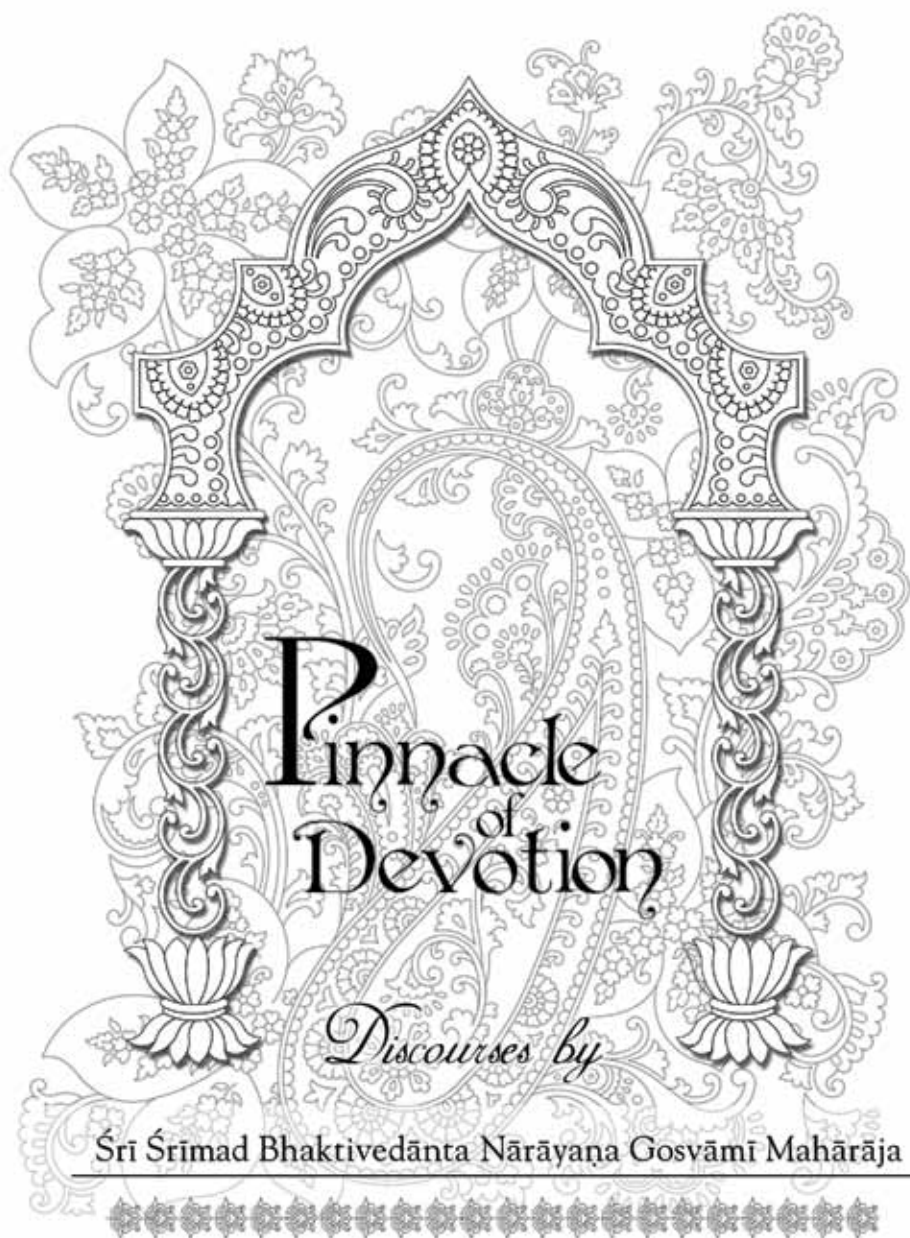


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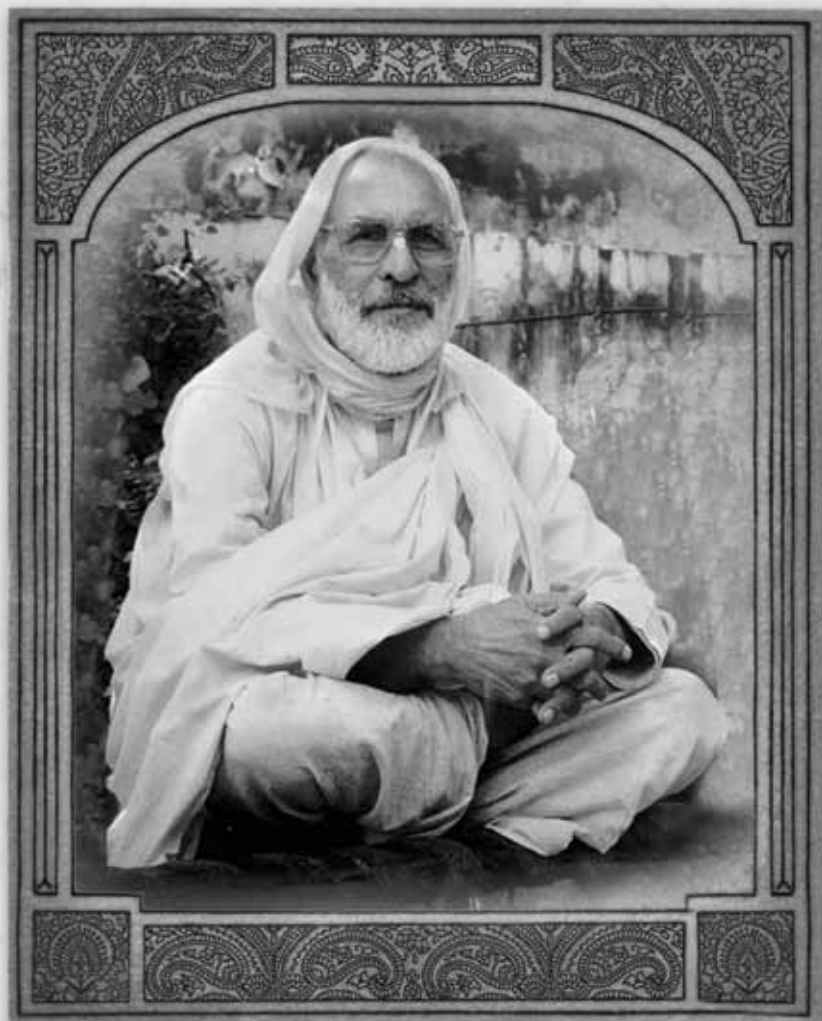


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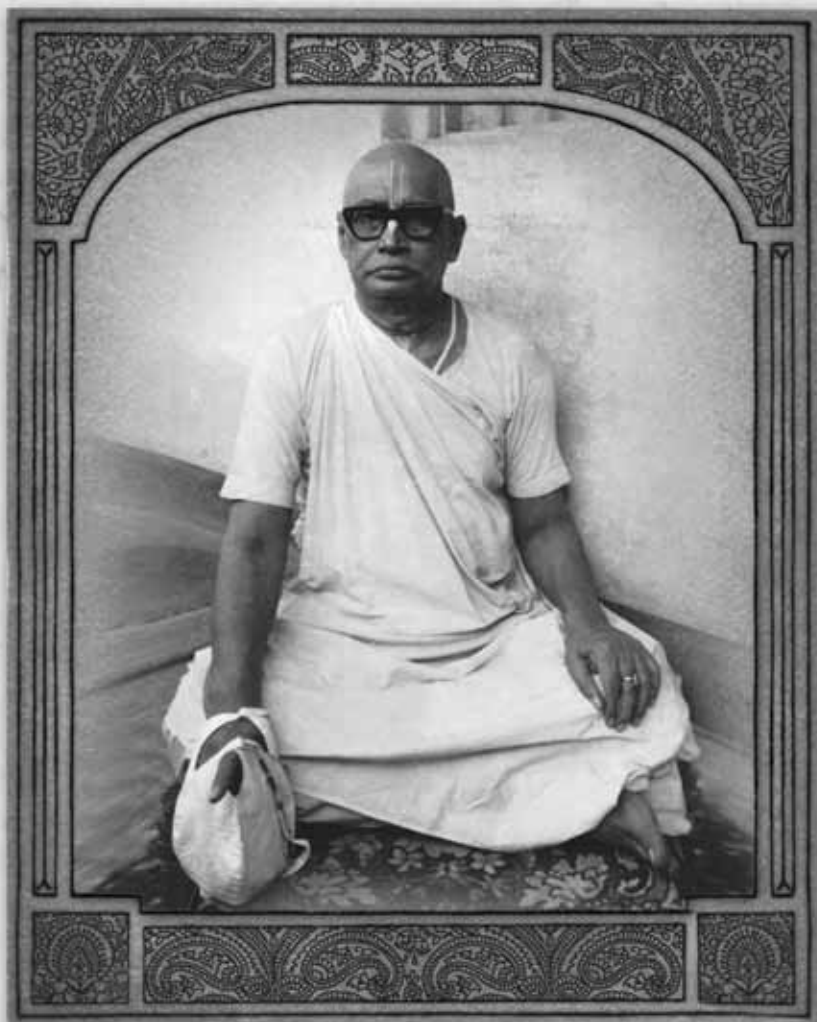
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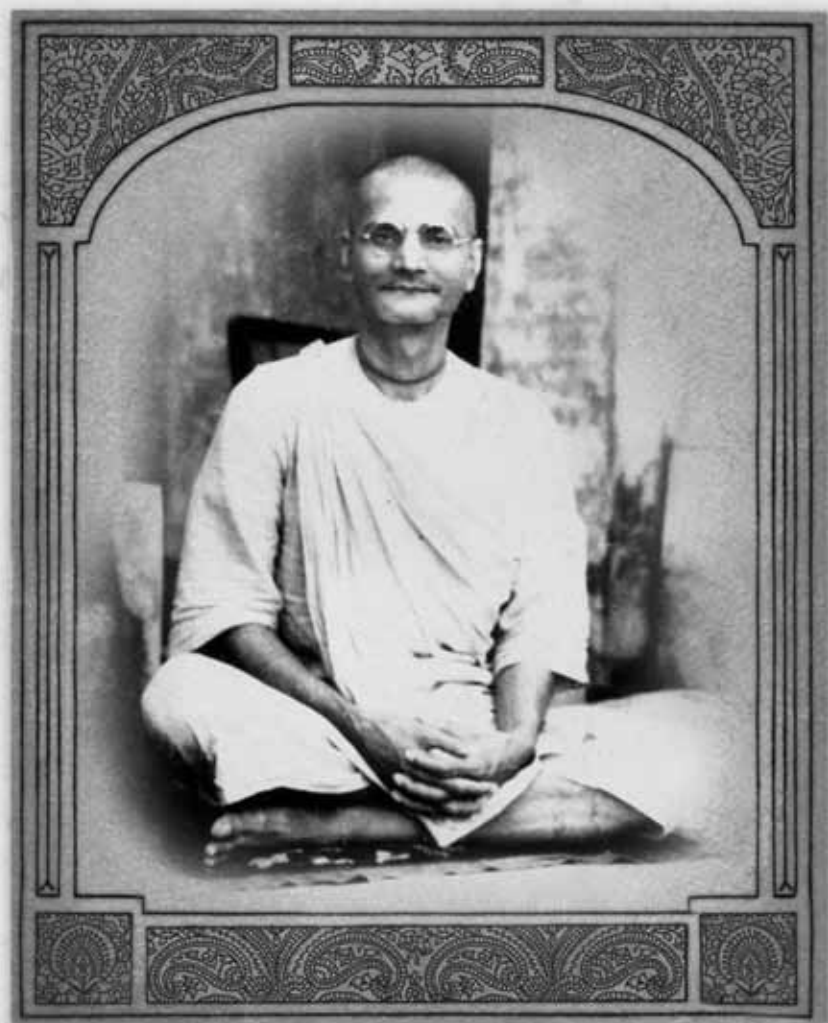
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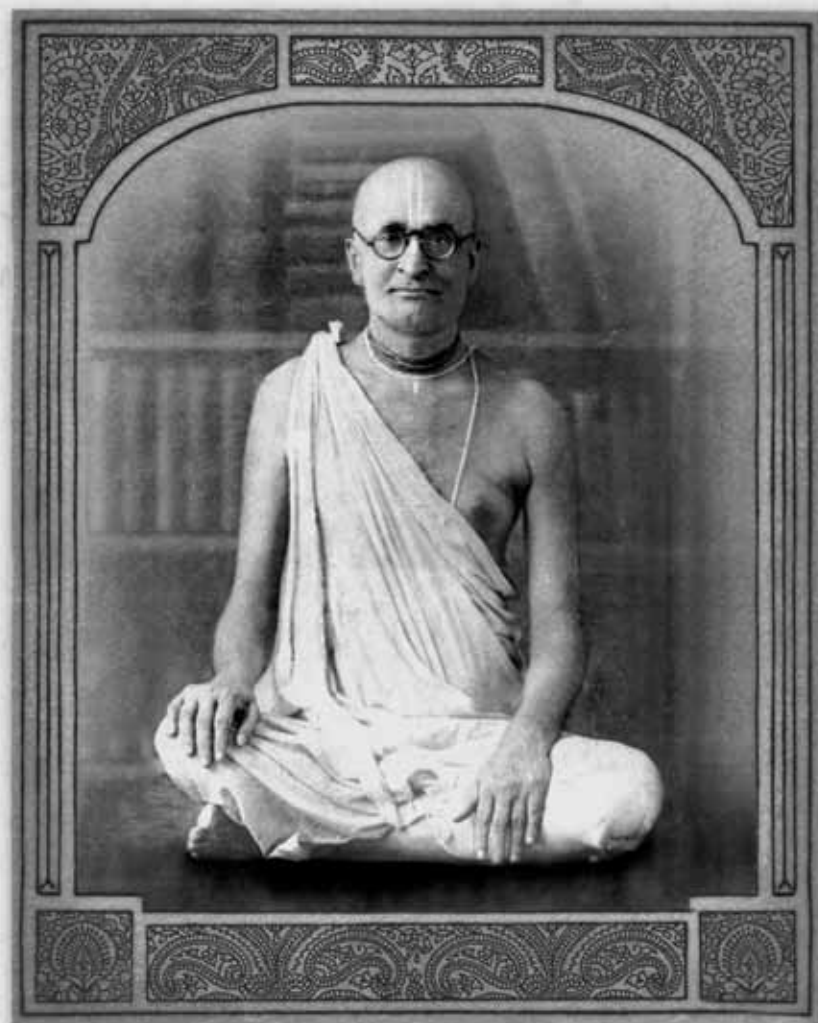
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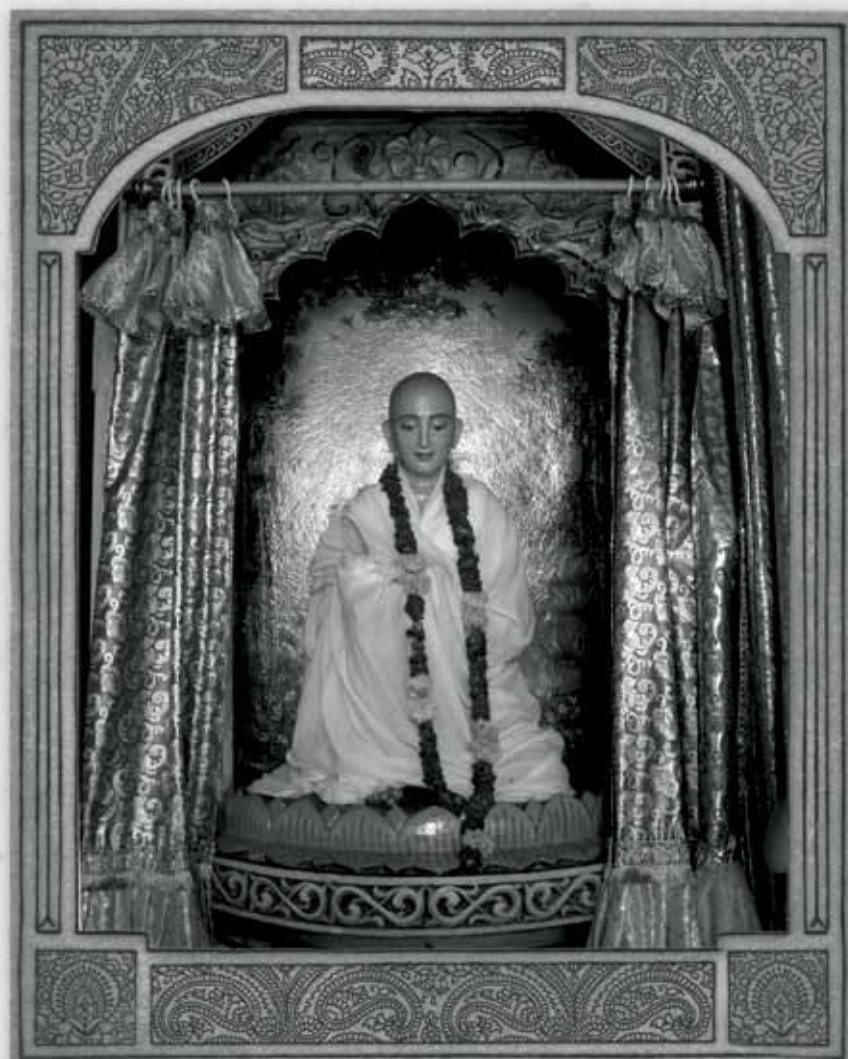
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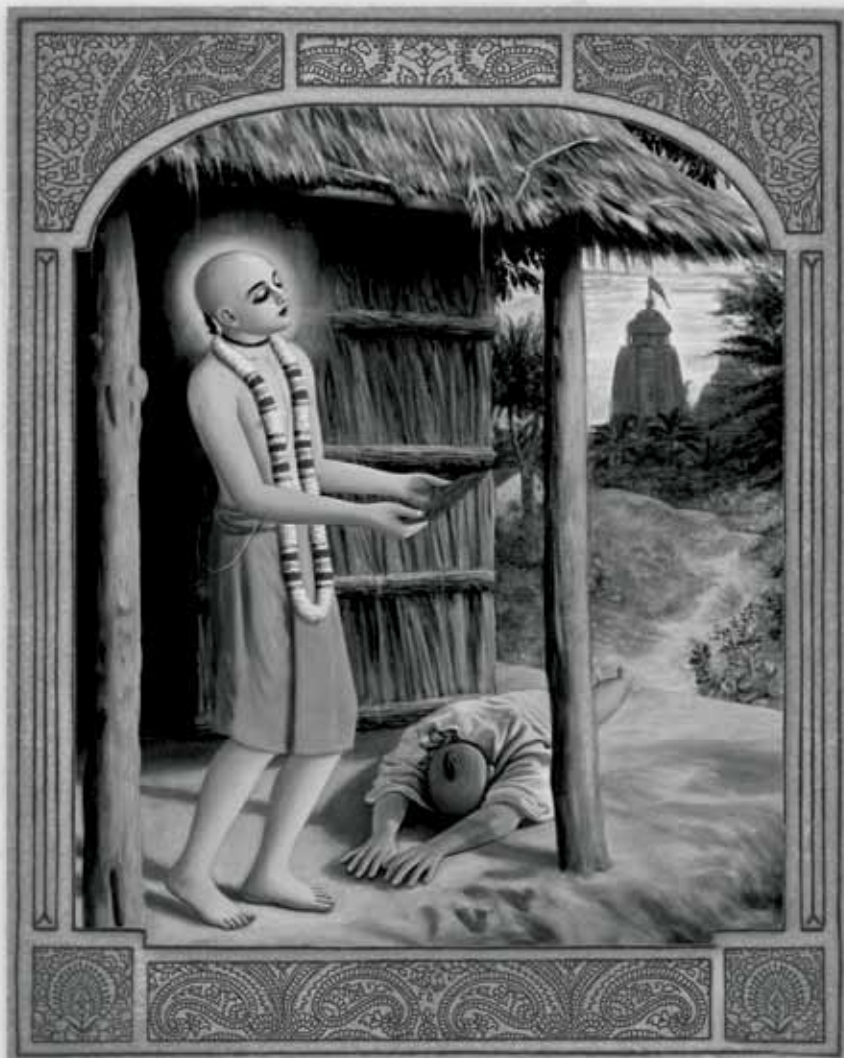
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keṣava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



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Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī



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Foreword

We all have a tendency to love. No one can live without loving someone. Even a tiger has this tendency; we see this in the way a mother tiger carries, maintains, and protects her babies. The problem, however, is where to place our love so that everyone will be happy.

In the beginning of life we love our parents, then our brothers and sisters, then our entire family, our beloveds, our community, nation, and even all of humanity. Yet, in spite of our giving so much love, we still feel frustrated. And it will continue to remain this way, until we know the identity of our Supreme Beloved.

As particles of sun-light or air expand without knowing where to end, so does our tendency to love whole-heartedly. According to the timeless wisdom-books of ancient India called the Vedas, our love can only be fully satisfied when it is fixed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth. He is the reservoir of all pleasure, all worlds, and all relationships.

Pinnacle of Devotion, its source of knowledge taken from the ancient mystical Vedas, teaches us how to love all living beings – humans, birds, beasts, insects, and even trees and plants – by the easy method of loving Kṛṣṇa. Pouring water on the root of a tree is the universal and practical method of supplying water to all the leaves and branches. In that connection, the Vedas say that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, is the root of all. All beings are His parts, and therefore by loving Him, everyone becomes happy.

In this book you will find that this elevated concept is written in very simple, easy to understand language, because the words herein were spoken that way by Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and then transcribed. If you feel some hesitancy to continue reading because of the several Sanskrit verses, phrases, and words scattered here and there, please don't miss this opportunity, even if this is the first time you are coming in contact with the Sanskrit language. Even if you don't understand the language, the transcendently

powerful verses, which are like *mantras* for meditation, free us from false material love. Material love is always frustrating. Reading, hearing, and uttering these verses gives us an opportunity to enter the all-blissful, loving Reality. You will also be happy to know that all the Sanskrit verses, phrases, and words are always translated.

Sanskrit is the main language of the ancient Vedas, and it is the world's original language. In fact it is the language that is spoken in the celestial planets as well as in the transcendental world.

The Sanskrit word *veda* means 'the aggregate of knowledge.' When knowledge comes to its most advance stage, it becomes a brilliant, spiritual love and affection. The quintessence of the Vedas is an ancient spiritual literature called *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and the essence of the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is vividly explained in this book, the *Pinnacle of Devotion*. Our respected readers will be introduced to that supremely beautiful love which is the ultimate goal of life and the foundation of endless, ever-fresh, and ever-unfolding fulfillment.

The Publishers

Introduction

In February 1997, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja gave his divine teachings to devotees in Australia, where he spent three weeks as part of his Bhakti Festival touring in the West. There he lectured on the principle causes for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance in this world. He also revealed the special gift which Mahāprabhu came to give the fortunate souls of this iron-age of Kali-yuga – a gift which is the very pinnacle of attainment for the spirit soul.

In order to give his audience a platform for understanding this sublime topic, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja first gave four lectures based on Chapter One of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta. In these lectures, he explained the essential principal of the spiritual preceptor (*guru-tattva*), who is a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the personification of Absolute Reality. He also emphasized the importance of association with pure saints (*sādhu-saṅga*). In the remaining nine lectures, he spoke on the primary purpose for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance, and explained with great care and in detail how one becomes qualified for His mercy.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja wanted his western audience to understand that the mission of his *śikṣā-guru* and intimate friend, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, known throughout the world as Śrīla Prabhupāda, the Founder Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, was to fulfill this same principal purpose for which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared. In his discourses, he therefore quoted extensively from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* Chapters Three and Four. In order to elaborate on certain points in his discourses, we have added quotes from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's books and recorded lectures as footnotes, all taken from Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja's Vedabase folio.

Kṛṣṇa-bhakti was practically unknown outside of India before Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja started his worldwide

preaching movement. We fall at his lotus-feet and offer our eternal gratitude to him for giving Kṛṣṇa consciousness so extensively, and for creating a world-wide interest in *bhakti*-literature, such as this edition of *Pinnacle of Devotion*.

We, the editors, are happy to present this revised edition of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's discourses in Australia, and we humbly request our respected readers to please excuse any errors made by us in presenting his divine words.

This publication is presented by the laudable efforts of several devotees. In alphabetical order they are: Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja; Ananta-ācārya dāsa, Anītā dāsī, Brajanātha dāsa, Haladhara dāsa, Jānakī dāsī, Kāliya-damana dāsa, Kamalākānta dāsa, Kṛṣṇa-kāminī dāsī, Madana-mohana dāsa, Mādhurīka dāsī, Madhusmita dāsī, Pītāmbara dāsī, Prahlādānanda dāsī, Prema-prayojana dāsa, Premavatī dāsī, Ṛṣabhadeva dāsa, Vaijayantī-māla dāsī, Vasanti dāsī, Vikāś Thākura, Yaśodā-gopī dāsī.

The editorial team



Part One

Guru Tattva

The Glory Of Śrī Guru

Come with me to Vṛndāvana, where Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the author of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, wrote his book in the solitary atmosphere of the Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple in Sevā-kuñja. Sevā-kuñja is one of the places in which the Lord performed His amorous pastimes. The foot-dust of all the *gopīs* is there, Śrīmatī Rādhikā's foot-dust is there, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa engaged in the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā there.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa also served Śrīmatī Rādhikā at Vamśivaṭa and Nidhuvana. At these places, Kṛṣṇa, Rādhikā, and the *gopīs* are controlled by *prema*, love personified. Their devotees do not aspire for Kṛṣṇa, but for *kṛṣṇa-prema*, love for Him. Kaṁsa, Jarāsandha, Śiśupāla, and other demons wanted Kṛṣṇa, but they did not possess that *prema*.

kṛṣṇa, guru, bhakta, śakti, avatāra, prakāśa
kṛṣṇa ei chaya-rūpe karena vilāsa

(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā 1.32)

Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys by manifesting Himself as the spiritual masters, the devotees, the diverse energies, the incarnations, and the plenary portions. They are all six in one.

In this *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* verse, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja explains that Kṛṣṇa manifests in this world in six features: as Kṛṣṇa Himself, as two kinds of *guru*, as the *bhakta* (His devotee), as *śakti* (His energy), as an *avatāra* (His incarnation), and as *prakāśa* (His manifestation). I will explain this very briefly, so that I may complete the discussion of the third and fourth chapters of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. The third and fourth chapters describe the purpose for which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the *ācāryas* in our disciplic line of spiritual masters (*paramparā*) have come to this world. However, in order to understand this most important subject

matter, it is necessary to understand some background information about Kṛṣṇa's manifestations.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja begins his description of the Lord's manifestations by explaining the principle of *guru*:

mantra-guru āra yata śikṣā-guru-gaṇa
tānhāra caraṇa āge kariye vandana
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.35)

I first offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my initiating spiritual master and all my instructing spiritual masters.

Mantra-guru means *dīkṣā-guru*. The *śikṣā-guru* teaches us who we are. He teaches the meaning of *bhakti* (devotional service to the Supreme Lord), the meaning of *jīva-tattva* (the established truths of the eternal soul), the means by which a conditioned soul can achieve *bhāva-bhakti* (spiritual emotions), and then *prema-bhakti* (pure love of God), the direct service of the eternal soul.

Real *bhakti* is *prema-bhakti*, pure loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.1) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states:

anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir-uttamā

Uttama-bhakti, pure devotional service, is the cultivation of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In other words, it is the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed through all endeavours of the body, mind, and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*). It is not covered by *jñāna* (knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation) and *karma* (reward-seeking activity), and it is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

It is the duty of a person desiring *bhakti* to remember this verse and to repeat it daily. He should try to enter deeply into its meaning and practice to develop its understanding. This practice is called

sādhana-bhakti.¹ By practicing *sādhana-bhakti* with the senses, a spiritual mood manifests. This mood is called *bhāva-bhakti*, and it is this *bhāva-bhakti* which soon blossoms into *prema-bhakti*. According to a devotee's level of advancement in *bhakti*, he or she will be eligible to perform *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti*, or *prema-bhakti*.

A person can be called a *sādhaka*, one who is performing *sādhana-bhakti*, only when his practice is aimed at attaining *bhāva-bhakti* and ultimately *prema-bhakti*.

A *guru* who is not realized in *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti*, and *prema-bhakti* cannot actually give *bhakti*, although he may appear to do the work of a *guru*. This is supported by all *śāstras*, including *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the Upaniṣads, and it is also supported by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. We should understand this principle:

*tasmād guruṃ praṇadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātām
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.3.21)

Any person who is seriously desirous of achieving real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of a spiritual master is that he must have realized the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation and arguments, and thus be able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken complete shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, are to be understood as bona fide spiritual masters.

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

1 "Sādhana-bhakti is of two kinds: *vaidhī* and *rāgānuga*. That *bhakti* which is accomplished through the function of the senses, and by which *bhāva-bhakti* is obtained is called *sādhana-bhakti*" (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, Verse 8, *Śrī Bindu-vikāśinī-vṛtti*).

There are three symptoms of a bona fide *guru*, the first of which is *śābde*. *Śābde* means that he is perfect in his knowledge of Veda, Upaniṣads, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, etc. However, knowledge of *śāstra* and the ability to give logical arguments based on that knowledge is not enough to qualify one as a *guru*. If one has no realization of Kṛṣṇa, if he is not absorbed in *bhajana*², if his *bhakti* is not very developed, then he is not a *guru*. The second symptom is that he is detached from worldly desires (*upaśamāśraya*).

These first and second symptoms are external. The internal symptom of the bona fide *guru* is *pare ca niṣṇātaṁ brahmaṇy*. The word *pare* refers to Parabrahman, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A *guru* should have internal realization of Parabrahman, otherwise he may fall down. Knowledge of *śāstric* arguments devoid of absorption in *bhajana* is not sufficient to save one from falling from the path of *bhakti*. A person may know all the arguments that support the *śāstric* viewpoint and he may outwardly engage in some kind of devotional practice; yet, if he is not detached from material desires and objects, he will fall down. If the *guru* falls, this becomes a great problem for the disciple and disturbs that disciple's entire life. Therefore, we should exercise caution by approaching for initiation a pure devotee, one who will not fall.

In the above-mentioned verse, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has written *mantra-guru āra yata śikṣā-guru-gaṇa*, which indicates both the initiating and instructing spiritual masters. What has Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja written in his translation and purport? Please hear this very carefully. It is very important.

Devotee reads (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.35):

Text: I first offer my respectful obeisances at the lotus feet of my initiating spiritual master, and unto all my instructing spiritual masters.

² *Bhajana* is a complete internal and external absorption in the spiritual practices of worshipping Kṛṣṇa – such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *smaraṇam*, etc. – with a mood of intense affection and attachment.

Purport: Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in his thesis *Śrī Bhakti-sandarbhā* (202) has stated that uncontaminated devotional service is the objective of pure Vaiṣṇavas, and that one has to execute such service in the association of other devotees. By associating with devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one develops a sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and thus becomes inclined towards loving service to the Lord. This is the process of approaching the Supreme Lord by gradual appreciation of devotional service. If one desires unalloyed devotional service, one must associate with devotees.

Let us pay great attention to these words. If we want unalloyed devotional service, we must associate with Vaiṣṇavas. Otherwise, we will be forced to have the association of materialists (*asat-saṅga*); this will be the result.

Let us follow Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's line of thought. If we desire unalloyed devotional service to Kṛṣṇa, then let us boldly follow these directions and instructions. If our preference is making money and we see that this will be hampered by associating with high-class Vaiṣṇavas, we will not be inclined to follow these instructions. However, if we aspire to be like Prahlāda Mahārāja, then let us try to understand the statements in Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's purports.

Please read the last line again, and then continue.

Devotee reads:

If one desires unalloyed devotional service, one must associate with devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. By such association only can a conditioned soul achieve a taste for transcendental love, and thus revive his eternal relationship with God in a specific manifestation and in terms of a specific transcendental mellow or *rasa* that one has internally inherent in him.

If we follow this instruction to associate with pure devotees, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will manage everything for us. We need not fear. Kṛṣṇa has created us. He is the Supreme Controller, so why should we have any

fear? All problems will be solved by following this instruction. Kṛṣṇa will manage everything.

If we want unalloyed service to Kṛṣṇa, then we must have courage. Let us be bold and make an effort to associate with qualified Vaiṣṇavas. In the following verse the importance of such association is stressed, not only once, but three times: *sādhū-saṅga*, again *sādhū-saṅga*, and again *sādhū-saṅga*.

*sādhū-saṅga sādhū-saṅga – sarva sastre kaya
lava mātra sādhū saṅga sarva siddhi haya
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.54)*

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

What is the meaning of this verse? Unalloyed service to Kṛṣṇa can be attained through *sādhū-saṅga*, and following this directive is our first duty.

Devotee reads (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Adi-līlā* 1.35 Purport):

The secret is that one must submissively listen to those who know perfectly the science of God, and one must begin the mode of service regulated by the preceptor or teacher. A devotee already attracted by the name, form, qualities, etc. of the Supreme Lord may be directed to his specific manner of devotional service. He need not waste time by approaching the Lord through logic.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be achieved through the method of mundane logic. If it is the type of logic presented in *sāstras* like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and predominated by devotion, then it may be accepted; otherwise not.

Devotee continues reading:

The expert spiritual master knows well how to engage his disciples' energy in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, and thus he engages a devotee in a specific devotional service according to his special tendency.

We have heard from the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda that everyone, from small children to superiors, used to think, “My Guru Mahārāja loves me so much.” The disciples experience this symptom of a bona fide *guru* because he does not desire material profit from them. He only wants to reside in their hearts and inject them with *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Unless the *guru* is perfect in his own realization of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, he cannot give such realization.

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. The disciple first offers his heart unto the lotus feet of his beloved *guru*, who in turn gives it to his *guru*, and so on, until it is placed at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, the leader of all the maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Rūpa Mañjarī will then give that devotee’s heart to Lalitā and Viśākhā, who will offer it at the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrīmatī Rādhikā will then engage that person in service to Kṛṣṇa and Herself.

If a *guru* does not have this symptom, then his disciple may humbly request the *guru* to allow him to take the association of an elevated soul who does have it. That *guru*, without envy and admitting that he cannot satisfy his disciple, will direct him to take shelter of Vaiṣṇavas who are of the caliber of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura. He will not complain that the disciple is taking shelter of a superior Vaiṣṇava.

A self-realized *guru* (*sad-guru*) never desires worldly gain. If he does, he is not actually *guru*. Śyāmānanda Prabhu was instructed by his *dīkṣā-guru*, Hṛdaya-caitanya of Kuliyā-grāma, to journey to Sevā-kuñja, Vṛndāvana, and take shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. Hṛdaya-caitanya told his disciple, “He will make you qualified to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.” Apparently Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī had no initiated disciples, but he gave his instructions to all the inhabitants of this world.

Devotee continues reading:

A devotee must have only one initiating spiritual master, because in the scriptures acceptance of more than

one is always forbidden. There is no limit, however, to the number of instructing spiritual masters one may accept. Generally a spiritual master who constantly instructs a disciple in spiritual science becomes his initiating spiritual master later on.

One should always remember that a person who is reluctant to accept a spiritual master and be initiated is sure to be baffled in his endeavor to go back to Godhead. One who is not properly initiated may present himself as a great devotee, but in fact he is sure to encounter many stumbling blocks on his path of progress towards spiritual realization, with the result that he must continue his term of material existence without relief. Such a helpless person is compared to a ship without a rudder, for such a ship can never reach its destination. It is imperative, therefore, that one accepts a spiritual master if he at all desires to gain the favor of the Lord.

If there is no chance to serve him directly, a devotee should serve his spiritual master by remembering his instructions. There is no difference between his instructions and he himself. In his absence, therefore, his words of direction should be the pride of the disciple. If one thinks that he is above consulting anyone, including his spiritual master, he is at once an offender of the Lord. Such an offender can never go back to Godhead.

It is imperative that a serious person accepts a bona fide spiritual master in terms of the *śāstric* injunction. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī advises that one should not accept a spiritual master in terms of hereditary or customary social and ecclesiastical convention. One should simply try to find a genuinely qualified spiritual master for actual advancement in spiritual understanding.

It is clear that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja is a pure follower of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, but to have such a fully qualified *guru* is very rare – very rare. If in this life, due to some spiritual piety (*sukṛti*), we have accepted even a *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī-guru*, some impressions of Vaiṣṇavism are made on the heart. Then, in our next birth, we may have the qualification to choose a bona fide *guru*.

How do we choose? We surrender ourselves at the lotus feet of

the *caitya-guru* (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.

Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 18.66)

Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear.

Kṛṣṇa will arrange a *guru* for one who surrenders sincerely and without desire for material gain. In this way such a person easily receives the mercy of that rare *guru*. Everything depends on Kṛṣṇa.

Although a bona fide *guru* is rare in this world, *śāstra* describes that rarer than such a *guru* is a bona fide disciple who surrenders fully, as Arjuna or Sudāmā Vipra surrendered to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The Vedas, Upaniṣads, and Purāṇas cite many examples of the ideal *guru* and the ideal disciple, and the example of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and his full surrender to the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmīs is one of the most exalted.

Who is the *guru* of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī? Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prayed to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the *maṅgalācaraṇa* (auspicious invocation) of each of his books. But when did Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu initiate Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātana? Have we heard of a fire sacrifice being performed for their initiation, and *mantras* being given to them?

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instilled everything in their heart; they accepted him as *guru* within their heart. It is most important to follow *gurudeva* internally and externally. If our heart is given very naturally at a Vaiṣṇava’s lotus feet, this means he is our *guru*,

regardless of whether or not *mantras* are given or a fire *yajña* is performed. These are external and not as important as the surrendering of one's heart.

There are two kinds of disciples, and therefore there are two kinds of *dīkṣā* (initiation): *anuṣṭhānikī* and *vidvat-rūḍhī*. *Anuṣṭhānikī-dīkṣā* is the external formality of a fire *yajña* and the giving of *dīkṣā* (*gāyatrī*) *mantras*. If one thinks, "I have sacrificed so much. My head is shaven and I have received my *mantras*. I am now initiated," this may be only external. Of course, formal initiation is essential, but it is not complete without *vidvat-rūḍhī*.

Vidvat-rūḍhī refers to an internal initiation wherein the disciple completely gives his heart at his *guru's* lotus feet. He knows that his *guru* will make him qualified to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. *Gurudeva* gives all kinds of transcendental knowledge (*divya-jñāna*) about *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, *guru-tattva*, *vaiṣṇava-tattva*, and *prema-tattva*.³

The *guru* teaches us what *māyā* is. He teaches that under the spell of the illusory energy *māyā*, one sees a man or woman as a source of one's own sense gratification. Such consciousness has created many problems between husband and wife, especially in western countries. People are sometimes married and divorced several times, and there is no concern for the children. Marriage means that both remain together for life; small problems should not cause divorce. The *guru* will teach his followers to be neither attached nor detached, but to perform their duty, and in this way see themselves, their wives, and their children as Kṛṣṇa's servants. He will teach them their duty in such a way that they develop their Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

The *guru* instructs us how to practice *bhakti* – how to develop our honor, affection, and service for Kṛṣṇa – through *divya-jñāna*, transcendental knowledge. He also destroys all our sinful reactions:

*divyaṁ jñānaṁ yato dadyāt
kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam
tasmād dikṣeti sā proktā
deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ*

(Bhakti-sandarbha 283)

3 *Tattva* means 'established philosophical truth,' or 'spiritual truth.'

By *dīkṣā*, one gradually becomes disinterested in material enjoyment and gradually becomes interested in spiritual life.

In this verse, ‘material enjoyment’ refers to all the problems arising from attachment to worldly affairs. In material life one is full of lust, anger, greed, madness, illusion, and envy. He thinks himself to be the enjoyer.

Gurudeva destroys the four stages of sin: (1) *prārabdha* – fructified *karma*, the reactions to previous actions which are presently being suffered and enjoyed; (2) *aprārabdha* – those reactions which will fructify in our next body; (3) *kūṭa* and *bīja* – sins which have not yet been performed, but the tendency to perform them is dormant in the heart; (4) *avidyā* – the ignorance whereby one forgets Kṛṣṇa and thinks himself to be the enjoyer. From this, all problems arise.

If our *dīkṣā-guru* is not of a high caliber and is thus incapable of extricating us from these reactions, then we must accept a *śikṣā-guru* who is more advanced. We will pray to Kṛṣṇa and *gurudeva* to help us solve our difficulties in this connection. Our *guru* will then advise us to seek shelter of advanced Vaiṣṇavas who are of the caliber of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura. If the *guru* is showing jealousy or envy that his disciples are associating with such a *śikṣā-guru*, or if he is opposed to Vaiṣṇavas and their teachings, the disciple should consider giving up that false *guru*.

śrī rūpa sanātana bhaṭṭa raghunātha
śrī jīva gopāla bhaṭṭa dāsa raghunātha

ei chaya guru – śikṣā-guru ya āmāra
tān sabāra pāda-padme koṭi namaskāra

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.36-37)

The instructing spiritual masters are Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaṭṭa Raghunātha, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. These six are my instructing spiritual masters, and therefore I offer millions of respectful obeisances unto their lotus feet.

In this section of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī first prays to his *śikṣā-gurus*, and then explains many truths about *guru*. Who are his *śikṣā-gurus*? Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

In this connection there is a very important point to consider. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has not mentioned the name of his *dikṣā-guru*. He took *śikṣā* directly from both Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and at the end of each chapter he offers his obeisances to them. Some say that his *dikṣā-guru* is Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, but I have not seen evidence of this. I have never read in any *śāstras* about the identity of his *dikṣā-guru*. Both he and his brother took *dikṣā* during their household life, before he finally left his family and went to Vṛndāvana. Without *dikṣā*, he would not have received the name Kṛṣṇadāsa.

For some reason he has not revealed the name of his *dikṣā-guru*, but has only named the six Gosvāmī associates of Mahāprabhu as his *śikṣā-gurus*. In their forms in Vraja-līlā, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī is Labaṅga Mañjarī, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa is Rāga Mañjarī, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is Vilāsa Mañjarī, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa is Guṇa Mañjarī, and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa is Rati Mañjarī. They each have two eternal forms, one as an associate of Kṛṣṇa and the other as an associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

If anyone has proper association with a bona fide *śikṣā-guru*, he will surely become a bona fide disciple. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is proud to be a disciple of the Six Gosvāmīs. He writes, “*tān’ sabāra pāda-padme koṭi namaskāra.*” He offers innumerable obeisances at their lotus feet, after which he prays to *bhaktas* (devotees) like Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, who in Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes is in the form of Nārada Muni.

*bhagavānera bhakta yate śrīvāsādi pradhāna
tān sabāra pāda-padme sahasra praṇāma*

(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā 1.38)

There are innumerable devotees of the Lord, of whom Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura is the foremost. I offer my respectful obeisances thousands of times unto their lotus feet.

There are two kinds of *bhaktas*, namely the realized soul and the *sādhaka*. In his former life, Nārada was a *sādhaka-bhakta*, and then he became a realized *bhakta*, a *premi-bhakta*. In this verse, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja is referring to all self-realized *bhaktas*: Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, Śikhi Māhiti, Mādhavī-devī, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, etc. There are six prominent *śikṣā-gurus* (the Six Gosvāmīs), and they are all realized *bhaktas* as well.

We have mentioned Kṛṣṇa's manifestations as the *guru* and the *bhakta*, and He also expands in three other ways: Śrī Advaita Ācārya is the plenary incarnation of Mahā-Viṣṇu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu is *svarūpa prakāśa* (an eternal, personal manifestation of Kṛṣṇa). Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita (who is Śrīmatī Rādhikā) and Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita (who is Rādhikā's maidservant) are *śakti* (Kṛṣṇa's transcendental potency).

Why was it that Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita was in such a humble service mood to Śrī Caitanya? After all, He was Śrīmatī Rādhikā, chief of all the left-wing *gopīs*, who freely express their transcendental sulky mood (*māna*) towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The answer is that in the form of Śrī Caitanya, Kṛṣṇa covered Himself with Śrīmatī Rādhikā's mood and complexion, and Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita was simply watching, taking the role of a teacher to see if Mahāprabhu was playing the part of Śrīmatī Rādhikā correctly. If Kṛṣṇa, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, made a mistake, then Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita would immediately correct Him. For example, when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu first met Nityānanda Prabhu in Nandanācārya's house, Mahāprabhu recited this verse from the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*barahāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vaṇiḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ vaijayantiṁ ca mālāṁ
randhrān veṇor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-vṛndair
vṛndāraṇyaṁ sva-pada-ramaṇaṁ prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ*

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.5)

The *gopīs* began to see Śrī Kṛṣṇa within their minds. Accompanied by His cowherd friends, Kṛṣṇa entered the charming forest of Vṛndāvana. His head was decorated with a peacock feather. He wore yellow *karnīkāra* flowers over His ears, a golden-yellow garment on His body, and a beautiful, fragrant *vaijayantī* garland about His neck. Śrī Kṛṣṇa exhibited His supremely captivating appearance, just like the best of dancers performing upon a stage. He filled up the holes of His flute with the nectar of His lips. The cowherd boys followed behind Him, singing His glories which purify the entire world. In this way, the forest of Vṛndāvana manifested even greater splendor than Vaikuṅṭha, due to being beautified by the marks of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Weeping, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu described the beautiful form of Kṛṣṇa, yet He could not completely express it in the way Śrīmatī Rādhikā did when She had uttered the same words. There was something lacking. Then, from behind a curtain, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita uttered the same verse, playing Śrīmatī Rādhikā's part marvelously. He wept loudly with tears running down His cheeks, and he melted everyone's heart. He did this in such a way that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who was also playing the role of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, understood that He had not played the part correctly.

