

Rays of The Harmonist

GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA PUBLICATIONS

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Govinda-Dāmodara-Mādhaveti

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



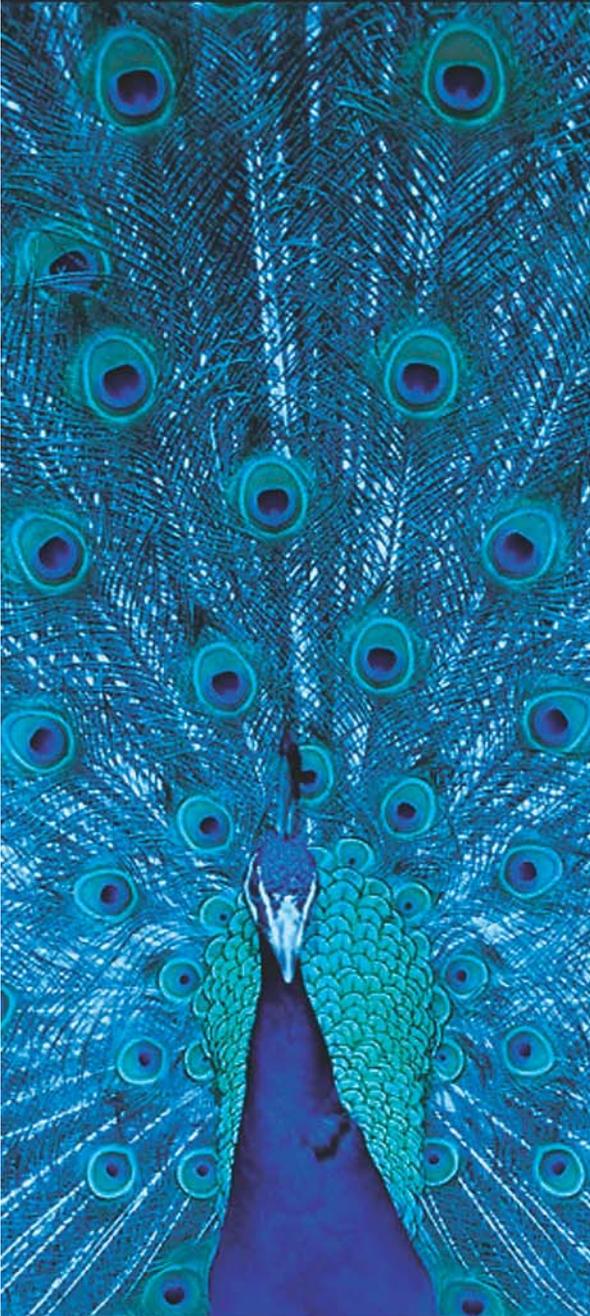
*dīvyad-vṛndāraṇya-kalpa-drumādhaḥ
śrīmad ratnāgāra-simhāsana-sthau
śrī-śrī-rādhā-śrīla-govinda-devau
preṣṭhālībhiḥ sevyamānau smarāmi*

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:
Śrī Rādhā-Govinda-deva in Jaipura

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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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Tridaṇḍi Svāmī
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 Gauḍīya line following Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. This journal continues its auspicious work of fearlessly spreading the glories of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārījī. To do so is its sole purpose and life. This journal offers the regular service (*niyama-sevā*) 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, Śrī 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, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, appeared in the sky of the souls' great fortune simply to reveal the speciality of Kṛṣṇa's holy name. He established *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the original evidence in the form of transcendental sound, and pure love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the supreme goal of life.

In this age of Kali, the only means to worship the Supreme Lord is through *saṅkīrtana-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 "*anavṛtti śabdāt*" from *Vedānta-sūtra* directs us to worship the holy name. But with what kind of intense eagerness is such worship performed? Śrī 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 Kṛṣṇa's holy name, which is non-different from Kṛṣṇa Himself, as they sing "*govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti*".

Written by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja for the Editorial to *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year 23, Issue 1 (1972).

Adapted for *Rays of the Harmonist*.



śrī govinda-dāmodara

by Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura

**agre kurūṇām atha pāṇḍavānām
duḥśāsanenā-hṛta-vastra-keśā
kṛṣṇā tadākrośad-ananya-nāthā
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (1)**

kṛṣṇā – Draupadī; *keśā* – whose hair; *vastra* – and clothing; *āhṛta* – had been seized; *duḥśāsanena* – by Duḥśāsana; *agre* – in front of; *kurūṇām atha pāṇḍavānām* – the Kurus and Pāṇḍavas; *tadā* – then; *akrośat* – called out; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava! *ananya-nāthā* – having accepted Him as her only master.

When Duḥśāsana seized Draupadī’s hair and *sārī* in the assembly of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, she accepted Śrī Kṛṣṇa as her only shelter and loudly beseeched Him, “O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava!”

**śrī-kṛṣṇa viṣṇo madhu-kaiṭabhāre
bhaktānukampin bhagavan murāre
trayasva mām keśava lokanātha
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (2)**

śrī-kṛṣṇa – O all-attractive one; *viṣṇo* – O all-pervasive one; *are* – O enemy; *madhu-kaiṭabha* – of the demons Madhu and Kaiṭabha; *bhakta-anukampin* – O You who are merciful to Your devotees; *bhagavan* – O all-opulent Lord; *murāre* – O destroyer of demonic qualities like those of the demon Mura; *trayasva* – deliver; *mām* – me; *keśava* – O Lord of Ka (Brahmā) and Īśa (Śiva); *lokanātha* – O Lord of the worlds; *iti* – thus;

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

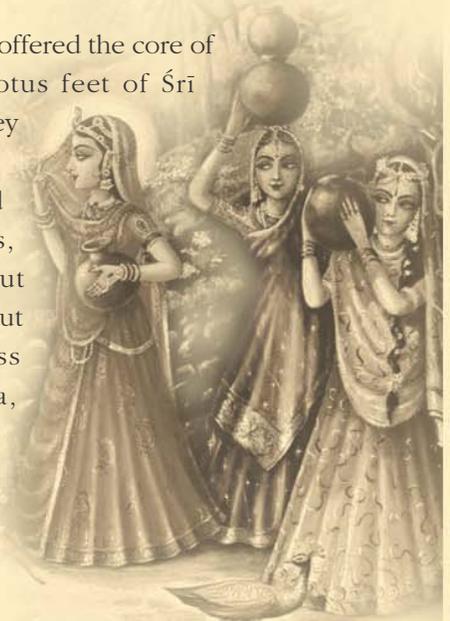
“O Kṛṣṇa! O Viṣṇu! Slayer of Madhu and Kaiṭabha! O You who are sympathetic to Your devotees! O all-opulent Lord, enemy of the demon Mura, save me! O Keśava! O Lokanātha! O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava!”



**vikretu-kāmākhila-gopa-kanyā
murāri-pādārpita-citta-vṛttiḥ
dadhy-ādikaṁ moha-vaśād avocad
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (3)**

citta-vṛttiḥ – the inner sentiments of the heart; *akhila-gopa-kanyā* – of all the *gopīs* (of Vraja); *arpita* – were offered; *murāri-pāda* – at the feet of Murāri; *vikretu-kāma* – desiring to sell; *dadhi-ādikaṁ* – yoghurt and other dairy products; *moha-vaśāt* – being overwhelmed by delusion; *avocad* – they called out; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

The *gopīs* of Vraja had offered the core of their hearts at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. 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 sambhṛta-taṇḍulāṁś ca
saṅghaṭṭayanto musalaiḥ pramugdhāḥ
gāyanti gopyo janitānurāgā
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (4)**

saṅghaṭṭayantaḥ – as they crushed; *sambhṛta-taṇḍulān* – the stored rice; *musalaiḥ* – with their pestles; *ca* – and; *ulūkhale* – grinding mortars; *pramugdhāḥ* – the enchanted; *gopyaḥ* – *gopīs*; *anurāgāḥ* – (in whose hearts) the state of *anurāga*, in which one always thinks one is beholding Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the first time; *janita* – was born; *gāyanti* – sang; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

While threshing their stock of rice with their mortars and pestles, the *gopīs*, their hearts enchanted by *anurāga* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, would sing “O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



**kācit karāmbhoja-pute niṣaṇṇam
krīḍāśukam kimśuka-rakta-tuṇḍam
adhyāpayām āsa saroruhākṣī
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (5)**

kācit – one of them; *saroruhā-akṣī* – lotus-eyed girls; *adhyāpayām āsa* – taught; *krīḍā-śukam* – her pet parrot; *niṣaṇṇam* – sitting; *kara-ambhoja-pute* – in the hollow of her lotus-like hand; *tuṇḍam* – with its beak; *kimśuka-rakta* – which was red as *kimśuka* blossoms; *iti* – (to sing) thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.



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 *kimśuka* tree, to sing “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



**grhe grhe gopa-vadhū-samūhaḥ
pratikṣaṇam piñjara-sārikāṇām
skhalad-giram vācayitum pravṛtto
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (6)**

grhe grhe – in every home; *gopa-vadhū-samūhaḥ* – all the wives of the cowherds; *pratikṣaṇam* – at every moment; *pravṛttaḥ* – were engaged; *vācayitum* – in inciting to chant; *skhalad-giram* – with faltering voice; *sārikāṇām* – the female parrots; *piñjara* – within their cages; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

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, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



***paryyaṅkikā-bhājam alam kumāraṁ
prasvāpayantyo 'khila-gopa-kanyāḥ
jaguḥ prabandham svara-tāla-bandham
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (7)***

akhila-gopa-kanyāḥ – all the *gopīs*; *alam* – intensely; *prasvāpayantyaḥ* – in the attempt to put to sleep; *kumāram* – the little boy; *paryyaṅkikā-bhājam* – in bed; *jaguḥ* – 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 *gopīs* would tirelessly sing “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”, while clapping in rhythm.

***rāmānujaṁ vīkṣaṇa-keli-lolaṁ
gopī grhītvā navaṇīta-golaṁ
ābālakaṁ bālakaṁ ājuhāva
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (8)***

grhītvā – taking; *navanīta-golaṁ* – a ball of fresh butter; *gopī* – Yaśodā; *ājuhāva* – called; *bālakaṁ* – her boy; *rāmānujam* – Kṛṣṇa, the younger brother of Balarāma; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava; *vīkṣaṇa-keli-lolaṁ* – whose eyes were playfully dancing; *ābālakaṁ* – within the entourage of boys.

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

***vicitra-varṇābharaṇābhirāme
'bhidhehi vaktrāmbuja-rāja-haṁsi
sadā madīye rasane 'graraṅge
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (9)***

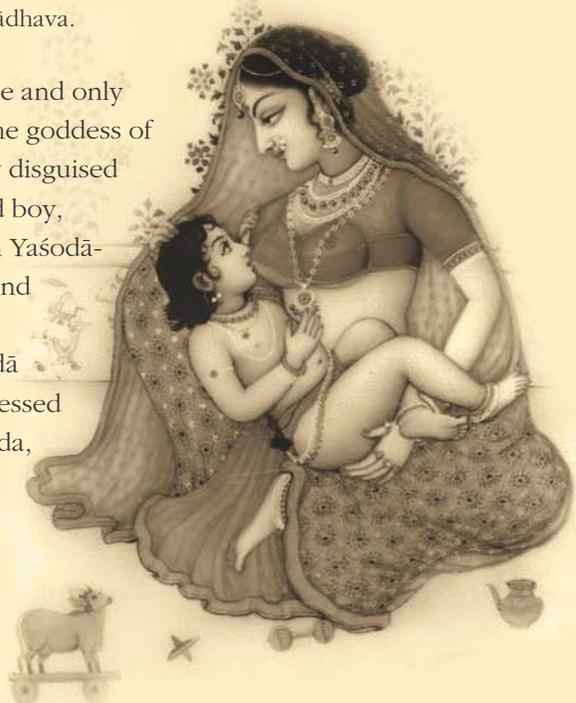
madīye rasane – O my tongue; *rāja-haṁsi* – O queen of swans; *vaktra-ambuja* – with a face like a blossoming lotus; *vicitra-varṇa-abharaṇa-abhirāme* – O you who delight in decorating yourself with astonishing syllables; *agra-raṅge* – with your delightful tip; *sadā* – incessantly; *abhidhehi* – call 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”.

***aṅkādhirūḍham śīśu-gopa-gūḍham
stanam dhayantam kamalaika-kāntam
sambodhayām āsa mudā yaśodā
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (10)***

kamalā-eka-kāntam – (as) the only beloved of the goddess of fortune; *śīśu-gopa-gūḍham* – in the guise of a cowherd boy; *aṅka-adhirūḍham* – was sitting in her lap; *dhayantam* – sucking; *stanam* – her breast; *yaśodā* – Yaśodā-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 Yaśodā-maiyā's lap and sucking her breast, Yaśodā joyfully addressed Him, “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.





***krīḍantam-antar-vrajam ātmajam svam
samam vayasyaiḥ paśu-pāla-bālaiḥ
premnā yaśodā prajuhāva kṛṣṇam
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (11)***

yaśodā – Yaśodā-maiyā; *prajuhāva* – called out; *premnā* – with love; *ātmajam svam* – her own son; *kṛṣṇam* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *krīḍantam* – who was playing; *antar-vrajam* – in Vraja; *paśu-pāla-bālaiḥ* – with cowherd boys; *samam vayasyaiḥ* – of His own age; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda! Dāmodara! Mādhava!

Yaśodā-maiyā lovingly called out to her son Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was playing somewhere in Vraja with the cowherd boys His own age, “Govinda! Dāmodara! Mādhava!”



***yaśodayā gāḍham ulūkhalena
go-kaṇṭha-pāśena nibadhyamānaḥ
ruroda mandam navanīta-bhojī
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (12)***

gāḍham – (while) tightly; *nibadhyamānaḥ* – binding; *navanīta-bhojī* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the eater of fresh butter; *ulūkhalena* – to the grinding mortar; *go-kaṇṭha-pāśena* – with a rope used for tying the necks of the cows; *yaśodayā* – Yaśodā-maiyā; *ruroda* – wept; *mandam* – gently; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

While tightly binding Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who had eaten fresh butter, to the grinding mortar with a rope used for tying cows, Yaśodā-maiyā wept gently, softly saying “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



***nijāṅgane kaṅkana-keli-lolam
gopī grhītvā navanīta-golam
āmardayat pāṇi-talena netre
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (13)***

grhītvā – bringing; *navanīta-golam* – a ball of butter; *gopī* – Yaśodā Gopī; *nija-aṅgane* – (entered) her courtyard; *kaṅkana-keli-lolam* – (where Kṛṣṇa was) playing with His jingling bracelets; *āmardayat* – she covered; *netre* – His eyes; *pāṇi-talena* – by the palm of the hand; *iti* – (and lovingly called) thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

With a handful of butter, Yaśodā Gopī approached Kṛṣṇa, who was in the courtyard absorbed in playing with the jingling bracelets around his wrists. With her other hand Yaśodā-maiyā covered His eyes and lovingly called, “O my dear Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



***grhe grhe gopa-vadhū-kadambāḥ
sarve militvā samavāya-yoge
puṇyāni nāmāni paṭhanti nityam
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (14)***

grhe grhe – coming from each and every house (in Vraja); *gopa-vadhū-kadambāḥ* – the multitude of *gopīs*; *sarve* – all; *nityam* – regularly; *militvā* – meeting; *samavāya-yoge* – in an assembly; *paṭhanti* – they recited; *puṇyāni* – the purifying; *nāmāni* – names (of Śrī Kṛṣṇa); *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara and Mādhava.

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

Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s purifying names, such as “Govinda”, “Dāmodara” and “Mādhava”.



