

Rays of The Harmonist

GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA PUBLICATIONS

No. 14 ❁ KĀRTTIKA 2004



Govinda-Dāmodara-Mādhaveti

- Also inside:
- A Deliberation on the Methodology of Sādhu-saṅga
 - Residence in Vraja
 - One Must Correctly Identify a Vaiṣṇava



*dīvyad-vṛndāraṇya-kalpa-drumādhaḥ
śrīmad ratnāgāra-simhāsana-sthau
śrī-śrī-rādhā-śrīla-govinda-devau
preṣṭhālībhiḥ sevyamānau smarāmi*

I meditate upon Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda-deva, who are seated beneath a desire tree on an effulgent, bejeweled throne in the supremely beautiful land of Vṛndāvana, where They are always being served by Their beloved *sakhīs*, headed by Lalitā and Viśākhā.

Rays of
The Harmonist

Gauḍiya Vedānta Publications

Kārttika 2004



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Inside cover:
Ṣṛé Rādhā-Govinda-deva in Jaipura

Contents

Editorial	3
Ṣṛé Govinda-Dāmodara-Stotram (verses 1–20) Ṣṛéla Bilvamaḷ gala Ōhākura	4
A Deliberation on the Methodology of Sādhu-saḷ ga Ṣṛéla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura	10
Residence in Vraja Ṣṛéla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Ōhākura Prabhupāda	15
One Must Correctly Identify a Vaiñéava Ṣṛéla Bhakti Prajī āna Keṣava Gosvāmé Mahārāja	24
Have I Made a Mistake? Ṣṛéla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmé Mahārāja	30
Karma-yoga: The Art of Spiritual Work Ṣṛéla Bhaktivedānta Svāmé Mahārāja	36
Ṣṛé Ṣṛé Rādhāñōamé Ṣṛéla Bhakti Pramoda Puré Gosvāmé Mahārāja	42
The Impetus for Sense Gratification Ṣṛéla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmé Mahārāja	49
Our Eternal and Omniscient Guardian Ṣṛéla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmé Mahārāja	53
O Merciful Ṣṛéla Prabhupāda... Ṣṛéla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmé Mahārāja	58
An Ocean in the Palm of One's Hand Ṣṛéla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmé Mahārāja	62
Ṣṛé Puruñottama Parikramā 2004 A Report	69
Mahāprabhu's Mercy Touches Noida and Jammu A Report	72
Passing Away of Mūla-prakāti Dāsé A Short Tribute	76



DEDICATED TO
ācārya keśarī
om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata
 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
 Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
 Founder-Ācārya
 of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti

He earnestly desired to re-institute the publication of all the magazines and journals that were being published during the manifest presence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

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om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata
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STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

1. To protect the *vicāra-dhārā*, or current of conceptions, of the *svārūpa-rūpānugā-guru-paramparā* as presented in the modern age by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (i.e. to uproot opinions opposed to the genuine conclusions of the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya*).
2. To promote a co-operative effort to preach the message of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha in accordance with the last instructions of Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

Editorial

It is with great pleasure that we present another issue of *Rays of the Harmonist*, in the hope of fulfilling the innermost desire of our spiritual predecessors in the Gauḍeya line following Çrëla Rūpa Gosvāmë. This journal continues its auspicious work of fearlessly spreading the glories of Çrë Çrë Guru-Gaurāi ga and Çrë Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārëjë. To do so is its sole purpose and life. This journal offers the regular service (*niyama-seva*) of attempting to free the conditioned souls who are afflicted by the disease of nescience from their *anarthas*, impediments, and to help sincere practising devotees enhance their attitude of service to the Supreme Lord, Çrë Hari. As such, the journal will be deemed successful if it can help free even a single conditioned soul from the prison house of the illusory energy.

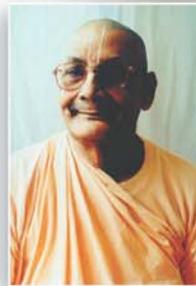
The soul's eternal occupation or nature is to love and serve the Supreme Lord purely and selflessly. Faithful persons who take shelter of a bona fide *guru* and worship the transcendental sound vibration (God's holy name), can become reinstated in their respective constitutional positions. The most magnanimous of all incarnations, Çrë Caitanya Mahāprabhu, appeared in the sky of the souls' great fortune simply to reveal the speciality of Kāñëa's holy name. He established *Çrëmad-Bhāgavatam* as the original evidence in the form of transcendental sound, and pure love for Çrë Kāñëa as the supreme goal of life.

In this age of Kali, the only means to worship the Supreme Lord is through *saì kërtana-yajña*, congregational chanting of the holy name. Therefore *Rays of the Harmonist* pledges total service to the Supreme Lord by propagating the glories of His name, form, qualities and pastimes. Its sole commitment is to preach the message descending in disciplic succession. But in discussing the Absolute Reality, *Rays of the Harmonist* never wishes to disturb anyone's mind.

The aphorism "*anavātti çabdāt*" from *Vedānta-sūtra* directs us to worship the holy name. But with what kind of intense eagerness is such worship performed? Çrë Caitanya Mahāprabhu, whose purpose was to relish the particular devotional moods of His own devotees, appeared in this age of Kali to exemplify this intense fervour. He did so through His own example and precepts. The residents of Vraja alone epitomise the pinnacle of such loving eagerness and acute anxiety to serve Kāñëa's holy name, which is non-different from Kāñëa Himself, as they sing "*govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti*". ●

Written by Çrëla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmë Mahārāja for the Editorial to *Çrë Gauḍeya Patrikā*, Year 23, Issue 1 (1972).

Adapted for *Rays of the Harmonist*.



śrī govinda-dāmodara

by Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura

**agre kurüëäm atha päëðavänäà
duùçāsanenā-hāta-vastra-keçā
kāñëä tadākroçad-ananya-nāthā
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (1)**

kāñëä – Draupadë; *keçā* – whose hair; *vastra* – and clothing; *āhāta* – had been seized; *duùçāsanena* – by Duùçāsana; *agre* – in front of; *kurüëäm atha päëðavänäà* – the Kurus and Päëðavas; *tadā* – then; *akroçat* – called out; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava! *ananya-nāthā* – having accepted Him as her only master.

When Duùçāsana seized Draupadë’s hair and *sāre* in the assembly of the Kurus and the Päëðavas, she accepted Çré Kāñëa as her only shelter and loudly beseeched Him, “O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava!”



**çré-kāñëa viñëo madhu-kaiiabhäre
bhaktānukampin bhagavan muräre
trayasva mää keçava lokanātha
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (2)**

çré-kāñëa – O all-attractive one; *viñëo* – O all-pervasive one; *are* – O enemy; *madhu-kaiiabha* – of the demons Madhu and Kaiiabha; *bhakta-anukampin* – O You who are merciful to Your devotees; *bhagavan* – O all-opulent Lord; *muräre* – O destroyer of demonic qualities like those of the demon Mura; *trayasva* – deliver; *mām* – me; *keçava* – O Lord of Ka (Brahmä) and Èça (Çiva); *lokanātha* – O Lord of the worlds; *iti* – thus;

govinda-dāmodara-mādhava – O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava!

“O Kāñëa! O Viñëu! Slayer of Madhu and Kaiiabha! O You who are sympathetic to Your devotees! O all-opulent Lord, enemy of the demon Mura, save me! O Keçava! O Lokanātha! O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava!”



**vikretu-kāmākhila-gopa-kanyä
muräri-pädärpita-citta-vättiü
dadhy-ädikaà moha-vaçäd avocad
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (3)**

citta-vättiü – the inner sentiments of the heart; *akhila-gopa-kanyä* – of all the *gopës* (of Vraja); *arpita* – were offered; *muräri-päda* – at the feet of Muräri; *vikretu-kāma* – desiring to sell; *dadhi-ädikam* – yoghurt and other dairy products; *moha-vaçät* – being overwhelmed by delusion; *avocad* – they called out; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

The *gopës* of Vraja had offered the core of their hearts at the lotus feet of Çré Kāñëa. Thus, when they tried to sell their yoghurt, milk and other dairy products, they forgot to call out “Yoghurt, yoghurt”, but in a state of madness called out “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.

-stotram

verses 1–20



***ulūkhale sambhāta-taëòulāàç ca
saàghaöòayanto musalaiù pramugdhäù
gäyanti gopyo janitänurägä
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (4)***

sai ghaöòayantaü – as they crushed; *sambhāta-taëòulān* – the stored rice; *musalaiù* – with their pestles; *ca* – and; *ulūkhale* – grinding mortars; *pramugdhäù* – the enchanted; *gopyaü* – *gopés*; *anurägäü* – (in whose hearts) the state of *anurāga*, in which one always thinks one is beholding Çré Kāñëa for the first time; *janita* – was born; *gäyanti* – sang; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dämodara-mädhava* – O Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava.

While threshing their stock of rice with their mortars and pestles, the *gopés*, their hearts enchanted by *anurāga* for Çré Kāñëa, would sing “O Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava”.



***käcit karämbhoja-puie niñaëëaà
kréòäçukaà kiàçuka-rakta-tuëòam
adhyäpayäm äsa saroruhäkñë
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (5)***

käcit – one of them; *saroruh-akñë* – lotus-eyed girls; *adhyäpayäm äsa* – taught; *kréòä-çukam* – her pet parrot; *niñaëëam* – sitting; *kara-ambhoja-puie* – in the hollow of her lotus-like hand; *tuëòam* – with its beak; *kiàçuka-rakta* – which was red as *kiàçuka* blossoms; *iti* – (to sing) thus; *govinda-dämodara-mädhava* – Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava.



One of the lotus-eyed girls taught her pet parrot, who was perched in the hollow of her lotus-like hand and who had a beak as red as the blossoms of the *kiàçuka* tree, to sing “Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava”.



***gähe gähe gopa-vadhü-samühaù
pratikñäëaà pii jara-särikäëäm
skhalad-giraà väcayitum pravätto
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (6)***

gähe gähe – in every home; *gopa-vadhü-samühaù* – all the wives of the cowherds; *pratikñäëam* – at every moment; *pravätta* – were engaged; *väcayitum* – in inciting to chant; *skhalad-giram* – with faltering voice; *särikäëäm* – the female parrots; *pii jara* – within their cages; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dämodara-mädhava* – Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava.

Indeed, in each and every home in Vraja the *gopas'* wives were always engrossed in training their caged she-parrots to chant with a faltering voice “Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava”.



**paryyai kikā-bhājam alaà kumāraà
prasvāpayantyo 'khila-gopa-kanyāü
jaguü prabandhaà svara-tāla-bandhaà
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (7)**

akhila-gopa-kanyāü – all the *gopés*; *alam* – intensely; *prasvāpayantyaü* – in the attempt to put to sleep; *kumāram* – the little boy; *paryyai kikā-bhājam* – in bed; *jaguü* – they sang; *prabandham* – uninterruptedly; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava; *svara-tāla-bandham* – to the rhythm of their clapping.

In the demanding task of putting their children to sleep, the *gopés* would tirelessly sing “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”, while clapping in rhythm.

**rāmānujaà vékñāëa-keli-lolaà
gopé gāhétvā navanéta-golam
ābālakaà bālakam ājuhāva
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (8)**

gāhétvā – taking; *navanéta-golam* – a ball of fresh butter; *gopé* – Yaçodā; *ājuhāva* – called; *bālakam* – her boy; *rāmanujam* – Kāñëa, the younger brother of Balarāma; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava; *vékñāëa-keli-lolam* – whose eyes were playfully dancing; *ābālakam* – within the entourage of boys.

Taking a handful of fresh butter, the *gopé* Yaçodā called out to her son Kāñëa, the younger brother of Rāma, “O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”, as her eyes danced playfully from one cowherd boy to another.

**vicitra-varëabharaëābhirāme
'bhidhehi vaktrāmbuja-rāja-haàsi
sadā madéye rasane 'grarai ge
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (9)**

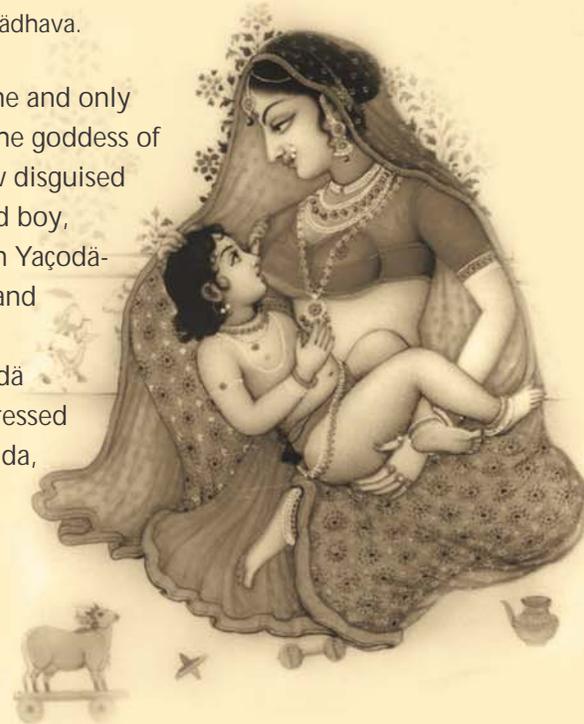
madéye rasane – O my tongue; *rāja-haàsi* – O queen of swans; *vaktra-ambuja* – with a face like a blossoming lotus; *vicitra-varëa-abharaëa-abhirāme* – O you who delight in decorating yourself with astonishing syllables; *agra-rai ge* – with your delightful tip; *sadā* – incessantly; *abhidhehi* – call out; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

O my tongue, O queen of swans whose face resembles a blossoming lotus, you always delight in decorating yourself with astonishing syllables. Therefore, with your delightful tip, kindly always call out “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.

**ai kādhirüohaà çicu-gopa-güohaà
stanaà dhayantaà kamalaika-kāntam
sambodhayām āsa mudā yaçodā
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (10)**

kamalā-eka-kāntam – (as) the only beloved of the goddess of fortune; *çicu-gopa-güoham* – in the guise of a cowherd boy; *ai ka-adhirüoham* – was sitting in her lap; *dhayantam* – sucking; *stanam* – her breast; *yaçodā* – Yaçodā-maiyā; *mudā* – joyously; *sambodhayām āsa* – addressed (Him); *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

While the one and only beloved of the goddess of fortune, now disguised as a cowherd boy, was sitting in Yaçodā-maiyā's lap and sucking her breast, Yaçodā joyfully addressed Him, “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.





**krèòantam-antar-vrajam ätmajaà svaà
samaà vayasyaiù paçu-päla-bälaiù
premnä yaçodä prajuhäva kânëaà
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (11)**

yaçodä – Yaçodä-maiyâ; prajuhäva – called out; premnä – with love; ätmajaà svaà – her own son; kânëam – Çré Kânëa; krèòantam – who was playing; antar-vrajam – in Vraja; paçu-päla-bälaiù – with cowherd boys; samam vayasyaiù – of His own age; iti – thus; govinda-dämodara-mädhava – Govinda! Dämodara! Mädhava!

Yaçodä-maiyâ lovingly called out to her son Çré Kânëa, who was playing somewhere in Vraja with the cowherd boys His own age, “Govinda! Dämodara! Mädhava!”



**yaçodayä gäòham ulükhaleña
go-kaëïha-päçena nibadhyamänaù
ruroda mandaà navanëta-bhojé
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (12)**

gäòham – (while) tightly; nibadhyamänaù – binding; navanëta-bhojé – Çré Kânëa, the eater of fresh butter; ulükhaleña – to the grinding mortar; go-kaëïha-päçena – with a rope used for tying the necks of the cows; yaçodayä – Yaçodä-maiyâ; ruroda – wept; mandam – gently; iti – thus; govinda-dämodara-mädhava – Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava.

While tightly binding Çré Kânëa, who had eaten fresh butter, to the grinding mortar with a rope used for tying cows, Yaçodä-maiyâ wept gently, softly saying “Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava”.



**nijài gane kai kana-keli-lolaà
gopé gähëtvä navanëta-golam
ämardayat päëi-talena netre
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (13)**

gähëtvä – bringing; navanëta-golam – a ball of butter; gopé – Yaçodä Gopé; nija-ai gane – (entered) her courtyard; kai kana-keli-lolam – (where Kânëa was) playing with His jingling bracelets; ämardayat – she covered; netre – His eyes; päëi-talena – by the palm of the hand; iti – (and lovingly called) thus; govinda-dämodara-mädhava – O Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava.

With a handful of butter, Yaçodä Gopé approached Kânëa, who was in the courtyard absorbed in playing with the jingling bracelets around his wrists. With her other hand Yaçodä-maiyâ covered His eyes and lovingly called, “O my dear Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava”.



**gähe gähe gopa-vadhü-kadambäù
sarve militvä samaväya-yoge
puëyäni nämäni païhanti nityaà
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (14)**

gähe gähe – coming from each and every house (in Vraja); gopa-vadhü-kadambäù – the multitude of gopés; sarve – all; nityam – regularly; militvä – meeting; samaväya-yoge – in an assembly; païhanti – they recited; puëyäni – the purifying; nämäni – names (of Çré Kânëa); iti – thus; govinda-dämodara-mädhava – Govinda, Dämodara and Mädhava.

Coming from each and every home in Vraja, a multitude of gopés would regularly assemble to recite

Çré Kânëa’s purifying names, such as “Govinda”, “Dämodara” and “Mädhava”.



**mandära-müle vadanäbhirämaà
bimbädhare pürita-veëu-nädam
go-gopa-gopé-jana-madhya-saàsthaà
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (15)**

vadana-abhirämam – Çré Kânëa, who possesses a delightful face; mandära-müle – (and who was standing) at the root



of a *mandāra* (i.e. *kadamba*) tree; *go-gopa-gopé-jana-madhya-saàstham* – in the assembly of cows, *gopas* and *gopés*; *pūrita-veëu-nādam* – filled (the air) with the sound of the bamboo flute; *adhare* – upon His lips; *bimba* – which resemble the crimson *bimba* fruit; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

Çré Kāñëa, whose face is very charming and who was standing at the root of a large *kadamba* tree among the assembled cows, *gopas* and *gopés*, placed His flute to His crimson lips, which resemble *bimba* fruits. The sound that echoed out was “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



***utthāya gopyo 'para-rātra-bhoge
smātvā yaçodā-suta-bāla-kelim
gāyanti proccair dadhi manthayantyo
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (16)***

gopyaù – the *gopés*; *utthāya* – after rising; *manthayantyaù* – while churning; *dadhi* – the yoghurt; *smātvā* – would remember; *bāla-kelim* – the childhood pleasure pastimes; *yaçodā-suta* – of Yaçodā-maiyā's son Çré Kāñëa; *bhoge* – during the bliss; *apara-rātra* – of the previous night; *gāyanti* – they sang; *proccaiù* – very loudly; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.



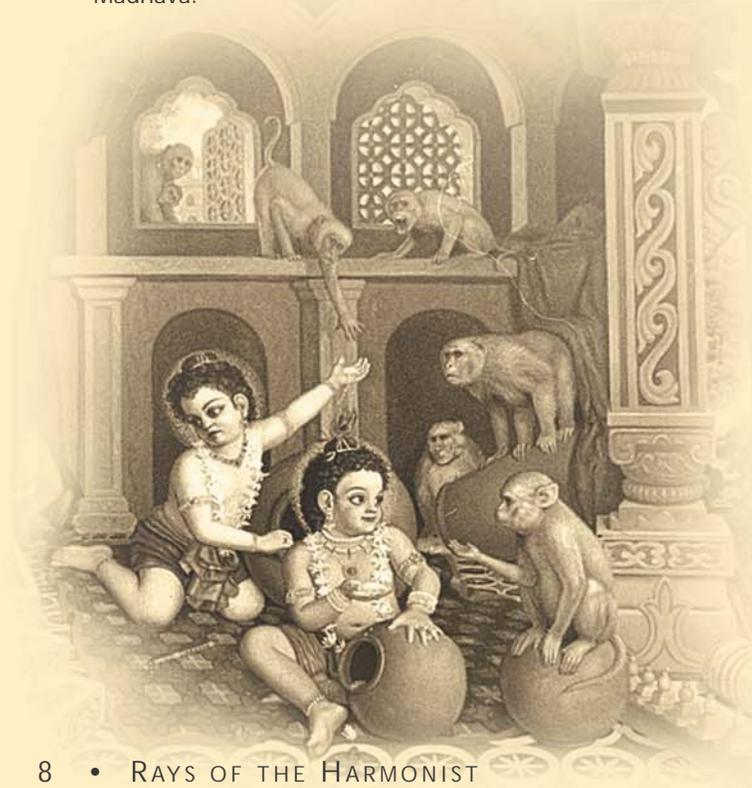
Upon waking, the *gopés* would churn yoghurt while remembering the pleasurable childhood pastimes of Yaçodā-maiyā's son from the previous blissful night. In doing so, they would loudly sing “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



***jagdho 'tha datto navanēta-piëò
gāhe yaçodā vicikitsayanté
uvāca satyaà vada he muräre
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (17)***

yaçodā – Yaçodā-maiyā; *vicikitsayanté* – doubtfully observing; *navanēta-piëò* – (whether) the stock of butter; *gāhe* – in her home; *jagdhaù* – had been eaten; *atha* – and; *dattaù* – had been given; *uvāca* – she said; *iti* – thus; *satyaà vada* – tell the truth; *he muräre* – O killer of Mura; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, O Dāmodara, O Mādhava.

Once Kāñëa ate some butter and then gave some to the monkeys. Doubting that Çré Kāñëa was a thief, Yaçodā-maiyā inquired, “O Murāri, O Govinda, O Dāmodara, O Mādhava, tell me the truth. Did You steal butter?”



**abhy arcya gehaà yuvatiù praváddha
prema-pravähä dadhi nirmamantha
gäyanti gopyo 'tha sakhé-sametä
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (18)**

abhyarcya – after caring; *geham* – for the household chores; *yuvatiù* – the young girl (Yaçodä); *praváddha-prema-pravähä* – her heart overflowing with very intense love; *nirmamantha* – churned; *dadhi* – yoghurt; *atha* – and; *sakhé-sametä* – surrounded by her friends; *gopyaù* – the *gopés*; *gäyanti* – they sang; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dämodara-mädhava* – Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava.

After tending to her household chores Yaçodä-maiyä, whose heart always overflows with intense love for Çré Känëa, began to churn yoghurt, surrounded by her *gopé* friends. Together they sang "Govinda, Dämodara, Mädhava".



**kvacit prabhäte dadhi-pürëa-pätre
nikñipyä manthaà yuvaté mukundam
älokya gänaà vividhaà karoti
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (19)**

kvacit – once; *prabhäte* – at dawn; *yuvaté* – the young girl (Yaçodä); *nikñipyä* – while going to place; *mantham* – the churning rod; *dadhi-pürëa-pätre* – in a pot full of yoghurt; *älokya* – looking; *mukundam* – at Mukunda; *karoti* – she made; *vividham* – this wonderful; *gänam* – song; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dämodara-mädhava* – O Govinda, O Dämodara, O Mädhava.

Once at dawn, as Yaçodä-devé was about to place the churning rod in a pot of yoghurt, she gazed upon her child, Mukunda. At once she became overwhelmed with love and sang this wonderful song, "O my Govinda, O my Dämodara, O my Mädhava".



**krëòä-paraà bhojana-majjanärthaà
hitaiñiëé stré tanujaà yaçodä
äjühavat prema-pariplutäkñé
govinda-dämodara-mädhaveti (20)**

yaçodä – Yaçodä-maiyä; *hita-aiñiëé* – desiring the welfare; *tanujam* – of her son; *krëòä-param* – who was absorbed in play; *stré* – that woman; *prema-paripluta-äkñé* – her eyes flooded with tears of love; *äjühavat* – called out; *bhojana-majjana-artham* – for bathing and food; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dämodara-mädhava* – O Govinda, O Dämodara, O Mädhava.

Desiring the welfare of her son, who was absorbed in playing, Yaçodä-maiyä's eyes welled with tears of love as she called out, "O Govinda, O Dämodara, O Mädhava, it's time to take bath and eat something." ●





A Deliberation on

by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



Association is the basis of one's nature

A person's nature is shaped by the company he keeps. In other words, a person develops a nature similar to that of whomever he associates with. The *jēva's* association with the fruitive activities he performed in his past life moulds his nature, and this nature is transformed by the company he keeps in his current life. Thus, association is the root cause in forming a person's character. It has therefore been said:

*yasya yat saì gatiù puàso
maëivat syät sa tad-guëaù*

Çré Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya (quoted in
Çré Bhakti-rasämäta-sindhu 1.2.229)

The quartz crystal assumes the colour of any object in its proximity, regardless of the hue of that object. Similarly, a person acquires the qualities of whomever he joins company with.

Sādhu-saᅅga is the path to liberation

Çrémad-Bhägavatam (3.23.55) states:



Appearing in English for the first time

the Methodology of Sādhu-saṅga

*saì go yaù saàsāter hetur
asatsu vihito 'dhiyā
sa eva sādhuñu kāto
niūsai gatvāya kalpate*

*teñv açānteñu müòheñu
khaëòitātmav sādhuñu
saì gaà na kuryāc chocyeñu
yoñit-krèòä-māgeñu ca*

By associating with worldly-minded materialists, a person is bound to undergo severe suffering in material existence. He will certainly have to bear the consequences of his association, even if he cannot distinguish between good and bad. By associating with saintly persons, however, a person attains *niūsai gatva*, complete freedom from worldly attachments.

Worldly association destroys all one's virtues like truthfulness, cleanliness, mercy, gravity, intelligence, shyness, prosperity, reputation, forgiveness, control of the mind, control of the senses, good fortune and opulence. One should utterly reject the company of a person who is not a *sādhu*, considering such association to be extremely miserable, for such a wicked and restless fool is but a dancing dog in the hands of a woman and is thereby simply bent on annihilating himself.

Relinquishing unfavourable association is essential

Regarding bad association, *Çrēmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.31.33–34) affirms:

*satyaà çaucaà dayā maunaà
buddhiù çrēr hrēr yaçaù kñamā
çamo damo bhagaç ceti
yat-sai gād yāti saì kñayam*

The symptoms of a *sādhu*, and the necessity of *sādhu-saṅga*

We do not, however, attain the desired goal merely by renouncing bad association. We must earnestly engage in *sādhu-saì ga*. The symptoms of a genuine *sādhu*, one whose association must be sought, have



“There are few genuine *sādhus*. They are currently so rare that a person would be lucky to discover one after intently searching far and wide for a very long time.”

been outlined in *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.21, 23–24):

*titikñavaù kàruëikāù
suhādaù sarva-dehinām
ajāta-çatravaù çāntāù
sādhavaù sādhu-bhūñāëäù*

*mad-āçrayāù kathā māñōāù
çāëvanti kathayanti ca
tapanti vividhās tãpã
naitān mad-gata-cetasāù*

*ta ete sādhaveù sādhuvi
sarva-saì ga-vivarjitāù
saì gas teñv atha te prārthyaù
saì ga-doñā-harã hi te*

Lord Kapila said, “O Mother, the sublime ornaments of a *sādhu* are that he is tolerant, merciful and a well-wisher and friend to all living entities. He considers no one his enemy, is peaceful and abides by the scriptures. These qualities comprise the nature of all pure devotees.

