ŚIVA
TATTVA

Lectures by

His Divine Grace
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja
LORD ÇIVA'S HIGHEST BENEDICTION

The Editors
Lord Śiva is manifest from the Supreme Lord's own divine desire. An understanding of siva-tattva (the principle of Śiva) is therefore essential in realizing the deep purpose behind human life and its relationships. Lord Śiva is a personality of many forms and names, such as Saṅkara, Sambhu and Mahesa. He is situated eternally in his original form as Gopīśvara, and in that form he guards the doorway to that which matters most – our transcendental life. By his own selfless dedication, this gentle and mysterious figure patiently guides those who traverse the path to the Absolute, assuring them safe passage through all the stages of devotion.

In this book Śiva-Tattva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyana Mahārāja brilliantly clarifies the holy Hindu trinity: Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Empowered by his spiritual masters in the disciplic succession of the Gauḍāyana Vaiṣṇava tradition, he reveals the conclusive truth (tattva) of Lord Śiva's original position and gives us a look into his endearing and affectionate nature.

The many intriguing historical narrations herein, all from authoritative Vedic literatures, are interwoven with conclusive philosophy. In this way, Śiva-Tattva reveals the beautiful harmony in Lord Śiva's apparently contradictory qualities. He is the destroyer and simultaneously the ingredient cause of creation. He is the predominating deity of the mode of ignorance and simultaneously the reservoir of absolute knowledge. He is the clever cheater and at the same time the giver of mercy. His associates are ghosts, hobgoblins and witches, and at the same time he associates with the most exalted demigods and sages, and even God Himself.

The profound topic of siva-tattva is so vast that this work could have included entire chapters on each of Lord Śiva's glories, pastimes and manifestations. The intention of this edition, however, is to inspire the reader with its essence, and to awaken interest in the evolution of consciousness.

Śiva-Tattva opens with the history of a special mission, originally told in Śrīla Saṅnātana Gosvāmī's epic, Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta. The aim of this mission was to establish in the world the ultimate goal of all yogic practices, prema-bhakti. In a heart-to-heart conversation with the sage Nārada Muni, Lord Śiva brings to light the qualifications of a genuine Vaiṣṇava or devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Setting the scene for this divine conversation, Śrīla Saṅnātana Gosvāmī writes:

In his own abode, Lord Śiva was just completing his worship of Lord Saṅkarsana and, absorbed in ecstatic love, he began dancing and performing kirtana. His followers, headed by Śrī Nandiśvara, were lovingly praising him by singing, playing musical instruments and calling out, “Jaya! Jaya! All glories to you! All glories to you!” With her lotus hands,
Parvati-devi was creating an enchanting rhythm with karatālas, and Lord Śiva was praising her for that. Seeing all this from a distance, the sage Nārada jubilantly offered obeisances and began playing his vina. Time and again he said, “You are the greatest recipient of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.” Repeating Lord Brahmā’s words, he began glorifying Śiva in a melodious voice. When Śrī Nārada approached Śrī Rudra (Lord Śiva) to take the dust from his lotus feet, Śiva, who was intoxicated in the nectar-stream of kṛṣṇa-prema and who is very dear to the Vaiṣṇavas, pulled the sage near, embraced him, and respectfully said, “Oh, son of Brahmā! What are you saying?!” (ŚrīBrhad-bhāgavatāmṛta Chapter Three, verses 1-5)

Lord Śiva’s fame as the greatest devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa was first presented to the English-speaking world by His Divine Grace Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. The foremost world-wide teacher of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, Śrīla Prabhupāda inspired an international movement. He gave to the world a veritable treasure-chest in his English translations of Vedic literature. It is that treasure-chest upon which we continually drew, to enrich this publication with footnotes and supplements. It was on the request of Śrīla Prabhupāda that Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja now travels and teaches audiences world-wide, nurturing the spiritual lives of thousands.

Śiva-Tattva is a compilation of four transcribed lectures of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja which, although not spoken in a series, takes the reader on a marvelous journey. Chapters one and two were spoken during his 1997 World Tour in Holland, on the morning and evening of July 3. Chapter three came from the English translation of his Hindi lecture, given in Mathurā, India on the eve of Śiva-rātri, March 5, 2000. Finally, in the fourth chapter, in a discourse spoken on October 10, 2001, he takes us on a pilgrimage to a temple in the ancient city of Jagannātha Purī, where Lord Śiva resides as Lokanātha Mahādeva.

The chronicles and personalities discussed in this book do not belong to the realm of religion or mythology; rather, they encompass universal truth. Usage of Sanskrit, the language in which the Vedic science was originally told, has been kept to a minimum for easy reading. The occasional word used, such as bhakti, meaning devotion, is clearly explained in the text. Following the tradition of our spiritual preceptors, we use standard diacritical markings to indicate the pronunciation of Sanskrit words. Pronounce ā like a in father, ī like ee in neat, ū like oo in root, ĭ like ri in rip, ni and ū like ng in hung, ś and ś like sh in shy, and c like ch in chap.

Begging for the mercy of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇava, we humbly present Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja’s glorifications of that most unconventional of transcendental personalities, Lord Śiva. We also beg the reader’s forgiveness for any mistakes or shortcomings in our delivery of his offering to Lord Śiva, on the auspicious occasion of Śiva-rātri – March, 2005.

The Editors
Once, the great sage Nārada Muni traveled to the abode of Lord Śiva and began to glorify him, saying, “You are very near and dear to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. Not only that, you are Kṛṣṇa’s manifestation; you are non-different from Him. You can give liberation and also kṛṣṇa-prema, the rare jewel of transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Hearing Nārada glorify him in numerous ways, Lord Śiva became angry and said, “Your glorification of me is false. I am not at all dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Lord Śiva is actually most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and therefore Kṛṣṇa can give him services which He cannot give anyone else. When the demigods and demons were churning the Milk Ocean in order to obtain the nectar of immortality, the first substance produced was a powerful and dangerous poison, burning the entire world. The demigods appealed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and He advised them to request Lord Śiva to drink the poison. Thus, they worshiped Lord Śiva and prayed, “Please save us! Only you can protect us! Only you can protect us!” Lord Śiva collected the poison and took it in his mouth, but he hesitated to swallow it, considering, “Lord Kṛṣṇa is in my heart. The poison will affect Him.” He therefore kept the poison in his throat, which was burned, and his neck turned the color blue.

Now, out of genuine humility, Lord Śiva told Nārada: “I want to be His beloved devotee, but actually I am not. You know that I always wear ashes from the burial grounds, and a garland of skulls. All my associates are ghosts and witches, so I am not qualified to be Kṛṣṇa’s dear devotee. If I am so dear to Him, why would He have ordered me to engage with the mode of ignorance in the terrible function of destroying the universe? If I am such a great recipient of His mercy, why would He have ordered me to become Śankarācārya and preach a philosophy that is adverse to Him?”

Actually, although he expressed otherwise, it was because Śiva is so dear to Kṛṣṇa that Kṛṣṇa was able to give him the difficult task of appearing as Śankarācārya. Many people had been worshiping the Supreme Lord only to fulfill their selfish purposes, thinking, “Simply by our worship of God, He will be pleased with us and satisfy all our worldly desires.” They worshiped Him only so that He would rapidly arrange for all of their needs, not to please Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa thought, “This is very dangerous.” He called Lord Śiva and instructed him, “Such false devotees will create great disturbances, so keep them far away from Me. Create a philosophy which teaches, ‘brahma satya, jagan mithyā – the Absolute is true, this world is false.’ You should preach, ‘All souls are Śiva; all souls are Brahmac; all are one. You are brahma, the impersonal Absolute. There is no need to worship any other God; you are the Supreme God.’ ” Reluctant, Lord Śiva asked Kṛṣṇa, “Can you please tell someone else to do this? I am not qualified for this service.” Kṛṣṇa replied, “No, you will have to do this. In the entire world, I see no one else who is as capable.”

Feeling ashamed, Lord Śiva now told Nārada, “At last, I had to agree to follow His order. Appearing as Śankarācārya I preached everywhere, ‘You are brahma, you are brahma, you are the impersonal brahma. The entire world is false.’ I am so much regretting this. I know I have committed a great offence by causing so many people to be averse to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Still, to carry out His order I spread this doctrine. It is clear by the fact that He sometimes gives me such orders that I am not His dearest one.”