After explaining Kṛṣṇa's other manifestations, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja describes Śrī Caitanya as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, Svayam Bhagavān, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead:

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu svayaṁ-bhagavān
tānhāra padāravinde ananta praṇāma*

*sāvaraṇe prabhure kariyā namaskāraei
chaya teṅho yaiche – kariye vicāra*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.42-43)

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Personality of Godhead Himself, therefore I offer unlimited prostrations at His lotus feet. Having offered obeisances unto the Lord and all His associates, I shall now try to explain these six diversities in one.

Thus, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has described the six manifestations of Kṛṣṇa.



*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-sāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvayata eva sadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

(Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam, Verse 7)

All the scriptures proclaim *śrī gurudeva* to be *sākṣāt-hari-tva*, endowed with the potency of Śrī Hari, and he is also considered by all the great saints to be His direct representative. Indeed, *śrī gurudeva* is very dear to the Lord, being His confidential servitor (*acintya-bhedābheda prakāśa-vigraha*, the inconceivable different and non-different worshipable manifestation of the Lord). I offer prayers unto his lotus feet.

In the verse of *Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam* beginning *sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-sāstrair*, there is a deep meaning in the word *hari-tvena*. It means that the spiritual master possesses the qualities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but he is not *viṣaya-kṛṣṇa*⁴, he is *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*. *Gurudeva* is the embodiment of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's quality of mercy, but it is incorrect to consider *gurudeva* to be *viṣaya-kṛṣṇa*.

*yadyapi āmāra guru – caitanyera dāsa
tathāpi jāniye āmi tāñhāra prakāśa*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Ādi-līlā 1.44)

Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Śrī Caitanya, I know Him also as a direct manifestation of the Lord.

Even the fruitive workers (*karmīs*), those persuing knowledge of an impersonal God (*jñānīs*), and performers of severe austerities

4 “The devotee is *āśraya*, always subordinate, the abode of love for Kṛṣṇa, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is *viṣaya*, the supreme object of love, the goal of life” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.10.6, purport).

(*yogīs*) consider *guru* to be nondifferent from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but they superimpose an incorrect conception upon *guru*, supposing him to be God. In the Sanskrit language, this superimposition is called *āropa*. For example, to consider a young mango tree as one that gives sweet fruit is not correct, but if we say that it will give fruit in time, this is correct. If we imagine that the unreal is real, we are incorrect, and this misunderstanding is called *āropa*.

In regard to developing our *bhakti*, we need to perform *āropa*, or rather *āropa-siddha-bhakti*. The beginner practices this in the following way: the Deity is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. In our conditioned state we see the Deity as a stone statue, yet we super-impose the correct conception that He is Kṛṣṇa. We cannot serve Him as Kṛṣṇa Himself, but as our affection for Him increases, we will perceive the Deity in the same way that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu perceived Him – as the direct personal form of Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa. The Deity will reveal His actual nature to us.



kṛṣṇa, guru, bhakta, śakti, avatāra, prakāśa
kṛṣṇa ei chaya-rūpe karena vilāsa

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1. 32)

Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys by manifesting Himself as the spiritual masters, the devotees, the diverse energies, the incarnations, and the plenary portions. They are all six in one.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has explained that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, although one, manifests in six features, and this established truth is called *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, inconceivably and simultaneously one and different.

He explained that his *śikṣā-gurus* are the Six Gosvāmīs: Śrīla Rūpa, Śrīla Sanātana, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Śrīla Jīva, Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa. He also revealed that

Śrī Advaita Ācārya, as an incarnation of Mahā-Viṣṇu, is therefore a partial incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. Nityānanda Prabhu is an eternal manifestation of both Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and it is by His mercy that Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu manifest in this world. In other words, without the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu, no one can realize Kṛṣṇa or Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Nityānanda Prabhu is the complete embodiment of *guru-tattva*.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has described his spiritual good fortune. He says, “I have received the mercy of the Six Gosvāmīs and other exalted Vaiṣṇavas. I have received the mercy of Govinda, Gopīnātha, and Madana-mohana, and I have taken *darśana* of Them. I have also seen and realized the glories of Vṛndāvana-dhāma. All this is the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu; therefore, I am His servant and He is my *guru*.”

Next, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explains that Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti* (power or energy) manifests as Śrī Gadādhara. Kṛṣṇacandra is Kṛṣṇa Himself, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu is that self-same Kṛṣṇa, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara, replete with the golden beauty and mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Thus, He is Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā combined.

*guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana śāstrera pramāṇe
guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karena bhakta-gaṇe
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.45)*

According to the deliberate opinion of all revealed scriptures, the spiritual master is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa in the form of the spiritual master delivers His devotees.

Dīkṣā-guru and *śikṣā-guru* are non-different; they are on the same level. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī represents the *śikṣā-guru*, and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī represents the *dīkṣā-guru*, yet there is no difference between them. They can both act as *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā-gurus*.

My most revered Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is both my *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā-guru*. Pūjyapāda Śrīdhāra Mahārāja and Pūjyapāda

Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja are also my *śikṣā-gurus*. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the *sannyāsa-guru* of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja has so much respect for my Gurudeva, both as a *guru* and as a friend.

*śikṣā-guruke ta' jāni kṛṣṇera svarūpa
antaryāmī, bhakta-śreṣṭha – ei dui rūpa
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.47)*

One should know the instructing spiritual master to be
the Personality of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as
the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord.

Dikṣā-guru is the manifestation of the form (*rūpa*) of Kṛṣṇa, and *śikṣā-guru* is the manifestation of the personal nature (*svarūpa*) of Kṛṣṇa. Which is superior, *rūpa* or *svarūpa*? In essence, there is no difference between them. *Sva* means 'mine' or 'own,' and therefore *svarūpa* may sometimes be dearer than *rūpa*, though essentially they are the same.

Our *dikṣā-guru* is our worshipable superior for whom we have reverence. We pray to him and take the dust of his lotus feet. But the *śikṣā-guru* is like a brother, a friend. Sometimes we can embrace him and speak with him frankly. We can reveal our hearts to him and tell him that we desire to serve Kṛṣṇa as the *gopīs* do. This association is very secret and sacred. We may hesitate expressing this to our *dikṣā-guru*, so we need the *śikṣā-guru*, who is like a bosom friend. With the *śikṣā-guru* there is a mood of fraternity; there is less of a mood of awe and reverence.

Similarly, 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.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states that a disciple should also serve his *dikṣā-guru* with a mood of intimacy (*viśrambha-sevā*), but due to constantly offering obeisances this cannot always manifest. To our *śikṣā-guru*, we can admit an attraction for a very beautiful girl and ask for his guidance, but it may be difficult to tell this to our *dikṣā-guru* because he is worshipable like a father. Our *dikṣā-guru*'s

response may be very heavy, but our *śikṣā-guru* will embrace us and say, “O dear one, do not be attached to sense gratification. Try to love Kṛṣṇa. Try to offer your heart in the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s lotus feet. Do not go to the girls of this world. A girl of this world is not really a girl; she is a burning fire or an ocean of poison. Do not continue in this direction.”

Due to the open-hearted nature of the relationship, a *śikṣā-guru* is needed. We can reveal everything to him. Within our heart, our *śikṣā-gurus* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and all of the previous *ācāryas* – are aware of our thoughts and actions. They have not died; they are all omnipotent.

Śikṣā-guruke ta’jāni kṛṣṇera svarūpa. The *śikṣā-guru* is the manifestation of the *svarūpa* (inner nature) of Kṛṣṇa, and the *dīkṣā-guru* is the manifestation of His form. There is no difference between Kṛṣṇa’s inner nature and His outer body; both are the same. One who thinks that there is a difference is a *māyāvādī*, an impersonalist. We should not associate with such a person.

Antaryāmī, bhakta-śreṣṭha, ei dui rūpa. There are two types of *śikṣā-guru*. *Antaryāmī* is the Supersoul, the *śikṣā-guru* in the heart (the *caitya-guru*), who gives inspiration from within. If one prays, “O Kṛṣṇa, You are my *caitya-guru*, I have given You my entire heart. Please arrange for me to take shelter of a qualified *guru*,” Kṛṣṇa will certainly arrange it. By approaching Kṛṣṇa with a sincere desire to have a *guru*, we will not have to suffer the result of making an incorrect choice.

*teṣaṁ satata-yuktānāṁ
bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi yogaṁ taṁ
yena mām upayānti te*

(Bhagavad-gītā 10.10)

To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with
love and devotion, I give them the understanding by
which they can come to Me.

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. Moreover, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells us in *Bhagavad-gītā* what happens after He gives such intelligence: “They come to Me, and I engage them in My service.” This demonstrates one of the ways in which Kṛṣṇa acts as *caitya-guru*.



Once, in South India, there lived a beautiful prostitute named Cintāmaṇi. When she was sixteen years old, she could dance and sing *kīrtana* so sweetly that everyone who saw her dance became attracted. Although Cintāmaṇi was a prostitute, she had an extraordinary quality; she was very attached to singing songs in glorification of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and many people were enchanted by her.

Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura was a pious and religious *brāhmaṇa* with a beautiful chaste wife, yet he was allured by Cintāmaṇi. He stopped all his business and service to his mother and father. He forgot his chaste wife and children and became fully controlled by Cintāmaṇi. He would go to her, especially at night, taking presents that he had procured by selling his land or his wife’s ornaments, or by stealing money and good cloth. His hope was that in return she would love him as he loved her.

In the course of time his father died, and a funeral ceremony was conducted. On the final day, the thirteenth day of the ceremony, thousands of *brāhmaṇas* sat in his courtyard, about to honor *mahā-prasādam*. He went to the kitchen, took many delicious foods and other objects, and wrapped them in a cloth. He then left his house, during the night, not caring whether or not his guests took *prasādam* or if his distressed mother and wife were comforted. He left them all and went to that prostitute.

On that night, rain fell heavily. In order to reach the prostitute’s house, Bilvamaṅgala had to cross a flooded river whose current ran swiftly. Feeling helpless and desperate to find a means of crossing, he noticed something resembling a log floating on the water in front of him. Not seeing that it was actually the half-rotten dead body

of a girl, he sat on it and crossed the river. Then, struggling across slippery ground, he finally reached the prostitute's home.

The door was closed. He knocked hard for a long time, but his sounds were not heard. At last, he walked to the back of the house and saw what looked like a rope hanging from the rafters. Grabbing hold of that rope, he attempted to climb it. It was not a rope, however, but a snake. Bilvamaṅgala slipped and fell unconscious, thus making a loud sound on the courtyard floor. Cintāmaṇi heard the noise and asked her maidservant to find out what had caused the sound. Finally she saw him and exclaimed, "Oh, Bilvamaṅgala has fallen down in the courtyard! But how did he come here?"

Cintāmaṇi and her maidservant then took the unconscious Bilvamaṅgala into her house and warmed his body. Now understanding what had happened, when he awoke she told him, "My body is full of blood, urine, stool, bile, and mucus; yet you are attached to it and have gone to so much trouble to get here in order to enjoy it. If you had a fraction of such love and affection for Kṛṣṇa, your life would have been successful. But you are so lusty. I can no longer have any affection for you. You should leave immediately."

Due to his past impressions of *bhakti*, her words penetrated his heart like an arrow and he became sober. He understood that he must develop his love for Kṛṣṇa. Without these past impressions, her words could not have reformed him. He would have fallen at her feet, panting like a dog and imploring her to accept him.

He then decided that he should neither be with Cintāmaṇi nor stay at his home, but should go to Vṛndāvana. For the next five days he took no foodstuffs. Rather he lived solely on the chanting of the holy name. Then, desiring to drink some water, he went to a well, where he saw a young, beautiful, newly married lady hauling water. He asked her for a drink, and knelt as she poured the water from her pot into his mouth. As he drank the water, he also drank in her beauty with his eyes, taking it into his heart.

He followed her home. She went into her room and he met her husband, who was standing at the door. He asked her husband, "Please call the girl who just walked past you."

Thinking Bilvamaṅgala to be a saintly person, the man called his wife, who came immediately. "How may I serve you?" she asked.

Bilvamaṅgala then told her that he wanted two of her hairpins. She could not understand why, but still she got them and gave them to him. As she and her husband looked on, Bilvamaṅgala said, “These eyes are my enemy, imprisoning me in lust. If there is no bamboo, there is no flute. Similarly, if my eyes are removed, my lust will also be removed. I will cut this lust at the root. If I am blind, then my eyes will no longer be attracted to beautiful women, and attraction for Śrī Kṛṣṇa will develop in my heart.” He thus pierced his eyes with those hairpins. Blood oozed from his eyes and he became blind.

He then proceeded to Vṛndāvana, chanting, “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare,” and soon a boy approached him and asked, “Bābā, where are you going?” The voice of that boy was very sweet. He was that blackish cowherd boy who was not like any other.

Bilvamaṅgala answered, “I am going to Vṛndāvana. My dear boy, who are You?”

“I am a cowherd boy,” the boy said. “I am also going to Vṛndāvana. If you want to go there, you can hold onto My stick and come with Me. I will help you.”

Vṛndāvana was about a six-month journey by foot, but after a few days the boy announced that they had arrived. As they were walking there, Bilvamaṅgala had created very sweet poems glorifying the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. These songs were very pleasing to Kṛṣṇa’s ears, and later they became known as the book *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta*, translated as “Nectar For Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Ears.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu later found this book in South India and presented it to His devotees.

The first poem in the *maṅgalācaraṇam* of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karnāmṛta* is as follows:

*cintāmaṇir jayati somagirir gurur
meśikṣā-guruś ca bhagavān śikhi-piñcha-mauliḥ
yat-pāda-kalpataru-pallava-śekhareṣu
lilā-svayamvara-rasaṁ labhate jayaśrīḥ*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.57)

All glories to Cintāmaṇi and my initiating spiritual master, Somagiri. All glories to my instructing spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who wears

peacock feathers in His crown. Under the shade of His lotus feet, which are like desire trees, Jayaśrī [Rādhārānī] enjoys the transcendental mellow of an eternal consort.

In this verse Bilvamaṅgala Thākura is offering his obeisances to Cintāmaṇi, who had inspired him to take shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. What type of *guru* was she? She was a *vartma-pradarśaka-guru*, the *guru* who says, “Come with me to a self-realized Vaiṣṇava.” The *vartma-pradarśaka-guru* shows the path. He may be *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī* (a neophyte devotee), but the initiating *guru* should not be less than a *madhyama-adhikārī* (an intermediate devotee).

What are the symptoms of a *madhyama-adhikārī*? It is necessary to know these symptoms before considering whom to accept as a *dīkṣā* or *śikṣā-guru*. If we do not see these symptoms in someone, we need not accept that person as *guru*. As mentioned before, if we do accept him, there will be many difficulties in our devotional life. If that *guru* falls down, our life will be ruined and we will cry bitterly.

*tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātām
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.3.21)

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

In order for one to be a bona fide *guru*, all the above-mentioned symptoms must be present, in full. The *guru* has complete knowledge of the scriptures, he is detached from material desires, and he is happy only by serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa. If one is unhappy and feels that his life has many problems, he is not qualified to be *guru*.

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura was beaten in twenty-two marketplaces, almost to the point of death, but he did not consider this a problem. Rather, he continued chanting with joy, “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa.” Prahlāda Mahārāja was tortured by his father, yet he never felt that he had a problem. Rather, he stood on the head of all problems.

A person in the role of *guru*, who chants and performs the nine processes of *bhakti* and has taken *dikṣā*, but laments that he has so many problems – his wife has cheated him, his children are not with him, he cannot manage or make money, or that he has no computer or sufficient material facility – should be rejected at once.

The third symptom of *guru* is that he is realized in *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Without this realization, he is bound to fall down from spiritual life due to still having material desires.

Besides these three symptoms, a *madhyama-adhikārī* will have four additional qualities. The *uttama-adhikārī* is, of course, superior, and he offers a superior result in *bhakti*, but such a *guru* is rare in this world. In the absence of such an *uttama-guru*, the *madhyama-adhikārī* can be accepted as a *śikṣā* or *dikṣā-guru*, but one should see whether or not he has the following four qualities:

- (1) *prema* – He has love and affection for Kṛṣṇa.⁵
- (2) *maitrī* – He shows friendship towards the Vaiṣṇavas and offers service to them. He has three kinds of relations with three kinds of Vaiṣṇavas: he honors and obeys with a mood of friendship one who is more advanced in *bhakti* than he is. He relates to equals as friends, and he is also friendly to those whose *bhakti* is less developed. So he has *maitrī* (friendship) with honor for superiors, *maitrī* with *mitra* (the friendship of equals) with those on an equal level, and *maitrī* with *kṛpā* (friendship with compassion) for subordinates.
- (3) *kṛpā* – He shows mercy to those persons who honor and have faith in Vaiṣṇavas. Such persons’ faith may even be worldly; in other words, they may have some material sentiments in relation to the *guru* and the Deity. It may be that they have more affection

5 Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes in his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* commentary that a *madhyama-adhikārī* cannot have real *prema*. However, by thinking of how the *gopīs* loved Kṛṣṇa, he may receive a shadow of their *prema*. Thus he has achieved the level of *āsakti*, natural attachment for Kṛṣṇa.

for the Deities than for the devotees, and therefore they may not like to meet with devotees and hear their *hari-kathā*. Such persons may understand that they should obey the scriptures, but they cannot act in the four ways that a *madhyama-adhikārī* can act. Such persons may be ignorant, but they want to learn how to advance in devotional service.

- (4) *upekṣā* – He avoids offenders, persons who are against the Vaiṣṇavas or who do not honor them. He is aware that relating or associating with such persons destroys all traces of *bhakti*.

We have thus discussed the three main qualities of the bona fide *guru*, as well as four additional qualities which are found in a *madhyama-adhikārī* (or an *uttama-adhikārī* acting in the role of a *madhyama-adhikārī*) who is qualified to be *guru*. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī warns us in his *Bhakti-sandarbhā* that one who accepts a *guru* for worldly name, fame, and gain, and one who acts as *guru* by accepting disciples for the same reason, will both fall down. Their destination will be hell.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī writes:

*avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇam
pūtam hari-kathāmṛtam
śravaṇam naiva kartavyam
sarvocchiṣṭam yathā payaḥ*

(*Padma-purāna*)

One should not hear anything about Kṛṣṇa from a non-Vaiṣṇava. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent has poisonous effects. Similarly, talks about Kṛṣṇa given by a non-Vaiṣṇava are also poisonous.

Therefore, one who makes an external show of being a Vaiṣṇava but who fails to honor Vaiṣṇavas, giving preference to worldly fame and gain, should be given up without delay, even though the disciple may have taken both *harināma* and *dīkṣā* from that person. Such a so-called *guru* should be given up.

This has been explained in the *Mahābhārata* and other scriptures. If one does not reject such a *guru*, he will have to go to hell; he should be ready for that. No Vaiṣṇava should be dishonored

– even a *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava, and what to speak of a *madhyama-adhikārī* and *uttama-adhikārī*. The association of one who is dishonoring or criticizing any Vaiṣṇava should be given up. If one says that he is a bona fide Vaiṣṇava and that he is the only bona fide disciple of his *guru*, yet he commits this offense, then his own *guru*, if bona fide, will reject him.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī gives all of us a very important instruction: We should not criticize anyone. We should not think that because there are quarrels in the transcendental world, such as those between the followers of Śrīmatī Candrāvalī and the followers of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, we may also quarrel. We should not take sides and criticize.

As mentioned earlier, all bona fide *gurus* are manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, there is no difference between Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. They are realized souls in the same disciplic line. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja preached in the West and my Gurudeva preached in India, yet they spoke the same message. Their love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the same, their teachings are the same, and their service for Śrī Mahāprabhu is the same. One was in the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness and the other in the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, but both are in the family of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is incumbent upon us to follow the instructions of our *ācāryas* and try to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



[On Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja’s request, devotees sing *Nanda-nandanāṣṭakam* and *Rādhā-kṛpā-kaṭākṣa-stava-rāja*.⁶]

We should daily sing these two songs in our *sādhana-bhajana*. If we know the meaning and are praying sincerely, it will be very beneficial. Even if we don’t know the meaning, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā will hear us. By our singing *Nanda-nandanāṣṭakam*, which glorifies Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā will be so pleased that She will

6 See Addendums, pages 197 and 199.

grant us all benedictions, whether we want them or not. And, when we are singing *Rādhā-kṛpā-kaṭākṣa*, Kṛṣṇa will be so pleased that He will grant us any benediction we desire. If we want Kṛṣṇa to write our name in the register of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's maidservants (*pālyadāsīs*), He will do so at once. He is 'at the gate,' writing the list of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *dāsīs* – those who want to serve Her. Therefore, if we add these two *kīrtanas* to our daily routine of *bhajana*, followed by the singing of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya* and the *mahā-mantra*, our *bhakti* will become strong.

Śrī Guru as a Manifestation of Kṛṣṇa

I have begun to explain the very important *maṅgalācaraṇam* verse of *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* by Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, as found in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*cintāmaṇir jayati somagirir gurur
me śikṣā-guruś ca bhagavān śikhi-piñcha-mauliḥ
yat-pāda-kalpataru-pallava-śekhareṣu
lilā-svayamvara-rasaṁ labhate jayaśriḥ*
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.57)

All glories to Cintāmaṇi and my initiating spiritual master, Somagiri. All glories to my instructing spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who wears peacock feathers in His crown. Under the shade of His lotus feet, which are like desire trees, Jayaśrī [Rādhārāṇī] enjoys the transcendental mellow of an eternal consort.

Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura first offers his obeisances to Cintāmaṇi, who had directed him towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and then to his *dikṣā-guru*, Somagiri. The word *cintāmaṇi* in this verse also means that the *guru* is like *cintāmaṇi*, a wish-fulfilling stone, because *guru* gives us Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The word *cintāmaṇi* also refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is actually Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura's *śikṣā-guru*. How beautiful this *śikṣā-guru* is – with peacock feathers in His crown, with three folds on His neck and abdomen, and with a three-fold bending form. He sings so sweetly. His lotus feet are like wish-fulfilling trees, and they are like soft leaves, His toenails shine very beautifully, the tips of His toes are more beautiful than the rays of the moon, and the rays of His toenails are very fragrant.

The name Jayaśrī in this above-mentioned verse refers to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who gives Her heart, Her life, and Her soul to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Offering Her entire life thousands of times over, She performs *ārati* to the rays emanating from His toenails, and by this She feels the same happiness as if it were Her *svayamvara*.

What is the meaning of *svayamvara*? To help you understand, I will tell you about the *svayamvara* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Once, Kṛṣṇa's cousin-sister Draupadī met with all His queens – Satyabhāmā, Rukmiṇī, Lakṣmaṇā, and others – at Kurukṣetra. Draupadī asked the queens how they had become so fortunate as to have gotten Kṛṣṇa as their husband, and Lakṣmaṇā then told the story of how she became His wife. Lakṣmaṇā was the darling daughter of a powerful king who, seeing her as an extremely beautiful and qualified girl, wanted to ensure that she would be given to an equally qualified husband.

The king thus arranged for a *svayamvara* ceremony. He placed a very high pillar in the earth, on the top of the pillar he placed a spinning *cakra*, and above the *cakra* was an artificial fish. He had promised the hand of Lakṣmaṇā to the one who, while looking down at a reflection of the fish in a pool of water, would be able to shoot with an arrow the pupil in the eye of the fish.

The world's champion archers were invited to attend, including Kṛṣṇa, Karṇa, Duryodhana, Jarāsandha, Śiśupāla, Bhīma, Nakula, Sahadeva, and Arjuna, and each was confident that he would marry the beautiful Lakṣmaṇā. Bhīṣma and Droṇācārya also came, thinking, "If I shoot that fish in its pupil, I will then arrange that this girl be married to Duryodhana." However, except for Kṛṣṇa, every one of these archers failed in his attempt. Most of them could barely even see the reflection of the fish in the water, so they gave up their bows. Karṇa saw the fish, but couldn't aim. Arjuna came forth very boldly and aimed at the fish, but his arrow only touched the tail of the fish. All were helpless.

Then, Śrī Kṛṣṇa stepped forward and moved so swiftly that no one could see when He picked up His bow, shot the arrow, and pierced the pupil of the fish's right eye. Lakṣmaṇā told Draupadī, "I became overjoyed, and my friends gave me a garland to place on the neck of Kṛṣṇa."

The selection of a bridegroom from thousands of suitors is called *svayamvara*, and this was a tradition in ancient India. At Lakṣmaṇā's

svayamvara there were thousands of princes, and although these princes were very handsome and qualified, she had given her heart to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Having heard His glories she wanted to marry Him, but she had felt hopeless in that regard.

When Kṛṣṇa shot the eye of the fish, Lakṣmaṇā's face glowed with happiness, the hairs on her body stood on end, and she could barely stand up. She trembled and her eyes looked down as she stealthily gave a sidelong glance towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, who is always searching for beautiful girls, also secretly glanced toward Lakṣmaṇā. When she received His glance, she was so overwhelmed that she could not raise her arms to place the garland on His neck; her girlfriends had to help her. She became so overjoyed that she lost external consciousness. This is the happiness of *svayamvara*.

Similarly, Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura wrote that Śrīmatī Rādhikā becomes overjoyed to serve the rays coming from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus toenails.

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and the Vaiṣṇavas in our disciplic line are not pleased to hear about Śrīmatī Rādhikā serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this way. Rather, they prefer to hear that Kṛṣṇa is obtaining happiness by serving the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. They want to see Kṛṣṇa praying for this opportunity.

Śrīla Prabhodānanda Sarasvatī writes:

*vaṁśī karān-nipatitaḥ skhalitaṁ śikhaṇḍam
bhraṣṭam ca pīta-vasanam vraja-rāja-sunoḥ
yasyāḥ kaṭākṣa-sara-phāta vimūrchitasya
tām rādhikām paricarāmi kadā rasena*

(*Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi* 39)

Struck by the arrows of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's sidelong glance, the son of the King of Vraja loses external consciousness. His flute falls from His hand, His peacock feather is askew, and His yellow garment is in disarray. When will I be able to render service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā with the topmost devotion?

Once, as Kṛṣṇa was going to herd the cows, He saw Śrīmatī Rādhikā in a beautiful grove. She glanced at Him from the corner of Her eyes, which were crooked like a bow shooting arrows of *prema*.

Beholding this scene, Kṛṣṇa lost control of Himself, His flute fell from His hands, His peacock feather fell from His head, He lost external consciousness, and His body trembled. Seeing Kṛṣṇa in this way, Madhumaṅgala nudged Him and asked, “O friend, what are You doing? Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā-maiyā, and many elders are here. You cannot behave like this in front of them. Be careful.” Kṛṣṇa immediately came to His senses.

In this verse, Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī is praying, “I want to serve this Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Her veil, fragrant from contact with Her body, carries this sweet fragrance to Kṛṣṇa’s nostrils, and upon His inhaling that fragrance He loses all control.”

The love and affection of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is higher than that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Although Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura indicates that Kṛṣṇa is superior to Rādhikā, those in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī desire that Rādhikā be always victorious over Kṛṣṇa – and it actually happens that way.

In this way, Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura is praying to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, his *śikṣā-guru*. What kind of *śikṣā-guru*? Kṛṣṇa is *caitya-guru*, the *guru* in the hearts of all beings. In His pastimes, Kṛṣṇa Himself comes as the *śikṣā-guru*. For example, He became *guru* for Arjuna. He is extremely merciful, and prayers to Him do not go in vain. Therefore, the first duty of the devotees is to have faith in Him.

Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī are examples of devotees who possess such faith. Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī often discussed with each other the glories of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. On one such occasion, Śrīmatī Rādhikā noticed that it was already midday, and they had not yet eaten. Appearing as a teenage village girl, She came to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and said, “You have not prepared any foodstuffs today. Are you fasting? My mother has given Me some milk, rice, and sugar, so please make *kṣīra* (sweet-rice) for yourselves.” But Rūpa Gosvāmī had no time to make the *kṣīra*, because he and his brother were totally absorbed and sharing with each other Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s glories.

Therefore, Śrīmatī Rādhikā offered to make it for them. She brought some dry cow dung, and by Her mere desire a fire was manifested. In a moment, She made very beautiful, tasteful *kṣīra*,

presented it to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and said, “Please offer this *kṣīra* to your worshipable Deity, then give some to your brother, and then take some yourself.”

After tasting that remarkable *kṣīra*, Sanātana Gosvāmī began to wonder who the girl was. He questioned Rūpa, “O Rūpa, have you prayed to Rādhikā, requesting Her to come?”

“No, I have not.”

“But She came and cooked for us. Taste this *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*. It could only have been cooked by Her.”

As they each took some of the sweet-rice, they wept uncontrollably and cried out to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, “Now You have disappeared and we have lost our opportunity to offer obeisances and serve You. Instead, we have troubled You by having You cook for us.” Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī then told his brother, “Rūpa, don’t do anything like this in the future.”

How marvelous their devotion is! Let us try to follow in their footsteps. Remembering pastimes such as this, let us try to serve the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.



As mentioned above, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has explained that the bona fide *dīkṣā-guru* is the *rūpa* of Kṛṣṇa, and the bona fide *śikṣā-guru* is the *svarūpa* of Kṛṣṇa. Although they are equal, sometimes *śikṣā-guru* may be superior and sometimes *dīkṣā-guru* may be, but they are both liberated, *uttama-adhikārī*.

Now he will further explain Kṛṣṇa’s manifestation as a *bhakta*:

*īśvara-svarūpa bhakta tāñra adhiṣṭhāna
bhaktera hṛdaye kṛṣṇera satata viśrāma*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.61)

A pure devotee, constantly engaged in the loving service of the Lord, is identical with the Lord, who is always seated in his heart.

The *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru* are non-different manifestations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as are all Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees. The hearts of those pure devotees are the abode of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa can take rest in their hearts because their hearts are pure, free from worldly desires. In their hearts there are no sufferings or problems, as there are no problems in the hearts of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātana. They don't want anything from Kṛṣṇa; therefore, He can take rest in their hearts and sleep very peacefully.

The hearts of *jñānīs*, *karmīs*, and *yogīs* are full of material desires. They pray, "O Kṛṣṇa, give me a very beautiful wife. O Kṛṣṇa, I have no son. O Kṛṣṇa, I want liberation (*mukti*).” But Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees don't want anything for themselves. Their only desire is for their *bhakti* to increase, to serve Kṛṣṇa more and more.⁷

These six manifestations – Kṛṣṇa, *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru*, the devotees, the diverse energies, the incarnations, and the plenary portions – are all Kṛṣṇa Himself, but manifested separately for the performance of His pastimes. They are different and non-different (*bheda* and *abheda*) from Him. This truth is called *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*.

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṃ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

By quoting this verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11), Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja has explained the identity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Please read from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's translation and purport.

Devotee reads from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 2.1:
Translation: Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth say that it is nondual knowledge and is called impersonal Brahman, localized Paramātmā, and the Personality of Godhead.

Purport: This Sanskrit verse appears as the eleventh verse of the First Canto, Second Chapter, of *Śrīmad-*

Bhāgavatam, where Sūta Gosvāmī answers the questions of the sages headed by Śaunaka Ṛṣi concerning the essence of all scriptural instructions. *Tattva-vidah* refers to persons who have knowledge of the Absolute Truth. They can certainly understand...

Nārada, Vedavyāsa, Brahmā, Śaṅkara (Śiva), and Śukadeva Gosvāmī are all *tattva-vit*; that is, they know the essence of the Vedic scriptures.

Devotee continues reading:

They can certainly understand knowledge without duality because they are on the spiritual platform. The Absolute Truth is known sometimes as Brahman, sometimes as Paramātmā and sometimes as Bhagavān. Persons who are in knowledge of the truth know that one who tries to approach the Absolute simply by mental speculation will ultimately realize the impersonal Brahman, and one who tries to approach the Absolute through *yoga* practice will be able to realize Paramātmā; but one who has complete knowledge and spiritual understanding realizes the spiritual form of Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead.

Devotees of the Personality of Godhead know that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of the King of Vraja, is the Absolute Truth. They do not discriminate between Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities, and pastimes. One who wants to separate the Lord's absolute name, form, and qualities must be understood to be lacking in absolute knowledge. A pure devotee knows that when he chants the transcendental name Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is present as transcendental sound.

In this regard, there is something very important to remember:

*yāha, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne
ekānta āśraya kara caitanya-carāṇe
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 5.131)*

If you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you must approach a self-realized Vaiṣṇava and hear from him. You

can do this when you have completely taken shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

It is not possible for us to know everything about spiritual life simply by reading books. It is true that all knowledge is situated in Veda, Vedānta, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and in all the books of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, but that knowledge is under lock and key – a very powerful lock and key. One who is not so qualified will not understand the meaning simply by reading. *Yāha, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera shāne*. There are two types of *bhāgavata*: *grantha-bhāgavata (śāstra)* and *bhakta-bhāgavata (Vaiṣṇavas)*. The *grantha-bhāgavata* is under lock and key, and the realized soul, the *bhakta-bhāgavata*, reveals its meanings.

By reading *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and all the other transcendental literatures of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja in the association of superior devotees, we can deeply understand their beautiful meanings and experience the ocean of *rasa*⁸ contained within them. Without the help of an advanced Vaiṣṇava, one may read these books many times and still fall down. Why? Without proper association, one is unable to grasp the essence of these transcendental books.

It is necessary for us to approach the *bhakta-bhāgavatas*. They are more merciful than *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and under their guidance we can realize the mercy of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise, it is not possible.

*vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate*

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.11)

The Absolute Truth is realized in three phases of understanding by the knower of the Absolute Truth, and all of them are identical. Such phases of the Absolute Truth are expressed as Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān.

8 *Rasa* means ‘the mellow taste of one’s personal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.’

It is essential for us to listen attentively and take this teaching into our hearts. Those who know this established truth (*tattva*), like Nārada, Vyāsa, Śaṅkara, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, have concluded that nothing is separate from Kṛṣṇa. Nothing is independent from Him. This established truth is called *advaya-jñāna-tattva*, the essential fundamental principle that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the one-without-a-second Absolute Truth.

Everyone is subordinate to Kṛṣṇa, including Baladeva and all other incarnations, all demigods, and all living entities down to the ants and grass. The illusory material nature, *māyā*, is also subordinate to Him. The only fundamental truth is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and all others are subordinate to Him. No living entity in this world is or any other world, or even in Vaikuṅṭha or Goloka Vṛndāvana is independent. Only Kṛṣṇa is independent. All that we see is a manifestation of His power. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Lakṣmī-devī is the manifestation of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. And we *jīvas* in this material world are also within Kṛṣṇa. This principle is called ‘unity in diversity.’ Knowers of reality understand this fundamental truth, that the Absolute Truth is Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja quotes the above-mentioned verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.11). Those with impersonal knowledge see this Absolute Truth as Brahman. What is Brahman? It is the perverted reflection of the rays of Kṛṣṇa’s toenails. It is without form, qualities, or pastimes. Paramātmā, the Supersoul dwelling in the hearts of all living entities, is a part of Kṛṣṇa’s eternity (*sat*) and transcendental knowledge (*cit*) potencies. He is a small fraction of Kṛṣṇa; He is not independent.

*ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁśaḥ
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokaṁ
mṛḍayanti yuge yuge*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.28)

All of the above-mentioned incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord, but Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead. All of them appear on planets whenever

there is a disturbance created by the atheists. The Lord incarnates to protect the theists.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is that Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supreme Personality of the Absolute Truth. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other *śāstras* confirm this verse from *Brahma-saṁhitā*:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

(*Brahma-saṁhitā* 5.1)

There are many personalities possessing the qualities of Bhagavān, but Kṛṣṇa is the supreme because none can excel Him. He is the Supreme Person, and His body is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. He is the primeval Lord Govinda and the cause of all causes.

Kṛṣṇa's first manifestation is Baladeva Prabhu in Vraja, who is non-different from Him. Only Their color is different: one white, one a very beautiful black. From Baladeva Prabhu in Vṛndāvana, Mūla-saṅkarṣaṇa (Baladeva in Dvārakā and Mathurā), Mahā-saṅkarṣaṇa (Lord Nārāyaṇa), Mahā-Viṣṇu (also known as Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu), Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Śeṣa, and this entire material world have manifested.

That very Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of the Absolute Truth, adverts as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His supreme power, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, comes as Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita.



Part Two

The Supreme Gift

A Verse With Deep Secrets

At the end of Dvāpara-yuga, after Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in this world were completed, He returned to His Goloka Vṛndāvana in the spiritual world. There, He began to think of the pure devotion He wanted to distribute to this world, even to the trees and creepers. Only He would be able to give this. The religious principles for each age (*yuga-dharma*) can be given by Mahā-Viṣṇu (who appeared in Kali-yuga as Śrī Advaita Ācārya) – and this is His function – but *kṛṣṇa-prema* can only be given by Kṛṣṇa Himself.

That very Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who can give love and devotion to all entities, took the mood and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and became Śrī Gauracandra. Why did He do this? It is because His mercy is unparalleled and causeless. As the ocean of *rasa*, He wanted to taste the fulfillment of the three desires that He could not fulfill in His form as Kṛṣṇa, and also to bestow that *kṛṣṇa-prema* which had not been distributed to the *jīvas* since the previous day of Lord Brahmā.

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇah kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śrīyam
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitah
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vah śacī-nandanah*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

The meaning of this verse is profound, for the complete causeless mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is within it.

It is necessary to understand the essence of this verse and thus become very beautiful, qualified devotees. Without properly understanding its moods, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa will not be sufficient to receive the Lord's full mercy. The quality of our chanting will be enhanced by our thoroughly grasping and embracing its meaning. With a clear understanding of this verse and its mood, we can focus internally while chanting.

Māyāvādīs also chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, but they go to hell because of their great offenses to the holy name. *Karmīs* also chant, but because of their desire to increase money, name and fame, they are also cheated of the true fruit of chanting. The holy name fulfills their material desires, but *bhakti* avoids them. On the other hand, those who chant under the guidance of a highly qualified *guru* or Vaiṣṇava develop a superlative quality of chanting. Therefore, it is most important to understand the essence of the instructions hidden in this verse.

The Purpose Of Lord Caitanya's Descent

We are continuing our reading from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Now we are discussing the third chapter, which explains the identity of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the reasons He came to this world. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja tells us that Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śacinandana Gaurahari, is directly Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is not only Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord, but He is Svayam Bhagavān, meaning the original form of Godhead, from whom all other incarnations emanate. He is Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa Himself. 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 Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa can never be separated.

Kṛṣṇa sported in Vṛndāvana for ten years. He took birth in Mahāvana Gokula and played there for His first few years, and then both His family and Rādhikā's family moved to Vṛndāvana, where They enjoyed unlimited pastimes. There in Vṛndāvana, Nanda Bābā's family stayed at Chaṭṭīkarā, and Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja stayed at Rāl. Then they moved to Kāmyavana, then Khelanvana, and finally Nanda Bābā's family settled in Nandagāoṅ Gokula and Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja's family in Varṣānā. In each dwelling place Their families made a new village, and Their villages were always side-by-side. Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa met at these places and eternally performed Their topmost pastime of *rāsa-līlā* as well as other pastimes.

When Kṛṣṇa comes to this world from Goloka Vṛndāvana, the whole of Vraja comes with Him: His associates, the Yamunā River, Govardhana Hill, Bhāṅḍīravana forest, and the entire eighty-four *krośas* (168 square miles) of Vṛndāvana accompany Him. He comes once in a day of Brahmā, in order to taste the five *rasas* of His pastimes: *sānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya*.

Although He enjoys these *rasas*, He still has three unfulfilled desires, and the fulfillment of these desires is the essential reason for

His appearance as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Also, because He is an ocean of causeless mercy and an ocean of *rasa*, He wants to sprinkle drops of special mercy upon the *jīvas* so that they will be able to come to Him and serve Him forever.

Devotee reads from the introduction to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 4:

In this chapter of the epic *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has stressed that Lord Caitanya appeared for three principal purposes of His own. The first purpose was to relish the position of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is the prime reciprocator of transcendental love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of transcendental loving transactions with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. The subject of those loving transactions is the Lord Himself, and Rādhārāṇī is the object [the abode of love]. Thus the subject, the Lord, wanted to relish the loving mellow in the position of the object, Rādhārāṇī.

The second reason for His appearance was to understand the transcendental mellow of Himself. Lord Kṛṣṇa is all sweetness. Rādhārāṇī's attraction for Kṛṣṇa is sublime, and to experience that attraction and understand the transcendental sweetness of Himself, He accepted the mentality of Rādhārāṇī.

The third reason that Lord Caitanya appeared was to enjoy the bliss tasted by Rādhārāṇī. The Lord [Śrī Kṛṣṇa] thought that undoubtedly Rādhārāṇī enjoyed His company and He enjoyed the company of Rādhārāṇī, but the exchange of transcendental mellow between the spiritual couple was more pleasing to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī than to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī felt more transcendental pleasure in the company of Kṛṣṇa than He could understand without taking Her position, but for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to enjoy in the position of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī was impossible because that position was completely foreign to Him. Kṛṣṇa is the transcendental male, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the transcendental female. Therefore, to know the transcendental pleasure of loving Kṛṣṇa, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as Lord Caitanya, accepting the emotions and bodily luster of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Lord Caitanya appeared to fulfill these confidential desires and also to preach the special significance of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare and to answer the call of Advaita Prabhu. These were secondary reasons.

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī was the principal figure among Lord Caitanya's confidential devotees. The records of his diary have revealed these confidential purposes of the Lord. These revelations have been confirmed by the statements of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his various prayers and poems.

This chapter also specifically describes the difference between lust and love. The transactions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā are completely different from material lust. Therefore the author has very clearly distinguished between them.

While Śrī Kṛṣṇa was considering how to fulfill His desires, the time came in Kali-yuga to preach the *yuga-dharma*, the religious process of the age. At that time, Advaita Ācārya came to prepare a platform for the descent of Kṛṣṇa and His associates. Advaita Ācārya wanted to give *vraja-prema*, but He could not do so because this was not the function of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Infact, this was not possible even for Rāma, Nṛsimha, Kalki, Vāmana, and Paraśurāma. All of these *avatāras* could establish *yuga-dharma*, but they could not give to any living being what Svayam Bhagavān, Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, could give – pure *vraja-prema*.

Baladeva Prabhu can give this *prema*, but He leaves it for Kṛṣṇa to distribute and He assists. In the pastimes of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Baladeva came as Nityānanda Prabhu. Nityananda Prabhu can also distribute that special *kṛṣṇa-prema*, that *mādhurya-prema* – directly and indirectly – but He waits for Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

There are four reasons for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance: two external reasons and two internal. The primary internal reason was to taste the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā (*prema-rasa niryasa korite asvadana*) and the secondary internal reason was to satisfy Advaita Ācārya who, offering *tulasī* leaves, had called for Kṛṣṇa to descend. The primary external reason for His appearance

was to teach the fortunate *jīvas* the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti* (*rag-marga-bhakti korite pracarana*), and the secondary external reason was to establish *yuga-dharma* (*yada yada hi darmasya*).

By His love, Advaita Ācārya induced Kṛṣṇa to come to this world. If a pure devotee takes the soft leaves of *tulasī* with a *mañjarī* in the middle, and offers it to Śrī Kṛṣṇa while weeping and praying to Him, Kṛṣṇa will not be able to refuse that devotee. He will have to 'leave' Goloka Vṛndāvana and at once come to him.

To inspire Kṛṣṇa to hear us, it is therefore necessary that we also worship *tulasī* daily, as Advaita Ācārya has done. By this method we can certainly please Kṛṣṇa, even if we are unable to please Him in any other way. By this method, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and all Their associates will enter our hearts.

As mentioned above, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śācinandana Gaurahari, is Kṛṣṇa Himself, and Nityānanda is Baladeva Prabhu. Through *sañkīrtana*, which is the *yuga-dharma*, Mahāprabhu bestowed *prema* upon all types of living entities. In fact, even Kṛṣṇa could not have induced the forest inhabitants to chant and dance as Caitanya Mahāprabhu did. Serpents, elephants, tigers, she-goats – everyone became inspired by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Mahāprabhu sang:

*Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa he
Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, rakṣa mām
Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, pāhi mām
Rāma Raghava, Rāma Raghava, Rāma Raghava, rakṣa mām
Kṛṣṇa Keśava, Kṛṣṇa Keśava, Kṛṣṇa Keśava, pāhi mām*

Weeping and sometimes rolling on the ground as He sang, Mahāprabhu was not in His external consciousness. Overwhelmed, all the animals, creepers, and trees began to chant along with Him. After receiving Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy, they all developed intense affection for Kṛṣṇa.

When Kṛṣṇa came to this world He was also merciful, but He gave *kṛṣṇa-prema* according to the quality of the devotee's surrender and devotional practice – not less, not more – like a scale.

*ye yathā mām prapadyante
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*

*mama vartmānuvartante
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11)

As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.
Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā.

Consider the analogy of a pot, which represents our qualification for *kṛṣṇa-prema*. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa was present, He never gave a pot to anyone. Rather He said, “Oh, bring your pot. According to the type and size of your pot, I will give you that much *prema*.”

Without our qualification, Kṛṣṇa will not give us *prema*. For example, if we have committed many offenses, He will not give us *prema*. On the other hand, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is giving the pot and the *prema*. He and Nityānanda Prabhu are so merciful. They have no scale at all. Because Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śacinandana Gaurahari, is the son of Śacī-devī, He is so magnanimous that whoever comes to Him receives His mercy. Without a scale, He says, “Come on, come on. Do you have a pot?”

