

# Śrīla Gurudeva

The Supreme Treasure

Volume 2



# Śrīla Gurudeva

## The Supreme Treasure

Volume 2

*Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu*

**Svāmī Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja**

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Swami A.V. Madhav

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## Dedication



I am presenting this book as an offering of devotion to our dearly beloved *jagad-guru*, *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata*

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

who has mercifully shown us an unadulterated life of utter dedication and loving service to his beloved Guru Mahārāja, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

This is an account of the most auspicious life, qualities and teachings of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

“Śrī Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is expert in describing *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. He is endowed with the qualities of magnanimity and sweetness, and he is the best of great souls. Because he is always relishing Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness, he is able to freely distribute that sweetness to others. I bow down and place my head at his lotus feet.”

Because he loves to speak *hari-kathā* and relishes the sweet transcendental name, form, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Lord, he is the most qualified to eradicate from one’s heart the most dangerous enemy in the path of *bhakti*, the deceitful entrapping fallacy of impersonalism.

*Tridaṇḍī-bhikṣu* Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja

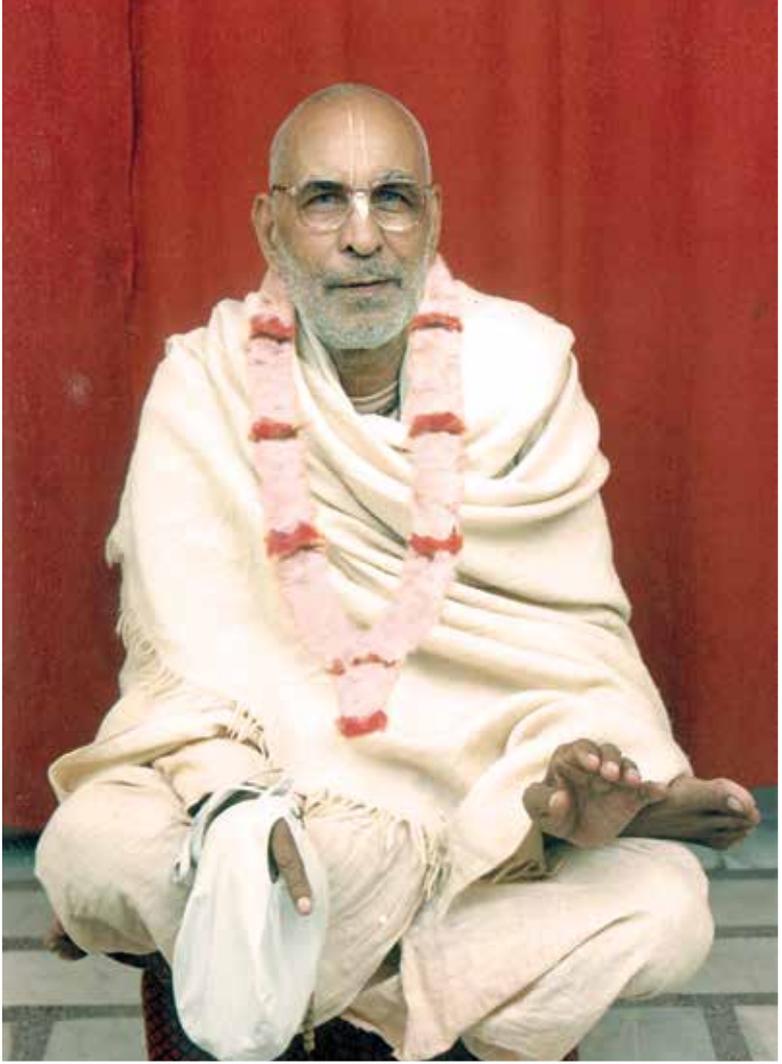


## Guru-varga



### The Three Pillars of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja—

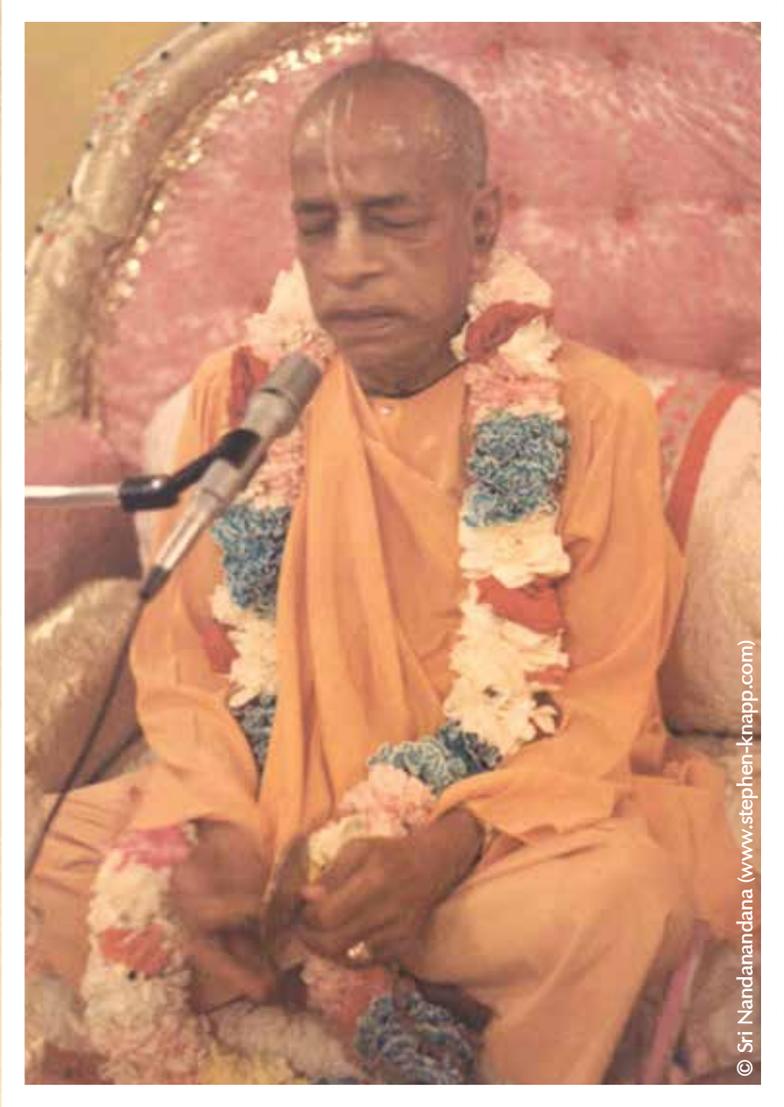
My *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my *dikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and *param-pūjyapāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja



*om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya*  
**Śrī Śrīmad**  
**Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja**

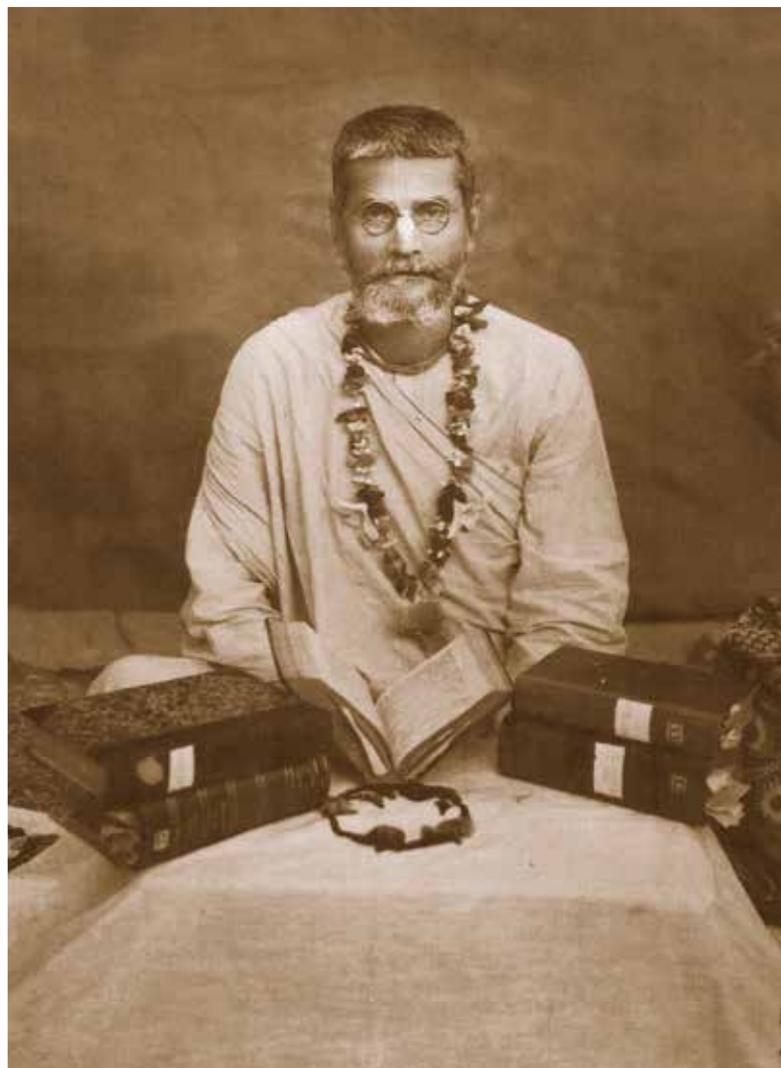


*nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda*  
**Śrī Śrīmad**  
**Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja**



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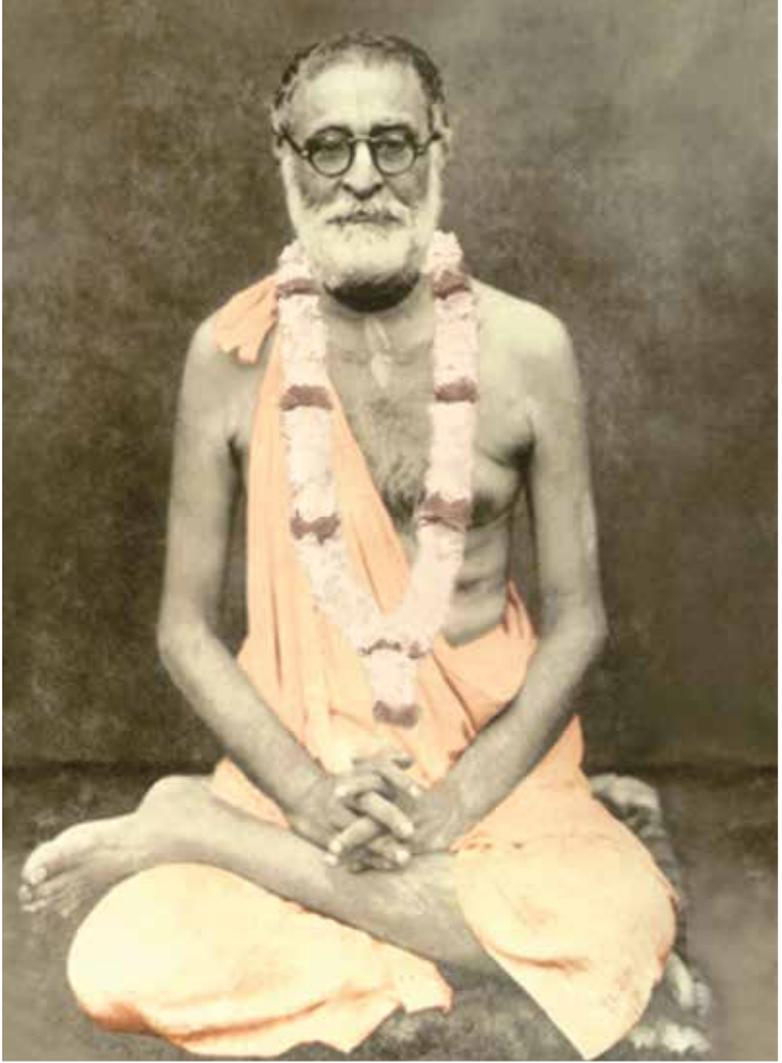
*nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇu-pāda*  
**Śrī Śrīmad**  
**Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja**



*nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda*

**Śrī Śrīmad**

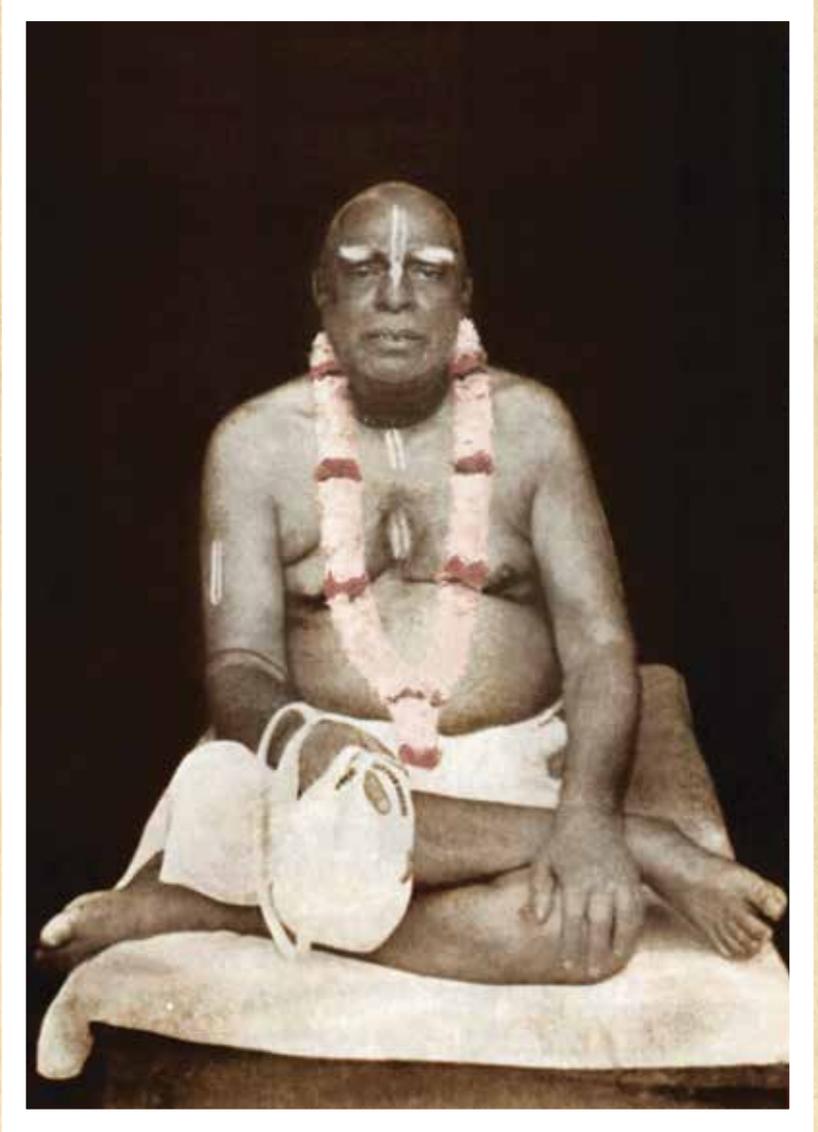
**Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja**



*nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda*  
**Śrī Śrīmad**  
**Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda**



*nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda*  
**Śrī Śrīla**  
**Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja**



*nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda*  
**Saccidānanda**  
**Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura**



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## Foreword

This book is about the extraordinary character and sublime teachings of our most revered holy master, *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, affectionately known as our beloved Śrīla Gurudeva. It is Śrīla Gurudeva's extraordinary mercy that he has revealed a glimpse of the spiritual world and awakened within us a taste for the supremely sweet pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīpāda 'Vidyālaṅkāra'<sup>1</sup> Mādhava Mahārāja is not writing just another book about some charismatic individual who is accepted by the general public as a *guru*. Nowadays the name *guru* has become quite fashionable. In the modern world we have financial *gurus*, management *gurus*, fashion *gurus* and so on, and it seems that any common man can be accepted as *guru* as long as he shows some expertise in his field. The approach of many so-called *gurus* may be of great appeal to the masses by making them feel good about the prospects of their material aspirations and the anticipated temporary pleasures of the mind and senses. One may receive some temporary upliftment from these self-styled *gurus*, but in the end, their encouragement for us to continuously chase after material happiness produces only a mental image of a possible future, but no ultimate satisfaction. That is because the material enjoyment they offer always ends in misery. This material enjoyment is just like a big fire; no matter how beautiful it is to look at, if you touch it, it will inevitably burn you and you will suffer tremendously. Similarly, harmful activities will make us suffer in the material world. People who are overpowered by the illusory material *māyā* of Kṛṣṇa feel happiness and suffering for many births under the influence of that illusory energy. Their happiness and sufferings are all the work of *māyā*, meaning 'forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa'. There are many persons in this world who may appear or claim to be *guru*, but a bona fide *guru* follows Śrī Brahmā, the original *guru* and grandfather of the universe. Kṛṣṇa consciousness was propounded

.....  
<sup>1</sup> Śrīla Gurudeva gave the title *Vidyālaṅkāra*, which means an ocean of knowledge, to Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja because of his expertise in his assisting Śrīla Gurudeva with his books.

by Śrī Brahmā aeons ago when the creation was still in its infancy. Only a bona fide *guru* representing his *guru* and the Lord can give one the essential help to attain real freedom.

*Guru* is a Sanskrit word and its original and intended meanings are explained in the Vedic literatures. *Gu* means 'ignorance' and *ru* means 'dispeller', so a real *guru* is someone who is in a disciplic succession of *gurus* that dispells our ignorance. Those in a material conception of life will teach others that they can and will become happy here, thus increasing their ignorance and boosting their false ego of bodily identification. A real *guru*, on the other hand, gives eternal results by initiating us on the path that activates and reveals our true spiritual identity. He mercifully gives instructions, convincing us of the many perfect philosophical conclusions of *bhakti*. Serving him and submissively hearing from him frees us from the ignorance that has been ingrained within our hearts since time without beginning. It gradually but firmly establishes within us a deep love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the divine Youthful Couple and the soul's function fully awakens. This is what a *guru* should give – our pristine intrinsic nature, our eternal *dharmā*. That's what our Śrīla Gurudeva, the deliverer of the fallen, is giving to us.

Our eternal natural function, or *dharmā*, is *bhakti* or devotional service. As one cannot separate heat from fire, so similarly, the service nature of the living entities cannot be taken away from them. We have to serve someone or something. We serve either Kṛṣṇa or *māyā*. Unfortunately, during this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, the insincerity and hypocrisy is so widespread that those who have a desire to follow religion are oftentimes misled; consequently they are disheartened to pursue religion with strong determination or conviction.

All religions propagated in the world are either steps leading to *bhakti* or else distortions of it. This being a fact, we should focus on our own cultivation of devotion and not worry or criticize what others are doing. We should be favourable towards the followers of other religions and have no animosity towards them. All of us advance according to the time that is ripe for us. Any religion should be respected according to its proportionate degree of purity.

In order to pursue our particular path with great devotion, we have to understand that there are mixed, polluted and imaginary concepts of *bhakti* that are falsely presented in the name of pure *bhakti*. There are different

categories. One group may have a slight semblance of *bhakti* or a mixed devotion (mixed with fruitive action or speculative knowledge, etc.). These are gradations of *bhakti* but only unalloyed devotion (*śuddha-bhakti*) can give life's ultimate goal – the nectar of pure love (*prema*). Only that *śuddha-bhakti* can bestow the highest results. Yet, on the path of *bhakti*, many try to give the impression that they are practicing pure *bhakti*, though in actuality they practice only a reflection or a shadow of devotion. It is important to know that whoever you follow, you will only be able to attain what they have, not more than that. Whatever level of consciousness one's *guru* attains, the followers can advance up to that level, not higher than that. That is why the gift of the higher part, the transcendental realm, can only be obtained by the exclusive mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the *ācārya* of *ujjvala-rasa*, and his intimate associates. The original form of Bhagavān descended in this age as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to deliver all the living entities. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is *priya-svarūpa*, the very embodiment of everything dear to Him, is His foremost disciple in establishing the deepest wishes of His heart. Those who completely come under the guidance and care of the genuine followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī will attain realization and advance through each successive stage of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

The realm of the Supreme Lord is naturally full of love and there is never any force. Here also, we are never forced to love, but this world is a place where the Supreme Lord examines us. Do we want only Him, or do we still want something of this world? The Lord will fulfill our desire, as much as we desire, not more than that. According to what we desire in life, we will get an appropriate *guru* or spiritual teacher. If we want transcendental vision, we can only get it by the special mercy of great devotees who see and perceive the Lord at all times and in all places. Only by their mercy will we excel in the examination, be able to recognize our true selves and begin to hanker for the only thing that will satisfy us – pure *bhakti*. One can only remember the Lord in all circumstances when the inclination to serve the Lord arises in one's heart by the sweet association and mercy of such a *sādhū*. Unless we have the opportunity to hear the pure nectar of their *hari-kathā*, we will always go back and absorb ourselves in sense gratification, even if we are inclined towards religious life. It is only by their merciful glance and the sharp words emanating from their lotus mouths that the hidden fantasies in the mind for gross and subtle sense gratification are finally eradicated from the heart forever.

If someone possesses only pretentious devotion (*chala-bhakti*), that is what their followers will get from them. Some, even in the name of *bhakti*, instruct others against the principles of *bhakti* and lead them on a path that is totally opposed to it. Therefore our previous *ācāryas* have clearly cautioned us to avoid mixed and polluted concepts of *bhakti*. Only then will our hearts be thoroughly cleansed, so that our activities can be most favourably executed for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Everyone is controlled by the desire for sense enjoyment, even when it comes to modern day religion. Most of the general public become attracted to follow certain religious teachings to get material boons from God in the form of economic development (*artha*) and sense gratification (*kāma*). They are misled to ask and search for material benedictions, rather than establishing their pure loving relationship with the Lord. Although their values are presented as the topmost and most relevant for God consciousness, they are in actuality a distortion of pure *bhakti* and the practitioner can only develop a little faith in God. Ultimately it is a deception and infinitely inferior to the flawless and completely pure *suddha-bhakti*. That is why we should always hear the perfect philosophical conclusions of *bhakti* (*bhakti-siddhānta*) from qualified persons. Unqualified persons with the four defects of human frailty<sup>2</sup> are unable to properly teach anything transcendental that is worth hearing. We need to seek help from those who are free from these very serious defects that prevent us from getting even a glimpse of transcendence. Methods of learning under the operation of the four-fold defects are useless in our progress toward the Absolute, for they can never free us from those defects.

What Śrīla Gurudeva has come to give is not a lower step on the staircase of mixed *bhakti*, but the topmost level of pure love. Like the *bhakti-rasācārya* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, he has come to fulfill the innermost heart's desire (*mano 'bhiṣṭa*) of *Kali-yuga pāvana āvatārī* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, to give us the service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā as Her confidential maidservant. If Śrīla Gurudeva had not come to make all these things accessible to us, we would have been grasping for straws, trying to understand these confidential pastimes with our mundane intellect, or we would have foolishly ignored these pastimes, because others had advised

.....  
2 As described in *Śrī Tattva-sandarbha, Anuccheda* 9, the four defects of human frailty are: (1) a tendency to make mistakes, (2) the tendency become under the illusion of false ideas and beliefs, (3) the propensity to cheat and (4) imperfect senses.

us that they were inappropriate and would compromise our spiritual lives. The person to teach us the proper understanding and method to approach the Lord's amorous relationships without offence is a bona fide representative of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, whose pure heart is immersed in these loving pastimes. Only someone like Śrīla Gurudeva, who is absorbed in the moods of these pastimes with Śrī Rādhā, can plant the seed of pure devotion and nurture it without impediments. These most confidential pastimes are not at all subject to Sanskrit scholarship or artistic creative imagination, but are only revealed to someone who has pleased the Divine Couple and Their devotees with unmotivated, pure, loving service. The supreme treasure that the most munificent Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu came to give personally would have certainly been lost from our vision unless Śrīla Gurudeva had mercifully unveiled it. Śrīla Gurudeva came to give the incomparable gift that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and all our *guru-varga* came to give, namely the *prema* of *unnatojjvala-rasa-sva-bhakti-śrīyam*.<sup>3</sup> Our material desires and pride would have kept us away if Śrīla Gurudeva had not come into our lives and qualified us with his potent *hari-kathā*. Without him, the pure desire to render unalloyed devotional service in the mood of the Vrajāśis would perhaps never enter our hearts.

Śrīla Gurudeva is a vastly learned scholar and author who has written and translated more than one hundred books in Hindi, that have been translated into many languages around the world, with over seventy titles in English. Even though he is ninety-one years old, he is still producing more transcendental literatures every year. These books are relished and appreciated by all those who are serious to study the deep Kṛṣṇa conscious meanings of the rūpānuga *ācāryas*.

People are very much eager to learn more about this outstanding preacher of *kevalā-bhakti*, who has manifest with his pen such a vast array of Gauḍīya literature and who has spread this knowledge throughout the whole world. This book helps us to know more intimately the person responsible for all of those books and gives us a chance to become more acquainted with the essential truths that he came to speak. It shows how he protected the *siddhānta* whenever it was needed and how he is the guardian of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Here the readers will not only know

<sup>3</sup> The *prema* of *unnatojjvala-rasa-sva-bhakti-śrīyam* means the *mañjarī-bhāva* of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's maidservants. (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)

about the greatness of Śrīla Gurudeva's accomplishments, but also his profound, internal purpose and moods. These things cannot be understood by outsiders, but Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja gives us a peek at the gravity and depth of his personality, which no other biographer – no matter how expert – can give.

Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja shows us in very simple language how Śrīla Gurudeva personally applies and demonstrates the instructions of his books in his own life, thereby instructing us how to ourselves act and advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Gurudeva perfectly exemplifies the conclusion of the Lord that one should teach by example. In this book you will see how Śrī Guru perfectly represents the *siddhānta* that is the very substance of the entirety of the Vedas. With logic and discrimination, Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja has described the name, fame, devotional activities and transcendental moods of Śrīla Gurudeva and he has strung this together in such a beautiful way, to show the very essence of the Absolute Truth.

He proves how Śrīla Gurudeva has an 'eternal' relationship with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja 'based on spontaneous love' and how he is considered by him to be 'the real *guru-sevaka*', the real servant of Śrī Guru. Unscrupulous persons try to defame him in an attempt to establish their own superiority, but their attempts simply increase his transcendental fame and reputation.

Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja has done an amazing service in the form of this biography. Not only is Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja Śrīla Gurudeva's personal servant; Śrīla Gurudeva himself has said on many occasions that he is his 'mother, father, minister, doctor, dietician, cook and bosom friend'. He personally heard from many of the contemporaries of Śrīla Gurudeva, but mostly he noted down these incidents from hearing directly from Śrīla Gurudeva himself, whom he has served for more than thirty years. He was always by his side, attentively hearing his scriptural debates with opposing parties, his answers to diverse questions, and his personal dealings with all types of different personalities and situations. He gives intimate details of the transcendental qualities and characteristics of Śrīla Gurudeva and explains how they are similar to those of the Lord. He also shows how Śrīla Gurudeva changes people's hearts by delivering the pure transcendental name, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare and by always describing the power, qualities and mercy of the holy name. The holy name,

which is identical with the Lord, has the power to free us and associate us with those spiritual beauties of the highest possible standards of excellence.

Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja gives a detailed account of how in 1952, at the young age of thirty-one, Śrīla Gurudeva took *sannyāsa*, the renounced order. At that time he taught and presented scriptural quotes which brought about the proper chanting of this mahā-mantra when it was being chanted in reverse sequence by almost everyone in the holy places of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja-maṇḍala. Śrīla Gurudeva would enthusiastically go to the pastime places of the Lord over and over again and describe the Lord's transcendental līlās that took place there, greatly inspiring all the devotees who came for pilgrimage. He also explains how Śrīla Gurudeva is constantly chanting the mahā-mantra under any circumstance. His presentation will astound even a stone-hearted person.

That mercy you get from the *rasika* Vaiṣṇava is perpetual. It goes on forever and will never stop. This is the supreme treasure. It is not something perishable, like all benedictions you receive from materialistic people. Spiritual greed (*lobha*) will increase when one associates with the *rāgānuga-rasika* Vaiṣṇava, hears from him, or hears about him. When a person hears from his lotus lips about the supremely blissful, sweet pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa – and especially the Lord's *mādhurya* pastimes with the *vraja-gopīs* – that genuine greed (*lobha*) enters the mind or the heart (*citta-vṛtti*).

This book is about the person who is a supreme treasure for the world and who gives the supreme treasure of *bhakti* to the world. People are looking everywhere in the world for treasures, but they fail to realize that the supreme treasure is right there in their heart. Unfortunately, they do not see this and are running after a mirage. Only Śrī Guru can dissolve the mirage, remove the ignorance and give us entrance into the kingdom of supreme, everlasting happiness. We want happiness, but for the most part, it escapes us. Even if we find temporary happiness in some superficial pleasures, it is short-lived and misery comes and takes its place. It is useless even to enter some kind of pseudo-religious movement and externally break our bad habits, if there is no lasting transformation. The speculations of the pseudo-religionists show that they are still completely bewildered by their material existence.

We were also painfully wallowing in total forgetfulness of the Lord, but Śrīla Gurudeva, who is the friend of the destitute and lowly, has

overlooked our disqualifications to give us that supreme treasure which is our real welfare.

Ultimately material life and sensual pleasure is a deception that entraps us, bewilders us, keeps us entangled and leaves us hurt. Due to all the suffering, we gain some power of discrimination and eventually we come to the point in our life... where we are exhausted... where we have had enough... where we are truly crying out to the Lord.

When we are truly destitute and deep in our hearts, desperate to have a connection only with God, the Lord hears our sincere longing and warms our hearts by sending His pure devotee, who is our only friend and shelter in this world. Although such association is extremely rare, the Lord will reveal to us His own eternal personal associate, the *bhakta-bhāgavata*. When we know how difficult that association is to attain, then we should sincerely pray for it without duplicity.

We cannot always get the association of living *sādhus*, so in the absence of the *bhakta-bhāgavata*, the Lord's devotee, we can take the association of the other all-auspicious type of *sādhū*, the *grantha-bhāgavata*, the *śāstra*. The *sādhus*, have with great endeavor meticulously written down the *śāstras* for our benefit and we can receive their association there. When we take shelter of these two *sādhus*, the *bhakta-bhāgavata* and the *grantha-bhāgavata*, they will make us qualified so that we will never give up Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When we always hear their *hari-kathā* laden with their potency, our intelligence will become firmly fixed in the proper philosophical conclusions.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the fountainhead of all *rasas* (*akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti*) and we can offer Him our eternal loving service in the mood of deep friendship, maternal or fatherly love, or in amorous love. In the worship of other forms of the Lord, although we can completely surrender unto Him with unwavering faith and love which is fully satisfying, we are not able to offer such confidential service and unconditional love as His friends, parents or lovers.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself in the mood and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, descended to this world to give love of God. Having reflected on the living entity's difficult and unfortunate situation, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally appeared in Their combined form of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who is an ocean of compassion for the fallen souls. Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja in this book is showing

how devotees all over the world are becoming happy and satisfied by hearing the pure message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu from Śrīla Gurudeva. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came some five hundred years ago to give us the topmost, all-auspicious spiritual knowledge and to show us how to practice it in pure love. He has now arranged to send His messenger Śrīla Gurudeva to us so that we can hear pure *hari-kathā* (topics in glorification of Lord Hari and His devotees) flowing constantly from his lotus mouth. If we have the extreme fortune to continually drink the ambrosial nectar that emanates from his lotus mouth and which flows from his pen, we shall never have to live again in misery, adverse to the Supreme Lord. While persons in this world are becoming more and more mad to enjoy their mundane senses, but are instead drowning in misery, searching for wealth, women and mundane reputation and fame, this book will help them to forget such fleeting happiness. Śrīla Gurudeva has never been in forgetfulness of the Lord and he can teach us how to live our life in such constant remembrance. He shows us how we can truly be happy by engaging in Kṛṣṇa's service. There is immense happiness in serving Him and a very relishable love and affection that is not found in material relationships. There are oceans of love and affection in Kṛṣṇa's transcendental abode.

Not only is Śrīla Gurudeva the supreme treasure; he is also giving us this invaluable treasure, namely the awakening and nurturing of our eternal loving personal relationship with the Divine Couple. He is not giving us a partially developed understanding, but is giving us the full and perfect philosophical conclusion (*siddhānta*) of the bona fide *gurus* (*ācāryas*) including Lord Caitanya Himself.

The book also talks about some controversial subjects, misunderstandings and slanderous statements. People are deceiving themselves if they do not properly respect a Vaiṣṇava and it is an offence to the holy name to disrespect and blaspheme the saintly devotees whose characters are spotless. Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja addresses many mistaken viewpoints and misguided mentalities and gives the facts of many incidents that were previously presented giving the wrong impression of Śrīla Gurudeva. He does this to protect the immaculate reputation of our most illustrious Śrīla Gurudeva and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* that he represents. He presents it not as a challenge, but to acquaint the innocent with the real facts and dispel their doubts and to warn them about the seriousness of offending Vaiṣṇavas who are so very dear to the Lord.

A pure devotee has no hostile mentality, personal grudges or dissatisfaction with anyone. Thus anyone who takes initiation of the holy name must wholeheartedly reject any tendency to disregard or disrespect any Vaiṣṇava. Śrī Guru is our greatest well-wisher and best friend. There is no one more merciful than him in this world, but those who are adverse to him cannot see it. A person develops his or her mentality and body in accordance with the activities that they have performed in their previous birth. The Lord is bestowing the fruits of their action, whatever they may be, to enjoy and engage in further acts. Those who are adverse to the Lord will be impelled to act by the external, illusory energy (*māyā*) of the Lord, and those who are surrendered without duplicity will see all the virtues of the Vaiṣṇava revealed in their true features. They will see the Vaiṣṇava's extraordinary transcendental qualities and will not liken them to mundane qualities, whereas those who are impelled by *māyā* and who commit offences, will not.

The example has been given of a palace made entirely of gems. Those whose hearts are pure will see its splendor, whereas an ant or someone with an offensive mentality will only try to find the hole. If we see how Śrīla Gurudeva is always serving Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugaḷa and how he is exclusively surrendered to Them, that will attract us and arouse in us an affection for him. And those who are not gentle and well-behaved towards him, will still unfortunately not be able to recognize the transcendental Vaiṣṇava, no matter how many virtues and material intelligence they may have developed by their *karmas*. They will not be able to judge his exclusive surrender to Their Lordships and will instead select a mundane personality.

Śrīla Gurudeva has brought with him the immaculate moods of the pure devotees and placed it right in the forefront of our consciousness. All we have to do is faithfully pay attention to him and we will benefit remarkably. He is not simply giving us an idea to ponder over like the armchair philosophers. Rather, he is showing us our exact spiritual identity and abode, and how to realize them. We should take advantage of this opportunity. This divine mercy comes only from a specially empowered personality who is overflowing with mercy from Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. No matter how low we *jīvas* have fallen, a powerful *guru* like Śrīla Gurudeva can bring us to the highest spiritual position by nourishing us and awakening our real nature and intrinsic mood of pure love of God.

We invite the sincere readers to deliberate on this book fully and relish the nature of Śrīla Gurudeva's *śuddha-bhakti*, the ultimate goal of all scriptures. See for yourself how the nectar of the *kṛṣṇa-prema* that he came to give manifests in his life and actions. We sincerely pray that Śrīla Gurudeva, who is the personification of mercy and forgiveness, may transmit his potency into the core of our hearts, so that we can render some pleasing service to fulfill his inner heart's longing to give *prema-bhakti* to the world. If we remain aloof from adverse association, hear from the lotus lips of pure devotees and read their devotional literatures, we will receive the highest, most sublime revelation of all, the supreme treasure, service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yuga.

I humbly beg your forgiveness for any mistakes,

Aspiring for the service of  
Śrī Hari, Guru & Vaiṣṇavas  
Rūpa-Raghunātha dāsa





## Introduction



*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā  
cakṣur unmīlitam yena tasmai śrī gurave namaḥ*

This book is about the most auspicious life and teachings of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. It is with great pleasure that we finally present this long anticipated book about Śrīla Gurudeva who is a treasure house of the most ecstatic form of pure love of God. Those who are fortunate will take advantage of this book. This is more than an historical timeline of events, for this book wonderfully summarizes the entire Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy and *siddhānta* as practised by an unalloyed, pure devotee of the Lord.

Hearing about a pure devotee is very auspicious, as it eradicates all doubts, misconceptions, misunderstandings and confusions on the path of pure devotional service. Those who are seriously looking for happiness in Kṛṣṇa consciousness must certainly give up all preconceived assumptions and transcend all sectarian designations, so that they can read this book with an open mind and get the real benefit of association with a fully realized Vaiṣṇava.

Śrī guru is the personification of Kṛṣṇa's mercy in this world. He comes to deliver the conditioned souls by enlightening them on the constitutional nature and eternal function of the soul. Gradually he reveals our eternal relationship and intimate service to the Lord. When we sincerely offer our life and soul to his lotus feet, our good fortune arises and in this way śrī guru opens the way to boundless peace and happiness for the conditioned soul.

Everyone tries to remove their suffering and increase their happiness. Some try to achieve this by hard labour and following moral principles, while others take drugs, have illicit relationships, steal and such in an attempt to improve the material conditions of their life. However, we see that all these attempts are baffled and happiness still remains elusive.

Whatever happiness we find in this world is meager and not everlasting. For example, one gains some pleasure by eating food, but if one keeps on eating, the same food that gives one pleasure will cause suffering. One does not want old age, diseases and death to come; yet they come. Any sane person will ponder over this problem and try to find a solution.

The scriptures tell us that we are not our bodies; rather we are souls, eternal parts and parcels of the supreme personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The soul's eternal constitutional function (*dharmā*) is eternal service and obedience to Kṛṣṇa. When the soul forgets his true identity as an eternal servant of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and instead identifies himself with the body, he is subjected to the tyranny of the illusory potency of the Lord (*māyā*) and his eternal constitutional function becomes perverted.

In an attempt to enjoy, the soul wanders in the material world taking one material body after another. However, all of his efforts to enjoy are obstructed by the external potency of the Lord. The material body is subjected to various types of suffering such as birth, old age, disease and death. The embodied living entity is always subject to the three types of miseries, namely, miseries caused by the mind, miseries caused by other living entities and miseries due to natural disturbances. However, the purpose of suffering is simply so that the living entities can realize that this suffering is unwanted and that this material world is not their home. The living entities can then strive for something everlasting or eternal.

The only way to achieve everlasting happiness is by performing devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is infinitely merciful, sends his eternal associates to teach us this process, so a seeker of everlasting happiness must necessarily take shelter of such people and learn this process from them. Such a teacher who can give us this supreme treasure is called a *guru*.

Service to *guru* is the backbone of devotional absorption (*bhajana*). Whoever wants to enter into the realm of *bhajana*, must first dedicate his life to the service of a bona fide *guru*. Such a *guru* will never consider the disciple to be his own property. Rather, he will consider the disciple to belong to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The bona fide *guru* will transfer the disciple's attachment and dedication for himself (for *guru*) to Them. Although he is an expansion

(*aveśa*) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, He never considers himself to be Śrī Kṛṣṇa; He always thinks that he is His eternal servant.

Our beloved Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is such a *guru*. Whoever reads this work will have a clear conception of the subject of Śrīla Gurudeva and his teachings.

This book will be like a lighthouse that guides those aspirants who want to progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness to reach spiritual perfection.

Just as Śrīla Vyāsadeva got inspiration by hearing the life history of his Gurudeva, Śrī Nārada Ṛṣi, one can get inspiration from hearing the biography of Śrīla Gurudeva. Without hearing about and serving *śrī guru*, no one can advance in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness either now, or in the future.

The mercy of *śrī guru* and Vaiṣṇavas is causeless, as it is independent of any material cause or piety. It is only by such causeless mercy that the *jīva* can obtain the merciful, sidelong glance of the eternally youthful couple of Vraja Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and join Them in Their eternal loving pastimes.

Therefore, without the mercy of real *sādhus* and *śrī guru*, pure spiritual desires for perfection will never awaken and fructify.

In describing the bona fide *guru*, it is never enough to just describe his external pastimes – what he was wearing, where, when, what foods he likes, etc. To properly glorify him, one must explain his teachings and his *siddhānta*. Unless one understands the teachings of the spiritual master, one cannot understand his mood, and if one does not understand his mood, one will not understand what his mission is all about. By understanding his mood, one can properly execute his mission. The mission of the bona fide *guru* is not independent of the previous *ācāryas*; it is the continuation of the mission that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī established on behalf of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī understood the inner mood of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and thus wrote many transcendental books on pure *bhakti* to establish His mission. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give *vraja-prema* through *nāma*, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

In the same way, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda is giving the same *vraja-prema* through *nāma*. The same mood and objective is being carried out by the pure devotees in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava line such as Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dāsa

Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣana, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is similarly continuing this powerful wave of pure *bhakti* – *bhakti* that is without a tinge of speculation, mundane *jñāna* or *karma*.

Śrī *guru* and his mission are thus never independent. The entire disciplic succession (*guru-varga*) is always with him. Śrī *guru* teaches lucidly and systematically all that he received from his spiritual master – the a,b,c, the x,y,z, and everything in between. Without securing his guiding grace, one will not be able to understand the deep meaning of his message.

People with ambitions other than to humbly serve śrī *guru* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are led astray by their own mind. Such unfortunate persons create enmity by finding faults in pure devotees and are unable to reconcile the apparent differences in the pure teachings of Vaiṣṇavas. We should not hear from such persons who are the cause of their own misfortune. To understand the spiritual meaning of the pure devotee's words, one has to serve the pure devotee favourably and intimately and thus by the grace of śrī *guru*, everything will be revealed in the heart. We will then be able to appreciate and understand the uncompromised quality of the *siddhānta* of śrī *guru*.

There is no confusion as to what is pure *bhakti* but as long as our heart is torn with material desires we will not be single pointed in our desire to serve purely.

Unless we are ready and willing to accept pure *bhakti* in our heart, we will not be able to recognize or fully appreciate a pure devotee. Our intelligence will be polluted and we will lose this rare opportunity which has been made accessible to humanity by the most munificent Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has clearly explained that the greatest opposition in the path of *bhakti* is the impersonal *māyāvāda* philosophy. This impersonalism comes in many forms and keeps us deeply entrenched in illusion, such as the hollow pride of empirical ignorance, which makes its way into the heart of immature devotees, who under such influence regard certain Vaiṣṇavas as enemies.

All devotees of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya should take shelter in His eternal spiritual community and unite to fight against such impersonalism and voidism.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is declared by all authorities and throughout the Vedas. Every living entity is His eternal servant. Our mind and senses are meant to be engaged in His service and only by such engagement will we be truly happy. This engagement is only given by a pure devotee. Śrī Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself to His pure devotee. To the non-devotees, Kṛṣṇa appears in His deluding feature. When the conditioned soul associates with the non-devotee, the Lord does not reveal Himself. Therefore the association of living pure devotees is most essential.

One's nature is determined and shaped by the company one keeps. Such association shapes one's character. The fruitive activities we performed in our past life and our past associations have moulded our nature in this current life.

By association with the living pure devotees and by understanding the Vaiṣṇava books, under their guidance, our lower nature will be transformed into good character.

The example is described in the Vedic scripture of a clear quartz crystal. It assumes the colour of any object in its proximity. Similarly, a person will acquire the qualities of whomever they join company with. Therefore association with saintly persons (*sādbu-saṅga*) is recommended throughout all revealed scriptures.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.23.55) clearly affirms:

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

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

Besides earnestly engaging in good association (*sādhū-saṅga*), it is also essential to give up unfavourable association, as recommended in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (3.31.33–34):

*satyaṁ śaucaṁ dayā maunaṁ buddhibḥ śrīr hrīr yaśaḥ kṣamā  
śamo damo bhagaś ceti yat-saṅgād yāti saṅkṣayam  
teṣv aśānteṣu mūḍheṣu khaṇḍitātmasv aśādbuṣu  
saṅgaṁ na kuryāc chocyēṣu yoṣit-krīḍā-mrgeṣu ca*

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

This book describes the necessity of association of saintly persons (*sādhū-saṅga*) and explains who is a bona fide *guru*, what are the rarely understood symptoms of a genuine *sādhū* and especially, how to attain the desired goal of life. The pastimes of Śrīla Gurudeva have been presented here so as to enable the devotees to associate with him.

When I joined the Gauḍīya Maṭha, my revered *dikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja specifically put me under the loving care of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and ordered me to serve him. Consequently, I received the opportunity to associate closely with both of these divine personalities. They were Godbrothers, dear disciples of Parama-gurudeva Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the respect and intimacy they shared was unparalleled. For many years my *dikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja was the *ācārya* and initiating *guru* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti.

At that time Śrīla Gurudeva was not initiating disciples, but was always guiding and instructing devotees. He taught all of us in the *maṭha* by his personal example, always emphasizing the *trṇād-āpi sunīcena* verse by Lord Caitanya, which states that one should be humbler than a

blade of grass and more forbearing than a tree, and that one should offer respect to everyone without desiring respect from others. His unique quality was that he was always speaking *hari-kathā* and telling us that in order to get Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy, we should constantly pray for the mercy of His beloved Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. In his *bhājana* he was never proud, but on the contrary was always tolerant, merciful and a well-wisher of all. If there were any issues or disagreements between any devotees, whichever way Śrīla Gurudeva decided to handle the matter was always fully backed by my *dīkṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Therefore, whatever Śrīla Gurudeva ordered was the mandate for everyone in the Samiti.

The Vedic scriptures and the writings of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* direct the sincere seeker of the truth to the pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. By submissive hearing with an open mind to the transcendental sound appearing on the lips of a pure devotee, one learns about Kṛṣṇa who is the Absolute Truth.

The conditioned soul cannot directly hear Śrī Kṛṣṇa on his own strength. His words have to be heard from the lips of a pure devotee. If one does not seek help from the pure devotee, one will surely be deluded. Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears in the heart of the pure devotee and only when the conditioned soul hears the holy name and pastimes of the Lord from the lips of such a *sādhū* can he perceive the Lord who is identical with His transcendental name, His divine form, qualities, activities and paraphernalia.

To properly understand the teachings of the great Vaiṣṇavas, one requires a service attitude that is free from mundane desires, mundane knowledge and speculation. The divine message is not transmitted by scholars interested in displaying erudition and minor details of technical knowledge. One will only be in a position to receive the divine message – that same message that was received by the *guru* in *paramparā* – when the *guru* is pleased.

One cannot approach the Lord without adhering to the method He has Himself prescribed. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself created the *guru-paramparā* system in order to receive transcendental knowledge. Thus the living pure devotee is the perfect medium for the appearance of the Lord to the conditioned souls. Otherwise, the Lord will remain covered and the

teachings of the great Vaiṣṇavas will also be grossly misunderstood. This is the bona fide way to understand and attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa that He Himself has given. There is no other way. Any other speculative and unauthorized methods to attain Kṛṣṇa are simply manifestations of impersonalism.

Lord Śiva once said to his consort Pārvatī:

"O Bhagavatī, among thousands upon thousands of persons desiring salvation, perhaps one exhibits the characteristics of a liberated soul. Among thousands upon thousands of such persons, maybe one actually achieves spiritual realisation and perfection. And among millions and millions of perfected and liberated souls, perhaps one, on the strength of his past virtuous activities (*sukṛti*) and good association (*sat-saṅga*), is devoted to Lord Nārāyaṇa. Just see, the devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa are self-satisfied and therefore they are extremely rare. But look here. If the pure devotee who serves Lord Nārāyaṇa in the mood of servitorship (*dāsyā-rasa*) is so rare, how much more uncommon is he who serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mood of amorous love (*mādhurya-rasa*)."

May this glorification of Śrīla Gurudeva, who is very dear to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, bring great happiness to the hearts of all the Vaiṣṇavas.

Completed on the occasion of Śrī Annakūṭa,  
Śrī Gaurabda 524, 7 November, 2010

*Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu* Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja  
(Dr. N. K. Brahmācārī, Ph.D.)



## Introduction (Continued) and Entering Aprakāṣa-līlā

The above first part of this introduction was written in the presence of our beloved Śrīla Gurudeva. When I presented an advance copy of Volume I of this biography in Govardhana to Śrīla Gurudeva, he became very happy. He asked me later in Jagannātha Purī, “How many volumes will you do?”

I told him, “Minimum four.” Gurudeva said, “Minimum four? You can do so many?” I said, “Yes. By your grace I could do more, but I will do a minimum of four.”

This second volume is being presented after Śrīla Gurudeva’s transcendental disappearance and return to Lord Kṛṣṇa’s eternal abode. I am therefore adding this entry to my original introduction for this volume.

Śrīla Gurudeva entered the *aprakāṣa-līlā*, the eternal pastimes of Śrī Śrī Ramaṇa Bihārījī, on the 29th of December, 2010. This specific day is very auspicious for all in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community. That particular day was also the appearance day of my Guru Mahārāja, Nitya-līlā Praviṣṭa Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī. As Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s and His pure representative’s appearance and disappearance are all spiritual, why did Śrīla Gurudeva choose this very day for his departure? There are so many reasons behind this which include:

- 1) When Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla B.V. Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja came to Navadvīpa *dhāma* at midnight, my Guru Mahārāja Śrīla B.V. Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja received him at the railway station of Navadvīpa and brought him to Devānanda Gauḍīya Māṭha in Navadvīpa, Nadia. My Guru Mahārāja took Śrīla Gurudeva inside the realm of the Divine Couple, under the guidance of *parama-gurudeva* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñana Keśava Mahārāja whose eternal constitutional form is Śrī Vinoda Māñjarī in the service of Rādhā-kṛṣṇa. To show that Śrīla Gurudeva is going to his Gurudeva along with his elder brother, Śrīla Gurudeva chose the auspicious occasion of my Guru Mahārāja’s Vyāsa-pūjā (appearance day). Just as Śrīla Gurudeva

came to *param-gurudeva* with his dearmost elder god-brother, similarly, he now entered into *nitya-līlā* choosing the appearance day of his elder god-brother who is so near to *param-gurudeva*.

- 2) Their intimacy has no bound and has no limit. During Śrīla Gurudeva's sickness pastimes at Govardhana, all devotees were thinking that Śrīla Gurudeva would enter into *nitya-līlā* on the disappearance day of my Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the disappearance day (exactly two years earlier) of one of my prominent *śikṣā gurus*, who is also their near and dear godbrother Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Hence, all devotees were very scared and extremely alert, thinking that Śrīla Gurudeva may depart on that day. The devotees were doing *kīrtana* and *bhajana* throughout the day and night, constantly praying to Śrī Girirāja Mahārāja and Śrī Narasiṃha-deva. Knowing the devotee's hearts, Śrīla Gurudeva decided not to depart on that very auspicious day in Kārtika. Later on, Gurudeva chose the date of my Guru Mahārāja's appearance day. In Jagannātha Purī, Gurudeva was always absorbed in the mood of separation, manifesting various symptoms. Sometimes he would get the hiccups non-stop, sometimes tears would flow from his eyes incessantly trickling down his face and sometimes his body would shake and foam would come from his mouth. All these were ecstatic symptoms of *prema*. Due to our foolishness we could not recognize all these ecstatic symptoms. Whoever has seen these manifestations of Śrīla Gurudeva is extremely fortunate; of this, there is no doubt. None of the devotees attending him informed Śrīla Gurudeva of the day of the appearance of my Guru Mahārāja. How Śrīla Gurudeva knew that very day and chose it to depart for his final journey is a mystery for those in general. This is inconceivable and is evidence that their intimacy has no limit. Surely there are many more causes for his final journey! Certainly there are many more explanations, but these reasons I've listed above are primary.

The special attraction of this book is the eternal identity of our most beloved Śrīla Gurudeva who expertly explained the spontaneous devotional moods of the residents of Vraja like no one else did at this time and is therefore naturally the most prominent *rāgānuga-rasika-ācārya* of our time.

The *siddha-deba* or constitutional form of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, our most beloved Śrīla Gurudeva is Śrī Raman Māñjarī, an eternal associate of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Her eternal *sevā* (loving transcendental service) is performed in the *nikuñja-līlā* of the Divine Couple, under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī and others. Fortunate are those who follow and receive the mercy of Śrīla Gurudeva.

I wrote *Śrī Ramaṇa-māñjarī-aṣṭakam*, a poem of eight verses in Sanskrit in 1992 and presented it to Śrīla Gurudeva much later, in 2008. Śrīla Gurudeva became very much pleased when I read it to him. He kept his merciful hand on my head and on my back. He blessed me to render ever-increasing devotional service under his guidance. Those devotees who are eager for *vraja-prema* and thirsty for *bhakti* will relish the explanation of this *aṣṭakam*.

Śrīla Gurudeva is a pure, *rasika* devotee and for those wanting to serve in the mood of the residents of Vraja and wanting qualification to practice *rāgānugā-bhakti*, he gives the qualification.

The main attraction and source of inspiration for this book is *parama-ārādhyatama* Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, by whose mercy all things are possible. Many others have kindly encouraged me throughout the years to write and were also great sources of inspiration. There are far too many to mention here, but I would like to thank all of them. I particularly want to give special credit to Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Tirtha Mahārāja, Śrīman Premānanda Prabhu, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Parivrājaka Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Vana Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Padmanābha Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Sajjana Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Siddhānti Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Dāmodara Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Govinda Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Harijana Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Nāraśimha Mahārāja, Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Paramahansa Mahārāja, Śrīman Brajanātha Prabhu, Śrīman Mādhava-priya Prabhu, Śrīman Amala Kṛṣṇa Prabhu, Śrīman Vijaya Kṛṣṇa Prabhu, Śrīman Dvija Kṛṣṇa Prabhu, Śrīman Rāmacandra Prabhu, Śrīman Rohiṇī-nandana Prabhu, Śrīman Hare Kṛṣṇa Prabhu, Śrīman Balarāma Prabhu, Śrīman Sanjay Prabhu, Śrīman Mahābuddhi Prabhu, and Śrīmatī Vṛndā-devī Dāsī.

Śrīmatī Śyāmarānī Dāsī was on the Advisory Board together with Śrīmatī Vaijayantī Mālā Dāsī, Śrīman Brajanātha Prabhu, Śrīmatī Poonam Dāsī, Śrīman Pankaj a Prabhu and Śrīman Acyutānanda Prabhu.

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There are many more and I would like to extend my thanks to all of them, especially to the Chief of the Financial Board, Śrīman Nandar Prabhu and Śrīmatī Sāvitrī didi.

## Apology

By the causeless mercy of Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrī Guru Paramparā and all the Vaiṣṇavas, I have tried my level best to present to the readers the teachings and biography of Śrīla Gurudeva. I beg forgiveness for not putting all the events in regular historical sequence. I have recorded many of these pastimes from memories that came first in my mind, in the style of Śrīla

Jagadānanda Paṇḍita who wrote the pastimes of the Lord in his *Prema-vivarta* according to his loving remembrances and not according to the standard sequential order. This book is therefore by no means an attempt to narrate the pastimes of Śrīla Gurudeva in chronological sequence. By talking with Śrīla Gurudeva, researching my personal notes and hearing the tape recordings, I have, from time to time, added extra details.

This biographical style may not appeal to every reader; indeed to write a biography approved by all readers is not possible at all. Still this book may be considered as an authentic biography full of bona fide *siddhānta* rather than an analytical study of a great person.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has written in his *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 2.85:

*prabhura yei ācaraṇa, sei kari varṇana,  
sarva-citta nāri ārādhite*

Some may complain I have been unduly harsh and perhaps others may object that I am overly mild. I am only trying to describe the true facts as they are without unduly trying to satisfy everyone.

I think the *sāragrāhī* Vaiṣṇavas will understand these teachings by overlooking the faults and accepting the good qualities.

*sakala vaiṣṇava gōsāi doyā koro more  
dante tṛṇa dhoṛi' kabe e dīna pāmāre*

I offer my humble obeisances at the lotus feet of all Vaiṣṇavas and taking a blade of straw between my teeth, I humbly beg for their mercy,

*Tridaṇḍī-bhikṣu* Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja,  
Ph.D – Philosophy, Ph.D – Vaiṣṇava Philosophy





## Maṅgalācaraṇa



*vande 'ham śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca  
śrī-rūpaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saba-gaṇa-raghunāthānvitaṁ taṁ sa-jīvam  
sādvaitaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sabitaṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ  
śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saba-gaṇa-lalitā-śrī-viśākhānvitāṁś ca*

I offer praṇāmas to the lotus feet of *śrī gurudeva* (both *dīkṣā* and *bhajana-śikṣā-gurus*); to our entire disciplic succession (*guru-varga*) and all other Vaiṣṇavas; to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and his elder brother Śrī Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, accompanied by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and their associates; to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates headed by Śrī Advaita Prabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu; and to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, who are accompanied by Śrī Lalitā, Śrī Viśākhā and all the other *sakbīs*.

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
cakṣur unmilitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

O Śrīla Gurudeva, you are so merciful. With the torchlight of divine knowledge, you have opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance. Praying from the core of my heart, I humbly offer my deep *praṇāma* at your lotus feet.

*vande śrī pādpadmāḥ śrī vāmana-nārayaṇa-trivikramāḥ  
yeṣāṁ kṛpā prasādaib vraja bhakti hr̥di prakāṣṭiyati*

I worship the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārayaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. By their causeless mercy, *bhakti* will manifest in the hearts of those who follow them.

*śrī thākuraṇī priya dayitāya kṛpādbhaye  
tattva-traya pradānāya vāmanāya namo namaḥ*

I offer my obeisances to the lotus feet of *nitya-lilā praviṣṭha om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who always used to

address Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as Ṭhākūrānī; who is very near and dear to Her; who is an ocean of mercy; and who gives the conditioned souls transcendental knowledge of the three *tattvas*, namely, *sambandha*, *abbidheya* and *prayojana*.

*śrī-nityānanda-abbinnāya gaura-kāmaika-carine  
rūpānugā-pravarāya 'śrī-rāga' iti svarūpini*

He is the non-different manifestation of *akbanda-guru-tattva* (the principle of *śrī guru* as one undivided whole), Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu. He fulfilled the inner desire of Śrī Gaurasundara by preaching *rāga-mārga-bhakti* to the whole world. I offer *praṇāma* to the most worshipable lotus feet of my Śrī Gurudeva, who is the best among the *rūpānugas* and who, in his eternal transcendental form (*siddha-svarūpa*), is Śrīmatī Rādhā Ṭhākūrānī's Rāga Mañjari.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya rādhikāya priyātmane  
śrī-śrīmad-bhaktivedānta-nārāyaṇa iti nāmine*

I offer *praṇāma* to *om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, who is very dear to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-lilā kathāne sudakṣam audārya-mādburya guṇais ca yuktam  
varam varenyam puruṣam mahāntam nārāyaṇam tvam śirasā namāmi*

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is expert in describing *kṛṣṇa-lilā*. He is endowed with the qualities of magnanimity and sweetness, and he is the best of the great souls. He is able to freely distribute Kṛṣṇa's sweetness to others because he is always relishing that sweetness himself. I bow down and place my head at his lotus feet.

*yugācārya prabhum vande nārāyaṇa karuṇalayam  
rādhā-dāsyē lobham dattvā tārayati bhuvana trayam*

I worship Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja who was awarded the title of *yugācārya* and who is the abode of mercy. He shows the path of *rāgānugā-bhakti* and thus delivers the three worlds.<sup>1</sup>

1 Śrīla Gurudeva was awarded the title of *yugācārya* by Śrīman Dipak Bhaṭṭa, the *guru* and *mahānta* (spiritual leader) of Śrī Varṣana Temple (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's father's royal palace) in Vraja, India. The most benevolent Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered pure

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale  
śrimate bhaktivedānta svāmin iti nāmine  
namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vānī-pracāriṇe  
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

I offer my respectful obeisances to the lotus feet of *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī* who is very dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O dear servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Gaurasundara and delivering the Western countries which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

*vāñchā-kalpa-tarubyas ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca  
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

I offer praṇāmas unto all the Vaiṣṇavas, who are just like wish-fulfilling desire trees, who are an ocean of mercy and who deliver the fallen, conditioned souls.

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya pracbhu nityānanda  
śrī-advaita gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*

I offer my respectful obeisances to the most munificent Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya who is known as Gaura because of His golden complexion. I offer my respectful obeisances to His immediate expansion, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu; to His incarnation, Śrī Advaita Ācārya; to His internal potency, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita; to His great pure devotee, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita; and to all the devotees who follow Him.

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare  
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

.....  
*bhakti* to the three worlds and Śrīla Gurudeva continues to deliver that same pure *bhakti* in a similar way.





## Śrī Guru Tattva and Śrī Guru-sevaka



### The Glory of Gauḍīya Guru-paramparā

The first and general understanding of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *tattva* is that the *jīva* or soul is the eternal servant of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *jīvera 'svarūpa' bhāya-kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa* (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 20.108*).

When attachment and desire to serve Śrī Rādhā becomes more powerful than attachment to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then *aiśvarya* (the Lord's majestic opulence) becomes covered.

The majestic *aiśvarya* mood of great awe and reverence is not manifest in the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura explains in his *Bhajana-rahasya, 5.10*:

*rādhā-pāda vīṇā kabhu kṛṣṇa nabi mile*

Without taking shelter of the lotus feet of Rādhā, one can never meet Kṛṣṇa.

*rādhikā dāsīra kṛṣṇa sarva-vede bole*

The Vedic scriptures declare that Kṛṣṇa is the property of the *māñjarīs*, the maidservants of Śrī Rādhā.

The glorious position of Śrī Rādhā is revealed by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī:

*jagat-mohana kṛṣṇa, tāñhāra mohinī*

*Caitanya Caritamṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.95*

That very Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who attracts the entire universe with His beauty, qualities, pastimes, nature, opulence, sweetness, and other aspects, is Himself attracted and rendered helpless by the unparalleled and unsurpassed love of Vṛṣabhānu-nandini Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

govindānandini rādhā, govinda-mobinī  
govinda-sarvasva, sarva-kāntā-śiromaṇi

Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.82

Śrī Rādhā is the one who gives pleasure to Govinda. The world is enchanted by Govinda but Govinda Himself is enchanted by Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Rādhā is everything for Govinda and She is the crest jewel of all His beautiful consorts.

The pleasure-giving potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's internal energy is called the *hlādinī-śakti*. The purest and most complete manifestation of the *hlādinī-śakti* is displayed by the Vraja *gopīs*, among whom Śrī Rādhā is the topmost crest jewel.

The essence of this pleasure giving potency or *hlādinī* is love of God, *prema*. The essence of *prema* or love of God is called *bhāva*. The ultimate manifestation of *bhāva* is *mahābhāva*. The embodiment of that exalted *mahābhāva* is Śrīmatī Rādhikā as is stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [Ādi-līlā 4.69], *mahābhāva-svarūpa śrī rādhā ṭhākurānī*.

Of all the loving devotees and eternal intimate associates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhā's transcendental loving service to Her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest.

Therefore to become a maidservant, a *kiṅkarī* of Śrī Rādhā is the topmost cherished goal of all the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. This is the speciality and glory of our line, *sva-priya-carāṇa-kinkarim kuru* (Śrī Rādhā-Prārthanā 2).

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja reveals - Śrī Kīṣorī's maidservants (kinkaris) are always devoted to Her service. The word *kainkarya* expresses a mood of being ardent to serve and it means *kim karomi*, "What may I do? What service can I do?"

This mood of pure *rādhā-dāsyā* is called *māñjarī-bhāva*. *Sva-priya-carāṇa-kinkarim kuru*, please make me a *kiṅkarī* at the lotus feet of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī birth after birth.

By the causeless mercy of the maidservants of Vraja, and by the causeless mercy of Śrī Guru, that *māñjarī bhāva svarūpa*, the mood of a *māñjarī*, is revealed in the heart of a sober *sādhaka*.

These topics should be understood soberly by a *śiṣya* (servant of Śrī Guru) who fully controls their senses.

In the practice of *rāgānuga bhakti*, the *mādhurya* feature of the Lord covers His *aiśvarya* feature. The *sādhaka* tastes the unlimited sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities and pastimes. In this way, the *sādhaka* realizes Śrī Guru as a confidential associate of Śrī Rādhikā.

In *vaidhī-bhakti*, a disciple's relationship with Śrī Guru is dominated by awe and reverence; he understands Śrī Guru is *sākṣād-bhari*, non-different from Śrī Bhagavān.

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-sāstrair  
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhir*

Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam 7

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes that all the scriptures and all the saints proclaim Śrī Guru to be *sākṣād-bhari*, one who is endowed with the potency of Śrī Hari and is His direct representative. Many of the same qualities of the Lord automatically reside in Śrī Guru. This understanding of Śrī Guru is in *vaidhī-bhakti*.

*kintu prabhor yab priya eva tasya  
vande guroh śrī caraṇāravinda*

Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam 7

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura further reveals that Śrī Guru is very dear to the Lord because he is a very confidential *servitor* of the Lord. Śrī Guru is thus simultaneously different and non-different from Śrī Hari, *acintya-bhedābheda-prakāśa-vigraha*.

Such a personality is therefore most worshipable and I offer prayers unto his lotus feet.

Understanding Śrī Guru as a very dear and confidential servitor is a manifestation of *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

Following in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, a *rāgānuga bhakta's* realization of Śrī Guru is as *mukunda-preṣṭha*, the nearest and dearest of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. His relationship with Śrī Guru will be marked by intimate service and friendship.

Śrīla Raghunātha Gosvāmī reveals in his *Manab Śīkṣā* verse 2:

*na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru  
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām ibha tanu  
śacī-sūnuṁ nandīśvara-pati-sutatve guru-varaṁ  
mukunda-preṣṭhatve smara param ajasraṁ nanu manab*

O my dear mind! Please do not perform either the *dharma* or *adharma* mentioned in the śrutis or Vedas. Rather, you should render profuse loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-Yugala here in Vraja, for the śrutis have ascertained Them to be the highest principle of supreme worship and the Supreme Absolute Truth. Always meditate on Śācīnandana Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, richly endowed with the complexion and sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, as non-different from Śrī Nandanandana and always remember Śrīla Gurudeva as most dear to Śrī Mukunda.

Śrī Guru is *mukunda preṣṭha*, the nearest and dearest of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Mukunda means that personality who refutes the happiness of *mukti* (impersonal liberation) and gives *premānanda* to His dear devotee. It also means *Mu*, jubilant; *mukha-padmaṁ kuṇḍa*, whose face is like a *kuṇḍa* or lotus flower.

The *rāga-bhakti sādhaka* sees his *guru*, not as *sākṣād-bhari*, but as an intimate friend of the Lord. The highest limit of friendship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa is manifest in the mood of the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

In *Bṛhat-bhakti-tattva-sāra*, it is said,

*rādhā-sanmukha-saṁsaktiṁ sakbī-saṅga-nivāsinīm  
tām abam satataṁ vande guru-rūpāṁ parāṁ sachem*

I forever worship my *guru*, who in his form as an exalted *sakbī*, is happily immersed in the company of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the other *sakbīs*.

It is described here that Gurudeva is a *priya-sakbī*, maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī previously described Śrī Guru as *mukunda preṣṭha*, as most dear to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa has unlimited relationships

with the Vrajavāsīs such as with Raktrak and Patrak who are servants of Nanda Bābā, in *dāsya-rasa*; with Subhal and Madhumaṅgal in *sakhya-rasa*, with Nanda and Yaśodā in *vātsalya-rasa* and with the *sakhīs* in *mādburya-rasa* such as Lalitā, Viśākhā, Campakalata and so on. Amongst them all, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is most near and dear to Kṛṣṇa. Of all the *gopīs* in Vraja who have *madhura* (loving service and devotion in the conjugal mood), Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *madhura-rasa* is of the highest limit.

Śrī Rādhikā has five types of *sakhīs* or dear friends. Among them, the *prāṇa sakhīs* and *nitya sakhīs* are very near and dear to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. These dear friends are called “*māñjarīs*”. The position of the *māñjarīs* or young friends of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is given in *Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta*:

*rādhāra svarūpa—kṛṣṇa-prema-kalpalatā*  
*sakhī-gaṇa haya tāra puṣpa-pātā*

*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 8.209*

By nature Śrī Rādhā is like a creeper of *kṛṣṇa-prema* and the *sakhīs* (*māñjarīs*) are the leaves, flowers and twigs of that creeper. When the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is sprinkled on that creeper, the leaves, flowers and twigs experience a happiness millions times greater than if they were to be directly sprinkled with this nectar. The *māñjarīs* have much greater affection towards Rādhikā than towards Kṛṣṇa (*bhāva-ullāsa-rati, tat-tad bhāva icchāmāyī*); thus they are known as *Rādhā-sneha-adhika*, and because Śrīmatī Rādhikā loves them so much, they are also very near and dear to Kṛṣṇa.

*yat-kiṅkarīṣu babuśah khalu kaku-vāñī,*  
*nityam parasya puruṣasya śikhaṇḍa-mauleh*

*Śrī Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi 8*

Śrīla Prabhodhānanda Sarasvatī, another great *rasika ācārya* in our line, has mercifully revealed in the above verse, how Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Enjoyer who wears a peacock feather in His hair, who is the source of all incarnations, falls at the feet of Śrī Rādhikā's young maidservants, the *māñjarīs*, begging them to allow Him to meet with Śrī Rādhikā.

Thus Śrī Guru is celebrated as *mukunda preṣṭha*, one very dear to Mukunda (Kṛṣṇa), by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

The realization that Śrī Guru is a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is essential for the *rāgānuga sādhabaka*. Under the guidance of his *guru-sakhī* or *guru-māñjarī*, at the appropriate time, Śrī Guru reveals that *māñjarī-bhāva* in the heart of his qualified disciple. The *sādhabaka* thus remembers the *aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā* or eight-fold daily pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, meditating on his Gurudeva as a *māñjarī* serving in those pastimes under the affectionate guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Māñjarī.

There is no room for mental speculation, imagination or fantasy in this factual bona fide process of *rāga-mārga*.

When the *sādhabaka* achieves qualification, the manifest *guru* will accordingly instruct him on his service to the Divine Couple in his spiritual body.

The *rāgānuga sādhabaka* while remaining in this world meditates internally on the service given to him by Śrī Gurudeva; as Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prayed in his Gīta Mālā:

*barane tadit, basa taravali,  
kamalā māñjarī nāma  
sade bara barsa, bayasa satata,  
svananda-sukhada-dhāma*

My color will be lightning, my garments a host of stars, my name Kamalā Māñjarī, my age eternally twelve and a half years, my home Svānanda-sukhada.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is revealing his own *siddha svarūpa* as Kamalā Māñjarī and her eternal service, which is, among other services, to supply camphor and betel nuts to the Divine Couple. In the same way, meditating on his eternal form and service, the *sādhabaka* will receive the mercy of Yogamāyā Devī and one day enters into the eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple. In due course of time, these will be revealed in the pure heart of the disciple, by the causeless mercy of Śrī Guru.

Śrī Guru is manifest here with us in this world and simultaneously in the spiritual realm is serving Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa. One may question how can Śrī Guru be present in this world and also be serving in the spiritual world? All this

is possible by the execution of the inconceivable potency and mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, the unified form of the Divine Couple. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains in his *Jaiva Dharma* that when a soul is performing *sādhana* in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in this exceptionally fortunate *Kālī-yuga*, at the time of achieving perfection, that soul will attain two *svarūpas*, that is two eternal forms - one will be eternally present in the pastimes of Mahāprabhu and one will serve in the *nitya-līlā* of the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa. In the same way, Śrīla Gurudeva can be present in the material world in one *svarūpa* and simultaneously be serving in the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal.