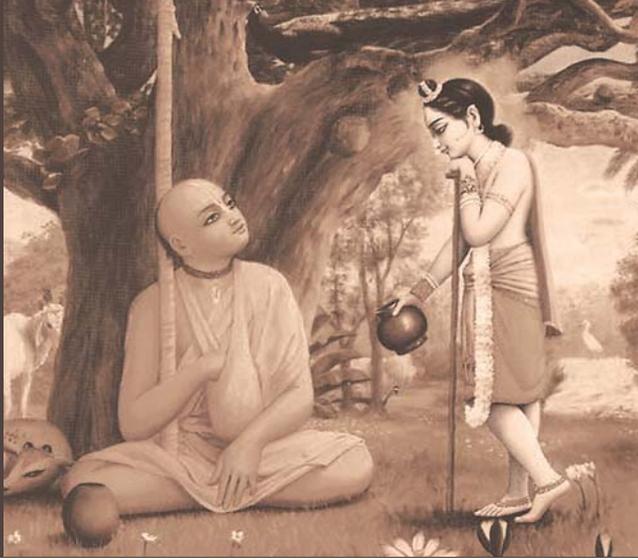
“Since the minds of such personalities are fully absorbed in Me, they do not perform the arduous endeavours of those lured by the paths of *karma*, *ji āna* or *aññāi ga-yoga*. Rather, they engage themselves simply in speaking and hearing *hari-kathā*, their minds having been easily cleansed by narrations of My pastimes. O virtuous lady, these devotees, who are completely free from all worldly attachments, counteract the harmful effects of a person’s material bondage. You should pray for their association.”

A *sādhu* is very rare and not to be judged by external dress

We should not identify a *sādhu* by his external garb. Even if someone has completely given up criticising others and engaging in idle gossip, he must clearly possess the above-mentioned virtues before we can recognise him as a *sādhu*. In this Age of Kali, knowledge of what makes a real *sādhu* is vanishing. It is a matter of grave concern that anyone and everyone who dresses himself as a *sādhu* is acknowledged as one. We should be ever mindful that by associating with such false *sādhus* we become duplicitous ourselves. There are few genuine *sādhus*. They are currently so rare that a person would be lucky to discover one after intently searching far and wide for a very long time.

Kṛṣṇa-bhakti influenced by mādhyaya-rasa is especially uncommon

Mahādeva (Lord Çiva) once said to Devé (Pārvaté), “O Bhagavaté, among thousands upon thousands of persons desiring salvation, perhaps one exhibits the characteristics of a liberated soul. Among thousands upon thousands of such persons, maybe one actually achieves spiritual realisation and perfection. And among millions and millions of perfected and liberated souls, perhaps one, on the strength of his past virtuous activities (*sukāti*) and good association (*sat-saì ga*), is devoted to Lord Nārāyaëa. Just see, the devotees of Lord Nārāyaëa are self-satisfied, and therefore they are extremely rare. But look here. If the



**“The devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa
is the topmost *sādhū*,
and the fruit of associating
with him is the highest.”**

pure devotee who serves Lord Nārāyaṇa in *dāsya-rasa*, the mood of servitorship, is so rare, how much more uncommon is he who serves Çré Kāñēa in *mādhurya-rasa*, the mood of amorous love.”

The devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is the topmost *sādhū*, and the fruit of associating with him is the highest

Only Çré Kāñēa’s pure devotee, who possesses all the symptoms mentioned previously, is to be considered the best of *sādhū*s, and his association is highly desirable for us. Çré Brahmā describes the benefit we receive from this association:

*tāvad rāgādayaù stenās
tāvat kārā-gāhaà gāham
tāvan moho 'i ghri-nigaòo
yāvat kāñēa na te janāù*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.36)

Çré Brahmā says, “The attachment and hatred that arise from spontaneous absorption in the objects of sense gratification are robbing us of our true nature. Our homes have become nothing but prison houses and we are constantly bound by the foot-shackles of material affection (*moha*). What a miserable condition we are in. O Çré Kāñēa, only when possessiveness (*mamatā*) towards You awakens in my heart by associating with Your pure devotees, shall I be counted among Your associates. From that day, the various propensities of my mind, such as attachment, shall no longer act like thieves but like beloved friends, by allowing me to engage in pure devotional

service to You. Only then will my home become transcendental and bestow eternal bliss; only from that day will my power of affection become favourable for devotional service and actually advance the cause of my soul.”

Lord Brahmā offered further prayers:

*tad astu me nātha sa bhūri-bhāgo
bhave 'tra vānyatra tu vā tiraçcām
yenāham eko 'pi bhavaj-janānāà
bhūtvā niñeve tava pāda-pallavam*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.30)

“O Çré Kāñēa,” he entreated, “my earnest prayer is that in this life as Brahmā, or in any other species of life, even as an animal or a bird, I may attain the fortune of being counted as one of Your devotees and engage in devotional service to Your lotus feet.” One achieves this exalted position only by associating with a pure devotee of Çré Kāñēa.

Sādhū-saṅga misconceived

What activities comprise *sādhū-saṅga*? This is a matter of great importance. Generally people think that *sādhū-saṅga* is performed when one identifies a *sādhū* and massages his feet, offers obeisances to him, honours his *caraëämāta*, takes his remnants or donates some money to him. It is true that a person honours a *sādhū* by these activities and thereby derives some benefit, but it is incorrect to deem these activities *sādhū-saṅga*.

The methodology of associating with sādhus

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (2.7.46) describes how to engage in *sādhu-sai ga*:

*te vai vidanty atitaranti ca deva-māyā
stré-çüdra-hüëa-çabarā api päpa-jëvü
yady adbhuta-krama-parāyaëa-çëla-çikñäs
tiryag-janā api kim u çruta-dhāraëä ye*

The word *adbhuta-krama* denotes Çré Kāñëa, whose pure devotees are *adbhuta-krama-parāyaëa*, or dedicated to Him. Only those who make a great endeavour to seek training and instruction from the *çëla*, or nature and spotless character, of such pure devotees can understand the illusory potency of the Lord. They alone become capable of fully crossing the ocean of *māyā*. Even souls who are born as women, *çüdras*, *hüëas*¹, *çabaras*² or other sinful kinds of human beings, or as animals and birds, can learn from the character of a *kāñëa-bhakta* and thereby effortlessly cross the ocean of birth and death. Thus, what doubt can there be that scholars with profuse knowledge of the scriptures will not also easily cross the ocean of material bondage by following the spotless conduct and character of a pure devotee.

In conclusion, one cannot transcend the power of *māyā* even after acquiring knowledge from many scriptures. No great benefit is achieved from birth in a high-class family, and one is unable to cross the material ocean of birth and death even after practising the dry renunciation enjoined in *çāstra*. Nor can worldly opulence and physical beauty render this favour. One achieves unalloyed, transcendental devotional service to Çré Kāñëa only by very carefully investigating the nature and character of the pure devotee, who is a true *sādhu*, and then by honestly following him.

¹ a hill tribe originating from Eastern Germany and part of Russia

² a tribe of hunters who keep and sell pigs

The materialist's humility and appeals for mercy are utter hypocrisy

Materialistic persons offer obeisances to a *sādhu* and pray to him, "O benevolent one, I am extremely fallen. Please bestow your mercy upon me and explain how my attachments to this world may be removed." But their words are hollow. In the depths of their heart, they are convinced that accumulating wealth is real gain, and amassing objects for sense enjoyment is life's only goal. An infatuation for money burns in their hearts day and night. The materialist hankers to be recognised by the *sādhu* and fears that the *sādhu*'s curse may destroy his prospects for sensual pleasure. Therefore, he displays false humility and devotion before him.

If the *sādhu* were to bless such a person by saying, "May your desire for sense gratification be extinguished, your opulence destroyed and your relatives taken away", the materialist would at once cry, "O *sādhu-mahārāja*, be kind! Don't bless me like this. Your favour is a curse and definitely harmful for me." Just see! Such behaviour with a *sādhu* makes a mockery of *sādhu-sai ga*.

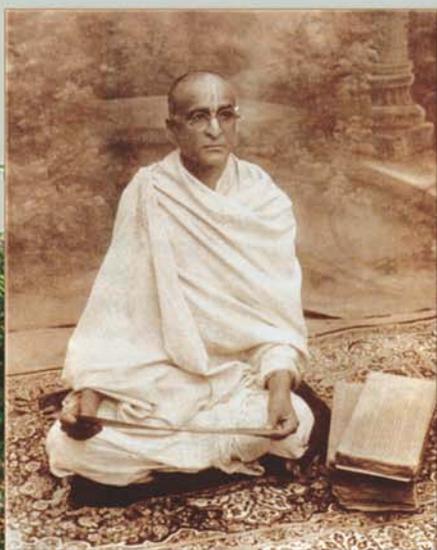
Duplicity deprives one of the real fruits of sādhu-saṅga

In the course of life, we may encounter many *sādhus*, but our deceitful natures check us from receiving the real benefit of their association. Our souls will make spiritual advancement if, with simple faith, we carefully and continuously assimilate the spotless character of a genuine *sādhu* – that is, a *mahātmā*, great soul. Keeping this in mind, we should associate closely with a *sādhu*. By doing so, we will become conscious of his nature and character and make a focused endeavour to develop such a nature and character ourselves. This, indeed, is the teaching of *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam*. ●

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Excerpts from an informal discourse given by
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda
on 8 October 1932 during Vraja-maṅḍala Parikramā

Originally published in the weekly *Gauḍīya*
by the disciples of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

Appearing in English for the first time

Residence in Vraja

Hankering for Perfection

In 1932 in the month of Kārttika, the Gauḍeya Māihā organised Vraja-maṅḍala Parikramā, spanning eighty-four *kosas*,¹ under the leadership of oṅ *vīṅēupāda* Ṣṛē Ṣṛēmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatē Prabhupāda. Thousands of devotees from all parts of India participated. The first day of the Parikramā saw a grand procession with *nagara-sai kērtana*, as the pilgrims visited the holy places of Mathurā.

On different days, Ṣṛēla Prabhupāda had his followers sing various songs composed by the liberated *mahājanas*, great souls. Through these songs, which are full of heart-felt appeal, Ṣṛēla

Prabhupāda showed that their example of continuous hankering for perfection (*siddhi-lālasā*) should be the sole purpose of all aspirants who have attained the stage of *anartha-nivātti*, in which unwanted obstacles are cleared. Ṣṛēla Prabhupāda personally selected the following songs by Ṣṛēla Narottama dāsa Ōhākura for the devotees to sing:

(1)

*hari hari! kabe haba vāndāvana-vāsē
nirakhiba nayane yugala-rūpa-rāṇi*

...

Prārthanā (Song 29)

¹ Eighty-four *kosas* is approximately 168 miles.

O Çré Hari, when will I be able to live in Våndävana and be a real Vrajaväsé? When will my eyes behold the beautiful forms of the Divine Couple, Çré Rādhā-Kāñëa? ...

(2)

*rādhā-kāñëa sevoì mui jëvane maraëe
tāra sthāna, tāra lëlā dekho rātri-dine*

...

Prārthanā (Song 48)

I shall serve Çré Rādhā and Çré Kāñña in life and in death. I shall behold Their transcendental abode and pastimes night and day. ...

(3)

*hari hari āra kabe palatibe daçā
ei saba kariyā bāme, āba våndävana dhāme,
ei mane kariyāchi āçā*

...

Prārthanā (Song 27)

O Çré Hari, when will my life change? When will I renounce all worldly affairs and make my way to Çré Våndävana-dhāma? I cherish this hope. ...

On Çréla Prabhupāda's direction, the devotees also sang the following songs by Çréla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura:

(4)

*dekhite dekhite, bhuliba vā kabe,
nija-sthūla-paricaya
nayane heribo, vraja-pura-çobhā,
nitya cid-ānanda-maya*

...

Gēta-māla (Part 5, Song 2)

When will I see that I have forgotten my gross bodily identity and am beholding the exquisite beauty of Vraja, full of eternal, spiritual bliss and cognizance. ...

(5)

*rādhā-kuëòà-taōa-kui ja-kuōëra
govardhana-parvata, yāmuna-tëra*

...

Çaraëägati (*Svëkara*, Song 4)

A small cottage in a grove on the banks of Rādhā-kuëòà, Govardhana Hill, the banks of the Yamunā...

(6)

*(āmi) yamunā-puline, kadamba-kānane,
ki herinu sakhī! āja
(āmār) çyāma vaàçé-dhārë, maëi-maì copari,
kare' lëlā rasa-rāja*

...

Kalyäëa-kalpataru (Ami Yamunā Puline)

O *sakhë*, what did I see today! In a *kadamba* grove on the bank of the Yamunā, a beautiful blackish boy holding a flute was standing on a jewelled platform, performing His pastimes as *rasa-rāja*, the monarch of all transcendental mellows. ...

The Nature of Spiritual Rasa

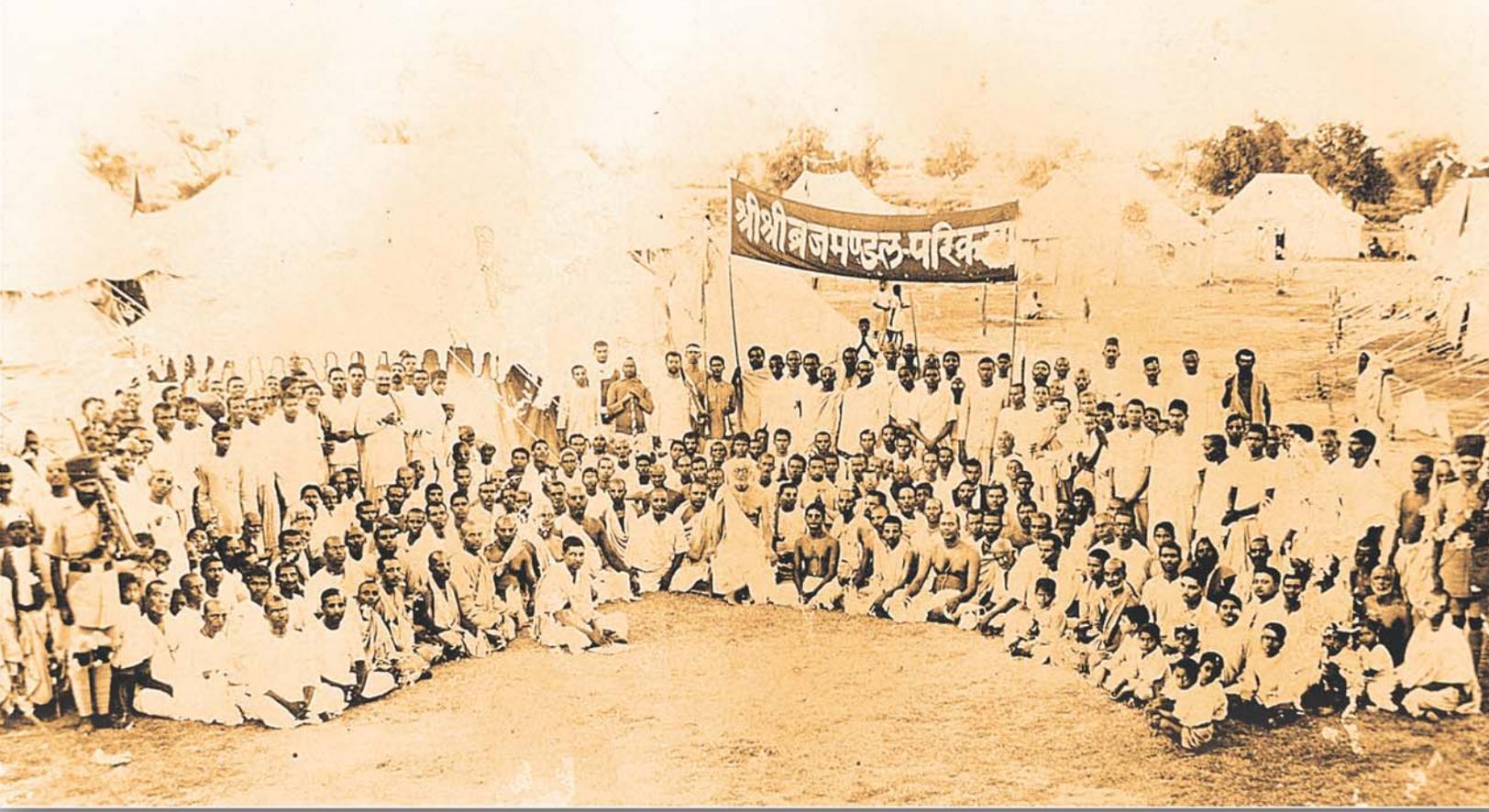
At midday on 8 October, at the end of a grand festival with *kërtana*, Çréla Prabhupāda began to speak to the assembled devotees in Mathurā. On Çréla Prabhupāda's instruction, Çrémad Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhasti-nemi Mahārāja sang the prayer "Hari Hari Āra Kabe Palatibe Daçā"² from Çréla Narottama dāsa Ōhākura Mahāçaya's collection of poems called *Prārthanā*. At that time, Sir Çré Devaprañāda Sarvādhikārë, former Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, arrived and, after paying his regards to Çréla Prabhupāda, sat down amidst the gathering.

Çréla Prabhupāda proceeded to explain this prayer of Ōhākura Mahāçaya, one line at a time:

bhramiba dvādaça vane, rasa-keli ye ye sthāne

I shall wander through the twelve forests of Våndävana where Çré Kāñëa performed His pastimes full of *rasa*.

² For the complete song by Çréla Narottama dāsa Ōhākura, please refer to the inside back-cover of this issue of *Rays of the Harmonist*.



Vraja-maëöala Parikramä with Çréla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvaté Öhäkura Prabhupäda

While explaining this part of the prayer, Çréla Prabhupäda said that Çré Gaurasundara has stated:

*anyera hädaya – mana, mora mana – vändävana,
'mane' 'vane' eka kari' jäni*

Çré Caitanya-caritämäta (Madhya-lälä 13.137)

For most people, the mind and heart are one. But My mind is never separated from Vändävana, and therefore I consider My mind and Vändävana to be one.

Çréla Prabhupäda continued: "Rasa arises in such a pure heart when the *sthäyëbhäva-rati*, or permanent sentiment in one of the five primary relationships with

Çré Känëa, combines with four other ingredients, namely, *vibhäva*, *anubhäva*, *sätvika-bhäva* and *vyabhicäre-bhäva*.³ This *rasa* in the form of any of the five principal *rasas* complimented by the seven secondary *rasas*⁴ surpasses the realm of mundane emotions and manifests on the platform of a heart that has become resplendent with *çuddha-sattva*, or pure, spiritual existence. At that time, one experiences intense astonishment in satisfying the senses of Vrajendra-nandana Çré Känëa, the embodiment of all transcendental *rasa*.

"That same heart, which shines with *çuddha-sattva*, is indeed the platform we call 'vana' and

³ *Vibhäva* is that in and by which *rati* is stimulated and thus caused to be tasted. It includes Çré Känëa, the devotee and everything that stimulates remembrance of Çré Känëa, such as His dress and ornaments, the spring season and the bank of the Yamunä. *Anubhävas* are thirteen different actions that display or reveal the emotions within the heart. They include dancing, rolling on the ground and singing. *Sätvika-bhävas* are eight symptoms of spiritual ecstasy, such as becoming stunned, perspiring and the standing of hairs on end. *Vyabhicäre-bhävas* consist of

thirty-three transient, internal spiritual emotions that emerge from the ocean of *sthäyëbhäva*, such as despondency, jubilation and fear.

⁴ The five principal *rasas* are (1) neutrality (*çänta*), (2) servitorship (*däsya*), (3) fraternity (*sakhya*), (4) parenthood (*vätsalya*), and (5) conjugal love (*mädhurya*). The seven secondary *rasas* are (1) comedy (*häsyä*), (2) wonder (*adbhuta*), (3) chivalry (*vëra*), (4) compassion (*dayä*), (5) anger (*raudra*), (6) fear (*bhayänaka*), and (7) disgust (*bëbhatsa*).

shelters the twelve *rasas*. Wherever Çré Kâñëa's sweet pastimes saturated with *rasa* manifest, they are inundated by *prema* from the fusion of *rasa*. If, as with an 'annicut'⁵, a sluice in the form of a trace of any desire other than to serve Çré Kâñëa is placed in the path of the current of *rasa*, then that *rasa* can no longer flow as before.

"Such works as *Bhāva-prakāça*, *Sāhitya-darpaëa* and the *rasa-çāstras* of Bharata Muni analyse and present the material mellows (*prākāta-rasa*) of this world, which exist on the platform of whimsical, mundane conceptions. The various *rasas* that arise in one's heart upon reading the life stories of material heroes and heroines, such as Naiñadha and Carita, Sävitri and Satyavāna, and Lailä and Majnü, merely emerge on the platform of transient, material relationships (*asthäyi-bhāva*). There, the subject of *rasa* is not the non-dual, unprecedented Personality, Çré Kâñëa.

"The only subject of the *rasa* that manifests in the twelve forests of Vraja, however, is Vrajendra-nandana Çré Kâñëa, the non-dual embodiment of all transcendental *rasa*. He is the only subject of the five types of *prema*, namely, *çānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*."

Take Shelter of the Residents of Vraja

Çréla Prabhupāda continued:

*sudhäiba jane jane, vrajaväsë-gaëa-sthäne,
nivediba caraëe dhariyä*

I shall enquire about the pastimes that took place in each location from all the Vrajaväsés, reverently offering them prayers and holding their lotus feet.

"Those who reside in Vraja are conversant with *kâñëa-kathä*, narrations of Kâñëa's pastimes, for they are constantly engaged in the service of Çré Kâñëa without cause or interruption. All the cows and calves serve Çré Kâñëa. They become dancing dolls to enhance the pleasure of His transcendental senses.

They become instruments in His pastime of milking the cows.

"Nanda-nandana Çré Kâñëa's servants like Citraka, Patraka, Raktaka and Bakula tend all these cows and also serve Kâñëa's parents. They wash Çré Kâñëa's lotus feet with the spiritual waters of Çré Yamunä, which are composed of liquefied transcendence. When Çré Kâñëa's body becomes covered with the dust of Vraja upon returning to His home in the north [Nandagrāma], then Raktaka, Citraka, Patraka and others wash Him with water from the Yamunä.

"What knowledge do Çré Kâñëa's cows possess? They are none other than great, venerated sages who recited the Vedas and performed penance for many lifetimes to attain Bhagavān's service. Those very sages have appeared as the treasure of Vraja in the form of its cows, and have learnt the art of giving milk for Çré Kâñëa's service. They are not ordinary, so-called *munis* and *āñis* who have studied Vedānta but not realised its purport.

"It is necessary for everyone to reside in Vraja, taking shelter of its residents. We have learned that Çré Rüpa Gosvāmë Prabhu has said:

*tan-nāma-rüpa-caritādi-sukërtanānu-
smātyou krameëa rasanā-manasë niyojya
tiññhan vraje tad-anurāgi janānugāmë
kälāa nayed akhilam ity upadeça-sāram*

Çré Upadeçāmāta (8)

It is imperative that a person engage himself in thoroughly and exquisitely singing the glories of Çré Kâñëa's names, form, qualities, associates and eternal pastimes. And in the course of remembering these, he should give up discriminating between what is immediately pleasing to him (*preyaü*) and what is to his long-term benefit (*çreyaü*). Controlling the whims of the mind, a person should spend all his time residing in Vraja following the mood of any one of the Vrajaväsés. This alone is the essence of all advice. The term 'Vrajaväsë' refers only to those servants of Hari

⁵ Annicut: a dam or other large solid structure made in the course of a stream for the purpose of regulating the flow of a system of irrigation.

“Controlling the whims of the mind, a person should spend all his time residing in Vraja following the mood of any one of the Vrajavāsīs. This alone is the essence of all advice.”



who are endowed with transcendental realisation. It does not refer to persons who are averse to devotees and engaged in material sense enjoyment.

“We come to Vraja in vain if we do not become followers of Çré Kāñëa by accepting the guidance of Citraka, Patraka and Bakula but, instead, are led by the senses – like the eyes and ears – to enjoy material objects. This will not awaken intense spiritual ardour (*anurāga*) in the heart.

“I am enjoying the objects of the senses, and the objects of the senses visible to me are giving me pleasure: this is called material sense gratification, or indifference to the service of Çré Kāñëa. How can we attain residence in Vraja if we do not develop uncommon attachment for Citraka, Patraka and Raktaka, who are the abode of *dāsya-rasa*; for Sudāma and Çrédāma, who are the abode of *sakhya-rasa*; for Çré Nanda and Yaçodā, who are the abode of *vātsalya-rasa*; and for Çré Rūpa Mai jaré and the other *gopés*, who are the abode of *mādhurya-rasa*. These are the eternally liberated residents of Vraja.

The Path to Success

sudhāiba jane jane, vrajavāsë-gaëa-sthāne

“One has to enquire about Çré Kāñëa’s pastimes in the same *rasa* towards which one is inclined. If I wish to learn about *mādhurya-rasa*, then I have to approach a Vrajavāsë established in *mādhurya-rasa*. If I approach someone who has not met Çré Lalitā and Çré Viçākhā or not directly seen Çré Rūpa Mai jaré, then I shall only end up hearing from him about something else, like the history of Nala and Damayanté or the abduction of Sëtā by Rāvaëa.

“The *gopés* solicited news of Çré Kāñëa from each and every tree and creeper of Vāndāvana:

*cūta-priyāla-panasāsana-kovidāra
jambv-arka-bilva-bakulāmra-kadamba-népāu
ye 'nye parārtha-bhava-kā yamunopakulāu
çaàsantu kāñëa-padavëà rahitātmanāà nau*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (10.30.9)

“It is impossible to understand the topics of Vraja without first becoming subservient to Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī.”

O *cūta*, O *priyāla*, O *panasa*, *āsana* and *kovidāra*, O *jambu*, O *arka*, O *bilva*, *bakula* and *āmra*, O *kadamba* and *nēpa* and all you other plants and trees living by the banks of the Yamunā who have dedicated your very lives to the welfare of others, we are suffering in separation from Çré Kāñēa, so please tell us where He has gone. In separation from Him, everything appears void.

“I have heard that *panasa*, the jackfruit tree, is no longer found in the land of Vraja. During His visit to Vāndāvana, Çré Gaurasundara, who was absorbed in His internal state, saw on the bank of Yamunā many of the trees from which the renowned Kabul dried fruits are made. This is explained in the *Anubhāñya* commentary on *Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta*. Çré Jayadeva Gosvāmé Prabhu has also mentioned this.

“Vrajavāsés in the mood of *çānta-rasa* are of five types: the cow (*go*), cane (*vetra*), horn (*viñāēa*), flute (*veēu*) and shore of the Yamunā (*yamunā-saikata*).

“It is impossible for us to reside in Vraja without the mercy of the Vrajavāsés. But why would they even want to talk to us? How is it possible for us to attain their *darçana* with these material eyes? We are overcome with pride and envy, and therefore they turn a deaf ear to our prayers. Until we become *tad-anurāgi*, deeply attached to them and to the object of their affection, they will not speak to us. Why should the Vrajavāsés who have entered the eternal, trans-



cidental pastimes of Çré Kāñēa want to communicate with us? They will first check to see whether we still seek material enjoyment or whether we have made Çré Kāñēa the object of our search.

“It is impossible to understand the topics of Vraja without first becoming subservient to Çré Rūpa Mañjarī and Çré Rati Mañjarī. I shall be able to understand the mercy of Çré Rūpa and Rati Mañjarīs only from that day when Çré Nityānanda Prabhu bestows His mercy upon me. Until then, I shall remain bewildered in the manner described in *Bhagavad-gētā* (3.27):

*prakāteu kriyamāēāni
guēaiu karmāēi sarvaçau
ahaì kāra-vimūhātmā
kartāham iti manyate*

The spirit soul deluded by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in fact carried out by the three modes of material nature.

And, thus, I shall be unable to realise the verse *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaà çaraēaà vraja* (*Bhagavad-gētā* 18.66): ‘Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me.’



“I shall be able to understand the mercy of Śrī Rūpa and Rati Mañjarī only from that day when Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu bestows His mercy upon me.”