“No, I have no pot. No qualification.”

“Oh, alright then. I will give you the pot and also this nectar, *kṛṣṇa-prema*.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave *prema* lavishly, but this is only one of the external reasons for His appearance. The internal cause for Kṛṣṇa’s descent as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was to relish the three moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, which only She can taste. He borrowed Her intrinsic mood and beauty and became *tadātmā*, meaning 'one in heart,' with Her.

To further understand the meaning of *tadātmā*, let us consider this analogy. When iron is placed in fire it can burn. Iron does not burn, only fire has this power, but when placed in fire the iron becomes one in quality with it and can also burn. Likewise, Śrī Kṛṣṇa became *tadātmā* with Śrīmatī Rādhikā and forgot that He is Kṛṣṇa.

When Caitanya Mahāprabhu met Rāya Rāmānanda at Godāvarī, He learned *rasa-tattva* from him. Rāya Rāmānanda is Viśākhā, Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s dearest friend, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Śrī Caitanya, made Śrīmatī Viśākhā-devī His *guru* in order to assist Him fully to develop the mood of

Rādhikā. Then, Kṛṣṇa, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, manifested His form as *mahābhāva-rasarāja-svarūpa*. Without accepting Viśākhā as His *guru*, this would not have been possible.

After meeting with Rāya Rāmānanda, Mahāprabhu returned to the Gambhīrā at Jagannātha Purī, where He was able to fulfill His desire to taste the three moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He is therefore very grateful to Viśākhā, and also to Lalitā, who appeared in this world as Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara. Without their help, He cannot taste these three moods of Rādhikā.

HIS BRILLIANT, UNPARALLELED DONATION

Because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself, He can distribute *vraja-prema*, and especially *parakīya-bhāva* (paramour love), which is also called *unnatojjvala-rasa*. *Unnata* means 'highest,' *ujjvala* means 'brilliantly shining,' and the *rasa* refers to the taste of a specific relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

The brilliance of *unnatojjvala-rasa* is unparalleled, and it is this love that all of our *ācāryas* in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* have come to this world to teach. Our *ācāryas* did not come to taste what Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to taste, but to give this same *rasa* which He came to distribute. The distribution of *unnatojjvala-rasa* is the main reason for His advent, but not the foremost, supreme reason. It is the primary external reason. As mentioned above, the primary internal reason was to taste Rādhā's mood, and the second was to answer the call of Advaita Ācārya.

Mahāprabhu wanted to distribute that *prema* upon the *jīvas* which is rare even for Brahmā, Śaṅkara (Śiva), and Nārada. This is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, which can only be accomplished by the power of Kṛṣṇa in the form of Mahāprabhu.

Similarly all our *ācāryas*, like Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, did not come only to preach

the glories of chanting the holy name, for this can be given by the associates of Mahā-Viṣṇu.

The expansions or manifestations of Mahā-Viṣṇu, like Advaita Ācārya, can preach and distribute the holy name, but they cannot preach *vraja-prema* through *nāma-prema-saṅkīrtana*. There is a vast difference between the *nāma-saṅkīrtana* of this Kali-yuga and that of other Kali-yugas. This is a specialty of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who came along with His followers and associates.

Incarnations of Mahā-Viṣṇu like Advaita Ācārya, and His associates like Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana, Sanat Kumāra, Viśvaksena, and others, can perform and establish *nāma-saṅkīrtana* and *yuga-dharma*, but that *nāma-saṅkīrtana* will not give *kṛṣṇa-prema*, or *vraja-prema*. The *nāma-saṅkīrtana* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates has a special power that can give this.

Unnatojjvala-rasa is the special mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, which can be tasted by Kṛṣṇa as Caitanya Mahāprabhu, but cannot be distributed. What did Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu give? He did give *unnatojjvala-rasa*, but *unnatojjvala-rasa* is of two kinds: *kāmātmikā*, which He relished, and *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā*, which He distributed.

Kāmātmikā is the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, the rest of the eight principal *gopīs*, and other *gopīs* like them. Śrīmatī Rādhikā has five kinds of *sakhīs* (*gopī* friends): *sakhī*, *nitya-sakhī*, *prāṇa-sakhī*, *priya-sakhī* and *priya-narma-sakhī*. *Priya-narma-sakhīs* are also known as *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*.⁹

- (1) *Sakhīs*: Daniṣṭhā is an example. These *sakhīs* love and serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa, but they are slightly more inclined toward Kṛṣṇa.

9 "It is said that the *gopīs* are divided into five groups, namely the *sakhīs*, *nitya-sakhīs*, *prāṇa-sakhīs*, *priya-sakhīs* and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*. All these fair-complexioned associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the Queen of Vṛndāvana-dhama, are expert artists in evoking erotic sentiments in Kṛṣṇa. The *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* are eight in number, and in the ecstatic dealings of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā they side sometimes with Kṛṣṇa and at other times with Rādhārāṇī, just to create a situation in which it appears that they favor one against the other. That makes the exchange of mellows more palatable" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.217).

- (2) *Nitya-sakhīs* and (3) *Prāṇa-sakhīs*: these are the only two kinds of *sakhīs* who are in the category of *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā*. It is their service that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu ultimately came to bestow upon the *jīvas*. These *sakhīs* serve both Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, with a propensity to favor Śrīmatī Rādhikā and render service to Her. If Kṛṣṇa calls them, they do not come to Him; they obey only Her. The *prāṇa-sakhīs*, like Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī, being even more intimately connected with Her are naturally the leaders of the *nitya-sakhīs*.
- (4) *Priya-sakhīs* and (5) *Priya-narma-sakhīs*: Lalitā and Viśākhā are examples. Among these two types of *sakhīs*, the *priya-narma-sakhīs* are most dear. Both types of *sakhīs* serve the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with a slight tendency towards Śrīmatī Rādhikā, but they do not lean solely toward Her. They have so much power that they can sometimes chastise Rādhikā and at other times chastise Kṛṣṇa.

The difference between the *nitya-* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* and the *priya-* and *priya-narma-sakhīs* is that the *nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* are *mañjarīs*. They do not do anything for their own personal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. They do everything for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. They have no desire to taste Kṛṣṇa's association for themselves. This *bhāva*, or mood, which is called *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā*, is also *unnatojjvala-rasa*, and it is this type of *unnatojjvala-rasa* that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to distribute.

This is a very elevated topic. One may wonder why I am speaking about this topic, since only a few, rare persons can truly embrace its essence. The answer is given in the above-mentioned verse, where it is implied that in order to perform *sādhana*, we must first be clear about our objective. For example, if we want money, we may have to serve the government, get a job, or do business. If we do not do business, we may resort to stealing, or we may get a group of dacoits and forcefully attack others with swords.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa attacked Bhīṣmaka's kingdom, where hundreds of thousands of kings and their armies waited in full force to protect Rukmiṇī from Kṛṣṇa. However, despite the efforts of those kings, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, like a lion entering a group of jackals, took Rukmiṇī on His chariot and rode to Dvārakā where He married her.

As mentioned above, if someone's goal is to accumulate money, and if by begging he does not get it honestly, he may get it by hook or by crook. A dog standing outside a sweet-shop will drool as he watches people eat *rasagullā* and *rasamalai*. He will not enter the shop, which the owner guards with a stick, but runs to lick the leaf cups that have been thrown away. And, while he is licking the cups, he will try to guard them from any other dog in the vicinity.

Similarly, in spiritual life our objective should be fixed first, and then we can decide how to achieve that objective. The practice to attain the goal is called *sādhana*, and the goal itself is called *sādhya*. Without knowledge of one's *sādhya*, one cannot determine his *sādhana*. This is why Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja presents the *sādhya* in the first verse after the *maṅgalācaraṇa* verses of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 1.4).

If your objective is to accept what Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give – that *unnatojjvala vraja-prema* – then come with me to the school of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, read all the Gosvāmīs' literature, and learn how to develop greed for this. There are no rules and regulations for how this eagerness will come. It can manifest by associating with and hearing from a bona fide Vaiṣṇava. It will not awaken by *śāstric* arguments alone.

A very ordinary, ugly, deformed poor man may see a princess and may have some greed to make her his wife. Although the idea of having her as his wife is absurd, there is no wealth or any other qualification required to have the greed for such a marriage. Similarly, spiritual greed cannot be controlled. It is acquired by hearing about the beauty of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the affection of the *gopīs* for Him as described by the literatures of the Gosvāmīs headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and also by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Such literatures also describe how Kṛṣṇa was controlled by the *gopīs*, and especially by Śrīmatī Rādhikā. They describe how He places His head at Rādhikā's lotus feet, begging for Her mercy.

By hearing the topics of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and the books of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī from a pure devotee, greed may come, whether or not one is otherwise qualified for it – whether or not one is a pure devotee. And when greed comes, one becomes qualified to choose

his means of practice (*sādhana*). He immediately achieves *ruci* (a natural taste for hearing chanting, remembering, etc.) and thus gallops toward his goal.

Those who practice *sādhana-bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa out of fear of going to hell are practicing what is called *vaidhī-bhakti*. Such persons have the propensity to perform *vaidhī-bhakti*. Practicing because greed has arisen in the heart is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*. There is a difference between *rāgātmikā*, which is the mood of the *gopīs* themselves, and *rāgānuga* devotees, those who are performing *bhajana* with greed to attain that mood.¹⁰

Those in this world who are at the advanced stage of *āsakti* (attachment for Kṛṣṇa), and who are just reaching the stage of *bhāva*, are *rāgānuga*. Those devotees who have not reached this stage, but who are developing some greed (*rāgānuga-pravṛtti*), will soon become qualified to practice *rāgānuga-bhakti*. They are not practicing *rāgānuga* yet, but they are approaching it.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came only to bestow this greed; to those who already have greed, He came to give them *bhāva*; and to those who have *bhāva*, He came to give them *prema*.

What kind of *prema* does He give? Not Śrīmatī Rādhā's mood of *unnatojjvala-kāmātmikā-bhāva*, but the mood of *unnatojjvala-tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā*. Although this is a difficult subject to understand, it is essential for us to try to understand it. After ten or twenty years, or in a future life, in the association of elevated (*unnata*) Vaiṣṇavas, we will be able to realize something of it.

A sincere, aspiring devotee tries to develop this greed. He prays, "I am not a *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava, but I beg that in this life, or if I am not qualified then in a thousand lives from now, that I may receive the mercy to become a *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇava. I want nothing other than this, nothing else. I do not mind dying, but I do mind 'taking water from anywhere other than Keśī-ghāṭa or Mānasa-gaṅgā *ghāṭa*, or any *ghāṭas* (bathing places) of the *tat-tad-bhāvecchātmikā gopīs*."

Now I will explain the original verse under discussion:

10 "The original inhabitants of Vṛndāvana are attached to Kṛṣṇa spontaneously in devotional service. Nothing can compare to such spontaneous devotional service, which is called *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. When a devotee follows in the footsteps of the devotees of Vṛndāvana, his devotional service is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.149).

*anarpita-carim cirat karunayavatirnah kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam sva-bhakti-sriyam
harih purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandipitah
sada hridaya-kandare sphuratu vah saci-nandanahh*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

This verse is from the *maṅgalācaraṇa* of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Vidagdha-mādhava*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu inspired Rūpa Gosvāmī in Prayāga to fulfill His desire to distribute *unnatojjvala-parakīya-bhāva*, and along with this, to distribute knowledge to the *jīvas* about what He tasted. This *bhāva* is unparalleled even in Goloka Vṛndāvana, what to speak of this world. This *prema* is the eternal religion (*nitya-dharma*) of all fortunate living entities, not just those in human bodies.

If a husband who has affection for his wife sees that his wife has affection for another man, he will be upset. Similarly, if the wife knows that her husband internally loves someone else, she will be upset. Either way, their entire life together will be disturbed. We see the relationship of husband and wife, lover and beloved, not only in humans, but in creatures, creepers, and trees. Without this loving relationship, one cannot live. Trees and creepers also have this affection, but they cannot express it. Humans can express it to a certain extent.

The perverted reflection of *prema* (pure spiritual love) is the desire to satisfy the body, and this is called *kāma* (lust). Because lust is not pure, it causes pain, suffering, and problems. In this world it is seen that a man cannot fully satisfy a woman and vice versa. After some time he or she will become dissatisfied and may look for someone else.

We are refugees here in this material world. Because of lust we are imprisoned here, seeking satisfaction in a wife, husband, children,

mother, father, friends, and worldly objects, and Kṛṣṇa arranges for us to taste the result of such material attachment. Satisfaction is only possible when one has affection for Kṛṣṇa; otherwise, no one can be satisfied.

When Lord Rāma and His own Śrīmatī Sītā-devī came to this world, they both played a role and taught us worldly jīvas the result of lust. They taught us that lust is a very bad thing,

When Rāma, Sītā, and Lakṣmaṇa were in the jungle, the demon Mārīca came in the form of a golden deer. Sītā saw the deer and told Rāma, “I want this deer. You can catch it alive, or You can shoot it and bring his skin.”

Lakṣmaṇa warned Rāma not to follow the deer. “He is actually a demon, not a deer,” Lakṣmaṇa told Rāma. “That demon will cause You many problems. Don’t go; it is better to disobey Your wife.”

Although Rāma is the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself and is therefore not controlled by *māyā*, He showed the conditioned jīvas what happens when a man comes under the control of a woman’s material desires. The result is problems. Rāma replied to Lakṣmaṇa, “I must carry out the order of My wife, even if the deer is a demon.”

Rāma went after the deer, and as a result He had to leave Sītā twice. Finally He had to leave her ‘forever,’ due to others doubting her purity after she had spent some days with Rāvaṇa. She was pure, but because others doubted her chastity, Rāma felt He needed to consider the mood of those citizens and abandon her. He sent her into the forest and then lamented deeply.

Rāma lived in a royal palace and Sītā lived in the forest in the *āśrama* of Vālmīki, sleeping on a grass mat and cutting wood for cooking. Rāma repented, “I have sent Sītā to the jungle, so I will also live as a renunciate and not taste any material comforts.” He stayed alone in His palace, sleeping on a mat on the floor. Sītā slept easily, but Rāma could not. He always wept, “O Sītā , O Sītā , O Sītā! I made a mistake by trying to satisfy My subjects.” Sītā was consoled by Vālmīki, but there was no one to console Rāma, no one to wipe away His tears. He wept constantly, and one who knows the heart of Rāma will also weep bitterly.

Once, Rāma performed a *rājasūya-yajña* (sacrifice) on the bank of the river Gomatī near Naimiṣāraṇya. All of His subjects,

including His mothers, brothers, monkeys (Hanumān and Sugrīva), and Vibhīṣaṇa assembled there. The *yajña* was conducted from early morning to ten o'clock, after which everyone assembled to hear narrations from the Purāṇas.

One day, the twin sons of Rāma and Sītā, Lava and Kuśa, arrived in that assembly. They were about nine years old and, closely resembling Rāma Himself, they were very beautiful. No one knew who they were or from where they had come. Playing on *vīṇās* they began to recite the Rāmāyaṇa, which they had heard in the *āśrama* of Vālmīki. They sang in a melodious tune, as with a *vīṇā*, wherein high sounds trembled down to low ones in a *rāga* suitable for spiritual lamentation (*karuṇa-rasa*). Their singing was so sweet that all those present were stunned in silence. They sang about the pastime in which Sītā, Rāma, and Lakṣmaṇa, in the dress of renunciates, left Ayodhyā for the forest under the order of Kaikeyī – at which time King Daśaratha, lamented, “Alas, Rāma! Alas, Rāma!” and immediately left the world. As Lava and Kuśa sang, Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Kaikeyī, Hanumān, Sugrīva, and the entire audience were captivated and wept bitterly. They felt that if the pastime was taking place right before their eyes.

As the day drew to a close, Rāma sent Lakṣmaṇa to give Lava and Kuśa a donation of a pot of gold coins, fine silken cloth, and golden ornaments. Lakṣmaṇa descended from His throne and asked them, “My dear boys, please tell Me your father’s name and where you are from. Lord Rāma wants to know your identity.”

The boys were silent at first, and then said, “You know the Vedas. You are a learned person, so You must know that it is not proper etiquette to inquire from a *brahmacārī* or *sannyāsī* about his father and mother, wife, daughters, or sons. You don’t know this etiquette? We are two *brahmacārīs*. You may therefore inquire about the name of our Gurudeva or the whereabouts of our *āśrama*, or request us to speak *hari-kathā*. We are disciples of Vālmīki. We have come from his *āśrama* and we have learned these songs from him.”

Lakṣmaṇa became speechless, ashamed that He had asked this question. He thought, “Yes, what they are saying is correct. One should not say to a *brahmacārī* or *sannyāsī*, ‘Oh, Mahārāja, you are still married. Your wife and sons are still there.’” He then requested

them, “Please accept this golden pot containing jewels and golden ornaments.”

The boys replied, “We are simple *brahmacāris*. What use do we have for such opulent gifts? We eat fruit, and without the use of a vessel we drink water from our hands. Please return these gifts to Rāma, who is a king and has use for them.”

Lava and Kuśa then returned to their mother, who had been anxiously waiting for them. Taking the boys in her arms, one in her left arm, the other in her right, she caressed them and asked, “O sons, why have you come home so late today?”

“Today, Mother, we went far away to the assembly of a king.” The boys did not know the king’s name. “There we sang the pastimes of Sītā and Rāma. We don’t know why, but everyone present was weeping – the king Himself, His brother, and even the monkeys. And while there, we saw something very unusual. There was a golden statue that looked exactly like you, with the same face and same beauty; but whereas you speak, this statue did not.”

Sītā began to weep bitterly. The boys asked her, “Mother, why are you weeping?” but she could not explain to them Rāma’s banishment of Her.

The next day, Rāma said to Vālmiki, “I know that Sītā is staying in your *āśrama*. Please bring her to Ayodhyā immediately. I cannot live without her.”

The following day, Sītā arrived in Ayodhyā with Lava and Kuśa holding her hands. Looking down at the ground as she walked, she followed Vālmiki and silently entered Rāma’s kingdom, wondering what was going to happen. Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa, Hanumān, Kauśalyā, and others eagerly gazed at the sight of Sītā returning to Ayodhyā. The Lord’s associates now assumed that the two boys must be the sons of Rāma. Because they were so beautiful, they could not possibly be the sons of any other.

Rāma approached Sītā and said, “Please show Me proof that you are pure, that you have never been touched by Rāvaṇa.”

Sītā responded in a mild voice with honor for Rāma, “Do You not accept the proof of my purity from Daśaratha Mahārāja and Agnideva? I will now give you proof.” She then prayed, “O Pṛthivī (the personified Earth planet), you are my mother. If I am pure, if

I have never known anyone except Rāma, if my heart has never touched anyone else, even for a moment, then please open and take me in your lap.” She said this three times.

Then at once, with a great sound, the Earth divided in two and a beautiful golden chariot appeared. Pṛthivī-devī took Sītā on her lap and the Earth closed.

Rāma immediately jumped up, crying, “O Sītā ! Sītā ! Sītā ! You have left Me! O Mother-in-law, Pṛthivī-devī, return My Sītā or I will shoot you and break you into pieces. I want to see Sītā at once!”

Vālmiki approached Rāma and said, “Rāma, do not be so distressed. Go to Sītā. She is waiting for You in Your abode.”

In this way Rāma is showing the world the result of lust: “Do not do as I have done, otherwise there will be so many problems.”

In order to be happy, try to attain pure love for Kṛṣṇa. Material love is an endeavor to gratify selfish desires, whereas pure *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the opposite, free from the slightest taint of any selfishness.

In order to reveal to the jivas their eternal natural *dharma*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended to this world. This world is like a school. Let us not waste this good opportunity to practice *bhakti-yoga* in the association of pure devotees, who are free from politics, hypocrisy, duplicity, and diplomacy. It is essential to understand that *vraja-prema* is our eternal *dharma*, and in order to be happy forever, we will have to achieve it. We must not allow lust to create a disturbance in our life. If one is married, that is alright; there is no harm in that as long as the husband treats his wife as one who is dear to Kṛṣṇa, serving her with love and affection but reserving his real inner affection for Kṛṣṇa.

This world is a training center. We must not become entangled in it, otherwise we will have endless problems. One may perform one’s duty, maintaining one’s family members, for wealth is also not detrimental if it is utilized properly. Our family is not meant to fulfill our lust. While serving our family we must practice *bhakti*, and thus make this world like Vaikuṅṭha, the Lord’s spiritual abode.

Auspicious Invocation

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ purāṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah*
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

This verse, the *maṅgalācaraṇa*, auspicious invocation, of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Vidagdha-mādhava*, was written by him in order to fulfill the wishes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

While Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was traveling from Vṛndāvana to Jagannātha Purī, he came to a village named Satyabhāmāpura. There, in the final part of the night, he had a dream. If at this time of night a person wakes from a dream, the dream may be true, and for exalted devotees, certainly their dreams are true. Śrīmatī Rādhikā's dreams, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dreams, and the dreams of pure devotees are never imaginary.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī dreamt that a celestially beautiful lady approached him and gave him this instruction:

*āmāra nāṭaka pṛthak karaha racana
āmāra kṛpāte nāṭaka haibe vilakṣaṇa*
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 1.42)

“Write a separate drama about me,” she said. “By my mercy, it will be extraordinarily beautiful.”

“Do not make one book, make two books: one for Vraja, and one for Dvārakā. Do not mix them.” Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī realized that this was actually Kṛṣṇa’s queen Satyabhāmā speaking to him.

After having that dream, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī considered, “It is the order of Satyabhāmā that I write a separate drama for her. I have brought together in one work all the pastimes performed by Lord Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana and in Dvārakā. Now I shall have to divide them into two dramas.”

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 1.43-44)

When he arrived in Purī, he met Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who gave him the same instruction: “Do not take Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa out of Vṛndāvana.”

On the next day, when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to see Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the omniscient Lord spoke as follows: “Do not try to take Kṛṣṇa out of Vṛndāvana, for He does not go anywhere else at any time. The Kṛṣṇa known as Yadu-kumāra is Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa. He is different from the Kṛṣṇa who is the son of Nanda Mahārāja. Yadu-kumāra Kṛṣṇa manifests His pastimes in the cities of Mathurā and Dvārakā, but Kṛṣṇa the son of Nanda Mahārāja never at any time leaves Vṛndāvana.”

After saying this, Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to perform His noontime duties, leaving Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī somewhat surprised.

“Satyabhāmā ordered me to write two different dramas,” Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī thought. “Now I understand that this order has been confirmed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Formerly I wrote the two dramas as one composition. Now I shall divide it and describe the incidents in two separate works. I shall write two separate invocations of good fortune and two different introductions. Let me think deeply about the matter and then describe two different sets of incidents.»

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 1.65-71)

What is the meaning? One should not take Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa to Dvārakā and Mathurā. In *tattva*, Kṛṣṇa and His manifestations are all one; there is no difference at all. But by *rasa-vicāra*, by the vision of *rasa*, Vrajendra-nandana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana as the son of Nanda Mahārāja) and Vasudeva-nandana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā as the son of Vasudeva Mahārāja) are not the same. An ordinary person or a *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī* could not have understood this, but Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī grasped the meaning at once. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is an *uttama-adhikārī* and of course all *tattvas* are revealed to him, but even a *madhyama-adhikārī* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī can understand this principle.

In Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's first book, *Vidagdha-mādhava*, he wrote the *maṅgalācaraṇa* beginning *anarṣita carim carat*. While he lived in Purī, he resided in the cottage of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Haridāsa Ṭhākura was so humble that he would not go to the Jagannātha temple for *darśana*. Instead, he offered his full obeisances from afar. "I am so wretched," he considered. "As a Muslim, I have no good qualities and I am impure." Following the humble mentality of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī considered, "Because I am the servant of a Muslim king, I am also like a Muslim."

One day, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to Haridāsa Ṭhākura's cottage with all His associates, including Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Ācārya, Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda, to meet with Rūpa Gosvāmī. In that very learned assembly, Rāya Rāmānanda asked, "What books are you writing? Please show us. Please recite the first verse, the *maṅgalācaraṇa*."

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya said, "Now please recite the description of the glories of your worshipable Deity." Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī hesitated due to embarrassment because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was present. The Lord, however, encouraged Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, saying, "Why are you embarrassed? You should recite it so the devotees can hear the good fruit of your writing."

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 1.129-130)

Although Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was very learned, because of his humility he was shy and did not want to show his writing. However,

when the devotees asked repeatedly, he agreed and recited the *śloka*:

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatiṛṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanāḥ*
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

Everyone became so happy to hear this. “How beautiful,” they all said. “This verse is full of correct philosophical conclusions (*siddhānta*). We have never heard anything like this. We have heard so many verses, but never one like this.”

When Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī thus recited his verse, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu disapproved of it because it described His personal glories. He expressed the opinion that it was an exaggerated explanation.

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 1.131)

Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “It is not a good verse. The first three lines of this verse are so beautiful, but ‘*sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandana* – May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart,’ is like poison in milk. It has spoiled the whole thing.”

Svarūpa Dāmodara disagreed: “This fourth line has made the verse like condensed milk with camphor or *miśri* (sugar candy). This fourth line has made it so much more tasteful.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then told all the devotees, “Be merciful to Rūpa Gosvāmī, so that he may know My heart and fulfill all My desires.”

RARE AND VALUABLE

Why did Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja take this verse as one of the *maṅgalācaraṇa* verses of his own *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*? He was such a greatly learned person that he could have written hundreds of verses in a very short time – in a moment. He has written so many other verses in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and he has also written *Govindalīlāmṛta*, which contains more than a thousand verses. Also, in his other books he has composed numerous excellent verses. Why then did he use this verse written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī?

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja humbly thought, “I am an ordinary person; I have no *bhakti* at all. Undoubtedly Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is Rūpa Mañjarī in Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes¹¹, is a *siddha-mahāpuruṣa*, a perfect, self-realized soul. His glorification and prayers to Kṛṣṇa will be more effective and more powerful than mine.”

In the same way, if we recite the prayers of devotees like Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Svarūpa Dāmodara, this will have more transcendental potency than if we invent our own. We do not sing *kīrtanas* of persons who are not qualified in devotion. Even though such persons may be able to create very ornamental language in English, Hindi, Bengali, or Sanskrit, still we do not sing their songs. We only sing the songs of authentic Vaiṣṇavas. By singing and praying in this way, surely our worshipable Deity will be happy.

Anarṣitam-carīm cirāt. *Anarṣita* means 'not given' and *cirāt* means 'for a long time.' What is it that has not been given? And what is that long period? That long period is Lord Brahmā’s one day, which contains so many of our Earth years. Four-hundred-thirty-two-thousand years (432,000 years) is the duration of Kali-yuga. Twice this (432,000 x 2 = 864,000 years) is the duration of Dvāpura-yuga, thrice this (432,000 x 3 = 1,296,000 years) makes Tretā-yuga, and four times this (432,000 x 4 = 1,728,000 years) make Satya-yuga. These four *yugas* taken together are called a *catur-yuga*. One *catur-yuga* lasts for 4,320,000 years.

11 “In the *Gaura-ganoddesa-dīpikā* (Verse 180) Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī is described to be the *gopi* named Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 10.84, purport).

This same cycle of four *yugas* multiplied by seventy-one is one *manvantara* (4,320,000 x 71 = 306,720,000 years), and there are fourteen *manvantaras*¹² in a day of Brahmā. In this way there are so many years in one day of Brahmā (4,294,080,000 years), and the same period is the length of his night.

It had been this long since Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had come and given unalloyed *unnatojjvala-rasām svabhakti-śriyam*. We are very fortunate to have taken birth only five hundred years after Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His followers. It is only about four hundred years since the time of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, and two-hundred-fifty years since Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura lived one hundred years ago. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura left this world in 1937; it is therefore only sixty years since he has disappeared from our worldly vision. It is only thirty years since our Gurudeva Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja disappeared, twenty years since Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja disappeared, and Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja left only about ten years ago.¹³

We are therefore very fortunate. Neglecting to understand and follow the teachings of our *ācāryas* and trying for this *unnatojjvala-rasām svabhakti-śriyam* means that perhaps millions of births will pass before we are allowed again this opportunity. On the other hand, if in this birth we go to a bona fide *guru* and become qualified, we may take our next birth on the planet and in the place where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu enacted His pastimes only two hundred years ago – that is, at the time of Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura or Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Our birth after that may be where and when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself is performing His pastimes with His associates. We must try to understand these truths and not

12 “*Manvantara* means a change of Manus” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.10.1).

“All the Manus are empowered incarnations of Kṛṣṇa (*manvantara-avatāra*). There are fourteen Manus in one day of Brahmā and 420 in one month. All the Manus are directors of human society” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.24.42, purport).

“Each Manu lives 4,320,000 years multiplied by 71. The present Manu has already lived for 4,320,000 years multiplied by 28” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.30.49, purport).

13 This lecture was spoken 1997, so the number of years mentioned in this paragraph were counted starting from this year.

think that this verse (*anarpita-carīm cirāt*) is false propaganda. It is as bona fide as Kṛṣṇa Himself.

In this above-mentioned auspicious invocation, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes, *karuṇayāvatiṛṇaḥ kalau*. In Kali-yuga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to this world along with His associates, during the seventh *manvantara*¹⁴. Twenty-seven *catur-yuga* cycles of Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga, and Kali-yuga had passed, and it was during the twenty-eighth *catur-yuga* cycle that He appeared.

Why did He come? *Samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām svabhakti-śriyam*. *Samarpayitum* means 'to give.' What did Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu come to give? He gave that very precious and rare gift, which is desired even by Brahmā, Śaṅkara, Nārada, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

THE MOOD OF VṚNDĀVANA

Śrī Uddhava, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dear friend, minister, and advisor, also wants this precious mood. He went to Vṛndāvana upon Kṛṣṇa's request, where he realized the glories of Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, and the *gopīs*, and especially the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. On one hand he became very happy to realize their glories, but at the same time he felt practically hopeless.

We may be pleased to see Mount Everest, which is about thirty thousand feet high, but we cannot imagine what it would be like to be that high. We would become hopeless if we try to compare ourselves with such a height. Similarly, when Uddhava came to Vraja from Mathurā and saw the *gopīs*, Yaśodā, and Nanda Bābā exhibit their height of love for Kṛṣṇa, he could not fathom such love. When he entered Nanda Bābā's home, he saw him weeping in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whom Nanda Bābā considered to be his own son.

Uddhava wondered, "How is this? Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is greater than Nārāyaṇa, Rāma, and all

14 "According to astronomical calculations, we are now in the twenty-eighth *yuga* of Vaivasvata Manu (also known as Śrāddhadeva). Each Manu lives for seventy-one *yugas*, and fourteen such Manus rule in one day of Lord Brahmā. We are now in the period of Vaivavata Manu, the seventh Manu, and the eighth Manu will come into existence after many millions of years" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.13.11, purport).

other incarnations. He has mercifully come to Nanda's house and is like a son to him, but actually He is not the son of anyone. He is neither the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, nor of Nanda and Yaśodā. How strange that Nanda thinks Kṛṣṇa to be his son."

Nanda Bābā then asked Uddhava, "Will Kṛṣṇa return? Does He remember us?" And he began to weep loudly. "I want to forget Kṛṣṇa," he said, "and for this reason I go to the bank of Yamunā. But there I see so many trees and creepers, and Yamunā-devī herself, all telling me the history of Kṛṣṇa's childhood. Every place and every living creature there reminds me of Kṛṣṇa." For example, Nanda would see Kṛṣṇa's footprints in one place, and in another place he would remember how Kṛṣṇa roamed with the cows and how the cows automatically gave milk without being milked.

Nanda Bābā explained to Uddhava how he wanted to console his heart and forget Kṛṣṇa, how he had left his home and gone to various places in Vṛndāvana. He lamented that because all the trees in these places were continually crying, "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!" they made him think of Kṛṣṇa even more intensely. He explained how he had gone to *rāsa-līlā-sthali*, *Vaṁśīvaṭa*, *Bhāṅḍīravana*, *Kālīya-hrada-gḥāṭa*, and then to Govardhana, which had been previously lifted by Kṛṣṇa, but all of these places were also crying. Even the particles of dust were crying for Kṛṣṇa. Thus, Nanda Bābā had been weeping so continuously that he could never take any rest.

Hearing this, Uddhava told Nanda Bābā how fortunate he and Yaśodā were to consider Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as their very loving son. "And you are very affectionate to Him," he said. "Sometimes you chastised Him, bound Him, and rebuked Him. You are so fortunate."

Nanda Bābā replied, "Uddhava, previously I had thought that because you have Kṛṣṇa's association you must be a very qualified person, but now I see that you are ignorant and foolish, with no knowledge at all.

"You say I am so fortunate, but actually I am the most wretched person in this world. You say that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If this is so, it means that I could not please that Supreme Personality when He was living with me, and this is why He left me and went to Mathurā. Then, to make matters worse, I could

not die of separation while crying out my son's name, as Mahārāja Daśaratha died when his son Rāma left his palace. I am not a good father." And again Nanda Bābā began to weep.

Uddhava thought, "Oh, I should not have spoken to Nanda Bābā like this. It was certainly foolish of me."

Uddhava, the most exalted personality in the Vṛṣṇi dynasty, was very intelligent and sharp in making decisions. He was Śrī Kṛṣṇa's private secretary, His prime minister, servant, and loving friend. But in this situation he was confused as to whether or not he had acted correctly. He thought, "I have come to console Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, and the Vrajavāsīs, but their bitter weeping is their good fortune. I know that I am not wrong to think in this way, because scripture confirms that if even one tear comes in the eye of someone crying for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is certainly fortunate. Nanda Bābā is weeping, so he is truly fortunate. To tell him to stop would be against *śāstra*. But I have also made a mistake in encouraging him to weep, because when he weeps he suffers so much. How can I pacify him? What shall I do?"

Uddhava's knowledge of the scriptures describing the fortune of those who cry incessantly for Kṛṣṇa was only theoretical, not practical, and for this reason he had thought it incorrect to encourage Nanda to continue weeping. He had considered this great ecstasy to be suffering. This was a very critical moment for Uddhava, who is our authority and a great devotee, but who had now become completely dumbfounded.

THE GOPĪS' SEPARATION

Uddhava spent the entire night speaking with Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā-maiyā. Then, in the morning, he went to console the *gopīs* in a nearby garden. This garden is presently called Uddhava-kyāri.

When the *gopīs* saw Uddhava, they thought he was Akrūra, Kṛṣṇa's uncle, who had come to Vṛndāvana months earlier and had driven Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā on his chariot. The only 'outsider' they had seen before was Akrūra, so they thought this outside person must be that same Akrūra. The word Akrūra means 'not cruel-hearted.' The *gopīs* thought it ironic that his name was Akrūra, because they considered him to be very cruel for taking Kṛṣṇa away from them.

“Akrūra has again come to this place,” they assumed. “But he has already taken Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā. Kṛṣṇa is not here, so what is his purpose in coming here again in the same golden chariot?”

“Oh, it must be that Kṛṣṇa has sent him to let all the elderly *gopas* and *gopīs* know that He is no longer their son, but He is now the emperor of Mathurā. He has sent Akrūra on that golden chariot to show us that He is an important person; He is no longer a mere cowherd boy, poor and without shoes and other opulent apparel. To show off His grandeur, He has sent His servant.”

One *gopī* said, “I see that he is *śyāma* (of blackish color), but he is not Śyāma¹⁵. He is black, but he is not that same black person. He has taken Kṛṣṇa’s color, ornaments, *pitāmbara* (yellow cloth), and other paraphernalia, but he is not Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is always in the highest stage of *mahābhāva*¹⁶, did not actually see Uddhava. In Her madness of separation from Kṛṣṇa, She began to speak with a bumblebee, thinking that he, the bee, was Kṛṣṇa’s messenger.

“You have come drinking wine,” She said to the bumblebee.

Bumblebee, you are accustomed to drinking honey from the flowers, and therefore you have preferred to be a messenger of Kṛṣṇa, who is of the same nature as you. I have seen on your moustache the red powder of *kuṅkuma* which was smeared on the flower garland of Kṛṣṇa while He was pressing the breast of some other girl who is My

15 Śyāma is another name for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, meaning that He is blackish, like a fresh rain-cloud.

16 “There is a supreme symptom of ecstatic love, which is called *mahābhāva*. This *mahābhāva* expression was possible only in Rādhārāṇī. But later on, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya appeared to feel the mode of love of Rādhārāṇī, He also expressed all of the symptoms of *mahābhāva*” (*Nectar of Devotion*, Chapter 28).

“A person engaged in devotional service becomes heartsick when singing the glories of the Supreme Lord. Because the Lord is very dear to him, when he glorifies the Lord’s name, fame, and so on, he becomes almost like an insane person. In that condition he sometimes laughs, sometimes cries, and sometimes dances. He continues in this way without even considering his situation. By gradually developing his love of Godhead, he increases his affection, his emotion, and his ecstasy. Such attachment, *mahābhāva*, is the highest stage of devotional love. It may be likened to sugar candy, which is the most powerful form of sugar. Love of Godhead can gradually develop in such a way that transcendental pleasure is increased to the highest stage for the real devotee” (*Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, Chapter 13).

competitor. You feel very proud because of having touched that garland, and your moustache has become reddish. You have come here carrying a message for Me, anxious to touch My feet. But My dear bumblebee, let Me warn you – don't touch Me! I don't want any messages from your unreliable master. You are the unreliable servant of an unreliable master.

(Kṛṣṇa, *The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, Chapter 46)

Sometimes Śrīmatī Rādhikā was laughing, sometimes joking, and sometimes She was criticizing Kṛṣṇa for being guilty of leaving them and going to Mathurā. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was present in the form of the bee, tasted Her mood of ecstatic separation.

In this way, we see that Kṛṣṇa tasted the moods of both separation and meeting. He tasted *dāsyā-rasa*, *sakhyā-rasa*, *vātsalya-rasa*, and *śṅgāra-rasa* (*mādhurya-rasa*). He tasted the love He felt from all His associates and devotees, and this has all been described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Why, then, did He come to this world? He was already enjoying in Goloka Vraja.

TWO KINDS OF VRAJA

There are two features of Vṛndāvana. One is Goloka Vṛndāvana, and the other is Bhauma Vṛndāvana, Vraja on this Earth. In this universe there are many millions of planets, of which we cannot count the number. Even Brahmā cannot count them, nor can Saṅkarṣaṇa, (a manifestation of Balarāma) who is the father and creator of all. Even if Saṅkarṣaṇa could count them, no other personality could do so. In every universe Vraja is manifested, and each Vraja is called Bhauma Vṛndāvana.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always in Goloka Vṛndāvana, sporting with all His associates like Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Citra, Candrāvalī, Śyāmalā, Bhadrā, and others like them. He plays with friends like Śrīdāma, Sudāma, Vasudāma, Stoka-kṛṣṇa, Labaṅga, and Arjuna, and He also performs pastimes with His parents, Nanda and Yaśodā. All these devotees are present in Goloka Vṛndāvana, and at the

same time they are also present with Kṛṣṇa in various universes, traveling with Him as in a roadshow.¹⁷

There is no difference between all the manifestations of Vraja in this material world and Vraja in Goloka. They are non-different and different at the same time, a transcendental truth called *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*. The manifestations of Vraja in this material world are real; they are manifestations of that Goloka Vraja. Therefore, if they are real, and if they are non-different, why do we want to go to Goloka Vṛndāvana?

There is also a difference, and it is necessary that we carefully understand this difference. In this Bhauma Vṛndāvana, *siddha* (fully perfected devotees) and *asiddha* (not yet perfect) devotees all saw Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Duryodhana could also see some pastimes, but he could not understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa's identity. He thought the Lord to be an ordinary son of a *gopa*, an ordinary cowherd boy.

Nārada Muni sees Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and always offers Him his prostrated obeisances. However, when He went to Vraja, Bhauma Vṛndāvana, Yaśodā-maiyā brought her darling son and placed Him at his feet. Yaśodā-maiyā took his foot-dust and said, "Your foot-dust will protect Kṛṣṇa."

Hearing this from Yaśodā-maiyā, Nārada thought, "I should not make any problems for Kṛṣṇa's pastimes by showing that I consider Him the Supreme Lord. Let His Vraja pastimes continue." Seeing the glories of Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā-maiyā, and the *gopīs*, Nārada was trembling, fearing that he might commit an offense. He feared that if he would tell Yaśodā-maiyā that Kṛṣṇa is God, Kṛṣṇa might become angry because His *nara-līlā* (human-like pastimes) would be disturbed. Yaśodā-maiyā knew more *tattva* (established philosophical truths) than Nārada, but due to the influence of Yogamāyā, she considered Kṛṣṇa her little boy who needed to become healthy and intelligent, and who needed to have any possible inauspiciousness driven away by the dust of Nārada's feet.

17 "Lord Kṛṣṇa, as He is, appears once every twenty-four hours of Brahmā's time (or after a lapse of 8,640,000,000 solar years) in each and every universe, and all His transcendental pastimes are displayed in each and every universe in a routine spool" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.14.8, purport).

Different classes of devotees can enter in the Lord's pastimes in this Bhauma Vṛndāvana, whether or not they are *siddha*. However, after some years, the pastimes disappear and are no longer visible to persons of this world. Only *siddha* devotees, those whose love and affection have been perfected, can go to Goloka Vṛndāvana, where they will live forever and never have to return to this world. Being in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's association, all spiritual beings, including those who are *kāya-vyūha* (expansions), *sādhana-siddha*, and *nitya-siddha*, will never, never, never take a material body in this world. They will never become opposed to Kṛṣṇa. Because there is no *māyā* in Goloka Vṛndāvana, they can never forget Kṛṣṇa. Only *Yogamāyā* is there in the spiritual realm, helping the devotees to increase their *prema* for Kṛṣṇa by arranging opportunities for them to serve Him. Because there is no chance of falling from Goloka Vṛndāvana, which is *siddha-bhūmi*, no conditioned soul in this world has come from there. Rather, they have come from the *taṭasthā* line,¹⁸ from Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu.

In order to help the *jīvas* by bestowing the greatest benediction (*samarpayitum*), Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes here as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I have given the explanation of this one word, *samarpayitum*. Once in Brahmā's day, Kṛṣṇa comes to give a rare, special *prema*.

18 "According to Viṣṇu Purāṇa, *Bhagavad-gītā*, and all other Vedic literatures, the living entities are generated from the *taṭasthā* energy of the Lord, and thus they are always the energy of the Lord and are not the energetic" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.7.9, purport).

The Highest Devotion

Fortunately for us, Caitanya Mahāprabhu has kindly come to bestow His mercy, and somehow He will make arrangements for us to increase our eagerness, our greed, for this *prema*. If there is greed, then gradually the path to achieve this *prema* will also manifest.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu ordered Śrīla Rūpa, Śrīla Sanātana, and Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavīrāja Gosvāmī to write about pure *bhakti*, which is only available for qualified persons. Although the neem is a very bitter tree and its small yellow fruits are also very bitter, crows fly there to relish the taste. Only the cuckoos sit on the mango tree and taste the beautiful sweetness of the mangos. Similarly, only qualified persons will read about this subject.

*arasa-jña kāka cūṣe jñāna-nimba-phale
rasa-jña kokila khāya premāmra-mukule
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.258)*

Those who are devoid of all mellows are like the crows that suck the juice from the bitter fruits of the *nimba* tree of mundane and impersonal knowledge, whereas those who enjoy mellows are like the cuckoos who eat the buds of the mango tree of love of Godhead.

I am continuing to explain the third and fourth chapters of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Hearing this subject, if one develops some taste and genuine eagerness, or greed, for what these chapters are offering, then our association will be fully successful.

Anarṣita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇaḥ kalau. Please note in your heart that all of our *guru-paramparā ācāryas* were *rāgānuga Vaiṣṇavas*, and they were especially *rūpānuga*¹⁹ *Vaiṣṇavas*. None of

19 “*Rūpānuga-bhaktas* are only those who follow the same manner and mood in which Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī serves Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Although Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī serves both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, she is more inclined to-wards Śrīmatī Rādhikā – happy in the happiness of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and suffering like Her when She suffers. Internally, in their constitutional forms, the *rūpānuga-bhaktas* serve in the same mood as Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, and externally they practice the same devotional activities as Rūpa Gosvāmī” (*Gaura-vāṇī pracāriṇe*, Chapter 7).

them were practicing only *vaidhī-bhakti*²⁰. They came to this world to give *rāgānuga-bhakti*, but they saw that unfortunately there was a very large jungle of *Māyāvāda*, *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, and *tapasya* that they would first have to cut down. In the beginning they had to cut down all these jungles, and much of their time was spent doing this. Their real aim was to give the nectar of *vraja-prema* to the *jīvas* of this world, for which we must have some eagerness. Once that greed has manifest, our path to develop Kṛṣṇa consciousness will be clear.

The desire to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the seed of *bhakti*, the *bhakti-latā-bīja*, and it is externally manifest as the first stage of *bhakti*, called *śraddhā*, or faith. The external activities of *śraddhā* can be seen externally, but if the internal desire to serve Kṛṣṇa is not present, then *śraddhā* is not actually present. When *gurudeva* plants this seed in the heart of the sincere Vaiṣṇava, that sincere disciple has great honor for *gurudeva*, for *śāstra*, and for Vaiṣṇavas.

When we cut the jungles of duplicity and other such worldly behavior, the *bhakti* seed, which is the tendency or desire to serve Kṛṣṇa, can grow. Gradually the plant of *bhakti* crosses the worldly jurisdiction of *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, *tapasya*, and all other impediments. It also crosses Brahma-loka and the desire to taste *mukti*, eternal salvation.