When the *sādhaka* of *rāgānuṅga bhakti* is absorbed in his internal meditation, a state of *samādhī* or trance is attained. In his internal spiritual body, he enters into the eternal pastimes of the spiritual realm while still situated in his manifest form in the material world. This is the speciality of one totally immersed in *rāgānuṅga bhakti*. This cannot be achieved by one who is still a prisoner of his material mind and senses. If a homeless person who is sleeping on a torn mattress, dreams that he is the president of a country, does that make him the president? No, as this is just a dream of a conditioned soul. One should be very careful not to think and mistake the meditation or spiritual trance of a fully liberated devotee, who is not under the influence of the material modes of nature, to be an illusion, a dream or an imagination. By the mercy of Śrī Guru, the qualified devotee meditates on his eternal, spiritual form situated in a grove or *kuñja* in Vraja and serves the Divine Couple under the guidance of his *guru-sakhī*. This topmost reality is not a wishful fantasy, a dream or an illusion in the realm of the mundane world. Pure, spontaneous devotional service is eternal and transcendental in nature. The pure spiritual desires of the *sādhaka* become an eternal reality by the mercy of Śrī Guru and Śrī Guru-*paramparā* .

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja explains that Śrī Guru is like a desire-tree. By his causeless mercy, Śrī Guru causes the spiritual *svarūpa* or identity of the disciple to appear within the disciple's heart. Having full faith in Śrī Guru's words, the *sādhaka* whole-heartedly performs *bhajana* (devotional service) with firm *niṣṭhā* (steadiness), and by the mercy of the *blādinī-śakti* (the spiritual pleasure potency), he

fully realizes his ultimate *svarūpa* or identity. The *sādhaka* then intently engages in the service of his most cherished Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the skillful enjoyer of pastimes. Śrī Guru will instruct everything necessary to the cent-percent surrendered disciple, truly rewarding him spiritually, far beyond any expectations.

By his unalloyed sincere service to his Gurudeva, the devotee can understand how Śrī Guru is simultaneously serving both in this world and in the spiritual world. He therefore assists Śrī Guru at all times. This uninterrupted selfless service or assistance to his Gurudeva is the natural cause of the auspicious manifestation of his spiritual *svarūpa* or form.

In the practice of *rāgānuga bhakti* the conception that Śrī Guru is Kṛṣṇa *rūpa* and *svarūpa*, the direct manifestation of Kṛṣṇa, will be covered.

The *sādhaka* will continuously serve Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the groves, the *kuñjas* of Vṛndāvana under the guidance of his Gurudeva who is Mukunda *preṣṭha*, the dear maidservant of Rādhikā.

This conception is the essence and highest understanding of Śrī Guru Tattva and Śrī Guru-sevaka.

## Śrīman Mahāprabhu's Greatest Donation

Śrīla Gurudeva has explained that Mahāprabhu came to give us the mood of maid-servitorship to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

In *Kālī-yuga*, a qualified *sādhaka* in the line of Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī only needs to understand, by realization, that Gurudeva has an eternal form as a *māñjarī* in Vraja-līlā.

As revealed by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, there are two processes by which one may execute this *rāgānuga bhakti*, externally and internally. The self-realized, advanced devotee externally remains just like a *vaidhī-bhakta* and executes all the scriptural, *śāstric* injunctions especially hearing and chanting. However, internally as an eternal associate of the Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, he always serves the Divine Couple in Vṛndāvana. In this way he serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa throughout the day and night.

In the physical and subtle body the *jīvātmā* is performing many activities (walking, talking, thinking, calculating, etc). These activities are only going on due to the presence of the soul. In the same way, the 'soul' of devotional service or *bhajana* is *śrī kṛṣṇa nāma-saṅkīrtana*, the chanting of the holy names, without which the other limbs of *bhakti* cannot function.

Although in the practice of *rāgānuga sādhana*, *smaraṇa* or remembrance is prominent, it must be understood that this remembrance is a limb of *bhajana* or devotional service, as are the other practices of *bhakti* such as *arcana*, etc.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give this extremely unique and astounding gift of maid-servitorship (*māñjarī bhāva*) to Śrī Rādhā through the glorious process of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. This glorious appearance and matchless gift of Mahāprabhu is very exceptional as it happens only once in a day of Brahmā.

In answer to questions from Paṇḍita Śyāmasundara Cakravartī, a famous leader of the independence movement in India, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda said that others acts of kindness are defective because they are part of the *māyika* (illusory) energy. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda explained, “The kindness that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has shown to *jīvas*, absolves them eternally from all wants, from all inconveniences and from all the distresses known as *tritāpa*. That kindness does not produce any evil and the *jīvas* who have got it will not be victims of the evils of the world; they will rather be swimming in the nectarian sea of Love, eternally enjoying its sweetness... Unlike other forms of kindness, His Lordship’s Grace is unproductive of evils... Kavirāja Gosvāmī Prabhu (the author of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta) has asked us to make a comparative study between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s Grace and all the so-called kindnesses that are incomplete and imperfect. Where there is not the gift of an eternal nature, there must be inadequacy, defect and deception...” (Quoted from Śrī *Sajjana-toṣani* – The Harmonist)

### The Holy Name is the Best Process for Perfection

Śrīla Gurudeva explained again and again, “Chanting the Holy Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the process for attaining perfection of *bhajana*”. The age of Kālī is considered the most wretched age, but this present *Kālī-yuga* is extremely fortunate and rare because of the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who personally comes to deliver the pure process of devotion. He comes in *Kālī-yuga*, but only *once* in a thousand cycles of *Kālī-yuga* or after billions of years. Śrī Caitanya-devā opens the heart of the sincere chanter of Hare Kṛṣṇa, to an intimate loving relationship with the most beautiful relisher of all relationships, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Without His mercy and the mercy of the entire *Pañca-tattva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya, Prabhu Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Śrī Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa and the *Gaura-bhaktas*, one cannot get the mercy of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Gurudeva continuously explained to us that the Holy Name, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāmā Hare Hare, is the embodiment of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

The loving intimacy with God that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is bestowing is not available or attainable by any other method or in any other religion or at any other time. This invaluable gift that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give is brought to us by the mercy of Śrī Guru. The pure Nāma given by Śrī Guru and his pure representatives contains and bestows all spiritual benedictions that can be achieved by following any other process in any of the four *yugas*.

Any type of *sādhana* or devotional practice, be it *rāgānuga* (spontaneous) or *vaidhī* (regulative) are rendered useless without the presence of Śrī Nāma-*saṅkīrtana*. This is confirmed by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī in his *Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.3.158:

*kr̥ṣṇasya nānā-vidha-kīrtaneṣu  
tan-nāma-saṅkīrtanam eva mukhyam  
tat-prema-saṁpaj-janane svayaṁ drāk  
śaktam tatab śreṣṭhatamaṁ mātām tat*

Of the many ways to glorify Lord Kṛṣṇa, chanting His holy name is the first. Because it has the power to give the great wealth of pure love for Him, it is considered the best.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also written in his *Bhakti Sandarbha* 275:

*nāma-saṅkīrtana aparitāyāgena smaraṇam kuryāt*

Without the performance of *kīrtana* one cannot do *smaraṇam*, meditation or remembrance.

Although there are fundamental differences in the path of *rāgānuga* and *vaidhī bhakti*, in the beginning both stages appear to be the same. Thus the development from faith or *śraddhā* to *prema* (love) is almost the same for the *vaidhī sādhaka* as it is for the *rāgānuga sādhaka*.

In the path of *vaidhī*, the *sādhaka* or practitioner is following the injunctions of scripture in a regulated way and tries to perform devotional service or *bhajana*. His propensity toward *bhakti* (devotion) is based only on hearing the injunctions of *śāstra*.

The devotee in *rāgānuga bhakti* also meticulously follows the prescribed rules and regulations but internally cherishes an intense transcendental greed to hear the sweet pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and thus he is attracted to serve and have a *rasa* or a relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa such as in *mādhurya-rasa*.

Such a *rāgānuga sādhaka* or devotee, while still in his *sādhaka-deha* (manifest body in the material world), will perform the nine limbs of *bhakti* or devotional service in his external body, and at the same time meditate internally on his eternal form. This form or *svarūpa* is not given prematurely and as mentioned previously it is revealed or gradually given by Śrī Guru when one comes to an advanced stage of uninterrupted favorable devotional service. This *svarūpa* is the devotee's real constitutional eternal spiritual form. By hearing this, one should develop strong faith in the process of devotional service, beginning with initiation by a bona fide *guru*.

### Every Soul has a Particular Rasa

Śrīla Gurudeva has explained so many times that different devotees have different characteristics, desires or tendencies and will choose to follow a particular Vrajavāsī in order to attain the goal of service in their particular *rāsaa*. In Vraja there are many *rasas* or relationships such as *sakhyā* (friendship), *vātsalya* (parental) and *mādhurya* (conjugal).

The *sādhaka* may meditate on Kṛṣṇa with His cowherd friends in *sakhyā rasa* and consider their Guru to be a *sakbā*; in the same way, by meditation upon parental love between Śrī Kṛṣṇa with His parents, Nanda Bābā and Mother Yaśodā, the *sādhaka* follows the mood of *vātsalya-rasa*.

The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas however, who are in our Guru Paramparā, the disciplic line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, follow Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī who in *Vraja-līlā*, is Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī, an eternal maidservant, confidentially assisting Śrīmatī Rādhikā in Her conjugal pastimes with Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

By hearing such conjugal pastimes, someone may think, "If I were under the guidance of Rūpa Māñjarī, then I could serve Rādhikā and the Divine Couple in this way." A desire may arise in the *sādhaka* to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in *mādhurya*. This is called *lobha* or spiritual greed to attain spontaneous devotion.

*tāmbūlārpaṇa-pāda-mardana-payodānābbisārādibhir  
vṛndāraṇya-maheśvarīm priyatayā yās toṣayanti priyāb  
prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhī-kulād āpi kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāb  
kelī-bhūmiṣu rūpa-māñjarī-mukhās tā dāsikāb saṁśraye*

Stavāvalī, Vraja-vilāsa-stava 38

I take shelter of the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā of whom Rūpa Māñjarī is prominent. Unlike the *prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhīs*, they can perform any service without hesitation. They perpetually and affectionately satisfy Śrīmatī Rādhikā by their various services, such as offering *tāmbūla*, massaging Her lotus feet, bringing Her water and arranging for Her trysts with Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Remembering in *rāgānuga bhakti* happens after hearing the attractive pastimes of the Lord from a pure devotee. It is mentioned in *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* that the prominence of *smaraṇa*, remembrance, is primary in the practice of *rāga-mārga sādhana*, nevertheless, this *smaraṇa* or remembrance is dependent on the performance of *kīrtana* or chanting of the holy names. Especially in *Kālī-yuga*, all the limbs of *bhakti* are dependent on *kīrtana*.

Now let us look at some astonishing transcendental pastimes that we have heard from Śrīla Gurudeva.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā being very pleased with Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī’s service said to her,

“Oh Rūpa Māñjarī, I am so happy with you. I want to reward you for your nice service. Please take one of my *sāris*.”

Śrīla Rūpa Māñjarī however said no and wouldn’t take the remnant sari of Śrī Rādhikā.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā was surprised, “All the *sakhīs* are hankering for my remnant cloth. Why won’t you accept it? Please, take it.”

But Śrīla Rūpa Māñjarī still refused. Śrīmatī Rādhikā then said, “Oh Rūpa Māñjarī, why have you become so proud?”

“No,” Śrīla Rūpa Māñjarī replied gently, “I haven’t become proud. If you want to reward me, then please give me one benediction. Please give me this benediction that when Kṛṣṇa comes to meet with you in the forest

grove, I would be the gatekeeper of that grove (*kuñja*). Kṛṣṇa will have to take permission from me, in order to enter the *kuñja*. If I allow, then Kṛṣṇa can enter to come and see you. Otherwise, He cannot enter.”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā's lotus face broke into a sweet smile and said “So be it.”

*yat-kiṅkarīṣu babuśab khalu kāku-vāñī,  
nityam parasya puruṣasya śikhaṇḍa-mauleh  
tasyāb kadā rasa-nidheh vṛṣabhānu-jāyās  
tat-keli-kuñja-bhavanāṅgana-mārjanī syām*

Śrī Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi 8

O daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, O ocean of *rasa*! The supreme enjoyer, the source of all *avatārās* who wears a peacock feather in His hair, falls at the feet of Your maidservants and begs them with many humble and grief-stricken words, so as to be able to enter into Your *kuñja*. If only I could become one stick in the broom used by Your *sakbīs* to clean Your delightful *kuñja*, I would consider my life a success.

In this way, the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas fervently aspire to be the followers of this Rūpa Māñjarī.

### How Lobha (Spiritual Greed) will Awaken in the Heart

Śrīla Gurudeva has told that it is only by hearing *hari-kathā* from a bona fide *guru* or pure devotee, that greediness will awake in our heart. But only hearing will not be enough, we also have to render devotional service and perform our own *sādhana-bhajana*.

One time Jaṭilā needed to go out of Jāvaṭa. Seeing this opportunity, one *sakbī* quickly informed Kṛṣṇa and arranged a meeting with Rādhikā. Then all of a sudden, without warning, Jaṭilā came back without going to the other village. Jaṭilā walked right in and caught Śrī Kṛṣṇa playing intimately with her daughter-in-law, Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Seeing this, Jaṭilā became very angry and pointed her finger threateningly at Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa quickly said, “My dear lady, I vow that I did not even look at any yoghurt. Still, this girl, your daughter-in-law, she became suspicious of me,

and said that I took and ate some yogurt from one of her yoghurt pots. So, in order to confirm this, by force she was opening my mouth and smelling my breath. Please tell your daughter-in-law that I am a saintly person. She should not be doing this here and that she should not be so suspicious of me.”

Hearing this clever explanation from Kṛṣṇa, the other *sakhīs*, especially the messenger who had invited Kṛṣṇa to come and meet there, could not stop laughing.

By hearing such delightful pastimes from the mouth of a pure devotee, an eagerness or desire to serve the Lord in His sweet pastimes, starts to manifest in the heart.

### Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Reflection Pastime

Once, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was deeply absorbed in his *bhajana* and saw another sweet pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa talking to His own reflection in Nandagrāma. Inspired by that pastime, he composed this verse in his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*:

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti  
guhyam ākhyāti prcchati  
bhunkte bhojayate caiva  
śaḍ-vidharṇ prīti-lakṣaṇam*

*Upadeśāmṛta 4*

Offering gifts in charity and accepting charitable gifts, revealing one’s mind in confidence and inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasāda* and offering *prasāda* are the six symptoms of love shared between devotees.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī beautifully describes the pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa talking to His reflection as follows:

Early in the morning, in the beautiful village of Nandagrāma, Mother Yaśodā was busy churning yoghurt in her palace, Śrī Nanda-bhavana. She made some freshly churned butter and gave it to her son Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa took the soft butter in his hand and began eating it happily. Yaśodā told Kṛṣṇa to eat the butter while she is going to do other household duties.

In the palace of Nanda-bhavana there are eighty-four brilliant jewelled pillars. While Kṛṣṇa was playing by Himself, He saw His reflection in one of the shiny pillars. Seeing His own reflection, Kṛṣṇa became surprised and thought, ‘Who is this beautiful, attractive boy? I have never seen a boy like this in Vraja. I should make friends with him. Although Dāu *bhaiyā* (Baladeva) is here in Vraja and is my friend, he’s not always here to play with me. Sometimes he goes to my uncle Upananda’s house or sometimes he stays with mother Rohiṇī. I need one friend who will always be with me’. Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in Vraja are characterized by the sweetness of His human-like activities. Although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and is all-omniscient, at the same time, due to the pastime-nurturing influence of His internal *yogamāyā* potency, He forgets His opulences. In this way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is trying to make friends with this boy in this amazing pastime. He spoke to the reflection, ‘My mother has dressed me like this so nicely, because I am the son of a king. I have so many beautiful outfits. If you like I can give one to you and if you have anything, you can also give me a gift.’

Kṛṣṇa did not receive a reply from his new friend. He then spoke again, ‘Look! I know so many tricks and I am very expert at stealing butter with my friends.’

One time, in early morning, my mother got up from the bed. She gently put a soft pillow for me to embrace and quietly went out from her bed to attend to her other services. I pretended to be asleep and as soon as Mother left the room I quickly jumped down from the bed and without making any sound, I slipped out of the house to meet my friends who were waiting for Me outside.

We went to the house of another *gopī* and taking her son with us, we quietly entered inside her house to steal butter. Just then that *gopī* caught me red-handed. She said, ‘O Kanaiyā, so early in the morning, you are up to no good!’

I replied, ‘I thought this is my own house and you are my mother.’

The *gopī* didn’t listen to any excuses and said, ‘Whenever we catch you doing your mischievous activities and tell your mother, she never believes us, so today I will personally take you to your mother’s house.’ Taking Me by the hand, she covered her face with a shawl which also fell over my

head. She proceeded to Nanda-bhavana with all my *sakhās* and her son following behind.

By a hint from my eyes, I called that *gopī*'s son to my side and then pleaded with her, 'O mother, my body is tender, so delicate and fragile; you are holding my hand so tightly it is hurting. Can you please switch to my other hand?'

The *gopī* said, 'Yes, only if you give me your other hand first'. At that moment I gave her the hand of her own son and quickly ran behind without her noticing.

I ran to my house and lay on the bed pretending to be fast sleep.

The *gopī* arrived and knocked loudly on the door calling, 'O Yaśode! O Yaśode!'

Mother opened the door and asked what was going on. 'Why are you screaming so loud? You will disturb my son who's sleeping.'

The *gopī* said, 'Your son is not sleeping. He was stealing butter in my house!'

Mother replied how could that be, just a couple of minutes ago she had seen me on my bed.

At that moment with perfect timing, I came out of my room rubbing my eyes and weeping, 'O Maiyā I am hungry'.

The *gopī* quickly removed her veil. She looked down at the hand she was holding, and to her utter astonishment, she saw that it was her own son!

I said 'O Maiyā, just see! Your *sakhīs* are always making up false stories about me and this is the proof. They are so miserly they don't even feed their children. When they are hungry they steal from their own houses.'

Mother looked at that *gopī* who became extremely embarrassed and for quite some time, that *gopī* avoided Nanda-bhavana.'

Kṛṣṇa related this most confidential pastime to his reflection and asked him if he knew of any cunning tricks. In this way he opened his heart to his new friend and inquired about his heart. The reflection gave no reply.

Kṛṣṇa thought if I am to make friends with this boy, I must feed him some delicious milk products. He offered some fresh butter to his friend, 'Please eat this and then give me some tasty morsel in exchange.' As Kṛṣṇa offered the butter, the reflection imitated him. Kṛṣṇa became

angry, 'I am trying to make friend with this boy but now I can see he is not at all simple hearted; he is actually quite crooked'. Kṛṣṇa then bared his teeth like a monkey at the reflection.

Mother Yaśodā was watching how her son Kṛṣṇa was playing with his own reflection and unable to contain herself, she began to laugh in delight.

Kṛṣṇa then realized his new found friend was only a reflection and feeling instantly shy, hid himself in His mother's veil. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, seeing this charming pastime, became inspired by the heartfelt interaction of Kṛṣṇa with his reflection and thus composed a beautiful verse in his *Upadeśamṛta*, describing the six loving exchanges between devotees.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī saw how Kṛṣṇa wanted to give and receive gifts, how He revealed his heart in confidence and wanted to hear his new friend's realizations, and how He offered *prasādam* and desired to taste the *prasādam* of his friend. When these types of loving exchanges are performed by devotees, especially between Śrī Guru and disciple, friendship develops.

Rūpa Gosvāmī instructed this is how devotees should associate together. However, if devotees associate in this way with materialistic persons, many unfavorable attachments will develop.

This pastime was taking place in Goloka Vṛndāvana and Rūpa Gosvāmī, who was present in this world doing his *bhājana* in his *sādhaka-śarīra*, was witnessing that pastime in his eternal spiritual form.

### Madhumaṅgala Exchanges Clothes with Kṛṣṇa.

Another time, while Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was absorbed in his *bhājana*, he saw Kṛṣṇa going cow grazing with His many friends such as His *sakbās* Sṛīdama, Sūdāma, Vasudhāma, Madhumaṅgala, Subala, Ujvalla, Vasanta, Kokila and many others.

Madhumaṅgala was telling Kṛṣṇa, 'You always brag that you did this and you did that, and the Vrajavāsīs are always giving you so many nice sweets, especially laḍḍūs. But you don't know why they give so māny sweets. Do you really want to know why?'

Kṛṣṇa wanted to know why. Madhumaṅgala said, 'It is only due to your peacock feather, your yellow *pītāmbara* cloth and your flute that makes everyone so impressed with you'.

‘I’m telling you Kṛṣṇa, if you give up these things, nobody will notice you and give you any sweets.’

Then Kṛṣṇa, desiring to please his beloved *sakhā*, suggested they should exchange clothes and paraphernalia. Madhumaṅgala happily agreed. After swapping clothes they continued to wander in the forest.

Meanwhile one demon named Keśī entered the forest. Assuming the form of a giant horse, he began searching to kill Kṛṣṇa on the order of the evil King Kaṁsa. King Kaṁsa had informed Keśī that Kṛṣṇa is dark complexioned, wears a peacock feather, has a yellow *pītāmbara* cloth and carries a flute.

And so, as Keśī was searching for Kṛṣṇa, he saw one cowherd boy walking happily with a peacock feather on his head, wearing a brilliant yellow *pītāmbara* cloth and carrying a flute.

Keśī thought that although this cowherd boy was not blackish, he must be wearing some kind of make up to make himself look fair. Convinced that he had found Kṛṣṇa, he immediately attacked Madhumaṅgala with his hind legs. By the grace of providence Keśī missed him, but the force of the wind from his kicking, knocked Madhumaṅgala to the ground some distance away. Shocked, Madhumaṅgala scrambled to his feet and shouted to Kṛṣṇa in great despair ‘Oh this cloth, this flute and this peacock feather of yours is the source of all danger, I don’t want it! I don’t want it anymore!’ He quickly gave back everything to Kṛṣṇa. The Keśī demon came again to attack but this time Kṛṣṇa caught him and effortlessly killed him.

Rūpa Gosvāmī observed this pastime or *lilā* in the spiritual world while being situated in his *sādhaka-deha* in this world.

A pure devotee present in this world in his *sādhaka śarīra* may at any time travel to the spiritual world and return according to his desire; this is the power of a devotee who is practicing *rāgānuga bhakti*. There are māny such examples in the scriptures and in the history of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

## Finding Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s Nose Ring

*Narottama* dāsa Thākura, Śyāmānanda Prabhu and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya were great devotees who on the order of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī started distributing the books of the six Gosvāmīs all over India.

The King of Viṣṇupura had invited Śrīnivāsa Ācārya in his royal palace in West Bengal. While Śrīnivāsa Ācārya was staying there, he went into a deep *samādhi* for three to four days, causing his servants to think he had left this world. All became worried and started lamenting deeply.

The news reached Rāmacandra Kavirāja who was the nearest and dearest disciple of Śrīnivāsa. He immediately rushed to the King's palace in Viṣṇupura.

Seeing his spiritual master, he understood that he was in deep *samādhi*. Offering his obeisances, Rāmacandra quietly sat down next to Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and became absorbed in meditation. Understanding the inner mood of his *guru*, he entered into the pastimes of the Divine Couple.

He saw that everyone was busy searching for something. Rādhikā's nose ring had fallen into the water and everyone was busy trying to find it.

Śrīnivāsa Ācārya in his form as a *mañjarī*, under the guidance of his Guru Mañjārī, was also engaged in searching everywhere for the nose ring.

Rāmacandra Kavirāja had entered into the same *līlā* in his *mañjarī svarūpa* and also began searching. He quickly found the nose ring under a lotus leaf and offered it to his Guru Māñjārī who passed it through the chain of different *gopīs* and *mañjarīs* and finally into the hands of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrī Rādhā became overjoyed. She wanted to know who had found her nose ring. Her maidservants told her it was this new *gopī* who had located the nose ring.

Rādhikā became very pleased with Rāmacandra Kavirāja in his *mañjarī* form.

After some time, both Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Rāmacandra Kavirāja came back into *bahir-dāsa* or external consciousness. All the assembled Vaiṣṇavas became very happy.

Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura prays:

*dayā kara śrī ācārya prabhu śrīnivāsa  
rāmacandra-sanga māge narottama dāsa*

*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Prabhu Daya Karo More 6*

Be merciful, O Prabhu Śrīnivāsa Acārya! Narottama dāsa begs for the company of Rāmacandra!



## I Muṣṭ Do Bhajana



A pure devotee like Śrīla Gurudeva does not have to worry about the necessities of life, but in his *naravat-līlā*, human-like pastimes, he sets an example for us. Whatever he does, he does for the welfare of all. In Volume I of this biography, there is an amazing story which explains what triggered, in Śrīla Gurudeva's young adult life while working in the police department, his decision to renounce the material world. At that time Śrīla Gurudeva's real identity remained hidden and he was known as Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Prabhu, a householder working in the police department. Śrīla Gurudeva described this incident that happened several times to the devotees, saying that this is what made him renounce and devote his life to *bhajana*. Śrīla Gurudeva would sometimes relate this story when preaching to the devotees to do their *bhajana* with determination and Kṛṣṇa would maintain them. I will describe this episode more deeply now, for it is such a wonderful proof that Śrīla Gurudeva is a pure devotee, always protected by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. With remarkable consistency and humility, instead of using himself as the example, Śrīla Gurudeva usually described the occurrence as I narrated it in the first volume, but what happened to "his friend" in the police department is in fact, truly what happened to no one other than Śrīman Nārāyaṇa himself. The miraculous incident is as follows:

On that night, Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Prabhu was scheduled to work the late night shift, from 10 pm to 6 am. Earlier that day after his lunch, he was thinking, "My duty's time has still not come, so I can chant some rounds for some time, and then I can join the office in the evening".

But he became so absorbed in chanting *harināmā* that he forgot all about the time and his work duties until the wee hours of the next morning. Seeing that there was only half an hour left before the completion of his shift, he became very anxious and quite worried. He arrived at the station

and told his colleague, “Maybe my higher officer marked me red in the attendance book. Oh, and of course he must have been so much angry with me for being late and irregular”.

His fellow officers were surprised. “What are you saying, Mr. Tivariji? You have done so many activities since this evening. Your superior officer has become so much satisfied. Come on my friend, how can you say that you were not here? See here is where you signed in.”

Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Prabhu became astounded and said, “What! I have come here and joined the office today and was so busy in my work that my officer became happy!”

His friends looked at him and said, “Yes, therefore in the registration book, your officer has promoted you to a higher rank”.

Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Prabhu couldn’t believe what he was hearing. He checked the attendance book and saw that indeed his superior officer had written next his name “highly recommended for promotion”. He understood what had happened. The Lord Himself came, assumed his form and performed his duties so expertly that his superior was extremely pleased. Śrīman Nārāyaṇa realized how Kṛṣṇa was so merciful to him. He thought of the mercy that Kṛṣṇa bestowed on Pūtanā, giving her the position of a nurse in Goloka Vṛndāvana and he started crying. He remembered this verse:

*abo bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ  
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī  
lebbe gatim dhātry-ucitām tato ‘nyam  
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema*

*Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 3.2.23)*

Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than He who granted the position of mother to a she-demon [Pūtanā] although she was unfaithful and she prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?

Śrīman Nārāyaṇa solemnly vowed in his mind, “Why waste my life? I will give up this job and will only do *bhajana* of the Lord.”

When Śrīman Nārāyaṇa revealed his mind to Śrīpāda Narottamānanda Prabhu, the latter said, “Tivārījī, it is true, there are so many examples in the scripture of Bhagavān Himself coming to serve His devotee.”

“Oh, Prabhu, can you please give me an example?”

Śrīpāda Narottamānanda Prabhu, enthused by the young man’s eagerness to hear the pastimes of Bhagavān and His devotees, quoted the verse 9.22 from *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*ananyāś cintayanto mām  
ye janāḥ paryupāsate  
teṣāṁ nityābhīyuktānām  
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy āham*

“However, for those who are always absorbed in thoughts of Me, and who worship Me with one-pointed devotion by every means, I Myself carry the necessities they lack and preserve what they have.”

“In connection with this verse,” said Śrīpāda Narottamānanda, “There is a true story of Śrī Bhagavān personally coming to serve His pure devotee, Ārjuna Miśra.

### The Story of Ārjuna Miśra

Once there was a pure devotee named Ārjuna Miśra, who was a very poor *brāhmaṇa*. Every morning he would perform his *bhājana*, spend two hours writing a commentary on *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, and then go out to beg alms.

Ārjuna Miśra’s wife would prepare the food collected by her husband, offer it with love to their deity of Bhagavān, Śrī Gopīnātha, give the *mahāprasāda* to her husband with great attention, and later partake whatever *prasād* was left with great satisfaction. This was their constant mood, and they were fully satisfied in the consideration that their poverty was a gift from Śrī Bhagavān. So their time passed blissfully.

Nearly all their clothes were torn, and between them they possessed only one cloth - a *dbotī* - that was suitable to wear outside the house. When her husband was out begging alms, his wife wore a piece of ragged,

torn cloth. When he was at home and she needed to go out, she wore the *dbotī*.

One day, after his morning *bhajana*, Ārjuna Miśra sat down to write a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* verse 9.22:

*ananyās cintayanto mām  
ye janāḥ paryuṣāsate  
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānām  
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy āham*

“However, for those who are always absorbed in thoughts of Me, and who worship Me with one-pointed devotion by every means, I Myself carry the necessities they lack and preserve what they have.”

Pondering this, Ārjuna Miśra’s mind became perplexed with a grave doubt that he was unable to resolve. He thought, “Will that Person, Svayaṁ-Bhagavān, who is the only master of the whole universe, Himself carry the necessities they lack of those who are engaged in His single-pointed *bhajana*, and preserve what they have? No, this can’t be true, because why is my situation as it is? I am completely dependent on Him, and with exclusive devotion, have offered everything to His lotus feet. So why do I have to undergo this misery of poverty? The words in this verse, ‘I Myself carry the necessities of those engaged in My *bhajana*’<sup>1</sup>, could not have been spoken by Bhagavān; someone must have changed it.”

Ārjuna Miśra tried to resolve this dilemma on the strength of his own intelligence but became increasingly doubtful and perplexed. Finally, he put three slash marks on this line with his red pen, and went out to beg alms.

Now, the most compassionate Bhagavān, who protects the surrendered souls, saw the doubt appear in the mind of His devotee. Taking the form of an extremely beautiful, tender, dark-complexioned boy, He filled two baskets with ample rice, *dāl*, vegetables, ghee and many other goods, and tying the baskets to the ends of a bamboo rod, He personally carried them on His shoulder to the house of Ārjuna Miśra.

Finding the door locked, He knocked several times, calling loudly, “Oh Mother, Oh Mother!”

1 *nityābhiyuktānām yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy āham*

The *brāhmaṇī* heard the calling, but being home alone and *wearing only her torn cloth, she felt she could not* answer the door. The knocking and calling continued, and finally finding no alternative, with head lowered shyly, she opened the door. Carrying the weight of the full baskets on the bamboo, the boy entered the courtyard, placed His load on the floor and stood to one side. Śrī Bhagavān in the guise of a boy, said, “Mother, Paṇḍitjī (the *brāhmaṇa*, Ārjuna Mīśra) has sent these supplies. Please take them inside.”

The *brāhmaṇī’s* face was lowered, but hearing the sweet words of the boy, she looked up and saw the two big baskets, filled with more vegetables and food grains than she had ever seen in her life, right there in the courtyard. Being repeatedly requested by the boy to take them, she finally carried them in a daze to the inner chamber of the house. Constantly gazing upon His beautiful face, she became completely happy.

*Oh, how beautiful His face is! How can a person of such dark colour have such exquisite beauty?* She had never even imagined such beauty. Awestruck, she stood transfixed. Then she noticed that on the boy’s chest were three bleeding slash marks. It looked as if someone had cut his chest with a sharp weapon. Her heart became deeply disturbed and she cried out, “Oh son! Which cruel person has made these cuts on Your chest? Alas! Alas! Even a stone heart would melt at the thought of hurting such a soft, tender body!”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the guise of the boy, said, “Mother, while bringing you these foodstuffs, I was delayed, so your husband punished Me in this way.”

With her eyes filling with tears, the *brāhmaṇī* cried, “What! He made these cuts on your chest? When he comes home I’ll ask him how he could have done such a brutal thing! My son, don’t feel distressed. Stay here for some time, and I will prepare some of this food and You can accept the *prasāda* of Ṭhākurjī.”

Seating the boy in the courtyard, the *brāhmaṇī* went to the kitchen and started to prepare an offering. Kṛṣṇa then thought, the purpose for which I carried these food-stuffs has been completed. When the *brāhmaṇa* comes home, he will discover the authenticity of My words, and will never doubt them again. Thus having made arrangements to dispel the doubts of His devotee, Kṛṣṇa disappeared.

That day, despite great effort, the *brāhmaṇa* was unable to collect any alms. Losing all hope, he returned home, considering the situation to be the will of Ṭhākurjī, his deity. His wife opened the back door when he knocked, and since he knew there had been no supplies in the house, he was surprised to see her cooking, and inquired, “What are you cooking? How is it that you have some supplies?”

Now she was surprised, and said, “Well, you sent a six-month supply of food with that little boy. Why do you ask? And I never knew your heart was so hard like stone. How could you slash the tender body of that boy three times on His chest? Have you no mercy?”

The *brāhmaṇa* was astonished.

“What are you talking about? I didn’t send anything home... nor did I hurt any boy. Please explain!”

The *brāhmaṇī* showed her husband the huge pile of supplies brought by the boy. Then she took him to the courtyard to show him the boy and His cuts... but the boy was not there. She searched the whole house for Him. Where had He gone? The courtyard gate was closed, as it had been before the boy came. The couple looked at each other in surprise. The whole situation began to dawn on Ārjuna Miśra, and tears began to flow continuously from his eyes.

After washing his hands and feet he entered the deity room and opened his *Bhagavad-gītā*. The three red pen slashes he had made that morning on the line: “I Myself carry the necessities of those engaged in <sup>2</sup>My *bhajana*”, were now gone. His doubt was completely dispelled, and overwhelmed with happiness, he came out of the deity room crying.

“My dear, you are so fortunate! Today you directly saw Śrī Gopīnātha! And He personally brought all these foodstuffs! How could I have possibly sent so much stock, just by begging?”

Then he explained to his wife, “This morning, while writing my *Bhagavad-gītā* commentary, I doubted one statement of Śrī Bhagavān, and slashed some words with three lines of red ink. That’s why the tender chest of the sweet young boy you saw, our Ṭhākurjī, Gopīnātha, was marked with three cuts. He is supremely compassionate, and went to

.....

2 *nityābhīyuktānām yoga-kṣemarān vahāmy āham*

considerable trouble to prove the authenticity of His statements, and to remove the doubts of an atheist like me.”

His throat choked up and he was unable to speak further. Overwhelmed with love, he cried out, “Oh Gopīnātha! Oh Gopīnātha!” and then fainted. Standing in front of their deity Śrī Gopīnātha, the *brāhmaṇī* was struck dumb, and her eyes filled with tears. Returning to external consciousness a while later, Ārjuna Miśra took his bath, did his daily duties, offered to Śrī Gopīnātha the meal that his wife had prepared, and with great love they both accepted His remnants. He continued writing the commentary on *Gītā* every day, immersed in love of God.

Our previous Ācārya, Seventh Gosvāmī Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura writes in his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, quoting Śrī Kṛṣṇa as saying:

“You should not think that the three types of fruitive worshippers attain happiness, and that My devotees suffer. My *bhaktas* think of Me only, without deviation. For the maintenance of their bodies they accept anything that is favourable to My *bhakti* and reject all that is unfavourable. In this way, they are *nitya-abhiyukta*, or ever-united with Me by devotional love. Free from selfish desires, they offer everything exclusively to Me. I alone maintain them, providing all their wealth and other requirements. From an external viewpoint, there may appear to be a similarity between materially-motivated worshippers (*pratīka upāsakas*) and My *bhaktas*, who only accept that which is favourable to My service. However, there is a big difference between the two. I carry the *yoga* (progress) and *kṣema* (maintenance) of My *bhaktas* even if they have no mundane desires. The special benefit My *bhaktas* receive is that by My mercy they enjoy all sense objects in a dispassionate manner and finally they attain eternal bliss. The *pratīka upāsakas*, however, again return to the field of *karma* after enjoying sense pleasure. They do not attain eternal bliss. I am indifferent to all mundane occurrences, but out of affection for My *bhaktas*, I am delighted to help them in every respect. In My doing this, there is no offence on the part of My *bhaktas*, because they do not pray to Me for anything except My favour. I Myself personally supply their requirements.”

“There is another true story of Śrī Bhagavān personally coming to serve His pure devotee, said Śrīpāda Narottamānanda, “The story of Padmavati and Jayadeva”.

## The Story of Padmavati and Jayadeva

Jayadeva was a Bengali poet from the Birbhum district in Bengal and was a great devotee of Their Lordships, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-mādhava. It's been recorded that Jayadeva was a court *paṇḍita* during the reign of Rāja Lakṣmaṇa Sena of Gauḍa. So many incidents took place in his life related to their pure devotion that the Lord became very fond of Jayadeva and his devotee wife Padmavati.

He was in Champahati when he wrote his eternal poetry, the *Gīta-govinda*. Always absorbed in the pastimes of Rādhā-kṛṣṇa, his attachment for Their Lordships increased more and more over time and thus floating on the waves of *Kṛṣṇa-prema* he composed this book of astonishing verses entitled *Gīta-govinda*. While Jayadeva was writing this book he described and revealed various *rasas* and *bhāvas* within his writings, yet it still lacked the touch of *khaṇḍita-madhura-rasa*. However, at one point he did not have the courage to depict Lord Kṛṣṇa, touching the feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

One day, while Jayadeva was out for his daily bath in the ocean, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, taking the form of Jayadeva, came into his room and wrote down the verse “*Dehi pada pallavam udaram*” in Jayadeva’s manuscript book.

Padmāvati, who was surprised to see that Jayadeva (Lord Kṛṣṇa) had returned so quickly from his bathing, said, “What is the matter? You just left a few minutes ago. How did you return so soon?”

Lord Kṛṣṇa, in the guise of Jayadeva said, “While on my way to the sea, a thought occurred to me, I didn’t want to forget it so I came back to note it down.”

Soon after Lord Kṛṣṇa had disappeared, Jayadeva returned from his bathing. Padmāvati was shocked to see Jayadeva return again so quickly and in her confusion said, “You went for your bath and soon came back to write something down in your book and left again just a few minutes ago. How could you finish your bath within such a short time and return home? I would like to know who that person that came here to write in your book and who is the person that is actually here now?”

Jayadeva, understanding the significance of the incident narrated by Padmāvati, at once went inside and quickly opened the book. The divine writing revealed the presence of his Lord Kṛṣṇa. He felt such ecstasy of love

that tears rolled down over his chest. He then called his wife and said, “You are the most fortunate person because you have attained the goal of your birth. You had the *darśana* of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and I am such a fallen soul that I have been deprived of the *darśana* of His manifested Self.”





## The Uttamā Bhāgavata and Kṛpa-Pātra



### Kṛpa-Pātra, The Reservoir of Mercy

Śrīla Gurudeva has been a cardio-patient in 1988, so there were very many restrictions made by doctors on his food intake. Nevertheless, in the beginning, if someone would bring some foodstuff for him, he would accept it and not consider whether it is good or bad for his heart. Later on, however, he would not immediately eat it. The devotees would be told to give it to Mādhava Mahārāja first. Then, when someone gave to me, I was very strict. If it was good for his health, I would give it to him; otherwise, not. People would later ask him, “Oh Gurudeva did you take what I sent for you?”

Śrīla Gurudeva would say, “What? When did you give? Oh, Mādhava Mahārāja is not giving to me, because he thinks it is not good for me. If milk will come, he will take the cream, and give me only the milk. If yoghurt will come, he will churn the yoghurt and give me the buttermilk, but he will keep the butter.”

Common people could not understand what Śrīla Gurudeva was saying. Gurudeva was saying that he is doing *bhajana* and such hard labour—whatever he has realised and what is proper *siddhānta*—the essence he’s giving to his sincere disciples and followers.

It is mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.13.3):

*śṛṇusvāvahito rājann  
āpi guhyaṁ vādāmi te  
brūyuh snigdhasya śiṣyasya  
guravo guhyam apy uta*

O King, kindly listen to me attentively. The activities of the Supreme Lord are very confidential, but I shall tell you about them, for the *guru* explains to a submissive disciple even topics that are very confidential and difficult to understand.

It is further stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.8):

*vettba tvaṁ saumya tat sarvaṁ  
tattvatas tad-anugrahāt  
brūyuh snigdhasya śiṣyasya  
guravo guhyam apy uta*

You are learned because your *gurus* have bestowed upon you all the confidential knowledge given to a polite and obedient disciple. Therefore you can tell us all you have learned from them.

Śrīla Gurudeva will tell all confidential things about *bhājana* to a disciple who is very polite, gentle and especially loyal to him. In the same way, Śrīla Gurudeva said that due to the kind of service we are doing, we are being given all these things (the cream of his teachings, the buttery nature of his personality and the real essence and spirit of his moods).

The pure devotee is *krpa-pātra*, the reservoir of *krpa*, mercy. The full mercy of Bhagavān comes through the devotee—it doesn't come from another direction or from another place. Our relationship with the Lord is arranged and established in this way. Without the devotee's mercy, you will not understand the Lord or get His mercy.

### Three Stages of Uttamā Bhāgavata

Śrīla Gurudeva has explained the three stages of *uttamā bhāgavata* during his *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* classes in the mid-eighties, in Śrī Keshavji Gauḍīya Māṭha, Mathurā. One who is on the highest platform of spontaneous devotion or the *uttamā mahā bhāgavata* has three stages of spiritual absorption.

One is called *bāhya-dāśā* or external awareness in which he can be seen performing Harināma *sankīrtana* and all the limbs of *bhakti*. In that external state, the pure devotee follows all rules and regulations and appears to be a resident of this world.

The second stage is called *ardha-bāhya-dāśā* meaning half internal and half external consciousness. In this middle stage there may be signs such as incoherent speech or movement. Explaining this stage and Śrīla

Gurudeva gave the example of Śrī Mahāprabhu Himself. He said that the *uttamā-bhāgavatas* (topmost devotees) in our *guru-varga*, when they are speaking *hari-kathā*, they are said to be situated in the external stage, while being at the same time in the internal stage. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself exhibited this stage of *ardha-bāhya-dāsā*.

When Śrīman Mahāprabhu would be in the internal stage, at that time His lotus feet and hand would retract into His stomach and He would turn into a round shape resembling a pumpkin or like a tortoise with limbs retracted. Continuous foam would ooze from His lotus mouth, tears pouring from His lotus eyes, and hairs standing on end throughout His entire body. In this way He would appear to be externally inert, but internally fully relishing spiritual bliss. Sometimes his joints would dislocate and stretch several inches, making Him appear longer.

One night, a fisherman captured Him inside His fishing net in the ocean. When the devotees headed by Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara approached a raving mad fisherman asking him if he had seen Mahāprabhu, the shaken fisherman said, ‘No, what I’ve seen is a powerful ghost and he has possessed me. I have seen Mahāprabhu before so many times. This is not Him. I fish every night and to protect me, I always remember Lord Narasimhadeva; no ghost can ever haunt me, but this time, as much as I remember Narasimhadeva, the ghost keeps attacking me again and again.’

When Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and all the accompanying devotees came to place where the fisherman said the ghost was, they found Mahāprabhu in His internal stage. All of them quickly surrounded Mahāprabhu and started *hari-kīrtana*. As soon as Kṛṣṇa’s name was uttered in Mahāprabhu’s ear, He roared and jumped up. All His dislocated joints returned to their proper positions.

Upon seeing so many devotees there, Śrīman Mahāprabhu came into the half external stage. Mahāprabhu spoke to them, “Seeing the river Yamunā, I went to Vṛndāvana. There I saw Śrī Vrajendranandana Śyāmasundara doing water-sport pastimes along with *gopīs* headed by Śrīmatī Rādhā Ṭhākurānī. Being on the bank of the Yamunā with other *sakhīs*, I was watching these sporting pastimes. I was very happy there. Now, all of you made some noise and forcibly brought me here.”

Now we will explain about the third stage of *uttamā-bhāgavata* which is known as *antar-dāśā*. *Antar-dāśā* is the state of being internally absorbed in the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, in the *uttamā-bhāgavata*'s eternal spiritual form (*siddha-śarīra*). In that internal stage there may be no signs of external activity such as speech or movement. Sometimes however symptoms of the activities in that *antar-dāśā* stage of the *siddha-śarīra* are visible or externally manifested on the body of the *uttamā-bhāgavata* (*sādhaka-śarīra*).

### Examples of Occurrences of Siddha Śarīra Symptoms on the Sādhaka Śarīra

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī starts his *Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* by this auspicious invocation:

*tvaṁ rūpa-māñjarī sakhi! prathitā pure 'smin  
puṁsah parasya vadanam na hi paśyasīti  
bimbādbhare kṣatam anāgata-bhartrkāyā  
yat te vyadhāyī kim u tac chuka-puṅgavena*

“My dear friend Rūpa Māñjarī! You are well known in Vraja for your chastity; you don't even look at the faces of other men. It is therefore surprising that although your husband is not at home, your lips, which are as beautiful as red bimba fruits, have been bitten. Has this perhaps been done by the best of parrots?”

Śrīla Gurudeva explains, “Before writing *Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was thinking, ‘I should write a *mangalacaranam*, an auspicious invocation.’ As soon as he picked up his pen, he at once entered *ardha-bahya-dāsa* (half internal, half external consciousness), and then *antara-dāsa* (internal consciousness). In that inner state, in his form as Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī, he saw the smiling face of Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī and noticed some unnatural marks – bite marks – on her lips. Rūpa Māñjarī also began to smile...”

“In a joking manner he said as Rūpa Māñjarī, ‘You are famous in Vraja as a chaste lady. However, although your husband has been gone

four or five days and has not yet returned, I see that you have fresh cuts on your lips from a few hours ago, or maybe from last night. I think that perhaps a small parrot has come and mistaken them for a bimba fruit.’ Rūpa Māñjarī then glanced towards Rūpa Māñjarī and, being very pleased with her, smiled still further...”

“In this world we have a *guru* and we are his disciples, but in *rāgānuga-bhakti* (internally) the *guru* is like a friend. *Viśrambhena gurau sevā*. In the spiritual realm, there is no formal relation of *guru* and disciple as there is in this world. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī used to address Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī as *guru*, and he respected him as such. Inwardly, however, he saw him as a *sakhī*, as Rūpa Māñjarī...”

All the verses of *Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* mercifully written by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are revelations of his confidential moods while he was deep in his internal stage of devotional trance.

The following are more examples of the manifestation of such divine symptoms on the body of the pure devotee. Many times I have also personally seen so many symptoms on Śrīla Gurudeva’s *sādhaka śarīra* but I never shared it with others. I instead used to joke with Śrīla Gurudeva due to our intimacy.

One time Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, being situated in his *sādhaka-śarīra* or his manifest body in this world, was meditating on the holi pastime (the colour festival) of the Divine Couple. In his *mañjarī* form Śrīnivāsa entered the joyful pastime and saw Śrī Radhā and Kṛṣṇa’s bodies, covered in a myriad of bright colours. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His friends were in one party and Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her *sakhīs* were in the opposite party. There were more *gopīs* than there were *gopas*. Both parties also had large syringes and were spraying many colors which were not easily removable. Everywhere, all the places and creatures also became reddish with the throwing of great quantities of red powder; the sky, trees, cows and everyone in Vraja became reddish at that time. As Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were enthusiastically throwing colours at each other, Śrīnivāsa, under the guidance of his *guru-mañjarī* began to supply coloured dye to Rādhikā.

In *Bhakti-ratnākara*, it is explained how after the pastime was complete, Śrīnivāsa came to external consciousness and saw that his *sādhaka* body and clothes were covered in colour from the holi pastime.

Once, Śrīlā Narottama dāsa Thākura was seeing in his meditation the pastime of the Divine Couple in his internally spiritual form. Śrīmatī Rādhikā requested her maidservants to bring some food preparations. They came with many different delicious items. Narottama dāsa Thākura in his *mañjarī* form, under guidance of his *guru-mañjarī*, began to boil some milk. The milk began to boil over and being unable to find a cloth he removed the pot from the fire with his hand. His hand was burned but without caring about it, he gave the milk to his Guru who offered it to the Divine Couple. While Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa were eating, Narottama dāsa Thākura's meditation broke and he saw to his surprise, that his hand was bearing the burn mark from the hot milk pot.

Another example is given in *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* where Uddhava was deeply immersed in the pastime of His dearest friend Dvārakāśīsa Kṛṣṇa. As he returned to external consciousness, he spoke gently to Vidura.

*śanakair bhagaval-lokān nṛlokaṁ punar āgataḥ  
vimrjya netre viduraṁ prītyāboddhava utsmāyān*

*Śrīmad-bhāgavatam 3.2.6*

The great devotee Uddhava soon came back from the abode of the Lord to the human plane and wiping his eyes, he awakened his reminiscence of the past and spoke to Vidura in a pleasing mood.

Śrī Uddhava is a very special intimate associate of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In all of Dvārakā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa only revealed to Uddhava, the agony of his separation from His beloved Vrajavāsīs. Kṛṣṇa wanted Uddhava to understand the superior nature of the love that the Vrajavāsīs have for Him, particularly that of the *gopīs*.

The sweetness and spontaneity of the love that the residents of Vraja have for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, brings Him immense happiness. This is confirmed in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* where it is said that the spontaneous loving dealings of the Vrajavāsīs causes Kṛṣṇa millions of times greater pleasure than dealings in awe and veneration. Therefore Kṛṣṇa sent Uddhava to learn and see for himself the exalted love of the *gopīs*, most particularly, that of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

To absorb one's mind exclusively in Kṛṣṇa is called *man-manā bhavā*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has accepted the *gopīs* as the highest ideal of *man-manā*

*bbāva* devotees and expresses this to Uddhava in sweet words in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.46.4-6:

Dear Uddhava, the minds of the *gopīs* are always absorbed in Me. I am their very life and their all-in-all. It is for My sake alone that they have relinquished everything, including their homes, husbands, sons, relatives, shyness, chastity, religious principles and so forth. They constantly remain absorbed in thoughts of Me alone. It is only by their trust in My statement that I will come back, that they are somehow or other, maintaining their lives in great difficulty and are waiting for Me.

This description of the *gopīs* who are feeling great anxiety in separation from Kṛṣṇa is the highest example of *man-manā bbāva*.

Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja explains that Kṛṣṇa was also feeling unbearable separation, but no one knew that. The *gopīs* could share their suffering with each other, but Kṛṣṇa could not share His feelings with anyone. He wept alone. This is why He sent Uddhava to Vṛndāvana; He wanted Uddhava to be admitted into the school of the *gopīs*, so that he would learn the meaning of the word love, *prema*.

Kṛṣṇa considered, “When Uddhava understands the love of the *gopīs*, he will be qualified to realize My feelings of separation.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always in Vraja

Uddhava had great love and affection for Kṛṣṇa, but when he arrived in Vraja, he realized that *vraja-prema* was totally new to him. He saw Kṛṣṇa playing with all His *sakhās*. Millions and millions of cows were hankering after Him, and milk was flowing from their bulging udders because of their spontaneous love. The very beautiful black and white calves were jumping here and there, and Nanda Bābā’s big bulls were fighting with each other.

As Uddhava saw that scene, beautiful ghee lamps flickered in the *gopīs*’ rooms, and the light from these lamps was soft and fragrant – not like the dead light from electric bulbs. Varieties of flowers spread their sweet

aroma in all directions, and the songs of the humming bumblebees were like the blowing of Cupid’s conchshell. Cuckoos and other birds were singing everywhere and peacocks were dancing about and calling, “Ke Kaw! Ke Kaw!”

All the *gopīs* were churning yogurt and singing, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.” They were all very beautiful, and Mother Yaśodā was the most beautiful of all. How else could Kṛṣṇa have become so beautiful? He would only have been black otherwise; it was because of her that His beauty was like the luster of pearls.

Uddhava saw all this, but in a moment the scene changed completely, and now he saw that all the residents of Vṛndāvana were weeping for Kṛṣṇa: “O Kṛṣṇa, where are You? Where are You?” Cows were not going out to graze. They simply wept, keeping their heads and eyes toward Mathurā, and the calves were not drinking the milk from the udders of their mothers. The peacocks were not dancing; rather, they looked as if they were blind. Every person and creature was mad in separation from Kṛṣṇa.

It was now evening, and Uddhava found himself in Kṛṣṇa’s home, where he became astonished to see the love and affection of Mother Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā. He could never have imagined that such high-class love could exist, but now he was able to realize something of its elevated nature.

### Śrīmatī Rādhikā is Always Absorbed in Pleasing Kṛṣṇa

Early the next morning, Uddhava wanted to relay Kṛṣṇa’s message to the *gopīs*. The *gopīs* brought him to Kadamba-kyārī where they respectfully offered him an āsana (seat). Uddhava, however, just offered his obeisances to the āsana. He then noticed what appeared to be a golden doll lying on a bed of flower petals, with sandalwood paste smeared on Her limbs. Seeing Rādhikā in such an intense state of separation, the *gopīs* like Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā, Campakalata, and the *māñjarīs* such as Rati Māñjarī, Rāga Māñjarī, Raman Māñjarī, headed by Rūpa Māñjarī were serving Her and trying to pacify Her; but who could actually pacify Rādhikā? She was in a state of total madness with no external awareness. The others were trying to pacify Her because their consciousness was still somewhat functional.

Their love is very high, millions of times greater than that of Uddhava, Satyabhāmā, and Rukmīṇī, and higher even than that of the other *sakhīs* of Vṛndāvana; but their love was not as high as Rādhikā's love. Among Kṛṣṇa's dear ones, She is the most dear. Rādhikā was motionless, lying on a bed of rose petals, which had become dried up by the touch of Her body, and all the *candana* (sandalwood pulp) that had been put on Her body to cool Her had completely dried up. All her friends were checking to see whether She was alive or not. She was in such a state that Her friends were completely distraught. When Uddhava saw the moods of Rādhikā, he became stunned like a wooden doll. Śrīmatī Rādhikā was engrossed in a mood in which She was feeling intense separation from Kṛṣṇa while He was in Mathurā. She was thinking, "Kṛṣṇa cannot live without women, and therefore He must be associating with the *Mathurā-rāmanīs*, the beautiful young damsels of Mathurā." Rādhikā was totally delirious in separation from Kṛṣṇa and began to experience *asūyā*, envy, towards these city girls.

A bumble bee was flying around Her feet, thinking Her feet were lotuses. Rādhikā saw the *madbukara*, the bumblebee; in Her high state of loving mood She thought that the bee was a messenger of Kṛṣṇa. In this elevated state of *divyonmada* (madness in separation), She scolded the bumblebee, "Don't touch me."

Seeing that bumblebee had come to Her in an intoxicated state, She said, "O Madbukara, it appears that My *kānta*, My beloved, has sent you to pacify Me because He feels guilty that He has committed sins and offences. He therefore wants to plead through you in humble submission.

O messenger of Kṛṣṇa, you are just like Him. He is a cunning cheater who deceives people of their wealth, and He is a cheater from all other points of view as well. And you are his bosom friend."

Śrīmatī Rādhikā never called Kṛṣṇa directly by His name, but She addressed Him indirectly by the use of other names. She told the bee, "You are the bosom friend of My *priya-bandhu* who is *dhūrta*, a cheater, and *dhṛsta*, stubborn."

As Uddhava witnessed Her talking to the bumblebee, he saw that actually Kṛṣṇa Himself had come to Vraja in the form of that bumblebee. He also saw how Rādhikā was very angry with Kṛṣṇa, criticizing and

abusing Him, and calling Him an ungrateful cheater. No one else could have spoken to Kṛṣṇa in this way, not Satyabhāmā and the other queens, and not even Mother Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā.

But Rādhikā told Him, “You are ungrateful, and you are like a six-legged bumblebee. Human beings have two legs and animals have four; but bumblebees have six legs, so they are more ignorant than any animal. We don’t want to have any relationship with that black person whose heart is as black as a bumblebee. Rāma was also black, and he cheated Sūrpanakhā and cut off her nose and ears.”

Before coming to Kadamba-kyārī, Uddhava had been with Nanda Bābā and he was very moved by his moods and amazed by his deep love. Mother Yaśodā had become blind from her separation to Kṛṣṇa. However, when Uddhava witnessed the transcendental ecstasies of *divyonmada* and *citrā-jalpa* (transcendental madness and anger in the mood of deep separation) in Śrī Rādhikā, he became stunned in helplessness.

Uddhava related His message, word by word, letter by letter. However, this only made the *gopīs* unhappy. Previously they had thought, “Kṛṣṇa has promised that He will come;” but after hearing the message, they thought, “Kṛṣṇa will never come,” and they felt even more separation. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī began to weep:

*he nātha he ramā-nātha vraja-nāthbārti-nāšana  
magnam uddhara govinda gokulam vṛjinārṇavāt*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.47.52*

O master of My life, O master of the goddess of fortune, O master of Vraja! O destroyer of all suffering; O Govinda, please lift Your Gokula out of the ocean of distress in which it is drowning!

Śrīmatī Rādhikā said, “I am dying without Kṛṣṇa. My dear *sakbīs*, if Kṛṣṇa does not come, I will die; I will surely die. Take My body, place it at the base of a tamāla tree, and place My arms around that tree so that I may feel connected to Kṛṣṇa. I pray that the water in My body will mix with Pāvana-sarovara where Kṛṣṇa bathes, so that I may touch Him. Let the air in this body go to Nanda Bābā’s courtyard and touch Kṛṣṇa when He is being fanned. May the fire in this body become rays of sunshine in

Nanda Bābā's courtyard, and then My soul will be happy. Now I cannot see Kṛṣṇa, or touch Him.”

Śrī Rādhā was in a very pitiful condition, in a mood of deep separation.

This is why Kṛṣṇa had sent Uddhava to Vṛndāvana: to try to be admitted into the school of the *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa had told him, “Be admitted into the school in which I studied. Then, when you return, we will be able to have some discussion about love and affection. First, go and become qualified.”

However, Uddhava was not qualified for admittance into the school of the *gopīs*. Uddhava therefore prayed:

*vande nanda-vraja-strīṅām  
pāda-reṇum abbikṣṇaśaḥ  
yāsām bari-kathodgītām  
punāti bhuvana-trayam*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.63

I repeatedly offer my respects to the dust from the feet of the women of Nanda Mahārāja's cowherd village. When these *gopīs* loudly chant the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the vibration purifies the three worlds.

*Nanda-vraja-strīnam* means the beloved *gopīs* of Kṛṣṇa. Uddhava prayed to them, “I want to offer myself unto the dust of your lotus feet. I want to keep even one particle of your foot-dust on my head, and if I can only get one particle of dust, it must be Śrīmatī Rādhikā's.” Neither Brahmā nor Saṅkara, nor even Satyabhāmā and the other Dvārakā queens, can attain this. Uddhava prayed, “If I cannot attain Rādhikā's lotus feet, then I will be satisfied with the dust particles from the feet of any of Her *sakhīs*. Only by taking the particle of dust or mood of the *gopīs* will I be able to please Kṛṣṇa”

When Uddhava returned from Vraja, he told Kṛṣṇa about the glories of the *gopīs* and their one-pointed love for Him.

“It is so very high that I could not touch it. I only saw that mountain of love from a great distance, but still it was so high that my hat fell off the back of my head as I looked up at it. I cannot imagine how glorious the *gopīs* are. I wanted to take the dust of their lotus feet, but now I am

hopeless. I am not qualified to touch their foot-dust, so I simply offer *praṇāma* to it from very far away.”

*āsām abo caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām abam syām  
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām  
yā dustyajam̐ sva-janam̐ ārya-paṭham̐ ca hitvā  
bhejur mukunda-padavīm śrutibhir vimrgyām*

*Śrīmad-Bhagavatam 10.47.61*

The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana have abandoned the association of their husbands, sons, and other family members who are very difficult to give up, and they have forsaken the path of chastity to take shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa, who one should search for by Vedic knowledge. Oh, let me be fortunate enough to be one of the bushes, creepers, or herbs in Vṛndāvana, because the *gopīs* trample them and bless them with the dust of their lotus feet.

This is our goal, the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is always absorbed in pleasing Kṛṣṇa.

Paramārādhyā Gurudeva Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has mercifully revealed these pastimes to us.

### The Mercy of a Rasika Vaiṣṇava

Those who have greed for *vraja-bhāva* and worship Śrī Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa by *rāgānuga-bhakti* under the guidance of a *rasika* Vrajavāsī will achieve *vraja-bhāva*. Those *bhaktas* that have greed but who follow *vaidhī-bhakti* will attain the abode of Dvārakā in *aiśvarya-jñāna*, where Kṛṣṇa manifests as Dvarakadish, Śrīmatī Rādhikā manifests as Satyabhāmā, Candrāvalī as Rukmīṇī, and their associates as the other queens of Dvaraka.

Therefore the greed for *vraja-bhāva* can only be received by the mercy of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava who is immersed in *rāgānuga bhāva*. Such *rasika-gurus* themselves participate in the transcendental pastimes. It is only under the guidance of such a *rasika* Vrajavāsī that one can worship Rādhā-kṛṣṇa Conjugal by *rāgānuga-bhakti* and thus achieve that extremely rare treasure of *vraja-bhāva*.

These pastimes are the life and soul of devotees and they should be properly heard in *paramparā* from a bona fide *guru*. One should not worship Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa without pastimes or chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* without remembering Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. This is also the advice of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Rāsācārya Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has similarly instructed that in order to attain *rasa*, the mellow taste of a relationship with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, one should chant Kṛṣṇa's name while remembering His sweet pastimes. An example is given that unless sugar and water are mixed, there will be no *rasa* or nectar to drink. Both must mix together; then it will be *rasa*. Without hearing properly from Śrī Guru and serving him pleasingly, one will not be able to chant with remembrance.

The *unnata-ujjala-rasa-māyā prema-bhakti* is practiced and preached by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and can be obtained only by his followers. If one is not following the guidelines and principles set by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, then he is considered a *sabajiyā*.

A *sabajiyā* has no internal realization of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *tattva* and is a servant of his various sensual and mental desires. Their duplicitous performance of *bhajana* is mainly to secure name and fame and indulge their senses. Such *sabajiyās* are called stone-hearted and have no interest in accepting the favorable directions for devotional service given by self-realized devotees; devoid of *kṛṣṇa prema*, devoid of *rāgānuga-bhakti* or even *vaidbhī-bhakti* like that of Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, the *sabajiyā* cheats himself and his followers.

One must therefore understand and realize what Śrī Guru is, what his qualities are and then learn how to discriminate. Śrīla Gurudeva made it very clear that: "Realization is the result of remembering *śrī gurudeva*; therefore we should always remember him. If we do not understand the mercy of *gurudeva*, we will not understand anything."

Without any fear, one must engage in the process given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. The teaching of our present *ācāryas* is the same wine in new bottles. The bottles are different colors, but the wine is the same. If you drink that wine, you will certainly become mad, but this madness is actually desirable.





## Their Intimacy Could Not Have Been Greater

Parama-gurudeva, Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja had many disciples, and amongst them, the most prominent were my *dīkṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. These three shared tremendous intimacy; even if they had been born from the same parents, their intimacy could not have been greater. Śrīla Gurudeva used to say that, “though we are three different bodies, our soul is one.”

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja was the *acārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti and was also the one initiating disciples. At that time, Śrīla Gurudeva was not giving initiation. Although the management of Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Māṭha was headed by Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja who was offered all respect as the *acārya*, when we *brahmacārīs* or the *māṭhavāsīs* brought any issues or disagreements before him, he would always tell us, “Take the matter to Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.” How he handled the matter, and whatever he decided to do was always fully backed by Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja; therefore, whatever Śrīla Gurudeva ordered was the mandate for everyone in the Śamīti.

This closeness and complete trust was also evident between Pujapada Trivikrama Mahārāja and Śrīla Gurudeva. In later years, when Śrīla Gurudeva started giving initiation, Pūjyapāda Trivikrama Mahārāja used to say, “I have no disciples, but all the disciples of Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja are my disciples”.

Additionally, when contemplating the intimacy that these three *gurus* shared, we should bear in mind they all accepted *sannyāsa* (the supermost position in human society) on the same day, from Param Gurudeva, Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Besides their unending preaching and services to their Guru Mahārāja, we should also consider the divine departure of these three *mahā-bhāgavatas*. They all disappeared from our external vision while residing in the Lord’s holy *dhāma*. Both Śrīla Bhaktivedānta

Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja left this world and entered *nitya-līlā*, the eternal *līlā* of the Lord on the same auspicious day (*tithī*), exactly two years apart (2004 and 2002 respectively). Śrīla Gurudeva said, “Following in the footsteps of my senior god-brother *prapūjya-caraṇa* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, I want to take shelter of the same *tithī* (exact day) to leave this world.” Instead of leaving on the disappearance day of Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva left on his most auspicious appearance day at three in the morning. Although none of Śrīla Gurudeva’s *sevakas* attending him told him which Vaiṣṇava calander day it was, by his own internal, transcendental connection he left at the most auspicious time to join in the most intimate pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Once, just before Śrī Navadvīpa *parikramā*, my Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja became very sick.

He decided to go to Siddha Bāḍi to recover—the same place where Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī had stayed when he was ill with tuberculosis. Just then Śrīla Gurudeva was coming from Mathurā for the Navadvīpa *parikramā*. When he heard the news, he immediately departed for Siddha Bāḍi with two *maṭha-vāsīs* and me. At that time I was Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī. When we arrived at Siddha Bari, Śrīla Gurudeva offered *praṇāma* to my Guru Mahārāja, who immediately said jokingly, “Navīna, pack my things because a policeman has come to take me away. If I refuse him he will arrest me and take me to Navadīpa *māṭha*. I think it is better to surrender.”

When Śrīla Gurudeva heard that, he laughed and laughed. They both were always serious but at the same time their personalities had a playful side which really came out when they got together. That very evening, all of us left Siddha Bāḍi and arrived in Kolkata the following day.

### At the Guest House

As we came to the Howrah Station in Kolkata, I saw Banwari Lāl Singhanīa together with a large group of his relatives, standing on the next platform. Mr. Banwari Lāl Singhanīa was there to pick his children and friends who had just come from Jagannātha Purī. At the same time that I saw them,

Mr. Singhanian's ten year old daughter spotted Śrīla Gurudeva and was excitedly pointing us out to her father. As some of us went to get a taxi from outside Howrah Railway Station, Mr. Singhanian walked towards us and asked us how we were doing. I replied that my Guru Mahārāja was sick and upon hearing this, Mr. Singhanian insisted to host us in his company's guest house which was close by.

Several cars that had come for Mr. Singhanian's family had already left, and only two cars remained for the rest of his group. Mr. Singhanian accommodated us by putting the remaining children in one car so that Śrīla Gurudeva, Guru Mahārāja and I could ride with him in the second car with his driver. Mr. Singhanian took me first to their residential house at 1 Pritoria Street, Kolkata, and dropped me there so I could start cooking, while Guru Mahārāja and Śrīla Gurudeva were driven to the guesthouse on Baligang Circular Road, a place which was normally reserved for his business. I was familiar with their home as I had been there many times with Śrīla Gurudeva. All the family members knew me very well since I was Śrīla Gurudeva's *brahmacārī* servant at that time. They said to me, "You go and cook for both of your Guru Mahārājas and our driver can drive you to the guest house later, when you finish cooking."

I always kept several days supply of dried breakfast food for Śrīla Gurudeva. We had come from Mathurā to Navadvīpa recently, so I had a lot of food in our luggage such as "*pera from Mathurā*". (Gurudeva used to love this milksweet very much, so we would also take it to the West when we started travelling there; Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja was also fond of this sweet and Śrīla Gurudeva used to send it to him regularly upon his request). I also had some roasted chickpeas and "*kburchan*", a type of dry sweet made of cream, "*petta*", another sweet made of a certain type of squash, puffed rice and other snacks. The locked bag also had Śrīla Gurudeva's plate, bowl and water thermos, so, before I left the car, I gave him the key. While both of them were at the guest house, without any *brahmachari* to serve them, they opened the bag, which was full of *prasādā*. They both became very happy. When the parents are not there then the children become very happy. No one is there to check them.

They were very hungry, so after Mr. Singhanian dropped them off, they opened the bag and ate many snacks and sweets—till their stomachs

were full. After cooking, when I arrived there, they saw me and began to laugh together. My Guru Mahārāja was making Śrīla Gurudeva laugh, and Śrīla Gurudeva was making Śrīla Guru Mahārāja laugh, and they were in stitches, laughing so much. It was as if they were teasing me. “What is the matter?” I asked. “Why are you laughing so much?”

Neither of them was saying anything. They were only looking at each other and laughing so much as if they were tickling each other.

Then my Guru Mahārāja said, “Your bag is empty. We were hungry. No one was there, so we both ate till our stomachs were full. We didn’t know when you would go to the market or when you would return, and so we ate to a full stomach. So if you would have returned two hours later, we would still be full.”

Then I said, “This bag is not for me but for the service of all of you: both of you and Pūjyapāda Trivikrama Mahārāja. By your causeless mercy my bag will always be full and never be empty again.” They became pleased with me.

Then my Guru Mahārāja and Gurudeva were speaking to each other. My Guru Mahārāja said that he will be the first to leave this world. Then Gurudeva said, “No, I will go from this world before you.”

My Guru Mahārāja said, “No, you have to do so much service. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja has reserved some big service for you that no one else can do.”

Then Gurudeva said, “I am a cardio patient. What can I do? Nothing is possible by me in this life time.”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāja replied, “You cannot understand now. When the time will come after a few years you will understand.”

“But what does Guru Mahārāja want to do through me?”

My Guru Mahārāja said, “I will not tell you now. After a few years you will understand by your own. Then you will be surprised by what I am saying to you now.”

Then I said, “You are only speaking about who will go first from this world. What kind of discussion is this? There is no other discussion. I don’t like to hear this kind of discussion between you, especially in my presence.”

Guru Mahārāja said, “Yes, we should not discuss this in front of them. They are children. Their minds will be disturbed.” Then they stopped. This event happened around 1989.

So the first time Śrīla Gurudeva went out of India was in 1996. We were in Badger, California when I told Gurudeva, “Remember Guru Mahārāja had said that you would have to do a very big service that no one else can do, which Parama-gurudeva had reserved just for you?” As soon as I said this, Śrīla Gurudeva began to weep. “Yes, now I understand what Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja said. My Guru Mahārāja has kept this big preaching *sevā* reserved for me.” He said he now knows what Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja meant when he spoke those words so many years earlier at Mr. Singhanīa’s guesthouse.

Śrīla Gurudeva had so much affection for his Godbrothers. Whenever Gurudeva would go travelling, he would write to Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, to Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja and to Pūjyapāda Śānta Gosvāmī Mahārāja, to request their blessings.





## Relationship with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja



In the first volume I wrote some details about my spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and one of my *śikṣā gurus* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikram Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Many times Gurudeva Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja used to comment that due to their deep intimacy, they were three different bodies but one soul. In the same way, there was deep intimacy between Śrīla Gurudeva and my spiritual grandsire Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja which was evident in their letters to each other. So to show the intimacy between them I am presenting something about Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja to the readers. I delineated in the first volume that, before his initiation, Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa (Śrīla Gurudeva) had met and associated with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja several times. At that time Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's name was Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu. Abhay Prabhu had great affection for his dear God-brother, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

In 1942 the Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti was established at Bose Parha Lane, in Calcutta (Kolkata) by Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja (at that time, Sajjana-sevaka Brahmācārī) and Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja (at that time, Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu), performed the ceremonial activities during the inauguration of Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti, and henceforth, they became its co-founders. As Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja himself wrote in 1968 to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja, in his native Bengali, "I have a very close connection with Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti. Yourself, and particularly Śrīpāda Vāmana Mahārāja know well that I am one of the three persons who founded Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti..."