***mandāra-mūle vadanābhirāmaṁ
bimbādhare pūrīta-veṇu-nādam
go-gopa-gopī-jana-madhya-saṁstham
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (15)***

vadana-abhirāmaṁ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who possesses a delightful face; *mandāra-mūle* – (and who was standing) at the root



of a *mandāra* (i.e. *kadamba*) tree; *go-gopa-gopī-jana-madhya-saṁstham* – in the assembly of cows, *gopas* and *gopīs*; *pūrīta-veṇu-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.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose face is very charming and who was standing at the root of a large *kadamba* tree among the assembled cows, *gopas* and *gopīs*, 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
smṛtvā yaśodā-suta-bāla-kelim
gāyanti proccair dadhi manthayantyo
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (16)***

gopyaḥ – the *gopīs*; *utthāya* – after rising; *manthayantyaḥ* – while churning; *dadhi* – the yoghurt; *smṛtvā* – would remember; *bāla-kelim* – the childhood pleasure pastimes; *yaśodā-suta* – of Yaśodā-maiyā's son Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *bhoge* – during the bliss; *apara-rātra* – of the previous night; *gāyanti* – they sang; *proccaiḥ* – very loudly; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.



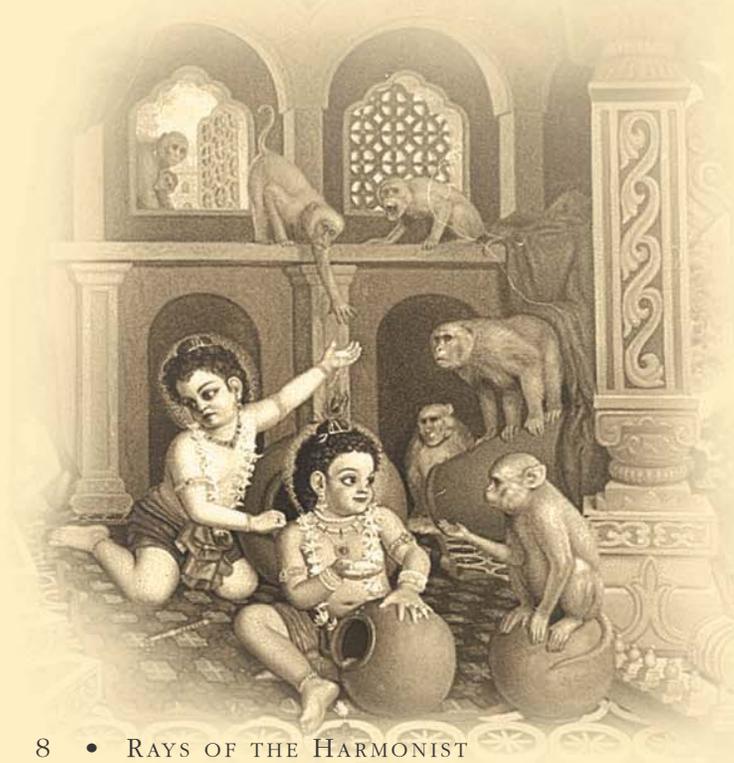
Upon waking, the *gopīs* would churn yoghurt while remembering the pleasurable childhood pastimes of Yaśodā-maiyā's son from the previous blissful night. In doing so, they would loudly sing “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



***jagdho 'tha datto navanīta-piṇḍo
grhe yaśodā vicikitsyantī
uvāca satyaṁ vada he murāre
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (17)***

yaśodā – Yaśodā-maiyā; *vicikitsyantī* – doubtfully observing; *navanīta-piṇḍaḥ* – (whether) the stock of butter; *grhe* – in her home; *jagdhaḥ* – had been eaten; *atha* – and; *dattaḥ* – had been given; *uvāca* – she said; *iti* – thus; *satyaṁ vada* – tell the truth; *he murāre* – O killer of Mura; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, O Dāmodara, O Mādhava.

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



**abhy arcya geham yuvatīḥ pravṛddha
prema-pravāhā dadhi nirmamantha
gāyanti gopyo 'tha sakhī-sametā
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (18)**

abhyarcya – after caring; *geham* – for the household chores; *yuvatīḥ* – the young girl (Yaśodā); *pravṛddha-prema-pravāhā* – her heart overflowing with very intense love; *nirmamantha* – churned; *dadhi* – yoghurt; *atha* – and; *sakhī-sametā* – surrounded by her friends; *gopyaḥ* – the *gopīs*; *gāyanti* – they sang; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava.

After tending to her household chores Yaśodā-maiyā, whose heart always overflows with intense love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, began to churn yoghurt, surrounded by her *gopī* friends. Together they sang “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava”.



**kvacit prabhāte dadhi-pūrṇa-pātre
nikṣīpya mantham yuvatī mukundam
ālokya gānam vividham karoti
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (19)**

kvacit – once; *prabhāte* – at dawn; *yuvatī* – the young girl (Yaśodā); *nikṣīpya* – while going to place; *mantham* – the churning rod; *dadhi-pūrṇa-pātre* – in a pot full of yoghurt; *ālokya* – looking; *mukundam* – at Mukunda; *karoti* – she made; *vividham* – this wonderful; *gānam* – song; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, O Dāmodara, O Mādhava.

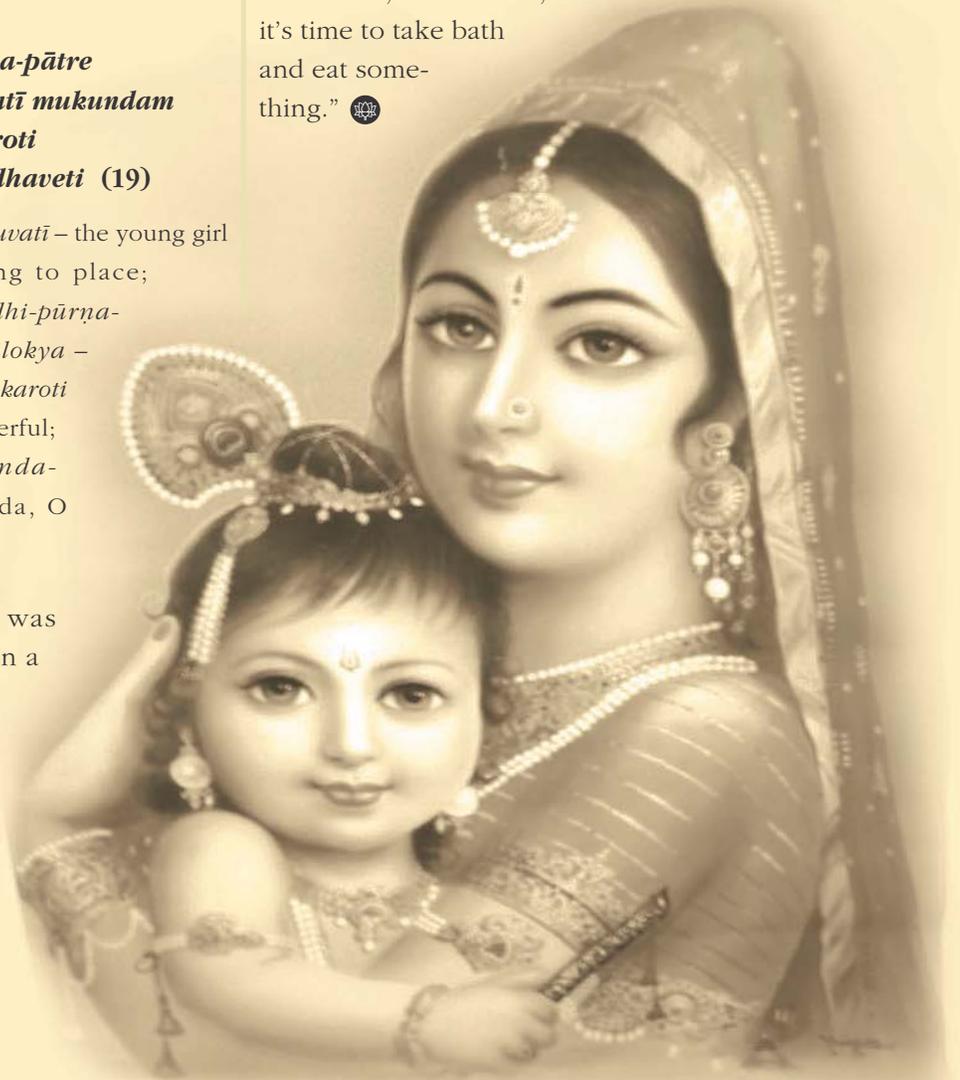
Once at dawn, as Yaśodā-devī was about to place the churning rod in a pot of yoghurt, she gazed upon her child, Mukunda. At once she became overwhelmed with love and sang this wonderful song, “O my Govinda, O my Dāmodara, O my Mādhava”.



**krīḍā-param bhojana-majjanārtham
hitaiṣiṇī strī tanujam yaśodā
ājūhavat prema-pariplutākṣī
govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti (20)**

yaśodā – Yaśodā-maiyā; *hita-iṣiṇī* – desiring the welfare; *tanujam* – of her son; *krīḍā-param* – who was absorbed in play; *strī* – that woman; *prema-paripluta-ākṣī* – her eyes flooded with tears of love; *ājūhavat* – called out; *bhojana-majjana-artham* – for bathing and food; *iti* – thus; *govinda-dāmodara-mādhava* – O Govinda, O Dāmodara, O Mādhava.

Desiring the welfare of her son, who was absorbed in playing, Yaśodā-maiyā’s eyes welled with tears of love as she called out, “O Govinda, O Dāmodara, O Mādhava, 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 *jīva'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 saṅgatiḥ puṁso
mañivat syāt sa tad-guṇaḥ*

Śrī Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya (quoted in
Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-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-saṅga is the path to liberation

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.23.55) states:



Appearing in English for the first time

the Methodology of Sādhu-saṅga

*saṅgo yaḥ saṁsṛter hetur
asatsu vihito 'dhiyā
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto
niḥsaṅgatvāya kalpate*

*teṣu aśānteṣu mūḍheṣu
khaṇḍitātmasu asādhuṣu
saṅgam na kuryāc chocyeṣu
yoṣit-kṛīḍā-mṛgeṣu 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 *niḥsaṅgatva*, 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, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.31.33–34) affirms:

*satyaṁ śaucaṁ dayā maunaṁ
buddhiḥ śrīr hrīr yaśaḥ kṣamā
śamo damo bhagaś ceti
yat-saṅgād yāti saṅkṣayam*

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-saṅga*. 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 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.21, 23–24):

*titikṣavaḥ kāruṇikāḥ
suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ
sādhavaḥ sādhu-bhūṣaṇāḥ
mad-āśrayāḥ kathā mṛṣṭāḥ
śṛṇvanti kathayanti ca
tapanti vividhās tāpā
naitān mad-gata-cetasaḥ
ta ete sādharmaḥ sādhu
sarva-saṅga-vivarjitāḥ
saṅgas teṣv atha te prārthyāḥ
saṅga-doṣa-harā 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.

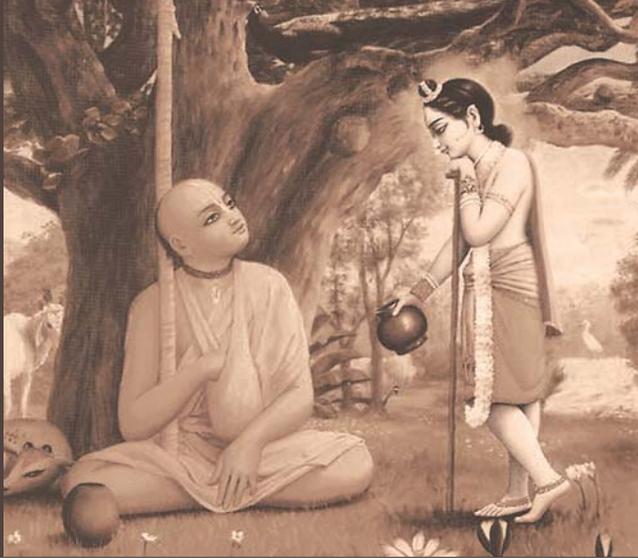
“Since the minds of such personalities are fully absorbed in Me, they do not perform the arduous endeavours of those lured by the paths of *karma*, *jñāna* or *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*. Rather, they engage themselves simply in speaking and hearing *hari-kathā*, their minds having been easily cleansed by narrations 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 mādhyura-rasa is especially uncommon

Mahādeva (Lord Śiva) once said to Devī (Pārvatī), “O Bhagavatī, 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 (*sukṛti*) and good association (*sat-saṅga*), is devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa. Just see, the devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa 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 *dāśya-rasa*, the mood of servitorship, is so rare, how much more uncommon is he who serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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. Śrī Brahmā describes the benefit we receive from this association:

*tāvad rāgādayaḥ stenās
tāvat kārā-grham grham
tāvan moho 'ṅghri-nigaḍo
yāvat kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.36)

Śrī 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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 tiraścām
yenāham eko 'pi bhavaj-janānām
bhūtvā niṣeve tava pāda-pallavam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.30)

“O Śrī Kṛṣṇa,” 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

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 *caraṇāmṛta*, 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

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.7.46) describes how to engage in *sādhu-saṅga*:

*te vai vidanty atitaranti ca deva-māyām
strī-sūdra-hūṇa-śabarā api pāpa-jīvāḥ
yady adbhuta-krama-parāyaṇa-śīla-śikṣās
tiryag-janā api kim u śruta-dhāraṇā ye*

The word *adbhuta-krama* denotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose pure devotees are *adbhuta-krama-parāyaṇa*, or dedicated to Him. Only those who make a great endeavour to seek training and instruction from the *śīla*, 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, *sūdras*, *hūṇas*¹, *śabaras*² or other sinful kinds of human beings, or as animals and birds, can learn from the character of a *kṛṣṇa-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 *śāstra*. Nor can worldly opulence and physical beauty render this favour. One achieves unalloyed, transcendental devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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.

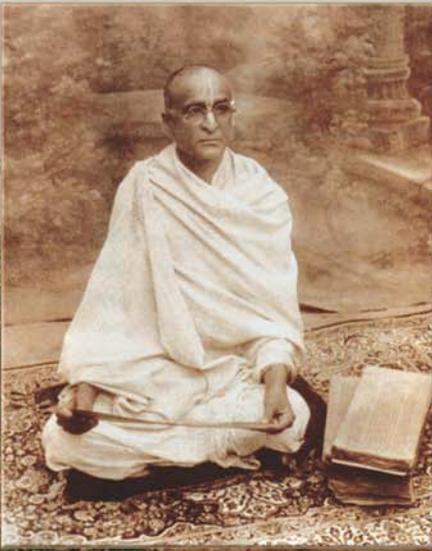
If the *sādhu* were to bless such a person by saying, “May your desire for sense gratification be extinguished, your opulence destroyed and your relatives taken away”, the materialist would at once cry, “O *sādhu-mahārāja*, be kind! Don't bless me like this. Your favour is a curse and definitely harmful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

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 *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. 

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Excerpts from an informal discourse given by
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda
on 8 October 1932 during Vraja-maṇḍala 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 Gauḍīya Maṭha organised Vraja-maṇḍala Parikramā, spanning eighty-four *kosas*,¹ under the leadership of *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. Thousands of devotees from all parts of India participated. The first day of the Parikramā saw a grand procession with *nagara-saṅkīrtana*, as the pilgrims visited the holy places of Mathurā.

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

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-nivṛtti*, in which unwanted obstacles are cleared. Śrīla Prabhupāda personally selected the following songs by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura for the devotees to sing:

(1)

*hari hari! kabe haba vṛndāvana-vāsi
nirakhiba nayane yugala-rūpa-rāsi*

...

Prārthanā (Song 29)

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

O Śrī Hari, when will I be able to live in Vṛndāvana and be a real Vrajavāsī? When will my eyes behold the beautiful forms of the Divine Couple, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa? ...

(2)

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevoṅ mui jīvane maraṇe
tāra sthāna, tāra līlā dekho rātri-dīne*

...

Prārthanā (Song 48)

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

(3)

*hari hari āra kabe palatibe daśā
ei saba kariyā bāme, āba vṛndāvana dhāme,
ei mane kariyāchi āśā*

...

Prārthanā (Song 27)

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

On Śrīla Prabhupāda's direction, the devotees also sang the following songs by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

(4)

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

...

