

# Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam

❧ ŚRĪ BHĀGAVATA-RAHASYA ❧

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*śrī-śrī-guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ*

# **SECRET TRUTHS** *of the* **BHĀGAVATAM**

ŚRĪ BHĀGAVATA-RAHASYA

Lecture series given in  
New Vraja (Badger), California  
June, 1999

by  
Śrī Śrīmad  
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA PUBLICATIONS  
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# SECRET TRUTHS OF THE BHĀGAVATAM

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## ❧ EDITORS' PREFACE ❧ (to the Second Edition)

By the causeless mercy of our beloved Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, we are happy to present to our respected readers a series of seven lectures he gave at the New Vraja community in Badger, California, June 1999. There he spoke on the deep meanings of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, from the First Canto to the Tenth, culminating in the inner significance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vṛndāvana.

Śrīla Gurudeva explained that each *śloka* of the *Bhāgavatam* contains many levels of meanings. When, in the association of Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees, a faithful hearer understands these meanings, he becomes free from hunger, thirst, illusion, unhappiness, and fear, and ultimately attains the association of Kṛṣṇa Himself.

*śrīmad-bhāgavatārthānām  
āsvādo rasikaiḥ saha  
sajātyiśāsaye snigdhe  
sādhau saṅgaḥ svato vare  
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.131)*

One should taste the meaning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the association of pure devotees. One should associate with the devotees who are more advanced than oneself, and who are endowed with a similar type of affection for the Lord.\*

Śrīla Gurudeva told his audience that, although for many years he had given discourses on the elevated meanings of the *Bhāgavatam* to devotees in Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, never before had he explained them during his visit to Western countries. He

later requested that these discourses be presented in book form, for distribution to a larger audience.

He further explained that because English is not his native language, he could not share his heart's realizations as easily in English as he could in Hindi. To make the meanings accessible to a wide range of Western readers, he wanted the lectures carefully edited.

Therefore, while preparing this publication, we asked Śrīla Gurudeva many questions for clarification. We also asked his secretary, Śrīmān Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja 'Vidyālaṅkara', who, at the time, had been hearing these lectures in Hindi for the previous twenty years. Their responses to our questions were then added, sometimes to the body of the lectures, and sometimes as footnotes. To ensure the reader's clarity of understanding, we have also occasionally inserted wording in square brackets.

Śrīla Gurudeva wanted the *Bhāgavatam* topics in this book to flow without interruption and that his other classes in New Vraja that year be placed in a separate section of the book.

Part One, therefore, is the series of Śrīla Gurudeva's seven evening classes on the *Bhāgavatam*; Part Two consists of his explanations of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *bhajanās*; and Part Three is comprised of his morning classes at the homes of the New Vraja residents as well as other topics that he discussed in the evenings before presenting his main point – the secret truths of the *Bhāgavatam*.

In his discourses, Śrīla Gurudeva often quoted verses from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and although he explained their purports, he did not always translate them. Therefore, after each verse quoted, we have added the translations, many of which come from Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda (compliments Bhaktivedānta Book Trust).

We would like to express our gratitude to the BBT for allowing us to use Śrīla Prabhupāda's invaluable books as references.

It was by Śrīla Prabhupāda's request and inspiration that Śrīla Gurudeva preached in the Western countries. We think that readers will be satisfied to see how the instructions of Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Gurudeva complement and illuminate each other.

We pray that our respected readers will excuse any mistakes and imperfections in our presentation of Śrīla Gurudeva's instructions and hope that they cherish this book, finding it helpful in their practice of *bhakti*.

Vaiṣṇava dāsānudāsa,  
The Publishing Team  
*Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam*

### **The Publishing Team of the Second Edition**

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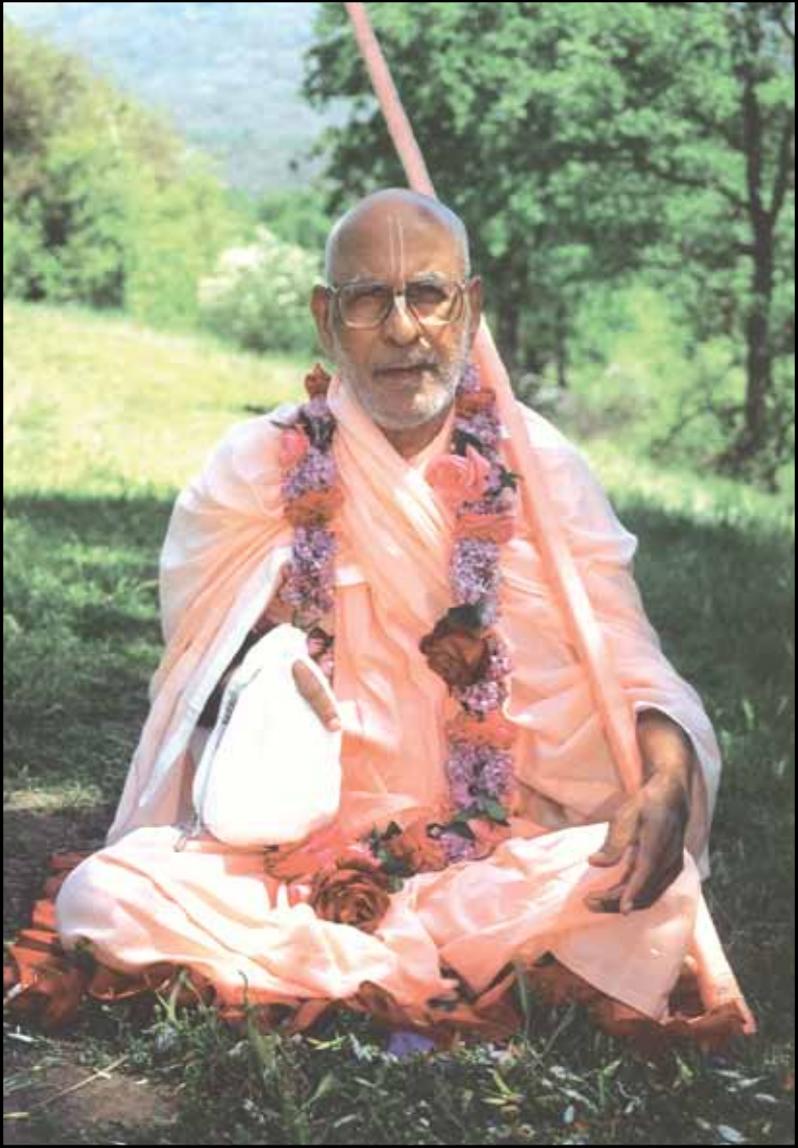
We would like to acknowledge the contribution of all those devotees who assisted in typing, checking the sound files, editing, and proofreading the First Edition of *Secret Truths of the Bhāgavatam* over fifteen years ago.

## ❧ PRONUNCIATION GUIDE ❧

### For Sanskrit and Bengali Songs

Following the tradition of our spiritual preceptors, we use standard diacritical markings to indicate the pronunciation of Sanskrit words.

- Pronounce **ā** like a in **father**, **ī** like ea in **neat**, **ū** like oo in **root**, **ṛ** like ri in **rip**, **ṁ** and **ṅ** like ng in **hung**, **ś** and **ṣ** like sh in **shy**, and **c** like ch in **chap**.
- The following diacritics are only found in the Bengali songs in Part Two of this book: **ĳ** is pronounced exactly the same as **j** and **ô** is pronounced exactly the same as **o**, but the marks are added because the spelling affects the meaning (**jaya** means ‘all glories’ and **ĳāya** means ‘he or she goes’). The letter **ḍ** is similar to the American pronunciation of tt in **butter**.



ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



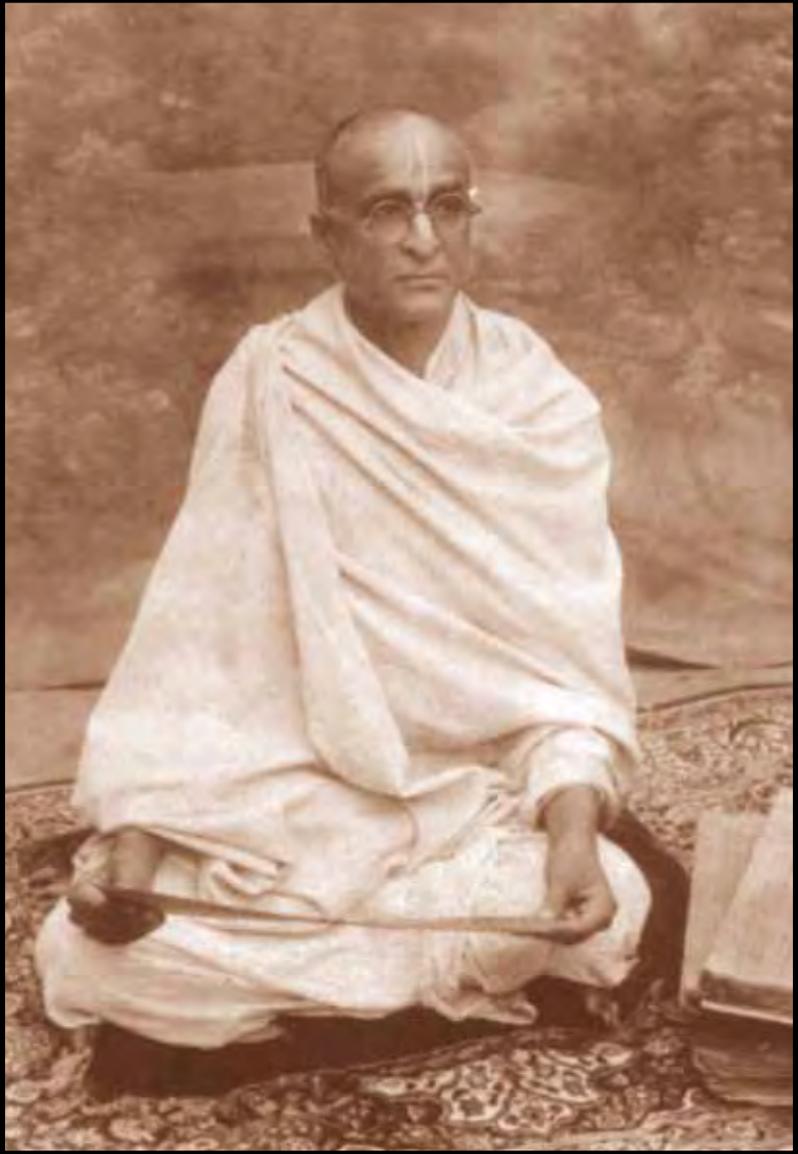
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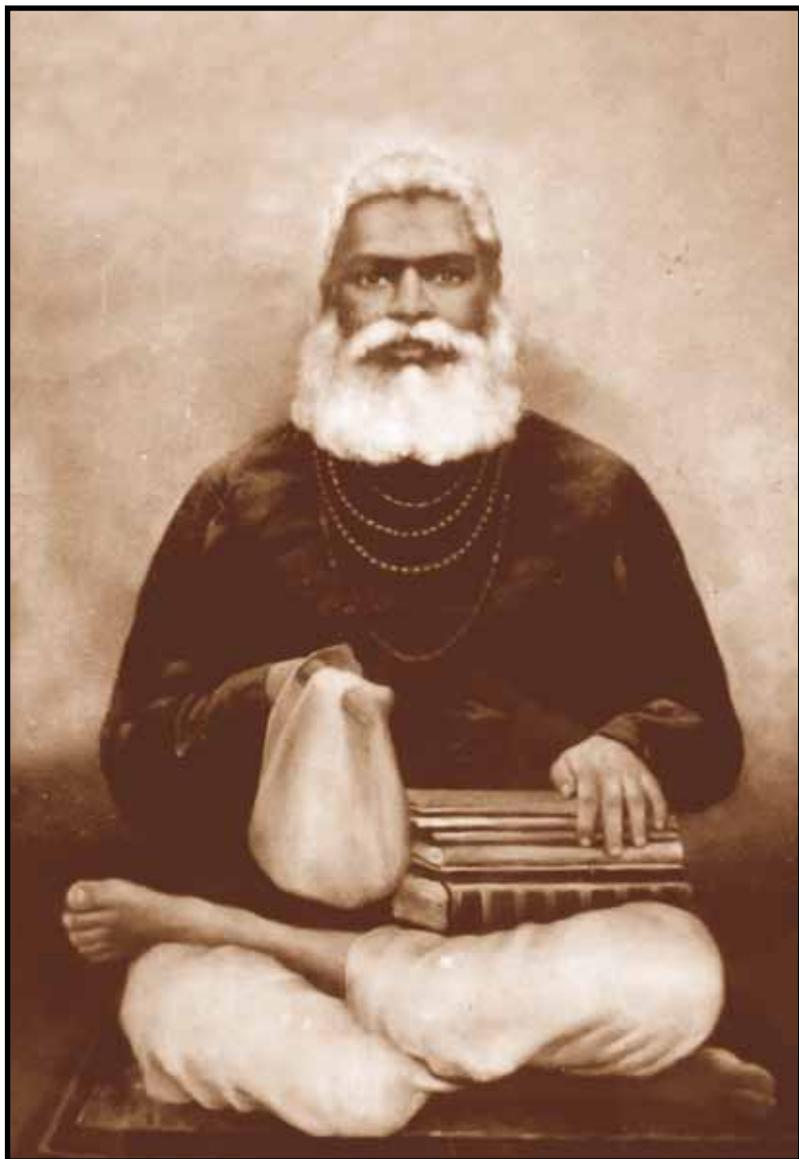
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BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ ṬHĀKURA PRABHUPĀDA



PARAMA-BHĀGAVAT-PRAVARA  
ŚRĪLA GAURA-KĪSORA DĀSA BĀBĀJĪ MAHĀRĀJA

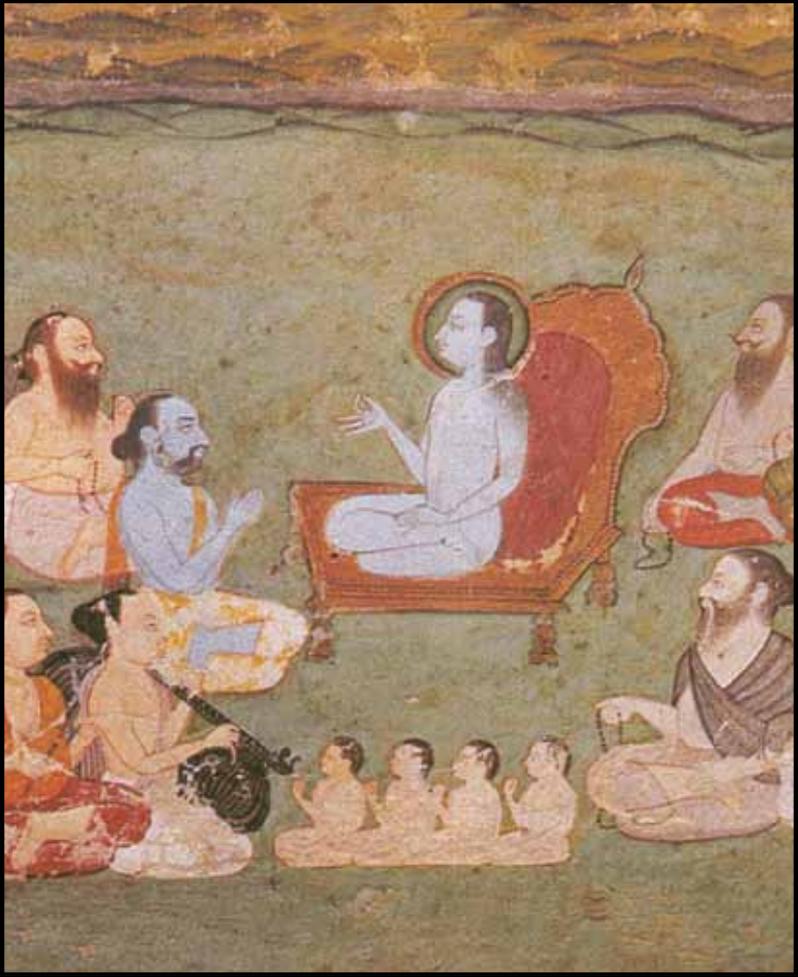


SACCIDĀNANDA  
ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA



## 1 Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *parama-satya*, the Supreme Truth, because He is both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal. He has come to distribute all these truths, to sprinkle His mercy by preaching *rāga-mārga*, and also to taste the beauty of the moods of Rādhikā. Therefore *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmahī* means, 'This Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu should kindly manifest in our heart.' (p 22)



## 2 Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaking the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī brought the *Bhāgavatam* from Goloka Vṛndāvana. He was the special parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore he knows so many things. If he were a parrot of Kṛṣṇa, he could not have known the heart of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and how much happiness She feels in meeting with Kṛṣṇa. ... Kṛṣṇa wants to taste what Śrīmatī Rādhikā tastes, and that is why He had to steal Her heart. But this parrot has no need to steal because he is always serving Her. He knows everything. He is *rasika* and he is *bhāvuka*. He knows more than Kṛṣṇa, and this is why Kṛṣṇa deputed him to remain in this world and manifest the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. (p 35)



### 3 Śrī Nārada Muni

In his trance, he easily saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord advised him, “You should continue hearing, chanting, remembering, and speaking *hari-kathā* to all. A day will come when death arrives, but you will not die. You will place your feet on the head of death.” This came to pass, and Nārada attained his *siddha-deha* (spiritual body). ... In that form he traveled everywhere, sometimes within this world, sometimes to Goloka Vṛndāvana, sometimes to the abode of Nārāyaṇa, and here and there. (p 41)



#### 4 Śrī Kṛṣṇa's appearance to Devakī and Vasudeva inside Kaṁsa's jail

Kṛṣṇa appeared to Devakī in His *catur-bhuja* (four-armed) form as a very beautiful teenage boy of about sixteen, with long wavy hair and golden and jeweled ornaments. At the same time, at twelve midnight, He took birth from the womb of Yaśodā, just as a baby does, weeping, "kyaaah-kyaaah-kyaaah." (p 55)



## 5 The killing of Śakaṭāsura

Once, Kaṁsa sent a demon named Śakaṭāsura to kill Kṛṣṇa. The demon thought, “I am so intelligent. I will not go there in a particular form; I will go there as air.” He entered a bullock cart and wanted to push the cart down on to Kṛṣṇa [who was lying underneath it] and crush Him. But Kṛṣṇa is not an ordinary boy. He playfully touched Śakaṭāsura with His toe-nails and the demon was killed at once. (p 57)



## 6 Śrī Kṛṣṇa takes the form of all the cowherd boys and calves

Baladeva then understood everything. “Kṛṣṇa is very wonderful,” He thought. He smiled and said, “O Kṛṣṇa, what is this? I see that You have become all the boys and calves. Your stomach was not filled up by taking the milk of only Śrīmatī Yaśodā, Your mother, so You became hundreds of thousands of cowherd boys. When Your stomach was still not filled, You became all the calves. All of these cowherd boys are You Yourself; they are not the original cowherd boys. (p 67)



## 7 Śrī Kṛṣṇa attracts the gopīs

“Lord Kṛṣṇa saw the unbroken disk of the full moon glowing with the red effulgence of newly applied vermilion, as if it were the face of the goddess of fortune. He also saw the *kumuda* lotuses opening in response to the moon’s presence and the forest gently illumined by its rays. Thus the Lord began to play sweetly on His flute, attracting the minds of the beautiful-eyed *gopīs*”\* (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.29.3). (p 83)



## 8 Beautiful Kṛṣṇa

The *gopīs* began abusing Brahmā, the creator: “He is very cruel. Kṛṣṇa is so sweet, and somehow this creator has given us a chance to meet with Him. But the creator is so cruel that just when we were going to meet Him, he took away that fortune, and again created separation. Just when we were going to taste that sweetness, he took it away. He is not qualified to create this world. He gathered all the beauty in the entire three worlds and made the beautiful body of Kṛṣṇa. How beautiful Kṛṣṇa looks! His form is beautifully bent in three places, there are beautiful dimples on His cheeks, and He smiles so beautifully – piercing our heart like the arrows of Cupid. (p 98–99)



## 9 Swing pastimes

Sometimes Kṛṣṇa controls the swing Himself. While Rādhikā is sitting on the swing, He swings Her very high, without supporting Her. She becomes afraid and cries out, "Oh, stop! Stop! Stop!" But Kṛṣṇa does not stop. Her veil and garments begin to fly here and there, and in Her fear She embraces Kṛṣṇa tightly. This is what Kṛṣṇa wants. (p 163-164)

## ❧ THE ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM ❧

This *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the age of Kali shall get light from this *Purāṇa*. \*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.43)

### Hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.3), Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda writes in his purport:

By submissively hearing this transcendental literature, one can attain the full pleasure of his heart's desire. But one must be very careful to hear the message from the right source. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is exactly received from the right source. It was brought by Nārada Muni from the spiritual world and given to his disciple Śrī Vyāsadeva. The latter in turn delivered the message to his son Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī delivered the message to Mahārāja Parīkṣit during the seven days before the King's death. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī was a liberated soul from his very birth. He was liberated even in the womb of his mother, and he did not undergo any sort of spiritual training after his birth. Yet despite his being a completely liberated person situated in the transcendental position above the three material modes, he was attracted to this transcendental *rasa* of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is adored by liberated souls who sing Vedic hymns. The Supreme Lord's pastimes are more attractive to liberated souls than to mundane people. He is of necessity

not impersonal because it is only possible to carry on transcendental *rasa* with a person.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are narrated, and the narration is systematically depicted by Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Thus the subject matter is appealing to all classes of persons, including those who seek liberation to relish the mellow of becoming one with the supreme whole.

In Sanskrit the parrot is also known as *śuka*. When a ripened fruit is cut by the red beaks of such birds, its sweet flavor is enhanced. The Vedic fruit which is mature and ripe in knowledge is spoken through the lips of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is compared to the parrot not for his ability to recite the *Bhāgavatam* exactly as he heard it from his learned father, but for his ability to present the work in a manner that would appeal to all classes of men.

The subject matter is so presented through the lips of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī that any sincere listener who hears submissively can at once relish transcendental tastes which are distinct from the perverted tastes of the material world. The ripened fruit is not dropped all of a sudden from the highest planet of Kṛṣṇaloka. Rather, it has come down carefully through the chain of disciplic succession without change or disturbance.

One should be intelligent enough to know the position of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by considering personalities like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who deals with the subject so carefully. This process of disciplic succession of the *Bhāgavata* school suggests that in the future also, for all time, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has to be understood from a person who is factually a representative of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī. A professional man who makes a business out of reciting the *Bhāgavatam* illegally is certainly not a representative of

Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Such a man's business is only to earn his livelihood.

One should conclude, therefore, that the serious student of the *rasa* should receive the message of *Bhāgavatam* in the chain of disciplic succession from Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who describes the *Bhāgavatam* from its very beginning and not whimsically to satisfy the mundaner who has very little knowledge in transcendental science. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is so carefully presented that a sincere and serious person can at once enjoy the ripened fruit of Vedic knowledge simply by drinking the nectarean juice through the mouth of Śukadeva Gosvāmī or his bona fide representative.\*

## The Manifestation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

The great sage Vyāsadeva, through his transcendental vision, could perceive that upon the dawning of Kali, the age of quarrel and hypocrisy, spiritual principles would substantially deteriorate, irreligion would masquerade as religion, and subsequently, people would become faithless. He pondered how to benefit all people in this terrible age. He then divided the Veda into four, to clarify the type of worship that best benefits the varying aptitudes of different types of people.

The word *veda* means 'knowledge,' or more specifically, 'knowledge that has come to this world from the Supreme Lord Himself.' Therefore, the Vedas are timeless and without fault. The Vedas answer questions such as "Who am I? How was this world created? Why are we born? Why do we die?" Veda has explained everything completely. Not a single question remains unexplained.

Vyasadeva presented the Purāṇas and *Mahābhārata*, which he compiled from related historical facts that explain the teachings of the four Vedas. They are therefore called the fifth Veda.

Since the Vedas are vast and deal with both material and spiritual subjects, Vyāsadeva compiled the Upaniṣads, which comprise solely of transcendental knowledge. In other words, they are the essence and conclusion of all the knowledge given in the Vedas.

Understanding that the intrinsic message of the Vedas and Upaniṣads would still be difficult for the common person to grasp, he wrote *Vedānta-sūtra* – aphorisms (*sūtras*) delineating the end (*anta*) of all knowledge (*Veda*).

Vyāsadeva had therefore made extensive endeavor to offer the people of this world knowledge that would help them in Kali-yuga, but even after compiling *Vedānta-sūtra*, he felt a vacuum. This was not due to his lack of knowledge. He reflected, “This may be because I did not specifically point out the devotional service of the Lord, which is dear both to perfect beings and to the infallible Lord.”

At that moment, his spiritual master, Śrī Nārada, arrived at Vyāsadeva’s hermitage. Smiling, Śrī Nārada asked him why he felt despondent, even after compiling the Vedas, the *Mahābhārata* and all the Purāṇas. Vyāsadeva asked Nārada to reveal the root cause of his sadness to him.

Śrī Nārada explained that Vyāsadeva had not described the sweet glories and transcendental pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe.

Although the Vedic literatures contain information about the Supreme Lord and the path of *bhakti*, they also present other paths, like *karma* (various levels of pious action), *jñāna* (knowledge of transcendence), and *yoga*. They also contain many stories of demigods, which people without authentic guidance sometimes confuse as pastimes of the Supreme Lord. Moreover, the transcendental pastimes of He who is the source of all incarnations of Godhead – Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma –

and *rāganūga-bhakti*, or spontaneous devotion, which can be performed only to Him, had not been clearly delineated.

Even if such descriptions are faulty from a literary point of view, they can bring about “a revolution in the impious lives of this world’s misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung, and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.” \*

Śrī Nārada continued,

“Whatever you desire to describe that is separate in vision from the Lord simply reacts with different forms and names to agitate the mind, as the wind agitates a boat which has no resting place.

“The people in general are naturally inclined to enjoy, and you have encouraged them in that way in the name of religion. This is verily condemned and is quite unreasonable. Because they are guided under your instructions, they will accept such activities in the name of religion and will hardly care for prohibitions.” \*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.15–16)

Nārada went on to describe *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and that hearing it from realized souls, who were devoid of any selfish interest, completely transformed his own heart. He informed him that by taking shelter of *bhakti*, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, he would be able to describe Kṛṣṇa’s sweet pastimes. Vyāsadeva then took shelter of his spiritual master, and by his mercy, he was able to write *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the very essence of Vedic literature – the blissful pastimes of the Supreme Lord.

With a pure heart, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa then became absorbed in meditation through the process of *bhakti-yoga* (devotion to the Supreme Lord). He thus saw the Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, along with His external

energy (*māyā*), which was far away from Him but under His control. Due to this *māyā*, the conditioned living entity forgets his service to Kṛṣṇa and becomes affected by impediments to spiritual life. Although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, the living entity bewildered by *māyā* considers himself a material product. He thus identifies himself with this body and considers that which is related to it to be his. The infinitesimal living entity can only be delivered by *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-yoga*, but the mass of people in the material world are ignorant of this fact. Understanding this, Śrī Vyāsa manifested *Bhāgavatam* through *bhakti-yoga*.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.7.4–6)

## The History of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Five thousand years ago, the most virtuous Emperor Parikṣit, grandson of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, ruled the entire world. Although he possessed unrivalled opulence, he was free from attachment to it. He was famous as a sage among kings, and all were happy under his reign. Even his enemies willingly bowed before him.

Once, while in the forest, by the will of the Lord, tiredness, hunger, and thirst overwhelmed Mahārāja Parikṣit and he searched for water. He came upon the hermitage of the great sage Śamīka Ṛṣi. The sage was in deep meditation, his eyes closed. Still, the emperor asked him for water.

When the sage did not respond or welcome him in any way, the emperor became uncharacteristically angry. The uncommon appearance of such anger in a saintly person is not like the anger of the souls of this world. In this case, its purpose was entwined with a plan that would be of greatest benefit to all humanity.

Insulted, the king turned to leave the hermitage and saw on the ground a lifeless snake. He picked up the snake, hung it on the shoulder of Śamīka Ṛṣi and returned to his palace.

Understanding what had happened, the son of Śamīka Ṛṣi, Śṛṅgi, burning in anger, used his brahminical powers to curse Mahārāja Parīkṣit:

On the seventh day from today a snake-bird will bite the most wretched one of that dynasty [Mahārāja Parīkṣit] because of his having broken the laws of etiquette by insulting my father.\*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.18.37)

Śamīka Ṛṣi, upon learning of the course of events, was not even slightly disturbed by the behavior of Mahārāja Parīkṣit. Rather he sorely lamented the behavior of his son. But the curse had already been spoken.

Although the entire event had taken place by Lord Kṛṣṇa's desire, Mahārāja Parīkṣit blamed himself and lamented his behavior of insulting the ṛṣi. He desired an immediate reaction so that he would never again be influenced by such inauspicious attitudes.

It was in this state of lamentation that Mahārāja Parīkṣit heard of his imminent death, which he wholeheartedly welcomed. He sat on the bank of the Ganges to absorb his mind solely on Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

It was not by chance that at that same time, a multitude of the greatest of *munis* (those who contemplate the Absolute) arrived at that place with their disciples. Mahārāja Parīkṣit addressed them:

O *brāhmaṇas*, just accept me as a completely surrendered soul, and let mother Ganges, the representative of the Lord, also accept me in that way, for I have already taken the lotus feet of the Lord into my heart. Let the snake-bird or whatever magical thing the *brāhmaṇa* created bite

me at once. I only desire that you all continue singing the deeds of Lord Viṣṇu. Again, offering obeisances unto all you *brāhmaṇas*, I pray that if I should again take my birth in the material world I will have complete attachment to the unlimited Lord Kṛṣṇa, association with His devotees, and friendly relations with all living beings.\*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.19.15–16)

He then sat peacefully, to fast until death. Turning to the sages, he said,

O trustworthy *brāhmaṇas*, I now ask you about my immediate duty. Please, after proper deliberation, tell me of the unalloyed duty of everyone in all circumstances, and specifically of those who are just about to die.\*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.19.24)

At that very moment, the most powerful sage of all arrived at that place. He was the son of Śrīla Vyāsadeva himself, Śukadeva Gosvāmī. He was only sixteen years old, but simply by seeing his astounding features, the sages, who were expert in the art of physiognomy, understood his exalted spiritual status and immediately rose from their seats. Śukadeva Gosvāmī then sat before the king, his charming effulgence pacifying all present. Mahārāja Parikṣit requested him,

You are the spiritual master of great saints and devotees. I am therefore begging you to show the way of perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die. Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember, and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me.\*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.19.37–38)

Śukadeva Gosvāmī acknowledged the glory of the emperor's question, as it benefits all people, and the answer is approved by all those fully situated in transcendence. He thus began to recite the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which is famous as the spotless Purāṇa, since its sole purpose is to nourish the soul. By nature, the soul does not have a glimmer of interest in this world. The soul's only function, interest, and satisfaction are in connecting in service with the Supreme Soul, God, who is all-attractive. The Vedas explain that the name Kṛṣṇa means 'all-attractive one.' The faintest trace of teachings that nurture selfish interest and thus perpetuate one's existence in this material cycle of birth and death are absent from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Simply by hearing it faithfully, one attains eternal life.

After seven days, the snake-bird manifested and bit Mahārāja Parīkṣit's body. However, because he had heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from a pure-hearted saint, Mahārāja Parīkṣit had by then absorbed his consciousness in the spiritual realm and had thus already left this world.

Among those assembled to hear Śukadeva Gosvāmī's narration was Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī. Later, in the sacred forest of Naimiṣāranya, powerful sages gathered to perform a sacrifice lasting one thousand years. In this setting, Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī narrated the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the best of all scriptures, to everyone present.

[Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said] O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.\*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.3)



*PART I*

*ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM CLASSES*

ŚRĪLA ŚUKADEVĀ GOSVĀMĪ INSTRUCTS MAHĀRĀJA PARĪKṢIT



## ❧ CHAPTER ONE ❧

# I Meditate on the Absolute Truth

### Inquiry by the Sages

**N**ow I want to begin my classes. I will start by explaining the first *śloka* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and gradually, I will come to the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states that once, at the very beginning of Kali-yuga, many hundreds of thousands of *maharṣis* and devotees assembled at a very pious place called Naimiṣāraṇya. They were thinking how to save the world from the effects of Kali-yuga. Kali-yuga is such an era that people quarrel among themselves for absolutely no reason – husband and wife, father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, and neighbors. Although there is no cause, still everyone quarrels. Kali-yuga creates such misunderstanding that quarrel is bound to happen, even with our own mind and soul. Therefore, these *maharṣis* and devotees were thinking about what to do.

At that time, Ugraśravā Sūta, the son of Romaharṣaṇa and a direct disciple of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, was inspired by Baladeva Prabhu Himself to come to Naimiṣāraṇya. All the realized devotees present, like Śaunaka and others, showed him respect and inquired from him as follows:

Respected Sūta Gosvāmī, you are completely free from all vice. You are well versed in all the scriptures famous for religious life, and in the Purāṇas and the histories as well, for you have gone through them under proper guidance and have also explained them. O Sūta Gosvāmī, being the eldest learned Vedāntist, you are acquainted with the knowledge of Vyāsadeva, who is the incarnation of Godhead, and you also know other sages who are fully versed in all kinds of physical and metaphysical knowledge. And because you are submissive, your spiritual masters have endowed you with all the favors bestowed upon a gentle disciple. Therefore, you can tell us all that you have scientifically learned from them. Please, therefore, being blessed with many years, explain to us, in an easily understandable way, what you have ascertained to be the absolute and ultimate good for the people in general. 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. There are many varieties of scriptures, and in all of them there are many prescribed duties, which can be learned only after many years of study in their various divisions. Therefore, O sage, please select the essence of all these scriptures and explain it for the good of all living beings, that by such instruction their heart may be fully satisfied.\*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.6–11)

The sages told Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī, “You are so learned and a disciple of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī himself. You know the essence of all *śāstra* and you are perfect. We therefore have some questions for you. Now that Kali is coming, what should we do? *Yenātmā suprasīdati*. How can our souls be happy? By what process can less intelligent persons – with little time, a short duration of life, and so many problems, difficulties, and sorrows – make their souls pleased? You are very learned and qualified. We believe in

you, and we believe that by reciting the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, you will certainly save us from the effects of Kali-yuga. We know that nothing else but the very sweet and powerful pastimes of Kṛṣṇa can save all people from Kali-yuga.”

Sūta Gosvāmī became happy with the questions of the sages, thanked them for their words, and then began to answer them by speaking *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

## Invocation Śloka

Sūta Gosvāmī had heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who had heard it from Śrī Vyāsadeva. Vyāsadeva began this literature with the following *śloka*:

*om̐ namo bhagavate vāsudevāya  
janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārtheṣv abhiṣaḥ svarāt  
tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ  
tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo 'mṛṣā  
dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ satyaṁ param dhīmahī  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.1)*

O my Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, O all-pervading Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. 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. It is He only who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmājī, the original living being. By Him even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water. Only because of Him do the material

universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual although they are unreal. I therefore meditate upon Him, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is eternally existent in the transcendental abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world. I meditate upon Him, for He is the Absolute Truth \*

## Maṅgalācaraṇa

First of all I should pray to my spiritual master, then I will begin to explain the *Bhāgavatam*.

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

I was blinded by the darkness of ignorance, but *śrī guru* has mercifully opened my eyes, anointing them with the salve of divine knowledge. I offer *praṇāma* to that *śrī gurudeva*.

*vāñcā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca  
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

I offer *praṇāma* again and again to the Vaiṣṇavas, who are the saviours of the fallen, who are just like wish-fulfilling desire trees, and who are oceans of mercy.

