

Śrīmad Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa's

# ŚRĪ RĀSA PAÑCĀDHYĀYĪ



Translated from the Hindi edition of

*tridaṇḍi-svāmī*

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



SEVĀ KUÑJA PUBLICATIONS

# ŚRĪ RĀSA PAÑCĀDHYĀYĪ



*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,*  
Tenth Canto, Chapters 29-33



śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrīmad Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa's

# ŚRĪ RĀSA PAÑCĀDHYĀYĪ

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,  
Tenth Canto, Chapters 29-33

with  
Elaborated Translations of Commentaries  
by Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda  
and Śrīla Viṣvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Translated from the Hindi edition of  
*tridaṇḍi-svāmī*

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa  
Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Sevā Kuṅja Publications  
Vṛndāvana

# ŚRĪ RĀSA PAÑCĀDHYĀYĪ

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with commentary by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

- *Śrī Padyāvali*

by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

# Dedication

The one-pointed follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī  
and great *rasika* poet who disappeared on Śāradiya Rāsa-pūrnimā,  
the very pure full-moon autumn day, giving a special signal  
indicating his return to the eternal *mahā-rāsa*

my beloved Śrī Gurupāda-padma



śrī gauḍīya-vedānta-ācārya-kesarī nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa  
om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

*the best amongst the tenth generation  
of descendants in the bhāgavata-paramparā  
from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu,  
and the founder of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti  
and its branches throughout the world*



This book has manifested by his inspiration  
and is his own creation. Although it is already his,  
we offer this publication into his lotus hands.





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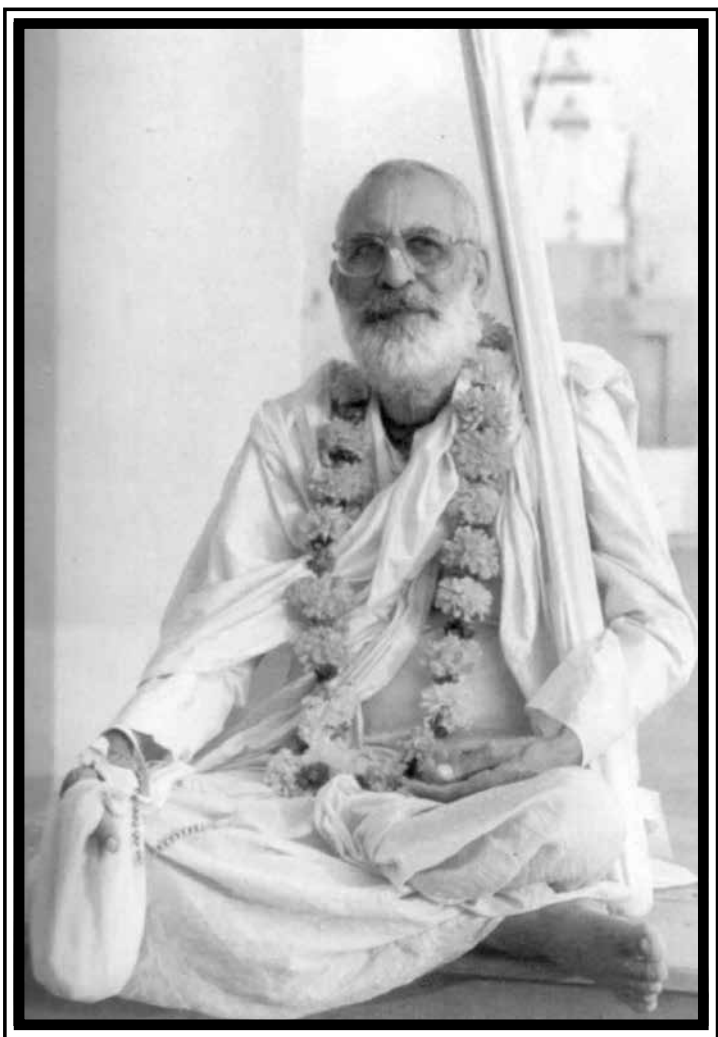
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*nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA





*nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
BHAKTIVEDĀNTA VĀMANA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



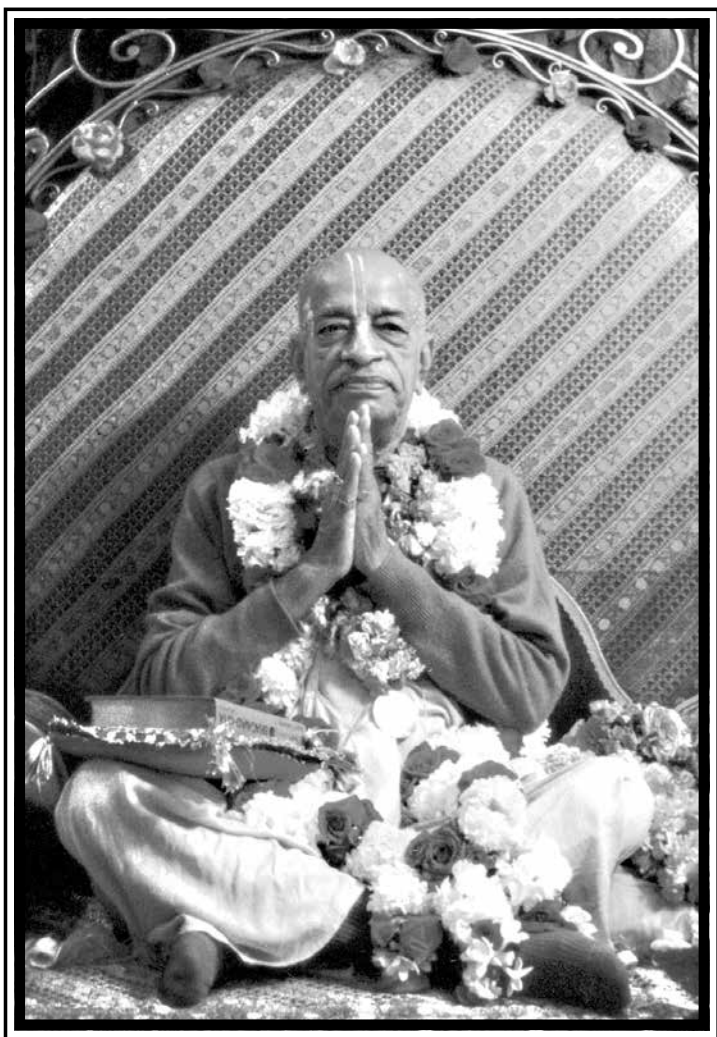
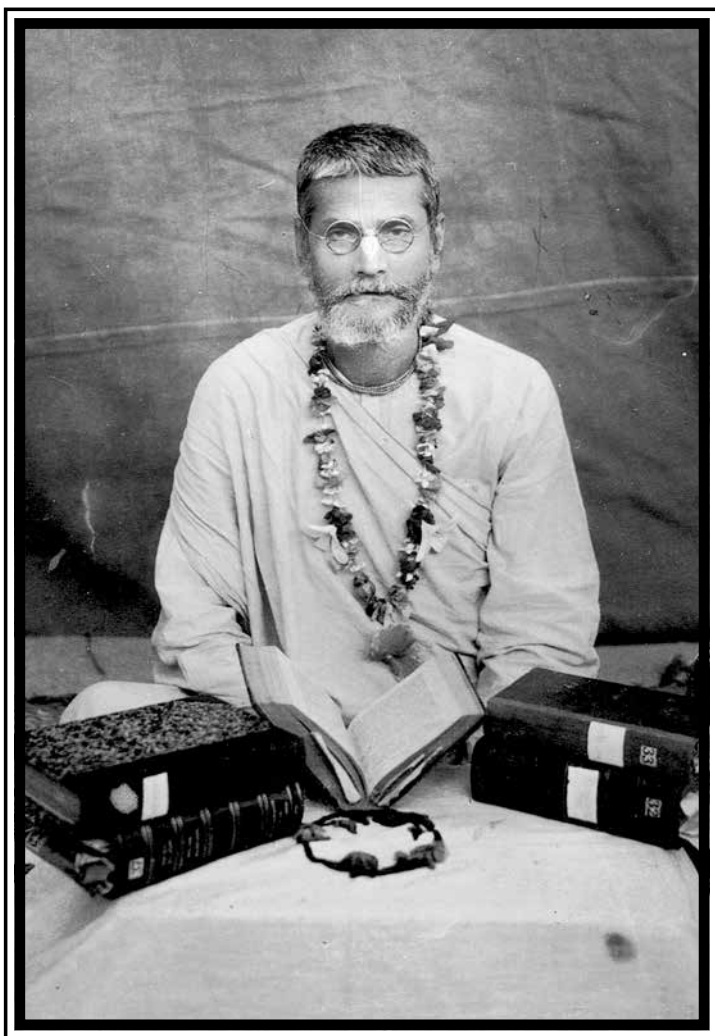


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*nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*

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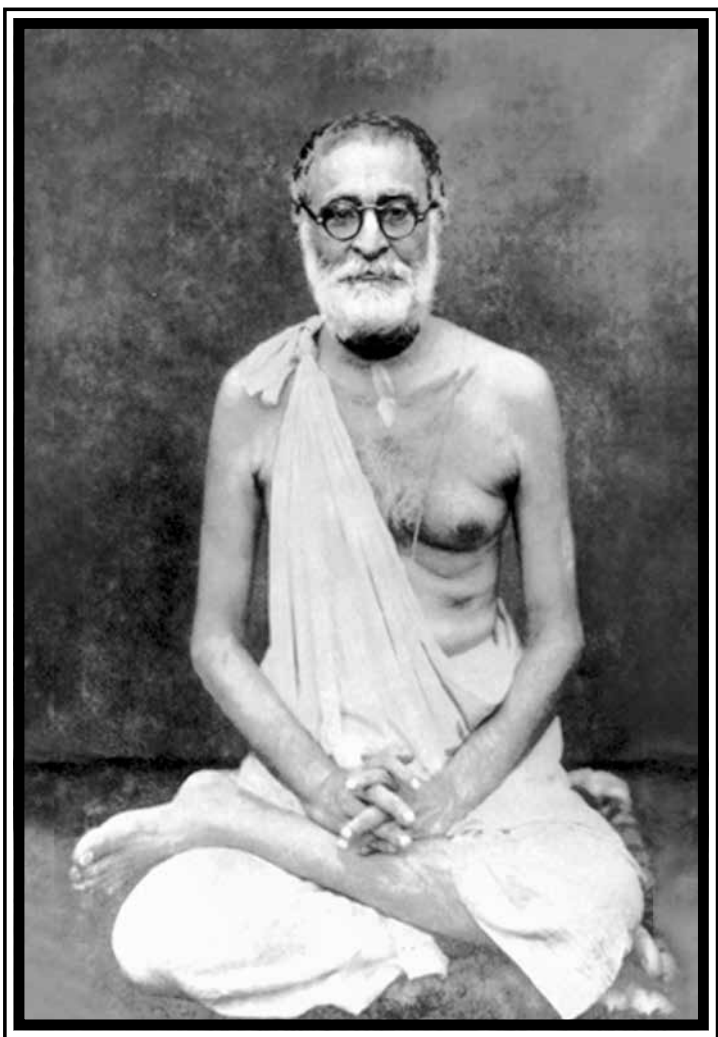




*nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA





*nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD

BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ ṬHĀKURA PRABHUPĀDA



# Introduction

It is our great pleasure to present this edition of *Rāsa-pañcādhyāyī*, taken from the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This book is born out of the causeless mercy and inspiration of our most worshipable *gurupāda-padma*, *ācārya keśarī nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. We have included our *ācāryas'* commentaries: Śrīla Śrīdhāra Svāmīpāda's *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*, which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda's *San̄kṣepa Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*, and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's *Sārārtha Darśinī*. Furthermore, we have written our own *Bhāvānuvāda* explanation based on the three *ācāryas'* elucidations. There were many Bengali translations of these three commentaries, but there was nothing in Hindi. I hope that the Hindi-speaking public will be able to relish our *Rāsa-pañcādhyāyī* with the commentaries.

A few years ago I spoke a series of lectures on *Śrī Rāsa-pañcādhyāyī* along with its commentaries. After hearing these deliberations, my audience again and again requested me to publish these in book form in Hindi. I could not refuse them. I do not know how this turned out; only the readers can judge.

*Padma Purāṇa* confirms that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Mahā-Purāṇa* is the very embodiment of Adhoksaja Bhagavān Śrī Nanda-nandana:

*pādaḥ yadīyau prathamadvitīyau  
tr̥tīyatūryau kathitau yadurū  
nābhīstathā pañcama eva ṣaṣṭho  
bhūjāntaraṁ doryugalaṁ tathānyau  
kaṇṭhas tu rājan navamo yadīyo  
mukharavindaṁ daśamāṁ praphullam  
ekādaśo yasya lalāṭapaṭṭakam  
śīro'pi tu dvādaśa eva bhātī  
tamādīdevaṁ karuṇānidhānaṁ  
tamālavaraṇaṁ suhitāvatāraṁ  
apārasaṁsāra samudra-setuṁ  
bhajāmahe bhāgavata-svarūpaṁ*

“I worship the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is the bridge for crossing the ocean of repeated birth and death; it has appeared for the benefit of all beings as the literary incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the origin of all the gods, the storehouse of mercy, and is black like the *tamāla* tree.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* consists of twelve Cantos, which correspond to the twelve different limbs of the Lord’s body:

The First and Second Cantos are His lotus feet.

The Third and Fourth Cantos are His thighs.

The Fifth Canto is His navel.

The Sixth Canto is His chest and mighty shoulders.

The Seventh and Eighth are His arms.

The Ninth Canto is His throat.

The Tenth Canto is His blooming lotus face.

The Eleventh Canto is His forehead.

The Twelfth Canto is His head.”

In the Tenth Canto of this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Mahā-Purāṇa*, Chapters 29-33 are known as *Śrī Rāsa-pañcādhyāyī*. In the very beginning of his commentary, Śrīla Viṣvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has proclaimed these five chapters to be the five life airs of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

There are two types of *rāsa-līlā*: *nitya* and *mahā*. *Ādi-Purāṇa* mentions the *nitya-rāsa*, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes *mahā-rāsa*. Again, *mahā-rāsa* is divided in two – *śarādiya* (autumn) and *vāsanta* (springtime). Actually, *rāsa-līlā* takes place every full-moon night, but only *śarādiya* and *vāsanta* have been recorded in the *śāstras*. *Śarādiya-rāsa* is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and *Gīta-govinda* gives an account of *vāsanta-rāsa*. The subject matter of the book in hand is *śarādiya-rāsa*.

Bhagavān performs His pleasure-filled pastimes to bestow mercy upon His devotees. Indeed, He has manifested this *rāsa-līlā* to show special favor to those who have taken shelter of *madhura-rasa*, His amorous pastimes. Hearing about the sweet moods of the *madhura-rasa gopīs*, the devotees become inspired to enter *rāga-marga bhajana*, the path of spontaneous devotion, under the guidance of the *gopīs*.

Brahmā and Indra had a doubt about Śrī Kṛṣṇa being the Supreme Godhead. For one year after Brahmā stole the calves and cowherd boys, Kṛṣṇa Himself took the forms of those calves and cowherd boys. This convinced Brahmā of the truth, and he offered prayers glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa



as Parabrahma, the Supreme Lord. Indra was also skeptical and sent torrential rains, but his pride was smashed when Śrī Kṛṣṇa held Girirāja Govardhana aloft. Indra then came with the Surabhī cow to beg forgiveness and perform *abhiṣekha* of Kṛṣṇa.

Kāmadeva also thought that Kṛṣṇa was an ordinary cowherd boy, and came to defeat Him. The proud Kāmadeva had already conquered Śrī Brahmā, Indra, Candra and other demigods, who had previously thought the Cause of all Causes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to be ordinary. Kāmadeva challenged Kṛṣṇa, and summoned Him to enter the arena. Kṛṣṇa gladly accepted the challenge. Millions of *gopīs* formed an impenetrable circle and Kāmadeva stepped inside. It was a beautiful, full-moon night on the bank of the Yamunā where fragrant breezes were blowing through the secluded bowers – all of these elements manifested to serve Kāmadeva's purpose. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed *rāsa-līlā*, and when Kāmadeva witnessed Kṛṣṇa's supreme beauty in the circle of the *gopīs*, he was stupefied; indeed, *manmatha-manmathaḥ* Śrī Kṛṣṇa soundly defeated him.

Bhagavān Śrī Veda-vyāsa's son, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who spoke *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatām*, was completely renounced throughout his whole life. This crown-jewel of swan-like liberated sages was beyond the influence of the illusory energy, indeed, he did not even know the difference between male and female. If this *rāsa-līlā* were a mundane, lusty affair, then such a exalted personality would not have described this in front of all the *deva-ṛṣis* (sages among the demigods), *mahā-ṛṣis* (great sages), *vipra-ṛṣis* (*brāhmaṇa* sages) and *rāja-ṛṣis* (saintly kings) who were present in Śrī Parikṣit Mahārāja's assembly. If it were something vulgar, then he would have referred to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Bhogeśvara, the king of enjoyers, and Kāmeśvara, the lord of lust, but instead he addressed Him as Ātmarāma, who finds His satisfaction within, and Yogeśvara, the supreme master of all mystic powers. At the end of the *rāsa-līlā* Śrī Śukadeva said: "*vikriḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ* – hearing this pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the hero of *rāsa-līlā*, completely expels the disease of lust in the heart and bestows the supreme *bhakti* at the lotus feet of Bhagavān" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.39). It is said that *rāsa-līlā* is the pastime of Kṛṣṇa's victory over Kandarpa; therefore, He has earned the title '*sākṣāt manmatha-manmathaḥ*' (directly the enchanter of Cupid), and devotees call Him Madana Mohana, He who bewilders Cupid.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 5.45-47, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the crown-jewel of omniscient persons, told Śrī Pradyumna Miśra, glorifying Rāmananda Rāya:

*vraja-vadhū-saṅge kṛṣṇera rāsādi-vilāsa  
yei jana kahe, śune kariyā viśvāsa  
hṛd-roga-kāma tāñra tat-kāle haya kṣaya  
tina-guṇa-kṣobha nahe, ‘mahā-dhīra’ haya  
ujjala madhura prema-bhakti sei pāya  
ānande kṛṣṇa-mādhurye vihare sadāya*

“When a person hears about Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa* and other *līlās* from the lips of the devotees with full faith and then relates these pastimes to others, the disease of material lust is immediately removed from his heart. The three modes of nature (goodness, passion and ignorance) cannot arouse material desires in him whatsoever. The result of such hearing is that he is lifted above the material modes, and thus he no longer becomes agitated. Indeed, he becomes deeply peaceful. He comes to understand that holding onto material desires will stand in the way of his attaining pure *prema*. He achieves the most relishable, unmotivated *prema-bhakti* endowed with the moods of the selfless *gopīs*. Then he always basks in the bliss of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness.”

Taking the support of these words uttered by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has written in his commentary of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.39: “Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa-līlā* is the very best of all His pastimes. Indeed, it is the crown-jewel of all the *līlās*. If one hears and then describes this pastime, speaking or writing about it, with complete faith in the words of the scriptures, this will bring about his greatest welfare. If one does this regularly, he attains *prema-bhakti*, even while material desires still lurk in the heart. Eventually, the influence of that *prema* drives out the disease of lust and other ailments. These two processes go on simultaneously, but *prema* manifests first. Anyone can achieve success by following this process; no qualification is required.”

By cultivating this *rāsa-līlā*, one can understand that the Vrajavāsīs are very dear to Kṛṣṇa, and out of all the Vrajavāsīs, His beloved *gopīs* are the special recipients of His love. Their devotion to Kṛṣṇa is spotless. For Him they have given up the bondage of love for husband, father, mother, brother

and other relatives. Furthermore, they throw chastity, social restrictions and other moral codes to the wind, and run to Him. Therefore, even though Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord Himself, the best of the *āptakāma* and *ātmārāma* personalities, and the reservoir of all opulences, He was forced to admit in front of all the *vraja-gopīs*, “The flag of My love for you is flying at high-mast, broadcasting Your glorious victory over Me. Even if I were to live as long as the demigods, I would not be able to pay you back for what you have done for Me. Out of your kindness, you may agree to release Me from this debt, but really and truly I will remain indebted to you for all time.”

Of all the *vraja-gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa’s topmost beloved is Śrī Rādhā, who is the embodiment of *mahā-bhāva*. *Madanākhyā mahā-bhāva* dwells only in Her heart; it is not found even in Lalitā and Her other *sakhīs* or in *akhilarasāmṛta-sindhu* Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is the ocean of all expressions of love. Only Śrī Rādhā is Rāseśvarī, the mistress of the circle dance. Without Her, there is no question of *rāsa*. In this way, through *rāsa-līlā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa has proclaimed the greatness of the *vraja-gopīs* and especially of Śrī Rādhā.

The crown-jewel of *paramahansa*s, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, called Rāsa-bihārī Śrī Bhagavān ‘*sākṣāt manmatha-manmathaḥ*.’ Pradyumna of the *catur-vyūha* is *sākṣāt manmatha* as well; his quality of also being the enchanter of Cupid comes directly from Rāsa-bihārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the material realm the demigod Cupid churns the hearts of ordinary humans, making them feel they have ‘fallen in love,’ but mundane Kāmadeva is merely a shadow of an expansion of the expansions of Pradyumna. It is this mundane Kāmadeva who was so bewildered by Rāsa-bihārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the beginning of *rāsa-līlā* that he fainted in his excitement to serve Him. This Rāsa-bihārī Madana-mohāna is a fresh youth (*nava-kīśora*) dressed as a cowherd boy (*gopa-veśa*), holding the flute (*veṇu-kara*), and the best of dancers (*naṭa-vara*). He goes to the hearts of very fortunate persons where He captivates the worldly Cupid, and when this material Madana faints, Kṛṣṇa tugs at their heart-strings. Now these persons’ hearts are continuously churning with the desire to attain their spiritual body favorable for serving Madana-mohāna exclusively in *madhura-rasa*, the amorous mellow.

*Akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ* Śrī Bhagavān is the enjoyer of four *rasas* – *dāsyā*, *sākhya*, *vatsalya* and *madhura* – but His topmost beauty manifests in *madhura-rasa*. The special moods He displays depend on the particular *dhāma* and the associates with whom He appears. It is with the *vraja-devīs*

that His sweetness increases to the highest degree, and during the *rāsa-līlā* His sweetness and attractiveness are experienced to the ultimate degree. This Rāsa-bihārī Madana-mohāna is directly *sākṣāt manmatha-manmathaḥ*. The crown-jewel of all His beloveds is Śrī Rādhārāṇī, the embodiment of *mahā-bhāva*; She relishes the happiness of serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa and facilitates His tasting bliss in *rāsa* and other *līlās* in Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa was not able to repay the *gopīs* for the love-filled *sevā* they rendered to Him in the *rāsa-līlā*. Thus, He feels ever indebted to them. But this entity called *prema* is beyond our imagination. One who has relished it on the strength it bestows cannot describe its characteristics; in the end, the only words they can utter is “*madhura, madhura*, how sweet, how sweet.”

*Rāsa rasika* Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself said:

*santi yadyapi me prājyā līlās tās tā manoharāḥ  
na hi jāne smṛte rāse mano me kīdṛśaṁ bhavet*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.209,  
quoted from *Brhad-Vāmana Purāṇa*)

“I enjoy many pastimes, and all of them are enchanting, but *rāsa-līlā* is so powerful that as soon as I think about it, I can’t explain what happens to My heart.”

There are no words to describe His condition when He is drowning in the flood of the nectar of *rāsa*, going absolutely mad as He relishes supreme bliss. Indeed, He gets completely overwhelmed just remembering it. In *rāsa-līlā* no one has even a scent of desire for one’s personal gratification. Therefore, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has called this *līlā* ‘the ultimate renunciation’ (*niṛṭti-parā*). “*Niṛṭti-pareyaṁ rāsa-pañcādhyaī* ‘*ti vyakti kariṣyāmaḥ* – I will be describing detachment as generated in *rāsa-pañcādhyaī*.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has no desire to please His own senses. His only desire is to give pleasure to the hearts of the devotees. He Himself has said this in *Padma Purāṇa*: “*mad-bhaktānāṁ vinodārthaṁ karomi vividhāḥ kriyāḥ* – I engage in a vast variety of pastimes just to entertain My dear devotees in every mellow.” However, the primary purpose of His existence is to fulfill the *vraja-devīs*’ heart-felt yearnings. Thus, He performs *rāsa-līlā*, by which He also tastes untold joy.

Kṛṣṇa's sweetness is so inconceivable that it awakens a tremendous enthusiasm to relish it in the heart of whoever hears about His charming pastimes. Eventually this enthusiasm overpowers him with such greed that he takes the shelter of a *guru* and dedicates himself to *bhajana*. But there is one point to be emphasized in regard to hearing this *kathā*. One must hear only from a Vaiṣṇava who is relishing Kṛṣṇa's sweetness in his heart at every moment. An intense desire consequently arises in the heart of the hearer. But if you hear from one who is in the grip of *anarthas*, all you will gain is *anarthas*. Ordinary persons, not knowing the secret realities of the pastimes, actually take Kṛṣṇa and the Vraja *gopīs* in the wrong way and show contempt for them, but hearing pure devotees' deliberations on this book will surely wash away that mistaken understanding. Of this I am completely sure.

I have full faith that the *rāganuga sādhakas* who are thirsty for *vraja-rasa-bhakti* will deeply appreciate this book. The faithful devotee will read this book and thus become qualified to receive the great treasure of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *prema*. Due to pressure of time, there may be some mistakes. I request the reader to correct them while reading. Finally, I appeal to my most worshipable *gurupāda-padma*, who is the condensed embodiment of Bhagavān's mercy, that he showers me with profuse mercy and thus enables me to fulfill his innermost desire. This is my prayer at his lotus feet, which bestow *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Praying for the mercy of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas on the disappearance day of Śrīla Gurupāda-padma.

Śaradiya Rāsa-pūrṇimā

14 October 2008

The wretched and fallen  
(*dina-hina*)

*Swami B. V. Narayana*

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa



## FOREWORD

# Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's Special Discourse on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Tenth Canto

Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Calcutta, 17 May 1930

First published in the weekly Gauḍīya, Volume 8, Number 41

There is a great necessity to write a special commentary on the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for those who earnestly thirst to serve Transcendent Beauty. Such an exposition will not be a display of the pompous language that big scholars utter in their dissertations on the Tenth Canto. Nor will it be the exhibition of the imitationists, the *prakṛta-sahajiyās*, who accept their cheaply conceived fantasies as part of absolute reality. Therefore, those in whom ardent spiritual greed has arisen will certainly want to read this book.

In this world there is no treatise like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It is not hearsay or mythology. If a person truly follows the deliberations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* without material motivation, he will understand that there is no text that can ever compare to this scripture – now or in the future. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* presents in sequence the progressively evolved conceptions of the Absolute. The preliminary conception is doubt in the existence of any supreme truth (*saṁśaya*). Next comes denial of the personal Absolute (*nāstikya*), then acceptance of the Absolute as impersonal and featureless (*nirguṇa*), the theory that God exists but is neuter (*klīva*), the potent Godhead (*puruṣa*) and then the Potent and His Potency (*mithuna*). The conception next evolves to *svakīya*, the eternal matrimony of the Supreme Male and His consort, and finally *parakīya*, the paramour conception of the Divine Couple.

In the Tenth Canto Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, the main subject of this book, are described, so what was the need of presenting the first nine cantos? They come first to make a platform to highlight the fact that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the completely independent autocrat. His loving affairs are the paramount subject of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The first nine cantos present the rudimentary theories of doubt up to the conception of conjugal love of

God, and in the Tenth Canto, in chapters like *Gopī-gīta*, the paramour conception is revealed.

Before the advent of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, many persons used to study *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. But only those who have read the *Bhāgavatam* after delving into His biographical anthology *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* – authored by Śrī Kṛṣṇādāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the foremost follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī – will be able to take to heart the real intention and the explicit theme of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The professional orators' and *prākṛtā-sahajiyās*' explanations of the *Bhāgavatam* actually cover the true conceptions of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī presented in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. The genuine commentary of the Tenth Canto will not be written in that way. Countless *sahajiyās* have delivered misleading commentaries simply for the gratification of general people. Thus they have cleared a path to hell for themselves and others.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the fully matured, succulent fruit of the wish-fulfilling Vedas, which are the source of aggregate knowledge and wisdom.

*nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalaṁ  
śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṁyutam  
pibata bhāgavataṁ rasam ālayaṁ  
muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.3)

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the mature, succulent fruit of the wish-fulfilling tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī and it has willingly descended upon this Earth in its entirety, through the disciplic succession of bona fide *gurus*. It is saturated with the supremely pleasing ambrosial nectar of transcendental emotion (*rasa*). It is completely liquid – having no skin, hard seed, fibers or other parts to be discarded – and thus is fully drinkable. O great devotees, you who are *bhāvuka*, well acquainted with the transcendental nectarean emotions of divine love, and *rasika*, expert in relishing all the specific forms of the liquefied ambrosia of transcendental emotion, even when you are fully liberated, should repeatedly drink the sweet nectar of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Indeed, the supremely liberated souls perpetually relish this grand treatise.



The word *nigama* means the Vedas. They are likened to a wish-fulfilling tree. The Vedas easily yield the fruit of whatever one may aspire for with resolve. Seculars resolve to pursue the ordinary fourfold Vedic goals, namely, *dharma* (mundane religiosity and righteousness), followed by *artha* (resultant prosperity), *kāma* (sensual exploit of the facilities afforded by prosperity), and at last *mokṣa* (the absolute cessation of consequent material sufferings). On the other hand, those who have abandoned sensual enjoyment (*bhukti*) as well as the pursuit of emancipation from suffering (*mukti*) and who have factually crossed beyond the realm of corporeal perception, never aspire for these unpalatable or tasteless things. The fruitive workers (*karmīs*), who are full of selfish motives, crave that which is distorted and repugnant, while the adherents of monism (*jñānīs*) try to realize dry and tasteless absolute non-distinction. But the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will never yield repugnant or tasteless fruit.

Within the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the increasing excellence of the intrinsic love between the Supreme Lord (*viśaya*, or *sevya*) and His servitors (*āśraya*, or *sevaka*) is readily traced through each of the successive stages from contracted (*saṅkucita*); to slightly budding (*iṣat-mukulita*); developing, or flowering (*puspita*); expanding, or blooming (*vardhita*); mature, or fully developed (*paripuṣṭa*); and finally profusely exuberant, or perfected (*prapakva*).

Similarly, as the wish-fulfilling tree of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* unfolds, all conceptions of the Supreme Absolute are chronicled as they evolve through doubt, the denial of the absolute, the impersonal absolute, the personal but impotent God, the Potent, the Potent with His Potency, the conception of conjugal love with the Supreme, and finally the superlative conception of *parakīya*, the Supreme as paramour. For one who anxiously longs to serve Transcendent Beauty through the *parakīya* conception, there is no entity that can award the fruit of their determined endeavor other than the wish-fulfilling tree of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This holds true in the whole of existence – throughout all the material universes, or beyond them, or across the Virajā in Brahmaloḥa (the endless incorporeal firmament), or even in any of the innumerable Vaikuṇṭha planets.

In considering the *parakīya* conception, four gradations of increasing excellence are observed. Initially it is overly tender and immature (*taruṇa*). In the growing stage it is astringent (*kaṣāya*), then ripe (*pakva*), and finally

fully ripened (*prapakva*). These gradations can be perceived by the topmost devotees who earnestly long to serve Transcendent Beauty. That is to say, it can be perceived by the *rasika* and *bhāvuka bhaktas* as they relish the transcendental nectar of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Only they are factually *bhāvuka* who are situated on the platform of full, uninterrupted realization of their *sthayī-bhāva*, their eternal relationship with Divinity rooted in their own particular mode of service. Apart from one's *sthayī-bhāva*, there are four other ingredients of pure transcendent love. When these four ingredients of love are integrated with the realization of *sthayī-bhāva*, then *rasa*, the transcendent nectar of divine loving exchange, will arise.

Those who are immersed in *rasa* completely surpass the realm of mundane perceptions. Situated on the platform of the profuse transcendental astonishment within their hearts, which are resplendent with *viśuddha-sattva* (the supreme purity of spiritual existence), they forever relish this sublime *rasa*.

Only they who are *rasika* (who can relish the astonishing humors of transcendence) can taste the nectar of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the perfectly succulent fruit of the wish-fulfilling tree of Vedic literature.

There is a possibility of choking if one swallows any other fruit, but because this perfectly ripened fruit is fully melted nectar, it contains only juice and is always easy to drink. It has no skin, no hard core, and no interfering network of fibers. Indeed, there is no aspect at all to be discarded. Literatures that are tainted by selfish motives (*anyābhilāṣa*), expectation of material gain (*karma*), cultivation of secular knowledge (*jñāna*), or pursuit of mystic power (*yoga*) and even those literatures that expound a form of devotion to God that is mixed with any of these (*miśra-bhakti*) are all entangled with undesirable, nonessential matters and are covered by a coarse layer of misconception. Unlike these, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the supremely pure and perfectly ripened embodiment of transcendent nectarean *rasa*. Indeed, it is the infinite reservoir of the absolute totality of this *rasa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Such divine *rasa* is meant to be relished through all stages. Even after the point of liberation the clan of truly free souls eternally takes pleasure in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The narration of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* should be heard from the mouths of the *paramahansa* Vaiṣṇavas, the most precious jewels among

liberated souls. Still, the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* hear from orators whose hearts are full of innumerable worthless attachments (*anarthas*) that they are dedicated to protecting. Such orators are simply obsessed with the flavors of mundane literature, poetry and syllables. On the pretense of hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* simply seek the meager gratification of their material senses mistaking *ku-rasa*, the unpalatable flavors of the mundane realm, to be actual *rasa*. Such imitators can never taste the pure, succulent transcendental mellows of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

By hearing the explanations of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sung by a liberated *paramhansa* like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, a qualified listener like Parikṣit Mahārāja, who was fully convinced regarding the temporary nature of human life, will at once become immersed in relishing the nectar of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and remain there forever. Thereafter, such a qualified listener forgets all his prior lower interests that were unrelated to Kṛṣṇa and becomes freed from worldly attachment.

A precise, written explanation of the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* grounded in profound and thorough deliberation is indispensable. Indeed, such a composition, arranged in congruence with the *rūpānuga-gauḍīya* conception (the conception of Śrī Caitanyadeva's apostles headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī), elucidating the Tenth Canto's chapters such as *Rāsa-pañcādhāya*, *Bhramara-gīta*, and *Gopī-gīta*, must be set forth without fail. The world is in want of actual beauty, or *rūpa*, the conceptions propounded by Śrī Rūpa, for currently only *ku-rūpa* abounds, misshapen conceptions that are opposed to his. In order to broadcast their cleverness and prematurely profess their own elevated status, the *sahajiyās* recklessly amuse themselves by dallying with these lofty branches of the Tenth Canto. Abolishing their misguided interpretations is requisite, as is composing the actual commentaries on *Bhramara-gīta*, *Gopī-gīta* and the rest.

Until now we have simply occupied ourselves in the process of negation, rejecting *atat* (literally, 'that which is not'). For eight years our periodical, *Gauḍīya*, has extensively discussed such issues. The *sahajiyās* can be greatly benefited by studying these articles. However, it is not possible to become advanced in *hari-bhajana* if we limit the scope of our endeavors either to simply negating *atat* or to performing favorable action.

The *sahajiyā-sampradāya* asserts, "We will not abandon offences to chanting the Lord's holy names." We say, "We do not chant the holy names

with offences as you do.” The latter declaration indicates the pursuance of favorable action; but this alone will not give entrance to *hari-bhajana*. Simply being committed to favorable action is not enough; *kṛṣṇa-anuśīlanam* is absolutely essential, that is, liberally cultivating with every fiber of one’s existence the uninterrupted performance of pure spiritual service that is conscientiously devoted to the pleasure and welfare of Kṛṣṇa.

Take the example of an epileptic. Despite his doing favorable activities to ensure his health, he is still subject to recurring seizures at any time. In the same way, in the absence of such sturdy and uninterrupted service, favorable action alone will not prevent the pilgrim on the path of *bhakti* from periodically losing his healthy spiritual consciousness and falling down. Aided by favorable action alone, he may suddenly stumble on any unfavorable elements appearing in his path or he may get knocked off balance by consuming the poison of untrue conceptions, mistaking it for ambrosia.

While the benefit of singly performing favorable actions that are related to *bhakti* is not lost even after unlimited lifetimes, still, in this very lifetime, those actions will grant neither emancipation from the mortal sphere, nor the perfection of the soul, nor the ability to perform real *hari-bhajana*. The attainment of Kṛṣṇa will remain completely out of reach for one who does not become captivated by His graceful, beautiful form and qualities. But those who have developed real greed for *rūpa*, Graceful Beauty, who are longing to serve Graceful Beauty, they alone gain intimacy with Kṛṣṇa.

The name ‘Śrī Rūpa’ is what is understood by the word *rūpa*, or ‘Graceful Beauty.’ Only those who long to serve Graceful Beauty know the meaning of *hari-bhajana*. They completely depend on the guidance of Śrī Rūpa and place all their hopes in following him. The lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī are their sole object of adoration and service, and the only perfection for which they yearn is to remain at her lotus feet eternally. It is they who are truly searching for Graceful Beauty. The commentary on the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* must be fashioned for them.

It is true that we do not approve of the fraudulent interpretations of *Bhramara-gīta* and *Gopī-gīta* propounded by the *sahajiyās*, but then we must also provide the real explanations in place of the condemned ones. Simply rejecting adverse elements by declaring ‘not this, not this’ offers no real assistance. The positive element, ‘it is this,’ must be established. Simply

rejecting adverse elements leaves one in a negative sphere; it does not bring one to the positive position.

The impersonal aspect of the Absolute, which is without any comprehensible features, is designated by the word *tat*, which literally means ‘that.’ Simply trying to realize *tat* by exhaustively negating all limited matter is insufficient. Leaving aside the dry investigation of *tat*, one must enter into the pastimes of *saḥ*, which literally means ‘He.’ He – the Absolute Personality, the infinite reservoir and original perfection of all transcendent features. One must enter into His pastimes by sequentially realizing the true and absolute nature of His name, His form, His qualities, and the unique glories of His intimate associates.

Those who limit their vision to *tat* and simply engage in the process of negating the unfavorable are bound to make material phenomena their focus. Then there are those who claim that their vision extends to *tat-sat*, namely the Absolute (*tat*) with transcendental existence (*sat*). But those who are factually situated in transcendence even perceive the material world, the cosmic manifestation of the Supreme Lord, as a reflection of the original immaculate source – the eternal and incorruptible abode of the Absolute Divinity. Thus they see *saḥ*, the non-dual entity, as He who manifests all features in full and who possesses sublime names, forms, qualities, intimate associates, and pastimes. Their vision is *raso-vai-saḥ*, ‘certainly, He is the divine nectar (*rasa*).’ He is the absolute form of all sublime nectarean mellows in their entirety. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*  
*prasṛmāra-ruci-ruddha-tārakā-pālīḥ*  
*kalīta-śyāmā-lalīto*  
*rādhā-preyān vidhur jayati*  
*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.1)*

Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra is supremely glorious! He is the condensed form of all the eternal, supra-mundane *rasas*. Indeed, He has not neglected the full expression of any divine sentiment. Just see how He subjugates the extremely submissive *gopī* Tāraka, just as the vernal full moon outshines a tiny star, so that her own effulgence is totally engulfed by His brilliance. And Pālī, who is also controlled by Him, is just like a constellation keeping the moon at her bosom. His rays overpower

her as well. When the vernal full moon accepts the night sky as a playground, the atmosphere becomes ideal for love dalliance. In the same way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes Śyāmā, who is like the dark blue vault, and Lalitā, who is love dalliance personified, His very own. Just as the full moon comes under the powerful influence of the Rādhā-constellation in the spring season, He comes under the control of the *prema* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the embodiment of *mahābhāva* and the origin of all the *yūtheśvaris*. Śrīmatī Rādhikā's love completely eclipses and defeats Him. She is His everything, without which He is just the lonely moon.

The school of the selfishly motivated *karmīs* and *jñānīs* question: "Why don't you manufacture salt? Why don't you work as weavers or plough the fields? Why don't you serve people suffering from cholera by becoming their sweepers? Or why don't you cremate the bodies of the deceased?" Hoping to perfect their favored means of increasing sensual and mental pleasure, they somehow attempt to subjugate the devotees of Kṛṣṇa for their purposes. Of course, their cleverness is insignificant compared to the brilliance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's servants, so there is no possibility that they can ever oppress us. Śrī Gaurasundara, Śrī Rādhā-Govinda and all Their intimate associates are superlatively worthy masters. As their loving servants, we have placed all of them on our shoulders in respectful subservience, and we will never allow anyone else a place there.

We will follow Śrī *Upadeśāmṛta*, the essential ambrosial commandments propounded by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. We will abandon what is unfavorable and accept the favorable, but we will never consider the practice of accepting what is favorable to be enough to maintain the progressive flow of our *bhakti*. We will not become degraded, losing our healthy spiritual consciousness like the epileptic who, tortured by recurring seizures, violently falls to the ground unconscious.

Filled with intense enthusiasm, we will actively cultivate the tendencies of our minds, bodies and words in the service of Kṛṣṇa's name and character (*kṛṣṇa-anuśīlana*), situate ourselves in Mathurā and Vraja – the fully transcendental facsimiles of Kṛṣṇa's unmanifest eternal abodes – and sing the glorification of His holy name and sublime nature. Thus we will follow the clear path set forth by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Then we will be able to

engage in *smaraṇa* (the act of meditating on Kṛṣṇa and thus remembering Him constantly).

We will attain permanent residence on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in the beautiful forest grove belonging to our most worshipful Goddess. Remaining there forever, we will engage in service to the Divine Couple under the direction of our eternal guides, whose hearts are the permanent resting place of love for Kṛṣṇa (*āśraya*). Outwardly we will never leave the shelter of Kṛṣṇa's holy name, and internally, enveloped in spiritual time – the eternal eightfold divisions of the day (*aṣṭa-kāla*) – we will serve the most cherished beloved of King Vṛṣabhānu's daughter. That is, we will serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the most beloved of Rādhārāṇī, for all time. This achievement is the pinnacle of all our expectations. We have no aspiration besides this. Furthermore, we cannot conceive that any higher aspiration exists even for greatly liberated souls.

In truth, our divine guide (Śrī Guru), who is the beloved servant of Kṛṣṇa; the holy name of Kṛṣṇa; the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which unfolds the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa; Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Themselves; and Śrī Caitanya, who is known as Śrī Gaurasundara, the combined form of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, are all non-different features of the Absolute Truth. We need not become like the fruitive workers and empiricists, who try to fulfill all their separate interests by the worship of five deities (*pañcopāsanā*). Their service is never meant for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. Instead, we will render truly pleasing service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in five ways to His five non-different features. First we will serve Him in His aspect of His own beloved servant, our divine guide. Second, we will serve Him as His holy name, His incarnation as transcendental sound. Third, we will serve Him as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Fourth, we will serve Him as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. And fifth, we will serve Him as Śrī Gaurasundara.

Furthermore, we will worship Kṛṣṇa with all five primary transcendental mellows (*pañca-rasa*) – as devotee, servant, friend, guardian and lover. By becoming the devoted follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*rūpānuga*), we will worship Kṛṣṇa in the paramour conception (*madhura-rasa*), which completely contains all five *rasas*.

We will not be content simply by rejecting the unfavorable, nor will we expect to flourish in *bhakti* simply by accepting the favorable. Rather, we will always actively cultivate the tendency to arrange for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure (*kṛṣṇa-anuśīlana*).

Śrī Caitanyadeva appeared before us as the embodiment of infinite magnanimity, compassion, and kindness (*audārya-vigraha*), for He freely bestowed upon us *unnata-ujjvala-rasa*, the most elevated, brilliant conception of devotional service in paramour love, which had not been revealed for millions of eons.

By immersing ourselves in the endless ocean of His magnanimity we will become the rightful recipients of that same rare treasure. Following in the footsteps of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Prabhu, His most confidential companion, we will recite:

*heloddhūnita-khedayā viśadayā pronmīlad-āmodayā  
 śāmyac-chāstra-vivādayā rasa-dayā cittārṇṇamādayā  
 śaśvad-bhakti-vinodayā sa-madayā mādhyama-māyādayā  
 śrī-caitanya dayā-nidhe tava dayā bhūyād amandodayā  
 Śrī Caitanya-candrodyā nātaka (8.14) quoted in  
 Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 10.119)*

“O Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, ocean of compassion! May Your auspicious mercy be awakened everywhere. It easily dispels all kinds of mundane lamentation, and it illuminates everything with purity. It thoroughly awakens supreme transcendental bliss and removes all confusion arising from disparities among scriptures. Your auspicious mercy releases a shower of all of the transcendental mellows, leaving one intoxicated. In other words, one becomes situated in the fully condensed bliss of separation, causing the heart to surge with divine madness. Your mercy perpetually stimulates *bhakti*’s own delightful nature, so that by the influence of the original transcendental Cupid, profuse ecstatic transformations are aroused that plunder one’s faculty of discrimination between right and wrong. The appearance of Your mercy heralds the complete cessation of all of the conditioned soul’s selfish desires and at the same time, it confers the last limit of divine sweetness. Your boundless mercy recklessly distributes the most valuable benediction without any restriction. Please, awaken Your causeless mercy within my heart.”

Translated from *Śrīla Prabhupādera Harikathāmṛtam*  
 published by Śrī Caitanya Maṭha



# Preface

On 14 October 2008, Śaradiya Rāsa-purnīma, the disappearance day of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, our beloved Gurudeva *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja* presented *Śrī Rāsa-pañcādhyāyī* to the Hindi-speaking public. Thus he answered the call of our *guru-varga* to disseminate the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with the bona fide commentaries. By doing so, he has assured that the world can have access to the true understanding of the astonishing activities and nature of *parama-puruṣa* Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara in Goloka Vraja.

*Rāsa-līlā* is the very zenith of all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's activities. Everything about this pastime is phenomenal, to the utmost degree. This festival of divine love proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Nanda-nandana is no ordinary person. How he danced with billions and billions of the fabulously beautiful, sweet and enchanting Vraja maidens at the same time and thoroughly satisfied each and every one of them is simply a feat beyond the grasp of our material understanding! Only Svayam Bhagavān, the Supreme Godhead Himself, can effect such an accomplishment. In all of existence, indeed, there is no one else capable of doing this. And what was the purpose of His inconceivable, extraordinary behavior? He wanted to share higher and higher levels of *prema* with the *gopīs*, whose love and dedication for Him outshine His love for them.

Another aspect of the beauty of this *rāsa-līlā* is that the joy that filled the forest on that full-moon autumn night was not limited to just Kṛṣṇa's and the *gopīs'* experience. No, it touched the whole universe and removed the sufferings of all beings at that time. And even today its effect is still flowing down on Earth, blessing everyone with the promise that we too can become devoted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa like the *gopīs* just by hearing about this startling, *prema*-filled pastime from pure Vaiṣṇavas. The joy that spread throughout the universe on that Śaradiya Rāsa-purnīma is ultimately available to us as well. So how merciful is the Supreme Lord that He wants to share His happiness with us and has thoughtfully provided us the effective tool to join Him in the form of this very book!

In the prelude to his commentary of *Gopī Gītā*, the third chapter of *Rāsa-pañcādhyaī*, Śrīla Jiva Gosvami said, “I desire to write the meanings of the words of the *gopīs*, which cannot be understood by anyone else except Śrī Kṛṣṇa. May the most gracious damsels of Vraja (*karuna-mayī vraja-devīs*) please accept my entreaty.” Similarly, we pray, “O Gurudeva, give us your mercy so that we may fully understand the *bhāvas* that you have expressed in the pages of this *guhya rasa-sampatti*, this confidential, nectar-filled literary treasure. When Kṛṣṇa returned to the assembly of the *gopīs* after having tested their love for Him by disappearing, He finally said to them, ‘*na pāraye ’haṁ niravadya-saṁyujām* – I am eternally indebted to you for your sacrifice and selfless dedication to Me.’ In the same way, Gurudeva, we are eternally indebted to you for manifesting this priceless book, thereby helping us to take a Trivikrama-like giant step to enter our rightful home in the land of eternal love and beauty where we will serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Their amorous affairs under your guidance. The value of your gift to us is beyond our understanding.”

The book in hand is a preliminary publication. We wanted to put this in the hands of the devotees now because we have been working on this for almost six years and we want to share with everyone the profound nectar found in these pages. Please forgive any mistakes, and give us your feedback so that we can make any needed corrections for the next printing. Many thanks to the devotees who helped with this publication, especially to Smt. Janakī dāśī and Smt. Vraja Sundarī dāśī, who translated the text from Hindi. Without their dedicated efforts, this English translation would not have happened. Many others also contributed in various ways: Śrī Premadāsa Śāstri Mahārāja, Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Nemi Mahārāja, Rādhikā dāśī (Russian), Madana Mohana brahmacārī (Mayank Mittal), Kṛṣṇadāsa brahmacārī, Acintya Kṛṣṇa dāsa (Abhijit Raya), Kṛṣṇa Mohan prabhu, Sundara-gopāla prabhu, Sāvitrī dāśī, Bakula dāśī and Kṛṣṇa Karunya brahmacārī.

Praying to serve Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas

Vicitrī dāśī (editor)

Sevā Kuñja, Vṛndāvana

6 September 2019, Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī

◉ ŚRĪ RĀSA PAÑCĀDHYĀYĪ ◉



## ◉ CHAPTER I ◉

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 10.29

### Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs Meet for the Rāsa Dance

#### VERSE 1

*śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca  
bhagavān api tā rātriḥ  
śāradaṭphulla-mallikāḥ  
vīkṣya rantum manaś cakre  
yoga-māyām upāśritaḥ*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: “When Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the unparalleled splendor of the autumn night beautified by blossoming jasmine flowers, He was inspired to perform the love-play of *rāsa-līlā* to fulfill the desire of His beloved *gopīs*. Thus, although He is complete in six opulences, He took shelter of His internal potency Yogamāyā. [When Śrī Kṛṣṇa stole the *gopīs*’ clothes, He informed them about those future nights, which all came together as this exquisite, divine night.]”

#### MAṄGALĀCARAṆA

*namaḥ om viṣṇu-pādāya gaura-preṣṭhāya bhūtale  
śrī-śrīmad-bhakti-prajñāna-keśava iti nāmine*

I offer *praṇāmas* unto *om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is most dear to Śrī Gaurahari.

*atimartya-caritrāya svā-śrītānāṁ ca pāline  
jīva-duḥkhe sadārttāya śrī-nāma-prema-dāyine*

He is graced with supramundane character, and like a parental guardian he nurtures with extreme, divine affection those who take shelter of him. He is always genuinely aggrieved to see the suffering of the *jīvas* who have turned away from Kṛṣṇa, and bestows upon them *śrī nāma* along with *prema*.

*gaurāśraya-vigrahāya kṛṣṇa-kāmaika-cāriṇe  
rūpānuga-pravarāya vinodeti-svarūpiṇe*

He is the manifestation of the receptacle of Mahāprabhu's *prema*, foremost among the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and his name is Vinoda as he is very skillful in giving pleasure (*vinoda*) to Vinodinī Rādhikā (as Vinoda Mañjarī) and to Mahāprabhu (as Vinoda Brahmācārī).

*viśvasya nātharupo 'sau bhakti vartma pradarśanāt  
bhakta-cakre varttitatvāt cakravartty ākhyayā bhavat*

Because he indicates the path of *bhakti*, he is known by the name Viśvanātha, the lord of the universe, and because he always remains in the assembly (*cakra*) of pure devotees, he is known by the name Cakravartī (he around whom a circle or assembly revolves).

*śrī-rūpa-caraṇa-dvandva-rāgiṇaṁ vraja-vāsinam  
śrī jīvam satataṁ vande mandeṣu ānanda-dāyinaṁ*

I perpetually pay respects to Śrī Jīva, who is full of affection for the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa, who is a resident of Vraja, and who bestows bliss to the ignorant.

*namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te  
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

I offer *praṇāma* unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Having assumed the golden hue of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He munificently bestows *kṛṣṇa-prema*, the rarest of all gifts.

I prostrate again and again at the lotus feet of our *guru-varga*, and I pray to all of them for their mercy: my *gurupāda-padma*, om *viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is an ocean of unconditional mercy; Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who is the greatest of exalted teachers and the foremost of preceptors adept in relishing *rasa*; Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda, who is the authority on conclusive Gauḍīya philosophy; the supremely worshipable Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda; and Śācīnandana Gaurahari, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa beautifully adorned with Śrī Rādhā's golden complexion and mood. Although unqualified in every

way, I am undertaking the presentation of elaborated translations of their commentaries on *śrī rāsa-līlā* described in Chapters 29-33 of the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam: Bhāvārtha Dīpikā, Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* and *Sārārtha Darśinī*.

## ***Bhāvānuvādas***

### ELABORATED TRANSLATIONS

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

This 29<sup>th</sup> Chapter begins with the conversation between Śrī Hari and the *gopīs*, consisting of clever questions, statements and retorts that took place at the onset of the *rāsa-līlā*. This is followed by the description of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's surprising disappearance upon His witnessing the rising of the *gopīs'* pride at the beginning of the *rāsa-līlā*.

THE COMMENTATOR'S AUSPICIOUS INVOCATION:

All victory to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Master of the goddess of fortune, who looked most beautiful in the *rāsa-maṇḍala* surrounded by the *gopīs*. He obliterated the pride of Cupid, who had become extremely proud of defeating the creator Brahmā and other demigods, after successfully instilling lust in their hearts.

'He who obliterated Cupid's pride:' Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmī wrote this auspicious invocation, thinking that ordinary persons might wonder, "How can Bhagavān have conquered Cupid? The Supreme Lord is enjoying with others' wives, so it appears that Cupid defeated Him." The commentator has himself posed this doubt, and he resolves it by presenting the following philosophical conclusions. As stated in the phrase '*yoga-māyām upāśritaḥ*,' Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed the *rāsa-līlā* under the shelter of Yogamāyā, who, as His internal potency, has the special ability to make the impossible possible (*aghaṭana-ghaṭan-paṭīyaśi*). He did not rely upon His external illusory potency for this. "*Ātmārāmo 'py arīramat* (10.29.42) – Śrī Kṛṣṇa is self-satisfied, but still He engaged in amorous pastimes." In other words, one who is self-satisfied can never experience the rising of lusty desires in his heart. "*Sākṣāt manmatha-manmathaḥ* (10.32.2) – Kṛṣṇa is the transcendental Kāmadeva, and He churns the heart even of Cupid, who

agitates the hearts of everyone else.” *Ātmany avaruddha-saurataḥ*<sup>1</sup> – in whose heart all symptoms of amorous feelings, such as *hāva* and *bhāva*, have been enclosed.” This evidence shows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa exhibited His supreme independence in the *rāsa-līlā*, and that this independence was broadcast in a special way. To announce to the world that He is the one who conquered Cupid, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tricked Kāmadeva with the *rāsa-līlā*. Thus *rāsa-līlā* was performed to announce victory over Cupid, and this is the underlying truth regarding this pastime. In this discussion of the amorous mellow in *Rāsa-pañcadhyayī*, I will focus more on the subduing of lust rather than its victory.

“*Tā rātriḥ* – those nights.” In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.22.27, beginning with *yātābalā*, Bhagavān said, “O fair ones, you have achieved perfection, so return home. I will romance with you in the coming nights.” Seeing that those nights were appropriate to fulfill His benediction, Śrī Kṛṣṇa developed the desire to perform *rāsa-līlā*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Again and again I offer my obeisances to the *rāsa-rasikas*, those who are expert in relishing the mellows of *rāsa-līlā*. In his commentary on this verse Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda writes: *rāsa-saṁrambhe*. This means that this First Chapter on the *rāsa-līlā* begins with the conversation consisting of retorts and rejoinders between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, and it finishes by relating Kṛṣṇa’s shrewd and skillful act of going into hiding when he observed the *gopīs*’ rising arrogance. With the phrase *kandarpa-jetṛtva-pratīteḥ*, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has raised the following doubt: Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa actually defeated Cupid by performing *rāsa-līlā*, but to an ordinary person it may appear that, since Kṛṣṇa romanced with others’ wives, He Himself was conquered by Cupid. To remove this doubt, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda replies, “It cannot be said like that, because the glories of Bhagavān’s *rāsa-līlā* are widely known.”

To show the influence of this extremely powerful pastime, the verse begins with ‘*śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca*’ (Śrī Śukadeva said). The name

1 An elaborate explanation of this phrase is given in Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary on Verse 10.33.25



'*bādarāyaṇi*' is used for the following reasons. Śrī Vyāsadeva performed very severe austerities in Badarikāśrama, and therefore he is known as Bhagavān Vyāsadeva Śrī Bādarāyaṇa. His worship was the topmost because His austerities were to satisfy Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme object of worship, Śrī Bādarāyaṇa is the best of omniscient persons. Consequently, it was possible only for the omniscient Vyāsadeva to perform such supremely excellent asceticism for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. The fruit that Śrī Vyāsadeva received for performing such austerities in Badarikāśrama came in the form of a son, Śrī Śukadeva, who is thus known as Śrī Bādarāyaṇi. Since he appeared as a result of Śrī Vyāsadeva's austerities, he naturally developed all the sublime qualities of pure devotees, such as omniscience, *prema* for Bhagavān, and being filled with *rasa* (transcendental mellows); but the significance of the name Bādarāyaṇi finds its final glories when he described the extremely confidential *rāsa-līlā*. In other words, only to propagate *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* did Śrī Vyāsadeva attain his son as a fruit of his rigorous austerities. Thus, the ultimate accomplishment of Śrī Śukadeva's glory as the son of Śrī Vyāsadeva was indeed to describe the topmost pastime, *rāsa-līlā*. Hence, it is appropriate to remember the original speaker, Śrī Bādarāyaṇi, and to hear the pastimes of *rāsa-līlā* with a heart purified by *bhakti*, just as he did. This is the intention in using the name Bādarāyaṇi.

In some editions an alternative reading, '*śrī śuka uvaca*,' is seen. The voice of parrot (*śuka*) is naturally sweet and soft. Thus the statement '*śrī śuka uvaca*' implies that Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, has very naturally presented the topmost sweetness and softness of this *rāsa-līlā* pastime, because he is eternally situated in the supremely brilliant mellow of conjugal love (*unnatojjvala-rasa*). Therefore, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is the only effective speaker of *rāsa-līlā*, which is saturated with *unnatojjvala-rasa*. Just as the speaker is absorbed in *unnatojjvala-rasa*, so the audience also has to listen with the same mood. This is what is indicated by using '*śuka*.'

It is seen that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's purpose is to give joy to the *gopīs*, who are filled with the topmost love, by fulfilling their innermost desires. To achieve this end He performs *rāsa-līlā*, and thereby He Himself relishes supreme happiness. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī highlights these two blissful achievements in these five chapters from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, by narrating Śrī Bhagavān's performance of the dancing pastimes with the beautiful

maidens of Vraja. These five chapters, which are like the five senses of the *Bhāgavatam*, are very dear to the devotees.

In front of the *vraja-gopīs* Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested His supremely lovely and enchanting form, which is the only shelter of all the beauty found in the three worlds. This form is so beautiful that it churned the heart of even Cupid, who captivates the hearts of all others. “*Gopyas tapaḥ kim acarān – What austerities did the gopīs perform in order to continuously drink with their eyes Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s unparalleled sweet beauty*” (SB 10.44.14)? One comes to understand by examining this verse and some others from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, that only the *vraja-devīs* have relished in the most intimate way Kṛṣṇa’s unparalleled beauty, flavor, fragrance, touch and speech. It is extremely rare even for the self-satisfied sages to receive such experience. The *vraja-gopīs* are the only ones who can drink the nectar of Śrī Bhagavān’s lips; it is completely impossible for others. This is the reason why it is widely accepted that the *vraja-gopīs* are the perfect candidates to participate in the *rāsa-līlā* because in them *ujjala-rasa* flourishes to the highest degree.

There are many similar instances where *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes the glories of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*. “In the amorous diversions of the *rāsa-līlā*, the *vraja-sundarīs*, with their bee-like eyes, drank the nectarean honey of Śrī Mukunda’s lovely lotus face, which removed the burning they experienced in the fire of separation” (10.15.43). “The *gopīs* became supremely joyful to see Śrī Govinda” (10.19.16). “Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the immensely alluring Vṛndāvana, which was exquisitely decorated by the autumn season with its lakes and rivers filled to capacity with crystal clear waters” (10.21.1). “The unmarried *vraja-gopīs* took a vow to follow strict rules and worship Kātyāyanī in the first month of the winter season” (10.22.1). These verses describe in a special way the sprouting passion of Kṛṣṇa and the *vraja-sundarīs* for each other.

Remembering Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* spoke the forthcoming verses. “O Master of amorous affairs, the side-long glance emanating from Your eyes, which defeat the beauty of the lotus in the autumn pond, has made us Your unpaid maidservants” (10.31.2). “O dear one, we remember Your special smile, Your beautiful glances, Your many amorous intrigues, Your heart-touching laughing, joking and intimate talks. All these memories bring extreme pleasure, and at the same time they have left us spell-bound” (10.31.10). “O

hero, in the evening You arouse romantic desires in our hearts by again and again showing us Your gorgeous lotus face, surrounded by beautiful dark locks and coated with dust raised by the cows' hooves" (10.31.12). "The suggestive way You spoke to us in private; the sight of Your smiling lotus face, which is the root cause of amorous desire; Your loving glances; Your broad chest, which is the abode of Lakṣmī – all these make us long to be with You" (10.31.17). In this way, the *vraja-sundarīs* themselves described their budding desire.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī deeply remembered Śrī Kṛṣṇa's and the *vraja-gopīs'* fresh meetings, and felt it appropriate to describe them in a special way. Thus he spoke this first verse "*bhagavān api* – although (*api*) Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, He desired to dally with the *gopīs*." Here, the word '*api*' leads one to meditate on the *gopīs'* newly arising passion, which was described earlier, and also it indicates the freshness of the forthcoming meeting. Since the time of *vastra-haraṇa-līlā* (the pastime of Kṛṣṇa stealing the *gopīs'* garments) the cowherd maidens had been waiting restlessly to engage in amorous amusements with Kṛṣṇa, their excitement having been aroused in *pūrva-rāga*, the passion of anticipation before actually meeting with their beloved. Intense feelings of love (*anurāga*) had already risen in Kṛṣṇa's heart, but He was controlling Himself, waiting patiently for the proper moment till the *gopīs'* amorous emotions developed the necessary fervor. That is why He did not act on His desires immediately.

Now the *vraja-sundarīs* are in mid-adolescence (*madhya-kaiśora*) and are naturally exhibiting the spreading of joy and auspiciousness, which are the qualities of that age. Those *gopīs* have come to understand the language of the flute, and due to this ability they are extraordinary. During the *vastra-haraṇa-līlā*, Śrī Bhagavān promised the *gopīs*, "O tender girls, now you have attained perfection, so you should return to Vraja. In the future nights, I will perform delightful pastimes with you." When Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the advent of those nights illuminated by the full moon, which were just right for keeping His pledge and which were radiant with deep *anurāga*, He gave up His self-control and indulged in amorous play. This indicates that although the *ātmārāma munis*, the self-satisfied sages, do not engage in any activity [except for meditating], they still perform *bhakti* to Bhagavān. Similarly, although Bhagavān is fully satisfied in every respect, the sight of those special nights stimulated His desire to experience amour.

In this way, the logic of ‘how much more?’ or ‘how much less?’ (*kaimutika-nyāya*) demonstrates the glories of the *prema* of the *vraja-sundarīs*, who are the abode of love (*ālambana-rūpa*). If such charming, sweet nights are the stimulant (*uddīpana*), then what can be said about these *gopīs*, who are the vessel of that love? Here, seeing the beauty of the night, Śrī Kṛṣṇa remembered the *gopīs* in His heart and this stirred His desire for amour. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa’s adolescent age is supremely glorious because it manifests everything [needed for the accomplishment of His *līlā*]. The description of the *rāsa-līlā* shows that both Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* were in their *kaiśora* stage (10-15 years old). The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* confirms this: “Bhagavān Śrī Madhusūdana, who takes away all miseries, honored His adolescence by associating in a delightful way with the *gopīs* for many nights.” The *Hari-vaṁśa* also mentions this: “Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is expert in determining the appropriate time (*kālauid*), respected His *kiśora* age, and engaged in amorous play with the young *gopī* maidens for many nights.” Here, *kālauid* has the same meaning as ‘*tā rātrīḥ vīkṣya*’ in this first verse. That is, “He experienced those nights as the stimulant.” ‘*Saḥ tābhir mumoda ha*’ (from this verse from *Hari-vaṁśa*) and ‘*rantum manas cakre*’ (from the main verse) mean: “Thus, He was inspired to revel with the *gopīs*.”

Here, the verbal root *kṛ* in the verb ‘*cakre*’ (did) indicates that the action reverts to the self (*ātmanepada*), revealing Kṛṣṇa as the enjoyer of the fruit of the activity. Hence, this *rāsa-līlā* is not only for the *gopīs*’ pleasure; it is also meant for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s happiness.

The word ‘*tāḥ*’ (those nights) in the original verse indicates a very special and astonishing time for Śrī Bhagavān. The phrase ‘*śaradotphullamallikāḥ*’ describes the sweet beauty of Vṛndāvana: “Vṛndāvana had become extremely beautiful with the blossoming of the *mallikā* and other autumn flowers.” Ordinarily, *mallikā* flowers do not blossom in the autumn, yet in this instance both *mallikā* and seasonal flowers were present at the same time, constituting an unprecedented phenomenon. Although only *mallikā* is mentioned, it is implied that all other varieties of flowers were also in bloom. This verse reveals that the *vraja-sundarīs*, as the dwelling place of love (*ālambana*), and the ideal place and time as the stimulus (*uddīpana*) give supreme, love-filled happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The time, place and other stimuli are extremely favorable for creating the proper atmosphere for Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa-līlā*. This pastime is the intrinsic

form of love (*prema-svarūpa*), being the symptom of amorous delight emanating from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's internal pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*). Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa's special desire for amorous delight is filled with pure love; it has no connection with mundane lust. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda wrote, "All glories to Śrīpati (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), who looked so beautiful when surrounded by the *gopīs* in the *rāsa-maṇḍala* that He churned the heart of even Cupid, who captivates the hearts of all others." This statement is absolutely proper, for Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has proclaimed the *Rāsa-pañcadhyāyī* as the vehicle for defeating lust. To support his statement, he writes in his *maṅgalācaraṇa* in the forthcoming commentary of Chapter 32: "In separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *vraja-sundarīs* began to wail loudly. When Kṛṣṇa heard them, His heart melted. He appeared among the *gopīs* and very respectfully consoled them. He saw that the *gopīs*' hearts were overwhelmed by the nectarean waves of His love, and by appearing among them He very mercifully gave pleasure to their hearts."

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the best of the sages, concluded his recitation of *rāsa-līlā* with the verse "*vikriḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca* – A sober person who in the beginning faithfully and continuously hears from his *guru* about the supremely sweet narrations of the all-pervading Śrī Kṛṣṇa's unprecedented *rāsa-līlā* with the young brides of Vraja, which is full of pure love, and later describes those pastimes, very soon attains supreme love for Bhagavān. And after that, very quickly his heart disease of material lust will be dispelled" (10.33.39). Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī's declaration clearly proclaims that this *rāsa-līlā* conquers lust, because it is full of pure, transcendental love, and has no tinge of material wantonness. The *rāsa-līlā*, which is the all-time embodiment of supreme transcendental bliss, has not even a scent of the play of mundane lust.

Śrī Bhagavān has shown in the *rāsa-līlā* the crucial role played by Yogamāyā, who is the very embodiment of His inconceivable energy, and who can make the impossible possible. Therefore, just as Yogamāyā is the very form of unimaginable potency, so *rāsa-līlā* is also endowed with the same powers. This is what one should understand. The sunrays are never separated from the sun; similarly Bhagavān does not perform any pastime without the help of Yogamāyā. Wherever Kṛṣṇa enacts His play, she is always there supporting the *līlā*. This indicates that Yogamāyā is Bhagavān's intrinsic *śakti*. *Yoga* means 'to unite;' so Yogamāyā is the potency who

arranges for Bhagavān's devotees to unite with Him in His pastimes. The *Viśva Koṣa* dictionary defines *māyā* in two ways: *dambha* (deceit) and *kṛpā* (mercy). Here *māyā* is taken as mercy, and that is why it is said, “*yoga-māyām upāśritaḥ* – He took shelter of His internal potency Yogamāyā.” In the word *upāśritaḥ*, the syllable *upa* means ‘to be very near.’ That is, coming under the sway of His full mercy, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa desired to engage in romantic activities with the *gopīs*.

A special meaning comes to light for ‘*tā rātriḥ vikṣya*’ (seeing all those nights). All those nights found fruition in the full-moon night (*pūrṇimā*), the queen of nights, when the *rāsa* dance took place. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's enthusiasm to meet with the *gopīs* increased along with the waxing of the moon, and reached its peak on the full-moon night. At that time Śrī Kṛṣṇa displayed full zeal to meet with the *gopīs*. That full-moon evening, He returned from the cow shed, finished His supper, sneaked past His mother, and went upstairs to His bedroom. There He decided, “Now the time is right to perform the *rāsa-līlā*.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

I offer obeisances to Śrī Rāma (Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa, my *dikṣā-guru*), who is filled with supreme divine love, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa-caraṇa, my *parama-guru*) and to Śrī Gaṅgā-caraṇa (Kṛṣṇa-caraṇa's *guru*). I then bow down to Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and to his *guru*, Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī, and also to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. After prostrating again and again before *śrī guru* (my *dikṣā-guru* Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa), I offer *pranāma* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of mercy. I take complete shelter of both Lokanātha Gosvāmī, who protects and nourishes everyone, and Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is as brilliant as the sun, and who dissipates the dense darkness of this world with the light of knowledge.

I offer myself and everything in my possession in the service of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the possessor of all potencies (*sarva-śaktimāna*), and who is much dearer to the charming, young *gopīs* than millions of their own lives. Furthermore, I also offer myself to the servitude of His beloved associates.

Now I will describe the crown-jewel of all of Śrī Hari's pastimes, the *rāsa-līlā*. This is described in five chapters of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which are likened to the *Bhāgavatam*'s five vital airs.

All victory, all victory to that *rāsa-līlā!* Śrī Lakṣmī-devī, who resides in the topmost realm of Vaikuṇṭha, was denied entrance to this pastime, yet Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave the *vraja-gopīs* the good fortune to participate, even though they reside in this earthly realm.

This 29<sup>th</sup> Chapter discusses the intense showering of the flute's poison-like sound on the *gopīs*, who are like *caṭaka* birds [which drink only rain-water during the *svati-nakṣatra* constellation]. It also describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa's playful verbal exchanges with the *gopīs*, and His disappearance.

On the dark-moon night of Kārtika, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then aged seven, enlightened Śrī Nanda Bābā and the other *gopas* regarding the doctrine of *karma*, and stopped them from performing the sacrifice to Indra. The Govardhana festival took place on the next day, which was the first day of the bright fortnight, and on the following day, the *vraja-vāsīs* celebrated Yāma-dvitiyā [the day when sisters honor their brothers] with a feast on the bank of the Yamunā. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the king of sages, did not mention the second festival, but we should understand that it took place. Thereafter, Indra became very angry and sent a ferocious rain-storm replete with thunderbolts to destroy Vraja. Then, for seven days, from the third to the ninth day of this fortnight, Śrī Kṛṣṇa held Śrī Govardhana aloft and protected the Vrajavāsīs. On the tenth day, in total amazement, the whole cowherd community discussed and conjectured about Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His power. The next day, on Ekadasi, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *abhiṣeka* ceremony took place. At the end of that night Varuṇa-deva's servant kidnapped Śrī Nanda Mahārāja, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to Varuṇa-loka to retrieve his father. On the full-moon day He gave the cowherd men *darśana* of Brahma-loka. In this way the autumn season came to an end. The following year on Janmāṣṭamī He celebrated His eighth birthday. After that, on the full moon night of the month of Āśvin, He accomplished the crown-jewel of all festive pastimes, the *rāsa-līlā*, the description of which starts with the words '*bhagavān api*.'

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī uttered this first verse of the *rāsa-līlā*, '*bhagavān api . . . rantuṁ manaś cakre*,' in a unique style and with great sweetness. The word '*api*' in the phrase '*bhagavān api*' suggests a special meaning: Bhagavān is full with six opulences, and He is self-satisfied because He is complete with all kinds of pleasures. He does not depend upon anyone else for His happiness; even so (*api*), the place, the time and the persons stimulated His desire to engage in amorous diversions. The place for these

amusements was the beautiful, enchanting Vṛndāvana; the time was the autumn full-moon night; and the participants were the young Vraja maidens, who, as the shelter (*ālambana*) of *prema*, were positively overflowing with love for Kṛṣṇa. Bhagavān was enraptured by the topmost sweetness of all these three excitants, and longed to engage in amorous activities. This is the meaning.

This verse explains that when Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the beauty of the autumn nights, which acted as stimulus (*uddipana*) for Him, He remembered what He had promised the lovely Vraja damsels. In this regard one has to understand that Śrī Kṛṣṇa desired to relish with His ears and all other senses the many charms of the millions and millions of playful, coquettish *gopīs*, who are the gemstones that fulfill desires for divine amorous love. He wanted to savor with all His senses their beautiful voices, their beautiful forms, their youthfulness, their fragrance, their sweetness, their cleverness and expertise in dancing, singing and playing musical instruments. Kṛṣṇa Himself is subjugated by the love of the *vraja-gopīs*, so He wanted that they should in turn relish with their ears and other senses His sweet voice and all His other sublime attributes.

Inspired by Kṛṣṇa's *satya-saṅkalpa-śakti*, His potency that makes all His desires come to pass, Yogamāyā, who can make the impossible possible, was able to condense millions and millions of nights suitable for the romantic activities of the *rāsa-līlā* into one 12-hour night. In the phrase '*tā rātriḥ vīkṣya*' (seeing those nights), the plural form '*tā*' indicates 'all those nights,' to which Śrī Kṛṣṇa referred when He stole the *gopīs*' clothes. The *Bhāgavatam* mentions this again further on in 10.33.38: "*brahma-rātra upāvr̥tte* – after one night of Brahmā passed." Taking the general, well-known meaning of this phrase, this clause establishes the superiority of that remarkable night of Brahmā.

"*Śāradotphulla-mallikāḥ* – the jasmine flowers were blossoming out of season during the autumn full-moon." "*Kunda-srajaḥ kula-pater iha vāti gandhaḥ* – We are detecting the scent of the enchanting fragrance of His *kunda* garland" (10.30.11); and "*reme tat-tarālānandi kumudāmoda-vāyunā* – the wind was carrying the fragrance of lotuses" (10.29.45). These statements reveal the miraculous beauty of Vṛndāvana at that time: the *kunda* flowers were blooming out of season, and lotuses were blossoming at night, although they usually open only during the day. In this way, the



appropriate time, place and persons were simultaneously at hand to furnish the needed ingredients for the *rāsa-līlā*, namely: the enchanting Vṛndāvana, the bright, full-moon autumn night, the superbly beautiful young *gopīs*, and the youthful, lovely Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. This favorable *kaiśora* form, which churns the mind of even Cupid, was endowed with such extreme beauty that it seemed like a direct manifestation of His desire to dally with the *gopīs*.

Bhagavān is self-satisfied (*ātmārāma*) and all His desires are fulfilled automatically (*svataḥ pūrṇakāma*). Despite that, He showed the desire to dally with the charming Vraja maidens (*bhagavān rantum manaś cakre*) because of His affection for His devotees, who are able to bring Him under their control. The Lord is beyond the material plane; nevertheless, He descends to this realm where He performs human-like pastimes. That is, He manifests His transcendental *līlā*, which resembles ordinary human activity, and thereby increases the devotees' bliss. "Bhagavān showed the desire to enjoy romantic affairs;" by this it is understood that this enjoyment was experienced internally, not externally. In meeting with the *gopīs*, Bhagavān fulfilled not only the yearnings of the *vraja-sundarīs*, but also His own inner longings. The phrase '*rantum manaś cakre*' uses the *ātmanepada* form of the verb, meaning that the doer enjoys the activity. This indicates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is the doer of the activity, also enjoys the fruit of the action.

Again, "*ittham-bhūta-premāṇo vrajasundaryo* – Śrī Hari possess such wonderful qualities that He attracts even the sages who are the personification of complete bliss and are naturally self-satisfied." Nonetheless, Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was Himself allured by the *vraja-sundarīs'* *prema*, which had such astonishing power that it drove Him to engage in amorous intrigues with them. This demonstrates the super-excellence of the *vraja-sundarīs*.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* explains that the *rāsa-līlā* took place during His early teenage years. "Madhusūdana, who removes all miseries, performed amorous play with the *vraja-sundarīs* for many nights during His *kaiśora* age." Śrī *Hari-vaṁśa* also describes this: "In compliance with His age, Śrī Kṛṣṇa respected His adolescence and romanced with the young *gopī* damsels at night." These two statements make it clear that Bhagavān fulfilled the purpose of His teenage years. Kṛṣṇa complied with the inner purpose of His teenage years by dallying with the *gopīs*, for the carefree amusements in His *kaiśora* age would otherwise not have been successful. The great authority, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmi, has written, "Partaking of amorous

amusements in the *kuñja*, Kṛṣṇa makes His adolescent years triumphant” (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.231). This statement also proclaims the superiority of the beautiful Vraja maidens.

To carry out His supremely sweet *rāsa-līlā*, Bhagavān manifested the special aspect of His great, inconceivable potency that makes the impossible possible. In this way He reconciled all of His activities, including those that have been described as well as those that have been left unsaid. “*Yoga-māyām upāśritaḥ* – He took shelter of His own inconceivable, internal energy, *Yogamāyā*, to enjoy loving play with the *gopīs*.” This pronounces *Yogamāyā*’s immense good fortune.

## VERSE 2

*tadoḍurājaḥ kakubhaḥ karair mukhaṁ  
prācyā vilimpann aruṇena śantamaiḥ  
sa carṣaṇīnām udaḡāc chuco mrjan  
priyaḥ priyāyā iva dīrgha-darśanaḥ*

When a husband returns home after a long absence from a foreign land, he applies *kuṅkuma* on his beloved wife’s face with his comforting hands. In the same way, when the moon, the consort of the stars, rose in the sky, he colored the face of his beloved, the eastern horizon, with his soothing, red radiance that bestows happiness. At the same time, the moon also removed the agony of the living entities, who were scorched by the rays of the autumn sun.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dipikā*

When Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed the desire for amorous activity, the autumn moon (the king of all the stars) rose in his fullness for the Lord’s pleasure. What did he do? When a man comes home after a long absence, he will take red *kuṅkuma* and spread it on his wife’s face. In the same way, the full moon smeared the face of his beautiful beloved, the eastern horizon, with *kuṅkuma* in the form of his red rays, which give supreme happiness. Thereby the moon removed the distress of the living entities, who were burning in the heat of the sun. ‘*Sa*’ (he) – the famous full moon (rose).

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

The moon approached his consort, the eastern horizon, for amorous pleasure in the same way a lover desiring dalliance presents himself to his sweetheart. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the full moon rising, the same mood arose in Him. In other words, Kṛṣṇa thought, “Just as I am disposed to meet with the *vraja-devīs*, the moon is ready for romance with the eastern horizon.” In this way, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī first expressed the moods that arose in Bhagavān’s heart, and then in this verse starting with ‘*tadā*’ he described the events that augured auspiciousness on that *pūrṇimā* (full moon night), which was the best of among all those nights. At that time (*tadā*), when Bhagavān displayed the desire for amour, the moon, which is the husband of the stars (*uḍurājah*), simultaneously rose along with his family (all the stars). This is what this verse suggests. The reddish hue (*aruṇena*) spread by the moon rays (*raśmibhiḥ*) were the perfect means to inspire Śrī Kṛṣṇa for dalliance. As the moon rose, he painted the face of his beloved, the eastern horizon, with his soft, reddish rays. Observing the moon’s activity, Bhagavān thought that it was a sign for Him to meet with the fervently impassioned *gopīs*. ‘*Vilimpann*’ (*viśeṣeṇa limpann*) means smearing with a special mood; this expression has been used because it was a special *tithi*, *pūrṇimā*, the full-moon night. ‘*Tadā*’ means ‘when Bhagavān desired;’ all the other billions of nights remained as full-moon nights, because of Bhagavān’s intrinsic *rasika* nature as the master of loving exchanges.

‘*Utphulla-mallikāḥ*’ – seeing the nights decorated with blossoming jasmine. Just as the full moon is a stimulant, so also are the nights. The rising of the full moon is very favorable. In this same narration, Bhagavān will Himself say later on, “*rākeṣa-kara-rañjita* – resplendent with the light of the full moon” (SB 10.29.21). This verse also refers to the full-moon night. In the first verse we find the phrase ‘*tā rātrīḥ*,’ meaning ‘all those nights;’ ‘*tāḥ*’ means ‘those,’ indicating that those nights are the *uddipana*, or stimulant. Similarly ‘*sa*’ (he) in this verse refers to the moon, who is also an *uddipana*. This is the meaning. That moon not only removed the sorrow of his beloved, the eastern horizon, it also gave relief to everyone in the world suffering mentally due to the heat of the autumn sun. The purport is that the *vraja-devīs*, being the shelter of all of Bhagavān’s potencies, are the embodiment of the supreme power. Therefore, the happiness or unhappiness that they

undergo automatically reflects in all the living entities of the world. Kṛṣṇa's birth and other pastimes are the evidence of this. Indeed, the day Kṛṣṇa was born, all living entities became joyful. Similarly, this night also removed the sufferings of all creatures. This is the conclusion.

“The way the lover desiring to dally goes to his beloved” – this example applies to the special attraction between the moon and the eastern horizon, exhibited by their great passion, their loyalty and their one-pointedness towards each other. When the beloved head of the family returns home after a long absence, he wipes away his family members' tears of sorrow. Similarly, the moon smeared the face of his mistress, the eastern horizon, with the red color of his passion. This suggests that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with His supremely blissful lotus hand, lovingly spread red *kun̥kuma* on the lotus faces of His beloveds. ‘*Dirgha-darśanaḥ*’ (meeting after a long time) indicates extreme eagerness. In this way, when Śrī Bhagavān has a desire for romance, to comply with His intention, the environment manifests favorable arrangements, such as the rising of the moon in the eastern direction. This is the external indication of His longing for amorous affairs.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The husband of the stars (the full moon) rose when Bhagavān showed the desire for romance. It is not that Bhagavān found His inspiration from seeing the rising of the full moon. Rather, the moon's ascent served to increase Kṛṣṇa's desire for amour, and also authorized Him to roam about with the *gopīs*. This is confirmed by the phrase ‘*kakubhaḥ karair mukham*’ – coloring the face of his beloved, the eastern horizon, with his hands (his red rays). That is, when the lover returns after a long separation, he takes red *kun̥kuma* and spreads it on his beloved's face. Similarly, when the lord of the stars, the moon, rises after a long time, he takes his rays in his soft hand, and with rising passion smears the face of his beloved, the eastern direction.

‘*Sa*’ (he) – the famous full-moon. ‘*Carṣaṇīnām*’ (humankind) – this word is also used in *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.6.42: “*aryamṇo mātṛkā patnī tayoś carṣaṇayah sutāḥ* – Mātṛkā, the wife of Aryamā, gave birth to many sons, the progenitors of the human race.” In the present verse, ‘*carṣaṇīnām*’ is used in conjunction with the moon, which removed the agony (*śuco mṛjan*) of the human race suffering from the heat of the sun.

The essence of this verse is as follows. The rising moon instructed Kṛṣṇa, “*He Kṛṣṇa, You have come in my dynasty; I am its founder and I am eminent among the brāhmaṇas. Furthermore, I am ancient and am the husband of many beautiful damsels.*” That is, although the moon had many wives of his own (the stars), with his own hands he touched the eastern direction, the wife of Indra, and anointed her face with red dye. What is more, he became immensely fond of her and aroused in her a passion for him. Therefore, it is as if the moon was saying, “You have appeared in my dynasty. As a fresh, unmarried youth, You are completely faultless and totally beautiful. Because of all this, You make the human race intoxicated with joy. For such a cowherd boy as Yourself, what is wrong in dallying with the beautiful *gopīs*? Therefore, go and freely enjoy amorous intrigues. You will not be touched by even a scent of immorality.”

### VERSE 3

*dr̥ṣṭvā kumudvantam akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalam  
ramānanābham nava-kuṅkumāruṇam  
vanam ca tat-komala-gobhi rañjitaṁ  
jagau kalam vāma-dr̥śāṁ manoharam*

The full, round moon – reddish as if tinted with fresh *kuṅkuma*, and lovely like the round face of Lakṣmī-devī – brought the *kumud* night lilies to blossom, and with its soft rays enhanced the unparalleled beauty of Vṛndāvana. Seeing all these effects of the full moon (complete with its sixteen phases and all its potencies), Śrī Kṛṣṇa played a sweet, mysterious note on His flute, the *kāma-bija* – ‘*klīm*’ – to charm the pretty-eyed *gopīs*.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

‘*Kumudvantam*’ – that which makes the *kumud* lilies blossom. ‘*Akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalam*’ – the sixteenth phase (the full moon). ‘*Ramānanābham*’ – lustrous like Śrī Ramā-devī’s (Lakṣmī-devī’s) round face. ‘*Nava-kuṅkumāruṇam*’ – red like fresh *kuṅkuma* (the rising moon with a reddish hue). When Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the moon with all these special features, and witnessed the beauty of Vṛndāvana colored by the delicate, cooling moon

rays, He played an enchanting melody on His flute. What was the purpose of that soft sound? The reply is ‘*vāma-dṛśā*’ – the fair-eyed maidens with their playful glances; He played an enchanting song on His flute to attract them.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

After Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the full moon, a special mood appeared in His heart. He left His home and entered the Vṛndāvana forest, which was tinted with the red rays of the moon. He arrived at a raised area called Rāsauli on the bank of the Yamunā. Soon afterwards, Śrī Vrajanābha established a village at this place, which exists even today, and is still known as Rāsauli. Reaching this bank of the Yamunā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa played an indescribable melody on His mesmerizing flute to attract the love-filled *gopīs*. This verse starting with ‘*dṛṣtvā*’ describes how Kṛṣṇa, after waiting for many bygone nights, used the flute to accomplish His purpose. ‘*Ramānanābhaṇī*’ – that Ramā who is engaged in love-play with Bhagavān; or that Ramā who inspires Bhagavān to enjoy amorous affairs. It should be understood that the word ‘*ramā*’ refers to Kṛṣṇa’s beloveds, who are the highest embodiments of pleasure. Of all His beloveds Śrīmatī Rādhikā is His very favorite; the word ‘*ramā*’ is meant for Her. Up till now Śrī Bhagavān was lax in using His flute’s special expertise, because He wanted to meet with this supreme beloved only. This indicates His indifference towards meeting with His other sweethearts.

‘*Ramānanābhaṇī*’ – seeing the moon, Kṛṣṇa remembered the face of Ramā Śrī Rādhikā, which was effulgent like the moon. Then, deciding to show Himself openly, He played a soft, melodious sound on His flute. The speciality of that flute sound was that only the *vraja-gopīs*, who were overflowing with deep love, could hear it, not anyone else. The sight of the moon reminded Kṛṣṇa of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s face. The reasons for this could be as follows: ‘*kumudvan*’ – as soon as the moon rises, the *kumud* night lilies blossom; therefore, one of the moon’s names is *kumudvan*. This indicates that at that time the night lilies were blooming. According to *Sahitya-darpana* the day lotuses (*padmini*) blossom by the rays of the sun; “they sleep at night, and the rising sun breaks their sleep.” In the first case the moon is the subject of the adjective, and in the second case the subject is the sun. The adjective ‘*kumudvan*’ refers to the round face of Ramā (Śrī Rādhā). *Ku* means ‘the Earth’, and *mut* means ‘joy’: it is the natural quality of

that round face to increase the joy of the Earth. There seems to be a gender change in the noun and thus the adjective *kumudvant* becomes *kumudvat*.

When ‘*akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalaṁ*’ (full disk) is applied to the moon, it denotes the full moon, complete with sixteen phases and full potency. In the case of Śrī Rādhā, all Her facial features, including Her nose, ears and eyes, are in proper proportion. The beauty of Her round face expresses the topmost mellow of conjugal love, and the appearance of many kinds of ecstatic transformations, such as *hāva-bhāva*, does not distort that beauty in the slightest.

‘*Nava-kuṅkumāruṇam*’ (newly applied *kuṅkuma*) – in regard to the moon, the reddish color is like a ball of fresh *kuṅkuma*; and in regard to Śrī Rādhājī, Her *anurāga* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes Her face glow with a reddish hue. In this way it is established that the time was right for romance. The next phrase, ‘*vanam ca*,’ shows the suitability of the place. The forest was illuminated by the soft rays of the moon (*komala-gobhī rañjitaṁ*). As the moon started rising, its first rays were just slightly lighting up the forest. In this way the stimulants for romance were exhibited. In the phrase ‘*komala-gobhī rañjitaṁ*,’ ‘*ra*’ is hidden at the end of the word *gobhī* to ensure that the meter falls in place, and ‘*bhī*’ at the end of *gobhī* is not pronounced with a long *ī* as in pique.

‘*Kalaṁ*’ – the sweet, low sound coming from Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s flute (*jagau*). In Verse 40 of this chapter, the *gopīs* say, “O Kṛṣṇa, what beautiful lady in all the three worlds would not deviate from moral codes upon hearing the sweet, mysterious song from Your flute?” This melody is purposely sweet in order to steal everyone’s hearts, and it is described as magical because Śrī Kṛṣṇa beckoned the *gopīs* to come by pronouncing each one of their names in such an indistinct way that all of them became bewildered and thought, “Kṛṣṇa is only calling me.”

‘*Vāma-dṛśaṁ manoharam*’ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa played the flute song in a way that would enchant only the playful-eyed, love-filled *gopīs*. In other words, that flute song was meant exclusively for them. Since they were the only ones who heard it, only they came to Kṛṣṇa, no one else.

Śrī Bhagavān sang a special melody that stimulated amorous sentiments. This is explained in the next verse: “*anaṅga-vardhanaṁ* – after hearing the flute song, which increases amorous sentiments, the Vraja maidens were completely overwhelmed with *prema* and were pulled to their beloved

Kṛṣṇa.” The melody that Śrī Kṛṣṇa played was surely a middle scale melody (*madhyama rāga*) because it aroused the *vraja-sundarīs*’ romantic desires. *Saṅgīta-śāstra*, a treatise on classical music, explains the *māyūra rāga*, the peacock melody: “It is the middle scale melody that rises from the middle scale and ends on the middle note, and it is played only in the evening. In the amorous mellow, the *ṛṣabh* and *daivat* notes are excluded.” In this verse, *ma* (*madhyama*), *ṛ* (*ṛṣabh*) and *da* (*daivat*) are offered at the beginning of the song; this is called *graham*, the beginning of any piece of music. Earlier, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.6, we read, “O King, the sound of the flute enchants all the living entities.” This quotation presents the sound of the flute in a general way, but even so, the bewitching nature of the flute song hypnotized all the *vraja-sundarīs*. But in the present situation, they were uncontrollably allured since the flute exclusively transmitted the romantic mellow (*ujjvala-rasa*). In all circumstances the *vamśī* plays a special role.

*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.1.368-372) lists Kṛṣṇa’s three kinds of flutes: *vamśī* or *veṇu*, *mahānandā* (great joy) or *sammohinī* (enchanter), and *ākaraṣiṇī* (attractor). The *vamśī* is described first. It is made of bamboo, and has eight holes half a finger’s length apart from each other. Before all these holes is a round hole for the mouth, which is 1 ½ fingers away from the first finger hole; its diameter is 3/4”. Hence, there are nine holes altogether. The front is four fingers long, and the last part is three fingers long. In total it is seventeen fingers long. This is the general description of *vamśī*, or *veṇu*. When the mouth-hole is ten fingers away from the first finger-hole, it is called *mahānandā*, or *sammohinī*, which is made of jewels. Then comes *ākaraṣiṇī*, which is made of gold. The mouth-hole is twelve fingers distant from the first finger-hole. The flute with a distance of fourteen fingers is known as *ānandini* (giver of bliss), or *vamśulī*. It is made of bamboo and is very dear to Kṛṣṇa’s friends. Each flute emits its own particular sound.

The phrase ‘*vāma-dṛśām*’ implies that Śrī Kṛṣṇa played this song specifically to attract all the *gopīs*’ senses, especially their minds – the controller of the senses – and their playful eyes, with which they always cast Him sidelong glances. Within this explanation, a hidden meaning comes to the surface, namely the formation of the *kāma bija* (*klīm*). Śrī Bhagavān played the *kāma bija* to attract the *vraja-sundarīs*’ minds and senses. According to the scriptures (*tantra*), the derivation of the word *klīm* is as follows: *ka* and *la* come from *kalarīṅ*; *ī* comes from the fourth letter



of *vāma-dṛśāṁ* (ṛ, or rī) – this produces the syllable *klī*. What is the effect of the flute song? The answer is ‘*manohara*’ – it steals the mind. The word *manas* (as in *manohara*) indicates Candra, the presiding deity of the mind, or the moon, which is the form of the mind. The flute song is a harvester (*lavaka*), meaning that it plucks the mind and the moon, attracting and stealing them both. Consequently, the moon is joined with the mind, shown in the form *candra-bindu* (°), a crescent with a dot over it. With the addition of the *candra-bindu*, *klī* becomes *klīm*, the *kāma-bija*.

Now this *kāma-bija* must have some sound. The song of Kṛṣṇa’s flute is its natural sound. This is how *kāma-bija* becomes endowed with sound. Therefore, it is said: *kalā tu māyā lavakā tu mūrtiḥ kalakvaṇaḍ veṇuninād-ramyaḥ*. *Kalā* refers to *Māyā*, or actually to *Rādhā*. *Lavaka* means *mūrti*, or ‘form’ as well as ‘sound;’ that is, Śrī Kṛṣṇa absorbed in playing a sweet and mysterious melody on the flute, as He stands beside the enchanting Śrī Rādhā. Taking the meaning of *lavaka* as ‘to cut,’ this phrase explains the formation of the *kāma-bija* (*klīm*): the *a* in *ka* is cut, or removed, and the *a* in *la* is cut and replaced by *ī*; these join together to form the conjunct *klī*. Then, as explained just above, *candra-bindu* (°) is added to create *klīm*. *Lavaka* also means ‘to take on a form,’ in which case the *kāma-bija* syllable (*klīm*) means that Kṛṣṇa took on a form and entered the sound of His flute. It traveled across Vraja to the *gopīs*, who saw His form in the flute song and instantly ran to the arena of the *rāsa*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśanī***

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa then looked at the full moon, the sight of which precipitated an astonishing augmentation of amorous desire in His heart. “*Yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janaḥ* – Whatever behavior a great personality practices, ordinary persons follow” (*Gītā* 3.21). Remembering these words and observing the conduct of the moon, who was the progenitor of His dynasty, Kṛṣṇa initiated an unfailing attempt to attract others’ wives, without feeling the slightest remorse. To show this, this third verse beginning with ‘*dṛṣṭvā*’ has been spoken.

‘*Kumudvantam*’ means ‘whose duty is to make the *kumud* night lily bloom.’ The rising of that moon brought tremendous joy to all the residents of the world. ‘*Kumudvat*’ – *ku* means the Earth and *mut* means happiness.

The duty of the moon's round face is to increase the happiness of the Earth. Here, the adjective '*akhaṇḍa-maṇḍala*' (round disk) is used to specify the full moon, in its sixteenth phase. Another meaning is that the form of that round face is never broken (*akhaṇḍa*). '*Ramānanābhaṇi*' means Lakṣmī (Ramā), the sister of the moon. [Both Lakṣmī and the moon came out from the churning of the Milk Ocean.] Usually a brother's and sister's faces bear some similarity; therefore it is proper to say that the effulgent moon resembled Lakṣmī's lustrous, beautiful face.

The following verse is found the *Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra*:

*devī kṛṣṇa-mayī proktā  
rādhikā para-devatā  
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva  
kāntiḥ sammohinī parā*

According to this verse, Śrī Rādhikā is the Supreme Goddess (*para-devatā*); that is why She is Kṛṣṇa's direct counterpart (*kṛṣṇa-mayī*); She is the source of all the goddesses of fortune (*sarva-lakṣmī-mayī*); She is all-attractive (*sarva kānti*) and thus attracts Kṛṣṇa Himself (*sammohinī*); and She is the Supreme Potency (*parā*). Therefore, the name Ramā indicates Rādhā, and no one else. *Smṛti* further substantiates this, affirming that Ramā is to be understood as Śrī Rādhā, who partakes of delight and who exudes it. In addition, Ramā also refers to the *gopīs*. '*Ramānanābhaṇi*' – seeing the full moon lustrous like the *gopīs*' round faces made Śrī Kṛṣṇa remember the Vraja damsels, and to attract them, He played a sweet tune on His flute. Alternatively, when Śrī Rādhā and all the *gopīs* saw the full moon, they remembered Kṛṣṇa's beautiful round face, thus causing all of their amorous sentiments to reflect fully on their effulgent faces.

'*Nava-kuṅkumāruṇam*' – the rising moon was reddish like a ball of fresh *kuṅkuma*. Witnessing that reddish moon, Kṛṣṇa's body reflected that same color. Alternatively, He remembered how His body becomes reddish when smeared with *kuṅkuma*. And He saw that the forest where He brings His cows for grazing had also become reddish.

Observing all these stimulants and remembering the *gopīs*, who are the shelter (*alambana*) of love for Him, Kṛṣṇa played a heart-capturing, sweet and melodious song on His flute to attract the beautiful-eyed Vraja maidens. Further on, in Verse 40 of this chapter, the *gopīs* confirm that Kṛṣṇa sang

through the flute: “What beautiful lady in all the three worlds would not digress from moral codes upon hearing the sweet, mysterious song from Your flute?”

‘*Kalaṁ vāma-dṛśāṁ manoharam*’ – the hidden meaning of this phrase is the *kāma-bija*. With the sound of His flute, Śrī Kṛṣṇa planted the *kāma-bija* in the hearts of the *gopīs* and drew them to Him. The *śrutis* also confirm this with “*gāyantaṁ striyaḥ kāma yanta* – that singing filled the women with desire.” Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa vibrated the *kāma-bija mantra*, the most excellent seed *mantra* of divine amorous love. The word *klīm* derives from the phrase ‘*kalaṁ vāma-dṛśāṁ manoharam*.’ *Kala* – *ka* and *la*; the fourth letter of *vāma-dṛśāṁ* is *ī*. When *ī* is joined with *ka* and *la*, it becomes *klī*. In the phrase *manoharam* are the words *mana* (mind) and *haram*, which mean to attract the presiding deity of the mind, which is the moon, whose symbol is the *candra-bindu* (◌). By connecting this *candra-bindu* with *klī*, the word *klīm*, which is the *kāma-bija*, is produced.

#### VERSE 4

*niśamya gītāṁ tad anaṅga-vardhanaṁ  
vraja-striyaḥ kṛṣṇa-grhīta-mānasāḥ  
ājagmur anyonyam alakṣitodyamāḥ  
sa yatra kānto java-lola-kunḍalāḥ*

The minds of the Vraja maidens were naturally rapt in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and after hearing the flute song, which arouses erotic desire, they were completely stupefied by *prema* and were pulled to their beloved. Unseen by each other, all the *gopīs* ran to Him, their earrings swinging because they were moving so swiftly.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

‘*Anyonyam alakṣitodyamāḥ*’ – each of the *vraja-devīs* went by herself to meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They did not let anyone else know that they were going to Him so that they would not feel rivalry between themselves. Following the sound of the flute, they proceeded towards the place where their beloved was waiting. They walked so fast that their earrings were swinging to and fro.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

Only those *gopīs* who were Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloveds heard His flute melody, not any of the other ladies of Vraja, and by the power of that flute song, they were drawn to Him. Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke this verse beginning with '*niśamya*' to indicate Śrī Bhagavān's extraordinary potency. Hearing the flute melody that arouses amorous sentiments (*anaṅga-vardhanam*), the *gopīs* rushed towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Here the use of the word '*anaṅga*' indicates that the romantic feelings that the *gopīs* had been nurturing in their hearts for Kṛṣṇa were in a seed form. Now, when they heard the flute, that desire started to flourish. In the previous verse, the phrase '*vāma-dṛśām manoharam*' implied that amorous desire was already present, and now it vastly increased, as inferred by the phrase '*anaṅga-vardhanam*' (increasing erotic desire).

Here '*anaṅga*' means 'a seed that is sprouting.' That is to say, when a seed starts to sprout, the plant grows to its full beauty, producing leaves, flowers and fruits. Later on, those fruits in turn produce seeds. Similarly, the *gopīs*' shyness, self-control, and other constraints had previously hidden the seed of amorous desire that was lying in their hearts, but now this sprout had developed to the leafy stage. This is the intended meaning. In other words, after hearing the flute song, the *vraja-sundarīs* pierced through the barriers of bashfulness, composure, etc., and arrived before Kṛṣṇa. This proves that the flute song is full of nectar because just hearing that sound caused the seed of romantic feelings (*anaṅga*) to burst forth into leaves. That is, as soon as the nectar of the flute song watered the *kāma-bija* sprout in the *gopīs*' hearts, it became full with foliage. In the phrase '*anaṅga-vardhanam*,' *aṅga* means 'lustful acts;' *anaṅga* (*na aṅga*) means 'that which is not *aṅga*, or lust. In other words, it refers to pure *prema*, or *aṅgī*, the original form [from which the contaminated form of lust comes]. The expanding of this *prema*, or *anaṅga*, is '*anaṅga-vardhanam*.'

Here, '*vraja-strī*' has some special meaning; it refers not to all the ladies of Vraja, but only to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloveds, because other *gopīs* did not join the *rāsa* dance. The only ones to hear the flute song were these special beloveds, whose hearts the supremely attractive Śrī Kṛṣṇa had already captured. Unseen by each other, they went alone to join the precious master of their hearts. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda explains why the *gopīs* went alone

and did not see each other. All of Kṛṣṇa's beloveds are actually friends with each other, but they are divided into separate groups, such as the *yutha* of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Candrāvalī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa attracted all of them at the same time, but none of them saw any of the others. Wherever they were, they started walking hastily without informing anyone. The reason why the *gopīs* did not see each other is that their hearts were dragged by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and thus their thinking power disappeared.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, "They arrived before Him very quickly." From this explanation we may understand that the sage was always with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in that he saw Him in his heart. In other words, Śrīpāda Bādarāyaṇi was pulled to Kṛṣṇa just as the *gopīs* were. While relating the *gopīs*' endeavors to go to Kṛṣṇa, he saw in his vision that he had arrived in front of Kṛṣṇa just as the cowherd damsels had. That is why he used the word '*ājagmur*' (they arrived), to communicate that he was feeling very close to Kṛṣṇa. In the next verse he used the word '*yayuh*' (going), the verbal root '*ya*' meaning 'to move,' or 'to go.' And in this fourth verse, the word '*sa*' (He) indicates the enthusiasm of the speaker in remembering Kṛṣṇa. '*Sa yatra kānto*' – the *gopīs* arrived 'where their beloved was.' The reason is that the supreme lover, Bhagavān, is ornamented with all the qualities of many different kinds of *nāyakas*. When the speaker remembered this, enthusiasm arose in his heart. This is what is expressed here.

Bhagavān's supremely attractive form, qualities, flute melody and moods increased the *gopīs*' heartfelt desires without limit, so the spot where their beloved was waiting was the most joyful place. Indeed, Bhagavān's flute playing was so hypnotizing that the *gopīs* did not roam about, but went straight to Him. This is the essence.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

As soon as the *gopīs* heard the flute song, like golden puppets pulled by the strings of that sound, they started rushing to the place where their beloved was waiting. To express this, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, "That sound was not only spellbinding, but it also increased their amorous love (*anaṅga-vardhanam*).” In other words, the loving sentiments that were already present in the *vraja-sundarīs* blossomed upon their hearing that flute melody. Being inspired by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the sound of the flute, like a great

thief, entered the treasure-chambers of their hearts through the open doors of their ears. That melodious song stole the *gopīs*' minds, as well as the great wealth of their self-control, bashfulness, fear and discrimination, and instantly it delivered these valuables to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. '*Kṛṣṇa-grhīta-mānasāḥ*' – Śrī Kṛṣṇa captured their minds and those things related to it, such as their composure, memory, discrimination, shyness, fear and intelligence.

'*Ājagmuḥ*' – started going. This shows that the *vraja-sundarīs* dashed off in the direction of the flute sound, as if chasing after that master thief to recover their wealth. By this one can understand that the *gopīs* were going to the emperor of thieves to beg him to return their valuables. Another point to be understood is that they were so anxious to catch that great thief that they ran off blindly, without seeing each other. Where were they running to? To the place where their darling, who had looted their precious jewels, was waiting. They ran so fast that their earrings, bangles and ankle bells started swinging. That thief actually did not burgle anything from their houses, knowing those items to be of no value. This is the essence.

#### VERSE 5

*duhantyo 'bhiyayuḥ kāścīd  
dohaṁ hitvā samutsukāḥ  
payo 'dhiśritya saṁyāvam  
anudvāsyāparā yayuḥ*

As soon as they heard Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute song, those *gopīs* who were milking the cows abandoned what they were doing and started off. Some *gopīs* were heating milk on the stove and simply left it there, resulting in it boiling over. Others were cooking cracked wheat and left it on the fire. All of them rushed towards the sound.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Persons whose hearts are infused with love for Kṛṣṇa immediately give up material religion, economic endeavors and sense gratification as soon as they hear anything about Kṛṣṇa or His flute song. That is why the *gopīs* left their household chores half-finished, and rushed off in whatever condition

they were and however they were dressed. This is the subject matter of this verse starting with ‘*duhantyo*.’ The *gopīs* who were boiling the milk did not wait to even remove the pots from the fire, and those who were cooking the wheat left it on the stove, although it had finished cooking, and ran off in the direction of the flute sound.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrīpāda Śukadeva Gośvāmī has described the manner in which the *gopīs* reached Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Possessed by the supremely enchanting flute melody, they neglected all activities for the body and anything relating to it. They also gave up all social restrictions and other considerations and rushed to Kṛṣṇa. In three verses, Śrī Śukadeva Gośvāmī specifies how all the *gopīs* forsook their homes. This verse and the next describe how some *gopīs* abandoned their household duties. Here ‘*duhantyaḥ*’ indicates that in the middle of milking the cows, they ran in the direction of the sound of the flute. ‘*Kāścit*’ (some of them) indicates that, from Rādhā’s and all the other *yūtheśvarīs*’ groups of *gopīs*, some parties were engaged in one type of activity. Further on, Verse 44 of this chapter states: “*vanitā-śata-yūthapaḥ* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the leader of many hundreds and hundreds of women.” This topic will be described later on.

‘*Dohaṁ hitvā samutsukāḥ*’ – *duha*, ‘milking,’ *hitvā*, ‘giving up,’ *samutsukāḥ*, ‘extremely eager.’ They were so eager that they were incapable of waiting another moment. This understanding applies to the coming verses also. ‘*Aparā*’ (some other *gopīs*) also applies to the previous and next verses. All the rest is in accordance with Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s commentary. That is to say, some *gopīs* left milk boiling on the fire, without removing it from the stove. Other *gopīs* left cracked wheat on the stove, and ran to the holder of the flute.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* were so tremendously excited to meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa that they could not tolerate waiting another instant. This and the next two verses describe how they gave up their activities related to ‘I and mine,’ and they rushed away. Some *gopīs* neglected family duties, such as milking the cows

themselves or overseeing the milking. Some cowherd girls failed to remove the boiling milk from the fire, and some left cooked wheat on the stove. All of them ran off in great haste.

VERSE 6

*pariveṣayantyaś tad dhitvā  
pāyayantyaḥ śiśūn payaḥ  
śuśrūṣantyaḥ patīn kāścid  
aśnantyo 'pāsya bhojanam*

**Some *gopīs* were serving the evening meal to their families; some were giving milk to little children; some were serving their husbands; and some were taking their supper. They all dropped what they were doing and ran to their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa.**

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Some *gopīs* gave up their three main evening activities, such as milking the cows. They forgot moral conduct, got up hastily and ran to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is what is expressed in these three verses. Those *gopīs* who were feeding their household members and servants left their service and dashed off. 'Yayuh' (they went) in the previous verse is connected with 'pariveṣayantya' (serving up meals) in this verse. The word 'pāyayantyaḥ' (feeding milk) indicates that they even abandoned service to their more loved ones. This verse also describes how the *gopīs* gave up their duties. Some *gopīs* were feeding cows' milk to the children of their sisters or sisters-in-law; they stopped in the middle and ran off. These children could not have been their own, for that would have incurred the fault of *rasābhāsa*, the overlapping of mellows against the principles of *rasa*. This shows how the *gopīs* neglected their duties to their extended families, and 'śuśrūṣantyaḥ patīn' (serving their husbands) indicates that they even renounced their own personal responsibilities as well. Some *gopīs* were heating water for their husbands' bath, but they stopped and dashed off. 'Aśnantyaḥ' (eating) – some *gopīs* were eating their meal; they stopped in the middle of their meal and ran, ignoring even their own bodily needs. This makes it clear that those who are deeply absorbed in *prema* for Bhagavān are not aware of whether their body is pure or impure.



ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

This verse indicates that the *gopīs* even gave up their natural family duties. Some were serving meals, and some were heating water for their husbands, but they dropped everything and ran.

## VERSE 7

*limpantyaḥ pramṛjantyo 'nyā  
añjantyaḥ kāśca locane  
vyatyasta-vastrābharaṇāḥ  
kāścit kṛṣṇāntikaṁ yayuḥ*

Some *gopīs* were anointing themselves with *kuṅkuma* and *candana*, some were cleansing their bodies with herbal paste, and some were applying mascara. Regardless of their condition, they all dashed off. Some of the *gopīs* were so overwhelmed with all-consuming passion that their dresses and ornaments were all in disarray as they rushed towards their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Bhāvārtha Dipikā**

Some *gopīs* were cleaning themselves, others were applying unguents, and some were putting on ornaments to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Whatever they were doing, they all abandoned their activities and ran. Those whose hearts are attached to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa perform their every activity for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure; and even if it is incomplete, it still bears the full fruit. This is what the phrase '*vyatyasta-vastrābharaṇāḥ*' (their ornaments and clothes were jumbled) indicates. Some *gopīs*' dresses and ornaments were in disorder, meaning that they put the lower garments above their waists and their upper garments below the waist. They also wore their ornaments in the wrong places.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

Some *gopīs*, lost day and night in separation from Kṛṣṇa, were adorning themselves with ornaments in the hope of attaining Him. As stated in *Śrī Gīta-govinda*, one *gopī* was so extremely eager that she neglected to put on the ornaments that attract Kṛṣṇa for amorous enjoyment. This same mood

is expressed in the present verse. *‘Limpantyah’* (applying cosmetics) – they stopped in the middle of applying their makeup and left. *‘Anyah’* (others) is connected with *‘limpantyah’* and *‘pramṛjantyah’* (cleaning themselves). The *gopīs* abandoned all these activities because they were oblivious even to their bodies and their belongings, what to speak of other matters. Consequently, their dresses and ornaments were in disarray (*vyatyasta*). The *gopīs’* behavior here demonstrates the external manifestation of love (*anubhāva*) known as *vibhrama*, or bewilderment. This state of extreme confusion arose due to their overwhelming enthusiasm to meet with Kṛṣṇa, and manifested in their abandoning all the previously mentioned activities. “*Vibhrama* – impelled by the powerful upsurge of erotic desire to meet with her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the disconcerted heroine puts on her necklaces, garlands and other ornaments in the wrong places” (*Ujñvala-nīlamanī* 11.39). This proves the intensity of the *gopīs’* love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which made them so blind with eagerness for Him that they completely disregarded their external dress. When they met afterwards, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself joked about their appearance, and He rearranged their ornaments and clothes in a proper manner.

The cowherd maidens’ activities such as milking the cows are essential, but we see that each of the activities in these verses is more important than the previous ones. In other words, removing the boiling milk from the fire is more crucial than milking the cows, and feeding the servants and family members is more important than boiling the milk. Lovingly feeding milk to the children takes precedence over serving the food to others. Service to their husbands has the topmost priority for these young wives. In this way, the superiority of their love is shown by the comparative priority of the activities that they abandoned. In any case, they gave up all household activities and ran to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

This verse starting with *‘limpantyah’* describes those *gopīs* who had given up their absorption in themselves and their belongings. Some *gopīs* were smearing *candana* on their bodies, and some were applying herbal unguents. They gave up all these activities and hastened off. Some were in the midst of getting dressed, but they lost all bodily consciousness because they were in so much haste to leave. This is explained by the word *‘vyatyasta’* –

putting on their clothes and ornaments in the wrong places. Here the *gopīs* were experiencing a state of bewilderment, an *anubhāva* called *vibhrama*.

### VERSE 8

*tā vāryamāṇāḥ patibhiḥ  
pitṛbhir bhrāṭṛ-bandhubhiḥ  
govinda-apahrta-ātmāno  
na nyavartanta mohitāḥ*

The husbands, fathers, brothers and other relatives tried to check the *vraja-sundarīs*, whose hearts had been stolen by Śrī Govinda. But because the cowherd maidens were spellbound and had lost their external discrimination, they could not be deterred.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

This verse starting with ‘*tā vāryamāṇāḥ*’ conveys the idea that there is no obstacle that has the power to obstruct one whose heart has been attracted by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs*, whose hearts had been possessed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, had no awareness of the external environment or any activities. Their so-called husbands, children and other relatives tried to bring them back to external consciousness by force, but were unable to do so, because these *gopīs* had abandoned the natural behavior inherent in married women, like chastity and their sense of shame, even though these qualities are difficult to relinquish. This verse, beginning with ‘*tā vāryamāṇāḥ*,’ relates this. These *gopīs*, who were madly in love with Kṛṣṇa, were stopped again and again by their husbands, fathers, brothers and other relatives, who were questioning them, “Where do you think you’re going at this time of night?” But they paid no heed and kept on going. Why? The answer is ‘*mohitā*’ (bewildered), meaning they were devoid of prudent judgment. One might ask why they were bewildered. The reply is that Govinda had kidnapped not only their hearts, but also the hearts of their husbands and other family members as

well. Thus, due to weakness of heart, their relatives had no power over the *gopīs* and could not stop them.

*Bhakti* for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has the power to remove all kinds of obstacles and adversities. The married *gopīs* were challenged by their husbands, and the unmarried *gopīs* were confronted by their fathers, brothers and other family members. In this regard, the *smṛti śāstra* declares that ladies are never allowed to be independent at any time. They are protected by their fathers in childhood; by their husbands as adults; and in old age, by their sons or, in the absence thereof, by other family members.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

The *vraja-sundarīs*, driven by their all-consuming passion for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, easily dropped all their obligations and rushed to their lover. They could do this, but how could the *gopīs*’ fathers, husbands and other family members grant them the freedom to run off? This verse starting with ‘*tā vāryamāṇāḥ*’ reconciles this paradox. The young wives were checked by their husbands, and the unmarried girls were stopped by their fathers and brothers. Even so, none of these *gopīs* could be halted. The reason is “*govinda-apahr̥ta-ātmānaḥ* – their hearts had been stolen by Govinda.” Thus they had lost all sense of fear and shame, and in this condition they could not be restrained. As Govinda had plundered even their souls, they were in a stupor (*mohitāḥ*), and they were pulled to Him like puppets on a string.

One might ask how the *gopīs* were able to leave. Usually, out of fear of a wife losing her reputation, a husband would not tolerate his spouse leaving the house alone at night, even in a life-threatening situation. The answer is this: yes, this is correct, but Yogamāyā accomplished this extraordinary feat by manifesting duplicate forms of the *gopīs*, who returned with their husbands and fathers to their houses. This will be explained in more detail later on.

### VERSE 9

*antar-gr̥ha-gatāḥ kāścīd  
gopyo ’labdha-vinirgamāḥ  
kṛṣṇaṁ tad-bhāvanā-yuktā  
dadhyur milita-locanāḥ*

**Some *gopīs* were stopped by their husbands and other family members, and could not get out of their houses. Completely submerged in love for their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, those *gopīs* closed their eyes and meditated on Him deeply.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Those *gopīs* who were trapped in their houses absorbed their thoughts in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In other words, they cherished Śrī Kṛṣṇa in their hearts, which He had already captured.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

If those *gopīs*' movements had been hindered, at that very time they would have attained the tenth and last stage of separation, *dasamī-daśā*, the verge of death. Now, three verses, starting with this one, '*antar-grha*,' describe the situation of some of the *gopīs* who attempted to rendezvous with Kṛṣṇa. Examples are given that reveal their special moods. In this regard, one should know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has two types of beloveds: *nitya-siddha* and *sādhana-siddha*. The eternally perfected nature of the *nitya-siddha gopīs* is illumined within the 18-syllable *mantra* because Kṛṣṇa is worshiped with this *mantra* together with His *nitya-siddha* Śrī Rādhikā and other *gopīs*. In other words, the phrase *gopī-jana-vallabha* in this *mantra*, as declared in the *śrutis*, shows that Kṛṣṇa is worshiped with Śrī Rādhā and Her girlfriends from time immemorial.

*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.29 states: "I worship the original Supreme Male, *param-puruṣa* Śrī Govinda, who resides in His abode, Vrajabhūmi, which is adorned with hundreds of thousands of desire-fulfilling trees and palaces made of jewels. There, uncountable *kāmadhenu* cows fulfill everyone's desires, and thousands and thousands of goddesses of fortune (*gopīs*) serve Him with great love." *Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.37 furthermore states: "*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis* – I worship the original personality Śrī Govinda, who, while dwelling within the hearts of all beings, resides in Goloka-dhāma with His pleasure potency, *hlādinī-śakti* Śrī Rādhā, who, being the counterpart of His own spiritual form, is the epitome of transcendental mellows, and is expert in sixty-four arts. They are surrounded by the *sakhīs*, who are the direct expansions of Her own transcendental

body and who are infused with blissful, spiritual nectar (*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa*).” *Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.56 affirms: “In that spiritual realm the beloveds are transcendental goddesses of fortune, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Male, is the only lover (*śrīyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo*).” In this way, it is confirmed everywhere that *nitya-siddha gopīs* are goddesses of fortune, and moreover, among all these *gopīs*, it is asserted that Śrī Rādhikā is preeminent.

In *Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra* we find the verse:

*devī kṛṣṇa-mayī proktā  
rādhikā para-devatā  
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva  
kāntiḥ sammohinī parā*

Śrī Rādhā-devī is supremely beautiful (*devī*), and She is the dwelling place for Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s amorous play. *Kṛṣṇa-mayī* – She sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere, inside and outside, and is Kṛṣṇa’s counterpart. *Rādhikā* – She fulfills all of Kṛṣṇa’s desires. *Sarva-lakṣmī-mayī* – as the shelter of all the Lakṣmīs, She is the source and ruling goddess of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s six opulences and She possesses all beauty. *Sarva kānti* – She who fulfills all desires.<sup>2</sup> *Sammohinī* – She infatuates Kṛṣṇa. *Parā* – She is the topmost of all beings. In this verse *parā sammohinī* indicates that nothing can surpass Śrī Rādhā’s *prema* – Her love is the ultimate.

*Ṛg-parīṣiṣṭa* (the supplement to the *Ṛg Veda*) describes Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s one-pointed love for each other: “*rādhayā mādhave devo mādhavenaiva rādhikā* – Śrī Mādhava is with Rādhā, and Rādhikā is with Mādhava.” In this verse *eva* (with) is related to Rādhā; Śrī Mādhava looks most beautiful with Rādhā, meaning that His beauty always manifests substantially more when He is with Her than when He is with any other *gopī*. This demonstrates Their one-pointed focus on each other. *Matsya Purāṇa* mentions: “Śrī Rādhikā’s beauty is pre-eminent in Vṛndāvana, and Rukmiṇī is similarly celebrated in Dvārakā.” Although both of them are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s energies, we have to understand that Śrī Rādhā is superior.

2 From *Caitanya Caritāmṛta* 4.93: *kimvā ‘kānti’-śabde kṛṣṇera saba icchā kahe/ kṛṣṇera sakala vāñchā rādhātei rahe* – *kānti* means all beauty and luster. *Kānti* may also mean ‘all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s desires.’ All of Kṛṣṇa’s desires rest in Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Now for the *sādhana-siddha gopīs*. The *Padma Purāṇa* tells the story:

*purā maharṣayaḥ sarve  
daṇḍakāraṇya-vāsiṇaḥ  
dṛṣtvā rāmaṁ hariṁ tatra  
bhoktum aicchan su-vigraham*

*te sarve strītvam āpannāḥ  
samudbhūtāś ca gokule  
hariṁ samprāpya kāmēna  
tato muktā bhavārṇavāt*

“In a previous age, the great sages of Daṇḍakāraṇya had *darśana* of the handsome Rāmacandra. Seeing Him, they desired to become *gopīs* in Gokula so that they could enjoy with the Lord in His much more beautiful form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rāmacandra remained silent. However, because He is a desire-fulfilling tree, He was actually blessing them to get Kṛṣṇa’s association. Later, they were born as *gopīs* in Gokula, and thus their desire to meet with Hari Śrī Kṛṣṇa was fulfilled. Śrī Kṛṣṇa of earthly Gokula appeared in the inner chambers of their houses, and they were liberated from the material ocean of birth and death.” ‘Attaining Śrī Hari’ means that they associated with Kṛṣṇa in Gokula.

*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11 declares: “In whatever way devotees worship Me, I reward them accordingly.” Consequently, the great *ṛṣis* of previous times took birth as females in Gokula, having worshiped Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mood of *gopīs*. When the *ṛṣiṣ* had *darśana* of Śrī Rāmacandra, whose beauty and face resembled Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s, they got absorbed in their worshipable deity Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This awoke their past impressions from their earlier performance of *bhakti*. Thus they desired to enjoy their venerable Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness, but being shy, they were not able to directly establish their relationship with Lord Rāma as their lover. However, Śrī Rāmacandra is a wish-fulfilling tree, and He mercifully fulfilled their cherished desire. This story is narrated in the above verse from *Padma Purāṇa* with the words *te sarve*. All those *ṛṣis* received female forms, and took birth from the wombs of the *gopīs* of Gokula. There, according to their personal desires, these *ṛṣi-cārī gopīs* attained Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who appeared in their own homes. Simultaneously, they were liberated from the material ocean of birth and death.

Taking birth from a *gopī*'s womb does not guarantee that one's body will be totally free of the influence of the material energy; even in *prakaṭa-līlā* some material contamination is bound to be there. Therefore, the material energy may still touch the bodies of the *gopīs* who took birth in Gokula. Here, we may cite the parallel example of Kāṁsa killing Devakī's six children in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes on Earth.

*Bṛhad-vāmana Purāṇa* makes it known that some *śrutis* accepted birth from the wombs of the *gopīs* of Gokula. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also tells us that the *śrutis* took birth as the *śruti-cārī* cowherd maidens. Therefore *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.87.23 narrates, "We *śrutis* will attain that nectar flowing from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet by getting a *gopī* body and taking guidance from Śrī Rādhikā and Her friends, who relish the nectar of His lotus feet (the wealth of His sweetness filled with love) and who intensely hanker for the tight embrace of His serpentine arms."

The Gāyatrī *mantra* herself has taken birth from a *gopī*'s womb. In the chapter on the creation (*Śṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa*) in *Padma Purāṇa*, Śrī Viṣṇu spoke to the cowherd boys at the time of Brahmā's marriage with Gāyatrī, who had assumed the form of a cowherd maiden: "I am giving this girl to Brahmā. I know the past, present and future – this girl Gāyatrī will be My beloved when I appear in your dynasty to accomplish the work of the demigods." *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1.23 similarly states, "Therefore, to give pleasure to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the wives of the demigods will take birth in Gokula as the *deva-kanyā gopīs*."