Give Up Hypocrisy and Speculation

“When aversion to the service of Çré Kāñëa appears in our hearts, it leads to calamities. And as a result of sinful activities from previous lives, we worship various demigods. Unless we take shelter of the feet of those who are engaged in Çré Kāñëa’s service with a favourable mood, our path will never be smooth. If while walking through a forest in Vraja, I happen to eat the fruits from its trees or smell its flowers, I will not have actually visited that forest. I will merely have committed offences by stepping on these sacred places.

“We are forbidden to step on Govardhana Hill. From this we should understand that we should not touch Çré Kāñëa’s body with our feet. Until supra-mundane *sakhya-rasa* awakens in the heart, placing one’s feet on Bhagavān’s shoulder is wholly inappropriate. One does not gain the right to climb Bhagavān’s shoulder merely by imitating *sakhya-rasa*. It is impossible for us to enter the forests of Vraja as a ‘lucre-hunter’, with the intention of enjoying worldly pleasures.

“How many more days do I have left? And why should I spend these days otherwise engaged? Çréla Narottama dāsa Ōhākura Mahāçaya has said:

*haiyā māvāra dāsa, kari nānā abhilāña,
tomāra smaraëa gela dūre
artha-lābha ei açe, kapaña-vaiñëava-veçe,
hramiyā bulaye ghare ghare*

Prārthanā (Song 6: Hari Hari Kāpā
Kari Rākha Nija-pade)

I have become a slave to illusion, and am filled with material desires. My memory of You has fled far away. Disguised as a Vaiñëava, I wander from house to house, hoping to get some money.

“The symptoms of hypocrisy have been described in the first verses of *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam*:

*dharmaù projjhita-kaitavo ‘tra
paramo nirmatsarëëà satāà
vedyaà västavam atra vastu çivadaà
täpa-trayonmūlanam*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.2)

This *Bhāgavata Purāëa* propounds the highest truth, completely rejecting all religious works that are materially motivated. Only those devotees who are fully pure in heart can understand this highest truth, which is reality distinguished from illusion for the



“One becomes a street sweeper by serving a dog, a stableman by grooming a horse, an ironsmith by beating iron, and a goldsmith by being absorbed in gold. It is essential to serve the eternally liberated Vrajavāsīs to become a Vrajavāsī.”



welfare of all. Such knowledge uproots the three-fold miseries.

“Occupational duties (*dharma*), economic development (*artha*) and sense gratification (*kāma*) are contemptible and should be rejected. Only material enjoyers strive for them. But the five schools of philosophy apart from the doctrine of Vedānta all more or less present only these three goals. Vedānta as explained by the impersonalists is simply an invention of their speculative minds; it is merely the opposite extreme of the desire for sense gratification. It is reprehensible to reject the existence of transcendental variety and embrace the mundane variegatedness of this world. But it is equally or even more inauspicious to impose mundane variegatedness on transcendence. This is a case of the cow who, once caught in a fire,

⁶ According to this old adage, the cow traumatised by fire transposes the qualities of her experience onto the brilliant sunset. Similarly, persons who have suffered the repeated disappointment of material existence may mistakenly assign the defects of matter, like impermanence and limitation in space, to the transcendental reality.

becomes fearful whenever he sees red clouds in the sky.⁶”

Some devotees noticed that many flies kept disturbing the divine body of Çréla Prabhupāda, who was engaged in speaking *hari-kathā*, and they approached him with a palm-leaf stalk to drive the flies away.

Çréla Prabhupāda said, “These are all Vrajavāsés. They should not be troubled. Engage in speaking *hari-kathā*. Engage me in constantly hearing *hari-kathā*. Absorb yourself in that activity which will lead to your *hari-bhajana* becoming perfect. I had many relatives, but they have now become engrossed in other activities. Outwardly they pretend to be engaged in *hari-bhajana*, but internally they are busy with other things.

“By discussing scriptures that deal with logic, like *Çankara-bhāṣya*, one can never understand the eternally liberated Vrajavāsés. One becomes a street sweeper by serving a dog, a stableman by grooming a horse, an ironsmith by beating iron, and a goldsmith by being absorbed in gold. It is essential to serve the eternally liberated Vrajavāsés to become a Vrajavāsé.”

Regarding selecting one’s place of *bhajana*, Çréla Prabhupāda said, “Charity begins at home.”⁷”

The Vision of a True Aspirant

Çréla Prabhupāda continued: “There is a class of people called the Bāulas, who consume semen, blood, stool and urine. They glorify the concept of *ji āna-miçra*, service mixed with empirical knowledge. There are countless people of this class in many places of East Bengal like Yaçohara, Khulnā, Nadēyā and Dhākā. People like the Bāulas, who belong to the thirteen type of *apasampradāyas*, or spurious schools of thought, can never understand the twelve kinds of transcendental *rasa*. If these twelve *rasas* are found

⁷ In an article published in *Çré Gauḍeya Patrikā* (Year 38, Issue 11), Çréla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja explains that the word “home” in the saying “Charity begins at home” refers to our hearts, where Çré Kāñēa resides. In other words, if we can love Çré Kāñēa in our hearts, all else will follow naturally.

only in Çré Kāñëa, why then do these people search for them elsewhere? This is my question to all those in the line of the *prākāta-sahajiyās*⁸.

“In order to find Çré Kāñëa, first we must wander throughout the entire universe searching for a *kāñëa*, one who belongs to Kāñëa. The cause of all our troubles is our failure to take shelter of the lotus feet of a pure Vaiñëava and our tendency to consider a non-Vaiñëava to be a Vaiñëava. Some ignorant people will accept any imitator to be accomplished in *bhajana* – even a man who happens to clench his teeth while playing a *ghini*⁹.

“To achieve the most worshipable object means to be completely absorbed in the mood of serving Çré Kāñëa. He is not made of any gross substance, but exists beyond the limits of sense perception. Is it possible to see Him with these paltry eyes engrossed



**“Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī
has revealed
the secret of *bhajana*
in two verses...”**

in material enjoyment, which Çré Bilvamañi gāla Ōhākura pierced out? Some people think that Çré Kāñëa is the supplier of their sense gratification and that the objects of sense gratification are non-different from Him. Both the sense objects and one’s futile eyes, which are prone to being afflicted with cataracts in but a short while, hinder one from beholding one’s worshipable deity and the place of worship.

“Çré Rūpa Gosvāmë has revealed the secret of *bhajana* in two verses:

*anāsaktasya viñayān
yathārham upayui jatau
nirbandhaù kñëa-sambandhe
yuktaà vairāgyam ucyate*

*prāpai cikatayā buddhyā
hari-sambandhi-vastunaù
mumukñubhiù parityāgo
vairāgyaà phalgu kathyate*

Bhakti-rasāmāta-sindhu (2.255–6)

Appropriate renunciation is to accept objects favourable to one’s devotional service while being detached from what is unrelated to Çré Kāñëa and attached to what is related to Çré Kāñëa. A person who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Çré Kāñëa is imperfect in his renunciation.

“If I am afflicted with the evil-mindedness of a worldly perspective, seeing myself as either an enjoyer or a renunciant, and this world as either to be enjoyed or to be renounced by me, then I am at once dismissed from qualifying as a practitioner in devotional service.” ●

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⁸ These are so-called Vaiñëavas, like the Bāulas, who variously misinterpret the original teachings of Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmë. Some even indulge in debauchery in the name of *bhakti*, by trying to imitate the transcendental loving affairs of Çré Rādhā and Çré Kāñëa.

⁹ Appears to be a musical instrument of some kind.



One Must

Some Misconceptions

The mercy of Çré Guru and the Vaiñéavas is the one and only means by which a *jéva* can attain the ultimate goal of life. Only by their mercy is it possible for him to obtain the merciful, sidelong glance of the most compassionate Çré Bhagavän. This we have heard repeatedly.

We have also heard that the mercy of Çré Guru and the Vaiñéavas is causeless. It is never brought about by anything of this world, nor by the impersonal, undifferentiated state of any such thing. We fail to grasp the nature of that mercy as independent of any material cause, and therefore we often ascribe imagined characteristics to it. We may think that there is no need for us to serve with resolute determination and careful, ardent endeavour; we can simply continue following our own fancies and, by the grace of Çré Guru and the Vaiñéavas, all our cherished desires will one day suddenly come true. We may even think that to

Correctly Identify a Vaiṣṇava

by Çré Çrémad Bhakti Prajñāna Keçava Gosvāmé Mahārāja

earnestly apply oneself in devotional service is but another expression of the mood to enjoy and a whimsical pursuit. Alternatively, we may imagine that bound *jévas* like us can realise our cherished desires independently, without the mercy of *sādhus* and Çré Guru.

Those who hold such opinions are unable to understand that the mercy of *sādhus* and the *jéva's* intent desire to serve are one and the same. Their deceitful words reveal that they are not truly yearning, with a heart full of remorse, to receive the mercy of *sādhus*.

Why Identify the Level of a Vaiṣṇava?

The *mahājanas*, great realised souls, have explained the method to obtain the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas:

*ye yena vaiṣṇava, ciniyā laiyā ādara kariba yabe
vaiṣṇavera kâpā yâhe sarva-siddhi, avaçya paiba tabe*

One who has become qualified to discern the level of eligibility (*adhikāra*) of those who have taken to the path of devotion and to thereby differentiate between the *kaniṣṭha-bhakta* (novice devotee), *madhyama-bhakta* (intermediate devotee) and *uttama-bhakta*

(advanced devotee), is duty-bound to honour those three types of Vaiṣṇavas appropriately. This is the meaning of the words *ye yena vaiṣṇava*.

It is improper to honour a *kaniṣṭha-adhikāre* in a way that befits only an *uttama-adhikāre*, or to deal with a *madhyama-adhikāre* as if he were a *kaniṣṭha-adhikāre*. Only when we respect Vaiṣṇavas in a manner befitting their respective qualification can we become free from knowingly or unknowingly committing *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. Only then can we realise the transcendental, merciful form of the Vaiṣṇavas, which bestows all desired perfection.

Therefore, the ability to correctly identify a Vaiṣṇava is indispensable. Simply by doing so, we are automatically filled with honour and affection for him. Upon recognising your brother, you are at once overcome by brotherly affection that is incomparably sweet. Our exclusive aim is to be able to recognise a Vaiṣṇava and consider him our property, our own dear well-wisher, and to develop an affectionate bond with him.

It is insufficient merely to dwell on how much the Vaiṣṇavas love us or consider us to be their own. This is because the personal satisfaction that comes from thinking we are loved by the Vaiṣṇavas is nothing but an external symptom of the desire for sense

**“Until we can identify
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gratification, which lurks in the deepest region of our hearts. If, instead, we begin to measure how much we have become bound in affection to the Vaiṣṇavas, it indicates that we are on our way to attaining the very perfection of all desires. Until we can identify Vaiṣṇavas and develop an intimacy with them in which we regard them as our bosom friends, we will be unable to realise the true nature of their affection for us.

Divine and Mundane Qualities

But before we can begin identifying Vaiṣṇavas or developing close affection for them, there are many issues we need to examine first. While trying to classify a Vaiṣṇava, we will discern, from the mundane perspective, many fine qualities in him, just as we will also chance to see his faults. Commonly, we are attracted by a Vaiṣṇava’s modesty, affection, natural forbearance and generosity. We tend to assess someone’s eligibility as a Vaiṣṇava solely by noting these virtues, which attract us and arouse in us a semblance of affection for him.

It is important, and appropriate, for us to analyse and reflect upon the nature of these “external” virtues. By doing so we can determine whether or not we actually have *darṣana* of a Vaiṣṇava by observing such qualities in him and, as a result,



From left to right: Ṣṛēla Bhakti Pramoda Purē Gosvāmē Mahārāja, Ṣṛēla Gīri Gosvāmē Mahārāja, Ṣṛēla Bhakti Prajī āna Keṇava Gosvāmē Mahārāja, Ṣṛēla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

becoming attached to him and showing him honour. A Vaiṣṇava should be identified and honoured on the basis of his *vaiṣṇavatā*, or quality that best defines a Vaiṣṇava. This quality is the Vaiṣṇava’s exclusive dedication to the service of Ṣṛē Viṣṇu, and it is this that comprises his real nature. If we want to identify a Vaiṣṇava, we need simply measure how dedicated he is to serving Ṣṛē Viṣṇu.

Ṣṛēla Kavirāja Gosvāmē Prabhu has listed the twenty-six qualities of a Vaiṣṇava, among which the intrinsic characteristic (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*) or defining quality is exclusive surrender to Ṣṛē Kāṇḍa (*kāṇḍaika-ṣaraṇa*). The remaining twenty-five qualities manifest under the shelter of this primary characteristic and further enhance its sweetness. These qualities will surely be present in Vaiṣṇavas, along with their *vaiṣṇavatā*, or hallmark, exclusive surrender to Ṣṛē Kāṇḍa. One cannot find a Vaiṣṇava who is not gentle and well-behaved; however, these virtues develop according to the strength of his *vaiṣṇavatā*.



**“Only to he
who has surrendered
without duplicity
are all the virtues
of a Vaiṣṇava
revealed in their
true aspect.”**

word. But this adjective cannot be applied to anyone except a Vaiṣṇava when it is given its truest and most profound sense (*vidvat-rūḍhē-vāttī*).

Our Misguided Vision

But who will look out for the superlative quality of a Vaiṣṇava? Only he who has realised its supremacy. In other words, only that person who has himself developed a service attitude will appreciate the importance of honouring this defining characteristic of a Vaiṣṇava. Only to he who has surrendered without duplicity are all the virtues of a Vaiṣṇava revealed in their true aspect. Such a person alone beholds the transcendental and extraordinary qualities of a Vaiṣṇava, without likening them to mundane qualities and thus inviting offences.

But we are devoid of a service attitude; and therefore we cannot comprehend this secret of recognising a Vaiṣṇava by his *vaiṣṇavatā*. All too often we are attracted by a Vaiṣṇava's other qualities, like his ample affection. We praise his patience, tolerance and other “external” virtues, but we should bear in mind that a Vaiṣṇava's qualities are not objects for our sense gratification. If the qualities I detect in a Vaiṣṇava, like affection and patience, do not inspire me to engage in the service of Ṇṛī Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas, and do not lead me to become attracted to his *vaiṣṇavatā*, then it should be understood that I have been unable see

The point here is that in enumerating these different qualities, ᆒṛēla Kavirāja Gosvāmē is not referring to our usual conception of them. From our mundane perspective, we may also detect the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava that are listed by ᆒṛēla Kavirāja Gosvāmē in persons who are not Vaiṣṇavas, such as the followers of *varēāçrama-dharma*. In truth, however, it is impossible for a non-Vaiṣṇava to possess the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. Whatever is synonymous with the word *vaikuṇṭha*, which denotes the abode of the Supreme Lord, is not limited, temporary and gross like the objects of this world. But everything else indicated by the words of this world is entirely worthless. Therefore, only extremely superficial observers will think that the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava can also be found in non-Vaiṣṇavas.

For instance, ᆒṛēla Kavirāja Gosvāmē has listed magnanimity (*vadānyatā*) as a Vaiṣṇava quality. An ordinary person can be “magnanimous” according to the conventional meaning (*aji a-rūḍhē-vāttī*) of the

Bhakti Rakṇaka ᆒṛēdhara Gosvāmē Mahārāja, ᆒṛēla Bhakti Sarvasva ᆒṛēla Bhakti Vicāra Yayāvāra Gosvāmē Mahārāja,

their true aspect. In other words, I have simply been trying to satisfy my senses.

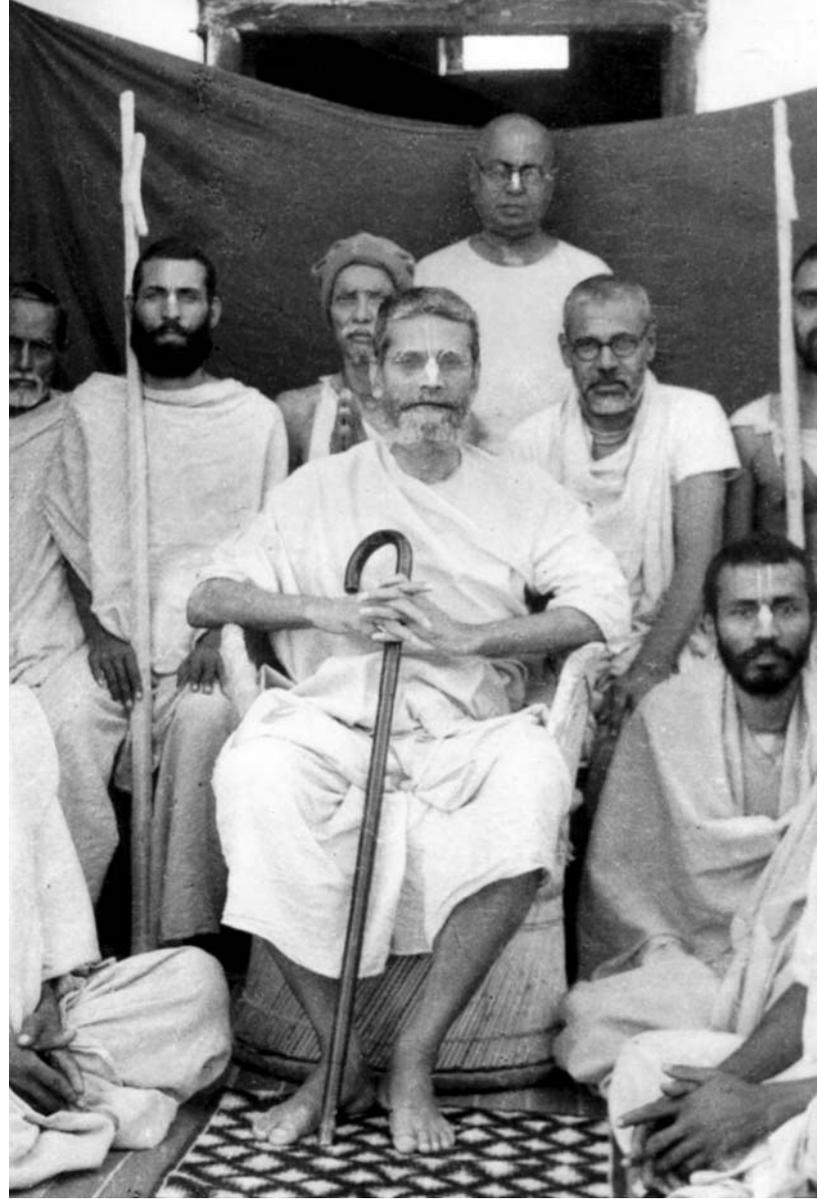
All the qualities of a Vaiñëava are certainly present in every Vaiñëava. If according to our material vision we conclude that Çréla Kâñëadâsa Kavirâja Gosvâmé Prabhu was a poet, but that Çré Çivânanda Sena or Çré Govinda, the servant of Çréman Mahâprabhu, were not all that poetic, then we have not properly understood the Vaiñëava's quality of being poetic (*kavitva*). Rather, by considering Çréla Kavirâja Gosvâmé to be an ordinary author, we merely see in him a rare and exceptional material talent – the gift of poetry.

Those with material intelligence are unable to judge a Vaiñëava by his exclusive surrender to Çré Kâñëa (*kâñëaika-çaraëa*). They consider him an ordinary person, and end up seeing his faults and assessing his *vaiñëavatâ* by looking at what is merely a semblance of his virtues. When they see the grave disposition of a particular Vaiñëava, they will liken it to the gravity of a common man and praise him, considering this virtue to be the sole benchmark of his *vaiñëavatâ*. But if another Vaiñëava conceals his gravity, they will not consider him to be a Vaiñëava or, even if they do, they will say that he is not as grave as that first Vaiñëava. Their words are as meaningless as the statement “a stone container made of gold”.

I begin my journey to hell by being envious of a Vaiñëava, seeing in him the semblance of faults, which are unpleasant to my senses. And I suffer equally by being affectionate to a Vaiñëava upon seeing in him the semblance of good qualities, which are pleasing to my senses. In both cases, my vision is limited to the mundane realm, and I am not fortunate enough to be able to recognise the transcendental Vaiñëava. Hence, in trying to find a Vaiñëava, we should not simply end up selecting someone who possesses mundane qualities or who is devoid of them.

A Concern

The *mahâjanas* have stated: “*vaiñëava cinite nâre devera çakati* – it is impossible even for the demigods



Centre: Çréla Bhakti Prajï âna Keçava Gosvâmé Mahârâja
Second from left: Çréla Bhaktivedânta Nârâyaëa Mahârâja

to properly identify a Vaiñëava.” This may lead me to wonder how I – a helpless and feeble being who is ignorant and foolish – can ever hope to recognise a Vaiñëava? How will I be able to understand his *vaiñëavatâ*? As long as I remain ignorant of *sambandha-tattva*, the principle of one's relationship with Çré Kâñëa, and continue to lack faith in the mercy of the Vaiñëavas, I will be subject to various types of misgivings and be deprived of this mercy.

One Vaiñëava has given a very beautiful and remarkably logical answer to this question. It is indeed true, he said, that the demigods themselves are unable to recognise a Vaiñëava, but why should this be cause for concern. The emperor may be unable to recognise my mother, but that will hardly prevent me from being able to recognise her, even if I were but a tiny baby.

**“We do not need
to create our relation
with the Vaiṣṇavas,
for it is eternal.
Our objective is simply
to realise that relation,
and this is possible
only by the strength
of their mercy.”**

When I was an infant, I did not understand what relationship my mother had with me, nor was I able to realise her deep love and affection for me. Although I was ignorant, it does not follow that my mother was not my mother at that time or that I was deprived of her affection. I always remained related to her and did not forego her maternal affection, despite being unable to understand who she is. Nourished by her love I have now attained adulthood and am able to appreciate how she is related to me and what maternal affection is. During infancy, I did not understand my mother; therefore, I could not realise the sweetness of her affection, although she showered me with it. But I have now grown into an adult through her love and nurturing. By her affection and mercy, I am now able to realise who she is and have now developed a feeling of possessiveness (*mamatā*) towards her.

When the practising devotee attains *madhyama-adhikāra*, he is able to ascertain the eligibility of a Vaiṣṇava and show him due affection. Only then is he able to receive the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas. It is also by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas that one reaches the *madhyama* stage. Indeed, their mercy is at play at all times. Only by the compassion of the Vaiṣṇavas does the *jēva* who is averse to Bhagavān and full of *anarthas* develop the tendency to chant the holy name of Bhagavān in the *kaniṣṭha* level. But the

kaniṣṭha-adhikāre is unable to realise this, and this is what makes him a *kaniṣṭha* devotee.

The Vaiṣṇavas shower their mercy upon the *kaniṣṭha-adhikāre* without his knowing it, and this mercy covertly and imperceptibly elevates him to the *madhyama* level. Then, only by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas does he develop the ability to discern what level a Vaiṣṇava is on and offer him due respect. We do not need to create our relationship with the Vaiṣṇavas, for it is eternal. Our objective is simply to realise that relationship, and this is possible only by the strength of their mercy. Why, then, should we have any concern about being unable to identify Vaiṣṇavas.

Have We Really Made the Vaiṣṇavas Our Own?

The degree to which I have been able to make a Vaiṣṇava my property and honour him can be measured by one criteria only: how indifferent or apathetic I have become towards non-Vaiṣṇavas, realising that they have no relation with me. Unless one is wholly indifferent towards non-Vaiṣṇavas, that is, has no relationship with them at all, one has no hope of ever developing a sense of kinship with the Vaiṣṇavas.

Our conviction that the Vaiṣṇavas belong to us develops in proportion to our feeling that non-Vaiṣṇavas are outsiders. This is not mere talk. If I really wish to be related to the Vaiṣṇavas, I must first renounce my attachment to non-Vaiṣṇavas. If my mother, father, brothers, friends and so-called close relatives become hostile to the service of the Vaiṣṇavas and to the supreme conscious Entity, then I will have to become wholly indifferent to them, regarding them as unrelated to me in any true sense. This includes my very own body and mind. Until I attain such determination, to think of the Vaiṣṇavas as my property is nothing but deceit. A person cannot have possessiveness towards or kinship with the Vaiṣṇavas while considering non-Vaiṣṇavas to be related to him – the two are mutually contradictory. ●

Translated from *Ṣre Gauḍeya Patrikā*,
Year 7, Issue 2 (1956)

Have I Made a

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

My Doubt

A doubt occasionally arises in my heart. I think, “Have I made a mistake in accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of the Gauḍeya Vaiṇēavas? It certainly seems so. I appear to have made a mistake in taking up *bhajana*, in accepting the shelter of the Gauḍeya Vaiṇēavas and, specifically, in taking refuge of the Gauḍeya Māiḥa and dedicating all my senses to serving in the Māiḥa.

“Gauḍeya Vaiṇēavas are not big-hearted. When we perform *bhajana* under their shelter, we are controlled by so many rules and regulations. If I were to take refuge of some other *sampradāya* where there is no concern for offences, such as *vaiṇēava-aparādha*, *nāma-aparādha* or *dhāma-aparādha*, I would feel no such hindrance or botheration. I would not be obliged to develop exclusive devotion for a particular object of worship [such as Rādhā and Kāñēa], nor would my eating

habits be curtailed. In the Māiḥa, issues like *vaiṇēava-aparādha* are raised, and it often impedes my unrestricted sense

Mistake?

*Appearing in English for the first time,
on the auspicious occasion of the
author's centennial*

enjoyment, lawless gossiping and other whimsical activities. It would therefore be better for me to live outside the Maïha than be governed by such restraints."

Sometimes I even think it would be best for me to abandon the shelter of a *gurudeva* as controlling as mine altogether, and to accept the *mantra* elsewhere, from someone who doesn't demand that I pay attention to all the rules and regulations. Thus, I occasionally contemplate severing my ties with the Gauḍeya Maïha completely. What stops me, however, is the thought that if people were to find out that I had broken my connection with Çré Guru, it could jeopardise my prestige and position.

Discipline and Deceit

The Vaiñëavas of the Gauḍeya Maïha are one-pointedly engaged in worshiping Çré Gaurài gadeva and Çré Rādhā-Kāñëa, under the guidance of Çré Rūpa Gosvāmipāda and the best among his followers, namely, Çréla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura and Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Gosvāmé. *Kāñëa-prema* is their only goal and their only practice, or *sādhana*. There is no absence of affection or devotion in the *sādhana* of the servants of the Gauḍeya Maïha. Hence, they will never support any endeavour that is unfavourable to the cultivation of affection for Çré Kāñëa.

What auspiciousness can a *sādhana* bring if it can't offer its practitioner any way to attain his

About the Author

One of the shining luminaries of the Gauḍeya sky, Çréla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmé Mahārāja was an intimate disciple of Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Ōhākura Prabhupāda who soon became renowned for his intense devotion, deep humility and brilliance in spreading the mission of his divine master. Indeed, Çréla Prabhupāda used to refer to him as "a preacher of volcanic energy".