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

I offer *praṇāma* to that greatly munificent Lord who bestows *kṛṣṇa-prema*. He is Kṛṣṇa Himself who has assumed a golden complexion and accepted the name Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

*guruve gauracandrāya rādhikāyāya tadāyayāya  
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa bhaktāya tad-bhaktāya namo namaḥ*

I Meditate on the Absolute Truth

I offer *praṇāma* to Śrī Gurudeva, Śrī Gauracandra, Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her associates, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His associates, and all Vaiṣṇavas.

*yaṁ pravrajantam anupetaṁ apeta-kṛtyaṁ  
dvaipāyano viraha-kātara ājuhāva  
putreti tan-māyātayā taravo 'bhinedus  
taṁ sarva-bhūta-hṛdayaṁ munim ānato 'smi*

I offer *praṇāma* to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who can enter the heart of all living entities. When he left home without undergoing the purification processes such as accepting the sacred thread, his father Vyāsa cried out, “O my son!” As if they were absorbed in that same feeling of separation, only the trees echoed in response to his call.

*tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jivāmi tvayā vinā  
iti vijñāya rādhe tvaṁ naya māṁ caraṇāntikam*

I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O Devī (Rādhā), please understand this and bring me to Your lotus feet.

*bhaktyā vihīnā aparādha-lakṣyaiḥ  
kṣiptāś ca kāmādi taraṅga madhye  
kṛpā-mayi! tvam śaraṇaṁ prapannā  
vṛnde! namaste caraṇāravindam*

Devoid of devotion and guilty of unlimited offences, we are flung into the waves of lust [anger, greed, and so on]. O merciful one, we take shelter of you. O Vṛndā, we offer *praṇāma* to your lotus feet.

Try to hear very patiently, with deep honor, and try to understand. Do not do any work during this class. Allow your mind to be controlled by my words. Give up all other activities,

like sleeping or anything else, and give me your ears, your hands, and all your senses, only for a couple of minutes. Afterwards, you are free to do as you like. Do not sleep and do not yawn. Sleepiness may come, but try to control it. Sit straight so that sleep will not come. You should hear very patiently and with all your energy.

*Janmādy asya yataḥ* [the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the manifested universes]. Śrī Vyāsadeva is offering *praṇāma*, obeisances. To whom? He does not actually say the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but all the symptoms of the worshipable object of his *praṇāma* apply only to Kṛṣṇa. To which Kṛṣṇa? Not to the Kṛṣṇa of Mathurā or Dvārakā but to that Kṛṣṇa who is the source of all others – Nanda-nandana Kṛṣṇa, Yaśodā-nandana Kṛṣṇa, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara. All others [manifestations of Kṛṣṇa] are included within Him.

## Why Kṛṣṇa Descends

Why did Kṛṣṇa descend to this world? The first reason is that Pṛthvī-devī (Mother Earth in the form of a cow), along with the demigods, went to Brahmā, the creator. Actually, Brahmā is only the external creator of this world. He is like a manager. Pṛthvī told him, “Recently, my four legs were broken and I cannot walk. My husband, Dharma (religion personified), who has taken the shape of a bull, also cannot walk.”

Nowadays there is so much sin in this world. Both men and women are like animals. So-called saintly persons and *sannyāsīs* do not observe the rules of saintly life, and they are therefore more wretched than animals. They make an artificial show of saintliness, with big neck beads, five-kilo *japa-mālā*, and very big *tilaka*. At the same time, they are always duplicitous, absorbed in making money, and full of lust. Because of this, we have so many problems.

Pṛthvī said, “Please save me and my husband, Dharma.”

Brahmā became very worried and went with Pṛthvī and the demigods to Kṣīra-samudra (the ocean of milk). There he began to do *ārādhana* (prayerful worship) of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. In his trance he heard the reply to his prayers: “I already know of this situation. My Prabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is also aware, and He will quickly descend. All the demigoddesses, in the form of earthly ladies, should descend to earth – to Gokula, Vṛndāvana, and Mathurā. All you demigods should descend in the form of *gopas* and Yadus. Kṛṣṇa will appear very soon.”

This is one reason for Kṛṣṇa’s descent.

Second, the time had come to establish the *yuga-dharma*. What was the *yuga-dharma* at that time? Deity worship. Yavanas and others were destroying temples, people had no faith in the Deities, and the standard of worship was the worst it had ever been. In order to save the situation, Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world, bringing within Him the *yuga-avatāra*, the *manvantara*, and all other incarnations like Nārāyaṇa, Rāma, Nṛsimha, Kalki, and Vāmana.

There were also other reasons for Kṛṣṇa’s descent. Jaya and Vijaya had been cursed to come to this world for three births as demons. Now, in their third birth, they would become Śisupāla and Dantavakra. Kṛṣṇa had to come to liberate them.

Moreover, Kṛṣṇa came to fulfill the promises He had made in His form of Rāmacandra. Rāma went to Daṇḍakāraṇya forest with Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa to carry out the orders of His father. There He dressed as a *sādhu*. Although His hair was *jaṭā*, matted, He was so beautiful, a teenager of about sixteen years. At that time, sixty thousand sages were performing *ārādhana*, service in meditation, to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal, to Rāma, or to others, by *mantra*. They had been chanting *gopala-mantra*, that is, *gopī-jana vallabhāya svāhā*, for thousands of years. During that long period of time, although the practices of these sages were somewhat weak, they did not become like fish, which die as soon as they are taken out

of water. Their practices were much superior to yours, but still [in comparison to the highest level], they were somewhat weak.

Your practices are very weak. Sometimes you chant your *gāyatrī-mantra* and sometimes you do not. Sometimes you sit awake [to chant] and sometimes you fall asleep. If you think about all your problems instead of concentrating on the *mantras*, your chanting of *mantras* will be like zero and you will fall asleep. At that time, big problems will come quickly.

So, these sages were performing their somewhat weak practices, but when they saw Rāma and He glanced upon them, they became inspired and began to pray to Him, “Please fulfill our desires.”

Rāma knew that they wanted to serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal and that they wanted to participate in *rāsa* and other *līlās*. He therefore kindly and mercifully told them, “In My next birth I will be Kṛṣṇa, and there in Vraja, by the help of Yogamāyā, you will take birth from the womb of a *gopī*. At that time, you can meet with Me and I will fulfill your desires.”

The sages continued with their practices for a very long time, from the appearance of Rāma to the appearance of Kṛṣṇa – hundreds of thousands of *yugas*. Do not think that in a moment you can get pure *bhakti* as easily as you can get *laḍḍūs* and *rasagullās*. “O Guru Mahārāja, you gave me the *mantras*, but still I have not realized that I am in Goloka Vṛndāvana. I want to be in Vṛndāvana now.”

Vālmīki Ṛṣi took initiation from Nārada, engaged in very severe austerities for sixty thousand years, and then became self-realized. But you do not want to follow all these things, like chanting your *mantras*. Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja gave some of you initiation into the *gāyatrī-mantra*. For one day, two days, one month, or for some years you practiced, but after that you became weak. Especially after his departure, you left your chanting. You have no faith in these *mantras*. You will have to practice them. It may be that it will take two, three, four, five, or so many

births, but our good fortune is that in this Kali-yuga, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to sprinkle His mercy. We can therefore chant with some hope that very soon we can become realized souls. So do not worry. Go on practicing like the Daṇḍakāraṇya ṛṣis.

When Kṛṣṇa descended, these ṛṣis took birth from the womb of the *gopīs*, and they also became *gopīs*. Later they worshiped the demigoddess Kātyāyanī for a long time in order to get Kṛṣṇa as their husband. Kṛṣṇa then came and their desires were fulfilled. It was for this reason also that He descended. In the same way, this process will bear fruit for you, but you must do one-pointed *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*, engaging in all the practices of *bhakti*.

There is yet another reason for Kṛṣṇa's descent. When Rāma went to Janaka Purī, the *rājā-kumārīs*, princesses, became charmed to see Him. When they saw that Sītā was married to Him, they developed a very strong desire: "Oh, if Rāma would also marry us, it would be so good. We want Rāma to become our husband; we will not marry anyone else." With this determination they never married.

Rāma was pleased and told them, "You will take birth in Dvāpara-yuga from the womb of a *gopī*."

Many years later, Rāmacandra ordered Sītā to leave His palace. She left and lived alone in Vālmīki's *āśrama*, where she gave birth to Rāma's twin sons. Rāma stayed in His palace and Sītā stayed in the forest. For certain reasons the king had left His queen, but Rāma never left His dear Sītā.<sup>1</sup> Although He remained in His palace, He always remembered her. His days passed with great difficulty. Rāma felt so much separation that sometimes He would speak with His *guru* and priest, Vasiṣṭha.

Once Rāma requested Vasiṣṭha, "I want to perform a fire sacrifice, an *aśvamedha-yajña* or any other *yajña*. Please allow Me to do this."

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<sup>1</sup> Rāma in His capacity as a king left His queen, but really, Rāma never actually left Sītā.

Vasiṣṭha replied, “Because You have left Your wife, You cannot perform any type of sacrifice. You should bring her back and sit beside her. Only then can You do it.”

“That cannot be,” Rāma told him. “Please make another arrangement so that I can perform the sacrifice.”

“Your father married three hundred and sixty wives, so You can also marry again. I think that there are many beautiful ladies in the world who would want to marry You. They would readily marry You.”

“No,” said Rāma, “I cannot marry anyone else.”

“Then You cannot perform the sacrifice.”

“Please, somehow arrange it,” Rāma insisted.

Vasiṣṭha then said, “You can make a golden statue of Sītā. With that Sītā, You can sit and perform the sacrifice.”

Each following year, Rāma had one *mūrti* of Sītā made. These Deities were installed by *mantra*, by both Vasiṣṭha and Rāma Himself. By their invocation these Deities actually became alive. In Rāma’s last days, just before His pastimes in this world came to a close and He was about to go to *aprakāṣa* Ayodhyā (His spiritual abode), all those Deity forms of Sītā came and told Him, “We want to go with You and be with You forever.”

Rāma replied, “In this incarnation I can only accept one Sītā; only one Sītā will remain with Me. You are now so many. You should go to Vṛndāvana and take birth from the wombs of *gopīs*. There I will manage everything and will fulfill all your desires.”

Kṛṣṇa also came for that reason.

Another cause of Kṛṣṇa’s coming was Śūrpaṅakhā, the sister of Rāvaṇa. She wanted to marry Rāma, and because Rāma is like a desire tree, He had to fulfill her desire. [He did so by directly associating with her in her next birth, in her form as Kubja.] By mystic power Śūrpaṅakhā was able to assume many beautiful forms and could allure many men. Rāma considered, “Because I have accepted her, in this life, no one else may marry her.” He

therefore ordered Lakṣmaṇa to cut off her nose. Then, in her next life she became Kubja and eight parts of her body were bent. Therefore, in that life also, no one married her. Her face was very beautiful, but her entire body was crooked and bent, like a hunchback. But when Kṛṣṇa touched her, she became very straight. At that time, her wishes were fulfilled. For this reason also, Kṛṣṇa descended.

Nārada Muni was another cause of Kṛṣṇa's descent. Once during Nārada's travels, he saw the two sons of Kuvera – Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva – playing with many heavenly Apsarā girls. They were as naked as trees and stones, drinking wine, and completely without shame. Upon seeing Nārada coming along the path, the girls became ashamed. They folded their hands, covered themselves with garments, and prayed to Nārada from afar. The two men, on the other hand, completely mad and intoxicated on wine, began abusing both the girls and Nārada. They called out, "Why has this old man come here and disturbed everything?"

Being very merciful, Nārada thought, "They are sons of my friend Kuvera." Nārada was on his way to meet Kuvera, but when he saw Kuvera's sons so degraded, he thought, "I should punish them." He therefore cursed them: "You should become trees. You are behaving like trees, and so you should become trees."

As soon as they understood, "Oh, we are going to be trees!" they fell flat at Nārada's lotus feet.

"What I have foretold will certainly come true," he told them. "But you will become trees in Gokula, where Kṛṣṇa will take birth and perform so many sweet pastimes. He will touch you and you will be liberated. Not only that, but you will also attain *bhakti* and become Kṛṣṇa's transcendental associates forever." So Kṛṣṇa also descended to fulfill Nārada's foretelling.

Kṛṣṇa also came to perform *rāsa-līlā*. The personified Upaniṣad *mantras* had been performing austerities and chanting the *gopala-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī-mantra*, in order to become

*gopīs*. By their chanting, they became *gopīs* in their next birth. They became known as *upanīṣad-cārī gopīs*, and Kṛṣṇa accepted them as His beloveds.

There are two types of devotees who, by chanting *mantras* and performing austerities, were accepted by Kṛṣṇa. They are called *yauthikī* and *ayauthikī*<sup>2</sup>, those who are in groups and those who are not. By this history we see that these *mantras* are very high-class and powerful. Never neglect them.

Once, Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were out traveling. Kṛṣṇa said, “O Arjuna, I am so thirsty. Bring water from somewhere.” While looking for water, Arjuna saw some birds going toward the Yamunā. Upon reaching the Yamunā, he saw that she was flowing very sweetly and her water was very pure and clear. He also saw an old lady with white hair who was in trance. He circumambulated the lady and offered *praṇāma* to her. After some time, she returned to external consciousness. Arjuna then asked her, “Mother, who are you, and why are you meditating in this place? No one is here. What are you doing here on the bank of the Yamunā?”

The lady replied respectfully, “I have been doing *ārādhana* (worship) here for hundreds and thousands of years. I want to be

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<sup>2</sup> The *sādhana-siddha gopīs* are of two types: *yauthikī* and *ayauthikī*. Practicing devotees who are completely enchanted by the loving moods of the *gopīs* perform *sādhana-bhajana*, following the path of spontaneous devotion (*rāgānugā*). Those who practice in groups and eventually take birth in Vraja, where they again come together, are called *yauthikī*, and those who take birth in Vraja, having practiced solitary *rāgānugā-bhajana* or with one or two others, are called *ayauthikī*.

The *yauthikī gopīs* are also of two types: *śruti-carī* (the personified Vedas) and (2) *muni-carī*, or *ṛṣi-carī* (the Daṇḍakāraṇya sages). Seeing the fortune of the *gopīs* performing *rāsa-līlā* and other pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, the *śruti-carīs* were struck with wonder. By engaging in severe austerities with great faith, they achieved birth in the homes of *gopīs* in Vraja. Then, by the influence of the association of *nitya-siddha* and *kāya-vyūha gopīs*, they easily entered the *rāsa* dance and other pastimes.

(*Veṇu-gīta*, Verse Four, *Ānanda-varddhinī Vyākhyā*)

a *gopī* in Vṛndāvana and serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal. Nārada kindly gave me *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī*, so I have been worshiping here with these *mantras*.”

Arjuna returned to Kṛṣṇa and told Him what had happened. Kṛṣṇa then went to the elderly lady and mercifully blessed her.

These are some of the reasons for Kṛṣṇa’s descent to this world. There are so many stories and so many reasons that it would take about ten days to explain them all.

## Meaning of the First Śloka

*om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya*

*janmādy asya yato ’nvayād itarataś cārtheṣv abhiṣaḥ svarāt*

*tene brahma hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ*

*tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo ’mṛṣā*

*dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ satyaṁ param dhīmahi*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.1)*

O my Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, O all-pervading Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. 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. It is He only who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmājī, the original living being. By Him even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water. Only because of Him do the material universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual, although they are unreal. I therefore meditate upon Him, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

who is eternally existent in the transcendental abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world. I meditate upon Him, for He is the Absolute Truth. \*

Śrī Vyāsadeva writes, *janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārtheṣv abhijṣaḥ svarat tene brahma hṛdā*. Although Kṛṣṇa's name is not directly stated here, all qualities described in the verse apply to Him, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara. Vyāsadeva is offering *praṇāma*: “*satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi* – I am meditating on *paraṁ satya*.” *Paraṁ satya* is the Supreme Transcendental Truth, the *advaya-jñāna-para-tattva*, Kṛṣṇa Himself. There is no one other than Him. *Janmādy asya yato* – it is He who created all these worlds, it is He who supports and nourishes them, and it is He into whom the entire creation enters after dissolution. *Janma, sthiti, pralaya* – creation, sustenance, and destruction; everything is coming from Him.

*Yato 'nvayād itarataś*. *Anvayat* means ‘direct’ and *itarataḥ* means *vyatireka*, ‘indirect.’ I will explain *anvayat* (direct) in a simple way. Kṛṣṇa has three *śaktis*, or powers: *cit-śakti*, *jīva-śakti*, and *māyā-śakti*. With His *cit-śakti* He creates all transcendental worlds, like Goloka Vṛndāvana and Vaikuṅṭha. All transcendental forms, like those of Kṛṣṇa, Baladeva, Nanda, Yaśodā, the *gopīs*, and so on, are also manifested by the *cit-śakti*.

With the *jīva-śakti*, He manifests all liberated and conditioned souls.

As far as the *māyā-śakti* is concerned, she is not a zero. She also is the power of Kṛṣṇa. She creates hundreds and thousands of *brahmāṇḍas*, or universes. This is what is meant by ‘direct.’

What is meant by ‘indirect’? All souls are *cetana*, conscious, or *cit*, aware, and this *māyā* is *jaḍa*, inert. Although inert, *māyā* covers the conscious beings, or *cetana padārtha*. This is a very strange thing. The *jīva* is conscious, and *māyā* is inert. Still, how

wonderful it is that the *jīva* is covered by and involved with this inert *māyā*. Thus covered, the *jīva* thinks he is this perishable material body. Such thinking should not take place, but it does. This strange phenomenon becomes possible by the power of Kṛṣṇa. This power is *kartum akartum anyathā kartum*. By this power, everything that is impossible becomes possible. This is the meaning of 'indirect.'

The complete, transcendental power, or *śakti*, of Kṛṣṇa is called *para-śakti*. It is only one *śakti*, but it manifests as three: *hlādinī-śakti*, *saṁvit-śakti*, and *sandhinī-śakti*. In this way, by *anvaya* and *itaratāś*, directly and indirectly, these worlds are created by Kṛṣṇa. *Avijñāḥ* means that Kṛṣṇa knows everything; He is very expert in creating and destroying, and also in supporting and nourishing. No one is as expert as He is. Even Rāma, Nṛsimha, Kalki, and Vāmana come from Him. He is therefore *ādi-puruṣa* (the original person) and *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam* (the cause of all causes).

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

*Brahmā-saṁhitā* (5.1)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, is the embodiment of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of all lesser controllers, and the source of all incarnations. He has no beginning or origin, though He is the source of everything and the cause of all causes.

The second line of the *śloka* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1) begins *tene brahma ḥṛdā ya ādi-kavaye*. Kṛṣṇa Himself inspired the heart of Brahmā, who is *ādi-kavi*, the first poet. He inspired Brahmā by transcendental sound vibration, *śabda-brahma*, thus

giving him all knowledge of Himself (Kṛṣṇa), of the *jīvas*, of *māyā*, etc. *Tene brahma* means ‘in the heart of Brahmā.’ The other demigods cannot understand all these truths. He inspired the heart of Brahmā only.

*Tejo-vāri-mṛdāṁ*. There are three elements in this world, or three kinds of creations, that we are able to see. *Teja* means ‘fire,’ *vāri* means ‘water,’ and *mṛdā* means ‘earth.’ Here, *teja* refers to Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes we can see fire when two sticks are rubbed together or by striking a match, but fire is actually everywhere. Without fire no one can live. If fire leaves your body you will die at once. A match manifests fire and makes it visible. After some time, when the fuel is finished, fire is no longer seen. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa can be seen by one who practices certain processes, and the soul can also be seen in this way. The soul will never be seen by mortal eyes, and it can never be realized by mortal senses.

The *jīvas* are compared with *vāri*, water. When water is solidified, it becomes like ice or snow. It becomes so hard that if it is thrown at someone, it may injure that person. Water, however, is not like that. Similarly, in the *jīva*’s natural position, which is liberation, he is serving Kṛṣṇa. By chance he has now forgotten Kṛṣṇa and is in an unnatural, ‘solidified’ stage. He thinks, “I am this body,” and all kinds of problems arise, such as quarrel with others.

Next is *mṛdā* (earth). In this world there are many kinds of pots made from earth. Some are called glasses and some are called pots and vessels, but all are made with mud, with earth. Ultimately there is no difference at all between them; only the name is different. This is also true of gold. A cup made of gold, a garment of gold, a necklace of gold, and a ring of gold; all are gold. The names are different, but all are gold.

“*Yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo ’mṛṣā* [the material universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual]. It seems that all these worlds are real, but they are not. When we see fire we think it is real. However, when

we realize Kṛṣṇa we will see that He is real. Souls are real, but the idea that ‘I am this body’ is not. This illusion is called *vinimayo*, exchange, and it refers to the interactions and reactions of the three modes of material nature.

“*Dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ* [Śrī Kṛṣṇa is eternally existent in the transcendental abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world]. Unlike this world, in the abode where Kṛṣṇa resides, there is no *māyā* at all. Only Yogamāyā is there. Only *para-śakti* is there. The *māyā* that creates this world and by whose effect we think, “I am this body,” does not exist there. Consequently those who live in that spiritual realm can never fall to this world. It is not that the *jīvas* from that abode have come here to this world and forgotten about the spiritual realm. Rather, they have forgotten that they are originally manifest from the borderline region between the material and spiritual worlds called *tatasthā*.

*jīvera ‘svarūpa’ haya—kṛṣṇera ‘nitya-dāsa’  
kṛṣṇera ‘tatasthā-śakti’ ‘bhedābheda-prakāśa’*

*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 20.108)*

The inherent form of the *jīva* is that of an eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The *jīva* is the marginal potency of Kṛṣṇa, and is therefore simultaneously one with and different from Him.

Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja has explained this, but we are not thinking about it deeply. *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.6) states: “*yad gatvā na nivartante tad dhāma paramam mama* – those who reach that supreme abode of Mine never return to this material world.” By practicing great austerities for hundreds and thousands of births, one may go to Goloka Vṛndāvana. Since there is no *māyā* in Vṛndāvana and no chance of forgetting Kṛṣṇa, how can a *jīva* fall from there? It is never possible. Everyone is always serving Kṛṣṇa there, and Yogamāyā helps them to serve Him.

*Dhāmnā svena sadā* means that in Kṛṣṇa's transcendental abode there is no *māyā*. Only *hlādinī-śakti*, *sandhinī-śakti*, and *cit-śakti* are there. The phrase *nirasta-kuhakaṁ* (absence of illusion) also means that there is no *māyā* there.

*Satyam param dhīmahī*. Kṛṣṇa, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara, is *param-satyā*, the Supreme Truth. *Dhīmahī*: "I meditate on Him. May He kindly be merciful and manifest in my heart."

The meaning of this first *śloka* is the same as that of *brahma-gāyatrī*: *om bhūr bhuvaḥ svaḥ tat savitur vareṇyam bhargo devasya dhīmahī dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt*. Actually, this first *śloka* of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the translation of *brahma-gāyatrī*, and it, also, is like a *mantra*.

## Further Meanings of the First Śloka

There is a second meaning of *janmādy asya*. *Ādi* means 'ādi-rasa,' 'the original *rasa*.' That original *rasa* is *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, *mādhurya-rasa*, and it comes from Kṛṣṇa, not from anyone else. There is more than one meaning for every word of each *Bhāgavatam śloka*, and all the meanings are very good. In this *śloka*, for example, each word has an alternate meaning.

Here *anvayād itarataś*, direct and indirect, also means separation and meeting. Kṛṣṇa is very perfect. *Tene brahma hṛdā ya*. In this verse, *ādi kavaye* refers to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Kṛṣṇa means 'Kṛṣṇa who is the ocean of *rasa*, from whom *mādhurya-rasa* comes.' Therefore the word is *ādi* (original). All *rasas* are included in Kṛṣṇa. He is *rasa-brahma*, and He inspired the heart of Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who is the first *kavi*. *Muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ*. Brahmā, Śaṅkara, and all other demigods are in illusion. They cannot understand this deeper meaning.

*Tejo-vāri-mṛdām* (fire, water, and earth) also has an alternate meaning. Here *teja* means, as has been stated in *brahma-gāyatrī*, *bhargo devasya*. *Devasya* means 'Kṛṣṇa Himself,' and *bhargah*

means ‘His power.’ ‘I meditate on the power of Kṛṣṇa who is Śrīmatī Rādhikā.’ *Tejo-vāri-mṛdām*. Here Vyāsadeva prays to Rādhikā, the power of Kṛṣṇa. Without understanding this, we cannot enter *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Sometimes there is separation between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, sometimes meeting, and sometimes neutrality<sup>3</sup>. Even when Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā are apparently separated, Kṛṣṇa is always with Rādhikā. “*Rādhāsā sva-dhāmani brahmaṇi raṁsyate namaḥ* – He is always with Rādhikā and all the *gopīs* in His abode” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.4.14).

In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated:

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis  
tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ  
goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūto  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

*Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.37)

Śrī Govinda, who is all-pervading and who exists within the heart of all, resides in His Goloka-dhāma along with Śrī Rādhā, who is the embodiment of His pleasure potency and the counterpart of His own spiritual form. She is the epitome of transcendental *rasa*, and is expert in sixty-four arts. They are also accompanied by the *sakhīs*, who are expansions of Śrī Rādhā’s own transcendental body, and who are infused with blissful, spiritual *rasa*. I worship that original personality, Śrī Govinda.

All the *gopīs* are as transcendental as Kṛṣṇa. They are the *kāya-vyūha*, bodily manifestations, of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Rādhikā is one with Kṛṣṇa, and therefore, all the *gopīs* are transcendental like Him. They are not less than Him. Kṛṣṇa plays with them and

<sup>3</sup> An example of ‘neutrality’ is *māna*, transcendental loving anger. Externally, Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī may say, “I have no connection with Kṛṣṇa,” but internally, She wants to meet with Him.

meets with them in Vṛndāvana-dhama. In this way, *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi* means, 'We meditate on Kṛṣṇa with Śrīmatī Rādhikā.'

There is still a more superior meaning, a fourth meaning: no *rasa* can exist without Rādhikā. Therefore Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are conjugal. *Janmādy asya*. From this conjugal Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, *mādhurya-rasa*, conjugal love, comes. Without Rādhikā's presence, Kṛṣṇa is like *nirviśeṣa-brahma*; there is no *rasa* in Him at all. When He is with Sītā, when He is with Lakṣmī, or even when He is with Satyabhāmā or Rukmiṇī, only a percentage of *rasa* is present. It is not complete. Even if all the *gopīs* are there but Rādhikā is not, *rasa* cannot be complete. If He is with the *gopīs*, especially with Rādhikā, then *rasa* will be complete. Here, Vyāsadeva is therefore praying to whom? In this context, *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi* means 'Rādhikā.' "May She kindly come and manifest." As stated in *brahma-gāyatrī*: "dhiyo yo naḥ pracodayāt – may Śrīmatī Rādhikā mercifully come."

The first meaning of this *Bhāgavatam* verse (1.1.1) refers to Kṛṣṇa and to this creation. The second refers to *madhura-rasa* in relation to Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa. The third is in relation to conjugal Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The fourth is only in relation to Rādhikā. This is because without power, Kṛṣṇa cannot do anything. Finally, the fifth meaning is in relation to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All the meanings of all the words will then refer to Him. *Satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *parama-satya*, the Supreme Truth, because He is both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He has come to distribute all these truths, to sprinkle His mercy by preaching *rāga-mārga*, and also to taste the beauty of the moods of Rādhikā. Therefore *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmaḥi* means "This Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu should kindly manifest in our heart."

Here *ādi-kavi* means 'Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.' Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu inspired all truths in Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī at Prayāga, and thus Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, *Vidagdha-mādhava*, and so many other books.

He then manifested these truths throughout the whole world. Now we are in this line. You should know how fortunate you are to have come in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Always think in this way. Always be hopeful and practice like this. *Satyam param* is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu .



## ❧ CHAPTER TWO ❧

# Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Does Not Cheat

If you hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then *tat-kṣaṇāt* – immediately, without delay – Kṛṣṇa will enter your heart and be controlled. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is so powerful and sweet. It is not bitter like quinine (a medicine for malaria patients). Other medicines may be somewhat bitter, but the medicine of *Bhāgavatam* is not. It is like nectar. The nectar of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* may not appear to be sweet in the beginning; it may even appear somewhat bitter, but afterwards, its real quality of sweetness manifests. It is actually very sweet and very powerful.

I have explained the essence of the first *śloka*, the *maṅgalācaraṇa* (auspicious invocation) of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and I explained its five different meanings. Now we will begin with the essence of the second *śloka*. After that, we will explain the third *śloka* and beyond.

*dharmāḥ projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām  
vedyaṁ vāstavam atra vastu śivadaṁ tāpa-trayonmūlanam  
śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte kiṁ vā parair īśvaraḥ  
sadyo hr̥dy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ śuśrūṣubhis tat-kṣaṇāt  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.2)*

Completely rejecting all religious activities, which are materially motivated, this *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* propounds the highest truth, which is understandable by those devotees who are fully pure in heart. The highest truth is reality distinguished from illusion for the welfare of all. Such truth uproots the threefold miseries. This beautiful *Bhāgavatam*, compiled by the great sage Vyāsadeva (in his maturity), is sufficient in itself for God realization. What is the need of any other scriptures? As soon as one attentively and submissively hears the message of *Bhāgavatam*, by this culture of knowledge the Supreme Lord is established within his heart.\*

Mahāmuni Śrīla Vyāsadeva wrote many Purāṇas. He put the *Gītapaniṣad* (*Bhagavad-gītā*) within the *Mahābhārata*. He divided the Vedas into four and he also compiled *Brahma-sūtra*, in which he presented high-class truths. But still he was not satisfied. Nārada Ṛṣi therefore came and suggested to him, “Totally surrender to Kṛṣṇa and enter a state of trance. Then you will realize something by which you will be satisfied. Otherwise it will not be possible.” Vyāsadeva heard the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in trance,<sup>1</sup> and after that he wrote it down.

*Dharmaḥ projjhita-kaitavo 'tra* [In this *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, all types of cheating religion, which are covered by fruitive

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<sup>1</sup> In a lecture in Maui, Hawaii, May 1999, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja explained this as follows: Although this book, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, came from Vyāsadeva, he is not the original author. Who is the author? No one in this world is the author; even Kṛṣṇa is not the author. Where did it come from? From the heart of Kṛṣṇa Himself. This book is Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. It is the embodiment of Kṛṣṇa Himself. Vyāsadeva has not compiled it; he received it in trance. It is transcendental, having come from Goloka Vṛndāvana. The pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are not separate. They descended into the heart of Vyāsadeva. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is therefore called *samādhi-bhāṣya*, trance language.

intention, are completely rejected]. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the last book written by Śrīla Vyāsadeva. In all of his other scriptures, like the Purāṇas, *Mahābhārata*, and *Brahma-sūtra*, he expounded so many truths and histories, but he did not explain the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are very powerful and very sweet; there is no adulteration in them. In all other Purāṇas there is some adulteration. For example, one Purāṇa states that in Goloka Vṛndāvana, Śrīmatī Rādhikā became angry and cursed Śrīdāmā, who in turn cursed Her, and because of this, they both had to come to this world. This cannot be. It is impossible.

Some statements in certain Purāṇas imply that there are impurities in Goloka Vṛndāvana, like quarrel, anger, and lust, but this is only to arouse the curiosity and interest of the general people. The intelligence of such people is not very high, and therefore Vyāsa presented all these mixed (adulterated) ideas only for them. In the Purāṇas, he made many statements just for beginners, which are not true to the fullest extent, just as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja made certain statements for beginners. For advanced devotees he said something else. In this way we should try to reconcile all apparently contradictory statements.

*Dharmaḥ projjhita-kaitavo 'tra*. In other Purāṇas, the histories of Hariścandra, Dhruva, Prahlāda, and Citraketu Mahārāja are given, but the purport of these histories is not clear. For example, Hariścandra was engaged in *karma* (pious action). He thought that worldly truths were real truths. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also describes this history, but at the same time states that the only truth is transcendental reality. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Vyāsadeva clearly explains what can lead us to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Some other Purāṇas discuss worship of materialistic *gurus* and relatives. They state, for example, that a wife should worship her husband even if he is not a devotee. But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* never cheats us in any way. It directly states:

*gurur na sa syāt sva-jano na sa syāt  
pitā na sa syāj jananī na sā syāt  
daivam na tat syān na patīś ca sa syān  
na mocayed yaḥ samupeta-mṛtyum*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.5.18)*

One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother, or a worshipable demigod.\*

What is the meaning of *na sa syāt* (one should not)? If a *guru* is not really a *guru*, if he cannot give love and affection for Kṛṣṇa, you should reject him. Such a *guru* may think, “All these disciples are my property, and I will enjoy their property. They have no connection with Kṛṣṇa. Their connection is only with me.” That *guru* is a wretched *guru*, not a real *guru*. He should at once be rejected, just as Bāli Mahārāja rejected his *guru*. There are so many examples of this in *śāstra*.

A husband is not a husband if he is not actually helping his wife in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; that wife should reject such a husband. If a wife is not helping her husband in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or if a husband is not helping his wife in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, they should be at once rejected. If a son is not helping his father in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then he is to be rejected as a son; there should be no relationship. If others help us in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then they are *guru*, husband, wife, daughter, son, father, or friend. Otherwise you should reject them.<sup>2</sup> This must be the root of all relationships. If you consider some compromise in this regard,

<sup>2</sup> Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has explained that ‘reject’ means to not give your heart to one who is not a devotee. It does not mean to abandon one’s duty to one’s family members. But if someone is actively opposing one’s endeavors in *bhakti* and obstructing one’s practices, that person can be rejected.

you will be deprived of Kṛṣṇa. This has all been clearly explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The *gopīs* are the most superior devotees in the world, and all of them disregarded their husbands. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains all these truths. It never says anything to cheat us.

*Nirmatsarāṇām satām* means that only those who are free from envy, duplicity, hypocrisy, and all other impurities can understand the statements in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Vedyam vāstavam atra vastu* means ‘the real truth, or reality.’ Who is *vāstavam vastu*? Kṛṣṇa Himself is *advaya-jñāna-para-tattva*. Nothing exists without having some relationship with Him. No one is independent but Him. Still, He sometimes becomes dependent. On whom? On the Vrajavāsīs, the *gopīs*, and especially on Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*Śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte kiṁ vā parair īśvaraḥ*. Ultimately there is no need to read. Simply by hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Kṛṣṇa will at once be controlled. He will be bound to enter the heart of a devotee who has honor for *hari-kathā* and the strong faith that whatever is written in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is true to the fullest extent. All that is required is this honor and faith.

There is yet another condition for understanding *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: one should not offend *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or the *bhāgavata*. There are two kinds of *bhāgavatas*: *bhakta-bhāgavata* (the pure devotee) and *grantha-bhāgavata* (the Vedic scriptures). Never offend either. If you simply hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with honor, Kṛṣṇa will at once enter your heart and be controlled. The *śloka* says, ‘at once,’ ‘very quickly.’ Do not disbelieve Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Sūta Gosvāmī, or Vyāsadeva. How will that come about quickly? Kṛṣṇa knows. He will immediately enter your heart and never leave. By hearing with strong belief and honor, you will be able to practice with your heart and by your activities. Kṛṣṇa must come. He is bound to come.

## The Ripened Fruit

*nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalaṁ  
śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṁyutam  
pibata bhāgavataṁ rasam ālayaṁ  
muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.3)*

O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.\*

*Nigama-kalpa-taror* means that all the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Śrutis, *Mahābhārata*, and *Rāmāyaṇa* combined together are like a transcendental desire tree, a *kalpataru*. On that tree, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the sweetest fruit of all. If you suck the root of a tree, you will find there is no sweet taste. If you suck the leaves or the branches, also you will get no sweetness. Even if you suck on the tree's raw green fruits, still no sweetness will be there. Only when the fruit has matured, or fully ripened, and been bitten by some cuckoo birds or parrots, who have been attracted by its fragrance, will it be so very tasteful.