Cheating the Cheaters

Lord Śiva also expressed to Nārada his regret in having given benedictions to Lord Kṛṣṇa’s enemies. To fulfill His Lord’s desires, he had given benedictions to demons like Rāvana, Vrkāsura, Śaīla and Jayadratha, and thus he had performed many activities that were seemingly opposed to Kṛṣṇa and kṛṣṇa-bhakti.

Nārada Muni said, “Master, please don’t try to mislead me. I know that whatever you do is to please Lord Kṛṣṇa and to assist Him in His pastimes, for the benefit of all beings. You told me that you have many

1 Lord Śiva was referring to the long history in relation to Śrīpāda Śankarācārya’s propagating the concept of the living entities’ oneness with God in all respects. Before the appearance of Śankarācārya fifteen hundred years ago, voidist Buddhism, which rejects the Vedas, was prominent in India. Śankarācārya is an incarnation of Lord Śiva, the topmost devotee of the Lord. However, in order to drive away Buddhism and re-establish Vedic authority, he had to compromise with the atheistic Buddhist philosophy and preach a non-devotional doctrine.
times given benedictions to His enemies. I know that His enemies, as well as the enemies of His devoted cousins, the Pândavas, worship you for ill-motivated benedictions. I also know that you grant them benedictions. But those benedictions are not foolproof; they always have some loophole. Actually, you cheat these beneficiaries in order to please Lord Kṛṣṇa. You are undoubtedly His dearest friend.”

Śiva and Nārada continued to discuss some historical incidents which, according to Śiva, proved that he was not dear to Kṛṣṇa – but according to Nārada, proved the opposite.

A Loophole

The great epic Mahābhārata tells of King Jayadratha, one of the many demons who received such a clever benediction from Lord Śiva. Duryodhana, the paternal cousin of the five Pândava brothers, had given his sister Dushala in marriage to King Jayadratha, and therefore the king had also become like a brother-in-law of the Pândavas. Once, Jayadratha tried to kidnap the Pândavas’ wife, Draupadé, desiring strongly to make her his own wife. As he forced her onto his chariot, she admonished him, crying, “I am the wife of the Pândavas. When they catch you, they will punish you and kill you!”

Jayadratha’s arrogance prevented him from hearing her, and he continued his abduction. Meanwhile, the sage Nārada approached the Pândavas and informed them, “Oh, I saw Jayadratha taking away Draupadé, and she was weeping!”

Two of the Pândavas, Bhima and Arjuna, immediately chased after Jayadratha. Bhima dismounted his chariot and ran faster than Jayadratha’s horses. With his bow and arrows, Arjuna created a fire that surrounded the chariot of Jayadratha, who was then captured and could not move. Severely beaten by Bhima and arrested by Arjuna, Jayadratha was bound to the chariot and taken to where Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja had been staying with Draupadé.

Bhima and Arjuna spoke to Yudhiṣṭhira, their respected senior brother. Bhima urged him, “I want to kill Jayadratha. Please order me to kill him.”

In support of Bhima, Arjuna said, “Jayadratha has performed a heinous act and should be killed.”

King Yudhiṣṭhira replied, “The offense was committed against Draupadé. We should take the case to her, and we will do whatever she orders.”

When Jayadratha was brought at the feet of Draupadé, she mercifully told her husbands, “Don’t kill him; forgive him. He is our brother-in-law.

If you kill him, your cousin-sister will be widowed and she will weep for the rest of her life.”

Bhima and Arjuna then approached Lord Kṛṣṇa and appealed to Him: “What should we do? We have vowed to kill Jayadratha, and now Draupadé tells us to forgive him.”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “For one who has been honored, dishonor is worse than death.”

Arjuna then shaved King Jayadratha’s head, leaving five patches of hair, and he shaved one side of his face, leaving the other side unshaven. Jayadratha felt humiliated, and after being released by Bhima and Arjuna he considered it better to have died. He thought, “I will somehow take revenge.” Thus absorbed, he went to Gangotri in the Himalayas and undertook a severe type of penance to please Lord Śiva.

After some months he gave up all food, water, and bodily activities, and was about to die. At this point Lord Śiva came before him and asked what boon he wanted as a result of his austerity. Jayadratha replied, “I want revenge against the Pândavas. I want to defeat and kill all of them.”

Lord Śiva told him, “You can defeat the Pândavas, but only Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhima, Nakula and Sahadeva; not Arjuna.” Jayadratha said, “If you cannot benedict me to my full satisfaction, then please grant that neither Arjuna nor anyone else will be able to kill me.” Lord Śiva replied, “I can grant you this: if your head is severed and falls on the ground, the person who caused this will die immediately. Your life will be saved and your head will rejoin your body. You may be ‘killed’ hundreds of thousands of times, but you will not die. On the other hand, if your severed head falls into your father’s hands and he throws it on the ground, then you will die.”

Jayadratha was satisfied, thinking, “My father would never do this.”

When the battle of Kurukṣetra began, Jayadratha took the side of the Pândavas’ enemy, Duryodhana. One evening during the battle, as the sun was setting, Jayadratha’s father was absorbed in prayer and making an offering of water to the Sun-god. Arjuna saw this opportune moment. With the skillful release of an arrow, he severed Jayadratha’s head from his body and caused it to fall into the hands of his meditating father. Startled and without thought, Jayadratha’s father tossed the head on the ground.

Then, opening his eyes he exclaimed, “What was that wet thing?” Seeing that he had just thrown his son’s head, he began to cry, “Oh my son! Oh my son! You are dead now!”
A Clever Benediction

Envious of Kṛṣṇa and with a desire for the strength to destroy him, the demon Śālva also took shelter of Lord Śiva. He performed a severe type of austerity and ate no more than a handful of ashes daily. After one year, Lord Śiva became pleased with him and asked him to beg for a boon.

Śālva begged from Lord Śiva the gift of an airplane, saying, “This airplane should perform as I wish; it should be operated by my mind. On my order it should go to heaven or anywhere I desire. In summer it should be air-conditioned. If there are only two men, there should only be two seats, and if I want to travel with hundreds of thousands of persons, many seats should manifest. It should never crash due to mechanical difficulty, and it should be equipped with all varieties of weapons. It should be dangerous and fearful to the Yadus.”

Lord Śiva agreed, and Śālva was helped by the demon Maya Dānava to manufacture a mystical airplane that began to destroy Dvārakā, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s abode. Śālva personally attacked from above, and his soldiers attacked on the ground. Headed by Pradyumna, the Yadu dynasty warriors fought with Śālva and his army, but they could not defeat him.

Finally, Lord Kṛṣṇa personally appeared on the battlefield, and after much intense fighting on both sides and many mystic displays by Śālva, the Lord took up His disc, cut off the demon’s head, and gave him liberation.

In this way, the benedictions given by Lord Śiva to the enemies of Lord Kṛṣṇa always have a weak point—a loophole. Lord Śiva is extremely clever, and he is always serving his Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Nārada knew this fact, and he wanted to publicize Lord Śiva’s glories. Śiva is very near and dear to Kṛṣṇa, and non-different from Him. Try to always honor him, for he is Kṛṣṇa’s greatest devotee.

\[
\text{nimna-gānām yathā gangā} \\
\text{devānām acyuto yathā} \\
\text{vaisnavānām yathā sambhūḥ} \\
\text{purāṇānām idam tathā}
\]

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.13.16)

Just as the Gangā is the greatest of all rivers, Lord Acyuta [Kṛṣṇa] the supreme among deities and Lord Sambhū [Śiva] the greatest of Vaiṣṇavas, so Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the greatest of all Purāṇas.

The Principle of Śiva

The principle of Śiva—śiva-tattva—is extremely complex. The principle of Brahmā is not as complicated, because Lord Brahmā is always a jīva, a finite spirit soul. Sometimes, when there is no qualified jīva, Lord Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa’s expansion) personally takes the post of Brahmā, but that is rare. Lord Śiva is not like that; he is not a finite soul.

After passing through the eight material coverings, and after crossing the Virajā (the river that divides the material world and the spiritual world) and the planet of Lord Brahmā (the highest material planet), one comes to the planet of Śiva. There he is known as Sadāśiva, a manifestation of Lord Viṣṇu.

Śiva-tattva can be understood by the analogy of yogurt and milk. Yogurt is nothing but a transformation of milk. Milk can become yogurt, but yogurt cannot become milk. This analogy is found in Brahma-saṁhitā and elucidated in Śrīla Jiva Gosvāmī’s commentary: “Just as milk is transformed into yogurt by contact with a transforming agent, Śrī Govinda, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, similarly accepts the form of Sambhu (Śiva) in order to accomplish a specific purpose. The example of yogurt is actually given in order to convey the idea of cause and effect, not the idea of transformation. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is reality and cannot be transformed, so it is not possible for Him to undergo any kind of distortion. A wish-fulfilling gem manifests many things according to one’s desire, yet its constitutional nature remains untransformed.”