Çréla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmé Mahārāja appeared in this world in Kārttika of 1904, on the disappearance day of Çréla Gaurakiçora dāsa Bābājé Mahārāja, in Kanchanpada, present-day Bangladesh. He accepted the renounced order in 1944, and established Çré Caitanya Gauḍeya Maïha in 1953, the current *ācārya* of which is Çréla Bhakti Vallabha Tērtha Mahārāja. One of his most significant contributions was to re-establish the appearance site of Çréla Prabhupāda in Çré Jagannātha Puré. This empowered personality, who was kind and magnanimous to all, entered *nitya-lēlā* in 1979, on the disappearance day of Çréla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājé Mahārāja. ●

Puṣpāñjali

by Çréla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaëa Mahārāja

"I often received the opportunity to associate closely with our revered *çikñā-guru* Çréla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmé Mahārāja. He was serene, tolerant, grave and endowed with many other qualities befitting a Vaiñëava. He preached Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu's message of Divine Love widely throughout India with great vigour. The special feature of his preaching was that he taught by personal example. He emphasised that we should be humbler than a blade of grass and more forbearing than a tree, and that we should offer respect to everyone without ourselves desiring respect from others. His unique quality was that he honoured all his Godbrothers. This is truly ideal. If we can sincerely follow his teachings, our *guru-pujā* will be successful." ●

From a speech delivered in Hindi on 17th November 2003 at Çré Caitanya Gauḍeya Maïha, Vāndāvana, at Çréla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja's birth centennial celebrations.

cherished goal quickly, or if it can't even offer him any certainty that he will realise his worshipable deity at all? This type of *sādhana*, when propagated, tends only to attract followers. For those content to pass their lives without purpose or restriction, what use is there to accept the lotus feet of *sad-guru*, a transcendental teacher? But those who can see their own faults and *anarthas*, and who try to become free of them, develop an urge to become qualified to taste the bliss of *prema* for Bhagavān. Only they can remain in the shelter of saintly devotees endowed with this *prema*. They can experience the happiness of being engaged in service to Bhagavān by living under the guidance of such one-pointed devotees and following their instructions. This involves subduing their senses and abstaining from whimsical activities.

Those who make a show of accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of Çré Guru simply deceive themselves; they pretend to be self-controlled and reformed but internally maintain their previous bad impressions, and especially the tendency to strive to gather followers. In other words, they recruit followers on the pretext of accepting the shelter of Çré Guru, with the aim of fulfilling their selfish ends through their so-called disciples. The attempts of such arrogant and duplicitous people to attain auspiciousness are endlessly frustrated.

To be a disciple means to be disciplined, or controlled. If a person outwardly accepts the shelter of Çré Guru but arrogantly maintains the attitude that he knows best about his spiritual life, then he is but a cheater – deceiving both himself and others. Pure Gauḍeya Vaiñēavas are most magnanimous and bestow the highest auspiciousness. If we can become eligible to understand even a single aspect of their exemplary lives we will become attached to *sādhana-bhajana* and be filled with jubilation and devotion.

Bhakti Lies Beyond Renunciation

Those who possess *kāñēa-prema* are neither enjoyers nor renunciants. They are not *karmés*, fruitive workers; neither are they *ji'ānés*, persons cultivating knowledge of the impersonal Brahman. Those who perform activities opposed to scriptural injunctions

honour *karmés* who abide by scriptural injunctions; and when *karmés* who are eager to enjoy the results of their endeavours see the external renunciation of *ji'ānés* and renunciants, they may be attracted to them. However, those who hanker for *bhagavat-prema* disregard both of these paths. They are attracted only by behaviour that nurtures the cultivation of this *prema*.

Someone who is not aspiring for *prema* for Bhagavān will perceive only enjoyment or renunciation in the behaviour of the devotees. If he takes shelter of them upon observing their external renunciation, he may for a while consider himself blessed to be in their company. *Kāñēa-prema*, however, cannot be attained by external renunciation. Unless one has faith grounded in philosophical truth (*tattvika çradhā*), or has affection for the *svarūpa* of Çré Bhagavān, he cannot become attracted to the behaviour of Bhagavān's devotees. The characteristic of such one-pointed devotees is that directly or indirectly they only cultivate love for Çré Kāñēa:

*anyābhilāñitā-çūnyaà
ji'āna-karmādy-anāvātam
ānukūlyena kāñēānu
çēlanaà bhaktir-uttamā*

Bhakti-rasāmāta-sindhu (1.1.11)

The cultivation of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Çré Kāñēa, or in other words the uninterrupted flow of service to Çré Kāñēa, performed through all endeavours of the body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*), which is not covered by *ji'āna* (knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation) and *karma* (reward-seeking activity), and which is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Çré Kāñēa, is called *uttama-bhakti*, pure devotional service.

One must deliberate upon this verse. The activities of a devotee of Kāñēa, such as establishing a *maīha* (spiritual institution), constructing a temple, meeting with materialistic or aristocratic people, hosting festivals with pomp and grandeur, and giving instructions to ignorant or faithless people, are all



“...when *karmīs* who are eager to enjoy the results of their endeavours see the external renunciation of *jñānīs* and renunciants, they may be attracted to them.”

çuddha-bhakti. To serve Bhagavān and the devotees one may supervise the construction of a temple or the house of a devotee, collect materials, purchase supplies and accept the lowly propensity to beg. Such activities are supremely pleasurable and they nourish one's *bhakti*.

What Is True Renunciation?

*kuññhi-viprera ramaëë pativratä-çiromaëi
pati lägi' kailä veçyära sevä
stambhila süryera gati jéyälla mâta pati
tuñña kaila mukhya tina-devä*

Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (Antya-lälä 20.57)

The wife of a *brähmaëa* suffering from leprosy showed herself to be the topmost of chaste women by serving a prostitute to satisfy her husband. She thus halted the movement of the sun, brought her dead husband back to life and satisfied the three principal demigods [Brahmā, Viñëu and Maheçvara].

We should consider this account in the light of our discussion. That chaste *brähmaëa* wife's service to

a lowly prostitute in the sincere endeavour to please her husband enhanced her glory. She thus became worshipable for the entire world. What's more, she became very dear to Çré Bhagavān. If, however, she had performed this service for her own sense pleasure, or for *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* or *mokñā*, it would have been reprehensible in every respect.

Similarly, activities such as constructing a *mañha*, meeting and talking with materialistic or aristocratic people, hosting grand festivals and bestowing the *çré nāma-mantra* to faithful persons sincerely desiring to serve Çré Bhagavān, His devotees and His *dhāma* (all aspects of Vaikuëha), enhance *bhakti* and ultimately cause *prema* to appear. Those same activities, however, bind one to this material world if they are performed with the aim of gratifying one's senses; accumulating wealth, women and fame; or attaining *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* or *mokñā*.

In this world, renunciation means to relinquish the objects of one's attachment. But can ceasing to take foods that merely aggravate a disease, for instance, be considered renunciation? Abstaining from foodstuffs that destroy good health and instead accepting foods that increase longevity can hardly be celebrated as a great act of renunciation. Thus, it is hard to see how the act of renouncing one's father, mother, relatives, friends, wealth, occupation, business or worldly duties performed to gain material comforts, can in itself be glorious. Only when a person renounces the objects of his mundane pleasure for the pleasure of the Complete Entity [Çré Bhagavān], expecting no sense enjoyment in return, can his renunciation be considered actual renunciation. In other words, true renunciation entails not striving for *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* or *mokñā*, or for wealth, women and adoration.

**“But the topmost
renunciation is to
abandon everything,
even one’s independent
will and desires, for the
pleasure of Bhagavān
Śrī Kṛṣṇa...”**



Ordinarily, it is considered irreligious to forsake the duties the scriptures prescribe for one’s *varëa* and *äçrama*; but if these duties are discarded for the pleasure and satisfaction of Çré Kāñëa, who is the cause of all causes and the bestower of supreme bliss, then and only then is such renunciation honourable. Indeed, such renunciation, which benefits everyone, is to be revered. To renounce endeavours for sense gratification – that is, endeavours in one’s search for happiness in this world or in the next – is courageous and glorious. But the topmost renunciation is to abandon everything, even one’s independent will and desires, for the pleasure of Bhagavān Çré Kāñëa and His one-pointed devotees.

Renouncing the mind’s propensity for independence, in other words, the sacrifice of one’s very self, is far superior to renouncing that which is inert and temporary. The glory of one’s renunciation lies truly in the glory of the object of such sacrifice. Çré Bhagavān and His devotees who possess *prema* are unlimitedly glorious; and therefore to renounce for their pleasure is supremely noble. Such renunciation is incomparable because it increases the happiness of all living entities by reawakening their relationship with Çré Bhagavān. It does not admit even the slightest scent of distress. Rather, the renunciant feels increasingly happy at every step. It can therefore be concluded that such renunciation bestows bliss in every respect and is highly esteemed.

Fruitive workers, or *karmés*, make sacrifices and perform austerity with the hope of attaining increased mundane sense pleasure in the future. Such renunciation is therefore meagre and does not bestow complete happiness. *Ji äñés*, who aspire for impersonal Brahman realisation, make sacrifices and perform austerity to dispel their own suffering. Their renunciation, also, does not bestow full happiness.

The sacrifices and austerities of Kāñëa’s devotees, however, are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Çré Hari. Since Çré Kāñëa is the cause of all causes, such renunciation bestows true welfare upon the devotee and upon others. Therefore Gauḍëya Vaiñëavas greatly honour those activities that promote love of Bhagavān, and they reject activities that hinder it. In this *sädhana* any sense enjoyment and renunciation that is favourable to *bhakti* is highly regarded. Yet devotees are not attracted to sense enjoyment and renunciation in their own right. They are attracted to love for Bhagavān and His devotees. They have no independent or whimsical desire to enjoy or renounce. *Yukta-vairägya*, renunciation for the pleasure of Çré Kāñëa, is their only *sädhana*. Without understanding *bhajana-rahasya*, the secrets of *bhajana*, one will become bewildered by what sense enjoyment is and what renunciation is. Both are impediments in the *sädhaka*’s cultivation of *prema* for Bhagavān.



“By taking shelter of the lotus feet of pure Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the Gauḍīya Maṭha, beggars for *kṛṣṇa-prema* become qualified to attain their greatest welfare.”

Don't Waste a Moment

Those who have realised that this human life offers an invaluable opportunity to work towards attaining the supreme goal, prize every moment of it. They are unwilling to waste even an instant in any other endeavour. They know that living entities in other species of life do not have the facility or good fortune to make progress towards the supreme goal and, accordingly, they see no value in living their lives in the manner of the lower species. Hence, upon attaining this extremely rare human life and, on top of that, attaining the fortune to associate with *sādhus* and developing *śraddhā* for the supreme goal, they cannot quietly squander a single moment of their lives. Rather, they will accept only what is favourable to the cultivation of affection for *Ṣṛé Kāñēa* and will reject all activities that are unfavourable to it.

As such, the devotees of the Gauḍēya Maīha instruct the world to engage only in those practices that are righteous and favourable to the cultivation of *kāñēa-prema* and to reject unrighteous activities that impede it. Moreover, they never indulge in violence or envy, as this hinders the cultivation of *prema*.

My Doubt Resolved

Thus, if I am genuinely searching for *kāñēa-prema*, I have not after all made any mistake in accepting the

shelter of the lotus feet of pure Gauḍēya Vaiñēavas. Such Vaiñēavas will not fuel our desire for *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokāa* or our hankering for wealth, women and adoration. The purpose of the Maīha is to help free us from these *anarthas* and attain *kāñēa-prema*. By taking shelter of the lotus feet of pure Gauḍēya Vaiñēavas in the Gauḍēya Maīha, beggars for *kāñēa-prema* become qualified to attain their greatest welfare. Moreover, they receive the opportunity to achieve the highest ideal of magnanimity and to ascend to the topmost level of pure *vairāgya*, renunciation. This is my unshakable conviction. One cannot be deviated from attaining *prema* for Bhagavān in due course, unless one becomes a severe offender.

One day, by the mercy of *Ṣṛéla Prabhupāda*, the world will profusely glorify and worship the *Ṣṛé Sarasvata Gauḍēya Vaiñēavas* [that is, *Ṣṛéla Prabhupāda*'s followers]. They alone are able to establish the highest ideal of benevolence in the world. Victory will certainly belong to the devotees of the Gauḍēya Maīha, or those who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of Gauḍēya Vaiñēavas. I have not, therefore, made a mistake in accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of pure Gauḍēya Vaiñēavas. Rather, I have whole-heartedly embraced the good fortune of attaining my highest welfare, and thus I am truly blessed. ●

Essay originally penned in 1966.
Translated from *Ṣṛé Caitanya-vāēē*.

Karma-yoga:

The Art of Spiritual

The Foolish Materialist

Out of compassion, Çré Kâñëa and His devotee Arjuna instructed the bewildered *jévas* to perform *karma-yoga*. If they had not shown this path, these *jévas*, who have fallen into the cycle of fruitive action, would simply continue to suffer untold miseries. The illusory energy, *mâyä*, has enslaved these pitiable materialists and stolen away their knowledge. Consequently, they are unable to even recognise that they are undergoing countless calamities. They may think themselves the doers, but *mâyä* is chastising them continuously. Çré Kâñëa explains this clearly in *Bhagavad-gétä* (3.27):

*prakâteu kriyamäëäni
guëaiu karmäëi sarvaçu
ahaì kära vimüòhätmä
kartâham iti manyate*

The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are actually carried out by the three modes of material nature.

Because the less intelligent materialist has forgotten Kâñëa, he cannot even recognise his own futile attempts to usurp Kâñëa. Thus, Çré Kâñëa's divine illusory energy has bound him with the three modes of goodness, passion and ignorance and hurled him into a web of diverse material activities, in which he has become deeply entangled. *Mâyä* manifests the materialist's various fruitive activities according to his



desires for sense gratification, which spring from the three modes. Thus, the materialist, who foolishly thinks himself the doer, confines himself in the prison house of sensual pleasure and suffering.

Śrî Kṛṣṇa, the Complete Whole

The Supreme Lord, Çré Kâñëa, has revealed to us that every *jéva* is a separated part and parcel of the Supreme. The duty of a part is to serve the whole.

Bhagavānera Kathā 7

Published in 1950

Work

by Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

The hands, legs, eyes, ears, nose and so on are parts of a whole, namely, the body. The hands and legs work hard to provide the stomach with food without ever desiring to enjoy separately from it; nor would such enjoyment be possible anyway. In fact, if the parts of the body were to engage in such senseless behaviour, they would mutilate the body. The hand and legs, unable to enjoy in any way, would become weak by not having fed the stomach. This has been nicely illustrated in a fable in *Hitopadeṣa* called

“Udarendriyāēām” (“The Story of the Stomach and the Senses”).

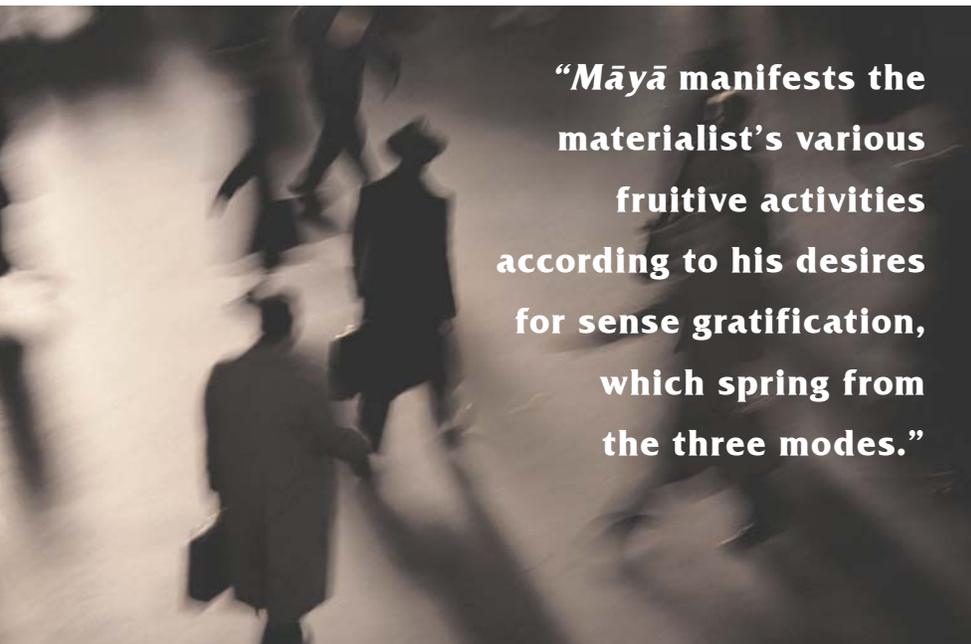
Lord Kāñēa is the life-source of the gigantic body of the universe. The *Bhagavad-gētā* explains repeatedly, and in various ways, that He is the root of the tree of this universe. It specifically states:

*mattaù parataraà nānyat
kī cid asti dhanāi jaya*

Bhagavad-gētā (7.7)

O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

illusion. It is sheer madness to serve the universe (*jagat*) and neglect its Lord (viz. Jagannātha).



“Māyā manifests the materialist’s various fruitive activities according to his desires for sense gratification, which spring from the three modes.”

*ahaà hi sarvayajī ānāà
bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca*

Bhagavad-gētā (9.24)

I am the only enjoyer and master of all sacrifices. Therefore, those who do not recognise My true transcendental nature fall down.

*na mää duikātino müdhäu
prapadyante narādhāmü*

Bhagavad-gētā (7.15)

Those miscreants who are grossly foolish, who are lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by illusion, and who partake of the atheistic nature of demons do not surrender unto Me.

Thus, Çré Kāñëa alone is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and every living entity is His eternal servant. Where, then, is there any scope for further argument? We have forgotten this simple fact. Instead of engaging our mind and senses in the service of Çré Jagannātha, the Lord of the universe, we believe ourselves to be little “Jagannāthas” and direct our mind and senses in trying to enjoy worldly pleasures. This is called *māyā*,

A Utopia for Demons

Nowadays, we witness occasional attempts to re-establish the utopian kingdom of Lord Rāma, but without Rāma. This is but the work of an assembly of Rāvaëas trying to denounce Lord Rāma and annihilate Him. It is difficult to see how Rāma’s kingdom can ever be established by such misguided efforts.

To establish Rāma’s kingdom, one must engage everything in this world in His service. The endeavour to eliminate Lord Rāma or His loving pastimes with His consort or energy is in fact an affair of the kingdom of demons. For this transgression, the community of Rāvaëas is uprooted and defeated by the servants of Lord Rāma, that is, by the Hanumäns. One should accept the shelter of *karmayoga*, as instructed by Çré Kāñëa, so that one, too, does not make this mistake.

True Knowledge of the Self

Materialists are foolish and ignorant, while those who are well versed in the truth make up the learned community. Such learned persons know that the modes of nature and the activities of this world associated with them are controlled by material nature and are wholly unrelated to the soul’s true nature. Therefore, unlike the ignorant, they do not engage themselves in material activities, which are governed by the modes. Their activities are a sacrifice, or *yajī a*, performed solely for the satisfaction of Viñëu. They remain forever free from identifying themselves with this material body, and endeavour simply to develop the constitutional occupation of the soul, *ätma-dharma*.

Such learned persons understand that the *jéva* has, by some circumstance, come into contact with material nature. Therefore, they remain aloof from material activities even while their material senses – such as

their eyes, ears and nose – are in contact with matter. In this regard, Çré Kâñëa states:

*tattva-vit tu mahä-bäho
guëa-karma-vibhägayòu
guëä-guëëñu vartanta
iti matvä na sajjate
Bhagavad-gëtä (3.28)*

One who is in knowledge of the Absolute Truth, O mighty-armed, does not engage himself in the senses and sense gratification, knowing well the differences between work in devotion and work for fruitive results.

Beyond Material Designations

Lord Kâñëa further instructs us on how to achieve such a liberated state:

*mayi sarväëi karmäëi
sannyasyädhyätma-cetasä
niräçér nirmamo bhütvä
yudhyasva vigata-jvaraù
ye me matam idaà nityam
anutiñhanti mänaväù
çradhdhävanto 'nasüyanto
ucyante te 'pi karmabhiù
Bhagavad-gëtä (3.30–31)*

Therefore, O Arjuna, surrendering all your works unto Me, with full knowledge of Me, without desires for profit, with no claims to proprietorship, and free from lethargy, fight.

Those persons who, without envy, execute their duties according to My injunctions and who follow this teaching faithfully become free from the bondage of fruitive actions.

Conceptions such as “I am the mind”, “This body is me”, “I am a material entity” and “Everything associated with my body is mine”, display ignorance of the Absolute Reality. Such ideas check us from knowing the truth. Therefore Çré Kâñëa has instructed us to fully

imbibe knowledge of the self and to be situated in the self. Only by doing so will we be able to understand that we are not these material bodies or minds but eternal entities emanating from the Lord’s superior spiritual energy.

When we realise the serenity of this transcendental reality, we automatically become detached from material nature and find relief from the happiness and distress that result from the senses contacting their sense objects. The false ego is then automatically subdued. At that time we become liberated from all material designations, and we thereby also become free of a material conception of the Supreme Entity. Thus purified, we find relief from the blazing fire of material existence.

The Foolish and the Faithful

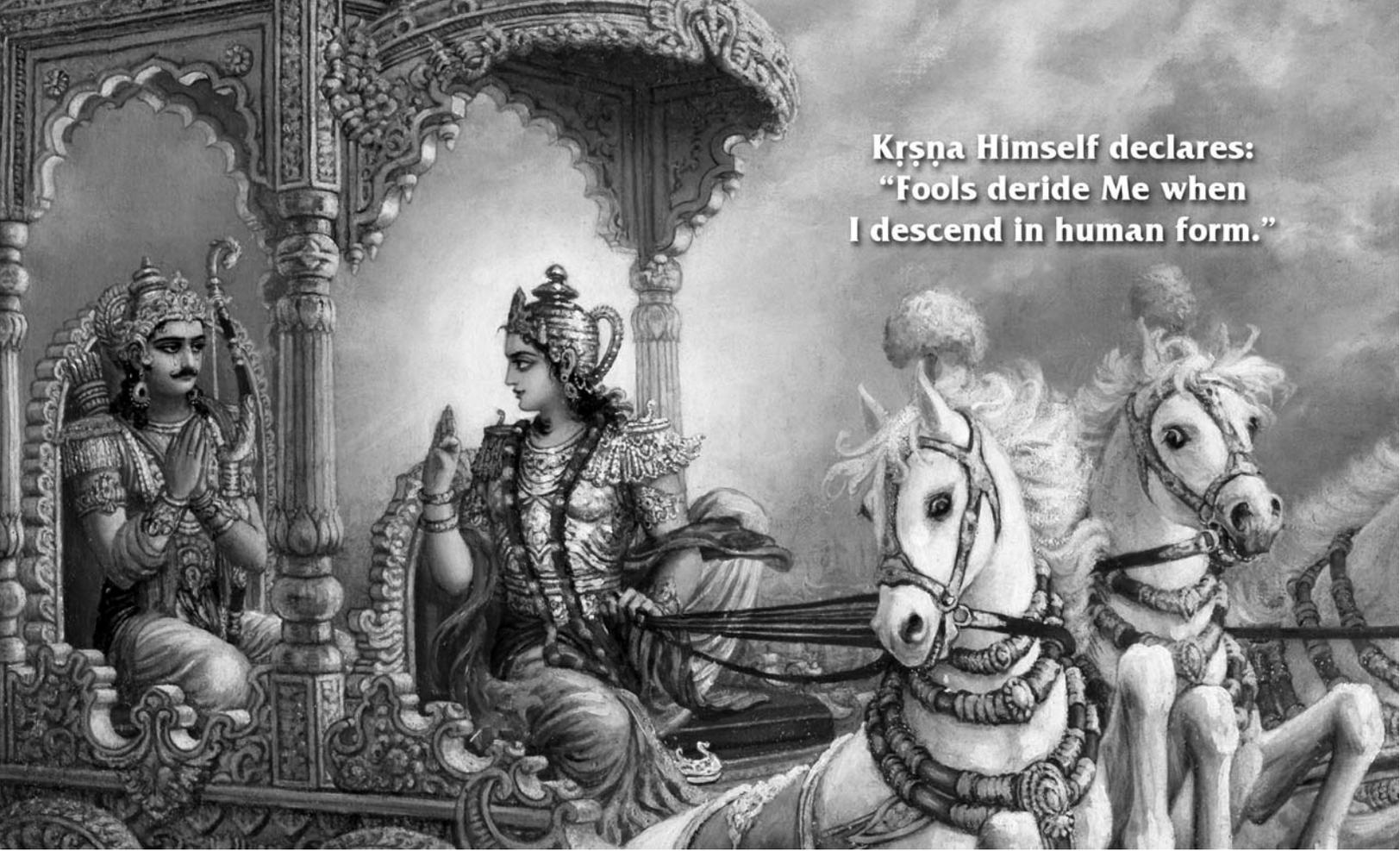
Çré Kâñëa alone is the Supreme Entity, as evidenced by all the scriptures. Even scriptures from countries other than India, such as the Bible and Koran, indicate boldly that Çré Kâñëa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What then to speak of the *Bhagavad-gëtä*, in which the Supreme Lord Himself declares (7.7):

*mattaù parataraà nänyat
kii cid asti dhanai jaya*

O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

Thus, as soon as we come in contact with Kâñëa, we come face to face with the transcendental sun. When the sun rises, everything is properly illuminated by its rays. As the transcendental sun of Çré Kâñëa rises in the sky of the *jëva*’s pure existence, the darkness of nescience is immediately dissipated. Then, endeavours to serve Çré Kâñëa become free from the contamination of *ji äna*, knowledge aimed at impersonal realisation, and of *karma*, reward-seeking activity.

To foolish, sinful persons, this subject appears simply to be exaggerated praise. But it is not a tall tale told for the pleasure of children; it is the factual truth. Only those who have taken shelter of Çré Kâñëa or His devotees can realise the reality of these subjects.



**Kṛṣṇa Himself declares:
“Fools deride Me when
I descend in human form.”**

Irrational people with a distorted mentality pretend to be Kāñēa, being envious of Him. But all such disobedient people who do not agree with the facts presented herein are extremely foolish. Kāñēa Himself declares:

*avajānanti māà müðha
mānuñià tanum açritam
Bhagavad-gétä (9.11)*

Fools deride Me when I descend in human form. They do not know My transcendental nature as the Supreme Lord of all that be.

These people deride Kāñēa, and therefore knowledge of Kāñēa does not easily enter their perverted minds, which are deranged by *māyāvāda* thought.

The faithful Vaiñēavas who possess *sukāti*, spiritual merits, and who are simple and sincere, completely accept what has been written in *Bhagavad-gétä*. This simple subject matter described therein is self-luminous like the sun. It cannot be covered by the darkness of *māyāvāda*. The Vaiñēavas will not

tolerate the mischief of presenting secondary and inferior explanations of the *Gétä* and labelling them “spiritual”. Those who are Çré Kāñēa’s servants fully embrace the concept of *karma-yoga* as defined by Çré Kāñēa Himself (*Bhagavad-gétä* 3.30): “*mayi sarvāēi karmaēi sannyasya* – fully surrender all your works unto Me.” Thus, by practising *karma-yoga*, the Vaiñēavas are impervious to the great fear of becoming entangled in fruitive activities.

Such faithful people are not bound by the limits of any country, caste or society. The devotees of Çré Kāñēa can take birth anywhere, without concern for caste, religion, society or country. Bhagavān is not bound by man-made limitations. As a result, the entire humankind can benefit from the instructions of *Bhagavad-gétä*. In the *Gétä*, Çré Kāñēa states unequivocally:

*māà hi pārtha vyapāçritya
ye ‘pi syuù päpayonayaù
striyo vaiçyas thathä çudräs
te ‘pi yānti parāà gatim
Bhagavad-gétä (9.31)*

O son of Pāthā, the abominable and outcaste dog-eaters (*cānòālas*), women as fallen as prostitutes, and people born in the lower classes of society like the merchants (*vaiçyas*) and labourers (*çüdras*) can immediately attain the supreme destination specifically by taking shelter of exclusive devotional service to Me.

The Divine System of Varṇāśrama

The heinous activities that go on in society in the name of caste and creed and which are influenced by selfish and demoniac motives, cannot hinder one's relationship with Kāñëa. Bhagavān Çré Kāñëa has said the following regarding the proper classification of society based on scriptural injunctions:

*cātur-varēyaà mayā sâññāà
guëa-karma-vibhāgaçau
tasya kartāram api mää
viddhy akartāram avyayam*

Bhagavad-gétä (4.13)

According to the three modes of material nature and the work associated with them, the four divisions of human society are created by Me. And although I am the creator of this system, you should know that I am yet the non-doer, being unchangeable.