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja took *sannyāsa* initiation from *Parama-gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja in 1959

at Śrī Kesaviji Gauḍīya Māṭha in Mathurā. Later he went to America and in New York, he established the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

When Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja first heard in October, 1968 that Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja had disappeared from this world and entered *nitya-līlā*, he told his assembled American disciples in Seattle, Washington, “So I am feeling now very much obliged to my Godbrother and *sannyāsa guru*, because he carried out the wish of my spiritual master and forced me to accept this *sannyāsa* order. This Godbrother, His Holiness Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is no more. He has entered Kṛṣṇa’s abode... In my childhood, when I became ill, I was very stubborn. I would not accept any medicine and therefore my mother used to force it in my mouth with a spoon. So anyway, I similarly did not want to accept this *sannyāsa* order but this Godbrother forced me.

“You must.’ *Apayayan mam...* The Vaiṣṇavas and the spiritual master however, forcefully give the medicine. So my Godbrother, Bhaktiprajna Keśava Mahārāja is *krpambudhi*. He did this favor upon me because he was an ocean of mercy. So we offer our obeisances to the Vaiṣṇavas as *krpambudhi*... The Vaiṣṇavas, the representatives of the Lord, are so kind. They bring the ocean of mercy to distribute to the suffering humanity. *Krpambudhir yas tam āham prapadye*. So I am offering my respectful obeisances unto His Holiness, because he forcefully made me adopt this *sannyāsa* order. He is no more in this world. He has entered Kṛṣṇa’s abode. I am therefore offering my respectful obeisances along with my disciples... on that *sannyāsa* day, when there was a reception, I first of all spoke in English. It was all an arrangement of the higher authority of Kṛṣṇa.”<sup>3</sup>

The next day, October 22, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja wrote a lengthy letter of condolence to Śrīpāda Trivikrama Mahārāja in Mathurā and in his postscript he again expressed that he wanted a life-size picture of Bhaktiprajñāna Keśava Mahārāja along with a picture of Śrīla [Bhaktisiddhānta] Prabhupāda placed in his prominent centers, “particularly New York, Hollywood, London and so forth.” Certainly this

3 Recorded 10/21/68. Quoted from THEIR LASTING RELATION: An Historical Account From lectures and letters by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda and Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. (CC-BY-ND Gaudiya Vedanta Publications)

clearly expressed desire of the *mahā-bhāgavata* to have life-size pictures of his *dīkṣā* and *sannyāsa-gurus* placed in his prominent centers should create a duty in the minds of his devotees.

### Fools Do Not Know How to Honour Vaiṣṇavas

Although all the prominent leaders of ISKCON were well aware of the close relationship between Śrīla Gurudeva and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, still, when Śrīla Gurudeva visited certain temples, many leaders did not give him proper respect and some even blasphemed him. According to Vaiṣṇava etiquette, when an elevated Vaiṣṇava comes, at least he is to be offered a seat, a drink of water and a flower garland to honour him.

The intimate connection and shared purpose of the two masters was evident; however, during his visit to the ISKCON temple in Los Angeles, despite the fact that disciples of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja were present, Śrīla Gurudeva was not at all welcomed properly—not even offered a seat. Elsewhere Śrīla Gurudeva was treated honorably and with dignity but the lack of respect he received there was very blatant.

Returning immediately from LA ISKCON temple Śrīla Gurudeva told, “If my *śikṣā guru* (Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja) was physically present today, he would have most probably commented: fools do not know how to honour Vaiṣṇavas.”

Śrīla Gurudeva was subjected to such mistreatment from certain disciples of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja but he always remained humble and tolerant.

Even thirty years before on December 15, 1966, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī had written to him, “I came to know that my disciple Chandrasekhara from Delhi wrote you a letter. Chandrasekhara sent me a copy of your reply to him. In that letter I came to know that foolish Chandrasekhara had blasphemed you. Fools do not know how to honour Vaiṣṇavas. By your greatness, please excuse him. I haven’t instructed him to do such a thing. I only told him to visit you. Anyway, excuse his *aparādha*. Chandrasekhara is a good man, but out of foolishness he used bad words to you. You please forgive him and me by your good qualities.”

## Compassion in LA

Despite this cold treatment at the Los Angeles Temple, Śrīla Gurudeva, out of his compassion, visited there again another year. Knowing that anyone who would see and listen to Śrīla Gurudeva would become attracted, the leaders must have told the devotees at the L.A. temple to stay away at that time; hardly any devotees were present when we came. At that time, a certain prominent ISKCON leader was giving class to a very few devotees in the temple. On seeing us they all remained seated. Although Śrīla Gurudeva was senior to everyone present there, none of them offered *praṇāma* to him. They did not even greet Gurudeva, or offer him a seat or garland. Śrīla Gurudeva respectfully offered his *praṇāma* to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and the Deities and quietly left.

Upananda Prabhu was the co-owner of Govinda's Bliss Bars, a very popular health bar in America at that time. Upananda Prabhu, (nowadays he is known as Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Avadhūta Mahārāja,) arranged for accomadation in a hotel and scheduled classes at different places in LA to give people a chance to meet Śrīla Gurudeva and to hear his sweet *hari-kathā*. Such self-realized, high-class Vaiṣṇavas speak about the wonderful pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in such a beautiful way, thus bringing others to Kṛṣṇa. For such pure devotees, when they speak there is no ulterior motive, so we should sit and hear the nectar flowing from their mouths.

Our next stop was Washington DC. We were booked to fly out from the LA airport at 8:10 am, but somehow Gurudeva's secretary, Brajanātha Prabhu, thought the flight was at 10:08 am. Early that morning, we received a surprise visit from two of the prominent leaders of the ISKCON LA temple in our hotel room.

“Mahārāja, we will take you to our temple and you can take *darśana* and then we will drop you off at the airport for your flight.” they said.

“Why so early?” I asked.

“It is because your flight is early.”

Brajanātha Prabhu checked and discovered that the flight was indeed early. We then hurried to pack our luggage. It was still dark outside.

Śrīla Gurudeva was ready to go with them, but we said to him, “Please, you shouldn't go with them. Better to come with us.”

“No, they are Vaiṣṇavas,” Śrīla Gurudeva replied innocently. “They came for me. I must go. I will take *darśana* and then they will drop me off at the airport.” His voice was content as always.

Although both these leaders had behaved so badly towards Śrīla Gurudeva two years earlier, one of them was a *sannyāsī* and other was a house-holder; now out of the blue they had come and Śrīla Gurudeva was ready to go take *darśana* of the dieties and then to go to the airport with them.

Both of them were emphatically insisting that Śrīla Gurudeva come alone. They didn’t even want me to accompany Śrīla Gurudeva. I wondered how they knew our flight schedule. These are the same people who publicly offended Śrīla Gurudeva for years and their sudden change of behavior was undoubtedly suspicious. We were very concerned and didn’t know what to do; we were in a dilemma. At this point, Brajanātha Prabhu, Puṇḍarīka Prabhu and I discussed in private whether or not we should let Śrīla Gurudeva go alone with them. Brajanātha Prabhu suggested I say something in Bengali to Śrīla Gurudeva—then no one except Śrīla Gurudeva would be able to understand.

So I said to Śrīla Gurudeva in Bengali: “When you went to their temple, how did they treat you? They don’t even fear *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. They do not care for you. Even when a common person visits their temple, they will ask him, ‘Who are you? Where are you coming from? Please have a seat.’ But they did not treat you like this. Since 1996, they have been trying to spoil your programmes, but they have never had any success. So we’re worried that they’ll surely do some permanent harm to you. It may be possible that we will not be able to see you for the rest of our life if you do decide to go with them. What will be our destiny? We don’t want you to go with them. I fear what they may do to you. They are insisting that you go alone. Why? They are saying that there is no need for Navīna Kṛṣṇa, Puṇḍarīka or Brajanātha to go. Why are they insisting again and again that you go alone with them? It must be some conspiracy. I don’t like that you will go alone with them. Suppose they will take you and do some mischief. What will you do? You please judge again by your own mind and then decide what would be better. Also, in any event, even if we miss the flight, we are not going to let you go alone.”

Then Śrīla Gurudeva replied to me in Bengali, “Yes, as you are requesting, it is better that I don’t go with them alone.”

Śrīla Gurudeva was silent for a few seconds. Then he said to the leaders, “I will not go alone with you. I can go only if Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī and Brajanātha also come. Without them, I will not go anywhere.” We were so relieved to hear this!

Later on, one of the favorable ISKCON leaders confided to Bhāgavata Prabhu (presently Śrīpāda Bhāgavata Mahārāja) and others what these certain ISKCON leaders said about that incident, “Navīna Kṛṣṇa is a big politician. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was ready to go with us, but after what Navīna Kṛṣṇa spoke to him in Bengali, he refused to go anywhere without them.” Bhāgavata Prabhu and other devotees told me this when we came the following year.



Śrīla Gurudeva and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta  
Swāmī Mahārāja:  
Narration by Śrīla Gurudeva<sup>4</sup>

### Our First Meeting

In 1947, I was in Calcutta as the personal servant to my *gurudeva*, and one day there was a large assembly and many Vaiṣṇavas were present there. During the lecture given by Gurudeva, a *grhastha* devotee came in at the back door. Upon seeing him, Gurudeva stopped speaking and asked me to bring him forward. That devotee humbly hesitated to come forward, but my *gurudeva* ordered that he come all the way to the front.

Gurudeva showed great respect to him and insisted he sit next to him on the platform. I looked up at Gurudeva, silently questioning, “Who is this devotee?” It was very rare that he had done this with others. Afterwards he told me, “This is Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Bābu, my dear godbrother. He is a very special disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupādā. He is very humble and qualified. You should take note of him, you should hear carefully from him, and you should serve him.”

At that time I would cook breakfast, lunch, and any other meal for Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu and many of the other senior Vaiṣṇavas. I would also wash their clothes and clean for them. He would watch me, and became pleased with me. He was happy to see my service for my *gurudeva* and asked me many questions about myself, like where I was from and where and how I had joined the *māṭha*. We spoke together, and he was satisfied with my replies. I was also very impressed with him, and attracted to him. This is when I began my service to him in my heart and in my work.

I am thinking now how very fortunate I was to have met him long ago, and to have served him. We had so much affection for each other

4 From the book *My Śikṣa-Guru and Priyā-Bandhu: Remembrances of Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupādā* compiled from selected interviews, lectures and writings of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. (CC-BY-ND Gaudiya Vedanta Publications)

that I cannot explain my heart sufficiently. He stated in one of his letters to me that from the first time he saw me, there was affection between us and that we shared a transcendental relationship of spontaneous love. He wrote that, as his Śrīla Prabhupādā had great faith and love for him from the beginning, he similarly had love and well-wishing for me.

He was a powerful speaker, and his lectures were most influential. Discussing translations from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by first giving word-for-word meanings, he would then present thorough explanations; and what he spoke was beautiful. In those days there were many senior disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, such as Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīla Tīrtha Mahārāja, Śrīla Śrauti Mahārāja, Śrīla Nemi

Mahārāja, Śrīla Yāyāvāra Mahārāja, Śrīla Auḍulomi Mahārāja, Śrīla Vaikāna Mahārāja, Śrīla Purī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gīri Mahārāja and Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāja. All these disciples were like tigers and thunderbolts, being well-versed in *siddhānta*. They would often come to visit my *gurudeva*, and I was able to serve them. Though Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu was then a *gr̥hastha* living outside any *māṭha*, he was considered by all to be extremely qualified.

He was very bold and never compromised with anyone regarding the established *siddhānta* – never. He defeated and convinced everyone by his realized preaching.

In those days I often saw him associating with his godbrothers, and he had many deep friendships in all the temples where they assembled – in Calcutta, Navadvīpa, Chinchura, and Delhi. He was often meeting with godbrothers he would show respect to them because he was a *gr̥hastha* at that time. And, even though he was married then, all the *sannyāsīs* and senior *brahmacārīs* highly regarded him because he was a learned scholar and a potent, brave preacher. He was known by all to be abhaya, fearless.

### Editorial Sevā

Our magazines, *Gauḍīya Patrikā* and *Bhāgavata Patrikā*, were started in 1953. At that time, Gurudeva requested Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu, “I want to establish publications in Bengali and other languages, and I would especially like you to write articles for them.” Earlier he had written

articles for the *Harmonist*, and now he continued to write many wonderful essays, *Gītā* purports, etc. He wrote so marvelously that everyone praised him. He challenged all who were opposed to *pure bhakti* at that time, especially the ‘Mūrgī Mission’. He called the Rāmakrishna Mission ‘the Mūrgī Mission’, because the members ate chicken. In fact, they ate flesh, eggs and many other abominable things.

Vivekananda and his Rāmakrishna Mission were very prominent in those days. They were renowned by the public, who thought, “Oh, these are such high-class devotees. In all of India, only they are following the Vedas, and all others are not. The Gauḍīya Mission and others are not Vedāntic.” Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu wrote a two-part article about the Mūrgīs. He began with the first part; and when the second part was also printed, all but the Mūrgīs were astonished and convinced. Many requested him to write more articles like these, which called for the reform of religious institutions.

At that time the president of India was Dr. Rādhākrishnan. He was very scholarly and his English was quite erudite, but he was world-famous as a very bold *māyāvādī*. He wrote an article in English saying that the soul in Kṛṣṇa’s body was God, but Kṛṣṇa’s body was not God. He said that, as with our body and soul, there was also a difference between Kṛṣṇa’s body and soul.

Guru Mahārāja was not here then, but Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu was and wrote a very powerful article in response. He quoted many strong examples from *śāstra* and declared to the President, “Those who speak like this are rascals. In Kṛṣṇa there is no difference between *deha* and *debī*, the body and its possessor. All His qualities, pastimes and names are transcendental. If one does not have a very pure and realized *guru*, he cannot understand this idea. You have no *guru*; you are reading *śāstra* yourself. Just as Gautama Buddha became *śūnyavādī*, so you are also just like that. At some time in South India you met with the very renowned Śaṅkarācārya’s teachings, but you have not read Śrī Rāmānuja, Śrī Mādhvācārya, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī; and you have never read Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. You should try to know what is *acintyabhedābheda*. Do not be sectarian. You are authority in India, the President, but you are not an authority in religion. You will have to learn something from us.”

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja appointed Śrīpād Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu to be the editor-in-chief of the Bengali *Gauḍīya Patrikā*, and I was also in the editorial board for the Hindi *Bhāgavata Patrikā*. He usually submitted his articles in Bengali, and sometimes, if he wrote an article in Hindi, I would edit and then submit it. This is because his mother language was not Hindi. Mostly he wrote his articles for our *Gauḍīya Patrikā* in Bengali. I then translated these into Hindi and printed them in the *Bhāgavata Patrikā*.

This was before the time of tape machines, and Prabhu was expert in the skill of stenography. During lectures of my *gurudeva* and other senior Vaiṣṇavas, he took shorthand perfectly and recorded those talks in his notebooks. His accurate transcriptions were also used for articles in the *Gauḍīya Patrikā* magazine. Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu continued writing for our magazines occasionally for many years, and some of those original editions are still preserved at our *māṭha*.

### Residing in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha

My *gurudeva* and I were present on the day Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu came again to the Keśavajī Gauḍīya Māṭha in 1955. We embraced him and he embraced us. Before coming, he had been successful with his pharmaceutical business in Allahābāda, called Prayāga Pharmacy, and it was very famous.

Many important personalities of India, including the prime Minister family, were customers in his shop. Later on, however, he had to sell it. Then he traveled to all the important cities of North India, such as Delhi, Kānpura, Lucknow, Āgrā, Jhansi, Mathurā, and other towns to sell the medicines he had made from his own formulas. Kuñja-bihārī Prabhu, a senior disciple in the *māṭha*, was especially devoted to him during this time. He helped to carry his bags and also to bring him *prasādam* while he worked.

After a while this business also came to an end, and Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu gave up his household life and all its possessions in Calcutta. He again came to Mathurā, this time without belongings. He brought a medical formula for treating ringworm, which he distributed to the shopkeepers, store-to-store, but sales were not good. He was living in

a room he had rented by the Yamunā, in Hooli Wali Gully near Bengali-ghāta. He had been there three or four days when I went to see him. I told him, “Prabhu, why are you staying here?” He was very humble and didn’t want to impose himself upon us, so I forcibly took his luggage and told him, “I will not let you go anywhere else. We are here. We are your sons. You are our *gurudeva*’s Godbrother and are very dear to us. We want to care for you. I will not allow you to stay here, separate from us.” I brought the *brabmacārīs*, Kuñja-bihārī Prabhu, Śeṣasāyī Prabhu and some mothers, and we took what few utensils he had and brought him to live in our *māṭha*.

I requested him, “Please stay here with us, preaching *Bhagavad-gītā*, writing and so on. I know that no one is assisting you now. I want to personally serve you. Please live here forever; we never want you to leave.” He became so glad.

I gave him a room adjacent to mine. His room was there (pointing to the room one door from the kitchen), and my room was here. There were only two rooms then, his and mine. At that time there was no dome of the *mandīra* in our Keśavajī Gauḍīya Māṭha.

We had very little facility to offer him, because nothing was there in our *māṭha*. There was just one bathroom, but still we were very easily able to live peacefully and accomplish everything we had to accomplish. At that time he also had nothing to show to others: “This is mine.” He had only his body and *ātmā* – no *paīsā* at all. He only had some copies of his *Back to Godhead* magazine, his *Gītā*, and three or four volumes of a Bengali *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He had no bedding, and no extra boxes or personal belongings.

We gave him one small room and many large books. Śrīpāda Nṛsiṃha Mahārāja (one of his godbrothers) and I donated some Sanskrit and Bengali books to him. There he began to write many English translations and articles. Day and night he would stay in his room and do this, and he also chanted a great deal of *harināma* and very beautifully sang *bhajanās*. We did not know when he ever took rest. He slept only a short time in the morning, because all during the night he was awake, and throughout the day also. He became so pleased with this arrangement of staying with us, and our Guru Mahārāja also became pleased when he was informed of this.

I would sometimes joke with him, saying, “Oh, you may try to be responsible for your children and your wife, but they are rejecting you.”

One of his sons was not very favorable, and another was somewhat favorable but not wanting to serve him. So I would say, “Prabhu, why not take more service from all of us? You should not go back there. I will beg from door to door and arrange to get you rice and any other items.”

When Prabhu first came to Mathurā to stay with us, he had an ailment which he humbly and silently tolerated. Because he was expert in medicines, he always used Ayurvedic or homeopathic remedies when necessary and avoided allopathic treatment. I was fortunate that he confided in me, saying, “I do not have faith in any doctors. If they demand to operate, I may die.” I told him that he could not die; he had too much important *sevā* to do. He agreed and said that he was very determined to fulfill his *gurudeva’s* order to preach all over the world. I said that I knew of a bona fide doctor here in Mathurā who had cured others. He let me take him there, and I stayed by his side during the entire operation. I hesitate to mention these details, because it may sound as if I was helping him. Actually, I know he was bestowing his mercy to allow me to perform intimate service.

We would often visit each other’s rooms, and sometimes we would joke together about various topics. He was very fond of joking, and when he would laugh it was very sweet. He joked in an especially delightful way, with a slightly playful smile. We also had many philosophical discussions together, speaking about such topics as *Prablāda-caritra* and Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We read many scriptures together, and he would deeply discuss the matters he wrote about in the *Gauḍīya Patrikā*. Sometimes he would have talks with one, two, three or five disciples of my *gurudeva* in my room. There were also some big officers and other important gentlemen who came to hear him speak, and they would say, “Oh, Abhaya Caraṇa Bābu is such a learned and advanced person!” Everybody would glorify him. Prabhu was very enthusiastic about cooking, and he often declared that all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas should be expert in cooking for Kṛṣṇa.

During the many months he stayed at Keśavajī Gauḍīya Māṭha, the two of us would perform *sandhyā-ārati* together each evening. He would always play the *mṛdaṅga* very expertly, and I would play the *kartālas* and sing. He liked my singing very much and always requested me to lead the *kīrtana*. Someone asked me, “Why doesn’t Prabhu also sing? He has a

beautiful voice as well.” I replied, “Yes, surely he does, but there are times he doesn’t sing because he is experiencing intense devotional feelings and weeping.” I have heard this also on some of his cassette recordings.

### Accepting Sannyāsa

He had been the manager of Bengal Chemicals and was so expert that he had arranged another company himself. But there were problems. He had come to Allahābādā and managed a very big medical shop, but after some time that also had difficulty. He then engaged in a little more business, but Kṛṣṇa would not allow it to continue. Then he came here.

As we once talked together in 1959, sitting side-by-side, Prabhu said, “When I first met Śrīla Prabhupādā, and when he gave me initiation, he told me that I should preach in English in Western countries. He also told me this over twenty years ago in Calcutta.” He continued, “That which I feared has come on my head, and now I see that I cannot successfully remain in business.” I replied, “Do not try for this anymore. You are not a person to do anything associated with worldly business. Kṛṣṇa and your *gurudeva* want you to preach in Western countries. You have such important work to do, and you are so qualified.” We laughed together about this in a friendly way.

Guru Mahārāja and Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu were bosom friends – they had lived and served together. Both were intellectual giants and very erudite persons from high-class families. So I now encouraged him to accept *sannyāsa* from our *gurudeva* and then go to preach in Western countries. Then, when my *gurudeva* later arrived from Navadvīpa, I told him,

“Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu is your friend. He can obey you because you are elder.” *Gurudeva* was a *sannyāsī* and Prabhu was in *gr̥hastha-veṣa* (the dress of a householder).

Earlier, when I had written to *Gurudeva* that *pūjyapāda* Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu was staying here with us, he told me, “He is my bosom friend. Show him all respect and give him all facilities.” I had known him since 1947, and I realized how highly qualified he was. *Pūjyapāda* Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Śrīla Śrauti Mahārāja, and Guru Mahārāja would always give him great respect, even though he was a householder.

At this time, therefore, I requested my *gurudeva* to apply some pressure so that he would take *sannyāsa*. Gurudeva then called him and said, “Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and all the other boys are encouraging that you take *sannyāsa*. I also support this idea. Do not hesitate to take the renounced order. You are so qualified.

Please take *sannyāsa* now. It will be very beneficial.”

Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu thus agreed to accept *sannyāsa*, and the ceremony was held the very next day. That day was the auspicious Viśvarūpa-mahotsava. Prabhu asked me, “How should I prepare?” I told him, “Don’t worry, I will arrange everything.” I prepared *bāhira-veṣa* (*sannyāsa dhotī*), *uttariya* (*sannyāsa* upper cloth) and a *dāṇḍa* with my own hands. I taught him how to wear these, and then I performed the fire *yajña*. Akiñcanā Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja came, and Śeṣaśāyī Brahmācārī, Kuñja-vihārī Brahmācārī, Parijataka Mahārāja and many other persons were also present. Now, most of these devotees have departed.

Sanātana Prabhu took *sannyāsa* with him, after which he became Bhaktivedānta Muni Mahārāja. He was ninety years old and had said to him, “If you agree to take *sannyāsa*, then so shall I.” He is also no longer here, having joined the eternal service of Kṛṣṇa.

I recited the *yajña-mantras* and performed the ceremony. Akiñcanā Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Prabhu’s intimate godbrother and friend, chanted Hare Kṛṣṇa continuously, from 8:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M., in a most sweet and deep manner.

My *gurudeva* then gave Prabhu the *sannyāsa-mantra*. The *sannyāsa* name which he gave him is “Swāmī.” This is one of the bona fide *sannyāsa* names; it means “controller” and “master.”

The title “Bhaktivedānta” had already been awarded in Calcutta by some of his godbrothers, and “Mahārāja” is a formal ending for those in the renounced order.

This name “Swāmī” was just fitting because Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja became the controller of many, many *jīvas’* hearts, due to his being strong and faithful to his *gurudeva*. This is why we affectionately call him “Swāmīji,” not in any common way but showing the greatest respect.

After the ceremony, Gurudeva requested Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja to speak. He spoke in English, although almost everyone present

could not understand that language. He explained that just at this time he remembered his *gurudeva's* specific orders to preach in the English language. He said, "I feel fortunate to accept *sannyāsa* from my godbrother, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I have known him for a long time and he is my close friend. He is a very bona fide disciple of our *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. He has kindly given me this *sannyāsa* order, and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa

Mahārāja and Śrīla Muni Mahārāja have also given me inspiration to do this. The order of *sannyāsa* means to preach the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the mission of the *guru* everywhere. My *gurudeva* instructed me to preach in English, in Western countries, and that is why I am writing English articles and books. I am praying to Kṛṣṇa, Gurudeva and all the Vaiṣṇavas that they give me the power to preach this mission all over the world."

Excerpts from his speech and a description of the ceremony were printed in a news article in our *Bhāgavata Patrikā*. The well-known photograph of our *gurudeva* sitting between Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Muni Mahārāja was taken on that day. Kuñja-bihārī Brahmācārī was formerly a wealthy devotee and had previously helped build our *māṭha* financially; so now he gladly donated the five *paisā* he had saved for a photographer's snapshot. Thus, today, we can all honor this *sannyāsa* portrait.

It was a special privilege for us to participate in assisting Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja in accepting *sannyāsa*. For the next three days after the ceremony, Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja stayed together with him in his room. They were especially close and confidential with each other. After this, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja went to Āgrā to preach at a program he had arranged. He was always coming and going, engaged in *guru-sevā*. We kept his room open for him for so many years, and during that time he wrote some of his books, like *Easy Journey to Other Planets*, here. His three volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* were not printed yet, so he continued writing and editing them here. The manuscripts were then given to the press in Delhi and gradually published. He was also writing *Back to Godhead* and other publications. He had done some translating before, in Calcutta and Allahābādā, but here he was easily able to concentrate and thus he accomplished so much.

Some persons don't consider the taking of *sannyāsa* to be very valuable or of much importance, but it is actually so important. I think that if Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja had not taken *sannyāsa*, perhaps he would not have done what he did in Western countries. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja himself explains in his books that it is favorable to accept the renounced order for preaching. In India, everyone has honor for *sannyāsīs*. In *sannyāsa*, one gives up something but gains everything. As explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam: mukunda sevana-vrata*. A *sannyāsī* thinks, "I only love Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I don't know anything else."

The *sannyāsa-mantra* is very helpful in attaining the *kṛṣṇaprema* which Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and all the other Gosvāmīs have tried to give us, and this is superior to all supermost attainments. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give this type of *kṛṣṇaprema*, and therefore the taking of *sannyāsa* is very important. Don't think it is a minor point.

#### At Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Mandīra

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja and I are godbrothers in regards to *sannyāsa*. I had taken *sannyāsa* before him, in 1954, and he took *sannyāsa* in 1959. However, I always considered him my superior and behaved towards him as my *śikṣā-guru*, but Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja never treated me as a disciple. Rather, he always accepted me as a bosom friend. He had me sit on the same seat with him while we were chanting *japa*, performing *kīrtana*, and also sometimes making *capātīs* together. He would roll the *capātīs* and I would put them on the fire, and then we would offer them.

We would also sit on the same bed together. One time I came to visit and gave him my *cā dara*, because he had no *cā dara* to put on his bed. He had only one torn quilt there. The walls were crumbling, but he was too absorbed in his *bhājana* and *sevā* to care for that. He performed intense *tāpasya* and *sādhana* in that *kuṭīra*, in that most sacred *tīrtha*. I feel fortunate to have received his association there.

During those years at Rādhā-Dāmodara, he was consumed in the writing of his translations and purports of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Whenever I visited him, I would try to offer him assistance. In those days I was

editing the *Patrikā*, which left me very little time. Still, we would often associate together there in his small *bhajana-kuṭīra*. Sometimes we took *prasādam* with the Rādhā-Dāmodara Gosvāmīs. He and I also performed *parikramā* of Rādhā-Dāmodara, walking together and paying respects at the *samādhis* of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, and especially Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

### Preparation and Departure for America

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja spent considerable time in Delhi before he went to America, because this is where he was printing and distributing his books. He published three volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there. I went there several times to be with him, and we stayed together in his rooms at the Chippiwada Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple.

He preached vigorously in Delhi; wherever he went, he preached to the public. He spoke about Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission to everyone he met, and he also engaged me beside him. Then, when he was in America, he wrote and encouraged me to continue preaching to the people he had cultivated there.

When Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was leaving to go to America, he described everything to me about his travel plans. He told me how, in Bombay, he had been given a ticket to travel across the Atlantic Ocean to Boston by freighter, and he described his route and his arrival there. He had great faith and a careful preaching strategy. His goal was to set up Vaiṣṇava institutes and dormitories there. Showing great confidence in the holy name, he said that even if at first the new students felt that they must take meat or wine, he would do what was necessary to begin their *bhakti*. He asked me to accompany him, and I begged him that I could not go without the permission of my *gurudeva*, who had ordered me to manage the *māṭha* in Mathurā.

One day he announced to me, "Now the time has come and I am going." He was leaving for the Port of Calcutta and was to visit Māyāpura also. I came and said good-bye, and I took his footdust and put it on my head. Before he left he requested me to keep a regular correspondence with him, which I did, and we wrote many letters to each other in those next

years. A few of these letters are printed in the pamphlet *Śrīla Prabhupāda's Letters from America*. Unfortunately, most of his other letters to me were loaned (to those in charge of publishing Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's biography on behalf of ISKCON) and have not yet been returned.

Later he wrote me to send him his books from his room in Mathurā, where many of his thick volumes were stored in his cabinet. His books were very dusty, and I cleaned and packed many boxes of them for an entire day. I then shipped those books by boat to New York. When we visited his rooms at the Los Angeles Temple in 1996, I was touched to see several of those same books still there in his bookshelves. I tried faithfully to perform all the services he requested.

### Return to India

When he returned to India in 1967, I met him and his disciple, Kīrtanānanda dāsa, at the airport in Delhi. He had instructed me to do this in his telegram. When we met, he told me many wonderful accounts and details about his preaching in America, and how miraculous were the results. Humbly, he felt that all this was only the mercy of his *gurudeva*, and the desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates. One special thing he told me was how he first chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* in Tompkins Square Park in New York City. Chanting for several hours, he had kept his eyes closed, deeply hearing and depending completely on that mercy.

We stayed together in Delhi for seven days at the Chippiwada Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple. Because Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was sometimes feeling ill, he would send me along with Kīrtanānanda dāsa to represent him in his preaching programs. He always encouraged us to preach very strongly. He wanted everyone to see his Western Vaiṣṇava, and so he took us to chant and preach to people he knew in Delhi.

After a few weeks, another of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's disciples, Acyutānanda dāsa, came to stay in Vṛndāvana. Because these two were Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's disciples, I sat together with them and honored the *mahā-prasāda* they had prepared.

All the caste Gosvāmīs, and almost all of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's godbrothers, would never take any *prasāda* or even the water that

Kīrtanānanda dāsa and Acyutānanda dāsa offered them. The reason they refused was that those disciples were Westerners and had previously eaten flesh. I spoke out against this policy and encouraged others to accept Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's disciples as bona fide. I explained how Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's preaching to foreigners was completely authorized and directly in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and our *guru-varga*. I think that most of the Indian Vaiṣṇavas have now accepted this.

During this first trip back to India in 1967, *parama-pūjyapāda* Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja came to visit my *gurudeva*, his *sannyāsa-guru*.

At that time, my *gurudeva* was in weak health and was confined to his bed in Calcutta. They had a confidential visit then, and this was their last time together in this world. My *gurudeva* was overjoyed at Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's devotional service to their Śrīla Prabhupādā. He expressed his appreciation and glorified his extensive preaching, and he pledged to cooperate in that preaching work. They also discussed my *gurudeva's* helping to arrange a donation of land for Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's future Māyāpura temple. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja were also present on that occasion.

After Śrīla Gurudeva departed from this world in 1968, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, along with his disciples, sent us a telegram of condolence. He also sent a long letter to Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja in Navadvīpa. He also delivered a lecture about Śrīla Gurudeva in Seattle, Washington, and there he described the history of his awarding him *sannyāsa*. He spoke about the great appreciation and affection he had for him, and how he had now entered Kṛṣṇa's abode. We heard later from some of his disciples that he shed tears when he received the telegram telling of our *gurudeva's* entering *nityā-līlā*.

In his letter to Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja asked him to send a photo of Gurudeva, because he wanted to place it on his temple altars in the West. He also wrote and asked me to send a picture to him. I remember that in one letter he requested me, "Please send me a picture of your *gurudeva* so I can have a portrait painted for displaying with our disciplic succession in all of our temples."

## Visiting Him in His Last Days

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was becoming very ill, and our Sukhānanda Prabhu was offering him naturopathic massages with Ganges water. Before he went abroad to England, Sukhānanda Prabhu came to Vṛndāvana for two hours every morning and evening for fourteen days to massage him, and these massages helped him. We also sometimes visited and spoke with him then. Once we came at a time when he had hardly eaten or even taken water for many days. Still, he affectionately greeted us and, as he had always done with all, he lovingly offered us the opulent *mahā-prasādam* that had been prepared and offered by his disciples. He exclaimed how nicely his young students were trying to serve their *gurudeva* and Kṛṣṇa. Even though he himself had eaten nothing at all for so long, he made sure, in such a careful and affectionate way, that each of us took *prasāda* to our full satisfaction.

Some godbrothers and associates were paying visits to him in his room around this time. Akiñcana Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bon Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Mahārāja, Indupati Prabhu (from Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāja's temple), Ānanda Prabhu, and many more devotees came to see him. We also came several times to be with him, along with our *brahmacārīs* like Śeṣāśāyī Prabhu, Śubhānanda Prabhu, Premānanda Prabhu, and sometimes others.

There are tape recordings of some of these conversations, but most of them were in Bengali or Hindi.

Just before Kārtika month in early October, when our annual Vraja Māṇḍala *parikramā* was about to begin, Parama-*pūjyapāda* Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja sent for me. He requested his senior *sannyāsīs* and many others, "I want to meet with Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja." A few of them then came by car and requested me, "Śrīla Prabhupāda wants you, so please come now." I was in the midst of giving evening discourse to our *parikramā* party, but I came immediately. When I arrived in his room at Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandīra, he was quite silent. Some boys were singing the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahāmantra*, and some *sannyāsīs* and other disciples were silent.

After some time he opened his eyes and indicated with his eyes for me to come close. He was so enthusiastic before his death – not his death,

no – his entering *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. He was not speaking, but when he saw me he showed his happiness. The devotees were chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa very softly in Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's special tune, and all could see that he was not speaking now.

I offered *praṇāma* to him, *śāntyā praṇāmā* (standing and silent), because I saw that there were many persons present and no space for me to offer full *praṇāmā*.

When he saw me he at once said, "Oh, Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has come."

He wanted me to take a seat on his bed. He tried to sit up, but I put my hands on him and said, "Please lie down, and I will sit over here." He then motioned for me to come nearer to his bed and said, "I want to speak to you." He wanted me to sit closer to his ear, so he told some disciples, "Bring a chair," and I sat on it near to his ear.

First he began to weep; his heart was melted. From the core of his heart he told me, "Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, can you excuse me?"

I feel that there is cause for you to forgive me. For the sake of preaching I have told my disciples some things, which perhaps I should not have said. Also I spoke very strongly about my godbrothers in one letter, which was then sent to everyone. I said that we are preaching and others are not, that they are *kaniṣṭhaadbhikārīs* who don't preach but are idle. I said that none of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas helped me – that they only take *mahāprasādam* and sleep."

At this time, many of his *sannyāsī* disciples were watching. His words and mood implied to me many things about how he had wanted to encourage his young students. As we are careful with babies, so he had sometimes instructed some of them not to mix with his godbrothers and the other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. To save his newcomers from becoming disturbed or confused, he sometimes told them not to visit anywhere else. One reason was that a few of his godbrothers had done some wrong things. Also, his disciples did not understand the Indian ways of indirect, subtle meanings. Also, he did not want them to lose heart due to criticism from any Indian Vaiṣṇavas who may not have understood their sensitivities and his style of training them.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja had been a member of the Gauḍīya Māṭha for a very long time and he knew the regulations and *siddhānta* – but he could not teach all his disciples everything in just a few years. He had been

cultivating many Vaiṣṇava Westerners from different countries, but they still lacked our Vedic culture and *sadācāra* (devotional habits). He had given his young disciples instructions to avoid other Vaiṣṇavas, just to protect them from becoming discouraged. He would say,

“Although they are not fully trained, their devotional attitude is so nice. I am praying to Guru Mahārāja and the *rūpānuga-guruwarga* to bless them all. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and Śrī Baladeva Prabhu will surely give them their mercy.”

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was remembering all these things, and he now requested me, “Kindly tell the other Vaiṣṇavas that I have made this offense, and to please excuse me. I have so much sorrow for this.” I told him, “You are my *śikṣā-guru* and a pure Vaiṣṇava. I know that you cannot do anything that is not in the line of *bhakti*. I think it may possible you have done these things only for the purpose of serving your *gurudeva* and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, All of us are indebted to you; there is no question. We know the prediction: “*ṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma.*” You have performed a miracle; you have spread His glories everywhere. We don’t think that you have done anything wrong, so I have nothing for which to excuse you. But I will relay your request to the senior Vaiṣṇavas. You are my *śikṣā-guru*; whatever instructions you give me I will follow with absolute sincerity.”

Tears were very sweetly falling from his eyes. He was acting in such a humble way, as if he was not a good Vaiṣṇava; but actually he was like Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He continued, “Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhuṣā ordered all of us to preach in Europe and America.

That was his strong desire. His other desire was that we all work together to preach. I didn’t waste a single moment. I tried my best, and to some extent it has been successful.” His voice was choked with emotion as he continued to speak: “If we can work conjointly, then, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu declared, this *sankīrtana* movement has great possibilities.”

Then he told me, “I want you to help take care of my disciples. I want them to be good and qualified devotees. If they come to you, please care for them.” Many of his disciples were nearby, so he softly whispered in Bengali, “When I went to the West, I caught so many monkeys in my net.

Really, they are very expert in quarreling among themselves like that. They are still very young and untrained. So I request you that after my departure you will help them in every respect.”

Considering the implications of this order from my *śikṣā-guru*, I hesitated. Then he grasped both of my hands in his own, looked deeply into my eyes and asked me to promise to help. Therefore I agreed, saying, “I promise that according to my ability and my *bhaktisiddhānta-tattva* (understanding of the conclusive statements of *bhakti*), I will always be ready to help them as you request.”

Then I told him, “I want to say something to them.” Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja at once became inspired and called to them, “Oh, you should all come near and hear Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.

Please take into your hearts what he is speaking.” Then I told them all, “Don’t think that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja is leaving this world. *Gurudeva* is eternal. You are fortunate to have such a bona fide *guru* and Vaiṣṇava. You should try to preach his mission more and more enthusiastically. If you are after material things, you will find yourselves quarreling over name, fame and worldly gain. You will not be following his teachings. You will not be following his mission; you’ll be doing wrong. So don’t pursue your own self-interest. Give up all these things. To serve Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, and to preach his mission, you should be united with all the devotees. Don’t quarrel with others over a small point. Don’t expel anyone from this mission by finding small faults. Try to behave like friends, with brotherhood, and then you can preach. If you have difficulty with any of these things, then, as Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has requested me, you can come to me and I will try to help you from the core of my heart.”

They all listened to me then, and this was recorded on a cassette tape. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja turned his head slowly, looking over the devotees as they gathered in closely. Then he slowly lifted his hand, as if to call them to attention, and said, “Listen to Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. Don’t fight amongst yourselves. I have given all direction in my books.” Then he lowered his hand.

After this Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja told me, “I pray to you that you will put me into my *samādhi* with your own hand. I don’t want to take *samādhi* from anyone else’s hands. I think you are the proper person. After my

*samādbi*, arrange to celebrate my *mahotsava* separation festival. You should give some amount of money to all the seven temples in Vṛndāvana and to all the Gauḍīya Māthas. It depends upon you how much – 201 rupees, 1001 rupees – according to your discretion, whatever you recommend. They should all hear these instructions and arrange to pay. Arrange a *mahotsava* festival also in Mathurā and invite all the senior Vaiṣṇavas to the feast. Invite all the Vaiṣṇavas in Vṛndāvana. Do this for me, and again I am telling you that you should always help my devotees.”

### His Divine Departure

When we arrived in those final hours on November 14th, he was not speaking. I felt at that time, by seeing his face, that he was fully remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. I think this was great mercy coming from Kṛṣṇa, because he had served Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa for his entire lifetime. For that special person, Kṛṣṇa absorption is there. Entranced in this way, his eyes were closed and he was exhibiting special symptoms. It was a very touching scene. He had no pain, no distraction. At that time his mouth was so beautiful. It was like a blossomed rose, like a lotus.

These are the signs of a very great personality. Otherwise, another may cry, “I am dying, I am dying,” and the face will be so ugly. But he was never like that. He was like a beautiful lotus flower. I knew what he was doing. I have seen others also, including my *gurudeva*, entering *aprakāṣa-līlā* (Kṛṣṇa’s eternal pastimes). I have seen Pūjyapada Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī, Śrīla Jagannātha Bābājī Mahārāja (a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda), Śrīla Narasīṁha Mahārāja, and Śrīla Padmanābha Mahārāja. I have seen many devotees when they departed, so I could judge what was transpiring. They would call out, “Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa” and “Rādhē Rādhē.” There are particular signs at that moment, which show that someone is remembering Kṛṣṇa, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja was exhibiting all those signs.

He was very beautiful and very exalted. There was no sign of pain and no attachment to the body or anything else.

He was no longer anxious for his young disciples, nor for any of the outward things he had established in his Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Now there was nothing else – only remembering Kṛṣṇa.

Our *brahmacārīs* were softly singing some *bhajanās*. At that time, I saw that he was fully satisfied, and thus I was also fully satisfied. I knew then that he would surely go soon, but there was no sign when he would go; he would leave now, or in a short time. He had previously talked with me, when he was in his external consciousness, but he did not request me to stay. I was not in a hurry, but I was thinking that just after my leaving for Mathurā he would enter into *nitya-līlā*. We left to return to Mathurā, and we were informed that he departed a few hours later.

Shortly after that time, we returned to the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandīra and made all arrangements for his *mahotsava*. According to his wishes, we took him on procession to most of the important deities of Vṛndāvana. There were so many of his disciples and other persons chanting in that procession, and all of the Vrajavāsīs came out into the streets to honor him. After this, I prepared his body. I wrote the special *mantras* on his chest and forehead with *tilaka*. I used salt for his body, and then, following all of the proper Vaiṣṇava procedures, I put his transcendental body into *samādhi* with my own hand.

### My Message Is One With His

Sometimes it sounds to some that I am speaking certain things that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has never said. When a seed is planted, it will naturally grow into a tree with branches. Are these branches not included in the original seed? Are they coming from somewhere else? Because it is a tree, all its parts will naturally manifest; they are all hidden within the seed. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has written everything in his books. I am not saying anything new. Everything that I speak is coming directly and exclusively from the authentic literatures of our *ācāryas*. I also try to give examples from Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's own purports, in his own words.

So his tree will certainly grow. New leaves will come and that same tree will give more and more shade. As we water that tree, so many beautiful flowers and fruits will come; that is sure. That watering process is hearing, chanting and remembering *hari-kathā*.

*Parama-pūjyapāda* Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has planted many seeds of *bhakti*. Some seeds are sprouting, some are growing, and some have

leaves – two leaves, four leaves, six leaves and more. But there are also many seeds that are drying up. Many devotees have lost their strength and their faith. Some *sannyāsīs* are leaving *sannyāsa*, and many sincere devotees are feeling disconnected and disheartened. These creepers which Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has planted need water to be sprinkled upon them.

One Vaiṣṇava can never be exactly the same as another. All details of expression cannot be identically the same; there must be some difference. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are not exactly the same. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī are in the same line but are not completely the same. The leaves of any tree, like a mango tree, are not all the same; there must be some difference. So we are also in the family of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and therefore we are included in the same tree. It cannot be said that there is any real difference between us, since we are in the same bona fide disciplic tree.

I was never interested in collecting many followers, and I didn't want to initiate many disciples. For a long time I have been active as a *śikṣā-guru* for the devotees in the Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamaītī. Similarly, I want to offer *śikṣā* to anyone who is interested.

Now I have accepted Western *dīkṣā* disciples, but my original intention was to help everyone become strong by *śikṣā*. I want the devotees to benefit from the *śikṣā* of all bona fide Vaiṣṇavas.

I want them to advance more and more in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, to have love and affection for each other and for all other Vaiṣṇavas. I want to see Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's movement become healthy and strong.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja tried to help in this same way, because he was also requested by Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja. He never called the devotees or tried to cause any disturbance. Many were attracted and came and wanted to hear *hari-kathā*, and he was distributing *hari-kathā*. Other Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas are also doing this. We are speaking *hari-kathā* here, and thus so many devotees are thirsty to receive help. The concept and *siddhānta* of *śikṣā-guru* and *guru-tattva* is not yet widely understood and accepted. The *śikṣā-guru* does not compete with the *dīkṣā-guru*.

He assists the devotees in strengthening their relationship with their *dīkṣā-guru*, and in understanding and carrying out their *dīkṣā-guru's*

conclusions. I am bound to serve Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja in these ways, because he is not only my *śikṣā guru*, he is also my bosom friend.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's order to me was that I help his devotees. If I am obeying him, then I may be disobeying others.

In any case, even if the whole world is on one side opposing me, I will be on the other side, trying to obey him. I only want to teach what is *pure bhakti* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and all our *ācāryas* down to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja.

I want to be welcome in his temples, where he performed his pastimes. I want to take his footdust, pay my respects, and especially worship at his place of *samādhi*, which was performed with my own hands. I have an open heart and open arms; my door is always open to anyone. My intention is to help everyone who comes to me, to establish a beautiful temple in their heart where Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa can be served.

I am praying at the lotus feet of my *dikṣā-gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajyan Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and at the lotus feet of my *śikṣā-guru* and *priya-bandhu*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja. May they bestow their mercy on all of you and also on me. If after first giving mercy to all of you there is some left, then may they give it to me as well. From my heart, I care for all of his followers who try to carry out his orders and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am begging all of the Vaiṣṇavas to be sympathetic to my attempt to serve the lotus feet and mission of our beloved Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja. He has kindly given me the opportunity to serve him, and I am offering my heartfelt *puṣpāñjali* at his lotus feet.





## Our Lasting Relationship<sup>5</sup>



### A Brief History

In June 1996, at the Śrī Rādhā-rāmaṇa Temple in Orange County, California, Siddhānta dāsa of Illumination Television (ITV) interviewed Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja regarding his relationship with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja.

**Interviewer:** Please tell us how you first met Śrīla Prabhupādā, and any circumstance you may have had with him when any characteristics of the pure devotee may have been exhibited.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I was the personal servant of my *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and I always traveled with him. We had a māṭha (preaching center and āśrama) in Calcutta, called Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti. It was there that I met Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja in 1946 or 1947. Whenever Gurudeva used to come to Calcutta, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja would come to see him. Both were disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura Prabhupādā, and they were also bosom friends. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja met Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda in about 1922, and about four years before that, in 1918, Guru Mahārāja took initiation from him. So Guru Mahārāja was the elder godbrother of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, and they were intimate friends from the beginning.

When there were some problems in the Gauḍīya mission in 1939–1940, Guru Mahārāja went to Prayāga (Allahābāda), to the house of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja. At that time, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja had a very good medical shop there, and he was also very renounced. Guru Mahārāja spent about five to six months with him there.

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5 Edited from the book THEIR LASTING RELATION: An Historical Account From lectures and letters by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda and Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. (CC-BY-ND Gaudiya Vedanta Publications)

In 1941, our Gurudeva, along with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, established the Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti in Calcutta. At that time, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was Abhaya Bābū. I went to the mātḥa in 1946, and perhaps at the same time, or maybe one month after, I arrived in Calcutta. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja again came there. I was the personal servant of my Gurudeva and I also served Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was so happy to see my service to Gurudeva. He asked some questions and became very pleased with my replies. He asked me, “What is your name? From where have you joined?” And thus I began to serve him.

In 1953, Guru Mahārāja started two magazines, called Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā and Gauḍīya Patrikā. Gauḍīya Patrikā was in Bengali and Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā was in Hindi. Guru Mahārāja requested Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja to be the editor-general of both journals. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja accepted and began to write many good articles, especially regarding *Bhagavad-gītā* – from beginning to end. Those who are not actually following Kṛṣṇa and Vedānta are not really religious persons. This is especially how Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja wrote about *māyāvādīs* in his *Bhagavad-gītā* articles. Those who think that Kṛṣṇa and His body are the same are Vaiṣṇavas. But those who think that Kṛṣṇa’s soul and body are different are *māyāvādīs*. They don’t know anything about the meaning of *Bhagavad-gītā*. One learned doctor, the president of India, Dr. Sarvapalli Rādhākṛishnan, was very famous in Western countries for his philosophy, but he wrote that Kṛṣṇa’s body was one thing and the spirit soul of Kṛṣṇa was another. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja wrote against this. He wrote very strongly in regard to Vedānta, and especially about the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He wrote that Kṛṣṇa, His body, His possessions and everything in relation to Him is the same *sat-cid-ānanda* substance.

One copy was sent from Mathurā to Dr. Rādhākṛishnan and one to each of the learned persons of the parliament. Dr. Rādhākṛishnan did not reply. They cannot reply, because *māyāvāda* is against the path of *bhakti*. There are so many arguments, but it would take time to explain. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja gave me his articles in Bengali, and I used to translate them into Hindi. I had a very close relationship with him.

I knew him as a very good and staunch philosopher. He had not gone to any colleges for learning Sanskrit, *Bhagavad-gītā* or Vedānta. He was a born philosopher and a pure devotee. He was a *mahā-bhāgavata*, but he played the role of a madhyama-adhikārī Vaiṣṇava to give help and initiation to others. An *uttamā-adhikārī* does not give initiation to anyone, because he thinks that everyone is a *mahā-bhāgavata* and always serving Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja was in this position, playing the role of a madhyama-adhikārī. I realized who he was by his words and his association.

Then, with no money, not a farthing, he came to the West. When he was in New York in 1965, he requested me by letter, “You should come with me. I am alone and I will have to do something here; so you should come.” I replied “My Gurudeva is here, and I am serving him. When he will return to Bengal I may come.” Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja wrote back, “Very good. You should serve your Gurudeva, but when you have the chance you should certainly come and join me.” I replied, “Yes, I will come.” After that I sent all his books – *Bhagavad-gītā*, Rāmānujācārya’s *bhāṣya* (*Śrī-bhāṣya*), Śaṅkara’s *bhāṣya* (*Śārīraka-bhāṣya*), and other *bhāṣyas* (commentaries) to New York. A few days ago I saw those books in Los Angeles. Not all, but some of them are there. I also sent him mṛdaṅgas, *karatālas*, *vigrahas* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and also ten kilos of sweet pera every month.

In 1967, when Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja returned to India with Kīrtanānanda, I was the only person to meet him at the airport in Delhi. We went to the Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in Delhi, and I used to live there at his request so that I could render various services to him. Then, when Acyutānanda came, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja told me, “I am not well; I’m tired. So you go with Kīrtanānandā and Acyutānanda to some persons’ homes; and you will have to give the lectures there.” I did so.

Later, after Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja returned to Vṛndāvana, to the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, I often came to visit him. There he discussed so many things about Vedānta, and especially about *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He discussed many principles of *bhakti*, and he explained that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to this world especially to taste Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s mood:

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇah kalau samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rāsām sva-bhakti-śriyam.* He gave such high-class, deep association there, and he loved me so much.

Later, in 1968, our Gurudeva disappeared from this world, and I sent a message to Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, who was at that time in Seattle. When he received it, he at once replied to me, as though he was weeping while writing. He wrote, “I am so much aggrieved because of this.” He composed a *śloka* and explained, “Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was weeping for his Gurudeva, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and I am feeling like this:

*vairāgya-yuga bhakti rasam prajātnai apayayan mām anabhīpsu andhām;  
kṛipambudhir yab parā dukhe śrī-keśava-tvam prabhuh asrayamī.*

I was not in a mood to take the renounced order. I was fearing so much. My family rejected me and I was penniless, but still I was not ready to take *sannyāsa* and fulfill my Gurudeva’s order to go to Western countries to preach his mission. But Pūjyapāda Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja gave me *sannyāsa*, the renounced order, and he told me, “You must accept this.” Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja wrote me that this was his śraddhānjali to Gurudeva’s lotus feet.

The renounced order is not a play. It changes one’s entire life and it means that one is aspiring for *gopī-bhāva*. Some say that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was only a cowherd friend of Kṛṣṇa, but I strongly oppose this. His *sannyāsa-mantra* was a *gopī-mantra*, and he has also taken *gopāla-mantra*. Those who are second initiated know the meaning of *gopāla-mantra*. Without it, no one can have the mood that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to give. So I have heard from him directly, and also by hearing his lectures I know, that he has come in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu – to give this mission. This was also the mission of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. They are both associates of Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu. They are not of this world. So Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has not come only to give *dharmā* (religious principles). He has not come only to give the *yuga-dharma* of *barināma*. This was not the primary mission of Mahāprabhu; it was the mission of Mahā-Viṣṇu, or Advaita Ācārya.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu comes, taking the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He teaches *gopī-prema*. It is that *prema* which He wanted to give to the *jīvas*.

*prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādana  
rāga-mārga bhakti loka karite pracāraṇa  
rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa parama-karuṇa  
ei dui hetu haite icchāra udgama*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.15-16

The Lord's desire to appear was born from two reasons: He wanted to taste the sweet essence of the mellows of love of God, and He wanted to propagate devotional service in the world on the platform of spontaneous attraction. Thus He is known as supremely jubilant and as the most merciful of all.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has come to the Western countries only to establish the mission of his *guru-paramparā* – nothing new – only their mission. He has not written any new books. He has translated the *Bhagavad-gītā* and he has given its purports. He has also given purports to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrī Īsopaniṣad and other books. He has given the names of the *paramparā*, from Nārada to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and down to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. So he was not out of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava line. He is a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava. We should not try to cut his link with the Gauḍīya mission or the Gauḍīya Māṭha: our disciplic order.

I can tell something about his mission in Western countries. He was always connected with the *sampradāya*. At first he has plowed and turned barren land into cultivated land – thus fertilizing it. He planted seeds, and these seeds should never stay the same. They should sprout, they should grow, and they should give sweet fruits. We should increase our devotional activities – our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We should not remain third-class Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has written everything in his books, including what he could not speak much about at that time. Those who think that he is dead are themselves dead. He is always giving inspiration to the whole

world. If we serve him, we will see his books with quite new meaning. Then we can properly read these books and become more qualified.

I learned from him that we should associate with devotees who are more bona fide and advanced than ourselves. We should honor them. We should see that all devotees are in one family, Lord Caitanya's family. If we do not think in this way, we cannot be devotees. We should think that we are in one family, and there are so many hands. Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja have thousands and thousands of hands, and we should honor all their hands; we should honor all those who are chanting the name. I heard him say that those who are chanting the holy name, even if they have not taken initiation, should also be honored. Those who have taken initiation and are chanting should be more honored. And those who are *mahā-bhāgavata* should be served by all means. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has written all this in his translations. So I pray that those who were initiated by Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja be very broad-minded. They should know that I am actually the first disciple of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, from before ISKCON was founded.

There are two kinds of *gurus* – *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā* – and both are the same. Sometimes the *śikṣā-guru* is superior, and sometimes the *dīkṣā-guru* may be. The relationship with the *śikṣā-guru* is very friendly; he is like a bosom friend. The *dīkṣā-guru* should be very much respected, and so we may somewhat fear him. But the *śikṣā-guru* is like a friend, sometimes sitting on the same seat as us.

I used to sit with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja on the same bed or āsana. Then, during his last days, I went to Vṛndāvana to see him. Taking my hands and putting them in his hands, he told me that I should sit on his bed, but I offered *praṇāma* to it and sat on a chair. He told me, “I have got so many disciples, but they don't know very much. You should try to help them. Especially my *samādhi* should be given by your own hands. I want this.” Tears came to his eyes as he was ordering this, and I told him, “You are my *śikṣā-guru*. Though you and I are friends, I always consider you my *śikṣā-guru*. I will always follow your instructions, word for word, letter for letter.” Then I told all the disciples present, especially the leading disciples, “You should not think that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja is

going to die. You should think that he has a mission to help the Western countries. After his going, you should be united and try to honor each other. Give his mission to the countries where he could not go. Don't cheat his mission. It is most high level to follow his orders. You should all try to be broad-minded and don't try to control anyone. You can't get *sneha* and *prema*, love and affection, by controlling and accumulating money. You can't control by giving orders." Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja called them, "Come on, come on. Listen to Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. Hear what he has to say."

Just after Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's departure, many devotees came from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana and we performed *nagara-saṅkīrtana*. I lead the *kīrtana*, and then I put Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja in *samādhi* with Vedic *mantras* and all other Vedic arrangements. Most of the renounced people of Vṛndāvana, including *bābājīs* from all four *sampradāyas*, came there, and I organized everything, including who should do the public speaking and in what order people should speak. I honored all, just as Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja asked me to do in his final words.

**Interviewer:** Of all the qualities Śrīla Prabhupāda exhibited, does one stand out in your mind?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The symptoms of *guru* have been written in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, and I saw these symptoms in Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:

*tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābbigacchet  
samt-pāṇib śrotriyaṁ brahma-ṅiṣṭham*

*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12*

To understand things properly, one must humbly approach, with firewood in hand, a spiritual master who is learned in the Vedas and firmly devoted to the Absolute Truth."

He was *brahma-ṅiṣṭhā*, one who has given up all other activities and has dedicated his life to working only for Kṛṣṇa.

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsub śreya uttamam  
śābde pare ca niṣṅātāṁ brahmāṅy upāśamāśrayam*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.3.21*

Therefore, any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide *guru* is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.

We see that one symptom of *guru* is that he knows Vedānta, Upadeśāmṛta, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, etc. He should be *siddhānta-vit* (knower of all philosophical conclusions), so that he can clear all the doubts of his disciples. I know that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was very much qualified in this. He knew everything. He was perfect in this.

Second, *guru* should be detached from worldly things, and I know that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja had no attachment. He had attachment to those who are thoroughly attached to Kṛṣṇa. The *guru* should have realization of his iṣṭadeva, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. One cannot preach without realization. If he is not factually practicing *bhakti*, and he has no realization, then his words will vanish into the air. No one will be able to truly follow his instructions.

I have realized this: that any disciple, or anyone else, who came to Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was overpowered by him. He conquered their hearts with love and affection. Without realization of Kṛṣṇa, no one can do this.

It has been said in *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34):

*tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā  
upadekṣyanti te jñānaṁ jñāninas tattva-darśinab*

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

Who is *tattva-darśi*? One who knows all *siddhānta* in all the Vedas, Upaniṣads and other *śāstras*. *Praṇipātena paripraśnena*. You should go to such a *guru*, again and again, very honorably questioning and serving him.

I see how Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja went to Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, how he accepted him as his *gurudeva*, and especially how, in a very short time, he spread his *prema*, his mission, Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, to the whole world. This was the *śakti* – the energy, the potency of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his *gurudeva* – that he could do all this. No common person could have done what he did.

I remember another instance. The last time I saw Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja (the evening before he departed from this world) he was so friendly to me. He told me, "I have done something wrong in my life, so I want to be forgiven. You should especially forgive me, because you have served me and you are so dear to me." I said, "No, don't say this. Anyone who comes in a special situation, at a special time, can say anything to encourage new devotees. We also say things like this. So I don't think you have done anything wrong." Then he told me, "You should forgive me, and you should tell all my godbrothers to forgive me. When I told some disciples, 'Don't mix with anyone; don't mix with my godbrothers,' it was in a letter, not in my books; and I told this only for a special time." Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was a first-class Vaiṣṇava, a *mahā-bhāgavata*; and he wrote like this only for third-class, *kaniṣṭha*, devotees.

I had once asked him, "Mahārāja, we are friends. I want to know why your Deities have names which are not siddhāntic, like Rādhā-Pārthasārathi and Rukmīṇī-Dvārakādhiśa. Regarding Rukmīṇī-Dvārakādhiśa, I know that in 1968 you established and performed *prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā* (the installation ceremony) of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa with peacock feather and flute, and with Rādhā there on His left side."

He replied, "When I established Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Los Angeles, I gave Them the name 'Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa', and then I left Los Angeles to go to India. When I returned I saw that someone had changed the name to Rukmīṇī-Dvārakādhiśa. I became very angry with that person. I was against this name, but now this name has come about."

Regarding Rādhā-Pārthasārathi, he told me he was very ill at the time and his disciples gave this name without his actual approval.

I read in his books that this is *rasa-ābhāsa*. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has written this, not only in one place but in many places. He told me not to think that this was his idea, and I told him, "My doubt is gone, and I pray

that you bless me so that I may be like you in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” He benedicted me, and I felt so glad, so fortunate, to think that he ordered me to always serve him.

**Interviewer:** I understand that Śrīla Prabhupāda was having many difficulties and harassments in Bombay to keep his centers, and you took some role to keep ISKCON’s property?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Some years ago Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja’s son told the Bombay court that he [Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja] was a vaiśya, a businessman – that he was not a *sannyāsī*. His son said that only a *brāhmaṇa* can take *sannyāsa*. Because Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was a businessman, he went to the West for business, and ISKCON is a family business. The son’s conclusion was that he himself is the master of all of ISKCON’s property. An ISKCON leader came and told me, “If you don’t give evidence, this son will take all of ISKCON, all over the world.” He told me that I should go immediately. I told him that I only want to serve Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, so I will go. After that I went to Bombay several times and sat in court the entire day. Every day Śrīman Navīna use to cook early morning I would take *prasādam* early in the morning, at about 7 a.m., and then immediately go to the court. I want to always serve the mission of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja.

## My Mission in the West

This is an excerpt from a lecture given during Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja’s first Western preaching tour. The lecture took place in San Francisco on June 30, 1996.

I have come from Mathurā, Vṛndāvana, but I do not feel I have left there. Everywhere I see very bona fide devotees, just as in Vṛndāvana.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda ordered Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja to go to the West to spread the holy name of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and he came about forty years later. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja similarly ordered me and I have also come, about twenty years later. He has ordered me and I have come.

My mission in the Western countries has three purposes. First, I want

to take the dust from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's lotus feet by going to the places he preached in Europe and here in America. He first came to New York, so I also wanted to go there. When he came he was penniless, singing Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāmā on the streets. He wrote me from there, and I sent him the books he wanted, as well as many pairs of deities of Gaura-Nityānanda Prabhu and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. I also sent him karatālas, mṛdaṅgas and many other paraphernalia.

Second, I have come here to give his message to the entire world. He has planted the seeds and they have somewhat grown, but they are lacking water. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has given me that water, which is his *hari-kathā*, and according to my ability I am carrying this water everywhere. I am so happy to carry out his instructions, and to take his foot-dust from the places he has sanctified.

The third purpose of my traveling is to help the sincere devotees who are unhappy due to long-term lack of good association. I have come to tell them, "You should see that your Prabhupādā is here among you. You must again become powerful and energetic, just as you were at the time of his manifested appearance. Think neither that he is dead, nor that he is not here. I did not know any of you before, but Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has done such marvelous things that on this Pacific seacoast, from Los Angeles to San Francisco to Vancouver, and to wherever I go, many devotees are coming to see me.

I am grateful to Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, and I am offering the lotus flowers of my devotion to his feet. He has performed a miracle, and if he were here today, he would preach more and more. He has written and translated so many books, which have been translated into over forty languages.

Now, however, eighty or ninety percent of the devotees have left ISKCON. I want that ISKCON become more and more powerful. Everyone should be strengthened and everyone should preach all over the world, just as Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja has preached.

I will speak some *hari-kathā* from Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and I will try to quench your thirst so that the bona fide honor and appreciation you have for your Prabhupādā will increase. He will bless us all, and he will be so happy that you have come.

## A Locked Treasure Chest

This is an excerpt from Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's lecture at the Ātmānanda Yoga Center in New York City on July 12, 1996.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has given everything in his books. He knew that a child of one year, or two years, or even five years, could not retain all the information. A father or mother save money for their child, keeping it in a locked box. When the child is mature, he will be qualified to take the treasures inside. Before maturity, however, the child would waste that treasure. Similarly, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja kept all his treasures in his books. If you want to open them, you should know that the key is in the hands of the *bhāgavata* (the pure, self-realized devotee).

There are two *bhāgavatas* – *grantha-bhāgavata*, the Vedic scriptures, and *bhakta-bhāgavata*, the pure devotee who embodies those scriptures. *Bhakta-bhāgavata* is superior, as the key to understanding the scriptures is with bona fide *bhaktas* who have *prema*. They can open the lock. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has kept the treasure which Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī left in *Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu* and his other books, and his own books are full of treasures. In his purports we see all the teachings that are in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's books. *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* (Nectar of Instruction), for example, gives the process by which we can go to Vṛndāvana and follow Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Some persons say, “We are not qualified, and we will never be qualified, to hear about Goloka.” I think that is quite wrong, because Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has written about it in his books. When we are matured and qualified, then we can actually taste that nectar and go to that place which Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrī Vyāsadeva, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja have written about.

## Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's Final Order:

The following is a transcription, translated from a cassette-taped Bengali conversation between Śrīla Prabhupāda (Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja) and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. On this cassette, made in October–

November 1977, we hear from Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja himself about his final order in this regard. Because the original conversation is in Bengali, with only small parts in English, it is probably a cassette you have never heard before.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. He will come tomorrow?

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** He will come when we (discussing with others). If we pick him up he might come tonight.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Hmm.

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** If we go just now with the car. Bhakticaru is going just now with the car. Mahārāja may come tonight.

Someone begins to sing, “*Govindam ādi-pūruṣam...*”

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Should we put a little fan on? A little bit.

The conversation with Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja begins:

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Śrīla Prabhupāda (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura) had a desire to preach all over the world – in Europe, America and so on. I tried my best to fulfill his desire. Now we should preach together.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** We have got experience that if we endeavor collectively, there is great possibility to spread the message of ākara māṭha, the mission of Mahāprabhu, pṛthivīte āche, everywhere in the world. I have contributed to this end to the best of my ability.

I wish that my godbrothers forgive my offenses. While preaching, many times we say things contrary to each other, or we cut each other's philosophical arguments. That happens. Please ask my godbrothers to forgive my offenses. (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Whatever you will order I accept completely. I consider you my *guru*.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** It has been done very beautifully. This is the proper way. It's good that you have raised this point – that everyone should protect the mission of Mahāprabhu which you have established in Western countries, by good cooperation. Though you have taught them, still, in the future, if everyone helps them, a wonderful movement can be established on the Earth.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible)...I have brought these mlecchas and yavanas. They are like monkeys (banaras), very expert in quarreling. Accepting those who were sent to me by the arrangement of Kṛṣṇa, and considering their qualifications and disqualifications, I tried educating them, just to get things going. And they learned to their capacity. Things can be done in good cooperation. There is enough land, big, big temples and no shortage of money... (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** It's proper for everyone to help in this matter. Everything will be still better if they are also humble and try to cooperate with everyone, with each other as well as with other Vaiṣṇavas. I will do my best to help. Whenever and whatever they will ask, I will try my best to help them. Whenever they will call me, any advice they will want, wherever they may want me to go, although my qualification is limited I will try to help to the best of my ability.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Are any of my godbrothers in Vṛndāvana now?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Who?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Vana Mahārāja might be there, as well as Indupati Prabhu from Caitanya Gauḍīya Māṭha.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Any more?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Only these two at the moment.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Who is Indupati?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Indupati. He comes here often.

**Bhaktīcaru Swāmī:** From Mādhava Mahārāja's Māṭha?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes. No one else is here.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Please call both of them—Vana Mahārāja and him.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This is very good proposal by you.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Please sit down. They will call them.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** All right.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** This cutting of arguments happens sometimes...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** These are insignificant matters in such a substantial worldwide mission. A little something here and there is of no consequence. You have done this wonderful preaching work for the

benefit of the whole world. There was no self-interest. You did everything only in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa – for benefitting all people at large.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** It is all by your blessings.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** You have done a wonderful thing. It is necessary to care for and preserve this mission, and to see that it is managed skillfully.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Kindly instruct them in this matter. I'm unable to speak.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes. Please take rest.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Please sit a little longer.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes. I'm here.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Your health is all right?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes. You please keep remembering Kṛṣṇa. These are all very qualified men. They will manage nicely.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** There is some problem (disturbance) in Māyāpura.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** That will all be worked out. The guṇḍās have done that for their selfish motives. Everything will be all right. Some obstacles are always there in any work.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Twenty thousand people gathered for the meeting. Have you heard anything about it?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, I have heard something. It was painful. The Communist Party people have done that nonsense. They have done utmost injustice. But now be free to peacefully remember Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their sweet pastimes. Your people will take care of the necessities. All will be well by the wish of the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. No need to think about it at all.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Hmm.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Don't worry.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** You have some affection for me? [This is an Indian expression of love.]

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Affection! What to speak of affection, I regard you as my *guru*

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** I know that. That's why I beg you to please forgive my offenses.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** You kindly forgive our offenses, so that our intelligence māy be fixed at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Please give us this blessing.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Where is Sukhananda?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** He has gone to Bengal.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** When did he go?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** He went about a month ago. Śeṣaśāyī has come with me to take your *darśana*. He has rendered some services to you.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Brahmācārī?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, Śeṣaśāyī Brahmācārī. Sometimes he has cooked for you.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Where is Tamāla?

**Devotee:** He is just coming, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja. He is in the other room.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, I can see that. It is very good that you have returned to Vraja from overseas.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** They wanted to keep me there, but I said, “No.” My health is not fit for any more travel...

Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja enters the room.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Have you consulted with Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja?

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Yes, this morning. Bhakticaru Swāmī, Bhaktiprema Swāmī and Śrīdhara Swāmī went to see him, and Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja described the ceremony.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I have told them everything needed to be done. I told them, “Whenever you need me, I’ll come here.”

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible)...When you enter the gate on the right side?

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** On the entrance on the left side. On entering, looking towards the deities. In other words, when you come into the temple, there is a big open...

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** You must put salt around the body.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I have explained everything to them.

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** It’s on the same side as the vyāsāsana.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Flowers should be placed in Māyāpura.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I have told them to keep some flowers, and wherever you desire those can be...

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** You will be there.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, I'll be there.

**Tamāla-kṛṣṇa:** He described the entire ceremony in detail, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible) Has Śeṣaśāyī taken *sannyāsa*?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** No. He is still a *brahmacārī*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** All of your duties are completed. You have fulfilled everything in your lifetime. There is no need to worry about anything. Only remember the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** By Their blessings only.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, you have done everything. Nothing is left unfinished.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Hnu.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Only one thing. They should be told not to fight with each other for self-interest. They should work in cooperation to spread your mission.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Don't fight among yourselves. I have given you my will. Execute that...Today is Ekādaśī?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, today is Ekādaśī.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** How is the service of Mahāprabhu going on?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Hmm.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Of Jhansi. Now He is at your place.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, your Mahāprabhu is with me. His service is going on nicely with great affection.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** At first I was trying to do something in Jhansi, but Kṛṣṇa had bigger plans. Now we have got so many places.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Why should you be confined to Jhansi? Kṛṣṇa wanted you to preach everywhere.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** I wanted to live like a *niṣkiñcana Vaiṣṇava* in Vṛndāvana; but Kṛṣṇa inspired me to go out and preach at the age of seventy with only forty rupees in my pocket. And then it took a grand shape.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, you have received the special mercy of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and also that of Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Do you have any pain in the body?

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** It's so so. (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (speaks to the devotees:) Give him caraṇāmṛta when he feels thirsty. Also, keep some tulasī leaves under his head.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** *Yeī bhaje seī baḍa.* [This is an excerpt from a verse from Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta:] “One who worships Kṛṣṇa is exalted.”

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Hmm. *Seī baḍa.* “He is exalted.”

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Abhakta hīnā chāra. “One who is a non-devotee is low-class and abominable.”

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *chāra.* “Abominable.”

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** They are fortunate. If one has single-pointed devotion to Lord Hari, then, even if he has any fault, *āpi cet su-durācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk / sādbur eva sa mantavyag samyag vyavasito hi sab.* This is the principle.

Indupati Prabhu enters in the room.

**Indupati Prabhu:** Hare Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Please come. Has Vana Mahārāja also come?

**Indupati Prabhu:** (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Indupati Prabhu has come.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has called you on my request. I was saying to Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja that I beg forgiveness from you....