The *Padma Purāṇa* has grouped the *gopīs* in four categories: *ṛṣi-cārī*, *śruti-cārī*, *deva-kanyā* and *gopa-kanyā*. "O King, these four kinds of *gopīs* are Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloveds. None of them are human." Of these, the *gopa-kanyās* are accepted as eternally perfect (*nitya-siddha*) because the narration of their birth or their *sādhana* is not found in any *sāstra*. Therefore, they cannot be regarded as ordinary humans with a material body." The *Padma Purāṇa* describes the previous life of the *ṛṣi-cārī gopīs* and how they achieved perfection in their *sādhana*. The cowherd maidens mentioned in this ninth verse, '*antar-grha-gatāḥ*,' are none other than the *ṛṣi-cārī gopīs*. Evidence for this is found in both *Padma Purāṇa* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which give similar descriptions of those *ṛṣi-cārī gopīs* attaining liberation.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.6 states, "Some *gopīs* were serving their husbands." These words make it clear that they were *sādhana-siddha ṛṣi-cārī gopīs*. None of them were engaged in milking the cows or in other outside



activities. Rather, they were serving their husbands in the inner chambers of their houses. We conclude that all these *gopīs* were *sādhakas* because we hear about them giving up their bodies, and *Padma Purāṇa* confirms this. Thus we can understand that those who had taken birth in Gokula as a result of *sādhana*, had attained the full, perfected mood, but they had not yet received their completely perfected spiritual body. Therefore, they were not *nitya-siddha* like Rādhikā.

These *sādhana-siddha gopīs* were in the inner chambers serving their husbands when they heard Kṛṣṇa's flute song. Immediately, they stopped their service and started moving towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But their husbands forcefully shut the doors, and prevented them from leaving. These *gopīs* could not get Śrī Govinda's direct association since they did not have their perfected bodies to meet with Him. In other words, unlike the *nitya-siddha gopīs*, they were prevented from reaching Kṛṣṇa. One should understand that Bhakti-devī did not cause their husbands' minds to become slack as she did with the *nitya-siddha gopīs*' husbands. Thus, completely thwarted from coming out of their houses, they meditated on Śrī Kṛṣṇa with deep yearning. As He had already captured their hearts, they completely submerged themselves in His mood. The visible symptom (*anubhāva*) of that meditation is their closing their eyes. This happens when one is lost in extreme sorrow or absorbed in profound contemplation. Mention of the eyes being closed indicates they were unaware of all externals and lost in deep meditation.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Here we will draw from the conceptions that Rūpa Gosvāmī presents in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has two kinds of *gopī* sweethearts: *nitya-siddha* and *sādhana-siddha*. The *sādhana-siddhas* fall into two categories: *yauthikī* (those who came to Kṛṣṇa in groups) and *ayauthikī* (those who came alone). *Yauthikī* again are of two types: *muni-cārī* and *śruti-cārī*. In other words, all the *śrutis* who performed *sādhana* together in a group are known as *śruti-cārī*, and the *munis* who executed *sādhana* together are known as *muni-cārī*. *Padma Purāṇa* names four categories of *gopīs*: "O King, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloveds are of four types: *rṣi-cārī*, *śruti-cārī*, *deva-kanyā* and *gopa-kanyā*. They are not ordinary humans." The *gopa-kanyās* mentioned here might appear as ordinary human girls, which is why it is

stated that this is not so, confirming that the *gopīs* are not mortal beings. The *gopa-kanyās* mentioned in this verse are clearly *nitya-siddha* because no scripture mentions their attaining Kṛṣṇa by performing *sādhana*. Here the question comes: if they are *nitya-siddha gopīs*, why did they worship Kātyāyanī-devī? We can reconcile this as follows. It is true that the *gopa-kanyās* did worship Kātyāyanī-devī, but this is only related as part of *nara-līlā*, human-like pastimes. In other words, because they are cowherd maidens (*gopa-kanyā*), they are *nitya-siddha* and do not need to perform any *sādhana*. This deliberation is explained in more detail in the pastime of Kṛṣṇa stealing the *gopīs*' clothes.

*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.37 gives the evidence that these *gopīs* are *nitya-siddha*. “*Ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitā* – I worship the original personality Śrī Govinda, who, while dwelling within the hearts of all beings, resides in Goloka-dhāma with His pleasure potency, *hlādinī-śakti* Śrī Rādhā, who, being the counterpart of His own spiritual form, is the epitome of transcendental mellows, and is expert in sixty-four arts. They are surrounded by the *sakhīs*, who are the direct expansions of Her own transcendental body and who are infused with blissful, spiritual nectar (*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa*).” This verse proves that the *gopīs* are the embodiment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*), and thus exist eternally in full perfection. *Gautamiya-tantra* confirms this: *hlādinī yā mahā-śaktiḥ*. From time without beginning, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is engaged in amorous pastimes with these Gokula maidens. The phrase *gopī-jana-vallabha* in the 18-syllable *mantra* refers to these *gopīs*. The *kṛṣṇa-mantra*, along with the *śrutis* that explain the method for the worshiping the *mantra*, have existed since time immemorial.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1.23 states: “*sambhavas tu amara-striyaḥ*<sup>3</sup> – The *deva-kanyās* will take birth in Vraja to give pleasure to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” When Śrī Kṛṣṇa incarnates in the heavenly planets, the expansions of His eternal consorts appear along with Him for His pleasure. These are the goddesses who take birth as cowherd girls when Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends to Vraja. *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* 3.52–53 explains that they become the *priya-sakhīs*, the confidential girlfriends of the root *nitya-siddha gopīs*.

*Śruti-cārī gopīs* are *sādhana-siddha*. The Prayers of the *Śrutis* (*Śruti-stava*) in the *Bṛhad-vāmana Purāṇa* testify to this when they extoll the

3 Some editions say *sura-striyaḥ*

Lord, “O Kṛṣṇa, Your beauty is such that it defeats the luster of millions of Cupids. The *darśana* of that beauty has aroused lusty desires in our minds, and we are surely attracted to You in a mood of amorous pleasure. We are nourishing the desire to attain You in the same mood as the cowherd damsels of Gokula, who understand You to be their lover and worship You as the essence of erotic joy.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa answered, “O *śrutis*, your sublime, heart-felt desires are rare and most difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, by My wish, they will be granted.”

Now we will discuss the *muni-cārī gopīs*. *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* states: ‘*gopālopāsakāḥ pūrvam aprāptābhīṣṭa-siddhayaḥ*’ – “Earlier they were worshiping Gopāla and their desire was fulfilled.” This statement proves that the *muni-cārī gopīs* are *sādhana-siddha*. The *Padma Purāṇa* confirms this: “The sages residing in the Daṇḍaka forest previously worshiped Gopāla, but their desire was not fulfilled. After a long time had passed, they received *darśana* of Śrī Rāmacandra. Being charmed by His beauty, they developed a deep yearning to taste amorous pleasure with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They did not express this outwardly, but in their minds they prayed to Śrī Rāmacandra that He would mercifully fulfill their cherished longings. Like a desire-fulfilling tree, Śrī Rāmacandra bestowed His mercy silently (by mind).” As a result of that mercy, they engaged in *sādhana*, and attained the stage of *bhāva*. They received *gopī* bodies, taking birth from the wombs of the *vraja-gopīs* at the time of Kṛṣṇa’s manifest pastimes (His *prakaṭa-līlā*), and attained Śrī Hari according to their amorous yearnings. Their cherished desire thus bore fruit, and they were liberated from the material realm.

In his commentary on the Tenth Canto, Śrīla Kavi Karnaṇpūra Gosvāmī explains that the *gopīs* who had borne children were the ones closed inside their homes by their husbands. The evidence for this is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.20: “Your mothers and fathers, sons, brothers and husbands are looking for you,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.32: “O beloved, You say that ladies must be under the guidance of husbands, sons and other guardians,” and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.31.16: “O Acyuta, we have left behind our husbands, sons, and other family members and come to You.” This proper meaning is evident everywhere.

Now we will examine the *muni-cārī gopīs* in greater detail. After the *maharṣis* who were worshiping Gopāla witnessed Śrī Rāmacandra’s sweet beauty, their *bhakti* became infused with fervent emotions (*rāgamayī*).

Thus they developed from *anartha-nivritti* to *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, *asakti*, and came up to *rati*, the first sprout of *prema*. Even though they were still slightly influenced by the material modes, Yogamāyā-devī brought them to Gokula and gave them birth as cowherd damsels from the wombs of *gopīs*. Of these *sādhana-siddha gopīs*, some were fortunate to gain the association of *nitya-siddha gopīs*. Thus, when their adolescence was just starting to blossom, they became filled with *pūrva-rāga*, the intense hankering to meet with Kṛṣṇa (before having had any contact with Him). At this time in trance they received the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's body, and consequently all vestiges of contamination were completely burnt off. All remaining blemishes disappeared, and their *kṛṣṇa-rati*, their overwhelming attraction to Kṛṣṇa, ascended to *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya* and higher stages.

Like the other *gopīs*, they also were married, but right from the beginning Yogamāyā always protected them from their husbands' touch by providing shadow forms. Thus they were never contaminated by contact with their husbands, and in their transcendental bodies, they attained the good fortune to join Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *rāsa* dance for His pleasure. On the night of the *rāsa*, they heard the flute song and, like the other *gopīs*, they became very eager to go to Kṛṣṇa. Even though they were obstructed by their husbands, Yogamāyā helped them to proceed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the *nitya-siddha gopīs*.

Some other *gopīs* were deprived of the association of the *nitya-siddhas*; thus their remaining contaminations were not burnt off. They were also married, like all the other *gopīs*; but they were enjoyed by their husbands, and had given birth to children. Later on, they got the company of the *nitya-siddha gopīs*, by which they developed *pūrva-rāga* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus their yearning to have direct contact with Him was awakened. However, despite having received the mercy of the *nitya-siddha gopīs*, they were still not fit for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's physical touch because they had had contact with their husbands, and consequently were not eligible to serve Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Yogamāyā did not assist them in joining Him that night.

Yogamāyā helped those *gopīs* whose *prema* had ripened (*jāta-prema*), but she did not facilitate these *gopīs* who had had relations with their husbands. That is why their husbands could stop them from going to meet with Kṛṣṇa. Locked in their houses, these *gopīs* underwent intense anguish, regarding their husbands as the greatest enemy of their lives. Indeed, they

felt that they were bereft of all good fortune, and were on the verge of death. On reaching this condition, one ordinarily remembers one's mother and other beloved family members, but these *gopīs* thought only of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and they meditated on Him deeply, perceiving Him as the only friend of their soul. This is the purport of this verse starting with '*antar-gṛha*.' Their husbands stopped them at the doorway of the house, threatening them with sticks in their hands and chastising them. Prevented from going out, they were trapped inside the house. Therefore, it was not possible for them to join Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* then focused their minds fully on Him, accepting Him as their one and only soul-mate. In great lamentation they called out to Him, "*Hā hā prāṇeka-bandho!* Alas, alas, friend of my life airs! O ocean of amorous arts in Vṛndāvana! Let me be Your beloved life after life. At this last moment, I am unable to behold Your beautiful moon-like face, but in my heart I am having Your *darśana*." Closing their eyes, the *gopīs* meditated with intense hankering on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and connected with Him in their hearts.

#### VERSES 10–11

*duḥsaha-preṣṭha-viraha-  
tīvra-tāpa-dhutāśubhāḥ  
dhyāna-prāptācyutāśleṣa-  
nirvṛtyā kṣiṇa-maṅgalāḥ  
tam eva paramātmānaṁ  
jāra-buddhyāpi saṅgatāḥ  
jahur guṇa-mayaṁ dehaṁ  
sadyaḥ prakṣiṇa-bandhanāḥ*

Those *gopīs* who were not able to meet with their beloved were subjected to extreme suffering in the intolerable fire of separation; and thus all their remaining inauspiciousness was burned off. Then, attaining the tight (*acyuta*) embrace of Śrī Acyuta in their meditation, they felt a supreme bliss that wiped away all their material piety. Thus becoming free from all kinds of auspicious and inauspicious bondage, they met with Paramātmā Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their paramour, and instantly gave up their remaining subtle material attachments.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Then, attaining Paramātmā Śrī Kṛṣṇa in their meditation, those *gopīs* gave up their remaining subtle material attachments (*guṇa-maya deha*). This is explained in these two verses containing the word 'jahuh' (they gave up). The following question might arise: How did the *gopīs*' subtle material bodies disappear if they did not know Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Soul? The answer is that attaining Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their paramour caused them to relinquish those bodies. They no idea of Kṛṣṇa's full identity, but meeting with Him nonetheless destroyed their last mundane attachments because the efficacy of an object does not depend on one's understanding its power. For example, if someone drinks *amṛta* thinking it to be poison, it still acts as nectar. Similarly, although the *gopīs* met with Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their paramour, the effect of that association still removed their materially-tinged subtle bodies. Another question might come: If they were still bound by their *prārabdha-karma*, how did their bodies disappear? The answer is '*sadyah*,' meaning, that instant the ties of their *prārabdha-karma* were completely destroyed.

This is the topic discussed in this verse '*duḥsaha-preṣṭha-viraha*' (intolerable separation from their beloved). The agony that those *gopīs* underwent being parted from Śrī Kṛṣṇa annihilated all their sins, and they attained Acyuta's tight embrace in their meditation. The supreme bliss that they enjoyed freed them from their bondage caused by material piety. Thus, the suffering they underwent and the subsequent happiness attained from meeting with Him in their meditation, completely destroyed all *karmas*; and hence the last vestiges of material qualities disappeared.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

After that, those *gopīs* united instantly with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is related in these two verses starting with '*duḥsaha*.' The first half of this verse explains the result of their enthusiasm, and the second half relays the result of their meditation. In their extreme eagerness, the intolerable separation from their beloved caused an intense burning, which consumed all their inauspiciousness. Attaining happiness in their meditation from the embrace of Śrī Acyuta (who never fails to give unending mercy to His

devotees) eradicated all kinds of material fortune. Here the use of the words ‘*duḥsaha*’ (intolerable) and ‘*tīvra*’ (intense) communicates the ultimate limit of anguish, and the words ‘*acyuta*’ (infallible) and ‘*nirvṛti*’ (finished) indicate the topmost level of happiness. ‘*Aśubha*’ (misfortune) connotes the pain they experienced in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa before achieving ever-ongoing meeting with Him. ‘*Maṅgala*’ is the happiness that they enjoyed in associating with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in their trance immediately after undergoing the distress of separation. The mature *sādhaka* receives perfection by feeling sorrow and joy in equal measure in his trance. These *gopīs* had been suffering slowly, but now they experienced happiness and distress simultaneously. That is why the words ‘*dhuta*’ (removed) and ‘*kṣiṇa*’ (diminished) are used.

With regard to Śrī Kṛṣṇa meeting with those *gopīs* in their own homes, Markendeya has said in *Vāsanā-bhāṣya*: “At that very moment all those *gopīs* attained in their trance the supremely blissful Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is affectionate to His devotees.” The words ‘*aśubha*’ and ‘*maṅgala*’ in Verse 10 cannot possibly mean ‘sin’ and ‘piety;’ they do not express the same notion. Sin and piety inevitably dispense their results at every moment. If the *gopīs* were subject to sin, they would never receive *sphūrtis* (visions) of Kṛṣṇa in their love-filled separation from Him. The *Padma Purāṇa* confirms this: “The birth of the Vaiṣṇavas is not the result of any *karma*.”

Thus, these *gopīs*’ births were not governed by *prārabdha karma*. Furthermore, in their previous lives as *sādhakas*, they had passed through *anartha-nivṛtti* and were already liberated from the bondage of their *karmas*. Even so, the words ‘*aśubha*’ and ‘*maṅgala*’ are defined as ‘sin’ and ‘piety.’ This can be understood from the pastime described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.45.45 in which Śrī Bhagavān Himself brought the son of His *guru*, Sāndipani Muni, from the abode of Yama. At that time He mentioned this type of karmic bondage: “*He Yamarāja, you should hand over My guru’s son to Me, even though he is still undergoing his prārabdha karma.*” Actually, it is only by the desire of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is independent and who likes to perform a variety of pastimes, if one is saved from his past activities or not. Bhagavān does this to increase one’s *prema* for Him. Such behavior is a sign of His very attractive *rasika* nature as a connoisseur of loving exchanges. It should be understood that Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed this pastime with the *gopīs* with the same objective in mind. Therefore, no other explanation can be given in regard to upholding the principle of *prārabdha karma*.

One might ask: Did the *gopīs* meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a paramour mood (*jāra-buddhi*)? The answer is no, it is not like that. They accepted the paramour mood as a stepping stone due to their vehement desire. Paramātmā Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the root cause of all existence. He is known as Yadu-pati and similar designations that indicate that He is the maintainer, so naturally He is everyone's master. He is the master of the *gopīs*, who accept Him with a special mood as their hero in amorous play. Therefore, He is their *pati*, their husband. This is the meaning here.

The purport is that the *vraja-sundarīs* have unparalleled passion for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and their paramour mood towards Him serves as a stepping stone to increase their passion to the ultimate limit. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is actually their real husband even though they have this paramour mood. The name Yadu-pati means that He is the master of the Yadus because He is their maintainer. As the original Paramātmā of every living being, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Soul, and therefore He is naturally everyone's maintainer and master. Similarly, in a conjugal relationship He is certainly the *gopīs*' spouse. Śrī Kṛṣṇa engages in very private, playful affairs with the *vraja-sundarīs*; therefore He is their lover (*ramaṇa*). Only the husband can be the *ramaṇa*, so Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *gopīs*' husband. When they performed love-play with Him, they were also absorbed in this same mood. In other words, they accepted Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their legitimate hero when they met with Him.

One may argue that the mood of a *ramaṇa* as the master or husband is not apparent here, so it is natural to think that the *gopīs* meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a paramour mood. The response is that even though they see Him as their paramour while on their way to meet with Him, their greed to unite with Him becomes so much stronger that the paramour mood (*jāra-buddhi*) is forgotten.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.6.35 explains how Pūtanā came with evil intentions, planning to kill Kṛṣṇa: "Though Pūtanā came to kill baby Kṛṣṇa by feeding Him her breast milk, she was delivered to the spiritual realm." Similarly, a paramour mood (*jāra-buddhi*) also indicates a degraded consciousness. When all these *gopīs* met with Bhagavān in deep meditation, their previous bodies disappeared. Concomitantly, their relationship with their husbands was automatically dissolved. How, then, is it possible for these *gopīs* to be meeting with another partner out of wedlock? A fallen wife who is attached to another man in the presence of the husband is known as



an adulteress. But here, the *gopīs* have already relinquished their husbands along with their previous bodies, so they cannot consider Kṛṣṇa as their paramour. The *Viśva-prakāśa* Sanskrit dictionary states that *ramaṇa* means 'dear one.' According to the *Amara-kośa* dictionary, *dhava*, *priya*, *pati* and *bharttā* are synonyms, meaning 'master;' and *jāra* and *upapati* are synonyms, meaning 'paramour.' It is not appropriate to equate the words *ramaṇa*, *pati*, etc., with *jāra*, because they actually have opposite meanings.

One might inquire why the word *jāra*, which implies degradation, is used instead of *ramaṇa*, *pati*, and other such decent words. We see the example of Pūtanā, who came with the depraved desire to kill Kṛṣṇa. Here also, the speaker seems to be casting aspersions by using the term *parakīya-bhāva* (paramour mood) because the word 'paramour' indicates a sinful relationship. The *Trikāṇḍa-Śeṣādi Kośa* dictionary and traditional society also hold the same idea. To reconcile this we submit that these implications do not apply here. It is true that social etiquette and religious behavior both condemn paramour love, but the *gopīs*' overwhelming love had driven them beyond these worldly conventions. The speaker uses the term 'paramour love' here to indicate the super-excellence of the *gopīs*' highly developed *prema*, their *anurāga*. *Prema* is denoted here as *kāma* because the activities based on lust (*kāma*) and *prema* appear similar. However, this *kāma* exhibited by the *gopīs* is nothing but a display of pure love because the sole purpose of these activities in *prema* is to please the lover. Hence, the *vraja-sundarīs*' feelings of committing adultery are exclusively for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, and giving delight to Kṛṣṇa is their natural instinct. Consequently, the apparently contemptible view of their being paramours (*jāra*) is completely invalid because their *jāra-bhāva* is to be understood as pure *kṛṣṇa-prema*. This indicates that the crest jewel of all the goals of life is to attain that supreme love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is overflowing with *prema*.

All of the *gopīs*' activities are only for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates this later on, in 10.31.19: "He *priya*! O dearly beloved! When we hold Your lotus feet to our breasts, we do so very gently, because we are afraid that our hard breasts will hurt Your soft feet." There are many other similar examples of the *gopīs*' *prema*. Śrīman Uddhava also says: "āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām aham syām – I only pray that I may take birth as a creeper, bush or herb in the Vṛndāvana forest so that I can always be bathed in the dust of the Vraja damsels' lotus feet. It is very difficult to

abandon conventional morality and give up one's dear ones, but these *vraja-gopīs* have done so to serve Śrī Govinda's lotus feet, which the *śrutis* are still seeking till today" (SB 10.47.61). Verse 58 in the same chapter states: "The *gopīs* are situated in *rūḍha-mahābhāva* for Supersoul Bhagavān Śrī Govinda. Thus they are the most super-excellent of all embodied beings on this Earth, for they are the only ones who have achieved the real purpose of life. The greatest sages, who are afraid of material existence, desire this pure love, and so do we as well. *Aho!* If one has not developed taste for hearing the ambrosial narrations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, even taking birth as Brahmā is useless." These considerations show that the *jāra-bhāva* of the *gopīs* cannot be considered as degraded because it gives them a most relishable *prema* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and this is the topmost goal of life.

An accompanying fruit of this paramour love is that all those *gopīs* gave up their residual material attachments. As mentioned above, all ties were cut, and the influence of the material elements was withdrawn. This indicates that they attained their fully blossomed transcendental forms.

*'Jāra-buddhyāpi'* – they indeed went for rendezvous in a paramour mood. Here the word *'api'* (still) establishes the sordidness of *jāra-buddhi*. Although "Pūtanā came with the intention to kill baby Kṛṣṇa with her breast smeared with poison, still she was awarded the position of a nursemaid" (SB 10.6.35). Here the word *api* in the phrase *'jighāṁsayāpi'* highlights the evil nature of the desire to kill. Similarly, the word *api* in *jāra-buddhyāpi* emphasizes the apparent baseness of paramour relations. One may say that 'coming with the desire to kill' and 'paramour mood' are both contemptible, but how can one say that *'jāra-buddhi'* is immoral when it is connected with *'paramātmānam'*? Supersoul Śrī Kṛṣṇa can never be subject to censure. This can be reconciled in the following way. "Pūtanā gave her breast smeared with poison to Hari." The use of the word 'Hari' here indicates that Supersoul who steals the minds of all by His compassion and other wonderful qualities. Therefore, even a cruel-hearted person cannot harbor the desire to kill Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is full of transcendental qualities. After considering the above, if the desire to kill Kṛṣṇa or to have a paramour relationship with Him does appear in a cruel heart, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself will take away these unwholesome desires, just as He made Pūtanā give up Her intention to kill and removed the impropriety of the *gopīs'* paramour love also. The reason for this is that He is directly the Supersoul, or Hari, and He is causelessly

merciful. Kṛṣṇa Himself will therefore destroy unseemly tendencies in one who has corrupt intentions, and that is what He has done here.

Bhagavān saw Pūtānā's giving poisoned breast milk as an envious act, but He nevertheless accepted it as a semblance of *bhakti*. Therefore He granted her the position of a nursemaid. The *gopīs*, on the other hand, were supremely devoted to Him, and were suffering intolerable separation from their beloved (*duḥsaha-preṣṭha-viraha*). Why, then, would He not accept them as His beloveds and give them happiness by meeting with them in their hearts? Surely He would do that! These *gopīs*' actual meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa took place in the eternal realm of Goloka, which is above and non-different from this earthly Gokula.

All these considerations explain why Śrī Bhagavān told Uddhava: "Those fortunate *gopīs* were unable to join Me on the night of the *rāsa* dance even though they were in Vraja, but they attained Me by thinking about My splendid pastimes." The *rāsa* love dance mentioned to Uddhava in 10.47.37 took place on the same day as the play-filled *rāsa-līlā* described in this 29<sup>th</sup> Chapter. Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays as a cowherd boy eternally in His pastimes in the spiritual sky (*aprakāṣa-līlā*), so it is possible that the *rāsa* dance could have taken place there some other day also.

*Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.37 confirms that this happened on the same night: "*nāsūyan khalu kṛṣṇāya* – the *gopīs*' so-called husbands did not blame Kṛṣṇa for any improper conduct." This shows that the husbands were not disturbed by their wives' giving up their bodies, because Bhagavān's Yogamāyā made those bodies vanish and manifested duplicate forms to take their place. The *nitya-siddha* beloveds who joined Kṛṣṇa in the *rāsa* dance had no idea about this secret. They did not know about Bhagavān performing this *rāsa-līlā* with the *sādhana-siddha gopīs* until He sent His message with Uddhava to Vraja. Actually, the *nitya-siddha gopīs* could not understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa's supernatural powers.

How amazing it is that these *gopīs* were still able to attain Kṛṣṇa even though their husbands stopped them from following the sound of the flute to reach Him! The reason is this: "Kṛṣṇa came to those *gopīs* who were locked inside their houses, and met with them in their private quarters." This is disclosed in the verse beginning with '*antar-grha-gatāḥ*.' Their inauspicious separation was removed by the excruciating burning they underwent and by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Not only their inauspiciousness was

eliminated, but through the *gopīs* the inauspiciousness of the whole world was also destroyed. Śrī Bhagavān has confirmed this in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.14.24: “By the power of My *bhakti-yoga*, the devotee purifies not only himself, but the whole world also.”

When the *gopīs* received such complete happiness from His embrace, their auspiciousness escalated, and this nourished the rest of the world as well. As mentioned before, the phrase ‘*guṇa-maya*’ here means ‘full absorption in a mood of separation.’ The description of the creation in the Third Canto relates that Brahmā also gave up his body when he became completely absorbed and changed His mood. The rest of the meaning is according to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s explanation. ‘*Antar-grha-gataḥ*’ (remaining inside their houses) – without being seen by anyone, Kṛṣṇa manifested in their houses and met with them there. All their bondage was thus cut at that moment. In this way, it was only that night that those *gopīs* were not able to join the *rāsa* dance (*alabdha-rāsā* – SB 10.47.37). This is the understanding.

The meaning is that, by the power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, the *gopīs* who were confined in their houses gave up their subtle material bodies in their meditation, and met with Him in their fully transcendental bodies. Kṛṣṇa met with these *gopīs* in their homes and He dispelled all inauspiciousness that had made them suffer in separation. ‘*Alabdha-rāsā*’ means that it was only on this particular night that these *gopīs* could not directly go to the *rāsa-maṇḍala* in the *prakaṭa-līlā*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Here Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is presenting two ways of understanding the verse starting with ‘*duḥsaha*.’ For materialistic persons he is only giving an external meaning, which hides the real object of the *gopīs*’ attainment, whereas for intimate devotees who are well versed in *siddhānta*, he is revealing the deep, internal purport, which is dear to his heart.

First, for the materialists, he says, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave liberation to the *gopīs*.” In other words, the *gopīs*’ inauspiciousness was cleansed by the intense heat produced from intolerable separation, and the bliss they received from Acyuta’s embrace in their meditation severed all their piety. When all their *prārabdha* ties were cut, the *gopīs* attained Paramātmā in

a paramour mood, and they gave up all their remaining subtle material attachments (*guṇa-maya deha*).

Now, for the internal devotees, Śrī Śukadeva says that the *gopīs* were suffering in the blazing fire of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but when they went into deep trance, they attained unlimited happiness by meeting with Him, and all their desires were fulfilled. Their unbearable separation caused such intense heat that all types of inauspiciousness were shaken to the core. This includes the heat generated in millions of universes from underwater fires in the oceans, *mahā-kālakūṭa* poison [produced from the churning of the milk ocean], and any other dangerous occurrence that causes sudden death. All of these gave up their pride and shivered in defeat upon witnessing the *gopīs'* agony. In their trance the *gopīs* met with Acyuta in transcendental bodies full of *prema*, in accord with their desires and natural sentiments. The joy they experienced from His embrace annihilated all their mundane and supra-mundane good fortune (*maṅgala*).

The happiness that the *gopīs* enjoyed from Kṛṣṇa's embrace in their meditation reduced to insignificance all the material happiness contained in millions and millions of universes, as well as the spiritual joy experienced by thousands who have realized the impersonal *brahma*. Some might think that the *gopīs'* agony in separation and their happiness in union with Bhagavān were the reactions to their previous sin and piety because sinful and pious reactions (*prārabdha karma*) are only wiped out by suffering and enjoying them. Vaiṣṇavas, however, do not accept this view. Misery felt in separation from Bhagavān is not the reaction of sin, and the bliss enjoyed in meeting with Him is not the fruit of piety. But the *sādhaka* in the stage of *anartha-nivṛtti*, who is still undergoing the reactions to his previous activities, is able to destroy his *prārabdha karma* by worshiping Kṛṣṇa. This is the rational conclusion.

Paramātmā Śrī Kṛṣṇa possesses the most sublime level of love. The *gopīs* met that Paramātmā in their meditation, in the disrespectable paramour relationship. In contrast, Rukmiṇī and the other queens enjoyed being Kṛṣṇa's respectable wives, seeing Him as the topmost husband that anyone could attain. The *gopīs*, however, realized Him in a much more intimate way because the unrestrained love in the paramour mood reaches the highest peak. The noble devotee Śrī Uddhava Mahāśāya loudly sings the great glories of the *gopīs*: “*yā dustyajam sva-janam ārya-patham ca hitvā* – to worship the lotus

feet of Śrī Govinda, the *vraja-gopīs* gave up their husbands, family members and Vedic morality, which are very difficult to renounce” (SB 10.47.61). The *gopīs* could do this because their love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was so strong. The *śrutis* present the same opinion and they are still striving to attain that love-filled form of Kṛṣṇa, which is the supreme goal.

Especially in Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s manifest *līlā* on Earth, it is seen that an act regarded as deplorable by material calculation is acknowledged as very elevated and respectable. Grandfather Bhiṣma says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.9.39: “That Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who bestows *sārūpya-mukti*, is now looking beautiful as Arjuna’s chariot driver, holding a whip and protecting the chariot.” This statement proves that Kṛṣṇa’s pastime as Pārtha-sārati, the chariot driver, is superior to His activities as an emperor. Similarly, in the material realm, extra-marital affairs (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*) are considered debased, but in the *prakaṭa-līlā* they become more exalted than the ordinarily higher *śanta-rasa*, because we observe that in the Vraja pastimes paramour love excels marital love. We also see clearly in this manifest *līlā* that insignificant items like a *guṇja-mālā*, red chalk (*gairika-dhātu*) and peacock feathers are more precious than expensive ornaments made from jewels and pearls. Here, the word ‘*saṅgatā*’ (attaining His direct association) indicates that Yogamāyā helped some *gopīs* to escape from the bondage of their husbands and fathers so that they could meet with Rāsa-bihārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa on that night of the *rāsa-līlā*; others joined Him on subsequent nights.

One might question how it is appropriate for Śrī Bhagavān to perform amorous pastimes like the *rāsa* dance with *gopīs* who have been enjoyed by another man? The answer is: “*jahur guṇa-mayaṁ dehaṁ* – those *gopīs* gave up their materially tinged subtle body.” Here ‘*deha*’ is used in the singular to indicate that they are all of one type. Some say that Yogamāyā made those bodies disappear without anyone noticing, and replaced them with another body. Others say that the bodies given up were contaminated by the three modes of nature. Even if we do not accept that those bodies were material, they are still to be understood as perishable. Why is the phrase ‘*guṇa-maya*’ used so often? This point can be settled thus: before the *gopīs* heard the sound of the flute, their bodies were divided into two parts – *guṇa-maya* and *cinmaya*, material and transcendental. The bodies that the *gopīs* gave up were the ones that had been enjoyed by their husbands. Otherwise, if we accept *guṇa-maya deha* to mean ‘their own bodies,’ this phrase would contradict the subject.

In this regard, we should consider the following point. In the beginning of one's devotional practice, following the instruction of *guru*, the devotee uses his ears and other external senses for hearing, performing *kīrtana*, remembering, bowing down and serving the Deities. As he advances in his practices, pure *bhakti* begins to pervade the functioning of his senses. “*Nirguṇo mad-apāśrayaḥ* – a surrendered person becomes transcendental” (SB 11.25.26). According to these words of Bhagavān, the devotees rise above the material modes when they accept the Lord's qualities through their senses by hearing, chanting, etc., and yet they still remain in the three modes of nature when they accept mundane sound and other sense objects. In this way, the devotees have two aspects – material and spiritual.

In this connection, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.42 says: “*bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir* – With each successive mouthful of food, one becomes satisfied, nourished and relieved of hunger, accordingly. Similarly, as surrendered devotees engage in the limbs of devotion, *prema-bhakti*, the manifestation of Bhagavān's love-filled form, and renunciation of material enjoyment arise simultaneously.” According to this logic, the material body is reduced as *bhakti* increases, and when *prema* emerges, the material aspect of the body is completely destroyed, giving rise to the transcendental body. Just as Śrī Bhagavān displayed the destruction of the Yādavas' material bodies in *mauṣala-līlā*, He similarly showed through His illusory energy the demise of the *gopīs*' gross bodies in order to delude the atheists and to protect the confidentiality of *bhakti-yoga*.

To establish the superiority of *bhakti-yoga*, sometimes the devotee goes to the spiritual realm in their same gross body, as in the case of Dhruva Mahārāja. Evidence for this is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.25.32: “*yeneme nirjītaḥ saumya guṇā jīvena citta-jāḥ* – He saumya! O gentle Uddhava! One who practices *bhakti-yoga* with complete faith conquers all the material modes arising in the mind, and that pure devotee can attain Me in *dāsyā*, *sakhyā* or one of the other relationships.” This shows that the performance of *bhakti-yoga*, which is beyond all material qualities, defeats the material modes. *Dhutāsūbhāḥ*: the intense, intolerable fire which arose from separation from their loved one; this fire removed the *gopīs*' inauspiciousness. In other words, the material aspect of their bodies was purified in a special way, and in their meditation they attained Śrī Acyuta's

embrace. Thus, their auspiciousness (*maṅgala*) increased, which means that their bodies became fully spiritual. This makes proper sense. ‘*Prakṣiṇa-bandhana*’ – by receiving the favor of Yogamāyā, they were liberated from the bonds of ignorance and from the obstacles presented by their husbands. However, it is wrong to say that they died because Kṛṣṇa Himself says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.37:

*yā mayā kṛīdatā rātryām  
vane ‘smin vraja āsthitāḥ  
alabdha-rāsāḥ kalyāṇyo  
māpur mad-vīrya-cintayā*

“All those fortunate *gopīs* who were stopped by their husbands were not able to join Me on the night of the *rāsa* dance; by thinking of My heroic activities they attained Me right in their own houses.”

Bhagavān has used the word ‘*kalyāṇī*’ to show that those *gopīs* who were checked by their husbands burned in the conflagration of separation, and desired to give up their bodies. “But at the beginning of the supremely auspicious *rāsa* festival, I did not agree to their dying, which would have been inauspicious.” Consequently, no death took place; rather these *gopīs* became greatly fortunate.

“*Tā ūcur uddhavaṁ prītās tat-sandeshāgata-smṛtiḥ* – Śrī Śukadeva said, ‘When those *gopīs* heard their beloved’s message from Śrī Uddhava’s mouth, their previous memories were awakened” (*SB* 10.47.38). Here, the word ‘*tā*’ refers to those *gopīs* who were locked in their houses by their husbands and thus prevented from joining the *rāsa*. Hence, they actually did not die, only their subtle material body was removed. This is the understanding. They gave up their residual material attachments by burning in the intense fire of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and attained pure spiritual bodies, like Dhruva and others. In this context, ‘*deha-tyāga*’ means giving up the body, and receiving a spiritual body. The phrases ‘*alabdha-vinirgamā*’ (*SB* 10.29.9) and ‘*vraja āsthitāḥ*’ (*SB* 10.47.37) have the same meaning – they remained in their houses. The phrases ‘*dhyāna-prāptācyutāśleṣa*’ (Verse 10 in this chapter) and ‘*māpur mad-vīrya-cintayā*’ (10.47.37) also have the same meaning – they attained His embrace in their trance. ‘*Śaṅgatā*’ (10.29.11) means they attained Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and ‘*alabdha-rāsā*’ (10.47.37) means they



did not join the *rāsa* dance. These references indicate that there were two types of *gopīs* who were restricted in their houses.

When the gardener sees that seven or eight mangoes on a tree are nearly ripe, he concludes that all the fruits on that tree are ready. He picks all of them and brings them home. In time, by the rays of the sun and other stimulants, the mangoes take on a beautiful color, exude a sweet fragrance and become tender with juice. Then they are suitable for the king's enjoyment. As the fruits mature, the king's prudent servant will select the ripest and present to the king for his pleasure. Some mangoes may be ripe inside but are not suitable for tasting as they are still unripe outside, not having any color or fragrance. Knowing this, the gardener allows them to ripen in the heat of the sun or by some other means, and after a few days, they are also ready to offer.

Similarly, in Gokula, some of the *muni-carī gopīs* took birth with completely pure, transcendental bodies, and were not touched by any man. Therefore, Yogamāyā helped them, and they went for *abhisāra* to meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa along with the *nitya-siddha gopīs*. On the other hand, those *muni-carī gopīs* who externally maintained some attachment to the material modes were placed by Yogamāyā in the intense fire of separation, which removed their remaining attachments and eradicated their blemish of having been touched by another man. Thus, by Yogamāyā's arrangement they received their pure, spiritual bodies with which they were able to meet Kṛṣṇa towards the end of that night of the *rāsa-līlā*.

Some *gopīs* had a slight touch of impurity, which was eventually burnt up in the fire of separation. Yogamāyā arranged for them to meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa some other night. After this, the *sādhana-siddha gopīs* who enjoyed the *rāsa* pastimes returned to their husbands' houses, just as the *nitya-siddha gopīs* did. From that time on, Yogamāyā protected them from being touched by their husbands, and they no longer had any sense of belonging to their husbands, sons and the rest of the family. Since they were completely overwhelmed by *kṛṣṇa-prema*, their breast milk dried up, and they were unable to nourish their babies. Their family members, thinking them to be mad or under the influence of a dark planet, remained silent. This is the faultless conclusion, leaving no loose ends to be reconciled. Some persons say that the *gopīs* who were locked in their houses did not have any children. The use of the word '*apatya*' (children) in a later verse indicates the sons of a co-wife, an adopted child, or the sons of a brother or other family member.

VERSE 12

*śrī-parikṣid uvāca  
kṛṣṇaṁ viduḥ paraṁ kāntaṁ  
na tu brahmatayā mune  
guṇa-pravāhoparamas  
tāsāṁ guṇa-dhiyāṁ katham*

**Śrī Parikṣit Mahārāja asked: “O great sage, the *vraja-ramaṇis* knew Śrī Kṛṣṇa only as their beloved; they never saw Him as the Supreme Spirit. As their hearts were ever attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s qualities, how were they able to become detached from the influence of the three modes of material nature?”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

One may raise the question: since in actuality husbands, sons and other family members are spiritual personalities (*brahma*), why would one not attain liberation by serving them? The answer is that the *gopīs* were not conscious of the spiritual natures of their husbands, sons and other family members, so they would not become liberated through their service to them. Then automatically the question arises: How did the *gopīs* become liberated by associating with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, since they did not see Him as the Supreme Spirit? This verse starting with ‘*kṛṣṇaṁ viduḥ*’ presents this doubt: “These *gopīs* knew Śrī Kṛṣṇa only as their beloved.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The name Parikṣit is explained in this way: ‘*pari*’ means ‘from every angle,’ and ‘*ikṣate*’ means ‘he knows everyone’s mood.’ Mahārāja Parikṣit knew Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Spirit, that is to say, he knew the power of His mercy and His inconceivable glories. However, there were some sincere devotees present, who had withdrawn from the external world, but who still harbored doubts in their hearts. That is to say, they believed in the power of Kṛṣṇa’s mercy and in the inconceivable greatness of *bhakti*, but they were dubious about Kṛṣṇa’s confidential pastimes. Śrī Parikṣit expressed their mood in a special way to remove their uncertainty.

Now, for the externally-oriented *brahma-jñānīs* and *karmīs*, who speculate about the conclusive truths of *bhakti*. To clear away their skepticism, Śrī Parīkṣit presented this doubt from the point of view of a *brahma-jñānī*. Their doubt can be expressed in this way: *brahma-jñānīs* very rarely attain liberation. How, then, could the *gopīs* attain liberation through their amorous mood (*kānta-bhāva*) when they did not understand Bhagavān as the Supreme Spirit? In some versions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the verse reads ‘*rājo uvāca*, the King said.’ Both versions have the same meaning – one who understands everyone’s moods. Śrī Śukadeva, the best of the sages, understood the motive behind Parīkṣit Mahārāja’s question, and removed the doubt of the sincere devotees while at the same time condemning those averse to *bhakti*. The explanation he gave for the latter group is well known.

The meaning for sincere persons is as follows. Wherever it is said, “The *gopīs* gave up their residual subtle material body (*guṇa-maya deha*),” the word ‘*guṇa*’ refers to the three modes of nature, namely goodness, passion and ignorance. In other words, they gave up their body that was under the influence of the material modes. Then the question arises: the contemptible material body is already known to be intrinsically composed of the three modes of nature, so why emphasize the phrase *guṇa-maya deha*? One might propose that the word ‘*guṇa*’ implies qualities of the mind, like compassion, which progress into a flow of more attributes, and ‘*maya*’ means plentiful. In that case ‘*guṇa-maya*’ would mean ‘one who possesses a host of excellent attributes.’ Even then, the question arises: how was the *gopīs*’ residual subtle material body removed if they only knew Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the ultimate lover and not as the Supreme Spirit (*brahma*)? How were the *gopīs* able to terminate their material attachment when their hearts were attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a material sense?

The *gopīs* who performed the *rāsa-līlā* with Bhagavān had fully transcendental bodies, untouched by the three modes. The *gopīs* who were locked in their houses did not receive bodies that were beyond material nature until later on. The subtle material body (*guṇa-maya deha*) of those *gopīs* who were prevented from going to the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, was replaced by a pure, transcendental body when they absorbed themselves in meditation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is to indicate *this* transformation that the adjective ‘*guṇa-maya*’ is used here. With regard to giving up the subtle material body, mental

virtuous qualities [such as being truthful, not criticizing others] are nothing but a product of the material mode of goodness, so they are considered to be equally disdainful.

This verse starting with '*kṛṣṇaṁ viduḥ*' presents this enquiry. The meaning of the verse is as follows: the *gopīs* only knew Kṛṣṇa as their beloved, '*paraṁ kāntaṁ*.' Here, *paraṁ* means 'only,' and *kānta* means 'their dearest lover,' who steals the minds of all with His uncountable, astonishing attributes. '*Na tu brahmatayā*' – they did not know anything about Kṛṣṇa being the Absolute Truth. '*Tāsāṁ guṇa-dhīyām*' – the *gopīs*' hearts were devoted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa because of His amazing qualities, which are so powerful that even staunch impersonalists give up their meditation on *brahma* and come running to Him. Those *gopīs* were so exclusively fixed on Śrī Kṛṣṇa that their loving tendency became one with Kṛṣṇa's wonderful qualities. Thus they became endowed with transcendental attributes. This is the meaning.

The purport is that when the core of the heart is absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's supreme beauty and other qualities, then one understands the paltriness of the impersonal *brahma*. The hearts of the *vraja-sundarīs* were endlessly submerged in Kṛṣṇa's amazing attributes so, just as the *gopīs* were overwhelmed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's unlimited qualities, He was similarly intoxicated by theirs. That is, He was subjugated by their *prema*. The *gopīs*' qualities were connected to Kṛṣṇa's because all their endeavors, inspired by their one-pointed *prema* for Him, were related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's transcendental merits. That is why it is said that the *gopīs* were endowed with transcendental qualities.

A question may emerge: all the *sādhana-siddha gopīs* were not situated in their completely pure spiritual bodies, so they gave up those bodies. But how could they possibly give up transcendental attributes, which are permanent? The answer is this: For those who worship *brahma*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests His effulgence only, but this was not the case for the *gopīs* who were locked in their houses. Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared before them in His full form with all His attributes. The worshipers of *brahma* are in the mode of goodness, so it is possible for them to be extricated from the current of the material modes. In contrast, there was no need to renounce Bhagavān's unlimited, fully transcendental qualities that were transmitted to the *gopīs*. This is the meaning. The qualities that are related to the *gopīs*' eternal forms are intrinsic to those forms, and it is impossible that the eternal body, with its inherent qualities, will ever be destroyed.

Another kind of enquiry arises. The *gopīs* knew Śrī Kṛṣṇa only as their beloved; they did not see Him as the all-pervading Supreme Spirit (*brahma*). “*Ye yathā mām prapadyante* – I reciprocate with devotees according to the way they worship Me” (*Gītā* 4.11). This being the case, since the *gopīs* did not know Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s all-pervading quality, how could His all-pervasive form manifest in their houses? And is it possible that the *gopīs* would give up the nectar that flows in meeting? They only knew Kṛṣṇa as being the handsome, expert lover, so how could they possibly give up such transcendental qualities related to their eternal forms? In which way did they meet with Bhagavān? *Mune* refers to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī and means ‘omniscient.’

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Parikṣit Mahārāja saw on the faces of those listeners who were indifferent to *bhakti* that they were harboring a doubt in their hearts. Even though Mahārāja Parikṣit had understood the essence of the subject matter by the mercy of Śrī Śukadeva, he presented their doubt to Śrī Śukadeva as if it were his own, in order to remove their skepticism. Thus he spoke this verse ‘*kṛṣṇam viduḥ*.’ “*He mune*, O omniscient sage! Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul and the Supreme Godhead, but these *gopīs* only knew Him as their intimate lover. They did not recognize Him as the Supreme Spirit (*brahma*). Rather, their mood was, ‘We enjoy dallying with Kṛṣṇa.’ How, then, were they freed from the influence of the three modes?” The *śrutis* and *smṛtis* declare: “Only by knowing the Supreme Lord can one become liberated. There is no other way” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.8). *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.24 confirms this: “*svātmānam ātmāmatayā vicakṣate* – one who knows or sees You as the Supersoul of all souls can attain liberation.” By this it is understood that one can achieve emancipation by realizing the Supersoul.

VERSE 13

*śrī-śuka uvāca*  
*uktaṁ purastād etat te*  
*caidyāḥ siddhiṁ yathā gataḥ*  
*dviṣann api hṛṣīkeśaṁ*  
*kim utādhokṣaja-priyāḥ*

**Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: “O Parīkṣit, I have already explained this topic to you (in the Seventh Canto). Śīsupāla attained liberation (*parampada* – the topmost goal) even though he was envious of Hṛṣīkeśa Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so what to speak of the *gopīs*, who knew Bhagavān Adhokṣaja as their beloved?”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

This verse answers the question posed in the previous verse. The essence is that the spiritual nature of living entities in general is covered, whereas the divinity of Hṛṣīkeśa Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the controller of all the senses, is always apparent; it is never covered. Therefore, He cannot be understood by the intelligence.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī understood Śrī Parīkṣit’s question, but in order to denounce and deprive those averse to *bhakti*, and at the same time to remove the doubt of the inquisitive devotees, he became a little angry. It was with this intention that he spoke this verse ‘*uktaṁ purastāt*.’ “O Parīkṣit, I have already told you about this (in the Seventh Canto). Śīsupāla attained perfection by hating Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” Here ‘perfection’ is understood to mean ‘attaining the desired goal.’ That is to say, Śīsupāla was reinstated in his previous position as a Vaikuṇṭha associate. This is related in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.1.47: “These two associates of Śrī Viṣṇu were always absorbed in enmity towards Him. In this deep absorption they received bodily features like Acyuta’s (*sārūpya-mukṭi*), and went back to Śrī Hari.” They were inimical towards Bhagavān, so their transcendental qualities were hidden, though present within them. When their envy was removed, they attained their previous position as associates of the Lord, endowed with the same transcendental qualities as before. Adhokṣaja Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is beyond the limits of sense perception, is the object (*viṣaya*) of *prema*, and the *gopīs* are the shelter (*aśraya*) of that *prema*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His qualities manifest in ever-new forms, and the *gopīs* experienced them in ever-new ways, through their constantly increasing *prema*. This is the understanding.

Śrī Śukadeva said, “I have already told you (in the Eleventh Verse) that

the *gopīs* gave up their bodies that were influenced by the three modes of nature (*guṇa-maya deha*). As soon as they attained their true spiritual body with its intrinsic form under the functions of the *svarūpa-śakti*, their material body, with its beauty and other virtues, was removed at the root.” The second meaning of Śrī Parikṣit’s question in Verse 12 is answered here: “I fulfill one’s inner desire corresponding to the mood in which one worships Me (*Gītā* 4.11). Accordingly, although all of My qualities are always present in Me, I only display to the *gopīs* the qualities that are appropriate for them.” This is the correct conception. Śrī Bhagavān loses track of Himself when He is so absorbed in *bhakti*, and at that time, *līlā-śakti*, seeing the opportunity to serve, manifests the whole gamut of His qualities. This is how the *sādhakas* who sincerely worship Him in an exclusive mood of *mādhurya*, though they are as yet far away, will attain their desired goal. Here ‘*dviṣann api*’ (even with enmity) provides an example given through *kaimutika nyāya* (the logic of ‘how much more, how much less?’). Śiṣupāla, the king of Cedi, hated Śrī Kṛṣṇa; even so, he attained perfection and was reinstated as an associate in Vaiṣṇava. If this is the case, then surely Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s treasured sweethearts will attain their perfection; there is nothing more to be said. In other words, Śrī Bhagavān’s natural propensity is to give Himself equally to all. That is why He gives Himself in charity to His devotees, and at the same time dispenses the opulence of liberation to those who see Him as their enemy. This is the meaning.

Bhagavān is called ‘Hṛṣīkeśa’ (the controller of the senses) and ‘Adhokṣaja’ (who is beyond material sense perception). These two names convey His qualities that manifest His opulence of bestowing liberation, etc. The use of these names in this verse makes it clear that even if one is unaware of Śrī Bhagavān’s opulent nature, the Lord’s particular qualities (that relate to the *sādhaka*’s mood) manifest automatically to help the *sādhaka* attain perfection.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The king of sages, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, knew that this was not the king’s own question. Even so, he chastised him, “O King, it seems that you have asked such a question without any understanding.” Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī was actually using the king as a vehicle to reprimand all those

who were averse to *bhakti*. “I have already told you (in the Seventh Canto) that Śīsupāla, the king of Cedi, attained perfection through his enmity for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This shows that one can achieve impersonal liberation (*sāyujya-mukti*) even through an unfavorable, envious mood, so what to speak of the *gopīs* attaining Śrī Kṛṣṇa with their favorable mood of amorous love (*kāma-rūpa-bhāva*)!”

*Hṛṣīkeśa*’ (the controller of the senses): Śrī Bhagavān is beyond the sense perception of Brahmā and other demigods. Nonetheless, when He Himself appears in this mortal world out His unconditional mercy, His inconceivable power enables even the most ignorant persons to perceive Him through their senses. Kṛṣṇa does this to deliver them; for these persons He is the Lord full of profuse mercy. If that Adhokṣaja Śrī Bhagavān (who is beyond the perception of the material senses) displays such mercy for the most fallen souls, how He will reciprocate with His beloved *gopīs*, who are the receptacle (*aśraya*) of His love! Indeed, He regards them so highly that they become the object (*viṣaya*) of His love. Surely, then, they can attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa by continuously remembering Him with love.

One may ask why Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī quoted the example of the King of Cedi attaining liberation. He could have mentioned Kṛṣṇa killing Aghāsura in His Vṛndāvana pastimes, an event that took place closer in time to the topic under discussion. So what was his intention in citing this example from the Mathurā pastimes? Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī explained to the king the deeper understanding of the example of Śīsupāla. “O King, Śīsupāla’s heart was absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a mood of enmity. It was only his material body given by the curse of the Four Kumāras that was destroyed. His spiritual body as an eternal associate was always present.” The reason for this is explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.1.46: “*viṣṇu-cakra-hatāmhasau* – Viṣṇu’s disc destroyed all his sins, but not his spiritual body. That is, his body as an eternal associate remained when he gave up his material body.” Here, ‘*siddhi*’ means attaining the cherished position as an associate. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.1.47 states: “Śīsupāla and Dantavakra were always thinking of Kṛṣṇa’s form in an envious mood. By the influence of this constant meditation, they were liberated from their demonic mood and reinstated as Viṣṇu’s associates in Vaikuṇṭha.”



## VERSE 14

*nṛṇāṁ niḥśreyasārthāya  
vyaktir bhagavato nṛpa  
avyayasyāprameyasya  
nirguṇasya guṇātmanaḥ*

**O King, though Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is unlimited, immeasurable, and untouched by the modes of nature because He is their controller, He personally appears out of His own sweet will for the supreme welfare of the living entities.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

The question arises: how can the soul be liberated from its material coverings? The answer is found in this verse beginning with 'nṛṇāṁ.' Just for the auspiciousness of humanity, Śrī Bhagavān, the master of the material modes, manifests in a human-like form. However, it is not proper to say that His body is material.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

This explanation brings to light the power of meditation on Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Jaya and Vijaya, eternal associates of Śrī Bhagavān, were cursed by the Four Kumāras. Accepting a demoniac mood, they appeared as Śiṣupāla and Dantavakra during Śrī Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes, and facilitated His relishing the activity of fighting. Similarly, the *gopīs*, who abound with love for Kṛṣṇa, came to perform blissful pastimes with their beloved, and assisted Him in actualizing those *līlās*. This verse 'nṛṇāṁ' makes use of *kaimutika nyāya* (the logic of 'how much more, how much less?'). When Śrī Bhagavān appears in this world, He bestows auspiciousness upon the living entities in general, giving them the qualification to relish the fruit of the pleasure of His pastimes (*līlānanda*). What, then, will He give to His associates and His sweethearts? This idea is communicated through the use of *kaimutika nyāya*. Śrī Śukadeva Goṣvāmī employed the term '*bhagavataḥ*' to assure us that Bhagavān can indeed bestow this kind of fruit. Since He can destroy billions of universes just by the flick of His eyebrows, it is illogical to say that He manifests in the material realm only to remove the burden of the

Earth. “*He rājan*, O King!” – the purport of this address is that “a king like you goes here and there for the benefit of the populace, and Śrī Bhagavān similarly descends for the welfare of the living entities.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is ‘*aprameya*,’ unlimited, and ‘*guṇātmanaḥ*,’ whose unlimited qualities, such as mercy, are usually dormant but particular qualities become manifest for the specific *līlās*. These qualities are intrinsic to His nature. Therefore, for the auspiciousness of humanity He awakens His mercy and other unlimited qualities, just as someone awakens a sleeping person. In this regard, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda says in his commentary on Verses 13–14, “All the living entities have a spiritual nature, which is covered. But as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the controller of all the senses, His divinity is apparent, it is never covered. This is understood automatically. Such understanding does not require the use of one’s intelligence.” To remove the doubt of averse persons, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda gives this meaning.

In this verse Śrī Śukadeva used ‘*avyayasya*’ (inexhaustible) and the three other adjectives to indicate Kṛṣṇa’s Godhood. Śrī Kṛṣṇa continuously gives Himself to His different devotees in different manifestations, but He is never depleted; this proves that He is limitless. How is it possible for Him to be inexhaustible? The answer lies in the word ‘*aprameya*,’ meaning that He is not limited by time, place, etc. One may then ask how He can be unlimited, without boundaries in time and space? The answer is that He is ‘*nirguṇa*’ – beyond the material qualities. What is the evidence that He is ‘*nirguṇa*?’ In response, the phrase ‘*guṇātmanaḥ*’ is employed, meaning that He manages the material modes. Bhagavān appears in this world for the benefit of the living entities by bestowing on them the results of different kinds of practices. To establish that it is not possible that He came here for any other reason, ‘*avyayasya*’ and three other adjectives are used. ‘*Avyayasya*’ also means that He does not undergo any material transformations, such as birth.

The explanation of Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s commentary is as follows. The question may arise: since *brahma*, the Supreme Spirit, has amorous desires that He fulfills, will the living entities not also have desires for such enjoyment? From the angle of consciousness, the living entity and the Supreme Spirit are the same; the only difference lies in their potencies. Therefore, since the living entities have a spiritual nature, it follows that the *gopīs*’ husbands are also spiritual beings. This being the case, why did the cowherd maidens not attain absorption in *brahma* when they looked

at their husbands with amorous desire? Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda answers this question thus: yes, it is true that the living entity's nature is spiritual, but it is hidden, being covered by *Māyā*.

*Brahma* Himself, as Hṛṣikeśa, controls the senses of everyone, including *Brahmā*. However, the living entities are dependent on the knowledge acquired from the senses. In this way, their knowledge is under the control of their senses. And as their consciousness is always directed towards external sense objects, their spiritual nature is hidden. Because of being absorbed in material designations, the conditioned souls do not focus on the ever-existing spiritual objects and that is why they do not see their own spirituality or that of others. But as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Hṛṣikeśa, the controller of everyone's senses, His spiritual nature is automatically manifest. That is to say, Kṛṣṇa's spiritual nature is self-evident, it is not covered. This is the final conclusion. One will achieve the Absolute Reality according to the desire or mood in which one becomes absorbed when approaching the Supreme Spirit. This is the essential meaning.

The question arises: How can an embodied soul be uncovered *brahma*? According to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda, the answer is this: the word 'body' means that Kṛṣṇa seems to have a body like the husbands of the *gopīs*. The conclusion of this subject is expressed through the phrase *bhagavato eva*. '*Aprameya*' and the other adjectives describe Bhagavān's distinctive characteristics of being inexhaustible, unlimited, etc., which are automatically understood in the term Bhagavān, as these are intrinsic to Him. *Evaṁrūpā* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pure spiritual form is not like appearance of the embodied being, so the bodies of the *gopīs*' husbands or ordinary persons cannot possibly be equated with the Lord's. How, then, can anyone designate Him as an 'embodied soul' when there is no similarity? How can we say He possesses a body when His form, along with His internal potency and all His variegatedness, is actually the Supreme Absolute Truth?

The scriptures that learned scholars have studied and realized, present evidence proving that the Lord's body is eternal and fully spiritual. Furthermore, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.9.3 Lord *Brahmā* says: "O Supreme Person, the visible form that You manifest is constituted of and is non-different from spiritual bliss, nothing else. Your spiritual effulgence, which is not covered and which is full of bliss, is beyond time and place; it is the partial manifestation of and is non-different from Your non-dual form. You, O Supreme Soul, are

the original worshipful Lord, one without a second. You are the creator of the universe yet You are separate from it, and You are the cause of the living entities and the senses. I take shelter of this unparalleled form.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

Śrī Bhagavān comes to this realm to bestow auspiciousness on humanity. Therefore, if one has any kind of connection with Him, He grants him the goal he desires. This verse ‘*nṛṇām*’ confirms that, by the power of the Lord’s mercy alone, one can attain Him, even if one has not performed any kind of spiritual practices. That is to say, Śrī Bhagavān manifests only for the benefit of human society. ‘Auspiciousness’ is understood to mean the highest benefit in the form of *bhakti*. He manifests to some to give impersonal liberation (*sāyujya*), for some He comes to give *sālokya*, equal facility to live on the same planet with Him, and to some others He bestows the fruit of *prema-bhakti*.

The purpose of His appearance is not just to remove the burden of the Earth caused by the demons. He also comes to bestow to the devotees the fruit of their practices. It is not that He comes only to kill Kāṁsa and other rogues, because just by a flick of His eyebrows He can destroy the demons in millions of universes. He is inexhaustible (*avyayasya*) – the demons’ atrocities cannot harm Him in any way, and by continuously manifesting Himself in many kinds of forms, He gives Himself to many types of devotees. This does not deplete Him because, being unfathomable (*aprameya*), He is beyond logic and measure. Consequently, no one can describe His reality because He is beyond the material modes (*nirguṇa*). He is ‘*guṇātmā*,’ meaning that His qualities like opulence are intrinsic to Him. His inherent qualities are naturally auspicious, and therefore He is the ocean of transcendental, blissful qualities. Is there anyone capable of possibly understanding His uncountable glorious characteristics?

### VERSE 15

*kāmaṁ krodhaṁ bhayaṁ sneham  
aikyaṁ sauhṛdam eva ca  
nityaṁ harau vidadhato  
yānti tan-mayatām hi te*

**Therefore, one who constantly thinks of Śrī Hari, in a mood of lust, anger, fear, affection, oneness or friendship, will become completely absorbed in Him, and due to this absorption, will eventually attain Him.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

If anyone has even a tiny bit of attachment in any way for Śrī Bhagavān, this attachment will be the cause of one's liberation. This is the meaning of this verse '*kāmaṁ*.' '*Aikya*' – relationship; '*sauhrda*' – *bhakti*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

This method is applicable for all times, not just at the time of Kṛṣṇa's personal presence. That is, when Kṛṣṇa's performs His manifest pastimes, everyone – devotees and non-devotees alike – gets His direct *darśana*, and they receive the appropriate fruits. But when *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is not manifest, one can still attain Him by becoming absorbed in Him. This process is explained in this verse beginning with '*kāmaṁ*.' This *kāma* is of two types: one is full of selfless love, *prema-maya-kāma*, as seen in the *gopīs*, and the other is desire for amorous self-satisfaction, *sambhoga-icchā-maya-kāma*, as exemplified by Kubjā of Mathurā. One may become absorbed in Kṛṣṇa through anger and envy, as Śiṣupālā did; fear as exhibited by Kāṁsa; familial affection that the Yādavas, Paṇḍavas and Vrajavāsīs displayed; oneness leading to liberation as in the cases of the self-satisfied sages, and friendship as seen in Kratha and Kauśika. Among these, fear and envy are unfavorable moods and are thus not accepted because a person with such a mood always sees Śrī Bhagavān as dangerous, although He is actually the embodiment of all auspicious attributes. Some who fear Him hide their feelings and hate Him internally, and some who envy Him display their hatred outwardly, but the astonishing thing is that Bhagavān bestows auspiciousness upon such impudent persons as well. Therefore, who can be so fallen as to maintain fear and antagonism towards Bhagavān? On the contrary, everyone should feel friendship and affection for Him. This is the purport.

This is the reason why Nārada, the sage of the demigods, advised in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.1.32: "Everyone's supreme duty is to somehow engage his mind in Śrī Kṛṣṇa." Here we should understand the appropriate

way to absorb the mind. In this regard, Nārada said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.1.27: “A person meditating on Śrī Kṛṣṇa with an inimical mood will attain a more intense absorption in the Lord than one engrossed in Him in a mood of devotion. This is my firm opinion.” Loving devotees disdain animosity towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and yet scholars learned in the scriptures have challenged the norms of the sublime path of *bhakti-yoga* and have stressed the power of animosity to produce very intense absorption. That is why it is said, “even through enmity.” Still the scholars agree that one should accept one of the favorable moods, such as affection or friendship. The word ‘even’ indicates that the mood of hatred is contemptible and unacceptable. Unity (*aikya*) also is not acceptable, because in oneness with Śrī Kṛṣṇa there is no manifestation of His personal attributes. In this verse, ‘*eva*’ (indeed) implies that one can achieve success through any one of the moods, such as lust. It should be understood that the Lord definitely (*hi*) bestows the desired goal to one completely absorbed in a plenitude of lust or any of the other moods. ‘*Tan-mayatā*’ – any of these moods should manifest in fullness, with Śrī Kṛṣṇa being the sole object of absorption.

However, Śrī Bhagavān has said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.14.21: “I am very dear to My devotees; indeed, I am their heart and soul. I am known only through *bhakti* performed with faith.” In *Padma Purāṇa* (*Uttara Khaṇḍa*) it is stated: “*Yogīs* have audience of Janārdhana by the power of their *bhakti*, but one cannot have His *darśana* through anger and envy if he has no *bhakti*.” From this one can understand that through envy and hatred it is not possible to attain the Lord. In *Bhagavad-gītā* 7.25 the Lord says, “*nāhaṁ prakāśaḥ sarvasya yogamāyā-samāvṛtaḥ*. Not everyone can see Me, because I am covered by *Yogamāyā*.” In these statements Bhagavān makes it clear that one who is envious of Him will not have *darśana* of His genuine form; he will see only a covered form. But by the influence of Bhagavān’s mercy, a vision of His true form will later manifest in the heart. Therefore, here anger and fear are acceptable in *sādhana*. Thus, what to speak of those who are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beloveds (*adhoksaja priyā*)? The logic *kaimutika-nyāya* demonstrates that the *gopīs’ kāma* is superior due to their being very intimate with Him. The conclusion is that it is one’s duty to follow the *vraja-gopīs’* mood of amorous desire for Kṛṣṇa. In this verse ‘*ca*’ can be read as ‘*va*,’ and the meaning is the same.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Śukadeva's intention in speaking this verse starting with '*kāmam*' is this: "O Parikṣit, accept this conclusion, which is generally applicable." The *gopīs* attained Śrī Kṛṣṇa through amorous love, Kaṁsa through fear, Śiśupāla through envy, the Yādavas through family relationship, the Paṇḍavas through friendship and affection, Śrī Nanda through parental love, and Śrī Nārada through *bhakti*. Self-satisfied sages achieved absorption by cultivating a mood of oneness with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Nowadays also, many persons will eventually attain Him by entering deep absorption (*tan-mayatā*) in Him through lust, anger or any of the other moods. This establishes that Bhagavān's pastimes go on continuously. Here, '*tan-mayatā*' is understood to mean 'having attachment or intense devotion.' Just as lusty men always meditate on women, the *gopīs* have a similar deep attachment for Śrī Kṛṣṇa through love-filled amorous desire. Anger and fear are almost the same; by totally absorbing in such a mood, one attains oneness (*sāyujya*) with Bhagavān.

## VERSE 16

*na caivam vismayaḥ kāryo  
bhavatā bhagavaty aje  
yogeśvareśvare kṛṣṇe  
yata etad vimucyate*

**“O King, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all the masters of mystic powers, is not subject to birth and death. By having a relationship with Him, all the moving and non-moving living entities of the world can attain liberation from the three modes of nature. Thus, it is not proper for you to be even slightly astonished by that Supreme Lord.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

It is not difficult at all for Śrī Bhagavān to bestow one with that sort of absorption, so it is not proper to be astonished by His actions. All moving and non-moving entities in the whole universe can be delivered, if Kṛṣṇa simply desires this to happen.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Now, in this verse beginning '*na caivam*,' Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī says: "O Parikṣit, let others be surprised, but it is not befitting for you to be astonished, because you personally experienced Śrī Kṛṣṇa's glories right from the beginning, while still in your mother's womb." Śrī Śukadeva was proud of his disciple Parikṣit, so he used the word '*bhavatā*' (by you), a term of respect, instead of *toyā*, the informal form of address. This matter is not so astonishing because Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa possesses unlimited opulences. If He is Bhagavān, then why does He accept birth from Devakī's womb? The answer is '*aja*,' unborn; He did not take birth like an ordinary living entity. Rather, He came of His free will to taste the *vatsalya-prema* of His devotees. As Bhagavān, He is the master of all mystics, and furthermore, in His form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, from every point of view He is full and complete in all *rasas*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

"O Parikṣit, others may be surprised, but you should not be. There is no need for you to have any doubt because you saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa's greatness while in your mother's womb. Even if He goes for cow-grazing, He is still Bhagavān, and even though He is the son of Devakī, still He is unborn. Though He is a debauchee enjoying with the *vraja-gopīs*, He is still the Lord of all masters of mystic powers. Furthermore, that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the source of all the incarnations, so please have no doubt about Him. Śrīdhara Svāmī has stated, 'All moving and non-moving living entities are liberated by the power of that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's glories.'" Another meaning is given: not only His associates in the *līlās* get delivered; even at the present time any living beings can be liberated from the force of the three modes of nature if they remember Him with moods such as amorous love.

**VERSE 17**

*tā dṛṣṭvāntikam āyātā  
bhagavān vraja-yoṣitaḥ  
avadad vadatām śreṣṭho  
vācaḥ peśair vimohayan*



[Now listen to what happened on the other hand:] Seeing those *vraja-sundarīs* in front of Him, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crown-jewel of expert speakers, bewildered them with His witty, charming words.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

This verse beginning with '*tā drṣṭā*' presents the topic related to '*vācaḥ peśeḥ*' – with playful, decorative talk.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

“O Parikṣit, it is not proper to present any type of obstacle in the discussion of this supremely nectarean *rāsa-līlā*, but you still diverted the narration with your question for the sake of the audience, in order for them to fix their minds. Upon your request I have presented the final understanding.” After expressing this, Śrī Śukadeva Goṣvāmī was very enthusiastic to describe the *rāsa-līlā* and, even without Parikṣit asking him to continue, immediately spoke this verse '*tā drṣṭā*.' '*Tā*' (them) refers to 'those *gopīs*.' “Kṛṣṇa saw the *gopīs* coming to Him in an extremely perturbed condition, having been attracted by the sound of the flute.” It is proper for Vraja ladies to stay in the village, not out in the forest. This is the meaning. The *gopīs* approached Him but remained at some distance due to shyness; seeing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to speak to them playfully.

There are two categories of playful speech: words (*śābdika vāga-vilāsa*) and meaning (*ārthika vāga-vilāsa*). Verbal (*śābdika*) incorporates an extremely charming flow of words and beautiful pronunciation, accompanied by a smiling face, playful and inviting glances and gesturing eyebrows. All of these together constitute a playful verbal exchange that makes the ocean of beauty rise. Meaning (*ārthika*) includes all kinds of meaningful conversations manifesting the special internal moods. These words communicate nectarean expressions of mellows (*rasa*), deep emotions (*bhāva*), ornamental play on meanings of words (*alaṅkāra*), and the enduring, most excellent object – excessive *prema* (*vastu-rūpa*). These are profusely present in this *ārthika vāga-vilāsa* in full, and they manifest in four ways: speech indicating indifference, pleading words, witty double meanings and straightforward meanings. Śrī Kṛṣṇa employed all of these when He spoke with the *gopīs*, who

thus came to know His deepest feelings. Sometimes He ignored them through bodily expressions, sometimes He begged them for romance, and sometimes He jokingly did both at the same time, thus conveying a double meaning, and sometimes He expressed His feelings directly.

In this way Śrī Kṛṣṇa bewildered the *gopīs* with the artful flow of His speech, and thus captured their hearts and discretion. First, He spoke prayerful words and a straightforward meaning, and later on He used other types of speech. Out of them, the *śābdika vāga-vilāsa* manifests in different ways, depending on one's nature and emotions. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa displayed indifference during this *vāga-vilāsa*, He did so to increase the *gopīs*' enthusiasm for Him, and not really to neglect them. This is confirmed by previous statements spoken in this episode: "Śrī Bhagavān showed the desire for romance," and "He played a sweet sound on the flute to attract the Vraja maidens." The purport is that hearts of the damsels of Vraja filled with joy when they heard Bhagavān's beseeching words expressing His real intention. Afterwards, His gestures of rejection and simultaneous prayers for meeting left them bewildered and they lost their discrimination. Śrī Kṛṣṇa poured out His inner mood through *śābdika vāga-vilāsa* – His prayerful requests expressing His true feelings.

Although He seemingly ignored the *gopīs* through *ārthika vāga-vilāsa*, this was only an external show of clever words to increase their eagerness. One hides his inner feelings by saying something else – this is called *avahitthā*, concealment of emotions. Śrī Kṛṣṇa used *avahitthā* to increase the *gopīs*' eagerness, and thus He cast them into lamentation, thereby robbing them of their intelligence. His prayerful words were meant to excite the cowherd maidens, and His speech having a double meaning – beseeching as well as ignoring them – was only to tease them. '*Vadatām śreṣṭha*' (the best of speakers): through *kaimutika nyāya* this phrase indicates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the best of speakers. Being Bhagavān, He is the greatest of all expert talkers, and His knowledge is naturally way beyond all others'.

The word *api* (even though) should be seen in every phrase of this verse. For example, *vraja-yoṣita api*: even though the *gopīs* are famous for their natural, perfect love for Kṛṣṇa, even though they have attained the highest symptoms of *prema*, and even though they have come before Him, Bhagavān, being omniscient and knowing their intention, still confused and agitated them through His playful double-talk. Why did He do this? Śrī

Kṛṣṇa is the crown-jewel of impudent jokesters. For His own amusement He spoke in this jesting way with them. This is the meaning.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Now Śrī Śukadeva picked up the subject matter again after reconciling the apparent diversion from the topic under discussion. ‘*Tā*’ (them) – the *gopīs* had been attracted by the sound of the flute, and were thrown into a confounded condition. Seeing them come before Him, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa bewildered the cowherd damsels even more with His words. After all, He is the most expert of those who are clever in talking according to time, place and audience, employing decorative, shrewd, suggestive speech (*vācaḥ peśaiḥ*), which is sometimes facetious and sometimes affectionate. The *gopīs* were already bewitched by the sound of the flute, and Śrī Bhagavān baffled them even more with His sarcastic speech.

By this, Bhagavān would fulfill His three cherished desires. “First of all, I am the object of the *vraja-sundarīs*’ love, which will not decrease even when I show them indifference. Thus, I will exhibit their pure, ideal love to the world. Secondly, I will display a contrary mood in the assembly today, and taking the *śṛṅgāra-rasa* heroines’ leftist mood, I will hide My inner feelings and make them accept a hero’s submissive mood. Thirdly, I will act in a contrary way in our meeting, and although the bashful *vraja-sundarīs* naturally hide their inner moods, I will force them to assume a mood opposite to their nature, and then I will listen to what they say.”

Scholars of *rasa* explain that just as impassioned maidens who cover their breasts and other limbs with their clothes still make quite an astonishing impression, similarly, when such women hide their enthusiasm with a leftist, contrary mood, they generate even more excitement by not exposing their inner feelings. Sometimes, however, a hero wants to see his sweetheart’s bare beauty; similarly he may also be eager to hear her express her inner fervor hidden under her contrariety. But he would not show any desire to see or hear these things in the presence of even a close friend, what to speak of others. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa first saw the *gopīs* naked at the time of stealing their clothes, and now He desired to hear their internal thoughts by removing their leftist behavior. Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *priya narma sakhas* were not with Him at this time. This is the understanding.

VERSE 18

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
svāgatam vo mahā-bhāgāḥ  
priyam kim karavāṇi vaḥ  
vrajasyānāmayaṁ kaccid  
brūtāgamana-kāraṇam*

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: “Greetings, O supremely fortunate *gopīs*! Was your journey here trouble-free? What can I do for you? Is everyone alright in Vraja? Now, please tell Me the reason for your coming here.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Seeing the *gopīs* perplexed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa feigned apprehension and asked: “Is everything fine in Vraja?”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

First of all Śrī Kṛṣṇa welcomed the *gopīs* respectfully with ‘*svāgatam*.’ Hiding His inner feelings, He acted as though indifferent to their coming. “It is very auspicious that You have arrived here.” Or, He might ask them, “O supremely fortunate *gopīs*, did you arrive safely?” He addressed them as ‘*mahā-bhāgāḥ*’ – ‘*mahā*’ means great, and ‘*bhāga*’ means one who is fortunate to have all the qualities of a chaste wife. In this way, He congratulated the greatly fortunate *vraja-sundarīs* for faithfully following the duties of a virtuous wife. “O beautiful, chaste ladies, how can I please you? Actually, I cannot do anything.” This is the meaning. Or, “O greatly blessed ones, what can I do to please you? Command Me. My special duty is to satisfy you highly exalted ladies.” This is the purport.

Śrī Bhagavān had previously greeted the wives of the Mathurā *brāhmaṇas* in a similar way (SB 10.23.25): “*svāgatam vo mahā-bhāgā* – Welcome, O most fortunate ladies!” At that time He asked them, “*asyatām karavāma kim* – Please sit down. What can I do for you?” Respecting them thus, He then asked, “What can I do?” He actually meant, “I cannot do anything for you.” In this way, He only displayed His indifference. Now He asked the same question to the *gopīs*: “Is there something special I can do to

please you?" With this equivocal question Bhagavān expressed His desire, that is, by saying '*priyam kiṁ*,' He not only showed indifference, but also intimated His desire to please them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa actually spoke the verse '*svāgatam*' with great affection when He saw the *gopīs* arrive in a disarrayed condition. His intention in saying '*mahā-bhāgā*' was to acknowledge that the *vraja-ramaṇīs* had given up everything to come meet their beloved whereas Śrī Kṛṣṇa has to maintain His love for all types of devotees, so His love is not one-pointed like the *vraja-gopīs*'. To show the greatness of the *gopīs*' *prema*, which is much higher than His, He addressed them as '*mahā-bhāgā*.' Here, the word *bhāga* means *bhajana*, or adoration. His question "*priyam kiṁ karavāṇi vaḥ* – What can I do to please you?" really indicated that He is subjugated by their love. He is indeed the crown-jewel of clever persons expert in subjugating their beloveds. That is, He is the topmost of all jokers – this is Bhagavān's intrinsic nature as a connoisseur of enjoyment. Up to this point, this is the actual meaning.

Now we will define 'joker.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw the *gopīs* coming towards Him in a flurry, and feigning some apprehension, He courteously asked them, with a joking undertone, "*vrajasyā* – Is everything fine in Vraja?" The *gopīs* might reply, "O crown-jewel of clever persons! You can understand that nothing unpropitious has happened there, because if there were anything inauspicious in Vraja, all the cowherd men would have come as well." To this, Kṛṣṇa would respond with a mischievous mixture of doubt and arrogance, "*brūtāgamana-kāraṇam* – O *gopīs*, in that case, some problem must have arisen for you ladies in Vraja, so please tell Me the reason for your coming here." The *gopīs* did not understand the intention behind Śrī Kṛṣṇa's question, and they remained silent due to their shyness. Observing their hesitation, He said, "I suspect that you are not replying because you are undergoing intense suffering and it is not proper to give bad news. That is why you cannot say anything." Having revealed His mood in this way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa now eagerly changed the subject and asked, '*vrajasyā*.' Similarly, wherever words of doubt are seen later on, we can understand that Śrī Bhagavān is speaking with clever double meanings.

On this occasion also, the *gopīs* did not reply to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's enquiry. They simply stood in front of Him, delighted in their hearts and looking down. Seeing the *vraja-ramaṇīs*' mood, He acted as if He was consoling

them and asked them bashfully, “*brūtāgamana-kāraṇam* – What is the reason for your coming? Even after some deliberation, I cannot figure out why you have come, so you have to tell Me.” Every sentence here is laced with indifference as well as pleading. The mood of indifference has already been examined, and now we will discuss the pleading.

In the forthcoming verses also, the statements expressing begging must be understood to have a double meaning. Śrī Kṛṣṇa addressed the cowherd maidens, “O greatly fortunate *gopīs*, what else can I say about your fortune? I am favorable to you in every way, and you are fresh, young maidens standing in front of Me on such an effulgent, full-moon night in this completely secluded forest. What else is needed to establish your good fortune?” Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa was asking His heartfelt question in the form of a prayer. That is to say, “Have you reached here without any trouble?” He appealed to them, “How can I please you? Your every wish is My command.” This is the meaning. Seeing the *vraja-sundarīs* remaining silent, Kṛṣṇa wondered, “*vrajasyānāmayaṁ kaccid* – Is everything fine in Vraja?” Humbly supplicating them, He said, “Please tell Me the reason you have come. Don’t be shy.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In general, when an impassioned man approaches his ladylove and reveals his eagerness for conjugal enjoyment, the woman ordinarily cannot tolerate his advances, even though enthusiastic, and she becomes angry. That is why Śrī Kṛṣṇa first honored the accepted custom regarding amorous exchanges and spoke the verse ‘*svāgatam vo*.’ “Was your journey comfortable? You are so vastly fortunate that from birth you have not experienced any miseries yourselves, nor has any sorrow ever crossed your vision.” Or, this sentence may be an answer, rather than a question: “Today your coming here is extremely auspicious. You are most fortunate, and that is why you faced no obstacles in coming. This is true for all blessed women; whatever they do is successful. They reap happiness and spread it to others. Pray tell Me, how may I please you? Now it is nighttime in this remote forest, I am a young man alone, and you are tender maidens, so tell Me what I can do to make you feel welcome. I am most eager to fulfill your desires. Please be merciful and tell Me clearly in simple words what you want from Me so

I can act accordingly. I will certainly carry out your order. Have no doubt about this.”

Kṛṣṇa expected that when the *gopīs* heard this, they would respond, “O bold one, O debauchee, we are chaste housewives. How dare You speak to us like this! Aren’t You afraid of transgressing religious codes and being punished by the King?” However, not receiving this type of reply, Śrī Kṛṣṇa retorted, “How can I please you?” This sentence suggests His desire for intimate contact. Out of shyness, the *gopīs* remained silent, tacitly giving their consent. Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa deliberated, “If these *gopīs* are not assuming their usual contrary mood today, then I will not exhibit any enthusiasm either. Rather, I will say something in a leftist mood.”

Kṛṣṇa now thought, “Just as opposite moods exhibited by lovers in their romantic dealings give rise to delight, similarly the reversal of roles in actual union is also very agreeable. Because these *gopīs* have become helpless in *prema* from drinking the intoxicating beverage of the flute song, they have changed their nature, and assumed a submissive mood. But as I do not become helpless in *prema*, it is My duty to artificially adopt a contrary mood in order to promote the excellence of the *līlā*. At the same time, My natural eagerness will still be active internally.” Thinking like this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa assumed a leftist mood, and with trepidation and deference He asked, “*vrajaśyānāmayaṁ kaccid* – Is everything fine in Vraja? Has Indra or anyone else stirred up any disturbance there? Being afraid, have all of you come running to Me for protection?” At this, the *gopīs* smiled at each other in amazement, and wondered, “What sort of roguish antics is He playing today?” Seeing the *gopīs’* reaction, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “Observing your silence, I can understand that there is no type of trouble or disturbances in Vraja, which means that everything is auspiciousness. Very well, then please tell Me why you have come here. I cannot ascertain the reason for your coming.” This is the purport.

#### VERSE 19

*rajany eṣā ghora-rūpā  
ghora-sattva-niṣevitā  
pratiyāta vrajaṁ neha  
stheyam strībhiḥ su-madhyamāḥ*

**“O slender-waisted ladies, this is a frightful night, and there are terrifying animals roaming about in this forest, so all of you should immediately return to Vraja. It is not advisable for tender maidens to linger in the deep, dark forest, especially at night.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

When the *gopīs* heard Śrī Bhagavān’s words, they felt bashful and displayed a slight smile on their faces. Seeing this, He spoke this verse beginning with ‘*rajany eṣā*.’

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“This night is very frightening, and you are directly witnessing this.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa suspected that the *gopīs* might counter with some clever argument, so He used the word ‘*pratyakṣa*’ (direct perception) to make it clear that this night was indeed terrifying. The *gopīs* might say, “This night does not inspire any fear. Rather, it has many good qualities and allows one to accomplish one’s purpose.” To firmly establish the fearsomeness of the night, Kṛṣṇa replied, “It is not proper for you well-bred ladies to venture out in this obviously fearsome night and especially to come to this forest.” The *gopīs* might respond, “It is not improper because we ladies are many, and have come here together in a group. And anyway, this same night is prevailing in Vraja also, isn’t it?” Kṛṣṇa continued, “In this forest this night submerges one in fear and extreme misery, because it is experienced in the mode of ignorance. But it’s not like that in Vraja, where your family and friends are present and can come to your aid. Here there is no one to help you.” This is the purport. Furthermore: “It is not advisable to stay here any longer, because the night itself is frightening. In addition, lions and other ferocious animals are roaming about, so all of you should go back to Vraja.” With this argument, He was forbidding them to remain there.

The *gopīs* might ask Kṛṣṇa, “What are You doing here?” The reply would be, ‘*strībhiḥ*’ (ladies): “It is not proper for ladies to stay here. I certainly will not be afraid, because I am a man, and males have much more strength than women.” In addition, “You are slender ladies. The shape of one’s body indicates one’s character.’ According to this logic, you are beautiful and



virtuous, so it is not proper for you to stay here.” The rest of commentary follows Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s explanation. That is, “*He* Rasika-śekhara, O supreme connoisseur of loving exchanges! Just like You, we have come to this forest to roam about and pick flowers.” With this excuse, the *gopīs* would justify their remaining in the forest. So, in answer to them, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse ‘*rajany eṣā*.’ In other words, “It is nighttime, not daytime. Daytime is for roaming and picking flowers. It is quite irregular for ladies to come to the forest and do this at night.”

Kṛṣṇa thought that they might reply, “O enjoyer of the nights (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), what is wrong if we come at night?” Thus He said, “*ghora-rūpā* – This night is frightening. This is the problem.” The *gopīs* retorted, “*He kamala-locana*, O lotus-eyed one this night is not terrifying because the moon is diffusing its rays everywhere.” Kṛṣṇa then replied: “*ghora-sattva-niṣevitā* – It may be a full-moon night, but the forest is full of ferocious animals.” Here another meaning can be taken: “There are so many of you *gopīs*, all in a group together. I am all alone, and I am not capable of pleasing all of you, so it is not right for you to loiter here. That is why you should return to your husbands in Vraja and please them.” With these words He teased them.

The *gopīs* retorted, “O greatest of weak-hearted men, we are not afraid of the ferocious animals.” Kṛṣṇa replied with “*su-madhyamā* – O slender-waisted girls, your waists are very thin, and therefore you are weak. Where is your strength? Frail ladies naturally fear strong animals.” This is the meaning. Actually, Bhagavān used all these excuses to increase His own pleasure. In other words, He was doing all this so that the *gopīs* would display their love for Him, and He was teasing them to increase their eagerness.

Another meaning is in the mode of begging. The first half of this verse conveys the idea that even if something happens that arouses fear, one should not give up trying to achieve one’s desired goal. “This full-moon night causes everyone’s hearts to be steeped in passion. There is no possibility that anyone else will come to this beautiful, dark forest on this lovely, dark night.” In other words, the intention is this: “O frail girls, no one will come over here, so all of you come close to Me without any fear because I am brave. The full-moon naturally removes all darkness, so this night is *aghora-rūpā*, it is not terrible. And due to the influence of Vṛndāvana, the animals here are *aghora-sattva*, non-violent. They are naturally friendly with each other and do not instill fear in anyone. In addition, the night is

like day because of the full moon, and the bees, cuckoos and all the other peaceful creatures are roaming about freely.”

The word *ghora* implies that fear is aroused only in wicked persons. Separating the syllables differently (moving the *a* from the previous word), the word becomes *aghora*, not causing fear to anyone. That is to say, “This forest does not inspire fear in any living entities. Besides, I am here in this forest and I am a powerful person.” This is all meant to reassure the girls of Vraja. The *sakhīs* who were standing in the back and laughing, kept on looking back when they heard this. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s words in the second half of this verse are directed to these *gopīs*. “Do not return to Vraja. Remain here. Why? It is proper for you to stay in such a place since you are ladies. Furthermore, you are slender and supremely beautiful, so you are just the right persons to be with Me.” This is the meaning.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“Alas! How sad this is! Kṛṣṇa enjoys with us in so many ways every day, and He has destroyed our self-control, our shyness, and our standing in society. He Himself attracted and summoned us today by playing His flute, and now He is asking us why we have come!” The *vraja-devīs* were looking at each other in disbelief. Seeing the expressions on their faces, Kṛṣṇa said, “So, are you looking at the bushes to try to convince Me that you have come to this forest to gather the night-blooming flowers for the worship of the gods? Listen! I do not accept this possibility because people pick flowers and engage in other such activities according to time, place and persons.” Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse ‘*rajany eṣā*’ to express this idea. “This night is illuminated with the brilliant rays of the full moon, but it is still dangerous because it is night and not day. There are snakes, scorpions and other such gruesome creatures hiding unseen under the leaves and roots of the creepers, so it is not a good time to pick flowers. Tigers and other terrifying animals (*ghora-sattva*) are regularly roaming around here. Really, Vṛndāvana forest is not safe at night. Return to Vraja.”

The *gopīs* might respond, “We will rest for awhile, and then we will go.” To this Kṛṣṇa answered, “*neha stheyam strībhiḥ* – It is not advisable for girls from respected families to linger here at night. The time and place are unfavorable. O slender-waisted damsels, you are beautiful, young girls

and I am a handsome youth, and we are alone here in this remote forest in the dead of night. There is no fault for us to be together here, as all of you are supremely virtuous and chaste, and also, according to the well-known evidence in *Gopāla-tāpanī*, I am *kṛṣṇo brahmacārī*. Nevertheless, we certainly cannot trust our minds.”

An opposite meaning can be read for this verse, revealing the eagerness in Kṛṣṇa's heart. Again He said, “You are so shy that you do not want to disclose the reason that you have come. You need not say anything because I know why you have come. Hear the actual truth. This full-moon night is beautiful and tranquil (*aghora-rūpā*), and delights everyone's hearts. And see how this forest-land is inhabited by peaceful, beautiful deer and other such non-violent animals (*aghora-sattva-niṣevitā*). Even ferocious creatures like tigers are also peaceful due the natural character of Vṛndāvana. Here all the animals and birds maintain friendly relations with each other. Therefore there is no cause for any kind of fear. And you need not be afraid that your husbands will come here because this forest is filled with ferocious animals at night.

“Therefore, do not go back to Vraja. Stay here with Me.”

“Why?”

“Because you are ladies.”

“Do You want only ladies to be with You?”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “*He su-madhyamā*, O beautiful, slender-waisted girls! Lovely, young ladies like you are just the right persons to be with Me; only you, and no one else.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa's words here express both neglect and hopeful expectations.

#### VERSE 20

*mātarah pitarah putrā  
bhrātarah patayaś ca vaḥ  
vicinvanti hy apaśyanto  
mā kṛdhvam bandhu-sādhvasam*

“Not seeing you at home, your mothers, fathers, husbands, sons and brothers must surely be searching for you. Therefore, please do not cause distress for your friends and relatives, and for Me as well.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“And also see that you are causing unnecessary distress for your mothers, fathers and other family members, who are concerned about your welfare. They certainly must be looking for you in all four directions.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“O best of men, You are so strong, and we are with You, so why should we fear anyone?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa presumed that the *gopīs* must be thinking like this, therefore He spoke this verse beginning with ‘*mātaraḥ*.’ “When your mothers, fathers, brothers and husbands do not see you at home, they will be searching for you everywhere.” Here, He mentioned parents and brothers, pointing to the unmarried girls, and for the married ladies, He indicated husbands and sons. But it will be established later on that this was imaginary, meant only as a joke. ‘*Ca*’ (and) means ‘all of your family members,’ and ‘*hi*’ means ‘certainly.’ “If, by chance, any one of your mothers, fathers or other family members might come here and see you with Me, not only you but I also would be scared and ashamed.” This is the meaning. “So do not linger here any longer and cause distress for your relatives or yourselves.”

The *gopīs* might reply, “O knower of powerful *mantras*, they will not venture into this remote forest, and even if they come, they will not be able to see us.” To this Kṛṣṇa would respond, “When your family members do not see you at home, they will think that something bad has happened to you, and fear will arise in their hearts. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.6 declares that saintly persons are affectionate to their well-wishers. According to this logic, you should return home and thus show affection to your family members.” This is the intention.

Verses 19 and 20 can both be explained as follows. The *gopīs* might say, “*He* Suvrata, O highly virtuous one! We do not fear anyone because we are here with You.” Thinking that the *gopīs* would speak in this way, Kṛṣṇa pretended to close His eyes and said, “*neha stheyam strībhiḥ* – It is not proper for ladies to stay here with Me because I am a *brahmacārī* from childhood, and I always stay far away from ladies.” The *gopīs* might retort, “Alas, how astonishing! There is no fault in staying with little girls and old ladies.” To this, Kṛṣṇa would reply, “All of you have just now stepped

into fresh adolescence.” With this intention He said, “O *su-madhyamā*, O slender-waisted ones, you are supremely beautiful young maidens, and if I am with you, some chance mishap might occur.” The *gopīs* might reply, “O greatest of expert cheaters, don’t You remember that we have already met with You in this Vraja many times? So why are You pretending with us in this way?” Hearing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa would say, “*neha stheyam strībhiḥ* – Ladies should not stay here in this remote forest, especially at night.” Kṛṣṇa then made an expression with His lotus face indicating that it would be a mortal sin for them to stay there. “Go back to Vraja because associating with you here at this time will surely bring Me bad luck.”

The *gopīs* might counter, “O You who are celebrated as a noble man! Don’t fear for Your reputation. Who will find out if we stay here with You?” To this, Kṛṣṇa replied with this verse beginning with ‘*mātarāḥ*.’ “When your mothers, fathers, husbands and other family members do not see you at home, they will definitely go out searching for you. It is sure and certain that they will come over here and find you with Me, so don’t put Me in jeopardy with your family members.” The rest of the verse can be understood in accord with what has been explained previously.

Actually, the real reason Kṛṣṇa said this was to arouse fear in the *gopīs* so that He could lead them to an area more distant and secluded than where He had played the flute. There is another meaning in a prayerful mood: “If you enter a very deep forest, there is no chance that your relatives could come there. No one will ever find you.” The word ‘*hi*’ (certainly) here means *eva* (indeed). “Your parents might wander here and there in this deep forest, but like blind persons, they would not be able to see you. So, instead of worrying about them, just enter the dense, dark forest and enjoy yourselves freely, without hesitation.” This is the meaning.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* might suggest, “It is true that we beautiful maidens have entered the forest at night. However, there is no possibility of any impropriety because we have come here huddled together in a tight group. Therefore, no one can accuse us of any indiscretion.” To this Śrī Kṛṣṇa would reply, “This is true. Even so, your family members, not seeing you at home, must be searching for you by now, fearing that you might have encountered

some mishap. It is not proper to put them in anxiety.” Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse ‘*mātaraḥ*’ with this intention. “Your mothers, fathers, husbands, sons and other relatives must be looking for you.” Because mothers are full of affection, they are mentioned first. Next, fathers are mentioned because it is very difficult for ladies to go out searching in the forest at night on their own. Out of all the family members, the husbands are the closest and will worry more; so surely they will come to the forest. This is the explanation.

Verse 6 of this chapter states: “*pāyayantyāḥ śiśūn payaḥ* – Some *gopīs* were feeding milk to the babies.” However, two- or three-month-old children would not be searching for those *gopīs*. Verse 22 says: “*krandanti vatsā bālās ca* – Return to your homes because the young children and calves are crying.” Bhagavān used the word ‘sons’ here in Verse 20, but He did not mention their age, pretending not to know how old they were. Thus, we can understand that He was joking with the *gopīs*. The meaning can be taken in another way: “Do not fear your family members. Even if they come searching for you, they will not be able to see you in this deep forest. Therefore, you may freely engage in amorous play with Me tonight.”

#### VERSE 21

*dr̥ṣṭam vanam kusumitam  
rākeśa-kara-rañjitam  
yamunānila-līlajāt  
taru-pallava-śobhitam*

**“He *vraja-ramaṇīs*, O beautiful damsels of Vraja! You have already admired the beauty of the forest decorated with flowers and illuminated with the rays of the full moon. And you have also seen how the leaves on the trees are swaying in the gently blowing breeze, which has been cooled by touching the Yamunā’s water.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Seeing the *gopīs* displaying their gentle, loving anger by looking away from Him, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “Haven’t you already seen the forest? This forest is resplendent with many kinds of flowers and the rays of the full moon. The gently blowing breeze, cooled by touching the water of the Yamunā,

tremendously increases the beauty of the forest by making the leaves on the trees tremble.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa observed the behavior of the *vraja-ramaṇīs* as they looked towards the forest. Perceiving their loving anger, He spoke this verse, saying, “Have you come to see the beauty of Vṛndāvana forest, bedecked with so many kinds of flowers?” If this verse is joined with the next one, ‘*tad yāta mā ciraṁ goṣṭhaṁ*,’ then Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued, “You have observed the beauty of the forest, so immediately return to the cowherd village.” Here ‘*kusumitam*’ and other adjectives describe the vision of Vṛndāvana. When the *gopīs* turned their eyes away from Kṛṣṇa in a mood of loving anger, and looked at the beautiful forest, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: “*drṣṭam vanam* – You have seen the forest.” After that, when the *gopīs* looked up, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: “*rākeṣa-kara-rañjitaṁ* – The forest land is illuminated by the rays of the full moon. Have you come to see this superb sight?” Then the *gopīs* looked at the bank of the Yamunā, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “*Aho!* I understand. You have come to see the beauty of the leaves on the trees dancing in the cool, gentle breeze that has touched the Yamunā.” The rest of the explanation follows Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s commentary.

The *gopīs* stood their ground, to make their point: “*He mahā-mohan*, O great enchanter, we have disregarded our family members, completely ignoring their words, so who else is there to fear?” To this Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied, “This may be so, but why did you need to come here at night? You could have come during the day.” Then He closed His eyes, pretending to go into meditation, and said, “Ahhh! I understand. You have come to My Vṛndāvana to admire the beauty of the full-moon night. Very good! Now you have accomplished your purpose.” Then, He gestured by pointing His finger, and spoke this verse ‘*drṣṭam*,’ meaning, “Now your *darśana* is complete, so return home.”

The actual meaning is this: In order to increase the *gopīs*’ feelings for Him, Kṛṣṇa directly pointed out all the elements contributing to the beauty of the forest. Humbly begging them to stay, He might say, “If you stay here, not only will you be relieved of fear of your family members, you will also enjoy the profusion of all the supreme delights provided by the forest.” To

stimulate the *gopīs*' emotions, He pointed His finger at the beautiful forest and spoke this verse '*drṣṭam*.' "You have imbibed the beauty of the forest, enhanced with all these elements." If this verse is joined with the first line of the next verse, '*tad yāta mā ciraṁ goṣṭham*,' then Śrī Kṛṣṇa repeats, "You have observed the beauty of the forest, so do not return to the cowherd village." This is the sequence.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After that, the *vraja-devīs* looked about shyly. Seeing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse '*drṣṭam*.' "Aho! Now I understand. You have come to see the charm of the forest. Very well, have you taken in its beauty decorated with lovely flowers?" When the *vraja-devīs* heard this, they looked upwards, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, "*rākeśa-kara-rañjitam* – How beautiful this Vṛndāvana forest is, tinted with the rays of the full moon!" Then the *gopīs* looked toward the bank of the Yamunā. Observing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa continued, "The breeze that has touched the Yamunā's water is wafting, making the leaves and flowering branches of the trees tremble. This is breathtakingly beautiful. You have seen the forest, and your cherished desire has thus been fulfilled. So at once, return to Vraja. Do not tarry another minute." Now for the meaning in a prayerful mood: "This Vṛndāvana is the topmost of all places. Furthermore, it is resplendent with the rays of the full moon. On top of that, the breeze, now cool having touched the Yamunā's water, is filled with the fragrance of the flowers, and is spreading it in all directions. All these are stimuli (*uddipana-vibhāva*) for tasting *rasa*, and I am directly present as the object of love (*alambana-vibhāva*), so today you will be put to the test for relishing *rasa*." This is the essence.

### **VERSE 22**

*tad yāta mā ciraṁ goṣṭham*  
*śuśrūṣadhvaṁ patīn satīḥ*  
*krandanti vatsā bālāś ca*  
*tān pāyayata duhyata*

**"O chaste ladies, do not delay here another second. Quickly return to Vraja, and serve your husbands there. The calves and**



**babies are crying in your homes. Go and feed all of them milk, and milk the cows.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

‘*Satīḥ*’ – O chaste ladies!

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“Your cherished desire is fulfilled by having *darśana* of the beautiful forest. Do not wait here any longer. Return to the cowherd village.” The cowherd village (*ghoṣa*) is the place where the cowherd community resides and where the churning of yogurt and the mooing of the cows resound loudly. Another meaning can be taken: the place where loud sounds indicate the activities being performed there. In some books it is read as ‘*goṣṭha*,’ the residence of the cowherders. “Return to your village. It is not proper for you to leave that village to roam around the forest. All facility is available for you there, so it is logical for you to go back.” This is the intention. “Quickly go back to the village. Do not dally.” This is the meaning of ‘*mā ciraṇ*.’

“Why should we go back?”

“To serve your husbands.”

“Why?”

“All of you are famous for your chastity. If you do not act as faithful wives, your reputation will be spoiled. I am not your husband, so it is not proper for you to stay here with Me.” This is the intention.

The *gopīs* might reply: “You are the supreme object of service, but our husbands cannot tolerate our serving You. They are always jealous of You. That is why we have given up those inimical husbands, and thrown our duty as loyal wives far away by sacrificing it at Your lotus feet.” Feeling that the *gopīs* might reply in this way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke the second part of this verse to arouse their love for their family members. “*Krandanti vatsā bālāś ca* – The calves and children you look after are crying. Therefore, return home. Let the calves have their mothers’ milk, and milk the cows for the children.” The babies and calves were actually very fond of the *gopīs* who looked after them, and that is why Śrī Kṛṣṇa mentioned them.

At this point, there is one principle to bring up: (Actually, in truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the only husband of all the *gopīs*.) The *Gopāla-tāpanī* confirms to

the *vraja-gopīs*, “That Śrī Kṛṣṇa will certainly be your husband.” *Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.56 declares: “*śriyaḥ kāntā kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ* – the Lakṣmīs are the beloved consorts, and Śrī Govinda is their only lover.” The *śrutis*, *āgamas* and other scriptures all arrive at the same conclusion, and so do the 10-syllable and other *mantras*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states that the *gopīs* are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s consorts (*kṛṣṇa-vadhvāḥ*). Therefore, it is not possible for the *gopīs* to be married to anyone other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa, since He is their one and only lover. Admittedly, they are convinced that they are married to others, but this is only to increase their eagerness for *rāsa-līlā*. This belief has been arranged by Yogamāyā, whose powerful position is made clear in the first verse of this chapter: “*yoga-māyām upāśritaḥ* – He took shelter of His internal potency, Yogamāyā.”

The cowherd men think they are the *gopīs*’ husbands, but Yogamāyā cheats them by creating duplicate *gopīs*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.9 says: “*nāsūyan khalu kṛṣṇāya* – Yogamāyā bewildered the *gopas*, who thought that they were the *gopīs*’ husbands. Seeing that their wives were with them, they did not accuse Śrī Kṛṣṇa of any wrongdoing.” According to this conclusion, although the *gopas* believed they were husbands, they never had intimate connection with the *gopīs*. Therefore, they had no children. The *gopīs* looked after their brothers’ children simply out of affection. These are the children mentioned in the verse. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.68.52 that it is customary to accept the brothers’ and other family members’ children as one’s own: “*sa-sutaḥ sa-snuṣaḥ prāyāt suhrdbhir abhinanditaḥ* – While being praised by His well-wishers, Śrī Baladeva left Hastināpur with His ‘son’ and daughter-in-law.” Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s son, Sāmba, is being referred to as Śrī Baladeva’s son.

The *gopīs* had no milk in their breasts and would feed cows’ milk to those sons, who were the objects of their affection. That is why it is said in this verse, “Arrange for the calves to get their milk, and milk the cows for the children.” Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said (SB 10.29.5): “*pāyayantyāḥ śisūn payāḥ* – they were feeding milk to the children.” Here, he says ‘children’ instead of ‘sons’ or ‘daughters’, and he says just ‘milk’, not ‘breast milk.’ If the children had taken birth from those *gopīs*’ wombs, then the heroines of the amorous mellow would have been contaminated, and that would have spoiled the *rāsa* dance. It is mentioned in Verse 20: “*mātaraḥ pitaraḥ putrāḥ* – your mothers, fathers, sons and other family members are searching for

you.” Śrī Bhagavān clearly mentions ‘sons.’ This is understood to refer to any sons who are old enough to look for their mothers in the nighttime – such mothers would be nearing old age. This appears to be the logic. If this were the case, the *rāsa* and the *rasa* would be completely spoiled.

In this regard, the sage Śrī Vaiṣampāyana does not agree with this idea. He himself said, “The omniscient Śrī Kṛṣṇa called together the young cowherd damsels and enjoyed amorous pastimes with them.” The best of sages, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has described the beauty of the *gopīs* (*ālambana*) as the stimulant of the amorous mellow, and he also does not accept the conclusion that some *gopīs* had children. ‘*Bhagavān api tā rātrih*’ (10.29.1) – This verse says how nature presented wonderful stimuli on the first night of autumn, and these caused Śrī Kṛṣṇa to remember the beauty of the *gopīs*, who are the very object of love, and thus He desired to engage in love-play. That is why His mind turned towards romantic intrigue (*rantum manas cakre*). For this reason this verse has been quoted.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī also described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.6 the stunning beauty of the *gopīs*, who were younger in age than Kṛṣṇa. “Yaśoda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa looks very brilliant surrounded by the golden *gopīs*, just like a pendant with a sapphire in the center surrounded by golden gems.” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.43 relates: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked charming in the circle of the *gopīs*, just like the moon in the middle of the stars.” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.7 also says: “The *gopīs* dancing with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s expansions looked very beautiful, like lightning flashes in the middle of a cloud bank.” All these verses describe the *gopīs*’ beauty and confirm the fact that they were younger than Kṛṣṇa.

When Śrī Bhagavān spoke about the *gopīs*’ sons, He was simply joking. He was not implying that they were at fault. Verse 17 of this chapter says: “*vācaḥ peśair vimohayan* – He bewildered them with His playful speech.” Verse 42 of this chapter says: “*prahasya sa-dayaṁ gopīr* – He was laughing mercifully at the *gopīs*.” All these verses clearly show that He was joking, and that is why He said, “Your mothers, fathers, sons and other family members are searching for you.” This statement is fanciful and was spoken in jest. If Kṛṣṇa were to condemn the *gopīs* and accept them at the same time, there would be no *rasa*, but when He jokingly directed attention to their faults, the *rasa* increased. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crown-jewel of heroes, pointed out the *gopīs*’ flaws to them, but if the support of ecstasy (*ālambana*) were actually

marred with any type of blemish (having given birth to children), this would be a detriment to the hero in relishing *rasa*. In poems describing high-class lovers, it is impossible that the hero will see any faults in his heroine. What to speak, then, of the poetry of great (Vaiṣṇava) poets who describe the *rāsa-līlā*, in which *param-puruṣottama* Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends to shower the nectar of this pastime? It is not possible that He will see faults in His heroines (*ālambana*). What more is there to be said about this?

In the conclusion of the shower of *rasa* in the *rāsa-līlā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.36 says: “To show mercy to the devotees, Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs such activities that attract the hearts of all. When one hears these pastimes, one becomes inspired to cultivate *bhakti*.” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.25 states: “Śrī Bhāgavan enclosed inside Himself all the *gopīs*’ gestures indicating their budding amorous desire, and He enjoyed all those nights that displayed the autumnal beauty that the famous poems and narrations describe.” Those *gopīs*’ husbands were the illusion created by Yogamāyā, and their sons were not actually their own.

Now Kṛṣṇa spoke in a mood of humble request: “Therefore, there is no need to fear your family members coming here. Everything here in this grove is conducive to romance, so do not go back to Vraja so quickly. Go a little bit later if you need to; you can go at the end of the night.” If ‘*ca*’ (and) is connected with ‘*mā*’ (no) in the phrase ‘*mā ciraṁ*’ and is used everywhere in this verse, then the meaning would be: “Do not serve your husbands, and do not observe the path of chaste wives; otherwise, the happiness derived from your independence will be destroyed.” Kṛṣṇa spoke this as a joke. All these negative statements were meant to fortify the *gopīs*’ independent spirit. “The calves and the children will not cry, so there is no need for you to go to give them their milk, or to milk the cows for the children.” Kṛṣṇa spoke all these words to inspire the *gopīs*’ sense of freedom.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“Therefore, O chaste ladies, don’t delay. Immediately return to your homes and accept your duty to serve your husbands as faithful wives.” This was directed towards the married *gopīs*. Then, for the unmarried girls, He said: “Your pet calves are crying. Pacify them by milking the cows.” Addressing the *municari gopīs*, He said “The children are crying. Feed them milk.”

Kṛṣṇa's words can also be interpreted as a humble entreaty: "You have seen the beauty of the forest, but do not go back to Vraja. Pass the whole night, romancing with Me. Do not serve your husbands. Do not play the role of virtuous wives because you should not waste the beauty and sweetness of the youth that the creator has bestowed upon you. Do not bother to milk the cows or feed milk to the children. O My fervent beloveds! What is the need for you to do any of this?"

### VERSE 23

*atha vā mad-abhisnehād  
bhavatyo yantritāśayāḥ  
āgatā hy upapannam vaḥ  
prīyante mayi jantavaḥ*

**"But perhaps you have come over here because you are controlled by inordinate love for Me. This would certainly be befitting, since all living entities naturally have affection for Me."**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is perhaps speaking this verse beginning with '*atha vā*' to send back those *gopīs* who were looking very disturbed due to being angry. '*Yantritāśayāḥ*' – it is proper for you to come here as your hearts have been subjugated by affection, just as all living entities are pleased to love Me."

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Meaning displaying indifference: After that, Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse '*atha vā*' to indicate to those *gopīs*, whose restless eyes reflect their loving anger, that they should go back home. In order to make the *gopīs* even angrier, Kṛṣṇa compared their love with the ordinary love of the other living beings. '*Atha vā*' can also be understood to imply 'another reason.' Just before, in Verse 21, Kṛṣṇa said, "You have seen the beautiful forest." Now He is giving another reason why they might have come here. "*Mad-abhisnehāt* – If you have come here out of natural love for Me, this is befitting because all beings nurture inborn love for Me. Not only you, but everyone in Vraja possesses this sort of affection for Me. But it may be possible that your love is much greater than theirs."

Here, the phrase ‘*abhisnehāt*’ has been used in a general way and does not imply the love between a man and woman. Rather, Kṛṣṇa is purposely slighting the *gopīs*. He says ‘*hi*’ (indeed), indicating that indeed all living entities love Him. “Therefore, you also love Me, but you do not possess that special intense amorous love (*rati*) for Me. So what is so great about your love?” Using the phrase ‘*mad-abhisnehāt*’ (your love for Me), He minimizes their love, implying that they possess the same type of love that is common to all others. That is why He addressed them with ‘*bhavatyah*,’ the formal form of ‘you.’ The explanation of the rest of the verse follows Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s commentary.

In an additional interpretation, the *gopīs* might reply, “Alas, it is very sad that we have given up our parents, husbands and sons, so why is it necessary to repeat their names?” In response, Śrī Kṛṣṇa praises them, and presents an alternative explanation with the words ‘*atha vā*’ (or else). The meaning is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has glorified the love of the *gopīs* very cleverly, and yet He has displayed His indifference at the same time. His conduct was harder than a thunderbolt, and it broke the *gopīs*’ hearts. Actually, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s apparent indifference was meant to increase the *gopīs*’ loving sentiments – there was no other reason.

Meaning as a humble entreaty: “Although you have come with another purpose, I request you to take some rest here.” This is another understanding of ‘*atha vā*.’ “If you have come here out of affection for Me (*abhisnehāt*), this is befitting.” Here *abhi* denotes a very high stage of affection (*sneha*), indicating the mood of *rati*. The reason expressed here is this: “All living entities have affection for Me and they are fully devoted to Me, so what to speak of you, who nourish even greater sentiments for Me!” This is the meaning. Kṛṣṇa has used the word ‘*bhavatyah*,’ the respectful form of ‘you,’ to show that He is in love with them. “So now you can freely dally with Me.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“Alas, up till now, I was thinking in vain about your purpose for coming here, but now I have understood the reason why you have come.” The word ‘*mayi*’ (for Me) is used in the verse with this purpose. “You hold very deep affection for Me in every respect, and being controlled by this affection, you have come to Me. You have achieved Your purpose by having My *darśana*. It is My true fortune that all the living entities naturally have inborn love for

Me. So you also love Me in a general way like everyone else; your love is not influenced by any amorous desire.” This is the suggested meaning.

In the mood of humble entreaty: “You have natural love for Me with the sentiments of a beloved, so you have come to Me under the control of that love. And your hearts have also forcibly pulled Me to join you here. Thus your arrival is proper; it is not without good cause. All living entities love Me in this way, but you are positively overflowing with the highest love for Me, so what else is there to say?” This is the meaning.

#### VERSE 24

*bhartuḥ śuśrūṣaṇaṁ strīṇāṁ  
paro dharmo hy amāyayā  
tad-bandhūnāṁ ca kalyāṇaḥ  
prajānāṁ cānupoṣaṇam*

**“O noble ladies, a woman’s topmost religious duty is to earnestly serve her husband, his parents and relatives, and to nourish the children and servants.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In this verse starting with ‘*bhartuḥ*’ and the next two verses, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is asking the *gopīs* to return by instilling in them fear of transgressing religious codes, either knowingly or unknowingly.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Meaning showing indifference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa anticipates some opposition from the *gopīs*: “If we really have some affection for You, then it is proper for us to serve You.” With these three verses beginning with ‘*bhartuḥ*’, He is instructing them on the regulations of religiosity by instilling fear in them. “Comparatively speaking, the topmost of all a woman’s obligations is to serve her husband. That is, her highest duty is to serve her husband, and not a paramour like Me.” The *gopīs* might answer, “We are already doing that according to our capacity.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies with ‘*amāyayā*’ (without duplicity): The hypocrisy of serving Me, a paramour, corrupts the religious duty of serving the husband.” This is the meaning.

By addressing the *gopīs* as '*kalyāṇaḥ*' (O noble ladies), Kṛṣṇa is instructing them, "It is proper for you to serve your husbands sincerely." By this kind of deceptive double-talk Śrī Kṛṣṇa is outwardly encouraging them to serve their husbands and other family members, but actually He is making fun of them because serving the husband is not really the topmost religious duty. Dharamarāja himself has said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.3.22: "The supreme religious principle for all beings in this world is to perform the limbs of *bhakti-yoga*, beginning with chanting the holy names of the Lord. Nothing is better than this."

Explanation according to humble entreaty: "Your arrival here, due to your very intense love for Me, is proper, and not only that, it is also in accordance with religious principles." This is explained in this verse starting with '*bhartuḥ*.' "The real husband is that person whom noble ladies accept sincerely (*amāyayā*) with a pure heart, and their topmost duty is to serve Him. But when their fathers and other relatives force them to get married, it is not their duty to serve those husbands. In other words, when the relatives give away the hand of a girl by force to someone, she may accept him externally as her husband, but her relationship with him is based on formal appearances, being devoid of an internal loving connection. We see the evidence for this in *Śrī Mahābhārata*: the extremely religious Śrī Bhiṣma-deva rejected Ambā Devī, because in her heart she had chosen Śalva as her husband. He was her real husband; nobody else could take that position. In the same way, none of you have chosen your own husbands, so they are your illusory husbands. You have accepted Me by the emotions in your hearts. I am your true husband, so your topmost duty is to serve Me. You have been in love with Me from your childhood, and I also love you all in the same way. Your hearts are the witness of this." This is the meaning. Śrī Kṛṣṇa will establish this understanding later on.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

"We love You as our paramour." Anticipating such a reply from the *gopīs* Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "This may be the case but You should still return to Vraja." The *gopīs* answer, "You know that we have overwhelming love for You. So why are You telling us again and again to go back to Vraja? Can those who are the abode of love ever abandon the object of their love?" Śrī



Kṛṣṇa replies, “What you say is correct, but we still have to reconcile the inclination of a love-filled woman with the scriptural injunctions. Listen to this – the conclusion of all scriptures is that a woman’s topmost obligation is to serve her husband. This being the case, you should engage in the service of your spouses with one-pointed focus and without any duplicity. And you should also serve your fathers-in-law and other relatives as is appropriate.”

Meaning in the mood of humble entreaty: the word ‘*strīṇām*’ means that the foremost duty for women, and especially for the *vraja-sundarīs*, is to serve to the husband, and not the relatives. They are not obliged to serve the other family members. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.15.12 states: “A person well versed in religion rejects these five branches of irreligion: unjust *dharma* (*vidharma*), someone else’s duty (*para dharma*), a semblance of religion (*ābhāsa*), subordinate duties (*upadharma*), and cheating religion (*chala dharma*).” “The scriptures declare that I am Viṣṇu, and you are well known as Vaiṣṇavīs, so to serve Me is your natural *dharma*. All else is *para dharma*, the obligations of others; performing *para dharma* does not bring anyone auspiciousness. Śrī Bhagavān said, ‘One who gives up *varnaśrama* and all other such duties to worship Me is the best’ (*SB* 11.11.32). According to this scriptural injunction, your real duty is to reject all other obligations and serve Me exclusively.”

#### VERSE 25

*duḥśīlo durbhago vṛddho  
jaḍo rogy adhano ’pi vā  
patiḥ strībhir na hātavyo  
lokepsubhir apātakī*

**“Women who desire a good destination in this life and the next should never reject a husband unless he is extremely sinful and fallen, even if he is wicked, unlucky, old, stupid, sickly or impoverished.”**

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“O Paṇḍita, expert in giving instructions to others! We have abandoned our husbands in all respects, so what is the point in accepting instructions

concerning their service?” Anticipating such an answer from the *gopīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse starting with ‘*duḥśīlaḥ*.’ The husband may be full of defects: wicked, thieving, unlucky, useless, old, incapable of working, suffering from terrible disease, extremely poor, or incapable even of filling his own belly. Still, he should not be rejected. The original verse states, ‘*adhano api*’ (even though poor) – here ‘*api*’ (even though) is related with every word of the verse. “A husband should not be abandoned even though he may be wicked and unfortunate. Considering this, how can you reject your husbands who are Vrajavāsīs and are endowed with all good qualities?”

‘*Lokepsubhiḥ*’ – the duty of those ladies who want a good destination in this world and the next is to serve their husbands; otherwise, they have to suffer in both worlds. One is allowed to reject the husband only if he is fallen. But in this verse the adjective ‘*apātakī*’ (not fallen) is used. Here *pātaka* means one who performs sinful activities. One who is not sinful is called *apātakī* according to the *smṛti-śāstra*, which instructs: “Serve your sinless husband.” Hence, Kṛṣṇa reiterates, “There is absolutely no justification for you to reject your husbands, because they are all Vrajavāsīs, and they do not have even a scent of sin.” This is the meaning. The *gopīs’ bhāva* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is so fixed that they are unwavering in their love for Him. Even so, He is presenting all these arguments just to increase their eagerness.

Kṛṣṇa’s humble entreaty: “In actuality it is confirmed that I am your husband. And it is also proven that a husband is not to be rejected, even he is wicked and has other bad qualities. Then, on what grounds can you reject Me, since I am your real husband and am endowed with all kinds of auspicious qualities? Those *gopas* who consider themselves husbands have all bad qualities, and furthermore they are not your real husbands, so they should certainly be rejected.” This verse ‘*duḥśīla*’ has been spoken with this intention.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ THĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* might say, “We have loving affection for You. Those husbands are uninspiring because they have an unsuitable, contrary nature, so why should we serve them?” In answer to this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this verse starting with ‘*duḥśīlo*.’ A husband may be wicked, but he is to be served as long as he is not fallen. The *smṛti* states: “One should serve an upright husband.” Accordingly, only a fallen husband is to be rejected. ‘*Lokepsubhiḥ*’ means

‘women who desire the happiness of joining their husbands on their planets in their next birth.’

Alternate explanation: “Those ladies who are desirous of the insignificant reputation and happiness afforded in this world and the next should not give up husbands who are wicked, unlucky, old, dull, sickly and penniless. But all of you have already taken a vow to give up both worlds and are drowning in the ecstatic ocean of My sweetness, so you in fact already rejected your husbands long ago.”

#### VERSE 26

*asvargyam ayaśasyaṁ ca  
phalgu kṛcchraṁ bhayāvaham  
jugupsitaṁ ca sarvatra  
hy aupapatyaṁ kula-striyaḥ*

**“It is contemptible for respectable ladies from good families to commit adultery. Such sordid behavior prevents them from reaching heaven, ruins their reputation, and brings misery; it is ghastly and condemnable in every respect.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

It is very despicable for ladies from upright families to accept a paramour (for the pleasure derived in an extramarital affair). Such behavior brings misery.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“O Prince of Vraja, we have kept Your order on our heads, understanding that there is no justification for rejecting a husband. But since long, they have been our husbands in name only. You are our actual husband, and it is proper for us to relate with You as such.” Anticipating these words from the *gopīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa censured their long-cherished desire, and hid His inner sentiments. In this verse starting with ‘*asvargyam*,’ He spoke extremely unpleasant words as if He were displeased. “For well-bred ladies to have a relationship with a paramour prevents them from reaching

Svarga. O impassioned ladies, you have not seen Svarga, so perhaps you have no desire to go there. Let that be. In any case, this society expects one to maintain one's reputation, but having an extra-marital relationship certainly obstructs this."

The word '*ayaśasyam*' (unfavorable for maintaining one's reputation) is spoken with this intention. "An extra-marital affair not only destroys one's respectability, both present and future, but it also ruins all of one's past repute." The *gopīs* might retort, "No one will ever come to know of our affair as it is extremely confidential." Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies, "But these affairs quickly fall apart; they are very temporary and thus insignificant." The *gopīs* say, "*He* Acyuta, O infallible one! Our relationship with You will be permanent because You never fall down." Śrī Kṛṣṇa answers, "But it results in unhappiness." *Gopīs*: "O best of wayward men! You are independent to roam around freely in Vraja and Vṛndāvana, so union with You results in pleasure, not in misery." Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "Even so, paramour love is terrible. It causes one to live in constant terror – of the husband in this world, and of hell in the next world."

The *gopīs* might say, "O Beloved, Your lips are nectarean, and they deserve to be worshiped with nectar. We have neglected all others just for You. We are not afraid of anyone." Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies, "That may be so; nonetheless, this kind of relationship is certainly scandalous, and it is condemned universally, both at home and abroad. Furthermore it dooms one in society and checks one's spiritual advancement."

"O best of philosophers! To achieve one's desired goal, one can tolerate this kind of blasphemy without difficulty." Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies with '*kula-striyaḥ*,' meaning 'a woman from a respectable family;' the singular form is used here to denote the whole female race. "The whole family is disgraced if one of its women is involved in an extra-marital relationship. Such activity is thoroughly improper, and should be repudiated in every respect." In essence, just as before, Kṛṣṇa was saying this just to increase the *gopīs*' eagerness.

Alternate meaning as humble entreaty: as stated before, a woman's true husband is that man whom she accepts in her heart. Anyone else is considered a paramour. A man accepted in marriage according to religious rites is a husband, and anyone else is a paramour. Śrī Kṛṣṇa jokingly stated the opposite meaning of the scriptural evidence. "So a husband who is living with his wife is *upapati* (paramour) because *upa* means 'near' and

*pati* means 'husband.' And this mood is '*aupapatyā*.' One who has this kind of *upapati-bhāva*, living with the legal husband who is actually not the real husband, is always full of faults and is barred from reaching heaven. It is irreligion to serve such a husband, so you should serve Me." This meaning is to be understood.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

"It is natural that all of you have a general type of fondness for Me. But a special affection mixed with lust is against religious principles and it should be rejected in every respect." This verse starting with '*asvargyam*' has been spoken with this intention. "For respectable women from good families, the pleasure derived from a paramour is despicable and illusory. It prevents one from reaching heaven, and it harms one's reputation." The *gopīs* may say, "Let this pleasure be very low-class and illusory, but the delight it affords is the best of all." Obstructions created by the husband are extremely painful, but according to *rasa-śāstra* this situation is topmost. This is corroborated by the poet Rudra as quoted in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* 3.20: a lady's contrary mood (*vāmatā*), the rarity of meeting (*durlabhata*), and her many rebuffs (*nivāraṇatā*) are Cupid's extraordinary weapons forcing the lover to come under her control.

When *pranaya* condenses and reaches its climax, then *anurāga*, a very deep attachment, arises in the heart, and due to its influence, pain in the heart is experienced as joy. For example, the prospect of meeting with one's paramour makes intolerable suffering feel like pleasure.

The scriptures on societal injunctions strictly forbid extramarital relations, warning that such unacceptable behavior brings one fear in this life and the next. Nevertheless, Śrī Viṣṇugupta-saṁhitā declares, "A doe-eyed heroine, while encountering obstructions in meeting with her lover and only occasionally getting the chance to meet with him, feels great excitement in her heart from her love affair." According to this rule of *rasa-śāstra*, societal restriction is not unfavorable as it helps in creating more pleasure for the lover. Śrī Kṛṣṇa uses the word '*jugupsitām*' (contemptible): It is universally condemned for noble ladies to engage in a paramour relationship (*aupapatyam*). The pleasure derived from such an affair is contemptible. All of you can tolerate extensive criticism happily just to

achieve your desired goal, but as you are very dear to Me, how can I tolerate your being censured? For this reason, it is better that you go back to Vraja.”

The meaning in a mood of humble entreaty: “It is well known that the paramour relationship is highly condemned, but in this regard, you have heard from Śrī Gargācarya and other public authorities that I am like Nārāyaṇa. In that case, if I am indeed like Nārāyaṇa, then it is not reprehensible for Me to be your paramour. Rather, our affair is to be praised because, as Parameśvara, I am beyond all kinds of ordinary auspicious and inauspicious actions.”

