

The Essence of All Advice

A COLLECTION OF DISCOURSES ON THE NECTAR OF INSTRUCTION

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda's
commentary on

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta
by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

*Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja*



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Introduction



During his second tour to the United States in May, 1997, our beloved Gurudeva, *om viṣṇuṣṭāda paramahansa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottaraśata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, delivered a series of eleven lectures in Badger, California, on Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* as translated and commented on by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda. He spoke these lectures with the aim of encouraging Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples and followers to move forward in their devotional practices.

Beginning with verse five, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja lectured for eleven days on all the remaining verses of *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*. Reading directly from Śrīla Prabhupada's translations and purports, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja reveals the sublime spiritual wealth contained within those explanations. Quoting from the writings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and other *ācāryas* in our disciplic succession, he clearly establishes the connection between Śrīla Prabhupāda's writings and the most confidential teachings of our greatest *ācāryas*.

In the course of these lectures, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja asked the audience many questions; the devotees' responses are included herein. We have retained the conversational style of Śrīla Mahārāja's presentation in the text to communicate a feeling of intimacy and to give the reader a sense of personal involvement. He often apologizes that his English is very poor and lame, but his faithful listeners find his way of speaking quite charming and fresh. We have changed some of his language but purposely have not used "Queen's English" throughout because we want to communicate his very particular mood. For example, Śrīla Mahārājī uses the expression "brooming" rather than "sweeping," because he does not want this *sevā* equated with the work of the common street sweeper. We hope that the devotees will appreciate his personal use of the English language.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja first met Śrīla Prabhupāda in 1947 and developed a very intimate relationship with him, both as a *śikṣā* disciple and as a friend. It is customary among Gauḍīya *sannyāsīs* to refer to one another by their *sannyāsa* names. He explains:

“When I say ‘Swāmījī’ or ‘Swāmī Mahārāja’, you should understand that I am speaking of my Śikṣā-guru, Śrī Srimad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, your Prabhupāda.”

Swāmī is Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *sannyāsa* name and his godbrothers and intimate associates would often refer to him as “Swāmījī”, which is an affectionate and very respectful form of address.

As the lectures delivered in Badger do not cover the first four verses of *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, an appendix has been added that includes three separate lectures by Śrīla Narayana Maharaja on those *ślokas*.

We humbly pray at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda and all of our *guru-varga* that they bless us with the understanding and enthusiasm to follow the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda in his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*. By their grace, may we one day:

“reside at Rādhā Kuṇḍa, and in a spiritual body surcharged with ecstatic devotional feelings (*aprākṛtabhāva*), render loving service to the divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, who perform Their *aṣṭakālīya-līlā*, Their eternal eightfold daily pastimes.”

[*Nectar of Instruction* Text 10]

The aspiring servants of
THE GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA PUBLICATIONS

5 October 1998
Śaradiya Rāsa Yatra

Disappearance of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



*Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja*



*Śrīla Bhakti Prajñana Keśava Mahārāja (center),
Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Muni Mahārāja (left),
and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja (right),
just after the sannyāsa initiation ceremony on September 17, 1959*



*Śrīla
Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda*



Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja offering puspāñjali to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja at The Manor, England, in 1996

Maṅgalācaraṇa



*gurave gauracandrāya
rādhikāyai tadālayai
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa bhaktāya
tad-bhaktāya namo namaḥ*

“I offer *praṇāma* to Śrī Gurudeva, Śrī Gauracandra, Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her associates, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, and to all of Their devotees.”

*śrī-caitanya mano'bhīṣṭam sthāpitam yena bhūtale
svayam rūpaḥ kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padāntikam*

“When will Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the dear associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, bestow upon me the shelter of his lotus feet? He has established in this world the method for obtaining love of Kṛṣṇa, according to the innermost heart’s desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.”

*ādadānas tṛṇam dantair
idam yāce punaḥ punaḥ
śrīmad-rūpa-padāmbhoja-
dhūliḥ syām janma-janmani*

“Taking a straw between my teeth, I beg again and again, ‘Oh, I want to become the dust of the lotus feet of

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda so that I may serve him birth after birth’.”

*bhaktyā vihinā aparādha-lakṣaiḥ
kṣiptāś ca kāmādi-taraṅga-madhye
kṛpāmayi! tvāṁ śaraṇaṁ praṇannā
vṛnde! numas te caraṇāravindam*

“Devoid of devotion and guilty of unlimited offenses, I am being tossed about in the ocean of material existence by the turbulent waves of lust, anger, greed and other inauspicious qualities. Therefore, O merciful Vṛndā-devī! I take shelter of you and offer *praṇāma* unto your lotus feet.”



*Śrīla
Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda*

CHAPTER ONE

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 5

New Braja, 18 May 1997



Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja has written a *ṭīkā*, an explanation, on *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, *Nectar of Instruction*. These instructions are for all devotees, from neophytes up to those in the highest stage. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu inspired Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Mahārāja at Prayāga, giving him many instructions, especially for performing *sādhana* in *rāgānugā-bhakti*. He outlined all types of *bhakti*, culminating in *prema-bhakti*, explaining how to enter it and how to cultivate it.

Kṛṣṇa came and tasted all kinds of *bhakti-rasa*, but He did not give the process by which neophyte devotees (*kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*) practice and advance into *madhyama-adhikārī*, how a *madhyama-adhikārī* gradually cultivates his *bhakti* to *uttama-adhikārī*, how the *uttama-adhikārī* can come into *svarūpa-siddha-bhakti*, and how someone in *svarūpa-siddha-bhakti* can come into *sādhana-siddha* and become *vastu-siddha*, a *premī-bhakta*.

We will begin here with the fifth *śloka*. We should not give our attention to anything else. Our whole meditation should

be focused here. If you read something, you should get absorbed in it, having the attitude that “I am serving this *grantha* (sacred text) and am taking all these instructions in my heart.” We should not read superficially, hearing with one ear and letting it out the other.

There is a very beautiful story which illustrates this point. In India there was once a king named Vikramāditya. He had so many “jewels”—his counselors—nine court jewels. All nine were highly learned, but among them Kalidāsa was supremely intelligent. One day a person looking like a madman came, holding a skull in his hand. He was quite naked and very dirty. He came in the council of Vikramāditya and put that skull on the desk, saying, “I have heard there are many intelligent jewels in your court. Let them come here and test whether the person whose skull I have placed here was intelligent or a fool and a rascal.”

Eight jewels were there, very learned persons, participating in the king’s council, but none of them were able to reply. Only the skull was there, nothing else, so how could they test it? Then that madman began to laugh and said, “You are all bogus, foolish persons with no sense. I had heard this, and now I have found out that it is true. So I am going.” And he took the skull, preparing to leave. In the meantime, Kalidāsa came. The King requested the madman, “Oh, wait a little. Another one of my counselors is coming, and he will answer your question.”

That person put the skull on the desk again, and Kalidāsa came. This same question was asked to Kalidāsa, who then took a long coconut stick made of very fine, long strands used for sweeping and went to the skull. He put the stick in one ear and it came out the other side, through the other ear. Then he said, “Your question is answered. Do you understand?”

“Oh, you should clarify more,” the King said. “I do not understand.”

Kalidāsa explained, “If anything comes in one ear and goes out the other, that person is surely foolish. And if something goes in one

ear and does not come out the other, but instead goes into the heart, then he is surely a very intelligent person. Thus, from his skull we can understand that this dead person was very foolish.”

If we hear so many things but do not take them into the heart, if we do not cultivate all these teachings, then we are like a foolish person and cannot develop our *kṛṣṇa-prema*. You have come from many distant, far-away places. So don't merely take these teachings in one ear and let them go out the other, but keep them in your heart and follow them.

Not one of us has come for any worldly gain. We have come here only to see how we can develop our *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Generally, we are *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*. It may be rare that some of us are *madhyama-adhikārī*, but not *uttama-adhikārī* in any case. As *kaniṣṭhas* and *madhyamas*, we should try to develop by hearing the instructions of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, as explained by Śrīla Swāmījī. When I say “Swāmījī” or “Bhaktivedānta Swāmījī Mahārāja,” you should understand that I am speaking of my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, your Prabhupāda.

Do not think that Swāmījī Mahārāja is not in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī. And do not think that Swāmījī is saying anything different from Rūpa Gosvāmī, even though Swāmījī has sometimes used different words and has elaborated further. What Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has described in two lines or in one *śloka*, Swāmījī has explained in ten pages, but he is not telling anything different. He is only illuminating the same thing for the benefit of those he is helping, those who are not understanding. So understand that Swāmījī is in the same line as Rūpa Gosvāmī. I am reading Swāmījī's commentary, and I will explain it. Don't think that, because his words are not the same as Rūpa Gosvāmī's, he is saying something different. Swāmījī is not actually repeating the same words that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has used, but the meaning and the eternal motive are exactly the same.

I shall begin reading from Text 5:

*kṛṣṇeti yasya giri tam manasādriyeta
dīkṣāsti cet prāṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā*

You should read the translation.

Devotee reads from *The Nectar of Instruction*:

One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should offer humble obeisances to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation (*dīkṣā*) and is engaged in worshipping the Deity, and one should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja: In this translation or even in the text, has Swāmiji mentioned anywhere that “the devotee must be initiated by me, myself only?” Has he said this? “We should deal with only those devotees initiated by me?” Has he said this? Or has he said, “We should consider that only my disciples and the disciples of my disciples are bona fide Vaiṣṇavas?” In the whole world no others are to be considered as Vaiṣṇavas? Has he said this? Is there any indication for this? No! We should not think that he is speaking about only “my disciples in my society.” No, he is speaking about the whole Vaiṣṇava community. This verse applies to someone who may not even be in Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *sampradāya*. He may be from the Śrī or Rāmānuja *sampradāya* or in one of the other *sampradāyas*. Even a person outside the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* is to be accepted as a Vaiṣṇava if he has heard anything about Kṛṣṇa’s glory. He may not even have taken initiation but he knows the glory of Kṛṣṇa’s name and is uttering *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*.

Swāmiji has given the example of his friend who was not in the Kṛṣṇa conscious society. He had not even taken any kind of

initiation. He was a famous English musician who had not left all his bad habits in eating, drinking, and smoking, but in his house he had some photos of Kṛṣṇa that he was respecting. In some of his famous songs, he used to sing *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*. Swāmījī is saying in his explanation that we should think of such a person as a member of our family, and he should be respected, even if he is drinking, taking intoxication, or anything else. And if he is initiated by a Vaiṣṇava or is in Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s family, we must respect him. If he is coming to our temples or programs, do not criticize him.

So here Rūpa Gosvāmī is saying *kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ man-asādriyeta*. Yes, you should read the purport.

Devotee reads:

We can see from practical experience that there are different types of Vaiṣṇavas. The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* generally chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, yet they are attached to women, money and intoxication.

BVNM: You should know the definition of *sahajiyā*. Some devotees are telling that Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is a *pakkā* (complete) *sahajiyā*. But you should hear the definition of *sahajiyā*. Repeat what you just read.

Devotee reads:

The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* generally chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, yet they are attached to women, money and intoxication.

BVNM: What things? Women, money and intoxication. But you should not think that by “women” Swāmījī is referring only to men who are attached to women; it also includes women who are attached to men. For men it is women, and for women it is men. Otherwise it will be misunderstood. Women will think this does not apply to them and will commit an offense.

Devotee reads:

Although such persons may chant the holy name of the Lord, they are not yet properly purified.

BVNM: Wait a little. Can anyone say that I am involved with women? Do I drink and smoke, or have any bad habits? Do I wear my *sannyāsī* dress when I come to my room in the *mandira* but change my cloth when I go to other countries? And about money—I want pure hearts only, I don't want money. So who is the *sahajiyā*, myself or those who are saying this? You can decide. Those who are saying this and who are not following all these instructions are *sahajiyās*.

Kṛṣṇa has given you the intelligence to deliberate on all these matters. Don't accept blindly. Don't believe their rumors and propaganda. Today, in Kali-yuga, propaganda and rumors are the most prominent weapons, but a Vaiṣṇava is not affected by all these things.

Read on.

Devotee reads:

Although such persons may chant the holy name of the Lord, they are not yet properly purified. Such people should be respected within one's mind, but their association should be avoided. Those who are innocent but simply carried away by bad association should be shown favor if they are eager to receive proper instructions from pure devotees, but those neophyte devotees who are actually initiated by the bona fide spiritual master and are seriously engaged in carrying out the orders of the spiritual master should be offered respectful obeisances.

BVNM: Now come to the purport. We will try to properly re-establish what Swāmiji is saying.

Devotee reads:

In order to intelligently apply the sixfold loving reciprocations

mentioned in the previous verse, one must select proper persons with careful discrimination. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore advises that we should meet with the Vaiṣṇavas in an appropriate way, according to their particular status.

BVNM: What is the *paribhāṣā*, the definition, of Vaiṣṇava? He has used the term Vaiṣṇava. What is the meaning? Vaiṣṇava is one who has taken *mantra*, *kṛṣṇa* or *rāma mantra*, and is worshiping his deities by that *mantra* and following the Vaiṣṇava rules and regulations. Is Swāmījī saying that he is my disciple so he is Vaiṣṇava, and all others are not Vaiṣṇavas? This would be an offense. We should not make offenses like this. We should adopt this complete *paribhāṣā* of Vaiṣṇava. Regardless of birth, caste or creed, we should accept anyone who is chanting, who is initiated in Vaiṣṇava *mantra* and worshiping deities by that *mantra*, following the rules—all these persons are Vaiṣṇavas. The worshipers of Rāma, Nṛsiṃha, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa—all who are worshiping in the proper way—are Vaiṣṇavas. Māyāvādīs also chant Kṛṣṇa’s name, but they are not in a proper Vaiṣṇava process.

Then?

Devotee reads:

In this verse he tells us how to deal with three types of devotees—the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, *madhyama-adhikārī* and *uttama-adhikārī*. The *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is a neophyte who has received the *hari-nāma* initiation from the spiritual master and is trying to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: If someone has taken *harināma*, what is the need of his taking *dikṣā*? Can anyone reply?

Devotee: In *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, Prabhupāda says that it brings one closer to the spiritual master.

BVNM: What is the difference, I want to know, between *harināma* and *dikṣā*? Which is prominent? Name or *dikṣā*?

Devotee: Name is non-different from *nāmi*, Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: Suppose I went to cook somewhere. Was there a stove? Yes, a stove was there, a pot was there, the fire was there, water was there, everything was there, but no rice. So can cooking be done or not? So take this *nāma* as rice. Without the help of a stove, water, fire and a pot, the rice cannot be boiled. If all things are there, but there is no rice, then we cannot cook. But if there is rice and all other needed items, then we can boil the rice and take it. Understand my example?

You should think that *nāma* is Himself Kṛṣṇa, or Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. *Nāma* is like rice, and the *dikṣā-mantras* are like the fire and all other things. To actually realize that the name is Himself Kṛṣṇa, all items are required—to purify ourselves, not to purify Kṛṣṇa’s name. Kṛṣṇa’s name is always pure:

*nāma-cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś
caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

(*Padma Purāṇa*, quoted in *CC. Mad.* 17.133)

[The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Kṛṣṇa’s name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Since Kṛṣṇa’s name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with *māyā*. Kṛṣṇa’s name is always liberated and spiritual. Because the name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are identical, His name is never conditioned by the laws of material nature.]

Kṛṣṇa is the same as His name—there is no difference. His name cannot be impure. It is always pure, always *cinmaya*, *sac-cid-*

ānanda-maya. But in our stage, we cannot chant the pure name. Understand? If we are full of ignorance, full of all kinds of worldly desires, *anarthas* and offenses, then what we utter as *kṛṣṇa-nāma* will not actually be *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. At this time you are standing on the platform of *māyā*, *avidyā*, so that name will not be pure. To purify our hearts and to get a real taste in chanting name, *dīkṣā* is needed. It is needed for so many other reasons as well: to have a link, a relationship between Kṛṣṇa and oneself, His name and oneself, and to give up all kinds of *anarthas* and *avidyā*. Fire is needed to boil water, but boiling water alone is not enough. Rice is also required. *Dīkṣā* is given to purify our heart and develop a link with Kṛṣṇa so that very soon we can realize that the name is Himself Kṛṣṇa.

Dīkṣā helps to establish the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and the devotee. *Gopī-jana-vallabhāya svāhā*. *Svāhā* means I am offering myself, I am dedicating myself fully at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Which Kṛṣṇa? Kṛṣṇa's name, which is the name of *brahma*, the Supreme Truth. With what relationship? That same relationship as the *gopīs* have with *Gopī-jana-vallabha*. By this relationship we should chant the name, giving up all *kṣa*, unwanted things. *Dī-kṣā*: *dī* means *divya jñānam dadāti*, giving *divya-jñāna*, transcendental knowledge. What is this *divya* relationship? Kṛṣṇa is my beloved. It makes no difference whether one is male or female. *Dīkṣā* gives this relation. If you do not take *dīkṣā*, this relationship will not come, and you will not be able to give up all your worldly desires and bad habits. So it helps. But we see examples of devotees, like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who chant *harināma* but have not taken *dīkṣā*. There are so many examples of this—no initiation. But yet by chanting and chanting and being in the association of highly realized devotees, they have received *kṛṣṇa-prema*. But these cases are rare. So we should follow rules and regulations in this matter. We must take *dīkṣā*.

If you are thinking that “I am like Haridāsa Ṭhākura,” then nothing will come. So now I think that you have properly realized this point—what is the difference between *harināma* and *dīkṣā*. Suppose you have only taken *dīkṣā* but not *harināma*, what will

you get? If you are not chanting the name but only *dīkṣā-mantra*, thereby taking out the Kṛṣṇa name from the *gopāla-mantra*, what remains? *Svāhā, svāhā*. Nothing remains—no liberation, nothing, zero. So the name has two functions.

Klīm and *śrīm* are the *bīja mantras*, and mixing with *svāhā, namaḥ* or *namaskāra*, they give us a special kind of power to give up all our bad habits. Without *dīkṣā* you cannot give them up. The name can also work, but why should you use it for this? You should not use the name in this way. Something less powerful can be used instead. The name alone can do everything, but it will take a very long time. Therefore, our *ṛṣis* have manifested these *mantras* by which our *kṛṣṇa-nāma* will quickly develop into *śuddha-nāma*, pure name. That is why *dīkṣā* is given in our disciplic order. Swāmījī has explained this, and I am not telling anything different. You should not think, “Oh, if you are saying that but not using the same words, then we will not accept what you say.” I find that if I am using the same words as Swāmījī, you will not understand what his deeper moods are. They are very hard to explain.

Now go on.

Devotee reads:

A *madhyama-adhikārī* has received spiritual initiation from the spiritual master and has been fully engaged by him in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. The *madhyama-adhikārī* should be considered to be situated midway in devotional service. The *uttama-adhikārī*, or highest devotee, is one who is very advanced in devotional service. An *uttama-adhikārī* is not interested in blaspheming others, his heart is completely clean, and he has attained the realized state of unalloyed Kṛṣṇa consciousness. According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the association and service of such a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or perfect Vaiṣṇava, is most desirable.

BVNM: Again I am repeating: should he be the disciple of the same *guru* or any other *guru*? Swāmījī is not saying, “among my disciples

only.” He would never write like this. Never. Nor will you find this idea in any books, in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, in *Upaniṣad*, or in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Who initiated Parikṣit Mahārāja? Who was the *guru* of Parikṣit Mahārāja?

Devotee: Śukadeva.

BVNM: He did not initiate him. But Parikṣit Mahārāja is saying that Śukadeva is his Gurudeva. He is taking his *saṅga* and hearing *hari-kathā* from him. So you should not think that only one’s initiating *guru* is a Vaiṣṇava and no one else. This mood is offensive. We should not think like this. It is not found anywhere. It is *asat-sampradāya*. Especially if someone coming in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *sampradāya* is qualified, he is a Vaiṣṇava. Even a *madhyama-adhikārī* should be honored and heard from.

Go on. Listen very carefully to this line. “One should ...”

Devotee reads:

One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*.

BVNM: I am always repeating this. Some are saying that you should always be distributing books, always, always, always, and making money, money, money for your whole life and this will take you to Goloka Vṛndāvana in the service of *gopī-prema*. This is quite absurd, quite absurd. I am thinking that those who are saying this are foolish. Swāmījī is not saying this. These activities are meant for building up one’s *sukṛti*. They are for newcomers who must do all these activities that Swāmījī has approved, but they should know that this book distribution alone will not be sufficient to achieve the final goal. They should go deep into Swāmījī’s purports, then they will have success. If a devotee is only distributing *lākhās* and *lākhās* of books, he will continue coming and going in the cycle of birth and death. By these activities he will only accumulate some *sukṛti* (spiritual merits).

Swāmījī has not told that one should always remain as a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. Rather, he has said that one should *not* remain

a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* forever. But some are insisting that we should be like that, and that this is the highest level of service! They are simply bluffing. Quite bluffing. We should not bluff anyone. Why are they falling down? They are blaspheming persons for their own gain, and when collecting donations in the name of Guru, they give 25% to the temple and 75% profit goes into their own pockets. Swāmījī is seeing everything, and he cannot tolerate this.

We should advance. One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*; he should try to move on, by hearing from a bona fide Vaiṣṇava. Greed will come if he is hearing in this way. If he is cultivating and obeying the orders of bona fide Vaiṣṇavas, like Swāmījī, he will surely become a *madhyama-adhikārī*. The *madhyama-adhikārī* will become an *uttama-adhikārī*, and the *uttama-adhikārī* will develop *kṛṣṇa-prema*, in *vastu-siddhi*. We have not come here to remain in the same *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* stage and make offenses. Anyone who perpetually remains *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* will have limited satisfaction.

Then, “one who is situated on the lowest ...”

Devotee reads:

One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, one who is situated on the lowest platform.

BVNM: You should all try to become *madhyama-adhikārī*, and those who are in *madhyama-adhikārī* should come to *madhyama-madhyama-adhikārī*, those who are in *madhyama-madhyama* should come to *madhyama-uttama*, and those in *uttama* should try to realize *svarūpa-siddhi*. And after *svarūpa-siddhi*, *vastu-siddhi*. Swāmījī has written everything, everything—*śravaṇa-daśā* (the stage of hearing), *varaṇa-daśā* (the stage of acceptance) *smaraṇa-daśā* (the stage of remembrance), then *āpana-daśā* (the stage of spiritual ecstasy), and *sampatti-daśā* (the stage of highest success of *prema*). He has explained all of this. But we have no chance to go through these books, because we are always only

distributing and distributing. We should know, however, that this will not take us to that higher goal.

Devotee: Gurudeva, if one is hearing from a *rasika*, *tattva-jñā madhyama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava, and advancing from *kaniṣṭha* to *madhyama* stage, then if that person is still distributing books, is that merely acquiring *sukṛtī*?

BVNM: No harm, no harm. At that time to distribute books is *bhakti*.

Devotee: Is it the level of consciousness of the person who is distributing that makes the difference?

BVNM: Yes, in any activity. A man is brooming but this is not mentioned in the 64 kinds of *bhakti*. But brooming in the *kuñja* will be the highest type of *sevā*. So all our activities can be utilized—what we are doing and even what we should not do. Sometimes the non-sense of worldly persons, when performed by a devotee, can be the highest service to Kṛṣṇa. But it depends on our stage. So we must try to come to *madhyama-adhikārī*, and the *madhyama-adhikārī* must try to come to *uttama-adhikārī*. Swāmījī Mahārāja is not saying that one should remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* forever; he should go forward. He must make some endeavor to progress. If he is not trying, then we should think that he is not in good association. There is some weakness, some leakage there, either in his *guru* or in himself. If his *guru* is not qualified, then he should give up that *guru*. If our eagerness or enthusiasm is not coming, and we are not trying to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness from *kaniṣṭha-* to *madhyama-adhikārī* due to an unqualified *guru*, then that *guru* should be given up.

Devotee reads:

One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, one who is situated on the lowest platform of devotional service and is interested only in worshiping the Deity in the temple.

BVNM: Only worshiping and worshiping for thousands of years, but not serving a high-class Vaiṣṇava, will not be sufficient. If you want

to develop, you can perform deity worship, but at the same time you will have to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness by the association of *uttama-rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. Otherwise you will not advance.

Devotee: Gurudeva, I was wondering what is the minimum qualification of a...

BVNM: You should hear all these things and gradually all your doubts will be resolved. But hear very patiently and very deeply. Try to absorb yourself in one thing. Don't let your mind go to other subjects. You should try to become absorbed in what we are doing now. Concentrate on one thing only, on what I am giving here, what Swāmiji is saying. Don't stray from the subject. Try to understand these words, the deep meaning of Swāmiji's statements and his mood. Then you can develop.

Devotee reads:

A person who is very faithfully engaged in the worship of the Deity in the temple, but who does not know how to behave toward devotees or people in general is called a *prākṛta-bhakta*, or *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri*.

BVNM: You should know what is *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri*, and then take your hand here (pointing to his heart) and judge for yourself what kind of *adhikāra* you have, what stage you are in. You can easily judge this for yourself. Otherwise you cannot advance. And then try to develop. Who is *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri*? One who has no association of any advanced Vaiṣṇava and is only worshiping the Deity may think that he is more advanced than all others. If someone comes who may give so much money, the *pujārī* will think, "If I do not honor him, he may leave and not give money. So I should honor him." He will take the garland of Ṭhākurajī, but how will he give it? He will not touch the person, he will throw it. If you go to Bihārījī Mandira, or any *mandira* of Vṛndāvana where all the *gosvāmīs* are *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri*, you will see that they throw garlands even to devotees who are *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata*. If Śukadeva Gosvāmī

or Nārada Muni come, they will throw the garland like this, because they don't know anything. They think, “Oh, that Deity is not mine so He can be dishonored, but this is my Ṭhākura, and only He is to be honored—not all others. Why are those people giving donations to that Deity? They should all give to my Deity.” He is not thinking that my Deity is everywhere, that my Deity is fully Kṛṣṇa. They cannot think like this because they have not developed their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You should try to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I think it will be interesting for you to genuinely realize Swāmījī's teachings. I am not saying anything new; I am only explaining the words of Swāmījī here. Do not think that I am saying anything separate here and there. You will also see this in all other authentic books. You should try to hear, because I think that you did not have much opportunity to be with Swāmījī and to serve him practically in a direct relationship. I have had that opportunity. I was lucky to serve him personally for more than 30 years, so you can safely hear something from me to develop your *bhakti*.

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 5

New Braja, 19 May 1997



BVNM: What are the special characteristics in the writings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī?

Devotee: Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī fully understood the internal mood and desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to taste the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and his writings specifically expressed all of these pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He expounded upon what was there in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and expanded upon that by his own internal realizations, and he also presented to the world the science of *bhakti-rasa*. He provided all the ingredients the devotees require to go deeply into experiencing this *bhakti-rasa*.

BVNM: Very good. But because of my poor knowledge of English, I am not expressing my real intention in my question. The point I want to express is that whatever Rūpa Gosvāmī has written, he has first practiced himself and then realized it. He has not written anything which he has not practiced, fully realized, and established in his life. He has practiced everything first. Beginning from *Nectar of*

Instruction—vāco vegam, Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu and Ujjvala-Nīlamanī, he has practiced everything in his life perfectly. Then after realizing the truth, he wrote his books. But for us, when we write books, this is not the case.

Can you tell from your realization that Kṛṣṇa’s name and Kṛṣṇa are the same thing? By chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, we will be happy in this life and in future lives. Have you practiced and realized this? Yet we want to write books, so many volumes—volumes and volumes.

For example, take the five Pāṇḍavas and the hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra—Duryodhana and all. Altogether Droṇācārya had one hundred and five students. Droṇācārya was highly qualified in archery and also in all the *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*. He knew all the *śāstras* and he used to teach them to his students. One day he gave them an assignment to practice speaking the truth. They were to meditate on this and then come back the next day.

Duryodhana told him, “Oh, I have already learned this. This is not such a difficult or complicated philosophy. I already practice this.”

“No. You should go and deeply think about this and come back tomorrow.”

The next day they all assembled. Droṇācārya asked Duryodhana, “Do you remember what I asked?”

“Yes, yes, so well. You told us to speak the truth.”

“No. You have not remembered.” Droṇācārya asked the others, “In this class, is there anyone else who has not understood or remembered this instruction?”

Only one hand came up. Whose hand was that? Yudhiṣṭhira’s. “I have not realized it practically in my life, so it is not possible for me to speak the truth.”

“Oh, then you alone will be able to realize it, but for the others it will be very hard.”

The specialty of Rūpa Gosvāmī is that no word and letter he has written can be changed. No one can ever change it. Once Sanātana

Gosvāmī was reading one of Rūpa’s poems, and he found what he thought was a mistake. He ordered Rūpa, “You should correct this.” What was that? *Veṇī vyālāṅganā phaṇām*. Rūpa Gosvāmī had described Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s *veṇī*, braid, as a very poisonous, black snake—a female snake, because the female becomes furious very quickly and is easily moved to attack. Male snakes do not become furious so easily. So he was describing that Her braid was waving in the air, *veṇī vyālāṅganā phaṇām*.

Sanātana Gosvāmī asked, “Why did you use this word? *Vyālā* means serpent, black snake. Why did you use this word?” Being the elder brother and *guru*, Sanātana Gosvāmī advised, “You should correct it.” Then very humbly Rūpa Gosvāmī replied, “Brother, I think that it would be better if you correct it. I will rely on you to do it.”

Sanātana Gosvāmī was intensely searching here and there for an alternative word that would be very smooth and sweet. He was giving his mind and heart to this matter but he could not think of anything, so he decided, “*Acchā*, I will do it tomorrow.” They were staying at Rādhā-kuṇḍa at that time in separate cottages. As he was returning to his own cottage, he was attracted by the sight of a very beautiful *kadamba* tree. Hanging from the branches of this tree were four ropes holding a magnificent swing. On the swing was sitting a very beautiful village girl, but like a normal Indian girl, she was not so extraordinary. And some other girls were there singing a sweet song and pushing the swing.

From far away Sanātana Gosvāmī saw that some very poisonous she-snakes were waving here and there in the air behind the head of that beautiful girl. The bottom of her braid was also moving back and forth. He at once ran towards her calling, “O *lālī*, O *lālī*, O *lālī*.” *Lālī* means darling girl. “O *lālī*, serpents are there in your hair. Be careful.” And he took his stick to remove those snakes. But when he came nearer, the girl smiled and at once vanished with all Her *sakhīs* and everything. Only the tree was there, no swing,

nothing else. Then he realized that Rūpa Gosvāmī, having had the same vision, had written the full truth. There was not any word or even a letter to be corrected. His work is “as it is,” just like *Gīta As It Is*. He had practiced and realized what he had written.

But we write volumes and volumes on so many topics, even while not having practiced or realized anything. We will write about Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and at the same time have four girlfriends. Or a girl will produce so many books, but having four boyfriends. We are uncontrolled in our eating and speaking, but yet we think we are qualified to write. But Rūpa Gosvāmī has never written anything which he has not practiced.

Apprehending the truth, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja never spoke anything which he had not realized. But we cannot know Kṛṣṇa by material consciousness. Spiritual truth can be realized only by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa Himself. In the Mahābhārata War, Kṛṣṇa told Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja to shout loudly that Aśvatthāmā was dead. But Yudhiṣṭhira said, “I have not realized that he is dead. I am seeing that he is fighting here. How can I say this?” Kṛṣṇa was repeatedly telling him to say this, but he would not. After that, Kṛṣṇa told Bhīmasena to kill an elephant named Aśvatthāmā, and he did. Then Kṛṣṇa asked Yudhiṣṭhira, “Now, can you say it?”

He replied, “No. I can tell only that Aśvatthāmā the elephant is dead, only the elephant.”

“Then you should announce loudly that ‘Aśvatthāmā is dead, Aśvatthāmā the elephant.’”

He began to shout very loudly, “Aśvatthāmā is dead,” and as soon as he finished this part of the sentence, Kṛṣṇa at once told Bhīma, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva to blow their five conchshells very loudly so that no one could hear, “Aśvatthāmā the elephant.” Only “Aśvatthāmā is dead” could be heard.

Until that time, Yudhiṣṭhira’s chariot never rode on the earth; it was always levitating. But at this time his chariot came down to the earth because he had made a very big offense in disobeying Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa had already shown Arjuna that everyone would be killed; all were within the teeth of death. All bodies were killed, but not the *ātmā*—it never dies. So Yudhiṣṭhira had made an offense. We should try to obey Kṛṣṇa, *śāstra* and *guru*. Otherwise, we cannot realize this truth.

I think that all truths in this world are lies. What is your name? Please tell truly, what is your name?

Devotee: Paramahaṁsa.

BVNM: But when? It is not true. The name of your *ātmā* is not Paramahaṁsa, or the name of the five elements which comprise your body with which you identify. Water and air have no name, so actually it is all false. We cannot speak a word of truth in this world.

So Rūpa Gosvāmī's specialty was that whatever he said from beginning to end was realized first. Like Vyāsadeva, he saw everything while in *samādhi*. He realized, and then he wrote. In Kali-yuga we don't do this. We take something from here and there, from this author and that one, and we put it all together and win the Nobel Prize. So we should try to realize what we say. However, as a peon we can quote from the teachings of our Gurudeva and *śāstra* and have very strong faith in these.

Now let us come back to the text. Yesterday what were we reading? Text 5. Perhaps we are on page 50. Swāmījī has described the symptoms of the *kaniṣṭha*-, *madhyama*- and *uttama-adhikārī*. Can you tell something about all three? Do you remember?

Devotee: *Kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. Primarily he has a vision that Kṛṣṇa, God, is in the temple, and I can see him if I go to the temple only, elsewhere not. And neither does he recognize who is a *bhakta*, who is not a *bhakta*, who is innocent, who is guilty. He doesn't see gradations. So he is a lower-class devotee.

Madhyama means he has conviction of the existence of Kṛṣṇa as God, but the scriptural backing is not complete. He is not fully learned in the science, not *śāstra-vit*. Also, the *madhyama-adhikārī* sees different grades of devotees. He sees the innocent person, and

to that person he preaches. He sees the guilty or non-devotee, the atheist, and he avoids that person. He sees his peer as a friend and is intimate and friendly with him, and then he sees the higher *adhikārī*, the advanced *mahā-bhāgavata*, as worshipable and serves his every wish.

The *uttama-adhikārī* is a *mahā-bhāgavata* who sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere. He sees everything happening according to Kṛṣṇa's plan and everybody acting as *kṛṣṇa-bhakta*. He does not discriminate between different levels. He has only the highest vision of pure devotion, and everywhere he sees that. So the beginning *adhikārī*, the *kaniṣṭha*, cannot discriminate because of ignorance. The highest *adhikārī*, *mahā-bhāgavata*, does not discriminate because of pure *bhakti*. But in the middle, the *madhyama-adhikārī* sees the different levels and can discriminate for preaching purposes.

BVNM: Anything more?

Devotee: Also, it is explained in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* that according to faith one can understand the different devotees.

BVNM: Swāmījī has described this. We will read it afterwards. Go on.

Devotee: For the *kaniṣṭha* it is stated: *yāhāra komala-śraddhā, se 'kaniṣṭha' jana, krame krame teṅho bhakta haibe 'uttama'* (CC. Mad. 22.69). He has *komala-śraddhā*, soft and pliable faith.

BVNM: What is the meaning of soft? Soft is so good.

Devotees: Delicate. Weak.

BVNM: Weak.

Devotee: Yes. It is weak, it waivers. When one comes in contact with someone who may present some opposing argument, his faith becomes weak. But *krame teṅho bhakta haibe 'uttama'*—by proper association, by *sādhu-saṅga* with high-class devotees, then *krame krame*, step by step, one ultimately can come to the platform of *uttama*.

Then next is *madhyama*. It is stated that the *madhyama bhakta* has full faith, and he is *mahā-bhāgyavān*, very fortunate.

BVNM: No. No.

Devotee:

śāstra-yukti nāhi jāne dṛḍha śraddhāvān
'madhyama-adhikāri' sei mahā-bhāgyavān

(CC. Madhya 22.67)

His understanding of *śāstra* is not on the level of the *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata*.

BVNM: He does not know *śāstra* perfectly. He knows it to some extent. That which he knows, he knows well but not perfectly. He has only partial understanding, but *dṛḍha śraddhāvān*. Understand? Again what am I saying?

Devotee: *Śāstra-yukti nāhi jāne dṛḍha śraddhāvān*. His understanding of *śāstra* is not perfect, but he has *dṛḍha śraddhāvān*, very strong faith.

BVNM: In other words, he can be defeated in arguments. But his *śraddhā*, his honor for Kṛṣṇa, his belief in *guru*, *śāstra* and Bhagavān is so strong that he will not give up his worshiping, chanting, remembering or anything. He is firmly established in his practices. Clear? *Acchā*. Then?

Devotee: So *dṛḍha śraddhāvān*. He is firmly established; he is fixed up.

BVNM: Any example? Like Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was beaten in twenty-two market places, but he never said, “O Allah! O Huḍā!” No. “*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*” He never stopped chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa. Khaṇḍa-khaṇḍa hai deha jāya yadi prāṇa* (Caitanya-bhāgavata *Adi* 16.94). “Even if someone cuts me in *lākh*s and *lākh*s of pieces, I cannot change my habit of chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa.*” Like Prahlāda Mahārāja—his *śraddhā* and his *siddhānta*, established truth, were both so strong.

Devotee: So such a devotee is *mahā-bhāgyavān*. He is greatly fortunate.

BVNM: And then?

Devotee: And then the *uttama-adhikārī*. He has *prauḍha śraddhā*, that is, deep faith. The *madhyama-adhikārī* has firm faith but the *uttama-bhāgavata* has very, very deep faith, which is fully realized.

BVNM: Deep faith, and second? *Śāstra-yukte suniṣṭhā*. What is the meaning of *sunipūṇa*?

Devotee: He has fully realized the Vedic conclusions, the *sāstric* conclusions, he is very expert and he is...

BVNM: ...realized, with realization. And his *śraddhā* is also very strong.

Devotee: And he is able to convince all others by *sāstric* arguments and reasoning.

BVNM: *Acchā*. Sit down. Very good. And thirdly, anyone? Anyone? More?

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda also mentions that sometimes the *uttama-adhikārī* will come down to the *madhyama-adhikārī* platform.

BVNM: It is true. *Uttama-adhikārī* comes to the middle stage and then he becomes *guru*. An *uttama-adhikārī* always sees that all are serving Kṛṣṇa, but he alone is not serving. Therefore he cannot teach anything. Never. Like Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is sitting on the top level of *prema* but thinking, “Oh, this deer is serving Kṛṣṇa so much. I cannot serve like him. These clouds are serving Kṛṣṇa, but I cannot.” Like this.

What is the next way to distinguish a devotee’s *adhikāra*? Caitanya Mahāprabhu has told three ways. We have described two; you can tell one more.

Devotee: *Kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, it was described yesterday that he thinks, “I am worshiping the Deities, only God.”

BVNM: No, no, not this. One’s stage depends first on *śraddhā*, not name. According to one’s *śraddhā* he is *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama* or *uttama*. What is told in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? *Prākṛta madhyama uttama*. Secondly it depends on one’s realization of *śāstra*, and thirdly it depends on chanting of the name, especially in Kali-yuga.

We should honor those who are chanting only one name as *kanīṣṭha*. *Yāñra mukhe śuni eka-bāra kṛṣṇa-nāma*. Even if he is uttering the name only once, whether he is *dīkṣita* or not, initiated or not, no harm. He is to be honored.

Secondly, those who are always chanting continuously are *madhyama-adhikārī*. And that person whose sight automatically awakens *kṛṣṇa-nāma* in our heart is *uttama*—like Haridāsa Ṭhākura. So many people saw him and were inspired to chant *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*—only by seeing him. He was *uttama-bhāgavata*, a very great personality, and he inspired people in this way.

Swāmijī has spoken all these things here. So now you should read on. “One should not accept a spiritual master without following his instructions”—page 52 bottom.

Devotee reads:

One should not accept a spiritual master without following his instructions. Nor should one accept a spiritual master just to make a fashionable show of spiritual life.

BVNM: What is the meaning of “one should not accept a spiritual master without following his instructions”?

Devotee: Without putting yourself at his lotus feet, taking his every word as life and soul, and following with all energy.

BVNM: Yes.

Devotee: One should not see the spiritual master as a show bottle, boasting that he has accepted a spiritual master, just to show off.

BVNM: Yes. “My spiritual master is so high, so I am also high.” This will not do. You will have to practice and obey him. If you are not obeying his instructions, then you are like a show bottle. We have realized this fact. “I am disciple of Maunī Bābā, he never speaks anything, only he writes.” Or, “I am the disciple of Vañśī dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, living under a cart. So renounced I am and, like

my Guru, I also smoke a *hooka* (water pipe).” No, this will not do. We must follow our *guru*’s inner motives, not imitating externals. Vamśī dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja was a *paramahansa*. He was not subject to rules and regulations. He may have smoked a *hooka* and kept fish bones outside his door to keep worldly people away so that his solitary *bhajana* would not be disturbed. We cannot even know all the reasons why he smoked a *hooka* or did anything else. But we will have to practice *sādhana*, trying to catch the inner mood. Not that one should accept a spiritual master to make a fashionable show of spiritual life. Those who have done this are certainly bound to fall. They are already fallen, even without doing anything improper. But outwardly we will see that after some days they will give up the practice of chanting the name. Only wearing *tilaka*, neckbeads and saffron cloth, looking like a devotee, will not suffice. It indicates something, but not everything. Those persons who take on the external dress but do not obey the orders of *gurudeva* are *sahajiyā*.

Yesterday we read in Swāmījī’s book, “One must be *jijñāsu* (inquisitive).” What is the meaning of *jijñāsu*? Can you tell a similar *śloka* from *Gītā*? Anyone?

Devotee:

*tad viddhi pranīpātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

BVNM: Yes. You should all know these facts. If you are not *jijñāsu*, then you cannot gain anything. You must be serving, thinking about your Gurudeva’s teachings, and reading the books thoroughly. Then some questions will come in your mind. If you are thinking deeply, reading thoroughly and hearing from him, a *paripraśna* will come. What is the meaning of *paripraśna*?

Devotee: Inquiry.

BVNM: No, not inquiry. What is the meaning?

Devotee: Submissive inquiry. Submissive question.

BVNM: Having full faith in his *guru*. After serving him, asking, “If I am qualified, please mercifully answer my question.” Like this. Then we can know something. Why do we want to know? To become established in the truth, to realize the facts.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

One must be *jijñāsu*, very much inquisitive to learn from the bona fide spiritual master. The inquiries one makes should strictly pertain to transcendental science (*jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*). The word *uttamam* refers to that which is above material knowledge.

BVNM: What is the symptom of *uttama-adhikārī*? Do you remember? *Uttama-adhikārī* from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Devotee: He sees that all living entities are equal. He has non-dual vision, he is able to see all living entities as parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa. He does not discriminate. He sees all living entities equally.