A doctor's qualifications are earned by his natural qualities and activities, not his birth. Similarly, the four divisions of society – namely, *brāhmaëa*, *kñātriya*, *vaiçya* and *çüdra* – are governed by a person's natural propensities and activities, not his parentage. This material world is influenced by the three modes of material nature, and the classification of human society based upon these modes and the work associated with them has existed since time immemorial. Society has always been divided into four classes in this way – never by parentage.

There will always be doctors in every country of the world. Similarly, the four divisions of *brāhmaëa*, *kñātriya*, *vaiçya* and *çüdra* are also present everywhere at all times. One does not qualify to become a

doctor simply by being the son of a doctor, and one also does not qualify as a *brāhmaëa* merely by being the son of a *brāhmaëa*. The qualities of each division have been delineated clearly in the scriptures. Therefore, our vision of a *brāhmaëa*, *kñātriya*, *vaiçya* or *çüdra* as belonging to a particular place or birth is clearly faulty.

Indian culture has become restricted by the hereditary caste system, like a frog trapped in a well. If the teachings of the saints of India were preached throughout the world in the true and magnanimous brahminical spirit, there would be no scarcity of peace and happiness. The world can experience bliss and harmony only by the propagation of brahminical culture. However, by subjecting people to the hereditary caste system – thus mistakenly calling a doctor's son a doctor, though he may lack all the qualities of a doctor – the Vedic brahminical culture has been gravely damaged in India, with very negative repercussions for the rest of the world.

Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu has propagated this brahminical culture as *jaiva-dharma*, the eternal function of the soul, thereby opening the way to boundless peace and happiness for the world. Those who are fortunate can perfect their lives by practising this divine *varëçrama* culture.

The demoniac *varëçrama-dharma* is not the same as the divine one. The division of society based on scripture is the same for all places and times. If anyone scrutinises this system in the light of scriptural injunctions, it will become evident that these four classes of society in fact exist everywhere. People with the qualities and work of a *brāhmaëa* can be found in all countries, whether in large or small numbers. Similarly, people in all parts of the world can also be categorised as *kñātriyas*, *vaiçyas* or *çüdras*, based on the modes of material nature and the work associated with those modes. Thus, the division of society into four classes based on qualification and occupation is universal and eternal: it existed in the past, prevails now and shall continue to exist in the future. ●

Translated from *Çré Gauòéya Patrikâ*,
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Translated into English for the first time

The Potency of This Day

mādhava-tithi, bhakti-jananē

Çaraëägatē (Çuddha-Bhakata)

Days that are dear to Mādhava, such as Ekādaçē and Janamāñāmē, are the mother of *bhakti* for they cause *bhakti* to appear in one's heart.

Çré Rādhā is the most beloved of Çré Mādhava and Her appearance day is the crest jewel of all days that are dear to Him, such as Ekādaçē. The *Padma Purāëa* states that when Devaāñi Nārada desired to hear the glories of Çré Rādhāñāmē from Çré Brahmā, his father, Brahmā replied that no one but Çré Hari Himself can suitably glorify the appearance day of His beloved. Although Ekādaçē is so dear to Çré Hari, a person gains one hundred times more spiritual merit that leads to *bhakti* by observing just one Rādhāñāmē *vrata* than he does by observing a thousand Ekādaçē *vratas*:

ekādaçyāu sahasreëa

yat phalaà labhate naraù

rādhā janamāñāmē puëyaà

tasmācchatguëādhikam



Śrī

The Time of Śrī Rādhā's Birth

Fearing the possibility of danger in Gokula Mahāvana, the birthplace of Nanda-nandana Çré Kāñëa, Çré Nanda Mahārāja relocated his residence to Nandēçvara Hill. His dearest friend, Çré Vāñabhānu Mahārāja, who also expected many disturbances in Rāvala, established his residence atop Çré Varñāëä Hill, which lies south of Nandēçvara Hill. It was in Rāvala, in the abode of Çré Vāñabhānu Mahārāja and his queen Kértidā, that Çré Rādhikā – the internal potency of Çré Kāñëa and the embodiment of His pleasure-giving potency – manifested the pastime of Her appearance. This occurred at noon on the eighth day of the fortnight of the waxing moon, in the month of Bhādra, during the auspicious *anurādhā* constellation, one year after Çré Kāñëa's birth.

Çré Rādhā is, in fact, Çré Kāñëa's intrinsic potency. Since the energy and the energetic are eternally non-different by constitution (*çakti-çaktimator abheda*), She appears whenever Kāñëa appears. To enable them to enact Their pastimes on Earth, Yogamāyā arranged for Çré Rādhikā to appear one year after Çré Kāñëa.

*tata ārabhya nandasya
vrajaū sarva-samāddhimān
harer nivāsātma-guëai
ramākrëòam abhün nāpa*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (10.5.18)

In this verse Çré Çukadeva Gosvāmë addresses Çré Parëkñit Mahārāja as follows: "O King, since Nanda-vraja, the land of Çré Nanda Mahārāja, is the residence of the Supreme Lord, Çré Hari, it is eternally magnificent in every respect. This is due to its own transcendental virtues. Moreover, from the moment Çré Kāñëa appeared there, it became *ramāyāü ākrëòä vihārasthānaä*, the pastime place of Lakñmé-devë." This indicates that Çrématë Rādhikā, the embodiment of all Lakñmës, opulence and good fortune, appeared after the birth of Çré Kāñëa.

Çréla Jëva Gosvāmipāda writes in *Çré Gopāla-campü* (*Pürva* 15.19–20):

*satyaà bahusuta-ratnākara-
tāà sa präpa gopa-dugdhābdhiü
kintvamāta-dyuti-rādhā
lakñmé-jananādgāt pürttim*

The ocean of milk, in the form of a *gopa* named Çré Vāñabhānu, had many sons as precious as gems. Despite this, he attained perfection solely due to the appearance of Lakñmé in the form of Çré Rādhā, who is endowed with ambrosial radiance.

*sä khalu çré-kāñëa-janama-variānantara-
varië sarva-sukhasatre rādhā nāmni
nakñatre jäteti rādhābhidhëyate.*

That very girl manifested the pastime of Her birth one year after the appearance of Çré Kāñëa, during the most auspicious constellation named *anurādhā*. Thus She was named Rādhā.

Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Rādhā's Appearance: First History

When Çré Varuëadeva, the god of the ocean, saw the invaluable jewel that is Çré Kāñëa in his own palace, he spoke with jubilation:

*adya me nibhāto deho
dyaivārtho 'dhigatau prabho
tvat-pāda-bhājo bhagavann
avāpuu pāram adhvanau*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (10.28.5)

"O Lord, today my life has become successful and I have attained the topmost wealth. Although I am the master of all the oceans, which are reservoirs of gems, I have never attained such a treasure as this. The servants of Your lotus feet have attained liberation (*adhvauna saäsārasya pāramavāpuu*). I am also Your servant and am praying for the same benediction."

The *Padma Purāëa* describes how Çré Rādhā appeared at Çré Vāñabhānu Mahārāja's *yajī a-sthala*, the place where he performed sacrificial rites:

*iti nrutvāpi sā rādhā
pyagatā pāthvèà tatau
bhādre māsi site pakñe
añāmé saàjī ike tithau
vāñabhānoryajī abhūmau
jātā sā rādhikā divā
yajī ārthāà çodhitāyāà ca
dāññā sā divyarūpiëé
rājānandamanā bhūtvā
tāà prāpya nijamandiram
dattavān mahiññéà nétvā
sā ca tāà paryapālayat*

Padma Purāëa (*Brahma-khaëòà* 7.40-42)

At noon, on the eighth day of the bright lunar fortnight, in the month of Bhādra, the celestially beautiful Çré Rādhikā appeared from the land that Vāñabhānu Mahārāja was excavating for the purpose of *yajī a*. With a delighted heart, Çré Vāñabhānu Mahārāja took Her to his residence and presented Her

to his noble queen, Çré Kértidā-devé, who proceeded to raise Her.

Śrī Rādhā's Appearance: Second History

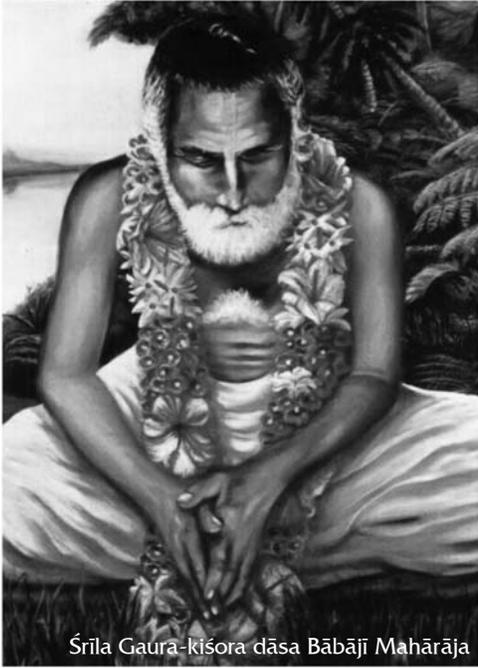
Another history describes that early one morning, in yet another place in Vraja, Çré Vāñabhānu Mahārāja was taking bath in the Yamunā. Floating close by was this spotlessly beautiful girl lying on a radiant and fully blossomed lotus. With great happiness, he at once took Her in his arms and brought Her home to his queen Kértidā-devé. In great bliss, Kértidā-devé embraced Her and began to care for Her with unbounded affection. But when the king and queen noticed that Her eyes did not open, their hearts were deeply afflicted, and they prayed at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord that He would bless Her with the power of sight.

Meanwhile, at their palace in Rāvala, Çré Nanda Mahārāja's queen, Yaçodā-devé, arrived from Gokula, holding Çré Kāñëa in her arms. The royal couple of Rāvala greeted her with much honour. Çré Yaçodā-devé gazed with unblinking eyes at the newborn baby girl lying in the lap of Çré Kértidā-devé. At that time, an astonishing incident took place. As soon as Yaçodā-nandana Çré Kāñëa came face to face with that baby girl, She opened Her eyes. Her first sight was the moon-like face of Her beloved Çré Kāñëa, and She simply gazed upon Him. Kāñëa too became overwhelmed upon gazing with intense feeling at the moon-like face of His most beloved. Their divine meeting took place through the meeting of Their eyes. The happiness of Vāñabhānu Mahārāja and his queen knew no bounds, and they celebrated the occasion with great pomp and grandeur.

Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmpāda has given a similar narration in his book *Çré Lalita-mādhava*.

Intense Longing for Śrī Rādhā's Service

Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmé, Çréla Sanātana Gosvāmé, Çréla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmé and other *gosvāmés* have lovingly sung the glories of Çré Rādhārāëé. How Çré Prabodhānanda Sarasvatipāda has relished Her glories in such an unprecedented and astonishing



Śrīla Gaura-kīṣora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

“That day when my most revered spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, first met his spiritual master ... he saw him walking towards Śrī Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, dressed as an *avadhūta* and singing one particular song over and over.”

Śrīla Gaura-kīṣora Mahārāja’s Heartfelt Prayer

manner in his *Ṇrē Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi!* The way Ṇrē Ṇrēla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura has composed *Svaniyamāññaka* and other prayers gloriously demonstrates his intense longing to attain *Ṇrē rādhā-dāsyā*, service to Ṇrē Rādhā.

This same mood is also found in the writings of the most worshipable Ṇrē Ṇrēla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatē Gosvāmē Prabhupāda – that is, in his *Anubhāñya* commentary on *Ṇrē Caitanya-caritāmāta*; in his *Anuvātti* on Ṇrē Rūpa Gosvāmē’s *Ṇrē Upadeṣāmāta*; in his poetic translation of the ten states of *divyonmāda* that Ṇrē Rūpa Gosvāmē described in *Ṇrē Ujjvala-nēlamaēi*, *Ṇrē Bhramara-gētā* and *Ṇrē Mahiñē-gētā*; in the *mañ galācaraēa*, or auspicious invocation, of his *Prārthanārasa-vivāti* commentary on Ṇrēla Narottama Ōhākura Mahāçaya’s *Prārthanā*; and in the *mañ galācaraēa* of his *Gauḁeya-bhāsyā* commentary on *Ṇrē Caitanya-bhāgavata*. These wonderful expressions of yearning for *rādhā-dāsyā* serve as a continuous, powerful inspiration for us.

That day when my most revered spiritual master, Ṇrēla Prabhupāda, first met his spiritual master, *oā viñēupāda* Ṇrē Ṇrēmad Gaura-kīçora Prabhu, he saw him walking towards Ṇrē Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, dressed as an *avadhūta* and singing one particular song over and over. With his own hand Ṇrēla Prabhupāda wrote down that song and kept it with him, regarding it as the dearest treasure of his *bhajana*.

As servants of Ṇrēla Prabhupāda’s servants, our sole objective is to seek out that secret treasure. The Six Gosvāmēs have demonstrated the ideal of weeping in profound anxiety as they wandered throughout Vraja, crying out “*hā rādhe! hā rādhe!*” In performing *bhajana*, our sole asset is our pure and sincere crying out to attain the transcendental mercy of the embodiment of mercy, Ṇrē Rādhārāēē. There is no other means to attain this treasure than by the causeless mercy of Ṇrē Gurudeva. That devotional song that Ṇrēla Bābājē Mahārāja would sing goes like this:

*kothāya go premamayi rādhe rādhe
rādhe rādhe go, jaya rādhe rādhe (1)*

Where is She who is the embodiment of *prema*? All glories to Ṇrē Rādhā.

*dekhā diye prāēa rākha, rādhe rādhe
tomāra kāñ gāla tomāya òake, rādhe rādhe (2)*

O Rādhā, please give me Your *darçana* and save my life. This wretched beggar for your mercy calls out to You, “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

*rādhe vāñdāvana-vilāsini, rādhe rādhe
rādhe kānu-mana-mohini, rādhe rādhe (3)*

O Rādhā, You enjoy pleasure pastimes in the forest of Vāñdāvana, wherein You enchant the mind of Kāñēa.

*rādhe añña-sakhēra çiromaēi, rādhe rādhe
rādhe vāñabhānu-nandini, rādhe rādhe (4)*

O Rādhā, You are the crest-jewel among Your eight principal *sakhés*. O Rādhā, daughter of Vāñabhānu Bābā.

(gosāi) niyama kare sadāi òāke, rādhe rādhe

The Six Gosvāmés were always calling out, "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) eka-bāra òāke keçé-ghāòe,
ābāra òāke vaàçé-vaòe, rādhe rādhe (5)*

... sometimes at Keçé-ghāòā, sometimes at Vaàçé-vaòā – "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) eka-bāra òāke nidhu-vane,
ābāra òāke kuī ja-vane, rādhe rādhe*

... sometimes in Nidhuvana, sometimes in Sevā-kuī ja – "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) eka-bāra òāke rādhā-kuèòe,
ābāra òāke çyāma-kuèòe, rādhe rādhe (6)*

... sometimes at Rādhā-kuèòā, sometimes at Çyāma-kuèòā – "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) eka-bāra òāke kusuma-vane,
ābāra òāke govardhane, rādhe rādhe*

... sometimes at Kusuma-sarovara, sometimes at Girirāja-Govardhana – "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) eka-bāra òāke tāla-vane,
ābāra òāke tamāla-vane, rādhe rādhe (7)*

... sometimes at Tālavana, and sometimes at Tamālavana – "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) malina vasana diye gāya,
vrajera dhūlāya gaòāgaòī jaya, rādhe rādhe*

The Six Gosvāmés' simple clothing appears dirty because they are always rolling in the dust of Vraja crying out, "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) mukhe rādhā rādhā bale,
bhāse nayanera jale, rādhe rādhe (8)*

Calling out "Rādhe! Rādhe", their eyes burst with floods of tears.

*(gosāi) vāndāvane kuli kuli kende beòāya
rādhā bali', rādhe rādhe*

They wander throughout the lanes of Vāndāvana crying out, "Rādhe! Rādhe!"

*(gosāi) chāpāna daèòā rātri-dine
jāne nā rādhā-govinda vine, rādhe rādhe (9)*

They know nothing but Rādhā-Govinda throughout the day and night. Rādhe! Rādhe!

*tāra para cāri daèòā çuti' thāke
svapne rādhā-govinda dekhe, rādhe rādhe (10)*

They take rest for only four *daèòas* (1 hr. 36 min.). Even at that time they receive *darçana* of Çré Rādhā-Govinda in their dreams. Rādhe! Rādhe!

Only when I sincerely offer my life and soul to attain this extremely valuable treasure, feeling true anxiety and deep yearning for it, shall I understand that Çré Gurudeva has accepted me with an open heart. Oh, when will such good fortune arise! The number days I have left in this life will soon be exhausted!

Śrīmatī Rādhikā's Transcendental Name

Çréla Rūpa Gosvānipāda tells the following story in the prelude to his narration of the one hundred and eight names of Çré Rādhā: Once Çré Rādhārāèé entered into a sulky mood towards Çré Kāñèa and, despite His hundreds of pleadings, refused to forgive Him. When Çré Kāñèa left that place with a greatly afflicted heart, Çré Rādhārāèé soon gave up Her sulky mood. Her heart now churning from Her absorption in Çré Kāñèa's qualities, She became extremely aggrieved and repented, "Alas! Speaking harshly to Him, I have rejected that Kāñèa who is the ocean of all virtues. Will He ever come to Me again?"

Seeing Her repenting like this, Her girlfriend Tungavidyā, famous for her wisdom, addressed Her: "O beautiful Rādhā, abandon Your respect for Kāñèa and listen attentively to my words. Do not worry, thinking, 'With harsh words I have rejected that Kāñèa who is the ocean of all virtues. Will He ever return to Me?' Previously, a *sakhé* named Kandarpa-sundaré was eager to establish a relationship with You in *sakhya-bhāva*, the mood of friendship. Çré



“Śrī Kṛṣṇa, captivated by Śrī Rādhā’s love, ceaselessly chants Her name. Therefore the name of Śrī Rādhā is like a deeply esoteric *mantra*.”

Paurëamäsë-devë advised her to chant Your one hundred and eight names to fulfil her desire. Çré Vändä-devë, the goddess of Vändävana, who is well-acquainted with the ways of Çré Paurëamäsë-devë, has written down those names in *sindūra* (vermilion), and at this very moment is offering them to the Lord of Your life, Çré Kāñëa. Aggrieved by the pain of separation from You, Kāñëa is experiencing some relief by chanting these hundred and eight names.”

It is said that Çré Rādhā’s names, being all-attractive and the embodiment of an extremely powerful *mantra*, should be written in *sindūra*. With this introduction Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmipāda narrates the unprecedented and exceptionally grave moods of the one hundred and eight names of Çré Rādhā, the Goddess of Çré Vändävana, in *Çré Premendu-sudhäsätra*. He has composed other hymns that are also extremely pleasing. Similarly, Çréla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmë has written the hundred and eight names of Çré Rādhā and other prayers in his *Stavāvalë*.

In fact, Çré Kāñëa, captivated by Çré Rādhā’s love, ceaselessly chants Her name. Therefore the name of Çré Rādhā is like a deeply esoteric *mantra*. Without the exclusive shelter of Çré Rādhā, there is no question of receiving the mercy of Çré Kāñëa.

Humility and Service: Not Pride and Erudition

Our most worshipable Çréla Prabhupāda has said, “Çré Kāñëa is *adhokāja çaktimän*, the possessor of all potency who exists beyond the range of the material mind, intelligence and senses. Çré Rādhā is *adhokājä çaktimatä*, Çré Kāñëa’s spiritual potency who similarly lies beyond our material reach. The philosophy of the *tarka-panthäs*, who believe in the process of gross dialectic to acquire knowledge, is ‘*anayä méyate iti mäyä* – through intellectual effort, one attains

understanding of *mäyä*.’ The supremely excellent philosophy of the *çrauta-panthäs*, however, who follow the process of hearing in disciplic succession as a means to acquire knowledge, is ‘*anayä rādhitaù iti rādhä* – through the process of worship, one attains Çré Rādhä.’ For them, the sole state of perfection is to engage in pleasing and satisfying Çré Kāñëa with their entire body, including all their limbs and senses.”

The *tarka-panthäs* can display their pride, but they cannot touch even the doorstep of the realm of *bhakti*. By instructing his own mind in *Çré Manaù-çikñä*, Çréla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmë humbly teaches us to renounce all pride and quickly develop sublime and incessant *rati* for Çré Gurudeva; for Çré Vraja; for the residents of Vraja; for the Vaiñëavas; for the *brähmaëas*, who are like the demigods of this Earth; for our *dëkñä-mantras*; for the holy names of the Lord; and for the topmost shelter of the lotus feet of Çré Rādhā-Govinda, the eternally youthful couple of Vraja. As long as the false pride that stems from one’s wealth, scholarship, beauty and birth in a high class family remains in one’s heart, it is impossible to practise devotional service even slightly.

Moreover, a person’s pride in his *bhajana*, devotion, renunciation, etc., also becomes a fatal hindrance on the path of devotion. We should always consciously remember the *täëädapi çunëcena* verse spoken by Çréman Mahāprabhu and, taking exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of Çréla Gurudeva, constantly pray for the mercy of Çré Rādhāräëë. It is in this manner that we should seek the mercy of Çré Kāñëa, the beloved of Çré Rādhā.

*binä rādhä prasādena
hari-bhaktiù sudurlabhä*

Without the mercy of Çré Rādhā, *hari-bhakti* is extremely difficult to attain.

*rādhā-bhajane yadi mati nāhi bhelā
kāñēa-bhajana taba akāraēa gelā*

Gētāvalē (Çrē Rādhāñāka, Song 8)

If the desire to serve Çrē Rādhikā does not appear in my heart, then my worship of Kāñēa is simply useless.

The Most Worshipable Object

In the book called *Krama-dēpikā*, Çrē Kāñēa says to the Moon-god:

*mama nāma-çatenaiva
rādhā-nāma sad-uttamam
yaù smaret tu sadā rādhāà
na jāne tasya kià phalam*

The name of Çrē Rādhā is superior to hundreds of My names. Even I cannot calculate the result achieved by constantly remembering Her name.

Just as Çrē Kāñēa, aggrieved by separation from His beloved, always chants the name "Rādhā", Çrē Rādhā too, stricken with grief when apart from Her beloved, constantly utters the name "Kāñēa". Therefore, the only meaningful name to be chanted by the *jēva* is the *rādhā-kāñēa yugala nāma* [the Hare Kāñēa *mantra*]. In "Rāya Rāmānanda Saàvāda" it is said:

'sampattira madhye jēvera kon sampatti gaēi?'
'rādhā-kāñēa prema yāi ra, sei baòa dhané'

Çrē Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.247)

Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu inquired, "Of the many capitalists who possess great riches, who is the topmost?"

Rāya Rāmānanda replied, "He who is richest in love for Çrē Rādhā and Çrē Kāñēa is the greatest capitalist."

'gāna-madhye kona gāna – jēvera nija dharma?'
'rādhā-kāñēera prema-keli' – yei gētera marma

Çrē Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.250)

Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Among all lyrics, which lyrics describe the living entity's actual business?"

Rāya Rāmānanda replied, "Those lyrics that speak about the loving affairs of Çrē Rādhā and Çrē Kāñēa are superior to all others."

'dhyeya-madhye jēvera kartavya kon dhyāna?'
'rādhā-kāñēa-padāmbuja-dhyāna – pradhāna'

Çrē Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.253)

Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Of the many types of meditation, which is necessary for all living entities?"

Rāya Rāmānanda replied, "The chief duty of every living being is to meditate upon the lotus feet of Çrē Rādhā and Çrē Kāñēa."

'sarva tyaji' jēvera kartavya kāhāi vāsa?'
'vraja-bhūmi vāndāvana yāhāi lēlā-rāsa'

Çrē Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.254)

Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Where should the living entity reside, giving up all other places?"

Rāya Rāmānanda replied, "He should reside in the holy place known as Vāndāvana or Vrajabhūmi, where Çrē Kāñēa performed His *rāsa-lēlā*."

'çravaēa-madhye jēvera kon çreñīha çravaēa?'
'rādhā-kāñēa-prema-keli karēa-rasāyana'

Çrē Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.255)

Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu further inquired, "Out of all topics people listen to, which is best for all living beings?"

Rāya Rāmānanda replied, "Hearing about the loving affairs between Çrē Rādhā and Çrē Kāñēa is most satisfying to the ear."

'upāsyaera madhye kon upāsya pradhāna?'
'çreñīha upāsya – yugala 'rādhā-kāñēa' nāma'

Çrē Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.256)

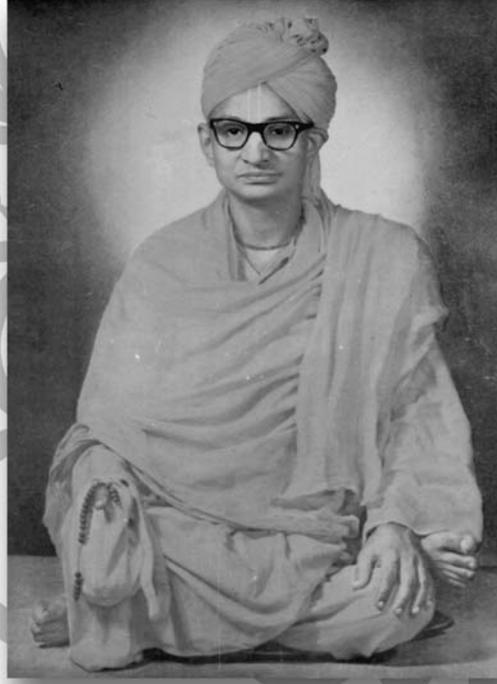
Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Among all worship-able objects, which is the chief?"

Rāya Rāmānanda, "The highest worshipable object is the holy name of Çrē Rādhā and Çrē Kāñēa." ●

Translated from *Çrē Caitanya-vāēē*,
Year 16, Issue 8 (1976)

The Impetus for Sense Gratification

Appearing in English for the first time



by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Categories of Jīvas

We observe many types of *jēvas* around us. A *jēva* is a conscious being: "*jēvati iti jēvaū* – that which has life is a *jēva*." They have been divided into five categories, namely, those whose consciousness is (a) covered, (b) stunted, (c) budding, (d) blossoming and (e) fully blossomed.¹

Non-moving beings such as trees and stones have covered consciousness: they are able to feel, but not act. Animals and birds have stunted consciousness because, unlike stationary beings, they can move from

one place to another and have a more evolved level of awareness. Nonetheless, they lack the ability to differentiate between good and bad. Being ignorant and unable to discriminate, they live fully under the direction and control of material nature.

The consciousness of *jēvas* in the human species of life is either budding, blossoming or fully blossomed. Such *jēvas* can be further divided into three groups: immoral atheists, moral atheists and moral theists. Immoral atheists lack faith in either moral principles or

¹ The Sanskrit terms for these five levels of consciousness are (a) *ācchādita-cetana*, (b) *sankucita-cetana*, (c) *mukulita-cetana*, (d) *vikasita-cetana* and (e) *pūrēavikasita-cetana*.

the Supreme Lord. Moral atheists do not accept that God exists independently of morality. In other words, they consider Him to be subject to the rules of ethical conduct.

Moral theists, by contrast, fall into two categories: hypothetical theists and true theists. The hypothetical theist tries to understand the Supreme Lord by speculation, as illustrated by the statement *sādhakānāḥ hitārthāya brahmaṇo rūpa-kalpanaḥ*. In other words, he believes that God has no form or qualities and tries to meditate upon Him solely by relying on his own imagination. The true theist, however, is quite different. He knows that God's form and qualities are eternal, and he performs his *sādhana*, or practices to attain perfection, with that conception.