Rāmeśvara Mahādeva

When Śrī Rāmacandra was making the bridge to Lāṅka, he established a Śiva-linga (deity form of Śiva) called Rāmeśvara. All the common people began glorifying Lord Śiva, shouting, “Rāmeśvara ki jaya! You are Rāma’s iśvara: you are the lord of Rāma.” The demigods were unsatisfied by this and announced through an arial voice, “Rāmas ca asau iśvaram: Rāma is God, and Śaṅkarā is also God; they are the same.” Hearing this, the Śiva-linga broke. Lord Śiva emerged from the linga and told them all, “You are all foolish; you do not know my tattva, the established truths regarding my identity. Rāma is my beloved and my God, and that is why I am called Rāmeśvara.”

\[2\] In this case the special transforming agent is constituted of a mixture of māyā’s aspect of the mode of ignorance, the minuteness aspect of the marginal potency, and a slight degree of the combined knowledge (saṁvit) and bliss (hlādinī) aspects of the transcendental potency. The effulgent subordinate controller in the form of Sambhū-linga, being united with this special transforming agent, is constitutionally the semblance of God’s expansion.” (Brahma-saṁhitā commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura)
Granting Perfect Love

Lord Śiva eternally resides in Lord Kuṣṇa’s abode, Vṛndāvana, where he manifests many forms to render devotional services to Him. The form of Gopīśvara Mahādeva was manifested by Lord Kuṣṇa’s desire. When Kuṣṇa desired to perform His rāsa dance, Śrimati Rādhikā, the embodiment of His pleasure potency, manifested from His left side and Gopīśvara Mahādeva manifested from His right side. The form of Śiva who lives in Kāśi or Kailāśa in the material world is a partial manifestation of the original Sadāśiva in Vṛndāvana. The many other commonly worshipped forms of Lord Śiva are expansions of Sadāśiva. They are not the original. Partial expansions such as Pippaleśvara Mahādeva, Bhūteśvara Mahādeva, Rangesvara Mahādeva and so on cannot award the benediction that can be attained by the mercy of Gopīśvara—the highest perfection of love, namely gopi-prema.

Śrila Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi has composed a prayer in his Vraja-vilāsa-stava:

muddā gependrasyatmaja bhuja parisrangā nidhaye
sphurad gopivrndair yam iha bhāgavatam pranayibhiṁ
bhajadbhistair bhaktāyās vamabhilasitam prāptam acirād
yamitire gopīśvaram anudinām tam kila bhaje

Śrīla Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi, the great Vaiṣṇava saint who resided in Vṛndāvana near the old Śri Madana-Mohana Temple, would go daily to see Śri Gopīśvara Mahādeva at his temple. Once, in his older years, Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi had a dream wherein Gopīśvara Mahādeva appeared and instructed him: “Now that you are old, please do not go through so much trouble to see me.” Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi replied, “I will continue to come. I cannot change this habit.” Gopīśvara Mahādeva said, “Then I will come and stay very near to your residence, manifesting in Bankhandé.” The very next day, Śrī Gopīśvara Mahādeva appeared in Bankhandé, halfway between his original temple and Śrīla Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi’s residence. Seeing this, Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi became overwhelmed with transcendental ecstasy, and from that day on he visited Bankhandé Mahādeva every day.

Wherever he was, Śrīla Śrṣṭi Gosvāmi could not live without his beloved Lord Śiva – Gopīśvara Mahādeva and Bankhandé Mahādeva in Vṛndāvana, and Kāmeśvara Mahādeva in Kāmyavana forest. In Govardhana he would stay near his very dear friend, Cakreśvara Mahādeva, who acquired the name when he served Govardhana Hill and the Vrajavāsīs by holding up his trident like a cakra (disc weapon), protecting them from the torrential deluge sent by King Indra.

Prior to this, Lord Śiva had asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the boon to witness His childhood pastimes. Kṛṣṇa ordered him to situate himself in Nandgaon called her Gopīśvara (she whose īśvaras, controllers, are the gopīs). He blessed her to become the guard of the rāsa-līlā and said, ‘Without the sanction of Gopīśvara, no one will be able to enter the rāsa-līlā.’” (Pinnacle of Devotion)

I daily worship Gopīśvara Mahādeva, who is situated on the bank of Yamunā. That very Gopīśvara was worshipped with deep devotion by the gopīs, and he quickly fulfilled their desire to attain a supremely precious jewel in the form of the embrace of the son of Nanda Mahārāja [Kṛṣṇa].

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We offer obeisance to Lord Śiva with prayers like this:

vrndāvanāvānī-pate! jaya soma soma-maule
sanāka-sanandana-sanātana-nāradedya
gopiśvara! vraja-vilāsi-yugānghri-padme
prema prayaccha nirupādhi namo namās te
(Saṅkalpa-kalpadruma 103)

By Śiva’s Benediction

A brāhmaṇa in Kāśi Vārānasi once prayed to Lord Śiva, “I want to give my daughter in marriage, but I have no money. Please give me money.” Lord Śiva told him, “Go to Vṛndāvana and meet with Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī. You can ask him to give you some wealth for your daughter’s marriage.” The brāhmaṇa went to Vṛndāvana, by foot, and there he asked the villagers there for the whereabouts of a person named Sanātana Gosvāmī. As they all knew him, they pointed out his residence.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī was practicing bhajana near the Yamunā River at Kāliya-hrada, the former abode of the very poisonous snake named Kāliya. Kāliya-hrada was close to the Yamunā, and therefore its surrounding area was full of sand. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī wore only a loincloth. He used to go begging door-to-door for a small amount of prasāda (Krṣna’s food remnants), and would take as his meal only one dry chapatti (flat bread), with no salt.

The brāhmaṇa arrived at his cottage and told him, “I went to Śaṅkarā Mahādeva, Lord Śiva, and he told me to meet you. He said you will give me some wealth for my daughter’s marriage.” Sanātana Gosvāmī replied, “I have no possessions. You can see that I have nothing but a loincloth.” Then he thought, “Oh, Śiva cannot tell a lie. He is my bosom friend.” Thinking of Lord Śiva and contemplating further, he remembered a touchstone he had once discarded and then forgotten. Now he told the brāhmaṇa, “Go to the Yamunā and remove some of the sand, and there you will find a touchstone. It is somewhere in the sand, though I don’t remember where.”

The brāhmaṇa found the jewel, touched it to iron, and the iron turned into gold. He was very, very happy that Lord Śiva had told him to come to Vṛndāvana, and thought with gratitude, “My prayer has been answered by him.” On the way home, however, his greed for money increased and he began thinking, “Why did Sanātana Gosvāmī keep the touchstone in the sand? It had no use there. He must have still more valuable jewels.”

He thus returned, and Sanātana Gosvāmī asked him, “Why have you come back?” He replied, “I’ve come because I know that you have more valuable jewels than this.” Sanātana Gosvāmī then said, “Go and throw the touchstone in the Yamunā. The brāhmaṇa did so with all his power, and then Sanātana Gosvāmī told him, “Come here. Come here.” He gave him the mantra, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare” and said, “I do not have worldly jewels, but I have transcendental jewels. The jewel of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rādhā will come to you in a very short time. So remain here. Your daughter’s marriage will take place automatically. Stay here and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.” That brāhmaṇa followed his instruction and became a very elevated saint.
Sri Nārada desired to proclaim the glories of Lord Śiva. As previously described, he praised Śiva as the greatest devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and most dear to Him, and Lord Śiva became upset by hearing those praises. Śiva then related a number of incidents which, according to him, were evidence that he was not dear to Kṛṣṇa at all.

Now Lord Śiva compares himself to Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, the famed devotee of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. He told Nārada, “Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja is superior to me, and it is he who is the dear devotee of the Lord.” Even though Lord Śiva is superior to Prahlāda Mahārāja, he told Nārada that Prahlāda Mahārāja is superior. Why? He said this to encourage people to follow Prahlāda Mahārāja’s ideal character and teachings.