BVNM: No, not like this. This does not mean that all are equal—some are fat, some young, some beautiful. And also in Vaikuṅṭha some are ladies, some are gentlemen, some are friends, mothers, animals, cows....

Devotee: He sees:

*sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed
bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany
eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ*

(SB. 11.2.45)

He sees within all living entities their relationship with the Supreme Lord. And *bhūtāni*. He sees always the living entities, the Lord and the *jīva*. He has the highest love for Kṛṣṇa and he sees that all living

entities have that same love for Kṛṣṇa as himself, even if they don't have it. Like the *gopīs* saw the trees, the birds and the clouds having the same love for Kṛṣṇa that they have. But they think, "I don't have such love."

BVNM: Yes. But here is the meaning, like Prahlāda Mahārāja. He is *tattva-jñānī*. Kṛṣṇa is the highest *tattva*, *advaya-jñāna-para-tattva*. *Vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam yaj jñānam advayam*. Kṛṣṇa is *advaya-jñāna-para-tattva*. Here an *uttama-adhikārī* devotee sees his own worshipable deity in each living entity, and he sees that all are related to Kṛṣṇa in the same way as he is. *Śloka? Sarva-bhūteṣu*, in all living entities *paśyed*, he sees, *bhagavad bhāvam*, the relationship to Kṛṣṇa. *Ātmanah*, of myself.

Devotee: *Bhāvam* means relationship?

BVNM: Yes. *Bhagavad-bhāvam*. The *bhāva* of Kṛṣṇa, that relationship which he himself has with Kṛṣṇa, he sees in everyone. If he is situated in *sakhya-rasa*, he will think, "Oh, all are friends of Kṛṣṇa." And if he is situated in *mādhurya-rasa*, "Oh, all are *gopīs*. All are serving Kṛṣṇa like *gopīs*." Kṛṣṇa is *gopī-jana-vallabha*. If the devotee feels his own relationship, then everywhere he will see that all are like this. A cheater sees all others as cheaters, a thief sees that all are thieves, a lusty person sees that all are lusty. If a brother and sister are going together in a car, a lusty person will think, "Oh, they are very lusty, very wicked persons. They are going in the car somewhere." He will not consider that they may be brother and sister. "Oh, as lovers they are going." In this way he thinks. So, the *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata* sees his own mood towards Kṛṣṇa in all.

And second line, *bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanah bhūtāni bhagavatī ātmany*. He is seeing that all are related to Kṛṣṇa in his same mood. And here he sees the same Kṛṣṇa is in everyone. Clear? *Sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanah*. His *iṣṭadeva* is everywhere. All the living entities are in Kṛṣṇa. And next, in all living entities he sees the same Kṛṣṇa. First he sees everyone in

Kṛṣṇa, and within all he sees Kṛṣṇa. But what does he see? *Ātmani bhāvam*.

Devotees: His own mood.

BVNM: His own mood. Understand now? He is *uttama-adhikārī*. If you have an *uttama-adhikārī* like this, you should serve him fully, putting your head and everything at his feet.

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
kriyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalan
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate*

(*Padyāvalī* 14, quoted in *CC. Mad.* 8.70)

[Intelligence which is infused with taste for *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* cannot be had even by pious activity performed in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price—intense greed to obtain it. If it is available, purchase it without delay at any cost!]

This *bhāva-bhakti* cannot be achieved only by past impressions or in the association of general *sādhus*, general devotees. It will be achieved only by the association of Rāya Rāmānanda, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī—association like this. Swāmījī has clarified all these things.

Read more. “Out of many such Vaiṣṇavas....” Where we are?

Devotee reads: We’re at the bottom of page 52.

Uttamam refers to that which is above material knowledge. *Tama* means “the darkness of this material world,” and *ut* means “transcendental.” Generally people are very interested in inquiring about mundane subject matters....

BVNM: What is the meaning?

Devotee: Mundane subject matters?

BVNM: Yes, like “Kindly marry my girl to that person. Can you look at my palms? What is in my future? Will I be rich? Will I gain some wealth?” Like this. And, “He has acted against me. What should I do? Should I take revenge? What should I do?” We are asking all these silly worldly questions. “How are you?” “I am so well. But are you well?” We don’t practice Vaiṣṇava etiquette, ask any Vaiṣṇava theory, or think, “I am so wretched. How can I progress?” These questions we don’t ask.

Then?

Devotee reads:

...but when one has lost such interest and is simply interested in transcendental subject matters, he is quite fit for being initiated.

BVNM: What is he saying? Again you should repeat.

Devotee reads:

...but when one has lost such interest and is simply interested in transcendental subject matters, he is quite fit for being initiated.

BVNM: What is the meaning?

Devotee: When one has lost interest in all of the material topics of this world, and he is interested in *divya-jñāna*, then at that time he has some qualification for *dikṣā*, initiation.

BVNM: But we see that nowadays many are not accepting this. Devotees may canvass for new members, especially trying to attract anyone who is rich, very beautiful, coming in an aristocratic family, or so learned. “Oh, come on, come on.” They send a special representative to enlist such persons by hook or crook, because in the future they can help in so many ways. But this is not proper motivation. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21) it is written: *tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam*. Same thing. Those

who have realized that worldly life is not good, who want to cross the ocean of birth and death, sorrows and suffering, and realize *kṛṣṇa-prema* should seek a good *guru*. This is the process and Śwāmiji is explaining it. But sometimes we overlook important aspects of the process, and that is why insincere devotees fall down. Even many who took the renounced order had no firm belief in all these things. But those who have given up worldly desires and want to develop their *kṛṣṇa-prema*, or perhaps are just looking for happiness in this world and the next, are qualified to have initiation. They can realize this *ātmā* and *Paramātmā*.

Next, go on.

Devotee reads:

When one is actually initiated by the bona fide spiritual master and when he seriously engages in the service of the Lord, he should be accepted as a *madhyama-adhikārī*.

The chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa is so sublime that if one chants the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra* offenselessly, carefully avoiding the ten offenses, he can certainly be gradually elevated to the point of understanding that there is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself.

BVNM: We should try to realize this. We are conditioned souls, so how can we realize? But it is possible. Where does the spirit to serve Kṛṣṇa come from? By the grace of Kṛṣṇa, *guru* comes to us. We cannot go to *guru*. So this spirit comes from Kṛṣṇa in the heart of *gurudeva*, and then to us. Kṛṣṇa is so merciful. We see that to maintain one's life a person has to labor hard from morning to night. And even in the night there are so many problems. But for devotees like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who was always chanting three *lākhas harināma*, there are no problems at all. So many people used to bring him delicious food, but he accepted very little. They would also bring him clothes and so many tasteful things, but he never took them. He never hankered for these things.

We know that Kṛṣṇa gives His mercy. We are chanting the name and the whole world is keeping their head on our feet. Why? A devotee thinks, “It is not due to any ability I may have. But I am chanting *harināma*. Thus all are serving me and placing so much faith in me. The whole world is coming.” Why? Swāmījī realized this. In a very short time he preached over the whole world and everyone was coming to him. How was he able to preach? Kṛṣṇa did it. So *nāma* and *nāmī* are the same thing. Sometimes the mercy of *nāma* is superior to *nāmī*.

When a devotee becomes *madhyama-adhikārī*, he realizes a little something. As he gradually goes up, he will realize so much more. For example, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was never afraid of death. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was also like this—no concern for death. Death was threatening, but they were never afraid. Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was worried only for Durvāsā, not for himself. And when Durvāsā saw that death was coming, that Cakra Sudarśana was following him, he fled. But he didn’t realize that this Cakra Sudarśana was everywhere. Wherever he went, Cakra followed him. Everywhere! He could not protect himself, and Ambarīṣa Mahārāja knew this fact. *Nāma* and *nāmī* are the same. So if a devotee realizes this, he will not fall down. He will always be absorbed in chanting the name and he will realize *pade pade* (step by step).

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpanam
śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varadhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsūdanam*

He will realize the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and he will see that *nāma* is Himself divine Kṛṣṇa. He will play with that name. He will see all of the pastimes in Him, everything. *Pūrṇāmṛtāsūdanam*. He will realize all these things.

Then. Go on, go on.

Devotee reads:

One who has reached such an understanding....

BVNM: You should all realize this fact. If you are *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, no harm. According to your faith you should realize something, that He is always protecting and inspiring you. You should know, “Gurudeva has given me Kṛṣṇa Himself.”

And if he is *madhyama-adhikārī*, he is seeing so many more things. And the *uttama-adhikārī* is seeing that Kṛṣṇa is playing, the name is playing. Everything is there. The whole of Vraja, all kinds of *rasa* and all kinds of powers are in *nāma*.

*nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis
tatrārpitā niyamitah smarane na kālaha
etādṛśi tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam idṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*

So beautiful is the name! It is Kṛṣṇa Himself, having all His qualities. “But I am so wretched that I have no taste for Him.” So try to weep with tears, folding your hands, and then you will realize all these things. This is the process of taking *harināma*.

Devotee reads:

One who has reached such an understanding should be very much respected by neophyte devotees. One should know for certain that without chanting the holy name of the Lord offenselessly, one cannot be a proper candidate for advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

BVNM: Swāmījī has always encouraged everyone to advance: “One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*.” He is saying *punaḥ punaḥ*, again and again, “Do not stay in one stage. Try to advance.” Don’t think that Kṛṣṇa will come if we remain only on the beginning level. “We are the head of the society for supporting cows, milking and serving them. This service alone will take us to Goloka-Vṛndāvana and award us the highest affection of

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.” No! It will only make some *sukṛti*, spiritual merit. From there you will have to associate with Vaiṣṇavas and take initiation from an authorized *guru*. After that you will practice *sādhana*, and all kinds of *anarthas* will go. Next *niṣṭhā* will come, then *ruci*, *āsakti* and gradually your *bhakti* will develop.

But by serving a bona fide *rasika*, *tattva-jñā*, *bhāvuka bhakta*, like Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda, at once *āsakti* will come, or *ruci* with greed. This will be due to past *sukṛti*. Then he will have the association of a very advanced *rasika* Vaiṣṇava. He will not take any ordinary Guru, but he will select someone who is *rasika* in our line of Rūpa Gosvāmī. He will not accept someone blindly. He will deliberate and listen for some time and when he will be convinced, then he will surrender to him. This association is everything, like with *śikṣā-guru*. He may or may not take initiation.

Do you know who was the *guru* of Svarūpa Dāmodara? He was a Māyāvādī *brahmacārī*. Svarūpa Dāmodara had gone to Kāśī, but really he was not a Māyāvādī. He was the associate of Bāla Gaura, Gauracandra. He had been the friend of Caitanya Mahāprabhu from babyhood. He was a resident of Navadvīpa and was the bosom friend of Gauracandra. He only played a role, going to Kāśī and taking initiation from a Māyāvādī *sannyāsī*. We can study his character and decide. Caitanya Mahāprabhu was not a Māyāvādī *sannyāsī*, even though he had taken *sannyāsa* from a renowned Māyāvādī *sannyāsī*, Keśava Bhāratī. So don't be satisfied with external appearances.

Devotee reads:

In Śrī *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* it is said:

*yāhāra komala śraddhā, se 'kaniṣṭha' jana
krame krame teṅho bhakta haibe 'uttama'*

(CC. Madhya 22.69)

“One whose faith is soft and pliable is called a neophyte, but by gradually following the process, he will rise to the platform of a first-class devotee.”

BVNM: Ah, we have explained this. Only one stanza you should read. Page 54, from beginning.

Devotee reads:

People in the Western countries cannot concentrate for long periods while chanting on beads. Therefore the minimum number of rounds is prescribed.

BVNM: Why has he told that you should chant only sixteen rounds? He is giving the answer here. What is he saying?

Devotee reads:

The people in the Western countries cannot concentrate for long periods while chanting on beads.

BVNM: But they can do worship for two, three hours. There is nothing to meditate or concentrate on, so they can do it. As a fashion they can go on the streets, jumping, dancing, singing very loudly and very affectionately. No harm. Twenty-four hours they can do this. But when you tell them, “Please sit down, keep your back straight and chant *Hare Kṛṣṇa*. Don’t look around. See Kṛṣṇa everywhere and chant *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*,” they can do this only for ten minutes and then they will start looking around. They are bound to. And if they can sit for twenty minutes, then they will sigh, stand up and will walk while chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa* very fast. Then if someone comes along, they will start conversing, “Oh, come on, come on. How are you? *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*.”

This is not the process. So Swāmiji has said to chant sixteen rounds because the Westerners are busy, very busy. Busy doing what? Making so many things, making money, making so many

material arrangements. They are making bombs to destroy the whole world in a second. In this way they are so busy.

Devotee reads:

Therefore the minimum number of rounds is prescribed. However, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura used to say that unless one chants at least sixty-four rounds of *japa* (one hundred thousand names), he is considered fallen (*patita*).

BVNM: Yes. Kṛṣṇa does not accept any offering if we are not chanting sixty-four rounds. So we should chant with quality. “O Kṛṣṇa, *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa.*” Like this. Where is my beloved Kṛṣṇa? Where is Nanda-nandana? Where is Yaśodā-nandana? Where is Rādhā-ramaṇa?” Weeping and chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*, seeing Kṛṣṇa somewhere in the bushes, we will at once run to catch hold of Him. But Kṛṣṇa is so naughty. He goes one, two feet behind, and sometimes here and there. He comes very near and then disappears. Then the devotee falls flat on the earth, rolling down, “O Kṛṣṇa, where have You gone, where have You gone?” Chanting like this, Kṛṣṇa will certainly come. This is the process Swāmījī has described.

Devotee:

According to his calculation, practically every one of us is fallen, but because we are trying....

BVNM: After some days we see that someone has fallen, he has left *harināma*, he has left all these *bhakti* activities, and has again become involved in all worldly affairs. But someone who has tolerance will never give up. Gradually they will develop. They will do sixteen rounds, after that thirty-two, then forty-eight, and after that sixty-four. Even then they will not be satisfied, and will try to chant two *lākhas*, three *lākhas*! After that they will chant pure, *śuddha-nāma*. This is the process of doing *harināma*. What is he telling?

Devotee reads:

...but because we are trying to serve the Supreme Lord with all seriousness and without duplicity, we can expect the mercy of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is famous as *patita-pāvana*, the deliverer of the fallen.

BVNM: Swāmijī realizes our position so he has given us some concession, especially for Western devotees, because they are always engaged in worldly affairs. So he has set a net and enticed us—if we will chant sixteen rounds even, we will be happy here now and there in the future. He has set a lovely trap for us. After that, we will gradually develop some taste and will not have to be told anything. And even after completing three *lākhās*, still we will not be satisfied! “Oh, there is no *kṛṣṇa-prema* here.” And we will always be weeping, lamenting, and praying:

*nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulkair nicitam vapuḥ kadā,
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati*

(Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka 6)

[O Prabhu! When will my eyes be filled with a stream of tears? When will my voice choke up? And when will the hairs of my body stand erect in ecstasy as I chant Your holy name?]

And we can pray like this:

*na prema-gandho'sti darāpi me harau
krandāmi saubhāgya-bharam prakāśitum
vamśi-vilāsy-anana-lokanam vinā
vibharmi yat prāṇa-pataṅgakān vṛthā*

(CC. Madhya 2.45)

“Oh, I do not have even a little smell of *prema* for Hari. I am crying to make a show of my good fortune. Fish that are taken out of the water at once die, without doubt. I am not seeing my beloved Kṛṣṇa, who plays upon His flute, but still I am alive. *Dhik mām, dhik mām*, fie on me, fie on me.” Thus, we will go on chanting and remembering.

Gaura premānande!

CHAPTER THREE

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokaś 5-6

New Braja, 20 May 1997



We started reading from Text 5 but did not finish. You should read from page 57, last stanza.

Devotee reads:

When a person realizes himself to be an eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa....

BVNM: I want to emphasize that you should hear all these things very carefully. Swāmīji has explained everything that Rūpa Gosvāmī has written, and I am further elucidating so that we can adopt all these practices and thus be established in *śuddha-bhakti*, pure *bhakti*. So we should hear very minutely and carefully.

I told something the other day about *nāma* and *dīkṣā*. I know that generally many devotees have had misunderstandings regarding these subjects which I clarified yesterday. I think that these explanations should go all over the whole world, and they can create a spiritual revolution. Rūpa Gosvāmī has originally written

these instructions, and in his book Swāmījī has revealed many of the deep meanings. I am only illuminating Swāmījī's words. This is our duty—to give a proper understanding of all these subjects. So when I read Swāmījī's *Nectar of Instruction*, I think, "Oh, Rūpa Gosvāmī is writing so deeply." Without the help of the explanation of any pure devotee like Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Swāmījī or Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, we cannot realize all these things, although everything is written in the books. And that is why the *ācāryas* and all other pure devotees realize these facts and write further commentaries. So writing never stops. If Swāmījī were still here, he would have written so many more books, more and more.

"So when a person realizes himself...."

Devotee reads:

...to be an eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa, he loses interest in everything but Kṛṣṇa's service.

BVNM: What does this mean?

Devotee: He gives up his desire for sense gratification and just wants to serve Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: He believes only in Kṛṣṇa's service, and he forgets about other things.

Devotee reads:

Always thinking of Kṛṣṇa, devising means by which to spread the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, he understands that his only business is in spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. Such a person is to be recognized....

BVNM: The symptom of a pure Vaiṣṇava is that he spreads the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. This is his business. What is the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement? Was this Kṛṣṇa consciousness existing before Swāmījī or not?

Devotee: Yes. It was the society of pure devotees.

BVNM: Was it existing before Caitanya Mahāprabhu or not?

Devotee: Yes.

BVNM: Yes, it is eternal. Nārada Ṛṣi is one of them. He is the greatest ISKCON devotee.

Devotee: (laughing) ISKCON member, life member.

BVNM: I think that no one can argue this point. Our *catur-mukha* Brahmā is our first *guru*. Nārada is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Vyāsa and Śukadeva Gosvāmī also. After that, Suta Gosvāmī, Madhvācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Viṣṇusvāmī, Nimbāditya, Mādhavendra Purīpāda, Īśvara Purīpāda, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda, and up to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī and his bona fide disciples—all are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Later Swāmījī will clarify what is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Is it simply a sect or a certain cult or group? It is not sectarian.

“Anyone who is spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over world....”

Devotee reads:

Such a person is to be recognized as an *uttama-adhikārī*, and his association should be immediately accepted according to the six processes (*dadāti pratigrhṇāti*, etc.).

BVNM: Anyone! He need not be from a specific sect, movement, group or anything. Anyone who is preaching like that is accepted as an *uttama-adhikārī*. I know that I am not in that class. It may be that I am *madhyama-kaniṣṭha*, *bas*, not more than that. This I know. Sometimes I am in the stage of *kaniṣṭha* and sometimes entering into *madhyama*, so *madhyama-kaniṣṭha*.

Devotee: But we know that you are....

BVNM: But you cannot realize it because you are not liberated.

Devotee: Mahārāja, if you’re saying that you are *kaniṣṭha*, then you cannot tell him that he is not liberated.

BVNM: What can we do! *Acchā*.

Devotee: So you are revealing your own glories.

BVNM: Anyone who is actually spreading *bhakti* never falls down.

But if after some time a person falls down, then does that mean that he has gone from *uttama-adhikārī* to a fallen stage? An *uttama-adhikārī* cannot fall in any way, in any condition. We must have this understanding. If he falls down, then we can understand that he was not an *uttama-adhikārī*. Swāmījī explains this point later on. If anyone is bona fide and is actually giving inspiration to everyone and following in our line, then he should be treated as an *uttama-adhikārī*. But some persons, even though they may be *madhyama-adhikārī*, only preach for their own gain. They can easily fall down.

Devotee: Some *gurus* are preaching all around the world and making many disciples. They have not fallen, but they do not possess the qualities of *uttama-adhikārī*.

BVNM: Swāmījī will explain further. I do not have to tell anything more, Swāmījī will explain everything. I am following behind him. He is so expert that he will not leave any point unanswered. He touches every point. I only have to show you where he is writing something.

Devotee reads:

Indeed, the advanced *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava devotee should be accepted as a spiritual master.

BVNM: “Indeed, the advanced *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava should be accepted as a spiritual master.” And if he has some doubts, then he is not an *uttama-adhikārī*. He will never change his *siddhānta*, sometimes saying this, sometimes that, sometimes jumping on this branch, sometimes on that one, sometimes falling down, again jumping up. The established truth is one. They should always be fixed on this point.

Devotee reads:

Everything one possesses should be offered to him, for it is enjoined that one should deliver whatever he has to the spiritual master. The *brahmacārī* in particular is supposed to beg

alms from others and offer them to the spiritual master. However, one should not imitate the behavior of an advanced devotee or *mahā-bhāgavata* without being self-realized....

BVNM: “An advanced devotee like Śukadeva Gosvāmī never wears shoes, so I also will not wear any.” This does not demonstrate proper understanding. We should not imitate any *mahā-bhāgavata*. A *mahā-bhāgavata* may act in an unusual way, sometimes wearing only sandals and nothing else on his body. Then a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* will think, “People will honor me if I am following that behavior.” Thus, to attract others he will wear wooden sandals, and he becomes so expert that he can walk a mile in them. We cannot do that but he can—one, two miles, he can walk that far. In severe cold he can survive without warm cloths, but we cannot. But this is imitation. We should try to follow the *mahā-bhāgavata*’s inner motives. We should not adopt just his external behavior. Otherwise, we will be quickly exposed. These are not the real symptoms of advanced devotees.

Devotee reads:

For by such imitation one will eventually become degraded.

BVNM: Yes. They will not advance, but they will degrade.

Devotee reads:

In this verse Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advises the devotee to be intelligent enough to distinguish between the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, *madhyama-adhikārī* and *uttama-adhikārī*.

BVNM: This is the conclusion.

Devotee reads:

The devotee should also know his own position and should not try to imitate a devotee situated on a higher platform.

BVNM: Now this is going on, and that is why so many are falling.

Devotee reads:

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has given some practical hints to the effect that an *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava can be recognized by his ability to convert many fallen souls to Vaiṣṇavism. One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of *uttama-adhikārī*.

BVNM: What does this mean?

Devotee 1: If one is still a *madhyama* or *kaniṣṭha*, he should not become a spiritual master.

Devotee 2: A person's *adhikāra* is always determined by faith. Śrīla Prabhupāda quoted earlier in *Madhya-līlā* to that effect. And as the faith increases, the *adhikāra* increases up to *uttama*. The *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*'s faith is limited, seeing Kṛṣṇa in one place only. The *madhyama-adhikārī*'s faith grows, and by discrimination he can determine how to judge people's levels, but *uttama-adhikāra* means that he sees everything and everybody is Kṛṣṇa, as we discussed yesterday.

BVNM: Not everything is Kṛṣṇa, but everything is in Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee 2: Everything in Kṛṣṇa, and everybody worshiping Kṛṣṇa as he worships his own *iṣṭadeva*, in his mood. So that is the *uttama-adhikārī* that we should take shelter of.

BVNM: Yes. One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of *uttama-adhikārī*. Unless he is an *uttama-adhikārī*, he cannot satisfactorily answer all questions. If two points are contradictory, he cannot reconcile them. How can he help those devotees who are in a dilemma about what to do or what not to do? He is saying that when one has attained the platform of *uttama-adhikārī*, then he can initiate and is actually qualified to preach. Otherwise, one cannot actually perform all these activities. We are seeing the results of unqualified persons acting as *guru*. Someone accepts disciples. Then a very beautiful lady devotee comes along and he becomes involved with her. He will give up his position as

guru and go off with her, sometimes not even bothering to get married. We have seen so many examples of devotees involved in collecting money and self-praise and all these things.

“A neophyte Vaiṣṇava....”

Devotee reads:

A neophyte Vaiṣṇava or a Vaiṣṇava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance.

BVNM: Yes. We should explain something here. An *uttama-adhikārī* like Nārada and others is actually *guru*. Sometimes such a *guru*, being *uttama-adhikārī*, will come in the stage of *madhyama-adhikārī* for preaching. But a *madhyama-adhikārī*, perhaps in the stage of *madhyama-madhyama* or *madhyama-uttama*, after he has become knowledgeable in all kinds of *śāstra-siddhāntas*, and his *śraddhā* is very thick and strong, can initiate a limited number of disciples, but not too many. And very carefully he should select such disciples who are on the same platform. What platform? *Madhyama* platform. He considers about himself, “I am still in the *madhyama* stage. I am not high and I cannot help my disciples so much.” He should understand his position in this way, thinking, “There are no high-class Vaiṣṇavas available now, so I am filling in, simply giving letters like a peon, like a postman.” He should understand in which stage he is situated and not be proud that “I am making *lākhas* and *lākhas* of disciples.” Otherwise, he becomes fallen, and then he must fall down. He is already fallen, so what to speak of falling down. If he is humble, he may advance into *uttama-adhikārī*, and surely, very soon he will be able to really preach and initiate.

It should be understood that his disciples cannot advance very well towards the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient

guidance. Their progress will be very limited. He should know this. Who should know? Any *madhyama* who is giving initiation. He should not be proud, thinking, “I am the same as Nityānanda Prabhu and you should obey me as you would obey Him.” This will be an offense. He should know that he is not like Rūpa Gosvāmī or Nityānanda Prabhu. He should not have this false pride. He should always realize his own position and should pray, “Oh, I know that I am only helping them a little.”

But we see that so many disciples accepted such a *guru*. Having made about two thousand disciples and himself becoming Bhagavān, then what happened? He went to hell. So we should not think, “Oh, think of me as Nityānanda—*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair*. I am that person, *sākṣād-dharitvena*.” But a *guru* who is sincere will not think like this. He will think that he is simply a messenger of Nityānanda Prabhu. He will not say, “I am the same person. I will come again and again, and I will take you to Goloka.” Nityānanda Prabhu and an *uttama-adhikārī* can speak like this. But don’t imitate them and say that “I am *uttama-adhikārī*.”

Those who imitate put themselves in a very dangerous position. We have seen how so many have fallen away from their positions and have even suffered violent reactions. Why? And some disciples, even while their *gurudeva* is still present in the world, begin initiating so many people themselves without their *guru’s* order. Why are they doing this? This is very bad behavior.

So the *madhyama-guru* should know that his disciples cannot advance very well, and he should realize that he himself should take guidance from an advanced spiritual master. Then he will not commit any *aparādha* against high-class Vaiṣṇavas. But if he does not take such shelter, then he will make so many offenses at the lotus feet of higher devotees—he is bound to do so. “Therefore a disciple should be careful to accept an *uttama-adhikārī* as a spiritual master.” We should be very careful in these matters.

Now we come to Text 6:

*dṛṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair
na prākṛtatvam iha bhakta janasya paśyēt
gaṅgāmbhasām na khalu budbuda-phena-pankair
brahma-dravatvam apagacchati nīra-dharmaiḥ
(Śrī Upadeśāmṛta 6)*

First we should try to honor three classes of Vaiṣṇavas. Thus, it has been explained: *kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta*. Even those who have taken Kṛṣṇa's name just once should be respected. Whether someone is our Godbrother or not, he should be seen as a Vaiṣṇava, and we should honor him as such. In the case that he is not our Godbrother, then what should we do? Should we try to take him by the back of the neck and say, "Go away from here. Don't come into our territory!?" And such devotees may pass a resolution, "No one should go to this Vaiṣṇava. He is out of our society. He is not in the line of our *guru*." They may advise like this even if that Vaiṣṇava is a very, very high-class devotee.

So we should honor all these instructions that Rūpa Gosvāmī is giving. Those who are chanting even one name should be honored within the mind. Those who are actually initiated and always chanting the holy names should be honored by mind and also by body and speech. And those who are higher, who do not criticize anyone, who have no *anarthas*, who are free of *nindā* (criticizing propensity) and *dveṣa* (envy) and are always chanting and remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa's *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, should be honored from the core of the heart. Give your head, your heart, your everything at that person's lotus feet and serve him. Serve his words, his lotus feet, everything!

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam
janma-koṭi-sukrtair na labhyate*

(*Padyāvalī* 14, quoted in *CC. Mad.* 8.70)

By serving him you can develop a very thick greed in spontaneous service for Kṛṣṇa. It will surely come.

Next he is explaining that a Vaiṣṇava may be of that high standard, but the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* cannot distinguish whether he is *uttama*, *madhyama* or *kaniṣṭha*. The *madhyama-adhikārī* can determine this but sometimes he may be mistaken. If he sees a very beautiful, young, energetic person chanting or delivering a speech, he may think, “Oh, he is a very bona fide Vaiṣṇava *guru*.” And if a Vaiṣṇava is more advanced and is preaching, but, like Aṣṭavakra, is so ugly and does not have a sweet voice, he will think, “Oh, he’s a bogus person.” So for them Rūpa Gosvāmī is telling:

*dṛṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vaṇuṣaś ca doṣair
na prakṛtatvam iha bhakta-janasya paśyēt
gaṅgāmbhasām na khalu budbuda-phena-pankair
brahma-dravatvam aṇagacchati nīra-dharmaiḥ*

You can read the translation.

Devotee reads:

Being situated in his original Kṛṣṇa conscious position, a pure devotee does not identify with the body. Such a devotee should not be seen from a materialistic point of view. Indeed, one should overlook a devotee’s having a body born in a low family.

BVNM: You should note one thing here. A lower-stage devotee does not see things with spiritual vision. Because of his worldly

outlook, he sometimes turns against a pure devotee. So he should be careful—very, very careful. The pure Vaiṣṇava does not have any worldly vision. Rūpa Gosvāmī is warning in this *śloka* that we should not judge the Vaiṣṇavas by our worldly criteria.

Devotee reads:

Indeed, one should overlook a devotee’s having a body born in a low family, a body with a bad complexion, a deformed body, or a diseased or infirm body. According to ordinary vision, such imperfections may seem prominent in the body of a pure devotee, but despite such seeming defects, the body of a pure devotee cannot be polluted. It is exactly like the waters of the Ganges, which sometimes during the rainy season are full of bubbles, foam and mud. The Ganges waters do not become polluted. Those who are advanced in spiritual understanding will bathe in the Ganges without considering the condition of the water.

BVNM: Once a *ṛṣi* named Aṣṭavakra went into the council of the learned *jñānī* Mahārāja Janaka. So many high-class *ṛṣis*, *munis* and *brahmavādīs* having realized *brahma* were there. And this Aṣṭavakra, whose body was crooked in eight places, managed to come to the council of Mahārāja Janaka. In one month he traveled the path that would ordinarily take only one day. So very slowly and with great difficulty he came with the help of only a walking stick. Seeing him, everyone began to laugh. Mahārāja Janaka also laughed. “Oh, this person is so bold and desperate. Here are so many learned counselors, and without any fear he has entered. His skin is so rough and black. Here something is crooked, there something is crooked, his mouth is twisted, everything about him is distorted. So how has he dared to come here? He has no good clothes, nothing. There are also cracks in his feet.” The whole assembly began to laugh. For a moment Aṣṭavakra was silent but then he also laughed—even more than the others. All were struck dumb, “Why

is he laughing?” and their laughter stopped. Then Mahārāja Janaka approached him and asked, “Who are you, and why are you laughing so much?”

He said, “Who am I? I will tell you afterwards. Why am I laughing? But I am not laughing, I am weeping, crying. I have come from very far away, and you see my condition. I cannot walk. I have only come here to see the counselors of Mahārāja Janaka. I have heard that they are so learned. Here are assembled *brahma-jñānīs* who are like Yājñavalkya and so many others. I came to hear their discourses and teachings. But instead I have become hopeless.”

Mahārāja Janaka asked, “Why have you become hopeless? Everyone here is so learned.”

He replied, “But I don’t see anyone who is learned. I see that all are cobblers, shoemakers.”

Then Mahārāja Janaka became grave, “Oh, they are all cobblers? Why are all of them cobblers? Totally all? You do not see that they are very learned persons, coming in the *brāhmaṇa-vaṁśa* (dynasty of learned *brāhmaṇas*), and very learned *brahmavādī-ṛṣiś?*”

“No, no. All are cobblers. Do you know why? Cobblers work with skins. They only know, ‘Oh, this skin is such rough leather; this skin is such fine leather, good quality. That one is very soft and smooth.’ So they are of the same class as cobblers. They cannot see whether the *ātmā* is pure or not; they cannot realize *ātmā* and Paramātmā—only body, this skin. They are expert in skin, but not in *ātmā*.”

Then all of them became ashamed, and at once Mahārāja Janaka approached the lotus feet of that *ṛṣi*. The king placed him on his own throne and began to apologize.

Here is the same principle. You should not apply your worldly vision to any devotees. Always be careful. Don’t criticize any Vaiṣṇava for your bodily or mental gain, for money, for reputation, or for any other thing. But generally we are acting against these instructions. “If a high-class Vaiṣṇava comes and exerts his

influence in our area, then we will lose our material benefits— income, disciples, position, power and all other things, and it will be extremely harmful for us.” So we should understand in this way. This is Rūpa Gosvāmī’s view, not only Swāmījī’s.

Then in the purport, come to page 63, last stanza.

Devotee reads:

If we consider the bodily defects of a Vaiṣṇava, we should understand that we are committing an offense at the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇava.

BVNM: We should always be careful for this.

Devotee reads:

An offense at the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava is very serious. Indeed, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has described this offense as *hātī-mātā*, the mad elephant offense. A mad elephant can create a disaster, especially when it enters into a nicely trimmed garden. One should therefore be very careful not to commit any offense against a Vaiṣṇava. Every devotee should be ready to take instructions from a superior Vaiṣṇava, and a superior Vaiṣṇava must be ready to help an inferior Vaiṣṇava in all respects.

BVNM: Swāmījī is telling this for all levels of devotees. What is he saying? That all devotees—lower grade as well as upper-grade *sādhakas*, those who are initiating and those who are initiated—all should be ready to take instructions from a superior Vaiṣṇava. And a superior Vaiṣṇava must be ready to help the junior Vaiṣṇavas. This is the symptom of an *uttama-madhyama-adhikārī*—he is helping the less advanced devotees. And if he is not doing this, then he is committing offenses. He must help them.

One is superior or inferior according to his spiritual development in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If you are a *madhyama-adhikārī*, you should always consider a devotee’s stage—whether he is

superior or inferior. Then you can progress. Otherwise your progress will be stopped. So always be careful about this.

Devotee reads:

One is forbidden to observe the activities of a pure Vaiṣṇava from a material point of view.

BVNM: But now we are seeing that certain devotees are viewing the Vaiṣṇavas with their material vision. We should change this view if we want to advance. And if we are not changing, then we make more and more offenses, and finally we will be ruined.

Devotee reads:

For the neophyte especially, considering a pure devotee from a material point of view is very injurious.

BVNM: “For neophytes especially, considering a pure devotee from a material point of view is very injurious.”

Devotee reads:

One should therefore avoid observing a pure devotee externally, but should try to see the internal features and understand how he is engaged in the transcendental loving service of the Lord.

BVNM: He should always be careful and observe how the pure Vaiṣṇava is engaged in his transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa. If he is always offending, he cannot see the Vaiṣṇava with proper vision. But we should try.

Devotee reads:

In this way one can avoid seeing the pure devotee from a material point of view, and thus one can gradually become a purified devotee himself.

Those who think that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is limited....

BVNM: This is a very important point. You should underline this. Those who have a liberal view can see that Nārada is in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Also Vyāsa, all the Vaiṣṇavas like Rāmānuja, Viṣṇusvāmī, Nimbāditya, and their disciples—all are in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Oh, they have some *vaiśiṣṭhya*, some speciality, but this is another thing. We will have more honor for those in our own line, but we will have to honor all. So those who think that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is limited to a certain section of people are wrong.

“Oh, only us, and all others are rejected. We should not have any *saṅga*, association, with any others.” This is not a proper mentality. If you cannot associate with them, at least you can have honor for them. What harm is there to honor others? But don’t dishonor any Vaiṣṇavas. If he is in the same line that I am following, *sajātīyā snigdha āśāya*, then I should associate with him. *Sajātīyā* means having the same mood that I want, like-minded. For instance, I want to be a friend of Kṛṣṇa, so I should find a superior Vaiṣṇava who has that mood. If I want to be fixed in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī, I will select someone who is superior to me and in this line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Then I should always associate with him with great honor. But I should not dishonor anyone else.

gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūisura-gaṇe

(*Śrī Manaḥ Śikṣā*, verse 1)

Even the *brāhmaṇas* who are living in Vṛndāvana should not be dishonored. They may not be one-pointed to Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes they may also worship Viṣṇu, Vaikuṅṭha-nātha, Dvārakādhiṣa and Kṛṣṇa in the same line, no harm. They are maintaining some proper form of worship, so we should not dishonor them or make any offense. Yet we cannot associate with them because they are not in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī. But if we tell them, “Oh, go away. We cannot meet with you,” this is very offensive and will harm our *bhakti*.

Those who think that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is limited to a certain section of devotees are mistaken. They think that those

within the ISKCON society are bona fide and all those outside the ISKCON society are not. Then what will happen? We find this mentality going on now, and this will create very big problems for them.

Devotee reads:

...or a certain tract of land are generally prone to see the external features of the devotee.

BVNM: What is the meaning of “certain tract of land”?

Devotee: An area of land—America or Europe—territory. This is our land.

BVNM: They should understand these things, and then they will be sincere Vaiṣṇavas, being qualified to preach and to receive honor. So they will have to change their vision.

Devotee reads:

They are generally prone to see the external features of the devotee. Such neophytes, unable to appreciate the exalted service of the advanced devotee, try to bring the *mahā-bhāgavata* to their platform.

BVNM: What is the meaning? Neophytes will think, “The *mahā-bhāgavata* is also on my platform. I have envy and he also has envy, I am a thief and he is also. He is nothing more than I.”

Devotee: Whatever I am thinking, everyone must think the same as me.

BVNM: Neophytes will also think, “I can control him also.” These are very great offenses.

Devotee reads:

We experience such difficulty in propagating this Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Unfortunately, we are surrounded by neophyte Godbrothers.....

BVNM: He has said “neophyte.” They don’t know all the rules of etiquette and all these *siddhāntas*. They do not know what is a

Vaiṣṇava. Only they have heard the *mantra* but actually they are not yet Vaiṣṇava, *madhyama-adhikāri*, and that is why they are making so many blunders. Swāmijī experienced this. He saw that some Godbrothers were quarreling with each other, not honoring the higher-class Vaiṣṇavas. They were not understanding what Swāmijī was doing. Some of his Godbrothers were criticizing him, so he is warning his disciples to keep away from their disciples and to be careful.

Devotee reads:

. . . who do not appreciate the extraordinary activities of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. They simply try to bring us to their platform, and they try to criticize us in every respect.

BVNM: History is repeating itself. The same thing is happening now. So we should be very careful about these things.

Devotee reads:

We very much regret their naive activities and poor fund of knowledge. An empowered person who is actually engaged in the confidential service of the Lord should not be treated as an ordinary human being, for it is stated that unless one is empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. When one thus criticizes a pure devotee, he commits an offense (*vaiṣṇava-aparādha*).

BVNM: “When one thus criticizes a pure devotee, he commits an offense (*vaiṣṇava-aparādha*).” This is very destructive and dangerous for those who desire to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They cannot progress. Where there is envy and worldly vision, material vision, they are bound to commit offenses. So sometimes *ācāryas* like Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī descend to this world.

Devotee reads:

A person cannot derive any spiritual benefit when he offends the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava. Everyone should therefore be very careful not to be jealous of an empowered Vaiṣṇava, or a *śuddha-vaiṣṇava*.

BVNM: They should not have any envy, not even a little smell of it. You should always be careful—don't be envious! Be liberal and broad-minded. Try to honor all. Don't just try, you should honor all Vaiṣṇavas. Don't criticize them. If you cannot associate with them, no harm, but don't dishonor them. If you know that some Vaiṣṇava is acting improperly, going to a prostitute and mixing with bad society, do not associate with that Vaiṣṇava, but do not dishonor him. Otherwise his bad qualities will come to you.

Devotee reads:

It is also an offense to consider an empowered Vaiṣṇava an object of disciplinary action.

BVNM: What is the meaning?

Devotee: Actually Vaiṣṇavas are to be honored in all cases, and never are we to be in a critical mood of any of them. It is not our duty. They all belong to Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is taking care of everyone. It is not our duty to criticize or to rebuke them in these ways.

BVNM: "...an object of disciplinary action"—what does this mean?

Devotee: Specifically, it was stated before that an empowered person who is actually engaged in the confidential service of the Lord should not be treated as an ordinary human being. For it is stated that unless one is empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. So this part of the text is speaking about the *uttama-bhāgavata*. Such a person should not be considered the object of discipline. Rather he is directly empowered by the Supreme Lord.

BVNM: (with sarcasm) You should control them by disciplinary rules and regulations. "Oh, you should come. We have made some rules

that you should also follow. Śukadeva Gosvāmī, come on, come on. You should first get dressed, put on *tilaka* and keep a *tulasī-mālā*. Otherwise we will not hear from you and we will tell you to go out from here.” And to control him: “Haridāsa Ṭhākura, have you accepted any *guru*? From whom have you taken initiation?” What will he say? He will smile and say that he doesn’t know anything and then the neophyte will want to control him. So don’t give any instruction or any advice to the *uttama-bhāgavata* if you want to gain something. And don’t try to control him. I know that a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* wants to control the *madhyama* and *uttama*. Sometimes, out of their ignorance *madhyama-adhikārīs* also want to control others.

Swāmījī told me when he was in a very worried mood, “Now, I am controlled. So many persons want to control me.” He confided in me so many concerns that I cannot reveal here, but we should be careful.

Devotee reads:

It is offensive to try to give him advice or to correct him.

BVNM: Now you are correcting your *guru*. “Oh, Gurudeva should be corrected. He should be advised. He does not know worldly things. He has no practical knowledge. He has not gone to Oxford University. He has only gone to Haridāsa Ṭhākura University and the school of Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī. He does not know the etiquette for worldly dealings. ‘Gurudeva, I was expert at the university, so I know so much more than you for practical affairs. You only know how to chant *Hare Kṛṣṇa*, *Hare Kṛṣṇa* and to tell *hari-kathā*. It is not sufficient. So sometimes you should follow my advice.’” Don’t give advice to the *guru*.

There was an old person in our *maṭha* named Muni Mahārāja. He took *sannyāsa* with Swāmī Mahārāja. He always helped me in so many ways, and I also served him when I was with him. When he was about one hundred years old, he was once sitting in a very little room attached to mine. He was telling me, “All the devotees call me a very old *giddha*, vulture (meaning a person so old that he cannot

move or do anything, a useless person). But I am sitting here, watching everything. I know everything that is going on, because I was expert in all these activities.” He was telling me so many things, “They think that I am like them. They want to regulate me, but they don’t know me.” He was smiling, but he was worried for this. So we should be very careful to avoid this mentality.

These are very important lines where Swāmiji is giving instruction. We should try to follow if we want to progress in our *bhakti*. This is called *iṣṭagoṣṭhī*. I am seeing that no one here is sleeping. All are inspired. Everyone has been hearing for ten or twenty years, but some are very worried, because they cannot follow these instructions. Yet they should make an effort. Read that line again.