Gīta-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-kuṇḍa-taṭa-kuñja-kuṭīra
govardhana-parvata, yāmuna-tīra*

...

Śaraṇāgati (*Svīkara*, Song 4)

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

(6)

*(āmi) yamunā-puline, kadamba-kānane,
ki herinu sakhi! āja
(āmār) śyāma vamaśī-dhārī, maṇi-maṅcopari,
kare' līlā rasa-rāja*

...

Kalyāṇa-kalpataru (Ami Yamunā Puline)

O *sakhī*, 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

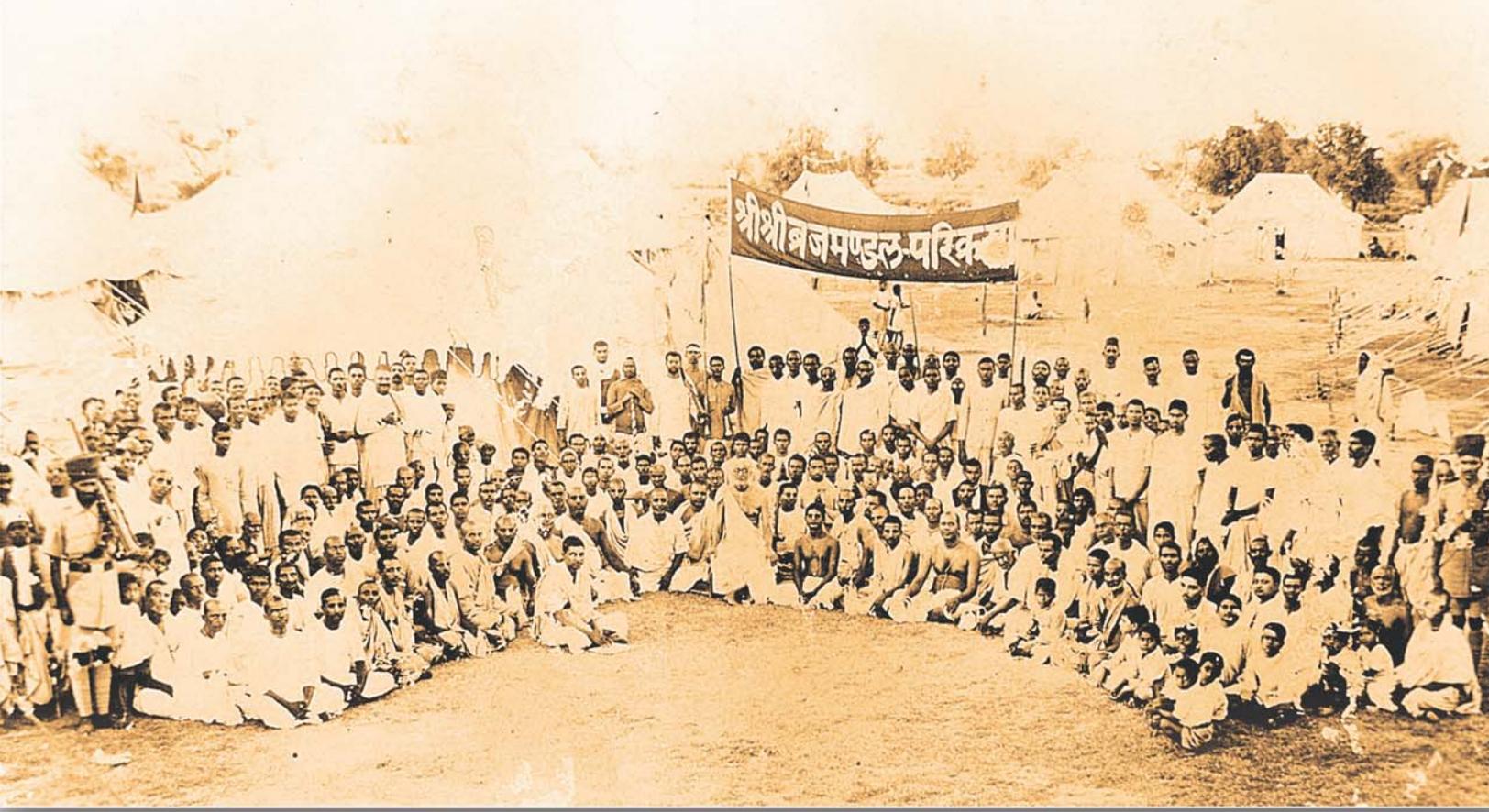
At midday on 8 October, at the end of a grand festival with *kīrtana*, Śrīla Prabhupāda began to speak to the assembled devotees in Mathurā. On Śrīla Prabhupāda's instruction, Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Gabhasti-nemi Mahārāja sang the prayer "Hari Hari Āra Kabe Palatibe Daśā"² from Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's collection of poems called *Prārthanā*. At that time, Sir Śrī Devaprasāda Sarvādhikārī, former Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, arrived and, after paying his regards to Śrīla Prabhupāda, sat down amidst the gathering.

Śrīla Prabhupāda proceeded to explain this prayer of Ṭhākura Mahāśaya, one line at a time:

bhramiba dvādaśa vane, rasa-keli ye ye sthāne

I shall wander through the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed His pastimes full of *rasa*.

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



Vraja-maṅḍala Parikramā with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

While explaining this part of the prayer, Śrīla Prabhupāda said that Śrī Gaurasundara has stated:

*anyera hṛdaya – mana, mora mana – vṛndāvana,
'mane' 'vane' eka kari' jāni*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 13.137)

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda continued: “*Rasa* arises in such a pure heart when the *sthāyībhāva-rati*, or permanent sentiment in one of the five primary relationships with

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, combines with four other ingredients, namely, *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyabhicārī-bhāva*.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 *śuddha-sattva*, or pure, spiritual existence. At that time, one experiences intense astonishment in satisfying the senses of Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of all transcendental *rasa*.

“That same heart, which shines with *śuddha-sattva*, is indeed the platform we call ‘*vana*’ and

³ *Vibhāva* is that in and by which *rati* is stimulated and thus caused to be tasted. It includes Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the devotee and everything that stimulates remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, such as His dress and ornaments, the spring season and the bank of the Yamunā. *Anubhāvas* are thirteen different actions that display or reveal the emotions within the heart. They include dancing, rolling on the ground and singing. *Sāttvika-bhāvas* are eight symptoms of spiritual ecstasy, such as becoming stunned, perspiring and the standing of hairs on end. *Vyabhicārī-bhāvas* consist of

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

⁴ The five principal *rasas* are (1) neutrality (*śānta*), (2) servitorship (*dāsya*), (3) fraternity (*sakhya*), (4) parenthood (*vātsalya*), and (5) conjugal love (*mādhurya*). The seven secondary *rasas* are (1) comedy (*hāsya*), (2) wonder (*adbhuta*), (3) chivalry (*vīra*), (4) compassion (*dayā*), (5) anger (*raudra*), (6) fear (*bhayānaka*), and (7) disgust (*bībhatsa*).

shelters the twelve *rasas*. Wherever Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa is placed in the path of the current of *rasa*, then that *rasa* can no longer flow as before.

“Such works as *Bhāva-prakāśa*, *Sāhitya-darpaṇa* and the *rasa-śāstras* of Bharata Muni analyse and present the material mellows (*prākṛta-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 Naiṣadha and Carita, Sāvitrī and Satyavāna, and Lailā and Majnū, merely emerge on the platform of transient, material relationships (*asthāyi-bhāva*). There, the subject of *rasa* is not the non-dual, unprecedented Personality, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

“The only subject of the *rasa* that manifests in the twelve forests of Vraja, however, is Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the non-dual embodiment of all transcendental *rasa*. He is the only subject of the five types of *prema*, namely, *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*.”

Take Shelter of the Residents of Vraja

Śrīla Prabhupāda continued:

*sudhāiba jane jane, vrajavāsī-gaṇa-sthāne,
nivediba caraṇe dhariyā*

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.

“Those who reside in Vraja are conversant with *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, narrations of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, for they are constantly engaged in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa without cause or interruption. All the cows and calves serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They become dancing dolls to enhance the pleasure of His transcendental senses.

They become instruments in His pastime of milking the cows.

“Nanda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s servants like Citraka, Patraka, Raktaka and Bakula tend all these cows and also serve Kṛṣṇa’s parents. They wash Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet with the spiritual waters of Śrī Yamunā, which are composed of liquefied transcendence. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 Yamunā.

“What knowledge do Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s service. They are not ordinary, so-called *munis* and *ṛṣis* 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 Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu has said:

*tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi janānugāmī
kālam nayed akhilam ity upadeśa-sāram*

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta (8)

It is imperative that a person engage himself in thoroughly and exquisitely singing the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 (*preyaḥ*) and what is to his long-term benefit (*śreyāḥ*). 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. The term ‘Vrajavāsī’ 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa. How can we attain residence in Vraja if we do not develop uncommon attachment for Citraka, Patraka and Raktaka, who are the abode of *dāśya-rasa*; for Sudāma and Śrīdāma, who are the abode of *sakhya-rasa*; for Śrī Nanda and Yaśodā, who are the abode of *vātsalya-rasa*; and for Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and the other *gopīs*, who are the abode of *mādhurya-rasa*. These are the eternally liberated residents of Vraja.

The Path to Success

sudhāiba jane jane, vrajavāsī-gaṇa-sthāne

“One has to enquire about Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 Vrajavāsī established in *mādhurya-rasa*. If I approach someone who has not met Śrī Lalitā and Śrī Viśākhā or not directly seen Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, then I shall only end up hearing from him about something else, like the history of Nala and Damayantī or the abduction of Sītā by Rāvaṇa.

“The *gopīs* solicited news of Śrī Kṛṣṇa from each and every tree and creeper of Vṛndāvana:

*cūta-priyāla-panasāsana-kovidāra
jambv-arka-bilva-bakulāmra-kadamba-nīpāḥ
ye ’nye parārtha-bhava-kā yamunopakūlāḥ
śāmsantu kṛṣṇa-padaviṃ rahitātmanām naḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.30.9)

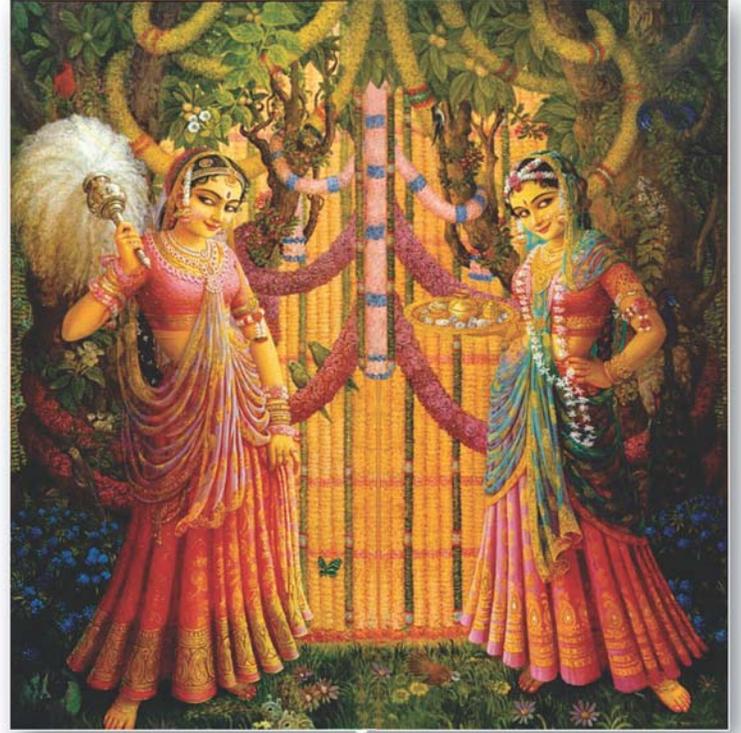
“It is impossible to understand the topics of Vraja without first becoming subservient to Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī.”

O *cūta*, O *priyāla*, O *panasa*, *āsana* and *kovidāra*, O *jambu*, O *arka*, O *bilva*, *bakula* and *āmra*, O *kadamba* and *nīpa* 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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 Vṛndāvana, Śrī 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 *Anubhāṣya* commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Śrī Jayadeva Gosvāmī Prabhu has also mentioned this.

“Vrajavāsīs in the mood of *sānta-rasa* are of five types: the cow (*go*), cane (*vetra*), horn (*viśāṇa*), flute (*veṇu*) and shore of the Yamunā (*yamunā-saikata*).

“It is impossible for us to reside in Vraja without the mercy of the Vrajavāsīs. But why would they even want to talk to us? How is it possible for us to attain their *darśana* 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 Vrajavāsīs who have entered the eternal, trans-



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

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

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā
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 ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s body with our feet. Until supra-mundane *sakhyā-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 *sakhyā-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? Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura Mahāśaya has said:

*haiyā māyāra dāsa, kari nānā abhilāṣa,
tomāra smaraṇa gela dūre
artha-lābha ei āse, kapaṭa-vaiṣṇava-veṣe,
hramiyā bulaye ghare ghare*

Prārthanā (Song 6: Hari Hari Kṛpā
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 Vaiṣṇava, I wander from house to house, hoping to get some money.

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

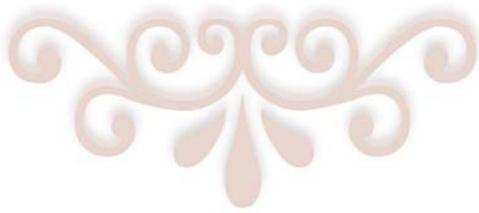
*dharmah projjhita-kaitavo ’tra
paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām
vedyaṁ vāstavam atra vastu śivadam
tāpa-trayonmūlanam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.2)

This *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda, who was engaged in speaking *hari-kathā*, and they approached him with a palm-leaf stalk to drive the flies away.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “These are all Vrajavāsīs. 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 *Śankara-bhāṣya*, one can never understand the eternally liberated Vrajavāsīs. 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.”

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

The Vision of a True Aspirant

Śrīla Prabhupāda continued: “There is a class of people called the Bāulas, who consume semen, blood, stool and urine. They glorify the concept of *jñāna-mīśra*, service mixed with empirical knowledge. There are countless people of this class in many places of East Bengal like Yaśohara, Khulnā, Nadiyā 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 *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā* (Year 38, Issue 11), Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmāna Gosvāmī Mahārāja explains that the word “home” in the saying “Charity begins at home” refers to our hearts, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa resides. In other words, if we can love Śrī Kṛṣṇa in our hearts, all else will follow naturally.

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

“In order to find Śrī Kṛṣṇa, first we must wander throughout the entire universe searching for a *kārṣṇa*, one who belongs to Kṛṣṇa. The cause of all our troubles is our failure to take shelter of the lotus feet of a pure Vaiṣṇava and our tendency to consider a non-Vaiṣṇava to be a Vaiṣṇava. 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa. 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 Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura pierced out? Some people think that Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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.

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

*anāsaktasya viṣayān
yathārham upayun̄jataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe
yuktam vairāgyam ucyate
prāpañcikatayā buddhyā
hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumuṣubhiḥ parityāgo
vairāgyam phalgu kathyate*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (2.255–6)

Appropriate renunciation is to accept objects favourable to one’s devotional service while being detached from what is unrelated to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and attached to what is related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A person who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 renunciator, 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.” ❁

Translated from the weekly *Gauḍīya*,
Vol. 11, No. 14 (12 November 1932)

⁸ These are so-called Vaiṣṇavas, like the Bāulas, who variously misinterpret the original teachings of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. Some even indulge in debauchery in the name of *bhakti*, by trying to imitate the transcendental loving affairs of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

⁹ Appears to be a musical instrument of some kind.



One Must

Some Misconceptions

The mercy of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas is the one and only means by which a *jīva* 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 Śrī Bhagavān. This we have heard repeatedly.

