

Sage & Seekers

Quotes from the
discourses and writings of
Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gōsvāmī Mahārāja



Bhakti Books

Sage & Seekers

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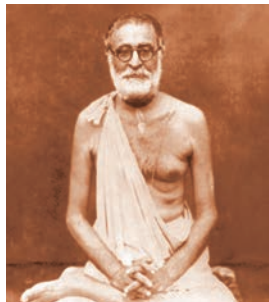
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PROEM

I wish to be with those who know secret things, or else alone.
– Rainer Maria Rilke. Rilke’s book of hours: Love poems to God.

*

This book, *Sage and Seekers*, holds a collection of quotes which encapsulate the essence of the ancient path of *bhakti-yoga* (seeking connection with the Absolute through loving devotion). They have been spoken or written by one of the leading *bhakti-yoga* teachers and scholars, om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Our desire is to share with the world the wisdom he has distributed: essential truths illuminating the science of self (the undying soul within us all), the esoteric nature of God and our eternal connection with Him. These teachings have manifested in our lives a joyful discovery and hope that belongs freely to all, whether or not they have prior familiarity with the *bhakti-yoga* philosophy.

On this path, the seeker’s objective is to meditate constantly, regardless of the external environment, upon the name, form and qualities of the divine absolute Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with unadulterated one-pointed love. Kṛṣṇa means “the all attractive one”. He possesses all good qualities and is the original form of the creator, controller and destroyer of everything in existence. However, His primary function is to receive and to reciprocate with those who remember Him with loving surrender. Ultimately, it is Kṛṣṇa alone who can answer the soulful pining of the seeker who is looking for fulfillment in personal relationship with the the divine.

The goal of *bhakti-yoga* is to develop that relationship to its fully blossomed state, whereupon the seeker leaves behind this false identity full of confusion and disappointment and discovers rapture in service. The secondary result is that one is freed from the cycle of repeated birth and death.

Perhaps today more than ever before, we are becoming familiar with the concept of our aptitude for transcendence, we are more comfortable with acknowledging our existential pain and are increasingly open about our underlying urgency for meaning and self-understanding. While society is learning to seek out physical, emotional and mental healing through broader holistic practices and philosophies, we, at our core, remain untapped, misunderstood and pining for something we can seldom put into words.

A seeking soul intuitively senses early on that a tangible peace and happiness – an ever elusive fulfilment – must be sought beyond our current perception and limitations, and can, or rather must be found in an approach to spirituality that is motivated by love not fear. When our soul's inclination is left untended, the soul seeks relief by fulfilling worldly urges, provocations and practically speaking, all too real worldly demands, and like a flower without water, we cease to reach for the light.

We, the seeker, grapple with a longing for connection that is deeply rooted in the soul's innate capacity for ardent love, and without direction, we look to the world of impermanence to fulfil this burning within us. Inevitably we find ourselves disappointed and, without

true knowledge, remain unaware that this epiphany of 'not belonging' stems from a truth that is astoundingly hopeful and uniting rather than isolating and hopeless.

Perhaps each time our fragility is unavoidably evident is the crucial time for us to carve a little more of our path toward the unbreakable soul within. At that moment, our prayers truly become our own.

There is an idea that seems to seep into religion that a vengeful creator personally punishes us. Yet our creator is a sweet, merciful personality endowed with all luminous qualities and the dynamic between us and God is one of an intrinsic, eternally loving relationship. Knowing this, we can come to understand that the purpose of the suffering we undergo in this world is to propel us in our search for that eternal loving relationship, and an organic and logical consequence of being separated from our soul's dear-most object of love.

We are united in being eternal souls who are subject to the varied struggles and complexities of this life and our relief from this concludes in realizing our relationship with God. Yet we have all accumulated different impressions as our soul transmigrates from birth to birth. Our experiences are not identical nor are our actions and reactions. In the course of our pursuing a deep comprehension of who we are, why we are here and why we should not simply be content to remain in this transient human life, we each retain our independent will. This independent will and what we do with it has, and continues to, generate a particular set of challenges and blessings that in turn contribute to the unique unfolding of our story.

However far the pilgrim must travel, their right to the ultimate destination is no less than the sister or brother who is but a few miles from it. Their arrival is not less lovingly anticipated. This message of anticipation reaches us via the Sages of *bhakti*.

The Sage's wisdom and understanding is infinitely valuable and irrefutably necessary. Such persons who understand their own true nature in relation to God can perceive us with the eyes of transcendence and as such, are positioned to be our truest friend and confidante. Heralding the truth, they enter our lives by their own kind grace, and by following their example, we can experience the profound joy and hope that comes with walking this path.

Sage and Seekers illuminates that we are not expected to cross the broad terrain between illusion and revelation all alone armed with only our fortitude. Those Sages are the guardians of devotion and are integral to our journey. It is they who will reach out for our hand again and again, however often we turn our face from the light. It is they who, with empathy devoid of judgement, will sit beside us in the dark night of the soul, invoking our buried faith and transforming our tears of existential suffering into psalms.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SAGE AND SEEKER

As fire is kindled from wood by another fire, the divine consciousness of man can similarly be kindled by another divine grace. His Divine Grace, the spiritual master, can kindle the spiritual fire from the wood-like living entity by imparting proper spiritual messages injected through the receptive ear.

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.32, purport by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda)

As we edge closer to completing *Sage and Seekers*, we are still dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 virus. During these challenging times many of us have been confronted by loneliness, questioning what is truly meaningful and examining how much genuine connection we have with each other. Who really has our best interest at heart? Who will be there for us when we have nothing to offer but our questions? Whose words of wisdom are truly timeless and will not be debunked or contradicted in a week's time by a flashing news headline?

Reflecting on my own life experience, meeting my *guru*, oṃ viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja (the speaker of the quotes within this book), was more of a transformative experience for me than I could fully identify at the time. I was fortunate to have been raised in a community of spiritual seekers, but there was no one who was capable of connecting with and aiding my own internal quest. It was upon meeting my *guru* that I was able to genuinely appreciate my position as a seeking soul in my own right. I newly appreciated that the path of *bhakti* was not merely a religious identity or a by-product of my cultural upbringing, but

the discovery of a philosophy that held answers to the questions enduring behind the curtain of my consciousness. This Sage was offering active spiritual solutions to all of our problems, and as I witnessed him embodying these very ideals he spoke and wrote about, I was inspired to pursue these same solutions. He was wholly fulfilled by his one-pointed love for Kṛṣṇa, and free from the anxieties that seemed to overwhelm others around me. This was inexplicably evident even to a child with little to no expectations.

Within a short timeframe, before I had reached adulthood, my *gurudeva* had a substantial impact on my consciousness. What had thus far been an abstract philosophical doctrine was now making a deep impression. In his presence, I felt the weight of my having transitioned through countless lifetimes of bodies and varied situations, along with my web-like entanglement in them, being lifted from me. This touched on a timelessly rooted sense of yearning and pain that far exceeded my years. He offered me astoundingly deep insights into the rituals and meditations I was familiar with since birth, creating a rich tapestry of connectivity through relationship and belonging.

Under his guidance I received not only a renewed reverence and enthusiasm for the path, but an uplifting immersion in the sacred atmosphere of the holy lands and in the *kīrtanas* we sing as we pour our heart into the names of the Divine. He taught me to pray not for salvation but for transcendent love and belonging, for faith in the causeless mercy of a sweet natured God endowed with personality and compassion.

Two decades later, I am still standing at this threshold of understanding. I see how deeply others have submerged themselves in dedicating their time and energy to spiritual opportunities provided by the grace of *śrī guru*, and that they have attained considerable progress on the path. And though I sometimes feel left behind due to my own infirmity, the nature of the authentic *guru*¹ is such that, not for a moment do I consider myself forsaken and forgotten.

My beloved *gurudeva* would often say, “Don’t be hopeless.” He understood that most of us require patience and that we may only be able to proceed so far in one lifetime. Yet he undertook the task of seeing us to our ultimate and eventual goal.

I have of course, been confronted many times by apathy in my meditation and by standstills in my spiritual growth, as well as challenging periods when personal loss brought to life experiences and perspectives that I had hitherto only encountered philosophically. In those periods Kṛṣṇa sometimes seemed overwhelmingly unreachable and far away, and I would question if He were hearing me. I wondered, “Are my prayers without devotion? Should I feel guilty that I don’t pray this ardently when not in the throes of material suffering? Should I be here in this sacred space with nothing to offer but my requests and my attachment to illusion?” In those hours, Śrī Guru, with whom I had a personal relationship and whose care for me



¹ One who is expert in understanding all the conclusions of the revealed scriptures such as the Vedas, who has direct experience and realization of Bhagavān, and who is not influenced by any kind of material agitation is known as a bona fide *guru* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.3.21).

I had tangible proof of, kept me anchored. His saintly renunciation, his complete faith in Kṛṣṇa, his writings, and his active empathy for our human experience reached out and gently pulled the prayers from my aching heart. It would be difficult in any circumstance, to summon all the words necessary to relay on this page the breadth and depths of such a relationship.

Perhaps the closest I can come to describing the result of Śrī Guru's grace in my life, is to say that; as I navigate this stormy existence, my own illusions and the world that seeks to draw me more deeply into them, the sacred soul within me – that is, the truth of me – shines within like a candle. Śrī Guru provides complete shelter to that flame from the howling winds and heavy rains. The Sages of *bhakti-yoga* speak of a surrender in which one submits to a journey of supreme awakening. On that journey, the power and potential of the spirit is actualized in service to the Divine.

Śrī Guru, the Sage, acts as a bridge from the material realm to the spiritual realm, providing meaning through a heart connection and through a vast comprehension of the practices we undertake in pursuit of our goal. Illuminating the path of devotion, or *bhakti-yoga*, from beginning to end and beyond, he is our dearest friend and guardian both in this life and the next, always reminding us of our purpose and potential. It is under the Sage's guidance that we approach loving service to the Divine, Śrī Śrī Rādhā² Kṛṣṇa-yugala.



² She who shines brilliantly and who is nondifferent from Śrī Kṛṣṇa is called Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is most worshipful and presides over all goddesses of fortune. She possesses all splendor and completely bewilders Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is the supreme internal potency of the Lord. (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.83)

It is with such a Sage that we share a sacred and unwavering bond.

As aspirants on this path, we present to fellow seekers words from our spiritual guardian that have nourished us on this road home.

Mekhalā dāsī (Kopsidas)



**This book is dedicated to our beloved
Gurudeva, oṃ viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Goṣvāmī Mahārāja,
and to all spiritual seekers on the path.**

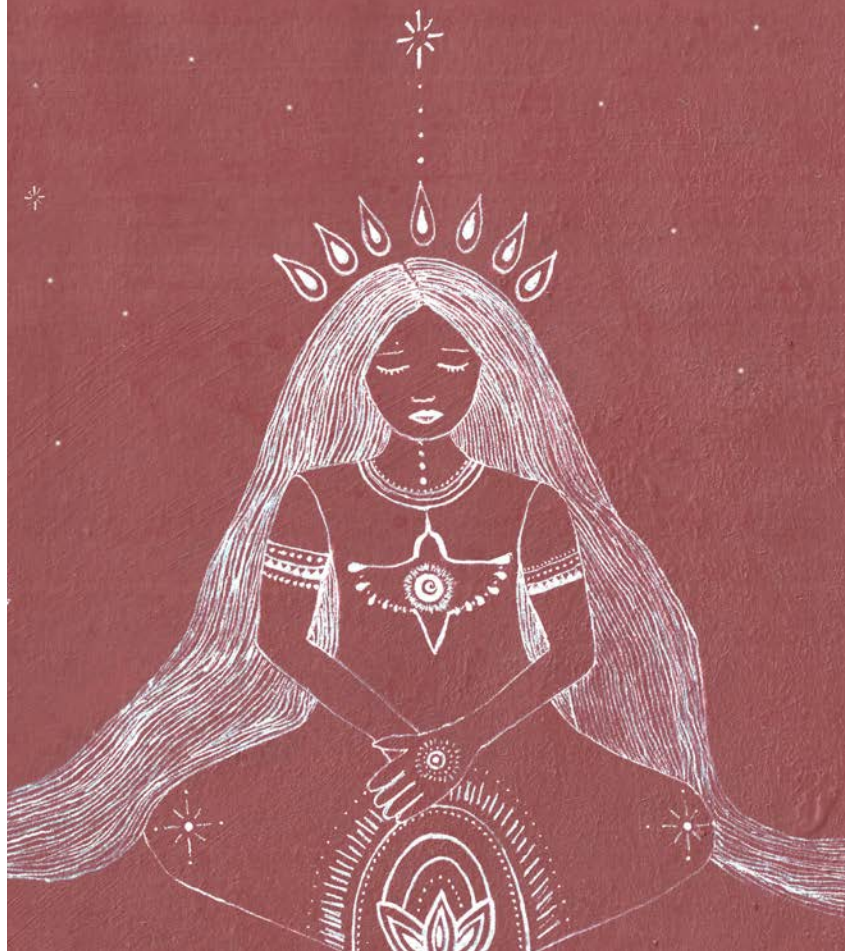
CHAPTER ONE

WHO AM I?



After the destruction of the body, I will not die, because I
am the spirit soul. Weapons cannot cut the soul and the
wind cannot dry it, nor is it subject to old age. The soul is
always youthful, free from death and eternal.

Rays of the Harmonist





WHO AM I?

One day you will have to give up your body, and you will not be able to take anything in this world with you – not your house, not a penny, not a hair on your head, not your father, mother, or anyone else. You will go alone, and even you do not know where you will go. Therefore, the first aim and object of our life in this world should be to understand the answers to these questions: “Who am I? Why am I suffering? Why am I dying and again taking birth? How can this cycle be finished?”

Walking with a Saint 2018

*

The transcendental nature of both Kṛṣṇa and the living being is one – and that nature is love. Kṛṣṇa is love in fullness or completeness, and the living being is an infinitesimal particle of that love. Although the living being is infinitesimal, if he takes shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa, his love and affection will become endless and infinite.

Discourse – 15 December 2001

*

This body is not my ‘self’. It is something like a garment. ... One day when we become old, we will have to give up this garment.

Yoga for Peace

*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like the sun, and the shimmering particles of light in the rays of the sun can be compared to the infinitesimal living beings. Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is complete transcendental reality, so the living beings are minute transcendental reality.

Ācārya Kesari Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*

Only human beings can obtain knowledge of the Absolute Truth; it is not possible in other forms of life such as birds, animals or trees.

Ācārya Kesari Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*

Who are ‘you’? Who is the ‘I’? Although this body is not ‘I’, we think we are this body. In this body, there is a soul and Supersoul. We are soul, and that is ‘I’. And regarding the Supersoul, He is controlling everything, and He is the creator of the entire universe.

Walking with a Saint 2008

*

The individual soul is never the Supreme, and even in the liberated stage he can never become so. Even after attaining liberation, the soul will remain a pure, minute, spiritually conscious entity.

Bhagavad-gītā, Chapter One

*

We are pure in heart and in soul because we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and have the potential to serve Him.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

*

There is no birth and death for the soul, so why are we coming here and suffering? It is because we have forgotten our loving father, mother, friend and most beloved – Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of love. We are His part and parcels, but now we have forgotten Him; that is why we experience birth, old age, death and their concomitant sufferings.

Yoga for Peace

*

Kṛṣṇa is the complete conscious being and the master of *māyā*, or the deluding potency. The living entities, however, are atomically conscious. Although pure, because of their marginal¹ nature, the living entities are capable of becoming subject to *māyā*.