All the Vedas and Upaniṣads are like these other parts of the tree. You can serve those *śāstras*, you can hear them and you can follow them, but you will find no sweetness. In all the Purāṇas, there is no such sweetness, not even in *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. Furthermore, even if you read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* on your own, you will not experience any sweetness. Why? Because the parrots and cuckoo birds have not touched it. There is a substance in the mouths of parrots, on their beaks, when

injected into a fruit makes the fruit more tasteful. That is why it is said, “*yāha, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne* – if you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you must approach a self-realized Vaiṣṇava and hear from him” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 5.131).

So many devotees are reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Śaṅkarācārya also read it, and all his *sannyāsīs* read it. Māyāvādīs also read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Without their doing so their business could not advance, and they would not be able to attain followers and money, respect and praise. It is for these reasons that they read it. Actually, they are very, very learned and they can explain hundreds of meanings for one word, as Sarvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya did. They know more than we do. But actually, they do not understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* at all. Why? Because they do not hear from a realized Vaiṣṇava who is *rasika* (who can taste *rasa*) and *bhāvuka* (who has *bhāva*, transcendental emotion).

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has come from Kṛṣṇa through the *guru-paramparā*. Who is Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī? He is the parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He has seen and tasted all the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with his own eyes, with his own senses, and with his own intelligence. Anyone who has not read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with a pure *rasika* and *bhāvuka bhāgavata* in this line cannot really explain it. That nectar will not come to him. If one has not come in line with this process, if one has not read or heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in this disciplic line and has not become *rasika* and *bhāvuka*, he can neither touch [the real meaning of] *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* nor explain it. He can utter the words, and there is no harm in that. In other words, he can give some explanations, but the fruit will not be like that which Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī gave to Parīkṣit Mahārāja and others.

There are some devotees like Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī who have read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with their *gurudeva*, and they

themselves are *rasika* and *bhāvuka*, but still they cannot explain it fully. Why? When they explain certain portions, they remember Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and at once faint. They become unconscious and unable to speak. If Kṛṣṇa Himself were to try to explain it, He would be the first person to faint. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, for example, could not explain *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; therefore, He sometimes wanted to hear it from Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita. And if Rādhikā were to hear even the first words of the first chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam – janmādy asya yato* – what would happen? She would remember Kṛṣṇa and at once faint. She, also, cannot explain it.

Gadādhara Paṇḍita, also, was always weeping, but because Mahāprabhu desired to hear from him, Yogamāyā arranged that he would not faint. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa may give special mercy like They gave to Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Just before entering Their *aparakṣa-līlā*, They ordered him, "You should remain in this world. We are going, but you should stay here for some time. We are giving you special mercy so that you can explain *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to everyone. You will not faint when doing so. There may be a chance that you will fall unconscious when you remember Me or Rādhikā while speaking *Brahmāra-gīta, rāsa [-līlā]*, or other such pastimes. Do not utter the name of Rādhikā and Me directly in those parts. Try to subdue your feelings. Special mercy will come from Us which will enable you to explain *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; otherwise it will be very difficult for you. Very difficult."

## Who can Explain Rasa?

If one is not *rasika*, he cannot explain *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This is because *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the very form of *rasa*. Vrajendra-nandana is *rasa-svarūpa* (the embodiment of transcendental relationships). Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, also, is *rasa-svarūpa*.

So this is a very high subject. We can explain a semblance, an *ābhāsa*, of this topic. You can imagine that if the semblance is like this, then how powerful it is when *rasika* and *bhāvuka bhaktas* like Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Śrīla Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī explain *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. If you have read *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*, then you can imagine something of this; otherwise, you cannot. This *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is like a very high-class transcendental treasure, more valuable than *cintāmaṇi*, desire-stone. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* cannot be compared even with *cintāmaṇi*. Those who try to compare the two are foolish. For the benefit of those who have no taste for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śukadeva Gosvāmī has stated in the Tenth Canto:

*nivr̥tta-tarṣair upagīyamānād  
bhavauśadhāc chrotra-mano-'bhirāmāt  
ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt  
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.1.4)

Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *paramparā* system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher, or one who is killing his own self?\*

Those who think only about worldly problems and thus give up hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from any devotee in the line of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Thākura, and others who have left behind all worldly desires, are like butchers.

Actually they are worse than butchers. They are committing suicide and are thus butchers of their own souls. In this context, 'butcher' does not only mean a killer of animals. It also means a killer of one's self. The entire future [progress] of such a person is blocked. Hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in this process is the only *mahā-auśadhāt*, great medicine, panacea, for this world. Hearing it will not go in vain. Although it is medicine, it is sweet like nectar. It has also been stated:

*nṛ-deham ādyaṁ su-labhaṁ su-durlabhaṁ  
 plavaṁ su-kalpaṁ guru-karṇadhāraṁ  
 mayānukūlena nabhasvateritaṁ  
 pumān bhavābधिṁ na taret sa ātma-hā*  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.17)*

While the human body, which permits one to attain all benefit in life, is obtained automatically in due course, it is a rare facility that may be likened to a dependable boat. The *guru* is the navigator, and I [Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the form of His instructions] am the favourable winds that propel it on its course. Considering this, one who does not use this human life to cross the ocean of repeated birth and death is verily the killer of his own soul.

Although this has been stated many times in many *śāstras*, still we remain worldly persons, like butchers cutting our own souls. We think it is very good to cut ourselves but not to hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Do not be like this.

*nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalaṁ  
 śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṁyutam  
 pibata bhāgavataṁ rasam ālayaṁ  
 muhur aho rasikā bhuvī bhāvukāḥ*  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.3)*

O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.\*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī brought the *Bhāgavatam* from Goloka Vṛndāvana. He was the special parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore he knows so many things. If he were a parrot of Kṛṣṇa, he could not have known the heart of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and how much happiness She feels in meeting with Kṛṣṇa. This parrot is always with Her and he knows everything that happens.<sup>3</sup> *Rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā*. He knows Kṛṣṇa's four types of *mādhurīs*, sweetness. Because he is the servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, he knows how sweet and beautiful Kṛṣṇa is. Unlike Kṛṣṇa, that parrot also knows the happiness tasted by Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Kṛṣṇa wants to taste what Śrīmatī Rādhikā tastes, and that is why He had to steal Her heart. But this parrot has no need to steal because he is always serving Her. He knows everything. He is *rasika* and he is *bhāvuka*. He knows more than Kṛṣṇa, and this is why Kṛṣṇa deputed him to remain in this world and manifest the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Try, therefore, to hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with great care, great honor, and a strong belief that "I do not need to do anything for my departure from this world. I need not worry about *mukti* (salvation), and I need not worry how I will achieve *bhakti*. Everything will come automatically by hearing." Kṛṣṇa

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<sup>3</sup> In a lecture in Maui, Hawaii, May 1999, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja explained that Śrīmatī Rādhikā dearly loves Her parrot. Sometimes She takes him on Her left hand and gives him pomegranate seeds or rice and milk. Caressing him, She tells him, "O parrot, can you repeat after Me, 'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa?'" Then, in the same tune as Rādhikā, the parrot says, "Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!"

has promised, “In the form of *hari-kathā* I enter the heart of the devotees and manage everything.” He is so powerful. Therefore you need not worry.

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has said that you should hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* throughout your whole life. He has not said that you should read it. Did he say anywhere that you should read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? Never. By reading, it will not come; we should hear. And this is true of *harināma* also. First you should hear, *śravaṇam*, then chant, *kīrtanam*, and so on. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also advises us to first listen to *hari-kathā*, and then we will be mature enough to explain it. Otherwise our explanation will be like zero.

## Hari-kathā Pleases Kṛṣṇa and the Soul

Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī heard the question of all the *ṛṣis*:

*tatra tatrāñjasāyusman  
bhavatā yad viniścitam  
puṁsām ekāntataḥ śreyas  
tan naḥ śaṁsitum arhasi*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.9)

Please, therefore, being blessed with many years, explain to us, in an easily understandable way, what you have ascertained to be the absolute and ultimate good for the people in general.\*

*ataḥ sādho 'tra yat sāraṁ  
samuddhṛtya manīṣayā  
brūhi bhadrāya bhūtānām  
yenātmā suprasīdati*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.11)

Therefore, O sage, please select the essence of all these scriptures and explain it for the good of all living beings, that by such instruction their heart may be fully satisfied.\*

The ṛṣis requested, “Tell us the essence of all the scriptures, the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and also *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. By following them, our *ātmā*, our soul, will be satisfied and happy.”

There is a deeper meaning to *yenātmā suprasīdati*. *Ātmā* here refers to the *ātmā* of all *ātmās*, Kṛṣṇa Himself. If Kṛṣṇa is satisfied and pleased, then the whole world is pleased. We should try to please Kṛṣṇa, then our soul will automatically be happy. If you do everything to please yourself, your own soul, then Kṛṣṇa cannot be pleased and you, also, cannot be pleased. The best process is to please Kṛṣṇa by all your activities. Then you will see that your *ātmā* is happy and others’ *ātmās* are also happy.

Now Sūta Gosvāmī is saying:

*sa vai puṁsām paro dharmo  
yato bhaktir adhokṣaje  
ahaituky apratihātā  
yayātmā suprasīdati*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6)

The highest pursuit for all humanity is *śuddha-bhakti* – to please Kṛṣṇa, the transcendent Lord Adhokṣaja, by all one’s efforts of body, mind, and soul. Such *uttamā-bhakti* must be performed without any desire for self-gain and without any break [being devoid of *karma* and *jñāna*] in order to fully satisfy the self.

Certainly, the most elevated *paro-dharma*, transcendental religion, is to serve Adhokṣaja. Who is Adhokṣaja? He who is beyond the material senses. He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara. Perform causeless, uninterrupted *bhakti*

to Him. Do not be like this: “Oh, in the morning I did some *bhakti*, and after that I went to my job and I forgot all these things. When I returned in the evening I again remembered something: *om... bhūr... bhuvah. Klīm... kṛṣṇāya... svāhā.*” After that you take *prasāda* and begin to yawn. *Bhakti* should be an uninterrupted flow, like a stream, always flowing like the Ganges river. This is high-class *bhakti*.

*dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām  
viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ  
notpādayed yadi ratim  
śrama eva hi kevalam*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.8)*

The main purpose of *varṇāśrama-dharma* is to simplify the life of a person who is performing his natural occupational duty, so that he has sufficient time to hear *hari-kathā*. However, if an attraction for *hari-kathā* is not inspired, then all the religious activities he performs in accordance with *varṇāśrama-dharma* will be so much useless labor.

If you are chanting, remembering, sometimes worshipping, and sometimes doing your three *sandhyās (gāyatrī-mantras)*, but you have no taste for hearing the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa from *mahā-bhāgavatas*, then quite suddenly, you may stop chanting. If you are worshipping, your worship may stop. If you are serving your *gurudeva* and devotees, then that also may stop very easily if you are not hearing *hari-kathā*. You will become weak very soon, and you will think, “I should return to my home and marry. We will make money, get a golden Deity and then we will serve all devotees, always read *Bhāgavatam*, and give classes.” Instead, however, you will become weak. You may even leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness forever.

*Dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ* [The duties executed by men that do not provoke attraction for the

message of the Personality of Godhead]. Those who have very strong faith in hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* can taste something. Try to create taste. How will it come? It comes by hearing, hearing, hearing. If you have no taste in chanting the holy name, continue chanting and hearing Kṛṣṇa's glories; then it will come. But you will have to be in high-class association. If that association is lacking, you cannot develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You will be weak and think, "We have very big problems. When Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja was here in this world, we were so happy and enthusiastic, doing this and that. But when he left, big problems came. So many *sannyāsīs* fell down, and *brahmacārīs* also left."

I think that most of you were *brahmacārīs* during the time of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. But when he left you became weak. You married and had children, and made a *saṁsāra* (household) of *Gītā*.<sup>4</sup> All of you may also be thinking, "Śrīla Mahārāja is present with us now, and we are very inspired to perform devotional service, but after he departs what will happen? The same thing will happen to us that happened to the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja." Do not think like this.

We, also, were serving our *gurudeva* [Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja]. Like Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, he departed from this world, but we are still here doing devotional service. So try to be like us, always chanting and remembering with strong belief. I am not a high-class Vaiṣṇava, but I have so much strong faith due to hearing *hari-kathā* from our *guru-varga*. Just as animals never worry about the future, you, also, do not worry. Have faith, not in problems, but in what

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<sup>4</sup> *Gītā-saṁsāra* tells the story of a devotee who sought material solutions to the difficulties he faced in living alone and preaching *Bhagavad-gītā*, instead of seeking the advice of his *guru*. Consequently, he again became entangled in material existence.

*gurudeva* has given in your heart. He has given everything, but now you will have to protect it, make it sprout, and nourish it. You will then see that everything is all right and there is no problem at all.

## The Benefit of High-Class Association

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī told the story of Nārada. Without the help of a transcendental, elevated *guru*, no one can develop in *bhakti*. A *guru* who has not internally served his *gurudeva*, who is not inspired and strong, and who has no faith cannot help his disciples. Therefore Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī first related the life history of Nārada. Nārada was the son of Brahmā, being born from his throat. In the throat there are words; in this case, transcendental words. Nārada is therefore the manifestation of word. What word? *Śabda-brahma*. *Śabda-brahma* is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Nārada has therefore been called *bhakti-avatāra*, the incarnation of devotion. In a previous life Nārada was born in a low-class [poor] family; his mother used to clean here and there [to support them]. When he was only five years old, the four Kumāras – Sananda, Saṅaka, Sanātana, and Sanat-kumāra – along with many *ṛṣis*, came to the village where he lived with his mother. He used to serve them with great honor. They would order him, “Oh, bring my *loṭā*, bring my *kaupīna* and my *kamaṅḍalu*. You may come with me when I go to bathe in the river.”

By good fortune, one day Nārada took some remnants of the *prasāda* left on the leaf plates of those *ṛṣis*. What was the result?

*bhakta-pada-dhūli āra bhakta-pada-jala*  
*bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa—tina mahā-bala*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 16.60)

The dust of the lotus feet of devotees, the water that washes their feet, and the remnants of their *prasāda* – these three are very powerful.

You should have strong faith in this. Even if you are chanting a great deal and reading *Bhāgavatam* a lot, it will not help you very much. If, however, you receive the remnants of any high-class Vaiṣṇava, you will be greatly benefited. Remnants are of two kinds: the nectar of *hari-kathā* and the nectar of *prasāda*. Other powerful substances are the dust of the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇava and the water that has washed his feet. One must serve these with honor. Do not try to forcibly take a Vaiṣṇava's foot-dust, jokingly quarrelling and wrestling with him and throwing him flat on the ground.

Try to be like Nārada. He had become very near and dear to saintly persons. When his mother, who was an attachment for him, quickly died after being bitten by a snake, he left home. In his trance [meditation], he easily saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Lord advised him, "You should continue hearing, chanting, remembering, and speaking *hari-kathā* to all. A day will come when death arrives, but you will not die. You will place your feet on the head of death." This came to pass, and Nārada attained his *siddha-deha* (spiritual body), which is always present, even when one is within the gross and subtle body. He realized his transcendental form, and in that form he traveled everywhere, sometimes within this world, sometimes to Goloka Vṛndāvana, sometimes to the abode of Nārāyaṇa, and here and there.

Without *guru* we cannot progress. But that *guru* should not be like a Kali-yuga *guru*. We are the property of Kṛṣṇa, so *guru* should bring us to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. That is *guru*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states that *bhakti* should not be like the *bhakti* of Dhruva. There was some defect in him. You know that the exalted devotee Nārada initiated Dhruva. He initiated Prahlāda Mahārāja, and he also initiated Citraketu Mahārāja. But these three disciples were in different categories. Even if the *guru* wants to give the same thing to all – Goloka Vṛndāvana, service to Kṛṣṇa – if the disciple has no past impressions, that *guru* cannot

give it. He wants to give it, but the disciple cannot take it. Dhruva Mahārāja had no past impressions. Although he performed severe austerities for six months, and although he was ultimately able to live without air and water, he did not have previous impressions from association with high-class devotees. Therefore, Nārada could not give him the purest *bhakti*.

Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wanted to give all these things, and that is why Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura began *naḡara-saṅkīrtana* and *nāma-haṭṭa*. Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja also began in this way, but he could not give his disciples the pure devotion to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted to give. Even Caitanya Mahāprabhu could not give this to Kālā Kṛṣṇadāsa. He was with Kālā Kṛṣṇadāsa in South India, but He could not give him this high-class of devotion. The recipient requires sufficient impressions from this birth and also from previous births. If you neglect to associate with high-class Vaiṣṇavas and neglect to realize all these truths, then *gurudeva* will not give it. Even though *gurudeva* wants to give this *bhakti*, and even though he can do anything, he will not deviate from the process. That is why Nārada could not give it to Dhruva. That is why Dhruva is still in Dhruva-loka and not in Goloka Vṛndāvana.

In the history of Devahūti and Kapiladeva, Kapiladeva told His mother:

*satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido  
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ  
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani  
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.25)

In the assembly of pure devotees, powerful discussions illuminating My heroic deeds become a rejuvenating tonic for both the ears and the heart. By hearing these narrations,

one quickly advances on the path of emancipation from ignorance. First he develops faith (*śraddhā*) in Me, then *rati* (the sprout of pure love), and finally he experiences the awakening of *prema-bhakti*, pure devotional service.

It is also stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.54)*:

*‘sādhu-saṅga’, ‘sādhu-saṅga’—sarva-śāstre kaya  
lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment’s association with a pure devotee one can attain all success.\*

If one is in *sādhu-saṅga* for even a moment, it will not go in vain. But this [association] should be taken with honor and very strong belief. Otherwise there will be no effect. No effect.

Bharata Mahārāja was a very advanced Vaiṣṇava and was just about to attain *rati* (the stage of *bhāva*). He had crossed *niṣṭhā-bhakti* and also the stage of *ruci*, relish for the holy name and *hari-kathā*. He had become very renounced and had entered the stage of *āsakti*. He left his home, wife, children – everything. He came to a very dense forest, and there he lived alone, chanting and remembering. But what happened? He became attached to a deer who was drowning in the river. He took pity on that baby deer. This is called mercy in the mode of goodness. Devotees should be merciful but not attached. Bharata Mahārāja was correct in being merciful, but he became attached, and thus his attachment to Kṛṣṇa diminished. Soon he died and [at the time of death], remembering only that deer, he became a deer. He was most careful in his second birth and also in his third.

Therefore you, also, should be careful about this. Even in a high stage there is a chance of falling down. You may be chanting and remembering, but because you are still full of *anarthas* you still have no taste (*ruci*), and there is so much chance of your

falling. We should, therefore, always be in elevated association. If Bharata Mahārāja had been with Nārada, he would not have continued in this world for three lives. But he did not have such association. Try, therefore, even at the stage of *niṣṭhā* or *ruci*, to always be in the association of advanced devotees.

What is the essence of this story told by Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī to Parīkṣit Mahārāja when he was going to die? Śukadeva said, “You came here, having given up your son and all kinds of attachment, and therefore, I am telling you *hari-kathā*. You should not be like Bharata. You should not give a moment to other attachments.” At the time of death, Bharata remembered a deer and also became a deer. Similarly, if one has many dogs and is very attached to them, it is certain that he will be a dog in his next life. No one can avoid this. If one has any worldly attachment, he could become a serpent, tiger, deer, horse, and so on. A man may even become a very beautiful lady, although previously he was in a male form, and he will become very lusty. If a lady remembers a male person, she may become like that male, and she will be very lusty. It may be like that. One may also become a donkey, because donkeys are very lusty. One may become a donkey, monkey, dog, and so on. So do not be attached.

From the beginning, try to always chant and remember Kṛṣṇa, but not Kṛṣṇa alone. If you remember only Kṛṣṇa, you may merge into Him like the Māyāvādīs do. We should remember Kṛṣṇa with His devotees. If your *gurudeva* has given you a particular ideal, try to follow that. He wants to give so many things, and he does give them, but if the disciple has no association, he may not be able to fully understand and follow. *Gurudeva* gives him everything in the *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī*, but the disciple is not qualified to know what he is being given. If, however, the disciple is always in the association of high-class, exalted Vaiṣṇavas, he will realize all these things.

Such Vaiṣṇavas can make you realize what is in the *gopāla-mantra*. It was given to Brahmā by Kṛṣṇa Himself. *Kāma-gāyatrī* was also given to him. By these *mantras* one can enter Goloka Vṛndāvana. More than remembering Kṛṣṇa, we should remember Yaśodā or *gopīs* like Rūpa Mañjārī and others; then we can serve Kṛṣṇa in that same way. There are so many things to say on this subject. It is our duty to follow Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, which is why we are called *rūpānugas*. We say in the *Jaya-dhvani*, “*rūpānuga-guru-varga kī jaya*,” but we do not know what *rūpānuga* is. We should try to know by questioning, “What is *rūpānuga*? What is *rāgānuga*? What is *rāga*? What is *śraddhā*? What is *niṣṭhā*? What is *ruci*? What is *āskti*, *rati*, *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, and *anurāga*?” Then we will know about all these stages of *bhakti*. We may read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but if we do not have proper association, we cannot attain anything. Therefore, *satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido*.

We can learn so many things from *Bharata-carita* (the life history and character of Bharata Mahārāja). In his third birth, Bharata was very renounced. He became a *brāhmaṇa*, but at the same time, he seemed totally like a madman, although he was not actually mad. He always remembered Kṛṣṇa and never associated with worldly persons. It is doubtful, however, if he received the kind of *bhakti* that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give: *anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇaḥ kalau (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 1.4)*.

You are so lucky, more than Bharata Mahārāja and others. You are so fortunate to have come at this time, just after Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. But we are so unfortunate that we do not want to follow the process. We want to take gold, worldly reputation or other things from Vaiṣṇavas, but not their high-class love and affection for Kṛṣṇa.

Bharata Mahārāja never attained this love. He received so much advanced knowledge, but did he receive a drop of love for Rādhā

and Kṛṣṇa conjugal? He never even heard about it. He never had the chance. Citraketu Mahārāja was also an elevated Vaiṣṇava, as was Prahlāda Mahārāja. Prahlāda used to see Kṛṣṇa here, there, and everywhere, but did he have any *ānugatyā* (guidance) from the *gopīs*? Did he have any taste or greed for attaining the mood of the *gopīs* love? Because he had no association of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His followers, he never had that greed.

Do not neglect or misuse this time, otherwise you will be like butchers – killers of your very self. Always be detached and try to utilize your time properly. In the absence of good association, if you are sincere and pray to Kṛṣṇa, who is so merciful, He will at once arrange everything. You can pray to Nityānanda Prabhu, who is more merciful than anyone, “Oh, please manage this. Give me the association of *rasika* devotees so that I can hear *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Be merciful. I depend on You. I am giving my whole heart to You.” If you have very strong belief in Nityānanda, He will surely manage everything.

## ❧ CHAPTER THREE ❧

# The Process of Hearing

**Y**esterday I explained that we should try to hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from superior, self-realized, *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. This is written throughout *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. *Śrī Caitanya caritāmṛta* states: “*yāha, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne* – if you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you must approach a self-realized Vaiṣṇava and hear from him” (*Antya-līlā* 5.131). What is the meaning? *Paḍa* means ‘read.’ If you want to read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you should first go to any superior, *rasika* Vaiṣṇava and hear and learn from him how to read it. It is imperative to know the process. After hearing, you can read and realize any *śāstra*.

It has also been written that those who have no high-class association cannot understand the meaning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In India, *Māyāvādī sannyāsīs* who are highly learned in Sanskrit speak and give lectures in Sanskrit. They know many meanings of each word, its verbal roots, and so on. But why have they become *Māyāvādīs*? Because they cannot truly understand *Bhāgavatam* at all. They also give explanations on the books of Jīva Gosvāmī and others, but they do not understand them. This is why it has been said:

*aham vedmi śuko vetti  
 vyāso vetti na vetti vā  
 bhaktyā bhāgavatam grāhyam  
 na buddhyā na ca ṭikayā  
 Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 24.313)*

Lord Śiva said: I may know; Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva, may know, and Vyāsadeva may, or may not know the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. On the whole, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the spotless Purāṇa, can be learned only through devotional service, not by material intelligence, speculative methods, or imaginary commentaries.\*

This verse has been spoken by Śaṅkara. Who is Śaṅkara? Mahādeva (Śiva). *Vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ*. He is the supreme Vaiṣṇava, the *ādi* (original) Vaiṣṇava. He says, “*aham vedmi* – I know the meaning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.” “*Śuko vetti* – and Śuka knows.” “*Vyāso vetti na vetti vā* – there is some doubt as to whether Vyāsa knows or not.”

Vyāsadeva has written *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and he has seen it in trance, but Śaṅkara says it is not certain whether he knows it or not. Actually Vyāsadeva knows half. How? He is in the category of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore, he is *śaktimān-tattva*, meaning that he is the object of *prema*. Śaṅkara, on the other hand, is the *āśraya*, abode of *prema*. He is in the line of Śrīmatī Rādhikā (the embodiment of *āśraya-tattva*). In *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is the parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore, he is also in Her line, or category. Anyone who is in the line of Rādhikā can know *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot know it. That is why He comes here to this world, to learn in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Viśakhā, in the form of Rāmānanda Rāya, initiated Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu into knowledge of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. After that, in Gambhīrā, in the mood of Rādhikā, He

tasted *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is nothing but the internal, intrinsic mood of Rādhikā. It is the glorification of Rādhikā, not the glorification of Kṛṣṇa.

*vande nanda-vraja-strīṇām  
pāda-reṇum abhīkṣṇaśaḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.47.63)

I bow down to the dust of the feet of the *gopīs*, who reside in Nanda Bābā's Vraja.

Śaṅkara is therefore correct when he says: “*vyāso vetti na vetti vā* – there is some doubt as to whether Vyāsa knows or not.” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.12) also states: *śruto 'nupaṭhito dhyātāādṛto vānumoditaḥ*. One should hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. If he is not accustomed to such hearing, he can remember something about it. If he cannot even do that, he can give his approval: “Oh, to hear *Bhāgavatam* is very good.” He acknowledges that. Even by doing this, a strong impression is made, which acts as *sukṛti* (spiritual merit that leads to *bhakti*). It has therefore been said:

*śrīmad-bhāgavatam purāṇam amalam yad vaiṣṇavānām priyam  
yasmin pāramahṁsyam ekam amalam jñānam param gīyate  
tatra jñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitam naiṣkarmyam āviskṛtam  
tac chr̥ṇvan su-paṭhan vicāraṇa-paro bhaktyā vimucyen naraḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.13.18)

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the spotless Purāṇa. It is most dear to the Vaiṣṇavas because it describes the pure and supreme knowledge of the *paramahṁsas*. This *Bhāgavatam* reveals the means for becoming free from all material work, together with the processes of transcendental knowledge, renunciation, and devotion. Anyone who seriously tries to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, who properly hears and chants it with devotion, becomes completely liberated.\*

If anyone hears the *Bhāgavatam* with *śraddhā*, from superiors who are explaining its deep meanings, who are very elevated in *bhakti*, and who have surrendered themselves to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then the words of *Bhāgavatam*, which are Kṛṣṇa Himself, will enter his heart and be realized. This is the process of hearing.

*vikrīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ  
śraddhānvito 'nuśṛṇuyād atha varṇayed yaḥ  
bhaktiṁ parāṁ bhagavati pratilabhya kāmāṁ  
hṛd-rogam āśv apahinoty acireṇa dhīraḥ*  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.33.39)*

A sober person who with full faith continuously hears or describes Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's transcendental *rāsa-līlā* with the damsels of Vraja will first attain pure devotional service for the lotus feet of Bhagavān. Thereafter, he will quickly conquer his senses and become forever free from the disease of the heart – worldly lust.

If one hears *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* according to this process and then reads it with *śraddhā*, all the words will come to him; they will reveal themselves, and he will become self-realized. If one does not have very much association with exalted Vaiṣṇavas, he should still read; there is no alternative. But he should surrender to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This is called *su-paṭhan vicāraṇa-paro*. He should think, "How deep the meaning is. O words of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you are transcendental. Please reveal yourselves. Manifest your mercy in my heart so that I may realize all these truths." This is the process.

I know so many highly learned and scholarly devotees of Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja who took the renounced order. They could remember many *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam śloka*s, from beginning to end, along with their many meanings, but when Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja

departed from this world, they left *sannyāsa*, their reading of *Bhāgavatam*, and everything else. This is not the process. If we want to enter deeply into *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we must read, but it will help us only if we are reading in accordance with the [proper] process. If we are lucky enough to have good association, and in that association any superior Vaiṣṇavas are explaining *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we should not lose time. We must try to utilize it. If we do not have the physical association of such pure devotees, we can study by following the instructions we have heard from them.

We should be free from the false ego of thinking, “We will understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by our own endeavor.” You can read by yourself, but in this process: be very humble and offer yourself, in *śaraṅāgati* (surrender) to the *Bhāgavatam*.

## Preparing to Hear the Tenth Canto

We have explained why the first nine cantos were spoken. Then comes the Tenth Canto. A platform is required for hearing the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We must know what this [material] world is. We can learn this by hearing the dialogue of Kapiladeva and Devahūti. It is necessary to realize what this world is and what this body is. This body is only a combination of stool, urine, and many other bad things. We cannot actually purify ourselves simply by taking bath, because the body is always full of these things. It can only be purified by chanting the holy names. Even after taking bath we utter:

*yaḥ smaret puṇḍarikākṣaṁ  
sa bahyābhyantara-śuciḥ*

*Garuḍa Purāṇa*

By remembering the lotus-eyed Lord, Puṇḍarikākṣa, one becomes pure, internally and externally.

Therefore, even after taking bath one should do *ācamana* and recite the names of Kṛṣṇa. From another perspective, we are always pure whether we do something to attain perfection or not. We are pure in heart and in soul because we are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and have the potential to serve Him. We can try to serve Kṛṣṇa like Dhruva Mahārāja did. No harm. But Dhruva Mahārāja could not achieve pure *bhakti* due to his worldly desires. Prahlāda Mahārāja had no desire; he was a *mahā-bhāgavata*. By hearing, we can try to become like him. Although so many problems came to him, he was never touched by them. He remained aloof from all problems and was never disturbed. If you become like him, you can remember and chant *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* always. Otherwise you will be disturbed.

To know all these truths you can also read the chapters about Bhārata Mahārāja and Citraketu Mahārāja. Do not be very attached to your children and wife, as Citraketu Mahārāja was in his first life. What happened to Citraketu? He finally left everything and was given transcendental knowledge by Nārada and Aṅgirā Ṛṣi.

Follow all these teachings. Material relationships can never make you happy. Never. So do not be anxious. Remain in whatever situation you are in, somehow or other maintain your life, and always remember and chant ‘Kṛṣṇa.’

Now, quickly, I am coming to the Tenth Canto. Śrī Parīkṣit Mahārāja said to Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, “You have told me everything up to the Ninth Canto, but I am not yet satisfied. I am so hungry for this *hari-kathā*.”

*nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād  
bhavauśadhāc chrotra-mano-'bhirāmāt  
ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt  
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.1.4)*

Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *paramparā* system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher, or one who is killing his own self?\*

Only very wretched animals and those who are slaughterers of animals can avoid hearing *hari-kathā* from superior speakers like Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, Śukadeva Gosvāmī was a very dear parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He had no contact with *māyā*, even in the womb of his mother. Soon after his birth, he was admitted into the school of Vyāsadeva, and there he studied *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from beginning to end. After this, he explained *Bhāgavatam* in the assembly of Śrīla Parikṣit Mahārāja. Here he says, *nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād*. If a speaker of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has no worldly desires, no worldly problems, and no attachment, like Śukadeva Gosvāmī or anyone in his line, one should not lose the opportunity to hear from him.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is for three kinds of persons. It is for those who want to fulfill worldly desires, those who want *mukti* (liberation) or who are already liberated, and those who are *bhaktas* – ultimately, *rasika-bhaktas*. The explanation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* should be heard from that class of speaker for all kinds of devotees. *Nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād*. What is the meaning of *upagīyamānād*? It is the opposite of *gāyamānāt* [‘they themselves are singing’]. *Upagīyamānād* means ‘one who has first heard from his *guru*, a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava, and then speaks [describes or sings] it’. The example of this is Sūta Gosvāmī Ugrāśravā. He attended the assembly of Śukadeva Gosvāmī and heard

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from him when Parīkṣit Mahārāja was hearing it. He first heard everything, and then he did *gīyamānāt*. One first engages in *śravaṇam* (hearing), and then, when he perfects that, he begins *kīrtanam* (speaking). At that time his speaking becomes *avyarthāmāha-auśadhi*<sup>1</sup>, the infallible medicine. It will not go in vain.

Those who were in the assembly of Parīkṣit Mahārāja and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, those who were junior, and also those who were senior – the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs* and the *madhyama-adhikārīs* – all advanced in their stage of *bhakti*. Those who were about to be liberated were liberated, and those who had no love and affection received love and affection. In this way everyone developed.

*Nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād bhavauśadhāc chrotra-mano-bhirāmāt* [descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing the disease (*roga*) of repeated birth and death]. What is the disease of this world? What is the main disease from which all diseases come? The root of all disease is forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa. This is called *avidyā*, ignorance of *kṛṣṇa-tattva* and ignorance of love and devotion to Him. This *avidyā* disappears very quickly. Those who do not listen [to *hari-kathā*] with great honor and strong faith are like butchers who kill themselves and others. In this world, many are butchers.

I gave several reasons, ten or more, for Kṛṣṇa's descent to this world. In the jail of Kāmsa He appeared from the womb of Devakī via the mind of Vasudeva Mahārāja.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, in Vṛndāvana, He took birth like a normal baby, connected to His mother, Yaśodā, by an umbilical cord. Both appearances are true.

<sup>1</sup> *Vyārtha* means 'useless' or 'futile.' *Avyārtha* means 'it will not go in vain.' *Maha* means 'infallible.' *Auśadhi* means 'medicine.' So *avyarthāmāha-ausadi* means 'the infallible medicine, which does not go in vain.'

<sup>2</sup> In the jail of Kāmsa, He was transferred from the mind of Vasudeva to the mind of Devakī, and from her mind to her womb. He thus appeared from the womb of Devakī.

Kṛṣṇa appeared to Devakī in His *catur-bhuja* (four-armed) form as a very beautiful teenage boy of about sixteen, with long wavy hair and golden and jeweled ornaments. At the same time, at twelve midnight, He took birth from the womb of Yaśodā, just as a baby does, weeping, “kyaaaah-kyaaaah-kyaaaah.”

Śukadeva Gosvāmī has said that Kṛṣṇa was the son of Vasudeva and Devakī. But to whom did he tell this? To all the Mathurāvāsīs. If Śukadeva had been in Vṛndāvana, however, what would he have said? None of the Vṛndāvana residents would have believed him if he had said that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Vasudeva and Devakī. They had already seen that Kṛṣṇa had come from the womb of Yaśodā. There was an umbilical cord that was cut in their presence. How would they believe Śukadeva Gosvāmī or Akrūra or Uddhava or anyone else? They would never believe them. If you are a Mathurāvāsī, then you may maintain the belief that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Devakī and Vasudeva; no harm. But if you want to become a Vrajavāsī, even a creeper, a bird, or an animal of Vṛndāvana, then you will have to believe that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Yaśodā, never the son of Devakī and Vasudeva. Both are true according to their own perspective. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has explained so many times that the Mathurāvāsīs are devotees of high caliber, and the devotees of Vṛndāvana are as well. But who is superior, the Mathurāvāsīs like Uddhava and Akrūra, or the Vrajavāsīs like Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā? The Vrajavāsīs. Therefore, we should believe their words the most.