VERSE 27

*śravaṇād darśanād dhyānān  
mayi bhāvo ’nukīrtanāt  
na tathā sannikarṣeṇa  
pratiyāta tato grhān*

“Ecstatic love for Me arises in devotees’ hearts when they hear about Me, take *darśana* of My deity, meditate on My beauty, and continuously chant My names, which are endowed with My attributes. Being in My physical presence does not yield the same result, so you should return back to your homes.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa continues His argument with ‘*śravaṇāt*,’ meaning, ‘Love for Me arises by hearing about My glories.’

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Meaning in a mood of indifference: “These *gopīs* will not go back, even after several attempts to persuade them.” Suspecting this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa displayed indifference in this verse beginning with ‘*śravaṇāt*,’ which points out the shortcomings in their passion for Him. “Receiving My direct association does not arouse the mood that manifests by hearing My glories.” The anxiety produced in the state of separation causes the sentiments to escalate very quickly, but in union the mood loses its intensity, and this longing slackens. The *vraja-sundarī*’ mood was at the topmost level, but by His crooked talk,

Kṛṣṇa rejected it as being inadequate, pointing out flaws in their love. In *pūrva-rāga* hearing usually comes first, followed by directly seeing the hero, but since they are unable to meet, constant flashes of the hero manifest in the heroine's heart. This explanation delineates the process of the awakening of *bhāva* by means of hearing and chanting. Actually, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke in this tricky manner to enhance the eagerness in the *prema* of the tender-hearted *vraja-devīs*, who, in a mood of compliance, were ever absorbed in their deep love for Him.

Meaning in a spirit of humble entreaty: "Before marrying our cowherd husbands, we accepted You as our true husband out of our loving attraction and faithfulness to You, even though we did not live with You. Now we are married to the *gopas*, but we feel no loyalty to them and have accepted this relationship only due to being bound by the knot of marriage. How, then, is it possible for us to feel affection for them?" Anticipating this mood, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse beginning with '*śravaṇāt*.' "The *bhāva* that arises when one hears narrations about Me that are imbued with special *rasa* is more intense than the *bhāva* that grows in My direct presence." The conclusion here is this. It is well known that loving couples get tied up in affection for each other by living together; such emotional bonds do not develop just by hearing. The *gopīs*, however, did not experience feelings of intimacy for their so-called husbands, even though they lived together.

In this context, it is said: '*na tathā sannikarṣaṇa pratiyāta tato grhān*.' If the word '*na*' is inserted in '*pratiyāta*' in this half of the verse, the sentence becomes '*tasmāta grhān prati na yāta*,' which means, "Don't go home and leave Me alone here." The phrase '*pratiyāta tato 'grhān*' can be broken into *tato* + *agrhān*. When '*a*' is combined with *yāta*, it becomes *ayāta*, "Don't go back home." When the word *prati* is prefixed with the root word, it reverses the meaning. For example, in the word *pratipakṣa*, *pakṣa* means 'party' and *pratipakṣa* signifies 'opposite party.' In this verse also, *prati* can be used to reverse the meaning, which then becomes a prohibition, forbidding the *gopīs* to go back home. Thus, both types of meanings – indifference and humble entreaty – generated newer and newer flavors of emotions in the *vraja-devīs*' loving exchanges with Kṛṣṇa. Their affectionate exchanges with Him influenced them in both ways, but His mood of apparent indifference affected their love-filled hearts more. In some *vraja-devīs* the true meaning manifested in their hearts, and newer and newer emotions arose in some other Vraja maidens, due to their hearts being churned by their *anurāga*.

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Meaning in a mood of indifference: The *gopīs* might object, “O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we have not come here for Your direct association, so why do You presume such a possibility? Still, Gargācārya has declared that You are like Nārāyaṇa, and we accept his statement. Thus, we have come here with the desire to perform *bhakti* at Your lotus feet. You should therefore keep us with You tonight, and mercifully fulfill our hearts’ desire by affording us worshipful service to Your lotus feet.” Expecting this kind of statement from the *gopīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke this verse starting with ‘*śravaṇāt*.’

“Love for Me is achieved by hearing about Me, seeing and remembering Me, and singing My glories. One does not get this *prema* by directly associating with Me. My pure devotees do not desire the four kinds of liberation, such as *sāmīpya* and *sālokya*. Rather, they pray for *bhakti* by performing *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, etc. All of you are Vaiṣṇavīs, so you are certainly aware of this well-known, fundamental truth.”

Meaning in a spirit of humble entreaty: “Intense amorous emotions for Me are stimulated by close association with Me. *Śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* do not generate the same result. Therefore, none of you should go back to Vraja.” In the original verse the phrase ‘*pratiyāta tato grhān*’ is found, but in this commentary the meaning ‘*tataḥ agrhān pratiyāta*’ has been accepted. Here the addition of *a* presents the negative meaning, which prohibits the *gopīs* from returning home.

**VERSE 28**

*śrī-śuka uvāca*  
*iti vipriyam ākarṇya*  
*gopyo govinda-bhāṣitam*  
*viṣaṇṇā bhagna-saṅkalpās*  
*cintām āpur duratyayām*

**Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:** Hearing Govinda speak such unpleasant words, the *gopīs* became extremely dejected, and drowned in the abysmal ocean of despair.



ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

In this verse, '*iti vipriya*,' Śrī Śukadeva Goṣvāmī explains the meaning of the name Govinda. This name suggests that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *indra*, the chief, of Gokula, and the well-wisher of all its residents. Since He takes care of His own people, He will certainly see to the happiness and comfort of the *gopīs*. What need is there to mention it separately? '*Bhāṣitam*' – what He says in clear words is unpleasant (*vipriya*). But His every sentence has a double meaning, so it was not certain whether His words were meant favorably or unfavorably. However, the unfavorable meaning manifested in the *gopīs*' hearts because of their natural eagerness, and they took His words as unpleasant. '*Viṣaṇṇā*' (broken-hearted) – for a long time the *gopīs*' had been harboring in their hearts the resolve to enjoy intimate association with Kṛṣṇa; this resolution was now shattered, and thus their hearts became inflamed. '*Duratyayā*' (insurmountable) – the *gopīs* were being forced into an unpalatable situation, unable to attain their desired object. Thus devastated, they drowned in an abyss of anxiety.

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa's very tender heart melts with love, but now He has become very cruel. This is our ill-fortune. Now what is our duty? Should we catch hold of His lotus feet and humbly pray to Him, or should we argue with Him and press upon Him the unreasonableness of His words? Should we exercise some patience and stay here? Or should we very cunningly pretend to start moving towards Vraja, and after walking some distance, try to understand His real intention, which is profound and inconceivable? Or should we give up our lives, but how and where? Should we do it in front of Him or behind His back? Should we drown in the Yamunā or die some other way? In any event, we should give up our lives." In this way, the *gopīs* considered so many alternatives.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

'Govinda' (*ga* + *vindate*): *ga* means 'who is an entertaining speaker,' *vindate* means 'who knows.' In other words, Govinda is one who is expert in witty, eloquent speech. '*Bhāṣita*' – the words spoken by Govinda were '*vipriyam*,' unpleasant. Even the presiding goddess of speech could not catch the meaning of His crooked words, but it was not hard for the love-

filled *vraja-devīs* to understand the inner meaning, which was internally pleasing to them. However, only the external meaning of the words indicating disinterest manifested in the *gopīs*' hearts, which were saturated with *prema*, and the cowherd maidens started to burn from within. Not seeing any reason for Govinda's unpleasant words, they doubted whether His unspoken words could contain any comfort either.

After this, humility arose in the *gopīs*' hearts from their *sthayi-bhāva* of intense love, and they decided, "Certainly we are unqualified for Kṛṣṇa's service, and that is why He is neglecting us." Fixed in this conclusion, they became morose and started contemplating their situation. "Alas! We gave up our husbands, in-laws, our parents, religiosity, patience, fear and shyness for Kṛṣṇa, but He has rejected us!" In this way, their plan shattered, they drowned in the deep sea of distress. "What should we do now? Should we take hold of His lotus feet and satisfy Him with our humble prayers? Or should we exercise self-control and slyly make a show of returning to Vraja, while we try to understand His hidden intention? Or should we just give up our lives – either in His presence or by drowning far away in the Yamunā, or by any other means?"

"Alas, alas! What a predicament we are facing! How will we be able to see His sweet lotus face if we give up our lives? And if we do not do so, how can we still manage to be near Him?" In this way the *gopīs* were tortured, being beaten by millions and millions of waves of anxiety. "Or how can we follow Śrī Kṛṣṇa's order and convince ourselves to eat that which we have already vomited – service to our husbands and relatives? What should we do? Where should we go?"

Filled with such worries, the *gopīs* were at a complete loss and remained standing in the same spot like dead sticks. It is said that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like a dark cloud, and the sound of His flute is like the rumbling of thunder that invites the *cataki* bird-like *gopīs* to approach this cloud and drink its nectar. However, instead of showering the rain of nectarean pastimes, this cloud was pouring out poisonous words of neglect, which the *gopīs* quickly drank in astonishment, since nobody in this world can give up their own nature.

#### VERSE 29

*kṛtvā mukhāny ava śucaḥ śvasanena śuśyaḥ  
bimbādharaṇi caraṇena bhuvaḥ likhantyaḥ*

*asrair upāṭṭa-masibhiḥ kuca-kuṅkumāni*  
*tasthur mṛjantya uru-duḥkha-bharāḥ sma tūṣṇīm*

Overwhelmed by excessive grief, the *gopīs* held their heads down and breathed heavily, exhaling hot air that dried up their reddish *bimba*-fruit lips. As they scratched the ground with their toenails, their tears mixed with their *kajjala* and washed away the *kuṅkuma* from their breasts. Their hearts were so burdened with sorrow that they simply stood there without saying a word.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

In this verse beginning with *‘kṛtvā,’* Śrī Śukadeva describes the condition of the distressed *gopīs*. Out of excessive grief, they were breathing heavily and exhaling hot air that dried up their reddish *bimba*-fruit lips. Hanging their heads down, they started scratching the ground with their left toes, while the *kuṅkuma* on their breasts was washed away in the flow of their tears mixed with *kajjala*. Due to their severe suffering they fell silent and remained standing there.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Overwhelmed by anxiety, the greatly distressed *vraja-devīs* were benumbed and for a moment they lost their power to speak. *‘Śucaḥ’* and *‘śuṣyat’* – these two words denote hot and heavy breathing. In the word *‘śuṣyat,’* the prefix *śatra* indicates the continuous dryness of the lips. Their red lips, akin to *bimba* fruits, started to dry up. The use of the word *‘bimba’* signifies the redness and tenderness of their lips, which had now become parched and pale. *‘Caraṇena’* – the *gopīs* externally displayed their very deep anxiety by scratching the ground with their left toenails. “O Pṛthivī, O Mother Earth, you should split asunder so that we can enter inside you.” This is indeed their intention. “It is favorable for us to enter into your womb instead of remaining on top of you.” This statement indicates that the *gopīs* were standing on the ground. *‘Upāṭṭa-masibhiḥ,’* due to the flow of their *kajjala*-mixed tears, the *kuṅkuma* smeared on their breasts was washed away. *‘Mixed with kajjala’* and *‘flowing down’* – these two descriptive phrases are used in the plural form to indicate a mighty stream of tears. The

*gopīs* are in this condition due to the severe and deep sorrow in their hearts. Torment, pain and many other afflictions which have not been named are also included. This caused two *sattvika-bhāvas* to manifest – becoming pale (*vaivaryna*) and becoming stupefied (*stambha*). This is the meaning.

In this verse ‘*sma*’ means ‘famous.’ It is a well-accepted fact that even Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s joking words can make the *gopīs* feel sad. Or ‘*sma*’ can also mean ‘astonishment.’ “*Aho!* Do not be astonished to see how glorious the *gopīs’ prema* is!” Even an ordinary joking word from Śrī Kṛṣṇa can cause them to drown in an indescribable state of grief. Śrī Kṛṣṇa had challenged the *gopīs* with prohibitive words, but in Verse 31, the *gopīs* display their indifference and answer Him in such a way that neither injures nor breaks their *prema*.

The *gopīs* are exhibiting external symptoms (*anubhāvas*) caused by anxiety. Even so, their speech, in particular, does not indicate any negative intention or present any obstacle to their meeting. It is not unusual for noble ladies to become speechless when a lusty man humbly proposes to them, but one way they manifest their inner feelings is by scratching the earth. Kṛṣṇa’s rude behavior obstructed their natural flow of *rasa*, but the nature of *rasa* is such that in the face of obstruction, it expresses itself through *anubhāvas*, such as their tears, which reveal their true sentiments. They may utter some prohibitory words, but at the same time, tears will flow or some other *anubhāvas* will manifest. Unless we accept this special explanation, their behavior appears contrary to the *rasa*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In this verse Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains how the *gopīs* experienced their desperation. The *gopīs* became silent and held their heads down, indicating shyness (*lajjā*). “Alas! We gave up our deep-rooted bashfulness for the sake of *prema*, but this has become the cause of our embarrassment. We are extremely shy ladies coming from respectable families, but our love for Kṛṣṇa impelled us to forfeit our modesty.” The connoisseurs of *prema-rasa* praise this *prema* extensively, and never condemn it. The symptom of *prema* is that it can control its object, Parameśvara, the Supreme Person. “We could not control Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the object of our love, so certainly our *prema* is not genuine. Thus it was to no avail for us to give up our shyness, indeed, it was a waste.”

The *vraja-devīs* thus felt remorse, shame and anxiety. The symptom of the *gopīs*' remorse was that their faces turned dark and dry. Just as the heat of the sun dehydrates *bimba* fruits, so the air that the *gopīs* exhaled as they breathed deeply in the flurry of their lamentation was hot like the blazing sun, and their very tender *bimba*-fruit lips became dry and dark. Next, the reason for the *gopīs*' shyness and worry is explained. Holding their heads down out of shyness and anxiety, the *gopīs* started scratching the earth with their left big toes, by which they meant to say, "O Mother Earth, break open and we will enter inside you."

Now their grief is described. The stream of the *gopīs*' *kajjala*-mixed tears washed away the *kunkuma* smeared on their breasts and left two black lines there. It seemed that the sharp blade of the torment of separation severed their bodies in half, making use of the black thread of their dark tears as the cutting line. This assumption is implied. The use of '*asrair*' (tears) in the plural and the present tense of '*mṛjantya*' (washing away) indicates that the abundant flow of tears soaked their inner garments and washed away the *kunkuma* on their breasts. In other words, two currents of the Yamunā were flowing from their eyes, while the fire of their torment raged in their hearts. These two were battling with each other, one attempting to extinguish the fire, and the other trying to evaporate the water. That is, desiring to extinguish the conflagration of the agony in their hearts, the Yamunā took shelter of the *gopīs*' eyes, and was flowing in two currents that cut their bodies in half. In this conflict it is not seen if either party was defeated or victorious. The *gopīs* were stunned and, unable to tolerate such extreme misery, they stood still like statues, drowning in intense sorrow.

#### VERSE 30

*preṣṭhaṁ priyetaram iva pratibhāṣamāṇaṁ  
kṛṣṇaṁ tad-artha-vinivartita-sarva-kāmāḥ  
netre vimṛjya rudītopahate sma kiñcit  
saṁrambha-gadgada-giro 'bruvatānuraktāḥ*

The *gopīs*, being filled with the topmost *prema* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, had given up all other desires for His sake. Thus they remained unwavering in their love for Him even upon hearing His cruel words. His harsh utterances aroused such splitting pain in them

**that their eyes filled with tears, causing them to lose their power of sight completely. Wiping away their tears, they replied to Him, their voices faltering due to love-laden anger.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's words telling the *gopīs* to return back home were unpalatable to them. In the present verse the *gopīs*, having become somewhat angry, started speaking to their beloved. What was the reason for the anger arising from their *prema*? Śrī Kṛṣṇa was their lover but He was speaking harshly and sending them back. This was the cause of their love-filled anger, *pranaya-kopa*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One may object that '*preṣṭha*,' the *vraja-devīs*' beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was being *apriya*, unloving, by sending them back. Why, then, did they not drive Him out of their hearts? The answer is '*tad-artham*,' to attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That is, their desire to attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa was so fervent that they had totally renounced all other aspirations and did not want to maintain any trace of material connection. They wanted only Kṛṣṇa. Offering a palmful of water, the *gopīs* had bidden farewell to their husbands, children and other attachments. That is why they could not drag their hearts away from their lover. If one asks why that was so, the reply is that Kṛṣṇa is the condensed form of supreme bliss, and He steals the hearts of everyone. His very name Kṛṣṇa encompasses this quality. Therefore, once someone gives their heart to Śrī Vrajendra-nandana, who is well-known as Kṛṣṇa, it is not possible to take it back.

One might ask, "How were the *gopīs* able to speak after being so devastated?" This is implied in the use of the word '*saṁrambha*' (agitation). When the *gopīs*' anger was aroused, it overlaid their despondency, and enabled them to speak. That is, the force of Kṛṣṇa's neglectful words caused dejection to manifest in their hearts. But then they remembered the entreaty that His words implied, and this brought their transcendental anger to the surface, covering their grief. Wiping away the tears from their eyes and looking at the face of their beloved, who was being unloving by sending them back, they started to speak, their voices stammering from indignation. The combination of these two moods – anger and despondency – enabled them to wipe away their tears.

Compelled by this loving anger, they glanced at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's face, and they wiped their eyes, intending to answer back His every word. It is understood that their bashfulness abated due to intense sorrow. The burden of the *gopīs'* grief was so heavy that they could not lift their heads, so they saw His face only partially (*kiñcit*), not fully. Their voices were stammering with agitation due to grief and shyness. '*Anuraktā*' (firmly attached): their unwavering attachment to Him inflamed their deep sorrow upon hearing His ungracious words, as they never expected such treatment from Him.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

Thereafter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa raised His voice and said, "O *gopīs*, why are you crying in the forest for no reason? Be happy and go back to your homes." When His loud voice entered the ears of the *uraja-devīs*, they returned to consciousness and began speaking. The verse starting with '*preṣṭham*' was spoken to describe this situation. Śrī Kṛṣṇa had associated with the *gopīs* many times, so they saw Him as their beloved. But now, without considering this, He spoke very harsh, unpleasant words to them, "All of you go back home and serve your husbands." It was not proper for Him to speak like this, because the *gopīs* had given up everything for Him. '*Vinivartita*' (cease): they had given up all their desires so fully that there was not even a trace of material attachment left in them. '*Sarva-kāmāḥ*' (all desires): in using this phrase Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī's intention is to communicate that '*kāma*' used in the service of Bhagavān for His pleasure is not lust, rather it is *prema*. That is why he has used *sarva* (all) instead of *anya* (others).

Almost blind from profuse tears, the *gopīs* wiped their eyes, thinking, "Now our lives are about to end. So let us first behold our beloved to our hearts' content and then we will give up our lives. Alas, alas! Kṛṣṇa has pronounced our death sentence, even though He is our beloved and we have not committed any crime." This is why the *gopīs'* transcendental anger was aroused. "He is rebuffing us because our beauty and qualities are not up to His standard. Thus we are ineligible for intimate association." Thinking like this, the *gopīs'* felt dejected and hapless. But then love-filled anger suddenly sprouted in them, and under its influence, they began to stammer their protest against Kṛṣṇa's harsh words.

One might pose a question: Whether the *gopīs* felt unlucky or annoyed, in either case, why did they not pull their hearts away from their beloved if they were devoid of *prema*? This query is resolved by the word ‘*anuraktā*’ – no logic whatsoever can possibly influence those who are blinded by *anurāga*, or controlled by overwhelming attraction.

VERSE 31

*śrī-gopya ūcuḥ  
maivam vibho 'rhati bhavān gadituṁ nṛśaṁsaṁ  
santyajya sarva-viśayāṁś tava pāda-mūlam  
bhaktā bhajasva duravagraha mā tyajāsmān  
devo yathādi-puruṣo bhajate mumukṣūn*

**The *gopīs* said: “O omnipotent one! O dearest beloved! You are all-pervading, so You know our hearts. It is not proper for You to speak such cruel words to us. We, Your loving maidservants, have given up all our material attachments so that we can devote ourselves to serving Your lotus feet. There is no doubt that we have no control over You, because You are independent and obstinate. Still, You should reciprocate with us just as the primeval Lord Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa mercifully fulfills the desires of those who seek liberation from this world. Do not discard us.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* said, “O tyrannical one! O independent one! We have given up everything for the service of Your lotus feet, so please accept us. Do not reject us.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The beautiful *gopīs* started speaking. There is one point to consider here. All the *gopīs* have a similar mood, and thus might all speak the same thing at the same time. If they were to do this, it would create a great uproar, which would not be congenial for *rasa*. So we should accept that the four main group leaders (*yūtheśvarīs*) uttered these statements of the *gopīs* simultaneously. Just ahead in this chapter there are four most excellent



statements (*mahāvākya*) that end with the following words: “O Supreme Person, be gracious with us” (10.29.33), “Pour the ambrosia from Your lips upon us and extinguish the fire blazing in our hearts” (10.29.35), “O subduer of all misery, kindly gratify us” (10.29.38), and “Please place Your lotus hands on our breasts” (10.29.41).

Each one of these four requests was spoken by a different *yūtheśvarī*. That means that the four groups of *gopīs* were surrounding Śrī Kṛṣṇa on all sides, and the chief *gopī* from each of the four groups spoke at the same time, expressing the same feelings in four distinct ways. Even though they were standing at their respective places, they were still all situated in front of Him. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatām* 10.13.8 describes Kṛṣṇa’s picnic with his friends on the bank of the Yamunā in the *van-bhojana-līlā*: “He was surrounded by many circles of His cowherd boyfriends, yet He was facing everyone.” All the *gopīs* were facing Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the same way.

[Before presenting his commentary, the respectable commentator, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī prays at the lotus feet of the *gopīs*.] “The *vraja-devīs* are the topmost of all heroines (*nāgareśvarī*). By their mercy one can understand the profound truths behind the words they directed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I bow down to such *nāgareśvarīs*, and I offer *pranāma* to *gopī-jana-prāṇa-vallabha* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the lover and the very life of the cowherd maidens.”

Subsequently, the *gopīs* said, “We will decide later on whether having renounced our parents, husbands and other family members to serve You is to be considered religious or irreligious. In any event, we see that You will certainly be at fault for rejecting us, and there will be no way for You to rectify this.” The *gopīs* spoke the present verse ‘*maivam*’ to communicate this idea. “*He vibho*, O almighty one, it is improper for You to speak such cruel words to us.” The word ‘*maivam*’ (*mā + evam* – not in this manner) has been used to express extreme anguish. ‘*Evam*’ – “You have ordered us to go back, but it is not proper for You to say anything like this to us.”

Why are the *gopīs* saying this? “*Nṛśaṁsa* – These words are brutal, and they pierce our hearts to the core like a hard thunderbolt. They are death itself for us.” According to the *Amara-kośa* dictionary, *nṛśaṁsa* means ‘fatal’ or ‘cruel.’ “*Gaditum* (speak): one should not even utter these words, what to speak of acting upon them.” The root word ‘*gad*’ means ‘to say clearly.’ “It is not proper to speak such cruel, heart-tormenting words openly. Furthermore, You are our *prāṇa-vallabha*, the Lord of our lives. You know

full well that our hearts are very soft, melting with *prema* for You, so it is not right for You to speak such harsh words to us for any reason whatsoever.” This is the meaning. The previous verse ends with ‘*saṁrambha-gadgada-gira*,’ which means that their voices were faltering due to transcendental anger. Even being in a humble position, the *gopīs* openly expressed their indignation through all their bodily gestures, as well as through their voices.

In Verse 18 of this chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: “*Svāgataṁ vo mahā-bhāgāḥ* – O greatly fortunate *gopīs*, greetings! Was your journey here trouble-free? *Priyaṁ kiṁ karavāṇi vaḥ* – What can I do for you?” The *gopīs* thought to themselves, “Did He speak these words so respectfully in a gentle voice so that later He could order us to go back? This is against the principles of *rasa*.” The *gopīs* understood that His intention was contrary to His words, and thus they answered appropriately. The cowherd maidens anticipated that Kṛṣṇa would say, “*He priya-vadinī*, O you who speak sweet words, what can I do for you?” Expecting this, the *gopīs* reply, “You should worship us. Fulfill our hearts’ desire and serve us.” One might ask why He should serve them. They say, “We have given up everything to become the maidservants of Your feet.” This is the humble statement of the *gopīs*. Here the *gopīs* only said ‘feet,’ not ‘lotus feet,’ because Śrī Kṛṣṇa had spoken very harshly to them, and thus His feet lacked the tenderness of the lotus; indeed, they had become the very resting place of harshness. In this way the *gopīs* replied to Kṛṣṇa’s question, “*priyaṁ kiṁ karavāṇi vaḥ* – What can I do to please you?”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might respond, “O *gopīs*, I will certainly serve you, but your service is to look after your husbands’ welfare, not to serve your own personal desires.” In reply the *gopīs* say, “We have completely rejected (*santyajya*) our husbands and all other objects of sense enjoyment, and have come to You.” The prefix *san* derives from *samyaka*, meaning ‘completely.’ The *gopīs* have given up all of these with the firm resolve not to accept them again (“because they are unfavorable in our service to You”). In this verse the *gopīs* have responded to all of Kṛṣṇa’s statements, starting with the third line of Verse 18 in this chapter, ‘*vrajasyānāmayaṁ kaccid*,’ up to Verse 22, ending with ‘*duhyata*.’

One might think that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had frightened the *gopīs* by saying, “*rajanī eṣā ghora-rūpā* – this is a frightful night” (10.29.19). In the next verse, ‘*mātarāḥ pitarāḥ putrā*,’ He chastised them: “It is not proper to put your family members in distress.” For these two reasons, He ordered the *vraja*-

*ramaṇīs* to return to Vraja. So how did they answer these two statements? The *gopīs* had fully renounced all attachments, and had no affinity even for their bodies, so the fearsome words '*rajany eṣā*' etc., were ineffective.

The meaning is that in these two verses quoted here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa targeted the *vraja-ramaṇīs*' love for their bodies. But the *gopīs* countered all of His arguments with the words '*santyaṁya sarva-viṣayān*,' meaning that they had given up all attachments. The *gopīs* had completely abdicated all sense objects and all interest in the body, and had come to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, so what is the question of maintaining affinity for their bodies? They answered Him by indirect inference, "O obstinate one! We have no recourse other than You. Do not reject us because You will be at fault if you do so." This is the intended meaning. How is this so? Even the Supreme Lord, who is beyond religion and irreligion, is expected to follow *dharma*, the path of righteousness.

It was with this intention that the *gopīs* used the word '*deva*' (divine one) to refer to the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa, who reciprocates with those who seek liberation. "So won't He gratify those who desire to attain You, the original Supreme Person?" That is, those who do not seek liberation and have firm conviction only in *bhakti* are known as *amumuṁkṣu jana* (*mumuṁkṣu* meaning 'liberation' and *a* meaning 'not interested'). '*Mumuṁkṣu*' can also refer to those who have rejected everything except the Lord Himself. It applies as well to those who have a strong desire to give up all varieties of sense enjoyment to attain Bhagavān. The primeval Lord accepts all of these devotees who give priority to their *bhajana*, and the *gopīs* implied, "You should also reciprocate with us in the same way."

In some editions '*bhajataḥ*' is found instead of '*bhajasva*.' '*Bhajataḥ*' is in the plural and ends in the second case. In such an instance '*mumuṁkṣūn*' (also second case and plural) will become the adjective of *bhajataḥ* (worshippers). Then, if *bhajasva* (please reciprocate, present tense) in the original verse is replaced by *bhajataḥ*, the interpretation is as follows: "The primeval Lord accepts all those who are desirous of doing His *bhajana*, including those who are practicing and those who are perfected." (*Sakāma* devotees, those with some personal motives, are excluded here.) "He does not reject them. You should also reciprocate with us in the same way."

The *gopīs* were exclusively devoted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form as a cowherd boy (*gopendra-nandana*), and they had no respect for any kind of *jnāna*, yet all kinds of knowledge serve the *gopīs*. The evidence for this is found in *Śrīmad-*

*Bhāgavatam* 5.18.12: “The demigods, along with their good qualities, reside in one who has unalloyed devotion to Bhagavān.” In *Nārada Pañcarātra* it is stated: “*bhukti, mukti, siddhi*, etc., which grant astonishing enjoyment, serve as maidservants to *hari-bhakti* Mahā-devī, the grand goddess of devotion to Śrī Hari.” Therefore, incited by *jñāna* and other *śaktis*, the loving words spoken by the *gopīs* were endowed with supreme opulence and knowledge. Such love-filled speech manifested due to the special miraculous power of *bhakti*, and pronounced the glories of the *gopīs*. In other words, when the *gopīs* were in a humble state, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s majesty manifested to them; they understood Him to be the Supreme Lord, so they spoke words expressing His opulence. That is why they said, “*He vibho*, all-powerful one! O omniscient one! You are all-pervading, residing within us and outside also. Thus You know the desires of our hearts. We are surrendered to Your lotus feet, so please reciprocate with us. Otherwise Your promise in *Gītā* 4.11 to reward Your devotees according to their surrender to You will become false.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might respond, “O respected *gopīs*, supreme philosophers, why do you desire material happiness?” Apprehending this, the *gopīs* said ‘*santyañya*’ (completely renouncing): “We have renounced all varieties of material enjoyment and desire only transcendental pleasure, because amorous play with You is the mature fruit (*vilāsa*) of *prema*; it is the essence of all goals and is the greatest wealth. So to prove the truth of Your statement in *Gītā*, You should also renounce everything and enjoy with us.” This is the deep meaning. “*He duravagraha*, O independent and obstinate one! You are free to do whatever You like. You do not depend on anyone, but don’t reject us, who are surrendered to You. You are Parameśvara, the Supreme Lord, and irreligion cannot touch You. Furthermore the *śrutis* have declared that You are *satya-saṅkalpa*, whatever You speak comes to pass, and You have pledged to fulfill the solemn vows of the devotees. To reject us would contradict the affirmations of the *śrutis*, and to violate their words would be highly improper.”

‘*Sarva-viśayān*’ refers to rejection of all kinds of personal enjoyments, starting from ruling the universe up to the attainment of Vaikuṇṭha. ‘*Te*’ (You): “Those who are incapable of renouncing You, because they are unwilling to do so, are the *amumuṁkṣun*. Please accept such loyal, surrendered souls.” This meaning comes out by using the second case instead of the sixth case for the syllable *te*. If the fourth case of *te* is also replaced with the second case, then the meaning would be ‘*mumuṁkṣu*’ – “desirous of renouncing all

kinds of enjoyment to attain You only. You are respected by the whole world (*deva*), so please reciprocate with such loyal, surrendered souls because by not doing so, You would negate Your godliness. The whole world worships You because You are the complete primeval Lord (*yathādi-puruṣo*) and the Supreme Bhagavān, so it is not appropriate to speak such harsh words (*maivam vibho 'rhati bhavān*)."

The *yajña-patnīs* also uttered such pleading words. The prayers they offered were similar, but the heart-felt meanings were not the same. The very beautiful Vraja maidens are naturally astute, and their grief-filled prayers reflected their innate contrary mood. In other words, due to their natural expertise in cleverly churning the *rasa*, they expressed their contrariness even while they stammered their humble plea, immersed in supreme grief. For example they said: "*evam* (in this way) – Please act agreeably and talk to us sweetly. It is not proper for You to speak rudely to those who have renounced all personal gratification and become the maidservants of Your lotus feet. *Duravagraham*, O stubborn one, reciprocate with us without restriction." Then, due to their contrary mood, they spoke in jest: '*Asmān*' – us, '*ā*' – completely; '*tyaja*' – reject: "Reject us completely." Prabhu accepts only devotees, not the non-devotees. The *gopīs* acknowledged this by saying '*deva*,' which implies reverence, but actually they were joking, and thus they reflected their inner moods.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After hearing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's rude words, the *gopīs* became surcharged with emotions and voiced their love-filled anger. "You are giving us religious instruction, yet at the same time You are bringing a mass of sin upon Yourself. This is not favorable for You." With this intention the *gopīs* spoke this verse starting with '*maivam*.' "*He vibho*, O all-mighty one! Why are You using such harsh words and indulging in sin by murdering us? Just like a brutal killer, You have shot the arrow of your cruel (*nṛśaṁsam*) words at us. This will surely bring about our death. We will give up our bodies and go to Yamarāja's abode; we will not follow Your instruction to return to Vraja. There are millions of us, and You will be responsible for killing millions of women. It is not proper for You to commit such a sinful act, for You are the son of Śrī Nanda Mahārāja, who is celebrated as a most religious person. If You do

not want to perpetrate this sinful act of killing all of us, then accept us. We have given up all types of sense enjoyment and worship You exclusively, so in the same way You should also renounce all Your sense enjoyment and reciprocate with us.” Here the word ‘*sarva-viṣaya*’ (all sense enjoyment) is used instead of *anya-viṣaya* (other sense enjoyment). This indicates that physical contact with Śrī Bhagavān cannot be considered sense enjoyment.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “O lustful women, you have rejected your husbands and are attracted to Me. Have your husbands not satisfied your passion?” The *gopīs* reply, “*He duravagraha!*” Here ‘*duravagraha*’ is understood thus: *du* means ‘full of faults,’ and *avagraha* means ‘restricted rainfall.’ For example, a farmer desires rainfall, but the cloud is *duravagraha*, that is, it releases poison instead of water. The *gopīs* argued: “O cloud, You are only pouring poison. We are *cātakī* birds, and You are like a rain cloud. Even though far away, the cloud saves the *cātakīs*’ lives by quenching their thirst, thus it is their dearmost friend. So the *cātakīs* drink only the water raining from the clouds. They do not drink water from any other source, even it may be an ocean full of nectar. We are also *cātakīs* of the Kṛṣṇa-cloud only. Even if You are far from us, You are still our dearmost, but due to our misfortune, You are pouring poison, and not the rainwater that will quench our thirst. It is Your choice if You do not agree to pour rainwater. We will not be unhappy, but You must know that we will drink this poison and accept death. We will not take anything else to quench our thirst. That is, we will not drink water from the nearby reservoir of our husbands. This is our nature. If You are even slightly inclined to show Your gratitude, then don’t reject us.”

Kṛṣṇa might reply, “It is true that *cātakīs* depend on clouds, but clouds do not rely on the *cātakīs* for anything. It is inconsequential to the cloud whether the *cātakīs* live or die; in either case, there is no loss or gain for the cloud.” The *gopīs* reply, “This is true, because the cloud is made of dull matter, and it can be indifferent to the life and death of *cātakīs*. But you are not inert like the cloud. You are like Nārāyaṇa, and the crest-jewel of clever persons, so You should act like Nārāyaṇa. You should be merciful and should accept us; do not reject us. Those who desire liberation renounce all kinds of sense enjoyment and worship the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa, who mercifully accepts them and fulfills their heartfelt desires. So why don’t You fulfill our heartfelt desire? We have given up all varieties of sense pleasure to serve Your lotus feet.”

## VERSE 32

*yat paty-apatya-suhrdām anuvṛttir aṅga  
 strīṇām sva-dharma iti dharma-vidā tvayoktam  
 astv evam etad upadeśa-pade tvayīśe  
 preṣṭho bhavāms tanu-bhṛtām kila bandhur ātmā*

**“O beloved, You are fully conversant with the esoteric aspects of religion. You have instructed us on the ethical principle that a lady’s prescribed duty is to serve her husband, children and relatives appropriately. According to this, we should serve You, our preceptor, because You, being directly the Supreme Lord, are the ultimate goal of all instructions. You are the dearest friend and the very soul of all living beings, so service to You automatically includes the service of husbands and children.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* said (sarcastically), “O Kṛṣṇa, You know all the principles of religion, thus You are telling us that a lady’s prescribed duty is to serve her husband, children and relatives. You are imparting religious instruction to us, but keep Your counseling to Yourself.” One might ask, “What is the reason to give such advice?” The answer is this: “You are the Supreme Lord. According to the truths revealed in the scriptures, all instructions lead to You, so You are the only suitable object for all these instructions.” Kṛṣṇa might respond, “How do you know that I am the Supreme Lord?” Anticipating this, the *gopīs* said, “You are certainly the Paramount Soul, the enjoyer of all that exists. You are indeed the Supreme Master. Thus, You are the dearest friend of all living beings, so whatever duties we have towards our kinsman culminate in You.

“We would have followed whatever instructions You gave us if You were a religious teacher, and we had come to inquire from You about *dharma*, accepting that You are truly knowledgeable regarding *dharma*. But You are not a spiritual teacher, and furthermore we have not come to inquire about *dharma*. Rather, You are the Supreme Soul, the conclusion of all religions. So, since we have achieved You, why do we need to perform any other religious procedure? *‘Bhartuḥ śuśrūṣaṇām strīṇām’* (10.29.24): these instructions that You have given should remain with You only. Don’t You know that instruction

should be given to those who need it? But You are the Supreme Lord and Master. Are masters like this? Should You give such instructions to those who have accepted You as Master? No! This can never be proper.”

Kṛṣṇa: “Why do You say that it is not proper to give such instructions to those who see Me as their master?” The *gopīs* answered, “You are the soul and the ultimate goal of all living beings. You are telling us that our husbands deserve our service, but actually You occupy the post of husband.” One might ask, “How so?” The *gopīs* replied, “You are the Supreme Lord, the presiding deity of all husbands and children, and the Master dwelling in everyone. Husbands and children have no existence without the Supreme Lord. Take the example of someone mistaking a rope for a snake. In this instance, the snake is situated in the rope, but one who has understood the reality of the rope does not think of a snake. In the same way, how will the presence of so-called husbands and children delude those who have understood that everything dwells in You?”

All the rest is the same, and there is no need to expand the discussion any further.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object: “*bhartuḥ śuśrūṣaṇaṁ strīṇāṁ* – ‘It is a woman’s duty to serve her husband and other family members.’ Why are you violating this injunction? For noble ladies such as yourselves, serving one’s husband is the supreme *dharma*. Why are you transgressing this command?” The *gopīs* anticipated that Kṛṣṇa would present the doctrine expounding *karma* (*karma-mīmāṃsā*), and they countered with Vedānta (*brahma-mīmāṃsā*), which is the ultimate conclusion of the Absolute Truth and which opposes *karma-mīmāṃsā*. On the strength of their intellect, they showed the shortcomings in Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s statement by imposing *ātmā-tattva* on Him. And in the present verse ‘*yat pati*,’ they affirm, “We are not involved in any irreligious act.”

‘*Dharma-vid*’ (knower of religion) is a sarcastic comment referring to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. “Your directive that a woman’s topmost duty to serve her husband portrays the actual knowledge of a *dharma-vid* like You. ‘*Upadeśa-pada*’ – in reality, this instruction applies to You only.” Here the phrase ‘*upadeśa-pada*’ means ‘the collective instructions from all the scriptures.’ “*Śāstra-yo-nitvāt* (*Brahma-sutra* 1.1.3): *Brahma* is the origin of all the scriptures. All the Vedas



and other scriptures give evidence for this.” *“Tattu samanvayāt (Brahma-sutra 1.1.4): all the scriptures are linked with brahma.”* According to this logic, all the conclusions of the scriptures terminate in *brahma*, the Supreme Spirit, so this instruction of serving one’s husband actually applies to Him.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “How can I be the subject matter of all the teachings of the scriptures?” The *gopīs* shrewdly reply, “Certainly (*kila*) You are the Supreme Soul.” One might ask, “How is that?” The answer is this: “You are the dearest of all embodied beings. When a person loves someone else, they do so for the pleasure of their own soul, and You, the Supreme Soul, are the object of everyone’s unalloyed *prema*. You are also everyone’s ever well-wisher and pure-hearted friend. Paramātmā, the Supersoul, infuses the living force into the senses and bodies of all the living beings, so You are their dearest friend. This proves that You are the Supreme Soul and the Almighty Master. Consequently, You are the only one worthy of service, and by that service to You, one reaps the result of all kinds of religious performances.” This is the meaning.

Kṛṣṇa might say, “O worshipful ones among the society of righteous people! You may give up all the objects of sense enjoyment if you wish, but you must still perform your own duty.” The *gopīs* respond with a bit of envy with the phrase ‘*yat pati.*’ “You are imparting instruction, but it is You who should be the object of that instruction, not us. You are the right candidate for Your religious commands.” Kṛṣṇa might say, “How is this possible?” The *gopīs* reply with the words ‘*preṣṭha*’ (dearest) and ‘*bandhu*’ (You fulfill all desires): “You attract the hearts of all the embodied living beings because You inspire everyone as the presiding deity of the heart. Therefore, you are the Soul. It is Your fault, not ours, and You are the one who must be taught to rectify Your fault.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s explanation is in the mood of awe and reverence, but it is relevant for this commentary as well. He has proved that only the Supreme Soul is to be accepted by explaining the theory of illusion (*vivarta-vāda*), in which one mistakenly accepts the individual soul as the Supreme Spirit (*brahma*), and he has also given the logic of briefly accepting a hypothetical tenet (*abhyupagama*). He has indicated that *ātmā* is the enjoyer, without specifying whether this ‘soul’ is *jīvātmā* or Paramātmā. Yet it should be understood that this *ātmā* indicates the Supreme Lord, who is the sole enjoyer.

An example is given to explain this point. The king is called the enjoyer of the country, but it is actually the residents, and not the king, who relish the kingdom. Here the enjoyer means the ‘master’ or ‘controller.’ In the same way, this enjoyment of the soul is also understood as the enjoyment of the Supreme Lord. If this meaning is not accepted, then Śrī Kṛṣṇa is understood to be a *jīva*, in which case, the present subject becomes meaningless. (The Supreme Master is implied, not the *jīvas*, the individual souls). This means that, as the Supreme Controller, He is the enjoyer of all objects. Nevertheless, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has not specifically said this. He has only used the word *ātmā* in a general sense to establish that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *sarva-svarūpatva*, meaning that everything is in Him, and nothing is separate from Him.

In his commentary Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda gives a second meaning, for example: “You are not the instructor of *dharma*, and we have not come to You to inquire about it. You are *ātmā*, You are the soul.” This statement should be understood as a humble entreaty. “*Ātmā* cannot be the instructor; it has to be somebody else. *Ātmā* cannot be the teacher of *ātmā*. So we do not have any instructor, and we have seen You, the *ātmā*, directly. Therefore, we are outside the jurisdiction of the rule of serving the husband.”

According to the Vaiṣṇava viewpoint (regarding the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda), *yadu-uktam* is explained in two different ways. Firstly, ‘*svāmini*’ is accepted as ‘master;’ actually, it means ‘sole shelter.’ Those who take shelter of Śrī Bhagavān are not under the command of any religion or irreligion. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.5.41 states: “All those who have taken shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Mukunda by body, mind and words are no longer indebted to the demigods, sages, family members, ancestors, or anyone else.” In this way, *bhakti* to Bhagavān has superseded *dharma*, and this is also confirmed according to objective reality (*vastu-vicāra*). Secondly, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has given the meaning of the word *adhiṣṭhān* as *īśvara* being the cause of the vitality of husband, children and family members.

The *śrūti*s (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.2.15, *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 2.2.10, and *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.14) confirm this: “*yasya bhāsā sarvam idaṁ vibhāti* – this whole world is dazzling due to the effulgence coming from Bhagavān.” In the present verse the word ‘*kila*,’ meaning ‘certainly,’ is in a mood of awe and reverence. ‘*Upadeśa-pade*’ means that ‘the instructions given by *śāstra* and *guru* culminate in the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān.’ “Some

persons accept the position of a husband or a son, but You, as *ātmā* and Paramātmā, are the original basis (*adhiṣṭhān*) of husband and son. You are the source of their living force, so You are the only one to be served, even in service to their bodies.” All the scriptures and all *gurus* prohibit all the cheating religions, and give instruction to worship only the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān.

The *gopīs* joked with Śrī Kṛṣṇa: “You should keep to Yourself these instructions regarding service to the husband. When You assumed the irresistible feminine form of Mohinī, did You practice the duty of serving a husband? Why not? You are *upadeśa-pada*, the preceptor. If *guru* gives the instruction to follow *dharma* but does not practice himself, the disciple will not be inclined to follow that advice.” The *gopīs* say ‘*īśa*’ (Supreme Lord) to assert, “You are directly the Supreme Lord, and thus, being expert in all the arts and in all fields of knowledge, You are qualified to practice such *dharma*. You may think that no one will love You for disguising Yourself as a woman, but You should not think like that because You are loved by everyone.” Indeed, because He has such a fascinating nature, He is loved by all. That is why the *gopīs* said ‘*preṣṭham*’ (dearest) and ‘*bandhur ātmā*’ (close relative, indeed one’s very self).

Contrary meaning: “*He* Śrī Kṛṣṇa! You are expert in *dharma*; that is why You are instructing us to serve our husbands and children, this being a woman’s foremost duty (*sva-dharma*).” Here the meaning of *sva-dharma* is given as *su* + *adharma* – extremely irreligious. All this has been said in a mocking tone to accomplish a particular purpose. “One should serve the actual husband, not the illusory one. You are that real husband, and You are to be served.” The *gopīs* continue, “You spoke this instruction. You, as the all-powerful master (*īśa*), are capable of speaking and putting this into practice, so You are the most qualified recipient for this instruction.”

Kṛṣṇa might ask, “Why?” The *gopīs* reply, “*tanu-bhṛtām* (for all embodied living beings): You are the shelter of *prema* for four kinds of living beings [demigods in the sky, birds in the air, aquatics in the water and other living entities who wander on land] in Vṛndāvana. You are the dearest (*preṣṭham*) object of love; as *bandhu*, You are the cause and abode of *prema*; thus You are the soul. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.4.68 states: ‘*sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ sādḥūnām hṛdayaṁ tv aham – sādhus are My heart and I am their hearts.*’ In this way, You are the object as well as

the shelter of the saints' hearts, and vice versa, they for You. If You become indifferent to the unlimited *sādhus* in Vṛndāvana, then we can give up our attachment to our husbands, for they are also residents of Vṛndāvana but few in number." Jokingly, the *gopīs* also state, "This is the reason why you are so unconcerned about us."

If we consider the phrase '*bhartuḥ śuśrūṣaṇam*' (faithful service to the husband) in Verse 24 in relation to the *gopīs*' words in this verse, the meaning will be contrary: "He Kṛṣṇa, You have commanded women to serve their husbands, children and other family members as their prescribed duty. Let the recipient of this service be You, the Supreme Master, the instructor Himself, as You are the dearest friend and very soul of the living entities. We know very well how to deal with our husbands. There is no need to advise us any further in this regard."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Then some brazen (*prakharā*) *gopīs* spoke this verse starting with '*yat*,' intending to defeat Śrī Kṛṣṇa through His own words. "Reminding us of a woman's prescribed duty, You have commanded us to serve our husbands and other family members. We neither oppose Your order nor do we present any argument against it; on the contrary, we follow it all the time. You might ask, 'How do you observe it?' We answer with '*upadeśa-pade*' – apply this advice to Yourself. You are the most qualified instructor of *dharma*, and You are advising us to serve our husbands. We have come here to assist that husband who is worthy of our devoted attention. So tell us, is there any husband other than You whom we should serve? The scriptures tell us that we should first tend to the *ācārya*, and then later serve others. According to this logic, by attending to the *ācārya*, one achieves genuine religiosity, and thus attains the Supreme Lord. Furthermore, if the *ācārya* is accepted as the Supreme Lord Himself, then how can one find someone superior to Him to worship? This means that when the Supreme Lord Himself is the *guru*, one is expected to serve Him, and no other husband."

The *gopīs* addressed Kṛṣṇa as '*īśa*' (Supreme Master) "You are dear to everyone as their true friend since You Yourself are the Supreme Controller and the Soul of all living beings. To serve a husband who accepts the presence of Paramātmā is real *dharma*, but the scriptures do not approve

service to a husband who is against Paramātmā. Husband, sons and other relatives are dead bodies without You. When someone dies, the relatives take the body to the cremation ground and perform the last rites. This is the process prescribed in the scriptures. You are the Supreme Lord incarnate, so by serving You, service to the husband is automatically accomplished. What is the purpose of serving a husband whose face has already been burned in the funeral pyre because he is unaware that You are the Supersoul and is opposed to You?"

The objection might be raised that pure love naturally keeps *aiśvarya-jñāna* covered. Therefore how could these love-filled *gopīs* have this knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's majesty in their hearts? The answer to this is found in *Śrī Nārada-Pañcaratna* and other such books, which record the symptoms of *prema*. These are explained in *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*: "*Prema* is by nature sometimes heating and sometimes cooling, and the combination of meeting and separation releases many different kinds of *rasas*; thus *prema* manifests an indescribable grandeur."

Rūpa Gosvāmī also writes in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.38):

*brahmānando bhaved eṣa  
cet parārdha-guṇī-kṛtāḥ  
naiti bhakti-sukhāmbhodheḥ  
paramāṇu-tulām api*

"If the bliss of merging in the Brahman effulgence (*brahmānanda*) is multiplied by the number of days in Brahmā's lifespan, it still cannot be compared to a single particle of the pleasure of tasting the mellows of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweetness."

This shows that the bliss of performing devotional service is vastly greater than the pleasure derived from *brahmānanda*. For the *gopīs* at the time of separation, the same bliss generates a drastic anguish, which is more intense than the heat from millions of suns. At this time Śrī Bhagavān's attributes related to *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya* are clearly manifested. That is, *prema* arising out of separation has a heating effect and, like full sunshine, illuminates everything very clearly. Thus all of the beloved's majesty and sweetness are revealed vividly; nothing remains hidden.

In contrast, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *vraja-devīs* meet, the same *prema* generates a bliss that is as cooling as millions of moons, and only His

sweetness is visible. Meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa is nectarean, and the taste of this nectar, like the ambrosia of the moon, is so intoxicating that His majesty remains hidden. However, the *prema* at the time of separation is different; it is always dazzling, so it reveals both *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya*. Hence, if there is some *aiśvarya-bhāva* at the time of union, it indicates that the *prema* is immature. However, in this case, the *vraja-devīs* anticipate separation even while meeting directly with their beloved, and thus, due to their full-blown *prema*, they realize His *aiśvarya* and speak about His regal qualities. What to speak of *prema* revealing qualities that do exist, the power of *prema* is so great that it inspires one to glorify qualities that actually do not exist. Such a phenomenon of exaggerating qualities that are not factual is witnessed in the character of Bharata Mahārāja, who, after seeing the footprints of the baby deer, said: “*kim vā are ācaritaṁ tapas tapasvinyānaya yad iyaṁ avaniḥ!* Ah! This Earth is most fortunate! What austerities has it performed that it is adorned with the footprints of the baby deer and is thus used as the place for the *brāhmaṇas*’ fire sacrifices?” (SB 5.8.23). Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has confirmed this.

VERSE 33

*kurvanti hi tvayi ratim kuśalāḥ sva ātman  
nitya-priye pati-sutādibhir ārti-daiḥ kim  
tan naḥ prasīda parameśvara mā sma chindyā  
āśāṁ dhṛtāṁ tvayi cirād aravinda-netra*

**“O beloved, exalted personalities who are expert in *śāstra* love only You because, being eternally dear to all living entities, You are their most intimate friend and indeed their very Soul. What is achieved by loving husband, children and other relatives, who are all subject to death and are simply the cause of suffering? O almighty one, You should be pleased with us. O lotus-eyed one, kindly do not cut down the creeper of our long cherished aspiration to have Your association.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In this verse starting with ‘*kurvanti*,’ the *vraja-devīs* appealed to Kṛṣṇa, strengthening their argument on the basis of morality. ‘*Kuśala*’ means

‘expert in *sāstra*.’ “We are Your subjects, subservient to Your rule, so what business do we have with children, etc.?” Those who have directly seen the very Soul of all living beings have no need to maintain any relation with children and other family members.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *vraja-devīs* had renounced their service to their husbands and other family members on the strength of *sāstra*, and in the present verse they abdicated their family responsibilities on the basis of righteous behavior. Verse 20 of the present chapter, ‘*mātarāḥ pitarāḥ putrā*,’ describes in detail the bonds of the *gopīs*’ affection, but in the first half of the present verse starting with ‘*kurvanti hi*,’ they thoroughly rejected these domestic ties. The word ‘*hi*’ (indeed) affirms their decision. ‘*Kuśalāḥ*’ (proficient) means clever, expert persons who can discriminate the substance from the insubstantial. Śrī Gargācārya confirms this in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.26.21: “*prītiṁ kurvanti mānavāḥ* – Those most fortunate persons who love Kṛṣṇa are *kuśala*. Such proficient persons have an eternal, spontaneous love for You (*ratī*). For this reason, we *gopīs* and others always cherish the desire to have a blissful loving exchange with You. In contrast, husbands and other family members cause us misery because they are contrary.” ‘*Sva ātman . . . ārti-daiḥ*’ – *sve* means ‘relatives,’ *ātman* means ‘self,’ *ārti-daiḥ* means ‘those who give misery.’ “Due to being opposed to You, our husbands and others obstruct us when we are going for *abhisāra* and thus give us pain. Therefore, we should cut off all relations with such inimical persons, who are trying to keep us away from You. We have no interest in such relatives.”

The word *sua* is a pronoun, but here the words *sve* and *svasmin* are both in the seventh case singular, because the word *sua* comes under the category of *pūrva* and other pronouns. The nine words beginning with *pūrva*, *smāt* and *smin* are optional.<sup>4</sup>

In Verse 31 the Vraja maidens in the first group said, “*bhaktāḥ bhajasva*: We have worshiped Your lotus feet, so You should reciprocate with us. Don’t reject us.” The *gopīs* concluded their appeal with the same mood in the present verse: “*tan naḥ* – You should be pleased with us. This is our desire.”

4 Ed: This is explained in *Harināmāmṛta-Vyākaraṇa*, Chapter *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*, aphorism 323: *pūrvādibhyo navabhyaḥ smāt-sminau vā*.

Having told their beloved what He should do, the *gopīs* next confirmed their intention by telling Him what He should not do: “*mā sma chindyā* – Do not cut down the flourishing creeper of our hope. We have been enamored of You from babyhood. As soon as our awareness started developing, we became fixed in our desires towards You. Don’t cut the creeper of our desire. Rather, let it fructify. Otherwise, our life will shortly come to an end because we totally depend on You.” This hope had completely negated the *gopīs*’ relationship with their husbands.

The *gopīs* expressed their hope in a special way: “*He varada*, O You who award benedictions! The day You stole the young girls’ clothes, You said, ‘I have understood your intention in performing this vow’ (*SB* 10.22.25). You granted them some special boon. Now You are breaking Your word. You are *īśvara*, the Supreme Master, so You can accomplish anything, even that which is impossible for others. We have been nourishing a desire for You in our hearts for a long time. Actually You instilled this in us, and now, who else but You can fulfill it?”

Kṛṣṇa might reply, “Why did you nourish such a desire?” The *gopīs* answer, “*He aravinda-netra*, which woman, upon beholding Your lotus eyes, will not be overcome with desire for You?” Later on, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.31.2, the *gopīs* will say: “*śarad-udāśaye* – O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, master of erotic mellows! O You who fulfill the deepest desires! We are Your unpaid maidservants. Your eyes supersede the beauty of the whorl of the most exquisite, fully blossomed lotus growing in an autumn pond. With these beautiful eyes You are killing us. Is this not murder? Is killing with Your deadly glance not considered murder in this world?”

The *vraja-ramaṇīs* have addressed Kṛṣṇa as *aravinda-netra*, lotus-eyed one, due to the love-filled anger that is inherent in their spontaneous *prema*. Indirectly, they meant to say, “Your lotus eyes have a very sharp edge like a whirling disc and they are ripping our hearts apart.” They proffer yet another meaning: “The lotus closes at night, and so do Your lotus eyes. Since they are closed at night and cannot see, it is logical for You to neglect us, even though we are the most beautiful of maidens.” The *gopīs* joked in this way. Using the metaphor *aravinda* also implies: “Your eyes are like lotuses. It would appear that You remove all kinds of afflictions just by Your glance, but You are behaving in a contrary manner with us. This is not proper.”



*Aiśvarya-pakṣa-artha*, explanation in awe and reverence: “*kurvanti hi tvayi ratim kuśalāḥ* – The scriptures declare that expert devotees (*kuśalāḥ*) like Nārada not only have faith in You, but also possess *ratī*, a highly developed, special love, through which they worship You. This is befitting because You are ‘*nitya-priya*,’ eternally dear. So, *nitya-priya*, it is not our fault if we love You. Where do eternality (*nitya*) and dearness (*priya*) come from? You are *nitya-priya*, because You are the Soul of all souls (*sve ātmanī*), the Paramātmā, or Supersoul. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.55 it is said: ‘O Mahārāja Parīkṣit, You should understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be the Supersoul, the Soul of all souls.’ This means that You are the abode of pleasure. Otherwise how could You be the source of pure, unconditional love (*nirupadhika-prema*)? What use do we have for husbands? Not even the slightest bit!”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might retort, “Your husbands are also eternally dear to Me.” The *gopīs* reply, “How can that be, when they give us pain? We worship You in a way which Śrī Nārada and other proficient devotees aspire to, but our husbands oppose our devotion to You, so what is the use of such husbands?” *He varadeśvara*, O topmost bestower of blessings! With this address the *gopīs* are declaring that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Master of all those who grant benedictions. “You never fail to bestow upon Your worshipers whatever they desire, so how will our prayer not be successful?” The same meaning applies to the upcoming commentaries.

Meaning showing indifference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object, “I am dear to all the embodied living beings. They love Me according to their nature, why don’t you also display Your natural amorous feelings for Me in the same way?” Expecting such an answer from Him, the *gopīs* retort, “Married ladies who are expert in their household duties (*kuśalāḥ*) are fortunate that their husbands alleviate all their sorrows. For them, their homes and their own souls are dear, so how can they be romantically attracted to You? Never! Their beloved family life would be ruined if they became attracted to You (*sva*). In general, chaste ladies never deviate from their vows to their husbands, and in the affluence of their domestic life, they do not feel any shortage. They live in the prosperity of home, husband and children, so how can they ever become devoted to You? Never! Do not imagine this even in Your dream. *He varada*, O You who fulfill desires! *He īśvara*, O master of Gokula! Kindly be pleased with us. Desist from any improper act.”

Now the *gopīs* are giving the meaning of '*naḥ prasīda*' (be merciful to us): "We will not stay here any longer. Give us permission to go home. Give up the desire of Your heart to have direct contact with us."

In this verse, '*paramēśvara*' (Supreme Controller) has been used rather than '*varadeśvara*' (He who grants boons), and '*chindhyāt*' (active voice) in place of '*chindyāḥ*' (passive voice – to cut down). In the *gopīs*' obscure, or elliptical, talk, the word *bhavān*, the respectful form of You, is omitted.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Some *gopīs* continued the line of reasoning presented in the previous verses, and now, in the present verse '*kurvanti*,' they quoted Śrī Gargācārya to strengthen their case on moral grounds. "Those who love Śrī Kṛṣṇa are most fortunate, because they are never overcome by lust and the other enemies. Kṛṣṇa always protects them just as Śrī Viṣṇu always defends the demigods from the demons.' Those who firmly believe this are most intelligent, and such intelligent persons have eternal, spontaneous affection for You. You are the object of their love (*sva*), and You are their Soul (*ātman*), so You are forever dear to them (*nitya-priya*).

"The love and affection for husband and children is based on bodily relationship, and is thus is temporary. We don't love those persons because they cause us distress, especially when they create obstacles for us at the time of *abhisāra*, so there is no reason to maintain any relation with them. Therefore, be pleased with us and protect our lives. If You do not care about saving us married *gopīs*, then let it be, but why are You making these unmarried girls cry? *He varada*, O bestower of boons! You told us, 'I have come to know of your solemn promise, and I will fulfill your desire in the coming nights.' Have You forgotten this?

"You might say, 'I am pleased with the unmarried *gopīs* because of their worship of Kātyāyanī, but why I should be pleased with you?'" To this the *gopīs* reply, "There might not be any reason; but You should be pleased with us nonetheless." Here the *gopīs* are making a very humble entreaty. "O Supreme Master, You are independent to act according to Your wish, but we have been completely enamored of You from childhood, and as soon as our awareness started developing, we began nurturing the desire to perform some special *sevā* for You. Now the creeper of our desire – a creeper that You Yourself

planted in our hearts – is bearing fruit, so please do not cut it down. Noble persons would never do such a thing.” The word ‘*cirāt*’ (long-standing) refers to the desire that the *gopīs* had been cherishing since early childhood.

“*He aravinda-locana*, O lotus-eyed one! When we were just entering youth, You planted *bhāva* in our hearts with the glance from Your tender lotus eyes. That *bhāva* took the form of the seed of the creeper of hope, and it is now bearing fruit.” In *rasa-śāstra* it is said, “When the eyes connect, the heart becomes enamored, and the lovers start meditating on how they can meet.” The *gopīs* continue, “Hearing about Your beauty and qualities, and having Your direct *darśana* has caused the creeper of our hopes to grow, and now it is embellished with relishable fruits and flowers, and it will bear more in the future. So why are You ready to cut it down today with the dagger of Your harsh words? No gentleman cuts down a tree full of fruits, especially when he himself has sown the seed and nurtured the plant. Don’t You know that? The science of ethics declares that it is improper to cut down even a poisonous tree that one has nourished and cared for.”

#### VERSE 34

*cittam sukkena bhavatāpahṛtaṁ gr̥heṣu  
yan nirviśaty uta karāv api gr̥hya-kṛtye  
pāḍau padaṁ na calatas tava pāda-mūlād  
yāmaḥ katham vrajam atho karavāma kiṁ vā*

“*He mana-mohana*, O enchanter of the heart! Till now our hearts were happily absorbed in household matters, and our hands were also busy with domestic chores, but You have very easily plundered our hearts. As we have been robbed of the power to think and our movements consequently curtailed, our feet refuse to take even one step away from Your lotus feet. Pray tell us, how can we return to Vraja? Indeed, what would we do there?”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

“You are asking us to return to Vraja, but this is quite impossible because You have stolen our hearts and other senses.” This is what the *gopīs* have expressed in the present verse ‘*cittam*.’ “Till now, our hearts were happily

engaged in household affairs and our hands were busy in housework, but with great delight You have kidnapped them.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “To ensure a comfortable stay at home, it is not advisable to leave your husbands and the rest of the family.” Expecting such a statement, the *gopīs* pointed out the problems involved in living in that home in this verse ‘*cittam*.’ “This home is not a happy place, it only gives us pain. You have stolen our hearts, which were happily (*sukhena*) engrossed in household affairs. But now, seeing You as the abode of true bliss, we have come to realize that these homes are places of suffering.” If *sukhena* is in the third place (*tratiya*), then the meaning will be: “You derived great pleasure in stealing our hearts, and You have stolen away the power of our two feet, which were employed in household work, moving about here and there. Now they are not moving even one step away from Your lotus feet, having lost their power to go anywhere else.” This means that the power of the hands and feet has been taken away along with all the senses. “Yet the sound of Your flute attracted us to come here. After this, how can we go back to Vraja?”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might suggest, “O delicate ones, if it is so, then I will lead the way and you follow Me.” The *gopīs* reply, “What shall we do there?” When the heart has been stolen, all the senses go along with the heart. Here the hands and feet are especially being emphasized, because their hands cannot continue to serve their husbands and do the household chores, and the feet are incapable of moving anywhere else. The word ‘*ūā*’ (furthermore) in the present verse suggests a group – their hearts, all their senses, hands and feet. The rest has been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda.

“That heart that was immersed in pleasure and in the objects of the senses now refuses to enter the house again because You have kidnapped it. So how can we possibly continue doing household chores?” Kṛṣṇa might reply, “*He graheśvarī*, O queens of the houses! You should reason with your hearts and convince them to enter there.” *Gopīs*: “You have also abducted our two hands, so they have become powerless to do household work. If You say, ‘Even so, it is not proper to stay here. Return to your homes,’ we would reply, ‘Our two feet have been attracted to You, and they will not take one step away from You.’ So how can we return to Vraja, and what would we

do there? The heart that is absorbed in you, the hands that are engaged in your activities and the two feet that are standing next to You are incapable of going anywhere else.”

Meaning displaying humor: “We had no reason to come to the forest, nor have we come to see You. Rather, we came here in search of one invisible thief who stole our wealth in the form of our hearts. Then we found that You are that thief! But even after catching You, we have not been able to retrieve our hearts, and are unable to go anywhere to lodge a complaint against You, because the power of our hands and feet has also been taken away. So how can we return to our homes without getting our lost treasure back? And even if we did return, what would we do there? O great burglar, You have stunned us and rendered us helpless with Your mesmerizing *mahā-mantra*, and in Your presence we cannot reach a solution. Now what will happen?”

Meaning showing indifference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “I have pulled all of you out of your houses by attracting you with the sound of My flute. You must be very tired, so how will you able to go back?” *Gopīs*: “He Mohana, are You thinking that we have come here because You have stolen our hearts? This is not the case. We are fully absorbed in domestic duties, and our hearts are happily engaged in household affairs, so it is not possible for You to steal them away. Our hands are also engaged in the same way. Don’t doubt our ability to move. We are not tired, and we can travel a good distance. We have nothing to do here, so why shall we not go back home?”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Some other *gopīs* spoke, their love-filled words saturated with *rasa*: “O emperor of thieves, our only purpose in coming to You is to recover our wealth that You have stolen. To accomplish this robbery You did not have to make any special effort as other thieves do. Simply by blowing some air through the holes of Your flute You easily carried off our hearts, which were happily (*sukhena*) occupied in domestic matters. But don’t think that our wealth (our hearts) is paltry. Those hearts were completely absorbed in our households, and by taking this treasure, You have plundered our very homes.” This is the suggested meaning. “Now that our hearts are no longer in our homes, it is of no consequence to us whether those houses are burned to ashes or they become more prosperous.” The *gopīs* lamented

further: “What to speak of our homes, You have also stolen our ability to hear and our other senses, and without them we cannot function.” *Karāv api*’ (our hands as well): “You have also abducted our hands, ears and eyes, which were employed in household duties.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “O beautiful ones, return to your homes today. Tomorrow or the day after, I will make some special investigation and give back your hearts.” The *gopīs* would reply, *Pādaṁ*’ (our feet): “Without our hearts, our feet are unable to take even one step away from Your lotus feet. So please return our hearts and then we will go back to Vraja.”

### VERSE 35

*siñcāṅga nas tvad-adharāmṛta-pūrakeṇa  
hāsāvaloka-kala-gīta-ja-hṛc-chayāgnim  
no ced vayanṁ virahajāgny-upayukta-dehā  
dhyānena yāma padayoḥ padavīm sakhe te*

***He prāṇa-vallabha, O love more dear to us than life! Your sweet, enchanting smiles, Your loving glances, and the melodious sound of Your flute have ignited the fire of love in our hearts. Only the nectar flowing from Your lips can extinguish it, so please administer this remedy. Otherwise, O friend, in truth we will be consumed in the fierce fire of separation from You, and in this way we will reach Your lotus feet in meditation.***

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“*He aṅga*, O beloved Kṛṣṇa, Your sweet smile and the soft sound of Your flute have kindled a blazing fire of lust in our hearts. Kindly extinguish this fire with the flow of the nectar of Your lips. If You will not do so, then we will burn ourselves in the blazing fire of separation from You, and like *yogīs*, we will attain to the proximity of Your lotus feet in meditation.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Next, the *gopīs* in the second group, sighing heavily and deeply, again clearly expressed their hearts’ desire in words reflecting their anxiety. At the same time, they were optimistic that their inner yearning would certainly be

fulfilled, but if Kṛṣṇa did not comply in the end, then He would have to take the entire blame. In this tone they concluded their argument with the present verse starting with ‘*siñca*’ (to sprinkle). Due to being greatly aggrieved, they were perplexed and thus they used the verb *siñca* in place of the subject. ‘*Nah*’ (our) refers to the fire in their hearts. In the conjunct ‘*hāsāvaloka*,’ when the later component (*avaloka*) is prominent, it is automatically understood from the context that the former component *hāsa* should have a related component (Your). “The nectar of Your lips” – in the verse ‘Your’ is not there, only ‘nectar of the lips,’ but ‘Your’ is understood.

The reason for using this phrase is that “You alone ignited this fire, so only You can put it out.” This means: “*He prāṇa-vallabha*, the sound of the flute filled with the nectar of Your lips has touched off the fire of lust in us. Quickly extinguish it with the flow of that same ambrosia.” The word ‘*pūra*’ (flood) indicates the magnitude of the fire of lust. ‘*Pūraka*’ has the suffix ‘*ka*’ added, but the meaning is the same.<sup>5</sup> “Your smiling glance is the ghee that fuels this fire and the soft notes of the flute are the favorable, strong wind that make the flames flare up. The combination of these two turns the fire of lust in our hearts into a raging conflagration.”

‘*Hṛc-chayāgni*’ means ‘the fire situated in our hearts.’ Lust lodges in the heart, so the remedy to extinguish it has to be administered internally; external application will not work. The only antidote is the flow of the nectar of the lips. The *vraja-ramaṇīs*’ prayer for direct amorous meeting was not contrary to the principles of *rasa*. They were so completely intoxicated by drinking the honey of the sweetness of the flute and of Kṛṣṇa’s exquisite beauty that they lost their power of discrimination. Their unprecedented *anurāga*, having reached the highest limit, had created distress and intense ardor, which were now dancing in their hearts. In this situation, it was not against the rules of *rasa* for the *gopīs*, who were wrapped up in their great excitement, to make a direct appeal for conjugal meeting. Rather, their request had become more astonishing due to their resolute mood of intimidation expressed in the phrase ‘*no cet*’ (if not): “If You do not extinguish the fire in our hearts, then we will give up our lives while thinking of You. It is said that

5 Ed: *Laghu-siddhānta-kaumudī* explains the use of the suffix *ka* in the *sva arthe* (self, or same, meaning) section of *taddhita-prakaraṇam* (secondary derivation of nouns). *Paṇḍitas* may use *ka* to beautify their articulations, to complete the meter in a poem, or to show how a word has been formed from its root.

whatever one remembers at the time of death, he will certainly attain. So, in line with this logic, we will definitely reach Your lotus feet.”

*He sakhe* (O friend) – by addressing their lover in this way, they were trying to stimulate more affection in His heart for them. They expressed their intention very clearly. Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “My smile and other irresistible attributes created the fire of lust. Do you see any pot of water with Me that can extinguish it?” Expecting such a joke from Him, the *vraja-ramaṇīs* retort, “The fire can be put out only by nectar (*amṛta*), not by water, and it must be an abundant flow, not just a trickle.” The word *‘pūraka’* (with the suffix *ka* – an abundant flow) has the same meaning.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “Where can one find the rare *amṛta* that you are talking about? And on top of that, so much of it – that is impossible!” Anticipating this, the *gopīs* reply, “Why are You keeping it secret? That nectar is in Your lips. Ah! This fire cannot be pacified by any other nectar. Furthermore, this fire of lust is so blazing hot that a veritable flood of this nectar is required to cool it down. It must be sufficient to satisfy the millions and millions of tender maidens who will drink it.” This statement indicates the *gopīs*’ unquenchable thirst, and also implies the very special quality of this nectar.

Kṛṣṇa: “Very well, you said that you will quickly reach My lotus feet by meditation. This means that you will leave your bodies, but I do not see any symptoms of that happening.” The *gopīs*: “*He Śyāmasundara*, are we like others, devoid of an overwhelming love, and we will search for some external source of fire? That fire will manifest from inside our bodies due to separation from You.” Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has explained everything else.

Alternative meaning: in this way, concluding their argument, the *gopīs* started thinking, “Why are we in such a hurry to take on the difficult task of giving up our bodies?” Saying *‘no ced’* (if not), with great sorrow they kept on thinking that in reality this was next to impossible. “*He Prabhu*, it is not so easy for us to be able to meet with You. Indeed, even in our meditation we are not successful. The reason is that our bodies are not suited for the nectar of meeting. Rather, they are fit to be incinerated in the fire of separation. *He sakhe*, O dear friend! We have not been able to experience the bliss of meeting with You in this life, and we suspect that in the next life also we are destined for separation only.” The *gopīs*’ use of the word *‘sakhe’* foreshadows their impending suffering. They thought that they would give up their bodies if they could not attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa very soon. Thus they



prayed, “If, after all our efforts, we are still unable to meet with You directly in our next life, then at least let us attain a path in our meditation that will bring us close to Your lotus feet. This is our final prayer.” The *gopīs* were alone with Kṛṣṇa in the forest, but they still addressed Him as *sakhe*, urging Him to accept them as His girlfriends.

Meaning in a mood of indifference: “*He mahā-lampata*, O topmost debauchee! Our native smile, winning glance and sweet singing have very easily stirred up lust in Your heart. You can pacify it by the nectar of Your own lips. There is not a single impassioned girl amongst us who is capable of extinguishing the fire of Your lust by the nectar of her lips.” This is how the *vraja-ramaṇīs* on behalf of their groups are displaying their apathy. In a playful, facetious manner they are saying, “When someone craves his favorite sweets but is disappointed because they are unavailable, then he starts licking his lips. This is what You should do. You have no other alternative. *He sakhe*, that hope You cherish is rarely fulfilled. If You do not give it up after hearing this, and if You still persist in blocking our path and trying to touch us, then we will burn our bodies in the fire of separation from our husbands. We may die, but we will not come near You – by body, mind or words. Even in our meditation we will not go towards the path where You are wandering. *He sakhe*, we have been playing with You since childhood, and we have become friends in this way. Thus You are quite aware of our firm commitment to religious principles.”

This verse seems to answer Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s concern in Verse 19 where He addresses the *gopīs* as ‘*su-madhyamā*.’ Here, the *gopīs* are saying, “*He sakhe*, in the hope of attaining Your lotus feet, we are even willing to give up these bodies, which are endowed with good qualities. However, even after casting off these bodies, we can never give You up.” Both the meanings of this verse indicating Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s opulence are practically the same.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.4.10 states: “*dhatte padam tvam avitā yadi vighna-mūrdhni* – those under Your protection definitely step over the heads of all kinds of obstacles.” In this quotation the word ‘*yadi*’ means ‘definitely.’ Similarly, in the present Verse 35, the word ‘*cet*’ also means ‘definitely.’ Thereafter, the *vraja-ramaṇīs* said, “We shall definitely not be burned in the fire of separation from You, and the path where You walk will certainly not appear in our meditation.”

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Subsequently, Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought, “Ah! The day I stole the *vraja-sundaris*’ clothes, I fulfilled My desire to see them all naked together, rather than privately meeting with each one alone; but My desire to hear the brazen, sweet words of these love-sick maidens when they reach the height of their emotions was not fulfilled, except at the time of drinking honey-liquor. Alas, alas! With the sound of My flute I have summoned these *gopīs* who became completely intoxicated upon hearing the erotic overtones in that melody. I have bewildered them with My ingenious speech, and I even kidnapped their hearts, in which their shyness, discrimination, religiosity and self-control were residing. Despite all this, they are still bashful in their speech, because they cannot come out of the grip of their inherent contrary mood (*vamya-bhāva*) that so completely covers their nature. Ah! How astonishing it is that they are not fully revealing the emotions that lie in the innermost chamber of their hearts!”

At this time, one principle *gopī*, coming under the control of the *sancarī-bhāva* of *unmāda*, left her *vamya-bhāva*, and spoke this verse ‘*siñcāṅga*.’ By clearly expressing her longing for direct meeting, she fulfilled Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s desire, saying, “*He aṅga*, O dearly beloved, with Your smiling glance and enchanting flute song You ignited the fire of lust in our hearts. Kindly put it out with the abundant flow of nectar from Your lips. That will absolve Your offense of knowingly igniting the fire. Otherwise, You will be implicated in the sin of deliberately setting someone else’s house on fire.”

In this verse, in place of *kāma*, ‘*hṛc-chaya*’ has been used, which means: “Our lust was sleeping in our hearts, and only You could awaken it. In the form of Your flute melody, You entered in our hearts through the path of the ears and set that sleeping lust ablaze. This sleeping *kāma* has burst into flames fueled by the ghee of Your inviting glance, the honey of Your smile, and the wind of the soft sound of Your flute. If the sinful reaction of igniting this fire terrifies You, then You should extinguish the fire of our lust. And another thing, it does not require much labor on Your part to ignite this fire of lust or to put it out. Just as Your smiling, loving glance feeds this fire, similarly the nectar of Your lips can douse it. Your lotus face is the dwelling place of both of these. O immoral prince, we have witnessed Your sport of igniting and dousing this fire many times. Today is not the first time that this *līlā* is taking place.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “My smiling, My glancing and playing pleasing notes on My flute are My normal behavior. These activities may indeed incite the lust of young maidens, but there are many, many young maidens situated in many, many places, so how can I possibly give this healing nectar of My lips to every one of them?” The *gopīs* would reply, “This is true. It is not possible. Nevertheless, You will be implicated in the murder of thousands upon thousands of damsels not related to You. When You feel some remorse, Your impertinence will subside.” This is the meaning of ‘*no ced*’ (if not). “If the fire of our lust does not die down, then we will burn our bodies to ashes in the fire of separation. Like *yoginīs* in meditation, we will certainly attain Your lotus feet.

“We know that we have not performed sufficient austerity in our previous lives that would award us Your mercy in this life. Nevertheless, please accept us. Now, to agree the austerity of immolating ourselves, we need not employ any external, ordinary fire because we already have two kinds of fire within our hearts – the fire of lust and the fire of separation. Out of the two, the fire of separation generates more heat, and it has enfeebled the fire of lust.

“So, to sacrifice our lives in the fire of separation, we take a vow and pray, ‘O fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa (*virahajāgni*), we are throwing our lives in you with the hope to attain the bliss of touching Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. Unseen by others, kindly place us on the path where He walks (*padayoḥ padavīm*) in such a way that His lotus feet should tread on our breasts, and not on the ground. The weight of His feet will quell the fire of lust in our hearts, and that will fulfill our yearning. Even though Kṛṣṇa is unwilling to touch our breasts, He will derive great pleasure by walking on them, and at the same time He will get relief from the sin of murdering so many women.’

“*He sakhe!* You are our friend. Even so, You are inflicting tremendous pain on us, so why shouldn’t we give You pain? That will cause You to feel remorse, but You should know that the remorse we love-sick *gopīs* will experience will be millions of times greater than Yours. What to do? Providence has written this calamity on our foreheads. Alas! O You who cannot foresee the consequences! O ocean of mercy! Why are You sowing the seed of the creeper of Your own regret? And why are You making us reap the fruit of Your actions? Now please give up Your obstinacy and accept us.” In this way, so many meanings can be drawn from this verse.

VERSE 36

*yarhy ambujākṣa tava pāda-talam ramāyā  
datta-kṣaṇam kvacid araṇya-jana-priyasya  
asprākṣma tat-prabhṛti nānya-samakṣam añjah  
sthātumś tvayābhiramitā bata pārayāmaḥ*

**“He kamala-nayāna, O lotus-eyed one! Śrī Lakṣmī herself only occasionally gets the chance to serve Your lotus feet. But we also got the fortune to touch them because You are very dear to the forest dwellers. O beloved, You made us so happy by accepting our service, that, from that time on, what to speak of serving husbands and children, we are unable to be with anyone else even for a moment.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “All of you should return to your husbands. Only they will douse this fire.” In answer the *gopīs* reply, “O lotus-eyed one, it is a festive event for Lakṣmī-devī whenever she gets the occasional opportunity to serve Your lotus feet. But as the forest dwellers are very dear to You, we also got the chance to touch Your lotus feet, and that filled us with bliss. From that very moment, we are not able to stand in the presence of anyone else, what to speak of husbands and children. They are all quite insignificant and so we have no interest in them.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “I am innocent. Why are you accusing Me of being a criminal? When impassioned women see My intrinsic beauty, their hearts naturally get agitated. What can I do about this? You may not have the strength to do your household chores, yet, as noble married women from respectable families, it is proper for you to stay at home.” In answer the *gopīs* speak this present verse starting with ‘*yarhi*.’ “He kamala-nayāna, O lotus-eyed one! When our unimaginable piety fructified, we were able to meet with You in a secret place where You gifted us with untold joy. As You

expressed Your inner desire by a gesture of Your eyes, we touched the soles of Your lotus feet and became very blissful.”

The act of touching is also mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.17:

*pūrṇāḥ pulindya urugāya-padābja-rāga  
śrī-kuṅkumena dayitā-stana-maṇḍitena  
tad-darśana-smara-rujas tṛṇa-rūṣitena  
limpantya ānana-kuceṣu jahus tad-ādhim*

“O *sakhī!* These Pulindīs, the young maidens who live in the forest, are fully satisfied because within their hearts they possess *anurāga*, extraordinary attachment, for Śrī Śyāmasundara. When they see our dearmost beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the pain of divine lust arises within them, and their hearts are struck with the disease of love. And when they see the grass covered with *kuṅkuma*, these forest maidens are immediately overcome by the burning torment of *smara*, overwhelming amorous desire. This reddish *kuṅkuma*, coming from Śyāmasundara’s lotus feet when He roams about Vṛndāvana, adorned the breast of one of His beloveds. The supremely fortunate Pulindī girls take this *kuṅkuma* and smear it on their faces and breasts, and in this way they alleviate the anguish of their *kāma*.”

This event took place before *śaradiya-rāsa*. At that time, one famous *vraja-gopī* (Śrī Rādhā) received the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet on Her breast, but this incident was known only in the group of this particular *gopī*. Now Her group of *gopīs* are calling themselves very fortunate due to having gotten the touch of the soles of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet by touching Her. The *gopa-kumarīs* who performed Kātyāyanī-vrata had the desire to touch Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet on the day of completing their vow. Although they never had close contact with Him, still they felt one at heart with those who had enjoyed His intimate association, and by this feeling of oneness, they considered they had also touched His lotus feet along with them. What is so special about these feet that they are desired even by Lakṣmī, the consort of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, who derives supreme pleasure from them?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “You allege that you touched the soles of My feet. This is only your dream. If something is true, then it is eternal and it should happen now also.” The *gopīs* answer, “*araṇya-jana-priyasya* – You are

very dear to the forest dwellers. The Pulindī girls and the does always get to see You, and You show them affection. But the Vraja dwellers You do not love, therefore You are not available to us so easily. How astonishing this is! We are just the right persons for You, but casting us and Lakṣmī-devī aside, You accept the does and Pulindī girls of the forest.” In this way, the *gopīs* are expressing their indignation. “From the day we touched the soles of Your feet, we cannot tolerate anyone else, nor have we any interest in seeing others. It seems that You have performed some *tantra* and cast a spell over us that has left us greatly agitated. This is the result of touching You.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object, “O liars! You are saying you cannot stay with anyone else, yet you are always living in your homes in Vraja. How is this possible?” The *gopīs* reply, “We derive no pleasure from living in Vraja. We don’t want to, but we are forced to live there.”

Meaning in a mood of awe and reverence: “Once, in one of Your incarnations You gave bliss to Lakṣmī-devī. But You live eternally in Vraja due to Your love for the cowherd community of the Vṛndāvana forest. The residents of Vṛndāvana have brought You under the control of their *prema* and have made You their exclusive property. But it is our misfortune that even though You live here all the time, we got to touch Your lotus feet only once.” Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda in his commentary explains the meaning of ‘*araṇya*’ thus: “We received the touch of Your lotus feet through the lower-caste forest dwellers.” This statement indicates the *gopīs*’ humility. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.23: “*mad-abhisnehād* – Or, if you have come here because of being controlled by inordinate love for Me, this is certainly befitting, as all living entities naturally have affection for Me.” But the *gopīs* replied, “We have come to You out of spontaneous love, not out of the ordinary love seen in others.”

Meaning showing indifference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “O *gopīs*, by addressing Me ‘*He sakhe*,’ you are reminding Me that we have touched each other in friendship in our childhood play.” The *gopīs* respond, “*yarhi* (when) – O lotus-eyed one! In our childhood, we received pleasure seeing you playing with your dear monkeys dwelling in the forest. Even at that time Your feet were inclined to take You for an amorous meeting with Ramā (beautiful, young maidens). We did not touch even the soles of Your lotus

feet then, what to speak of other parts of Your body. We were innocent children, and thus our in-laws are not averse to You.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “You should go to your husbands. Only they will douse the fire of your lust.” Fearing this, the *gopīs* reply, “*yarhy ambujākṣa* – O lotus-eyed one, from the very moment we beheld Your lotus eyes, we have become like bumblebees hovering around them, anxious to drink their honey.” According to the rule of *rasa-śāstra*, first the eyes of the two lovers meet, next their hearts are attracted, and then they make a plan to rendezvous. “Our first encounter through the eyes aroused *pūrva-rāga* in our hearts. Later, in some secluded *kuñja* of Govardhana, we held the soles of Your lotus feet to our breasts (so now we are unable to live anywhere else.)” What is so special about these lotus feet? “*Ramāyā datta-kṣaṇam* – Your lotus feet, sought after even by Lakṣmī, Śrī Nārāyaṇa’s beloved consort in Vaikuṇṭha, generate a festival full of desires for amorous enjoyment.”

The Nāgapatnīs said, “*yad-vāñchayā śrīr lalanācarat tapaḥ* – With the desire to get the dust of Your lotus feet, Lakṣmī performed severe austerities for a long time” (SB 10.16.36). The *gopīs* continue, “We have heard from Śrī Gargācārya how the Nāgapatnīs glorified Your lotus feet in this way, so Your lotus feet will also create a festival of amorous desires for us cowherd maidens, who reside in the forest. What is so astonishing about this?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object, “How are you qualified to get the object that Lakṣmī desires?” In answer the *gopīs* say: “*araṇya-jana-priyasya* – The cowherd community residing in the forest is very dear to You. We are from the same clan, so this gives us the qualification to receive the dust of Your lotus feet. From the very first time we touched the soles of Your lotus feet, we could no longer live with our husbands. Indeed, we feel revulsion towards them.” The *gopīs* continue, “Not only were we able to touch Your lotus feet with our breasts, but You also enjoyed us to Your full satisfaction in every way. Therefore, You blessed us with the fortune of reaching the topmost level of pleasure. Since we are enjoyed by You, do not dispatch us to some other place. We will simply lie helplessly at Your lotus feet.” This is how the *gopīs* present their humble entreaty.

VERSE 37

*śrīr yat padāmbuja-rajāś cakame tulasyā  
labdhvāpi vakṣasi padam kila bhṛtya-juṣṭam  
yasyāḥ sva-vikṣaṇa utānya-sura-prayāsa  
tadvad vayan ca tava pāda-rajah prapannāḥ*

**“O Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā and other reputed demigods go to great lengths to achieve the merciful glance of Lakṣmī-devī, who enjoys an eternal place on Your chest without any rival. Yet, she hankers so much for a portion of the dust of Your lotus feet that she is willing to share it along with her co-wife Tulasī. The same dust is easily available to Your devotee servants, and like them we have also come to take shelter of this dust.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

The *gopīs* spoke this verse to point out the astonishing wonder of attaining the auspicious service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. “Without any competition, Lakṣmī-devī secured an exclusive place on the chest of Śrī Nārāyaṇa. But to attain Your foot dust, she is willing to tolerate the vexation of being with her co-wife, Tulasī, both of whom hanker for the dust of Your lotus feet, which are served by Your attendants in Vṛndāvana.” In this way, they describe the enormous fortune of attaining these lotus feet. “*Sva-vikṣaṇa* (to get her glance) – Brahmā and other demigods strive to get the merciful glance of Lakṣmī.” The *gopīs* said, “Like them, we have also taken the shelter of the dust of Your lotus feet and come to You.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “Like Me, you have also taken birth in the cowherd community. So why are you talking about touching the soles of My feet?” Anticipating such a comment from Him, the *gopīs* humbly spoke this verse beginning with ‘*śrī*’ hiding their anxiousness to attain their desired object. “Unchallenged, Śrī (Lakṣmī-devī) attained a place on the chest of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, yet she hankered for the dust of Your lotus feet. She gave up the idea of keeping the coveted position as the Lord’s exclusive beloved,



desiring instead to serve as a maidservant. She was even ready to accept being with the many, many others serving Your lotus feet.”

What is the status of that Lakṣmī-devī who begged for the dust of Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet? The *gopīs* answer with ‘*yasyāḥ*’ (whose) – that same Lakṣmī-devī, whose merciful glance is sought by Brahmā and other demigods at great endeavor. ‘*Tadvat vyaṁ ca*’ (in the same way, we also) – the *gopīs* cite the example of Lakṣmī and say that they have the same desire. “We also want to take shelter of the dust of Your lotus feet.”

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.8.19 Śrī Gargācārya says, “O Nanda, your son is equal to Nārāyaṇa. Indeed, your child possesses all the same qualities as Him.” The *gopīs* affirm, “You are like Nārāyaṇa, and we are worthy of being Your beloveds since we also come from a noble family, yet we want to take shelter of the dust of Your feet. Śrī Nārāyaṇa and You have highly exalted qualities, and Lakṣmī and we *gopīs* enjoy the status of beloveds. Even so, we feel we are in an inferior position. Lakṣmī compared Śrī Nārāyaṇa’s feet to a lotus, and desired their dust. We have not compared Your feet in this way, but still we yearn for their dust.”

In this verse, ‘*padāmbuja-rajah*’ (dust of the lotus feet) and ‘*tava pāda-rajah*’ (the dust of Your feet) have been spoken. In the first phrase the feet have been equated to a lotus, but in the second phrase no metaphor has been used. In this way the *gopīs* have elucidated an unparalleled speciality regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s feet. “Lakṣmī desires the dust of Nārāyaṇa’s feet, being attracted to them because they are beautiful, soft and sweet like a lotus. We *gopīs*, on the other hand, have surrendered to Your feet only out of pure love, not because they have any of those qualities. At the time of the churning of the milk-ocean, Lakṣmī-devī rejected all others and selected Nārāyaṇa, and we also worship You in the same way.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “If I have touched you, even in My dream, I do not remember. If I made a mistake, and did so unknowingly, such a fall-down should not be repeated. As you come from respectable families, it is improper for you to transgress ethical conduct, and it would also be improper for Me to condone such immoral behavior.” In their answer the *gopīs* give the example of Lakṣmī, who is the topmost virtuous woman. “*Vakṣasi* (upon His chest) – Lakṣmī-devī has a place on the chest of her master Nārāyaṇa. Even then, she was greatly captivated by Your unparalleled sweetness. But she considered herself unfit for intimate association with You, so she desired

(*yat*) only the dust of Your feet in Vṛndāvana. Indeed (*kila*), we also take shelter of Your foot dust.”

The same famous statement is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.16.36: “*yad-vāñchayā śrīr lalanācarat tapaḥ* – Lakṣmī, whose body is very tender and fragile, gave up all other desires and performed severe austerities just to attain the dust of Your feet, but she was not successful.” The highly exalted *gopīs* themselves have said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.31.1: “*janmanā vrajaḥ* – O beloved, this land of Vraja has become unlimitedly exalted because You took birth here, and that is why Lakṣmī-devī, the goddess of beauty and wealth, eternally resides here.”

*‘Pāda-rajah’* (foot dust) – due to their extreme anxiety, the *gopīs* have spoken this twice in the verse. “Not only Lakṣmī but Tulasī also desires Your foot dust.” Tulasī, or Vṛndā-devī, who assists in the pastimes, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beloved, yet she only desires His foot dust. The *Kartika-māhātmya* of the *Padma Purāṇa*, in the history of Jālandhara, affirms that Tulasī-devī is the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the *Mathurā-māhātmya* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*, it is said: “Vṛndāvana is made up of the twelve forests, which are under the care of Vṛndā-devī. Śrī Hari resides here eternally. Brahmā, Rudra and other demi-gods remain in the service of this *dhāma*.” In the *Mathurā-māhātmya* of the *Varaha Purāṇa* it is said, “O Earth, Vṛndāvana, which has twelve forests, can destroy all varieties of sin. It is protected by Vṛndā-devī and is very dear to Me.” These quotations make it clear that Vṛndā-devī takes shelter of Vṛndāvana.

“What kind of dust particle do you desire?” “*Bhṛtya-juṣṭam*’ (served by many servants) – You have many, many servants attending to Your feet. We desire that particle that is the remnant of their service.” Now the *gopīs* discuss the speciality of this particle of dust with the word ‘*yasyaḥ*’ (whose): “With just her glance (*sva-vikṣaṇe*), Lakṣmī can bestow the wealth of love for the lotus feet of Śrī Nārāyaṇa. Her merciful glance is sought after by Viṣvakṣena and Garuḍa (*ānya-suraḥ* – divine personalities). So if Lakṣmī-devī and also Tulasī-devī sought Your foot dust, what is wrong if we also desire it?”

Explanation in a mood of reverence: the meaning is the same as before, but the former viewpoint, or that of sweetness, is the result of their exalted love, and the latter, or that of reverence, is blooming with *jñāna*. That is the only difference.

Explanation displaying indifference: Kṛṣṇa might say, “Lakṣmī-devī and Vṛndā-devī have abandoned their respective husbands, and have taken

up residence in My Vṛndāvana with the hope to attain Me. In comparison with them, what is your position?” Anticipating such an answer, the *gopīs* say, “Lakṣmī-devī (*śrī*) along with Tulasī (Vṛndā) live in this forest eager for (*yat*) the dust of Your feet. ‘*Tadvaṭ*’ (in the same way) – Shall we take shelter of Your foot dust as they have done? No, never! Lakṣmī is famous for being fidgety, and Vṛndā, the wife of Jālandhara, is an adulteress. That is their nature, but such fidgetiness and immoral behavior do not apply to us.” In *Śrīmad-Bhāvagatam* 10.29.24, ‘*bhartuḥ śuśrūṣaṇām*’ (earnest service to one’s husband), the *gopīs*’ chastity was in question, but this commentary showing indifference affirms their virtuous conduct.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“It is You who have accepted us as Your beloveds, but we simply pray for the service of Your feet.” The *gopīs* explained this with examples in this verse ‘*śrīr yat*.’ “Lakṣmī-devī desires the dust of the lotus feet of Śrī Nārāyaṇa. We also have taken shelter of Your foot dust because You have the qualities of Nārāyaṇa. “*Nārāyaṇa-samo guṇaiḥ* (SB 10.8.19) – this statement spoken by Śrī Gargācārya proves that You are like Nārāyaṇa in every way, so it is self-evident that we must be like Lakṣmī. Lakṣmī-devī occupies the best place, namely Nārāyaṇa’s chest, and yet she hankers for the dust of Your feet, along with her co-wife Tulasī. Furthermore, that place is crowded with men, so just to attain the foot dust, she has forsaken a beloved’s natural bashfulness and accepted a lower position. Lakṣmī prefers to be a maidservant rather than a sweetheart, and we desire the same mood. We also want to abandon our shyness and massage Your feet along with Your servants, Raktaka and Patraka. The Vṛndāvana Pulindī girls find the *kuṇkuma* from the soles of Your feet on the grass, and they smear their foreheads with it. We *gopīs* also want the same *kuṇkuma*, and are willing to accept an inferior position in order to obtain it.”

The *gopīs* continued, “Śrī Nārāyaṇa, being very satisfied with Lakṣmī, has given her an eternal place on His chest. You are *rasika śekhara*, the topmost enjoyer. Considering this, will You not give us a place for a moment close to the soles of Your feet? Is it written in our destiny? Garga Muni has stated that You are like Nārāyaṇa, so keep us on Your chest if You want to protect Your reputation.” In this way the *gopīs* express the gravity of their emotions.

Kṛṣṇa might say, “Lakṣmī is very restless. You should also be restless like her and visit the homes of pious people.” Anticipating such joking words, the *gopīs* reply, “One who calls Lakṣmī-devī unsteady is a fool. She is not restless; she is supremely steadfast. Brahmā, Indra and other demigods, who are like her sons, go to great endeavor just to receive her merciful glance filled with parental love because they know that no one can get any kind of prosperity without her kind gaze. Usually she does not even look their way, but through some special power of hers, she still grants them the wealth they desire.”

VERSE 38

*tan naḥ prasīda vṛjinārdana te 'nghri-mūlam  
prāptā visṛjya vasatīś tvad-upāsanāśāḥ  
tvat-sundara-smita-nirīkṣaṇa-tīvra-kāma  
taptātmanām puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa dehi dāsyam*

**“O You who annihilate all the miseries of the surrendered souls! Desiring to serve You, we have abandoned our homes, families and villages, and have come to the shelter of Your lotus feet. You should be pleased with us. O crest jewel of men, Your sweet smile and crooked glance have ignited our hearts with the blazing fire of desire to meet with You, which has now spread to each and every pore of our bodies. Please accept us as Your maidservants and give the precious fortune to serve You.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“*Vṛjinārdana* – O conqueror of all miseries! Just like *yogīs*, we have relinquished our homes and other attachments and come with the hope to take shelter of Your lotus feet and serve You. O jewel among men, Your enticing glance and gentle smile have aroused an intense fire of amorous desire in our hearts, so please let us serve You.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs* of the third group concluded their argument with this present verse ‘*tan naḥ*.’ Mentioning the reasons here, the *gopīs* asked for a favor: “*dehi dāsyam* – Please give us an opportunity to serve You as Your

maidservants.” Kṛṣṇa might reply, “O *gopīs*, intoxicated by your fresh youth! Such service is rare. How can I give it to you?” Hearing this, the *gopīs* spoke very humbly: “*prāptā* (we have approached) – With the hope to serve You, we have given up friends, family, relatives, and come to Your lotus feet. We are surrendered to You, so certainly You will fulfill our desires. Otherwise, we will be greatly aggrieved, and this will make You unhappy.”

With this intention they addressed Him, “*He vṛjīnārdana* – O vanquisher of distress, You are also the topmost of *rasikas*, those who delight in loving flavors.” In the excitement of their amorous sentiments, the *gopīs* called Kṛṣṇa *rasika-śekhara*, the foremost enjoyer of the mellows of love. “You should give us service endowed with nectar.” With this intention, they said “*tvat-sundara-smita* (Your beautiful smile) – With Your beautiful smile and glance You have set our hearts ablaze with the fire of amorous desire. But we are not asking for any reparation, and we have also given up the hope for relief from this fire. All we ask is that You allow us to serve You. That would be fair on Your part.” Thus the *gopīs* said, “*puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa* – O crest-jewel of men, bestow Your service upon us and fulfill our desire.”

“*Viśṛjya vasatīs tvad-upāsanāśāḥ* – renouncing our homes with the hope to worship You.” In this phrase, if ‘*upāsanāśāḥ*’ is taken as the adjective of ‘*vasatī*’ (in the home or village), then the meaning is this: “In that home or village, our worship (*upāsa*) of You has been forbidden so we have given up that place and come to take shelter of Your lotus feet.”

“O handsome one, You flash a beautiful, slight smile and crooked glance at us, and at the same time speak words of rejection – this is Your knavery.” In this way Śrī Kṛṣṇa was trying to conceal this mood in His heart, but the *gopīs* exposed it by their ingenuity. “*Tvat*’ (Your) – You have aroused this intense lust which has inflamed our hearts. So to relieve us from this ‘*kāma*,’ award us Your servitorship.” These words also serve to nullify Kṛṣṇa’s statement in Verse 25 of this chapter: “*duḥśīlo durbhago vṛddho* – Those whose hearts have been burnt by the *kāma* manifesting from Your glance naturally give up past connections, but how can they be blamed?” The *gopīs*’ hearts had been inflamed for no one but Kṛṣṇa. They had taken His shelter just to attain a particle of His foot dust. So were they justified or not for leaving their husbands and homes? How will this be decided? What is the harm in rejecting husbands and other family members? It is like this – if a maiden has been bitten by a huge snake, it is pointless to hold her

responsible for she has lost all her intelligence and is not capable of judging right from wrong.

Meaning in a mood of indifference: “*Tvat* (Your) – We do not desire the dust of Your feet. Kindly refrain from being so insistent with us (*prasīda*). *He vrjīnārdana*, O giver of misery! We have not abandoned our homes and families, nor have we come to the soles of Your feet to worship You. We have come to see the splendor of Vṛndāvana in this moonlit night for our own amusement, so give up the hope to attain us. We have no interest in being Your maidservants. You can give Your servitorship to all those maidens whose hearts are inflamed with lusty desires after seeing Your beautiful, sweet smile. But those who are afflicted by lusty desires will not be able to accept Your servitude fully.”

In the third line of this verse is the phrase ‘*sundara-smita-nirīkṣaṇa-tivra-kāma taptātmanām*.’ According to the rules of grammar, this ends in the genitive case (6<sup>th</sup> case) instead of the dative case (4<sup>th</sup> case).<sup>6</sup> Thus, ‘intensely burning in lust’ cannot be applied to the attractive *gopīs*. “*He puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa* – O crest jewel of men! You are hoping to attract the brides of Gokula by Your glance radiating *kāma*, but You cannot get them. So to fulfill Your desire, You should dress Your male friends as the Gokula brides. Till now, You have not been able to attract and seduce the maidens of Gokula as You want. We spoke about some maidens who are intensely inflamed by Your glance, but in actuality, there are no such maidens in Vraja; it is only imagination.” Impossibility has been indicated here. ‘*Puruṣa-bhū*’ refers to all men folk. “O You who tarnish all males! Your nature is such that You have disgraced the whole of male society.” This is spoken with a touch of anger. ‘*Uṣaṇa*’ means ‘giver of pain,’ and the root word *ūsa* has been used to denote disease.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“Like the devotees of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, we want to leave our homes and families because our only desire is to serve You.” With this intention the

6 Ed: According to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s *Harināmāmṛta-uyākaṇaṇam*, the fourth case indicates the transfer of proprietorship of an object – example, a person donates a cow to a *brāhmaṇa*. But when a person cannot accept the proprietorship of the object given in worship (*pūjā*) (example, he offered *arghya*, scented water for greeting, to the sun) or out of mercy (*anugraha*) (example, Kṛṣṇa gave a blow to Cānūra), then the sixth case is applied.

*gopīs* spoke this verse ‘*tan naḥ*.’ “You are like Nārāyaṇa, so You should be pleased with us.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa answered, “Your adverse fortune is the main thing stopping you from getting My favor, so how can I oblige you? Does Nārāyaṇa give His mercy to any and everyone?” The *gopīs* replied, “*He vṛjīnārdana* – O vanquisher of distress! Certainly You can dispel our ill fortune. It is well known in the *śāstra* that Śrī Nārāyaṇa destroys all the miseries of His surrendered souls. We have taken complete shelter of the soles of Your feet, without desiring anything else. *Viṣṛjya vasatīḥ*’ – We have rejected our homes replete with husbands, children, etc.” Kṛṣṇa answered, “It is true that you have given up the pleasure of family life, but I can understand that you certainly expect some other happiness from Me.” The *gopīs* responded, “*tvad-upāsanāśāḥ* – Our only desire is to worship You, and we do not look for any other kind of happiness. We will make You happy by our worship. Are we at fault if, by chance, we get some pleasure from Your *darśana*? Only Your beautiful face is to be blamed for this.” Kṛṣṇa might reply, “Alright, you are not at fault. Then why are you saying to Me, ‘Extinguish the fire of lust by the nectar of Your lips?’ This is quite improper.” The *gopīs* answered, “This is not improper. It is a fact that You alone have ignited this fire of lust. Our souls are burning in the fire kindled by a glance from Your beautiful lotus face, which is decorated with a sweet smile. So please grant us the privilege of being Your maidservants, rather than Your wives.”

Śrī Vallabhācārya has written in his *Subodhinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: “We are only praying for servitorship, not for marriage, so there is no need to undergo the regular practice of *brahmaṇa* thread initiation.” The *gopīs* said, “It does not make any difference whether we are virgin girls or married ladies. We can be Your maidservants in either case, for any position is acceptable and faultless for Your maidservants.” In his *Bṛhad-vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇi* commentary Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī has written, “Marrying Kṛṣṇa and serving Him as a wife is not as pleasing as accepting Him as a paramour, which gives the highest delight.” *Bhāgavatāmṛta* and other poetries confirm this. The *gopīs* are begging for this very special position as maidservants.

The essence is this: “You are the great ocean of lust, thus You are a debauchee. We young ladies want to worship You with our whole bodies for Your pleasure. We have requested the nectar of Your lips to extinguish the fire of lust in us. That is also Your worship because this fire of lust is the main ingredient for Your worship. *He puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa*, O jewel among men!

We are justified in addressing You in this way. We are *gaurāṅgī*, fair-bodied, and You are the blue sapphire decorating all our limbs.”

VERSE 39

*vīkṣyālakāvṛta-mukhaṁ tava kuṇḍala-śrī  
gaṇḍa-sthalādhara-sudhaṁ hasitāvalokam  
dattābhayaṁ ca bhuja-daṇḍa-yugaṁ vilokya  
vakṣaḥ śrīyaika-ramaṇaṁ ca bhavāma dāsyah*

“O beloved, Your beautiful lotus face surrounded by Your curly hair, Your lovely, radiant cheeks decorated with exquisite earrings, the nectar of Your sweet lips defying heavenly ambrosia, Your crooked glance and soft smile exuding delight, Your two arms which remove the fear of those surrendered to You, and Your broad chest which is the eternal playground of Lakṣmī-devī – seeing all these, we have become Your maidservants.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Kṛṣṇa might say, “After abandoning your husbands, why are You praying for My service?” The *gopīs* reply, “We have become Your maidservants upon seeing Your beautiful lotus face encircled by curly hair, Your lovely cheeks decorated with exquisite earrings, Your ambrosial lips, Your smiling glance, Your two arms which remove all fears, and Your broad chest which is the resting place of Lakṣmī-devī.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object, “You cannot be purchased by money or any other valuable, and you won’t accept any salary, so how will you become My maidservants?” The *gopīs* answer, “This rule of purchasing or paying salary does not apply here. Elsewhere, servants and maidservants work for their employer in exchange for money, but You have purchased us and paid our wages just by showing us Your face.” This is the meaning of ‘*vīkṣya*,’ seeing in a special way. ‘*Alakāvṛta*’ (surrounded by curly locks) – this is the special feature: “Your face encircled by curly locks, Your cheeks effulgent from Your dazzling earrings, Your smiling glance, Your ambrosial lips, Your arms



which grant fearlessness, and Your chest which is the place of amorous enjoyment – seeing all this, we have become Your maidservants.”

Thus, the beauty of the entire face has been described. The dancing, curly locks (*alaka*) covering the forehead constitutes the beauty of the upper part of the face. Dazzling earrings (*kundala-śrī*) illuminate His cheeks on either side of the face. The sweet, enchanting smile (*hasita*) and lovely, captivating glances occupy the central and lower parts of the face. ‘*Gaṇḍa-sthala*’ are the cheeks, whose splendor has been enhanced by the earrings. Just seeing the lips and estimating their nectar and catching their sweet fragrance, creates a special greed.

In this way, the *gopīs* have described the unparalleled beauty of Kṛṣṇa’s whole face. “*Dattābhayaṁ ca bhuja-daṇḍa-yugaṁ* – You grant fearlessness to the devotees by killing the demons with Your mighty arms. Since Your arms are so powerful, why should we be afraid of our husbands?” This clever statement cancels out the *gopīs*’ fear of their husbands, and indeed, the tight embrace of these arms also dispels their fear of Cupid. This is the intended meaning. The adjective ‘*daṇḍa*’ describes the very special elegance of Kṛṣṇa’s arms, which are well-rounded, stout and long, their overall appearance validating their strength. ‘*Śrīya*’ – the golden line decorating the left side of Kṛṣṇa’s chest increases its beauty. His chest has become the topmost place of enjoyment for Lakṣmī, who has taken the form of that golden line, so Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s chest is understood to be the abode of extreme beauty and the treasure house of all riches.

In the present verse, ‘*ca*’ (and) and ‘*vilokya*’ (glancing upon) are repeated twice; this is to emphasize that the *gopīs* were hoping to get the special shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s left arm and chest. The verb ‘*vilokya*’ is used for ‘*bhuja-yugaṁ*’ (two arms) and ‘*vakṣaḥ*’ (chest), indicating that both are used in an amorous embrace. Seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s enchanting form, the *gopīs* spoke this verse, indicating their desire to kiss His beautiful face ornamented by those cheeks and lips, to drink the nectar flowing from His lips, to be embraced by His arms and to be pulled close to His chest.

The mention of the curly locks and other features shows that when they first beheld the beauty of that face, their eyes did not meet due to shyness. However, later on their eagerness took the upper hand, causing them to look into each other’s eyes. Then, the *gopīs*’ desire intensified as they beheld His arms and finally His chest, which was the resting place of their longing. This is the sequence of the flow of desire.

It is to be understood that the *gopīs* wanted to become Kṛṣṇa's maidservants because they were stunned by the beauty of His limbs. In worldly affairs, there is generally an exchange of money for some service. But for the *gopīs* to become Kṛṣṇa's eternal maidservants, their salary is the sight of His beautiful form, the taste of the inherent sweetness of His lips, the touch of His tempting arms, and the embrace of His chest, the place where Lakṣmī resides.

'*Vikṣya*' (seeing): Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus face is encircled by curly locks and decorated with beautiful earrings. These act as an indestructible noose to tie up the Vraja maidens' restless eyes, which are like wagtail birds. That is, their wagtail-like eyes have been imprisoned in the net of His curly locks, and the two earrings are the knots at the ends of the ropes on either side of the net. The two cheeks are the resting place for these wagtails, and the nectar of the lips is their tempting food. The glance and a mild smile together nourish and train the two faithful, pet birds for romantic enjoyment. The protective arms extend to the hands, which are like tender new leaves. When someone looks at such arms, he automatically sees the chest, which is adjacent to the arms. Which maiden, on seeing all this, will not yearn to give up everything and take shelter of this particular place? The rest has been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda.

"Your two earrings are beautified by Your lotus face. The nectar of Your lips leaps onto Your cheeks, which, with the reflection of Your two earrings, display an unparalleled beauty. Seeing this along with Your slight smile and the beauty of Your face surrounded by Your curly hair, we have been possessed by a relentless greed to become Your maidservants." '*Vilokya*' means to have such an excellent *darśana*. In this way, the extreme attractiveness of each feature is conveyed.

Meaning in a mood of indifference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object, "If you do not want to surrender in the dust of My feet, like Lakṣmī-devī and Vṛndā-devī, then why are you staying here and gazing upon Me?" Anticipating this, the *vraja-ramaṇīs* are saying '*vikṣya*' with a little pride. "Have we come here to look at such a face? Shall we become your maidservants just from seeing Your smiling glance, Your two arms, and Your chest, the dwelling place of Lakṣmī? No, never! Don't let this idea enter Your mind!" This 'no' and 'never' convey sarcasm, but at the same time they communicate some underlying entreaty.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “All of you desire to be My maidservants, so have I purchased you by paying some price, or are you donating yourselves to Me?” Anticipating that Kṛṣṇa will speak like this, the *gopīs* reply, “No, no, it's not like that. You purchased us with a priceless smile and the inconceivable jewel of Your glance as we were just entering adolescence. Such payment, which has never been heard of or seen before, is millions of times greater than our actual worth. After purchasing us, You took us to Your *kuñja-maṇḍira*, the sacred love bower, where You displayed all Your treasures to us. You were wearing *makara* earrings of pure Jambu River gold studded with blue sapphires and rubies (*padmanidhis*). The *kuñja-maṇḍira*, made of wish-fulfilling *cintamaṇīs* and jeweled columns, was dazzling with blue splendor. Indeed, it was fit for the pleasurable escapades of the goddess of fortune. Your curly hair and earrings – themselves the *kuñja-maṇḍira* – invited us to enter inside. As You cunningly pushed back and tied up Your curly hair, You paraded before us all Your riches, more vast than the treasures of Kuvera. In this way, everyday You fed us ambrosia, which is beyond the reach of even the demigods.” This is the meaning of this verse starting with ‘*vikṣya*.’

“When You tie a red turban on Your head and tilt it to the side, the maidservants lift it up to comb Your hair. At the same time You attempt to tuck Your curls inside the turban. The tips of the curls hanging down on the sides of Your forehead enhance the loveliness of Your lotus face. Other times, when You tie a topknot, some of Your long curly hair hangs down around Your forehead, and covers Your face slightly. And when You are being massaged with a fragrant herbal paste, Your hair scatters here and there, again hiding some of Your face. The same thing happens at the time of our intimate meeting. We have become Your eternal maidservants due to observing these displays of the beautiful, sweet and vast wealth of Your lotus face, whose splendor is increased by these curly locks. Sometimes Your face is uncovered, sometimes half covered, and sometimes fully covered. Similarly, Your restless earrings sometimes hang without moving, sometimes they move just slightly, and sometimes they dangle briskly to and fro, but in every case they always heighten the beauty of Your lotus face.”

When Kṛṣṇa jokes and smiles, His lips extend into His cheeks and spread their nectar there, and the *gopīs* drink that nectar with their *cakora* bird-like

eyes. At the time of confidential meeting, that same nectar is deposited on the cheeks of the *gopīs*, or the nectar of the *gopīs*’ lips falls on His cheeks. Behold Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus face like this, with the cheeks shimmering with the reflection of the *makara* earrings, and moist with the lip-nectar that has jumped there – oh, such a face! This moon-like face with a slight smile and inviting glance makes the lily-like *gopīs* blossom. What else can be said about this lotus face?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “Your husbands will not tolerate our relationship, and will complain to Kaṁsa Mahārāja. This will place us in a fearful situation.” Expecting this, the *gopīs* reply: “*dattābhayaṁ ca bhuja-daṇḍa-yugaṁ* – Your two mighty arms make us fearless. You protected us when You lifted Govardhana and crushed Indra’s pride, and with the same powerful arms, You will wipe out that beast Kaṁsa as well, so why should we be afraid of him?” Here, the manifestation of the mellow of chivalry (*vira-rasa*) nourishes the amorous mellow (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*). Kṛṣṇa says, “All of you belong to somebody else, and I am very religious. So it is not proper for Me to accept you as My maidservants.” Kṛṣṇa pointed at Himself with His forefinger and asked, “Have you understood who I am?” *Gopīs*: “Yes, indeed! O *dharmika cudamaṇi*, O crest jewel of religious persons! We have understood You. You say You cannot make the wives of the *gopas* Your maidservants, and yet by force You have already brought Lakṣmī-devī, the wife of Nārāyaṇa, from Vaikuṇṭha and kept her on Your chest. Out of embarrassment, she has transformed into a golden line and always frolics with You there. We also know that Your age is such that You will not reject any fair maiden who belongs to someone else, not only in the fourteen worlds, but also above and beyond this universe, and in Vaikuṇṭha-loka as well.”

#### VERSE 40

*kā sṛy aṅga te kala-padāyata-veṇu-gīta-  
sammohitārya-caritān na calet tri-lokyām  
trailokyā-saubhagam idaṁ ca nirīkṣya rūpaṁ  
yad go-dvija-druma-mṛgāḥ pulakāny abibhran*

**“He Kṛṣṇa, is there any beautiful maiden in all the three worlds who would not digress from moral conduct, having been enchanted by Your mellifluous flute-song, which is ornamented**

with ascending and descending trills, and after gazing upon Your beautiful three-fold bending form, which is the source of auspiciousness for the three worlds? Your beauty that attracts the three worlds and the sound of Your flute are so irresistible that, what to speak of women, even the cows, birds, trees and deer also tingle with excitement, being immersed in supreme bliss.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “For noble women to accept a paramour is reprehensible.” (This has been expressed before.) The *gopīs* responded with this verse ‘*kā stry*.’ “O beloved Kṛṣṇa, is there any woman in all the three worlds who will not be charmed after hearing Your sweet flute song (*kala-padāyata*)?” ‘*Āyata*’ means ‘melodious ascending and descending trills.’ In some versions ‘*kala-padāyata*’ is replaced with ‘*kala-padāmṛta*,’ meaning ‘the nectarean flute song.’ “Even men become agitated upon hearing Your flute, so which woman will not get excited and deviate from religious conduct after hearing this enchanting sound and seeing Your lovely Syāmasundara form, which is the source of auspiciousness for the three worlds? Your flute reveals Your location and Your sweetness, and if one just hears it, certainly one will not think twice about immediately dropping their responsibilities, and what to speak of seeing You and directly experiencing Your sweetness.” What more can be said in this regard?

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Kṛṣṇa might object, “If you will become My maidservants from seeing My beauty, then you will become the laughing stock for chaste women.” In reply the *gopīs* spoke this present verse ‘*kā stry*’ in a loud voice, simultaneously vocalizing their anger and humility. “All the women in the three worlds will be deviated from moral behavior.” In this regard, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.12 the *gopīs* reported, “When the wives of the demigods in their heavenly airplanes see Śrī Kṛṣṇa and hear His enchanting *venu-nāda*, they become completely infatuated by the force of Cupid, and they fall down into the laps of their husbands.”

‘*Kala-padāyata*’ [*kala* + *pada* + *āyata*]: *kala* – sweet, indistinct sound. The sweetness of the flute song is designed to steal the mind, and the

vagueness of the sound makes each *gopī* think that the flute is calling her name only. *Pada* – every note of the flute song is equally bewildering. The *gopīs* used the word *āyata* (drawn-out) to indicate that they understood Śrī Kṛṣṇa's intention to summon them, and that they could not restrain themselves another moment from running to Him.

Alternatively, '*kala-padāmṛta veṇu-gīta*' (the nectarean flute song) intimates the unparalleled sweetness of the flute melody. The *gopīs* were feeling, "For us not to see our beloved feels like death, and the paradox is that we experience the same death-like state when we do see Him." In this way, they are feeling that they face death in both situations. So, seemingly afraid, they are saying, "*trailokya-saubhagam* – the sum total of all the beauty, charisma and auspiciousness that is found in the entire universe, whether upper, middle or lower planets, is directly present here in the form of Kṛṣṇa." This indicates that such beauty does not exist anywhere else.

The meaning is this: which woman in the entire three worlds will not become intoxicated by the nectarean taste in the sweet, indistinct flute melody, and will thus lose her discrimination and digress from her chastity? Indeed, the only business of the flute song is to allure prey. Furthermore, which woman will not be deviated after directly beholding Śrī Kṛṣṇa's astonishingly vast beauty? In the previous explanation of *kala-padāyata*, *āyata* means the long, drawn-out melody with ascending and descending trills. When this sound enters someone's ears, due to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's strong desire, that person cannot maintain his composure another moment.

Those who cannot see Kṛṣṇa but hear the flute melody from afar also get bewildered. However, no one can explain how those who can see the treasure of His vast beauty become bewildered. That is why the *gopīs* declared a little fearfully, "*trailokya-saubhaga-rūpa* – Your beauty brings auspiciousness to the three worlds." The ocean of Kṛṣṇa's beauty contains whatever auspiciousness, popularity and beauty is present within the entire three worlds – the upper, lower, and middle planetary systems. Having directly witnessed and described such unparalleled beauty, the *gopīs* attempted to explain with *kaimutika-nyāya* (the logic of how much more, how much less?) that if one gets infatuated just by hearing about this ravishing beauty, then what happens after direct *darśana* cannot be explained in words. What is more, the most intelligent men, and even Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, are infatuated

by His beauty, so which woman in these three worlds will not become spell-bound by beholding His handsome form?

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.35.15 states: “Learned authorities such as Indra, Śiva and Brahmā become enchanted when they hear Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s flute melody.” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.2.12 reports: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself gets astonished by His charming beauty.” *Aho!* What to speak of such persons who can differentiate between the substantial and insubstantial, even cows and other animals, birds and trees and other non-moving beings undergo horripilation, being charmed upon hearing the flute and seeing His beauty.

Meaning in the mood of indifference: Śrī Kṛṣṇa might object, “If your hearts are not agitated by directly beholding Me, then why do you want to leave (instead of spending the night here)?” In response, the *gopīs* spoke this verse ‘*ka śtrī*.’ “We are unbendingly virtuous, but which other woman in the entire three worlds will not compromise her chastity upon coming into Your presence? All the women in the three worlds shake in fear and move away from You, being concerned that contact with a lusty person like You will impair their morality, or chastity. Even the cows, birds and trees horripilate upon seeing Your beauty, so which woman will not keep her distance from You, apprehending that her honor will be jeopardized? It is always condemned for beautiful women to surround a handsome man, so we are leaving. Anyway, we are not that much enchanted, and we have not even looked at Your beautiful form with desire in our eyes.” This is the meaning.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might submit, “Have all of you abandoned the path of religiosity and that is why you are condemning other chaste ladies? It is said that a wicked person shamelessly attributes faults to one who is innocent. This is what you are doing. Why, upon just seeing this auspicious birthmark on My chest, this golden line, are you finding fault with the most chaste lady Lakṣmī, and thus offending her?” With a little anger, the *gopīs* agilely answer, “We are not defaming Lakṣmī or anyone else, but we are blaming Providence, who created You to destroy religiosity in all the three worlds.” With this intention, the *gopīs* spoke this verse ‘*kā śtry aṅga te*.’ “O dear one, O Kṛṣṇa, which woman in all the three worlds will not deviate from her chastity, being enchanted by the nectarean flute song (*kala-padāmṛta*)?”

Indeed, all will go astray.” If *‘kala-padāyata-mūrcchitena’* is used, then the meaning is ‘stupefied by the long, drawn-out notes of the flute melody.’

“Is there any woman who will not transgress from virtuous behavior when they hear this? So, it is not their fault; rather, Your skillful flute song is to be blamed. Every woman wants to maintain her chastity, but You force them to abandon their religiosity. It is not only Your flute song that destroys women’s chastity, Your beauty also does the same thing.” For this only, the *gopīs* said *‘trailokya’*. “All the beauty that is present in the three worlds – upper, middle and lower – and in the transcendental *Vaikuṇṭha* planets as well, is simply a droplet of the ocean of Your beauty. So if someone is enchanted by this and falls down from accepted morality, why should they be blamed? Indeed, the lust present in the nature of women is not the reason for their being charmed, because Your beauty and virtues render all moving and non-moving living beings helpless.” With this intention, the *gopīs* said *‘yad go’* – because of this, the cows and other creatures. “Under the influence of Your song and Your beauty, cows, birds, deer and even trees horripilate in supreme bliss.”

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, “O King! What more can I say? Indra, Mahādeva, Brahmā and other demigods also become infatuated by hearing this sound” (SB 10.35.15). Even those who are well versed in the highest truths are enchanted by hearing the flute. And Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself becomes spell-bound by His own beauty” (SB 3.2.12). Thus, the *gopīs* conclude, “Your beauty is the source and cause of such astonishment.” This is the understanding.

#### VERSE 41

*vyaktaṁ bhavān vraja-bhayārti-haro ’bhijāto  
devo yathādi-puruṣaḥ sura-loka-goptā  
tan no nidhehi kara-paṅkajam āрта-bandho  
tapta-staneṣu ca śiraḥsu ca kiṅkariṇām*

“O beloved, certainly You have taken birth in *vraja-maṇḍala* to relieve the distress and fear of the residents of *Vraja*, just as *Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa* comes to protect the realm of the demigods. O friend of the wretched, O merciful one! We are indeed in a very pitiful condition. Our breasts are inflamed with the burning desire to meet You. So You should keep Your tender lotus hands



**on the breasts and heads of Your maidservants to relieve our anguish and give us new life.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

‘*Vyaktam*’ – certainly.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs* of the fourth group commenced their argument by asserting that they could not be held responsible for transgressing *dharma*. Rather, they placed the blame on Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. With this verse they concluded their discussion. The *gopīs* suspected that Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “O *gopīs*, you are talking about so many personalities becoming enchanted, but, as I have the same qualities as Nārāyaṇa, I am *pūrṇa-kāma*, all My desires are satisfied. Thus, nothing attracts Me. What more can I say in this regard?” Thinking in this way, the *gopīs* spoke this verse starting with ‘*vyaktam*’ (certainly).

The *gopīs* said, “We are Your maidservants in this special mellow, so we will not be blamed for giving up *dharma*. Rather, if you do not fulfill our desire, You will be at fault for not executing Your *dharma*.” In this way, the *gopīs* repudiated the blame and passed it on to Kṛṣṇa in an irrevocable way – “Definitely You have done this.” Thus they again presented their conclusion. “You advented to annihilate all fear and distress in Vraja, just as the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa, out of His own will, protects the realm of the demigods, so please keep Your lotus hands on the heads and enflamed hearts of Your maidservants. Furthermore, You might say, ‘O *gopīs*, I accept your reasoning that lovely maidens fall down from their chastity simply upon seeing Me. Therefore, it is My duty to bestow My ambrosial servitude upon you. But, like Nārāyaṇa, I am complete with all virtues and I am *pūrṇa-kāma*, so why would I be inclined to perform such service?’” Apprehending such a statement from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* spoke this verse ‘*vyaktam*.’

“It is well known that You remove the Vrajavāsīs’ miseries and fears, and that is why You appeared in Vraja. For example, when the Vrajavāsīs were afraid of Putanā and the forest fire, and when they were distressed by torrential rains, You saved them. And especially when the Vrajavāsīs languish just thinking about separation from You, You alleviate their agony. You Yourself have avowed, ‘I am the sole master and protector of the cowherd

community. All the residents of Vraja are My very dear family members, and I will protect the cowherd village by the enormous power of My mighty arms. This is My firm declaration.”<sup>7</sup> You spoke this when You lifted Govardhana on Your left hand, so if You will not award us Your ambrosial servitorship, You will be breaking Your promise.”