Kṛṣṇa is the possessor of all power and the living entities are devoid of power. Thus, there is an eternal difference between God and the living entities.

Our Eternal Nature

*

Kṛṣṇa and the transformation of His potency, the living entities, are non-different from each other. But this oneness is only from the perspective of their being equal as spiritually conscious beings.

Our Eternal Nature



¹ The living being has a tendency to be in contact with either the material energy or the spiritual energy of Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes he enters into the dark material nature and identifies himself with matter, and sometimes he identifies himself with the superior, spiritual nature. Therefore he is called the Supreme Lord's marginal energy.

THE SOUL

It is not that pure transcendental love comes from outside and is brought by our efforts or spiritual practice. What already exists in the soul will come out – no new thing will come. No type of association or spiritual practice can change what is already there. What is in your soul will manifest by hearing, chanting and remembering Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Gaura-vāṇī pracāriṇe

*

You are not this body; you are the soul within the body.
The soul has a very beautiful form with all good qualities, but it is
now covered by this gross and subtle body.

Walking with a Saint 2008

*

Our soul is present, but it is covered by these two outer bodies
(the body and mind). As a result, we have forgotten God.

Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Sweetness

*

To love is natural for all. Trees also love; they want to
love each other. How? Little vines love trees and embrace them.
If you touch a tree's leaf as though caressing it, the tree will be very
happy. If you take a knife to cut the branches, the tree will be scared.
It will tremble. If you tell a dog, "Come on, come on," he will come.
And if you are mean to it, then the dog will attack you.
So our nature – the nature of the soul – is love.

Yoga for Peace



*

The soul is perfect in itself. The soul's relation with Kṛṣṇa, as well as the soul's name, qualities and specialities, are already present within. This perfection is not brought from outside. Unfortunately, *māyā* covers it, but *śrī guru* removes that *māyā* and then everything manifests automatically.

Gaura-vāṇī pracāriṇe

*

Kṛṣṇa attracts all creatures because He attracts the soul, which is present in the demigods, hogs, fish, eggs, trees, vines, and even in water particles and dust. The soul is present everywhere. If you practise *bhakti-yoga*, you can see and realize this fact, and you will gradually develop devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

The Butter Thief

*

After the destruction of the body, I will not die, because
I am the spirit soul. Weapons cannot cut the soul and the
wind cannot dry it, nor is it subject to old age. The soul is always
youthful, free from death and eternal.

Rays of the Harmonist

*

All souls are the residence of Bhagavān².

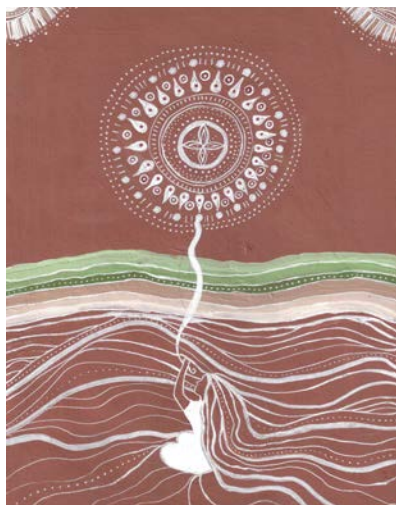
Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

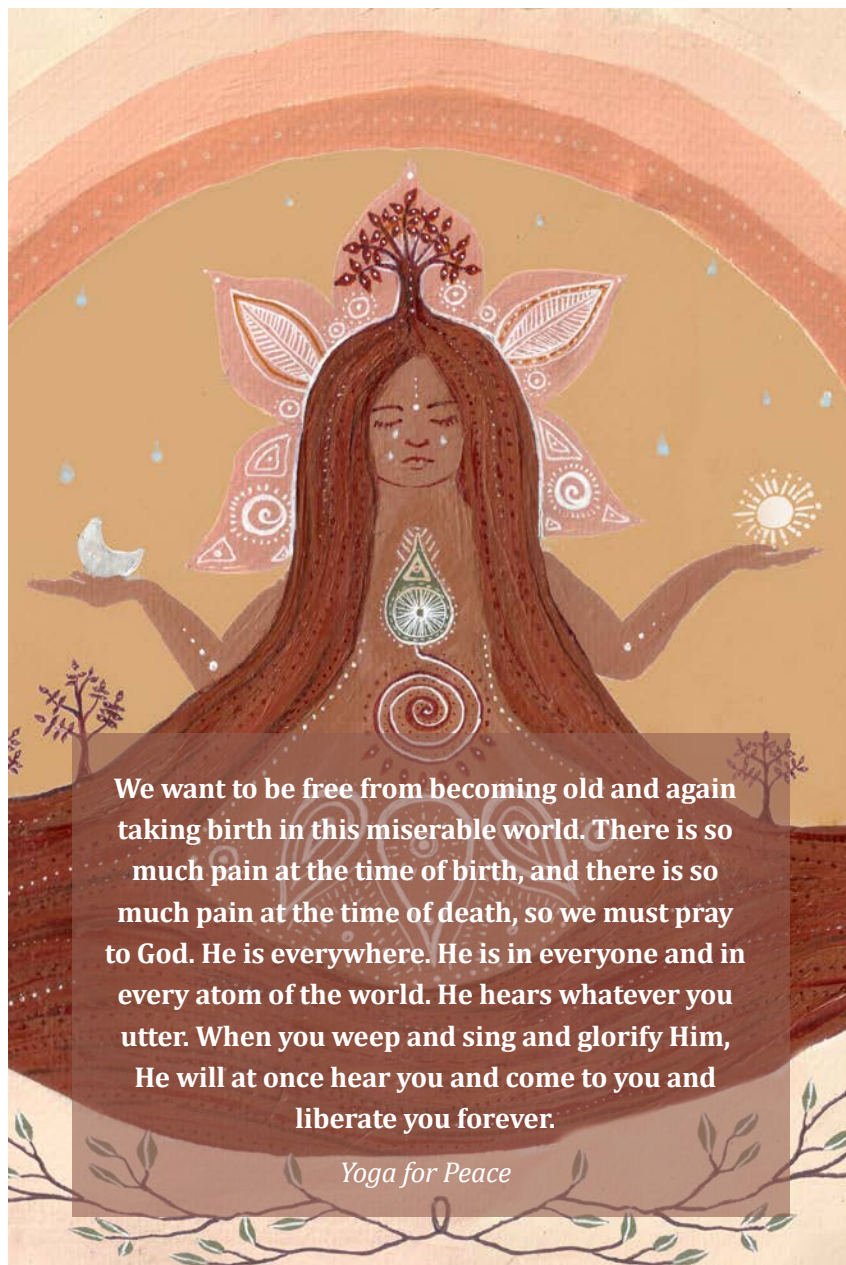


² Bhagavān refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Bhaga* means 'opulences' – there are six in all – and *vān* means 'He who possesses them': wealth (*aiśvarya*), strength (*vīrya*), fame (*yaśa*), beauty (*śrī*), knowledge (*jñāna*) and renunciation (*vairāgya*).

CHAPTER TWO

THE VEIL OF ILLUSION





We want to be free from becoming old and again taking birth in this miserable world. There is so much pain at the time of birth, and there is so much pain at the time of death, so we must pray to God. He is everywhere. He is in everyone and in every atom of the world. He hears whatever you utter. When you weep and sing and glorify Him, He will at once hear you and come to you and liberate you forever.

Yoga for Peace



WHAT IS REAL AND WHAT IS ILLUSION

When the living entity becomes opposed to Bhagavān, *māyā*, the deluding potency, pounces on him, and some desires arise in his heart. After fulfilling these desires, the living entity realizes,
“All this is actually not happiness after all.”

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

We consider the pain and happiness of the material body to be our own, our worldly relations to be related to our very selves, and worldly loss and gain to be related to our very selves. This is the forest fire of material existence in which we are time and again taking birth.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

We should consider whether in fact we are this body or the soul within the body. It is a fundamental truth that there is all the difference in the world between our real self, which is the soul, and our body. Knowing this, we have to be detached from this body.

We should also inquire where the soul has come from.

Happiness in a Fools Paradise

*

You should know you are neither male nor female.
The soul is transcendental – a servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa,
but we have now accepted a female or male form.

Discourse – 12 June 2005

*

Everyone wants peace and happiness in their lives, but I don't think that the advancement of material science has actually made anyone happy. Happiness really depends on love. We cannot find happiness without love and affection. This is our real necessity: happiness and love. We want pure happiness and pure love and affection, but we can't find them here. Nevertheless, they do exist. We are trying to find happiness by developing impure love and affection for imperfect personalities. The Vedic literatures tell us that we can only be happy by developing pure love and affection for the supremely pure personality, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Happiness in a Fools Paradise

*

As two swords will not remain together in one scabbard, *māyā* and *bhakti* [absorption in the material world and absorption in devotion to the Supreme Being] will not remain together in one's heart.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

Kindly do not waste your time with this false conviction:
“By worldly things I will be happy.”

Walking with a Saint 2008

*

You should know that we are all spirit souls.
The soul is not white or black. All souls are very beautiful.
Regarding the transcendental form of the soul, there is no question
of who is less intelligent or more intelligent.

Discourse – 12 June 2005

REFUGEES IN THIS WORLD

This world is a training centre. We must not become
entangled in it, otherwise we will have endless problems.

Pinnacle of Devotion

*

Listen, you are not residents of this world. You are refugees.
Old age will come soon. After that you will give up your body, and you
will have to leave everything behind. You must endeavour to become
free from the entanglement of this material world. Perform your
work, but don't be attached [to the fruits of work].

Walking with a Saint 2008

*

Someone may argue that the world is a prison-house full
of unlimited misery. But the material world will not be a prison for
those who are not infatuated with it.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

We want to be free from becoming old and again taking birth in this miserable world. There is so much pain at the time of birth, and there is so much pain at the time of death, so we must pray to God. He is everywhere. He is in everyone and in every atom of the world. He hears whatever you utter. When you weep and sing and glorify Him, He will at once hear you and come to you and liberate you forever.

Yoga for Peace

*

Live in the world, but do not be entangled [in it].

Walking with a Saint 2008

CHAPTER THREE

CONSCIOUS LIVING





The trees and vines of Vṛndāvana seem to be ordinary, but upon seeing Kṛṣṇa, they become overwhelmed with transcendental emotion. With great joy they offer obeisances to the feet of Kṛṣṇa by offering their fruits and flowers, and they shed tears of love in the form of streams of honey. Even the plants and trees of this world have feelings; like us they are conscious. They are not able to express their feelings in words, but they can express them.

Bhakti-rasāyana





AHIMŚĀ – A LIFE OF NON-VIOLENCE

The general principle regarding non-violence (*ahimśā*) is to not kill any living entity. *Himśā*, or violence, does not only mean to commit murder with one's hands or a weapon; rather, *himśā* is to cause pain to another with one's tongue, mind or heart.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

*

The cow is the mother of everyone. Without any consideration, she gives milk to Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and everyone else; therefore, she is like a mother. We cannot kill our mothers and eat their meat. So do not eat meat.

Walking with a Saint 2008

*

What is the meaning of meat? I have explained it many times: M-E and E-A-T. Whoever I eat will return to eat *me*. Every action has a reaction. If you abuse anyone, you will be abused. If you give a slap, you will get a slap. Those whose flesh you are taking will get a human body and they will eat you, so you should not do these things.

Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Sweetness

*

All creatures are also created by God. They are all children of the same God. Therefore, why should we not have love for all? In Indian Vedic culture it is said, “*Sarve sukhino bhavantu* – everyone should be happy”. This does not only mean humans, but vines and other plant life, as well as pigs, birds and all other animals and all types of aquatics. They are also in the family of the same God.

Discourse – 14 June 2003

LEARNING FROM NATURE

We want to be completely selfless in our dealings, and for this we have the example of the tree, which gives its bark, roots, fruits, leaves, wood and shade. The tree offers everything to others with no expectation of remuneration.

Why can't we human beings be so selfless?

Harmony

SEEING THE DIVINE PRESENCE IN EVERYTHING

If with awareness of Bhagavān's presence, someone offers obeisances even to a piece of straw, or offers something to that straw with great feeling and shows it respect, then those action will serve to fulfil that person's desires and give perfection.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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Prahlāda Mahārāja offered obeisances to everything – birds, animals, insects, straw. Why? Because he understood that without the presence of Bhagavān, nothing can exist, not because he thought,
“This is Bhagavān Himself.”

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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The soul is inside every type of body, but we don’t understand that the soul is a dear part of Bhagavān. It doesn’t matter that the soul is bound within a material body; its intrinsic form is that of a servant of Bhagavān; therefore, the soul should be respected.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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The trees and vines of Vṛndāvana seem to be ordinary, but upon seeing Kṛṣṇa, they become overwhelmed with transcendental emotion. With great joy, they offer obeisances to the feet of Kṛṣṇa by offering their fruits and flowers, and they shed tears of love in the form of streams of honey. Even the plants and trees of this world have feelings. Like us they are conscious. They are not able to express their feelings in words, but they can express them.

Bhakti-rasāyana

CHAPTER FOUR

**HARMONIOUS
COMMUNICATION**





HARMONIOUS COMMUNICATION

The process for achieving success has nothing to do with controlling;
it has to do with universal love and affection.

Harmony

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If you have love, it may be gradually transferred to God.
If you have no love and you are always quarrelling,
you cannot have the mercy of God.

Discourse – 8 June 1998

*

Always see what other people want. Try to realize their difficulties.
Try to understand their suffering. Let us try to keep our own mood
concealed and try to hear and accept the other person's.

Harmony

*

There is a Hindi saying: "If you place a thorn in someone's path,
that thorn will become three, like a trident, and it will return to
pierce you. On the other hand, if you do good for others you will be
showered with flowers." Therefore, never harbour bad thoughts
about anyone with the intent to harm them. Even if someone unjustly
abuses you, simply tolerate; do not retaliate.

Harmony

*

We should try to respect each other. If anyone rebukes us, no harm. We should think, “It is my *karma*; it is due to the actions of my past births.” Or else we can understand, “Kṛṣṇa has arranged this to teach me tolerance.” We should try to realize all these teachings.

Secret Truth of the Bhāgavatam

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We want to associate with everyone on the platform of love and affection, not by controlling them. You cannot bring others to Kṛṣṇa’s service by manipulating them or controlling them.

The Soul of Book Distribution

WELCOMING GUESTS

If someone comes to our home or temple, we should certainly give him something. It might be Him [Kṛṣṇa Himself in disguise]! ... Knowing Bhagavān to be inside everyone, give him respect and speak to your guest with sweet words.

Going Beyond Vaiṣṇava

SHARING THE MESSAGE

It is the duty of the disciple, like a postman who delivers a message without changing it, to distribute the words of *śrī guru* and our *guru-paramparā* to everyone. Realization will gradually come.