By one's *sādhū-saṅga* and continual watering of the one's *bhakti-latā*, the growth of one's *bhakti-latā* will be unstoppable. It will grow beyond even the territory of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the husband of Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune, and cross Ayodhyā, Goloka, and Dvārakā. Finally it reaches Vṛndāvana, where it takes shelter of Kṛṣṇa in the form of Vrajendra-nandana, Rādhā-kānta, Rādhānātha. Here, the creeper develops beautiful tasteful fruits. The 'gardener' disciple, taking shelter of the creeper of *bhakti*, also reaches the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, and there he tastes that sweet fruit of *bhakti-rasa*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī that another gardener is *gurudeva*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's representative. Mahāprabhu gives the fruits to pure Vaiṣṇavas

20 "One has to serve Kṛṣṇa according to these regulative principles, but if one develops spontaneous love for Kṛṣṇa as exhibited in the activities of those who live in Vraja-bhūmi, one attains the platform of *rāgānuga-bhakti*. One who has developed this spontaneous love is eligible for elevation to the platform enjoyed by the inhabitants of Vraja-bhūmi" (Śrī Caitanya-cariṭāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.221, purport).

to distribute among all the world's devotees. Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Ācārya, Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda also try to distribute this fruit, but the number of fruits is endless. Instead of decreasing, the number of sweet fruits always increases.

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)*

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

The general meaning of this Sanskrit verse will give us some understanding of what Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught to Śrīlā Rūpa Gosvāmī. All His teachings are in this verse, which is the essence of all His philosophical conclusions. This verse is the most important of the *maṅgalācaraṇa* (auspicious invocation) verses in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*; the rest of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is spoken just to explain it.

Anarpita-carīm cirāt. As I explained earlier, *anarpita* means 'has not been given,' and *cirāt* means 'for a long time.' I have explained that in Brahmā's day, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu comes soon after Śrī Kṛṣṇa's appearance in this world. This *prema* had been given before, trillions of years before, and since then so many Indras and Manus have come and gone.

Avatīrṇaḥ kalau samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti. This age of Kali-yuga is glorious because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself came in this age and gave what was not given for thousands upon thousands of *yuga* cycles of Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga, Kali-yuga. He came to give *unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam*.

What is *unnatojjvala-rasa*? There are five kinds of *rasa*, namely *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya*.

Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanandana, and Sanat-kumāra are devotees in *śānta-rasa*. They have very strong faith in Kṛṣṇa, but no actual personal relationship with Him; no ‘human-like’ relation of friendship, parenthood, etc. As liberated souls they are with Nārāyaṇa and they have transcended the suffering and sorrows of this world, but they have no sweet, human-like relation with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They consider that because Kṛṣṇa is God, He has no appetite, no thirst, and no fatigue. From their point of view there would be no need to massage or wash His feet, and because Kṛṣṇa has no appetite, there is no need of offering Him sweet foodstuffs. They see Him as the most self-satisfied of all those who are satisfied within themselves (*ātmārāmas*).

Śānta-rasa devotees are satisfied in themselves, but not in Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They have the realization that they are spirit souls beyond the body. They are beyond worldly requirements, but they do not serve Kṛṣṇa or Nārāyaṇa directly. There are many *śānta-rasa bhaktas*, but it is rare to find a *bhakta* in *dāsyā-rasa*. *Koṭiṣv api mahāmune*.²¹ Out of hundreds of millions of *bhaktas*, a Vaiṣṇava like Hanumān, who is in *dāsyā-rasa*, is very rare.

In this world there are two kinds of entities: non-moving and moving. Those on the level of immovable trees do not have developed senses. They feel sorrow, happiness, and other emotions, but they cannot express themselves. Among those entities who can move here and there are insects, birds, animals, and human beings; most living beings are below human beings.

This human form is very, very rare. Even most of those who have the form of men are still like dogs, asses, and other animals, if they are not favorable to Kṛṣṇa. Those who are favorable to Śrī Kṛṣṇa are very, very rare. Among hundreds of millions of favorable persons, those with intelligence and knowledge of how to serve properly are rarer still. And, among hundreds of millions of intelligent people, those who serve Lord Nārāyaṇa are exceptionally rare.

Among those who want to be devotees, a perfect *nārāyaṇa bhakta* is very rare. Among them the *kṛṣṇa-bhakta* is rarer, and those

21 This phrase is from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.14.5).

with the *vraja-bhāva* of *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya-bhāva* are still rarer. Up to *vātsalya-bhāva*, there is no *ujjala-rasa*. *Ujjala-rasa* is present only in *mādhurya-rasa*.

Mādhurya-rasa is of two kinds. In the abode of Lord Nārāyaṇa in the transcendental realm of Vaikuṅṭha, there are only two *rasas*: *śānta* and *dāsyā*. In Ayodya there are two and a half *rasas*, namely *śānta* and *dāsyā* and half of *vātsalya*. The *vātsalya-rasa* of devotees like Daśaratha Mahārāja and Kauśalyā, the parents of Lord Rāma, is ‘half,’ because their love is mixed with *aiśvarya-bhāva*, the mood of awe and reverence. There is a great difference between the son of Kauśalyā and Daśaratha and the son of Yaśodā-maiyā and Nanda Bābā. Sometimes Kauśalyā thought, “Oh, Rāma is God Himself,” and then she began to pray to Him, but Yaśodā-maiyā never prayed to Kṛṣṇa as God.

Once, looking inside Kṛṣṇa’s very little mouth while He was yawning, Yaśodā-maiyā saw the entire universe along with millions of Brahmās, Śaṅkaras (Śivas), and Viṣṇus. She thought, “O Supreme Lord, why am I seeing this? Kṛṣṇa is only a little boy. What I am seeing must be caused by a ghost or some magic. Am I dreaming?” She pinched herself. “No, I am not dreaming,” she concluded. “Then why am I seeing all this?”

She could not consider that Kṛṣṇa is God. She immediately ran to Nanda Bābā and asked, “Why am I seeing these scenes? Please bring Gargācārya and Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣis so that they may perform a ceremony to protect Kṛṣṇa.”

When the *brāhmaṇas* arrived, Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā-maiyā gave them large amounts of wealth and cows as a donation. Gargācārya and Śāṅḍilya Ṛṣi then told Nanda Bābā to bring a black cow. After mixing the urine and dung of that cow to make a paste, they took hold of its tail and used it as a brush to apply the paste on Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s body. Then they chanted, *lalāṭe keśavam rakṣet/ nārāyaṇam athodare rakṣet/ vakṣaḥ-sthale mādhavam rakṣet/ govindam kaṅṭha-kūpake rakṣet/ viṣṇum ca dakṣiṇe rakṣet/ bāhau ca madhusūdanam rakṣet/ trivikramam kandhare rakṣet/ vāmanam vāma-ṭpārśvake rakṣet/ śrīdharam vāma-bāhau rakṣet/ hṛṣīkeṣam kandhare rakṣet/ pṛṣṭhe ca padmanābham rakṣet/ kaṭyām dāmodaram rakṣet.*

“Now don’t fear,” they said. “Don’t fear.” They accepted Nanda Bābā’s donation in the form of cows and other valuables, and everyone became happy.

On the other hand, when Arjuna saw the Universal Form of Kṛṣṇa, he was frightened and began to pray, “I have committed so many offenses to You. I have called You ‘friend,’ I have called You ‘Kṛṣṇa,’ and I have ordered You to take my horses and become my charioteer. I have therefore dishonored You. Please excuse me. I will never offend You again. Please withdraw this Universal Form and show me Your human-like form. I want You to be my friend in my chariot.”

In Vaikuṅṭha and Ayodhyā there is *śuddha-dāsyā* (unmixed, or pure, servitorship), but in Vraja, servitorship mixes either with the mood of a friend or the mood of a parent. There are unlimited servants of Nanda Bābā who think, “Kṛṣṇa is my child.” They kiss Him, take Him on their shoulders, and play with Him. They also rebuke Him at times, saying, “Oh, You are very dirty.” The servants of Vaikuṅṭha and Ayodhyā cannot do this.

The relationship of Kṛṣṇa and His servants in Vraja is very beautiful – but it is not called *unnatojjvala-rasa*. Although it is more intimate than the pure *dāsyā-rasa* of Vaikuṅṭha and Ayodhyā, still it is called *dāsyā-rasa*.



Sakhya-rasa (friendship) is higher than *dāsyā-rasa*. It is so intimate that Kṛṣṇa’s friends can wrestle with Him. Hanumān cannot wrestle with Rāma, but Śrīdāma, Subala, Madhumaṅgala, Arjuna, and all of Kṛṣṇa’s friends of Vraja can defeat Him in wrestling. Moreover, in His defeat, Kṛṣṇa’s own happiness greatly increases. He wants to always be defeated by these friends. If He is defeated His friends become happy, and seeing this, He becomes still happier. Then, when they see His happiness increase, their happiness again increases.

In comparison, Hanumān cannot be so free with Rāma. When Sītā-devī is present at night with Rāma, Hanumān has to leave. In this way, the relationship of friendship (*sakhya-rasa*) of Vraja is indeed very elevated and sweet – but still it is not called *unnatojjvala-rasa*.



Next we come to *vātsalya-rasa*, the mood of a parent of Kṛṣṇa, which is much more elevated than the relationship and mood of a friend. Yaśodā-maiyā can rebuke Kṛṣṇa and tie Him with ropes. She can pull His ears and say, “Oh naughty boy, You are always telling lies. Did You eat this earth?”

“Mother, I have not eaten it.”

“Oh, You have not eaten it? All the boys are saying You did.”

“They are naughty. They want to see you punish Me. That is why they told you this.”

“Oh? I want to see inside Your mouth,” she says, and she looks inside.

Now come with me to a place very far from here. We are going to beautiful Gokula Vṛndāvana, where the Yamunā is flowing. We have now reached Brahmāṇḍa-ghāṭa, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Nandanandana, Yaśodā-nandana, a boy of two and a half years old. He is not wearing any clothing except for the peacock feather Yaśodā-maiyā has placed in His hair, and a very beautiful golden belt with dangling bells that she has tied around His waist.

When Kṛṣṇa moves, the bells of His waistbelt creates a very sweet tinkling sound. He is very happy to be playing with Śrīdāma, Subala, and all other boys nearby, and some servants are guarding all the boys so they do not fall into the Yamunā.

All of a sudden the boys, especially Madhumaṅgala and Śrīdāma, begin to clap very loudly. Kṛṣṇa wonders what has happened, why is everyone clapping and laughing for no apparent reason.

He asks, “Why are you clapping and laughing?”

Joking with Kṛṣṇa, they say, “You are very black. Your mother

is so beautiful, with a fair complexion, and Your father is very fair. It is absurd to think that a black son like You could have come from them. You are not really the son of Nanda and Yaśodā.”

They again clapped, along with Baladeva. Kṛṣṇa was alone; the others have teamed up against Him. They are making funny faces, twisting their mouths, clapping, and irritating Kṛṣṇa by their different poses.

Kṛṣṇa becomes unhappy and begins to weep. He asks them, “Oh, I am not the son of Yaśodā? Then where have I come from?”

They say, “Perhaps some lady gave birth to You, and she could not support You, so on the day You came from her womb, she placed You in the hole of a tree. Then, either Nanda Bābā or Yaśodā-maiyā saw You and very mercifully brought You to their home from there. You have certainly not come from Yaśodā’s womb.”

Weeping very bitterly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa returns home and enters His courtyard. Unable to control His tears, He begins rolling on the earth. That day He does not run inside His house calling, “Mother! Mother!” He is simply weeping. Yaśodā-maiyā comes at once and tries to place Kṛṣṇa on her lap, but He pushes her away.

Seeing him very angry and very sad, Yaśodā-maiyā asks, “My dear boy, my dear son. What happened that You are weeping so much that You won’t sit on my lap?”

“I am not your son. Why are you calling Me your son? I am not your son.”

“Why are You speaking like this?”

“All the boys are clapping and laughing and joking and teasing Me. They say I am not your son, so I must now go away to the forest.”

“Who is telling You this?”

“All the boys are saying it, and Baladeva is also saying it. He is taking their side and clapping.”

Yaśodā-maiyā somehow manages to take weeping Kṛṣṇa on her lap and says, “I promise You on the name of Nārāyaṇa that I am not telling a lie. You are my son and You have come from my womb.” After saying this three times, He becomes somewhat consoled.

This beautiful *vātsalya-rasa* is not found in Vaikuṅṭha, Ayodhyā, or even in Dvārakā. It is not found even in Mathurā.

Nārada Muni once came to the courtyard of Yaśodā-maiyā and saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa rolling on the earth and weeping. “Mother! Mother! Mother!” I want to sit on your lap.”

Yaśodā-maiyā replied, “I will not take You on my lap. You are a dirty and naughty boy. You go to the neighborhood *gopīs* and steal their butter and yoghurt, just like a monkey. I will not pick You up.”

Nārada was struck with wonder. “Yaśodā-maiyā is so fortunate,” he pondered. “Govinda, Kṛṣṇa, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, and the very form of eternity, knowledge and bliss. Yet, Yaśodā is treating Him like her own son. Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants to sit on her lap, and she is saying, ‘Don’t come. Go away. I do not like naughty boys.’”

Who can speak like this? Nārada, Śaṅkara, and Brahmā cannot do so. Vasudeva and Devakī also cannot do so. Daśaratha and Kauśalyā certainly cannot do so. Only Yaśodā-maiyā can do this. Nanda Bābā can somewhat, but not exactly like Yaśodā-maiyā, so her affection is superior even to his. Still, her parental love is not called *unnatojjvala-rasa*.



Now come with me to Dvārakā and see one of the two kinds of *mādhurya-rasa*, namely *svakīya-rasa*, the love of Kṛṣṇa’s lawfully wedded wives. In Dvārakā, *svakīya* is the best *rasa* of all, and Kṛṣṇa’s 16,108 queens are the excellent examples. Of these queens, eight are most prominent, among them Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā are prominent, and among these two queens Satyabhāmā is the most exalted.

Rukmiṇī was very beautiful and she is a perfectly chaste wife, but she was always serving Kṛṣṇa in a submissive mood. Satyabhāmā, on the other hand, sometimes manifested intense transcendental jealous anger (*māna*²²).

22 *Māna* is the sentiment that prevents the lover and beloved from meeting freely, although they are together and are attracted to each other. *Māna* gives rise to transient emotions like transcendental anger, dependency, doubt, restlessness, pride, and jealousy.

Kṛṣṇa was once sitting on the bed of Rukmiṇī-devī. Hundreds of thousands of maidservants were there to serve Him, but Rukmiṇī-devī asked them all to leave the room. She took a *cāmara* (yaktail fan) in her own hand and fanned Him with great love and affection.

On that same day, Kṛṣṇa was very, very grave. He told Rukmiṇī-devī, “I have done something wrong. I have disturbed your good fortune. All the very beautiful, well-qualified, and youthful princes of the world wanted to marry you. As far as I am concerned, I am black and not very beautiful. In fact, I have no qualification at all; I am *nirguṇa* (without any qualities). Because you are so qualified, the sons of the richest persons in the world wanted to marry you. You are the most beautiful lady in the world. There is no one equal to you, no comparison at all. You are the daughter of a very great king, but I am not even a prince. I am a very ordinary person.

“Only poor persons have affection for Me. Those who are neglected by everyone take shelter of Me, and I am also affectionate to them. Rich, qualified, and beautiful persons do not like Me, and I am also not disposed toward them.

“But all of them want you, so I think that it would be better for you if I take you to a person who is as beautiful, wonderful, and qualified as you. If you let Me know who that person is, I will take you to him. I do not want you to have to stay with a person as unqualified as Myself.

“You may argue that, ‘No one will marry me because I am already married,’ but I assure you that everyone is still eager to marry you. Śiśupāla wants to defeat Me in every way, so he would certainly marry you. In fact, all the princes of the world want to defeat Me. So please let Me know whom to give you to, with whom you will be very happy.”

Having heard Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s words, Rukmiṇī lost her grip on her *cāmara*, which fell from her hands as she fainted. Kṛṣṇa was alarmed. Trying to see whether she was still alive, He took some cotton and put it under her nose. She was breathing very slowly, as though she would die at any moment. He then placed His mouth near her ear and said, “O dearest Rukmiṇī, you are My life and soul. I was only joking with you. If I knew that you were so soft and sensitive, I would not have said these things to you. I used to joke with the *gopīs*, and

they would joke twice as much back. They would tell Me, ‘Get out of this *kuñja*. We don’t want to see the face of any black person. All black persons are like You, always cheating others. At once go from here.’

“I thought that you would be somewhat like the *gopīs*. I never thought that you would be so sensitive that you would almost die. In the relationship between husbands and wives, the husbands are always laboring very hard to maintain the family. In the evening they are tired and return home, for the sole purpose of seeing and hearing the sweet voices of their little children and the sweet behavior of their wives.

“When husband and wife remain for a long time at home, they become like two vessels. When two or three vessels come together they make sounds as though they are quarreling. In the same way, quarreling is a *rasa* in this householder life. I wanted to see your face when you are angry, to taste its sweetness. I never thought that you would become so devastated. You are My life and soul. I will never joke with you like this in the future. If you were to die, I would also die.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa wept as He spoke, and Rukmiṇī-devī regained consciousness. When she gathered her senses, she also began to weep and said, “You are telling the truth. You are surely *nirguṇa*, because the worldly qualities of *sattva* (material goodness), *raja* (passion), and *tama* (ignorance) are not present in You. I know that You are the God of gods. The reason that only poor, neglected persons worship You and serve You is that rich persons, full with material knowledge and coming from elevated families from the worldly point of view, are always drowning in the ocean of false ego, thinking, ‘I am so learned, and I have received all the degrees of all the universities of the world. I have so many credentials, I am from a very rich family, and I am so beautiful.’

“If one is beautiful, he thinks, ‘I am the monarch of all I survey,’ and neglects his spouse and everyone else. Such materialistic persons cannot serve You nor can they chant Your holy names. I think that only persons neglected by the world, and who know this world to be full of birth, death, and other miseries, can come to You and serve You. Only those who realize their unhappiness come to serve You.

“I myself am under the modes of nature, namely *sattva*, *raja*, and *tama*. It is for this reason that worldly persons appreciate me, but they are unfortunate.

“I want to serve Your lotus feet as a maidservant of the maidservant of Your maidservant; washing Your pots, sweeping, and always serving in some way or other. I want to serve those same lotus feet which the *gopīs* have served. I do not want anything more. If You tell me to leave You, I will die at once.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa then told Rukmiṇī-devī, “I will never speak like this again. I was only joking.”

All *rasas* are within Rukmiṇī-devī – but even this affection is not called *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

In these topics we find such elevated philosophical conclusions. Try to understand them all, because they are the conclusive truths taught by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

The Gopīs' Selfless Love

By His unconditional mercy, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to this world to give *unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śrīyam*. I have explained that although the affection and service Kṛṣṇa receives from His friends and Yaśodā-maiyā and Nanda Bābā is very elevated, it is not *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

I have discussed the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* pastime wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa's queen, Rukmiṇī, fully gave her heart to Him. The following story illustrates a pastime of Satyabhāmā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's most dearly beloved queen. Although very exalted, her love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is still not *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

SATYABHĀMĀ'S TRANSCENDENTAL ANGER

Once, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and all His queens were sitting in His assembly hall; some fanned Him with a peacock fan, others with a *cāmara*, and others served Him in various other ways. At that time Nārada Muni²³ arrived, holding a *pārijāta* flower from heaven. The *pārijāta* was so beautiful, so aromatic, and so sweet that it made all of Dvārakā fragrant. Nārada Muni approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa and requested, "I am giving this flower to You. Right now, in my presence I would like You to give it to Your most beloved queen."

Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought, "Nārada is very tricky, and now he wants to create a problem for Me." He knew that if He would give the flower to any queen, the others would be upset and angry with Him. He wondered, "Why is Nārada doing this? What shall I do?"

Nārada Muni repeatedly requested Kṛṣṇa to give the flower to His favorite queen, saying that this would make him very happy. Seeing no means of escape, Kṛṣṇa considered, "I cannot cheat Nārada, because he is so expert at cheating others." He took the *pārijāta* flower and looked towards all His beautiful queens, who

23 Śrī Kṛṣṇa ordered Yogamāyā to inspire Nārada to come and assist Him in performing new pastimes. Nārada was very pleased to come to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mission.

were all thinking, “Kṛṣṇa loves me the most.” They were all sure of this, because whenever He met with any queen, He told her, “Oh, you are My dearest queen.” Each was convinced that she would receive the flower.

Because Rukmiṇī was the seniormost queen, Kṛṣṇa placed the *pārijāta* flower in her hand, and she became very happy. “I am so fortunate to be Kṛṣṇa’s most beloved,” she thought. “Now it is clear that I am His favorite.”

Seeing this, the lips of the other queens began to quiver, especially Satyabhāmā’s. She became like a very poisonous snake that becomes highly disturbed and begins to hiss when provoked with a stick.

While Nārada Muni relished this scene, Kṛṣṇa considered that He was in very big trouble and wondered what to do.²⁴ Satyabhāmā was so angry that she could not control or hide her emotions. She immediately left the assembly and, removing her very beautiful royal garments and ornaments, stormed into the ‘anger room.’

Previously in India, the king’s palace had a *kopa-bhavana* (anger room). In this way, when any queen was in an angry, sulky mood, she would take off her royal garments, dress in old, dirty, worn and torn garments, and enter that room. Sitting or lying down, not on a bed but on the ground, she would weep and lament. Then, if the king heard her, he would come to her, find the cause of her anger, and appease her.

Satyabhāmā wept loudly in the palace *kopa-bhavan*, taking many long breaths. Kṛṣṇa was aware of the seriousness of the problem, and therefore He left the assembly and silently entered the room. Then, sitting by her side He tried to caress her feet, but she reacted like a furious lady snake and kicked His hands away.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa was very expert at pacifying angry ladies, because He had had so much experience in Vṛndāvana with the *gopīs*. Because He had pacified Śrīmatī Rādhikā so many times, it was easy for Him

24 Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to give away the flower after some time, and thus ‘cheat’ Nārada, but He allowed Nārada to ‘cheat’ Him. This increased His own pleasure because He is *bhakta-vatsala*, meaning that He always desires to please His devotee. He wanted to be ‘defeated’ by Nārada. Nārada knew that Kṛṣṇa wanted to create new pastimes; he wanted to fulfill Kṛṣṇa’s desire to kill Narakāśura and deliver the 16,000 imprisoned princesses, and he was also eager to see these pastimes.

to pacify Satyabhāmā. He did not need His flute in Dvārakā, because the queens' sulky mood was not so high that Kṛṣṇa would need it to pacify them. If He simply showed some anger in response to theirs, they would become submissive.

Once, when Kṛṣṇa was glorifying the *gopīs* in the royal assembly, Satyabhāmā could not tolerate this, and she left. Kṛṣṇa became angry and announced to the entire assembly, "She should get out of My palace. I don't want to see her. Her father, Satrājī, is wicked, and she is also wicked." Someone went to Satyabhāmā and told her what Kṛṣṇa had said, and she immediately returned to Him, in a mood of submission, her anger subsided.

The *gopīs*, on the other hand, were not living in Kṛṣṇa's palace, nor was He supporting them with food, clothing, or any material facility. Therefore, they were not in any way subordinate to Him. Rather, like Him, they were independent. They could chastise Him, whereas He could not chastise them. They would say, "Go from here. You do not support us. We take nothing from You. We are not obliged to You." He could not pacify them very easily.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa would fail in His attempts to pacify Śrīmatī Rādhikā, He would take the help of Lalitā and Viśākhā. If this also failed, He would take the help of Subala. If that failed as well, He would take His flute and play a tune steeped in pitiable lamentation due to a mood of separation from Her. Through His flute He would tell Her, "I cannot live without you. I am dying, I am dying," and then Rādhikā would accept Him.

Once, because of Kṛṣṇa's behavior, Śrīmatī Rādhikā was experiencing so much *māna* (Her sulky mood) that She would not come to meet with Him. Many days passed. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was grievously lamenting and wanted to find a way to pacify Her. He therefore took shelter at the lotus feet of Lalitā and Viśākhā, who whispered some suggestions into His ear. Following their advice, He came in the morning to Śrīmatī Rādhikā's home in Yāvaṭa, dressed as a student begging alms. Wearing a sacred thread and wooden sandals, and carrying an umbrella made of palm leaves, He called, "I am a *brahmacārī*, a disciple of Gargācārya. I remain at a house only as long as a person would take to milk a cow. If I leave empty-handed, many calamities may befall you. Your cows may die, or the master of your cows may die along with all the members of your household."

Jaṭilā, Śrīmatī Rādhikā's mother-in-law, saw this very beautiful student, as brilliant as the sun, calling out, as *māyāvādī-sannyāsī* do, the name of impersonal, powerless, qualityless Brahman: "Alaka nirañjana! Alaka nirañjana!"

Seeing that He was begging alms, Jaṭilā wanted to give Him a donation, but He refused to take anything from her. "I cannot tell if you are married, unmarried, or if you are a widow," He said. "If there is a chaste lady who has the symptoms of being married²⁵, only then will I accept any alms."

Jaṭilā went inside the house and told Śrīmatī Rādhikā, "Dear daughter, a very powerful student *yogī* has come, and the rays emanating from His body are like the effulgence of the sun. He looks like a scholar of the Vedas. Perhaps He is the student of Gargācārya. Do not disobey or dishonor Him. Please, give Him some alms."

Śrīmatī Rādhikā refused: "Because you always accuse Me of being unchaste and speaking with boys, I will not go to Him, even if He is a scholar or a *yogī*, or even if He has all other good qualities."

Jaṭilā repeatedly requested Her, but Śrīmatī Rādhikā was not willing to comply. Jaṭilā then told Lalitā and Viśākhā, "She refuses to obey me. If She does not give alms to that boy, all of our cows will die, and my son Abhimanyu will also die. Please help me."

Lalitā and Viśākhā approached Śrīmatī Rādhikā and told Her, "You should obey your mother-in-law and give alms to that scholar." Somehow they convinced Her to agree, and therefore She took some grains, flour, *ghee*, *dahl*, gold coins, and other valuable objects and placed them in a golden pot. Then, completely covering Her face with Her veil so that it could not be seen, She came out of Her room with the help of Her *sakhīs* and very slowly approached the place where Śrī Kṛṣṇa was standing. She began to place the alms in His begging cloth, but Kṛṣṇa refused. "I cannot accept this," He said, "My sole reason for coming here from afar is to beg You to put Your anger in My cloth. If You simply smile and give Me Your anger, I will be satisfied. Otherwise, I will die."

A very slight smile appeared on Śrīmatī Rādhikā's face as She upturned the pot, not in His begging cloth but on His head. Laughing

25 In Vedic culture *sindūra*, bindi, conchshell bracelets, and red lac painted on the feet are some signs that a lady is married.

along with Her *sakhīs*, She immediately returned home with them and Kṛṣṇa was satisfied.

In this way, Kṛṣṇa had to try in so many ways to pacify Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the *gopīs*. If His flute-playing failed, if Lalitā and Viśākhā failed, if Śrīdāma and Subala failed, and if He Himself failed, He had to discover a new method.

In Dvārakā, however, He had no use for His flute, for Lalitā and Viśākhā, or for Subala or Śrīdāma. His chastising words were threatening enough for the queens, but that was His final weapon. Here, He spoke to Satyabhāmā in a very mild voice.

“Why are you so angry?” He asked Satyabhāmā. “I merely gave Rukmiṇī one flower. I will give you a tree full of *pārijāta* flowers and plant it in your courtyard. Please don’t be angry.”

Satyabhāmā said, “Go away, I don’t want to see You. You are a liar and a cheater. I cannot believe a word You say. Several times You have told each one of us that we are Your dearmost beloved. You say this, but You don’t mean it. You cheat us all.”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “I am not cheating you. Have faith in Me. Test Me. Please give Me another chance.”

“Yes, I will give You one more chance. If, as You have said, You can plant a *pārijāta* tree full of flowers in my courtyard, then I will be happy.”

“Come on,” Kṛṣṇa said.

He sat with Satyabhāmā-devī on the back of His bird-carrier Garuḍa, and together they traveled to Indra’s kingdom. On the way Kṛṣṇa killed the demon Narakāsura, and when He and His queen arrived He told Indra, “You always say that I am your friend, so now I am asking you for one *pārijāta* tree. I will take it to Earth and plant it in the courtyard of Satyabhāmā. Nandana-kānana is full of *pārijāta* trees. Be pleased with Me and give Me one tree from there.”

Indra replied, “Oh, You dare to speak like this to me? Leave heaven at once and return to Earth. Not even one flower from the *pārijāta* tree, what to speak of an entire tree, can be given to worldly persons. How is it that You were able to come here? One cannot enter heaven without performing austerities for hundreds of thousands of years. You should go now.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said, “I have come here with the sole purpose of taking the tree, which I will now uproot.”

When Indra still refused, Kṛṣṇa, who was carried by Garuḍa, went to Nandana-kānana and uprooted a *pārijāta* tree. Kṛṣṇa then began His return journey to Dvārakā, but when He was halfway there, Indra and his son and all his soldiers attacked Him in an attempt to take back the tree. At that time Kṛṣṇa’s son Pradyumna came there and defeated the son of Indra, Jayanta. Kṛṣṇa Himself defeated Indra and his soldiers, and then returned to Dvārakā.

He then called all the queens to the home of Satyabhāmā, and in front of them all, He planted the *pārijāta* tree in her garden. Satyabhāmā became so happy, and she tried to honor all of Kṛṣṇa’s other queens. If Kṛṣṇa had given the tree to Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā would never have gone to Rukmiṇī’s palace, whereas here we see that Rukmiṇī was present at Satyabhāmā’s palace and was quite grave. Although she was thinking, “Oh, Kṛṣṇa is more pleased with Satyabhāmā, who is now His most beloved wife,” she did not reveal any symptom of her unhappiness.

Even though there seems to be some envy in Dvārakā, actually there is no chance of any inimical emotion there. Rather, this display of emotions is one of the stages of transcendental love, for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. At the same time, although Satyabhāmā’s affection and service to Kṛṣṇa is so glorious, it is not *unnatojjvala-rasa*. This most glorious love is unique to the *gopīs*.

UNIQUE TO THE GOPĪS

Though there are many varieties of groups of *gopīs*, they can be said to be in two categories: *nitya-siddha* and *sādhana-siddha*:

- (1) *Nitya-siddha*: The *nitya-siddha* (eternally perfect) *gopīs* are also of two kinds:
 - (1.1) *kāya-vyūha*, the direct bodily expansions of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.
 - (1.2) *nitya-siddha-jīvas*, the eternally perfect living entities manifested from Baladeva Prabhu and having *gopī* forms. They never at any time come in contact with the material energy.

- (2) *Sādhana-siddha*: These *gopīs* are also of two categories:
- (2.1) *ayauthikī*, those who are not in groups, but who came to *prakāṣa* Vṛndāvana (where Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are manifest in this world) either individually or in a pair.
- (2.2) *yauthikī*, those who came in groups. *Yauthikī gopīs* can be further divided into three categories:
- (2.2.1) *ṛṣi-cārī* or *muni-cārī*, the sages of Daṇḍakāraṇya forest.
- (2.2.2) *śruti-cārī*, coming from the group of the personified Vedas and *śruti-mantras*.
- (2.2.3) those coming from Janakapura. When Rāma went to Janakapura to marry Sītā, the unmarried princesses there had a desire to marry Him.

Having performed *sādhana* for many lifetimes, the *sādhana-siddha gopīs* had completely given up their anger, lust, greed, and worldly desires. Gradually they had received *niṣṭhā* (steadiness), then *ruci* (taste in chanting and other devotional practices), and then *āsakti* (natural attachment). Eventually, from the heart of the *rāgātmikā-gopīs*, *śuddha-sattva* had entered their hearts and they attained *bhāva* and then *prema*. This position is very, very rare.

The devotees in *prakāṣa* Vraja, the place in which Kṛṣṇa performs His manifest pastimes in the material world, are so rare. They have no worldly desires, pains, sufferings, or sorrows; they are not even aware of such desires or sufferings, having become freed from them in their stage of *sādhana*²⁶. They had attained this freedom from material contamination while still in the stage of *sādhana*, many lifetimes previous to their having become perfect.

When they had reached the most advanced stage of *bhāva*, they took birth in Vraja and began to associate with the eternal associates of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Those who were already married had no connection with their husbands, because Yogamāyā was protecting them.

26 "Sādhana-bhakti is of two kinds: *vaidhī* and *rāgānuga*. When *uttamā-bhakti* is accomplished through the medium of the senses of the conditioned soul, it is called *sādhana-bhakti*. That *bhakti* which is accomplished through the function of the senses, and by which *bhāva-bhakti* is obtained, is called *sādhana-bhakti*" (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, Verse 2, Śrī Bindu-vikāśini-vṛtti).

The *kāya-vyūha* (bodily expansions) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā directly and freely entered *rāsa-līlā* in the groves of Vṛndāvana. No obstacles prevented them, and Yogamāyā made all arrangements for them as well as for the *nitya-siddha gopīs*. The *sādhana-siddha gopīs*, however, who had for the first time taken birth in earthly Vraja during Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes, were stopped.

Who are the *sādhana-siddha gopīs*? Some had worshiped Kātyāyanī with the hope of receiving a benediction that Śrī Kṛṣṇa would become their beloved. They had prayed, "*kātyāyanī mahāmāyā, mahā-yoginy adhīśvari, nanda-gopa-sutaṁ devī patiṁ me kuru te namaḥ* – Please give me the benediction that Kṛṣṇa will become my husband." Actually, the *gopīs* were young and had no real idea of having Kṛṣṇa as a husband; they had no real idea of 'husband.' They had seen that their parents were married. They had seen that their relatives were living with their own husbands. Thus, being attracted to Kṛṣṇa's enchanting beauty, they were simply thinking of Him as their 'play husband.' They wanted Him only as their beloved.

Some of the *sādhana-siddha gopīs* had taken birth in Vraja from the womb of *gopīs*. They were each married to one of the *gopas*, and due to hearing the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they developed great affection for Him and a desire to meet with Him. On the night of the *rāsa-līlā*, when they heard the sound of His flute, they made an attempt to meet Him but were stopped by their husbands.

Other *sādhana-siddha gopīs*, those who had sufficient association of the *nitya-siddha gopīs*, went to meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa without restriction. Only those who had recently arrived there, and those who had taken birth for the first time in Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes on Earth, were checked.

Why were they checked? It is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that a slight *kaṣāya* (obstacle) remained in their hearts, from which they had to become free. Thus, when their husbands checked them, their hearts burned in the fire of separation. The intensity of their feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa burnt any *aśubha* (inauspiciousness) still present in their hearts. In their meditation, they took Kṛṣṇa into their hearts and embraced Him there so tightly that in that meeting with Him their *subha* (auspiciousness) also disappeared.²⁷

27 "Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī hides the confidential desired goal of the *gopīs* from materialistic people. By the words *duḥsaha* etc., he expresses the external meaning, as well as the deep inner meaning that is dear to devotees who have knowledge of confidential devotional service.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu met the dacoits Jagāi and Mādhāi, He did not cut off their heads. No weapon was used. Rather, He changed their moods and they began a new life. They did not continue their past activities, because all results of their sinful and pious activities had been burned.

It is necessary to understand that worldly pious and impious activities are both binding because they both impede one in rendering service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the stage of *sādhana*, reactions to both good and bad activities are destroyed. In Sanskrit, good and bad activities are called *puṇya* (pious activities) and *pāpa* (sins). With the reactions to these two types of activities awaiting us, we will have to take birth again and again. So they will have to be given up, and then we will attain *āsakti* and then *bhāva*.

The *sādhana-siddha gopīs* who had recently taken birth in Vṛāja had already passed through all these stages and entered into the wombs of *gopīs*. If there were no pious and impious activities, no *puṇya* or *pāpa*, then what was burned?

An analogy is given of ripe and unripe mangos. Ripe mangos may be eaten immediately, whereas unripe mangos require heating so that they may soon ripen. Similarly, those *gopīs* who had sufficient eagerness could immediately join the *rāsa* dance, while others, feeling the intense burning heat of separation from Kṛṣṇa

27 (continued) "First he speaks for materialistic people: 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa granted liberation to the *gopīs*.' This means that when the *gopīs* experienced the acute pain of separation from their most dearly beloved, the inauspiciousness (*aśubha*) in their beings vanished. The result of their auspicious activity was also destroyed as they experienced the bliss of embracing Acyuta (Kṛṣṇa) in their meditation. Therefore, the bondage of past activity was destroyed, they attained the Supersoul by thinking of Him as their paramour, and they gave up their bodies made of three modes of nature.

"Now he speaks for devotees: At the time of intense meditation, the *gopīs* experienced extreme sorrow due to their fire-like separation from their beloved, and they also attained the unparalleled happiness of meeting with Him. In this way their desire was fulfilled. Furthermore, the immense suffering of separation from their dearest beloved humiliated all inauspiciousness. The intolerable fire of separation from one's beloved exceeds the power of all things that inflict death, beginning from the forest-fire and ending with the *kāla-kūṭa* poison (the severe and fresh poison of a serpent). In this fire, all inauspiciousness renounced its pride in its severity and, conceding defeat, began to tremble.

"As soon as Lord Acyuta came in the *gopīs*' meditation, their transcendental bodies made of *prema* and endowed with appropriate self-conception manifested, and He embraced them. The relief the *gopīs* experienced at that time conquered all material and spiritual inauspiciousness. That is, in comparison to the blissful embrace of their beloved who appeared in their meditation, the material happiness of millions of universes as well as the spiritual bliss of thousands of Brahman attainments appeared quite inferior" (*Sārārtha-darśinī*, Chapter 29, Verse 10, *Bhāvānuvāda*).

when they were stopped by their relatives, became qualified to meet with Him on another night.

A TRICK OF YOGAMAYA

As mentioned earlier, some of the *sādhana-siddha gopīs* had newly arrived in Vraja and had never personally met Kṛṣṇa; they had only seen Him from afar. Some had come originally from Indraprastha and were newly married to Vṛāja *gopas*; thus they had lived in Vraja for only a few months or a few years. Some had come from other parts of Vraja and had recently come to Nandagāoṇ and Yāvaṭa through their marriages. Among these *sādhana-siddha gopīs*, those who had not had sufficient association with the *nitya-siddha gopīs* could not freely meet with Kṛṣṇa, although they wanted to. Then, when they took Him into their hearts by their intense feeling of separation from Him and strongly embraced Him there, they became qualified to meet Him on another night.

When the *gopīs* were still little children, Yogamāyā played a trick on Brahmā by entering his mind. She made him desire to personally induce Kṛṣṇa to perform further pastimes. By her influence he thought, "If I steal His calves and cowherd boys, what will He do?" He skillfully stole them and placed them in a cave for one year. At the end of that time he came to see what Kṛṣṇa was doing, and he became quite puzzled. Kṛṣṇa was playing as usual. He had expanded into millions of calves and cowherd boys, and was playing with them daily as He always had, as if nothing had happened. He then gave Brahmā the mercy to realize that all the calves and friends were His own expansions.

Why did Śrī Kṛṣṇa perform this pastime with Brahmā? One reason was that all the cows had more affection for Kṛṣṇa than for their calves, and desired that He would become their calf. They desired this, and He had to fulfill their desire.

When Kṛṣṇa would come home in the evening after cowherding, the elderly *gopīs* would kiss Him with great motherly love, but after a moment He would run into Mother Yaśodā's home and disappear from their vision. They wanted Him as their son, so that they could

unrestrictedly offer Him their heartfelt motherly affection. Kṛṣṇa had to fulfill their desire as well.

More importantly, all the girls of Vraja wanted Kṛṣṇa as their beloved. Therefore, when He took the individual forms of the millions of cowherd boys. Paurṇamāsī told everyone that that year was auspicious for everyone's marriages. The young *gopīs* were thus married to those *gopas* who were actually expansions of Kṛṣṇa.



TO REACH THAT GOAL

We should perform neither material pious nor impious activities. We must try to engage all our activities in Kṛṣṇa's service. If we perform activities for ourselves or for the pleasure of others, in order to do good for them materially, this is called 'pious activities,' and this will create obstacles in our spiritual development. If we make a temple in order to show the world that we are performing great work, and think, "I am the creator of this temple. I will receive so much name and fame," this will also be an obstacle for our *bhakti*. We must act only to please Kṛṣṇa, Gurudeva, and pure devotees.

If at the time of *sādhana*, we engage in activities other than pleasing Kṛṣṇa, our *sādhana* becomes hampered and we will not be able to enter Vraja. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explains the meaning of *sādhana-bhakti*, and it is necessary that we acquaint ourselves with its true meaning. Sometimes we chant *harināma* with our hearts full of worldly desires and *anarthas*²⁸. We do not know what is *sādhana-bhajana* or what is love and affection for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We only chant because our *guru* has told us that by chanting *harināma* everything auspicious will be achieved. This is surely

28 "Anarthas are of four kinds: (1) *svārūpa-bhrama* (illusions about spiritual identity); (2) *asat-tṛṣṇā* (thirst for that which is unreal, that is, material enjoyment); (3) *aparādha* (offenses); and (4) *hṛdaya-daurbalya* (weakness of heart)" (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, Verse 3, Śrī Bindu-vikāśinī-ṛtī).

correct, but at the same time our *harināma* chanting should be pure and with some realization of our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. We must give up all worldly desires, all *anarthas*, and all offences, and even the desire for Kṛṣṇa to be our husband. That will be real *sādhana*.

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyaṁ jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir-uttamā.*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.1)

Uttama-bhakti, or pure devotional service, is the cultivation of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In other words, it is the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed through all endeavors of the body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*). It is not covered by *jñāna* and *karma*, and it is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

All kinds of worldly desires, as well as desires to achieve *Vaikuṅṭha* or *Dvārakā*, should be given up. The practitioner of pure *sādhana-bhakti* does not cover his *bhakti* by taking the help of *karma* (fruitive activities) and *jñāna* (the philosophy of impersonalism). He has no desire other than the desire to please Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotees, and to attain pure *bhakti*. He engages his body, mind, and words in Kṛṣṇa's service, and also serves Him by his moods. He avoids any activity that will create an obstacle in his *bhakti*. Such pure activity is called pure *sādhana-bhakti*.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja explains in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*kṛti-sādhyā bhavet sādhyā-
bhāvā sā sādhanābhidhā
nitya-siddhasya bhāvasya
prākāṣyaṁ hṛdi sādhyatā*

(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.105)

When transcendental devotional service by which love for Kṛṣṇa is attained is executed by the senses, it is called *sādhana-bhakti*, or the regulative discharge of devotional service. Such devotion eternally exists within the heart of

every living entity. The awakening of this eternal devotion is the potentiality of devotional service in practice.

Let us remember this philosophical truth, keeping it in our hearts. Let us pray to become qualified to understand it.

If you do not understand, you can inquire from senior Vaiṣṇavas, and if you are still not satisfied, you may come to me with your questions and I will try to answer them. These meetings are very good and rare opportunities to discuss these highest of topics. If you lose this opportunity, it may be lost forever. It is very rare to have this association, so try to make it successful. Do not miss even a word. By this, you will see yourself developing towards perfection in *bhakti*.

Supreme Chastity

CHANTING WITH RELATIONSHIP

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 that particular relationship which is inherent in our heart. Unless one has a proper relationship with a bona fide *guru* and a realization of one’s own relationship with Kṛṣṇa, *kṛṣṇa-prema* will not be attained by him for hundreds and millions of births.

*bahu janma kare yadi śravaṇa, kīrtana
tabu ta’ nā pāya kṛṣṇa-pade prema-dhana*
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Adi-līlā* 8.16)

If one is infested with the ten offenses in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, despite his endeavor to chant the holy name for many births, he will not get the love of Godhead that is the ultimate goal of this chanting.

One pure holy name chanted by a devotee who has taken initiation in a proper way, and has at least somewhat realized his relationship with Kṛṣṇa and His associates, is superior to three-hundred-thousand holy names chanted by someone who has not.

Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a pure devotee, and he chanted three-hundred-thousand holy names daily. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave him the title ‘*nāmācārya* Haridāsa Ṭhākura’ and greatly honored him. He daily gave him His *darśana* at Siddha-bakula, Haridāsa Ṭhākura’s *āśrama*, and sent him His *prasādam* remnants with Govinda, His servant.

Another devotee, a boy named Rūpa, was very junior to Haridāsa Ṭhākura. He was not an *ācārya*, nor did he chant many

holy names daily. This was because whenever he began to chant, he became so absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes that he sometimes lost external consciousness and would simply weep in ecstasy. He was also writing books that explained the inner moods of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, which the Lord had revealed to him in Prayāga.²⁹ By his preaching and writing, he taught the inner desire of Mahāprabhu in this world.

Who is superior? Ordinary persons consider Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura superior to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, but those who know all the philosophical truths understand that Rūpa Gosvāmī is superior. Rūpa Gosvāmī is Rūpa Mañjarī and Haridāsa Ṭhākura is both Brahmā and Prahlāda Mahārāja, so Rūpa Gosvāmī is far superior. Such truths are unimaginable to people in general; only those who do *bhajana* seriously can realize this fact.