Sometimes Mathurāvāsīs tell lies. In fact, Kṛṣṇa Himself has said that Mathurāvāsīs are liars. In *Bhagavad-gītā* He told Arjuna, “You should promise that I cannot neglect any of My devotees. If I make this promise, it may be that I will change, because I am a Mathurāvāsī. But if you make this promise, I will have to keep it.” In this way, Kṛṣṇa admits that the Mathurāvāsīs tell lies. Those who say that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Vasudeva and Devakī are liars; their words are not true. Who [which Kṛṣṇa] fought in the

Mahābhārata war? It was not Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa; it was Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand, if Yaśodā Maiyā tells Kṛṣṇa, “You are my son,” there is no doubt about it. First, you should believe this.

It was only for beginners that Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja wrote somewhere in his *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that Kṛṣṇa was the son of Vasudeva, and He was given to Nanda and Yaśodā only for them to support and nourish Him as their foster child, but this is not true. You should have firm belief in this. Try to be a Vrajavāsī. If you are hearing this class, then try to be a Vrajavāsī. First have this faith, then you can realize *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This is the basis. Kṛṣṇa has so many opulences and all kinds of powers; He especially has six kinds of opulences. When He is in Nanda Bābā’s house as Vrajendra-nandana, He has all opulence and all power, more than He has in Dvārakā and Mathurā, but Vrajendra-nandana’s opulence and power are covered by very sweet *mādhurya*. Only high-class devotees can realize all these truths. Try to have the heart of the Vrajavāsīs.

Those who are sleeping [in these classes] will not obtain all these understandings. Please try to sit properly, otherwise you will sleep and miss my class, and then you will become a Mathurāvāsī; not even a Mathurāvāsī, you will become a Dvārakāvāsī or a Vaikunṭhavāsī. If you do not hear with attention, it may be that the evils of others will enter your heart and very easily sleep there. Do not be inattentive.

This is the first understanding: Kṛṣṇa is Vrajendra-nandana. The second is that Vrajendra-nandana is very merciful.

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ  
jighāmsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī  
lebhe gatiṁ dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyam  
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.2.23)*

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

When Kṛṣṇa was about two-and-a-half or three years old in Gokula, He performed many beautiful pastimes. Once, Kaṁsa sent a demon named Śakaṭāsura to kill Kṛṣṇa. The demon thought, “I am so intelligent. I will not go there in a particular form; I will go there as air.” He entered a bullock cart and wanted to push the cart down on to Kṛṣṇa [who was lying underneath it] and crush Him. But Kṛṣṇa is not an ordinary boy. He playfully touched Śakaṭāsura with His toe-nails and the demon was killed at once. What is the meaning behind this pastime? If a person is very learned, if he has read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, all the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, and all other scriptures, he may still be like a demon if he does not serve Kṛṣṇa with love and affection. Actually all Māyāvādīs are like Śakaṭāsura, as are all in their line. They are very expert in quoting the scriptures; they can explain so many meanings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and when they speak all are charmed. But ultimately they say, “We are that same *brahma*.” They are all like Śakaṭāsura, and therefore, Kṛṣṇa kills them by any trick, and purifies their heart. We must be careful to not be like them.

Do you know the demon Tṛṇāvarta? What is the meaning, or essence, of the pastime of Kṛṣṇa’s killing Tṛṇāvarta? What is the *dhūla* (dust) and *tṛṇa* (straw) thrown about by Tṛṇāvarta? It is the logic that is opposed to *bhakti*, logic that is against love and affection, arguments that are full of *māyāvāda*, *smārta-vāda*, impersonalism, and so on. Kṛṣṇa can destroy all these arguments. We should not hear the logic of all these demons. During Kṛṣṇa’s time, there were only a few demons in this world. But nowadays there are hundreds and thousands of demons everywhere. By using ‘logic’ they speak against *bhakti*, so we should be careful to not hear from them.

## How to Control Kṛṣṇa

We should understand how we can control Kṛṣṇa and bind Him in our heart. It is for this purpose that Kṛṣṇa manifests *dāmodara-līlā*. Yaśodā wanted to bind Him. “Oh, Kṛṣṇa has done something bad,” she thought. “His nature is that of a thief, going here and there and stealing butter and everything else.”

Once, Yaśodā asked Him, “Have You taken [eaten clay]?”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “Oh, I have not taken.”

Yaśodā Maiyā said, “What is in Your mouth? I want to see.” What did she see there? She saw that everything was in Kṛṣṇa’s mouth, including all the worlds. She saw Kṛṣṇa’s universal form and hundreds and thousands of Viṣṇus and Brahmās. What did she think? “Oh, perhaps I am dreaming. Or maybe a ghost has come and is in Kṛṣṇa’s mouth.” She did not know which. She took water and washed her face. “Am I in a dream or am I in reality?” Then [that vision completely disappeared and] she saw nothing. She never thought that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

When Kṛṣṇa showed His universal form to Arjuna, Arjuna folded his hands and prayed, “O Kṛṣṇa, I have committed so many offences. I have called You ‘friend,’ but You are not really ‘friend,’ You are the Supreme Creator, the Creator of creators of creators. You are *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*. In the future I will not call You ‘friend.’ I married Your sister, and by that I became such an *aparādhi* [by seeing Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary brother-in-law]. I am not qualified to do this. I have given You so many instructions like, ‘Bring my chariot and place it in the middle of both armies.’ I will never do this in the future. Please excuse me.” Later, Kṛṣṇa made His universal form disappear and called for Yogamāyā. Under the influence of Yogamāyā, Arjuna said, “O friend, come on, come on. We should fight against these armies.”

Devakī and Vasudeva sometimes thought, “Kṛṣṇa is my son,” but then they saw how easily He leaped up onto the high throne, very easily grabbed Kaṁsa, threw him to the ground, jumped on him, and killed him. Actually Kaṁsa had already killed himself [by his activities]. Kṛṣṇa only jumped on him. Kṛṣṇa did nothing to kill Kaṁsa because Kaṁsa was already dead.

Vasudeva and Devakī were present there. Everyone was present. Kaṁsa had brought them there in order to say to them, “You should see how I kill your son.” Nanda Bābā was there with all the *gopas*. Kaṁsa’s father, Ugrasena, was also brought there, and Akrūra was there with so many others. Kaṁsa wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa in the presence of all to show them “I am so superior.” But quickly, without any effort, Kṛṣṇa jumped on Kaṁsa and Kaṁsa died. Kṛṣṇa said, “What can I do? I simply jumped on him and he died. What can be done?”

Devakī and Vasudeva then prayed to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa was bowing down at the feet of Devakī, and Baladeva at the feet of Vasudeva Mahārāja. But Devakī and Vasudeva prayed, “Oh, we know who You are. You are *nārāyaṇa-tattva* Himself.” Kṛṣṇa began to weep at the feet of Devakī, and Baladeva wept at the feet of Vasudeva Mahārāja. They even sat on Their parents’ lap, but still Devakī’s and Vasudeva’s devotion continued to be in the mood of awe and reverence. Yaśodā had also seen exhibitions of Kṛṣṇa’s opulences, but she never thought Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Never. This is the difference between Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, and therefore, Yaśodā is so superior to the Mathurāvāsīs.

## Dāmodara-līlā

In Gokula, Kṛṣṇa was bound around the waist by Mother Yaśodā. Kṛṣṇa loves the devotees and the devotees love Him. If the devotees’ love for Kṛṣṇa is superior to His love for them, then He may be bound, or controlled, by them, otherwise not.

How can you control Kṛṣṇa? It is only possible by being fully under the guidance of Mother Yaśodā or Subala, Śrīdāma, and Madhumāṅgala, or by being under the guidance of the beloved *gopīs*, especially those *gopīs* who can bind Kṛṣṇa and easily control Him. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to sprinkle this kind of love.

Why, at first, was Yaśodā not able to bind Kṛṣṇa? The rope was always short by two fingers. All the ropes were joined together with knots, and together they became one or two miles long. The measurement of Kṛṣṇa’s waist was only that of twelve fingers, and around it hung a golden chain given to Him by Mother Yaśodā. His waist did not expand, but still the rope was not sufficiently long enough to fully go around it even one time; it was always two fingers too short.

Two things are represented by the two fingers. The first is the endeavor of the *bhaktas* to do *bhakti*. If we want to bind Kṛṣṇa by our own intelligence, our own efforts, we cannot. We can neither have His *darśana* nor His mercy, nor can we control Him. The second principle, therefore, is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. We cannot bind Kṛṣṇa merely by our endeavor. We must first become *śaraṅāgata*, surrendered, totally surrendered. At our present stage we are not actually surrendering. We say, “Gurudeva, today I have surrendered to you. But the lock and key [to my self] remain with me.” In this way we have surrendered in word only. This will not do. We will have to totally surrender. How do we surrender? You can go to Arjuna or you can go to the Vrajavāsīs, who are totally surrendered. And if you want to surrender even more, then you will go to the *gopīs*. They will tell you the process of surrender.

As Yaśodā was trying to bind Kṛṣṇa, He was thinking, “If Mother binds Me, how will I be able to play with the boys? Śrīdāma and Subala are waiting for Me, along with all the cows.”

What were they waiting for? They had pain in their udders, but they could not give milk to their children, the calves. Only if Kṛṣṇa

came would they give milk. In this way Kṛṣṇa thought, “If Maiyā binds Me, I cannot go. It will be better if she does not bind Me.” Therefore, Yogamāyā at once came and this miracle took place.

Kṛṣṇa’s waist was small and the ropes became longer and longer, but they would not go around His waist even once. Yaśodā Maiyā was trying to bind Him, but she felt, “I have been trying from the beginning of the morning, and now it is twelve, but still I cannot bind Him.” She took shelter of her Ṭhākuraḥ and prayed, “O Nārāyaṇa, O Ṭhākuraḥ, if I do not bind my son, then all the Vrajavāsīs will laugh at me.” The color in her face changed and tears were about to fall from her eyes. Sweating, she considered that she would not be able to bind Him.

Although she fully believed that she could not bind Him, still she vowed, “I will bind You. I may try for one day, two days, three days, or my whole life, but I will not give up. I must bind You.” Weeping, she took shelter of Nārāyaṇa. When Kṛṣṇa saw her tears, He immediately became merciful. Yogamāyā left, and Mother Yaśodā very easily tied Kṛṣṇa with the rope she used to bind her hair.

If we follow the *gopīs* or Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, Śrīdāma, and Subala, all of whom are in Vraja, we can bind Kṛṣṇa. This love and affection belongs to *āśraya-tattva*, the abode of love. The Vrajavāsīs are all abodes of that love.

## Fruit Seller Līlā

There was a fruit seller who lived in Mathurā. She had heard from some persons who were coming to Mathurā from Gokula that a very beautiful and charming child of about two years old, the son of Nanda and Yaśodā, lived in Gokula. She wanted to have *darśana* of Him, so she took some fruits in her basket and went to the area of Nanda Bhavan, the home of Nanda Mahārāja. There she called, “Oh, *phala lo, phala lo*, take fruits, take fruits.”

In Mathurā and Vṛndāvana, there were many fruit sellers everywhere, and she would also sell fruits in that way. But when she came to Nanda Bhavan, sometimes Kṛṣṇa was sleeping, sometimes He was playing here and there, and sometimes He was in the lap of Yaśodā, drinking breast milk. Therefore, she never had a chance to see Him. One day she said, “Today I will go and not return until I have had His *darśana*.” She made a vow to ‘do or die.’ The objective of her life was fixed. We should also try to make a vow like this. Having made this promise, she called out, “*Phala lo, phala lo.*” Gradually she forgot to say this and instead called, “*Govinda lo, Govinda lo, take Govinda, take Govinda. Dāmodara lo, take Dāmodara, Mādhava lo, take Mādhava. Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.*”

The easiest way to see Kṛṣṇa is to perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. The fruit seller adopted this process, as did the *gopīs*. When Kṛṣṇa disappeared from the *rāsa* dance, they sang His names so that He would come back. Like other fruit sellers, this lady was practiced in carrying her basket on her head, not touching it with her hands. She could even dance easily without it falling from her head. In this way, from morning until twelve she looked for Kṛṣṇa.

At last she became tired and sat down at the door of Nanda Bhavan. “How will I see Kṛṣṇa?” she thought. At this time Kṛṣṇa took some corn, wheat, and other grains from the storehouse. He was quite naked, wearing around His waist only a gold chain with tinkling bells, the sweet sound of which sometimes charmed even Himself. He picked up some grains, but as He walked over to the fruit seller, the grains fell through His fingers; only two or three remained. With very greedy eyes, Kṛṣṇa looked toward the very sweet golden, yellow and reddish fruit – bananas, mangos, grapes, kadamba, and so many others. “Oh, give Me fruits, give Me fruits,” He said to her. The fruit seller looked at Him and became totally charmed.

“I will give them to You if You sit on my lap and call me ‘Mother.’”

This was a very big problem for Kṛṣṇa. “If I am seen sitting on her lap and addressing her as Mother,” He thought, “everyone will laugh. What should I do?” He quickly looked here and there to see if anyone was watching. When He saw that there were no witnesses, then very quickly, for a moment, He sat on the lap of that fruit seller and said, “O Mother, give Me fruits,” and then jumped off. The fruit seller happily began to give Him fruits.

“What do You want?” she asked.

He replied, “I want this and I want that.”

At first He held out His hands, and then, as He took more and more fruit, He held both arms close to His chest. She gave Him two, three, four, five fruits and more, until His arms were filled up.

Looking here and there and dancing, He then went to His mother and put all the fruits in her veil.

“Oh, from where have You brought the fruits?” she asked Him, and quickly she began to distribute them. Although hundreds of *gopīs* came and took those sweet fruits, the supply never diminished. It was unlimited.

And what became of that fruit seller? She simply sat there deep in thought. Her heart had been stolen by Kṛṣṇa, and without her heart, she could only be absorbed in remembering Him. After some time, someone came and asked her, “Why are you here? What are you doing?” Somehow she remembered her duties. She took her basket and started for her home in Mathurā. Midway, near to where the Yamunā was flowing, she began to wonder, “Why is my basket so heavy?” When she removed it from her head, she saw that it was full of diamonds and other jewels. She became astonished. She put it back on her head, but then threw it into the Yamunā. She had no need at all for the jewels. What became of her, no one knows. In the eyes of the world, she had become totally mad.

Do you know what became of her? She became greater than Devahūti. She was not concerned about whether her veil was on her head or off, whether she was naked, or what her condition was. She was always in trance. In fact, she entered a state even greater than trance. Kṛṣṇa immediately took her body, her outer shell, and gave her a greater position than He gave Pūtanā, sending her to Goloka Vṛndāvana to serve Him there. Kṛṣṇa is so kind. She had no special relationship with Kṛṣṇa; her *bhakti* was like *śānta-rasa*, the mood of neutrality, which is devoid of a mood of service. Still, thinking her to be like a mother, Kṛṣṇa had called her ‘Mother’ and gave her a position far superior to Pūtanā, Kubjā, and others. He is so merciful. Try to quickly realize all these truths. If your *bhakti* is very high, then in one birth you can achieve a destination like this. Pūtanā went to Goloka, but the fruit seller lady went to Vṛndāvana, which is superior.

### More Childhood Līlās

Kṛṣṇa then came from Gokula to Vṛndāvana and performed so many pastimes there. First, along with Baladeva Prabhu, He killed Dhenukāsura. Actually, Baladeva Prabhu killed him. What is the essence of this story? Symbolically, ‘donkey’ has so many meanings. First of all, donkeys are quite ignorant. Second, they are so lusty that although the donkey is always kicked by the hind legs of the she-donkey, he is so ignorant that he never gives up trying to enjoy her. Who can save you from this? Only *gurudeva* [who is a manifestation of] Baladeva Prabhu. You should always know that all *gurus* who are qualified and bona fide are the *prakāśa*, manifestations, of Nityānanda Prabhu or Baladeva Prabhu. Those who are not realized like this are not qualified *gurus*, and they cannot save you from these donkeys. Nityānanda Prabhu and Baladeva Prabhu are the same *tattva*, but Nityānanda Prabhu is the most merciful. Just as Mahāprabhu is more merciful

than Kṛṣṇa, Nityānanda Prabhu is more merciful than Baladeva Prabhu. They are the same; there is no difference between Them at all. There is only some difference in the degree of Their mercy.

Therefore, if we take shelter of a *guru* in the line of Nityānanda Prabhu or Baladeva Prabhu, he can save us from lust and ignorance. It is very, very, very hard to become free from lust. Kṛṣṇa has created male and female in all species, and it is very rare and very hard to become free from this *hṛdā-roga*, disease of the heart. You can give up your children, wealth, reputation, and everything else, but it is very difficult to give up the desire for praise. Moreover, it is even more difficult to renounce lust, because it is in the heart. Only Baladeva Prabhu can release us from this, and therefore, He quickly killed that demon.

Many *brahmacārīs* engaged by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja had been performing devotional service for several years, but when he departed from this world, most of them became lusty and again married. This lust even entered *sannyāsīs* who were serving and worshiping the Deities, reading *Bhāgavatam* and doing so much preaching. It controlled them, and they were driven from this devotional line. So you should try to be very careful. This is not the first time you have taken the shape of a human and married. I think you have done this hundreds of thousands upon hundreds of thousands of times, or more than that. When you realize this fact, you will at once become like Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, and all others like them. You will have to follow this process if you want to go to where they are. Today, or after some days, you will have to be like them. Even if you are in married life, you will have to be like the Pāṇḍavas, like Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, and others, and like the *gopas* and *gopīs*. All of them were attached to Kṛṣṇa, not to anyone else. This is the essence of all instructions.

After the pastime of killing Dhenukāsura, Kṛṣṇa performed the pastime of *brahmā-vimohana-līlā*. Brahmā saw that Aghāsura had been liberated and had merged into the effulgence coming from the toes of Kṛṣṇa. He was actually liberated. Although it seemed that he had merged into Kṛṣṇa, he could not actually merge. Jaya and Vijaya, in the shape of Śiśupāla and Dantavakra, were also liberated, and they also seemed to merge into Kṛṣṇa’s body, but in reality they became Jaya and Vijaya. Then, when Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes were completed, they went to Vaikuṅṭha along with Nārāyaṇa [who, along with all other incarnations, was within Kṛṣṇa’s body and had come with Him to this world].

Similarly, it only seemed that Aghāsura merged in Kṛṣṇa. Brahmā somehow saw this and became very happy. He thought, “Oh, Kṛṣṇa is so merciful. He has appeared like a boy, and He is performing all these sweet pastimes. I want to see some more pastimes, so I should do something by which I can see them.” If Brahmā had prayed to Kṛṣṇa, he would have engaged in the correct process, but he never prayed. He was thinking how by his own efforts he could induce Kṛṣṇa to perform more pastimes. He thought, “I should do something so that Kṛṣṇa will play. I should steal away all the cowherd boys and all the calves.” From where did these thoughts come? They came by the influence of Yogamāyā-devī. It was Kṛṣṇa’s wish at that time.

Kṛṣṇa had been thinking, “Hundreds and thousands of *gopīs* want Me to be their son. They want to keep Me in their lap and give Me their breast milk. They all want this. I will have to fulfill their desire because I have made a promise to this effect: *ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham* (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11). I must become their son.” Also, hundreds and thousands of cows – the nine hundred thousand of Nanda Bābā’s cows, the eleven hundred thousand cows of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, and countless numbers of others – wanted Kṛṣṇa to become their

calves. Kṛṣṇa is a desire tree, and He also wanted to become the calves of all the cows.

In Vṛndāvana, Gokula, Nandagāon, and everywhere, all the young girls thought, “Kṛṣṇa should be our husband; He should be our beloved.”

They all wanted this, so He had to fulfill their desire, also. For these reasons He decided, “It is a good time [to descend],” and at once He sent for His internal potency, Yogamāyā. Actually, there was no need to send for her because she is always in Him. She knew His wish and at once managed everything. Brahmā stole the cowherd boys and calves and kept them in a cave. Brahmā then went to his abode for only a moment and quickly returned. In this world, though, that moment lasted for one year.

What happened before Brahmā returned? Baladeva Prabhu had been thinking, “Oh, I am seeing a very strange thing. All the *gopīs* used to have so much more love and affection for Kṛṣṇa than for their sons. But now I see that they have equal love for Kṛṣṇa and their sons. I see also that the cows now have so much more affection for their elder sons than for their new calves. Why? What is the cause?” Baladeva then understood everything. “Kṛṣṇa is very wonderful,” He thought. He smiled and said, “O Kṛṣṇa, what is this? I see that You have become all the boys and elder calves. Your stomach was not filled up by taking the milk of only Śrīmatī Yaśodā, Your mother, so You became hundreds of thousands of cowherd boys. When Your stomach was still not filled, You became all the elder calves. All of these cowherd boys are You Yourself; they are not the original cowherd boys. Why have You done this? [You have taken their forms] to marry all the *gopīs*. You have married them all.”

Gargācārya had previously told the Vrajavāsīs, “This year is a very good year, an auspicious year. You should promise all your daughters in marriage, even those who are still in the wombs

of their mothers, vowing in a mood of friendship [with others Vrajavāsīs who would soon have a child], ‘If a son is born from your womb, and if my child is a daughter, they will marry.’ You should make a promise like this.”

In this way, all the *gopīs* were married. By a trick, all the *gopīs* who married that year were actually married to Kṛṣṇa. Only Rādhikā was not married, and this was also a trick of Yogamāyā. Vṛṣabhanu Mahārāja had been told during that year that it was a very bad year for marriage arrangements. Rādhikā was later married to Abhimanyu. Actually She was not married to him, but rather Her manifestation was married. Who is Abhimanyu? He is also a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa. So Her shadow was married to His shadow. Because Rādhā is none other than the power of Kṛṣṇa, She cannot be separated from Him. She is one with Him. To enjoy pastimes, They become two, but otherwise They are one. Both appear as one in the form of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and when They are two, They are Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. They are one soul in two bodies. By pure devotion you can realize all these things. This is the essence of the *brahmā-vimohana-līlā*. Kṛṣṇa can accomplish many tasks by one activity.

## Later Vṛndāvana Pastimes

Those who in their previous lives were the golden statues of Sītā, those who were previously the Vedic *mantras*, those who were the *ṛṣīs* of Daṇḍakāraṇya, and all the girls of Ayodhyā Purī and Janaka Purī – all became *gopīs*, either in groups, *yauthikī*, or alone, *ayauthikī*. They all came to Vṛndāvana and observed *kātyāyanī-vrata* for one month. But [upon the completion of this *vrata*] who came before them? Why could Kātyāyanī not come? If they were worshiping Kātyāyanī, Kātyāyanī should have come. But she never came. Kṛṣṇa Himself came, and He gave His benediction to them.

Kṛṣṇa desires that those who want to be like the *gopīs* should give up all worldly considerations. For the happiness of Kṛṣṇa we can give them up. This body is like a garment. As you may know, Devahūti and others like Śukadeva Gosvāmī had no need to cover themselves with another garment. We are ignorant. We will have to transcend bodily considerations. We should keep nothing for ourselves; we should give everything to Kṛṣṇa. Then we can come to that realm.

Now, quickly, we will come to the topic of *rāsa-līlā*, and after that I will come to the objective of my *hari-kathā* here. Why did Kṛṣṇa leave Vṛndāvana? Everyone wants to be in a place where there is much love and affection. We know that in Vṛndāvana, the love and affection for Kṛṣṇa is superior to anywhere else. There is also love in Mathurā but not like in Vṛndāvana. Then why did Kṛṣṇa leave Vṛndāvana? And after leaving, He should have returned from time to time to meet with the Vrajavāsīs, but He never came back. Why? He wanted to console the *gopīs*. Why could He not personally come to console them? Instead He sent His messenger, Uddhava. Why did He send him? Kṛṣṇa has so much opulence and He is so powerful. Why did He not invite all the *gopīs*, along with Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā, to Mathurā or to Dvārakā? If He could take all the Yādavas from Mathurā to Dvārakā in one night, why could He not bring all the *gopīs*, Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, the cows, and everyone and everything else in Vraja, and live with them in Mathurā or Dvārakā? Was there a scarcity of space in Dvārakā because it is surrounded by an ocean? Is this why He did not take them there? In fact, there was so much room in Dvārakā, so why could the *gopīs* and Nanda Bābā not reside there? These questions we will try to solve in tomorrow's class.



## ❧ CHAPTER FOUR ❧

# Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs

I have explained the essence of some of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Now I am going to tell some very secret pastimes. First of all you should know who Kṛṣṇa is. He is not a worldly boyfriend, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā is not a worldly girlfriend. Their most elevated love is not material lust. Their love is beyond the touch of all bodily senses and even beyond the mind.

*vyatītya bhāvanā-vartma  
yaś camatkāra-bhāra-bhūḥ  
hṛdi sattvojjvale bāḍhaṁ  
svadate sa raso mataḥ*

*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (5.79)*

*Rasa* is the miraculous *sthāyībhāva* (permanent emotion), which is the veritable repository of wonder, and which is experienced after the practitioner crosses beyond the path of contemplation. It is relished in the heart that has become radiant from being thoroughly and completely refined by pure unalloyed transcendental existence (*śuddha-sattva*).

No mental speculation can touch Them. That is why Kṛṣṇa is called *adhokṣaja-tattva*, or *aprākṛta-tattva*. If we have even a seed of transcendental *śraddhā* (faith) and honor to hear, we

can gradually understand all these truths. All kinds of lust will go away, and gradually *śuddha-sattva* (pure transcendence) will come. We can then realize these truths. We are not qualified to speak on them or to hear them. Still, for senior devotees I am telling something. Those who are senior must hear, and they should hear with very strong faith and honor. They should know this and then follow the process from the beginning. But they should [carefully] hear.

First, Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān:

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

*Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, is the embodiment of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of all lesser controllers, and the source of all incarnations. He has no beginning or origin, though He is the source of everything and the cause of all causes.

Not only that, Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān:

*ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ  
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam  
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokam  
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.\*

Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān Himself, Vrajendra-nandana, the ocean of *rasa*. He is *sarva-śaktimān* – all kinds of powers, seemingly contradictory to each other, are within Him. He is *śakti-śaktimatayoḥ abhedaḥ* – there is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and His powers (*Vedānta-sūtra*). He is *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam* – the cause of all causes; *sarva śaktimān* – the embodiment of infinite powers; and *akhila-rasāmṛta-sindhu* – the complete ocean of the nectar of loving relationships. We hear this, but we have no realization of it. We can only hear. If after practicing for many thousands of births we realize what we have heard, then we are very, very fortunate.

Who are the *gopīs*? They are the *vilāsa-mūrti* (pastime expansions) of Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa is one without a second. He is *advaya-jñāna-para-tattva*, the complete truth. All *viśva-brahmāṇḍa* (material worlds), all *cit-jagat* (transcendental worlds), and all *jīva-jagat* (living entities) have come from His power. There is no difference between them. Still, *bheda-abheda*, there is difference and non-difference. We cannot understand this with our mind. We can only understand it through our *guru-paramparā*.

*Āmnāya-prāha*. You should know what *āmnāya* means. *Āmnāya* is the authentic evidence of the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and all other scriptures, which has been accepted by our *guru-paramparā*. If something is called Veda but is not accepted by our *paramparā*, then we will reject it.

Our *guru-paramparā* has accepted that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is *amala-pramāṇa*, immaculate evidence. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and all *śāstras* are saying that all *gopīs* are non-different from Kṛṣṇa. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.37) states *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ*. They are the *rūpa*, form, of Kṛṣṇa. They are Kṛṣṇa Himself. Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself is Kṛṣṇa; there is no difference at all between Them. Only for *vilāsa* (pastimes), for relishing each other, has Kṛṣṇa divided Himself in two. Kṛṣṇa was in Vṛndāvana alone at Varṁśī-vaṭa, and from His left side, His very beautiful *para-śakti*, *hlādinī-śakti*,

in the form of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, came out and ran towards Him with *rāga*, attachment.

*Rā* means *anurāga* (intense transcendental affection). *Dhā* means *dhavati* (to eagerly run very fast). So Rādhā means to eagerly run with high-class ecstatic love and emotion. She ran towards Kṛṣṇa calling, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!” In this way She became Rādhā. Because She was worshiped by Kṛṣṇa Himself, Her name is also Rādhikā, but She Herself is Kṛṣṇa. You cannot imagine this, but it is stated in *śāstra*, so you should accept it.

What is Their love? *Bhāva*. *Bhāva* is not anything of this world. It is *śuddha-sāttva*, the essence of *hlādinī* (the transcendental pleasure potency) and *saṁvit* (the cognizance potency) mixed together on the platform of *sandhinī* (the existence potency). Without *sandhinī* there is no *hlādinī* and no *saṁvit*. *Hlādinī* and *saṁvit* meet on the platform of *sandhinī*. Rādhārāṇī Herself is Kṛṣṇa’s *hlādinī* potency. Why *hlādinī*? She always gives *hlāda*, pleasure, to Kṛṣṇa. Her body is made of the most elevated *mahābhāva* (the very essence of *hlādinī*, the transcendental pleasure potency). All Her organs, moods, senses, hair, eyes, and everything about Her are made of *mahābhāva*. Therefore She is *hlādinī*.

## Stages of Prema

Regarding the other *gopīs*, they are *kāya-vyūha* (bodily manifestations) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and therefore they, also, are one with Kṛṣṇa. You cannot imagine how they are one with Him and different from Him. Their love is *mahābhāva*. To have some idea of this, let us begin from *bhāva*, or *rati*. What is *rati*? When, by the practice of *bhakti-yoga*, we cross *sādhana-bhakti* (devotional practice), we come to the border of *bhāva-bhakti*. We perform *sādhana-bhakti* only to achieve *bhāva*. If we do so, it is real *sādhana*. If someone is chanting, remembering, and practicing all the processes of *bhakti*, but his objective is not *bhāva* and he is

not thinking, “I want to attain *bhāva*,” then it is not *sādhana*. What kind of *bhāva* do we want? Not that of Śrīdāmā or Subala, Nanda Bābā, or Yaśodā Maiyā. We want *mahābhāva* like that of the *gopīs*; and among the *gopīs*, only the mood of *mañjarīs*, such as Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī, and Lavaṅga Mañjarī.

When that mood enters the heart like an electric current, and the mood of the *jīva* becomes *tadātmika*, one, with that of the *gopīs*, it is called *bhāva-bhakti*. There is also something inherent in the soul’s heart, and by a combination of both – one’s own eternal inherent nature combined with the *hlādinī* and *samvit* aspects of Kṛṣṇa’s *svarūpa-śakti* – *bhāva-bhakti* manifests.

In the mature stage of *bhāva* comes *svarūpa-siddhi* (the perfection of one’s constitutional position), and after *svarūpa-siddhi*, *vastu-siddhi* (the spiritual body) manifests. At that time you will totally give up this body and take birth from the womb of a *gopī*. You will have to continue your practice in Vraja that is manifested in this world. In that body, *prema* (transcendental love) will come, but it will not come in this present body. This body cannot withstand *prema*. If it were to come, at once you would die, or rather, this body would die. If *prema* were to enter this body, it would burn at once. You can never have *prema* in this body. For that *prema*, the *śuddha-sattva* (purely transcendental) body, is essential.

Although there may be many causes for that *prema* to go away, it never does.

*sarvathā dhvaṁsa-rahitaṁ satyapi dhvaṁsa-kāraṇe  
yadbhāvabandhanaṁ yūnoḥ sa premā parikīrttitaḥ*

*Ujjvala-nīlamanī*

This means that true love does not break even when there is sufficient cause. Instead of breaking, it becomes unlimitedly more new and fresh. This is called *prema*. It is not like the lust of

worldly persons, where after one day, two days, or some days, a man and woman marry and the next day get divorced. We claim to have a friendship with someone, be bosom friends, but if there is any cause for the friendship to break, that friend quickly leaves us and becomes our enemy. I know so many who used to be bosom friends and afterwards became enemies, and also those who used to be enemies who became friends. This is not *prema*; it is not actually love.

When that pure love touches our heart and becomes very dense, very thick, then our heart melts, tears come to our eyes, and the many symptoms of *aṣṭa-sāttvika-bhāva* (eight kinds of transcendental transformation) manifest. It is then called *sneha*. *Sneha* becomes increasingly thick until finally it becomes *praṇaya*. Do you know what *praṇaya* is? It is when the lover and beloved become ‘one,’ when there is no shyness at all, no difference in their thinking. When a person goes to the bathroom, he sees himself naked in the mirror, but he has no shyness. Similarly, in *praṇaya*, the lover and beloved are like the same person; neither has shame. They do not think [for example], “This is my form, and what I see in the mirror is my reflection.” Rather [one in *praṇaya* thinks], “I myself am the reflection of my beloved.” Both lover and beloved are like this. You cannot imagine it, but you can hear about it.

After this, *māna* comes. The beloved thinks, “If I do *māna*, if I enter a sulky mood, my lover will certainly come and pacify me.” In this stage, *praṇaya* has become *māna*. Kṛṣṇa has to come to pacify His beloved. If He does not, He will never be able to meet Her.

After this, *rāga* develops, and after that, *anurāga*, which is *nitya-navīna*, ever fresh. When, at that time, the beloved sees Kṛṣṇa or Kṛṣṇa sees His beloved, they think their meeting each other is new. The beloved thinks, “Oh, I have never seen Kṛṣṇa before. Who is that black person?”

When *anurāga* reaches its highest stage, it is called *mahābhāva*. This has been described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Only if we come to this stage can we realize something of the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and understand who Rādhā is and who Kṛṣṇa is. Still, I am giving some glimpse, a shadow of a glimpse. I am not a realized person, but I am always thinking and thinking of this, so I am giving some idea.

What is *mahābhāva*? When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meet together, They forget Themselves. They do not know who They Themselves are and who each other is. Only ecstatic love exists, and that love controls Them both. Kṛṣṇa does not know He is Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā does not know She is Rādhikā. This mood [*mahābhāva*] is particularly heightened in Rādhikā, even more so than in Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is the object of love, but Rādhikā is the reservoir, or the abode, of love.<sup>1</sup>

*pahilehi rāga nayana-bhaṅge bhela  
anudina bāḍhala, avadhi nā gela  
nā so ramaṇa, nā hāma ramaṇī  
duñhu-mana manobhava peṣala jāni'*

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<sup>1</sup> This is explained in Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's translation of and commentary on *Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda Saṁvāda (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.193)*:

It is Śrī Rādhā's desire to give happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa continuously, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa desires to do the same for Śrī Rādhā. Neither Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the lover par excellence, nor Śrī Rādhā, the pre-eminent beloved, is the cause of this spontaneous attraction, but it awakens just from seeing each other and turns into Cupid, who grinding or melting Their minds together, makes Them one. Their hearts and minds, desiring only to give happiness to one another, become non-different from each other. At that time, They become obsessed with a desire to engage in loving pastimes and They forget all else except meeting together. In essence, at that time, Śrī Kṛṣṇa forgets that He is a hero, or lover, and Śrī Rādhā also loses the feeling that She is a heroine, or beloved. "*Se-saba prema-kāhinī* – these are all topics of *prema*."

*e sakhi, se-saba prema-kāhini  
kānu-ṭhāme kahabi vichurala jāni'  
nā khoñjalun dūtī, nā khoñjalun ān  
duñhukeri milane madhya ta pāñca-bāṇa  
ab sohi virāga, tuñhu bheli dūtī  
su-purukha-premaki aichana rīti  
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.194)*

Alas, before We met, there was an initial attachment between Us brought about by an exchange of glances. In this way attachment evolved. That attachment has gradually grown, and there is no limit to it. Now that attachment has become a natural sequence between Ourselves. It is not that it is due to Kṛṣṇa, the enjoyer, nor is it due to Me, for I am the enjoyed. It is not like that. This attachment was made possible by mutual meeting. This mutual exchange of attraction is known as *manobhava*, or Cupid. Kṛṣṇa's mind and My mind have merged together. Now, during this time of separation, it is very difficult to explain these loving affairs. My dear friend, though Kṛṣṇa might have forgotten all these things, you can understand and bring this message to Him. But during Our first meeting there was no messenger between Us, nor did I request anyone to see Him. Indeed, Cupid's five arrows were Our *via media*. Now, during this separation, that attraction has increased to another ecstatic state. My dear friend, please act as a messenger on My behalf, because if one is in love with a beautiful person, this is the consequence.\*

“There was no messenger to convey Our love. Only Our eyes were there.” High-class *rasarāja-mahābhāva* manifests at that time. This has been described in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. *Gopī-prema*, therefore, is not very easily obtained, like a *rasagullā* from Calcutta or Delhi. Many persons here in the West make

*rasagullās*, but they are not like *rasagullās* from Vṛndāvana or Calcutta, which are like a sponge saturated in sweet juice and have a very sweet fragrance.