Walking with a Saint 2008

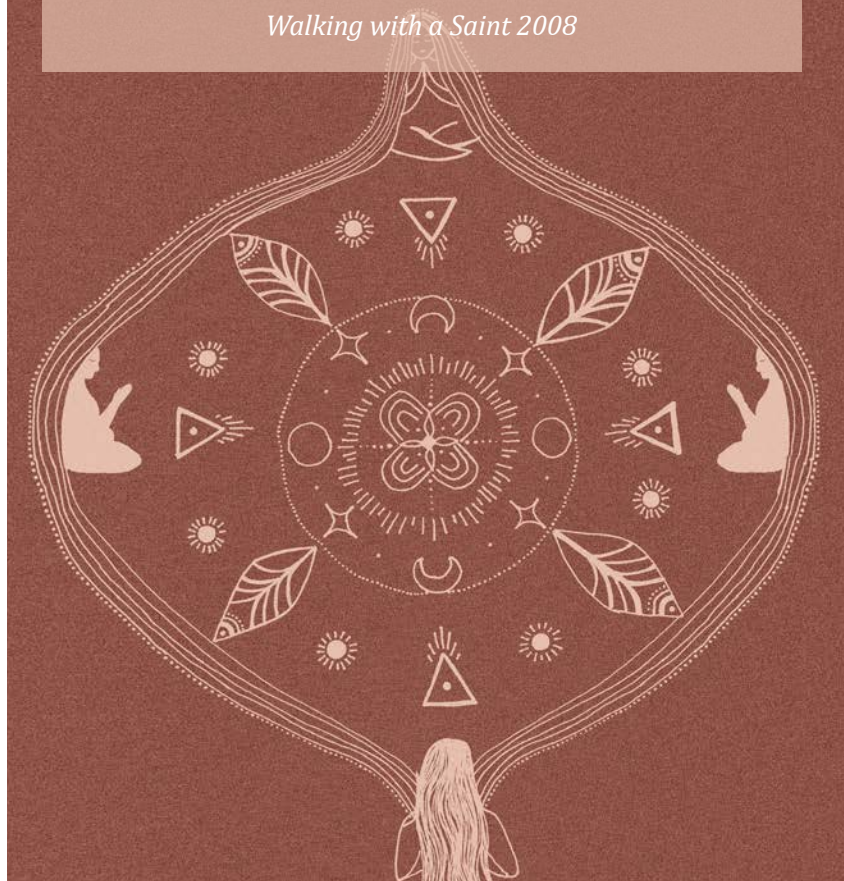
CHAPTER FIVE

**UNITY IN
DIVERSITY**



God is one without a second. Our God, your God, others' God – the Muslims' God, the Christians' God, and the Indians' God – are not separate. The only difference is in the names. The names Allah and Khudā are the same as Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Bhagavān and Paramātmā. You are Muslim, but your soul is not Muslim. Your soul, my soul, and everyone's soul is part and parcel of the one Supreme Lord; so we are all brothers and sisters.

Walking with a Saint 2008





UNITY IN DIVERSITY

In this entire universe, there is only one Supreme God. There are many conceptions of God, but the Supreme God is not Russian, British, German or Australian. He knows all languages perfectly, and ultimately there is no need of knowing them all. There is only one real language in the entire world, and that language is called love.

Yoga for Peace

*

God is one without a second. Our God, your God, others' God – the Muslims' God, the Christians' God, and the Indians' God – are not separate. The only difference is in the names. The names Allah and Khudā are the same as Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Bhagavān, and Paramātmā. You are Muslim, but your soul is not Muslim. Your soul, my soul, and everyone's soul is part and parcel of the one Supreme Lord; so we are all brothers and sisters.

Walking with a Saint 2008

*

There is only one religion, that religion is natural, and that natural religion is love and affection for God and for everyone.

Discourse – 8 June 1998

*

Bhagavān descended as an incarnation in the form of so many names – why? Because there are many different types of people in the world. Their proclivities and faith are of many types. Their previously acquired natures are different, and even in perfection their internal natures are different.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

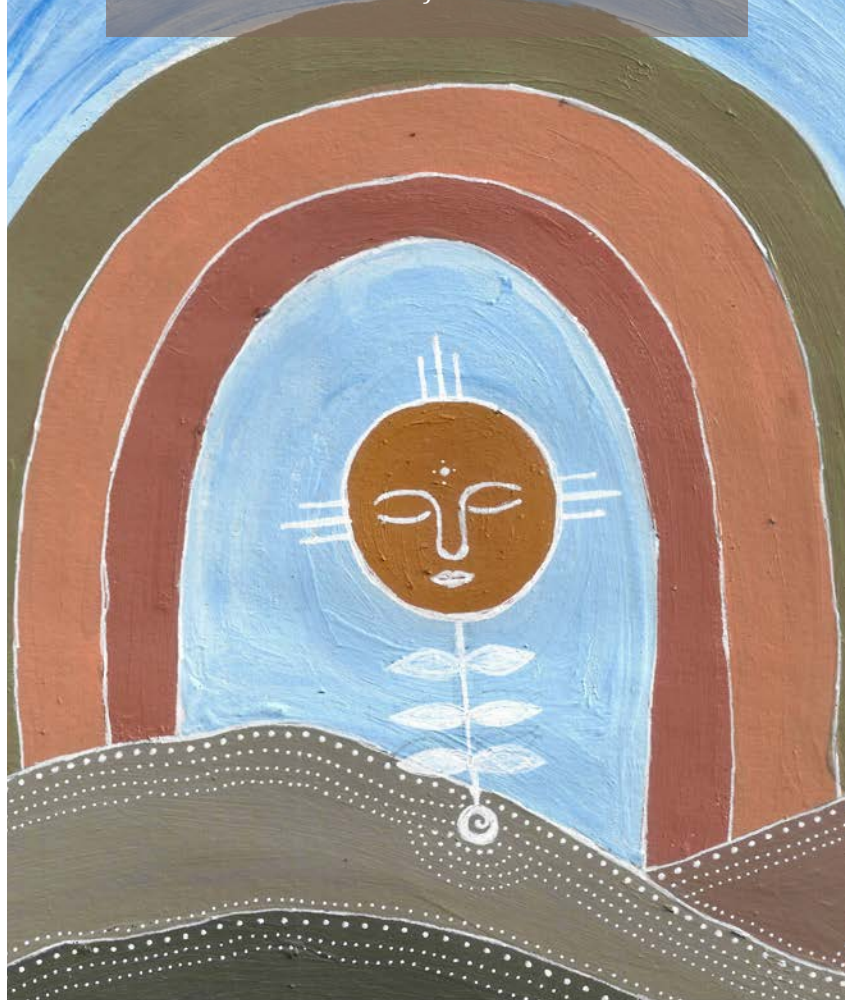
CHAPTER SIX

**THE DAWN
OF FAITH**



Right now, at this moment, let us give up
thinking about problems, and be faithful,
knowing that Kṛṣṇa is always our protector.

Pinnacle of Devotion





THE DAWN OF FAITH

The dawning of faith is compared to the time when the night is complete and symptoms of daybreak begin to appear. The peacock makes the *ke-kā* sound, and the sparrows begin making the *chā-chā* sound. The birds' *chā-chā* sound is like the devotees relishing *hari-kathā*, and the *ke-kā* sound indicates that having accepted initiation (*dīkṣā*) from a spiritual master, the stars that were so luminous during the night – meaning the attraction to sense enjoyment, which until now was shining for the conditioned soul – are no longer visible. The eastern horizon begins to turn red, and now we understand that the night has come to an end, meaning that the conditioned soul's wandering in the material world will soon come to an end. This is *niśānta-bhajana*, and it is the dawning of faith.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

This gradual awakening beginning with cleansing the mirror of the heart is *niśānta-bhajana*.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

If our faith is in externals and not in the internal, then what happens internally? We get the opposite of spiritual life.

Harmony

*

The spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas are supremely merciful. Making different plans, they cause faith to arise in others and always try to strengthen that faith. Their first duty to us is to awaken our faith in the holy name, *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas, and this is *niśānta-bhajana*.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

Right now, at this moment, let us give up thinking about problems and be faithful, knowing that Kṛṣṇa is always our protector.

Pinnacle of Devotion



*

“If I just perform *bhajana* (internal worship) of Kṛṣṇa, then everything is accomplished.” Such a high-quality type of faith is called *śraddhā*. If that *śraddhā* is placed in the words of the scriptures, in the words of the spiritual master, and in the words of the Vaiṣṇavas, then everything will come from that.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER SEVEN

FAITHKEEPERS





FAITHKEEPERS

Always remain in the association of pure devotees of Kṛṣṇa, the reservoir of truth and pleasure. If you remain alone, you will become weak, and illusion will swallow you. Even if your *gurudeva* is far away, in India or here and there, don't think that he is not in your heart. Like Kṛṣṇa, he may be present anywhere, and you can call him.

Discourse – 10 March 2002

*

The heart of those pure devotees is the abode of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa can take rest in their heart because it is pure – free from worldly desires. In their heart there is no suffering or problems... They don't want anything from Kṛṣṇa; therefore, He can take rest in their heart and sleep very peacefully.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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In order to achieve real *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, have real happiness, learn how to progress in this life and realize who we are, it is necessary to go to a self-realized soul and submissively hear from him. He will surely help us.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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If our heart is given very naturally at a Vaiṣṇava's¹ lotus feet, it means he is our *guru*, regardless of whether or not he has given us *mantras* or performed a sacred fire ritual. These are external and not as important as the surrendering of one's heart.

Pinnacle of Devotion

*

A *sādhū* is someone who has realized Kṛṣṇa and his own self and who is detached from worldly desires. If you meet such a *sādhū*, he will convince you that you are not this body and that only in this human form can you realize that you are a soul.

Walking with a Saint 2008

THE HEALING COMPANY OF SAINTS

In our spiritual practice we may be unhappy. Such misfortune may come to us. Those whose very life is devotional absorption (*bhajana*) can reveal our weaknesses and our obstacles to devotion, and from where those weaknesses and obstacles have arisen. They will give us a plan for eliminating those problems at the very root.

Going Beyond Vaiṣṇava



¹ A devotee of Lord Viṣṇu. In this case, one who is a fully realized soul.

*

By our own effort it is not possible to overcome our illusion; we simply become more entrapped. Therefore, we should depend fully on the grace of the Vaiṣṇavas, the spiritual master and Bhagavān, and we should not try on our own to escape this entrapment.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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When the living being attains saintly association, then this darkness of illusion begins to dissipate and he can understand that his night will soon be ending, meaning that his wandering through countless lifetimes in this material world will soon be finished.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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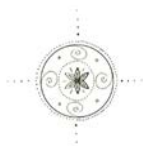
In this world, millions of living beings are sleeping, and the kindness of the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas that awakens them is like a fathomless ocean.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER EIGHT

**ŚRĪ GURU,
OUR ETERNAL GUIDE**





ŚRĪ GURU, OUR ETERNAL GUIDE

Where does the spirit to serve Kṛṣṇa come from?
By the grace of Kṛṣṇa, *guru* comes to us. We cannot go to *guru*.
So this spirit comes from Kṛṣṇa in the heart of *gurudeva*,
and then to us. Kṛṣṇa is so merciful.

The Essence of All Advice

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Unfortunately, *māyā*, the Lord's deluding potency, covers the soul.
Śrī guru removes that *māyā*, and the soul's perfect, true, constitutional
form, qualities, services and so on manifest automatically.

Gaura-vāṇī Pracāriṇe

*

A *guru* should have realization of God so that he can give God from
his heart to others' hearts. Next, he should be detached from worldly
desires. Such a *guru* is very rare. However, if you pray to God with a
clean and simple heart, "O God, You are merciful; please arrange that I
can meet such a *guru*," He will somehow mercifully arrange that such
a *guru* will come to your door and teach you everything.

Yoga for Peace

*

Gurudeva is the embodiment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's quality of mercy.

Pinnacle of Devotion

*

When we first enter devotional service, we are not aware of our specific relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We only know that “Kṛṣṇa is my master and I am His servant.” Later, *gurudeva* helps us develop the particular relationship that is inherent in our heart.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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The bona fide *guru* never takes the heart of the disciple as his own property. Rather, he makes the disciple’s heart soft, sweet and fragrant, suitable to be offered to the Divine Couple.

Pinnacle of Devotion

*

What is the meaning of *guru*? He who is himself practising and asking others to practise in the same way.

Essence of All Advice

*

We are the property of Kṛṣṇa, so *guru* should bring us to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. That is *guru*.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

*

Following śrī *guru*’s words of instruction is internal *darśana* (vision of him). Watching his behaviour and the way he performs his activities is external *darśana*.

Walking with the Saint 2008

*

A bona fide *guru* never egotistically considers himself to be a *guru* or even an advanced devotee. ... A pure *guru*, or Vaiṣṇava, always remains far from such egoism. He naturally thinks himself to be extremely low and fallen, and he continuously offers prayers to Bhagavān's feet.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

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If someone is not able to give *prema*, transcendental love, then he is not really a *guru* at all. Being capable of bestowing transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa is the primary attribute of a genuine Vaiṣṇava *guru*.

Śrī Prabandāvalī

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The bona fide spiritual master imparts teachings to the disciple through his own conduct.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

*

A *guru* who has not internally served his *gurudeva*, who is not inspired and strong, and who has no faith, cannot help his disciples.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

*

Guru is one who is especially dear to Kṛṣṇa. All living entities are dear to Kṛṣṇa, yet by serving and receiving the mercy of such a *guru*, who can actually overpower Kṛṣṇa by transcendental love, we can meet Him; otherwise we can't meet Him.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Just like the omniscient Supersoul present in the core of everyone's heart, the *guru* has the special characteristic of perfectly knowing our heart. He knows the eternal constitutional mood of our soul – our eternal relationship with Bhagavān – and accordingly, he connects us with Him. Then, by supplying the water of hearing, chanting and remembering, he nourishes that relationship and cuts down anything that obstructs that nourishment with the sharp axe of his words. He does this so expertly that the spiritual practitioner barely notices, but all the while the needful is accomplished. This is what the bona fide *guru* and genuine Vaiṣṇavas do.

Dāmodarāṣṭakam

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Whatever the *guru* tells us is the supreme truth of the Vedas, and we should always keep it with us. A spiritual practitioner may desire to understand everything by relying solely upon his own experience and then moving forward. Rather than accepting what anyone else may tell him, he may feel that he must directly experience everything himself. But the *guru* can see that trying to understand everything step by step may take millions of lives.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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In the same way that Kṛṣṇa cries and is upset for us, so the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas are so upset for us that we cannot possibly estimate it. The *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas suffer so much for us, just like a mother when she is raising her small child.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

It is Śrīmatī Rādhikā who is the very personification of kindness for us, and Her manifestation in this world is the spiritual master.

All of the kindness of Bhagavān is found in the *guru*.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

It is our own *guru* who can give us special things because of our direct relationship with him. He attracts us to *bhakti* (the path of devotion)

and eradicates our desires for material enjoyment.

Therefore, birth after birth, we will remain indebted to him.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

RELATIONSHIP WITH ŚRĪ GURU

How will it be possible for a spiritual practitioner to attain a feeling of possessiveness for Śrī Kṛṣṇa? It will first sprout for *śrīla gurudeva*, the associate of Kṛṣṇa. The practitioner will feel, “He is my life and soul. He is more dear and intimate than my own soul.” Then, when that possessiveness for *gurudeva* gradually matures, *gurudeva* will personally transform it into possessiveness for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Discourse – 2 October 2003

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How must we surrender to the *guru*? As it says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34), “one who approaches the *guru* with these three tendencies: submission (*praṇipāt*), relevant inquiry (*pariprasna*) and sincere service (*sevā*) is qualified to understand this knowledge.”