Let us try to enter deeply into *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, taking initiation (*dīkṣā*) in a real way³⁰ so that we can have a permanent connection with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We should also honor a person who has not yet received *dīkṣā* but is chanting Kṛṣṇa's name, for he is trying to be part of Kṛṣṇa's family. Even if he rebukes us, we should still honor him. We should criticize only our undeveloped, unconscious mind. The mind is so wicked. Each morning we should take a broom and beat the mind by saying, "O mind, be pure and try to serve Kṛṣṇa."

My humble request to everyone is to honor all senior Vaiṣṇavas, senior in years spent with *gurudeva* as well as senior in *bhakti*. We cannot realize who is senior or junior in *bhakti* unless we ourselves are advanced. Sometimes we may be able, but generally we are only qualified to consider who is senior or junior in years with *gurudeva*. This is good, but the consideration on the basis of *bhakti* is superior.

29 "Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī the ultimate limit of the truth about Lord Kṛṣṇa, the truth about devotional service, and the truth about transcendental mellows consummating in conjugal love between Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa" (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Madhya-līlā 19.115).

30 "That religious undertaking which bestows *divya-jñāna*, or transcendental knowledge, and destroys *pāpa* (sins), *pāpa-bīja* (the seed of sin), and *avidyā* (ignorance) to the root is called *dīkṣā* by learned authorities in the absolute truth" (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*).

"*Divya-jñāna* is transcendental knowledge contained within a *mantra* which reveals the form and identity of the Supreme Lord (*bhagavat-svarūpa*) as well as the knowledge of the *sādhaka-jiva*'s particular relationship with the Lord" (*Bhakti-sandarbhā*, Anuccheda 283).

*jena vaiṣṇava ciniyā laiya ādara
karibe jabe vaiṣṇavera kṛpā tāhera
sarva siddhi avaśya pāyibe tabe
(Vaiṣṇava Vijñapti, by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)*

When one will be able to recognize a Vaiṣṇava and offer him respect, then one will undoubtedly attain all perfection by his mercy.

Those who are qualified to realize who is a *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī*, who is a *madhyama-adhikārī*, and who is an *uttama-adhikārī* are surely above *madhyama-madhyama-adhikārī*, and such Vaiṣṇavas should be respected.³¹ Our spiritual life develops greatly when we give respect according to this standard, considering the stages of one's real advancement in devotion. It is not correct to honor everyone in the exact same way. Rather, we must consider whether one is *kaniṣṭhā*, *madhyama*, or *uttama-adhikārī*, and give honor accordingly.³²

CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU TASTING UNNATOJJVALA-RASA

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)*

31 A *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī* is a neophyte practitioner of *bhakti* (devotional life), a *madhyama-adhikārī* is an intermediate practitioner, and an *uttama-adhikārī* is a topmost practitioner.

The symptoms of the *kaniṣṭhā-adhikārī* are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.47): "One who worships the Deity of the Lord with faith but renders no service to the Lord's devotees or other living entities is a *prākṛta-bhakta*, or materialistic devotee."

The symptoms of the *madhyama-bhakta* are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.46): "One who has love for the Supreme Lord, friendship toward the devotee, mercy toward those who are ignorant of *bhakti*, and who neglects those who are inimical to the Lord or his devotees is considered a *madhyama-bhāgavata*."

The symptoms of an *uttama-bhakta* are described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.45): "One who sees in all living entities the soul of all souls, Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, and who also sees all living entities in Śrī Kṛṣṇa is an *uttama-bhāgavata*."

32 "One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should offer humble obeisances to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation (*dīkṣā*) and is engaged in worshipping the Deity, and one should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others" (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, Verse 5).

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

I have discussed the *unnatojjvala-rasa* that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to taste, the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, as well as the *unnatojjvala-rasa* that He wanted to distribute among all qualified souls, the mood of a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to taste are actually *unnatojjvala-rasa*, and what He distributed through the chanting of the holy names, through *nāma-prema*, is a part of that.

I want to give a vivid explanation so that you will understand the difference between these two kinds of *unnatojjvala-rasa*. Until now I have explained that the mood of *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, and even *vātsalya* is not *unnatojjvala-rasa*. Even the *svakīya* mood of Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as well as that of Sītā-devī towards Śrī Rāmacandra, is not *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

Very rare persons will be able to grasp the truths of this topic. Those whose hearts are pure, and who have served an elevated Vaiṣṇava and are associating with him, will understand. Even Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Kṛṣṇa could not give this understanding to all, and therefore I also cannot give it to all. Those who have come to hear these discourses surely have past impressions (impressions made on the heart from previous lives' devotional activities) of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's philosophy. That is why they have come to join us from different parts of the world, like England, America, Australia, Holland, and Canada, and are traveling with me to various countries. It is certain that they have some impression of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's family of devotees.³³

33 "There are millions of universes. When the fortunate soul wandering through these universes associates with Lord Caitanya's followers in his various births, then by their mercy, in this birth he receives the association of very exalted devotees" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Madhya-līlā* 19.151).

If they continue associating, then by hearing all these truths they can gradually understand and realize them. Certainly a very strong impression will be made in their hearts. Those who have no interest in this are not destined to understand it, and therefore they will not come to hear.

SPIRITUAL CHASTITY

In Indian Vedic culture there was a shadow of *unnatojjvala-rasa* in the lives of married couples. When a qualified man and a chaste, qualified girl married, they recited Vedic *mantras* with the witness of fire, air, water (especially Gaᅅgā water), *tulasī*, *śālagrāma*, *brāhmaᅇas*, and devotees. After this, they were generally not allowed to reject each other, except in some extraordinary situation wherein the spouse lost faith in Śrī Kṛṣᅇa and His associates or in chanting *harināma*. Only in that case could he or she be rejected.

This is also true with *gurudeva*. He cannot be rejected in any way, unless he is like the faithless spouse. Even if he is not very beautiful, if he is ugly, if he rebukes, if he sometimes gives a ‘slap,’ or if he controls us for our benefit (not for his own benefit), these are not good reasons for giving him up.

The above-mentioned personalities are witnesses during the marriage ceremony, after which the wife is considered half of the husband’s body (*ardhāᅅgiᅇī*). She becomes *saha-dharᅇiᅇī*, which means she always helps her husband in religious principles, in *bhakti*, and in all other activities. In Indian culture we do not take the wife as a maidservant; she is *saha-dharᅇiᅇī*.

Nowadays, things have changed. The married couples follow western culture and give up religious activities, such as respecting *guru*, *brāhmaᅇas*, elders, and neighbors. However, if the marriage ceremony is observed in the Vedic way, with Vedic *mantras* chanted under the guidance of *guru* and Vaiṣᅇavas, and witnessed by fire, *śālagrāma*, water, air, etc., then the married couple becomes *svakīya*, which is itself a shadow of *parakīya-unnatojjvala-rasa*.

Those who, from the beginning of their marriage, have no affection for their husband, and who love another person, are called *parakīya*. In the material world this is very degraded. However,

regarding Kṛṣṇa and His beloveds, Uddhava says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and Śrīla Vyāsadeva and Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī also say:

*kvemāḥ striyo vana-carīr vyabhicāra-duṣṭāḥ
kṛṣṇe kva caiṣa paramātmāni rūḍha-bhāvaḥ
nanv īśvaro 'nubhajato 'viduṣo 'pi sāksāc
chreyas tanoty agada-rāja ivopayuktaḥ*

(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.47.59)

How amazing it is that these simple women who wander about the forest, seemingly spoiled by improper behavior, have achieved the perfection of unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Soul! Still, it is true that the Supreme Lord Himself awards His blessings even to an ignorant worshiper, just as the best medicine works even when taken by a person ignorant of its ingredients.

Those who have no connection with Kṛṣṇa, even if they are chaste in their marriage relationships, are like prostitutes (*vyabhicāra*). On the other hand, whether a lady is married or not, if she is serving Kṛṣṇa, chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, remembering Kṛṣṇa, and thinking Kṛṣṇa to be her beloved, her chastity is considered superior to all goddesses and other chaste ladies.

THE MOST CHASTE LADIES

You may have heard the names of Arundhatī, Sāvitrī, and Damayantī, and there were so many other chaste ladies like them in Indian culture. You may have also heard the names of Draupadī, the wife of the five Pāṇḍavas; Kuntī, the mother of the Pāṇḍavas; Mandodarī, the wife of Rāvaṇa; Ahalyā, the wife of Gautama Rṣi³⁴, and Tārā, the wife of both Sugrīva and Vali.

At first Tārā was married to Vali, but when he was shot and killed, she became the wife of Sugrīva. Mandodarī was the wife of Rāvaṇa, but after he was killed by Lord Rāmacandra, she lived with

34 Ahalyā, though the wife of Gautama Rṣi, also had some connection with Indra. However, she loved only Lord Rāmacandra and was delivered by Him.

Vibhīṣaṇa. Kuntī had five husbands, namely Surya (the sun-god), Pāṇḍu, Yamarāja (Dharmarāja), Vāyu (the air-god), and Indra (the king of heaven), but still she is considered superior to all other chaste ladies. Draupadī also had five husbands, but still she is celebrated as *kanyā*, a sacred unmarried girl. Although these five ladies were apparently married to someone else, and although some of them even had more than one husband, they always thought, “Kṛṣṇa is my beloved, my heart and soul.” Their marriages were therefore not obstacles to their *bhakti*. These ladies are glorified and honored as *kanyā*, because they loved Kṛṣṇa or Rāma more than their husbands.

Among all chaste ladies, the *gopīs* are the most superior. Ordinary ladies have the mood that someone other than Kṛṣṇa – someone in a body made of earth, water, fire, air, stool, urine, and so many other abominable things – is their *pati* (husband). *Pati* actually means ‘he who saves one from all sufferings, sorrows, and death, and who supports with *prema* and knowledge.’ Such a person is truly *pati*. Our husbands cannot do this. They cannot save us from becoming old; they cannot save us from our hair turning white.

So actually, our beloved, our husband, our ‘all-in-all’ is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. There is no impediment in *bhakti* for those who think like this, even if they are married.

As explained earlier, the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana were married by the trick of Yogamāyā. They are non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the *hlādinī-śakti* (internal pleasure-giving potency) and *svarūpa-śakti* (personal intrinsic potency) of Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are like the sun and its heat, or water and its liquidity, which cannot be separated. The *gopīs* who easily took part in *rāsa-līlā* and served Śrī Kṛṣṇa are *kāya-vyūha*, manifestations of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Although externally they are married to other *gopas*, those marriages are false. Those marriages are only meant to create a mood in the *gopīs* that, “We are wives of other *gopas*.” Because they love Kṛṣṇa they have no connection with their husbands at all. Such love is called *parakīya*. *Parakīya-rasa* means that the *gopīs* are married to other persons, but their affection and love is only for Kṛṣṇa. Whether or not they are actually

married to anyone else³⁵, they are all *parakīya* and are far superior to any other chaste lady.

UDDHAVA'S LESSON IN VṚNDĀVANA

Uddhava, Kṛṣṇa's friend and prime minister in Dvārakā, was never married. From boyhood he was a strict, celibate *brahmacārī*, as were Nārada Muni and Śukadeva Gosvāmī. These elevated and renounced devotees all wanted to take the foot-dust of the *gopīs* upon their heads. Why is this?

Uddhava prayed:

*āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-jusām ahaṁ syāṁ
vṛndāvane kim aṅgi gulma-latauśadhīnām
yā dustyajam svajanam ārya-ṭhaṁ ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padavīm śrutibhir vimṛgyām*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.47.61)

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

*vande nanda-vraja-strīṇām
pāda-reṇum abhikṣṇaśaḥ
yāsām hari-kathodgītām
punāti bhuvana-trayam*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.47.63)

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

35 According to the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam commentaries of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, even the *gopīs* who were not yet married, although knowing they would eventually marry other *gopas*, considered Kṛṣṇa their beloved. They also joined in Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā*.

Uddhava went to Vṛndāvana and realized the glories of the *gopīs*. He had previously thought, “I am superior to all other devotees.” However, when he came to Vṛndāvana, he understood, “Kṛṣṇa has sent me to learn something in this school of *prema*, the devotional school of the *gopīs*. Now I see that I am not even qualified to receive admission. Why has Kṛṣṇa sent me here? I am not even qualified to submit my name in that school. The standard of the *gopīs*’ devotion is so much higher than mine. I cannot give myself to Kṛṣṇa as the *gopīs* have given themselves.

“Because they have given up everything to serve Kṛṣṇa, I want to glorify them by taking their foot-dust upon my head. They have given up their shyness, their fame, and their service to their husbands. They have forgotten to take meals and to decorate themselves, and they have even forgotten their own bodies. If I am not qualified to even enter their school, how will I get the chance to obtain their foot-dust?”

Therefore, Uddhava felt hopeless, quite hopeless. He considered, “I am not qualified to touch their lotus foot-dust, not even one dust particle. So I will simply offer obeisances in their direction.”

There were millions of *gopīs*. Uddhava could neither count them nor could he understand their moods, so how could he pray for the dust of all of their feet? There would be no end to his praying. Finally he resolved, “I should take only one dust particle from one of the *gopīs*. Then, by attaining the mercy of that one prominent *gopī*, I will automatically achieve the mercy of them all.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa encouraged him in his heart, “O Uddhava, if you like, you can surely select one *gopī* from whose feet you want to take one particle of dust.”

Whom did he select? Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He wanted just one of the millions of dust particles at Her lotus feet. He considered, “Even though I am not qualified for this, if I can pray, even from far away, in the direction of one particle of dust, my life will be successful.”³⁶

36 “Uddhava appreciated the exalted position of the *gopīs* and wished to fall to the ground and take the dust of their feet on his head. Yet he dared not ask the *gopīs* to offer the dust from their feet; perhaps they would not be agreeable. Therefore, to have his head smeared with the dust of the *gopīs*’ feet without their knowledge, he desired to become an insignificant clump of grass or herbs in the land of Vṛndāvana” (Kṛṣṇa, *The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, Chapter 46).

It was in a garden near the border of Nandagāoṅ that Uddhava realized the glories of the *gopīs*. There, he saw the *gopīs* feeling so much separation that sometimes their outer senses were inert. He contemplated, “My life has become successful simply by coming to the school of the *gopīs*, even though I was not admitted. Just by breathing the air that comes from that school, my life has become successful.”

It is this love of the *gopīs*, as glorified by Uddhava, that is called *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

The *gopīs* control Śrī Kṛṣṇa by their exalted love. The phrase ‘dust from the lotus feet’ has many meanings, and one meaning is ‘follower of the *gopīs*.’ Uddhava wanted the blessing to become the follower of the followers of the *gopīs*, so that he could learn how to love Kṛṣṇa like the *gopīs*, so that his love could also control Kṛṣṇa. Still, he failed to attain this.

Śaṅkara (Śiva) also wanted to personally become a *gopī*, and he performed austerities for that attainment. When Paurṇamāsī Yogamāyā became pleased and appeared before him, he prayed to join *rāsa-līlā*. Paurṇamāsī mercifully dipped him in Brahma-kuṇḍa and he immediately assumed the form of a teenage *gopī*, at which time he entered the area of *rāsa-līlā* and hid in a grove.

Meanwhile, the *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa sensed that someone of a different mood had come. They asked each other, “Why are you not so happy today? What is the matter?”

After searching, they discovered the new *gopī* and asked ‘her,’ “Who are you? What is your name? Who are your parents? What is your husband’s name? Where is your in-laws’ house?”

When Śaṅkara in the form of a *gopī* could not reply, they began to slap her, so much that her cheeks became swollen and she began to cry, “Yogamāyā, Yogamāyā! Save me! I will never again come to Vṛndāvana, and I will never dare to see or take part in *rāsa-līlā*.”

Paurṇamāsī came and requested the *gopīs* to be compassionate to Śaṅkara. “She is the object of my mercy,” Paurṇamāsī told them.

The *gopīs* thus accepted Śaṅkara as a *gopī*. Kṛṣṇa named her Gopīśvara (she whose *īśvaras*, controllers, are the *gopīs*) and blessed her to become the guard of the *rāsa-līlā* by saying that without her sanction, no one would be able to enter.

DEFINITION OF UNNATOJJVALA

The love of the *gopīs* is called *unnatojjvala*. *Ummata* means 'highest,' and *ujjvala* means 'more shining than the sun,' charming Kṛṣṇa with one's heart and pleasing Him in every respect. The affection of Śrīmatī Rādhikā exhibits the highest mood of this *unnatojjvala-rasa*, and Her mood is indicated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.1):

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyaṁ jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir-uttamā*

The cultivation of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or, in other words, the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed through all endeavors of the body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*), which is not covered by *jñāna* and *karma*, and which is devoid of all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is called *uttama-bhakti*, pure devotional service.

Ultimately, the words *bhaktir-uttama* denote this highest affection of the *gopīs'* *parakīya-bhāva unnatojjvala-rasa*. In the form of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa personally came to taste this topmost mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā; but He could not distribute this mood, because it is the wealth of Śrīmatī Rādhikā alone. Even Śrīmatī Lalitā and Śrīmatī Viśākhā do not have Her mood of *mādana*, the highest platform of *unnatojjvala-rasa*. They can experience up to *mohana* or *modana*, which is somewhat lower.³⁷

37 "Highly advanced ecstasy is divided into two categories – *mādana* and *mohana*. Meeting together is called *mādana*, and separation is called *mohana*" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Madhya-līlā* 23.58).

"On the *mādana* platform there are kissing and many other symptoms, which are unlimited. In the *mohana* stage, there are two divisions – *udghūrṇā* (unsteadiness) and *citra-jalpa* (varieties of mad emotional talks)" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Madhya-līlā* 23.59).

"In the highest transcendental ecstasy there is a feeling of being enchanted in the presence of the enchanter. When the enchanter and the enchanted become separated, *mohana*, or bewilderment, occurs. When so bewildered due to separation, one becomes stunned, and at that time all the bodily symptoms of transcendental ecstasy are manifested. When they are manifest, one appears inconceivably crazy. This is called transcendental madness. In this state there is imaginative discourse, and one experiences emotions like those of a madman" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Madhya-līlā* 1.87, purport).

In these separation moods, Śrīmatī Rādhikā became so absorbed in Kṛṣṇa that when Uddhava approached the *gopīs* to give them a message from Kṛṣṇa, She did not see him at all. Instead She thought that a bee, flying around Her feet, was Kṛṣṇa’s messenger. She spoke with that bee in many moods, sometimes angry and sometimes favorable. Perhaps it was Kṛṣṇa Himself who had come in the form of that bee in order to taste all Her loving sentiments.

She told the bee, “You are a madman and very impure. Go away from here. I am so pure. Do not try to touch My feet. Why have you come in this form? I think you have done so to increase our anger. You are so foolish that you cannot think properly how to pacify the anger of the *gopīs*. You don’t know how to pacify us?”

Hearing this, Uddhava considered, “Oh, this is the mood of real devotion. I do not know anything about such love.” He heard all Her talks from very far away, and saw Her *unnatojjvala-rasa* from very far away. He was not able to experience even a spark, a sprinkle, of that *rasa*. He could not be compared with any entity of Vṛndāvana, not even a cow or a calf.

The cows in Vṛndāvana loved Kṛṣṇa much more than Uddhava loved Him. Kṛṣṇa approached the cows like their son. He came to the calves as their friend, and stroked and hugged them just as one friend is affectionate with another. Sometimes He massaged their legs and put very soft, sweet grass in their mouths saying, “Take it, My friend.”

Uddhava could not realize this love, or love like this, and that is why he was not qualified to remain in Vṛndāvana. That is why he had to return to Mathurā.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa was very anxious to taste that mood. If one does not have such love and affection, he cannot realize Kṛṣṇa; how sweet He is, how beautiful He is, and how beautifully He sings. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give some sprinkles, some very little particles, of this to the *jīvas* of this world.

The *jīvas* would not be able to withstand the *unnatojjvala-rasa* He tasted. They have no capacity, no qualification, to have such a high class of affection. Only Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her *kāya-vyūha* expansions can experience this. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu did not come to give this type of *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU'S GIFT

What, then, has Mahāprabhu come to give? He came to give *unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śrīyam*. In this connection there is more emphasis on the final words, *sva-bhakti-śrīyam*. *Sva* means 'own,' and *sva-bhakti* means 'own *bhakti*.' Whose own? Śrīmatī Rādhikā's own. Kṛṣṇa's *bhakti* means Rādhikā's *bhakti*, because Rādhikā is the personification of Kṛṣṇa's *bhakti*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to taste the essence of supreme devotion to Himself, which is Rādhikā's love, and He wanted to distribute to the qualified *jīva* His *bhakti-śrīyam*.

The word *sva* refers only to Rādhikā, *bhakti* refers to Rādhikā's *bhakti*, and *śrī* means *śobhā*, or beauty. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to give the beauty of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

The following example will help us to understand the meaning of 'beauty' in this connection. Let us imagine a creeper. If that creeper has no leaves, no fruits, and no flowers, then it has no beauty. However, suppose the creeper has many green leaves, many flowers on each branch, many *mañjarīs*, and some very sweet and delicious reddish or golden grapes that the cuckoos are always eating (after which those cuckoos sing very sweetly). If the air touches and plays with that creeper, all its leaves become happy and begin to dance. At this time the *mañjarīs* also dance with happiness. This is the beauty of that creeper.

If the creeper has no leaves, no *mañjarīs*, and no fruits, the air will not play with its branches. It will have no taste to play. If we see a creeper sporting with the air, its leaves always dancing, we are seeing the beauty of that creeper. Similarly, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to give the beauty of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *unnatojjvala-rasa*, not Her *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

The creeper represents Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself. And what is the beauty? The beauty is Her *sakhīs*. If there are no *sakhīs*, there is no beauty. Therefore, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is always surrounded by four kinds of *sakhīs*: *svapakṣa*, *vipakṣa*, *taṭastha*, and *suhṛda*. The *svapakṣa goṣṭhīs* are on the side of Śrīmatī Rādhikā; they are Her intimate *sakhīs*. Although Candrāvalī and all her *sakhīs* are *vipakṣa*, opposed to Rādhikā, the opposition in Vṛndāvana is not like that of the material world. In Vṛndāvana, the feelings of opposition, as well as all other sentiments, are varieties of *prema*, or transcendental love.

Other *sakhīs* are in the middle. They are called *taṭasthā*, meaning ‘neutral,’ and still others are called *suhṛda*, meaning ‘friendly.’ *Suhṛda* is not *svapakṣa*, not *vipakṣa*, and not *taṭastha*. With Rādhikā, the *suhṛd-pakṣa-sakhīs* are friends, and with Candrāvalī and other *vipakṣa-sakhīs* they are *taṭastha*. Those who are *taṭastha* to Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her *svapakṣa-sakhīs* are *suhṛda* to Candrāvalī.

What is the meaning of *śrīya*, or beauty, in the phrase *svabhakti-śrīyam*? Among the *svapakṣa-sakhīs* of Rādhikā there are five divisions: *sakhī*, *nitya-sakhī*, *prāṇa-sakhī*, *priya-sakhī*, and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhī*. Although these *sakhīs* are associates of Rādhikā, some of them sometimes have an inclination towards Kṛṣṇa, while at the same time they always have the disposition to serve both. They are neither *taṭastha*, nor *suhṛda*, nor *vipakṣa*. They are *svapakṣa*, but they have an inclination towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Those *svapakṣa gopīs* who are inclined towards Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and are very near and dear to Rādhikā, are called *priya-sakhīs* (or *narma-sakhīs*) and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* (or *priyanarman-sakhīs*), some examples of which are Lalitā, Viśākhā, and Citrā. Those whose sole inclination is towards Rādhikā, who think that without Rādhikā they cannot live and who think that Rādhikā is their life and soul, are called *nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs*.

Among the *nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs*, the *prāṇa-sakhīs*, like Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī, are prominent. These two divisions of *sakhīs* always serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā. If Kṛṣṇa is defeated by Śrīmatī Rādhikā at various sports and games, they are very glad and clap. If Śrī Kṛṣṇa defeats Rādhikā, then they themselves feel defeated and they make a sad or sour face. Those like Lalitā may laugh and enjoy, but the *prāṇa-* and *nitya-sakhīs* will feel sorrow.

These *nitya-* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* are always with Rādhikā. Lalitā, Viśākhā, and other *sakhīs* like them do not always enter the *kuñja* when Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are performing certain confidential pastimes, but these *sakhīs* have the freedom to enter at any time. They have a ‘free pass’ to serve there. Lalitā, Viśākhā, and *sakhīs* may hesitate, but those like Rūpa Mañjarī and other *prāṇa-sakhīs* and *nitya-sakhīs* will not. They can do any service at any time.

When Kṛṣṇa meets with Śrīmatī Rādhikā, these *sakhīs* taste whatever Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa taste together, even when they are far

away from Them. They relish everything, and they have no need at all to meet with Kṛṣṇa separately. These *nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* are called *mañjarīs*, and they are the ‘beauty’ of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s love as mentioned in the phrase above, *sva-bhakti śrīyam*.³⁸

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has come to give the mood of these *nitya-* and *prāṇa-sakhīs*. The *jīvas* can never expect more than this; they cannot be like Lalitā, Viśākhā, and others like them. But do not think this service is a small thing.

The pure love of the *mañjarīs* is called *unnatojjvala-rasa*, *tat-tad-bhāveccātṁikā*. Such *gopīs* do not want to directly meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa themselves or serve Him directly. Rather, they become happy by seeing the unlimited pleasure in the meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given this mood of service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā through *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, and He Himself has tasted *unnatojjvala-rasa*: the three moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. One with the mood of a *mañjarī* can taste the beauty and sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s flute song, and every other feature of Kṛṣṇa. If he has no such *prema*, he cannot relish such a taste.

As mentioned above, no one other than Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has ever mercifully given this *unnatojjvala-rasām svabhakti-śrīyam*. Before Him, *dāsyā-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, and *vātsalya-rasa*

38 “Although manifest, happy, expanded and unlimited, the emotional exchanges between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa can only be understood by the damsels of Vraja or by their followers.” (*Govinda-lilāmṛta* 10.17) The personal associates of Rādhārāṇī are called *sakhīs*, and Her near assistants are called *mañjarīs*. It is very difficult to express their dealings with Kṛṣṇa because they have no desire to mix with Kṛṣṇa or to enjoy Him personally. Rather, they are always ready to help Rādhārāṇī associate with Kṛṣṇa. Their affection for Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī is so pure that they are simply satisfied when Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are together. Indeed, their transcendental pleasure is in seeing Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa united. The actual form of Rādhārāṇī is just like a creeper embracing the tree of Kṛṣṇa, and the damsels of Vraja, the associates of Rādhārāṇī, are just like the leaves and flowers of that creeper. When a creeper embraces a tree, the leaves and flowers of the creeper automatically embrace it.

“*Govinda-lilāmṛta* (10.16) confirms that Rādhārāṇī is the expansion of the pleasure potency of Kṛṣṇa and is compared with a creeper, and Her associates, the damsels of Vraja, are compared to the flowers and leaves of that creeper. When Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa enjoy Themselves, the damsels of Vraja relish the pleasure more than if they would meet with Kṛṣṇa themselves. Although the associates of Rādhārāṇī do not expect any personal attention from Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī is so pleased with them that She arranges individual meetings between Kṛṣṇa and the damsels of Vraja. Indeed, Rādhārāṇī tries to combine or unite Her associates with Kṛṣṇa by many transcendental maneuvers, and She takes more pleasure in these meetings than in Her own meetings with Him. When Kṛṣṇa sees that both Rādhārāṇī and Her associates are pleased by His association, He becomes more satisfied” (*Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, Chapter 31).

had been somewhat given by Madhvācārya, Rāmānuja, and all other ācāryas. However, the śrī of *sva-bhakti-śriyam unnatojjvala-rasa* had not been given for a long time – since Caitanya Mahāprabhu had come previously, on the previous day of Brahmā.

This is the highest benediction. If anyone has some greed for this attainment, even a little taste, by reading *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and by hearing these subjects, he will give up everything at the lotus feet of his *gurudeva*, his *śikṣā-guru*, or any pure devotee, and try to collect this nectar.

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

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.70)

Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price – that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.

PREPARATION FOR THE LORD'S ADVENT

Śrī Advaita Ācārya is the manifestation of Mahā-Viṣṇu in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes. Some manifestation of Mahā-Viṣṇu is present in all *yugas*, so why did Advaita Ācārya call for Kṛṣṇa Himself to descend? As one who is aware of past, present, and future, Advaita Ācārya knew that His Lord wanted to taste *vraja-prema*. He knew that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would advent Himself, but He did not know exactly when, and He wondered why He had not yet appeared. He worshiped Śrī Kṛṣṇa by offering *tulasī* and Gaṅgā water to His lotus feet, and by crying out with His heart, "O Kṛṣṇa, come at once."

Śrī Kṛṣṇa will not hear our prayers by worship alone, but by our heartfelt crying out like Advaita Ācārya did. This is real *kīrtana*. The *kīrtana* of Advaita Ācārya shook the entire world, and therefore Śrī Kṛṣṇa decided to come immediately.

When Caitanya Mahāprabhu took birth in Śrī Māyāpura, Advaita Ācārya Prabhu was more than sixty years old. Before the Lord's birth, He had spent many years touring the holy *tīrthas* in North, South, East, and West India, including the pastime places of Kṛṣṇa in Śrī Vṛndāvana. From Vṛndāvana, He went to Mithilā, the birthplace of Sītā-devī in Janakapura. When He reached the outskirts of the city, He saw a very effulgent old man lying down and resting his head on the root of a tree. The man was absorbed in an internal mood and was not influenced by his external senses. Tears streamed from his eyes in a very heartfelt way as he was singing a *kīrtana*:

*tātala saikate bāri-bindu-sama
suta-mitra-ramaṇī-samājetohe
visari mana tāhe samarṣala
ab majhu habo kon kāje*

(Śrīla Vidyāpati)

O Lord, completely forgetting You, I have offered my mind unto the society of women, children, and friends, and this experience has been just like offering a drop of water unto the burning hot sands of the beach. How can I possibly be relieved of this great misery?

He is saying here that his heart feels like a desert. We can see the example of deserts such as those in Australia, Africa, and the Arab countries. The summer sun makes the sand there so hot that if one plants a seed it pops immediately, like puffed rice. In that condition, the deer and other animals cannot survive; they die at once. When a drop of rain falls on that desert, it vaporizes and burns like steam, just as a sprinkle of water will sizzle, splash, and burn anyone near it when it falls on boiling oil. Similarly, our heart is like a desert. Any drop of happiness coming from our spouse or children may seem pleasant at first. However, like boiling steam or water on oil, it burns us.

The effulgent person was weeping, “O Kṛṣṇa, having forgotten You, I am under the illusion that these poisonous attachments are natural for me. Throughout the day I am absorbed in my wife and children. I waste all my time in useless, silly, nonsensical, and

destructive activities. Now I have become old and I do not know how to do *bhajana*. O Kṛṣṇa, save me, save me!”

From a distance, Advaita Ācārya stood silently, taking that man’s *darśana*. He could see that the man was a *mahā-puruṣa*, a fully self-realized soul, otherwise he would not have been able to express such spiritual emotions. Advaita Ācārya walked over to him and offered him obeisances. “Who are you?” He asked.

“I am a bogus person,” the man replied. “I have wasted my life, my whole life; and now I am a hundred years old. What shall I do?”

Previously, this great person had been a special *kavi* (poet) in the king’s council, as Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya was, and he had received great respect even from kings. He had enjoyed a beautiful wife and many children, but in his last days he lamented that he had wasted his life. At that time, he wrote many songs describing Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu used to hear these songs when He lived in the Gambhīrā. There in the Gambhīrā, Mahāprabhu was particularly inspired by the songs of Caṇḍīdāsa and Vidyāpati; and this person was Vidyāpati.

Advaita Ācārya would have also met with Caṇḍīdāsa and other great devotees; He was so powerful. We pray at His lotus feet to kindly bestow His mercy. By His mercy we can know Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, His teachings, and the purpose of His descent. In this way our hearts may melt.

MAHĀPRABHU’S GIFT OF BHAKTI

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu mercifully came to distribute *unnatojjvala-rasa*, the same *prema* He had given when He had last advented on Earth, long, long ago, on the previous day of Brahmā.

By increasing the quality of our chanting, we will develop pure affection for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and *bhakti* will enter into our heart. At that time we will have realization of this *unnatojjvala-rasa*.

All of our *ācāryas* have warned us not to depend on our worldly intelligence, because it will not help us attain our goal of life. We must try to increase our love and affection for the Supreme Lord by chanting, remembering, and performing devotional activities. Thus, *śuddha-sattva* (pure, unalloyed goodness) will descend from

Goloka Vṛndāvana and enter our hearts, and then we will clearly understand all spiritual truths.

Try to hear, and also try to have realization of what you are hearing, by your practice of *bhakti*. We have a tendency to trust our mental calculations and speculations, but these will not help us attain our goal.

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya has taught:

*bhaja govindam bhaja govindam
bhaja govindam mūḍha-mate
samprāpte sannihite khalu maraṇe
nahī nahī rakṣati ḍukṛṇ-karaṇe*

You intellectual fools, just worship Govinda, just worship Govinda, just worship Govinda. Your grammatical knowledge and word jugglery will not save you at the time of death.

One of Śaṅkarācārya’s many disciples was about one hundred years old. One day he was repeating the *dhātu* (verbal root) grammar rules: *saḥ, tau, te* (prefixes of *vyākaraṇa*, or grammar). Śaṅkarācārya told him, “Your hair has become white, your teeth have fallen out, your eyesight has gone, and now you are foolishly reciting all these rules of *vyākaraṇa*, *anusvāra*, and *visargaḥ*. This will not save you. You should chant. *Bhaja govindam, bhaja govindam, bhaja govindam.*”

There is no value in depending on our intellectual capacity or any other material facility. Our success is in associating with bona fide Vaiṣṇavas, bona fide *gurus*. If we see that our *guru* is not qualified, we may take any *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee as a *śikṣā-guru*. If we have faith in that pure Vaiṣṇava, we should give our heart to him at once and take *dikṣā* and *śikṣā*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Gayā and offered His heart at the lotus feet of Śrī Īṣvara Purī, saying, “Having taken initiation from you; and, having received your association, I am satisfied. My entire life has now become successful.”

There will be many problems in our life, but solving them will not help us fulfill our goal. Our primary problem is how to achieve pure *bhakti*. If this is not solved, we will become absorbed in politics,

money-making, and acquiring name and fame. This will also not help or protect us, even if we are in a big group. So try to do as Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Advaita Ācārya have done. Follow all the teachings of Śrī Caitanya, Śrīla Rūpa, Śrīla Sanātana, and all the other Gosvāmīs.



I am now going to explain the last two lines from this same verse beginning with *anarpita carim cirat*:

*hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanah
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Ādi-līlā 1.4)*

Śacīnandana Gaurahari is Hari Himself. Hari refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Here, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī refers to Him not as Hari, but as Śacīnandana. His mother, Śacī Mā, was very merciful to everyone, so it must be concluded that her son, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, also has that quality. He may have sometimes appeared to be very hard-hearted, as in His pastimes with Choṭa Haridāsa, Kālā Kṛṣṇadāsa, and Pratāparudra Mahārāja, to whom He would not give His *darśana*. At that time He was not interested in taking the advice of Advaita Ācārya, Nityānanda Prabhu, Rāya Rāmānanda, Svarūpa Dāmodara, or even Paramānanda Purī who was on the level of his *guru*. He told them, “I am living in Purī in the renounced order of life. If you desire wealth and reputation, you can associate with Pratāparudra Mahārāja, but I have no interest in these things.”

Unless we are strict like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we cannot achieve pure *bhakti*. Still, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays, “O Prabhu, if you evaluate my qualification, you will see that my situation is forever hopeless. But I know that as the son of Śacī Mā You are by nature kind-hearted, and because You cannot give up this quality, You will not consider whether or not I am qualified for Your mercy.”

Among all qualities, being supremely merciful (*parama-karuna*) is a most superior quality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They are always kind to everyone. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is therefore praying, “O Śācinandana, You are Hari Himself, with the beauty and mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. You are so merciful. You want to give Your mercy to all living entities, even if, like Jagāi and Mādhāi, they are fallen souls who have no qualification at all.

Hari puraṭa sundara: The word *hari* has so many meanings. *Hari* means ‘Kṛṣṇa Himself, who steals the heart and mind of everyone.’ *Hari* also means ‘monkey.’ In connection with this above-mentioned verse, it means ‘a very powerful lion.’

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore prays, “O Śācinandana, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, as mad elephants flee when a lion roars, so when You roar with Your *harināma-saṅkīrtana*, the mad elephants of the results of past sinful activities and offenses committed to Vaiṣṇavas, which can immediately uproot the creeper of *bhakti* and dry it up forever, also flee.”

Our offenses are like mad elephants. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains that if one offends any pure devotee, by criticizing him, abusing him, beating him, not being very happy to see him, or by not welcoming or showing respect to him by standing as he enters or leaves a place, such a person is committing an offense. Like a mad elephant, this offense will destroy all one’s power, piety, beauty, knowledge, intelligence, wealth, etc. Such an offender is not even qualified to go to hell. A bigger and more miserable hell will have to be created just for him. We should try to understand this.

Hari, the lion-like Caitanya Mahāprabhu, lives in a very dark cage – our heart. If we remember, glorify, and perform *kīrtana* for Him, His roar will destroy all mad elephants (elephantine offenses). Without His mercy, it is not possible to become free from sinful reactions. Not even Śrī Kṛṣṇa can make this possible; but this same Kṛṣṇa, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, can do it. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has taken mercy from Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the most compassionate. Her mercy combined with Kṛṣṇa’s mercy can destroy all offenses.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is therefore praying that this Śācinandana will come into our heart. The mercy of Gaurāṅga, who is Kṛṣṇa

Himself covered by the beauty and golden color of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, is incomparable. No one can compare to Him in His heart's affection and love for all. He is only comparable to Himself.

Rūpa Gosvāmī has given the meaning of the entire Fourth Chapter in this verse describing the purpose of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's advent. Now I would like to hear the explanation and meaning given by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja:

Devotee reads (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.4–6):

Text: May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost core of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has descended in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation has ever offered before: the most elevated mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

Purport: This is a quotation from *Vidagdha-mādhava*, a drama compiled and edited by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Text: I have given the essential meaning of the fourth verse: this incarnation descends to propagate the chanting of the holy name and spread love of God.

Text: Although this is true, this is but the external reason for the Lord's incarnation. Please hear one other reason – the confidential reason – for the Lord's appearance.

Purport: In the Third Chapter, fourth verse, it has been clearly said that Lord Caitanya appeared to distribute love of Kṛṣṇa and the chanting of His transcendental holy name, Hare Kṛṣṇa. That was the secondary purpose of Lord Caitanya's appearance. The real reason is different, as we shall see in this chapter.

Try to hear this. This is the true glory of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja – that he is an intimate associate and follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Devotee again reads *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 4.6:

Although this is true, this is but the external reason for the Lord's incarnation. Please hear one other reason – the confidential reason – for the Lord's appearance.

It is important for us to read *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and become familiar with this information. Devotees must understand all these explanations. All respectable and serious Vaiṣṇavas must know them. Devotees are not meant to simply collect money and make plans. Everyone must certainly do some service according to his tendency, but all dignified devotees should also carefully understand Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's innermost purpose for coming to this world.

Devotee reads from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 4:

Summary: In this chapter of the epic *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has stressed that Lord Caitanya appeared for three principal purposes of His own. The first purpose was to relish the position of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who is the prime reciprocator of transcendental love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of transcendental loving transactions with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. The subject of those loving transactions is the Lord Himself, and Rādhārāṇī is the object. Thus the subject, the Lord, wanted to relish the loving mellow in the position of the object, Rādhārāṇī.

The second reason for His appearance was to understand the transcendental mellow of Himself. Lord Kṛṣṇa is all sweetness. Rādhārāṇī's attraction for Kṛṣṇa is sublime, and to experience that attraction and understand the transcendental sweetness of Himself, He accepted the mentality of Rādhārāṇī.

The third reason that Lord Caitanya appeared was to enjoy the bliss tasted by Rādhārāṇī. The Lord thought that undoubtedly Rādhārāṇī enjoyed His company and He enjoyed the company of Rādhārāṇī, but the exchange of transcendental mellow between the spiritual couple was more pleasing to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī than to Śrī

Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī felt more transcendental pleasure in the company of Kṛṣṇa than He could understand without taking Her position, but for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to enjoy in the position of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī was impossible because that position was completely foreign to Him. Kṛṣṇa is the transcendental male, and Rādhārāṇī is the transcendental female. Therefore, to know the transcendental pleasure of loving Kṛṣṇa, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as Lord Caitanya, accepting the emotions and bodily luster of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Lord Caitanya appeared to fulfill these confidential desires and also to preach the special significance of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare, and to answer the call of Advaita Prabhu. These were secondary reasons.

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī was the principal figure among Lord Caitanya's confidential devotees. The records of his diary have revealed these confidential purposes of the Lord. These revelations have been confirmed by the statements of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his various prayers and poems. This chapter (Chapter 4, which is a commentary on *Ādi-līlā* 1.4) also specifically describes the difference between lust and love. The transactions of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā are completely different from material lust. Therefore the author has very clearly distinguished between them.

For whom has Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja written this? He wanted his books distributed so that anyone desiring to understand them will approach a superior Vaiṣṇava by whose association he will try to become qualified. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja knew that many persons in the world would become gradually qualified to read and understand the spiritual conclusive truths herein, and that is why he wrote in this way.

Some persons say that no one in the world is qualified to realize these truths about Lord Caitanya, and they assert that one who tries to understand is a *sahajiyā*³⁹. By this logic, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and

39 A *sahajiyā* is a person who considers the stages of advanced devotion to be easily achieved and who thus sometimes imitates the external symptoms of spiritual ecstasy associated with those stages.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja must also be *sahajiyā*, because these words of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* are theirs. Kindly do not accept such logic.

Actually, any person reading Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the association of pure Vaiṣṇavas, and chanting Gaura-Nityānanda Prabhu's holy names, certainly becomes qualified. We are all recipients of Mahāprabhu's mercy because we have given up all other lines to take shelter in His disciplic succession.

Those who have taken shelter at the lotus feet of Caitanya Mahāprabhu or His associates will certainly become qualified one day. Do not feel hopeless. I see rays of hope everywhere. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy will be upon you.

Without This, The World Is Useless

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

Vaiṣṇavas are like desire trees who can give anything, even *kṛṣṇa-prema*. They can also give the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, which is very rare. Let us never criticize any Vaiṣṇavas; let us always try to honor all of them. Then we will realize all the truths of this subject matter.

PRAYING THE ĀCĀRYAS' PRAYERS

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanāḥ
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)*

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.

I have explained the general meanings of this verse, and I am now going to discuss something special, which Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has given us.

We have heard the very wonderful explanation of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, wherein he has clearly explained the deep meanings of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's verses.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja gives the meaning of this verse in his other Bengali *payāras* (verses), and we will take the help of Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja's explanation in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* to explain his mood.

pūrṇa bhagavān kṛṣṇa vrajendra-kumāra
goloke vrajera saha nitya vihāra
 (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.5)

What is Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja's explanation?

Devotee reads from Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.5:

Text: Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of the King of Vraja, is the Supreme Lord. He eternally enjoys transcendental pastimes in His eternal abode, Goloka, which includes Vraja-dhāma.

Purport: In the previous chapter it has been established that Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vrajendra (the King of Vraja), is the Supreme Personality of Godhead with six opulences. He eternally enjoys transcendently variegated opulences on His planet, which is known as Goloka. The eternal pastimes of the Lord in the spiritual planet Kṛṣṇa-loka are called *aprakāṣa*, or unmanifested pastimes, because they are beyond the purview of the conditioned souls. Lord Kṛṣṇa is always present everywhere, but when He is not present before our eyes, He is said to be *aprakāṣa*, or unmanifested.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī is elucidating on the purport of this verse beginning *anarpita-carim cirāt*, written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Why did he quote this verse here? He considered, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa may not hear my prayer, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā may also not hear it, but They cannot avoid hearing the prayer of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.”

Let us cultivate the mood of being always under the guidance of Vaiṣṇavas. It is unbeneficial for us to try to be the supreme, thinking, “I am the controller, I am controlling all.” Instead we should think, “I am a servant. I am the servant of the servant of the servant of the

servant of the servant of the servant of the servants of your servants. I am the last servant's foot-dust." This is humility. A *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava thinks in this way.

We utter so many prayers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, but They may overlook our prayers. They may not take them seriously.

*ṣad-aṅga śaraṇāgati hoibe jāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā śume śrī-nanda-kumāra
(Śaraṇāgati, by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)*

The youthful son of Nanda Bābā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, hears the prayers of anyone who takes refuge in Him by this six-fold practice known as *śaraṇāgati*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa hears the prayers of those who have attained the six kinds of full-surrender at His lotus feet. This is the door, or window, or entrance to *bhakti*. We can enter only if we possess these six qualities in our heart.

*ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso goptṛtve varaṇam tathā
ātma-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ
(Hari-bhakti-vilāsa 11.676)*

There are six symptoms of self-surrender an unalloyed devotee possesses: (1) *ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ* (accepting only what is favorable for *prema-bhakti*); (2) *prātikūlyasya varjanam* (rejecting everything unfavorable for *prema-bhakti*); (3) *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsa* (firm faith that Kṛṣṇa is the only protector, knowing that no other activity can provide protection); (4) *goptṛtve varaṇa* (no doubt that Kṛṣṇa is the only guardian and maintainer); (5) *ātma-nikṣepa* (offering one's whole self to the Lord, feeling incapable of doing anything independently from Kṛṣṇa's desire); and (6) *kārpaṇya* (humility, feeling insignificant and very fallen). Possessing all these attitudes is called *śaraṇāgati*.