## Come with Me to Vṛndāvana

Now, thinking about all these things, come to Vṛndāvana. Leaving your mortal body here, leaving all kinds of moods, problems, and everything else, come with me. Let us go to Vṛndāvana, and then you can realize something. Do not remember anything worldly.

Kṛṣṇa has gone to graze the cows, and the *gopīs* are saying:

*śrī-gopya ūcuḥ*

*akṣaṇvatām phalam idaṁ na param vidāmaḥ*

*sakhyah paśūn anuviveśayator vayasyaiḥ*

*vaktraṁ vrajeśa-sutayor anaveṇu-juṣṭam*

*yair vā nipītam anurakta-kaṭākṣa-mokṣam*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.21.7)*

The cowherd girls said: O friends, those eyes that see the beautiful face of the sons of Mahārāja Nanda are certainly fortunate. As these two sons enter the forest, surrounded by Their friends, driving the cows before Them, They hold Their flutes to Their mouths and glance lovingly upon the residents of Vṛndāvana. For those who have eyes, we think there is no greater object of vision.\*

It was *vasanta ṛtū*, springtime, but in Vṛndāvana, the flowers of every season were in bloom. The Yamunā was flowing very sweetly, making sounds of *ka-kala-kala-kala*. So many lotus flowers were blooming, their fragrance attracting the bumblebees, who were perhaps saying, “Rādhe, Rādhe, Rādhe,” in glorification. All the bumblebees had become mad.

Kṛṣṇa had taken hundreds of thousands of cows to graze, and His friends had also joined Him with hundreds and thousands of their own cows. They played and jumped, and all were calling, “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kānāiḥya, Bhāiḥya, Kānāiḥya.”

There were so many cowherd boys, you cannot imagine. Here in this class there are no more than three hundred persons, but if thousands were here, perhaps the devotees would have no place to sit. If Kṛṣṇa comes here with nine hundred thousand of Nanda Bābā’s cows, and Śrīdāmā comes with eleven hundred thousand of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja’s cows, where would they all sit or stand? There would be no room even to stand. Where would they graze, and how could they be controlled? It would be very difficult. But the *dhāma* is Kṛṣṇa. It is a manifestation of Baladeva Prabhu Himself. It expands and sometimes it contracts.

At this time the *gopīs* are in their homes. There are many different groups of *gopīs*, and as they remember Kṛṣṇa, it is like they are actually seeing Him. They say, “We know we have eyes, but simply having eyes is not good enough, because with these eyes, we have not taken *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa.”

Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are both in the forest, and Baladeva is somewhat ahead. Kṛṣṇa is playing on His flute, His crooked eyes [side-long glances] searching for something. Many *gopīs* are standing here and there, performing *ārati* of Kṛṣṇa with their eyes, and He is accepting their *ārati*.

*Vrajeśa-sutayor* means ‘the son of Nanda Bābā.’ The *gopīs* say, “The eyes of those who have not seen Vrajeśa-suta going cowherding are useless. A thunderbolt should come and punish those eyes; there is no need of them.” *Vrajeśa-sutayor* has another meaning. Baladeva is not the son of Nanda Bābā, but He has been supported and nourished by him. He always thinks, “My father is Nanda Bābā, not Vasudeva or anyone else; and Yaśodā is My mother.” *Vrajeśa-sutayor*, therefore, as explained by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, also means the two sons of Nanda Bābā: Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva.

There is also a deeper meaning. There are two Vrajeśas (masters of Vraja). Nanda Bābā is one, and superior to him is Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja. He is also Vrajeśa. Nanda Bābā has one son, Kṛṣṇa, and Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja has three children – two daughters and one son. Sutā, his daughter, is Rādhikā. Here *sutaś ca* becomes *sutayor* according to the rules of Sanskrit grammar.

The deeper meaning is that the eyes that do not see Vrajeśa-sutayor, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, are useless. What are Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa doing? Kṛṣṇa is playing on His flute and Baladeva has walked ahead to give Kṛṣṇa a chance to be with the *gopīs*. The *gopīs* have surrounded Kṛṣṇa, and Rādhikā has met with Him. She forcibly takes His flute, *anuveṇu-juṣṭam*, and begins to play it. Kṛṣṇa becomes very attracted and thinks, “I cannot play like She can.” He therefore looks toward Her with a crooked, side-long glance, being very attracted by Her playing.

A *sakhī* says, “If one has not observed this scene, one’s eyes are useless. A thunderbolt should at once come and finish that person’s life. I do not want such a life.” The explanation of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is very *rasika*. He quotes a *gopī* as saying, “Oh, let us go to see Kṛṣṇa. Just now He is in the lane; we should go.”

Another *sakhī* says, “Do not speak so loudly. If your mother-in-law hears, she will at once punish you.”

“Do not worry. What will she do?” the first *gopī* replies. “Her daughter is going there, and my mother-in-law herself is going, so I do not fear.”

“But there is reason to fear. We should not go to Kṛṣṇa.”

“Oh, let us go. We will never behold this scene again, and life is very short. If the chance to see Kṛṣṇa passes us by, we will never get that chance again, so please come. We should go and meet with Him.”

“But still, how is it possible to go?”

“Kṛṣṇa’s sweet voice and face are so beautiful that when you see Him, He will attract you, and you will give up your *dhairya*

(patience), *pati-vratā-dharma* (chastity), and *lajjā* (shame). Then you will be desperate and quickly go to Him. Let us go there.”

*Vaktraṁ vrajeśa-sutayor anaveṇu-juṣṭam yair vā nipītam anurakta-kaṭākṣa-mokṣam.* All the *gopīs* were speaking and feeling like this, as shown in many other *ślokas* like *pūrṇaḥ pulindya* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.7).

## Gopī Gītā

After that, in the coming *śārada-ṛtū*, autumn season, Kṛṣṇa decided:

*bhagavān api tā rātrīḥ  
śāradotphulla-mallikāḥ  
vīkṣya rantuṁ manaś cakre  
yoga-māyām upāśritaḥ  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.29.1)*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, witnessing the arrival of those autumn nights scented with blossoming jasmine flowers, desired to enjoy loving affairs, and for this purpose He employed His *yogamāyā* potency.

The *gopīs* had no desire; Kṛṣṇa had the desire. *Bhagavān api*. Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān. He is *ātmārāma* (self-satisfied) and *āptakāma* (He has no wishes).<sup>2</sup> Yet when He remembered the *gopīs*, He at once remembered *Yogamāyā* – *yoga-māyām-upāśritaḥ*. *Yogamāyā* is the power of Kṛṣṇa, an expansion of His *para-śakti*, and she manages everything. Where there is *Yogamāyā*, the material *Mahāmāyā* has no influence at all. In *Goloka Vṛndāvana*, everything is managed and controlled by

<sup>2</sup> There is a subtle difference between *ātmārāma* and *āptakāma*. *Ātmārāma* means ‘taking pleasure in the self,’ and *āptakāma* means ‘not requiring any more than one already has in this world.’ One who is *āptakāma* is fully satisfied with what he already has.

Yogamāyā; Mahāmāyā has no influence. Therefore, any *jīva* soul who is serving Kṛṣṇa in that realm cannot forget Him and cannot fall down from there.

*Rantum manaś cakre.* Kṛṣṇa at once decided, “I should perform such a *vilāsa*, pastime, that by hearing about it, everyone will be attracted, follow the principles of *bhakti-yoga*, become liberated, and quickly go to Goloka Vṛndāvana.” There is no other way, or process, as powerful. Kṛṣṇa is very merciful, and out of His mercy He performed this pastime.

*dr̥ṣṭvā kumudvantam akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalam  
ramānanābham nava-kuṅkumāruṇam  
vanam ca tat-komala-gobhī rañjitaṁ  
jagau kalaṁ vāma-dṛśām manoharam*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.29.3)*

Lord Kṛṣṇa saw the unbroken disk of the full moon glowing with the red effulgence of newly applied vermilion, as if it were the face of the goddess of fortune. He also saw the *kumuda* lotuses opening in response to the moon’s presence and the forest gently illumined by its rays. Thus the Lord began to play sweetly on His flute, attracting the minds of the beautiful-eyed *gopīs*.\*

Kṛṣṇa took His flute. It was evening time, the moon was golden and full, and it was coming from the very reddish eastern horizon. *Pūrva-diśā*, the eastern direction, is like the moon’s beloved. It was as though by his rays, which are like his hands, the moon was taking a large quantity of *gulab* (pink coloring) and decorating the face of the eastern direction. Remembering this, Kṛṣṇa at once placed His flute upon His lips and *jagau kalaṁ*, played a very sweet tune. What was that tune? It is written in *klīm*, the seed *mantra*. Each *gopī* thought that Kṛṣṇa was calling her. Rādhā, Lalitā, and all others thought, “He is calling me only, no one else.”

The essence of the *gopāla-mantra* is the seed *klīm*. How? *Kalam* (sweetly) is a combination of the two Sanskrit letters *ka* and *la*. The fourth letter of the Sanskrit alphabet is called *vāma-dṛśām*. [In this *śloka* it means ‘the girls with charming eyes.’] Just as the English alphabet begins with a, b, c, d, the Sanskrit alphabet begins, a, aa, i, ee. The fourth letter, *ī* [pronounced *ee*], is called *vāma-dṛśām*. Grammar is also here, the essence of grammar: ‘*Ka*’ and ‘*la*,’ combined with ‘*ī*,’ becomes ‘*klī*.’

And what is *manoharam*? Ultimately, Manohara is Kṛṣṇa, He who attracts the mind. That Kṛṣṇa gave part of His quality [of attracting the mind] to Candra, the moon god. Thus the *adhiṣṭātrī-devatā*, predominating deity of the mind, is Candra, and that moon has now taken the shape of *candra-bindu*, a dot. In Sanskrit this dot is called *anusvāra*, and the word *klīm* is thus completed. Upon [hearing] *klīm*, each and every *gopī* thought that Kṛṣṇa was calling her alone, and therefore, all of them came. All the *gopīs* assembled as though mad. If a thief has taken a person’s golden ornaments, that person will pursue the thief. Here, the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute is compared to a thief. It entered the heart of the *gopīs*, took them away, and quickly returned to Kṛṣṇa with those hearts. All the *gopīs* followed that sound and came to Kṛṣṇa thinking, “I alone am coming to Kṛṣṇa to get back my heart.”

*nīśamya gītām tad anaṅga-varধানam  
vraja-striyaḥ kṛṣṇa-grhīta-mānasāḥ  
ājagmur anyonyam alakṣitodyamāḥ  
sa yatra kānto java-lola-kuṇḍalāḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.29.4)

When the young women of Vṛndāvana heard Kṛṣṇa’s flute song, which arouses romantic feelings, their minds were captivated by the Lord. They went to where their lover waited, each unknown to the others, moving so quickly that their earrings swung back and forth.\*

Charmed and seemingly mad, all of the *gopīs* came to Kṛṣṇa, who smiled and said, “O My dear *gopīs*, You are high-class devotees. I know that you came to see this scenery of Vṛndāvana forest, and you especially came to see Me, because I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Since you have seen Me and you have seen this very beautiful Vṛndāvana, the Yamunā, and everything else, you should now return [to your homes]. No chaste lady should be alone with any male person. Even if her husband is very ugly, worthless, attacked by disease, incapable, penniless, crooked or hunchbacked, a chaste lady should serve him. This is Vedic culture. I know that all of you have husbands, so you should return and serve them. If you do not do this, then you are deviating from your religious *dharma* and your Vedic culture, and you will have to go to hell. Certainly, you should return.” In this way, Kṛṣṇa gave many examples from the Vedas and elsewhere to explain why they should go home.

The *gopīs* were wondering whether Kṛṣṇa was joking or speaking seriously. One *gopī* said, “O Gurudeva, *namaskāra* to You. You are our *gurudeva*. I think that these high-class elevated teachings and instructions cannot be given by anyone but You. You are really our *guru*. *Śāstra* states that first, before worshiping anyone else, one must worship *gurudeva*. You are our *gurudeva* and so You should accept our worship, then we will worship our husbands, Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa, and anyone else. If You do not accept our worship, You are breaking all the laws of *dharma*, and You will be responsible for the reactions, especially since You have said:

*ye yathā mām prapadyante  
tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham  
mama vartmānuvartante  
manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

*Bhagavad-gītā* (4.11)

This means “I must reward those who worship Me, meditate on Me, and so on, according to their qualities.”

The *gopīs* said, “We are serving You and You are not accepting our worship, so You are guilty and are bound to suffer.” They said so many things that Kṛṣṇa became speechless. He could not reply. They then began to dance in *rāsa* and sing. Kṛṣṇa later disappeared from the *rāsa* dance and all the *gopīs* lamented and cried bitterly. They all became totally mad. They asked the trees, creepers, animals, and the Yamunā, “Have you seen Kṛṣṇa? Have you seen Kṛṣṇa?” After that, they began to perform *līlā* (Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes). They became like Kṛṣṇa Himself, thinking, “I am Kṛṣṇa.” One *gopī* held up her cloth and said, “Oh, I am Kṛṣṇa. I am lifting Govardhana. See how I am doing it.” One *gopī* began to sit on the breast of another lady and exclaimed, “Oh, I am Kṛṣṇa, and she is Pūtanā. Just see how I am killing this Pūtanā.” Some *gopīs* were playing on a flute and saying, “Oh, how sweetly I am playing. You should see.” In this way they were imitating Kṛṣṇa. In their total madness they began to sing:

*jayati te 'dhikaṁ janmanā vrajaḥ  
śrayata indirā śaśvad atra hi  
dayita drśyatām dikṣu tāvakās  
tvayi dhṛtāsavas tvām vicinvate*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.31.1)*

The *gopīs* say, “O most beloved, because of Your birth in this land of Vraja, the entire area has become more glorious than Vaikuṅṭha and other planets. It is for this reason that Lakṣmī, the goddess of beauty and wealth, eternally decorates it with her presence. O beloved, in this blissful land of Vraja, it is only we who are not happy. We maintain our lives solely for Your sake, being extremely anguished in separation from You, and are wandering from forest to forest in search of You. Therefore, please appear before us now.

*tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam  
kavibhir īditaṁ kalmaṣāpaham  
śravaṇa-maṅgalaṁ śrīmad ātataṁ  
bhuvī grṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.31.9)*

Nectarean discussions about You are the life and soul of those who are tormented by separation from You, and greatly learned personalities, such as Brahmā, Śiva, and the four Kumāras, sing of them. Those narrations vanquish the distress of past sins. Immediately upon being heard, they bestow the highest auspiciousness, and especially the wealth of *prema*. The nectar of Your narrations is expanded by those who glorify Your pastimes, and therefore such narrators are truly the most generous benefactors in the world.

One *gopī* is singing *tava kathāmṛtaṁ*. *Āmṛta* means ‘nectar.’ “Your pastimes and Your speech are all like nectar. If anyone feels upset because of their many problems and is burning in the forest-fire of those problems, and if he feels so much pain in this world, he will be pacified if he hears *hari-kathā*. Therefore, *kṛṣṇa-kathā* is like *āmṛta*, nectar, and those who distribute this nectar are the greatest donors.” In this world, those who take *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and by distributing it give to others the kind of love and affection it describes, are surely the most charitable donors.

Some *gopīs* give the opposite meaning to *tava kathāmṛtaṁ*. “Your name, Your pastimes, Your teachings, and Your words are like poison, *mṛtaṁ*. We realize this. We were very happy in our worldly affairs, but when we heard Your words, we became as though mad. All kinds of problems came, and now we are homeless. We no longer have even a drop of love and affection for our homes, husbands, or children. Those who preach Your glories and tell *hari-kathā* are enemies and are like butchers. Why? If anyone hears Your glories, he will give up his home. A husband

will give up his wife, and a wife will give up her husband. They will become homeless and, like birds, they will go to live in the forest. They will weep and they will make their whole family weep. So do not hear this. Be very careful. Those who bring *Bhāgavatam* here and say, 'I will not take any fee. Come and simply hear *kṛṣṇa-kathā*,' are like butchers. They will cut your affection for worldly things, and you will no longer be able to be happy in this world, so do not hear all these things."

Different groups of *gopīs* are giving different meanings to the same *śloka*, and therefore, several kinds of meanings are revealed here. Śukadeva Gosvāmī has given some idea, but Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī have explained many, many meanings. The *gopīs* in each group sing each *śloka* with a different meaning.

### “Which Type of Lover are You?”

After the *gopīs* sang their *gopī-gītā*, song of separation, Kṛṣṇa appeared in their assembly. He looked so beautiful there, smiling but somewhat ashamed. At that time, the *gopīs* asked Him many questions. One *gopī* placed His hands on her shoulder. Someone else placed His feet on her lap, another took betelnut from His mouth, and another, from a distance, stared at Him with arrow-like sidelong glances.

The *gopīs* asked, “What kind of person are You? We gave up everything for You and have become homeless. We left our husbands and everything else, including even our *dhairya* (shyness) and *dharma* (religious considerations), for You. But You left us in a moment. We know that there are three kinds of persons. The first love those who love them. ‘If you love me, I love you.’ This is one kind of love. Regarding the second, even if you do not love the other person, still, he is so perfect that he loves you. And the third is he who, whether one loves him or not, has

no love for anyone. We think that You must be one of these three kinds of persons. Which one are You? We see that we are loving You, but You are not loving us.”

Smiling, Kṛṣṇa replied, “Listen to Me. The love of someone who only loves another if his love is reciprocated is not pure love. It is like a business relationship. Such a person loves and wants to be loved in return. This is not at all transcendental or pure love, so I am not in that group.

“Those who love despite others not loving them are like fathers and mothers. Some sons, after becoming youths, give up their parents. Despite this, mothers and fathers have so much love and affection for those sons. Children may do something against the parents, but still, fathers and mothers always love their children without any desire for gain. This is somewhat better than the first type, as there is some real relation there, some actual love. But I am not even among these persons.

“Regarding those who do not love anyone in this world, whether others love them or not, they are of four kinds: *ātmārāma*, *āptakāma*, *akṛtajña*, and *guru-drohi*.”

Try to understand. Those who are *āptakāma* do not require anything. Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī or Sanaka and Sananda, for example, have no worldly desire or any other desire. They are self-satisfied.

Those who are *ātmārāma* are ‘*ramaṅ-ing*’ in their *ātmā*; that is, always enjoying within themselves. Kṛṣṇa is satisfied in all ways. He has no need to take from anyone else in order to become satisfied.

The third type of lovers are *akṛtajña*, ungrateful creatures, like animals. A father and mother do so many things for their children, but the children may be so ungrateful that they may give up their fathers and mothers. The *guru-drohi* (those who are inimical to their *guru*, or superiors) will not only give them up, but he will also cause them so many problems. He will think,

“Oh, why are they not dead?” He may even shoot his father and mother, thinking them his enemies. Such persons do not understand the real situation, and therefore they are *guru-drohi*.

Kṛṣṇa continued, “I am not among any of these six types. I am your beloved and all of you are My beloveds. I disappeared only to increase your love.”

By chance, a very poor man may obtain a *cintāmaṇi*, but being unaware of its value, he may neglect it. Another person, aware of its value, may steal it. While the owner searches for it, someone may ask him, “What are you searching for?”

“I am trying to find that stone. It was very beautiful and someone has taken it.”

“Oh, that was not an ordinary stone; it was *cintāmaṇi*. It can give everything you desire.”

The owner would then weep. “I have lost that priceless thing.”

So Kṛṣṇa said, “First I came to you and then I disappeared. This was only to increase your love and affection for Me, to bring you nearer and nearer to Me. You are My beloveds and I am your beloved. I cannot repay you for your love in hundreds of thousands of births.”

*na pāraye 'ham niravadya-samyujām  
sva-sādhu-kṛtyaṁ vibudhāyuṣāpi vaḥ  
yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ  
saṁvṛṣcyā tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.32.22)*

My darling *gopīs*, your meeting Me is innocent and immaculate in every respect because it is devoid of even a single iota of desire for your own happiness. It is overflowing with supremely pure love. Although the bonds of affection for the members of one’s own home are impossible to overcome, you have completely demolished them. Thus, for loving service to Me, you have transgressed

the moral laws of this world. Even if I lived as long as the gods I would be unable to requite even one drop of your love, sacrifice, and service. All of you may free Me from debt simply by your own gentle nature, but I am forever the debtor of your *prema*, and will always continue to be.

The *gopīs* are not *sādhakas* (practicing devotees) and they are not *siddhas* (perfected devotees). Who are they? They are Kṛṣṇa Himself, the *kāya-vyūha*, bodily manifestations, of Rādhikā. Still, Kṛṣṇa tastes all these loving relationships with them. These are not ordinary things; they are all transcendental – more than transcendental.

This is the nature of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*. Those who hear these topics and always remember these pastimes, chanting, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare,” take the essence of all instructions given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī writes:

*tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-  
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya  
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī  
kālaṁ nayed akhilam ity upadeśa-sāram*  
*Upadeśāmṛta (8)*

By always chanting the names ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa,’ thinking of these very powerful, sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and being in Vṛndāvana under the guidance of any high-class *rasika* and *bhāvuka* devotees, everything will be successful. This is the essence of all instruction. If you live in Vṛndāvana but only think of problems and are not under the guidance of any *rasika* Vaiṣṇava, then you are bound to commit offences to Vṛndāvana-dhāma and to Vaiṣṇavas, as hundreds and thousands of persons are doing. You will give up your faith and again return to worldly life to engage in nonsense activities.

So to chant in this way is the process. You will have to enter this process. I have given a glimpse, an outline, of these pastimes. At the end of Kṛṣṇa's *vṛndāvana-līlā*, Akrūra came to take Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva to Mathurā, in order to save Their father and mother, Vasudeva and Devakī. Kāmsa had put Vasudeva and Devakī in jail and was making them suffer so much. Sometimes he was kicking their chests and other times greatly abusing them. Why? He wanted to know where they had kept their child. "I know He has taken birth from you, but you have sent Him away. Tell me where He is, otherwise I will kill you." Every day he would come and abuse them. He killed Devakī's six sons. The seventh was transferred to Gokula in the womb of Rohiṇī, and the eighth was Kṛṣṇa, who was stealthily brought to Gokula, where He mixed into the *pūrṇa* (complete) Kṛṣṇa, who had taken birth from Yaśodā's womb.

Kāmsa realized, "We sent so many demons to kill Kṛṣṇa in Gokula and elsewhere, but they were themselves killed, never to return with any message or report, so I cannot kill Him there in Vṛndāvana. We should therefore try to invite Him here. We will worship Lord Śiva and have a *dhanur-yajña* (archery competition) and a very good wrestling match, and all my subjects will come from different parts of the country to see the festival."

Akrūra was thus sent from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana, and tomorrow we will discuss what happened after that.

## ❧ CHAPTER FIVE ❧

# Kṛṣṇa Leaves Vṛndāvana

Kṛṣṇa is now completing His pastimes in Vraja. After He killed Keśī and Vyomāsura, Nārada came to Him and prayed, “Remember that You have to do so many things. Now, while performing Your *vṛndāvana-līlā*, You are very much charmed, and You have forgotten that Your Mathurā father and mother are in the jail of Kaṁsa. Kaṁsa is creating so much havoc and is always insulting them and kicking them with his boots. Also, You have promised to marry sixteen thousand one hundred eight devotees in Dvārakā, and You will have to save and protect the Pāṇḍavas. They are *śaraṇāgata*, surrendered only to You. Duryodhana is creating so many problems. He has taken their kingdom and driven them into the forest, so You will also have to help them. You have promised to destroy all the demons. There are so many demons now. All those who were killed in Laṅkā in *rāma-līlā* have returned as *kṣatriya* kings, and they are a great burden to this earth. You have so many other responsibilities as well. You should remember all this and not only be involved in Vṛndāvana.”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “You have reminded Me, and now you may go. Everything will be taken care of.”

Thus, one day, when Kṛṣṇa was at Prema-sarovara, between Nandagāon and Varsānā, He made a decision. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were sitting on the bank of this very beautiful Prema-sarovara

with the *gopīs*. The scenery was extremely beautiful. All kinds of flowers were in bloom, cuckoo birds were singing, so many peacocks were dancing, and Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were surrounded by hundreds and thousands of *kāmadhenu* (wish-fulfilling cows).

In Their assembly were Lalitā, Viśākhā, all the *aṣṭa-sakhīs*, many other prominent *sakhīs*, and also Nāndīmukhī, Vṛndā-devī, and Dhaniṣṭhā. Śrīmatī Rādhikā was sitting on the lap of Kṛṣṇa. The two were like one; His hand was around Her shoulder, and Her hand was around His waist. A bumblebee came by and thought that the lotus feet of Rādhikā were actually a very fragrant and sweet lotus. He came to taste some of the honey of that lotus, and humming, wanted to enter it. Being very soft, Rādhikā became afraid and put Her hands up in front of Her to protect Herself. Madhumaṅgala at once came carrying a bamboo stick. He waved it at the bee and drove it very far away. Then he returned and said, “I have driven away this *madhusūdana*, bumblebee, and he will never come again. Do not fear.”

The word *madhusūdana* has so many meanings. It is one name of Kṛṣṇa. Why is He called Madhusūdana? The love and affection of the *gopīs* is like *madhu*, honey. Kṛṣṇa tastes that honey, and thus He is called Madhusūdana. *Madhu* also refers to ‘worldly desires and attachments.’ A desire for wife, husband, children, and so on is also like honey. Kṛṣṇa can cut away all these things, so He is Madhusūdana. *Sūdana* means ‘to cut away.’ If you call, “Madhusūdana! Madhusūdana!” He will cut all bad desires and attachments [from your heart]. There are many other meanings of *madhusūdana*, but these two are prominent.

Madhumaṅgala said, “I have driven this *madhusūdana* out forever. He will never return.”

When Śrīmatī Rādhikā heard this, She became unhappy and thought, “Oh, Madhusūdana [Kṛṣṇa] has gone.” Although She was on the lap of Kṛṣṇa, She was weeping so much. “Where has Kṛṣṇa, Madhusūdana, gone? Will He never come? How can I live? I will

die. Without Madhusūdana I cannot live.” She forgot Herself, and She forgot that She was on the lap of Kṛṣṇa. Weeping and weeping, She became senseless and lost Her external consciousness. Kṛṣṇa saw this and thought, “This is a very strange thing. She is on My lap, but She has forgotten that.”

This is called *prema-vaicittya*. It is more exalted than *divyonmāda*, and it is within the category of Rādhikā’s mood of *mādana*. In meeting with Kṛṣṇa She feels separation from Him. This topmost love is only in Rādhikā. It is not in anyone else, including Lalitā and Viśākhā, what to speak of Candrāvalī. In the highest class of *prema*, there is separation in meeting – the fullest separation and fullest meeting – and at the same time everything is forgotten.

Kṛṣṇa sees, “If Śrīmatī Rādhikā is very near to Me, She worries, ‘Where is Kṛṣṇa? Where is Kṛṣṇa?’ In fear of future separation from Me, She becomes senseless. I cannot help Her. But if I am not here, She then enters a deep mood of separation and remembers Me. She thinks, ‘Oh, this *tamāla* tree is Kṛṣṇa.’”

Śrīmatī Rādhikā does not think, “This is a *tamāla* tree,” as we would. She actually thinks, “Kṛṣṇa is here.” She does *śṛṅgāra*, dressing Herself very nicely in ornaments and garments, and says, “Oh, and where were You?” Then She exhibits *māna*, transcendental loving anger. Even in separation there is *māna*. It is a very strange thing.

Kṛṣṇa is thinking, “Now She is weeping. What shall I do? How will I console Her? I cannot console Her. This is a very big problem for Me. Whenever I am with Rādhikā, She weeps in fear of future separation from Me, but I cannot help Her. And if I am not here, She enters a mood of deep separation from Me. She sees clouds, and thinking those clouds to be Me, She says, ‘O clouds!’ It is as if She is saying, ‘O Kṛṣṇa, don’t come to Me.’”

Because Rādhikā’s braid is black like Kṛṣṇa, She tussles with it, thinking it to be Him, and thus feigns disinterest. She always

feels like this in separation from Him. She can experience some happiness as She sleeps or performs any other activity, but when She meets with Kṛṣṇa, She experiences a very deep mood of separation from Him. Kṛṣṇa thought, “What shall I do? I should go somewhat far away to give the *gopīs*, especially Rādhārāṇī, some relief, otherwise they will always be unhappy. If I remain here, they will always feel separation, weep, and fall unconscious. I should leave Vraja. Otherwise I cannot help them.”

Kṛṣṇa thus decided, “I should appear in their dreams or as a *sphūrti* or something like that, but I should not appear before them directly, or else they will become unhappy.” This also is why Kṛṣṇa does not return to Vṛndāvana. If He returns, what will become of the *gopīs*? If you have a cut on your body and you squeeze some lemon juice on it, what happens? You will experience more suffering.

Their stage of *mādana* and *modana* is so high, more than *rūḍha* and *adhirūḍha*. You cannot realize these moods; you can only hear something about them. If you practice love and affection like this in elevated association, you can realize something. You will become so attached to the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa that you actually realize them. Then you will have no attachment to worldly things, you will have no problems, and you will always be happy. When you read any page of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, you will read so deeply.

## Kṛṣṇa’s Wish

In the meantime Kamsa was thinking how to kill Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. He had made so many plans, but all had failed. All of the demons he sent had been killed. At last he called Akrūra, who was like Kṛṣṇa’s uncle, and told him, “You are such a qualified person. I know that you have so much attachment for me. You also have a relationship with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, so I think that you should help me. I am going to arrange an arena here, near

Raṅgeśvara temple, where we will have interesting events like wrestling matches. When Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva come here, we will all surround Kṛṣṇa and kill Him. Go at once and bring Them to Mathurā.”

Akrūra is a *parama-bhakta* (topmost devotee). He has faith that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that He has come to kill Kaṁsa and all other demons. He therefore became very happy. “I must go there and see Kṛṣṇa,” he thought. “Will He remember me as He does His other servants? If He does, I will be so fortunate. Somehow Kaṁsa has given me the good fortune of being able to go to Kṛṣṇa and take His *darśana*.” This is why Akrūra went to Vṛndāvana.

What is at the root of all this? Kṛṣṇa’s wish. Yogamāyā had put these thoughts in the mind of both Kaṁsa and Akrūra. Kṛṣṇa’s plan was to go there. By His desire, an arrangement was made so that He would have to go far away from Vṛndāvana, to pacify the *gopīs*. Akrūra thus came in a golden chariot given to him by Kaṁsa.

Vasudeva, Devakī, and Mahārāja Ugrasena had been put in jail and bound with thick chains, and strong guards were posted to watch them. Kaṁsa’s plot was that, after Kṛṣṇa had arrived there with Baladeva, he would call all Kṛṣṇa’s devotees, like Nanda, Vasudeva, Devakī, Ugrasena, and he would kill Kṛṣṇa in front of them. “They will see that I am Kaṁsa and I can kill Kṛṣṇa. Then they will feel so much separation from Kṛṣṇa that they themselves will die.”

According to Kaṁsa’s plan, Akrūra went to Vṛndāvana to meet with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. On the way, he saw the footprints of Kṛṣṇa. If you have gone to Nandagāon, you may have seen Caraṇa Pahāḍī, which still bears the impressions of the beautiful footprints of Kṛṣṇa. Akrūra saw hundreds and thousands of footprints in the dust of Vraja near Nandagāon, because Kṛṣṇa was always roaming there barefoot with the cowherd-boys. Akrūra fell upon these lotus footprints and prayed. Tears fell from his eyes, his heart melted, his

bodily hairs stood on end, and he offered so many prayers. Those prayers are recorded in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He was a very high-class Vaiṣṇava in *dāśya-rasa*.

Later that evening, Akrūra met with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva and secretly told Them, “Do You know that You are the sons of Devakī and Vasudeva? Now they are in jail, and the demon Kaṁsa is torturing them, only because of You. There is no other reason. Because Your parents sent You to Gokula, they are now being tortured.”

Kṛṣṇa became furious. “Because of Me?” He said. “I must go to Mathurā. After doing so, I will then return to Vṛndāvana.” He made up His mind and told this to His father, Nanda Bābā. Nanda Bābā agreed because there were some good reasons why Kṛṣṇa should go. If He did not go, Kaṁsa would also torture all the Vrajavāsīs.

That same evening, to the accompaniment of drums, it was announced everywhere that the next day, Nanda Bābā and the other *gopas*, along with some of Kṛṣṇa’s friends, would take Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa to Mathurā, see the arena and the wrestling match, and then return home. All of Kṛṣṇa’s friends were happy. “We are also going, and we will see new, new things,” they thought.

Nanda Bābā was not afraid of Kṛṣṇa remaining there, because he thought, “I am going with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, and I will bring Them home again.” All the *gopas* were like this, neither lamenting nor feeling separation.

Nanda Bābā told Yaśodā Maiyā, “You should be *nirbhaya*, without fear or anxiety. I am going and I will bring Them back again. There is nothing to fear.” Yaśodā thought, “Oh, he is going with Them, so They will return.”

## The Gopīs’ Lamentation

The *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa’s beloveds, however, were in another mood. They began abusing Brahmā, the creator: “He is very cruel. Kṛṣṇa is so sweet, and somehow this creator has given us a chance to meet with Him. But the creator is so cruel that just when we were

going to meet Him, he took away that fortune, and again created separation. Just when we were going to taste that sweetness, he took it away. He is not qualified to create this world. He gathered all the beauty in the entire three worlds and made the beautiful body of Kṛṣṇa. How beautiful Kṛṣṇa looks! His form is beautifully bent in three places, there are beautiful dimples on His cheeks, and He smiles so beautifully – piercing our heart like the arrows of Cupid.

“Everything about Him is crooked. His words are sweet and also crooked. His glance is crooked, and it penetrates the heart of those who look at Him. We had a chance to see Him, but this cruel creator is like a baby boy. Baby boys make a palace out of sand and proclaim, ‘Oh, this is my *rājā* palace, my royal palace,’ and then they destroy it. So Brahmā is like that. He gave us an opportunity to meet with Kṛṣṇa, in whom he placed all the sweetness and beauty of the three worlds, but as soon as we met Him, he at once took this fortune away. That Vidhātā, that cruel creator of destiny, has now come here in the form of Akrūra. Actually he is *krūra*, cruel, but he has taken the name Akrūra. By that name he declares, ‘I am not cruel,’ but actually he is very cruel, very cruel.”

The *gopīs* were weeping. Because we cannot hear their weeping, we may be laughing now, but the *gopīs* were not laughing. They were expressing their lament from their heart and feeling separation from Kṛṣṇa. “Oh, Vidhātā has come here just when we were about to relish meeting with Kṛṣṇa.”

It can be compared to being presented with a very beautiful, tasteful dish, and just as you are about to take it, someone takes it away. The monkeys from Vṛndāvana, for example, sometimes come and take your plate and then jump into a tree. You become bewildered and cry out, “What happened?” Similarly, here the *gopīs* are saying, “This cruel Akrūra came and took away Kṛṣṇa, our beloved. How can we live? We cannot remain alive.”

[In separation from Kṛṣṇa], the *gopīs* became like fish out of water. Are we at this stage? We are not, and therefore Kṛṣṇa remains very far away from us, but for these *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa is always with them. Try to come to this stage. This is our objective. How can you possibly come to this stage if you divide, and divide, and further divide your attachment to Kṛṣṇa with worldly wives, sons, and daughters? You came into this world alone, and while you were in the womb of your mother, Kṛṣṇa told you, “Be alone. I am giving you this birth only so you can practice *bhakti-yoga*. Do not make anyone your boyfriend, girlfriend, sister, mother, etc. Try to become like Bharata in his third birth as Jaḍa Bharata.”