In some scriptures ‘*vraja-janārti*’ is seen in place of ‘*vraja-bhayārti*.’ In such a case, *ārti* means the unlimited distress of the Vrajavāsīs, both inner and outer. “Furthermore, You have taken birth in a special, noble family. If we die in the fire of separation from You, Your vow to protect the Vrajavāsīs from fear and distress will go in vain, and You will be implicated for breaking Your promise. Even *pūrṇa-kāma īśvara*, the self-satisfied Supreme Lord, desires to keep His word.” With this intention, the *gopīs* spoke the second line of this verse starting with ‘*deva*,’ which is defined as one whose presence is full of splendor and who is worshiped by the whole world. “The primeval Lord is topmost among all men, and the *deva* who appeared from the womb of Aditi by His own will came to protect the demigods and His intimate associates. You have also appeared in the same way. Thus, to alleviate our miseries, keep Your lotus hands on our burning breasts.”

The only reason that the *gopīs* compared Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s hands to a lotus is that His hands remove intense burning. Indeed, the intention of the *vraja-ramaṇīs*, who are filled with the topmost *prema*, was to convince Śrī Kṛṣṇa to keep His lotus hands on their breasts. If He simply agreed to do this, their burning would subside. However, if there were any chance that the heat would be transmitted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus hands, they would not make such an appeal. Hence, they very humbly made another request, “Please keep Your lotus hands on our heads as well and make us one with You.”

“*He āṛta-bandho* – O friend of the distressed! We are Your maidservants, but even in Your direct presence, we are burning up. This cannot be justified. As the friend of the distressed, You should keep Your hands on our heads, but if You are motivated by lust, do not put them on our breasts.” This is the deeper meaning. “As soon as You touch our bodies, the different moods hidden in our hearts will automatically come to the surface. We shall not be able to conceal them anymore.”

7 *tasmān mac-charaṇaṁ goṣṭhaṁ man-nāthaṁ mat-parigrahaṁ / gopāye svātma-yogena so ‘yaṁ me vrata āhitaḥ* – Kṛṣṇa made this vow when lifting Govardhana (SB 10.25.18).

Meaning in the mood of indifference: the *gopīs* suspected that Kṛṣṇa was ready to touch their bodies by force. “*Vyaktam* – You remove the fear and miseries of the residents of Vraja, so it is Your duty to protect us from the fear of transgressing *dharma*. For You to break *dharma* is thoroughly improper.” *He ārta-bandho* – with this address the *gopīs* are praying to be saved from overstepping *dharma*. “This fear makes us very unhappy. *He ārta-bandho*, it is Your duty to remove this fear, not to increase it. O You whose heart is burning with the fire of lust, You are unable to distinguish between right and wrong. What to speak of chaste ladies like us, don’t even touch Your domestic maidservants. Your hand is burning with the fire of lust, so never mind their breasts, don’t even keep your hand on their heads; otherwise, their *dharma* will be destroyed. We know that You are capable of such immoral acts with them, but don’t even think of behaving improperly with us, as we are chaste ladies from respectable families.” This is the essence of the *gopīs*’ discussion.

The conversation starting with ‘*svāgataṁ vo mahā-bhāgāḥ*’ (10.29.18) up to the present verse is an *anubhāva* called *samlāpa*, a verbal exchange characterized by replies and counter-replies.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśini***

“O Kṛṣṇa, what is the point of flaunting Your cleverness? Quit hiding Your real feelings.” The *gopīs* made their intentions very clear when they spoke this verse ‘*vyaktam*.’ “You have taken birth to remove the fears and sufferings of all the Vrajavāsīs, and You Yourself have affirmed this. You have protected the Vrajavāsīs from the forest fire, torrential rains and strong winds.” In some versions ‘*vraja-janārti hara*’ is found, in which case the meaning will be, “It is a well-known fact that You have taken birth from the womb of Yaśoda in the home of Śrī Nanda Mahārāja in Gokula to remove the fears and miseries of the residents of Vraja in the same way that *adi-puruṣa* Nārāyaṇa, the primeval Lord, protects the planets of the demigods. If You do not respond to our prayer, one hundred million *gopīs* will die. Then their parents and all the other Vrajavāsīs will be devastated, wondering in great fear how so many *gopīs* lost their lives at the same time in the middle of the forest.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might reply, “Well, in this situation, what do you want? Tell Me.” The *gopīs* answer, “*He ārta-bandho*, keep Your lotus hands on our inflamed

breasts and heads.” If Kṛṣṇa says, “My tender hands will be scorched by touching Your inflamed breasts,” the *gopīs* would answer, “We are Your maidservants, and our burning breasts are also meant for Your service. The heat of the sun does not make the lotus suffer, rather it makes it blossom. Similarly, our burning breasts will provide pleasure to Your lotus hands.” This is meaning, “You should keep Your lotus hands on our heads with the blessing that we should not fear that henceforth You will ever reject us.”

VERSE 42

*śrī-śuka uvāca*  
*iti viklavitaṁ tāsāṁ*  
*śrutvā yogeśvareśvaraḥ*  
*prahasya sa-dayaṁ gopīr*  
*ātmārāmo 'py arīramat*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: “O Parikṣit, when Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the imperial master of all masters of mystic *yoga*, heard the *gopīs*’ lament, which was filled with emotional turmoil, His heart melted out of mercy. He is *ātmārāma*, self-satisfied, and enjoying in His own *svarūpa* so He does not need any external object for His enjoyment. Nevertheless, He smiled and inaugurated the *rāsa-līlā* with the *gopīs*.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

‘*Viklavitaṁ*’ – the humble words spoken in the great agitation of *prema*. ‘*Gopīr-arīramat*’ – inaugurated the *rāsa-vihāra* with the *gopīs*, the pleasure-filled activities included within the *rāsa-līlā*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

The present verse starting with ‘*iti*’ describes how Śrī Kṛṣṇa was satisfied to hear the *gopīs*’ words spoken in the great agitation of *prema*. Like His own words, which had double meanings, the words of the *vraja-ramaṇīs* arising out of anger and humility, were also read in two ways, displaying entreaty and indifference. To fulfill His desire for pleasure, in a laughing mood He

started the *rāsa-vihāra* with the *gopīs*. He had wanted to hear the *gopīs*' responses to Him, which, even though He was only joking, reflected their extreme perturbation. Now that this desire was fulfilled, Kṛṣṇa was laughing.

Due to hearing the excellence of Kṛṣṇa's answers in response to their own words, the *gopīs*' hidden feelings were exposed. This caused *bhāva* (an advanced stage of *prema*) to arise in their hearts. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw this, His heart fully blossomed with very special feelings. This manifested on His face as the *anubhāva* of jubilation (*harṣa*), which is explained in the *rasa-sāstra*. After hearing the humble, love-filled words of the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa experienced His heart melting with compassion. Thus He led all the *gopīs* in the *rāsa* dance (*gopīr-arīramat*), with Himself as the master of the whole event, and displayed great zeal for engaging in amorous play. This is the meaning.

For performing this amorous play, Kṛṣṇa Himself promoted the *rāsa* dance, and the *gopīs* also wanted to participate. Out of the two, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire was predominant. For example, when children are playing, the one who has called them together plays the upper role. The *gopīs* also participated in the amorous play that Kṛṣṇa instigated. Therefore, the use of the verb '*arīramat*' (He satisfied) in the active voice (*parasmaipada*) illuminates the pre-eminence of the agent (*kartā*) because the *parasmaipada* affix occurs after a verbal root that terminates in *nic* (for attributing the fruit of the action to the agent), providing the root's non-*nic* intransitive counterpart with an animate agent [Panini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* 1.3.88]. Here the verbal root '*ram*' is intransitive. This is why Śrī Kṛṣṇa convinced the *gopīs* to enjoy the *rāsa* dance.

In this regard, it is stated: '*ātmārāmo 'py*' – it is astonishing that one who is fully absorbed in the pleasure of the self (*ātmānanda*), should become involved in some other activity, but such an impossible occurrence has taken place. *Aho!* How powerful is the *prema* of the *gopīs*, which reduces even *ātmānanda* to insignificance. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.10 states: "*ātmārāmās ca munayo* – The transcendental qualities of Śrī Hari attract even the self-satisfied sages." But the indescribable love of the *vraja-devīs* attracts and controls even *ātmānanda* Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The word '*api*' (even though) has been used to establish the super-special quality of the *gopīs*' *prema*. Thus, the use of '*api*' here is quite appropriate; otherwise an *ātmānanda* would be acting against his nature.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.4.64 the Lord says, "Without My devotees, I do not take any pleasure even within My own self." This statement refers to

ordinary devotees, but it indicates that the attraction of *ātmānanda* becomes insignificant in the face of the *prema* of the the *gopīs*, who are the topmost devotees. This has been said with a special intention, although '*ātmārāmo 'py*' has been spoken in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.4.64 and also in the present verse. This repetition is not without meaning because Bhagavān takes more pleasure in being controlled by the love of His devotees than from His own *ātmā*.

One might question how Kṛṣṇa, being one, could enjoy with unlimited *gopīs*? This is answered by the word '*yogeśvareśvara*,' the master of the mystic *yogīs*. If ordinary *yogīs* can expand into many bodies by the power of their mystic *yoga*, and simultaneously perform many different activities, then why will Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the supreme master of all *yogīs*, not be able to do the same thing by the influence of His inconceivable, inborn potency, even without expanding Himself? In the inner chambers of Dvārakā, Nārada Muni witnessed Kṛṣṇa in a single body doing many different activities in the different palaces at the same time, by the influence of Yogamāyā. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.69.2: '*citraṁ bataitad ekena/vapuṣā yugapat prthak grheṣu/dvy-aṣṭa-sāhasraṁ/striya eka udāvahat*.'

The word '*gopī*' is used in this verse to remind one of all those *mahāmantras* in which these celebrated *gopīs* are mentioned as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal beloveds, and thus His enjoyment with them is not surprising.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa had been keen to hear the *gopīs*' words, which were spoken in great humility in their overwhelming *prema*. His desire now satisfied, He laughed and said, "*Aho!* All of you cowherd maidens are overflowing with love, yet every day at the time of meeting, you display extreme contrariety (*vamya-bhāva*). I have exhibited this *vamya-bhāva* only today, and that, too, externally; My internal mood is submissive (*daṁṣīya*). I have done so only this one time, and you became completely devastated, and out of despair you gave up your shyness. This has delighted Me. I have taken in My palms the ocean of all your hidden feelings for Me, and I drank it. I am victorious over you! O *gopīs*, topmost among the wise, I have conquered you! Now your shyness is a hindrance to our meeting, so you should give it up and come forward. Become a garland of jewels around My neck and let me drink the nectar of your lips, for which I have been thirsting for a long time."

After all this jovial, spectacular conversation Śrī Kṛṣṇa affectionately inaugurated His amorous play with the *gopīs*. Due to the effect of the brilliant *prema* of the love-filled *vraja-devīs*, He hid His *ātmārāmatā*, and submitted Himself to *prema*. The news of its victory has been declared in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavaam* 1.7.10: “*ātmārāmāś ca munayo* – the transcendental qualities of Śrī Hari are so astonishing that even self-satisfied sages get attracted and engage in *bhakti* to Him.” This verse describes Śrī Hari’s supra-mundane qualities, and it also highlights the glories of the *gopīs’ prema*. The *gopīs* are the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure potency. There is no fault in Kṛṣṇa’s enjoying with the Vraja maidens, for they are the manifestation of His pleasure potency, and thus they are part of His own being, like His very own soul.

In this amorous episode, Śrī Kṛṣṇa experiences more bliss than He does in enjoying His own self. This is confirmed in His talk with Uddhava: “*na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr naivātmā ca yathā bhavā* – He Uddhava, neither Saṅkarṣana, Lakṣmī nor even Myself are as dear to Me as you are” (*SB* 11.14.15). Kṛṣṇa also says: “*nāham ātmānam āśāse mad-bhaktaiḥ sādhubhir vinā* – I love only My devotees, who are completely surrendered to Me. Without them, I have no interest in enjoying My own self nor the goddess of fortune” (*SB* 9.4.64). These statements make it clear that Bhagavān delights in His devotees, from whom He derives more joy than from His own self.

The *gopīs* are the crown jewels of all the devotees, so Śrī Kṛṣṇa reaps a very special bliss in being conquered by their love and performing *vihāra* with them, rather than dwelling within His own self. How could one Kṛṣṇa by Himself enjoy with millions and millions of fair maidens? *Krama-dīpikā* gives testimony to this. The word ‘*yogeśvareśvaraḥ*’ resolves this doubt. An ordinary *yogī* like Saubari can expand into many forms and enjoy with many women. Rudra and other demigods, who are his masters, can do the same. This being the case, then certainly Śrī Bhagavān, who is the Supreme Master of these mystic *yogīs*, and who is endowed with inconceivable potency, can perform many kinds of activities even without expanding Himself. This is not at all astonishing.

Śrī Nārada, after witnessing Dvārakā-līlā, became amazed to behold many manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, as quoted in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.69.2: “*citram bataitad ekena vapoṣā* – Aho! How astonishing that Śrī Kṛṣṇa in

His one form is sporting with 16,000 wives in different moods in 16,000 palaces simultaneously.”

VERSE 43

*tābhiḥ sametābhir udāra-ceṣṭitaḥ  
priyekṣaṇotphulla-mukhībhir acyutaḥ  
udāra-hāsa-dvija-kunda-dīdhatir  
vyarocataiṇāṅka ivoḍubhir vṛtaḥ*

The benevolent Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa adapted His mood and activities to please the *gopīs*, yet He remained infallible, fixed in His eternal, blissful nature which is full of knowledge. He laughed openly, showing the brilliance of His *kunda* flower-like teeth. The *gopīs*’ lotus faces blossomed with joy upon seeing His loving glances. Standing in their midst, He appeared like the radiant full moon surrounded by stars.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

The lotus faces of the *gopīs* bloomed upon seeing their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa. His magnanimous laugh unfolded the splendor of His jasmine-bud-like teeth. ‘*Ēṇāṅka*’ means ‘full moon.’

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

The next four verses starting with this one, ‘*tābhiḥ*,’ describe the rites of amorous play that Kṛṣṇa instigated, featuring the exceptional beauty that Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests in His loving union with the *gopīs*. Just as the beauty of the full moon is enhanced when surrounded by stars, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s splendid radiance also increases when He is encircled by the *gopīs*. ‘*Sametābhiḥ*’ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa summoned the *gopīs* by His flute song and thus inaugurated the *rāsa* dance. In the previous verse ‘*arīramat*’ makes the same point. ‘*Tābhiḥ*’ means ‘with the assembled *gopīs*,’ ‘*vṛtaḥ*’ means ‘surrounded by,’ ‘*vyarocata*’ means ‘shining forth.’ The word ‘*acyutaḥ*’ denotes that He remained fixed in His infallible position even while He was engaged in romancing with so many *gopīs*. Thus He performed special pastimes (*udāra-ceṣṭitaḥ*). ‘*Udāra*’ means skillful, supremely excellent, delightful pastimes that stimulate a



special mellow; '*ceṣṭita*' means Śrī Kṛṣṇa's activities, such as touching, giving flowers and glancing.

In other words, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was touching one *gopī*, offering flowers in the hand of another *gopī*, and glancing at some others. These are His munificent activities that stimulated very special moods in the *gopīs*' hearts. '*Priyekṣaṇa*' – therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* exchanged loving glances. '*Utphulla mukha*' (blossoming faces) – this confirms that the *gopīs*' faces are like lotuses. Their beloved Kṛṣṇa was glancing affectionately at their blooming faces, and the *gopīs* were reciprocating in kind. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's loving glance removed the darkness of the unhappy, contrary moods hidden in their hearts. In other words, the rays emanating from the sun-like Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested the lotus-faced *gopīs*' natural *nitya-siddha-bhāva*, their eternal, perfect moods. This indicates the special *rasa* of the *gopīs*. '*Udāra-hāsa*' – His broad smile exposed the brilliance of His *kunda* flower-like teeth, thus displaying His special *rasa* and enhancing the charm of His laughter. The word '*eṇa-aṅka*' (the full moon) shows that, even though Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternally the epitome of supreme beauty, His splendor still increases when He is surrounded by the *vraja-sundarīs*. Just as the moon in the sky becomes more radiant when surrounded by sparkling stars, the same happens with Śrī Kṛṣṇa when encircled by the *gopīs*.

'*Tābhiḥ*' (with them): When the *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa are together, their brilliance, their love for each other, their eternal communion, as well as the beauty of the *gopīs*' slender waists, are all magnified.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

'*Udāra*' (liberal) refers to He who generously gives amorous pleasure to the *vraja-devīs* and who gives *prema* to His *bhāva bhaktas*, devotees who have attained the stage of *bhāva*, through hearing and singing about His pastimes. '*Ceṣṭitaḥ*' (activities) pertains to Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is always performing pastimes such as touching the *gopīs*, giving them flowers and casting glances at them. '*Acyuta*' is He who is performing pastimes with every *gopī* at the same time, yet who never deviates from His absolute position. '*Udāra-hāsa-dvija*' is that Kṛṣṇa who, with His broad, generous smile, reveals His dazzling teeth, which defeat the brilliance of *kunda* flowers, and who is as splendid as the full moon.

## VERSE 44

*upagīyamāna udgāyan  
vanitā-śata-yūthapaḥ  
mālām bibhrad vaijayantīm  
vyacaran maṇḍayan vanam*

The *vraja-gopīs* started singing sweetly about the attributes, beauty and pastimes of their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who reciprocated by loudly singing songs glorifying their love and beauty. That supreme hero, bedecked with a *vaijayantī-mālā*, led hundreds and hundreds of groups of *gopīs*, and started roaming about Vṛndāvana, thus enhancing its grandeur.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

In this way, as Śrī Kṛṣṇa started moving towards the Yamunā with the *gopīs*, He increased the splendor of Vṛndāvana. Pointing out the different flowers to the *gopīs*, He stimulated their sentiments. He took the path along the Yamunā's bank, which was highly suitable for amorous enjoyment. This is the meaning of the present verse 'upagīyamāna.' First of all, Śrī Kṛṣṇa jubilantly sang in a high pitch about the moon and the stars, stirring up the *vraja-sundarīs'* emotions. Then, the *gopīs* repeated the song (*upagīyamāna*) in a high tone, and according to their mood, their song could be taken either as glorifying the moon, or glorifying Kṛṣṇa with His names and qualities. Such a double entendre is found in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1: the phrase 'akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ' has two meanings – one for Kṛṣṇa and the other for the moon. First, Śrī Kṛṣṇa sang a song describing the full moon, which emits all varieties of tasteful, nectarean mellows; which dims all the stars by dispersing its effulgence; which has come out to enjoy romantic dalliance in the night, thereby increasing its beauty; and whose topmost beloved is the star named Anurādhā. All glories to that full moon, the emperor of all the seasons, reigning in all its grandeur.

The *vraja-sundarīs* gave the meaning of this song in favor of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thus 'akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ' means He who is the complete shelter of all the twelve nectarean mellows (*śanta*, etc.). 'Prasṁmara-ruci-ruddha-tāra-kā-pāliḥ' is He who has subjugated the two *gopīs* Tāra-kā and Pāli, by

spreading His captivating beauty. ‘*Kalita-śyāmā-lalitāḥ*’ refers to He who has absorbed the minds of the two *gopīs* Śyāmā and Lalitā; ‘*rādhā-preyān*’ – who gives His full love to Rādhā; ‘*vidhuḥ*’ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa in all His splendor; ‘*jayati*’ – be victorious!

The *gopīs* sang Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s glories by changing a few of the words of His song here and there. Śrī Kṛṣṇa sang, “Oh, look, look! This pond is very serene and clear due to reflecting the radiance of the moon, and it is further embellished by buzzing bumblebees hovering over the night lilies.” The *gopīs* took this song, and changed ‘*yāminī*’ (night) to ‘*kāminī*,’ and ‘*ṣaṭ*’ (six-legged) to ‘*sat*.’ The meaning then became: “Radiating His crystalline effulgence and decorated with a peacock feather, Kṛṣṇa is so attractive, giving pleasure to the whole Earth. Singing sweet melodies with pleasing lyrics, He becomes even more alluring.” The *gopīs* sang about Kṛṣṇa in the same melody and rhythm that He used. The hearts of the *vraja-sundarīs* were exclusively absorbed in their beloved, and thus He directly manifested from their words. The *Viṣṇu-purāṇa* affirms: “Kṛṣṇa sang about the autumn moon-lit night and the pond, which is the abode of the lilies, and the *gopīs* sang Kṛṣṇa’s names only, again and again.” Both Kṛṣṇa’s names and attributes are relishable. Sometimes the *gopīs* were singing about His qualities and sometimes only His names.

‘*Vanitā*’ means ‘love-filled damsels’ (according to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary). ‘*Vanitā-śata-yūthapaḥ*’ refers to the leader who commands (*paḥ*) hundreds and hundreds (*śata*) of groups (*yūtha*) of lovely maidens – He is their hero. Another meaning of ‘*paḥ*’ is ‘He who drinks the beauty of these damsels through His eyes.’

These *vraja-ramaṇīs* are called ‘*vanitā*’ because they are all deeply attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. All of them are supremely in love with Kṛṣṇa, yet according to their various moods towards Him, they are divided into four groups: *svapakṣa*, *vipakṣa*, *suhṛta-pakṣa* and *tataṣṭha-pakṣā*. Each group is comprised of hundreds and hundreds of *gopīs*. Again, within these four major groups, hundreds and hundreds of *vanitās* are grouped together in separate parties on the basis of their individual *bhāvas*. However, each *gopī* enjoyed many kinds of amorous pastimes with Śrī Kṛṣṇa according to her own particular mood. All of them directly drank the nectar of His lips and made Him drink the nectar of their lips, thereby increasing His pleasure.

‘*Vaijayanti*’ is a garland strung with five kinds of flowers. In the forthcoming verse ‘*valayānām nūpurāṇām*’ (10.33.5), it is stated that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was adorned with bracelets, anklets and many other such ornaments at the time of the *rāsa* dance, and He was also wearing a *vaijayanti-mālā*. While He was roaming through the forest with the Vraja maidens, they gathered five kinds of flowers, strung a *vaijayanti-mālā* suitable for wandering in the woods (*van-vihāra*) and placed it around His neck. In addition, the forest goddess Vṛndā-devī arranged for many such *mālās* and kept them in different *kuñjas* located throughout the forest. It is to be understood in this way. ‘*Vyacarat*’ means ‘roaming all around.’

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* sang sweetly in a high pitch with the proper combination of *rāga* (particular melody), *svara* (chord) and *tāla* (rhythm). They sang the following song in *tin-tāla* (three beats):

*vadanam madhuma-sadanam, calanam dalanam kandra-kirtinām  
hasitam sudṛgbhir lasitam, tava sarayaḥ pātu mām anissam*

“Your auspicious lotus face is the abode of sweetness, Your gait belittles the fame of the movements of an excellent elephant, and Your soft smile is cherished by beautiful maidens. Please nourish and protect us forever.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is the maintainer and the lover of millions and millions of *gopīs*, the most prominent being Śrī Rādhā and Candrāvalī, who themselves protect hundreds of groups of *gopīs*. All of them together sang the same melody that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had sung, but they described His names and attributes. In response, He loudly sang in the same style as Rādhā and Candrāvalī, changing some of the words:

*tvad-vadanam sadanam madhumnām, tatra hanta dṛganta-vilāsāḥ  
teśv asamām suśamām upajagmuḥ, sundarī kāma-kalāḥ sakalās tāḥ*

“*He sundarī*, O beautiful one! Your face is the abode of sweetness, and therein Your eyes are moving playfully. *Aho!* You display extraordinary expertise in the art of elegantly expressing amorous desire.” Then the *gopīs* sang:

*kānte twav-āsyodaya-dattam indu, mṛga-cchalād duryaśa eva dhatte  
janopahāsā saha no 'tha vā kim, duijo 'pi mūḍho garalam jaghāse*

“O beloved, You are disgraced because Your moon-like face bears some blemish [the love-mark from another sweetheart], like the moon with the mark of a deer. O handsome one, You are twice-born, so why are You so foolish as to drink poison?”

In these songs Kṛṣṇa sang ‘*sundarī*’ and the *gopīs* said ‘*sundara*,’ He said ‘*kantā*,’ and they said ‘*kante*.’ The *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa sang responsively. *Vaijayantī-mālā* is a garland strung with flowers of five different colors, or instead of flowers, five different colored gems.

#### VERSE 45

*nadyāḥ pulinam āviśya  
gopībhir hima-vālukam  
juṣṭaṁ tat-taralānandi  
kumudāmoda-vāyunā*

**Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa arrived with the *gopīs* at the sacred bank of the Yamunā, where the sand was shining like camphor and was cool from the waves of the river. The whole area was bathed in the light of the full moon and was fragrant with the scent of night-blooming lotuses. There, on that blissful river bank, Bhagavān initiated His amorous play with the cowherd maidens, who are His internal potency.**

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In this verse ‘*nadyāḥ*’ and the next, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī described how Śrī Kṛṣṇa brought the *gopīs* to the bank of the Yamunā and with great artistry engaged them in amatory enjoyment. ‘*Hima-vālukam*’ – the sand on the bank of the Yamunā was white as camphor. In the previous verse the word ‘*vana*’ has been used, indicating Vṛndāvana. ‘*Nadyāḥ*’ refers to the river in this Vṛndāvana. Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to this bank of the Yamunā, who was spreading bliss with her gently flowing waves. The soft breeze, fragrant with the night lotuses, permeated the whole atmosphere. Lotuses ordinarily

bloom only in the day, yet, just like jasmine (*mallikā*) flowers, they were in full bloom at night in this autumn season by the influence of Kṛṣṇa's *rasa*-filled pastime potency (*līlā-śakti*).

'*Ānandī*' – with the effect of this *rasa*-filled potency, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *līlā* became filled with pleasure. '*Juṣṭam*' (served) indicates that the cool and gently flowing breeze laden with the fragrance of flowers was serving the bank of the Yamunā. In some versions, '*kumud*' and '*ānanda*' are not seen, and in place of '*juṣṭam*,' '*reme*' is used. In such a case the meaning would be: "Śrī Kṛṣṇa arrived at the bank of the Yamunā, which was served by the breeze fragrant with lotuses. Here He engaged in various types of amorous play with the *vraja-ramaṇīs*." Because of the difference in choice of words in some versions, I have explained each of the words in this verse separately.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

The bank of the Yamunā is naturally congenial for *rāsa-līlā*. The gentle breeze blowing off the river was cooled by the waves of the water, and was laden with the fragrance of the fresh, blossoming lotuses, thus making this place quite delightful. Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to sport here. In some places '*reme*' (took pleasure) is found in place of '*juṣṭa*' (served). If '*juṣṭa*' is used, the meaning of '*ramayāṁ cakāra*' in the next verse will be 'He took pleasure' – Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to the bank of the Yamunā with the *gopīs*, where a cool, gentle breeze was blowing, and He took pleasure in amorous amusements with them. Some versions have alternate meanings for '*kumudāmoda*' and '*taralānanda*.'

### VERSE 46

*bāhu-prasāra-parīrambha-karālakoru*  
*nīvī-stanālabhana-narma-nakhāgra-pātaiḥ*  
*kṣvelyāvaloka-hasitair vraja-sundarīṇām*  
*uttambhayan rati-patiṁ ramayāṁ cakāra*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa threw His arms around the *vraja-sundarīs* and embraced them, pressed their palms, touched their braids, thighs, waists and breasts, joked with them, playfully scratched them with His fingernails, delightfully glanced at them, and laughed with them. In this way He aroused their

**transcendental lust – the supremely glorious erotic *prema* – and gave them pleasure by sporting with them.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa threw His arms around the *vraja-sundarīs* and embraced them, pressed their palms, touched their braids, thighs, waists and breasts, joked with them, and playfully scratched them with His fingernails. He looked at some of the *gopīs* and laughed. In this way He aroused their lust and engaged in amorous play with them.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa extended His arms around the *vraja-sundarīs*, He removed their natural bashfulness, which was covering their *rati*, symptomized by their overwhelming obsession for their lover, and stimulated it to the stage of *mahābhāva*, the topmost level of *prema*. Thus He aroused Cupid (*rati-pati*) in them. In this way Śrī Kṛṣṇa revealed His deep attachment for them and demonstrated His supreme skillfulness in amorous dealings. Extending the arms means moving them to take hold of the *gopīs* in a tight embrace. '*Kṣveliḥ*' implies with flattering conversations and winning activities, such as picking up their veils. '*Vraja-sundarīṇām*' means the beauty of the *vraja-sundarīs* was just perfect for Kṛṣṇa's amorous play. "A beautiful form is the abode of good qualities," this logic indicates the talent of the *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa was enjoying with so many *gopīs* at once, but none of them was aware of this. This was accomplished by Kṛṣṇa's special potency to cast a spell over them. Each *vraja-sundarī* was seeing Kṛṣṇa with her only. None of them noticed any other *gopīs*, nor were they inclined to do so.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa extended His arms and embraced the *gopīs* to His chest in such a way that in their embrace they looked like a swastika. He was holding one by the hand, touching the hair of another, fondling the waist of someone else, joking with another, scratching one with His nails, flattering another, and flashing a smiling glance at yet another. With these ingratiating activities

He was stimulating that erotic (*rati-patī*) *prema* in the *vraja-sundarī*s and dallying with each *gopī* with His many direct expansions (*prakāśa-vigrahas*, all having the same features).

One might wonder how it was possible for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to perform amorous play with millions of *gopīs* in that restricted area on the bank of the Yamunā, where there were neither love couches nor private quarters. This is a fact, but just like the personal form of Bhāgavan, the land of Vṛndāvana is also immensely powerful. Even a grain of earth from Vṛndāvana the size of a sesame seed can expand unlimitedly, and after the *līlā* is finished, it contracts. For the amorous play of Bhagavān, hundreds of secluded groves complete with flower beds, perfumes, flower garlands, betel nuts and other items of enjoyment were arranged by Yogamāyā, who is the *durgata-ghatana patīyasī śakti*, the power to make the most impossible possible. At the end of the *līlā*, all of this was withdrawn. In this way everything was perfectly accomplished.

VERSE 47

*evam bhagavataḥ kṛṣṇāl  
labdha-mānā mahātmanaḥ  
ātmānam menire strīṇām  
māninyo hy adhikaṁ bhuvi*

Being so highly honored by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord and Supreme Lover, the *gopīs* became proud, and each one considered herself the finest woman in the world.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

*Mahātmā* – detached mind.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Bharata Muni writes that when a colored cloth is dipped repeatedly in a pot of dye, its color becomes brighter. Similarly, union cannot be nourished without separation. To narrate very exceptional pastimes, Śrī



Śukadeva Gosvāmī, in whose heart a distinctive *prema* was arising, used this logic and spoke this present verse ‘*evam*’ to introduce a special mood of separation. ‘*Mahātmanah*’ indicates beyond divinity, the most excellent of heroes; the reason for this is ‘*bhagavataḥ kṛṣṇāt*,’ He is Bhāgavan Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. The *vraja-sundarīs* received so much honor from Him, who had come under the control of their love. Due to this, they became *mānini*, indignant towards their lover. Each *gopī* considered herself to be the most fortunate woman in the whole world and also among the beautiful maidens present on the bank of the Yamunā. Thus, after intimately associating with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they displayed loving anger towards Him, and developed pride in their hearts towards the other *gopīs*.

The *māna* of these *vraja-sundarīs* is an exceptional wave in the ocean of *prema*, because it is expressing their *praṇaya*, which is a condensed form of *prema*. The beauty of *māna* is displayed only after *praṇaya*. Thus, *māna* is considered as that *bhāva* which creates an obstruction in the youthful couple looking at and embracing each other, even though there is no one else around and they feel intense love for each other. *Māna* is a level where love takes a strong turn. It is one kind of *vipralambha*, and is a special stage in the exaltation of *praṇaya*. An astonishing taste is produced when this *māna*, stemming from the *sthayī-bhāva*, combines with *vibhāva* and other ingredients of *rasa*.

*Rasa-śāstra* states, “The movement of *prema* is crooked like the movement of a snake. That is why *māna* may arise in the hero and heroine with or without any reason.” The *gopīs* exhibited pride (*garva*), thinking, “None of the women in the whole world have obtained a hero like Him. All the lovely maidens present on the bank of the Yamunā have attained Kṛṣṇa but are not as fortunate as I am.” *Garva* is exhibited “when one disobeys others due to possessing good fortune, beauty, youth, virtues, topmost association and fulfillment of desires.” This is one of the transitory emotions (*sañcāri-bhāvas*). It rises and then drowns in the ocean of *sthayī-bhāva*, augmenting the permanent emotion and then vanishing. Just as a wave of the ocean expands it and then disappears, similarly, *garva* and other *sañcāri-bhāvas* arise from the *sthayī-bhāva* of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, increasing the *prema* and then disappearing. Thus, it is understood that *garva* is a special element of *prema*, escalating *kṛṣṇa-prema* to a very special state, a very high level of *rasa*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

According to Bharata Muni, the color of a cloth becomes brighter when it is dipped again and again in a pot of dye. Similarly, *sambhoga*, or union, is not nourished without being dipped into *vipralambha-rasa*, the flavor of separation. According to this logic, *līlā-śakti* manifests *vipralambha* as a pretense to bring *sambhoga* to its fullest form. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke this verse ‘*evam*’ to explain this phenomenon. The *vraja-sundarīs* brought ‘*mahātmā*’ – the excellent, super-divine hero Bhagavān – under the control of their love, and received profuse honor from Him who is the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Thus, each one started thinking in her heart, “I am the most fortunate among all the women on the surface of the Earth, and not only that, among all the fair maidens assembled here on the bank of the Yamunā.” In this way, they became *praṇaya-mānini* towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, proud because of their great *prema*, and were feeling superior to the other maidens.

**VERSE 48**

*tāsāṁ tat-saubhaga-madam  
vīkṣya mānaṁ ca keśavaḥ  
praśamāya prasādāya  
tatraivāntaradhīyata*

Śrī Keśava observed that these *vraja-ramaṇīs* were overly proud due to their good fortune and were now exhibiting *māna* also. In order to quell their pride and satisfy them by dispelling their indignation, He suddenly disappeared from their assembly.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

‘*Saubhagya-mada*’ refers to intoxication due to good fortune, meaning that they lost control of themselves. *Māna*, indignation, and *garva*, pride. ‘*Keśava*’ – *ka* means Brahmā, *īśa* means Śiva; Keśava is He who controls Brahmā and Śiva. No effort whatsoever was required for this Keśava to break their pride and indignation.

End of the *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā* on

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 29

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

This verse describes the rising of pride (*garva*) in the *vraja-ramaṇīs* from their intoxication due to good fortune (*saubhagya-mada*). *Viśva-koṣa* defines '*mada*' as *retaḥ* (semen), *kasturi* (musk), *garva* (pride), and transformation of the heart due to delight. But this *garva* is not the transformation of the material heart. Śrī Kṛṣṇa took special notice of this *garva* and *māna* in the *gopīs*. He realized that their pride was thoroughly incorrigible, and that there was no means to rout it out. Even hundreds of entreaties would not be able capable of dispelling this *māna*. After analyzing the *māna* of the *vraja-ramaṇīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa ascertained that the only means to overcome it was for Him to vanish from their presence. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa instantly disappeared without anyone noticing which way He went. There was no question of tasting *rasa* with them without breaking their pride, and without pleasing Rādhā.

'*Antaradhīyata*' – *dhīṣṇa* means disrespect, the root verb being *dhī*. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.30.28, Śrī Kṛṣṇa disappeared with Śrī Rādhā although no one witnessed this. Yogamāyā accomplished this to fulfill His desire. Sometimes, the hero adopts a negligent mood to remove a *māna* aroused by envy. *Rasa-sāstra* describes that anger with a cause (*sahetu-māna*) is removed by these means: gentle words (*sāma*), dissension (*bheda*), action (*kriya*), donation (*dhāna*), courtesy (*natī*), neglect (*upekṣā*) or any other suitable mood which is appropriate to produce *rasa*. But causeless *pranāya-māna* goes away on its own, or perhaps after some small retaliation. One might object that the *māna* of the *vraja-ramaṇīs* was causeless, so why did Kṛṣṇa neglect them and disappear? The reply is this: neglect was necessary to pacify their *māna* because if both parties are indignant, then the anger will become more solid, and, together with pride, will keep growing. Anger and pride help *prema* to ripen. In other words, for *prema* to reach its highest limits, neglect was required to pacify both *garva* and *māna*. Thinking in this way, Śrī Bhāgavan decided to vanish and thus achieved both tasks.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa disappeared to accomplish two purposes simultaneously: when the pride and indignation of the *vraja-ramaṇīs* would be removed, they would join the supremely nectarean *rāsa-līlā*, and thus He would relish *śṛṅgāra-rasa* to the fullest extent. Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa acts according to His

own will, and it is not a very difficult task for Him to remove the *vraja-ramanīs*’ pride, but His disappearing made them taste *vipralambha-rasa*, which is highly nourishing for *prema* as it makes one hanker for the desired object. He Himself has said this in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.20:

*nāhaṁ tu sakhyo bhajato ‘pi jantūn  
bhajāmy amiṣām anuvṛtti-vṛttaye  
yathādhano labdha-dhane vinaṣṭe  
tac-cintayānyan nibhṛto na veda*

“O *gopīs*, I reciprocate with My loving devotees, but not immediately. This I do to strengthen their attraction for Me. If a poor man suddenly receives vast wealth and then loses it, his heart becomes so absorbed in his lost wealth that he forgets everything else, even eating and drinking. Similarly, after I meet My devotees, I purposely hide Myself so that they will think about nothing else but Me.”

Actually, the only reason for His disappearance was to enjoy with Śrī Rādhikā.

‘*Keśava*’ means ‘extremely effulgent.’ It is said in *Mahābhārata*: “O best of sages, this plenary expansion of Myself manifesting here is called *Keśa*, thus the omniscient call Me *Keśava*.” By this it is understood that the splendor and beauty of the whole place was lost when He suddenly disappeared.

End of the *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* on  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 29

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

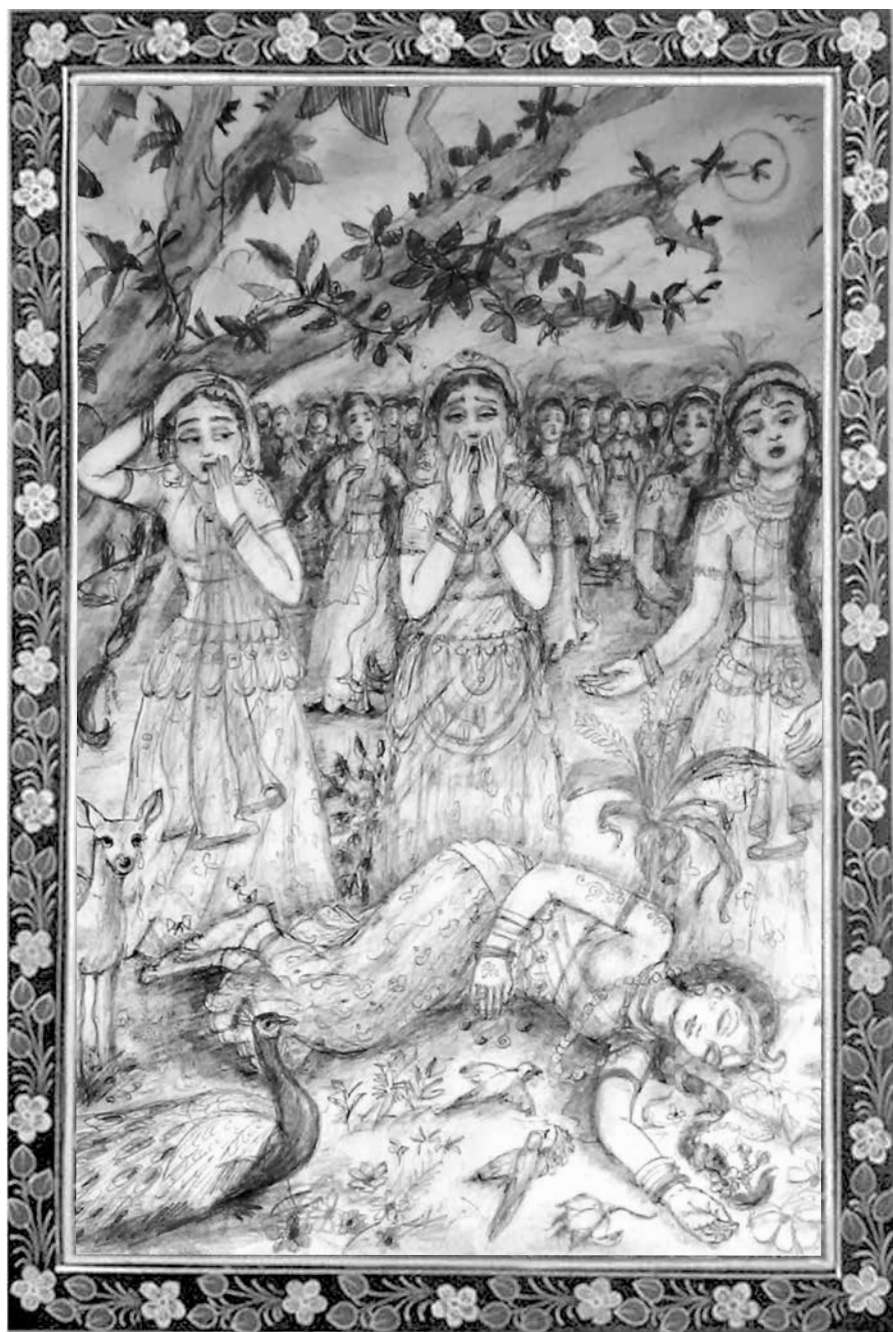
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Bhagavān treated all the *vraja-sundarīs* equally, honoring and embracing them. When the chief *gopī*, the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, saw this, She became enraged out of envy, and Her eyes turned red. The lesser ranking *gopīs* filled up with pride at their auspicious fortune. The present verse ‘*tāsām*’ explains how Śrī Kṛṣṇa, aware of the cowherd maidens’ moods, resolved the situation. ‘*Tāsām*’ – *tā* (them) + *sā* (Her); *tā* means the pride of the *vraja-sundarīs*, and *sā* refers to the anger of Vṛṣabhānu-kumārī. To remove the pride of the *vraja-sundarīs* and to please

Vṛṣabhānu-kumārī Śrī Rādhā by pacifying Her anger, Śrī Keśava took Her by force and disappeared.

'*Keśava*' – *kaḥ* means Brahmā + *iśaḥ* means Maheśvara (Śiva) + *vayate* means 'offer prayers.' Brahmā and Śiva offer prayers to Keśava, their monarch. This being the case, what was the need for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to go to such endeavor to break the pride of the *vraja-sundarīs*? '*Keśava*' also means 'one who pleases Śrī Rādhikā by dressing Her hair.' Indeed, *rasika-śekhara* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is very expert in this art. '*Antaradhīyata*' is an antiquated form of '*antardadhat*,' meaning 'disappeared.' He disappeared with Śrī Rādhikā, taking Her away by force. The forthcoming verses substantiate this. He did not go elsewhere; He vanished from that very spot in front of the *vraja-devīs*. He accomplished this by the help of Yogamāyā to fulfill His desire.

End of the *Sārārtha Darśinī* on  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 29



## ◉ CHAPTER 2 ◉

ŚRIMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 10.30

# The Condition of the Gopīs in Separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa

### VERSE 1

*śrī-śuka uvāca  
antarhite bhagavati  
sahasaiva vrajāṅganāḥ  
atapyamāṁs tam acakṣāṇāḥ  
karīṇya iva yūthapam*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: O Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared. When the *vraja-sundarīs* did not see Him they became like a herd of female elephants who have lost their mate. In the *gopīs*' hearts the fire of separation burst into flames.

## *Bhāvānuvādas*

ELABORATED TRANSLATIONS

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Bhāvārtha Dipikā*

The 30<sup>th</sup> Chapter describes how the *gopīs*, feeling untold anguish upon not seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa, began burning in separation, and like mad women they searched for Him from forest to forest till late in the night.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī felt great pain when he described how Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared. Due to this, he was unable to speak; thus, there was a break in the narration. This break marked the end of the previous chapter. Even though he was feeling unhappy, as soon as he remembered the good fortune of the topmost *gopī*, Śrī Rādhikā, with whom Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa had disappeared, he regained his composure and resumed the narration with this first verse. Śukadeva Gosvāmī used the phrase '*antarhite*,' meaning

that Śrī Bhagavān vanished suddenly without anyone observing. The word ‘*sahasaiva*’ (quite suddenly) designates the imperceptible way in which He disappeared. In other words, they did not see Him leaving, so they could not know in which direction He had gone. His unexpected departure threw the *vraja-gopīs* into a frenzy of intense affliction.

The use of the word ‘*vrajāṅganā*’ (the damsels of Vraja) indicates that Kṛṣṇa is the only lover of all the *gopīs*, thus their pain in separation was excessive. This intense burning in separation which the *gopīs* were experiencing is compared to that of the female elephants’ anxiety upon losing sight of their beloved leader. This comparison is used to show that she-elephants’ only shelter is their mate. Similarly, the *vraja-gopīs*’ only resource is Śrī Kṛṣṇa; because of this, the *vraja-devīs* felt overwhelming agony when their lover abandoned them.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

This 30<sup>th</sup> Chapter describes how the *vrajāṅganās*, maddened in separation from Kṛṣṇa, began searching for Him, asking all the trees about His whereabouts. Then they started enacting their lover’s different pastimes. Later, it tells how He took one *gopī* with Him, and in the end, He left Her also. ‘*Acakṣāṇā*’ means ‘not seeing;’ when the *gopīs* lost sight of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they were devastated by anxiety.

VERSE 2

*gatyānurāga-smita-vibhramekṣitair*  
*mano-ramālāpa-vihāra-vibhramaiḥ*  
*ākṣipta-cittāḥ pramadā ramā-pates*  
*tās tā viceṣṭā jagṛhus tad-ātmikāḥ*

Those *gopīs*’ hearts had already been completely attracted by Ramā-pati Kṛṣṇa – by His way of walking like an intoxicated elephant, by His very sweet smiles radiating *prema*, by His playful glances, by His charming love-chatter, and by His many other inviting gestures and stratagems. Those *vraja-devīs*, overwhelmed in *prema*, became completely one with Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the goddess of fortune, and they began acting like Him.



ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Ramā-pati Śrī Kṛṣṇa's graceful gait, His passionate, joyful and provocative glances coupled with His dancing eyebrows, His heart-stealing sweet-talk, His flirting and all His other provocative acts – all these gestures infatuated the *gopīs*. Consumed by *prema* they went wild, and being totally absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they began playfully imitating all His different pastimes.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Starting from this current verse, which begins with '*gatya*,' and all the way up to and including the first verse of Chapter 32, the narration recounts the *gopīs*' anguish in separation. '*Gati*' means Śrī Kṛṣṇa's usual way of walking, '*anurāga*' means His special moods befitting a lover, '*smita*' means His soft smile, '*vibhrama*' means His moving eyebrows and other inviting gestures – all of these mannerisms are expressions of His heart-felt desires for amorous intrigue. '*Vihāra*' means erotic diversions; the second '*vibhrama*' indicates special romantic sentiments. The *rasa-sāstras* give another meaning for *vibhrama*, that is, the restlessness of the heart due to amorous desire.

'*Anurāga*' arising from the heart refers to activities on the mental plane. His way of walking, His soft smile, His beckoning glances, and His amorous roaming about are bodily activities. His captivating talks are a verbal activity. It should be understood that by all these activities many, many other emotional sentiments are expressed. Here '*gati*' is a common act so it is taken separately. His soft smile and suggestive glances arise in the first stage of *anurāga*, so these three are grouped together. '*Ālāpa*,' sweet love talk, and '*vihāra*,' lovers strolling together, arise with '*vibhrama*' (rapture), thus these three come in one phrase.

In the previous Chapter 29, Verses 43 ('*tābhiḥ sametābhir*')–46 ('*bāhu-prasāra-parirambha*') describe Śrī Kṛṣṇa attracting the *gopīs* by His alluring behavior, His movements and impassioned expressions. These *gopīs*, thoroughly intoxicated, now began imitating Kṛṣṇa's behavior with them – how He caressed them, embraced them and joked with them on the bank of the Yamunā, as described in the verse '*bāhu-prasāra-parirambha*.'

In the verse at hand, the word '*pramada*' is used, indicating ladies whose hearts have been captivated and instilled with a special madness

(*pra + madā*). By splitting the word in this way, we can understand the true nature of these *gopīs*. They are characteristically intoxicated. Now highly maddened, they became fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's loving exchanges with them and started imitating His pastimes. What else can be said about these love-sick maidens?

'*Ramā-pateḥ*' in this verse *Ramā* refers to Lakṣmī-devī, the source and presiding deity of all beauty, all attributes, all sweetness, all majesty and all riches; and thus Her *pateḥ* would be considered the absolute master of all these opulences. According to *śāstra*, *Ramā* also means Śrī Rādhā, so *Ramā-pati* means Śrī Rādhā's master, Kṛṣṇa. The use of the expression '*Ramā-pati*' here indicates that Kṛṣṇa has disappeared, taking Rādhā with Him. '*Tās tā*' (all of those) in the last line of this Verse 2 refers to all of those different actions described in the verse '*bāhu-prasāra*' (10.29.47), such as spreading His arms.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Then the *vraja-sundarīs* started searching for Kṛṣṇa here, there and everywhere, in every *kuñja*. They were unable to find Him, and their anguish increased by the moment. Due to this anguish, the *sañcari-bhāva* of *unmada*, divine madness, arose. Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke this verse beginning with '*gatyā*' and the next verse to show how this *sañcari-bhāva* manifested. '*Ramā-pati*' refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the master of all beauty and all wealth. '*Gatyā*' is His natural way of walking; alternatively, the way He first walked towards the *gopīs*. Then comes '*anurāga*,' shown by His soft smile; '*vibhrama*,' His restless, dancing eyes revealing His wanton moods; and '*manorama ālāpa*,' charming love chatter.

For instance, "O lovely land-lotus ladies, won't you give a drink of your nectar to the thirsty bumblebee?" In answer, the *gopīs* say to Kṛṣṇa: "O bumblebee, the husband of the lotuses is the sun, not the bee. Therefore, why should we give You our honey to drink?" Kṛṣṇa replies: "O beautiful lotus ladies, it is the nature of the lotus that they won't give their honey to their husband, the sun. Rather, they let their paramour, the bee, drink their honey."

By this *manoramālāpa* (clever verbal exchange), the *gopīs* were soundly defeated. As the *gopīs* smiled sweetly, Kṛṣṇa drank the nectar of their lips and began His amorous play. Kṛṣṇa singled out one sweet maiden

and said, “Ah, I understand when you were walking in front of Me under the *kadamba* tree, you were bitten by an insolent snake (that arouses lust), and I see that his venom has already gone all the way up to your breasts. As you are from a respected family, you are too embarrassed to tell Me about the snake bite. But I can remove that poison, and that’s why, out of My kindness, I have come to help you. I will recite the *mantra* to counteract the poison as I massage you.”

That *vraja-devī* replied, “O snake charmer, no snake has bitten me. Go to that person who was actually bitten by the snake and caress her body.” Kṛṣṇa answered, “O well-bred lady, from your stuttering I can understand that you are becoming agitated due to the burning of that poison. Knowing this and not doing anything to help you, surely I would be guilty of killing a woman. Therefore, I will alleviate that poison.” Saying this, Kṛṣṇa approached that *vraja-devī* and scratched her breasts.

After that, they began their amorous diversions, all of them completely maddened by erotic desire. The *rasa-śāstras* explain ‘*vibhrama*’ when one’s heart is filled with conjugal desire, one becomes overly restless. Due to this condition, the *vraja-devīs* displayed all the mannerisms indicative of their thirst for romance. Now, in separation, the *gopīs* walked down memory lane together, remembering all those dalliances they had enjoyed with their beloved. Their hearts so much attracted to Kṛṣṇa, they said, “O heart, what are you doing here? Go out and look for the love of your life.” In this way the *gopīs* were chastising their life forces. From their speech one can understand that their hearts were about to leave their bodies. Here ‘*pramadā*’ signifies the high degree of the *gopīs*’ madness, which then escalated to the top limit (*unmada*). In this condition they became one with Kṛṣṇa (*tadātmika*), seeing themselves as Him, and they began imitating His many different pastimes.

### VERSE 3

*gati-smita-prekṣaṇa-bhāṣaṇādiṣu*  
*priyāḥ priyasya pratirūḍha-mūrtayaḥ*  
*asāv ahaṁ tv ity abalās tad-ātmikā*  
*nyavediṣuḥ kṛṣṇa-vihāra-vibhramāḥ*

In this way Kṛṣṇa’s beloved *vraja-sundarīs*, the lovely damsels of Vraja, became like Him, copying all His mannerisms – His

carefree way of walking, His sweet, laughing smile, His infatuating glances and His ambrosial words. The moods underlying all of Kṛṣṇa's inviting gestures infiltrated the *gopīs*' bodies, and they became maddened. Remembering His amorous pastimes, they took on His nature and as they mimicked His amorous activities, they avowed, "I am Kṛṣṇa!"

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* became completely absorbed in their beloved Kṛṣṇa's ways – His gait, His laughing and joking, and other mannerisms. Therefore, those *vraja-sundarīs* became *kṛṣṇa-vihāra-vibhrama*, that is, they began acting just like their sweetheart and insisted to each other, "I am Kṛṣṇa!"

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In this verse '*gati-smita*,' Śrī Śukadeva Goṣvāmī clearly states that the *gopīs* assumed Kṛṣṇa's nature. The previous verse describes their beloved's walk, smile, laughter, glances, speech and other inviting movements. Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed many actions that the *gopīs* acted out, but these are not being elaborated on here. The *gopīs*, who were absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's gestures, experienced that all their senses and entire bodies became like His. Therefore, inside and outside, they became super-saturated with their beloved's moods. In simple language it can be explained that the *vraja-ramaṇīs*' speech, mind, senses and everything else – all the activities of the senses and provocative gestures – were just like Kṛṣṇa's. '*Abalā*' (the weaker sex) refers to women. Therefore, all their gestures would naturally have a feminine tone, but still, they had assumed Kṛṣṇa's inner nature. Every *gopī* introduced herself to the others as indeed being Kṛṣṇa Himself. "That person whom you are so excited about – I am that Kṛṣṇa, I am the hero of amorous intrigue. Why are you in so much turmoil over Me?"

How did those *gopīs* present themselves? They acted exactly as Kṛṣṇa did when He was in the throes of romantic dalliances with them. The *gopīs* became filled with Kṛṣṇa's qualities, and in *prema-līlā* it is very natural for them to see themselves as their beloved. However, their thinking that they were Kṛṣṇa is not artificial like *ahaṅgrahopāsanā*, the Māyāvāda practice

of worshipping oneself as the Supreme. The words '*priyāḥ priyasya*' (the *gopīs* [absorbed] in their beloved) are used in this verse to emphasize that because the *gopīs*' love for Kṛṣṇa is inborn, they naturally reflect their beloved's personality.

The *gopīs* mirrored all the different ways that Śrī Kṛṣṇa displayed His love for them. In other words, whatever movements or expressions He employed, the *gopīs* mimicked, being completely absorbed in His walking, laughing, joking, etc. These *vraja-gopīs* imitating Kṛṣṇa's activities is called *līlā-anubhāva*. The *rasa-śāstra* says: absorbed completely in *prema*, the beloved imitates her lover's activities and dresses like him – such behavior is called *līlā-anubhāva*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

This third verse '*gati*' relates how the *vraja-sundarīs* behaved in their fully blazing madness. The previous verse recounted how the *gopīs* assumed all of their beloved's mannerisms – His way of walking, His smile, His glances, His sweet love-chatter, His amorous play. In other words, the *gopīs*' minds and senses, indeed their whole beings, were taken over by their lover's behavior – His laugh, walk and other actions. Being controlled by madness, two persons became one: "Kṛṣṇa is me. Truly, I am Kṛṣṇa." Giving up all logic, they emphatically said, "I am Kṛṣṇa." As the *vraja-sundarīs* attained this mature stage of relishing *rasa*, their whole beings became like their lover. This sense of oneness with Kṛṣṇa is not to be confused with *ahāṅgrahopāsanā*. The words '*priyāḥ priyasya*' indicate that the *gopīs* are declaring to each other, "I am Kṛṣṇa." At this time, none of them identified in the slightest as maidens of Vraja. The reason for this is that, remembering Kṛṣṇa's amorous adventures with them, they became absorbed in these *līlās* and went insane.

### **VERSE 4**

*gāyantya uccair amum eva saṁhataḥ  
vicikyur unmattaka-vad vanād vanam  
papraccchur ākāśa-vad antaram bahir  
bhūteṣu santaṁ puruṣaṁ vanaspatīm*

(When those *gopīs*' absorption in Śrī Kṛṣṇa subsided a bit, their mood also changed.) Altogether they loudly sang about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's qualities and became intoxicated. In this mood they started searching for their beloved, going from one forest to another, looking in every dense thicket. O Parikṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, like the sky, is everywhere, pervading inside and outside all the inert and conscious objects. He was not far away from them, but the *gopīs*, not seeing Him in their midst, asked the trees and creepers where He was.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Now singing even more loudly, those *gopīs* became maddened and went from one forest to another in search of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They were inquiring from the trees about their beloved's whereabouts – this is the behavior of persons who have lost their minds. The sky is all-pervading; in the same way the Supreme Person is inside and outside every living entity. It is this Supreme Person whom the *gopīs* were asking about.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

This verse starting with '*gāyantya*' describes how, after a long time, the *gopīs* reverted to their usual condition, but then again went mad. Here *gāna* means singing. To protect themselves, they were singing about the killing of Pūtanā and Kṛṣṇa's other pastimes famous in Gokula. For example, the *gopīs* sang, "*viṣa-jalāpyayād* – O best of men, You have saved us Vrajavāsīs again and again from all dangers. You protected us from the poisonous water of Kāliya Lake, Aghāsura, the rainstorm sent by Indra, the demon Trṇāvarta, Indra's thunderbolt, the perilous blazing fire, Ariṣṭāsura, Maya's son Vyomāsura, and many other dangers" (10.31.3).

There are several reasons why the *gopīs* sang out loud: (1) to make sure that Kṛṣṇa, who was quite some distance away, would hear about their dire sufferings; (2) to attract Kṛṣṇa, who loves to hear His devotees singing; and (3) it is natural for one to sing when the heart is afflicted. '*Amum eva*' means they sang songs about Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa inflicted untold suffering upon the *vraja-sundarīs* by abandoning them. Even so, in separation they

were singing His glories. The beloved never sees the faults in her lover even when bewildered, and will always sing his glories. ‘*Samhata*’ means ‘banded together;’ altogether in a whole group the *gopīs* looked everywhere for Kṛṣṇa, and in a mood of friendship they stayed together to remove each other’s pain. They sang about Kṛṣṇa as they searched for Him, and as they roamed around, they asked the trees where their beloved was.

What was the reason for inquiring from the trees and creepers? The reason was ‘*unmattaka-vad*,’ meaning, they were asking frantically like insane persons. Due to their madness, their hair, clothes and ornaments were disarrayed. ‘*Puruṣa*’ means in the form of Supersoul; He is all-pervading, inside and outside all living entities, like the sky. It is this *puruṣa* that the *gopīs* were inquiring about. The only object and receptacle for the *gopīs*’ love is Kṛṣṇa in His human-like pastimes. In other words, the *gopīs* never felt that Kṛṣṇa was the Supersoul, so He never showed Himself as such to them. Controlled by the madness of *prema*, they were asking the trees the whereabouts of their lover Kṛṣṇa.

“What a calamity! What a calamity!” In the forest there is no one to hear their crying, so did the *gopīs*’ lamentation go in vain? No, and to prove this, the word ‘*ākāśa*’ is used in this verse, meaning that Bhagavān, like the sky, is all-pervading, inside and outside all the living entities, and He was hearing their lament. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.21 Kṛṣṇa Himself says, “*mayāparokṣaṁ bhajatā* – although I had gone into hiding, I was constantly absorbed in hearing your love-cries and maintained My deep love for you.” The word ‘*puruṣa*’ is used, indicating that the *gopīs* were inquiring about their hero Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the mature stage of their *prema*, the *gopīs* were directly seeing Kṛṣṇa everywhere, visible to their eyes in all moving and non-moving entities. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.35.9 the *gopīs* said: “The creepers and trees of the forest, luxuriant with fresh flowers and fruits, are bowing down and horripilating.” This is evidence that Kṛṣṇa was manifesting in their hearts.

The meaning is that those saintly *gopīs* were so bewildered in love that they saw Kṛṣṇa next to every object that they looked at from far away. Again, when they came near that object, they saw Kṛṣṇa inside it also. Although the trees and other vegetation have no senses, still the *gopīs* asked all the plants about their beloved. This, we must understand, is madness. In other words, only a person gripped by the hysteria of love would question a senseless tree.

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

When the highly incited madness of those *vraja-sundarīs* subsided, in half-external consciousness they began to look for Kṛṣṇa. This verse 'gāyantya' describes their search for Him. Immersed in the anguish of separation, the Vraja damsels looked everywhere for their lover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They separated into small groups to expedite their search, and like deranged women, they roamed from forest to forest, inquiring from the trees about Kṛṣṇa's whereabouts. '*Unmattaka-vad*' means 'like mad women.' Why inquire from someone who is not capable of responding? It is obvious that anyone who would question insentient trees and bushes is certainly out of their mind.

One may ask, "Did Śrī Kṛṣṇa hear the *gopīs* frantically questioning the trees while He was very happily absorbed in romancing with Vṛndāvanēśvarī Śrī Rādhā?" Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī answered this question with these words: '*bhūteṣu ākāśa-vad antaraṁ bahir santaṁ puruṣaṁ*.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form is unlimited and all-pervading. Therefore, when the *gopīs* were inquiring from the trees, although Śrī Kṛṣṇa was engrossed in enjoying love-play with His primary heroine Śrī Rādhikā, at the same time He was present with every living entity, inside and outside. This is why He was attentively hearing the *gopīs* insanely questioning the trees. This is what has been implied here.

VERSE 5

*dṛṣṭo vaḥ kaccid aśvattha  
plakṣa nyagrodha no manaḥ  
nanda-sūnur gato hṛtvā  
prema-hāsāvalokanaḥ*

[The *vraja-devīs* first went to the very large trees and asked:]  
"He *aśvattha* (sacred berry tree), he *plakṣa* (holy fig tree), he *nyagrodha* (banyon), Nanda-nandana Śyāmsundara has stolen our minds with His love-filled smiles and glances and has absconded with them. Have you seen Him?"



ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The next nine verses expand on the *gopīs'* questioning all the plants. The *gopīs* thought that, out of all the plants, these trees are the tallest, so surely they must have seen Kṛṣṇa, even from afar. They asked, "With His gentle smiles coupled with His loving glances, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has kidnapped our minds, and like a thief, has run off. Have you seen Him?"

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

"*Vaḥ* (you) – Have you seen Him? *He pīpala, he plakṣa!*" Knowing that these trees are dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* respectfully addressed and inquired from each and every one of them. "You may ask why we are inquiring about Nanda-nandana. He has stolen our minds." Here '*hṛtvā*' (stealing) is used to indicate that the *gopīs'* minds, which are likened to precious jewels, had been pilfered, and therefore they said, "We are searching for our stolen property. Because you are saintly persons, we are asking you."

The expression '*nanda-sūnu*' is used to exhibit the reason for the *gopīs'* trust. "Because Kṛṣṇa is the son of the great saint, Nanda Mahārāja, we trusted Him and kept our jewels with Him. And then He robbed us." *Nanda* also means *ānanda*, bliss. "Nanda Bābā gives joy to the whole of Vraja; therefore, it is not possible that His son will be *nirānanda*, not giving happiness. Understanding this, we had faith in Him. But He betrayed our trust and ran off with our invaluable jewel-like minds." Therefore, the *gopīs*, feeling hurt, would not pronounce Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name but rather referred to Him as Nanda-nandana. Also, perhaps due to some resentment they did not take their lover's name directly. According to *sūcakasyāpi tad bhavet* logic ('what you speak about happens to you'), one does not speak out a thief's name. The *gopīs* asked the trees, "If you have seen Him, then He must be roaming in this area. Only after getting some confirmation from you will we continue our search for Him." This mood has been indicated here.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśini***

In this way, nine verses (5-13) elaborate on the *gopīs'* questions. The Vraja maidens were thinking to themselves, "This *pīlū* and the other tall trees surely must be seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who may be far away." Considering

this possibility, they first asked the trees about their lover's whereabouts. Fearing that the trees might raise an objection to their enquiry, the *gopīs* said, “*He āsvattha, he pīlū, he banyon*, you must be wondering why we are asking for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Even being the son of the saintly Nanda Mahārāja, He has robbed us of the jewels of our minds and run away. Have you seen Him? He sends His smiles and glances, infused with the special medicine of *prema*, as His thieving accomplices to beguile everyone. They entered the innermost chambers of our hearts through our eyes, and absconded after grabbing the treasure of our minds.” Hoping that the trees would reply, the *gopīs* waited for a few minutes, but the trees remained silent.

“Ah! Seeing us as insignificant, these trees did not reply and simply ignored us. Therefore, what is the use of asking them, whose fruits are so puny? They are oblivious to acting for the welfare of others. They have no flowers and their hearts are tainted.” Speaking like this, the *gopīs* went elsewhere.

#### VERSE 6

*kaccit kurabakāśoka-  
nāga-punnāga-campakāḥ  
rāmānujo māninīnām  
ito darpa-hara-smitaḥ*

**O *kurabaka* tree, O *āśoka*, O *nāga-keśara*, *punnāga* and *campā*, that younger brother of Balarāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-candra, who mitigates the impertinence of all haughty women with just His sweet gentle smile – has He passed this way?**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“The *kurabaka* and other trees are noble, because they do welfare for others by offering their flowers and other bodily parts.” Thinking in this way, the *gopīs* asked them, “O *kurabaka*, O *āśoka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s soft, sweet smile pulverizes the pride of arrogant ladies. Have you seen Him going down this path?”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

“These *aśvattha* trees are so exalted that they ignore us as insignificant. Therefore, they won't give us any information.” Thinking in this way, the *gopīs* approached *kurabaka* and *aśoka* trees as described in this verse starting with 'kaccit.' “*He kurabaka* – O tree always full with red blossoms; *he nāga* (*nāga-keśara*) – Has Balarāma's younger brother gone this way? Is He hiding somewhere nearby?” In the previous verse the *gopīs* asked, “Have you seen Him? You are so tall, so you can see very far away.” But now they are asking, “*ito* (passing by here) – Has He passed this way or has He gone some other way? Please tell us. If you cannot reply easily, then, if He indeed passed this way, His footprints will be here and we will follow His footprints.” The original word used in this verse is *itaḥ*, which refers to a particular path. But others read it as *gataḥ*, which indicates several paths. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has accepted *itaḥ*: “Have you seen Him passing through this place?”

'*Rāmānuja*' is to be understood as Nanda-suno, meaning, “Being the younger brother of Balarāma, the crown-jewel of noble persons, we put our trust in Him. You may be wondering how He managed to steal the hearts of us proud ladies.” The *gopīs* continued, “His smile is so stupefying that it demolishes the arrogance of haughty women. That smile has robbed us of our hearts. Displaying that smile indiscriminately to every young damsel as He roams about, He is unaware of the havoc He is wreaking. We glowered at Him and by His duplicitous smile He has pilfered our mighty pride. This is why we are searching for Him. We cannot live a moment in separation from that supremely captivating person. Therefore, we are asking if you know where He is.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S  
**Sārārtha Darśini**

The *gopīs* entered a flower garden and thought to themselves, “We should ask these pure-hearted trees, who welcome the bees as their guests with the honey flowing from their flowers.” With this mood they went to the flowering trees and asked about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. “*He kurabaka*, *he nāga-keśara*, where has Kṛṣṇa gone? Is He hiding nearby?” The trees might question, “Why

are you asking for Him?” To this, the *gopīs* replied, “We were abounding with pride, and with His gentle, captivating smile, Kṛṣṇa snatched away our precious pride and left us poverty-stricken. This is why we are searching for Him.” Suddenly the wind blew, shaking the tips of the branches. Seeing this, the *gopīs* thought, “These trees are shaking their heads to indicate, ‘We don’t know.’ Therefore, what is the use of asking these hard-hearted male trees? There is no possibility of getting any fruit from them. Let us go somewhere else.”

VERSE 7

*kaccit tulasi kalyāṇi  
govinda-caraṇa-priye  
saha tvāli-kulair bibhrad  
dṛṣṭas te ’ti-priyo ’cyutah*

[When the male trees did not reply, the *gopīs* inquired from the female bushes.] O sister Tulasī, your heart is so soft, and you desire everyone’s welfare. You have so much *prema* for the lotus feet of Govinda, and He also loves you so much. Therefore, He always wears your garland surrounded by bumblebees over His heart. Have you seen our beloved Śyāmasundara, who never fails to display His loving nature?

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

“He Tulasī, that Acyuta who holds you so dear that He always wears you as a garland buzzing with bees – have you seen Him?”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

“The trees, being male, will naturally side with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Furthermore, they will feel animosity towards us, knowing that we are upset with Him, and surely they will not give us any information. But this Tulasī will take our side because she is female like us and she is very dear to Kṛṣṇa. Because of this she has amassed great good fortune; she is so fortunate that she must have seen our beloved.” Assuming this, the *gopīs* addressed Tulasī, speaking this verse *kaccit*.

“*He Kalyāṇi, O you who bestow auspiciousness upon the world! You are supremely fortunate because you are very dear to the lotus feet of Govinda Gokula-candra.*” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.37 says that Lakṣmī-devī has a permanent place on Śrī Nārāyaṇa’s chest, but after meeting with Tulasī, she developed the desire to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. ‘*Caraṇa*’ is used to show respect, just as in *ācārya-caraṇa* (the venerable preceptor). Here in this verse, the *gopīs* used this term due to feeling humility in front of Tulasī. This is why they said, “*He gokulendra-priya Tulasī! O you who are so dear to the prince of Gokula!*” By this, they implied that Kṛṣṇa will surely come. “*Saha*’ (with) – Tulasī is so dear that Kṛṣṇa wears her as a garland, even though it is swarming with bees.” This is testimony to Tulasī’s outstanding qualities.

Purport: “You have such qualities that even you are surrounded by buzzing bees, Acyuta tolerates the disturbance of the bees and keeps you on His chest. We know only Kṛṣṇa, no one else; even so He left us.” In other words, the *gopīs* were trying to say, “Kṛṣṇa left us, and now He loves Tulasī so much that He even tolerates the swarms of bees. His attachment for her is so great that He is not disturbed by the hordes of bees, who are a nuisance. It is impossible for Kṛṣṇa to hide with the intoxicated bees buzzing around Him; still He does not remove the garland, nor does He shoo them away. Therefore, O Tulasī, being attracted to your love, Kṛṣṇa must have come near you. We conclude that you have surely seen Him. Tell us where that Acyuta is now.” The word *acyuta* has a double meaning – “He never leaves you, as He does with us. Therefore, you certainly must have seen Him.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* were thinking, “The bushes and the creepers will take our side because they are also female. They will surely understand the pain in our hearts. Definitely they will show us compassion.” The *gopīs* went to Tulasī, the most prominent of the bushes, and inquired about Kṛṣṇa with this verse ‘*kaccit.*’ “*He Kalyāṇi, O most auspicious one!*” The reason for addressing her thus is this: “Because we are separated from Kṛṣṇa, we are devoid of auspiciousness. You are the fortunate one because you are ‘*govinda-caraṇa-priye,*’ dear to Govinda’s lotus feet.” *Caraṇa* is used to show reverence, just as in *ācārya-caraṇa*, the honorable teacher.

Tulasī may have questioned the *gopīs*, “Aren’t you also dear to Govinda’s lotus feet?” The *gopīs* reply, “What you are saying is true, but compared to us, you are many times more fortunate because there is no chance of Kṛṣṇa leaving you. You do not have to endure the pain of separation. He always gives you shelter at His lotus feet. This indicates your good fortune. He keeps you on His chest, even with the bees buzzing all around.” ‘With the bees’ – by this the *gopīs* meant to say, “O Tulasī, you are endowed with extraordinary qualities. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa keeps you on His chest while tolerating the disturbance of hundreds and hundreds of bees. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who loves fragrances, has left us because we are not fragrant like you. This is our final conclusion.”

VERSE 8

*mālaty adarśi vaḥ kaccin*  
*mallike jāti-yūthike*  
*prītiṁ vo janayan yātaḥ*  
*kara-sparśena mādhabaḥ*

[Now the *vraja-ramaṇīs* are asking the fragrant jasmine creepers and bushes<sup>1</sup>:] *He mālati, mallikā (cameli), jāti and jūhi*, did our beloved Mādhava pass by here and elate you by picking your fragrant flowers and touching you with His soft hands?

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Laden with many good attributes (many, many flowers), these creepers and bushes are bowing down in humility. From this the *gopīs* concluded that these creepers have surely seen Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* asked, “*He mālati, mallikā, jāti and jūhi*, Śrī Mādhava, by touching you with His hands, has aroused your love. Have you seen Him? Which way has He gone?” It should be understood that *mālati* and *jāti* are two varieties of jasmine.

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1 Editor’s note: *mālati* grows on a creeper; the other varieties of jasmine flowers grow on small bushes.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

"Tulasī did not talk to us because she is so proud of being the recipient of Kṛṣṇa's affection. So now we will ask the *mālati* creepers. Naturally humble, they bow down and serve Kṛṣṇa by offering Him their flowers. They are His maidservants, but still they are devoid of pride. Therefore, if we inquire from them, surely they will reply." The *gopīs* spoke this verse with this intention. "*He mālati, he mallikā*, have you seen our beloved Mādhava?" Being very anxious, the *gopīs* addressed each and every creeper. Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has explained '*kaccit*' as meaning 'at any time.' "Have you seen Him at all?"

The meaning is this: "*He mālati, he mallikā*, the signs of Mādhava having touched you with His hands are visible on your bodies. This means that you have seen Him." Therefore the *gopīs* were enquiring with a special intensity. "Have you seen Mādhava? What is the reason for Śrī Kṛṣṇa having touched your bodies?" The reply: "Mādhava Śrī Kṛṣṇa loves flowers in the same way that springtime (*mādhava*) loves them. Therefore, with His own hands He has picked the very best flowers from the tips of your branches. In this way He aroused ecstatic pleasure (*prīti*) in you, and then He moved on (*yāta*). He left you also, so your sufferings and ours are the same. Therefore, it is quite appropriate for us to talk about Him with you. He caressed you and then left you hanging; he did the same with us and tossed us into an ocean of misery." Noticing the scratch marks Kṛṣṇa left on the flowering plants (His maidservants), the *gopīs* teased the creepers, feeling a bit jealous.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

"Ah! This Tulasī, intoxicated with her good fortune, didn't even look at us. Therefore, seeing us as her co-wives, she would not tell us Kṛṣṇa's whereabouts, even knowing where He is. Alas, we are totally bereft of good fortune." Lamenting in this way, the *gopīs* approached the *mālati*, *jāti*, *mallikā*, *yūthikā* and other flowering creepers and bushes and asked, "*He mālati* and other jasmines, flowers are very dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Has He passed this way? Did He touch your limbs and pick your flowers, thereby leaving you elated?" In the rainy season and autumn, the *mālati* and *jāti* produce profuse blossoms. *Jāti* and *cameli* are different varieties of jasmine.

VERSE 9

*cūta-priyāla-panasāsana-kovidāra  
jambv-arka-bilva-bakulāmra-kadamba-nīpāḥ  
ye 'nye parārtha-bhava-kā yamunopakūlāḥ  
śamsantu kṛṣṇa-padavīṁ rahitātmanām naḥ*

[Now the *vraja-devīs* asked the fruit trees:] “*He rasala, priyāla, kaṭahala* (jackfruit), *pītaśāla, kacanāra, jambu* (rose apple), *arka, bel, maulasirī, āmra* (mango), *kadamba, nīpa* and other exalted trees on the Yamunā’s bank! All of you live just for the welfare of others. Our lives are empty without Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so please tell us where He is.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

“All these fruit-bearing trees satisfy the living entities by giving charity. They must have seen Kṛṣṇa.” Thinking like this, the *gopīs* asked them, “O *cūta* and other trees, you are residents of a holy place, accepting birth as trees on the bank of the Yamunā, living for the welfare of others. We have lost our soul, and there is a void in our hearts. So please tell us which path Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taken.” *Cūta* is one type of mango, and *nīpa* is a kind of *kadamba*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

The *gopīs* thought, “Because these *mālatī, yūthikā* and other creepers are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s maidservants, they are fearful and would not say anything.” Therefore, in this verse beginning with ‘*cūta*,’ the *gopīs*, seeking information on Kṛṣṇa’s whereabouts, asked other trees, who were knowledgeable like sages.

*Cūta* is a type of creeper (mango), and *āmra* is one variety of mango tree. The poets of Eastern India use the word ‘creeper’ for the mango trees whose branches bend downwards, which in central India look like creepers. The *Viśva-prakaśa* dictionary defines *nīpa* as a type of *kadamba*, called *dhūli-kadamba*, having large flowers with a lot of pollen. The seeds of the *priyāla* are commonly known as the edible *cāru-bīja*. *Panasa* is the jackfruit tree. *Āsana* is the *pītaśāla* tree. *Kovidāra* is the *yugapatraka*, which is known in the Vindhya-cala Mountains as the *koyilāba* tree. *Raktacāncana* is one kind of *kāñcanāra*, or mountain ebony tree. *Arka* is a very insignificant plant; that the



*vraja-devīs* inquired from such a common plant clearly shows their extreme eagerness. In this way, the *gopīs* took the name of every tree and asked each one individually in which direction Kṛṣṇa went.

The trees appeared to be saying, “How will we benefit by telling you where Kṛṣṇa is?” The *gopīs* replied, “*Parārtha-bhava-kā*: you have taken birth simply to benefit others.” In the original text *parārtha-bhava-kāḥ* is written. According to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda, *bhava-kāḥ* is read without the sound ‘i’ because he interprets *bhava* as ‘birth.’ The version *bhavikāḥ*, where an ‘i’ is inserted in front of the *ka* suffix according to the rules of *bahu-vrihi samāsa*<sup>2</sup> is seen everywhere. It means ‘auspiciousness’ and ‘prosperity.’ Both spellings ultimately give the same meaning.

“All these trees have taken birth just for others’ welfare. Furthermore, because of their austerities, they have taken shelter of the bank of the Yamunā and become residents of a holy place; therefore they are trustworthy and merciful. They will surely tell us the truth and not cheat us.” With this intention the *gopīs* asked the trees, “Please tell us the path Kṛṣṇa has taken.” *‘Yamunopakulā’* means ‘near the bank of the Yamunā,’ *upa* means ‘near’ and *kūla* means ‘bank.’ If the trees would say, “You yourselves should search for Kṛṣṇa,” then the *gopīs* would reply in a pathetic tone, “*rahitātmanām nā* – Because of separation, we have lost our intelligence. Therefore we are practically dead and not capable of searching.” The *gopīs* asked all the trees and plants, “Have you seen Kṛṣṇa?” Previously, they did not receive any answer. So now, becoming clever, they simply prayed to find out which path Kṛṣṇa took. Earlier, the *vraja-ramaṇīs* asked the *aśvattha* and other trees, “Can you tell us where Śrī Kṛṣṇa has gone,” but they received no reply. Here, using their ingenuity, they humbly requested the trees to simply inform them which path Kṛṣṇa took.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśini***

“Ah! Those *mālatis* and other bushes know where Śrī Kṛṣṇa is, but, because of fear of their co-wife Tulasī and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they would not tell us. Therefore, there is no use to ask these bushes, who are not independent agents.” Thinking like this, the *gopīs* approached the mango, jackfruit and other fruit trees. Seeing those trees, they thought, “These trees are motionless, as if holding their

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2 *bahu-vrihi samāsa* – *samāsa* is a compound, and *bahu-vrihi* literally means ‘much rice’ but denotes a rich man, literally, ‘one who possesses much rice.’ In this case, it means ‘those who are full of auspiciousness for the sake of others.’

breath, and are residing on the bank of the holy Yamunā. It seems that they are completely absorbed in remembering Śrī Viṣṇu. Thus, they will never lie to us.” Having this faith, they spoke this verse starting with ‘*cūta*.’

*Cūta* is a mango creeper. *Ām* is a mango tree. *Nīpa* is a *dhūli-kadamba* with big flowers. Then there are smaller flowers called *kadamba*, which are very fragrant. *Priyāla* is one type of *śāla* tree (prized for its wood). *Āsana* is the yellow *śāla* tree. *Kovidāra* is a type of *kāñcana* tree. *Arka* is the insignificant *ākanda* weed; still it is very dear to Gopīśvara Mahādeva and thus always grows near him. They also prayed to the coconut, betel-nut and other trees, “Which way has Śrī Kṛṣṇa gone? Please be merciful and tell us which path He has taken. In separation from Him, everything has become void.” The trees might ask, “Why should we tell you?” To that the *gopīs* reply, ‘*Parārtha-bhavaṅkā*’ – “You have taken birth only for the welfare of others, and you are living on the bank of the Yamunā. Therefore you are residents of a holy place. Thus you will surely help us.”

VERSE 10

*kiṁ te kṛtaṁ kṣiti tapo bata keśavāṅghri-  
sparśotsavotpulakitāṅga-nahair vibhāsi  
apy aṅghri-sambhava urukrama-vikramād vā  
āho varāha-vapuṣaḥ parirambhaṇena*

**O beloved of Bhagavān, Pṛtīvī-devī, Earth Goddess! What sort of austerities have you performed that you attained the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet and thus became so blissful that you began horripilating in the form of the grasses sprouting up, making you look very beautiful? Are you feeling this bliss from Śrī Keśava touching you now with His lotus feet, or maybe it arose earlier when Vāmanadeva became Trivikrama and stepped on you? Or did you feel it much earlier, when Varāhadeva embraced you and thereby protected you?**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“He Pṛtīvī-devī, what sort of austerities have you performed that you have now been blessed with the festive touch of Śrī Keśava’s lotus feet? This

caused you to horripilate in great bliss, making you look very beautiful.” The *gopīs* asked her this with a specific intention. “Are you feeling this bliss from Śrī Keśava touching you now with His lotus feet, or perhaps it arose earlier when Vāmanadeva became Trivikrama and measured you with His steps? Not only this, perhaps you felt it much earlier, when Varāhadeva embraced you. Because you are so qualified to attain this good fortune, you must have seen Śrī Keśava, so please show us where He is.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Meditating on the path that Śrī Kṛṣṇa took, the *gopīs* wanted to pray to it. Thus, they looked at Pṛtīvī-devī and thought, “This Pṛtīvī is present everywhere; therefore she must have received Kṛṣṇa’s *darśana*.” By seeing the tender grass sprouting on the Earth, the *gopīs* understood that she was horripilating in bliss due to the festive touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. This indicates that Pṛtīvī was the recipient of supreme good fortune, which the *gopīs* described in this verse beginning with *‘kiṁ*.’

“*He Pṛtīvī-devī, what sort of tapasya did you perform that you have attained such auspiciousness?*” *‘Tapa’* here is understood as pious deeds. *‘Apy arighri-sambhava’* means the arising of a festival due to the touch of His lotus feet. “*Api kiṁ* – Has your festival of bliss manifested from the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet? When Viṣṇu became Vāmanadeva, wanting to take over the three worlds, He manifested His supreme opulence and assumed His Trivikrama form. And when He took possession of the three worlds, He placed His feet on you. Is that when you experienced a festival of bliss? The beauty you displayed when horripilating at that time was not as special as now. So perhaps you are horripilating due to having had direct union with Him when earlier He assumed His Mahā-Varāha form to protect you.” The *gopīs* expressed these ideas in the last line beginning with *‘aho* (or perhaps).’ “*Aho!* Before this, is it due to the embrace of Varāhadeva?”

In this way the *gopīs* wondered what austerities Pṛtīvī had performed to attain the touch of Śrī Keśava’s lotus feet. “Is being touched by Vāmandeva’s feet the reason that you have attained the touch of Śrī Keśava’s lotus feet? Or did you accrue so much good fortune when previously Varāhadeva embraced you and you are now experiencing a festival of bliss from the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet? Please tell us which one. This indicates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s

position is much more exalted than Vāmanadava's and Varāhadeva's. Thus, how can we tolerate the separation from such an exalted person? O Earth, you are supremely fortunate because you have touched His lotus feet. But we are so unfortunate that we have not had the same chance. Therefore, please be merciful and show us the path He has taken."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
*Sārārtha Darśinī*

One *sakhī* said to the others, "Ah! These trees must be completely absorbed in meditating on Viṣṇu, and hence they are not able to hear our question. Or perhaps they are not responding to us because they are hard-natured, as residents of the holy places generally are. Alas! How will we determine which ones know Śrī Kṛṣṇa's location? It is uncertain. So why are we uselessly blaming the residents of the holy place? One who has surely seen Him will know where He is. Therefore, it behooves us to ask that person."

All the others asked her, "*He priya sakhī*, is there anyone here who has seen Kṛṣṇa? Do you know that person, and if you know, please tell us." Upon the request of all of them, she pointed to the Earth. Then all the *gopīs* replied, "O *sakhī* you are speaking the truth. Wherever Śrī Kṛṣṇa may go, it will be on this Earth, so He is never distant from her. Kṛṣṇa's parents, friends, dear *sakhīs* and servants, on the other hand, sometimes have to endure the pain of separation from Him, but Pṛthivī is never apart from Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, compared to all others, the Earth is so fortunate. We will not ask the Earth in the same way that we inquired from the trees and plants before. Instead of asking Kṛṣṇa's whereabouts, it is better to inquire from her about the austerities she performed very long ago resulting in her present good fortune. Due to the fruit of those ancient austerities, she is spared from undergoing the pain of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa now. If we can do those same pious deeds, we also will be relieved from the anguish of our separation."

Deliberating in this way, the *gopīs* asked Pṛthivī-devī about her austerities in this verse beginning with *kim*. "He Pṛthivī-devī, what *tapasya* has brought about this good fortune by which you are enjoying the great festival of touching Śrī Keśava's lotus feet? We can understand that you are relishing a festival of bliss by seeing your tender grasses sprouting up in response to your rapture. Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot be without you for a moment. Wherever He goes, you are always in contact with His feet. In this way, day

and night, you are rolling in the joy of associating with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, you are vastly more fortunate than us. Tell us what *tapasya* you performed to achieve this blessing. We are languishing in separation; we never attained the good fortune that you are enjoying. If we simply hear about your austerities, we will become successful.”

Seeing the Earth silent, the *gopīs* remembered her history and inquired, “When Śrī Bhagavān Vāmanadeva assumed His Trivikrama form and put His feet on your body, you were able to tolerate the burden of holding His feet. Is it by that austerity that you have now received the good fortune of touching Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, or is it due to the austerity of having previously endured the pain of Varāhadeva’s overly tight embrace? To attain this festival of great bliss, one must perform austerities and practices that others find difficult, but for you this was easy, because, being a female, it was pleasurable for you to get the association of a man. So how can any woman be more fortunate than you?”

#### VERSE 11

*apy eṇa-patny upagataḥ priyayeha gātrais  
tanvan dṛśāṁ sakhi su-nirvṛtim acyuto vaḥ  
kāntāṅga-saṅga-kuca-kuṅkuma-rañjitāyāḥ  
kunda-srajaḥ kula-pater iha vāti gandhaḥ*

**O does, O dear friends, has Acyuta, who is eternally fixed in His loving nature, passed this way with His sweetheart, giving your eyes the supreme bliss of the sight of the heart-capturing and beautiful sweetness of His body? We feel that He must have taken this path because we are picking up the scent of the enchanting fragrance of His *kunda* garland, which swings over His heart and which is now smeared with the *kuṅkuma* from the breast of His beloved.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In this verse beginning with ‘*apy*’ (indicating an enquiry), the *gopīs*, upon seeing the does’ happy eyes, thought that perhaps they had seen Kṛṣṇa. “*He sakhi*, wife of the deer, has Gokula-pati Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with His beautiful

face, arms and other limbs, come to the forest with His beloved and given pleasure to your eyes?” The phrase ‘with His beloved’ clearly indicates that they can sense the fragrance coming from Kṛṣṇa’s *kund* garland, and it is mixed with the scent of the *kuṅkuma* from His beloved’s breast.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Now a special topic will be discussed. [Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:] “Taking someone with Him, Śrī Bhagavān disappeared.” It is not clearly mentioned with which beloved He went; this will be disclosed later on. In this verse Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī reveals his inner mood. “Śrī Bhagavān has many, many incarnations, but I [Śrī Śukadeva] am especially attracted to Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s descent. In turn, Śrī Bhagavān has many associates, but I have special attachment to the Vrajavāsīs, and out of all them, I am exceptionally drawn towards the *vraja-devīs*. This confidential fact is common knowledge, but hardly anyone knows that, out of all the *vraja-devīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā attracts me the most. The gradation of my attachment is according to the level of the devotees’ superiority. My heart is hesitant to directly tell about Śrī Rādhikā’s superiority, Her position being so highly secret. However, knowing Her superior position and failing to describe it, I would be at fault for hiding this knowledge. Spared by this fear, I wish to reveal it.”

(With Rādhikā, who is the prominent of the *vraja-devīs*, Kṛṣṇa always performs supremely confidential pastimes. Śrī Śukadeva was most attracted by these *līlās* but he has not mentioned them anywhere. Therefore, no one knows about them. There is gradation among the devotees in the level of their *prema*, and this determines their superiority; this in turn ordains Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s affection for them. This confidential *līlā* is appropriate only for devotees who have taken shelter of *madhura-rasa*; it is not suitable for devotees in *śānta* and other *rasas*. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī was hesitant to openly describe these confidential pastimes because of the presence of some unqualified persons in the audience. Furthermore, even among those who are in *madhura-rasa*, there are many different levels of eligibility. However, to not mention this in front of the qualified listeners would be a fault of hiding the knowledge, and thus he desired to reveal these confidential pastimes also.)

“Therefore, when Śrī Rādhikā’s *sakhīs* said, ‘O wives of deer, did Kṛṣṇa come this way with His sweetheart?’ they did not clearly mention Rādhikā’s

name. Every now and then, whenever given an opportunity, I will indirectly (through *vyanjana-vṛtti*, indirect suggestion) reveal this through the words of the opposite party (Candrāvalī). Or sometimes, being deeply absorbed, I may openly reveal this secret, but I will not speak Her name directly. To mention Rādhikā's name is far away, and it is unlikely that I will mention the other *gopīs'* names either. Furthermore, through *vyanjana-vṛtti* when ulterior meanings are implied, many different *rasas* can be revealed, but the direct meaning cannot do that. Sometimes, by speaking indirectly, very astonishing meanings emerge. When the subject to be conveyed is determined and its meaning is manifested indirectly, then an astonishing ecstasy is evinced. (The meaning expressed indirectly can produce a very special taste which is more astonishing than what is conveyed by direct explanation.)" With this intention, Śukadeva Gosvāmī revealed this topic through Rādhikā's *sva-pakṣa sakhīs*.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa took Śrī Rādhikā and suddenly disappeared, Rādhikā's *sakhīs* had a suspicion. "It seems that Śrī Kṛṣṇa disappeared, taking our Śrī Rādhā with Him." But the *gopīs* who did not know this secret were only eager to look for Balarāma's younger brother, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rādhikā's *sakhīs* were roaming together with all the other *sakhīs*, but they separated from them, even in their intoxicated condition, and formed their own group to search for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. Even though Rādhikā's *sva-pakṣa sakhīs* were in a small separate party, the others did not realize from the behavior of Her *sakhīs* that this smaller group was looking for Śrī Yugala; they thought the smaller group also was looking only for Kṛṣṇa. The *sva-pakṣa gopīs* already suspected that their dear *sakhī* was with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, even before seeing His footprints; this is chronicled in Verses 32-33 of this chapter. This verse, '*apy eṇa-patny*,' is the evidence. "O friends, wives of the deer, has our Acyuta passed this way with His beloved, satisfying your eyes?" In this verse all the words indicate that Śrī Kṛṣṇa disappeared with Śrī Rādhā. Those *sakhīs* were eager to have the *darśana* of Śrī Yugala, not just Kṛṣṇa by Himself. Therefore, in this mood, Rādhikā's *sakhīs* asked about Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, using the word '*priyayā*,' meaning 'with His beloved.' '*Api*' means 'possibly,' or 'maybe the couple has come this way.' '*Api*' can be an interrogative, in which case the meaning would be, "*He sakhī*, did Acyuta come to you?"

The does may ask, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *van-vihārī* – He roams about the forests, and we are *vanacārī*, forest dwellers. Therefore, what is so surprising if our paths cross?" This is why the *sakhīs* said, "He came with His sweetheart.

Very often He comes here alone, but this time He came with His beloved. It is astonishing that He came with Her, and seeing Them together gives great happiness.” “*Gātraiḥ* (by the bodily limbs) – When He is with Śrī Rādhā, many different *anubhāvas* (external signs of ecstasy) decorate His body, indicating the supreme bliss He is experiencing. Seeing His condition when He is with Rādhājī is the supreme pleasure for the eyes of Rādhikā’s *sva-pakṣa gopīs* and you does. It is highly likely that Kṛṣṇa, who is radiating bliss, has come your way. If this is the case, it is not proper for you to hide this from us, because we are His intimate and rightful companions. Just by His scent alone, we can know everything about Him.” Having this mood, the *gopīs* said ‘*kāntāṅga*.’

“*Kāntāṅga* (the body of His beloved) – First comes Gokula-pati Kṛṣṇa’s fragrance, then the fragrance of His *kund-mālā* which is mixed with the *kunkuma* that got smeared from the breast of His beloved when He embraced Her. All these scents are coming clearly, and we recognize these aromas for certain because we have encountered them many, many times. The forest air is permeated with the fragrance of the body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sweetheart and the scent of the *kunkuma* from Her breast combined with the aroma of His *kund-mālā*. The does, whose eyes are filled with pleasure, are feeling supreme bliss from having the *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoying with His beloved.” The observer, the act of seeing and the object of sight – the Divine Couple roaming in the forest – all three are equally praiseworthy. Rādhikā’s *sva-pakṣa gopīs* concur with this.

The first line of the verse starting with ‘*api*’ expresses the *gopīs*’ enthusiasm mixed with humility and politeness. ‘*Eṇa-patnī*’ (wife of the deer) – the does have a very natural and beautiful way of seeing (*drṣṭi*). This is to be praised. The wives of the deer, although not married according to religious rites, are married only by their *anurāga*, their love for each other, but this is also accepted as legitimate. Here *drṣṭā* (the observer) is the doe, and although she is not married by religious rites, she is to be praised. Due to this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has come close to the does (*upagata*), and by this word, the good fortune of the observer (the wives of the deer) is highlighted. Furthermore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa came with His beloved – this is what the does are witnessing. And the object of sight (*drṣya*) – Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa – is also praised.

The word ‘*gātraiḥ*’ indicates an uncommon sight of the Divine Couple’s meeting, due to which the eyes were elated with the topmost joy and are thus extensively glorified. As quoted previously, the *gopīs* asked, “O doe friend,



did Acyuta come this way with His sweetheart?" The suggested meaning of 'acyuta' is that Kṛṣṇa entered here with His beloved spontaneously. So again the *dr̥śya* is praised. 'Vah' is the plural form of 'you,' meaning that the doe's companions are included. "He *hiraṇi*, O doe, you are most fortunate so you should be praised. Likewise, your companions are also praiseworthy." In this way, with the word *vah*, *dr̥ṣṭā* (the observer) is also praised. Next comes 'kāntā' (His beloved); with this, *dr̥śya* – His beloved – is praised. 'Tadaṅga-saṅga' refers to *kānta* Kṛṣṇa, who is ardently embracing His beloved; this phrase glorifies this rarely seen *dr̥śya*.

A series of *dr̥śyas* are cited and all are to be extolled: '*kuca-kun̐kuma*' – the *kun̐kuma* on the *gopī*'s breast; '*raṅjita*' (colored) – the naturally white *kund* flowers in the *kund-mālā* have been colored by the *kuca-kun̐kuma*; '*kula-pater iha*' – the master of the *gopīs*, or *dr̥śya kānta*; '*iha*' means 'this place,' which is aromatic from the extraordinary fragrance of the *kund-mālā*; '*vāti*' (air) – the air flowing around filled with the fragrance; '*gandha*' (fragrance) – the combined aroma of the *kund-mālā*, crushed in Their embrace, and smeared with *kun̐kuma*. All these objects of sight (*dr̥śya*) are glorified.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *vraja-devīs* were inquiring about Śrī Kṛṣṇa from Pṛthivī-devī, but they did not get any answer. They thought, "Alas, Pṛthivī is wonderfully painted with the signs from her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet – flag, thunderbolt, goad, etc. Thus, she is taking pleasure as *sva-dhīna bhartrikā*, having brought her husband under her control. Now she has become blinded by extreme pride, so she will not acknowledge us." Thinking thus, the *gopīs* moved forward and saw a doe roaming around. They pointed at her and said, "He *sakhī*, wife of the deer! Did Śrī Kṛṣṇa pass by you with His beloved?" Addressing the doe as '*sakhī*,' the *gopīs* implied, "Although you are the wife of the deer, you are also the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, like us, and you also consider Him as your sweetheart. Therefore, surely Śrī Kṛṣṇa must have come here. Did the sight of His charming form increase the pleasure of your eyes?" The word '*dr̥śām*' (sight) here is used in the plural form to show respect. "Acyuta – With the desire to increase the pleasure of your eyes, you walk behind Him. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa never disappears (*vicyuta*) from your sight." This is the mood that has been expressed here.

After watching the does, who were walking ahead in their natural gait, the *gopīs* suddenly said, “Yes, surely they have seen Kṛṣṇa, and they are replying to us, ‘There is no need to say more. We will show Him to you. Just follow us.’ As the does continue to walk ahead, they keep turning their heads back to us, beckoning us to follow them. The trees may be cruel to us, but in this Vṛndāvana these does are merciful and it behooves us to follow them.” However, when the *gopīs* lost sight of the does, they thought, “They gave us an indication, but they did not show Him to us. And now they have left.” One *sakhī* said, “If this is so, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is certainly hiding nearby. Fearing Him, these does have disappeared to save themselves from any blame they might incur in revealing His presence.”

These *gopīs* were thinking in this way when suddenly they detected the aroma of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s body. In great delight they exclaimed, “*Sakhī!* Certainly Śrī Kṛṣṇa is hiding in this forest because the air is laden with His scent.” Elated, they again used the word ‘*kāntāṅga*,’ meaning, “We can smell *kula-pati* Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *kund* flower garland, which has been smeared with the *kunkuma* from His beloved’s breast during Their embrace.” Here, the bodies of the two lovers, the *kunkuma* from Her breast and His *kund* flower garland – the aromas of these three entered the noses of the *gopīs*. Thus they could conclude Kṛṣṇa’s presence there. This is the mood here. “He is *kula-pati*, the enjoyer of all the *gopīs*. Yet He has given up His *kula-pati niṣṭhā*, His identity as the master of all, and is enjoying with only one *gopī*. Just look at His injustice.”

## VERSE 12

*bāhum priyāṁsa upadhāya grhīta-padmo  
rāmānujas tulasikāli-kulair madāndhaiḥ  
anvīyamāna iha vas taravaḥ praṇāmanam  
kiṁ vābhinandati caran praṇayāvalokaiḥ*

**O trees! It seems that Balarāma’s younger brother, our beloved Śyāmasundara, has walked by here, followed by bees intoxicated from the fragrance of Tulasī *mañjarīs*, holding a *līlā-kamala* in His right hand, and resting His left hand on the shoulder of His beloved. It seems you have bowed down to offer**

**respects to Him. Has He acknowledged Your obeisances with His loving glance?**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

Seeing the trees bending over with the weight of their fruits, the *gopīs* presume that they have bowed down due to seeing Kṛṣṇa, who has walked past them while dallying with His beloved. This is the meaning of this verse beginning with 'bāhum.' Furthermore, the bees, intoxicated and blinded with the scent of Tulasī, are chasing after the smell.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *vraja-devīs* inquired from the does several times about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but the animals did not reply. When the does continued to look on silently, the *vraja-devīs* suspected that their silence was due to commiserating with the *gopīs'* anguish. "They have observed our distress born of separation. Therefore, they are numb." With this thought, the *vraja-devīs* left them and moved on. After some distance, they saw that all the trees were bowing down from the weight of their fruits and flowers. The *gopīs*, thinking that the trees were reverentially and humbly offering 'praṇāma' at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, inquired from them in this verse 'bāhum.' The *sva-pakṣa gopīs* praised Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in this verse also, thereby indirectly confirming that They were roaming about together. "O trees! Has Balarama's younger brother, with His arm on the shoulder of His beloved, come here and has He welcomed your respectful greeting with His deep loving glance?"

In this way, besides glorifying Kṛṣṇa's affectionate glance, the *gopīs* were indicating the trees' eligibility to accept Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy flowing from His loving glance and praised their excellence. If it is asked why Kṛṣṇa might not reciprocate the trees' respectful greeting, this question is answered by the *gopīs* suggesting as the reason that He was too absorbed in sweet dalliance with His beloved. The *gopīs*, being Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's intimate companions, knew all about Their attributes and activities, and thus simply by picking up Their scent, they asked, "Has Śrī Kṛṣṇa come here, with His left arm resting on His beloved's shoulder, and has He accepted your respects?" The general reason for Baladeva's younger brother not acknowledging the

trees' welcome may be that, due to roaming around for a long time, He was impatient to reach the pastime place.

The trees might ask, "They are always roaming about in this area and see us here, so what is so special today?" The *gopīs* reply, "The special thing today is that as He is roaming around, He is keeping His hand on the tender shoulder of His beloved, who is exclusively devoted to Him." The trees might further inquire, "They come into the forest to behold the beauty of the trees and the creepers, so will They not accept our greeting with a loving glance?" The *gopīs* answered, "Swarms of intoxicated bees, attracted by the fragrant smell of the Tulasī in Kṛṣṇa's garland, are hovering around His beloved. Now, being absorbed in brushing them away from Her body with the *lilā-kamala* in His right hand, His mind will not go anywhere else. If this is so, how will He respond to your respects?"

'*Tulasikālī-kula*' – this phrase is used to express the excellence of Tulasī's fragrance that pervades Kṛṣṇa's forest playground. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.35.10 also praises Tulasī by stating that swarms of bees drink Tulasī's divine honey-like aroma and become intoxicated. '*Madāndhaiḥ*' – Even though they lose their power of sight from drinking Tulasī's scent, they still continue to follow Kṛṣṇa. This indicates the special aroma arising from the Tulasī garland rubbing against Kṛṣṇa's body. In the verse at hand only Tulasī has been mentioned, but in a previous verse (10.29.44) we find the words '*mālāṁ bibhrad vaijayantīm*,' meaning that Kṛṣṇa entered the dance arena wearing a *vaijayantī* garland. Again, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.30.7 we find glorification of Tulasī, with Kṛṣṇa wearing a Tulasī garland.

The previous verse, 10.30.11, states that Kṛṣṇa was wearing a *kund-mālā*. Three different kinds of garlands have been mentioned, but in the course of Their play, the *vaijayantī* and *kund* garlands had fallen down, so in the present verse only the Tulasī garland is named. This indicates how Kṛṣṇa enjoyed with His beloved, meaning that the garland got crushed when They embraced each other very tightly. With this verse, Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *svapakṣa gopīs* praised the Divine Couple's enjoyment together. Verse 30 of this chapter says: "*tasyā amūni naḥ kṣobhaṁ* – Seeing the footprints of this fortunate *gopī* disturbs our minds." These words spoken by the *vipakṣa gopīs* in a mood of contrariety also establish the same idea.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In this verse '*bāhuṁ*' the *gopīs*, observing the trees bowing from the weight of their fruits, assumed that they were offering their respects to Kṛṣṇa. Thus, after some discussion the cowherd maidens concluded that Śrī Kṛṣṇa must be nearby. "O trees! You are Kṛṣṇa's subjects, and you pay your taxes with your fruits and flowers. While roaming around here, has He accepted your respects with a loving glance? Alas, alas! He does not have time to give a loving glance to gentle saints like you."

Thinking thus, the *gopīs* referred to their sweetheart as 'Rāmānuja' (Balarāma's younger brother) [as Balarāma's state of intoxication is well known in *Bhagavāt*] with feelings of envy. The suggested meaning in this verse is that "Kṛṣṇa is inebriated (*matta*), and has become very weak and languid due to having shared intimacies with His beloved. So He is resting with His left hand on His sweetheart's tender shoulder, using it for a pillow. With the blue lotus in His right hand He is brushing away the intoxicated, impatient bees that have left the Tulasī garden and are hovering around Her face, being attracted to its fragrance. He is occupied in serving the lotus face of His beloved, and thus He cannot give His attention to you trees. Therefore we can understand that He is hiding somewhere close by, enjoying with Her.

"So should we also follow the bees?" Therefore they are saying '*madāndhaiḥ*, blinded with intoxication.' "But it is not proper for respectable persons to follow anyone who is so maddened and out of control." The *gopīs* thought, "Kṛṣṇa is completely engrossed in the service of His beloved, so He has no time to even accept the respects of others."

## VERSE 13

*prechatemā latā bāhūn*  
*apy āśliṣṭā vanaspateḥ*  
*nūnaṁ tat-karaja-sprṣṭā*  
*bibhraty utpulaḱāṇy aho*

**O *sakhīs*, we should ask these creepers, who are embracing the arms (branches) of their husband, this tree. They are bristling in rapture; certainly this is due to the touch of Kṛṣṇa's fingernails. Ah, how fortunate they are!**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Some *gopīs* said, “*He sakhīs!* All these creepers have definitely met Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Just ask them.” However, someone might object that if they are all embracing their husbands, then how will they meet Kṛṣṇa? The answer is this: “Ah, how fortunate they are that, even while in the arms of their husbands, they have been touched by Kṛṣṇa’s nails and are experiencing rapture. This does not happen from meeting with their husbands.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In the upcoming verse 10.30.27, the *vraja-devīs* asked, “Which damsel’s footprints are these?” By this question it is understood that these *gopīs* did not pay attention to the words of Rādhikā’s *sva-pakṣa sakhīs* spoken in the previous verse, ‘*bāhuṁ priyāṁsa*,’ about Kṛṣṇa and His beloved. If they had heard attentively, then they would not have any doubt about the identity of the damsel’s footprints. These *gopīs*, who were neutral to Rādhikā, heard the words of the *sakhīs*, but being neither attached to Rādhikā nor against Her, did not properly catch their meaning.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī was naturally consistent in showing the divergent moods among the different groups of *gopīs*. In this verse starting with *prcchatama* (just ask), he expressed the neutral mood of the *taṭasthā gopīs*. These *vraja-devīs* said, “O *sakhīs*, ask these creepers who have been blessed with the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But how is it possible that they met with Kṛṣṇa since they are embracing the limbs their husbands, the trees?” Discussing thus, the *gopīs* finally concluded that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had definitely touched them with His nails on the pretext of plucking flowers. One might ask, “How do you know this?” In answer, they reply, “These creepers are horripilating in rapture, thus producing a profusion of newly sprouting tendrils. This is a sure sign that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has touched them with His nails. Ah, how extraordinary this is! This has not been seen before.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One *gopī* said ‘*prcchata*’ (just ask), showing some other signs of Kṛṣṇa’s presence to other *gopīs*. “O *sakhīs*, ask these creepers who have been blessed with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s touch. If we say that these creepers are embracing

the branches of their husband, the tree, then it is impossible for them to meet with Kṛṣṇa.” To this, they replied, “Although they are in the embrace of their husband, Kṛṣṇa has certainly touched them with His nails. We can see that, due to the rising of amorous desire, they are horripilating in rapture as seen in the sprouting of new tendrils. This is surely resulting from the touch of the nails of the supremely blissful Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because such ecstatic symptoms are not possible in the association of their husband. Nor have we ever witnessed such symptoms in others before. So they cannot lie to us like others, saying that they have not seen Kṛṣṇa.”

#### VERSE 14

*ity unmatta-vaco gopyaḥ  
kṛṣṇānveṣaṇa-kātarāḥ  
līlā bhagavatas tās tā  
hy anucakrus tad-ātmikāḥ*

**He Parikṣit, after these maddened *gopīs* spoke incoherently while searching everywhere for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they felt distressed and helpless due to the pain of separation. Their identification with the heart of Kṛṣṇa became so intensified that they saw themselves as Him and started acting out His pastimes.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Up to this point, the subject of the *gopīs* enquiring like frantic persons about Kṛṣṇa has been narrated in detail. Thinking of Ramā-pati, the husband of the goddess of fortune, they became one at heart (*tadātmika*) with Him. Now their activities in such a state will be minutely described. The *gopīs* had been talking incoherently like mad women, and, becoming overwhelmed in searching for Kṛṣṇa, they started imitating His pastimes.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs* were speaking like mad women, and such mad *gopīs* became very helpless and distressed in their search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa due to intense suffering from separation. According to *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 10.30.4, in such a state, the *gopīs* were loudly singing about Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. Now

they started acting out those pastimes. This was due to their having become at one with Kṛṣṇa (*tadātmika*), their consciousness being totally absorbed in Him, and thus they started imitating their beloved. It is very clear that although they were copying Kṛṣṇa, they still did not feel oneness with Him because they had not given up their own *bhāva*. This is confirmed in the coming Verse 20 in this chapter where it is said that ‘with great effort she started raising her veil with her hand.’ Here the word ‘effort’ is used. If it were a manifestation of oneness, then the raising of the hand would be effortless and natural.

In verse 10.30.19 one *gopī* was keeping her hand on the shoulder of another and saying, “O *gopīs*, I am Kṛṣṇa. Look at my charming movements.” In this sentence, she was taking the name Kṛṣṇa. If they were identical with Kṛṣṇa, then they would not have to make any endeavour to imitate Him while enacting all these pastimes. Some *gopīs* played Pūtanā-līlā. This pastime was also performed with fear from Pūtanā, who had come to poison Kṛṣṇa. They identified with the fear that Kṛṣṇa could have experienced. For example, people become terrified seeing a tiger and, being intensely absorbed in fear, they start imitating that tiger. Similarly, feeling the same intensity of emotion, the *gopīs* became *tadātmika* with Kṛṣṇa and started enacting this pastime. Pūtanā was not the object of their absorption; rather, they became intensely engrossed in Kṛṣṇa and imitated Him. So, in mimicking this *līlā*, the *gopīs* did not exhibit any sentiments that were contrary to their *prema*.

Some other *gopī* tried to imitate Śrī Yaśodā, but could not because she was firmly situated in her *madhura-rati-bhāva*. At that time, deeply concentrating on Kṛṣṇa’s childhood emotions, she copied Him and became afraid of Yaśodā’s punishment. Thus, in her excessive pure love, she experienced Kṛṣṇa’s feelings of fear. This *gopī*’s *madhura-bhāva* did not mix with *vatsalya-bhāva*; rather, she adopted Kṛṣṇa’s mood. So in playing this *līlā* there was no mixing of improper or contrary moods. All these moods arose suddenly in the *vraja-devīs* due to madness, and not for any other reason.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The maddened *gopīs* inquired about Śrī Kṛṣṇa from whomsoever they saw, whether they were animate or inanimate entities. They also observed the



signs of amorous desire in them, and they thought, “All these creepers have become stunned in ecstasy from the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and thus they have become speechless.” This is a symptom of their divine madness. Therefore, they could not get any information about Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s location. They were exhausted from searching for Him up and down in every direction, and could no longer function due to intense anguish in separation. Thus all the *gopīs* were immersed in deep anxiety and became so much obsessed that their external vision ceased to work.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes descended in their hearts, and being completely Kṛṣṇa conscious, the *gopīs* started imitating His pastimes. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *līlā-śākti* gave some relief to the distraught *gopīs* when they began to see themselves as Him. By imitating their beloved’s pastimes, for a moment they experienced the bliss of associating with Him. In enacting His activities they themselves did not play the unfavorable pastimes, like the killing of Pūtanā. The reason for this is that these pastimes are contrary to their *stayī-bhāva*, their permanent emotion. So, for the perfection of these contrary pastimes, Yogamāyā took the form of a cowherd maiden, and imitated Pūtanā in the circle of the *gopīs*. We should understand that the *gopīs* acted out only pastimes favorable to their mood.

When Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī commenced describing this confidential *līlā* in the assembly of Mahārāja Parikṣit, the *gopīs* inspired him in his heart, forbidding him to speak about this in these words: “O Śukadeva, please do not broadcast our utterances in this assembly.” Receiving this prohibition, the king of sages, Śukadeva, thought, “In the bliss of being absorbed in this pastime, I have described the activities of the *gopīs*, but I will not reveal their names. Thus I will comply with their order.”

#### VERSE 15

*kasyācit pūtanāyantyāḥ  
kṛṣṇāyanty apibat stanam  
tokajītvā rudaty anyā  
padāhan śakaṭāyatīm*

**One of the *gopīs* became Pūtanā, and another became Kṛṣṇa and started sucking her breast. Some *gopī* became Śakaṭa, the cart, and another became baby Kṛṣṇa and kicked it over.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The next four verses, starting with '*kasyācit*,' describe the *gopīs* enacting Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *līlās*, being fully absorbed in Him. One *gopī* started acting like Pūtanā, and another, who played Kṛṣṇa, sucked her breast.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The absorption of the *gopīs* in Śrī Kṛṣṇa and their imitating Him has been described in nine verses. One *gopī* started acting like Pūtanā (*pūtanāyantyāḥ*), but she remained fixed in her *madhura-bhāva*. She did not get absorbed in Pūtanā's contrary mood. Another *gopī* manifested Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *bhāva*, becoming absorbed in baby Kṛṣṇa, and imitating Him, started sucking milk. In other words, this *gopī*, identifying with Kṛṣṇa's mood, only pretended to suck milk as the actual objective was to act like Him. '*Stanam-apibat*' (drank from the breast) is the phrase that describes this in this verse.

Some other *gopī* became baby Kṛṣṇa, and while crying, started kicking the body of another *gopī*, who was playing the role of the cart, Śakata. Simulating the form of the cart, she had lifted her body off the ground and was resting on her hands and legs, facing downwards, and the other *gopī* started kicking her.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The imitation of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes by the *gopīs* is narrated in four verses, beginning with this verse, '*pūtanāyantyāḥ*.' Out of the whole assembly one of the *gopīs* started nursing like Pūtanā, and another *gopī*, acting like Kṛṣṇa, started sucking her breast. Another *gopī*, acting like baby Kṛṣṇa, started crying and kicking the *gopī* who had taken the role of Śakata, the cart, thus acting out *śakata-bhanjana-līlā*, the pastime of breaking the cart.

**VERSE 16**

*daityāyitvā jahārānyām*  
*eko kṛṣṇārbha-bhāvanām*  
*riṅgayām āsa kāpy aṅghrī*  
*karṣantī ghoṣa-niḥsvanaiḥ*

One cowherd maiden became Tṛṇāvarta and displayed the *bhāva* of carrying away another cowherd girl, who thought she had become baby Kṛṣṇa. Yet another *gopī*, hearing the sweet sound of her own ankle bells and thinking the sound was coming from Kṛṣṇa's ankle bells, started to drag her feet on the earth and in this way enacted Kṛṣṇa's sweet crawling pastimes.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Some *gopī* started imitating the demon Tṛṇāvarta and took away the *gopī* playing baby Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One *gopī* became possessed by the mood of baby Kṛṣṇa, and another one picked her up in the mood of Tṛṇāvarta. In other words, one *gopī* imitated Tṛṇāvarta and played the pastime of picking up Kṛṣṇa. Some other *gopī* began to play baby Kṛṣṇa's crawling *līlā* in Nanda's courtyard as her ankle bells tinkled. Surprised by hearing the sound of her ankle bells and waist bells, she turned her head about, looking to see where the sound was coming from. This indicates that the *gopīs* were wearing ankle bells and waist bells. *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 10.8.22 describes this charming pastime of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa crawling with their jingling ankle and waist bells.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Just as the demon Tṛṇāvarta had abducted baby Kṛṣṇa, one *gopī* similarly acted like demon Tṛṇāvarta and picked up another *gopī* who was in the mood of baby Kṛṣṇa.

**VERSE 17**

*kṛṣṇa-rāmāyite dve tu  
gopāyantyāś ca kāścana  
vatsāyatīm hanti cānyā  
tatraikā tu bakāyatīm*

Two *gopīs* played Kṛṣṇa and Rāma, who were surrounded by many other *gopīs* acting like cowherd boys and calves. One *gopī* became Vatsāsura while another became Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who killed that demon. Similarly, one *gopī* became Bakāsura and another one played Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who exhibited the *bhāva* of tearing the demon apart.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Two *gopīs* played like Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Rāma, and many others acted like cowherd boys and calves. Imitating the play of cowherd boys, these *gopīs* started enacting the calf-herding *līlā* as if they were in the pastures. The *gopī* who was impersonating Śrī Kṛṣṇa pretended to be killing another *gopī* who was mimicking Vatsāsura. Yet another *gopī* acted like Kṛṣṇa and simulated the killing of the *gopī* who was playing Bakāsura.

VERSE 18

*āhūya dūra-gā yadvat  
kṛṣṇas tam anuvartatīm  
veṇuṁ kvaṇantīm krīḍantīm  
anyāḥ śaṁsanti sādhu iti*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to call the cows and calves who had drifted far away in the forest by playing His flute. In the same way, one *gopī* thought herself to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and while playing the flute, exhibited the *bhāva* of calling the cows who had wandered off in the forest. Other *gopīs* praised her, exclaiming, “Well done! Well done!”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

In the same way Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to call the cows who had wandered far away with His flute, one *gopī* copied how Śrī Kṛṣṇa would play the flute to call the cows. In some places the word *anukurvātīm* (they imitated Him) is found.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

Up to this point, only the imitating of Kṛṣṇa's childhood pastimes has been described. Now the *gopīs* are imitating all those wonderful *līlās* that Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed in the summer season before killing Pralambāsura. In these pastimes Kṛṣṇa has just entered His *kiśora* age, which is the *ālabana*, or support, of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*. So here, in this verse beginning with '*āhūya*' and the next one, the *gopīs*' *anubhāva* (external bodily gestures that indicate one's inner feelings) in the form of imitating their beloved is displayed.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to play His flute to call the far-away cows; similarly one *gopī* imitated Śrī Kṛṣṇa and played the flute to call the cows, who were scattered far and wide. Many other *gopīs* [who were acting like the cowherd boys] started praising this *gopī*, exclaiming, "*Sadhu, sadhu!*"

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa used to call the far-away cows with His flute, one *gopī* made the sound of a flute, imitating Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In place of '*anuvartatīm*,' *anukurvātīm* is seen in some versions. Both mean the same.

## VERSE 19

*kasyāñcit sva-bhujam nyasya  
calanty āhāparā nanu  
kṛṣṇo 'ham paśyata gatim  
lalitām iti tan-manāḥ*

One *gopī*, absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, put her arm on the shoulder of another *gopī* and started walking about, telling the other *gopīs*, "O *sakhās* (friends), I am Kṛṣṇa. Just see the charming way I walk."

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

'*Gatī*' – *nṛtya-līlā*, dancing pastime.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* started imitating different types of Kṛṣṇa’s wonderful and varied pastimes. One *gopī* became totally absorbed in *līlā* and developed such a strong *sañcarī-bhāva* of divine madness (*unmada*) that she even forgot her own identity. Unable to remember who she was, she became one with Kṛṣṇa (*tadātmika*). All this is described in the four verses beginning here with ‘*kasyañcit.*’ Another *gopī*, imitating Śrī Kṛṣṇa, put her arm on the shoulder of a different *gopī*, who was imitating Subala. Walking like this, she said, “O *sakhīs*, I am Kṛṣṇa. Look at how I walk so charmingly.”

VERSE 20

*mā bhaiṣṭa vāta-varṣābhyām  
tat-trāṇaṁ vihitam maya  
ity uktvaikena hastena  
yatanty unnidadhe ’mbaram*

One *gopī* became Śrī Kṛṣṇa and said, “O Vrajavāsīs, don’t be afraid of this torrential rain. I have made all arrangements for your protection.” Speaking thus, the *gopī* imitated the lifting of Govardhana by stretching out her veil over her head.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

One *gopī* diligently stretched out her veil over her head.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One *gopī* acting like Kṛṣṇa said, “Don’t be afraid of the rainstorm.” She was absorbed in this *līlā* and had a direct *sphūrti* of the rainstorm. She was speaking while imitating the *līlā* of lifting Govardhana. In one of the following verses a *gopī* said, “See, see the forest fire.” This should also be understood as absorption in *līlā*. The example of Kṛṣṇa swallowing the forest fire has not been given because it would generate extreme fear, which would cause the *śṛṅgāra-rasa* to recede.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopī* performing the *līlā* of Kṛṣṇa lifting Govardhana diligently stretched out her veil over her head to protect everyone from the rainstorm. She perfectly imitated how Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill.

**VERSE 21**

*āruhyaikā padākramya  
śirasy āhāparām nrpa  
duṣṭāhe gaccha jāto ’haṁ  
khalānām nanu daṇḍa-kṛt*

**O Parikṣit, one *gopī* imitated the serpent Kāliya, and another, copying Śrī Kṛṣṇa, climbed on her head, and kicking her, said, ‘O wicked serpent, go away from here. I have taken birth to punish envious persons like you.’**

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

‘*Padākraman*’ means ‘kicking while climbing;’ one *gopī* climbed on the cowherd maiden who was imitating the serpent Kāliya, and kicked her head. In some scriptures, instead of ‘*nanu*,’ the word ‘*nrpa*’ is seen. ‘*Nanu*’ means ‘definitely’ or an address, and ‘*nrpa*’ means ‘calling out in amazement, “*He nrpa! He duṣṭa*, O wicked one!” This implies the humiliating of the sinful Kāliya. “*Gaccha* – Go away from here. Otherwise, I will punish you.” Therefore, the *gopīs* said, “*jātaḥ* – I have taken birth to wipe out evil.” In the actual pastime of subduing Kāliya, the word ‘*gaccha*’ is not found<sup>3</sup>. The *gopīs* took the essence of the *līlā*, and accordingly, they finished their depiction of the pastime with the word ‘*gaccha*,’ telling Kāliya to leave.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“*Duṣṭāhe* – O wicked Kāliya!”

3 In the *līlā* Kṛṣṇa told Kāliya to go away in Verse 10.16.60, at the very end of the pastime, after severely punishing him.

VERSE 22

*tatraikovāca he gopā  
dāvāgniṁ paśyatolbaṇam  
cakṣūṁṣy āśv apidadhvaṁ vo  
vidhāsyē kṣemam aṅjasā*

**One *gopī* became Śrī Kṛṣṇa and spoke to the other *gopīs* who were imitating the *gopas*, who were scared of the forest fire. “O cowherd folks, look! A fierce fire is burning the forest. All of you quickly close your eyes. I will easily protect you.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

“Close your eyes.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In this way, the *gopīs* enacted all the activities included in the pastime of subduing Kāliya, such as entering the Kāliya Lake. One *gopī*, acting like Kṛṣṇa, climbed on the head of the *gopī* playing Kāliya, and said, “*Re duṣṭa Kāliya, O wicked Kāliya!*” In some places, ‘*he*’ is used instead of ‘*re*,’ which implies contempt.

Imitating the *līlā* in which Kṛṣṇa protected all the Vrajavāsīs from the forest fire, one *gopī* went into meditation (*dhyāna-yoga*), and, closing her eyes, felt intense fire of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her heart. Along with this internal vision, she experienced the forest fire externally, and said, “O cowherd folk, all of you quickly close your eyes. I am going to do something auspicious for you. If you will not close your eyes, then the heat of the forest fire will rob you of your sight.”

“Behold this forest fire, which will scorch your eyes.” Actually, there was no forest fire, but still they said, “Look!” These words are the cause of the players’ actions. *Muñjātavī-līlā* (which took place near Bhāṇḍīra-vana, where Kṛṣṇa swallowed the forest fire to rescue the cows and cowherd boys) is similar to this *davana-līlā*, or forest fire pastime (which took place on the bank of Yamunā the night after the subduing of Kāliya), so it is not described separately. ‘*Apidhadhvaṁ*’ (just close) – ‘*apidadhvaṁ*’ was customarily used by the *ṛṣis* [who did not observe strict grammar] in place of ‘*apidhadhvaṁ*’



[which is pure Sanskrit]; this should be understood as an oversight. *Añjasā* means ‘without difficulty.’