We have also heard that the mercy of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas 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 Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas, all our cherished desires will one day suddenly come true. We may even think that to

Correctly Identify a Vaiṣṇava

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī 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 *jīvas* like us can realise our cherished desires independently, without the mercy of *sādhus* and Śrī Guru.

Those who hold such opinions are unable to understand that the mercy of *sādhus* and the *jīva'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 laiṅyā ādara kariba yabe
vaiṣṇavera kṛpā yāhe sarva-siddhi, avaśya 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-adhikārī* in a way that befits only an *uttama-adhikārī*, or to deal with a *madhyama-adhikārī* as if he were a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. 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

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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 *darśana* of a Vaiṣṇava by observing such qualities in him and, as a result,



From left to right: Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gīri Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla 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 Śrī 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 Śrī Viṣṇu.

Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī Prabhu has listed the twenty-six qualities of a Vaiṣṇava, among which the intrinsic characteristic (*svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*) or defining quality is exclusive surrender to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa*). 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa. One cannot find a Vaiṣṇava who is not gentle and well-behaved; however, these virtues develop according to the strength of his *vaiṣṇavatā*.



Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Sarvasva
Śrīla Bhakti Vicāra Yayāvāra Gosvāmī Mahārāja,

The point here is that in enumerating these different qualities, Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī 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 Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī in persons who are not Vaiṣṇavas, such as the followers of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. In truth, however, it is impossible for a non-Vaiṣṇava to possess the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. Whatever is synonymous with the word *vaikuṅṭha*, 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, Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī has listed magnanimity (*vadānyatā*) as a Vaiṣṇava quality. An ordinary person can be “magnanimous” according to the conventional meaning (*ajña-rūḍhī-vṛtti*) of the

**“Only to he
who has surrendered
without duplicity
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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-rūḍhī-vṛtti*).

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 Śrī 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

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

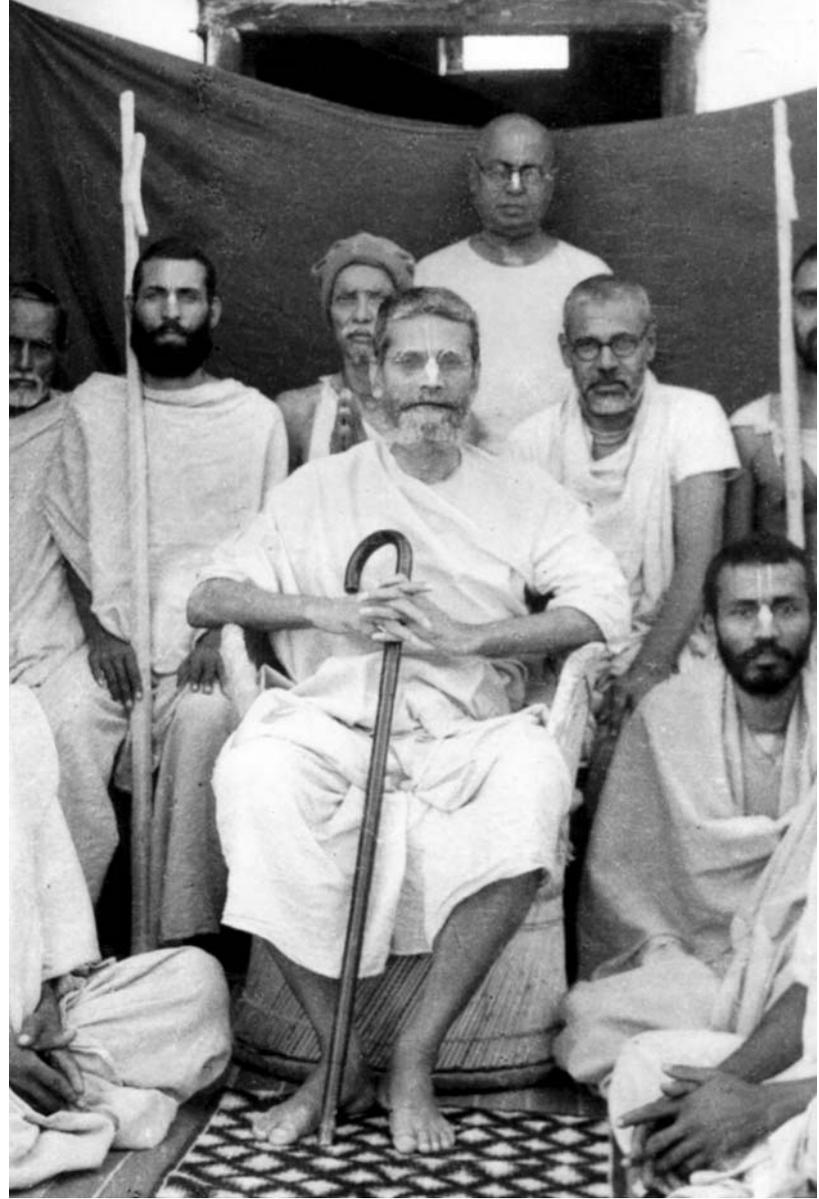
All the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava are certainly present in every Vaiṣṇava. If according to our material vision we conclude that Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī Prabhu was a poet, but that Śrī Śivānanda Sena or Śrī Govinda, the servant of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, were not all that poetic, then we have not properly understood the Vaiṣṇava's quality of being poetic (*kavitva*). Rather, by considering Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī 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 Vaiṣṇava by his exclusive surrender to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇaika-śaraṇa*). They consider him an ordinary person, and end up seeing his faults and assessing his *vaiṣṇavatā* by looking at what is merely a semblance of his virtues. When they see the grave disposition of a particular Vaiṣṇava, they will liken it to the gravity of a common man and praise him, considering this virtue to be the sole benchmark of his *vaiṣṇavatā*. But if another Vaiṣṇava conceals his gravity, they will not consider him to be a Vaiṣṇava or, even if they do, they will say that he is not as grave as that first Vaiṣṇava. 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 Vaiṣṇava, seeing in him the semblance of faults, which are unpleasant to my senses. And I suffer equally by being affectionate to a Vaiṣṇava 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 Vaiṣṇava. Hence, in trying to find a Vaiṣṇava, we should not simply end up selecting someone who possesses mundane qualities or who is devoid of them.

A Concern

The *mahājanas* have stated: “*vaiṣṇava cinite nāre devera śakati* – it is impossible even for the demigods



Centre: Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Second from left: Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

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

One Vaiṣṇava 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 Vaiṣṇava, 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 *jīva* 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-adhikārī is unable to realise this, and this is what makes him a *kaniṣṭha* devotee.

The Vaiṣṇavas shower their mercy upon the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* 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 *Śrī Gauḍīya 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 Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas? It certainly seems so. I appear to have made a mistake in taking up *bhajana*, in accepting the shelter of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas and, specifically, in taking refuge of the Gauḍīya Maṭha and dedicating all my senses to serving in the Maṭha.

“Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas 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 *vaiṣṇava-āparādha*, *nāma-āparādha* or *dhāma-āparādha*, 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 Kṛṣṇa],

nor would my eating habits be curtailed. In the Maṭha, issues like *vaiṣṇava-āparādha* 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 Maṭha 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 Gauḍīya Maṭha completely. What stops me, however, is the thought that if people were to find out that I had broken my connection with Śrī Guru, it could jeopardise my prestige and position.

Discipline and Deceit

The Vaiṣṇavas of the Gauḍīya Maṭha are one-pointedly engaged in worshipping Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva and Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmipāda and the best among his followers, namely, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. *Kṛṣṇa-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 Gauḍīya Maṭha. Hence, they will never support any endeavour that is unfavourable to the cultivation of affection for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

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 Gauḍīya sky, Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja was an intimate disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda who soon became renowned for his intense devotion, deep humility and brilliance in spreading the mission of his divine master. Indeed, Śrīla Prabhupāda used to refer to him as “a preacher of volcanic energy”.

Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja appeared in this world in Kārttika of 1904, on the disappearance day of Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja, in Kanchanpada, present-day Bangladesh. He accepted the renounced order in 1944, and established Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha in 1953, the current *ācārya* of which is Śrīla Bhakti Vallabha Tīrtha Mahārāja. One of his most significant contributions was to re-establish the appearance site of Śrīla Prabhupāda in Śrī Jagannātha Purī. This empowered personality, who was kind and magnanimous to all, entered *nitya-līlā* in 1979, on the disappearance day of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja. ❀

Puṣpāñjali

by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

“I often received the opportunity to associate closely with our revered *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He was serene, tolerant, grave and endowed with many other qualities befitting a Vaiṣṇava. He preached Śrī 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 Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Vṛndāvana, at Śrīla 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 Śrī 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 Śrī 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 Śrī 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 Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas 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 *kṛṣṇa-prema* are neither enjoyers nor renunciants. They are not *karmīs*, fruitive workers; neither are they *jñānīs*, persons cultivating knowledge of the impersonal Brahman. Those who perform activities opposed to scriptural injunctions

honour *karmīs* who abide by scriptural injunctions; and 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. 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. *Kṛṣṇa-prema*, however, cannot be attained by external renunciation. Unless one has faith grounded in philosophical truth (*tattvika śraddhā*), or has affection for the *svarūpa* of Śrī 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

*anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu
śilanam bhaktir-uttamā*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.11)

The cultivation of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or in other words the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed through all endeavours of the body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*), which is not covered by *jñāna* (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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is called *uttama-bhakti*, pure devotional service.

One must deliberate upon this verse. The activities of a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, such as establishing a *maṭha* (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.”

śuddha-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?

*kuṣṭhi-viprera ramaṇī pativratā-śiromaṇi
pati lāgi' kailā veśyāra sevā
stambhila sūryera gati jīyāila mṛta pati
tuṣṭa kaila mukhya tina-devā*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 20.57)

The wife of a *brāhmaṇa* 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, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara].

We should consider this account in the light of our discussion. That chaste *brāhmaṇa* 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 Śrī Bhagavān. If, however, she had performed this service for her own sense pleasure, or for *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* or *mokṣa*, it would have been reprehensible in every respect.

Similarly, activities such as constructing a *maṭha*, meeting and talking with materialistic or aristocratic people, hosting grand festivals and bestowing the *śrī nāma-mantra* to faithful persons sincerely desiring to serve Śrī Bhagavān, His devotees and His *dhāma* (all aspects of Vaikuṅṭha), 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 *mokṣa*.

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 [Śrī 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 *mokṣa*, 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 *varṇa* and *āśrama*; but if these duties are discarded for the pleasure and satisfaction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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. Śrī 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 Śrī 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 *karmīs*, 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. *Jñānīs*, 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 Kṛṣṇa’s devotees, however, are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Hari. Since Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the cause of all causes, such renunciation bestows true welfare upon the devotee and upon others. Therefore Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas greatly honour those activities that promote love of Bhagavān, and they reject activities that hinder it. In this *sādhana* 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-vairāgya*, renunciation for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is their only *sādhana*. 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 *sādhaka*’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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa and will reject all activities that are unfavourable to it.

As such, the devotees of the Gauḍīya Maṭha instruct the world to engage only in those practices that are righteous and favourable to the cultivation of *kṛṣṇa-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 *kṛṣṇa-prema*, I have not after all made any mistake in accepting the

shelter of the lotus feet of pure Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. Such Vaiṣṇavas will not fuel our desire for *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* or our hankering for wealth, women and adoration. The purpose of the Maṭha is to help free us from these *anarthas* and attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. 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. 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda, the world will profusely glorify and worship the Śrī Sarasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas [that is, Śrīla 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 Gauḍīya Maṭha, or those who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. I have not, therefore, made a mistake in accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of pure Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. 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 *Śrī Caitanya-vāñī*.

Karma-yoga: The Art of Spiritual

The Foolish Materialist

Out of compassion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His devotee Arjuna instructed the bewildered *jīvas* to perform *karma-yoga*. If they had not shown this path, these *jīvas*, who have fallen into the cycle of fruitive action, would simply continue to suffer untold miseries. The illusory energy, *māyā*, 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 *māyā* is chastising them continuously. Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains this clearly in *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.27):

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni
guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ
ahaṅkāra vimūḍhātmā
kartāham 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 Kṛṣṇa, he cannot even recognise his own futile attempts to usurp Kṛṣṇa. Thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa'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. *Māyā* 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.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Complete Whole

The Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has revealed to us that every *jīva* 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 *Hitopadeśa* called

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

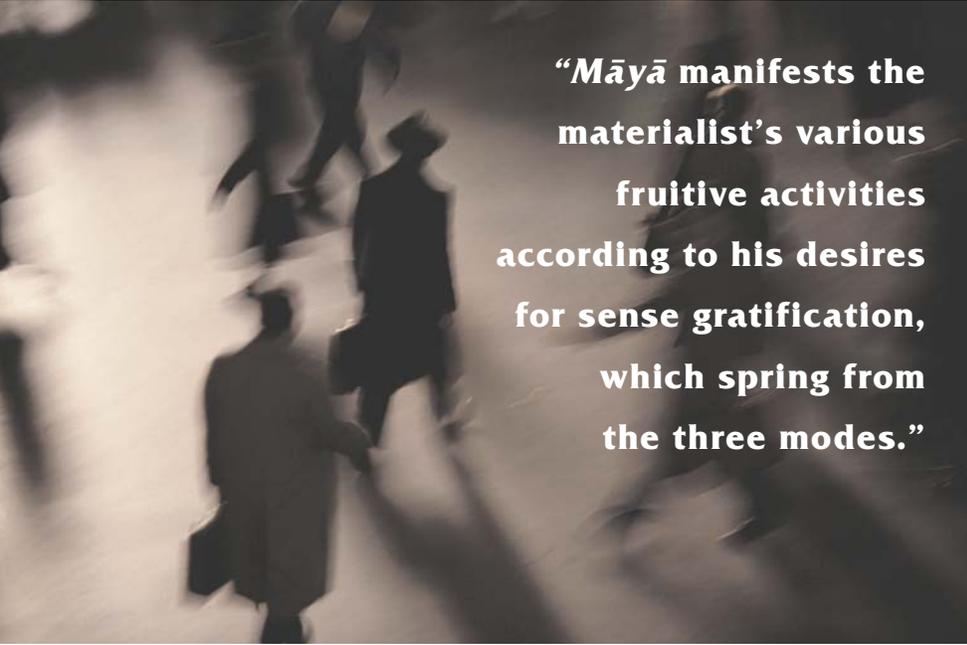
Lord Kṛṣṇa is the life-source of the gigantic body of the universe. The *Bhagavad-gītā* explains repeatedly, and in various ways, that He is the root of the tree of this universe. It specifically states:

*mattaḥ parataram nānyat
kiñcid asti dhanañjaya*

Bhagavad-gītā (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.”

*aham hi sarvayajñānām
bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca*

Bhagavad-gītā (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 mām duṣkṛtino mūdhāḥ
prapadyante narādhamāḥ*

Bhagavad-gītā (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, Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī 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 Rāvaṇas 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 Rāvaṇas is uprooted and defeated by the servants of Lord Rāma, that is, by the Hanumāns. One should accept the shelter of *karma-yoga*, as instructed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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 *yajña*, performed solely for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu. They remain forever free from identifying themselves with this material body, and endeavour simply to develop the constitutional occupation of the soul, *ātma-dharma*.

Such learned persons understand that the *jīva* 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, Śrī Kṛṣṇa states:

*tattva-vit tu mahā-bāho
guṇa-karma-vibhāgayoḥ
guṇā-guṇeṣu vartanta
iti matvā na sajjate*
Bhagavad-gītā (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 Kṛṣṇa further instructs us on how to achieve such a liberated state:

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi
sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā
yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ*
*ye me matam idaṁ nityam
anutiṣṭhanti mānavāḥ
śraddhāvanto 'nasūyanto
ucyante te 'pi karmabhiḥ*
Bhagavad-gītā (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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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

Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What then to speak of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, in which the Supreme Lord Himself declares (7.7):

*mattaḥ parataram nānyat
kiñcid asti dhanañjaya*

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 Kṛṣṇa, 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa rises in the sky of the *jīva*’s pure existence, the darkness of nescience is immediately dissipated. Then, endeavours to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa become free from the contamination of *jñāna*, 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Kṛṣṇa, being envious of Him. But all such disobedient people who do not agree with the facts presented herein are extremely foolish. Kṛṣṇa Himself declares:

*avajānanti mām mūḍha
mānuṣīm tanum āśritam*

Bhagavad-gītā (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 Kṛṣṇa, and therefore knowledge of Kṛṣṇa does not easily enter their perverted minds, which are deranged by *māyāvāda* thought.