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (speaking softly to Indupati Prabhu) Mahārāja is having difficulty in speaking. I'll tell you.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** I beg forgiveness for my offenses. I did not wish to offend anyone. While preaching sometimes we cut each other's arguments...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (softly explaining Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's desire to Indupati Prabhu)

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Will you forgive me?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (to Indupati Prabhu) Will you?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (to Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja) Mahārāja, you have not committed any offense. Please be merciful to us. You haven't committed any offense.

**Indupati Prabhu:** (inaudible)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** If anyone considers that you have committed an offense, he himself is at fault.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Hmm...?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (speaking softly to Indupati Prabhu about Śrīla Prabhupāda) He has just returned from London.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** They had arranged the world tour program, but I had to return...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I will speak about your wish to those disciples of Śrīla Prabhupādā (Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura) who are not here. Everyone should try to help and give them (your disciples) the needed guidance, so they can manage nicely. Please do not worry about anything. Remember only the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā- Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** Please guide them in arranging the festival properly and giving appropriate donations to the gosvāmīs.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** (to Bhaktīcaru Svāmī) Have you understood what he is saying?

**Bhaktīcaru Svāmī:** Yes. (continues to softly speak with Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja)

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja** (to Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja): I have a special request. Please do not worry about these matters anymore. They are qualified, and they know your desires. Now only think about Kṛṣṇa. Everything will be taken care of. You have made the whole world dance in kṛṣṇa-nāma. Now I'll take leave.

**Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja:** First take some *prasāda*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, I'll take.

**Bhaktīcaru Svāmī:** Śrīla Prabhupādā, I'm arranging that.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja leaves.

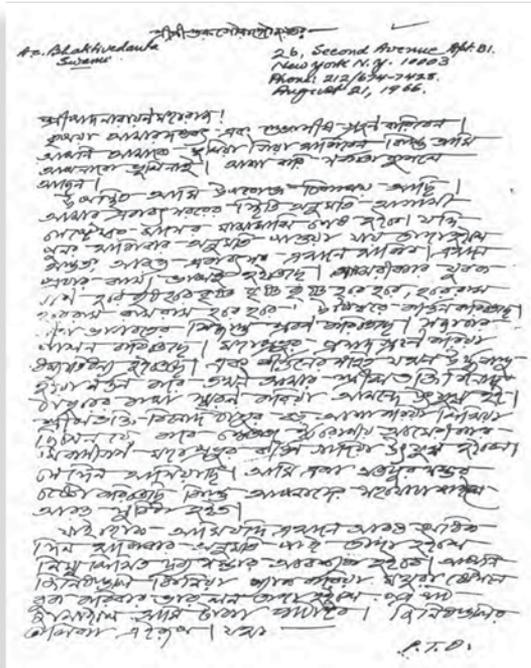




## Letters From America<sup>6</sup>

The intimacy and love shared among my spiritual grandsire, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, my Guru Mahārāja, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, my Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and another of my prominent śikṣā-gurus, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gowami Mahārāja, was so very deep and strong that no relationships in this mortal world can compare to them. The following letters give us a glimpse of the deep intimacy amongst them.

### First Letter:



6 For the complete published letters, read the book *Letters From America* published (CC-BY-ND) by Gaudiya Vedanta Publications.



26 Second Avenue Apt. B1  
 New York, NY 10003 USA  
 Phone: 212-674-7428  
 August 21st, 1966

Srīpād Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,

Please accept my *dāṇḍavats* and also please take my blessings.

I think that now you are forgetting me. I will never forget you, but I see that you are forgetting me. How are you? I hope you are all *kuśala* (well and happy) in every way. Now I am staying at the above address. In the middle of September I think that my visa will be finished, so if the government allows I will try to extend it.

Very good preaching is going on here. American boys are very beautifully chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*. They are chanting loudly. They are eagerly

hearing *Gītā* and *Bhāgavata-siddhānta*. They are also practicing *sadācāra*, leaving all bad habits. Also, they are taking Mahāprabhu's *mahāprasāda*. By doing this with their arms upraised, I remember Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's prediction and become so pleased. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote very hopefully, "When will that day come when white people, that is Europeans and Americans, join with all others and loudly sing Mahāprabhu's *kīrtana*." So I can see that that day has come. I am trying my utmost for this. I am also praying for your help and then it will be easier. So if I stay here longer, if they give permission, please send me the following things which I am listing here. You must buy these things and pack them. Book them from Mathurā Station. If you take this responsibility as I am writing you, you must purchase and then pack. After receiving your letter saying how many rupees are needed, then I will send you the money.

- 1) One pair of metal Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities. Arms length (16")
- 2) Very beautiful dresses, ornaments, crowns. Three changes
- 3) Ten pairs of quality *karatālas* from Navadvīpa
- 4) Three good *mṛdaṅgas*
- 5) One *tamburā*
- 6) One good quality harmonium
- 7) Fifty *harināma mālās*, neckbeads, and beadbags
- 8) One book of *Sat-kriyā-sāra-dīpikā* (by Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī)

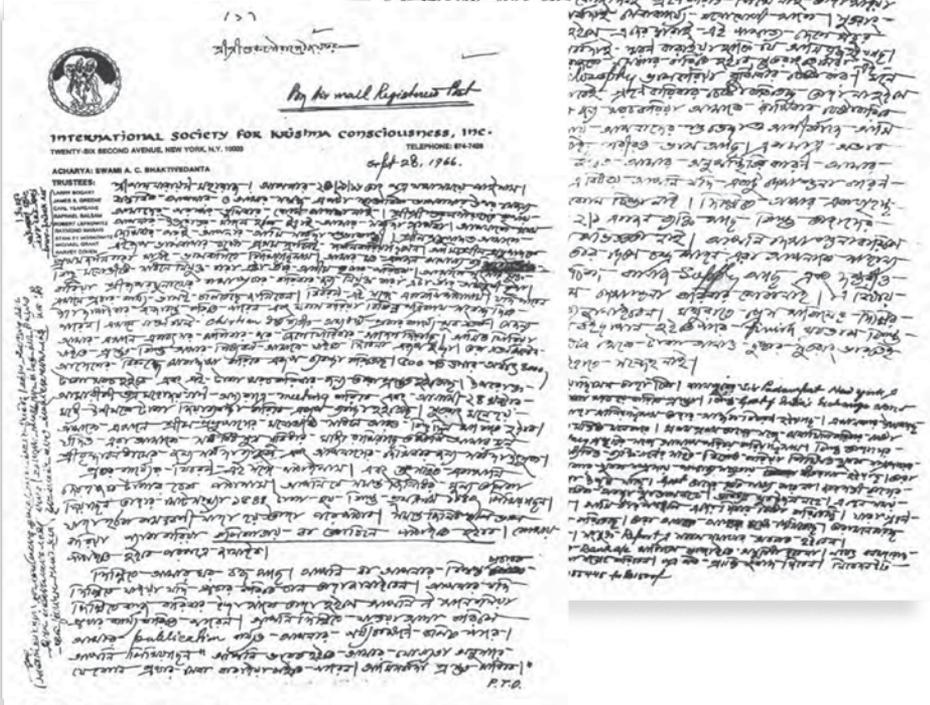
If you can find any man who is expert in playing *mṛdaṅga*, then if you want you can tell him to come here, if he wants to come. If this man agrees to come, then please give him my address.

Let me know what is the cost for all of this, and also what is the packing cost. I will send you that amount. As soon as I get your letter, I shall send you the money.

So I hope this time also you will send all that I am wanting and you will help my effort. I have taken so much help from you, and I request that this time also you will help me in this preaching work. I will be so grateful to you. The *viṅgrahas* must be purchased either in Mathurā or Vṛndāvana. If it is possible, the *khola* (*mṛdaṅga*) and *karatālas* should be purchased from Navadvīpa. Then in Calcutta my agent can ship it. I know that this will be some trouble, but still I know that you will send it. Receiving this letter, you must give your reply also. I am well.

A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī

Second letter:



Tridandi Goswami  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta

c/o Gopala P. Agarwal  
415 North Main Street Apt 111

“Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Jayatho”

By Air Mail Registered Post  
International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Inc.  
TWENTY-SIX SECOND AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10003  
TELEPHONE: 674-7428  
ACARYA: Swami A.C. Bhaktivedanta Sept. 28, 1966.

TRUSTEES: (P.S. They are all my disciples and all their names are now Vaiṣṇava names.)

Larry Bogart

James S. Greene

Carl Yeargans

Raphael Balsam

Robert Leftkowitz

Raymond Marais

Stanley Moskowitz

Michael Grant

Harvey Cohen

Śrīpād Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja,

I received your letter, dated 20.9.66 on time. Our relationship is certainly based on spontaneous love. That is why there is no chance of us forgetting one another. By the mercy of Guru and Gaurāṅga may everything be auspicious for you. This is my constant prayer. From the first time I saw you I have been your constant well-wisher. At his first sight of me Śrīla Prabhupāda also saw me with such love. It was in my very first *darśana* of Śrīla Prabhupāda that I learned how to love. It is his boundless mercy that he has engaged an unworthy person like me, in fulfilling some of his desires. It is his causeless mercy to engage me in preaching the message of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha.

The preaching work is going very well here. I sent a copy of my description of this along with the letter. You may try to print it if you can, and you can copy it and give this news to different newspapers. Here the government is very cautious about preaching any other religion except Christianity. Therefore I am ordered to leave after staying for only one year. I am also ready to return, but my disciples do not want me to go. They are arranging to file a suit against this order of the government. Five hundred dollars will be spent, about Rs 4000/-. They are prepared to spend that much money. The above mentioned American gentlemen will hold a meeting tonight, and within twenty-four hours they will arrange a lawyer to be paid. So it seems I have to stay here longer, to fulfill the desire

of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even though they keep me in all kinds of comfort and convenience, still my mind is anxious to return to Vṛndāvana, and I am enthusiastic to see you all.

I am sending the description of the preaching along with this letter. One check for Rs 1500/- is also included. In the price list that you have given, the total comes to Rs 1544/-, but by mistake you have written Rs 1080/-. Anyway, I shall adjust more or less and send it to you later. Everything needs to be packed properly and sent to Calcutta or Cochin. Where to send, I shall write to you in the next letter.

My room is locked in Delhi. If you or any of your faithful preachers want to preach in Delhi, let me know. If you want to work in Delhi, you can use that room and preach. If you continue going to Delhi, then my publication work can be taken care of, under your observation. You wrote to me, “You can engage me in any preaching work in India according to by ability. I shall always be ready to do so.” So I can preach wholeheartedly by your good wishes.

Here, fifteen educated boys have accepted discipleship from me. They have given up wine, meat, intoxication, marijuana, tea, coffee, eggs etc., and are honoring *kṛṣṇa-prasāda* given by me every day. They never knew how to take *dahl*, *capātī*, rice, milk, and fruits, but now by eating such *prasāda*, they are quite happy and are always attentively doing their service. Therefore, when these young boys are fully ready, vast preaching will take place in these Western countries through them. I always remind them that I am old. “At any time I may have to say *namaskāra* to Yamarāja, so you all try to understand this Kṛṣṇa consciousness philosophy properly.” I think that they are trying to take this up properly.

Otherwise, why would they spend Rs. 4000/- to Rs 5000/- to file a suit to try to keep me here? Anyway, by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and your good wishes and blessings, I feel no inconvenience. My health is also good. My only concern is that due to my absence from India my printing work is held up. Regarding this, if you can supervise a little, then I will have no worry. In Delhi, I have a householder disciple and there are also one or two others, but they have no experience with printing. If you can supervise, then Śrīman Candraśekhara and his son Candra Mohana will

help you. I have a proper press, a supply of papers, and an arrangement with the officials, but no one to look after it. Let me know your opinion as soon as you receive my letter. There is a press in Mathurā, but it is not as convenient as Delhi.

The books could be printed in America. The final printing is very good, but very expensive. It is also difficult to bring money from India, so the printing has to be done there. There is no doubt about it. What you have heard about the temple is true. Sir Padampat from Kānpura is ready to spend as much as required to make a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in New York. But it was not possible for the currency exchange with the government of India. Half of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* I brought with me are distributed.

Here, the high-ranking people consider Bhagavān's devotees to be insane. In the beginning I tried to associate with them. I became acquainted with the secretary of the governor and others; but seeing their demoniac nature I have focused my attention on the middle class – especially toward young and educated. Here the young educated *sampradāya* are disgusted with Western civilization. They are being ruined by taking marijuana and associating with women. The government does not care for them. They are sent to the Vietnam War by force. The political situation here is not good. This means that their future is not very bright. Because of this condition, Śrīman Mahāprabhu has come to this country. I am trying to give them the dust of His lotus feet and those who are accepting are feeling joy.

They are accepting me with love, thinking that I can give them life. You will come to know all this news in the Joint Report. A crosscheck is being sent. It will not be difficult to cash it if you have a bank account. Otherwise you can collect money with the help of Bon Mahārāja or other friends. Please reply to me as soon as you receive my letter.

*Nivedana*

(I offer myself to you)

*Śrī Bhaktivedānta Swāmī*





the check, you take it and cash it. I have some money in Vṛndāvana, which I have not spent. Therefore the total is Rs 2250/- and there is Rs 200 to be deposited. Spend the money as follows:

1 harmonium (A) according to description	Rs 350/-
1 harmonium (C)	Rs 500/-
1 <i>sitar</i> (A)	Rs 250/-
1 <i>sitar</i> (B)	Rs 250/-
	Rs 1375
1 <i>tanpura</i> (A)	Rs 200/-
1 <i>tanpura</i> (B)	Rs 250/-
2 <i>mṛdaṅgas</i> (the body should be made of tin according to Trivikrama Mahārāja's description)	Rs 150/- Rs 1975/-
10 pairs of good Navadvīpa <i>karatālas</i>	Rs 100/- Rs 2075/-
Total	Rs 2450/-
Balance	Rs 375/-

There is no need to purchase any warm clothes for Vinoda Kumāra. Here I have about four or five overcoats and warm chadars etc. There is no need to bring any bedding while traveling by ship. First of all, it is summer. Secondly, they will provide blankets, bedding and everything on the ship.

The *brahmacārīs* and I use very simple clothes here. I am sending you a photograph to show how I live here. I am making the Americans wear *brahmacārī* robes, and shave up. If a *brahmacārī* from India dresses as an American he will not be appreciated. So tell Vinoda Kumāra to come as a *brahmacārī*. There are enough overcoats and warm clothes here. If it is necessary, buy him one good blanket and one pair of shoes (not made of leather). That means do not spend more than Rs 100/- on him, including the journey to Calcutta. So out of Rs 375/-, if Rs 100/- is spent for Vinoda Kumāra, Rs 275/- remains.

Pack everything in Delhi and send it by goods train to Howrah station to my United Shipping Corporation agent (freight paid R/R). Register in the address of registered letter M/S United Shipping Corporation 14/2, Old China Bazaar St, Room No. 18, Calcutta.

Spend as you need for your transport to Delhi and for your two to four day stay there. Pack all books after making a list, and get 11 steel trunks

packed. It means closing the box, locking it, stitching sacks around it and locking it with iron straps.

On the top of each package write A. C. Bhaktivedānta, New York (via Howrah). Send a copy of all goods to the shipping agent R/R. Send one copy to me along with R/R. If Rs 275 is not enough to send these goods then do not buy the *karatālas*. Then Rs 100/- more remains. In this way if everything is done under your supervision I shall be very glad. I hope you will ever oblige me by helping in this way.

Kindly send me my *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas* that are in Vṛndāvana. The key that is left in Vṛndāvana is the key to the kitchen. After you open the door of the room you will find a big key on the right side of the wall shelf. Open the door of my sitting room with that key. My *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas* are in that room. There are *karatālas* in the kitchen also. Please get the room cleaned by Sorojini and give her one rupee. The bank is supposed to pay Rs 5/- to the Gosvāmī per month, but the Gosvāmī never wrote me a letter. Try to find out if he receives the money and make me happy by writing me as soon as you receive this letter.

*Kṛpā parthi*

(I want your mercy)

*Śrī Bhaktivedānta Swāmī*

PS. If it is possible send me *tilaka* and *agarbathi*.

Fourth letter:

Śrīpād Trivikrama Mahārāja,

Yesterday I received your letter dated October 12, and its contents were heart-breaking. Kindly inform me of the details of the sudden disappearance of Pūjyapāda Mahārāja (Śrīla B.P. Keśava Mahārāja). I had a very long-standing intimate relationship with Śrīla Mahārāja. When I used to visit Śrīdama Māyāpura, I was taken care of by Śrīpād Narahari Dādā and Śrīpād Vinoda Dādā with great affection. They were my extremely loving friends. Also in Calcutta, the senior Tīrtha Mahārāja, Professor Niśikanta Sannyal and Vāsudeva Prabhu, were very dear to me. Afterwards I used to visit and associate freely with Śrīpād Śrīdhara Mahārāja as if we were the closest of family members. Except for Śrīpād Śrīdhara Mahārāja, all of the above-mentioned Vaiṣṇavas have gradually

disappeared. Our time is also approaching, so it will be best to have the opportunity to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda as long as possible.

I have a very close connection with the Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti. Yourself, and particularly Śrīpād Vāmana Mahārāja, are well aware of the fact that I am one of the three persons who founded Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti. We had conceived the idea of the formation of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti at Bosapada Lane, Calcutta, even before Śrīla (Keśava) Mahārāja accepted *sannyāsa*. Within a few days of the formation of the Śamīti, Śrī Narottamānanda Brahmācārī (presently Tridaṇḍi Swāmī Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kāmālā Madhusūdana Mahārāja) separated himself from the Śamīti. At that time Śrīpād Vāmana Mahārāja, who was then a *brahmācārī*, visited our home at Sītākānta Banarjī Lane. He made me the chief editor of the Bengali magazine, Śrī Gauḍīya Patrika. Respecting the order of Śrīla (Keśava) Mahārāja, I started writing articles for the Gauḍīya Patrikā regularly. Śrīla Mahārāja greatly appreciated whatever I wrote. Thereafter, I was also appointed as the president of the Hindi magazine, *Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā*, and many of my articles were published in that. Afterwards I could not submit articles due to lack of time. Now I have become a resident of foreign lands and I have to travel twenty thousand miles every year.

The greatest compassion of Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja was to make me a *sannyāsī*. I had taken a vow that I would never accept *sannyāsa*, but Śrīla Mahārāja forcibly gave it to me. He would certainly have been most pleased today to see the success of my preaching. Last year I visited him in Calcutta along with my disciples, and despite being bedridden, he was very pleased to receive us. I have complete confidence that both in his manifest presence and after his disappearance, he must be very pleased to see my widespread preaching of the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in Western countries like America, Canada, England, Germany and Hawaii (Honolulu), situated in the Pacific Ocean, as well as eastern countries like Japan (Tokyo) and so on.

I was a staunch *grhamedī* (one whose thoughts are absorbed in household affairs). Śrīla Prabhupāda used to come to me in dreams from time to time and call me to renounce family life and come along with him. The dreams would frighten me and make me think that I would have to accept *sannyāsa*. I didn't have any desire to take *sannyāsa*. But upon the repeated insistence of Śrīpād Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja bestowed boundless mercy upon this unwilling and blind

person, by forcibly giving me *sannyāsa*. It seems that this desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda's was transmitted into his heart, and it was thus that my *sannyāsa* was accomplished.

So I am eternally indebted to Śrīla (Keśava) Mahārāja. Therefore, immediately after receiving your letter, I organized a *viraha-sabhā*, an assembly at the Seattle temple to honor his disappearance. I am sending the condolence resolution of the meeting along with this letter. Kindly accept it as our *śraddhāñjali*, or humble homage. In my other centers (the list is enclosed), particularly London, Hamburg and Honolulu I have given instruction to arrange a *viraha sabhā* and offer *śraddhāñjali* homage likewise.

You will be glad to know that under my guidance I have formed three *sankīrtana* parties comprising American youths and couples. One such party is currently traveling to all cities in America and I am also with this party. The second party of six devotees is performing *kīrtana* at different places in London. The Indians living there are amazed to see them. They have given up their homeland and come all the way to the Western world to attain wealth and reputation, but the Americans are performing *harināma-sankīrtana*. Somehow the preaching activities are going on very nicely. I am interested to know what kind of constitution you are forming. In this matter you will receive my complete cooperation, because I am a man of constructive ideas. I do not like destructive policies.

It was the desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura that Americans perform *kīrtana* in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, and that opportunity has now come. Unfortunately, those who have intruded in Māyāpura consider it to be their personal property. These days others are restricted from visiting that place. Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja used to deal with these *guru-tyāgīs* (those who renounce their *guru*) and *guru-bhogīs* (those who enjoy the property of their *guru*) with sword in hand.

Anyway, last year he mentioned that he would arrange five acres of land for me in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. You were present at that time. If you help me in this matter, I intend to make an *asrāma* in Māyāpura. American boys and girls can visit and stay there and receive proper training. By our cooperation, preaching activities can be done very nicely. Therefore, I am eager to know the details of your constitution.

I am going to Montreal tomorrow. From there I will go to Sante Fe (New Mexico) and then to Los Angeles. I am sending the addresses of our various centers along with this letter. We are executing a plan to build

New Vṛndāvana on three hundred acres of land. Kindly reply to the Los Angeles – Hollywood address as I will be staying three days in Montreal, seven days in Śānta Fe and almost one month in Los Angeles.

*prithvite āche yata nagarādi grāma  
sarvatra pracara haibe more nāma*

Preaching can be spread extensively throughout the world on the basis of this system. I think that you will make your constitution directly in accordance with the above prediction. I hope your *bhajana* is going on nicely. Your obedient servant,

*Śrī Bhaktivedānta Swāmī*



## There is No Place for Ritvik in Śrī Guru-Tattva

The following abridged article discusses the newly concocted doctrine of the *ṛtvik* system of accepting a *guru* (as a *dikṣā-guru*) after he has disappeared and entered *nitya-līlā*. It is odd that the proponents of this concocted doctrine presuppose that their understanding of *ṛtvik* initiation was a rule or principle given by the founder *ācārya* of ISKCON, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja redundant and to be implemented after his departure.

At the Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Māṭha, in Mathurā, India, curious devotees asked Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva questions on this topic. To help us grasp Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's intentions for the continuation of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, *gurudeva*, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is presenting in a logical manner pertinent references from the Vedic scriptures—*Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Upaniṣads*, and *Rāmāyāna*. He clearly conveys the true meaning of 'ṛtvik', and how it is viewed in relation to the eternal system of *guru-paramparā*.

For the many devotees who are trying to serve Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *sankīrtana* movement, we hope the following explanations will offer critically important insight into these often misunderstood topics.

Question: According to scripture, what is the meaning of *ṛtvik*?

Answer: The established conclusion of all the Vedas, discovered deep within the Vedas by Śrīla Gurudeva, is pure devotion unto Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is all-mighty (*sarva-śaktiman*) and an ocean of all nectarean mellows (*akḥila-rāsāmṛta-sindhu*). However, externally, the Vedas appear to be related to the performance of *yajña*, for fulfilling fruitive desire (*karma-kāṇḍa*), and worship of impersonal Brahmā by cultivation of knowledge (*jñāna-kāṇḍa*). The *Ṛg-Veda* and *Atharva-Veda*

have no direct relationship with the performance of *yajña* (sacrifice), but the *Sāma-Veda* and *Yajur-Veda* are directly related with sacrifices and their rituals.

‘*Rtau yajitī r̥tviki*’ One who conducts sacrifice according to Vedic *mantras* is called a *r̥tvik*. There is an arrangement of sixteen types of *r̥tviks* to perform Vedic sacrifices. These are *brahma*, *udgātā*, *hotā*, *adhvaryu*, *brahmacci*, *prastota*, *maitravarun*, *pratisbata*, *pota*, *pratibarta*, *accavak*, *nestba*, *agnidhra*, *subrahmanya*, *gravastota*, and *unyaita*. The *yajman* employs priests to perform sacrifice for him and pays them—*r̥tvijodatta-dakṣiṇam*. He selects these sixteen types of *r̥tviks* for the sacrifices. All these *r̥tviks* are virtuous, of high character, learned in the Vedas and expert in execution and supervision of sacrifices. Among all these sixteen *r̥tviks*, *hotā*, *udgātā*, *adhvaryu* and *brahma* are prominent.

#### The Four Most Prominent Types of *R̥tviks* [priests]:

(1) One who invokes the particular deities (*devatās*) to be present in the sacrifice by reciting the *mantras* of *Ṛg-Veda*, and thus performs the sacrifice, is called *hotā*.

(2) One who sings aloud and chants the hymns of the *Sāma-Veda* to please and glorify invoked deities is called *udgātā*.

(3) The *Adhvaryu* murmurs and continuously chants the prosaic section of the *Yajur-Veda*. He performs his specific duties paying extra attention to its various aspects and its meaning and that is why his participation in *yajña* is quite prominent.

(4) Protecting the *yajña* from external obstacles, rectifying the possible mistakes in recitation, and removal of various types of discrepancies arising in the detailed performances related to *yajña*, is the function of the *brahma*. He is the chief priest of *yajña*. He supervises the over-all functioning of *yajña* and rectifies the faults. So this *brahma* is considered superior to all other *r̥tviks*. Hence, it is imperative for the *brahma*, who undertakes the main responsibility to supervise the whole sacrifice, to have complete knowledge of the three Vedas (*Ṛg*, *Sāma*, *Yajur*).

In Vālmiki's Rāmāyāna, similar descriptions about ṛtvik are found:

*nā sadanga vidatrasinnavrato nababusrutah  
sadasyastasya vai rajnyo navada kusala dvijah*

*Bala-kanda, 14.29*

In the *putresti-yajña* (sacrifice performed with the desire to have a son) conducted for Mahārāja Dāśaratha, all the conductors, or *ṛtviks*, were well-versed in all the limbs of the Vedas. They were all strict celibates and had heard the Vedas repeatedly and systematically from expert knowers of Vedas. All of them were expert in philosophical discussion and assertions.”

We find another example of sixteen *ṛtviks* described in the Rāmāyāna in the description of *asvamedha-yajña*:

*bayasya yāni carigani tani sarvani brahmanah  
agnau prasyanti vidbhivata samastah sadaŚrītvirjnh*

*Bala-kanda, 14.38*

All the sixteen types of *ṛtviks* started to offer oblation articles systematically into the fire, which were required as integral limbs of the *asvamedha-yajña*.

Beginning from the Vedic period up to Dvāparā-yuga, it is seen that many great emperors have obtained their desired fruits by flawless performance of sacrifices. Because these kings were not very expert in the Vedas and in performing sacrifices, they themselves became yajamans, and they appointed as *ṛtviks*, non-greedy and virtuous *brāhmaṇas*, who were well-versed in the Vedas and in performance of *yajña*. Sometimes even *brāhmaṇas* who were knowers of the Vedas used to perform the Vedic sacrifices with the help of *ṛtviks* in order to fulfill their fruitive desires. Generally all of these sacrifices were performed for fulfilling material desires, the chief of which was the attainment of heavenly planets.

Question: What is the relationship of *ṛtvik* with *guru-tattva* as described in scriptures?

Answer: After deliberation upon the *Mahābhārata* (the fifth Veda), Vālmīki's *Rāmāyāna*, and the *Purānas*, it becomes very obvious that *ṛtviks* have nothing to do with *parāmartha*, the subjects of the supreme transcendental goal, namely *ātmā-tattva* (the science of the self), *bhāgavata-tattva* (the science of Bhagavān), *bhakti-tattva* and so on. The *ṛtvik* does not aim to attain *mukti* in the form of emancipation from mundane miseries, nor to attain eternal service to the lotus feet of Bhagavān after becoming free from the cycle of birth and death. After the completion of *yajnas*, the *yajamānā* pays the appropriate remunerations (*dakṣiṇā*) to the *ṛtviks* and sends them away. The *yajamāna* and the *ṛtvik* have no mutual, eternal relationships.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Mahābhārata* also, there are very few contexts which are related to *ṛtviks*. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* wherever the word “*ṛtvik*” has been mentioned, it is used only in connection with the performance of *yajnas*, and nowhere can it be found being used in relation to *parāmartha* or supreme transcendental goals. In the famous episode of Purañjānā, there is a reference in which King Prācīnabarhi performed unlimited numbers of *yajnas* through his *ṛtviks*. As a result of these *yajnas*, the eastern portion of the earth was completely covered by sacrificial grass mats (*kuśa*). In many of these *asvamedha-yajnas* animals were also sacrificed. Still the king's mind was restless. Eventually by the instructions of Devarṣi Nārada he realized the futility of *yajnas* performed to fulfill material desires. After completely abandoning them, he entered into the path of *bhakti*. This topic is illustrated in the Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

In the *Ādi-parva* section of *Mahābhārata*, regarding the topic of the *Khaṇḍavana-daha*, the burning of the Khandavana forest, there is a descriptive episode of King Svetaki. During his lifetime, King Svetaki had so many *yajnas* performed that all of his *ṛtviks* became fed up with such *yajnas*. In spite of receiving high remuneration from the king for their services, as well as repeated requests that they continue performing *yajnas* for him, these *ṛtviks* were no longer willing to act as *ṛtviks*. Thus, becoming hopeless, Svetaki took shelter of Mahādeva Saṅkara. He performed worship of Śrī Saṅkara for a long time and thus pleased him.

King Svetaki asked for the benediction that Śrī Saṅkara would accept the post of *ṛtvik* and complete the performance of his *yajnas*. Being pleased with the king, Mahādeva Saṅkara ordered his partial expansion, Mahaṛṣi Durvasa, to accept the post of *ṛtvik* and complete King Svetaki's *yajña*. Appointing Mahaṛṣi Durvasa as the chief (*brahma*) *ṛtvik*, King Svetaki successfully performed his *yajnas* through him, and at last attained Svarga-loka according to his desires.

As described in Vālmīki's *Rāmāyāna*, Mahārāja Dāśaratha performed *asvamedha-yajña* and *putresti-yajña* with the intention of having a son. He appointed Śrīngi Ṛṣi, who was well-versed in all the Vedas, as the chief *ṛtvik* (*brahma*). As a result of this performance he had four sons. Furthermore, Mahārāja Śrī Rāmacandra, following the *loka-maryada*, moral principles and social customs for kings, performed many *yajnas* such as the *asvamedha-yajña* through Mahaṛṣi Vāśiṣṭha, Vamadeva and other *ṛṣis* and *munis* who knew the Vedas completely.

Thus it becomes obvious that all such *yajnas* are performed merely to fulfill mundane desires and to attain *svarga*, but they are never performed in pursuance of *parāmartha*, transcendental *bhakti*. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while giving instructions to Ārjuna in *Gītopaniṣad*, has Himself said:

*te taṁ bhuktvā svarga-lokaṁ viśālaṁ  
kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti  
evaṁ trayī-dharmam anuprapannā  
gatāgataṁ kāma-kāmā labhante*

*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.21

When they have thus enjoyed heavenly sense pleasure, they return to this mortal planet again. Thus, through the Vedic principles, they achieve only flickering happiness.

In other words, people who are attached to performing the fruitive activities mentioned in the three Vedas (*Rg*, *Sāma* and *Yajur*), worship Me by performing *yajnas*, and, accepting the remnants (*soma-rasa*) of *yajña*, they become free from sins and pray for the destination of heaven. As the result of their pious activities they attain Indra-loka, and there they enjoy the objects of divine pleasure available to the demigods. After enjoying

the great sense pleasures available in heaven, they again fall back to the lower planets of the material world due to gradually exhausting all of their pious deeds. Thus, these people who perform yajnas to fulfill their material desires, as prescribed in the above three Vedas, repeatedly return to this material world. Śrī Kṛṣṇa additionally says:

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

*Bhagavad-gītā 4.34*

To acquire knowledge of the Absolute Truth, one must approach Śrī Guru, inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The Guru who is both a *jñānī* (expert in the imports of the *śāstra*) and a *tattva-darśī* (self-realized in the Absolute Truth) can enlighten you with transcendental knowledge because he has seen the truth.

It is said in the *Upaniṣads*:

*tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet  
samit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, 1.2.12*

To learn the transcendental subject matter, one must approach a spiritual master. In doing so, he should carry fuel to burn in sacrifice. The symptom of such a spiritual master is that he is expert in understanding the Vedic conclusion, and therefore he constantly engages in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

For attaining *vijñāna* (*jñāna* with *prema-bhakti*) of the supreme absolute entity, carrying *samidha* (wood for the sacrifice), which in other words is considered to be representative of sublime faith, one must approach with complete surrender of body, mind, and words, a *guru* who knows the *tattva* of Kṛṣṇa and the essence of the Vedas.

Furthermore it is said in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.23):

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tatha gurau  
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

The true import of the scriptures is revealed only to those great souls who have the same unflinching faith and *parā-bhakti* (transcendental devotion) for their Guru as they have for the Supreme Lord.

A similar statement is also found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21):

*tasmād guruṃ praṇadyeta  
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam  
śābde pare ca niṣṇātāṃ  
brahmaṇy-upaśamāśrayam*

Any person who seriously desires to achieve real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the spiritual master is that he must have realized the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation, and must be able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, are to be understood as bona fide spiritual masters.

*tāte kṛṣṇa bhaje, kare gurura sevana  
māyā-jāla chūṭe, pāya kṛṣṇera caraṇa  
Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 22.25*

If the conditioned soul engages in the service of the Lord and simultaneously carries out the orders of his spiritual master and serves him, he can get out of the clutches of *māyā* and become eligible for shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

From the above scriptural evidences it is very clear that the relationship between *guru* and *śiṣya* (disciple) is eternal and transcendental. Gurudeva is described as the *svarūpa* and *prakāśa* (manifestation) of Bhagavān.

Therefore he must always be worshipped like Bhagavān. Only by his mercy can a *jīva* who is bound in the grips of *māyā* be freed, and after being situated in his pure constitutional position, become engaged in the service of Bhagavān. Without the mercy of Śrī Gurudeva the supreme welfare of the *jīva* is impossible.

On the other hand, the relationship between the *yajamāna* and the *ṛtvik* is temporary and based on self-interest. It is for the fulfillment of mundane desires. Their relationship lasts for a short time only. Therefore, since time immemorial, the system of *guru-paramparā*, which is also known as *āmnāya* or *sat-sampradāya*, has been prevalent in the scriptures. The four lines of bona fide succession of spiritual masters has originated from the associates of Śrī Bhagavān, that is Śrī Lakṣmī, Śrī Brahmā, Śrī Rudra and Śrī Sanat-kumāra. In the age of Kālī, Śrī Rāmanujācāryas, Śrī Mādhvācārya, Śrī Viṣṇusvami and Śrī Nimbāditya respectively are the four *ācāryas*, famous as the followers of the above personalities. *Guru-paramparā* (the bona fide succession of spiritual masters) is always prevalent in the *āmnāya* line of these four *ācāryas*. Even in the *advaita-sampradāya* (followers of Saṅkarācāryas) the tradition of *guru-paramparā* is well preserved.

*guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana sastrera prāmane  
guru-rupe kṛṣṇa kṛpa karena bhakta-gane*

*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 1.45*

“According to the deliberate opinion of all revealed scriptures, the spiritual master is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of the spiritual master delivers His devotees.”

*śikṣā-guruke ta' jani kṛṣṇera svarūpa  
antaryami,, bhakta-srestha, -- ei dui rūpa*

*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 1.47*

“One should know the instructing spiritual master to be the Personality of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord.”

So in the tradition of our *sampradāya* there is provision for *dikṣā-guru*, *śikṣā-guru*, *bhajana-guru*, *paṭha-pradarsaka-guru*, *caitya-guru* and so on.

But we will not find any statement in the scriptures which recommends accepting a 'ṛtvik-guru' or the ṛtvik tradition in order to perform one's *sādhana* of *parāmartha* (the highest transcendental goal). We do not find even in the Śāṅkara *sampradāya* any depiction of such utilization of ṛtvik tradition what to speak of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*.

Question: These days we do not see the tradition of *guru-paramparā*. Some *gurus* are falling down, unable to maintain the requirements of being a *guru* and there seems to be a lack of bona fide *guru*. It is said by some that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja has briefly mentioned ṛtvik in his letters. Is that true? They ask what is the harm if we accept *dīkṣā* through such a ṛtvik system or through his audio-cassettes now that he is no longer physically present?

Answer: In the present age of Kālī many people become irritated simply by hearing the word 'guru' because of seeing the misconduct, the activities which are against the principles of *bhakti*, and the fall-downs of many so-called *gurus*. Thus, at the current time, some people put forward the idea that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja was the last bona fide *guru*, and after his disappearance there is no longer a *sad-guru* present in the world, nor will there be one in the future. Therefore, after his disappearance there is no need for anyone to accept any living *guru* because ṛtviks will carry forward this *śiṣya-paramparā* (disciplic succession) and they will give *dīkṣā* only by utilizing the cassette recordings of his own, voice chanting the *gāyatrī-mantras*.

This conception is completely speculative and is against the injunctions of the scriptures. The *guru-paramparā* or *āmnāya* line is eternal and everlasting since the time of creation. This line of *guru-paramparā* exists up to this day without any break, and it will continue to exist like this in the future also. To say, "There is no bona fide *guru* living in the world at present and neither will there be any in the future," is an atheistic opinion. Because Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja is such an important figure in our eternal *sampradāya*, it is obvious that he would not establish anything against *guru*, *śāstra* or *sādhū*.

Some people talk about accepting *dīkṣā* through the medium of the audio-cassettes of great personalities after they have disappeared. There

are various flaws in this ideology. Before giving *dīkṣā* a *guru* examines the characteristics, thoughts, intentions and so on of the aspiring candidate. Similarly, for some period of time, the aspirant will also observe the *gurutva* (greatness), conduct, *bhajana* and attitude of his *guru*. When both of them are satisfied, then only, there is an arrangement to give and to accept *dīkṣā*. This process is not possible through cassettes once the *guru* is no longer physically present. It is not possible for the cassette to examine the aspirant before giving *dīkṣā*, and neither is it possible for the aspirant to observe the greatness, conduct and mode of *bhajana* of the *guru* through the medium of cassettes alone.

From the history of our *sampradāya*, it is well known that Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa was a perfected saint or *guru* of Dvāpara-yuga. But yet his *sat-śiṣya*, Śrīla Mādhvācārya, had direct *darśana* of Śrīla Vedavyāsa who had appeared about 5000 years prior to him. Despite being so qualified, Śrīla Mādhvācārya never thought that he could become the disciple of Śrīla Vedavyāsa without the latter's physical presence. On hearing the sincere prayers of Śrīla Mādhvācārya, Śrīla Vedavyāsa personally appeared before him and gave him *dīkṣā*. We can observe many such examples in the scriptures. A bona fide *guru* can manifest anywhere by the prayers of a bona fide *śiṣya*. For the common people, the process of accepting *dīkṣā* is to directly receive *kṛṣṇa-mantra* from a bona fide *guru* who knows *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, but in the case of *uttamā-adbhikaris*, the example of *bhāgavata-paramparā* is visible everywhere. Hence, it is not a proven fact that the cassette is a bona fide and effective medium to give *dīkṣā*.

If, in modern times, in special circumstances a *guru* has given *dīkṣā* through his representative or through cassette, this still cannot be accepted as the ultimate principle for everyone at all times and in all places. A *guru* may give *dīkṣā* through the medium of his representative or cassette to a faithful person who is living in a remote place, and cannot personally come before his *guru* due to circumstances, but this is a temporary situation arising out of extreme circumstances only. Whenever it is possible, the *guru* will himself personally give *dīkṣā*.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja has neither accepted nor mentioned the tradition of *ṛtviks* as *gurus* anywhere in his bona fide books. Nor did he support the tradition of *ṛtviks* in his personal letters.

Whatever Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja arranged, it was most definitely not ‘*ṛtvik-guru*’, which is a contradiction of terms. To call it this is the cause of embarrassment for him among those who know the Vedic *śāstras*.

As you can see, it is very important to consider the scriptural meaning of the word ‘*ṛtvik*’. The term applies only when a *yajman* undertakes a *yajña* for fulfilling his material desires. Because he, the *yajman*, is himself ignorant of the Vedic rules for performing the *yajña*, he appoints, for the successful completion and achievement of desired results, the *ṛtviks*, who are virtuous and who know the Vedas.

In consideration of this principle, can it be conjectured that a *guru*, being ignorant of the *dikṣā-mantras* and their conceptions, will appoint a *ṛtvik* more qualified than himself, who in turn will give *dikṣā* to others, thus acting as the representative of the *guru*? Some people say that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja appointed *ṛtviks* who were to give *dikṣā* to his disciples. If this statement is accepted as true, then it means they are accusing Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja of being an unqualified *guru*, an ignorant *yajamāna* who, for the sake of fulfilling his material desires would have appointed *ṛtviks* more qualified than himself. No, it cannot be true, for this is completely impossible. Therefore, on the path toward attaining the supreme absolute reality, Bhagavān, this concocted *ṛtvik* conception is impractical and against the scriptural conclusions.

[Question:] How does a disciple relate with his *guru* once he has entered in *aprakāṣa-līlā* (the *guru*’s entrance into the eternal pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world)? Like Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupādā’s disciples, those who took initiation when he was still physically present. How can they relate with him since he is now in *aprakāṣa-līlā*?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** A disciple should think, “He is my Gurudeva. He is eternal. He is still here.” When we pray for anything, he will inspire us. He is eternal, everywhere, and in our hearts also. He has not left his body. His body, his everything, is transcendental. So don’t worry. Our relationship with him is the same as it was.

[Question:] Does the example of Śrī Mādhvācārya approaching Śrīla Vyāsadeva show that an aspiring disciple can, so to speak, summon a departed *ācārya* who has entered into *aprakāṣa-līlā*, and request initiation from him? Of course, Mādhvācārya was in a special situation. He was an

empowered expansion of the Lord. He was one of the four *sampradāya ācāryas*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Mādhvācārya was a direct disciple of Vyāsadeva. When Mādhvācārya was living, about 4000 years had passed since Vyāsa disappeared from this world. However, Mādhvācārya knew that Vyāsadeva was still alive and that he is eternal. So he prayed to him in Badrikaśrāma, beseeching him, “I want to take your *darśana* and to be initiated by you.” And when he was praying, at once Vyāsadeva personally came there, and Mādhvācārya presented his wish to him that he should grant him initiation. Vyāsadeva gave him initiation and then after that Vyāsa disappeared.

In conclusion we can see by these questions and the answers given by Śrīla Gurudeva, that the newly emerging theory of ‘the *ṛtviks*’ is completely speculative and not supported by any *śāstra*.

In 1972 Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja wrote saying that he wanted his disciples to be ‘independently thoughtful’. We have to understand the philosophical conclusions of the *śāstra* (*siddhānta*), otherwise we cannot be strong. Without being fixed in the conclusions of Śrī Guru and the *śāstra*, we will hear some nonsense and at any time we may fall down.

*siddhānta baliyā citte nā kara alasa  
ibā ha-ite kṛṣṇe lāge sudṛḍha mānasa*

*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 2.117*

A sincere devotee should not neglect the discussion of such conclusions, considering them controversial, for such discussions make the mind and intellect stronger. Thus one’s mind becomes attached to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In another 1972 letter he said, “They are preaching all nonsense and the people are accepting them, but *if someone wants to be cheated*, what can be done?” That is why we ourselves have to understand this subject matter or someone will push their speculations upon us and we will become side-tracked in our spiritual life.

They are trying to put a variable on the eternal *paramparā* system by saying that the system as it existed is not acceptable or relevant at this

point in time. They put their slant on the philosophy and procedure of the eternal *paramparā* system but this is not in line with either Guru, Sādhu or Śāstra. There is absolutely nothing to support their theory in our Gauḍīyaa Vaiṣṇava line.

The *guru-paramparā* system of living *gurus* has existed from time immemorial with no break and will exist like this in the future also. Even Lord Rāma, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya took bona fide living *gurus*. To say that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja is the last bona fide *guru*, is not in line with *guru*, *sādhu* and *śāstra*. This premise is not found anywhere in his books or in any *śāstra*. To have direct association and communion with Śrī Gurudeva is essential. A bewildered *kaniṣṭha-adbhikārī* (neophyte devotee) may try to take help from this *ṛtvik* philosophy or some other quazi-religious ideology, but these are not our Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* and one will surely become beguiled by them.

Direct association with Śrī Guru is the first step on the path of divine service. Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhata Sarasvatī says that Śrī Guru is to be served in every entity and that if Śrī Guru is not served, no one can truly be served. He says that we should not hear anything until we are authorized to hear it from our divine master, Śrī Gurudeva.





## Why He Came? The Contribution of Śrīla Gurudeva

We would like to present now one main topic of this book which is why Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivendanta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, came to this world and what was his contribution to this world.

There are many generous people involved in humanitarian works—donating food, water, clothes, and so on to those materially deprived. Our Śrīla Gurudeva is not going around personally donating food, water, and clothes to the poor in the same manner as the others yet he has become immensely popular. His name and fame are spread all over the world. We will deliberate on this amazing popularity, and the cause behind this.

Every Janmāsthāmi in the Mathurā *māṭha*, Śrīla Gurudeva holds a grand festival that lasts for three days. There are more than 50,000 plates of sumptuous *prasādam* are distributed to guests as they have visitors continuously coming during those three days. Śrīla Gurudeva also donates devotee clothes to those in need. In Navadvīpa, during the annual Gaura Pūrṇimā festival and Navadvīpa *parikramā*, done in the honour of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, more than 500,000 plates of *prasādam* are distributed there during the ten-day festival.

In Govardhana, more than 100,000 plates of *prasādam* are distributed during Braja Māṇḍala *parikramā*. Śrīla Gurudeva goes to great lengths to make sure that whoever comes to the festivals will get *prasādam*. In this way he is giving pure sanctified food in charity with lasting spiritual benefits.

The worldly generous persons donate with the subtle desire to be recognized as magnanimous, virtuous and benevolent, thus harbouring frūitive desires for their own benefit. Rather than striving to render all kinds of selfless confidential services to the Supreme Lord, they engage in reward-seeking activities which will propagate their own humanitarian enterprises. Such charity is temporary and therefore has no eternal benefit because the person they feed today will be hungry again tomorrow and

every day for the rest of his life. The clothes they give to someone will eventually be worn out and more will be needed. So, how can these welfare acts done on the bodily platform, provide any eternal or perpetual benefit? Such material welfare cannot stop the continuous suffering of people.

As long as God is not the centre of one's activities, whatever duties one performs are subject to fruitive actions and reactions. To render service to the *jīva* who is averse to service to God, is to render service to his enjoying propensity. Both the doer and the recipient of such welfare may enjoy some temporary material benefits, however they cannot become free from material suffering, neither in this life or future lives. Do not think that Śrīla Gurudeva is dead against helping the needy people.

So how is Śrīla Gurudeva's contribution different?

Śrīla Gurudeva came into this world to contribute *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is spiritual, eternal and perpetual. He came to distribute the ocean of mercy from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and to complete Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's mission to distribute that mercy all over the world. To bestow *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* upon all souls is undoubtedly the topmost form of altruism. Śrīla Gurudeva is always thinking how to give others such benevolence through the proliferation of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's compassion. Other contributions will continue to produce heavy burdens on the already suffering humanity and nothing else. One who wholeheartedly accepts this gift of *bhakti* will not be entangled in worldly *dharmas* and *karmas* like with the gifts of all others. Only those who take exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanyadeva and His pure representative will achieve the real gift of *hari-bhakti* and attain full spiritual welfare in this very lifetime.

## The Glory of Bhakti

Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* (11.14.20):

*na sādhyati mām yogo  
na sāṅkhyam dharmā uddhava  
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo  
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā*

My dear Uddhava, I cannot be controlled by those who study Sāṅkhya philosophy or *śāstra*, or who perform mystic yoga, pious acts austerity or renunciation. I am controlled only by the *bhakti* rendered by My pure-hearted devotees.

The meaning of this verse is that *bhagavad-bhakti* is the only means by which one can attain their ultimate spiritual benefit. The path of *bhakti* or devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest welfare for every living being. This highest welfare constitutes our real *dharma* or constitutional duty.

Feeding people, constructing hospitals and building godless educational centres cannot bring permanent welfare to the world.

It is also mentioned in the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* (6.3.22),

*etāvān eva loke 'smīn puṁsām niḥśreyasodayaḥ  
tivreṇa bhakti-yogena mano mayy arpitam sthiram*

Only loving devotional service to Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which begins with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is called *bhakti-yoga*. This alone is the supreme *dharma*, the paramount religious principle for the living beings in this material world.

*yatheṣṭa vihari' kṛṣṇa kare antardhāna  
antardhāna kari' mane kare anumāna*

*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 3.13*

Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys for as long as He wants and then winds up His transcendental pastimes disappearing from our sight. After that, however, He thinks this:

*cira-kāla nābi kari prema-bhakti dāna  
bhakti vinā jagatera nābi avasthāna*

*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā 3.14*

For a long time I have not awarded unalloyed loving devotional service unto Me to the inhabitants of the material world. Without such loving attachment for Me, the existence of the material world is of no use.

This material world would not exist without *bhakti*. The whole purpose of the material creation is to bring the living entities to the spiritual world to enjoy their natural loving relationships there. This is among the main reasons why Kṛṣṇa comes Himself and sends his pure devotees. There is no meaning to life without *bhakti*.

If there is no pure devotee to give us *bhakti*, there is no purpose to this material world. Without the association of pure devotees there is no possibility to come out of the material realm. The whole material world was created to give an opportunity for the conditioned souls to come to their true natural state of unalloyed loving service to the Lord.

Without *sādhū-saṅga*, this world would become devastated; there is no reason for the existence of the material world without it. As the Lord Himself states, “*bhakti vinā jagatera nāhi avasthānā*—without such loving attachment to Me, the existence of this material world is of no use.” Therefore the Lord personally comes, *sa vai puṁśama paro dharmo yato bhaktir adboksaje*. He establishes real eternal *dharma*, the supreme religion that teaches us how to give our love—*bhaktir adboksaje*—to Lord Adhokṣaja (the transcendental Lord who cannot be understood by any means of the material mind and senses).

*bhaktir evainam nayati  
bhaktir evainam darśayati  
bhakti-vaśaḥ puruṣo  
bhaktir eva bhūyasī*

*Māṭhara-śruti*

It is only unalloyed *bhagavad-bhakti* that carries the *jīvas* close to Bhagavān, brings about an audience with Him, and bestows eternal engagement in His *sevā*. Bhagavān is controlled only by *pure bhakti* and nothing else. Certainly such *bhakti* is most powerful and attractive.

This is the speciality of Śrīlaa Gurudeva. He is giving this unalloyed *bhakti* which is the *parā-upakara*, the highest benefit for everyone. Without the help of the pure devotee and the *paramparā* system (which is set up and preserved by the Lord), no one can get out of this material world.

Without Śrī Guru’s personal guidance, any other ritualistic ceremonies or forms of religious practice will not deliver us from material existence and the endless cycle of birth and death. Therefore it is essential to hear from and follow the instructions of the pure devotee. His first and foremost instruction is to chant the holy names of the Lord.

The Vedic scriptures prescribe—especially in this age of Kālī which is the age of conflict and quarrel—that the chanting of the holy names of the Lord, *harināma saṅkīrtana*, is the only *dharmā* and welfare for humanity.

Śrīla Gurudeva strongly reinforces this point. “If there is just one true performer of this *nitya-dharma* (eternal *dharmā*) who keeps the fire of *hari-saṅkīrtana* ablaze, then his nation, caste and society can never be ruined... This *saṅkīrtana* makes possible the eternal welfare of the world and of one’s country, society, caste and self.” (BVNM, 1964 lecture, Delhi)

This is the undisputed power of *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It gives true happiness, situates one in their constitutional position and prevents illusion from covering the consciousness. The seed of such *bhakti* can only be given by Śrī Guru and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*brabmāṇḍa bbramīte kona bhāgyavān jīva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja  
māli hañā kare sei bīja āropana  
śravaṇa-kīrtana-jale karaye secana  
prema phala pāki paḍe māli āsvādaya  
latā avalambi māli kalpavṛkṣa pāya  
tābhāñ sei kalpavṛkṣera karaye secana  
sukhe premaphala-rasa kare āsvādana  
ei ta parama phala-parama puruṣārtha  
jānra āge trṇatulya cāri puruṣārtha*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 19)

While wandering on and on in this material existence, some fortunate *jīva*, by the mercy of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, attains the *bhakti-latā-bīja*, the seed of the creeper of devotion, in the form of Kṛṣṇa *sevā-vāsanā* (the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa). He becomes a gardener and waters

that seed with the water of *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana*. At first it begins to sprout, and then it becomes a creeper. It pierces the coverings of the universe, and one after another, traverses the *virajā*, Brahmaloka and the *paravyoma*. Finally, it climbs up to the desire-tree of Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet in Goloka Vṛndāvana. There it bears fruits in the form of *prema*. When the fruit becomes ripe, it falls here in this world, and the gardener tastes it. Taking support from that *bhakti-latā* he takes shelter of the desire-tree of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet and always tastes the *rasa* of the *prema* fruit. This very *prema* is the crest-jewel of all achievements for the *jīva*."

People are mad after material happiness but it all ends in misery. None of their material possessions can be taken with them at the time of death. It all vanishes at that time and according to their particular *karma*, they begin a new chapter in a new body. It may be in the body of a demigod, a *brāhmaṇa* or a bird. According to their accumulated *karma* from previous lives and this life, they are forced to wander through any one of the 8,400,000 species in an endless cycle of birth and death. It could be an insect, an animal or a tree, etc. But one who gets the seed of devotion and sows it in his heart, watering it by hearing, chanting, remembering and loyally serving the bona fide Guru and Vaiṣṇavas will certainly get the fruit of Love of God.

That seed of devotion one can only get from Śrī Guru, the bona fide representative of the Lord. Śrī Guru, out of his causless mercy gives this seed of devotion in the form of spiritual instructions, through *hari-kathā* and *dīkṣā mantras*.

Śrī Guru gives us the process and it is up to us to seriously follow it and not be distracted by false ideologies. Only *pure bhakti*, which is eternal, gives bliss to Bhagavān. That divine service which allows you to enter that transcendental world is given by Śrī Gurudeva. Only by his grace can we make advancement and proceed to that world.

*yasya deve parā bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau  
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ prakāśante mahātmanah*

*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23*

The conclusive essence of the scriptures is revealed only to those great souls who have transcendental devotion (*parā-bhakti*) unto Śrī Bhagavān and equal devotion for Śrī Gurudeva.

Here is an open secret. Without any *guru-niṣṭhā*, many may say that they love and are worshiping Kṛṣṇa, but where is their “equal devotion for Śrī Gurudeva” as described in this verse which is the conclusive essence of the scriptures. You cannot jump to a previous Ācārya or straight to Kṛṣṇa. The *paramparā* principles are set forth and followed by the Lord Himself, who also accepted a Guru. We follow whatever *guru, sādhu* and *śāstra* are advising, as long as they are in line with one another. If someone steps outside this discipline, they will become confused and bewildered. If one genuinely wants to achieve the goal, one has to surrender to Śrī Guru. Outside of this there is no other way of fulfilling the purpose and meaning of life, and become fully God conscious.

In the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* (1.5.12) it is mentioned,

*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam  
na śobbate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam  
kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īśvare  
na cārpitam karma yad apy akāraṇam*

Even pure knowledge (*jñāna*), which is the direct *sādhana* to obtain liberation, has no beauty if it is devoid of *bhakti* to the infallible Lord. How then can selfless action (*niṣkāma-karma*), which is not offered to Bhagavān and fruitive action (*kāmya-karma*), which is always inauspicious both in its practice stage and at perfection, be beautiful or beneficial?

So here in the *Bhāgavatam* also, it is teaching that even when one receives the results of good fruitive *karma*, one’s comfortable position is transient and ultimately painful. In still another place in the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* (10.14.3), our *ādi-guru*, the four-headed Brahmā, explained,

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva  
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām*

*sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatāḥ tanu-vān-manobhir  
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*

My dear Lord, those great devotees that have put aside all impersonal conceptions of the Absolute Truth, and who have therefore abandoned the process of speculative knowledge, should hear the narrations of Your personality and activities from self-realized devotees. Although You are Ajita, unconquerable by anyone in all the three worlds, You are conquered by such persons who offer all respects to those narrations and who give their body, mind and words for Your service, even though they remain in their established social positions.

*Ācāryas* like Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī in his *Vaiṣṇava-toṣani*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in his *Laghu-toṣani*, and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his *Dig-Darśani Ṭīkā*, have explained this verse more elaborately and with very deep meanings. Śrīla Gurudeva gives the essence of those explanations as follows:

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva*

There are two kinds of knowledge: one is the conception of mixing in *brahma*, and its followers chant, “*Āham brahmāsmi*,—I am *brahma*, the supreme spirit, the impersonal God, and all are *brahma*.” The goal of their meditation is impersonal, to mix into *brahma* and to become *brahma*.

The second type of knowledge is called *tattva-jñāna*, and it is the conception that we are all parts and parcels of Kṛṣṇa and that He is the Supreme Lord. He is *sarva-śaktimān*, the possessor of all powers, and He is full with all opulence. He can create millions of universes in a moment, and again, in a moment, He can also destroy those universes.

There are many kinds of *jñāna*, like *tat-padārtha-jñāna* (the knowledge regarding Kṛṣṇa’s Bhāgavata or Godhood), *tvam-padārtha-jñāna* (the knowledge of the *jīva*’s infinitesimal nature and his relationship with Bhagavān), and *jīva-brahma-aikya jñāna* (the misconception that the *jīva* and the Supreme *Brahma* are one

in all respects); they have all been explained in great detail in *śāstra*.

Impersonal knowledge is not complete and it is therefore not appreciated in the *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*. Śrīla Vyāsadeva and Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī have both refuted the speculations and misconceptions of the impersonalist *jñānīs* and *yogīs*, over and over again. What to speak of “*tat-tvam asi*” *jñāna* and “*āham brahmāsmi*” *jñāna*, even the *tattva-jñāna* that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord and creator, [not that He Himself creates, but that He gives the order to His subordinates and they then create and destroy millions of universes in a moment], even that mood of awe and reverence (*aiśvarya*), must ultimately be discarded. As four-headed Brahmājī says—*jñāne prayasam udapasya*—don’t endeavor for that [kind of *jñāna*]. (BVNM)

So, in the ordinary sense, *jñāna* is only in relation to *brahma*. Those who are *jñānīs* think themselves *brahma*. If you want to serve Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā in *vraja-bhāva*, you will have to leave *jñānā*. You will have to try to hear only the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, to remember them, and to chant the names of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā. Otherwise, if you are not *ekāntika*, one pointed, you cannot approach Vraja. However, if *jñāna* is *tattva-jñāna*, that is, realization of Bhagavān, then one can go to Vaikuṅṭha. Nevertheless, such *jñānīs* cannot reach the topmost abode, Vṛndāvana.

It is only when somebody gets *rāgānuga-bhāva-bhakti*, that gradually one is granted the ability to enter Vraja. When that *bhāva-bhakti* turns to *prema*, then only can someone serve the Divine Couple in Vṛndāvana. That *bhakti* is without awe and reverence as Śrīla Gurudeva explains: Although it is possible for Kṛṣṇa, the conceptions of *aiśvarya* and *mādhurya* cannot exist simultaneously for devotees. When Kṛṣṇa showed Ārjuna His universal form on the battlefield during the *Mahābhārata* war, Ārjuna became perplexed and began to pray with folded hands, “I have made many mistakes. I have done wrong. I have called You ‘*sakhā*,’ friend, and You are also personally driving my chariot. Prabhu, excuse me for this. Now I know that You are the creator of this universe. You are the Supreme Lord.” Ārjuna now forgot his friendship with Kṛṣṇa, and he repented his previous actions and mentality.

On the other hand, when Mother Yaśodā saw the universal form in Kṛṣṇa's mouth, she was puzzled and thought, "Why is my boy like this? A ghost may have come." Overwhelmed by *vātsalya-prema*, she called for the *brāhmaṇas* and also for Nanda Bābā. The *brāhmaṇas* told her, "We will quickly purify Him." Then, after fetching black cows for a *yajña*, the *brāhmaṇas* procured urine and cow dung, mixed them together, and applied it on the body of Kṛṣṇa.

Yaśodā Mā never thought that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. In fact, if anyone would say that He was, she would not take it seriously; she would take it as a joke. No Vrajavāsī will ever believe that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme. *Prema* cannot manifest unless one has a relationship with Kṛṣṇa with the realization that "Kṛṣṇa is my most beloved" or that "He is my son." *Vraja-prema* can never come if one thinks, "My son is the Supreme Lord." If you want to have *Vraja-prema* one day, then, like the Vrajavāsīs, you will have to forget that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. The Mathuravasis can say that He is the Supreme Lord because they saw His four-handed form, but the Vrajavāsīs can never say that.

*jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva* - For those of you who are somewhat advanced, don't endeavor to practice in this way - to know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. You should go to the assembly of pure Vaiṣṇavas like Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, where *hari-kathā* is flowing automatically, like a stream, or a fountain, or a waterfall.

In summary, we have presented and discussed two śloka from the Bhāgavatam to show that *naiṣkarma* (fruitive *karma*) and *jñāna* (speculative knowledge) are in the ultimate sense not good for the living soul. So, Śrīla Gurudeva did not come in this world to give *karma* or *jñāna*; he only came to give *pure bhakti*. In this way, Śrīla Gurudeva is indisputably fulfilling the desire of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya.

Moreover, it is told by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, our previous *ācārya*, in his *Prema Bhakti Candrika*,

*karma-kāṇḍa, jñāna-kāṇḍa, kevala viṣera bhāṇḍa,*  
*amṛta baliyā yebā khāya*  
*nānā yoni sadā phire, kadarya bhakṣaṇa kare,*  
*tāra janma adbaḥ-pāte yāya*

Both *karma-kāṇḍa* (fruitive activities with reward seeking desires) and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* (speculative knowledge with a desire for impersonal liberation) are simply two pots of poison. If one drinks these two poisons, thinking that they are both as sweet as nectar, he will fall from the human realm and spend a long time wandering in many species of life, eating many abominable things, and enjoying many horrible so-called pleasures.

For example, as it is described in scripture, the sinful living entity will have to take bodies as a dog and a hog, and then eat the stool of human beings, along with so many other nonsense things. In other words, this present human life, unless we take to *bhakti*, will be completely ruined and our fortunate human birth will go completely in vain. What good would it be if one becomes even the President or Prime Minister of the Nation, if in their next life they become a dog?

So, Śrīla Gurudeva came into this world to distribute *pure bhakti*, not mundane *karma* or *jñāna*. Śrīla Gurudeva is mercifully distributing this *bhakti*, this love. Kṛṣṇa is controlled by *bhakti* and nothing else.

Furthermore, in the *Nārada-bhakti-sūtra* 1.3 it is said, *om amṛtarūpā ca*—that *bhakti* is nectar. The next verse states,

*om yal labdhvā pumān siddho  
bhavaty amṛto bhavati tṛpto bhavati*

*Nārada-bhakti-sūtra* 1.4

Only upon receiving that *bhakti* can the *jīva* be perfect, and having received that nectar he will obtain liberation from this material world, and will be self-satisfied.

To become liberated from the material world means that one attains the service of Bhagavān. Then it also is mentioned,

*om yat prāpya na kiñcid vāñchati  
na śocati na dveṣṭi na ramate notsābī bhavati*

*Nārada-bhakti-sūtra* 1.5

When someone obtains *bhakti*, then he is freed from his material desires, his envy, and any possible opposition to Bhagavān.

So this is the glory of *bhakti*.

## The Definition of Bhakti

Next, we will examine the definition of *bhakti*? Śaṅḍilya Ṛṣi composed one book entitled, *Śaṅḍilya Bhakti Sūtra*, in which he preached about *bhakti*. In this book, in the second *śloka* of chapter one, he gave this definition of *bhakti*:

*sā parānuraktir īśvare*

Great attachment to the lotus feet of the Supreme Controller is called *bhakti*.

Another place where the definition is mentioned is in the *Śrī Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu*, *pūrva-vibhāga* (1.1.12), wherein it is said:

*sarvopādhi-vinirmuktam  
tat-paratvena nirmalam  
bṛṣīkeṇa bṛṣīkeśa  
sevanam bhaktir ucyate*

*Bhakti*, or pure devotional service, means engaging all our senses and mind in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all the senses, with the sole purpose of pleasing Him. When the spirit soul renders service unto the Supreme, there are two side effects. One is freed from all material designations, and one's senses become spiritualized simply by being employed in the service of Hṛṣīkeśa, the master of the senses.

There are many definitions of *bhakti*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda, the greatest authority, made this definition for the benefit of the whole world. In *Caitanya-līlā*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is the eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; in *Vraja-līlā*, the maidservant Rūpa Māñjarī, the eternal associate of the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. In Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu*, *pūrva-vibhāgah*, we find this all-time standard definition of *pure bhakti* that has been used by all the *ācāryas* in our Gauḍīya line.

anyābbilāṣitā-śūnyam  
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam  
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-  
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā

*Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu. Purva 1.1.11*

*Uttama-bhakti*, pure devotional service, is the cultivation of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa—in other words, the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed through all endeavours of the body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*). It is not covered by *jñāna* (knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation), *karma* (reward-seeking activity), *yoga* or austerities; and it is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This verse, *anyābbilāṣitā-śūnyam*, is a barometer for pure devotional service; it defines what *pure bhakti* or *uttama-bhakti* is. If the *bhakti* lines up with these well-defined devotional characteristics, then the reading on the barometer will go very high and vice-versa.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmipāda systematically explains the favorable endeavors for the cultivation of devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; when such activities are performed for His pleasure, it is called *bhakti*.

*Bhakti* has two stages, the practice and the perfectional stage. In the practice stage (*sādhana*), there are sixty-four limbs of *bhakti*, beginning with *guru-padāśraya*, taking shelter of the lotus feet of a genuine spiritual master, accepting *dīkṣā* (initiation) and śikṣa (spiritual instructions) from him, serving the *guru* with a feeling of great intimacy and so on.

The perfectional stage is called *sādhya-bhakti* or *prema-bhakti*. *Sādhya-bhakti* has eternally perfect love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Sādhana-bhakti* is the immature state, whereas *sādhya-bhakti* is the fully matured or ripened state.

*Sādhana-bhakti* can also be divided into two types—*vaidhī* and *rāgānuga*. One cannot jump to *rāgānuga*. Untill a spontaneous attachment and taste for Kṛṣṇa appears in the heart of one practicing *vaidhī*, he follows the regulative activities and the rules prescribed in *śāstra*. *Rāgānuga-sādhana-bhakti*, on the other hand, is performed when one has spontaneous attachment (*rāga*) in the heart and that person is always intensely eager to

possess the moods of the *vrajavāsīs*; their performance of *sādhana* is just to follow them. The *vrajavāsīs* are eternally perfect and their attachment and love for the Lord is supreme. It can never be broken. To follow them is possible only by the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Gurudeva is a *parama-bhagavadbhakta*. By his causeless mercy, the conditioned souls (*baddha-jīvas* who are spiritually unaware) obtain identification with, and shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and other *parama-bhagavadbhaktas*. Only when those persons have fully taken shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Guru will the Lord's *svarūpa-śakti* manifest in their body, mind and words (even though they are material). The example is given that when fire permeates an iron rod, it burns other objects. The iron rod does not burn other objects—the fire does. In this example the fire is said to have obtained oneness with the iron rod (*tadātmya*). Similarly, by the mercy of the Lord, the *bhakti-vṛtti* of *svarūpa-śakti* obtains *tadātmya* with the body, mind and words of the devotees and then acts through them.

In the verse under discussion, the word “Kṛṣṇa” has been used to indicate Svayam Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and all other incarnations (*avatars*) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

In order to establish the *svarūpa* or inherent nature of *bhakti*, the qualifying adjective *anukūlyena* (favourably disposed) has been used, because *bhakti* is not accomplished by unfavourable behaviour. The real meaning of *anukūlya* is to be completely free of any attitude that is unfavourable or hostile to the Lord.

Without the complete absence of any attitude that is unfavourable to the Lord, *bhakti* is not established. According to this definition of *bhakti*, the fault of *ativyapti* cannot be applied to the asuras (in other words the definition of *bhakti* does not extend to them), because they are always possessed of a malicious attitude towards the Lord. Consequently, because they are not devoid of a hostile attitude, their activities are not regarded as *bhakti*.

On the other hand, sometimes an activity of Yaśoda-maiyā, from the external point of view, appeared to be unfavourable because it was seen to be displeasing to Kṛṣṇa, but Yaśoda-maiyā has no trace of any attitude that is displeasing to Kṛṣṇa. She is always permeated with an attitude

that is completely agreeable towards Kṛṣṇa, being constantly attentive to rearing Him and looking after His welfare.

The devotees naturally display even greater love towards those things that are favourable towards the service of Kṛṣṇa than towards Kṛṣṇa directly. Kṛṣṇa was to be nourished with the milk that was boiling on the stove. It was only with the idea of Kṛṣṇa's future benefit that Yaśodamaiyā left Him aside to tend to the milk; therefore this action is also *bhakti*. The true nature of *bhakti* is not established by the mere absence of an inimical attitude, for even within a clay pot there is an absence of animosity. Can the pot then be said to possess *bhakti*? It never can. For it to be accepted as *bhakti* there must be a person who is favorably endeavoring to please the Lord.





## Early ISKCON Conversations with Śrīla Gurudeva



Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, Girirāja Mahārāja, Satswarup Mahārāja, Dhanudhar Mahārāja, Sivarama Mahārāja, Ayodyapati Prabhu (Bhakti Bhṅga Govinda Mahārāja), Pārthasārathi Prabhu (Pārthasārathi dāsa Mahārāja), Yadurani devī, Bhurijan Prabhu, Jagatarini devī, Kartā devī and others would often come to see Śrīla Gurudeva in Mathurā.

Śrīla Gurudeva systematically taught them from *Jaiva Dharma*, *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *Rāsa Pañcādhyāyī* to different subject matters like Vaiṣṇava *sadācāra*, how to observe the *āvirbhāva* (appearance day) and *tirobhāva-tithī* (disappearance day) of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrīla Gurudeva taught them for many years, and based on some of these teachings, he has now published a book of paramount importance to all future devotees, the *Śrī Gopī-gīta*.

Her Grace Śyāmarāṇī didi and all of her Vaiṣṇavi crew made a tremendous contribution in the publication of this beautifully illustrated and designed book.

Śrīla Gurudeva's lectures from this period are now available to all devotees.

At that time, in Mathurā *māṭha*, Śrīla Gurudeva used to live on the second floor, close to the temple Deities. Nowadays Tirtha Mahārāja is living in that same room which used to be Śrīla Gurudeva's *bhajana kuṭīra* and Śrīla Gurudeva's *bhajana kuṭīra* has been shifted for fear for convenience and to maintain his privacy.

When some of the senior ISKCON devotees approached Śrīla Gurudeva for learning, he affectionately agreed to teach them and patiently answered all of their questions. In the recordings which are still available, you can hear how expertly he clarified everything, especially on topics like *rasa* and *tattva-siddhānta*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructs that the duty of every man is to approach a spiritual master, question him about devotional service

and listen to him explain the process. It is also stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that there is no difference between *śikṣā* and *dikṣā guru*; *śikṣā guru* is the *svarūpa*, the personality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa while *dikṣā guru* is the *rūpa*, the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

In this way, by properly understanding *śrī guru-tattva*, one carefully worships Śrī Guru; seeing one's faithful and humble service, Kṛṣṇa becomes most pleased and one quickly attains pure devotional service. Disrespecting Śrī Guru will however, nullify all knowledge given by him.