However, Prahlāda Mahārāja cannot enter Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental abode, Vṛndāvana, whereas Lord Śiva resides there eternally as Gopiśvara. Śiva serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally in numerous ways. He and his wife Pārvatī-devī meditate on aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s confidential

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4 In the hermitage of Śrī Nārada Muni, Prahlāda Mahārāja heard the message of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam while within the womb of his mother. From his birth, Prahlāda was fixed in transcendental realization of the all-pervading presence of the Supreme Lord, and he preached love of God to his schoolmates at the tender age of five. Despite efforts by his atheistic father to change his nature – efforts that culminated in repeated attempts to kill him by means of administering poison, putting him in boiling oil, tossing him from the top of a cliff and so on – Prahlāda continued to experience great joy by remembering Lord Viṣṇu and chanting his holy names. Prahlāda was protected by the Supreme Lord in every situation. Finally, Lord Viṣṇu appeared in the form of a half-man, half-lion and killed his demonic father. When offered a benediction by the Lord, Prahlāda simply asked for the liberation of his father, as well as that of all conditioned souls. He is honored in this world by all pure devotees.
eight-fold daily pastimes. These secret pastimes are very confidential, yet both Śiva and Pārvatī are able to meditate upon them. Śiva is hundreds of thousands of times superior to and more worshipable than Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, and yet the artful Śiva declared Prahlāda Mahārāja to be superior. Why did he do so? In one sense Prahlāda Mahārāja is superior, and in another sense he is not.

We can reconcile this by considering the two perspectives from which to understand the identity of Lord Śiva: We can see Śiva from the point of view of his post, and also from the point of view of his personality. As a personality, separate from his post, he appears as an associate of the Supreme Lord, such as Gopīśvara, Hanumān and Bhima. As Gopīśvara he resides eternally in Vṛndāvana. As Hanumān he always associates with and serves Lord Rāma. As Bhima he always serves Lord Kṛṣṇa. And, when Hanumān and Bhima combine together in this present age of Kali-yuga, they become Madhvacārya, our Sampradāya-guru.3

From the point of view of Lord Śiva’s function as the god of annihilation, and also that of Brahmā as the secondary creator of the universe, Śiva and Brahmā are actually posts. Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva are not ordinary human beings, but their posts are like that of the president or prime minister of a nation, wherein the man representing the post has to perform a certain defined job.

Both as the post and the person, Śiva is superior to Brahmā. Lord Śiva is an expansion of Lord Viṣṇu, but sometimes a jīva (living entity) may become Śiva’s expansion known as Rudra. If a man purely performs the duties of varṇāśrama for one hundred births, he may become Brahmā.6 In other words, he may attain the position, or post of Brahmā. In turn, when a person in the post of Brahmā carries out his function expertly for one hundred births, he becomes qualified to perform the function of Śiva in his manifestation as Rudra. Śiva’s post is therefore superior to that of Brahmā, and this is also evidence that Śiva is more powerful than Brahmā.

5 “Śrīla Madhvacārya is the original ācārya for those who belong to the Madhva-Gaudīya-sampradāya.” (SB 6.1.40 purport) “This Madhva-Gaudīya-sampradāya is also known as the Brahmā-sampradāya because the disciplic succession originally began from Brahmā. Brahmā instructed the sage Nārada, Nārada instructed Viṣṇudeva, and Viṣṇudeva instructed Madhva Muni, or Madhvacārya.” (Kṛṣṇa Introduction).

6 “The Vedas say, “Svadharma-niṣṭhāh sata janmabhīḥ pumān virincatām eti” - One who strictly follows the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma for at least one hundred births will be rewarded with the post of Lord Brahmā.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.20.33 purport) Varṇāśrama-dharma – the institutions dividing society into four divisions of social life and four occupational divisions of castes.

The Duty of Destruction

What is the function of Lord Śiva’s post, and why is it superior to that of Lord Brahmā? One reason is that Brahmā cannot execute pralaya, the complete destruction of the universe – a very dangerous thing, whereas Śiva can do so.

Śiva’s function as destroyer is similar to that of a farmer who plants and cultivates a large area of wheat. The farmer carefully waters and nourishes the crop, guarding it from animals, and after five or six months the wheat matures and ripens. Then, either by hand or a machine, the farmer harvests the plants and carefully removes the grains from their shafts. The rest of the plant-matter becomes refuse, and subject to rotting and attracting disease, vermin, and snakes. Therefore, the farmer sets fire to it and burns it.

Just as the farmer extracts the grains from the plants, Lord Śiva extracts the eternal spirit souls from their material bodies and from the world. At the time of annihilation he creates an inferno, setting the entire universe on fire, but the spirit souls are not destroyed.

There are two kinds of universal devastations: one at the end of Lord Brahmā’s day and one at the end of his life. At the end of his day (4,320,000,000 solar years) he rests in a mystic sleep within the body of Garbhodakaśēy Viṣṇu, and all the conditioned living entities enter as well.7

While the entire universe is submerged in water, the living entities rest in their subtle bodies within the transcendental body of Garbhodakaśēy Viṣṇu. They await the start of the next day of Brahmā, the next material creation or manifestation. Some of them become liberated, and others do not.

7 “At the beginning of Brahmā’s day, all living entities become manifest from the unmanifest state, and thereafter, when the night falls, they are merged into the unmanifest again. Again and again, when Brahmā’s day arrives, all living entities come into being, and with the arrival of Brahmā’s night they are helplessly annihilated.” (Bhagavad-gītā 8.18-19)

“At the end of the day, under the insignificant portion of the mode of darkness, the powerful manifestation of the universe merges in the darkness of night. By the influence of eternal time, the innumerable living entities remain merged in that dissolution, and everything is silent.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.11.28)

“The dissolution of the three worlds is effected by the incarnation of darkness, Rudra, represented by the fire of eternal time which blazes over the three worlds. These three worlds are known as Bhūt, Bhuvah and Svah (Pātalā, Martiya and Svarga). The innumerable living entities merge into that dissolution, which appears to be the dropping of the curtain of the scene of the Supreme Lord’s energy, and so everything becomes silent.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.11.28 purport) cont...
When Lord Brahmä completes the one hundred celestial years of his life, Lord Śiva again performs this duty of destruction. At that time all the spirit souls enter into the body of Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu or Mahā-Viṣṇu. At the end of each day of Lord Brahmä, all souls enter Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and at the end of Brahmä's life, even the millions of manifestations of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu enter Kāraṇodakaśaśāyī Viṣṇu\(^7\) along with the spirit souls. At the time of creation, Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu generates innumerable manifestations of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and at the time of complete annihilation, they enter back into his body.\(^9\)

Lord Śiva is not a living entity, but he is also not in the category of Lord Viṣṇu. He is much more powerful than any living entity, even up to Lord Brahmä. However, he is not equal to Lord Viṣṇu. Because he is almost as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he can see the three phases of time: past, present and future. One of his eyes is like the sun and another is like the moon. He also has a third eye, located between his eyebrows. It is from this third eye that he generates fire and employs it at the time of the universal destruction.

seen from this perspective – the destroyer – Lord Śiva cannot serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa directly, because he is engaged at his post. Those souls who are liberated after hundreds of thousands of lifetimes of devotional practice, having renounced all responsibilities and concerns of the world – including occupations like that of Brahmä and Śiva – and who constantly hear about, glorify, and remember Lord Kṛṣṇa, take birth in this world as pure devotees like Prahlāda Mahārāja. This was told by Lord Śiva to Śrī Nārada.

Prahlāda Mahārāja has nothing to do with this world; nothing to create or demolish. He rejected all such affairs as insignificant. Although he had inherited a large kingdom, it was controlled and governed by his ministers. His senses were totally absorbed in the transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord. He was always engaged in hearing the name and glories of the Lord, singing and speaking about his glories, remembering and meditating on him, offering prayers, carrying out the his orders and fully surrendering to him.

Devotees in Prahlāda's category have no need to approach Lord Kṛṣṇa's manifestations like Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva and Lord Rāma, for the Lord personally comes to them in these forms. Lord Śiva told Śrī Nārada that because he is always engaged in the post of controlling the universe, he can neither see nor offer services to the Lord daily, as Prahlāda Mahārāja sees Lord Vāmanadeva or Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva. Vāmanadeva and Nṛsiṁhadeva are both manifestations of the same Lord, who regularly gives Prahlāda his divine association and the opportunity to serve and offer obeisance at his lotus feet.

Although both Brahmā and Śiva are actually superior in bhakti (devotion) to Prahlāda Mahārāja, their posts involve contact with the three guṇas, or modes of material nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance. The role of Lord Brahmā is creation and procreation in raja-guṇa, the mode of passion. Lord Śiva's role of demolition and dissolution is in tama-guṇa, the mode of ignorance. It is for this reason that they are called guṇa-avatāras, incarnations of the material qualities.