### VERSE 23

*baddhānyayā srajā kācit  
tanvī tatra ulūkhale  
badhnāmi bhāṇḍa-bhettāraṁ  
haiyaṅgava-muṣaṁ tv iti  
bhītā su-drk pidhāyāsyam  
bheje bhīti-vidāmbanam*

One *gopī* accepted the mood of Vrajeśvarī Śrī Yaśodā (externally), and one slender *gopī* became immersed in the *bhāva* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *gopī* playing Yaśodā tied up the *gopī* playing Kṛṣṇa with a flower garland exactly as He had been tied to the grinding mortar. The *vraja-sundarī* playing Kṛṣṇa started enacting His behavior of crying in fright. Exhibiting fear and with tears coming from her beautiful eyes, this *gopī* covered her face with her hands, just as Kṛṣṇa had done.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

‘*Su-drk*’ – beautiful eyes. She covered her beautiful eyes with her hands. *Bhīti-vidāmbanam* – imitating a fearful mood.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

As previously mentioned, one *gopī* who was simply copying the activities of Vrajeśvarī Śrī Yaśodā (but not taking her *bhāva*) said, “I will tie up this butter thief, who has broken the pot of yoghurt.” With a flower garland this *gopī* started tying up the hands and legs of another *gopī* to the cowherd maiden who was huddled up playing the role of the grinding mortar. *Tanvī* (slender): one *gopī* instantly became thin out of intense separation. This *gopī*, enacting fearful Kṛṣṇa, began to imitate the actions of trembling, crying, staring with wide eyes in astonishment, and pleading in a pitiful voice. She covered her face with her hands because a child naturally does this when afraid. We should understand that trembling and crying

out of fear and entreating are the activities of Kṛṣṇa who was afraid of His mother. Similarly, the *gopīs* enacted other *līlās* in the same appropriate way.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After this, suddenly the *gopīs*' divine madness subsided, and their oneness with Kṛṣṇa (*tādātmya*) also slackened. The feeling that "I am a *gopī*" manifested in them. When, spontaneously, these *gopīs* were inspired to play the *līlās* of breaking pots, stealing butter, etc., Yogamāyā imitated Śrī Yaśodā and appropriately harmonized these pastimes. "O naughty boy, You are running away after stealing butter? I will bind You." So Yogamāyā, who was enacting Yaśodā Gopī, bound (*bandheti*) the *gopī* playing Kṛṣṇa with her garland. Exhibiting fear, that beautiful-eyed *gopī* covered her face with her hands.

VERSE 24

*evam kṛṣṇaṁ prcchamānā  
vr̥ṇḍāvana-latās tarūn  
vyacakṣata vanoddeśe  
padāni paramātmanaḥ*

**O Parikṣit, while performing the pastimes and again enquiring from the trees and creepers of Vṛṇḍāvana, the *vraja-devīs* arrived at a place in the forest where they noticed the footprints of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In the course of enquiring about Śrī Kṛṣṇa from the trees and creepers of Vṛṇḍāvana, the *gopīs* reached the spot where they saw the footprints of Paramātmā Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

While the *vraja-devīs* were singing over and over again the pastimes and enacting them, and enquiring from the trees and creepers about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they came to a place in the forest where they saw many footprints of the Original

Supersoul of everyone. They ‘saw’ the footprints – this word expresses great surprise. The *gopīs* thought, “How astonishing!” The sages discuss the lotus feet of this Paramātmā only through a few words from the Vedas, but these words are just hints; meaning, they spend their whole lives in discussing these feet only, while the *gopīs* directly beheld all these footprints of Paramātmā in one place in the forest, which is the place of their amorous enjoyment with Him. “This is amazing! We are sages, but the *gopīs* are superior to us. We are not equal to the *gopīs*, not even in the slightest. So if we cannot even be equal, even by a fraction, to these *gopīs*, then how shall we attain the mood of Kṛṣṇa’s eternal beloveds, which is full of very special *prema*?”

According to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s explanation, the sequence of *līlā* from the first verse of this chapter (*antarhite bhagavati*) indicating the disappearance of the Lord up to this verse where the *gopīs* saw His footprints, is: 1) the fire of separation felt by the *gopīs*; 2) singing while searching; 3) imitating the pastimes of killing Pūtānā and others; 4) again searching; 5) seeing the footprints. However, according to me (Jīva Gosvāmī), the sequence is: 1) feeling the fire of separation; 2) extending their arms and imitating the embracing of Kṛṣṇa; 3) singing and searching, and in between, enacting the pastimes of killing Pūtānā and others; 4) seeing Kṛṣṇa’s footprints.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* proceeded further, enquiring about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Here the suggested meaning of the word ‘*evam*’ is: due to the intensity of divine madness in separation, the *gopīs* forgot themselves and, becoming one with their beloved Kṛṣṇa, enacted many of His *līlās*. (Verse 3 of this chapter states: “The moods behind all of Kṛṣṇa’s love-laden glances and other inviting gestures infiltrated the *gopīs*’ bodies; they became maddened, and started relishing the highest stage of rapture.”) These *gopīs*, the beloveds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, started imitating His various pastimes and said, “I am Kṛṣṇa. Just see how gracefully I walk.” When their absorption slackened and they came back to their self-awareness, they again started searching for Kṛṣṇa. It should be understood that the enactment of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes by the *uraja-devīs* manifested due to deep absorption in their beloved. In the story of Prahlaḍa, it is said that “sometimes devotees, being fully absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, imitate Him.” In the narration of *rāsa-līlā*, a *gopī*

imitated Kṛṣṇa pretending to suck the breast of the *gopī* playing Pūtanā. They imitated other *līlās* as well. When their absorption weakened after the enacting of the *līlās*, they again started enquiring from the trees, creepers, and even inanimate objects due to their very intense feelings of separation.

VERSE 25

*padāni vyaktam etāni  
nanda-sūnor mahātmanah  
lakṣyante hi dhvajāmbhoja-  
vajrāṅkuśa-yavādibhiḥ*

After seeing the footprints, the *gopīs* said, “These footprints certainly belong to the crest-jewel of benevolent persons, Nandanandana Śrī Śyāmasundara, because the marks of the flag, lotus, thunderbolt, elephant goad and barleycorn are clearly visible.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Seeing the footprints, the *vraja-devīs* spoke among themselves: ‘*padāni*’ – the group of footprints. “The lotus, thunderbolt, elephant goad and barleycorn are clearly indicating that these footprints belong to Nandanandana. If we ask, ‘How is this clear?’ the answer is that the flag and other marks are famous and are clearly indicating this fact. This is the sign of a *mahātma*, a great personality. The soles of these feet are decorated with a flag and other marks because the son of Nanda is the Supreme Person.”

In the *Padma-purāṇa*’s narration of the *Brahmā-Nārada Samvāda*, sixteen different marks are described on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s soles. “O divine sage, I have seen sixteen different marks on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s soles. Eight of them are on the right sole, and seven are on the left. The eight on the right sole are the flag, lotus, thunderbolt, goad, barleycorn, swastika, a line going upwards and an octagon. The seven on the left sole are the rainbow, triangle, water pot, half-moon, double circle, fish and a cow’s hoof-print. Besides this, there is another mark like a *jamun* fruit, a rose apple, which does not have a definite place.”

In *Krama-dīpikā*, eight marks are described: fish, elephant goad, disc, conch, flag, barleycorn, lotus and thunderbolt. In *Gopāla-tapaṇi Śruti*, three marks are given: conch, flag and umbrella. In the *Glorification of Mathurā-*

*maṇḍala* in *Adi-Varaha Purāṇa*, it is said, “O auspicious one! The impression of the disc on the ground is seen where Kṛṣṇa happily plays His pastimes.”

In this way, besides the sixteen marks mentioned here, three more emblems – disc, conch and umbrella – have also been mentioned. Thus, altogether, there are nineteen marks on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s soles. In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, only six marks – disc, etc. – are mentioned; those are in relation to Śrī Viṣṇu and other incarnations. This is further affirmed in the *Padma Purāṇa* after the description of the sixteen marks: “O wise one, when sixteen different marks are seen on someone’s soles, then it is certain that Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, has incarnated in the world. There is no doubt about it. O best of Vaiṣṇavas, among all Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s unlimited incarnations, some have only two, three, four or five symbols out of these sixteen.”

Now the location of these marks is explained, as ascertained in the *Padma Purāṇa*. In the middle of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s right sole is the flag. The lotus is located three-fingers’ width below the tip of the middle toe, above the flag [*Skanda Purāṇa* concurs with this]. On the right side of the sole is the thunderbolt, and above that is the elephant goad. At the base of the big toe is the barleycorn. The swastika is found at the place where it increases the beauty of the lotus feet. In between the bases of the big toe and the second toe starts the line which extends to the middle of the sole. Eight fingers below the tip of the big toe is the octagon. According to the *Hayaśīrṣa* and *Matsya Purāṇas* the length of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s soles is fourteen fingers, and the width is six fingers. So one should understand the placement of these symbols is in accord with these measurements. The measurement of the fingers has been determined in agreement with these dimensions.

On Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s left sole the multi-colored rainbow is found four fingers below the tips of the toes. Eight fingers below the tips of the toes in the middle of the sole is the triangle, and below this is the half-moon, which is eclipsing the triangle. The water pot is situated at the appropriate place increasing the beauty. Above all the symbols is the sky, which is represented by two concentric circles. Below all the symbols is the fish. Below the rainbow is the cow’s split hoof-print. The *jamun* fruit has its natural color and round shape; it is not a line. The *gopīs* also described all these emblems on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s soles are after seeing the footprints. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* relates: “Some *gopī*, while searching for Kṛṣṇa, looked at the ground and started horripilating, and with a choked voice, told the other *gopīs*, ‘Just look, my

friends! Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, marked with the flag, thunderbolt, goad and lotus, are visible here.' Hearing this, the *gopīs* gazed upon His footprints."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

When the three stages of the *gopīs'* divine madness subsided, they continued their search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the forest. Suddenly they came upon their lover's footprints and became very blissful – '*padānīti*.' *Skanda Purāṇa* describes the placement and significance of the flag and the other symbols adorning Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's soles. First the right sole is described. The disc is at the base of big toe. The six enemies headed by lust are destroyed for devotees who remember this mark. Just below Śrī Bhagavān's middle toe is the lotus. The bee-like hearts of the devotees who meditate on this lotus become greedy to drink its nectar. Under the lotus is the flag. The devotees who meditate on it can attain victory over all *anarthas* and become fearless. On Bhagavān's right heel is the sign of the goad. If devotees remember this, their uncontrolled elephant-like minds are brought into submission. At the base of the small toe is the thunderbolt. Remembering this annihilates a mountain of sins. Remembering the barleycorn at the base of the big toe brings all kinds of riches. On the right side of the right sole is the thunderbolt and above that, at the base of the small toe, is the goad.

The Gauḍīya devotees say that *Skanda Purāṇa's* statement about the goad on the heel actually refers to Śrī Nārāyaṇa. In this way, there are six symbols on Kṛṣṇa's right sole – disc, flag, lotus, thunderbolt, goad and barleycorn. The rest of the symbols are described in *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī Tika*. Starting from the junction of the big and second toes is the line that runs to the middle of the sole. An umbrella is situated under the disc. Below the middle of the sole are four swastikas located at the four cardinal directions, and in between each swastika is a *jamun* fruit, four in all, and in the middle of the swastikas is the octagon. This makes eleven emblems on Kṛṣṇa's right sole.

On the left sole at the base of the big toe is a conch, the top of which points upwards. This symbol manifests all kinds of knowledge. At the base of the middle toe is the sky, represented by two concentric circles. Below that is the bow, without the arrow. Below the bow is the cow's hoof-print. Below this is the triangle, around which are four pots (some places say three). Below the triangle is the half-moon, at whose tips are two triangles.

Under this is the fish. Including these eight symbols, there are nineteen emblems in all.

### VERSE 26

*tais taiḥ padais tat-padavīm  
anvicchantyo 'grato'balāḥ  
vadhvāḥ padaiḥ su-prktāni  
vilokyārtāḥ samabruvan*

**The *vraja-sundarīs* continued searching for their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa following His footprints, and noticing one young bride's footprints intermingled with His, they became very disturbed and talked among themselves.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Su-prktāni*' – intermixed.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Moving ahead in their search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* followed His footprints, which were decorated with the flag and other emblems. '*Tais taiḥ*' (those very ones) is repeated two times, indicating the *gopīs*' astonishment at seeing so many footprints, which were spread out over a vast area; sometimes they were clearly visible and in other places they were half covered by grass. Moving forward, they noticed the footprints of a young maiden alongside Śrī Kṛṣṇa's footprints. Finally they reached a place where they could no longer see her footprints, and they thought, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa has lifted this young *gopī* on His shoulder and walked away." '*Abalā*' – weak; the *gopīs* have been called *abalā*, or weak, having become exhausted and feeble due to their separation from Kṛṣṇa and their tiring search for Him. '*Vadhu*' – young bride; the purpose of using the word *vadhu* is to establish Śrī Rādhā as extremely fortunate and as being Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dearmost beloved.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

'*Su-prktāni*' – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's footprints were intermingled with Śrī Rādhā's.

VERSE 27

*kasyāḥ padāni caitāni  
yātāyā nanda-sūnunā  
aṁsa-nyasta-prakoṣṭhāyāḥ  
kareṇoḥ kariṇā yathā*

**Oh! Which fortunate *vraja-sundarī*'s footprints are these? Just as a she-elephant walks with her beloved, the king of elephants, She is strolling along with Nanda-nandana Śyāmasundara, resting Her arm on His shoulder.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa has placed Her arm on His shoulder. '*Kareṇoḥ*' – she-elephant.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs* who were assembled there spoke together, “Which beautiful maiden's footprints are these?” The question may arise, “How did the *gopīs* come to know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa went off with one lovely damsel?” The answer is that the footprints which the *gopīs* observed were smaller in size, and their impression in the soil was not deep due to Her being very lightweight. Seeing these signs, they concluded that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had walked away with one loving maiden. “These footprints belong to a fair girl who has gone off with Nanda-nandana.” This sentence may seem to be the statement of the general *gopīs* but it should be understood as the joking remark of Śrī Rādhā's *svapakṣa sakhīs*, as being quite familiar with Śrī Rādhā's footprints, they could recognize them simply by glancing at them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa had placed the arm of that *ramaṇī* firmly on His shoulder for some special enjoyment of *rasa*, and also, as it was nighttime, She was stumbling along, unable to walk properly, and He wanted to give Her support. Furthermore He wanted to take Her away by force to another place. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love for this maiden, greater than for the others, is confirmed by this action. There is an example for this: just as a lusty, intoxicated elephant roams around with the she-elephant from forest to forest, Śrī Kṛṣṇa also is controlled by the love of this maiden and is roaming about the forests with Her.



ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

‘*Aṁsa-nyasta-prakoṣṭhāyāḥ*’ – on whose shoulder Nanda-nandana has placed His left arm.

## VERSE 28

*anayārādhito nūnaṁ  
bhagavān harir īśvaraḥ  
yan no vihāya govindaḥ  
prīto yām anayad rahaḥ*

This fortunate *ramaṇī* has certainly worshiped Bhagavān Śrī Hari perfectly and has fully satisfied Him. Otherwise, why has our *prāṇa-priyatama* Śrī Govinda, who is the love of our life, abandoned all of us and taken only Her to a secluded place?

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

**Bhāvārtha Dīpikā**

‘*Rahaḥ*’ – secluded place.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

Lalitā and other *sva-pakṣa sakhīs*, Rādhā’s most intimate companions, recognized Her footprints, but remained silent out of sagacity. Candrāvalī and other *vipakṣa gopīs*, being gravely distressed, were unable to speak. *Taṭastha*, or neutral, *gopīs*, who find their happiness in serving Kṛṣṇa according to their mood, did not pay much attention to the fact that there were some maiden’s footprints with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s. As they were not attached to whether Kṛṣṇa was meeting Rādhā or Candrāvalī, they remained silent.

The friendly *suhṛt-pakṣa gopīs* – who neither obstruct the meeting of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa nor make any special endeavor for Their meeting, but still are happy in Their union – were the first ones to speak ‘*anayā*’ (by Her): “This *ramaṇī* has certainly controlled Bhagavān Śrī Hari and made Him happy by Her special worship.” The word ‘*nūnaṁ*’ denotes ‘surmising’ and ‘certainly.’ ‘*Hari*’ is He who takes away all miseries. ‘*Bhagavān*’ refers to Śrī Nārāyaṇa. ‘*Īśvara*’ is He who can fulfill the deepest desires of His devotees and who is independent. ‘*Anayārādhito*’ – “Śrī Kṛṣṇa, roaming with this *ramaṇī* who

worships Him, is controlled by Her, not by us.” *‘Rādhayati’* – Rādhā, who performs worship; the name Rādhā comes from *ārāadhanā*, to worship. Her name has manifested in this way.

With great effort, Śrī Śukadeva was trying to hide Śrī Rādhā’s name in his heart, but by Her mercy, Her name issued forth from his mouth. The reason for this is that he realized the meaning of the name ‘Govinda’ – He who enjoys Rādhā’s senses and who is controlled by Her. “So in this dense forest He has abandoned (*vihāya*) us (*naḥ*) and gone off with Her alone to enjoy in a private place (*rahaḥ*), which is inaccessible to us.” Or *‘yan naḥ’* – “Rādhā became angry and left the *rāsa*, so Kṛṣṇa has gone with Her to a secluded spot, leaving all of us behind.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *suhṛt-pakṣa gopīs* recognized that *ramaṇī*’s footprints as belonging to Śrī Vṛṣabhanu-nandinī. Of this they were assured in their hearts, but because there was a crowd of all kinds of *gopīs*, they acted as if they did not know. Understanding the identity of that *ramaṇī*, the *suhṛt-pakṣa gopīs* indirectly pronounced Her name and blissfully expressed the glories of Her fortune in this verse. *‘Anaiyava nūnam’* – the word *‘nūnam’* means ‘certainly.’ “The maiden who went with Śrī Kṛṣṇa has certainly worshiped Śrī Nārāyaṇa (*bhagavān*), who can fulfill the deepest desires of His devotees (*īśvara*) and who takes away all miseries (*hari*), and by Her worship (*ārādhitaḥ*) She has controlled Him. But we were not able to do that. So Śrī Govinda has abandoned us (*yan no vihāya*) and gone with Her to the secluded forest.” *‘Rādhayati iti rādhā’* – the use of the verbal root *rādh* denotes the name of this *ramaṇī* as Rādhā. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī earnestly endeavored to keep Śrī Rādhā’s name a secret, but by Her mercy it spontaneously emerged from his moon-like mouth, like the rumbling of a kettledrum announcing Her vast good fortune.

“O *gopīs*, you uselessly delude yourselves in thinking you are equal to that great *ramaṇī*, but this is not logical because certainly Śrī Rādhā has won Śrī Hari.” *‘Bhagavān’* – He who is handsome and passionate and who can establish His own glories. *‘īśvara’* – who is able to cheat you, “so Śrī Govinda has abandoned all of us and has lovingly taken that *ramaṇī* to a secluded *nikuṇja* to enjoy Her senses.”

*Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī* describes the emblems on Rādhā's soles. Left sole – a barleycorn is below the big toe, under that is the disc, under that is the umbrella, and under that is a bracelet. Starting at the juncture of Her large and second toes is a vertical line that extends down to the middle of Her sole. A lotus is under the middle toe, under which is a flag with an insignia, and under that is a creeper with a flower. Under the small toe is a goad, and on the heel is a half-moon. In total, there are eleven symbols.

Right sole – a conch is under the big toe, under that is a club. Under the small toe is an altar, under that an earring, and under that a scepter. A mountain is below the small and middle toes, under that is a chariot, and a fish is on the heel. This makes a total of eight symbols on the right sole. Altogether, there are nineteen symbols.

#### VERSE 29

*dhanyā aho amī ālyo  
govindāṅghry-abja-reṇavaḥ  
yān brahmeṣau ramā devī  
dadhur mūrdhny agha-nuttaye*

Some *vraja-sundarīs* said, “O beloved *sakhīs*, the dust that Govinda touches with His lotus feet becomes blissful and attains all fortune. Even Brahmā, Śiva and Ramā-devī take this dust on their heads to remove their sufferings and all inauspiciousness.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“O *sakhīs*! Ahhh! The dust of Govinda's lotus feet is very blessed because Brahmā and others smear this dust on their heads, so we also can anoint ourselves with this foot-dust and become eligible to attain Kṛṣṇa.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *taṭastha-pakṣa sakhīs* exclaimed ‘*dhanyā*’ after seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's footprints. “*He sakhīs*, this dust has become vastly auspicious by the touch of Govinda's lotus feet.” They were all suffering from the same distress, so almost all of them had the same mood, and they all spoke in unison, “This is extremely astonishing.” The word ‘*dadhuḥ*’ (took) is in the

past tense to express that surely this dust has been honored by Brahmā, Śiva and Ramā-devī, who smeared it on their heads with devotion to dispel the misery of separation and other sufferings. Ramā-devī is the topmost of these three, and Śiva is superior to Brahmā. “However, we could not get the touch of His lotus feet due to some offense or being distressed in separation. The reason for this dust being blessed is that it has attained the touch of Govinda’s lotus feet. Therefore Brahmā and others put it on their heads and become fortunate.”

Actually, this kind of glorification of Kṛṣṇa’s foot-dust manifests in the *gopīs* by the effect of their profound *prema*. The power of *prema* can make even an insignificant object appear praiseworthy. When something is truly glorious, then what can one say about it? The greater the love, the more dear and praiseworthy something becomes. An example of this is Bharat Mahārāja’s love for the baby deer as told in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 5.8.23: “What austerities has this Earth performed that it is decorated with the tender footprints of this gentle baby deer, and has thus become the place where the *brāhmaṇas* perform fire sacrifices?” In this verse the saintly King Bharata, who was nursing the baby deer, is glorifying the touch of that animal’s feet due to his love for it; but in truth, that animal had no potency to influence the fortune of the Earth.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *taṭastha-pakṣa gopīs*, after seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s footprints (but not giving any heed to the other person’s footprints alongside His, as told in the previous verse), talked among themselves, “O *sakhīs*, all this dust is blessed by receiving the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet; therefore, Brahmā and other demigods as well take this dust on their heads to get relief from their misery of separation.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd friends have witnessed that when Kṛṣṇa returns from the woods to the cowshed, Brahmā and other demigods descend from Svarga to the forest grounds, meet Him on the path and offer prayers glorifying Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 10.35.22: “*vandyamāna-caraṇaḥ pathi vṛddhaiḥ* – All the demigods stand on the side of the path and worship the dust of Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet with different prayers.”

“Brahmā and others have attained Śrī Kṛṣṇa by taking this dust on their heads with devotion, but due to our shyness, we still have not been successful in this. So our anguish from separation has not been alleviated. Come, we will smear ourselves with this dust and we will attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus our ‘*agha*,’ our pain from separation, will be dispelled.”

## VERSE 30

*tasyā amūni naḥ kṣobhaṁ  
kurvanty uccaiḥ padāni yat  
yaikāpahṛtya gopīnām  
raho bhunkte 'cyutādharam*

Some other *gopīs* said, “O *sakhī*, what you say is alright, but we are observing the raised footprints of some *gopī* that are creating great commotion in our hearts. This is because the *sakhī* who has taken Śrī Kṛṣṇa to a secluded place has snatched the nectar of His lips from us – which is the essence of all that we possess – and is drinking it all by Herself.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In the present verse ‘*tasyā*’ (Her), some other cowherd damsels said, “This *ramaṇī* has stolen the entire wealth of all the *gopīs* and is enjoying it all alone in a secluded place. If this maiden’s footprints were not alongside Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s, we would not be aggrieved, but since they are mixed with His, we are feeling extreme pain.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

This verse ‘*tasyā*’ is spoken by the *vipakṣa gopīs*, the *vraja-devīs* of the opposite party – Candrāvalī and her friends. “The footprints of this *ramaṇī* are creating extreme pain and agitation in our hearts because She has stolen away Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the entire wealth of our lives, and is enjoying the nectar of His lips in a secluded place all by Herself. That enchantress has looted our treasure. Otherwise Kṛṣṇa would not have

abandoned us in this remote forest and become absorbed in dallying privately with Her.”

In some places ‘*dhanam*’ (riches) is seen instead of ‘*raho*’ (in seclusion), but Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has given the meaning of ‘*dhanam*’ as ‘*sarvasva*’ (one’s entire property). ‘*Acyuta*’ – the suggested meaning of this name is ‘the nectar of the lips of that Acyuta, who never abandons this *ramaṇī* to go anywhere else.’

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *sakhīs* of the opposite party spoke this verse beginning with ‘*tasyā*.’ “The footprints of this *ramaṇī* seen near Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s footprints are giving extreme pain to our hearts because the nectar of Acyuta’s lips is our treasure. It is meant for all of us but this *ramaṇī* is enjoying it all by Herself. This lusty maiden is an enchantress. She has brought Kṛṣṇa under Her control by some illusory power, and taken Him away to a remote place where She is relishing the nectar of His lips. Because of this, Kṛṣṇa has abandoned all of us maidens, who are filled with genuine love for Him.”

**VERSE 31**

*na lakṣyante padāny atra  
tasyā nūnam tṛṇāṅkuraiḥ  
khidyat-sujātānghri-talām  
unnīnye preyasīm priyaḥ*

**O *sakhīs*, look! That *gopī*’s footprints are not seen over here. It seems that our dearest Śyāmasundara must have realized, ‘The sharp grass is pricking the tender soles of My beloved,’ so He must have surely lifted Her up on His shoulder.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

These *gopīs* could no longer see that *ramaṇī*’s footprints. They kept searching for Kṛṣṇa’s foot-dust, and seeing only Kṛṣṇa’s footprints now, they became extremely aggrieved. This has been told in the three verses starting with ‘*na lakṣyante*.’ “It seems to indicate that Kṛṣṇa was concerned

that the tender soles of that ladylove should not be pricked by sharp dry grass and He thus lifted Her up on His shoulder.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“Here the footprints of that *ramaṇī* are not visible anymore because Her beloved Kṛṣṇa has lifted Her on His shoulder.” This statement spoken by the *vipakṣa gopīs* is full of envy. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has given the meaning of this word ‘*unnayana*’ as ‘climbing on the shoulder.’ The *gopīs* of the opposite party were smoldering in the fire of envy when they no longer saw that *ramaṇī*’s footprints alongside Kṛṣṇa’s. This could be the statement of the *sakhīs* also, because, thinking this *ramaṇī* to be the object of Kṛṣṇa’s love, they felt that beloved Kṛṣṇa has lifted His sweetheart on His shoulder, as Her tender soles would be hurt by the sharp grass. If we see it in this way, then the word ‘*unnayana*’ will be defined as ‘using both His hands to place Her on His shoulder.’

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“O *sakhīs* afflicted with the dreadful disease of envy! There is no need to be aggrieved since that *ramaṇī*’s footprints are not seen here anymore.” One *priya sakhī* spoke this verse ‘*na lakṣyante*’ to her friends, who became filled with bliss and who looked at each other with crooked smiles. Rejoicing that those other footprints were not there, they started prattling and imagining, indicated by ‘*nūnam*’ (certainly) and other words. ‘*Unninye preyaśīm*’ – “Certainly Kṛṣṇa has lifted His beloved with both His arms and embraced Her to His chest. This dear maiden is obviously the exclusive object of Kṛṣṇa’s love because He became apprehensive that Her tender soles would be hurt by the sharp grass and He could not tolerate that She would feel any pain in walking.” Thus, the *svapakṣa sakhīs* became elated for two reasons: (1) observing Rādhikā’s great fortune, and (2) seeing the unhappiness of the *vipakṣa sakhīs*.

### **VERSE 32**

*imāny adhika-magnāni  
padāni vahato vadhūm*

*gopyaḥ paśyata kṛṣṇasya  
bhārākrāntasya kāmīnaḥ  
atrāvaropitā kāntā  
puṣpa-hetor mahātmanā*

**As all the *gopīs* moved ahead, one of them said, “O *sakhīs*, look! Here Kṛṣṇa’s footprints are sunk deeper in the sand. Certainly that lusty fellow has lifted His beloved on His shoulder, and with Her weight, His feet have left a deeper impression.”**

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

This verse starting with ‘*īmāny*’ is spoken by the *vipakṣa gopīs* with envy. “O *gopīs*, don’t be sad. Look, look! That impassioned Kṛṣṇa picked up His beloved on His shoulder and became overburdened by Her weight, so His footprints are deeper in the ground.” “*Gopyaḥ – O gopīs!*” This address infers that they are clever enough to correctly interpret all the signs. “It is obvious that passion is the cause behind Śrī Kṛṣṇa lifting that *ramaṇī*. Otherwise, how can that very tender Śyāmasundara pick Her up? He is not *vidagdha-śiromaṇi*, clearly He is not the crest-jewel of expert lovers as He has abandoned all of us and has lifted up that lusty girl instead. ‘*Kāmīnaḥ*’ – Kṛṣṇa is under the grip of amorous desire, but He is not *prema-rasa-vidagdha*, He is not expert in relishing the flavors of love.

The *sakhīs* said, “Over here, *mahātmā* (meaning *vidagdha-śiromaṇi* Kṛṣṇa) has put down His beloved on the ground in order to pick flowers.” The line starting with ‘*atrāvaropitā*’ is not seen in some books; therefore it has not been considered as a separate verse.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“O *sakhīs*, you are speaking without thinking. Don’t feel sad. Why are you speaking like that? Not seeing the footprints of that *ramaṇī* is giving us more pain than seeing them along with Kṛṣṇa’s. We were distressed by seeing the footprints of that enchantress, but now not seeing them, we are feeling worse because obviously our *praṇa-nātha* has lifted Her on His shoulder to protect Her soles from the sharp grass.”



After determining the reason for not seeing the footprints, the *gopīs* of the rival party said ‘*imānti*.’ “Here Kṛṣṇa’s footprints have sunk deeper in the soil.” “*Vadhū* (bride) – She is not married to Kṛṣṇa but in this lonely forest He treated this dear one like His young bride. He was overburdened with Her weight, and these deep footprints are the evidence. Just as materialistic people roam around in the world carrying the weight of their wives and children, in the same way Kṛṣṇa is roaming about, carrying this sweetheart as His bride. Kṛṣṇa is simply lusty, and is not a proper lover because He has abandoned all of us damsels, who are filled with true love for Him. Because He is caught in the jaws of lust, He is carrying this bride around; otherwise how could Kṛṣṇa, the very delicate son of the king of Vraja, manage to lift that *gopī*?”

‘*Atra*’ (in this place): the *sakhīs* said, “At this place Kṛṣṇa put down His beloved from His embrace.” According to them He is ‘*maḥātmā*’ (*mahe* + *ātmā*), or *vidagdha-śiromaṇi*; *mahe* means ‘He who loves decorating the hair of His beloved,’ and *ātmā* means ‘heart.’ One whose heart is absorbed in decorating the hair of His beloved is *maḥātmā*. ‘He put down His beloved under this *aśoka* tree, thinking, ‘By touching Her feet, the tree will blossom with profuse flowers, and I will pluck those flowers and decorate My sweetheart.’” With this thought, Kṛṣṇa placed His beloved on the ground and gathered flowers for decorating Her, so He is ‘*maḥātmā*,’ very intelligent.

### VERSE 33

*atra prasūnāvacayaḥ  
priyārthe preyasā kṛtaḥ  
prapadākramaṇa ete  
paśyatāsakale pade*

**O *sakhīs*, look, look! That expert lover Śyāmasundara put His beloved down in this place and, standing on His tiptoes, gathered flowers to decorate her. We can see from the footprints that only the front part of His feet have left an impression in the ground and the heels are nowhere to be seen.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

*'Prapadākramaṇa'* – impression made in the ground from standing on the front part of the feet. “Just see, the footprints are not complete here.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Some other *sakhīs* spoke this verse '*atra prasūna*.' “*Preyasā* – Kṛṣṇa, who has boundless love, has picked flowers at this place to decorate His beloved.” “How do you know that the lover Kṛṣṇa has picked flowers?” This is indicated by '*prapadākramaṇa*,' meaning that only the front part of His feet have left marks on the ground. These same marks are seen under many trees.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* states: “Certainly at this place Śrī Dāmodara has picked many flowers. Only the toes of that *mahātmā* have left impressions in the ground. So many toe-marks are seen here.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Kṛṣṇa picked flowers from this *aśoka* tree for His beloved, so there were no blossoms seen on these branches. To reach flowers on the higher branches He stood on His tiptoes; thus His footprints were incomplete.

**VERSE 34**

*keśa-prasāadhanam tv atra  
kāminyāḥ kāmīnā kṛtam  
tāni cūḍayatā kāntām  
upaviṣṭam iha dhruvam*

**Look! Certainly this expert lover Kṛṣṇa sat down here and decorated His beloved's hair, just like an impassioned man and for sure, sitting here, He wove the flowers that He picked with His own hands into His sweetheart's braid.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Seeing the signs that indicated that that beautiful girl had been sitting on Kṛṣṇa's lap, the *gopīs* said, “At this place that lusty boy arranged the hair

of that lusty girl. Certainly He sat here and placed a flower ornament on the top of Her braid.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Seeing a wreath of flowers fallen on the ground, the *vipakṣa sakhīs* said again, “Sitting here that lusty Kṛṣṇa embellished the hair of that lusty girl.” The word ‘*tu*’ (furthermore) has been used to express a fresh consideration to the *gopīs*’ previous conclusion. In some versions ‘*hi*’ is found, meaning ‘certainly.’ ‘*Kāminyāḥ kāmīnā*’ (the impassioned girl and boy) – these two words are used in describing His decorating Her hair. In other words, by arranging Her hair, He enjoyed amorous play; this is one of the activities that a person in the heat of passion likes to do. “Certainly at this place that impassioned boy sat down to tie flowers in Her hair.” Just as a person sits to dress another person’s hair, the same signs are seen here. Many times in the *nikuṅjas* of Vraja, the *gopīs* had witnessed the way Kṛṣṇa sat down to decorate Śrī Rādhā’s hair, so they surmised that this was what happened here.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The signs here were evident that that *ramaṇī* was sitting on Kṛṣṇa’s lap. Thus the *vipakṣa gopīs* were again saying, “Kṛṣṇa embellished His sweetheart’s hair in this place. We can understand that a forest-goddess provided the comb and other items needed for decorating Her hair. That *ramaṇī* is lusty and not a real lover. Otherwise, why else would She deceive Her *priya-sakhīs* and come alone to this secluded place with Her impassioned lover? Kṛṣṇa Himself is also overcome by desire and not a true lover. He doesn’t even acknowledge our pain of separation. In the fever of His passion, He abandoned all of us, who have genuine love for Him, and carried that lusty girl over here. And on top of that, with His own hands He picked flowers with which He fashioned a crown for Her hair. This action demonstrates Kṛṣṇa’s subservient nature when He’s intent on pleasing His sweetheart. For the sake of Their pleasure in Their intimate love-play, it is for certain that They sat down here in this isolated place and completely under the control of lust, They engaged in amorous chitchat while Kṛṣṇa decorated His beloved.”

VERSE 35

*reme tayā cātma-rata  
ātmarāmo 'py akhaṇḍitaḥ  
kāmināṁ darśayan dainyaṁ  
strīṇāṁ caiva durātmatām*

O Parīkṣit, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, self-satisfied and infallible, is Himself the source of His own pleasure. Thus, He cannot be attracted by the beauty and feminine charms of alluring damsels. Yet, to reveal the pathetic condition of lusty men (under the control of ladies) and crafty women, Śrī Kṛṣṇa engaged in love-play with the *gopīs*.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Śrī Śukadeva has resumed his narration with this verse '*reme*.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa is self-satisfied (*svātma-rata*), He takes pleasure within Himself only (*ātmarāma*), and He is infallible, not attracted by feminine charms (*akhaṇḍita*). If this is so, why did He engage in amorous dalliance? The answer is '*kāmināṁ*.' to expose the pathetic condition of lusty men and the deviousness of worldly women.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī praised the *līlā* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa through the lips of the *gopīs*. Now, he himself glorified these pastimes in this and the next few verses. Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoyed amorous activities with that *ramaṇī* although He is *svātma-rata*, *ātmarāma* and *akhaṇḍita*. '*Svātma-rata*:' *sva* means *aṁśa-rūpa vaibhava*, direct pastime expansions of His transcendental potency; this refers to the goddesses of fortune from Vaikuṇṭha and the very dear cowherd maidens, Kṛṣṇa being their source (*aṁśī*). This is how He is complete in Himself, and has no expectations from others. '*Ātmani*' – He is absorbed in Himself, i.e., He is self-satisfied (*pūrṇakāma*). Being *pūrṇakāma*, He is completely absorbed in the bliss of His own *svarūpa*; He does not need any second item for enjoyment, so He is '*ātmarāma*.' He enjoyed with that *ramaṇī* although He is '*svātma-rata*' and '*ātmarāma*.'

He completely ignored Lakṣmī and all the beloved cowherd damsels, but by dallying with that *ramaṇī*, He increased His pleasure.

What is the reason for this? The answer is found in the word '*tayā*' (with Her), referring to that *ramaṇī*, who is the highest abode of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. *Tat* is another form of *tayā* – "He enjoyed with that *ramaṇī*." The use of this word by Śukadeva Gosvāmī reveals his exceptional intelligence, having spoken this after realizing the enormity of Rādhā's love as compared to the other beloveds. (The word '*tayā*,' meaning 'she,' in the original verse ends in the third case. The revered commentator interprets the instrumental (third) case as denoting causality, so the meaning is 'because of Her.' In other words, She is the cause for Kṛṣṇa's leaving the *rāsa-maṇḍala*.) In the original verse the phrase '*reme tayā svātma-rata*' is seen, but in some books '*cātma-rata*' is used. The explanation of both is the same, but the phrase '*ātma-rata*' cannot be taken as *ātmārāma*; this would create the fault of redundancy. In the original verse the word is '*ātmārāma*,' yet the word '*ātma-rata*' (*ātma* means Self and *rata* means satisfied) denotes Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *pūrṇakāmatā*, all His desires being fulfilled within. '*Cātma-rata*' – many *gopīs* discussed the dalliance of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the previous verses. The letter '*ca*' confirms that Kṛṣṇa indeed enjoyed with Rādhā exactly as the *gopīs* described.

One might object that Śrī Kṛṣṇa also enjoys with the goddesses of fortune and the other cowherd maidens. The reply is this: Kṛṣṇa is always '*akhaṇḍita*,' undivided in His enjoyment with Rādhā. When associating with Lakṣmī and the beloveds of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa is *khaṇḍita* – His mind becomes distracted and He remembers Rādhā, just as a *khaṇḍitā nāyikā* remembers Her lover while meeting with her husband. When He is with Rādhā, He is never *khaṇḍita*, His mind is never diverted to Lakṣmī or others. Kṛṣṇa has surrendered His whole being to Rādhā, accepting defeat in the face of Her love. To be controlled by the love of His dear ones is His great attribute. This has been described in *Śrī Bhāgavatāmṛta* and elsewhere in many ways. Rādhā's *prema* is so powerful that Kṛṣṇa, even while being '*svātma-rata*,' is controlled by Her love, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *prema* is such that it overrides His *ātmārāmatā*.

Worldly lusty men and women are devoid of real shelter and pure love; and such persons are defeated by the glories of Kṛṣṇa's *prema*. The words '*kāmināṁ darśayan*' in this verse have been spoken to explain this. Ordinary

people have three defects: they end up producing stool and urine, their bodies are dependent on grains and water, and their nature is to satisfy their bodily cravings. This verse bespeaks of the pathetic condition and misfortune of such impassioned persons. However, He who is *saccidānanda vigrahā* is self-satisfied; the words '*kāminām darśayan*' do not apply to Him, nor do they apply to His dear ones, who find their satisfaction in His pleasure.

'*Strīṇām*' refers to the deviousness of ordinary women, who display the three defects. This has not been said about the *saccidānanda vraja-devīs*, who live only to give pleasure to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They are described in the forthcoming verse of *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 10.32.10, "*tābhir vidhūtaśokābhir* – The Supreme Lord Acyuta was shining splendidly, encircled by the *gopīs*, who were now freed from all distress." This shows the distinctive characteristic of the *gopīs* in whose hearts exceptional love arose for Kṛṣṇa, even after He caused them to suffer in separation. But ordinary women have base natures: intoxicated by pride, they become overjoyed in controlling passionate men. This is the meaning of '*strīṇām*.'

In the Dvārakā pastimes, in answer to Kṛṣṇa's joking words, Śrī Rukmiṇī says in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 10.60.45, "O my Lord, a foolish woman who has not worshiped Your transcendental lotus feet and who has never relished even one drop of the sweet honey issuing forth from them, accepts as her husband a mortal man, whose body is a living corpse, consisting inside of muscles, bones, blood, parasites, stool, mucus, bile and air, and externally covered by skin, hair, whiskers, beard, nails and bodily hairs." In this verse Kṛṣṇa's exceptional quality is described: '*yā te padābja-makarandam ajighratī strī*' – and that *ramaṇī* who spoke these words is also exceptional due to her ability to realize the exceptional sweetness emanating from His lotus feet.

Again, to demonstrate more the pitiable condition of lusty men and the deviousness of ordinary women, two more verses are quoted: '*darśaya dvidhu parājayam*' and '*sat-sarasijodara*.' The second verse is from *Gopī-gīta*, *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 10.31.2: "O Kṛṣṇa, Lord of amorous love! You fulfill all desires. We are Your unpaid maidservants, but You are killing us with the beauty of Your glance, which demolishes the pride of the most beautiful, fully blossomed lotuses in an autumn pond. To kill like this, by Your glance – is this not considered murder in this world?" These words were not uttered with any ill will towards Kṛṣṇa; they spontaneously flowed from the lips of the *vraja-gopīs*, who are endowed with *mahābhāva* and

who were serving Kṛṣṇa by delighting Him with their unparalleled words full of *rasa*. In this way they increased His pleasure.

These eloquent words, which flow from the heart, and not from mental deliberation, make Kṛṣṇa's beauty and other attributes shine forth spontaneously. Kṛṣṇa did not see even a speck of duplicity in the *gopīs*. He is *svātma-rata* and *ātmārāma*; His activities do not reflect any trace of the contemptuous behavior of materialistic, lusty persons. This is the only way to understand Kṛṣṇa's conduct. It is Kṛṣṇa's nature to be controlled by His devotees' love, but in the eyes of those averse to Him, He appears to be driven by amorous passion. In *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 9.4.64, Śrī Nārāyaṇa is saying, "I love My devotees more than My own self." The *sāstras* present many other such statements affirming this.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In this way, having expressed Śrī Rādhā's exceptional good fortune through the words of the *gopīs*, now Śrī Śukadeva himself proclaimed the same thing in this verse starting with '*reme*.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *ātmārāma*; yet He engaged in loving affairs with Śrī Rādhikā. He is *svātma-rata* and enjoys with Śrī Rādhā, who is His splendid *ātmā*, His very soul. The pleasure He derives in enjoying with Śrī Rādhā, He does not get in *ātmārāmatā*. In some books the word *cātma-rata* is seen, but if the word '*ātma-rata*' is taken as '*ātmārāma*,' then the defect of redundancy is incurred. When the letter '*ca*' is interpreted as '*eva*' (certainly, or indeed), then it means that He is making very special endeavors to enjoy with *param-premavatī* Śrī Rādhikā, who is endowed with the highest love for Him. According to the *Amara Kośa* dictionary, the meaning of *ātmā* is 'endeavor, intelligence, determination.' So the pleasure that Śrī Kṛṣṇa reaps in His enjoyment with Śrī Rādhikā is not available in His *ātmārāmatā*. In other words, the joy that He relishes with Her is absent in *ātmārāmatā*, His aspect of taking pleasure within Himself only; therefore He is eager to enjoy with Śrī Rādhikā.

If this is true, then there could be an objection and one could accuse Kṛṣṇa of being *apūrṇa*, or incomplete. The retort is that He is '*akhaṇḍita*,' not fragmented; He is perfect and complete because Śrī Rādhikā is His second form, His internal potency (*hlādinī-śakti*). In this way, Śrī Rādhā is the form of *hlādinī-śakti*, the pleasure-giving potency, the essence of

which is *prema*; Her *prema* evolves to its ultimate limit of *mahābhāva*, and She alone is the embodiment of this *mahābhāva*. The delight Śrī Kṛṣṇa derives in His *ātmārāmatā* is minute in comparison to His enjoyment with Śrī Rādhikā, who is the total essence of the delight contained in *mahābhāva*. So naturally, He experiences greater pleasure with Her than reveling alone within Himself.

The *Gautamīya-tantra* states, “The *hlādinī* potency is paramount among all the potencies. It has its source in Śrī Rādhikā, who is the sum total of the *hlādinī* potency and the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. She possesses all the best qualities.” Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *ātmārāma*, at the same time He is *svātma-rata*, busy enjoying with Śrī Rādhā. He is *svātma-rata*, yet He is *akhaṇḍita*, or complete. He is *pūrṇa*, complete within Himself, yet He is absorbed in enjoying with Śrī Rādhā. For the welfare of materialists or those who are ignorant of the Absolute Truth, Śrī Bhagavān conceals His confidential pleasure-filled activities lest such persons misconstrue them. This is the explanation of the word ‘*kāminān*’ (lusty men).

Through His confidential pastimes with Śrī Rādhā, Bhagavān is imparting moral instruction for the benefit of humanity, but these spotless amorous activities cannot be understood by those under the sway of lust and controlled by devious women. Passionate men are in a most pitiful and degraded condition, and in such a state, hard-hearted women deviously take advantage of them. In the previous verses the *vraja-devīs*, in their mad prattle, have accused Śrī Kṛṣṇa of being lusty and Śrī Rādhā of being crooked, and thus they conceal the true nature of *ujjvala-prema-rasa*, resplendent pure amorous love. Worldly lovers, who see this world as a mirror of their own consciousness (the so-called logic of *ātmavat manyate jagat*), think that Kṛṣṇa is lusty and Rādhā is crooked like themselves. In other words, they display the humble behavior of impassioned men when proposing to a woman and the duplicity of women who reject their advances.

In the transcendental amorous love, when Kṛṣṇa entreats Śrī Rādhā for Her favors, He accepts subservience and comes under Her control. She, in turn, exhibits reluctance. This behavior enhances and nourishes Their spotless love – there is no other way. This is the explanation conveyed by *rasika* devotees.



## VERSES 36-37

*ity evaṁ darśayantyas tās  
 cerur gopyo vicetasah  
 yāṁ gopīm anayat kṛṣṇo  
 vihāyānyāḥ striyo vane*

*sā ca mene tadātmānam  
 variṣṭhaṁ sarva-yoṣitām  
 hitvā gopīḥ kāma-yānā  
 mām asau bhajate priyaḥ*

The *gopīs*, having lost their presence of mind, wandered from one forest to another. They were showing each other the footprints of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved. That fortunate *gopī* whom He took to a secluded place, leaving behind all the other cowherd maidens, proudly felt, “I am the most favored. He has rejected all the others, who also love Him dearly. I am the special recipient of His honor and veneration.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

‘*Sā ca mene*’ (She thought) – The deviousness of women is expressed by Śrī Śukadeva in these two verses. ‘*Kāma-yānām*’ – Lust is the only reason why these women have come in the forest, that is, they have collected here for the sole purpose of fulfilling their desire. “Kṛṣṇa has left all the other *gopīs* and is worshiping Me alone.” For this reason this *ramaṇī* thinks She is the foremost.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The bewildered *gopīs*, observing all the footprints, were wandering from one forest to another. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has not accepted the first half of verse 36, because the first line of this verse ‘*ity evaṁ*’ is inconsistent with the narration of the previous verse 35 spoken by Śrī Śukadeva. The second line of verse 36, ‘*yāṁ gopīm*,’ is also not approved by Śrīdhara Svāmī because the words ‘*sā ca*’ in the next verse are incongruous with

the commentary on '*strīṇāṁ durātmātām*' in verse 35. Therefore, he has disregarded this entire verse and commented only on verse 37.

The verse '*sā ca*' delineates the great glories of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's love, which is nourished by *māna* (love filled anger) and its subsequent pacification. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa was enjoying with that *ramaṇī* alone in that secluded place, She considered Herself to be the most favored. Now this *māna* has arisen in Her, although previously when the other *gopīs* were feeling proud, She was not in *māna*. This indicates two kinds of *māna* in the *vraja-devīs*. When in their hearts only their beloved manifests, then their *sthāyī-bhāva* rises to *māna*, and they experience a *sañcārī-bhāva* of tremendous joy. However, when they slowly come to external consciousness, this *māna* is accompanied with the *sañcārī-bhāva* of pride.

Śrī Rādhā has very intense *anurāga*, so in Her heart only Kṛṣṇa was manifesting; thus She continued to experience the *sañcārī-bhāva* of excessive joy. Now, upon Her regaining Her senses, the *sañcārī-bhāva* of pride has arisen in Her heart. Then, why did this *gopī* consider Herself the foremost, better than all the others? The reason is that Śrī Rādhā thought to Herself, "Leaving all the other *gopīs*, who had come to gratify their amorous desires, this indescribable, wonderfully glorious, supremely independent and most rare hero is pursuing Me only. He is My only lover, and He is reciprocating exclusively with My love."

In Her heart Śrī Rādhā always feels that She is the most fortunate of all the *gopīs*, while the other cowherd maidens feel that they are much more blessed than ordinary pleasurable women. In this respect also the speciality of Śrī Rādhikā's love in comparison to all the other *gopīs* has been exemplified.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After describing the extraordinary nectar that Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī relishes in meeting with Her beloved (*samujjala-sambhoga-rasa*), Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is now awakening the seed of *vipralambha*, the feelings experienced in separation, in the verse '*yām gopīm*.' That *ramaṇī*, Śrī Rādhā, was amidst the *gopīs* who were filled with pride in their good fortune (*saubhāgya-mada*), having received so much honor from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but She did not share in that pride. Suddenly, this *māna* arose in Śrīmatī Rādhikā as

She considered Herself the topmost [and He was not giving Her the esteem She deserved]. She thought, “My beloved Kṛṣṇa has abandoned all the other *gopīs*, who were eager for amorous enjoyment, and now He is adoring only Me, trying to please Me in so many ways.” When previously Śrī Rādhā had seen that Kṛṣṇa was treating Her the same as all the other *gopīs*, She had gone into *māna*, but now that sulky mood also disappeared.

### VERSE 38

*tato gatvā vanoddeśam  
 dr̥ptā keśavam abravīt  
 na pārāye 'ham calitum  
 naya mām yatra te manaḥ*

Developing pride in this way, that special *gopī* wandered in the forest with Her lover and became intoxicated by her love and good fortune. She asked Kṛṣṇa, who controls even Brahmā and Śiva, “O My beloved, I cannot walk any further. My tender feet are tired, so You can carry Me on Your shoulder wherever You like.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Rādhā considered Herself the most excellent of all and was very proud of it. As She continued walking in the forest with Keśava – He who arranges the hair (*keśa*) of Śrī Rādhā – She spoke to Him. What did She ask Him? “After walking so much in the forest, I have become very tired and cannot walk any further.” These words are deceptive. Kṛṣṇa might answer, “*He* Mugdhe, O innocent girl! Do You want to enter into the charming forest, away from the other *gopīs*?” Rādhā replied, “*naya* – No. Pick Me up in Your arms like before and carry Me.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Rādhikā, proud of Her good fortune, entered an especially beautiful part of the forest with Keśava, and spoke to Him. One who decorates Śrī Rādhā’s hair (*keśa*) and weaves it into a braid – He is Keśava. Underlying Her sweet words was a hidden meaning. The proud words of a *svādina-*

*kantā*, an independent ladylove, give very special pleasure to the hero. Therefore, Śrī Rādhikā said, “I’ve become exhausted from wandering around so many places in the forest. I cannot walk any further.” Kṛṣṇa might answer, “O innocent girl, You cannot be carefree by resting here, because if all those *gopīs* come, then Our private tryst will be disturbed. So we should go somewhere else.” Her reply: “You can pick Me up like before and take Me wherever You want.” Then He might ask, “Should I carry You to the flower bed in a secluded *nikuñja*, where others cannot enter? Or should I take You to a flower garden to decorate You with flowers?” Her answer to that: “Take Me wherever You want.”

VERSE 39

*evam uktaḥ priyām āha  
skandha āruhyatām iti  
tataś cāntardadhe kṛṣṇaḥ  
sā vadhūr anvatapyata*

Hearing His beloved’s words, Śrī Śyāmasundara said, “O dear one, just climb on My shoulder.” But as soon as She tried to do this, He disappeared, upon which this special *gopī* started weeping bitterly.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The present verse starting with ‘*evam uktaḥ*’ describes the lowness of passionate persons. As soon as that maiden was about to climb on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s shoulder, He disappeared. This action demonstrates His *akhaṇḍatvā*, His completeness.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In the mood of *svādhīna-bhartṛkā*, a lady who controls her lover, Śrī Rādhā spoke some joking words, feigning laziness. Hearing Her statement, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in turn, similarly tricked Her and disappeared. This has been narrated in the present verse starting with ‘*evam uktaḥ*’ and the next two verses. Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “O My beloved, climb on My shoulder.” His invitation was just a joke, but She took it as a love-filled proposal. Such joking words,

when spoken by others, may seem abusive, but when spoken by one's beloved, they seem genuine. For example, smoke coming from ordinary wood is not pleasant for anybody, but smoke that comes from sandalwood in the form of incense is pleasing to everyone.

In this verse, the meaning of '*skandha*' is 'shoulder and chest.' The *Viśva-prakāśa* Sanskrit dictionary gives several meanings of '*skandha*:' 'upper part of a tree trunk, body, shoulder and group.' Here, if the meaning is taken as 'body', then 'chest' is most appropriate. "O My lovely one, mount on My chest," He said to Her but He did not mean it. '*Tataḥ*' means 'afterwards,' and '*ca*' means 'however,' indicating a change of action. Alternatively, the phrase can be read, 'and He disappeared,' where '*ca*' means 'and,' which connects a group of actions. The purpose of Kṛṣṇa's disappearance was to remove the envy of the *gopīs* from the different groups and to establish good will among all of them. Even when Kṛṣṇa disappeared the first time, He had a similar purpose of bringing unity. Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs many difficult tasks with one action, and this exhibits His clever expertise. How amazing it is that the intelligence of the Supreme Controller strolls over the heads of everyone.

As a *svādhīna-bharṭṛkā* heroine controlling Her lover, Śrī Rādhā exhibits the highest level of Her *prema*. They were enjoying Their amorous union congenially. Suddenly Śrī Kṛṣṇa tricked Her and disappeared. She came tumbling down from the highest ecstasy of union to the deep despair of *vipralambha*, and started wailing and crying piteously in separation, but even in such a situation, Her humility highlighted another aspect of Her topmost excellent level of *prema*. The letter '*sā*' in this verse indicates this *ramaṇī*, whose life and soul is *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Thereafter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought to Himself, "The crown-jewel of excellent heroines, love-filled Rādhikā, has given up Her natural contrary behavior (*vamyatā*) and shyness, being completely absorbed in amorous play with Me. When requested by the hero, a proper heroine does not easily accept his invitation to go to the flower bed. If She has given up Her natural contrary behavior, and if I also adopt a proper hero's *dakṣina-bhava*, or compliant mood, towards the ladylove – if both lovers display the same mood – then there is an obstacle in tasting the *rasa* fully. So better I give up My *dakṣiṇa*-

*bhāva*, My natural mood of cooperation. The hero and heroine should not both adopt the same mood, whether *dakṣiṇa-bhāva* or *vāmya-bhāva*. So, if I give up the natural behavior of a hero, *rasika* devotees will not find fault with Me because according to convention, by the lover accepting a mood opposite to the heroine's, the sweet conjugal mellow becomes more relishable.

"Therefore, I will adopt a non-cooperative *vāmya* mood. In this way, My long-standing desire to see the deep *vipralambha* condition of *param-premavati* Rādhikā will also be fulfilled. The other *gopīs* have observed the bliss and good fortune that Rādhikā manifests in My embrace, but now they will witness Rādhikā's wondrous condition arising from My separation, which is born from Her fathomless love for Me. They will drown in an ocean of supreme astonishment upon observing this.

"In this way, the *gopīs* will be able to understand Rādhikā's deeper sentiments in separation as compared to their own. They will see that their affliction in *viraha* is like the flame of a lamp, while Her anguish is like a blazing forest fire. Thus they will realize the insignificance of their own pain. When complete *sambhoga* is followed by *vipralambha*, the amorous mellow (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*) is fully consummated. If the *gopīs* only witness the bliss Rādhā experiences in meeting with Me and do not see Her condition in separation, they will not be content.

"After I very skillfully leave Her, and the other *gopīs* witness Her agony in separation, they will sympathize with Her because they will be sharing the same pain. Thus their hearts will become totally absorbed in Me with the same feelings. Later, when I appear among them, their pain of separation will be dispelled. All sharing in the same joyful mood, they will join the *rāsa* dance and it will be performed and relished properly. If I appear now with Rādhikā by My side, their vanity will not be redressed by any means." Deliberating thus, Śrī Kṛṣṇa decided to adopt *vāmya-bhāva* and to suddenly disappear. He told Rādhikā, "*skandhe āruhyatām* – Climb on My shoulder." As soon as Śrī Rādhikā readied to do this, He vanished from Her sight.

In the previous verse, Śrī Rādhā said, "O Kṛṣṇa, You can carry Me wherever You like." Her real intent was: "I have become very tired from roaming in the forest and engaging in amorous activities, so I feel like taking some rest here. If My sweetheart remains awake the whole night, certainly He will not feel well." For these reasons Śrī Rādhā decided to be taken to the flower bed without offering any objection, thinking that both of Them could sleep together on

the same bed. For the perfection of this pastime, *prema-rasa-mayī-līlā-śakti*, the potency that fills the *līlās* with loving sentiments, covered Their ability to know each other's intentions. 'Anvatapyata' – Śrī Rādhā began lamenting over and over again and burning in excruciating separation.

#### VERSE 40

*hā nātha ramaṇa preṣṭha  
kvāsi kvāsi mahā-bhuja  
dāsyās te kṛpaṇāyā me  
sakhe darśaya sannidhim*

**O possessor of My life, O lover, O My dearest one, where are You? Where are You, O mighty-armed one? O My friend, I am Your most fallen maidservant. Quickly come to Me and give Me Your *darśana*.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

This verse starting with '*hā nātha*' describes Śrī Rādhikā's lamentation.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Rādhikā's lamentation is described in this verse starting with '*hā nātha*.' The word '*hā*' is a cry of pain, expressing great sorrow; it is uttered with each salutation. '*Nātha*' means 'master who maintains Me;' '*ramaṇa*' – 'Gift Me with amorous pleasure;' '*preṣṭha*' – 'The one who loves Me in the most suitable way and whose *prema* for Me is always expanding.' '*Kvāsi*' – 'Where are You? You have so much love for Me, so why have You left Me alone and gone into hiding? Alas, because I do not know where You are, My heart is greatly troubled.' '*Kvāsi*' is repeated twice due to extreme perplexity. She remembered the exceptional good fortune She enjoyed when embraced by Kṛṣṇa. She also recalled the special beauty of His limbs, which stimulated Her *prema-rasa*. Treasuring these recollections, She became enchanted and called out, "*He mahā-bhuja!* O might-armed one!" And in utter humility She cried, "*dāsyā* – Please bring this maidservant to You."

Kṛṣṇa might ask, "Are You searching for Me to get My embrace again?" Anticipating this question, She said, "No, no. O My friend, where are You? You Yourself enfolded Me in Your arms earlier and thus created

My present sorrow, but I don't even want Your embrace now. Just tell Me Your whereabouts, and I will be pacified simply by knowing that." The word 'dāśya' means "I am Your maidservant, unqualified to be Your *sakhī*. But only when You favored Me, the qualification to receive Your affection was thrust upon Me. It is You who has mercifully implanted in My heart the desire to give You pleasure. By the power of that mercy I want to serve You exclusively in a way that is most favorable for Your delight. '*Kṛpaṇāyāh*' – I am unable to tolerate this misery in the absence of Your service. Therefore, I am highly distressed. This is the reason I cannot endure separation from You, and I am unable to drive this pain out of My heart. So please don't neglect Me. I beg You not to sew the seed of sorrow."

This verse is full of grief, which is steeped in humility, or self-abnegation (*audārya-anubhāva*). Scholars define *audārya* as 'humility in all possible situations.' After this, out of sheer exhaustion, Śrī Rādhā had no energy to even lament anymore, and She fainted on the ground in intense separation. For this reason, in the next verse, Śrī Śukadeva has used the word '*mohitā*,' meaning 'unconscious.'

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Rādhikā's lamentation is described in this verse starting with '*hā nātha*.' *He nātha* – the address means: "I am being scorched in the blazing fire of separation from You, and My life air is leaving My body. I am trying My best to keep it with Me, but am not able to stop it from leaving. You are the one and only master of My life airs, so quickly come and protect Me. I am not requesting You to protect My life for My own selfish desire, but rather for Your better interests. '*Hā ramaṇa*' – *He ramaṇa*! You have abandoned all the *gopa-ramaṇīs* and brought only Me to this remote place to relish amorous pleasure with You. But if I die in Your absence, You will not be able to partake of this amorous delight, and You will lament in grief, remembering Me."

Kṛṣṇa might reply, "If I am distressed, then what is it to You?" Apprehending this, She says, "*He preṣṭha*, You are my dearmost one. You are My sole lover – You and only You. So any distress You might feel multiplies a million-fold in My heart and gives Me much more pain. To the tips of Your toenails, I can sacrifice millions and millions of My lives. I cannot tolerate that You undergo any suffering, even after My demise. This is the reason



You should mercifully give Me Your *darśana* and remove My suffering. Bring Me close to You.”

Kṛṣṇa again might say, “How shall I be able to protect Your life, which is escaping from Your body?” She replies, “*He mahā-bhujā*, You have mighty arms. Your two arms are like a *sañjīvanī*, a life-giving tonic, which can revive one from death. Simply by the touch of Your arms, My body will be rejuvenated and cooled, and My life force, which is on the verge of slipping away, will come back and remain fixed in My body.” Kṛṣṇa might object, “If Your condition becomes so extreme without Me, then knowing that I am none other than the son of the respected king of Vraja and also very tender, why did You order Me, ‘Take Me wherever You want?’ Why have You roused My anger in this way?”

Rādhā’s piteous answer reflects Her great anxiety: “I am Your fallen maidservant. I spoke like that because I was extremely tired from roaming in the forest, overcome by indolence and sleepiness after Our amorous play. So please forgive this most fallen maidservant. I am unqualified to be Your maidservant, yet very mercifully You have established this strong friendship between us. I spoke on the strength of this. That’s why I am now saying, ‘O friend, bring Me close to You.’”

In answer Kṛṣṇa might say, “*He priye*, O My dearest, I am pleased with You. Come to Me.” Her reply: “O friend, I cannot come because I am blinded by the pain of remorse, so I am unable to see where You are. Thus You have to bring Me to You.” Grieving in intense separation, She fell on the ground in a swoon. For this reason the word ‘*mohitā*’ has been used in the next verse.

#### VERSE 41

*anvicchantyo bhagavato  
mārgam gopyo ’vidūritaḥ  
dadṛśuḥ priya-viśleṣān  
mohitām duḥkhitām sakhīm*

**O Parīkṣit, in the meantime, the *gopīs* continued following Bhagavān’s footprints on the path, and reached there. From a short distance they saw that their (fortunate) *sakhī* had fallen unconscious, being extremely unhappy due to the excruciating pain of separation.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

While searching for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* saw their *sakhī* nearby.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

'*Avidūrata*' means 'not very far,' because if they are too far away, then there is the possibility of not seeing Her. However, illuminated by the rays of the full-moon, the beautiful Rādhā was highly visible. While searching for Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* saw their *sakhī* lying on the ground in intense separation from Her lover. Overwhelmed in agony, She had fainted (*mohitā*), and now all the other *gopīs* were sharing Her grief. All of them were equally afflicted in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, yet Śrī Rādhikā's pain of separation was acute, especially because Kṛṣṇa had left Her alone. Witnessing this, the other *gopīs* dropped their envy and sympathized with Her, as all of them were now suffering in the same condition. The word '*sakhī*' has been used for this purpose. However, we should understand that Śrī Rādhā's own friends have very special love for Her, as compared to the other *gopīs*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

As they were searching for Kṛṣṇa, from afar the *gopīs* saw Rādhikā lying on the ground senseless, shining like an effulgent flash of lightning. Observing Her miserable condition, even *vipakṣa sakhīs* felt affection for Her. This is the nature of *ujjala-rasa*, that in the ladylove's separation from her lover, envy in all the other ladyloves dissolves, and affectionate feelings arise. Thus it is said that only in separation, there is an external manifestation of affection for each other.

**VERSE 42**

*tayā kathitam ākarṇya*  
*māna-prāptim ca mādhavāt*  
*avamānaṁ ca daurātmyād*  
*vismayaṁ paramaṁ yayuḥ*

When they came close to that *gopī* and with great effort brought Her back to consciousness, She told them about all the honor and love that She received from Mādhava. She also confided in them, “I mischievously disrespected Him, so He vanished.” The *gopīs* were extremely astonished to hear Her words.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

After this, the *sakhīs* came close to Rādhā, and in the mood of friendship, they tried to soothe Her and bring Her back to consciousness. Then they asked Her why She was weeping and had fainted. With moist eyes Śrī Rādhā replied, “How I got separated from all of you, I do not know. I was under some spell, and after going some distance, I regained My self-awareness. Then I realized that I was alone with Mādhava roaming from forest to forest. O My friends, what more can I say about Mādhava? Lakṣmī-devī longs to enjoy with Him – this Mādhava, who is the possessor of the wealth of all good qualities. That same Mādhava, out of His own will, offered Me respect and made Me extremely fortunate. And after that, I became proud, and in an uncooperative mood, I dealt with Him in a cunning way.”

The *gopīs* became extremely astonished to hear how, in the end, Mādhava disrespected and abandoned Rādhā. Here, the word ‘*daurātmyā*’ (improper behavior) is used to express Rādhā’s humility, and not to point out any crookedness in Her. In the real sense, the soul who has turned away from Śrī Kṛṣṇa is actually *daurātmyā* – his nature is wicked. But that *ramaṇī* (Rādhā) was now far away from Kṛṣṇa – the usage of ‘*daurātmyā*’ in this case is simply a matter of some distance rather than wickedness. Distancing ourselves from Kṛṣṇa constitutes *daurātmyā* (*dūra* (far)+ *ātmā* (soul)) towards Him.

There were three causes of extreme astonishment: (1) Kṛṣṇa disappeared with Rādhā from the assembly of the *gopīs* without anyone noticing. Instead of staying there with Rādhā, He whisked Her away. The pastimes with Her are extremely incomprehensible as compared to His dealings with other *gopīs*. On top of that, She became sulky. (2) Among millions of *gopīs* no one received as much honor as Rādhā. (3) After giving so much respect, He insulted Her by deserting Her. Actually, it is not possible that He will act like that. It is for these three reasons that the *gopīs* were so astonished.

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Thereafter, the *sakhīs*, crying loudly, tried to revive Her by fanning Her. When She returned to consciousness, they asked Her, “O *sakhī*, please tell us what happened.” She answered, “O My dear friends, alas! How I got separated from you I do not know. I was bewildered and not in control of what I was doing. But I am distinctly aware that I received great honor and after that I was hugely insulted – the reason for both is My crookedness. He neglected and insulted millions and millions of loving *ramaṇīs* like you, and set all of you ablaze in the fire of separation from Him, while I alone received good fortune. This is His cheating behavior. Although I am insignificant, still I ordered that unscrupulous son of the king, ‘I cannot walk any further. Carry Me wherever You want.’ This is My audaciousness, and for this I have received such dishonor. My heart is aggrieved for these two reasons.”

Rādhā’s sorrow expresses Her resentment for Her beloved Kṛṣṇa, courtesy towards the *gopīs*, and Her own heartfelt humility. Therefore, Śrī Śukadeva has used the word ‘*daurātmā*’ to represent Her feelings. Actually, the meaning of *daurātmā* is: the soul of that *ramaṇī* is distant from Kṛṣṇa; or Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *ātmā* of the *ramaṇī* Śrī Rādhā, is far away from Her, so She is in the state of separation, which is *dūrātmā* – *daurātmā*. This *daurātmā* is to be understood as ‘distance,’ and is synonymous with separation from Kṛṣṇa. So the actual definition of ‘*daurātmā*’ is the misery incurred in separation from Kṛṣṇa.

After hearing this narration, the *sakhīs* drowned in an ocean of astonishment and said, “My dear *sakhī*, Your good fortune is proper. There was no duplicitous behavior on the part of Kṛṣṇa. You, like a *svādhina-bhārṭṛkā*, ordered Your beloved due to being tired after amorous play. That is also not improper. All this happened to enhance the *rasa*. However, the *anukūla-nāyaka*, the favorable hero, will not disobey His mistress. To throw Her into such a state of misery is against *rasa*, and His conduct was improper. Alas! How astonishing it is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa – who is the crest-jewel of all the topmost *rasikas*, the greatest lover, and the ocean of mercy – behaved in this manner.” That He insulted His mistress by abandoning Her was a matter of great surprise for the *sakhīs*.

## VERSE 43

*tato 'viśan vanam candra  
 jyotsnā yāvad vibhāvyate  
 tamaḥ praviṣṭam ālakṣya  
 tato nivavṛtuḥ striyaḥ*

The *vraja-devīs* continued searching for Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the deep forest as far as the light of the moon could penetrate. Finding that the woods were too dense and dark to go further, they realized, “If we keep searching here, then He will go into hiding in an even deeper part of the forest.” Therefore, they turned back.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

After this, the *gopīs* entered the woods along with this *sakhī* to search for Kṛṣṇa. “He must have gone to the dark, dense forest.” Thinking in this way, they retraced their steps.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

After this, the *sakhīs* pacified Rādhā, who was suffering in separation from Kṛṣṇa, and restored Her life. Now, with great impatience, they gathered together and again started searching for Kṛṣṇa. This is the subject matter in this verse beginning with ‘*tata*.’ The *gopīs* entered the woods and continued looking for their sweetheart as far as they could see in the moonlight. But even after searching, they could not ascertain Kṛṣṇa’s movements from His footprints, as He had entered a very deep and dark part of the forest. This area was so dense that the moonlight could not penetrate; thus the *gopīs* turned back. Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa tells us, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the thick forest, where the moonbeams could not penetrate, so His footprints were not visible. Thus the *gopīs* decided to go back.” Here ‘*striya*’ means ‘it is infeasible for women to enter the dark forest.’

The *gopīs* deliberated, “In order to avoid us, Kṛṣṇa is sneaking into the dangerous, darker reaches of the forest.” Thinking thus, they became extremely worried about His safety due to their tender feelings for Him.

They decided to stop pursuing Him and retraced their steps. In place of ‘*tataḥ*’ in this verse, ‘*hare*’ is sometimes seen, but the commentator Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda does not accept this. In this verse ‘*tataḥ*’ (after this) has been used twice; to reconcile the repetition, the second ‘*tataḥ*’ is explained as ‘thereupon, the *gopīs* stopped searching for Hari.’

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After this, the *sakhīs* took Rādhā by the hand and picked Her up. Collectively, they again started searching for Kṛṣṇa. This is the meaning conveyed in this verse starting with ‘*tataḥ*.’ The *gopīs* searched for Kṛṣṇa as long as the moonlight allowed, but due to big shade trees, the forest became so thick and dark that they gave up their search. Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa reports, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the thick forest where the moonbeams cannot penetrate, so His footprints are not visible. Thus you should turn back.” The *gopīs* returned because the forest was too dark – this reason is external. Actually they were thinking, “O *sakhīs*, drowning in the ocean of misery! Kṛṣṇa is hiding His black body in this dark forest so that no one should see Him. He is running away from wherever we try to find Him. Kṛṣṇa’s tender body must be sore and exhausted from roaming so much in the forest.” Upon realizing this, the *gopīs* also felt pain, so they went back.

**VERSE 44**

*tan-manaskās tad-alāpās*  
*tad-viceṣṭās tad-ātmikāḥ*  
*tad-guṇān eva gāyantyō*  
*nātmagārāṇi sasmaruḥ*

O Parīkṣit, the *gopīs*’ minds were completely concentrated on Kṛṣṇa, they were talking only about Him, and with their bodies they were enacting His activities. Each particle of their bodies and souls was united with Him. Singing out His pastimes and glories, they became so engrossed that they forgot their homes and bodies.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In this way, even after not finding Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* forgot their homes because they were completely *tadātmikā* with Him – their souls became filled with His presence.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Thereafter, the *vraja-devīs* stopped searching for Śrī Hari and turned back. “In this deep forest the sharp grass and stones must be hurting Kṛṣṇa’s tender feet.” Realizing this, the *gopīs* drowned in deep distress. ‘*Tan-manaskās*’ – their hearts were fully captured by Kṛṣṇa, even though He was not with them, having entered this impenetrable forest. In other words, Kṛṣṇa fully occupied their hearts, leaving no place there for anything else. ‘*Tad-alāpā*’ – they were conversing only about Kṛṣṇa and how His feet were undergoing pain due to walking over rough ground full of sharp stones. This was their sole topic of discussion. ‘*Tad-viceṣṭā*’ – in great anxiety they were roaming about the forest, intent on somehow bringing Kṛṣṇa out from there; all their activities were focused exclusively on Him. ‘*Tad-ātmikā*’ – their souls were cent-per-cent dedicated to Kṛṣṇa.

The *gopīs* were aggrieved by Kṛṣṇa’s disappearance, but they remembered only His virtues, especially His mercy and His all-enchanting power. They did not condemn Him for forsaking them. Having completely forgotten themselves, they were simply singing His glories, with the intent that Kṛṣṇa should hear them. They were not even aware of themselves, what to speak of their homes.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Divine madness in the *vraja-devīs* again manifested due to overwhelming absorption. After some time it subsided, and they started talking about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Once more they enquired about Him from the *aśvattha* (banyan) and other trees. In the intermediate stage of their divine madness, they again imitated some of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, such as one *gopī* becoming Pūtanā and breast-feeding Him, and another becoming Kṛṣṇa drinking her milk. In the mature stage of their madness they became *tad-ātmikā* – “I am Kṛṣṇa.

Behold My charming movements.” Imitating Kṛṣṇa in this way they became completely absorbed in those particular moods and forgot their identities. At the same time, as they were accustomed to doing, they loudly sang His glories.

VERSE 45

*punaḥ pulinam āgatya  
kālindyāḥ kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāḥ  
samavetā jaguḥ kṛṣṇam  
tad-āgamana-kāṅkṣitāḥ*

Every pore of the *gopīs*’ bodies was anticipating Kṛṣṇa’s quick arrival. Totally immersed in Him, they came to the sacred bank of the Yamunā, where they all started singing about the qualities and sweet pastimes of their beloved.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

The *gopīs* returned to the same spot on the bank of the Yamunā where they had met Kṛṣṇa in the beginning. These *gopīs*, anticipating His arrival, immersed in His emotions and began to sing His glories.

End of the *Bhāvārtha Dipikā* on

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 30

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

After this, they thought, “If we search for Kṛṣṇa in all directions in the forest, He will enter into a darker area, and His tender feet will be hurt by thorns, sharp grass, and pointed stones. So we should stop our search and go to the bank of the Yamunā. It is a completely open space where all of us can be together, and our loud calls will reach far and wide. We will start singing in a high pitch a song full of humility and reproach. Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa will become compassionate and, on His own, He will come to us.” Thus, spurred by their love for Kṛṣṇa, they returned to the bank of the Yamunā and, immersed in their beloved, they started singing loudly about Him.

End of the *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* on

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 30



ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“Alas, alas! Wherever we will go to search for Him, He will run away from there. So why should we give Him the trouble of roaming in the forest? We cannot locate Him without His assent.” According to *śruti*: “*yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas*. Only those whom He chooses out of His mercy can have His *darśana*.” The reason for His *darśana* is His mercy, and the mercy is attained through His *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. Thinking thus, the *gopīs* went back to the place where they had previously met Him, and started chanting His names in a loud voice. In this way they established the philosophical conclusion that Kṛṣṇa’s mercy can only be obtained by *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.

End of the *Sārārtha Darśinī* on*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 30Thus ends the *bhāvānuvāda* of the three commentaries(1) *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*, (2) *Samkṣepa-Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* and(3) *Sārārtha Darśinī* of the Thirty-second Chapter of the  
Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.



Drawing by Vicitri dási.

## ◉ CHAPTER 3 ◉

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 10.31

### ***Gopī-gīta:*** **The Gopīs' Song of Separation**

VERSE 1

*gopya ūcuḥ*  
*jayati te 'dhikam janmanā vrajaḥ*  
*śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi*  
*dayita dṛśyatām dikṣu tāvakās*  
*tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate*

The *gopīs* said: O precious beloved, Your birth in this land of Vraja has made it more glorious than Vaikuṇṭha and other planets. For this reason, the presiding deity of beauty and wealth, Indirā (Lakṣmī-devī), eternally decorates this Vraja by residing here. O Master, this Vraja is extremely blissful, only we *gopīs*, Your dearest ones, are very unhappy being separated from You. We continue to maintain our lives only for Your sake, and have become extremely disheartened searching for You throughout the forest. So please, now give us Your *darśana*.

### ***Bhāvānuvādas***

ELABORATED TRANSLATIONS

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The end of the previous chapter described that the *vraja-devīs*, in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, became depressed after searching for Him continuously and returned to the bank of the Yamunā. Now in this Thirty-first Chapter while singing songs about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they started praying for Him to come. (This prayerful song of separation by the *vraja-gopīs* is known as *Śrī Gopī-gīta*.)

“O lover! O dear one! By taking birth in Vraja, You have made it more glorious and opulent than any other abode. Your accepting birth here is the very reason that induced Indirā (Lakṣmī) to eternally decorate Vraja with Her presence. All the Vrajavāsīs are drowning in a vast ocean of bliss. Only we, Your *gopīs*, are unhappy. Looking up and down for You throughout the forests of Vraja, we somehow remain alive only for Your sake. Please appear before us. Be gracious and give us Your *darśana*. Come and see how miserable we are searching for You.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

I desire to disclose the meaning of those words spoken by the *gopīs* that no one except Śrī Kṛṣṇa understands. I repeatedly submit my earnest request to the gracious maidens of Vraja to sanction this cherished desire.

This *Gopī-gīta* is the essence of the wealth of nectarean mellows. As this nectar has already been tasted by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, I am collecting some of his remnants.

The *gopīs* said, “O dear one, since You took birth in Vraja, it has become vastly more glorious than ever before.” The word *adhika*, vastly more, indicates that the excellence of Vraja is not limited to a few places in Vraja. Rather, it is experienced everywhere in all four directions. Therefore (*hi*), the presiding goddess of wealth, Śrī Lakṣmī-devī (Indirā), eternally decorates this Vraja by living here. Thus, wealth and beauty here are perpetually increasing by the moment. The word ‘*vraja*’ indicates not only the land itself, but also the inhabitants. In this way due to the influence of Indirā, Vraja’s men-women, animals-birds, creepers-trees, lakes, mountains, etc., have attained full auspiciousness in every respect. “But, alas! We alone are treated unfairly by Providence, being cast into unrelenting suffering. Worst of all, although You are omniscient, most merciful – and moreover our beloved – You cannot understand our sorrow.” Attempting to express their feelings, the *gopīs* said, “At this time we can ignore the pain of other predicaments, we just want You to know about our misery.” To express this, the *vraja-devīs* called out, “*Dayita*, O dear one!”

“*He dayita!* O beloved! Just for a moment, even from far away, behold our condition and finally recognize our suffering.” The innermost purport of this statement is: “It is Your nature to feel the grief of others. Therefore,

upon learning about or seeing our miserable condition, You will be unable to refrain from appearing before our eyes.”

Kṛṣṇa might ask the *gopīs*, “Why are you so unhappy?” To explain this, they speak the line beginning with the word ‘*dikṣu*.’ They reply, “Clinging to the hope of finding You, we, Your *gopīs*, are searching everywhere for You. This aimless wandering has made us extremely tired.” ‘*Tāvakāś tvayi*’ means: “We are Your *gopīs*, whom You have accepted as Your own.” They impart another purport to these words: “We take pride in identifying ourselves as Yours, and that is why we are so unhappy while looking for You. If we were not Yours, we would never be subject to this sorrowful state.”

With humility rising in their hearts, the *gopīs* address Kṛṣṇa, ‘*He dayita*,’ hoping that their lover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the ocean of mercy, will take pity on them because, by definition, ‘one who bestows mercy is known as *dayita*.’ But *dayita* is also ‘one who accepts the heart.’ The focus in this interpretation, given by Kṣīra Svāmī, is actually compassion, as the *gopīs*’ intention was to invoke the mercy in the heart of Śrī Kṛṣṇa while accusing Him sweetly. “Now that You have accepted our hearts, it is improper not to bestow Your mercy upon us.”

A question comes: “Genuine love devoid of deceit [self-gratification] does not exist in the world of mortal men. If it does exist, then how can there be separation? If, for some reason, there is separation, how can the lovers remain alive?” According to this logic, it is evident that the heroine cannot remain alive in separation from her *dayita*. Thus Kṛṣṇa asks the *gopīs*, “Then how come you are still alive without Me?” They reply, “We live only for You. Our life airs remain in our bodies because we hope to be with You.” “*Tvayi dhṛtāsavas* – We are maintaining our lives only for Your sake, and have offered our life airs and senses unto You. Because of this, we are searching for You. Therefore, O beloved, please try to understand our plight, because if You do, then You will definitely give us Your *darśana*.”

This verse is composed in the meter called *indirā*. Not only do the *laghu* and *guru mātrās* alternate in a fixed circle in harmony of lines and letters, but even the first letter of each of the two portions of a line is the same. It means that the first letter of the second part of each *pāda* is same as the first part. Some verses of this chapter have other letter repetitions of this kind. In some verses, as in this first one, the first and seventh letters are the same in both parts of a line. This special technique is described in the *Muktāphala* commentary of Kṣīra Svāmī.

Here ‘*drśyatām*’ means ‘the knower,’ that is, ‘one who realizes our sorrow.’ The *gopīs* say, “Let our sorrow be known.” The deep intention behind this is as follows: “After He beholds our anguish, He will surely manifest Himself, for He is someone who is distressed by the sorrow of others.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The Thirty-first Chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes the aroma of music and rhythm coming from the honey of love that is contained in the lotus flowers of this *Gopī-gīta*, *The Song of the Gopīs*. The bumblebee Kṛṣṇa is irresistibly attracted to these flowers.

I begin my commentary by repeatedly offering obeisances to the lotus feet of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmī and our *guru-varga*, from whose remnants I receive my sustenance. Desiring their blessings for my own welfare, I am taking up the task of commenting on *Śrī Gopī-gīta*.

The previous verse (10.30.45) relates that the *gopīs*, losing all hope of finding Kṛṣṇa, returned to the bank of the Yamunā and began singing His glories, praying with intense desire for Him to come. With the firm conviction that their song would melt His heart, they began singing their earnest request. One might ask what kind of song they sang. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī gives the answer in this verse, starting with ‘*gopya ūcuḥ*,’ “The *gopīs* sang:

“*He dayita!* O beloved! Because of Your birth here, Vraja has become glorious, indeed far superior to all other planets.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa might contend that this superiority is even there in *Vaikuṇṭhaloka*. The *gopīs* respond with ‘*adhikam*’ – “This Vraja is more glorious than *Vaikuṇṭha*. *Vaikuṇṭha* is certainly wonderful, but this Vraja Dhāma is even more superb.”

Describing another super-excellent feature of Vraja, the *gopīs* say, “*Indirā*, who is served by everyone in *Vaikuṇṭha*, that same *Mahālakṣmī-devī* is constantly serving this Vraja. Hence this Vraja is replete with all prosperity, even more than *Vaikuṇṭha*.” This is the mood. “Because *Indirā*, the goddess of wealth, resides here, Vraja is full of incomparable bliss not found anywhere else. We *gopīs*, Your beloveds, are the only ones who experience sorrow – an intolerable anguish which no one has ever seen or heard of before. We are not praying to You for relief from our pain, but

if You will once look (*drśyatān*) at our condition in this Vṛṇḍāvana (*atra*), then You will definitely (*hi*) fulfill the purpose of Your eyes.”

Kṛṣṇa might inquire, “What should I look at?” They reply, “See here, in this delightful Vṛṇḍāvana, we, Your own *gopīs*, are searching for You, suffering extreme anguish in separation. What else could please You more?”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might wonder how these *gopīs* could remain alive after being burnt in the blazing fire of separation (because it is impossible for lovers to continue their lives in such a situation). The *gopīs* reply, “O beloved, have no such doubt. We are still alive because we have turned our lives over to You, who have seized our vital airs and driven us insane. If those life airs were still ours, then they would be residing in our bodies and there be burnt in the blazing fire of separation. Thus we would be dead, which would be a boon to us, and we would have been happy by now. But You have taken control of our life airs, which are now happily residing in You, accepting You as their master. If one’s life airs are happy, how can that person die? Therefore, we conclude that You take constant pleasure in seeing us suffer.”

Often the verses of *Gopī-gīta* are decorated with alliteration where throughout the verse the second syllable is the same in each successive line. In this first verse the second syllable ‘*ya*’ is the same in the first two lines, and ‘*yi*’ is the second syllable in the third and forth lines. Also we see here that the first and seventh letters are the same in each line: for example ‘*jayati*’ and ‘*janmanā*’ in the first line. Other varieties of alliteration may be found in other verses. This subject is elaborated upon in the *Muktāphala Tikā*.

#### VERSE 2

*śarad-udāśaye sādhu-jāta-sat-  
sarasijodara-śrī-muṣā dṛśā  
surata-nātha te ’śulka-dāsikā  
vara-da nighnato neha kim vadhaḥ*

**O Surata-nātha, master of amorous pleasure! With the glance of Your eyes that surpass the beauty of the whorl of enchanting lotuses which blossom in autumn ponds, You have lethally injured us, Your unpaid maidservants. O bestower of benedictions, You don’t consider killing by a glance to be murder?**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In this chapter, *Śrī Gopī-gīta*, each verse is sung independently by a different *gopī*.<sup>1</sup> Therefore we should consider that each verse is prefaced with the phrase: 'some *gopī* said.' In this way even though this second verse is spoken by one particular *gopī*, it is linked with the previous verse.<sup>2</sup>

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, "Go ahead and look for Me. What do I care?" To this *gopīs* reply with this verse beginning with '*śarad-udāśaye*.' "Your eyes have stolen the beauty of the radiant whorl of the most attractive lotus flowers that blossom in autumn ponds. O Surata-nātha, O master of amorous pleasure, You are slaying us, Your unpaid maidservants. You don't see this as murder? Do You think one can be killed only by weapons and not by eyes? It is certain that You are killing us. Your eyes have robbed us of our life airs. O bestower of benedictions fulfilling all desires! You should return this stolen property by appearing before us just once. We ask only for this."

The sentence "You should appear before us just once" can be attached to the end of every verse.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The phrase '*śarad-udāśaye*' means 'autumn lakes.' This signifies the auspiciousness of the autumn season when the reservoirs of water become clear and pristine. This also indicates the time and place of birth of the lotus. '*Sādhu-jāt*' means born in a beautiful way, that is, the lotus was fully blossomed when it took birth. '*Sat*' indicates the special, unique qualities that come from high caste. '*Udara*' indicates the wealth of the beauty hidden<sup>3</sup> in the middle of a lotus flower. Thus the exquisite beauty of a lotus is fully described.

- .....
- 1 The hidden meaning is that the nineteen verses of this chapter are not sung by either one single *gopī* or all of them together. Rather, the heads of the different groups of *gopīs* have prayed according to their individual *bhāvas* (moods).
  - 2 Here we have to understand that although each verse is spoken by a different *gopī*, and all the verses are being sung at the same time, still each verse is linked to the next in an uninterrupted continuation of *bhāva*, because even though the *gopīs* have spoken the verses according to their different sentiments, all the *gopīs* are situated in the same mood of separation.
  - 3 Birth, time of birth, place of birth, caste, rarity and beauty of the whorl – these indicate the lotus flower's supreme excellence in every aspect.



“The splendor of Your eyes is such that it easily conquers even the splendor of a thousand-petaled lotus and steals its beauty as well. Wherever Your eyes cast their charming glance, it becomes impossible for that place to keep its allurements. Those eyes of Yours express ever-fresh, novel emotions at every moment, and therefore they definitely rob the beauty of such places.” This is the mood.

Here the word ‘*dṛṣā*’ is the noun *dṛṣ* in its instrumental case and in singular number, meaning ‘by one eye.’ The confidential meaning of this is: “When even one of Your eyes most competently expresses Your intentions and is thus killing us, we cannot even imagine our condition if both of Your eyes would glance upon us.”

The word ‘*dṛṣā*,’ when explained in connection with the word ‘*surata-nātha*,’ becomes *dṛṣaiva surata-nātha* – He who begs (*nātha*) for amorous union (*surata*) with His glance (*dṛṣā*). The *gopīs* say, “O You who beg for *surata*! Simply by casting Your sidelong glance our way, You request us for amorous enjoyment. Therefore You are the one responsible for arousing this desire in our hearts. Furthermore, You are *varada* (giver of benedictions) – the day You stole our garments, You gave us this benediction, and now Your glance begging for *surata* has reinforced our unflinching desire. As a result we have become Your unpaid maidservants (*aśulkadāsikā*). Hence we are not to be blamed; as we are Your volunteer workers, our virtuous character shines out. If You would not have expressed Your amorous desire through Your sidelong glance, then the strong desire for pleasure would not have arisen in our hearts. Therefore, to fulfill this ardent impulse, we have come to You, having completely given up our religiosity, chastity, forbearance, etc. Still we are not at fault because this is the behavior of an unpaid maidservant. Actually, the splendor and other special qualities of Your glance are to be blamed, and now Your eyes have become even more reprehensible.” To explain their position the *gopīs* speak the word ‘*nighnata*’: “You are killing us with Your glance.”

Another meaning of this verse is that the *gopīs* accuse Kṛṣṇa of stealth through the artful use of His glance. This tendency in thieves manifests in three ways. The first one is to pilfer the property of respectable persons – and the thief will feel no remorse. The second is to secure inside information about someone’s property which is hidden in a most secret place, and the third is to reach the places that are extremely difficult to access.

The *gopīs* attribute the first tendency to Kṛṣṇa by speaking the phrase ‘*sat-sarasi*,’ which means ‘extremely pure autumn ponds,’ and ‘*sādhu-jāta*,’ which means that “the lotuses take birth in those ponds and consequently have a high-class birth.” The word ‘*sat*’ glorifies the beauty and other assets of the lotus flowers and thus confirms that they have exalted qualities. The *gopīs* therefore conclude, “Your eyes have robbed the high-class lotus of its beauty, thus implicating You in illicit activity. And if You cannot admit this, then You are even more at fault.”

The *gopīs* next speak the line beginning with ‘*sarasijodara*’ to explain how Kṛṣṇa practices the second tendency also. “You have stolen the beauty hidden in the lotus immersed in the deep water of the pond. In the autumn season, the fully blossomed thousand-petaled lotus flower, growing deep in the middle of the pond, conceals its invaluable beauty in its whorl, but still somehow Your glance acquired full knowledge about that highly hidden wealth. How is it possible that Your eyes learned about this well-concealed beauty and succeeded in stealing it?”

They continue, “It is clear that You are guilty of the third tendency as well, because just with Your eyes you reached the lotus in the middle of the deep waters and stole its radiance from the pericarp.” With the arrival of autumn after the rainy season, the lakes are filled to the brim with pure, clear water. Because the water is so deep at this time, it is extremely difficult to reach the thousand-petaled lotus flower which is situated in the center of the pond. And for the glance to reach the middle of the flower and penetrate its thousand-petal covering presents a further challenge. “Even in such a bottomless pond filled to the brim with water, just see how Your eyes reached this extremely inaccessible place.

“Actually, out of fear of Your glance, the lotus has hidden its radiance – the heroine of its beauty – in its whorl with a covering of thousands of petals. But You succeeded in reaching there as well and stealing her. Then what to speak of us simple-hearted girls of Vraja, who fearlessly wander throughout Vṛndāvana? You kidnapped us also with Your thieving glance.

“The lotus, knowing that You would definitely abduct the wealth of its beauty with Your eyes, hid its treasure away in its belly, and cautiously took up residence in the deep water. Despite witnessing this crooked behavior, You never became upset with the lotus and simply stole its beauty, which with great respect You placed in Your eyes. We, on the other hand, never

behaved in a sly manner like the lotus. Rather, being naturally ingenuous, we were wandering fearlessly all over Vraja. Despite our simplicity, You forcefully pilfered all our riches – our self-control, virtuous behavior, shyness, deference for family line, piety, honor, vitality, mind, etc. Although the cunning lotus tried her level best to resist You, You placed her beauty in Your eyes and thus honored her. But we, Your unpaid maidservants, placed ourselves at Your lotus feet and You abandoned us during the night in the dense forest. This kind of unjust behavior will naturally give rise to resentment. Even though You gave us an inferior position as unpaid maidservants, still we renounced all jealousy, and began serving You without any selfish motive. Now, with those same eyes You are ready to kill us, although it is very unfair of You.” Only to convey this message the *gopīs* say, “*nighnata*, You are killing us.”

The *gopīs* pose a question: “*neha kiṁ vadhaḥ* – Is killing by the eyes not considered killing? You think You are an expert thief and that You won’t get caught using Your crafty glance to slay us surreptitiously. Even if no one knows what You have done, isn’t it still an act of murder?”

By addressing Kṛṣṇa as *surata-nātha* and *varada*, they actually mean to say, “Alas! We know the truth about Your sidelong glance. The amorous pleasure (*surata*) for which You were begging with Your eyes, or which You promised as a blessing (*varada*), is all false. You have demonstrated this expertise only as a pretext to do away with us.” The comments of the *gopīs* regarding Kṛṣṇa killing them are described in Śrīdhara Svāmī’s *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā* commentary.

In the line ‘*te śulka-dāsikāḥ*,’ the letter *a* can be separated from the word *śulka*, and the sentence will become *dr̥ṣaiva śulka-dāsikāḥ*. This means: “You purchased us by Your glance, which defeats the beauty of the whorl of the lotus. We have sold ourselves for the price of Your glance, but still You have abandoned us. This is nothing less than killing. Won’t this be considered murder – *suṣṭhārām janānāmupatāpaka*?”

The *gopīs* address Kṛṣṇa as “the woe (*nātha*) of successful persons (here the verbal root *nātha* means ‘to bring calamity’).” They say, “O You who make

4 Here ‘*suratanātha te*’ is explained thus – ‘*su*’-*suṣṭhu* (exclusively); ‘*rata*’-*ratānām* (devoted); ‘*nāthate*’-*janānāmupatāpaka* (causing pain/agony in people). Here ‘*nāthate*’ is the present tense, third person and singular form of *ātmanepadī* (self-serving) verbal root ‘*nāthī*.’

Your beloveds suffer in a secluded place, O You who let Your beloveds burn in the fire of separation, O Varada<sup>5</sup>, You who gave a blessing but went back on Your word (here the verbal root *dā* is used in its second meaning, ‘to break’). Through Your sidelong glance, You begged us for amorous pleasure and gave us a benediction, and today with the same gesture of Your eyes, You are killing us. Therefore if You want to clear Yourself of all these wrongdoings and save us from the jaws of death, You should appear before us.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S

### *Sārārtha Darśini*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “Are you *gopīs* suggesting that I have come to inflict misery upon you?” To this the *gopīs* reply, “Not only are You giving us great distress but You are also killing us.” This is expressed in the line beginning ‘*śarad-udāśaye*.’ “Your eyes beg for amorous enjoyment (*dṛṣā surata-nātha*) and also bless (*varada*) us with the bliss we desire. And with those same eyes, which have thrown us into the blazing fire of *prema*, You are killing us, who are Your unrequited maidservants. Do You not consider this killing? Or is murder by weapons the only real type of killing?”

With sarcasm they say, “*He varada*, giver (*da*) of benedictions (*vara*)! You destroy (*da* derived from *di*, destroy) happiness in this world and the next (*vara*, the higher planets). If You actually had any rights on us or we were Your property, we would have no complaint against You – whether You took care of us or destroyed us. But the fact is that we are not your personal property. You never bought us, nor did You accept us in marriage. Your eyes, which are habituated to looting, have robbed us of all discrimination, and, leaving us bewildered, have driven us mad. As a result, we freely gave ourselves to You, becoming Your unpaid maidservants.”

The *gopīs* next explain Kṛṣṇa’s qualities of having power to attract and to bewilder, and being the very king of all expert thieves. “With Your eyes You have kidnapped *śrī* – the very essence of beauty, the wealth contained in the whorl of the finest, fully blossomed lotus (*sarasijodara*) growing in a saintly environment (*sādhū-jāta*) of the deep autumn ponds (*udhasaye*) filled with crystal clear water.” In this way, the *gopīs* described how Kṛṣṇa’s

5 Here ‘*varada*’ is explained in this way-‘*vara*’- *nijavara* (one’s own boon; ‘*da*’-*chedaka* (deny), because the verbal root ‘*da*’ also means ‘to deny.’ One who denies giving boons.

eyes robbed the high-born (*sata*) lotus and thus acquired such extraordinary fragrance, coolness, grace and softness.

“Your thieving glance succeeded in entering the innermost place of those pious, high-class lotuses, just to plunder their wealth. An ordinary person could never have done this. Similarly, the thief of Your glance has thrown some bewitching and intoxicating dust into our eyes and has thus made us deranged. It snatched the treasured blessing of our amorous pleasure previously bestowed as well as our life airs, and it has presented these to You. This is why we told You before that our life-airs reside in You. As You have stolen our wealth, we are left poverty stricken and are on the verge of death.”

The *gopīs* conclude, “You will be accused of genocide, killing thousands and thousands of cowherd maidens. Therefore, appear before us and save Yourself from the sin of slaughtering women. Beware of sin, and show us Your lotus face.”

### VERSE 3

*viṣa-jalāpyayād vyāla-rākṣasād  
varṣa-mārutād vaidyutānalāt  
vr̥ṣa-mayātmajād viśvato bhayād  
r̥ṣabha te vayaṁ rakṣitā muhuḥ*

**O crest jewel among men, time after time You protected us *vraja-gopīs* from all types of danger. You saved us from death from the poisonous water of Yamunā, the man-eating python Aghāsura, the rain sent by Indra, the whirlwind caused by Tṛṇāvarta, Indra’s fiery thunderbolts, the forest fire, the bull demon Ariṣṭāsura, and Vyomāsura, the son of Maya Dānava.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

The *gopīs* say, “O R̥ṣabha, O best among men, just see. Many times You mercifully saved us from the jaws of death. Why, then, are You killing us now, sending Cupid from Your eyes to attack us?” This is the mood the *gopīs* express in this verse beginning with ‘*viṣa*.’

“O crown jewel of men! You saved us from the deadly poisonous water (*viṣa*) of the Yamunā. Many times You protected (*rākṣasat*) us from death when threatened by Aghāsura, the whirlwind-demon Tṛṇāvarta, the storm

and thunderbolts sent by Indra, the bull-demon Ariṣṭa, and the son of Maya, Vyomāsura. You saved us from all dangers in the past like the serpent Kāliya, so why are You neglecting us now?"

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

"He Kṛṣṇa! Because we have descended from the same clan and because it is simply common decency to help those in trouble, You have always protected us. Why do You now forget the principle that it is not proper to cut down the tree one has raised when it reaches maturity, even if it be poisonous?" Even if an enemy (or unfavorable object) is maintained and nourished, one should not destroy it, what to speak about a loved one (or something favorable). "Why don't you remember this logic?" To explain this, the *gopīs* use the phrase '*viṣa-jalāpyayād*.'

Kṛṣṇa may ask, "O *gopīs*, tell Me in which way I protected you." To this the *gopīs* reply, "*He vraja-jīvana*, O life of Vraja! You saved the cowherd boys and cows when they fell into the mouth of death after drinking the poisoned water of the Yamunā. Another time Aghāsura, the demon in the form of a snake, swallowed all the boys and calves. The cowherd boys could not ascertain the true identity of the snake-demon. They entered his mouth along with their calves, and You saved them from death in his terrifying jaws. These cowherd boys and calves are the very life of all the inhabitants of Vraja. Therefore, by saving them You saved all the Vrajavāsīs – that includes us. Thus You respected our village tradition." For this reason it is evident that Kṛṣṇa saved the *gopīs* from all these dangers. '*Vyāla-rākṣasāt*' refers to Aghāsura, as confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.12.25: "Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is in everyone's heart, knew that actually the python was a demon."

The *gopīs* continue, "Indra was very angry and wanted to destroy Gokula. Thus, he unleashed a heavy rainstorm punctuated with a continuous barrage of flashing thunderbolts. You protected all of us from that inundation by easily lifting Govardhana Hill. In this way, You saved us."

'*Vṛṣa-mayātmajād*' – "You saved us from the violent demons." The word *vṛṣa* (bull) in this phrase is understood to be Vatsāsura. Although he came in the form of a calf, at the time of death his real gigantic body of a bull manifested. That is why he is called the bull-demon here. In the very same

way, Lord Varāha appeared from the nostril of Brahmā in a tiny form, but He gradually expanded into an enormous size.

The meaning of the phrase *vr̥ṣa-mayātmajād* may be taken to be ‘the son of a bull’ and ‘the son of Maya Dānava (Vyomāsura).’ Thus, the *gopīs* say, “O crown jewel of men, You protected the cowherd boys from the violent attacks of Vatsāsura and Vyomāsura.” Again, the *gopīs* apply this incident to themselves, because they are integral members of the cowherd community.

Kṛṣṇa performed the pastime of killing Vyomāsura, the son of Maya, in His childhood. Although *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* recounts this pastime after the description of the *rāsa-līla*, it actually happened before that. This pastime of killing the son of Maya should have been included in the narration of Kṛṣṇa’s childhood pastimes, but as Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī was absorbed in deep trance, some of the *līlās* were described out of sequence.

In the end the *gopīs* conclude, “You saved us from all dangers. We cannot count all the times that You rescued us. On each occasion You delivered us from all fear. Therefore, O most excellent among men, You are competent to save us from every type of danger.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* make another point: “If You want to kill us, why did You save us from all calamities previously? Since You saved us before, it is not proper to kill us now.” Therefore the *gopīs* say, “*He ṛṣabha*, O best among men! You saved all of Vraja, ourselves included, from the poisonous water of Kālīya Lake, from Aghāsura, and from the anger of Indra when he was bent on destroying Vraja with his rainstorms and thunderbolts. You also saved us from Tṛṇāvarta, the bull demon Ariṣṭa, Vyomāsura, and again and again from many other dangers.”

Kṛṣṇa might question, “I crushed Kālīya and other demons for My own protection, so how were you protected in these cases?” The *gopīs* reply, “*He prāṇa-vallabha*, You are the only support of our lives. Therefore, our lives are one with You. If You had not saved Yourself by subduing Kālīya, then our death would have been assured. Therefore, by protecting Yourself, You have saved us. Then, when Indra was so angry and sent heavy rains and thunderbolts, You held up Govardhana to protect the whole of Vraja. As we are part of Vraja, You protected us. Therefore, knowing that You are the

protector from all fears in the universe, we, burning in the fire of love lit by the five arrows of Kāmadeva, have come to You to extinguish this fire. But instead of pacifying us, You placed us in a fire of separation that is millions of times greater. Do You not fear the sin of betrayal?"

Although Kṛṣṇa killed Aṣṭāsura and Vyomāsura after the *rāsa-līlā*, the *gopīs* mention these pastimes because they heard them from Gargācārya and Bhāgūrī Muni. They were told that, according to Kṛṣṇa's astrological chart, He would kill those demons in the future. The *gopīs* speak as though Kṛṣṇa had already performed these pastimes because they had heard this so long ago.

#### VERSE 4

*na khalu gopikā-nandano bhavān  
akhila-dehinām antarātma-dṛk  
vikhanasārthito viśva-guptaye  
sakha udeyivān sātvatām kule*

**O friend, it is certain that You are not the son of Yaśodā. Rather, You are the Supersoul who resides in the hearts of all the living beings. In response to Lord Brahmā's prayer, You have appeared in the Yadu dynasty to protect the universe.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* continue, "You descended in this world to protect the entire universe. Therefore, You should not disregard anyone, and especially to neglect Your devotees is highly improper."

Expressing this mood, they utter the words beginning '*na khalu*,' meaning, "O friend, it is certain that You are not the son of Yaśodā. You are the witness, the Supersoul, in the hearts of all living beings." Śrī Kṛṣṇa may ask: "Can anybody see this witness?" The *gopīs* reply: "*Vikhanasārthito* – in response to Brahmā's prayer, You, the Supersoul, have taken birth in the Yadu dynasty to protect the universe, and thus come within sight."

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava-Toṣaṇī***

In the previous verse, the *gopīs* said, "He Kṛṣṇa, because You are the crown jewel among men, You are capable of protecting us from all kinds of



fears.” Continuing their analysis of Kṛṣṇa’s abilities, the *gopīs* speak this verse beginning ‘*na khalu*.’ “Witnessing Your supernatural prowess, we come to the following conclusion. O friend, we are absolutely certain that You are not the son of a *gopī* (Vrajeśvarī Śrī Yaśodā). We assume that You are the Supersoul in the hearts of all living beings.” The cowherd girls are not at fault in addressing Kṛṣṇa as ‘*gopikā-nandana*,’ the son of a *gopī*; it is not their intention to minimize the position of Yaśodā, the queen of all *gopīs*. Now seeing Kṛṣṇa in a mood of majesty as the Supersoul, with great humility they utter these words, which seem to minimize Yaśodā’s glory. But actually they feel very close to her, accepting her as the crest jewel in their community.

“As You are the Supersoul, the witness of every living entity, certainly You must be aware of the burning in our hearts. Therefore, there is no need to say any more to You about the anguish we are suffering in separation.”

Even accepting Kṛṣṇa as *antaryāmī*, the Supersoul, the *gopīs* present the reason for His descent with the word ‘*vikhanasārthito*.’ They say, “Responding to the prayer of Your devotee, Lord Brahmā, You appeared in Vraja in the family of Your crown jewel devotees in order to watch over the universe. Thus, You always cast Your merciful glance in their direction, and when there is the need, You always protect them. What’s more, we are Your beloveds. Is it right to lose the chance to take care us? This full-moon night is the right time for You to fulfill Your mission.”

Thinking that Kṛṣṇa might object and tell them, “You are not My devotees,” they say, “If You feel that we are not Your devotees, still You should protect us because Brahmā requested You to save the entire universe.” This is the intention in uttering the words ‘*viśva-guptaye*.’ “Within the universe all kinds of entities are found – non-devotees, conscious and unconscious beings, pious and impious souls. But out of all Your devotees, our feelings for You are extraordinary. Therefore, You should take special care of us.” This mood is expressed by the word ‘*sakhe*.’

The prayer in which the *vraja-devīs* glorify Kṛṣṇa as Paramātmā and the protector of the universe, is full of awe and reverence on the surface, but only because it is spoken in the acute state of separation. However, they are simply repeating what they heard from Gargācārya and other sages. *Aiśvarya-jñāna* would never manifest in their hearts. Actually, according to their mood, they know Śrī Kṛṣṇa only as *gopikā-nandana*, and experience nothing but the abundance of *mādhurya* exuding from the son of Yaśodā.

When *aiśvarya* seems to be present in their words, it should be understood that they speak as a suppliant, making a humble entreaty only to achieve their desired goal. This is the case with all other utterances of the *gopīs* that seem to be laced with *aiśvarya-jñāna*. The rest of the verse is according to Śrīdhara Svāmī.

The word '*khalu*' (indeed) is used as a negation. The sentence can read, "O friend, You are the Supersoul, but this does not mean that You are not the son of Yaśodā. Rather, You *are* the son of Yaśodā." By saying the word '*vikhanasā*,' they mean, "You appeared in the family of devotees in response to the prayer of Lord Brahmā to protect the entire universe. Consequently, You should care for us also. It is not right for You to neglect us. We are certainly worthy of Your protection." This is the mood.

According to another meaning, the *gopīs*, filled with resentment, say, "You are not the son of Yaśodā; she is extremely compassionate and always looks after us. There is no doubt that You are the Supersoul because You look at everything with indifference. Still, controlled by the *bhakti* of Brahmā, You came disguised as the son of Yaśodā in order to protect the universe. As children we became Your friends and played together; therefore You should protect us." This is the reason that they utter the word '*vikhanasā*.'

Because '*na*' is the first word in the verse, it can be attributed to all four lines of the verse. When it is applied to the phrase '*viśva-guptaye sakhe*,' the phrase can be read as *viśva-guptaye 'sakhe (asakhe)* in accordance with the rules of conjunction (*sandhi*). Then the meaning is, "O You who are not our friend, O You who are averse to us! All the Vrajavāsīs know You as the son of Yaśodā. Gargācārya, Bhāguri and other sages believe You to be the Supersoul of all beings, and Paurṇamāsī says that You have descended in answer to Brahmā's prayer to protect the universe. However, observing Your behavior, we are unable to determine what is the actual fact. It seems that You are not the son of Yaśodā, who is supremely kind. If You were her son, You would not be so heartless. Rather, You would surely be kind to us because we are related to her. You would not neglect us in this way. You are not even the Supersoul in the hearts of all living entities, otherwise how could You be unaware of our misery? If You were the Supersoul, You would know how we are suffering, and thus could not refrain from giving us Your *darśana*. Moreover, if You have descended to protect the universe as per Brahmā's prayers, You would protect us also because we are within the

universe and should not be neglected. You did not appear in the family of devotees. If You had, we also would be recipients of Your causeless mercy.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
**Sārārtha Darśinī**

Śrī Kṛṣṇa might say, “O *gopīs*, again and again you speak irrationally. Get hold of yourselves! I am the son of Nanda, the source of all bliss, but you accuse Me of killing women and insidiously betraying people’s trust. Therefore, I will go to such a remote place that in this lifetime you will not see Me again, not even once.” The thought of such threatening words seared the *gopīs*’ hearts. In an attempt to please Him, they glorified Him by this prayer beginning with ‘*na khalu gopikā*,’ saying, “O friend, You are certainly not the son of Yaśodā, rather You are the Supersoul, the witness dwelling in the hearts (*antarātma-dṛk*) of all living beings. We heard from Bhāguri Rṣi, Gargācārya and Paurṇamāsī that You are the Supersoul. Residing in our hearts, You know all our desires and inspire us to speak in this way. We act according to Your inspiration; therefore do not be angry with us. Be pleased. We heard about the cause of Your appearance here. According to the request of Lord Brahmā, You were born in the Yadu dynasty, the best of devotees, arising like the sun from behind the mountain of Śrī Yaśodā’s womb, to protect the world.”

Kṛṣṇa then replies, “O intelligent and *rasika gopīs*, if You know all these truths about Me, why did you speak to Me so harshly?” The *gopīs* exclaim, “O friend!” implying, “You drowned us in an ocean of friendship; therefore we took the liberty to use rough words. You watch over the whole universe, so extend Your merciful protection to us as well as we are Your *sakhīs* and are a part of the universe.”

Their words have yet another meaning: “There is no living being, from the demigods and humans down to the animals, who can bear to witness the suffering of their beloveds. You, on the other hand, take delight in seeing our misery. For this reason we think that You are not the son of Yaśodā. Yaśodā is famous for a heart that immediately melts with compassion at others’ grief. How could You possibly have taken birth from the womb of Gopeśvarī Yaśodā as You do not exhibit any of her qualities?” Kṛṣṇa inquires, “Alright, then who am I?” The *gopīs* answer, “You are the Supersoul. Although the Supersoul resides in the hearts of all living beings and witnesses their

sufferings, He remains unconcerned. Therefore, O crest jewel among indifferent persons, there must be some other reason for Your birth in Vraja that we do not know about. Have You made Your appearance here to sustain the residents of this universe or to inflict them with miseries?”

Next, in the line beginning ‘*vikhanasā*,’ the *gopīs* explain why Kṛṣṇa appeared. They say, “Desiring auspiciousness for his creation, Brahmā beseeched You to reside here incognito. If You were to reveal Your identity, all souls would perform *bhakti* to You. Thus everyone would be liberated from this world, and all of Brahmā’s creation would go in vain. Brahmā therefore prayed: ‘O Lord, when You appear in this world, may Your identity remain secret. In that way, no one will know that You are the Supreme Lord. Thus, atheists as well as those who do believe in God but do not regard You as the Lord (such as Jarāsandha<sup>6</sup>) will all be deluded by Your ‘immoral’ (*adhārmika*) behavior, and will acquire a demoniac nature, like Jarāsandha. Thus my creation will increase.’ To fulfill Brahmā’s desire, You took birth in the dynasty of the Yadus. You renounced Your true nature, and You displayed all types of shocking behavior, like enjoying with others’ wives, robbing, killing, and displaying envy and pride. In this way You kept Your identity hidden. O friend! In the course of running off with other men’s wives, You have become our friend. Still, although You are our *sakhā* (friend), You remain untouched by Your *sakhīs*’ grief, and make no effort to extinguish it.”

#### VERSE 5

*viracitābhayaṁ vṛṣṇi-dhurya te  
caraṇam iyuṣāṁ saṁsṛter bhayāt  
kara-saroruham kānta kāma-daṁ  
śīrasi dhehi naḥ śrī-kara-graham*

**O crest jewel of the Yadu dynasty, Your lotus hands give soothing shade to those souls who, terrified by the cycle of birth and death, surrender to Your lotus feet. Thus, You relieve them of all fear. O beloved, please place on our heads these very lotus hands that fulfill all desires and that hold the hands of the Goddess of Fortune.**

6 Jarāsandha believed in the existence of Bhagavān, but he did not accept Kṛṣṇa as God. Such a mood is demoniac.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* begin to express their four desires<sup>7</sup> in this and the next three verses, starting here with '*viracitābhayaṃ*': "O crest jewel of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, O protector of those who surrender to Your lotus feet out of fear of material existence, O beloved, O fulfiller of all desires! Please place Your lotus hands, which clasp the hands of Lakṣmī, on our heads."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda's

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

When the *gopīs* speak this verse, it appears that they are full of awe and reverence (*aiśvarya*), just as it seemed in the previous verse. They say, "You protect those who surrender to Your feet out of fear of the material world." By the phrase '*viracitābhayaṃ*,' they indicate Kṛṣṇa's quality of giving *mokṣa* and liberating one from all fear. By the word '*kāma-dam*' they imply, "You fulfill all the desires of those who seek to achieve the three goals of life (*trivarga*) – *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* – and *bhakti* as well." By the phrase '*śrī-kara-graṇam*,' meaning one who holds the lotus hand of Lakṣmī-devī, the *gopīs* reveal Kṛṣṇa's propensity to come under the control of His dear associates, and to be very *rasika*. It should be understood that each of these qualities of His is better than the previous one. First Kṛṣṇa bestows liberation, and better than liberation is His fulfilling the *trivargas*, the three goals of life, and superior to that is His bestowal of *bhakti*, but His quality of coming under the control of His intimate associates and being full of *rasa* exceeds all His other attributes.

The word '*saroruha*' describes the natural coolness and sweetness of His hands. The *gopīs* say, "Because Your hands are naturally cool and sweet, one can easily guess how valuable a gift they may bestow." They imply, "We are burning up in separation. Your lotus hands are soothing and give supreme bliss, so place them on our heads." *Mokṣa* refers to the elimination of all suffering, which thus paves the way for the unhindered growth of the great wealth of *prema*. When there are many kinds of miseries, one's heart gets agitated; this presents obstacles to the augmentation of *prema*. Therefore,

- 7 (1) Place Your lotus hands on our heads. (2) Show us Your lotus face graced with a gentle smile. (3) Place Your lotus feet on our breasts. (4) Give us the nectar of Your lips.

the devotees who want to perform loving service always desire the removal of obstacles that come on their path for *prema-sevā*. One-pointed devotees ignore ordinary *trivarga* – *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma* – because they have no desire for self-enjoyment, but for Kṛṣṇa's *sevā* they desire the *trivargas* that provide everything auspicious in helping one attain this wealth of pure love. In the delight of their *prema*, the *gopīs* describe that Kṛṣṇa's hands have the quality of bestowing both *mokṣa* and *trivarga*, which are very crucial for devotees.

Kṛṣṇa may say, "You are not worthy, so how can I place My hands on your heads?" The *gopīs* reply, "This is true. You are a highly exalted personality. Despite this, even though we are undeserving, still we are requesting that, in view of Your unlimited qualities, You be generous and place Your lotus hands on our heads." Expressing their feelings they continue, "O best in the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, You have appeared in Nanda Mahārāja's family in order to fully exhibit unprecedented sweetness. To prove this, consider the unique mood of our relationship with You and put Your lotus hands on our heads."

The *gopīs* address Kṛṣṇa as *kānta*, beloved. The meaning of other words has already been explained in the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī. However, the words beginning with '*viracitābhayaṁ*' also have another meaning: "Your lotus hands have the prowess to remove all the fears related to this material world." The *gopīs* are again saying *kāntaṇca* and *tatkāmadaṇca*; in the verse itself the two words *kānta* and *kāma-dam* are separate, but if interpreted with *karmadhārya* compound, it becomes one word used as an adjective describing the lotus hands of the Lord. "These hands – which inspire our desire to enjoy with You, our beloved (*kānta*) – are known to be very generous and soothing because they bestow bliss and all desired objects (*kāma-dam*). Therefore, place those lotus hands on our heads."

By '*śrī-kara-graham*' the *gopīs* mean to say, "Your hands have brought the goddess of wealth, Lakṣmī, under control and kept her in Your Gokula. In this way Your lotus hands are the shelter of the whole gamut of wealth. There is no doubt about it. *He kānta*, O beloved, the heat of separation from You is especially fearful for us. Therefore, keep Your lotus hands on our heads and take away our distress. Then we will achieve our desired goal – to attain Your auspicious association. As a result of attaining You, we will get all kinds of riches useful for serving You. Even though feeling unqualified

to serve You, still we request that You not neglect us. Offer Your lotus hands on our heads and accept us as Your *dāsīs*.

“The family line of Nanda Mahārāja, the King of Vraja, is a special branch of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, and You are the ornament of that lineage.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, as we are Vrajavāsīs, naturally You are supposed to look after us. You can never neglect us. Certainly, without any doubt, You should place Your lotus hands on our heads and accept us.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### *Sārārtha-Darśinī*

Kṛṣṇa said, “O *gopīs* who speak so pleasingly! I disappeared to drink the exceedingly sweet nectar of Your angry words. My desire has been fulfilled, so you may ask for any boon you like.” Reassured by these gracious words, the *gopīs* begin to voice their desires in four verses. The first of the four is this fifth verse, beginning with ‘*viracitābhayaṁ*.’

They address Kṛṣṇa, “O best of the Vṛṣṇis, You are the shining sun for the lotus flowers of Your family. Please place Your hands on our heads.” Kṛṣṇa might say, “Why should I?” The *gopīs* reply with ‘*kāma-dam*.’ “Fearing the five arrows of Kāmadeva, we sought Your protection. So place Your lotus hands on our heads to remove the pain inflicted by Cupid.” Another meaning: “Your lotus hands, which can remove the disease of *kāma*, also incite lust in our hearts by their inviting gestures. Your lotus hands grant fearlessness to those who surrender to You out of fear of the material world. When Your hands are capable of protecting one from all worldly fears, then what trouble will they have to save us from this suffering inflicted by our *kāma*?”

Kṛṣṇa might say, “In that case I will place My hands on your breasts. That will fulfill My desire.” The *gopīs* say, “No,” and then explain ‘*śrī-kara-graḥam*.’ “When You were about to place Your hand on Śrī Lakṣmī’s breast, she stopped

8 Nanda and the other cowherd men are in the Yadu dynasty. According to *Śrī Gopāla-campu* (pūrva, 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter), the topmost king of the Yadus, Śrī Devamidha, was living in Mathurā. He had two wives – the 1<sup>st</sup> was from *kṣatriya* line and the 2<sup>nd</sup> was from *vaiṣya* line. The son of the *kṣatriya* queen was Śūrasena, and the son of the *vaiṣya* queen was Parjanya. Śūrasena’s son was Vasudeva. Parjanya Bābā followed his mother’s *vaiṣya dharma* and resided in Mahāvana, rearing cows. Parjanya *gopa*’s sons were Upananda, Abhinanda, Nanda, Sunanda and Nandana. The real meaning of *vṛṣṇi-dhurya*, the best of the Vṛṣṇis, is the prince who was born to the king of the topmost lineage of the cowherd community – Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is *gopa-kumāra* Vrajendra-nandana.

You and took hold of Your hand in hers. Similarly, if You want to touch our breasts, we will stop You. It is better if You put Your hands on our heads.”

VERSE 6

*vraja-janārti-han vīra yoṣitām  
nija-jana-smaya-dhvaṁsana-smita  
bhaja sakhe bhavat-kiṅkarīḥ sma no  
jalaruhānanam cāru darśaya*

**O best among heroes, You dissolve the sorrows of the residents of Vraja. The beam of Your mild smile is quite capable of shattering Your closest associates’ pride in their good fortune and their loving anger. O dear friend, we are Your maidservants. Please accept us helpless girls and make us happy by showing us Your captivating lotus face.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* say, “O You who relieve the Vrajavāsīs of all their miseries! O hero, Your soothing, gentle smile destroys the pride of Your near and dear ones. O friend, we are Your maidservants, so You should certainly engage us in Your service and give us shelter.” The *gopīs* implore Kṛṣṇa, “You should show us young ladies the beautiful lotus of Your face at once.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In full absorption the *gopīs* first prayed only for Kṛṣṇa to accept them in a general way, but in this and the next two verses they appeal to Him to fulfill their specific requests. In this verse beginning with *vraja*, they beg only for His association: “*Bhaja* – Accept us. Meet with us and thereby remove our sorrow. Oh, although this is our original desire, we are first asking You to just show us Your enchantingly beautiful face, so similar to a lotus flower.” By calling Kṛṣṇa “*vraja-janārti-han*, O You who destroy the sorrow of the inhabitants of Vraja,” the *gopīs* imply that He is capable of accepting them and thereby eliminating their sorrow born of separation. They intimate that if He does not immediately save them in their dying condition, the glory described in this name will prove meaningless.



By addressing Kṛṣṇa as ‘*vīra*, O hero,’ they imply that He is competent to bestow upon His closest associates even something that would ordinarily be imprudent to give. That is, it is not proper to give to those unfit to receive it. “Although we prayed for something beyond our suitability, still You are able to fulfill our desire.” Kṛṣṇa might respond, “When we met on the bank of the Yamunā, you became intoxicated by your good fortune and developed pride from your intimate association with Me. To rectify you I am now refusing to give you My *darśana*.” The *gopīs* answer, “O You who can destroy the pride of Your associates! Because You lavished so much affection on those whom You accepted as Your beloveds, they became conceited. As Your slightest smile easily vanquishes such vanity, then what is the need for You to inflict punishment by disappearing?” These words communicate the extraordinary beauty of Kṛṣṇa’s nectarean smile, and therefore the *gopīs* say, “We eagerly look forward to seeing Your smile.

“*He sakhe*, O friend, accept us by giving Your direct association. If You do not save us now, then later on, seeing our dire condition You will also suffer because friends usually share each others’ sorrows. Furthermore You will be guilty of betraying our trust.” Although the *gopīs* are qualified to consider Kṛṣṇa as their friend, overwhelmed by humility in separation, they were afraid to appear arrogant. Therefore they said, “We are Your maidservants. ‘*Yoṣitām*’ – we are weak women, and do not have the strength to search for You any more. We are exhausted and suffering so much in separation that we don’t know if we will be able to keep our lives going. Therefore mercifully show us Your lotus face.” Śrīdhara Svāmī gives the other interpretation in his commentary.

The words of the *gopīs* may also be taken in this way: “Your gentle smile destroys the pride of those women whom You have accepted as Your near and dear ones, like Your wives such as Lakṣmī. Then what to speak of us, Your maidservants, and Your soft smile will easily quell our pride. Therefore, You should attend to us.” Kṛṣṇa may say, “How can I please you?” The *gopīs* give their reply with this and the next two verses. “To remove the burning agony of separation and to rejuvenate our half-dead bodies, appear before us and show us Your lotus face.”