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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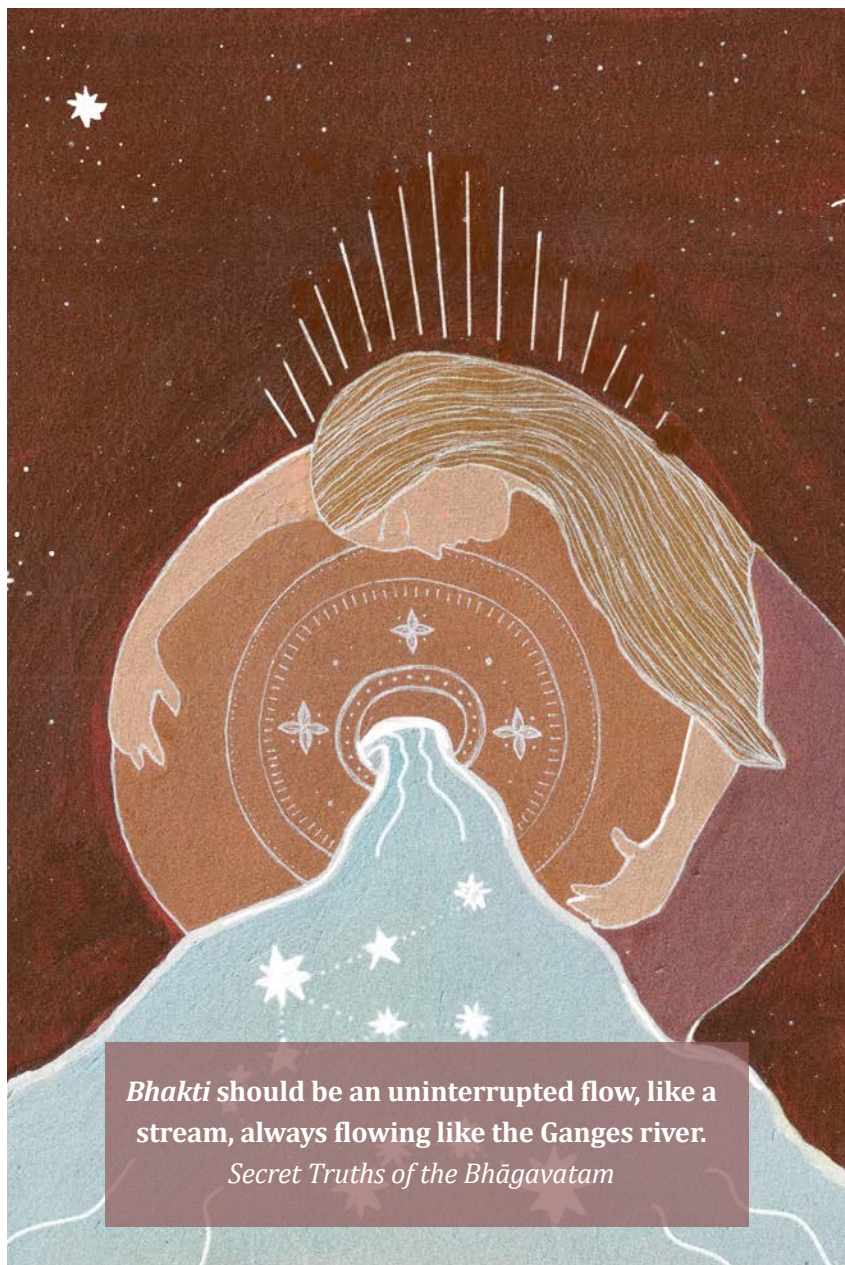
So many difficulties will come to test us in the service of our *guru*, but our resolution should be, “Birth after birth, I will never leave my spiritual master or my Lord.”

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER NINE

**BHAKTI-YOGA –
THE PATH OF
DEVOTION**





Bhakti should be an uninterrupted flow, like a stream, always flowing like the Ganges river.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam



BHAKTI-YOGA – THE PATH OF DEVOTION

Meeting with God through pure love and affection
is called *bhakti-yoga*.

Kṛṣṇa – The Lord of Sweetness

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What is the meaning of *yoga*? ... When a soul is connected with God, this is pure *yoga* – *bhakti-yoga*. If we want to connect two bricks, we must bring some ingredient that will connect them, like mud or cement. If one wants to connect souls with God, there must be something to bind them. What is that? It is love and affection.

Discourse – 23 December 1998

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By the practice of *bhakti-yoga*, one will know,
“I am spirit soul, part and parcel of the Supreme Lord.”
Then, by love and affection, one comes in touch with Him.

Walking with a Saint 2007

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It is natural for the soul to serve Kṛṣṇa. ... Kṛṣṇa is love personified.

Walking with a Saint 2007

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If a devotee accidentally commits some sinful activity, there is no need for him to undergo any atonement. By continuing his practice of *bhakti*, his heart will be purified.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

That which we do for ourselves is not *bhakti*. Gradually, when what we do becomes solely for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa and His companions, then only will it be *bhakti*.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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Prema-bhakti, transcendental loving devotion, is Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself, and one of Her expansions is Bhakti-devī. Bhakti-devī has form and attributes, and she is full of mercy. Like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, she is independent. She can make Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa dance, she can manifest Them in our heart, and she can also make us dance. She can engage us in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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The Supreme Lord is very kind; He is causelessly merciful. He has given us a very valuable asset, and that asset is love. We have love, but we will have to purify it by loving Kṛṣṇa.

Yoga for Peace

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It is the living entity's immense good fortune that Bhagavān comes to him in the form of *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas, or sages. He sends the *guru* to him and sends the Vaiṣṇavas to him, and through them the seed of the vine of devotion is planted in the living being's heart. As long as we do not have this seed of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, for us it is still night.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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Bhakti should be an uninterrupted flow, like a stream, always flowing like the Ganges river.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

THE POTENCY OF DEVOTION

Love has nothing to take but everything to give.

Harmony

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Suppose there is a pitcher of water. If we simply add some lemon juice and some sugar, it immediately becomes nectar. Similarly, we must perform so many worldly duties, but if, following in the mood of our spiritual master, we meditate on Bhagavān while carrying them out, they will all become nectar.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Whatever condition you are now in – if you are a thief, a dacoit, or a hooligan, or if you are pure – start performing *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* (internal worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and chanting the holy name, and automatically *bhakti* will take care of the rest.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

THE MOOD OF DEVOTION

If Kṛṣṇa's love is equal to the devotee's love, then Kṛṣṇa will not be controlled. But if the devotee has more love and affection for Kṛṣṇa than Kṛṣṇa has for him, then what?

Kṛṣṇa comes under the control of that devotee.

Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Sweetness

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The practicing devotee should also desire to perform activities that will melt Śrī Kṛṣṇa's heart. Śrī Kṛṣṇa will not be able to resist him for very long. He will accept that devotee with His whole heart and immerse him in His own sublime service.

Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam

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He [Kṛṣṇa] may willingly come under the control of a spiritual practitioner when He sees them eagerly perform loving service to Him with great persistence, but He cannot be attracted by austerities alone. He is only attracted by sincere love.

Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam

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If someone is offering worship solely for the pleasure of
Bhagavān – even though there may be some mistake in it –
it will be accepted as genuine *bhakti*.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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Sometimes we may say to someone, “Hey you, come here!”
If we call Kṛṣṇa in the same way, will He listen? If we call Him and
the correct feelings are not there, He will not listen. We may say to
someone nicely and with some feeling, “Please come and take
prasāda (sacred food that has been offered to the Deities).”

If we approach Bhagavān in that mood, He will come.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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Kṛṣṇa says here that if one simply offers Him a leaf, a flower,
some fruit or water with love, He will accept it. Whatever is offered
with love, He will accept. In a devotee’s heart there should always be
this love that creates hunger in Kṛṣṇa.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

EARNEST LONGING

If any living being, feeling extreme anguish, prays to Kṛṣṇa from the
core of his heart and even once calls out, “O Kṛṣṇa! I am Yours,” then
Kṛṣṇa gives him the association of saintly persons (*sādhū-saṅga*) and
makes him cross beyond the bondage of illusion.

To Be Controlled By Love

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Be very humble and hanker for *bhakti* so that your heart will melt.

Harmony

*

When greed manifests in a person's heart, he will not see whether it is a sin or a pious act to love Kṛṣṇa. He will think,

"It may be wrong or right. It may be impious or pious.

I have given my whole heart to Kṛṣṇa, and if anyone tells me to do otherwise, I won't care for his advice."

Discourse – May 1992

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With great pleasure, all day we are eating, sleeping, joking, laughing, quarrelling, and in the midst of all this, we chant a little *harināma*. Relatively easily we can rid ourselves of our worldly attachments, but that rare transcendental love, *prema*, which we are aspiring for, will not come if we are going on like this. We must have great eagerness, always thinking, "How will I meet Kṛṣṇa?"

Bhakti-rasāyana

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We can see that to catch Kṛṣṇa, double speed is necessary. "Double speed" means that our own sincere efforts must be there, and Kṛṣṇa's mercy must also be upon us. He loves all living beings, but we must love Him twice as much, and then we can catch Him.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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No one can actually bind Bhagavān by the strength of their spiritual practice, but by endeavouring more and more until such great determination comes that all of one's bodily needs and worldly attachments are forgotten, then Bhagavān's heart will melt and He will bestow special mercy.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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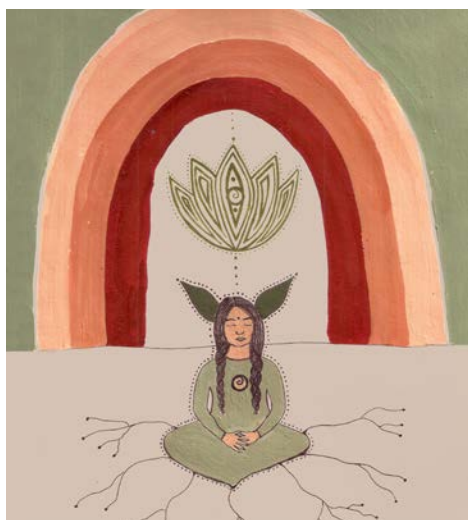
Let us say someone has become greedy for a *rasagullā* (an Indian sweet), and he has no money. Then by grabbing it, stealing it, or by any means he will get it. Our greed for *bhakti* must be like that, and we should pray to Bhagavān that He will be merciful and give us this greed.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

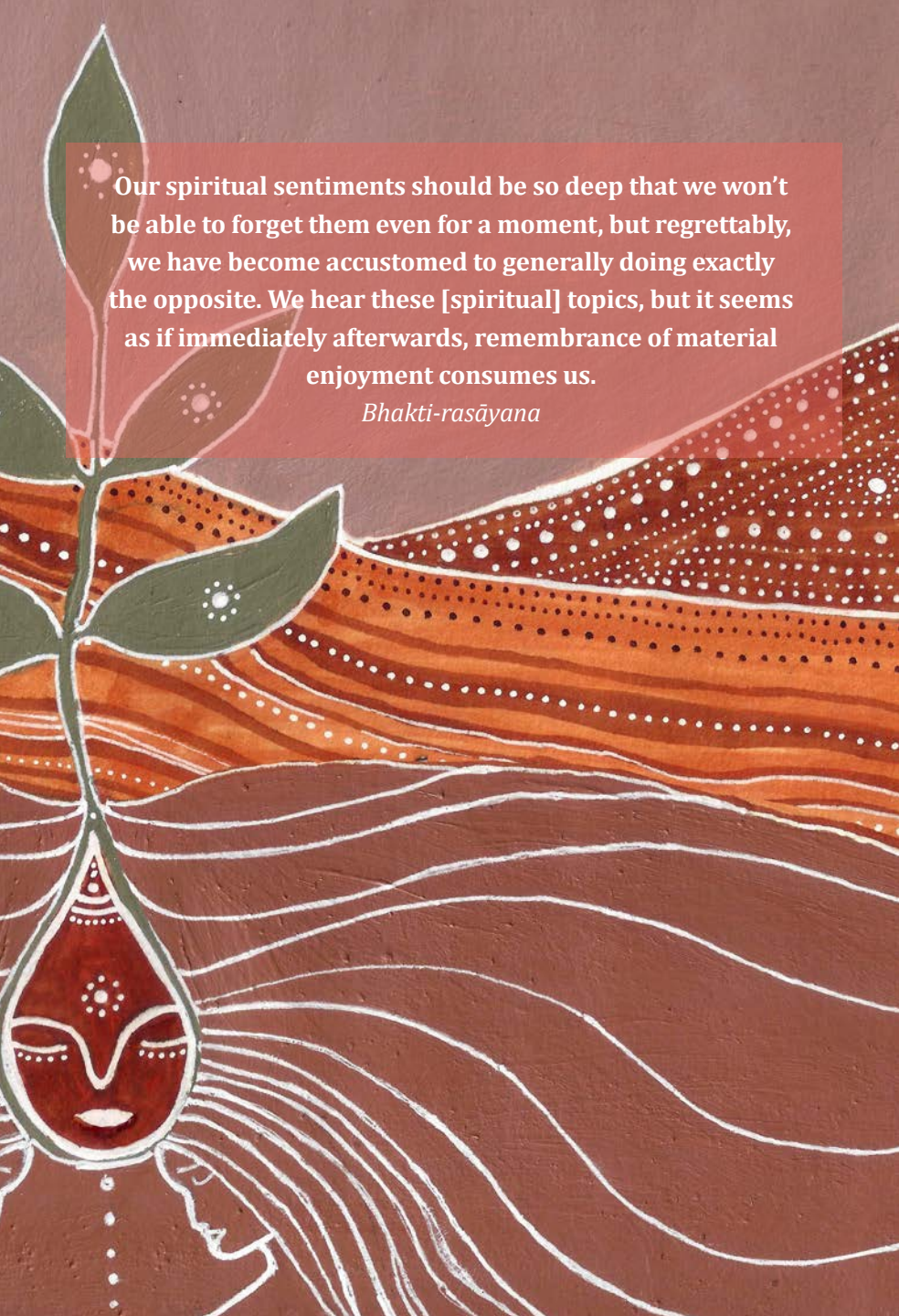


CHAPTER TEN

**OUR SPIRITUAL
PRACTICE**







Our spiritual sentiments should be so deep that we won't be able to forget them even for a moment, but regrettably, we have become accustomed to generally doing exactly the opposite. We hear these [spiritual] topics, but it seems as if immediately afterwards, remembrance of material enjoyment consumes us.

Bhakti-rasāyana



OUR SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

From the very beginning of our spiritual practice, we must know what the practice is and what the goal is. “Which path should I take? And by travelling along this path, what will I attain?”

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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A businessman checks every evening to see how much money he has made that day. He checks to see whether he has made any profit or incurred any loss. ... Similarly, before we go to sleep, we should consider whether our spiritual practice is improving, diminishing, or remaining at the same level.

Walking with a Saint 2008

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There is an unfathomable ocean of divine love within Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental abode. To awaken that transcendental love within our hearts, we must release our unwanted tendencies and make our heart pure.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

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If you want to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness, try to know the moods of the *mantras* given by your *gurudeva*. Punctually, daily, you should try to say them as he has instructed you.

Essence of all Advice

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Our previous spiritual preceptors chanted all night long, meditating on one verse after another. For half an hour the waves of the mood of one particular verse would be coming to them. Sometimes they would be fully submerged in those waves, sometimes they would rise to the surface and float on those waves, and then they would move on to the next verse. As they did this more and more, the whole night would pass, and where it went, they wouldn't know. This is the traditional method of performing internal worship.

Bhakti-rasāyana

DEEP ROOTS

Please listen very carefully to my words so that they do not evaporate in the air. Do not forget what I am saying. Listen carefully, write down these instructions, and then try to follow them.

Harmony

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Our spiritual sentiments should be so deep that we won't be able to forget them even for a moment, but regrettably, we have become accustomed to generally doing exactly the opposite. We hear these [spiritual] topics, but it seems as if immediately afterwards, remembrance of material enjoyment consumes us.