Devotee reads:

It is offensive to try to give him advice or to correct him.

BVNM: Don’t try to give any advice to your superiors. They are superior in all ways. Not just in spirituality, but also in worldly knowledge.

Devotee reads:

One can distinguish between a neophyte Vaiṣṇava and an advanced Vaiṣṇava by their activities.

BVNM: No, all cannot. Only *madhyama-adhikārīs* and sincere devotees can distinguish, others cannot. A *kaniṣṭha* will think, “I am the only advanced one and all others are inferior.” But an advanced devotee will think, “I am inferior and all others are advanced.”

Devotee reads:

The advanced Vaiṣṇava is always situated as the spiritual master, and the neophyte is always considered his disciple.

BVNM: We should think like this. We should always think that we are his disciple. I observed Swāmiji. He was preaching all over the world. He wrote so many books, including an explanation of *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, and he published *Gītā As It Is* in about sixty

languages. And he made thousands of disciples. But he was weeping at the time of my Gurudeva's departure and he wrote us a letter quoting a verse of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī with a small change:

*vairāgya-yug-bhakti-rasaṁ prayatnair
apāyayan mām anabhīpsum andham
kṛpāmbudhir yaḥ para-duḥkha-duḥkhī
śrī-keśava-bhakti-prajñāna-nāma*

He changed the name of Sanātana Gosvāmī, and in its place he added the name of our Guru Mahārāja. How he was honoring his *sannyāsa-guru!* He was not a disciple of my Gurudeva, but my Gurudeva had given him *sannyāsa*. Swāmījī always treated him like his *śikṣā-guru*. And he was always giving honor to all the Vaiṣṇavas, to Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja and so many others.

Just before his divine disappearance, weeping, he took my hands in his and told me, "I have made so many mistakes and offenses at the lotus feet of Vaiṣṇavas. I have said so many things that I should not. So please, you should excuse me." I am his *śikṣā-śiṣya*, so much lower than him and he was taking my hands and weeping, begging me to excuse him. How he was liberal! How he was humble! A common person cannot do this because of his false ego, but Swāmījī had no false ego. He is a realized soul. That is why he is advising us not to make all these mistakes. He also requested me, "You should convey this prayer of mine to all my Godbrothers."

I told him, "You cannot speak like this. You cannot make any offense. Some people may think you committed offenses, but you had your reasons for what you said, and if you have spoken anything out of line, still it is not an offense."

So Swāmījī is warning, "The spiritual master must not be subjected to the advice of a disciple." What is the meaning?

Devotee 1: The spiritual master is not under the jurisdiction or control of the disciples; he is not subject to their advice.

Devotee 2: The disciple may offer something for the spiritual master's consideration, but the spiritual master is not obliged to take that.

BVNM: Yes. Go on from, "The spiritual master must not be..."

Devotee reads:

The spiritual master must not be subjected to the advice of a disciple, nor should a spiritual master be obliged to take instructions from those who are not his disciples.

BVNM: What is the meaning?

Devotee: The spiritual master is not required to accept the advice of his disciple. If his disciple wants to give him advice, he is not required to accept that. If someone is not the disciple of a *guru*, but he also wants to give the *guru* advice, the *guru* is not required to accept his advice.

BVNM: Yes. So, we should be very careful in these matters. And this is called *Nectar of Instruction*. Then Swāmiji's final words:

Devotee reads:

This is the sum and substance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmi's advice in the sixth verse.

BVNM: Yes. *Gaura premānande!*

CHAPTER FOUR

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokas 6-7

New Braja, 22 May 1997



BVNM: When you come here, what will you do?

Devotee: Listen.

BVNM: What will you listen to? You will first have to pay some *dakṣiṇā* for listening. But you are not first giving *dakṣiṇā*, and that is why you are not hearing deeply and keeping my words here in your heart. Those who will not give *dakṣiṇā* in the form of *śraddhā* don't know the value of *śraddhā* and the value of hearing. I have learnt it by serving my Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas very laboriously day and night, by reading and by doing austerities. All that I have gained from them I am giving to you without taking any dollars or anything like that in return. So you are thinking that this *hari-kathā* is of no use, having no value at all. But if I tell you that I will take \$1,000 or \$10,000 for one hour, even that would be an insignificant amount considering what I am giving. But you are not taking in all this wealth. Then what is the use of spending so much money to come here from England if you are wasting your time and not really hearing anything? I worry for this. We should try to take in all these

teachings. Otherwise, what is the use? This is a very unfortunate situation. And I am so unfortunate that I cannot give you anything lasting. Don't give me cause to worry. If I become very worried, then I will not be able to give classes here, and I will return to Vṛndāvana. What is the use if no one is gaining anything?

You will all have to repay me. Sanātana Gosvāmī has written in his *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* that if there is no *dakṣiṇā*, then initiation will be false. So this *śikṣā* is like initiation. What is the meaning of *śikṣā*? It is a form of initiation. By this *hari-kathā* I am giving initiation. What is the point of hearing? *Śikṣā-guru* is to be considered the same as *dikṣā-guru*, even more so. I have left Vṛndāvana, Mathurā, my *sādhana*, *bhājana*, everything, only to give you some new thing, that which I have realized. But I am unhappy to see that I am not being paid. I should be paid. How can you pay me? By learning what I want to give you.

We have finished *Śloka* 5 and 6. What is the purport of *Śloka* 6? Can anyone answer?

*dṛṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair
na prākṛtatvam iha bhakta-janasya paśyēt
gaṅgāmbhasām na khalu budbuda-phena-pankair
brahma-dravatvam apagacchati nira-dharmaiḥ*

Very briefly you can tell the meaning of this *śloka*. You don't remember? This means you are not tasting what I am giving.

Devotee: Just like the Ganges has foam and some impurities in it, the Vaiṣṇava looks like he is impure but we should never consider the advanced devotee in a material way. We should see that he is actually pure cent-per-cent.

BVNM: Who can answer? Those who cannot reply should hide their heads so that Mahārāja will not see them. But Mahārāja is seeing everything, everyone. You should tell the meaning of this *śloka*—*dṛṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair*.

Devotee: In this *śloka* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda is telling how we should be careful when associating with Vaiṣṇavas. He has told us about the three levels of Vaiṣṇavas.

BVNM: He has explained *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama* and *uttama*. Now he is telling how to honor the three. What is he saying?

Devotee: We have to be very careful when meeting with *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇavas because their dealings, behavior and all their activities are on a completely transcendental platform. Outwardly they act like normal human beings. Sometimes we see that they are having some disease or they are unable to speak, that there is something wrong with their voice. Yesterday in the drama we saw that all the sages in Mahārāja Janaka's assembly started laughing at Aṣṭavakra Ṛṣi because his body was so deformed. That was not proper etiquette because a pure devotee is completely situated in transcendental consciousness. He laughed back at them and then they were all ashamed of their behavior. We should not try to estimate the activities of pure Vaiṣṇavas with our material intelligence.

In this verse Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is explaining about the Gaṅgā. The water has come from the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, so it is like *brahma*; it is very pure. By the touch of the Gaṅgā we get purified. That is the power it has. But when we go there, we see some impurities and some foam lying on that water. If we say, "Oh, this water is not good. I'm not going to touch that water. I'll become more dirty," this will be an offense to that holy river. But those who know this will dip in the water with full faith, despite seeing all those impurities on the surface. Then they are blessed with the mercy of the Ganges.

BVNM: What is the meaning of *svabhāva-janitair*? Due to the nature of the body. What does this mean?

Devotee: If he has a deformed body or diseased body.

BVNM: No, disease is not *svabhāva*.

Devotee: He is always situated in his original constitutional position in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

BVNM: *svabhāva-janitair vapuṣāś*. *Vapu*, the body, is separate.

Devotee: If his nature is....

BVNM: What nature?

Devotee: If he seems to have something wrong with his character.

BVNM: Yes! Sometimes he will become angry, speaking roughly or giving some slap, like Rāmadāsa Abhirāma Ṭhākura. He would use his whip on everyone. This is *svabhāva*, nature. By the nature of the body, sometimes they become angry without any reason. Don't be put off by seeing this rough behavior or rough speech. If there is some gold but it has fallen down inside a drain where all pass stool and is very filthy, what will you do? You will look all around to see if anyone is watching you. Then you will pour some water into the drain and take the gold. Understand? An intelligent person will take that gold anyway. There is no consideration whether it is in a clean or dirty place. Gold never becomes impure. It is the same with *bhakti*. If someone has *bhakti* and is really a Vaiṣṇava, but sometimes becomes angry, uses rough, harsh words, or exhibits rough behavior, still you should try to serve and please him, and try to take *bhakti* from him. Do you understand? If you think, "He is a rough-speaking person, so I will not go to hear from him," then you will be the loser. So we should be very careful about this.

Svabhāva and then *vapuḥ*. *Svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair* and other things.

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei 'guru' haya*

(CC. Madhya 8.128)

Go to any person who is *tattva-vettā*, whether he is *brahmacārī*, *grhaṣṭha*, *vanapraṣṭhī* or out of *varṇāśrama* society, no harm. He may be Mohammedan like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, no harm. You should go and take *bhakti* from him. If you have any bad thoughts about him, considering that he is ugly or black, his teeth are crooked, or he is a rough-speaking person, then you will be making an offense

at his lotus feet and you will be cheated. So do not look at his “negative” qualities. And do not try to give him advice. Why? You will only give him advice if you think that he is a fool, and this is an offense. Don’t advise and don’t try to correct him by saying, “You are incorrect. You should do it in this way.”

You know Hemalatā Ṭhākuraṇī, the daughter of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya? She was sitting in an assembly, hearing *hari-kathā*. While the speaker was reciting *Bhāgavatam*, she was chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*. The speaker was thinking that now he had become *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata*, and he told Hemalatā Ṭhākuraṇī, “It is very bad to chant *harināma* when *Bhāgavata* is going on. Don’t you know that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is Himself Kṛṣṇa, and you are chanting here?” At once the whole assembly was very much offended. Everyone boycotted him, telling him, “We don’t want to hear from you. Hemalatā Ṭhākuraṇī is beyond the control of anyone, beyond all rules and regulations. She can manifest *lākhas* and *lākhas* of forms, being here and there at the same time. Chanting, remembering, hearing—she can do everything at the same time. So there is no need or possibility of controlling such a person.” Finally, this Rūpa Kavirāja was boycotted by the whole Vaiṣṇava community and became known as *atibāḍī* (a pretender) Rūpa. So we should not try to correct those who are advanced. Rather we should try to be corrected by them.

In addition, do not think that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is limited to a certain section of people, a certain group of devotees or a certain tract of land. “We will hear only from those who belong to a particular group of devotees.” Don’t make all these offenses. Be broad-minded and try to honor all Vaiṣṇavas.

We should not avoid all these regulations, thinking, “Oh, I am now *madhyama-adhikārī*, and these instructions are meant only for *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*. There is no harm if we don’t follow them.” Don’t do this, otherwise you will be making an offense at the lotus feet of Rūpa Gosvāmī. You should try to always be established in

these truths. They are very helpful. Up to *bhāvāvasthā* (the stage of *bhāvā*), we will still have some *anarthas*. If we displease the Vaiṣṇavas, *bhakti* and Bhagavān, then we will lose our status as *madhyama-adhikāri*. So don't be deluded like this. Try to read these *ślokas* again and again and try to follow. If you are not following all these instructions, it means that you are not advancing in *bhakti* but are actually gradually regressing back to your worldly activities. Those who understand will practice and progress.

Text 7

*syāt kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyā-
pittopataṭṭa-rasanasya na rocikā nu
kintv ādarād anudinam khalu saiva juṣṭā
svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-hantrī*

Read the translation.

Devotee reads:

The holy name, character, pastimes and activities of Kṛṣṇa are all transcendently sweet like sugar candy. Although the tongue of one afflicted by the jaundice of *avidyā* (ignorance) cannot taste anything sweet, it is wonderful that simply by carefully chanting these sweet names every day, a natural relish awakens within his tongue, and his disease is gradually destroyed at the root.

BVNM: Will the disease first be destroyed and then taste will come, or will taste first come and then the disease will go away?

Devotee: First taste comes and then the disease goes away.

BVNM: Is she speaking correctly?

Devotees: Yes.

BVNM: I think that the disease must first go and then sweetness will come, or is it that some taste will come first and then the disease will go? Which is it?

Devotee: Both are taking place at the same time, simultaneously both are going on.

BVNM: But must medicine be given first, or will the disease go away gradually without medicine?

Devotee: Medicine must be there.

BVNM: Yes, first comes the medicine. *Harināma* is the medicine and everything. *Harināma* should be taken first, then the disease will go. But if you think, “First the disease will go and then I will take the medicine. Then I will taste it,” this is not correct. You can progress from whatever stage you are in, no harm. You may be lusty or a liar. You may have so many worldly desires and bad qualities. Just take that medicine first. Try to leave all your bad habits, but the medicine should be taken regardless. So the medicine is *harināma*. By chanting *harināma*, gradually the disease will go away and a little taste will come for the medicine. How? By taking, taking, taking, taking, and having good association—as we are doing *kīrtana* and hearing so much *hari-kathā* here. Old people, young people, even all the little boys and girls—all are energetic. Everyone is dancing, chanting, hearing and doing so many kinds of *bhakti* services. So we must adopt this process.

Now read the purport.

Devotee reads:

The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, His quality, pastimes and so forth are all of the nature of absolute truth, beauty and bliss.

BVNM: The holy name, character, pastimes, and activities of Kṛṣṇa—everything is transcendental. And transcendently they are sweet. But we are taking *harināma*—*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*—and falling asleep. Why? No taste! We are hearing *hari-kathā*, but our minds are going here and there. How do I know? I know, because if I ask any questions, you will answer, “I don’t understand.” But if I will say, “I want to arrange your marriage with a very, very, very beautiful lady devotee,” then immediately you will give your full attention, “Oh! Where is she?”

This is very tasteful. But when I am telling *hari-kathā*, actually everyone's mind is anywhere else but here, and then you fall asleep.

But if someone really wants to know the sweetness of this medicine, he will be convinced to take it and will be careful. It is very sweet, but now you are thinking otherwise. In Mathurā, there was a devotee who never joined in the *kīrtana*. We used to begin *kīrtana* very loudly with the *mṛdanga*, first *dik, dik, dik*, and then *ta*. With the first *dik* he would fall asleep and start snoring. He never used to come to our classes. After some time he returned to his home. He bought a rickshaw, and after that he was badly engaged in worldly activities and even began to eat fish again.

So if you have no taste in *hari-kathā*, then you will not find any taste in *harināma*. First taste should come in hearing, but if it does not, then you should think, "I will sit and hear again."

Once *Bhāgavatam* was being spoken in Vṛndāvana. Who was the speaker? Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī. So many persons were sitting there listening to the pastimes of the *gopīs* when Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā. Hearing his narration all were weeping and feeling separation mood. But one person was not. His heart was not melting, so he took some chilli powder from his pocket and put it in his eyes. Tears started flowing. Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa was watching this. After class he approached that person and embraced him. "Oh, I have heard that a chaste devotee will think that he has not served the Vaiṣṇavas or *Bhāgavatam*, so he punishes his body. Tears are not coming from my eyes, so my eyes should be punished. I saw that you took something and put it in your eyes and tears were coming. Surely you are a very fortunate person. Surely."

Hearing this and having been embraced by Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, that devotee began to weep. He was repenting, knowing that he was so full of offenses and *anarthas* that his heart was not melting. He was feeling, "I am not qualified to be in this assembly of Vaiṣṇavas who are all weeping, so I should do something to punish myself."

We should realize all these things. If tears are not coming, our hairs are not standing on end and our heart is not melting, then we should know that we are very unfortunate. We must have made some offenses and we are full of *anarthas*. Everything about Kṛṣṇa is transcendently sweet, more than sugar or honey, but yet we have no taste at all. So there must be some reason for this.

Then?

Devotee reads:

Naturally they are very sweet, like sugar candy, which appeals to everyone. Nescience, however, is compared to the disease called jaundice, which is caused by bilious secretions. Attacked by jaundice, the tongue of a diseased person cannot palatably relish sugar candy. Rather, a person with jaundice considers something sweet to taste very bitter. *Avidyā* (ignorance) similarly perverts the ability to relish the transcendently palatable name, quality, form and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Despite this disease, if one with great care and attention takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, chanting the holy name and hearing Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes, his ignorance will be destroyed and his tongue enabled to taste the sweetness of the transcendental nature of Kṛṣṇa and His paraphernalia.

BVNM: Take an example. Kṛṣṇa is like sugar candy. His names are like sugar candy, and so are His pastimes. Akrūra brought Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva to the council of Kaṁsa at Raṅgasthāli. Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika, Kaṁsa, and many evil persons were there. Twelve kinds of people saw Kṛṣṇa in twelve different ways. It was always the same sugar candy, Kṛṣṇa, but everyone tasted it in different moods. How did Kaṁsa taste this?

Devotee: He saw Kṛṣṇa as death personified.

BVNM: Yes. Actually he began to shake upon seeing Kṛṣṇa. And the other courtiers of Kaṁsa, his associates, how did they see Kṛṣṇa? *Aśanir*—the wrestlers saw Kṛṣṇa as a thunderbolt. *Nṛṇām*

nara-varaḥ—all the common persons saw that Kṛṣṇa was so beautiful, marvelous. Among all persons He is the most beautiful and sublime, having all good qualities and opulences. *Strīṇāṁ smarō*—all the wives of Yādava saw Kṛṣṇa like Kāmadeva, Cupid. All were charmed by Him. *Gopānāṁ sva-jano*—all the *gopas* saw Him as their friend. Subala and Śrīdāmā were there. *Sva-pitroḥ śisuh*—and Nanda Bābā, Vasudeva and Devakī saw Him as their son. The *jñānis*, *brahma-jñānis* and all others saw *tattvaṁ paraṁ yogināṁ*, *tattva*, *paratattva*. *Mṛtyur bhoja-pater*—Kaṁsa saw Him as his death. *Asatāṁ kṣiti-bhujām*—all the evil kings who had been invited by Kaṁsa saw Him as their controller and they feared Him. And *vṛṣṇināṁ para-devatā*—the members of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty saw Kṛṣṇa as their *paradevatā*, *iṣṭadeva* (supreme worshipable deity).

So there were twelve kinds of persons and each one had a different vision of Kṛṣṇa. Kaṁsa was a *rogī* (diseased person) with this jaundice, and his courtiers were also jaundiced, but to different degrees. They were *bhaktas* of different levels. All of them tasted the same Kṛṣṇa, but Kaṁsa and his courtiers became angry, and His parents, the Yādus, Yādavīs, Vaiṣṇavas and all others became overjoyed to see Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa-nāma is like sugar candy. But when you first take it, it will be very bitter, very bitter. If you take it gradually, the disease will go and then you will find it very sweet. When this happens, then you can understand that your *roga* (disease) has gone.

Devotee reads:

Such a recovery of spiritual health is possible only by the regular cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

BVNM: We should not give up. If it is not tasteful, no harm. You should continue anyway. If sleep is coming, no harm. Chant loudly, very loudly. There was a Vaiṣṇava, our *śikṣā-guru*, who said, “When I first came in touch with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in the beginning of my career, I used to sleep

while chanting. So I discovered a way to stay awake. Above me there was a hook. I took a rope and tied my *śikhā* to that rope and chanted *harināma*. And if sleep came and my head fell down, the rope would jerk my head up again. So the whole night I spent chanting *harināma* like this.” After that we saw that in his old age he was always chanting, always chanting. Even if he had no *mālā*, no harm, he was chanting anyway. He was very beloved to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, and a close bosom friend of our Gurudeva. All *sannyāsīs* and senior Vaiṣṇavas used to call him Narahari Dādā (big brother), just as they used to call my Gurudeva “Vinoda Dādā.” Narahari Dādā was the mother of the whole Gauḍīya Mission. He used to tie his *śikhā* to the ceiling in order to chant *harināma*. If you are sleeping, you can tie your *śikhā* to something and then you will stay awake. Some measure should be taken, anything, to keep sleep away. Then when sleep or *alāsyā*, laziness, comes, loudly chant, “*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.*” You can also jump. So like this, *nidrā*, sleep, will go away. And then sit down and remember Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, such as Dāmodara-līlā and others, or by mind go on Govardhana and Vṛndāvana *parikramā* while chanting.

Then?

Devotee reads:

When a man in the material world takes more interest in the materialistic way of life than in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he is considered to be in a diseased condition.

BVNM: Almost all of us are like that. I think that it is a rare person who has taste in all these things. They are not concerned with worldly matters like how to maintain their lives, how to be happy, how to have a very beautiful house or anything else. They don’t go toward these things. “How to make our love and affection so qualified?” They only endeavor for this!

Devotee reads:

The normal condition is to remain an eternal servant of the Lord (*jīvera* ‘*svarūpa*’ *haya* – *kṛṣṇera* ‘*nitya-dāsa*’). This healthy condition is lost when the living entity forgets Kṛṣṇa due to being attracted by the external features of Kṛṣṇa’s *māyā* energy. This world of *māyā* is called *durāśraya*, which means “false or bad shelter.” One who puts his faith in *durāśraya* becomes a candidate for hoping against hope. In the material world everyone is trying to become happy, and although their material attempts are baffled in every way, due to their nescience they cannot understand their mistakes. People try to rectify one mistake by making another mistake. This is the way of the struggle for existence in the material world. If one in this condition is advised to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and be happy, he does not accept such instructions.

This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is being spread all over the world just to remedy this gross ignorance. People in general are misled by blind leaders. The leaders of human society—the politicians, philosophers and scientists—are blind because they are not Kṛṣṇa conscious. According to *Bhagavad-gītā*, because they are bereft of all factual knowledge due to their atheistic way of life, they are actually sinful rascals and are the lowest among men.

*na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ
prapadyante narādhamāḥ
māyayāpahṛta-jñānā
āsurāṁ bhāvam āśritāḥ*

(Bg. 7.15)

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

Such people never surrender to Kṛṣṇa, and they oppose the endeavor of those who wish to take Kṛṣṇa's shelter. When such atheists become leaders of society, the entire atmosphere is surcharged with nescience. In such a condition, people do not become very enthusiastic to receive this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, just as a diseased person suffering from jaundice does not relish the taste of sugar candy. However, one must know that for jaundice, sugar candy is the only specific medicine. Similarly, in the present confused state of humanity, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the chanting of the holy name of the Lord—*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*—is the only remedy for setting the world aright.

BVNM: One thing I want to tell you. Once I took a stone, and I threw it in a very big pond, two or three miles in diameter. When I threw the stone, some ripples came, first, second, third, fourth, fifth, and reached the far side of the lake. Those ripples went here, there, everywhere. If the stone hits very near to one shore, from there the ripples spread everywhere in the lake. In this way, if anyone chants *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*, what happens? It vibrates in the air, and it goes to the far end of the world. Not only this world, but it covers the whole universe, Svarga, Martya, Patala, even to Vaikuṅṭha and beyond. There is no end to it. All are touched by this vibration. It purifies the atmosphere of the whole world.

Suppose I am sitting here singing. I can be anywhere in any far corner of the world, and singing into some machine there. If others in another part of the world are listening to their radios or any other good machine, my voice will vibrate more there, and they will hear clearly. But those who have no machines, will they get any effect? Yes, the vibration will go there, even though they cannot hear it. It will purify the atmosphere in the whole world. If you chant *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa* more, especially when all are singing in a large

congregation, this sound will go everywhere, and the whole atmosphere will be purified. So don't think that it is useless to do *kīrtana*. Everyone in the whole world will receive the effect and be purified so much by it.

If we chant like Gaura Kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda, our Narottama Ṭhākura, our Rūpa Gosvāmī, who were chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*, what will it do? It has two functions—internal and external. For instance, when we throw a stone in the water, we see outwardly some ripples going everywhere—one, two, three, four, five, there. But internally there is a power doing this. So if you chant, outwardly you will see its effect, going here and there, making the whole atmosphere very pure. But internally what will it do? It will change your heart—not only your heart, it will touch everyone's heart in the whole world. In this way you will develop *kṛṣṇa-prema*. We are not realizing this, but still it is working.

So you should know that this name is very powerful. If you have no *ruci* but still continue chanting, you will see that a taste will come and your heart will be changed. Your *kṛṣṇa-prema* will develop, and the whole atmosphere will become very, very pure. So always keep firm faith in this.

This world can never help you. Don't attempt to enjoy anything here. Try to develop a spiritual mood. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We see how Swāmījī was preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness so strenuously. But what has happened? Devotees practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness for a long time, even twenty or twenty-five years, who were chanting, remembering and doing so many *bhakti* activities, gave up and went away. Why? It must be due to some offenses. Or from the beginning they had no taste. They wanted to taste worldly things, and misused *kīrtana* and *hari-kathā* for their mundane purposes. They didn't want to develop *kṛṣṇa-prema*. They were thinking, "By this chanting, everyone will come and honor me and then I will taste all worldly pleasures very easily. All

will offer *praṇāma* to me. They will give me what I want, one *lākha*, two *lākhās* dollars, and then I will buy a car for one *lākha*, and decorate my room in gold.” Thus they will be deprived of *bhakti*. So always remember these things and chant only to have *bhakti* and be in Vṛndāvana.

Go on from, “The real disease is in the heart.”

Devotee reads:

The real disease is in the heart. If the mind is cleansed, however, if consciousness is cleansed, a person cannot be harmed by the material disease.

BVNM: We do not fear or worry for material diseases. They cannot harm us. It is this heart disease that will harm us. But we are concerned only for our outer diseases and not for our inner diseases. Instead we are indulging in all material enjoyments, and thus our disease will gradually increase.

Devotee reads:

To cleanse the mind and heart from all misconceptions, one should take to this chanting of the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra*.

BVNM: They should enter into the authorized process. Otherwise it will not be fruitful and the outer disease will develop.

Devotee reads:

This is both easy and beneficial. By chanting the holy name of the Lord, one is immediately freed from the blazing fire of material existence.

BVNM: Those who are following and always chanting say, “I am daily chanting sixteen rounds. Our holy master has told us to do this.” So if they are chanting and preaching all day here and there, why are they falling? What is the cause? We should wonder why. There must be some loophole. We should try to discover where it is and stop the leakage. Otherwise, the water will not be retained and

all will leak out through these holes. So our water is going out like this. We should try to be careful in all these matters.

Devotee reads:

There are three stages in chanting the holy name of the Lord—the offensive stage, the stage of lessening offenses, and the pure stage. When a neophyte takes to the chanting of the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*, he generally commits many offenses. There are ten basic offenses, and if the devotee avoids these, he can glimpse the next stage, which is situated between offensive chanting and pure chanting. When one attains the pure stage, he is immediately liberated. This is called *bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpanam*. As soon as one is liberated from the blazing fire of material existence, he can relish the taste of transcendental life.

The conclusion is that in order to get freed from the material disease, one must take to the chanting of the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*.

BVNM: Now, something is going on that is very wrong. Devotees who are coming from hearing from Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, wanting to take *darśana* of the Deity and hear *hari-kathā*, are being banned from visiting certain temples. Why? If someone is chanting, and you go and tell him, “Oh, you cannot come here. You are a bogus person,” this is an offense and a serious cause for concern. You should always be careful not to do this.

One hour is over and we will finish it tomorrow.

Gaura premānande!

CHAPTER FIVE

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokas 7-8

New Braja, 23 May 1997



Internally and externally we should be the same. Our hearts should be at one with our words. There are some politics behind someone saying, “Oh, I know you. You are a very good devotee.” And when that devotee goes away, the one who was praising him says, “He is a very wicked person.” Don’t do this. Be the same inside and outside.

If you have goodwill for someone of bad character and want to help him, you can advise him very politely. If you are qualified and he knows you have some goodwill for him, then he will listen to your instructions; otherwise, he will never listen. First purify your own heart. Then you can try to help others. Every year Caitanya Mahāprabhu was cleaning Guṇḍicā Mandira. He was brooming more than anyone else in order to give instruction to all others. So we should follow His example.

We have read in Swāmiji’s explanation that we are all diseased persons. Our diseases are of two kinds: one is of this material body

and the other is in the heart. Those who are real devotees do not worry about worldly disease. Their only concern is for their heart disease. And what is that heart disease? If the mind is clean, then everything is okay. The mind should be cleansed of duplicity, hypocrisy and diplomacy. So, our real disease is in the heart. And what is that heart disease? *Hṛd-roga*. Śrīla Vyāsadeva and Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī have clarified it. Here in the heart there is such a strong disease, that *hṛd-roga*. *Roga* means *kāma-roga*. What is *kāma-roga*? Lust. Lust for worldly things. So, if duplicity, hypocrisy, diplomacy, and the tendency to cheat others are there, then this is dangerous for us. Even if someone is full of ignorance and is weak, there is no harm as long as he is sincere. And if a man's heart is full of duplicity and other bad propensities, then he cannot progress. Never. He may do one *lākha* of *harināma*, spending the whole day engaged in *bhakti* activities, but when the chance comes, he still tries to cheat others in worldly dealings. Because he is not sincere, he will always be motivated to gain money and praise, and be concerned that his name and fame should be spread here and there for his self-gain.

Especially lust, *hṛd-roga*, how will it go away? There is only one way—to chant the name in the association of a higher Vaiṣṇava whose heart is pure. His heart has been completely cleansed and he has developed his *kṛṣṇa-prema* to a high degree. Being under his guidance always, obeying him, living in Vṛndāvana (if not by body then internally by mind), our hearts will be cleansed. First *bhakti* will come and then the heart will be cleaned. Don't think that first we will clear our hearts, that first everything will go away, and then *bhakti* will come. It will never happen like this. This is not authentic *siddhānta*. *Bhakti* will come gradually by its own power, and then without any effort this *hṛd-roga* will go. *Vikriḍitam vraja-vadhūbhir idañ ca viṣṇoḥ śraddhānvito 'nuśṛṇuyād* (SB. 10.33.39) means with *śraddhā*, with great honor, sincerely. *Anuśṛṇuyād* means always, continuously hearing. How? With so much affection

and love and honor. We must be established in this consciousness always, continuously without break.

Atha varṇayed yaḥ. And after this, what is he describing? At the end of the narration of *rāsa-līlā-prasaṅga*, when *rāsa-līlā* had stopped, Śukadeva Gosvāmī is telling Parīkṣit Mahārāja about those who will not hear, that actually they must hear! The verb used is *anuśṛṇuyād*—you must! If you are not doing *śravaṇa*, not hearing, then you are actually committing an offense, because both the author Vyāsa and Śukadeva Gosvāmī are advising this, and you are not obeying. So you must hear. And after hearing, *anuśṛṇuyād atha varṇayed yaḥ bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhya*—you will first have *bhakti*. And then, *pratilabhya kāmam hr̥d-rogam āśv apahinoty acireṇa dhīraḥ*. Then *kāma* comes. What *kāma*? *Kāma* meaning *prema* of Kṛṣṇa. First this *kāma* appears and all *hr̥d-roga*, all bad desires and all ignorance will go away.

You must hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. *Satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-samvido* (SB. 3.25.25) (“In the association of pure devotees, discussion of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes is very pleasing to the ear and heart.”) Hearing Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās* is so powerful that you do not have to do any other *sādhana*. Parīkṣit Mahārāja never did anything else. He only heard and by hearing, he went to Goloka Vṛndāvana and served Kṛṣṇa. So *anuśṛṇuyād*, you will have to hear these *līlās*, and by this you will learn all *tattvas*—*jīva-tattva*, *māyā-tattva*, *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, *yogamāyā-tattva*, *bhakti-tattva*, *prema-tattva*, *sādhana-tattva*—everything will come automatically to you. Then gradually *sādhana-bhakti* will come, and after that *bhāva-bhakti*, *prema-bhakti*, and then Kṛṣṇa will be controlled by that very *bhaktā*.

If we are trying to give up this disease, but instead our disease is increasing, developing more and more, we should understand that we are doing something wrong. We should enter into the proper process, which is to hear.

So Swāmījī is telling that the disease is in the heart. If mind and heart are cleaned, then everything is cleaned. It does not help to

take bath twenty times in the sea, because fish live in the water and they are so impure and give off such a bad smell. If a fish jumps from the water and lands on someone, he will cry out, “Oh, such a bad smell has come!” So always bathing will not work. There is only one medicine for cleaning the heart. What is that?

*nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād
bhavauśadhāc chrotra-mano-‘bhiramāt
ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*

(SB. 10.1.4)

[Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *paramparā* system. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?]

This is the way. Whether one is a *bhakta*, *nirveśeṣa-vādī*, *viśayī*, *kāmī* having so many desires, or *aparādhi*, having committed so many offenses, everyone should hear and chant the holy name. This is told in a *śloka* in *Bhāgavata* (SB. 2.1.11) also.

*etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītam
harer nāmānukīrtanam*

[O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material

desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.]

Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam.

Purification will come from the name. We want to clear our hearts: *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam*. If we do all these unfavorable activities and after that chant *harināma*, this is absurd. You should be whatever you are, wherever you are situated, in whatever stage you are—*kāmī*, *viṣayī*, *bhogī*, *durjana* (scoundrel)—whatever you are you should be—no harm. But be sincere, and then chant *harināma* under the guidance of a pure-hearted Vaiṣṇava. Then, after that, *ceto darpaṇa marjanam* will work. *Bhava-mahā-dāvāgni*—the fire of the world will be extinguished, and all virtues will come—*vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam*.

Then, *vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam*. Who is Kṛṣṇa? He is the *jīvanam* of *vidyā-rūpī-vadhū*, of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The essence of all *vidyā* is Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is *hlādinī-śakti*. Without *nāma*, She will not come. *Vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam*. The ocean—the endless ocean of *ānanda*, pleasure—will come. Then we will play here and there in the waves forever. And at last we will dive into the ocean of love and affection. Never again will we come to this mortal world. So begin *harināma* from wherever you are, from whatever stage you are in, and try to be sincere. Don't be duplicitous. Don't desire any money, fame or other worldly things. Only by chanting, remembering and hearing will we gain strength in cultivating our *bhakti*. First hear. If you are not hearing all these things, you will not become strong. So we must hear and try to follow in order to free ourselves from material desires. This is the conclusion.

You should read.

Devotee reads:

The conclusion is that in order to get freed from the material disease, one must take to the chanting of the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*.

BVNM: Don't try any other process. Don't say that we should first become purified by chanting *harināma* and then we will hear. Nowadays this is going on. "We should not hear *hari-kathā*, we should not associate with higher Vaiṣṇavas, but we should clean our hearts only by chanting *harināma*." Never. We have heard the correct procedure in Swāmījī's text. We have not come to remain in one stage forever. We should try to advance from *kaniṣṭha* to *madhyama*, from *madhyama* to *uttama*. If you are not trying, and you want to be always, forever and eternally in the *kaniṣṭha* stage, thinking, "Oh, it is good for me," that is all right. You can remain there if you like, but we will never wait like this. Always we should endeavor with great desire to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And the key to advancing is in the hand of the *uttama* Vaiṣṇava. So we should try to take his association, always hearing from him. This is the process, and very quickly we will move onwards.

Devotee reads:

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is especially meant for creating an atmosphere in which people can take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

BVNM: But in trying to create a Kṛṣṇa conscious atmosphere, if you are quarreling amongst yourselves and not honoring higher Vaiṣṇavas, or not having faith in anyone else, the atmosphere will be ruined. Then those who are bona fide and sincere will leave that false *bhakti* path. Now we see this happening. So we should try to reform ourselves and to honor all Vaiṣṇavas and all others as well. Then all who come will feel, "Oh, this is a very nice atmosphere. We should chant *harināma*." But if you are engaged in self-enjoyment, visitors will know because they are not so foolish. They will know. They will not respect you and will go away. Only bogus persons will come. They will join you, make some money, and afterwards they will also go away. So we should behave like chaste, bona fide Vaiṣṇavas. Especially those who are preaching should be

like this. Swāmīji intended that his Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement would especially create an atmosphere in which people would be inspired to take to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

One must begin what?

Devotee reads:

One must begin with faith, and when this faith . . .

BVNM: What faith? What is faith here? That my chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s names will give everything to make my life fully successful. Then there will be no need of going to any impersonalist university. We should only go to the school of Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābāji Mahārāja and to the university of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. That is enough! Kṛṣṇa can give us anything in this world. We have seen Vālmiki. He had faith in Kṛṣṇa’s names, and his life was miraculously transformed.

The holy name is so powerful. Agastya took one drink of sea water, and he ended up drinking all the water from the entire sea. Śaṅkara and Brahmā are performing all their functions only by the grace of the name. Swāmī Mahārāja served his holy master by preaching everywhere and by himself chanting Kṛṣṇa’s names. He had no worldly qualification. The world had rejected him; his wife and sons had rejected him because he could not make any money. They all rejected him. But he took shelter only in the name, and everywhere in the whole world he is now worshiped for this. We should try to be like that.

Our faith should be like Haridāsa Ṭhākura’s. He was beaten in twenty-two market-places and his blood splattered everywhere. His face was battered, and only his bones remained, but he was still chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*. His tormentor said to him, “O Prabhu, please die. Otherwise my whole family will die.” So Haridāsa said, “Yes, I am dying.” And he became like a dead person. They threw his body in the Ganges. Then they were so satisfied, and they told the Kazi, “Oh, we have done a marvelous job! He is now dead, and we have thrown his

dead body into the Ganges.” But after one hour they saw Haridāsa Ṭhākura again in such a healthy state, chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. He came out from the Ganges still chanting and went to his place. Everyone there wondered how this could have happened. He had been dead. Every bone had been broken. And still he came out like before, even more healthy! Then they declared that he was a *jindapira* (Muslim saint), a person who is like a demigod in this life. A man can be *jindapira* by his *samskāra* (his activities) after so many millions of births, but in this present lifetime Haridāsa became like a demigod.

Have you heard of Agastya Ṛṣi? A bird told him that the sea had taken her eggs and would not return them. The bird was weeping. Agastya Ṛṣi went and told the sea, “Oh, she is weeping so much. You should return her eggs.” But the sea would not listen. Agastya Ṛṣi took a palmful of water and drank it, and the whole sea dried up, and those eggs were returned to that bird.

You know the history of Sanātana Gosvāmī? He threw his *cintāmaṇi* stone in the Yamunā and he was chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*. He never remembered that he had had a *cintāmaṇi*. He had no use for it, because he had so many *cintāmaṇis*. What were those *cintāmaṇis*? *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. When you have a firm belief that everything can be achieved by the name, then you don’t need anything else—liberation, *svarga*, *vaibhava* (wealth), *rājya* (kingdom), anything. You may want to be president of North America only, but you can be president of the whole world by chanting *harināma*. Have strong faith in this. But actually we have no faith. On the pretext of serving Gurudeva, seventy-five percent of our collection we keep in our pocket and twenty-five percent we give to him. Does Gurudeva know or not? Does Kṛṣṇa know or not? If we are cheating Kṛṣṇa and

Gurudeva, how will we be successful in our chanting? So have faith in the name. Then?

Devotee reads:

...and when this faith is increased by chanting, a person can become a member of the Society.

BVNM: But how Swāmījī's mood was so high! If he could see what is happening now, that his disciples are not honoring the Vaiṣṇavas, he would be very sad. What to speak of *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, they are not going to honor anyone.

So, "we are sending..."

Devotee reads:

We are sending *saṅkīrtana* parties all over the world, and they are experiencing that even in the remotest part of the world, where there is no knowledge of Kṛṣṇa, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* attracts thousands of men to our camp. In some areas, people begin to imitate the devotees by shaving their heads and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, only a few days after hearing the *mantra*. This may be imitative, but imitation of a good thing is desired. Some imitators gradually become interested in being initiated by the spiritual master and offer themselves for initiation.

If one is sincere, he is initiated...

BVNM: But if one is not sincere, he will be cheated. He will think, "Gurudeva has given me a *mantra* and I am initiated. Now I can initiate others." How can he know the process? Only outwardly he knows something. He brings a *tulasī* plant and keeps it by him. He brings a very, very big, big chanting *mālā* from the market, very big. Sometimes when I give a smaller *mālā*, disciples bring a very large *mālā* for Rs. 500 from the market or from Rādhā-Kuṇḍa. It is so big that I cannot even hold it in my hand. They think that by this

big, big *mālā* Kṛṣṇa will at once come. But Kṛṣṇa will not come for Rs. 1000 or for any amount.

So, if anyone is sincere, he will chant like Caitanya Mahāprabhu, on his *kaupīna*, making knots in the cloth. But for us the *tulasī-mālā* is very sacred and powerful, so we should use *tulasī*. But don't use such big, big, big ones! Use something smaller, medium size, but very easy to chant on. And try to take the mood of your Gurudeva. Serve him and his words. "I took initiation, and after some months I left my Gurudeva and I became a *guru* myself." No, this is not initiation.

"If one is sincere...."

Devotee reads:

If one is sincere, he is initiated, and this stage is called *bhajana-kriyā*. One then actually engages in the service of the Lord by regularly chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, sixteen rounds daily....

BVNM: He has told the meaning of sixteen rounds before.

Devotee: Minimum sixteen rounds, nothing less.

BVNM: Swāmījī set this standard to bring the devotees in. It is only for Western devotees, not for Indians. We never heard our Gurudeva say this. We have heard minimum sixteen rounds only from Swāmījī, because the Westerners are always engaged in so many other activities. Thus they have no time at all. So at least you should chant sixteen rounds. But it does not mean that if you are chanting seventeen rounds, then you are making an offense. Some devotees have told me, "It is a very big offense to disobey Swāmījī and he has instructed that we should chant only sixteen rounds." No, this is a wrong understanding. It was Swāmījī's desire that everyone should chant at least thirty-two rounds, if not one *lākha*, but he saw that his disciples could not meet such a high standard.

Devotee reads:

...chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, sixteen rounds daily, and refraining from illicit sex, intoxicants, meat-eating and gambling.

BVNM: This is clearing of the heart. We should try to realize all these things properly. What? And refraining from illicit sex, what else?

Devotee reads:

...refraining from illicit sex, intoxicants, meat-eating and gambling. By *bhajana-kriyā* one attains freedom from the contamination of materialistic life. He no longer goes to a restaurant or hotel to taste so-called palatable dishes made with meat and onions....

BVNM: But we see that prominent devotees are secretly going to restaurants and doing so many bad things. We should be satisfied with *mahā-prasāda* only.

Devotee reads:

...nor does he care to smoke or drink tea or coffee. He not only refrains from illicit sex, but avoids sex life entirely. Nor is he interested in wasting his time in speculating or gambling. In this way it is to be understood that one is becoming cleansed of unwanted things (*anartha-nivṛtti*). The word *anartha* refers to unwanted things. *Anarthas* are vanquished when one becomes attached to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

BVNM: First know what is *sādhya*. What is our object? First know our object, then *sādhana*, then *sādhana-bhakti*. We should know all these things. What is *bhāva*? What is *prema*? Then you can do what is needed for attaining *bhāva*. Then that will be *sādhana*. And if you have a desire to attain *prema* from the stage of *bhāva*, then you are doing *bhāva-bhakti*, otherwise not. You

must know all these things. You may have been doing *sādhana-bhakti* your whole life, but that *sādhana-bhakti* is not real if it has not been done to achieve *bhāva-bhakti*. What you have been doing cannot be considered *svarūpa-siddha-bhakti*. Rather, it will come in the category of *aropa-siddha* or *saṅga-siddha*, contaminated with *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, *tapasya* and all other things. It is not pure. If you are not hearing from the highest class of Vaiṣṇavas, how can you know all these things? And how can you enter into actually practicing *svarūpa-siddha-bhakti*? So Swāmiji has called *bhāva* “the preliminary awakening of dormant love of Godhead.”