At that time, Śrīla Gurudeva himself (who at that time was addressed as Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja or sometimes Śrīla Mahārāja) was not giving *dikṣā* initiation. Śrīla Gurudeva did give *barināmā* but not Brahmin initiation to a few devotees, such as Śrīpāda Premānanda Prabhu in 1974, to me (Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī) in 1979, and Subala Sakhā Prabhu (now Śrīpāda Vana Mahārāja) around 1980. On the other hand, the ISKCON leaders who visited him for guidance and instructions on spiritual and devotional matters were giving *dikṣā* initiation to disciples all over the world. One should take shelter and guidance from Vaiṣṇavas more elevated than oneself. This is what they were doing in approaching Śrīla Gurudeva. One should instruct junior persons who sincerely approach one for spiritual guidance and this is what Śrīla Gurudeva was doing with them.

It is enjoined that one must accept a Guru who has fully realized both *śāstra* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet*, for such a Guru has the power to deliver the *jīvas* from the fire of material existence.

According to *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*, a person who is not fully realized but considers himself a *guru* is called '*adhenu*', a barren cow that gives no milk.

Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura explains in *Jaiva Dharma* however, that it is not proper to give up a *guru* whose knowledge is meager, if he is not inimical to the Vaiṣṇavas, if he is not a Māyāvādī, and if he is not attached to sinful activity. In that case, one should still respect him as *guru* and with his permission, one should go to another Vaiṣṇava who is more knowledgeable and serve and take instructions from that Vaiṣṇava.

In his *Bhakti-Sandarbhā*, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī also comments on the verse '*guror āpi avaliptasya*' – one who has accepted the duty of *guru* but who is envious of pure devotees, who blasphemes them, or behaves māliciously

towards them, should certainly be abandoned. Such an envious *guru* lacks the mood and qualities of a Vaiṣṇava *guru*.

Some of those who approached Śrīla Gurudeva for understanding and learning the confidential topics of Vaiṣṇava scriptures went back to devotees and temples to give classes, courses and write books on *bhakti rasa* and many of the things that they had heard from Śrīla Gurudeva, practically never mentioning or acknowledging Śrīla Gurudeva to the others. This is not proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette.

Vedic culture and Vaiṣṇava etiquette teaches that we should always acknowledge and honour the source of our learning, our *Vaiṣṇava* teachers and the *guru-paramparā*, for they are giving us everything.

*Hari-kathā* is meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Guru (the unalloyed servant of the Lord) and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is not the purpose of *hari-kathā* to increase one's own name, fame and adoration or to display one's own intellect; it is meant for pleasing Vaiṣṇavas, Śrī *Guru* and Śrī *Kṛṣṇa*.

Śrīla Gurudeva mercifully unlocked the deeper meanings of *rasa-tattva* and generously spent so much time helping others understand the deep *siddhānta* of our *ācāryas*, which Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja asked him to do just before he left his body and entered *aprakāṣa-līlā*.

In *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava that a servant or disciple of the spiritual master should be free from false prestige, never considering oneself to be the doer.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura cautions that offenses committed at the lotus feet of Śrī Hari, are absolved by *harināma*. But for offenses against Śrī Guru or a Vaiṣṇava, there is absolutely no means of deliverance other than genuinely repenting, asking forgiveness and serving the Vaiṣṇava one has offended.

Below are some excerpts from early 1990's conversations between Śrīla Gurudeva and several GBC members on the books *Rāga-vartma-candrika* by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrī *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

## Difference between Aiśvarya and Mādhurya<sup>7</sup>

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Śrīla Viśvanātha Chakravarti Ṭhākura tells us that we should know what is *aiśvarya* and what is *mādhurya*. What is *aiśvarya*?

**Śrīpāda Girirāja Svāmī:** *Aiśvarya* means ‘opulence,’ or ‘majesty.’

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** It is the majestic feature of the Lord in Dvārakā, Mathurā, and Nārāyaṇa’s Vaikuṅṭha; it is worship with awe and reverence.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** And what is *mādhurya*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Sweetness which overpowers His opulence. It is the sweetness of the Lord’s pastimes.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This is not a sufficient answer. Sweetness alone is not *mādhurya*. We taste sweet things, but this is not *mādhurya*. We taste something like this in our family relations; and a teenage boy tastes what he calls *mādhurya*, but this is not *mādhurya*. In the background there must be *aiśvarya*, opulence. Without *aiśvarya* there cannot be *mādhurya*.

Do you know what is *mahā-aiśvarya*? As *aiśvarya* means ‘opulence,’ *mahā-aiśvarya* means ‘great opulence.’ Whether or not great opulence is present, if Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes go on as *nara-līlā*, then it is *mādhurya*.

Do you know the meaning of *nara-līlā*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Worldly.

**Burijana dāsa:** As with humans.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Whether or not *mahā-aiśvarya* is present, if Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes are *nara-līlā*, then it is *mādhurya*. On the other hand, if by the presence of *mahā-aiśvarya* Kṛṣṇa knows that, “I am Īśvara, God,” and His *bhakta* also knows that He is God, that is *aiśvarya-līlā*.

Someone may propose: “One should understand that sarvajnata, omniscience, indicates an abundance of *mahā-aiśvarya*, great opulence, devoid of *mādhurya*, sweetness, while *mādhurya* is simply the *mugdhatta*, or bewilderment, that results from completely setting aside *aiśvarya* and

<sup>7</sup> The complete transcript of this section was printed as Chapter 4 of the book *The Hidden Path of Devotion*, entitled *Opulence or Sweetness?* published by the Gaudiya Vedanta Publications (CC-BY-ND).

imitating *nara-līlā*, human-like behavior.” Only dull-headed people will speak like this.

The conclusion regarding *mādhurya* and related topics is that whether *mahā-aiśvarya* is exhibited or not, if the mood of human-like pastimes is not transgressed even slightly, then it is called *mādhurya*. (from *Rāga-vartma-candrika*, Second Illumination).

For example, we have seen that when Kṛṣṇa and Ārjuna were about to fight in the Battle of Kurukṣetra, Ārjuna saw Kṛṣṇa’s Universal Form and then told Kṛṣṇa. “I’ve committed so many offenses at Your lotus feet. I’ve addressed You as ‘friend,’ and I have ordered You to drive my chariot. But You are God, my worshipable Lord.” This is *aiśvarya-līlā*, because Kṛṣṇa was in the mood that “I am God,” and He showed Ārjuna His Universal Form. When Ārjuna saw that form, he left his mood of friendship with Kṛṣṇa.

Also, when Kṛṣṇa went with Baladeva to see Vāsudeva and Devakī after killing Kāṁsa, Vāsudeva and Devakī began to worship Kṛṣṇa with many prayers of glorification. In this instance Kṛṣṇa was in *aiśvarya-bhāva*, the conception that He is God. He considered Himself God, and they also knew that He is God.

On the other hand, the Vrajavāsīs never considered Him to be God. He went to Govardhana and lifted it with only one finger (the pinky finger of His left hand) for seven days. Indra then came and performed an opulent bathing ceremony for Him, employing several sacred substances, called *abhiśeka*. After this, the elderly gopas assembled and decided, “Let us call Yaśodā and Nanda Mahārāja. Let us tell them, ‘Do not imagine that Kṛṣṇa is your son. Do not call Him thief, liar, or any other bad name; that will be an offense.’” They advised Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā Maiyā to understand that Kṛṣṇa is perhaps some demigod, or perhaps Nārāyaṇa Himself, since this is what they had heard from Gargacarya.

Yaśodā never thought of Kṛṣṇa as God. Rather, extremely pleased that her son had lifted Govardhana for seven days, she considered, “Everyone is offering praise to my son,” and her breasts became swollen with great pride. If a woman hears anything good about her children, she becomes so pleased. Although Yaśodā knew that the act of lifting Govardhana was not that of an ordinary person, she still considered, “Kṛṣṇa is merely my child; my son.” This is *mādhurya*.

As I explained on a previous day, Uddhava came to console the *gopīs* in their mood of separation from Kṛṣṇa after Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā. There, he overheard the *gopīs* saying, “We have heard from *Paurṇamāsī* and Garga Ṛṣi that Kṛṣṇa is Īśvara, Bhagavān; not only in this birth, but in past births as well, and when He was Rāmacandra as well. But we know that even as Rāmacandra He did so many wrong things; and He was controlled by Sītādevī.”

So, although it had come to their attention through Purnaamasi and Gargacarya that Kṛṣṇa is God, they personally never saw Him as such. This is the nature of their “*īśvara-bhāva*.” They would tell Him, “Oh, come here. The red lac (decorative paint) on my feet is no longer there. You should repaint it.” They would order Him to perform so many services for them, and they would also become angry with Him. If they were actually aware of Kṛṣṇa’s Godhood, how could they have become angry with Him?

Rather, the *gopīs* behaved with Him only as their lover. In their version of “*īśvara-bhāva*,” they know nothing beyond the idea that He is their beloved. This is *mādhurya-bhāva*.

Thus, when Kṛṣṇa knows that He is Īśvara and His *bhakta* also knows this, that pastime is in *aīśvarya-bhāva*. On the other hand, when He and His associates both forget this – and even when some idea comes to them that He may be God, they only behave towards Him like a lover – that is *mādhurya-bhāva*.

In Vraja, Kṛṣṇa is always in *vraja-bhāva*. He is always overpowered by *prema*, meaning Yogamāyā, His internal desire potency; all actions in Vraja are performed by this *prema*. It is not against *siddhānta* to say that Kṛṣṇa is overpowered by *prema*, because *prema* and Kṛṣṇa are the same Truth: *sat-cit-ānanda-māyā*, consisting of eternal existence, unlimited knowledge, and unfathomable joy. This *prema* is the intrinsic nature of Kṛṣṇa. Do you know the meaning of *svabhava*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Can we say that *prema* is a sakti (potency) of Kṛṣṇa, or not?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We may say so. Kṛṣṇa Himself is known as *raso vai sab* (the reservoir of the unlimited pleasure of *rasa*). *Rāsa* is *prema* (pure love for Kṛṣṇa), *prema* is Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is *prema*. And, at the same time, *prema* is the *śakti* of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Chakravartī Ṭhākura tells us that at the time of *rāsa-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa was *sarvajña*, all-knowing, because He knew, “All the *gopīs* love Me and want to dance with Me. He knew this, and He therefore expanded into innumerable Kṛṣṇas. On the other hand, when He did what the *gopīs* desired, He was *mugḍha*, unaware of His *aīśvarya*. Both qualities are present in Him at the same time. Why? This is due to His *acintya-śakti*, His potency of inconceivability, which is beyond all mundane logic.

Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura then says that when, by *vaidhī-bhakti*, someone worships Nārāyaṇa, or Rāma, or any other plenary expansion of Kṛṣṇa, that devotee goes to Vaikuṅṭha after attaining perfection.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What about Rukmīṇī-dvārakādhīśa?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I will explain this afterwards, separately. When one performs *vaidhī-bhakti* and discusses topics regarding Vaikuṅṭha, after achieving perfection he attains Vaikuṅṭha. Regarding those who have no greed but want to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and they are worshiping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa by the regulations of *vaidhī-bhakti* – where do they go at the time of perfection (*siddhī*)?

**Burijana dāsa:** With no greed?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** No greed. They are worshiping by *vaidhī-bhakti*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** To Dvārakā

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Why Dvārakā? There is no relation with Dvārakā here.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** They are worshiping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa?

**Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** They want Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** But no greed?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** No greed, and by *vaidhī bhakti*. In that case, they will attain Goloka. They know nothing about *parakīya* (Kṛṣṇa’s paramour love with Rādhikā and the *gopīs*). They only know *svakīya* (the idea of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa as a married couple). This *svakīya* is in Goloka. The planet of Goloka is vast; so many *prakostas* (separate sections) are situated there.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Levels.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** So many. So, if one is worshiping Rādhā-kṛṣṇa by *vaidhī-bhakti* and has no greed...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Goloka; he goes to Goloka.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Goloka. There in Goloka we find *aiśvarya-jñāna*, knowledge of Kṛṣṇa’s Godhood, and *svakīya-bhāva*, the mood of Rādhā-kṛṣṇa as a married couple. There is no conception of *parakīya* there; only *svakīya-bhāva* – but with the Lord as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Every kind of *aiśvarya* (opulence) is present there, almost like that of Nārāyaṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is not manifest as Nārāyaṇa there.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I was reading Garga Saṁhitā, which describes this. As I was reading, I was thinking that this is like Nārāyaṇa but it is Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. It is not like the Rādhā-kṛṣṇa we always hear about in Vṛndāvana and Gokula. It’s a different mood.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The twenty-four prominent forms of Nārāyaṇa, as well as all His other forms, reside in lower Vaikuṅṭha. Higher than that is Rāma-loka, and higher than that is Kṛṣṇa-loka. Kṛṣṇa-loka begins from Goloka, and in Goloka there are so many divisions: Goloka, Dvārakā, Mathurā, and then Vraja. In lower Goloka there is only *svakīya-bhāva* with *aiśvarya-jñāna*, with no greed at all towards *vraja-bhāva*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** At the place where Akrūra took his bath when he was taking Kṛṣṇa and Balarāmā to Mathurā, Kṛṣṇa showed the residents of Vṛndāvana a vision of Goloka.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, they only saw Goloka, not Vraja, not Vṛndāvana.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** They saw this Goloka?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This Goloka.

**Burijana dāsa:** Kṛṣṇa showed Vaikuṅṭha to Akrūra.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** ‘Vaikuṅṭha’ in this connection refers to this Goloka. He also showed this to the Vrajavāsīs – not Vraja, only Goloka. Kṛṣṇa and all His associates including Rādhikā and Yaśodā were there in Goloka in their own forms, but they were not in *vraja-bhāva*.

Next, suppose someone worships Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in *vaidbī-bhakti* – not in *rāga-mārga*, not under the guidance of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava – and at the same time has greed. That devotee will go to Dvārakā. [For example, *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* states that Gopa-kumāra went to many places before reaching Goloka Vṛndāvana – even to Dvārakā. He had greed, but because

he did not have sufficient *rasika* association, he could not easily complete his journey to Goloka Vṛndāvana. -Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja

Why will they go there? It is because Rādhikā manifests as Satybhama there in Dvārakā and Candrāvalī manifests as Rukmīṇī; and because *aiśvarya-jñāna* (knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's Godhood) is present there. When Rādhā and Candrāvalī are present with Kṛṣṇa as Satyabhāmā and Rukmīṇī, Kṛṣṇa is in His feature as Dvārakādīśa and He is served by them in Dvārakā.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What is the difference between someone who worships and goes to Goloka, and someone who worships and goes to Dvārakā?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Those who worship without greed go to Goloka.

**Burijana dāsa:** Only one has greed, but both are worshipping in *vaidbhī-bhakti*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** In Dvārakā there's greed?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Those *bhaktas* have greed, but they are worshipping in *vaidbhī-bhakti*. In that case Rādhikā manifests as Satyabhāmā, Candrāvalī as Rukmīṇī, and their associates as the other queens of Dvārakā. Kṛṣṇa is in the same form there as He is in Vṛndāvana, but there He is a young Yādava.

Next, those who have greed for *vraja-bhāva* and worship Rādhā-kṛṣṇa by *rāgānuga-bhakti* under the guidance of a *rasika* Vrajavāsī will achieve *vraja-bhāva*. Is this clear?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** This is very important

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This is a very important thing. So I am not wasting my time.

Without knowing these truths, we cannot have a proper idea of Vraja, and we may be deceived. One's *svarūpa* (constitutional spiritual form) will only manifest when one is under the guidance of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** This gives us the conviction that we must try for the thing you are teaching – *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, *rāgānuga-bhakti*. But you will have to give me *dakṣiṇā* (a donation) for this.

**Śrīpāda Girirāja Svāmī:** I'll give anything...

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: I am very greedy. I want *dakṣiṇā*.

Śrīpāda Girirāja Svāmī: Tell me what to give.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: I will have to tell you?

Śrīpāda Girirāja Svāmī: My heart.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Yes. These are such good topics; we are certainly lucky that we are discussing them. In the practice of *bhakti*, hundreds of thousands of births may go by and it is not sure that one will have the fortune to discuss such things. It is only the mercy of *guru* and Gaurāṅga that we are able to do so.

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### Rāga-vartma-candrika<sup>8</sup>

Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: You said that today you would be speaking on *Rāga-vartma-candrika*. You said you would be giving a synopsis; a summary.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Before beginning *Rāga-vartma-candrika*, we first pray to our Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and to Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, then to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and then to the author, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. We earnestly beg that their mercy comes to us, especially the mercy of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

In this *Rāga Vartma Candrika*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura tells us what he has realized about Śrī Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa's *anurāga* by the grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. *Anurāga* refers to that stage of *prema* which comes just before *mahābhāva*. Within *prema* comes *sneha*, then *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, and then *anurāga*.

The author states, "I am writing something for those persons – those very lucky persons – who have greed for this *rāga* but can find no path to enter for achieving it. This book serves as their guide, like a moonbeam

8 This section is an excerpt from the transcript printed as Chapter 2 of the book *The Hidden Path of Devotion*, entitled *How to Enter Rāgānuga-bhakti?* published by the Gaudiya Vedanta Publications (CC-BY-ND).

(*candrika*), to shed light on the path (*vartma*) leading to the loving devotion of the residents of Goloka Vṛndāvana (*rāga*). This path is very rare in the world.

During the *Amavasya*, dark-moon, night there is no moon; it is so very dark. There is a very narrow pathway, but it is not seen. If there would be a moon, that moon would give rays of light so that the path can be seen. This book is the *candrika* (moonbeam) which casts its light on *rāga* and the path leading to *rāga*. It is therefore called *Rāga-vartma-candrika*.

We should know that this pathway is a very, very narrow one, meant only for a few, rare, highly-qualified persons; it is not for everyone. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura advises that others not read this book.

However, there is no worldly qualification required to enter this path; the only qualification is *lobha*, or transcendental greed. It is stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, “*api cet su-durācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk*” A man may be full of *anarthas* (undesirable habits and thoughts); but if he takes the association of a *rāgānugā-bhakta* and under his guidance reads the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he may become attracted and acquire a very deep greed to have the same transcendental mood as the Vrajavāsīs. He may be attracted to *sakhya-rasa* (friendship with Kṛṣṇa), *vātsalya-rasa* (parental love for Him), or *mādhurya-rasa* (a relationship with Him as a beloved). Simply by faithfully hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*’s descriptions of the moods of the *gopīs*, or those of Kṛṣṇa’s father and mother, or those of Kṛṣṇa’s friends, one may begin to yearn to experience in his heart the same moods as theirs.

It may be noted, however, that Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is not describing *sakhya* and *vātsalya-bhāva* in *Rāga-vartma-candrika*; he is presenting only *gopī-bhāva*. In that regard, in order to attain that *bhāva*, one will especially hear from a *rāgānugā-bhakta* the portions of the Tenth Canto discussing Kṛṣṇa’s relationship with the *gopīs*, namely *Gopī-gīta*, *Yugala-Gīta*, *Bhramara-Gīta*, *Pranaya-gīta*, and *Venu-gīta*.

One who has *saṁskāras* (impressions in the heart) from having taken proper association in his previous births will be able to cultivate greed and achieve *gopī-bhāva* by reading *śāstra*; he will not have to rely on *śāstric* logic to convince him. For such a person, this treatise will be the *candrika* for discovering the path of *rāgānuga*.

The author first explains that there are two kinds of *śraddhā* (faith) – *vaidhī* and *rāgānuga* – which result in two kinds of *bhakti* – *vaidhī-bhakti* and *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Both types of *śraddhā* are achieved through the association of qualified Vaiṣṇavas. Where entrance in *bhakti* is impelled by fear, where it is induced by the injunctions of *śāstra* that instruct everyone to perform *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa, otherwise they will go to hell – this is called *vaidhī-bhakti*.

In this way one may enter *bhakti* by fear; or, one may be impelled by the order of *śāstra* which is based on *yukti*, reasoning. For example, *śāstra* has ordered:

*sa vai puṁsāṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje  
ahaituky apratibatā yayātmā suprasīdati*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 1.2.6*

The highest pursuit for all humanity is *śuddha-bhakti* – *bhakti* performed in order to please Kṛṣṇa, the transcendent Lord Adhokṣaja, by all one's efforts of body, mind, and soul. Such *uttama-bhakti* is continuously performed without any personal desire (*anyabhilāṣitā-sunyam*) and without any break. In this way one can fully satisfy the self (*ātmā*).

By hearing such instructions, many people enter *bhakti*, and such *bhakti* is called *vaidhī-bhakti*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** This is *vaidhī-bhakti*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** And, that *bhakti* which is based only on genuine greed is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Such greed is generated by hearing the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, by reading the books of the Gosvāmīs, and especially by being in the association of a *rāgānugā-bhaktā*. Without the association of such *rāgānuga-bhaktas*, the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* will not be properly understood.

What is the nature of genuine greed? How can we know whether or not our greed is genuine?

When a *sādhaka* hears from *rāgānuga-rasika* Vaiṣṇavas about the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, especially His pastimes with the *gopīs*, whether this be

from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta*, *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, *Rādhā-Rāsa-Sudha-Nidhi*, or any other books, his *citta-vṛtti* (heart) becomes very eager to acquire the moods of Kṛṣṇa's *parikāras* (associates). At that time he becomes absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *rūpa* (form), *guṇa* (qualities), and *līlā* (pastimes).

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** When the heart is filled with the qualities of Kṛṣṇa, and the form of Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Do you know the meaning of *citta-vṛtti*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Spiritual...inner... What's the word? Inner...

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I want that word.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Consciousness? Inner consciousness?

**Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Consciousness. In this connection *citta-vṛtti* means 'mind' or 'heart.' When our *citta-vṛtti* eagerly desires to be like those of Kṛṣṇa's eternal associates, in other words to have the moods of those eternal associates, that condition of the heart is its real or natural state, as opposed to the imposed worldly *citta-vṛtti*.

At this time, the devotee is not interested in examining *śāstric* orders. He will only want to achieve that mood which he sees in his *āśraya-gopī*, the *gopī* for whose mood he has developed greed. This is genuine greed.

Do you understand? Can you say what is meaning of *lobha*, greed?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** It is when a person hears the descriptions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and then thinks of the feelings the *gopīs* have for Kṛṣṇa.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** He wants to have...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** He wants to have that same feeling that is within them, strongly; that is *lobha*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** That is *lobha*, but you have left out one thing. Those with *lobha* are not regulated by *śāstric* orders or bindings. Such orders are left untouched.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Rules and regulations are not there.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The rules and regulations of *śāstra* are not needed at all.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Otherwise it is *vaidhī*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** For example, one may see some or *rabries* (Indian sweets) and, whether or not he has the money to pay for those sweets, he may at once develop greed for them. He will exclaim, “Very tasteful!” Similarly, in whatever stage a person may find himself, if he sincerely contemplates, “Oh! The mood of the *gopīs* is very tasteful and very good. I have greed for that,” such greed has no bindings or consideration of *śāstric* restrictions. If we judge that we are not qualified and we think that what we want is too high for us, this is a sign that we do not possess greed. Do you understand?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Please explain.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** If I desire a *rasagulla* but I think, “I have no money in my pocket to purchase it, so I cannot have it,” that means I have no real greed for it.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Greed goes beyond that.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Somehow or other, by hook or by crook...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Beg, borrow, or steal.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** By stealing, or begging, or by any other means. Such a person does not think about his qualification or disqualification. He does not consider whether or not he is able to have this *bhakti*. He simply thinks, “I must have it!” This is real greed. Do you understand?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Heart’s desire.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** His desire must be overpowered by the form, qualities, and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Then it will be called real greed.

A *sādhaka* may ponder, “I have heard from the *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas how Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citrā, Rūpa Māñjarī and other associates serve Kṛṣṇa, and I want to serve like them.” Not judging whether he is qualified to achieve this *samajati-bhāva* (the identical mood for which one aspires), if he does not wait for any logical argument to convince him, that it is called greed.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Argument means ‘reasoning.’

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** It should come without relying on any reasoning. If reasoning is required, it is not greed.

The next consideration is this: When greed comes, how does one achieve his desired result? It comes by the association of *rāgānuga-rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. In that association one reads *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, *Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu*, especially *Rāga-vartma Candrika*...

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** *Vraja-riti Cintāmaṇi*

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Vraja-riti Cintāmaṇi*, *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, *Rādhā-rasa-sudha-nidhi*, Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī's *Gīta-govinda*, and the books of Śrī Kavi Karṇapūra and all our Gosvāmīs.

One will have to read all of these books and resolve: "How can I easily achieve that mood, somehow, by hook or by crook. What is the easiest method to get this?" This should be the question.

All of our *ācāryas*, including Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, have recorded for us, in a practical way, how they themselves achieved it and how the *sādhana-siddha-gopīs* achieved it. Their writings are authentic. One will search out their methods in *śāstra* and follow the methods discussed therein, because without following *śāstra*, without following the guidelines of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one will become sahaṅgiya or atheist.

A person with greed will never judge his qualification; this is the main point. Rather, he will take assistance from these books. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is not personally present, but he is present through his books.

It is important to understand that this greed will not come by personal effort alone. It comes only by the grace of Kṛṣṇa Himself and by the grace of a *rāgānugā-bhakta*. Without their mercy one cannot have it.

*Bhakta-kṛpā*, the mercy of Vaiṣṇavas, is of two kinds: *praktana* (from previous lives), and *adbunika* (from this life). *Praktana* refers to mercy that comes from past births as well as the present birth. If a man has *saṁskārās* from his previous birth's devotional activities and receives the mercy of a Vaiṣṇava in this birth, he will very easily and quickly advance in *bhakti*. Perhaps he will not even have to again accept *dīkṣā*, as in the case of some of our Gosvāmīs. Or, if he takes *dīkṣā*, he will be seen to advance very rapidly.

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, and Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda did not reveal their *guru-paramparā*; yet they received the association of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and achieved their desired goal.

This is an example of mercy due to *purva-saṁskāra*, impressions accrued in previous births.

\* \* \* \* \*

Saṁskāras, impressions on the heart<sup>9</sup>

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The purpose of reading and uttering the prayers of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is to develop *saṁskāras*, impressions on the heart.

Our Guru Mahārāja, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, used to tell us never to sing any songs other than those composed by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Premānanda dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrī Govinda dāsa and other *siddha-mahāpuruṣas*, (perfected, great personalities) in our *guru-paramparā*. Because such devotees are empowered and very advanced in *bhakti*, if we sing their *kīrtanas*, something of their *bhāva* will certainly enter our hearts.

Our Guru Mahārāja told a story about Narahari Prabhu, a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura. Narahari Prabhu was not very learned, but he was a very sincere devotee. He was such a good servant of Śrīla Prabhupāda that all the *sannyāsīs* and learned devotees would bow down at his feet. Even my Guru Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja paid respect to him. I have seen him. He was always chanting, never sleeping, and he would always do any *sevā* at any time. He was known as the ‘mother’ of Gauḍīya Māṭha. He would take the young boys on his lap, give them milk, put them to sleep, and to look after them in every way. In the night he would take a hurricane lamp to attend the younger boys, and if one of them had passed urine, he would clean their bedding, give them medicines, and do whatever was required. Everyone knew him as ‘Florence Nightingale’ and addressed him as Narahari Dā. ‘Dā’ means ‘*dada*’, elder brother.

Narahari Prabhu once became so ill and unable to digest anything that he was about to die. Our Guru Mahārāja, who was known as Vinoda *Bihari* rahmacari at that time, took Narahari Prabhu with him to East

9 The sections from this point are from transcribed recordings courtesy of Śrīla Gurudeva's editorial *sevā* team.

Bengal, near his ancestral hriome, to meet a very famous *ayurvedic* doctor. After examining him, the doctor told Guru Mahārāja, “If you had not reached here today, he may have died within two or three days. Somehow God has sent you to me. First I want to give him one spoonful of ghee daily.” Our Guru Mahārāja said, “He will die at once if he takes ghee. He cannot digest even water, what to speak of ghee.” The doctor then explained his theory. He said, “I know that he will not die. His stomach requires ghee. I will give him ghee, knowing that it will pass through him. But some coating will remain in his stomach. I will give him one spoonful in the morning and one in the evening for seven days. This will be his treatment.” After fifteen days they obtained a good result, and in one month Narahari Prabhu was cured.

I am giving this example because in our present condition we have nothing. We cannot understand the topics discussed by our *ācāryas*. Yet, when we sing their songs, some *sarṁskāra* will certainly come, and that will give a good result later on. We will gradually and increasingly try to develop greed to serve Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa. We should sing the songs and prayers of our predecessor *ācāryas*, but always with great *śraddhā*, faith, and care.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Remembering Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and serving in separation

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** What *śloka* do you want to hear?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Do you want to repeat yesterday’s *śloka*?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Do you mean the *śloka* beginning *aty-utkatena*?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja and Bhurijana Prabhu:** Yes. Yesterday you did that.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yesterday I explained that there are two kinds of *bhajana*. The first is in *vīpralambhā-līlā*, performed by chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes of separation. The second is in *sambhoga-līlā*, performed by remembering His pastimes of meeting. Although the *gopīs* and Vrajavāsīs always like

to meet Kṛṣṇa, He plays in such a manner that they enjoy *vīpralambha-rasa*. The *sādhaka* should cultivate *vīpralambha-bhāva* thinking, “I am not seeing Kṛṣṇa, I am not seeing Śrīmatī Rādhikā, I am not seeing Vraja, I am not seeing anything!” He should always feel separation as Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has shown here - separation from Kṛṣṇa and especially from Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

In many ślokas, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has also lamented in separation from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. At the time of Rūpa Gosvāmī’s entrance into *aprakāṣa-līlā*, he composed this śloka:

*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭham girīndro ‘jagarāyate  
vyāghra-tuṇḍāyate kuṇḍa jīvātu-rabhisya me*

Now that I no longer have the sustainer of my life, the land of Vraja has become empty and desolate, Govardhana Hill has become like a great python, and Rādhā-kuṇḍa has become like the gaping mouth of a ferocious tigress.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī also lamented in separation for his *śikṣā-gurus*. He prayed, “I’m so unlucky. First Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu departed from this world. Afterwards I lived constantly with Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, and he also left. Next I caught hold of the feet of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, but he also left. Then, experiencing that every place and every dust particle of Jagannātha Purī reminded me of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Gadādhara Paṇḍita, and all their associates, I fled to Vṛndāvana.”

Although Gurudeva has also entered his *aprakāṣa-līlā*, the neophyte disciple remains in this world in a very pleasant manner. On special days, such as his *āvīrbhāvā* (appearance day) and *tirobhava* (disappearance day), the occasion comes that the disciple may remember him. At that time, however, he is involved in arranging the *utsava* (festival), and there is very little chance to realize that separation. While speaking something about him, a drop of tear may come, and then again it may not come. If the festival is very elaborate, there will be no tears. That disciple must manage so many functions, such as the abhiṣeka, pūjā, and distribution of *mahā-prasādam* to the Vaiṣṇavas. He arranges these festivals mainly for the people in general, for those who have no intimate relation with his

Gurudeva, but he should do something so that a feeling of separation will come within his own heart. That is called *bhajana*.

Who will feel separation? Those special persons, who have realized their immense obligation and indebtedness to Gurudeva for all they have received, and who have rendered service to him with *visrambha-bhāva*, they will weep.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** *Visrambha-bhāva*. What does that mean?

[Bhurijana Prabhu:] Loyal?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Visrambha-bhāva* means *visrambhena-guror-sevā*

**Girirāja Svāmī:** Affectionate?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The service will surely be with affection, but the meaning is somewhat different here. *Visrambha-bhāva* means that there is no consideration, “I’m so low and my Gurudeva is in so high.”

**Dhanurdara Svāmī:** Reverence.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Awe and reverence will not be there; otherwise one will not be able to weep.

**Girirāja Svāmī:** Intimate.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, *visrambha-bhāva* means intimate *sevā*. The *sevaka* performs such intimate service to Gurudeva that Gurudeva remains always pleased with him. The *guru* will not consider for even a moment that, “He is my servant and disciple.” Instead he will feel, “He is so near and dear. He is my heart.” Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda, the disciple of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, and Govinda, the disciple of Īśvara Purī, were servants of this caliber.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** But that is a very rare relationship.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Although it is a rare relationship, it is absolutely necessary for *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Without a relationship like this, we cannot weep like Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** How do we come to that stage?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Separation from Gurudeva will be experienced on different levels. When we consider how merciful he was and how much greater he is than ourselves, we feel a certain type of sentiment. However, when we remember how near and dear he was and how much he loved us, then we will weep profusely for

him. The *gopīs* can weep so much more than Nanda Bābā. Yaśodā Mā can also weep more than Nanda Bābā, but the *gopīs* can weep even more than.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Yaśodā Maiyā.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yaśodā Maiyā. This is because the *gopīs* relationship with Kṛṣṇa is more ‘keen’ or intimate. We should have this kind of relationship with Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and also with our Gurudeva, Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and all others like them. Then we can weep for their mercy. If we have yet to develop an intimate service relationship with our Gurudeva, we cannot imagine our relationship with Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī or Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa. Our advancement depends upon on our ‘keen’ service - how intensely we serve our Gurudeva. All other relationships and experiences develop on that platform. If we can weep for Gurudeva, we can weep for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. If we cannot weep for our Gurudeva, we cannot weep for Her. I have experience of that. Whatever we know, we know from Gurudeva, and therefore we should weep in our hearts for him.

In the first *śloka* of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has prayed to Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī:

*tvaṁ rūpa-mañjari sakhi! prathitā pure ’smin  
purīṣab parasya vadanam na hi paśyasīti  
bimbādbhare kṣatam anāgata-bharṭṛkāyā  
yat te vyadbhāyi kim u tac cbuka-puṅgavena*

My dear friend Rūpa Māñjarī! In Vraja you are well known for your chastity. You don’t even look at the faces of other men! It is therefore surprising that your lips, that are as beautiful as red bimba-fruits, have been bitten, although your husband is not at home. Has this maybe been done by the best of parrots?

Was Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī weeping or laughing? It may seem that he wrote this verse in a laughing, pleasant mood. Actually, however, he was remembering a previous pastime and weeping at the feet of Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī, “You have been so merciful to me. I remember seeing your mood after Kṛṣṇa kissed you and left a mark on your lips. When will I see you in that condition again?” In the second *śloka*, *sthala-kamalini yukta*

*garvita*, he is again offering *praṇāma* and weeping, “Will I see this again?” These first two verses are very important.

Now, in this seventh *śloka*, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī cries, “*bā svāmini kṣaṇam iba praṇayena gāḍham*. Will it be possible for me to weep for You for even a moment? If I had full realization I could weep constantly, but I pray that I may weep for even a moment. Here Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī had prayed, “Ha *svāmini*.” He has a relation with Rādhikā as a *māñjarī*, and She is his *svāmini* (mistress).

How shall we weep? Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given instructions in the sixth verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam:

*nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā  
vadanam gadgada-ruddbayā girā  
pulakair nīcitam vaṇub kadā  
tava nāma-graḥaṇe bhaviṣyati*

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

Although Kim, ‘when,’ is not in the original verse, we should include it and pray, “When will I lament so deeply in separation that I will weep while chanting the names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-govinda, or Vṛndāvanesvarī?” Weeping is our *dharma*.

**Bhurijana dāsa:** Our business.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Our *svadharma*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** In this verse Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays, “*aty-utkaṭena nitarām virabānalena*. My heart is burning in the great fire of separation.” He sincerely feels this sentiment, and his grace, and the grace of our *gurudeva* and the *guru-paramparā*, we will also realize this some day. This is our real prayer. When we pray and sing this *śloka*, this should be our mood: *tava nāma-graḥaṇe bhaviṣyati*. When, by chanting *harināmā*, remembering and listening, will I weep?” Those who are very fortunate can lament, weep, and realize these things. “*ākrandanena vidburā vilapāmi padyaib*.” Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is praying, “O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, now I want to

offer some flowers to Your lotus feet.” These flowers are songs about the pastimes he has realized and heard about from Rūpa Gosvāmī and others. Dāsa Gosvāmī has composed *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* in the mood of a *sādhaka*, for the benefit of *sādhakas*.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura prays in a similar way in his *Prārthanā*:

*hari hari! āra ki emana daśā haba  
chāḍiyā puruṣa-deba kabe vā prakṛti haba  
duñbu aṅge candana parāba*

Song 13, text 1

When, relinquishing this male material body and obtaining the spiritual body of a *gopī*, will I anoint the limbs of the Divine Couple with sandalwood paste? O Lord Hari, Lord Hari, when will this day be mine?”

He writes, “O Hari, will the day come when, even for a moment, my *puruṣa-bhāva* (male ego) will go far away and I will obtain the form of a *gopī*? May I have the chance to have a mood like that? *Duñbu aṅge candana parāba*. Lalitā will give an order and Viśākhā will pass the order to Rūpa Māñjarī. She will say, ‘Kṛṣṇa always likes to see very new *sakbīs*, and you have collected one. So send that new *sakbī* to bring some *candana*, *kuñkuma*, and *aguru* to Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa.’ These unguents are so fragrant, beautiful, smooth and cooling. I will take them and anoint the limbs of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, always looking towards my *guru-sakbī* and Rūpa Māñjarī to see whether I am doing it correctly or not. Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa will enjoy seeing this. Because I am a new *sakbī*, I may do something wrong. Then, seeing my mistake, They will smile and become very pleased.”

*tāniyā bāndhiba cūḍā nava guñjā-hāre beḍā  
nānā phule gāñthi diba hāra*

Song 13, text 2

When will I arrange the hair of the Divine Couple? When will I give Them *guñjā*-necklaces and garlands strung with various flowers?

In the form of a *māñjarī*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sees that Rādhikā’s and Kṛṣṇa hair is. opened. *Kbulagaya*. [Hindi for untied]

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Untied

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Untied and going hither and thither.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja and Bhurijana dāsa:** Scattered.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura continues, “Then, from the corner of her eyes, Rūpa Māñjarī will indicate to me that I should comb Their hair. First I will comb Rādhikā’s hair, and then Kṛṣṇa’s also. Rādhikā will grimace as if my combing is causing Her some pain, and Rūpa Māñjarī will say, ‘What are you doing? You should comb very gently.’ Then, taking the comb from my hand, she will teach me how to do it properly.” This is the duty of *guru*. “Then I will ask her, ‘May I do it now?’ With her permission, I will try again. After Her hair has been combed, braided, and tied, Śrīmatī Rādhikā will be decorated with fragrant flowers like beli, cameli, and jūhī. *nava guñjā-bāre beḍ*. A beautiful garland of *guñjā* will be offered to both Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā. *nānā phule gāñtki dība hāra*. By gathering seven or eight differently colored flowers, I will string a *vana-mālā* (garland of forest flowers). I will also place some flowers in Rādhikā’s braid in a very fine, artistic fashion.”

When Kṛṣṇa is offered a garland, He always knows who has made it – especially if it was made by Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Similarly, if Kṛṣṇa makes a garland and someone else gives it to Rādhikā, She can immediately feel that it was made by Kṛṣṇa.

*pīta-basana aṅge parāiba sakhī-saṅge  
badane tāmbūla dība āra*

Song 13, text 2

When will I give Them yellow garments? When, accompanied by the other *gopīs*, will I place betel-nuts in Their lotus mouths?

Kṛṣṇa is *śyāma*, fresh cloud-colored, and His cloth is *pīta*, yellow. *Sakhī-saṅge* means that in his form as a *māñjarī*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura is taking the help and instructions of ‘her’ *guru-sakhī*, Rūpa Māñjarī and all others. She prays, “Because I am new, I am taking their help and they are teaching me. After giving garlands and clothes to Rādhikā, I will decorate Her ears, braid, and forehead with flower ornaments.”

*duñbu rūpa manobārī beriba nayana bhari  
nīlāmbare rāi sājāiyā  
nava-ratna-jari āni bāñdhiba vicitra beñī  
tāte phūla mālati gāñthiyā*

Song 13, text 3

When will I gaze at the beautiful forms of the Divine Couple?  
When will I dress Śrīmatī Rādhikā in blue garments, and decorate  
Her braided hair with garlands of jasmine flowers and strings of  
nine different kinds of jewels on a golden thread?

“I will then place *kastūri-bindu*, a musk dot, on Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s  
chin, and draw *makara* (dolphins) on Her cheeks. After this is completed,  
I will hand Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa a mirror, and I will observe Their forms  
from the side and think, ‘How beautiful They are!’ *Nilambare rāi sajiya*.  
I will dress Śrīmatī Rādhikā in *nilambara*.”

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What does *nilambara* mean?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Nilambara* means  
‘blue cloth.’ It is the color of Kṛṣṇa. She will wear a red *lahanga*, skirt, and  
Her very fine, almost transparent veil will be blue.”

Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura continues. “*nava-ratna-jari āni bāñdhiba  
vicitra beñī / tāte phūla mālati gāñthiyā*.” I will place many beautiful jewels  
in Her hair, and decorate Her braid with garlands of *mālati* flowers.”

*sei rūpa-mādhurī dekhiba nayana bhari’  
ei kari mane abhilāṣā  
jaya rūpa sanātana deha more ei dbana  
nivedaye narottama dāsa*

Song 13, text 4

My desire is that some day I shall be able to directly see the  
sweet beauty of the transcendental forms of the Divine Couple. O  
Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, all glories to you  
both. Please bestow this treasure upon me. Please grant my desire.  
Narottama dāsa appeals to you in this way.

Here, in his form as a *sādhaka*, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura prays to Rūpa  
Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī - not to the *sakbis*. In his *svarūpa* as Vilāsa

Māñjarī, she will pray to Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī, Lavaṅga Māñjarī, Rati Māñjarī, and other *sakhīs*. Now he prays, “When will I attain that state in which I may serve in this way?” When you read these prayers, something will come in your hearts.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Some ‘coating.’

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** It will only be a coating, but it will act and create your *samskāra*.

Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura has written in a somewhat different mood in his *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* (text 63):

*kadā nu kasyām nu vipad-daśāyām  
kaiśora-gandhiḥ karuṇāmbudhir naḥ  
vilocanābhyām vipulāyatābhyām  
ālokayiṣyan viṣayī-karoti*

When will Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of mercy in His fresh youth, under some unknown dangerous circumstances, again look at us with His wide eyes and accept us within His purview?

A similar desire has been expressed here. The author, Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, is a *bhāvuka bhakta* – not *siddha* (in *prema-bhakti*), but *bhāvuka* (in *bhāva-bhakti*), and also *rasika* (he understands the mellows of the five *rasas*). He has received something in his heart from *rāgātmika-jānā* (the associates of Kṛṣṇa in Vraja), and therefore he is *bhāvuka*. He is *Kṛṣṇa-pakṣa* and *Kṛṣṇa-virabita*, meaning that he is inclined towards Kṛṣṇa, and thus he expresses separation from Kṛṣṇa, not Rādhikā. He has written all the *ślokas* in *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* with some connection to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, however, because he also has some taste for Her service. Kṛṣṇa does not want to listen to any prayers that are devoid of a connection with Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs*. If Kṛṣṇa hears, “I am being served by Rādhikā” or “I am serving Rādhikā,” He becomes very pleased. Therefore, from the first to the last *śloka* in *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, there is some connection with Rādhikā. In the first verse he has used the word *jayaśrīḥ*:

*cintāmañir jayati somagirir gurur me  
śikṣā-guruś ca bhagavān śikhi-piṣcha-mauliḥ  
yat-pāda-kalpataru-pallava-śekharaṣu  
līlā-svayaṁvara-rasaṁ labhate jayaśrīḥ*

He writes that Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful. His mouth, eyes, nose, hands, and all the parts of His transcendental form are beautiful. Although Kṛṣṇa's feet are not as beautiful as His face, Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura has only described the beauty of His feet in the beginning. He writes: "His feet are like lotuses and His toes are like lotus petals, and Rādhikā offers āraṭi to the rays emanating from the tips of His toenails.

We Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas do not want to hear these things. For those with the same mood as Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, this *śloka* is very beautiful, but we would be more interested and pleased if he had written that Kṛṣṇa offers āraṭi to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Instead, he writes that She is offering āraṭi, and She is so pleased - as a girl is pleased when choosing Her husband and giving Him a garland when They first meet.

**Bhurijana dāsa:** Where did the first meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa take place?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Anywhere in Saṅketa, or Vṛndāvana, Nandagoan or Varsānā.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** If Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura was praying like this, and you said we would have been so much more pleased had it been the opposite way, why did Caitanya Mahāprabhu appreciate *Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta* so much?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore He relished *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta*.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Caitanya Mahāprabhu certainly appreciated it.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** But we should try to see what Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Rūpa Māñjarī, Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara, and Śrīla Rāya Rāmānanda have told - not what Rādhikā has told or what Kṛṣṇa has told. This is not our goal. Our goal is to perform service like the *māñjarīs*, or like the *sakḥīs* - like Rādhikā. Rādhikā always wants to hear Kṛṣṇa's name, and Kṛṣṇa wants to hear Rādhikā's name, but we must follow the proper channel. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* for Śrīmatī Rādhikā, not for Kṛṣṇa, and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also prays to Rādhikā in *Sankalpa-kalpadruma* (text 1):

*vr̥ndāvaneśvari vayo-guṇa-rūpa-lilā  
saubhāgya-keli-karuṇā-jaladhe 'radhehi  
dāsī-bhavānī sukhayani sadā sa-kāntam  
tvaṁ alibhibh parivṛtam idam eva yāce*

O Queen of Vṛndāvana, O great ocean of mercy, playfulness, good fortune, transcendental pastimes, beauty, virtue, and youthfulness; please hear my prayer. Let me be Your maidservant. I will always please You, who stay with Your lover and Your friends. I beg this of You.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also prayed to Śrīmatī Rādhikā in his own Sankalpa-kalpadruma, and all our Gosvāmīs have done the same. This is the speciality of our *sampradāya*, and we should follow this path. When we pray to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, somehow Kṛṣṇa Himself will come, and try to hear from.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** A distance?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** In a hidden way. In this seventh *śloka* Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī uses the word ‘ha,’ meaning ‘alas.’ He prays in lamentation, “He *karuṇā sagara*. O ocean of mercy, I am so distressed because You are not looking towards me.”

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī remembers the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is absorbed in all the *mādhurī* of Kṛṣṇa.

**Bhurijana Prabhu:** Sweet glories.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The sweet glories of Kṛṣṇa. Seeing His qualities, His movements, and the sweetness of His mercy, She becomes *unmāda*, mad. What is the meaning of *unmāda*? Transcendental madness. In *unmāda*, one does something that by ordinary standards is wrong. We can do what is right and that is our *svabhaviki-sthiti*, our natural position. However, when we lose that thinking and do something that is not to be done, that is called *unmāda*. One should not sit on Kṛṣṇa’s shoulders, but the *gopīs* can do so in *unmāda*. They can order Him about as they desire.

When Kṛṣṇa left the *gopīs* during *rāsa-līlā*, they were thinking about His movements and everything about Him. By such continuous thinking they became mad (*unmādāvasta*) and began to imitate Him. Each and

every *gopī* thought, “Only I am *priyatam*, Kṛṣṇa, and all the other *gopīs* are all my *priyātamas*, beloveds.” Do you understand?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Can you say again how they are seeing? That everyone else. Please repeat that.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** A *gopī* thinks, “I am Kṛṣṇa, the *priyatam* (lover) and these *gopīs* are my *priyātamas* (beloveds).” At the same time, others are also seeing that, “I am the lover, all are my *priyātamas*.” In his Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū, Śrī Kavi Karṇapūra explains how it happened that each *gopī* thought herself to be Kṛṣṇa, and how each one saw the others as Pūtanā, Aghāsura, or Bakāsura. Do you know the meaning of *āsakti*?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Attachment.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** One’s attachment is never directed to something in which one has no taste. Try to understand: One will only develop attachment and *tadatma-bhāva*, feelings of oneness, to that which is favorable and in which one has taste. Do you understand? Are you following?

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I understand.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Anything *pratikūla*, unfavorable, will never become the object of one’s attachment or remembrance, and therefore the *gopīs* cannot be attached to Pūtanā. Because Pūtanā is *pratikūla* to the *gopīs’ bhāva*, it is not possible for them to become unmāda and feel oneness with her. They will only be attached to Kṛṣṇa’s activities. In re-enacting *Pūtanā-līlā*, it appears that one *gopī* threw down another, climbed upon her breast, and took the breast of that other *gopī* in her mouth. However, Kavi Karṇapūra explains that where it seems that a *gopī* is lying down as Pūtanā, that *gopī* is not there. Because the *gopīs* will not accept *pūtanā-bhāva*, those *gopīs* acting as Pūtanā and other demons were created artificially by Yogamāyā.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Not gopis. Yogamaya. I see.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** They are not *gopīs*, because the *gopīs* will not be attached.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** To Putana’s *bhava*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This is a very important topic, and it is difficult to understand simply by reading the

descriptions of this pastime in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. When something *pratikūla* to the *gopīs* is required in a *līlā*, Yogamāyā makes the arrangements and does everything for them.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** She manifests everything.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** She helps them, and they each think, “I’m Kṛṣṇa,” as they perform all the *līlās*.

When the *gopīs* heard Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song and left their houses and their husbands in the dead of night, the real *gopīs* came to Kṛṣṇa and Yogamāyā expanded duplicate *gopīs* to stand by the side of their husbands. Similarly, this was the case here. All the ‘*gopīs*’ who played the parts of Pūtanā, Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Kāliya, and so on, were imitations created by Yogamāyā.

Śrī Kavi Karṇapūra has also revealed that when the *gopīs* were imitating Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Himself had entered the *gopīs*’ hearts and was the actual performer of His own pastimes. This fact was mentioned earlier with reference to the fire entering and acting through the iron in *tadatma-bhāva* (oneness). The *gopīs* were thinking, “We are doing this,” but actually Kṛṣṇa was acting. Yogamāyā was not acting in that case, but Kṛṣṇa Himself was doing everything.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has made a similar point in this connection. When Kṛṣṇa entered the *gopīs*’ hearts, His six opulences, namely *aiśvarya* (wealth), *virya* (strength), *yaśasa* (fame), *śrī* (beauty), *jñāna* (knowledge), and *vairāgya* (renunciation) fully manifested in them. Because Kṛṣṇa was there, everything was there, and therefore they lifted Govardhana.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** They didn’t lift Govardhana.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** They had the power to do it, but they simply lifted their veils. Although they were merely imitating Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, because Kṛṣṇa was present they had the power to lift Govardhana Hill and dance on the heads of Kāliya.

Also, the reverse is true. If the *gopīs* are in Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa can act, otherwise He cannot. His abilities are the effect of the *gopīs*’ *śakti*, power. The *gopīs* are *svarūpa-śakti*, and therefore whatever Kṛṣṇa does is actually done by the *gopīs*. Every quality and every power in Kṛṣṇa are those of the *gopīs*. They don’t reveal this, however, otherwise the pastimes would not

be able to continue. Yaśodā can do everything. The *sakhās* can kill *lakhs* and *lakhs* of Kamsas, Aghasuras, Bakasuras, and all others, but they do not exercise their power - and this is also true for the *gopīs*.

Returning to our original point, when praying, uttering or chanting *harināma*, or when remembering *harināma*, we should realize some *vipralambha-bhāva*. If we have no mood of separation, we will have to gradually - *vardhana parega*.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Have to Increase.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Develop?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We will have to develop this *bhāva* through the execution of *sādhana*. By reading about these pastimes, something will enter our hearts and someday we will experience all these things.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** And by remembering our Gurudeva.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Realization also comes by remembering Śrī Gurudeva. We should always remember Gurudeva and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If we do not understand the mercy of Gurudeva, we cannot understand anything. If you are getting something new from me, you can also remember me.

*Lobha-mūla* means greed for *rāga-bhakti*, and our *sādhana-bhajana* should be enriched with this. Here, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is crying and crying, but we are not shedding even one teardrop. We have nothing.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** We are dry.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has called out, “Ha *svāminī*, O my *Svāminī*.” The word *svāminī* indicates his sweet relationship with Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He has also written in *Manah Śikṣā*:

*mad-iśā-nāthatve vraja-vīpina-candraṁ vraja-vane  
śvarīm tan-nāthatve tad-atula-sakhītve tu lalitām  
viśākhām śikṣālī-vitarāṇa-gurutve priya-saro-  
girindrau tat-prekṣā-lalita-rati-datve smara manah  
“O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, You are my supreme...”*

**Bhurijana dāsa:** Goddess.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Ārādhyā-devi*.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Worshipable Deity.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** “You are my *nātha*.” *Nātha* means *svāmīnī* (mistress).

“If anyone asks me who is Kṛṣṇa? I will only say that He is the Prāṇanātha (life and soul or soul mate) of my Īśvarī (master), Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” Our Īśvarī is Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and Kṛṣṇa is Her Prāṇanātha. He is therefore worshipable for us, but our main worshipable Deity is Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Our relationship with Kṛṣṇa is through Her.

Lalitā devī is very near and dear to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore she is also worshipable by us. Viśākhā, born on the same day as Rādhikā, is named after Her, and is no less qualified. Lalitā is also known as Anurādhā, and Viśākhā is also known as Rādhā. Lalitā and Viśākhā only have honor and appreciation for something if it has relation to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. We should also be like this. We should see whether something is related to Her or not.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Can you say that again please? Can you repeat that? Everything that they want should have relationship with Śrīmatī Rādhikā?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** So we should also.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** See everything.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We should see if something is related with Śrīmatī Rādhikā or not. Suppose one girl is coming from Nandagaon and another is coming from either Yāvaṭa or Varsānā. We will prefer the one from Yāvaṭa, because she is coming from Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the other is coming from Kṛṣṇa. We will first inquire about Rādhikā, then Kṛṣṇa. A *rūpānuga-bhakta* will always give preference to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is praying in this seventh *śloka*, “I am lying on the bank of Your Rādhā-kuṇḍa, taking nothing to eat or drink, and always weeping and chanting, ‘Rādhe! Rādhe!’ I think that some day or other You will have to give me Your mercy. If You don’t, then I have no need of Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, Rādhā-kuṇḍa’s mercy, or any others’ mercy. I will also no longer want to live here.” In this way he is crying.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda has written that *sambhoga* and *viraha*, *vipralambha*, are standing side by side eternally, forever, for *ananta-kalā* or *akhaṇḍa-kalā*.

**Bhurijana dāsa:** Endless time.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Do you understand? Only a person who has some realization of *vīpralambha* can taste and enjoy *sambhoga-līlā* for *akaṇḍa-kalā*. One who has no taste of *vīpralambha* cannot enjoy *sambhoga-līlā*. The main object and ultimate goal of our *sādhana-bhājana* is to realize *vīpralambha-bhāva*. If *vīpralambha* is achieved, we can realize everything else.

We have discussed this one *śloka*. I am finishing here today. Before you arrived today, I was thinking that you will be coming with hunger (to hear), but I have not read or prepared anything. I am always moving here and there and meeting with all persons. I thought, “What will I tell them?”

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** You cooked very quickly. In a moment you had everything ready. Now we can understand how Śrīmatī Rādhikā could cook so quickly for Kṛṣṇa, simply by Her desire.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We will discuss the next *śloka* on the next day.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Today is Monday. Tomorrow you will be resting perhaps. Tomorrow is your resting day from us. You will not rest, but we will burden you.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Then, on Śārada Pūrṇimā (the first day of Kartikka and the disappearance day of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja).

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** We are coming.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We will meet there.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** At five o'clock.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Five o'clock or five thirty. Your *kīrtana* will be done there.

**Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Ok.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We will speak something about the specialty of our Gurudeva and our *guru-paramparā*, and then we will do āraṭi and honor *mahā-prasādam*.

Bhāvas and Rasas

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** What is a *māñjarī*? We have heard about mango *māñjarīs*. Any creeper or good flower has

*māñjarī*s. Although the *māñjarī* appears first and then the flower, the *māñjarī* is always located above the flower. When a bee comes to sit on the flower and drink its honey, the *māñjarī*s tremble, being overjoyed.

Similarly, the Kṛṣṇa-bee comes to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, She glances at Him, and They engage in loving pastimes (*prema-vilāsa*). Although the ‘bee’ does not sit on the *māñjarī*, the *māñjarī* trembles, feeling as if the bee is sitting on her. Whatever the ‘flower’ experiences in those pastimes manifests in the *māñjarī*, so there is no need for the bee to go to her. She automatically feels everything felt by the flower. If the bee kisses the flower, then, seeing this, the *māñjarī* feels that “the bee has kissed me.”

In fact, the *māñjarī* tastes something special, which even the flower does not taste, in the sense that the flower does not tremble as the *māñjarī* does. Similarly the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā experience a pleasure in being Her maidservant, which She Herself does not experience, and that pleasure is called *bbāva-ullasa rati*.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī wanted to be a *māñjarī*, not a flower. In other words he did not want *sakhī-bhāva* (the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s friends like Lalitā and Viśākhā, who have direct relationships with Śrī Kṛṣṇa). Do you understand? Herein lies the importance of the *māñjarī*s. In our *sampradāya* no one wants to be Śrī Rādhā’s *sakhī*; they only want to be Her *kiñkarī*. Are you totally following my words? Do you know the meaning of the word *kiñkarī*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Servant.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Maidservant

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** There is no equivalent word in English for *kiñkarī*. It is such a beautiful Sanskrit word, which refers to something very soft, very fragrant, and so sweet.

We cannot learn these topics simply by reading books. No book will clarify the truths for you as we are discussing in this conversation. By discussing with me in this way, you can obtain more than what you can obtain by simply reading books.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** These truths come only through realization.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I do not say that I have any realization, but I have God’s mercy and Gurudeva’s mercy.

In the first *śloka* of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī states that although Rūpa Māñjarī's husband is absent, he sees a mark on her lips. How has this come about? It is not that Kṛṣṇa has kissed Rūpa Māñjarī. He has kissed Śrīmatī Rādhikā and therefore Rādhikā has that mark on Her lips, but the mark at once manifested on the lips of Rūpa Māñjarī.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I was asking you about that in Bombay.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The marks on the face or body of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī do not come to Lalitā and Viśākhā, but they all come to the *māñjarīs*. We are followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is Rūpa Māñjarī. I think that in your entire life you will not forget this teaching.

A person may have taken only *anusthaniki* (formal) *dikṣā*, thinking, "So many others have taken *dikṣā*, so I should also take it." By a fire *yajña* he has received a sacred thread, *kanti-mala* (neck beads), and so on, but he has not been given instructions on the internal mood of *dikṣā*, which constitutes real *dikṣā*.

*Dikṣā* comes gradually, not in a moment; the process of receiving *dikṣā* takes place over a long period of time. When one has the advantage of past births' *samskāra*, one will easily accept *dikṣā* and the process will be accomplished quickly, but without previous *samskāras* the process will be slow.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Unless one gets the association of *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇavas.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** And that disciple must also be qualified. If the disciple does not have sufficient *samskāras* and does not yet possess any greed, he will not be able to properly receive these truths from his *dikṣā-guru*, who may be very qualified but may not have sufficient time to train him on this topic. Later on, when greed is meant to come, that disciple does not change his *gurudeva*; he need only accept a *śikṣā-guru*. Sometimes the disciple will give more preference to his *śikṣā-guru*, or equally to both *gurus*, according to their qualification. He will gradually hear all these topics.

If one's *dikṣā-guru* is present, the disciple will receive all these things from him. Or, his *gurudeva* will gladly order him to hear from another person, as in the case of Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śrī Śrīnivasa Acarya.

As I mentioned earlier, if a person has greed by dint of his previous births' *saṁskāras* or by his present birth's *saṁskāras*, he will begin to search through *śāstra* – by reading and hearing – especially those *śāstras* or commentaries written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and his followers, the *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas.

What is the actual meaning of *rūpānuga*? In his books, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has described, in *taṭasthā-bhāva*, the various *rasas*. Do you know the meaning of *taṭasthā*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Marginal.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Neutral.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** He has written from a neutral position about all the *rasas* – *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya*. If one has greed for any of these moods, that person will be a *rāgānugā-bhakta* but not *rūpānuga*.

What is *rūpānuga*? Even if one follows *Ujvala-nīlamanī*, he may be *rāgānuga* but not *rūpānuga*. One will be *rūpānuga* when one especially follows the way in which Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (in the form of Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī) serves Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, deeply meditating on the qualities and *bhāva* which Rūpa Māñjarī possesses in serving Them.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** All *rūpānuga-bhaktas* are *rāgānuga*, but not all *rāgānugas* are *rūpānugas*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The *sādhaka* will have to search through *śāstra* how to receive these moods. He will hear from a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava, who will tell him to read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Ujvala-nīlamanī*, *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, *Rādhā-Rāsa-Sudha-Nidhi*, Jayadeva Gosvāmī's *Gīta-govinda*, and the books of Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati and others.

The *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava will also instruct him to search only that *bhāva* for which he has greed. He will know about everything (*sakhya*, *vātsalya*, *mādhurya*), but he will have to serve only by one mood, the mood of his *sthāyi-bhāva* (permanent constitutional mood). One's *sthāyi-bhāva* will manifest only when *prema* is reached, but greed for that *sthāyi-bhāva* is achieved before that. Genuine greed will not change in this or any future life – this is called *garba-saṁskāra*. If one has real greed, as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has, his greed for a particular *sthāyi-bhāva* will never change in any birth. It will always remain the same.

Bhārata Mahārāja achieved the stage of *bhāva*, but it is not known in which *rasa*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** In *Bhagavatamrtam* it is given that his is one of Vaikuṅṭha *bhāva*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Only *dāsya-bhāva*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Yes, *dāsya-bhāva*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana, and Sanat Kumāra have their *sthāyi-bhāva* in *śānta-rasa*. Yet, they can narrate the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** How is that? I remember asking you that question before.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** They can do so from a neutral position. They know all about the various *rasas*, but they don't have direct experience of those *rasas*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What about Śukadeva Gosvāmī?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has some direct experience, because he is the *śuka*...

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Parrot...

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** He is the parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, so he possess the *sthāyi-bhāva* for Vraja.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** This is a very important thing that you said about Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** As Śrīmatī Rādhikā's parrot, he sits on the branches of *tamāla* or *kadamba* trees. He watches the confidential pastimes of Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, and becomes very, very pleased. Yet, he cannot serve like Rūpa Māñjarī.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** So what kind of *bhāva* does he have? He is watching everything.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** It has been said in *śāstra* that he has *śānta-bhāva*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Because he is neutral.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** But he is in Vraja, and there is no *śānta-bhāva* in Vraja. We will have to judge what *rasa* he actually possesses. When Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are sleeping in the morning, that Śuka parrot says so many things to awaken Them.

Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: That is not *śānta-bhāva*...

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Yes, it is not *śānta-bhāva*.

Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: He must have everything.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: We will have to consider all these truths.

Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Why is it said that he has *śānta-bhāva*?

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: For the *śānta-rasa bhaktas*.

Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: Externally it appears like that.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: But...

Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja: But it is not actually.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: The cows of Vraja have *vātsalya-bhāva*, so surely Śuka cannot be of *śānta-rasa*.

To illustrate how to search out the process in order to attain the fruit of one's genuine greed, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives the example of a man who is greedy to drink milk. Seeing some milk he wants to taste it, so he must go through a process to get it. He may ask someone who drinks milk how that person acquired it. After questioning him he will purchase a cow, making sure that the cow has a calf, because unless the cow has a calf it cannot give milk. He will then take the cow and calf to his home, where he will apply water or ghee to the udder of the cow and bring the calf to drink. When the calf has taken milk, the man will wash the udder of the cow, after which he milks her. Next, he puts the milk on the fire to boil. Then, if he wants that boiled milk sweetened, he adds sugar, and for extra flavor he adds rose water, *kewra* (an extract distilled from the Pandanus flower which is used to flavor drinks and desserts in Indian cuisine), camphor, and so on.

Similarly, although a *sādhaka* with genuine greed does not require the reasoning of *śāstra* to convince him to do *bhakti*, he goes through those *śāstras* that will give him entrance into the process in order to achieve his goal.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura tells us that when a person has actual greed in *rāgānuga-bhakti*, he will also follow the procedures of *vaidhī-bhakti* – although his *bhakti* will not be *vaidhī-bhakti*. He will engage in the nine processes of *bhakti*, namely *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *viṣṇu*

*smaraṇam*, *pāda-sevanam* and so on. From the very beginning he will carefully perform *guru-caraṇāśraya* (taking shelter of the lotus feet of śrī *guru*), and faithfully serve him in *visrambha-bhāva*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What is the meaning of *visrambha-bhāva*?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** It implies ‘giving up all fear.’ Fear caused by the sense of awe and reverence is not present. The disciple will serve his *guru* as a bosom friend. He will not think, “I am very low and he is very high.” Rather, he will determine, “He is mine and I am his.”

The analogy is given of a young son who, seeing his father sitting above him does not care to sit on the ground. He will at once jump up and sit on his father’s lap. Then he will pat his father’s shoulder, stroke his father’s face, and touch him on his arm or hold his hand, serving him with great love.

Moreover, a person qualified with genuine greed, with even greater love than that young son, will serve his *gurudeva* from whom he has collected the truths he has grasped and the moods he now possesses. This type of intimate service is essential.

*Guru-caraṇāśraya* means ‘taking shelter of the self-realized *guru*.’ This is the first of the sixty-four items of devotional service. Then, following the instruction of the second item, one takes *dīkṣā* initiation from him. *Śrī Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu* lists these sixty-four practices of devotional service, the first five of which are in relationship to *guru*.

“On the path of regulative devotional service, one must observe the following items: (1) One must accept a bona fide spiritual master. (2) One must accept initiation from him. (3) One must serve him. (4) One must receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. (5) One must follow in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas* and follow the directions given by the spiritual master.”

The *rāgānugā-bhakta* follows these same procedures, but his *bhāva* (mood) has changed from that which is found in *vaidhī-bhakti*. The *vaidhī-bhakti* disciple will sit lower and pray to his *gurudeva* with folded palms, “Gurudeva, please give me an order. What service shall I do?” Then, when he receives an order, as a servant, that disciple will perform

the service. On the other hand, a 'greedy person' will serve in the mood I have previously described; with no fear and no sense of difference. He will see resolve that "I am his..."

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** "And he is mine."

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** All the limbs of *vaidhī-bhakti* are followed by the *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava, but...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What is the difference?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The mood is different.

### Assisting and Meditating on our Gurudeva

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This is the third of the three important *śloka*s discussed by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his *Rāga-vartma-candrika*:

*śravaṇotkīrtanādīni vaidhī-bhakti uditāni tu  
yānyāṅgāni ca tānyatra vijñeyāni maṇiṣibhiḥ*

*Śrī Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu*, 1.296

In *vaidhī-bhakti* one should practice the limbs of *bhakti* like *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, and so on according to one's qualification. Similarly, it has been advised by scholars who are well versed in the principles of *bhakti* to follow the same practices on the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

*Śravaṇotkīrtanādīni*: This refers to all the nine limbs (*aṅga*s) of *bhakti*; or to the five main limbs, namely *sādhū-saṅga* (association of pure devotees), *nāma-kīrtana* (chanting the Lord's holy names), *bhāgavata-śravaṇa* (hearing narrations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from the pure devotee), *mathurā-vāsa* (living in Vraja, Navadvīpa, and Purī); and *śrī-murti-rāddhayā-sevana* (serving the Deity with faith). Whatever limbs of *bhakti* are executed in *vaidhī-bhakti* should be adopted in *mādhurya (rāgānuga)-bhakti* also, but the *bhāva* will be changed.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Can I ask some questions? When we are meditating on the activities of Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī and Śrī Rati Māñjarī,

we know that our *guru* is also assisting them. So I want to know: when you are meditating on your Gurudeva, do you also meditate on assisting him in his service to Rūpa Māñjarī?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We do it as assistants of Vinoda Māñjarī.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** How does a disciple – just as you are his disciple – how do you meditate on assisting Vinoda Māñjarī?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I will tell you afterward. You will also know your Gurudeva by his grace, and you will meditate accordingly.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I am asking this because you are always saying that we should meditate on Rūpa Māñjarī or Rati Māñjarī. So I am only asking if we should meditate on our Gurudeva as you are meditating on serving Vinoda Māñjarī.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** As our *ācāryas* have done, we meditate on our Gurudeva as a very near and dear *sakhī* of Rūpa Māñjarī; and who has qualities like those of Rūpa Māñjarī, but not exactly the same.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** As we are assisting our Gurudeva in our *sādhaka* form here, will we also be assisting him there?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The form of your Gurudeva which you have seen and served will surely come to you, so you can pray to him that his form as a *sakhī* will manifest in your heart. Then, when he gives you his *darśana*, at that time your meditation will be very easy for you. It is certain that he will somehow give an idea, and after that you will be able to realize and serve him there. Now you should only pray to him, “Please manifest yourself as you serve in *Kṛṣṇa-līlā*.”

**Burijana dāsa:** “*Tan no guroh pracodayat.*”

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, that is the *guru*-mantra. We should know that he is certainly a *sakhī* of Rūpa Māñjarī, performing all varieties of services to Śrīmatī Rādhikā under Rūpa Māñjarī’s guidance.

Regarding your Gurudeva’s *sādhaka-śarīra* (the form as a devotee engaged in *sādhana-bhajana* in this world), that is already known to you. You can realize what you have seen and who you served as you watched him engage in *sādhana-bhajana*.

## Receiving all Moods from Śrī Guru

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I will be discussing the topic of *saṁskāras*, so try to understand the meaning.

If one has no previous births' *saṁskāras* but has somehow obtained greed by the causeless mercy of a qualified *guru* or Vaiṣṇava, this is called *adbhunika-kṛpā* (*kṛpā* means 'mercy'). Such a person receives *dikṣā* from a *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava *guru*. Or, if he has received *dikṣā* before developing greed, then he accepts a *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava as his *śikṣā-guru*. He may serve both his *śikṣā-* and *dikṣā-gurus* with equal devotion. Or, in some cases he may serve the *śikṣā-guru* more closely than his *anusthana-dikṣā-guru* (the *guru* who gives the initiation *mantras* according to *pāñcarātrika-vidhī*), as did Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *dikṣā-guru* was Yadunandana Ācārya, and afterwards Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu placed him in the hands of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara. Later, when Raghunātha dāsa went to Vṛndāvana, he had the association of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and especially Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Ultimately, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prayed to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī for all the activities of service described in his *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī did not disclose the name of his *dikṣā-guru*; perhaps because he did not receive his devotional thoughts from him. Rather he acknowledged Rūpa and Raghunātha, because he received all his moods from them. At the end of each chapter of his *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, he prayed:

*śrī-rupa-raghunātha-pade yāra āśa  
caitanya caritāmṛta kabe kṛṣṇa dāsa*

Praying at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha, always desiring their mercy, I, Kṛṣṇadāsa, narrate *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, following in their footsteps."

Why does Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī pray to Rūpa Gosvāmī? Svarūpa Dāmodara is Lalitā-devī, and is therefore more qualified than Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is Rūpa Māñjarī. Yet, Raghunātha dāsa prays only to Rūpa

Gosvāmī. Why? It is because he does not want to be a *nāyikā* (beloved heroine) of Kṛṣṇa like Lalitā and Viśākhā.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** He wants to be in *māñjarī-bhāva*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Only *māñjarī-bhāva*.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** He wants to follow Rūpa Māñjarī, because they are in the same category; the category of *māñjarī*.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Tadatmya (Oneness of Heart)

**Bhurijana dāsa:** Dhanurdhara Mahārāja and I were not here the last time you spoke, but we listened to the tape.

**Śrīpāda Dhanurdhara Mahārāja:** But we couldn't understand from the tape what you were doing. We couldn't understand your hand-motions.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** The *māñjarīs*.

**Śrīpāda Dhanurdhara Mahārāja:** It was about the *māñjarīs*. You said, "It is like this."

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja can describe more than I.

**Śrīpāda Dhanurdhara Mahārāja:** He already told us, but we want to hear it from your realizations.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** You told us that what you were saying was not in any book.

**Burijana dāsa:** My understanding from that example was that the heart of Rūpa Māñjarī is so dedicated to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that she feels everything Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī feels. I also understood by your statement at the end that one must be dedicated to his *guru* in the same way. Without surrender and without giving one's heart to the *guru*, it doesn't work, especially in *rāgānuga*.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This surrender and complete dedication of the heart to *guru* is called *tadatmya* (oneness of heart) in Sanskrit. When an iron rod is placed in fire, the qualities of the fire enter the iron. When fire permeates an iron rod it is the fire that burns other objects; it is not that the iron rod burns other objects; the iron rod

may 'consider,' "I am fire," in the sense that the qualities of the iron have become one with the qualities of the fire; it now does the work of fire.