If we want to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, first we should fully offer ourselves at His lotus feet, and there are some symptoms that this has been

accomplished. Simply speaking about it will not do. What are the symptoms?

Ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ: We will only adopt that service or activity which is favorable to Kṛṣṇa.

Prātikūlya vivarjana: We will immediately give up all that is unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa's service, be it in the form of association, food, society, or sinful activities.

Rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāsa: We will have very strong faith that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always protecting us and that He is the only protector. We are not the protectors, nor can money protect us. In this entire world no scientist, no doctor, no one, and nothing can help us. Only Kṛṣṇa can help us.

If we are trying to do *bhajana* and at the same time we are hankering, "O Kṛṣṇa, save me, I am penniless, help me, help me!" or "I am helpless and suffering so much," it means we do not have the required faith in Kṛṣṇa and we cannot really do *bhajana*. There are many kinds of problems that we cannot solve, so we should have strong faith that Kṛṣṇa is our only protector and He will surely save us.

Why worry? We need simply serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Problems will come and Kṛṣṇa will solve them, and if He does not, no harm. In that case it will be said that He is not very merciful. All will defame Him, saying, "Now He has given up His merciful nature and has become cruel-hearted." Actually, He cannot give up His qualification of protecting the Vaiṣṇavas.

Kṛṣṇa protected Ambariṣa and Prahlaḍa Mahārāja. He protects everyone, in the mothers' womb and everywhere else, so we can be fearless. There is actually no problem at all. If a problem comes in *bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa will at once manage everything to solve it. Why should we fear? We can think, "If I am alone and the entire world is against me, I do not care." Let us be solid like this; otherwise how can we progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness?

We need not think, "If I simply do *bhakti* and nothing else, so many problems may come. Perhaps my big society will reject me, and because everyone will be upset and opposed to me, I will have to move from my house. What will I do?" If we want to do *bhakti*, we must be like Prahlaḍa Mahārāja and Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura.

The Mohammedan king prohibited Haridāsa Ṭhākura from chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, and ordered him to chant instead, “Allah, Allah, Allah. Khodā, Khodā, Khodā.” But Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura refused. He told them, “If Kṛṣṇa, Rāma, Allah, and Khodā are the same, then why are you troubling people? Why are you trying to make them Mohammedan by force? Why chant only Khodā and Allah? If Kṛṣṇa and Rāma are Allah and Khodā, what is the harm in chanting Kṛṣṇa?”

They replied, “We will cut you into millions of pieces and give your body to the dogs.”

“I have no fear,” Haridāsa said, and he began to chant ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’ very loudly on the main road. The Mohammedans tried to kill him but could not. Haridāsa had determined, “Even if someone cuts me into pieces, I will not give up my chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s name.”

If, like this, we become bold and strong in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will come at once; or He will send His Sudarśana *cakra*; or He can send Garuḍa, or Hanumān, or He will come Himself in the form of Lord Nṛsimha to protect us. Why should we fear? There is no need to fear at all.

In the first stage of *bhakti*, there are so many problems. Let us try to jump over them, just as Hanumān did when he crossed over the sea. He chanted, “Jaya Śrī Rāma,” jumped over the sea, and went to Laṅkā. Let us be like this. Right now, at this moment, let us give up thinking about problems, and be faithful, knowing that Kṛṣṇa is always our protector.

Goṭṛṭve varaṇam tathā: Kṛṣṇa is our only guardian and maintainer. It is therefore incumbent upon us to surrender our whole self – body, mind, soul, and everything we possess – and think, “I will not do anything that Kṛṣṇa does not like. I am surrendering everything at His lotus feet.” This is *śaraṇāgati*. If we do *śaraṇāgati* in this way, the door to the realm of *bhakti* will be opened and we will easily enter. This is of primary importance.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explained:

pūrṇa bhagavān kṛṣṇa vrajendra-kumāra
goloke vrajera saha nitya vihāra

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.5)

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of the King of Vraja, is the Supreme Lord. He eternally enjoys transcendental pastimes in His eternal abode, Goloka, which includes Vraja-dhāma.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is always playing in Vṛndāvana with the *go* (cows), *gopas* (cowherd boys), *gopīs*, and all the beings of Vṛndāvana, Vraja. He especially feels pleasure in the society of *gopīs* there.

The upper part of the Vaikuṅṭha region is called Kṛṣṇa-loka, and the lower part is called Vaikuṅṭha *paravyoma*. In *paravyoma* Vaikuṅṭha all the incarnations and manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, like Rāma, Nṛsmha and Nārāyaṇa reside. There are separate divisions in Vaikuṅṭha, which are all endless in every way.

Kṛṣṇa's mouth is very little, like a baby's, but in it Yaśodā-maiyā saw all the worlds, including Goloka Vṛndāvana. Even a dust particle of Vṛndāvana is endless. By the wish of Kṛṣṇa Vṛndāvana may appear very little, or very big, because in Vṛndāvana, each grain of dust is Baladeva Prabhu Himself; thus, every grain of dust of Vṛndāvana has this power.

Kṛṣṇa-loka, or Goloka, is divided into three sections. The combination of all three is called Goloka, and the boundary line is also called Goloka. The first part, the lower part, is called Dvārakā; the middle part is called Mathurā; and the upper part is called Vraja, Vṛndāvana, and Gokula. On one hand they are the same, but there is also some speciality in each section.

In Vṛndāvana there are twelve forests and twelve sub-forests. The first is Gokula, where Kṛṣṇa's *balya-līlā* (babyhood) pastimes are performed; in Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa's *paugaṇḍa* (childhood pastimes) and *kiśora-līlā* (pastimes in youth) are performed.

Vṛndāvana is spread over thirty-two square miles. Actually, from Yamunā to Govardhana Hill, Nandagāoṅ, and Varṣāna, all are in the greater Vṛndāvana, and this area is superior to Gokula. In Vṛndāvana, Govardhana is topmost, and at Govardhana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa are the most superior.

Why has Kṛṣṇa-loka been divided into three? It is divided according to the stages of the *prema* of the various devotees. In Dvārakā there is some knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's opulence (*aiśvarya*) as

Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In Mathurā there is less awareness of the Lord's opulence, and therefore less awe and reverence, and there is still less in Vṛndāvana. On the other hand, *prema* is more developed in Vṛndāvana, less in Mathurā, and less again in Dvārakā.

In the outer region of Goloka, called by the same name, Goloka, devotees have knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's Godhood. There, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa live in the mood of *svakīya-bhāva* (wedded love). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always present there as God Himself, where He is even more opulent than Nārāyaṇa. In Goloka He is neither the son of Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā-maiyā, nor of Vasudeva and Devakī. He is like a husband, but there is no marriage ceremony. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is present there; but, like Lakṣmī, She is always offering obeisances at His lotus feet.

In Dvārakā, this mood of opulence and reverence (*aiśvarya-bhāva*) is somewhat covered. There, Kṛṣṇa becomes a friend of the residents of Dvārakā and the husband of all the queens, and there His marriage arrangements take place. Sometimes Satyabhāmā enters a sulky mood (*māna*), and Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, tries to pacify her anger. He may tell her, "I have made a mistake." In Goloka, this display of human-like subservience by Śrī Kṛṣṇa would never happen.

In Mathurā, this *aiśvarya-bhāva* is still more covered. Yet, Kṛṣṇa manifested His four-armed form at the time of His appearance, at which time Vasudeva and Devakī prayed to Him, "You are God Himself. We remember that we pleased You in our past births, and so received the benediction that You will become our son. This is why You have now appeared here." They saw Him holding the conch, disk, club, and lotus flower. He was in the prime of youth, with wavy hair and adorned with many golden ornaments like the Kaustubha jewel. Then, when they prayed to Him, He assumed His form as a two-armed baby, and they became very worried about how to protect Him. If Vasudeva knew that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was Bhagavān Himself – that He could protect everyone and that He could kill the demon Kaṁsa in a moment – why would he have taken Him to Gokula? Actually, at that time he forgot Kṛṣṇa's Godhood. On one hand the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's opulence was present, but on the other hand, the sweetness

of a human-like relationship was present. In Dvārakā, there is more of a mood of awe and reverence towards Kṛṣṇa than an experience of a sweet human-like relationship with Him.

In Vraja, no one ever knows that Kṛṣṇa is God. There, the elderly *gopīs* tell Him, “Can You bring Your father’s shoes?” Then Kṛṣṇa, who at that time is two years old and quite naked, very gladly walks, as if dancing. He puts His father’s shoes on His head and, still dancing, comes to the *gopīs*. Eager to see Kṛṣṇa’s greed to taste *ladḍus*, the *gopīs* tell Him that they will give Him one if He sings and dances. Then, looking at them with very greedy eyes and outstretching His arms as if dancing, Śrī Kṛṣṇa sings sweetly. The *gopīs* then tell Him, “Very good,” and give Him a *ladḍu*.

In Vṛndāvana, any and all consciousness of Kṛṣṇa’s Godhood is covered by *mādhurya-bhāva* (the sweetness of human-like relationships). In *mādhurya-bhāva*, whether or not opulence is manifest, the residents of Vṛndāvana think Kṛṣṇa to be only their worldly brother, friend, or beloved.

Kṛṣṇa held Govardhana Hill at the age of only seven years old. He was neither a giant nor four-handed. He was smiling, playing His flute, and telling jokes with all the *gopas* and *gopīs* there. The *gopas* and other elderly persons, who were like Kṛṣṇa’s fathers and mothers, considered that Nanda Bābā had certainly performed austerities to please Nārāyaṇa, and for that reason Nārāyaṇa had now entered the body of Kṛṣṇa and was holding Govardhana Hill.

And what about the *gopīs*? They were staring at Govardhana and telling him, “O Govardhana, stay where you are. Don’t be heavy for Kṛṣṇa, otherwise we will curse you.” They thought that Govardhana remained upward because of their strong words.

As for Śrīmatī Rādhikā, She is always on Kṛṣṇa’s left side. The *ācāryas* in our line have concluded that because Kṛṣṇa was holding Govardhana with the tip of the little finger of His left hand, it was actually Śrīmatī Rādhikā, as the complete potency or power of Kṛṣṇa, who lifted Govardhana. The supreme manifestation of opulence is in Vṛndāvana, but it is covered with so much *mādhurya-bhāva* that it is not noticed at all.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja explains that Kṛṣṇa always plays in Goloka, but not in Dvārakā, Mathurā, or the outer part of Goloka.

Along with His many associates, He performs His playful pastimes in Goloka Vṛndāvana, Gokula, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, etc.

All moods are present in Vṛndāvana:

*pūrṇa bhagavān kṛṣṇa vrajendra-kumāra
goloke vrajera saha nitya vihāra*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.5)

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of the King of Vraja, is the Supreme Lord. He eternally enjoys transcendental pastimes in His eternal abode, Goloka, which includes Vraja-dhāma.

In India, a *sahajiyā* named Rādhānātha has written a lengthy commentary on Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, saying that there is no mood of *parakīya-bhāva* in Vraja. But his argument is not valid. If a mood has no seed in the original abode, how can it be manifest in this world?⁴⁰

Parakīya-bhāva and all other moods are present in Vṛndāvana. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His associates descend with these moods to Bhauma Vṛndāvana (Vṛndāvana manifested in this material world) in each and every universe. Bhauma Vṛndāvana and Goloka Vṛndāvana are practically the same, and yet there is some difference. No ordinary person of this world can see and realize that Kṛṣṇa is always playing in Bhauma Vṛndāvana, but if anyone develops pure *prema*, he can go to Goloka Vṛndāvana, where he will always see Him playing.

It is incorrect to think that in Goloka Vṛndāvana there is no *parakīya-bhāva*, no birth of Kṛṣṇa, and that Kṛṣṇa is always in the form of a teenage youth. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has given a commentary on this verse (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.5), wherein he explains that Kṛṣṇa is eternally playing in Goloka Vṛndāvana, and He descends from there, once in a day of Brahmā, to the thirty-two square mile area of Bhauma Vṛndāvana.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa eternally performs pastimes with His five kinds of associates in Goloka Vṛndāvana – *śanta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*,

40 “*Janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārtheṣv abhijñāḥ svarāt* – I meditate upon Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa because He is the Absolute Truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance and destruction of the manifested universes. He is directly and indirectly conscious of all manifestations, and He is independent because there is no other cause beyond Him.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.1.1).

and *mādhurya* (the moods of neutrality, servitorship, friendship, parenthood and amorous love). When He comes to this world, He brings all the residents of Vraja-bhūmi, including the ever-liberated peacocks, and all other birds, cows, associates like friends, parents, and beloveds, the Yamunā River and Govardhana Hill. He lives in Vraja until the age of ten years, then He goes to Mathurā, and then Dvārakā. Still, to this day He is performing pastimes with all of His associates in Vṛndāvana.

If we have no *bhakti* we cannot see this. Ordinary *bhakti* will not be sufficient to reveal these pastimes. When we come to the stage of *bhāva*, from time to time we will experience this – otherwise not. Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes to this world to sprinkle His mercy upon all *jīvas*, to those who are doing *sādhana* and to those who are not, to those who have already matured up to *bhāva* and to those who have reached *prema*. He descends to elevate them all.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes once in each day of Brahmā; only once. And when His pastimes are over, He disappears with all of His associates of Vraja. After His disappearance, when He is in Goloka Vṛndāvana, He thinks:

*cira-kāla nāhi kari prema-bhakti dāna
bhakti vinā jagatera nāhi avasthāna*

Please read the translation, and then the purport, of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja.

Devotee reads from Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.14:

Verse: For a long time I have not bestowed unalloyed loving service to Me upon the inhabitants of the world. Without such loving attachment, the existence of the material world is useless.

Purport: The Lord seldom awards pure transcendental love, but without such pure love of God, freed from fruitive activities and empiric speculation, one cannot attain perfection in life.

Contained throughout *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* are the purports of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. Yet, we rarely have the opportunity to hear clear explanations of his words. If we ourselves cannot properly explain this, it means we have no true interest in the subject. To develop pure interest in the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, we must try to associate with Vaiṣṇavas who have a great taste in these topics and who have no interest at all in worldly topics.

We have not come to this world with worldly possessions, and when we leave this body we will have to give up whatever we have accumulated. So why should we worry for material comforts and prosperity?

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja has come to this world for the same purpose as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu – to give that *prema* which the Lord Himself came to give – but only very rare persons realize this. In order to give the world a platform on which to understand that *prema*, Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja was cutting the jungles of *māyāvāda* and other false philosophies, and devotees joined him in this. However, we should not think, “Jungle cutting is the highest service in this world; this is what he came to give.”

We cut jungles in a particular place in order to construct a building or reside there. In this analogy, that construction is the construction of pure *bhakti*. We should not simply continue to cut jungles for millions of births. There are certainly jungles everywhere, but it is useless to spend our lives cutting them. Here, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja is teaching the world: *bhakti vinā jagatera nāhi avasthāna*. What has he written in the purport?

Devotee reads:

Purport: Without such loving attachment, the existence of the material world is useless.

It is useless. Simply cutting jungles is useless if one’s mood is not to construct *bhakti* in the hearts of devotees. This is the essential factor. We have not come to this world to create many material constructions for our comfort. Our Gosvāmīs and *ācāryas* are very powerful and have also cut jungles, but we are not so powerful. If we

concentrate only on trying to cut the jungles of *sahajiyās*, *Māyāvādīs*, and sense enjoyers – even in the name of ‘making devotees’ – we will be affected by those same contaminations.

Here is a lucid example. Someone once saw a person drowning in the current of a very big river, and although he himself did not know how to swim, he immediately jumped into the river to save the drowning man. The drowning man then caught hold of him, and they both drowned.

So, first we should know how to swim; we should know the art of saving ourselves, and then we can save others. We should throw a rope from the shore. The drowning man will then catch hold of the rope and we will be able to save him. Only if we can swim can we jump in, otherwise we will also die.

All these *bhakti-siddhāntas* are very powerful, but if we are not pure devotees and we are trying to make others devotees, we will drown in the ocean of material emotions and activities. Let us first become qualified, develop *bhakti* in our heart by practicing *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *viṣṇu-smaraṇam*; hearing about Kṛṣṇa, chanting His names and glories, and remembering Him. Then we can save others.

When Kṛṣṇa was in His abode, He was thinking, “For a very long time I have not distributed the affection of the residents of Vraja in *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya-bhāva*. When I previously came in the form of Gaurāṅga, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śacīnandana, I gave this affection. Now a long period has passed, so I should give it again. Without *prema-bhakti*, the world will be destroyed.”

Kṛṣṇa continued:

*sakala jagate more kare vidhi-bhakti
vidhi-bhaktye vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi śakti*

What is the meaning?

Devotee reads (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.15):

Everywhere in the world people worship Me according to scriptural injunctions. But simply by following such regulative principles, one cannot attain the loving sentiments of the devotees in Vraja-bhūmi.

There is a difference between pure *vaidhī-bhakti* and impure *vaidhī-bhakti*. What we are doing may not be pure *vaidhī-bhakti*. *Śravaṇam* and *kīrtanam*, etc., performed only to please Kṛṣṇa, is actually *vaidhī-bhakti*. If we are concentrating simply on money-making, we are not practicing *bhakti*. A pure practitioner of *vaidhī-bhakti* is very rare. If we look in our hearts, we may see that we are performing activities, like purchasing motor cars, for our own gain and reputation. This is not pure *bhakti*; it is not even pure *vaidhī-bhakti*. We should first try to follow *vaidhī-bhakti*.

At the same time, Kṛṣṇa says here, “I am not satisfied by even real *vaidhī-bhakti*.”

What is pure *bhakti*? It is service to Kṛṣṇa in *dāsya*⁴¹, *sakhya*-, *vātsalya*-, and *mādhurya-bhāva*, as the Vrajavāsīs serve Him. To associate with someone who can teach us Kṛṣṇa’s real moods is very rare, even in Bhauma Vṛndāvana. There are so many so-called scholars there who will cheat you, and there are many tortoises and monkeys who will harass you.

Try to realize all these verses in very beautiful and powerful association. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja are personally looking upon us; they are very happy. Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja is saying, “I want to give you this, and therefore I am inspiring Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja to give it to you.”

41 The *dasya-bhāva* in Vrndavana is not pure *dasya-bhāva*, for it is always mixed with *sakhya*- and *vatsalya-bhāva*.

Lord Caitanya As The Perfect Devotee

*vande 'ham śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca
śrī-rūpam sāgrajātam saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānvitāṁś tam sa-jīvam
sādvaitam sāvadhūtam parijana-sahitam kṛṣṇa-caitanya devam
śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa lalitā-śrī-viśākhānvitāṁś ca*

This one verse offers obeisances to *gurudeva*, to our *śikṣā-guru*, to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates, and to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their associates. When we are in a hurry and do not have time to recite the *praṇāma-mantra* for each worshipable personality, we can utter this prayer because it includes everyone.

There is another very short offering of obeisances, shorter than this one, which is also important to recite daily – especially when we do not have much time:

*gurave gauracandrāya rādhikāyaya tad-ālayaya
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa bhaktāya tad-bhaktāya namo namaḥ*

I offer *praṇāma* unto Śrī Gurudeva, Śrī Gauracandra, Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her associates, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, and to all Vaiṣṇavas.

KṚṢṆA PROTECTS HIS DEVOTEES

In order to teach us how to attain pure *bhakti* to the Lord and His associates, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relates the story of Prahāda Mahārāja and his demoniac father Hiraṇyakaśipu. Hiraṇyakaśipu told his commanders, “Go everywhere, and if you notice a person who is in any way favorable to Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, or Hari, rob him at

once, burn his home, and then either murder him or banish him from my kingdom. And because cows give milk, butter, and ghee, which are all used in sacrifices for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, kill them also. Mango, banana, and other fruits are used in Viṣṇu's service, so cut down all fruit trees. In fact, if you see anyone or anything that has any relation to Hari, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa, or Rāma, then destroy it at once."

Hiraṇyakaśipu thought he could kill Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, but instead he and his evil associates were killed. Kāmsa gave similar orders, and for this reason Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Pūtānā, and other demons were sent by him to Vraja. However, the result was opposite to his desire, for they were all destroyed.

When a person aspires to love and serve Kṛṣṇa, he or she is besieged with so many troubles and problems. But there is nothing to worry about, because historically we see that Kṛṣṇa always protects His devotees, and to date He has not changed His mood. He is causelessly merciful. If we are very sincere in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness, He will surely save us. Troubles may come, but they are temporary; let us not be worried by them.

By surrender (*śaraṇāgati*), we can remain strict and strong in our practices. If we surrender like Prahlāda, Dhruva, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, and Sītā-devī, Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect us. We can also be clever like Akrūra, who tricked Kāmsa by pretending to be one of his servants. That is also good. However, by concealing His identity as one of Kṛṣṇa's party members, he was not as surrendered as those who fearlessly and directly served Śrī Kṛṣṇa and depended on Him for the results of their actions.

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

If we see a sincere devotee experiencing some suffering, let us try to help him both internally and externally. Let us not overlook the occasion to help such a devotee with any kind of problem.

NOT SIMPLY BY REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES

In Bengali verses, called *payāras*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explains the verse beginning with *anarṇita-carīm cirāt*. As mentioned above, one such *payāra* is as follows:

*sakala jagate more kare vidhi-bhakti
vidhi-bhaktye vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi śakti
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.15)*

Everywhere in the world people worship Me according to scriptural injunctions. But simply by following such regulative principles one cannot attain the loving sentiments of the devotees in Vraja-bhūmi.

After disappearing from His Bhauma Vṛndāvana pastimes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa considered that people in this world generally have no connection with Him and do not believe in Him. *Dharmaṇa hīna paśubhiḥ samānāḥ* – they are like the lowest of animals, such as hogs, dogs, and asses who, although experiencing great suffering, are attached to the cause of their suffering. Although the male donkey is repeatedly kicked by the hind legs of the female donkey, he continues to follow her to satisfy his lusty desires. In the rainy season a moth wants to taste fire, and he therefore flies into it and is burnt at once. We are also like this.

In the form of both men and women, atheists do not know about God, or Kṛṣṇa, and they have no relationship with Him. Their policy is “Eat, drink and be merry.” After drinking large quantities of alcohol, such a person may fall down in an alleyway by the sewer. Dogs come and lick his face, but he is so intoxicated that he thinks, “Oh, I am king of the entire world.” He does not realize his wretched condition. Although he is mad, he thinks everyone else is mad.

Among all these atheists, a person who worships demigods like Durgā, Kālī, Gaṇeśa, and so forth is rare. More rare is a Nārāyaṇa *bhakta*, and among millions of Nārāyaṇa *bhaktas* it is rare to find a Kṛṣṇa *bhakta*. Among Kṛṣṇa *bhaktas*, those who are properly doing *vaidhī-bhakti* are rare, and among them it is very rare to find those who have an interest in the mood of *rāgānuga*, with some greed to serve Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa says here, “*vidhi-bhaktya vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi cacti* – Simply by following such regulative principles, one cannot attain the loving sentiments of the devotees in Vraja-bhūmi.”

What is *vaidhī-bhakti*? It is the process of *sravaṇam* (hearing about the Supreme Lord), *kīrtanam* (glorifying His name, fame, etc.), *viṣṇu-smaraṇam* (remembering Him), *pāda-sevānam* (serving

His lotus feet), *arcanam* (worshipping Him), *vandanam* (offering prayers), *dāsyam* (becoming His servant), *sakhyam* (becoming His friend), and *ātma-nivedanam* (surrendering everything to Him). Even if this is properly performed, and even if we have a very bona fide *guru* like Nārada, the *guru* of Dhruva and Prahlāda, this *vaidhī-bhakti* will never lead us to *vraja-bhāva*.

aiśvarya-jñānete saba jagat miśrita
aiśvarya-sīthila-ṛeme nāhi mora pṛita
 (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.16)

If the entire world's population performs *vaidhī-bhakti* in the real sense, under the guidance of a bona fide *guru*, it will still achieve only *maryādā-mayī-bhakti*, service mixed with awe and reverence and with knowledge that Nārāyaṇa is the controller of everything and is the Supreme Lord Himself. Such persons will never achieve service in Vṛndāvana.

Aiśvarya-jñānete saba jagat miśrita: Among those who are practicing *vaidhī-bhakti*, only one percent, half a percent, or one-hundredth of a percent, will develop some greed for *vraja-bhāva*. It is that rare.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, "To those practicing pure *vaidhī-bhakti*, I give only service to Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha. Even if they are chanting three-hundred-thousand names daily, as Haridāsa Ṭhākura did, even if they are always hearing the Purāṇas, the Upaniṣads, and the Vedānta-sūtra, and even if they are practicing *bhakti* like Prahlāda Mahārāja, I only give them entrance into Vaikuṅṭha."

aiśvarya-jñāne vidhi-bhajana kariyā
vaikuṅṭhake jāya catur-vidha mukti
pāñā sārṣṭi, sārūpya, āra sāmīpya,
sālokya sāyujya nā laya bhakta jāte brahma-aikya
 (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.17-18)

By performing such regulated devotional service in awe and veneration, one may go to Vaikuṅṭha and attain the four kinds of liberation – *sārṣṭi*, *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya*, and *sālokya*. Devotees never accept *sāyujya*, however, since that is oneness with Brahman.

They attain one of the four kinds of *mukti* in *Vaikuṅṭha – sārṣṭi* (having the same opulence as the Lord), *sārūpya* (having the same bodily features as the Lord), *sāmīpya* (being a personal associate of the Lord), and *sālokya* (living on the same planet as the Lord). They reject the fifth type of liberation, which is *sāyujya* (annihilation of the soul's consciousness by merging with Kṛṣṇa's effulgence).

After Ajāmila associated with the Viṣṇudūtas, he practiced *vaidhī-bhakti*: hearing and chanting the name of Nārāyaṇa and meditating on His form. Those *bhaktas* who practice like Ajāmila can go to *Vaikuṅṭha*, but they will not be able to serve Kṛṣṇa in *Vraja*.

Please read the purport.

Devotee reads (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.16*):

Knowing My opulences, the whole world looks upon Me with awe and veneration. But devotion made feeble by such reverence does not attract Me.

What is the meaning of 'the whole world?' In this connection it does not refer to demons, animals, demigod-worshippers, and all other categories of non-devotees. It refers only to those practicing *vaidhī-bhakti*. Please read this again, along with the purport.

Devotee reads:

Text: Knowing My opulences, the whole world looks upon Me with awe and veneration. But devotion made feeble by such reverence does not attract Me.

Purport: After His appearance, Lord Kṛṣṇa thought that He had not distributed the transcendental personal dealings with His devotees in *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya*. One may understand the science of the Supreme Personality of Godhead from the Vedic literature and thus become a devotee of the Lord and worship Him within the regulative principles described in the scriptures, but one will not know in this way how Kṛṣṇa is served by the residents of *Vraja-bhūmi*. One cannot understand the dealings of the Lord in *Vṛndāvana*

simply by executing the ritualistic regulative principles mentioned in the scriptures. By following scriptural injunctions one may enhance his appreciation for the glories of the Lord, but there is no chance for one to enter personal dealings with Him. Giving too much attention to understanding the exalted glories of the Lord reduces the chance of one's entering personal loving affairs with the Lord. To teach the principles of such loving dealings, the Lord decided to appear as Lord Caitanya.

There is no difference between *nāma* (the holy name of Kṛṣṇa) and *nāmī* (the possessor of the name, Kṛṣṇa Himself). Kṛṣṇa mercifully manifests as *śabda-brahma* (transcendental sound). In other words He personally manifests as His holy names such as Madana-mohana and Govinda.

There are two kinds of holy names: primary and secondary. Jagannātha, Brahmā, Īśvara, Paramātmā, and Allah are secondary names. The primary names are Kṛṣṇa, Nṛsimha, Rāma, and Nārāyaṇa. Of these, the most superior primary names are Rādhā-nātha, Rādhā-kāntā, Madana-mohana, Govinda, Rāsa-bihārī, and other similar names.

If someone still has *anarthas* as a result of his offenses, even if he chants three-hundred-thousand names daily and performs the nine limbs of *bhakti* such as *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam* etc., he will not attain *vraja-prema*. He will not even attain *vaikuṅṭha-prema* or *mukti*. He will only get some worldly opulence, like name, fame and money. If his chanting is *nāmābhāsa* (the clearing stage of chanting), this can give him *mukti*. And, if a little *prema* comes by performance of *vaidhī-bhakti*, that *prema* will lead him to Vaikuṅṭha, not Vraja.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not controlled by *vaidhī-bhakti*, even if it is performed perfectly. He is only controlled by the *dāsya-bhāva*, *sakhya-bhāva*, *vātsalya-bhāva*, and *mādhurya-bhāva* of Vraja. Without one of these *bhāvas* we will not reach Vraja in millions of births of Brahmā, what to speak of millions of our births. After millions of births of Brahmā we will still have no connection with Kṛṣṇa. Our greatest fortune in this birth is our opportunity for a connection with *vraja-bhakti*. If we lose this, we can consider that we are losing everything.

*yuga-dharma pravartāimu nāma-saṅkīrtana
cāri bhāva-bhakti diyā nācāmu bhuvana*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.19)

I shall personally inaugurate the religion of the age – *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, the congregational chanting of the holy name. I shall make the world dance in ecstasy, realizing the four mellows of loving devotional service.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is saying here, “I will inaugurate the *yuga-dharma* (religious process of the age), I will give the four kinds of *bhakti* in *vraja-bhāva* – *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*, and I will make the entire world dance.” ‘The entire world’ means that place where Vaiṣṇavas are serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and where Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, will appear even to wild animals. ‘The entire world’ means those who come to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

KṚṢṆA PRACTICES WHAT HE PREACHES

Here, Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “I will have to first practice that rare *bhakti* Myself.”

*āpani karimu bhakta-bhāva aṅgikāre
āpani ācari' bhakti śikhāimu sabāre*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.20)

I shall accept the role of a devotee, and I shall teach devotional service by practicing it Myself.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “I will take the mood of a *bhakta*,” He is referring to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Then He says, “I will teach others by following the code of Vaiṣṇava behavior and I will manifest all the Vaiṣṇava qualities. Otherwise, no one will receive *vraja-prema*.”

The following story illustrates an important principle. A father was very worried about his son, who had developed the habit of eating an Indian sweet called *guḍa*, which made sores and boils break out on the boy’s body. His father told him that the boils were due to

the number of sweets he ate, but the boy did not listen. Finally, the father went to his *gurudeva* and requested his help. “When I tell my son to stop eating sweets, he pays no attention; but if you tell him, he may listen to you.”

His *gurudeva* said, “Bring your boy back in three days.”

In three days the father returned with his son, and his *gurudeva* instructed the boy, “O my darling boy, you should not take these sweets; they are so harmful for you. Do you understand?”

“Yes,” the boy replied.

“Please obey me.”

“Yes. I will obey you,” the boy said, and he gave up his bad habit.

Later, the boy’s father went to his *gurudeva* and asked, “Why couldn’t you tell him to stop on the first day? Why did you wait for three days?”

He replied, “At that time I myself was eating sweets, so if I had told him to stop, my words would have had no potency and he would not have obeyed me.”

Let us practice *bhakti-yoga* ourselves, be bona fide, and then teach others. Then our words will have potency and our teaching will be effective. Imitating a pure devotee like Srīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja we may also speak about Kṛṣṇa. However, whereas people listened to him because of his purity, they will not listen to us if we are not practicing pure *bhakti*. If Nārada says to someone, “Control your mind at once, and give up all your worldly desires,” that person would immediately gain the strength and energy to follow his instructions.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stressed the importance of practicing oneself in order to successfully teach others. He said, “I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *viṣaya* (enjoyer) of *bhakti-yoga*, but in order to preach I must become the *āśraya*⁴² and follow

42 “*Viṣaya* and *āśraya* are two very significant words relating to the reciprocation between Kṛṣṇa and His devotee. The devotee is called the *āśraya*, and his beloved, Kṛṣṇa, is the *viṣaya*. Different ingredients are involved in the exchange of roles between the *āśraya* and *viṣaya*, which are known as *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika* and *vyabhicārī*. *Vibhāva* is divided into the two categories: *ālambana* and *uddīpana*. *Ālambana* may be further divided into *āśraya* and *viṣaya*. In the loving affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī is the *āśraya* feature and Kṛṣṇa the *viṣaya*. The transcendental consciousness of the Lord tells Him, ‘I am Kṛṣṇa, and I experience pleasure as the *viṣaya*. The pleasure enjoyed by Rādhārāṇī, the *āśraya*, is many times greater

the process of *bhakti-yoga*.” Here, Kṛṣṇa is saying:

*āpane nā kaile dharma śikhāna nā yāya
ei ta' siddhānta gītā-bhāgavate gāya*
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.21)

What does Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja write in his translation?

Devotee reads (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.21):

Unless one practices devotional service himself, he cannot teach it to others. This conclusion is indeed confirmed throughout the *Gītā* and *Bhāgavatam*.

If we are not following, we are not qualified to instruct another person. This has been explained clearly in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Nowadays people think that preaching is easy, and that distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness is more important than practicing it. However, if one does not know the *śāstra*, or the ABC's of what is preached or taught, then he will be ineffective. One may collect money by distributing books, keep seventy-five percent, and give twenty-five percent to the temple. Although he imagines, “I am a very good preacher,” or “I am preaching to the whole world,” all he is really doing is taking *mahā-prasādam* and living in the temple. His preaching is so-called preaching only. If one is not actually practicing, then after a few days, months, or years, he again takes to bad habits; and when found guilty of this, he is driven from the temple, or he himself leaves *bhakti* altogether.

Preaching successfully is not cheap. If you are following the process and are having some realization, then try to give it to others. Your soul becomes very blissful by practicing *bhakti-yoga*, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests in your heart. So, first be satisfied yourself by chanting and remembering, and when your faith is strong you can properly preach. Otherwise you are cheating. Moreover, we see in this world that persons who cheat others are themselves cheated by

than the pleasure I feel.' Therefore, to feel the pleasure of the *āśraya* category, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu” (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.135, purport).

Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu says:

*yāre dekha, tāre kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra' ei deśa
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 7.128)*

Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Kṛṣṇa as they are given in *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.

Mahāprabhu is extremely powerful. He gave this instruction and was then able to empower others. We must realize that we can only have an effect on others if we sincerely obey the order of *guru*. We will then be like a postman, and the message we carry will be heard.

As previously explained, Śrī Kṛṣṇa was thinking:

*yuga-dharma-pravartana haya aṁśa haite
āmā vinā anye nāre vraja-prema dite
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 3.26)*

My plenary portions can establish the principles of religion for each age. No one but Me, however, can bestow the kind of loving service performed by the residents of Vraja.

The *yuga-dharma* for Satya-yuga is meditation, the *yuga-dharma* for Tretā-yuga is *yajña* (fire-sacrifice), for Dvāpara-yuga it is Deity worship, and in Kali-yuga it is *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.

In all these *yugas*, the *yuga-dharma* can be preached by the Lord's plenary incarnation, Mahā-Viṣṇu, but He cannot give *vraja-prema*. Nārāyaṇa cannot give it and Rāma cannot give it. By general consideration all the incarnations are the same as Kṛṣṇa in *tattva*, but in a deeper consideration there is some difference.

Some incarnations, for example, are plenary parts of Kṛṣṇa and some are partial parts. In *rasa-vicāra* (the consideration of transcendental mellows) as well, their functions are divided. Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone can give this *vraja-prema*.

No One But Kṛṣṇa

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explains that, within His heart, Śrī Kṛṣṇa considered again coming to this world to distribute a sprinkle of *unnatojjvala-rasa*. He thought, “The *yuga-dharma* can be established by My plenary portions, the *yuga-avatāras*. However, this *unnatojjvala-rasa* has not been given since the last day of Brahmā, when I previously came as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.”

All *yuga-avatāras* come from Śrī Advaita Ācārya, or Mahā-Viṣṇu. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and His second body is Baladeva Prabhu. The only difference between Him and Baladeva is Their bodily color. Baladeva Prabhu expands further as Mūla-saṅkarṣaṇa in Dvārakā, and He still further expands as Mahā-saṅkarṣaṇa in Vaikuṅṭha. From Mahā-saṅkarṣaṇa comes Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and from Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu comes Mahā-Viṣṇu Advaita Ācārya. From one *aṁśa* (plenary portion, or limb) comes another, then another, then another, and so on.

Mahā-Viṣṇu (Advaita Ācārya) is in charge of establishing the *yuga-dharma*, which, in Kali-yuga, is *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. Although Advaita Ācārya is the ‘head of this department,’ Śrī Kṛṣṇa was thinking that besides Himself, no one can establish *vraja-prema*.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī writes:

*caturtha ślokerā artha ei kaila sāra
prema-nāma pracārite ei avatāra
satya ei hetu, kintu eho bahiraṅga
āra eka hetu, śuna, āche antaraṅga*

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.5-6)

I have given the essential meaning of the fourth verse: this incarnation descends to propagate the chanting of the holy name and spread love of God. Although this is true, this is the external reason for the Lord’s incarnation. Please hear one other reason – the confidential reason – for the Supreme Lord’s appearance.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī is requesting us to establish the aim of our chanting and meditation. First we have to determine the main objective of our *sādhana* and *bhajana*, and then we can fix our minds on that goal. Why did we decide to take shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and our *gurudeva*? If we have determined that our goal is *vraja-bhāva*, service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa like that of the *gopīs* and others in Vraja, we will seek the shelter of an exalted, self-realized *guru*. If our goal is not clear, and if we also want money, name and fame, and material fortune, then we will seek a *guru* with a mixed conception of spiritual life and we will be cheated. Such a *guru* may say, “If you take initiation from me, your worldly desires will all be fulfilled very easily, and by the potency of the *mantra* I am giving you, you will make money and become famous.” In this way he will cheat us, as he himself has been cheated, and both the *guru* and disciple will go to hell.

Those who want *vraja-prema* and who have impressions on their hearts from previous lives of association with a pure Vaiṣṇava, will be able to consider and properly decide where to accept shelter.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Gayā and associated with Śrī Īśvara Purī. Having surrendered everything – His mind, heart, and body – at His *gurudeva*’s lotus feet, He declared that His life was now successful. He received the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and *gopāla-mantra* from Śrī Īśvara Purī, and by chanting these *mantras* He saw a very beautiful boy playing on a flute. This boy had a three-fold bending form, a peacock feather in His hair, three lines on His abdomen and neck, and He spoke in a very sweet voice. Maddened with love, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu ran after that naughty boy, who went into a *kuñja* (secluded grove) and disappeared. In deep separation Caitanya Mahāprabhu fell to the ground, rolling about and crying, “O Kṛṣṇa, where are You? Where are You?”

By His own actions, Mahāprabhu established the objective of our life. With this elevated goal in mind, we can consider who will be most helpful in our attainment of that goal. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has explained that one who is ignorant of his goal will be deprived of the most elevated association.

In the fourth verse of *Ādi-līlā*, beginning *anarpita-carīm cirat*, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī established that Śrī

Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to bestow upon the conditioned souls *unnatojjvala-rasa*, the beauty of the *gopīs*' full love and affection for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. How can this *prema*, which is extremely rare in millions of universes, be attained by us? When, by chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, will we fall down on the earth and roll about, tears streaming from our eyes and our hair standing on end? How will it ever happen?

Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in order to fulfill the three desires to taste Śrīmatī Rādhikā's love for Him. We must concentrate on choosing our objective, and then we can proceed in fulfilling it. How can we do this? It is not accomplished by chanting merely one or two rounds of Kṛṣṇa's holy names each day, nor is it accomplished by performing *arcana* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Gaura Nityānanda Prabhu, Jagannātha, Baladeva, Subhadrā, *śālagrāma-śilā*, Nṛsimhadeva Bhagavān, Rāmacandra, Lakṣmaṇa, Sītā, and others at the same time on one altar. In the beginning, when our *śraddhā*⁴³ is like a very small sprout, we may have this impression.

We think and act according to the type of association we have. Although in the beginning we are not able to properly follow a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or even a *madhyama-adhikārī*, gradually, by his association we will be able to completely follow him. Many of you have traveled thousands of miles, from America, Canada, England, and other places, to hear how to become clear about the objective of life and the means to attain it. Your hearts must have had some impressions (*saṁskāras*) from past lives and this life. These discussions are not accessible for those who have no such impressions.

LOVING KṚṢṆA LIKE THE VRAJAVĀSĪS

Now I shall give the essence of what Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja wanted to give. Later, when we have more time, I will explain more elaborately how to attain our highest goal: what rules and regulations to follow, and what our practices should be. I will explain Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, *Manaḥ-śikṣā*

43 *Śraddhā* means initial faith; faith in the statements of *guru*, *sādhu*, and scriptures. *Śraddhā* is awakened when one has accumulated devotional pious activities over many births, or by the association and mercy of a transcendental person who has dedicated his life to the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is the first stage in the development of the creeper of devotion.

of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and *Śikṣāṣṭakam* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, among others. I will begin with ABCD: from *śraddhā*, to *niṣṭhā*, to *ruci*, *āsakti*, *bhāva*, *prema* and then higher.

Even if we do not have a spontaneous desire to serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of the Vrajavāsīs, we can at least know from *śāstrā* that Kṛṣṇa's three-fold bending form is very beautiful. Although He is Yaśodā-maiyā's small son, He is the God of gods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Even Brahmā and Śaṅkara cannot fully understand His identity.

Brahmā has four heads, Śaṅkara has five heads, and Saṅkarṣaṇa and Sahasraśīrṣā Viṣṇu have unlimited mouths and heads. But even they cannot fully glorify baby Kṛṣṇa, who is sucking on the breast of Yaśodā. In the form of a baby, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa lies down He is so weak and helpless that He cannot roll over; yet at the same time He is so powerful that He supports the entire conscious and unconscious universe.

Loving Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the *gopīs* and Vrajavāsīs love Him is our ultimate goal. With this in mind, we read the books of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja in order to understand how that goal can be easily attained.

As I mentioned earlier, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī states that Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to distribute the holy name with *prema*. This is the explanation of the fourth verse. *Nāma-saṅkīrtana* alone can be established by Mahā-Viṣṇu, but He cannot give *vraja-prema*. When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in this world, He not only taught the *yuga-dharma*, but He gave that very rare *prema* that no one else can give. He gave both the holy name and *prema*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave *prema* through the *yuga-dharma*, which in this age is chanting the Lord's name. If the *yuga-dharma* had been *arcana* (Deity worship), then He would have given *prema* through *arcana*; and if it was meditation, then He would have given it through meditation. In this way Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu established the *yuga-dharma*, and He asserted that there is no need at this time for a separate *yuga-avatāra* to come and establish it: "I Myself will establish it, and at the same time I will give that special *prema* that no *yuga-avatāra* can give." He called Nārāyaṇa, Mahā-

Viṣṇu, Mūla-Saṅkarṣaṇa, Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa, Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Ananta Śeṣa, and all His other expansions, and They all combined in His body.

It was not Śrī Kṛṣṇa who killed Kāmsa and Pūtanā; rather it was Mahā-Viṣṇu, who was within Kṛṣṇa's body. Although we usually hear that it was Kṛṣṇa, it is not His duty to establish religion; it is the duty of Mahā-Viṣṇu. Because Kṛṣṇa's expansions are combined in His body, Their separate duties may appear to be performed by Him.

His actual personal pastimes are in Vṛndāvana, tasting the *dāsya-*, *sakhyā-*, *vātsalya-*, and *mādhurya-rasa* of Vraja. 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.

He 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*, but Rādhikā's *prema* is much greater. She is therefore My *prema-guru*. At the same time, when I consider deeply, I see that My form has a special quality that drives Her mad. What is that quality?"

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 teach *nāma* and give this special *prema*.

svayaṁ-bhagavānera karma nahe bhāra-haraṇa
sthiti-kartā viṣṇu kareṇa jagat-pālana

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.8)

To take away this burden, however, is not the work of the
Supreme Personality of Godhead. The maintainer, Lord
Viṣṇu, is the one who protects the universe.

Svayaṁ Bhagavān, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, is Kṛṣṇa. Nārāyaṇa, Rāma, Dvārakādhiśa, Goloka-pati, Nṛsimha, and all of the incarnations of Kṛṣṇa are Bhagavān, but only

Kṛṣṇa is Svayaṁ Bhagavān. *Bhāra-haraṇa* in the above-mentioned verse means ‘to take away the burden of the Earth,’ which is not the duty of Kṛṣṇa. It is the duty of Mahā-Viṣṇu, or Advaita Ācārya.

What is Kṛṣṇa’s duty? What is His personal speciality?

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

(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.15-16)

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

Rāga-mārga bhakti loka karite pracāraṇa is a very important line, and it is the essence of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta. This is particularly explained in *Rāyā Rāmānanda saṁvāda* (the discussion between Mahāprabhu and Rāya Rāmānanda), Svarūpa Dāmodara explains it at the Ratha-yātrā festival, and some aspects are also explained in the dialogues Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had separately with Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī. This was the main objective of their discussions.

Rāga-mārga-bhakti is different from *vaidhī-bhakti*. When we read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, especially the histories of Ajāmila, Vṛtrāsura, and Kapila and Devahūti, we become fearful that we will go to hell if we do not serve Bhagavān.

One may be a faithful servant of one’s father, mother, husband, and children, and one may perform pious activities. Nowadays, to serve the motherland is given high regard, and there are examples of this in every country. In India, Bhagat Singh, Gandhi, and others gave their lives for this purpose, and this principle is true in America and England and other countries as well. However, if we serve our country’s people, but not Kṛṣṇa, our original father, we will go to hell. Knowing this, we must certainly serve Kṛṣṇa. If a tendency to serve Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Rāma, and other incarnations is motivated by a

fear of suffering, the practice of such service is called *vaidhī-bhakti*.