Bhakti-rasāyana

MINDFULLY READING SCRIPTURES

If you read something, you should get absorbed in it with the attitude that “I am serving this sacred text, and I am taking all these instructions to heart.”

The Essence of All Advice

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When you are reading these books, don't 'read'. Serve. Offer obeisances, place the book on your forehead and heart, and pray, “O Prabhu, you are personally Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. Please be merciful to me.” This is the process of reading.

The Soul of Book Distribution

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We should treat all the books of the Gosvāmīs as our instructing spiritual masters. We should offer obeisances to the books, and then read them. If we do this, we will realize that all philosophical conclusions are coming automatically in our heart. This is the process of reading – not reading but serving the books.

The Soul of Book Distribution

When you are reading the dialogue between Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāya Rāmānanda on the bank of the Godāvarī river, you can think, "I am on the bank of Godāvarī. Rāya Rāmānanda and Mahāprabhu are sitting here. I am also peacefully sitting with them and hearing all their topics. 'O Mahāprabhu, O Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu, please be merciful to me. Please sprinkle your mercy upon me so that I can understand these high-class transcendental conclusions.' " Without praying in this way, you will have doubts and you will not be able to realize anything.

The Soul of Book Distribution

HEARING SPIRITUAL DISCOURSES – HARI-KATHĀ

Kṛṣṇa's name and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are not mundane things of this mortal world; they are transcendental. Hearing Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is not an ordinary activity; it is also transcendental. ... Even if one is covered with ignorance, and his heart is full of unwanted material thoughts and desires, still, if he has a little honour – just a very little – these transcendental vibrations will come through his ears to his heart. These are not words in the common sense. Kṛṣṇa Himself comes in these transcendental sound vibrations. How? His transcendental world comes into the heart of any person who has a slight fraction of faith. When one realizes this, his whole heart becomes clean and pure, and his faith becomes more condensed.

The Butter Thief

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There may not be any taste for the holy name in the beginning stage, but this is not a matter of concern. But there definitely should be a taste for listening to *hari-kathā*, because by hearing spiritual discourses from the lips of pure devotees, a taste for chanting Kṛṣṇa's name will certainly arise.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

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Everything will come automatically by hearing. Kṛṣṇa has promised, "In the form of *hari-kathā*, I enter the heart of the devotees and manage everything." He is so powerful. Therefore, you need not worry.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

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By hearing with strong belief and honour, you will be able to practice with your heart and by your activities. Kṛṣṇa must come. He is bound to come.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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The real *guru* says, "You need only give me your ears. I do not want your wealth or anything else. I only want to purify your ears. Through the medium of your ears, I will put something in your heart that will make you happy forever. Transcendental happiness will come to you. Besides this, there is no other process by which you will be happy."

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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Whenever we hear *hari-kathā*, we should listen with our heart, and be sure to keep it in our heart. Otherwise, the ear will hear, but the ear will not tell the heart. What is spoken in our ears should arrive in our heart, and we should try to bring that into practice.

Then we will get the result of hearing.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

NOURISHING THE VINE

Have faith, not in problems but in what *gurudeva* has given in your heart. He has given everything, but now you will have to protect it, make it sprout, and nourish it.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam



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In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it has been said that *bhakti* (devotion to Kṛṣṇa) is like a vine. If you give water to the vine of *bhakti*, it will grow up to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Walking with a Saint

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Strictly follow the regulative principles; no smoking, gambling, meat eating, illicit sex, etc., and give up duplicity and hypocrisy at once. These *anarthas* (hindrances to attaining one's spiritual goal) are like holes, and whatever water the devotee collects to nourish his seed will come out again through these holes, without having touched the the seed of the vine of devotion. The gardener should first of all make the necessary arrangements. He should repair the holes and then remove the rocks from his heart, and in this way, he can plant the seed of devotion.

Discourse – 6 July 2002

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You can now judge for yourselves if you have transcendental faith or not. Without transcendental faith you cannot develop; therefore, from today you should promise, “No matter how many problems may come, even if the greatest problems come to me, I will never give up my chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa.” Only by having a mood such as this will the seed of devotion sprout; otherwise it will take a very long time.

Discourse – 6 July 2002

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In the evening, the moon rays cause the lily flowers to gradually blossom. As the night continues, so much fragrance comes. From where does it come? Something is coming from the flower and something is coming from the moon. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa's name is like that moon, and His rays are compared to the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas. When these rays touch your heart, it will blossom, and all kinds of good qualities will come. They are bound to come if you chant and remember in this way.

Discourse – 25 May 2000

SURRENDER

If someone factually surrenders to Bhagavān, then that surrender will be the destroyer of all of his faults.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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This is really surrender. “Whether You give me good things or problems, no harm. Now I am happy. I have given everything to You.”

Secret Truth of the Bhāgavatam

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If we surrender, tolerating all difficulties, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will say, “Oh, for Me he is tolerating so much suffering.” His heart will melt and He will at once give *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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If we want to bind Kṛṣṇa by our own intelligence, our own efforts, we cannot. We can neither behold Him nor receive His mercy, nor can we control Him. The second principle, therefore, is Kṛṣṇa's mercy. We cannot bind Kṛṣṇa merely by our endeavour. We must first become surrendered, totally surrendered.

Secret Truth of the Bhāgavatam

CHAPTER ELEVEN

MINDFULNESS





MINDFULNESS

If your mind has become your friend,
then it is very easy to remember the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.

Essence of All Advice

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Energy is one, and mind is one. They cannot be in two places...

If you give your mind to sense gratification,
you will lose the opportunity to advance in *bhakti*.

When you fully give your energy and mind to transcendental
topics and personalities, you will then progress in spiritual life.

Walking with a Saint 2008

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We are chanting the holy name, studying verses and giving scriptural readings, but where are our minds? Just as when we place an empty pot in a river it immediately fills up with water, similarly, immediately after hearing some spiritual discourse, our minds again become filled with thoughts of sense enjoyment that we have been experiencing since time immemorial. We must try to keep the mind free from these thoughts, even though it may not always remain steady.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Endeavouring to push the thoughts of worldly enjoyment out of the mind is not necessary. The mind that has a tendency to ponder sense enjoyment should simply be engaged in hearing and describing Bhagavān's names, qualities, form and pastimes and that will be all that is necessary. By doing this more and more, eventually we will fully relish these topics.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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For a man to absorb his mind in any one activity, then his eyes, ears, nose and all his senses must be completely centred on that.

If the mind cannot concentrate on something, it is more or less uncontrolled. Sometimes our mind is pondering sense enjoyment, and sometimes we think about Kṛṣṇa. This is the conditioned state.

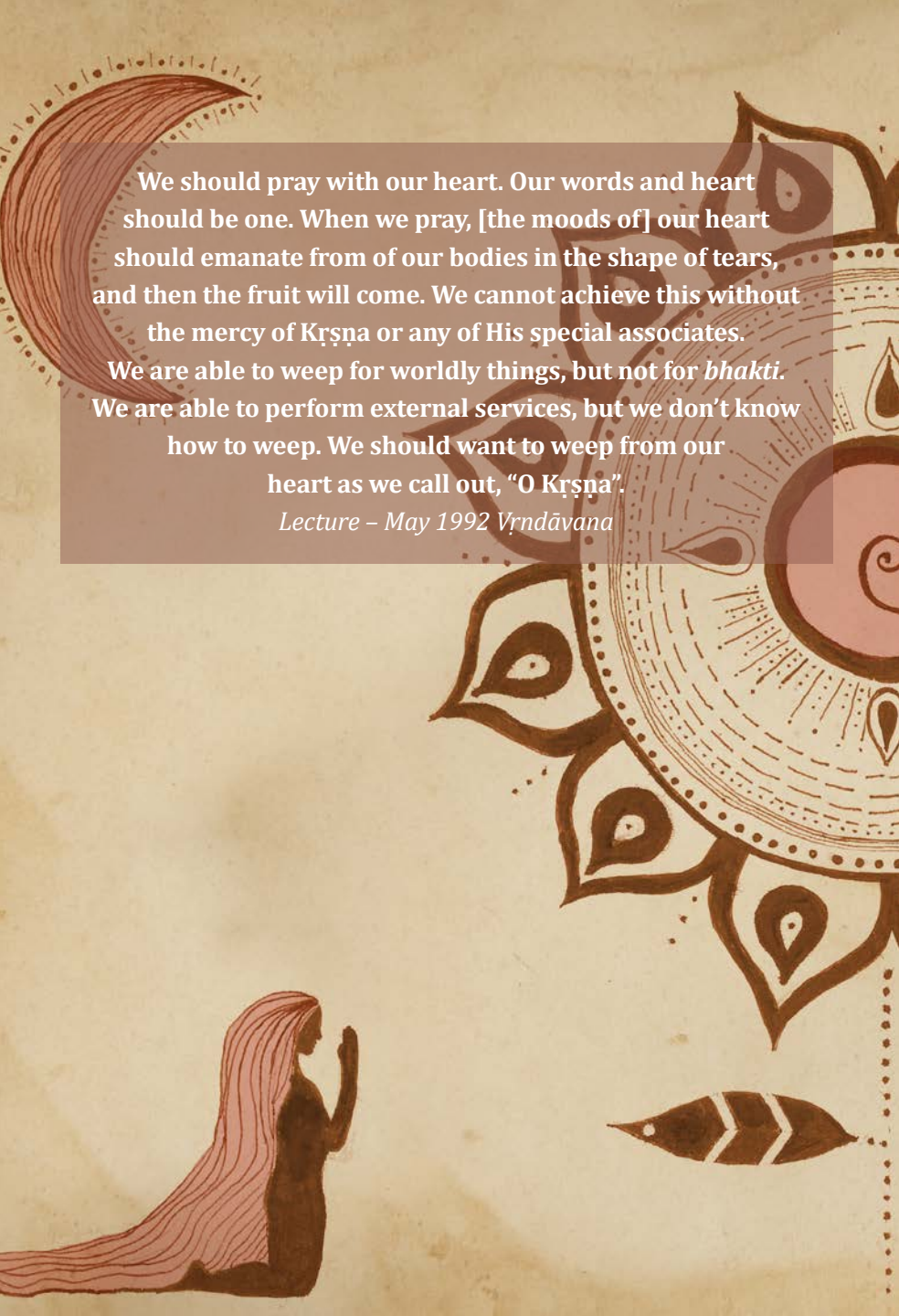
But if someone's mind is fully absorbed in the lotus feet of Bhagavān, then that is the highest form of worship.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER TWELVE

**CHANTING -
A PERSONAL PRAYER**



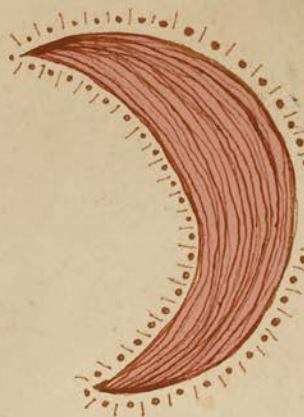


We should pray with our heart. Our words and heart should be one. When we pray, [the moods of] our heart should emanate from of our bodies in the shape of tears, and then the fruit will come. We cannot achieve this without the mercy of Kṛṣṇa or any of His special associates.

We are able to weep for worldly things, but not for *bhakti*. We are able to perform external services, but we don't know how to weep. We should want to weep from our heart as we call out, "O Kṛṣṇa".

Lecture – May 1992 Vṛndāvana







CHANTING – A PERSONAL PRAYER

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

This means, “O Supreme Personality of Godhead,
You are so merciful. You have given me this human body,
intelligence, a heart so soft and full of love and affection.
I want to serve You eternally, so please be merciful to me.”

Yoga for Peace

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When you are chanting Kṛṣṇa’s name, what should you remember?

You should always remember the pastimes related to Kṛṣṇa –
how He attracts peacocks, cuckoo birds, deer, all the vines, trees,
rivers, mountains, *gopas*, *gopīs* and cows, and charms them
with His sweet voice and flute.

Essence of All Advice

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Even if you have chanted for one day, or one moment, from the
core of your heart, you will definitely enter the line of *bhakti*.

There will be no loss, only ever-increasing gain.

Walking with a Saint 2008

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Those who chant the name of Kṛṣṇa, being eagerly desirous to meet Him and serve Him with relationship – “Kṛṣṇa, You are my friend,” “Kṛṣṇa, You are my darling child,” or especially, “Kṛṣṇa, You are the beloved of my Svāminī” – then, it is definite that at some time Kṛṣṇa will call those persons and they will join Him forever in transcendental Goloka Vṛndāvana (Kṛṣṇa’s eternal abode).

Discourse – 24 June 2003

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If one is chanting in a methodical way, there is no harm, but if one is chanting with confidence, oh, Kṛṣṇa must come.

Essence of All Advice

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With great love, we should take Kṛṣṇa’s name
and encourage others to chant it.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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If Kṛṣṇa’s name is uttered with pure transcendental devotion, Kṛṣṇa Himself will dance on our tongue. While chanting, we should pray to Kṛṣṇa, “I am offering myself unto Your lotus feet and am giving up all worldly desires. I have no beloved other than You. You are my everything.”

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

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If anyone chants *hare kṛṣṇa, hare kṛṣṇa*, what happens?
It vibrates in the air, and it goes to the far end of the world.
Not only this world, but it covers the whole universe... and beyond.
There is no end to it. All are touched by this vibration.
It purifies the atmosphere of the whole world.

Essence of All Advice



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Especially before sleeping we should be very careful. We should sincerely pray, “The whole day I have tried my best, but during the night-time nothing is under my control. I do not know where my mind will fly and take me.” If we pray and depend on the mercy of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, they will take care of us. And what will be the result? We can observe the first thought that comes in our heart and mind when we wake up in the morning. If we practice this, then, after a few days, when we awake, some chanting will be automatically going on within us.

Discourse – 11 April 2000

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If you chant
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare,
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare,
your senses will be controlled, your ears will be controlled,
your mind will be controlled, and you will be controlled.
All the vines and trees will hear; they have ears to hear.
The entire atmosphere and all atoms will hear, and they
will benefit. Even if they do nothing, they will benefit.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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Water, air and practically everything is polluted these days...

Similarly, material sound vibration in the form of abuse, criticism of others, quarrelling and so forth, and in fact any material vibration, pollutes the mind, senses and heart of everyone throughout the world. We can counteract this pollution and pain by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

Yoga for Peace

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Remember Caitanya Mahāprabhu and pray,

“Oh, be merciful to me! O Pañca-tattva, be merciful to me! O Nityānanda Prabhu! Be merciful so that we can realize these pastimes, so that we can chant, and so that we can forget all the problems of this world.” Try to forget “Where is the world? Who am I?” Then Kṛṣṇa will come and wipe away your tears; He is so merciful. So you should chant and remember.

This is the process.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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When one has fully realized the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa’s name, then one’s tongue will not be able to stop chanting it.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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In the chanting of the holy name there is no consideration of time or place. While eating, lying down, with unclean hands and mouth, or in whatever condition, one can chant Kṛṣṇa's names.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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We should chant with peace of mind, love and firm faith, and then the *mantra* will give us direct audience of our Deity, and also of our spiritual master.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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With a melted heart, loudly sing about the names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Bhagavān. When one sincerely chants his favourite name of Bhagavān, then from the tongue that name will enter the mind and then the heart, thereby quieting all of the senses. If by any separate endeavour someone tries to control the restless mind, he will not be able to do so.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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If I call out, "Come over here," who will come? Many people may come. If I describe some qualities of the person I want, then still many may come. But if I call out the name of the specific person I want, then at once only that person will come. Similarly, there is glorification of Bhagavān's qualities, forms and pastimes, but for calling out to Him and remembering Him, the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's names is the best.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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Unfortunately, we do not have strong faith in Kṛṣṇa's name. We see that another person is chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and yet he has a heart disease or any other disease, and he is dying. Seeing this, we sometimes develop doubts. Don't think like this. Our soul is eternal. The only disease is our misconception that "I'm this body and everything in relation to this body is mine."