Similarly Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī and all the other *māñjarīs* are tadatmika (one in heart) with Rādhā, so the action of Rādhā becomes the action of all the *māñjarīs*. In other words, whatever She realizes is also realized by every *māñjarī*; nothing is hidden from them. Some things may be hidden from Her *sakbīs*, but not from Her *māñjarīs*.

Gurudeva gives everything that Nityānanda and Baladeva have come to give

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** All the limbs of *vaidhī-bhakti* are followed by the *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava, but...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What is the difference?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The mood is different.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** A different mood.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** If one rejects the practices of *vaidhī*, he will not be able to enter *rāgānuga*; his greed will be checked. So he must follow.

For a person who has actual greed and wants to follow the process of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says that Bhagavān comes to him in the forms of both *caitya-guru* and *dīkṣā-guru*. In this connection we should know that *guru* is *akhaṇḍa-tattva* (the complete, undivided principle of *guru*), a manifestation of Nityānanda Prabhu, Baladeva Prabhu. Because *gurudeva* gives everything that Nityānanda Prabhu and Baladeva Prabhu have come to give, and because all his instructions are Theirs, he is regarded as Their manifestation.

In *Bhagavad-Gīta* (10.10) it is stated:

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam  
dadāmi buddhī-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*

Upon those who perform *bhajana* to Me with love, yearning for My eternal association, I give them the intelligence by which they can come to Me.

If a soul surrenders to Kṛṣṇa and possesses pure greed, if he has a pure heart and sufficient *saṁskāras*, the Lord reveals everything in his heart (*dadāmi buddhi-yogam*) as *caitya-guru*. Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā*, “I give him the wisdom to achieve my *bhakti*.” He does not give this openly; He gives it in the heart. He benedicts His devotee with a *spḥurti* (internal vision), inspiring him from within, and personally manifests in his heart all *siddhāntas*. He also gives instructions externally, in the form of the *dikṣā-guru* or *śikṣā-guru*.

### Kṛṣṇa Smaraṇa, Remembering Kṛṣṇa with His Dearest Associates

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Kṛṣṇa dictates everything, He manifests Himself, from within, whether or not anyone else sees.

I have sometimes experienced this myself. I feel something within myself – I have not read, nor have I seen or heard a certain fact; yet, sometimes very beautiful things come in my heart. Perhaps you have also had this experience? Certainly you will have had this experience, because one who serves his *gurudeva* will surely receive these realizations. Even if *gurudeva* is not present in our sight, still, he will manifest all these truths.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura begins by telling us the three key ślokaś from *Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu* (1.294-296) by which one can enter the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*. The first is:

*kṛṣṇaṁ smaraṇaṁ janaṁ cāśya preṣṭhaṁ nija samībitam  
tat tat kathā-rataś cāśau kuryād vāśaṁ vraje sadā*

While remembering Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved associates whom we desire to follow, being fully absorbed in discussions of their pastimes, one should always reside in Vraja. If this is not possible, then one should reside there by mind.

The second is:

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

On this path of *rāgānuga*, being charmed by the intense love of Kṛṣṇa's beloved Vrajavāsī, the *sādhaka* should live in Vraja under the guidance of those devotees who have taken shelter of the Vrajavāsīs (like Śrī Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmīs), always eager to serve them in his present physical body. And, in the perfected stage of his *siddha-rūpa*, the internally conceived spiritual body suitable for performing *prema-sevā*, he should engage in the cherished service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa according to his chosen mood. In this regard he should follow in the footsteps of the eternal residents of Vraja, such as Śrī Rādhikā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, and Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī.

And the third *sloka* is:

*śravaṇotkīrtanādīni vaidhī-bhakti uditāni tu  
yānyaṅgāni ca tānyatra vijñeyāni manīṣibhiḥ*

In *vaidhī-bhakti* one should practice the limbs of *bhakti* like *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana*, and so on according to one's qualification. Similarly, for *rāgānuga-bhakti* also it has been advised by scholars who are well versed in the principles of *bhakti* to follow these practices.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura then comments on each *sloka*, one by one – this subject is very deep. Let us discuss the first *sloka*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Where is this *sloka*? Which part of *Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu* is it in? Where can I find it?

**Śrīpāda Girirāja Svāmī:** I can find it. It is at the end of the Eastern Division.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** You can see it at the end of *purva vibhaga* (Eastern division). Kṛṣṇam *smaraṇa* means 'remembering Kṛṣṇa.' *janam casya prestham nija samihitam* refers to additionally remembering His *preṣṭha*. Do you know what *preṣṭha* means?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Dear ones.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** These dear associates may be of *dāsya-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, or *vātsalya-rasa*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is especially discussing those in *mādhurya-rasa*.

One who has developed greed to attain the mood of the *gopīs* will remember Kṛṣṇa when He is in Sevā Kuñja or Vamsivata. He has a lovely smile on His face, and He has placed a very beautiful vamsi flute on His lips. His restless eyes, like those of a deer, are searching here and there. Seeing the *gopīs* coming, He becomes overjoyed, and at that moment He has no control over His body or mind. He is God Himself, yet He forgets everything at that time. He knows not what He is doing, nor even what He looks like. Standing in His *tribhanga-lalitā* (threefold-bending) pose, He is exquisitely beautiful.

Thousands upon thousands of *gopīs* are present there, but from the corner of His eyes He is searching for one particular *gopī* – and that *gopī* is delaying. Then, from far away He sees Her coming. Who is that *gopī*? Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The *rāgānuga sādḥaka* meditates how Kṛṣṇa appears at that time.

This is *smaraṇam* – remembering Kṛṣṇa with all these details and appreciating His many virtues. In *Jaiḥva Dharma* we read about the qualities of Kīśora-Kṛṣṇa, that is, Kṛṣṇa in His teenage form, in *śṛṅgāra-rasa* (*mādhurya-rasa*). The qualities of Kṛṣṇa in *sakḥya-rasa* are not the same as His qualities when He is with the *gopīs*, and the qualities of Kṛṣṇa with Nanda and Yaśodā are also different. His qualities are different in every *rasa*.

We should remember Kṛṣṇa with all the qualities with which He is adorned in *madhura-bhāva*. We should remember Him with the *gopīs* as He tries to cheat them in gambling; and as He cheats them and is cheated by them as they try to steal His flute. Remember Kṛṣṇa and His *priya-jānā*, His dearest associates.

What are the ways of the *gopīs*, and especially of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī? What are the activities of that very *gopī* for whom we have greed to follow? That *gopī* is not Rādhikā, Lalitā or Viśākhā; it is Rūpa Māñjarī. We have a very keen interest to see what she is doing. It is her mood that we want to adopt. When Śrīmatī Rādhikā is pleased, then Rūpa Māñjarī becomes so pleased. Rūpa Māñjarī performs so many services, like bringing water in a golden pot, sometimes very slowly and gently fanning with a *cāmara*...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Massaging?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, when she sees that Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are very tired, she serves Them accordingly.

We will carefully watch that *māñjarī*, seeing what she is doing and how she is performing her numerous services.

The way in which one enters these pastimes and services is based on unbroken remembrance. *Janam casya* – remembering all the *gopīs*, and especially that *gopī* in whom I am...

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Interested.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Interested.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Meditating upon that.

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** This is the method of *rāgānuga-sādhana-bhajana*. *Tat tat kathā ratas casau* – This phrase in the same *śloka* is in relation to the *śikṣā guru*, that *premi guru* or *rāgānuga guru* from whom we are hearing. He will discourse with us about the ways in which all the *sakhibīs* are serving Kṛṣṇa, and especially the ways in which Rūpa Māñjarī and our *guru* in *sakhibī-veśa* (in the form of a *sakhibī*) are serving. One should talk about their pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, as I sometimes discuss them with you.

Such a devotee always resides in Vṛndāvana. If he has no chance to be in Vṛndāvana by body, he surely lives there by mind; for without living in Vṛndāvana, one cannot attain that kind of love.

These three practices are essential: *Kṛṣṇa smarāṇa*, remembering Kṛṣṇa with His dearest associates; *tat tat kathā ratas casau*, continuously conversing about their pastimes; and *kuryad vasam vraje sadā*, always residing in Vṛndāvana (if not by body, then at least by mind), in such pastime places as Sevā Kuñja, Saṅketa, and Jāvaṭa, and if you have the qualification you may go to Rādhā Kuṇḍa at midday. Spend all day with Rādhikā and that *gopī* for whom you have the conviction to follow.

This is all for today. I will, perhaps, be able to complete the next two *ślokas* in the next three days.

\* \* \* \* \*

Tulasī

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I have one last question, regarding Śrīmatī Tulasī-devī. Is there a separate *jīva* in each Tulasī plant? If so, how do we...?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Each plant is a manifestation of Tulasī devī. Tulasī devī can manifest anywhere, just as Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā manifest everywhere. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā manifest in unlimited universes as well as in *mūrti* forms. Similarly, Śrīmatī Tulasī devī manifests in unlimited universes and in unlimited places in the form of a plant.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I mean to say that in a normal tree there is a *jīva* soul. So, since there are so many tulasī plants, are there...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We can understand from the example of the *śālagrāma-śila*. There are so many *śālagrāma-silas*, but this does not mean that Nārāyaṇa is different in each *śila*. He is not like the *jīvas*. In the same way, Tulasī is one. All the Tulasī plants are the same Tulasī; they are not separate.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** These are not *jīvas*?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** No, certainly not.

There are so many pieces of Govardhana *silas* – hundreds of millions of *silas* – and in each *śila* Govardhana is fully present. As the *silas* are not different Govardhanas, Tulasī is one.

In Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana pastimes we see that Vṛndā devī is a separate personality and Tulasī Māñjarī is a separate personality; and there is another Tulasī, who is a *duti* (messenger) of Vṛndā devī. Also, here in this world, Tulasī (the plant) is a manifestation of Vṛndā devī.

Sometimes the name Tulasī Māñjarī is used for Rati Māñjarī, that is, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has two names in his *siddha* form: Tulasī Māñjarī and Rati Māñjarī.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Is this the same person?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The same.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is Tulasī Māñjarī? She is under Vṛndā devī? She is a *duti* of Vṛndā?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** No, Tulasī is a separate personality. Tulasī Māñjarī is one personality, and Tulasī is another. Tulasī is a *duti* (messenger), not a *māñjarī*. Later on, you will know. By and by, you will learn everything. How are you?

**Śrīpāda Satsvarūpa dāsa Gosvāmī:** Glad to be here.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Bhurijana said we should select the days on which we will do some *parikramā*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We can select on another day. I have a very little something...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** A feeling in your heart?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, yesterday night, for half a minute. The doctor said, “You may have these symptoms for the next three months, so don’t fear.”

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** So tomorrow you will take rest. We will not come tomorrow.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, at least one day there should be rest. The subject we discussed today is enough for you.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** More than enough; and there will be many tomorrows.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** You can think about what we discussed.

**Śrīpāda Girirāja Mahārāja:** The day after tomorrow is Sunday.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** No problem.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** This is no problem for you? Many people do not come on Sunday morning?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** They come, but you will come at this time in the morning.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** We will try to come by 9:30 sharp. Sunday will not be a problem for you?

**Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** You can come like they come.

## Essential Practices and Chanting of Mantras

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** The material cause...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** And the efficient cause. The material and efficient causes.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** What is the meaning of efficient?

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** The doer and the...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Let us take the example of an earthen pot. The earth, both raw and baked, is *upādāna*; and the man himself is *nimitta*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** The potter.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We can also take the example of the thread, or other materials. They are *upādāna-kāraṇa*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** The immediate cause?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** In the matter of cosmic creation, Karanadakasayi-Viṣṇu is *nimitta-kāraṇa*, and Advaita Ācārya is *upādāna-kāraṇa*. Do you understand?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** We were recently teaching this in *Brabma-saṁbitā* class.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The creation of the material world has two causes – *nimitta* and *upādāna* – of which *upādāna* is more important. The ingredient, or eminent, cause (*upādāna*) is *prakṛti*, and the instrumental cause (*nimitta*) is Karanadakasayi-Viṣṇu. Here in *Rāga-vartma-candrikā*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura tells us about the *upādāna-kāraṇa* (eminent, or prominent, cause) of greed. One eminent cause is *śravaṇam*, hearing from our *dīkṣā* or *śikṣā gurudeva* about Kṛṣṇa: that Kṛṣṇa who is a beautiful teenage youth, who looks extremely sweet as He holds His flute to His lips, and who inspires *gopī-prema*. *Guru* will also tell us about those particular *gopīs*, namely Rūpa Māñjarī and all of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's other *māñjarīs*, who are the *āśraya* (abode) of that *gopī-prema* for which we aspire. We should remember them and talk about all of their activities, and we should also go to all the places of their pastimes.

**Burijana dāsa:** *Lilā-sthāna*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We should go to the *lilā-sthāna*, the places of their pastimes, such as Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Girirāja Govardhana, Vṛndāvana, and Vaṁśivaṭa. Such devotional services are *upādāna-kāraṇa*, essential practices, which will hastily bring us to our goal.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** And *nimitta*?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I was just about to say; some practices are *nimitta-kāraṇa*, such as putting on *tilaka*, wearing...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** *Kanti-mala*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Wearing *kanti-mala*, and taking *sannyāsa* and wearing saffron cloth. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is gradually clarifying the subject matter. Some practices are *upakarak*. Do you know the meaning of *upakarak*?

**Burijana dāsa:** Primary. Is ‘primary’ the proper translation for this word? Primary means ‘completely necessary.’

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Upakāraka* means that if you engage in those practices your *bhakti* will progress, you will gain; and if you don’t, you will be the loser. Such practices include reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and similar Vaiṣṇava literature. [*Upakarak* means ‘beneficial,’ and therefore it refers to both *upādāna-kāraṇa*, and *nimitta-kāraṇa* practices.] *Gurūpadasraya* (taking shelter of the bona fide *guru*), *mantra-japa* (chanting *mantras*), *dhyānā* (meditation), hearing and remembering – these practices are *bhāva-sambandhi upādāna-kāraṇa*. These practices are necessary, and in all such practices it is essential to always keep in the center the root *bhāva* for which we have greed – *dāśya*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalya* or *mādhurya*. In *sādhana* (the stage of practice), that *bhāva* (*abhista-bhāva*) is unripe, and in the *siddha* stage (the stage of perfection), it is ripe.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Still, the idea of *upādāna* and *nimitta* is not clear yet.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** First is *bhāva-mayī*, actual greed for that particular mood: *māñjarī-bhāva*. Second is *bhāva-sambandhi*, which is *upādāna-kāraṇa* – engaging in those essential practices which quickly give that mood. Without *gurūpadasraya*, one cannot attain this greed. Hearing from Śrī Guru and serving him are essential practices, and are therefore called *upādāna-kāraṇa bhāva-sambandhi*. To remember the *gopāla-mantra*, *kama-gāyatrī*, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *mantra* are all *bhāva-sambandhi*. When remembering *klīm gauraya svāhā*, will we utter words only? Something should come in our hearts; that Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself, and that His kindness is causeless. He is always in a mood to give *kṛṣṇa-prema* through His *mantra*, *klīm gauraya svāhā*. To that Gaurāṅga, in order to attain His service, we offer ourselves by the word *svāhā*. We are therefore advised to chant all these *gāyatrī mantras* given to us by *guru* – three times every day. This is also *upādāna-kāraṇa*. We must do this.

*nijābhīṣṭa kṛṣṇa-preṣṭha pācheta’ lāgiyā  
nirantara sevā kare antarmanā hañā*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.159

Actually, the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana are very dear to Kṛṣṇa. If one wants to engage in spontaneous loving service, he must follow the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana and constantly engage in devotional service within his mind.

Following one of Kṛṣṇa's beloved associates according to his inner desire, the *sādhaka* always chants the *mahā-mantra*. This is *upādāna-kāraṇa* – not only chanting, but remembering the qualities of *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. What qualities? The qualities of Rāma [meaning Rādhā-ramana] in “Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.” In “Hare Kṛṣṇa,” “Hare” is Śrīmatī Rādhikā. *Harati kunje iti hare kṛṣṇam harati*. This means that Kṛṣṇa is attractive to all, but Śrīmatī Rādhikā attracts Kṛṣṇa and enchants Him in the *nikuñja*. She is therefore Madana-mohana Mohinī, the enchantress of the enchanter of Cupid. Meditating in this way, we chant *harināma*.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is a *siddha-mantra*, and therefore no *anusthana* (ceremony) of *puraścaraṇa* (preliminary purificatory procedures) need be performed along with its utterance. Chanting the *mantra* in this way is a practice of *bhāva-sambandhi* (that practice which quickly gives its performer his cherished goal), and therefore such chanting is *upādāna-kāraṇa* (essential practice). *Nimitta-kāraṇa* practices are not *bhāva-sambandhi*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains about the *aṣṭa-daśākṣara* (eighteen-syllable) *mantra*, and the *daśākṣara* (ten-syllable) *mantra* that Caitanya Mahāprabhu received from his Gurudeva. With the addition of *klīm kṛṣṇāya govindāya*, the *mantra* is *aṣṭa-daśākṣara*, and with only *gopijana vallabhāya svāhā* it is a *daśākṣara mantra*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** The last thing you just said – can you clarify that further please?

**Burijana dāsa:** The mantra that Mahāprabhu received?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What does *daśākṣara* mean?

**Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** *Gopijana-vallabhāya svāhā* is the *daśākṣara mantra*.

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Ten-syllable *mantra*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Without *klīm*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What is the *mantra*?

**Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** Your *guru* has given this to you, and I have also given it: *gopijana-vallabhaya svāhā*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** But no *klīm*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Klīm* is not counted within the ten syllables; it is separate. It is the *bija-mantra*; the *bija* itself is a *mantra*, and it has combined with the other syllables.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What happened to *kṛṣṇāya govindāya*?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** With the addition of these two words and *klīm*, the *mantra* becomes an eighteen-syllable *mantra*. Some persons say that there are twenty-four syllables in the *kāma-gāyatrī*, and others say there are twenty-six, but when Rādhikā gave the correct information in the *svapna* (dream)...

**Burijana dāsa:** In a dream to Viśvanātha Cakravati...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Then he knew...

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Twenty-four and a half syllables. He knew what that half syllable is.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** These *mantras* are also *bhāva-sambandhi*, and hearing and telling about Kṛṣṇa with His dear ones are also *bhāva-sambandhi*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that in *rāgānuga* there are two primary activities – *smaraṇa* (remembering) and *kīrtana* (chanting). In this regard which is superior, *kīrtana* or *smaraṇa*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** *Smaraṇa*.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** You say that *smaraṇa* is superior?

**Burijana dāsa:** *Bṛhat-Bhāgavatāmṛta* clearly says that *kīrtana* is superior.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī explains that *smaraṇa* seems to be superior, but for *Kālī-yuga* it has been declared, “*Harer nāma, harer nāma, harer nāma eva kevalam.*” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has come only for *kīrtana*, and those who engage in *kīrtana-yajña* (*harināma saṅkīrtana*) are called *sumedhasab*.

*kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇaṁ  
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair  
yajanti hi su-medhasab*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 11.5.32

In the age of Kālī, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Kṛṣṇa. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions.

In this *śloka*, the word *sumedhasa* means very....

**Śrīpāda Mādhava Mahārāja:** Intelligent.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Here, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that what Caitanya Mahāprabhu has decided is the decided fact. Therefore *smaraṇa* is not superior; rather it is in the *anugatyā* of *kīrtana* (it follows *kīrtana*). Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has explained in his *Bṛhat-bhāgavatāmṛta* why this is so; but *sahajiyā* bābājīs do not follow his idea. He has especially written that *smaraṇa* should be executed under the supervision of *saṅkīrtana*. When a person is engaged in remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, if there is any noise or if we would loudly chant *saṅkīrtana*, that person's concentration would be interrupted. If that person is pure, even if we loudly chant *kīrtana*, his silent meditation would not be disturbed.

On the other hand, even if a person's mind is very *canca*l...

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** Flickering.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Even if his mind is flickering, if he performs loud *kīrtana*, then all his senses are bound to become silent. Therefore, chanting and remembering together is *bhāva-sambandhi*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura refers us to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's book, *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, which discusses the ṛṣis who performed *tapasyā*. Do you know the meaning of *tapasyā*?

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja and Dhanurdhara Mahārāja:** Austerities.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** We should not think that in this regard 'austerities' means surrounding oneself by fire in the summer, taking bath in very very cold water in the winter, not eating, taking a vow of silence, or accepting any other such bodily hardships. Here, 'austerities' refers to *arādhāna*, worship. Sixty-thousand ṛṣis performed *arādhāna* by mind, and by the grace of Lord Rāmacandra, all of them became *gopīs*.

So these practices are all *bhava-sambandhi*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** When you mentioned before that *kīrtana* is superior to *smaraṇam*, does this *kīrtana* mean *japa* (chanting softly on beads), or does it mean congregational chanting with many people doing *kīrtana* together?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Which one is not important? The important thing is having greed, being in the *anugatyā* (under the guidance) of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava, remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa while chanting by tongue, and being in *Vṛndāvana* by body or by mind. This type of *kīrtana* is best. If our Gurujī is performing *kīrtana* and we have participated in that, our *kīrtana* will not be the same as his, because we are not equal to him. He is remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and weeping, but we are not doing so. We are only singing along with him; our chanting is not the same. Chanting may be of two types: *vyakti-gata* and the other is *samasti-gata*.

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** Individual and congregational.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Yes, ‘individual and congregational.’ Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was performing *kīrtana* ‘individually,’ alone; but when he was chanting with Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *kīrtana* party, that chanting was not individual. When Caitanya Mahāprabhu spoke with Rāya Rāmānanda, their discussion was ‘individual.’ *Nimitta-kāraṇa* practices include *vrata*s (vows, religious observances), such as *Ekādaśī vrata* and *Janmāṣṭamī vrata*, and performing any austerity for Kṛṣṇa – while having that greed.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** But why the comparison with *upādāna* and *nimitta*? Why is he choosing these two words – *upādāna-kāraṇa* and *nimitta* – to explain the difference between these two groups?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** *Upādāna-kāraṇa* practices must certainly be performed. If we do not perform *nimitta-kāraṇa* practices at any time, it is harmful, but not as harmful as the neglect of *upādāna-kāraṇa* practices.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** You gave the example that *upādāna-kāraṇa* is the clay and *nimitta* may be the potter.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Without the potter, and without earth, nothing can be done; but the earth is especially crucial, and therefore *upādāna* is superior. Hearing the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and serving Gurudeva are *upādāna-kāraṇa*, and these other practices are secondary.

**Burijana dāsa:** ‘Primary and secondary’ is the proper translation. One is supportive, or secondary. *Nimitta* means ‘it supports,’ and *upādāna* means ‘the basis,’ or ‘the primary.’

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** That’s what it means here; but when describing creation, those two words are not used.

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** It is the same, though.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** It is not same, but similar.

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** One is the ingredient. Without the ingredient, you cannot cause anything; so it is more important.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** If anyone says that we should not observe Ekādaśī – like Hita-Hari-vāmśa – this is not right.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What do you mean?

**Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:** We must observe Ekādaśī and Janmāṣṭamī, even though they are *nimitta-kāraṇa*, and even though they are not as important as the practices which quickly induce internal absorption. Ekādaśī, Janmāṣṭamī and similar observances, like placing *tilaka* marks on the body, are beneficial for remembering the main objective. They support the practices of *bhāva-sambandhi*, which in turn leads to *abhiṣṭa-bhāva-mayi*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** Can you repeat that one more time please?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** First is *abhiṣṭa-bhāva-mayi*, and then *bhāva-sambandhi*. The practices of *bhāva-sambandhi* are superior to those of *nimitta-kāraṇa*. The *bhāva-sambandhi* practices are the *mūla-kāraṇa*, the main cause, in the development of *abhiṣṭa-bhāva-mayi*, and Ekādaśī, Janmāṣṭamī etc. are secondary.

**Dhanurdhara Svāmī:** If the secondary practice is not present, still the primary cause is sufficient?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Suppose someone gives stress on Ekādaśī, Janmāṣṭamī and Rāmā-navamī, but that person is not hearing *hari-kathā*, chanting, and remembering; the injunction that Ekādaśī is secondary is for him.

What is the harm in neglecting Ekādaśī? For one who has greed, and is so engaged in *bhāva-mayi* or *bhāva-sambandhi* that he is unaware of the day, there is no harm. Vāmśīdāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is an example of this. He

was observing Ekādaśī for three or four days, for example, on Aṣṭamī (the eighth day of the moon) and Navamī (the ninth day of the moon). Then, when Ekādaśī (the eleventh day of the moon) came, he was completely unaware of the day. Similarly, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī would be internally absorbed in remembering his services in the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa for many days, and Ekādaśī would go by at that time. Because these two *mahā-bhāgavatas* were performing *rāgānuga-bhajana*, there was no harm in their missing Ekādaśī. However, if one misses Ekādaśī when one is externally conscious, this would be very harmful for his *bhakti*.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** What is the difference between *bhāva-mayi* and *bhāva-sambandhi*? What is the distinction?

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** I have told you all these things.

**Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja:** I know, but I got confused on the point when you went into the differences between *upādāna* and *nimitta*, and how they refer to each one.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** First I explained *abhiṣṭa-bhāva-mayi*, which may be in an unripe or ripe stage. In the stage of *sādhana* it is the absorption that “We are *gopīs*,” and in the *siddha* stage we will actually become *gopīs*. In both cases, it is *abhiṣṭa-bhāva-mayi*. Next is *bhāva-sambandhi upādāna-kāraṇa*. These are activities we must perform, like hearing and remembering. These practices must not be neglected for any reason. Regarding *nimitta-kāraṇa* practices, if we cannot follow them under certain circumstances, it is not harmful; therefore it is considered secondary. Vāṁśīdāsa Bābājī Mahārāja or Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī were fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* for so many days, and Ekādaśī came and left during that time of absorption. For them there was no harm. On the other hand, if there are occasions that we do not follow it, this is harmful for us. That is why *nimitta-kāraṇa* is called ‘secondary.’

(Excerpts of transcribed recordings end here)

## EAGER TO HEAR

These confidential discussions (above) stem mostly from Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’s book called *Rāga Vartma Candrikā* and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī’s *Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*. Although these

books were published in English by other devotees, the ISKCON leaders headed by Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja wanted to hear these topics coming from a bona fide authority in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. They could not grasp the essence without his clarification and detailed explanations.

At the time when they used to come to hear from Śrīla Gurudeva, they tried to keep the door closed during class in his room for two main reasons. Obviously they did not want any noise to come in and disturb and secondly they wanted to keep it secret. Some of them didn't want our *māṭha brahmacārīs*, who to them were considered junior, to come and join the class. Our *māṭha brahmacārīs* were well trained by Śrīla Gurudeva. If Śrīla Gurudeva would ask questions, our *brahmacārīs* who were all well-versed and who knew *siddhānta* could readily reply and this may not look good on them. As the personal servant of Gurudeva I would always be there with him ready to serve in any way. Although they did not want other *brahmacārīs* to come, they could not stop me in my service.

In Mathurā, only during the day after Ekādaśī, we used to go for collection, door to door, and would bring flour, rice, *dāl*, spices, potatoes and other vegetables. On one such Dvādaśī, I came back from my collecting to offer my *praṇāma* to Gurudeva. Gurudeva's door was locked from inside. I knocked, and then I knocked a second time, after which they opened the door. Upon seeing me they looked nervous, understanding what they had done was wrong. Even though I was upset, I thought it was not proper to come in front of Gurudeva and other Vaiṣṇavas in an angry mood. So I went to cook for Śrīla Gurudeva since it was already past 11:30 A.M. Although they reckoned me to come in, I preferred not to go. I was already running late and I had to get started preparing for Śrīla Gurudeva's special diet. After I finished cooking, I went back and Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja and Girirāja Mahārāja asked me why I was angry today. I replied, "I was not angry, but I do have one question and one request. Then Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja told me. "Please ask." I was Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī back then and I made this request to them, "Śrīman Mahāprabhu is *namo mahā-vadanaya*. He's the greatest, most munificent donor, giving *prema*. All of you are preaching His mission all over the world. You are also generous and broadminded and are great donors.

Is the indication of broadminded and generous that you keep the door closed so others cannot hear Gurudeva's *hari-kathā*? So my request from today is please don't be miserly. All the *brahmacārīs* in the *māṭha* also want to listen to Śrīla Gurudeva. They were here from the beginning with Śrīla Gurudeva, and by closing the door, you are closing them out. This is not fair or proper. They can sit quietly behind you, no problem, and you can sit in the front and ask whatever you want without interruption. Whoever is qualified will understand and whoever is not qualified will not understand. So from now on, I want the door open so that all can get equal opportunity to listen to Gurudeva's class."

From that day on, this incident was never repeated. When Gurudeva gave the class, the door remained open even on special occasions like *Dvādaśī* when I was not there.





## Śrīla Gurudeva Testifies to Save ISKCON

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness (ISKCON) was a former resident of Calcutta in his *naravat-līlā* (human-like pastimes). At that time he married and had children. That was before he entered the *sannyasa-aśrama* (renounced order) in 1959. In 1965 at the advanced age of seventy, he left India, went to the Western countries, and then performed a miracle. He took the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the mission of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and in a most remarkable way established ISKCON throughout the whole world. He also created an international book distribution branch, the Bhaktivedānta Book Trust (BBT). After more than a decade of pioneer preaching in the Western world, as well as extensively cultivating residents of his native India, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja departed from this world. In November 1977, in Vṛndāvana, he entered the eternal pastimes of his beloved Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava.

A few years later, his son from his previous *aśrama*, inspired by others, began legal proceedings against ISKCON. He claimed that his father, Abhaya Charan De was not a Brahmin but a Vaiśya and therefore according to the social caste system, could not take *sannyāsa*. He said that only a Brahmin can take *sannyāsa*. He further claimed his father was a businessman who went to the West for business purposes only and that ISKCON was a family business enterprise. As such, after his father's demise, being the hereditary son, he was now the rightful heir and owner of ISKCON's property. This was the case that was brought against ISKCON after the departure of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja. Aware of the imminent danger, ISKCON conveniently transferred the case from Calcutta High Court to Bombay High Court.

Śrīla Gurudeva said, "An ISKCON leader came and told me, 'If you don't give evidence, his son will take all of ISKCON, all over the world'. He told me that I should go immediately to Bombay. I told him that I want to serve Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, so I will go... I want to always serve the mission of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja."

Despite his fragile health, Śrīla Gurudeva went alone. The ISKCON leaders bought him a flight ticket so he could quickly come from Delhi to Bombay. He was given accommodation at the Juhu temple in Bombay. For a considerably long time Śrīla Gurudeva would regularly go, right after breakfast, to the court. He was the star witness in proving that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja had legitimately taken *sannyāsa*, the renounced order from an authorized *sannyāsa guru*, and that he had no connection with his previous family life. Both Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, the *sannyasa-guru* and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja had departed from this world, so it was only Śrīla Gurudeva, who had performed the ceremonial rites of *sannyāsa* for Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja who remained the sole eye-witness.

At great lengths Śrīla Gurudeva quoted in court and powerfully explained *sāstric* evidences from the scriptures pertaining to the fact that one is a Brahmin not by birth but only and solely by qualification thereby smashing the false ideology and malpractice of the Smārta Brahmins. He also elaborated in great detail the order of the *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsa*.

He emphasized that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was duly initiated in a bona fide Vaiṣṇava line and as such is beyond the designation of caste and creed. Vaiṣṇavas are superior to Brahmins and therefore are qualified to accept this *sannyāsa* order regardless of their birth.

He continued to explain in court the authenticity of the Brahmā Mādhva Gauḍīya Sampradāya, about the glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, about the *ācārya* of our line Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura whose seniormost disciple was Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the validity of the *sannyāsa* order awarded in this disciplic line.

The judge, the lawyers and all the other officials were greatly impressed by Śrīla Gurudeva who was, as always—pure-hearted, honourable and unequivocally attached to the absolute truth and *pure bhakti*.

All this was done by Śrīla Gurudeva to protect Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's movement. Śrīla Gurudeva never hesitated to assist and freely gave his testimony for the sake of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's movement. This evidence was crucial in this case to save ISKCON from being taken away.

The ISKCON leaders came begging Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja (Śrīla Gurudeva) to help because they knew that he was the only one qualified to give such evidence. In this way, it was Śrīla Gurudeva who saved their Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement from being taken by the biological son born in Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's previous *āśrama*.

By the time this portion of the court hearing was over, Śrīla Gurudeva's health had badly deteriorated. Śrīla Gurudeva however never once complained about his poor health and between courts hearings, also gave extensive courses as requested by the ISKCON leaders on the confidential teachings of the Gosvāmīs. Somehow the ISKCON leaders didn't take notice of his declining health needs and sent Śrīla Gurudeva all alone, even though by now he was seriously ill, all the way from Bombay (Mumbāi) to Mathurā by train.

When we went to pick up Śrīla Gurudeva at the Mathurā railway station, we were shocked to see how weak and frail he looked and how sick he had become. It took Śrīla Gurudeva weeks to recuperate fully; with love and attention we provided Śrīla Gurudeva with proper nourishing foods and medicines and gradually nurtured him back to health.

### ISKCON Leaders in Mathurā

Four months later, a few ISKCON *sannyāsīs* came to Mathurā to request Śrīla Gurudeva again to go to Bombay for the next court hearing. Without thinking twice about his own health, Gurudeva agreed.

Our *māṭha* (temple) *brahmacārīs* overheard the conversation and became worried about Gurudeva's health but, due to etiquette, they didn't speak up. (While Śrīla Gurudeva or any highly qualified Vaiṣṇava speaks to others, the juniors customarily will not take part in the discussion without the kind permission of that Vaiṣṇava.). The *brahmacārīs* there had to remain silent as they didn't dare interrupt Śrīla Gurudeva, for whom they had such deep respect, while he was talking. Furthermore the ISKCON *sannyāsīs* that appeared big, well-fed and full of worldly confidence were quite intimidating to some of those simple and thin village *brahmacārīs*.

Although coming from a similar village background, I was not at all intimidated and objected with force. At that time my name was Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī and upon entering Śrīla Gurudeva's room, I offered my respectful obeisances to him and the Vaiṣṇavas present and began to speak.

"We will not allow Śrīla Gurudeva to go to Bombay anymore," I said.

The ISKCON *sannyāsīs* all looked at me surprised and asked me why not. I answered, "The last time you took Gurudeva to Bombay, he became extremely sick. There was no *brahmachari* assistant to take care of his personal and health needs. Although you undoubtedly provided very nice treatment according to your abilities, you are not aware of what is favourable and what is unfavourable for Śrīla Gurudeva's health; so we won't allow him to go anymore."

"I must go," Gurudeva said humbly, "otherwise, ISKCON will be ruined."

The ISKCON *sannyāsīs* quickly agreed with Śrīla Gurudeva and repeatedly said that Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was very much needed to give evidence.

I did not give up and firmly continued, "We will let Gurudeva go to Bombay with some conditions. One of our *brahmacharis* has to accompany him. The last time, Śubhānanda Brahmācārī (now Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Tīrtha Mahārāja) accompanied him to the Delhi airport. When he came back to Mathurā from Delhi, he was weeping and couldn't eat for two days. He was very distressed to see Gurudeva go alone on the plane. So if Śrīla Gurudeva is to go again to Bombay, you will have to purchase two flight tickets, one for Gurudeva and one for one of our *brahmācārīs*."

They immediately agreed.

"And they must both be return tickets; neither Gurudeva nor the *brahmācārī* will return by train."

Again they agreed.

"Not only that," I went on, "the two tickets must be handed to us here in Mathurā."

"Yes." They agreed.

"Not only that", I continued "our *brahmācārī* devotees will purchase the *bhoga* (foodstuffs for offering) and cook for Gurudeva as well. They immediately agreed upon it.

When the ISKCON *sannyāsīs* went away, all the *brahmacārīs* who were living in the *māṭha* at that time, such as Śrīpāda Nandanandana Brahmācārī, Śrīpāda Śubhānanda Brahmācārī, Śrīpāda Premānanda Brahmācārī, Śrīpāda Raghunātha Brahmācārī and Śrīpāda Gaura-kr̥ṣṇa Brahmācārī and others, approached Gurudeva with a special request.

“Among us,” they said, “Navīna Kṛṣṇa is the newest member of the *māṭha*. Although we were shy to come in front of you, especially in the presence of the ISKCON *sannyāsīs* who are big and intimidating, this new skinny boy stood up and made them agree to all his demands. We think he should be the one to go with you to Bombay, as he is quite capable of arranging everything and resolving any issues.”

This is how I became Śrīla Gurudeva’s more than 100% personal servant. Prior to this I had often cooked for Śrīla Gurudeva and served him, but I didn’t always accompany him when he travelled for his preaching. But from this time onwards, I personally assisted him and travelled with him permanently. I was thus blessed with this very important responsibility and very happy to be engaged in this service.

### Juhu Bombay: Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja Takes Lessons

In Bombay, Śrīla Gurudeva would wake up early, as always, and do his *bhajana*. I would cook and serve breakfast *prasāda*, and around 7:30 to 8:00 in the morning, Śrīpāda Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja would come and take Gurudeva to court, where he would be on call for the whole day, not returning until evening.

As the court case was going on in Bombay, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja requested Śrīla Gurudeva to teach him Śrī *Brahma-sambhitā*. He said that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda’s English edition of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary on *Brahma-sambhitā* was so high that he was not able to grasp his very fine, scholarly English. He was eager to carefully study this *Brahma-sambhitā* because he had heard when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu found this chapter His associates would memorize a string of these verses and wear them on their necks for continuous remembrance.

Śrīla Gurudeva was surprised Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja couldn’t understand the English even though it was his mother tongue. So while they were in

Bombay, from that day, Śrīla Gurudeva started teaching him *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* on a daily basis, as well as go to the court. After some time, when they went back to Bombay for another hearing, Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja requested Śrīla Gurudeva to go over it again with him, a second time. In this way Śrīla Gurudeva graciously taught him *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* twice.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja said that before he came to the temple he considered himself an intellectual but he could now see who the real intellectual giants were. He said that Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupādā knew so many languages and that English was not even his first language. Previously he tried to take help and read his English translation of *Brahma-saṁhitā* with the Oxford dictionary but still he could not understand. His pride was crushed.

We cannot understand spiritual subject matters simply by our intellect. These eternal truths are revealed, as Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*, through *paripraśnena sevayā*, service and submissive inquiry to Śrī Guru.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja said he understood how insignificant he was and that he was very grateful to Śrīla Gurudeva to have taught him this *Brahma-saṁhitā* again. “By your causeless mercy,” he appreciatively said, “I can now understand what precious jewel is hidden in this *Brahma-saṁhitā*.”

## Don't Think You are the Supreme Controller

Śrīla Gurudeva is an eternal associate of the Lord. Such a *mahā-bhāgavata* is more than qualified to accept unlimited disciples. At that time when the court case was still going on, Śrīla Gurudeva was in Juhu, Bombay. Even though he was not giving initiation or accepting disciples, he was mercifully giving his association and guidance to whoever came to him. Śrīla Gurudeva was in his room when one ISKCON Indian bodied *sannyāsī*<sup>10</sup> came to him looking very depressed and morose. He stood in front of Śrīla Gurudeva with his head lowered and it looked as if he was weeping.

Seeing his morose condition, Śrīla Gurudeva's heart melted because the heart of a pure saintly person is much softer than butter. Butter melts when it's heated, whereas a saintly person's heart melts when they see .....

10 He got *harināma* and *dikṣā* from my spiritual grandsire *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viśṇūpāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and *sannyāsa* from Śrī Kīrtanānanda Swāmī.

people in distress. With the greatest sensitivity, in Hindi, Śrīla Gurudeva asked the Indian *sannyāsī*, “Do you (*tum*) want to speak something?” Gurujī understood that something happened to this *sannyāsī* devotee which must be very very unfavourable for him.

‘Yes,’ he answered.

“Tell me frankly, don’t hesitate”, Gurudeva assured him. I will try to help you at my level best. After getting consolation from Śrīla Gurudeva, that *sannyāsī* continued weeping and looking towards me (at that time I was Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī). Śrīla Gurudeva told him, “Why you are looking towards Navīna? There is nothing to worry or fear from him. He is like my second body. What you can speak in my presence—same you can speak in presence of him without any hesitation.”

The Indian *sannyāsī* replied, “I am banned by the ISKCON GBC (Governing Body Commission) from giving initiation to any devotee.”

“Why? Have you done something wrong?” Gurudeva enquired.

“I asked one devotee to come and take *barināma dikṣā* (initiation) from me”, he replied.

“What happened after you made this request?” Gurudeva asked.

He replied, “I thought that the devotee to whom I requested was loyal to me, but it turned out just the opposite. Somehow the devotee got influenced by others and complained to the GBC against me. In the GBC meeting, they decided in some way or other they want to punish me. So the members of the GBC have restricted me for 2 years from giving *barināma* or *dikṣā*. Especially Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja is very rigid towards me.”

“How long ago was this?” Gurudeva asked.

“Almost one year is going to be completed.”

“Oh, almost one year is going to be passed. Then why didn’t you tell me this before? I have been coming here for three, four month’s now. Ok, tell me to whom I have to talk—you inform me. I can tell Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, Girirāja Mahārāja, Śrīdhara Swāmī...”

“Oh, Gurudeva, only Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja will be enough for this. There is no need to involve others on this matter. Easily he can lift the ban without consulting with others.”

Śrīla Gurudeva then ordered me, “Navīna, go to Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja’s room. Tell him that I am urgently calling him.” After ordering me Śrīla

Gurudeva told the Indian *sannyāsī*, “You may happily go in your own room. I will tackle this matter. You don’t need to be present here any longer.

I went to Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Maharja’s room, paid obeisances and told him, “Gurudeva is calling you very urgently”.

As soon as Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja entered into Gurudeva’s quarters, Gurudeva asked him resolutely in a very grave voice, “You have banned this *sannyāsī* from giving *harināma* for two years!” The impact was as if he roared.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja was startled and told, “He wanted to give Harināma to a devotee without taking permission from the GBC. Therefore, he was put on probation by them for 2 years.

“Ok, I am commanding that you lift this injunction from this devotee.” Gurudeva instructed him, “If you want to direct and manage a big institution, then do not interfere in this type of small trivial matters. You should try to avoid these things.”

“If you get involved in such insignificant matters, how you can run such a big society, especially how can you perform your *sādhana-bhajana*? All these matters will come to your mind during chanting *harināmā* and especially when you will chant your *gāyatri mantras*. Moreover, a big society like ISKCON may fall apart, so be very careful.”

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja nodded his head, “Ok, Gurudeva, whatever you order we will follow wholeheartedly.” After paying obeisances to Śrīla Gurudeva he went back to his own room and lifted the ban against the Indian *sannyāsī* the very same day.

The next day, that very Indian *sannyāsī* came to Śrīla Gurudeva with a big smiling face, fully prostrated himself at the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva and said, “Oh, Gurudeva! What you did for me, even an affectionate father will not do for his son. I am eternally indebted to you.”

## Case Settled

The court case dragged on for many months, but fortunately in the end the legal battle was finally settled with none of the BBT or ISKCON properties lost. Śrīla Gurudeva had advised the ISKCON *sannyāsīs*, “Listen, this man is the son of your Gurudeva. I think it is better to give

him some money and reconcile it. They will not win because I am here and I will give all proof from scripture and no one will be able to defeat me. But still I think it is better to give him some money and settle this.” They agreed to Śrīla Gurudeva’s recommendation.

There is no doubt that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja is greatly pleased with Śrīla Gurudeva for standing up and fighting for ISKCON. Śrīla Gurudeva was very happy to do this service. Gurudeva was very compassionate and wanted to help these young inexperienced devotees. Most of the ISKCON devotees were half his age, at that time in their twenties and thirties and very new in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

It didn’t matter to Śrīla Gurudeva that some of these new devotees were disrespectful and arrogantly dismissed what he did. Śrīla Gurudeva considered Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja as his dearest friend and *śikṣā-guru*, a relationship that some ISKCON leaders have tried to minimize. From these historical facts we can understand that a genuine disciple is just as rare as a genuine *guru*. Śrīla Gurudeva remained unfazed by their general lack of respect and wished them all well before heading back to Mathurā with his personal servant.

## Protector of the Sampradāya

Sometime after the court case, several ISKCON *sannyāsīs* came to see Śrīla Gurudeva at the Śrī Keshavaji Gauḍīya Māṭha in Mathurā. Śrīla Gurudeva received them warmly. They thanked Śrīla Gurudevā for helping them with the court case. After several minutes of discussion they presented him with a proposition.

“Śrīla Mahārāja,” they started, “We want to invite you to the West. We have a few rules or conditions but we will take you everywhere, to England, to America – all over the world.”

To invite Śrīla Gurudeva to preach in their temples all around the world was a major breakthrough in their stance. Most of the ISKCON leaders had isolated themselves from the association of advanced bona fide Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas and were not interested in practicing the process of *bhajana* as it had been presented by Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna

Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. If their Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja didn't want them to practice *bhajana*, why did he want all these Ācāryas' pictures in all his prominent centres?

They even indicated that their process was different by saying, “*We don't preach Gauḍīya*” even though their spiritual master comes from the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* and was one of the three founders of the Gauḍīya Vedānta Śamīti.

The court case showed them that they could have lost everything and it was a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava who came to their rescue and saved them, so now, most probably feeling obliged to him, they wanted to reciprocate.

At that time Śrīla Gurudeva was not initiating any disciples. He had been a *sannyāsī* for more than forty years and shared his vast knowledge, insights and experiences with all who approached him. The ISKCON *guru-sannyāsīs* however were younger, both in age and experience in Kṛṣṇa consciousness compared to him, yet they were sadly insinuating that he was not as “qualified” as them and that he accept the free ticket to the West and comply with their rules.

Śāstra declares that all types of *anarthas* (material desires), *aparādhās* (offenses) and *abhimānas* (false identifications) can only be eradicated by good association (*sat-saṅga*). As long as a devotee identifies himself with the material body, he cannot enter the kingdom of *bhajana* which all the *ācāryas* have come to give. Śrīla Gurudeva said we have to reject all kinds of false identities pertaining to the body, such as, “I am a *brāhmaṇa*”, “I am a *kṣatriya*”, and pertaining to character, such as, “I am so qualified”, “I am rich”, “I am a scholar” etc. Śrīla Gurudeva says that only when we become more humble than a blade of grass (*trṇād āpi sunīca*) and pray in extreme distress with an intense desire to obtain Lord Caitanya's mercy is it then possible to attain that mercy.

Although some leaders had taken the position of initiating *guru*, they wasted valuable years in not taking proper shelter of advanced Vaiṣṇavas (*sādhū-saṅga*) after the departure of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja. The result was that many failed to drive extraneous desires from their hearts which presented numerous deterrents to their remaining on the path of *śuddha-bhakti*. Thus many of the leaders, after some time, left their vows and responsibilities to the institution behind and some became materially ambitious and attached to their positions. This lack

of pure *sādhū-saṅga* also led to their failure to understand the proper conclusions of the Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. One such glaring example was their gross misunderstanding or their unfortunate inability to understand the true origin of the *jīva*. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja had plainly written the conclusion that no one falls from Vaikunṭa in his purport in *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* which is the essence of the Vedas: “The conclusion is that no one falls from the spiritual world, or Vaikuṅṭha planet, for it is the eternal abode.” S.B. 3.16.26 purport. Yet still they remained confused.

Their Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja is a *nitya-siddha*, an eternal associate of the Lord. He is an instrument of the Lord and of the previous Gauḍīya Sampradāya Ācāryas. He came to fulfill Lord Caitanya’s prophecy to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. These *sannyāsīs* assumed they had automatically inherited the mission of their *guru*, and thus had come to Śrīla Gurudeva’s māṭha with a proposition that he join them.

So it was on that fateful day that they approached Śrīla Gurudeva. They did not seem intent to take shelter of a *sādhū’s* lotus feet and humbly hear *hari-kathā* from him. Knowing his influence and ability to preach the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, they wanted him inside their institution to speak and attract people all over the world. However they had an agenda attached to that offer—they wanted to control Śrīla Gurudeva’s speech by having him give support to their way of preaching and to their *apasiddhāntic* conclusions in regards to the soul.

One cannot cheat Śrīla Gurudeva or charm him with a display of external emotions, gestures and official procedure.

“We will take you to the West and give you opulent facilities,” they continued, “but there is a condition—you just have to tell that the *jīva soul* has fallen down from Vaikuṅṭha, not otherwise, and comply with some other formalities.”

Śrīla Gurudeva was sad to hear them speak these words. I had never seen him so stern. Fully cognizant of the nature of transcendental reality and knowing the imports of all *śāstras*, he rejected their absurd offer with a resounding instantaneous, “No!”

Their behavior toward him portrayed a lack of knowledge of proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette and their failure to clearly understand the *siddhāntic* teachings of their own *guru*.

He at once chastised them, “How can I ever speak like this? Go away from my *māṭha* and don’t come again with this nonsense proposal! Don’t think that I am greedy to go to the West.”

Śrīla Gurudeva further cautioned them from making offences, “You think you are going to show me opulence there in the West. In our Braja, there is so much opulence that the whole opulence of the material world cannot compare to even the most tiny fraction of the opulence of Vṛndāvana. Even though that opulence is covered by the unparalleled sweetness of *mādhurya bhāva*, one who has seen that opulence of Vṛndāvana *dhāma* has no need to see anything else in this material world.

“When the pious Muslim Emperor Akbar went to Sanātana Gosvāmī asking for some service, he humbly replied that he didn’t need anything. Still requesting again and again, finally Sanātana Gosvāmī told him he could fix a broken corner of a stair on the bank of the River Yamunā. Akbar felt offended thinking, ‘*Why has he asked me to do this insignificant service. He knows very well my position as Emperor and my immense power. Knowing everything why is he requesting me in this way? Anyway, let me carry out the order of the saintly person.*’

“Thinking in this way, Akbar went to the Yamunā. By the mercy of Sanātana Gosvāmī, he was able to see the great opulence of Vṛndāvana *dhāma*. He ran back to Sanātana Gosvāmī and fully prostrated himself. He said, ‘Prabhu, by your mercy my ego has been shattered and I have understood that I am insignificant. I am unable to do the service you requested. If I sell my whole country, still it will not be enough to repair the transcendental stair of Vṛndāvana. So many precious jewels are there. By your causeless mercy today I have understood that everything of Vṛindvana is eternal and transcendental and everything of this world is temporary and mundane.’”

Gurudeva continued heavily, “And you think you will show me some opulence in the West...You nonsense. I will never say anything contrary to what I have directly heard from my Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhakti Prajana Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja and our scriptures.”

In this way Śrīla Gurudeva was teaching how everything should be confirmed with *guru*, *sādhū* and shastra and that any conclusion that is against the precepts of Rūpa Gosvāmī and our *rūpānuga ācāryas* is to be rejected immediately. He was speaking so softly and sweetly when the *sannyāsīs* first came but now he was speaking to them with commanding authority showing that he expected immediate obedience, “I have known and spoken this philosophy with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja since 1946 and know that it is not possible at all for him to write anywhere in his book that the *jīva* has fallen from the Vaikuṅṭha planet... You cannot change the meaning of what is there in *śāstra*.”

Śrīla Gurudeva powerfully reprimanded their actions. “Don’t think that I am greedy to go to western country. I am indebted to my most merciful Śrīla Gurudeva. I will always be loyal to him. He taught me everything and sent me for preaching. When argument came, automatically I was able to clear. Do not speak what is not in scripture and what you have not realized or otherwise you may be wrong. Wherever I go, I will speak only that which has been given by our *guru paramparā* and our scriptures.”

The *bhāgavata paramparā* must be kept intact in its purest form. Just as Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura sent Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa to Jaipur to protect the Gauḍīya Sampradāya, Śrīla Gurudeva is giving us all the essential truths of our Sampradāya Ācāryas and the scriptures so that the *sampradāya* can be protected from *apasiddhānta*.

Śrīla Gurudeva flatly refused their foolish offer. Their misunderstanding the philosophy and presenting it as a core *siddhāntic* teaching of their Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja would create a threat and an unprecedented deviation from the teachings of our *ācāryas* in the Bhāgavata *sampradāya*.

Sternly silenced by Śrīla Gurudeva, the *sannyāsīs* never dared mention anything like this to Gurudeva ever again.





## Lessons on Service and Absorption



### At Ramacandra Prabhu's Home

Rāmacandra Prabhu (Mr. Rajkamala Julka) had his residence on the top floor of a four storey building on Kailash Hill in South Delhi. He and his good wife Śrīmatī Kalavati didi had invited Śrīla Gurudeva and his associates to their home. After going up a few flights of stairs, Śrīla Gurudeva asked, “How much further is it?”

“Just one more storey Śrīla Gurudeva,” Rāmacandra Prabhu said.

As you come in to the apartment, you see the kitchen on the right and the deity room on the left. Passing through there are two bedrooms. So near Ṭhākuraḥ's place there is one sofa. Śrīla Gurudeva sat there, but Rāmacandra Prabhu and his wife thought he had gone into his bedroom for rest.

At that time I was Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī. I had to go out for Śrīla Gurudeva's other service. So Kalavati didi began cooking for Gurudeva and Rāmacandra Prabhu was very happily doing their Rādhā Kṛṣṇa deity service. Rāmacandra Prabhu was sitting there on the floor and Kalavati didi was coming in and out and speaking to Rāmacandra Prabhu about what to get from the market and what things they had to do for Gurudeva's service. All the while Gurudeva was quietly sitting on the sofa two or three feet from Rāmacandra Prabhu, but he and his wife did not see him. After one hour, Rāmacandra Prabhu saw, “Oh, Gurudeva, have you rested enough? It was a long journey from Mathurā.”

“What rest, I have been sitting here for about one hour chanting and observing how you are so absorbed in your service.” said Śrīla Gurudeva. “I see that both of you are happily engaged in your service. If someone wants to be successful in *bhajana*, they must observe the process as you and your wife are doing. You are not neglecting me, but so absorbed that you did not even notice me. I am very pleased by this. This is an ideal example of how *bhajana* is to be performed.”

Rāmacandra Prabhu called his wife Kalavati, and she too had not noticed Śrīla Gurudeva. She said that she thought Śrīla Gurudeva was inside the room and after that she became very shy.

Śrīla Gurudeva mentioned that in the eleventh canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there was a most intelligent *avadhuta brāhmaṇa* who learned from twenty-four *gurus*. “Dattātreya learned different things from the mountain, the trees, the air, the fish, the deer, the small baby, the elephant and so on. He learned from the arrow maker that one should be so absorbed in *bhajana* that they become unaware of what is happening around them. The arrow maker was a blacksmith. He was so absorbed in making the king’s arrows sharp that when a marriage party passed by, playing drums and singing and dancing, he didn’t even notice. He was not even aware of it until someone told him that a beautiful marriage party had passed by.”

Śrīla Gurudeva said that we should be absorbed like this. “We shouldn’t want to see and know what’s going on here and there. We should be absorbed in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and not in all this other nonsense, material illusions. We should just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and not hear anything else. Everyone is different and it is not for us to criticize and find fault with what Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān has arranged for others. We should be absorbed in hearing and chanting ourselves and not be bothered by what others are doing, like the arrowmaker who was absorbed in his own service.”

### Weeping Like A Village Girl

Even though Pūjyapāda Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja and my *dīkṣā-guru* Paramārādhyā Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja could not come every year for the Vraja Māṇḍala *parikramā*, they would however always be present for Śrī Navadvīpa *parikramā*. Once in Navadvīpa *parikramā* Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja said to me “Oh Navīna, your Mahārāja (Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja) weeps like a village girl during *hari-kathā*.” As he was so senior to me and was Śrīla Gurudeva’s god brother I did not answer or try to defend him. If I had tried to defend it would have been a Vaiṣṇava *aparādha*. It is not Vaiṣṇava etiquette at all.

A few days later we were at Mamagachi in Modadrumadvīpa. Śrīla Gurudeva was speaking about Lord Rāma's pastimes. Lord Rāma's pastimes are full of *karuṇā-rasa*, so heartwrenching that hearing this all the audience began weeping including and especially Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Gurudeva and Trivikrama Mahārāja were situated next to each other and I was sitting next to Pūjyapāda Trivikrama Maharja. Trivikrama Mahārāja began weeping uncontrollably; tears were streaming from his eyes, mucous was coming from his nose and saliva dropping from his mouth; he was manifesting all these ecstatic symptoms.

When Śrīla Gurudeva's lecture was over, I said to him, "Pujyapada Trivikrama Mahārāja was telling me that you weep so much during *hari-kathā* like a village girl. But today I have seen Trivikrama Mahārāja weeping more bitterly than you. I have never seen one can weep so bitterly—why so?"

Śrīla Gurudeva laughed and joked with Trivikrama Mahārāja. "Oh, you're also a village girl!"

Then Trivikrama Mahārāja gave me a big slap on the back and said "What can I do? Your Mahārāja is speaking so much beautiful *hari-kathā*, so pathetic, full of *karuṇā-rasa*. I don't want to weep, but it's not in my control. When I try to control myself I just weep more! This is not my fault; this is the fault of your Gurudeva, Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja."

## Serving Prasāda

During *parikramā*, Śrīla Gurudeva specifically ordered all his *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs* to help cook and serve *prasādam* to all the devotees who came for the pilgrimage. He said, "Those who have come for *parikramā* are our guests and it is our duty to serve them; seeing your hard labor for the service of Hari, *guru* and Vaiṣṇava, Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu will be very pleased with you."

## Service of Guest is Best, Either in East or West.

Sometimes a *brahmacārī* or *sannyāsī* would become tired and sit down for *prasādam*, but upon hearing that Śrīla Gurudeva was coming, they would

immediately leave their *prasādam* behind and start serving again. Such loyalty to Śrīla Gurudeva is the key to success in spiritual life.

If someone was hiding, thinking they were being very clever, Śrīla Gurudeva would say it was sheer foolishness; they think they are clever but actually they are not. Śrīla Gurudeva has full authority upon all his *brahmacārī* and *sannyāsī* disciples. As their eternal well-wisher, Śrīla Gurudeva rigorously trains them and if needed, chastises them. This is done out of love for the disciple and is never pride, nor a display of mundane ego. If upon hearing Śrīla Gurudeva's loving chastisement for a particular devotee, someone starts criticizing that particular devotee, then one will immediately commit an offence or Vaiṣṇava *aparādha*. In order to guard one against this kind of offence, we should be very careful not to misunderstand the dealings between Śrīla Gurudeva and his devotees.

There may be many reasons why someone cannot come forward to serve *prasādam* during *parikramā* as per Gurudeva's instruction. It may be due to poor health or sheer exhaustion. One may be taking a break or resting. We should be careful not to jump to hasty conclusions even when such a devotee is being chastised. Mercy comes in many ways, even in the form of chastisement.

### Bussing Not Allowed During Parikramā

Before his cardiac problem, Śrīla Gurudeva would go everywhere on *parikramā* by foot. Śrīla Gurudeva said, "Only those who are sick and old may use a vehicle during *parikramā*, otherwise everyone should go by foot." Following Śrīla Gurudeva's example, all the devotees would also go by foot. Later on however, because of his advanced age and heart problem, it was no longer possible for Śrīla Gurudeva to go by foot to the pilgrimage places. He therefore started going by car.

One time, back in the earlier days of *parikramā*, we were on our way back from Nṛsimhapallī to Devānanda Gauḍīya Māṭha in Navadvīpa. Śrīla Gurudeva was walking with so many of us *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs*—a large group of us. In the distance we saw a bus coming, loudly honking its horn. Śrīla Gurudeva noticed that there were some *brahmacārīs* and

even a few *sannyāsīs* inside the bus and also on its roof. In a playful mood, Gurudeva immediately blocked the road and stopped the bus with his *dāṇḍa*. Knowing Śrīla Gurudeva's rule and seeing him with his raised *dāṇḍa*, the *brahmacārīs* quickly jumped out the windows or speedily climbed down from the roof and started running away. Even the *sannyāsīs* that were on the bus were very fast to run from Gurudeva, fearing him and his *dāṇḍa*.



## Meeting With Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was born in 1929 in an aristocratic *brāhmaṇa* Vaiṣṇava family in the small village of Jaganatha Pura, not far from Jaganatha Purī in Orīssa. His family generations were well known *kīrtanīyas* since the time of Śyāmananda Prabhu, the great Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* in our disciplic succession. In his family home there was a Deity of Śrī Gopāla Jiu and thus he was trained in Vaiṣṇava philosophy from the very beginning of his life. In 1975, at the age of 45, he accepted *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja in the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandīra in Vṛndāvanā. He was a very dear and intimate disciple with a very deep understanding of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. On the order of his spiritual master, he went to open a preaching center in Bhubanesvara, the capital city of Orīssa, near Jagannātha Purī. Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was very bold in his preaching and he would always emphasize the importance of *sādhbu-saṅga*. Śrīla Gurudeva also used to always emphasize *sādhbu-saṅga* and *śravaṇa* (hearing from the *sādhbu*). So how do we get the association of such a *sādhbu*? Even if you have a heap of pious activities you cannot get this. There is only one way to purchase *sādhbu-saṅga*. Only by greed! If you have greed, then you can go and listen to *hari-kathā*.

It was in the early nineties that Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja first came to visit Śrīla Gurudeva. He had come to the Śrī Kesavji Gauḍīya *māṭha* in Mathurā many years earlier, even before his initiation, but at that time Śrīla Gurudeva was away preaching elsewhere and was not in his Mathurā *māṭha*.

When Śrīla Gurudeva was in Jagannātha Purī in the early nineties, we stayed at Mr Singhanīa's guest house there. I was then Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī and I used to cook everyday for both Śrīla Gurudeva and Satsvarūpa Mahārāja who was staying in one of the guest rooms upstairs. Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja came there one day from Bhuvanēswar to

meet with Śrīla Gurudeva. It was around midday when I welcomed Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja. He was accompanied by one Indian *brahmacārī* disciple. I offered him *praṇāma* and a chair. Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja said, “Are bābā! I have a big body. Give me a big chair, not a small one.” So I immediately complied. I then came with water and respectfully asked if he would like a glass. Gour Govinda Mahārāja took the water but replied, “I have not come to drink water; I have come to drink nectar from Śrīla Mahārāja’s lotus lips.” He inquired what Gurudeva was doing. I said that he was taking rest, and asked if he wanted me to call him.

He said, “No, no, no. Don’t disturb him when he’s resting. When he finishes, then I will talk with him.” I told him that Satsvarūpa Mahārāja was also there upstairs taking rest. He was staying there with his servant Madhumaṅgala. He told me not to disturb them either. “If by the grace of Jagannātha deva, he comes himself, then I have no objection. Otherwise, I will meet him later.”

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was very careful to follow Vaiṣṇava etiquette and proper Vedic tradition. Respect is given to the elders or senior Vaiṣṇavas. When senior Vaiṣṇavas meet, the junior disciple does not interfere and politely wait for their permission to take part. In Vedic family life, it is the same; if a superior is speaking, the junior remains silent. Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja’s rule for his disciples was that when he would talk with other senior Vaiṣṇavas, they would not be present unless he personally asked them to be. So this *brahmacārī*, his *sevaka*, remained outside.

Śrīla Gurudeva heard our voices and called for me. I went upstairs and told him that Param Pūjyapāda Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja had just come to meet with him. Having already rested for about an hour, he immediately came down to see him. They both embraced and offered *praṇāma* to each other.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja had been a devotee since his childhood and was extremely serious about spiritual life. He liked Śrīla Gurudeva’s books so much and would acquire them with great enthusiasm. The main topics he discussed with Śrīla Gurudeva were in relation to these books. Śrīla Gurudeva considered and told us that Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was, “*a very high class of Vaiṣṇava*” and yet Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja

would be very humble and submissive before Śrīla Gurudeva. Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was a deeply self-realized soul. Although he was a Sanskrit scholar, highly educated in Vaiṣṇava philosophy and conversant with many of these subjects, he was inspired to ask many questions and submissively hear from Śrīla Gurudeva. I am simply repeating whatever I heard from them.

Once, one of Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja's disciples asked him, "Why aren't you going much to Vṛndāvana, Vraja Māṇḍala, to preach?" Gour Govinda Mahārāja replied, "The *rasa-ācārya* Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is already there. He is doing very nicely. I have no need to go there."

Now in Purī, Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja told Śrīla Gurudeva that he was suffering so much because he was being restricted from speaking *hari-kathā*. "They say, 'Don't come here. This is my zone. This is my territory. You cannot go there. This is not your zone. People are inviting me to go here and there to speak; they want my help and I want to go, but they are always stopping me from going anywhere.'" Śrīla Gurudeva said, "I don't care for all these zones and territories. Where I like, I go. If any institution stops me from speaking *hari-kathā*, then I will give up that institution immediately and go where I can speak *hari-kathā*." Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja replied, "Yes, it is possible for you, but what can I do? It is my duty. I am bound by the rule and regulation. Oh Mahārāja! You are so fortunate, but I am so unfortunate that even though I desire, still I am not allowed to meet with you. I even have had to come in secret."

Śrīla Gurudeva asked, "Why? Many of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's senior disciples are coming to see me." He named a number of them such as Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja, Satsvarūpa Mahārāja, Girirāja Mahārāja, Bhurijana, Jagatarini, Karta and Jadhurani.

"Yes, they can come to you. But if certain devotees find out that I am coming, then the GBC may create problems for me."

Śrīla Gurudeva said that these rules do not apply to him and that he is free to go anywhere to preach, "My Gurudeva's title is *Ācārya Kesarī*, lion among all *ācāryas*. He was so fearless and bold. The cub of a lion will never be a jackal; it will always be a lion. I am also like a lion, I don't fear to preach anywhere or invite anyone to my Māṭha. I have been sleeping in my cave, but now I will jump here and there and catch some very fat sheep and I'll

bring them to my cave. Then they will understand. I don't care what they do." This was before Śrīla Gurudeva had begun his Western preaching.

Once Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja inquired, "Mahārāja I would like to know from you some details about 'rūpānuga' and 'rāgānuga'."

Śrīla Gurudeva replied, "Yes, unless one becomes *rūpānuga*, they cannot understand the Gauḍīya philosophy. Without following the guidelines of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, one will become a *sabajiya* or atheistic.

There is a difference between *rūpānuga* and *rāgānuga*. But first, you should know what "*rāgātmika*" is. Although this topic is high, if you know these things and properly follow Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's instructions, you can advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; otherwise not. So *rāgātmika* refers to the eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa and the eternal associates of His incarnations. Those who are eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa, they are called *rāgātmika-jānā*. This means they are with Kṛṣṇa living in Vraja in Goloka Mahāvana, and when He came to this world, they came with Him. Hearing about their service mood and activities, someone may develop transcendental greed and intensely desire a love like they have—like that of mother Yashoda binding Kṛṣṇa or like His friends, Śrīdama, Sudama or Madhumaṅgala, or like the *vraja-gopīs*. They are called *rāgātmika-jānā*. So the *sabhās* who are serving Kṛṣṇa, the parents who are serving Kṛṣṇa, and the *gopīs* who are serving Kṛṣṇa, they are all *rāgātmika-jānā*.

If someone in this world has some greed for this and wants to follow in the footsteps of the *rāgātmika-bhaktas* and are thus practicing *bhakti* under the guidance of a like-minded bonafide *guru* and *Vaiṣṇava*, wanting to have their mood, then they are called *rāgānuga*. This applies to those who have some intense greed for *bhakti* and who are actually following the process to attain it, not to anyone else. All this is described by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Śrī Bhakti-rāsāmṛta-sindhu* and *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī*.

The *guru* comes to awaken what is already in each soul. The soul's relation with Kṛṣṇa, its name, qualities and all its specialities are already present within. The soul is perfect in itself; its perfection is not brought from outside. Unfortunately *māyā* covers the soul, but when Śrī Guru takes away or removes that *māyā*, then everything is automatically manifested by the causeless mercy of Śrī Guru. What is already there will come out. No new thing will come. No association will change what is already naturally

in the soul. What is in your soul will manifest by hearing, chanting and remembering (*śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *smaraṇa*). Whatever *rasa* is there in the soul will manifest automatically when our *anarthas* disappear. If the soul's *rasa* is *dāsyā-rasa*, that will manifest and one will have little taste for *sakhya-rasa* or *mādhurya-rasa* and vice-versa.

So if a devotee develops greed like Rādhikā's *sakbī* or maidservant, and they practice *bhakti* in this world to attain that, then they are *rāgānuga sādhaka* of *śṛṅgāra rasa* or *madhura rasa*.

*Rāgānuga* is in this world only, not in *aprakāṣa* (unmanifest) *Vṛndāvana* in the spiritual world.

Then Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja asked, “Who is *rūpanuga*?”

Śrīla Gurudeva replied that Rādhikā's maidservants like Rūpa Māñjarī, Rati Māñjarī, Lavaṅga Māñjarī, Rāga Māñjarī, Kastūri Māñjarī, Manjulali Māñjarī, Anaṅga Māñjarī—there are so many *māñjarīs*; they are massaging Rādhikā's feet, giving her betelnut, arranging Her dress, arranging Her hair, giving Her water and whatever services that are needed. The *māñjarīs* never hesitate to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in any situation. So, one who has greed for this kind of service and is following Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmipāda in this world and following Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī, they are called a *rūpānuga sādhaka* of *madhura rasa*.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja then told Śrīla Gurudeva, “Śrīla Mahārāja, I have no language in which to tell you, nor do you have any idea how much pleasure it is for me to receive your darshan like this. I have another question.”

“Yes! Yes, you can ask any question,” said Śrīla Gurudeva, “any question you desire.”

“Why is *rāgānuga* not in *aprakāṣa Vraja*?” he asked.

Śrīla Gurudeva replied, “To clearly comprehend this, it is essential to first understand several points. Bhauma *Vṛndāvana*, the *Vṛndāvana* manifest here in this material world, is called *Sādhana bhūmi*. The *aprakāṣa Vṛndāvana*, in the spiritual world, is called *Siddha bhūmi*. One practices *sādhana* (regulated devotional service) only in this world—not there. A *sādhaka* (devotional practitioner) first has to become a perfect follower here. Only then can he or she enter there. Someone who is immature or on a lower stage, who doesn't have the proper feelings, they cannot enter the *aprakāṣa-līlā*. For such a *sādhaka*, it will take time.

Now *rāgānuga* is two-fold; *rāga* and *anuga*. *Rāga* refers to the ability to enjoy an object or deep attachment for the object of one's love and *anuga* means he who is following or following in the footsteps. *Lobha* is required, that genuine greed to hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa by reading the books of the Gosvāmīs, and especially by being in the association of a *rāgānugā-bhakta*—that is *rāgānuga*. Without the association of *rāgānuga-bhaktas*, the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* will not be properly understood. Hear from them. When one takes pleasure in hearing from a *rāgānuga-rasika* Vaiṣṇava and he develops an unquenchable thirst to acquire the moods of Kṛṣṇa's eternal associates, His *parikāras*, then he is said to be following *rāgātmika* or the intrinsic nature of the eternal associates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Rāgātmika*—whose *ātmā* is completely saturated—engrossed with *rāga*. You should know *rāgānuga* is the process to obtain *Rāgātmikā-bhakti*, eternal spontaneous attachment (*rāga*) or devotion that is characterized by spontaneous attachment to Kṛṣṇa. That spontaneous devotion is the greatest amongst all forms of *bhakti*.

A *rāgānugā-bhakta* is one who is following or practicing *rāgānuga* under proper authorized guidance. *Rāgānuga* is a type of *sādhana-bhakti*. One must practice diligently in this world with an intense greed to attain *rāgātmika-bhāva*. Devotion which follows in the footsteps of such *rāgātmikā-bhakti* is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*. One eagerly desires to be like those *parikāras*. When the heart has this *lobha*, this greed to attain the moods of the eternal associates, it gradually comes to its real and natural state. That *lobha* (transcendental greed) is not found in the conditioned state. One cannot attain it by themselves or by their own efforts alone. It will not come as a result of mental and intellectual prowess. It comes only by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa Himself and by the mercy of a *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava who himself has such greed. Without their grace one cannot have it. You have to come to the point where you must have it by any means.