On the other hand, by hearing pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa from a pure devotee, or by reading in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* about the service of the *gopīs* and *Vrajavāsīs*, if one develops a tendency or greed to serve Kṛṣṇa as they do, this is *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

While Śrī Kṛṣṇa sucks the breast of Yaśodā-maiyā, she puts Him on the ground. He then rolls around on the earth crying, “Mother, Mother! I want to sit on your lap!” But Yaśodā-maiyā threatens Him, saying, “Naughty boy, at this very little age You steal butter and roll on the earth, making Your body and cloth dirty. I will never take You on my lap.”

While Nārada Muni was visiting Vraja, he witnessed this pastime and thought, “Oh, Yaśodā-maiyā is such a high-class *Vaiṣṇavī*. What pious activities and rigorous austerities did she perform in her previous lives to have Kṛṣṇa Himself, the God of gods, as her son? Did she bathe in many pure *tīrthas* (holy places) and give great quantities of wealth in charity? Kṛṣṇa is sitting on her lap and she is chastising Him. I can never be as elevated as her.”

Yaśodā-maiyā noticed Nārada Muni standing nearby, so she took her son and placed Him at Nārada’s lotus feet. Nārada was astonished and wondered what to do. “If I don’t give my foot-dust to Him,” Nārada thought, “it will be clear that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This will disturb His human-like pastimes and make Him very angry with me.”

Yaśodā then took Nārada Muni’s foot-dust, first sprinkling it over her own body and then on Kṛṣṇa’s head and body. Nārada Muni was silent. He could not stop her, because he did not want to make Kṛṣṇa angry.

On the other hand, Yaśodā does not mind if Kṛṣṇa is angry and cries. She threatens to give Kṛṣṇa a slap if He continues to cry bitterly. She says, “Oh, You are not becoming quiet? I will give You a slap.” She then lovingly slaps Him and again says, “Be quiet.” Who else could do this?

When one hears pastimes of such intimacy as this, and a desire arises in one’s heart for the opportunity to serve Kṛṣṇa as a mother, this is called *rāgānuga-bhakti* in *vātsalya-bhāva*.

Another devotee may hear the pastimes describing how Śrī Kṛṣṇa obeys the *gopīs* and places His head at their lotus feet, especially at the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and says, “Please forgive Me,” Or “I will not be able to repay You in millions of births.” The devotee will then wonder about the glories of the *gopīs* and desire to become their foot-dust. This means desiring to become completely sold-out to their services as the fully dedicated maidservant of Rādhikā. This is *rāgānuga-bhakti* in *mādhurya-bhāva*.

Uddhava said:

*āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syāṁ
vrndāvane kim aṅgi gulma-latauśadhīnām
yā dustyajam svajanam ārya-ṣaṭhaṁ ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padaṁ śrutibhir vimṛgyām*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10. 47. 61)

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

In Vṛndāvana, Uddhava went to the ‘school’ of the *gopīs*, where he learned about the highest love and affection for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes the *gopīs* chastised Kṛṣṇa, calling Him ‘cunning’ and ‘cheater,’ and other times declaring, “We should not mention His name. We want to forget Him. He is so ungrateful. How could He forget His mother Yaśodā, His father Nanda, and His friends like Subala and Śrīdāma? How could He forget Girirāja Govardhana and Yamunā-devī, where He played for several years during His boyhood? How could He forget us, and especially, how could He forget Śrīmatī Rādhikā?”

Hearing the *gopīs*’ words, Uddhava became dumb-founded like a wooden stick and prayed, “I want to be bathed in the dust of the *gopīs*’ lotus feet. I should stay in Vṛndāvana for a long time and perform so many austerities that I will become qualified for this.”

For the fulfillment of this prayer, waiting for that mercy, Uddhava is presently at Uddhava-kuṇḍa near Kusuma-sarovara in Vṛndāvana.

How glorious is the *gopīs*' service to Kṛṣṇa! Their service should be our ultimate goal, and we should consider how to attain it. If we are prepared to do anything to get it, that greed is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*.

Persons practicing *rāgānuga* are very rare. If we are only able to do *vaidhī-bhakti*, we should continue to do so. If by some good fortune we attain the association of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava, a self-realized devotee who is situated in his relationship with Kṛṣṇa – such as Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Nārada Muni, Rūpa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, or Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his line of disciplic descendants – a very little greed for this will awaken within our hearts, and then we may become qualified.

Kṛṣṇa Teaches Through His Pastimes

[The following discourse was given in Singapore, March 7, 1997, just after Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja left Australia, on route to Navadvīpa]

THE STORY OF VṚTASURA

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's Canto Six, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī related to Parikṣit Mahārāja the history of Vṛtrāsura. He described how Vṛtrāsura, although in the body of a demon, was able to offer such elevated prayers to Kṛṣṇa that even Indra was astonished.

*ajāta-pakṣā iva mātaram khagāḥ
stanyaṁ yathā vatsatarāḥ
kṣudhārtāḥpriyaṁ priyeva vyuṣitaṁ
viṣaṅṅāmano 'ravindākṣa didṛkṣate tvām*
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.11.26)

O lotus-eyed Lord, as baby birds that have not yet developed their wings always look for their mother to return and feed them, as small calves tied with ropes await anxiously the time of milking when they will be allowed to drink the milk of their mothers, or as a morose wife whose husband is away from home always longs for him to return so that she can satisfy him in all respects, I always yearn for the opportunity to render direct service unto You.

Engaged in battle with Indra, Vṛtrāsura asked him, “Why have you not yet killed me? Take your thunderbolt and use it. Hurry up, hurry up!”

Indra hesitated, thinking, “How can I kill him? Vṛtrāsura is such an elevated devotee.”

Vṛtrāsura persistently requested, “In this body of a demon I cannot serve my Lord Kṛṣṇa, so it is better that you kill me.”

Indra had previously attacked him, but Vṛtrāsura was so powerful that he caught Indra’s club and used it to strike the head of Indra’s elephant Airāvata. Airāvata then fell to the ground with Indra on his back. Soon after that, being again attacked by Vṛtrāsura, Indra could not keep his thunderbolt from falling from his hands.

Vṛtrāsura then said:

*paśya mām nirjitaṁ śatru
vṛkṣāyudha-bhujam mṛdhe
ghaṭamānaṁ yathā-śakti
tava prāṇa-jihirṣayā*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.12.16)

O my enemy, just look at me. I have already been defeated, for my weapon and arm have been cut to pieces. You have already overwhelmed me, but nonetheless, with a desire to kill you, I am trying my best to fight. I am not at all morose, even under such adverse conditions. Therefore you should give up your moroseness and continue fighting.

“Why are you not killing me?” Vṛtrāsura asked Indra. “Pick up your thunderbolt again, take your seat on Airāvata, and try to kill me!”

Detached from his body even during the battle, Vṛtrāsura prayed to Kṛṣṇa: “O Kṛṣṇa! I want to ask You for something.”

Kṛṣṇa appeared in Vṛtrāsura’s heart and said, “Yes, I want to offer you a benediction.”

Vṛtrāsura said, “I am not praying that You fulfill my material desires. I only want that my tongue be always engaged in chanting Your names, my mind always absorbed in meditation on You, and my body always engaged in Your service.” This is a very exalted prayer.

*aham hare tava pādaika-mūla-
dāsānudāso bhavitāsmi bhūyah
manaḥ smaretāsu-pater guṇāms te
grṇīta vāk karma karotu kāyah*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.11.24)

O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, will I again be able to be a servant of Your eternal servants who find shelter only at Your lotus feet? O Lord of my life, may I again become their servant so that my mind may always think of Your transcendental attributes, my words always glorify those attributes, and my body always engage in the loving service of Your Lordship?

We only have three possessions: our body, mind, and tongue. It is only by the body, mind, and tongue that we can perform activities. Like Vṛtrāsura, our only desire should be to use the tongue to sing about Kṛṣṇa's name, fame, glories, and pastimes.

The tongue has no backbone. Still, although it is spineless, it is so powerful that it can perform greatly destructive activities. The battle of Mahābhārata was fought only because Draupadī did not control her tongue. She told Duryodhana, "Your father, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, is blind, and you are also like a blind man." Because she insulted him in the assembly of great kings, Duryodhana wanted to take revenge by taking off her *sārī* in public. As a result of this evil deed by Duryodhana, the battle was fought.

Do you know why the battle was fought between the armies of Rāma and Rāvaṇa? It was because Sītā had not controlled her tongue and had thus abused Lakṣmaṇa. When the demon Mārīca came in the form of a golden deer, Sītā begged Rāma, "O beloved Rāma, please bring me this deer, either dead or alive." As Rāma was leaving to fulfill her request, He told Lakṣmaṇa to protect her in every possible way. Then, after Rāma pursued and shot the deer, Mārīca cried out in the voice of Rāma, "Lakṣmaṇa! Lakṣmaṇa! Come and help Me!"

Sītā told Lakṣmaṇa, "Rāma must be in danger. Why are You not going?"

Lakṣmaṇa replied, "I know that it is impossible for Rāma to be in danger. He is the Lord of lords. Do not be worried about Him."

But Sītā repeatedly insisted, "Please go at once!"

Lakṣmaṇa warned her, "If I leave, demons will come and kidnap you."

Sītā replied, "Oh, I know why You are hesitating. You are an agent of Bharata. Concealing Your real purpose, You have come with

us, hoping to somehow or other kill Rāma and become my husband. But it will never happen! I will die before I accept anyone other than Rāma as my husband.”

Lakṣmaṇa began to weep. “I accept you as my mother. Please do not speak such harsh words. I will go, but I will not be responsible for whatever happens to you.” He took his bow, drew a circle on the ground, and told her, “Do not cross the line of this circle.”

If Lakṣmaṇa had remained with Sītā, she would never have been kidnapped, and thus no battle would have been fought. The battle was fought only because of her sharp words.

Of course Sītā and Draupadī are transcendental personalities, and their speech and actions are engaged only for the Lord's pleasure. By these examples, they are teaching us conditioned souls that we must always try to control our tongue. In the beginning of devotional life we often do not control our tongues, and this lack of control results in so many nonsense activities. We may disobey our *gurus*, or even abuse them and other Vaiṣṇavas. So many varieties of offenses are committed due to the uncontrolled tongue. Therefore, to control the tongue is a devotee's first duty.

How can we control the tongue? It is possible only by constantly chanting the Lord's holy name, at which time the tongue will have no time for chattering. It is in our spiritual self interest that we avoid laughing frivolously and joking about others, for by such joking we may commit offenses. We can be grave by always chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa. Unfortunately we do not follow this, and we thus suffer the consequences.

By always remembering Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, as well as Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu and Their pastimes, there will be no time for the mind to wander. The mind will become so pure that the tongue and other senses will automatically be controlled, and we will no longer commit offenses.

The mind is controlled only by always remembering Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, and always praying to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Control of the body is possible if we always engage it in the

service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *śrī guru*, and the Vaiṣṇavas; otherwise, we will quarrel with them. I once heard of a disciple in India who took an axe and threw it at his *guru* as he slept. That particular night the *guru* was sleeping in the opposite direction, with his feet where he usually placed his head. The axe thus landed between his legs, and he was saved. Because the *guru* was a pure devotee, Nityānanda Prabhu and Lord Nṛsimhadeva saved him.

We must try to engage our body in such a way that it always serves the Vaiṣṇavas: by cooking, going to holy *tīrthas*, cleaning the temple or the abode or *bhajana-kuṭīra* of *gurudeva* and the Vaiṣṇavas, and by offering obeisances with eight parts of the body (*aṣṭāṅga-praṇāma*). By always engaging the body in this way, it will be automatically controlled.

Vṛtrāsura therefore prayed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

*ajāta-pakṣā iva mātaram khagāḥ
stanyaṁ yathā vatsatarāḥ kṣudhārtāḥ
priyaṁ priyeva vyuṣitaṁ viṣaṇṇā
mano 'ravindākṣa didṛkṣate tvām*

Ajāta-pakṣā iva mātaram khagāḥ means ‘like a baby bird who cannot yet fly.’ “O lotus-eyed Lord,” Vṛtrāsura prayed, “As baby birds that have not yet developed their wings always look for their mother to return and feed them...” The baby bird’s father and mother have gone to collect food, and he chirps as he waits and wonders, “When will my mother come? When will my mother come?” Why does he want his mother? First, the mother will bring him something to eat, and second, he is afraid that crows and owls may seize him and eat him. When the mother comes, his fear disappears and he also gets something to eat.

Initially Vṛtrāsura prayed like this, but being unsatisfied he corrected himself. In the next part of his prayer he said, “As small calves tied with ropes anxiously wait for the time of milking so that they will be allowed to drink the milk of their mothers...” In the morning, a mother cow goes to the pastures to graze. Upon her return, because her calf is tied up, he cannot go to her to take her milk. So he is mooing, and although bound, he is jumping about as

calves do. The master of the cow then comes and unties the calf, who jumps up and runs to his mother, taking her udder in his mouth and drinking. The reason he had mooed so loudly was that he wanted his mother to come and give him milk.

What is the difference between the prayer of the bird and the prayer of the calf? The bird wants an insect or worm, which is outside the body of the mother, and he also wants his fear to go away. In the second instance the calf is calling, “Mother, mother,” and the cow comes and gives her own milk. But the calf only wants the milk. The defect here is that the calf gives up his mother when his stomach is full. He then playfully wanders here and there, and when he is again hungry he returns to his mother.

Vṛtrāsura felt that his prayer was still lacking. The hungry calf wept only for milk, and when he was satisfied had no further need for his mother. Vṛtrāsura knew this and did not want to be like that. He therefore offered a third prayer: “*priyaṁ priyeva vyuṣitam viṣaṅṅā* – As a morose wife whose husband is away from home always longs for him to return so that she can satisfy him in all respects...” In the absence of her beloved husband, a wife always thinks of him and talks to her sons about him. She glorifies her husband’s qualities to them, expresses her concern for his welfare, and describes how she will serve him upon his return by cooking for him and offering him fresh sweet water. There are three aspects in the beloved wife’s service to her husband: uttering his name, always meditating on him, and serving him with her body.

This third prayer is complete in devotion. In it, the word ‘husband’ has actually not been used, but rather ‘beloved.’ This relationship is even more than that of husband and wife; it is not one of duty, but rather one of love.

Although Vṛtrāsura played the role of a demon, he expressed his great desire to love Kṛṣṇa. Just as a chaste lady who chants and remembers her husband’s glories without any reason or desire for personal gain, so the pure devotee serves Kṛṣṇa. This is a very important teaching of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This history and that of Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja are very significant. Hearing about them, we try to imbibe their qualities.

KṚṢṆA’S BIRTH AND BABY PASTIMES

After reading the first nine cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we come to the Tenth Canto descriptions of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. This Tenth Canto begins by explaining how Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the wombs of both Yaśodā-devī and Devakī.

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya
glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya
tadātmānam sṛjāmy aham*

(*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.7)

Whenever and wherever there is a decline in religious practice, O descendant of Bharata, and a predominant rise of irreligion – at that time I descend Myself.

When demonic people are engaged simply in fulfilling worldly desires – ‘eat, drink and be merry’ – at that time Kṛṣṇa or His incarnations come to establish devotion to Himself. At the end of Dvāpara-yuga, Duryodhana, Kāṁsa, Jarāsandha, and Dantavakra were present on the Earth. Although they dressed as *kṣatriyas*, they were actually demons, always engaged in stealing others’ wives, murdering, and fighting battles. Thus, in order to protect the world from such demons, Śrī Kṛṣṇa advented.

Secondly, Kaśyapa Muni and Aditi performed great austerities to have God as their son, and Droṇa and Dharā also performed austerities to have God as their beautiful and special son so that they could love and serve Him. Kaśyapa and Aditi also wanted God as their son, but not with a specific desire to serve Him with love and affection. For this reason, although Kaśyapa and Aditi became Vasudeva and Devakī, and although Kṛṣṇa came as Devakī’s son, she and Vasudeva could not serve Him. On the very day Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared to Vasudeva, Vasudeva had to take Him from the prison of Kāṁsa to Gokula. In Gokula, Kṛṣṇa had taken birth from the womb of Yaśodā, so when Vasudeva reached Yaśodā’s bedside and put Kṛṣṇa on her bed, Vasudeva Kṛṣṇa merged into Yaśodā’s Kṛṣṇa.

Years later, on the order of Kāṁsa, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva traveled with Akrūra from Nandagāoṅ to Mathurā. When They arrived at

the Vṛndāvana-Mathurā border near the Yamunā at Brahma-hrada, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva sat on the chariot while Akrūra went to take bath in the river. At that time, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā, and Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī, got down from Their chariot and returned to Vraja, and Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who were the sons of Vasudeva got up on the chariot. Akrūra then returned to the chariot and all three journeyed to Mathurā.

Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara, the son of Yaśodā, and Baladeva, the son of Rohiṇī, do not go an inch out of Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa is always fully the son of Yaśodā, and He is only partially the son of Vasudeva. This is because when He was in the womb of Devakī, He was in His manifestation of Nārāyaṇa, and Nārāyaṇa is only a part of Kṛṣṇa.

jayati jana-nivāso devakī-jaṇma-vādo

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.90.48)

All glories to Śrī Kṛṣṇa who resides in the heart of all living entities and who is referred to as the son of Devakī (although He is factually the son of Yaśodā).

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is proclaimed not only to the residents of Mathurā that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the son of Yaśodā-maiyā and Nanda Bābā, but also to Akrūra, Uddhava, Nārada, and the entire world. Although they may see Kṛṣṇa as the son of Devakī and Vasudeva, Yaśodā-maiyā will say, "He is my son." All *gopīs*, all cowherd boys, and all Vrajavāsīs will say that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Yaśodā-maiyā.

Which source is most authoritative, the Mathurā-vāsīs or the *gopīs*? The *gopīs*, headed by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, are superior to Uddhava, Nārada, Akrūra, and the residents of Mathurā. The words of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the Vrajavāsīs are true to the highest extent. Those who say that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Vasudeva and Devakī are telling only a partial truth, not the complete truth.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa took birth at midnight in Gokula, He simultaneously appeared from the womb of Devakī in Mathurā. It is not stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that he 'took birth' from the womb of Devakī. Rather He 'appeared,' not as a baby, but as a sixteen-

year-old youth with long hair, a Kaustubha-*maṇi* necklace, golden ornaments, and a crown. In Gokula, on the other hand, He had no long hair, no crown, and no ornaments. He was like an ordinary little baby, crying, “Waa-waa-waa.”

Kṛṣṇa’s birth pastime took place in Gokula, not in Kāṁsa’s prison in Mathurā. Fifteen minutes after the birth of Kṛṣṇa, a baby girl was also born from the womb of Yaśodā, and thus two babies were born from Yaśodā – Kṛṣṇa and His younger sister, Yogamāyā.

Vasudeva put Kṛṣṇa down on Yaśodā-maiyā’s bed [The form of Kṛṣṇa in Vasudeva’s arms merged with Kṛṣṇa lying on the bed of Yaśodā-maiyā] and he took that baby girl back to Mathurā. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes Kāṁsa grabbing the feet of Yogamāyā, who was in the form of a newborn baby, in order to dash her on a stone and kill her. She immediately took her form as Mahāmāyā, Durgā-devī, flew into the sky, and kicked Kāṁsa on the head. Kāṁsa was astonished to see that this was his worshipable deity, Durgā-devī (the shadow manifestation of Yogamāyā). Durgā told him, “He who will kill you has already taken birth in another place.”

Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains in this connection that the younger sister of Kṛṣṇa, Yogamāyā, then departed from Kāṁsa’s palace.⁴⁴ Therefore, Gokula Kṛṣṇa is the elder brother of Yogamāyā.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared from Devakī’s womb, Vasudeva wanted to give some donation in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*, but because he was in prison he could not. Only in his mind, therefore, could he give away his ten thousand very beautiful cows and calves decorated with gold and silver.

On the same day, everyone in Vraja saw that Yaśodā had given birth to a very beautiful son who was the color of a fresh monsoon cloud, and they became very happy. News of His birth traveled like wildfire, and all the Vrajavāsīs, well decorated and carrying *ghee*, *rabrī*, curd, milk, and butter, went to visit Yaśodā and her new-born

44 “Kāṁsa tried to dash the child downward against a piece of stone, but since she was Yogamāyā, the younger sister of Lord Viṣṇu, she slipped upward and assumed the form of the goddess Durgā. The word *anujā*, meaning ‘the younger sister,’ is significant. When Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa, took birth from Devakī, He must have simultaneously taken birth from Yaśodā also. Otherwise how could Yogamāyā have been *anujā*, the Lord’s younger sister?” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10. 4. 9, purport).

child. All the *gopīs*, the wives of the *gopas*, gathered in the courtyard of Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā-maiyā and sang this *kīrtana*: “Nanda ke ānanda bhayo jaya kanhaiyā-lāla – When Kṛṣṇa was born, Nanda Bābā became very blissful.”

Nanda Bābā held a very big festival, at which time he gave in charity many chariots and horses, millions of cows decorated with gold and silver, as well as other valuables. He gave away everything in his house, and everything he gave was replenished.

Mixing yogurt and tumeric together, the Vrajavāsīs made a paste and rubbed it on the cows, calves, and people; so much so that the house of Yaśodā became 'muddy' with that paste. Everyone was happy because Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā, although mature in age, had become the parents of such a beautiful son.

Every day there was a variety of festivals at Nanda Bābā's house. On the third day, Nanda Bābā went to Mathurā to pay taxes to Kāmsa. Before Kṛṣṇa's birth, having had no son, Nanda was like a person in the renounced order, absorbed in thought of Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa. However, as soon as he had a child, Kṛṣṇa Himself, he gave up his absorption in Bhagavān and became worried about how he would support his boy. He contemplated, “Now I need wealth, many cows, and a palatial building.”

If Kṛṣṇa is our son, we can rightfully possess wealth, opulence, chariots, many calves and cows, gardens, etc. Otherwise, like one in the renounced order, our needs are best served by always being engaged in serving and remembering Śrī Kṛṣṇa and performing *kīrtana*.

Before Kṛṣṇa's birth, when Nanda Bābā was detached, he sometimes went to pay taxes and sometimes did not. He felt he had nothing to lose or gain by paying or not paying. But now he was worried that if he did not pay taxes, Kāmsa would retaliate and some harm might come to his son.

On the same day that Yogamāyā manifested to Kāmsa as Durgā, Kāmsa called his demoniac associates and told them, “My worshipable deity, Durgā-devī, told me that Viṣṇu has taken birth somewhere outside of Mathurā. I want all of you to find that baby and kill Him.” The demons thus traveled here and there to fulfill Kāmsa's order.

Pūtanā, one of the strongest demons, was like a sister to Kāmsa. Kāmsa personally requested her, “O sister, I am fearful because the person who is destined to kill me has now taken birth and is present on Earth as a little baby boy. Can you save me?”

“Oh, why not?” she replied; and, taking the form of a very beautiful *gopī*, she flew to Gokula.

Pūtanā came to Bhauma Vṛndāvana, the Vṛndāvana of this world which, like the Vṛndāvana in the Lord’s spiritual realm, has nothing to do with *māyā*. Bhauma Vṛndāvana is *sat-cit-ānanda*, full of eternal, unfathomed happiness, and transcendental knowledge, as are Yaśodā Bhavan and other pastime places. So how is it that this demoness could go there? Demons can go neither to Goloka Vṛndāvana or to Kṛṣṇa’s abode in this world. So how did it happen that Pūtanā was able to go to *sat-cit-ānanda* Bhauma Vṛndāvana, to the courtyard of Yaśodā-maiyā?

In her past birth, Pūtanā was the daughter of Bali Mahārāja. When the Lord’s incarnation, Lord Vāmanadeva, came to the palace of Bali Mahārāja, His exquisite beauty was captivating. Because this daughter had no son, she began to consider, “If a son like this would come into my womb, I would have so much affection for Him.” Vāmanadeva knew her mind and agreed. He contemplated, “Yes, I will come as a baby.” Later, when this lady saw how Vāmanadeva was harshly treating her father, threatening him by taking big steps and binding him in a snake rope, she became furious. “Oh, if You were my son, I would poison You,” she cried. Vāmanadeva also accepted this, and within His mind He said, “Yes, you may do so. You will come within My touch, and then I will purify you and engage you always in My service.”

There is also another reason why Pūtanā was able to enter Vṛndāvana. It was actually Yogamāyā who called her there. By Yogamāyā’s arrangement, the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are ever-fresh. Usually, if a man and his beloved are always together, their affection for each other wanes; but this is not the case in Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. Still, in that regard, when Yogamāyā arranged for Pūtanā to take Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her arms and put poison in His mouth, this frightened the Vrajavāsīs and their love for Kṛṣṇa was thus further refreshed.

Kṛṣṇa sucked out not only Pūtanā's poison but also her soul, and she was thus liberated. She had tried, with all her strength, which was equal to that of ten thousand elephants, to push Śrī Kṛṣṇa off her breast, but she could not do so. Flying into the sky, she cried, "Oh, save me! My dear brother Kaṁsa, save me! Save me!" However, because Kṛṣṇa has declared in the scriptures that He will never give up those who come to Him, He would not let her go and He would not allow her to leave Vraja. Her dead body fell down in Kaṁsa's garden and smashed it, and thus she could not go to Mathurā and tell Kaṁsa what happened. Kaṁsa was worried that his sister had not yet returned – and in fact she never returned.

After this incident, Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed many other pastimes and killed many demons, such as Tṛṇāvarta and Śakaṭāsura. As a baby, He simply played with His feet as babies do, sometimes sucking His thumb, sometimes sucking His toes, and sometimes playing on a bed. When Śakaṭāsura, the cart demon, came to kill Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa playfully upturned the cart in which he was hiding, and killed him.

Sometimes Kṛṣṇa would put His hands in the mouths of dogs, and sometimes He would wrestle with the horns of large bulls and climb on the bulls' backs.

DĀMODARA-LĪLĀ

At two and a half years old, beautiful Śrī Kṛṣṇa would wander here and there naked. While the Vrajavāsīs were going about their daily activities and while at social functions, Kṛṣṇa would steal butter from various homes with other little boys. The Vrajavāsīs would therefore complain to Yaśodā-maiyā that Kṛṣṇa and His friends were very naughty.

Why did they complain to Yaśodā? The activities of Kṛṣṇa were so pleasing that all the *gopīs* wanted Him to come daily to their houses and play there; in that way they could relish His pastimes. Seeing that Yaśodā was not able to enjoy these particular boyhood sports, they wanted to give her the opportunity to experiencing them, by 'complaining' to her about them. "O Yaśodā," they would say in effect, "Your boy is so beautiful. How sweet are His movements, and how sweetly He plays. You should try to see all this."

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa would deny their accusations, the *gopīs* would ask Him questions like, “Oh? Why does Your mouth have yogurt and butter around it? Why?”

Kṛṣṇa would then answer, “A monkey came and wanted to take butter from My hand, but I would not give it to him. I was actually guarding your house so I tried to drive the monkey away, but he was so naughty that he smeared My face with butter.”

“But why are Your hands full of butter?”

“Oh, you don’t know? My mother has given Me a very valuable gold and pearl bracelet, which became so warm that I felt a burning sensation. So I put My hand in the butter pot to cool it down. I have not taken your butter.”

Once, a *gopī* who was hiding in her room saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa stealing her butter. While His hands were still in the pot, she caught hold of Him and said, “What are You doing? Are You stealing butter?”

“No, mother.”

“Then what are You doing?”

“Oh, My calf has fallen into this pot. I am searching for him.”

“Oh, where is Your calf? A calf cannot fall down in this little vessel.”

“I will show you,” Kṛṣṇa said, and then pulled out His hands, which were now holding a marble calf. “My father has given Me this toy. I was playing with him, and he fell down in the butter pot.”

Sometimes the *gopīs* complained to Yaśodā-maiyā, “Kṛṣṇa is so naughty. By His stealing butter and yogurt from our houses, and doing so many other mischievous acts, He will surely have a questionable character in the future. You should try to control Him.”

One morning while Kṛṣṇa was sleeping, Yaśodā-maiyā was churning curd. She was very beautiful; otherwise how could Kṛṣṇa have been so beautiful? When Kṛṣṇa woke up, He thought, “Where is My mother?” and He began to cry. While she churned, Yaśodā-maiyā was absorbed in chanting, “*govinda dāmodara mādhaveti.*” Her voice was very sweet, and the sound of her rhythmic churning was like the playing of a *mṛdaṅga*: *dhik gā, dhik tān*. It was as though that sound was singing, “*Dhik, fie on those who do not serve Kṛṣṇa; fie on them, fie on them.*”

Yaśodā-maiyā was so absorbed in churning that although Kṛṣṇa was crying, “Mother! Mother!” she could not hear Him.

Crying more and more loudly, He therefore climbed out of bed. As He rubbed His eyes the *kājala* on them ran down His cheeks, and it was as though the Gaṅgā and Yamunā Rivers were falling from His eyes. Quite naked and with a peacock feather in His hair, He ran to Yaśodā-maiyā, but she still could not hear Him. Finally, grabbing her churning rod with one hand and her veil with the other, He stopped her churning.

“Who is this?” she thought. “O, Kanhaiyā.” Taking Him on her lap, she stroked and caressed Him with much love and affection. Tears poured from her eyes and milk flowed from her breast. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was hungry and He sucked with much intensity.

While feeding Kṛṣṇa, Yaśodā-maiyā noticed that the milk on the stove was boiling over. She thought, “This milk wants to serve Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is taking my milk.”

It is important to understand that Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu’s Ocean of Milk has come from the breasts of Yaśodā-maiyā. Wherever there is milk, it has ultimately come from her, and her milk-ocean is endless and deep. The entire universe is situated in Kṛṣṇa’s mouth, and all the worlds are situated in His stomach. Even if there were millions of oceans of milk and if He were to drink them, they would all finally become empty. On the other hand, Yaśodā-maiyā’s milk supply was so endless that hundreds or millions of Kṛṣṇas could never exhaust that supply.

In the meantime, the milk on the stove was thinking that it had no chance to serve Kṛṣṇa. “What is the use of my life?” the milk considered. “I should give it up.”

Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura also says in his prayers, “Without serving Kṛṣṇa I am so unfortunate, and in this life I have not served Him. I am always absorbed in useless worldly activities to collect possessions, but I am not happy. Although my material goals are like poison, I give up the nectar of *bhakti*, *kṛṣṇa-prema*, in pursuance of them. I should die. Why do I remain alive? Why am I maintaining my life?”

We should also think like this. “If I am not serving and not doing proper *sādhana-bhajana*, then what is the use of this life? The human body is endowed with a greater capacity than animals for taking to spiritual life. Although I have higher intelligence and an

opportunity for good association, I neglect it and take poison. So why should I not die? Lord Brahmā has made my heart harder than stone, and it is only for this reason that I do not die.”

Before going to bed each night, we should consider our spiritual development: “Has my faith increased today? Has my knowledge and service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa increased?” We do this in business when we close our shop or office in the evening. We calculate our gains and losses. Similarly, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda used to say that every night we should calculate whether our *bhakti* has increased, or whether it is the same, or whether it has decreased. He said we should do this daily.

If our association is good, then our *bhakti* will increase; and if not, it will decrease. If we have taken *asat-saṅga* (worldly association), then we will have a taste for sense enjoyment. If we have taken *sat-saṅga* (good association) on the same level as ourselves, and *viṣayi-saṅga* (association of sense enjoyers) as well, then our service will be external and we will also have some taste for material enjoyment.

Suppose we took initiation twelve years ago, or twenty-four years ago. Now it is essential for us to calculate the growth of our service to Kṛṣṇa. Is our *sādhana-bhajana* the same as when we first joined? Has it diminished, or has it developed? If we sincerely consider such points, we can progress quite easily. If we have not made much progress from the time of joining the mission, if we have a taste for sense enjoyment and if we are simultaneously taking *asat-saṅga* along with *sat-saṅga*, this is the result of some offense. We can know, then, that our *bhakti* is decreasing.

When we first came to our *gurudeva* we were so enthusiastic. Similarly, with good association we will maintain our enthusiasm. If we do not have enthusiasm, it is due to bad association, offenses, and *anarthas*⁴⁵; and an attempt must be made to correct the situation. A boy cannot remain in the same class for twenty years. If he does so, it means that he is not really in class. He is not studying, but rather playing soccer, or cricket, or other games, and taking bad association. He has not actually been in school. We need to calculate our progress, otherwise we cannot improve.

45 *Anarthas* are unwanted desires, activities or habits which are likened to weeds hindering one's advancement in *bhakti*.

While the milk was thinking in its humble way, Yaśodā-maiyā considered, “I must try to save this milk.” She immediately started to put Kṛṣṇa down, but He tightly caught hold of her with His hands and feet, like monkeys do, and He firmly held onto her breast with His mouth. He cried out, “I am still hungry! Where are you going?” He held onto her with all His strength. But Yaśodā-maiyā gave Him a loving slap and, removing Him from her lap, sat Him down beside her. Pūtanā had the strength of ten thousand elephants and she used all of that strength to try to remove Kṛṣṇa from her breast, but she could not do so. In a moment, however, with one push, Yaśodā made Him sit down. Although He is the all-powerful Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the presence of Yaśodā’s love and affection, He became controlled. Though angry, He sat there by her side.

Why did Yaśodā push Kṛṣṇa away? Did she love the milk more than Kṛṣṇa? Was she acting against *bhakti*? No, she did not love the milk more than she loved Kṛṣṇa. In fact, this Dāmodara-līlā actually illustrates the meaning of *bhakti*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said:

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir-uttamā*

(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.1)

Try to remember this verse. *Bhakti* means 'activity performed for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa,' but here we see that Kṛṣṇa became angry and later broke the yogurt vessel. Were Yaśodā-maiyā’s actions *bhakti* or not? Yes, they were. Why? Because she was thinking, “My milk is not sufficient to serve Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa also likes milk in the form of butter, yogurt, curd, and so on.” She acted for the well-being of Kṛṣṇa, and whether He cried or not did not affect her. Because her action was for Kṛṣṇa’s welfare, it was *bhakti*.

The two wrestlers of Kaṁsa, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika, were giving pleasure to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mellow taste of chivalry, because Kṛṣṇa loves to wrestle. But their wrestling with Him was not *bhakti*, because they wanted to kill Him. Their mood and intention were unfavorable, not favorable, for His pleasure. Yet, even when Yaśodā-maiyā pulled Kṛṣṇa’s ears to chastise Him, her action was *bhakti*.

Kṛṣṇa may have cried and wept, but her action was *bhakti* because it was done with a motive to please Him.

Sprinkling water on the milk until the boiling subsided, Yaśodā-maiyā thought, “Oh, I will give you to Kṛṣṇa. I will engage you in Kṛṣṇa’s service.”

Gurudeva is like Yaśodā-maiyā, giving all devotees help and a chance to serve Kṛṣṇa; he even gives up his own service for this. What does this mean? *Guru* is always remembering Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes and serving them. Being an *uttama-bhāgavata*, he resides in Goloka Vṛndāvana. He ‘gives this up’ and comes down to the stage of *madhyama-adhikārī* to help the devotees.⁴⁶ Some devotees are *kaniṣṭhā* and some are *madhyama* – generally they are *kaniṣṭhā*. *Guru* ‘comes down’ to tell them, “You should not do this, you should do this,” and he sings the *kīrtanas*, *saṁsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka*, *emona durmatī*, and *amāra-jīvana kīrtanas*. Because he is always giving his mercy, *gurudeva* is like a mother.

Being angry at Yaśodā-maiyā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa took a rolling pin and cracked a hole at the bottom of the butter pot. Why the bottom? He first tried to tip it over, but He could not do so because He was a little boy. He was able to lift Govardhana upon His finger, but He could not shake that pot. He tried to make a hole on the upper side, but the pot was too thick there. Then, aware that the bottom of the pot was thinner, He made a hole at the bottom so that all the butter would fall out.

He then distributed that butter to the monkeys. When Yaśodā-maiyā understood that Kṛṣṇa had stolen the butter and was distributing it, she tried to catch hold of Him. Great *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, and *yogīs* cannot touch the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa by the power of their mind. Jarāsandha and Kālayavana could neither follow nor catch Him. Even the four Kumāra brothers Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana, and Sanat-kumāra cannot touch Kṛṣṇa by the power of their minds. But Yaśodā, a *gopī*, and a little heavy-set, ran faster than Kṛṣṇa. Then, after catching Him, she said, “I will teach You a lesson.”

“No, no, Mother, don’t do so! Don’t do so!” And Kṛṣṇa began to weep.

46 He doesn’t actually give up his exalted position as an *uttama-adhikārī*. He remains in his position, but plays the role of, and performs the functions of a *madhyama-adhikārī*.

“Then why did You break the pot?”

“I have never broken the pot.”

“Then who broke it?”

“You yourself.”

“How?”

“You were running so fast that your ankle-bells hit the bottom of the pot, and it broke. You could not see this because you were in a hurry, but I saw.”

“Oh, You are a very big liar and a very naughty thief [She used the word *chora*, which is ‘thief’ in the Sanskrit language, and it is also the name of Yaśodā’s ancestor.]

“Mother, I am not a thief. In My dynasty, the dynasty of Nanda Bābā, there were never any thieves; although there may be many thieves [*Choras*] in your dynasty.”

Yaśodā-maiyā began to tie Kṛṣṇa’s waist with some rope, but she could not wrap the rope around Him, not even once. She tied another rope to the first rope, and another, and then another, until the rope was more than one mile long. But still, it was always the width of two fingers too short to go around Him even one time.

The *gopīs* began to laugh and clap. Yaśodā-maiyā was very embarrassed because, even though Kṛṣṇa was born from her womb, she could not bind Him. Her face reddened and tears danced in her eyes. At the same time she prayed to Lord Nārāyaṇa. “O Nārāyaṇa, please save me from disgrace. Why should I not be able to tie my child? Please help me.”

Aware that His mother was praying like this, Kṛṣṇa finally allowed her to bind Him.

Why was Yaśodā-maiyā not able to bind Him at first? What is the significance of the two fingers? One finger represents Yaśodā’s own effort, and this means that Kṛṣṇa cannot be controlled by our efforts in *sādhana-bhajana* alone. We cannot even see Him, what to speak of control Him. The second finger represents Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. Kṛṣṇa’s mercy is everywhere, but the correct process is required to receive it.

These are the two means of success: (1) Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, and (2) our *sādhana-bhajana*. An example is given of the cat and the monkey.

Kittens need only to weep, “Meow! Meow!” and their mothers will come, take them in their mouths, and carry them here and there. The baby monkey, on the other hand, does all the work, while the mother does nothing. If the mother wants to go somewhere, she simply looks at her child, who will come running and tightly catch hold of her. She will then jump from one tree to another or from one house to another. She will not hold onto the baby. If her baby falls, she will give him up forever, never again taking that child with her.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa may not appear to us despite our practice of *sādhana-bhajana*; nor will He appear if we are not doing any *sādhana*, despite the availability of His mercy. Both are needed – our hard endeavor and Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. If Kṛṣṇa’s mercy is there, yet we are not doing proper *sādhana* and *bhajana*, we will not be successful. If both are there, only then can we see Kṛṣṇa. We want to weep for *guru’s* mercy, the *uttama-adhikārī’s* mercy, and for Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, for by doing so, we show that we are trying our best to receive it. If we follow these two methods properly and sincerely, we will receive their mercy and we will be able to control Kṛṣṇa as Yaśodā-maiyā did.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought, “If Yaśodā-maiyā binds Me, then I can’t go out and play with My friends. Śrīdāma, Sudāma, Vasudāma, Stoka-Kṛṣṇa, Labaṅga, and Arjuna are all waiting for Me.”

All the cows were also waiting for Kṛṣṇa, thinking, “When will Kṛṣṇa come? Only He can take our milk; no one else.” The calves were present, but the cows would not give them their milk. Pushing their calves away, they waited for Kṛṣṇa to come and milk them. With their udders full of milk, they cried, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Kṛṣṇa thought, “How can I let this happen? The cows will not give milk, and if they are not milked they will die. I must go to them. All the calves will also die if I don’t go there. And the *gopīs*, like Rādhikā, Lalitā, and Viśākhā (then only two years old), are waiting for Me to play with them. If My mother binds Me, I won’t be able to play with them all.”

Immediately Yogamāyā came. Although the rope was growing longer and Kṛṣṇa’s waist was only twelve fingers wide, He could not be bound. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is powerful, full of hundreds and thousands of various potencies, but of all these potencies, *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā-śakti* (His mercy energy) is the most prominent. Therefore, when He saw that

His mother, who had been working so hard to bind Him, was about to weep, and when He saw her reddish face and her embarrassment before the elderly *gopīs* who were clapping their hands and laughing, His *kṛpā-śakti* manifested, His heart melted, and Yaśodā-maiyā easily bound Him with the soft rope used for binding her hair. After this, she tied Him to a grinding mortar.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa was weeping, and His tears, blackened by *kājala* (eye cosmetic), was running down His cheeks. Rubbing His eyes and taking very long breaths, He looked so beautiful. He was weeping, but so sweetly. His face, His naked body, and His fearful mood were so sweet. Anyone who sees this scene will experience its sweetness.

*namāmiśvaraṁ sac-cid-ānanda-rūpaṁ
lasat-kuṇḍalaṁ gokule bhrājamānam
yaśodā-bhiyolūkhalād dhāvamānam
parāmṛṣṭam atyantato drutya gopyā*

Satyavrata Muni prays, “Oh, may that very form of Kṛṣṇa, with His eyes full of tears and taking long, long breaths, come into my heart.” This is Dāmodara-līlā.

His movements are so sweet, when He looks crookedly at someone His eyes are so sweet, His pastimes are sweet, His mother is sweet, His *gopīs* are sweet, and His Vraja is sweet. Everything about Him is so sweet.

The Pure Name Is Kṛṣṇa

[The following is a discussion at the Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in Navadvīpa during the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival, March 15, 1997.]

[Devotee:] Who is Bhakti-devī, the personification of devotion?

[Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] She is *svarūpa-śakti*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā. When Her components *samvit* and *hlādinī*⁴⁷ combine together, the essence is called *bhakti-śakti*.

Vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam.⁴⁸ Kṛṣṇa Himself, or the holy name Himself, is like the husband or the lover. And who is the loved one? Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Prema-bhakti* 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.

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 17.133)*

The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Kṛṣṇa's name is complete,

47 "The transcendental potency by which He (Kṛṣṇa) knows Himself and causes others to know Him is called *samvit*. The transcendental potency by which He possesses transcendental bliss and causes His devotees to have bliss is called *hlādinī*" (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 4.62, purport).

48 *Vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam* (from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣāṣṭakam*) means 'the life and soul of the bride, in the form of transcendental knowledge.'

and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Since Kṛṣṇa's name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with *māyā*. Kṛṣṇa's name is always liberated and spiritual. Because the name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are identical, His name is never conditioned by the laws of material nature.

[Devotee:] On one hand, *śāstra* states that if we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* in the association of non-devotees, the pure holy name will not manifest to us. But this verse says: “*pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ* – The holy name of God and God Himself are equally perfect, complete, uncontaminated, and eternal.” So, when a person with *anarthas* and committing offences chants the holy name, is the name coming but covered by clouds of *anarthas*? Or is there no name at all?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] It will be *nāmāparādha* or *nāmābhāsa*.⁴⁹ *Kabhū nāmābhāsa sadāya nāmāparādha*. By one's constant chanting, all *anarthas* will disappear from one's heart, and *śuddha-nāma* (the pure name) will appear there. The *sādhaka* will then have realization of Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa will come to him at this time.

[Devotee:] Someone may say that when one is chanting *nāmāparādha* or *nāmābhāsa*, *nāma* (Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is nondifferent from His name) is present, but covered.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] No.

[Devotee:] But it is said that *nāma* (the holy name) is *pūrṇaḥ-śuddho*, always pure.

49 “*Mukti*, freedom from all sinful reactions, is obtained even by *nāmābhāsa*, or a glimpse of the light of the holy name before its full light is perfectly visible. The *nāmābhāsa* stage is between that of *nāmāparādha*, or chanting of the holy name with offenses, and pure chanting. There are three stages in chanting the holy name of the Lord. In the first stage, one commits ten kinds of offenses while chanting. In the next stage, *nāmābhāsa*, the offenses have almost stopped, and one is coming to the platform of pure chanting. In the third stage, when one chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* without offenses, his dormant love for Kṛṣṇa immediately awakens. This is the perfection” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.24.20, purport).

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] *Nāma* is always pure; this is correct. But we have no conception of the pure name. Our level of attainment depends on how and why we are chanting or calling the holy name. If you are not pure, *nāma* will not come. The result of *nāmāparādha* will be material position, reputation, wealth, and the fulfillment of other worldly desires.

[Devotee:] But I have heard that a shadow (*nāmābhāsa*) is only there due to the presence of the sun (*śuddha-nāma*), and it is only due to clouds (*anarthas*) that one cannot see the sun.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] With this logic, one can say that the clouds are the sun. Similarly, if you are a *nāmābhāsī* or a *nāmāparādhī*, you may think, “Oh, this is *nāma*.” But it is not *nāma*; it is a cloud. In fact, it may even be darkness. Neither one is *nāma*. “*Nāmākṣara bahir haya baṭe nāma nāhi haya*⁵⁰ – If one chants offensively, it is not *nāma* at all. It is merely worldly syllables that sound like the real name.” Just as imitation gold is not gold, so what appears as the holy name chanted with offenses is not actually the holy name.