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

tolerate the mischief of presenting secondary and inferior explanations of the *Gītā* and labelling them “spiritual”. Those who are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s servants fully embrace the concept of *karma-yoga* as defined by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself (*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.30): “*mayi sarvāṇi karmaṇi sannyasya* – fully surrender all your works unto Me.” Thus, by practising *karma-yoga*, the Vaiṣṇavas 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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-gītā*. In the *Gītā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa states unequivocally:

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya
ye ’pi syuḥ pāpayonayah
striyo vaiśyas thathā śudrās
te ’pi yānti parām gatim*

Bhagavad-gītā (9.31)

O son of Pṛthā, the abominable and outcaste dog-eaters (*cāṇḍālas*), women as fallen as prostitutes, and people born in the lower classes of society like the merchants (*vaiśyas*) and labourers (*śūdras*) 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 Kṛṣṇa. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said the following regarding the proper classification of society based on scriptural injunctions:

*cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam
guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśah
tasya kartāram api mām
viddhy akartāram avyayam*

Bhagavad-gītā (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, *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra* – 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 *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra* are also present everywhere at all times. One does not qualify to become a

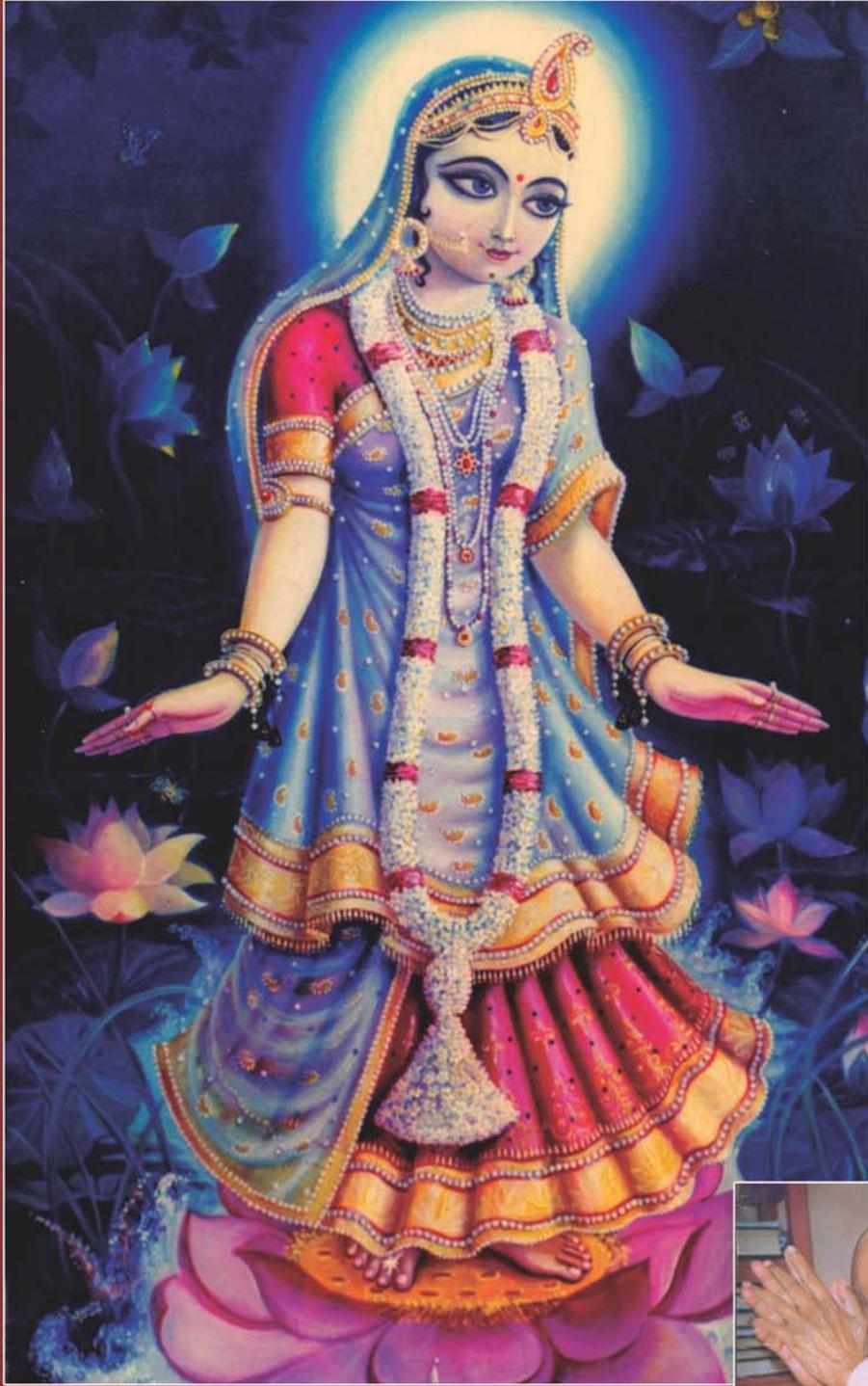
doctor simply by being the son of a doctor, and one also does not qualify as a *brāhmaṇa* merely by being the son of a *brāhmaṇa*. The qualities of each division have been delineated clearly in the scriptures. Therefore, our vision of a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or *śūdra* as belonging to a particular 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.

Śrī 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 *varṇāśrama* culture.

The demoniac *varṇāśrama-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 *brāhmaṇa* 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 *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas* or *śūdras*, 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. ॐ

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*,
Year 2, Issue 4 (1950)



Translated into English for the first time

The Potency of This Day

mādhava-tithi, bhakti-jananī

Śaraṇāgatī (Śuddha-Bhakata)

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

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

ekādaśyāḥ sahasreṇa

yat phalam labhate naraḥ

rādhā janamāṣṭamī puṇyam

tasmācchatguṇādhikam



Śrī

The Time of Śrī Rādhā's Birth

Fearing the possibility of danger in Gokula Mahāvana, the birthplace of Nanda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Nanda Mahārāja relocated his residence to Nandīśvara Hill. His dearest friend, Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, who also expected many disturbances in Rāvala, established his residence atop Śrī Varṣānā Hill, which lies south of Nandīśvara Hill. It was in Rāvala, in the abode of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja and his queen Kīrtidā, that Śrī Rādhikā – the internal potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa's birth.

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

*tata ārabhya nandasya
vrajaḥ sarva-samṛddhimān
harer nivāsātma-guṇai
ramākṛīḍam abhūn nṛpa*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.5.18)

In this verse Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī addresses Śrī Parīkṣit Mahārāja as follows: “O King, since Nanda-vraja, the land of Śrī Nanda Mahārāja, is the residence of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Hari, it is eternally magnificent in every respect. This is due to its own transcendental virtues. Moreover, from the moment Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared there, it became *ramāyāḥ ākrīḍam vihārasthānam*, the pastime place of Lakṣmī-devī.” This indicates that Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the embodiment of all Lakṣmīs, opulence and good fortune, appeared after the birth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmipāda writes in *Śrī Gopāla-campū* (*Pūrva* 15.19–20):

*satyaṁ bahusuta-ratnākara-
tām sa prāpa goṇa-dugdhabdhiḥ
kintvamṛta-dyuti-rādhā
lakṣmī-jananādgāt pūrtim*

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

*sā khalu śrī-kṛṣṇa-janama-varṣānantara-
varṣe sarva-sukhasatre rādhā nāmni
nakṣatre jāteti rādhābhidhīyate.*

That very girl manifested the pastime of Her birth one year after the appearance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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 Śrī Varuṇadeva, the god of the ocean, saw the invaluable jewel that is Śrī Kṛṣṇa in his own palace, he spoke with jubilation:

*adya me nibhṛto deho
dyaivārtho 'dhigataḥ prabho
tvat-pāda-bhājo bhagavann
avāpuḥ pāram adhvanah*

Śrīmad-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 (*adhvaṇa saṁsārasya pāramavāpuḥ*). I am also Your servant and am praying for the same benediction.”

The *Padma Purāṇa* describes how Śrī Rādhā appeared at Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja's *yajña-sthala*, the place where he performed sacrificial rites:

*iti śrutvāpi sā rādhā
pyagatā prthvīm tataḥ
bhādre māsi site pakṣe
aṣṭamī saṁjñāike tithau
vṛṣabhānoryajñabhūmau
jātā sā rādhikā divā
yajñārtham śodhitāyām ca
dṛṣṭā sā divyarūpiṇī
rājānandamanā bhūtvā
tām prāpya nijamandīram
dattavān mahiṣīm nītvā
sā ca tām paryapālayat*

Padma Purāṇa (*Brahma-khaṇḍa* 7.40-42)

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

to his noble queen, Śrī Kīrtidā-devī, who proceeded to raise Her.

Śrī Rādhā's Appearance: Second History

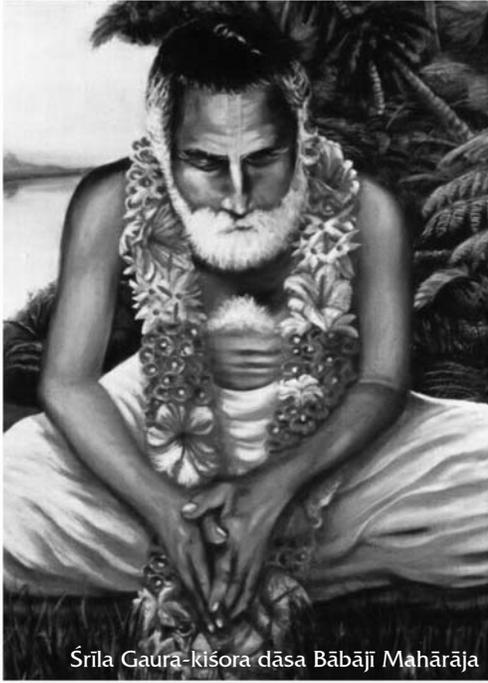
Another history describes that early one morning, in yet another place in Vraja, Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja was taking bath in the Yamunā. Floating close by was this spotlessly beautiful girl lying on a radiant and fully blossomed lotus. With great happiness, he at once took Her in his arms and brought Her home to his queen Kīrtidā-devī. In great bliss, Kīrtidā-devī 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, Śrī Nanda Mahārāja's queen, Yaśodā-devī, arrived from Gokula, holding Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her arms. The royal couple of Rāvala greeted her with much honour. Śrī Yaśodā-devī gazed with unblinking eyes at the newborn baby girl lying in the lap of Śrī Kīrtidā-devī. At that time, an astonishing incident took place. As soon as Yaśodā-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa came face to face with that baby girl, She opened Her eyes. Her first sight was the moon-like face of Her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and She simply gazed upon Him. Kṛṣṇa 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 Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja and his queen knew no bounds, and they celebrated the occasion with great pomp and grandeur.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmipāda has given a similar narration in his book *Śrī Lalita-mādhava*.

Intense Longing for Śrī Rādhā's Service

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and other *gosvāmīs* have lovingly sung the glories of Śrī Rādhārāṇī. How Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatipāda has relished Her glories in such an unprecedented and astonishing



Śrīla Gaura-kīśora 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-kīśora Mahārāja’s Heartfelt Prayer

manner in his *Śrī Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi*! The way Śrī Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed *Svaniyamāṣṭaka* and other prayers gloriously demonstrates his intense longing to attain *śrī rādhā-dāśya*, service to Śrī Rādhā.

This same mood is also found in the writings of the most worshipable Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda – that is, in his *Anubhāṣya* commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*; in his *Anuvṛtti* on Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*; in his poetic translation of the ten states of *divyonmāda* that Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī described in *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, *Śrī Bhramara-gītā* and *Śrī Mahiṣī-gītā*; in the *maṅgalācaraṇa*, or auspicious invocation, of his *Prārthanārasa-vivṛti* commentary on Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya’s *Prārthanā*; and in the *maṅgalācaraṇa* of his *Gauḍīya-bhāṣya* commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*. These wonderful expressions of yearning for *rādhā-dāśya* serve as a continuous, powerful inspiration for us.

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

As servants of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s servants, our sole objective is to seek out that secret treasure. The Six Gosvāmīs 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, Śrī Rādhārāṇī. There is no other means to attain this treasure than by the causeless mercy of Śrī Gurudeva. That devotional song that Śrīla Bābājī 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 Śrī Rādhā.

*dekhā diye prāṇa rākha, rādhe rādhe
tomāra kāṅgāla tomāya ḍāke, rādhe rādhe* (2)

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

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

O Rādhā, You enjoy pleasure pastimes in the forest of Vṛndāvana, wherein You enchant the mind of Kṛṣṇa.

*rādhe aṣṭa-sakhīra śiromaṇi, rādhe rādhe
rādhe vṛṣabhānu-nandini, rādhe rādhe* (4)

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

(gosāi) niyama kare sadāi ḍāke, rādhe rādhe

The Six Gosvāmīs were always calling out, “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

(gosāi) eka-bāra ḍāke keśi-ghāṭe, ābāra ḍāke vaṁśi-vaṭe, rādhe rādhe (5)

... sometimes at Keśi-ghāṭa, sometimes at Vaṁśi-vaṭa – “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

(gosāi) eka-bāra ḍāke nidhu-vane, ābāra ḍāke kuñja-vane, rādhe rādhe

... sometimes in Nidhuvana, sometimes in Sevā-kuñja – “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

(gosāi) eka-bāra ḍāke rādhā-kuṇḍe, ābāra ḍāke śyāma-kuṇḍe, rādhe rādhe (6)

... sometimes at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, sometimes at Śyāma-kuṇḍa – “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

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

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

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

... sometimes at Tālavana, and sometimes at Tamālavana – “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

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

The Six Gosvāmīs’ 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) vṛndāvane kuli kuli kende beḍāya rādhā bali’, rādhe rādhe

They wander throughout the lanes of Vṛndāvana crying out, “Rādhe! Rādhe!”

(gosāi) chāpānna daṇḍa 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 daṇḍa śuti’ thāke svapne rādhā-govinda dekhe, rādhe rādhe (10)

They take rest for only four *daṇḍas* (1 hr. 36 min.). Even at that time they receive *darśana* of Śrī 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 Śrī 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

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmpāda tells the following story in the prelude to his narration of the one hundred and eight names of Śrī Rādhā: Once Śrī Rādhārāṇī entered into a sulky mood towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa and, despite His hundreds of pleadings, refused to forgive Him. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa left that place with a greatly afflicted heart, Śrī Rādhārāṇī soon gave up Her sulky mood. Her heart now churning from Her absorption in Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s qualities, She became extremely aggrieved and repented, “Alas! Speaking harshly to Him, I have rejected that Kṛṣṇa 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 Kṛṣṇa and listen attentively to my words. Do not worry, thinking, ‘With harsh words I have rejected that Kṛṣṇa who is the ocean of all virtues. Will He ever return to Me?’ Previously, a *sakhī* named Kandarpa-sundarī was eager to establish a relationship with You in *sakhya-bhāva*, the mood of friendship. Śrī



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

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

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

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

Humility and Service: Not Pride and Erudition

Our most worshipable Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *adhokṣaja śaktimān*, the possessor of all potency who exists beyond the range of the material mind, intelligence and senses. Śrī Rādhā is *adhokṣajā śaktimatā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s spiritual potency who similarly lies beyond our material reach. The philosophy of the *tarka-panthās*, who believe in the process of gross dialectic to acquire knowledge, is ‘*anayā mīyate iti māyā* – through intellectual effort, one attains

understanding of *māyā*.’ The supremely excellent philosophy of the *śrauta-panthās*, however, who follow the process of hearing in disciplic succession as a means to acquire knowledge, is ‘*anayā rādhitaḥ iti rādhā* – through the process of worship, one attains Śrī Rādhā.’ For them, the sole state of perfection is to engage in pleasing and satisfying Śrī Kṛṣṇa with their entire body, including all their limbs and senses.”