Next?

Devotee reads:

When a person is relieved from unwanted things, he becomes fixed in executing his Kṛṣṇa activities. Indeed, he becomes attached to such activities and experiences ecstasy in executing devotional service. This is called *bhāva*, the preliminary awakening of dormant love of Godhead. Thus the conditioned soul becomes free from material existence and loses interest in the bodily conception of life, including material opulence, material knowledge and material attraction of all varieties. At such a time one can understand who the Supreme Personality of Godhead is and what His *māyā* is. Although *māyā* may be present, it cannot disturb a devotee once he attains the *bhāva* stage.

BVNM: *Māyā* cannot touch that devotee. Sometimes there will be an occasion that he has reason to become angry, but he does not. There are some symptoms of *bhāva* by which you can determine whether you have really attained *bhāva* or not. That *śloka* is:

*kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ viraktir māna-śūnyatā
āśā-bandhaḥ samutkañṭhā nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ
āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne prītis tad-vasati-sthale
ity ādayo 'nubhāvāḥ syur jāta-bhāvāṅkure jane*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.3.25-26)

[Tolerance, effectual use of one's time, detachment from worldly enjoyment, absence of pride, steadfast hope that Kṛṣṇa will bestow His mercy, intense longing to obtain one's goal, always having a taste to chant the holy name, attachment to hearing narrations of the Lord's qualities, and affection for the transcendental residences of the Lord—these are the nine sprouts of *prīti*, or the symptoms of the appearance of *bhāva*.]

If *bhāva* is there, you will see some symptoms. If you are doing *sādhana-bhakti*, there will be other symptoms. *Kṛṣṇa-prema* has its own symptoms. We will know the different stages by the various symptoms. And what are the symptoms? You will have to go to Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* to see. Or you will have to hear from a living bona fide Vaiṣṇava. This is the way to know all these things.

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

(Cc. *Madhya* 22.54)

[The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success.]

Even a very brief association with a real *sādhu* will change your whole life. So what is Swāmījī saying?

Devotee reads:

Māyā cannot disturb a devotee when he attains the *bhāva* stage.

BVNM: *Māyā* cannot touch him. *Kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ viraktir māna-śūnyatā*. An incident may occur that is just cause for anger, but you will not react. Sometimes you may be disturbed by worldly things, but another time you will not be affected at all. Like Ambarīṣa Mahārāja—he was only standing with

folded hands. Death was coming, and he was completely silent. Prahāda Mahārāja and Haridāsa Ṭhākura were the same. You can see all these examples.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

This is because the devotee can see the real position of *māyā*. *Māyā* means forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa, and forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa consciousness stand side by side like light and shadow. If one remains in shadow, he cannot enjoy the facilities offered by light, and if one remains in light, he cannot be disturbed by the darkness of shadow. By taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one gradually becomes liberated and remains in light. Indeed, he does not even touch the darkness. As confirmed in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 22.31):

*kṛṣṇa – sūrya-sama; māyā haya andhakāra
yāhāṇ kṛṣṇa, tāhāṇ nāhi māyāra adhikāra*

“Kṛṣṇa is compared to sunshine, and *māyā* is compared to darkness. Wherever there is sunshine, there cannot be darkness. As soon as one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the darkness of illusion, the influence of the external energy, will immediately vanish.”

BVNM: Actually I have been reading and giving class on this book, *The Nectar of Instruction*, only to come to the eighth *śloka*. My main purpose is to give a deep idea of this *śloka*. It is the essence of all kinds of teachings. Here teachings means the instructions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rūpa Gosvāmī. The first seven *ślokas* have been presented only to help us follow and realize this *śloka*:

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

(Śrī Upadeśāmṛta 8)

Rūpa Gosvāmī has expressed his idea in this way. I am now explaining the sum and substance of all *upadeśa* taught by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. By following this *śloka*, you can easily attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. This is the goal and object of our life. So he is saying *tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi*. Read Swāmījī's translation.

Devotee reads:

The essence of all advice is that one should utilize one's full time—twenty-four hours a day—in nicely chanting and remembering the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes, thereby gradually engaging one's tongue and mind. In this way one should reside in Vraja (Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma) and serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of devotees. One should follow in the footsteps of the Lord's beloved devotees, who are deeply attached to His devotional service.

BVNM: We will explain it. I want to read one stanza on page 75, "in the transcendental realm . . ." Today in the evening so many persons will leave, so I want to touch that mood.

Devotee reads:

In the transcendental realm of Vraja (Vraja-dhāma) one should serve the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with a feeling similar to that of His associates, and one should place himself under the direct guidance of a particular associate of Kṛṣṇa and should follow in his footsteps. This method is applicable both in the stage of *sādhana* (spiritual practices executed while in the stage of bondage) and in the stage of *sādhya* (God realization), when one is a *siddha-puruṣa*, or a spiritually perfected soul.

BVNM: Swāmījī is quoting here one *śloka* of Rūpa Gosvāmī from *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.295). That *śloka* is:

*sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa
siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā
vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

The meaning is so deep. Rūpa Gosvāmī says that if you want to serve Kṛṣṇa, then you should perform *sādḥana* like Caitanya Mahāprabhu has instructed. What is that *sādḥana*? What is the process? He is saying *sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa*. You should serve as a *sādḥaka*, and also as a *siddha*. We will give an example.

Rūpa and Sanātana, all our Six Gosvāmīs, and all our *ācāryas*, especially Rūpa-Raghunātha—how are they serving?

*saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ kālāvasāni-kṛtau
nidrāhāra-vihārakādi-vijitau cātyanta-dīnau ca yau
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa-smṛter madhurimānandena sammohitau
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī-jīva-gopālakau*

[I offer my prayers to the Six Gosvāmīs, who passed all their time in chanting the holy names, singing songs and offering *daṇḍavat-pranāmas*, thereby humbly fulfilling their vow to complete a fixed number daily. In this way they utilized their valuable lives and conquered over eating, sleeping and other such pleasures. Always seeing themselves as completely worthless, they became enchanted in divine rapture by remembering Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's sweet qualities.]

Swāmiji always used to recite this song with tears in his eyes, very, very honorably with deep love and affection.

Saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ—this is *sādḥana*. For what purpose? To attain *bhāva*. *Saṅkhyā-pūrvaka*, not less than one *lākha*, two *lākhās*, three *lākhās*. All the associates, like Rūpa-Raghunātha, were doing this daily, *saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma*. *Gāna*, what *gāna* (singing)?

*rādhe jaya jaya mādharma-dayite
gokula-taruṇī-maṇḍala-mahite
rādhe jaya jaya mādharma-dayite*

govinda-dāmodara-mādhaveti

namāmi nanda-nandanam

Like this. Two, three, four hours at a time they were absorbed. *Saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ*. And *vandanā* (praying):

*bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netrām
smarāmi rādhām madhura-smitāsyām
vadāmi rādhām karuṇa-bharādrām
tato mamānyāsti gatir na kāpi*

(*Śrī Stavāvali, Śrī Viśakhānanda-stotra* 131, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī)

[I worship Rādhā who has lotus-eyes. I meditate on Rādhā who has a sweet smile. I glorify Rādhā who melts with compassion. She is the only goal of my life—I have no other refuge.]

Always I am doing *bhajana*. I am doing *bhajana* of Rādhikā, always remembering Her lotus feet. With my mouth I am uttering “*Rādhe, Rādhe, jaya jaya Śrī Rādhe*.” Why? Śrīmatī Rādhikā is unlimitedly merciful, more than Kṛṣṇa. *Tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi* (O Rādhe, I am Yours, I am Yours). You should always do *vandanā* like this. After that, offer *praṇāma*, *saṣṭāṅga-praṇāma*. Do you know what is *sāstāṅga-praṇāma*? Offering eight parts of body on the ground like a rod (head, hands, feet, knees, chest). And heart, inner heart. By speech saying *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*, and doing *praṇāma* like this. These eight parts should be offered.

Sāstāṅga-praṇāma to whom? Rādhā-Govinda, Rādhā Gopinātha, Rādhā-Madana-Mohana, Rādhā-Dāmodara, Rādhā-

Śyāmasundara, Rādhā-Ramaṇa, Rādhā-Gokulānanda, Rādhā-Mādhava, Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, Rādhā-Bāṅkī-bihārījī, Rādhā-Vallabha, Rādhā-Giridharī and so on, and to the places of pastimes with Nanda Bābā Mahārāja—*ki jaya ho*. Nanda Bābā—*ki jaya ho*, Yaśodā Maiyā—*ki jaya ho*, Kṛṣṇa-kanhaiyā—*ki jaya ho*, Dāū-bhaiyā—*ki jaya ho*, Rohinī Maiyā—*ki jaya ho*, Rasilī-rasoiyā (cook expert in making very sweet preparations)—*ki jaya ho*, and all these things. To Varsānā, Varsānā—*ki jaya ho*, Vṛṣabhānu Bābā—*ki jaya ho*, Kīrtidā Maiyā—*ki jaya ho*, Śrīdāmā-bhaiyā—*ki jaya ho*. *Hlādhinī-mahābhāva-svarīpa mama ārādhya Śrīmatī Rādhikā—ki jaya ho*. Anaṅga Mañjarī—*ki jaya ho*. *Jaya* to all the places there, to Vṛndāvana, Nidhuvana, Vamśī-vaṭa, Keśī-ghāṭa, Dhīra-samīra, Sevā-kuñja, doing *praṇāma* to Bhāṅḍīravana where Rādhikā was married to Kṛṣṇa and where They were playing on a swing, to Yamunā, to Girirāja Govardhana, to Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, *lākhas* and *lākhas* of these glorifications—four hours!

Devotee: Twenty-four hours.

BVNM: No. Four hours! If they do for twenty-four hours, they will remember and they will fall flat, they will faint, and they will roll down, always saying, “*Ha Rādhe!*” and singing:

*he rādhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-sūno kutah
śrī-govardhana-kalpa-pādapa-tale kālindī-vane kutah
ghoṣantāv iti sarvato vraja-pure khedair mahā-vihvalau
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī jīva-gopālakau*

[I am doing *vandanā* to the Six Gosvāmīs, who were always calling out, “He Rādhe! O Queen of Vṛndāvana! Where are You? *He Lalite!* O son of Nanda Mahārāja! Where are You? Are You seated beneath the *kalpa-vṛkṣa* trees of Śrī Govardhana Hill? Or are You roaming in all the forests along the soft banks of the Kalindī?” They were always lamenting, overwhelmed and burning in feelings of great separation as they wandered throughout all Vraja-maṇḍala.]

This is called *sādhana*. These instructions are for outer *sādhana*, not inner. Inner *sādhana* is more, more developed. Always sitting, playing in the waves of Rādhā's and Kṛṣṇa's love, in the unlimited ocean of *prema*. This is *sādhana-bhajana*. And internally where? Rūpa Gosvāmī is Rūpa Mañjarī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is Rati Mañjarī. They are always serving Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal, sometimes fanning, sometimes massaging Śrīmatī Rādhikā, sometimes offering betelnut. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa is telling them, "Come on," and they will say, "No, we will not come." They are hiding behind Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This is doing service. Which service is greater? Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī states in his *Stavāvali* (*Vraja Vilāsa-stava* 38):

*tambūlārpaṇa-pāda-mardana-payo-dānābhisāradibhir
vṛndāranya-maheśvarīm priyatayā yas toṣayanti priyah
prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhi-kulād api kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāḥ
keli-bhūmiṣu rūpa-mañjarī-mukhās tā dāsikāḥ samśraye*

[By offering Her betel nuts, massaging Her feet, bringing Her water, arranging for Her secret meetings with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and performing various other services, countless *gopī* maidservants constantly please Śrī Rādhā, the queen of Vṛndāvana forest. In their service to the Divine Couple, they are even less shy than the *prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhīs*, for whom Śrī Rādhā is more dear than life. I take shelter of these *gopī* maidservants, who have Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī as their leader.]

These are services in *siddha-rūpeṇa*. And what is *sādhaka-rūpeṇa*? *San̄khyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ*. Always engaging in all these activities—twenty-four hours a day weeping bitterly, rolling down on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, sometimes in Vṛndāvana, Sevā-kuṅja, Vaṁśī-vaṭa, on the bank of Yamunā. This is *sādhana*. *Sādhana* is not distributing books for the rest of

our lives and keeping seventy-five percent of our collection in our pockets. For the beginning stage Swāmījī approved all these activities—without them we cannot progress. But if we are engaged like this forever and do not come in the line of real *sādhana*, we will never advance. That is why Swāmījī sent me. He told me, “Go and help my devotees. Otherwise they will dry up, and giving up this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they will be derailed.” If the devotees will not taste these things and advance, how can they stay in this movement? If a river is not flowing, and the water has stopped, then the water will become stagnant, and after that it will dry up. *Bhakti* is like a current. Our *bhakti* will surely go up, up, up, up. And if it is not going up by this process that Swāmījī is describing, then we are not doing real *sādhana*.

We should try to realize all these instructions and perform *bhajana* like this. I have given only a very little taste. If I reveal more to you, some will say that Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is *sahajiyā* and is telling so many confidential things that should not be heard. Blatantly they will say this!

I have been speaking on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for the last seven or eight days. What have I told? I have spoken about Prahāda Mahārāja, Bali Mahārāja, Ajāmila, Citraketu, Nṛsimha Bhagavān, from the beginning. But if I am not touching *vraja-līlā*, then it is all bogus, all bogus. So I must mention a little from the Tenth Canto and give you some taste so that you will not fall down. Otherwise, if you do not hear Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās*, you will fall down. I have given only a very little touch. You should develop a very strong greed to hear more of *vraja-līlā*. And if you develop some greed, then I will give so much more.

Swāmījī has written “that even in the stage of bondage.” What is the meaning? The stage of bondage means the conditioned stage. So you should hear *dāmodara-līlā* now. We must hear how Kṛṣṇa took birth in both places, in Mathurā and also in a hidden way in

Gokula, how He tasted *vātsalya-rasa* and other things. We are meant to hear about *vraja-līlā* in the stage of bondage. To think, “We will be liberated and then we will be qualified to hear Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās*,” is wrong and totally false!

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 8

New Braja, 24 May 1997



We have finished our seventh *śloka* of *The Nectar of Instruction*. I have given some outline for the eighth *śloka* but I want to start from the beginning again. This eighth *śloka* is the sum and substance, the essence, of all the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda. What is this *śloka* teaching? It is teaching how we should cultivate our activities for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa and how we can advance. First of all, Swāmījī is telling us that we have not come to spiritual life only to remain forever in the *kaniṣṭha-adhikāra* stage, that we should try to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We should not still be doing the same practices and cultivating the same mood that we were twenty-five years ago. We should not be satisfied to remain in the same stage. We will have to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. For this reason he is explaining this *śloka*.

When we first came to this Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we began chanting *harināma*. And today we are still chanting *harināma*, but

it is not the same. It is like the difference between geometry for beginners and for Ph.D.'s. So now after twenty years, should we still be chanting the same way we were in the beginning? No! Our chanting and our mood should be so much more developed. How can we develop? For this Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given the first seven *ślokas*. Now he is coming to the internal mood, and he is saying *tan-nāma-rūpa*.

You should read the translation first and then we will explain.

Devotee reads:

The essence of all advice is that one should utilize one's full time—twenty-four hours a day—in nicely chanting and remembering the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes....

BVNM: Why twenty-four hours? Why? You will have to do something to maintain your life—you will have to take some sleep, you will have to care for your families, your children—so why is he saying twenty-four hours? How can we reconcile all these things? You will have to reconcile. This is the difference between your beginning stage of chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa* and what you are doing now. Swāmījī will explain further in his purport. But can we do what is expected of us? It is possible. For those persons who have difficulty chanting sixteen rounds, Swāmījī said, “I am giving some concession because Western devotees cannot easily do more. They are always engaged in bodily activities.” So for them he is telling sixteen rounds, but this instruction is not for advanced devotees.

What is Swāmījī telling for advanced devotees? For them he is saying twenty-four hours a day. Now, senior devotees will ask, “How can this be? Oh, this is Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's idea, not Swāmījī's. He never told us this.” But Swāmījī has told this very clearly, and because of this wrong understanding I am now telling all these things again. One day you will have to come up to this higher stage; otherwise, your love and affection for Kṛṣṇa will not

be strong. For neophyte devotees he has said, “Oh, you should begin from two, three, four, up to sixteen rounds.” But when you progress, you will give up all your worldly attachments, keeping no worldly desires at all. Then you can actually advance. So he is telling us how to do this.

Then, “pastimes, thereby gradually....”

Devotee reads:

...thereby gradually engaging one’s tongue and mind. In this way one should reside in Vraja....

BVNM: Oh, then he is saying that you should all give up your homes and come to Vraja? How is this possible? Oh, it will be possible if you have no worldly desires. Then you will be pure devotees and you will have no reason to be anywhere else. You will only want to be in Vraja. Those who are not qualified to be in Vraja should live there by mind. This is another concession. But after some time you will have to go to Vraja and give up all these worldly desires. Where will you have to go? Goloka Vṛndāvana. He has written “Goloka Vṛndāvana” in brackets: “One should reside in Vraja (Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma).”

For a *sādhaka* it is absurd to think that he can be in Goloka Vṛndāvana. Do you understand this? A *sādhaka* cannot go to Goloka Vṛndāvana. After liberation, after *prema*, he can go there. But the *sādhaka*’s goal is to go there, so Swāmijī has written “Goloka Vṛndāvana” in brackets, meaning that our object is to go there. But in *sādhana-avasthā* we will never be in Goloka Vṛndāvana. Some devotees will say, “Oh, our Guru Mahārāja has written Goloka Vṛndāvana, in *sādhana-avasthā*? This is for *sādhaka-avasthā*?” This *śloka* is for *sādhana*. You know what *sādhana* means? It is for one in the stage of bondage. Then how can one be in Goloka Vṛndāvana? So has Swāmijī written falsely? No, you will have to reconcile all these things. Otherwise you cannot advance. If you say, “Oh, he has written ‘Goloka Vṛndāvana’, so we will go

to Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma in the stage of bondage,” you must ask how this is possible! You will have to use your intelligence, and that intelligence will come from the association of a bona fide Vaiṣṇava or *guru*. Otherwise you will always be confused and have so many doubts. So you will have to reconcile this contradiction. But only highly developed and realized Vaiṣṇavas can reconcile all these things.

Then again, “In this way one should reside....”

Devotee reads:

In this way one should reside in Vraja (Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma) and serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of devotees.

BVNM: What is the difference between devotee and associate, *pārṣada*, *parikarā*? Can anyone say?

Devotee: A devotee is a *sādhaka* and an associate is an eternal *nitya-siddha*.

BVNM: Eternal, he is liberated. Who is liberated? Kṛṣṇa’s associates. They are called *parikaras*. They are not devotees, they are not *sādhakas*. If the word “devotee” is used, you should always consider that he is a *sādhaka*. How can a *sādhaka* be in the eternal *dhāma*, Goloka Vṛndāvana? After liberation. After receiving *prema*, then Yogamāyā will take him there for eternity. But devotees cannot go there. When will they go? When they attain *kṛṣṇa-prema* — *sneha*, *māna*, *pranaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, etc. After that they can go, otherwise not. Only serving cows, only distributing books but not going deeply into them, or only making life members—these activities will create some *sukṛti* but they are not considered pure devotional activities. But what Swāmījī is referring to here is pure devotion. We will have to come to this platform one day, and then we can attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Otherwise, never, never, even in *lākhas* and *lākhas* of births will we get *kṛṣṇa-prema*. And if we do not seriously endeavor for pure devotion, then we are bound to make some offenses. Swāmījī is telling that throughout our whole day, twenty-four hours, we should chant and remember. But some are saying you should not follow this instruction.

Once I went to one of my *mathas* in India and was expressing all these ideas. Everyone became happy to hear this, but afterwards the *matha* commander called all the devotees and said, “Don’t follow what Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is telling. You should serve the cows. You should go out here and there for *bhikṣā* (begging), and do all these other activities. Chant only sixteen rounds, not more. If you follow Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, then you will be deviated. You cannot live, you cannot maintain your life by his instructions and thus everything will be upset.” All the boys came to tell me, “Our *matha* superintendent is saying this.”

“So one should follow....”

Devotee reads:

One should follow in the footsteps of the Lord’s beloved devotees, who are deeply attached to His devotional service. Since the mind may be one’s enemy or one’s friend, one has to train the mind to become his friend.

BVNM: *Mana eva manuṣyāṇām kāraṇam bandha-mokṣayoḥ.* Mind is the cause of bondage and liberation. He is our enemy and our friend, so you should try to train the mind first. If your mind is not on friendly terms, then he is your enemy. And if you follow the mind when he is your enemy, you will go to hell. In the state of bondage, we cannot take shelter of, or take any advice from, the mind. What should we do? Follow Rūpa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Gurudeva, and all the disciplic *ācāryas*. Do not follow what the mind is whispering. Keep a whip and control your mind with it. Ten times daily, take a broom and beat the back of your mind. Ten times! Then you may become pure. Otherwise, your mind will always be like a dog’s tail, always curved. If you take one hundred kilos of *ghee* and rub it on the dog’s tail to make it straight, when you let go it will again become curved. The mind is like this. So, always weeping and weeping, by taking the shelter of a realized *rasika tattva-jñā* Vaiṣṇava, you may be able to bring the mind

under control. Otherwise not. You will have to be very careful of the mind. If your mind has become your friend, then it is very easy to remember the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. So Swāmījī and Rūpa Gosvāmī are telling us that first of all we will have to train our mind. Then all our bodily activities and senses will follow in line.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is especially meant for training the mind to be always engaged in Kṛṣṇa's business.

BVNM: Jīva Gosvāmī established this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, the *Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā*, and all our *ācāryas* are members of this assembly. Jīva Gosvāmī was the first president, and after him Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja was president. After that came Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. And then the next famous president of this *Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā* was Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. This is the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness movement. After some time Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa became another powerful president. After that came a very deep *andhakāra yuga*, a period of darkness, but that darkness ended when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became very prominent. As the Saptama Gosvāmī he became the president of the assembly and he preached everywhere. And after that came Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, who preached all over the world just by his arms, like Swāmījī. In a very short time his one hand preached all over the whole world.

Swāmījī was one of the very greatest preachers of this Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and president of that *Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā*. He brought a new bottle but it was the same wine inside. The new bottle was the name of that branch of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness—International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. Intelligent persons know it is the same wine but in a new bottle. Some of Swāmījī's followers have now deviated and they don't want to accept this theory, but I think that they are not very intelligent. The Kṛṣṇa

Consciousness movement is eternal, you should know this. It is not anything new. Its followers are also eternal. Third-class bogus *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* are not members of this movement. They only appear to be doing some *bhakti* activity. The members of this society are all liberated souls, like Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. So if you will be like Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda, Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and our Gurudeva, then you will also be members. Otherwise, you will be like the simple *chaukidāra*, gatekeeper, like dogs sitting at the gate, doing some semblance of *sādhana*. Does the *chaukidāra* have the independent power to reject anyone? Never! When we become pure, we will remember this *Viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja-sabhā*, alias Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, as it is!

Then?

Devotee reads:

The mind contains hundreds and thousands of impressions,
not only of this life but also of many, many lives of the past.

BVNM: Can anyone explain how the mind has hundreds and thousands of impressions? Anyone?

Devotee: The mind contains the impressions of past lives which are carried within that subtle body.

BVNM: How are there thousands and thousands of impressions? How? In a moment *lākhas* and *lākhas* of impressions are going on in the mind. You may be thinking so many different things, “I will beat that person. He is very wicked.” Or “I love that person.” You will feel affection for some and have an opposite mood for others, sometimes even abusing them. All these thoughts create impressions in your mind. And even for only a moment’s impression you will have to taste some reaction for *lākhas* and *lākhas* of births. Do you understand this clearly or not? In your own words you should explain.

Devotee: That all the impressions of previous experiences are stored in our mind like a tape recorder.

BVNM: Also the present, whatever you are doing now. If your age is fifty or sixty, can you estimate how many impressions you have stored in your mind? Unlimited numbers! No one can calculate. And you will have to taste all these impressions for *lākhas* and *lākhas* and *koṭis* of births. Unknowingly or knowingly, you killed an ant when you were passing on the road. Will it come as an impression or not?

You were going on a path and so many ants were there. Wearing very hard shoes you unknowingly placed your foot on so many ants. You caused about a hundred ants to die, and you never even noticed. Even if this act was done unknowingly, the impression from it will come.

Innocently your son is putting his hand in fire. He does not know that it is fire and that it will burn. But if he puts his hand in the fire, will it burn him or not? Even if it is done unknowingly, it will still burn. If you are keeping some kerosene oil in a tin, will there be some smell or not? Keeping it knowingly or unknowingly, it will have some bad smell. So if you are doing anything knowingly or unknowingly, you will have to taste the reactions. It will come as an impression.

If a bull came and took you on his horns, injured you and caused some pain, and if you took a very big stick and gave him three, four *daṇḍas* (blows), will it make an impression or not? Can you tell? It will. The bull will have no impression because he is an animal, *karma-yonī* (animal species). They are all suffering. If the bull butts you like this, this is a reaction coming from your past births' impressions. If you are silent, thinking, "He has done this because of my past activities," then you will not incur any new impression. But if you are retaliating with a stick again, then new impressions are made. And that bull will come to you as a man, and he will have to beat you. If you are taking the flesh of any cows, the

cows will take birth as humans, and you will come as a cow for so many births, and the cows as humans will take your flesh again and again and again. In this way we are tasting impressions coming from *lākhas* and *lākhas* of past births. And because of these we are also making so many new impressions. Try to avoid making any new bad impressions. Rather, what impression should you make? You should always chant and remember Kṛṣṇa. If anyone is disturbing you, no harm. Be like Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was powerful enough that he could have prevented the Muslims from beating him in twenty-two market places, whether he had prayed to Kṛṣṇa or not. He was Brahmā, and he could have easily resisted them. With a curse he could have destroyed those Muslims who were beating him. But he did not exercise his power.

So in this way always chant and remember. Swāmījī is explaining that the time of death is especially crucial. If you chant and remember Kṛṣṇa in the last moments, you will be liberated from this world. Otherwise, if you have chanted your whole life, but at the time of death you are thinking of some prostitute or any other bad thing, then you will have to take a lower birth in a miserable condition. So be very careful.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

These impressions sometimes come in contact with one another and produce contradictory pictures.

BVNM: What is the meaning?

Devotee: Like a dream. In a dream you may have an impression of a mountain, and another impression may come of gold, so you dream of a gold mountain.

BVNM: In this life?

Devotee: This life and previous lives.

BVNM: How is it that in this life these impressions sometimes come in contact with one another and produce contradictory pictures?

Devotee: One may have performed impious activities and pious or spiritual activities, and by nature they are contradictory.

BVNM: What is an example?

Devotee: I might plant some trees or give some charity, but then I might do something sinful, and perhaps I might come into good association and do something spiritual. So my mind is not fixed. I'm involved in so many contradictory activities.

BVNM: You have performed so many good and bad activities in your life. If remembrances of both are coming simultaneously, you will be confused and be in doubt as to what you should or should not do. For example, a very beautiful lady, or for ladies a very handsome man, caught your eye and you were attracted, but you already had a good, chaste wife. So you are thinking, "What to do?" Two feelings are coming from past activities, impressions, and now you are deciding what to do. "Should I enter a relationship with this new lady and give up my old wife or not? This new lady is so beautiful and my first wife is somewhat aged and not so good-looking, so what should I do? It is not right to leave my wife but this new lady is very young, very beautiful, and very sweet. What should I do?" Thus you find yourself in a dilemma. It may be that four, five, six impressions will come at a time—what to do? That impression which is most prominent will defeat all the others.

Your wife tells that you should not follow Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and threatens, "If you do that, I will take poison and die." So you have to decide whether you will follow the *bhakti* path, chanting, remembering and doing *sevā* or not. And your wife is saying that you should take flesh and eggs and enjoy with her. "If you are not coming to me, and if you are going to be a pure devotee, at once I will take poison and I will give poison to all our children." "Oh, what to do? This is a very big problem! What should I do?" This confusion of purpose is coming from your past activities which have created varieties of impressions. They may come one, two, three, four, five at a time, and then it is very hard to discern what is

proper behavior. However, any devotee can save you. So we should try to take the association of any good, realized soul. He will show you the proper path in an instant.

There is the story of Nārada who saw a hunter with his bow and poisoned arrows in a big forest. He shot one deer, who was now doing *chaṭ-paṭ*, *chaṭ-paṭ* (flapping around). He was only half-dead and rolling about in pain. When Nārada saw this, he thought, “Oh, the deer is half-dead and is suffering so much, and doing *chaṭ-paṭ*, *chaṭ-paṭ*.” A little while later he saw another deer, a rabbit, and some birds that were also flapping like that. At last he approached that hunter who came with bow and arrow in hand and challenged Nārada, “Why have you come here like this and disturbed me? All my prey are running here and there, and you have frightened them off. I will kill you.”

Nārada replied, “You cannot kill me. You have no power to do so. You have no power to even touch me. Look around you.” And Nārada took some drops of water from his pot and sprinkled them. The hunter at once saw *lākhas* and *lākhas* of these animals ready to kill him. He cried out, “They are killing me and again I am taking birth and again they are killing me. And they are in rows, *lākhas* and *lākhas* of them waiting to kill me.” He at once fainted and was rolling on the earth. Again Nārada took some water and sprinkled it. The hunter came back to his senses and fell flat at the lotus feet of Nārada Ṛṣi, “Save me! Save me! Save me!”

Nārada told him to break his arrows and bows.

“Then what will I do? How will I maintain my life?”

“Oh, do not worry about this. All necessities will come to you in huge quantities, but you should take only a little. First you should distribute all your possessions.”

In a moment that hunter was changed, and he became a great saint. After some days Parvata Ṛṣi and Nārada Ṛṣi returned there. Now this hunter had become so pious that he would watch the path so that no ant would be harmed when he offered *praṇāma* to

Nārada Ṛṣi. He had become so pious! Parvata Ṛṣi asked, “Who is he?”

“Oh, he is my disciple. He was a very big hunter and so *niṣṭhura*, cruel-hearted. Now he has become so pious.”

“Oh, you are a touchstone. In a moment you can change anyone.”

So, if a person like Nārada Ṛṣi will touch us, our mind can be controlled, otherwise not. So go to Vṛndāvana.

What is the *śloka*?

Devotee reads:

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaraṇ bhāvaṁ
tyajaty ante kalevaram
taṁ taṁ evaiti kaunteya
sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

(Bg. 8.6)

“Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, that state he will attain without fail.”

At the time of death, the mind and intelligence of a living entity create the subtle form of a certain type of body for the next life. If the mind suddenly thinks of something not very congenial, one has to take a corresponding birth in the next life. On the other hand, if one can think of Kṛṣṇa at the time of death, he can be transferred to the spiritual world, Goloka Vṛndāvana.

BVNM: Any example for both?

Devotee: Bharata Mahārāja by thinking of a deer, he became a deer.

BVNM: Yes. He was thinking of a deer. So, if you think of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa’s associates, certainly you will be like that. Is there any example? Yes, Ajāmila became like this, and so many others. *Śrutis* have done like that. *Śruti* means *Veda*, and it is not just a book, not only a piece of paper. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is not a piece of paper, *Gītā* is not a piece of paper. Without these literatures we cannot see, because we are blind, mortal. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Gītā* and

all *Vedas* are immortal, like Kṛṣṇa. But at present we cannot see this. His teachings are immortal. We cannot realize all these things now. Only by cultivating all our activities to please Kṛṣṇa can we begin to understand. This realization will come in the stage of *bhāva*. Then we can realize a little. So we should try to develop our Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and perform our *sādhana* to develop *bhāva*.

The *Vedas* and *Śruti mantras* became *gopīs*. The Daṇḍakarāṇya ṛṣis became *gopīs* because they were praying for this at the time of death. From the very beginning they were meditating in this way. In their last moments they thought like this and thus received birth as *gopīs*.

There are so many *lākhas* and *lākhas* of examples of this. So if you are always thinking of and remembering the *gopīs*, or thinking of Śrīdāmā and Subala, you will take birth as *gopas*. Don't think of Kṛṣṇa alone. Then you will be annihilated in *brahma*, and it will go against you. So we should remember Kṛṣṇa with His associates, with special emphasis on Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This is *bhakti*. Try to realize this fact. We should chant and remember whom? We should remember those who are serving Kṛṣṇa. If you want to love Kṛṣṇa like His mother and father, you will have to follow Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā and treat Kṛṣṇa like your son. If you are doing so at the time of death, then you will be the servant of Nanda and Yaśodā, and you will serve Kṛṣṇa like a mother and father.

If you want to serve like the *gopīs*, then you will have to think in that way. You will have to follow their example and learn how to serve them. You will have to be expert in all these things in this life and gradually develop your thinking of how the *gopīs* are serving Kṛṣṇa. At the time of death, if you are remembering these things, then you will become a servant of the *gopīs*. This is the hidden secret.

Swāmijī has not told all these things explicitly, but he has given it in code form. This is like a *sūtra*.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

This process of transmigration is very subtle; therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advises devotees to train their minds in order that they will be unable to remember anything other than Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: You should note all these things in your heart if you want to advance. If you are advancing only in worldly desires and meditating on those things, then you cannot progress in *bhakti*. You are not following Swāmījī. You will have to develop according to the prescribed process, gradually adopting all these teachings and coming in line. “This process of transmigration is very subtle.” Here subtle means *sūkṣma*. You will have to take to this process. Don’t always focus on externals, adopting all these things only artificially, outwardly. Instead you should go in deeply. Otherwise you cannot understand the teachings of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

This process of transmigration is very subtle; therefore Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advises devotees to train their minds in order that they will be unable to remember anything other than Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: Is he saying that half of your thoughts should be on Kṛṣṇa and the other half can be in *māyā*? What is he saying? If anyone, even a *sannyāsī*, is not fully devoting his mind to Kṛṣṇa, and is meditating more on worldly affairs, he can fall down—he is bound to fall down. But if someone is a *grhastha* yet is gradually developing his mind towards Kṛṣṇa, he will go up to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Devotee reads:

Similarly, the tongue should be trained to speak only of Kṛṣṇa and to taste only *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*.

BVNM: Is he telling that even in the upper stages you should still be doing all these external activities, *aropa-siddha-bhakti*, like making a garden or a restaurant or an incense factory? These instructions were given for the initial stages, only so that the very neophyte devotees could build up some *sukṛti*, some impressions, but for the advanced stage what is he instructing? Swāmiji is saying what I am saying, and I am saying what he is saying—we are saying the same thing! There is no difference at all. How some of his disciples are seeing differences I don't know! We are both giving the same thing, in the same bottle, not even in another new bottle. I have not brought any new bottle. What I am telling is the same bottle, same wine, the same thing as our whole disciplic line of *ācāryas* has given.

Devotee reads:

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī further advises, *tiṣṭhan vraje*: one should live in Vṛndāvana or any part of Vraja-bhūmi.

BVNM: Why is he saying this and for whom? For devotees or non-devotees?

Devotees: Devotees.

BVNM: So why are they saying that Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is stating something different? I am saying the same thing, but this instruction is not for everyone. Those who are qualified should be in Vraja. Those who are giving up all their worldly attachments will gradually come to be in Vṛndāvana, forever in Vṛndāvana. Is Swāmiji not declaring this same thing?

Devotee reads:

Vrajabhūmi, or the land of Vṛndāvana, is supposed to be eighty-four *krośas* in area. One *krośa* equals two square miles. When one makes Vṛndāvana his residence, he should take shelter of an advanced devotee there.

BVNM: Who will be there? Is any advanced devotee there? Always it was Swāmiji's desire that his disciples should hear from the

advanced Vaiṣṇavas. It was not his intention that his disciples should set themselves up like kings in a very beautiful *rāja* palace with all facilities. They should not move in that direction. No, they should give up all desires and develop the mentality only to serve, not to be served. Only to serve! To serve whom? The pure devotees there. They should not seek worldly things in Vṛndāvana and should not quarrel. We are only to follow these instructions. It is very harmful to live in Vṛndāvana and maintain attachments. If you are doing some sinful activity, it is like a thunderbolt. So don't do all these things. You should practice all these things here, and then reside in Vṛndāvana.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

In this way one should always think of Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes.

BVNM: If a man has so many problems, he will wonder, “Oh, what to do? My wife has left me for someone else. What will happen to my children? How will I earn my living? What to do?” Living in Vṛndāvana but always worrying about these things, quarreling with others and being involved in so much diplomacy and politics, then how is he in Vṛndāvana? He is not in Vṛndāvana, but rather he is simply engaged in sinful activities.

“This is....”

Devotee reads:

This is further elucidated by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

BVNM: I will explain it tomorrow. It is a very, very good thing. I wanted to finish this *śloka*. I will try to finish it tomorrow.

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 8

New Braja, 25 May 1997



I want to be the footdust of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī forever, *janmani janmani* means birth after birth. If I have to take birth, no harm, but I want only to be the footdust of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. This is the highest object, the highest object. And we can attain that highest object. What is that object?

*tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jivāmi tvayā vinā
iti vijñāya rādhe tvaṁ naya mām caraṇāntike
(Śrī Vilāpa Kusumāñjali 96, Raghunātha dāsa)*

[I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O Rādhe, please understand this and bring me to the service of Your lotus feet.]

This is the highest, to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā. It can be attained only by being the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

*ādadānas tṛṇam dantair
idam yāce punaḥ punaḥ
śrīmad-rūpa-padāmbhoja-
dhūliḥ syām janma-janmani
(Śrī Dāna-Keli-Cintāmaṇi 175, Raghunātha dāsa)*

Taking a dry grass between my teeth, I am folding my hands and deeply praying from the core of my heart. Unconditionally, thoroughly, completely, I am offering myself and devoting myself fully at the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. In all future births I want to serve Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda, so I want to be the dust of his lotus feet.

We will explain his eighth *śloka* in *The Nectar of Instruction*. What has Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī said in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.294)?

*kṛṣṇam smaran janañ cāsyā
preṣṭham nija-samihitam
tat-tat-kathā-rataś cāsau
kuryād vāsam vraje sadā*

He has said in the main *śloka*, ‘*tiṣṭhan vraje*,’ to always be in Vṛndāvana. But that is not enough. You must also be under the guidance of Vaiṣṇavas. This means that you will always be hearing their *hari-kathā*, obeying their instructions, and staying in Vṛndāvana. But then something more is needed. What is that? *Tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi*—always chanting His name, and doing what else? Hearing about and meditating on all the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa related to that name. What name? Like Dāmodara. When you are calling Dāmodara’s name, then you should remember the pastimes of Dāmodara. There are two Dāmodaras—Yaśodā-Dāmodara and Rādhā-Dāmodara. They are not the same. You should remember how Śrīmatī Yaśodā was binding unlimited Kṛṣṇa, how He was

weeping, and also how the *gopīs* tied Kṛṣṇa with Śrīmatī Rādhikā's veil so that He could not go here and there and leave the *rāsa*. That is why He became Rādhā-Dāmodara.

When you are chanting Kṛṣṇa's name, what should you remember? You should always remember the pastimes related to Kṛṣṇa—how He attracted peacocks, *kokilas* (cuckoo birds), deer, all the creepers, trees, rivers, mountains, *gopas*, *gopīs*, cows, and charmed them with His sweet voice and flute. So when chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa*, we should remember all these things. But instead, what is in our minds? We are thinking, “Where am I going in this world? How can I control this situation?” No, no, we should never chant with this mentality. Always remember the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa when you are chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa*, and follow this process. Gradually we must train the mind to always remember Kṛṣṇa. The high-class devotees can do this.

Remember and chant Kṛṣṇa's name in the right process. *Hare Kṛṣṇa*, *Hare Kṛṣṇa*. The eyes are closed, and the mind is concentrated. Automatically a pastime comes. Kṛṣṇa is in Keśi-ghāṭa in Vṛndāvana with *lākhas* and *lākhas* of cows and cowherd boys, playing on His flute and doing *śṛṅgāra* with His *sakhās* (decorating each other), and playing so many different games. Sometimes the *sakhās* play like monkeys, putting on tails like Hanumān. When they catch hold of the tail of one big Hanumān, he jumps from this tree to the next one. Holding onto that tail very tightly, they also go jumping from one tree to the next, here to there. All are clapping and laughing. In so many ways they are joking and playing and passing the time. Sometimes they are making jokes and imitating frogs. They squat down and jump, and again jump, and all are jumping like this and sounding like frogs. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa suddenly goes far away and all run after Him. Who will catch Kṛṣṇa first? So they are doing all these pastimes.

One time Madhumaṅgala came to Kṛṣṇa and said, “You are very *svārthī*, selfish, very selfish You are. All the *gopīs* come with so

many preparations. They give all these things and so much honor to You, and give nothing to us. Everything is always only for You. I know why. Because You have a *pītāmbara*, You have a sweet *vaṁśī*, and a peacock feather on Your head. But anyone can take these things and appear more beautiful and more honorable to all others. It is only because of these three things that You look so beautiful and attract everyone. You can take my cloth and give me Yours. Give me Your *vaṁśī* and You take my *śṛṅgāra*. You should also give me Your peacock feather. Then we will see that all *gopīs* will love me more, and give me *rasagula*, *pera*, *burfi* and everything. They will give me so many things, *makkhana* and *mīśrī* also. No one will ask for You and everyone will come to me.” Kṛṣṇa began to smile and said, “We should test this. Let us change our clothes!”

A devotee is chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*, and all these moods are coming in his mind. He sees them exchanging their clothes. Kṛṣṇa gave His flute and peacock feather to Madhumaṅgala, and He Himself took Madhumaṅgala’s clothes. At that time a very big horse, the Keśī demon, came. He was whinnying so loudly that the whole of Vraja was upset. Everyone was afraid and wondering whether a storm had come or what? All the dust of Vraja went up in the sky. Everything was covered by deep darkness, like *andhakāra*, and everyone was so afraid. They could not imagine what was happening. And Kṛṣṇa was now nowhere to be found. Only Madhumaṅgala was there. Keśī was searching for Kṛṣṇa, who had gone some distance away. Kaiṁsa had told him, “You should go and at once kill Kṛṣṇa.”

Keśī said, “I don’t know what Kṛṣṇa looks like. How can I recognize Him?”

“Oh, very easily you will know Him. If someone is wearing a *pītāmbara-vastra* around His neck and a *pītāmbara-dhoti* below, a flute on His lips, a peacock feather on His head, and having a somewhat blackish complexion, you should know that He is Kṛṣṇa.”