Prahlāda Mahārāja is nirguṇa, transcendental to the three modes of nature. He has nothing to do with activities in material goodness, passion, and ignorance, by which this world is shackled. Lord Śiva is also beyond the three modes of nature, but he adopts the mode of ignorance (tama-guṇa) to efficiently perform his function.

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7 “It is said that the blazing fire from the mouth of Saṅkarsana rages for one hundred years of the demigods, or 36,000 human years. Then for another 36,000 years there are torrents of rain, accompanied by violent winds and waves, and the seas and oceans overflow. People forget all these devastations of the worlds and think themselves happy in the material progress of civilization. This is called mūya, or ‘that which is not.’” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.11.31 purport)

8 “There are two types of dissolution of the manifested cosmos. At the end of every 4,320,000,000 solar years, when Brahmā, the lord of one particular universe, goes to sleep, there is one annihilation. And at the end of Lord Brahmā's life, which takes place at the end of Brahmā's one hundred years of age, in our calculation at the end of 8,640,000,000 x 30 x 12 x 100 solar years, there is complete annihilation of the entire universe, and in both the periods both the material energy called the mahat-tattva and the marginal energy called jīva-tattva merge in the person of the Supreme Lord.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.10.21 purport)

9 “Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu is the first incarnation of the Supreme Lord, and he is the master of eternal time, space, cause and effects, mind, the elements, the material ego, the modes of nature, the senses, the universal form of the Lord, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and the sum total of all living beings, both moving and nonmoving.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.6.42)
The Personal Associate

Regarding Lord Śiva’s glorification of Prahlāda Mahārāja, now consider Lord Śiva’s identity as a transcendental personality – separate from his post. Sometimes senior Vaiṣṇavas express sincere recognition of the novice, inspiring him or her on the path of devotion. The Vaiṣṇava may say, “Oh, you work so hard and earn money, and with that money you support and nourish me. I have no means at all. I do nothing but visit for a short while, eating and sleeping at your expense. I would not be able to speak the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa at this festival if you had not arranged for the management of all the activities here, so you are superior to me.”

Out of sincere humility, gratitude and affection, liberated souls speak in this endearing manner, and at the same time they are fixed in the realization that they are always being personally maintained by the Supreme Lord. The senior Vaiṣṇava has the disciple’s personal benefit in mind.

However, Lord Śiva was not speaking for Prahlāda Mahārāja’s benefit, but to acquaint aspiring devotees with the stages of devotion. His desire was to facilitate the service of Śrī Nārada Muni and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī10, whose mission was to establish in the world the sequence of the grades of devotion and ultimately establish the glories of the gopīs. Try to understand all these truths, and seek to gradually become firmly situated in bhakti.

Imagine that you are in a market in which there are thousands of varieties of shops. In some of those shops there are products made of iron, in some shops there are products made of gold, in some there are jewels, and in others cintāmaṇi (wish-fulfilling stones). An expert is guiding you through all the shops, pointing out different products and revealing which are superior.

If there are a thousand pounds of iron and only one ounce of gold, the gold has more value. On the other hand, many pounds of gold will not amount to the value of one Kaustubha-manī or a similarly precious stone. Millions of such precious jewels cannot compare with a tiny quantity of cintāmaṇi, and even millions of cintāmaṇi stones cannot compare with one holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Now suppose someone is chanting the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa alone, and another is absorbed in the name of Rādhā-Ramana. The name Rādhā-Ramana, meaning Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enjoyer of pastimes with Śrīmati Rādhārāṇī, has more transcendental taste (rasa) than the name Kṛṣṇa alone. The person absorbed in that holy name will therefore experience a greater spiritual pleasure.

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10 Please see the Preface for more details.
There are three considerations (vicāras) from which to understand the relationship between Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Śiva. One is called tattva-gata-vicāra – the consideration of their relationship by established philosophical truth. Another is called aīśvarya-gata-vicāra – the consideration of their relationship in the Supreme Lord’s pastimes of majesty, and the third is naravat-gata-vicāra – the consideration of their relationship in the Supreme Lord’s sweet, human-like pastimes.

According to philosophical truth (tattva), Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s plenary portion is Sadāciva, and Sadāciva’s partial manifestation is Lord Śiva. From the perspective of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in opulence and majesty (aīśvarya), Lord Kṛṣṇa is Śiva’s worshipful Deity, who is always loved, honored and respected by him. However, in naravat-gata-vicāra, Kṛṣṇa plays another role – that of an ordinary human being. He performs pastimes as a very young, small child who cannot do anything independently. His mother, Śrīmati Yāsodā-devī, feeds Him and tends to all His needs. During these human-like pastimes, Lord Śiva might come and give Him benedictions.

In the scriptures called the Purāṇas it is stated that when Kṛṣṇa resided in Dvārakā, He worshiped Śiva to beget a child from the womb of His wife Jāmbavatī. Although Śiva is worshiped by Kṛṣṇa in those pastimes, he never thinks himself superior. He is always conscious that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that he is Kṛṣṇa’s eternal servant.

It is essential to have a clear understanding of these truths. One who knows these three perspectives or considerations can understand the relationship between Lord Śiva and his Lord.

Established Truth

According to the principle of philosophical truth, Lord Śiva is a partial manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s plenary expansion, Sadāśiva. When Kṛṣṇa desires to create, He expands Himself as Mahā-Saṅkarsana, and possessing
this creative desire, Śāṅkaraṇa expands as Mahā-Viṣṇu (Kāraṇodakaśayi Viṣṇu). Mahā-Viṣṇu then desires to create, and His desire takes the form of a light that emanates from between His eyebrows. The semblance or dim twilight reflection of that light is called Sambhu-linga (Siva). Many people worship Lord Śiva in the form of Sambhu-linga. The light itself is eternal and is not Sambhu-linga; Sambhu-linga is its semblance or shadow.

There is another semblance called Yoni, and this is the shadow of Rāma-devī. Rāma-devī is the spiritual potency of Mahā-Viṣṇu, and in Vaikuṇṭha she is Lord Nārāyaṇa’s beloved consort Lākṣmī-devī. This is her original transcendental form, and her shadow is the limited conceiving potency – Yoni.

Mahā-Viṣṇu has two types of potency with which he creates the material worlds. One type of potency is called nimitta – the instrumental cause of creation, and the other is called upādāna – the ingredient cause. Instrumental and ingredient causes can be explained in this way: Suppose I say, “I killed a snake with a stick.” The person who desired and performed the activity is the instrumental cause (nimitta), and the stick is the ingredient cause (upādāna). In another example, a potter makes a pot. The desire or will of the potter to make the pot is the instrumental cause. The sum total of all the instruments used to create it, like the wheel, clay, mud and water, is the ingredient cause.

Mahā-Viṣṇu’s eternal instrumental potency takes its reflected form as Yoni, the limited shadow potency, and the ingredient cause assumes the reflection-form of Sambhu-linga. Creation then takes place by the union of Sambhu-linga and his female consort Yoni. Sambhu is called the linga of the Supreme Lord, which means that he is the manifest symbol of the Lord’s male generative capacity, and he appears for the purpose of preparing the cosmic manifestation. That potency which gives birth to the material creation is the energy called Māyā, and her intrinsic form is Yoni.

Actually, the original instrumental and ingredient cause is not Yoni and Sambhu; it is Mahā-Viṣṇu. Material nature, as Yoni, desires to create by dint of the kāma-bija (desire seed) impregnated in her, and she is therefore the secondary instrumental cause. The desire-seed gave her the urge to create, and because she then wanted to create, she is called the instrumental cause. Sambhu supplies the materials of creation, and he is therefore called the ingredient cause. Sambhu, the dim reflection of the Supreme Lord’s own divine desire-filled glance, consummates his union with Yoni. However, he can do nothing independent of the energy of Mahā-Viṣṇu.

Mahā-Viṣṇu is the Supreme Personified Will, and it is he who brings about the union of the two – Yoni and Sambhu. He is the divine dominating person, the plenary portion of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the creator of the mundane world. In order for creation to take place, there must be the desire of the Supreme Doer. He must be present. The instrumental cause and ingredient cause must be mixed with the desire or glance of Mahā-Viṣṇu.