The *gopīs* speak in great pain and in the anger of love: “*vraja-janārti-han* – O You who destroy the misery of the Vrajavāsīs but are still a hero capable of killing women! This is how You display Your bravery, and due to

such heroism we are practically dead. Actually, You use Your soft, deceitful smile to destroy the happiness of Your intimate companions. Now go and enjoy with those who are not Your maidservants (*abhavat-kinkarīḥ*). Do not show us Your captivating lotus face because we have decided to die.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

Some other *gopīs* say, “You destroy the anguish inflicted by Kāmadeva’s arrows. You do this only for the ladies (*yoṣitām*) of Vraja, not for other women, and not even for the demigoddesses.” It is mentioned further on in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.35.3: “Although the demigoddesses are seated in heavenly airplanes with their husbands, upon hearing Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song, they become astonished. Pierced by Cupid’s shafts, they become enamored and lose their faculties. Therefore they do not notice how their waist belts open. They later despair and feel very ashamed.”

The *gopīs* say, “O hero, O You who conquer over Cupid, whose attacks are extremely difficult to endure! Having conquered Brahmā and other demigods, Cupid had become very puffed up but You smashed his pride into smithereens. You cannot tolerate our having even the slightest pride in our good fortune. You also cannot put up with our sulky mood, which arises from our natural contrary nature. ‘*Nija-jana-smaya-dhvaṁsana-smita*’ – With Your smile You destroy the pride and the sulky mood of Your sweethearts.”

Kṛṣṇa might request them, “All right, you may immediately ask for a boon.”

If He speaks in this way, the *gopīs* respond by saying, “We are Your maidservants. Accept us and serve us.”

He may then question them, “If you are My maidservants, why are you ordering Me to serve you?”

The *gopīs* reply, “Because You are our friend, You should serve us.”

“That makes sense. So tell Me, how can I serve you?”

“*Jalaruhānanam cāru darśaya* – Show us Your alluring lotus face.”

### VERSE 7

*praṇata-dehinām pāpa-karṣaṇam*  
*tṛṇa-carānugam śrī-niketanam*  
*phaṇi-phaṇārpitaṁ te padāmbujam*  
*kṛṇu kuceṣu naḥ kṛndhi hṛc-chayam*

**Your lotus feet remove all sins of those living beings who submit to them. Your lotus feet chase after the cows and calves who go out to graze. Your lotus feet are the object of service for Lakṣmī-devī, who is herself the reservoir of all beauty and wealth. Your lotus feet graced the hoods of the serpent Kāliya. Those same lotus feet You should rest on our breasts and pacify the fire of lust blazing in our hearts.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“Your lotus feet eliminate the sins of surrendered souls without any discrimination. Overwhelmed by mercy, Your lotus feet follow after the grazing cows. They are the abode of all beauty; thus they have become the shelter of Śrī Lakṣmī. Being extremely powerful, they trampled the hoods of the Kāliya serpent. Place those lotus feet on our breasts.” Kṛṣṇa may ask, “Why?” They answer, “To extinguish the *kāma* in our hearts.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava-Toṣaṇī***

(The *gopīs* worry, “If, after hearing our prayers, Kṛṣṇa comes and shows us His lotus face graced with a gentle smile, thus removing our sulkiness, and then disappears, what will happen to the disease in our hearts?”) This is the *gopīs*’ second request. Generally people will apply some medicinal ointments externally to cure the disease inside the body. Similarly, in this verse the *gopīs* beg Kṛṣṇa to soothe the fire of separation in their hearts by the ointment of association with His transcendental body. Out of humility they focus only on His feet and glorify their virtues: “*Praṇata-dehinām* – Your lotus feet free a person of all his sins once he submits to them. Thus Your lotus feet are very extraordinary; You should place them the breasts of we *gopīs* who belong to You.”

Kṛṣṇa might say, “Indeed, you have no fear of sin, but I do.” To this the *gopīs* reply ‘*praṇata*.’ “You destroy the sins of those who offer You obeisances even once, not considering the circumstances under which they surrendered to You. Just see how You eliminated all sins of the sons of Kuvera, Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, who had been turned into trees, and the serpent Kāliya, who surrendered to You. How, then, can You be afraid of sin?”

Kṛṣṇa might say, “Due to madness and pride you have committed an offence. Therefore it is not proper for Me to place My feet on your

breasts.” In reply, the *gopīs* speak this verse ‘*praṇata*.’ “May our offence be vanquished as in the case of Kāliya and others, who surrendered to You.”

Kṛṣṇa says, “How can I place the super-soft soles of My lotus feet on Your hard breasts?”

The *gopīs* respond with ‘*tr̥ṇa-carānugam*.’ “O beloved, Your feet follow behind cows, calves and other animals, who roam from forest to forest on rough ground laced with sharp rocks, pebbles and thorns. So in comparison it is highly unlikely that they will experience much discomfort when placed on our breasts.”

Kṛṣṇa says, “It is inappropriate for Me to associate with you ignorant girls.”

The *gopīs* respond, “You chase after the cows, who are also ignorant.”

Kṛṣṇa: “In what way are the cows stupid?”

To this the *gopīs* reply ‘*tr̥ṇa-carānugam*.’ “The cows are so brainless that they prefer grass to sugar candies and other nice sweets even when those are placed before them. We are not more foolish than them. Therefore, if You can follow behind the cows, You can certainly show us the same mercy that You have for the cows.”

Then Kṛṣṇa asks, “Is it appropriate for Me to place My feet on your breasts that are so exquisitely beautiful? The *gopīs* reply, “*Śrī-niketanam* – Your lotus feet are the abode of the great treasure of beauty. Possessing unparalleled splendor, they are the best of ornaments. Therefore, by placing Your lotus feet on our breasts, then that will be the best of ornaments for our breasts, and nothing else will increase their beauty.”

Kṛṣṇa confesses, “Out of My cowardly nature I am afraid of Your husband.” The *gopīs* reply, “*phaṇi-phanārpitam* – If You can place Your feet on the hoods of the wicked Kāliya serpent and dance there, thereby removing the poison of his *anarthas*, how can You be called a coward? How is it that You have a cowardly nature? If Your feet could clear away poison [in the waters of the Yamunā], then certainly they are able to extinguish this torment of our love poisoning our hearts.” Thus the *gopīs* describe the virtues of Kṛṣṇa’s feet by these four phrases, of which ‘*praṇata-dehinām papa-karṣaṇam*’ is the first one.

Kṛṣṇa inquires, “Do you want Me to place My feet on your breasts to free you from all the sins from so many births?” The *gopīs* answer, “No, no, not for that. Take away this *kāma* in our hearts. We yearn to hold Your lotus feet to our breasts to pacify our lust. This is our only purpose.”

“O dearmost beloved, You are our life and soul. Therefore, to avoid inflicting any pain on Your tender feet, we will place them on our breasts

with utmost care.” This is spoken in the last verse of this chapter (*yat te sujata*). “With great affection, we will put Your lotus feet on our breasts, though they are burning from the disease of the heart.”

It is to be understood that in the previous verse the *gopīs* used the word *śirasi* (head) in singular number only out of humility. Thus they expressed this mood, “If You place Your hands at least on one head, then all the rest of us will be included automatically.” However, in the present verse they use the word *kuceṣu* (breasts) in plural number being overpowered by greed. While they were in the mood of humility, Kṛṣṇa’s touching just one of them seemed sufficient for all, but here, as they were smitten by greed, a small favor was not enough to satisfy, and they each desired personal contact.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

Some other *gopīs* propose, “O Kṛṣṇa, place Your lotus feet on our breasts.” To explain why they want Him to do this they say, “Thus vanquish our disease, the flames of *kāma* tormenting our hearts.”

The *gopīs* have *samarthā-rati*<sup>9</sup> – their love is capable of controlling Kṛṣṇa; therefore, endowed with pure *prema*, they never think about relieving their own sorrow or worry for their personal happiness. Their only thought is to give Kṛṣṇa pleasure with their bodies, words and minds. These Vraja maidens most expertly reveal their youthful beauty and pain of separation in order to arouse Kṛṣṇa’s desire for the bliss of *surata*. Usually, they do not express their love by words because this would diminish the *prema*. But here they verbalize their feelings of lust only to dismiss their *kāma* as insignificant.

For example, one man wanted to feed a hungry friend and for that purpose began to lovingly prepare four types of sweets. When his friend

- 9 *Rati*, amorous love, is of three kinds: *sādhāraṇī* (ordinary), *samanjasā* (proper) and *samarthā* (competent). The *rati* of Kubjā is the example of *sādhāraṇī-rati*. It has been condemned because its fundamental basis is the desire to enjoy union. The queens of Dvārakā have *samanjasā-rati*, which respects standards of religious conduct, and is awakened by the regulative principles of marriage. “I am His wife, He is my husband” – such sentiments limit this *rati*. The *rati* of the residents of Gokula is *samarthā*. This *rati* splendidly goes beyond the boundaries of social restrictions and religious principles. *Samarthā-rati* is actually not improper. Indeed, from the perspective of the ultimate transcendental objective, only this *rati* is correct in the highest sense. *Sādhāraṇī-rati* is like a jewel; *samanjasā-rati* is like *cintāmaṇi*, and *samarthā-rati* is supremely rare, like the Kaustubha-*maṇi*.

asked him, “For whom are you making these?” he answered, “For myself, not for you.” In this way love remained in full power. If that man would answer, “I do this only to please you. I have no selfish desire,” the love would decrease.

*Prema-Samputa* (text 68) tells us: “When the light of *prema* illuminates the home of the heart of the *rasika* hero and heroine, it continues to shine brightly. But it at once becomes faint or dies if it goes out through the gateway of the mouth, that is, when expressed by words. If one verbalizes one’s love, ‘I love you so much. I cannot live without you,’ then the *prema* will not last long. Even if it does remain, its strength is reduced. To that degree that the *prema* is not displayed outside, in that same amount it remains very deep and condensed in the heart.”

Because the *vraja-devīs* have no desire for their own happiness, the Lord confesses in the verse ‘*na pāraye’ham*’ (SB 10.32.22) that He is controlled by such love. “O *gopīs*, our meetings together are filled with completely pure love. You have severed the chain of household life, which is very difficult to break, and you have stepped beyond the rules of social etiquette in order to serve Me. Even if I have a long life like the demigods, I still will not be able to repay you for even a particle of your *sevā* and your *prema*. The only way this debt can be absolved is if, out of your saintly nature, you agree. I am forever indebted to you for your unmatched love.” All the scriptures confirm that Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be controlled only by selfless love and never by lust. Therefore, the *prema* of the *vraja-devīs*, who possess *samarthā-rati*, is only for Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure; in every way it is topmost and is beyond description.

Kṛṣṇa tells the *gopīs*, “I am afraid of committing a sin by resting My feet on your breasts.” The *gopīs* reply, “Your lotus feet destroy the sins of all surrendered souls. Therefore there is no reason for You to fear sin. How can He who eliminates sins be afraid of sin?”

Then Kṛṣṇa says, “Your breasts are very hard. How can I put My soft feet on them? Won’t I feel pain?” The *gopīs* answer, “*tṛṇa-carānugaṁ* – With these feet You follow the cows as they graze, and they go to areas difficult to reach. If Your feet can tolerate walking in those places, then what discomfort will they experience from the hardness of our breasts? Instead, it will be very pleasing to them because we are eager for Your amorous pleasure.”

Kṛṣṇa again speaks, “Will it be proper to put My feet on your breasts which are decorated with many jeweled ornaments?” The *gopīs* reply, “Śrī-

*niketanam* – Your feet are the abode of all beauty, therefore they will serve as the best ornament on our breasts.”

Kṛṣṇa says, “But I am afraid of your husbands.” Then the *gopīs* encourage Him, *Phaṇi-phaṇārpitaṁ* – You were not afraid to set Your feet on the hoods of the poisonous Kāliya serpent, why then should You fear our husbands?”

#### VERSE 8

*madhurayā girā valgu-vākyayā  
budha-manojñayā puṣkarekṣaṇa  
vidhi-karīr imā vīra muhyatīr  
adhara-sīdhunāpyāyayasva naḥ*

**O Kamala-nayana, O lotus-eyed one! Your extremely sweet voice and enchanting speech, which attract astute intellectuals, are bewildering us. O munificent hero, please restore the lives of Your maidservants with the divine ambrosia of Your lips, sweeter than the sweetest *amṛta*.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

O lotus eyed one! We are bewildered by Your sweet voice and most heartfelt words, which steal the minds of grave intellectuals, who consequently lose their sobriety. O hero, we are Your maidservants. Enliven us with the nectar of Your lips.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Remembering the flow of sweet words from Kṛṣṇa’s fragrant mouth, the *gopīs* experienced such a strong desire to relish the nectar of His lips that the agony of separation reached the stage of *moha*, complete bewilderment. Fearing that this condition would be very difficult to overcome, the *gopīs* again ask for some rejuvenating tonic in addition to a medicated ointment – that is, they request the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips coupled with an embrace in this verse beginning ‘*madhurayā*.’

“We are bewildered by Your sweet voice. Therefore You should revive us with the nectar of Your lips, otherwise we will die.” Kṛṣṇa asks, “Why will you die?” “Because we will remember the sweet words You spoke, such as

‘*svāgatam vo mahābhāgāḥ* – O most fortunate ladies, have you reached here safely?’ We also remember the words You spoke to Śrīmatī Rādhikā:

*kathorā bhava mṛdvī va  
prāṇas tvam asī rādhike  
astī nānya cakorasya  
candra-lekham vinā gatiḥ  
(Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Vidagdha-mādhava)*

“O Rādhikā, whether You be cruel to Me in Your sulky mood or merciful, You are always My life and soul. Just as a *cakora* bird cannot live without the moonbeams, I cannot live without You.’

“Sugary words such as these and many others equally sweet bring us back to life. But remembering such sweet words now, we are becoming completely bewildered.” ‘*Muhyatiḥ*’ means that they reached the stage of bewilderment just preliminary to death.

Kṛṣṇa asks, “In what way do you find my words striking?” The *gopīs* answer, “Your style of speaking is most agreeable, sweeter than sweet, accompanied by Your charming voice, the special choice of the sounds and the tenderness of *prema*. Thus any living being will be enchanted by Your speech. Your gentle and beautiful words – which are structured according to proper grammar with subject and predicate – express Your desires, worthiness and affection. Furthermore, Your words bestow bliss to erudite scholars because of the way You express Your thoughts – sometimes using the direct meaning of words, sometimes elliptical expressions and sometimes indirect meanings. Laden with desire and emotion, Your utterances are decorated with linguistic ornaments and are full of deep meaning.”

The word ‘*imā*,’ meaning ‘these *gopīs*,’ indicates that they are dying right in front of Kṛṣṇa’s eyes at that very moment, therefore there can be no doubt about their condition. They say, “Why can’t You give us what we desire? Certainly You should comply with us.” Kṛṣṇa may say, “What you are asking for – the nectar of My lips – is not proper for giving. How can I give it to you?” The *gopīs* reply, “*He vīra*, O hero, You are not only a very merciful person, You are also most munificent. Therefore, there is nothing You cannot give. O lotus-eyed one! When You speak sweet words with a gentle smile on Your lotus face, casting inviting glances, You can bewilder anybody.”



Līlāśuka Śrīpad Bilvamaṅgala describes Kṛṣṇa's sweet talk in *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Karṇāmṛta* (verse 33): "O beautiful one, when You, maddened with pride, lovingly converse with the maidens of Vraja, then there is no limit to resourcefulness in Your eloquence, resulting from Your youthful age. Your words are full of nectar and give great pleasure to the mind by Your poetic expression and figurative manner of speech. Your words, accompanied by the glances of Your large lotus eyes (*puṣkarekṣaṇa*), repeatedly manifest in the hearts of pious persons, overwhelmed by loving emotions for You." The commentary on the rest of the verse is according to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda.

Another meaning can be read into the *gopīs*' speech: "We were bewildered by the sweetness of Your words. Thus, having lost all discrimination, we became Your maidservants, being fully confused." Those words can be understood in yet another way: "We became Your maidservants, being attracted by hearing Your sweet voice. Now, not hearing this sweet sound, we are bewildered, tossed about in the pain of separation from You."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

"O My jewel-like beloveds, more dear to Me than My life airs! O My precious sweethearts, I cannot be indifferent to You because you are the very breath of My being. You can have complete confidence in Me – I am your slave, fully chained in the golden shackles of love. Trust Me. I am in your hands; consider Me as one of your ornaments, a bangle that you wear on your wrists."

Remembering how Kṛṣṇa used to speak like this, one *gopī* exclaims, "*Madhura yā* – Your words are sweet because each syllable contains a deep indirect meaning. Extremely pleasing to the ear, they consist of beautiful phrases overflowing with charming (*valgu*) words and astonishing meanings. By their power to penetrate the mind they bewilder intelligent persons (*budha-manojñayā*). Your words throw us, Your maidservants (*vidhi-karīr*), into an embarrassed condition. We relished their sweetness to such a degree that we became intoxicated in bliss. Please rejuvenate us with the nectar of Your lips."

There can be another meaning, "Please fill us, who were previously beguiled thus, with the nectar of Your lips and in this way bewilder us again."

VERSE 9

*tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam  
kavibhir īḍitaṁ kalmaṣāpaham  
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ  
bhuvi gṛṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

**Narrations of Your pastimes overflow with nectar – such life-giving descriptions constitute the only wealth in the otherwise bleak existence of those suffering in separation. Throughout the ages, Your devoted poets, such as Brahmā, Śiva and the four Kumāras, repeatedly sing out Your glories. These narrations, bestowing auspiciousness upon their listeners, vanquish the distress resulting from all their past sins, and bestow the wealth of *prema*. Those who broadcast Your transcendental activities are truly the greatest benefactors in the world.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* speak, “In separation from You we were close to dying, but pious persons told us ambrosial stories about You and thus cheated us from dying.” This is explained in the verse ‘*tava kathāmṛtaṁ*.’ ‘*Kathāmṛtaṁ*’ means that the narrations of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes are *amṛta*, full of nectar. ‘*Tapta-jīvanam*’ – this is so because they rejuvenate souls who are burning in Your absence. Its power far exceeds the famous heavenly nectar. ‘*Kavibhiḥ*’ – therefore all those who perceive the Absolute Truth (*brahma-jñas*) glorify it, knowing celestial nectar to be inferior. ‘*Kalmaṣāpaham*’ – tales of Your deeds root out material desires and auspicious and inauspicious results arising from fruitive activities such as giving in charity. The nectar of Paradise is devoid of such virtues; instead, it intensifies material desire. Narrations of Your life are also ‘*śravaṇa-maṅgala*,’ bestowing auspiciousness to those who merely hear them. Thus one need not observe any rituals to relish the nectar of Your *kathā*, but to drink celestial nectar one must undergo some prescribed procedure. The nectar of discussions about You is exquisitely charming and soothing (*śrīmat*), whereas celestial nectar arouses a drunken state. So how is it possible to compare a piece of glass to a precious jewel? Those who spread

on Earth this *kathāmrta* by describing Your pastimes actually bestow the most precious gift (*bhūri-dā*) – they give life to those who hear it.”

The last line of the verse can be interpreted in this way: “Those who spread on Earth the nectar of narrations about Your pastimes must have performed many pious activities in their past lives.” The *gopīs* conclude, “When even those who spread the nectar of Your *kathā* are so fortunate, then what to speak of those who directly behold You? Therefore we pray, please appear before us.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Suspecting that Kṛṣṇa may ask them, “Without getting the nectar of My lips, how is it that you are still alive?” the *gopīs* attribute the glory of their discussing His pastimes as the reason. Their own pleasing experience stands as evidence<sup>10</sup> of this glory.

“*Tava kathāmrta* – narrations of Your pastimes are indeed nectar, and because of their great power we are still alive.” A question may arise: how is it like *amṛta*? The *gopīs* reply, “Discussions about You are just like nectar because *hari-kathā* itself is the goal, having value on its own, and is also the means to achieve other goals.” In other words, many people seek the demigods’ *amṛta* because it is full of flavor; it simultaneously removes disease and discrepancies as it nourishes and gives strength. Similarly, just by hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathāmrta*, one achieves the supreme goal – *kṛṣṇa-prema* – and as a side effect, it saves one from lust, anger, etc., and all other material calamities, such as fainting due to some disease or sudden death. Furthermore, it is the *sādhana* to attain other fruits, and is itself also the destination. To prove this statement, the *gopīs* are saying, “This *kathāmrta* gives life to suffering persons, it is praised by the poets, it eradicates all kinds of sins, it bestows auspiciousness just by hearing, it is most excellent, and is famous throughout the whole world.”

.....  
 10 The *gopīs* have heard from the sages that the nectar of heaven is supremely sweet, but it comes to an end, and nectar in the form of liberation stops material sufferings and gives no experience of bliss. But hearing and glorifying the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *kathā*, one relishes the supreme sweet mellow, which never ends. By hearing that *kathā*, one experiences the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s beauty, attributes and pastimes in full, and this is what the *gopīs* have realized.

*‘Tapta-jīvanam’* – The *gopīs* illustrate the life-giving quality of this *kathā*. It enlivens miserable persons. It saves from death those who suffer in the fire of separation, then what to speak of those who suffer in the material world.

The *gopīs* confirm that this nectarean *kathā* is the life even for great personalities like Brahmā, who, standing on the side of the path, offer their respects to Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet when He returns with the cows at the end of the day (*vandyamāna-caranaḥ pathi vṛddhaiḥ* – SB 10.35.22). When Kṛṣṇa places the flute on His lips and plays a sweet melody, Indra, Śiva, Brahmā and other demigods faint out of bliss. Hearing the high and low trills of that flute melody, the demigods, though they are the most knowledgeable sages, are unable to comprehend its structure and, dumbstruck, bow their heads (SB 10.35.15).

*‘Kavibhir īḍitam* – great poets like Brahmā, Śiva, the four Kumāras and other self-realized souls (*ātmārāmas*) glorify these ambrosial narrations.” The word *‘īḍita’* (described) has originated from the union of the verbal root *īḍ* and the suffix *ta*. This suffix indicates the present tense. Therefore the meaning is, “Great scholars glorify Your *kathāmṛta* by simply repeating the words of us Vrajavāsīs. They are unable to praise it with their own words because Your confidential pastimes remain hidden from them.”

*‘Kalmaśāpaham* – the nectar of talks about You is so powerful that there is no one who would not like it.” By its power everyone acquires taste (*ruci*) for it. Facing some impediments in stimulating taste, this nectar destroys not only the result of pious and sinful material activity, but even the result of offense to itself. Thus it arouses taste for hearing the *kathā*.

*‘Śravaṇa-maṅgalam* – Because of the power of this *kathā*, if one just hears it and does not even understand the meaning, his whole life becomes auspicious, that is, he attains the supreme goal [*kṛṣṇa-prema*]. And if someone knows the meaning of this *kathā*, what can we say about them?”

“This nectar of *kathā* is *śrīmat*, sublimely beautiful. *Ātatam* – it is all-pervading because everyone speaks Your glories everywhere. For this alone it exceeds the fame of celestial nectar, which, being limited by nature, is not available for everyone, and thus becomes the cause of war between the demigods and demons. Your nectar, on the other hand, is infinite, and its benefits are available to everyone. Those who speak about You to others are the most magnanimous persons on Earth. Especially when such persons shower this nectar on Gokula, they revive our lives when we are burning in separation from You.” Therefore Brahmā and other devotees

of Kṛṣṇa distribute the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes throughout the world, outside of Vraja. In Vraja, all the Vrajavāsīs sing about Kṛṣṇa, but it should be understood that the maidens of Vraja hear such narrations from their *sakhīs*. This means all the *sakhīs* are *bhūri-dā*.

Alternative meaning: fearing that Kṛṣṇa may say, "O distraught *gopīs*! Why then don't You spend time relishing the nectar of such narrations until I fulfill your desire?" they reply, "Narrations about You are like death for us. They kill us." Kṛṣṇa may ask, "How is that possible?" The *gopīs* answer, "*tapta-jīvanam* – They burn our life airs because when we hear those narrations, the fire of separation increases millions of times over. Thus they become the cause of our death." The inner meaning is this: "Narrations about You produce the same effect on us as drops of water that sizzle when they fall on boiling oil. They only increase our suffering. In the same way, we *gopīs* are like oil boiling in separation from You. When a drop of *kathāmṛta* goes in our ear, instead of cooling us, it sputters and evaporates, and greatly increases the heat of separation."

"*Kalmaṣāpaham* – Only poets who are Your devotees praise such narrations for their ability to destroy sin, not others. Also, we were told that hearing about Your activities bestows all kinds of auspiciousness, but we never had such an experience ourselves. '*Śrīmad-ātataṁ*' – because Your *kathā* is very beautiful (*śrī*), the words describing You have developed pride (*mad*); maddened by their own beauty, they are disrespecting us, Your own people, and, spurred by their pride, are spreading everywhere (*ātataṁ*). Thus Your *kathā* is like death, and those who narrate them are *bhūri-da*, the destroyers (*da*)<sup>11</sup> of life (*bhūri*)."<sup>11</sup> The *gopīs* speak in this way only out of great pain of separation. They conclude, "In the hope that You will come, we want to remain alive for a few more seconds. Therefore we do not want those narrations to kill us."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

In the previous verse the *gopīs* describe the glories of the honeyed words flowing out of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mouth. Now they say, "O Kṛṣṇa, who can possibly describe the glorious sweetness of the words flowing from Your mouth? No

.....  
11 In this interpretation the syllable *da* stands for the verb do, which means 'to cut.'

one, because it is beyond description! Even when sung by virtuous persons, the nectar of narrations about Your name, beauty, qualities, etc., exceeds the taste of the well-known heavenly ambrosia and the nectar of liberation.” With this intention the *gopīs* speak this verse ‘*tava kathāmṛtam*.’

Kṛṣṇa may ask, “Why are they compared to nectar?” The *gopīs* explain, “*tapta-jīvanam* – Narrations about You rejuvenate those who suffer from severe diseases and from existence in the material world. Furthermore, they give life to those who pine in separation from You. Therefore discussions about You are pure nectar that far surpasses celestial nectar and the nectar of liberation.”

“*Kavibhir īḍitam* – Great poets like Prahlāda and Dhruva glorify the nectar of Your *kathā*: ‘O Lord, upon hearing about Your transcendental pastimes, souls experience great bliss. One cannot experience such bliss even upon realizing *brahma*. Then what can I say about the temporary enjoyment in Paradise, which is slated to be slashed by the sword of time, causing one to fall back down to the world of death’” (SB 4.9.10)? It is not found anywhere that celestial nectar and the nectar of liberation are glorified in this way. Thus, according to the conclusion of the poets, they cannot be considered relishable.”

“*Kalmaṣāpaham* – The nectar of tales about You destroys the results of sinful activities from previous lives. Celestial nectar, on the other hand, does not have this power. Instead, it increases passion and in this way causes men to sin even more. The nectar of liberation also does not destroy sinful reactions.”

“*Śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ* – The nectar of Your *kathā* is extremely tasteful; it fulfills desires and brings auspiciousness to those who chance to hear it. Every moment these narrations are retold (*ātatam*) by Your devotees, thus bestowing even the wealth (*śrīmat*) of *prema*. The other two types of nectar do not have such qualities. ‘*Bhuvī grṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*’ – Those who speak or glorify this *kathā* are the only true benefactors (*bhūri-dā*) of the world. Even if one offers them everything he has, still he can not repay such persons.”

There is another meaning in these words: “Narrations about You are sweet only when You are present nearby. Otherwise they cause great disturbance. *Kathā* about You brings on death (*mṛtam*).” Kṛṣṇa asks, “How is that?” The *gopīs* reply, “*Tapta-jīvanam* – it burns up our life airs.”

Another meaning: “This *kathā* makes us feel just like a drop of water falling in boiling oil – hearing Your *kathā* while burning in separation from You simply increases our suffering,” Kṛṣṇa asks, “Why, then, do the *Purāṇas* and other scriptures praise that *kathāmṛta* so much?” The *gopīs* reply, “*Kavibhir īḍitaṁ* – great poets like Vyāsadeva glorify Your pastimes because it is the nature of poets to do so. They are very expert in inventing stories and exaggerating the subject. One cannot trust such eulogies presented by the poets.” This is the meaning.

“*Kalmaṣāpaham* – By hearing narrations about You, one experiences the great misery of separation in which all of one’s previous sins and offenses are destroyed.”

[Here the *gopīs* speak with irony.] “*Śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ* – It is auspicious for ordinary people hear to hear narrations about You. Thus these stories will continue to be spoken. But if intelligent persons, considering the suffering which results from hearing such narrations, cease to listen to them, then certainly recitation of these topics will stop.

“Rich and evil men, intoxicated and blinded by their wealth, want everyone on Earth to die. Therefore they hire speakers of the scriptures and order them to tell stories about You in every town and village. In this way those who speak about You kill (*da*) their audience. They spread the trap of *kathā* and, appearing to be very gentle, they sit down in front of their audiences and proceed to kill masses of people; therefore they are even more sinful than hunters, who merely kill a few animals. Intelligent persons will certainly avoid such speakers.”

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* confirms this point in Verse 10.47.18:

*yad-anucarita-līlā-karṇa-pīyūṣa-vipruṭ-  
sakṛd-adana-vidhūta-dvandva-dharmā vinaṣṭāḥ  
sapadi gṛha-kuṭumbaṁ dīnam utsrjya dīnā  
bahava iha vihaṅgā bhikṣu-caryāṁ caranti*

“Those who have relished with their ears one drop of nectarean narrations of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes give up all dualities of material life. They leave their homes and come to Vṛndāvana, wandering about as humble beggars.”

The *gopīs*’ criticism of narrations about Kṛṣṇa is but a reflection of their inner fire of separation. In truth they praise the *kathā* and its speakers.

VERSE 10

*prahasitaṁ priya-prema-vīkṣaṇaṁ  
viharaṇaṁ ca te dhyāna-maṅgalaṁ  
rahasi saṁvido yā hṛdi sprśaḥ  
kuhaka no manaḥ kṣobhayanti hi*

**O darling beloved, we were immersed in blissfully remembering Your special smiles, the loving looks in Your eyes, the intimate exchanges and heart-touching conversations that we enjoyed with You in a secluded place. Such meditation bestows supreme joy. O treacherous friend! Now remembering those times with You troubles our hearts.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Kṛṣṇa may say, “If all you say is true, then you can attain peace just by listening to *kathā* about Me, and there is no need for Me to appear before you.” The *gopīs* reply with this verse ‘*prahasitaṁ*.’ “Our minds are already agitated remembering all the pastimes we enjoyed with You; we cannot be pacified simply by hearing about them.” They call out, “O beloved, O cheater!” In this verse the word ‘*saṁvidaḥ*’ means ‘playful, suggestive hints.’

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

According to the first meaning, the *gopīs* fear that Kṛṣṇa may say, “You thoughtless ladies! Why are you so deeply attached to Me? I am beyond your reach. And, nurturing great affection for Me, why are you not pacified simply by hearing about Me?” The *gopīs* feel no satisfaction from listening to conversations about Him, and in the following three verses criticize Him for previously showing them great affection.

According to the second meaning the *gopīs* say, “We cannot continue to live much longer just clinging to the hope of finding You.” Indirectly they mean to say, “Those who have never seen You and are not familiar with Your unique, playful gestures, will not be burning up in the hope to meet with You. And those who have not heard Your sweet, loving words – such persons can be satisfied simply by hearing about You and they can stay alive with the expectation of eventually attaining You. But we remember Your hearty laugh



accompanied by a glance full of love, the pastimes of roaming about with You, and the heart-touching messages You spoke in a secluded place. All these have made us anxious and bound our hearts with the hope of meeting You again. Now we cannot tolerate another moment without Your *darśana*.” This is how the *gopīs* express their mood in this verse ‘*prahasitam*.’

First meaning of ‘*prahasitam*’: “When You saw us, You were so delighted that You could not restrain from displaying a big smile and a hearty laugh.” Kṛṣṇa might ask, “What was that laugh like?” The *gopīs* answer, “That laugh was accompanied by a glance full of love, ever-changing and ever-fresh. First You gave us a very special smile, after that You looked at us with intense passion. Seeing that, we abandoned our self-control, shyness, family considerations, fear and all other constraints, and became the servants of Your lotus feet. Thus our lives achieved success. In this way, with Your hearty laugh and loving glance You used to make us mindless.”

‘*Viharaṇam*’ – playing with Your *sakhās* of the same age. Kṛṣṇa might ask, “What was special about those pastimes?” The *gopīs* answer, “*dhyāna-maṅgalam* – Meditating on them brings auspiciousness. Remembrance of such pastimes nourishes our hope to see You because by Your actions You were expressing the desire to meet with us. When playing with Your friends, You used to put Your left hand on the shoulder of one *sakhā* while twirling a pastime lotus (*līlā-kamala*) with Your right hand. Seeing You displaying such captivating gestures, we used to get submerged in an inexplicable ocean of emotions. In this way You disclosed Your innermost intentions. The vision of those gestures in our hearts makes us desperate to meet with You.

‘*Rahasi samvidaḥ*’ – In a far-off lonely place, You began to play on Your flute, calling each one of us by name, and engaged in joking conversations (*narmālāpa*) with us.” Kṛṣṇa might ask, “What kind of joking conversations?” The *gopīs* answer, “They were heart-touching.” This shows that, out of all amorous activities, *narmālāpa* is the most intimate. The word ‘*yā*’ (which) indicates something very astonishing: “The joking words You spoke to us in a very lonely place were extremely wonderful, and deeply touched our hearts.” *Yā hṛdi sprśaḥ*’ (which touch the heart) – this applies to all the words preceeding *yā* – *prahasitam*, *prema-vikṣaṇam*, *viharaṇam* and *rahasi samvidaḥ*. Each subsequent action is better than the previous one, all of them touching the heart.

By calling Kṛṣṇa '*kuhaka*,' a cheat, the *gopīs* mean to say, "Your sweet smile and other endearing actions end up bringing misery. Your intention is simply to cheat. Only an outrageous rogue like You can do this." This is the mood. The *gopīs* use the word '*naḥ*' (us) in plural number to emphasize, "This is our experience – all of us testify to this. Your gentle smile, Your sidelong glances requesting to meet with us, Your suggestive words – all of these ever-fresh and novel – cause us great disturbance and agitation. '*Hī*' (indeed) – certainly these are agitating us." The *gopīs* are affirming the reason for their unrest. '*Priya*' means one who tempts. "You are our only beloved, and You are always enticing our minds. As we love You alone, our minds are always uneasy and we are always unhappy. This time, again You are deceiving us." With this intention they address Him as *kuhaka*, "O cheater."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S  
***Sārārtha-Darśinī***

The *gopīs* say, "When You are out of our sight, we get no satisfaction. And everything that reminds us of You gives us great pain." They express this in the verse beginning '*prahasitam*.' "*He priya*, Your sweet gentle smile, Your loving glances, Your amorous meetings with us (*vihāra saṁprayoga*), Your pleasant conversations (*saṁvidah*) in a secluded place – all these entered deep in our hearts. Now, remembering all these in Your absence causes us tremendous grief. We wish we could forget them, but we cannot.

"*Dhyāna-maṅgalam* – It is said that remembering these four kinds of exchanges with us brings auspiciousness and bliss. But in truth it only disturbs our minds. At first Your actions – Your gentle smile, Your loving glance, roaming around the forests with You, and intimately chatting in private – make us feel happy, but shortly thereafter they submerge us in an ocean of misery. Therefore You are a cheater. The poisonous, spicy fritters fed by a swindler are initially very tasty and give pleasure, but soon they start burning the victim and finally kill him."

VERSE II

*calasi yad vrajāc cārayan paśūn*  
*nalina-sundaram nātha te padam*  
*śīla-trṇāṅkuraiḥ sīdatīti naḥ*  
*kalilatām manaḥ kānta gacchati*

***He nātha, he kānta, O beloved master! Your lovely lotus feet are softer than a lotus. When You leave Vraja to take the cows out for grazing, Your lotus feet suffer great pain from dry husks, sharp pebbles and spikes of grass. Thinking about this makes our minds uneasy.***

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

The *gopīs* say, "Just look, our minds are melting with love for You. Why are You cheating us again? What is the purpose of such behavior?" They express these feelings in this verse beginning with '*calasi*' and the next. Here the *gopīs* say, "*He nātha, O master, O beloved! When You take the cows out to graze, Your beautiful, gentle lotus feet are disturbed, poked by hard grains, sharp grass and pointed sprouts. The thought of their suffering sets our minds off reeling. Thus we are harassed by the idea that You may be distressed.*"

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs* express the following mood in two verses, the first one beginning with '*calasi*.' "It does not happen just occasionally that You bring us sorrow. Both meeting with You and separation from You are equally frustrating." Kṛṣṇa might ask, "How is it possible that I cause such misery?" The *gopīs* reply, "*vrajād* – from the time You leave Vraja to take the cows out for grazing until You return, we worry the whole time that You will be running here and there chasing after the cows, and Your soft feet will be hurt by sharp grains, dry grasses and sprouts." This statement shows that the *gopīs* are truly anxious for Kṛṣṇa's welfare. "*Paśūn-cārayan* – You take uncountable numbers of cows out for grazing. For that reason You are bound to quit the road and wander from place to place." The inner meaning of their words is that "animals have no intelligence; therefore without thinking they will go to places that are troublesome for Your lotus feet."

'*Śilam*' means sharp tips of forest grains that have fallen on the ground. *Hari-vaṁśa* 2.8.23 tells us, "In a dense forest where sunrays cannot penetrate, the ground is covered with thorns." But this does not mean that all forest grounds will be ridden with thorns. Therefore, in this verse the *gopīs* have not mentioned thorns.

The *gopīs* lovingly address Him in two ways, “*He nātha*, O master, You are the Lord of the Vrajavāsīs, so it certainly unacceptable that Your lotus feet should be so troubled. *He kānta*, O beloved, Your tender lotus feet should be touched only by our soft hands, not by sharp grains and dry grasses. This is the reason why we feel so utterly frustrated.” There is another meaning: “Being *nātha*, master of Vraja, all the inhabitants of Vraja are pained to see You suffering, but as You are our *kānta*, we are more severely affected.”

The word *nātha* can be interpreted in still another way: “*He nātha*, You who torture Your close friends!” The *gopīs* propose that Kṛṣṇa may say, “O wise ladies, do not be anxious. Indeed, you should forget about any discomfort I may feel.” They explain: “*kānta* – O lover, even a discerning person cannot help worrying for his dear ones. Therefore, we cannot stop worrying about Your feet being afflicted (*kalilatā*).” According to another meaning, the *gopīs* imply by the word *nātha*, “*He prāṇeśvara*, O Lord of our lives, if we did not love You, then we would not be affected by the pain coming to Your feet. But as You are the master of our lives, whatever is painful to You, we, being Your maidservants, will experience that same pain.”

The scriptures illustrate the ill effects of love as follows:

*yāvata kurute jantuḥ sambandhān manasaḥ priyān  
tāvato'sya nikhanyante hṛdaye śoka-śaṅkavaḥ*

“The deeper one’s relationship is with somebody, to that degree sorrow and fear pierce his heart.”

In the light of this verse, Kṛṣṇa suggests to the *gopīs*, “If this is the case, then give up this love. Remove it from your hearts.” The *gopīs* answer, “*manaḥ kānta gacchati* – O beloved, what can we do? Even if we don’t want to be disturbed, our minds are uncontrollable. Fearing that You may encounter some mishap, we automatically become disheartened. Our love for You is so great that it overpowers our minds, robbing us of prudence and the ability to make any resolve.” Fearing that Kṛṣṇa may object, “But your minds belong to you,” the *gopīs* explain, “It is not the fault of our minds. O Manohara, O beloved who charms the mind, You are so attractive that You have stolen our minds. Thus, they are with You, and not with us. Ah, stop wandering in the forest and quickly come here! Give us Your *darśana* and return our minds.” This is the intended meaning.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* say, "This is not the only time that You bring us anguish. Other times also, when You are in pain, You try to make us miserable as well." Therefore they are speaking this verse '*calasi*.' "As soon as You take the cows out for grazing, we imagine how Your feet, more beautiful and tender than lotus flowers, are wounded by grain-spikes and sprouting grass, and our minds become racked with pain."

Their words can be interpreted in a different way: "*Kalilatām* – Our minds are accustomed (*lati*) to arguing (*kalī*). Thus our minds keep on quarreling with us." Here is an example of such an argument: "O mind, if Kṛṣṇa suffers from walking in the forest, then why does He leave Vraja to go to that forest every day? I think you panic in vain." The mind retorts, "You brainless cowerd maidens! The soles of His feet are softer than land lotuses. There are grain-spikes, grass shoots, twigs and stones in the forest. Do you think they will not hurt His feet?" The *gopīs* try to make the mind understand, saying, "Silly mind, surely Kṛṣṇa walks on the soft, sandy paths. No need to worry."

The charmed mind replies, "O unintelligent Vraja maidens! Tell Me, do the cows look for a soft path when searching for fresh grass?" The *gopīs* reply to the mind, "O you, blinded by love, the cows have no discrimination and go anywhere. But Kṛṣṇa has eyes. Why would He walk on hard grains and sharp grass?" The mind retorts, "Pity on you, who are devoid of even the smell of love. What happens if occasionally He perchance sets foot on such a sharp object?" Now the *gopīs* agree with the mind, "O brother mind, you are right! The Creator has given us life only to suffer this agony." The mind says, "O miserable ones, you can remain alive, but now, accompanied by your life airs, I am going to abandon your bodies."

**VERSE 12**

*dina-parikṣaye nīla-kuntalair  
vanaruhānanam bibhrad āvṛtam  
dhana<sup>12</sup>-rajasvalam darśayan muhur  
manasi naḥ smaram vīra yacchasi*

.....  
12 In some editions it is read as *ghana*.

**Just as the day is declining You return from the forest. Then we see Your face, decorated by dark locks of hair and covered with a thick layer of dust raised by the cows. Our beloved hero, You repeatedly impress us with Your beauty and thus arouse in our hearts amorous desire to enjoy with You.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

At dusk, when the day departs, the lotus of Your face is surrounded by dark curly locks, which look like a swarm of bumblebees. A layer of pollen-like dust flung by the cows' hooves envelopes that lotus-like face. By repeatedly showing us Your face, You only arouse *kāma* in our hearts, but You cheater, You deny us Your association.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava-Toṣaṇī***

The phrase '*dina-parikṣaye*,' meaning 'at the tail end of the day,' expresses the *gopīs*' deep sorrow. They describe the natural and exquisite beauty of Kṛṣṇa's face: dark curly locks of hair (*nīla-kuntalair*) fall on His forehead, covering (*āvṛtam*) His face. Its luster concealed, His handsome face becomes more enchanting. A thick layer of dust (*dhana-rajāsvalam*) further increases this effect. The book *Viśva-Prakāśa* explains that the word *dhana* has two meanings: a multitude of cows and great wealth. Therefore, it should be understood that Kṛṣṇa's lotus face is covered by the dust upraised by the cows' hooves. The *gopīs* imply that even the dust enhances Kṛṣṇa's beauty, as is explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.8.23:

*tan-mātarau nija-sutau ghr̥ṇayā snuvantyaū  
pañkāṅga-rāga-rucirāṁ upagrhya dorbhyām*

"Their bodies smeared all over with a paste of mud, cow dung and cow urine, the two brothers Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma looked especially captivating."

In this way, the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's body is increased by the dust flying from the cows' hooves. It should be understood that Kṛṣṇa, adorned in this special cowherder's garb, is *uddīpana* (stimulant) for the *gopīs*' love for Him. Such adornment is the external reason why He inspires amorous

desire. And on the internal level the *gopīs* explain, “*dina-parikṣaye* – You show us Your face at dusk, the time that automatically awakens amorous passion.” The dusk and the dark curly locks are the two elements that stimulate the arousal of *kāma*. “If You would go directly home and not show us Your face, then You would not inspire so much *kāma*. But instead, You show us Your face day after day.”

The *gopīs* explain that under the pretext of protecting the cows Kṛṣṇa shows them His face again and again and thus continuously invokes their love. “We attempt to suppress that love by the strength of logic, but You repeatedly inflame our minds (*manasi*). In this way, desire for You fully pervades our intelligence, and keeps on increasing, with no indication that it will decrease. Thus we cannot resist any longer.” This statement indicates the power and the all-pervading effect of burning amorous desire (*kāma-pīḍā*). Their words have yet another meaning: “*Smara*, amorous desire, arouses agony when one remembers one’s beloved. You personally instill this *smara* in us.” In this way they describe the intensity of their love, and also indicate Kṛṣṇa’s glories indirectly.

The *gopīs* glorify Kṛṣṇa’s prowess by addressing Him as ‘*vīra*,’ hero. In the frustration of unrequited love they imply, “You are a hero only on the strength of torturing us by showering us with arrows of Cupid – for nothing else.” These words spoken in sarcasm echo their loving anger. The *vraja-gopīs*’ describing His chivalry serves to stimulate their emotions. With this sort of mood, they repeatedly say, “Alas, even in front of our elders in Vraja, just seeing You dressed in Your cowherd outfit, we experienced the rise of amorous desire, causing us great perturbation. Then in the remote forest on the full-moon night You appeared as the charming and perfectly decorated hero ready for romance. We shared loving exchanges and relished beautiful sentiments, and after that we lost You. So now, what is there to say about our condition? As we remember You in separation, our lust is provoked. Therefore, do not tarry. Quickly come and save us.” This is the mood.

This verse and the next two express another attitude: “O beloved, every day You go off leaving our desires unfulfilled. Despite Your neglect, still our hearts are filled only with loving feelings for You – we are not callous towards You. You inspire the arousal of *smara* in our hearts; they are not operating by their own volition. This amorous desire, due to the action of our hearts, lovingly flows towards You. Despite our *kāma* not being

satisfied, still our hearts are not dry due to the natural flow of *sneha*. When we meet with You, You only stimulate *kāma* in us; the way You associate with us is not conducive to an exchange of mutual affection. Our behavior with You is simple and full of love, but You are deceitful in all of Your actions. Obviously You have no affection for us.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha-Darśinī***

The *gopīs* say, “You are not willing to make us cheerful even when we meet. When You return to Vraja from cow-grazing in the evening (*dina-parikṣaye*), dark curly locks (*ñīla-kuntalair*), swaying in the mild breeze, play on Your lotus face, which is covered with dust (*dhana-rajāsvalaṁ*) upraised by the cows’ hooves.” According to *Viśva-prakāśa* the word *dhana* has two meanings: vast numbers of cows (*godhana*) and great wealth. Here it is understood as hosts of cows.

“Your face is like a forest lotus heavily dusted with the pollen from Your wonderful, swaying garlands. You repeatedly show us this sweet beauty (*darśayan muhur*). On the pretext of looking after the cows and searching for Your friends, You roam about with the aim of letting us see You, knowing that Your *darśana* bestows the greatest bliss. Thinking, ‘Let these girls drown in an ocean of misery,’ You incite in us the pain of amorous desire (*smaraṁ yacchasi*). Convincing us that the path of virtuous behavior is like burning poison, You drove us mad. Now, having brought us to the forest, You leave us here weeping. O hero! You shoot Cupid’s arrows only to destroy the chastity of the ladies of Vraja.”

VERSE 13

*praṇata-kāma-daṁ padmajārcitaṁ*  
*dharaṇi-maṇḍanaṁ dhyeyam āpadi*  
*caraṇa-paṅkajaṁ śantamaṁ ca te*  
*ramaṇa naḥ staneṣv arpayādhi-han*

**O charming lover, O destroyer of all afflictions of the mind! Your lotus feet, which fulfill the desires of Your surrendered devotees, are worshipped by the lotus-born Brahmā himself. Your lotus feet are the embellishment of the Earth. In calamity**



**only Your lotus feet are to be remembered because they relieve all misfortune, and serving them bestows supreme bliss. Kindly place those lotus feet on our breasts.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In this verse, '*praṇata-kāma-dam*,' and the next the *gopīs* pray, "Now You should desist from Your cunning behavior and fulfill our desire. O You who annihilate anxiety, O darling beloved! Brahmā worships Your lotus feet. Your feet are the most worthy object of meditation because mere remembrance of them abolishes all adversity. Furthermore, Your lotus feet, when being served, are the very form of bliss. May You place the lotuses of Your feet on our breasts, and may our *kāma* be thus mitigated."

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In the tenth verse '*prahasitam*' and the following verses, the greatest among sages Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes Kṛṣṇa's *pūrva-rāga* directly in the *gopīs*' own love-laden words. This has never been done before. He gave this explanation, presenting the *gopīs*' perception of Kṛṣṇa's intense attachment for them – such description, which no one else can give, is overflowing with *rasa*. The *vraja-devīs*, longing to directly meet with Kṛṣṇa, blame Him for their *anurāga*. In Verses 7-8 they introduced this desire and now, while singing their song they experienced the torture of love. Therefore, they again prayed by uttering this verse beginning '*praṇata*' and the next one.

'*Praṇata-kāma-dam*' – "Your lotus feet fulfilled the desires of surrendered souls like the sons of Kuvera and the wives of the serpent Kāliya. Thus one can understand that Your lotus feet bestow all desired objects. '*Padmajārcitam*' – realizing this after kidnapping the cowherd boys and calves, the lotus-born Brahmā reverentially offered respect to Your lotus feet." This is illustrated in Verse 10.35.22: "*vatsalo vraja-gavāṁ yad agadhro vandyamāna-caraṇaḥ pathi vṛddhaiḥ* – in the evening when Kṛṣṇa and His *sakhās* return to the village with all the cows, Brahmā and other exalted demigods standing along the path adore His lotus feet." Previously, in Verse 4 of this chapter, the *gopīs* said, "*vikhanasārthito* – in response to Lord Brahmā's prayer, You descended to the Earth to protect the universe."

In Verse 13 as well the *gopīs*, confirming that Brahmā worships Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, thus glorify the supreme divinity of these lotus feet.

*“Dharaṇi-maṇḍanaṁ* – O beloved, marked with a flag and other extremely pleasing and extraordinary symbols, Your feet decorate the Earth. In this way Your lotus feet display their beauty and grace. Mercifully, by the touch of Your lotus feet, You have bestowed vast auspiciousness upon Pṛthivī-devī.”

*“Dhyeyam āpadi* – Just remembering Your lotus feet removes all kinds troubles from the root. When You were holding up Govardhana, we experienced this. When Indra was very angry and sent a ferocious rainstorm to destroy Gokula, we thought of You and You lifted Govardhana Hill on Your lotus hand and saved us from Indra's devastation.” In this way the *gopīs* describe how Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet fulfill all desires (*śantamaṇi ca*). Not only that, they explain that His lotus feet are themselves the supreme goal: “Serving Your lotus feet bestows supreme satisfaction.” The purport is that remembering Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet is the process to achieve happiness. And His lotus feet themselves are the embodiment of joy.

To express that Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet destroy sorrow and give happiness, the *gopīs* address Him in two ways – as beloved (*ramaṇa*) and the destroyer of mental afflictions (*ādhi-han*). They imply, “*He ādhi-han, he ramaṇa!* You should end our pain of separation and immerse us in the bliss of Your astonishing pastimes.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“If you are convinced that I always cause you misery, then what do you need from Me?” Fearing that Kṛṣṇa might speak like this out of anger, the *gopīs* cry in great anxiety, “Alas, alas! Blinded by the reactions of our past sins, we made false allegations against You!” Now, in this verse, desiring to please Kṛṣṇa, they begin to glorify Him, affirming that He bestows all kinds bliss (*praṇata-kāma-dam*). They continue, “We need You. You are our only goal, therefore kindly soothe our grieving souls. If an offender comes and humbly takes Your shelter, You never neglect them. Rather, You fulfill all their desires.” The next two verses also express this mood.

“Although Kālīya was an offender, and his wives were implicated because of their connection with him, they prostrated before You and

offered humble prayers, thus they attained Your mercy. *‘Padmajārcitaṁ’* – Brahmā also worshipped Your lotus feet to be forgiven for his transgression. Therefore You should pardon our misbehavior and fulfill our desire.” This is the meaning.

*‘Dharaṇi-maṇḍanam* – just as Your lotus feet decorate the Earth, Your lotus feet should also adorn our breasts. *‘Dhyeyam āpadi’* – meditation on Your lotus feet alone mitigates all mishaps. Gargācārya states, *‘anena sarva-durgāni yūyam aṅjas tariṣyatha (SB 10.8.16)* – by His grace you will easily surmount all adversities.’ Therefore You should deliver us from this distress of separation.”

“For all of these reasons, we maintain that Your lotus feet are *‘santamaṁ,’* the epitome of auspiciousness and full of bliss. *He ādhi-han,* O destroyer of distress! To remove our anguish, place Your lotus feet on our breasts. It is no trouble for You to do this; rather, this will bring You great pleasure.” Therefore, the *gopīs* address Him, *“He ramaṇa,* O beloved sweetheart! If You celebrate this festival of Cupid with us, Your heart-felt desires will come to fruition.”

#### VERSE 14

*surata-vardhanam śoka-nāśanam  
svara-veṇunā suṣṭhu cumbitam  
itara-rāga-vismāraṇam nṛṇām  
vitara vīra nas te ’dharāmṛtam*

**O best of heroes, the ambrosia of Your lips enhances the joy of amorous pleasure and drives away all the sorrow of separation. This nectar, transmitted through Your warbling flute, induces all humankind to forget any other attachment. Please distribute this magic elixir to us.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“When the flute plays, it kisses Your lips, which perfume the flute-song with their nectar. O hero, give us Your lips’ ambrosia.” *‘Itara-rāga-vismāraṇam nṛṇām’* – it wipes out all types of material desires, such as ruling over the entire Earth.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

*'Adharāmṛtam'* – Kṛṣṇa's lips are nectar. Just by their touch, they increase the desire for *'surata'*, amorous enjoyment, which comes as the result of *prema*. In this way the *gopīs* are indicating that the nectar of His lips is sweet like honey and makes one mad. Becoming shy, they explain in this verse, "Even if one drinks this nectar again and again, he still cannot be satisfied. It is so powerful that it takes away sorrow (*śoka-nāśanam*); it makes us forget the painful experience of failing to achieve You."

*'Itara-rāga-vismāraṇam nṛṇām'* – It makes even men forget about their desires, such as becoming emperor of the world and achieving liberation. Then what to speak of ladies, especially us *gopīs*, who are eager to have Your association? The nectar of Your lips will make us forget all fondness for family members and social etiquette." What more can be said on this topic? By its own desire this *adharāmṛta* causes desire for anything else to vanish completely. It increases the inherent, eternal yearnings in the hearts of all men and women, and drives out any other attachment.

The *gopīs* prove the truth of their statement regarding men when they say, "*svaṛita-veṇunā suśṭhu cumbitam* – the flute, which is known to be masculine in gender, tastes the nectar of Your lips when You are playing it." This is the proof that even men forget all other affection upon attaining that nectar. The *vraja-devīs* speak like this when highly impassioned and completely absorbed in *bhāva*; thus it seems that male devotees can also relish Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *adharāmṛta*. One must deliberate upon this. Men can receive the remnants of Bhagavān's *tāmbūla*, which He gives to His special devotees who are the objects of His mercy. As the nectar of His lips and the flavor of His *tāmbūla* are non-different, men also get to relish His *adharāmṛta*, albeit indirectly.

This verse of *Gopī-gīta* sequentially describes three qualities of that nectar: *'surata-vardhanam'* – it increases longing for relishing it; *'śoka-nāśanam'* – it puts an end to all sorrow; and *'itara-rāga-vismāraṇam'* – it makes one forget all other attachments. In this way it is shown that this nectar is the supreme goal of human existence. These three qualities of Kṛṣṇa's nectarous lips are also described in the previous verse (13), therefore these two verses have the same meaning. By addressing Kṛṣṇa as a charitable hero (*vīra*), the *gopīs* imply, "There is nothing that You cannot give. Bestow Your *adharāmṛta* to us." The rest of the verse follows Śrīdhara Svāmī's explanation.

Śrīdhara Svāmī revealed that the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips is perfumed by the nectar of the flute-song. That is, when the nectar of His lips comes out of the holes of the flute, the sound is especially beautiful. In this way Kṛṣṇa's nectar-filled lips release a deep tune which inspires greed. Those who hear this enchanting melody experience great bliss and the heart-touching desire for amorous meeting. A question comes: how can one distinguish the difference between the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips and the nectarous aroma of the flute-song? According to *gandha-yukti-nyāya*, the logic of mixing fragrances, when two fragrances are put together, one can still distinguish one from the other a little bit.

There is still another meaning: "When the flute produces different sounds that arise from *ṣaḍja*<sup>13</sup>, it kisses Your nectar-like lips." In this way the *gopīs* describe how intoxicating that nectar is. "The flute, being from an entirely different species, repeatedly kisses those lips, and continuously sings out tunes that are so staggeringly melodious that they madden the whole world. The power to inebriate found in the flute has come from kissing Your ambrosial lips. No one can deny this."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* continue their prayer, "O You who are just like Dhanvantari, the best of physicians! Give some medicine to us, who, suffering from lovesickness, are falling unconscious. Bring us back to life by injecting us with some miraculous remedy. The nectar of Your lips increases the pleasure of amorous meeting (*surata-vardhanam*) and takes away pain (*śoka-nāśanam*)."<sup>13</sup> Kṛṣṇa may say, "How can I give you such extremely precious nectar for free?" The *gopīs* answer, "You are celebrated as a generous savior in regard to giving in charity because You rejuvenate the dying by giving the medicinal nectar of Your lips at no cost. Even the flute, which is merely a dry stick of bamboo, relishes this nectar when it is played upon (*svarita-veṇunā*), kissing Your lips again and again (*suṣṭhu cumbitam*). That is why the sound flowing from that dry *veṇu* becomes extremely sweet."

.....  
13 *ṣaḍja* – the first of the seven primary musical notes. According to some, it is the fourth. Meaning, it arises (*ja*) from the six (*ṣaḍ*) organs: tongue, teeth, palate, nose, throat and chest. It resembles the sounds of the peacock, and its symbol is *sā*, the first note of the musical scale.

The *gopīs* think that Kṛṣṇa may argue, “Some people are devoted to wealth, followers and family. Such unwholesome attachment is harmful for the disease. It is useless to administer this nectar-filled antidote to such persons.” They answer, “Only this nectar makes people forget about their attachments (*īlara-rāga-vismāraṇam*). This is such a powerful potion that it removes bad habits. We have experienced this ourselves. O hero, O You who are generous in distributing charity, O most compassionate one, distribute (*vitara*) this medicine among us ladies, who also belong to human society (*nṛṇām*).”

VERSE 15

*aṭati yad bhavān ahni kānanam  
truṭi yugāyate tvām apaśyatām  
kuṭila-kuntalam śrī-mukham ca te  
jaḍa udikṣatām pakṣma-kṛd dṛśām*

**O precious one! Unable to see You the whole day while You roam throughout the forests, we experience every moment as a millennium. When You return in the evening, we gaze upon Your lovely lotus face decorated with Your curly locks, but we greatly lament the blinking of our eyelids, which impedes our *darśana*. Certainly the person who created eyelids is nothing more than a fool.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* lament, “When You are outside our vision, each moment brings unlimited grief. However, when we see You, each moment bestows unending bliss. After realizing this, we renounced all attachments as *sannyāsīs* do, and came to You. Why, then, are You so eager to reject us?” Expressing their feelings in this verse beginning with ‘*aṭati*,’ as well as in the next, the *gopīs* say, “When You perform pastimes in Vṛndā’s forest during the day, all living beings who are barred from seeing You experience each moment as a millennium.” In this way they describe the sorrow of separation. They continue, “Somehow we manage to make it through the day. And in the evening when You return, we again eagerly gaze upon Your handsome lotus face, but our *darśana* is obstructed by the blinking of the eyes.” At that time

they deride Brahmā as being foolish for creating eyes that blink. They come to this conclusion because each moment is intolerable for them when their view of Kṛṣṇa's face is blocked. Thus, they infer that the sight of His face bestows unlimited bliss.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“While You are out roaming around in the forest the whole day, we are deprived of seeing You. During that time every moment seems a millennium to us.” The word ‘*yugāyate*’ indicates that time barely crawls along for those who are anguished, and thus testifies to the enormity of the *gopīs*’ sorrow. They say, “The agony of not being able to see You is excruciating, so please come to us at once.”

“*Apāśyatām*— Not seeing You, all the Vrajavāsīs feel separation, so what to speak of us? When You return at the end of the day, we want to fix our eyes on Your exquisite lotus face surrounded by Your curly locks, but our view is obstructed by the blinking of our eyelids.” In this way they criticize Brahmā as being foolish for creating eyelids. When the word ‘*ca*’ is applied to the word ‘*apāśyatām*,’ the meaning is, “If Brahmā had created eyelids only for those who never see Kṛṣṇa’s face, he would not be at fault. But it was wrong of him to create them for those who see Kṛṣṇa’s extraordinarily beautiful face decorated with curls of hair falling on His forehead.” The rest of the verse is understood according to Śrīdhara Svāmīpada’s explanation.

In another way, the *gopīs* are saying, “You, whose character is uncommon, Your nature is beyond the cognizance of our senses! We have never received even a drop of happiness from You. Whether You are present or not, we experience only sorrow.” In the first half of this verse beginning with ‘*aṭaṭi*,’ the *gopīs* describe their sorrow when they cannot see Kṛṣṇa. In the second half, beginning ‘*kuṭīla*,’ they convey their suffering while gazing at Him in the evening. “When You return at the end of the day, we want to stare uninterrupted at Your beautiful face surrounded by curly hair, without our eyelids blinking. Otherwise, our *darśana* is obstructed and so is our joy.” They conclude, “This obtuse fool Brahmā only created eyes that blink; for this he deserves to be cursed.”

When the verbal root *kṛt* in the word ‘*pakṣma-kṛt*’ is used in its other sense, ‘to cut,’ the meaning is, “Among all those who raise their heads to

behold Your face, he who cuts off his eyelids is not at all ignorant. He is a scholar, expert in *rasa*.” There is still another meaning: “May that intelligent person whose eyelids are severed, be honored above all who behold Your face. Even if You are standing directly in front of us, what will we fools be able to see with our eyes covered by eyelids?”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* continue, “We suffer from our ill luck. What can You do about this?” With this intention they speak this verse ‘*aṭati yad bhavān*.’ “When You go to the Vṛndāvana forest, we are unable to see You. During this time, for us each *truṭi* (2700th of a *kṣaṇa*—[so small it has no duration]) is like a millennium (*yugāyate*). When all the other inhabitants of Vraja are unable to see You for three-quarters of the day, in their suffering that time feels like three months, but for us those three *yāmas* (nine hours) are like millions of *yugas*. What other reason can there be but our ill fortune?

“Somehow we make it through the day, and evening time when You return from the forest, we *gopīs* again eagerly get to gaze upon Your beautiful face. But even then the foolish creator of our eyelids torments us, throwing us into an unlimited ocean of misery. When we are finally able to see You, our eyes blink, and thus our vision of You is impeded. Although a blink lasts only 900 *truṭis*, for us it is 900 millenniums. Either way we suffer from our bad luck – whether we see You or not.”

The sage Maitreya Ṛṣi explains the divisions of time in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.11.6-7: “A *truṭi* is the time needed for the integration of three *trasa-reṇus*. Two micro-atoms make one atom, and three atoms make one *trasa-reṇu*, a hexatom. (This hexatom is visible in the sunshine which enters through the holes of a window screen). That is 2700th of a *kṣaṇa*. One hundred *truṭis* make one *vedha*. Three *vedhas* make one *lava*. The duration of time of three *lavas* is equal to one *nimeṣa*, and the combination of three *nimeṣas* makes one *kṣaṇa*.” [2,700<sup>th</sup> part of a *kṣaṇa* makes one *truṭi*, and 900 *truṭis* is 1 *nimeṣa*. Some say that a *kṣaṇa* is so subtle that it has no duration.]

According to another interpretation, the verbal root *kṛt* is used in its second meaning, ‘to cut.’ Then the meaning is: “He who has cut off his eyelids is genuinely intelligent because he can get absorbed in the joy of seeing



Kṛṣṇa without any interruption. We, on the other hand, are unintelligent because we leave the eyelids on our eyes. So what will we be able to see, even if Kṛṣṇa stands directly in front of us?" This is the mood.

#### VERSE 16

*pati-sutānvaya-bhrātr-bāndhavān  
ativilaṅghya te 'nty acyutāgatāḥ  
gati-vidas tavodgīta-mohitāḥ  
kitava yoṣitaḥ kas tyajen niśi*

**O Acyuta, You know why we have come here. You played Your flute, knowing the path Your song would take. That resonant sound bewildered us and we have come to You, disregarding our husbands, children, brothers, friends and entire family. Who else but You, You rogue, would abandon innocent maidens like us after bringing us to Your shelter in the dead of night?**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

#### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

"O Acyuta, thus we have ignored our husbands, children, relatives, brothers and friends in order to come to You." Śrī Kṛṣṇa may ask, "Why have you come here?" "*Gati-vidas* – You know the reason why we have come." According to another meaning, the *gopīs* say, "You are very expert in producing enchanting sounds with Your flute, and You know its effect." Or: "Although we are savvy to Your nature, we are still charmed by Your penetrating flute-song, and have come to You. *He kitava*, O cheater, what other man except You would abandon maidens who have come to Him of their own accord at night? No one else would do this."

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

#### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

"You have made our condition very miserable, whether You are present before us or out of our sight. But today the way You behaved with us was truly improper." To express this mood, the *gopīs* speak the verse beginning '*pati*.' They say, "With complete disregard for our religious duties, we have abandoned (*ativilaṅghya*) all love for our husbands, children, in-laws and other relatives. We have disobeyed their orders, and have come to You."

Kṛṣṇa may ask, “Why have you done this?” *Gopīs* reply, “Because You called us with Your loud flute-song, which enchanted us. Just as a doe runs to the hunter, being stupefied by his song, we have come to You under the spell of the Your music. It is not that You played Your flute by the will of the gods. You are so calculating – You did so with full knowledge of all the consequences. You knew that we would be attracted and would come running to You.” With this intention the *gopīs* say ‘*gati-vidas*.’

According to another interpretation Kṛṣṇa may say, “Since you are self-composed, how is it possible that you would become bewildered just by hearing My flute-song?” The *gopīs* reply, “You know very well that the special nature of Your flute song bewilders even Indra, Brahmā and Śiva.” They reiterate this in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 10.35.15: “Hearing this song, Indra, Brahmā, Śiva and other demigods are baffled.”

Kṛṣṇa may say, “You are very intelligent and know My nature. Why, then, were you not more cautious?” The *gopīs* explain, “We are well aware of Your nature, but Your flute-song is spellbinding. Just as an animal, being captivated by a spell-binding *mantra*, will be pulled in that direction by force, Your melody bewildered us and dragged us to You. O cheater, now tell us what man other than You would abandon beautiful damsels who have come to Him in the night? No one!” By addressing Kṛṣṇa as a cheater – *he kitava*, *he ṭhaga*, *he kapaṭa* – they are implying that no other rogue would reject a woman who has come to him in the middle of the night. “A cheater uses the things he acquired by his fraud for himself. But Your specialty is that You discard what You gain by deceit. Such purposeless deception is most condemned in society. O Acyuta, You never deviate from Your deceitfulness; You always act in accordance with it. This is why You have successfully fulfilled the meaning of Your name Acyuta.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURĀ’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Those Vraja ladies who were stopped in their houses by their husbands when they heard the flute, somehow crossed all obstacles and came to Kṛṣṇa and spoke this verse beginning ‘*pati*,’ voicing their grievance. “*Gati-vidas* – O Acyuta! Knowing that we are nearing our final stage, death (*daśama-daśā*), we have come to You. Even in our dire condition, You have failed (*cyuta*) to give us Your *darśana*. Were You given this name

Acyuta, 'He who is infallible, or not *cyuta*,' because Your nature is exactly the opposite?"

Kṛṣṇa says, "If this is true, why have you come to Me?" The *gopīs* reply, "We have not come here because of *our* desire. We were mesmerized by Your flute-song, which thoroughly destroyed our intelligence and discrimination." "Well, foolish women, if that is correct, then keep on tolerating this hardship." The *gopīs* exclaim, "Cheater! Deceitful friend! Is there anyone as cowardly and cruel as You who would abandon maidens coming to You on their own in the middle of the night? Indeed, no one else."

In another understanding, the *gopīs* say, "Fraud! Mad person! What young man can heartlessly reject a demure damsel who has come to Him at night for *abhisāra*? No one. You are a cheater, but today You have cheated Yourself [of pleasure]." This is the mood. According to the *Medini* Sanskrit dictionary, the word *kitava*, masculine gender, has several meanings: a madman, a cheat and a thorn apple.

#### VERSE 17

*rahasi saṁvidam̐ hṛc-chayodayam̐  
prahasitānanam̐ prema-vīkṣaṇam̐  
brhad-urāḥ śrīyo vīkṣya dhāma te  
muhur ati-sprhā muhyate manaḥ*

**O possessor of our lives, our private conversations with You in a lonely place, Your lotus face with a soft smile giving rise to amorous desire, Your love-laden glances, and Your broad chest, the eternal abode of Lakṣmī – remembering all these our minds are repeatedly bewitched and we hanker more and more to meet with You.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

"Previously, just from seeing You, we were afflicted by the disease of love arising in our hearts. The only cure for it is the medicine of Your association. Although no other method can help us, You reject us now." To communicate this idea, the *gopīs* speak this verse '*rahasi saṁvidam̐*' and the next one. "Seeing Your broad chest, the place of Śrī Lakṣmī's pleasure pastimes, we experience intense yearning that continually confuses and stupefies us."

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

"We are astounded observing the amorous desire arising in Your heart. How did we come to know this was happening to You? *Rahasi saṁvidam*' – with jesting words You begged us for *prema* in a secluded place. *Prahasitānanam*' – Your beautiful smile kindles our *kāma*. *'Prema-vikṣanam*' – You gazed upon us with thirsty, love-filled eyes. When we behold Your broad chest, the source of the *kāma*, our minds are seized with desire and struck with wonder." *'Bṛhat*' – broad; this indicates the special beauty of the chest, which stimulates desire to be tightly embraced. *'Śriyaḥ*' – on that chest is the golden line, which is the eternal abode of Śrī Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune. *"Ati-sprhā* – the sight of Your chest stirs in us a powerful longing to meet with You."

*'Vikṣya*' means 'seeing,' and *'sprhā*' means 'yearning.' The subject of these two verbs is 'we,' meaning the *gopīs*. Joining *'vikṣya*' with *'ktvā*,' the verb becomes a past participle because the action of seeing Kṛṣṇa was completed in the past. Another meaning comes if the sentence is read independently from the pronoun 'we,' in which case the main accent goes on the word 'see,' and becomes 'the desire to see.' Thus, seeing (*vikṣanam*) becomes the cause of the rising of strong desire (*ati-sprhā*). In this case, the meaning is as follows: "Previously we met with You in a secluded place, and after that our minds are always churning with strong desire to see You."

According to another interpretation, the *gopīs* say, "When we saw that Your heart was palpitating with amorous desire, an uncontrollable longing took over our minds, causing us to be bewildered over and over again." Thus, because Kṛṣṇa was afflicted with desire first, the *vraja-devīs*, confirming their innocence, place full blame on Him and say, "Now our minds are bewildered by that same strong desire (*ati-sprhā*)." The *Bhāgavatam* commentator Cīta-sukha reads this word as *ati-sprhām* (in neuter gender) [instead of *ati-sprhā*, which is feminine gender.] Both versions mean 'the desire only to meet with Kṛṣṇa.' By admitting that their minds are bewildered, the *gopīs* express the intensity of their longing.

Alternatively, the *gopīs* are trying to say, "It is not only now that we are witnessing the rise of lust in Kṛṣṇa; this already happened many times before. At those times, our minds were possessed by great hankering when we would see Him, but now just by remembering the lust rising in Him, we

are seized by overwhelming desire to be with Him. As that desire has not been fulfilled, we are on the brink of death.” This is the mood. Because this desire could not be removed, it was impossible for the *gopīs* to resist it. In other words, there was no possibility of curing the *gopīs*’ disease. In this way the *gopīs* describe their pathetic condition.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
*Sārārtha Darśinī*

The *gopīs* say, “What can we do? Your five enchanting actions are like the five arrows of Cupid<sup>14</sup>. Using them to enter through the holes of our eyes, You invaded our hearts and set them on fire. We will enumerate Your five bewildering agents. The first is ‘*rahasi saṁvidam*’ – with Your words You beg for affection (*rati*) in a secluded place. The second is ‘*hṛc-chayodayam*’ – when You see us, Your mind is attacked by Cupid. The third is ‘*prahastānam*’ – You smile beautifully. The fourth is ‘*prema-vikṣaṇam*’ – You gaze upon us with love. The fifth is the sight of Your broad chest (*brhad-urah*), which is the abode of all beauty and which stimulates intense desire to embrace it. Seeing these again and again, we are inundated with an extreme longing to meet with You (*ati-sprhā*). Due to this our minds are bewildered, and our burning enthusiasm is making us faint.”

VERSE 18

*vraja-vanaukasām vyaktir aṅga te*  
*vṛjina-hantryi alaṁ viśva-maṅgalam*  
*tyaja manāk ca nas tvat-sprhātmanām*  
*sva-jana-hṛd-rujām yan niṣūdanam*

**O precious one, more dear to us than our own lives! Your presence eliminates all sorrows of the inhabitants of the village and the forests of Vraja, and covers the world with auspiciousness. Our hearts cannot contain our eagerness for You. Stop being a miser and give us a little of that medicine which uproots the disease in the heart of Your intimate associates.**

.....  
14 Ed: Kāmadeva’s five arrows: (1) red *ākaraṇa-bāṇa*, arrows that captivate; (2) yellow *vaśikaraṇa-bāṇa*, arrows that subjugate by casting a spell; (3) dark blue *unmādana-bāṇa*, arrows that intoxicate; (4) *drāvaṇa-bāṇa*, arrows that melt the heart; (5) white *śoṣaṇa-bāṇa*, arrows that suck up one’s strength.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“O beloved, more precious than our life-airs! Your presence destroys the sorrows of all the inhabitants of the forests of Vraja, without any discrimination. It bestows auspiciousness upon the entire world. Our minds are fixed solely on the desire to attain You. Do not be miserly; give at least a tiny bit of the medicine that can cure the heart-disease of us *gopīs*, who are Your intimate admirers.” Kṛṣṇa may ask, “What is this medicine?” The *gopīs* reply, “You alone know about the very secret medicine that removes this disease.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“Because You express in many ways the amorous desire hidden in Your heart, all Your feelings transfer to us. Many times we think, ‘Alas, how can the fire of that desire burning in Your heart be extinguished?’ While considering the remedy, we become absorbed in feelings for You. Your desires reflect in us because it is our nature to love You. However, in the course wondering how we can relieve Your suffering, our love grows stronger and stronger, and the intense desire rising from such affection breaks our hearts.” The *gopīs*’ words, which are full of their pain and grief, are documented in this verse beginning ‘*vraja*’ and also in the next one.

The *gopīs* continue, “Your appearance in Vraja village destroys the sufferings of all the Vrajavāsīs and the forest dwellers (*vraja-vanaukasām*). But now Your disappearance has become the cause of intolerable anguish. Is it proper for You to do this?” The word ‘*vyakti*’ means ‘presence.’ By uttering this word, the *gopīs* indicate that it is wrong for Kṛṣṇa to stay away. With their hearts broken from their overpowering love, the *gopīs* say, “O dear one (*aṅga!*)” Thus they express their affection. Suffering in separation, they do not address Kṛṣṇa by His name, but by an affectionate endearment. They continue, “Your birth in Vraja puts an end to the miseries (*vṛjina-hantrī*) of not only the residents of Vraja, but of all living beings in the whole world.”

There is another meaning: “Although You are the embodiment of auspiciousness for the entire world (*viśva-maṅgalam*), You particularly bestow pleasure upon the residents of Vraja.” Both meanings lead to one request: “Therefore, You should administer some remedy for our sorrow.”

Kṛṣṇa may say, “O *gopīs*, you yourselves are saying that I have taken birth to remove the troubles of the Vrajavāsīs. According to this statement, I will surely protect them from all dangers. Since you are also inhabitants of Vraja, you will automatically be protected from all calamities, and thus you will certainly be peaceful. So there is no need for you to pray for your sufferings to be relieved. Is there anything else you are requesting?” The *gopīs* reply, “*Tvat-sprhātmanām* – Our hearts are always longing to be with You. Our only sorrow is that we do not get Your association. We have no other complaint.”

Kṛṣṇa argues, “Other residents of Vraja also nourish intense desire to be with Me. What is so special about your longing?” The *gopīs* explain, “*Sva-jana* – Out of all the Vrajavāsīs we are the closest to You. You have a confidential remedy for the heart-disease afflicting Your intimate associates. Abandon Your miserliness and give us at least a tiny bit of that medicine to uproot this disease from our hearts.” The *gopīs* use the word *manāk* (a tiny amount) to indicate the rarity of obtaining that medicine. According to another interpretation, they are following the common tactic of a beggar, saying, “Give me at least a little bit.” Actually, such beggars are not asking for just a little.

The *gopīs* use the word ‘*hṛd-rujām*,’ heart-disease, in the plural number [implying many diseases]. By the use of the plural and the prefix ‘*ni*’ in the word ‘*niṣūdana*’ (that which counteracts), the *gopīs* indicate, “Our heart disease – our desires for You – can never be satiated. Rather, it automatically continues to grow, exhibiting newer and newer symptoms.” In this way their illness always manifests in two way – never being satiated and ever increasing. With the same intention they utter the word ‘*niṣūdana*.’ “Only that medicine can fully (*ni*) cure our disease.” The plural number and the prefix *ni* indicate that a small amount of this medicine is not capable of curing their disease. Although the *gopīs* ask for a small amount of that medicine, they are actually indicating that they require a great deal of it.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* say, “We are ingenuous and virtuous girls. You completely captivated us with Your flute-song and lured us to this forest at night. You Yourself called us, but not just to set us ablaze in the fire of ardent desire, but

rather to give us Your direct association to protect our lives. This is Your real intention.” Kṛṣṇa may ask, “How can you possibly suggest such a thing?” The *gopīs* answer, “Your presence indiscriminately bestows auspiciousness to all the inhabitants of Vraja and the entire world, and destroys all miseries. Therefore, we *gopīs*, hankering to nourish Your aspirations, which arose in Your heart when You first saw us, petition You to give us something of that. Give up Your miserliness.”

Kṛṣṇa replies, “Good, I will give it to you. What is that I should give you?” The *gopīs* explain, “*Sva-jana-hṛd-rujām yan niṣūdanam* – To cure the disease of our heart, that is, of our breasts, we require the medicinal touch of Your lotus hands. If You apply this medicine on our breasts, Your yearning will be fulfilled (*tvat-sprhātmanām*); only this will save us from death.”

#### VERSE 19

*yat te sujāta-caraṇāmburuhaṁ staneṣu  
bhītāḥ śanaiḥ priya dadhīmahi karkaṣeṣu  
tenāṭavīm aṭasi tad vyathate na kiṁ svit  
kūrpādibhir bhramati dhīr bhavad-āyuṣāṁ naḥ*

**He *priya*, O precious one! Your feet, more tender than lotus flowers, we place on our hard breasts – very, very carefully lest we hurt them. Now it is night, and with those soft feet You are roaming around somewhere in this remote forest. Are they in pain, bruised by pebbles and sharp stones? The thought of this sets our heads spinning, causing us to fall in a swoon. We live only for Your sake; we are Yours, we are Yours.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Overpowered by strong emotions of love, the *gopīs* weep while saying, “O precious beloved, when we carefully place Your beautiful soft feet on our hard breasts, we are afraid of hurting them, but we see that You wander throughout the forest with these feet.”

In some books the word ‘*aṭasi*’ (you roam) is replaced by the word *nayasi* (you bring). Then three meanings can be taken: “By these feet You bring the cows out to graze,” or “You bring a beautiful lady in the forest,” or “You bring



Yourself.” The word ‘*tat*’ means either ‘therefore’ or ‘those lotus feet.’ The *gopīs* say, “Don’t the sharp stones and gravel hurt Your soft feet? Surely You must be experiencing much pain. You are our life-air. Thinking that You are in pain, our minds are completely troubled. So quickly come and appear before us.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Kṛṣṇa may say, “What is that heart-disease of yours? And what is the remedy for it?” In the midst of their tears, the *vraja-devīs* reply in this verse beginning ‘*yat*.’ ‘*Amburuha*’ – meaning ‘lotus.’ Kṛṣṇa’s feet are compared to a lotus to show the softness of His feet. ‘*Sujāta*’ – meaning ‘extremely delicate;’ this adjective is used to indicate that Kṛṣṇa’s feet are much softer than even the lotus.

The *gopīs* say, “We place Your lotus feet on our breasts slowly (*śanaiḥ*).” “Why?” “Because we fear (*bhītāḥ*).” “What is your fear?” “Our breasts are extremely hard (*karkaṣeṣu*) and Your feet are most tender.” Kṛṣṇa may ask, “Then why do you put My feet on your breasts?” The *gopīs* reply, “O dear one (*priya*), because You are our lover, Your feet should remain close to our hearts. We place Your feet on our breasts, which are the only proper place for them, but tonight You are making them wander here and there in the forest.” In this way the *gopīs* explain why they repeatedly speak about His feet, which they want to keep on their breasts. They do not speak of any other part of Kṛṣṇa’s body. Overpowered by unlimited affection, the maidens of Vraja express their concern that His feet might be troubled by hostile conditions while walking around.

When first speaking about Kṛṣṇa’s roaming in the woods in Verse 11, the *gopīs* mentioned His taking the cows to the grassy pastures in the forest. Usually there are sharp-edged grains (*śila*) in such areas, thus they are concerned that His lotus feet will be hurt. But at this time Kṛṣṇa is walking on the harsh ground of the Yamunā’s bank, and therefore they fear that sharp pebbles and thorns (*kūrpa-ādibhiḥ*) may cut His feet. Actually there is no such danger, because by Vṛndā-devī’s careful arrangement and also because of the natural gentility of that land, there are no sharp stones and the like in Vṛndāvana. Still, the *gopīs*’ hearts are in fear, being subject to this principle of logic: the heart of a friend is always filled with fear of dangers for the one he loves.

A question may arise: “Why do your minds become so severely agitated? Why do you girls completely lose your wits?” The *gopīs* reply, ‘*Bhavad āyusām*’ – “You are our very life.” They told this to Kṛṣṇa in the very first text of this *Gopī-gīta*, when they uttered the words ‘*tvayi dhṛtāsavāḥ*’: “Our vital forces dwell in You.” And again they confirm this in Verse 11 beginning with ‘*calasi yad vrajāc*’: “When You leave Vraja to go to the forest. . .” Thus, they repeat this conviction throughout their lament. In reply, they further postulate: “Because our life-airs reside in You, we feel all of Your pain – thus all those sharp stones and thorns threaten our lives as well. Therefore, we cannot go on living. Fearing for Your lotus feet is truly making us ill at heart. There is only one remedy for our disease – we will gently caress Your lotus feet and with tender loving care place them on the most guarded part of our body – on our hearts. Then, when we feel them happily situated there, our disease will be cured. Therefore, come to us at once.” This is the mood.

When the Vraja maidens are filled with such concentrated feelings of love, there can be no doubt that the lord of their lives reciprocates with the same one-pointed adoration. Kṛṣṇa thinks, “Ahhh! These beautiful girls of Vraja have focused their undivided love in Me. The only proper thing for Me to do is offer Myself to them; this will make them happy.” Consequently, desire for amorous enjoyment stirs in Kṛṣṇa’s heart in response to the *gopīs*’ *prema*. Various confidential emotions that still remain hidden in the *gopīs*’ hearts can be discovered by *rasika* devotees through their realizations.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“O *gopīs* adept in crafting *rasa*! While you are here praying (for My welfare), My feet are happily walking in the forest. I find no time to put them on your breasts.” Hearing Kṛṣṇa speak like this, the *gopīs* burst into tears and explain their formidable heartache in the verse beginning ‘*yat*.’ They say, “Your extremely tender feet may be easily hurt, and therefore we are even afraid to place them on our breasts. Alas, alas, You walk in the forest with those feet! Why do You persist in uselessly being so bold?”

Kṛṣṇa may ask, “Why are you afraid of putting My feet on Your breasts?” The answer is ‘*karkaśeṣu*,’ meaning: “The harshness of our breasts is the cause of our fear.” Again, Kṛṣṇa questions, “Then why do you hold My feet on your breasts?” The *gopīs* respond, “O precious love of our life, when You

place Your feet on our breasts, You experience deep satisfaction. It is only for Your pleasure that we place them there. When You press Your feet to our breasts, we directly behold Your joy. But when we see how tender those feet are, we naturally worry about them and fall into distress.”

The *gopīs* express this mood with the words ‘*śanaiḥ dadhīmahi*.’ “We take hold of Your tender lotus feet very slowly and gently.” One of the symptoms of *mahā-bhāva* is to be distressed for fear of any obstacles to Kṛṣṇa’s happiness. Influenced by this *mahā-bhāva*, the *gopīs* explain, “As we are tied to You in a mood of friendship, we fear that we may cause Your feet some discomfort; therefore we hold them very carefully. Thus we are sad, even when meeting with You; perhaps the Creator has written unending suffering into our destiny. What can we do? Suppose we satisfy the Creator by austerities, and then ask him for the boon: ‘Please make our breasts soft.’ But that may not make You happy. On the other hand, if they remain hard, Your feet will feel pain. Either way we are troubled.

“We experience distress when we meet with You and when we part; let it be so. However, as You are independent, why do You subject Yourself to such suffering? Why do You walk in the forest with Your tender feet? There is no need for You to do this. Are Your soft feet suited for roaming in the forest?” In this way the *gopīs* indicate their concern for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa may say, “I do whatever I please. Why bother yourselves with all these affairs?” The *gopīs* explain, ‘*Tad vyathate na kim svit?*’ “Do Your feet not feel pain? Of course they must. As You are harsh to us, so You are harsh to Your own body.” On the other hand, Kṛṣṇa may deliberate, “Since the *gopīs* feel so afflicted because of My discomfort, I will have to accept some suffering for the distress I cause them.” The *gopīs* respond, “Is that why You tolerate all this suffering?” According to another interpretation, the *gopīs* say, “You derive great pleasure in seeing us suffer; therefore the pain Your feet undergo You actually consider as happiness. That is why You tolerate it.”

There is still another meaning in the *gopīs*’ words, and in that case they use the logic *saṁsarga-jā doṣa-guṇā bhavanti*, one’s faults and qualities arise according to the association. They say, “Before, Your heart was as tender as a flower, but after associating with our hard breasts, Your heart also became hard, as did Your feet. Therefore, walking on sharp stones and thorns does not bother You.” Another meaning can be taken: “The touch of Your lotus feet is so glorious that even the stones become soft.” Yet another

meaning: “Either because of her compassionate nature, or desiring to taste the sweetness of Your feet, the Goddess of Earth holds out her tongue for You to walk upon.” Otherwise, the *gopīs* say, “You are even a greater ocean of love than we are. Therefore, having somehow separated from us by ill fate, You entered the condition of total madness and are wandering about in the forest, unaware of any pain to Your feet. Unlimited reasons for Your behavior come to mind, leaving us totally perplexed. We cannot come to any definite conclusion.”

Kṛṣṇa may say, “You are exaggerating your suffering – you are making a mountain out of a mole hill. Well, I do not take your sorrow seriously because you are still alive.” The *gopīs* explain, ‘*bhavad-āyusām*’ – “We have offered our lives to You. Indeed, You are our very life. Because You remain in auspicious circumstances, thousand of miseries may bombard us, but death cannot come near us. We do not die because You are our life.”

The innermost meaning of their words is: “To insure that we always suffer, the Creator decided to add our life span to Yours. He considered, ‘If the *gopīs* die immediately in the blazing fire of amorous love, whom will I torture? I should prolong their lives by placing them in the trust of my like-minded friend Kṛṣṇa, who also enjoys giving pain to the *gopīs*. I will thus be able to give them unlimited distress, and even when attacked by a thousand calamities, they will not die. So I can send their way as many hardships as I like.’ O Kṛṣṇa, because of this desire of the Creator, we are not dying, even in the face of so many afflictions.

“Amidst all these predicaments our intelligence is becoming bewildered. Just now our life airs will surely depart from our bodies, and You should stand there and watch them go! You may ask, ‘How can you die when you still have time on your life span?’ ‘*Bhavad-āyusām*’ – You are our life span. That is, we offered our remaining life span to You, so may You enjoy playing in Vraja for a long time with those added years of life.”

Thus ends the *bhāvānuvāda* of the three commentaries  
 (1) *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*, (2) *Samkṣepa-Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* and  
 (3) *Sārārtha Darśinī* of the Thirty-second Chapter of the  
 Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

## ◉ CHAPTER 4 ◉

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 10.32

# Śrī Kṛṣṇa Reappears and Consoles the Gopīs

### VERSE 1

*śrī-śuka uvāca  
iti gopyaḥ pragāyantyah  
pralapantyaś ca citradhā  
ruruduḥ su-svaraṁ rājan  
kṛṣṇa-darśana-lālasāḥ*

Śrī Śukadeva said, O King! In this way, the Vraja *gopīs* sang out their laments in various captivating ways as they were drowning in separation from their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Unable to control themselves in their pitiful condition, they began to weep loudly in very sweet, heart-rending voices that resounded with their ardent desire to see their lover.

## *Bhāvānuvādas*

ELABORATED TRANSLATIONS

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

When Śrī Hari heard the *gopīs* lamenting in separation, His heart melted to a great degree. Then, having appeared there, He honored those *vraja-devīs* and consoled them. Seeing the hearts of the *gopīs* extremely agitated in the great waves of the nectar of His love, Śrī Nanda-nandana mercifully filled the hearts of all the Vraja damsels with bliss. This is the subject matter described in this Thirty-second Chapter.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, "In this way, the *gopīs*, extremely eager to see Kṛṣṇa, began to sing various charming songs in full voice, and in great lamentation wept openly.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In this verse the word 'itī' is used, meaning 'in reference to previously mentioned words,' 'in this manner,' etc. In this way, the Vraja damsels became very eager to have audience of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. '*Pra-gāyantyah*' means they began to sing loudly due to their *prema* being intensified. At times, spurred by feelings of helplessness, they began to weep uncontrollably. Or, in the agitation of separation, they began to babble incoherently. Or, while singing and crying in various manners, they began to weep piteously in a loud, high pitch. The behavior of the *vraja-devīs* is certainly understandable in the light of their fervent desire to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, "O King!" addressing him in a mood of distress.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In this Thirty-second Chapter, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī described how Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared before the *gopīs*, who offered Him worship upon His arrival. He venerated them in turn, and in loving, heart-felt words, declared that He was indebted to them.

Hankering for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's audience, the *gopīs* began to sing a wonderful rhythmic melody, gradually rising up the musical scales. The outbreak of their intense *prema* rendered them helpless; thus they began to babble and weep bitterly in a sweet voice that expressed their lamentation.

**VERSE 2**

*tāsām āvirabhūc chauriḥ*  
*smayamāna-mukhāmbujah*  
*pītāmbara-dharaḥ sragvī*  
*sākṣān manmatha-manmathaḥ*

At that moment Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the crest jewel in the dynasty of Śūrasena, appeared among those wailing damsels of Vraja. His lotus face was blossoming with a gentle smile, a garland of forest flowers hung around His neck, and His body was wrapped in dazzling yellow cloth. His beauty was such that it churned the mind of Kāmadeva, who himself stirs the hearts of everyone.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Sākṣāt manmatha-manmatha*' – the stunning form that directly enchanted even Cupid. In other words, this form was so beautiful that it instilled lust in the heart of Cupid, who himself bewilders the whole world.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Witnessing the *gopīs*' distressed condition, Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought to Himself, "Agitated in separation, the cowherd damsels are crying bitterly, being so worried that I may hurt My feet in this deep, dense forest. Consequently, their life-airs are about to depart." Thinking about them in this way, He suddenly appeared right in the midst of the weeping *gopīs*, with a gentle smile on His face. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was attracted by their self-abnegation, seeing how they were undergoing such intense anguish in separation from Him and how they were crying in great humility, and thus He gave them this merciful *dārśana*. In their humbleness the *vraja-devīs* had no concern for the distress they felt in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rather, they were worried only about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's unhappiness, and this is what agitated them. It is due to such special humility that one quickly obtains Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, it is established that such special humility is indeed the means of attaining the lotus feet of Bhagavān.

Despite Śrī Kṛṣṇa being famous as 'Śaurī' – one who has taken birth in the dynasty of Śūrasena, i.e., in the abode of Vasudeva – He appeared right the middle of the Vraja damsels, displaying His complete sweetness and beauty, ever fresh at every moment. In this form He manifested unprecedented qualities far more excellent than ever seen before. For example, it will be mentioned further on, "Accepting the form which is the very abode of all the beauty of the three worlds, Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared resplendent among the cowherd damsels" (10.32.14); and "Just as a great dazzling sapphire looks beautiful surrounded by golden beads, similarly Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Mother Yaśodā, looked especially dazzling encircled by the golden-complexioned cowherd damsels" (10.33.6). "O *sakhī*! What type of austerities have those damsels of Vraja performed, as a result of which they are continuously drinking by their eyes the transcendental beauty of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is the essence of all loveliness? Such beauty is incomparable

and unsurpassed, self-manifest, ever-fresh, extremely rare, and the only basis of fame, beauty and opulence” (10.44.14).

Similarly, describing the special glories of the *gopīs*, Śrī Uddhava declared (10.47.58): “On this Earth, only those cowherd damsels have been successful in making their existence meaningful because they have achieved the highest level of love (*rūḍha mahā-bhāva*) for Bhagavān Śrī Govinda. Those who are fearful of material existence, great sages, and we devotees also desire that loving mood. Ah! What is the use of receiving birth as Brahmā if one has not developed overwhelming attachment (*anurāga*) to hearing the nectarean accounts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with the *gopīs*?”

According to this philosophical conclusion that Śrī Uddhava spoke, it is befitting that Śrī Kṛṣṇa will manifest His unprecedentedly beautiful and sweet form among the *gopīs* since they are endowed with the topmost love. This idea is illustrated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.42: “A person eating a meal will experience simultaneously satisfaction of mind, nourishment of the body, and freedom from hunger. Similarly, to the degree one performs devotional service, especially hearing and chanting, then accordingly one simultaneously experiences *bhakti* characterized by love, sudden vision of Bhagavān, who is the object of love, and detachment from the illusory sense objects. In other words, the person who is advancing in *bhajana* will receive a vision of the topmost form of his loving Lord, and will also relish His sweetness to the degree of his *bhajana*.” According to this logic, it has been shown that Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared among the *vraja-gopīs* in that form which directly churns the heart of Cupid, who himself agitates the hearts of all.

That form of Rāsa-bihārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *sākṣāt-manmatha-manmatha*<sup>1</sup>.

1 In this verse, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has addressed Śrī Kṛṣṇa who performs the *rāsa* dance as *sākṣāt-manmatha-manmatha*. The purport is that in the various quadruple manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa such as Vāsudeva, the original Pradyumna of Dvārakā alone is the transcendental and direct manifestation of Manmatha, or Madana. Moreover, He is the root cause of the subsequent quadruple manifestations found in the other transcendental abodes, and is the original Cupid. In addition, Svayaṁ-rūpa Bhagavān Rāsa-bihārī Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the very source of Cupid in the form of Pradyumna. Here the word *sākṣāt* (directly) denotes the transcendental Cupid Pradyumna Himself (*svayaṁ*) and not the mundane Kāmadeva.

Endowed with one particle of the reflection of the potency of Dvārakā Pradyumna, the mundane Cupid churns the minds of the living entities of the material world by inspiring material desires in them and only manifests the



In various quadruple manifestations such as Vāsudeva, He is directly Cupid (*manmatha*). His beauty is not like that of the mundane invisible Cupid, who is a manifestation of a portion of the material energy. Rather, He is the embodiment of Rasa-rāja Rāsa-bihārī Vrajendra-nandana, who is the emporium of all mellows, who enjoys the *rāsa* dance, and who has the ability to churn the mind of even Cupid himself. Just as the Supersoul gives the power of seeing to the eyes, similarly Vrajendra-nandana empowers the mundane Cupid of this world. The worldly Cupid manifests as a plenary portion of the special beauty and qualities of that transcendental Cupid, Kṛṣṇa, who descends in this world displaying His beauty and qualities to the absolute fullest extent. Therefore it can be seen that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form as the great Cupid contains the mono-syllable seed *mantra* [the *kāma-bīja klim*] and meditations on His other forms, which also manifest the mood of a Cupid. The word *manmatha* communicates the ability to agitate His other manifestations. Moreover, such form (directly *manmatha-manmatha*) alone is the topmost shelter of love (*ālambana*), which manifests only in the original mellow, *śṛṅgāra-rasa*; such form is not attained in any of the other devotional mellows – this is what has been explained.

In this way, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the unprecedented, incomparable nature of the pleasure-filled pastimes and attire of the enjoyer of *rāsa-līlā* highlighting three features: His smiling lotus face (*smayamāna-mukhāmbujah*), His yellow garment (*pītāmbara-dharaḥ*), and the garland around His neck (*sragvī*). By using the present tense of the verb

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topics that are suitable for satisfying their bodily senses. However, that mundane Cupid also becomes enchanted by seeing Rāsa-bihārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa and faints due to being aroused by intense desire to serve Him as a female. The mind of the living entity is the place of residence of the mundane Cupid, whose activities satisfy the mind and the senses by inspiring them to enjoy the various sense objects. However, out of good fortune when the form of this new Cupid – Rāsa-bihārī dressed as a cowherd boy – appears in the mind of the living entity, first of all, He infatuates the mundane Cupid, who is present there, and makes him faint. As a result of this, the desire for sense gratification does not flash in the mind again. Thereafter, Rāsa-bihārī attracts that pure mind towards Himself.

Factually this form of Vrajendra-nandana, Rāsa-bihārī and Rasa-rāja (the king of all mellows), is indeed *sākṣāt-manmatha-manmatha*, directly the Cupid of even the Cupids. He always performs the pastimes such as the *rāsa* dance in Śrī Vṛndāvana in the company of the cowherd damsels, who are the incarnate manifestations of His internal potency.

*smayamāna*, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī indicates that the gentle smile Śrī Kṛṣṇa displayed only at that moment as Rāsa-bihārī is very special – its spirit is different from His natural, usual smile. The word *pītāmbara* means that He is wearing a yellow garment. However the additional usage of the word *dhara* (wearing) conveys that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was wearing the yellow garment in a particular manner. The adjective *sragvī*, garlanded with a wreath of the forest flowers (*vana-mālā*), further adds to His glories.

His gentle smile revealed His happiness and affirms that His act of abandoning the *gopīs* was just a mischievous prank. He covered Himself up to His head with His yellow garment, thus indicating His embarrassment at having abandoned the cowherd damsels. He appeared before His beloveds respectfully wearing around His neck the garland they had given Him, implying that He wanted to become fortunate by embracing them and putting His arms around their necks. This conveys Śrī Kṛṣṇa's disinterest in meeting anyone else other than the *gopīs*. Moreover, His unique beauty at this particular time is described in order to implant that exquisiteness in the hearts of the audience.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In this verse, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the crest jewel of swan-like liberated personalities, addresses Śrī Kṛṣṇa as '*śauri*,' indicating that he is siding with the *gopīs* and is exhibiting annoyance towards Kṛṣṇa, being unhappy at His behavior. The purport is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared in the dynasty of King Śūrasena, in other words, in the warrior class noted for its craftiness. Therefore, He exhibited His valor by giving great distress to the cowherd damsels, who had so much love for Him. If Śrī Kṛṣṇa were not a member of warrior class and rather belonged to the community of simple-hearted cowherd folk, then He could never have inflicted such suffering upon the *gopīs*.

Kṛṣṇa's lotus face was blossoming with happiness despite the *gopīs'* distress. However, the fact is that He came with a cheerful smile on His lotus face just to give joy to the cowherd damsels. At the same time the *gopīs'* anguish was burning the lotus of His heart. As if to beg forgiveness from them, Śrī Kṛṣṇa folded His hands and took hold of the front portion of His yellow garment which was hanging down from His shoulders (*pītāmbara-dhara*). And just to show the *gopīs* His feelings for them,

He was still wearing the same forest-flower garland they had previously placed around His neck.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is directly the Cupid of Cupids (*sākṣāt manmatha-manmathah*) – this phrase indicates that He churns the mind of the god of love, the Cupid who is the aggregate or the sum-total (*samaṣṭi-gata*) of all Cupids. It is this Cupid that enchants the living entities in this world by His flower arrows. The same Cupid came to enchant Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but he himself became so captivated by the Supreme Cupid that he became infused with a feminine mood and eagerly desired to serve Him as a woman. From this it can be gathered that Madana-mohana (the enchanter of Cupid) Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved sweethearts began to perform their *rāsa-līlā* love games being agitated by the arrows of Cupid who was transcendental like themselves. They were not touched by the pain inflicted by the arrows of the mundane Cupid, who has no authority in the *rāsa-līlā*. It is understood that, in order to make the *gopīs* forget the distress they were suffering in separation, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested His *manmatha-manmatha* form, displaying to the maximum degree His splendor (*rūpa*), elegance (*saundarya*), loveliness (*lāvanya*) and cleverness (*vaidagdhya*).

### VERSE 3

*taṁ vilokyāgataṁ preṣṭhaṁ  
prīty-utphulla-dṛśo 'balāḥ  
uttasthur yugapat sarvās  
tanvaḥ prāṇam ivāgatam*

The *gopīs*' eyes blossomed with the bliss of love on beholding that their most beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is even more attractive than tens of millions of Cupids, had personally appeared in their midst. They had been helpless, but now all of them stood up together, as if their divine life-airs had re-entered their lifeless bodies, revitalizing every limb with new consciousness.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Tanvaḥ*' – each and every limb of the body, such as hands and feet.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

'*Āgatam*' (arrived) – first Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly appeared to the *gopīs* in the distance and, being very eager, gradually approached them. Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa confirms this: "Later on, the *vraja-devīs* saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa coming towards them, His lotus face blossoming with a gentle smile." *Vilokya* means 'seeing in a special manner,' that is, the *gopīs* had become helpless from weeping so much, so they could not see clearly and could not ascertain who was there. Alternatively, when they saw their most beloved Lord, who had caused them intense suffering, they could not believe it was Him; therefore they began to look very carefully. '*Abalā*' (weak) – although they were incapable of standing up due to being weak from separation, still they all rose up on their feet. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being their most beloved and their only lover, was indeed the cause of their life and death; thus, as soon as they saw Him, they got up. This is explained with the phrase '*tanva prāṇam ivāgatam*,' their life-airs re-entered their bodies. For example, when the life-airs that have exited the body return, the hands, legs and other limbs immediately regain consciousness; exactly like that, the *gopīs* came back to life and stood up. In this verse we see the word *āgata* (arrived) used twice, to clarify that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's arrival was the only reason for the *vraja-devīs* to stand up. This verse illustrates the ecstatic symptom (*anubhāva*) called *vilāsa* (gestures that appear immediately upon meeting one's lover), whose nature is described in the *rasa-śāstras* as follows: "The graceful gestures of the mouth, eyes and other features while walking, standing, sitting and enjoying various pastimes with the beloved is known as *vilāsa*."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

'*Tanvaḥ*' – all the bodily limbs, such as hands and legs. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's arrival was the impetus causing those cowherd damsels, who were in a stupor, to stand up. To make this point clear, the word '*āgata*' is repeated. Being agitated in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it was as if the cowherd damsels had lost their minds and life-airs. When they saw their lover arriving, their life-airs returned, and in great joy all of them stood up together. For example, when the life leaves the body, the hands, legs and other limbs remain inert; however when the same life-airs return to the body, all the

limbs simultaneously come alive again. Similarly, on obtaining Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the vital force of their lives, the lifeless *gopīs* were rejuvenated and stood up together.

#### VERSE 4

*kācit karāmbujam śaurer  
jagrhe 'ñjalīnā mudā  
kācid dadhāra tad-bāhum  
amse candana-rūṣitam*

**One *gopī* happily caught the lotus hand of Śaurī Śrī Kṛṣṇa between her joined palms and another one kept His arm, smeared with sandalwood pulp, on her shoulder.**

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

#### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The previous chapter (*Gopī-gīta*) depicted how all the *gopīs* – *svapakṣā* (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's party), *vipakṣā* (the opposition party), etc. – due to the sense of helplessness created from separation, shared the same mood and thus all their speech was similar. Now, having obtained Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the support of their love (*ālambana*), the cowherd damsels began to express their own particular moods. In the five verses beginning with '*kācit*,' Śukadeva Goṣvāmī describes the different moods of some of the prominent *vraja-devīs*, which they exhibited through their variegated gestures.

One *gopī* happily caught hold of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus-like right hand in both her hands, being highly eager to relish the happiness of touching Him. Such behavior is suitable for caressing the hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was excited with joy and was now exhausted from wandering in the forest. The phrase 'by her joined palms' indicates that she was the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the following characteristics: she is gentle, almost like a friend but actually in a mood of servitor-ship, and she remains under the subjugation of her sweetheart, endowed with a rightist mood (*dakṣina-bhāva*).

As that *gopī* had already taken Śrī Kṛṣṇa's right hand, another *gopī* kept His upper arm, smeared with sandalwood paste, on her shoulder. She was standing next to her beloved, conveniently on His left side. Therefore, this *gopī* was keeping Śrī Kṛṣṇa's left arm on her right shoulder. This is indeed logical for her, and the same sort of incidents will come up later on.

‘*Candana-rūṣitam*’ means beautifully decorated with bodily unguents, such as *tilaka* made from sandalwood paste [which has a special power to pacify the fire of separation]. Because this *gopī* pulled Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s left arm onto her shoulder, it is implied that she is a beloved sweetheart who is (1) *prakharā*, bold, (2) openly friendly with her lover, (3) slightly subservient to him, and (4) endowed with a rightist mood.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The five verses beginning with ‘*kācit*’ describe the loving activities the most prominent of the *gopīs* exhibited with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, according to each one’s particular sentiments. One *gopī* was eager to touch Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a mood of polite affection. Therefore, she caught hold of His right lotus hand with both her hands. It is made clear in the second part of the verse that this *gopī* took hold of only His right hand. Due to that respectful touch, it is understood that: (1) that *gopī* is endowed with the feeling of belonging to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*tadīyatā*) with love called *ghṛta-sneha*, resembling ghee; (2) subservient to her beloved; and (3) right-wing heroine (*dakṣiṇa-nāyikā*). Moreover, since she was the first to touch Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it is quite evident that she is the senior-most *gopī*, Candrāvalī.

Another *gopī* placed her lover’s left arm, which was smeared with a variety of sandalwood unguents, on her shoulder. It is logical that this *gopī* stood on the left side of her lover. The embrace she awarded to her beloved hero is slightly tinged with a mood of awe and reverence. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that (1) she possesses *madhu-sneha*, possessive attachment which is sweet like honey, but somewhat mixed with reverential *ghṛta-sneha*; (2) her love openly displays a sense of friendship (*suhṛt-pakṣa*); (3) she has brought her lover under her control, and (4) she has a rightist inclination (*dakṣiṇā*). Therefore she is Śyāmalā.

### **VERSE 5**

*kācid aṅjalīnāgrhṇāt*  
*tanvī tāmṇūla-carvitam*  
*ekā tad-aṅghri-kamalaṁ*  
*santaptā stanayor adhāt*

One slender *vraja-sundarī* took Śrī Kṛṣṇa's chewed *tāmbūla* (betel nut) in her hand. Another *gopī*, whose heart was agitated in separation, sat down and placed His lotus feet on her breast.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Añjalīnā*' – with joined palms.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One delicate-limbed *gopī* accepted in her joined palms the betel nut (*tāmbūla*) that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had chewed. Here the word '*tāmbūla*' indicates that in every *kuñja* Śrī Vṛndā-devī had kept all the items needed for refreshing and redecorating the Divine Couple, such as *tāmbūla*, garlands and sandalwood pulp. Or this work was accomplished under the auspices of Yogamāyā. Although the word *śaurī* [in the previous verse] has not been mentioned here, nevertheless it is understood that this *gopī* accepted His *tāmbūla* in her joined palms (*añjalī*). However, here she is not endeavoring for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's touch, but rather for getting the nectar of His lips. This *gopī* is gentle, almost like a servant but actually in the mood of friendship; she is subservient to her beloved, and is a right-wing heroine (*dakṣiṇa-nāyikā*).

Some other *gopī* held Śrī Kṛṣṇa's right lotus foot on her breasts. Because Śrī Kṛṣṇa had already placed His left arm on another beloved's shoulder, He was standing with His weight on His left foot. At this time, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was still standing, later it is written that He will take a seat. Therefore that *gopī* herself sat down and took hold of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus foot. She did so because her heart was agitated, burning in the mood of separation. In some versions *hṛdaya* (heart) is used in place of *stanayoḥ* (breast), meaning, holding Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus foot on the upper portion of her heart. She is bold (*prakharā*), having a mood of friendship mixed with a sense of servitor-ship, controlled by her lover, and is a right-wing heroine.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One *gopī* accepted Śrī Kṛṣṇa's chewed *tāmbūla* in her joined palms. This heroine is (1) endowed with friendly nature closely akin to servitor-ship, (2) controlled by her sweetheart, and (3) rightist. Therefore, She is

endowed with the mood of *tadīyatā*, the sense of dedication that ‘I belong to Kṛṣṇa,’ laced with *ghṛta-sneha*, affection like ghee. Therefore she is Śaibya, the friend of Candrāvalī, who was mentioned at the outset.

One other *gopī*, agitated by the distress of separation, sat on the ground. With her two hands she took hold of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s right foot and placed it on her breasts, thus pacifying herself. At that time Śrī Kṛṣṇa was standing with His left arm resting on the shoulder of another beloved and His left foot supported on the ground – this was His position. She is a *gopī* with (1) a mood of friendship tinged with servitor-ship, (2) controlled by her hero, and (3) having a right-wing mood. For this reason, this *gopī* is also a heroine endowed with (1) the mood that ‘O Kṛṣṇa, I am thine’ (*tadīyatā-bhāva*), and (2) ghee-like affection (*ghṛta-sneha*). Therefore, she is Padmā, another of Candrāvalī’s *sakhīs*.

#### VERSE 6

*ekā bhru-kuṭīm ābadhya  
prema-saṁrambha-vihvalā  
ghnantīvaikṣat kaṭākṣepaiḥ  
sandaṣṭa-daśana-cchadā*

**Some other *gopī*, completely agitated from the anger of love, had raised her eyebrows and was biting her lips as she began to frown at Śrī Kṛṣṇa, all the while piercing Him with the arrows of her sidelong glances.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

‘*Bhru-kuṭīm ābadhya*’ – raising her eyebrows in a curve like a bow. ‘*Prema-saṁrambha-vihvalā*’ – she became overwhelmed in her loving anger. She bit her lips and, as if chastising Śrī Kṛṣṇa, glowered at Him with disdain.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One Vraja damsel became agitated, absorbed in the anger of affection. Raising her eyebrows and biting her lips, she was glaring at Śaurī Śrī Kṛṣṇa as if to chastise Him with her cutting glance. In some versions, *sandaṣṭai*



is used in place of *kaṭākṣepaiḥ*; both have the same meaning – through this *gopī*'s glance she was expressing her intense annoyance with Him and reproaching Him. The *gopīs* mentioned in the previous two verses are right-wing heroines, having a submissive mood towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They stepped forward and caught hold of His different limbs and accepted His betel nut (*tāmbūla*). All the while, Kṛṣṇa stood in the same place, unable to move because they were holding onto Him – this is what has been revealed. The *gopī* in this verse, exhibiting a leftist nature, stood at a distance. Nevertheless she bestowed the topmost happiness upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa, scowling in intense loving anger. This is related in *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: “One particular Vraja damsel raised her eyebrows to express her anger. As she examined Śrī Kṛṣṇa, she began to drink the honey from His lotus face with the bumblebees of her eyes.”

Two sub-ecstasies, namely *viuvoka* and *lalita*, are exhibited in this verse. *Viuvoka* is described in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* 11.52: “Due to pride and anger, the heroine shows disrespect towards the sweetheart or objects that he has given. Such disrespect is known as *viuvoka*.” *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* 11.56 defines *lalita* thus: “*Lalita* is a sub-ecstasy in which all the heroine's actions – the movement of all the limbs, displaying tenderness, and gestures of the eyebrows – are manifest in a most fascinating way.” This *vraja-devī* is (1) *prakharā* – very intense in nature, (2) *susakhyā* – endowed with a pleasant mood of friendship, (3) having completely controlled her lover, and (4) a left-wing heroine (*bāmā-nāyikā*).

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One *gopī*, agitated out of intense loving anger, bit her lips and arched her eyebrows like a full-drawn bow. She was glaring at Śrī Kṛṣṇa as if aiming the arrows of her glances at Him, wanting to pierce Him to the quick. Her mood suggests she was thinking, “O crest-jewel of swindlers! You successfully experimented on us, giving us the deadly *halāhala* poison of pure *prema* for You. As a result, our life-airs have practically left our bodies. So why have You come to burn our life-airs again?” That *gopī* looked at Śrī Kṛṣṇa in such a way as if to say, “I know very well what kind of person You are.” She was biting her lower lip and hiding her mouth behind her hands, thus displaying her anger. This *gopī* has *madīyatā-bhāva*, the sense of possessiveness that “Kṛṣṇa is mine!” which is laced

with *madhu-sneha*, honey-like affection. This combination gives rise to her crooked, quarrelsome nature. She is Śrīmatī Rādhā.

VERSE 7

*aparānimiṣad-dṛgbhyām  
juṣāṇā tan-mukhāmbujam  
āpītam api nātrpyat  
santas tac-caraṇam yathā*

**Another *gopī* was repeatedly drinking the nectarean honey flowing from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus face with her unblinking eyes. Yet her thirst was never quenched, just as the fully dedicated saintly devotees who always serve the lotus feet of Bhagavān are also never satisfied.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Another *gopī* was staring at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus face with wide-open eyes with which she was nicely drinking the nectarean honey oozing from His face. Even though properly beholding its sweetness, she remained unsatiated, and thus she continued gazing upon Him.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Some other *vraja-devī* was nicely relishing the sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus face with unblinking eyes. Nevertheless, she was not feeling satisfied. Here Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beautiful, sweet face is compared to a lotus dripping with honey. Thus, the eyes of the cowherd damsels are compared to the tongue. This depicts their greed to savor the sweetness of His face. The devotees dedicated to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *dāśya-rasa*, despite having *darśana* of or serving His lotus feet again and again, remain thirsty. Similarly this damsel of Vraja as well does not get satiated, despite drinking up to the brim the honey from His supremely sweet lotus face with her bumblebee-like eyes. This example holds true only in the sense that both experience absence of satisfaction. At the same time, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus face is the shelter of His sweetness, which the devotees in *dāśya-rasa* and the *vraja-devīs* experience according to their own distinct moods. This *gopī* stood in front of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and stared

at Him with unblinking eyes; thus it is understood that she is a haughty heroine (*prakharā-nāyikā*). “Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself will come and meet me.” Thinking like this, she stands her ground. Such a heroine exhibits the following qualities: (1) she is a good friend, (2) controls her lover and (3) has a leftist nature (*bāmā*).

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Some other *gopī* became stunned due to excessive ecstasy. As a result, like a bee, she was relishing the sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus face with unblinking eyes. Nevertheless she was not getting any satisfaction. Another meaning can be taken. The previous verse describes that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was tormented by the arrows of Śrī Rādhā’s cutting glances, which caused His face to tremble with fear, bewilderment and regret. These emotions reflecting on His lotus face at this moment increased its sweetness, which this *gopī* fully tasted. She continued to relish this beauty again and again with unblinking eyes. The sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s face is naturally unbounded, and now it was greatly increasing in manifold ways due to the barrage of arrows unleashed by her beloved *yūtheśvarī*’s (Śrī Rādhā’s) angry glances; and it was further enhanced by the mixture of transitory ecstasies (*sañcarī-bhāvas*) that He was undergoing, such as cringing in fear (*sañkoca*), embarrassment (*lajja*), despondency (*viṣāda*), and humbleness (*dainya*). As this *gopī* beheld that sweetness, her thirst became more excessive and could not be satisfied. Śrī Śukadeva is unable to find a complete example for such a lack of satisfaction. Therefore he is giving only a partial example, mentioning saintly persons who, despite rendering continuous service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, never get satiated.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa was totally mesmerized by Śrī Rādhā, who was striking Him with the arrows of Her glances. His mind and vision were completely chained to Her, and He had not the slightest thought for any other *gopī*. Therefore, that *gopī* considered, “At this moment, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not looking at me.” Understanding this, she freely and brazenly gazed upon His lotus face with wide, unblinking eyes. Therefore it can be understood by this that Śrī Rādhā, who was showering the arrows of Her angry glances, enjoys the greatest good fortune in every respect. Moreover, the *gopī* in this verse, who is beholding Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus face in a carefree manner, is the fortunate

Lalitā, the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhī* of Śrī Rādhā, who is the foremost of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweethearts.

VERSE 8

*taṁ kācin netra-randhreṇa  
hṛdi kṛtvā nimīlya ca  
pulaṁkāṅgy upaguhyāste  
yogīvānanda-samplutā*

One *vraja-devī* took Śrī Kṛṣṇa into her heart through the path of her eyes, upon which she closed her eyes and embraced Him within. She became immersed in the topmost bliss and her bodily hairs stood on the end, just like a perfected *yogī* having obtained his worshipable Supersoul in meditation.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Hṛdi kṛtya*' means 'took Śrī Kṛṣṇa into her heart.'

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One *vraja-devī* brought Śrī Kṛṣṇa into her heart through the path of her eyes and became immersed in bliss. Just as the sun and other spheres have great attachment for their support, the clear sky, similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has great attachment for the heart of this Vraja damsel. In this way, having obtained Śrī Kṛṣṇa she became shy, and consequently closed her eyes. Due to emotional ecstasy she began to horripilate, and internally she held Him in her embrace for a long time. 'Becoming immersed in bliss like a *yogī*' – this example is given to describe her inner vision (*sphūrti*). This *gopī* became absorbed in meditation just like a *yogī*. She exhibits the following qualities: she is a soft-hearted *gopī* (*mṛdvi*) as indicated by her shyness, she enjoys intimate friendship with her lover (*susakhyā*), whom she has brought under her control (*svādhīna-kāntā*), and she is a left-wing heroine (*vāmā-kāntā*).

Thus, the seven prominent *gopīs* have been described. In addition, one more prominent *gopī* is mentioned in Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa, i.e., the eighth *gopī*: "One *gopī*, on seeing Śrī Govinda coming, became joyful and began to chant 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.' Other than Kṛṣṇa's name, she could not say anything else." This statement affirms that this *gopī* is *prakharā* and *saralā*, bold and simple.

Here is an analysis of this topic: the ecstasy named *rati* (intense attachment) is mainly of two types. The first is *tadīyatā-bhāvanā-maya*, meaning, “I belong to my dearmost beloved.” This heroine displays a submissive right-wing mood to her lover. In the second case, *madīyatā-bhāvanā-maya*, the heroine thinks, “He is mine.” Due to her vast love, she exhibits a left-wing mood (*vāmā-bhāva*), feeling that she controls her lover. As these two moods mix together in different proportions, many more types of moods manifest. Thus exist *vraja-devīs* with a great variety of moods. Those who are *sajātīya*, who share a mutually compatible mood, become friends and form a partnership in the spirit of *sva-pakṣatā*, feeling that such and such *gopī* belongs to her party.

All the *gopīs* group together in different parties according to their mutually compatible moods. Those groups having an antagonistic mood (*vīpakṣa*) act in competition with the others. Among them, those Vraja damsels who possess a spirit in large degree compatible with *sva-pakṣas*, but have a little bit of another mood, constitute the *suhṛta-pakṣa*, having a mood of friendship with the *sva-pakṣas*. If they only nurture good will for the *sva-pakṣas*, and possess a great deal of mixed moods, then their *sajātīya* mood [for the *sva-pakṣas*] is so minute that it is not clearly visible. Thus they are *taṭastha* (border-line cases), having a sense of neutrality. These *vraja-devīs* have taste only for their own cherished moods towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The main reason behind their friendship with each other is Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone and this is indeed befitting.<sup>2</sup>

- .....
- 2 In this way four types of differences are accepted among the *vraja-devīs*: (1) *sva-pakṣa*, one's own party, (2) *suhṛta-pakṣa*, party that is favorable to one's mood, (3) *taṭastha-pakṣa*, neutral party, and (4) *prati-pakṣa*, party opposed to one's own. Their differences are explained thus. *Gopīs* who fully share a kindred mood are *sva-pakṣatā*, and group together in a partnership. If the mood is somewhat heterogeneous, then, in relation to the *sva-pakṣas*, they belong to the friendly group (*suhṛta-pakṣatā*). When there is only a little bit of the same spirit found, they constitute the neutral group (*taṭastha-pakṣa*). When this mood is completely heterogeneous in every aspect, then they belong to the opposite group (*prati-pakṣa*). When two parties have completely contrary moods and are mutually antagonistic, they cannot tolerate each other. Therefore the absence of palatability in the moods is the cause behind the opposition. Due to this antagonism, there is mutual hatred, and they endeavor to thwart their rivals' well-being and cause unpalatable disturbances. Whichever party is more or less of the same nature of one's own sentiment, one develops friendship with such a group. Factually it is

Of these two moods, *madīyatā-maya bhāva* is superior to *tadīyatā-maya* because, due to extreme feelings of possessiveness (*mamatā*), one is able to relish Śrī Kṛṣṇa's human-like sweetness (*mādhurya*) to a much greater degree. Therefore the depth and force of the flow of love are much more. When this *madīyatā-bhāva* reaches a fully mature state, that deep stream of love, moving with so much force, does not flow in a proper way; rather it twists and turns, moving in a zigzag fashion, manifesting a left-wing *vāmyā-bhāva*. Another name for this phenomenon is *kauṭilya-ābhāsa*, a semblance of crooked behavior. According to the logic of Śrī Bharata Muni, "The movement of love is crooked, just like a moving snake." The nature of such love is that the lady-love externally acts in a roundabout or devious way, and because of this, the lover is controlled by her leftist mood.

In this connection, Śrī Rudra has also said, "A woman's contrary mood, the difficulty to meet, and the woman's rejection of her lover—I consider these three to be Cupid's main weapons, or the means for a woman to captivate her sweetheart." In this regard Śrī *Hari-varṇa* mentions Śrī Satyabhāmā-

.....  
very rare or impossible that any of the *vraja-devīs* will have the identical mood and identical degree of those sentiments. Sometimes due to *ghuṇākṣara-nyāya*, or the logic of serving by happy chance even unknowingly, there is a possibility of compatibility of moods, in which case such a party is accepted as a friendly party (*suhṛta-pakṣa*). This *suhṛta-pakṣa* is of two types: (1) who help to attain the desired goal, and (2) who remove obstacles. In this way, all the Vraja damsels in the friendly class are favorable for the *sva-pakṣa*. At the same time they are neutral or opposed to other groups. The scriptures on transcendental mellows (*rasa-śāstra*) describe the party who is friendly to one's opposition party as neutral. Therefore every *vraja-devī* is endowed with her own unique sentiments for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which He relishes. These sentiments alone lead to mutual friendship with each other. *Rati*, attachment, is at the root of it. The nature of that attachment creates two types of moods: (1) *tadīyatā-maya* and (2) *madīyatā-maya*.

Here one fact is to be emphasized. Inside the heart that is marked by a modest, submissive nature, the love (*prīti*) known as *madhura-rati*, or amorous attachment, mixes with the ingredients that are favorable. The quality and intensity of the love decreases due to this submissiveness. Moreover when the loving humility manifests to the agreeable degree, the cowherd damsel develops *tadīyatā-bhāva*, the permanent nature that "O Kṛṣṇa, indeed I am Thine." This mood is exemplified in the hearts of Śrī Candrāvalī and the confidantes in her group.

When the love is more intense than the modesty, it covers the submissive nature. Then the permanent ecstasy that is full of *madīyatā* ("Śrī Kṛṣṇa belongs to me") manifests. This permanent ecstasy does not have even an iota of reverence. The sentiments full of *madīyatā* that are present in the hearts of Śrī Rādhā and Her personal confidantes are the examples of this.

devī: “Śrī Satyabhāmā-devī, young and beautiful, became proud due to her great good fortune. When she heard Śrī Nārada describing Śrī Rukmiṇī’s good fortune, the arrogant Satyabhāmā became filled with envy.” Moreover, it is said, “Śrī Rukmiṇī, the daughter of King Bhīṣmaka, is the queen of the general populace, and is the head of the whole royal family. Śrī Satyabhāmā-devī is the best among ladies and she also enjoys great good fortune.”