Madhumaṅgala was also somewhat blackish. He had exchanged his dress with Kṛṣṇa and was looking just like Him, with the flute, peacock feather and *pītāmbara*. From very far off Keśī spotted him and thought, “Oh, there is Kṛṣṇa.” But Madhumaṅgala was not that Kṛṣṇa. Keśī saw him and began to whinny and jump very high. He jumped from far away and reached that *brāhmaṇa* boy, wanting to kill him. Just the air moving from Keśī’s tail caused Madhumaṅgala to fall flat on the earth! He was rolling down on the ground and calling out, “*Are bābā!*” Do you know the expression ‘*are bābā!*’? It means, “O father, father, father.” Like this. “O mother, save me! O God, save me!” Madhumaṅgala threw his *vamśī* far away, he dropped the peacock feather here and the *pītāmbara* there, and he fell down and was rolling about. It was Madhumaṅgala’s greatest fortune that Keśī’s legs could not reach him. Otherwise what would be his destination? He started to fly away from there, but luckily Kṛṣṇa was very nearby. He caught hold of that *brāhmaṇa* boy and said, “You should keep My clothes for one or two days more.”

“No, no, I don’t want. Take all Your things.” He gave everything back to Kṛṣṇa. “And give me my belongings.”

Kṛṣṇa said, “No, no. I will not give them to you.”

“Oh, you must give them to me. Otherwise I will be killed. I was practically finished, but luckily just in the nick of time I was saved. God has saved me. So I will take my things. I don’t want any *lāḍḍus* or anything else!”

He is remembering and smiling. Who? That devotee chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*. Why is he laughing? No one knows why he is laughing, but he had gotten some taste in seeing these pastimes.

I have told only one pastime but Kṛṣṇa has performed *lākhas* and *lākhas* of various kinds of pastimes. I am giving another very little sample.

Once Kṛṣṇa was in Govardhana. He had gone there with His cowherd friends for cow grazing. *Lākhas* and *lākhas* of friends

were there with Him. The cows were peacefully taking grass, and Kṛṣṇa was playing with His friends. He was at Dāna Ghātī. Do you know Dāna Ghātī in Govardhana? It is a narrow passage between two mountains. So He was playing there, and suddenly He heard a very sweet voice. He asked, “Who is coming? Oh, the *gopīs* are coming. They are going somewhere.” Kṛṣṇa told His friends, “Today, we will have to collect a tax from them. Otherwise, we will not let them pass.”

The devotee is chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*, and this whole pastime is coming automatically like a chain of pictures on the cinema reel. He sees that Śrīmatī Rādhikā was with Her *gopī* friends, and She was coming very close to Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa asked, “Who are You?”

She would not answer.

Again He asked, “Who are You?”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā spoke very gently, but Kṛṣṇa harshly repeated, “Who are you?” like some men have a habit of speaking harshly. She said very gently, “You don’t know who I am?”

“No, I don’t know who You are.”

“You don’t know?”

“Why are you not answering My question? Instead You are asking Me a question. You don’t know who I am?”

She was silent.

Again Kṛṣṇa spoke, “Daily I am seeing that My Vṛndāvana garden is being ruined. You are crushing so many plants. I didn’t know where all the flowers were going or who was stealing them, but now I have caught You red-handed, and I will punish You for trespassing. I am a very *dharmika-puruṣa*.” Do you know *dharmika-puruṣa*? “I am a religious person. Do You know that I am the owner of this garden?”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā very sweetly and gently answered, “Have You planted any of the plants here, ever? And You have become the master?”

The *sādhaka* is hearing this exchange. The taste is very sweet and he becomes very absorbed in chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*. And in a chain all these images are coming.

Then Śrīmatī Rādhikā asked, “Have You planted any plant? Any very little plant?”

Kṛṣṇa was silent.

“Have You given water to any of these plants?”

“No,” Kṛṣṇa answered in a low voice.

“But with *lākhas* and *lākhas* of cows You come and destroy all the plants Yourself. We provide the plants and water. My *sakhī* Vṛndā-devī is always planting and planting and serving Vṛndāvana. So it is named Vṛndāvana, not Kṛṣṇavana. How can You be the master of this Vṛndāvana? Your forefathers, Your father, Your father’s father, grand-father—were they the masters of this Vṛndāvana? How can You claim this? So You are ruining Vṛndāvana, not protecting and nursing it or doing anything productive.”

“Oh, don’t tell Me this,” Kṛṣṇa answered. “I am the owner of this place. I am a very *sādhu-puruṣa*, religious person.”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā said, “What is Your name, please?”

Kṛṣṇa told, “My name is Kṛṣṇa.”

“Oh, Kṛṣṇa is always a very irreligious person. I have heard that there was a boy named Kṛṣṇa. He killed a lady when He was only six days old, still an infant. Oh, is this the sign of being a religious person—to kill someone’s wife, a lady? I also know of a boy named Kṛṣṇa, who from His boyhood used to enter others’ houses and steal curd, milk and butter. Are You that very same Kṛṣṇa? Oh, He was so religious! He always spoke the truth! I’ve heard that He had eaten some earth, and Yaśodā Maiyā asked Him, ‘Have You taken earth?’ ‘No, mother, I have not taken.’ ‘Then, why are Baladeva and all others complaining to me?’ Are You that same liar Kṛṣṇa?”

“I once heard of one boy who was not satisfied with his lies. He was such a religious person that when the girls of Vṛndāvana were taking bath and had put their clothes on the bank nearby, that boy

Kṛṣṇa took all their cloth and climbed up on the branches of a high tree. Then He told the girls, ‘You should come naked and offer *praṇāma* to Me.’ Oh, are You this religious person, Kṛṣṇa? Very religious, very religious! But still that religious person was not satisfied. Next He played on His flute and called all the *gopīs* and told them, ‘You should dance with Me and join My *rāsa*.’ Oh, are You that religious person? And after that He left all the *gopīs*, His mother and father also, Nanda-Yaśodā, and went to search for another father, mother, and 16,000 wives, and even then He was not satisfied. He wanted more and more new ladies. Are you that very Kṛṣṇa, so religious?” All the *gopīs* were clapping and Kṛṣṇa became embarrassed.

The *sādhaka* is still chanting and smiling a little, “*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*.” This *sādhaka* was Rūpa Gosvāmī. A lame devotee came by and saw that he was smiling. He thought, “Oh, perhaps he has seen that I am lame, and that is why he is laughing.” But actually, why was he laughing? Because he had witnessed this *lilā*. He had been chanting for about three, four hours, *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*, and was quite absorbed.

Anyone can see these pastimes. Those who are in a higher stage of devotion will automatically witness these *lilās*. When chanting they will never think, “I should go to the shoe shop because my shoes have become dirty. I need a new pair.” Or, “I will have to purchase a very beautiful golden chain for my wife and my elder daughter.” And then while chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa*, the neophyte devotee goes marketing and enters a very opulent gold shop. No, we should not do *harināma* like this. Instead we should be absorbed in chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*. All our senses and especially the mind must be absorbed in chanting. That is what Rūpa Gosvāmī is telling, and Swāmījī is repeating the same thing.

Go on, “A devotee should....”

Devotee reads:

A devotee should always reside in the transcendental realm of Vraja.

BVNM: Yes. This is being in Vraja. How can a devotee always be in Vraja? How? Anyone can be in Vraja by body, pulling rickshaws, cheating people, especially cheating devotees and making money. If someone is not giving any money to the *brāhmaṇas* of Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, they will tell you, “You will go to hell if you do not give us money. Your father also will go to hell, so you should pay us some *dakṣiṇā*. First give us our *dakṣiṇā*, then you can receive blessings.” But this is not living in Vṛndāvana. A devotee may come from very far away to be in Vṛndāvana and set up a shop, doing business, buying and selling shares and all other things, being so active in the market. And sometimes he also chants *Hare Kṛṣṇa*, but his mind is always in the shop. This is not Vrajavāsa.

If you want to be in Vrajavāsa, be like Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, always chanting and remembering all these things.

*saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ kālāvasānī-kṛtau
nidrāhāra-vihāarakādi-vijitau cātyanta-dīnau ca yau
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa-smṛter madhurimānandena sammohitau
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī-jīva-gopālakau*

[I offer my prayers to the Six Gosvāmīs, who passed all their time in chanting the holy names, singing songs and offering *daṇḍavat-praṇāmas*, thereby humbly fulfilling their vow to complete a fixed number daily. In this way, they utilized their valuable lives and conquered over eating, sleeping and other such pleasures. Always seeing themselves as completely worthless, they became enchanted in divine rapture by remembering Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s sweet qualities.]

Don't take a large sum of money to deposit in the bank and from that money plan on maintaining yourself very easily for the rest of your life. Don't come to Vṛndāvana and arrange to have so many luxurious facilities, attached bathrooms, fan, heater, so many costly things, table, watch, so many sitting arrangements, and on and on. Don't take pride in accumulating luxurious goods from abroad, from Chicago, New York, from America, England, London. This is not the way to do *bhajana* in Vṛndāvana. Only take *ḍora-kaupīna* and, being *niṣkiñcana*, do *bhajana*. Otherwise, you cannot follow these instructions and advance. So this is the symptom and this is the process for being in Vṛndāvana. Swāmījī is saying, "He should reside in the transcendental realm of Vṛndāvana," and then?

Devotee reads:

...and always engage in *kṛṣṇaṁ smaran janāṁ cāsyā
preṣṭham...*

BVNM: *Smaraṇam*. What is *smaraṇam*? If you are chanting *nāma* but not remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in your heart, then how are you in Vṛndāvana, Vraja? You should have the mood of Vṛndāvana, actually feeling that, "I am in Vṛndāvana." So engage in *smaraṇam*—it is so important. Why? Of all the senses, who is the king? The mind. For example, we walk. From what sense do we walk? By the feet. No, not the feet. If your mind is not giving consent, you cannot walk. Rather, you will fall down. If you are taking something, it seems that you are taking with your hand. But actually it is not by the hand. It is by the mind. If the mind is not in accord, then you will not be able to take anything. If you are going anywhere, the mind must agree. There was one incident with our assistant headmaster. He was our history teacher and a very good philosopher. Once he was on his way to school, but he went about two miles past the school, thinking about something else. The boys saw him and caught up with him, asking, "O master, where you are going?"

“I am going to school.”

“But you have gone two miles past the school.”

“Oh, I have gone past the school? How is that possible?”

So, we are walking and all the senses are following the mind. If the mind is not there, then we will miss everything. If we are doing anything with the mouth, the hands, or any of the other senses, it is actually the action of the mind, that *bhāva*, that is dominant. You may be chanting, but if your mind is not there, then that chanting goes almost in vain. And if the mind is there, then automatically the mood is there. If someone is chanting but he is not having the mood of a Vrajavāsī, then there is no relation with Kṛṣṇa, because this relation comes from the proper mood. In what mood are you chanting this name? And what are you thinking? *Gopī-jana-vallabha*. In this way, Kṛṣṇa is my beloved, Kṛṣṇa is my child, son, or Kṛṣṇa is my friend. There should be some relationship that your Guru has given you. And if you are not realizing that, you have not really been initiated by your Gurudeva. He has cheated you because you were not qualified. Or else the guru is also not qualified, he does not know anything himself, so how can he help his *śiṣya*? But to any qualified person the guru must give this relation; this is the meaning of *dikṣā*. And the guru will help you give up all bodily desires. This is initiation. So the activities of the mind are more powerful and more significant than the activities of our senses. Do you follow this?

Take the example of a man who sees a naked girl. He does not directly approach her, but he becomes so much attracted. His mind will become absorbed in thoughts of her and he will see her everywhere. But in reality he is not actually connected with her. That girl will be gone, but still he will think of her. This happened in the case of Ajāmila. He saw a low-class prostitute drinking wine and embracing a man, and he could not control his mind. And after that you know what happened? He became involved with a prostitute. He gave up his father, mother, children, chaste wife, everything.

And he became that rascal Ajāmīla. But due to his previous *samskara* he named his son Nārāyaṇa, and that name saved him. So you should understand how powerful the mind is and train it, as Swāmījī has recommended. We will have to train our mind because it is the root of all evils and all good activities as well. An uncontrolled mind is our enemy, but when it is controlled it is our friend. So we should try to discipline it, to influence it.

Devotee: I have a question. What if you are chanting and the mind is thinking of service to *gurudeva* on the bodily platform? For example, “I have to cook for Gurudeva. I have to go to the store for Gurudeva.”

BVNM: This is the service of Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee: While you are chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa*?

BVNM: Yes, no harm. In the beginning when chanting, you may think of your service, no harm. But when you advance, you will be seeing a chain of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes automatically coming. You may not want them to come, but you cannot stop them. For instance the *gopīs* are thinking, “I should forget Kṛṣṇa. We want to forget Kṛṣṇa, this black person, but we cannot.” In a chain of images Kṛṣṇa is always coming, always coming. “We don’t want to go to Yamunā, but our feet are not obeying us. What to do? They are automatically going there. Our ears are always in curiosity to hear the very sweet sound of His *vanśī*. Then I want to give a slap to these ears, they are not obeying. ‘Don’t hear, don’t go to Kṛṣṇa.’ But why are they not obeying us? We want to forget Kṛṣṇa because He has forgotten us. Why is He not thinking of us? But we cannot forget Him.”

This is the condition of high devotees. Sometimes they want to forget Kṛṣṇa, but they cannot. A chain of pastimes, of beauty and all sweet things of Kṛṣṇa, are automatically coming. Gradually this will happen. So we will have to train our mind.

Here Swāmījī is saying that *smaraṇa* is better. But how it will come? Only by *kīrtana-prabhāve smaraṇa haibe*—if your chanting

is very good, automatically all these *smaraṇa*, remembrances, will come without interruption. *Smaraṇa* will come like the current of a river, always flowing. Then all the senses will be controlled automatically, very easily. I am telling that it is easy, but actually it is not so easy. You will have to give up all worldly desires. First do it, whether you are in family or in renounced order. No harm in being in family life. The *gopīs* are all in family life, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and all the prominent associates of Mahāprabhu, Mādhavī devī, Sikhī Mahitī, all were like this. No harm. So don't be worried or hopeless for this.

Then. "And always engage in *kṛṣṇa-smaraṇa*." What?

Devotee reads:

...*kṛṣṇaṁ smaran janāṁ cāsyā preṣṭham*, the remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved associates.

BVNM: Which associates? Like friends, like father, mother, Nanda Yaśodā, like the *gopīs*, like Lalitā, Viśākhā, like Rūpa Mañjarī and all others. We should remember those personalities for whom we have a little greed. Don't only remember Kṛṣṇa, otherwise you will be an impersonalistic *jñānī*. So always see Kṛṣṇa with His associates. We will have to take the moods of His associates, not of Kṛṣṇa. We cannot be like Kṛṣṇa. Who is Kṛṣṇa's dearest associate? Who? The *gopīs*. So if anyone is so fortunate to have greed to serve Kṛṣṇa like the *gopīs*, he should meditate on them always, remembering their activities and how they serve Kṛṣṇa. "The remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved associates. By following...."

Devotee reads:

By following in the footsteps of such associates....

BVNM: You will have to follow the steps of whom? Not of Kṛṣṇa, because he is *kartā*, taster. What are the *gopīs*, friends, and servants?

Devotee: They are tasted by Kṛṣṇa, enjoyed by Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: Yes. They are serving Kṛṣṇa, so you will have to serve like them. Only "by following...."

Devotee reads:

By following in the footsteps of such associates and by entering under their eternal guidance, one can acquire an intense desire to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

BVNM: How can we get their guidance? “O Rūpa Gosvāmī, O Sanātana Gosvāmī, be kind to me. I am not qualified to have a particle of your lotus foot dust. I know that you are causelessly merciful. I have not done anything to deserve it, but I am always awaiting your mercy and nothing else.” Kṛṣṇa will say, “You should do something. Otherwise, how I can give you My mercy?” We will reply, “O Kṛṣṇa, don’t cheat me. What has Kāliya done, what has Aghāsura done, what have Jagāi and Mādhāi done for You? But yet You have given mercy to them. I am more wretched than them, so I am qualified for Your mercy. You cannot find another person more wicked than me. I am the most wretched in the whole world. I am very fallen, so I am most qualified to have Your mercy. You are causelessly merciful. Where will You use this? Where? You will not find another like me, so I am very qualified for Your mercy. Besides, I know some tricks. If You are not merciful to me, then I will defame You. I will broadcast everywhere that Kṛṣṇa is not merciful. He has forgotten to bestow His mercy. And then all will know that You are so *niṣṭhura*, cruel-hearted, merciless. Then what will You do? So You must give mercy to me. You are causelessly merciful.” We must pray like this, weeping for the mercy. “O Kṛṣṇa, O devotees, I am waiting only for your mercy.”

This is their guidance. If you are offering yourself and fully surrendering, Kṛṣṇa is bound to give mercy, and if you are not praying like this, then there is no hope. You will have to do something. If you take a step toward Him, He will come *lākhas* of steps to you, and if you are going back one step, He will go *lākhas* of miles far away from you. So we must pray very deeply. Then?

Devotee reads:

“...under their eternal guidance, one can acquire an intense desire to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented as follows upon this verse:

BVNM: This point is very essential and important. You should try to underline Swāmījī’s explanation in your hearts. I am not telling anything new. I know nothing. I am simply trying to follow what Swāmījī has written here, and I am telling you my understanding of his words. No new thing, only I am repeating the words that Swāmījī has written here. Some say that Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is giving lectures very far away from Swāmījī’s meanings and instructions. But I assert very strongly that I have no separate interest. I am only following Swāmījī’s words. Here also you will hear that I am preaching the same thing. What is Swāmījī saying? “In the transcendental realm of....”

Devotee reads:

In the transcendental realm of Vraja (Vraja-dhāma) one should serve the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with a feeling similar to that of His associates....

BVNM: Which associates? Four kinds of associates, and of all the associates, the *gopīs* are the best, having the top mood. “And one should....”

Devotee reads:

...and one should place himself under the direct guidance of a particular associate of Kṛṣṇa and should follow in his footsteps. This method is applicable both in the stage of *sādhana* (spiritual practices executed while in the stage of bondage) and in the stage of *sādhyā* (God realization), when one is a *siddha-puruṣa*, or a spiritually perfect soul.

BVNM: This instruction is given for those in the stage of *sādhana*, bondage, when one is full of *anarthas*—no harm. What is the meaning of bondage, when one is full of *anarthas*? It may be that even if one has so many worldly desires, no harm if there is *śraddhā* in the words of *guru*, Vaiṣṇava and Kṛṣṇa. He can follow this instruction. At the time of death Bharata Mahārāja was remembering a deer, and he became a deer. If anyone is thinking of Rūpa Gosvāmī and following his instructions at the time of death, what will he become? He will become the servant of Rūpa Gosvāmī. If he is thinking of Rūpa Mañjarī’s service, then surely he will get a body like Rūpa Mañjarī. Why not? Surely he will. If it does not happen like that, then *Gītā* is false, *Bhāgavatam* is false, all our literatures are false!

So if we are going to do something with our lives, why not follow this? It’s easy. Swāmījī is saying that this instruction applies for the conditioned soul in the stage of bondage as well as for the *siddha-mahā-puruṣa*—it is meant for both the *sādhaka* and *siddha*. So we should try to follow it. Swāmījī has never said, “When we are liberated, we will think of Kṛṣṇa and His associates.” He has never said this anywhere! Now, so many devotees are sounding an alarm, “Don’t hear the pastimes of the Tenth Canto, otherwise you will be ruined. Swāmījī has told us not to hear these things.” Where has he warned like this? I want to see the places. He may have said this only for bogus persons who do not want to serve Kṛṣṇa. But he will not tell this to any person who has even a little honor for Kṛṣṇa. He cannot go against any *śāstra*, and all *śāstras* declare this.

satatam kīrtayanto mām yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ

(BG 9.14)

[Constantly chanting My glories, endeavoring with determined vows, and offering *praṇāmas* to Me, these great souls engage in My worship and remain eternally united with Me.]

He has written like this.

So, it is not the true fact that we cannot hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in this world. It is not true that we must first be liberated from all worldly desires and then we will go to Goloka Vṛndāvana, and only there we will hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. This is quite false, quite false, quite false!

I think that we will finish this *śloka* tomorrow. It is very important and we will have to finish it. I wanted to tell the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, but I have been engaged only up to the Ninth Canto. Only yesterday I touched some boyhood pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, but I could not continue. I wanted to tell at least Kṛṣṇa's very sweet boyhood pastimes, Dāmodara-līlā, Govardhana-dhara and all His other important pastimes, but I can touch only Dāmodara-līlā here, today or tomorrow.

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 8

New Braja, 26 May 1997



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

Once there were two Vaiṣṇavas who went to a town. One of them made his living arrangements under a banyan tree. Near that tree lived a prostitute in the second story of a very beautiful building. And the other Vaiṣṇava was hosted at a temple in the middle of town. The Vaiṣṇava who was living near the prostitute was thinking in one mood, and the Vaiṣṇava who was staying in the temple was thinking in another mood. The Vaiṣṇava in the temple was thinking, “That Vaiṣṇava is staying with a prostitute.” And he was observing that so many persons were coming and going from there. And the Vaiṣṇava living near the prostitute was thinking, “I am so foolish, so unfortunate that I cannot live in the temple. My friend is so

fortunate that he is always living with the Deities, doing *kīrtana*, and chanting and remembering.” And the Vaiṣṇava who was living in the temple was always thinking of that prostitute and criticizing the other Vaiṣṇava. “I am so lucky that I am in the temple, and he is such a wretched person that he is there.” In this way his mind was always absorbed in criticizing.

In the meantime, the time of death came. The Vaiṣṇava who was in the temple saw that three very dangerous looking forms were coming towards him. “Who are you?” he asked.

“We are death. We are Yamadūtas and have come to take you.”

“Oh, I am not the person you are looking for. He is there with the prostitute. I am not that person. I am such a holy person living in the temple.”

“No, no. We know all these things. You are the person that we have come for.”

“Then where will you take me? To Svarga?”

“No, no. We will take you to the most wretched place and punish you. You are always criticizing that Vaiṣṇava. But he is like a *sādhū*, always thinking of you being so fortunate, living in the temple and always chanting the holy name.”

So I advise you to follow Rūpa Gosvāmī’s instruction and never criticize anyone. If someone is performing bad activities, he is simply doing harm to himself. If you criticize anyone, looking at the bad side of his character, then all his bad qualities will come to you, and Yama will come to punish you first. So always try to see the good qualities of the Vaiṣṇavas, and always absorb yourself in hearing, chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa. Even if people are out of caste and creed, if they are bad, still you should not criticize them. Try to always remember their good qualities and to glorify devotees. This is the way. Rūpa Gosvāmī and Swāmījī are advising that we should guard against criticizing.

What is the last teaching of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī that Swāmījī explains? *Sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa siddha-rūpeṇa*.

Devotee:

*sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa
siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad-bhāva-līpsunā kāryā
vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.295)

[On the path of *ragānugā-bhakti*, a *sādḥaka*, being enchanted by the intense love of Kṛṣṇa's beloved Vrajavāsīs, should serve Kṛṣṇa both in the *sādḥaka-rūpa* (the present physical body) and the *siddha-rūpa* (the internally conceived spiritual form which is suitable to serve Kṛṣṇa according to one's cherished desire). In the *sādḥaka-rūpa* he should follow the *sādḥana* executed by the *rāgānuga-bhaktas* (our Gosvāmīs and *ācāryas*), and in the *siddha-rūpa* he should emulate the moods of Kṛṣṇa's dearest *rāgātmika* associates, like Lalitā, Viśakhā, Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī and so on.]

A devotee in his *sādḥaka-rūpa*, in his devotee form, should be serving Kṛṣṇa outwardly, but inwardly in his *siddha*....

BVNM: No. Can you explain the meaning of *sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa*?

Devotee: That we serve the *ācāryas* like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī according to how he was doing *sādḥana* in his *sādḥaka-rūpa*, and also how Rati Mañjarī was serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā in her *siddha-rūpa*. So like this, following the Gosvāmīs in our *sādḥaka-rūpa*....

BVNM: Outwardly what?

Devotee: *saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ*.

BVNM: Yes, this is *sādḥaka-rūpeṇa*—how Rūpa Gosvāmī has done *sādḥana*, always remembering and chanting. *Saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥ*. These are the outward activities of

sādhana. So we should try to follow the *sādhana* Rūpa Gosvāmī has performed as a *sādhaka*. And what is the meaning of *siddha-rūpeṇa*?

Devotee: That is like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in *Śrī Vilāpa-Kusumāñjali*, śloka 72—*śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-karārcita-pādapadma*.

BVNM: Very good. Another śloka?

Devotee:

*tambūlārpaṇa-pāda-mardana-ṣayo-dānābhisāradibhir
vṛndāranya-maheśvarīm priyatayā yas toṣayanti priyaḥ
prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhi-kulād api kilāsaṅkocītā bhūmikāḥ
keli-bhūmiṣu rūpa-mañjarī-mukhās tā dāsikāḥ samśraye*

(*Vraja-vilāsa-stava* 38, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī)

[By offering Her betel nuts, massaging Her feet, bringing Her water, arranging for Her secret meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and performing many other services, many *gopī* maidservants constantly please Śrī Rādhā, the queen of Vṛndāvana forest. In their service to the Divine Couple, they are even less shy than the *prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhīs*, for whom Śrī Rādhā is more dear than life. I take shelter of these *gopī* maidservants, who are under the leadership of Śrīmatī Rūpa Mañjarī.]

BVNM: The first śloka describes what Rūpa Gosvāmī was doing in *sādhaka-rūpa*. Now in *siddha-rūpa* he is always serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā. *Tambūlārpaṇa*—giving betel nuts, *pāda-mardana*—massaging, helping Rādhikā to meet Kṛṣṇa. In all activities Rūpa Mañjarī is expert.

*nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai
yā yālibhir yuktir apekṣaṇīyā
tatrāti-dākṣyād ati-vallabhasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

This is *siddha-sevā* of Gurudeva. And what is external *sevā*?
The second *śloka* of *Guruvāṣṭaka*:

*mahāprabhoḥ kīrtana-nṛtya-gīta-
vāditra-mādyan manaso rasena*

This is outer—Gurudeva as *sādhaka-rūpeṇa*. And when thinking of Gurudeva in *siddha-rūpeṇa*—*nikuñja-yūno rati-keli siddhyai*.

Sādhaka-rūpeṇa is what Rūpa Gosvāmī was doing as a *gosvāmī*, living like a *sādhaka*. Gurudeva is like a *sādhaka* when he is doing *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* and all his *bhakti* practices. And internally, Rūpa Gosvāmī is Rūpa Mañjarī. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is Rati Mañjarī. They are *sad-siddha*, and in that form what *sevā* are they doing?

*śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-karārcita-pādapadma
goṣṭhendra-nandana-bhujārpita-mastakāyāḥ
hā modataḥ kanaka-gauri padāravinda-
samvāhanāni śanakais tava kim kariṣye
(Vilāpa-Kusumāñjali 72, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī)*

“When will that day come when Rūpa Mañjarī will call me and order me to do this *sevā*, when Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are both tired from walking here and there in Vṛndāvana?” Rādhikā is more soft, so She is more tired. She has put Her head in Kṛṣṇa’s lap, and Her feet in the lap of Rūpa Mañjarī. Kṛṣṇa is gently massaging Her head. And sometimes with His *pītāmbara* He is wiping Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s face very affectionately. And Rūpa Mañjarī is massaging Her feet very gently, softly and sweetly.

Nearby Rati Mañjarī is standing and fanning with a *cāmara*. Rūpa Mañjarī calls her with her eyes, “Come on, come on. I will give

you a remnant of *mahā-mahā-mahā-prasādam*. You should take these feet and gently massage them. I am going to bring water, very beautiful water because They are thirsty.” Saying this, Rūpa Mañjarī placed those feet in the hands of Rati Mañjarī. “When will I have a chance to serve like this? When will Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī give me this remnant of this *mahā-mahā-mahā-prasādam*?” This is *siddha-rūpeṇa*.

So he is saying:

*siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā
vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

Lipsunā means that those who have some greed to serve, even just a little, should pray like this. What is the meaning of *vraja-lokānusārataḥ*?

Devotee: Following the footsteps.

BVNM: They should follow the Vrajavāsīs. How? Can you explain *vraja-lokānusārataḥ*?

Devotee: How His dear devotees in Vṛndāvana are serving Him.

BVNM: Like who?

Devotee: Like Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs*. Like Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī, Labanga-Mañjarī.

BVNM: No, not them. *Lokānusārataḥ* refers to Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī and others as Vrajavāsīs observing Ekādaśī. There are so many persons who don't follow Ekādaśī. But Rūpa Gosvāmī is following. Those who don't observe Ekādaśī are saying that they are following *gopas* and *gopīs*. But actually, they are not following them because we have heard that Nanda Bābā and all the boys went to Mathurā on *Ambikā-karaṇa* and honored Ekādaśī. But some Nimbarkīs and Rādhā-vallabhīs say that they have no need to follow Ekādaśī. So *vraja-lokānusārataḥ* means to follow the Vrajavāsī, like Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and

all our disciplic *ācāryas*. They never worshiped Rukminī-Ramaṇa. *Vraja-lokānusārataḥ* means worshiping exclusively in Vraja, not Dvārakā, not Purī or any other places. *Vraja-lokānusārataḥ* means we will have to follow what Rūpa Gosvāmī has done in Vṛndāvana. We will not follow Rūpa Mañjarī or Rati Mañjarī outwardly. In *siddha-bhāva* we can follow them by mind. We can cultivate the desire to be like them, but we will have to follow and practice as *sādhakas*.

Did Rūpa Gosvāmī and our other Gosvāmīs follow Rukminī-Ramaṇa or Jagannātha, Balarāma and Subhadra? They prayed only for Their mercy. So we also can pray for Their mercy but we will not worship Them. You cannot be devoted to two, three, four, five *iṣṭadevas*. Only Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā should be in your heart. We want to serve only Them as our *iṣṭadeva*, but we will honor all. We will honor Śrī Gopīśvara Mahādeva, no harm. We can honor Hanumān, no harm. We can honor Balarāma, Jagannātha and Subhadra, because they are the same as Kṛṣṇa in *tattva*. But we can take only Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa into our hearts. Lalitā, Viśākhā, all the associates of Kṛṣṇa, Girirāja Govardhana and Yamunā as well can come in our hearts, no harm. But Yamunā-maiyā cannot come. She cannot go to Vraja, only Yamunā-sakhī can go there. You should think about these matters very deeply. Rādhikā-maiyā will not be in Vraja—she is Satyabhāmā. But who is Śrīmatī Rādhikā? The beloved of Kṛṣṇa. Is She married to Kṛṣṇa? No need of marriage. Their relationship is far beyond all these other relationships.

If there is anything you desire, Girirāja is there to supply it. Don't go to Gaṇeśa or to anyone else. We have no one else, only Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. We should not want anything from Kṛṣṇa, because He is our beloved. And Kṛṣṇa is only Nanda-nandana, Yaśodā-nandana, and Rādhā-kānta. He is not Īśvara, who can fulfill our desires. In Vṛndāvana Vraja, Kṛṣṇa is not their Īśvara. He is not like a god or demigod or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What is He? He is only the son of Yaśodā, Yaśodā-nandana, controlled by

Yaśodā. He is Rādhā-kānta, not Kṛṣṇa. If the *gopīs* have to ask something, they will go to Girirāja Govardhana. Nanda Bābā will worship *śālagrāma* and request, “My boy should always be happy. My son should always be happy.”

So, this mood should come. This is *vraja-lokānusārataḥ*. We should accept only those practices that Vrajavāsīs like Rūpa and Sanātana have done for their *sādhana-bhajana*. Do not think that you can surpass them in any way, thinking that you are more generous than Rūpa and Sanātana. So we will have to know what Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, all Six Gosvāmīs, and our all *ācāryas* have done and how to follow them. And if you think you do not need to hear these things from any good Vaiṣṇava who is superior to you, then you will not get this mood. “My Gurudeva has written everything in his books, so we should not read anything else. He has written everything we need.” Then why did Vyāsa publish so many books? And if Vyāsa has given everything, then why did Rūpa Gosvāmī write so many books? And if Rūpa Gosvāmī has written everything, then why did Jīva Gosvāmī compile so many more books? Why did Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura write so much? Why did Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura write more than one hundred books? Why? If everything has been done before, then why did Swāmījī write so many hundreds of books? And I think that if he were still here with us, he would have written so many more books. Kṛṣṇa’s glories cannot be counted. He is immeasurable, unlimited, transcendental.

So, I think that it is true that Swāmījī has given everything in his books, but to understand his writings and his moods, you need some further explanation. Swāmījī has not written any new books. He has only given explanations of *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Gītā*—nothing new. These books are general. So when any of our *ācāryas* come, being very powerful, they write so many books, because, even though everything has already been

given, sometimes the truth is covered by ignorance, by Kali. They come to clear away all these doubts. What is *vartamāna*, our present day position? So many new, new questions are coming in the minds of Kali-yuga persons, so to explain all these truths, our *ācāryas* have to publish many more books.

Then *vraja-lokānusārataḥ*. We will have to cultivate all our activities in the mood of Vraja. In Vṛndāvana today all are not necessarily Vrajavāsīs. There are some rickshaw pullers who keep a knife. In the night they will take you in their rickshaw, and midway they will attack and loot you. They are not Vrajavāsīs. The *paṇḍas* always wanting money are not Vrajavāsīs. In Vraja, some rare Vrajavāsīs can be found, but not all are like them. Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda are the real Vrajavāsīs. Swāmījī has told, “My home is in Vṛndāvana, my office is in Bombay, and my practice is in Māyāpura.” His home is Vṛndāvana, so he is a Vrajavāsī. No? We should try to follow his internal moods. Oh, some are saying that “Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is undermining him, not glorifying him.” What could be more glorious than what I am saying? I think that no one can glorify Swāmījī like this.

Then “Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura....”

Devotee reads:

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has commented as follows upon this verse: “One who has not yet developed an interest in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should give up all material motives and train his mind by following the progressive regulative principles, namely chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa and His name, form, quality, pastimes and so forth.”

BVNM: He has told us to give up all material motives. Are we doing this? Those who are not doing this are not actually following Swāmījī. But those who are actually following all these instructions are the real members of ISKCON. Otherwise they are not really

ISKCON. I say this with great conviction. We should try to follow and obey Swāmijī not only by words but with our hearts.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

In this way, after developing a taste for such things, one should try to live in Vṛndāvana and pass his time constantly remembering Kṛṣṇa’s name, fame, pastimes and qualities under the direction and protection of an expert devotee.

BVNM: This is a very special point—“under the direction and protection of an expert devotee.” You are living in Vṛndāvana, chanting and remembering. But if you are not taking association of these expert devotees, then what do you have? So many zeros without a one. What does this mean? Zero without one equals nothing. All your practices are like zero, zero, zero—Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not there. Then all your efforts—chanting and remembering—are like zero, yielding no fruit. If you think, “I am expert. I don’t need the protection of an expert devotee,” you are not following Rūpa Gosvāmī. Then?

Devotee reads:

This is the sum and substance of all instruction regarding the cultivation of devotional service.

BVNM: After that he is explaining something else. He has told the sum and substance, but still he wants to explain something more. What is it?

Devotee reads:

In the neophyte stage one should always engage in hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. This is called *śravaṇa-daśā*, the stage of hearing. By constantly hearing the transcendental holy name of Kṛṣṇa and hearing of His transcendental form, qualities and pastimes, one can attain to the stage of acceptance called *varaṇa-daśā*.

BVNM: What are these pastimes? We are not qualified to hear *kṛṣṇa-kathā*? Someone may ask, “What are the pastimes?” Oh, he has written *Kṛṣṇa Book*. All the pastimes are there. For whom has he written *Kṛṣṇa Book*? For whom? For all who are neophyte. Who are neophyte? I am chanting for about fifty years—am I neophyte or advanced?

Devotee: Advanced.

BVNM: No. If you have not advanced your Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the stage of *uttama-adhikārī* or *madhyama-adhikārī*, you are still neophyte. Only talking about something is not enough. A certain level must be reached. So Swāmijī is saying this for neophytes and all others that we should first engage in *śravaṇa-daśā*, hearing. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has explained all these five stages in the last part of *Jaiva Dharma*. These explanations are for advanced devotees as well as for neophytes. Then what is the difference? Any difference? There is no difference; it is the same thing. You will have to reconcile all these things. If you cannot reconcile, then you are bogus. You should try to be in the association of good devotees, hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā* and all the pastimes that Swāmijī has written in his books. You should hear what has been written in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, what has been explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, all these things. What is the qualification? The only qualification is honor for *guru-vākya*, *kṛṣṇa-vākya*, *śāstra-vākya*. If you have honor and greed to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then you are qualified to hear these things.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

Then one can attain to the stage of acceptance called *varaṇa-daśā*. When one attains this stage....

BVNM: What stage? *Varaṇa-daśā*. *Varaṇa* means to decide to practice something properly. After hearing about something, you will have to make a conscious decision to embrace and cultivate

what you have heard. You become quite convinced that “I should do this. I should definitely do this. I should be like this.” To make a decision and dedicate yourself to the prescribed practice is *varaṇa-daśā*. Gurudeva tells that you should chant one *lākha* of *harināma* and always remember Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If you say, “I heard but I could not follow,” then you have not come to *varaṇa-daśā*. But if you are actually doing it, then you are in *varaṇa-daśā*. Now Swāmījī will explain.

Devotee reads:

When one attains this stage, he becomes attached to the hearing of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

BVNM: *Varaṇa-daśā*, now he has some attachment to hearing *hari-kathā*. He will have some taste for that.

Devotee reads:

When one is able to chant in ecstasy, he attains the stage of *smaraṇa-avasthā*, the stage of remembering. Recollection, absorption, meditation, constant remembrance and trance are the five items of progressive *kṛṣṇa-smaraṇa*. At first, remembrance of Kṛṣṇa may be interrupted at intervals, but later remembrance proceeds uninterrupted. When remembrance is uninterrupted, it becomes concentrated and is called meditation. When meditation expands and becomes constant, it is called *anusmṛti*. By uninterrupted and unceasing *anusmṛti* one enters the stage of *samādhi*, or spiritual trance. After *smaraṇa-daśā* or *samādhi* has fully developed, the soul comes to understand his original constitutional position.

BVNM: This is *svarūpa-siddhi*. Then?

Devotee reads:

At that time he can perfectly and clearly understand his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. That is called *sampatti-daśā*, the perfection of life.

BVNM: Has Swāmījī warned that you should not go through these five stages and that you should not hear all these things? He has said that *bhakti* is like the current of a river. We should try to develop *śravaṇa-daśa*, *varaṇa-daśā*, then *smaraṇa-daśā*, *bhāvāpaṇa-daśā* and, finally, *sampatti-daśā*. “Oh, we are not qualified for this.” Certainly you are not qualified. But why are you presenting opposition to those who are qualified? Have you reason or power to do this? You have no right to do this. You simply want to control all others; thus you say, “You are not qualified to hear this. You are not qualified to think of anything about the *gopīs* or about Vraja. Only what we are speaking is appropriate for you.” In this way they try to control others. Swāmījī has not taken this approach. He has given freedom to go through all these stages. In fact, he is ordering us to do this. And if you are not following and obeying him, this is your weakness. So, to truly obey him is to follow all these things. This is the way established by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and certified by all our Gosvāmīs, up to Swāmījī.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

Caitanya-Caritāmṛta advises those who are neophytes to give up all kinds of motivated desires and simply engage in the regulative devotional service of the Lord according to the directions of scripture.

BVNM: In what stage can we give up all our desires? In the beginning there is no *niṣṭhā*. When *niṣṭhā* comes, so many desires go away. When *ruci* comes, some desires still remain but I think that seventy-five percent have gone. In the stage of *āsakti*, almost all kinds of *anarthas* have been removed, but still there are some. In the stage of *bhāva*, all have gone but a slight smell is there. That smell can bring anyone down again. But when Kṛṣṇa gives His *darśana* and *prema* comes, even that slight smell totally goes away. Then one can never fall.

Citraketu Mahārāja, Bharata Mahārāja, Jaya and Vijaya are examples of this. They were not conditioned souls. They have come only as examples to give us instruction. They were in the stage of *bhāva*, still having a scent of *anarthas*. That is why, because of that scent, Bharata Mahārāja treated that deer with so much affection and he became attached. Then for three births he went down. But will we be so fortunate? No! We may get lost forever! They were realized souls and had gone up to *bhāva*. That is why they returned after only three births. But we cannot return so easily. They took the roles of being fallen just to set examples for us. Actually they were not fallen. We should not regard them as fallen, but we should realize that we can easily fall. So we should be very careful.

Even up to the stage of *bhāva* there is some material attraction. But we should endeavor to progress. We should not be discouraged that we are not qualified, thinking, “Oh, we are not even in *niṣṭhā*.” Don’t think like this. Try to develop and follow all the orders of our Rūpa Gosvāmī and all the *ācāryas* in our line.

Devotee reads:

One should give up all kinds of motivated desires and simply engage in the regulative devotional service of the Lord according to the directions of scripture.

BVNM: What is ‘regulative?’ *Vaidhī-bhakti*. Actually we have no natural desire to serve. But we have realized the sufferings and sorrows of this world, and we have the *śraddhā* to know that by serving Kṛṣṇa we can be liberated from these things. So we are doing regulative *bhakti*, following the regulations and rules.

Devotee reads:

In this way a neophyte can gradually develop attachment for Kṛṣṇa’s name, fame, form, qualities and so forth. When one has developed such attachment, he can spontaneously serve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa even without following the regulative

principles. This stage is called *rāga-bhakti*, or devotional service in spontaneous love.

BVNM: What is he saying? “He can spontaneously serve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa even without following the regulative principles.” Can anyone explain this line?

Devotee: He doesn’t have to hear from *śāstra* that he should serve Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: No, no. He knows that he must serve Him.

Devotee: But he doesn’t have to hear. Spontaneously from the heart he wants to serve.

BVNM: There are some rules and regulations he can omit. Only this. He need not follow those regulations that are not helpful for spontaneous service to Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee reads:

This stage is called *rāga-bhatki*, or devotional service in spontaneous love.

BVNM: Here Swāmījī has written about this *rāgānugā-bhakti* for his devotees. Swāmījī explained *rāgānuga-bhakti* before me, and I am only repeating his words. I am following him, so how can I be considered a culprit? Is Swāmījī a culprit for writing about *rāgānugā-bhakti*? No, he is not a culprit—he is *guru-tattva*. He is like Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī. He has done something so marvelous for us, and you should follow all his instructions. We cannot criticize him. He has done nothing for which he can be criticized.

I think that one of the greatest grievances against me is that I am speaking about *rāgānugā-bhakti* sometimes. But I have given classes here two times daily for twelve days. What have I said that they are alleging against me? Nothing, actually nothing. Go on.