The initial form of the creation is mahat-tattva, the sum-total twenty-four elements. **This mahat-tattva is the reflection of the kāma-bija, the original desire-seed in Goloka Vṛndāvana. The seed of amorous creative desire in Goloka is the embodiment of pure cognition. It is a prototype of the sex desire in this mundane world, though it is located far from it. The seed of the mundane sex desire is thus the perverted reflection of the seed of the original creative desire in Goloka Vṛndāvana.**

### Service in Pastimes of Majesty

The historical narrations that follow are examples of aśvarya-gata-vicāra, Lord Śiva’s relationship with Kṛṣṇa from the perspective of Kṛṣṇa’s majesty. Revealed in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, these transcendental histories demonstrate Lord Śiva’s dependence on Him. They also further reveal that when Śiva gives benedictions to Kṛṣṇa’s enemies, he does so to assist in the Supreme Lord’s pastimes, which are performed for the benefit of all beings.

### Śiva’s Dependence

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam tells of a demon named Vṛkṣaṣura who, desiring to enjoy Lord Śiva’s wife, Pārvati, performed severe austerities to ‘please’ Lord Śiva. When Lord Śiva appeared before him to grant him a benediction, Vṛkṣaṣura expressed his desire that as soon as he would touch the head of anyone, that person’s head would immediately split open and he would die.

Lord Śiva granted this benediction, and Vṛkṣaṣura immediately rushed forward to use it against Lord Śiva.

Śiva asked, “What are you doing?” He replied, “Now I am applying my benediction.” He did not say, “I want Pārvati.” He simply looked at Pārvati and then ran towards Lord Śiva. Fearful, Śiva ran away, and Vṛkṣaṣura immediately chased after him. Lord Śiva was attired in a deerskin, which fell

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11 Mahat-tattva: the twenty-four elements are the five gross elements, the three subtle elements, ten senses, five sense objects and the total material cause.
off, and then his damaru drum also fell. He kept running, however, and he remembered his Lord. Who was the Lord he remembered? It was Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is aśvarya-gata-vicāra.

Lord Śiva fled from the land to the sky and from the sky to other planets, until he reached the limits of the universe, but Vṛkṣaśāra continued to chase him. The predominating deities of higher planets, such as Bhṛma, Indra and Candra, were not able to save him from the impending danger, and finally he approached Kṛṣṇa's incarnation, Lord Viṣṇu in Śvetadvipa.

In order to protect his devotee, Lord Viṣṇu appeared as a perfect brahma-cārya, and the effulgence emanating from his body was attractive to both Śiva and the demon. After stopping Vṛkṣaśāra by offering obeisances to him, and winning his confidence by speaking sweet and reassuring words, Lord Viṣṇu asked, “Why are you running after Śiva?”

Vṛkṣaśāra replied, “He has given me the benediction that when I put my hand on someone’s head it will split open. Now I will use the benediction on him.”

Lord Viṣṇu in the dress of a brahma-cārya said, “You are very foolish. You believe the benediction of this man who smokes gañjā, takes all types of intoxication and lives in crematoriums? Do you believe that he is authorized and powerful enough to give benedictions? His benediction will prove futile. He is just fooling you. You are running after him, but in the end you will find that his benediction is ineffective. Try it on yourself; put your hand on your head. You will see that nothing happens.”

Vṛkṣaśāra agreed, “Yes, I will try.”

In this way, by Lord Viṣṇu’s sweet words and by the expansion of his illusory energy, the demon became bewildered. He forgot the power of Lord Śiva and his benediction. He therefore put his hand on his own head, it immediately split open, and he died.

This pastime gives evidence that Lord Śiva is not independent; his worshipable Deity is Kṛṣṇa.  

Śiva’s Benefactor

All the pastimes performed by Śiva are meant to teach everyone about Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s supremacy, and to inspire everyone to serve Him and take shelter of Him. The following history is another example of this.

12 “Thus by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa, who is transcendental to all material qualities, Lord Śiva was saved from being killed by a demon. Anyone who hears this history with faith and devotion is certainly liberated from material entanglement as well as from the clutches of his enemies.” (Kṛṣṇa, Chapter 88)
The King of Kāśī was a staunch devotee of Lord Śiva, and he took the side of Paundraka Vāsudeva. He had previously received a benediction from Lord Śiva to be able to defeat Kṛṣṇa in combat, but in this battle he was not only defeated, but killed. With the assistance of His Sudārśana cakra Śiva killed Paundraka, and by His arrows He killed the king of Kāśī. Having cut off the head of the king, He then arranged to throw it into the city of Kāśī.

The King had a son named Sudakṣiṇa, who was determined to avenge the death of his father. Sudakṣiṇa thus worshiped the lord of Kāśī, Viśvanātha – Lord Śiva – who then instructed him to perform a special ritualistic ceremony that calls forth a fire demon for the purpose of killing one's enemy. Lord Śiva also sanctioned his ghostly companions to accompany the fire demon, and Dvārakā then fell under attack.

Kṛṣṇa called for his Sudārśana cakra, which froze the demon and forced him to return to Kāśī and destroy his creators. Moreover, following behind the demon, the Sudārśana cakra burned the entire city to ashes.

At that time even Lord Śiva himself had to run from the city. Where his deerskin fell, he did not know. He also left his trident and everything else, including his wife, and quickly fled. He arrived at a place in Navadvīpa called Harihara-kṣetra, and there he took shelter of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Lord Nityānanda said, “To the west of the Alakananda River see Kāśī, where the followers of Śiva and his consort endeavor for liberation. This Navadvīpa Kāśī, however, is superior to the other Kāśī. Here, Śiva is always dancing and chanting the name of Gaurāṅga [Caitanya Mahāprabhu], begging his followers to accept devotion to Mahāprabhu. The renunciates who live for a thousand years in Kāśī may attain liberation through the cultivation of knowledge leading to impersonal liberation, but here the devotees kick away that liberation as they dance and chant the name of Gaurāṅga. While leaving the body here, living entities are delivered by Lord Śiva, who chants the name of Gaurāṅga in their ears. This abode is thus called Mahā-Vārāṇasi, for here there is no fear of death.” (Śrī Navadvīpa-Mahātmya by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura)

The identity of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is given as follows: “According to the Vedic literature, the foremost occupational duty for humanity in this Age of Kali is nāma-saṅkīrtana, or congregational chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The incarnation for this age especially preaches this process, but only Kṛṣṇa Himself can explain the confidential loving service performed in the four principal varieties of loving affairs between the Supreme Lord and His devotees. Lord Kṛṣṇa therefore personally appeared, with His plenary portions, as Lord Caitanya.” (Śrī Caitanya-carita-mārtīra, Ādi-lilā, Chapter 3 Summary)
From Navadvipa he went to Ekāmra-kānana (now Bhuvanesvara) near Puri, in Orissa, where he took shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His form as Lord Jagannātha. This pastime is āśīvrya-gata-vicāra, and it also reveals that the worshipable Deity of Lord Śiva is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, or Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Service in Human-like Pastimes

Lord Rāmacandra’s worship of Lord Śiva is an example of naravata-gata-vicāra — a sweet, human-like pastime. As stated earlier, Rāma played the role of an ordinary human being who had to perform the difficult task of crossing the ocean to reach Lankā, and he worshiped Lord Śiva for the power to do this.

Lord Rāma established a linga of Rāmeśvara Mahādeva and began worshiping him, thinking, “By Lord Śiva’s mercy I can cross the sea.” Actually he was powerful enough to personally jump across the ocean in a second, but he was playing a role to inspire ordinary people. The common people present considered that Rāmeśvara Mahādeva was in fact the lord of Rāma, and that was why his name was Rāmeśvara. The demigods then appeared and declared, “Rāmeśvara Mahādeva and Rāma are both the same. There is no difference between them. Both are iśvara; both are God, the Supreme Lord. Ordinary people think only that Rāmeśvara is the lord of Rāma, but they are not intelligent. It is not like that.” At that moment Lord Śiva manifested from the linga and said, “No. Try to understand this truth. Rāmeśvara means ‘He whose Lord is Rāma.’ Rāma is my Lord!”

The pastimes of Lord Rāma are found in Rāmāyana, Śrimad-Bhāgavatam, the Purāṇas and Rāma-carita-mānas, and they take place in a previous Age, called Tretā-yuga. The demonic king Rāvana had kidnapped Lord Rāma’s wife, Sītā-devī, and taken her to Lankā. Before Rāma knew where Sītā had been taken, he was weeping profusely, and Laksmana was trying to console him. The more Laksmana tried to pacify him, however, the more bitterly he wept. In this state of mind, he was beseeching the trees and creatures of the forest, and even the Godāvari River. He appealed to the trees of Panjātavi forest, “O Panjātavi, have you seen Sītā? Where has she gone? O deer, have you seen Sītā? O Godāvari, have you seen my dear Sītā? Why has she left me?” Lord Rāma became maddened from insuborable grief.