We promised then, in the womb, that we would not divide our attachment, but when we came out of the womb, our mother or sister took us on her lap and called, “Oh-h-h-h, baby, baby, baby, baby.” We thus made a mother, a father, sister, neighbors, an entire community, and so on. Then we gradually came to our youth and made one, two, three, four, five, or six girlfriends or boyfriends.

Kṛṣṇa in the form of *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas is reminding us about this. They are warning us, but we say, “Oh, after this I will not do this again. I will give it up. This is my last time.” Again, however, waves of attachment come.

Try to realize that when you die, you will die alone. Alone. Those to whom you have given your attachment and your whole energy will not remember you. They cannot help you. You must know all this. The *gopīs* are saying this. They are very expert because they never divide their love and affection by giving it to anyone in this world. They withdrew their love from their husbands, sisters, brothers, fathers, and everyone else and came to Kṛṣṇa. If you want to love Kṛṣṇa, gradually you will have to be like them. If you do not follow the *gopīs*, then at the time of death you will be kicked, just as donkeys are kicked by the hind legs of female donkeys. After that your body will be burnt to ashes. Surely you should know that there is no one who can help

you. Only Kṛṣṇa can help someone. You should try to realize all this. You will be able to do so by association. Take some love and affection from this association and return home with it. This will help you.

The *gopīs* first blamed Vidhātā, the creator. Then they blamed that creator by blaming Akrūra. Now they are blaming Kṛṣṇa. They say, “Oh, no blame goes to Vidhātā or Akrūra or anyone else. It is simply that Kṛṣṇa is always *nava saṅga priya*, He always wants newer and newer association. He is never satisfied with old association. Like a bumblebee He goes to a very beautiful lotus, and after taking its sweetness, He again goes to the next, then to another, and still to another. Sometimes the bee becomes maddened and even goes to bad-smelling flowers. Although he cannot even see any *madhu* (honey) in them, he goes to them because they are new.

“Kṛṣṇa is like this. He is blackish also, just like that bee. He is never satisfied with old lovers and wants to relish new ones. This is His motive for leaving us and going to Mathurā. There He will be very happy. Now He is with us, but we are only village girls, and we are not so beautiful. We cannot attract anyone. The girls from Mathurā can pose very beautifully. They can speak many sweet words, and they can attractively exhibit their shyness. But we are not like that. We cannot play like them. They are very expert because they live in a town. They can put on make-up so beautifully and decorate their faces with lipstick and so many cosmetics. But we do not know all these arts. And there are not only one, two, three, or four such girls in Mathurā, but hundreds of thousands of them. Kṛṣṇa will become so attached to them. He will give His love to this one, to that one, to that one, and also to that one. He will be fully engaged, and He will never return. We know.”

The *gopīs* lamented, “We know Kṛṣṇa’s habit. When tonight is over, He will leave, and we fear He will never return. For the Mathurāvāsīs, on the other hand, a very good morning will

follow this night. All the ladies and all the Yādavas, Vṛṣṇis, and Bhojas will be so happy, because they will see the beautiful face of Kṛṣṇa and say, ‘Good morning, good morning.’ All of them will have the chance to see the essence of the beauty of the entire world, because they will see Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa will talk with them and become attached to them. But for us, this night is like *kāla-yama*, death. Tomorrow morning we will not see Kṛṣṇa. How dangerous. We will all die. All the birds and peacocks and all the animals will die. And what will become of the cows? They will not graze. They will only look in the direction in which Kṛṣṇa may come. They will also die. What, then, will become of this Vṛndāvana? It will be a barren land only. Daily In Mathurā there will be a great *mahotsava*, festival. And in Vṛndāvana, nothing. It will be barren land.

“Now we are wondering; we are astonished. There are so many elder persons here, like Upananda and all the brothers of Nanda Bābā. They seemed to be very intelligent, but now we are thinking that they are not so intelligent at all. Why are they not stopping Nanda Bābā from taking Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva to Mathurā? Why don’t they send Akrūra back alone? Kṛṣṇa should not be sent to Mathurā, but they are not saying anything. They are accepting this proposal of Nanda Bābā and Akrūra. Then what should we do? We will have to give up our usual shy behavior. We ourselves will go to Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā Maiyā and tell them, ‘You are so cruel. Don’t send Kṛṣṇa with this cruel Akrūra. Kṛṣṇa will never return. We know.’ We can try. Let us go and tell Yaśodā Maiyā and the others.”

In the meantime, morning came and Akrūra performed his *sandhyā* (morning *gāyatrī*). He then brought his chariot and, taking Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, began to climb upon it. The *gopīs* at once came to see the chariot. Some of them fell down in a faint. Seeing the scene from afar, Śrīmatī Rādhikā became senseless, unconscious. Those *gopīs* who remained conscious came, and in

deep lamentation took the reins of the horses. Some fell down, rolling on the ground in front of the chariot, and some wept. Still, Akrūra was so cruel that he wanted to take Kṛṣṇa, by any means, to Mathurā.

Through the messenger of His eyes, Kṛṣṇa made a promise to all the *gopīs* who were still conscious. “I will come back very soon. I am going now, and I will kill Kāṁsa today or tomorrow. Then I will return to Vraja.” He also said to them, “Give this message to all the *gopīs* who are unconscious, especially to Rādhā: the day after tomorrow I shall certainly return.”

Akrūra quickly slapped the horses with a stick in such a way that they galloped off crookedly, so they could not be followed. Most of the *gopīs* fainted. Those who did not faint watched the dust rising from the chariot. Some of that dust fell upon them. The *gopīs* never returned to Nandagāon but remained instead in the forest. Uddhava came sometime later to meet them. It was a very pathetic scene.

All the *gopīs* were thinking, “We should die, but we should not die. Why not? Because Kṛṣṇa may return. He has promised, ‘I will return,’ so it is certain that He will come. We have faith in His words, so He will surely come. But if He sees that we have already died when He comes, He will also die, so we must not die. We should tolerate any kind of separation, any kind of fire. Even though we are burning in a fire, the fire of separation, still we will have to maintain our life – only for Kṛṣṇa, only for Kṛṣṇa – so that when He comes, He will see us.”

## Waiting for Kṛṣṇa

The *gopīs* therefore waited one day, two days, three days, four days, one year, two years, three years, four years, five, ten, fifteen, fifty – but Kṛṣṇa never returned. Why? Sometimes He may have come to see the *gopīs* in the form of a bumblebee, sometimes

in a dream, and sometimes in any manifestation. When He did so, they thought, “Oh, we are seeing Kṛṣṇa in a dream. Actually, He has not really come.” Sometimes they were so deeply in love that they never thought that Kṛṣṇa had even gone to Mathurā. Rather they considered, “Kṛṣṇa is in Vṛndāvana and has gone to graze the cows. In the evening Yaśodā takes an *ārati* tray and gets everything ready for His and Baladeva’s arrival.” Yaśodā may have stood there the whole night, but Kṛṣṇa never returned. There was no cooking done at all and no birds sang. You cannot imagine the condition of Vraja.

Now [in this connection] I will tell a worldly story.

Once, when I was in Italy, I went with two others to walk on the beach by the ocean. After the walk, we returned to our car. A very beautiful old dog came over to us. His eyes were full of mud, and there were some signs that he had been weeping. At once he came over and smelled us, looking at us quite pathetically. Then, another car drove in and the dog went over to it, still looking sad. He was an Alsatian dog (a German Shepherd). A very good dog.

I asked Brajanātha Prabhu and Lilā-puruṣottama Prabhu [who lived locally], “Is this dog waiting for his master, who is perhaps walking here and there?” They replied, “People come to the sea shore for holidays and sometimes leave their dogs behind for various selfish reasons.”

This dog had previously belonged to a wealthy person and had been with him for several years. His master used to take him in his car wherever he went, bathe him and show him so much love and affection. In this way, many years passed and the dog was so happy, always serving his master.

After some time that dog began to get old. One day, he came to the beach with his master and saw a she-dog. When he got out of the car, he went off with that she-dog. His master thought, “I will have to take a new dog. What will I do with this old dog?” He then left him there, quickly went to his motor car and drove back

to his house. He never cared for that dog again. He neglected him after that.

After some time that dog returned and looked for his master. "Where is my master? Where is my master?" He searched every car, here and there. After that, he did not eat anything. He just always looked for his master. One year, two years passed. His master never returned, but the dog never stopped looking for him. Now there was no one to wash the mud from his body or wipe away the tears from his eyes, and there was no one to give him anything to eat. He always wept for his master, and thought, "Oh, my master must surely come." For that, the dog continued to live in the hope that "Today, or one day, my master will come." He simply waited and waited.

This dog's master may have been cruel, but Kṛṣṇa is not cruel. The dog remembered his master, thinking, "He will come. He is just now coming. Oh, perhaps now he is coming." He went up to anyone and again saw, "Oh, this is not my master," and then he began to weep and became sad. Then he sat and waited in hope. That dog may have been remembering, "One day my master took me on his lap, washed me with his own hands, and gave me sweet things to eat. That which he was going to eat, he gave to me instead. And sometimes he used to take me in his bed." Thinking like this, the dog wept.

Now, if a dog can do this, why can we not do it? This is just an example and is a mere shadow of the *gopīs*'s separation. A devotee can also be like this, always remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* remembered, "How Kṛṣṇa was dancing with us, how He used to put His betel nuts in our mouths, how He loved us, and how He was sometimes singing with us. He would boast, 'Oh, I can sing in the fifth note,' but we *gopīs* sang in the seventh note, and He praised us. 'O *sādhū, sādhu, sādhu!* Very good, well done!' But now who will praise us?" In this way they were simply remembering and weeping.

This is *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā* (the eternal eightfold daily pastimes of Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa). Devotees can remember all these things, and thus their minds will not wander here and there. Kṛṣṇa tells the *gopīs*, “You should remember Me,” but the *gopīs* sadly look towards Kṛṣṇa and reply, “Oh, we want to forget You, but we cannot. Although we want to forget You, all remembrance of You comes one pastime after another, like a chain. If You can forget us, why can we not forget You? This is our situation; we cannot forget You.”

The *gopīs*’ lamentation is something like that of that dog, but not really the same. What I told you about the dog is only perhaps a shadow of a shadow of a shadow of the *gopīs*’ lamentation. The *gopīs* are only keeping their life because Kṛṣṇa has told them that He will return. This is their only *āśā*, hope. Without this hope, they would die. They are burning in the fire of separation, but yet they do not want to die.

### Kṛṣṇa’s Mood in Mathurā

And what about Kṛṣṇa? Is He happy in Mathurā? No, He is not happy there. Somehow Lalitā can pacify Śrīmatī Rādhikā by saying, “Do not weep; Kṛṣṇa will surely come.” But there is no one to pacify Kṛṣṇa, no one to tell Him that the *gopīs* will come. Kṛṣṇa has no friend like this in all of Mathurā, so He is alone, intensely burning in a fire of separation, with no one to save Him. Here in Vṛndāvana, Yogamāyā Pūrṇimā, Vṛndā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, and all others share in helping Rādhikā in Her great suffering in separation from Kṛṣṇa. But in Mathurā there is absolutely no one to help Kṛṣṇa. That is why He wanted to send someone to school. Why school? So that this person could become qualified to console Him in His lamentation. He therefore sent Uddhava to the school of the *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana.

Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were sons of Yaśodā and Rohiṇī. Although They came to Mathurā, They could never forget this. After Kamsa

was killed, Nanda Bābā was waiting outside the town, thinking, “Why are Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva not coming? Kaṁsa has been killed. Perhaps it is due to the conspiracy of the Yādavas, and they are purposely not allowing Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva to come to me.” For two days he did not eat anything; he just fasted, waiting for Kṛṣṇa and feeling so much separation from Him. After sunset, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva came and sat on the left and right side of Nanda Bābā, who was weeping so much.

Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva asked, “Father, you are weeping. Why?”

Nanda Bābā said, “You have come to Mathurā and You have forgotten me. Perhaps now You have a new father and mother.”

Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva also began to weep, “No, Father, you are Our only father. But all of the Yādavas, like Akrūra, Uddhava, Ugrasena, Devakī, and Vasudeva, are telling Us, ‘You are sons of Devakī and Vasudeva.’ They do not want Us to come to you. They fear that if We come to you, you will take Us to Vṛndāvana and We will never return to Devakī and Vasudeva. That is why they are not allowing Us to come.”

Nanda Bābā asked, “Do You think that You are sons of Vasudeva and Devakī?”

“Oh,” Kṛṣṇa replied, “I can never think like that. Not even in a dream.”

Baladeva Prabhu also said, “I also can never even dream like that. You are My father, Yaśodā is My mother, and Rohiṇī is also My mother. My parents are in Vṛndāvana. I know that some say, ‘You are sons of Devakī and Vasudeva.’ But they never gave Me a drop of milk, nor have they shown Me any love and affection. And I was separated from them. But you and Yaśodā Maiyā have nourished Me and given Me milk, and therefore, you are My father and mother and My everything. I cannot consider him [Vasudeva] to be My father, so I must come with you and Kṛṣṇa back to Vṛndāvana.”

Nanda Bābā said, “Now, what shall we do? You are both so intelligent. I think that I must go to Vṛndāvana, and Kṛṣṇa, You should come with me. Baladeva Prabhu may remain here. Why? Because the six sons of Devakī have been killed by Kāṁsa, and Devakī has only one son left – Baladeva. If You both come they may die. I think it would be better if only Kṛṣṇa comes with me.”

Baladeva Prabhu told him, “I cannot live alone; I will die. Do not separate Me from Kṛṣṇa. I will come with Him; without Him I cannot live for a moment.”

Kṛṣṇa then said, “Father, listen to Me. It will be better if for two or three days I remain here with Baladeva. After two or three days everyone will be pacified and then I will return.”

Although Nanda Bābā became upset to hear this, there was no other way. He thought, “If I take Kṛṣṇa with me, then Baladeva will come. If Baladeva comes they will all die, and I would be like a butcher. Everyone would say, ‘Nanda Bābā is very cruel.’ What to do?” This was his dilemma.

Kṛṣṇa said, “Oh, do not weep. Do not worry. I will come back very soon, as soon as they are all pacified. So you should go.” He then took many golden ornaments and silken garments and tied them up in the *cā dara* of Nanda Bābā.

Nanda Bābā thought, “If I take all this, then the mother of Kṛṣṇa will say, ‘Oh! You have sold Kṛṣṇa for these garments and ornaments and come home empty-handed.’ How will I be able to show my face in Vraja?” On the other hand, he could not refuse those gifts and say, “I cannot take them,” because Kṛṣṇa Himself was giving them.

Somehow, in the evening, Nanda Bābā returned. But what became of Yaśodā? When she saw that Kṛṣṇa had not come, she eventually became blind. Filled with anger, she said, “You have sold my son and have brought these ornaments and garments? And you think that by this we will be happy?” Then she lay down on a bed and did not get up. She simply remained there, weeping. There was now such a pathetic mood in Vṛndāvana.

One hot summer day, like the days in India in the month of Jyeṣṭha (May–June), at midday, Yaśodā decided to take some of Kṛṣṇa’s baby garments, His little flute, a few of His marble calves and some other toys, and place them in a cloth. She then left her house. One *gopī* came to her and asked, “Mother Yaśodā, where you are going?”

Yaśodā was as if dumb and was in no condition to answer. But still she said, “I am going to my child.”

### “Where is your child?”

“I have heard that He is in Mathurā, so I must go. I will not tell them there that Kṛṣṇa is my son. I will go to Devakī-rāṇī and tell her, ‘I want to be your *dasī*, your maidservant. I will clean your vessels and do everything like a *dasī*, and I will not take anything in return. If for only one day I can see the face of your child, I will be satisfied.’” Speaking like this she fell to the ground and completely fainted. In this way, Yaśodā daily experienced so much separation from Kṛṣṇa that you cannot imagine.

And what became of Kṛṣṇa? All the Yādu-vaṁśa – Akrūra and all the others – had a meeting and made a decision: “We must change Kṛṣṇa’s mind. How? We should perform His sacred thread ceremony and convince Him that ‘Devakī and Vasudeva are Your father and mother, and You are a Yādava.’ He should be sent to *gurukula* to study, and after some time He will forget [Vraja]. He is like a baby of ten years or twelve years, so He can forget.” They conspired together in this way.

The sacred thread ceremony was then performed for Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. Their heads were shaved and *brahmacārī* garments were given to Them, as well as the *gāyatrī-mantra*, the sacred thread, and wooden sandals. Imagine how very beautiful and charming Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva must have been as *brahmacārīs*. Their *gurudeva*, Gargācārya, gave them begging bowls and ordered, “You should now go to at least five or ten houses and

beg some *bikṣa* (alms) for me. You should say, ‘O Mother, give Me some donation. O Mother, give Me. O Father, give Me,’ like this.” Gargācārya made his *cādara* like a *jhuli*, begging cloth.

Those *brahmacārīs* took the *jhulis* and *daṇḍa*, just as nowadays when [at the time of initiation] new initiates take a *daṇḍa* [to collect *bikṣa* for their *gurudeva*]. They were given very beautiful *daṇḍas*. Kṛṣṇa was given a crooked *daṇḍa* and Baladeva Prabhu a very thick and straight one. Now Their *gurudeva* said, “You must first go to Your mother and father and beg from them, and then go to others.”

Kṛṣṇa closed His eyes and thought, “Oh, My *gurudeva* has told Me to go to My mother, but where is My mother? I have no mother here. My mother is where? She is in Vṛndāvana, in Nandagāon.” He remembered that His mother had promised, “O Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, when You are given the sacred thread of a *brahmacārī* along with *mantras*, I will fill Your *jhuli* with diamonds, gold, and so many other jewels.” Kṛṣṇa was remembering this and called out, “Where is My mother? Where is she?” As He stood before the Mathurāvāsīs, He began to shout, “O Mother! O Mother!” Devakī and Vasudeva, especially, were ready to give Them alms, but Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva did not address them as Mother and Father. Instead They remembered Yaśodā Maiyā and cried out, “Mother! Mother! Mother!” Both of them, especially Kṛṣṇa, were crying and rolling on the earth. This was the condition of Kṛṣṇa. He was feeling so much separation, but there was no alternative because He had to perform many pastimes in Mathurā and Dvārakā. Thus from this time onward, it was a pathetic scene, both in Mathurā and in Vṛndāvana.

## Try to Realize It

Tomorrow we will discuss this again. Try to realize it. You can remember and chant *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare / hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare* with tears in

your eyes, thinking, “Oh, what is the state of Kṛṣṇa and Yaśodā Maiyā? Yaśodā Maiyā is always thinking, ‘O my dear child, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.’” In this way you should also try to lament and feel separation and chant, “Hare Kṛṣṇa.” Remember Caitanya Mahāprabhu and pray, “Oh, be merciful to me. O Pañca-tattva, be merciful to me. O Nityānanda Prabhu! Be merciful so that we can realize these pastimes, so that we can chant and so that we can forget all the problems of this world.” Try to forget “Where is the world? Who am I?” Then Kṛṣṇa will come and wipe away your tears; He is so merciful. So you should chant and remember. This is the process.

Remember all the pastimes in a deep way. When you are reading, these symptoms [such as tears] may manifest. For this reason Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja came. He was so merciful and wanted to make you all qualified like this. But he saw that you had so many other desires – jungles of desires and misconceptions – so he began to cut them. He wanted to make the ground fertile, but he left some work for me, so that I could serve him. He left me this service and told me, “Now you should go and tell them. Among them, some are very qualified. If they hear of these moods, they will certainly develop some qualification to have them.” That is why I came. I have no desire to gain money or prestige. I have not come to quarrel with anyone, nor to make any disciples. On the other hand, one who accepts these views are disciples.

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam  
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam  
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ  
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiśyāt*

*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta (1)*

A wise and self-composed person who can subdue the impetus to speak, the agitation of the mind, the onset of anger, the vehemence of the tongue, the urge of the belly,

and the agitation of the genitals, can instruct the entire world. In other words, all persons may become disciples of such a self-controlled person.

*Sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt.* Such a person is actually *jagat-guru*, just as Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja is *jagat-guru*, and his *gurudeva* is *jagat-guru*, *viśva-guru*, the teacher of the universe. He is *guru* of all the three worlds, as is Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. We are therefore so fortunate to be in this disciplic line. Try to remember these things. All of our friends and neighbors are not as dear as these *gurus*. They cannot help you, but you can help them. You can nourish and support them, but do not be entangled. You can do your duty, but always think like this and try to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness. *Gaura-premānande!*

## The Glory of Govardhana

[Devotees then performed a drama about Govardhana.]

This was a good drama. It reminded us of the pastimes of that Kṛṣṇa who lifted Govardhana and saved all the *gopas* and Vrajavāsīs. One may serve so many demigods for worldly benefit only. But these demigods, Indra, Brahmā, and others, may have some false ego. And actually they are not bestowing the fruits of service to them. Kṛṣṇa gives us all the fruits of serving Him, so why not surrender to Kṛṣṇa? Girirāja is none other than Kṛṣṇa Himself, and he is also the servant of Kṛṣṇa; he is both these things. But we will achieve more benefit if we consider Girirāja to be the servant of Kṛṣṇa. If he is Kṛṣṇa, he can only give so much; but if he is a servant, he can give love and affection for Kṛṣṇa as the *āśraya* – the devotee, the abode of love. In other words, he can give love and affection for Kṛṣṇa that is under the guidance of the *gopīs*.

Girirāja can give such affection, but it is very difficult for Kṛṣṇa to give it. This is because Govardhana is also a part, or a manifestation, of Rādhikā, not just of Kṛṣṇa. Although he was

seen as *catur-bhuja*, a four-armed Nārāyaṇa manifestation of Kṛṣṇa, actually he is a servant and can give everything to anyone.

*pramada-madana-lilāḥ kandare kandare te  
 racayati nava-yūnor dvandvam asminn amandam  
 iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagnakas tad-dvayor me  
 nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam  
 Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam (2)*

The youthful Divine Couple perform delightful amorous pastimes within each and every one of your caves. Thus, since you facilitate the witnessing of Their *lilās*, O Govardhana, please give me residence by your side.

All the very secret pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopas* and especially with the *gopīs*, and all the very beautiful *kuñjas*, like *tamāla-kuñja* and *mālatī-kuñja*, are there in Govardhana. Wherever Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* decorate each other and do *vilāsa* (pastimes), the *gopīs* [first] arrange the *kuñjas*. Govardhana is the witness of all of these very secret pastimes. He can sprinkle his mercy upon us so that we, also, may become like the *gopīs*. Only Govardhana, Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Yamunā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, and Rūpa Mañjarī are qualified to give this [*gopī-bhāva*]. Sometimes they give some authority to Gopīśvara Mahādeva so that he can also give it. Vṛnda-devī and Yogamāyā are also fully expert at giving this. No one else can give it. Therefore, if you serve Girirāja Govardhana, who is witness to these pastimes, he can also reveal them to you.

*yatraiva kṛṣṇo vṛṣabhānu-putryā  
 dānaṁ grhītuṁ kalahaṁ vitene  
 śruteḥ sprhā yatra mahaty ataḥśrī-  
 govardhano me diśatām abhīṣṭam  
 Śrī Govardhanāṣṭakam (3)*

[At Dana-ghāṭī] Kṛṣṇa instigated a quarrel with the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja in order to extract tax. My great longing is to hear that sweet quarrel. May that Śrī Govardhana fulfill my desire.

Kṛṣṇa was taking *dana*, tax, from the *gopīs*. The *gopīs* were quarrelling with Him. They also collected tax from Kṛṣṇa, and He was forced to give it. In this way, Govardhana witnesses so many pastimes. Tomorrow we will remember and worship Girirāja Govardhana and offer him many preparations. As a result of our service, he may be merciful to us and sprinkle upon us realization and service of the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa

## ❧ CHAPTER SIX ❧

# The Fortune of the Gopīs

### Exclusive Greed to Serve Kṛṣṇa

**A**gain, come along with me. We should go to Mathurā. Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are now there, having been invited by Kaṁsa through Akrūra. Kaṁsa wanted to murder Kṛṣṇa, and therefore, he made an arena in which to do so. When Kṛṣṇa came with His many cowherd boyfriends and heard the sound of the drums, He wanted to enter that arena. The elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa tried to kill Him there, but Kṛṣṇa quickly finished him. Stained with drops of blood and carrying the elephant's tusk on His shoulder, He entered the arena. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma appeared very beautiful, like two baby lions. They had no fear at all when They entered the arena. Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika, and other wrestlers were waiting to fight Them, and they forcibly took Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva Prabhu and wrestled with Them. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma very quickly killed the wrestlers and went to jump on Kaṁsa's throne. Nanda Bābā was there, and Vasudeva, Devakī, and Ugrasena Mahārāja were also brought there from jail. Previously, they had been very much afraid, thinking, "Now Kṛṣṇa will be killed because He is just a baby boy, and Baladeva is also a baby. Both of Them will be destroyed here."

[The wives of the Mathurā Yādavas had also previously been upset.] At that time [Before the wrestlers were finally killed by Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma] these ladies stood up and said, “Kali has come here, and *adharmā*, irreligion, has also come. We should not remain here. If we stay, it means we endorse these things. We should not accept this, otherwise sin will also come to us. We must give up our seats and leave this place. The *gopīs* are so fortunate, and we are unfortunate. Kṛṣṇa is really the most beautiful person in the whole world, the essence of all beauty. All *madhurya* (sweetness) is in Him. But we are unfortunate. We see Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva here, but Kṛṣṇa is now wrestling with these demons. He is somewhat angry, and He is in *vīra-rasa*, a chivalrous mood. We see Him like a lion in a cage. But oh, how fortunate are the *gopīs*, who see Him when He is in Vṛndāvana, where He is like a lion freely roaming in the forest.

*pun̄yā bata vraja-bhuvo yad ayaṁ nṛ-liṅga  
gūḍhaḥ purāṇa-puruṣo vana-citra-mālyah  
gāḥ pālayan saha-balaḥ kvaṇayaṁś ca veṇuṁ  
vikrīdayāñcati giritra-ramārcitāṅghriḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.44.13)

O *sakhī*, the actual truth is that the land of Vraja is supremely pure and blessed, because here the Supreme Person is living, disguised as a human being. That same Lord, whose lotus feet are worshiped by the lord of all lords, Mahādeva Śaṅkara, and by Śrī Ramā-devī, wanders about here with His brother Balarāma and His cowherd boy friends. Adorned with a garland of multi-coloured flowers, He grazes the cows and plays the flute sweetly. Absorbed in many kinds of pastimes, He wanders here and there with delight. By the touch of His lotus feet, this land of Vraja has become virtuous and successful.

*Punyā bata vraja-bhuvo* means that in this world, Vrajabhumi is certainly more exalted and glorious than any other place. Why? Because Kṛṣṇa is there in Vṛndāvana. This glory is not only due to Kṛṣṇa, but also due to the *gopīs*, especially Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is the essence of everything. She is the essence of Kṛṣṇa's *madhurya* – His beauty, His sweetness, and all His other qualities. In all the three worlds, therefore, Vrajabhumi is supreme. *Nṛ-liṅga gūḍhaḥ purāṇa-puruṣo vana-citra-mālyah*. The *purāṇa-puruṣa*, the Original Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is there. All this is written here in the following verse, in a hidden, secret way.

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

*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, is the embodiment of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of all lesser controllers, and the source of all incarnations. He has no beginning or origin, though He is the source of everything and the cause of all causes.

Kṛṣṇa moves here and there, walking and playing with the cowherd boys like friends. He also interacts with the Vraja ladies in a son to mother relationship. *Gāḥ pālayan* means 'He always nourishes and supports the cows.' *Gāḥ* has many meanings. One meaning refers to all the senses, and that is why Kṛṣṇa is called Hṛṣīkeśa. It also means 'cows, Vedas, and all kinds of religious knowledge.' Kṛṣṇa always supports and nourishes them all. *Saha-balaḥ* means 'with Baladeva Prabhu.' *Kvaṇayamś ca veṇuṁ* means 'playing sweetly on the *veṇu*.' By the sweet sound of this *veṇu*, Kṛṣṇa attracts the whole world. *Vikṛīdayāñcati* means that He always plays in Vṛndāvana, Gokula, Nandagāon, and Varṣāṇa.

*namāmīśvaraṁ saccidānanda-rūpaṁ  
lasat-kuṇḍalaṁ gokule bhrāja-mānam  
yaśodā-bhiyolūkhalād-dhāvamānam  
parāmṛṣṭam atyaṁ tato drutya gopyā  
Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam (1)*

I offer obeisances unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the possessor of all potencies, whose beautiful form is the entirety of concentrated existence, knowledge, and bliss. On His cheeks, *makara*-shaped earrings are swinging playfully. His infinite brilliance shines forth from His most splendid residence, the transcendental abode, Śrī Gokula. He was afraid of Mother Yaśodā [because He smashed the earthen pot of yoghurt]. When He saw her coming He leapt down from the grinding mortar and ran away. Nevertheless, Mother Yaśodā ultimately caught hold of Him from behind, for she ran more swiftly than He did.

Kṛṣṇa always plays there like a boy, not like God, not like the four-handed Kṛṣṇa of Dvārakā and Mathurā. *Giritra* means ‘Śaṅkara’ (Lord Śiva). Śaṅkara, Brahmā, Ramā, and Lakṣmī herself want to serve the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Lakṣmī wants to worship Kṛṣṇa, but she does not have the chance. She has to remain on the other side of the Yamunā, in Baelvana. There was no entrance at all for her [to participate in *rāsa-līlā*]. Although she was charmed by Kṛṣṇa, and although she left her husband, Nārāyaṇa, in Vaikuṅṭha and came to Baelvana with a greed to be in Vṛndāvana and to, play, dance, and sing in *rāsa-līlā*, she was stopped by Yogamāyā, who said, “Oh, you cannot enter. First you will have to become a *gopī*, marry a *gopa*, and then you can enter; otherwise not.”

Lakṣmī replied, “This is a very big problem. I cannot change my husband. I am a *brāhmaṇī*.”

“Then you should remain here,” Yogamāyā declared.

Śaṅkara also wanted to worship that [Vṛndāvana] Kṛṣṇa. He was somewhat tricky. He came to the border of Vṛndāvana and worshiped Yogamāyā, who appeared there and asked, “What do you want?”

“O Mother Yogamāyā, I want to see Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa* dance in Vṛndāvana.”

She asked, “Have you performed any austerities to achieve this?”

“No, I have not done anything,” he responded.

By her causeless mercy she quickly took Śaṅkara and dipped him in *Brahma-kuṇḍa*. When he came out, his form was that of a very beautiful *gopī*, a teenager of sixteen years. Yogamāyā said, “You may remain here and watch *rāsa-līlā*.”

Later, while *rāsa* was being performed, Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs*, “Today My interest in *rāsa* is not so great. I do not have much enthusiasm.”

The *gopīs* replied, “Why? Is there some defect? Has a *viḡātīya*, an outsider, come?” They began to search for that person and at last they saw a new *gopī* in a grove. They caught hold of her and asked, “Who are you? What is your name?” Yogamāyā had never given her a name, so that new *gopī* could not answer. “What is the name of your husband?” She had not been married to any *gopa*, and again she could not reply. “Who is your father?” Yogamāyā had not given this information, and therefore the new *gopī* could not answer any of their questions.

All the *gopīs* began to slap her. Her cheeks became swollen and she began to cry, “O Yogamāyā, save me, save me!”

At once Yogamāyā came there and requested Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, “She is my disciple. Please be merciful to her.” That *gopī* then became known as Gopīśvara Mahādeva. She was allowed to view the *rāsa-līlā* from very far away, but she was not allowed to participate.

These pastimes and others indicate that Kṛṣṇa is so much greater than His manifestations in Mathurā, Dvārakā, and

Vaikuṅṭha. Your *gurudeva* has given you a relationship with that Kṛṣṇa, Gopījana-vallabha. You are so fortunate. Simply by chanting the *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī* with a mood of having relationship with Kṛṣṇa, you can become a *gopī* and go to Vraja, otherwise there is no way. This was explained by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and all His disciples.

You are so fortunate to come in this line. So do not be weak; never be weak. Many problems will come, but be like the Himālayas, Mount Everest, and the Alps [meaning “remain fixed like a mountain”]. Do not go here and there. Always serve Kṛṣṇa.

## The Ladies of Mathurā Glorify Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs

*gopyas tapaḥ kim acarān yad amuṣya rūpaṁ  
lāvāṇya-sāram asamordhvam ananya-siddham  
dṛgbhiḥ pibanty anusavābhinavaṁ durāpam  
ekānta-dhāma yaśasaḥ śrīya aiśvarasya*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.44.14)*

*Sakhī*, I do not know what austerities the *gopīs* have performed to be always drinking the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa’s form with their eyes. What is the nature of His form? It is the essence of bodily beauty (*lāvāṇya-sāra*). Within this material existence or above it, there is no beauty equal to His, what to speak of a greater beauty. He is not decorated by anyone, nor is He perfected by ornaments and clothes. Rather, He is perfect in Himself. While seeing this form, one does not become satiated, because its beauty increases at every moment. All fame, beauty, and opulence take shelter of it. Only the *gopīs* are fortunate enough to have such a *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa; no one else.

The ladies of Mathurā glorified the *gopīs*: “The *gopīs* are so fortunate. What sacrifices and *tapa*, austerities, must they have performed in their past lives? If we find out, then we must also perform them.”

Do you know what some *gopīs* did in the past to have become *gopīs*? Nothing. They are *kāyavyūha*, bodily manifestations, of Rādhikā. They are not *siddha-bhaktas*, devotees who became perfect. Other *gopīs*, however, are not *kāyavyūha*. For hundreds of thousands of births they were practicing austerities and chanting the *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī* in the Daṇḍakāraṇya forest.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to this world, He said that this [the body of a *gopī*] can be attained in one birth. You will not have to practice for hundreds of thousands of births. He therefore sent Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, and others to teach us that if you want to be like this [a *gopī*], you will not have to do so many austerities, as the *ṛṣis* did in Daṇḍakāraṇya. Anyone who Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu glanced upon began to chant, “O Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Rādhe, Rādhe.” So you are very fortunate [to have come in this line]. But be fortunate. Try to take advantage of your good fortune.

The Mathurā ladies continued, “Certainly the *gopīs* are the most glorious persons in the whole world, because they are tasting the honey of Kṛṣṇa’s beauty – *lāvaṇya sāram*, His luster.” Even if one is black, no harm. If there is *lāvaṇya*, luster, coming from within, as it does from pearls, this is beauty. Kṛṣṇa is blackish, but *lāvaṇya sāram*, the essence of beauty, was emanating from within His body. In India we say *mukha ka pani*, which means luster. There is no need for Kṛṣṇa to wear ornaments or beautiful garments. Nothing is needed [to make Him look beautiful]. If there is a spot of ink here and there on Kṛṣṇa’s body, it will look very beautiful and it will make Him appear more beautiful.

If He is covered with the powder-like dust that is kicked up by the cows, He becomes still more beautiful. And if He is naked, oh, He is even more beautiful. In any condition, Kṛṣṇa's beauty always increases.

*Dṛgbhiḥ pibanty.* The *gopīs* always drink the sweetness of the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's beauty. *Anusavābhinavaṁ durāpam ekānta-dhāma yaśasaḥ śrīya aiśvarasya.* Kṛṣṇa is the abode of all *yaśa*, glories and fame; *śrīya*, beauty; and *aiśvarya*, all varieties of opulence, which include sweetness, mercy, and every other good quality.

You should know that your *bhajanīya*, your worshipful deity, is not an ordinary person. The Mathurā ladies say, "For us, the *gopīs* are the most worshipful, as they drink all of Kṛṣṇa's honey-like beauty. But here in Mathurā, we see Kṛṣṇa surrounded by so many enemies, and He is in a somewhat angry mood, wrestling with others. We are not fortunate to be able to see Kṛṣṇa as the *gopīs* see Him. The *gopīs* are so glorious that their mind and tongue are the chariot of Kṛṣṇa." How is this?