Devotee reads:

At that stage the devotee can follow in the footsteps of one of the eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. This is called *rāgānugā-bhakti*.

BVNM: What is *rāgānugā-bhakti*? For whom is he writing? For everyone? Everyone who wants to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. And for those who don't want to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, it is not applicable. So I think it is Swāmījī's desire that all the devotees who have left their homes to enter the *bhakti* way should follow this. But if they are not qualified to follow *rāgānugā*, then they should follow regulative *bhakti*.

Devotee reads:

Rāgānugā-bhakti, or spontaneous devotional service, can be executed in the *śānta-rasa* when one aspires to be like Kṛṣṇa's cows or the stick or flute in the hand of Kṛṣṇa, or the flowers around Kṛṣṇa's neck.

BVNM: This is correct. But we will have to reconcile this. In Vraja, Rūpa Gosvāmī says that there is no *śānta-rasa*. But if there is no *śānta-rasa*, then something is lacking in Vraja. So there is some *śānta-rasa*, but it is mixed. The creepers become so ashamed when Kṛṣṇa picks their flowers—they love Kṛṣṇa like a beloved and blush, “He touched us.” The trees are like the friends of Kṛṣṇa. The cows want to serve Kṛṣṇa like a mother. The calves are like brothers—Kṛṣṇa embraces them around their necks. In Vṛndāvana the flute is not in *śānta-rasa*. The *gopīs* have so much envy for *vamśī*, because *vamśī* and Kṛṣṇa are always kissing each other. If you take *vamśī* out of Vraja, then what happens? It becomes like Dvārakā. There Kṛṣṇa has no flute. He asks, “Why will I take *vamśī* from Vraja to Dvārakā? I have to control the *gopīs*, so I will need it in Vraja. But when I go to Dvārakā, I will tell My queens, ‘Oh! You should go out of My palace.’ And by My saying this, they will be controlled. There is no use for *vamśī* there. There is no reason for Me to fall flat at the feet of the Dvārakārāṇīs, no reason at all. Only My words will be needed. They will see My eyes, My mouth, set sternly like this, and they will become so afraid that they will be controlled at once.”

But in Vraja, Kṛṣṇa is working so hard to please the *gopīs*, and the *gopīs* are saying, “Oh, go away from our *kuñja*. Do not let Kṛṣṇa come to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” This is Vraja. This is *rāgātmikā-bhakti!* Those who are following this are called *rāgānuga-bhaktas*. So here I am saying that no one in Vraja is in *śānta-rasa*—not the calves, cows or Kṛṣṇa’s *vanṣī*, His flute which is just a stick. No one! All are like friends, beloved, mother, father, like this. But Rūpa Gosvāmī has mentioned *śānta-rasa* in Vraja in his book, just as Swāmījī has written here for ordinary persons who have no taste in all these things.

Śānta-rasa is one-sided. The possibility to serve is limited. A tree, which is in *śānta-rasa*, cannot serve Kṛṣṇa if He does not go under that tree and taste its shadow or take some of its fruits. Only then it is serving. Otherwise it cannot serve, so it is one-sided. Just by the sight of Kṛṣṇa he is taking something from Him, although he is actually not qualified to serve Kṛṣṇa. This is called *śānta-rasa*. But in Vraja when any tree sees Kṛṣṇa, oh! his branches become full of flowers, *mañjarīs* and fruits—they appear just upon catching sight of Him! At once they extend their hands up towards Kṛṣṇa. As trees they will treat Him like a friend and as creepers like a beloved. And they will relish so many *bhāvas*. It seems that Girirāja Mountain is in *śānta-rasa*, but we have a different view. So we will have to reconcile all these things.

In this vision, so much love and affection is there. When the creepers see Kṛṣṇa, they become so happy that many new *mañjarīs* and green leaves sprout. They smile by showing their flowers and beckon to Kṛṣṇa like this, as if to say, “Come on. Come on. Come on.” So they are not in *śānta-rasa*. If they are in *śānta-rasa* and feel pleasure in the mood of love, then what to tell of *sakhya-rasa*, *vātsalya-rasa* and *mādhurya-rasa!* So there is a taste. If anyone has a very little, thin greed to taste all these things in the service of Kṛṣṇa, he is qualified to enter into *rāgānugā-bhakti*. And he cannot be controlled by any rules and regulations.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

In the *dāśya-rasa* one follows in the footsteps of servants like Citraka, Patraka or Raktaka.

BVNM: If we hear of anyone who wants to serve Kṛṣṇa as a *dāsa*, he will take the names of Citraka, Patraka and Raktaka. We will ask, “Who are they?” Are they mentioned in any *śāstra*? How did he hear about them? Is this correct or not? If Swāmījī is telling about them, some curiosity will arise to know who they are and what service they do for Kṛṣṇa. If you make no inquiry, then it means that you are not attached to this. If Swāmījī has written the meaning of *rāgānuṅgā-bhakti*, you may inquire, “O Prabhuji, what is *rāgānuṅgā*? I have not heard of it before, but here Swāmījī has mentioned it.” Will you inquire or not? And if you inquire, then some may accuse you of being a *sahajīyā*! Do not think like this. Try to understand the writings of Swāmījī. This is the duty of any good, bona fide disciple. So many questions will arise.

Then?

Devotee reads:

In the friendly *sakhya-rasa* one can become a friend like Baladeva, Śrīdāmā or Sudāmā. In the *vātsalya-rasa*, characterized by parental affection ...

BVNM: Why has he not given the name of only one *sakhā*? He has named three, four, five. Why? Because Baladeva Prabhu’s mood is not like Subala’s, not like Madhumaṅgala’s, not like Ujjvala’s or Śrīdāmā’s. There are five kinds of *sakhās*, all having different moods, so Swāmījī has written many names. Otherwise, he would have mentioned only Baladeva, the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa. Everything is not manifested in Him—Baladeva Prabhu will not joke and laugh with Kṛṣṇa the same way the *sakhās* do, nor will He climb on Kṛṣṇa’s shoulders. And Baladeva has some *vātsalya* mood that the *sakhās* don’t have. If you go deeply, you will be full of love

and affection. If it will touch your hearts, then you will develop some interest in this.

Devotee reads:

In the *vātsalya-rasa*, characterized by parental affection, one can become like Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā.

BVNM: Oh, one thing Swāmījī has perhaps done wrong. Why did he not take the name of Kṛṣṇa’s actual father and mother? Who were they? Devakī and Vasudeva. But he has omitted their names. Oh, I cannot hear this.

I know that Swāmījī Mahārāja has accepted Nanda and Yaśodā as Kṛṣṇa’s real mother and father, so he is giving their names. For those who are in very lower grades he will say, “Oh, actually His father and mother were Vasudeva and Devakī. Kṛṣṇa was only the foster son of Nanda and Yaśodā.” Swāmījī makes this point clearly—he does not admit that Devakī and Vasudeva were Kṛṣṇa’s real parents. So you will have to accept this point.

Devotee: In *mādhurya-rasa*, characterized by conjugal love, one can become like Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī or Her lady friends such as Lalitā and Her serving maids (*mañjarīs*) like Rūpa and Rati.

BVNM: There are three kinds of personalities in *mādhurya-rasa*. There are not just the *gopīs*. And amongst the *gopīs* there are so many kinds of moods. But we cannot have Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s mood. Lalitā’s and Viśākhā’s mood is very rare also. *Jivas* cannot have it—they can come only as Rādhikā’s serving maids, like Rūpa and Rati. Oh, again Swāmījī has written the word *mañjarī*. This is a very bad thing! If I had printed this book, I would have taken this name out; I would have published without the name *mañjarī*! Who published this book? Any outside person? Or Swāmījī has done it? Perhaps nothing is wrong with this name *mañjarī*. No, no, don’t hear this *mañjarī* name, otherwise you will all be *sahajiyā*!

Our object is to become this *mañjarī*. It is the very highest, very highest! Our mood and our goal is that. But do not think prematurely that you are a *mañjarī*, otherwise you will be finished. We can have greed to marry a princess, Elizabeth perhaps, no harm. But do not go to Elizabeth and tell her, “I am going to marry you.” Otherwise they will cut off your head at once! Keep it in your heart only. Do not tell anyone. We should keep our greed for the goal hidden in our hearts like camphor.

Then?

Devotee reads:

This is the essence of all instruction in the matter of devotional service.

BVNM: *Gaura premānande haribol! Rūpa Gosvāmī ki jaya!
Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī ki jaya! All Six Gosvāmīs ki jaya!
Our guru-paramaparā ki jaya! Gaura premānande!*

CHAPTER NINE

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokas 8-9

New Braja, 29 May 1997



Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is saying, “I want to serve the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. I cannot serve Rūpa Gosvāmī personally. I am not so qualified. So I want to serve the lotus foot-dust only—and only one particle—birth after birth, *janmani, janmani*, for so many births. And if I become liberated, then in Vraja also I want to serve the lotus dust of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s lotus feet. Why? These dusts are so loving, so sweet. So, in this world and after liberation, or after going to Vraja, I want to serve his lotus foot-dust.”

We have explained the sum and substance of the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī as presented in *The Nectar of Instruction*. What is the meaning of *sukīrtanānu?* *Sukīrtanānu* means?

Devotee: The *kīrtana* of the holy names that is done especially under the guidance of *rasika-bhakta* Vrajavāsīs, so that that holy name can take proper effect under their appropriate guidance.

BVNM: Here, *anu* comes first. *Anu* means “under the guidance of, hearing from *gurudeva*”—*śikṣā-guru* and *gurudeva*. If one has not heard from his *gurudeva* or *śikṣā-gurudeva*, then he cannot do *sukīrtanānu*. *Anu* implies *nirantara*, always, spontaneously, not breaking, and that person is *uttama-adhikārī*.

So, by first hearing from *gurudeva* or *śikṣā-gurudeva* in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, then it is *sukīrtanānu*. Here, one expression is also used—*tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī*. What does he mean by *tad-anurāgi*?

Devotee: Someone who has *anurāga*, attachment for Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: Can you give any example?

Devotee: Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī.

BVNM: Yes. Is he telling correctly who are *tad-anurāgi*?

Devotee: Basically, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

BVNM: You should ponder what I am asking and then answer. I am asking about *tad-anurāgi*. Those who have natural *rāga*, affection, in their *ātmā*—who are they? Śrīdāmā, Subala, Madhumaṅgala. And more than them? Nanda Bābā. And more than Nanda Bābā? Yaśodā Maiyā. And more than them? Lalitā, Viśākhā and all the *gopīs*. So they are *anurāgi-jana*. We cannot be like this. In this world, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are *tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī*. Who are *anurāgi-jana*? Here it means the *gopīs*. And *janānugāmī*? They are Rūpa, Raghunātha, all our Gosvāmīs and those who are associates of Mahāprabhu. They are playing the role of a *ragānuga-bhakta* here. *Rāgi* are Vrajabāsī *jana*. With their spontaneous love they are always serving Kṛṣṇa, their *prāṇa*. *Prāṇa* means life and soul. We have heard *anurāgi-jana*. And *anugāmī*? We cannot have the association of *tad-anurāgi*. We want to follow them. So we must associate with *tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī*, such as Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, especially Rūpa-Raghunātha:

*śrī-nīpa-raghunātha-ṭade yāra āśa
caitanya-caritāmṛta kahe kṛṣṇadāsa*

*nīpa-raghunātha-ṭade haibe ākūti
kabe hāma bujhaba se yugala-pīriti*

When will I know all these things? When we will have real love and affection for Rūpa and Raghunātha, then we will be able to understand something.

So, devotees should live in Vṛndāvana under the guidance of *tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī jana*, like Rūpa Gosvāmī and others in his line, always chanting and remembering, hearing from their *gurudeva* or *śikṣā-guru*. They should be chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa*, and sometimes:

*śrī kṛṣṇa gopāla hare mukunda,
govinda he nanda kiśora kṛṣṇa
hā śrī yaśodā tanaya prasīda,
śrī ballavī-jīvana rādhikeśa*

(*Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛtam* 2.4)

*rādhā ramaṇa hari govinda jaya jaya
rādhā ramaṇa hari govinda jaya jaya*

*he rādhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-sīno kutah
śrī-govardhana-kalpa-ṭadapa-tale kālindī-vanṇe kutah
ghoṣantāv iti sarvato vraja-ṭpure khedair mahā-vihvalau
vande nīpa-sanātanaṇu raghu-yugau śrī-jīva-gopālakau*

Like this, always doing *kīrtana*, but with minds where? *Manasī nīyojya* (mind always engaged) in Vraja, playing with *tad-anurāgi-jana*. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa is controlled by His mother, sometimes He is joyfully playing with the cowherd boys. Sometimes He is dancing with peacocks very

sweetly, and sometimes playing with the *gopīs*. I have told of some of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Where will the mind go? The mind will also be absorbed in those *līlās*. So practice like this for twenty-four hours daily, quite absorbed, with tears coming. This is the sum and substance of *The Nectar of Instruction* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Next, he is coming to a topic even more important than this. What is the symptom of an intelligent man? Those who have accepted Rādhā-kuṇḍa as non-different from Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself can be considered intelligent. We should understand what is the mood of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja in his explanation of this *śloka*. He wants everyone to advance and know what Rādhā-kuṇḍa is. The symptom of an intelligent devotee is to serve Rādhā-kuṇḍa as if it is Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself. Here he has not given any explanation for Kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍa. Why not? Because he is somewhat inclined towards Śrīmatī Rādhikā. And *kṛṣṇa-prema* and Kṛṣṇa's service are included in Rādhā-kuṇḍa, the embodiment of Rādhā. Everything is in Śrīmatī Rādhikā—Kṛṣṇa as well. There may be some occasion when Kṛṣṇa is not with Rādhikā. In Mathurā, He was not with Rādhikā. In the battle of Kurukṣetra, Rādhā was not with Kṛṣṇa. In Dvārakā, He is Rukmiṇī-Ramaṇa, Satyabhāmā's friend, not Śrīmatī Rādhikā's, for all external appearances. Inwardly it may be that She is there in His heart. But Śrīmatī Rādhikā cannot be alone—She is always with Kṛṣṇa. Even if Kṛṣṇa has gone to Dvārakā or Mathurā, still He remains with Śrīmatī Rādhikā. So Rūpa Gosvāmī is telling who Śrīmatī Rādhikā is, how we should behave with Her, and who is the most intelligent devotee.

*vaikuṅṭhāj janīto varā madhu-purī tatrāpi rāsotsavād
vrndāraṇyam udāra-pāṇi-ramaṇāt tatrāpi govardhanaḥ
rādhā-kuṇḍam ihāpi gokula-pateḥ premāmṛtāplāvanāt
kuryād asya virājato giri-taṭe sevām vivekī na kaḥ*

We should read how Swāmījī is translating this *śloka*. If there is anything you do not understand, you can ask.

Devotee reads:

Nectar of Instruction, Text 9

The holy place known as Mathurā is spiritually superior to Vaikuṅṭha, the transcendental world, because the Lord appeared there. Superior to Mathurā Purī is the transcendental forest of Vṛndāvana because of Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā* pastimes. And superior to the forest of Vṛndāvana is Govardhana Hill, for it was raised by the divine hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and was the site of His various loving pastimes. And, above all, the superexcellent Śrī Rādhā-kuṅḍa stands supreme, for it is overflowed with the ambrosial nectarean *prema* of the Lord of Gokula, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Where, then, is that intelligent person who is unwilling to serve this divine Rādhā-kuṅḍa, which is situated at the foot of Govardhana Hill?

BVNM: Then who are the persons who are not willing to serve this Rādhā-kuṅḍa and how would you describe them? Those who are wishing to serve Rādhā-kuṅḍa are intelligent. And those who don't want to serve Her, what will they be called?

Devotees: Fools.

BVNM: Swāmījī is not saying this word directly, but he is certainly implying that those who are not willing to serve Rādhā-kuṅḍa are . . . Oh, I will not say the word 'fools', but you can say it. But actually this is the point. So those of us who are doing *vaidhī-bhakti*, regulative *bhakti*, are not so wise, not so intelligent. But those who are accepting the process given in the last *śloka* are intelligent. And among them, those who are most intelligent want to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal on the bank of Rādhā-kuṅḍa. They want to be there, and if not by body, at least by mind, by heart. They are most intelligent. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Kṛṣṇadāsa

Kavirāja Gosvāmī are always there. All our Gosvāmīs have permanent seats at Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Have you gone there? If you have gone there with any high-class devotee, you may have seen their places—everything is there. The *Pāñca* (five) Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī are also there, doing *ārādhana* of the *gopīs*. So they are all intelligent. And those who are actually superior, having their transcendental bodies, are always there in the guidance of Rūpa and Rati Mañjarī and all the others, serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā. And sometimes they are serving Yugalā Kīśora. They are most, most intelligent, supremely intelligent. We want to follow them. Rūpa Gosvāmī also wants to follow them, as well as Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, all, and Swāmījī also.

I have heard from so many of Swāmījī’s devotees that in his last days, two or three days before he departed, he requested them, “Take me to Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Just now today, I want to go to Rādhā-kuṇḍa in a bullock cart. I do not want to go by car. Bring a bullock cart, and in that I will go, like Nanda, Yaśodā, like all Vrajavāsī *gopīs*.” This was his desire, and I know this fact. But he was controlled. His disciples would not arrange for him to go. But actually no one can control him, and I know he went with his soul, in his transcendental body. He is always there among Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha, as *tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī*. Like *janānugāmī* (a follower of the residents of Vraja) he is there. So this was his last wish.

This is actually the glory of Swāmījī. If anyone does not understand Swāmījī’s real glory, he is also a fool, because he is not actually touching Swāmījī’s greatness. And they cannot properly glorify him. They do not understand that Swāmījī was endowed with such high-class qualities, especially that he had the highest love and affection for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. But instead they will see an *uttama-bhakta* and say, “Oh, he’s a *sahajiyā*. He’s a nonsense.” They want to bring all high-class devotees, *uttama-bhāgavatas*, down to the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* level, because they have no real idea.

I know that Swāmījī wanted to serve there forever, because he had realized this poem of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Now he is giving his mood in the purport. We can hear.

Devotee reads:

The spiritual world is three-fourths of the total creation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

BVNM: In *Gītā* it has been told. What has been told? Do you remember this *śloka*? That this world is only one-fourth of the spiritual world. Where is the *śloka* in *Gītā*? *Ekāṁśena sthito jagat* (*Gītā* 10.42).

This world is not so big. This is only one world. There are *lākhas* and *lākhas* of worlds coming from the Karaṇa-vāri of Mahā-Viṣṇu, Karaṇodakśāyī Viṣṇu. *Lākhas* and *lākhas* of universes are floating on the Karaṇa-vāri. All the universes taken as a whole are only one-fourth. It has been told one-fourth, but I think that *lākhas* and *lākhas* are a little reflection of the whole creation. So, “it is the most....”

Devotee reads:

And it is the most exalted region. The spiritual world is naturally superior to the material world; however, Mathurā....

BVNM: We fear that if we are liberated, doing *bhajana*, then we will be lost. Actually, Indra, by thinking like this, once committed some offense at the lotus feet of his Gurudeva, Bṛhaspati. Immediately he was removed to this world as a hog. In this form he was tasting worldly desires and playing with so many she-hog wives. And he had so many children, sons and daughters! Gradually they were growing up, so many, many, many of them, and Indra was quite happy. There was no problem for taking food, or acquiring a very good palatial building to live in, or getting any luxurious possessions. He was so happy living as a pig.

One day Brahmā came on his way to Puṣkara. He saw that pig and recognized him. “Oh, this hog is not a hog. Actually it is Indra in this hog body because he insulted his Gurudeva.” Brahmā became very merciful to him and told him, “You are not a hog. These are not your wives and children. You should come with me to your original place, heaven.”

He was filled with wonder. “I cannot go there.”

“Why not?”

“Oh, would I have to leave my most beautiful family, sons, daughters and my wives? I have so many, not only one but more than sixty thousand, so many! How can I leave them? I cannot go there. I am so happy here. You should go. I will not go.”

Brahmā was astonished. “You are not going? But there everything is so wonderful. Here is only some nonsense. Immersed in nonsense, you are here with the pigs, taking stool from here and there and sleeping in the stinking, rotting drains. So you should come with me.”

Indra asked, “May I go with my children and my wives? And will we have some new, new fresh stools to eat there?”

“No, no. You will have nectar there, nectar!”

“I do not want nectar, I want these things.”

“*Acchā*. I will give you.” And thus saying, he sprinkled some water from his *kamaṇḍalu* and spoke, “*Maṅgalam bhavatū, maṅgalam bhavatū*. All auspiciousness unto you.”

As Brahmā began to take him, Indra jumped at Brahmā and began to attack him. “I will never go.” But mercifully Brahmā sprinkled some more water on him. Indra could then see the truth. “Oh really, how bad this place is. In heaven my wife is waiting for me and all are worried for me. There are so many beautiful *apsarās* there like Menakā, Urvasī and all others. Nectar is there. I can play there in the beautiful Nandana-kānana which is filled with *pārijāta-puṣpa*, and so many other wonderful things. Oh, I must go there.” Then he prayed to Brahmā, who again sprinkled some water on him. He became pure Indra, giving up his inauspicious body, and at once he went to heaven.

So our condition is like that. We are thinking that we are most happy with “my very dear wife. If she is not so beautiful, then I can manage some new arrangement. I can divorce and take a new wife. And after some time when she becomes old, then again I can change.” And the wives are also thinking, “I will change my husband one, two, three times if I like!”

But there are so many problems in human life, more than for pigs and hogs. They can sleep but we cannot. We are so much involved in problems. The biggest one is that now we are moving into old age. Old age is coming on, and now white hairs are appearing here and there. If there are one or two, I will pluck them out. But if they are scattered here and there, everywhere, then what to do? If one tooth falls out, no harm, I will replace it with a golden tooth. But all? And at last we will die, giving up everything here. So we should be very sober.

We think that we are quite okay, that we will have a beautiful husband or wife, but there exists something much greater than this happiness. Especially in Goloka Vṛndāvana, where only Kṛṣṇa is beloved. We must pray that we can serve Him. We cannot imagine what nectar is there. If a man realizes this, then he will become very detached. He will take the renounced order and he won't even notice all these things, whether she is beautiful, he is beautiful, that is beautiful, or anything in this world is beautiful. Like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, like Caitanya Mahāprabhu, like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. One day we will have to be like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. One day we will have to be like the prostitute who became a very high-class devotee. Giving all her possessions to others, she became *niṣkiñcana*, *akiñcana*, only serving Tulasī and keeping no desires at all. We will have to be like her. Otherwise we cannot serve Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

(Reading from NoI): “So Mathurā and the adjoining area, however, although appearing in the material world, are considered superior to this spiritual world because the Supreme Personality of

Godhead Himself appeared at Mathurā,” not any other place. In Dvārakā, there was no birth of Kṛṣṇa. Father and mother are there, but no human birth. He took birth in Mathurā. Specifically where in Mathurā? In Gokula, in Vṛndāvana, the site of His real birth. His birth in jail in Mathurā was a manifestation of Vāsudeva and has been told only for those who love Dvārakā or Mathurā. It has been told for Parikṣit. But after associating with Śukadeva Gosvāmī and becoming more advanced, then Parikṣit said that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara.

In Dvārakā there are so many good pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Once Kṛṣṇa was in the *rāja* palace of Rukmiṇī. At that time Rukmiṇī was the most wonderful, beautiful woman in the whole world. She was like a *kīśorī* and possessed all transcendental qualities. One day Kṛṣṇa was sitting on the bed of Rukmiṇī-devī. She took a *cāmara* from the hands of her maidservants and in a very loving mood, very sweetly and gently, was fanning Kṛṣṇa.

That day, Kṛṣṇa was so grave, very *gambhīra*. He told Rukmiṇī, “O Rukmiṇī-devī,” (but not addressing her like His beloved), “I know that you are the most beautiful queen in the whole world. All the handsome young kings and their sons want to marry you. You have so many qualities and are so beautiful. But I am black and ugly, not beautiful like you. You are the daughter of a very big king, Bhīṣmaka. I am not a king’s son. I am not a *rāja-kumāra*, a prince. I am only a common person. My father is not so distinguished. Kaṁsa put My father and mother in jail. So I am a very general, ordinary person. I have no beauty nor any qualities like you. Only those persons who are so poor and have fallen in misery and suffering call on Me. I am the prince and friend of unfortunate persons who are always in distress and are especially poor, *akiñcana*, *niškiñcana*. Only those persons like Me. I know that so many rich kings, even Śíśupāla, wanted to marry you. You say that they only want to marry you in order to defeat and insult Me, not because they really want to marry you. But I know better, so I am

telling you that you should come with Me, sit on My chariot, and I will take you to that very king whom you really wish to marry.”

Hearing this, Rukmiṇī at once fell down flat on the earth. One could not tell whether her life and soul was there or not. Kṛṣṇa became worried. He took some cotton and put it under her nose and saw that she was barely alive. He began to tell Rukmiṇī-devī, “My beloved Rukmiṇī, I did not really mean all those things I was telling you. I was only joking. Family life is the only happiness in this world. But sometimes the husband wants to make his wife angry to test her love. So he will purposely provoke her to taste her anger. When the husband finally comes home in the evening, tired after working the whole day, if his wife speaks sweetly, he forgets his day’s labor and his fatigue. I was enjoying all these things. But I also wanted to enjoy your anger. If a husband cannot do this, then his family life is not so happy. I wanted to see how beautiful you are when you are angry. Like this, I wanted to taste your mood. You are My beloved, without you I cannot live.

“I am accustomed from boyhood to act like this. I wanted to tell you that in Vraja sometimes I used these words with the *gopīs*. But they were more expert than Me. In angry voices they used to tell Me, ‘Get out from our *kuṅḅjas*. O Rūpa Mañjarī, tell this black one not to enter My *kuṅḅja*.’ And She told two *gopīs*, Rūpa and Rati Mañjarīs, to stand at the gate of that *kuṅḅja*, ‘He should never come in any way. He knows so many tricks. He may come disguised as a woman, like Mohinī, making very beautiful flower *mālās*, and sometimes in other disguises. Kṛṣṇa’s friend Subala can make Him look like a woman, a *kiśorī*, so always be careful that this rogue does not come at anytime.’

“I come with folded hands, telling the *gopīs*, ‘I want to see Śrīmatī Rādhikā,’ and they reply, ‘You cannot come. Go away. Go back to where You came from. Don’t come here.’ I was accustomed to this type of behavior and that is why I joked with you in that way,

expecting to enjoy your response. But I think that you cannot joke like this. You are very soft hearted.” Hearing this, gradually her life came back again and she began to play so many pastimes with Kṛṣṇa.

In Dvārakā there are so many intimate *līlās*, but yet Kṛṣṇa has no birth there. Therefore in Mathurā, Vṛndāvana-Gokula is especially exalted.

Raghunātha dāsa also glorifies Rādhā-kuṇḍa:

*vaikuṅṭhād api sodarātmaja-vṛtā dvārāvati sā priyā
yatra śrī-śata-nindi-paṭṭa-mahiṣī-vṛndaiḥ prabhuḥ khelati
prema-kṣetram asau tato 'pi mathurā preṣṭhā harer janmato
yatra śrī-vraja eva rājatitarām tām eva nityam bhaje*
(*Vraja-vilāsa-stava* 5, Raghunātha dāsa)

Mathurā is superior because in it is Vṛndāvana. In Mathurā-maṇḍala, Vraja-maṇḍala is situated. Mathurā is so superior, just as in this universe this planet, Pṛthivī-devī, is superior because of the presence of Bhārata-bhūmi. So, in Mathurā there is Vṛndāvana, and Vṛndāvana is more exalted because of the presence of Govardhana. And Govardhana is blessed because of the presence of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa. The progression takes place gradually—first the body, then the mind, *mana*, *buddhi*, *ahaṅkāra*, *citta* (mind, intelligence, false ego, heart), and after that, the soul. Kṛṣṇa is there in the soul, and in Kṛṣṇa Śrīmatī Rādhikā is there. That is why this human body is so supreme, because we can go to the highest destination. Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the life and soul of all these things. And this is what Swāmījī is telling us.

Devotee reads:

The interior forests of Vṛndāvana are considered superior to Mathurā because of the presence of the twelve forests (*dvādaśa-vana*).

BVNM: Yes, quite superior, because the twelve forests are in Mathurā-maṇḍala, and among the twelve forests is Vṛndāvana. In an area of sixteen square miles, two *krośas* of space, Govardhana, Nandagāṇ, Varsānā, all are included there.

Devotee reads:

... the twelve forests (*dvādaśa-vana*), such as Tālavana, Madhuvana and Bahulāvana, which are famous for the various pastimes of the Lord. Thus the interior Vṛndāvana forest is considered superior to Mathurā, but superior to these forests is the divine Govardhana Hill because Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill like an umbrella ...

BVNM: Swāmījī is telling something hidden here. He is not speaking openly, because we are not qualified. Not only is he telling the reason that Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana on His hand, but he is also describing the lushness of Govardhana. There are so many groves, so many ponds, so many fountains and caves where the *gopas* play with Kṛṣṇa, and places where they go for cowherding. Govardhana is serving by all his senses, all his means, giving grasses, giving sweet fruits, very sweet water, providing a throne for Yugala Kiśora, and making groves where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa can play. And among all these places are Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, which are like Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Themselves.

So Govardhana is so superior to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndāvana is only renowned for what thing? *Rāsa-līlā* took place in the shade of Vaiṣṇī-vaṭa. But that *rāsa-līlā* was not prominent because it was *pañcayati-rāsa*. *Pañcayati-rāsa* means all kinds of *gopīs* were there, even the *gopīs* who were at first *sādhana-siddha*. This includes the sixty-thousand sages from Daṇḍakāraṇya, from Janaka-purī, from Ayodhyā, and so many other kinds of *gopīs* were there. Even those who were not associates of Rādhikā, who were not Her bodily manifestations, were there, as were *svapakṣā*, *vipakṣā*, *suhṛt*, and *taṭasthā gopīs*. So many kinds of *gopīs*. Also

among those *gopīs* were some who were qualified but had been checked by their husbands. They gave up their bodies, taking Kṛṣṇa by their eyes and keeping Him in their hearts. They embraced Him in such a way that all inauspiciousness was dispelled. These *gopīs* were also there. They have all participated in that *rāsa*.

But at Govardhana or Rādhā-kuṇḍa, special *gopīs*, only the party of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, were there, not anyone else. So this *rāsa* is superior to the one in Vṛndāvana. Swāmījī is telling about Kṛṣṇa lifting Govardhana like an umbrella here, but it is....

Devotee reads:

It is also at Govardhana Hill that Kṛṣṇa tends the cows with His cowherd friends, and there also He had His rendezvous with His most beloved Śrī Rādhā and engaged in loving pastimes with Her. Rādhā-kuṇḍa, at the foot of Govardhana, is superior to all because it is there that love of Kṛṣṇa overflows. Advanced devotees prefer to reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa....

BVNM: Advanced devotees. What does he mean by advanced devotees? Those who are serving their *gurudeva* by hearing, who have come into the *madhyama-adhikāra* stage and are always remembering, chanting and doing all these activities. We must become advanced devotees. We should not be practicing for a long, long time, fifteen, twenty-five, fifty years, one hundred years, *lākhas* of years, and still be *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*. Swāmījī does not want us to stagnate like this. He has previously told that we have not come here to remain *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*. We must try to advance. So, the “advanced devotee prefers to reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa because this place is the site of many memories of eternal loving affairs between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī (*rati-vilāsa*).”

We can continue tomorrow, because one hour has gone. It seems that we have spoken for only five minutes. I think that it will take so much time to explain all these good things that Swāmījī is telling us. I want to read his explanations, and also I want you to

taste all these things. By knowing all these things you can try to advance. You should not be *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri* forever. Our way to Kṛṣṇa should not be blocked by surrendering to the idea that you are not, and you will not at any time be qualified to read this. “Don’t read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto.” Then why has Vyāsa written all these things? Why? In the council of Parīkṣit Mahārāja, when he was hearing *Bhāgavatam*, all kinds of *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, *yogīs* and *tapasvīs* were there, and by the words of Śukadeva Gosvāmī all were purified. Then why will we not be purified if we have come in the line of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Swāmiji? Why not? We are also qualified to have this thing. We will be qualified. So we should try to understand the deep meanings of Swāmiji, the deep meanings of Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī and Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I pray to Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Rūpa Gosvāmī, and all our disciplic *ācāryas* to be merciful to you all and also to me. They should sprinkle their mercy on all of us.

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokas 9-10

San Francisco, 30 May 1997



*vaikuṅṭhāj janito varā madhu-purī tatrāpi rāsotsavād
vṛndāraṇyam udāra-pāṇi-ramaṇāt tatrāpi govardhanaḥ
rādhā-kuṇḍam ihāpi gokula-pateḥ premāmṛtāplāvanāt
kuryād asya virājato giri-taṭe sevām vivekī na kaḥ*

We have already read the translation and half of the purport. Now let us read the rest of the purport, which has been taken from *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*.

Devotee reads:

In *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā)*, it is stated that when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu first visited the area of Vraja-bhūmi, He could not at first find the location of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. This means that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was actually searching for the exact location of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Finally He found the holy spot, and there was a small pond there. He took His bath in that small pond and told His devotees that the actual

Rādhā-kuṇḍa was situated there. Later the pond was excavated by Lord Caitanya's devotees, headed first by the Six Gosvāmīs, such as Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa. Presently there is a large lake known as Rādhā-kuṇḍa there. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given much stress to Rādhā-kuṇḍa because of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire to find it. Who, then, would give up Rādhā-kuṇḍa and try to reside elsewhere? No person with transcendental intelligence would do so. The importance of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, however, cannot be realized by other Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*, nor can persons uninterested in the devotional service of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu understand the spiritual importance and divine nature of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Thus Rādhā-kuṇḍa is mainly worshiped by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the followers of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

BVNM: Reading all these explanations, one may question why Caitanya Mahāprabhu glorified this Rādhā-kuṇḍa so much. What is Rādhā-kuṇḍa? It is merely a lake, not so big, and very small in comparison with the ocean or any great lake like the Caspian Sea. In India, there are many lakes that are thousands of times bigger, like Cilka Hrada and others. Why is Caitanya Mahāprabhu glorifying Rādhā-kuṇḍa? Just by asking, some may accuse you of being a *sahajiyā*. But if someone wants to know about the glories of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and reads this description from *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, automatically this question will arise.

He will see that Rādhā-kuṇḍa is closely connected to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. What is the glory of Śrīmatī Rādhikā? This understanding will come naturally if someone has a desire to know all these things. Swāmījī is explaining that Rādhā-kuṇḍa is worshiped almost exclusively by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Other *sampradāyas*, like Nimbārka, Rāmānuja and Madhva, have no connection with Rādhā-kuṇḍa. They don't know the secret things about this special lake. But those in the family of

Caitanya Mahāprabhu have deep honor and regard for Rādhā-kuṇḍa. They esteem Rādhā-kuṇḍa more than Varsānā, Rāval (the birthplace of Śrīmatī Rādhikā), Nandagāon, Govardhana, Vṛndāvana or anywhere else. Why? What is there? Is there any beautiful mountain, river or well decorated forest? We see nothing extraordinary there. Curiosity will naturally arise to know why. Its uniqueness is that this *kuṇḍa* is directly Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself. Śyāma-kuṇḍa is the embodiment of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that is, Vrajendra-nandana, Rādhā-kānta, Kṛṣṇa Himself. There is no difference at all. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet together in Vṛndāvana and also at Govardhana. They perform *rāsa* in both of those places also, so what is so special about Rādhā-kuṇḍa? It is here that Kṛṣṇa is always controlled by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and it is here that Śrīmatī Rādhikā is called *svādhīna-bhartṛkā*. If we don't know about these things, how can we properly glorify Rādhā-kuṇḍa? It is very rare to be able to appreciate these glorifications. So if you are not even hearing these things, you will not be qualified in *lākhas* and *lākhas* of births.

If someone has not yet become very pure or developed so much love and affection that he is qualified to hear, then what should he do? Should he be forever hopeless for this? No, do not ever be hopeless. Someone may still have many *anarthas* but if he has some interest and greed to hear this, then he is considered qualified. That greed alone constitutes the qualification to hear.

A devotee born in a *brāhmaṇa* family may have cultivated his regulative *bhakti* for *lākhas* of births and may have very few *anarthas*. Still, if he has no honor, no *ruci*, to hear, then he is disqualified from hearing. But a third class bogus person, like Bilvamaṅgala, entangled always in lust for a prostitute, immediately awoke when his prostitute was singing:

rādhā-ramaṇa-hari govinda jaya jaya
govinda jaya jaya gopāla jaya jaya

*rādhā-ramaṇa-hari govinda jaya jaya
rādhe rādhe rādhe jaya jaya jaya śrī-rādhe
rādhā-ramaṇa-hari govinda jaya jaya*

When the prostitute was quite absorbed in singing this *kīrtana*, Bīlvamaṅgala would be attracted and would also become absorbed. So this is the qualification. It does not matter if one is a lusty, wretched person with no qualifications, no education, or any positive quality. This taste for hearing about these topics is itself the only required qualification.

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalam
janma-koṭi-sukrtair na labhyate*

Sukṛti accumulated over *lākhas* and *lākhas* of births will not help. But the qualification can come easily if we hear from a devotee like Rāya Rāmānanda, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī, or their followers who tell the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa so sweetly. Their *mati*, their hearts, are always immersed in this ocean of love and affection for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Eligibility does not require any worldly qualification or any spiritual quality. The only requirement is some taste, *ruci*, to hear, and this *ruci* can come either from impressions from past lives or it can be newly formed in this life, no harm. *Ruci* coming from past lives is much stronger. But if it is coming from newly acquired impressions, it will still yield so many fruits. Taste to hear these topics is the only thing of any value, nothing else.

Swāmiji is explaining that other *sampradāyas* have nothing to do with Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Why is Rādhā-kuṇḍa so supermost? *Premāmṛtāplāvanāt kuryād asya virājato giri-taṭe sevām vivekī na kaḥ. Premāmṛtāplāvanāt*—there is a flood of *prema*.

Sometimes a river may flood. Why does a flood come? What is the reason?

Devotee: The river cannot contain so much water, so the water overflows. This is called a flood.

BVNM: Yes, the river is very small and narrow. When so much heavy water comes, the river cannot contain all the water so it overflows here and there. Similarly, here in Vṛndāvana, there is a controlled flow. At Govardhana the flow is greater, but it can still be controlled. But in Rādhā-kuṇḍa, oh, so much flood! The whole of Vraja Vṛndāvana is inundated. Even Kṛṣṇa comes and is submerged in the flood, sometimes playing in the waves and going here and there. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is floating on that flood, and both of Them are controlled only by *premāmṛtāplāvanāt*. *Prema* is Their *kartā*, supreme doer. So by *prema* Kṛṣṇa is dancing, Rādhā is dancing, the *gopīs* are dancing, all Vrajavāsīs are dancing. *Prema* herself is also dancing, and whoever she touches will also dance.

So *premāmṛtāplāvanāt*—*prema* is in Vṛndāvana, in Vraja, and in Gokula. In Gokula there is plenty of *vātsalya-rasa*. In Nandagāon there is plenty of *vātsalya* plus *sakhya*. Sometimes separation mood is also there. In Govardhana all *rasas* are there but they are controlled. But in Rādhā-kuṇḍa *prema* cannot be controlled. Herein lies the glory of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. In Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Kṛṣṇa is not prominent So who is prominent? Śrīmatī Rādhikā! Feeling separation, sometimes Kṛṣṇa goes there and, praying to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, takes bath three times in Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Kṛṣṇa becomes just like a devotee, praying to Śrīmatī Rādhikā for Her mercy by chanting Her *mantra* with folded hands, and humbly begs Her, “When will You be pleased? When will You be pleased?”

*agha-riṣur api yatnād atra devyāḥ prasāda-
prasara-kṛta-kaṭākṣa-prāpti-kāmaḥ prakāmam
anusarati yad uccaiḥ snāna-sevānu-bandhais
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kuṇḍam evāśrayo me*

(Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍāṣṭakam 3, Raghunātha dāsa)

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has said, “O Rādhā-kuṇḍa, you are Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself. You are visible as a *kuṇḍa* only to give mercy to the devotees serving here. You can give so much mercy, even more than Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself. You are always present here as a *kuṇḍa*. Anyone can touch you, take bath in you, or pray to you.” Even Kṛṣṇa Himself prays like this.

Why is Śrīmatī Rādhikā always there? Why? So many pastimes take place at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa that Brahmā, Śaṅkara and all others want to live there but they cannot. Have you ever heard that Hanumān wants to come to Vraja? He never does. Can you say why? He fears, “I may do some offense there.”

One time Brahmā went to Vraja to witness the glories of Kṛṣṇa, but he wanted to see His glory by his own effort rather than by Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. That is why he stole the cowherd boys and calves and thus behaved very badly. So Hanumān says, “I am *bandara*, a monkey. I may commit some offenses. If I see that Yaśodā Maiyā is twisting Kṛṣṇa’s ears, then I may take my *gadā* (club) in my hand to defend Him, and what will happen if I act like that?” So he fears, “I should not go to Vṛndāvana, otherwise I may do so many wrong things.” That is why general devotees don’t go to Rādhā-kuṇḍa and cannot know the glory of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Do you want to see Rādhā-kuṇḍa? Come with me, follow me.... First we come to Kusuma-sarovara, and from there the fabulously beautiful Rādhā-kuṇḍa begins. In the very middle of Rādhā-kuṇḍa is Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja—very beautiful groves with fragrant flowers, peacocks and cuckoos. Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s younger sister, Anaṅga Mañjarī, has beautifully decorated it for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. And at the eight corners of Rādhā-kuṇḍa are the eight spectacular *kuñjas* of Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā, Campakalatā, Tuṅgavidyā, Indulekhā, Raṅgadevī, and Sudevī. Then, surrounding this inner circle are thousands and thousands of more beautiful groves. In addition to all these, Rūpa, Rati, Labaṅga, Guṇa Mañjarī, Mañjulālī Mañjarī, Kasturi

Mañjarī, Vilāsa Mañjarī and so many other *mañjarīs* have their *kuñjas* everywhere around the *kuṇḍa!*

Around Śyāma-kuṇḍa, the eight prominent *sakhās*, Dāmā, Śrīdāmā, Vasudāmā, Stoka-Kṛṣṇa, Labaṅga, Arjuna and all, have their *kuñjas*, but they have given them to the *sakhīs*. The *sakhās* do not live there. Sometimes they come but very rarely, only when Kṛṣṇa wants them to. There Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā with all Her *sakhīs* are singing, dancing, and enjoying in so many ways. Śrīmatī Rādhikā lives there with all Her *sakhīs*, pleasing and serving Kṛṣṇa, but especially Kṛṣṇa is serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā there. This place is called *mahā-yogapīṭha*. In Vṛndāvana, where is the *yogapīṭha*? At Vamśī-vaṭa, the site of *rāsa-līlā*, where Kṛṣṇa was dancing and singing with the *gopīs*. But Rādhā-kuṇḍa, being the *mahā-yogapīṭha*, is much more prominent than Vamśī-vaṭa. These pastimes are so fantastic and are always going on. You cannot even imagine them. So, among all the *līlā-sthalīs*, Rādhā-kuṇḍa is most exalted.

When Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to Vṛndāvana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa was just a small pit, having only a very small amount of water. Caitanya Mahāprabhu discovered the village and asked, “Where are Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa?” The name of that village was Aritgāon. Aritgrama means Ariṣṭāsura-gāon (Ariṣṭāsura, Vṛṣabhāsura), thus the name became Aritgāon. “So this is Aritgāon, but where are Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa?” He asked so many old persons, but they all answered, “We do not know where Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa are, but we know that this is Kālī-kheta and that is Gaurī-kheta.” Kālī-kheta means black field and Gaurī-kheta means golden field. So Mahāprabhu thought, “Oh, Kālī? Kālī means Kṛṣṇa, so here is Kṛṣṇa’s *kuṇḍa*. It is not *kheta* but *kuṇḍa*.” And Rādhā-kuṇḍa they were calling Gaurī-kheta. It is not actually Gaurī-kheta but Gaurī-kuṇḍa. Mahāprabhu took bath there and declared that this is Śyāma-kuṇḍa and the other is Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

Then Mahāprabhu left and discovered Vṛndāvana-dhāma. We know that at first Kāmyavana was called Vṛndāvana. Caitanya

Mahāprabhu explained that in Kāmyavana Yamunā is not there, nor is Govardhana nearby. Here, there is no Kāliya-hrada, nor Brahmā-hrada, Brahmā-kuṇḍa, Vamśī-vaṭa, nor Keśī-ghāṭa, so how can it be Vṛndāvana? Vallabhācārya came to Caitanya Mahāprabhu, saying that Kāmyavana is Vṛndāvana. But Caitanya Mahāprabhu corrected him, “No. This is Kāmyavana and there is Vṛndāvana.” Caitanya Mahāprabhu discovered all the forests and all the pastime places.

One day Emperor Akbar, the Mohammedan king, was coming with his armies of *lākhas* and *lākhas* of horses and soldiers. His horses and elephants were so thirsty. The Emperor himself was also thirsty. As he was passing that way, he asked someone, “Is there any big pond where we can take water?” The villagers said, “No. There isn’t any big pond, but you can take water from this Kāli-kheta and Gaurī-kheta.” The Emperor objected, “There is not enough water for even one horse or any elephant. They will finish all the water!”

The villagers said, “Do not worry. You should bring them all here.” So the Emperor came with all his soldiers, elephants and horses. There were *lākhas* and *lākhas* of horses and elephants. They began to drink, but the water was never finished. All were satisfied, and still there was more water. The Emperor was very impressed and he wanted to enlarge the pond, but he could not do so at that time. After this, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī came to Rādhā-kuṇḍa and wanted to restore the ponds, but he was very worried because the *kuṇḍas* are *cintāmaṇi*. The water is *svayaṁ amṛtam*, nectar. So he was repenting, “Why do I wish to improve the *kuṇḍas*?” At that time a very big businessman, a *paisa-wālā*, came there and said, “Badrinārāyaṇa has sent me and told me in a dream that ‘you should go to Rādhā-kuṇḍa and tell Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī that I have ordered you to give money to restore the *kuṇḍas* and make them very nice.’” The businessman went directly to Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and told him, “I want to help you in this work.”

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī refused, “I don’t want to do this sort of thing.” Then Badrinārāyaṇa came in Raghunātha’s dream and told him, “You must do this.”

So Raghunātha accepted some money and managed the work. First he dug Rādhā-kuṇḍa in four corners, making it very square, because Śrīmatī Rādhikā is so *sarala*, simple. When he began to excavate Śyāma-kuṇḍa, he wanted to make it square also, but there were so many trees here and there that needed to be cut down. That night the trees wept and prayed, “O Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, don’t cut us down. We are here doing *ārādhana* of Kṛṣṇa on the bank of Śyāma-kuṇḍa, so don’t disturb us.” Therefore, Raghunātha concluded, “Oh, Kṛṣṇa wants His *kuṇḍa* to be crooked like Himself.” Kṛṣṇa is always crooked, everything about Him is crooked. Thus Raghunātha gave Śyāma-kuṇḍa its irregular form which is the very shape that we see today.

One time Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were playing here. At once a demon in the shape of a bull came and wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa and all the others. Kṛṣṇa very suddenly took the two hind legs of the bull, whirled him around in the sky and threw him. Immediately he died. The *gopīs* were there and told Kṛṣṇa, “You cannot touch us because you have done *go-hatya*. You have killed a cow.”

“I have not killed a cow. He was a demon in the shape of a bull.”

“But You have killed it, so You cannot touch us.”

“Then what will I do? Without touching you I cannot live.”

“You should become purified.”

“How?”

“Go to the *sāgara* (ocean) and all the *tīrthas* of the world. Take bath and then come.”

Kṛṣṇa smiled and called all the *tīrthas* there. They came in their personified forms and were praying, “What service may we do for You?”

“You should become the water in this place.” And with His heel Kṛṣṇa made an impression, and that became a very big pond.

Then at once, *pārṣṇi prakhātam*, all the *tīrthas* became water and the pond was filled. Kṛṣṇa took bath and said, “Now I am pure. Can I touch you?”

“Never, never. We will make our own pond without Your help. You should take bath there and then You will be pure.” Śrīmatī Rādhikā easily dug the hole for Rādhā-kuṇḍa with Her toes, and all Her *sakhīs* were engaged in helping. Rādhikā was dancing and sweating, but yet it was so sweet. It became a very big pond, but there was no water. Where should the water come from? Kṛṣṇa offered, “Take it from My pond.” And He told all the *tīrthas* that in a hidden way they should go in this new *kuṇḍa*.

The *gopīs* refused, “We don’t want to touch any of the water from Your *kuṇḍa*. We will go to Mānasī Gaṅgā in Govardhana, bring water from there, and we will fill up our *kuṇḍa* ourselves.”

They took *lākhās* and *lākhās* of pots and began to go, but all the *tīrthas* lay down on the path, weeping, “Śrīmatī Rādhikā, we want to serve You. Why are You going there?”

Their humble prayer touched Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s heart. She was so pleased that She allowed them to fill Her *kuṇḍa*. At once they made a channel between the two ponds and the waters of Śyāma-kuṇḍa entered Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Kṛṣṇa took His bath, and then He touched all the *gopīs*. This is Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Here, Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself is Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Kṛṣṇa is Kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍa, but the supremacy of Rādhā-kuṇḍa prevails.

Rūpa Gosvāmī has glorified Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Everywhere there is glorification of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Swāmījī is also telling that if anyone goes and touches the water and takes *ācamana*, or if anyone goes and takes bath, he will have the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhikā to serve Her there. We cannot tell any greater glory of Rādhā-kuṇḍa than this. So we should try to know what is Rādhā-kuṇḍa. It is superior to any other place in Vraja. It has been said:

*śrī-vṛndāvipināṁ suramayam api tac chrīman-sa govardhanaḥ
 sā rāsa-sthālīkāpy alam rasamayī kim tāvad anyat sthalam
 yasyāpy amśa-lavena nārhati manāk samyaṁ mukundasya tat
 prāṇebhyo 'py adhika-priyeva dayitām tat kuṇḍam evāśraye
 (Vraja-vilāsa-stava 53, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī)*

Vṛndāvana is so beautiful, *rāsa* is going on there, and Girirāja Govardhana is so glorious, what to speak of other *tīrthas* of Vraja. But they are not equal to even one *lākha*'s (one hundred-thousandth) of a part of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Never. Let me take shelter of Rādhā-kuṇḍa which is more dear to Kṛṣṇa than His own life's breath!

The glory of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa is so rare, so high. Swāmījī is saying that if someone is intelligent, he can begin to touch a little of the glory of Śrīmatī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Then he will develop the desire to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Kṛṣṇa may be ready to give His service, but if Rādhikā's mercy is not there, they will say that there is nothing to do.

In his *Śrī Svāṇiyama-Daśaka*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written, "I have no attraction for Kṛṣṇa. If He personally invites me to come to Dvārakā, I will not go—I do not like to serve Kṛṣṇa if Rādhikā is not there. But if I hear that Śrīmatī Rādhikā has gone to Dvārakā to serve Kṛṣṇa, at once I will fly there without any invitation. And if I know that Śrīmatī Rādhikā is alone at Rādhā-kuṇḍa without Kṛṣṇa, no harm, I will also be there. I want to be in Rādhā-kuṇḍa, even if I'm hearing the chattering and pattering of all the villagers, I want to be there. I want to take their remnants and hear their worldly talks, *gramya-kathā*, but I don't want to go to heaven or anywhere in Vaikuṇṭha, anywhere in Vraja, leaving this place." Rādhā-kuṇḍa is so glorious!

Then:

*karmibhyaḥ parito hareḥ priyatayā vyaktim yayur jñāninas
tebhyo jñāna-vimukta-bhakti-paramāḥ premaika-niṣṭhās tataḥ
tebhyas tāḥ paśu-pāla-paṅkaja-dṛśas tābhyo 'pi sā rādhikā
preṣṭhā tadvad iyaṁ tadiya-sarasī tām nāśrayet kaḥ kṛtī*

(Śrī Upadeśāmṛta 10)

What is the translation?

Devotee reads:

In the *sāstra* it is said that of all types of fruitive workers, he who is advanced in knowledge of the higher values of life is favored by the Supreme Lord Hari. Out of many such people who are advanced in knowledge (*jñānīs*), one who is practically liberated by virtue of his knowledge may take to devotional service. He is superior to the others. However, one who has actually attained *prema*, pure love of Kṛṣṇa, is superior to him. The *gopīs* are exalted above all the advanced devotees because they are always totally dependent upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the transcendental cowherd boy. Among the *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the most dear to Kṛṣṇa. Her *kuṇḍa* (lake) is as profoundly dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa as this most beloved of the *gopīs*. Who, then, will not reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and, in a spiritual body surcharged with ecstatic devotional feelings (*aprākṛta-bhāva*), render loving service to the divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, who perform Their *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, Their eternal eight-fold daily pastimes. Indeed, those who execute devotional service on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa are the most fortunate people in the universe.

BVNM: I see that so many devotees go to Varsānā, and they like it more than Rādhā-kuṇḍa. They want to go to Gahvaravana. Māna-ghara, Dāna-ghara, Vilāsa-ghara, Mor-kuṭī are all there. Śrīmatī Rādhikā plays with Kṛṣṇa in so many ways there. I think that all the Vrajavāsīs think that this Varsānā is superior to

any other place. But they don't know all these mysteries. They can never know. If anyone wants to know the glories of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, they should read *Brhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*, Seventh Chapter of first volume and also Seventh Chapter of second volume.

Why is Rādhā-kuṇḍa so significant? Why has Kṛṣṇa come from Vṛndāvana to live in Dvārakā? An ordinary devotee cannot answer all these questions. Those who know the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *prema* can tell something. Rohiṇī-devī (the mother of Baladeva), Baladeva Prabhu and Uddhava (because he went there) can tell something about this Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Vraja. Why did Kṛṣṇa leave Vṛndāvana, Vraja, and come to Dvārakā? There are many hidden reasons behind His going. Kṛṣṇa wanted to satisfy the *gopīs*, but in Vraja He could not.

Na pāraye 'ham niravadya-samyujām. Why? You know there are two elements in *prema*—separation mood (*vipralamba*) and meeting (*sambhoga*). When meeting with Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* become so happy, and in separation from Him they become so unhappy. At that time no one can touch the glories of the *gopīs*—they are very high. When Uddhava went to Vraja, he saw the glories of the *gopīs* to be like the Himālaya Mountains, so high, and he felt as insignificant as a particle of dust. Kṛṣṇa sent him to see the *gopīs'* behavior and to realize all their moods. Kṛṣṇa tells his friends in Dvārakā, “I want to be in Vṛndāvana, Vraja, and always stay at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, but I cannot. Why? Because the love and affection of the *gopīs* is so high that even in separation they feel *sambhoga*, and when meeting with Me they feel *viraha*. This is very, very painful for Me. Just like one time Śrīmatī Rādhikā was sitting in My lap and Madhumaṅgala came along. A bee was humming around and Śrīmatī Rādhikā became afraid. Madhumaṅgala saw Śrīmatī Rādhikā's fear, so with a stick he chased that bee very far away. When he returned he said, ‘I have driven Madhusūdana away and he can never come again.’ Hearing this, She fainted and cried, ‘O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa, where are You?’ even though She was in My lap.”

Though She was in Kṛṣṇa's lap, She was feeling so much separation that She fainted. Once Kṛṣṇa had gone somewhere else, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā was feeling separation. Kṛṣṇa could understand that in separation from Him She became so absorbed that upon seeing a *tamāla* tree, She embraced it and said, "Oh, You have returned!" And She was laughing and joking and taunting that tree as if it were Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes He saw that in separation Śrīmatī Rādhikā was kissing the darkness, "Oh, this darkness is Kṛṣṇa." She wanted to embrace that darkness, thinking that it was Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā is telling to her *sakhīs*, "*Sakhī*, I feel better when I become senseless. When I lose external consciousness, I can forget all these things, so why do you try to bring Me back to My senses? At that time I am okay, but when I return to My senses, again I become distressed. So why do you do this? You are My enemies."

Thus Kṛṣṇa became so astonished. "Such high-class *prema* is in Rādhā-kuṇḍa, in Śrīmatī Rādhikā!" He cannot satisfy the *gopīs*, because when He comes and plays with them, they think of future separation. Thus they are always feeling pain. He said, "I cannot bear to see their pain. If they see Me, they will feel pain because they are more absorbed in separation, so I should not stay here. I cannot satisfy them. At Rādhā-kuṇḍa this mood will increase. They will weep bitterly and will faint."

Can any of you imagine these things? This is the special glory of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, where all these moods are being experienced, where *prema* is like a flood, and where *prema-vaicitṭya* is manifested. In *Bhramara-gītā* (SB. 10.47) many of these moods are described—*prajalpa*, *sujalpa*, *abhijalpa*, *anujalpa*² and so many more. You cannot imagine!

² Mad imaginative (emotional) talks known as *citra-jalpa* can be divided into ten categories—*prajalpa*, *parijalpa*, *vijalpa*, *ujjalpa*, *sañjalpa*, *avajalpa*, *abhijalpa*, *ājalpa*, *prati-jalpa* and *sujalpa*. There are no English equivalents for these different features of *jalpa* (imaginative talk).

So I think that to only do *vaidhī-bhakti* amalgamated with *karma* and *jñāna* will not be sufficient to come into the family of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His *sampradāya*. If you want to be in Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *sampradāya*, you will have to do *rūpānugā-bhakti*. What is *rūpānuga*? Because they don't know the meaning of *rūpānuga* and the meaning of *sahajiyā*, some are fearing, "Oh, if I take the name of *rūpānuga*, I will become a *sahajiyā*." No! We are daily saying "*rūpānuga-varga ki jaya!*" We should understand the significance of *rūpānuga*. We will have to know who Rūpa Gosvāmī was, what he did, what was his special service, and what were his moods. Then we can be *rūpānuga*.

Rūpānuga means to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā, nothing else. This *Nectar of Instruction* is just an outline shedding some light on the subject. To enter this realm more deeply, you must hear a realized soul explain all these things, and he can give you a deeper impression of this book. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written it for only this purpose. Swāmījī did not have time to write any explanation of *Śikṣaṣṭaka*, *Manah-śikṣa*, and many others, but he saw that this particular book was so important that he wrote his commentary. But those who will only look at the first *śloka*, *vāco vegam manasaḥ... vāco vegam manasaḥ... vāco vegam manasaḥ*, and then close the book, thinking, "It is all right. This is sufficient for us. We are not qualified even to do *vāco vegam manasaḥ*, so how we can read any further?"—how will they advance?

Swāmījī has come to give this *rūpānuga* line to us. So we should not be hopeless. We should try to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this line.

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokas 10-11

San Francisco, 31 May 1997



We have read this tenth *śloka* and also some of the purport. I want you to read page 87, second paragraph, “After taking to devotional service....”

Devotee reads:

Śloka 10, purport

After taking to devotional service under the regulative principles, a person may come to the platform of spontaneous love of Godhead, following in the footsteps of great devotees like Nārada and Sanaka and Sanātana.

BVNM: Can you explain why he has said, “service under the regulative principles, a person may come to the platform of spontaneous love of Godhead”? Why has he said “may”?

Devotee: Because it is not guaranteed that just by practicing the *vaidhī-bhakti* process they will automatically come to....

BVNM: I think that everyone here is understanding this fact. He has said, “may.” He has not given any guarantee for this. Those who

cultivate regulative principles and then come in the association of a realized *rasika-bhakta* in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī will get spontaneous love. Otherwise, simply by following these regulative principles for *lākhas* and *lākhas* of births, one cannot come to the platform of spontaneous love. But we hope to be fortunate to come in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We like to be called *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas. Why? Can anyone answer? Why do we want to be *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas and glorify Swāmījī as *rūpānuga*?

Devotee: Because Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī appeared in this world most recently. He is Rūpa Mañjarī and is so close to Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Following very closely in his footsteps as a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava is the only way to attain that kind of closeness, that kind of intimacy, that kind of *bhakti*.

BVNM: Can you tell what is the difference between *rāgānuga* and *rūpānuga*?

Devotee: *Rāgānuga* means to follow the real Vrajavāsīs in any of the *rasas*, such as *dāśya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*. The real Vrajavāsīs, who have *rāga*, are called *rāgātmika-bhaktas*. But *rūpānuga* specifically means those following Rūpa Mañjarī, who is serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

BVNM: *Rūpānuga* means especially Rūpa Gosvāmī's own mood. In his books he has explained all kinds of *rasa* and all kinds of *rati*, but what was his special mood towards Kṛṣṇa? How did he serve and in what mood? If anyone follows Rūpa Gosvāmī's mood, he will advance in *mañjarī-bhāva*, otherwise not. Vallabhācārya is not *rūpānuga*. Svarūpa Dāmodara is not *rūpānuga*. What is he? Svarūpa Dāmodara himself is Lalitā. He is Rūpa Gosvāmī's *guru* and Rūpa serves under him, but yet Rūpa has a special service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā which Lalitā does not have. Svarūpa Dāmodara serves Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa equally, but with some partiality for Rādhikā. But Rūpa is totally absorbed in serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This is the mood of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

If anyone has the mood of Yaśodā Maiyā, if anyone has the mood of friends, like Subala and Śrīdāmā, or if they have any mood of Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā, the *aṣṭa-sakhīs*, they are not *rūpānuga*—they are *rāgānuga*. They are superior to Rūpa Gosvāmī. Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda are superior to Rūpa Gosvāmī because they are Lalitā and Viśākhā. But we cannot follow Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda; we cannot follow Lalitā and Viśākhā—their mood is separate. They are above our touch, and we are not aspiring for that mood. What do we want? The mood of Rūpa Gosvāmī, Rūpa Mañjarī, always serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā, happy in Her happiness and unhappy in Her distress.

Sometimes Lalitā can chastise Śrīmatī Rādhikā. How?

*dhūrte vrajendra-tanaye tanu suṣṭhu vāmyam
mā dakṣiṇā bhava kalaṅkini lāghavāya
rādhe giram śṛṇu hitām iti śikṣayantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

(Śrī Lalitāṣṭakam 4)

[I offer *praṇāma* unto Śrī Lalitā-devī, the charming treasure-house of all good qualities, who instructs Śrīmatī Rādhikā in this way: “O Kalaṅkini (unchaste one)! Rādhe! Listen to my good instructions which are favorable for you! Vrajendra-nandana is very crafty (*dhūrta*). Do not display Your mood of gentle submission to Him; instead, in all circumstances, always be contrary.]

She can say, “*dhūrte vrajendra-tanaye*, don’t have any link with *dhūrta* Vrajendra-nandana.” To whom is she telling this? Rādhikā. “Do not speak. When He comes, You should sit like this, frowning. And if He wants to keep His head on Your feet, You should move Your feet away, like this, not looking at Him.” Lalitā can speak to Rādhikā like this.

When Rādhikā is quite absorbed in *viraha* (separation), Lalitā will pacify Her, saying, “Oh, you should not weep. Kṛṣṇa is here.” In

the same way, Svarūpa Dāmodara was telling Caitanya Mahāprabhu, “Why are You lamenting for Vrajendra-nandana? Vrajendra is not far away from here. He is here.” At once Caitanya Mahāprabhu took His nails, scratched the earth, and said, “Oh, I will see. Oh, Vrajendra-nandana is here?” He became so happy and took Svarūpa Dāmodara’s hands in His. Rūpa Gosvāmī will not do this. If Śrīmatī Rādhikā is weeping, then Rūpa Mañjarī also will weep. She will do the same thing as Rādhikā. When Rādhikā is meeting with Kṛṣṇa, then Rūpa Mañjarī thinks that she is meeting with Kṛṣṇa. If Śrīmatī Rādhikā is unhappy, then Rūpa Mañjarī will be unhappy—equally! This is *rūpānuga*.

Rūpānuga, not *rāgānuga*. All *rūpānugas* are *rāgānugas*, but not all *rāgānugas* are *rūpānugas*. You should know this fact. What am I saying?

Devotee: All *rūpānugas* are *rāgānuga*, but not all *rāgānugas* are *rūpānuga*.

BVNM: Who are *rūpānuga*? Those who are actually following the mood of Rūpa Gosvāmī. All our *ācāryas* are *rūpānuga*, not only *rāgānuga*. So it is a very, very important point.

Our Gurudeva has composed *Rādhā-Vindodāṣṭakam*. The first *śloka* is:

rādhā-cintā-niveśena yasya kāntir vilopitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇam vande rādhāliṅgita-vigraham

[I worship the lotus feet of that form of Kṛṣṇa when, due to being thoroughly immersed in separation from Śrīmatī Rādhikā (who is displaying *māna*, Her jealous anger), His own dark complexion vanishes and He assumes Her bright, golden luster.]

The meaning is this. Sometimes Śrīmatī Rādhikā becomes so absorbed in separation, weeping so bitterly that She faints, but Rūpa Gosvāmī does not want this. Our Gurudeva, who is *rūpānuga*, or any of our *ācāryas* including Rūpa Gosvāmī, will not want this. What will they want? *Rādhā-cintā-niveśena yasya kāntir vilopitā*. Kṛṣṇa should weep in separation from Śrīmatī

Rādhikā, no? Kṛṣṇa should weep. Our Śrīmatī Rādhikā is so soft, Her feet are so soft, She should not walk here and there to search for Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa should search for Her, because He is a cowherd boy. His feet are so hard, hard, hard. He should walk so much, so much.

So, *rādhā-cintā-niveśena yasya kāntir vilopitā*. Śrīmatī Rādhikā disappeared from the *rāsa* and Kṛṣṇa was searching, searching, searching. He could not get Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *darśana*, so He was searching and weeping. At last Kṛṣṇa sat down at Imlī-tālā in Vṛndāvana, near Yamunā in Sevā-kuṅja. He was bitterly weeping and was absorbed in thinking, "Oh, where can I find Śrīmatī Rādhikā? Where can I find Rādhikā? She has left Me here. Where has She gone?" Drowned in these thoughts, Kṛṣṇa lost His black color, and at once His complexion became golden. He was still Kṛṣṇa, but He became golden like Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and His mood was changed into Rādhikā's. He was crying bitterly, "O Kṛṣṇa, where are You? O Kṛṣṇa, where are You?" Do you understand this? He was not calling "Rādhike, Rādhike," in Kṛṣṇa's mood. Rather, at once Her color and mood came in Him, and He began to call, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, where are You?"

In all the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti's *maṭhas*, our Guru has established our Deities, Vinoda-bihārī, with this mood—*rādhā-cintā-niveśena yasya kāntir vilopitā*. Kṛṣṇa's color went out and He became golden, taking the color and mood of Rādhikā—that is Caitanya Mahāprabhu! *Rādhāliṅgita-vigraham*. I am doing *vandanā* to that very form of Kṛṣṇa, which has been embraced by Rādhikā with all Her parts. Rādhikā's whole body is there, and Kṛṣṇa's body has been completely covered by all the parts of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. So Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *rādhāliṅgita-vigraham*. This is *rūpānuga*. Kṛṣṇa should weep, Kṛṣṇa should search for Rādhikā. Why should our sweet, innocent, very simple Śrīmatī Rādhikā go here and there, in mountains, across rivers, through thorns? Why should She go? Kṛṣṇa should go all over searching for Her. This is *rūpānuga*. So all *rūpānuga* Gosvāmīs are like this. They have come only to bestow their mercy in this way.

Swāmiji cut jungles, but he did not come only for this. In this *rūpānuga Nectar of Instruction*, Rūpa Gosvāmī’s teachings, he is giving all these *tattvas*. You should patiently hear. And then you can understand what is the mood of this special *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*, Śrīla Swāmiji, who is in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Then, “after....”

Devotee reads:

After taking to devotional service under the regulative principles, a person may come to the platform of spontaneous love of Godhead, following in the footsteps of great devotees like Nārada and Sanaka and Sanātana.

BVNM: Why is he mentioning Nārada? Why? And Sanaka and Sanātana? They were all following regulative *bhakti*. But Nārada and Uddhava, by the association of the *gopīs*, and Sanaka by the grace of both Nārada and Umā Devī (the wife of Śaṅkara) all received spontaneous love and service for Kṛṣṇa. Originally they were not in this mood. So Swāmiji is giving examples. If anyone is performing regulative principles of *bhakti*, then by chance from one’s past impressions or by luck without any cause, Kṛṣṇa can mercifully send His devotees to give their association. By hearing from them and following their instructions, one will attain spontaneous love, just as Nārada, Sanaka, and Sanātana did.

Devotee reads:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead then recognizes him to be superior. The devotees who have developed love of Godhead are certainly in an exalted position.

Of all these devotees, the *gopīs* are recognized as superior because they do not know anything other than satisfying Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: He has written, “of all devotees,” but we should know that the *gopīs* are not devotees. What are they? They are expansions of

Śrīmatī Rādhikā, special expansions. Some of them are *sādhana-siddha*, like the *Vedas*, *Śruti-mantras*, and others. But they are as honorable as the *gopīs*, becoming like their expansions. Regarding the degree of their grace there is no difference between them. They are to be considered the same.

Devotee reads:

... the *gopīs* are recognized as superior because they do not know anything other than satisfying Kṛṣṇa. Nor do the *gopīs* expect any return from Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, sometimes Kṛṣṇa puts them into extreme suffering by separating Himself from them. Nonetheless, they cannot forget Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana for Mathurā, the *gopīs* became most dejected and spent the rest of their lives simply crying in separation from Kṛṣṇa. This means that in one sense they were never actually separated from Kṛṣṇa. There is no difference between thinking of Kṛṣṇa and associating with Him.

BVNM: What is the meaning? What?

Devotee: Thinking of Kṛṣṇa is the same as directly associating with Him. Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself to the devotee who is fully absorbed in Him.

BVNM: But why are the *gopīs* crying? Why are they crying? If they are both the same, then why are they crying so much, weeping and sometimes fainting? We cannot explain this, but Kṛṣṇa can. And Kṛṣṇa has explained all these things in *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam* to Nārada himself. Has Swāmījī written anywhere about *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam*? What has he written?

Devotee: In *Ādi-līlā*, chapter 5, he writes that if one wants to get an understanding of Kṛṣṇa in relation to His devotees, he must read *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam*³.

³ Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī Prabhu, the teacher of the science of devotional service, wrote several books, of which the *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam* is very famous; anyone who wants to know about the subject matter of devotees, devotional service and Kṛṣṇa must read this book. (*Ādi-līlā* 5.203 purport)

BVNM: One cannot easily know the difference between *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama* and *uttama*, and also *uttama-kaniṣṭha*, *uttama-madhyama* and *uttama-uttama*. And in these three, *uttama-kaniṣṭha*, *uttama-madhyama* and *uttama-uttama*, there are *lākhas* of gradations. If we can hear *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam* from a bona fide Vaiṣṇava in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, then we can understand these things. But now we have nothing to do with *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛtam*: “If anyone reads *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*, he will very easily become a *sahajiyā*. And if you will read Tenth Canto, you are a *sahajiyā*.” If anyone just says the words, “*gopī, gopī*,” or “*rāgānuga*,” he will be accused of being a *sahajiyā*, and that is why they are falling down. Thus, all paths have been blocked for them and, if they want to advance in *bhakti*, they must return to where they were before. Sometimes these persons make offenses against *bhakti*, against this *rāgānugā-bhakti*, and that is why they never become qualified to hear, to read and to enter it. They are disqualified forever and thus they are deprived of these things. I think that they have never read about *rāgānugā-bhakti*, never, never. Otherwise they would not speak like this.

Then?

Devotee reads:

Rather, *vipralambha-sevā*, thinking of Kṛṣṇa in separation, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu did, is far better than serving Kṛṣṇa directly.

BVNM: This separation mood is very important, very, very important. Not necessarily in all cases, but sometimes the separation mood of the *gopīs* is superior to their meeting Kṛṣṇa because they are seeing Him in their hearts. In meeting they lose sight of Kṛṣṇa in their hearts, but in separation, losing Kṛṣṇa outwardly, they are always meeting with Him internally. So sometimes separation becomes superior. But you should know that the *gopīs* cannot be satisfied without meeting Kṛṣṇa and serving Him directly. They

do not want to be separated from Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa does it anyway. Why? Why does He arrange so much separation? There are some reasons, but you can know them only by doing *bhajana*. So you should try to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness and deeply enter into your *bhajana*. Then you will be able to understand and realize something. Only my telling you will not be sufficient. Never. No, we will have to practice and chant more with love and affection, following the example of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and then we can realize something.

We are saying “*rūpānuga-guru-varga ki jaya*” daily. But have you ever questioned what is *rūpānuga*? Why are you glorifying? Was your Gurudeva *rūpānuga*, or *rāgānuga* only? Or not even both? They are saying, “He was only doing regulative *bhakti* and preaching. He never preached *rūpānuga*.” But I am assuring you that he was *rūpānuga*. Why *rūpānuga*? We will have to try to understand what *rūpānuga* is, who Rūpa is, what his mood is, and how we can adopt it. This is not offensive. If we are not doing this, it is offensive, being in the line of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

Thus of all the devotees who have developed unalloyed devotional love for Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* are most exalted, and out of all these exalted *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the highest. No one can excel the devotional service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Indeed, even Kṛṣṇa cannot understand the attitude of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī....

BVNM: She is the highest, the highest! If one cannot become qualified to hear all these things and to have a mood like this, then what will he do? Some will say, “Oh, we are not qualified and will never be qualified in the future.” This is an offense at the lotus feet of *bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa Himself and Rādhārāṇī also. That is why they will become more and more opposed to *rūpānuga-bhakti*.

Devotee reads:

...therefore He took Her position and appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, just to understand Her transcendental feelings. In this way Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gradually concludes that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the most exalted devotee of Kṛṣṇa and that Her *kuṇḍa* (lake), Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, is the most exalted place. This is verified in a quotation from *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* (Uttara-khaṇḍa 45), as quoted in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*:

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos
tasyāḥ kuṇḍam priyam tathā
sarva-gopīṣu saivaikā
viṣṇor atyanta-vallabhā*

“Just as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is dear to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa (Viṣṇu), so Her bathing place (Rādhā-kuṇḍa) is equally dear to Kṛṣṇa. Among all the *gopīs*, She alone stands supreme as the Lord’s most beloved.”

Therefore everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should ultimately take shelter of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and execute devotional service there throughout one’s life.

BVNM: What is he saying? “Everyone.” What is the meaning of everyone? “If anyone has been liberated and gone to Vṛndāvana in their transcendental form, only those persons can have this idea.” Has he written like this? No, he has written, “Therefore anyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness....” And those who are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are bogus persons and will never have this idea. But everyone who is interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should ultimately take shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Rādhā-kuṇḍa. He is saying ‘everyone’, and we are making so many walls, divisions in these instructions. There are no walls—the walls are false. So anyone who is certainly interested in Kṛṣṇa

consciousness will follow this idea, and those who not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness will not follow. This is the guideline. So those who are not interested in taking shelter of Rādhā-kuṇḍa are not Kṛṣṇa conscious. And actually those who are following this statement are really in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

Therefore everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should ultimately take shelter of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and execute devotional service there throughout one's life.

BVNM: Their whole life they will do this. This is a very helpful line, very helpful. Those who are not following these lines are going down. They must go down, there is no path for them. All ways are blocked.

“This is the conclusion ...”

Devotee reads:

This is the conclusion of Rūpa Gosvāmī in the tenth verse of *Upadeśāmṛta*.

BVNM: Yes. Very good.

Text 11

*kṛṣṇasyoccaiḥ praṇaya-vasatiḥ preyasībhyo 'pi rādhā
kuṇḍam cāsyā munibhir abhitas tāḍṛg eva vyadhāyi
yat preṣṭhair aḥy alam asulabham kiṁ punar bhakti-bhājām
tat premedam sakṛd api saraḥ snātur āviṣkaroti*

This is the last *śloka*. What is the translation?

Devotee reads:

Of the many objects of favored delight and of all the lovable damsels of Vrajabhūmi, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is certainly the most treasured object of Kṛṣṇa's love.

BVNM: What is the meaning? Can you explain the meaning of “object of Kṛṣṇa’s love”?

Devotee: She is the most lovable object. Kṛṣṇa has so many objects, so many cowherd boys, cows, so many Vraja *gopīs*, the trees, Yamunā, everything ...

BVNM: Kṛṣṇa’s love. What is the meaning here? The love that the Vrajavāsīs have for Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rādhikā has that—She knows how to love and please Kṛṣṇa. So this should be our object, as Rūpa Gosvāmī has written. First we should know who Kṛṣṇa is. He is the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Do not take Kṛṣṇa as your beloved. We should think that my *ārādhya-devī* is Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and we want Her mood. We cannot take Her mood fully, only in part. What is that part? The mood of Rūpa. We can take only this. So the object of our whole devotion is to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa like Rūpa Gosvāmī. Rūpa Gosvāmī has not served Kṛṣṇa solely as Śrīmatī Rādhikā does. Rather, he has served Śrīmatī Rādhikā. If he had wanted, he could have served Kṛṣṇa directly, because he was himself *nāyikā*, not less than any *gopī*. But he never thought to be any *nāyikā*. Do you know what *nāyikā* means? It means heroine, like Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā, Campakalātā, Śyāmalā, Bhadrā, Candra—they are all *nāyikās*. But Rūpa Gosvāmī and all of our Gosvāmīs never wanted to serve Kṛṣṇa like them, only like Rūpa Mañjarī, who was always serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā. In Her guidance, if She gave an order, they would follow it. This is *rūpānuga-bhāva*.

So what is the treasured object of Kṛṣṇa’s love? Treasure means treasury. They have so much opulence and wealth. We cannot take all of it, but *rūpānuga-jana*, those who are following Rūpa Gosvāmī, want to give us something of Rādhikā’s treasure. It is the most valuable thing, and everything is included in it. We can realize this if we serve any Vaiṣṇava here who has these moods. Then we can have it and our lives will be successful. The object of all our *bhakti* is that. What is it? Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

has said, “What is our object? We want to be the dust of the lotus feet of Rūpa Mañjarī.”

I sang this song upon the departure of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī in his *samādhi* place in Vṛndāvana. Why did I sing it? Because I saw that he used to appreciate this song so much whenever I used to sing it in Mathurā and other places. This song was very, very dear to Swāmījī, so at the very time of his departure I sang, and he was hearing, “*śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-pada sei mora sampada.*” *Sampada* means? Oh, the *sampada* (treasure), he has that *sampatti*, precious wealth from Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s treasury—and we can have it. How? By serving Rūpa Mañjarī. Śrīmatī Rādhikā will meet this challenge.

How was Swāmījī able to take all these things from Rūpa Gosvāmī and from all the epics and produce all his books? I was amazed at his achievement, and I wondered how he did this. This is Swāmījī’s real glory. The glories that we ordinarily praise are not his real glories. “He was so *vairāgī*, renounced. He had nothing to do with any worldly things.” These are not glories. In some people’s eyes they may be glories, but these are secondary. He preached the name all over the world. This is a glory, but it is secondary, thirdly, fourthly. We cannot realize this thing which is described here. He wants to give a jewel from the treasured object of Kṛṣṇa’s love. Where is he? In Rādhikā’s heart. And he has come to give this special thing. Who else has glorified Swāmījī in this way? This is the highest glory of Swāmījī. But I think those who can touch even a little of the glory of Swāmījī are very rare in this world.

This jewel was given by Svarūpa Dāmodara to Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Rūpa Gosvāmī gave it to Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Jīva Gosvāmī. Kindly, mercifully, Raghunātha dāsa gave it to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, and it went into the hands of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and thus came in the hands of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, and from his hands he gave some of these jewels to Swāmījī, “Oh, go give these

to the world.” Those jewels we want to take, but very rare are those who can accept. Our Gosvāmīs are willing to give, but some persons will not take—they refuse. If they do not take, no harm—some little something they are getting. I think that only when they will be in the association of any of these kinds of *bhaktas*, then they can receive something of this treasury and understand the glory of Swāmījī.

Go on.

Devotee reads:

And, in every respect, Her divine *kuṇḍa* is described by great sages as similarly dear to Him. Undoubtedly Rādhā-kuṇḍa is very rarely attained even by the great devotees; therefore it is even more difficult for ordinary devotees to attain. If one simply bathes once within those holy waters, one’s pure love of Kṛṣṇa is fully aroused.

BVNM: He has given hope and we should trust in his words. Purport.

Devotee reads:

Why is Rādhā-kuṇḍa so exalted? The lake is so exalted because it belongs to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is the most beloved object of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: I think that this *kuṇḍa* is Herself Śrīmatī Rādhikā, not that it belongs to Her. He has written this only so that we can easily understand this thing. Rādhā-kuṇḍa is Herself Rādhikā, and Kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍa is Himself Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that these *kuṇḍas* are even more merciful than Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā, because these *kuṇḍas* are manifest. We can touch them and take bath in them. We cannot realize transcendental Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā, so these *kuṇḍas* are most merciful to us.

Even if we do not know the glory of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, but go there and with honor take water and sprinkle it on us, take bath, or glorify Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Rādhikā will be very pleased, certainly. And we can have the mercy of Rādhā-kuṇḍa by

going there, or living here and in our minds taking bath and doing a very simple meditation, “Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Rādhā-kuṇḍa.” In this way something will come to us.

Devotee: In our conditioned state are we really touching Rādhā-kuṇḍa when we bathe there?

BVNM: Really or not, the heart touches a little, no harm, no harm. Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa are so powerful. Nārada has received the benediction that if anyone touches, sees or hears about any place of Kṛṣṇa’s pure pastimes, Kṛṣṇa will have to give *prema*. “You are bound to give.” Kṛṣṇa vows, “Yes, I am bound.”

Devotee reads:

The conclusion is that to live on the banks of the Rādhā-kuṇḍa and to bathe there daily constitute the highest perfection of devotional service. It is a difficult position to attain, even for great sages and devotees like Nārada. Thus there is no limit to the glory of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. By serving Rādhā-kuṇḍa, one can get an opportunity to become an assistant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī under the eternal guidance of the *gopīs*.

BVNM: This is the conclusion. We have no time to explain all these words. Each and every word of *The Nectar of Instruction* should be explained, but we have no time to do this. Without understanding and following, we cannot realize the meaning of *rūpānuga* and the glory of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. But at least we should hear and know that this is the object of our whole devotional life, and this is the highest goal. Keeping this object in our heart, we should start from the beginning, following what Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has told in *Manah Śikṣā*:

*gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūsuragaṇe
sva-mantre śrī-nāmnī vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe
sadā dambham hitvā kuru ratim apūrvām atitarām
aye svāntar bhrātaś caṭubhir abhiyāce dhṛta-padaḥ*

[O my dear brother, my foolish mind! Taking hold of your feet, I humbly implore you with sweet words. Please give up all pride and quickly develop sublime and incessant *rati* for Śrī Gurudeva, Śrī Vraja-dhāma, the residents of Vraja, the Vaiṣṇavas, the *brāhmaṇas*, your *dikṣā-mantras*, the holy names of the Supreme Lord, and the shelter of Kiśora-Kiśorī, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the eternally youthful divine couple of Vraja.]

This *śloka* is so important. If we do not follow it, we cannot enter into all these moods. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is a most dear *rūpānuṅga* Vaiṣṇava and if we will take shelter of him, he will show us the way to enter within this *Nectar of Instruction*. Otherwise we cannot enter. So we should remember this *śloka* and keep it always in our throats and try to do all these things. This is the mercy. “Mahārāja, you should be merciful to me. Mahārāja, you should be merciful to me. Gurudeva, you should be merciful to me.” This is the mercy. You should take this, then all your problems will go away.

For those who want to serve Kṛṣṇa, their only problem is how to get Kṛṣṇa’s service—there is no problem other than this. And if it is solved, everything is solved! So we should not be absorbed so much in problems. Always problems, problems, problems! The only problem is to get Kṛṣṇa’s service—nothing else. People may reject us—no harm. The whole world can reject us—no harm. But I know that Kṛṣṇa will never forget us, never! He has promised, “One may be rejected by one’s mother, father, husband, wife, children, by the whole world, even by one’s so-called *guru*, but those who are giving up all these things for Me, I can never give them up.” You will have to have faith in Kṛṣṇa’s words:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*

Mām ekaṁ. Surrender to Me only and there will never be any problem for you. If you are Arjuna and you are killing Bhīṣma

Pitāmaha, you are killing your Gurudeva, Dronācārya and Kṛpācārya, you are killing Duryodhana, Duḥśāsana, Aśvatthāmā and all of your hundred brothers, if you are killing your relatives who are in Duryodhana’s party and opposed to you, if you are killing everyone, still you will get no reaction, nothing! I will take all these reactions and burn them. Don’t be worried about this.

How can Kṛṣṇa make this good promise? We will have to trust His words. Otherwise, how can we go forward in *bhakti*? Kṛṣṇa has said so many things more wonderful than this, so we should follow these instructions if we want to be like this. This is the mercy—my mercy, Rūpa Gosvāmī’s mercy, Gurudeva’s mercy, Mahāprabhu’s mercy—everything is there.

*gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūsuragaṇe
sva-mantre śrī-nāmnī vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe
sadā dambham hitvā*

Dambham means false ego. “I am a very beautiful lady. I am a very handsome youth. I am so intelligent. I am so wealthy. I am so qualified. I am Indian. I am Vrajavāsī.” Give up all these false identifications. “If you are not paying *dakṣiṇā*, I will give you a curse. Become a tortoise. Your *sarva-nāśa* is happening.” Do you know what *sarva-nāśa* means?

Devotee: Destruction. You will be completely destroyed.