At this time Lord Śiva and his wife Sati came to Daṇḍakāranya Forest, where Lord Rāma had been living with Sītā and His brother Laksmana for fourteen years, following the order of His father, King Daśaratha. Śiva was thus present to witness Lord Rāma’s divine pastimes, and seeing them, he was moved; his heart melted. He offered full obeisances, with all the limbs of his body touching the ground, and glorified Rāma: “Oh! These pastimes are so beautiful and marvelous that they will melt the heart of anyone who sees them.” He then circumambulated the outer precincts of that area, weeping due to the transcendental emotions of grief in separation exhibited in his Lord’s pastimes.

Offering his final respects, Śiva was ready to return to Kailāsa, when Sati asked him, “My dear husband, to whom are you offering obeisances?” Lord Śiva replied, “Śrī Rāma is my worshipful Deity. I worship him always.” Sati said, “I see that Rāma is like an ordinary man weeping for his wife. Even I know where Sītā is, but he does not know? Why is he grieving? He appears to be a weak person. Is he not strong enough to bring Sītā back? He must be an ordinary man, not God. Why are you honoring him so?”

“You are ignorant,” Lord Śiva told his doubting wife. “You do not understand that Rāma is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” He told her that if she did not believe him she could conduct a test of some sort, to determine Śrī Rāma’s position.

Lord Śiva rested under a banyan tree a little distance away, and Sati, by her inherent mystic power, changed to a form like Sītā’s. She went to the area where Śrī Rāma was piteously searching for Sītā. She saw the trees, plants, and wildlife of the forest as before. She saw Sītā-Rāma everywhere and in everything. Wherever she looked in the forest — here, there and everywhere — she saw only Sītā-Rāma, Sītā-Rāma, Sītā-Rāma.

Then, reassuming her own form, she returned to the spot where Śiva was waiting under the banyan tree. He asked her, “Did you test him to see who he is?”
Satī lied, “Most respected husband, I believed you; so there was no need to test him.”

Lord Śiva saw in a trance what had actually happened and silently vowed, “Satī has taken the form of Sétā, my mother; therefore she is no longer my wife. She is now my mother, and from now on I will treat her as such.”

When he made this vow, the demigods at once showered flowers from heaven, and they praised him, “You have made a remarkable vow.”

Satī asked, “What vow did you make?” Śiva remained silent.

The bona fide disciple always has faith in his self-realized guru. Lord Śiva was the Guru of Satī, but she had not believed him when he told her that Rāma is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If a disciple does not obey his guru, his bhakti and spiritual life will diminish. If a disciple lies to his guru, he again goes to hell.

When Lord Śiva and Satī-devī returned to their cottage in Kailāsa, Śiva placed her seat facing him. In Vedic culture a wife sits on the left side of her husband and a mother, respected as guru, sits in front of her son, facing him.

A disciple does not offer obeisance to his guru from his guru’s right or left side, but always in front of him. A true disciple does not remain silent, but respectfully asks relevant questions of his guru and serves him. He does not ask questions in a challenging mood, but rather to learn. It is stated in Bhagavad-gītā (4.34):

\[ \text{tad viddhi pranipātena} \]
\[ \text{pariprasṇena sevayā} \]
\[ \text{upadeksyanti te jñānam} \]
\[ \text{jñāninas tattva-darsinah} \]

Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.

Lord Śiva entered a trance for thousands of years, and Satī felt severe separation from him. She thought, “Śiva has left me. He is treating me like his mother because I took the form of Sétā. As long as I am in this body he will not accept me as his wife, so I will have to give up this body.”

After some time, Satī’s father Dakṣā, the son of Lord Brahmā and great progenitor of the universe, began a sacrifice. Although every sacrifice is intended to please the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, all the demigods, especially Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and the other principal demigods, are invited and take part. However, Lord Śiva was not invited to Dakṣā’s sacrifice.

The chaste Satī heard the heavenly denizens, who were flying in the sky, speaking about the great sacrifice being performed by her father. She saw that the wives of the heavenly denizens, dressed in fine clothing, were coming from all directions and were going to the sacrifice. She approached her husband and said, “My dear Lord, your father-in-law is now performing a great sacrifice. All the demigods who were invited by him are going. If you desire, we may also go.”

Lord Śiva warned her not to go, due to her father’s enmity and envy towards him – an enmity that had begun long before, in a former Age. Lord Śiva now remembered his father-in-law’s harsh words spoken at that time. Īśvara had come to Dakṣā’s council, where Dakṣā was being honored by many leaders of the universe. Dakṣā’s daughter was married to Lord Śiva, so he considered Śiva to be like his son. He offered obeisances to Brahmā because Brahmā was his father, but he did not show any respect to Śiva. Lord Brahmā welcomed Dakṣā, but Śiva was absorbed in meditation and chanting the mahāmantra: “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Hare Hare.”

Insulted by Śiva’s apparent neglect and considering himself Śiva’s superior, Duṣṭā publically criticized him. Many incidents took place as a result of that, and Satī returned to Kailāsa. Previous to this, Dakṣā had often criticized Śiva, being disturbed that his daughter had married such an ‘inferior person’, but after this incident he considered Śiva his enemy. Lord Śiva, on the other hand, had never felt enmity towards Dakṣā.

Now Lord Śiva told Satī, “A woman can go without an invitation to see her guru or her father and mother, but if her father thinks that her husband is his enemy, then she should not go to see him. You know that your father thinks I am his enemy, although I have never considered him as such.”

Despite her husband’s words, Satī was determined to go. She went, but upon her arrival she observed Dakṣā dishonoring him. She angrily condemned her father and glorified Lord Śiva in front of all present. Then, while meditating on Lord Śiva’s holy lotus feet, she gave up her body in a mystic fire that manifested from her heart.

By quitting her body, Satī was able to disconnect herself from her offensive father and transfer herself to another body in order to associate with Lord Śiva without that contamination. However, her main motive was to become free from the result of her own offenses, and again be accepted as Lord Śiva’s beloved wife. In her next life she took birth as Pārvatī, the...
daughter of the Himālayas. In that birth she performed austerities for many years and achieved her desired goal.

Here we see that Śiva's worshipable Deity is Rāma, and because Sati took the form of Sitā-devī, he left her. He is a chaste Vaishnava, always serving Lord Krṣṇa and Lord Rāma. Sati-devī is also a pure devotee. She is the Supreme Lord's divine energy, but she was playing a role in order to give lessons to ordinary persons.

Both Śiva and Sati served in Lord Rāma's human-like pastimes. Rāvana had not actually taken the real Sitā. He was not able to touch her. He could only take a mayā-sitā. The real Sitā, the transcendental potency of Rāma, was taken away and protected by the lord of fire, Agnideva. Rāma's crying and asking each and every plant, tree, mountain and river, “Where is my Sitā?” was an exhibition of his human-like pastimes.

The great saint Tulsidāsa has written in his Rāma-carita-mānasā that we should accept Śrī Śiva-Pārvatī as our Guru, and they will give us love for the lotus feet of Rāma. Those who worship Śiva as an independent lord are like Vṛkṣaśūra. They want to have sense gratification with Kṛṣṇa's potency. Instead of becoming Vṛkṣaśūra, we should become devotees, and consider Śiva-Pārvatī as our Guru in the matter of devotion to the Supreme Lord.

Consider further the identity of Lord Śiva's worshipable Deity. Śiva's mantra is Rāma, and he always chants the holy name of Rāma. To whom does this refer? Although this also refers to Śrī Sitā-Rāma, the name he actually chants is that of Mūla-Saṅkarṣaṇa, Balarāma, the first expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rāmacandra is also an expansion of the original Rāma – Balarāma – but the factual worshipable Deity of Lord Śiva is Balarāma.

Ultimately, in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, Rāma does not refer to Daśaratha's son Rāma, nor to Paraśurāma or Balarāma. Lord Rāmacandra, Lord Paraśurāma and Lord Balarāma are all manifestations of Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare,
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

The meaning of Rāma here is Rādhā-ramaṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa who engages in ramana with Rādhā. Ramana means playing or enjoying. Kṛṣṇa enjoys playful pastimes with Rādhārāṇī, and He is therefore called Ramana or Rāma.

No Lust in Lord Śiva

The following history is another example of naravata-gata-vicāra, or madhurya-gata-vicāra. There is also some tattva-gata-vicāra here, and altogether it is a nectar cup-full of madhurya (sweetness) and tattva (philosophical truth) – tasting very good.