This disease will not go away by any worldly medicine.

It will go away only by chanting Kṛṣṇa's names.

Discourse – 1 June 2002

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Chanting Kṛṣṇa's name is like sugar candy, but when you first take it, it will be very, very bitter. However, if you take it, gradually, the disease will go away and then you will find it very sweet. When this happens, then you will understand that your disease has gone.

Essence of All Advice

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All the names of Kṛṣṇa are the embodiment of love. 'Kṛṣṇa' is very charming and beautiful, and He is the embodiment of love. 'Rāma' is the embodiment of love.

If you are in touch with this love, your life will be happy.

Yoga for Peace

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Even though generally it is said that there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's name, there is actually a small difference in mercifulness. The name is more merciful than Kṛṣṇa; Kṛṣṇa has invested all His power in His name, and it is accessible to everyone at all times. By the mercy of the name, we will attain the direct company of Kṛṣṇa, so therefore the name is more merciful.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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Just as the sun rises at precisely the appropriate time, similarly the name will appear on a devotee's tongue and illuminate everything within his heart when the time is right. And just as when the sun rises there is no need of any electric light or candle because everything is automatically illuminated, similarly when the name bestows full realization upon a devotee, he will have a clear understanding of himself in his constitutional position (eternal identity), and all of his fear will vanish.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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How will pure devotion for Kṛṣṇa arise in the heart? The power of chanting Kṛṣṇa's name is likened to the rays of the moon, which make the lotus of the heart gradually bloom. ...

When the heart fully blossoms, that is the stage
of transcendental love.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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The holy name (the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*) that we have received from the [qualified] *guru* is like a strong seed. From a strong seed a healthy plant will emerge, but a weak seed will produce nothing. Similarly, the spiritual master gives us transcendental sound vibration, and receiving that holy name of Kṛṣṇa from him will produce the fruit of transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa. But the weak seed, which is not transcendental sound vibration and which does not have perfection inherent within it, will only produce the fruits of material enjoyment and liberation.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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Trees, vines, animals and insects cannot speak. They cannot understand our language. Still, everyone, not only humans, but all creatures throughout this universe, will be touched by the powerful holy name, whether they are aware of it or not. If one touches fire knowingly or unknowingly, one will feel its effects.

Yoga for Peace

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Anyone – old, young, Hindu, Muslim – anyone can chant the names of God. ... Without any money or any special conditions, we can chant,

“Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare,
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.”

By this chanting, you will develop love for all. You will not be able to kill any animal, or even a tree. You will not want to give pain even to grass. You will see God and souls everywhere.

Yoga for Peace

THE HEART OF PRAYER

We should pray with our heart. Our words and heart should be one. When we pray, [the moods of] our heart should emanate from our bodies in the shape of tears, and then the fruit will come. We cannot achieve this without the mercy of Kṛṣṇa or any of His special associates. We are able to weep for worldly things but not for *bhakti*. We are able to perform external services, but we don't know how to weep. We should want to weep from our heart as we call out, "O Kṛṣṇa".

Discourse – May 1992

KĪRTANA – SONGS OF DEVOTION

Kīrtana is that process by which the transcendental sound of Kṛṣṇa's name and glories enters the ears and purifies the heart.

This is the actual meaning of *kīrtana*.

Discerning True Sentiments of the Soul

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If you are chanting or discussing topics related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa anywhere, the vibration goes all over the world. This is called *kīrtana*. *Kīrtana* is not only performed with sacred drums and cymbals. Discussion of *hari-kathā* is the most powerful *kīrtana*. It purifies the whole world.

Secret Truth of the Bhāgavatam

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If you throw a stone in a pond, so many ripples will form around it, one after another, and they will touch all points on the bank. The pond is limited, but the ether, or sky, is endless. It extends throughout the entire universe, and it may even touch Goloka Vṛndāvana. Similarly, if a sound vibration is impure, that impurity also goes everywhere. Everyone is shouting about politics, shouting mundane sounds, and so many bad things. Now the whole world and the entire atmosphere has been polluted. This very powerful sound vibration of the holy name will also go and touch the entire world. ... It will touch all the trees and vines, all the atoms in the water, the sky and everywhere else. It will purify everything, whether you are aware of it or not.

Secret Truth of the Bhāgavatam

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Money and reputation cannot touch the real performer of *kīrtana*. We should try to be like that: melting other's hearts, melting our own heart, and always weeping for Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Discerning True Sentiments of the Soul

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When performing *kīrtana*, do not look here and there. Try to understand the meaning of this *kīrtana* and be totally absorbed in it; then you can gain something.

Secret Truth of the Bhāgavatam

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Those following the path of *bhakti* should sing before the Deity the songs of the great devotees of Bhagavān. Such songs are steeped in prayer and express the moods of surrender to the Lord, a yearning for the personal service of the Lord, and other such sentiments.

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu

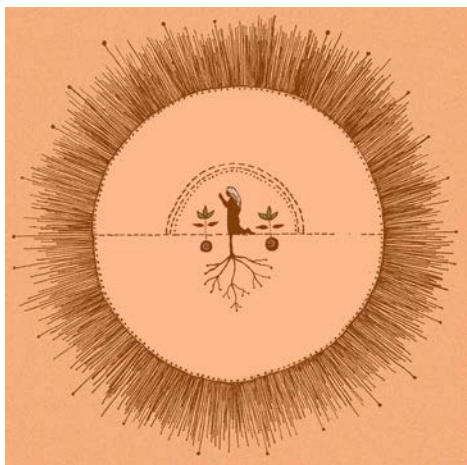
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The mind is like a horse without a rider. If there are no reins and no rider, what will the horse do? It will run here and there according to its own desire. But if the rider of *kīrtana* climbs upon the horse of our mind and takes the reins, then the horse of the mind will not run aimlessly but will go wherever the rider directs him.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

**QUALITIES THAT
NURTURE THE PATH
OF BHAKTI-YOGA**



Do not feel hopeless. I see rays of hope everywhere.

Pinnacle of Devotion





QUALITIES THAT NURTURE THE PATH OF BHAKTI-YOGA

Qualities such as offering respect to others but never demanding respect in return, sympathy, compassion, forgiveness, gratefulness and so forth are favourable for *bhakti*.

Mādhurya-kādambinī

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Offering respect to others and never demanding respect in return help nourish humility, the elixir that gives life to the *bhakti* of the spiritual practitioner.

Mādhurya-kādambinī

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Compassion for every living entity, friendship and a mood of kindness are qualities by which *bhakti* becomes free from obstacles and firmly established within the heart of the spiritual practitioner.

Mādhurya-kādambinī

SINCERITY

First purify your own heart, then you can try to help others.

Essence of All Advice

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Symptoms of a pure disciple have been given in scripture. He will be very humble. He must be tolerant. A disciple should not be perplexed by worldly suffering, nor be concerned whether he is defeated or victorious. He should not care if he is respected or insulted – never should he be concerned with these things.

Discourse – 7 April 2000

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Even if someone is full of ignorance and is weak,
there is no harm as long as he is sincere.

Essence of All Advice

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Begin chanting Kṛṣṇa's name from wherever you are, from whatever stage you are in, and try to be sincere. Don't be duplicitous. Don't desire money, fame or other worldly things. Only by chanting, remembering and hearing will we gain strength in cultivating our *bhakti*, mood of devotion.

Essence of All Advice

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If you follow śrī guru's instructions, you will be attracted to Kṛṣṇa very quickly, so try to follow his words. Association means to follow him, not to physically be with him. It does not matter whether you are physically with him. If you follow his instructions, there will be an effect.

Walking with a Saint 2008

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If you are sincere, extremely sincere, topmost sincere,
all spiritual power and all spiritual truths will manifest in your heart.

Walking with a Saint 2008

SACRIFICE

Bhakti is not cheap. We are trying to attain that love which controls both Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, but we must understand what price we have to pay for this. We have to give up everything we consider to belong to us.

Discourse – 12 April 2000

GRATITUDE

In this world, even an animal will remain indebted for its entire life to someone who removes a thorn from it. In the same way, we are indebted to our *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas. How can we be ungrateful to those who have tried to remove the thorn of material attachment from us, and have tried to entice us to drink transcendental mellows of devotional service? Towards such *gurus* and Vaiṣṇavas, we should always be grateful.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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Of all these qualities, the quality of gratitude is especially favourable for *bhakti*, for Bhakti-devī does not appear in an ungrateful heart. Śrī Bhagavān Himself is thoroughly imbued with the quality of gratitude.

Bhagavān gives His very self as charity when the devotee makes a simple offering of *tulasī* and water.

Mādhurya-kādambinī

HUMILITY

As much as your devotional mood increases, humility will come and you will think, “I’m very low.” If your *bhakti* has not increased, then only false ego will act.

Discourse – 19 January 2002

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You cannot become humble just by imitating humility.
If your *bhakti* increases, humility will come naturally.

Discourse – 1 June 2002

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When even a little *bhakti* has entered someone’s heart,
then humility will certainly be there. Where there is no humility,
we can understand that there is no *bhakti*.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Where humility exists in its full form, there *bhakti*
will also be in its full form.

Bhakti-rasāyana

DETERMINATION

If someone is striking a match, what is his aim? To make a flame. And if after striking one match, a flame is not made, then he will take another match and try again. Our endeavour to reach the highest limit of transcendental perfection through our spiritual practice is like that.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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Do not be weak; never be weak. Many problems will come,
but be like the Himālayas, Mount Everest and the Alps.
Do not go here and there. Always serve Kṛṣṇa.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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In our present condition, being near Kṛṣṇa and rendering direct service to Him is something that is very far away from us. We cannot even imagine what real unselfishness is; we are unable to understand it. But we are practicing *bhakti-yoga* so that this mood of true unselfishness in relation to Kṛṣṇa will come to us. While remaining within this world, we should continue practicing in the association of those great personalities who have actually become devoid of selfishness; then we will be able to imagine at least something of the nature of true unselfishness.

Hari-kathāmṛta, Volume Two

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When we first take up devotional life, we think that attaining Bhagavān will not be difficult. Upon recognizing the reality of it, we should never become despondent. ... We should always remain eager and determined.

Bhakti-rasāyana

AUTHENTICITY

Pretentious humility is inimical to the path of devotion and is always to be abandoned. In fact, real humility is not mere external behaviour; it manifests from the heart.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya

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We should try to follow the fully realized, illustrious saint's inner motives. We should not adopt just his external behaviour.

Essence of All Advice

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Internally and externally we should be the same.
Our heart should be one with our words.

Essence of All Advice

HOPEFULNESS

Nowadays I see that devotees have so many problems, and because of these problems, they cannot chant regularly. Sometimes they are restless and upset, and thus they give up worshiping the Deity, chanting, remembering and reading books. I have come to remind you to not be like this; do not be weak. Your suffering will increase by whatever [material] attempts you make to decrease it. So, don't be upset; rather try to chant more and read more.

Discourse – 16 June 2003

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Do not be hopeless; never be hopeless. You can always have hope, because Kṛṣṇa is weeping for us. He is lamenting for us. We cannot lament or weep for Him, but He is lamenting and weeping for us.

Discourse – 22 September 2002

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We may think that this is not possible for me, “How can I get the mercy of Kṛṣṇa?” No. We must be determined that Kṛṣṇa will surely bestow His mercy.

Essence of All Advice

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“Oh, surely one day, very soon we will achieve this nectar of pure devotion. Surely we will have the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the service of Mahāprabhu. Surely we will get it.” This confidence should be there. If you have no confidence, how you can advance?

Essence of All Advice

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If our hearts are not completely melted, we will never meet Kṛṣṇa, so there is only one hope: “We are standing on the shore of the ocean of Your kindness, and if even one drop of that ocean falls upon us, then our lives will become meaningful.”

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Do not feel hopeless. I see rays of hope everywhere.

Pinnacle of Devotion

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

**OFFERING
ONE'S HEART**





OFFERING ONE'S HEART

If you want to make your life successful, happy and peaceful, then try to give all of your love and affection to Kṛṣṇa and, with Kṛṣṇa in the centre, give your love and affection to all living beings.

Harmony

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It is not that the servant who is nearer is necessarily better. ... It is not a question of the physical proximity or distance, but of the heart's nearness to or distance from Him. That service to Hari, Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas in which there is the most love is the best.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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Śrī Kṛṣṇa will select a heart that is dear to Him and then say, "Come, I will take your heart." Even if we really desire to give Him our heart, it is very difficult, but if He desires to take our heart, then it is possible. But we must make our heart such that when Kṛṣṇa sees us it will inspire greed [for our heart] within Him.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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In the same way as the river offered the gift of lotuses to Kṛṣṇa's feet, we should offer our very heart to the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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If someone attains the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, then certainly He will take their heart. If we are especially eager, wondering, "When will I be able to see the beautiful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa?" then Kṛṣṇa will be so pleased and come and take our heart.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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The *gopīs* are eating and decorating themselves, but they do not make any formal offerings or perform worship of Kṛṣṇa. They are using many good quality things in the course of dressing and decorating themselves and applying their ornaments – but who is it all for? Whatever they do is for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. As soon as something comes to them, it is automatically for Kṛṣṇa. In this way we should do everything exclusively for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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With tears flowing from their eyes, they [sincere spiritual practitioners] perceive their heart as being in the form of a flower and they offer that flower to the feet of Kṛṣṇa. Without being asked, automatically Kṛṣṇa will come and take that flower.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

A DISH OF LOVE

Kṛṣṇa never becomes hungry. He wants to taste the mood of *bhakti*, devotion, through the offering of any preparation. He never tastes plantain, *rabaḍī*, milk, or anything. He only tastes the essence of those offerings, which is love and affection.

Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Sweetness

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Only when there is sincere desire from within will Bhagavān accept an offering. Otherwise, He will not be hungry and will not accept it.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

*

If we are preparing food but we have no genuine desire to please Him [Kṛṣṇa], we are not in the proper mood. Then the Deity won't accept any of it, because He has no need. He is hungry only for *prema*, transcendental love.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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When we offer food to Kṛṣṇa, what are our feelings? We chant the *mantra*, but is the necessary mood there, or not? Our feelings should be like those of Mother Yaśodā: with great affection she seats Kṛṣṇa and, pampering Him, begins to feed Him, saying, "Take a little of this; it is very nice. ... Here, take some of this; it is the nicest." Tell me, then, with how much *prema* is she feeding Him? We should try to offer food to Kṛṣṇa with these feelings.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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If we have made a preparation thinking,
“I have made this, I brought the ingredients, I collected the
necessary funds and I will enjoy it,” and afterwards offer it to
Bhagavān, then that is somewhat all right, but it is not completely
correct. Do not offer it only after preparing it, but rather from the
very beginning it should be offered to Bhagavān.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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We should first offer our very selves to the Deity:
“I am Yours.” Then whatever we eat or do will
automatically be for Bhagavān.

Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

OBSTACLES





OBSTACLES

Do not speak whatever you feel like. Consider first what the effect of your words will be. If you can check your tongue, then you can do *bhajana* (meditative spiritual practice) easily.