BVNM: Some Vrajavāsīs say, “First pay *dakṣiṇā*, *lākṣmī*, *lākṣmī*.” These people are not really Vrajavāsīs. *Gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūsuragaṇe*. *Guru*. Who is *guru*? Those who have taken some jewels from the treasury of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. And what is that jewel? Here Swāmījī has told—to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā like Rūpa Mañjarī. This is the jewel! Only those who have this jewel can give it to you. Otherwise, those who have no jewels like this, how can they give anything? They can only say what they have realized: “Bring money to build a *mandira*.” Or, “I am giving you a visa for Goloka

Vṛndāvana and you will directly go there.” What is the value of such a promise? To give this jewel is the main reason why Prabhupāda came, but I think that those who are making false promises have not understood their *guru*’s true glory. So *guru* is he who has the jewel from the treasure-house of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Gurau goṣṭhe: *Guru* is giving these things. He who is taking everything—all wealth, all reputation, all services from devotees—but not clearing our hearts, not making them pure to offer at the lotus feet of Rādhikā, then he is actually not *guru*. But real *guru* you will have to honor and serve.

Gurau goṣṭhe: What is the meaning of *goṣṭha*? Where Kṛṣṇa lives—Nandagāon, Varsānā, Māyāpura, Gambhīra, all are *goṣṭha*, but especially in Vraja-bhūmi—Nandagāon, Varsānā, Rādhā-kunḍa. These places are *goṣṭha* and you will have to honor them.

Goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu: *goṣṭhālayiṣu* are those who live in *goṣṭha*, like Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā Maiyā, Śrīdāmā, Subala, Madhumaṅgala, and all the *gopas* and *gopīs*. Devotees like Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and all following in their line are also *goṣṭhālayiṣu*. The Vrajavāsīs of today are not in this category. You should serve *goṣṭhālayiṣu*.

Goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane: *Sujane* means devotees from other *sampradāyas* like Madhvācārya, Rāmānuja. They are *sujane*, serving Kṛṣṇa in His other forms. They may be residing in Vṛndāvana, but they are not Vrajavāsī. What are they? *Sujana*, *sajjana*, but not Vrajavāsī. Who are the Vrajavāsīs? Those in the mood of the *gopas* and *gopīs*—they are Vrajavāsīs. Those who have taken birth in Vṛndāvana, Vraja-bhūmi, are not necessarily Vrajavāsīs. Real Vrajavāsīs can be anywhere in this world, but they must have the mood of the *gopas* and *gopīs*. *Sujane bhūsurā-gaṇe:* Who is *bhūsurā*? They are the *brāhmaṇas*, serving Kṛṣṇa, but along with Him they are also serving so many demigods. Still, they should be given some honor.

Then *bhūsurā-gaṇe sva-mantre*. If you want to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness, try to know the moods of the *mantras* given

by your Gurudeva. Punctually, daily, you should try to say them as he has instructed you. And then *mahā-mantra*, the *Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra*, *sva-mantra*. *Guru* has given that *mantra*. What *mantra*? Himself Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa:

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

This *mantra* is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal. Giving up all of your false ego, false walls and everything unfavorable, you should say these *mantras* with so much honor, with *prīti*, *rati*. You should serve all these persons and places that Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has mentioned and that we have explained. Then you will see that very soon you will develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is mercy. If you want to take my mercy or the mercy of any *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava, this is the mercy you should try to attain. This will solve all our problems.

Gaura premānande!

A P P E N D I X

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 1

Mathurā, 3 November 1996



I have told you to remember this first *śloka* of *Upadeśāmṛta*.

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmāṁ pṛthivīm sa śīśyāt*

[A wise and self-composed person who can subdue the impetus to speak, the agitation of the mind, the onset of anger, the vehemence of the tongue, the urge of the belly and the agitation of the genitals can instruct the entire world. In other words, all persons may become disciples of such a self-controlled person.]

If we are chanting, remembering and reading many books, but are not being very careful to give up these six *vegas*, we cannot develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I know that so many devotees

are taking shelter of Gurudeva and trying to do *bhajana*, but no advancement is coming. All the *anarthas*, unwanted desires, are still there. They may even have done *bhajana* for more than fifty years, but after some time they fell down. Not only one or two but several devotees, even many who had taken the renounced order, fell down, because they were not careful about giving up these six *vegas*. We may do *bhajana*, chanting *nāma*, for more than fifty or even one hundred years, but still all kinds of bad desires come in our hearts. Our mind is not controlled, our tongue is not controlled, our everything is out of control—and that is why we are not advancing.

Sometimes we pretend to be very big, big scholars, preachers and *sannyāsīs*, but by pretense we will not be successful. If you are not doing *bhajana* under the guidance of a bona fide Vaiṣṇava, you will still be subject to *krodha*. I have explained *mano-vega* and also *jihvā-vega*, so we should carefully try to control them. Yet I know that they cannot be controlled unless there is good association, good quality chanting and remembering—good *bhakti*. If *bhakti* will come, *vegas* will go. Otherwise they cannot go. So we should always try to search for good association, *sat-saṅga*.

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

(CC. Madhya 22.54)

Those who are not taking association of devotees who are more developed than themselves will very soon fall down from the stage they have achieved. We are witnessing so many cases of this. We think that we can go into seclusion in the forest or any pleasant place and then we will be able to check all these *vegas*, because “we have become *guru*.” We feel no need to take higher association. “There is none like me. I’m a bona fide Vaiṣṇava. I have become *ācārya*.” After some time we see that *māyā* comes and enters through the mouth in the form of delicious foods. *Māyā* goes

inside the heart of that devotee and he becomes more *krodhī*, more lusty, more of a cheater, and subject to other bad qualities. So Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is advising that we should try as hard as possible and weep for the mercy of bona fide Vaiṣṇavas and Kṛṣṇa. And we should be very cautious—we should not think that we can give up the association of the Vaiṣṇavas.

Today I was describing how Yaśodā did *pariśrama*, so much hard labor, with great sincerity. Kṛṣṇa saw that His mother had become worried that she could not control her son, so then He easily came under her control. We must also try very hard. We should be like monkeys who catch hold of their mothers and also we should weep for Kṛṣṇa like the very little kitten—both combined. We must weep for the mercy and also try our hardest. We should do both. If Kṛṣṇa, Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu see our sincerity, and at the same time our *śaraṇāgati*, our surrender, They will surely be very merciful to us and our *anarthas* will go in a very short time.

It has been told:

*kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ
viraktir māna-śūnyatā
āśā-bandhaḥ samutkaṅṭhā
nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ*

(BRS. 1.3.25)

[Tolerance, effectual use of one's time, detachment from worldly enjoyment, absence of pride, steadfast hope that Kṛṣṇa will bestow His mercy, intense longing to obtain one's goal, always possessed of taste to chant the holy name, attachment to hearing narrations of the Lord's qualities, and affection for His abodes—these are the symptoms of the appearance of *bhāva*.]

First Rūpa Gosvāmī has explained that *kṣānti* means tolerance. For example, an occasion for anger may arise but, nevertheless,

you will not become angry. “Someone has rebuked me but I should not get angry.” But still you cannot check your anger. If someone dishonors and insults you, you will become so furious and angry. You cannot control it. Only the devotees who are under the guidance of a bona fide Vaiṣṇava can check their anger, by the mercy of that Vaiṣṇava and Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise, it is not possible. Those devotees will always remember this *śloka* from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāno
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam
hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namas te
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

(SB. 10.14.8)

[My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently tolerating the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible to attain unalloyed service to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, for it has become his rightful claim.]

You should always remember these words when trying to do *bhajana*, especially if you have been initiated. Otherwise, *māyā* will come in the form of *krodha* and cover you. She will derail you at once. What is the meaning of *tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāno*? *Dīvyā-jñānam* comes to those who have taken shelter of a Vaiṣṇava and have taken *dīkṣā*. Their relation with Kṛṣṇa has been established and they are so enthusiastic to follow these instructions. Gradually, their relationship with Kṛṣṇa develops. They know who they are, who is Kṛṣṇa and what is their relation with Him. Now they know the aim and object of their life and their *sādhana-bhajana*. Then they proceed directly to the goal, and they will remember that their *guru* has told them, “Do not be angry! Do not be dissatisfied! Be satisfied with what you have.” Thus they will be content.

“If anyone is beating me like the Mohammedans did to Haridāsa Ṭhākura in twenty-two market-places, I should remember how he never became angry.” He said to them, “You can cut me into *lākhas* and *lākhas* of pieces, but I will never, never, never give up *harināma*. I will always do *harināma* no matter what.” Although they were beating him in so many markets and abusing him so much, still he never became angry. Why? He thought, “I have done something for which I should be punished, so now I am receiving what I deserve. I have done so many wrong things in my past lives and now I have to taste all these reactions. Thus, they are beating and insulting me. All this is due to my past activities, so I should tolerate. Whether I am laughing or weeping, I will have to tolerate.” So he became very calm and quiet.

Devotees especially should think, “If I have some *sukṛti*, good impressions from past births, it has come from *harināma*. If I have chanted *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, not aware of His auspiciousness, still so much benefit comes.” Doing *harināma* even in ignorance will not be fruitless. If someone chants “*Hare Kṛṣṇa*” for his father, mother and sons rather than for Kṛṣṇa, still he will get so much good result because *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is so powerful.

I know that if people are insulting and beating me here and there, I must have done something wrong in my past lives. Take the *tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. You remember the *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsī*? He had been a family man, a *brāhmaṇa*, and so rich. He never cared for his wife, children, villagers, or neighbors—he never cared for anyone. He never paid any tax to the government and he never gave any charity. If anyone came for a donation, he would take a *lāṭhī*, stick, and run after that person. He would never give anything. One time some government officials came and took all of his belongings. Then that night more people came and set his home on fire, and everything was burned. His sons and wife declared, “You should leave our home.” And thus he became helpless, completely alone.

By some good fortune he met a Vaiṣṇava. Becoming very polite and gentle, he fell flat at the lotus feet of that Vaiṣṇava, “Save me, save me from all these calamities. I’m so worried—so many sufferings and difficulties have come to me. My boys, my wife, all my relatives, villagers and neighbors have sent me out of my house and village. I am now penniless with nothing to eat and no possessions at all.” The Vaiṣṇava told him, “Do not be worried. I am giving you the *kṛṣṇa-mantra*. By this you will have everything you like. You can even get salvation, and after salvation you can serve Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana or in Vaikuṅṭha, as you like.” He became happy and the Vaiṣṇava gave the renounced order to that penniless *brāhmaṇa*. He told him to go and beg in his own village from his neighbors.

The Vaiṣṇava gave him some pots and ordered, “Go there at once.” When he reached his village, his wife and children, his neighbors and all the villagers became furious and began to abuse him. “You are an imposter, pretender, hypocrite! You are an offender!” Saying all these things, they began to beat him. They took his pot and put stool in it instead of *rotī*. They snatched his *daṇḍa* and beat him with it. Then they dragged him away. He reported this to Gurudeva who replied, “Oh yes, very good! You should again go to that place. Did you also abuse them and try to beat them?” “No, Gurudeva.” “Again go and tolerate.” He returned and again they did the same, but he was quite silent. He was thinking:

*tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāno
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtām vipākam
hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namas te
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

He was remembering this *śloka* and thinking, “Gurudeva has kindly given me this *tridaṇḍi-veśa* to serve Mukunda, so as long as I have this body, I will have to tolerate all difficulties. Kṛṣṇa is so

merciful that He has given me a chance to rectify myself.” He went back to his village again and again. Then all the villagers observed a change in him. “He is so sincere now. He is not speaking a word of protest despite our abuse.” Gradually they developed so much honor for him. Gurudeva told him, “Now you are able to serve Kṛṣṇa, so come on.”

So we should try to give up all our anger and other bad qualities in our characters. If we can observe this, certainly Kṛṣṇa will be very glad. We try not to smoke, because it has been written in the four basic rules and regulations that we should not smoke, we should not take wine, we should not drink, we should not look at ladies with lust. We should not kill any animal or any person. These four rules are basic. Sometimes we outwardly follow them, but we never worry about our anger or lust. A man can indulge his lust and change his wife ten times, or women may change their husbands so many times, ten times, more than that! They are not concerned for the future consequences. Some devotees may lie and cheat others, saying, “I’m taking this donation to serve my Gurudeva and Kṛṣṇa,” and they keep everything for themselves. Sometimes, kindly, they give one fourth of that donation to their Gurudeva and three-fourths they put in their pocket. We don’t take heed of all these bad qualities, because they are so deeply hidden in the heart. I know there are also so many lusty persons. But it is more dangerous to lie and cheat than to take a cigarette or to drink. More dangerous, but we are not concerned. Understand? We don’t drink, but we can indulge our lust as we like. We can cheat by collecting funds of so many *lākhas* and *lākhas* rupees. We can take a motor car worth 75 *lākhas*, saying, “I am going to serve my Gurudeva. Kindly give me some donation and I will serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.” But that whole amount goes into his pocket and thus he falls down.

So we should very carefully try to follow all these instructions. If you have *krodha*, beware! *Krodha* is very, very dangerous for all, but especially for beginners. When anger is aroused, knowledge is

lost. We become fools, unable to distinguish right from wrong or to understand what will be the fruit of our behavior. Then our *bhakti* is lost. If we fight with our Gurudeva, we will think that we know as much as him, even if he is a bona fide *guru*. So many persons, now as well as in the past, have come to Gurudeva, who is so qualified, but yet they do not follow his orders. Instead they abuse him, “Oh, you do not know anything.” I have seen persons like this. They become so angry but this behavior is not favorable for *bhakti*. To abuse Gurudeva, to fight or to be angry with him is much worse than smoking cigarettes, telling a lie or stealing. This is so dangerous.

We know how lusty Bilvamaṅgala was, but he was changed in a day. You know Ajāmīla—he became such a wonderful devotee by the touch of four Viṣṇudūtas, so we should try to follow all these teachings internally. Do not just make an outward show, like not taking cigarettes, for example. This will not help so much. We do not put so much stress on not taking cigarettes or meat—these things will automatically go. I know that Swāmiji once told me, “When I go to Western countries, I will allow the boys to come in my hostel, and I will supply eggs, meat, and wine if they want.” I asked, “Why?” “Oh, the power of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is very wonderful. I will tell them that you can take all these things but chant *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. And in a very short time, they will be transformed into good devotees.” I know that he made hippies happy, so happy that they became nice devotees.

We do not put so much stress on outward things, but we stress *vaco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam, jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam*. If you do not control your stomach, so many diseases will come and lust is bound to come. You cannot check it. So we should try and pray to Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, Rūpa, Sanātana, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda, that mercifully they should empower us so that we can give up all our bad habits and become bona fide Vaisṇavas. Do not try to hide any-

thing from a Vaiṣṇava, Guru or Kṛṣṇa, because after sometime it will become a very big blunder. If there are blunders, you cannot check the reactions. Understand? If we do not express our inner feelings and inner lusty desires to our *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, if we try to hide these things, they will become more and more powerful and one day they will engulf us.

So do not try to hide anything from the Vaiṣṇavas. I know that some of you are hiding things. Some among you are hearing *hari-kathā* and also writing *prema-kathā*, love letters, to others in your group. I know, because if I did not know, how can I be a Vaiṣṇava? So you should believe me when I tell you that I know everything you have in your hearts. Do not try to hide anything. Guru knows everything if he is bona fide, so do not try to conceal and hide all these things. You should have faith in me and I will try to give medicines for these diseases and certainly you will recover!

Gaura premānande!

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 1

Mathurā, 31 October 1996



What is *vāco-vega*? It is the urge to speak and is the root of all bad qualities. It can bring on *krodha* and other evils as well, like lust and envy. It can actually destroy us, so we must always try to control our tongue. Having no bone, no backbone, she can go in any direction heedlessly, sometimes here, sometimes there, sometimes up, sometimes down. She is so crooked—she will go anywhere and provoke all kinds of evil activities.

Don't try to joke with the Vaiṣṇavas, with your friends or with anyone. In joking we may say something very improper. If we joke with our Gurudeva or the Vaiṣṇavas, we may commit some offense, and then *jivhā-vega* is aroused, so we should be very careful. Especially, lady devotees should not joke with the men, and the men in turn should not joke with the ladies. Caitanya Mahāprabhu has warned us strictly—this tongue can do so many wrong things.

Śrī Rāmacandra, following his promise to his father, was staying in Pañcavaṭī of Daṇḍakāraṇya with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā. At that

time Rāvaṇa sent Marīcī in the shape of a golden deer. Sītā saw it and prayed to her husband, “I want to have this golden deer. I have never seen any deer like this and I want it. If he cannot be taken alive, at least I want his skin. I will give it to Bharata or Kaikeyī.” Lakṣmaṇa said, “I am very suspicious of this deer. An ordinary deer will not be so beautiful. I fear that there is some conspiracy here. This is not a normal deer.” Rāma replied, “Do not worry. Have no doubts. I am going. You should stay here and protect Sītā. I will surely capture it and bring it here dead or alive.”

Rāma left to follow the deer, who went very far away. Rāma shot an arrow. As the deer was dying, he transformed into a demon, speaking in a voice the same as Rāmacandra’s, “O Lakṣmaṇa, O Lakṣmaṇa!” The sound reached the ear of Sītājī and She became so worried. “O Rāmacandra! He has been attacked by some demon, so He has called Lakṣmaṇa.” She said to Lakṣmaṇa, “At once go and save your brother. I am so worried for Him.” Lakṣmaṇa replied, “Do not be worried. I know Rāma. No one can attack or harm Him. So remain here peacefully.” But Sītā said, “No, you should go and see. He has called out like a dying man.” Lakṣmaṇa answered, “Do not worry. I will not go because Rāma has told me to stay here to protect you, and that I will do.” Sītā told, “Oh, you want to marry me? Rāma should be killed and you’ll be my husband? That can never happen. I will die by poison or I will burn myself in fire but I can never be your wife. I know that you are a CIA of Bharata and Kaikeyī.”

Lakṣmaṇa became so worried. “Why is Sītā speaking like this?” He could not bear her harsh words and was bewildered by Her speech. Repeatedly She kept talking like this and then began to weep, saying, “I know that you are a very cruel person and have come to cheat Rāma. You have come to murder Him. I cannot bear this.” She was weeping and weeping. Lakṣmaṇa said, “I do not know what will be the result, but I will go. However, I will take one precaution—I am drawing a line for your protection. You must not

cross beyond this line for any reason.” Saying this, he went off, but Sītā was guilty of an offense to Lakṣmaṇa. Lakṣmaṇa was completely pure-hearted. He had no lust, but Sītā had spoken like this because She was Māyā Sītā, not the original Sītā. In this form she abused Lakṣmaṇa and committed an offense. Because of this, Lakṣmaṇa went off. Rāvaṇa came suddenly and took Sītā away. If Lakṣmaṇa had been there, Sītā could not have been stolen and Rāvaṇa could not have come at all. Only because of Sītā’s words, so many calamities ensued. A very big war took place and Rāvaṇa was defeated. From this you should understand how important it is to control your tongue.

There is also the story of Draupadī. One time she said to Duryodhana, “You are the son of a blind man and you are also blind. You are not seeing where there is water and where there is land.” He became furious and vowed, “I will surely take revenge for this and be vindicated.” Fighting ensued and both the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas were destroyed. So try to control your tongue. Do not speak whatever you feel like. Consider first what will be the effect of your words. If you can check your tongue, then you can do *bhajana* easily.

Gaura premānande!

A P P E N D I X

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Ślokaś 1-4

Eugene, 30.4.01 am and 1.5.01 am



We are explaining *The Nectar of Instruction*. These instructions were given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who inspired in the heart of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī all *rasas* along with the process by which very easily we can have that *rasa*—how we can enter into the sweet pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and then Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. But we should always remember—in Kali Yuga:

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

For Kali Yuga, neither *yoga*, *tapasya*, nor anything else of the sort is prescribed. Out of so many limbs of *bhakti*, this *Hare Kṛṣṇa*

nāma-saṅkīrtana is the most prominent. Everything is in the name, everything.

*nāma-cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇas
caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

You should always have strong faith in the name—always, always. There is nothing else required, only the name. Our *sādhana* and also our *sādhya* are included in the name. But there is some process that must be followed. In the guidance of a very *rasika*, *tattva-jñā* Vaiṣṇava, one must always chant the name, and by the mercy of this Vaiṣṇava, all benefits will come. There is no need to speculate or use our imagination. Everything will come.

There is one thing we should keep in mind—we should try to keep this transcendental wealth in our hearts as our life and soul. It is not to be distributed wholesale. If you are distributing it here and there, what will happen? It will evaporate like camphor. How can you keep camphor? If you leave it in the open, it will go away in a moment. So keep it in an airtight bottle with some black pepper; then it will not go away. This heart is our bottle, and with black pepper inside, close it very, very tight. If *kali mirch* (black pepper) is there, not even a little camphor will be lost.

What is the meaning? We should only take out our transcendental wealth as Mahāprabhu did. He shared it with only three and a half persons—not with anyone else, because this was His life and soul. You may experience that tears are coming, but after some time, if you reveal your wealth improperly, you will see that your tears are gone, never to return. So, you should try to preserve this precious wealth in your heart. Keep it sacred. Do not take it to the fish market, here and there. Distribute it to those who are very qualified. Whisper in their ears only. This is like black pepper—keep

these things very carefully, my dear children. Otherwise you will lose everything. I want you to be able to keep this treasure. And what else is that *kali mirch*? It is *sādhu-saṅga*. You should always stay in *sādhu-saṅga*, because this will help you protect your precious wealth.

You should try to follow all the teachings and principles of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. He has named this book ‘*amṛta*’, nectar—*Nectar of Instruction*. Whose instructions are these? His own? No, they are Mahāprabhu’s. By following them, you can very easily taste that nectar, very easily. This nectar comes in two forms: first—what not to do, and next—what to do. First—what not to do is told especially for those who have taken initiation, who want to taste the nectar of Mahāprabhu’s teachings. And what is that nectar? *Rāgānugā-bhakti* in the stage of *rati*. This is meant for those devotees in the stage of *rati*, not for ordinary persons. These instructions carry a very deep meaning, so try to follow them, imbibing them like nectar.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī first tells us:

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvam apīmām pṛthivīm sa śīṣyāt*

Try to follow this if you want to enjoy that nectar. What is the meaning?

Devotee: There are six urges to control in the beginning of the *bhakti* process. *Vāco vegam*—one should control his speech. He should control his tongue, speaking only about Kṛṣṇa, and not letting the tongue seek sense gratification. The tongue has no strong will to do the right thing and can be a great source of danger. *Manasaḥ vegam*—controlling the mind and always thinking about Kṛṣṇa. *Krodha-vegam*—controlling anger. *Jihvā-*

vegām—controlling the pushings of the tongue in terms of foodstuffs. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī not to eat luxuriously, not to run after the tongue. Our Guru Maharaja, Śrīla Prabhupāda, said there is a straight line between the tongue, the stomach and genitals. If the tongue is not controlled, then so many diseases will come in the stomach. And by that pressure downward, one develops lusty desires. We should not eat foodstuffs prepared by materialists, because then our mind will become evil.

One who is *dhira*, who is controlled in these six urges, becomes qualified to be *jagat-guru* and to make disciples all over the world.

BVNM: This is nectar, but there are those who do not want to take it. They think it is bitter, very bitter. They want only *rasa*—to hear about the very sweet night (*niśā-līlā*), pre-dawn (*niśānta-līlā*) and midday (*madhyāhna-līlā*) pastimes. They do not want to control the six urges, but this instruction to do so is more important.

What is the meaning of ‘sober’, a sober person? *Dhira*—a sober person is one who can tolerate the urge to speak. Oh, this is the problem. This tongue has no backbone. She makes quarrels everywhere, everywhere. You know, I have told so many times that you should not speak as you like. Do not do what the tongue wants because it is uncontrolled. It caused the Mahābhārata battle and the Rāmāyaṇa Battle of Laṅkā. And all were destroyed.

In addition, don’t tell others about Kṛṣṇa’s sweet *aṣṭa-kālīya* pastimes which are in *Govinda-Līlāmṛta* and *Kṛṣṇa-Bhāvanāmṛta*. This is also a kind of looseness of the tongue. You should try to control this urge—oh, to do this is very hard, very hard. But if you want a drop of this nectar, you should try to control the tongue. Don’t speak these confidential topics here and there in the markets.

And then, *krodha-vegām*: this is the root problem. From where does anger come? It comes from so many desires. Where there are no desires, there is no *krodha* at all. You will be very happy—

always, always happy, and always smiling. Your face will show that you have no anger. So, you should try to take this drop of nectar first if you want to enjoy the transcendental nectar of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā.

Jihvā-vegām—some Pepsi, some Coca Cola, and here also, there are so many kinds of drinks, so many, but try to control yourselves. You should take only what is required to maintain your life. Be like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Then no desires will come. Swāmī Mahārāja told something new—all these senses are here in a straight line. All the important things are here—the mind, the tongue, then the belly, and more, oh, very very bad thing, and even this is in a straight line. So we should try to control these urges. But who can do this? Even Śaṅkara failed, and Brahmā also failed. Only Haridāsa Ṭhākura was saved. Why? Because he had offered his everything to Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. *Māyā* came in the shape of a very beautiful young lady, saying, “Oh, you should meet with me.”

“I will fulfill your desire,” Haridāsa told her. “Oh, wait a little. I am doing a *yajña*—one *crore* (ten million names) *harināma*. Very soon I will be finished. You should sit down and wait. I will surely fulfill your desire.” But his *yajña* was not finished in one or two days. It took three days—*harer nāma*, *harer nāma*, and then *harer nāma*—three times *śāstra* says this and in three days she was purified! Surely, surely and surely, if anyone will chant like this, surely, surely and surely, one will be purified. And thus it came to pass that the lust of that prostitute was removed at once. Everything is in a straight line—mind, tongue, stomach and what? I do not know the word. All were purified, and she became like Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Not like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, but some of his qualities came to her, and she became at once renounced. She came to him, saying:

“O Prabhu, I want to take your shelter.”

“Go to your house,” he told her. “Sell your house and donate all your belongings to the greedy *brāhmaṇas*. They can accept these things very easily. Do not keep anything. You should be *akiñcana-niṣkiñcana*. Keep only one white *sārī*.”

She was a very beautiful teeny-aged girl, and she left everything. When she returned, Haridāsa Ṭhākura told her, “I am giving you this nectar—*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*. Don’t go here and there. You should be seated here. You can go out only to clean your body, to pass urine and such things. You should take bath here in the Ganges, and in my *āśrama* Tulasi is growing. Sit by her, and day and night without rest you should chant.”

She did as he instructed, and what happened to her? She became a very high-class devotee. All elevated Vaiṣṇavas used to come to see how she had changed, how the impossible had become possible. This is very wonderful. So we should try to follow her example. Such a person is actually *guru*, and the whole world will become his disciple. Even Brahmā and Śaṅkara will come to take his *darśana*, and Kṛṣṇa Himself will come when such a person is chanting. So we should try to follow this instruction.

And then second:

*atyāhāraḥ prayasaś ca
prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyam ca
ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati*

You should note this down in your heart. What is the meaning? **Devotee:** In the second verse of *Upadeśāmṛta*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains that there are six activities which must be avoided; otherwise, our devotional life will be totally ruined. What are they? First of all—*atyāhāraḥ*, over-eating. This does not pertain to over-eating with the mouth only. We have five knowledge-acquiring senses. If these senses are engaged in any way in material enjoyment, this is called *atyāhāraḥ*, or over-eating through any of the senses. *Prayasaś* means over-endeavoring. What is an over- endeavor? Any activity which is detrimental to our *bhajana* or any activity which is not geared to the development of our spiritual life—this is an over-

endeavor, and it must be rejected. *Prajalpa* means talking unnecessarily about mundane subject matters. *Niyamāgrahaḥ*—*niyama* means rules and regulations. One may not be following rules and regulations but rejecting them and acting whimsically according to the dictates of the mind or independently of the orders of the *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas—this is called *niyama agrahaḥ*. And *niyama āgrahaḥ*—this means to follow the rules and regulations so strictly that even when there is a chance to make spiritual advancement by having good association, you will neglect that association due to strictly adhering to your own vows and practices. So both of these can destroy devotional service. This also refers to someone practicing devotional life who has developed his *adhikāra*, but even though he has made some progress, he continues to follow the rules and regulations that pertain to a lower stage of spiritual life. This will cause him to stagnate and his *bhakti* will go away.

Jana-saṅga—this means to associate with persons who are against *bhakti*.

asat-saṅga tyāga,—ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra
'strī-saṅgī'—eka asādhu, 'kṛṣṇābhakta 'āra

(Madhya 22.87)

Mahāprabhu asked, “Who is a Vaiṣṇava?” He said, “That person who gives up *asat-saṅga* is a Vaiṣṇava.” There are two types of *asat-saṅga*—*māyāvādī*, impersonalist, and the other is *strī-saṅgī*, those males or females who are attached to the association of the opposite sex—to associate with them or to associate directly with the opposite sex is called *strī-saṅga*. This is very dangerous. One should not associate with those who do this.

Lauḷyam means greediness. In his commentary, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explained this greediness as the restlessness of the mind to look for and hanker for different types of philosophies which are not coming in our *guru-varga*. When the mind is restless and tries to take something from these philosophies

instead of taking only the conceptions which are flowing in our *guru-paramparā*, this is called *laulyam*. It is also the cause of the destruction of our *bhakti*.

BVNM: *Ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati*—what is the meaning? Oh, you have taken initiation and some *bhakti* has come. You have progressed in *bhakti* up to the stage of *ruci*, and *āsakti* is about to come. But if you are not avoiding these prohibitions, even from this advanced stage your *bhakti* will go away. Even if you have attained *ruci*, and *āsakti* has started coming, you will fall down if you are engaging in these forbidden activities.

These first two drops of nectar are very important. If you are not following these instructions, then you will think that *āropa-siddha-bhakti* and *saṅga-siddha-bhakti*—the types of *bhakti* in which you are engaged—are *śuddha-bhakti*. Then what will be the result?

In this regard, I want to tell you about an incident that happened at a big ISKCON center in Calcutta. Yesterday we read in the “Times of India” that over 70 devotees were arrested there. They were quarreling with the intent to kill each other. And who were they? Godbrothers. The leaders of both sides had taken initiation from the great personality Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, and now they were quarreling to take control of that center and all the devotees. One of their godbrothers had become a *guru* and GBC, and was controlling everyone. And the second party, having no faith in that *guru*, were *ṛtvik*. They also want to control all of ISKCON, and were insisting that they are the real ISKCON. But who is the real ISKCON? Neither side is ISKCON. I do not want that we should be like them. From the very beginning, we must control all urges and avoid these six prohibitions. Otherwise, we are bound to act like them, and that’s why I am not going to establish such big, big centers here and there around the world.

I want you to practice all these instructions and preach throughout the whole world. That is the best thing. Tell everyone:

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

You should chant and be like a *guru* and instruct others. To be *guru* means that you should practice these teachings and tolerate all these urges. First you should practice, and then you can tell others. Then really you are a Vaiṣṇava. You should be *akiñcana* (having no sense of ownership) and *dīna-hīna* (very humble), not quarreling with anyone. Why are godbrothers quarreling? For *bhakti* or what? They are quarreling because they are greedy for mundane achievements—only this. I request you not to do this. Be very humble.

Those who are taking *nāma*, chanting and following all these instructions must be Vaiṣṇavas. They cannot fall down, ever. If one is following these regulations but not chanting and remembering and not in the guidance of any Vaiṣṇava, then really he is not a Vaiṣṇava. These instructions have not been given for such persons. They have been told for those who have taken initiation, who are following *guru* and all his teachings, who have taste in the name, for whom *āsakti* is about to come and whose offenses are almost gone. As it has been told in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.18):

*naṣṭa-prayeṣv abhadreṣu
nityam bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavaty uttama-śloke
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī*

[By regularly hearing *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the person *bhāgavata*, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.]

Without practicing the limbs of *bhakti*, one may try to follow *atyāhāraḥ prayasaś ca* and also *vaco vegam jihvā-vegam* only, but actually this is not possible. No one in the whole world can do this. From the beginning, how can one follow *vaco vegam jihvā-vegam krodha-vegam*? How can one tolerate these pushings? First one must accept *bhakti*. By the power of *bhakti*, as much *bhakti* will come, these urges will go. Without *bhakti*, *vaco vega* cannot be given up. One will not be strong enough to give it up. So first, one must accept initiation; then he will engage in chanting, remembering, serving *guru* and in this way advance.

Devotee: The very first verse says if I can control these things, then I can be *guru* of everyone.

BVNM: Oh, this is the meaning for those who are in jail. This is their foolishness, that “I will be *guru*.” From the beginning, as soon as they took initiation, they began to be *guru*, thinking, “Now I am *guru*. Oh, Gurudeva, give me some *jhola-mālā* (bead bags); I want to initiate others.”

“Very good,” Gurudeva replies.

From the beginning they wanted to be *guru*, but really they are not *guru*. How many disciples did Rūpa Gosvāmī have? Sanātana Gosvāmī, how many disciples? Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, how many disciples?

Then:

*utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt
tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt
saṅga-tyāgāt sato vṛtteḥ
ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati*

Someone should explain this briefly.

Devotee: We have to be enthusiastic. We are doing *bhajana*, but we have no *utsāha* so we cannot progress. For example, the Daṇḍakāraṇya ṛṣis were doing *bhajana* by chanting the *gopāla-mantra*, but gradually they became weak. They were not so

enthusiastic, but they were so fortunate that they met Śrī Rāmacandra Prabhu. By His grace they developed very quickly. One must always be enthusiastic.

Niścayād—determined. We may think that this is not possible for me, “How can I get the mercy of Kṛṣṇa?” No. We must be determined that Kṛṣṇa will surely bestow His mercy. Just like when Duḥśāsana was about to take off Draupadī’s cloth, Bhīma got up. He became so angry and took his club. Then what happened? Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja pulled at his cloth and asked him to sit down. After that, Arjuna stood up. He was the greatest archer in the whole world. He took his Gāṇḍīva bow, but again, Yudhiṣṭhira pulled at his cloth and asked him to sit down. “Surely Kṛṣṇa will come and protect us. Do not worry.” This is *niścayād*.

Dhairyāt—but Arjuna could not tolerate this insult. Yudhiṣṭhira, by his eyes, told him to be patient.

Tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt—we must follow what our previous *ācāryas* did. We must do that *karma*, nothing new. We should not invent any new plan to progress in *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. How they maintained their lives—this example we have to follow. We do not have to discover any new way to maintain our lives.

Saṅga-tyāgāt—we have to give up bad association. Śrīla Swāmiji has explained in his *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*:

asat-saṅga tyāga,—ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra
'strī-saṅgi'—eka asādhu, 'kṛṣṇābhakta 'āra

‘*Strī-saṅgi*’ means not only associating with women but also those who associate with women; we should not associate with those persons either. And we should not associate with those persons who are not devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

Sato vṛtteleḥ—we must associate with *sādhus*, those who are themselves practicing and instructing others. Just as I have heard from Gurudeva:

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-uṇpadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa*

(Cc. Madhya 7.128)

[Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become *guru* and try to liberate everyone in this land.]

What is the meaning of *guru*? He who is himself practicing and asking others to practice in the same way. He is *guru* and we have to follow in his footsteps. Then our *bhakti* will increase. If we do so, then very quickly we can advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness

BVNM: There are six principles favorable to the execution of pure devotional service. First, be enthusiastic. What is the meaning? We should be enthusiastic to chant *harināma*, to hear pure *hari-kathā*, to be in high-class association. If we will do all these things, we will always be happy. *Yayātmā samprasīdati*. So we should be enthusiastic. We should not be very loose-minded, loose-bodied, and we should never be idle.

Then second, endeavoring with confidence. What confidence? “Oh, surely one day, very soon we will achieve this nectar of pure *bhakti*. Surely we will have the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the service of Mahāprabhu. Surely we will get it.” This confidence should be there. If you have no confidence, how you can advance?

There was a devotee who was always chanting, “Nārāyaṇa, Nārāyaṇa, Nārāyaṇa. O Nārāyaṇa, Nārāyaṇa! *Om kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya*.” For so many thousands of years he was chanting like this. One day he saw Nārada and asked him where he was going. “Oh, I am going to Vaikuṅṭha to meet Nārāyaṇa.”

“Oh, please be merciful to me. You should inquire from Nārāyaṇa for me. For thousands of years I have been chanting ‘Nārāyaṇa, Nārāyaṇa’. I want to know when He will give me His *darśana*.”

Nārada reached Vaiṅkuṭha. There he met with Nārāyaṇa and told Him, “There is a devotee who has been chanting Your name for so many years. He has asked when You will give him *darśana*.”

Nārāyaṇa asked, “In what process he is chanting?”

“He is sitting under a tamarind tree and chanting.”

“There are so many branches and so many leaves on that tree. No one can count how many leaves there are. I will give him *darśana* after as many births as there are leaves on that tamarind tree.”

Nārada became very disappointed. “How can I tell that devotee this? He will die.”

When Nārada returned, he tried to avoid that devotee, and hid from his view, but there was only one path. That devotee was waiting and waiting for Nārada to come with Nārāyaṇa’s answer. Finally, when Nārada could no longer avoid him, he approached him and told him, “Very sad thing, very sad thing.”

“What’s that?”

“Nārāyaṇa has said that as there are unlimited leaves on the tamarind tree, after that many lifetimes He will give you *darśana*.”

Oh, that devotee began to dance and sing, “Nārāyaṇa, Nārāyaṇa, Nārāyaṇa! Up till now, I had no confidence that I would ever get Nārāyaṇa’s *darśana*, but now I have confidence that Nārāyaṇa must come and give me His *darśana*, even after thousands and thousands of births. No harm, but eventually I will see Him.” And he continued to dance.

At once Nārāyaṇa came—in a moment! Nārada was so surprised and asked Him, “Oh, why have You gone against Your word? You said that after *lākhas* of lives You would come. So why have You come just now?”

“At first he was doing *bhajana* in what process? He was following a slow process, doing general *bhajana* with no eagerness. But now he is chanting Nārāyaṇa, always absorbed. He is not thinking about his food or anything else. So how can I stay away? I

thought, ‘I must come.’” If one is chanting in a methodical way, no harm. But if one is chanting with confidence, oh, Kṛṣṇa must come.

And third, being patient. What is the meaning? “Today *śuddha sattva* has not come in my heart and I want to see Radha-Kṛṣṇa conjugal.” But we are not seeing Them, so we think it is better to try something else. No. Have patience. It will come, but in its own time. For whom have these instructions been told? For those with *utsāha*, who are initiated, who have some taste in chanting name, hearing *hari-kathā*, and serving *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas. This verse has been told not only for beginners. Be patient. If after thousands and thousands of births, you have reached this *rati*, then very soon *bhakti* will come. Don't be weak. Act according to regulative principles, such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam*, all these, and especially *sādhu-saṅga*, *nāma-kīrtana*, *bhagavat-śravaṇa*, *mathurā-vāsa* and *śrī-mūrtira śraddhayā sevā*. If we have not made any offenses, we can achieve our goal very quickly, even in thousands of births. Oh, even a few thousand births can be considered a very short time, because we are coming from where? From the beginning of the creation! No one can calculate how many *yugas* and how many Brahmās have passed—so many thousands and *lākhas* and uncountable Brahmās have been changed. So, if *bhakti* comes after hundreds and thousands of *lākhas* of births, oh, no harm. Do not try to jump. Pray for the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, the Vaiṣṇavas and *guru* especially.

Avoid the association of non-devotees, and follow in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas*. What is the meaning? How they maintained their lives—this I should follow. *Grhasthas* should be like the *grhastha-bhaktas*, and those who are renounced should be like the renounced devotees. Renounced persons should follow how Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī maintained his life. And *grhasthas* should live like Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Bhavānanda Rāya and the Pāṇḍavas. If you are in the renounced order, but are not following properly and are involved with so many factories and taking shares

in the Ford Company, what will be the outcome? You will be destroyed. *Gr̥hastha-bhaktas* can do something for their maintenance, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has advised. For the Pāṇḍavas, Kṛṣṇa told, “You should fight against your opponents.” But for Uddhava, for Nārada, Vyāsa and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, he never said this; they were all present at that time. So we should practice all these things, and then pure nectar will come.

Try to follow these instructions up to this point. Do not think that I am your enemy. I have not come to make you my enemy. I want you to be pure, my dear children, and be rid of all ignorance. I want to put you in the fire and then with a hammer, I want to hammer you to make you pure. If you are willing to undergo this, then come to me as a disciple. Otherwise, you should be very, very far away from me. I do not want to make any problems for you. So you should try to realize all these things and be pure for Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Fourth *śloka*: This explains how we should behave with Vaiṣṇavas—how to receive something from them, how to give them something, how to hear from them and how to follow them.

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhuñkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidham pṛīti-lakṣaṇam*

If you are knowingly or unknowingly associating with bad elements, all their qualities will come in you. If they are Māyāvādīs, *strī-saṅgīs* or *viṣayīs*, all their bad habits and bad qualities will come to you very soon, even if you are meeting with them unknowingly. And if you take the association of a high-class devotee, knowingly or even unknowingly, he will elevate you. You do not need to ask him any question, and even if he is not doing anything, still the atoms from his body for sure will come into your heart. And if you

are giving him something, receiving something from him, hearing and serving him, then what to tell! So *dadāti pratigrhṇāti*.

Devotee: In this forth verse, *dadāti pratigrhṇāti*—exchanging gifts, giving and taking. *Guhyam ākhyāti prcchati*—revealing one's mind in confidence and hearing confidential subject matters about Kṛṣṇa.

BVNM: *guhyam ākhyāti prcchati*—Bhaktivedānta Swāmiji has translated it as “opening one’s mind to devotees.” Who is a pure devotee among all the devotees? Gurudeva is the pure devotee. So we are opening our mind—mind means heart. We should try to open our heart. If you are not opening but rather blocking it, then what will happen? It will be more than an atom bomb; it will explode in your heart and you will be finished. I know that so many devotees want to conceal something in their hearts, but it is very bad, very bad. They say, “Do not tell this to Gurudeva. Otherwise something will happen.” Our Gurudeva used to say that one who has something hidden here from Gurudeva will be very far away from Gurudeva and all devotees. They want to be far away, not so much open-hearted—it means that there is something black in the heart. There is an Indian proverb which says that when there is something blackish, there is something wrong. So we should try to open our heart. There must be someone to whom I can open my heart like a diary and who can read everything. We should have nothing to conceal, nothing to hide from him. Thus, we will progress very quickly and soon we can serve Gurudeva. Otherwise not. Always we will fear him and remain distant.

Oh, *prasādam*. *Catur-vidha-śrī-bhagavat-prasāda-svādv-anna-ṭīptān hari-bhakta-saṅghān*. *Hari-bhakta-saṅghān*—in the assembly of *hari-bhaktas*. Gurudeva is very expert to take *prasādam* and to give *prasādam*. “I think it will be better if I am not taking anything but distributing to all the devotees.” This will give greater happiness. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu never used to take anything—very little. And he took only those things that are not so tasteful, like *laphra*, mixed vegetables. But He used to serve *prasādam* to everyone. So

we should try to be like that. I think that *prasādam* here can refer to any type of gift. Do not keep things for yourself. Your everything should be for Kṛṣṇa, *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas. Then you will be a true devotee.

Gaura premānande!

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