Lord Śiva is immensely powerful and he has no lust. He may even be naked, and his wife Pārvatī may also be sitting naked on his lap, but they have no lusty desires. If an ordinary girl and boy stay close together, especially without clothes, lust will enter their hearts. However, this falldown does not take place in the hearts of Lord Śiva and Pārvatī-devī under any circumstance.

In this regard, a transcendental pastime is described in the Sixth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Lord Śiva was once giving a lecture in an assembly of great saintly persons, Pārvatī was sitting on his lap, and both of them were completely naked. At that time the exalted devotee King Citraketu came and said in a friendly way, “Just see the position in which you are giving your lecture.” Pārvatī thought that he was criticizing Lord Śiva. Disturbed by the thought that anyone would think Lord Śiva has lusty desires in his heart, she cursed him.

King Citraketu was on friendly terms with Lord Śiva, and because Citraketu’s Guru is also Mūla-Saṅkarṣaṇa, he and Śiva were god-brothers. He never meant to say that lust was in Śiva’s heart. He was simply saying that this was not the standard way to deliver a lecture.

Lord Śiva chastized Pārvatī and said, “Why did you curse him? He is an exalted devotee. Look at his advancement in bhakti. Although he is quite competent to revoke your curse and curse you in retaliation, he has readily accepted your curse. This is his greatness – this is the behavior of a Vaishnava.”

Lust cannot remain near Lord Śiva. Neither Lord Sadāśiva nor his partial manifestation of Śiva who stays with Pārvatī have lust in their hearts. When Kāmadeva, Cupid, once came to disturb Lord Śiva’s meditation, Śiva simply opened his third eye and burned him to ashes.

How could it happen then, that Lord Śiva was attracted to the beautiful form of Mohinī-mūrti? Mohinī is an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, and He can do anything. It was Lord Kṛṣṇa who personally created the attraction within Lord Śiva’s heart, and He who showed him this form of Mohinī. In the course of serving Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, His internal bewildering energy, yogamāyā, is so strong that it can do anything.
In October of 2001, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja took a party of six hundred pilgrims, including over two hundred Westerners, to the sacred and beautiful town of Jagannātha Puri on the east coast of Orissa. One of the many holy sites visited by the pilgrims was the temple of Lord Śiva in his form as Lokanātha Mahādeva. Arriving at the site, the pilgrims passed through a large gate that lead to a courtyard. On the right of the courtyard there was a beautiful pond and on the left there were some shops selling sweets and other items for worship.

As is the case with many Indian temples, the management of the temple of Lokanātha Mahādeva did not allow Westerners to enter. Therefore, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and the Indian devotees went into the temple while the Western devotees waited patiently in the courtyard. After a few minutes, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja came out of the temple alone and sat down on a slab platform in front of one of the little shops. He was immediately surrounded by the Western devotees, eager to hear him speak, and the following is a transcription of his talk:

Lord Śiva is a most exalted devotee of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. He always faithfully serves Lord Kṛṣṇa and all His incarnations such as Lord Rāma, Lord Nṛsiṁha, Lord Kalki, and Lord Varāha.

In this world, Lord Śiva has five different kinds of manifestations: earth, water, fire, air and ether – of which our body, the Earth and the universe are made. He is also qualified to personally appear from forms composed of these five elements, in order to serve his Master.

You have no ability to see anything other than these five elements. Now you cannot see the soul, which is your self. If you develop bhakti, pure loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then you will see Him; and by His light you will see your own soul.

We went inside the temple but we simply saw a room full of water, so there was no need of going inside. You are fortunate to be out here at this big pond called Gaurī-kunda, which is a symbol of Lord Śiva. You can touch this pond, perform ācamana, and you can offer your obeisances here. In Bengal and other places there are also ambu-lingas (lingas made of water), and Śiva is worshipped in that form.

Indian devotees are fortunate to see the deity and offer arati (worship), whereas the Western devotees are not given permission to enter the temple. Because of this, the Western devotees have an opportunity to come to Lokanātha Mahādeva in a mood of great humility – thinking themselves to be very low and fallen. In fact, if they
come with this mood, they are even more fortunate than those devotees who went inside. If you are out here crying to Lokanātha – Gopīśvara Mahādeva – praying, “Please be merciful to me,” he will come to you first, and he will sprinkle his mercy upon you. Lord Śiva is a manifestation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and as such, he is always hungry for love and affection. If you are crying and thinking, “We are very unfortunate,” Lord Kṛṣṇa will personally come to you. He is very merciful, so do not worry that you cannot go inside. You are most lucky.

Wherever Kṛṣṇa resides, Sadāśiva Viṣṇu is always present. In Mathurā and all other places where there is a temple of Kṛṣṇa or any Viṣṇu Deity, Sadāśiva as Lokanātha or Gopīśvara Mahādeva will be there – to serve the Supreme Lord’s abode. Śiva serves Kṛṣṇa everywhere; he is always in Kailāsa, always in Kāśi, and always in Bhubanesvara. It seems from worldly, external vision that he sometimes leaves one place and goes to another, but this is not the real truth.

In his pastimes he shifted from Kailāsa to Kāśi. While in Kāśi he assisted the atheist King Kāśirāja and the king’s friend Paundraka Vāsudeva, who artificially became four-armed and challenged Lord Kṛṣṇa. In the battle that ensued, Lord Kṛṣṇa severed the heads of both Paundraka Vāsudeva and the king of Kāśi, who had considered himself one of Lord Śiva’s best servants. The king’s master, however, could not save him when Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Sudarśana cakra burnt down Kāśi.

Seeing his city in flames, Lord Śiva fled. After some time he arrived in Ekāmra-kānana in Bhubanesvara and took shelter of Lord Jagannātha. Lord Jagannātha told him, “Never fear. Because you have come under my shelter, I will give you the post of Lokanātha, the protector of my abode.” If anyone comes to this holy place and takes my transcendental association without taking yours, his coming here will not be complete. He must come to your place after visiting me, and then his mission here will be accomplished and he will become happy.”

Lord Śiva is extremely kind by nature, and he is the abode of love. In this regard, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has written (Sankalpa-kalpadruma 103):

vṛndāvānavaṇi-pate! jaya soma soma-maule
sanaka-sanandana-sanātana-nārādeśya
gopīśvara! vṛaja-vilāsi-yugāṅghri-padme
prema prayaccha nirupādhī nāmo nāmas te

O gatekeeper of Vṛndāvana! O Soma, all glories to you! O you whose forehead is decorated with the moon, and who is worshipable by the sages headed by Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Nārada! O Gopīśvara! Desiring that you bestow upon me prema, divine love for the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, who perform joyous pastimes in Vṛaja-dhāma, I offer obeisances unto you time and again.

We pray, “O Lord Śiva, even great personalities like Śrī Nārāda Muni and the four Kumāras worship you. You can give love and affection like that of the gopīs. In your purest form of Gopīśvara Mahādeva, you are very powerful. You are hari-hara-eka-ātmā, which means that Kṛṣṇa has become your ātmā and you have become His ātmā.”

Here, ātmā means dearmost or very beloved, so Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Śiva are one at heart. Lord Śiva serves the Supreme Lord as Hanuman, as Bhima, as Madhvācārya, as Advaita Ācārya at the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and in so many other forms.

We have come here to beg for the mercy of Lokanātha, but personally I don’t see Lokanātha here. I see Gopīśvara Mahādeva, of whom Lokanātha is an expansion.

Please repeat after me: [Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārājā uttered each half line of the above-mentioned Sanskrit prayer alone, and the assembled pilgrims responded in unison. Then he shared with them its deep and intimate purport:]

We pray, “O Gopīśvara Mahādeva, we have come to you. Here your name is changed. You have manifested as Lokanātha, but we don’t know you as Lokanātha. We only know you as Gopīśvara Mahādeva. You cannot cheat us by hiding from us. You can cheat demons like Rāvana, Kamśa, Jarāsandha and others, but you can never cheat us. This is because we have taken shelter of Yogamāyā Paurnāmāsi. If you cheat us, we will have to complain to Paurnāmāsi, and she will ‘punish’ you. Do you remember when all the gopīs slapped your cheeks so much that your cheeks became swollen? Kindly remember this.” [See page 8, footnote 3]

Pleased by the love expressed in this prayer, Lord Śiva will appear in his form of Gopīśvara Mahādeva. He will be very helpful, and happy to give mercy.
I have shared something special with you. As you are sitting outside and feeling separation from Lord Śiva, he will surely sprinkle his mercy.