What Are the Sense Objects?

A conscious entity will have a basic tendency of the heart that is either material or transcendental. *Çré Prema-vivarta* outlines the history of our material proclivity, which is extremely difficult to rid oneself of:

kāñēa-bahirmukha haiyā bhoga-vāi chā kare nikañā-stha māyā tāre jāpatiyā dhare

As soon as the living entity misuses his independence by becoming indifferent to *Çré Kāñēa* and desiring to enjoy the objects of the senses, then the illusory energy, which is very nearby, ensnares him.

The root cause of our material tendency is forgetfulness of the Supreme Lord, *Çré Hari*. This forgetfulness awakens within us the impetus to enjoy our senses, thus dragging us very far from the Supreme Lord. The sense objects do not consist of money, a large house and so on, but of (a) form, (b) taste, (c) smell, (d) sound and (e) touch. Our five knowledge-acquiring senses – namely, the eyes, tongue, nose, ears and skin – are engrossed in form, taste, smell, sound and touch, respectively. Thus they are intimately connected with these five functions. When combined together, these five objects of sense gratification manifest for a man as the form of a woman and, for a woman, as the figure of a man. The mutual desire between a man and woman is insatiable.

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (9.19.14) states, “*na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānām upabhogena çāyati* – lusty desires can never be purged through continued enjoyment.” Lust is not satiated by engaging in sense gratification; it only burns more fiercely.

Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (*Antya-līlā* 6.199) states:

tathāpi viñāyera svabhāva – kare mahā-andha sei karma karāya, yāte haya bhava-bandha

Those who are attached to materialistic life become blind to spiritual life, and they thus bind themselves to the cycle of repeated birth and death by the actions and reactions of their activities.

The living entity's plight, which arises from his natural affinity for sense enjoyment, is like that of a man tirelessly pursuing a mirage he has come to cherish deeply. Such living entities who chase the objects of the senses cannot judge whether the mirage they are pursuing will actually fulfil them or merely end up deceiving them. In this world, everyone is actively furthering his own selfish motives. But the society of intellectuals should ask itself whether or not perfect happiness can in fact be found when both they who seek it and they who claim to be able to offer it are themselves unfulfilled. By seeking mutual sense gratification in this world, people only suffer misery:

kāñēa bhuli' sei jēva anādi-bahirmukha a taeva māyā tāre deya saḥsāra-duḥkha

Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (*Madhya-līlā* 20.117)

Forgetting *Çré Kāñēa*, the living entity has been captivated by material nature from a time without beginning. Therefore, the illusory energy inflicts upon him all kinds of suffering in his material existence.

Curing the Fever of Material Existence

The living entity who is indifferent to the Supreme Lord is so tightly bound by *māyā*, the illusory energy, that he can never free himself. Therefore, *Çré Bhagavān* has said (*Bhagavad-gētā* 7.14):

mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāḥ taranti te

**For the conditioned
soul, this material
world is like a
mirage he has come
to cherish deeply.**



Only by surrendering unto the Supreme Lord can one remain aloof from *māyā*, which blinds one with the passion for sense enjoyment. Clouded by *māyā*, the living entity becomes so influenced by the modes of material nature that he considers sense gratification to be the most desirable goal, even though it brings him only distress. He is unable to find any happiness despite his pains:

*kurvan duùkha-pratékāraà
sukhavan manyate gāhé*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (3.30.9)

The living entity considers the mere absence of distress to be bliss. Real happiness cannot be found in this material world, as it does not lie in sense gratification.

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (9.4.20) states, "*kāmaà ca dāsye na tu kāma-kāmyayā* – Mahārāja Ambarēña desired only to serve the Supreme Lord, without any self-interest." One should similarly aspire to be the eternal servant of Çré Kāñēa, without using this position as a means to satisfy one's material ends. Çréla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura writes:

*āmi to' tomāra, tumi to' āmāra
ki kāja apara dhane*

Çaraëägati (Ātma-Nivedana)

I am indeed Yours, and You are truly mine. What need is there of any other treasure?

Unless we attain such a realisation, we remain intoxicated by the desire to enjoy the objects of the

senses, a condition that is extremely difficult to cure. Çréla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura says:

*viñāye je préti ebe āchaye amara
sei-mata préti hauk caraëe tomāra*

Gétāvalé (Prabhu Tava Pada Yuge)

I pray that I may develop as much attachment for Your auspicious feet as I now have for worldly affairs.

If by good fortune we develop as much attachment for the Supreme Lord as we now have for the objects of the senses, our desire for sense enjoyment will be eradicated and we will cross the ocean of birth and death. Our state of bondage has existed since a time without beginning, and is quite impossible for human intelligence to undo. It can be unravelled only by associating with *sādhus*, realised souls:

*'sādhu-saì ga', 'sādhu-saì ga'
sarva-çāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saì ge
sarva-siddhi haya*

Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 22.54)

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that even a moment's association with a *sādhu* can award all perfection.

Although such *sādhus* are our greatest well-wishers, we prefer to keep our distance from them, let alone actually associate with them. We know that their association will subdue our desire for sense enjoyment, making it impossible for us to enjoy the objects of the senses.

Renouncing Lust for Love

Everyone is controlled by the desire for sense enjoyment, whether he be a householder or a renunciant. If a person has not yet clearly defined his ultimate goal, accepting household life and renouncing the world are both quite useless. We must become one-pointed in trying to attain the Supreme Lord. This is indeed the *sādhana*, spiritual practice, of a devotee.

In *Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lēlā 8.69)*, it is said:

*yāvat kīud asti jāihare jarañhā pipāsā
tāvat sukhāya bhavato nanu bhakñya-peye*

Varieties of food and drink make one feel very happy as long as there is hunger and thirst within the stomach.

We find that we are unable to relish food if we are not hungry or thirsty. Similarly, if the hunger to attain love for the Supreme Lord has not arisen in our hearts, how can we become inclined to engage in activities that lead us to Him. In any case, our one-pointed objective must be to make sincere endeavours to accept what the community of saintly persons has given us and is giving us still. Indeed, it has been said:

*sādhu-sai ge kññēa-nāma ei mātra cāi
saāsāra jinite āra kauna vastu nāi*

Besides *sādhu-sai ga* and *kññēa-nāma* I do not need anything to live in this world.

Çré Gaurahari has instructed the living entities through His own life's example that the holy name is our only objective (*sādhya*) and our only practice to achieve that objective (*sādhana*). He has shown us that all our desires can be fulfilled by taking shelter of the Lord's holy names.

Those whose minds are deeply engrossed in the sense objects, who are uninterested in developing affection for Çré Hari and who wish to spend their lives solely in trying to enjoy their senses, can never find relief from the continual hankering for sense gratification.

*ātmendriya-prēti-vāi chā tāre bali 'kāma'
kññēendriya-prēti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma
Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (Ādi-lēlā 4.165)*

The desire to gratify one's own senses is lust (*kāma*), but the desire to please the senses of Çré Kññēa is love (*prema*).

Satisfying one's lust is called sense gratification. Making sincere efforts to free oneself from this is called renouncing the desire for sense gratification. ●

Translated from *Çré Gauḍeya Patrikā*,
Year 39, Issue 7 (1987)

About the Author

Śrēla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmē Mahārāja is one of the last disciples of Çrēla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatē Ōhākura Prabhupāda in the *sannyāsa* order present today. Çrēla Bhakti Hādya Bon Gosvāmē Mahārāja and Çrēla Bhakti Pramoda Purē Gosvāmē Mahārāja brought him to the lotus feet of his spiritual master at the tender age of eleven. Upon initiating him, Çrēla Sarasvatē Ōhākura named him Çrē Rādhā-ramaēa dāsa, and carefully arranged for his education.

After his disappearance from this manifest world, Çrēla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatē Ōhākura Prabhupāda appeared to Çrē Rādhā-ramaēa Brahmācārē in a dream and ordered him to accept the renounced order and preach the teachings of Çrē Caitanya Mahāprabhu widely. Thus, in 1942 Çrē Rādhā-ramaēa Brahmācārē accepted *sannyāsa* from Çrēla Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvāra Mahārāja in Remuēa, Orissa. He

later founded Çrē Caitanya Āçrama, which has several branches in India.

Çrēla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmē Mahārāja would never refuse even the tiniest order of Çrēla Prabhupāda or any of his disciples, and had utmost regard for anyone who had even brief contact with his spiritual master. To this day, Çrēla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja regularly sends Çrēla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Mahārāja letters to report on his preaching outside India, to which Çrēla Santa Mahārāja replies with great pleasure, always bestowing his profuse blessings.

This exalted Vaiñēava, who joined Çrēla Sarasvatē Ōhākura's mission as a mere boy and quickly became renowned for his melodious singing, has just completed his ninety-first year in loving service to his divine master. ●

Our Eternal and Omniscient Guardian

Translated into English for the first time

Excerpt from a lecture delivered by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

on the disappearance day of

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Navadvīpa



The Spiritual Biography

We have assembled here today for a special reason, that is, to honour the disappearance day, or *viraha-tithi*, of my most beloved Gurudeva, *jagad-guru nitya-lēlā praviñña oā viñēupāda aññottara-çata Çrē Çrēmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keçava Gosvāmē Mahārāja*.

When people of this world write biographies, whether of common persons or eternally perfect and liberated saints, they always examine two

aspects of the protagonist's life: his birth and his death. The birth and death of the living entity entangled in fruitive action occur merely by the dictates of his past deeds and their consequences. But Bhagavān does not undergo material birth and death because He is *sac-cid-ānanda*, the embodiment of spiritual existence, consciousness and bliss. Similarly, the advent and disappearance of eternally perfect, liberated souls are not material. Such personalities are not bound in the cycle of birth and death by their activities and the results of those activities. This has been stated unambiguously in the scriptures.

On this same full moon day, my Gurudeva disappeared from this world at a glorious time, thus depriving us of his merciful association. Where did he go? To his eternal abode and destination, Goloka Vāndāvana. Those who are eternally perfect and eternally liberated automatically achieve a destination that lies wholly beyond the reach of ordinary persons.

Our Eternal Well-wisher

If ever the question should arise whether or not Çré Guru and the Vaiñéavas deceive us, the scriptures confirm that, in a way, they do. They accept the various hardships of this world just to assist those who are sincere in their efforts to practise *hari-bhajana* or *sādhana-bhajana*. And to those who avoid *sādhana-bhajana* and instead engage in whimsical activities, Guru and the Vaiñéavas remain somewhat indifferent. This, especially, is to be understood.

If the residents of the *maïha*, or spiritual institution, behave correctly and engage themselves in *sādhana* and *bhajana* by completely devoting their lives to the service of Çré Hari, Guru and the Vaiñéavas, they can attain complete perfection. Qualified guardians assume the role of well-wishers, even in this world; what then to speak of our spiritual guardians, in whom we witness a far more exalted conception of guardianship.

Who is Gurudeva? He is our best friend. He is our eternal well-wisher, who offers shelter to the shelterless. How is this? He is the exclusive point of refuge for those who can find no shelter in this world. None is as merciful and compassionate in the prison house of this world as he is.

There is much more to say about *guru-tattva*. Çré Guru is concerned for our spiritual well-being. People often make a display of caring for others' material well-being, but they do not understand the importance of spiritual welfare; nor can they help anyone else grasp this. Unless we receive Bhagavān's causeless mercy, we will not identify the correct path to Him or ever find an appropriate guardian.

Guru of the Universe

Those who have become acquainted with the path of *sādhana-bhajana* by personally pursuing that path and successfully surmounting the various obstacles and hardships along the way, and who in turn point submissive souls in the same direction, fall within the category of *jagad-guru-tattva*, spiritual teachers of the entire universe. In relation to *guru*, people often think, "This person is my *guru*, that person is your *guru*, and that other person is his *guru*," but the scriptures presents a different conception:

*mannāthaù çré jagannātho
madguruù çré jagadguruù*

My Lord is the master of the universe, and my *guru* is the spiritual preceptor of the entire world.

Less intelligent people err in their attempts to understand this. That person who is my *guru* is the *guru* of all fourteen planetary systems, and therefore he is *jagad-guru*, *guru* of the entire universe. This is a scriptural truth, not mere fantasy. We may think that we honour our Gurudeva by praising him profusely, and that he will be pleased by our display of devotion, but this reveals a misunderstanding about *guru-tattva*. It is not like this.

When the *guru* has attained omniscience, he falls in the category of *antaryāmi-tattva*, which is to say he is all-knowing like the Supersoul. Nothing need be presented to him as newsworthy. He is inherently aware of our mistakes, imperfections, faults and shortcomings; and yet he still showers us with abundant encouragement to pursue spiritual life, inspiring us to perform *sādhana-bhajana*. This is his special mercy.



**“Śrī Guru ... is
inherently aware
of our mistakes,
imperfections,
faults and shortcomings;
and yet he still
showers us
with abundant
encouragement
to pursue spiritual life,
inspiring us
to perform
sādhana-bhajana.”**



Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Original Guru

In his *hari-kathā*, Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Prabhupāda has said that the people of the world plainly failed to understand the instructions of *Bhagavad-gētā* and *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam*, though the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Çré Kāñëa, spoke them directly. They are unable to grasp these same teachings today, and will also be incapable of doing so in the future. Having reflected on the living entity's plight, Çré Rādhā and Çré Kāñëa personally appeared in this world in their combined form of Gaurahari, Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and assumed the role of *jagad-guru* to instruct all humankind.

This indicates that Bhagavān is the original cause of the living entities' engagement in *hari-bhajana* and is most concerned for them. Thus, by His personal example, He has arranged to teach the living entities how to chant the names of Çré Kāñëa and engage in *bhajana* of Çré Rādhā and Çré Kāñëa with deep and ardent yearning. His expression of *bhajana* is portrayed in such literary works as *Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta* and *Çré Caitanya-bhāgavata*, which depict His pastimes.

Can there possibly be any deficiency in Çré Kāñëa? He does not lack anything. *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam* (6.9.22) states, “*svenaiva lābhena samaà praçāntam* – Bhagavān is always jubilant and fully satisfied by His own spiritual perfection.” While this is true, Bhagavān becomes distressed upon seeing the miserable condition of the living entities, and He weeps. This is the natural disposition of a guardian and is why Bhagavān personally descended to preach the process of *sādhana-bhajana* and *nāma-sai kértana*, the congregational chanting of the holy names.

Many people raise the doubt, “Is Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu still bestowing His mercy today? After all, are there not numerous examples to show that only His personal associates received His favour?” It is the conditioned soul's doubting nature to always seek defects in others, be they Vaiñëavas or Bhagavān Himself. His mentality is like that of an ant which tries to find a hole in a temple composed of gems. This is his great misfortune.

The Path of Humility and Surrender

The scriptures instruct us to care for our own well-being and the well-being of others, but we are unable to understand what this means. Our crippled nature blights everything and our useless fault-finding mentality takes us nowhere. Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu has instructed:

*tāëäd api sunécena
taror api sahiñëunā
amāninā mānadena
kértanëyaù sadā hariù*

Çré Çikñāññakam (3)

One should continuously chant the holy name of Çré Hari, thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass that has been trampled beneath everyone's feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless and offering respect to everyone according to his respective position.

The scriptures describes how one can become *amāné-mānada*, free from the desire to receive

honour and able to offer all respect to others. Our *guru-varga*, or line of previous *ācāryas*, has beautifully elaborated upon this point:

amānē mānada haile kērtane adhikāra dibe tumi

My prayer is that when I have abandoned the desire for honour and am able to offer all respect to others, you will bestow upon me the ability to perform *kērtana*.

What does this mean? If I can become *amānē-mānada*, I may actually achieve something in spiritual life. But if, instead, I nurture desires unfavourable for *bhakti*, I will never attain any success. My devotional practices will merely deceive me and others. Our *guru-varga* is revealing this fact to us. The scriptures offer abundant advice and regulations for our benefit, but we do not understand them. The instructions from the lotus lips of a *sad-guru*, whose heart melts with compassion, have such uncommon potency that he bestows his mercy upon the living beings through the power of these words alone.

**“By *śaraṇāgati*,
dedicating ourselves
completely
to the lotus feet
of Śrī Guru,
there is hope
that we may make
advancement.”**

What will allow us to understand this? By *çaraëāgati*, dedicating ourselves completely to the lotus feet of Çrë Guru, there is hope that we may make advancement. But if Guru and the Vaiñëavas see that I am extremely proud, eager for name and fame, and behaving whimsically, they will become indifferent to me. If I do not understand anything despite being told repeatedly, and if I do not follow the path indicated by Çrë Guru, they may deprive me of their association. It is not their purpose to deceive us. This is not even the motive of Bhagavān, let alone of His associates, who are always eager to bestow mercy upon the conditioned souls. Çrë Guru and the Vaiñëavas only wish to see us advance spiritually, but we do not realise this.

Avoid Offences at All Costs

Today is my Gurudeva’s disappearance day, but my heart is not weeping. I have never missed him, from the core of my heart. I am not in the least bit concerned that I have lost such a precious stone, a touchstone. I have my dress of a *sādhu* and know that I will eat and live nicely. This attitude is a matter of serious concern.

Those who wish to follow the process of *sādhana-bhajana* and who try to engage themselves in thoughts of Bhagavān and in service to Him, should be extremely watchful. Çrëla Narottama Ōhākura has written “*vando mui sāvadhāna-mate* – I bow to the lotus feet of my Çrë Gurudeva with great care and attention.”

What does “care” refer to here? The scriptures instruct us to be attentive not to commit offences. One should always keep this in mind. While chanting the holy name, one should carefully avoid *nāma-aparādha*; while visiting the *dhāma* one should avidly avoid *dhāma-aparādha*; and while serving the deities one should take great care not to commit *sevā-aparādha*. Moreover, while residing with Guru and the Vaiñëavas and serving them, one should attentively guard against committing *guru-aparādha* and *vaiñëava-aparādha*.

With so many obstacles and restrictions, one may wonder where to go and what to do. But the



**“What they say
to their community
of followers
they glean from
the scriptures’
positive and negative
injunctions.”**

scriptures also tell us that the greater the obstacle, the more easily we shall attain our goal. A careful examination of the scriptures reveals that they contain Bhagavān’s words of discipline and regulation. Whatever instructions or advice Bhagavān has conferred upon us is repeated by Guru and the Vaiñēavas. They do not fabricate anything. What they say to their community of followers they glean from the scriptures’ positive and negative injunctions.

The Guru’s Chastisement

“When I’m praised,” one may think, “I feel so much pleasure; but when criticised, I feel great discomfort.” That is not the correct attitude. It is inappropriate to hear Guru and the Vaiñēavas glorify one. Rather, I should consider it my great fortune if, for my spiritual welfare, they mercifully punish and rebuke me out of love. But I am unable to tolerate this, and it leads me to present counter-arguments to defend myself. In *nēti-çāstra*, the scriptures delineating moral conduct, it is stated, “*bhātyaçca uttardāyakaū* – he who immediately answers back on being directed should be rejected as a servant.”

One should listen to Guru and the Vaiñēavas when they deem it necessary to rectify us. One

should try to understand their words with composure and patience, in the faith that they are speaking for our benefit only. They have no selfish motive. We must always maintain this attitude, for what will Çrē Guru’s attitude be towards us if we don’t? Extremely mild. He may treat us like an esteemed personality, a master, and behave like our servant. And then if he doesn’t listen to us, we may decide to reject him as our *gurudeva*.

Once, Çrēla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatē Ōhākura Prabhupāda said with deep regret, “Those who think they must have a *guru* to live in this world, just as a person who wants to cross a river must procure a boatman, or a person who wants his clothes washed must locate a washerman, have been cheated. Such persons, who try to understand Gurudeva’s actions with their material intelligence, have never once seen or met me, nor with this attitude will they ever do so.”

The eternally liberated souls always speak the message of Vaikuēha. They never utter anything for their selfish interest, but nonetheless we see faults in them. In doing so, we create problems for ourselves and are simply being betrayed from all directions. ●

Translated from *Çrē Gauḍēya Patrikā*,
Year 55, Issue 10 (2003)

O Merciful Śrīla

Written for the occasion of
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's
disappearance day on 21 December 1957

You Are Compassionate to All Souls

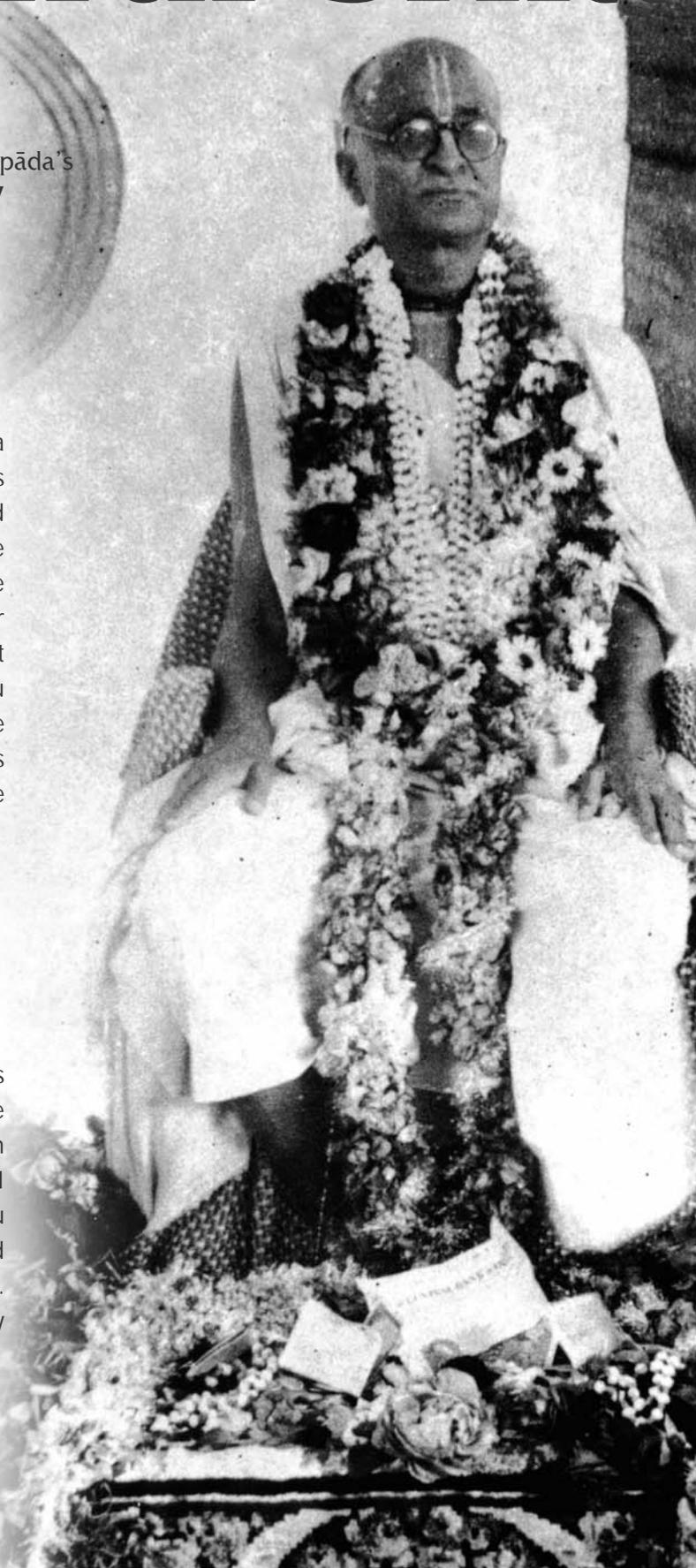
My most worshipable and merciful Çréla Prabhupāda, today, on your auspicious disappearance day, you are being glorified everywhere – from all directions. Those who are praising you are extremely fortunate, for you have bestowed your favour upon them. You even shower your compassion indirectly upon those who do not glorify you. As the very embodiment of mercy, you exude nothing but compassion, though not everyone is able to receive it equally, on account of his particular destiny. This does not imply that you are partial.

In *Bhagavad-gētā* (4.11), Çré Kāñëa affirms:

*yathā mää prapadyante
tääs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*

As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.

You have properly safe-guarded the integrity of this verse. Through your exemplary behaviour you have preserved the veracity of Çré Kāñëa's statement in *Bhagavad-gētā* (9.29), "*samo 'haà sarva-bhüteü* – I am equal to all beings." Without being perturbed, you would appropriately punish even those who prided themselves in being your especially intimate servants. That chastisement is actually nothing but your mercy and demonstrates your magnanimity.



Prabhupāda...

By Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

You Embodiment the Mood of Separation

Çréla Prabhupāda, everything you do is in fact full of mercy. You mercifully appeared in this world. You mercifully remained visible to our material eyes for some time. And now, by your mercy, you have again become unmanifest to the materially conditioned living beings. These three actions share the same purpose: to bestow mercy. This is your sole aim. Even today you are not in any way depriving the living entities by remaining concealed from their vision. You are thoroughly acquainted with what is beneficial for the *jēva* and in what proportion. The materially conditioned living entity, however, cannot comprehend the manner in which you bestow your mercy.

Çré Kāñēa allowed the *gopés* to taste the bliss of union and then revealed His limitless mercy by drowning them in an ocean of separation from Him. Your behaviour is identical to Kāñēa's, for it displays the same unbounded mercy. If Çré Kāñēa had remained with the *gopés* forever, the conditioned souls would surely have been delighted, but the most merciful Çré Kāñēa said:

*yat tv ahaà bhavatēnāà vai
dūre varte priyo dāçām
manasaù sannikariārthaà
mad-anudhyāna-kāmyayā*



yathā dūra-care preññhe
 mana āviçya vartate
 strēēā ca na tathā cetaù
 sannikāññe 'kñi-gocare
 mayy āveçya manaù kâtsnaà
 vimuktâçeña-vâtti yat
 anusmarantyo mää nityam
 acirän mäm upaiñyatha

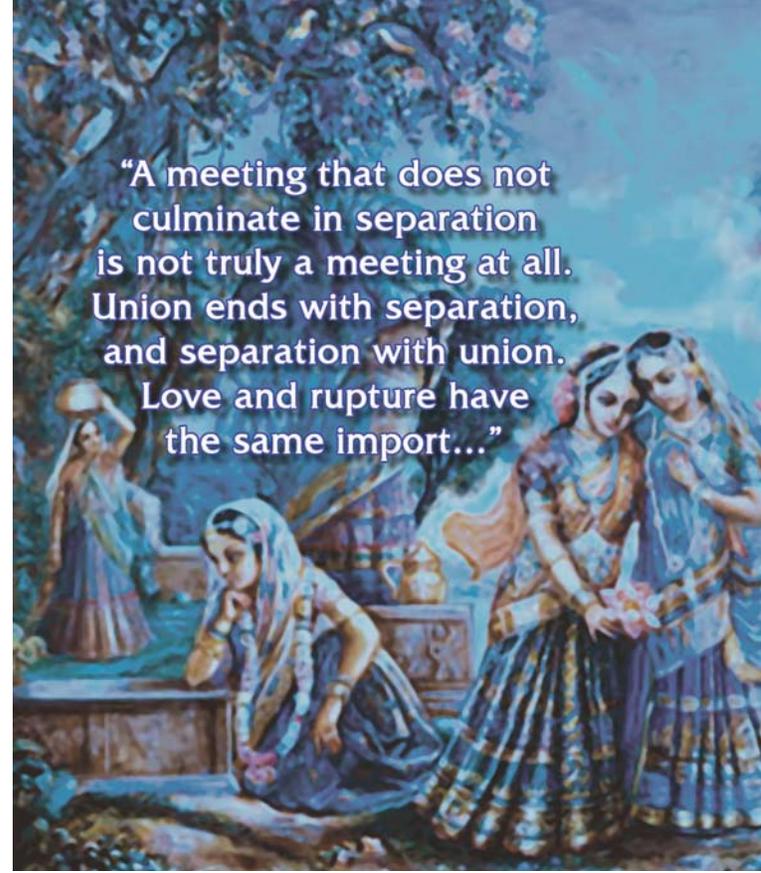
Çrémad-Bhägavatam (10.47.34–36)

The actual reason why I, the treasured object of your sight, have stayed far away from you is that I wanted to capture your minds and draw them closer to Me. When a woman's lover is far away, she thinks of him more than when he is present before her. Your minds are fully absorbed in Me, forsaking all else, and you always remember Me. Therefore, you will be reunited with Me very soon.