The *tarka-panthās* can display their pride, but they cannot touch even the doorstep of the realm of *bhakti*. By instructing his own mind in *Śrī Manah-śikṣā*, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī humbly teaches us to renounce all pride and quickly develop sublime and incessant *rati* for Śrī Gurudeva; for Śrī Vraja; for the residents of Vraja; for the Vaiṣṇavas; for the *brāhmaṇas*, who are like the demigods of this Earth; for our *dikṣā-mantras*; for the holy names of the Lord; and for the topmost shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī 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 *trṇādapi śunīcena* verse spoken by Śrīman Mahāprabhu and, taking exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva, constantly pray for the mercy of Śrī Rādhārāṇī. It is in this manner that we should seek the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of Śrī Rādhā.

*binā rādhā prasādena
hari-bhaktiḥ sudurlabhā*

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

*rādhā-bhajane yadi mati nāhi bhelā
kṛṣṇa-bhajana taba akāraṇa gelā*

Gītāvalī (Śrī Rādhāṣṭaka, Song 8)

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

The Most Worshipable Object

In the book called *Krama-dīpikā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says to the Moon-god:

*mama nāma-śatenaiva
rādhā-nāma sad-uttamam
yaḥ smaret tu sadā rādhām
na jāne tasya kiṁ phalam*

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

Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, aggrieved by separation from His beloved, always chants the name “Rādhā”, Śrī Rādhā too, stricken with grief when apart from Her beloved, constantly utters the name “Kṛṣṇa”. Therefore, the only meaningful name to be chanted by the *jīva* is the *rādhā-kṛṣṇa yugala nāma* [the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra]. In “Rāya Rāmānanda Saṁvāda” it is said:

*‘sampattira madhye jīvera kon sampatti gaṇi?’
‘rādhā-kṛṣṇe prema yānra, sei baḍa dhanī’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.247)

Śrī 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 Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the greatest capitalist.”

*‘gāna-madhye kona gāna – jīvera nija dharma?’
‘rādhā-kṛṣṇera prema-keli’ – yei gītera marma*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.250)

Śrī 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 Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are superior to all others.”

*‘dhyeya-madhye jīvera kartavya kon dhyāna?’
‘rādhā-kṛṣṇa-padāmbuja-dhyāna – pradhāna’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.253)

Śrī 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 Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

*‘sarva tyaji’ jīvera kartavya kāhān vāsa?’
‘vraja-bhūmi vṛndāvana yāhān līlā-rāsa’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.254)

Śrī 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 Vṛndāvana or Vrajabhūmi, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed His *rāsa-līlā*.”

*‘śravaṇa-madhye jīvera kon śreṣṭha śravaṇa?’
‘rādhā-kṛṣṇa-prema-keli karṇa-rasāyana’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.255)

Śrī 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 Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is most satisfying to the ear.”

*‘upāsyaera madhye kon upāsya pradhāna?’
‘śreṣṭha upāsya – yugala ‘rādhā-kṛṣṇa’ nāma’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.256)

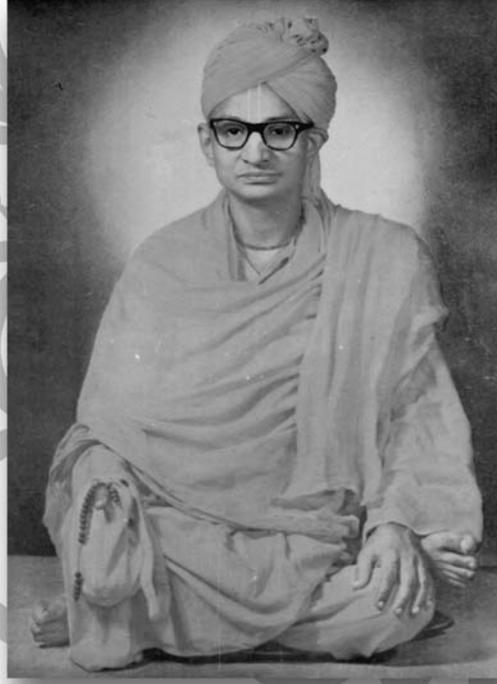
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, “Among all worshipable objects, which is the chief?”

Rāya Rāmānanda, “The highest worshipable object is the holy name of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Translated from *Śrī Caitanya-vāñī*,
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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 *jīvas* around us. A *jīva* is a conscious being: “*jīvati iti jīvaḥ* – that which has life is a *jīva*.” 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 *jīvas* in the human species of life is either budding, blossoming or fully blossomed. Such *jīvas* 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) *pūrṇavikasita-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 *sādhakānām 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. *Śrī Prema-vivarta* outlines the history of our material proclivity, which is extremely difficult to rid oneself of:

kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha haiyā bhoga-vāñchā kare nikaṣṭa-stha māyā tāre jāpatiyā dhare

As soon as the living entity misuses his independence by becoming indifferent to Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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, Śrī 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.

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

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Antya-līlā* 6.199) states:

tathāpi viṣayera 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:

kṛṣṇa bhuli' sei jīva anādi-bahirmukha a taeva māyā tāre deya samsāra-duḥkha

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya-līlā* 20.117)

Forgetting Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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, Śrī Bhagavān has said (*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.14):

mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ 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 duḥkha-pratikāraṁ
sukhavan manyate gṛhī*

Śrīmad-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.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.4.20) states, “*kāmam ca dāsye na tu kāma-kāmyayā* – Mahārāja Ambarīṣa desired only to serve the Supreme Lord, without any self-interest.” One should similarly aspire to be the eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, without using this position as a means to satisfy one’s material ends. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes:

*āmi to’ tomāra, tumi to’ āmāra
ki kāja aparā dhane*

Saraṇāgati (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. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

*viṣaye je prīti ebe āchaye amara
sei-mata prīti hauk caraṇe tomāra*

Gītāvalī (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-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’
sarva-śāstre kaya
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge
sarva-siddhi haya*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya-līlā* 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 *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.69)*, it is said:

*yāvat kṣud asti jaṭhare jaṭhā pipāsā
tāvat sukhāya bhavato nanu bhakṣya-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-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma ei mātra cāi
samsāra jinīte āra kauna vastu nāi*

Besides *sādhu-saṅga* and *kṛṣṇa-nāma* I do not need anything to live in this world.

Śrī 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 Śrī 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-prīti-vāñchā tāre bali 'kāma'
kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 4.165)*

The desire to gratify one's own senses is lust (*kāma*), but the desire to please the senses of Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*,
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About the Author

Śrīla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is one of the last disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda in the *sannyāsa* order present today. Śrīla Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja brought him to the lotus feet of his spiritual master at the tender age of eleven. Upon initiating him, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura named him Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa dāsa, and carefully arranged for his education.

After his disappearance from this manifest world, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda appeared to Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa Brahmācārī in a dream and ordered him to accept the renounced order and preach the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu widely. Thus, in 1942 Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa Brahmācārī accepted *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Bhakti Vicāra Yāyāvāra Mahārāja in Remuṇā, Orissa. He

later founded Śrī Caitanya Āśrama, which has several branches in India.

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

This exalted Vaiṣṇava, who joined Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura'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-līlā praviṣṭha om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī 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 Vṛndāvana. 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 Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas 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 Vaiṣṇavas remain somewhat indifferent. This, especially, is to be understood.

If the residents of the *maṭha*, or spiritual institution, behave correctly and engage themselves in *sādhana* and *bhajana* by completely devoting their lives to the service of Śrī Hari, Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas, 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*. Śrī 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:

*mannāthaḥ śrī jagannātho
madguruḥ śrī jagadguruḥ*

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,
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and yet he still
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sādhana-bhajana.”**



Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Original Guru

In his *hari-kathā*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda has said that the people of the world plainly failed to understand the instructions of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, though the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 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, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally appeared in this world in their combined form of Gaurahari, Śrī 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa and engage in *bhajana* of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa with deep and ardent yearning. His expression of *bhajana* is portrayed in such literary works as *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, which depict His pastimes.

Can there possibly be any deficiency in Śrī Kṛṣṇa? He does not lack anything. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.9.22) states, “*svenaiva lābhena samam prasāntam* – 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-saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the holy names.

Many people raise the doubt, “Is Śrī 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 Vaiṣṇavas 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. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has instructed:

*ṭṛṇād api sunīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam (3)

One should continuously chant the holy name of Śrī 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 *amānī-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:

amānī mānada haile kīrtane 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 *kīrtana*.

What does this mean? If I can become *amānī-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 *śaraṇāgati*, dedicating ourselves completely to the lotus feet of Śrī Guru, there is hope that we may make advancement. But if Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas 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 Śrī 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. Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas 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. Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura has written “*vando mui sāvadhāna-mate* – I bow to the lotus feet of my Śrī 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 Vaiṣṇavas and serving them, one should attentively guard against committing *guru-aparādha* and *vaiṣṇava-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 Vaiṣṇavas. 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 Vaiṣṇavas 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 *nīti-śāstra*, the scriptures delineating moral conduct, it is stated, “*bhṛtyaśca uttardāyakaḥ* – he who immediately answers back on being directed should be rejected as a servant.”

One should listen to Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas 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 Śrī 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, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura 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 Vaikuṅṭha. 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 *Śrī Gauḍīya 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

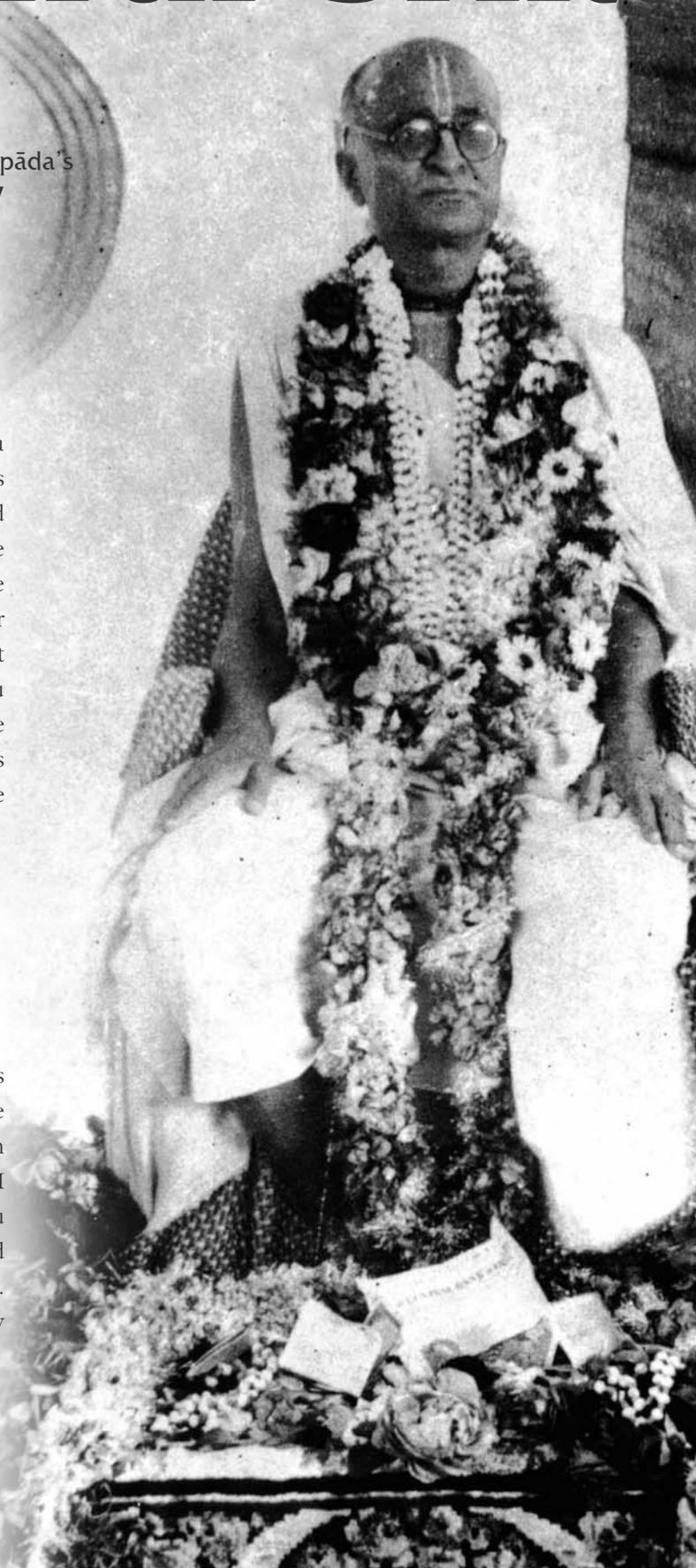
My most worshipable and merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, today, on your auspicious disappearance day, you are being glorified everywhere – from all directions. Those who are praising you are extremely fortunate, for you have bestowed your favour upon them. You even shower your compassion indirectly upon those 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-gītā* (4.11), Śrī Kṛṣṇa affirms:

*yathā mām praṇadyante
tāms 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statement in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.29), "*samo 'ham sarva-bhūteṣu* – 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.



Appearing in English for the first time

Prabhupāda...

By Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

You Embody the Mood of Separation

Śrīla 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 *jīva* and in what proportion. The materially conditioned living entity, however, cannot comprehend the manner in which you bestow your mercy.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa allowed the *gopīs* 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 Kṛṣṇa's, for it displays the same unbounded mercy. If Śrī Kṛṣṇa had remained with the *gopīs* forever, the conditioned souls would surely have been delighted, but the most merciful Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

*yat tv aham bhavatīnām vai
dūre varte priyo dṛśām
manasaḥ sannikarṣārtham
mad-anudhyāna-kāmyayā*



yathā dūra-care preṣṭhe
 mana āviśya vartate
 strīṇām ca na tathā cetaḥ
 sannikṛṣṭe 'kṣi-gocare
 mayy āveśya manaḥ kṛtsnam
 vimuktāśeṣa-vṛtti yat
 anusmarantyo mām nityam
 acirān mām upaiśyatha

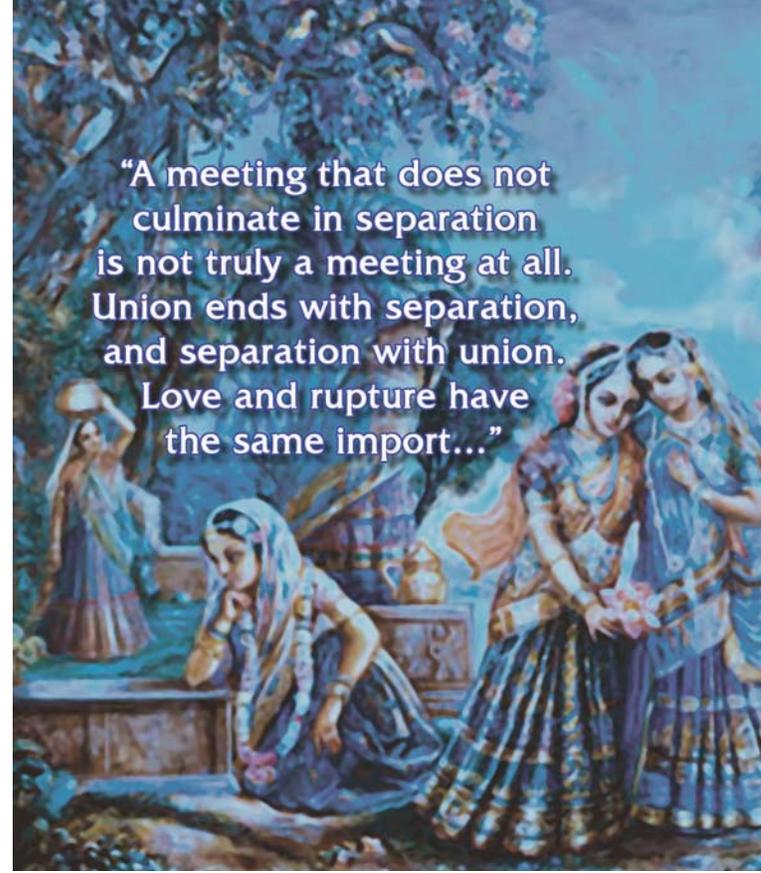
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.34–36)

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 Śrīla Prabhupāda, your devotees, who are absorbed in constantly remembering you with feelings of separation, attain the state of *mām upaiśyatha*, “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 Śrīla Prabhupāda, your form is composed of *sac-cid-ānanda* – 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 *darśana*. 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 Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*rūpānugas*) 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and you have shown your compassion by propagating service in separation (*vipralambha-sevā*).