Verses 4 and 5 give an account of the four rightist confidantes who are endowed with the mood of *tadiyatā* (“I am Thine”), each one described in half the verse. However later on, in one verse each, Verses 6, 7 and 8, three types of leftist confidantes who are endowed with a sense of possessiveness (*madīyatā-bhāva*, “Thou art mine”) are described. In this way, we can clearly see that the poet Śrī Śukadeva has given more consideration to the mood of possessiveness (*madīyatā-bhāva*). The last three verses describe one *gopī* as follows: “One cowherd damsel furrowed her eyebrows...” She is the best among all. As She is endowed with special, super-excellent sentiments, She is described first. No other cowherd damsel can possess that most exceptional mood. Moreover, such mood manifests upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa forsaking Her, and She is thrown into separation. Śrī Kṛṣṇa abandoned all the *vraja-devīs*, except this one to whom He bestowed good fortune by carrying Her off. Thus He Himself has indicated Her outstanding nature. That best among all *gopīs* was staring at Śrī Kṛṣṇa with furrowed eyebrows.

One particular *vraja-devī* is described in the first line of Verse 4. She is one of the four cowherd damsels of Vraja who are rightist, or submissive in mood. She is the most excellent and senior-most, thus she is mentioned first. Being the foremost she jumped over everyone and touched Śrī Kṛṣṇa first. She exhibits the sweet behavior of a right-wing heroine. Therefore, this *gopī*’s mind-set is contrary (*prati-pakṣā*) to the mood of the super-excellent *vraja-devīs*, such as Śrīmatī Rādhā, described in Verses 6-8.

Now the deliberation on the *yūthas*, or groups, of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Candrāvalī is presented. There are some *gopīs* whose mood conforms with Śrī Rādhā’s leftist mood; they are *sakhīs* in Her group. Those *gopīs* whose mood is akin to Candrāvalī’s are her *sakhīs*. These *gopīs*’ affiliation with those group leaders is determined by the similarity of the mood. The *gopī* referred to in Verse 6 is Śrī Rādhā, and those discussed in Verses 7 and 8 are Lalitā and Viśākhā, Śrī Rādhā’s most confidential *sakhīs*. Just as Śrī Rādhā has *madīyatā-maya vāmya-bhāva*, so do Lalitā and Viśākhā. In the first

part of Verse 4, first of all, the topic of rightist Śrī Candrāvalī is discussed, and the second part of the Fourth Verse describes another *sakhī*. This *sakhī*, Śyāmālā, belongs to the right-wing, submissive class, nevertheless she is the friend (*suhṛta*) of Śrī Rādhā, having a somewhat similar mood. Her character is a little different from those *gopīs* endowed with a *tadīyatā-maya* rightist mood. Therefore she cannot be counted among the group of Candrāvalī. Later comes the eighth *sakhī* (Bhadrā), who is described in Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa, but as her special mood is not clearly delineated, she is not included in either the rightist or the leftist groups. Because of this Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has not mentioned her. In the end, she is accepted as a *taṭasthā-sakhī*, a neutral confidante.

Now he is giving the names of these *gopīs*. In the *Bhaviṣya-uttara Purāṇa*, on the occasion of Malla-Dvādaśī, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to Yudhiṣṭhira, “O Mahārāja! O great king! Please listen to the names of the ten prominent *gopīs*: Gopālī, Pālīkā, Dhanyā, Viśākhā, Dhyāna-niṣṭhikā, Rādhā, Anurādhā, Somābhā, Tārakā and Daśamī.” In some versions, one finds the name ‘Dhaniṣṭhikā’ in place of ‘Dhyāna-niṣṭhikā’. Daśamī, meaning ‘tenth,’ is also one name; she is mentioned last because of the meaning of her name. The word *tathā* (and) indicates that another name of Daśamī is Tārakā. Moreover, the cowherd damsel named Gopālī is certainly the follower of Gāyatrī, who is described in the *Padma-Purāṇa*.

*Skanda-Purāṇa*, in *Dvārakā-māhātmya* of *Prahlāda-Saṁhitā*, tells about the incident at Māyā-Sarovara when Śrī Uddhava came again to Vraja as Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s dear emissary. Upon meeting him, the *gopīs* expressed their inner feelings just as they would have with their beloved Kṛṣṇa Himself. According to each one’s particular sentiments, the names of eight cowherd damsels are mentioned. However those expressions were so full of distress that it is inappropriate to delve into them during the happy *rāsa* dance. At the same time, they should not be neglected when under consideration. The damsels of Vraja are now devoid of any shelter other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, their sorrowful arguments are documented here.

On hearing Śrī Uddhava’s words, Śrī Lalitā-devī fainted out of anger. Weeping with tear-filled eyes, she said, “O Uddhava! Please do not unnecessarily bring up the topic of that Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is a thorough liar and who is going down the wrong path. He is deceitful and is dear to cruel people. Fie on Him hundreds of times – we don’t want to hear about that



sinful, cruel-hearted person who has abandoned His lady-loves and like a fool, He has gone to Dvārakā.” Śrī Śyāmālā Sakhī commented, “O *sakhis*! Why are you causing distress by repeatedly speaking about that person who is blind to His own good fortune and devoid of any pious merit? Please speak about something else.” Śrī Dhanyā remarked, “Who has brought the messenger of that wicked person here? This sinner should now go away on the path of no return. Whoever takes that path never comes back [like Kṛṣṇa].” Śrī Viśākhā pronounced, “We do not know anything about His character, lineage, birth and activities. He is completely devoid of religiosity and the other goals of human life. It is futile to meet with such a person.”

Śrī Rādhā quipped, “The one who never felt fear of sin in killing Pūtānā, O *sakhis*, will surely kill any woman. Is there any doubt about this?” Śrī Śaibyā said, “O most fortunate Uddhava! Please speak the truth. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the best among the Yādavas. What is He doing now that He is surrounded by beautiful city ladies? Does He remember us?” Śrī Padmā spoke up, “O Uddhava! Śrī Kṛṣṇa is endowed with arms powerful like thunderbolts. He is beloved of the beautiful women dwelling in the city. After how many more days will lotus-eyed Śrī Kṛṣṇa return?” Śrī Bhadrā said, “O Śrī Kṛṣṇa! O best among the cowherd men! O beloved of the cowherd damsels! O mighty-armed one! Please deliver us *gopīs* from the ocean of material existence.”

Many people count Śrī Candrāvalī among the eight confidantes, but do not include Dhanyā, who is not as well known as the famous Candrāvalī. In this connection, as previously mentioned, *Bhaviṣya-uttara* counts the number of confidantes to be ten. However, here there are only eight. This difference in numbers implies that these two accounts do not propound the same opinion. Within the eight confidantes mentioned in the *Skanda Purāṇa*, some people do not include Dhanyā, but rather accept Candrāvalī because she is much more famous. Thus, the five confidantes such as Lalitā [excluding Śaibyā, Padmā and Bhadrā] are leftist (*bāma*) and essentially bold (*prakhara*).

However, here in Verses 6-8, starting with ‘*bhru-kuṭim ābadhya*,’ the three leftist *gopīs* are described. Therefore, to include Śrī Candrāvalī in the eight is indeed logical, because she has been ascertained as the foremost among the right-wing party. Therefore, the two parties – leftist and rightist – have three confidantes each; their number will be six in total. Śyāmālā is friendly towards the group of Śrī Rādhā, who is leftist by nature. When

we add Śyāmalā and the neutral cowherd damsel mentioned in *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, the numerical count arrives at eight.

Verse 6, with the words '*ekā bhru-kuṭīm ābadhya*,' describes one *sakhī* who is foremost among the members of the leftist group. She has the great good fortune to be endowed with the ultimate limit of the topmost ecstasy. Therefore, She cannot be anyone else other than Śrī Rādhā, who is the best among Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved sweethearts.

One can also see the conclusion that concurs with this in the *Padma-Purāṇa*:

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos  
tasyāḥ kuṇḍam priyam tathā  
sarva-gopīṣu saivaikā  
viṣṇor atyanta-vallabhā*

"Just as Śrī Rādhikā is the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, similarly, Her *kuṇḍa* is also equally dear to Him. Among all the cowherd damsels, Śrī Rādhikā is the most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa." *Matsya* and *Skanda Purāṇas* also mention this: "In Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhikā has been described as the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa." *Bṛhad-gautamīya Tantra* also confirms this:

*devī kṛṣṇa-mayī proktā  
rādhikā para-devatā  
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva  
kāntiḥ sammohinī parā*

"Goddess Śrī Rādhikā is the personification of the love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is the Supreme Goddess, the embodiment of all the goddesses of fortune, and the epitome of all loveliness. She is the Supreme Enchantress and the Supreme Ruler of the world." Furthermore, *Rk-pariśiṣṭa* narrates, "In this world, Śrī Mādhava who is full of pastimes, is present with Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Rādhikā is present with Śrī Mādhava." Umāpati-dhara, who was the friend of Śrī Jayadeva and the prime minister of Lakṣmaṇa-sena Mahārāja, similarly described Śrī Rādhikā as the principal cowherd damsel. "Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Kāṁsa, was greeted by the artful movement of the eyebrows of one beautiful *vraja-gopī*. Another beautiful damsel greeted Him with wide open eyes. Yet another lovely girl secretly greeted Him with her attractive smile. However, His fearful eyes were falling on Śrī Rādhā's lotus face, which was effulgent with playful beauty,

and which expressed disdain flowing from Her natural pride. With a fearful look, He was repeatedly praying to Her, begging with His eyes; therefore She is accepted as Rādhā.” This proves that Śrī Kṛṣṇa nurtures greater affection for Śrī Rādhikā than for any of the other *vraja-sundarīs*.

Śrīpāda Sanātana Gosvāmī said, “The best of my younger brothers, the great devotee of the Lord (*mahā-bhāgavata*), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has presented an elaborate discussion of this topic in the *Sthāyī-bhāva Prakaraṇa* of *Ujjaṇala-nīlamanī*, the chapter describing the permanent ecstasies. She who is well-known as ‘Gāndharvā’ in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Śruti* possesses the main symptoms found in Śrī Rādhikā; therefore she is understood to be Śrī Rādhā. In this way, all the *śāstras* present logical arguments and conclude that Rādhikā is the most prominent of all the *gopīs*.

Previously the statements of the different *nāyikās* were quoted from *Prahlāda-Saṁhita*. The expertise seen in Śrī Rādhā’s speech makes it clear that She is a *madhyā-nāyikā*<sup>3</sup>, intermediate heroine. Here and in Verse 6 of this chapter, for the sake of the *līlā*, She displayed anger by acting in an impudent manner. Compared to the heroines who were holding Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s arms, Rādhikā’s *madhyā* mood is seen to be greater. Both of these books – *Prahlāda-Saṁhita* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* – agree on this point.

In Verse 7, one of Śrī Rādhā’s *sakhīs* has been described through the words ‘with unblinking eyes.’ Because this *sakhī* has a leftist (*vāmā*) mood and imperious (*prakharā*) nature, she must be Śrī Lalitā. Here, her usual extremely leftist (*ati-vāmya*) mood is not seen because she appeared extremely satisfied on seeing how Śrī Kṛṣṇa was agitated due to being wounded by Śrī Rādhā’s very acrid glance. In *Bhaviṣya-uttara Purāṇa*, this Lalitā has been addressed by another name – Anurādhā. The *Bhaviṣyottara Purāṇa* mentions these two names – Rādhā and Anurādhā – joining them together as *rādhānurādhā*. From this conjoint form, it is understood that these two are heroines in the same group. Among these confidantes (*sakhīs*) who belong to the same class, Śrī Rādhā, the most prominent, is discussed first. Rādhā and Lalitā are described in Verses 6-7 of this chapter. There also, Śrī Rādhā has been described as the most prominent among the two. Therefore, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhaviṣyottara-Purāṇa* concur in their opinion.

- 3 The *yūtheśvarī* who exhibits *prakharā* (harsh) and *mṛdu* (sweet and soft) moods to the same degree and in whom *mugdhā* (innocent) and *pragalbhā* (impudent) moods are mixed – she is *madhyā* (intermediate).

Later on, Verse 8, '*taṁ kacin-netra-randhreṇa*,' describes another one of Śrī Rādhā's *sakhīs* – Viśākhā, whose *vāmyatā* (left-wing contrary character) and tenderness of heart are just like Śrī Rādhā's. Moreover, her statement starting with '*na śīlanī*' documented in *Prahlāda-Saṁhītā* is further evidence proving her left-wing character mentioned in this verse.

It has already been established that the first heroine, who is of the first category, described in the first couplet of Verse 4 is Śrī Candrāvalī, who is widely accepted as being Śrī Rādhā's primary competitor. In this connection Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura said: "One time, after sporting with Śrī Rādhikā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was returning from the *mohana-kuṇja* (enchanting bower) of Śrī Rādhā. On the way, accidentally He met Śrī Candrāvalī, and asked her,

'O Rādhā! Are you okay?'

On hearing Śrī Kṛṣṇa address her as such, Candrāvalī retorted,

'O Kāṁsa! Are you okay?'

Being wonderstruck, Śrī Kṛṣṇa replied,

'O beautiful damsel! O you whose heart is bewildered! How did you develop such perverse understanding? Where did you see Kāṁsa?'

Candrāvalī answered, 'Where did You see Rādhā here?'

Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa realized that she was Candrāvalī. Understanding His mistake, He became extremely embarrassed and lowered His face. Seeing how Candrāvalī so quickly and cleverly gave her reply arising from her envy, Hari smiled gently. May such Lord Hari protect us."

As the meaning of their names is virtually the same, this Candrāvalī is Śrī Somābhā (*somābha* meaning 'like the moon'), who is mentioned in *Bhaviṣya-uttara Purāṇa*.

The second couplet of Verse 4, '*kācid-dadhāra*,' describes Śyāmalā, the friend of Śrī Rādhā. *Prahlāda-Saṁhītā* narrates that she enters the groups of Lalitā and others and bestows salutary advice; thus we learn about her friendship with Śrī Rādhā. The *sakhīs* who are soaked in the same mood, become distressed at each other's sorrow, and lament together. Due the slight difference of their moods, she is seen in the form of the giver of friendly advice. Śrī Madhvācārya-pāda in his purport of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has referred to Śyāmalā with the name Līlā.

Śrī Candrāvalī's two confidantes are Śaibyā and Padmā. Śaibyā has been described in the first line of Verse 5, '*kācid-aṅjalīnā*,' and the second line, '*ekā-tad-aṅghri*,' portrays Padmā. Moreover, the cowherd damsel who has been

described as *taṭasthā* (neutral) in *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is Bhadrā, who has a leftist mood. Her humility indicates the mood of a servant, and she also nurtures a desire for amorous meeting, which blossoms only to a small degree.

The great sage Śrī Śukadeva has concealed the names of these cowherd damsels, and has described them in a hidden way with the ornament of speech called *apahnuti*. That is, one reveals some confidential object and then presents another meaning to cover it over. “With the permission of that great personality, I [Jīva Gosvāmī] have shed light on this confidential pastime and artfully recorded it. Now I am feeling shy. O Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Your beloved sweethearts! All of you are my only shelter. Mercifully forgive the impudence of this person (i.e., myself), who has no other resort.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In great apprehension one *gopī* was thinking, “Due to great good fortune I have connected with this lover, but He is so fickle that He may leave me again.” Therefore, when she received Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s audience, she took Him and placed Him in her heart (*hṛdi kṛtvā*). Thus she became immersed in bliss. Then fearing that He might fly away through the door of the eyes, she closed her eyes. ‘*Pulakit-aṅgi*’ – her body broke out in horripilation triggered by experiencing the complete and unobstructed bliss of union with her lover. Having lost her composure due to the intense desire to hold Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her arms, she kept her eyes closed for a long time, feeling as if she was embracing (*upaguhya āste*) Him in her heart. And because of meeting in that private place (in the heart) where no one could see them, there was no need to feel shy.

As the three *gopīs* mentioned in Verses 6, 7 and 8 did not come close to their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it is understood that they are *bāmā*, left-wing cowherd damsels. “Śrī Kṛṣṇa should personally come to us. We shall never go to Him.” This demonstrates their mood of possessiveness, *madīyatā-bhāva* (Kṛṣṇa belongs to me!), which is filled with *madhu-sneha*, affection that is sweet like honey. Therefore it is accepted that these three are extremely intimate with Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*su-sakhyā*) and keep Him under their control. The first among these three is Śrī Rādhikā, the topmost leader (*yutheśvarī*) of all the *gopīs*. The second and third cowherd damsels are Her closest girlfriends (*sakhīs*), Śrī Lalitā and Śrī Viśākhā respectively.

The *Śrī Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* describes these seven confidantes (*sakhīs*) mentioned in Verses 4-8. They are Candrāvalī, Śyāmalā, Śaibya, Padmā, Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā and Viśākhā. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has mentioned seven prominent *gopīs*, and *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* accounts for the eighth principle *gopī*: “One cowherd damsel experienced such great bliss on seeing Govinda coming that she could only utter ‘Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!’ She could not say anything else.” She should be known as Bhadrā.

*Śrī Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* quotes from *Skanda Purāṇa* (*Dvārakā-māhātmya* of *Prahlāda-Saṁhiṭā*), wherein these eight cowherd damsels are proclaimed as prominent out of all the three billion *gopīs*. One can refer to *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī* to learn more about their hierarchy, as only a little bit is indicated here. And out of these eight cowherd damsels, Śrī Rādhā is the most prominent. *Śrī Padma Purāṇa* clearly states: “Just as Śrī Rādhikā is dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, similarly Her pond is also dear to Him. Among all these cowherd damsels, Śrī Rādhā alone is most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

*Bṛhad-gautamīya Tantra* affirms this: The beautiful, effulgent Goddess Śrī Rādhikā is totally absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is the most worshipable goddess, presiding over all the goddesses of fortune. All splendor exists in Her. She completely enchants Kṛṣṇa, and is the supreme ruler.” *Rk-pariśiṣṭa* confirms this: “Śrī Mādhava is present with Śrī Rādhā, and Śrī Rādhikā is present with Śrī Mādhava with all excellence.”

#### VERSE 9

*sarvās tāḥ keśavāloka-  
paramotsava-nirvṛtāḥ  
jahur viraha-jaṁ tāpaṁ  
prājñam prāpya yathā janāḥ*

Seeing their beloved Keśava, the *gopīs* experienced a great festival of bliss and were liberated from the anguish of separation, just as people become free from the pangs of material existence upon receiving the association of a great devotee of Bhagavān.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Persons desiring liberation (*mumukṣu-gaṇa*) become free from the pangs of material existence on obtaining the Supreme Lord (*prājña*,

meaning *īśvara*). Another understanding: worldly persons become free from the pangs of material existence on receiving the association of ‘*prāñña*’ – the Lord’s topmost devotee who knows Brahman. Alternatively, when the living entity transcends the states of wakefulness and dreaming (*viśva* and *taijasa*), he reaches the state of *prāñña* (deep dreamless sleep, or *suṣupti*). That time, he receives the audience of the Supersoul, the indwelling witness, upon which he becomes free from the pangs of material existence. Similarly, the cowherd damsels experienced great bliss in the grand celebration of receiving audience of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, they became free from their lamentation arising from separation.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Out of three hundred crore (3 billion) cowherd damsels, eight are prominent. They have just been discussed in the previous verses, but what happened to the rest of the *vraja-devīs*? Expecting this question, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaks this verse ‘*sarvā*.’ In other words, *sarvā* – all the cowherd damsels – became absorbed in the topmost bliss just seeing Śrī Keśava. The word ‘*keśavaḥ*’ has been used previously in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.48 to convey the meaning ‘most effulgent’ – “Śrī Keśava observed that these *vraja-ramaṇīs* were overly proud due to their good fortune and were now exhibiting *māna* also. In order to quell their pride and satisfy them by dispelling their indignation, He suddenly disappeared from their assembly.”

However in this Ninth Verse, the word ‘*keśavaḥ*’ has been used to indicate very beautiful hair. Moreover, in the beginning of this chapter, it is said: “*tāsāṃ āvirbhūt* – He appeared, manifesting that form that was attractive for the entire world.” According to this definition, the word *keśava* (*keśa*, or hair, along with *vaḥ*) indicates the glorification of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beauty, which enchants the whole universe. The import of the word *keśavaḥ* in both of these verses can be accepted as ‘the reservoir of supreme effulgence.’ In the explanation of the word *keśava* in the previously mentioned verse, it is told that the *vraja-devīs* lost their effulgence due to Śrī Keśava’s vanishing. Similarly, it is to be understood that their effulgence reappeared when Śrī Keśava returned. The purport is that when the sun is visible, it illuminates the world, and when it sets, the

world is immersed in darkness. Similarly, the form of most brilliant Keśava, just like the sun, is the embodiment of concentrated effulgence. When this form disappeared, the hearts of the *vraja-devīs* became covered with the darkness of the distress of separation. When that form of concentrated effulgence reappeared, their agitation from separation was removed and they experienced great bliss. As Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *darśana* bestows the topmost joy, the *gopīs* enjoyed a festival of supreme happiness.

To give a suitable example, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaks the word '*prāñnam*.' When the embodied living entity is in ignorance upon reaching the state of deep sleep, his gross and subtle senses are inactive, and he experiences the presence of *prāñna*. At that time, the immediate destruction of his three-fold miseries begins; it is not completed, but the hope for it is set in motion. However in this state also, the mood of ignorance remains present in an invisible form. The living entity's agitation is not completely annihilated until the ignorance is removed in toto. Similarly, the *vraja-devīs'* anguish in separation began to disappear due to the audience of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. However, it did not vanish completely at once because of the fear hidden in their hearts that "Kṛṣṇa may abandon us again." Alternatively, a man agitated by material existence begins to give up his distress on receiving the association of *prāñna*, the topmost devotees of Bhagavān. Similarly, the cowherd damsels also began to give up their grief generated from separation on attaining Śrī Kṛṣṇa, however it was not completely removed at once. In this way, these two examples are useful only in showing the initiation of the destruction of pain, but not the completion of the process.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Here the word '*prāñna*' means *parama-bhāgavata*, topmost devotee, and '*janāḥ*' means the people agitated by material existence. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has said in connection with the description of the rainy season: "*grheṣu tapta-nirvinṇā yathācyuta-janāgame* – the living entities who are burning in the fire of household life become overjoyed by the arrival of a topmost pure devotee of Acyuta Bhagavān" (10.20.20). Similarly, the cowherd damsels, who were suffering in separation, received the topmost bliss upon seeing Śrī Keśava and they were relieved of their distress.



## VERSE 10

*tābhir vidhūta-śokābhir  
bhagavān acyuto vṛtaḥ  
vyarocatādhikaṁ tāta  
puruṣaḥ śaktibhir yathā*

**O Parīkṣit! Bhagavān Śrī Acyuta, situated in His *saccidānanda* form and ever possessed of divine beauty and sweetness, is looking even more attractive today, being surrounded by the *gopīs*, who were relieved from their distress of separation. Thus adorned, Kṛṣṇa appeared just like the Supersoul encircled by His intrinsic potencies.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Puruṣaḥ*' means *paramātmā*, or Supersoul, surrounded by His potencies such as *sattva*, pure consciousness. Alternatively, '*puruṣaḥ*' means worshiper (*upāsaka*) who is surrounded by potencies such as knowledge, strength and valor. '*Puruṣaḥ*' also means the living entity sleeping in the heart, who looks splendid surrounded by material designations. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked fabulously beautiful, adorned and encircled by the cowherd damsels, now free from distress.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Giving up their pride (*mada*) and sulky mood (*māna*), all the *vraja-devīs* gathered together and followed Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose supreme beauty manifested at that time being surrounded by the cowherd damsels. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes this in three verses beginning with '*tābhiḥ*.' The phrase '*vidhūta-śokābhiḥ*' refers to the *gopīs*, who were now totally free from the distress of separation. Śrī Parāśara Muni has described the special reason behind the liberation of the *gopīs* from their anguish of separation (*viraha-tāpa*). "Śrī Mādhava appeared in the midst of those cowherd damsels and removed their distress by sweetly conversing with one, glancing at another while artfully arching His eyebrows, and touching yet another with His cooling hands. Thus courteously propitiating them, He extinguished their sorrow born of separation."

In this way, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is complete in every respect, being endowed infinitely with the six opulences. Thus He is ‘*acyuta*’ (infallible), that is, He never waivers even a drop from that state of absolute completeness. This is His nature. When He met with those *gopīs* – who are the embodiment of His internal potency that manifests a special *prema* – and freed them from the distress of separation, He began to radiate an even more spectacular beauty than before. It is indeed appropriate that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, situated in the midst of the breath-takingly beautiful *gopīs*, manifested such an excellent appearance, never seen previously.

Another example is given to illustrate this topic further. The Supreme Person (*puruṣa*) or the Supreme Controller (*īśvara*) manifests His form as the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*bhagavat-rūpa*), who, decorated by His majesty and other aspects of the internal potencies, looks even more beautiful. In His form as the impersonal Brahman, He does not look as beautiful. Moreover, *svayaṁ-bhagavān* (the Original Supreme Personality of Godhead) Śrī Kṛṣṇa exudes the greatest degree of beauty when surrounded by the *gopīs*, the personifications of His internal potency’s special expression of *prema*. ‘*Tāta*’ means ‘O Parīkṣit.’ This term indicates the topmost compassion; it is used as a title for those who are candidates worthy of receiving compassion, or to address one’s father. Many such meanings are found. Nevertheless here we accept the meaning as compassion to reveal the most confidential pastime. The purport is as follows. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said to King Parīkṣit, “O Parīkṣit! You are the recipient of my topmost mercy. For this reason alone, I am revealing this great secret to you.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Any person looks exceedingly charming when arrayed with the potencies of his senses, and loses his attractiveness when the power of the senses diminishes. The *gopīs*, being the manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s internal potency, are endowed with special love and affection. When the *gopīs* are lost in lamentation, He reflects their distress, and thus His charm and beauty are greatly diminished. Upon being freed from the distress of separation, the *gopīs* become exceedingly effulgent and more lovely (*ujjala*). When Śrī Kṛṣṇa meets these cowherd damsels now glowing, His beauty increases many

times over. To repeat, a person is happy when his senses are satisfied, and he feels wretched if his senses are distressed. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa experiences joy in the happiness of the *gopīs*, and He feels misery in their distress. This implies that Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes fully accomplished by the cowherd damsels' love. This also implies that the *gopīs*' love for Him is ingrained in their very beings. [In other words, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love conforms to the *gopīs*' love, or His love is dependent on their love. However their love is not controlled by His, rather their love, reflecting their inherent natures, is independent.]

This principle has been elucidated in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of *Skanda-Purāṇa*: "Sixteen thousand *gopīs* had gathered in the *rāsa* dance arena. Situated in their midst, Paramātmā Janārdana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul and well-wisher of all beings, appeared like a swan or like the *gopīs*' very life-air. O goddess Pārvatī! These cowherd damsels are known as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sixteen potencies. He is like the full moon, and these *gopīs* represent the sixteen phases of the moon – it should be understood in this way. These sixteen phases appearing as the *gopīs* join together and make a complete circle. The sixteen parts, or the sixteen phases, have taken the forms of the sixteen main *gopīs*. O beautiful-faced one! These sixteen cowherd damsels have accepted different, different moods, and each one manifested in a thousand bodies."

*Āgama* recounts, "Surrounded by one billion (one hundred crore) beautiful damsels in the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked especially wonderful." From all the evidence, it can be known that three hundred crore cowherd damsels were present in the *rāsa* dance. Among them, the previously mentioned sixteen thousand *gopīs* are prominent, and out of them, a thousand cowherd damsels are more outstanding. Among these, only eight *gopīs* are the most excellent, and out of these eight, only two – Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Candrāvalī – are the striking chiefs. And out of these two, Śrī Rādhā uniquely stands supreme. The devotional scriptures have ascertained this conclusion.

#### VERSES 11-12

*tāḥ samādāya kālindīyā  
nirviśya pulinaṁ vibhuḥ  
vikasat-kunda-mandāra  
surabhy-anila-ṣaṭpadam*

*śarac-candrāmśu-sandoha-  
dhvasta-doṣā-tamaḥ śivam  
kṛṣṇāyā hasta-taralā  
cita-komala-vālukam*

The one-and-only all-powerful Śrī Kṛṣṇa, looking very beautiful and charming, accompanied the cowherd damsels to the extremely delightful bank of the Yamunā. There, the gentle breeze was blowing, carrying the fragrance of the *kunda* and *mandāra* blossoms, and the riverbank was reverberating with the humming of the bumblebees intoxicated from the sweet smell of nectar. The autumn full moon diffused its splendid rays, and dispelled the darkness of the night, thus making the whole atmosphere auspicious. With her hand-like waves, Śrī Yamunā piled up soft sand on her shore, creating the stage for Kṛṣṇa's sweet *līlā*.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

The wind had become fragrant with the scent of the blooming *kunda* and *mandāra* flowers. Attracted by the aromatic breeze, the bumblebees became intoxicated, and were hovering around that riverbank. The autumn full-moon had risen, dissipating the darkness of the night with its effulgent rays. The combination of all these elements produced a most pleasant atmosphere on the riverbank. Using her waves as hands, Śrī Yamunā created a stage of extremely soft sand for Bhagavān's pastimes on the shore. Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to the beautiful and charming riverbank in the company of the cowherd damsels, and being surrounded by them, He looked even more wonderful than before. In the first half of Verse 11, the word *nirviśya* (entering) is a gerund. Therefore, this verse reads along with the previous one to complete the sentence with a finite verb.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

The previous verse mentioned that Bhagavān Śrī Acyuta began to exude a unique beauty. Now, the two verses beginning with 'tāḥ' describe the elements enhancing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty. 'Samādāya' means catching

the hands of all the cowherd damsels, that is, holding the hand of each and every *gopī*. First He arrived at the Yamunā's bank where He met all the *gopīs*, and then He proceeded to (*nirviśya*) another sandbank which was suitable for the *rāsa* dance. He situated Himself in the very middle of the second sandbank, where He began to radiate a very special beauty.

One may challenge: Śrī Kṛṣṇa is only one. How could He catch the hand of every single cowherd damsel? To remove this doubt, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that Kṛṣṇa is *vibhu*, all-pervading. Though Śrī Kṛṣṇa is only one, He desired to console all the *gopīs* at once, by praising them (*sāma* – using kind words to win over their hearts) and by being charitable to them (*dāna*). Therefore He caught the hands of all of them at the same time.

Now, in one and a half verses beginning with '*vikasat*,' he describes the elements that were present to stimulate ecstasy, thus establishing the suitability of the Yamunā's sandy bank for the *rāsa* dance. The wind had become favorably scented with the fragrance of the fully blooming *kunda* and *mandāra* flowers. Drawn by the aromatic breeze, the bumblebees were hovering on the bank of the river. From this statement it is understood that the wind was cool and fragrant, and was moving along slowly. If the wind had been blowing fast, then there would be no chance of any bumblebees hovering on the riverbank. The darkness of the nighttime had dissipated due to the effulgent rays of the full autumn moon. Here the word '*śarat*' (autumn) indicates that the rays of the moon were bestowing topmost serenity. The word '*sandoha*' (abundance) indicates that the full moon was so effulgent that it dispelled (*dhvasta-doṣā*) the darkness, making it seem like it was daytime. With her hand-like waves, Śrī Yamunā (Śrī Kṛṣṇā) spread very soft sand on that bank.

Śrī Kṛṣṇā (Yamunā), bearing the same name and complexion as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is His *sakhī*. Therefore, she prepared the *rāsa-maṇḍala* by spreading soft sand with her wave-like hands. Alternatively, she attracts the heart of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by her divine beauty, and thus she is well known as Kṛṣṇā. In this connection, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.11.36 relates, "Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa became greatly happy on seeing Vṛndāvana, Govardhana and the shore of the Yamunā." '*Hasta*' means the hands of Yamunā represented by her waves. Just as we use our hands to collect things, similarly Yamunā also collected the softest sand with her hand-like waves, thus creating the great stage for the theatrical performance. This indicates that the place of

the *rāsa* dance was flat and soft. Everything else is as according to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda's commentary.

Alternatively, Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered (*niriviśya*) that sandy bank by respectfully taking the cowherd damsels along with Him. Reaching the middle of the bank, He manifested in His special '*vibhu*' form, displaying great opulence. Here the word '*vibhu*' has been used to communicate that He was exhibiting an especially spectacular beauty never seen before. This will be elaborated upon in the next two verses. The commentary for the rest of the verse is similar.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One Śrī Kṛṣṇa accepted those one billion *gopīs*. Taking hold of the hands of each one and laughing, He came to the bank of the Yamunā, where He looked astonishingly handsome. This continues the description from Verse 10. Then, one and a half verses beginning with '*vikasat*' depict the elements present on that sandy bank that stimulated the mood for *rāsa-līlā*. There the wind was blowing, carrying the fragrance of the fully blossoming *kunda* and *mandāra* flowers. Therefore the bumblebees were coming, attracted by the fragrance. Because the wind was blowing over the river, it is understood that it was cooling, and the presence of the bumblebees hovering indicates that the breeze was blowing gently.

Due to the rays of the autumn full-moon, the darkness of the night had disappeared, making that place very pleasant. Śrī Yamunā had prepared her bank, making it very broad and level by spreading soft sand with her hand-like waves. Due to the touch of those waves, the sand of Yamunā's bank had become soft, cooling and agreeable. The sandy bank was now extremely beautiful and suitable in every respect for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* to play out their *rāsa-līlā*.

### **VERSE 13**

*tad-darśanāhlāda-vidhūta-hṛd-rujo*  
*manorathāntaṁ śrutayo yathā yayuḥ*  
*svair uttarīyaiḥ kuca-kuṅkumāṅkitair*  
*acīkṣann āsanam ātma-bandhave*

Those *vraja-devīs* became overjoyed to receive Śrī Kṛṣṇa's audience. Transcendental bliss illuminated their hearts, and thus all their heartache was completely washed away. Just as the personified *Vedas* become totally satisfied when they receive the direct audience of Bhagavān, similarly all the *gopīs*' heart-felt yearnings were fulfilled. Using their veils, which were colored with the saffron powder from their breasts, they arranged a seat for their intimate friend Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was dearer to them than their own souls.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

The personified *Vedas* became completely satisfied. Similarly, the cowherd damsels also obtained the ultimate limit of their heart's desire. The meaning is this: the personified *Vedas* could not obtain the audience of the Supreme Lord despite presenting *karma-kaṇḍa*, the part of the *Vedas* describing fruitive ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites. In other words, the goal of *karma-kaṇḍa* practices is to fulfill one's personal desires, but this process is incomplete because it cannot convince Bhagavān to give His *darśana*, which was the goal of the *śrutīs*. However, due to the pursuit of transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Lord, they received His audience; thus their hearts were completely filled with bliss, and consequently they renounced the process of *karma-kaṇḍa*, which leads to the satisfaction of material desires. Similarly, the cowherd damsels were gratified upon seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Although they were self-satisfied from within, still they served their lover, inspired by their *prema*. Therefore, it is said “*svair uttarīyaiḥ* – those *gopīs* prepared a sitting place with their own veils for their souls' dear friend (*ātma-bandhave*, or *antaryāmi*).”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

In this verse beginning with ‘*tad*,’ Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the love-filled *sevā* of the *vraja-devīs*, who have become extremely elated upon having the audience of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On beholding the all-powerful Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was very eager for a special pastime, the *gopīs* experienced an extraordinary bliss that washed away all the torments of their hearts.

Accompanied by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was eager to enjoy dancing pastimes, those *vraja-devīs* were present on the shore of the Yamunā, which was just the right place for the *līlā*. Therefore they were sure that now Śrī Kṛṣṇa was ready to stay with them for a long time, having the intention to perform numerous love games that comprise the *rāsa* dance.

Before this, there was a fear in their hearts that “Kṛṣṇa may abandon us,” however now this fear had vanished. Thus, not only was the *gopīs*’ distress pacified, but they also obtained the topmost bliss, that is, they achieved the ultimate limit of their hearts’ desires. In this connection, the following example is given: the Vedic scriptures (*śruti*), not being fixed in any one mood, had been presenting various philosophies, but they were able to give up that propensity when they revealed Śrī Kṛṣṇa who performs *rāsa-līlā*. Now they focused on devotional service as the supreme goal of human life. Thus, their opinion culminates with the ultimate conclusion.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has Himself confirmed in the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.11.20: “O Uddhava! The statements that glorify My pastimes of creation, maintenance and annihilation of the cosmic manifestation purify the entire world. Vedic statements that do not touch upon these activities or My birth and childhood pastimes are fruitless. Intelligent persons will not accept such useless writings.”

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.12.69, Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī said, “Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī was completely detached from all desire for the sense objects because he was self-satisfied, tasting the bliss of self-realization. Nevertheless his heart had become attracted by hearing from Śrīla Vyāsadeva about the charming pastimes of *ajita* Bhagavān, who is unconquerable. As a result, he gave up his realization of the impersonal Brahman. Out of compassion for the living entities, he revealed *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which highlights the ultimate goal of human life. I offer obeisances to the lotus feet of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Śrīla Vyāsadeva who destroys sins.” This example confirms that the Vedic scriptures derive their significance only when they describe the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Moreover, among the narrations of Śrī Bhagavān’s pastimes, this *rāsa-līlā* is filled with the highest expressions of love. The Vedic scriptures also became completely successful by describing this pastime alone. This shows the topmost glories of *śrī rāsa-līlā*. Therefore, the ornament of speech



named *sahokti* (a comparison of many objects using the word *saha*, all together) has been used here.

Thereafter, the damsels of Vraja, becoming steady at heart, arranged a sitting place for Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a most wonderful and charming manner. What did they use to make a seat for Him? Among all the clothes they were wearing, they took their own veils. As already told, they had been weeping in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and thus their veils that covered their hearts had become red due to the *kuṅkuma* on their breasts mixing with the tears flowing from their eyes. These very garments they took for His seat.

One might ask, “How did the *vraja-devīs* overcome their natural shyness and take the veils covering their breasts to provide a sitting place? And how did they offer to Śrī Kṛṣṇa a seat made from cloth they had already worn?” To explain this, Śukadeva Gosvāmī uses the phrase ‘*ātma-bandhave*,’ most dear intimate friend whom one loves more than one’s own self. Therefore, as they were subjugated by feelings of such deep friendship, they offered their used cloth as a seat for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whom they regarded as their own. All the rest is as per the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda. The seat that these *gopīs* made, consisting of very fine cloth, was extremely spacious. Moreover, it is to be understood that the *gopīs* of every group made a separate seat.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Now Śukadeva Gosvāmī is describing the loving service the *vraja-sundarīs* rendered to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which was befitting their deep mood of friendship for Him. All the *gopīs*’ mental distress vanished due to the great bliss they received from seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thereupon, all of them made a seat for their dear friend from their outer garments – the very fine cloth that covered their bodices. On beholding that seat, even the Vedic scriptures (the *Mahā-Upaniṣads*) also obtained the ultimate fulfillment of the highest of all desires. *Bṛhad-vāmana Purāṇa* states, “On seeing this, the *śrutis* became very eager to attain that mood: ‘When will it come to pass that we *śrutis* will attain the mood of the *vraja-gopīs*, and like them we also will offer our veils smeared with the *kuṅkuma* from our breasts to our beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa and engage in amorous play with Him?’” Therefore, these *śrutis* performed intense austerity to become *gopīs*, taking the guidance of the eternally perfect cowherd damsels.

In *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 10.87.23 the *śrutis* themselves say, “Śrī Rādhā and Your other eternal sweethearts, their intelligence being stolen by the intense poison of the beauty of Your strong snake-like arms, tasted the love-filled sweet nectar of Your lotus feet. We *śrutis* also obtained the same mood as those cowherd damsels. By following in their footsteps, we have been granted bodies as cowherd damsels at the end of the day of Brahmā (or in another *kalpa*) and thus received the nectar of Your lotus feet.”

From this one can know the following truth. The personified Vedas which had seen the incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa during the previous day of Lord Brahmā had become eager to sport with Him. Only those *śrutis* took birth in this day of Brahmā and received *gopī-bhāva*. However those Vedic scriptures who have developed eagerness to sport with Śrī Kṛṣṇa during this day of Brahmā, will take birth in Gokula as *gopīs* in the next day of Brahmā. Therefore it is to be understood that the Vedic scriptures are unlimited.

#### VERSE 14

*tatropaviṣṭo bhagavān sa īśvaro  
yogeśvarāntar-hṛdi kalpitāsanah  
cakāsa gopī-parīṣad-gato 'rcitas  
trailokya-lakṣmy-eka-padam vapur dadhat*

**The all-powerful Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all lords, for whom the best of mystics affectionately establish a seat in the innermost chambers of their pure lotus hearts, arrived in the assembly of the *gopīs* on the sandy bank of the Yamunā. There He sat on the *āsana* arranged by the cowherd maidens, who then proceeded to worship Him, as His transcendental body, which is the sole shelter of all the beauty and charm in the three worlds, glowed brilliantly.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

#### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Thereafter Śrī Kṛṣṇa came to the assembly of the *gopīs*. As they honored Him, He looked dazzlingly radiant. For their benefit He assumed this special form, which was the sole support of all the beauty and splendor of the three worlds.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Original Personality of Godhead, who increases the ocean of the nectar of love, is endowed with six attributes such as opulence. Moreover He is *īśvara*; as such, He is capable of manifesting His *īśvaratā*, His supremacy, in unprecedented forms. Nevertheless He arrived in the assembly of cowherd damsels and sat on the seats they arranged for Him. Sitting on their *āsanas*, He shone brilliantly (*cakāsa*), manifesting an unprecedented beauty rarely seen anywhere else.

With this intention, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaks the words ‘*yogeśvarāntar-hṛdi*.’ Rudra and other great mystics who are engaged in perfect trance, mentally prepare a seat for Bhagavān in their lotus hearts in their one-pointed meditation. However they are unable to bring Him there. That Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifesting an unprecedented beauty, today personally sat in the society of the cowherd damsels on the seat these simple girls offered Him. The seats arranged by the masters of mystics are only figments of the imagination, so they cannot induce Bhagavān to come and sit. With the phrase ‘*gopī-parīṣad-gato*’ (present in the assembly of the *gopīs*), this verse establishes the glories of the *vraja-devīs*’ special relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was looking splendid sitting in their midst on the sandy bank of the Yamunā. It is this ambience, which is just suitable for transcendental pastimes, that the *yogeśvaras* bring into the inner core of their hearts through their meditation – this is the understanding.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested an unprecedented beauty surrounded by loving *gopīs*, who are the manifestation of His pleasure potency. The cowherd damsels worshiped (*arcita*) Him, meaning that they honored Him by offering Him a seat, *tāmbūla*, joking words, sweet and gentle smiles, sidelong glances, etc. What was the beauty He displayed at that time? He manifested a form that was the shelter of the wealth of all beauty in all the three worlds and the spiritual sky as well, including Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha and all Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s incarnations. With that sort of form He appeared in front of the *gopīs*. The ladies of Mathurā glorify this beauty later on in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.44.14: “*He sakhi*, O my friend, what sort of austerities have the *vraja-gopīs* performed that they are continuously drinking with their eyes Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beauty, which is the essence of all loveliness and is unparalleled and unequalled, self-perfect, ever fresh, rarely encountered, and the sole shelter of all beauty and opulence?”

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa sat down on the various *āsanas* offered by the different groups of *gopīs*, who had stacked up their veils for each seat. One might question, “There were uncountable seats, so how could one Kṛṣṇa sit on all of the different *āsanas* at the same time?” The answer is that He is Īśvara, the Supreme Being, so He is capable of manifesting many forms without anyone noticing and taking His seat on every *āsana* simultaneously. The reason for this is that in this context ‘*bhagavān*,’ the Supreme Lord, means *kāma-vān*, possessing desires. According to the *Amara-koṣa* dictionary, *bhaga* means opulence, desire, greatness, etc. In this case, the meaning is that He desired to sit down on all those *gopīs’ āsanas*. Seeing His desire, Yogamāyā, His majestic potency (*aiśvarya-śakti*), assisted Him in producing all those forms.

The masters of the mystic *yogīs*, like Śeṣa and Śaṅkara, by their meditation prepare within the core of their hearts a sitting place for Śrī Kṛṣṇa; such a place is so pure, rare and priceless that hardly anyone in the three worlds can attain that elevated state of meditation. But these *vraja-gopīs* arranged a seat outside their hearts with their own cloth scented with their perfumes. Sitting on the *gopīs’ āsanas*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked radiantly beautiful. He who is the Supreme Bhagavān and to whom Brahmā, Rudra and other associates offer prayers at the shore of the Milk Ocean, thereby inducing Him to reveal His presence indirectly in their hearts for just an instant – that same Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally came in the assembly of the *gopīs* and sat down on their *āsanas* for a long time (without moving a muscle). In some versions ‘*arcita*’ (worshipped) is read as *acyuta*, meaning, who sat for a long time. If it is read as ‘*arcita*,’ the meaning is that those *gopīs* honored Him by offering Him *tāmbūla*, joking words, gentle smiles and sidelong glances with arched eyebrows.

How did He look in that assembly of *gopīs*? He who is the dwelling place of the treasure of all the beauty found in the three worlds – lower, middle and upper – of the material and transcendental realms, replete with their incarnations and all their objects – that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when being worshiped in the assembly of the *gopīs*, became dazzlingly brilliant being nourished by the cowherd maidens’ effulgence, gentle smiles, sidelong glances and other sweet aspects. From the very first moment that Kṛṣṇa came and sat in that assembly of the *gopīs*, He radiated untold beauty while talking and joking

with them – it is this very Śrī Kṛṣṇa that Lord Śiva and other great mystic *yogīs* brought into the core of their hearts through their meditation.

#### VERSE 15

*sabhājayitvā tam anaṅga-dīpanam  
sahāsa-līlekṣaṇa-vibhrama-bhruvā  
saṁsparśanēnāṅka-kṛtāṅghri-hastayoḥ  
saṁstutya īṣat kupitā babhāṣire*

**The *vraja-devīs* – in whose hearts Śrī Kṛṣṇa had awakened pure amorous desire by His supernatural, nectarean beauty – honored Him with their gentle smiles, provocative sidelong glances and dancing eyebrows. Taking His lotus feet and hands in their laps, they caressed them and became very blissful from His touch. They began to praise His beauty and other qualities, but remembering that He had left them, they felt a bit angry and spoke as follows.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs*’ playful glances and soft smiles were coupled with gesturing eyebrows. ‘*Samsparsanena*’ – by touching.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

This verse starting with ‘*sabhājayitvā*’ explains the reason for the rising of concealed anger in the hearts of the *vraja-devīs*, who are naturally endowed with *prāṇaya*, deep, intimate love. First they honored Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the manner described before, and now they began to question Him displaying some slight anger through their gestures and facial expressions. Someone may have the following doubt. Considering that the *gopīs* had honored Śrī Kṛṣṇa, how, then, could they exhibit any anger towards Him? In answer, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says ‘*anaṅga-dīpanam*,’ inciting amorous desires. The explanation is that first Śrī Kṛṣṇa had abandoned the *gopīs* and gone away. And now He was acting in such a way as to arouse their romantic yearnings. Having pondered the nature of their loving feelings, the cowherd damsels spoke with some anger, “He abandoned us, and now He behaves in such a way.”

One may have a doubt that *kāma* was aroused in the *gopīs* first, and that is why they offered their upper garments that were colored by the saffron paste from their breasts as a seat for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. If this were the case, on seeing amorous excitement in their lover, how did they consider it proper to express their anger? Therefore the author says that those *gopīs* placed His lotus hands and feet in their laps, and while fondling them, glorified His various good qualities. However, they had hidden their displeasure behind their respectful behavior – this is the implied import.

Then how did their anger come to be known? ‘*Sahāsa-līlekṣaṇa-vibhrama-bhruvā*’ – it came out through their sidelong glances (*līlekṣaṇa*), gentle smiles (*sahāsa*) and playful movement of their eyebrows (*vibhrama-bhruvā*). By the use of the *tṛtīyā-vibhakti* (instrumental case) in the phrase ‘*sahāsa-līlekṣaṇa-vibhrama-bhruvā*’ many other provocative gestures are indicated. Immediately a crooked mood arose in the *gopīs*’ hearts – “Our beloved sweetheart should Himself admit His mistake.” Such movements of the eyebrows reflected the *gopīs*’ calculating minds. Their shrewdness will be expressed by their method of interrogating their beloved.

In this way the transitory ecstasy named *avahitthā*, concealment, manifested in the *gopīs*. Ancient great personalities say, “The mood hiding the secondary ecstasies is known as *avahitthā*, concealment.” The *gopīs* were smiling, casting sidelong glances, attempting to incite amorous desire in their lover, keeping His hands and feet in their laps, massaging them, respecting Him with their *sevā*, and glorifying Him. The whole time they were hiding their anger in their hearts. All these actions are not indicative of anger, but rather of their love. By all these activities, they were hiding their loving anger (*praṇaya-kopa*), which will be revealed when they will ask three questions later. This behavior of the *vraja-sundarīs* is full of deceit. If their loving behavior here is real, the questions reflecting their anger would not emanate from their mouths later.

The word *avahitthā* is feminine in gender. Included in it are three types of moods: *hetu* – the reason to hide something, *gopya* – that which is to be hidden, and *gopana* – the method of hiding. Among these three moods, *gopya-bhāva* and *hetu-bhāva* are real, however *gopana-bhāva* is artificial, or deceitful. Through *gopana* an endeavor is made to reveal a particular mood that actually does not exist in the heart. To hide the *gopya-bhāva*, some actions are done, but they are contrived.

*Hetu*, or cause – the *bhāva* under which the permanent or genuine mood is hidden. The sentiment to be concealed is known as *gopya*. The activity that hides it is known as *gopana*. In this verse, the crookedness inherent in the *gopīs*' deep love is the cause. The intolerance that has arisen due to anger is *gopya*. The *gopīs* are happily touching and massaging Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet and glorifying Him, thereby, by trickery hiding their true feelings. They are also gently smiling and gazing at Him, gaining His confidence – this shows their devious intent, which they are trying to hide – this is *gopana*. This *anubhāva* of *gopya-bhāva* is alone real, while *gopana-bhāva* is unreal like a mirage.

The verse mentions '*aṅghri-hastayoḥ*,' meaning hands and feet, indicating a pair – Kṛṣṇa's two hands and two feet. Billions of *gopīs* touched these simultaneously. This act, accomplished by the power of *Yogamāyā*, is factual.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

This verse starting with '*sabhājayitvā*' describes the *vraja-devīs*' gestures indicating their reluctance to satisfy Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire for amorous play. With sidelong glances, soft smiles and dancing eyebrows, they worshiped their lover, who showed His own amorous desire and stimulated theirs (*anaṅga-dīpanam*). "First Kṛṣṇa abandoned us, and now He is seeking intimate contact with us." In this way, the *gopīs* displayed their affectionate anger, but to hide that anger, they honored Him accordingly. How did they do this? '*Aṅka-kṛtāṅghri-hastayoḥ*' – the *gopīs* took His soft lotus feet and hands in their laps, or Kṛṣṇa placed His feet and hands in their laps. Upon touching Him, they started to praise Him, "Ah! Your feet and hands are exceptionally cooling. Their touch mitigates all anguish. Therefore, You are truly the comforting moon that knows no sorrow or sufferings." Applauding Him with these sarcastic words, they expressed the bit of anger they were still holding. Their loving anger had automatically reduced by the bliss of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *darśana*. With whatever little anger remained, they spoke to Him as follows.

### **VERSE 16**

*śrī-gopya ūcuḥ*  
*bhajato 'nubhajanty eka / eka etad-viparyayam*  
*nobhayāṁś ca bhajanty eka / etan no brūhi sādhu bhoḥ*

The beautiful *gopīs* said: “*He Kṛṣṇa*, there is one kind of person who gives love only to those who love them. Another kind of person is the opposite – they love even those who do not reciprocate their love. A third type is one who does not love either those who love them or who are indifferent to them. O beloved, explain to us these three types of persons and tell us whom You consider the best.”

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

In this verse starting with ‘*bhajata*,’ the *gopīs* inquire from Śrī Kṛṣṇa like ordinary persons, hiding their inner intention to prove His ungratefulness by His own words. Here *bhajata* means ‘one who shows love,’ *anu* means ‘loving according to the love one receives.’ Some are opposite to this, that is, without any expectation, they love even those who are indifferent to them. Yet others love no one, whether they are loved or not. “Please explain properly these three types of persons.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

The *gopīs* say, “With our clever statements, we will bind Kṛṣṇa in such a way that He will not be able to abandon us again.” With this intention, they present their question. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes this in the verse ‘*śrī-gopya ūcuḥ*.’ “(1) Some persons love only those who love them. (2) Some persons are just the opposite – they love even those who do not love them. (3) And others do not love anyone, whether they are loved or not. *He Kṛṣṇa*, properly (*sādhū*) explain these three types of persons to us. What result do they attain? Contemplate this subject and explain it to us.” Addressing Śrī Kṛṣṇa with ‘*bhoḥ*,’ O dear one,’ they caution Him to give proper attention because, knowing that He is in the wrong, He might want to avoid the issue. Or He might not give attention because He is otherwise absorbed.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
*Sārārtha Darśinī*

Each *gopī* thought to herself, “Today this Kṛṣṇa gave us so much suffering by abandoning us. He is the crown-jewel of all lovers, but still He has cast us into a dire condition. Therefore, this is the right moment to question Him: ‘*He Kṛṣṇa*, what is Your mood towards us? Do You love



us, are You indifferent, or are You inimical towards us? These are the three possibilities, but we cannot ascertain which category You fall into.

“Is there a cause for Your love for us, or is there no cause? It is not possible that Your love is conditional because one whose love is conditional is always nice to those who can gratify him and does not give them suffering. But You tried to murder us by throwing us into the fire of separation. Therefore Your love does not fall into this category. Nor is Your love for us unconditional. If it were, You would not have abandoned us in the middle of the night in the dark forest. And seeing our suffering, You felt no remorse. Thus we conclude that You must have some other intention behind Your love.

“Nor are You indifferent towards us – we see that You give us both happiness and sorrow. Furthermore, You are not hostile to us, neither permanently nor temporarily due to some unfavorable situation. We don’t see that You are antonistic to us all the time, so it cannot be permanent. And You cannot be temporarily inimical towards us due to some unfavorable action because we have not done anything to hurt You. So what is the reason for Your ill will towards us? This enmity is very strange, indicative of the desire to kill one’s trusty servant. You have become the example of this.’ We will not openly say this, but we will pose our question as a riddle, so He will be obliged to give a proper answer.”

Because these *gopis* all share the same feelings and the same thoughts, with the same mood they ask, “O learned Kṛṣṇa! Kindly answer one of our riddles.” This is the subject matter of this verse beginning with *‘bhajato ‘nubhajanty eka’* “One kind of person honors only those who honor him. That is, they only love those who love them. Their love is conditional; it depends on what they will receive in return, and if they do not receive anything, then they give no honor. This is conditional love. Another kind of person is just the opposite – even if there is no love given, still they give love. Their love is without expectation. As there is no demand for anything in return, their love is unconditional. A third kind of person does not love anyone, whether they are loved or not. Such a person’s mood is neither conditional nor unconditional. They remain indifferent. When no love is shown, envy and hostility arise.” In this way, the *gopis* do not present their question openly, but Kṛṣṇa will tell even more than what they mention. Pointing out these different moods, they ask Kṛṣṇa, “Indeed, who are they? Why do some love and some do not? Give up Your discordant attitude and impart a relevant understanding to this subject.”

VERSE 17

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
mitho bhajanti ye sakhyaḥ  
svārthaikāntodyamā hi te  
na tatra sauhṛdaṁ dharmah  
svārthārthaṁ tad dhi nānyathā*

**Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “My dear *sakhīs*, one type of person shows love only when receiving love. Such a person is selfish, interested only in his own profit. He cannot act as a true friend, and he has no inner sense of duty or morality. His loving behavior is actually self-centered, and other than that he has no other purpose.”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, knowing the *uraja-devīs*’ intention, answers with this verse ‘*mitho*.’ “O *sakhīs*, some persons respect or love each other only in the hope of gaining something. They have no regard for anyone else except themselves. The reason for this is that their every endeavor is for their self-interest. Such a person’s so-called love has no good-heartedness or any principles; thus it yields no happiness.” For example, those who look after cows and buffaloes do so only to get milk for their own comfort. Their regard for others is like this.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Selfish interest is of two types: (1) visible – directly receiving wealth and opulence and (2) invisible – the hope of reaching the heavenly planets, etc. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.6 states: “The demigods reciprocate accordingly in whatever way people worship them.” Just as cows and buffaloes bestow their milk upon those who maintain them, similarly, the demigods provide material wealth, heaven and other such gifts to their worshipers when pleased with the fire sacrifices (*yajña*) they offer them.

“Those who do a favor for someone, anticipating a favor in return, do so only for their own benefit. All their activities are based on selfishness. In such love there is no real friendship or morality. Although religious

behavior (*dharma*) and friendship are praiseworthy, when used to accomplish some selfish desire they become despicable. *Dharma* is counted among the four goals of human life, yet when it is done with the aim of earning money to fulfill one's material desires under the cover of so-called loving exchanges, the friendship is actually full of deceit, and the whole business becomes contemptible." This is the intention. This statement is confirmed by the use of the word '*hi*' (certainly).

"The mutual exchanges that I have explained cannot be '*anyathā*,' in any other way. That is, they cannot be without duplicity or selfishness. In these exchanges there is definitely no real *dharma* or real friendship free from duplicity; they are based on accomplishing one's personal interests. Whatever I have said is completely true; there is not a touch of falsity in my explication. The reason is '*sakhyah*, you are My girlfriends. I am speaking to you with this mood of friendship. Therefore, there is absolutely nothing untrue in it."

The *vraja-devīs* might object, "You also love us with a mood of selfishness." To remove this doubt, Śrī Kṛṣṇa mentions His natural intimacy with them by addressing them as "*He sakhyah*, O My most confidential lady friends." Everything else follows the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda.

Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda says, "Due to lack of true friendship in this love, it affords no happiness." The purport of this is that although it brings the visible satisfaction that comes with obtaining wealth, it lacks real affection. Therefore virtuous people do not regard such happiness as substantial. Any such so-called happiness is imaginary, and there is no statement further ahead supporting it. Many commentators such as Cit-sukha have accepted the word '*svārthārtham*' in place of *svatmanam*.<sup>4</sup> If we accept this reading, then the meaning will be: one may see the love that is mentioned in this verse to be directed to another, but actually it is self-centered. Everything else is clear.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Understanding the *gopīs*' intention, Śrī Kṛṣṇa answers their first question with this verse beginning with '*mitha*.' There are some who show love in the expectation of receiving a favor in return. Such people are selfish,

4 Ed: Our version uses *svārthārtham*, but Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda's version obviously used *svatmanam*.

all their endeavors being focused on obtaining immediate and future results for their own self-interests (*svārtha*). Certainly (*hi*) such people love only themselves, and no one else. They do not know any other kind of love, their conduct being rooted in personal gain. Such selfish persons have no love or sympathy for others. Looking at the meaning of the next verse, one can understand that the mutual regard between such people can not be counted as '*dharma*' (religious behavior). In some books, the word *svātmārtham* is seen, but the meaning remains the same.

VERSE 18

*bhajanty abhajato ye vai  
karuṇāḥ pitarau yathā  
dharmo nirapavādo 'tra  
sauhrdam ca su-madhyamāḥ*

**O slender-waisted maidens, the second type – compassionate persons and parents – give love and affection even without being loved in return. Their selfless, unblemished love comes out from their adherence to religious principles, thus they are true well-wishers.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Persons who love even those who do not love them are of two types: the compassionate and the affectionately attached. But the first type is possessed of a sense of duty (*dharma*) and the second type [mother and father] is under the sway of personal desire (*kāma*). This is explained in this verse '*bhajanty abhajato*.'

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Here the word '*vai*' has been used to indicate *prasiddhi* (renown). Persons who love despite not being loved in return are of two types: compassionate personalities and parents. The word *ca* (and) has not been used after '*pitarau*' (mother and father), yet it should be accepted. Only such love has faultless (*nirapavāda*) religiosity and heart-felt friendship. The address '*su-madhyamā*, O beautiful damsels,' has been used to imply that the *gopīs* alone are endowed

with all good qualities. “Among all qualities, this great characteristic of loving those who do not love in return brilliantly shines forth in you. Indeed, you are the immaculate example of this.” Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s intention in speaking these words should be understood thus: “The *vraja-devīs* should love Me in the same way.” This, in fact, shows the dexterity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s speech. Everything else is as per Śrīdhara Svāmipāda’s commentary.

The previous verse describes those people who are selfish in their loving dealings; their friendship and religiosity are tainted. The present verse tells about those persons whose love is selfless and without any expectations. The examples of this are benevolent persons and parents. By nature benevolent persons are highly moral and devoted to helping others. These are the special qualities seen clearly in altruistic people. Parents, on the other hand, follow household duties in rearing their children; they adhere to ‘*dharma*,’ but of an ordinary nature.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In the answer to the second question Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks about those who love unconditionally. The two examples are compassionate persons and parents (mother and father). Compassionate persons have no relationship with the objects of their mercy, while parents are related to their children. Mericiful personalities are the pure devotees, such as Prahlāda, who bestow their causeless grace. In these two examples there is no expectation of anything in return. Even if the other party does not honor them, still they feel distress in the other’s misery and happy in his pleasure, and they maintain this loving attitude till the end of their lives. Moreover, the pure devotees feel the pain and pleasure that a mother and father undergo. Out of these two, the first example of benevolent personalities is superior [because they have no blood relationship with the objects of their mercy] and the second example of the father and mother is inferior. In both the examples, the *dharma* (religious duties) is devoid of the desire of results (*nirapavāda*) and is therefore eternal. The same is true for sincere friendship, laced with loving, well-wishing sentiments.

“O *su-madhaymās*, O slender-waisted girls!” With this address Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants to convey an idea indirectly: “Your middle (*madhayma*) question is most commendable (*su*). Because I condemn the examples in My answer

to your first and last questions, it can be understood that those questions are unworthy. You alone are the basis of the answer to this excellent middle question. Only you *gopīs* exemplify this absolute, selfless love.”

VERSE 19

*bhajato 'pi na vai kecid  
bhajanty abhajataḥ kutaḥ  
ātmārāmā hy āpta-kāmā  
akṛta-jñā guru-druhaḥ*

Some persons do not love even those who love them, then what to speak of those who do not love them. They are of four types: *ātmārāma* (rejoicing in one's self), *āptakāma* (whose wishes have been satisfied), *akṛta-jñā* (ungrateful), and *guru-drohi* (inimical to one's superiors).

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

In reply to the *gopīs'* third question, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks the present verse '*bhajato 'pi*.' Some persons do not love even those who love them, then what to speak of those who do not love them. They are divided into four categories: *ātmārāma*, *āptakāma*, *akṛta-jñā* and *guru-drohi*. The *ātmārāma* personalities only rejoice in the nature of the self, and they are unaware of externals. The *āptakāma* persons are fully satisfied within; they are *purna-kāma*, all their desires have been fulfilled, thus the sense objects offer them no attraction. *Akṛta-jñā* (the ungrateful) are foolish; they do not remember the favors and love that have been showered on them. The *guru-drohis* are very cruel-hearted. "*Sa pitā yastu poṣakaḥ* – one who nourishes is like a father." According to this logic, one who kindly helps another is to be considered his respectable elder. One who turns against them is known as *guru-drohi*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Here '*vai*' has been used to indicate certainty, meaning, these people certainly do not love anyone. '*Hi*' means 'celebrated.' Some persons do not love even those who love them, then what to speak of loving those who do not love them. Such personalities fall in four categories – *ātmārāma*,

*āptakāma*, *akṛta-jñā* and *guru-drohi*. *Akṛta-jñā* (ungrateful) – such persons do not love out of ignorance, therefore they are not so much at fault. However those who, despite knowing, do not show love are held guilty to a high degree – these are *guru-drohi*, those who envy their well-wishing superiors. To criticize a *brāhmaṇa* who is fit for capital punishment is an offense, and so is ignoring one's well-wisher.

Although the word *guru-drohi* does not apparently have any special meaning, yet in the secondary sense, it indicates one who does not show any appreciation to his benefactor. Those who are included in this category are devoid of *dharma* (religiosity), *artha* (economic development), *sauhrda* (friendship) and *dāya* (compassion).

Here the purport is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is certainly cruel, because He abandoned the *vraja-devīs* and disappeared. Therefore the *gopīs* concluded, "Even though we love Kṛṣṇa, He does not reciprocate with us. So, He must be of those who do not return love." Thinking thus, they counted Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the last category (*guru-drohi*), and exchanged knowing glances with each other.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In reply to the *gopīs'* third question, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks the verse '*bhajato 'pi*.' Some do not love even those who love them, so certainly they have no regard for those who do not love them. They are of four types and each one is inferior to the previous one. *Ātmārāma*, who come in the first category, are oblivious to externals. They are enjoying within and are complete within themselves.

*Āptakāmas*, the second category, are aware of externals, nevertheless they are *pūrṇa-kāma*, self-satisfied. Therefore, despite obtaining all sense objects, they have no interest to enjoy them. The third category, *akṛta-jñā*, ungrateful persons, seek gratification from others, but they forget the favors people render them.

The fourth category is *guru-drohi*. They accept favors from others, but do not admit their indebtedness for such kindnesses, and without any reason act inimically towards those who have helped them. Those who do have some reason are minor offenders (*alpa-drohi*), nevertheless they are included in this same category of offence as per *kaimutya-nyāya*<sup>5</sup> (the

5 Sometimes an example can be given to explain that if a person accomplishes a great task, then it is easy for him to do a small job.

logic of ‘how much more, how much less?’). Denouncing those who maintain and nourish one is one kind of *guru-droha*, and those who backstab their benefactors are also in this category. These three types of *guru-drohis* – without reason, with cause, and backstabbing – have no love in their hearts.

The example of maintaining cows and buffaloes for one’s selfish interest is given in response to the first question. In reply to the second question, two examples are cited: compassionate personalities and mother and father. The third question is answered with six examples: (1) *ātmārāma* (2) *āptakāma* (3) *akṛta-jñā*, and three types of offenders to elders, i.e., (4) without cause (5) with cause and (6) betrayers. In total, nine examples are given.

#### VERSE 20

*nāhaṁ tu sakhyo bhajato ’pi jantūn  
bhajāmy amiṣām anuvṛtti-vṛttaye  
yathādhano labdha-dhane vinaṣṭe  
tac-cintayānyan nibhṛto na veda*

**My dear *sakhīs*, I do not immediately reciprocate with My devotees’ loving feelings for Me in order to intensify their eagerness to attain Me. Consequently, their condition becomes like that of an impoverished man who gains some wealth and then suddenly loses it; thus he becomes fully absorbed in worrying over his lost money, so much so that he even forgets about his thirst and hunger.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### ***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *vraja-devīs* considered Śrī Kṛṣṇa a culprit in the third category and hinted this to each other through their eyes and funny smiles. Observing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “O *sakhīs*, I am not any one of those. Rather, I am extremely compassionate and friendly.” The cowherd damsels might ask, “How?”

He responds, “I want to ensure that those who love Me should be able to meditate on Me without interruption. Therefore I do not openly show love and affection towards those who love Me. ‘*Yathā*’ (just as) – For example, a poor person gets a lot of wealth and then loses it. Then that person remains continually immersed in worrying over that lost money, and even forgets about his hunger and thirst.”



ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

The *vraja-devīs* concluded that Kṛṣṇa becomes happy by performing various activities with them and others. Thus He cannot be either *ātmārāma* (self-satisfied) or *āptakāma* (fully content). Moreover, when He bestows the intense distress of separation, then in His behavior any kind of love, whether with cause or without, is not seen, as mentioned in the previous verse. His astute answers reveal His profound intelligence, so it cannot be that He is unable to understand the favors rendered by others. Thus He cannot be *akṛta-jñā*, ungrateful. So the only possibility left is the last category, *guru-drohitā*, meaning ‘extreme cruel-heartedness.’ This is the understanding that Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has expressed in His commentary. Actually, the *vraja-devīs* wanted to prove that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *akṛta-jñā*, but, while answering their questions, He became implicated in more faults. Seeing this, the *gopīs* were very satisfied and started signaling to each other through their eyes and smiles. They asked this question to prove Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s cruel-heartedness.

“O *sakhīs*! Some people do not love Me, but still I love them. This love on My part is the most excellent love, so what can be said if someone really loves Me?” With this intention, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this verse starting with ‘*nāham*.’ Here, by saying ‘*tu*,’ He introduces another topic. “I do not fall in any of the four categories starting with *ātmārāmatā*. I do not display My love to those who love Me. I have explained to My great devotee Nārada, ‘O Nārada, I do not live in Vaikuṇṭha. I do not reside in the hearts of the *yogīs* or mystics. Rather, I reside where My devotees lovingly sing My glories (*nāham vasāmi vaikuṇṭhe* – *Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa* 92.21–22).’

“O *sakhīs*! This statement confirms that I always stay near My devotees or those who love Me. However the special thing is that I do not give them the charity of showing Myself to them, rather, I reside near them in secret. Do not think that you love Me and I do not reciprocate. I was in close proximity to you the whole time, but because I was hiding, you couldn’t see Me.”

In the present verse the word *na* (not) in *nāham* means that “I do not love those who love Me.” And it is implied that this includes even the *gopīs*. Even before expressing such cruel words, when this thought just arose, Śrī Kṛṣṇa experienced an intolerable pain in His heart. Extremely tormented by this pain, He spoke *nāham* as if He had forgotten even the proper manner of conversing with the *gopīs*. Here ‘*sakhyah*’ means ‘O confidantes, My

dear friends! By this address Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants to indicate to the cowherd damsels that “I am not *ātmārāma*, rather I enjoy dallying with you. I display indifference towards you, but I don’t do this with just you – I act this way with everyone (*jantūn*—every living entity). So do not be apprehensive if I seem to disregard you.”

The *gopīs* might ask Him, “You have affection for us, but why do You make it appear that You do not love us?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies, “In order to ensure the uninterrupted (*anuvṛtti*) flow of the meditation of every living entity, I do not reciprocate openly. I do this in order to intensify My devotees’ love for Me to the highest degree. When their love reaches the state of maturity, then only can they meditate on Me continuously.”

The *gopīs* might reply, “Our meditation is always focused on You, and all the time we are worrying about You. So why do You act in this way with us?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa responds, “This is true. Nevertheless I want to ensure that *prema* reaches the super-special state of complete maturity. Therefore, I do not visibly reciprocate.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives an example to bring home this point with the word *yathā* (just as). For example, if a poor person receives some wealth and then loses it, he will become absorbed in worrying over that lost wealth, forgetting everything else. Here the word ‘*vināṣṭa*’ expresses the intense agitation of that poor person. Therefore, as a result of that agitation, the heart of that poor person is continuously immersed in worrying over his lost wealth.

In this way, Bhagavān subjugates everyone by His beauty, qualities, etc. As He is replete with all perfections, He does not need anything, He only looks for love. Therefore, He is totally detached in all respects and is equipoised in every circumstance. Nor does He expect the return of favors. In this regard, He is similar to compassionate personalities like Prahlāda and well-wishing persons like one’s mother and father, but His benevolence and well-wishing behavior are vastly greater. The reason for this is that the love that controls Bhagavān is not easily obtained. Nevertheless He bestows that love which is the crest jewel of all the goals of human life. This also shows that Bhagavān relishes an unprecedented joy tasting the *prema-rasa* flowing from His dear devotees. The reason for this is that He is ever eager to increase the waves of love. For this He even tolerates the pain of separation from His dear ones.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* might say, “You are not included in the examples of the first and second questions, namely, (1) selfish persons and (2) benevolent personalities and parents. But which category of examples mentioned in the third question do You fit in?” Expecting this question, Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies, “O *sakhīs*! Do you desire to hear Me admit My own defeat? O confidantes, O crest jewels of those expert in casting sidelong glances and exchanging mischievous smiles with each other! Please listen! I am *ātmārāma* and *pūrṇakāma* in My form as Nārāyaṇa, but as the son of Śrī Nanda Mahārāja I am neither *ātmārāma* nor *pūrṇakāma*. Being a cowherd boy, I have not studied ethical conduct, so I am ignorant (*akṛta-jñā*). However, I am omniscient in My form as Nārāyaṇa, and consequently grateful (*kṛta-jñā*). I have satisfied you over and over again sharing pleasure-filled pastimes with you. Only once did I abandon you. Due to this offense, you are accusing Me of being *guru-drohi*. But now I have come back and am giving you the bliss of seeing Me again, so I am not *guru-drohi*.”

The *gopīs* might continue their interrogation thus: “Then please tell us positively, what category do You belong to?” Expecting such a question from the cowherd maidens, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this verse ‘*nāham tu*.’ *Tu* has been used here in a different context. *Jantūn* (with My devotees) – “I do not show My affection to the devotees who are worshipping Me.”

*Gopīs*: “So how are You different from the other types?” Kṛṣṇa answers, “My devotees worship Me by loudly singing My names. To protect their worship, I do not outwardly acknowledge their (*amīśām*) love. O feeble maidens! You are unable to understand My intention. I am telling you about My nature. Listen. Those who are seriously engaged in worshipping Me develop humility when they are unable to have My audience, despite the intensity in their *sādhana*. That devotee will think, ‘Alas! Alas! All my endeavors are futile. Therefore I certainly must be an offender. That is why I am not getting even a drop of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. Fie on me, fie on me!’

“In this way, every moment their detachment and humility increases. Thus there is no chance for lust and anger to develop, and their *bhakti* for Me intensifies. This is how I protect the practice of *bhajana* of those who have not yet achieved perfection.

“To those devotees who have achieved perfection and developed *prema*, I also do not show My love in order to protect their mode of sustenance, that is, their attachment to Me. I give them a glimpse of Me and then disappear. That increases their attachment to Me. In this way they become like a penniless person who unexpectedly receives some wealth, and then suddenly loses it. Such a person will become completely immersed worrying over it, forgetting even his hunger and thirst. Thus their attachment to Me increases, and this is what I desire. Outwardly, I do not show My affection, but in secret I give them even more love. In this way, I am indeed merciful, and you are the example of the middle question, that is, those who love in spite of not being loved. Some think that if I give My *darśana* to My devotees, I am loving them, otherwise not – this explanation is illogical. The reason is that I have declared: ‘*ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmś tathaiva bhajāmy aham* – As all surrender to Me I reward them accordingly (*Gītā* 4.11). I cannot behave in any other way.”

VERSE 21

*evam mad-arthojjhita-loka-veda  
svānām hi vo mayy anuvṛttaye ’balāḥ  
mayāparokṣam bhajatā tirohitam  
māsūyitum mārhatta tat priyam priyāḥ*

**O tender maidens! There is no doubt that for My sake you have given up all social etiquette, the path of religion prescribed in the Vedas, and all your near and dear ones. Wanting to ensure that your mindset remained fully fixed on Me, I went into hiding, but was continuously loving you the whole time and listening to you professing your love for Me. Please do not see any faults in My love. You are My beloveds and I am your lover.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“You have come to Me without considering proper or improper social etiquette, or religiosity or irreligiosity as delineated in the Vedas. Furthermore, you even rejected all relationships with friends and family members, forgoing your affection for them. To ensure that your love and

attachment for Me would continue to increase, I hid Myself. Nevertheless I was attentive towards you the whole time, and was secretly listening to your love-filled conversations. O delicate ones, My beloveds! Please do not hold any grudge against Me.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this verse ‘*evam mad-artha*’ to tell the *gopīs* that He was indeed very close by them the whole time. ‘*Evam*’ – in this way; *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.5 relates: “One *gopī* who was milking a cow, dropped what she was doing and went to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” “*Mad-artha* – For My sake you cowherd damsels have given up everything – all religious principles mentioned in the Vedas, social conduct, and relatives and friends. *He abalāḥ*, O feeble women! It is practically impossible for a weak person to give up all these things. Nevertheless you have done this and come to Me. It is not proper for you to accuse Me of neglecting you.” He explains the special reason behind this with the phrase ‘*priyam priyā*’ – “I am your beloved and you are My sweethearts.”

“Consider a poor person who suddenly receives wealth from somewhere and by destiny loses it; he will worry over it so much that he will forget everything. Similarly, I had hidden Myself in order to increase your loving passion towards Me. ‘Just look! These clear footprints are certainly those of the great soul Śrī Nanda-nandana (*SB* 10.30.25).’ These words you spoke testify that you could not see Me even though I was nearby.”

The *gopīs* might ask, “What were you doing hiding from our vision?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies, “I was relishing your love talks and appreciating your affection for Me. You might ask Me, ‘What is the reason for showing us such kindness?’ You maidens have given up your husbands, children, brothers, friends, social considerations and Vedic *dharma* for My sake (*mad-artha*).” Everything else is according to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s commentary.

In the last line of the verse the word ‘*mā*’ (do not) has been used twice (*mā asūyitum mā arhatha* – do not condemn Me), thereby strongly emphasizing the point. “I am your lover (*priyam*) and you left everything for Me. So it is not proper for you to denounce Me. Indeed, I am your *dhīra-lalita nāyaka*, your submissive hero, so you can blame Me for causing you extreme distress.” The *gopīs* respond, “How can such accusation be proper?”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies, “O My precious sweethearts! A lover should not behave in such a manner with his beloveds. Therefore, you are justified in blaming Me.” This shows Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s cleverness in the skill of humble entreaty.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The *gopīs* might object: “You say that You don’t give *darśana* to Your two types of devotees (*jantūn* from the previous verse) – those whose love for You has reached perfection and those whose love for You has not awakened – in order to increase their propensity for meditation. It is indeed appropriate for You to reciprocate in this way and there is no fault in this. However, if You deal with us in the same manner, then are we also to be counted among those ordinary living entities?”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, anticipating such sorrowful words from the *gopīs*, responded with remorse, “O cowherd damsels! You are dearer to Me than millions of My own lives, and are like particles of dust at My lotus feet. Today, I treated all of you like ordinary persons. You should forgive My bad behavior.”

With this intention, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks the verse ‘*evam mad-artha*.’ *Amara Koṣa* dictionary defines ‘*evam*’ as ‘in this way.’ Kṛṣṇa says, “Without analyzing what is proper and what is improper, you cowherd damsels have abandoned all accepted etiquettes, religiosity and irreligiosity as delineated in the Vedas, as well as the affection for your intimate kinsmen, friends and wealth, and have come to Me. To increase the intensity of your love for Me (*anuvṛttaye*), I disappeared from your sight and was indirectly favoring you. At the same time I wanted to hear the love-filled words you spoke in My absence.”

In extreme humility Śrī Kṛṣṇa admitted, “My behavior towards You was quite wrong. In the past, present or future there cannot be devotees like you. Your love for Me is so vast that there is no possibility of it ever diminishing, just like an atom or a supremely situated object cannot undergo any decrease or increase in size. I acted as I did out of desire to show other *premi-bhaktas* the great excellence of your love during separation. You should forgive Me for My inconsiderate behavior. You are leveling accusations against Me but this is not appropriate. You are all my beloved sweethearts, and I am your lover. The lady-love does not recognize any defects in her lover.”

## VERSE 22

*na pāraye 'ham niravadya-saṁyujāṁ  
 sva-sādhū-kṛtyaṁ vibudhāyusāpi vaḥ  
 yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ  
 saṁvṛścyā tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā*

**O beloved *gopīs*! Your loving relationship with Me is completely pure, free from any trace of desire for personal gratification. To serve Me you have severed the arduous shackles of household life and have transgressed established customs of society. I will be unable to repay one drop of your love, sacrifice and service, even if I live as long as the demigods. Only due to your noble nature you can absolve this debt; even then I will be eternally beholden to your *prema*.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“O cowherd damsels! Let us end this discussion. Now hear the genuine, final truth.” With this intention, Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks the verse ‘*na pāraye 'ham*.’

“Your contact with Me is completely spotless. Even if I receive a long lifespan like the demigods, I will not be able to repay you for your exemplary behavior. You have served Me by completely cutting asunder the shackles of household life, which are impossible to break. I, on the other hand, will never be able to reciprocate with you because I love many devotees. My mind is not one-pointed like yours. Therefore, may your own meritorious activities be your reward. No endeavor on My part can free Me from this debt, only you can do this through your amiable disposition.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The word ‘*vaḥ*’ (unto You), the possessive case (6<sup>th</sup> *vibhakti*), indicates relationship. “I am unable to compensate your meritorious service. You have performed an unparalleled activity; such behavior is totally beyond My capacity.”

What is that extraordinary activity? “Your connection (*saṁyujah*) with Me is completely pure and unblemished (*niravadya*). Although My meeting

with You appears like mundane lust, factually it is saturated with unalloyed, pure love. Your attachment to Me is one-pointed, your hearts being focused exclusively on Me, as your husbands have never even touched you.”

“Yāh – you young brides from respectable families have taken shelter of Me only after obliterating the severe shackles of domestic life. Doing so completely destroys the comforts of family life and the promises for happiness in the next life. You have surrendered fully unto Me with supreme affection, but My love is harnessed in many other places. I am not one-pointed so I am unable to return the same type of love to you.”

The word ‘yā’ (you) has been used without connecting to the word ‘vāh’ (to you) that is mentioned in the end of this verse. Moreover, later on, that ‘vāh’ is joined (having as an essential or inherent part). Therefore, the word ‘vāh’ has been used in the first person. Everything else is as per Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda’s commentary.

‘Vibhudhāyuṣāpī’ (a life as long as the demigods) can be further interpolated as a lifespan even longer than that: “Even great mathematicians cannot calculate this span of time (*vibudha*). Even if I receive an infinitely long lifespan which is beyond count, I will still be unable to offer a suitable restitution for your virtuous activities.”

The phrase ‘geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ’ (the chains of household life) indicates plural number. However in some books it is read as *geha-śṛṅkhalām*, which is singular in number. In either case, the meaning remains the same.

The word ‘durjara’ means ‘which is very difficult to cut.’ “You have broken the shackles (*śṛṅkhalā*) imposed by daily household chores, such as caring for the cows. Furthermore, you have served Me by abandoning the obdurate bondage of family affection. However I could not do the same for you.”

In the phrase ‘durjara geha-śṛṅkhalā,’ the word ‘durjara’ (difficult to sever) is the adjective and ‘śṛṅkhalā’ (shackles) is the metaphor. The purport of this is that by one’s own strength no one can ever sever the shackles of domestic life, which are very difficult to break. Moreover, in ‘saṁvṛṣya’ (to cut), the word ‘saṁ’ or ‘samyak,’ indicates that it is possible to give up this attachment somewhat in the heart, but it is very difficult to execute this externally. “However, You cowherd damsels have shown your love for Me by nicely sundering the unbreakable knots of household life. I, on the other hand, have not surrendered unto you without expectation as you have done for Me, thus I do not have the ability to reciprocate your love.”



The commentator offers a humble confession: “I surrender unto Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda. Being pleased with me, he keeps me under his shelter and nourishes me by bestowing upon me the entirety of the unlimited wealth of transcendental mellows.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

“O My dear beloveds! Listen to the thoughts running through My mind. Our meetings together are unblemished, devoid of any mundane lust or fruitive desire, beyond social etiquette and scriptural injunction. Your saintly nature is inherent; it has not originated by contact with some other sanctified object. Even if I receive a long lifespan like the demigods, I shall not be able to repay My debt to you in full.” With this intention Śrī Kṛṣṇa speaks this verse starting with ‘*na pārāye haṁ*.’

Here the word ‘*kṛtyam*’ has been used in the singular to indicate: “I am unable to repay you for even one single favor that you have rendered Me. You have shattered arduous familial ties, that is, the love and affection of husbands, in-laws, fathers, brothers, etc. And after breaking these bonds, you do not revive your connections with these persons, unlike immature mystics who continue to harbor attachment to family. However, on My side, I adore you and at the same time maintain loving relationships with all others, including My mother, father, brother, friends and relatives. So with you *gopīs* I am not able to keep My vow – to reciprocate with devotees in the same mood in which they surrender unto Me (*ye yathā mām prapadyante/ tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* – *Ġītā* 4.11). It is impossible for Me to repay you in any manner. Your good character itself is your reward. It is only out of your magnanimous nature that I can be absolved of this debt, but in reality, I shall always remain obliged to you.” This is Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s mood.

Hearing all this talk, the *gopīs* thought, “Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, is full with all transcendental qualities, devoid of even the slightest defect. He is the authority in loving dealings, yet He is proclaiming the superiority of our love and minimizing His own. He is forfeiting His own superior position in order to serve us and remain eternally our in debt. Therefore we are unfortunate because we wanted victory over Him, but He is eager to establish His own defeat before us. Indeed, He is intent on broadcasting the excellence of our love. We cannot be like Him. As a result, Kṛṣṇa’s love has surmounted us.”

Thus ends the *Sārārtha Darśinī* commentary of the Thirty-second Chapter of the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This is approved by saintly persons. It gives bliss to the hearts of the devotees.

Thus ends the *bhāvānuvāda* of the three commentaries  
(1) *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*, (2) *Samkṣepa-Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* and  
(3) *Sārārtha Darśinī* of the Thirty-second Chapter of the  
Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

◉ CHAPTER 5 ◉

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM 10.33

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa Performs the  
Grand Rāsa Dance with the Gopīs**

VERSE 1

*śrī-śuka uvāca  
itthaṁ bhagavato gopyaḥ  
śrutvā vācaḥ su-peśalāḥ  
jahur viraha-jam tāpaṁ  
tad-aṅgopacitāśiṣaḥ*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, “O King, hearing Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sweet words relieved the *gopīs* of the last remnants of their distress of separation. All their desires were fulfilled when they received the touch of the limbs of their dearmost beloved, the abode of utmost beauty and sweetness.

***Bhāvānuvādas***

ELABORATED TRANSLATIONS

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Afterwards, Śrī Hari enjoyed playing in the water and roaming in the forest with all His beloved *gopīs*. This is described in the 33<sup>rd</sup> Chapter. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, “O King, the *vraja-devīs* felt fulfilled in every respect when they touched Bhagavān’s transcendental limbs.”

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The supremely enchanting *rāsa-līlā* shines forth with great splendor in this world. This pastime brilliantly proclaims the greatness of the cowherd damsels in comparison to Śrī Lakṣmī-devī.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s irresistible, loved-filled words relieved the cowherd damsels of the heat of separation they had been suffering in the past and might suffer

in the near future. The words “I am eternally indebted to you” cleared the pain of separation of the past; and Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s statement, “I never leave you. I am always with you, even at the time of separation,” completely eradicated the apprehension that, due to some stroke of fate, there might again be separation in the future. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.9 has already mentioned this: “At that time, the fear that Kṛṣṇa might leave them again was deeply seated within their hearts. But now the *gopīs*’ anguish of separation was fully dissipated.” ‘*Tad-aṅgopacitāśiṣaḥ*’ – if we accept the additive ‘*gopya*,’ the meaning is that all the *gopīs*’ desires were fulfilled by touching Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental hands and embracing His limbs. If we use the additive ‘*bhagavata*,’ the meaning will be that Śrī Kṛṣṇa fulfilled all His desires by embracing the *gopīs* and holding their hands. ‘*Su-peśalā*’ (most charming) – the *gopīs*’ distress was relieved by hearing their lover’s sweet words.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

This 33<sup>rd</sup> Chapter describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa* dance, His walks through the forest, and His water sports, as well as Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s answer to Mahārāja Parikṣit’s question.

When the *gopīs* heard Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s most charming, love-filled words and they received the touch of His limbs (*tad-aṅgopacitāśiṣaḥ*), their amorous desires were fulfilled. In this way, the anguish they had been suffering in separation was dissipated. If the additive ‘*bhagavataḥ*’ is used, the meaning is that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa also derived great pleasure from touching the limbs of the *vraja-devīs*, who are full of *mahābhāva*. Consequently He broadcast the indisputable superiority of their *prema* to all. The *māna* of the *gopīs* described in the end of the previous chapter was pacified at the close of the exchange of questions and answers between Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd maidens. After that, they commenced their amorous play by kissing and embracing each other.

### **VERSE 2**

*tatrārabhata govindo  
rāsa-kṛīḍām anuvrataiḥ  
strī-ratnair anvitaḥ prītaḥ  
anyonyābaddha-bāhubhiḥ*

Those jewels of women, the *gopīs* whose hearts were fully focused on their beloved, linked their arms together and encircled Govinda, who joyfully inaugurated the playful *rāsa* dance on the enchanting bank of the Yamunā.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

'*Rāsa-kṛīḍā*' is the special dance performed by several female dancers. The beautiful Vraja maidens linked their arms together and started the playful *rāsa* dance with Govinda.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Vraja damsels at last reached an agreement. Kṛṣṇa had wanted to sing and dance with His treasured beloveds from the very start, and now He commenced the great *rāsa-līlā* festival. Govinda – the eternal ruler of Gokula who possesses unlimited opulence, beauty and sweetness – manifested His position as the supreme jewel among men. The phrase '*strī-ratna*' expresses the super-excellence of the *vraja-devīs* compared to all other ladies, and the word '*ratna*' (jewel) establishes their superior position among their kinsmen and all other groups. The supreme male with the most excellent women were the perfect ingredients needed to start the *rāsa-līlā*. Overwhelmed in their love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* were fully and completely under His control (*anuvrata*), so they joined their arms together and started the *rāsa* dance. The deep meaning of '*ābaddha*' (linked together) is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa remained locked in their circle and could not escape. The word '*bāhu*' means the arms of the *gopīs*; Kṛṣṇa's arms were draped around the necks of the *gopīs*, and the *gopīs*' arms were linked together. *Rāsa-līlā* necessarily involves dancing in a circle, because its specific character is that the male dancer holds the necks of the female dancers, who link arms with one another and arrange themselves in a circle.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S  
*Sārārtha Darśinī*

*Rāsa* is created by the combination of the pleasurable activities of dancing, singing, kissing, embracing, etc. All these ingredients are present in abundance in the play-filled *rāsa-līlā*. '*Anuvrataḥ*' – the *gopīs* were

favorably disposed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being overwhelmed in their love for Him. They joined their arms together, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa started the circular dance with those jewels of women.

VERSE 3

*rāsotsavaḥ sampravṛtto  
gopī-maṇḍala-maṇḍitaḥ  
yogeśvareṇa kṛṣṇena  
tāsāṁ madhye dvayor dvayor  
praviṣṭena grhītānāṁ  
kaṇṭhe sva-nikaṭaṁ striyaḥ  
yaṁ manyeran nabhas tāvad  
vimāna-śata-saṅkulam  
divaukasāṁ sa-dārāṇām  
autsukyāpahṛtātmanām*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine *rāsa-līlā* festival commenced, with thousands and thousands of *gopīs* forming a circle around Him. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of mystic *yogīs*, expanded Himself and stood between every two *gopīs* and embraced their necks with His arms. Each maiden felt that her beloved was standing next to her alone. The demigods were overcome with excitement to witness this festival, and hurried there with their wives in their celestial airplanes, which soon filled up the sky.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

The *rāsa* festival started nicely with Yogeśvara Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* dancing and expressing their sentiments through gestures. This is the subject matter of this verse comprised of five lines and four extra words. Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared between every two *gopīs* and embraced each and every one of them around the neck. Each *gopī* thought, "Kṛṣṇa is next to me and embracing me only." One might wonder how one Kṛṣṇa could be next to each *gopī* and how each *gopī* thought that He was with her and no one else. The answer is that nothing is impossible for Him because He is the master of all mystics, and is endowed with inconceivable potencies.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa began the *rāsa* dance, the demigods came there in great eagerness with their wives, and their hundreds and hundreds of celestial airplanes covered the sky.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

*Rāsa* is an assemblage of supreme *rasa* (divine mellows); this is the accepted meaning. The *rāsa* festival is the occasion of special activities filled with happy emotions. Such activities include dancing in a circle. The life and soul of *rāsa* brings together and spreads mellows in group dancing, and this creates the pleasure of a multitude of passions (*rasa-kadamba-maya*). Just dancing in a circle with various movements cannot be termed as *rāsa*. The word ‘*kṛṣṇena*’ means that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the center point in this supremely delightful festival because He is the condensed form of all kinds of blissful mellows. “*Sampravṛtto gopī-maṇḍala-maṇḍitaḥ* – the *gopīs* all came together in a circle, bestowing beauty to this unprecedented *rāsa* pastime.” This combination was the perfect arrangement for *rāsa* to begin.

Śrī Parāśara Muni has given a special description of the manner of dancing. “The *rāsa-maṇḍala* has been created with all the *gopīs* together in one place, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the side of each and every *gopī*. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is holding every *gopī*’s hand, and their eyes are half-closed in the ecstasy of His touch. The *rāsa* dance started with the tinkling of their moving bangles and the singing of autumn *ragas* resounding throughout the whole area.”

In the present verse, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, “*tāsām madhye dvayor dvayoḥ* – Kṛṣṇa was standing between every two *gopīs*.” If he had said ‘*dvayor*’ only once, it would have meant that Kṛṣṇa was standing between two *gopīs*, but he repeated the word ‘*dvayor*,’ indicating that He was standing between each pair of *gopīs*. Later on, Verse 6 states: “*madhye maṇinām haimānām mahā-marakato yathā* – He was like a dazzling sapphire amidst gold beads.” ‘*Madhya*’ means ‘amidst.’ Kṛṣṇa was situated between every two *gopīs*, embracing their necks with both His arms. The *gopīs* were on the two sides of Kṛṣṇa, and He was also on both sides of them. Śrī Bilvamaṅgala confirms this: “*aṅganām aṅganām antarā mādhave, mādhave mādhave cāntareṇāṅganāḥ/ittham ākalpīte maṇḍale madhya-gaḥ, saṅjagau veṇunā devakī-nandanāḥ* – the formation of the

*rāsa-maṇḍala* was such that there was one Kṛṣṇa between every two *gopīs*, and one *gopī* between every two Kṛṣṇas. He was also in the center of the circle playing His flute.”

*Krama-dīpikā*, a handbook on the process of worship, prescribes the worship of a couple, not three persons, and states: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa was situated between each pair of doe-eyed *gopīs*.” ‘*Striyaḥ*’ (ladies) – a noble person reciprocates equally with all his impassioned lady-loves, otherwise pleasure will be lost due to the fault of partiality. ‘*Sva-nikaṭam . . . manyeran*’ – each *gopī* was thinking, “Kṛṣṇa is next to me and embracing only me.” Each *gopī* was directly able to see Him next to her.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa inaugurated the play-filled *rāsa-līlā* to share happiness with the *gopīs*. Therefore, to ensure that each one would relish the full splendor of this *rāsa* festival, He placed Himself next to every *gopī* because all of them were equally deserving to taste this joy. Each cowherd maiden was thinking (*manyeran*), “Kṛṣṇa is present in many places at once due to His unparalleled skill in dancing, but I have embraced Him directly.” Otherwise, Śrī Śukadeva would have said *paśyan* – each one saw (*paśyan*) Śrī Kṛṣṇa next to her. The cowherd maidens were overwhelmed with delight, thinking, “Kṛṣṇa is next to me.” Due only to their bliss as they relished this unique pleasure, they were so bewildered that they could not understand that He was present on both sides of them. How astonishing it is that Kṛṣṇa, although one, still entered in between each pair of *gopīs*. He could do this because, as Yogeśvara, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord and Master of Yogamāyā, His very special and inconceivable, inherent potency that enables Him to manifest in all these forms by His own desire, without any external inspiration.

The demigods ordinarily roam around in the sky, but when they suddenly saw the *rāsa-līlā* begin, they gathered together to witness this spectacle, and their celestial airplanes filled up the whole sky (*nabhaḥ*). The question might arise: the sky was covered with their aircrafts, so was the moon was also covered, making the area dark? The answer is that the moon still illuminated the whole area because the demigods’ aircrafts were above the moon, and not in front of it. It is said that Brahmā, Rudra and other demigods came with great eagerness to witness this *rāsa* festival. This means that this kind of festival is not celebrated in Svarga or on any other planet. The demigods were avid to watch Bhagavān dancing. However, since they are in *dāsya-rasa* (servitorship), they were not qualified to witness the



full *rāsa-līlā* and could not see the more confidential, amorous activities. Therefore, Yogamāya covered their sight so that they could only see Him dancing. She did not allow them to witness the more intimate exchanges.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa* festival with the *gopīs* gives nectarean pleasure to the eyes and hearts of the devotees, who are like *cataka* birds. This is described here in a long verse comprised of 2 ½ verses short of six words. Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered between each and every pair of *gopīs* as they stood in a circle, and initiated the festive dance with full vigor. We should not think, however, that He was the active agent who inaugurated the *rāsa*; rather, *rāsa-līlā* itself was the officiating agent, having been invested with independent power by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to set this pastime in motion. The *rāsa* pastime herself performed the whole management, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa became one instrument in this festival. He Himself, along with all His energies and all His other pastimes are subservient to this all-powerful *līlā*, whose supreme glories have been broadcast throughout the universe. For this reason, Lakṣmī was very eager to join this festival, but she was not successful.

How could Śrī Kṛṣṇa enter between every pair of *gopīs*, and embrace them with His arms? This is reconciled in Verse 6 of this chapter: “*madhye maṇinām haimānām mahā-marakato yathā* – He was like a dazzling sapphire in the midst of gold beads.” ‘*Madhye*’ means ‘middle’ and ‘*marakata*’ (sapphire) is singular. Furthermore, the present verse states: “*tāsām madhye dvayor dvayoḥ* – He entered (*praviṣṭena*) between each pair of *gopīs*,” it does not say that He was present between each pair. Thus it is understood that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was present in the center, like the whorl of a lotus. He danced with such speed that He could instantaneously enter between every two *gopīs*, and then return to His place in the center. He was moving around in the circle, embracing three hundred million *gopīs*, and yet at the same time He was present in the center. This clearly denotes that He was moving with speed even faster than a firebrand. All the *gopīs* witnessed Him simultaneously in the center of the whorl and with each *gopī* in the surrounding circles. Bīlvamaṅgala Ṭhākura describes this: “*aṅganām aṅganām antarā mādhave, mādhaveṁ mādhaveṁ cāntareṇaṅganāḥ/ ittham ākalpīte maṇḍale madhya-gaḥ, saṅjagau veṇunā devakī-nandanāḥ* –

in the *rāsa-maṇḍala* there was one Mādhava between every two *gopīs*, and one *gopī* between every two Mādhavas. And Devakī-nandana was also in the center of the circle playing His flute.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa could accomplish such an astonishing feat because He is ‘Yogeśvara.’ He is expert in all the arts and in this pastime He has displayed His supreme dexterity. Alternatively, He is Yogeśvara, the supreme master of the great power Yogamāyā, who can accomplish the impossible. Śrī Kṛṣṇa understood that all the *gopīs* cherished the desire for Him to embrace them, and He was also eager to embrace them. Therefore, Yogamāyā presented a solution by manifesting one Kṛṣṇa for every *gopī*. ‘*Tāsām madhye dvayor dvayoḥ praviṣṭena*.’ there are two ways to interpret this phrase. (1) Two separate Kṛṣṇas were on each side of every *gopī*, touching her with Their arms. But there is no impropriety here as Yogamāyā arranged that each *gopī* was feeling the presence of only one Kṛṣṇa. (2) Kṛṣṇa entered between every two *gopīs*. This is not difficult to reconcile. Each Vraja maiden was feeling that Kṛṣṇa was right next to her, and thought, “Kṛṣṇa is very close to me and is embracing only me.” It may be so; it is because of Kṛṣṇa’s phenomenal dancing skill that He was seen next to each *gopī*, and yet, at the same time He was also in the middle of the *rāsa* dance. There, as Devakī-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, He was embracing Vṛndāvanēśvarī Śrī Rādhā, who, as confirmed in the *Rādhā Śata-nāma Stotra*, is the supermost *gopī* and the sole reason for the *rāsa-līlā*.

Brahmā and the other demigods were eager to watch Kṛṣṇa’s dance performance, and they came with their wives in their airplanes, which soon filled up the sky. However, as the demigods are in the mood of servitorship, they were not qualified to witness His confidential activities with the *gopīs*, so Yogamāyā covered the *gopīs* from their sight. Their wives, on the other hand, were qualified, so they could see both the dancing and Kṛṣṇa’s intimate activities with the *gopīs*.

#### VERSE 4

*tato dundubhaya nedur  
nīpetuḥ puṣpa-vrṣṭayaḥ  
jagur gandharva-patayaḥ  
sa-strīkās tad-yaśo ’malam*

The divine kettledrums from the heavenly planets started resounding and flowers rained down as the Gandharvas and their wives sang Śrī Kṛṣṇa's splendid glories.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda's  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Thereafter, the demigods started singing about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's immaculate grandeur.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Thereafter, the demigods sang about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sterling magnificence and kettledrums resounded. These kettledrums are divine, and at the onset of any auspicious festival, they start reverberating automatically on their own, without anyone playing them. Wherever the kettledrums and other musical instruments are mentioned later on, one should understand that they are playing themselves. It is mentioned in the beginning that the kettledrums started resonating, indicating the auspiciousness of the *rāsa* festival; they also acted as the agent to collect the *gopīs* together in their own groups.

'*Nīpetuḥ*' (fell down) – 'ni' means 'in abundance,' in other words, an abundance of flowers fell down and covered the dancing arena with flowers. The chief Gandharvas had one-pointed faith in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and they started singing His spotless glories along with their wives and different Apsarās. '*Amala*' (spotless) – the power of this song removed the dirt in the hearts of the living entities. Therefore it is said that at that time any unseemly desires of the chief Gandharvas and others were eliminated.

#### VERSE 5

*valayānām nūpurāṇām  
kiṅkiṇīnām ca yoṣitām  
sa-priyāṇām abhūc chabdas  
tumulo rāsa-maṇḍale*

As all the *gopīs* started dancing with their beloved Śyāmasundara in the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, the ringing of their armlets, ankle-bells and waist-bells mixed together, creating a sweet sound that spread in all directions.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

As the *gopīs* danced exultantly with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, their armlets and other ornaments rang out, creating a tumultuous sound.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

After giving an account of the festival of the demigods showering flowers, Śrī Śukadeva now describes the musical sounds connected to the *rāsa* in this verse starting with '*valayānām*.' The *vraja-devīs*' bangles, ankle-bells and waist-bells created a loud sound. '*Kiṅkiṇī*' means an ornamental waist-belt decked with tiny bells. The *gopīs* decorated themselves, as women are wont to do, with bangles and other ornaments. The phrase '*sa-priyāṇām*' (with their beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa) shows that Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself in as many forms as there were *gopīs*, and His armlets and other ornaments made the same loud sound. '*Rāsa-maṇḍale*' refers to the circular arrangement of various groups for the dance.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

'*Sa-priyāṇām*' – the Vraja maidens along with their lover Kṛṣṇa. The sound of the *gopīs*' ornaments mixed with the sound of *mṛdaṅgas* (drums) and the flute also (*ca*), but these were not the prominent instruments, and did not dominate over the ringing of the bangles, anklets, etc.

VERSE 6

*tatrātiśuśubhe tābhir  
bhagavān devakī-sutaḥ  
madhye maṇinām haimānām  
mahā-marakato yathā*

In that *rāsa* dance Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was shining in the midst of the *vraja-sundarīs* like a dazzling blue sapphire surrounded by gold beads.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

'*Mahā-marakata*' –Śrī Kṛṣṇa was shining in the middle of the golden-complexioned *gopīs* just as a dazzling blue sapphire stands out in the midst of golden beads. Each *gopī* thought that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was next to her, and embracing only her. To convey this sense, the word '*madhye*' (in the middle) has been used in the singular.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

"That person whom you (Parikṣit) celebrate as Devakī-suta is endowed with all opulences and charms, but He became more resplendent in the assembly of the fair Vraja maidens." The wife of Nanda has two names: Yaśodā and Devakī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā, is extremely charming, but He becomes more attractive in the midst of the *vraja-sundarīs*, just as a blue sapphire's beauty shines in a string of gold beads. This example is given to describe His beauty. The word '*madhye*' is in singular, signifying that Kṛṣṇa was present next to each *gopī*. Actually, Śrī Bhagavān manifested in many forms and at the same time was also standing in the center of the *rāsa* circle. There He increased the beauty of the whole *rāsa* dance by playing on the flute and roaming around with Śrī Rādhā. *Krama-dīpikā* confirms this: "The Vraja maidens arranged themselves in a circle by holding each other's hands. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was present in the center and He expanded His divine self in many forms. These manifestations entered between every two *gopīs* and embraced them around their necks with His arms." He was present in the center of many jewels – this is emphasized and repeated in these words: "The resplendent pillar made of jewels was shining in the center of the whorl of a large red lotus." Also, "His chest became reddish from the embrace of young maidens whose breasts were smeared with *kuṅkuma*." Śrī Kṛṣṇa was standing in the middle of the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, playing on His flute.

'*Maṇinām haimānām*' means 'made of molten gold,' and '*mahā-marakata*' is a dazzling blue sapphire. The *gopīs* standing in a circle are compared to a necklace of golden beads. Just as a necklace of golden beads greatly enhances the loveliness of the blue sapphire in its center, similarly, the embrace of His golden-complexioned beloveds greatly augmented His blue-sapphire beauty. The word '*mahā-marakata*' is in the singular form

but this is not meant for just the one Kṛṣṇa in the center, because in Verse 7, the use of the phrase ‘*megha-cakra*’ (cloud bank) indicates that blue-sapphire Kṛṣṇa was present in many forms. Śrīdhara Svāmī has written this in his commentary.

Some say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has a natural blue complexion like a sapphire, but He enhanced His beauty marvelously by dancing dexterously with great speed, spinning around and embracing the necks of the golden-complexioned cowherd maidens. When Kṛṣṇa’s blue complexion touches the golden-complexioned *vraja-sundarī*, He adopts the color of an emerald with a bluish tinge. It was His skillful dancing, and not the special power of His being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that caused His fascinating beauty to shine forth in this way.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The son of Devakī, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, belongs to the race of *kṣatriyas* (warriors), and He is Bhāgavan, possessing all six opulences in full, but in the midst of the cowherd maidens He becomes especially resplendent. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s blue-sapphire-like complexion scintillates like an emerald when it comes in contact with the golden-complexioned *gopīs*. The word ‘*mahā*’ has been used to signify the excellence of the combination of the two complexions. Kṛṣṇa, who is like a blue sapphire, took on a greenish hue in the middle of the assembly of the golden-colored *gopīs*, and radiated like a precious emerald. His beauty exceeded par excellence in the embrace of the *gopīs*, and they also became exceptionally lovely. Some books use the phrase ‘*mahā-marakata*’ (great emerald).

### **VERSE 7**

*pāda-nyāsair bhūja-vidhutibhiḥ sa-smitair bhrū-vilāsair  
bhajyan madhyaiś cala-kuca-pātaiḥ kuṇḍalair gaṇḍa-lolaiḥ  
svidyan-mukhyaḥ kavara-rasanāgranthayaḥ kṛṣṇa-vadhvo  
gāyantyās taṁ taḍita iva tā megha-cakre virejuḥ*

The *gopīs* sang Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s nectarean pastimes very sweetly and danced with expert foot work that matched with their artistic and elegant hand gestures. They smiled playfully and arched their eyebrows. Their waists bent

dramatically, the veils coving their breasts fluttered, their earrings swung on their cheeks, their faces perspired, and their braids and waist belts came loose. As the boundlessly beautiful Vraja maidens danced with their lover, they shone like golden streaks of lightning flashing in a bank of blue clouds.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked most handsome amongst the *gopīs*, who likewise became exceedingly attractive being with their lover. This present verse '*pāda-nyāsaiḥ*' describes their movements and gestures – dancing feet, gesturing hands, bending waists, restless veils covering their breasts, earrings swinging on their cheeks, and lotus faces perspiring. They had tied up their hair and waistbands tightly, but these started to come loose. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's many forms appeared like a cloud that moved at great speed in a circle. The *gopīs* shone like lightning, the perspiration on their faces looked like rain drops, and their singing sounded like thunder. The rest will be understood by the devotees at the level of *bhāva*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa was looking extraordinarily beautiful with the *gopīs*, and they also looked most wonderful with Him. This verse gives a detailed description of their fascinating movements as they danced in various ways. Sometimes they went forward and sometimes backwards, and sometimes they gestured elegantly with their hands. One might ask how they could make these movements while they were holding each other's hands. The answer is that sometimes they let go of each other's hands. Their dancing eyebrows and the gentle smiles on their faces expressed their various sentiments as they danced with extreme expertise, their delicate waists swaying naturally from side to side. Sometimes, when they spun very quickly like a potter's wheel, it appeared that their slender waists might break. Previously, they had offered their veils to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for His seat, so when He got up, they picked up their veils (*kuca-pāṭa*) and covered themselves again. Śrīdhara Svāmī has explained the rest. He has divided '*rasanāgranthayaḥ*' into the two words '*rasana-agranthayaḥ*,' which means 'loosening of the knots,' but the correct word is actually *granthayaḥ*.

*‘Kṛṣṇa-vadhvo gāyantyah’* – Kṛṣṇa’s beloveds sang His glories, and, gathering together in their own groups, they shone brilliantly as they circled around Him. One might ask how they looked. They looked like lightning in a mass of clouds. The example of lightning in the clouds expresses a natural relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *vraja-devīs*. One might raise the objection that Verse 6 does not mention the relationship between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, when it states: *‘madhye mañinān,’* their meeting created a very special splendor. That would appear to mean that their relationship is occasional, not of a married couple. But in the present verse, rapt in the excitement of wonderful pleasure, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that the *gopīs* are *‘kṛṣṇa-vadhvah,’* the brides of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and their relationship is eternal. The example of lightning in the clouds confirms this. Although Kṛṣṇa and the Vraja maidens are not married, the *gopīs* are to be seen as His eternal consorts due to the superiority of their vast love.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the blue sapphire, became even more handsome in the assembly of the golden-colored *gopīs*. Now this verse relates how Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s presence enhanced the *gopīs’* beauty. *‘Pāda-nyāsaiḥ’* describes the *gopīs’* expert foot movements as they danced artistically. Sometimes they moved forward, sometimes backwards, and sometimes they spun like a potter’s wheel, with hand gestures that matched the melody and rhythm of the song. They were singing extraordinary songs accompanied by various ingenious movements of the hands, feet and facial expressions.

*‘Bhujā-vidhutibhiḥ’* – they held each other’s hands, but sometimes they let go and quickly pantomimed with their hands, acting out the topics of the songs. Their gentle smiles and various suggestive expressions of the eyebrows (*bhrū-vilāsair*) further evinced their own particular moods that inspired their expert dancing and singing. *‘Bhajyan madhyaiś’* – the *gopīs* spiraled very swiftly in the dance and their slender waists bent till it seemed that they would break. *‘Cala-kuca-patāiḥ’* – the *gopīs* had previously spread their veils on the ground for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to sit on. They picked those up and covered themselves at the commencement of the dance. Now, the *gopīs* were dancing so quickly that those veils were flying away.



Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has referred the *gopīs* as ‘*kṛṣṇa-vadhvaḥ*,’ meaning ‘brides of Śrī Kṛṣṇa,’ or ‘to be enjoyed by Him.’ In the synonym section of *Amara-koṣa*, ‘*vadhu*’ (bride) has three meanings: wife, daughter-in-law, and woman in general. To take the meaning as wife contradicts the statement of Śrī Bhīṣmadeva in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.9.40: “Let me surrender to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who enjoyed with the wives of the *gopas*.” Śrī Bhīṣmadeva has addressed the *gopīs* as the wives of the *gopas*, not as Kṛṣṇa’s wives. Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī has also elucidated *kṛṣṇa-vadhvaḥ* as fair-limbed *gopīs* embraced by Śyāmasundara, to be enjoyed and sheltered by Him only. This is the real import of *Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī*.

### VERSE 8

*uccair jagur nṛtyamānā  
rakta-kañṭhyo rati-priyāḥ  
kṛṣṇābhimarśa-muditā  
yad-gītenedam āvṛtam*

The *gopīs*, excited to dally with their beloved, were singing sweet songs loudly with their beautiful voices and were dancing. As they drowned in bliss from getting the touch of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, their singing reverberated throughout the entire universe.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

‘*Nṛtyamānā*’ – while dancing. ‘*Rakta-kañṭhyo*’ – the *gopīs* sang melodiously, and became jubilant from Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s touch. ‘*Idam*’ – the whole universe.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

After portraying the dancing of the *vraja-devīs* in the previous verse, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, exhilarated by their bliss, next described the prominence of their singing in this verse beginning with ‘*uccaiḥ*.’ Due to close contact with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* became extraordinarily elated and started singing in a loud voice. ‘*Nṛtyamānā*’ – dancing and singing at the same time, they demonstrated their expertise in both. Through their singing and dancing

they expressed their fondness for amorous enjoyment (*rati-priyāḥ*). That is, the way Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed His love was very dear to them, and the way they expressed their love through their singing and dancing was very appealing to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and made Him extremely happy. Do not think that the *gopīs*' loud singing and dancing made them tired. With this intention it is said that they became joyful from Kṛṣṇa's touch so they did not experience any fatigue from singing and dancing.

'*Yad-gītena*' expresses another effect resulting from the loud singing – their singing pervades the whole universe, and is the source of all musical scales (*rāga-rāginī*). *Śaṅgīta-sāstra*, an authoritative treatise on music, states that sixteen thousand melodies come from the singing of the *vraja-devīs*. "There are as many melodies as there are types of living entities existing in this world. Out of them, the sixteen thousand that have come from the *gopīs* are the best." Śrī Śrīdhara Svāmī has explained that Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave supreme respect to the *gopīs* for the way they manifested the art of dancing. '*Rakta-kañṭhī*' (throats colored with *prema*) – who sing different melodies in a sweet voice due to *prema*; this phrase indicates the untold sweetness of the *gopīs*' voices. The reason the *gopīs* sang loudly is that they were aroused by amorous desire (*rati-priyāḥ*) and were overjoyed to get Kṛṣṇa's touch. The *gopīs* sang much more loudly than Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Parāśara has also written about this: "In this *rāsa-sthali* Śrī Kṛṣṇa was singing as loud as possible. The *gopīs* praised Him saying, '*Sādhu Kṛṣṇa, sādhu Kṛṣṇa*' and they sang twice as loud." Three adjectives modifying *rakta-kañṭhya* describe their singing: filled with love, elegant and sweet.

In this way, as Verse 6 tells us, "Śrī Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by the *vraja-devīs* in the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, looked absolutely sensational." Similarly, this verse describes how beautiful the *gopīs* looked as well as how exceptional their singing was. The rest of the explanation is clear.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Dancing is prominent in the playful *rāsa* pastimes. After describing this dance, Śrī Śukadeva speaks about the prominence of singing. '*Nṛtyamānā*' – dancing accompanied by loud singing. Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave the *gopīs* so much respect on account of their dancing that they horripilated in joy; thus their voices were colored with different *rāga-rāginīs*. *Śaṅgīta-sāra* also affirms:

“There are as many melodies (*rāgas*) as there are living beings in this world. Out of all these, the sixteen thousand that the *gopīs* sang are the very best.” ‘*Rati-priyāḥ*’ – the way Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed His affection previously was very appealing to the *gopīs*. Those *gopīs* became so overjoyed by their lover’s intimate touch that they did not experience any fatigue from their energetic dancing. The sound of their loud singing pervaded the entire universe, and even today the residents of this world repeat their love-filled singing.

### VERSE 9

*kācit samam mukundena  
svara-jātir amiśritāḥ  
unninye pūjitā tena  
prīyatā sādhu sādhu iti  
tad eva dhruvam unninye  
tasyai mānam ca bahu adāt*

One *gopī* was singing her own melody that harmonized with Mukunda Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s singing, and then she sang in a pitch that rose above His. Hearing her excellent, unique voice, He became pleased and praised her, “Very good! Exceptional, exceptional!” Another *gopī* picked up the same melody but sang in a different meter. Śrī Kṛṣṇa honored her also.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

One *gopī*, singing along with Mukunda, sang trills very melodiously. ‘*Amiśritā*’ – not mixed up with the melody sung by Kṛṣṇa; meaning, though she was singing with Kṛṣṇa, her song remained distinct. Śrī Kṛṣṇa honored her performance, saying, “*Sādhu, sādhu!*” Again, another *gopī* sang the song in a much higher voice and with a special rhythm.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Now, starting with ‘*kācit*,’ five and a half verses describe the prominent *gopīs*’ different activities by which they expressed their love. One *gopī* joined her singing with the melody that Śrī Mukunda was singing and then she sang in a higher tone. ‘*Unninye*’ – remarkable pitch. That *vraja-devī* mixed her song

with Kṛṣṇa's, and at the same time, her voice remained distinct. Being satisfied with her, Kṛṣṇa honored her. In which way? By saying, "Excellent, excellent!" He said it twice to emphasize His deep appreciation of her beautiful song. Another *gopī* continued the melody of the first *gopī*, but in a more beautiful voice with a unique rhythm, so Śrī Kṛṣṇa paid her even more honor than he gave to the first *gopī*. 'Dhruvam unninye' means that the song is composed in the *abhoga rāga* and is accompanied by *yati* and *niḥsāra* beats. She composed this special melody with these techniques and sang exquisitely. The rest of the explanation is according to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Regarding the *svars* (musical sounds), there are seven principle notes. These are *śadja*, *ṛṣabha*, *gāndhāra*, *madhyama*, *pañcama*, *dhaivata* and *niśāda*, in short known as *sa re ga ma pa dha ni*. *Saṅgīta-sāra* says that the seven notes have derived from the *śrutis*, and they are pleasing to the hearts of the listeners. These notes are similar to the sounds of the peacock, *cātaka*, goat, crane, cuckoo, frog and elephant, respectively. The animal sounds are unique, and not easily imitated. Groups of melodies are formed by combining these notes. *Saṅgīta-sāra* classifies these into eighteen types, which are further subdivided into two categories. In the first, all seven notes are sung in their *śuddha* (pure) form. In the second category, known as *vikṛta* (transformed), some notes are sung in two different pitches – *komala* (flat) and *tivra* (sharp). According to *kaiśikya*, a variety of dramatic style that presents dancing, singing and amorous activities, there are ten varieties all together.

The *gopīs*' singing was distinct (*amiśritāḥ*) from Kṛṣṇa's singing. They sang *śuddha* tones with excellent trills. This style of singing does not make use of disharmonious notes, and this can only be understood by connoisseurs of music. There is no one whose singing can compare to the *gopīs*'.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

*Saṅgīta-sāra* affirms that the seven notes – *śadja*, *ṛṣabha*, *gāndhāra*, *madhyama*, *pañcama*, *dhaivata* and *niśāda* – have originated from the *śrutis*. These notes resemble the sounds of the peacock, *cātaka*, goat, crane, cuckoo, frog and elephant, respectively. But to reproduce them is quite difficult. The *rāgas* are divided into eighteen groups, all of which have two sub-groups. One is *śuddha* (pure), having the original seven notes in

their pure forms. In the other sub-group some notes are sung in different frequencies, known as *vikṛta* (transformed).

‘*Amiśritā*’ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa sang a particular *rāginī* and one *gopī* sang along with Him, yet her melody remained distinct. She sang the songs of the *rāsa* dance in pure tones (*jātis*) with great expertise. Seeing this *gopī* perform this difficult pure singing in such a beautiful and excellent manner, Kṛṣṇa became overjoyed. He complimented her, saying, “*Sādhu, sādhu!*” and honored her by presenting His yellow shawl. This *gopī* is Viśākhā. Another cowherd maiden warbled the same melody, her voice quavering with superb modulation in a particular rhythm known as *dhruva tāla*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed her even more respect than the previous *gopī*, and gifted her His jeweled necklace, pendant and rings. This cowherd maiden, endowed with more merits than Viśākhā, is Lalitā-devī. Noticing the wonderful singing of both of these principle *gopīs*, Śrī Rādhā Herself burst into song. So we must understand that Śrī Rādhā is the reservoir of a gamut of talents, which manifest in Her closest *sakhīs* to a high degree.

#### VERSE 10

*kācid rāsa-pariśrāntā*  
*pārśva-sthasya gadā-bhṛtaḥ*  
*jaग्रāha bāhunā skandham*  
*ślathad-valaya-mallikā*

One *gopī* became tired while dancing with her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so she took hold of Muralī-manohara Śyāmasundara’s shoulder with her arm, and rested against Him as He was standing next to her. Her bracelets and the jasmine flowers in her braid had come loose.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

#### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Out of those *vraja-sundarīs* honored by Śrī Kṛṣṇa for their dancing and singing, one among them became especially overjoyed and shone with love. This is described in this verse starting with ‘*kācit*.’ Due to dancing so much, she became tired, and her bracelets and the jasmine flowers in her braid came loose.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

In this way, Śrī Śukadeva has described the prominence of some of the different *gopīs* according to the superiority of their singing and other talents in expressing their *prema*. Now he explains the love of the primary *gopīs* who are most intimate with Kṛṣṇa. And out of these cowherd maidens, he alludes to one very fortunate chief damsel in this verse '*kācid rāsa*.' Exhausted from dancing, this *gopī*, who was standing near Gadādhara Śrī Kṛṣṇa, tightly grabbed hold of His shoulder with her arm. The phrase '*pārśva-stha*' (standing nearby) indicates that she grasped His shoulder very easily and quickly. Otherwise, if she had been at some distance, her feet might have slipped because she was absorbed in *rāsa*. '*Gadā*' means 'baton,' the dance master looks beautiful holding the baton, and he who holds the baton is Gadādhara. Alternatively, it means one who vibrates words through the stick (*vamśī*, the flute). Holding the flute in the *rāsa* dance is the cause of beauty; thus '*gadā-bhṛta*' means Vamśidhārī, He who holds the flute. As the commander-in-chief of the dancers, it is appropriate for Him to wield the flute. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa was situated in the middle of the *rāsa-maṇḍala* in the same way the head dancer takes his place in the middle of all the dancers.

The phrase '*ślathad-valaya-mallikā*' (her bracelets and the flowers in her hair came loose) describes symptoms indicating that this *gopī* was tired. The flowers in her bracelets and braid loosened and fell down on the ground due to her strenuous dancing. Śrī Parāśara has also said: "Some *gopī*, tired from dancing, placed on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's shoulder her creeper-like arm, which was decorated with bracelets that were shaking." Here it should be understood that the jasmine flowers came loose and cascaded down. The *gopīs*' actions come in the category of *mādhurya-anubhāva*. This is one of the ten sub-*anubhāvas* (ecstatic symptoms) that comprise *śobhā*, the main *anubhāva*, when the body is decorated with signs of amorous enjoyment. The symptom of *mādhurya* is that all activities naturally display a consistent charm and beauty in every situation.

It is understood that this *gopī*, who was situated in the center of the *rāsa-maṇḍala*, exhibiting the mood of *svādhīna-bhartṛkā* (the heroine who controls her lover) is none other than Rādhikā. The two previous verses have described Rādhā's two *sakhīs*, Lalitā and Viśākhā, who give happiness to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa by their expert singing. The accounts given earlier portraying

Śrī Rādhikā's playful behavior show Her mood as an independent heroine. Lalitā and Viśākhā's singing and other skills are instruments to help augment Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After describing the dancing and singing of the prominent *sakhīs* (Lalitā and Viśākhā), in this verse starting with '*kācid rāsa*,' the narrator now portrays one principal, fortunate *sakhī* (Śrī Rādhā). This *gopī*, becoming extremely tired from dancing, with Her right hand caught hold of the shoulder of *gadā-bhrta* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was standing closeby. '*Gadā*' means one who understands and nourishes their warbling, or who appreciates the depth of the singing of the two *sakhīs*. The bracelets and jasmine flowers in her hair had come loose. In this way, the *svādhīna-kāntā bhāva* of this *ramaṇī* is displayed – She is Vṛṣabhānu-kumārī Śrī Rādhikā, who controls Her lover.

### **VERSE II**

*tatraikāṁsa-gataṁ bāhuṁ  
kṛṣṇasyotpala-saurabham  
candanāliptam āghrāya  
hṛṣṭa-romā cucumba ha*

**Śrī Kṛṣṇa put His soft lotus hand on one *gopī*'s shoulder – His hand naturally scented like a lotus, and now more fragrant being smeared with sandalwood pulp. In response to His aromatic touch, that *gopī* thrilled with rapture. Her hairs stood on end, and she quickly kissed His hand.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

*'Utpala'* – that hand smells like a blue lotus.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In this verse '*tatra*' Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is surely describing Śyāmalā's joy-filled play because what he is relating now is similar to what he described in Verse 4 of the previous chapter (32). This one *gopī* kissed Śrī Kṛṣṇa's

hand – more fragrant than a lotus – which was resting on her shoulder. His arm had been smeared with sandalwood paste. ‘*Ālipta*’ (smeared with) begins with *ā*, indicating that His arm was artistically anointed with different types of scented cosmetics. The word ‘*ha*’ at the end of this verse means ‘clearly.’ Being helpless in *prema*, her hairs stood on end and she openly kissed His hand. According to another understanding, when that *gopī*’s body exhibited extreme horripilation out of bliss, then, indeed, her heart must have been filled with immeasurable joy. What else is there to say? Her heart was so elated that she kissed Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus hand without hesitation. This shows her boldness (*pragalbhata*), one of the *anubhāvas* (ecstatic symptoms). According to scholars, when kissing and other amorous activities are performed without reticence at the time of union, this is called *pragalbhata*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One *gopī* kissed Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s hand, which was resting on her shoulder. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s body – including His hands – is more fragrant than a lotus, and hence, the sandalwood fragrance could not cover over His natural aroma. This cowherd maiden must surely be Śyāmalā, because her behavior is very similar to that of Śrī Śyāmalā Sakhī described in Verse 4 of Chapter 32.