When that *sādhaka* is mature with the proper feelings, then he may take birth in the manifest, *prakāṣa*-Vṛndāvana and be guided by an eternal associate where Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are going on somewhere in the material universe. There the *sādhaka* will be further trained and reach perfection. That is the perfectional stage and at that point, it's up to Kṛṣṇa. If He

wants to bring us to another universe where He is travelling or wants us to enter *aprakāṣa* Vṛndāvana, we go spontaneously.

All *rūpanugas* are *rāgānugas*, but not all *rāgānugas* are *rūpanugas*.

Also, whenever “*anuga*” is added, may it be *rāgānuga* or *rūpānuga*, we have to understand that it is in this material world.

While in their *sadbhā* form, they serve in the following way:

*sāṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhibh kālāvasānī-kṛtau*  
*nidrābhāra-vibhārakādi-vijitau cātyanta-dīnau ca yau*  
*rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa-smṛter madhurimānandena sammobitau*  
*vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī-jīva-gopālakau*

*Śad-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka 6*

I worship the Six Gosvāmīs, who passed all their time in chanting the holy names, singing devotional songs and offering *dāṅḍavat-praṇāma*, thereby humbly fulfilling their vow to complete the chanting of a fixed number of holy names daily. In this way they utilized their valuable lives and conquered over eating and sleeping. They were always very meek and humble and thus they became enchanted in divine rapture, remembering Śrī Rādhā-kṛṣṇa’s sweet qualities.

With their *siddha-deha*, they serve as follows:

*tāmbūlārpaṇa-pāda-mardana-payodānābbhisārādibhir*  
*vrndārāṇya-maheśvarīm priyatayā yās toṣayanti priyāb*  
*prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhī-kulād āpi kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāb*  
*kelī-bhūmiṣu rūpa-māñjarī-mukhās tā dāsikāb saṁśraye*

*Vraja-vilāsa-stava, śloka 38*

The *prāṇa-preṣṭha* group of *sakhīs* always keep Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the Queen of Vṛndāvana, fully contented with their loving service by supplying Her with *tāmbūla*, massaging Her feet, bringing water, setting up secret meetings with Her paramour, and so on. However, I desire to take shelter of those maidservants of Śrīmatī who have acquired an even more unreserved attitude than the *prāṇa-preṣṭha sakhīs*, and who thus draw more affection from

Rādhikā, and are privileged to serve Rādhikā unhesitatingly at Her most intimate moments. I take shelter of these *gopī* maidservants who have Rūpa-māñjarī as their leader and I am proud to have them as my *śikṣā-gurus* in devotional service.”

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja then inquired, “Śrīla Mahārāja, you said that all *rūpānugas* are *rāgānugas*, but not all *rāgānugas* are *rūpānugas*. What is the reason given by the *ācāryas*?”

Śrīla Gurudeva replied, “Rūpānugas are first *rāgānuga* and then *rūpānuga*. Rāgānugas are in a particular mood or sentiment such as *dāsyā-rasa*, *sakhyā-rasa*, *vātsalyā-rasa* or *mādhuryā-rasa*. Some have in their hearts an intense desire to serve Kṛṣṇa in a manner of a friend, a parent or a lover. Those who have greed for such service and such kind of love are *rāgānuga sādhaka*. For example, there are those who desire to follow in the mood of Subala *sakhā* or Mother Yaśoda or Lalitā, Rūpa Māñjarī, etc. In the same way, those who have a desire to serve Lord Śrī Rāma following Hanumāna or Lakṣmana, or desire to serve any other incarnation of God—they too are *rāgānuga*.

On the other hand, *rūpānugas* are only those who are exclusively following Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmipāda in this world with their *sādhaka* body and Śrī Rūpa Māñjarī with their *siddha-deha* (spiritual body).

Rūpa Māñjarī is an eternal associate of the Divine Couple. One should deeply meditate on the qualities and *bhāva*, the mood Rūpa Māñjarī has in serving Them. Rūpānugas are exclusively in *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, and more specifically they are in *parakīya-śṛṅgāra-rasa*, the paramour mood. Not only paramour, but a particular mood of paramour—that mood only the *māñjarī* (*nitya-sakhī* and *prāṇa-sakhī*) *gopīs* have.

Sometimes it is misunderstood that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja was only in *sakhyā-rasa* and cannot give *mādhuryā-rasa*. This is not a fact. He came to this world only for spreading the mission of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmipāda. The entire disciplic-succession of our Gauḍīya *sampradāya* is *rūpānuga*. The *sampradāya* of Nimbāditya Ācārya is *rāgānuga*, but of Dvārakā—of Satyabhāmā and Rukmīṇī. The followers of his mission are not like Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī or his followers. Only the *ācāryas* coming in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are *rūpānuga*. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja has come especially to give this *rūpānuga-bhakti*. He did

not come only to give *rāgānuga* or to only give *sādhana-bhakti* or *vaidbhī-bhakti*. He could not give this fully to his general disciples at that time, because they were not mature enough. How could he openly preach this topic when there was practically no one ready to understand? Even now, decades later, hardly anyone is trying to understand this. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja was mostly engaged in cutting the jungles—the thorns of impersonalism and voidism.

All our *ācāryas* have told us to follow the Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇavas and do *bhajana* in this way. This is the process. Gurudeva shows us how to perform *bhajana*, otherwise we will never know what is spontaneous devotion. These things we have to deeply understand.

If we have not received sufficient instructions of how to do our *bhajana* from our *dīkṣā-guru*, if we are sincere, mercifully he will send a *śikṣā-guru* to help us. There are sixty-four limbs of *bhakti*. Whatever Rūpa Gosvāmī has given, we must follow. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja didn't teach anything different and neither did his *guru*. Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's idea was to inspire devotees for this service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the most powerful among all the *gopīs* to capture Kṛṣṇa's heart and control Him completely, and in order to become Her *dāsī* (maidservant), we will have to become *rūpānuga*. In this line we are almost all *rūpānugas*. Without being *rūpānuga* – without the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Mañjarī – we cannot serve Rādhikā.

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭam*  
*sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale*  
*svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ*  
*dadāti sva-padāntikam*

When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī give me shelter under his lotus feet? Because he is the dearest servant of Śrī Caitanyadeva, understanding His innermost desire, he was able to establish His mission in this world.

A *rāgānuga* who follows the manner and mood in which Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī serves Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—those who are in the same mood as Rūpa Mañjarī in their constitutional form and who perform the same

devotional activities as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī—are *rūpānuga*. A *rūpānuga* serving Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa following Rūpa Māñjarī is more inclined towards Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, happy in Her happiness and anguished in Her suffering. Such a follower is a *rūpānuga*. This can only be understood by exclusively following a *Rūpānuga ācārya*.”

Śrīla Gurudeva then gave some examples from *sakhya-rasa*, *vātsalya-rasa* and *mādhurya-rasa*.

Another topic of discussion was the eternal *dhāma* of Purī, of Navadvīpa and of Vṛndāvana. Which was superior—Navadvīpa, Purī or Rāya Rāmānanda’s place?

Śrīla Gurudeva said that Mahāprabhu has the mood of Vṛṣabhānundinī in Navadvīpa, and in Purī He has the mood of Vīyoginī-Rādhā, and at Godāvarī-tata he has mood of Samyoginī-Rādhā. Vṛṣabhānundinī’s mood however, is topmost.

Navadvīpa is non-different from Vṛndāvana, and Vṛndāvana is far superior to Godāvarī (Kurukṣetra) and to Dwaraka.

After their discussion Śrīla Gurudeva went back upstairs to his room to write, as at the time he was in the middle of writing one of his many books. Hearing us upstairs, Madhumanagal opened Satsvarup Mahārāja’s door and I then informed him about Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja being there. Hearing the message Śrī Satsvarup Mahārāja came downstairs and met with Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja.

Initially I thought, I should not disclose all the confidential topics discussed between Śrīla Gurudeva and Śrī Gour Govinda Mahārāja. Later on I made up my mind, thinking if I do not publish all these topics, then it will be a big loss for the whole world, especially for the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. So, I will publish more of the topics they discussed in Jagannātha Purī in the next volume.

Besides *rāgānuga* and *rūpānuga*, other topics and questions that they discussed were:

- (1) Whether Parjanya *gopa* was alive or not?
- (2) Whether Kṛṣṇa and His friends remained silent or not during the serving of Prasāda.
- (3) Whether Kṛṣṇa’s uncles stayed with Him or not while serving *prasādam*.

- (4) Did Rādhikā know how to play the flute?
- (5) Whether Jatilā had doubts about Rādhikā.
- (6) Was Rādhikā ever caught red-handed by Jatilā?
- (7) Whether the *māñjarīs* are married or not.
- (8) Is there any proof that *māñjarīs* took part in *rāsa* dance?
- (9) Whether *māñjarīs* united with Kṛṣṇa?
- (10) By which *mantra* Rādhikā worshipped the sun-god?
- (11) Who will recall the pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa? What will happen to an unworthy person who will try to recall the pastimes?
- (12) What evidences are there that friends think themselves equal to Kṛṣṇa?
- (13) What defines the term “*rasika*”?
- (14) Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa and Nityānanda is Balarāma. Where is the proof?
- (15) Why Kṛṣṇa is compared with the Sun?
- (16) Did the Vraja *gopīs* admit Kṛṣṇa is Nārāyaṇa?
- (17) In which mellow do Parikṣit Mahārāja and Śukrācārya belong to?
- (18) Did Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma go to the cow grazing field every day — what is your opinion?
- (19) Did Kṛṣṇa ever wear the garment of Rādhārānī to cheat other *sakbīs*?
- (20) Did Kṛṣṇa perform pastimes with other *sakbīs* at a time when He was courting with Rādhārānī?

At the end of their meeting, Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja heartfully thanked Śrīla Gurudeva, saying he was eternally indebted to him, “I have never heard such wonderful examples. I would like to hear more, but I do not think my time here will be much longer.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was very heartbroken for being restricted in his preaching in many ways. He said to Śrīla Gurudeva, “If I leave this world, please take care of my disciples”.

On Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja’s disappearance day Śrīla Gurudeva said, “When I went to Purī, however, he came with a disciple, Birbhadra *brahmacārī*, and we discussed many subject matters. He was so bold that he never cared for criticism of his *siddhāntic* understanding. He told what I tell – what is written in *Jaiva-dharma* – that no conditioned souls ever came from Goloka Vṛndāvana. They came from Mahā Viṣṇu, or from the *tatāṣṭha* (marginal) region. Also, just as I do in my classes – as I

begin from the stage of *śraddhā* and finish at *vraja-prema*, he used to do the same... They wanted to ban him totally, to stop him from preaching proper *siddhānta*, but he told them, “I must obey my Prabhupāda...He was very bold, and for that reason he left his body in Māyāpura...”

Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja was fixed to present only the unadulterated truth, ready to give up his life for it, saying “You can ban me or I can give up my life, but I cannot change my *siddhānta* as you are asking.”

I was told that in 1995, the GBC voted, with a more than twenty man committee, on the origin of the *jīva* and that a high majority of the members voted in favor that the *jīva* falls from Vaikuṅṭha. When Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja wanted to speak to them the proper *siddhānta*, he was checked from speaking as they said they had already voted. This made him very unhappy. He questioned, “How many are liberated in that society or body?” With great conviction he said, “Whatever we say must be confirmed by *guru*, *sādhū* and *śāstra*. They are voting on *siddhānta*! Just see the situation now...” Gour Govinda Mahārāja gave the example of a dog walking on the street. “If ten men vote that the dog is a goat, does that make the dog a goat?”

Just before his disappearance Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja confided to his disciples, “Prior to his departure, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda said the material world is not a fit place for any gentleman to live in. I’m also thinking of leaving. I will ask my Gopāla, and whatever He tells me to do, I will do.”

On February 6, 1996, on the auspicious appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, Śrīla Gour Govinda Mahārāja, while speaking *hari-kathā*, left this world in Lord Caitanya’s *holy dhāma*, Māyāpura.



## Pañtimes with Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja was a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and god-uncle of Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa (Śrīla Gurudeva's *brahmacārī*'s name). He also sometimes came to stay at Devānanda Gauḍīya Māṭha with Parama Gurudeva, and Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa was his first personal assistant. Other times he would stay in Chinchura (a city in India near Kolkata) in West Bengal, and at those times also, Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa would assist and serve him in many ways. When Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja went to bathe in the Ganges, Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa would accompany him and assist him by carrying his cloth, etc. After taking bath, Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa would wash and carry his wet cloth back to the Chinchura *māṭha*, where he would arrange his tilak, a mirror for applying it, and clean dry cloth. In this way he used to serve, caring for Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja's every need.

One of the only things Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa had brought with him when he joined the *māṭha* was a lota, a small round pot used for carrying water. One day, Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa were bathing in the Gaṅgā when all of a sudden, for some reason, who can tell why, the water rose and a wave of water carried the lota away. Śrīla Purī Mahārāja commented positively that this was a good thing. He laughed and said, "Gaṅgā-devī has carried away the last remembrance and last attachment of your *purva-āśrama* (life before joining the *māṭha*). That means Gaṅgā-devī wants to cut off your attachment to previous memories; it is very auspicious for your *bhajana* and for your *guru-sevā*."

When Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja was about one hundred years old, in around the year 2000, Śrīla Gurudeva went to Jagganatha Purī to pay his obeisances and to visit him. Śrīla Purī Mahārāja asked if Gurudeva remembered this incident. Śrīla Gurudeva said he did and they both laughed in heartened memory of it.

Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja was very fond of Śrīla Gurudeva's books, and he requested regularly that whenever he published a new book that he sends it to him. Śrīla Gurudeva always used to arrange that he would get those new books. Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja was very loving to Śrīla Gurudeva and would always tell others that Śrīla Gurudeva was a pure *vaiṣṇava-sevaka* and *guru*.



## Beginning of Śrīla Gurudeva's Preaching in the West

### Obtaining Visas for the United States

Śrīla Gurudeva was a very humble Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava, whole-heartedly dedicated to serving his Guru Mahārāja and his mission his entire life. He was very simple, easy to please and unpretentious. He had no desire to travel outside the holy *dhāmā*, yet he was preaching actively wherever he went. He had no desire to take disciples, yet he was willing to train and take under his care, anyone who came to him. Due to so many requests from devotees and also because of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's request for him to preach to his disciples, Śrīla Gurudeva decided to travel to the West. At that time Śrīla Gurudeva had no *māṭha* in Delhi. Whenever we used to go preaching in Delhi, we used to stay in different places, at the homes of various devotees there; sometimes we would stay in Rajashri Garden and sometimes in Shalimar Bagh.

We came to Delhi to get our papers ready for travelling. We were staying in Shalimar Bagh. It was time to get our visas for America. Our host was concerned and commented that it would be easier for Śrīla Gurudeva to get the visa as he was a senior citizen, but for us *brahmacārīs*, my god-brother Puṇḍarīka Prabhu and I (Navīna Kṛṣṇa Brahmācārī at that time), it would be very difficult to get the *visas*. In fact he seriously doubted that we, “the bachelor boys” as he called us would get accepted at all. Of this, he was certain and said our attempt would be futile.

I replied, “You don't know the glories of a saintly person, and especially that of Śrīla Gurudeva. I have full faith that if this is the desire of Śrīla Gurudeva that we accompany him to the West for preaching, then we will get our visas without any difficulty. Of this I am fully certain.”

Our host had his reservations. He said, “I have seen so many saintly persons, I have worked very hard from my childhood to prosper as I

am today, and I have travelled many times throughout the world for my business. I run an international business, Navīna Prabhu and I must say, you have no experience of this world.”

“True,” I said, “you know much more about this material world than I. There is no doubt that you are more experienced than me in this matter. You may have seen many saintly persons but you don’t know the glory and very strong will of our Gurudeva. In the future, after you see his preaching, you will learn the glory of our Śrīla Gurudeva.”

The host said, “I’ve also seen so many *gurus*. You don’t need to advise me about any *guru*.”

I answered, “Yes Prabhuji, you may possibly know so many so called Gurus, but I am sure you do not know anything about Śrīla Gurudeva. Today you will know something by his causeless mercy.”

The host then said, “I have no objection if you want to go to the West, but the both of you won’t be able to obtain a visa,” Our host was quite convinced of that and laboured this point. He suggested, “If Śrīla Gurudeva wants, I can send you and Puṇḍarīka Prabhu both through my office, putting you in pants and shirt and tie. Because I pay so much income tax to the government, with my office letterhead, you will be able to get a visa very easily.”

I politely rejected the offer. “I will never wear anything but my saffron cloth. I certainly would never put on pants and shirt and tie. Thank you for offering though. Gurudeva desires that we should go to the West, so it must happen. Please wait and see what will happen. The visa application process has begun; we simply have to complete the formality. You will see yourself, and then you will understand the glories of our Śrīla Gurudeva.”

Our host was a dedicated devotee of Śrīla Gurudeva, but he was unyielding on this point. “Don’t argue with me,” he insisted. “You will see.”

He was doubtful but still he drove Śrīla Gurudeva, Puṇḍarīka and I to the American Embassy. My intention in narrating this is to show the glories of our Śrīla Gurudeva. If a *mahā-bhāgavata* desires something, it is bound to happen. I beg that our host, after reading this, will not take any offence.

In applying for an American visa at that time in India, one was first required to give a bank draft. If the visa was approved, one had to make a

further deposit and submit one's passport, which was then to be collected the next working day.

The passport personnel interviewed us and took our passports and requested us to pay the fee and our passports were to be ready the next day. We deposited more money, and they asked us to return the following day to pick up our passports.

Rāmacandra Prabhu was waiting for Śrīla Gurudeva outside the American embassy. He drove us to his residence. I then phoned our host to tell him the good news. He was still doubtful and said, "How do you know you've obtained your visas?"

I told him that people are saying we would get our visas. Our host replied that we shouldn't trust the common people. Common people may say so many things. I have no trust on them. What is the evidence that you have obtained the visa? Then I explained how the process was advancing through the normal procedure, that there were no problems, and that they said we could collect our passports tomorrow: an indication, according to the people at the embassy, the visas had been approved.

Hearing our story our friend and host then relented, "Yes, I suppose then that they must have been approved."

I said, "Oh! You had so much doubts earlier and made so many negative comments. I hope now that you understand the glories of Śrīla Gurudeva?"

He replied in a low voice, his false ego washed away, "Yes, I have no more doubt in the power of Śrīla Gurudeva's desire to preach everywhere."

## Representative Heads West

By the unfathomable sweet will of the Lord and His pure representatives, Śrīla Gurudeva boarded the plane at the Delhi airport, finally heading to the Western world. This was a monumental time in the history of the world, greater than anything that our mundane history books landmark as important turning points or world changing events. By the blessings of such a *mahā-bhāgavata*, all perfection can be reached. This was the same airport where he alone personally greeted Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja when he first returned to India in 1967 from his groundbreaking preaching success in America.

Śrīla Gurudeva is a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava of the highest order, and his going to the West, is for no other reason than to give the highest goal of our life, *prema-bhakti*. His ability to transparently deliver the precise teachings of our *sampradāya* Ācāryas is outstanding. He is in the direct line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda and a direct disciple of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He has imbibed their moods and their teachings, as well as those of Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and the Six Gosvāmīs. He represents all of them and the entire *paramparā* and by his immense love and devotion, he is sprinkling their mercy upon all of us. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, a close associate and his *śikṣā-guru*, wrote Gurudeva and said, “Our relationship is certainly based on spontaneous love. That is why there is no chance of us forgetting one another.”

Śrīla Gurudeva’s departing India for the West is a natural progression in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s mission to spread Lord Caitanya’s movement — love of God — all over the world. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the Supreme Lord Himself, predicted that in every town and village the chanting of the Holy Name would be propagated. Not just anyone can fulfill this prediction and fulfill the *mano-bhīṣṭam*, the heart’s desire of the Lord. Only a great personal associate specifically empowered by the Lord, like these two great stalwarts of Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* army, can truly fulfill His heart’s desire.

The Western world is on the whole filled with *tamo-guṇa* (the mode of ignorance) and *raja-guṇa* (the mode of passion). Humans are madly absorbed in sense gratification and for the most part, they are falling into the abyss of ignorance which brings them down into lower and lower species of life. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupādā has said that this material world is not a fit place for a gentleman. A rare opportunity is awaiting us. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja came and Śrīla Gurudeva has come with the most precious, matchless gift, *pure bhakti*. If we sincerely follow in this line with faith, Gaura-Kṛṣṇa and Their most merciful representatives will eagerly save us.

## First Stop, Holland

Śrīla Gurudeva arrived in Holland on May 5, 1996. This was the auspicious beginning of his first worldwide preaching tour in the West. Coincidentally, this day is one of the most prominent days already being celebrated in Holland and throughout Europe as the anniversary of *Liberation Day*, celebrating the day they were freed of Hitler's rule after World War II. The devotees came not for that, but to see Śrīla Gurudeva and celebrate his coming to remove ignorance and give real liberation, *bhakti*. Śrīpādā Brajanātha Prabhu and others arranged for many devotees to meet with Śrīla Gurudeva in Holland. They came in large numbers to welcome Śrīla Gurudeva with enthusiastic kirtans. Everyone was happily and excitedly chanting and dancing along with Śrīla Gurudeva. "Somehow Brajanātha Prabhu and his wife Vrinda attracted me to come here." Śrīla Gurudeva addressed the crowd, "I am so happy to come. Never had I dreamed that I would leave Vṛndāvana, nor did I ever want to leave Vṛndāvana to come to the West. But surrounded by devotees like Vṛndā, Brajanātha, Tuṅgavidyā, Vṛndāvana-vilasini and others, I think I'm still in Vṛndāvana. I am never out of Vṛndāvana."

Śrīla Gurudeva explained to them, "Swāmī Mahārāja did not come just to clear the jungle and thorns of *māyāvāda* and voidism. Swāmījī wanted to give all that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and all our *guru-varga* came to give, the *prema* of *unnatojjvala-rasa-sva-bhakti-Śrīyam*; but in a very short time Kṛṣṇa called him and he left. So perhaps he has called me to give something to you all and make you qualified so you will never give up Kṛṣṇa and always hear *hari-kathā*... Swāmī Mahārāja has written so māny things in his books but without developing your *bhakti*, you will not be able to understand... So I have come to help you all without any personal gain..."

Śrīla Gurudeva gravely related how in the last moments of his manifest presence in this world, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja had called him and said, "Please excuse any wrong I have done. While preaching many times we say things contrary to each other or we cut each others philosophical arguments. Please ask my Godbrothers to forgive my

offences. I have said that my Godbrothers are doing nothing but sleeping... But I know they are so qualified. I took *sannyāsa* from Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, instructions from Śrīdhara Mahārāja...”

Śrīla Gurudeva replied, “There’s no *aparādha*. Whatever you have said was done for preaching and for teaching your disciples. You said something as a Godbrother but your mood was not contrary, like Citraketu Mahārāja commented something against Lord Śiva in the presence of Pārvatī Devī. You have done marvellous work spreading Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s order all over the world. You have changed flesh eaters and wine takers into devotees. We are so much indebted to you.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “You must do my Śamādhi and also teach my devotees to grow up in *bhakti* and not stay at the same level...”

Śrīla Gurudeva: “Swāmījī never told anyone that you should disrespect any Vaiṣṇavas. Just like Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has told, if you want to do *bhakti*, then you should give respect to all the Vaiṣṇavas, the Gurus, the pure *brāhmaṇas* and others. This was the principle of Lord Caitanya and all the followers of Lord Caitanya. Try to honour all of Lord Caitanya’s followers, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa kavirāja... Śikṣā Gurus and Dikṣā Gurus are equal. Try to understand—if they are both qualified, they are the same. ...”

Śrīla Gurudeva ignited a great fire of enthusiasm right from the very start of his setting foot in the West. Seeing and hearing Śrīla Gurudeva, everyone became bright-faced and happy. After successfully preaching for about a week in Holland and enthusing all the devotees, Śrīla Gurudeva and his entourage proceeded to their next destination—England.



## Prayers to Śrīla Gurudeva



### Śrīla Gurudeva's Ārati

Below is a song I composed for the pleasure of Śrīla Gurudeva:

*jaya jaya gurudever āratiko śobhā  
yamunā-taṭa braja-tīrthe bhakta-mana lobbhā*

All glories, all glories to the beautiful *ārati* ceremony of Śrīla Gurudeva, performed on the banks of the Yamunā in the sacred Vraja<sup>11</sup>, attracting the minds of the devotees.

*rāga-mārga siddhāntera mūrṭimanta ati  
keśavera priya tumi nārāyaṇa yati*

O Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, you are the complete embodiment of the conclusive truths (*siddhāntas*) of the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, and you are the beloved *sannyāsī* disciple of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*gaura-vāṇī dhūpa tava śrī vedānta dīpa  
pāścātya pracārakera tumi hao bhūpa*

In your *ārati* the message of Śrī Gaurasundara is the incense, and *śrī vedānta* is the ghee lamp<sup>12</sup>. You are the monarch among those who preached in the West.<sup>13</sup>

- .....
- 11 Navadvīpa is situated on the western bank of the Gaṅgā, which is where Yamunā flows. So *yamunā-taṭa braja-tīrthe*, at this Yamunā in Navadvīpa which is non-different from Vraja, Śrīla Gurudeva's *ārati* is being performed. *Braja-tīrtha* can also mean 'attracting the minds of the devotees headed by Śrīpad Tīrtha Mahārāja and Brajanātha Prabhu'
  - 12 Just as the ghee lamp dispels darkness, the *bhaktivedānta sannyāsīs* under your shelter dissipate the darkness in the *jīvas'* hearts with their *bari-karbā*.
  - 13 Another meaning of *bhūpa*: *bhū* – earth, *pa* – to maintain. In other words you maintain and nourish the *bhakti-latā*, the creeper of devotion, of all of your disciples and followers on the whole earth.

*sārasvata-keśava-dhārā jala-śaṅkha dhāra  
pālya-dāsī madhu-snehe mugdha carācara*

The water in the conch shell is the current, that is, the line of thought, of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. By the honey-like affection (*madhu-sneha*) of Śrī Rādhā's maidservants, Her *pālya-dāsīs*, all beings – moving and non-moving alike – are enchanted.

*tila-phula jinni nāsā śrī aṅga sundara  
deśī videśī bhakta tava puṣpa sambhāra*

Your beautiful nose defeats the beauty of sesame flower and your limbs are very beautiful. The Indian and foreign devotees are the flowers and other ingredients of your worship.

*sevānande premānanda cāmara dūlāya  
madhukanṭhe kṛṣṇa-dāsa nīrājana gāya*

Śrīpad Premānanda Prabhu waves the *cāmara* in the bliss of serving you in uncountable ways, while Kṛṣṇa dāsa<sup>14</sup> sings your *ārātī* in a sweet beautiful voice.

*mahānande bhakta-vṛnda bājāya mṛdaṅga<sup>15</sup>  
mādhava vana<sup>16</sup> akātare māge tava saṅga*

In great joy, throngs of devotees are playing the *mṛdaṅga*. [But,] Mādhava and Vana, fervently beg for your association.

\* \* \* \* \*

14 Kṛṣṇa dāsa – the living entities situated in the constitutional nature of being the servant of Kṛṣṇa, or devotees whose name includes the word *kṛṣṇa*, or the *kīrtaniya* Kṛṣṇa dāsa.

15 *mṛdaṅga* – *brhat-mṛdaṅga*. This refers to the publishing department. The devotees who are engaged in publishing services in any language anywhere on Earth are joyfully beating that *mṛdaṅga* for your pleasure.

16 *mādhava vana* – This refers to Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja and Śrīpad Vana Mahārāja especially *mādhava* means the composer of this *arati* song, written in 2005 in presence of Śrīla Gurudeva who was quite pleased with this *kīrtan*.]

In the eternal pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world, the identity of Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is Śrī Raman Māñjarī. She is Śrīmatī Rādhikā's eternal loving companion whose identity and service is revealed in the following *aṣṭakam*. Śrīla Gurudeva mercifully authorized that this *aṣṭakam* may be released after his disappearance for the benefit of those fortunate devotees who are very serious in their *sādhana-bhajana*.

Śrī Ramaṇa-māñjarī-aṣṭakam  
(visamavṛttena viracitam )

अहर्निशम् भावनामृतायाम् भाविता भूत्वा विस्मरयसि त्वम् लौकिक गुणगाथा ।  
तत्तद्भाव बर्धनार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्लरि कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ १ ॥

*abarniśam bhāvanāmṛtāyām bhāvitā  
bhūtvā vismarayasi tvam laukika guṇagāthā  
tattadbhāva bardhanārthaṁ tvam kalpavallari  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa mañjari (1)*

Continuously absorbed in Kṛṣṇa *prema*, you have forgotten your *sādhaka-deha* (manifest body in this material world). You are a desire creeper that increases the *tat-tat-bhāva* mood of the *māñjarīs*; by your mercy you may reveal our constitutional spiritual form and ecstatic loving mood (*māñjarī-bhāva*). When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

पाटलवस्त्र चम्पकद्युति मनोहरं त्वम् श्रीराधिकायाः अभिसार तव नित्यकाम ।  
अभिसार कामार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्लरि कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ २ ॥

*pāṭalavastra campakadyuti manoharam  
tvam śrīrādhikāyāḥ abhisāra tava nityakāma  
abhisāra kāmārthaṁ tvam kalpavallari  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa mañjari (2)*

Your attire is pink in color and your bodily complexion is golden like the beautiful golden plumeria. You are so attractive that even

Kṛṣṇa becomes bewildered by seeing you. You are Rādhā's eternal loving companion and your intimate service is to assist Her for *abbisāra* (when Rādhikā is proceeding to meet with Kṛṣṇa at night, at the appointed secret rendezvous place). You are a desire creeper for Rādhikā's *abbisāra*. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

कृष्णाकृष्ण निशायोग्य श्रृंगार कृत्वा अभिसारार्थं कृत्वा क्लृप्त कर्पूरभूषा।  
श्रीराधा-अभिसारार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्लीरि कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ ३ ॥

*krṣṇākrṣṇa niśāyogyā śṛṅgāra kṛtvā  
abbisārārthaṁ kṛtvā kṛpta karpūrabhūṣā  
śrīrādhā-abbisārārthaṁ tvam kalpavallāri  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa mañjari* (3)

You will expertly decorate Rādhikā, disguising Her with different colourful matching clothes according to the visibility of the moon during the night, sometimes, during white fortnight, decorating Her with white ornaments and smearing camphor on Her body, and on black fortnight, dressing Her in deep dark color clothing. You conceal Rādhikā by cheating the people in general for Rādhikā must not be seen by them and the secret rendezvous place must be kept hidden. You are a desire creeper for Rādhikā's *abbisāra*. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

निशायाम् पथि वृक्षं दृष्ट्वा मुण्डित मुण्डम् विवर्ण भविष्यति श्रीराधायाः तुण्डम्।  
राधाभिसारार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्लीरि कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ ४ ॥

*niśāyām pathi vṛkṣaṁ drṣṭvā muṇḍita muṇḍam  
vivarṇa bhaviṣyati śrīrādhāyāḥ tuṇḍam  
rādhābbisārārthaṁ tvam kalpavallāri  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa mañjari* (4)

Seeing tree stumps on the way to *abbisāra* during the night, Rādhikā's face becomes completely pale. She thinks that the very persons She is concealing Herself from, are standing there. You will say, "Oh Rādhē! Do not worry. They are only tree stumps, not

people.” You are a desire creeper for Rādhikā’s *abbisāra*. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

अभिसार काले तव स्कन्धे मुदिता न्यस्तहस्ता गुवः प्रतारनार्थं शिञ्जित (त्वया) वस्त्रवृता ।  
गुवः प्रतारनार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्ली कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ ५ ॥

*abbisāra kāle tava skandhe muditā nyastabastā  
guravaḥ pratāranārthaṁ śiñjit (tvayā) vastravṛtā  
guravaḥ pratāranārthaṁ tvam kalpavallāri  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa mañjari (5)*

Being very pleased with you, Rādhikā will keep Her arm on your shoulder during her *abbisāra* towards Kṛṣṇa. You will wrap a cloth around Her ankle bells so that no noise should be heard. In serving to conceal Rādhikā from Her superiors, you very cleverly arrange for whatever She requires at any moment. You are a desire creeper for cheating and tricking Her superiors. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

अभिसार शिक्षायार्थं कण्टक कर्दमाक्त प्राङ्गणे श्रीराधां चालयति (अति) मृदु संगोपने ।  
अभिसार शिक्षायार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्ली कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ ६ ॥

*abbisāra śikṣāyārthaṁ kaṅṭaka kardamākta prāṅgane  
śrīrādhāṁ cālayati (ati) mṛdu saṅgopane  
abbisāra śikṣāyārthaṁ tvam kalpavallāri  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa mañjari (6)*

To best train and prepare Rādhikā for *abbisāra* at night, you place thorns here and there and pour water on the ground to make it muddy. Then you assist Rādhikā in practicing how to perfectly walk in the forest for *abbisāra* on a slippery, dark and rainy night. To teach Her *abbisāra*, you are a desire creeper. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

अत्युकट मान प्रसाधनार्थं श्रीराधायाः अपेक्षयति युक्ति सदा सुवलोच्चलनयोः ।  
राधा-मानोत्कर्षार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्ली कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरि ॥ ७ ॥

*atyukṭa māna prasādbhanārtbhaṁ śrīrādhāyāḥ  
apekṣayati yukti sadā suvalojjalayoh  
rādhā-mānotkarṣārthaṁ tvam kalpavallāri  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa māñjari (7)*

To nourish Rādhikā's enchanting and inconceivable mood of *māna* or sulkiness, you always consult with Kṛṣṇa's *priya-narmā-sakhās* like Subala and Ujjwal. You are a desire-creeper for increasing the intensity of Rādhā's sulky mood. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

जित्वा ब्रजराज सूनुम् वाक्युद्धे श्रीरासेश्वर्य्यः कृपा लभसि गणमध्ये।  
रासेश्वर्य्यः कृपार्थं त्वम् कल्पवल्लीरि कृपा कदा करिष्यसि माम् श्रीरमण मञ्जरी ॥ ८ ॥

*jitvā vrajarāja sūnum vākyaudghe  
śrīrāseśvaryaḥ kṛpā labhasi gaṇamadhye  
rāseśvaryaḥ kṛpārthaṁ tvam kalpavallāri  
kṛpā kadā kariṣyasi mām śrīramaṇa māñjari (8)*

Being victorious in a serious debate against Kṛṣṇa, the son of the king of Vraja, you, among Lalitā's associates, received the mercy of Rāseśvarī. You are a desire creeper because of receiving mercy from Rāseśvarī. When, oh when, will that day come when you will bestow your mercy upon me?

इतीममद्भुत नवीन स्तोत्रं निशाम्य श्रीरमण मञ्जरी।  
ललितायाः गणे स्थानं दत्त्वा करिष्यसि नित्य सहचरि ॥ ९ ॥

*itīmamadbhuta navīna stotraṁ niśamya śrīramaṇa māñjari  
lalitāyāḥ gaṇe sthānaṁ datvā kariṣyasi nitya sabacari (9)*

Upon hearing this new, astonishing, unprecedented and ever-fresh prayer about you, kindly give me some place within the associates of Lalitadevi and make me your eternal bosom friend.

In this last verse of Śrī Raman Māñjarī Aṣṭakam, the word “*navina*” carries different meanings.<sup>17</sup> By the causeless mercy of Śrīla Gurudeva and

17 *Nāvina* means primarily: (1) the *brahmācārī* name of Śrī Mādhava Mahārāja, the composer and author of this *aṣṭakam* prayer (2) Ever-fresh prayer (3) New prayer

the influence of their sincere *bhajana*, devotees will discover and relish many new meanings.

After the Janmāṣṭamī festival in 2008 at Śrī Giridhārī-Gauḍīya Māṭha, I prayed to Śrīla Gurudeva's lotus feet and then said to him, "I have composed one *aṣṭakama*; I want to recite it for you. Would you like to hear it now?"

Śrīla Gurudeva said, "Ok, go ahead."

I used to write some *kīrtana* from time to time and recite it to Śrīla Gurudeva. He used to become very happy hearing them. So, when I recited this *aṣṭakam*, Gurudeva looked at me and said, "How have you snatched my heart and put it on a piece of paper. How do you know all these things?"

I humbly replied, "Oh Gurudeva, this is only possible by your causeless mercy."

Gurudeva enquired, "Who taught all these details to you."

I replied, "Gurudeva, only you, no one else."

Śrīla Gurudeva said, "I never explained anything about this to anyone. So tell me frankly how did you know all these details?"

(Due to deep intimacy, we used to joke with each other from time to time.) Śrīla Gurudeva said, "Do not joke with me. Don't play with me. Tell me frankly how have you come to know all this? When did you compose this *aṣṭakam*?"

I replied, "I composed this *aṣṭakam* in 1992. After that so many changes or corrections have taken place inside this *aṣṭakam*. So I want to know from you if this *aṣṭakāma* is final or any changes will be required. No more *spburti* (transcendental vision or revelation) is coming into my heart."

Gurudeva replied, "This is final, no more changes are required. Now you have to open your heart. How you came to know all this details about my constitutional form and service?"

I replied, "Oh, Gurudeva! After His renounced order Mahāprabhu was in Jagannātha Purī. During the cart festival of Lord Jagannātha-deva, Śrīman Mahāprabhu was uttering one verse from the mundane literature named *Sābitya darpaṇa* and *Kāvya-prakāśa*. The *śloka* was:

*yaḥ kaumāra-haraḥ sa eva hi varas tā eva caitra-kṣapās  
te conmīlita-mālatī-surabhayaḥ prauḍhāḥ kadambānilāḥ  
sā caivāsmi tathāpi tatra surata-vyāpāra-līlā-vidbau  
revā-rodhasi vetasī-taru-tale cetaḥ samutkaṅṭhate*

Padyavali 386

That very personality who stole away my heart during my youth is now again my master. These are the same moonlit nights of the month of Caitra. The same fragrance of *mālatī* flowers is there, and the same sweet breezes are blowing from the kadamba forest. In our intimate relationship, I am also the same lover, yet still my mind is not happy here. I am eager to go back to that place on the bank of the Revā under the Vetasī tree. That is my desire.

All devotees became surprised why Śrīman Mahāprabhu was reciting this mundane lusty poetry pertaining to a mundane lover and his beloved. No one dared to ask this to Mahāprabhu, only Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara understood Mahāprabhu's heart.

“Oh Gurudeva! You have explained that not only Svarūpa Dāmodara understood, but Rāya Rāmānanda also understood Mahāprabhu's heart, because one is Lalitā and another is Viśākhā. Both of them are fully aware of Śrīmatī's heart and Śrīman Mahāprabhu is revealing His heart being absorbed in the mood of Rādhārāṇī.”

During that same cart festival of Lord Jagannātha-deva in the same year, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was also present in Jagannātha Purī. Hearing that *śloka* from Śrīman Mahāprabhu's lotus lips, he composed one parallel *śloka* which was originally spoken by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself:

*priyaḥ so 'yaṁ kṛṣṇaḥ saba-cari kuru-kṣetra-militas  
tathāhaṁ sā rādhā tad idam ubhayoḥ saṅgama-sukham  
tathāpy antaḥ-kbelan-madbura-muralī-pañcama-juṣe  
mano me kālindī-pulina-vipināya sprhayati*

*Padyavali 387*

My dear friend, now I have met My very old and dear friend Kṛṣṇa on this field of Kurukṣetra. I am the same Rādhārāṇī, and now We are meeting together. It is very pleasant, but still I would like to go to the bank of the Yamunā beneath the trees of the forest there. I wish to hear the vibration of His sweet flute playing the fifth note within that forest of Vṛndāvana.

After writing that *śloka* on a palm leaf, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī kept the leaf under the grass roof of Haridāsa Ṭhākura's *bbajana* kuṭīra, in Jagannātha

Purī. Śrīman Mahāprabhu used to come to Siddha Bakul every morning to give his *darśana* to Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Whenever Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī or Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī used to come to Jagannātha Purī, they would stay with Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura. When Mahāprabhu came to Siddha Bakul after *Jagannātha-darśana*, only Haridāsa Ṭhākura was present there and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī went to take bath in the ocean. While Mahāprabhu was sitting in Siddha Bakul, He noticed the palm leaf slightly sticking out from the grass roof. Mahāprabhu took the palm leaf and understood that it was Rūpa Gosvāmī's hand-writing. His handwriting was as beautiful as a row of pearls. A few minutes later Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī returned to Siddha Bakul from his bath and fully prostrated himself at the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu. Due to deep love and affection Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave a big slap on the back of Rūpa Gosvānipāda. Mahāprabhu continued, "Oh, Rūpa! How you knew my heart?" Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī kept his face down and remained silent.

Later on, Śrīman Mahāprabhu disclosed this *śloka* among all of his devotees who were present during the cart festival of Lord Jagannātha-deva in Purī. Svarūpa Dāmodara Prabhu replied, "Oh Mahāprabhu! I've understood you have bestowed your causeless mercy and inspired everything inside the heart of Rūpa."

Śrīman Mahāprabhu replied affirmatively, "Yes. Previously Rūpa had met me at Aradil village near Prayāga. Seeing his simplicity and qualification, I inspired everything inside the heart of Rūpa."

I replied to Śrīla Gurudeva, "Oh, Śrīla Gurudeva! If Śrīman Mahāprabhu's causeless mercy caused Rūpa Gosvāmī to compose the parallel *śloka* of Mahāprabhu's inner mood, in the same way your causeless mercy made me compose this *aṣṭakam* about your constitutional form and service." Śrīla Gurudeva became extremely pleased and gave his profuse blessings from the core of his heart. I cannot disclose the nature of these blessings as they are individual and personal.

Śrīla Gurudeva said, "I have one order for you. I am restricting you from explaining this *aṣṭakam* to anyone doing *prakāṣa-līlā* (his manifest pastime). Afterwards, it will be very helpful for advanced *sādhakas* in their *sādhana-bhajana*. At that time everyone can recite. They will obtain my mercy, no doubt."

After this incident Śrīla Gurudeva spoke many times in appreciation of my service, sometimes to just a few individuals and sometimes in the presence of many devotees.<sup>18</sup> It is all due to Śrīla Gurudeva's pure heart, pure association and *pure bhakti*. Without his giving me his intimate service and his nourishing me with his constant guidance, none of this would be possible. All credit goes to Śrīla Gurudeva, his dear associates like my *dīkṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, his *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedāna Swāmī Mahārāja, the previous Ācāryas, the Pañca Tattva, and the Mistress and Master of Vṛndāvana, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

.....

18 Śrīla Gurudeva: "I know that even in other Gauḍīya Maths, devotees have served their *gurudeva* whole-heartedly but no one has served their *gurudeva* whole-heartedly over three decades as Mādhava Mahārāja is serving me. I can never think even in my dream that someone can serve like him. He has crossed all the boundaries. I am indebted to him eternally. I am praying to my *paramaradhyagurudeva* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, all Gauḍīya *gurū-parampara*, all Vaiṣṇavas, associates of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple and Their associates to all bestow their causeless mercy upon my Mādhava." (Editorial note by Brajanātha dāsa)



## The Concluding Transcendental Pastimes of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja<sup>19</sup>

On Wednesday, 29 December 2010, shortly before dawn on the auspicious *kr̥ṣṇa-navamī-tīthī* of the *pauṣa-(nārāyaṇa-)māsa* – the appearance day of *om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja – at 3 a.m., in the Śrī Jayaśrī-Dāmodara Gauḍīya Maṭha, which is located at Śrī Cakra-tīrtha, the sacred appearance place of Śrī Jagannātha-Baladeva-Subhadṛā in Kṣetra-maṇḍala Jagannātha Purī, he who is an intimate associate of *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who in turn is the intimate and dear associate of *jagad-guru om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhu-pāda, the protector of the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya*; he who is best among the one-pointed followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī-pāda, who fulfils the innermost desire of *kali-yuga pāvana āvātārī* Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the saviour of the most fallen in this age of Kali; he who is the crown jewel of the clan of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas in present times; he who was acclaimed *Yuga-ācārya*; and he who was the president-*ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti Trust: *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa svāmī aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja by his own sweet desire entered Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārījī's *naiṣa-līlā* (night pastimes), in the Lord's own eternal abode, thus submerging those *sevakas* who had taken shelter at his lotus feet in an ocean of intense separation from him.

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19 Edited from the article entitled *Om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja Entered Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārījī's Naiṣa-līlā* which was originally based from a report by Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Siddhanti Mahārāja and Śrīman Sañjaya dāsa Brahmācārī published in the Rays of The Harmonist, issue 24/Kartik 2011 - Entering Nitya-līlā (CC-BY-SA Rays of The Harmonist Team) and printed in Hindi in the Vyāsa-pūjā issue of *Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā*, Year-7, Issues 11–12

## INDICATIONS OF DEPARTURE

### Return from Nepal

Śrīla Gurudeva had cherished desire for a long time to visit the birthplace of Śrīmati Sita devi, eternal consort of *maryada-purusottama* Lord Śrī Ramacandra. So many times he had expressed his desire that I want to visit Janakapura, the kingdom of Mahārāja Janaka. Śrīmati Sita-devi's father's name was Shiradhvaja Janaka. Janaka is the title of their dynasty and pura means city. In which city Mahārāja Janaka used to live, that is called Janakapura. One of Gurudeva's disciples, Mr. Somnath Prabhu prayed to Śrīla Gurudeva, "O Gurudeva, whenever you order me, I'll do all arrangement to visit Janakapura. Nothing to worry." When Gurudeva had time, the weather was not good to go there. Then Mr. Somnath and Punama didi offered to Gurudeva, "We can arrange a helicopter for you from Kathamandu, the capital city of Nepal to Janakapura, After that you may return to Kathamandu by the same helicopter. Due to his cardiac problem, he was not allowed to fly twice within 24 hrs. So, we never took any risk. At last, it so happened that Śrīla Gurudeva went to Janakapura as a preaching tour. In August 2009, Śrīla Gurudeva went to Nepal to preach the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, as well as to visit the city of Janakapura to have *darśana* of Śrī Sītā-devī's birthplace. Gurudeva addressed his devotees in Nepal as well as upon his return to Mathurā, in his arrival address at the Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, he described that cherished journey: "For a long time, I had desired to visit the birthplace of Śrī Sītā-devī, the śakti of Lord Rāma, and by her mercy that desire has been fulfilled in the final part of my life. Therefore, I think that with this pilgrimage, I have completed my *darśanas* of all the holy places of the world." Although, Śrīla Gurudeva is an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and divine couple, but in his early age, due to influence of his family members, he had inclination towards Śrī Śrī Sita-Rama and he has even taken *darśana* of Śrī Śrī Sita-Rama, Lakṣmana, Bharata, Satrugṇa and Hanumanaji. When Śrīla Gurudeva went to touch Lord Rama's lotus feet, they disappeared. Hearing *barikathā* from Śrīla Narottamanda Prabhu, later on famous by the name Śrīla Bhaktikamala Madhusudana

Gosvami Mahārāja, Gurudeva's inclination increased towards Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the divine couple because it was his constitutional form, the maidservant of Śrīmatī Radha-ṭhākuraṇī. For example, Venkatta Bhatta, Trimalla Bhatta and Prabhodananda Sarasvati were devotees of Śrī Śrī Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa in the beginning. Due to association of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, they changed completely and came in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu because they had constitutional form of service of Śrī Śrī Radha-Kṛṣṇa, not Śrī Śrī Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa.

Śrīla Gurudeva expressed his desire in Nepal in front of so many devotees, who were the part of his preaching tour and *darśana* of Janakapura, "I'll not stay in this world for a long time. For what purpose I have come in this world, my purpose has been fulfilled. There is no need to stay any more in this world." Hearing this heart-breaking news from Śrīla Gurudeva's lotus lips, the present devotees become very morose. Easily someone can understand from the picture that everyone's face became morose. We want to thank Mr. Somnath Prabhu and Punama didi. They bore all expenses for Śrīla Gurudeva and his party to visit Janakapura and became recipient of Śrīla Gurudeva's mercy.

## Badger

In June 2010, Śrīla Gurudeva presided at Badger's annual Summer Hari-kathā Festival, delivering a series of heart-rending classes portraying the anguish that Kṛṣṇa felt in separation from the Vrajavāsīs after He left them to go to Mathurā, and the torment they felt being separated from Him. At the end of what was to be his final class there, he announced, "This is my last journey to America." Then, to the great dismay of the over eight hundred devotees gathered, Śrīla Gurudeva left the festival a day before its scheduled conclusion. The devotees who were present there never believed that this is Śrīla Gurudeva's last journey in America because he has told so many times, "This is my last tour. My preachers will come, I may not come anymore. But, I have to come to Houston, America, for my checkup every year. So, at that time I may visit few places." So, any devotee couldn't take it seriously. Everybody thought that Gurudeva is saying this to increase the eagerness of devotees.

Thus in various ways, Śrīla Gurudeva began to reveal some of what his supremely worshipful *guruṣāda-padma*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa- Bihārījī were indicating to him – that he had fully accomplished his assigned service of disseminating Śrīman Mahāprabhu's teachings (*gaura-vāṇī*) in this world and was soon to enter *nitya-līlā* and present himself to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārī for service to Them in Their eternal abode.

### Enacting the Pastime of Illness

In accordance with the unfolding of a divine plan, Śrīla Gurudeva enacted his human-like pastime of illness from the beginning of 2010. In a prelude to the more serious illness that would occur later in the year, on two occasions at the time of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, Śrīla Gurudeva did not come to preside over the evening assembly. Great disappointment filled the hearts of the attending devotees, who yearned to hear transcendental *kathā* from his lotus mouth.

Even though he was noticeably weak during his American and European tour, after he had returned to India and celebrated Guru-pūrṇimā. One day, Śrīla Gurudeva called myself (Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja) and Brajanātha Prabhu, "What is my next schedule for out of India?" Brajanātha Prabhu replied that Gurudeva you have promised Russian devotees to attend Russian festival via Dubai to bestow your mercy on the devotees of Dubai for the first time. They have been eagerly waiting for your *darśana* for so many years. Gurudeva replied, "Okay, I'll fulfill my promise, but after this tour, don't make any arrangement to go out of India. This will be my last tour out of India. Now I am in advanced age. Any thing may happen anytime. So, I don't want to go out of India anymore." We both replied, "O Gurudeva what you have ordered, we shall follow. We shall not make any more arrangement for you to go out of India." We never understood that Gurudeva will leave us so soon because so many times Gurudeva had life threatening warnings and he came out from danger due of causeless mercy of Śrī Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṃhadeva and *sarva-abbista-pradata* (fulfiller of everyone's all desires) Śrī Giriraja Govardhana. He still planned to fly to Dubai and Russia to

participate in *hari-kathā* festivals there. Some devotees expressed concern about this. He had just returned from a world tour and had little time to rest. Further, he had just given *darśana* to thousands of devotees at three Guru-pūrṇimā festivals in India. For these reasons, the devotees felt he should not travel again so soon. But Śrīla Gurudeva could not be dissuaded from going and remained fixed in his determination to fulfil his promise to the devotees in Russia, who for years had been eagerly yearning for his *darśana*, being unable to come to India due to their financial constraints. Upon his return to India, however, after the successful completion of those festivals, he went directly from the airport to the hospital.

### Janmāṣṭamī – his last lecture in Delhi

On the request of his doctors, Śrīla Gurudeva stayed in Delhi to regain his health. Therefore, for the first time in fifty-six years, he was not in Mathurā or Vṛndāvana for the celebrations of Jhulana-yātrā; his annual three-day conference honouring Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī on his disappearance day; Śrī Baladeva Pūrṇimā; Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī; and Śrī Nandotsava. Words cannot describe how he lamented not being able to be there. The transcendental moods he expressed in his last lecture, given on Śrī Janmāṣṭamī at Śrī Ramaṇa-Bihārī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Delhi, have already been published along with the complete discourse in the Hindi magazine *Śrī Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā* (year 7, number 7).

### Arrival in Mathurā and Govardhana

Śrīla Gurudeva completed his medical treatment just after Śrī Nandotsava and immediately travelled to Mathurā. After staying there for two days, he proceeded to Govardhana.

A devotee in Mathurā told Śrīla Gurudeva that in his absence, the Janmāṣṭamī festival seemed devoid of life. He requested Śrīla Gurudeva to be present in Mathurā every Janmāṣṭamī, just like he used to be. At this, Śrīla Gurudeva became very grave. “A new era is about to begin,” he responded. “Everything will be different from now on.” With these words, Śrīla Gurudeva fell silent.

## FURTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF ILLNESS

After a short stay in Govardhana, Śrīla Gurudeva again exhibited manifestations of sickness. He expressed a deep desire to stay in Vraja and to be able to celebrate Śrī Rādhāṣṭamī in Mathurā, but because Mathurā and Govardhana lack adequate medical facilities, he had to return to Delhi.

As Gurudeva enacted his pastime of illness again and again, the heartbreak his disciples and followers experienced can only be known to them. Everyone simply desired Śrīla Gurudeva's speedy recovery, by one means or another. Śrīla Gurudeva was scheduled to fly to Malaysia on 19 September, but on the advice of his Ayurvedic doctors, his journey was cancelled. The doctors said that we are coming to you, you don't have to come far distance. So his journey was cancelled. His *sevakas*, headed by Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja and Brajnatha Prubhu, hastily consulted prominent doctors from India and abroad and began to arrange the best possible treatment in Delhi.

Continuous *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, *parīkramās*, worship and offerings, and fire sacrifice for the recovery of Śrīla Gurudeva's health

While Śrīla Gurudeva stayed in the Śrī Ramaṇa-Bihāri Gauḍīya Maṭha and received treatment, local devotees and devotees arriving from all corners of the world would perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* outside his *bhajana-kutīra*, for hours every day. Śrīla Gurudeva would relish their *kīrtana* from inside his *bhajana-kutīra*. People neglected their jobs, businesses and household affairs with just two things in mind – their concern for Śrīla Gurudeva's health and how to receive his *darśana*. Sometimes Śrīla Gurudeva's *sevakas* would help him walk to the door of his *bhajana-kutīra*, his arms resting on their shoulders as they walked on either side of him, or sometimes we used to help him to travel by wheelchair. Upon seeing Śrīla Gurudeva, the devotees would perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* loudly and would feel such intense emotion that often they could not help but weep. At other times, Śrīla Gurudeva would come out to sit on his balcony and give his *darśana* and blessings to the devotees below.

To pray for his good health, many devotees performed regular *parīkramā*, *abhiśekha* with *pañcāmṛta* and worship, especially of *sarva-abhista-pradata* Śrī Girirāja Govardhana. Besides this, Nṛsimha *yajñas*,

*Sudarśana yajñas* etc., were organized in India and abroad on a daily basis. Everyone's sole cherished desire in performing these devotional practices was to see that Śrīla Gurudeva gain full recovery of his health, quickly. If his *sevakas* caught a glimmer of hope that any medical procedure, alternative or otherwise, would help him, they would try it immediately.

### Manifesting transcendental symptoms

During this period of ill health, Śrīla Gurudeva remained absorbed in deep transcendental moods. Sometimes he would utter indistinct words, and other times he would chant his *ābnika* or *stava-stutis* (devotional prayers) for hours on end. Only upon his *sevakas'* repeated efforts to offer him food or medicine would he slowly return to external consciousness, sometimes fully and sometimes only partially. Thus Śrīla Gurudeva would constantly remain in an internal state (*antara-daśā*). The high-class devotee or *uttama-bhagavata* as a *sadbaka*-form, they have three stages in their *bhajana*: (1) *Antara-daśā* means internal stage. (2) *Ardha-babya-daśā*. (3) *Babya-daśā*.

Being in internal stage, the *uttama-bhagavata* are serving their worshippable deity, the divine couple constantly. They even forget completely that they are living in this body in this material world. They have entered in *aprakata-līla* and taking *darśana* and serving *līlā* there. General mass will not understand this thing. Being with us, doing all activity, still they are in *samadbhī*, like *vrajavasis*, especially *vraja-gopīs*. It is called *sabhaja-samadbhī*.

In *ardha-babya daśā*, they talk like a madman. There is no link in their talking. The *karmis* and *jñānis* think that this devotee has become mad because *karmis* and *jñānis* have no knowlegde about this stage of *bhakti* as they are devoid of *bhakti*. For example, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu manifested ecstatic symptoms on his transcendental body and asked Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda, "Am I Caitanya? I was watching the water sport pastime of the divine couple. Why have you dragged me here?"

In *babya-daśā*, the *uttama-bhagavata* comes down to *madhyama*-stage and advises other devotees and disciples, and does *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. We have seen and realised these 3 stages of *uttama-bhagavata* in Śrīla Gurudeva.

Within Śrīla Gurudeva's *bhajana-kutīra*, his *sevakas* would from time to time sing his favourite *kīrtanas*, and sometimes they would read to him from scripture.

One day Śrīla Gurudeva said, "I have collected all the spices, but cannot find the *ubar*." He uttered this over and over. Each time, his *sevakas*, especially Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja and Dvija Kṛṣṇa Prabhu asked him what this spice was, but Śrīla Gurudeva simply softly uttered the same word again and again. No one present had ever heard of this transcendental spice. To clear this point, we are giving one example of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. During his preaching, so many so-called Vaisnavas became against him and wanted to remove him from this world. Their idea was, "*Nā rabegā bāmsa, nā bajegī bāmsurī*." That is, if there is no bamboo, there is no possibility of a flute. If there is no Cakravartī Ṭhākura, there will be no preaching of paramour mood. Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura used to do *parikramā* of Vrindavan everyday. It was a part of his *bhajana*. The so-called devotees hid inside a big bush. Whoever did *parikramā* had to pass through the huge bushes. Nowadays, there are no more bushes. In middle of 80's, Śrīla Gurudeva showed us that area where they conspired to kill Cakravartī Ṭhākura. When Cakravartī Ṭhākura entered that bush area, he became a teenage *mañjarī*, Radhika's *mañjarī*. The conspirators asked that *mañjarī*, "O lālī, have you seen Cakravartī Ṭhākura? He just entered here. Where has he gone?" That *gopī* girl replied, "O, I have come from Javat, My svaminiji has sent me here to pickup some flowers, so I came to Vrindavan to pick some nice and fragrant flowers." As soon as the *mañjarī* crossed the bush area, he transferred again to Cakravartī Ṭhākura's form. Seeing this miracle scene, the conspirators ran towards him and fell full flat on his lotus feet and asked forgiveness again and again. To remove their offences, they became his disciples.

Like Śrīla Cakravartī Ṭhākura told in *mañjarī* form that I have come here to collect flowers for Svaminiji, in the same way, Śrīla Gurudeva told that I came here to collect *ubar masālā* (spice). By comparing this instance, the devotees can understand how much elevated *vaiṣṇava* Gurudeva was in his *sadhaka* form.

## Arrival of Respected Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas for Śrīla Gurudeva's Darśana

During Śrīla Gurudeva's stay in Delhi and Govardhana, many devotees who had attained the shelter of his lotus feet came daily to take his *darśana*. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas from different *maṭhas* also came for his *darśana*. These included present *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Matha, Parampujyapada Śrī Bhaktiprajnana Yati Mahārāja, Śrī Gopinātha Gauḍīya Maṭha's present *ācārya*, Śrīpad Bhakti Vibhuda Bodhāyana Mahārāja; Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti's present *ācārya*, Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Paryāṭaka Mahārāja, and also Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Vaiṣṇava Mahārāja; ISKCON GBCs Śrīpad Gopālākṛṣṇa Mahārāja, Śrīpad Bhakticāru Mahārāja, Śrīpad Indradyumna Mahārāja, Śrīpad Bhakti Bhṛṅga Govinda Mahārāja, and Śrīpad Vedavyāsa Mahārāja; from Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīpad Bhakti Prapanna Tapasvi Mahārāja and Śrīpad Bhakti Vicāra Viṣṇu Mahārāja. In addition, many *brahmacārīs* and householder devotees from ISKCON and various Gauḍīya Maṭhas came to have *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva. *Pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vallabha Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the present *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, and his godbrother, *pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Bhārati Mahārāja, telephoned and expressed to Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja their concerns and prayers for Śrīla Gurudeva's health.

## Newly published books offered into Śrīla Gurudeva's lotus hands

Śrīla Gurudeva had been in Delhi for Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's disappearance day. At that time, Rasa-Bihārī Prabhu offered the English translation of *Utkalikā-vallārī* to Śrīla Gurudeva, on behalf of publication team. In addition, he was offered time to time, *The Distinctive Contribution of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī*, printed in both English and Hindi, on behalf of Mañjarī dāsī. Later, Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Dāmodara Mahārāja offered him the English translation of *Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-mālā*, and he also offered two booklets on behalf of Śyāmarāṇī dāsī: *Harmony Preview and Understanding Śrī Guru*. Śāntī dāsī offered an English translation of Śrī *Rādhā-kṛṣṇa-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, and Śyāmarāṇī dāsī and Vasanti dāsī

offered a copy of *Walking with a Saint*. Also, Oriya translations of *Jaivadharmā*, *Śrī Camatkāra-candrikā* and *Śrī Prema-samṣṭā* were offered to Śrīla Gurudeva's lotus hands by Śrīman Madhumaṅgala Brahmācārī and Śrīman Varṇśī-vadana Brahmācārī. Although Śrīla Gurudeva does not read Oriya, he showed keen interest by opening several pages and inquiring time and again, "What is written here?" Vṛndāvanēśvarī dāsī and Kuñja-kalikā dāsī offered Spanish translations of *The Way of Love* and *Manab-śikṣā*. And the Chinese devotees also offered him various Chinese translations. On many of these occasions, Śrīla Gurudeva was not always speaking, but on seeing these publications, his face would invariably brighten and he would shower his heartily blessings by repeatedly raising his lotus hands and bestowing his merciful glance upon the devotees involved in the service of book publishing.

When *Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā* (year 7, number 7) was offered to Śrīla Gurudeva, he first skimmed through the magazine from cover to cover, and then returned to the article written by Paramgurudeva Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, which he read in full.

### The Arrival of Devotees for Śrī Vraja-maṅḍala Parikramā

Many devotees from India and abroad began to arrive for the eighty-four krosa Vraja-maṅḍala *parikramā*, which is performed during the month of Kārtika. But first, each and every devotee anxiously went to Śrī Ramaṇa-Bihārī Gauḍīya Maṭha to receive Śrīla Gurudeva's *darśana*, and only then did they proceed to Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

### Śrīla Gurudeva's instruction to Join Śrī Vraja-maṅḍala Parikramā

The devotees were worried about Śrīla Gurudeva's health and some wanted to remain in Delhi to be near him. However, once Kārtika started, he did not always encourage this. On many mornings and evenings, he would come to the screen door of his *bhājana-kutīra*, either to sit for a few minutes or to stop briefly as he walked, aided by his *sevakas*. If he saw devotees waiting for his *darśana* in the courtyard, often he would ask them why they were there, and he would instruct them to go to

Vṛndāvana to participate in Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*. “Your life will become successful by visiting these pastime places,” he would say. “I am only unable to attend *parikramā* because of my ill health, but I order all of you to go and participate. Gradually, I am improving and will try to join the *parikramā* as soon as possible.”

### The Kind Concern of the Devotees

Śrīla Gurudeva’s pastime of illness prompted some devotees to speak to his personal *sevakas*, headed by Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja, expressing their concern that Śrīla Gurudeva was being obliged to remain in Delhi. These devotees felt that it was only appropriate that he be taken to Govardhana. The devotees’ concern was motivated by their great affection for Śrīla Gurudeva, and his *sevakas*, especially Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja, Brajanātha Prabhu, Siddhanti Mahārāja and Sañjaya Prabhu understood this. However they could not comply because they felt it their responsibility to do all they could to enable Śrīla Gurudeva to recover his health.

“If Śrīla Gurudeva were to manifest his disappearance pastime in Delhi,” the devotees said, “this would be terribly undesirable.” Responding to this, his *sevakas*, especially Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja answered to Ramacandra Prabhu and Dr. R.Prakash, “Please don't worry. When proper time will appear in front of us to take Śrīla Gurudeva to Govardhana, Gurudeva will order direct to me. I'll not delay for a second to fulfill his cherished desire.” Instead of this, Ramacandra Prabhu asked Śrīla Gurudeva quite a few times, “O gurudeva, would you like to go to Govardhana?” Gurudeva never replied to Ramacandra Prabhu about this matter.” The *sevakas* further pointed out, “Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura manifested their disappearance pastimes in Kolkata. Was that considered a greatly undesirable occurrence? Wherever an eternal associate of Bhagavān like Śrīla Gurudeva resides is indeed Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, Śrī Govardhana or Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa.” But to some they did express their faith that, “At the appropriate time, Śrīla Gurudeva will express his desire to go to Govardhana.” Certainly, this came to pass.

## Expressing the Desire to Reside in Govardhana during Kārtika

One day, in the middle of Kārtika, Śrīla Gurudeva told his *sevakas* that he now desired to go to Govardhana. Upon hearing his request, they immediately made all arrangements to take him there. On the morning of his departure, the crowd of devotees in the Delhi temple was so huge that it took half an hour for Śrīla Gurudeva to travel in his wheelchair from the elevator exit to the ambulance, a distance of about forty metres. Śrīla Gurudeva held his palm upright, showering blessings upon all. Dr. Ravindra Prakash of Delhi accompanied him on his journey to Govardhana.

## RESIDING AT GOVARDHANA IN KĀRTIKA

A thousand devotees gathered for Śrīla Gurudeva's *darśana* upon his arrival at Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha. During the remainder of his stay in Govardhana, his health fluctuated from day to day and he remained in internal consciousness (*antara-dasā*) most of the time.

## Manifesting Transcendental Emotions

From time to time, Śrīla Gurudeva would manifest some of the symptoms of ecstasy mentioned by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Sometimes incessant tears would flow from his eyes, sometimes froth would issue from his lotus mouth, and sometimes he would hiccup continually for hours on end. Occasionally, as if in forgetfulness, he would ask, "Where am I?" or "Is it day or night?" Like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu, "Where Am I? Who am I?" and sometimes he did not recall the names of even his closest *sevakas*. When Śrīla Gurudeva forgot the name of Śrīla Brajanātha Prabhu in Govardhana, Śrīla Gurudeva asked, "Call the devotee?" His personal *sevaka* asked, "To whom I may call? Gurudeva replied, "The very tall figure western devotee who always travels with me." The *sevaka* asked, "Brajanātha Prabhu?" He replied, "Yes, yes, call Brajanātha." But Śrīla Gurudeva never forgot my name, Mādhava Mahārāja. Yet at other times, he would exhibit his razor-sharp acuity and

catch a *sevaka*'s faulty pronunciation of devotees' names, correcting him by properly pronouncing them himself.

Sometimes, upon seeing the service attitude of the devotees attending him, he would express his appreciation of them, and at other times, he would correct them and tell them how to perform their service. Sometimes he would awaken from sleep and ask, "The *parikramā* has gone to Nandagāon today?" or, "It is Ekādaśī today?" This always astonished those serving him, as they had not given him any information as to what day it was, yet Śrīla Gurudeva had accurate knowledge of what was happening.

Although it was of utmost importance to those attending Śrīla Gurudeva to see to his dietary needs according to the doctor's instructions, still, he would sometimes inquire, "Will you not give me anything to eat today?" Needless to say, it was with great pleasure that they would immediately offer something to him.

### Arranging for Darśana of Śrīla Gurudeva

A particular predicament arose during Śrīla Gurudeva's stay at Govardhana: How could *darśana* be arranged for all the devotees who had come for *parikramā* from India and abroad? It was not possible to allow everyone inside Śrīla Gurudeva's *bhajana-kutīra*, but the devotees were disconsolate that they could not take his *darśana*. Initially, a system was put in place of allowing devotees to cue up for *darśana* through the side-window. But this did not prove to be successful; the line did not flow smoothly and more often, did not even move at all.

Everyone was bewildered as to how to deal with the situation, until finally, Ramacandra prabhu made a wonderful suggestion: "Why not put a large LCD screen in the temple room? That way, all the devotees can easily take Śrīla Gurudeva's *darśana* at the same time." This proposal was happily welcomed by all, and an LCD screen was quickly arranged. Now the devotees in the temple could have *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva in his *bhajana-kutīra*. A small television screen was also placed in his *bhajana-kutīra* so he could also see them.

When Śrīla Gurudeva was not able to see the *sannyāsīs* on his screen (because they were on stage, out of camera range), he would inquire, "Where

are the *sannyāsīs*? I cannot see them.” The *sannyāsīs* happily honoured his request and assembled before the camera. Seeing all the devotees taking his *darśana* from the temple room, Śrīla Gurudeva would raise his hand to bless them. Sometimes, when he was absorbed internally, even though his mere presence or glance gave all blessings, his *sevakas* would try to draw him into external consciousness to interact with the devotees.

These *darśanas* filled the devotees with great bliss and they would loudly chant, “Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva!” or “Gurudeva, *tumbārī jaya jaya bo!*” Sometimes they would sing “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti,” while at other times, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* to the ‘Australian tune’. Singing and chanting in this way, the devotees would often become overwhelmed and begin to weep. For the duration of Śrīla Gurudeva’s *darśana*, no one would move from their places but would simply stare at the screen with unblinking eyes, oblivious to all else. One midnight, Śrīla Gurudeva suddenly woke up and continuously insisted his *sevakas* to take him to Vṛndavana *dhāma*. The present *sevakas* couldn’t tackle the matter. They informed me (Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja) that Gurudeva is calling you. He is insisting to take him to Vṛndavana *dhāma*. We couldn’t satisfy him so we have come to call you. Śrīla Gurudeva is only calling you for this reason. By causeless mercy of Śrīla Gurudeva, I know the tricks how to satisfy and console my *lala* (Śrīla Gurudeva). Seeing me Gurudeva told, “Mādhava Mahārāja I want to go to Vṛndavana.” I replied, “Yes, we will arrange. It is midnight now. Tomorrow morning we will go. In the meantime I am doing necessary arrangement.” Gurudeva replied, “Yes, very good.”

### The Predicament of Śrīla Gurudeva’s *Sevakas*

Although Śrīla Gurudeva’s *darśana* on the LCD screen was well appreciated, how could it compare with directly seeing him, even if only for a moment? Gradually, devotees began to press for this. “Please make some arrangements for direct *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva,” they requested. “Taking his *darśana* on the screen does not compare with this.” His personal *sevakas* endeavoured to accommodate the devotees as far as they could, but they were in a painful quandary. How could they possibly ensure Śrīla Gurudeva’s personal needs and also satisfy everyone?

They next tried to implement a system of allowing devotees to silently have *darśana* from the window while Śrīla Gurudeva was sleeping, but once he unexpectedly woke up and instructed his *sevakas* to close the curtains fully, without so much as a little opening in them. “I do not want anyone to be upset by seeing me in this condition,” he told them. The *sevakas* had no choice but to comply with Śrīla Gurudeva’s request, and so had to perform their duties in a dimly lit room throughout the day.

### The Intense Desire of the Devotees for Direct Darśana

Seeing Śrīla Gurudeva’s deep internal absorption, his *sevakas* carefully served him in that state, but on occasion, out of concern for his health, they would gently awaken him to external consciousness and attempt to bring him out of the room, saying, “O Śrīla Gurudeva, the doctors suggest that you come out of the room for at least a few minutes and that you sit in the fresh air and meet with the devotees.”

Words cannot describe the condition of the devotees or the enthusiasm and joy that filled their hearts when they saw Śrīla Gurudeva come to the open door in his wheelchair, or even sometimes walk there, his hands on the shoulders of devotees on either side of him. On these occasions, he would give his *darśana* for a few minutes. From windows, from the roof, from the garden, from the balcony, even hanging from pillars or however they could, the devotees would position themselves so as to receive *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva, as if wanting to record these moments in their hearts forever. Some devotees offered *āratī* to Śrīla Gurudeva with ghee lamps, while others were content to perform *āratī* with their eyes. Wherever Śrīla Gurudeva turned to look, the devotees standing in that direction would consider themselves most blessed. He gave *darśana* like this for two or three days, after which he again entered full internal consciousness.