*yā dohane 'vahanane mathanopalepa  
preṅkheṅkhanārbha-ruditokṣaṇa-mārjanādau  
gāyanti cainam anurakta-dhiyo 'śru-kaṅṭhyo  
dhanyā vraja-striya urukrama-citta-yānāḥ*  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.44.15)*

The ladies of Vraja are the most fortunate of women because, with their minds fully attached to Kṛṣṇa and their throats always choked up with tears, they constantly sing about Him while milking the cows, winnowing grain, churning butter, gathering cow dung for fuel, riding on swings, taking care of their crying babies, sprinkling the ground with water, cleaning their houses, and so on. By their exalted Kṛṣṇa consciousness they automatically acquire all desirable things.\*

Try to follow what the *gopīs* are doing. *Yā dohane*. When they milk the cows they sing, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti, Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.” *Avahanane*. When they thresh any grain like rice or wheat with a mortar and pestle, they do it with rhythm. When the pestle is pushed down, it sounds like a *mṛdaṅga*. Their bracelets sound very sweet, like *karatālas*, and they sing very sweetly, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti, Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.” They are churning plenty of milk that has been made into *dahi*, or yogurt, and kept in big vessels, and are singing, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti, Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.” They have no problem at all. For them, nothing is a problem.

The elderly *gopīs* are similarly engaged. Absorbed in singing, they simply remember the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and churn butter. Even if Kṛṣṇa enters at that time, they do not notice Him, so He says, “O Maiyā, Maiyā, Maiyā! What are you doing?” [As they churn] tears fall due to love and affection, all their bodily hairs stand on end, and their heart melts. All the *gopīs* are like this.

*Upalepa* [‘smearing,’ or ‘smearing the walls and floors with cow dung’]. And they are brooming (*marjana*) their houses. What are their minds and tongues doing? Chanting, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti, Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.” Some boys are weeping, “Mother, Mother!” Their mothers at once pick them up, put them to bed, and sing, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti, Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.” They do not tell them, “You should sleep, you should sleep, you should sleep.” They do not tell them a story or sing a lullaby. They simply sing Kṛṣṇa’s names. Hearing their mothers singing this very good song, the children fall asleep, and again the *gopīs* begin to churn and sing, “Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti, Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti.”

*Anurakta-dhiyo*. Their hearts were quite absorbed in remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. *Aśru* means ‘continuous tears,’ and *kaṅṭhyaḥ* means ‘choked voice.’ *Dhanyā vraja-striya*. Referring to the young

*gopīs*, the ladies of Mathurā are saying, “Oh, how glorious are these *gopīs*.” *Dhanyā* means ‘very fortunate.’ “We are not fortunate. We do not see Kṛṣṇa the way the *gopīs* do. We cannot be like that here.” *Urukrama-citta-yānāḥ*. *Urukrama* refers to Kṛṣṇa’s always sitting very happily on the throne or chariot of the *gopīs*’ minds. It also means that the *gopīs* are always sitting on the throne of Kṛṣṇa’s mind. Kṛṣṇa always remembers them. Why? He must be where the *bhakta* sings [of Him], and therefore, He is always there with the *gopīs*. “The *gopīs* are always there in the mind of Kṛṣṇa. How fortunate they are.”

*prātar vrajād vrajata āviśataś ca sāyam  
gobhiḥ samam kvaṇayato 'sya niśamya veṇum  
nirgamya tūrṇam abalāḥ pathi bhūri-punyāḥ  
paśyanti sa-smita-mukhaṁ sa-dayāvalokam*  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.44.16)

When the *gopīs* hear Kṛṣṇa playing His flute as He leaves Vraja in the morning with His cows or returns with them at sunset, the young girls quickly come out of their houses to see Him. They must have performed many pious activities to be able to see Him as He walks on the road, His smiling face mercifully glancing upon them.\*

[The wives of the Mathurāvāsīs are saying,] “Oh, how fortunate the *gopīs* are. Very early in the morning, at about nine o’clock, Kṛṣṇa comes out of Yaśodā’s house with hundreds of thousands of friends and hundreds of thousands of cows and goes to the forest to cowherd.

“At that time, the *gopīs* are on the roofs of their houses, at their windows and doors, or here and there in the groves of their gardens. They are very *anurakta*, absorbed, in Kṛṣṇa, and [as He enters the forest] they take *darśana* of Him. When He returns from cow-grazing in the evening, they see Him again and become so happy.”

What is Kṛṣṇa doing? Sometimes He comes nearby them and touches their chins with His *muralī* or *veṇu* flute. Having taken their whole heart, Kṛṣṇa then enters Vraja. At that time Yaśodā Maiyā performs *ārati*. With their eyes, all the [young] *gopīs* perform a better *ārati* than Yaśodā Maiyā, and Kṛṣṇa accepts their *ārati*, smiling. Therefore the *gopīs* are so glorious.

Who is glorifying whom? Mathurā is glorifying Vraja. The *gopīs* have never gone to Mathurā, and none of the ladies of Mathurā have ever come to Vraja. Kṛṣṇa only sent one Mathurāvāsī, Uddhava, to see the glories of the *gopīs*, Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, and all the other Vrajavāsīs.

After killing Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika, Kṛṣṇa at last killed Kaṁsa. Then Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva came to where Nanda Bābā was sitting on his bullock cart, in a town just outside Mathurā. While waiting for Them, he had been thinking, “When They come I will take Them both back to Vṛndāvana.”

On the day after Kaṁsa was killed, all the Mathurāvāsīs were with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. Although Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were always thinking about Nanda Bābā, They had no chance to meet him, so Nanda Bābā and the cowherd boys remained waiting. In this way, one day passed, and then two days. On the third day, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva somehow came to Nanda Bābā at night. Baladeva Prabhu sat on Nanda Bābā’s right side, and Kṛṣṇa sat on his left. Nanda Bābā was weeping bitterly. “What have You decided to do?” he asked. “Have You decided that You are the son of Vasudeva and Devakī?”

“No, father; We cannot decide that. How could We decide that? Even in Our dreams We cannot think like this.” Both Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were weeping loudly, and Nanda Bābā was also weeping.

At last Baladeva Prabhu said, “Bābā, I want to come to Vraja with Kṛṣṇa and you.”

Nanda Bābā said, “Oh, I cannot take You. I am not so cruel. You must remain here for some days. All of Devakī and Vasudeva’s sons have been killed by Kāmsa. Now You alone are alive, so You should remain here.”

Baladeva replied, “Without Kṛṣṇa I cannot live anywhere for a moment. I will die.”

Nanda Bābā asked Kṛṣṇa, “What should I do? What should I do?”

Kṛṣṇa answered, “Father, if you request Me, I will remain here for some days with Baladeva Prabhu. If Baladeva leaves now, then His father and mother, Vasudeva and Devakī, and all the Mathurāvāsīs will die. So I think it is better that I remain with Him here. After some time, when everyone is pacified, I will quickly return. They are your friends. I have no relationship with them other than that they are your friends and you are My father.”

Here Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura puts forth a *pūrvapakṣa*, a question a person asks before he himself answers it: “If Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda and Yaśodā and not the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, how could He remain there in Mathurā?” A person wants to live in that place where he receives the most love and affection, regardless of whether he is the son of persons there or not. Such a consideration is secondary. A person likes to be wherever he receives high-class love and affection. Undoubtedly all the Vrajavāsīs love Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva so much more than anyone else does, from anywhere else. Yet it has been stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that Nanda Bābā returned to Vraja without Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. This is true, and it is also true that Kṛṣṇa never leaves Vṛndāvana. How can we reconcile this?

## **Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa and Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa**

As Nanda Bābā wept, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva each assumed two forms. One was for *prakāṣa-līlā* (manifest pastimes) and the other

for *aprakāṣa-līlā* (unmanifest pastimes). In *prakāṣa-līlā* Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were in Mathurā, but Their *aprakāṣa-līlā* forms returned with Nanda Bābā to Vṛndāvana. The son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā, Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa, returned with Nanda Bābā. Actually, that Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa never goes to Mathurā. His manifestation as Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa goes. So Nanda Bābā took Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva with him on his bullock cart, but that scene was not observed by anyone. In another bullock cart, a manifestation of Nanda Bābā was feeling great separation and was weeping and weeping. He returned to Vṛndāvana without Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has reconciled all these very secret truths, and only the most exalted devotees can realize them. Otherwise, without this reconciliation, all the *gopas* and *gopīs* would have died at once, in a moment; Yaśodā Maiyā also. So there are two *līlās*, or pastimes, there simultaneously: *aprākāṣa-līlā* and *prakāṣa-līlā*.

Now I am coming to the point. What I have told you over these past six days was only an introduction. I want to give you some nectar about the love of the *gopīs*, which even Uddhava could not taste. He could only return to Kṛṣṇa [in Mathurā] and glorify the *gopīs*.

As I have already explained, Kṛṣṇa went to *gurukula*. One day, after He had left *gurukula*, He was sitting on the roof of His palace. Devakī and Vasudeva and all of His other relatives were in the palace, but Kṛṣṇa went alone to the roof and looked toward Vṛndāvana, north of Mathurā. He became so sad and began to weep bitterly. Through the eyes of His emotions, He saw that His mother was also weeping so bitterly that she had become blind. All the cows were dying, and many were on the verge of death. None of the calves were taking milk from the udders of their mothers. The cuckoos were not singing, and even the peacocks were not dancing, all because Kṛṣṇa was not there. Looking at all this,

Kṛṣṇa began to cry, “O Yaśodā Maiyā! O Nanda Bābā!” He became immersed in separation, crying, “O *gopīs*, O Rādhe, O Lalite!”

In the meantime Kṛṣṇa’s bosom friend Uddhava came. He had been searching for Kṛṣṇa, and now he saw Him sitting there, weeping very bitterly.

*vṛṣṇīnām pravaro mantrī  
kṛṣṇasya dayitaḥ sakhā  
śiṣyo bṛhaspateḥ sāksād  
uddhavo buddhi-sattamaḥ*  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.46.1)

This means that Uddhava was the highest in rank, the best in every respect, in all of Mathurā. He was the most intelligent of all the Yādavas. He was Kṛṣṇa’s prime minister, he was *dayitaḥ*, very near and dear to Kṛṣṇa, he was *sakhā*, His friend, he was *śiṣya*, His disciple, and he was *bṛhaspateḥ sāksād śiṣya*, the direct disciple of Bṛhaspati. He is said to be like Bṛhaspati, but actually he is greater than Bṛhaspati because Bṛhaspati is only the priest of the demigods.

Kṛṣṇa took Uddhava’s hands and put them in His own. Uddhava wanted to pacify Him, but he had no words to do so. “Why is Kṛṣṇa weeping? For whom is He weeping?” At that time Uddhava did not know the glories of the *gopīs*; therefore, he could not realize the *virahānala*, the fire of separation, within Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa’s heart was burning, and because no one was qualified to save Him, it only kept burning, burning, and burning. Uddhava asked, “O friend, why are You weeping?”

Kṛṣṇa said,

*gacchoddhava vrajaṁ saumya  
pitror nau prītim āvaha  
gopīnām mad-viyogādhiṁ  
mat-sandేశair vimocaya*  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.46.3)

“Uddhava, you are My friend, My prime minister, and My all-in-all. In some respects you are more dear to Me than Baladeva Prabhu, what to speak of Lakṣmī and other dear ones. You are My heart and I am your heart. I do not know anyone but you. So I am telling this secret thing to you only. O Saumya, you should go to Vraja, Vṛndāvana and Nandagāon.”

*Saumya* means ‘soft and pleasing like the moon.’ *Saumya pitror nau*. Kṛṣṇa says, *pitror nau*, meaning ‘our father.’ He may say, ‘My father’, so why does He say, ‘our father’? It is because He thinks that Uddhava is His brother.

And who is their father? *Pitror* here means both mother and father and is used for Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā. Kṛṣṇa is in Mathurā, in the palace of Vasudeva and Devakī, and they are present there. But still He is telling Uddhava, “My father and My mother, Nanda and Yaśodā, are very unhappy, feeling the fire of separation from Me. You must go there”. *Prītim āvaha*: “You should pacify them.” If Kṛṣṇa is the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, why would He say this?

Now Uddhava is thinking, “I know that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, but why is He speaking like this? It may be that He is only partly the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, but fully the son of Nanda and Yaśodā.”

Sometimes, at first, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja wrote that Kṛṣṇa was the adopted son of Nanda and Yaśodā. But later, he explained this understanding. He is a follower of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. He knew this fact from the beginning [that Kṛṣṇa was fully the son of Nanda and Yaśodā], and gradually, like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, he disclosed it. All Vrajavāsīs know definitely that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda and Yaśodā, not the son of Vasudeva and Devakī. Uddhava was astonished. “Oh, now Kṛṣṇa is admitting that He is the son of Nanda and Yaśodā. I must pacify them.”

Why has Kṛṣṇa first mentioned His mother and father? He wanted Uddhava to know that “My mother and father are so dear to Me, but a greater secret is that My *gopīs* are the most dear.”

This is why He spoke in this way. *Gopīnām mad-viyogādhiṁ mat-sandeśair vimocaya*: “You should go and take My message to the *gopīs*. They are feeling so much separation from Me, more than Nanda and Yaśodā. So you should go and pacify them, not with your logic, not with your *tattva*, not with your intelligence, but with what? One can only pacify others by giving them My words, *mat-sandeśair*, My message. You should repeat it as it is, as I am telling it, without mixing it with anything else and without missing a single word. Go to the *gopīs* and give them My message. Then they may be pacified.”

### Kṛṣṇa Glorifies the Gopīs

Kṛṣṇa is admiring and glorifying the *gopīs* with His own words:

*tā man-manaskā mat-prāṇā  
mat-arthe tyakta-daihikāḥ  
mām eva dayitaṁ preṣṭham  
ātmānaṁ manasā gatāḥ  
ye tyakta-loka-dharmāś ca  
mad-arthe tān bibharmy aham*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.46.4)

The minds of those *gopīs* are always absorbed in Me, and their very lives are ever devoted to Me. For My sake they have abandoned everything related to their bodies, renouncing ordinary happiness in this life, as well as religious duties necessary for such happiness in the next life. I alone am their dearmost beloved and, indeed, their very Self. I personally sustain such devotees, who for My sake give up all worldly duties.\*

Here is the glory of the *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa Himself accepts and reveals their glories. I think there is no one in this whole world who can glorify the *gopīs* like Kṛṣṇa can. But even He cannot

aptly glorify them. That is why, to understand their glories, He took the beauty and mood of Rādhikā. He made Viśākhā-devī His *śikṣā-guru*, and through her, He learned something. Then, in that form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He could glorify Rādhikā and the *gopīs* even more than He could in His form of Kṛṣṇa. Only Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu could do this. If Caitanya Mahāprabhu had not descended to this world, no one would have any idea how to glorify Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, especially Rādhā. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave this gift, and we are so lucky to have come in His line. Kṛṣṇa describes all the *gopīs* as *tā man-manaskā*. “They have engaged their entire minds in Me. They are totally absorbed in Me and nothing else throughout the day and night, twenty-four hours a day.” How?

[To one devotee:] You should tell the story in brief.

[A devotee relates a story that appears in *Nectar of Govinda-līlā*. A newly married *gopī* wanted to see Kṛṣṇa, but her mother-in-law would not allow her to, so she peeked at Kṛṣṇa from behind a door. Kṛṣṇa arranged for a calf to run in her direction. He followed that ‘stray’ calf, came close to the *gopī*, and stole her heart. After that she lost her mind. When she was asked to churn yogurt, she churned mustard seeds. When she was asked to fetch water and given a small baby to look after, she went to put the baby in the well, thinking the baby to be the water pot, but someone stopped her.]

*Man-manaskā mat-prāṇā*. *Mat-prāṇā* means, “I am their *prāṇa*, their life.” Because Kṛṣṇa is the life of the *gopīs*, they would have died without Him when He left Vṛndāvana for Mathurā, but they did not die. Why? Because He was indeed their very life [meaning, they lived for Him]. *Mat-prāṇā* also means, “All the *gopīs* are My very life, My *priya*, dear ones.”

“*Mad-arthe tyakta-daihikāḥ* – for Me they have given up all *deha* and *daihikāḥ*, their bodily conception of life and all those things related to their bodies, like their decorations, their taking of food,

and all other activities. *Mām eva dayitam* – I am their only beloved; no one else is. *Preṣṭam* – I am their dearest. *Manasā gatāḥ* – they are totally absorbed in Me. *Ye tyakta-loka-dharmāś ca mad-arthe tān bibharmy aham* – they have given up all their shyness, *dharma*, *varṇāśrama-dharma*, husbands, and everything else for Me. Therefore, I must support and nourish them. I must nourish and serve at all times those who have left everything for Me.”

This is Kṛṣṇa’s promise. Always remember this. If you are giving up all worldly things, always remembering Kṛṣṇa and remaining absorbed in Him, you should have no doubt that He will surely support and nourish you. Do not be worried about your support, nourishment, or anything else. We depend on our relatives, but at the time of death they cannot save us. Only Kṛṣṇa can save us. Kṛṣṇa is saying, “I must support and nourish them, Uddhava. That is why you must go there.”

*mayi tāḥ preyasām preṣṭhe  
dūra-sṭhe gokula-striyaḥ  
smarantyo ’ṅga vimuhyanti  
virahautkaṅṭhya-vihvalāḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.46.5)*

My dear Uddhava, for those women of Gokula I am the most cherished object of love. Thus, when they remember Me who am so far away, they are overwhelmed by the anxiety of separation.\*

“The *gopīs* wander here and there, feeling so much separation from Me. They cannot perform any household duties and they do not even take any *prasāda* remnants. They are always waiting.”

What do they wait for? Kṛṣṇa had promised, “I am coming the day after tomorrow.” They are all waiting only for that. They thought, “Oh, the day after tomorrow, the day after tomorrow. Kṛṣṇa has said that He will return when the day after tomorrow

comes... tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow.” None of the *gopīs* entered their house in Vraja. Where were they? In the forest of Nandagāon, Kadamba Ṭer, Kadamba-kyārī or Uddhava-kyārī. No one saw them there. It was only by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, or Yogamāyā, that Uddhava saw them.

*dhārayanty ati-kṛcchreṇa  
prāyaḥ prāṇān kathañcana  
pratyāgamana-sandeśair  
ballavyo me mad-ātmikāḥ*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.46.6)*

It is by their trust in My statement, ‘I will come,’ that the *gopīs* are maintaining their lives somehow or other, with great difficulty, and are waiting for Me.

The *gopīs* are keeping their life only because Kṛṣṇa has promised to come. They know that He must come. But when will He come? Tomorrow, tomorrow. That is why they are waiting and remaining alive. They consider, “If we die, then when Kṛṣṇa comes, He will not see us and He will also die.” Only to please Kṛṣṇa, to ensure that He would not be unhappy, do they somehow keep their life.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa said to Uddhava, “You should go there.” He gave him His *vaijayantī-mālā* (garland), along with His golden crown, garments, saffron cloth, and also the golden chariot of Kamsa. He walked along the path with Uddhava, talking about the *gopīs*, Nanda Bābā, and other topics. Uddhava saw that it was becoming late, so he climbed onto the chariot, whipped the horses, and drove off. Kṛṣṇa simply stood there, looking toward the *ratha* (chariot). When the *ratha* was out of sight, He looked toward the dust that came from its wheels. And when the dust subsided, His only thoughts were of the *gopīs*. At that time, someone came and took Him back to the palace.

Tomorrow we will discuss how Uddhava went to Vṛndāvana, what dialogue transpired, and what he saw there. You only have to hear and try to remember all these topics about the glories of the *gopīs*, and especially the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came only to give this teaching. He gave it to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī explained it to Jīva Gosvāmī. Mahāprabhu also explained it to Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also received it. Then they expressed it in their explanations of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Try to remember all these things. This is called *bhajana*.

### Take These Teachings with You

[Devotees then performed a drama about the life of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.]

I think that our coming here to New Vraja, our classes, and the very sweet dramas, have been successful. These classes and dramas, especially about the teachings of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, his life and his process of *bhajana*, will touch the heart of all pure devotees. Take all we have discussed with you when you return to your home. You must return, but take this powerful nectar of *hari-kathā*. Remember it all, and try to do *bhajana* in the process of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. You can read his *Manah-sikṣā*, along with the explanation of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and follow the instructions of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī:

*tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-  
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya  
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī  
kālaṁ nayed akhilam ity upadeśa-sāram*

*Upadeśāmṛta* (8)

While living in Vraja as a follower of the eternal residents of Vraja, who possess inherent spontaneous love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

one should utilize all his time by sequentially engaging the tongue and the mind in meticulous chanting and remembrance of Kṛṣṇa's names, form, qualities, and pastimes. This is the essence of all instruction.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī followed the teachings in this *śloka*, and you saw in the drama how he prayed to Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī:

*śrī-rūpa-mañjarī-karārcita-pāda-padma-  
goṣṭhendra-nandana-bhujārpita-mastakāyāḥ  
hā modataḥ kanaka-gauri-padāravinda  
samvāhanāni śanakais tava kiṁ kariṣye*

*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (72)*

O Rūpa Mañjarī, when, golden-complexioned Rādhikā is lying with Her head in Kṛṣṇa's lap and Her feet in your lap as you massage them, will you, [with an indication] from the corners of your eyes, give me your *mahā-prasādam sevā* of gently massaging Her feet while you fan Her?

Śrīmatī Rādhikā was laying with Her head in the lap of Kṛṣṇa. In their *siddha-deha*, spiritual forms, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī as Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in the form of Śrī Rati Mañjarī, were there. Rūpa Mañjarī called Rati Mañjarī and gave her the remnants of her service. How glorious this is.

A strong desire, or greed, for the goal of life may come only by the association of exalted *rūpānuga* devotees. It will never come by performing regulative *bhakti*. So try to come in the process of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Try to follow like my *brahmacārīs* here and in India. I am proud of them, and I will be proud if you will be ideal *brahmacārīs*, *sannyāsīs*, *gṛhasṭhas*, and lady devotees.

Try to take this and follow it your whole life. Never deviate. Take it with you in your heart forever. Be very strong. If you

are weak, remember Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and your *gurudeva*, and remember how powerful your *gurudeva* is. In this way you will never deviate. Do not make any problems for anyone. Always beat your mind with many *daṇḍas*, bamboo sticks. This mind is the root of all evil. Try to control the horse of the uncontrolled mind, and then everyone will be so happy and you will be good devotees.

## ❧ CHAPTER SEVEN ❧

# Come with Me to Vṛndāvana

### Pure Happiness

**C**ome with me to Vṛndāvana and Mathurā. Concentrate your mind. Among all the human beings in this world, not one is happy or satisfied. You may be living in America, you may be today's richest person, or you may be making so much money. Your house may be full of all kinds of comforts and opulent paraphernalia. You may have a very beautiful wife, and perhaps after being married for one or two years, you have selected a new wife. You may also have very good and qualified children, as well as two, three, four, or five dogs.

Everything may be okay, but still so many problems come. Everyone is suffering. Those who are rich suffer more than anyone. This life is full of miseries, problems, difficulties, sorrows, sufferings, and diseases. No one is free from tasting the varieties [of suffering]. I think that there are so many rich people among you, but can any of you raise your hand and say, "I have never had any problem?" Can you say, "I am without problems and am always happy"? This morning one of you told me you were sick. In this world, no one is happy, whether he be a king, a prime minister, a president, or anything else.

All *jīvas* want pure happiness, but that desire is absurd in this *māyā-saṁsāra* (material world). We always want happiness to come to us, but as stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*śrī-prabuddha uvāca*  
*karmāṇy ārabhamāṇānām*  
*duḥkha-hatyai sukhāya ca*  
*paśyēt pāka-viparyāsaṁ*  
*mithunī-cāriṇām nṛṇām*  
*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.3.18)*

Accepting the roles of male and female in human society, the conditioned souls unite in sexual relationships. Thus they constantly make material endeavors to eliminate their unhappiness and unlimitedly increase their pleasure. But one should see that they inevitably achieve exactly the opposite result. In other words, their happiness inevitably vanishes, and as they grow older their material discomfort increases.\*

Everyone in the world tries for happiness, either alone or with the association of wife, a husband, an entire family, or others. And sometimes they associate with members of the United Nations, who cannot check war, although they may try. Because the members themselves have so many problems, how can they solve the problems of others? It is therefore stated in the Vedic scriptures that although we try for happiness, our suffering is so strong that it keeps its feet on our head, and we are forcibly bound to taste it. Can you have a remedy to help you escape from old age? Never. From death? Never. Everyone wants to be happy, but will mere wanting be enough?

At the same time, it cannot be said that people are always unhappy and without even a little happiness. Happiness is there, but it is very small. It passes quickly, and again suffering and

problems come like waves. We think, “We will solve this problem and then we will be happy.” In the meantime, however, we see that even bigger problems have come.

On the day of your marriage, you see your new bride and think, “Oh, very beautiful, very beautiful.” The next day, however, you see that she wants ornaments and many other things. Moreover, she will try to control you by saying, “You should not love anyone else,” or “you have to do as I say.” In this way so many problems arise.

So in this world there is no pure happiness. Somehow we want pure happiness. Pure happiness certainly exists, but not in this world. A happiness that is beyond this world is called *brahmānanda* (the bliss of Brahman), the happiness a *jīva* can taste within himself when he attains salvation. In *brahmānanda*, there is no distress at all, but *brahmānanda*, also, is not pure. It is not a positive condition; it is negative.

What do I mean by negative? If one man catches hold of another and goes to choke him, the captured person cries, “Save me! Save me!” Just as he is about to die, someone may come and save him. He stands up, takes several deep breaths and gasps, “I have been saved. Now I have been saved!”

This is like salvation, or the happiness of *brahmānanda*. Liberation from suffering is not positive happiness. Only a devotee surrendered to Kṛṣṇa can be happy. But he will never say that he is happy. What will he say? “Oh, I have a very big problem. Why am I alive? Why am I not dying due to being bereft of Kṛṣṇa’s *darśana*?”

If you serve Kṛṣṇa, that is real happiness. Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of *ānanda* (spiritual bliss). You may think, “I am *pūrṇānanda* (full of delight) and I am *brahma* (spirit). But if you do not follow Kṛṣṇa, if you are not serving, chanting, and remembering Him, you cannot be happy in any way. This positive happiness is not called *brahmānanda*. It is called *prema*, love and affection for Kṛṣṇa, and there are many kinds of *prema*.

## Kṛṣṇa ‘Transforms’ into the Śāstras

Real happiness is to serve Kṛṣṇa with the love and affection of the *gopīs*. By serving Him, they experience so much pure *ānanda*. Really, this is the love and affection we want, but we do not know what it is. For those who want to be happy, Kṛṣṇa has transformed into *śāstra*. In other words, He has manifested Himself as *śāstra*. In *śāstra* it is written, “If you follow My instructions, you can have that kind of love and affection.” Among all *śāstras*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is *amala-śāstra* (the pure, spotless scripture), the *śāstra* you can rely upon and believe in. It cannot cheat you, because it is the embodiment of Kṛṣṇa Himself.

All *śāstras* state that by chanting, remembering, and performing *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa, to Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will be happy. Then certainly you will also be happy. But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says something that appears different. It states, “O *jīvas*, you have no power. You will never have the qualification to serve Kṛṣṇa. You are powerless; you will not be able to call Him.”

All the *śāstras* have explained that you should remember and call out to Kṛṣṇa. “*Harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā* – there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way but chanting the holy names.” This has been stated in *Bṛhad-nārādīya Purāṇa*, *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, and other *Purāṇas*, but not in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

All *śāstras* say, “You should do *bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa.” But what does *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* say? “You cannot call Kṛṣṇa; Kṛṣṇa has descended to call you.” He is so merciful. Out of mercy He has descended to this world. You cannot go there [to the spiritual world] and just start to serve. Can you go to Vṛndāvana, Gokula, or Śvetadvīpa (Navadvīpa-dhāma in the spiritual world) and call for Him? But the Kṛṣṇa of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is so merciful that He took His flute and descended to this earth, to Vṛndāvana, calling to all, “Come on, come on, come on!”

The real *guru* says, “You need only give me your ears. I do not want your wealth or anything else. I only want to purify your ears. Through the medium of your ears, I will put something in your heart that will make you happy forever. Transcendental happiness will come to you. Besides this, there is no other process by which you will be happy. You are crying for Kṛṣṇa, but your crying has no power.” How are you crying? The following story is an example of this.

Once, there was a very beautiful, powerful *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class in process, and many devotees were present. The speaker of the *hari-kathā* had a long beard and long hair, which was quite white. He was saying this and that, and everyone was attentively hearing. An old lady was also sitting there, and she was weeping. Her tears fell constantly. When the *sādhu-bābā* finished the class, those who had attended gradually left, but that lady remained there. He called to her, “O Mother, you are a very high-class devotee. My *hari-kathā* has touched your heart. Why are you weeping so bitterly?”

The lady’s weeping increased and she replied, “Bābā, what can I say? I had a male goat. He was so strong, and he had a long beard just like yours. Sometimes I would give him something to eat and he happily ate, his beard moving in a way that is similar yours when you speak. So, Bābā, when you tell *hari-kathā*, I always remember that goat. But he was stolen from me, and I do not know what to do. I am weeping for that goat.”

Our calling to Kṛṣṇa is like this. It may seem like a semblance of pure chanting, but actually, it is not even a semblance. It is *pratibimba*, a reflection. Our hankering should be pure. At this stage we cannot have that kind of sincere prayer. Our prayers should be in a mood of separation, from the core of our heart. Kṛṣṇa has this mood ten million times more than us. He is weeping for us. He is the father of the father of all fathers, the beloved of the beloved of all beloveds. With much love and affection for us

He thinks, “Having forgotten Me, they are greatly suffering. They cannot come to Me, they cannot even call Me by weeping bitterly, and their hearts are not melting. Therefore I must go to them.” This is why Kṛṣṇa descended with His flute and all His beauty. He took the essence of all beauty and descended. He is calling us, but we do not hear Him. Try to realize this.

### Feeling Separation

*dr̥ṣṭvā kumudvantam akhaṇḍa-maṇḍalam  
ramānanābham nava-kuṅkumāruṇam  
vanam ca tat-komala-gobhī rañjitam  
jagau kalam vāma-dṛśām manoharam  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.29.3)*

Lord Kṛṣṇa saw the unbroken disk of the full moon glowing with the red effulgence of newly-applied vermillion, as if it were the face of the goddess of fortune. He also saw the *kumuda* lotuses opening in response to the moon’s presence and the forest gently illumined by its rays. Thus the Lord began to play sweetly on His flute, attracting the minds of the beautiful-eyed *gopīs*.\*

Kṛṣṇa took His flute and called the *gopīs* by playing *klīm*. We are not so qualified, however. We cannot hear this sound, nor can we call Him. This is why He came in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, only to call us. For this reason Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu traveled here and there and took *sannyāsa*. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has stated:

*nigama-kalpa-taror galitam phalam  
śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṁyutam  
pibata bhāgavatam rasam ālayam  
muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ  
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.3)*

O expert and thoughtful men, relish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literatures. It emanated from the lips of Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Therefore this fruit has become even more tasteful, although its nectarean juice was already relishable for all, including liberated souls.\*

Kṛṣṇa is like a fruit, a *nigama-kalpa-taror*, the fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literature, with no skin, no pit, and no stringy fiber. In Him, there is nothing besides *rasa*. He was brought through the *guru-paramparā* by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī and has descended to this world to call to us: “Do not suffer. Be happy. Be blessed by transcendental happiness.” But we are not qualified even to desire transcendental happiness.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* questions all the other Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, *Mahābhārata*, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and so on by asking, “*Kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema* – How shall I take shelter of anyone more merciful than Kṛṣṇa?” None reply, and therefore *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.23) itself says:

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ  
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī  
lebhe gatiṁ dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyam  
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema*

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

The demon Pūtanā was accustomed to eating the flesh and fresh blood of babies anywhere. When she went to kill baby Kṛṣṇa, however, He gave her a spiritual body and sent her to Goloka, which is even greater than Vaikuṅṭha. Therefore, we should try to serve Kṛṣṇa and hear about Him. We should become qualified

by taking shelter of any qualified devotee or *guru*. Without such a *guru* we cannot make advancement. The *śāstras* have stated that all humans want happiness and that they want to meet with Kṛṣṇa. But *Bhāgavatam* tells us that Bhagavān wants the *jīva*. All *śāstras* have stated that when Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā, the *gopīs* were feeling separation. The *gopīs* sent a *haṁsa*, a swan, to Mathurā, to let Kṛṣṇa know how they were suffering in their separation from Him.

But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says something else: Kṛṣṇa was suffering so much that He had to send Uddhava, His messenger, to Vṛndāvana. Do you understand? The *gopīs* did not send any messenger; Kṛṣṇa sent one. Generally we hear that it is the *bhakta* that is always suffering, weeping, feeling separation, and hankering for Bhagavān. But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says the opposite: Kṛṣṇa is hankering for His devotees, always. He is always calling, “O Mother! Mother!” When Brahmā stole Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd boys, Kṛṣṇa searched for them. Kṛṣṇa is searching for us, but we are so unqualified that we cannot hear His flute or call out to Him with our heart. Although we should try, we can only really call out when our heart is empty and we have taken the shelter of an exalted devotee.

## Kṛṣṇa’s Separation from Vṛndāvana

Earlier I asked five or six questions. First, Vraja, Vṛndāvana, Gokula, and other places in Vraja-bhūmi are filled with the highest love and affection. Vṛndāvana is itself *rasa*. So why did Kṛṣṇa leave Vṛndāvana and go to Mathurā and Dvārakā? Just as Kṛṣṇa is the ocean of *rasa* Himself, Vṛndāvana is also the ocean of *rasa*, but still He left Vṛndāvana. Why? Second, if He left, there must have been a cause. If we go anywhere for a special purpose, we return when the purpose is satisfied. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana for a special reason. After Kāmsa was killed, He should

have returned to Vṛndāvana, but He never returned. Why? What is the answer?

Everyone wants to live in that place where he receives the most love and affection, not where he tastes a lower kind of love and affection. For example, if you are eating a *rasagullā* and someone offers you Indian *guḍa* (unrefined sugar) or something similar to eat in its place, you will not accept it. You will want to taste the *rasagullā* only. So why did Kṛṣṇa, who was perfectly loved by the *gopīs*, Mother Yaśodā, Nanda Bābā, and others, leave quickly one day and never return?

The third question is that, even if Kṛṣṇa did not return with the intention of staying in Vraja forever, why didn't He visit from time to time? What would have been the harm? If someone comes to America from India to make money, then as soon as he has made sufficient money, he can return. Even if he does not return permanently, he can still go to India from time to time to meet with his relatives. So why did Kṛṣṇa not go to meet with His relatives, His father and mother? He should have gone, but He did not go at all. He sent a messenger. Why did He not go Himself? A messenger cannot do what Kṛṣṇa can do. Kṛṣṇa knew that by His sending a messenger, the Vrajavāsīs would not be satisfied. He knew, "They will only be satisfied if I go there." Still, He sent the messenger with a letter for them. He told the messenger, "You should give this *sandēśa*, this message, to them."

Even if there were a very important reason for Kṛṣṇa's not returning, there must have been some way that He could have called all the Vrajavāsīs to Mathurā or Dvārakā. There was no lack of space there; there was so much space. Kṛṣṇa can do anything. He can supply all the houses, boarding, and everything else needed, just as He did when He hosted all the Mathurāvāsīs. He could have brought all the Vrajavāsīs there in the same way, and He could have remained in Dvārakā or Mathurā with them. Why did He not bring them?