O Çréla Prabhupäda, your devotees, who are absorbed in constantly remembering you with feelings of separation, attain the state of *mäm upaiñyatha*, "reunion with you". This is an example of your immense mercy.

A meeting that does not culminate in separation is not truly a meeting at all. Union ends with separation, and separation with union. Love and rupture have the same import: this teaching has come from your own lotus lips. As such, you are bestowing your grace upon your devotees today by revealing yourself as an embodiment of the mood of separation.

O merciful Çréla Prabhupäda, your form is composed of *sac-cid-änanda* – spiritual existence, knowledge and bliss. Your disciples have heard from your own lotus mouth that the materially conditioned souls can never glimpse your transcendental form; only liberated souls receive your *darçana*. In trying to see you, conditioned souls merely perceive an image of you reflected in the material mode of goodness. Nonetheless, you have showered your endless mercy upon those who were attracted by this image. You have made it known to them that all the followers of Çréla Rüpa Gosvämé (*rüpänugas*) are grieving in separation from their worshipable deity. Your sole



"A meeting that does not culminate in separation is not truly a meeting at all. Union ends with separation, and separation with union. Love and rupture have the same import..."

objective is service in that same mood. You embody the nectarean ocean of *vipralambha*, feelings of separation from Çré Kāññä, and you have shown your compassion by propagating service in separation (*vipralambha-sevä*).

You Are Uncompromising in Upholding the Truth

O merciful Çréla Prabhupäda, you cannot actually be introduced in terms of material time, place and historical events, and therefore I am not interested in doing so. You are free from all material qualities, and have in all ways revealed and preached unalloyed, transcendental devotion characterised by separation. You are entirely intolerant of any material doctrine. Therefore, you have manifested your mercy by refuting *mäyäväda*, the doctrine of illusion, through your sovereign-like writings, which are rich in the conclusions of the scriptures, and through your speaking, which is as grave and loud as thunder.

O merciful Çréla Prabhupäda, you never pandered to the materialists. Rather, you terrified them, like death personified. Hearing your lion-like roar proclaiming the principles and conclusions of devotion, the fruitive workers hid deep in their burrows like fearful jackals. Your valour as an



upholder of the truth is testimony to the limitless mercy you have for the living entities.

O generous Çréla Prabhupāda, no desire other than to serve Çré Kāñëa was ever present in your character. You were a *brahmacāri*, unmarried celibate, since childhood and later manifested the pastime of accepting *sannyāsa*, the renounced order. Thus, you have firmly established the principle that it is extremely difficult to achieve the ultimate goal of life if one is fond of associating with women. Çréla Bhaktivinoda Ōhākura writes:

*ramaëë-jana-saì ga-sukhaà ca sakhe
caramè bhayadaà puruñārtha-haram*

Çré Godruma-candra Bhajanopadeça

O friend, the pleasure to be had in the company of beautiful young women ultimately turns to fearfulness, and distracts one from the true goal of human life.

You have shown limitless mercy by living up to the ideal portrayed in these words of your spiritual master.

¹ A pseudosect of so-called Vaiñëavas who variously misinterpret the original teachings of Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmë. Some even indulge in debauchery in the name of *bhakti*,

O merciful lord, your conceptions are forever divine. In the religious conventions convened to discuss various pertinent issues you invalidated the concept of demoniac *varëäçrama* and established divine *varëäçrama*. By your transcendental power, you overcame the fierce opposition. As a result, your sincere servants have been following that system of divine *varëäçrama* to this day. This divine triumph of yours displays your great compassion.

O merciful Çréla Prabhupāda, you have condemned the concept that matter and spirit are identical, as well as the ideas of the *prākāta-sahajiyās*¹, and thereby illuminated the nature of supremely pure devotional service. Had you not appeared on this earth, who would have cleansed the heaps of impurities that had entered the *prema-dharma*, religion of unadulterated love, propagated by Çréman Mahāprabhu and who would have revealed its pure message? Who would have distributed the beauty of devotional service in the mood of separation, given by Çréman Mahāprabhu to the world? O Prabhu, there is no end to your mercy.

I Humbly Pray at Your Lotus Feet

O merciful master, on this day of your disappearance, may the remembrance of your mercy become my life and soul. How far can an insignificant and wretched soul like me touch upon your immeasurable compassion? Even the demigods cannot adequately sing its glories. Nonetheless, I will be blessed if one day I can be fortunate enough to serve the lotus feet of one of your servants, thereby connecting with your mercy. Today, on your disappearance day, I humbly pray at your lotus feet that I may not become degraded by committing any offences and that I may eternally remain engaged in the service of the servants of your servants. ●

Translated from *Çré Gauòëya Patrikã*,
Year 8, Issue 11 (1957)

by trying to imitate the transcendental loving affairs of Çré Rādhā and Çré Kāñëa.



An Ocean in the Palm of One's Hand:

An exposition of the verse
jayati jana-nivāsaḥ

Based on a series of lectures delivered by
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
on Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's commentary to the final verse
of Śrī Bhakti-rasāyana in Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

*jayati jana-nivāso devakē-janma-vādo
yadu-vara-pariṇat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam
sthira-cara-vājina-ghnaṁ su-smita-çrē-mukhena
vraja-pura-vanītānāḥ vardhayan kāma-devam*

*Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (10.90.48),
Çré Bāhad-bhāgavatāmāta (2.7.154)*

All glories to Çrē Kāṇēa who is known as *jana-nivāsaṁ*, He who lives in the hearts of all living entities, or He who is their ultimate resort. Although He is famous as having taken birth from the womb of Devakē, there is some controversy about this. He is served by the exalted Yadus, who are His associates. With His mighty arms, the Pāëöavas, He kills the demons; and by thus destroying irreligion, He dispels the suffering of all living entities, both moving and inert. His gentle, smiling lotus face always increases the *kāma (prema)* of the *gopés* of Vāndāvana, as well as the queens of Mathurā and Dvārakā.

Setting the Scene

As Çréla Çukadeva Gosvāmé spoke this verse, he remembered the sweet pastimes of Çrē Kāṇēa – from His birth to His final days in Dvārakā. This verse not only encompasses the Mahābhārata battle, but all pastimes leading up to it and following it.

After hearing this verse, Mahārāja Parēkñit was about to leave the place where he had been hearing *hari-kathā*. Çré Çukadeva Gosvāmé, who was also preparing to depart, said to him, “Don’t waver or be afraid. Always remember that *guru* and Kāñëa are with you.”

Çréla Çukadeva Gosvāmé gave Mahārāja Parēkñit the fruit of *mahat-sai ga*, or association with a pure devotee – namely, the paramour mood of a *gopé*. This was Çré Parēkñit’s eternal, constitutional position. Çré Parēkñit said to Çré Çukadeva Gosvāmé, “Now that I have received what you wanted to give me, I feel fully satisfied.” Çré Parēkñit did not think he would actually be fortunate enough to receive this gift, but *mahat-sai ga* bestows complete perfection. He never thought this highest fruit would come to him, but it did.

If you are sincere and focused exclusively on Çré Kāñëa, and if you have *guru-niñhā*, unshakable faith in *çré guru*, then your life will very quickly be successful and you will attain this same goal. Be one-pointed like Parēkñit Mahārāja. During Çréla Çukadeva Gosvāmé’s seven-day narration of *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam*, he asked Parēkñit Mahārāja if he wanted to drink some water, and Parēkñit Mahārāja replied, “No, I am satisfied drinking the nectar of your *hari-kathā*.”

“Glory unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa!”

*jayati jana-nivāso devaké-
janma-vado*

Çréla Çukadeva Gosvāmé remembered the entirety of Çré Kāñëa’s sweet pastimes and said, “*Jayati* – may Çré Kāñëa be glorious.” What does “glorious” mean here? Why do we pray “*Nityānanda Prabhu ki jaya, Gauracandra ki jaya, Vaiñëava-jana ki jaya*”? *Jaya*, or glory, means “victory”, the opposite of defeat. By this prayer we

mean, “May the Lord and His associates be victorious over me. May they conquer over all my *anarthas* – my lust, anger, greed, pride, illusion and envy. May they defeat me. Then I too will be glorious.”

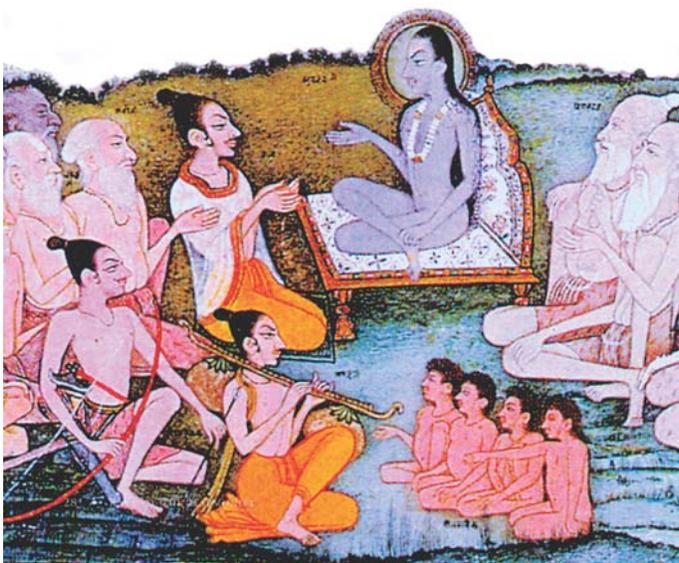
Śrī Kṛṣṇa: The Shelter of All Souls

Jana-nivāso means Çré Kāñëa is everywhere. He resides within all beings and all beings exist within Him. *Nivāsa* means “abode” or “shelter”. Çré Kāñëa is the reservoir and shelter of every living being, whether demon or demigod, and He supports and nourishes all living creatures. The word *jana* has two meanings. It refers, first, to non-devotees in whose hearts Çré Kāñëa sits as a witness to their activities. Don’t doubt that Çré Kāñëa sees when we misbehave. He is all-pervading. If you want to hide your activities from others, it means you are doing something crooked. Çré Kāñëa is everywhere, as is *çré guru*. You cannot conceal anything from Him.

The general meaning of *jana-nivāsa* is “You are always in the hearts of all beings as the Supersoul”,

but Kāñëa cannot reside in the hearts of His devotees in this form. He can be there only as their worshipable deity – that is, as their master, friend, son or lover.

The second meaning of *jana* is “personal associates”. Here it means “*nija-jana*”, the pure Vaiñëavas – that is, His very own devotees. The *Vrajavāsés* are this kind of *jana*. The residents of Mathurā are also pure devotees, but they are not as exalted as



“Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī ...
asked Parīkṣit Mahārāja if he wanted
to drink some water, and Parīkṣit Mahārāja
replied, ‘No, I am satisfied drinking
the nectar of your *hari-kathā*.’”

the Vrajavāsés, for whom Kāñëa is their very life air. Çré Kāñëa's *nija-jana* include Yaçodā-maiyā, Nanda Bābā, the cowherd boys like Çrédāma and Madhumaṅ gala, and the *gopés*. The Vrajavāsés are His life as much as He is theirs. The *gopés* are the highest class of *jana*. Yaçodā-maiyā is exalted, but the *gopés* are more so; and among all the *gopés*, Çrémāté Rādhikā is the highest and the most dear to Kāñëa. If you think Kāñëa is *mahat-sai ga*, exalted association, then Çrémāté Rādhikā is *mahéyasé-sai ga*, the most exalted association. Her association is even more elevated and desirable than Çré Kāñëa's.



**“If you think
Kṛṣṇa is
mahat-saiṅga,
exalted
association,
then Śrīmatī
Rādhikā is
mahiyasi-saiṅga,
the most
exalted
association.”**

Çré Kāñëa takes shelter in the hearts of His *nija-jana* and rests there. In others words, He personally manifests there. And to remove the pain of separation of His devotees in this world He manifests here as His many incarnations.

The Impartial Lord

Once, at the time of the Rājasūya-yajī a, Yudhiñöhira Mahārāja asked Çré Nārada Āñi a question. This was the same question Parékñit Mahārāja asked Çréla Çukadeva Gosvāmé: “Çré Kāñëa is equal to all. Why, then, does He side with the demigods and fight against the demons to protect them? As Çré Nāsīàhadeva, Çré Rāma and other incarnations, He

killed Hiraëyakaçipu, Rāvaëa, Kumbhakarëa and other demons. These activities seem to indicate that the Lord is partial.”

In reply, Çré Nārada spoke Canto Seven of *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam*. As the Supersoul, Çré Kāñëa lives in the hearts of all beings and is therefore equal to all, just as the sun shines impartially upon everyone. But if an owl shuts its eyes and refuses to come out of its hideout, how will it ever be able to see the sun? It will never be able to. Demons do not perform *bhakti* and are like that owl. They don't believe in God. Nonetheless, Çré Kāñëa descends to this world in His various incarnations and bestows His mercy upon them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Son of Yaçodā

Devaké-janma-vado. The residents of Mathurā and people in general say that Kāñëa took birth from the womb of Mother Devaké. This statement, however, can be challenged for two reasons. No one can become the father or mother of the Supreme Lord. Çré Kāñëa is the master and father of everyone, including Devaké, but He is truly the son of Çrémāté Yaçodā-devé. She is His real mother. He is partly the son of Devaké and Vasudeva, but fully the son of Nanda and Yaçodā.

When Kāñëa released Devaké and her husband Vasudeva from jail, they returned to their palace and Devaké wept. She lamented, “How fortunate Yaçodā is to have directly experienced and relished Kāñëa's childhood pastimes. I did not get the chance to experience this. Çré Kāñëa would beg *rois* and butter from Yaçodā, but He never once begged anything from me. He would tell lies to Yaçodā, but He never once lied to me. Yaçodā is more fortunate than I am.”

Çré Kāñëa is *para-brahma*, the Supreme Truth. He is the Supersoul, the controller of everything and the source of all incarnations. His opulence is unsurpassed. When, as a young boy, Kāñëa put some earth in His mouth, the *gopés* complained to Yaçodā-maiyā, but Çré Kāñëa denied what He had done. Yaçodā-maiyā forcibly made Him open His mouth, and there she

beheld His universal form. She saw that He is in fact the Supreme Truth, the controller of all controllers, the Supersoul, Çré Násiàhadeva, etc., and that all existence lies within Him.

This verse does not mention Çré Kāñëa's name directly, but the previous verse does, and this verse refers to that same Çré Kāñëa. He took birth from the womb of Yaçodä-maiyä, Devaké being but another name of Yaçodä, and He killed Aghäsura, Bakäsura, Pütanä and other demons, and fought in the Mahäbhärata battle. The context of this verse indicates that it is referring to Çré Kāñëa. May that Çré Kāñëa be glorious.

At the beginning of Ratha-yätträ, Çré Caitanya Mahäprabhu chanted this verse in the mood of Çrématé Rädhikä meeting with Çré Kāñëa at Kurukñetra. By their sentiments, the *gopés* brought Kāñëa to Vändävana at that time and decorated Him with flowers. In their hearts they forcibly handed Him the flute He left with Yaçodä-maiyä in Vändävana, along with His peacock feather, and they whispered in His ear, "Don't think that Your father and mother are Vasudeva and Devaké. Don't believe that You have come from the Yadu dynasty and that You are a Yädava. Consider Yourself to be a *gopa* only." Çré Kāñëa replied, "Yes, I will accept what you say."

Vanquisher of the Demons

yadu-vara-pariñat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam

All members of the Yadu dynasty are the *nija-jana* of Çré Kāñëa who resides in Dväarakä, for they are His associates. His arms, the Päëòavas, destroyed all the demons. He did not vanquish the demons with His own hands, but through the hands of Bhéma, Arjuna and others. Although He did kill demons personally, in the Mahäbhärata war it was Arjuna and Bhéma who annihilated the entire army of the enemy. Out of affection for His devotees, He gave all the credit for killing wicked kings like Jaräsandha to His devotees, although He could have easily performed such a feat Himself, simply by desiring it.

This verse seems to describe Kāñëa's pastimes in Dväarakä, but in its deeper meaning it in fact glorifies Vrajendra-nandana Çré Kāñëa. In Vändävana, Kāñëa

killed Pütanä and other demons with his own arms. Moreover, in Vändävana He killed the greatest of demons – the deep separation experienced by Çrématé Rädhikä and the *gopés*.

He Who Removes All Suffering

Sthira-cara-väjina-ghnaù means "He who removes life's endless pain and suffering". Çré Kāñëa takes away the suffering of all moving and non-moving living entities in the endless cycle of birth and death. It also means "He whose flute playing removes all suffering". Çré Kāñëa's smiling face increases the love and affection of the *gopés* and relieves them from their pangs of separation from Him. May this Çré Kāñëa be glorious.

Sthira-cara-väjina-ghnaù describes Çré Kāñëa's supreme magnanimity in the form of bestowing His *prema-bhakti* to all living beings. Here, *sthira* refers to non-moving entities of Vändävana, like creepers, grass and bushes, and *cara* to moving living entities, including worms. Çré Kāñëa does not first look for a reason to bestow His *prema-bhakti* – such as the recipient's qualification. Through the gift of *prema*, He destroys the material miseries of all beings, as well as the suffering that comes from separation from Him. When one lights a fire for cooking, darkness and cold are dissipated as a secondary result. Similarly, when one performs *bhakti*, the cycle of birth and death is halted as a secondary result. Thus, He is truly glorious.

In Vändävana, Kāñëa's smiling face and flute playing remove the suffering of the Vrajaväsés. What distress do they endure? They suffer only from feelings of separation from Him. They have no other problem.



**"When one lights a fire for cooking,
darkness and cold are dissipated
as a secondary result.**

**Similarly, when one performs *bhakti*,
the cycle of birth and death is halted
as a secondary result."**





“In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa’s smiling face and flute playing remove the suffering of the Vrajavāsīs.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Sweet Smile

This verse contains the pastimes of Gokula, Vāndāvana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Çyāma-kuṇḍa, as well as the *rāsa-līlā* and all the other pastimes of Vraja:

*su-smīta-çré-mukhena
vraja-pura-vanītānāḥ vārdhayan kāmā-devam*

The smile on Kāñḍā’s beautiful face always increases the *kāma* (*prema*) of the damsels of Vāndāvana and the queens of Dvārakā. Here, *kāmā-devam* does not refer to material lust, but to *prema*. What kind of *prema*? *Sneha, māna, praēaya, rāga, anurāga, bhāva*

and *mahābhāva*. The *gopīs* tell Kāñḍā, “You are the personification of that Kāmādeva.”

Kāmā-devam refers to that Çré Kāñḍā who causes the desire to satisfy Him to appear in the hearts of His devotees. It also means that by increasing the *kāma* (*prema*) of the *gopīs*, He destroys any remaining attachment they may have for their relatives in this world. In other words, He cuts their material entanglement. This *kāma* is known to vanquish all types of goals. For the *gopīs*, however, that same *kāma*, or *prema*, uproots their entanglement in family life. The limits of that *kāma* increase at every moment, assuming ever new forms.

Çré Kāñḍā resides in the hearts of the *gopīs* as Kāmādeva. The function of *kāma* acts everywhere in this world, but Çré Kāñḍā Himself performs that function in the *gopīs*’ hearts. As Kāmādeva, He stimulates *kāma*, and therefore He exists eternally in full splendour. Here the words *çré-mukhena* mean “whose gentle, smiling lotus face is full of beauty and sweetness”. He expands the playful activities of *kāma*, which are characterised by His enjoyment with the *gopīs* of Vraja, and thus He exists gloriously.

If we take the word *pura* to denote Mathurā and Dvārakā also, the meaning becomes “He who stimulates the *kāma* of the *vraja-gopīs* and the queens of Mathurā and Dvārakā exists in full glory.” The word *pura* also implies Kāñḍā’s going to Mathurā, and thus indicates the *gopīs*’ highest pangs of separation from Him. Therefore His pastime of leaving Gokula and then returning manifests the supreme excellence of His *prema*.

Another meaning can be taken: “That person who increases the paramour mood of *kāma* (*prema*) in others’ wives, namely, the *gopīs*, intensifies the highest level of suffering. But for this He cannot be blamed. It is the nature of the gentle, sweet smile on His lotus face to burn the hearts of others.” The *gopīs* glorify Çré Kāñḍā’s smile, knowing that it captivates the hearts of all the living entities and destroys the heat of lust in His devotees. But they also criticise this same smile, because it has severed their worldly attachments. This severance, however, is in fact nothing but Çré Kāñḍā’s compassion.

The Essence of All Vedic Scriptures

It is with this verse that Çréla Çukadeva Gosvämé concluded his description of Kånëa's pastimes in *Çrémad-Bhägavatam*. Mahäräja Parékñit later recited this same verse at the end of *Çré Båhad-bhägavatämåta*. With this one verse, Çréla Çukadeva Gosvämé gave Parékñit Mahäräja – in one handful – the essence of the entire purport of the Vedas, Puråëas, *Mahåbhårata*, *Bhagavad-gétå* and *Råmåyaëa*.

This verse is indeed the essence of the vast ocean of Çré Kånëa's pastimes as described in various scriptures. It was Çréla Çukadeva Gosvämé's desire to place it in Parékñit Mahäräja's heart. With this one verse in the palm of his hand, Mahäräja Parékñit then taught his mother the essence of all Vedic literature, including *Çrémad-Bhägavatam*. All knowledge from the past, present and future lay in those teachings.

Mahäräja Parékñit first drank that nectar himself, thus becoming immortal and *rasika*, that is, realised in all transcendental mellows. He thereafter imparted this essence to his mother, telling her, "Don't think of Çré Kånëa as the Supreme Lord and the knower of all truths. Don't think of Him as He who has unlimited opulence. Think of Him only as the *gopés'* most beloved, and remember Him as your most beloved. May that very Çré Kånëa, the son of Yaçodå-maiyå, be victorious."

The Power of the Holy Name

All the deep purports of this verse can be realised by taking shelter of Çré Kånëa's holy name. Agastya Åñi's chanting of the holy name was so powerful that he was able to control the ocean. By sipping a mere palmful of water from the sea he dried up the entire ocean. Don't think that your chanting will not bear fruit. Through continuous chanting, *anarthas* will disappear and *rati* (*bhåva-bhakti*) and *sthåyibhåva*, your permanent relationship with Kånëa, will manifest. You will become more powerful than Agastya Åñi. Chanting the holy name will end your repeated birth and death in this world:

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

Çré Caitanya-caritāmåta (Ådi-lålå 17.21)

In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the sole means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of Çré Kånëa. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.

All of Çré Kånëa's sweet pastimes will enter the heart of the devotees who chant His holy name:

*harināma tuwā aneka svarūpa,
yaçodā-nandana, ānanda-varadhana,
nanda-tanaya rasa-kūpa*

Harināma Tuwā (1)

O Harināma, you possess unlimited forms, such as Yaçodå's beloved son, He who increases the bliss of Gokula, the son of Nanda, and the deep well of *rasa*.

All the pastimes of Çré Kånëa reside in the *mahå-mantra*: Hare Kånëa Hare Kånëa Kånëa Kånëa Hare Hare / Hare Råma Hare Råma Råma Råma Hare Hare.

Conclusion

In his *Båhad-bhägavatämåta*, Çréla Sanåtana Gosvämé quotes this verse from Canto Ten, which has many profound meanings. Previously, Çré Caitanya Mahåprabhu had explained to him sixty-one meanings of the *åtmåråma* verse (*Çrémad-Bhägavatam* 1.7.10). Çréla Sanåtana Gosvämé similarly offers numerous explanations for each word of the verse *jayati janā-nivåsaù*. His sole purpose is to convince his readers to enter the line of *kånëa-bhakti*. He and Caitanya Mahåprabhu can explain this verse in countless different ways – each meaning being deeper and more difficult to fathom than the previous one. ●

Based on the following lectures:
25 June 2004 (Verbania, Italy) and
24–29 September 2004
(Çré Keçavajé Gauðeya Maõha, Mathurå)

Śrī Puruṣottama Parikramā

A report by Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Dāmodara Mahārāja

2004



Grand Road, Jagannātha Purī

On 5–18 August this year, over five-hundred devotees from thirty different countries assembled in Çré Jagannātha Purī to observe the auspicious month of Çré Puruṣottama, under the guidance of oā viñēupāda Çré Çrémad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja. Çré Caitanya Maīha on Grand Road kindly agreed to host the festival. This maīha, which basks in the shadow of the graceful domes of the Çré Jagannātha Mandira, is the sacred birthsite of the compassionate founder of the Gauḍeya Maīhas, Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatē Ōhākura Prabhupāda. Surely it is due to his wonderful potency to deliver the entire world (*mahad-adbhuta-pāvana-çaktī*) that the Puruṣottama *vrata* and *parikramā* were especially exciting this year.

Residing on Grand Road, halfway between the Jagannātha Temple and Guḍōicā, the devotees were

easily able to remember the Ratha-yātrā festivals at the time of Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu. With His hundreds of intimate associates, Mahāprabhu performed very grand *harināma-sai kērtana* in the mood of Çrématē Rādhikā and the *gopēs* bringing Çré Kāñēa back to Vāndāvana from Kurukñetra.

The Glories of Puruṣottama Month

Puruṣottama comes once every two years, eight months, sixteen days and four hours, and is caused by the overlapping of the solar and lunar calendars. The *smārtas*, or followers of the *karma-kāēōa* section of the Vedas, and the Vaiñēavas have different views on this month. The *smārtas* neglect it, holding that no pious activity like fire sacrifice, giving in charity, marriage, and so on, should be undertaken in this month, because of its inauspicious quality. Accordingly, they give it various names like *māla-māsa* ("the

impure month”), *adhi-māsa* (“the leap month”) and even *chora-māsa* (“the thieving month”). Vaiñēavas, however, regard this month as sacred, and the Vaiñēava scriptures describe its profuse glories.

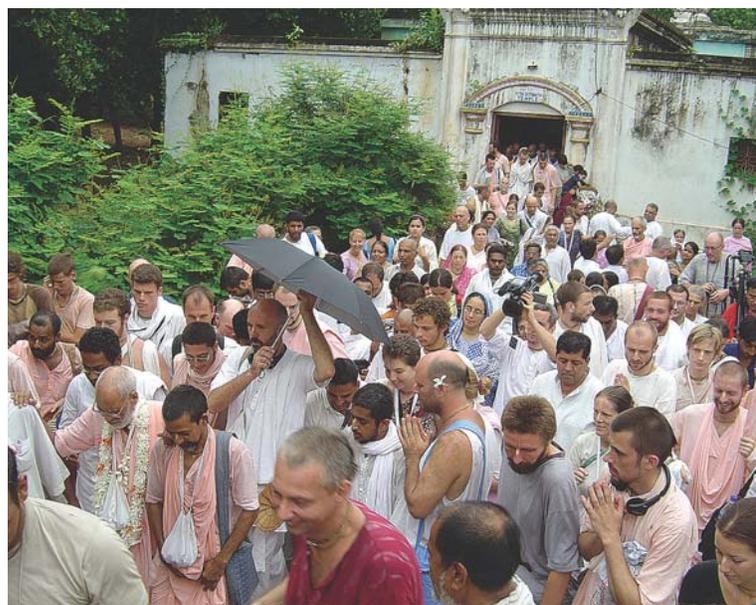
This month, being neglected by everyone, took shelter of Çré Nārāyaēa, who prayed to Çré Kāñēa on his behalf. Çré Kāñēa, being merciful, infused this month with all His qualities and potencies, making him equal to Himself. Thus this month was given the name Puruñottama. According to the Vaiñēava scriptures, the month of Puruñottama is worshipful for all.