### The Vraja-maṇḍala Parikramā Performed by Śrīla Gurudeva

At this time, Śrīla Gurudeva performed an amazing *līlā* for about three days. He was constantly immersed in some type of deep ecstatic emotion. However, one day, he repeatedly urged his personal *sevakas*, “Take me to Vṛndāvana. I want to perform Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*.” The *sevakas*

tried to pacify him by informing him that all the devotees were now at Govardhana, having arrived there from Vṛndāvana, and he was in fact with the *parikramā* party. Still he continued to insist that they must take him to Vṛndāvana. They concluded that for him to insist upon this, he must have a confidential reason, so they told him, “Yes, Gurudeva, we will arrange for you to go to Vṛndāvana.” Upon hearing this, he became satisfied and rested for some time.

Sometime in the evening he would say, “Oh, today the *parikramā* will go to Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Mandira, Sevā-kuñja, Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmsundara Mandira and other nearby places. I cannot go to them all, but I will certainly go to Sevā-kuñja and Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara.” Or, “Today the *parikramā* is going to Māna-sarovara.” It was as if he were directly in Vṛndāvana, performing Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*.

Upon rising the next morning, Śrīla Gurudeva exclaimed, “Oh, this Painṭhāgaon is so beautiful! Śrī Rādhājī’s special glories (*vaiśiṣṭya*) were established here.” It seemed that in his deep ecstatic state, in just one day he had completed the twelve-day *parikramā* that is performed from Vṛndāvana, and had now reached Govardhana.

Śrīla Gurudeva then began to say “I must visit Dāna Ghāṭī, the festival at the bank of Surabhi-kuṇḍa, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa and the other pastime places.” Some time later he said, “Today the *parikramā* is going to Nandagāon and Varsānā. We will also go to Ṭer Kadamba, Uddhava-kyāri and Ūncāgaon.” In this way, also within a day, he completed the eighteen-day *parikramā* that is normally performed from Govardhana.

Every year, immediately after *parikramā*, Śrīla Gurudeva would hold programs in Delhi and go to the dentist. Having thus completed Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, the next morning he said to his personal *sevaka*, Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja, “Inform my dentist in Delhi that we are coming there, and request him to be ready because in the evening we have the celebration at Śrī Ramaṇa-Bihārī Gauḍīya Maṭha. It is essential that we reach the *maṭha* in time.” Wanting to support Śrīla Gurudeva’s inner mood, although not knowing the reality of that mood, the *sevaka* replied, “Yes, I will contact him.”

Later as the *sevaka* assisted him in brushing his teeth, Śrīla Gurudeva asked him for the dental floss and when he could not find it, Śrīla

Gurudeva concluded, “It must have been packed with everything else in the car going to Delhi. If you find it easily, bring it; otherwise just leave it and in Delhi we will see what to do.”

Thus Śrīla Gurudeva revealed his personal Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā-līlā*, leaving his *sevakas* astonished and grateful to have had a glimpse of his internal moods.

The arrival of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja’s auspicious disappearance day

Some years before, Śrīla Gurudeva had stated, “Following in the footsteps of my senior Godbrother *prapūjya-carana* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, I want to take shelter of the same *tithī* (exact day) to leave this world.” These words caused much apprehension in the hearts of all, and as the disappearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja approached, the devotees began to be increasingly anxious that his words might come to pass. In a most earnest attempt to prevent this, almost all the devotees who had come to Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* and also devotees all over the world began to pray intensely to Śrī Girirāja Govardhana, who fulfils all desires. Many stayed awake the whole night performing *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, some sang stava-stuti, while some performed *abhiśekha* of Girirāja and others circumambulated Girirāja. To the devotees’ great relief, though, in the morning it was reported that Śrīla Gurudeva had slept peacefully that night.

### Śrīla Gurudeva’s Merciful Instructions on the Occasion of the Release of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

During Kārtika, the first volume of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*’s Tenth Canto, Chapters 1–8, translated by Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Tīrtha Mahārāja and edited by Śrīla Gurudeva, was published. Śrīpad Tīrtha Mahārāja presented the book to Śrīla Gurudeva, who joyfully received it and released it for distribution. At that time, he gave valuable instructions to Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Tīrtha Mahārāja that are pertinent to all his followers:

“When, by my Gurudeva’s order, I translated Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s *Jaiva-dharma* into Hindi, I cited Guru Mahārāja as the editor. In the Introduction, Gurudeva wrote, ‘Only because I am the object of the

devotees' honour has my name been mentioned as the editor of this book, but actually it is the translator and publisher of this Hindi *Jaiwa-dharma, tridaṇḍi-svāmī Śrī Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja*, who has indeed accomplished all the functions of the editor and has thus become the object of my special blessings.'

"Although externally I did all the labour to produce this book, which is why Śrīla Guru Mahārāja wrote to that effect, still in my heart I always maintained the conception that the writing was accomplished by Guru Mahārāja only. In the same way, you should never think that it is you who are translating these sacred *granthas*. Rather, always think that Śrīla Gurudeva has accomplished this book through you for the welfare of the whole world, and that for the auspiciousness of the world, he has sprinkled the rain drops of this transcendental message like a shower of flowers. Śrīla Gurudeva continued, "You should not think you are a doer, you are only an instrument in the hand of Gurudeva."

"I have almost finished fifty-two chapters of the Tenth Canto. Now complete the Tenth Canto according to our Gauḍīya conception, as you have done here, fully crediting our *guru-varga (aśraya-vigraha)* for your efforts and always keeping them in the forefront."

The devotees were overwhelmed to hear his words, full of mercy and blessings.

### Offering New Publications to Śrīla Gurudeva

During that period, Śrīpad Viṣṇu-daivata Mahārāja, Mañjarī dāsī and Kṛṣṇa-prema dāsa also offered Śrīla Gurudeva the English translation of the second volume of *Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, and the Rays of The Harmonist team offered the Kārtika 2010 edition of into his lotus hands. The Hindi publication of *Four Rūpanuga Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas*, compiled, translated and edited by Śrīla Gurudeva, was also offered to him. Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja offered the English hagiography he has written, entitled, *Śrīla Gurudeva: The Supreme Treasure* and Veṅu-gopāla dāsa offered a graphic novel *I Am Spirit*. Śrīla Gurudeva was most pleased and blessed all the devotees who were involved in the publication of these books.

## Śrīla Gurudeva's Auspicious desire

One day, Śrīla Gurudeva said to some of the devotees working on the Hindi publications, "When I leave, continue publishing our books just as they are being printed now. The cycle of progress in publishing our scriptures should never be broken. Whatever books are out of stock should be reprinted immediately."

## Śrīla Gurudeva—The Supreme Treasure

Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja offered the first volume of his second Phd Thesis during Kartika at Govardhana. Later on, Śrīla Gurudeva moved to Jagannath Puri in JayaŚrī Dāmodara Gaudiya Math. The printer sent the final copies to Mādhava Mahārāja. Along with other devotees, headed by Mādhava-priya Prabhu and Siddhanti Mahārāja, Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja offered the final copy of the First Volume of Śrīla Gurudeva's biography, nicely binded in blue and orange color cloth. Śrīla Gurudeva asked his personal *sevaka*, "How many volumes will you do?" Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja replied, "Between 4-5 volumes." Gurudeva asked again, "Will you be able to do so many volumes?" Mahārāja replied, "Yes Gurudeva, by your causeless mercy, I can do even more. I have collected from your classes so much material from beginning of 80's." Gurudeva became very happy and placed both his lotus hands on my head, "Yes, you can do that. My heartly blessings to you. In future, my biography will be like a lightpost for devotees around the world. What you have showed me in Cebu, Phillipinnes, before submitting your thesis before the university, all that matter will be there without any change?" Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja replied, "Yes Gurudeva, that was a condensed form. It will be expanded very nicely." Gurudeva told, "Yes, go ahead, again my heartly blessings to you."

## Various Vaiṣṇavas Arrive for the Darśana of Śrīla Gurudeva

There was a constant flow of *ācāryas* and Vaiṣṇavas from different Sārasvata Gauḍīya maṭhas and different sampradāyas to the Giridhārī

Gauḍīya Maṭha to honour Śrīla Gurudeva. It is impossible to name them all, but they include: from Vinoda-vānī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Vṛndāvana, Śrīpad Bhakti Vikaśa Govinda Mahārāja; from Govardhana Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīpad Govardhana dāsa Bābājī; from Śrī Rūpānuga Bhajana Āśrama at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śrīpad Bhakti Sarvasva Govinda Mahārāja and Śrīpad Mathurānātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja; the present *ācārya* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Maṭha in Vardhamāna, Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Ācārya Mahārāja; from Śrī Bhajana-kuṭī in Vṛndāvana, Śrīmad Gopānanda Vana Mahārāja; the *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, *pūjyapāda* Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Yati Mahārāja, along with Śrīmad Bhakti Sudhīra Dāmodara Mahārāja; from Śrī Gopīnātha Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīpad Bhakti Śaraṇa Dāmodara Mahārāja; from ISKCON, Śrīpad Mahanidhi Mahārāja, ISKCON Vṛndāvana's Temple President, Śrī Pañca-Gauda Prabhu and his wife Śrīmatī Gaura Pūrṇimā dāsī, Vice-President Śrī Janārdana Brahmācārī, and Śrī Śruta-kīrti Prabhu; from Śrī Vṛnda-kuñja, Śrīpad Paramadvaiti Mahārāja; Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja's disciple Śrīpad Govinda Mahārāja; many *sannyāsī* disciples of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vaibhava Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja; and several other devotees. Besides these, from Māna-garha (Varsānā), Śrī Ramesh Bābā; Sanskrit *paṇḍita* Śrī Viṣṇu Pandey of Mathurā and Śrī Shyamdas of Jatīpurā; followers of the *puṣṭi-mārga*, as well as other Vaiṣṇava saints also came to have his *darśana*.

Seeing the great efforts of his *sevakas*, Śrīla Gurudeva became concerned

Seeing that the devotees were serving him day and night, one day, Śrīla Gurudeva said, "I do not want to live in this world any longer."

"Please, why are you speaking like this?" they asked him.

"It is because of me that so many devotees are being troubled," he said.

"Gurudeva," they responded, "we experience no trouble in serving you. In fact, being able to render you just a little service is our greatest fortune. We only beg that you please forgive our shortcomings."

Despite his debilitated physical condition, it was Śrīla Gurudeva who was concerned for us, worrying that we were the ones who were troubled.

## Gurudeva's Words of Benediction at the End of Kārtika

While in Govardhana, Śrīla Gurudeva's health very slowly improved, much to the joy of the devotees. On the full-moon day at the end of Kārtika, he came out of his *bhajana-kutira* in a wheel-chair and spoke to all the devotees assembled there: "Just as you have come to participate in this year's Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, you should all come every year. Within a few months, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* will also take place, and all of you must also participate in that *parikramā*. I will meet all of you there." These encouraging words caused the devotees to resoundingly chant "*Jaya Gurudeva, Jaya Gurudeva!*" their throats choked with happiness.

## Return to Delhi after Kārtika

After Kārtika, Śrīla Gurudeva remained in Govardhana for a few days. Then on the suggestion of Dr. Ray from the Philippines and Dr. Ravindra Prakash from Delhi, Śrīla Gurudeva was again taken to Śrī Ramaṇa-Bihārī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Delhi. As before, there was a flux of devotees and doctors moving in and out of the temple. One day, Śrīla Gurudeva addressed the local doctor and the doctors who had come from abroad, "You are all endeavouring so hard for me," he said. "For this I am giving you my heartfelt gratitude." When they heard this, they replied, "Guruji, it is our supreme fortune that you have allowed us to render some service at your lotus feet."

"Do not take me anywhere except the *dhāma*"

On the advice of Dr. Ray, Śrīla Gurudeva's personal *sevakas*, headed by Brajanātha Prabhu approached him with a request that he travel to Italy for further treatment. Since Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja did not agree with this proposal, he refused to convey this message to Gurudeva. Śrīpada Mahārāja told to Brajanātha Prabhu and Dr. Ray, "Śrīla Gurudeva ordered me 2 years back that in my last days, don't take me out of *dhāma*, don't take me out of India. So, if I convey this message to Śrīla Gurudeva, he will not be happy with me. Moreover, we have to arrange minimum 8-10 tickets besides Gurudeva's tickets, and also arrange for fooding and lodging. It

is too much hassle out of India for so many persons." Brajanātha Prabhu request Śrīpada Mahārāja, "Okay, I'll convey this message to Gurudeva, but you have to be present with me and Dr. Ray when we convey this message to Gurudeva." They informed him about Italy for his treatment. Gurudeva replied, "Yes, what all of you think better, you can do." Getting green signal from Śrīla Gurudeva, all arrangements were made. After half an hour, Śrīla Gurudeva ordered me to call Brajanātha Prabhu. Śrīla Gurudeva said, "O Brajanātha, I have no desire to go out of *dhāma*, out of India, so don't take me anywhere except the *dhāma*. I want to leave my body in the *dhāma*. Take me back to Govardhana."

"But it is so cold in Govardhana," they told him.

"Then take me to Navadvīpa," he replied.

"But it is cold there too," they said.

"Then take me to Jagannātha Purī," he said. "Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja also performed his disappearance pastime in Jagannātha Purī-dhāma, and later his *sevakas* brought him to Śrī Dhāma Māyāpura. Take me to Jagannātha Purī, also, and if I leave my body there, then take me to Govardhana or Navadvīpa, wherever possible." Gurudeva continued, "Do all necessary arrangement to go to Jagannātha Purī as soon as possible without delay."

It was exactly four days after this conversation that they started for Śrī Jagannātha Purī. The *sevakas* encountered two obstacles: first, no plane tickets were available right away; and second, tickets were only available on a date that was not auspicious. The day after giving his order to go to Purī, Śrīla Gurudeva asked, "What is happening about our going to Purī?"

His *sevakas* answered, "We have not been able to obtain tickets for tomorrow, and the day after is *navamī*, so we will go on *daśamī*."

Śrīla Gurudeva replied, "Let us go the day after tomorrow." He continued, "The western devotees, they never check any *tithī* or constellation for their journey, and everything is going on nicely. So I don't want to consider any *tithī*."

"But we have never travelled on *navamī* before," they responded, "because it is inauspicious to do so."

Śrīla Gurudeva said, "We have never travelled on *navamī* before. Let us travel this time and see what happens."

We could not help but wonder what mysterious plan was hidden in his decision. The trip was arranged on *navamī*, according to Śrīla Gurudeva's desire.

### ABSORBED IN THE MOODS OF MAHĀPRABHU WHILE RESIDING IN THE ABODE OF SEPARATION (ŚRĪ JAGANNĀTHA PURĪ-DHĀMA)

On the November 30, Śrīla Gurudeva arrived at Jayaśrī-Dāmodara Gauḍīya Maṭha, which is located at Cakra-tīrtha in Śrī Jagannātha Purī-dhāma. He was greeted by the devotees there who welcomed him with much affection and proper ceremony. As before, his *sevakas* continued serving him around the clock. From time to time, they would chant *kīrtana* or read from *śāstra* to him in his *bhajana-kutīra*. Whenever Śrīla Gurudeva saw any of them sitting idle, he would say, "Do not be idle. Speak *hari-kathā* to the other devotees. Speaking *hari-kathā* is a limb of *bhakti*."

One day, while looking across the wide beach toward the ocean, Śrīla Gurudeva said softly, "Previously, whenever I would come to Śrī Jagannātha Purī *dhāma*, I would meditate on Śrīman Mahāprabhu's bathing in the ocean along with His associates. I would also meditate on the words of Śrīman Mahāprabhu at the time of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura's disappearance from this world, after He had bathed him in the ocean. Śrīman Mahāprabhu said that now this ocean is a *mahā-tīrtha* (supreme holy place) because it has become the *caraṇāmṛta* (foot-bathing water) of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura. So, I would bathe in the ocean nearly every day. Now, also, I want to take bath with this ocean water. Can you arrange some water from the ocean for me to bathe?" From that day onward, Śrīla Gurudeva was bathed after massage every day with water carried from the ocean.

Each morning and evening, he would walk in the corridor of the temple guest house, assisted by his *sevakas*, headed by Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja and Brajanātha Prabhu who supported him on either side, and he would sit on his balcony to have *darśana* of that most holy of oceans. Simultaneously, he would give *darśana* to the devotees standing on the ground below. One day, as Śrīla Gurudeva gazed at the ocean, he said, "This place is the very spot to which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu floated when He was immersed in *mahābhāva* and His body assumed a form like

that of a turtle.” Most of the time, however, Śrīla Gurudeva sat quietly. His deep absorption was most apparent.

Another time, when he was looking at the ocean, he asked his *sevaka* if he could count the ocean waves. “No.” the *sevaka* answered, “the ocean waves are unending.” “My heart is like that,” Śrīla Gurudeva told him. “It is flowing with uncountable waves of moods for the service of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and also with waves of affection for my disciples and followers.”

One thing was especially noticeable in Śrī Jagannātha Purī *dhāma*. If someone offered obeisances to Śrīla Gurudeva, even from as far away as the shore of the ocean, Śrīla Gurudeva would invariably raise his hand to bless them. Furthermore, until the conclusion of his manifest pastimes, he would fold his hands and offer respects to any kind of prasāda that was brought to him. Only then would he honour it. At times, Śrīla Gurudeva was so deeply immersed in internal consciousness that his *sevakas* had to endeavour for 30–45 minutes to get him to accept just one spoonful of food. This occurrence had repeated itself in Delhi, Govardhana and then also, Śrī Jagannātha Purī. Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja used to feed him by his own hand in the last one month of Gurudeva's manifest pastime. Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja used to carouse his head and touch his chin like a mother dealing with a baby. Mahārāja will tell, “*Bābā khā lo, lālā khā lo.*” If sometimes Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja allowed others to feed him on some special occasion, hardly will he eat from others. Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja had to come back to feed Gurudeva. Seeing this situation, Brajanātha Prabhu, Siddhanti Mahārāja and Mādhava priya prabhu used to comment, “Baby will eat from his mothers hand only.” Whenever any new *sevaka* made him drink water or baby food at night shift, Śrīla Gurudeva used to look towards the *sevaka's* face and ask, “Why are you giving this? Where is the previous *sevaka*?”

## The Book Fair in Bhubaneśvara

The annual Bhubaneśvara book fair took place during Śrīla Gurudeva's stay in Śrī Jagannātha Purī. The devotees of the Jayasrī-Dāmodara Gauḍīya Maṭha had, as usual, reserved a stall for the purpose of distributing

Śrīla Gurudeva's books. Some devotees came to Śrīla Gurudeva to ask his permission and blessings to distribute his books at the fair, and he most happily gave them. After that, he would inquire daily about the book distribution, and whenever he noted the presence of any local temple devotee in his room, he would inquire, "Why has he not gone to the book fair?" When the devotees, Western and Indian alike, heard about Śrīla Gurudeva's daily inquiry, it greatly stimulated their enthusiasm.

### Sārasvata Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas from Purī Arrive for Śrīla Gurudeva's Darśana

In Jagannātha Purī, many *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs* from different Gauḍīya maṭhas came to take *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva and offer him respects. Prominent among them were, from Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīpad Bhakti Viveka Paramārthī Mahārāja and Śrīpad Bhakti Sambandha Śuddhādvaitī Mahārāja; from Śrī Gopīnātha Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīpad Bhakti Śaraṇa Vāmana Mahārāja and Śrīpad Gopīnātha Brahmacārī; from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mission, Śrīpad Bhakti Vicāra Viṣṇu Mahārāja and Śrīpad Bhakti Svarūpa Śrīdhara Mahārāja; and from Śrī Nīlācala Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīman Saccidānanda Brahmacārī.

### Attaining a Complexion Similar to Śrī Gaurahari's

As soon as Śrīla Gurudeva arrived in Śrī Jagannātha Purī, he manifested some noticeable transformations. One was that the radiance emanating from his body increased constantly and his complexion became more golden. This caused us to consider that perhaps because he was in deep meditation on his most worshipful Śrī Gaurahari and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, he was attaining Their bodily complexion.

In this way, the days passed.

On the morning of December 27, Śrīla Gurudeva went on to his balcony as usual, and the devotees who had gathered on the beach below performed guru-pūjā for the first time. Due to cold and windy weather, His personal *sevaka*, Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja wanted him to return to his room because Gurudeva caught cold very easily. Once he caught cold,

it very hard to get rid of. His physical health was in a fragile stage. Keeping in mind this situation, Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja and Brajanātha Prabhu wanted to take him back. But Śrīla Gurudeva waited until the *ārati* was finished. He was then wheeled to the landing above the lobby. All the devotees rushed to the lobby to see him there. Again, his *sevaka* requested him to return to his room, but Śrīla Gurudeva insisted on remaining where he was. He looked intently at each and every devotee and raised his hand, blessing them all. Maybe it seems to us that Śrīla Gurudeva wanted to give his heartily blessing to all his devotees for the last time.

The next day, 28 December, he remained in his room and did not give *darśana*.

## THE CLOSING OF HIS PASTIMES

### Don't Take Me in Hospital

Just before Kartika, 2008, Śrīla Gurudeva ordered me, "Don't take me to any hospital during my last stage. I want to leave this world being in *dhāma* and *matha*. I don't want to be in a hospital. So many needles will be stuck in my body here and there, so many tubes in nostril and other places of the body." I humbly asked, "O Gurudeva, why are you telling all these things?" Gurudeva replied, "Sooner or later, it must happen. This is the nature of this material world. Whoever comes has to depart from this world one day. So, for your benefit, I am instructing you." I again asked, "How I can understand that this is your last moment?" Gurudeva replied, "Among all *mathavasis*, only you can understand that this is my last moment. If you are do not agree, no one can take me to hospital. This is my last and final order for you. You must have to fulfill my last instruction." I replied, "O Gurudeva, for your pleasure we will follow your order." So, seeing the fragile condition, early morning 29th December, we never tried to move him from matha. Śrīla Gurudeva ordered me same time in 2008, "If I depart from this world from either Mathura, Vrndavan or Govardhana, then arrange my *samādhi* in Govardhana. This is my first choice. If I depart from either Jagannath puri or Navadvipa *dhāma*,

then arrange my *samādhi* in Navadvipa *dhāma*." According to his desire, we arranged his *samādhi* in Navadvipa *dhāma*, Śrī Śrī Kesavaji Gaudiya Matha. This Navadvipa matha will be the main attraction centre all over world due to Gurudeva's *samādhi*.

### Antardhāna-līlā

On the morning of 29 December, 2010, Śrīla Gurudeva woke up very early, at about 2.00 a.m. His shift incharge, Sanjaya Prabhu asked him, "Śrīla Gurudeva, will you drink some water?" "Yes," he replied, and the *sevaka* helped him to sit up. Śrīla Gurudeva said that first he wanted to use the washroom, so the devotees assisted him and then helped him back to sit on his bed. Śrīla Gurudeva began to drink the glucose water while the *sevaka* held the glass, but straight away he said, "I am not able to sit."

The *sevaka* quickly helped Śrīla Gurudeva lay down. Śrīla Gurudeva then asked him to help him turn over, and as the *sevaka* did so, Śrīla Gurudeva took a deep breath and his face seemed to change somewhat. Upon noticing this, Sanjaya prabhu immediately called me. I (Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja) entered Śrīla Gurudeva's room and immediately checked his oxygen level and heartbeat. The oxymeter showed the fluctuations of Śrīla Gurudeva's pulse and oxygen intake on the monitor. Then I asked the devotee who was present there, "Please call devotees who used to serve. Gurudeva will leave us very soon. This is not a very good symptom." Then they called Brajanātha Prabhu, Mādhava Priya Prabhu, Siddhanti Mahārāja and others.

Yet despite this alarm, Śrīla Gurudeva seemed very peaceful and as he gazed upon all present, it did not seem at all that he was about to conclude his manifest pastimes.

But then the monitor indicated a drop in pulse and oxygen level and the devotees began to loudly chant *harināma*. Śrīla Gurudeva's tongue quivered as he chanted *harināma* along with the devotees. A few minutes later, just a minute before his departure, he closed his eyes, and gradually his tongue also became still. According to the clock on the wall, it was three in the morning. All present were stunned and in a state of shock.

## Devotees Gather in Śrīla Gurudeva's Room

Gradually all the *sannyāsīs*, *brahmacārīs* and other devotees who were staying in the *maṭha* and outside guest houses gathered in Śrīla Gurudeva's room, and upon seeing him, all began to lament. As per Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition, Śrīla Gurudeva was bathed with fresh water, anointed with *tilaka* on the twelve parts of his body, and dressed in new cloth. He was then seated in *padmāsana*, or the lotus position. His body was soft and looked so natural it seemed as if he would open his eyes at any moment. Gradually, the winter sun rose and he began to glow golden in its rays.

The devotees began singing one *kīrtana* after another: *Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam*, *Śrī Guru-paraṃparā*, *Je ānilo prema-dhana*, and Śrīla Gurudeva's favourite *bhajanas*, like *Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī Pada*, *Dekbite dekbite*, *Cintāmaṇi-maya rādhā-kunḍa-taṭa*, *Śrī Nandanāṣṭakam*, *Śrī Rādhā-kṛpa-kaṭākṣa Stavarāja*, *Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam*, the *mahā-mantra* in the Australian tune that he was so fond of, and many other *kīrtanas*.

As news of Śrīla Gurudeva's departure from this world spread, devotees from all over Śrī Jagannātha Purī, especially the Gauḍīya maṭhas, began to arrive to take his *darśana* for the last time. Devotees tearfully offered *aratī* to Śrīla Gurudeva as they sang *Śrī Guru-caraṇa-padma*.

Within a few moments, news of Śrīla Gurudeva's entering *nitya-līlā* spread throughout the entire planet, anguishing thousands of devotees and plunging them into the heartbreak of separation.

## Divine Departure on the Appearance Day of Om Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The day Śrīla Gurudeva departed from this world was the appearance day of his senior godbrother, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. The devotees in Jaya-śrī Dāmodara Gauḍīya Maṭha had made elaborate preparations for the auspicious celebration and had invited all Sārasvata Gauḍīya Maṭha Vaiṣṇavas for *hari-guru-kathā*, *kīrtana* and the honouring of Śrī Jagannātha *mahā-prasāda*. But such a grand celebration did not take place that day.

The fact that Śrīla Gurudeva departed on the very day of his senior godbrother's auspicious appearance indicates that even though he was not informed of when it would be, he was quietly waiting for this day, just as Bhīṣma Pitāmahā waited for the sun to move into the northern hemisphere (*uttarāyaṇa*) to depart.

By this we can understand something of the intimate relationship of those three pillars of the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, the three foremost disciples of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja manifested his pastime of disappearance on the exact date (*tithī*) that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja departed from this world, and Śrīla Gurudeva manifested his disappearance on the exact date that marked the appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

### Concluding His Pastimes in the Abode of Separation (śrī vipralambha-kṣetra)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu spent His last eighteen years in Śrī Jagannātha Purī in the association of Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda and Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, remaining absorbed in relishing the emotions of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *vipralambha* (mood of separation). Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda and Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara would chant specific poetry from Śrī Caṇḍīdāsa, Śrī Vidyāpati and other Vaiṣṇava poets in accordance with Śrīman Mahāprabhu's moods in order to nourish His emotions. Thus absorbed in relishing the moods of *vipralambha*, Śrīman Mahāprabhu brought His pastimes to an end by entering into Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha. Absorbed in relishing similar moods of separation, Śrīla Gurudeva also concluded his pastimes in this same abode of *vipralambha*, Śrī Jagannātha Purī, at the very spot, Cakra-tīrtha, where Lord Śrī Jagannātha made His appearance.

Because Śrīla Gurudeva manifested his disappearance pastime at Cakra-tīrtha, this *tīrtha* has now become *mahā-tīrtha*, or great holy place, especially for Śrīla Gurudeva's followers. For Śrīla Gurudeva, the *mahā-*

*bhāgavata rasika-jana*, the name *cakra* (wheel or disc) served as a constant *uddīpana* (stimuli) for *cakravartī-līlā*, that is, *rāsa-līlā*. Thus absorbed at the time of the *rāsa-līlā* pastimes, Śrīla Gurudeva entered that very pastime.

### Entering Naiśa-līlā (the Night Pastimes)

Our supremely worshipful Śrīla Gurudeva entered the eternal pastimes (*nitya-līlā*) of Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārījī at three o'clock in the morning. Śrī Govinda-līlāmṛta, by Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta, by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, describe Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, or pastimes within the eight divisions of the day. The *yāma*, or part of the day, from 10:48 p.m. to 3:36 a.m., lasting for four hours and forty-eight minutes, is known as *naiśa-līlā* (night pastimes). Therefore, three o'clock in the morning falls within Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's *naiśa-līlā*. This segment is the longest and most confidential of the intimate *nikuñja* pastimes. A summary of *naiśa-līlā* is as follows:

At night, when all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's family members are resting, He secretly leaves His palace in Śrī Nandagāma and goes to the forest of Vṛndāvana, which at that time is infused by a gentle breeze carrying the sweet fragrance of forest flowers. Humming bees, intoxicated by this aroma, lose their way and fly hither and thither. Swans and herons, pierced by Cupid's arrows, wander the lakes, and birds fly in all four directions, blissfully chirping, "*Jaya jaya!*" At this opportune time, Śrī Kīrtidā's darling daughter, Śrīmatī Rādhājī, also comes secretly from her in-laws' place in Yāvaṭa to meet Her beloved at Their pre-appointed meeting place.

In Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweet meeting, They perform *rāsa-līlā-vihāra* and other pastimes, such as wandering throughout the forest and beholding the astonishing scenery. They also describe each other's beauty, qualities and sweetness; decorate each other with forest flowers; dance, sing, and play musical instruments; enjoy water-pastimes; drink intoxicating beverages; and perform many other such *līlās*.

Upon witnessing these pastimes, which bewilder the entire universe, the wives of the demigods, the heavenly damsels, the wives of the

Gandharvas, and others are totally enchanted. They also sing praises of the divine couple, chanting, “*Jaya jaya!*” as they shower flowers from the sky and play the dundubhi drum and other musical instruments.

Tired from the joyful play of *rāsa-līlā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* take rest. The *mañjarīs* bring varieties of fruits and drinks for them. The *sakhīs* then perform the *līlā* of drinking intoxicating beverages and engage in even more confidential pastimes to enhance Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s bliss. After this they assist Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s water pastimes in the Yamunā. The *mañjarīs* bring the Divine Couple to the shore and decorate Them. Then, the Divine Couple rest in a forest grove.

At that time, some very intimate *prāṇa-sakhīs* take Rādhā’s and Kṛṣṇa’s feet, which are supremely charming and more delicate than fresh lotus petals, in their laps, and massage them in a mood of deep affection, while some other *mañjarīs* fan Them. Others bring *tāmbūla*, a folded betel leaf filled with delicious, aromatic ingredients. Relaxed by these services of the maidservants, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa become free from Their fatigue and sleep peacefully. Not even Śrīmatī Rādhājī’s *priya-narma-sakhīs* have entrance into these intimate services.

While Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārījī rest peacefully, their dear *mañjarīs* offer Them many items of worship, such as *pādyā* – tears of love bathing Their lotus feet; incense – their fragrant breath; lamps – their effulgent moon-like nails; flowers – their love-laden, intimate glances, full of *mamatā* (love imbued with the mood that ‘you are mine’); and *āratī* – their life-airs saturated with intense *prema* that has reached the stage of *mahābhāva*; all mixed with the camphor of their smiles.

Summoned by the indication of his *guru-rūpa-sakhī* (his gurudeva in *sakhī* form), Śrīla Gurudeva presented himself in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārījī at that auspicious moment. Under the guidance of Śrī Vinoda Mañjarī (Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja), Śrī Nayanamaṇi Mañjarī (Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda) and Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Rati Mañjarīs, and in subordination to Śrī Lalitā-devī, our Śrīla Gurudeva, in his eternal *mañjarī* form as Śrī Ramaṇa Mañjarī, has entered the *naiṣa-līlā* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Ramaṇa-Bihārījī and is situated there, absorbed in serving Them in deep ecstasy throughout the eight *yāmas* of the day.

Śrīla Gurudeva joined Śrī Navadvīpa *dhāma*, Śrī Devananda Gaudīya Matha on 26 December 1946. When he landed in the railway station, at that time, the station was completely dark and his mother tongue was Hindi. He doesn't know Bengali at all. He never informed Śrīla Parama Gurudeva that this very day he is coming to take his shelter. Gurudeva was thinking, "What to do now? I have never been in Navadvīpa *dhāma*. I don't know their language. To whom will I ask? Maybe I have to spend overnight in this dark railway station. Next morning, I will find my way to go to Śrī Devananda Gaudīya Matha somehow or other to meet my beloved Gurudeva." Śrīla Gurudeva used to communicate with Parama Gurudeva through English language. My Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vamāna Gosvāmī Mahārāja, (his *brahmacārī* name at that time was Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī) used to take dictation from Parama Gurudeva and used to send letter to Śrīla Gurudeva. Śrīla Gurudeva was thinking, "What shall I do now being in railway station in dark night?" Somebody with a lantern was calling, "O Tivariji, O Tivariji, are you here?" Śrīla Gurudeva's surname was Tivari in his *purva-aśrama*. Gurudeva thought, "Who is calling my surname?" When the lantern man came close to him, Gurudeva replied, "Yes, I am Tivariji. Who are you? What is your identification? Why are you calling me in dark midnight? How do you know me?" The lantern man (my beloved Guru Mahārāja in *brahmacārī* form, Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī) replied, "My name is Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī. I used to communicate with you through letter by the order of my Paramaradhya Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhakti-prajñāna Kesava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He has sent me here to take you to him in Śrī Devananda Gaudīya Matha." Gurudeva told, "I never wrote him that I am coming this very night. How did he know?" Then my Guru Mahārāja replied, "The bona fide *guru* is omniscient like Kṛṣṇa." They embraced each other and came together to Śrī Devananda Gaudīya Matha. When Śrīla Gurudeva departed from this world, that was the appearance day of my Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vamāna Gosvāmī Mahārāja. The concluded *siddhanta* is – When Gurudeva joined Matha, my Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vamāna Gosvāmī Mahārāja brought him to Śrī Devananda Gaudīya Matha, and my same Guru Mahārāja (Rāga

Mañjarī) in his day of appearance took Śrīla Gurudeva, "O Ramana Mañjarī, Vinoda Mañjarī (Parama Gurudeva) is calling you for the service of Śrī Śrī Radha Ramana-biharīji.

Śrīla Gurudeva came to this planet on the order of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrīmatī Rādhikā to give us *vraja-bhakti* as taught by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and to provide us the qualification necessary to enter these pastimes. He never wanted to give anything less than this. He was really *bburidā*, the greatest donor, and *mahā-mahā-vadānyāya*, greatly magnanimous to the superlative degree. We are therefore boundlessly fortunate to have come to his lotus feet.

According to Vaisnava calendar, name of the months like Kesava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava etc are all names of *visnu-tattva*. Same way, our *tilaka-mantra* also is in same sequence like Kesava, Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava etc. When someone joins the *māṭha* as a *brahmacārī*, he will be identified by his Gurudeva's identification. No identification is allowed for mathavasis by biological birth. Śrīla Gurudeva told this so many times, especially in the occasion of giving serial classes on Ramayana starting from Ramana-vami. When Luv-kusa, the sons of Lord Rama, were living in Valmiki asrama, they didn't know the identification of their father or mother. Their mother, Sita-devi, was famous in the Valmiki *āsrama* as Vana-devi. So, Valmiki rsi sent Luv and kusa to sing Ramayana gāna at the time of Lord Rama's *asvamedha yajña*. Laksman enquired about their parents by the order of Lord Rama. They replied to Laksmāna, "We have only one identification, we are living in asrama of our Gurudeva, Śrī Valmiki rsi. He is our Guru, we are his disciples." Śrīla Gurudeva was born in this world in month of Mādhava according to Vaisnava calendar. His childhood name was Śrīman Nārāyaṇa. When he came to Parama Gurudeva, his name became Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa. After renounce order, he became famous by the name Śrī Bhaktivedanta Nārāyaṇa. This 'Nārāyaṇa' name never changed. He became the disciple of Śrīla Bhakti-prajñāna Kesava and he was served by Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja, and entered in *nitya-līlā* in month of Nārāyaṇa.

## THE JOURNEY FROM ŚRĪ PURĪ-DHĀMA TO ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA

To attain the eternal association of his most worshipful *guru* *pāda-pādma* and that of his two senior godbrothers, Śrīla Gurudeva, seated in a lotus position (*padmāsana*) in a car adorned with flowers, thus commenced his journey from Śrī Jagannātha Purī to Śrī Navadvīpa. The decorated car left at eight in the morning on the auspicious *kṛṣṇa-navamī* and was followed by six other vehicles full of devotees.

First, Śrīla Gurudeva went to Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura at his *samādhi* in Svargadvāra and took leave of him. A devotee brought water from the ocean where Śrīman Mahāprabhu had bathed Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura's transcendental body at the time of his disappearance from this world, and this water was sprinkled on Śrīla Gurudeva's transcendental body. From there, he performed *parikramā* in the car around the periphery of Caṭaka-parvata, Śrī Ṭoṭā Gopinātha, Yameśvara Ṭoṭā, Śrī Siddha-bakula and Śrī Gambhīra. After performing *parikramā* of Śrī Jagannātha-vallabha gardens and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's birthplace, the car finally came to the Simhadvāra (lion gate) of Śrī Jagannātha's Temple, where devotees had gathered, having collected Śrī Jagannātha-deva's *prasādi-mālā*, sandalwood paste, cloth, *mahā-prasāda* and other such items to offer to Śrīla Gurudeva. Śrīman Mahāprabhu had offered the same items to Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura at the time of his *samādhi*. In this way, after bidding farewell to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and His associates in Śrī Jagannātha Purī, Śrīla Gurudeva commenced his journey to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma.

As the car drove through Bhubaneśvara, Jajapura and other places, many of Śrīla Gurudeva's disciples and followers came to receive his *darśana*, and with intense emotion tearfully offered their puṣpāñjali at his lotus feet. On reaching Baleśvara, some devotees offered Śrī Kṣīracorā Gopinātha's *prasādi* garland and *khīra* to Śrīla Gurudeva. This journey from Śrī Jagannātha Purī to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma took fourteen hours.

The car carrying Śrīla Gurudeva's transcendental form arrived at Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma at around 10.30 in the evening. As it neared the maṭha gate, the devotees who had gathered there, numbering more than a thousand, surrounded the car, sobbing

bitterly and chanting “Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva!” There are no words to describe their pain of separation from him. Śrīla Gurudeva was brought into the temple room and seated on the *vyāsāsana* in a lotus pose. The devotees performed his *āratī*, singing *Śrī guru-carāṇa-padma*.

### Devotees in India and also Overseas Journey to Śrī Navadvīpa

Śrīla Gurudeva’s speciality was the pure transcendental affection he showered upon all. Such affection, which has no comparison in this world, was a tangible experience of a truly spiritual, selfless loving relationship. Therefore, when devotees within and outside India heard of his entering *nitya-līlā*, their hearts and minds raced to him. Everyone that could possibly do so immediately stopped what they were doing and hastily made arrangements to go to Śrī Navadvīpa to receive his final *darśana*. Some devotees arrived before Śrīla Gurudeva, and many others arrived throughout the night.

For the duration of the night on the auspicious *kṛṣṇa-navamī*, Śrīla Gurudeva’s transcendental body was placed on the dais in the temple room. As devotees arrived, having travelled by air, train, car, or however possible, they were immediately able to have his *darśana*. One by one, without restriction, they prostrated themselves at Śrīla Gurudeva’s lotus feet, offering their heartfelt *srāddha-puṣpāñjali*. Many sat in the temple room throughout the whole night for this last *darśana*, singing *kīrtanas* and *bhajanas* pertaining to moods of separation.

### NAGARA-SANĪKĪRTANA

The next day, 30 December, at 8 o’clock in the morning, Śrīla Gurudeva was placed in a sitting position on a palanquin decorated with flowers. Accompanied by thousands of devotees singing *sanĵīrtana*, he proceeded to the nearby Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha. An unprecedented scene took place as the inhabitants of Śrī Navadvīpa who resided on the path of the procession came out of their homes to offer him *praṇāma*, even from a distance. Some offered *āratī* and some cried out, “*Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva! Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva!*”

In Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Śrīla Gurudeva took *darśana* of his most worshipful *gurupāda-padma*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and his senior Godbrother Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, as well as *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-Bihārī and Śrī Lakṣmī-Varāhadeva. In this way, he announced that now he had come to join them in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma.

Śrīla Gurudeva's Godbrothers and the devotees of Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha then offered *āratī* to Śrīla Gurudeva. Tears filled the eyes of nearly all at the sight of Śrīla Gurudeva coming before his own *gurudeva*. After taking *darśana* of his *gurupāda-padma* and offering him *praṇāma*, Śrīla Gurudeva proceeded to the steps of Pañca-veṇī, also known as Manipurī-ghaṭa, to have *darśana* and offer his *praṇāmas* to beautiful Gaṅgājī, just as he used to do during his manifest presence at the time of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*. The saṅkīrtana party accompanying Śrīla Gurudeva was so large that all who saw it thought they were witnessing the performance of his Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*.

### SAMĀDHI

Śrīla Gurudeva returned to Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha at around 11 a.m. and the devotees reverentially performed *abhiśekha* of his transcendental form with *pañcāmṛta*, Gaṅgā water, rose water, aguru, fragrant oils, and other substances. Tilaka was meticulously applied in twelve places on his resplendent limbs, and he was dressed in a new cloth. The *samādbi-mantra* was written on his chest by his personal *sevaka* Śrīpada Mādhava Mahārāja and Śrīpada Tirtha Mahārāja made *svastika* marks on his chest with sandalwood paste.

At that time, devotees arriving from various places had the good fortune to make arrangements for his large *bhoga* offering as well as a beautiful *āratī* to him and other ceremonies.

Śrīla Gurudeva entered *samādbi* in Koladvīpa next to his *bhajana-kutīra* at Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha. The followers and disciples of Śrīla Gurudeva who had arrived from India and abroad, as well as the *sannyāsīs*, *brahmacārīs* and residents of Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa, Śrī Māyāpura and

Godruma, were witness to all the ceremonies pertaining to *samādhi*. These were performed in accordance with Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's descriptions of how Śrīman Mahāprabhu placed Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura in *samādhi*. Śrīla Gurudeva was placed in *samādhi* adorned with Lord Jagannātha's *prasādi* cloth, *mahā-prasāda*, *dātuna* (twig used as a toothbrush), garland and sandalwood paste. The devotees also offered him *prasāda* from Śrī Kṣīracorā Gopīnātha, along with *prasādi* cloth and other items from Śrī Govindadevajī in Jaipura.

With heartfelt faith, devotees who had arrived from all corners of India and abroad observed and directly participated in the *samādhi* ceremony. From the area surrounding the *samādhi* site, from balconies, from rooftops, and from all directions, they offered a shower of flower petals. Overwhelmed in the mood of deep separation, they sang Je ānilo *prema-dhana* and other such *kīrtanas*. Gradually, as the thousands of devotees present looked on, the *samādhi* was filled and covered with the dust of that most sacred holy place (*dhāma-rajā*), and Vṛnda-devī (Tulasī) was placed on top.

In a tender expression of their love for Śrīla Gurudeva, the devotees covered the small *samādhi* mound with flowers, and offered ghee and oil lamps and an abundance of fragrant incense. They sang *kīrtana* and circumambulated Śrīla Gurudeva, they read the account in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta of the departure of *nāmācārya* Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, and they sat close to the *samādhi*, either in silence or softly chanting, as memories of Śrīla Gurudeva flooded their minds.

After the ceremony, the devotees respectfully honoured Śrīla Gurudeva's *mahā-prasādam*. The next day, a temporary structure was erected on the site to serve as a temple. Currently, all *bhoga* offerings, *ārati*, *pūjā-arcana* etc., are daily being performed to Śrīla Gurudeva in his temporary *samādhi* in a regulated manner.

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In this way, Śrīla Gurudeva completed his last journey, beginning from Govardhana in Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala to Purī-dhāma in Śrī Kṣetra-maṇḍala, finally arriving at Śrī Navadvīpa in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala. Śrīla Gurudeva,

the present-day Vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma, the topmost Vaiṣṇava, of Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala, Śrī Kṣetra-maṇḍala and Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, accepted *samādhi* for time eternal in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which is non-different from Vraja. His *samādhi* and *bhajana-kutīra* at Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha are located at the *rāsa-sthalī* that is situated at the boundary of Śrī Kuliyā Hill, which is non-different than Śrī Girirāja Govardhana.

## The Meaning of Samādhi

Many years ago, Śrīla Gurudeva himself explained the meaning of *samādhi* as follows: *sama* means ‘equal’ and *dhi* means ‘intelligence’. When a pure devotee departs from this world, attaining a *svarūpa* like that of the associates of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, he attains intelligence, beauty, qualities and so forth like theirs. The worshipful deity of our paramparā is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. When our *ācāryas* enter *samādhi*, they attain *sama-dhi*, meaning their intelligence becomes similar in mood to that of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s other intimate associates, under whose guidance they perform direct service to the Divine Couple.

## Who Will Feel Separation?

In a lecture on *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* in 1991, Śrīla Gurudeva asked the devotees present, “Who will feel separation? Only those special devotees who feel deep gratitude to their *gurudeva* – who are greatly indebted to him and who have served him with intimacy – will feel separation. The mood, ‘I am so fallen and my Śrīla Gurudeva is so great,’ will not enter the thoughts of such devotees. They will have no mood of awe and reverence for him. If they do, they will not be able to cry for him.

“Separation from *gurudeva* is felt on various levels. When we consider his mercy, magnanimity and greatness, a particular type of mood arises within us. But when we remember how close and dear he was to us, and when we remember his affectionate dealings with us, we are able to cry so much for him. Mother Yaśodā cries for Kṛṣṇa more than Śrī Nanda Bābā does, but the *gopīs* cry even more than Mother Yaśodā because their relationship with Kṛṣṇa is more intimate. We should also have such an

intimate relation with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, our own *śrīla gurudeva*, and all our *guru-varga* (superiors). Only then can we cry for their mercy.

“If we have not developed an intimate relationship with our *śrīla gurudeva*, how will we ever be able to understand our relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and others? Our progress in bhajana depends upon our inner closeness with *śrīla gurudeva* and the intimate services that we perform for him. If we are able to cry for our *śrīla gurudeva*, only then can we cry for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī also. On the other hand if we cannot cry for our *gurudeva*, then how will it be possible to cry for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī? That is why our crying for *gurudeva* should be heartfelt.”

### The Secret Behind Taking Samādhi in Navadvīpa

Śrīla Gurudeva entered *samādhi* in *gupta* (hidden) Govardhana, the courtyard of Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha located in Koladvīpa, which is non-different from Govardhana in Vraja. Just as Śrī Navadvīpa is supremely magnanimous, compassionate and forgiving, and does not consider any offence, Śrīla Gurudeva is also supremely magnanimous, most merciful and kindly forgiving of all faults. Śrīla Gurudeva accepted *samādhi* in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma to establish the principle that without the mercy of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma – in other words, without the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu – it is neither possible to attain the mercy of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma nor the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Furthermore, he wanted to be near by his supremely worshipful Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and most dear godbrothers, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. That is why his *samādhi* is located midway between theirs.

### Gratitude

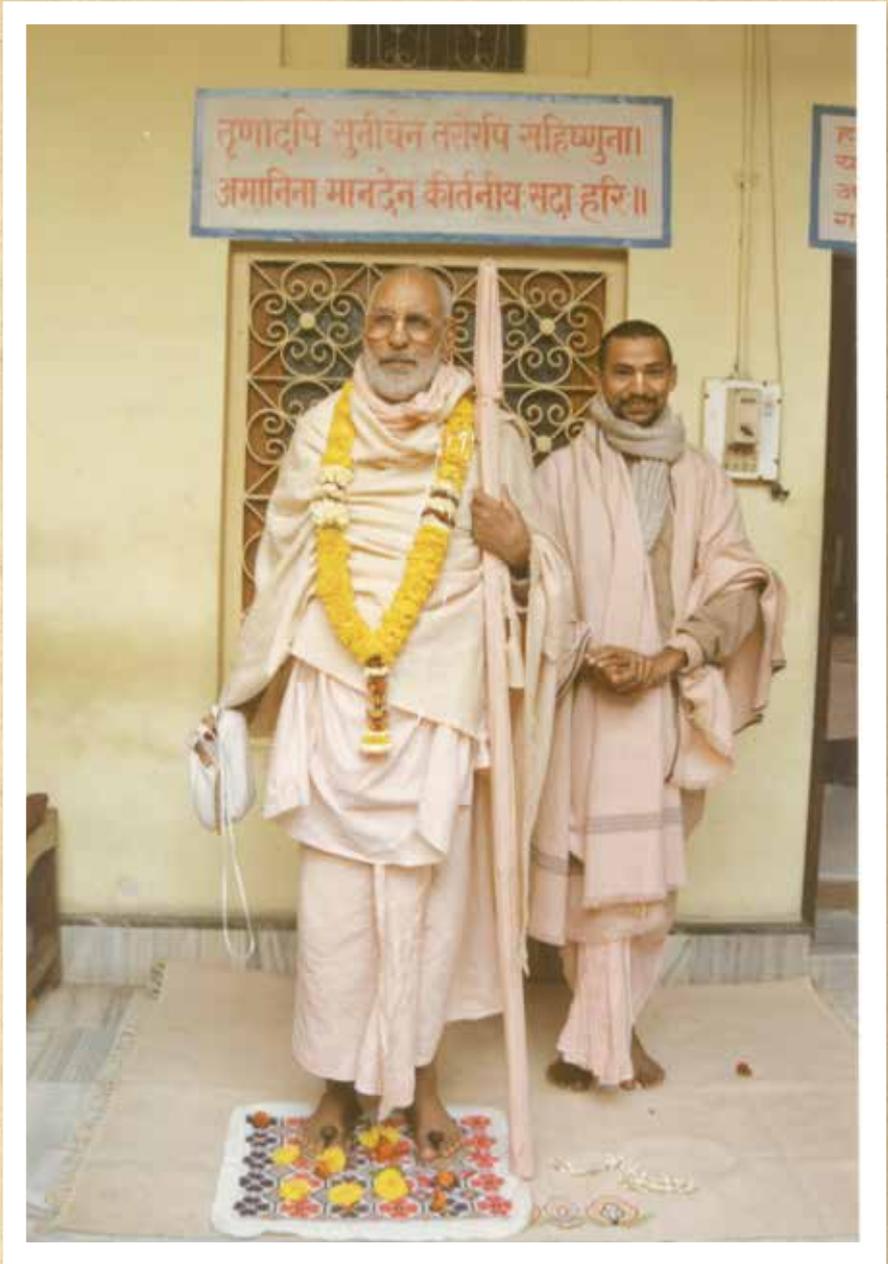
We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to any devotee who has ever performed any kind of service to Śrīla Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa*

*om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.*  
By Śrīla Gurudeva's all-compassionate mercy, these fortunate souls are destined to receive the all-auspicious grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

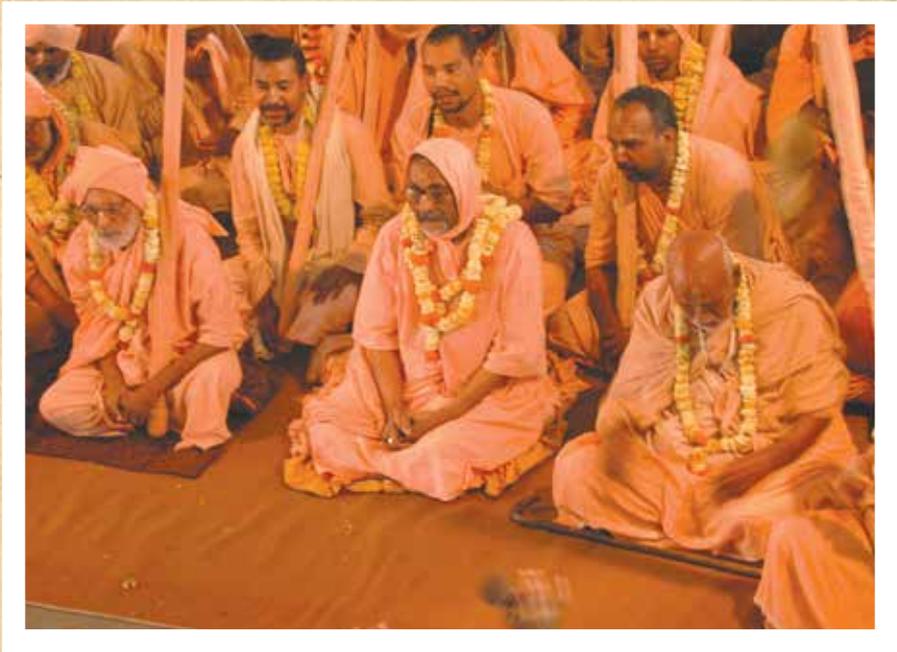
Śrīla Gurudeva

Gallery

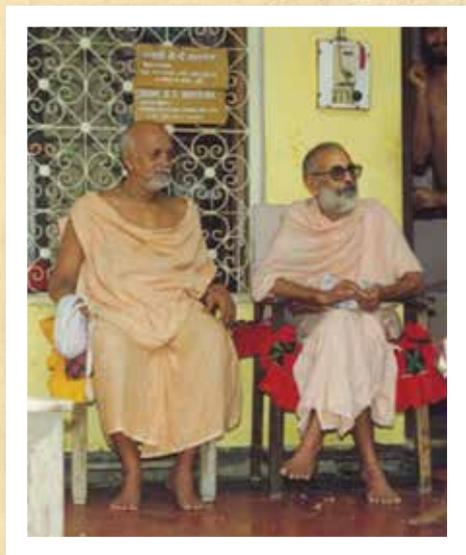
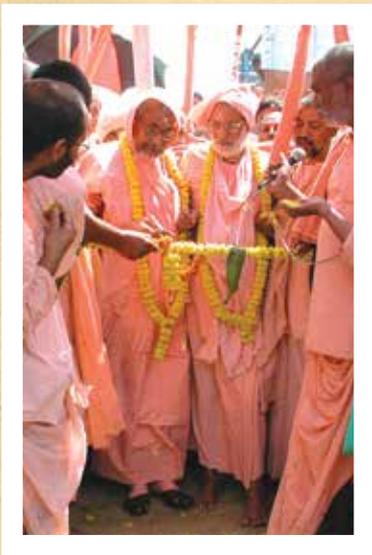




The pure devotee is *krpa-pātra*, the reservoir of *krpa*, mercy. (p.32)



Śrīla Gurudeva used to say that, “though we are three different bodies, our soul is one.” (p.45)





My Guru Mahārāja said, “No, you have to do so much service. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja has reserved some big service for you that no one else can do.” (p.48)

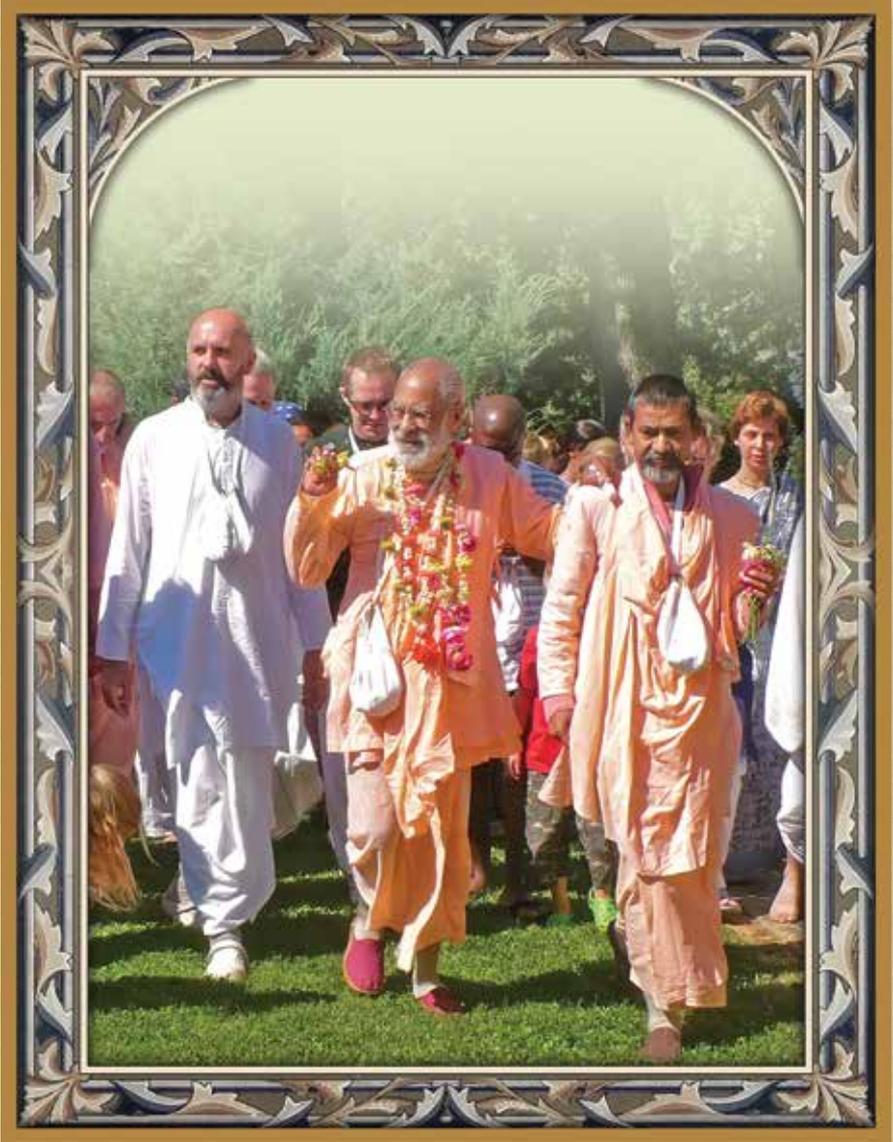




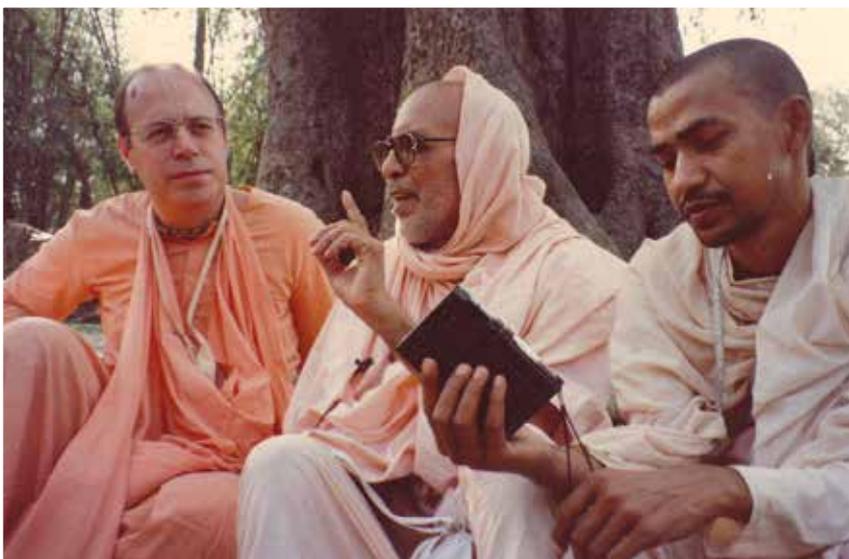
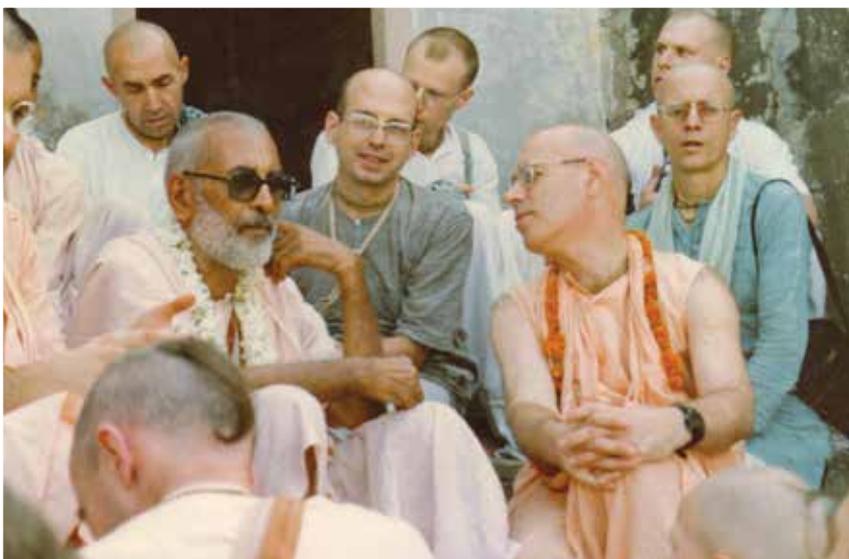
The *sannyāsa-mantra* is very helpful in attaining the *kṛṣṇa-prema* which Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and all the other Gosvāmīs have tried to give us, and this is superior to all supermost attainments. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give this type of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, and therefore the taking of *sannyāsa* is very important. (p.66)



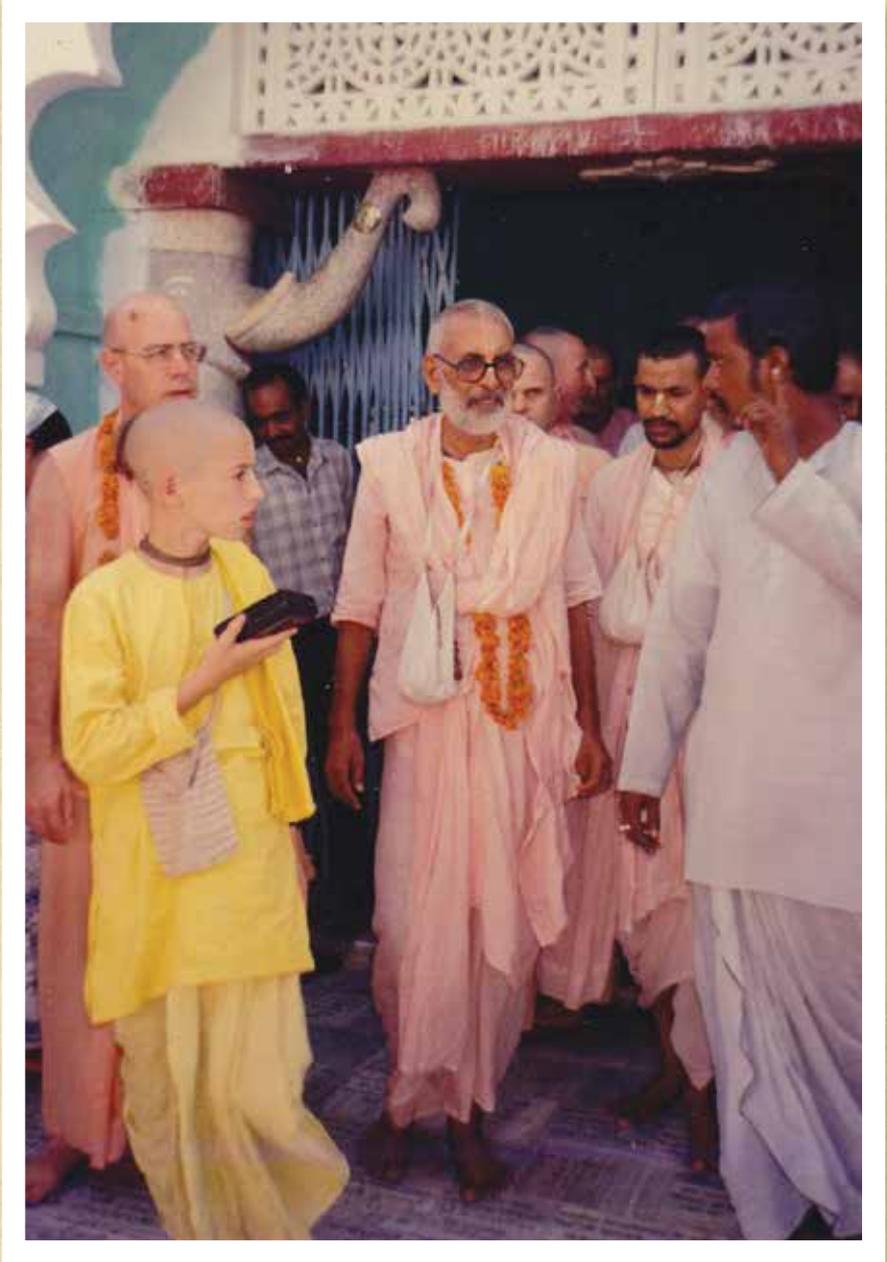
"Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja and I are godbrothers in regards to *sannyāsa*." (p.66)



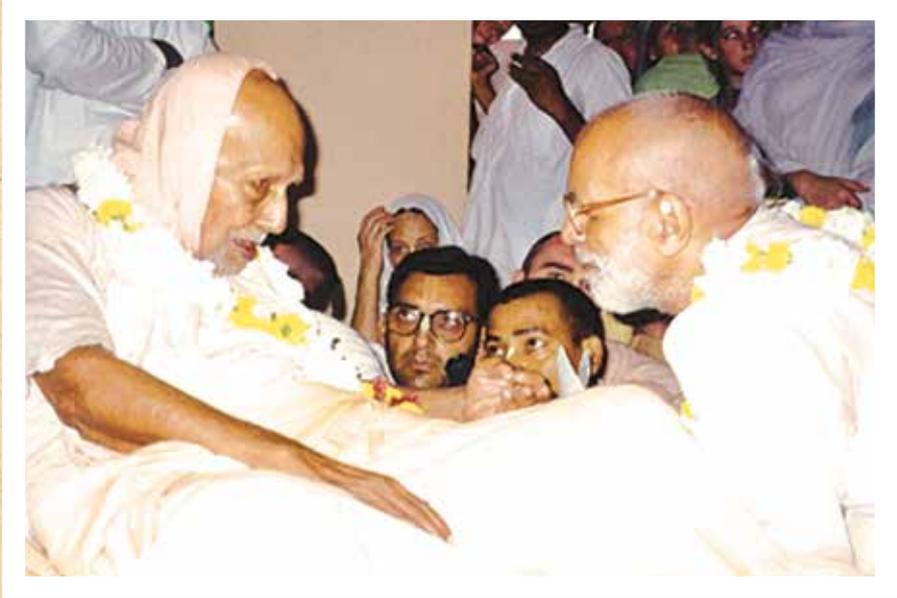
He came to distribute the ocean of mercy from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and to complete Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's mission to distribute that mercy all over the world. (p.128)



When some of the senior ISKCON devotees approached Śrīla Gurudeva for learning, he affectionately agreed to teach them and patiently answered all of their questions. (p.143)

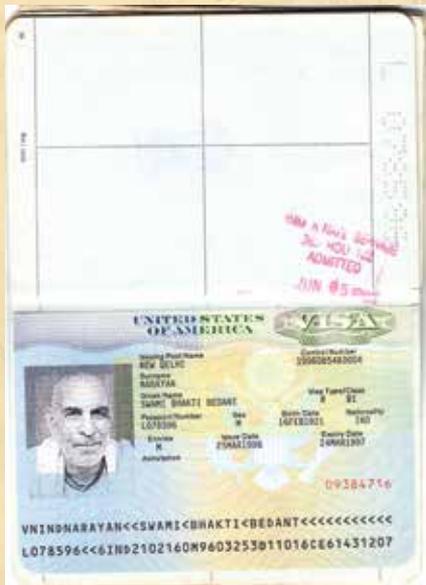


Śrīla Gurudeva Testifies to Save ISKCON. (p.203)



Pastimes with Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Puri Gosvāmi Mahārāja. (p.235)

Obtaining Visas for the United States. (p.237)



Śrīla Gurudeva's first passport and visa to the west.



Śrīla Gurudeva's Ārati by Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja. (p.243)



Janmāṣṭamī – his last lecture in Delhi. (p.257)



“O Śrīla Gurudeva, the doctors suggest that you come out of the room for at least a few minutes and that you sit in the fresh air and meet with the devotees.” (p.267)



On the November 30, Śrīla Gurudeva arrived at Jayaśrī-Dāmodara Gauḍīya Maṭha, which is located at Cakra-tīrtha in Śrī Jagannātha Purī-dhāma....

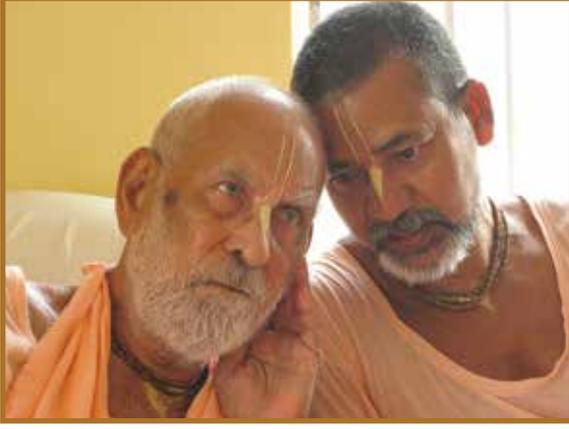
One day, while looking across the wide beach toward the ocean, Śrīla Gurudeva said softly, “Previously, whenever I would come to Śrī Jagannātha Purī dhāma, I would meditate on Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s bathing in the ocean along with His associates. I would also meditate on the words of Śrīman Mahāprabhu at the time of Śrīla Haridāsa Thākura’s disappearance from this world, after He had bathed him in the ocean. Śrīman Mahāprabhu said that now this ocean is a *mabā-tīrtha* (supreme holy place) because it has become the *caraṇāmṛta* (foot-bathing water) of Śrīla Haridāsa Thākura. So, I would bathe in the ocean nearly every day. Now, also, I want to take bath with this ocean water. Can you arrange some water from the ocean for me to bathe?” (p.275)



When Gurudeva joined Matha, my Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Mahārāja brought him to Śrī Devananda Gaudiya Matha, and my same Guru Mahārāja (Rāga Mañjari) in his day of appearance took Śrīla Gurudeva, "O Ramana Mañjari, Vinoda Mañjari (Parama Gurudeva) is calling you for the service of Śrī Śrī Radha Ramana-bihariji. (p.284)



Śrīla Gurudeva entered *samādhi* in Koladvīpa next to his *bbajana-kutira* at Śrī Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha. (p.288)



## About the Author

Svāmī B. V. Mādhava (Dr. N. K. Brahmācārī, Ph.D.) was born into a family of Vaiṣṇavas in Midnapur, West Bengal, in 1956. He has been a full-time practising monk in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition since 1979 and accepted initiation in disciplic succession from Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, a Vaiṣṇava of the highest level with all the characteristics of a true *guru* described in the scriptures. For nearly thirty years, Svāmī B. V. Mādhava has served continuously as the *sevaka*, or personal servant, of his instructing *guru*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Like his initiating *guru*, his instructing *guru* is also a Vaiṣṇava of the topmost calibre and a true *guru*, as described in the sacred texts of the tradition. In March 2000, the author was given the sacred order of *sannyāsa*, the highest level of a renunciant.

In 1977, Svāmī B. V. Mādhava graduated in Sanskrit with honours from the University of Kolkata. Thus, the author is fluent in Bengali, Sanskrit and Hindi. This has allowed him to read and study the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, Itihāsas and later writings that comprise the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava canon in the original languages in which they were composed. Accordingly, Svāmī B. V. Mādhava is in a privileged position to undertake this study. He has dedicated the better part of his life to serving his *guru* directly as his *sevaka*. Thus, he has met all the requirements of a disciple, as set out in the Vaiṣṇava scriptures. This renders this contribution particularly authoritative and valuable.