You Are Uncompromising in Upholding the Truth

O merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, 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 *māyāvāda*, 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda, 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda, no desire other than to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa was ever present in your character. You were a *brahmacārī*, 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. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes:

*ramaṇī-jana-saṅga-sukhaṁ ca sakhe
carama bhayadaṁ puruṣārtha-haram*

Śrī Godruma-candra Bhajanopadeśa

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 Vaiṣṇavas who variously misinterpret the original teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. 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 *varṇāśrama* and established divine *varṇāśrama*. By your transcendental power, you overcame the fierce opposition. As a result, your sincere servants have been following that system of divine *varṇāśrama* to this day. This divine triumph of yours displays your great compassion.

O merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have condemned the concept that matter and spirit are identical, as well as the ideas of the *prākṛta-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 Śrīman 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 Śrīman 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 *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*,
Year 8, Issue 11 (1957)

by trying to imitate the transcendental loving affairs of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.



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 devakī-janma-vādo
yadu-vara-pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam
sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ su-smīta-śrī-mukhena
vraja-pura-vanitānām vardhayan kāma-devam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.90.48),
Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta (2.7.154)

All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is known as *jana-nivāsaḥ*, 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 Devakī, there is some controversy about this. He is served by the exalted Yadus, who are His associates. With His mighty arms, the Pāṇḍavas, 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 *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana, as well as the queens of Mathurā and Dvārakā.

Setting the Scene

As Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke this verse, he remembered the sweet pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa – 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 Parīkṣit was about to leave the place where he had been hearing *hari-kathā*. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who was also preparing to depart, said to him, “Don’t waver or be afraid. Always remember that *guru* and Kṛṣṇa are with you.”

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

If you are sincere and focused exclusively on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and if you have *guru-niṣṭhā*, unshakable faith in *śrī guru*, then your life will very quickly be successful and you will attain this same goal. Be one-pointed like Parīkṣit Mahārāja. During Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s seven-day narration of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he 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*.”

“Glory unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa!”

*jayati jana-nivāso devakī-
janma-vado*

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī remembered the entirety of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sweet pastimes and said, “*Jayati* – may Śrī Kṛṣṇa be glorious.” What does “glorious” mean here? Why do we pray “*Nityānanda Prabhu ki jaya, Gauracandra ki jaya, Vaiṣṇava-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.”

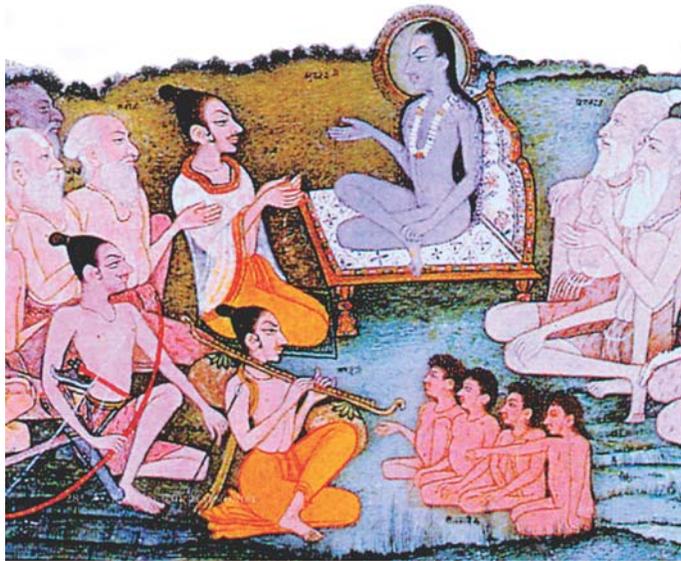
Śrī Kṛṣṇa: The Shelter of All Souls

Jana-nivāso means Śrī Kṛṣṇa is everywhere. He resides within all beings and all beings exist within Him. *Nivāsa* means “abode” or “shelter”. Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa sits as a witness to their activities. Don’t doubt that Śrī Kṛṣṇa sees when we misbehave. He is all-pervading. If you want to hide your activities from others, it means you are doing something crooked. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is everywhere, as is *śrī guru*. You cannot conceal anything from Him.

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

but Kṛṣṇa 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 Vaiṣṇavas – that is, His very own devotees. The *Vrajavāsīs* 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 Vrajavāsīs, for whom Kṛṣṇa is their very life air. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *nija-jana* include Yaśodā-maiyā, Nanda Bābā, the cowherd boys like Śrīdāma and Madhumaṅgala, and the *gopīs*. The Vrajavāsīs are His life as much as He is theirs. The *gopīs* are the highest class of *jana*. Yaśodā-maiyā is exalted, but the *gopīs* are more so; and among all the *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the highest and the most dear to Kṛṣṇa. If you think Kṛṣṇa is *mahat-saṅga*, exalted association, then Śrīmatī Rādhikā is *mahīyasī-saṅga*, the most exalted association. Her association is even more elevated and desirable than Śrī Kṛṣṇa's.



“If you think Kṛṣṇa is mahat-saṅga, exalted association, then Śrīmatī Rādhikā is mahīyasī-saṅga, the most exalted association.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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-yajña, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja asked Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi a question. This was the same question Parīkṣit Mahārāja asked Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is equal to all. Why, then, does He side with the demigods and fight against the demons to protect them? As Śrī Nṛsimhadeva, Śrī Rāma and other incarnations, He

killed Hiraṇyakaśipu, Rāvaṇa, Kumbhakarna and other demons. These activities seem to indicate that the Lord is partial.”

In reply, Śrī Nārada spoke Canto Seven of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. As the Supersoul, Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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, Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends to this world in His various incarnations and bestows His mercy upon them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Son of Yaśodā

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

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

Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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, Kṛṣṇa put some earth in His mouth, the *gopīs* complained to Yaśodā-maiyā, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa denied what He had done. Yaśodā-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, Śrī Nṛsiṃhadeva, etc., and that all existence lies within Him.

This verse does not mention Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name directly, but the previous verse does, and this verse refers to that same Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He took birth from the womb of Yaśodā-maiyā, Devakī being but another name of Yaśodā, and He killed Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Pūtanā and other demons, and fought in the Mahābhārata battle. The context of this verse indicates that it is referring to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. May that Śrī Kṛṣṇa be glorious.

At the beginning of Ratha-yātrā, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu chanted this verse in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra. By their sentiments, the *gopīs* brought Kṛṣṇa to Vṛndāvana at that time and decorated Him with flowers. In their hearts they forcibly handed Him the flute He left with Yaśodā-maiyā in Vṛndāvana, along with His peacock feather, and they whispered in His ear, “Don't think that Your father and mother are Vasudeva and Devakī. Don't believe that You have come from the Yadu dynasty and that You are a Yādava. Consider Yourself to be a *gopa* only.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied, “Yes, I will accept what you say.”

Vanquisher of the Demons

yadu-vara-pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam

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

This verse seems to describe Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Dvārakā, but in its deeper meaning it in fact glorifies Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa

killed Pūtanā and other demons with his own arms. Moreover, in Vṛndāvana He killed the greatest of demons – the deep separation experienced by Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs*.

He Who Removes All Suffering

Sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ means “He who removes life's endless pain and suffering”. Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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”. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's smiling face increases the love and affection of the *gopīs* and relieves them from their pangs of separation from Him. May this Śrī Kṛṣṇa be glorious.

Sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa's supreme magnanimity in the form of bestowing His *prema-bhakti* to all living beings. Here, *sthira* refers to non-moving entities of Vṛndāvana, like creepers, grass and bushes, and *cara* to moving living entities, including worms. Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa's smiling face and flute playing remove the suffering of the Vrajavāsīs. 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, Vṛndāvana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, as well as the *rāsa-līlā* and all the other pastimes of Vraja:

*su-smita-śrī-mukhena
vraja-pura-vanitānām vardhayan kāma-devam*

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

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

Kāma-devam refers to that Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa resides in the hearts of the *gopīs* as Kāmadeva. The function of *kāma* acts everywhere in this world, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself performs that function in the *gopīs*’ hearts. As Kāmadeva, He stimulates *kāma*, and therefore He exists eternally in full splendour. Here the words *śrī-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 Kṛṣṇa’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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s compassion.

The Essence of All Vedic Scriptures

It is with this verse that Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī concluded his description of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Mahārāja Parīkṣit later recited this same verse at the end of *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*. With this one verse, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī gave Parīkṣit Mahārāja – in one handful – the essence of the entire purport of the Vedas, Purāṇas, *Mahābhārata*, *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Rāmāyaṇa*.

This verse is indeed the essence of the vast ocean of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes as described in various scriptures. It was Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī's desire to place it in Parīkṣit Mahārāja's heart. With this one verse in the palm of his hand, Mahārāja Parīkṣit then taught his mother the essence of all Vedic literature, including *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. All knowledge from the past, present and future lay in those teachings.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit 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 Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 *gopīs'* most beloved, and remember Him as your most beloved. May that very Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā-maiyā, be victorious."

The Power of the Holy Name

All the deep purports of this verse can be realised by taking shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name. Agastya Ṛṣi'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* (*bhāva-bhakti*) and *sthāyibhāva*, your permanent relationship with Kṛṣṇa, will manifest. You will become more powerful than Agastya Ṛṣi. 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*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 17.21)

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

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

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

Harināma Tuwā (1)

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

All the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa reside in the *mahā-mantra*: Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.

Conclusion

In his *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī quotes this verse from Canto Ten, which has many profound meanings. Previously, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had explained to him sixty-one meanings of the *ātmārāma* verse (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.10). Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī similarly offers numerous explanations for each word of the verse *jayati janā-nivāsaḥ*. His sole purpose is to convince his readers to enter the line of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. He and Caitanya Mahāprabhu 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
(Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā)

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 Śrī Jagannātha Purī to observe the auspicious month of Śrī Puruṣottama, under the guidance of *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrī Caitanya Maṭha on Grand Road kindly agreed to host the festival. This *maṭha*, which basks in the shadow of the graceful domes of the Śrī Jagannātha Mandira, is the sacred birthsite of the compassionate founder of the Gauḍīya Maṭhas, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. Surely it is due to his wonderful potency to deliver the entire world (*mahad-adbhuta-pāvana-śakti*) that the Puruṣottama *vrata* and *parikramā* were especially exciting this year.

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

easily able to remember the Ratha-yātrā festivals at the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. With His hundreds of intimate associates, Mahāprabhu performed very grand *harināma-saṅkīrtana* in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs* bringing Śrī Kṛṣṇa back to Vṛndāvana from Kurukṣetra.

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-kāṇḍa* section of the Vedas, and the Vaiṣṇavas 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”). Vaiṣṇavas, however, regard this month as sacred, and the Vaiṣṇava scriptures describe its profuse glories.

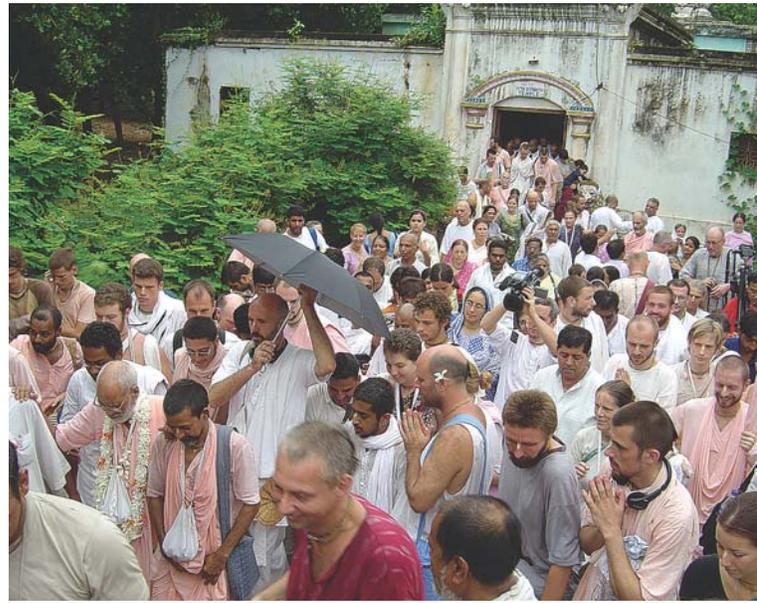
This month, being neglected by everyone, took shelter of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, who prayed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa on his behalf. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being merciful, infused this month with all His qualities and potencies, making him equal to Himself. Thus this month was given the name Puruṣottama. According to the Vaiṣṇava scriptures,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

Visiting the Sacred Places of Purī

Each morning, the devotees performed *parikramā* within Kṣetra-maṇḍala, visiting the holy sites associated with the pastimes of both Śrī Jagannātha and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja inaugurated the *parikramā* on the first morning by leading everyone past the Śrī Jagannātha Mandira to the Gambhīra, where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu spent the final years of His pastimes. On another day, Śrīla Mahārāja accompanied the devotees to Ṭoṭā-gopinātha Mandira and spoke *hari-kathā* in the courtyard where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would hear the secrets of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita.

Some days later, Śrīla Mahārāja also met the devotees at Lokanātha Mahādeva, one of the protectors of the *dhāma*. While the Indian devotees took *darśana*, 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 *darśana* 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 *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

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



Above: Śrīla Mahārāja and the devotees at Ṭoṭā-gopinātha Temple



Right: *hari-kathā* at Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura’s *samādhi*

ocean and his place of *bhajana* at Siddha-bakula; Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda’s *bhajana-kuṭīra* at Caṭaka-parvata; Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita’s *bhajana-kuṭīra*, where his Girirāja *śilā* is currently being worshiped; Indradyumna-sarovara and Narendra-sarovara; Jagannātha-vallabha-vatika, where Rāya Rāmānanda lived; Guṇḍicā and Nṛsimha Mandiras; Cakra-tīrtha; and many other places. Bus trips were



Outside Lokanātha Mahādeva’s temple



The *parikramā* party at Cakra-tīrtha

arranged to Ālālanātha, Bentāpura (Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda's birthplace), Sākṣi-gopāla Mandira, Nīla Mādhava and many amazingly beautiful places in Bhubaneśvara, including Liṅga-rāja Mahādeva, Bindhu-sarovara, Ananta Vāsudeva and Gauri-kuṇḍa, 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 Śrīla Mahārāja's discourses on "Rāmānanda Saṁvāda" from Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā*, Chapter 8. This chapter relates the dialogue between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya at Godāvarī, 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. Śrīla Mahārāja also spoke on "Rāmānanda Saṁvāda" during the month of Puruṣottama in Purī three years ago; nonetheless, his classes this year made the assembled devotees think they had never heard this discussion before.