Essence of All Advice

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To enter the kingdom of *bhajana*, the desire for name and fame must be abandoned. For a spiritual practitioner (*sādhaka*), abandoning the desire for name and fame is the most important thing. If he has done so, then soon the sun will be rising, meaning that soon *bhakti*, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, will be arising within him. But if he has not ridden himself of this desire, then he will remain in the darkness of night.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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Sometimes Bhagavān will even put an apparent obstacle in a spiritual practitioner's path in order to curb his pride. He may try to increase that devotee's humility by this means.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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If we see that our spiritual practice is producing attachment to material results such as name and fame, then we are moving in the wrong direction.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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If we consider things like luxurious food and accommodation to be favourable for us, then the mirror of the mind will not be cleansed and the reflection of one's own spiritual form will not be visible. The mirror should be made spotless; there should be no dust or anything on it.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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We should be able to see what our illusory body is, what our spiritual body is, and what all of our faults are, but our great misfortune is that instead, we only see others' faults.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

The sun is always giving light and heat, but at night it is not seen. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Absolute, but our unwanted habits and thoughts, our offences, and our ignorance, which are like clouds, fog, and night, block our vision like a wall.

Pinnacle of Devotion

CLEARING OBSTACLES

There is a very simple way to bring the tongue under control.

After offering foodstuffs to the Lord, partake of that
mahā-prasāda and continuously chant the holy name:

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

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

ANGER

From where does anger come? It comes from so many desires.

Where there are no [material] desires, there is no anger at all.

Essence of All Advice

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When anger is aroused, [real] knowledge is lost.

We become fools, unable to distinguish right from
wrong or to understand what the fruit of our behaviour will be.

Our *bhakti* is then lost.

Essence of All Advice

COMPLACENCY

Sometimes our determination is not firm, and many practitioners fall into the trap of again becoming involved in enjoying *māyā* (the illusory energy), thinking, “I will work hard, make lots of money, build a house and live comfortably.” But they forget that one day, they will have to die and leave it all behind.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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One should perform the practices of *bhakti* with great eagerness.

One should not be complacent and think, “Oh, if *bhakti* is in my astrological chart, I will get it.” Do not simply depend on “luck”; make some endeavour to obtain *bhakti*, strive for it day and night, and do not waste even a moment, for one may die at any moment.

Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā

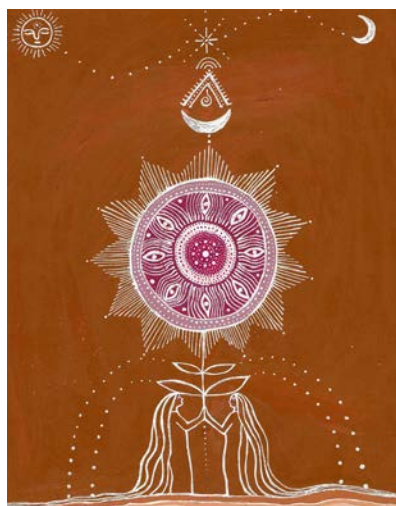
SELFISHNESS

We should consider that all objects are to be employed in the service of Bhagavān, but instead we think, “I am their master.” On account of this, so much quarrelling and fighting is going on.

Going Beyond Vaiṣṇava

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

**TEND TO
YOUR OWN GARDEN**





TEND TO YOUR OWN GARDEN

Never criticize anyone. If someone is doing bad things, he only causes harm to himself. If you criticize someone, thinking, “This is wrong,” or “This fellow is very bad,” then all the bad qualities that you are thinking about will enter your heart.

Harmony

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Be very careful. First look at your own condition and try to purify yourself. Is there any lust in you? Is there any deceit and hypocrisy in you? Be worried about that; do not worry about others. *Guru* and *Kṛṣṇa* are responsible for others. You cannot do anything to help them, so you have no right to criticize.

Harmony

*

If you see another devotee doing something wrong, don't look. There are elevated Vaiṣṇavas who will see their faults and rectify them. You cannot do so, so just tend to your own spiritual practice (*bhajana*). If someone else is not doing *bhajana*, why are you worrying about it? Just look at your own behaviour.

Harmony

*

We do not see our own faults, but we want to see others', and day and night we talk about this. Nowadays this is the fashion, and in this way, we lose the chance to do *bhajana* (meditative spiritual practice).

Harmony

*

Avoid criticizing others; criticize your own
mind and bad habits instead.

Harmony

*

For those who cannot forgive the faults of others,
praying to God for forgiveness is nothing but imitation.

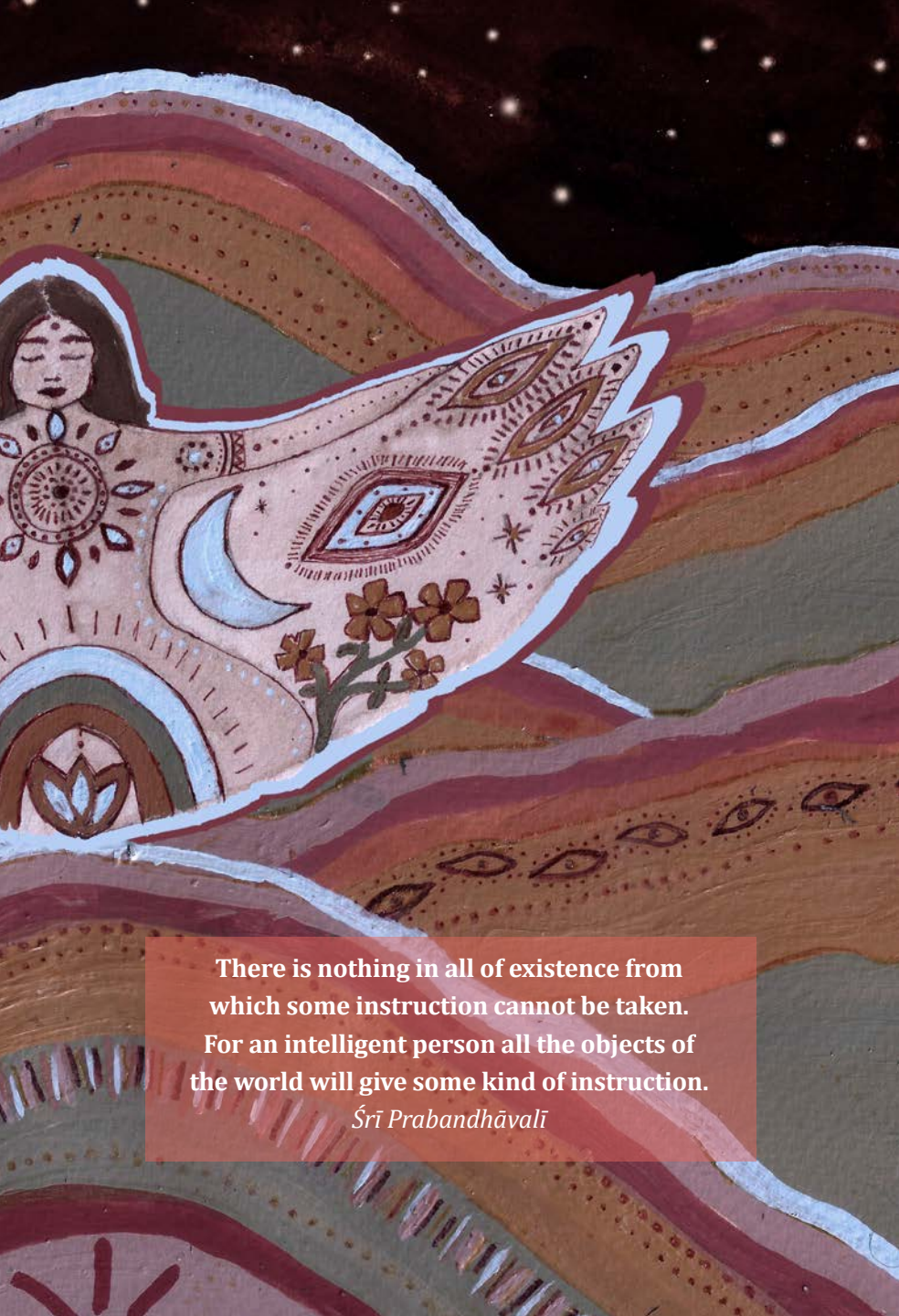
Mādhurya-kādambinī

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

**TAKING
RESPONSIBILITY**







There is nothing in all of existence from
which some instruction cannot be taken.
For an intelligent person all the objects of
the world will give some kind of instruction.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī



TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Why are all the troubles, miseries, sorrows, suffering and problems coming? Kṛṣṇa is not the cause. These conditions are the results of our past activities, and they are coming to purify us.

Harmony

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“No one else is guilty, and Kṛṣṇa is also not responsible, for any troubles that fall upon me. Who is responsible? I am. I am responsible for whatever activities I have performed.” By thinking like this, we will always be happy, even if we have millions of problems.

Harmony

*

If you hit someone and that person hits you back twice as hard, you cannot complain. You started something and he reacted. You can think, “I have caused him some harm in a previous birth. Now, through him, Kṛṣṇa is giving me the reaction.” Do not become angry or envious, otherwise your mind will become agitated and you won’t be able to perform *bhakti*. This teaching is for all of you.

Harmony

*

Let us try to control our heart and our mind. Some people have cheated us, that is true, but we should respond in the following way, “I have cheated them in a previous birth. That is why they are cheating me today.” It should not make us angry.

Harmony

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If we simply take up *bhajana* (meditative spiritual practice), then *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas will be merciful and give us the necessary strength to achieve the direct mercy of Bhagavān. But first of all, the desire must come from within us.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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You are the root cause of all your problems. Kṛṣṇa wants to take you out of your problems, but you keep making them.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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Whatever obstacles we are currently facing are due to our own previous misdeeds and are not the fault of any other person.

Bhakti-rasāyana

*

The sun shines in the sky. Does it give any condition before giving its nourishing light and heat? But if one does not come in front of the sun and instead remains in the shade, how can the sun give that person its heat and light? You may think that this is conditional, but really it is not. Kṛṣṇa, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas give their mercy in this way.

Walking with a Saint 2008

THE ENVIRONMENT IS ALWAYS FRIENDLY

Actually, nothing in this world is unfavourable for us; it is only due to our present weaknesses and unwanted thoughts and habits that we see our environment as unfavourable.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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We should see something good in whatever happens to us. We should see how Kṛṣṇa has arranged all circumstances for our benefit. How should we think when a problem comes? “There is certainly something good here for me. Kṛṣṇa has sent this.”

Harmony

*

Do not worry about being happy in this world, and do not try to remove your suffering artificially. As suffering comes without invitation, happiness will also come automatically; there is no need to endeavour for this.

Harmony

*

There is nothing in all of existence from which some instruction cannot be taken. For an intelligent person, all the objects of the world give some kind of instruction.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

If your only concern is to chant and remember Kṛṣṇa, then all your problems will serve you and help you, no matter what they are. Even if the whole world is kicking you and insulting you, you will think, “Oh, this is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. I wanted to be alone and to chant always, continuously. Now I have this opportunity.”

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

**ŚRĪ CAITANYA
MAHĀPRABHU – THE
AVATAR OF MERCY**





ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU

Mahāprabhu exhibited His love and affection in the jungles of Jhārikhaṇḍa by causing the wild animals to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* together in ecstatic love. By His influence, the behaviour of these wild animals towards each other changed, and they lived together peacefully and even drank from the same watering places. It was by His mercy that love and affection was spread throughout this planet and the universe.

Harmony

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Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stressed the importance of personally practicing in order to successfully teach others. He said, “I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the recipient of *bhakti-yoga*, but in order to preach I must become the abode of love and follow the process of *bhakti-yoga*.”

Pinnacle of Devotion

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Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the spiritual master of the universe, is imparting the teaching that, if any fortunate soul wants to seat Kṛṣṇa on the throne of his heart, he must first wash and clean the dirt from his heart. It is necessary to make the heart clean, calm and radiant by devotional service. If any of the thorny grass, dust and rocks of *anarthas* (spiritual impediments) remain within the field of the heart, then the supremely worshipful Bhagavān will not situate Himself there.

Jagannātha Ratha-yātrā

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Kṛṣṇa cannot fully understand and taste His own quality without experiencing Śrīmatī Rādhikā's sentiments.

Therefore, He must come as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to appreciate this and give a sprinkle of that appreciation to others. As Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He can give the holy name along with a special *prema* (transcendental love).

Pinnacle of Devotion

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In the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself covered by the beauty and mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Kṛṣṇa tastes the happiness Śrīmatī Rādhikā receives from serving Him.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself especially came in the dress of a devotee and went door to door, giving the holy name.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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Even Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot describe His own glories. He cannot find the depth of the glories of His own name, qualities and form. Assuming the complexion and sentiment of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He became Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He descended in this form to investigate His own glories, but He still couldn't find their depth.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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This must be understood first: Mahāprabhu gave His everything to the living beings, whereas Kṛṣṇa did not give as much. Kṛṣṇa came in the form of Mahāprabhu with the mood of Rādhikā. What is the meaning? ... Here the mood of Rādhikā means the sentiment of loving kindness for the living entities.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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He [Caitanya Mahāprabhu] didn't come in the form of Bhagavān; He won't give *bhakti* (a mood of devotion to Himself) in that form. In His form of Bhagavān, He will taste a mood of devotion, but in what form will He give it to the souls of this world? For this, He will personally assume the role of a devotee.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER NINETEEN

**ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ -
OUR SUPREME
SHELTER**





ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ – OUR SUPREME SHELTER

The words *devī gāndharvike* express the glories of Śrī Rādhā's good fortune. They refer to She who is a mine of sweetness and beauty and who, by Her captivating dancing, singing, playing on musical instruments and performance of other charming arts, completely enchants the mind of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya

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This Kṛṣṇa is eternally situated with all His attributes and with His complete power, personified in the form of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Even if the sun could be separated from its heat and light, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa can never be separated from each other.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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Kṛṣṇa will give you everything, even if you do not pray for anything. And if you pray to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, She will give even more than Kṛṣṇa. Her treasury is greater than Kṛṣṇa's. If Kṛṣṇa gives something, it is actually from the treasury of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. ... You must pray to Her, but for what? "I want to become Your maidservant. Sprinkle Your mercy upon me and give me the type of love for Kṛṣṇa that the Vrajavāsīs have, and not anything else."

Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Sweetness

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Rādhikā is the very embodiment of kindness,
and every pore of Her every limb – indeed, every atom of Her
existence – emanates transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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Kṛṣṇa should weep, Kṛṣṇa should search for Rādhikā.
Why should our sweet, innocent, very simple Śrīmatī Rādhikā
go here and there, over mountains, across rivers, through thorns?
Why should She go? Kṛṣṇa should go all over searching for Her.

Gaura-vāṇī Pracāriṇe

*

Rādhā's appearance is so attractive from head to toe that upon
seeing Her, Kṛṣṇa is immersed in *prema*, transcendental love.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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In reality Kṛṣṇa is *aptakāma*, meaning that He has no unfulfilled
desire, but upon seeing Rādhikā, not only one desire, but millions
and millions of desires arise in Him. His quality of being *aptakāma*
is demolished and He is drowned in the waves of desire.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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There are so many who are dear to Kṛṣṇa, but amongst them
Rādhikā is the most dear to Him.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

Kṛṣṇa is the object of love, but Rādhikā is the reservoir,
or abode, of love.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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Those who very carefully worship Rādhikā's feet will meet Kṛṣṇa
in the snap of a finger, but what does it mean to meet Kṛṣṇa? Where
is Kṛṣṇa complete? Without Rādhikā is He complete? Only when
Rādhikā is with Kṛṣṇa is He complete. Only by the mercy of Rādhikā
will one be able to have Their divine audience (*darśana*) and attain
the qualification to serve Them. Without the mercy of Rādhikā, one
will not be able to meet Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

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Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself is Kṛṣṇa; there is no difference at all
between Them. Only for pastimes, to relish each other,
has Kṛṣṇa divided Himself in two.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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Kṛṣṇa tells Himself, “I am so beautiful, but when I see the beauty of Rādhikā I become controlled by Her. I am so lovely, but Śrīmatī Rādhikā is even lovelier. I have so much *prema* (transcendental love), but Rādhikā’s *prema* is much greater. She is therefore My *prema-guru*. At the same time, when I think deeply, I see that My form has a special quality that drives Her mad. What is that quality?”