Visiting the Sacred Places of Purī

Each morning, the devotees performed *parikramā* within Kñetra-maēōala, visiting the holy sites associated with the pastimes of both Çré Jagannātha and Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Çréla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja inaugurated the *parikramā* on the first morning by leading everyone past the Çré Jagannātha Mandira to the Gambhēra, where Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu spent the final years of His pastimes. On another day, Çréla Mahārāja accompanied the devotees to Ōoā-gopēnātha Mandira and spoke *hari-kathā* in the courtyard where Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu would hear the secrets of *Çrēmad-Bhāgavatam* from Çré Gadādhara Paēōita.

Some days later, Çréla Mahārāja also met the devotees at Lokanātha Mahādeva, one of the protectors of the *dhāma*. While the Indian devotees took *darçana*, he sat with the Western devotees outside and stressed the value of humility and eagerness. He said that if a person is unable to have *darçana* of Mahādeva but prays outside the temple with intense desire, considering himself more worthless than a blade of grass, then Lokanātha Mahādeva will certainly look kindly upon him. Such a person is sure to attain *kāñēa-prema*.

On other days, the pilgrims dodged the raindrops as they visited the many pastime places in Purī, including Çréla Haridāsa Ōhākura’s *samādhi* by the



Above: Çréla Mahārāja and the devotees at Ōoā-gopēnātha Temple



Right: *hari-kathā* at Çréla Haridāsa Ōhākura’s *samādhi*

ocean and his place of *bhajana* at Siddha-bakula; Çréla Sarasvatē Ōhākura Prabhupāda’s *bhajana-kuōēra* at Caōaka-parvata; Çré Jagadānanda Paēōita’s *bhajana-kuōēra*, where his Girirāja *çilā* is currently being worshiped; Indradyumna-sarovara and Narendra-sarovara; Jagannātha-vallabha-vatika, where Rāya Rāmānanda lived; Guēōicā and Nāsiāha Mandiras; Cakra-tērtha; and many other places. Bus trips were



Outside Lokanātha Mahādeva’s temple



The *parikramā* party at Cakra-tērtha

arranged to Ālālanātha, Bentāpura (Çré Rāya Rāmānanda's birthplace), Sākñi-gopāla Mandira, Nēla Mādha and many amazingly beautiful places in Bhubaneçvara, including Liī ga-rāja Mahādeva, Bindhu-sarovara, Ananta Vāsudeva and Gauri-kuëòà, where the devotees were able to take a refreshing bath in its medicinal waters.

An Ocean Full of Jewels

Of course, the main reason for visiting the holy places is to hear *hari-kathā* from the *sādhus* there. Thus, the highlight of the *parikramā* was Çréla Mahārāja's discourses on "Rāmānanda Saāvāda" from *Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta, Madhya-lēlā*, Chapter 8. This chapter relates the dialogue between Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Çré Rāmānanda Rāya at Godāvaré, in which Rāya Rāmānanda presents various goals of life (*sādhya*s) and methods to attain them (*sādhan*a)s, each successively higher than the previous one, until he reaches the most esoteric level of pure devotion. Çréla Mahārāja also spoke on "Rāmānanda Saāvāda" during the month of Puruñottama in Puré three years ago; nonetheless, his classes this year made the assembled devotees think they had never heard this discussion before.

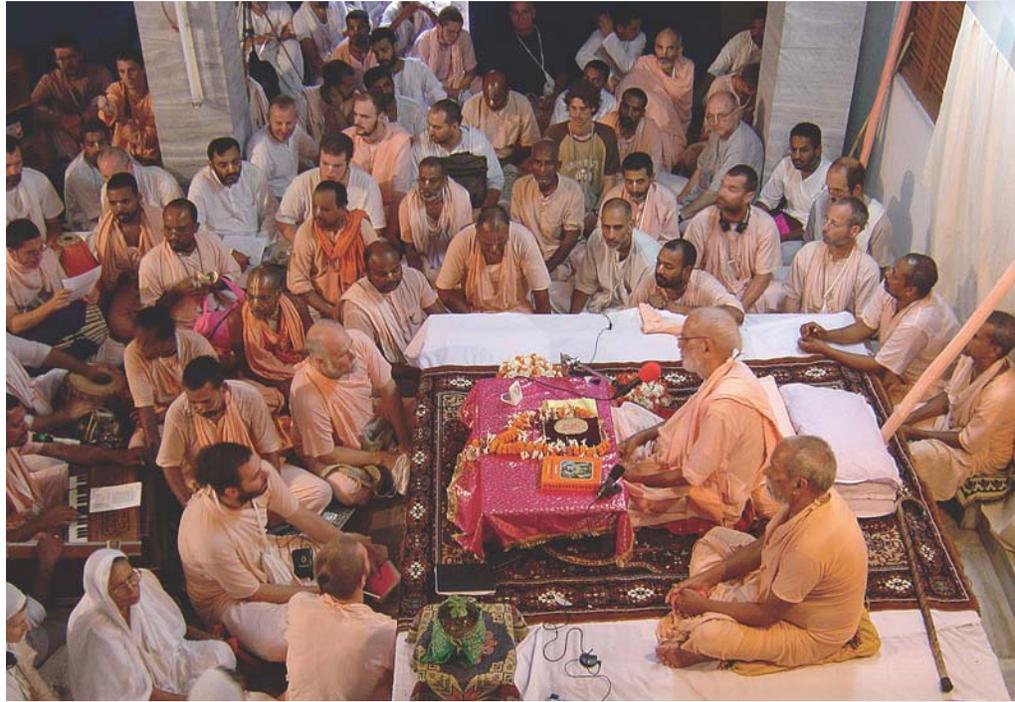
Çréla Mahārāja devoted the first two classes to discussing the opening verse of the chapter:

*sai cārya rāmābhidha-bhakta-meghe
sva-bhakti-siddhānta-cayāmātāni
gaurābhir etair amunā vitērēais
taj-ji atva-ratnālayatāà prayāti*

Çré Gaurāi ga is the ocean of all *bhakti-siddhānta*, conclusive truths about pure devotion. He infused these into the heart of Çré Rāmānanda Rāya, who became like a cloud filled with the water of the deepest and most esoteric purports of *bhakti*. Now empowered by the ocean of Çré Gaurahari, this cloud showered its rain back upon the sea, filling it with

valuable jewels, which are Çré Gaurāi ga's realisations of Çré Rādhikā's moods.

Çréla Mahārāja beautifully described how Çré Gaurahari is like a golden, unending ocean full of the nectar of *bhakti-rasa*. This ambrosial ocean is completely astonishing, unprecedented, unequalled and sweeter than the sweetest. And its waves are Mahāprabhu's pastimes wherein He undergoes differ-



ent ecstatic transformations. Çré Gaurahari, being Çré Kāñēa Himself, is the original compiler of the Vedas and the source of the science of *bhakti-rasa*. Thus, as a cloud is formed by the condensation of the water from the ocean, Çré Rāmānanda Rāya, being an incarnation of Çré Viçākhā-devé, is himself a condensed, pure form of the *madhura-rasa* contained in Çré Gaurahari.

Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu is not Çré Rādhā, but Çré Kāñēa covered by Her golden complexion and inner sentiments. Therefore, He has accepted Çré Rāmānanda Rāya as His *çikñā-guru* in order to fulfil His three inner purposes – namely, to understand (1) the glory of Çré Rādhā's love, (2) the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and (3) the happiness She feels when She realises the sweetness of His love. Thus, Çré Rāmānanda Rāya is the cloud, and his explanations of all *bhakti-siddhānta* are like

the rain falling at the time of the constellation known as Svätë, which produces jewels in the ocean. This *siddhānta* entered the ocean-like heart of Çré Gaurahari and produced the most astonishing jewels – realisation of the three reasons for His descent.

A Quandry: Mahāprabhu’s Prayers to Śrī Nṛsiṃha

Although Çréman Mahāprabhu toured South India on the pretext of finding His older brother, Çré Viçvarüpa, His real intention was to meet His dear associate Çré Rāmānanda Rāya. Before reaching Vidyānagara, Mahāprabhu passed through the place of pilgrimage known as Jiyaḍa-nāsiḍha. Upon beholding the deity of Çré Nāsiḍha in the temple, He offered His respectful obeisances and danced in great ecstasy. “O Nāsiḍhadeva,” He called out, “You are the lord of Prahlāda Mahārāja and, like a honeybee, are always engaged in beholding the lotus-like face of the goddess of fortune.”

This raises a question: if Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu is always absorbed in tasting the moods of Çrématé Rādhikā, why would He wish to taste the moods of Çré Lakīmé-devé, as expressed in the prayers He offered? Çréla Mahārāja explained that Çré Kāñēa is the enjoyer of all types of *rāsa* and that Lakīmé-devé is but an expansion of Çré Rādhā. Contained in Çrématé Rādhikā’s *prema* is every variety of *rāsa*, including the *prema* of Lakīmé-devé. Thus, Mahāprabhu’s tasting the special quality of Lakīmé-devé’s *prema* is not contrary to His tasting *rādhā-bhāva*. Rather, the former fully compliments the latter.

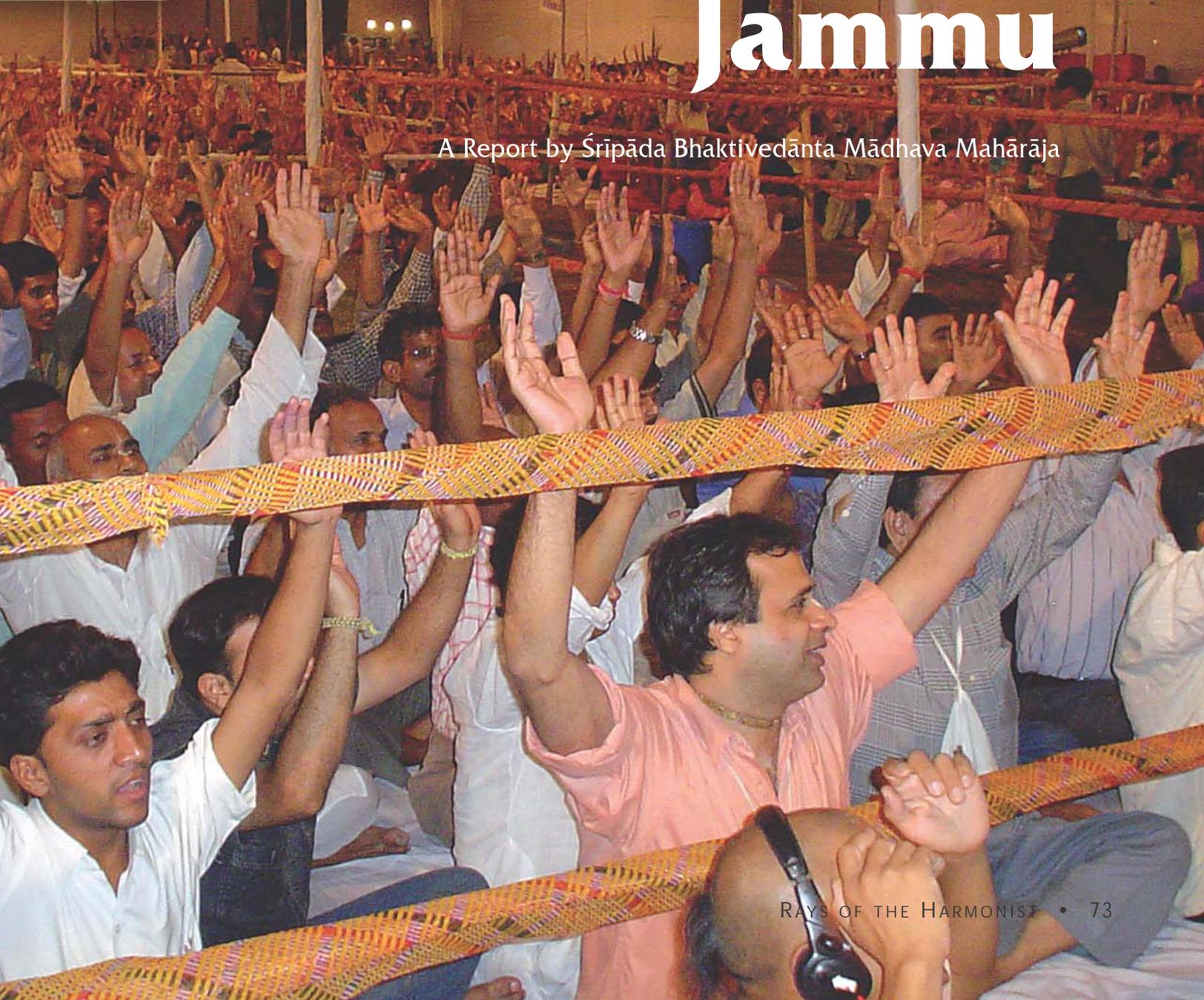
With this unprecedented, sweet introduction, the assembled devotees gratefully bathed in the shower of Çréla Mahārāja’s *hari-kathā* for the duration of the *parikramā*. This “Rāmānanda Saḍvāda” is so potent that it can inspire in one’s heart the very highest of all desires. Çréla Mahārāja requested that his lectures on this conversation be translated into English and compiled into a book, a project that is now under way. When the *parikramā* came to an end on 18 August, everyone found that his pockets had been filled with priceless gems. By the causeless mercy of our supremely pure and compassionate *guru-paramparā*, no one’s heart was left empty. ●





Mahāprabhu's Mercy Touches Noida and Jammu

A Report by Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja



Noida, New Delhi

Following in the footsteps of our illustrious Gauḍeya predecessors, Ṣṛēla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja continues to push forward the mission of Ṣṛē Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout India and the rest of the world. On 1 October this year, he led a grand Ratha-yātrā procession through the streets of Noida, New Delhi, accompanied by *kērtana* parties, floats, musical bands, elephants and great fanfare. The main purpose, of course, was to attract thousands of locals to a large pandal programme in Noida, arranged for 2–5 October by the devotees of Ṣṛē Rādhā-Govinda Gauḍeya Maīha in collaboration with a religious society named Bāi ke-Bihārē Mitra Maēḍala.

At this programme, Ṣṛēla Mahārāja delivered powerful lectures on *Ṣṛēmad-Bhāgavatam* every evening from 5:00 to 7:00, stressing the need to take full advantage of this human life. Only by developing deep love and attachment for the Vaiñēavas, for Ṣṛē Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and for Ṣṛē Rādhā and Ṣṛē Kāñēa, can one find any true meaning and fulfilment in this life.

"Some speakers recite *Ṣṛēmad-Bhāgavatam* for a fee," Ṣṛēla Mahārāja said, "And because they rely upon payment from their hosts, they are obligated to satisfy their audience by telling them what they want to hear. I have not come to offer this kind of *hari-kathā*. I have not come to provide mere entertainment. Rather, I have come to speak the uncompromised truth and thus help you become happy and make your lives successful."

Every evening the immense, well-decorated, high-tech pandal was packed



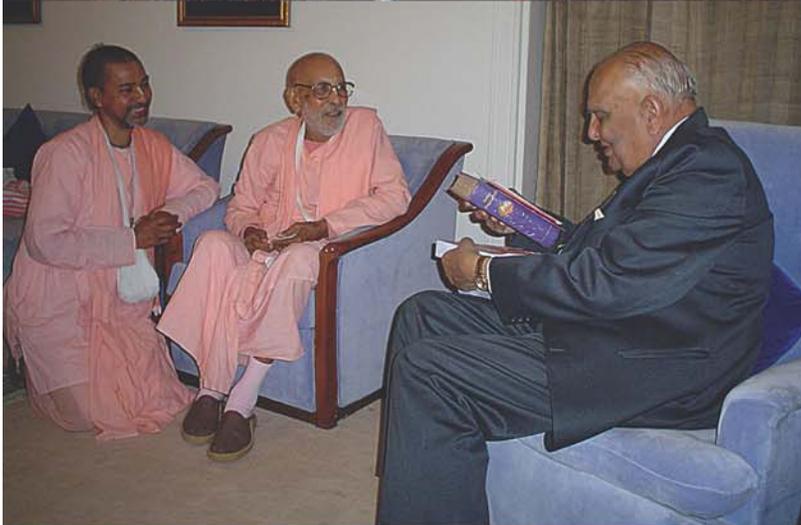
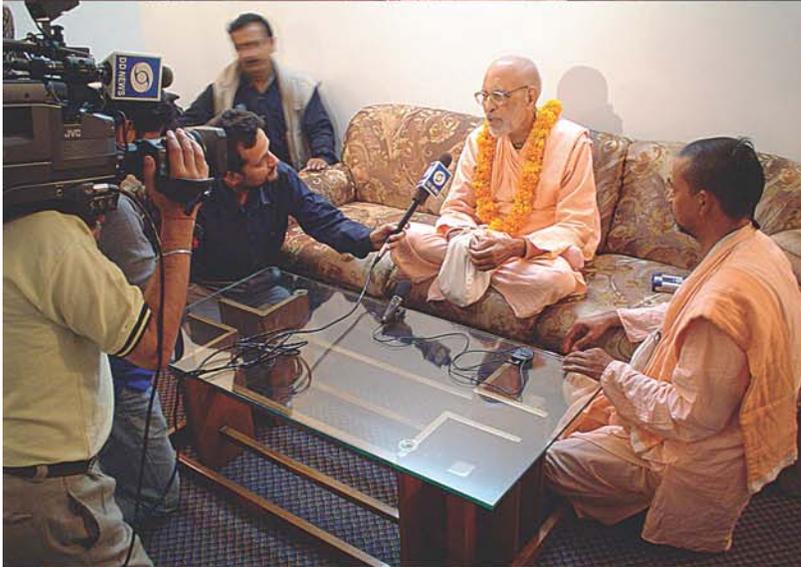


with up to five thousand eager listeners, mostly educated and affluent inhabitants of Noida and New Delhi. Çré Ashok Pradhan, Member of Parliament for Noida, and Çré Nawab Singh, Member of the Legislative Assembly, also attended and sought Çréla Mahārāja's blessings. Altogether, some hundred people requested *harināma* initiation.

A second successful programme was also held in Faridabad, on 23 and 24 October.

Jammu and Kashmir

Çréla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja also travelled to Jammu, where he spread the message of Çré Caitanya Mahāprabhu with great energy. From 8–14 October, he delivered powerful lectures each afternoon from 3:00 to 6:00. The government of Jammu and Kashmir honoured him as a state guest during his visit, hosting him in a special guesthouse and arranging for him to be chauffeured with a full security escort. Çréla Mahārāja was cordially received at the airport by Çré Sobha Ram, Deputy Director of Hospitality of the Protocol Department. The Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Çré S. K. Sinha, and its Deputy Chief Minister, Çré Mangat Ram Sharma, personally came to meet Çréla Mahārāja and obtain his auspicious blessings. Çréla Mahārāja requested them to kindly assist in spreading Mahāprabhu's *sai kērtana* movement by providing some land in Jammu for this purpose. ●



Opposite page: *Ratha-yātrā* and *hari-kathā* in Noida, New Delhi.

This page (from top): ecstatic *kērtana* in Jammu; Çréla Mahārāja holds a press conference in Jammu; the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir receives *Bhagavad-gētā*; and the Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir meets Çréla Mahārāja.



Passing Away of Mūlaprakṛti Dāsī

By Śrīmatī Mañjarī dāsī



On Ekādaṣī, 12 July 2004 at 8:26 a.m., our dear Godsister and friend Mūlaprakṛti dāsī gloriously departed from this world. In September 2003, she was diagnosed with cancer and, after a courageous battle with the disease, returned to Vāndāvana to spend her final days.

Those of you who knew Mūlaprakṛti will remember the intensity with which she lived her life. She had a burning desire to serve her spiritual master, Ṣrēla Bhaktivedānta Svāmē Prabhupāda, by preaching. She joined ISKCON in Los Angeles in 1973, and in the early years, shot to the top of the book distribution charts, distributing literally hundreds of thousands of books all over the United States and Japan and collecting millions of dollars for Ṣrēla Prabhupāda's projects.

After Ṣrēla Prabhupāda's departure, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī and her husband, Gopavāndapāla Prabhu, initiated unique programmes to develop spiritual communities and foster loving relationships between devotees. Their two sons and daughter – Ṣravaēa dāsa, Kīrtana dāsa and Nityā dāsī – are testimony to the devotion and dedication with which they lived their lives.

In more recent years, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī's abiding desire to act as a bridge between devotees blossomed as her horizon expanded to include the entire family of Gauḍeya Vaiñēavas. She began a book of interviews of people who knew Ṣrēla Prabhupāda before he went to the West. She became inspired by Ṣrēla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja, who understood her great sincerity and encouraged her desire to glorify her Ṣrēla Prabhupāda.

Mūlaprakṛti dāsī took her personal *bhajana* very seriously, waking every morning at 3 a.m. to chant – gradually coming to one *lākha* – and worship her

govardhana-ṣilā. Mūlaprakṛti also traveled widely and touched the lives of countless devotees with her sweet, loving exchanges, her exemplary humility and her yearning for devotees to realise their common bonds.

Ṣrēla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja came to visit Mūlaprakṛti in her final days. She reached out to touch his lotus feet, and he said to her, "Don't be afraid. Very soon you will give up these old clothes, and beautiful, new ones will come and you will be with all of Kāñēa's *bhaktas* in the *kui'jas* of Vāndāvana. Yes, I know where you are going, and I'm not afraid for you. You should leave very soon, without delay."

Mūlaprakṛti said, "I am thinking of Ṣrēla Prabhupāda."

"That is good," Ṣrēla Mahārāja told her. "Ṣrēla Prabhupāda is with you. And I will help you also."

Before she lost the strength to speak, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī assured us she was chanting in her mind. At times she confided that Ṣrēla Prabhupāda was blessing her with profound experiences. Her last audible words were "Hare Kāñēa".

In the end, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī lay under a beautiful portrait of Ṣrēla Prabhupāda, with Kāñēa's thick *tulasē* garland and Rādhārāē's flower belt encircling her face, her beloved Deity, Girijiu, touching her forehead, and impressions of Ṣrēla Prabhupāda's lotus feet behind her head. The holy names were written in *gopē-candana tilaka* on her body.

Hearing of Mūlaprakṛti's passing, devotees stopped whatever they were doing and came from all over. After a tumultuous *kīrtana*, they performed her last rites on the bank of the Yamunā. We pay our heart-felt *praēāmas* to this great Vaiñēavē, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī, who graced our lives with her friendship and love and taught *guru-niñhā* by her life's example. ●

Hari Hari Āra Kabe Palatibe Daśā

(Prārthanā)

by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura

**hari hari āra kabe palatibe daṣā
ei saba kariyā vāme, yāba vāndāvana-dhāme,
ei mane kariyāchi āṣā (1)**

hari – O Ṣṛé Hari; *hari* – O Ṣṛé Hari; *āra* – and; *kabe* – when; *palatibe* – will become changed; *daṣā* – condition of life; *ei* – this; *saba* – all; *kariyā* – doing; *vāme* – unfavourable; *yāba* – I will go; *vāndāvana-dhāme* – to the abode of Vāndāvana; *ei* – this; *mane* – in my mind; *kariyāchi* – I do; *āṣā* – the hope.

O Ṣṛé Hari, when will my life change? When will I renounce all worldly affairs and make my way to Ṣṛé Vāndāvana-dhāma? I cherish this hope.

**dhana jana putra dāre, e saba kariyā dūre,
ekānta haiyā kabe yāba
saba duṁkha parihāri, vāndāvane vāsa kari,
mādhukarē māgiyā khāiba (2)**

dhana – wealth; *jana* – followers; *putra* – children; *dāre* – wife; *e* – this; *saba* – everything; *kariyā* – placing; *dūre* – far away; *ekānta* – with one-pointed determination; *haiyā* – being; *kabe* – when; *yāba* – will I go; *saba* – all; *duṁkha* – material miseries; *parihāri* – giving up; *vāndāvane* – in Vāndāvana; *vāsa* – residence; *kari* – doing; *mādhukarē* – alms; *māgiyā* – begging; *khāiba* – I will eat.

When will I leave my wealth, followers, children, wife and all else far behind and, with one-pointed determination, head to Vāndāvana? When will I forget all material miseries and live in Vāndāvana, eating only what food I can get by begging?

**yamunāra jala yena, amāta samāna hena,
kabe piba udāra pūriyā
kabe rādhā-kuēōa-jale, snāna kari kutuhale,
ṣyāma-kuēōa rahiba pāōiyā (3)**

yamunāra – of the Yamunā; *jala* – the water; *yena* – by which; *amāta* – nectar; *samāna* – equal; *hena* – like this; *kabe* – when; *piba* – I will drink; *udāra* – my belly; *pūriyā* – filling; *kabe* – when; *rādhā-kuēōa* – of Rādhā-kuēōa; *jale* – in the water; *snāna* – bath; *kari* – taking; *kutuhale* – with eagerness; *ṣyāma-kuēōa* – at Ṣyāma-kuēōa; *rahiba* – I will stay; *pāōiyā* – having come.

When will I drink my fill of the Yamunā's ambrosial water? When will I eagerly bathe at Rādhā-kuēōa? When will I make my residence at Ṣyāma-kuēōa?

**bhramiba dvādaṣa vane, rasa-keli ye ye sthāne,
premāveṣe gaōāgaōi diyā
sudhāiba jane jane, vrajavāsē-gaēa-sthāne,
nivediba caraēe dhariyā (4)**

bhramiba – I shall wander; *dvādaṣa* – twelve; *vane* – in the forests; *rasa-keli* – of Ṣṛé Kāñēa's pastimes filled with transcendental mellows; *ye ye* – various; *sthāne* – places; *prema-āveṣe* – overwhelmed by *prema*; *gaōāgaōi* – rolling about on the ground; *diyā* – doing; *sudhāiba* – I shall enquire; *jane jane* – to all the people; *vrajavāsē-gaēa* – of the residents of Vraja; *sthāne* – at the places; *nivediba* – I shall offer prayers; *caraēe* – their lotus feet; *dhariyā* – taking.

I shall wander through the twelve forests of Vāndāvana where Ṣṛé Kāñēa performed His pastimes full of rasa and roll on the ground, overwhelmed by *prema*. I shall enquire about the pastimes that took place in each location from all the Vrajavāsīs, reverently offering them prayers and holding their lotus feet.

**bhajanera sthāna kabe, nayana-gocara habe,
āra yata ache upavana
tāra madhye vāndāvana, narottama dāsera mana,
āṣā kare yugala caraēa (5)**

bhajanera – of service; *sthāna* – the place; *kabe* – when; *nayana* – of the eyes; *gocara* – within the range of perception; *habe* – will be; *āra* – and; *yata* – as many as; *ache* – there are; *upavana* – forest gardens; *tāra* – of them; *madhye* – in the midst; *vāndāvana* – Vāndāvana; *narottama dāsera* – of Narottama dāsa; *mana* – the heart; *āṣā* – the hope; *kare* – does; *yugala* – of the Divine Couple; *caraēa* – the lotus feet.

When will I behold my place of *bhajana*? When will I see the various forest gardens like Ṣṛé Vāndāvana? In his heart, Narottama dāsa cherishes the hope that one day he will attain service to the lotus feet of the Divine Couple in Ṣṛé Vāndāvana. ●

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