**VERSE 12**

*kasyāścīn nāṭya-vikṣipta*  
*kuṇḍala-tviṣa-maṇḍitam*  
*gaṇḍam gaṇḍe sandadhatyāḥ*  
*prādāt tām̐būla-carvitam*

Another *gopī*’s earrings were swinging as she was dancing, and the glitter of the earrings made her cheeks shine more. She pressed her cheek against Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s cheek. Then He placed His chewed *tām̐būla* in her mouth.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

One *gopī*, dancing very fast, put her cheek, which was shining from her dangling earring, on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s glowing cheek.



ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

The mood of the *gopī* mentioned in this verse is similar to that of Śrī Śaibya described in 10.32.5, who is accepting the chewed *tāmbūla* in her joined palms. This verse surely relates Śaibya's joy-filled play. 'Kasyāścit' – some *gopī*, on the pretext of being tired from dancing, put her cheek against Kṛṣṇa's cheek. Here 'prādāt' (offering) means that Kṛṣṇa brought His mouth in front of this *gopī*'s mouth, and with great affection He transferred His chewed *tāmbūla* from His mouth into hers. In the word 'dāt,' the 6<sup>th</sup> position (*ṣaṣṭhi*) has been used to make it very confidential.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

Some *gopī*'s cheeks were decorated with the effulgence of her earrings which were swaying as she danced. She touched her cheek to Kṛṣṇa's cheek on the excuse of being tired. Śrī Kṛṣṇa brought His mouth close to hers, and with great honor, transferred His chewed *tāmbūla* into her mouth. This *gopī* is similar to the cowherd maiden mentioned in the previous chapter, 32.5, so she is Śaibya.

**VERSE 13**

*nṛtyatī gāyatī kācit / kūjan nūpura-mekhalā*  
*pārśva-sthācyuta-hastābjaṁ / śrāntādhāt stanayoḥ śivam*

**As one *gopī* was dancing and singing, a sweet sound emanated from the ringing of her ankle-bells and the small bells on her waist-belt. When she wearied, she put Acyuta's soothing lotus hand on her breast.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Bhāvārtha Dīpikā**

One *gopī*'s ankle and waist bells were ringing as she was dancing.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

In Verse 4 of the previous chapter, the *gopī* who caught hold of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's right hand is Candrāvalī. She is also the subject of this verse 'nṛtyatī,'

which describes her love-filled play. She started to sing and dance, and this caused her ankle-bells and waist-bells to chime in time with the rhythm of her dancing. Acyuta was standing next to her, and she kept His comforting lotus hand on her breast. There is a special purpose in using the name Acyuta in this verse because it means ‘one who is situated next to this *gopī* without diverting His attention.’ Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s hands are like lotuses because they can alleviate burning affliction. This is why this *gopī* kept His auspicious and comforting hand on her breast when she became extremely tired. In this way, these six verses have described the love dalliance of the six principle *sakhī*s.

The seventh *sakhī*, Padmā, displays almost the same symptoms as Candrāvalī, so her love-play should also be understood to be very similar to hers. The eighth *sakhī*, Bhadrā, has been mentioned in *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: “One *gopī*, especially expert in singing Kṛṣṇa’s glories, started kissing Madhusūdana’s love-filled, inviting arms.” Śrī Jayadeva also has confirmed this eighth *sakhī* as Bhadrā. In his statement, “Śrī Rādhikā, blinded by love, embraced Śrī Kṛṣṇa very tightly in front of the lovely maidens overwhelmed in the ecstasy of the *rāsa* dance,” Bhadrā’s loving character and the playful actions she displayed in front of Rādhā are intimated.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One *gopī* went close to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and placed His hand on her breasts, and thus alleviated the heat generated from her strenuous dancing and singing. She is certainly Candrāvalī since she is holding Kṛṣṇa’s lotus hand. Another *sakhī* – Padmā – is also known to take hold of His hands. Verse 5 of the previous chapter (32) mentions that one *sakhī* kept Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus foot on her breast, but now she is keeping His lotus hands on her breast. In both these cases, the heat of the breast is extinguished. There is no special mention of the eighth *sakhī* Bhadrā, yet it should be understood that she is performing some special love-play with Kṛṣṇa.

### **VERSE 14**

*gopyo labdhvācyutam kāntam  
śrīya ekānta-vallabham  
grhīta-kaṇṭhyas tad-dorbhyām  
gāyantyās tam vijahrire*

As the *gopīs* were singing and enjoying love-play with their darling Acyuta the infallible, the exclusive beloved of Lakṣmī, He clasped them in a tight embrace with His arms around their necks.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The present verse '*gopyo*' describes the other *gopīs* who were also performing rapturous love games.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

'Acyuta' – Acyuta Śrī Kṛṣṇa is dallying with so many *gopīs*, yet the glories of His beauty, qualities and nature remain consistent; they never undergo any deviation. To attain this Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the rarest of the rare (*ekānta-vallabha*). He is the supermost lover and the object of *prema*, more than Śrī Vaikuṇṭhanātha, the exclusive master of Lakṣmī-devī. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.16.36 affirms Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the object of Lakṣmī-devī's love also: "To achieve Kṛṣṇa she underwent severe austerities but she could not attain Him as her lover." Only the *gopīs* were successful in this regard. Not only did they attain Him, but He could not tolerate even a moment's separation from them, and He clasped their necks in a tight embrace. The *gopīs* were blissfully singing Kṛṣṇa's glories and frolicking with Him. This shows the greatness of the *vraja-devīs* as compared to Lakṣmī-devī. Śrī Uddhava, having also experienced this, said in 10.47.60: "At the time of *rāsa-līlā*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa held onto the necks of the *vraja-devīs* in a tight embrace and fulfilled their desires. The mercy He bestowed upon them was not received by His eternal consort Lakṣmī-devī, who always resides on His chest, nor by the heavenly damsels, who are as fragrant as lotuses and dazzlingly beautiful, and what to speak of other women."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

'*Gopya*' – in this way, the principle *gopīs* and all the others were enjoying playful love games with Kṛṣṇa according to their own particular natures. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.16.36 says in the prayers of the Nāga-patnīs (the wives of the Kālīyā serpent): "*yad-vāñchayā śrīr lalanācarat tapa* – Lakṣmī-devī performed austerities with the desire to get the dust of Kṛṣṇa's lotus

feet but did not succeed.” In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.60 Uddhava says: “*nāyaṁ śriyo ’ṅga u nitānta-rateḥ prasādaḥ* – the favor received by the *gopīs* was not attained by Lakṣmī-devī.” *Śrī Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta* relates a story from the *Purāṇas*: “Lakṣmī-devī was enamored by witnessing Kṛṣṇa’s beauty and performed penances to attain Him, but could not.” The beloved of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, Lakṣmī-devī, desires to have Kṛṣṇa’s association, but this is impossible. In the explanation of the verse at hand, ‘*kānta*’ means ‘extremely passionate,’ and ‘*acyuta*’ means that Kṛṣṇa’s glories remain intact even when He is dallying with so many *gopīs* at the same time. Each of the *gopīs* attained this extremely passionate, extremely beautiful beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa as her own. He lovingly embraced each and every one of them with His arms. Acyuta held each *gopī* in His arms just as Śrī Nārāyaṇa clasps Lakṣmī-devī to His chest, so Kṛṣṇa is also Lakṣmī-devī’s beloved because Śrī Nārāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa are non-different in *tattva*.

#### VERSE 15

*karṇotpalālaka-viṭaṅka-kapola-gharma-  
vaktra-śriyo valaya-nūpura-ghoṣa-vādyaiḥ  
gopyaḥ samāṁ bhagavatā nanṛtuḥ sva-keśa-  
srasta-srajo bhramara-gāyaka-rāsa-goṣṭhyām*

**The *gopīs*’ ears were embellished with lotuses, their curly locks were swaying against their cheeks, and their lotus faces were sparkling with drops of perspiration – all of these enhanced their unprecedented beauty. Their anklets and bracelets were ringing out and the flowers in their hair were falling down as they were dancing with Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *rāsa-maṇḍala*. Bees hummed sweetly in tune with the singing.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

Many singers, drummers, and Gandharavas and Kinnaras along with their wives, assembled together to celebrate the *rāsa* festival. Being intoxicated from the excitement of the gala event, all of them danced with great zeal. This verse starting with ‘*karṇotpala*’ describes the thrill of the *rāsa* dance augmented by the playing of many musical instruments.

The *gopīs*' ears were embellished with lotuses, their curly locks swayed against their cheeks, and their lotus faces sparkled with drops of perspiration – all of these enhanced their unprecedented beauty. Their anklets, waist-bells and bracelets rang out and the flowers in their hair fell down as they danced with Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *rāsa-maṇḍala*. This indicates that their artistic hairdos, being happy with the singing and drumming, caused the *gopīs*' heads to shake in rhythm with the music, and thus the flowers in their hair showered down on Kṛṣṇa's feet. In this way the cowherd maidens sang and danced with Kṛṣṇa and the bees sang along with them.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

With the present verse '*karnōtpala*,' we see that the glories of the *vraja-sundarīs* far outshine those of Lakṣmī-devī. The lotuses on their ears, curly locks on their cheeks and the drops of perspiration on their faces created a beauty never seen before. Although the *vraja-devīs* were fatigued from dancing and singing, they were still shining brightly. The reason for this ecstatic dancing was that these cowherd damsels attained the association of Kṛṣṇa in His most stunning, unparalleled form.

These *gopīs* are completely controlled by His love. The phrase '*samaṁ bhagavatā*' signifies that the *gopīs* are also as adept as Kṛṣṇa in amorous affairs, so it is to be understood that He was also decorated like the *gopīs* with lotuses on His ears, curly locks on His cheeks, and perspiration sparkling on His face. Kṛṣṇa Himself had placed the lotuses on the *vraja-sundarīs*' ears. In this *rāsa* festival, the bees had taken the position of singers, and marvelously they sang songs appropriate for *rāsa-līlā*.

All the rest has been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda. The *gopīs*' bracelets, waist-bells and anklets were ringing, sounding like instruments, and the humming of the bees also made the same sounds. This combination created a tumultuous vibration. All these sounds were favorable for the dancing. As soon as all the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and other demigods saw the *rāsa* dance, they also became inspired to dance. Verse 3 of this chapter mentions the demigods with the word '*divaukasāṁ*,' but in the present verse, though not mentioned, Kinnaras, Gandharvas, etc., are understood to be present. Intoxicated in bliss, they were trying to play musical instruments, but actually, in this *rāsa-līlā*, the *gopīs* did not need any accompaniment.

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The excellence of the singing and dancing has been described in many previous verses. Now, the present verse '*karnotpalālaka*' depicts how the *vraja-sundarīs*' dancing augmented the effulgence of their faces to the fullest extent. The word '*utpala*' (lotus) implies the presence of a round ornament on the upper part of the ear. Their cheeks were decorated with curly locks and their lotus faces were perspiring from the labor of dancing, and this heightened their superbly beautiful appearance. With the movement of their dancing limbs, their bracelets, anklets and waistbells were chiming, thus keeping the rhythm of the dancing. Drums, flutes and other instruments sounded by themselves in time with the chiming sound. The presiding deities of these instruments appeared there and sang in great bliss, thus making their lives successful.

The *vraja-devīs* were dancing with the same dexterity as Kṛṣṇa (*samaṁ bhagavatā*). They became helplessly overwhelmed from the joy of dancing with Him. Their heads were shaking in unison with the rhythm of the movements of their feet, and the flower garlands tucked in their hair buns started falling. It seemed like the flowers, in appreciation of the *gopīs*' skillful dancing, were happily falling on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, who was dancing next to them. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has also said this. Many bees also came there, attracted by the fragrance of these cascading flowers, and with their natural humming, became singers in this dance festival.

**VERSE 16**

*evam pariṣvaṅga-karābhimarśa-  
snigdhekṣaṇoddāma-vilāsa-hāsaiḥ  
reme rameśo vraja-sundarībhir  
yathārbhakaḥ sva-pratibimba-vibhramāḥ*

**Ramā-pati Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of the goddess of fortune, danced with the beautiful Vraja maidens, embracing them, holding their hands, casting love-filled glances, smiling, and enjoying care-free amorous play with them, just as a child plays with his own shadow.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The *gopīs* were playing various amorous games with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was mutually enjoying with them, but their romantic actions could not subdue Him. This is the meaning of this verse starting with '*evam*.' An example is given in this regard: Kṛṣṇa was engaged in dallying with the Vraja maidens, His own potencies, just as a child plays with His own reflection. This shows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa transmitted His entire dexterity, aroma, extreme beauty and sweetness to the *vraja-devīs*, and enjoyed with them.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

'*Evam*' – the *gopīs* were engaged in amorous play, displaying various inviting gestures, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa was reciprocating appropriately. The present verse compares Śrī Kṛṣṇa's play with His *gopīs*, who are His own potencies, to a small boy (*yathārbhakaḥ*) who plays with his own shadow. Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, who are likened to His shadow, were copying each others' playful activities. Kṛṣṇa, like a wonderstruck boy, has a natural tendency for amorous affairs, and the result of this is the advent of this *rāsa-līlā*, comprised of beautiful, romantic exchanges. It seems as if the portion of Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda's commentary saying that 'the *gopīs*' romantic actions could not subdue Kṛṣṇa is not part of his original exposition; someone else added it later on.

This example of the child amusing himself with his shadow makes it clear that it is the *gopīs* only who bring out His qualities. A boy can see and experience the beauty of own face in a reflection, not on his own, so it is to be understood that Kṛṣṇa also exhibits and relishes His sweetness through His beloveds. It is not possible for His sweetness to manifest without the love-filled attitude of the *gopīs*, whose faces reflect His extreme sweetness.

'*Rameśa*' – He is the master (*iśa*) of Lakṣmī (*ramā*), but He enjoyed with the *vraja-sundarīs* in an excellent, unparalleled way; He did not do this with Lakṣmī-devī. This means that the beauty, qualities and love of the Vraja damsels are greater than hers. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the master of Lakṣmī-devī but He does not perform romantic activities with her. Śukadeva Gosvāmī relates this with great surprise in this verse '*evam*.' Just as a child plays with his own reflection (*sua-pratibimba-vibhramah*), so Rāmā-pati Kṛṣṇa also plays

with the *gopīs*, embracing them, freely caressing their breasts and thighs, sending them love-filled glances, and communicating His loving emotions through His smiles.

Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* share the same excellent qualities and mutual attachment. This is shown in the example ‘*sva-pratibimba-vibhramah.*’ Just as a child naturally feels happy when he plays with his own reflection, Kṛṣṇa is similarly absorbed with great love in enjoying with the *gopīs* because they are His *svarūpa-śakti*, His own reflections. With this intention they were previously called *kṛṣṇa-vadhū*, and not *gopa-vadhū*. *Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.37 states: “Śrī Govinda, who is all-pervading and who exists within the hearts of all, resides in His Goloka-dhāma along with Śrī Rādhā, who is the embodiment of His pleasure potency and the counterpart of His own spiritual form. She is the epitome of transcendental *rasa*, and is expert in sixty-four arts. They are also accompanied by the *sakhīs*, who are expansions of Śrī Rādhā’s own transcendental body, and who are infused with blissful, spiritual *rasa*. I worship that original personality, Śrī Govinda.”

Kṛṣṇa’s various gestures are copied by the *gopīs*, who serve as His reflections, and in this way, with great attachment, they play with each other. The word ‘*snigdha*’ (affection) indicates the *gopīs*’ and Kṛṣṇa’s profound attachment for each other. Śrī Parāśara Muni has explained this *sāttvika-anubhāva* of Kṛṣṇa in this way: “Due to touching the *gopīs*’ cheeks with His hands, Kṛṣṇa’s hairs stand on end, and drops of perspiration appear, evoking the image of a cloud releasing raindrops (His perspiration) on grass (His hairs standing on end).”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśini***

Kṛṣṇa experienced amorous pleasure to the fullest extent by engaging in all the various activities of the *rāsa*, like dancing and singing. The word ‘*pariṣvaṅga*’ (embracing) shows that He embraced each *gopī* while dancing. Kṛṣṇa tasted a vast variety of amorous pleasure in close contact with the *gopīs*. ‘*Karābhimarśa*’ (touching with His hand) indicates that He touched their left breasts with His right hand, to mark the rhythm at the end of each song. In between dances, He lovingly gazed (*snigdheḥṣaṇa*) at the cleavage of their breasts. ‘*Uddāma-vilāsa*’ – He rewarded them with His kisses. ‘*Hāsa*’ –



His face bloomed with a broad smile showing His contentment in having fully enjoyed many amorous activities with the *gopīs*.

*Rameśa*’ is Lakṣmī-pati, the husband of the goddess of fortune. Kṛṣṇa displays His majesty with Lakṣmī, but partakes of amorous pleasure with the *vraja-devīs*, not with Ramā. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s amorous sporting with the *gopīs* is like the play of a baby with his shadow. Just as a child becomes enchanted by cavorting with his shadow, similarly Kṛṣṇa was playing with the *gopīs*, overpowered by their love. One might raise the question: how could Kṛṣṇa frolic with unlimited *gopīs* at one time? These sweet, romantic dealings with the Vraja maidens exhibit the utmost opulence but this is not like His majestic behavior with Ramā-devī. The fact is that each *gopī* is the counterpart of His *svarūpa*, His own form. This is the significance of ‘*yathā sva-pratibimba*’ (*yathā*—like, *sva*—His own, *pratibimba*—form). The meaning of ‘*bimba*,’ or *svarūpa*, is derived from the conversation between Uddhava and Vidura in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.2.11: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended to Earth in His eternal form (*sva-bimba*) and was visible to everyone, even to those who had not performed any penances. Now He has disappeared from sight, without satisfying our hankering for Him.”

These *gopīs* are expansions of Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*), which is an integral part of His own internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*). All the cowherd maidens are reflections of His *svarūpa*, for the purpose of giving Him pleasure. This *līlā* is the exhibition of His deriving joy from His own reflections (*ātmabhūta*). This is the accurate explanation of ‘*sva-pratibimba*,’ it is not actually correct to say ‘His own shadow.’

#### VERSE 17

*taḍ-aṅga-saṅga-pramudākulendriyāḥ*  
*keśān dukūlaṁ kuca-paṭṭikāṁ vā*  
*nāñjaḥ prativyoḍhum alaṁ vraja-striyo*  
*visrasta-mālābharaṇāḥ kurūdvaha*

**O Parīkṣit! Due to the *gopīs*’ intimate association with Kṛṣṇa, their senses were overwhelmed in bliss. The flower garlands around their necks broke and fell down, their ornaments went topsy-turvy, their hair became disheveled, and they were unable to keep their veils and blouses in place.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

After this, the *vraja-sundarīs* became agitated by Kṛṣṇa's amorous play. This is described in this verse '*tad-aṅga*.' The *gopīs* became totally helpless as a result of the extreme bliss arising from having Kṛṣṇa's intimate association. Their hair became disheveled, their dresses and cloth covering their breasts came loose, and they were unable to hold onto them. Their garlands and ornaments were also thrown into disorder.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The *gopīs* fell into a state of helplessness due to experiencing extreme bliss, and the *rāsa* dance came to a halt. This is the subject matter of this verse starting with '*tad-aṅga*.' Because of their close contact with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs*' joy came to a climax, resulting in the dysfunctioning of their senses, symptomized by loosening of hair and inability to keep their veils and cloth covering their breasts in place.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After this, the *gopīs* became completely overwhelmed from the bliss they derived by getting Bhagavān's close association. This is described in the present verse '*tad-aṅga-saṅga*.' They became so agitated with unprecedented ecstasy that they were unable to keep the cloth covering their breasts in place.

**VERSE 18**

*kṛṣṇa-vikrīḍitaṁ vīkṣya*  
*mumuhuḥ khe-cara-striyaḥ*  
*kāmārditāḥ śaśāṅkaś ca*  
*sa-gaṇo vismito 'bhavat*

When the heavenly damsels sitting in their planes in the sky witnessed Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-kṛīḍā*, they became agitated with desire to meet Him. The moon was also astonished, along with the stars and other planets.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The present verse '*kṛṣṇa-vikrīḍitaṁ*' says: "Not only the *vraja-sundarīs* were agitated, the wives of the demigods were also smitten by lust. The moon and his consorts, the stars, were also bewildered and stopped in their tracks. The planets, like Jupiter and Venus, which are more ancient than Candra, also stopped moving and remained where they were. In this way, the night became very long, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoyed His amorous play in great happiness.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayaṁ Bhagavān, so He is endowed with sweetness and other attributes to the fullest extent. In the word '*vikrīḍitaṁ*,' *vi* means 'special' and *krīḍitaṁ* means 'play.' Watching (*vikṣya*) this very special pleasurable pastime, the heavenly damsels became excited by amorous desire, and felt anxious to be with Kṛṣṇa. They were enchanted by observing how the *gopīs* rendered direct service with intense love. First of all, the demigoddesses forgot their own lack of qualification to attain Kṛṣṇa, and secondly, becoming bewildered, they lost awareness of their own bodies.

The rest is according to Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda's commentary, in which he affirms that Kṛṣṇa enjoyed happily in that very long night. It is not possible to perform various types of pleasurable pastimes in a short night. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.38 also states '*brahma-rātra upāvṛtte*;' this means that the night became equal to 1,000 *catur-yugas* (four ages) according to the time scale of Brahmā. At the end of this long night, upon Kṛṣṇa's insistence, the *gopīs* returned to their homes. This became possible because Yogamāyā, Bhagavān's potency, reconciled unlimited incongruous actions.

Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has stated that the moon and other planets were so astonished that they became stunned. This is an assumption because the movements of the moon, etc., are governed by the laws of astronomical science, so they slowed down in these unusual circumstances, and moved in an opposite direction. In fact, Yamunā and other rivers stopped flowing, and sometimes flowed backwards in order to facilitate the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's *līlā*. In the same way, the circular movements of the planets stopped. Here, many nights are indicated. The words '*tā rātriḥ*' (those nights) in Chapter 29, Verse 1, and '*niśāḥ*' (many nights) in Verse 25 of this chapter also indicate

that the night was very, very long. So the reconciliation is that although the night progressed, one night stretched on interminably.

It is said that the heavenly damsels became helplessly attracted to Kṛṣṇa. This shows the supreme charm of the amorous play of the *rāsa-līlā*. This is justified because all the ecstatic emotions escalated to the supermost limit in the dancing and singing with Kṛṣṇa, and *rāsa* itself was controlling the whole event. The most fortunate *vraja-sundarīs* exhibited great dexterity in their romantic sporting; even Lakṣmī rarely achieves such fortune. In the present verse, the word '*kāmārditaḥ*' (agitated by lusty desires in the plural) is used, but in other places '*kāmārditaḥ*' (singular) is seen; however Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda does not approve this. The phrase '*deva-striya*' (*khe-cara-striya*) means 'many demigoddesses,' who were all aroused with loving feelings for Kṛṣṇa. Thus, *kāmārditaḥ* in the plural is justified in this case, but *kāmārditaḥ* is correct in regard to the moon.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The demigoddesses became lusty for Kṛṣṇa after observing His amorous play. This singular form '*kāmārditaḥ*' indicates that the moon assumed a feminine mood, and also experienced lust after watching Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā*, because no male is allowed to witness the bodies of the *vraja-sundarīs* and their amorous play in this pastime. It is for this reason only that Yogamāyā covered the sight of the demigods; this has already been told earlier.

### **VERSE 19**

*kṛtvā tāvantam ātmānam  
yāvatīr gopa-yoṣitaḥ  
reme sa bhagavāms tābhir  
ātmārāmo 'pi līlayā*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is '*ātmārāma*,' self-satisfied, yet He expanded Himself in as many forms as there were *gopīs* in order to enjoy with each and every one of them.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Bhāvārtha Dīpikā**

This verse starting with '*kṛtvā*' (making) is understood thus: in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.22.4, the young girls prayed to Kātyāyanī-devī to award them the son of Nanda Mahārāja as their husband:

*kātyāyani mahā-māye mahā-yoginy adhīśvari  
nanda-gopa-sutaṁ devi patim me kuru te namaḥ*

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.22.27, Bhagavān also blessed these young maidens, telling them: "*yātābalā vrajaṁ siddhā mayemā raṁsyathā kṣapāḥ* – Your desire is fulfilled and I will play with you in the coming nights. Now return to Vraja." In answer to the prayers of these *gopīs* and to keep His promise, He appeared in as many forms as there were *gopīs* and enjoyed with all of them.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

Upon the completion of the *rāsa* dance, Śrī Kṛṣṇa took some rest and then performed a special pastime. This is explained in this verse '*kṛtvā*.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa is '*ātmārāma*,' self-satisfied, yet He assumed as many forms as there were *gopīs*, and began to frolick with them. This is the understanding of '*ātmānaḥ*.' *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives many references testifying to His all-pervading nature. For example, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.9.13 says: "He has no inside, no outside, no front and no rear. Rather, He is all-pervading. He is not influenced by the passage of time, and due to compassion He descended in a human-like form." According to this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has a medium-sized human-like body. Even then, His figure is all-pervasive. He can expand into many identical forms and many different incarnations. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.69.2 gives an example of this: "It is most astonishing that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, expanding His one form, simultaneously married 16,000 princesses in separate palaces." He accepted many forms out of His own will and at the end of the *līlā*, He became one again.

'*Gopa-yoṣitaḥ*' (cowherd maidens) – some are married and some are not. Their *pūrva-rāga* is described separately in Chapters 21 and 22. *Hari-vamśa* also says: "Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa called the married and the unmarried *gopīs* to the *rāsa-sthālī*, and enjoyed with all of them in one night. He is

Kārajña, the knower of the right time; and He enjoyed Himself to His full satisfaction, and thus made His youth successful.” Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu has described these amorous pastimes in his *Ujjava-nīlamanī*. Bhagavān exhibits two main features in this imperial *rāsa-līlā*: His full sweetness, which is the essence of His Godhood and His topmost wealth; and the peak of *prema-rasa*, the ambrosia of divine love. He attracts the entire universe by His beauty, attributes, pastimes and sweetness. The same Bhagavān has performed this *rāsa-līlā* to extend His own special *prema*. This will be explained in detail in the coming chapters and has also been described in *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛtam*. He is *ātmārāma*, meaning that He enjoys to the fullest extent within Himself and with each of His devotees, who are like His own self. He manifested Himself in as many forms as there were *gopīs*, and performed amorous play with them in separate *kuñjas*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S

### *Sārārtha Darśinī*

‘*Kṛtvā*’ (making) – Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed confidential pastimes with each *gopī* in separate *kuñjas*. In order to do this, He expanded Himself into as many forms as there were *gopīs*, married and unmarried. He is *ātmārāma*, yet He enjoyed with the cowherd maidens. This has been described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.42.

### VERSE 20

*tāsāṁ rati-vihāreṇa  
śrāntānāṁ vadanāni saḥ  
prāmṛjat karuṇaḥ premṇā  
śantamenāṅga pāṇinā*

**O King, when the *gopīs* were very tired from continuous singing and dancing, the most compassionate Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa lovingly wiped their faces with His soothing lotus hands.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

This verse ‘*tāsāṁ*’ describes Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s abundant mercy for the *vraja-devīs*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

'*Rati-vihāra*' (amorous enjoyment): '*rati*' means 'the love of a couple for each other;' and '*vihāra*' expresses various dextrous amorous activities. In the original verse '*rati-vihāreṇa*' is found, but in some places *tāsāṁ ati-vihāreṇa* (profuse enjoyment with them) is seen – the meaning of both is the same. The *vraja-sundarīs* were fatigued from this amorous play and their faces were perspiring. With great love, Śrī Kṛṣṇa wiped their lotus faces with His comforting hand and also tied up their disheveled hair. Thus their faces became effulgent. He did so because He is very compassionate, and He cannot tolerate the miseries of others. His compassion rains on everyone everywhere, yet He displays His special mercy when He very lovingly wipes off the perspiration from the *vraja-devīs*' faces with His comforting hands. '*Premṇā*' – with love; *prema* only highlights the good attributes in the object of love, and increases one's affection for this object.

These *gopīs* have reached the extreme limit of their ecstatic emotions, and this is the supermost speciality of their love. With this kind of love, the quality of compassion comes automatically – *prema* is the sole reason for this.

'*Śantamena*' (most comforting) – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus hands naturally give comfort merely by their touch, and if they bestow love, they are even more comforting. The two words '*prāmṛjat*' (wiped) and '*premṇā*' (with love) indicate that Kṛṣṇa was extremely satisfied with the *gopīs*. '*Aṅga*' (my dear King) is Śukadeva Goṣvāmī's loved-filled address for Parīkṣit.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

'*Rati-vihāreṇa*' – in some versions *ati-vihāreṇa* is seen. Observing that the *vraja-sundarīs* were very tired from their amorous play, Śrī Kṛṣṇa halted their romancing. He wiped the drops of perspiration from their faces with His extremely soothing lotus hands. At the same time He fanned them, applied sandalwood paste, arranged their dresses and offered them *tāmbūla*.

VERSE 21

*gopyaḥ sphurat-puraṭa-kunḍala-kuntala-tviḍ-  
gaṇḍa-śriyā sudhita-hāsa-nirīkṣaṇena  
mānaṁ dadhatya ṛṣabhasya jaguḥ kṛtāni  
puṇyāni tat-kara-ruha-sparśa-pramodāḥ*

**Parīkṣit, the beauty of the *gopīs* cheeks was enhanced by the dazzle of their golden earrings and their bouncing, curly locks. They honored Puruṣottama Bhagavān with loving glances and very sweet, nectarean smiles. Extremely elated from the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus hands, they started singing about His glorious, auspicious activities.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

This verse '*gopyaḥ*' describes the temperament of the cowherd maidens. The *vraja-devīs* honored the greatest hero (*ṛṣabha*), Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with their nectar-filled smiles and sweet glances, along with singing out His glories. Their cheeks displayed unparalleled beauty with their glittering golden earrings and curly locks hanging down. The *gopīs* felt extremely delighted by the touch of His nails.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

After this, the *gopīs*, highly elated by the touch of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's nails, increased their hero's bliss in three ways: by their beauty, by their nectarean sweet smiles and by singing His glories. This is the topic discussed in this verse starting with '*gopyaḥ*.' The *gopīs*' bright golden earrings and their lustrous, curly locks enhanced their beauty; they communicated their sentiments through their glances coupled with nectarean sweet smiles; and they performed *saṅkīrtana* singing about His glorious pastimes. Śrīdhara Svāmī has used '*ṛṣabha*' to mean 'husband' or 'master.' In Verse 7 of this chapter, the best of *munis* Śukadeva Gosvāmī has revealed the *gopīs*' relationship with Kṛṣṇa by referring to them as *kṛṣṇa-vadhū*. So why should we keep this secret? Therefore, in this case, '*ṛṣabha*' means 'husband of the *gopīs*;' He is their beloved and their enjoyer (*dayita* and *ramaṇa*). If



we accept this principle, then their dealings with each other are not as a married couple. Rather, the *gopīs* enticed Śrī Kṛṣṇa with their beauty and sidelong glances and thus gave Him supreme joy. He was now lamenting, “*Aho!* It is My great fortune that these brides (*vadhū*) are honoring Me so much. Alas! I brought infamy upon Myself by abandoning such beloveds, who are My own *svarūpa*.”

The word ‘*ṛṣabha*’ points out the superexcellence of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. ‘*Kṛtāni puṇyāni*’ indicates that the *gopīs* started singing Kṛṣṇa’s auspicious and attractive names, forms and qualities. Their excellent singing ability was transmitted into the *gopīs* by the touch of His lotus hands. Although the *gopīs* themselves are completely expert in singing His glories, still they were silent due to their loving anger. So to inspire them, Kṛṣṇa touched them. They were very tired from their amorous play, but they became most happy and sang with great joy.

In the previous verse and this one, *helā anubhāva* (amorous passionate desire) is shown. When one attains the pure state of spiritual existence (*sattva*), nothing will disturb his consciousness, even in the face of due cause. The first ecstatic symptom of this pure state is *bhāva*. Just as a seed does not germinate until the appointed time, even though there may be rain, similarly in the pure state of existence, *bhāva* does not manifest until one is about to enter adolescence (*vayaḥ-sandhi*) and receives Kṛṣṇa’s *darśana*, which stimulates their *bhāva*. The next stage is *hāva*, which is symptomized by provocative gestures, like tilting the head, arching the eyebrows and casting sidelong glances. When this *hāva* indicates amorous passionate desires, it is known as *helā*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After this, all those *vraja-sundarīs*, who had brought their lover under their control, came out from their *kuñjas* and gathered together in one place. They were bedecked with jeweled ornaments, having been decorated by their most beloved Kṛṣṇa. They started singing auspicious songs to mark the finale of the *rāsa* festival. All this has been explained in this verse ‘*gopyaḥ*.’ The cheeks of the *vraja-devīs* were glowing with the dazzle of their golden earrings and curly locks. They were flashing nectarean smiles at that best of heroes, Ṛṣabha Kṛṣṇa. Overjoyed from the touch of His nails,

these *gopīs* were singing about Sri Kṛṣṇa's enchanting *līlās*, which purify the three worlds.

VERSE 22

*tābhir yutaḥ śramam apohitum aṅga-saṅga-  
ghṛṣṭa-srajaḥ sa kuca-kuṅkuma-rañjitāyāḥ  
gandharva-pālibhir anudruta āviśad vāḥ  
śrānto gajībhir ibha-rāḍ iva bhinna-setuḥ*

**Bhagavān's forest-flower garland had been crushed from the *gopīs*' tight embraces and was colored with the saffron paste from their breasts. Attracted to the aroma of the garland, hordes of bees were buzzing all around Him and, like the topmost Gandharvas, were singing His glories. They followed Him as He entered the Yamunā in the company of all the *gopīs* to alleviate His fatigue. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa broke all barriers of social customs and Vedic morality, and engaged in water games with the cowherd damsels, just as a king of elephants who, weary from conjugal play, rushes into a pond or river with his consorts and sports in the water.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The present verse starting with '*tābhir*' describes the water sports. Kṛṣṇa's garland had been crushed from the tight embraces of the *gopīs* and was colored with the saffron paste from their breasts. Attracted by the fragrance of the *kunda-mālā*, swarms of bees, who were singing like the topmost Gandharvas, started following Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered in the water, demolishing all social etiquette and Vedic morality, just as an elephant tramples a dike along a river.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

After all this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was extremely happy; this verse (*tābhiḥ*) and the next two describe His love-filled activities. Surrounded by the *gopīs*, He entered the Yamunā to mitigate His and the *gopīs*' exhaustion. One might ask, "How is it possible that Bhagavān got tired?" The answer is that

tiredness comes when Bhagavān enacts His ambrosial, love-filled, human-like pastimes, being intensely absorbed. The special intention of the phrase ‘*aṅga-saṅga*’ (close contact with the *gopīs*) is that the bodies of the *vraja-gopīs*, who are worshiped by *padmīnī* ladies, naturally emit a most exquisite fragrance. ‘*Kuca-kun̥kuma-raṅjitāyāḥ*’ – His crushed garland was smeared with the *kun̥kuma* from the *gopīs*’ breasts, emitting an extraordinary aroma. Bees were intoxicated by this pure scent and were following Kṛṣṇa. This indicates that this aromatic, crushed garland was made of white *kunda* (jasmine) flowers, now even more beautiful due to the pinkish tint coming from the *gopīs*’ *kun̥kuma*. All these ingredients are *uddīpana* for amorous play in the water. Desiring to continue their erotic adventures, He entered the Yamunā. The example is that of a king of elephants who loves to sport with his female companions in the water. In the same way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was attracted to play in the water with the *gopīs*. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has explained the rest.

Swarms of bees, singing like the best of Gandharvas, followed Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Viśva-koṣa* explains that the Gandharvas are the topmost singers; thus it is understood that the bees were singing the most appropriate songs for accompanying water sports. With whom did Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the grip of erotic desire, enter the water? With all the *gopīs*, who were wearing garlands that had been crushed by His embrace and whose bodies were smeared all over with their own *kun̥kuma*. ‘*Bhinna-setuḥ*’ (breaking the embankments) – in this way, just as an extremely tired elephant displays His insolence by breaking the muddy embankments upon entering a body of water, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, showing the same impudence, entered the Yamunā with great fanfare, to relieve His own fatigue and the tiredness of the *gopīs* as well.

In the present verse ‘*sa kuca-kun̥kuma*’ is written. In some versions *sva* (extraordinary) *kuca-kun̥kuma* is seen. The meaning of ‘*sa*’ is ‘He’ – that Śrī Kṛṣṇa whose body had been smeared with the extraordinary *kun̥kuma* from the *gopīs*’ breasts. After He entered the Yamunā, her waters also took on this reddish color. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has used ‘*sa*,’ meaning ‘that very Kṛṣṇa,’ He has not acknowledged *sva*.

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1 Ed: According to Bharata Muni, there are four classes of women, the topmost being *padmīnī*.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Upon completion of the *rāsa* festival, Kṛṣṇa and the *vraja-sundarīs* bathed and played in the water to alleviate their fatigue after dancing and enacting many amorous arts. '*Tābhir yutaḥ*' means 'with them.' With whom? The answer is with those whose garlands had been crushed from Kṛṣṇa's close embrace, and who were smeared with the saffron paste from their own breasts in the rapture of the romantic rendezvous. In some versions, *sva kuca-kuṅkuma* is seen in place of *sa kuca-kuṅkuma*. '*Sa*' indicates Kṛṣṇa. Swarms of humming bees followed Him, singing like the best of Gandharvas; *Viśva-koṣa* explains that the word *gandharva* represents those who are the best of singers.

Surrounded by the *gopīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the Yamunā to relieve His exhaustion. '*Bhinna-setuḥ*' means 'breaking the earthen embankments.' Just as a king of elephants breaks the muddy dikes as he recklessly charges into the water with his she-elephants, in the same way Śrī Kṛṣṇa transgressed social etiquette and Vedic injunctions as He entered the Yamunā with the *gopīs* for water sports.

VERSE 23

*so 'mbhasy alaṁ yuvatibhiḥ pariṣicyamānaḥ  
preṁṇekṣitaḥ prahasatībhīr itas tato 'nga  
vaimānikaiḥ kusuma-varṣibhir īdyamāno  
reme svayaṁ sva-ratir atra gajendra-līlaḥ*

**O Parīkṣit, in the Yamunā the *gopīs* splashed water on Kṛṣṇa from all sides and laughed loudly as they gazed upon Him with great love. Seeing this, the demigods in their airplanes started singing His glories and released a shower of flowers. In this way, the self-satisfied Lord engaged in water play with the *vraja-ramaṇīs* like a king of elephants.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *ātmārāma* (self-satisfied), He sported in the water with the assembly of *gopīs*.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

This verse depicts their water sports. Once they were in the water, the very expert and intoxicated *vraja-ramaṇīs*, who were ready to play, surrounded the supremely ingenious jokester Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and sprinkled Him with water on all sides. Internally also, His heart was melting from their love-filled, side-long glances. Externally, He was bathed with water, and internally with their love – thus He was fully absorbed in amorous dalliance. What were the *vraja-devīs* doing as they were splashing Kṛṣṇa? Joyfully intoxicated, they were laughing, smiling and gazing at Him again and again. Śrī Kṛṣṇa began His amorous antics with them, making them wet inside and out. Although He is *ātmārāma*, He performed this supremely powerful *līlā* in the water just like a king of elephants.

This *jala-vihāra-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa playing in the water with the *gopīs*, is very endearing. The demigods showered flowers from their airplanes and glorified Śrī Kṛṣṇa with choice hymns, broadcasting His supremely exalted position. However, they could not witness this pastime because they were unqualified. They were able to see the *mahā-rāsa*, but Yogamāyā hid the confidential scenes of the *rāsa-līlā* from them.

‘*Aṅga*’ (O king) – Śukadeva Gosvāmī addressed Mahārāja Parīkṣit joyfully. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has explained the rest. ‘*Sva-rati*’ (*sva*—one’s own, *rati*—attachment) means dedication to one’s own people, in other words, to the *gopīs*, to whom Kṛṣṇa is extremely attached. This is the reason that He is not so much satisfied when He defeats the *gopīs*, rather He prefers to be defeated by them. [Parīkṣit asked Śrī Śukadeva:] “Can you mercifully describe Kṛṣṇa’s water sports in detail?” Completely absorbed in this *līlā*, Śukadeva answered: “*sva-rati* (*sva*—uncommon, *rati*—water play). I do not find any suitable examples for this *līlā* so I am unable to speak in detail.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

‘*Premṇekṣitaḥ*’ (glancing with love) – in some versions *premnokṣitaḥ* (moistened with love) is seen. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *ātmārāma*, yet He performed all these *līlās* because of ‘*sva-rati*.’ *Sva* means wealth, and *rati* means playing. These play-filled pastimes are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s wealth.

VERSE 24

*tataś ca kṛṣṇopavane jala-sthala  
prasūna-gandhānila-juṣṭa-dik-taṭe  
cacāra bhr̥ṅga-pramadā-gaṇāvṛto  
yathā mada-cyud dviradaḥ kareṇubhiḥ*

Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa emerged from the Yamunā and started roaming in a charming flower garden on the riverbank. A gentle breeze was blowing, making the whole atmosphere vibrant with the heavy aroma of all the blossoming flowers growing on the land and in the water. Surrounded by the Vraja maidens and the bees, He seemed like an intoxicated king of elephants wandering about with his she-elephants.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

After the descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's play on the land and in the water, the present verse gives an account of His roaming in the woods. In this garden on the bank of the Yamunā, all the directions were laden with the scent of the land and water flowers. Surrounded by the *gopīs* and bees, He started wandering around like a king of elephants.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

After the pastimes of playing in the water, His roaming in the woods is described. Intent on performing more romantic escapades for further enjoyment after bathing, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* changed their outfits and put on new dresses suitable for strolling. They moved here and there, picking flowers, playing hide-and-seek in the *nikuñjas*, and performing other amusing pastimes. The bees hovered about when they were plucking flowers because, although the colorful ointments decorating their bodies had been washed away while playing in the water, they were still emitting a natural, sweet aroma. In the midst of the bees and lovely *gopīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was wandering around like an intoxicated elephant, who emits an aromatic secretion from his forehead. Because Kṛṣṇa was so fragrant, the bees were surrounding Him. The example of '*dviradaḥ*' (elephant) highlights Kṛṣṇa's excellence and His attachment to His beloveds.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After the conclusion of their water sports, they dried off and put on fresh clothes and ornaments brought by forest goddesses. Accompanied by the *gopīs*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa started roaming in this small forest on the bank of the Yamunā, replete with thousands of *kuñjas*. From all directions refreshing breezes were blowing, aromatic from the flowers in the woods and in the water. Kṛṣṇa picked many flowers and tucked them into the *gopīs'* hair. The bees, attracted by the fragrance of the flowers, hovered around the *gopīs* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The whole picture was reminiscent of an intoxicated elephant who, exuding a fragrant fluid from his forehead that attracts many bees, cavorts with his she-elephants. Kṛṣṇa also, in the same way, was enjoying Himself with his beloveds.

**VERSE 25**

*evam śaśāṅkāṁsu-virājitā niśāḥ  
sa satya-kāmo 'nuratābalā-gaṇaḥ  
siṣeva ātmany avaruddha-saurataḥ  
sarvāḥ śarat-kāvya-kathā-rasāśrayāḥ*

**O Parīkṣit, this autumn night, which included many other nights within it, was extremely beautiful. The whole area was lit up by the moonlight and all those ecstatic ingredients of the autumn season that the poets describe were fully present. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed transcendental pastimes along with His most beloved *gopīs* on the bank of the Yamunā, in her waters and in the forest, and thus fulfilled His purpose. By this *līlā* He completely subdued Cupid, who derives his existence from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as well as the concomitant actions and reactions resulting from mundane lust.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

This verse '*evam*' concludes the whole *rāsa-līlā*, the grand festival in which Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose desires are completely pure, accomplished His goal by performing His amorous play with His beloved *gopīs* throughout

the whole night. This night was replete with all the ecstatic ingredients described in poems about the autumn season; beautified by the moonrays, it sheltered *śṛṅgāra-rasa* and served Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Although Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa was surrounded by the best of jewel-like women and was performing erotic games with them, He never lost His composure and Cupid was unable to gain victory over Him.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

This verse '*evam*' sums up the *rāsa-līlā* that took place on the full-moon autumn night. It also includes the *rāsa-līlās* that occurred on other full-moon nights as well as other amorous pastimes performed at different times. '*Śarat-kavya-kathā*' refers to the subject matter inspiring the poets, namely the moonlit autumn nights, which are laden with all kinds of ingredients for stimulating *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, when Kṛṣṇa enjoys this ever on-going dance festival of love. Each season of the year has its own flavor, and this special *rāsa-līlā* night contained all these flavors in full. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa was able to perform this *rāsa-līlā* with an unlimited variety of activities. It is to be understood that here the word '*śarad*' (autumn) includes all six seasons.

The phrase '*sarvāḥ niśāḥ*' (all these nights) indicates Kṛṣṇa's other amorous pursuits as well, like secretly entering the *gopīs*' houses, calling them for *abhisāra*, and sleeping with them in the *kunjas*. These episodes occur in both moonlit and dark nights as well. There is no mention of any specific *līlā* here but it to be understood that all kinds of romantic escapades were going on.

'*Rasāśrayāḥ*' – poets from the entire length and breadth of the country, and throughout the ages, have recorded descriptions of the autumn nights in their lyrical narrations to the best of their ability. Thus their poems become the repositories of all the moods contained in *śṛṅgāra-rasa*. All these were present in this *śārādiya rāsa-līlā*, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoyed them to His full satisfaction, but it to be noted that in all these poetries, transcendental *rasa* is the primary element; there is not even a scent of mundane lust.

The question arises: how did He enjoy? The answer is '*saurata*' – Kṛṣṇa enclosed within His heart all of the *gopīs*' gestures indicating their conjugal desires, and reached an unprecedented state of joy. He was unable to ignore their invitations. No one special action on the part of the *gopīs* attracted Him;



rather, it was the sum total of all their expressions. An example of this is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.60.58: “Bhagavān Devakī-nandana is *ātmārāma* (self-satisfied), yet He enjoyed conjugal affairs with Rukmiṇī-devī, performing human-like pastimes and engaging in love-chatter (*saūrata-saṁlāpa*).”

‘*Ātmany avaruddha-saurataḥ*’ – Why did He lock up in His heart all the *gopīs*’ gestures indicating their amorous desires? The answer is this: all those fair maidens were obsessed with love for Him, and all their actions were arising out of *anurāga*. The main reason is their transcendental love for Him, and not the mundane lust of this world. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *satya-kāma*; His desires are spotless, devoid of the scent of any fault. Śrī Parāśara and Vaiśampāyana have said, “In this way, encircled by the *vraja-gopīs*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the abode of happiness, attained supreme delight in the full-moon autumn night.”

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has said: “Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoyed all those nights, the beauty of which is recorded in poems glorifying *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, but He kept His erotic feelings tucked away inside His heart, and did not let them flow out as ordinary humans are wont to do. This indicates His victory over Cupid.” In this statement, he has explained the word ‘*saūrata*’ in a way that is not generally accepted. One may question why he has done this. It should be understood that he has done so to affirm that Bhagavān is not under the dominion of Cupid.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

This verse starting with ‘*evam*’ (in this manner) summarizes this autumn night *rāsa-līlā*, which includes a great variety of activities. Due to the influence of Yogamāyā, the nights were brightly illuminated by the moon and sheltered all kinds of ingredients favorable for *śṛṅgāra-rasa*. In this way Śrī Kṛṣṇa derived great delight in performing confidential *rāsa-vilāsa* in Vṛndāvana, taking advantage of (*siṣeva*) these nights. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the subject of all these activities. That is why all these nights offered themselves to Him for His pleasure, for the performance of all His amorous affairs. It is to be understood that Kṛṣṇa accepted this service with great honor, just as devotees respect *mahā-prasad*.

His romantic dallies are not mundane, rather they are transcendental. The phrase ‘*satya-kāma*’ means that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original, ever-existent

personality replete with transcendental desires. ‘*Anuratābalā-gaṇaḥ*’ is an adjectival phrase describing Kṛṣṇa: ‘*anurata*’ – always attached to Kṛṣṇa; ‘*abalā-gaṇaḥ*’ – all those gentle-natured women. By the use of the word ‘*abalā*’ (lovely ladies) it is shown that the *vraja-gopīs* were completely swayed in His love. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was fully engrossed day and night in His romantic pleasures with them. Transcendental amorous play is symptomized by ‘*ātmany avaruddha-saurataḥ*,’ which refers to Kṛṣṇa keeping within His heart all their displays of amorous feelings, like *hāva-bhāva* (provocative gestures), *vivvoka* (neglect) and *kila-kiñcita* (a medley of contradictory emotions spurred by jubilation); their *vyabhicāri-bhāvas* such as *vamyā* (contrariness), *autsukya* (eagerness) and *harṣa* (joy); their *sāttvika-bhāvas* like *stambha* (being stunned), *sveda* (perspiring) and *vaivarna* (changing color); as well as the *anubhāvas* of *darśana* (seeing), *sparsana* (touching), *saṁlāpa* (conversing) and *ālīngana* (embracing). This is a symptom of transcendental romantic play (*saurata*). All these emotions are hinted at in the phrase *saurata-saṁlāpa* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.60.58:

*evam saurata-saṁlāpair  
bhagavān devkī-sutaḥ  
sva-rato ramayā reme  
nara-lokaṁ viḍambayan*

“Bhagavān Devakī-nandana, imitating human-like pastimes, spoke love chatter and enjoyed romantic dalliance with Rāmā.”

The word ‘*saṁlāpa*’ ordinarily denotes general conversations, but in this special case it means ‘romantic talks.’ The word ‘*saurata*’ carries its usual meaning and includes all romantic gestures and feelings.

‘*Sarvā siṣeve*’ means He made use of all the nights of the twelve months. What was the nature of those nights? “*Śarat-kāvya-kathā-rasāśrayāḥ* – these nights were surcharged with all the ingredients of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, which are depicted in the poems describing autumn nights.” *Amara-kośa* dictionary defines the word *śarat* as ‘all six seasons of the year.’ This particular *rāsa-līlā* night sheltered the sum total of those poetic narrations of the six seasons. All the pure-hearted *rasika* poets have described in their lyrical compositions Kṛṣṇa’s Vṛndāvana pastimes predominated by *śṛṅgāra-rasa* that took place in all the nights of the entire year. They include

all the ancient poets such as Vyāsadeva, Parāśara and many more, and also more recent poets such as Jayadeva, Līlāśuka, Govardhanācārya and Rūpa Gosvāmī. However, they could not cover the subject matter fully. I also am unable to completely describe all these romantic pastimes that Kṛṣṇa performed, although have tried to the best of my ability.

#### VERSES 26-27

*śrī-parīkṣid uvāca  
saṁsthāpanāya dharmasya  
praśamāyetarasya ca  
avatīrṇo hi bhagavān  
amśena jagad-īśvaraḥ  
  
sa katham dharmā-setūnām  
vaktā kartābhirakṣitā  
pratīpam ācarad brahman  
para-dārābhimarśanam*

**Mahārāja Parīkṣit questioned: “O best of sages, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the entire creation, advented along with His plenary portion Balarāma to establish religiosity and to annihilate irreligion. He Himself institutes, guards and instructs religion and moral principles. Why, then, did He violate them by touching other men’s wives?”**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Bhāvārtha Dipikā***

‘Pratīp’ (contrary) means ‘behaving in an irreligious manner.’ Such conduct on the part of Bhagavān is not as irreligious as eating the flesh of a deer or a bird killed by a poisoned arrow; rather it is an act of supreme bravery. This is the purport of ‘para-dārābhimarśanam’ (touching other men’s wives).

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

A variety of events took place during this enchanting Śrīmatī Rāsa-līla. They include, first of all, attraction of the Vraja maidens by the sound of

the flute, then their love talks with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, next amorous dalliance, after that playfully disappearing with Rādhā, followed by appearing again and sitting on the veils offered by the *gopīs*, answering their puzzling questions, then the joy of dancing, confidential escapades, water sports, and roaming in the woods on the bank of the Yamunā. Relishing the full mellows of this special festival, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the best of sages, narrated this whole pastime in great detail, and thereby happily answered all of Mahārāja Parikṣit's inquiries. By hearing this, the king experienced great delight. It is very clear that he did not see any fault in *rāsa-līlā*. If there were any blemish to be found, it would have been distasteful and the joy of hearing would have been disrupted. Śrī Parikṣit himself harbored no doubts, but there were many unfavorable *karmis* and *jñānis* in the audience who might have had some misgivings. For their welfare Mahārāja Parikṣit mercifully presented this question to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī in these two verses and the next one.

Bhagavān, the Lord of the universe, appeared in this world to establish *dharma*, that is, to re-establish the religious principles that had been lost and to ensure that they are honored. He came to remove not only irreligiosity, but also its roots that are buried deep in the heart. Otherwise, it is not possible to institute *dharma* fully. The use of the word 'hi' (assuredly) here in Verse 26 confirms Bhagavān's well-known declaration in *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.8: "I appear millennium after millennium to protect My unalloyed *bhaktas*, to annihilate the wicked and to re-establish *dharma*." The word '*bhagavān*' means that the Supreme Lord exercises special powers to do this. He appears with His plenary portion Baladeva due to the seriousness of His mission.

Why is He so insistent on doing this? Because He is the Lord and Maintainer of the Universe. If He does not protect His creation, then the world would certainly come to an end. In *Bhagavad-gītā* 10.42 He says, "With only one plenary portion I pervade the entire universe." According to this logic, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord, full in all six opulences, and complete in Himself, so it is not possible for Him to desire to play with the *gopīs*.

'Sa' (He) is related to Verse 26, referring to one who has advented to establish religiosity. How can He (*sa*) engage in romancing with the wives of other men? '*Dharma-setu*' refers to moral codes to protect society. All Vedic religious rules have emanated from Kṛṣṇa; He instructs them and also practices them. Otherwise, if one who instructs does not follow, general society will not accept his teachings. Bhagavān introduces and speaks *dharma*, and

He also follows it, so how can He act irreligiously? ‘*Vaktā kartābhirakṣitā*’ – He is not only the original speaker (*vaktā*) and creator (*kartā*) of *dharma*, but He protects (*abhirakṣitā*) it also. How? By killing all those who oppose the Vedas (*abhi*), and also by maintaining and promoting (*rakṣitā*) *dharma* in various ways.

So if Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original speaker, executor and protector of religious principles, how can He act contrary to them by embracing the wives of other men? “O best of *brāhmaṇas*, O direct personification of the Vedas! Your whole dynasty is implicated by Kṛṣṇa transgressing Vedic codes. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as *brahmaṇyadeva* (the protector of the *brāhmaṇas*), so it is illogical for Him to act immorally by embracing other men’s wives. For *brahmaṇyadeva* Śrī Kṛṣṇa to do such an act is unthinkable. If morality is transgressed in this way, you *brāhmaṇas*, who are the personification of the Vedas, are held blameworthy.”

Śrī Śukadeva might say, “O dear one, why did Bhagavān engage in romantic play with other men’s wives? How can I comprehend all this? He is the all-powerful controller. It is beyond my ability to understand His *līlā*.” Anticipating such an answer, Śrī Parikṣit said, “O *brāhmaṇa*, you are the embodiment of all the Vedas, decorated with omnipotence. Nothing is inaccessible to you.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.32.21 says: “*mayāparokṣaṁ bhajatā tirohitaṁ* – when I was hiding, I was still loving you.” With this statement Kṛṣṇa becomes the promoter of *adharma* (immoral conduct), and also the performer of *adharma* by directly associating with the *gopīs*. “Repeatedly behaving in this immoral way, You have perpetrated and maintained *adharma*, and are more at fault than others who perform *adharma*. By such behavior on Your part, You have destroyed *dharma* and have instituted *adharma* and given it credibility.” Mahārāja Parikṣit is propagating this philosophical truth: Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has advented with His plenary portion Baladeva to establish *dharma* and annihilate *adharma*. In this statement it is said that *dharma* is planted. But to initiate *varnāśrama-dharma* is something very ordinary. This word ‘*saṁsthāpana*’ (to institute) indeed indicates His real purpose, which is to present some special *dharma*, namely, *śuddha-bhakti*. Furthermore, *Padma-purāṇa* states, “Always remember Viṣṇu, never forget Viṣṇu. All directives and all prohibitions from the *śāstras* are included in this.” Śrī Kuntī-devī also affirms the main

reason for Kṛṣṇa's descent in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.20: "O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You have appeared to bestow *bhakti-yoga* upon pure hearted, swan-like sages. How can I, being a woman, understand You?" Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has said in his commentary on this verse, "He Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You attract self-satisfied personalities by Your attributes and bless them with *bhakti-yoga*. This is the reason for Your appearance."

Kṛṣṇa's power alone bestows *prema-bhakti*, even without giving any instructions. In this way, all elements contrary to *bhakti-yoga* are automatically destroyed, without the need for any special endeavor. So why will such a powerful Supreme Lord mingle with other men's wives? The fact is that He has never performed any immoral act by enjoying with other women because He is 'dharma-setu,' that is, He is the speaker, executor and maintainer of *śuddha-bhakti*, which is the core of all *dharma*.

The main reason for Kṛṣṇa's appearance is to give *prema*, the fruit of *prema-bhakti*. In service to Kṛṣṇa, all other duties are to be disregarded, so the *gopīs* abandoning service to their husbands is the extension of *prema-bhakti* because it is also a display of neglecting any other duty. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.20.9 says: "tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta – one should perform Vedic ritualistic activities till one becomes detached from mundane attachments and acquires faith in hearing *hari-kathā*." Accordingly, *sādhakas* should perform Vedic ritualistic activities until they develop *śraddhā*, but not after that. This is the validation for disregarding all other duties. This being the case, what more can be said for the *nitya-siddha gopīs*?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān and Lord of the Universe; He is the source (*amśī*) of all that be, including the *gopīs*. They are His parts (*amśa*) and are separated from Him to perform pastimes; hence the meeting of the whole with His parts is not *adharma*. He is the Supersoul of everyone, and is also eternally present within the *gopīs*, thus there is no fault in their meeting. There is no possibility of Kṛṣṇa behaving contrary to *dharma* by meeting other ladies. 'Para-dārābhimarśanam' – here the word 'para' means 'supreme, intrinsic potency,' and 'dārā' means 'His own ladies.' Embracing them is not against *dharma*, "because you (Śukadeva Gosvāmī) have addressed the *gopīs* as *kṛṣṇa-vadhū* (Kṛṣṇa's brides)."

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

After this, Maharāja Parīkṣit noticed that a suspicion regarding Kṛṣṇa’s behavior was arising in the desire-ridden hearts of the *karmīs* and *jñānīs* sitting in the audience. To alleviate their doubts, he posed this question found in this verse ‘*saṁsthāpanāya*.’ Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has incarnated along with His expansion Jagadīśvara Viṣṇu, and it is this part (*aṁśa*) who establishes *dharma* and annihilates *adharma*. Or Svayam Bhagavān has come with Baladeva. How, then, can He behave against religious principles? Even if Bhagavān has affairs with other men’s wives in His own personal pastimes, He is not subject to any reaction that would ordinarily come out of immoral activity. But sometimes, in His *līlā*, even though being Īśvara, the Supreme Controller, He accepts a curse and its result.

**VERSE 28**

*āpta-kāmo yadu-patiḥ  
kṛtavān vai jugupsitam  
kim-abhiprāya etan naḥ  
śaṁśayaṁ chindhi su-vrata*

**Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternally self-satisfied, His heart is never touched by extraneous desires. What was His intention in performing such a despicable act? O virtuous one (O Śrī Śukadeva, you who strictly adhere to religious principles)! Be merciful and dissipate this doubt.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

“O best of sages, if you say that it is not immoral for the self-satisfied Supreme Lord, then the question comes, if He is *pūrṇa-kāma* and has no desires, why did He perform such a contemptible act?” The present verse asks this question.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

“Why did the Lord of the Yadus, *āpta-kāma* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, perform such a despicable act by entertaining other men’s wives? The purpose in calling Him

Yadu-pati is to question how He can be the lord of the supremely virtuous Yadu dynasty if He Himself performs forbidden acts. We have only this misgiving. We do not question Him in any other regard, so please remove this doubt.” The word ‘our’ has been used here to indicate the suspicions arising in many members of the audience. “Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the perfectly self-satisfied Supreme Lord and the crest jewel of the righteous Yadu dynasty, but His conduct of enjoying with others’ wives is against *śāstra*. He has instructed moral principles but He Himself is not following. Consequently, the hearts of the *karmīs* and *jñānīs* are shaking with doubts. *He suvrata*, O you who are firmly established in celibacy and attached to virtuous behavior! Please destroy our doubt. Otherwise, the righteous behavior of people like you will become extinct.”

Suggesting another meaning, Śrī Parikṣit Mahārāja expressed his opinion indirectly: “*yadu-pati* – Kṛṣṇa Himself is the Lord of the Yadus, and everyone in the Yadu dynasty is a top class devotee. He is very merciful to His devotees. Did He perform this contemptible act being impelled by His propensity to shower mercy?” It is an indisputable fact that He always acts favorably towards them. He is ‘*āpta-kāma*’ – by performing *rāsa-līla* He fulfilled His desire (*kāma*) to distribute (*āpta*) *prema-bhakti* for Himself. This *rāsa-līla* has propagated the supermost goal of *prema-bhakti*, so it cannot be said that He acted contemptibly. Rather, He has given satisfaction to saintly persons.

“O you who are fully fixed in *bhakti*! Without hesitation, remove all our doubts. This *rāsa-kṛīḍa* of Bhagavān is full of the nectar of *prema-bhakti*, and I personally have no doubt regarding this. And in this assembly there are many great personalities who are infused with the nectar of *bhakti* and who are well versed in *śāstra*; they also harbor no suspicions. Yet, some unfavorably inclined persons are present as well, and they are ignorant regarding the fundamental truths of *bhakti*. This question is for their welfare. I fold my hands and request you to firmly cut down their doubts.”

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

In the present verse ‘*āpta-kāma*,’ Parikṣit Mahārāja is asking, “If it is not against religious principles for the Supreme Lord, what was His intention in performing this abominable act? He is *āpta-kāma* and *pūrṇa-kāma*, so it is not correct to say that He did it to fulfill His lusty desires. He performed this



despicable act even though He is devoid of the sense of enjoyment. This has cast a shadow on His character. If it is said that this was necessary for the present *avatāra*, then how can He be the Lord of the Yadu dynasty, which is supremely religious? In this regard, I and many others are skeptical.” ‘Na’ has been used to denote ‘us.’ “He is *āpta-kāma* and *ātmārāma*, yet He took great delight in dallying with the Vraja *gopīs*, who are the embodiment of love and bliss. This is a very deep and confidential concept. *He su-vrata*, you strictly adhere to proper behavior, yet you yourself are deeply absorbed in this *līlā*. This increases my doubt. Mercifully eradicate this suspicion.”

#### VERSE 29

*śrī-śuka uvāca*  
*dharma-vyatikramo dṛṣṭa*  
*īśvarāṇām ca sāhasam*  
*tejñyasām na doṣāya*  
*vahneḥ sarva-bhujo yathā*

**Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:** O king, sometimes the Supreme Lord and some very powerful, godly personalities courageously carry out some scandalous action, but the purity of their character prevails, just as fire remains uncontaminated while devouring everything it touches.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

In the present verse starting with ‘*dharma-vyatikramo*,’ Śukadeva Gosvāmī uses *kaimutika-nyāya* (the logic of ‘how much more, how much less’) to refute the idea that the Supreme Lord is guilty of some reprehensible act. He does this by giving the example of other great personalities – such as Prajāpati, Indra, Candra and Viśvāmitra – who apparently transgressed morality by committing questionable acts, but remained blameless since they are very powerful.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA’S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, out of natural compassion and affection for his disciple, destroys Śrī Parīkṣit’s doubts. In seven verses, starting with the

present one, he also reconciles the meaningful conclusions that the king presented indirectly. Īśvara, or the Supreme Lord, is not under the control of *karma*. On occasion He is seen to transgress morality, as well as some other great personalities, like Brahmā, who brazenly ran after his daughter with lusty intentions, and Bṛhaspati, who shamelessly enjoyed with the wife of his brother Utathya. Such actions are not seen as blameworthy, just as no fault touches fire, which can devour everything yet remains uncontaminated.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Īśvara, the Supreme Lord, does not have to undergo any reactions to His *karma*, so He does not incur any blame when He dares to meet intimately with other men's wives. There is no possibility of any fault in His deeds. With this intention Śrī Śukadeva speaks these seven verses starting with 'dharma-vyatikramo.' In the present verse he answers the first question. Rudra and other gods may be seen to commit immoral acts but they are not condemned due to the illustrious position they occupy. For example, fire can consume everything but remains pure, similarly the actions of these powerful persons are not censurable.

**VERSE 30**

*naitat samācarej jātu  
manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ  
vinaśyaty ācaran mauḍhyād  
yathārudro 'bdhi-jam viṣam*

**Those who are incompetent should not even think of imitating the activities of powerful controllers. If some foolish person does so, he brings destruction upon himself. Rudra drank the ocean of *hālahala* poison but if anyone else tries to do this, he will be burnt to ashes.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21 declares, "Whatever actions done by exalted personalities, the ordinary people follow." According to this logic, if great persons behave immorally, general people may follow suit. The present verse is spoken

with this apprehension. Conditioned souls should not even mentally imitate the behavior of great personalities. If someone other than Rudra drinks *kālakūṭa* poison arising from the ocean, he brings destruction upon himself.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

If exalted personalities engage in some contemptible actions, then what is surprising if others also do this? With this apprehension, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that ordinary, conditioned souls should not even think of doing such an act, which transgresses *dharma*. ‘*Samācarana*’ = *samyak* (fully) + *ācarana* (behavior). *Samyak* has been used here in a negative sense, as a warning not to follow even an iota of such behavior. ‘*Manasāpi*’ – not even mentally, what to speak of putting into action; ‘*hi*’ – certainly; ‘*vināśyati*’ – if one acts in such a way, one incurs sin, suffers misery, and brings about his own destruction, in this lifetime and in future lives. ‘*Mauḍhyād*’ (controlled by foolishness) – if someone, unaware of the majestic powers of great personalities and of his own incompetence, copies them out of foolishness, he will meet his end. That is why it is absurd for an ordinary person to imitate Śiva drinking poison. An intelligent person will not be inclined to do this. The *kālakūṭa* poison arising from the ocean is lethal, and one who drinks it will be instantly finished. That is why unintelligent people are warned not to imitate forbidden acts performed by persons of the status of Brahmā and Śiva. Powerful rulers never meet their end by acting in such a way; rather, their acts display their grandeur. After Śiva drank the *kālakūṭa* poison, His throat took on a beautiful blue color, and he became more attractive.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21 states: “*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭha* – Whatever a great man does, the general people emulate. Whatever standards he establishes, all the world follows.” According to this logic, others will also be inspired to do abominable acts in the wake of the precedents that Brahmā and others have set by their immoral conduct. This verse has been spoken to address this point. There is no scope for the fallen, conditioned souls to transgress *dharma* even mentally. If, out of stupidity, someone copies Śiva and drinks *kālakūṭa* poison, he will be instantly destroyed, but Rudra is glorified for doing so and He became more beautiful when his throat turned blue.

VERSE 31

*īśvarāṇām vacaḥ satyaṁ  
tathaivācaritaṁ kvacit  
teṣāṁ yat sva-vaco-yuktaṁ  
buddhimāns tat samācaret*

**The statements of superior, competent authorities like Śiva should be accepted as valid and one should act in accordance with their words. Occasionally they also behave freely, defying accepted moral conduct, so an intelligent person should follow their favorable instructions that coincide with their exemplary conduct.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

There are two statements: (1) "Incompetent persons should not commit immoral acts even mentally, what to speak of actually doing them;" (2) "Whatever a great man does, the general people emulate" (*Bhagavad-gītā* 3.21). With these two statements, how can one ascertain proper behavior? The present verse 'īśvarāṇām' has been spoken to answer this question. The words of empowered personalities always present the truth, so their instructions are to be followed. An intelligent person will also accept their behavior as exemplary when it agrees with the instructions they have given.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

When the behavior of superior authorities is in accordance with their instructions, intelligent persons will thoughtfully follow their advice. 'Sva' (own) – their words convey the truth, and carry supreme power. Their instructions are taken from *śāstra* and are meant for the welfare of the populace. Their words are potent, and intelligent persons will also accept the example of their behavior where it is consistent with their speech. However, the foolish will not understand this.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

As stated before: "Whatever a great man does, the general people emulate." According to this, how can one ascertain virtuous behavior? To

reconcile this, the present verse ‘*īśvarāṇām*’ has been spoken. The words of authorized controllers are always true and beneficial for the people at large, but their behavior is sometimes (*kvacit*) exemplary and sometimes not. When Bhagavān appears as the son of Mahārāja Daśaratha, He establishes proper social decorum by His own virtuous behavior, and His instructions are all-auspicious.

Intelligent persons (*buddhimān*) will follow those words that are in accordance with *śāstra* and are one with the Lord’s conduct. For example, Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa ordered Arjuna in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.35: “Kill this terrorist Aśvatthāmā, the killer of our most dear ones.” But Arjuna did not follow this instruction.<sup>2</sup> So the instructions that are supported by *bhakti-śāstra* are to be honored.

#### VERSE 32

*kuśalācaritenaiṣām  
iha svārtho na vidyate  
viparyayaṇa vānartho  
nirahaṅkāriṇām prabho*

***He Prabhu, such powerful personalities are free of falso ego and have no selfish motives in performing any pious act. And when they perform some apparently impious action, they do not suffer any negative reaction because they have transcended concepts like gain and loss, piety and impiety.***

.....  
2 Ed: Aśvatthāmā had killed Draupadi’s children in their sleep at night. Kṛṣṇa ordered him killed, but elsewhere *śāstra* instructs that a *brāhmaṇa*, even if sinful, is never to be killed. Arresting Aśvatthāmā, Arjuna bound him up with ropes like an animal and brought him before Draupadi, who insisted he be released so that his mother should not suffer the loss of her child. Arjuna untied Aśvatthāmā but punished him by slashing off his hair and severing the jewel from the criminal’s head with his sword. Thus humiliated, he was then driven out of the camp. In this way, losing his hair, his wealth and residence, he was, in effect, killed and not killed. Being highly intelligent, Arjuna was able to honor scriptural injunctions and Kṛṣṇa’s order as well.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

One might question why these great controllers perform unethical acts. The present verse gives the answer. The essence is that virtuous, intelligent persons act to destroy *prārabdha karma*; they have nothing else to do.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

'Ca' – beyond this world; in the present verse, 'vā' indicates a group. Competent persons are not subject to sinful reactions, even having performed impious acts. Why? The reason is that those who are free of false ego do not have to undergo reactions from piety and impiety. As they are devoid of the mood of 'I' and 'mine,' their actions are not subject to the laws of *karma*, and they do not fall down to the hellish planets. What else can be said about them? *He Prabhu* – this address means that 'you can understand everything.' Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is addressing Śrī Parikṣit as *īśvara*, meaning that 'you are also free from the rules of action and reaction.'

**VERSE 33**

*kim utākhila-sattvānām  
tīryaṇ-martya-divaukasām  
īśituś ceśitavyānām  
kuśalākuśālānvayaḥ*

**If this is the situation of the competent demigods and great men at the level of *īśvara*, then how can the Supreme Controller and Creator of all living beings – including animals, humans and demigods – be governed by the laws of worldly piety and impiety meant for His subjects?**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

The present verse '*kim uta*' explains that when pious and impious acts do not affect the great personalities, then certainly Śrī Bhagavān, who is their Lord, cannot be under the rules of piety and impiety. What other explanation can there be?

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOŚVĀMĪPĀDA'S

**Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī**

As empowered personalities are free from false ego, their behavior is never a source of disturbance. If this is the case, then how can there be any question of wrongdoing by the Supreme Lord, who advents for the welfare of the living beings? The present verse '*kim uta*' employs *kaimutika-nyāya* to emphasize this point. If great personalities have no concern for their benefit or loss, then what to speak of the independent Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the controller of all the created beings (*sattvānām*) and who dispenses the results of their *karma*. All the created beings include animals, humans and demigods (*tiryak-martya-divaukasām*), who are subject to the modes of ignorance, passion and goodness. Bhagavān is far beyond all laws governing His creation. All those great personalities are directly under His control. When they are not subject to advantage and disadvantage, auspiciousness and inauspiciousness, piety and impiety, then how can their controller, Bhagavān, be implicated in such acts? This can never be, because He is the supreme controller of everyone; being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He is not controlled by anyone or anything.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ TĪHĀKURA'S

**Sārārtha Darśinī**

The previous verse affirms that Brahmā and other powerful personalities are not held guilty for transgressing *dharma*. Now the present verse uses *kaimutika-nyāya* to clarify that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not implicated in any kind of wrongdoing by embracing the wives of others.

**VERSE 34**

*yat-pāda-paṅkaja-parāga-niṣeva-triptā*  
*yoga-prabhāva-vidhutākhila-karma-bandhāḥ*  
*svairam caranti munayo 'pi na nahyamānās*  
*tasyecchayātta-vapuṣaḥ kuta eva bandhaḥ*

When devotees serve the dust of the Lord's lotus feet, they become completely satiated. *Yogīs*, by the power of their meditation on Him, cut the bonds of their *karma* and roam around freely, without getting entangled. The same Supreme Person manifests His transcendental form out of His own free will, so how can He be under any kind of bondage?

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

This verse further clarifies the same subject. Devotees are contented by serving the pollen of the Lord's lotus feet. They become free from the bondage of *karma* and are able to attain a suitable body, according to their desire, to serve Bhagavān. *Jñānīs* are also able to sever their *karmic* reactions just by meditating on His lotus feet. How can the same Bhagavān be subject to any kind of bondage?

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

In the present verse '*yat*,' the same subject is clarified by *kaimutika-nyāya*. '*Parāga*' – the effulgent particles from His lotus feet; '*niṣeva*' – exclusive service by which the devotees become satiated (*tr̥pta*); this means that, being full of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, they see everything else as insignificant, and nothing entangles them. Sages achieve liberation from *karmic* reactions by the power of practicing *bhakti-yoga*, and even if they perform some prohibited activity, they remain unaffected. Therefore, if *bhakti-yoga* (devotion to Bhagavān) is so powerful, how can the same Supreme Controller Bhagavān be under any kind of bondage? That He enjoys full freedom is indicated by '*icchayā*' (by His own sweet will). This is explained by *kaimutika-nyāya* – by His own sweet will, Bhagavān manifests His divine form to engage in pastimes; He does not come as a result of *karmic* reaction like the *jīva*. The Lord advents in this material world by accepting the bondage of the *bhakti* of His devotee. How can such Bhagavān be subject to any other bondage? Here is an example of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's independent behavior – Bhagavān [even though He is known as Brahmanya-deva, 'the Lord who favors the *brāhmaṇas*'] overrides His own words by defeating the *brāhmaṇa* Durvasa to protect His devotee, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S

***Sārārtha Darśinī***

When Bhagavān's devotees are not bound by *dharma* and *adharma*, then how can their worshipful deity Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa be subject to any bondage? This is the subject matter of this verse starting with '*yat*.' The devotees are freed from the clutches of *karmic* reaction just by the power of *bhakti-yoga* and exclusive service to the Lord's lotus feet. These pure devotees can even



cut down the results of the *karma* of those who come for their audience. So certainly their worshipful Lord can never be touched by *karma*. And when that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa adverts here, He comes in His transcendental form out of His own free will, and His meeting with the wives of other men should be understood as completely spiritual as they are expansions of His own *svarūpa*.

### VERSE 35

*gopīnām tat-patīnām ca  
sarveṣāṃ eva dehinām  
yo 'ntaś carati so 'dhyakṣaḥ  
krīḍaneneha deha-bhāk*

**Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul and Master dwelling in the hearts of the *gopīs*, their husbands, and, indeed, of all living beings. The same Śrī Bhagavān manifests His divine form to engage in playful pastimes.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

The previous verse establishes the paramour relationship with the *gopīs*, and reconciles any fault arising out of it. The present verse declares Kṛṣṇa as omnipresent, so the paramour mood becomes completely meaningless because nothing is separate from Him. This verse '*gopīnām*' has been spoken to affirm this point. One who is seated as Supersoul in the *gopīs*, their husbands and in all living beings, and who is their Master, meaning He is the witness of everyone's thoughts and activities – that very same Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes in His transcendental form to enjoy pastimes. Therefore, unlike us, He is beyond all faults.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### *Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

In the previous verse the paramour relationship of the *gopīs* has been accepted, and the vice ordinarily connected with it has been dismissed by logic. Nevertheless, the *gopīs* are still seen as adulteresses, and they are condemned for this. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has not been able to tolerate this accusation, and dismisses the paramour relationship, which is the root of the blemish attributed to the *gopīs* with the present verse '*gopīnām*.' The *gopīs* are involved in an

extra-marital affair with Kṛṣṇa but He is not held at fault; still, as the cowherd maidens are considered unchaste wives and He is associating with them, He is to be accepted as a libertine. If this accusation is not nullified, then the *gopīs* will always be condemned. This is intolerable for Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

In the present verse he dismisses the paramour relationship of the *gopīs*. The ultimate transcendental personality Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is also the Supersoul of the *gopīs*, their family members and the entirety of embodied beings, comes to this realm to perform pastimes. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has explained the word '*adhyakṣa*' as 'the witness of thoughts and activities.' This means that Śrī Kṛṣṇa resides as the Supersoul in all living beings, so there is nothing which is not His own. Therefore, the word *paradāra* (adultery) becomes meaningless, and the idea that the *gopīs* are paramours is dismissed.

One might raise the objection that Paramātmā has no form, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa has a very special form, so what is the difference between Him and us? In answer to this, he says '*sa eva*,' the very same Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been confirmed as Bhagavān in the previous verse, so He is unmistakably distinct from us. The word '*sarveṣāṇaiva*' has been formed with '*ca*' (and—from the 1<sup>st</sup> line of the verse), '*evam*' (of all—from the 2<sup>nd</sup> line) and '*saḥ*' (He—from the 3<sup>rd</sup> line) – 'He is not like all of us.' In some versions, *ca* is not seen, but *eva* is found everywhere. Śrī Bhagavān, out of His own sweet will, manifests His transcendental form, not out of the reaction to any *karma* like ordinary *jīvas*, and His form is suitable for particular pastimes. The Supersoul has been called formless; the reason is that since He is sitting inside as the Supersoul, He has no form. But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.2.8 presents evidence that He is not formless: "*kecit sva-dehāntar-hṛdayāvakāṣe prādeśa-mātraṁ puruṣaṁ vasantam* – some persons meditate on a personality the size of a thumb residing within the heart, holding a conch, disc, club and lotus flower in His four hands." According to this evidence, one might object: if a thumb-sized Supersoul resides in the hearts of the *jīvas*, how can He perform birth and other pastimes? The answer is that one who is the master of all living beings takes on a form out of His own will, not due to the bindings of *karma*. Furthermore, we living beings have no contact with someone else's *ātmā*, but Bhagavān is the Soul of all beings, present within everyone.

In some versions *eśa kṛīḍana deha-bhāk* is seen, and here '*kṛīḍaneneha deha-bhāk*' is found. He resides in the hearts of the Vraja maidens, their family members and in all embodied beings, and provides all of them

the qualification to participate in His particular pastimes. He is the superintendent of all the different qualifications. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.44.14 the ladies of Mathurā praise the love of the Vraja *gopīs*: “*gopyas tapaḥ kim acarān* – Ah! What austerities these cowherd maidens have performed that they continuously drink the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beauty!” In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.22.4 the *gopīs* say: “*kātyāyāni mahā-māye* – O Mahāmāyā Kātyāyāni! Please make the son of Nanda Mahārāja our husband.” And in 10.47.21 they ask: “*api bata madhu-puryām* – O gentle one, is Kṛṣṇa still in Mathurā? Does He ever think about His father’s home and His cowherd friends, does He ever talk about us, His maidservants?”

In all these verses it is seen that the *gopīs* have very special, intimate feelings for Kṛṣṇa. They see Him as their lord and master in the form of a husband, not in any other way. Then one might object: why does He not play in the form of Supersoul, only in the form of Kṛṣṇa? The reply is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has an eternal form that is suitable for playing and that everyone can see, but Supersoul does not. If we think about the meaning of *kṛḍaneneha deha-bhāk*, we will understand ‘assuming a form for sporting in this world.’

One might object that if Kṛṣṇa is the indwelling Supersoul, then His being the possessor of everything is taken too far. Just because He is *antaryāmī*, it does not mean that some other men’s wives can become His own. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.60.45 gives more evidence to reconcile this. In *dvārakā-līlā*, Rukmiṇī replies to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s joking words: “Prabhu, a foolish woman who has not worshiped Your transcendental lotus feet and who has never relished even one drop of the sweet honey issuing forth from them, accepts as her husband a mortal man, whose body is a living corpse, consisting inside of muscles, bones, blood, parasites, stool, mucus, bile and air, and externally covered by skin, hair, whiskers, beard, nails and bodily hairs. If it had no outside cover, its foul smell would attract millions and millions of flies and other insects.” According to this statement, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s extremely effulgent form consists of *viśuddha-sattva*, eternal spiritual existence. The *vraja-gopīs*’ forms are the same. Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa can never be attracted to someone’s body made of stool, urine, etc. because these substances are repulsive.

As said in the next verse: “*bhajate tādṛśiḥ kṛḍaḥ yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet* – people will become eager to dedicate themselves to Me after hearing narrations of these supremely auspicious pastimes.” But the paramour

relationship and the splendor of *unnatojjvala-rasa* (the brilliantly shining amorous mellow) cannot be fully understood when the devotee still has not achieved perfection. In such a state, he cannot taste the real pleasure of this *līlā*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.9, ‘*antar-gr̥ha-gatāḥ*,’ says that those Vraja maidens who were not able to attain perfection through *sādhana* and were confined in their houses, gave up their bodies.<sup>3</sup> And what is the explanation for Kṛṣṇa’s inclination to Kujā in Mathurā? *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.42.8 says that “the same Kujā was transformed into a very beautiful, high-class lady by Mukunda’s touch.” In this way, Kujā became eligible to meet with Śrī Kṛṣṇa as His touch acts like a touchstone, changing iron into gold. Another example is Dhruva Mahārāja, who, receiving the touch of Śrī Nārāyaṇa’s conch, reached Vaikuṇṭha in the same body. That means these devotees, after being granted perfection, received the highest type of pleasure.

But in the case of the *gopīs*, this is not applicable. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.10, ‘*tābhir vidhūta*,’ states that the fair ladies of Vraja embellished Kṛṣṇa; it does not say that He embellished the *gopīs*. Also in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.60, “*nāyaṁ śriyo ’nga* – In the *rāsa* festival, Śrī Kṛṣṇa embraced the *vraja-sundarīs* around their necks with His vine-like arms. Such a boon was never conferred to Lakṣmī, the demigoddesses who are effulgent and fragrant as lotuses, or any beautiful women of this world.” This verse testifies to the superexcellence of the *vraja-gopīs* over Lakṣmī-devī and the heavenly damsels. And the present Verse 35 should be seen as presenting the same conclusion.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa resides as the Supersoul in the *gopīs* and their so-called husbands, the cowherd men, the cows, and all embodied beings. How? *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.90.48 states: “*jayati jana-nivāso* – All glories to He who resides in the hearts of all living beings as the Supersoul and who also lives with the cowherd community. He takes birth from the womb of Devakī [Yaśodā], but this is just a theory as He is indeed unborn [being ever-existing]. He is served by the Yadavas, who are His associates. Just by His desire He can annihilate evil, but He uses His strong arms, or devotees like the Pāṇḍavas, to destroy irreligious demons. He takes away the miseries of all the moving and non-moving beings of this world [and also the agony of the Vrajavāsīs in separation from Him]. He increases the feelings of love

3 For detailed explanation, see commentary of Verses 9–10 in Chapter 29.

in the *vraja-gopīs* and His queens in Dvārakā by displaying His charming, blissfully smiling face. May that Śrī Kṛṣṇa be victorious.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.32 declares: “How astonishing it is that the abode of supreme bliss, who is the complete Absolute Truth, is playing as the eternal friend of the greatly fortunate Nanda Mahārāja and his fellow residents of Vraja.” The *śrutis* (*Gopāla-tāpanī*) also say that Śrī Bhagavān, in the form of a cowherd boy, eternally enjoys Himself with the cows, *gopas* and *gopīs*, but out of these, He amuses Himself with the Vraja maidens in a particular fashion. He is the object for the eyes (*adhyakṣa*) of everyone in the material realm and performs His pastimes here for their pleasure. What is the reason for these two kinds of pastimes? In answer he says that Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes in His natural cowherd boy form in the material world and performs His pastimes, which everyone can see. His *gopāla* form is perpetual, and so is His sporting with the Vraja maidens. So the *gopīs* are Kṛṣṇa’s eternal beloveds, and their bodies are transcendental like His. All this has been proved beyond a doubt here.

In the manifest pastimes (*bhauma-prakaṭa-līlā*) the *parakiya* relationship between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* may be met with some skepticism. Yet, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is blissfully absorbed in this narration and refers to the Vraja maidens as *adhokṣaja-priyā*, *bhagavat-priyā*, *kṛṣṇa-vadhva*. Thus it is to be understood that Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has very clearly asserted that the Vraja maidens are identical in *tattva* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In *Gopāla-tāpanī* Durvāsā Ṛṣi also tells the *vraja-sundarīs*: “Śrī Nanda-nandana is your husband.” In *prakaṭa-līlā*, which gives rise to some suspicion, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is confirmed as their husband. By *kaimutika-nyāya* the same conclusion is ascertained in *aprakaṭa-līlā*, which is beyond any doubt.

The 18-syllable *gopāla-mantra* also establishes this principle. Śrī Brahmā has explained this mantra in *Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.37 in the same way:

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis  
tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ  
goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūto  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

“Śrī Govinda, who is all-pervading and who exists within the hearts of all, resides in His Goloka-dhāma along with Śrī Rādhā, who is the embodiment of His pleasure potency and the counterpart of His

own spiritual form. She is the epitome of transcendental *rasa*, and is expert in sixty-four arts. They are accompanied by the *sakhīs*, who are expansions of Śrī Rādhā's own transcendental body. I worship that original personality, Śrī Govinda."

Here, the word *kalā* means 'expansions of Kṛṣṇa's body' (*nija-rūpatayā*), or 'His own beloveds' (*sva-kāntā*). The phrase *nija-rūpatā* expels all the doubts of paramourship in *prakaṣa-līlā*. *Brahma-saṁhitā* firmly declares the *gopīs* as Lakṣmīs, goddesses of fortune, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Person. This is presented in the introduction in Verse 5.29, "*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu* – I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose transcendental realm is adorned with millions of desire-fulfilling trees, pavilions bedecked with precious gems, and uncountable wish-fulfilling cows. There He is always served with great affection by hundreds of thousands of *lakṣmīs*, or *gopīs*." It is again affirmed in the conclusion in Verse 5.56, "*śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ* – in Goloka the *gopīs* (the *vraja-lakṣmīs*) are the beloveds, and the lover is the Supreme Person Śrī Govinda." Not only in *Brahma-saṁhitā* but elsewhere as well, such as the 18-syllable *gopāla-mantra*, the predominant word is *gopī*. In the *Gautamīya-tantra*, *gopī-jana-vallabha* also ascertains the same principle.

Catering to the inclinations of external practitioners in his explanation of the eighteen-syllable *mantra*, the venerable seer of said *mantra*, Devaṛṣi Śrī Nārada has focused upon the two aspects of Bhagavān's majesties, namely *māyā-śakti* and *svarūpa-śakti*, and has abandoned the conventional understanding that gives predominance to the chanting of Śrī Bhagavān's name. For the sake of those dearly beloved devotees who have been inducted into the inner realm of spiritual development and are meditating upon this *mantra*, he determines the word *govinda* to mean '*śrī-gopāla-mūrti*,' or the beautiful and divine form of Gopāla, which designates Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the *pati*, or husband of the *gopīs*. In this way, in the manifest pastimes, the paramour mood has been overruled.

According to this *siddhānta*, this *mantra* – *gopī-jana-vallabha* – is explained thus: the word *gopī* refers to *prakṛti*, or wife; *jana* means *mahāttattva*, or the material elements; *vallabha* is the master, or the shelter, of these two. This *vallabha*, who is known as Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the extremely effulgent, condensed form of bliss that pervades everywhere and is

the shelter of everyone. He is the source of bliss for the entire universe and is widely celebrated as the husband of the *gopīs* in many, many lifetimes. He is the same Nanda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa. ‘In many lifetimes’ means that in many, many *kalpas*, He advents in Bhauma Vṛndāvana, and the *vraja-gopīs* come with Him, so they are His eternal associates. In *Bhagavad-gītā* 4.5, Kṛṣṇa says, “O Arjuna, I have appeared many times before also.” From time immemorial He advents in every age with the *gopīs* – this has been declared in the *śrutis*, *purāṇas* and *tantras*. This means that for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, there is no question of the *gopīs* being someone else’s wives. How, then, can their association be considered improper? In this way, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has eliminated the possibility of the *gopīs* being adulteresses.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The previous verse explained that even if Śrī Kṛṣṇa embraces someone else’s wife, He is not at fault. Bhagavān pervades every living being, and thus nothing is *para*, or separate from Him. This is the point of this verse ‘*gopīnām*.’ The same Supersoul Śrī Kṛṣṇa is present inside the *gopīs*, their husbands, and the entirety of embodied living beings. So if He is dwelling inside, how can there be any wrongdoing in embracing externally? He is the witness overseeing the intelligence of the *gopīs* internally, so what is the fault if He sees their external bodies? The objection may be raised that, being the Supersoul, He is formless, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taken a form, so why should He not be blamed like an ordinary person? The answer is ‘*kṛīḍaneneha deha-bhāk*’ – He has assumed the body of a cowherd boy for performing *līlā* in Vraja-maṇḍala, and He serves the *gopīs* by wiping off the perspiration arising out of their strenuous amorous play.

VERSE 36

*anugrahāya bhaktānām  
mānuṣaṁ deham āśritaḥ  
bhajate tādrśīḥ kṛīḍā  
yāḥ śrutvā tat-paro bhavet*

In order to bestow mercy upon the devotees as well as the conditioned souls, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests His

**humanlike form and performs such extraordinary pastimes (*rāsa-līlā*) that anyone who hears about them becomes exclusively devoted to Him.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

One might raise the question: “Why will one who is *āptakāma* (self-satisfied) have inclination for immoral acts? This verse ‘*anugrahāya*’ explains that He does so to show mercy to His devotees. The essence is that Śrī Bhagavān performs *rāsa-līlā* and other such pastimes to transform the hearts of those who, devoid of interest in Kṛṣṇa, are absorbed in mundane romance; thus He turns them into devotees.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

The question arises: “How can *āptakāma* Bhagavān be disposed to amorous play? Even if He is attracted to such play, then what is His intention in performing activities that are censured by the world according to external vision? The answer is to show mercy to His devotees (*anugrahāya*). Bhagavān Himself says in *Padma-purāṇa*, “I perform various pastimes for the pleasure of My devotees.” According to this statement, Bhagavān is the shelter of all existence in the form of *brahma* (the Supreme Spirit), yet He Himself takes shelter of a human-like form, which is *para-brahma-svarūpa*, the form of the Absolute Truth. In his commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1.1, Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda says: “*daśame daśamaṁ* – The Tenth Canto reveals the tenth object, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person who shelters all the universes.” *Bhagavad-gītā* 14.27 affirms: “*brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham* – I alone am the basis of that *nirviśeṣa-brahma*.” This present verse (36) uses the word ‘*āsritaḥ*,’ but in some other versions *āsthitaḥ* is seen. In such a case, the meaning will be ‘accepting a human-like form.’ In fact, this human-like figure is the Lord’s eternal form.

It cannot be said that Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taken a human-like form out of His own sweet will for this pastime only because the cowherd community saw *parabrahma* Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a human-like form, beyond this material world [in the outer circle of Goloka] where He was being worshiped with great opulence. In the same way, to bestow mercy to His devotees, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends in His eternal human-like form to engage



in *līlās*. He is *āptakāma* but He showers His mercy on His devotees appropriately. This is the nature of *viśuddha-sattva*. Bhagavān is always anxious to award the appropriate result to His devotees for their *bhajana*. Examples are mercy to King Rahūgana in the pastimes of Jaḍa Bharat, and also ‘to you, O Parīkṣit, His special mercy.’ Here the ‘devotees’ means the *vraja-devīs*, residents of Vraja and all other Vaiṣṇavas for all ages, past, present and future. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās* include the *pūrva-rāga* of the Vraja maidens and Kṛṣṇa’s birth and childhood pastimes directly enjoyed by the Vrajavāsīs; all the devotees – past, present and future – get mercy by the seeing and hearing about these *līlās*. Therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa expands His pastimes, which may look very ordinary, but after hearing them, devotees and others also become exclusively dedicated to Him. Consequently, those who are hearing this supremely nectarean *rāsa-līlā* will perform their *bhajana* with greater depth.

The upcoming Verse 39, ‘*vikriḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca*,’ explains this topic in great detail. Those *jīvas* in a human body will hear narrations of the pastimes because Bhagavān advents in this mortal world, and here only worship of Him is predominant. So humans get to hear these narrations easily. In the original verse, ‘*bhaktānām*’ (devotees) is seen, but in some versions *bhūtānām* (all created beings) is used; the devotees are the reason for Bhagavān’s descent, but all created beings derive benefit, including materialists, those seeking liberation, liberated persons, and all other entities, by the manifestation of His human-like pastimes. His supremely merciful nature is the sole cause for His coming. Other *jīvas* are benefited as well, but only by the association of devotees. Śrīdhara Svāmīpāda has explained the rest. By hearing Bhagavān’s *līlā-kathā*, even those who are disinclined to Kṛṣṇa give up their disinterest and become devotees.

Speaking about Bhagavān’s very special mercy, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī becomes absorbed in the ultimate limit of nectarean *prema* and focuses on the *gopīs*. Another explanation for the previous Verse 35 explains that Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s universal form is one of His aspects. The objection is that, if this is so, why does He want to display this *līlā* before worldly people? Why does He not do it in confidence, only in His *aprakāṣa-līlā* (His eternal realm)? The answer is that He does this for His devotees (*bhaktānām*) in this world, where He manifests His human-like form. Bhagavān’s universal form comprises all fourteen planetary systems (*bhūr-bhuvaḥ svaḥ*), and this

mortal world is a portion of His universal form. When Bhagavān adverts here, He accepts that portion of the mortal world present in His universal form to bestow His mercy upon His devotees. It is said that Bhagavān's different limbs form the fourteen planetary systems. "The Earth is His body" is the evidence given in the *śrutis*. New practitioners are instructed to worship this gigantic form to stabilize their minds. It is inferred that the Earth and the other planets are formed by His limbs, but this is His marginal characteristic. Whatever it is, the use of the word 'body' in the *śrutis* indicates a human form.

"*Yāh śrutvā tat-paro bhavet* – hearing this, devotees and others become dedicated to Him." The word *tatpara* is explained first – the devotees and even non-devotees will be inclined to devotion by hearing this *līlā*. *Anugrahāya bhūtānām* is also seen in some places, which means 'giving mercy to all living beings.' Someone might say that devotees and non-devotees who hear about *rāsa-līlā* without having proper qualification will consequently encounter impairment in their *bhajana*, but such explanation cannot be accepted. According to the context, the correct understanding is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa became eager to perform *rāsa-līlā*. This *līlā* is so attractive to the heart that when Kṛṣṇa hears it from the lips of the devotees, He Himself becomes captivated.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURA'S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The present verse '*anugraha*' answers Parīkṣit Mahārāja's second question: "Why did Śrī Kṛṣṇa perform this prohibited act?" He did so to show His mercy to the devotees. After hearing narrations of this *līlā*, humans will develop faith and will become dedicated to Him. So what more can be said about this *rāsa-līlā*? Out of all His pastimes, this *rāsa-līlā* shines forth with the greatest glory. Not only is it full of nectar up to the brim, but it also has some very astonishing and incomprehensible potency, like the powerful medicine of a priceless *mantra* that makes all humans become inclined to *bhakti*. What more can be said on this subject, which drowns all kinds of devotees in supreme bliss! A human form is the chief requisite to do *bhajana* and to thus easily attain *bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, because Bhagavān adverts among the human beings in this mortal world where one can easily hear about *rāsa-līlā* from the glorious devotees.

## VERSE 37

*nāsūyan khalu kṛṣṇāya  
 mohitās tasya māyayā  
 manyamānāḥ sva-pārśva-sthān  
 svān svān dārān vrajaukasaḥ*

**The cowherd men, deluded by the potency of Yogamāyā, saw their wives with them in their houses; therefore they were not suspicious of Kṛṣṇa.**

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Bhāvārtha Dīpikā***

Those who act against the Vedas give this type of justification for their unapproved behavior. The purport is that if those who do not have any special authority get involved in forbidden activities, then these are considered sinful. That is why this verse 'nāsūyan' has been spoken.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

One might object that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul and He performs endless pleasurable pastimes with the *gopīs*, His eternal beloveds. This eradicates the paramour relationship; but by logic His aspect as Supersoul has been slightly established, not in full. This is the first point. The second point is that the *vraja-gopīs* are eternal beloveds, so they are not marked by any blemish coming from a paramour relationship; so alas, alas, why are they called adulteresses? This means that they have been married to someone else. They may have been eternal beloveds in eternal lifetimes, but at present they are the wives of the cowherd men. This can be explained by saying that Bhagavān expands such pastimes to bestow mercy and to make His devotees staunchly dedicated to *bhakti*.

Another question may come: by this *līlā*, how is Śrī Kṛṣṇa showing His mercy to His topmost devotees, the residents of Vraja? Because He has engaged in amorous play with the cowherd men's wives, they will naturally resent Him. So all those eternal beloveds underwent the suffering of having to marry other men, and their husbands had to face embarrassment by Bhagavān's activities. Hearing such narrations, how can the devotees remain steady in practicing their *bhakti*, and what to speak of non-devotees? The present verse

has been spoken to remove such apprehension. Here the principle of logical conclusion is stronger than the story-line itself – so the residents of Vraja did not have any envy towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, certainly not (*khalu*!) The proof is Brahmā's statement about Śrī Kṛṣṇa in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.14.35: "You are the only focal point of all the Vrajavāsīs, whose households, treasures, dearest relatives, friends, children, very lives and hearts' desires rest on You." In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.16.10 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī tells Mahārāja Parīkṣit: "The Vrajavāsīs have dedicated their souls, their dear ones, their wealth, wives, and desires of the heart to Śrī Kṛṣṇa." And certainly the cowherd men, being Vrajavāsīs, never felt any envy for Kṛṣṇa.

So if it is said that the residents of Vraja, who are the object of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy, may or may not know [that their wives were with Kṛṣṇa and not with them], still His behavior with them was not proper. To reconcile this, it is said that His beloved *gopīs* became the wives of these *gopas*, and due to delusion the cowherd men saw them as their wives, but in the absolute sense the *gopīs* are married to Kṛṣṇa. Thus, He automatically attracted them, and the Vrajavāsīs could not know this, so wherein lies the fault? It is a well-known fact that the *gopīs* are Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal beloveds, so it is impossible for there to be any other meaning. The *gopīs* are immaculate; to prove this by logical conclusion is like sweeping a spotless house with a clean broom. To increase the joy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's variegated love-filled pastimes, Yogamāyā bewildered the cowherd men, who assumed Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wives as their own. Thus they saw the *gopīs* inside their houses next to them.

'*Tasya*' (His) has been analyzed in two ways: (1) the cowherd men were married to other cowherd women created by Yogamāyā; they were not married to Kṛṣṇa's eternal beloveds. These *gopas* considered these eternal beloveds as their wives, but actually they were not. These *gopīs* were protected by Yogamāyā; the *gopas* were covered over and could not understand this. The cowherd men heard some rumors, but they did not believe them. These *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa's eternal beloveds, never ever saw these cowherd men as their husbands. In this way this theory of husbandhood is obliterated. Those so-called husbands were never tied up in the marriage, so that is why they did not make allegations against Kṛṣṇa. Śukadeva Gosvāmī also says the same thing, but he did not use the word 'envy.'

(2) After Kṛṣṇa called the *gopīs* for *rāsa-līlā*, Yogamāyā created the duplicates, whom the cowherd men saw in their houses next to them. These

*gopas* accepted them as their wives, so they could not feel any resentment towards Kṛṣṇa or suspect any wrong-doing. Yet, if one is convinced that these shadow forms of Bhagavān's beloveds slept on the same bed with the *gopa* husbands, then one is mistaken. 'Sva-pārśva' (next to them) – the *gopas* saw these *gopīs* next to them, truly thinking, "This is my wife," but this was just a delusion created by Yogamāyā, who cheated them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa pronounced the *gopīs*' superlative glories in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.22: "na pāraye 'haṁ niravadya-saṁyujāṁ – Your loving relationship with Me is completely pure, free from any trace of desire for personal gratification." This indicates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not touched by the fault of mixing with anyone else's wives. Gargācārya also gives the same meaning by *kaimutika-nyāya* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.8.18: "Those who love Kṛṣṇa are vastly fortunate. They cannot be defeated by their enemies, just as the demigods sheltered by Viṣṇu cannot be overcome by demons." *Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.56 also confirms this: "śriyaḥ kāntā kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ – the Lakṣmīs are the beloveds and the Supreme Male is the one and only lover. All the trees are wish-fulfilling, and the earth is desire-stone." This proves that the paramour relationship of the *vraja-devīs* is the trick of *māyā*; actually they are Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal beloveds. This has been affirmed here.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.29.8 presents another point of consideration: "tā vāryamāṇāḥ patibhiḥ – the so-called husbands of the *gopīs*, their parents and dear relatives were prohibiting them from leaving their houses." The question comes: did these cowherd men know about the *gopīs*' attraction to Kṛṣṇa or not? If they did not know, then they cannot be jealous of Him. If it is assumed that they were envious, then this conclusion [that they did not know] cannot be accommodated. But if the *gopas* knew that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was calling their wives, then that is why they stopped them. Afterwards, when they saw their wives next to them in their houses, they might have thought, "Our wives are obedient to us." So they harbored no resentment towards their wives. But when they came to know that these *gopīs* were going due to Kṛṣṇa's beckoning, then they could naturally become jealous of Him. In this way, the question is settled.

So the explanation is that the cowherd men did not know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was deliberately calling their wives. The astonishing thing is that His flute melody was especially trained to enter only the ears of the *gopīs*, and no one else. If others also heard this sound of the flute, then Kṛṣṇa's parents and

others would run to the spot in anticipation of some calamity, thinking, “Why has He gone to this secluded forest in the night when everyone is sleeping?” Śrī Kṛṣṇa attracts everyone by His innate sweetness, so naturally the *gopīs* also go to see Him. But they were stopped by the *gopas* because nighttime was not the proper time to go out. Even if the Vrajavāsī *gopas* had come to know that the *gopīs* were with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in that secluded forest for the whole night, they might not feel any resentment because the Vrajavāsīs have a very special affection for Kṛṣṇa. But some semblance of resentment must have been there. The reason is that the residents of Vraja consider that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the sole reason for their lives. If He spends the whole night with the other men’s wives, then He has transgressed social etiquette and Vedic injunctions. This would have astonished them and they would have become worried for His welfare. This would make them develop some anger towards Him and they would resent their wives and daughters for their inappropriate behavior. In the present verse, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that the cowherd men saw their wives near them inside the house, so there was no reason to show any kind of envy or resentment towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

In the *Padma-purāṇa*, *sṛṣṭi-khaṇḍa*, Viṣṇu gives a benediction to the *gopas*, the founders of the family line of His beloveds, in some previous age: “When Nanda and the other cowherd men will incarnate on the Earth, I will also reside amongst you and play with your daughters. That play will be so pure that no one’s heart will be tainted by anger, envy or any other negative feeling.” The Vrajavāsīs have an inborn affection for Kṛṣṇa so they cannot hold any resentment towards Him. To say that they did not feel envy for Kṛṣṇa due to the effect of *māyā* contradicts this point. Actually, people of this world are envious of Bhagavān because they are deluded by *māyā*, the external illusory energy, but when free of *māyā*, they are attracted to Him. ‘*Mohitās tasya māyayā*’ – the Vrajavāsīs did not feel any resentment towards Bhagavān due to the effect of *māyā*; to say this is contrary to the explanation given here. To reconcile this contradiction, ‘*manyamānāḥ*’ (they thought) is to be joined with ‘*mohita*’ (deluded) – deluded by Yogamāyā, they thought their wives were at home. Otherwise, we will get involved in arguments and counter-arguments about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and will not arrive at any conclusion. Those who cannot understand the cowherd men’s genuine concern for Kṛṣṇa’s welfare see the *gopas* as being envious of Him, and their unfounded suspicions about Him must be eradicated. The above-mentioned conclusion dislodges the contradictions.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is completely absorbed in loving exchanges with His dear ones, and this *māyā* (Yogamāyā) understands this automatically; even without the instruction of Kṛṣṇa, she knows what to do, like a very expert minister of an emperor. By her arrangements, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is able to enjoy the topmost pleasure. Even in preceding *līlās*, she assisted in this way. So Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī says that Yogamāyā is the doer (*kartā*), and that is why in the initial verse of *rāsa-līlā* he says, ‘*yogamāyām upāśritaḥ*, took shelter of Yogamāyā.’ Yogamāyā is the special potency for accomplishing all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes.

If, by scriptural evidence, it is established that the *gopīs* are the eternal *svakīya* of Kṛṣṇa [His own wives], then the word ‘*tasya*’ (Him—His own illusory potency’) in the verse at hand becomes meaningless. When one meets with his own wife, no envy is aroused. Thus the great personalities have joined ‘*tasya*’ with ‘*dārān*’ (wives) to show the underlying meaning [that they are His eternal consorts]. If the explanation is presented in this way, then any seeming breaches in social etiquette – that Kṛṣṇa is the *upapati* (paramour); that the *gopīs* would by lying in someone else’s bed; that the Vrajavāsīs feel resentment for Kṛṣṇa; and that the *gopīs*’ behavior is improper – all these anomalies [which have been enacted to heighten the excitement in the *līlā*] are nullified.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beloved *gopīs* were not in their houses when they were meeting with Him in the forest; Yogamāyā placed duplicate forms of the *gopīs* next to their husbands. The cowherd men believed these duplicates to indeed be their wives; they did not experience any difference between Kṛṣṇa’s beloveds and these facsimiles, because the Vrajavāsīs were all illusioned (*mohita*) by Yogamāyā. It must be so because the glories of chaste, young women are never defeated in any way. What more can be said about someone who accepts Śrī Bhagavān as her husband? Gargācārya affirms this in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.8.18 by *kaimutika-nyāya*: “Anyone who has love for the eminent Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot be defeated by any enemy.” According to this evidence, the glories of the Lord’s devotees never diminish, so what to speak about His special beloveds!

In regard to protecting the sanctity of the social etiquette of faithful wives, one can refer to the story of the duplicate image of Śrī Sītā-devī as told in the latter part of the Thirty-second Chapter of Uttara section of *Kūrma-purāṇa*. “All chaste wives are equal to the consort of Lord Śiva (Rudrāṇi). There is no doubt that such women can never be defeated by anyone. For the moral

benefit of the general masses and to show the responsibilities of a chaste wife, Sītā-devī, the wife of Dāśarathī Śrī Rāmacandra, who is celebrated in the three realms of existence, renounced royal pleasures and left for the forest full of violent animals with her husband. There she stayed in the Pañcavaṭī forest in a hut of dried leaves made by Śrī Lakṣmaṇa, as if she was experiencing pleasures found in Nandana-kanan, the forest of Indra.

“Then Rāvaṇa, the all-conquering, extremely powerful king of the demons, being captivated by Śrī Sītā-devī’s unparalleled beauty, exercised his demonic powers to create illusion and transformed himself into a very energetic and peaceful sage. With the sinister motive to abduct her, he began roaming around her cottage in the lonely forest. As Sītā-devī was a devoted wife, that demon was unable to hide his evil intention. At that time Śrī Rāmacandra was absent, and she was all alone in the hut. Thus, for her protection, with folded hands she started glorifying Lord Agnīdeva, the god of fire, as she remembered Śrī Rāmacandra. The demigods will certainly respond to a chaste lady’s simple prayer. Therefore, Agnīdeva complied and, desiring Rāvaṇa’s death, he created a shadow form of Sītā-devī and protected the real Sītā-jī by hiding her. Seeing her shadow form, the king of demons kidnapped her and took her to the island of Laṅka in the middle of the ocean. Later on, that king of the demons was killed at the hand of Śrī Rāmacandra, who was accompanied by Lakṣmaṇa. Śrī Rāma was apprehensive to accept Sītā. To instill trust in the general citizens, *māyā* Sītā entered the fire, which devoured her, and Agnīdeva offered the real Sītā-devī to Śrī Rāmacandra. And they all returned to Ayodhyā.” Therefore, the way Agnīdeva protected the chaste Sītā-devī with his deluding powers, similarly Yogamāyā exercised her illusory powers and protected Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s eternal beloveds by hiding them from the Vrajavāsīs. In adherence to this story, the subject matter at hand has been resolved.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

One might question that, as Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa dallied with the Vraja maidens the whole night, their husbands and in-laws did not see these ladies in the house; so why did they not express any anger towards Kṛṣṇa? To remove this apprehension Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaks this verse ‘na.’ The Vrajavāsīs were under the influence of Bhagavān’s Yogamāyā. The word



‘*māyā*’ in the verse refers to Yogamāyā, and not the external, illusory potency. The associates of Bhagavān are not influenced by the external *māyā*, only those who are affected by the illusory potency become indifferent to Bhagavān. But in the *gopas*, no symptom of indifference to the Lord was seen. Yogamāyā enchanted them: when the *gopīs* went for *abhisāra* with Kṛṣṇa, Yogamāyā created duplicate *gopīs* and bewildered their husbands. The *gopas* saw their wives in their houses, so they never felt any anger towards Kṛṣṇa.

In *Ujñvala-nīlamanī* (3.32) it is said:

*māyā-kalpita-tādrk-stri*  
*śīlanenānusūyubhiḥ*  
*na jātu vraja-devīnām*  
*patibhiḥ saha saṅgamaḥ*

“Kṛṣṇa’s beloved *gopīs* are the crest-jewels of all chaste women, and are brimming over with *prema*. These *vraja-devīs* have only the conception of being the wives of the *gopas* as, in fact, they never had any intimate contact with these so-called husbands.”

These marriages were arranged to create the special exhilaration that comes in a paramour relationship. The *gopas* were husbands in name only; they never had any physical relations with their wives. At the time of *abhisāra*, these *gopas* were eating, drinking and being served by these shadow *gopīs*, who were identical in form and nature with the originals, thus the cowherd men had no reason to find fault with Kṛṣṇa.

Yogamāyā is the spiritual potency, so her actions hold true for all time. Even when this material world is annihilated, the *gopas’* conception of the *gopīs* being their wives continues on. By Yogamāyā’s arrangement, these *gopas* did not have any intimate contact even with the duplicate *gopīs*. These duplicate *gopīs* are the exact replicas of the originals, so even with these, any kind of intimacy would be improper. It may be said that these duplicates were in the houses and perhaps shared the bed also, but Yogamāyā reconciled this also because she removed all lusty feelings in these *gopas*. When the original *gopīs* came back to their respective homes after romancing with Kṛṣṇa in the forest, Yogamāyā removed the duplicates.

VERSE 38

*brahma-rātra upāvṛtte  
vāsudevānumoditāḥ  
anicchantyo yayur gopyaḥ  
sva-grhān bhagavat-priyāḥ*

After the long night of Brahmā had passed and morning was coming, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa ordered His beloveds to return to their homes. The *gopīs* unwillingly went back to their houses because their every act is meant for pleasing Kṛṣṇa.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

*Brahma-rātrī* – *brāhma-muhūrta* (the one and one-half hours before sunrise). *Upāvṛtte* – came to an end.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī*

After reconciling all the questions related to the topic at hand, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī concludes the entire narration. With the word '*anicchantyo*' (reluctantly), He indicates that the *gopīs* were drowning in the ocean of transcendental bliss and were still unsatisfied. At the end of the night of Brahmā, they were still dallying with Kṛṣṇa; just as morning was coming they reached the edge of the forest near Vraja, and seeing that the time was right, they proceeded to their respective houses. One might object that they had given up everything for Kṛṣṇa so why should they go back even at that time? The reason is that Śrī Vāsudeva commanded them to do so because at that time Kṛṣṇa had to be present in Nanda Bhavan to be with His father Nanda and make him happy. In the morning Śrī Nanda Mahārāja especially remembers his dear son, after being separated the whole night. So Śrī Kṛṣṇa has to come back home at this time. Thus the *gopīs* were also obliged to return to their homes at the same time. Here the name Vāsudeva (the son of Vasudeva) should be understood as the son of Śrī Nanda because in *gokula-līlā*, the son of Nanda Mahārāja (*nanda-putra*) is eternally present. However, Śrī Śukadeva uses the name Vāsudeva in reference to the eighth *vasu* Drona in his previous life, who was now present within Śrī Nanda in this pastime. To indicate this *vasu*, the name Vāsudeva has been used, but actually it means Nanda-nandana only.

‘*Anumoditāḥ*’ – Śrī Kṛṣṇa ordered the *gopīs* to go back with the promise that He would give more of His association later on. They unwillingly left due to His repeated insistence. Another meaning can be taken – “I am always with you, and we dance, sing and enjoy many other pleasurable pastimes together. I am subjugated by your overwhelming *prema*, therefore I will surely keep My promise to meet with you again. Thus I am advising all of you to return to your homes.” This is the reason why Kṛṣṇa was humbly requesting each and every *vraja-sundarī* to return home.

Meaning in the mood of *aiśvarya*: the *gopīs* were inspired by ‘Vāsudeva’ Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supersoul in their hearts to return to their homes; and externally His humble entreaty convinced them to go. Thus Kṛṣṇa’s glories are exhibited. ‘Vasudeva’ means ‘whose heart is especially pure.’ *Śrīmad-Bhagavatām* 4.3.23 affirms this: “one whose consciousness is thoroughly pure (*viśuddha-sattva*) is known as *vasudeva*.” According to this statement spoken by Śrī Śiva, the presiding deity of such a pure heart is Vāsudeva. If Vāsudeva Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being the very form of *prema*, is in the hearts of the *gopīs*, they are thus subject to His will and are bound to submit to His humble request and return to their houses.

The question may come: Kṛṣṇa had given up the association of the *vraja-devīs*, so how could they now agree to leave Him? Kṛṣṇa is controlled by *prema*, and the fruit of *prema* is getting Kṛṣṇa’s association, so if they gave up His association, then how is it proved that He is controlled by *prema*? This explains the use of the phrase ‘*bhagavat-priyāḥ* – those who hold the Lord very dear.’ Such beloveds can tolerate their own sufferings, but they cannot bear that Kṛṣṇa should suffer even a tiny bit. Just like a perfect gentlemen, Kṛṣṇa, being controlled by His beloveds, tolerated unbearable separation by sending them back to protect their chastity, social standing and submission to their families.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S

### ***Sārārtha Darśinī***

The long night – equivalent to a night of Brahmā (*brahma-rātra*), containing 1000 *yugas* – quickly (*upa*) passed (*āvṛtte*). At the end of this long, long night, the *gopīs*, upon the order of Śrī Vāsudeva, reluctantly returned to their houses. It was Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s intention to perform so many pastimes in one night, and as He is *satya-saṅkalpa*, everything He desires

comes to pass. Thus, whatever desire He had for dancing, singing and other entertaining escapades – to complete all that, a vast time span was required. To provide that long amount of time, 1000 *yugas* entered into one night (four *praharas* – 12 hours) at the *rāsa-sthalī*. Furthermore, this universe measuring 500 million *yojanas* (1 *yojana* equals 8 miles) entered into the five *yojanas* of Vṛndāvana, and this was witnessed by Brahmājī at the time of Kṛṣṇa's *bhojana-līlā* (His picnic with the cowherd boys). And when Kṛṣṇa was very young, Mother Yaśoda tied unlimited ropes together to bind Him, but was not successful; and in His mouth she saw vast universes. Thus, it is seen that nothing is impossible for Him. Śrī *Laghu-Bhāgavatāmṛta* confirms this: “Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, all of His dear associates, His *dhāma* and time are inconceivably powerful. Nothing is impossible for them.”

“*Vāsudevānumoditāḥ* – To ensure the perfection of our romantic rendezvous, we must keep our cherished love affair secret.” Therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed the *gopīs* to return to their homes. Alternatively, inspired by Vāsudeva, the Supersoul in their hearts, the *gopīs* experienced the rising of shyness and fear of their elders. Thus, they reluctantly returned to their houses, even in the face of unbearable separation from their beloved.

### VERSE 39

*vikrīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ  
śraddhānvito 'nuśṛṇuyād atha varṇayed yaḥ  
bhaktiṁ parāṁ bhagavati pratilabhya kāmam  
hrd-rogam āśv apahinoty acireṇa dhīraḥ*

A sober person who faithfully hears again and again the narrations of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's transcendental *rāsa-līlā* with the *vraja-devīs*, and later describes those pastimes, very soon attains *parā-bhakti*, supreme loving devotion, for the almighty Lord. Consequently, he conquers the senses, and is freed from the heart disease of material lust forever.

ŚRĪLA ŚRĪDHARA SVĀMĪPĀDA'S  
*Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*

By hearing about the playful *rāsa* dance by which Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa defeated Kāmadeva, one succeeds in conquering mundane lust. This is the topic of discussion in this verse '*vikrīḍitaṁ*.' One who with faith repeatedly

hears about this *rāsa-līlā* and then describes it, very quickly becomes sober and attains loving devotional service to Śrī Bhagavān and immediately gives up the heart disease of lust.

Thus ends the elaborated translation of the commentary named  
*Bhāvārtha Dipikā* of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Chapter of the Tenth Canto  
 written by Śrīdhara, who is the servant of this supreme bliss.

ŚRĪLA JĪVA GOSVĀMĪPĀDA'S

### ***Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī***

Just as *rāsa-līlā* is the best of all *līlās*, similarly hearing and describing this *rāsa-līlā* grants the topmost fruit: it removes material desires and bestows the flow of love of God. With *kaimutika-nyāya*, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī affirms that this is the supreme fruit conferred by this pastime. The narrator, being completely submerged in bliss, gives the blessing described in this verse '*vikrīḍitaṁ*' to all future speakers and hearers of this pastime. A person who with faith continuously hears about the activities of the young brides of Vraja with Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the *rāsa* dance and then describes them to others, will very quickly attain *parā-bhakti* for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and will immediately give up lust, the disease of the heart.

'*Vraja-vaḍhū*' means the *vraja-gopīs*, who are like new, young brides. That is, in this playful *rāsa-līlā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave the *vraja-sundarīs* the good fortune of serving Him; thus He accepted them as His consorts and made their lives successful. It is with these *vraja-sundarīs* that the all-pervading Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs such pastimes. Here '*rāsa-kṛīḍa*' (the amorous games of the *rāsa-līlā*) includes many other activities besides dancing – this is indicated by the phrase '*idaṁ ca*.'

'*Viṣṇoḥ*' – Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared between every two *gopīs*, which is mentioned in Verse 3 of this chapter; this indicates that He is all-pervading (*viṣṇoḥ*) as said in this verse. '*Śraddhānvito*' – hearing with complete faith. If one listens without faith, it is an offense; to remove this one must hear continuously; not only hearing, but also describing, remembering and recommending. Then one can receive the special fruit of supreme loving devotion. Having the guidance of the *gopīs*, one attains *bhakti* laced with *prema*, which manifests every moment in a new form. Thus one quickly gives up lust, the disease of the heart. Disease of the heart does not

include any desire connected with Bhagavān because any desires related to Bhagavān are transcendental. Diseased desires of the heart and desires related to Bhagavān are diametrically opposed to each other – this is what is established here. Here only material lust (*kāmaṁ*) is mentioned, but all other diseases of the heart are also removed.

In *Gītā* 18.54 Kṛṣṇa says, “One who is established in *brahma* neither hankers nor laments for anything. He is equal to all living entities, and thus he attains *prema-bhakti* for Me.” According to this statement, after the disease of the heart is destroyed, one attains *parā-bhakti*, but the verse at hand proclaims that *parā-bhakti* comes before the dissolution of the heart disease. Therefore, the *sādhana* of hearing *rāsa-kṛīḍa* is much more powerful than all other practices. The word ‘*dhīra*’ means that one attains gravity and gains control of his senses. Alternatively, very quickly he attains *bhakti* and gets liberated from the heart disease – the pain of separation from Kṛṣṇa – because by hearing and speaking about *rāsa-līlā* one can achieve Śrī Kṛṣṇa very quickly.

The commentator’s prayer:

*kṛīḍatā vahirantaśca jaḍo’yaṁ yena narttyate*  
*tasya caitanya-rūpasya prītyai bhagavato-stivadam*

He who enjoys inside and outside, makes a dull person like me dance.  
This work which I am doing for the pleasure of that Supreme Living Force, Śrī Bhagavān, should be successful.

ŚRĪLA VIŚVANĀTHA CAKRAVARTĪ ṬHĀKURĀ’S  
***Sārārtha Darśinī***

Śrī *rāsa-līlā* is the crown-jewel of all of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. Thus the fruit of hearing and narrating *śrī rāsa-līlā* is also the topmost. This is told in this verse ‘*vikṛīḍitaṁ*.’ ‘*Ca*’ (and) refers to other pleasure-filled pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with the *vraja-sundarī*s described by other poets, which are similar to this *rāsa* dance. ‘*Viṣṇoḥ*’ – *tāsāṁ madhye dvayor dvayoḥ* – one Kṛṣṇa stood between every two *gopī*s; this indicates His all-pervasive nature, thus the name Viṣṇu (all-pervasive) is used. ‘*Nu*’ – surely; ‘*anu*’ – daily; continuously hearing, then glorifying to others and describing it in poetry. ‘*Bhaktiṁ parāṁ*’ – supreme loving devotion; ‘*pratīlabhya*’ – obtains; even though lust and other diseases are present, first *prema* enters

the heart, and its power removes the lust that is lodged there. Such is the power of hearing and narrating this *rāsa-līlā* – simultaneously lust goes and *prema* manifests, but the effect of *prema* is observed first. In this way the faithful *sādhaka* attains *prema* for the lotus feet of Bhagavān, and all his material desires are eradicated. The reason for this is that *prema* is not weak like *jñāna* and *yoga*, rather it is supremely independent and vigorous. This shows the difference between the two types of *kāma* – the disease of lust in the heart and pure spiritual love for the Supreme Lord. Spiritual love for Bhagavān is full of nectar, and material desire in the heart is completely the opposite in nature.

A person who has full belief in the words of the scriptures (*dhiraḥ paṇḍita*) will not doubt that one can attain *kṛṣṇa-prema* even while the heart is afflicted with the disease of lust. *Prema* does not embrace that person who does not trust in *śāstra* and who is an offender to the Holy Name. One who has faith in *śāstra* will develop faith in hearing about *rāsa-līlā*. For such a person, *prema* will appear first as the fruit of his hearing this *līlā-kathā*, and eventually all varieties of heart disease are destroyed at the root.

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Śrī *kṛṣṇāṭīvaśikāra cūñcoḥ* – fully capable of subjugating Kṛṣṇa; this *rāsa-līlā* – that denied entrance to Lakṣmī devī, that is the female swan of *prema*, and is the crown jewel of all glorious acts – shines forth in all its brilliance. Only those who take the guidance of the Vraja *gopīs*, who show the path of sweet mellows, gain entrance to the *rāsa-līlā*; even the scholars of the scriptures find it very difficult to enter there. There is so much to be said about *rāsa-līlā*, what is generally known and unknown, but out of fear of making the book too voluminous, I have told just the essence.

Thus ends the *Sārārtha Darśinī Ṭikā*, “The Commentary that Gives Bliss to the Devotees,” on the 33<sup>rd</sup> Chapter of the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Thus ends the *bhāvānuvāda* of the three commentaries

- (1) *Bhāvārtha Dīpikā*, (2) *Samkṣepa-Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī* and
- (3) *Sārārtha Darśinī* of the Thirty-third Chapter of the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.





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