[Devotee:] If one is careful not to commit offenses, can he achieve *śuddha-nāma* simply by hearing the sound vibration of the holy name? Is that not sufficient?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] It is possible only if one receives the unconditional mercy of *guru*, or any realized devotee, or Gaurāṅga, or Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. With such mercy, *śuddha-nāma* is easily realized. Otherwise, attaining it is very difficult.

There are two kinds of mercy: the mercy of a *bhakta* and the mercy of Bhagavān. For us to receive the mercy to chant *śuddha-nāma*, the *bhakta* must be fully-realized, like Nārada, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, or Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs. Otherwise, by our practice alone it is not possible to attain *śuddha-nāma*. The only

50 “*Prema-pumartho mahan*. That is wanted. There is one word by Bhaktivinoda Thākura: ‘*Nāmākṣara bahir haya nāma nāhi haya* – simply the alphabets are coming, but that is not *nāma*.’ *Nāmākṣara*, Hare Kṛṣṇa, the alphabets are coming out, but it is not the holy name” (Room conversation with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. Māyāpura, 25 February 1977).

way to attain it is to always weep for Their mercy, and to take their shelter in the real sense. Having come to Gaura-dhāma, Navadvīpa, there is hope for us. At the same time, we will have to always hanker for Kṛṣṇa to arrange that we have the association of a pure Vaiṣṇava. Then, by that association, the pure name will very easily come.

There are many austerities in performing Navadvīpa *parikramā*. The hot sun shines on our head, and the earth and dust are also very hot. Many devotees, who usually remain in their home, who are not accustomed to these kinds of austerities, do this *parikramā* – walking not just one mile, but up to forty miles in the blazing heat. They perspire, their faces turn red, their feet burn, their heads burn, and there is insufficient water. Sometimes the road is so hot that their feet blister.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu sees that even in this stage they are performing such austerities, His heart melts and He is bound to bestow His mercy. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu will say, “Oh, you have so much attachment for this *dhāma*.” Surely They will give Their mercy. I have seen with my own eyes that devotees are so hot and tired that they cannot even smile. But still they continue their *parikramā*, chanting *harināma-kīrtana* with the Deity of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on a palanquin, and a party of thousands of devotees. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is bound to give His mercy by bestowing upon them *kṛṣṇa-prema* – either in this life or in a future life.

If there is *śraddhā*, advancement will come despite the presence of *anarthas*. We may have millions of *anarthas*, and we may be committing many offenses unknowingly as well, but if we have *śraddhā*, they will gradually disappear.

Śraddhā is of two kinds: *śuddha-śraddhā* (pure faith) and *laukikī-śraddhā* (faith which is based on custom or tradition). Everything depends on *śraddhā*. There is *śuddha-śraddhā* or *pāramārthika-śraddhā* (spiritual or transcendental faith), and there is an *abhāsa* (semblance) of that. *Abhāsa* is of two kinds: *pratibimbābhāsa* (reflection) and *chāyābhāsa* (shadow). *Pratibimbābhāsa* is not good; *chāyābhāsa* is somewhat better.

What is *śuddha-śraddhā*? It is the full faith that by serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa, doing *parikramā*, chanting the holy name, and serving

gurudeva and the Vaiṣṇavas, one's life will surely be successful. The progress of one with deep *śraddhā* will not be hindered by *anarthas*. But that *śraddhā* must be pure. If we do *parikramā* to fulfill a worldly desire, that *śraddhā* is not pure.

What is the symptom of *pāramāthika-śraddhā*? One will think, "I may be cut to pieces, but I will never give up chanting the holy name or performing devotional activities. Never."

[Devotee:] On one hand, I have heard it said that *nāmābhāsa* and *nāmāparādha* are *nāmākṣara* (syllables), and this is supported by the verse:

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*
(*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.234)

No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him.

This verse says that the material tongue and senses cannot touch the holy name. But, on the other hand, there is the verse:

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇas caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*
(*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 17.133)

The name is *pūrṇa-śuddha*; it is always pure. Some people say that when persons perform *harināma*, *nāma* is present even if the chanters are Māyāvādīs who chant *nāmāparādha*. They say a cloud of *anarthas* or *aparādhas* obscures pure *nāma* and therefore respect should be given to *nāma*, but one should not stay in that *māyāvādī* association and receive its poisonous effects.

The name is present wherever someone is chanting. So, if one has the desire to chant, *nāma* will appear on his tongue, even though there is some *aparādha* or *anartha*?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] No. If someone is chanting with *aparādhas* or *anarthas*, Kṛṣṇa does not appear to that person. *Śuddha-nāma* is Kṛṣṇa Himself. “*abhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ* – Kṛṣṇa’s name and Kṛṣṇa Himself are not separate.” When *śuddha-sattva* comes, it descends from Goloka Vraja into our hearts when our hearts are free from *anarthas* and *aparādhas*. More specifically, *śuddha-sattva* always resides in the hearts of the associates of Kṛṣṇa. From their hearts it comes into our hearts. *Śuddha-sattva* is the essence of *hlādinī* and *samvit* combined, and *śuddha-nāma* appears with the descent of *śuddha-sattva* into our hearts. Only at that time will the holy name and the possessor of the name be perceived as one and the same.

There are two stages prior to *śuddha-nāma*, which are *nāmābhāsa* and *nāmāparādha*. *Nāmāparāda* is not *nāma*, but *nāmākṣara* (simply mundane syllables that sound like *nāma*). It occurs or appears when the chanter has some *śraddhā*, but his heart is still full of *anarthas*. Regarding *nāmābhāsa*, as described in *Jaiva-dharma* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and in *Harināma-cintāmaṇi* by Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, there are two types. These two types are *pratibimba-nāmābhāsa* and *chāyā-nāmābhāsa*.

First try to understand *pratibimba-nāmābhāsa*. The sun is present in the sky. It is millions of miles from the Earth, but its reflection is seen in a waterpot. Similarly, the real holy name is situated millions of miles away. What we experience is only a reflection (*pratibimba*), and that reflection is not the same as the pure name.

[Devotee:] So, if *nāmābhāsa* is a reflection, then where is *śuddha-nāma*?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] *Nāma* is *śuddha-citta sūrya*. It is in the heart of pure devotees and also in Goloka Vṛndāvana. From there the reflection is coming.

Sometimes, third-class devotees (*kaniṣṭhā-adhikārīs*) mistake this *pratibimba* to be Kṛṣṇa, but it is not. The reflection of the sun is not the sun itself, and *pratibimba-nāmābhāsa* is not *śuddha-nāma*.

Māyāvādīs and others like them also chant *nāma*. They see that the *śuddha-bhaktas* are chanting and receiving great honor, so

they think, “We should chant like this, and then *mukti* (impersonal liberation) will be easily available.” They do not acknowledge the form or attributes of Kṛṣṇa or any of His manifestations. Rather, they think they can chant *kalpanā-nāma* (an imaginary name with imaginary attributes), and ultimately they will realize the qualityless God. Their *nāma* is called *pratibimba-nāmābhāsa*. The real name is not present.

The second type of *nāmābhāsa* is *chāyā-nāmābhāsa* (shadow-*nāmābhāsa*). Please deeply hear this analogy. In the final hours of the night, at 4-5 a.m., the darkness in the eastern direction begins to decrease. Neither the sun nor its rays have risen, and there is yet no light, but there is a mild dissipation of darkness. This is the *abhāsa* of the sun, which will soon rise. The sun itself will not rise immediately; that will take one hour. We are seeing something which is still not the sun. We are just about to see the sun, but we have not seen it yet. This is *chāyā-nāmābhāsa*; it is nearer to seeing the sun than the reflection, but it is not the sun.

Chāyā-nāmābhāsa can give *mukti* and wealth. It can also give *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. It can also give the path to Vaikuṅṭha, as shown in the example of Ajāmila⁵¹, but it cannot give *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

In the lower part of the Vaikuṅṭha region, there is the impersonal realm called Brahma-loka, where one gets *sāyujya-mukti* (annihilation of the self). There are also four higher kinds of liberation: *sārūpya* (to have the same bodily features as the Lord), *sāmīpya* (to associate with the Lord), *sālokya* (to live on same planet as the Lord) and *sārṣṭi* (to have opulence equal to that of the Lord). All these four are available by chanting *chāyā-nāmābhāsa*. This is because those who chant *chāyā-nāmābhāsa* have faith that Kṛṣṇa has form, attributes, and power. By continually chanting even *chāyā-nāmābhāsa*, and not committing *aparādha*, pure *nāma* will come quickly.

Chāyā-nāmābhāsa itself, however, is also not the real name. When not even a part of the sun is visible but one can clearly see

51 After Ajāmila saw the Viṣṇudūtas he went to Haridvāra, performed *bhakti* and then attained Vaikuṅṭha. So *chāyā-nāmābhāsa* gives a chance for good association (like the Viṣṇudūtas).

some dim glimmer of light, this is called *abhāsa*. So, in both stages of *nāmābhāsa* (*pratibimba* and *chāyā*), the sun cannot be seen; the pure name is not there.

The type of *nāmābhāsa* a person chants depends on his *śraddhā*. If one's *śraddhā* is *pratibimbha-śraddhābhāsa*, his chanting of *nāma* will be *pratibimba-nāmābhāsa*, and it will give him the results of his Māyāvāda conception.

If one's *śraddhā* is *chāyā-śraddhābhāsa*, then his chanting of *nāma* will be *chāyā-nāmābhāsa*. The name chanted in *chāyā-nāmābhāsa* by one who receives very high-class *sādhu-saṅga* will one day turn into the pure name, just as one hour after *brāhma-muhūrta*, if there are no clouds in the sky (or in other words no *nāmāparādha*), the sun will automatically be seen. In *śuddha-nāma*, there are no *anarthas* or *aparādhas*.

Because the sun is practically unlimited, it is not possible for it to be covered by clouds. Rather, the clouds and fog cover our eyes. In the same way, *anarthas* and *aparādhas* cover the soul's *śraddhā*, so much so that even if he chants for millions of births, he will not attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*. “*Koṭi koṭi janme kare yādi śravaṇa kīrtana, tabuta na pāya kṛṣṇa pade prema dhana* – If one commits offenses to the holy name, he will not achieve the desired goal, which is *kṛṣṇa-prema*.” Due to the presence of clouds, the sun will not be seen.

When we see the *abhāsa* of light (not the rays of the sun, but an *abhāsa* or reflection of the rays) during *brāhma-muhūrta*, we know that soon the sun will rise. This is *chāyā-abhāsa*. Again, *pratibimba-abhāsa* is when there is neither the presence of direct sun, nor is there any ray; there is only the sun's reflection. In the same way, there is no real *kṛṣṇa-nāma*.

[Devotee:] How does *pratibimba* come about? Why would one chant *pratibimba*?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] This occurs when one has no *sādhu-saṅga* or *guru*. Or, even if he has a bona fide *guru*, he may not have the *saṅga* of that *guru*. Or if he has a third-class bogus *guru* who has no real knowledge, the disciple will not be able to receive *śuddha-nāma* nor will he be able to have all the *siddhāntas* clearly explained. Such a chanter can only do *pratibimba-nāmābhāsa*.

[Devotee:] Someone may say that Kṛṣṇa is absolute, so His reflection, which is also Him, is also absolute.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] Yes, just as the sun is also its sunlight, but at night we do not perceive the sun. In the morning, light is seen coming from the sun's rays. The sun is always giving light and heat, but at night it is not seen. Similarly, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is absolute, but our *anarthas*, *aparādhas*, and ignorance, which are like clouds, fog, and night, block our vision like a wall.

[Devotee:] But *nāma* is always pure.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] That is true, but our *nāma* is not *nāma*, although we may think it is. I gave two examples.

[Devotee:] We cannot say we chant impure *nāma*. *Nāma* is always pure. It is my heart which is not pure.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] When we take *nāmāparādha* and *nāmābhāsa* as the name, it is like pointing into the air and saying, "This light is the sun." What is it really? The sun may be absolute, it may be present in the sky, but what we are pointing to is not the sun.

[Devotee:] Even if one is chanting millions of holy names, is it only through the mercy of *guru* that he can have pure *nāma*?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] It is by the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *śuddha-bhakta* or pure devotee. What you are telling, what you are understanding, what you are thinking is the holy name – that *nāma* is not the holy name. A lightbulb is not the sun. Those who have no superior *sādhū-saṅga*, whose hearts are not pure, who have not received the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and who do not have the help of a *guru* will not be able to chant this pure name. It is only words from a dictionary. *Nāma* is present.⁵² When *nāma* illuminates

52 Our *ācāryas* like Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and others petition the Lord for His mercy in their prayers begging for the holy name. For example, in the song *Jiva-jāgo*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes, "Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda fell at the lotus

Himself in our heart, then it is understood that Kṛṣṇa has come. Then we will not be able to check our tongue or our mind from chanting continuously, automatically, day and night, as Caitanya Mahāprabhu did. At that time it may be said that we are chanting the pure holy name.

[Devotee:] Gurudeva, at that time does one see Śrī Kṛṣṇa?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] One *śuddha-kṛṣṇa-nāma* will give *prema*, and then we can see Him.

[Devotee:] When we chant pure *nāma*, will Śrī Kṛṣṇa appear before us?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] We cannot make Śrī Kṛṣṇa appear by our chanting endeavor. Kṛṣṇa Himself will appear on our tongue and dance there when we chant *śuddha-nāma*. With faith, we should try to chant at least *nāmābhāsa*.

Those who do not read the books of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* like Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura will not be able to explain this vividly. If disciples are only crying, “*Guru, guru, guru,*” they will not understand this principle. If one thinks he should only know his own *guru*, and that there is no need to know Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, our Gurudeva Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, or Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī in order to know Kṛṣṇa, this is offensive thinking.

[Devotee:] One must weep for the mercy of *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas in order to be able to chant the pure name. But as conditioned souls, proud and full of *anarthas* and *aparādhās*, how do we develop a mood of weeping for the mercy of the Lord?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:] By always serving *śuddha-guru*, *śuddha-vaiṣṇavas*, *śuddha-nāma*, and engaging in devotional

feet of Lord Gaurāṅga, and after begging for the holy name he received that *mahā-mantra*.” In the song *Emona Durmati*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura prays, “O Lord, I am falling at the soles of Your feet, weeping and weeping for the holy name”.

practices, in no time you will be a pure devotee. Do not give time for *anarthas* and *aparādhas*. In other words, we should be so engaged that we do not have time to dwell on past *anarthas* and *aparādhas*, nor should we have time to involve ourselves in committing new ones.

With a mood of service to *śrī guru*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the Vaiṣṇavas, and with an understanding that Kṛṣṇa's name is Kṛṣṇa Himself, one should serve them by chanting day and night. If we serve and hear from those who are chanting *śuddha-nāma*, our chanting of *nāmābhāsa* will go away and the pure name will appear for us.

Madhava-Tithi, The Mother Of Prema-Bhakti

[This lecture was spoken on February 1997 in Murwillumbah, Australia.]

Today is *ekādaśī-vrata*, and I think that most of you have observed it. To observe *Ekādaśī* fully, like Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, is very rare. We should try, but we are influenced by this present age, *Kali-yuga*.

Mahārāja Ambarīṣa lived in *Satya-yuga*, and he was so strong that he could have fasted for one year, without sleep, standing on one leg, without even drinking water or breathing air. In *Kali-yuga* we are neither strong nor advanced¹; but we are fortunate. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has explained that on *Ekādaśī* if we are hungry, we may take some fruit, juice, or milk. We should not eat continually. It is not that we drink a liter of one type of juice, and half an hour later another type of juice, and again within half an hour we take boiled potatoes and other vegetables, then after half an hour a large drink of water, a pound of paneer with sugar, and another half liter of *rabri*. We should eat only as much as is needed to allay sleep and idleness.

Remaining awake day and night, we should spend *Ekādaśī* chanting and remembering Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as Ambarīṣa Mahārāja did. He was the emperor of the whole world, a householder, and he was externally entangled in material attachments. Durvāsā Muni was a *brāhmaṇa* and a realized *yogī*. He could curse someone to die, and also bring a dead man back to life. He was a *brahmarṣi*, a *brahmavādī*

1 “O learned one, in this iron age of Kali men have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.10).

with great powers. He thought: “I am born in a *brāhmiṇical* family and am in the dynasty of Śaṅkara (Śiva). I am a manifestation of Śaṅkara, the son of Atri and Anasūyā, who are highly learned *uttama-bhakta* Vaiṣṇavas. My parents gave so many teachings to Sītā-devī, who is Laksmī herself, when She and Rāma visited my parents’ cottage. I am the greatest and most powerful man in this world; I can do anything within a moment.” However, Durvāsā Muni never observed Ekādaśī.

Once, in his palace in Madhuvana, Mathurā, Ambarīṣa Mahārāja observed Mahā-dvādaśī, neither drinking water nor sleeping. He absorbed himself throughout the day and night in chanting, remembering, serving the Deities, and praying. The next day, after worshiping Śrī Kṛṣṇa, when he was almost ready to break his fast, Durvāsā Muni arrived at his palace.

Durvāsā was like a god, a realized *brahmavādī*, but he had not observed Ekādaśī. Ambarīṣa Mahārāja requested him to break Ekādaśī by taking *mahā-dvādaśī-pāraṇa*, after which he himself would honor *prasādam*. Durvāsā Muni replied, “Yes, but first I will take bath nearby in the Yamunā River. I won’t be very long.”

He delayed for such a long time, however, that only a few minutes were left before the auspicious time for breaking Ekādaśī would be over. Ambarīṣa Mahārāja wondered what to do. He thought, “A *brāhmaṇa-ṛṣi*, a *siddha mahā-yogī*, has come to my door. He is not an ordinary person. I should respect him by offering him *mahā-prasādam* before I myself take it. Otherwise, I will be neglecting Indian culture, and I may possibly go to hell. On the other hand, I must observe my *ekādaśī-vrata*, which is not a worldly activity. It is transcendental, and if I fail to observe it by not taking *mahā-prasādam* at the proper time, I may lose my *bhakti*. Should I honor this *brāhmaṇa*, or honor *bhakti*?”

After careful consideration, he chose to honor *bhakti*. “I cannot act against *bhakti* in any way, even if I lose some material prosperity or go to hell. I will not disrespect Ekādaśī; I will break it within the prescribed time.” He then drank a drop of water that had been used in the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, called *caraṇāmṛta*.

If one observes Ekādaśī without taking juice or water, he can break the fast by taking *caraṇāmṛta*. But if water, fruit, juice, milk,

or vegetables have been taken, one will have to break it by taking some grain; otherwise his Ekādaśī is not complete.

Ambarīṣa Mahārāja thought, “I have not taken even water during my observance of Ekādaśī, so I can take *caraṇāmṛta*. In this way, because I will not have taken any grains, I will also be respecting the *brāhmaṇa*.”

After taking a drop of *caraṇāmṛta*, Durvāsā Muni returned. “I know you, He shouted. “You are only a so-called *bhakta*. I am a *siddha* (perfect mystic) *brāhmaṇa*. You know my parentage. You know of my great powers, and yet you have dared to dishonor me. I will immediately burn you to ashes.”

He took one dreadlock from his hair, dashed it to the ground, and ordered it to become a burning fire. The fire demon then ran towards Ambarīṣa Mahārāja in an attempt to burn him to ashes. At that moment the Sudarśana *cakra* appeared there. Śrī Kṛṣṇa had ordered His *cakra* to always protect the Vaiṣṇavas, persons who have taken shelter of Him, so Sudarśana burned to ashes the fiery demon and then moved toward Durvāsā Ṛṣi, who fled, ‘taking his legs on his head².’ Durvāsā Ṛṣi then cried out, “Save me! Save me! Save me!”

When the fire demon had approached Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, the king chanted and was fearless. He thought, “Whether I live or die depends on Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” He depended fully on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Sudarśana *cakra* saved him. Durvāsā Muni, however, though a powerful *brāhmaṇa* and realized *yogī*, feared death and fled. He tried first to take shelter of his father, Lord Śiva; but seeing him approach, Lord Śiva called out to him, “Don’t come here. Go from here! I know why you are running. You are in this predicament because you have dishonored a Vaiṣṇava. I know how influential Vaiṣṇavas are and I fear offending them. If I give you shelter, Sudarśana will also attack me.”

Durvāsā Muni then went to Lord Brahmā, who also refused to help him. After that he approached Lord Viṣṇu and prayed, “O Viṣṇu! O Viṣṇu! Save me from Your weapon. I am taking shelter of You.”

Lord Viṣṇu said, “I am powerless to protect you. I have no freedom. I am bound to My *bhaktas*. They have given their hearts to

2 “Taking his legs on his head” is a Hindi expression to illustrate one who flees at lightning speed.

Me, and I have given Mine to them. I am in no way independent of My devotees.”

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
aham bhakta-parādhīno
hy asvatantra iva dvija
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo
bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.4.63)

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to the *brāhmaṇa*: “I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me.

If someone gets a thorn in his foot, that thorn cannot be removed from his head. It must be removed from his foot. So Lord Viṣṇu is saying, “The Vaiṣṇavas are everything to Me. It is My vow to protect them. If you want to be saved, you must go at once to Ambarīṣa Mahārāja. Do not see him as a family man or an ordinary *kṣatriya* king. Do not think ‘Oh, he is nothing.’ He is My heart. Offer him your obeisances.”

Worldly persons tend to think, “I am so learned, rich, and powerful. These bogus Vaiṣṇavas are useless and only chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, doing nothing of value.” Do not behave like this. Rather, become an actual, sincere Vaiṣṇava. Then, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will protect you and bestow upon you *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

On the Lord’s order, Durvāsā Ṛṣi immediately returned to Mahārāja Ambarīṣa. Durvāsā begged, “Please save me from the Sudarśana *cakra*. His heat is burning me.” Ambarīṣa then prayed, “O Prabhu, O Lord, if I have ever performed devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then please save this *brāhmaṇa*.” No sooner were these words spoken then the Sudarśana *cakra* became cool and returned to Lord Viṣṇu.

Ever since Durvāsā Ṛṣi had begun fleeing from the Lord’s weapon one year earlier, Ambarīṣa Mahārāja had not eaten anything.

In fact, when he finally came before Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, the king apologized to him with great humility. He said, “I am nothing – I am not a devotee. I have neglected and dishonored you by breaking my fast.” Durvāsā Muni fell flat at the lotus feet of Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, who embraced him.

Ambarīṣa Mahārāja asked him to be merciful and honor *mahā-prasādam*. Durvāsā then expressed his new realization, that *bhaktas* are more powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa has given all of His power to the Vaiṣṇavas. But they hide this and ‘cheat’ others, presenting themselves as fallen persons. *Tṛṇād api sunīcena*. Although they are extremely powerful, they are also meek and humble, generous and polite.”

Durvāsā Rṣi gladly took *mahā-prasādam*, after which Ambarīṣa Mahārāja also honored *prasādam* along with his whole family.

So be like that: humble, with strong faith in devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Ekādaśī. We can give our head, life, and soul to observe Ekādaśī. Ekādaśī will protect us, for she is the mother of *prema-bhakti*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written: *mādhava-tithi, bhakti-jananī, jatane pālana kori*. Ekādaśī is *mādhava-tithi*, Kṛṣṇa Himself. Holy days like Ekādaśī are *bhakti-jananī*, the mother of *prema-bhakti*. We should try to follow it as purely as possible, not eating and drinking many times throughout the day.

If possible, observe it without even drinking water (*nirjala*), or take a little *prasādam* once in the day if this is not possible. Many old people, who are lean and thin, can observe *nirjala-ekādaśī*; so why not those of you who are young and strong? Try to observe it like this. However, if by such fasting your head pains and you go to sleep, then what is the use? Try to remember Kṛṣṇa, associate with Vaiṣṇavas, read the Vedic scriptures, and offer prayers day and night.

One such prayer is:

*he kṛṣṇa! karuṇā-sindho! dīna-bandho! jagat-pate!
gopeśa! gopikā-kānta! rādhā-kānta! namo ‘stu te*

I offer my unlimited obeisances unto You, O Kṛṣṇa!
You are the ocean of mercy, friend of the fallen, Lord of

creation, and master of the cowherd community. You are Gopī-kānta, beloved of the *gopīs*, and above all You are Rādhā-kānta, the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā!

Observing Ekādaśī gives even more spiritual power than *brahma-jñāna* (realization of spirit as separate from matter) and *brahma-yoga-samādhi* (absorption in the impersonal aspect of God).

Śrī Nanda-nandanāṣṭakam

*sucāru-vaktra-maṇḍalam sukarna-ratna-kuṇḍalam
sucarcitāṅga-candanam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, whose face is extremely delightful, in whose beautiful ears hang jeweled earrings, and whose entire body is anointed with fragrant *candana*. (1)

*sudīrgha netra-pankajam śikhi-śikhaṇḍa-mūrdhajam
anaṅga-koṭi-mohanam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, whose eyes are more beautiful than the fully bloomed lotus, whose head is beautifully adorned with an arrangement of peacock feathers, and who enchants millions of Cupids. (2)

*sunāsikāgra-mauktikam svachanda danta-panktikam
navāmbudāṅga-cikkaṇam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, from whose beautiful nose hangs an elephant-pearl, whose teeth are immensely effulgent, whose bodily complexion is more beautiful and lustrous than a fresh raincloud. (3)

*kareṇa veṇu-rañjitaṁ gatī-karīndra-gañjitaṁ
dukūla-pīta śobhanam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, whose lotus hands hold the flute, whose lingering gait defeats even that of an impassioned elephant, and whose dark limbs are beautified by a yellow shawl. (4)

*tri-bhaṅga-deha-sundaram nakha-dyuti-sudhākaram
amūlya ratna-bhūṣaṇam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, whose threefold-bending posture is exquisitely elegant, the effulgence of whose toe-nails puts to shame even the moon, and who wears invaluable jewels and ornaments. (5)

*sugandha-aṅga-saurabham-urovirāji-kaustubham
sphuracchrī-vatsalāñchanam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, whose body exudes an especially beautiful fragrance, and whose broad chest is adorned with the Kaustubha jewel and the mark of *śrīvātsa*. (6)

*vṛndāvana-sunāgaram vilāsānuga-vāsasam
surendra-garva-mocanam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, the expert lover of Vṛndāvana who performs immaculate pastimes and who is attired in clothes which are suitable for those pastimes, and who pulverized the pride of Indra. (7)

*vrajāṅganā-sunāyakam sadā sukha-pradāyakam
jagan-manah pralobhanam namāmi nanda-nandanam*

I offer *praṇāma* to Nanda-nandana, who as the lover of the *vraja-gopīs* perpetually delights them and who enchants the minds of all living entities. (8)

*śrī-nanda-nandanāṣṭakam paṭhed ya śraddhayānvitah
tared-bhavābhim dustaram labhet tadanghri-yugmakam*

Whoever regularly recites this Śrī Nanda-nandanāṣṭakam will easily cross the seemingly insurmountable ocean of material existence and attain eternal residence at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. (9)

Śrī Rādhā-kṛpā-kaṭākṣa-stava-rāja

*munīndra-vṛnda-vandite tri-loka-śoka-hāriṇī
prasanna-vaktra-paṅkaje nikuñja-bhū-vilāsini
vrajendra-bhānu-nandini vrajendra-sūnu-saṅgate
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Your louts feet are worshiped by the host of sages and You drive away the grief of the three spheres. Your joyful face blooms like a lotus and You delight in pastimes in the *kuñjas* of Vraja. The daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja and the mistress of Vraja-kumāra's heart – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (1)

*aśoka-vṛkṣa-vallarī-vitāna-maṇḍapa-sṭhite
pravāla-vāla-pallava-prabhā 'ruṅāṅghri-komale
varābhaya-sphurat-kare prabhūta-sampadālaye
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

You dwell in a *mandira* composed of creepers climbing upon *aśoka* trees. Your soft lotus feet are like lustrous red coral, newly-sprouted leaves, and the rising sun. Your lotus hands, always eager to fulfill the cherished desires of Your devotees, grant the benediction of fearlessness. You possess infinite opulence – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (2)

*anaṅga-raṅga-maṅgala-prasaṅga-bhaṅgura-bhruvām
savibhramam-sasambhramam dṛganta-bāṇa-pātanaih
nirantaram vaṣī-kṛta-pratīti-nanda-nandane
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

On the stage of loving playfulness, in an occurrence of immense auspiciousness, Your curved eyebrows suddenly emit showers of arrow-glances which constantly

overpower Nanda-nandana – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (3)

*taḍit-suvarṇa-campaka-pradīpta-gaura-vigrahe
mukha-prabhā-parāsta-koṭi-śāradendu-maṇḍale
vicitra-citra-saṅcarac-cakora-śāva-locane
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

The glistening, fair complexion of Your limbs is like lightening, gold, and *campaka* flowers, the shining brilliance of Your face defeats even the effulgence of millions of autumnal full moons, and Your eyes, which are restless like *cakora* birds, display strange and wonderful scenes at each new moment – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (4)

*madonmadāti-yauvane pramoda-māna-maṇḍite
priyānurāga-rañjite kalā-vilāsa-ṇaṇḍite
ananya-dhanya-kuñja-rājya-kāma-keli-kovide
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

You are intoxicated in the beauty of Your own youth and are always adorned with Your preeminent ornament, Your delightful sulking mood. Dyed in Your darling one's love, You are supremely expert in the art of loving affairs. In various exalted *kuñjas* You're the most learned in the study of all love's novelties – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (5)

*aśeṣa-hāva-bhāva-dhīra-hīra-hāra-bhūṣite
prabhūta-śāta-kumbha-kumbha kumbhi-kumbha-sustani
praśasta-manda-hāsyā-cūrṇa-pūrṇa-saukhya-sāgare
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

Adorned simultaneously with the ornament of Your amorous flirtation and with Your gravity, which is like a necklace of diamonds, Your lovely breasts are like twin water-urns composed of pure gold, also like the cranial globes of *Jaya-nandini*. Displaying Your acclaimed mild smile You are an ocean of divine bliss – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (6)

*mṛṇāla-vāla-vallarī-taraṅga-raṅga-dor-late
latāgra-lāsya-lola-nīla-locanāvalokane
lalal-lulan-milan-manojña-mugdha-mohanāśrite
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

Your soft arms are like fresh stems of lotuses swaying on a body of water. Just as a creeper dances in a gust of wind, Your restless bluish eyes flash anenthraling glance. Your charm entices Mohana Himself to follow after You, and when meeting, You steal away His mind, then give Him shelter in His spellbound condition – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (7)

*suvarṇa-mālikāñcita-tri-rekha-kambu-kaṇṭhage
tri-sūtra-maṅgalī-guṇa tri-ratna-dīpti-dīdhite
salola-nīla-kuntale-ṣrasūna-guccha-gumphite
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

Your neck, as beautiful as a lovely conch, is decorated with golden necklaces and three lines, ornaments composed of three colors of glistening jewels swing from Your trisūtra, and Your black tresses, which are woven with clusters of the best flowers, slowly oscillate – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (8)

*nitamba-bimba-lambamāna-puṣpa-mekhalā-guṇe
praśasta-ratna-kiṅkiṇī-kalāpa-madhya-mañjule
karindra-śuṇḍa-daṇḍikā-varoha-saubhagoruke
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

Your hips are adorned with a waistband studded with swinging goldenflower-gems. The acclaimed jingling of those gems is exceedingly enchanting. Your beautiful thighs taper like the sloping trunk of the king of elephants – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (9)

*aneka-mantra-nāda-mañju-nūpurā-rava-skhalat
samāja-rāja-haṁsa-vaṁśa-nikvanāti-gaurave
vilola-hema-vallarī-vidāmbi-cāru-caṅkrame
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

The varieties of Vedic *mantras* sweetly resounding from Your golden anklets resembles the chirping of a flock of noble swans. As You walk along, the beauty of Your limbs resembles undulating golden creepers – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (10)

*ananta-koṭi-viṣṇu-loka-namra-padmajārcite
himādriyā-pulomajā-viriñcajā-vara-prade
apāra-siddhi-ṛddhi-digdha-sat-padāṅguli-nakhe
kadā kariṣyasiha mām kṛpa-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam?*

You are worshiped by Śrī Lakṣmī, the goddess of unlimited millions of Vaikuṅṭha planets. Śrī Pārvati, Indrāṇi, and Sarasvatī all worship and attain benedictions from You. Meditation on even one of the nails of Your lotus feet grants an infinite host of perfections – O, when will You bestow upon me Your merciful sidelong glance? (11)

*makheśvari! kriyeśvari! svadheśvari! sureśvari!
tri-veda-bhāratīśvari! pramāṇa-śāsaneśvari!
rameśvari! kṣameśvari! pramoda-kānaneśvari!
vrajeśvari! vrajādhipē! śrī rādhike namo 'stu te!*

You are the *svāminī* of all kinds of sacrifices and actions, of Svadhā-devī (symbolization of sacrificial offerings presented to deceased ancestors), and the host of demigods, of the words of the three Vedas, of all the scriptures, including those which delineate law and logic, of Śrī Ramā-devī (fortune-devī) and Śrī Kṣamā-devī (forgiveness-devī), and especially of the delightful *kuñjas*. When will You mercifully make me Your *dāsī* and grant me the qualification to render service to Your amorous pastimes with the prince of Vraja? O Rādhikā, supreme goddess of Vraja, I offer You *praṇāma* again and again. (12)

*iti mam adbhutaṁ-stavaṁ niśamya bhānu-nandinī
karotu santataṁ janam kṛpā-kaṭākṣa-bhājanam
bhavet tadaiva-sañcita-tri-rūpa-karma-nāśanam
bhavet tadā-vrajendra-sūnu – maṇḍala-praveśanam*

He Vṛṣabhanu-nandinī! Upon hearing this wonderful prayer, please make me the perpetual object of Your merciful glance. Then, by the influence of Your mercy, all the reactions to my *karma* will be destroyed and, realizing my internal identity as a *mañjarī*, I will enter the circle of the *parama-preṣṭhasakhīs* to participate in Kṛṣṇacandra's eternal pastimes. (13)

A Beautiful Song

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote this beautiful song, Śrī Nāma-kīrtana, in the middle of the night, while he was immersed in performing his *bhajana*. In fact, he wrote all his songs while absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's sublime pastimes. All of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's important pastimes are present in this song, and therefore it carries very deep meanings.

Yaśomatī-nandana means 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā-devī.' *Vraja-vara-nāgara*. *Nāgara* means 'beloved of the *gopīs*;' there is no equivalent word for *nāgara* in English, or in any other language of the world, but those who understand the topics in *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* can realize its deep meanings. Although this song is actually meant for *uttama-adhikāris*, we can also hear and sing it, and perhaps an intense eagerness to serve *Yaśomatī-nandana* Kṛṣṇa will manifest in our heart. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has mercifully appeared to give this greed.

Yāmuna-taṭa-cara, *gopī-vasanahara*, *rāsa-rasika kṛpāmaya*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always wandering on the banks of the Yamunā. Sometimes He goes with the *gopas* for cow-herding, but it is not essential that they go to the Yamunā for that; there are many other sources of water for the cows. He particularly goes there because He knows that the beautiful *gopīs*, carrying pots on their heads, will come there to collect water for their pots.

Yamunā water is not actually water. It is the love and affection of the *gopīs*, and in that 'water' Śrī Kṛṣṇa takes bath. Regarding the *gopīs*, although they have many servants and maidservants at home who could go to the Yamunā and collect the water, they think, "We should bring the water ourselves." They go there with the excuse that they want water, but they are merely cheating their family members. Their only desire is to meet Kṛṣṇa, and for this purpose

they have given up all worldly attachments and obligations, such as religion, duties toward their husbands, children, and other family members, and all other household duties. They have even given up their shame.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*ye yathā mām prapadyante tām̐s tathaiva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*
(*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11)

As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly.
Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pṛthā.

In this verse, Śrī Kṛṣṇa promises to love and reciprocate with anyone in whatever way they love Him, but He cannot repay the *gopīs'* love. He can repay the love of His friends, His servants like Hanumān, His devotees like Sanaka and Sanandana, and all the associates of Rāmacandra. He can also somewhat repay the love of His father, Daśaratha Mahārāja, His mother, and all His other friends. But He cannot repay the love of the *gopīs*. To try to repay them, He goes to the banks of the Yamunā.

But sometimes the *gopīs* do not come to the Yamunā. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then waits for them the entire day, His eyes always busy roaming and searching for them. If anyone asks Him, "Why are You wandering here and there?" He answers, "Oh, I have lost one of my calves and I am searching for him." He knows many tricks, and He will play any of them in order to get the opportunity to meet the *gopīs*.

At our present stage of spiritual advancement, we cannot understand or taste the meanings in these beautiful, marvelous verses. When we associate with mature Vaiṣṇavas, and our love and affection also matures, at that time we will realize and taste them.



A Life Sketch of
Śrīla Bhaktivēdānta
Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the disciple of *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is one of the foremost leading disciples of *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda.

On February 16, 1921, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja took his divine birth in the village of Tewaripur, located near the bank of the sacred Ganges River in Bihar, India. It was here that Lord Rāmacandra killed the Tāraka demon. Śrīla Mahārāja appeared in this world on the *amāvasyā* (new moon) day. His birth name was Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Tiwari. He was born in a very religious Trivedi *brāhmaṇa* family, and throughout his childhood he had many opportunities to regularly accompany his father to *kīrtanas* and lecture assemblies.

In February of 1946, he had his first meeting with his *gurudeva*, in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, West Bengal. He had traveled there from his village after meeting a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura named Śrīla Narottamānanda Brahmācārī, who had been touring in the area, preaching the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. After some discussions with him, Śrīla Mahārāja had become convinced of the paramount position of the philosophy disseminated by the *ācāryas* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Within days, he had left home to join the mission of his spiritual master and surrender his life to him.

Arriving in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, Śrīla Mahārāja enthusiastically joined the annual *parīkramā*. At the end of the *parīkramā*, on Gaura-pūrṇimā, he was given both *harināma* and *dīkṣā mantras* by Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, receiving the name Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa Brahmācārī. Soon afterward, his *guru-*

deva also awarded him the title ‘Bhakta-bāndhava,’ which means ‘friend of the devotees,’ as he was always serving the Vaiṣṇavas in a very pleasing manner.

Over the next seven years, He traveled extensively with his *gurudeva* on preaching tours throughout India. In 1952, again on Gaura-pūrṇimā, his beloved *gurudeva* awarded him initiation into the sacred order of *sannyāsa*. In 1954, his *gurudeva* gave him charge of the newly opened temple in Mathurā, Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha. Śrīla Mahārāja then began to spend part of the year in Mathurā and the other part in Bengal, serving extensively in both areas. This continued for the next fourteen years.

His responsibility further increased when Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja appointed him vice-president of his institution, the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, as well as editor-in-chief of its Hindi publications and monthly magazine, *Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā*. In 1968, his *gurudeva* departed from this world and Śrīla Mahārāja personally performed all the necessary ceremonial rituals for his *samādhi*. During this time period, as a humble servitor of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, he began to organize the annual Kārtika Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, which he continues to carry on up to this present day.

Śrīla Mahārāja was requested by his *gurudeva* to translate the books of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura from Bengali into his native language, Hindi. He has carried out this request by translating some of the Ṭhākura’s most prominent books, such as *Jaiva-dharma*, *Caitanya-Śikṣāmṛta*, *Bhakti-tattva-viveka*, *Vaiṣṇava-siddhānta-mālā*, to name only a few. All these books, as well as his translations and commentaries of other prominent *ācāryas* of the *guru-paramparā*, are presently being translated into English and other languages by his followers. To date, he has translated and published over eighty books in Hindi, and over fifty books in English. In addition, many of his English books have now been translated into other languages, including Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Portuguese, Chinese, and several Indian languages.

He continues to lecture in Hindi, Bengali, and English throughout India and internationally, and all of his discourses are recorded. Several Hindi lectures have been transcribed, as well as translated

into English and other languages for publication. Additionally, thousands of his English lectures have been recorded and filmed, and, they are also being sent as transcriptions, audios, and videos over the internet to reach hundreds of thousands of fortunate souls.

A significant relationship in the life of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is his association with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, known throughout the world as Śrīla Prabhupāda, the famous preacher of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and Founder Ācārya of ISKCON, the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. They first met in Calcutta, in 1946, on the occasion of the inauguration of a new branch of the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti when they had both come to render their services. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja is one of its founding members.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja accompanied his *gurudeva* to Jhansi, where Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, or Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu, as he was formerly known, had been trying to start a Vaiṣṇava society named The League of Devotees. A few years later, in the early Fifties, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja came to reside in Mathurā at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, on the invitation of his god-brother, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and he remained there for some months. Sharing regular devotional exchanges and deep discussions of Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* with him, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja developed a still further intimate relationship with Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja during this time period, regarding him both as his *śikṣā-guru* and bosom friend.

In 1959, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja initiated Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Prabhu into the sacred *sannyāsa* order, giving him the *sannyāsī* name and title Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, and the ceremony of Vedic fire *yajña* and all the rituals were personally performed by Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja was already residing in Vṛndāvana during this period, first at the Vamśī Gopāla Mandira and a few years later at the Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara Mandira, and Śrīla Mahārāja would often go there to visit him.

He would cook for him and honor the *prasādam* with him, and they would exchange intimate discussions on Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

When Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja went to preach in the West and succeeded in starting the first Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in America, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja sent him the first *mṛdaṅga* drums and *karatālas* that he would be using for *sankīrtana*.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja maintained regular correspondence every month or two with Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja up until 1968, when Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja entered *nitya-līlā*. After that, he continued to write Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, until his own divine departure in 1977.

Toward the end of his manifest stay in this world, he requested Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja several times to kindly give his association to his western disciples and help them to understand the deep truths of the Vaiṣṇava philosophy in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja humbly agreed to honor his request, considering him to be one of his worshipable *śikṣā-gurus*. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja also requested Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja to take complete charge of performing all the rituals for his *samādhi* after his departure. Both of these requests clearly demonstrated his firm and utter confidence in Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

For three decades since Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's departure from the vision of this world in November 1977, Śrīla Mahārāja has been unwaveringly carrying out this final request, by providing insightful guidance and loving shelter to all who come to him seeking it. Through the medium of his English books and extensive world touring, he is now giving his association and divine realizations to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's followers and all other sincere searchers of truth throughout the globe. Although he is over 88 years of age, he regularly travels throughout India and abroad, preaching the glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and the true glory of ISKCON's Founder Ācārya Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja and his entire *guru-paramparā*.

In 2009, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja completed his thirtieth world preaching tour. In many countries, he is invited to prominent Hindu temples to give lectures on India's Vedic *sanātana-dharma*. When he is in India, he is regularly invited by dignitaries to speak at their spiritual programs. A prominent member of the Brahma-Madhva-Gauḍīya disciplic succession, he is highly acclaimed throughout India as a spiritual scholar and teacher, and as a pure devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He is recognized as a strict follower of Vedic culture, Hindu *sanātana-dharma*, Vaiṣṇava etiquette, *daiivī-varṇāśrama*, and *bhāgavat-bhajana*. Most of the notable spiritual scholars of Mathurā and Vṛndāvana invite him to speak at their assemblies, and he also invites them to attend programs at his *maṭha*.

Many Indian government officials, like the DCP (Deputy Commissioner of Police) and also many court judges, in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta, Mathurā, and elsewhere are his disciples. Many renowned industrialists and businessmen regularly come to him to inquire about spiritual life and receive his blessings. Many head *pūjārīs* throughout Vraja-maṇḍala visit him. The head *pūjārī* of the well-known Rādhā-Govinda Mandira in Jaipur regularly arranges to bring garlands and *mahā-prasādam* from the Deities, especially on the occasions of Śrīla Mahārāja's commencement of another world tour. This is also true of the *pūjārī* of Śrī Jagannātha Mandira in Purī. The leader of all Lord Jagannātha's servants, the Dayitā-pati of Purī, also attends Śrīla Mahārāja's classes when he is in Purī.

Śrīla Mahārāja has been conducting Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* for over 50 years, and, during that time, the heads of all the villages come to him and pay their respects. He has also been engaged for several years in organizing the renovation of many holy places in Vṛndāvana, such as Bhāṇḍīravaṭa in Bhāṇḍīravana, Kadambakyārī near Nandagrāma, Brahma-kuṇḍa and Surabhi-kuṇḍa in Govardhana, and Kāliya-ghāṭa in Vṛndāvana. His work in this regard is recognized by the public, the government and the press. For this and his other spiritual achievements, he was awarded the title Yuga-Ācārya by the heads of the various villages throughout Vraja-maṇḍala.

He also leads a Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* every year at the time of Gaura-pūrṇimā. At that time he and his *sannyāsīs* are followed by over 20,000 pilgrims from Bengal, and over 2,000 other Indian and Western pilgrims. Most of the devotees from Bengal are poor village people, and they are given free facilities and *prasādam* throughout the week-long festival.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has demonstrated and exemplified the unadulterated life of utter dedication and pure loving service to his *gurudeva*, his *guru-paramparā*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. As Their intimate servitor, he continues to illuminate the path for those who wish to discover and dive deeply into the ecstatic ocean of *rādhā-dāsyam*, service to the radiantly beautiful lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dearly beloved, Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

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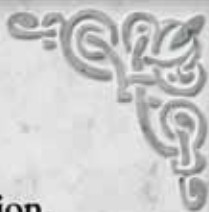
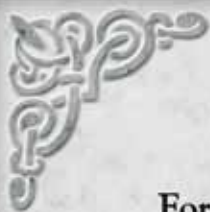
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