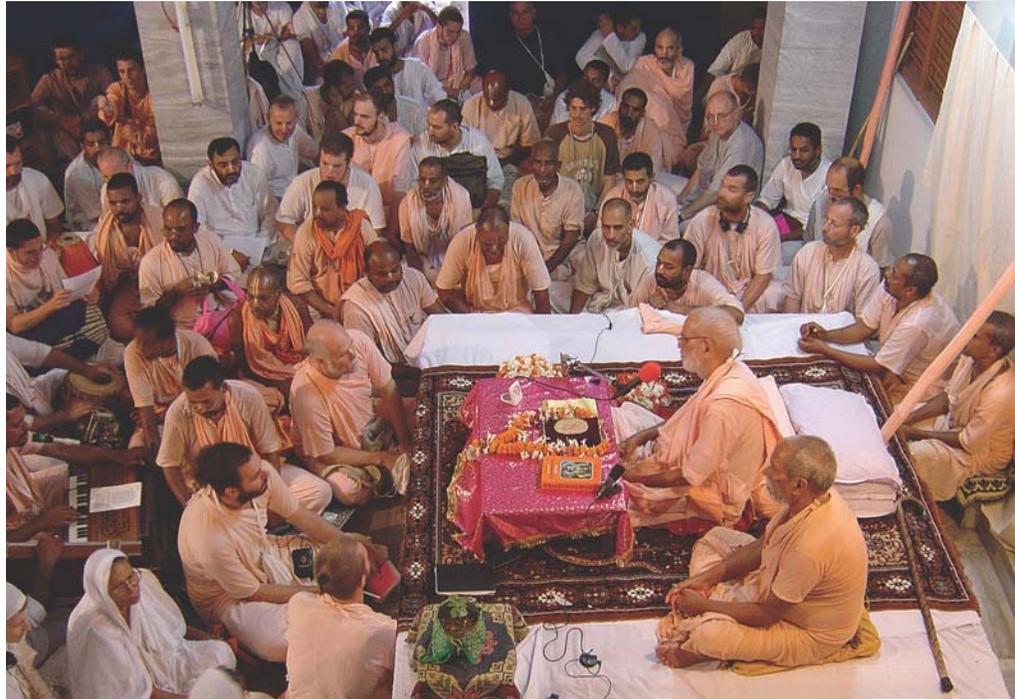
Śrīla Mahārāja devoted the first two classes to discussing the opening verse of the chapter:

*sañcārya rāmābhidha-bhakta-meghe
sva-bhakti-siddhānta-cayāmṛtāni
gaurābdhir etair amunā vitīrṇais
taj-jñatva-ratnālayatām prayāti*

Śrī Gaurāṅga is the ocean of all *bhakti-siddhānta*, conclusive truths about pure devotion. He infused these into the heart of Śrī 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 Śrī Gaurahari, this cloud showered its rain back upon the sea, filling it with

valuable jewels, which are Śrī Gaurāṅga's realisations of Śrī Rādhikā's moods.

Śrīla Mahārāja beautifully described how Śrī 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. Śrī Gaurahari, being Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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, Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya, being an incarnation of Śrī Viśākhā-devī, is himself a condensed, pure form of the *madhura-rasa* contained in Śrī Gaurahari.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is not Śrī Rādhā, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa covered by Her golden complexion and inner sentiments. Therefore, He has accepted Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya as His *śikṣā-guru* in order to fulfil His three inner purposes – namely, to understand (1) the glory of Śrī 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, Śrī 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 Svātī, which produces jewels in the ocean. This *siddhānta* entered the ocean-like heart of Śrī Gaurahari and produced the most astonishing jewels – realisation of the three reasons for His descent.

A Quandry: Mahāprabhu’s Prayers to Śrī Nṛsimha

Although Śrīman Mahāprabhu toured South India on the pretext of finding His older brother, Śrī Viśvarūpa, His real intention was to meet His dear associate Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya. Before reaching Vidyānagara, Mahāprabhu passed through the place of pilgrimage known as Jiyaḍa-nṛsimha. Upon beholding the deity of Śrī Nṛsimha in the temple, He offered His respectful obeisances and danced in great ecstasy. “O Nṛsimhadeva,” 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 Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is always absorbed in tasting the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, why would He wish to taste the moods of Śrī Lakṣmī-devī, as expressed in the prayers He offered? Śrīla Mahārāja explained that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the enjoyer of all types of *rasa* and that Lakṣmī-devī is but an expansion of Śrī Rādhā. Contained in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *prema* is every variety of *rasa*, including the *prema* of Lakṣmī-devī. Thus, Mahāprabhu’s tasting the special quality of Lakṣmī-devī’s *prema* is not contrary to His tasting *rādhā-bhāva*. Rather, the former fully compliments the latter.

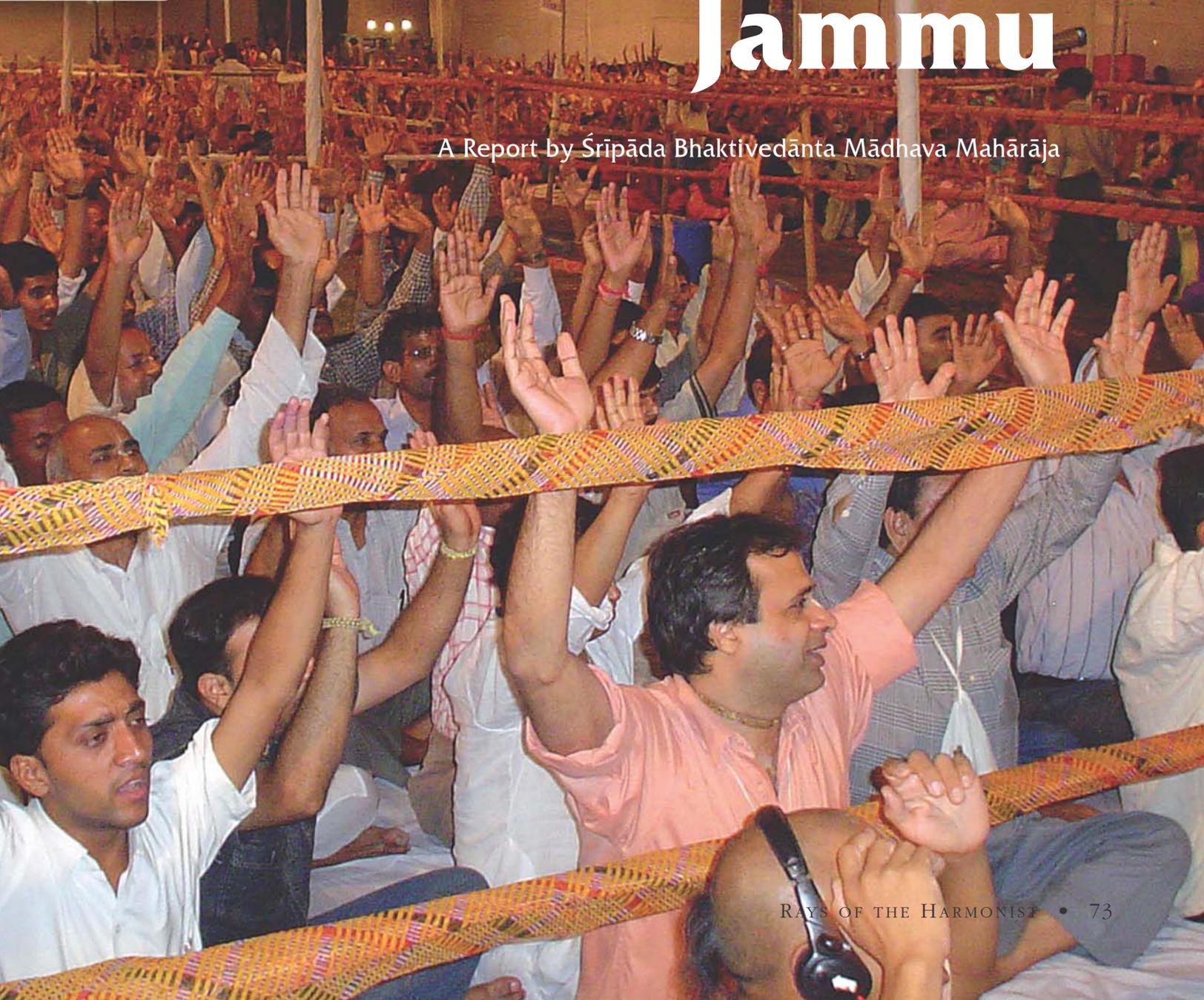
With this unprecedented, sweet introduction, the assembled devotees gratefully bathed in the shower of Śrīla Mahārāja’s *hari-kathā* for the duration of the *parikramā*. This “Rāmānanda Saṁvāda” is so potent that it can inspire in one’s heart the very highest of all desires. Śrīla Mahārāja requested 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 Gauḍīya predecessors, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja continues to push forward the mission of Śrī 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 *kīrtana* 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 Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Gauḍīya Maṭha in collaboration with a religious society named Bāṅke-Bihārī Mitra Maṇḍala.

At this programme, Śrīla Mahārāja delivered powerful lectures on *Śrīmad-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 Vaiṣṇavas, for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and for Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, can one find any true meaning and fulfilment in this life.

“Some speakers recite *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for a fee,” Śrīla 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



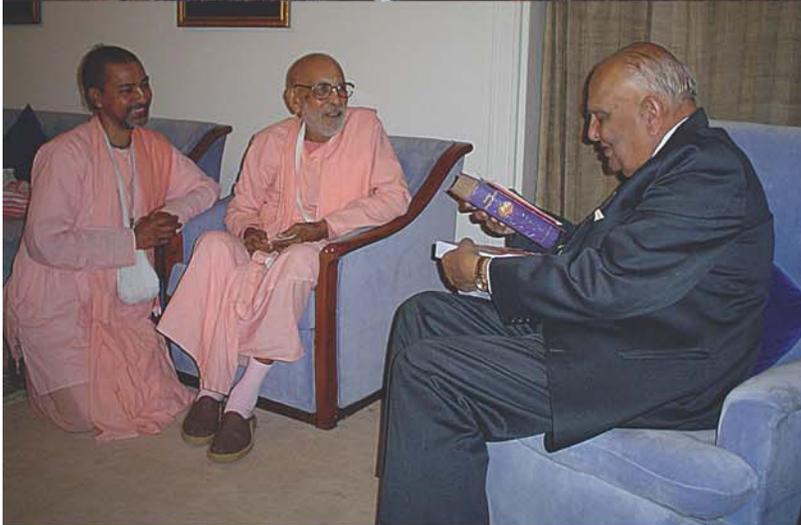
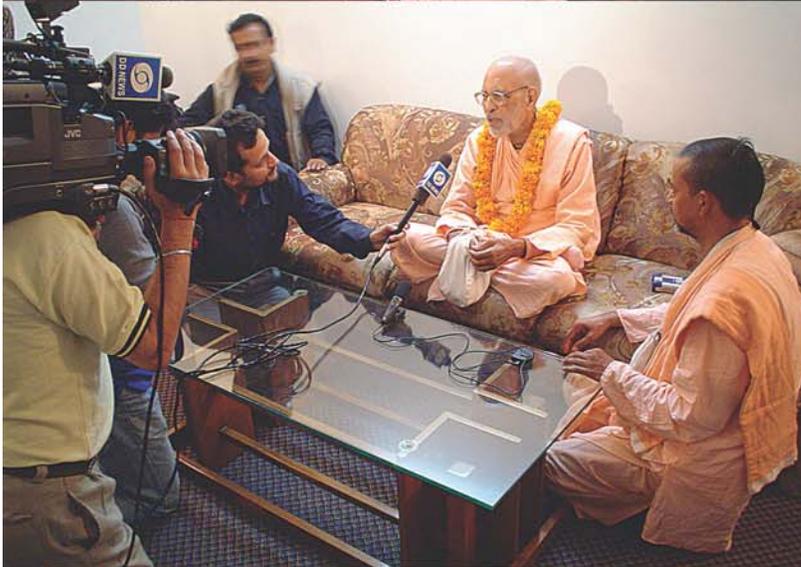


with up to five thousand eager listeners, mostly educated and affluent inhabitants of Noida and New Delhi. Śrī Ashok Pradhan, Member of Parliament for Noida, and Śrī Nawab Singh, Member of the Legislative Assembly, also attended and sought Śrīla Mahārāja's blessings. Altogether, some hundred people requested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

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

Jammu and Kashmir

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja also travelled to Jammu, where he spread the message of Śrī 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. Śrīla Mahārāja was cordially received at the airport by Śrī Sobha Ram, Deputy Director of Hospitality of the Protocol Department. The Governor of Jammu and Kashmir, Śrī S. K. Sinha, and its Deputy Chief Minister, Śrī Mangat Ram Sharma, personally came to meet Śrīla Mahārāja and obtain his auspicious blessings. Śrīla Mahārāja requested them to kindly assist in spreading Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* 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 *kīrtana* in Jammu; Śrīla Mahārāja holds a press conference in Jammu; the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir receives *Bhagavad-gītā*; and the Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir meets Śrīla Mahārāja.

Passing Away of Mūlaprakṛti Dāsī

By Śrīmatī Mañjarī dāsī



On Ekādaśī, 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 Vṛndāvana 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, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda's projects.

After Śrīla Prabhupāda's departure, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī and her husband, Gopavṛndapāla Prabhu, initiated unique programmes to develop spiritual communities and foster loving relationships between devotees. Their two sons and daughter – Śravaṇa 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 Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. She began a book of interviews of people who knew Śrīla Prabhupāda before he went to the West. She became inspired by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who understood her great sincerity and encouraged her desire to glorify her Śrīla 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-śilā. 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.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī 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 Kṛṣṇa's *bhaktas* in the *kuñjas* of Vṛndāvana. 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

“That is good,” Śrīla Mahārāja told her. “Śrīla 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 Śrīla Prabhupāda was blessing her with profound experiences. Her last audible words were “Hare Kṛṣṇa”.

In the end, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī lay under a beautiful portrait of Śrīla Prabhupāda, with Kṛṣṇa's thick *tulasī* garland and Rādhārāṇī's flower belt encircling her face, her beloved Deity, Girijū, touching her forehead, and impressions of Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet behind her head. The holy names were written in *gopī-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 *praṇāmas* to this great Vaiṣṇavī, Mūlaprakṛti dāsī, who graced our lives with her friendship and love and taught *guru-niṣṭhā* by her life's example. 🕉

Hari Hari Āra Kabe Palatibe Daśā

(Prārthanā)

by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura

**hari hari āra kabe palatibe daśā
ei saba kariyā vāme, yāba vṛndāvana-dhāme,
ei mane kariyāchi āśā (1)**

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

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

**dhana jana putra dāre, e saba kariyā dūre,
ekānta haiyā kabe yāba
saba duḥkha parihāri, vṛndāvane vāsa kari,
mādhukarī 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; *duḥkha* – material miseries; *parihāri* – giving up; *vṛndāvane* – in Vṛndāvana; *vāsa* – residence; *kari* – doing; *mādhukarī* – 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 Vṛndāvana? When will I forget all material miseries and live in Vṛndāvana, eating only what food I can get by begging?

**yamunāra jala yena, amṛta samāna hena,
kabe piba udāra pūriyā
kabe rādhā-kuṇḍa-jale, snāna kari kutuhale,
śyāma-kuṇḍa rahiba pādīyā (3)**

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

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

**bhramiba dvādaśa vane, rasa-keli ye ye sthāne,
premāveśe gaḍāgaḍi diyā
sudhāiba jane jane, vrajavāsī-gaṇa-sthāne,
nivedība caraṇe dhariyā (4)**

bhramiba – I shall wander; *dvādaśa* – twelve; *vane* – in the forests; *rasa-keli* – of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes filled with transcendental mellows; *ye ye* – various; *sthāne* – places; *prema-āveśe* – overwhelmed by *prema*; *gaḍāgaḍi* – rolling about on the ground; *diyā* – doing; *sudhāiba* – I shall enquire; *jane jane* – to all the people; *vrajavāsī-gaṇa* – of the residents of Vraja; *sthāne* – at the places; *nivedība* – I shall offer prayers; *caraṇe* – their lotus feet; *dhariyā* – taking.

I shall wander through the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana where Śrī Kṛṣṇa 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 vṛndāvana, narottama dāsera mana,
āśā kare yugala caraṇa (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; *vṛndāvana* – Vṛndāvana; *narottama dāsera* – of Narottama dāsa; *mana* – the heart; *āśā* – the hope; *kare* – does; *yugala* – of the Divine Couple; *caraṇa* – the lotus feet.

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

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