Pinnacle of Devotion

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The topmost humility is found in Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is the pinnacle of humility. In whomever She detects even a trace of *bhakti*, She considers that person worthy of Her reverence. She offers prayers to that person, thinking, “I should try to become like them.”

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Kṛṣṇa is love, and His love is Rādhikā.
Without love, without Rādhikā, He cannot exist for even a second.

Yoga for Peace

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Who is it that, even though Her heart is in the form of a seedling, can overpower the mad elephant Kṛṣṇa, who is directly Parabrahma (the Supreme Spirit) Himself? Rādhikā.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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Is this sentiment of mercy found more in Kṛṣṇa or in Rādhikā?
More in Rādhikā, and She is the one who, like a mother, nurtures us.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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We are more interested in taking shelter of Bhagavān's topmost loving devotees. It is a special characteristic of those of us in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya*¹ that we don't actually take shelter of Kṛṣṇa. Even though He is the one who possesses all *śakti*, power, who is the unlimited ocean of transcendental mellows, who is supremely merciful, who is especially affectionate to His devotees, who is beginningless and who is the cause of all causes, who is it that we take shelter of? Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Bhakti-rasāyana



¹ The philosophical school in the lineage of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is in this lineage.

CHAPTER TWENTY

**ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA -
THE LORD OF
SWEETNESS**





ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA – THE LORD OF SWEETNESS

Kṛṣṇa is the seed, the root of all incarnations, and from this original seed, different forms come.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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There are many, many incarnations of the Lord.
Each and every incarnation is directly the Lord Himself,
and all are eternal, spiritually conscious and blissful.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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Some say that originally Kṛṣṇa has no form,
and that when anyone of this world calls Him, then according
to that person's particular sentiment, He takes a corresponding
form and appears in this world. But this idea is incorrect.
All His forms are real and eternal, and when devotees call Him
by the name of a specific form, then in that very form He comes.

Going Beyond Vaikuṇṭha

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If a thief has taken a person's golden ornaments, that person will pursue the thief. Here, the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute is compared to a thief. It entered the hearts of the *gopīs* (cowherd girls), took them away, and quickly returned to Kṛṣṇa with those hearts. All the *gopīs* followed that sound and came to Kṛṣṇa thinking, "I alone am coming to Kṛṣṇa to get back my heart."

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

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It is true that we are not seeing Kṛṣṇa, but He sees us, and He hears what we say to Him. We do not hear what He is telling us, and we do not hear Him calling us by playing His flute, but our call is heard by Kṛṣṇa, who is very kind and causelessly merciful. He has sent all our spiritual teachers, He has also sent Jesus, and sometimes He Himself descends with all His associates – only because He loves us.

Discourse – 22 September 2002

*

If God has no form, then from where did this world come? The world is full of so many forms. Something cannot come from nothing. Therefore, God must have a form, and His form is the most beautiful. There is no one as beautiful as Him. Kṛṣṇa has all varieties of good qualities. For example, He is so merciful. If God is not merciful, how can He know our difficulties, sorrows and sufferings and how can He help us? God is the embodiment of love and affection. If He were not so, then what would be the use of such a God?

Discourse – 27 December 1998

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Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of love and affection.

Walking with a Saint 2008

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The nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips comes out through the holes of the flute as the nectar of sweet sound. This exquisite music causes dry trees to become green and lush, flowers to bloom, and stones to melt.

Veṇu-gīta

*

What is the nature of Kṛṣṇa's form? It is the very essence of loveliness, and its beauty is unequalled and unsurpassed.

Bhakti-rasāyana

*

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it says that the flute is His dear most companion. The vibration of this flute can melt anything, even rugged mountains, and it is also capable of entering devotees' bodies and stealing their heart.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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He wears cloth the same golden colour as the *gopīs'* complexion, thus disclosing His inner loving feelings for them. On His broad chest the beautiful *vaijayantī* garland, made of five or seven kinds of flowers, is swinging gently and sweetly.

Veṇu-gīta

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Sometimes a rainbow is seen opposite the sun while it is raining, and when the sky is filled with dark clouds, the rainbow looks particularly beautiful. Kṛṣṇa's complexion is like a fresh cloud, and the peacock feather half-moon decorating His topknot looks like a beautiful rainbow.

Veṇu-gīta

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Kṛṣṇa picked up His flute. It was evening time. The moon was golden and full, and it was coming from the very reddish eastern horizon. The eastern direction is like the moon's beloved. It was as though by his rays, which are like his hands, the moon was taking a large quantity of pink colour and decorating the face of the eastern direction. Remembering this, Kṛṣṇa at once placed His flute upon His lips and played a very sweet tune.

Gopi-gīta

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Kṛṣṇa is the very embodiment of supreme, spiritual ecstasy, and so are His pastimes. If one is simply hearing narrations of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, then for him there is no necessity of practising renunciation or anything of the kind.

Bhakti-rasāyana

*

The breeze was blowing very gently, seemingly unable to carry the full weight of the flowers' fragrance. Seeing this natural splendour, the desire for enjoyment arose in Kṛṣṇa, and He played the flute very softly. Hearing this deep vibration, the peacocks went mad, dancing in rhythm with their tail-feathers fully spread out. All the animals, birds and insects of Vṛndāvana congregated in the meadows of Govardhana to witness the peacock's performance.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Because He uses the end holes of the flute to produce very deep notes, His playing of the flute is like thunder, and His yellow cloth is like lightning.

Bhakti-rasāyana

*

Sometimes a peacock, being maddened in *bhāva* (transcendental emotion), would come near Kṛṣṇa, and He would gently stroke it with His hand. Sometimes He would call a parrot, and when it flew on to His hand, while stroking it gently, He would teach it to speak and then listen to what the parrot said back. The calves would also receive the touch of His hands.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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The *gopīs* sang of Kṛṣṇa's activities that were in relation to them: how He met with them, how He fed them *tāmbūla*, how He tied bells on their ankles, how He strung garlands of flowers for them, and how when they became fatigued, He wiped the dust from their faces and bodies and made a bed of flowers for them to rest on.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Kṛṣṇa was holding the flute to His lips and playing so sweetly that it seemed that the nectar of His heart was emanating through the holes of the flute and inundating the entire area of Vṛndāvana.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

Śyāmasundara (Kṛṣṇa), who has very, very beautiful hair and on whose head the peacock feather is always present, is standing in His threefold-bending posture under a *kadamba* tree in a bower in Vṛndāvana. He is holding the flute to His beautiful lips, with the nectar of His heart pouring out from the holes of the flute. We should always think of this Kṛṣṇa.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

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He played His flute in such a way as to steal the attention of the whole world, and all the *gopīs* became automatically attracted. Kṛṣṇa, by His beauty, by His qualities, by His affection, by His *rasa* and by all the other specialties of His style, stole the hearts of all living entities.

He sent a messenger from house to house. How did He send it?

By His lips, through the medium of His flute, all the *rasa* of His heart was expressed in His calling of the *gopīs*.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

OUR INTIMATE FRIEND

To those who are always connected to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, serving Him with love and devotion, He gives the intelligence by which they can come to Him. What kind of intelligence does He give? He gives transcendental intelligence, which further connects us with Him.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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In the most advanced stages of *bhakti*, one does not regard Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead but as one's dear friend, dear son, or most beloved. He sees Kṛṣṇa as his, and he sees himself as Kṛṣṇa's.

Pinnacle of Devotion

*

How do we choose a *guru*? We surrender ourselves at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa in the heart and pray to Him. Residing in our heart, He will hear our plea. He will always hear. If one prays, “O Kṛṣṇa, I sincerely desire to become Your servant. Please direct me to the lotus feet of a qualified *guru*,” He will surely arrange this. One who neglects such prayer and has confidence in his own ability to select and examine his *guru* will be disturbed in his spiritual life.

Pinnacle of Devotion

*

We should not be absorbed so much in problems.
Always problems, problems, problems! The only problem is to get Kṛṣṇa’s service, nothing else. People may reject us, no harm. The whole world can reject us, no harm. But I know that Kṛṣṇa will never forget us, never! He has promised, “One may be rejected by one’s mother, father, husband, wife, children, by the whole world, even by one’s so-called *guru*, but those who are giving up all these things for Me, I can never give them up.”

The Essence of All Advice

*

As we hanker for pure, transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa,
Kṛṣṇa also hankers to give it. He always seeks an
excuse to give it to us.

Vintage darsans – May 1992

*

Kṛṣṇa is the protector and maintainer of those who have taken exclusive shelter of Him. Besides Him, there is no other shelter.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

*

Our prayers should be in a mood of separation, from the core of our heart. Kṛṣṇa has this mood ten million times more than us. He is weeping for us. He is the father of the father of all fathers, the beloved of the beloved of all beloveds. With much love and affection for us He thinks, “Having forgotten Me, they are greatly suffering.

They cannot come to Me, they cannot even call Me by weeping bitterly, and their hearts are not melting. Therefore, I must go to them.” This is why Kṛṣṇa descended with His flute and all His beauty.

He took the essence of all beauty and descended. He is calling us, but we do not hear Him. Try to realize this.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

*

Kṛṣṇa is always nearby, and if we call out to Him, will He not hear? ... He is always very near us, inside our heart. If we call Him sincerely, is it possible that He won't hear us? Will Kṛṣṇa not hear if we loudly call out to Him? At present we don't have sufficient faith, but when we pray from deep within our heart with great faith and with tears falling from our eyes, “O master of the *gopīs*, please hear my desperate prayer!” will He not hear it? Certainly He will. ... When we have this mood, then what we are engaged in can really be called dedicated spiritual practice.

Bhakti-rasāyana

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Bhagavān is so merciful that He descends to the material realm in the form of Paramātmā (Supersoul) and is always present in the heart of the living being as the witness. He watches over us and looks for any pretext to bring us back to Him. He is always there in the heart of the living entity, watching and waiting for such a good opportunity. He is very merciful, but not just merciful; He is the intimate friend of the living being.

The Nectar of Govinda-līlā

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

OUR REAL HOME





OUR REAL HOME

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is beautiful, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is more beautiful, and together
They perform so many sweet pastimes. Our home is with Them.

Walking with a Saint 2008

TRUE LOVE

Material love is an endeavour to gratify selfish desires,
whereas pure *kṛṣṇa-prema* (transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa) is the
opposite, free from the slightest taint of any selfishness.

Pinnacle of Devotion

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True love is that love which does not break, even when there is
sufficient cause to break it. Even when there is sufficient cause for it
to break, instead of breaking, it becomes unlimitedly more new and
fresh. This is called *prema*. It is not like the lust of worldly persons,
where after one day, or two days, or some days, a man and woman
marry and next day get divorced.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

*

By *prema*, transcendental love, Kṛṣṇa is dancing, Rādhā is dancing, the *gopīs* are dancing, and all Vrajavāsīs are dancing. *Prema* herself is also dancing, and whoever she touches will also dance.

Essence of All Advice

*

First of all you should know who Kṛṣṇa is. He is not a worldly boyfriend, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā is not a worldly girlfriend. Their most elevated love is not material lust. Their love is beyond the touch of all bodily senses and even beyond the mind.

Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

*

Prema (transcendental love) is a transcendental entity endowed with free will, and in our present condition it will not enter our heart because we would not appreciate its true value. So when no type of selfishness remains within us, then we will be practicing *uttama-bhakti* (nurturing activities and moods that are exclusively for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa).

Hari-kathāmṛta, Volume Two

OUR ULTIMATE ASPIRATION

Rādhā-dasyam (confidential service to Śrī Rādhā) is our ultimate objective. This is our *artha*, real wealth, and that which hinders and obscures this is called an *anartha*.

Śrī Prabandhāvalī

*

What is the meaning of *śrīyam*? *Śrī* means beauty. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is likened to a vine, the beauty of which is its leaves and flowers. When the leaves and flowers of the vine move gently in the breeze, we can then see how beautiful the vine is. If there are no flowers or leaves on that vine, there is no beauty. We don't want to be Śrīmatī Rādhikā – the vine. We want to be the leaves and flowers of the vine. We want to be *pālya-dāsīs* (affectionately sheltered maidservants) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and nothing more.

Vintage darśanas May 1992

*

I request my entire *guru-paramparā*, up to Bramhā, to sprinkle their mercy upon you. By their mercy you will realize that the object of your life and spiritual practice is *rādhā-dāsyam*.

Discourse – 28 January 2006

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

**FINAL
INSTRUCTIONS**





NEVER BE HOPELESS

Try to chant the name with a strong belief that Kṛṣṇa is hearing you and calling you. Always believe this. Have confidence in this: “*Guru* is always with me.” If a *guru* is bona fide, then he is a manifestation of Nityānanda Prabhu, Baladeva Prabhu, and he is always protecting us, always inspiring us. He never dies. He is always with us. If any difficulty comes, chant Kṛṣṇa’s names and also call out to Gurudeva and Nityānanda Prabhu. They will quickly come and save you. Don’t be worried. Never. Don’t think that you are alone and cannot do anything. Never. You are not alone. Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, Gaura Nityānanda, all of the *ācāryas* (spiritual masters) in our disciplic line are with you; always saving you.

Discourse – 19 January 1998

*

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, he is everywhere, and he is in our hearts also. He has not left his body. His body, his everything, is transcendental. So don’t worry. Our relationship with him [after he leaves this world] is the same as it always was.

Discourse – 16 December 2007

*

Suppose you are trying to take bath, and at the same time all the water is draining out. Still, some of the water touches your body and you feel somewhat refreshed. Similarly, even if you do not fully understand what I am telling you, something will nevertheless come to you. Somewhat of a seed of greed to attain this mood will come to you, and it will become a treasure for you for the future. Try to become very bold and strong, and try to follow my teachings.

Actually, these are not my teachings, they are the teachings
of my *gurudeva* and the *guru-paramparā*.

Discourse – 29 June 2002

*

Never be hopeless. ... We cannot lament or weep for Kṛṣṇa, but He is lamenting and weeping for us. Go on chanting, remembering, and offering obeisances, and you will be able to quickly attain all the invaluable gifts I have described.

Discourse – 22 September 2002

*

Next year I want to come and see that all of you have very much developed and that all of my children have become educated, are helping each other, and have some love and affection for all. In this way our objective will be successful, and we can love Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal.

Discourse – 22 September 2002

*

Out of compassion, Śrī Bhagavān, in the form of *śrī guru*, expands His manifest pastimes. In the same way, *śrī guru* enacts the pastime of disappearing from this world to enter his eternal pastimes. His sole purpose in doing so is to stimulate the full service and full possessiveness of his dependents. Those fortunate enough to have taken shelter of a *rūpānuga-guru* during his manifest presence experience a constant increase in their attachment to serving him. And after his disappearance, their attachment to him continues to increase many times over.

Rays of The Harmonist No. 15 Kārtika 2005

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