If you want to know all the answers to all these questions, you will have to go deep into *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with any self-realized devotee who has served his *gurudeva* and the devotees, and who has also served *Bhāgavatam* with *bhāgavatam*. What is the meaning? One must serve *Bhāgavatam* with *bhakta-bhāgavata* (the person *bhāgavata*), because that *mahā-bhāgavata* has the lock and key to understanding the *Bhāgavatam*. Though we want all our queries to be satisfied, how can this happen when we do not want to serve any *mahā-bhāgavata* or give honor to all others? Still, Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that He sends to this world His devotees of various kinds (like the *śikṣā-guru* and the *dīkṣā-guru*), and says to them, “Oh, go and give them some answers so that they, also, may become pure devotees.”

### Why Kṛṣṇa did not Return to Vṛndāvana

Now we will explain the answers to our questions. The first question was, “Why did Kṛṣṇa leave Vṛndāvana?” I explained one reason: the *līlā* (pastime) at *Prema-sarovara*. Kṛṣṇa was very worried, thinking, “When the *gopīs* are with Me, they feel an intense mood of separation in anticipation of the future. In *mahābhāva*, in *prema-vaicittya*, they become as though lifeless.”

You cannot imagine all these feelings and how the *gopīs’* heart was burning in the fire of separation. On considering the *gopīs’* burning heart, Kṛṣṇa thought, “If I leave Vṛndāvana they will still feel separation, but in that type of separation they will meet with Me, in a dream or in another way. They will see a *tamāla* tree and embrace it as though it were Me. They will think, ‘Oh, we are meeting with Kṛṣṇa.’ Then they will become happy. They will again take their meals and decorate themselves. Therefore I must leave Vraja.”

It is true that everyone wants to be where there is plenty of *ānanda*, happiness. No one wants to go to a place where there

is less happiness and less love and affection. But this is not the nature of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His nature is somewhat different. He has hundreds of thousands of devotees everywhere. Some of the devotees in Mathurā were given great suffering by Kāṁsa. In fact, Devakī and Vasudeva had been suffering from the very day of their marriage ceremony. After their marriage, eight sons were born to them, including Kṛṣṇa. In this way, about eight years passed. After that, an additional ten years and eight months passed, because Kṛṣṇa lived in Vraja for that long. Therefore, it may be that Vasudeva and Devakī were being tortured by Kāṁsa for about nineteen years. So many persons left Mathurā to live here and there, and those who remained were always weeping and suffering. How could Kṛṣṇa neglect them? He could not. He certainly cared for them also. If He did not, He would not be all merciful.

The Pāṇḍavas were also weeping. Kuntī was crying to Kṛṣṇa to come and help them. Draupadī had also called to Him, crying, “Oh, I am going to be put to shame in front of everyone.” Her hands upraised, she had bitterly called out “O Govinda! I am totally surrendered to You.” She closed her eyes and thought, “Whatever will happen will happen.”

Under these circumstances, how can Kṛṣṇa play in *rāsa-līlā* at Varṁsī-vaṭa in Vṛndāvana? He also has to save Draupadī. If any *bhakta* calls Him anywhere in this world, He cannot remain aloof. If He were to do so, He would have to give up His name, *bhakta-vātsalya*, He who gives mercy to His devotees. He has to take care of all the devotees, even though He is tasting so much *rāsa* in Vṛndāvana. That is also why He went to Mathurā.

There is something more. Kṛṣṇa has promised: “*ye yathā mām prapadyante tāmś tathaiva bhajāmy aham* — according to the service rendered to Me by My devotees, I will have to repay them” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11). It was only to the *gopīs* that He could not keep this promise. To all others He could keep it, but to the *gopīs*

it was not at all possible. There is surely no comparison between any devotee in the entire world and the Vrajavāsīs. No one can compare to Mother Yaśodā, Subala, Śrīdāma, or to the *gopīs* such as Lalitā and Viśākhā. There is no comparison.

On the other hand, Devakī and Vasudeva had also performed very severe austerities in their past births as Sutapā and Pṛṣṇi. They kept their head on the ground and stood on one hand, while keeping their feet high in the air. They remained without breathing any air or drinking any water during the heat of summer, the cold of winter, the rainy season, and so on. They continued doing this for more than sixty thousand years. Dhruva had practiced his austerities for six months, and during the last month he fasted even from air. But Sutapā and Pṛṣṇi did this for more than sixty thousand years. And now, in the form of Vasudeva and Devakī, they were calling [to Kṛṣṇa]. Would Kṛṣṇa not have heard? He must have heard. This was another reason He had to go to Mathurā.

Now I will answer the second question. If Kṛṣṇa fulfilled His reason for coming, which was to save Vasudeva and Devakī and to kill Kaṁsa, then He should have returned to Vṛndāvana when He had done that. But how could He? All the Yaduvāsīs and Mathurāvāsīs had scattered due to fear of Kaṁsa, and the whole kingdom was in disorder. Kṛṣṇa therefore, gave the kingdom to Ugrasena Mahārāja and made him king. But Ugrasena was very old and powerless, so Kṛṣṇa Himself had to manage the affairs of the kingdom.

There were two wives of Kaṁsa: Asti and Prāpti. They went to their father Jarāsandha, a very big demon who was even more powerful than Kaṁsa, Duryodhana, and all others, and told him that his son-in-law Kaṁsa had been killed by Kṛṣṇa for no reason; he was innocent. They claimed that Kaṁsa had simply been sitting on the throne when all of a sudden Kṛṣṇa jumped up, grabbed him, and killed him without any cause. Jarāsandha became very unhappy to hear this. He therefore took his soldiers, numbering

more than those in the Mahābhārata army, millions upon millions, and invaded Mathurā, not only once, but eighteen times.

Kṛṣṇa thus decided, “What would happen if I were to go to Vraja? Everyone there would be killed by Jarāsandha.” So He could not go there. He wanted to go, but He considered that if Jarāsandha became aware of this, he would think, “All the Vrajavāsīs are truly loved by Kṛṣṇa; they are so dear to Him, so I must smash Vṛndāvana.” In Vṛndāvana there were no soldiers, no army, no fort – no protection at all – and the Vrajavāsīs are not warriors. They are very innocent; they simply graze the cows. Jarāsandha would have been able to come and smash all of Vṛndāvana in just one day.

Nanda Bābā knew this fact, so when Kṛṣṇa met with him after killing Kāmsa, He whispered in his ear, “Do not be upset. I will come. After destroying Jarāsandha and all the other demons I will come. I must. But if I come now, Jarāsandha will come to know, and after a while his soldiers will attack the Vrajavāsīs and everything in Vṛndāvana will be destroyed. I will not be able to save you. There is no fort there, no army, nothing.”

There was yet another reason why Kṛṣṇa did not return to Vṛndāvana. Vasudeva and Devakī knew very well that a person who goes elsewhere to perform a job or duty will return to his original place when his duty is completed. Similarly, if Kṛṣṇa, who came from Vṛndāvana, were to have returned to Vṛndāvana, He would never have gone back to Mathurā and Dvārakā. But if Kṛṣṇa were to say, “I am going to Indraprastha, I am going to Mithilā, I am going here and there,” Vasudeva and Devakī would never object. They would say, “All right, You may go. Return very quickly.” But if Kṛṣṇa had requested permission from Devakī and Vasudeva to quickly go to Vṛndāvana and then return, they would have become very worried and would have wept. They would not have responded at all and would not have given permission. Why not?

Vṛndāvana is *rasamayī-bhūmi* (the land of eternal loving relationships). Devakī and Vasudeva knew that Kṛṣṇa would not

be going there to complete any duty or job, and that if He went, He would have become totally absorbed in *rasa* (transcendental mellows). Kṛṣṇa is Himself *rasa*, and all the *gopas* and *gopīs* are also *rasa*. Therefore He would not return. If Kṛṣṇa were to ask, “May I go to Vṛndāvana?” then Devakī and Vasudeva would have begun to weep bitterly. Not only Devakī and Vasudeva would weep, but all of the Mathurāvāsīs would also and feel that they would die that very day. This is why He could not go to Vṛndāvana, even though He sometimes wanted to go.

If Kṛṣṇa had gone to Vṛndāvana every now and then and met with the Vrajavāsīs, He could have easily returned, because Vṛndāvana is only a distance of two fingers from Mathurā. The two places are so near that they border each other. Besides this [if He wanted to], He could have even gone to Goloka Vṛndāvana, Mithilā, or Dvārakā in a moment. Why, then, could He not travel an hour or two to Vṛndāvana? He never went. Why? If He had gone back for a even a moment, the separation mood of the *gopīs* and *gopas* would have increased hundreds of thousands of times and not subsided. Why? If there is a flame in a lamp, it may be extinguished by a little wind, but if a fire is very big, like a forest fire, can it be extinguished by the wind? Instead, the wind will increase the fire more and more.

The fire of separation in the heart of the *gopīs* and *gopas* is like this. It is not like the very little flame from a ghee-lamp, which dwindles. If you put a frying pan on a stove, the frying pan becomes reddish, and if at that time you put one drop of water on it, what happens? ‘Chhhhhhhunt.’ If that water splashes on you anywhere, you will be burned. The fire of the mood of separation in Vṛndāvana is like this. If Kṛṣṇa were to have gone there for a moment or for one or two days, the Vrajavāsīs would have burned more. And after He had left again, they would have died at once. For this reason, also, He does not return to Vṛndāvana.

## The Opposing Moods of Mathurā and Vṛndāvana

Someone may say that Kṛṣṇa should bring His father, mother, and all the *gopīs*, *sakhas*, and *gopas* to Mathurā, but this would create a very difficult situation; there would be some danger. What danger? *Rasa-saṅkaṭa*, the danger of overlapping *rasas*, a contradiction of mellows. In Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa is like a cowherd boy. He is only the son of Nanda Bābā, He is without shoes or an umbrella, and He serves all the cows, as well as Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā. In Mathurā He has no flute and no stick, and He is not a cowherd boy. There, He is a very powerful *kṣatriya* king. What kind of king? He is like an emperor, or rather, the emperor of emperors. No one can challenge Him there. But in Vṛndāvana, all the Vrajavāsīs challenge Him.

So what would happen if the Vrajavāsīs came to Mathurā? Would Kṛṣṇa be able to keep His peacock feather on His head and His flute in His hand? What would He say if Nanda Bābā were to come to Mathurā? Who would He address as His father and mother – Devakī and Vasudeva, or Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā? And with whom would He spend the night – the *gopīs* or Satyabhāmā and Rukmiṇī? They would all fight.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.43.17) states that in Mathurā, Kṛṣṇa is *para-devatā*, the Lord of lords, for all the Yādavas. *Para-devatā* means *vṛṣṇīnām para-devateti*. He is the King of kings and is worshipful for all the Mathurāvāsīs. In Vṛndāvana He is *sva-jana*, simply the son of Nanda Bābā, simply the friend of the cowherd boys, and simply the beloved of the *gopīs*. He is not *para-devatā*. No *gopa* will worship Him. Yaśodā Maiyā never worshiped Him, and the *gopīs* only worship Him with abuses. They say to Him, “You are *kālā* (black). You are a *lampaṭa* (womanizer), a *cora* (thief), and You are black-hearted.” This is their worship. If all the *gopīs* go to Mathurā and abuse Kṛṣṇa in this way in front of

all the Yādavas, what would happen? There would be no solution to the problems that would arise.

In Mathurā, Kṛṣṇa is worshipful for all the Yādavas, even for Uddhava, Akrūra, and King Ugrasena. But in Vṛndāvana, *gopas* like Śrīdāmā and Subala climb onto His shoulders and say, “O my horse, go on, go on! Eh, eh, quickly, quickly, quickly, run!” But if Śrīdāmā and Subala were to go to Mathurā and make Kṛṣṇa be their horse front of all the Yādavas, there would be a big problem.

Devakī and Vasudeva cannot accept *praṇāma* (obeisances), from Kṛṣṇa. Why not? They believe that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore they have awe and reverence for Him. They have seen His four-armed form. In Vṛndāvana, on the other hand, Nanda Bābā tells Kṛṣṇa, “Oh, bring my *padāukā* (shoes).” Kṛṣṇa puts those shoes on His head and comes to His father, dancing. But if Nanda Bābā were in Mathurā and if, in front of all the Yādavas, he were to order Kṛṣṇa, “O my son, You should bring my shoes,” would He bring those shoes? He would be confused about what to do.

Moreover, in Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa is with all the *gopīs*, like Rādhikā, Lalitā, and Viśākhā. Can He sit with Rādhikā or perform *rāsa-līlā* in Mathurā, in front of the Yādus? Can He massage the feet of Rādhikā in front of them? He cannot. This is *rasa-sankula*, a congestion of mellows. How would Kṛṣṇa reconcile all these things? He would be in a dilemma. Therefore He does not bring anyone to Mathurā from Vṛndāvana.

Kṛṣṇa is thinking, “What should I do?” Due to the circumstances, He cannot go to Vṛndāvana. However, if He sometimes sends His messenger to pacify His father and mother, then, at the same time, His messenger can learn something there. This is the most important reason for Kṛṣṇa’s sending Uddhava: so that he can be admitted into the school of the *gopīs*. Here, Kṛṣṇa is thinking that Uddhava should be admitted into that school and learn the truths about their *prema*. Although Uddhava cannot realize these

truths, he can try to learn; he should go there and be admitted. Lalitā and Viśākhā are the teachers and Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself is the principal. Kṛṣṇa is thinking that Uddhava should be admitted into that school and learn the truths about their *prema*. Although Uddhava cannot realize these truths, he can try to learn. He should go there and be admitted.

Uddhava cannot possibly know all the consonants and vowels (*svara* and *vyañjana*) of Vṛndāvana; he can never learn that. He need only know two-and-a-half letters: *prema*. [In written Sanskrit, the word *prema* has two-and-a-half letters.] In English there is no word like this.

In this way, Kṛṣṇa sent Uddhava to Vṛndāvana so that he would learn something about *prema*. Kṛṣṇa considered, “When this messenger becomes qualified, he will come back here and I will be able to share some of My suffering with him. Therefore he should be sent.” His main purpose in sending Uddhava was not that He required a messenger; but rather that He wanted Uddhava to realize a little something of Vraja *prema*. “When he returns and sees Me weep, he will realize why I am weeping and why I am suffering, then I can distribute some of My suffering to him.”

## Understanding these Elevated Topics

We should begin from the beginning:

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam  
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam  
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ  
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

*Upadeśāmṛta (1)*

A wise and self-composed person who can subdue the impetus to speak, the agitation of the mind, the onset of anger, the vehemence of the tongue, the urge of the belly,

and the agitation of the genitals can instruct the entire world. In other words, all persons may become disciples of such a self-controlled person.

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti  
guhyam ākhyāti prcchati  
bhuñkte bhojayate caiva  
ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam*

*Upadeśāmṛta (4)*

Offering pure devotees items in accordance with their requirements, accepting *prāsādī*, or remnant items, given by pure devotees, revealing to devotees one's confidential realizations concerning *bhajana*, eating with great love the *prāsada* remnants given by devotees, and lovingly feeding them *prāsada* – these are the six symptoms of loving association with devotees.

There are so many important principles here. Then:

*tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-  
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya  
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī  
kālaṁ nayed akhilam ity upadeśa-sāram*

*Upadeśāmṛta (8)*

While living in Vraja as a follower of the eternal residents of Vraja, who possess inherent spontaneous love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one should utilize all his time by sequentially engaging the tongue and the mind in meticulous chanting and remembrance of Kṛṣṇa's names, form, qualities, and pastimes. This is the essence of all instruction.

[After the lecture a drama was performed from *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*. In the drama, Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā was feeling

so much separation from the Vrajavāsīs that He was not able to perform any of His daily duties. He fainted and was then taken to Nava-Vṛndāvana (New Vṛndāvana, in Dvārakā) and dressed as a *gopa* with peacock feather and flute. When He regained consciousness, He spoke to *mūrtis* of the Vrajavāsīs. All the Dvārakāvāsīs who witnessed this were astonished. After the drama, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja expressed his appreciation and commented on the significance of the play.]

Really, Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful in Vṛndāvana. By comparison He is not so beautiful in Dvārakā. Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa is hundreds of thousands times more beautiful than Dvārakādhīśa Kṛṣṇa. Even Padmā, an old lady of one hundred ten years (the mother of Kaṁsa and the chaste wife of King Ugrasena), was filled with lust when she saw Kṛṣṇa and wanted to embrace Him, what to speak of others. Satyabhāmā, Rukmiṇī, and all the other queens lost their composure. Kṛṣṇa is so beautiful, the essence of all beauty. He is *manmatha manmatha*, the Cupid of cupids.



A decorative, ornate border with intricate scrollwork and floral motifs surrounds the central text. The border is symmetrical and features a central diamond-shaped element at the top and bottom.

*PART 2*

*EXPLANATIONS OF SONGS  
COMPOSED BY  
ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA*

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## ❧ YAŚOMATĪ-NANDANA ❧

*yaśomatī-nandana, vraja-vara-nāgara,  
gokula-rañjana kāna  
gopī-parāṇa-dhana, madana-manohara,  
kālīya-damana-vidhāna (1)*

Kṛṣṇa is the beloved son of Mother Yaśodā, the topmost hero of Vraja, the delight of Gokula, and Kāna [an affectionate name for Kṛṣṇa]. He is the treasure of the lives of the *gopīs*, the enchanter of Cupid, and the punisher of the serpent Kālīya.

*amala harināma amiya-vilāsā  
vipina-purandara, navīna nāgara-vara,  
vaṁśī-vadana, suvāsā (2)*

These spotless holy names are filled with Kṛṣṇa's nectarean pastimes. He is the king of the forest of Vraja and the supreme youthful lover. He holds the flute to His mouth and wears very beautiful garments.

*vraja-jana-pālana, asura-kula-nāśana,  
nanda-godhana-rākhawālā  
govinda, mādharma, navanīta-taskara,  
sundara nanda-gopālā (3)*

He is the maintainer of the residents of Vraja, the killer of many demons, and the protector of Nanda Mahārāja's herd of cows. He is Govinda (the giver of pleasure to the cows, *gopas*, and *gopīs*) and Mādharma (the consort of the topmost Lakṣmī). He is a butter thief and the beautiful cowherd son of Nanda.

*yāmuna-taṭa-cara, gopī-vasana-hara,  
rāsa-rasika kṛpāmaya  
śrī-rādhā-vallabha, vṛndāvana-naṭavara,  
bhaktivinoda-āśraya (4)*

He wanders along the bank of the Yamunā River. He is the thief who steals the young *gopī*'s clothes, and the enjoyer of the *rasa* of the *rāsa* dance. He is full of mercy, the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the most expert dancer of Vṛndāvana, and the shelter of Bhaktivinoda.

### Sweet Names of Kṛṣṇa

When you sing, try to understand the meaning. Among all *kīrtanas*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Yaśomatī-nandana* and *Vibhāvarī śeṣa, āloka-praveśa, nidrā chāḍī' uṭho jīva bolo hari hari, mukunda murāri, rāma kṛṣṇa hayagrīva* are very elevated. At the time of Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, not everyone was allowed to sing these *kīrtanas*. Only very advanced devotees could sing them, otherwise they were not sung. The moods in them are so high. *Yaśomatī-nandana* is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, covered with *mādhurya* (sweet human-like pastimes). Here, He is not addressed as the Supreme Personality; only as *Yaśomatī-nandana*. He is not even addressed as *Nanda-nandana*.

*Nanda-nandana* is such a sweet name, but I think that *Yaśomatī-nandana* is even more sweet. Why? The devotion and *vātsalya* (parental) love of *Yaśodā* is superior to that of *Nanda Bābā*. The two cannot actually be compared, but for those in *taṭastha* (the neutral position), it is possible to compare them. Every associate of Kṛṣṇa in *Vraja* views their specific *rasa* as most superior.

Who is *Yaśomatī-nandana*? He is that Kṛṣṇa who is controlled by *Yaśodā* and who is always weeping for butter and *capātīs*. Although He weeps, sometimes *Yaśodā* says, "I will not take You

in my lap and I will never give You milk.” Kṛṣṇa throws Himself down, rolls on the earth, and cries, “*Maiyā rī, Maiyā rī! Maī dūdha pīyūṅgā* – O Mother, O Mother! I will drink milk.”

Yaśodā replies, “Oh, You cannot come in my lap. You have now become a thief, a robber. I will never give You milk.”

Kṛṣṇa weeps bitterly. Sometimes Nārada comes and sees this scene. He thinks, “Oh, how fortunate is Yaśodā. Even though Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she thinks He is her own son. She takes hold of Kṛṣṇa and warns Him, ‘You should not do that.’ Chastising Him she says, ‘I will not give You milk.’ ”

In Śrī Nārada’s eyes, Kṛṣṇa is not Yaśodā-nandana. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*, the cause of all causes. Nārada has never seen Kṛṣṇa’s human like *līlā* (pastimes) in his life, and now he is seeing it in Vraja. Sometimes Yaśodā binds Kṛṣṇa to a grinding mortar, and afterwards, she weeps for hours and hours.

It is because of Yaśodā that Śrīmatī Rādhikā comes to the house of Nanda Bābā to cook, and Yaśodā engages Rādhikā in that service. When Rādhikā comes to her house, she supports and nourishes Her, even more than she does Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes Yaśodā gives Her something to eat and Rādhikā becomes shy. Yaśodā asks, “Oh, why are You shy? You are my daughter. You are just as dear to me as Kṛṣṇa. Do not think there is any difference. I love You even more than Your mother, Kīrtikā, does.”

Do you know that Yaśodā is greater than Kīrtikā? Kīrtikā loves Rādhikā, but not as much as Yaśodā does. Yaśodā loves Her – not as a daughter, but as a newly married daughter-in-law. Yaśodā wants Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa to marry, and that is why she has so much love for Her. I think that if we were to compare, we would see that Yaśodā loves Rādhikā even more than she loves Kṛṣṇa. Without Yaśodā there could not be any sweet pastimes. She arranges Their meeting as if she does not know anything of Their loving exchanges.

*Vraja-varo-nāgara*. Who is He? Yaśodā-nandana. *Nāgara* and *nāgari*, lover and beloved. Kṛṣṇa played everywhere, and He is the topmost beloved of the *gopīs*.

*Gokula-rañjana-kāna*. Gokula, *gopa kula samūha*. *Samūhe* means all groups: groups of all *gopas*, groups of all *gopīs*, groups of all cows, groups of all cowherd boys, and groups of all the calves. What transpires in Gokula? Everywhere Kṛṣṇa plays and performs *vilāsa*, pastimes. He goes cowherding, but why does He go? There is some ulterior motive. He considers, “If I go, everyone will be certain that I have gone cowherding.”

But why is Kṛṣṇa actually going? Only to meet with the *gopīs*. In Western countries, boys and girls meet directly, which is not very good. But the stealthy way in which the *gopīs* meet with Kṛṣṇa, hiding and meeting, makes Kṛṣṇa so happy. The *gopīs* go to meet Kṛṣṇa with much struggle and great difficulty, not caring at all for their fathers, mothers, fathers-in-law, neighbors, and so on. In this way Kṛṣṇa meets them and performs *rāsa* with them. That is why He is *nāgara* (a hero, lover). Who is *kāna*? Kanhaiyā is Kṛṣṇacandra Himself.

*Gopī-parāṇa-dhana*. *Gopī-prāṇa-dhana*. Kṛṣṇa is the life and soul (*prāṇa*) of the *gopīs*, and the *gopīs* are also the life and soul of Kṛṣṇa. Both are true. Without Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* cannot remain alive. Do you know what became of the *gopīs* when Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā? We will touch only a little of this confidential subject matter. I want to say more, but I cannot. I will keep it for future years. I can’t fully explain it during my stay here once a year. We will continue it over the next two, four, six, eight years.

Yaśodā is also a *gopī*. All cowherd women, both young and old, are *gopīs*. But Lalitā, Viśākhā, and all others like them are the *gopīs* referred to in this context. What is the meaning of *gopī*? One who can keep Kṛṣṇa secretly in her heart. She who cannot take Kṛṣṇa out of her heart is a *gopī*.

Madana-manohara. Kṛṣṇa is the Cupid of cupid of cupid of cupid. He is *manmatha manmatha* (the form of Kṛṣṇa which enchants the heart of Cupid, who agitates the heart of others). Śrīmatī Rādhikā is *cupidā*. *Cupidā* means one who is many hundreds and thousands times more enchanting than the Cupid of cupids.

*Kālīya-damana-vidhāna* means ‘the punisher of the Kālīya serpent’ It is a matter of curiosity why Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura brought *kālīya-damana-vidhāna* (into this song). Previously he only referred to sweet pastimes, so why has he brought poison here? Actually it is not poison. This was the first pastime in which Kṛṣṇa was able to trick the *gopīs* and bring them near Him. The *gopīs* were six or seven years old, and Kṛṣṇa was eight. Kṛṣṇa wanted to impress them. “See how brave I am.” He danced on the hoods of Kālīya only to show them, “Just see how qualified and brave I am.” Therefore *kālīya-damana-vidhāna* is not a very dangerous or harsh pastime.

*Amala harināma amiya-vilāsā*. Why has Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura uttered these words? What is the meaning? Kṛṣṇa has invested His full power, His sweetness, and all His nectarean pastimes in His name. If you chant *harināma*, Yaśomatī-nandana will come, Vraja-varo-nāgara, Gokula-rañjana kāna, and Gopī-parāṇa-dhana will all come. They are all present in *harināma* for one who is chanting the pure name in the mood of having a relationship with Kṛṣṇa. What relation? “Kṛṣṇa is my *prāṇa-dhana*, the wealth of my life.” With that relation. Then all the pastimes I have explained will very quickly manifest in your heart. This is the process. *Amala harināma*. You should not think that these are only words.

*Amala* means ‘pure,’ *amiya* means ‘nectar,’ and *vilāsā* means ‘dancing and singing in *rāsa* and playing on swings while everyone sings *mallāra-rāga* and so many other tunes.’ Sometimes Kṛṣṇa

controls the swing Himself. While Rādhikā is sitting on the swing, He swings Her very high, without supporting Her. She becomes afraid and cries out, “Oh, stop! Stop! Stop!” But Kṛṣṇa does not stop. Her veil and garments begin to fly here and there, and in Her fear She embraces Kṛṣṇa tightly. This is what Kṛṣṇa wants. This is *amiya-vilāsā*. There are many kinds of *vilāsa*, and they are written in *Govinda-līlāmṛta* and other books. All these *amiya-vilāsā*, nectarean pastimes, are invested in *harināma*.

*Vipina-purandara, navīna nāgara-vara. Vipina-purandara.* Kṛṣṇa is the Indra (*purandara*) of Vṛndāvana (*vipina*, or forest). Indra here means ‘the superior.’ One of the names of Kṛṣṇa is Indra, and He has given this name to the demigod Indra. Kṛṣṇa’s name is also Rāma, and He has distributed it somewhat to Balarāma and Dāśarathi Rāmacandra. All the names in the entire world belong to Kṛṣṇa. Who is Dharaṇi-dhara (He who holds up the earth)? Kṛṣṇa, and He has given this name to Anantadeva. Whose name is Baladeva? It is Kṛṣṇa’s, but He has distributed that and all His names to many others.

*Vipina-purandara, navīna nāgara-vara.* Kṛṣṇa is ever-fresh, new; therefore Rādhikā tells Lalitā, “O Lalite, can you tell Me who is that black person? I have never seen Him before in My whole life. And who is that person now playing the flute? And who is the boy in that picture painted by Citra? Oh, now I want to commit suicide. Surely I will commit suicide because Indian ladies are very chaste, but I have divided My love and affection among three persons. One person is He who plays sweetly on His flute, another is that black person I have just seen, and the third is the one in this picture. In this way My love is divided among three personalities, so I must die. I must die.”

Lalitā told Her, “Do not die. The black person, the one who plays on His flute, and the person who is in this picture are one and the same.”

Kṛṣṇa is therefore *nava-navaya* – always *navīna nāgara vara*, ever-fresh and new.

*Vaṁśī vadana suvāsā. Vaṁśī vandana.* There is always a flute on Kṛṣṇa’s lips. Even when He sleeps, His flute is close by. Sometimes, He puts it in His sash and then sleeps. From the time of His birth until He left Vṛndāvana, He could not give up His flute for a moment. When He went to Mathurā, He kept His flute with Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Weeping and weeping He told Her, “When I return, You should give My flute back to Me.”

*Suvāsā.* Kṛṣṇa wears a peacock feather on His head, He has a three-fold bending form, His eyes are very crooked, and His cheeks are very beautiful, very beautiful. There is no comparison to His beauty. Kṛṣṇa can only be compared to Himself.

*Vraja-jana pālana.* Kṛṣṇa supports all Vrajavāsīs. How? He kills Pūtanā, Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Kaṁsa, and all other demons. Also, with love and affection He supports everyone. *Asura-kula-nāśana.* He destroys all the demons, by His sweet pastimes. *Nanda-godhana-rākhawālā.* He always protects *nanda-godhana*, the cows of Nanda Bābā and others.

*Govinda, mādharma, navanīta-taskara, sundara nanda-gopālā.* Indra gave Kṛṣṇa the name Govinda because He always loves all the *gopas, gopīs* and everyone else. Mādhava means that He is the husband of Mādhavī, Rādhikā. Here Mā or Mādhavī does not mean Lakṣmī; Rādhikā is superior to Lakṣmī, as are all the *gopīs*.

*Navanīta-taskara.* Kṛṣṇa has so much hunger and greed to take the butter of all the *gopīs*. Even when His mother keeps butter for Him, He steals anyway. If one *gopī* offers Him butter He says, “I am not hungry. I don’t want it.” Then, as soon as she leaves, He very quickly enters her house and steals it.

*Yāmuna-taṭa-cara.* Kṛṣṇa is always walking on the banks of the Yamunā. Why? He has promised the *gopīs*, “I will go there and you should also go there. I will meet you all there in the early

morning.” He is always waiting there for all the *gopīs*, and the *gopīs* may also wait there for Him. They then perform so many pastimes together.

*Gopī-vasana-hara*. Kṛṣṇa took the garments of the *gopīs*. There was nothing shameful in this. They were very young; some were about three or four and some were older, and Kṛṣṇa Himself was about seven years old. So there was no lust. They were bathing naked in the Yamunā when Kṛṣṇa said, “Oh, you should not do this. It is an offense to Varuṇadeva, the god of the rivers.” Perhaps Kṛṣṇa wanted to test them, to see, “If I instruct them, will they obey Me or not?” Why did Kṛṣṇa take the *gopīs*’ garments? Only highly elevated devotees who are followers of the *gopīs* can know and understand the answer. We cannot understand. Whatever Kṛṣṇa instructs the *gopīs* to do, they will do.

We cannot even obey our *gurudeva*. *Gurudeva* will tell us, “You should do it that way,” and we reply, “If I cannot do it, then what?” But when *Gurudeva* says, “Jump,” you should do that. You should know what your *gurudeva* wants and act accordingly. If you do not, then you are a *baka*, a crane. The crane stands on one leg, as if performing severe austerities, appearing to be one-pointed. Why? Not in obedience to a higher authority; he only wants to catch fish.

A disciple who does not obey his *gurudeva* is like this. One should know the will and inner mood of one’s *gurudeva*, and act accordingly. I always knew what my *gurudeva* wanted without his telling me, and I would follow his will. There was a disciple of my *gurudeva* named Ānanda prabhu, who was junior to me. When I was engaged in Mathurā, he also served him there. He knew exactly when *Gurudeva* wanted water and what kind of water he wanted. He knew when to fan him, when to massage him, and so on. He knew his heart. If a disciple does not know his *gurudeva*’s heart, he is not a *sevaka*, servant. He should know *gurudeva*’s heart and act accordingly. We see, however, that disciples have so

many problems – newer and newer problems daily. The *guru* has to tolerate so much. The disciples may quarrel among themselves, and they may even quarrel with Gurudeva himself. Such disciples are like the *baka*. We should try instead to be *sevakas*.

*Rāsa-rasika, kṛpāmaya. Kṛpamaya* means that Kṛṣṇa is full of mercy. By His causeless mercy He performed *rāsa-līlā* with all the *gopīs*, who are transcendental just as He is. He very kindly sprinkled His mercy, so that people all over the world can hear about these pastimes, develop greed, and then follow the process to attain *vraja-bhakti*. If *rāsa-līlā* had not been performed, we could not have imagined the love of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*. Therefore, out of His mercy, Kṛṣṇa called all the *gopīs* with His flute.

*Srī-rādhā-vallabha vṛndāvana-naṭavara. Rādhā-vallabha* means ‘He is the only beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.’ There is no better adjective for Kṛṣṇa than Rādhā-vallabha. *Vṛndāvana-naṭavara* means that He is *naṭavara*, the best dancer in *Vṛndāvana*. He dances everywhere throughout *Vṛndāvana*, and he especially dances in the heart of all the *gopīs*.

*Bhaktivinoda-āśraya. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura* is saying, “This very Kṛṣṇa is my *āśraya*, my shelter. May He kindly always be manifest in my heart.”

I have given only a very little outline of the meaning of this *kīrtana*; all of Kṛṣṇa’s *Vṛndāvana* pastimes are present herein.

So, try to do *kīrtana* in this way. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura always spent his nights singing and continually weeping. Sometimes he made *purīs* and *kacorīs*, thinking, “Kṛṣṇa is now performing *rāsa*, and afterwards He will come here, so I should cook these.” His internal mood was that of a *gopī*. This is our objective. Try to follow all these proper practices and become very high-class devotees. Do not be attached to worldly things, especially to your anger, lust, and problems. Try to keep your feet on the head of problems. Take a broom daily and try to chastise your mind. The mind is the only *śatru*, enemy. Others are not *śatru*.



❧ **GURUDEVA! KṚPĀ-BINDU DIYĀ** ❧  
(From Śaraṇāgati)

*gurudeva!*

*kṛpā-bindu diyā, karô ei dāse, tṛṇāpekṣā ati hīna  
sakala-sahane, bala diyā karô, nija-māne sprhā-hīna* (1)

O Gurudeva, give me a drop of mercy and make this servant more humble than a blade of grass. Give me the strength to tolerate all eventualities and make me free from my vanity.

*sakale sammāna, kôrite śakati, dehô nātha! jathājatha  
tabe tô' gāibô, harināma sukhe, aparādha ha'be hata* (2)

Give me the power, O Master, to honor all living entities according to their due. Then I shall chant the holy names of Śrī Hari blissfully, and my offenses will be vanquished!

*kabe henô kṛpā, labhiyā e jana, kṛtārtha hôibe nātha!  
śakti-buddhi-hīna, āmi ati dīna, karô more ātma-sātha* (3)

When will this person receive such mercy and be successful in life, O Master? I am devoid of strength and intelligence and am extremely fallen. Kindly take my soul and make me your own.

*jogyatā-vicāre, kichu nāhi pāi, tomāra karuṇā sāra  
karuṇā nā hôile, kādiyā kādiyā, prāṇa nā rākhibô āra* (4)

If I consider my qualification, I find nothing of value; your mercy is the essence of my existence. If you are not merciful, then, weeping and weeping, I will no longer maintain my life.

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja asked Baṅki-bihārī prabhu to explain the meaning of the song *Gurudeva! Kṛpā-bindu Diyā.*]

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** Gurudeva! Give me a drop of mercy, make me your servant. O lord, make me more humble than a blade of grass.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** If anyone insults you, what will you do?

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** I'll try not to fight.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Speak from your heart.

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** I would try to realize that this is coming from my own *karma*, from my own previous abuse of others. And I would try to take it that this is working that out, and it will be gone now, and from now on I will not repeat my mistake.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** But if anyone is insulting you, will you insult him in return, tit for tat? What you will do?

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** I'll try to not insult him in return, and not continue the cycle.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Someone may not be in the cycle. He may tolerate insults, but at the same time vow in his mind, "I will have no further connection with this person, otherwise he will insult me." He may not honor the other person, but rather boycott him and say, "I will not be with a person like him." Is this good or bad?

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** It is bad, because he is not taking responsibility for his own *karma*, which has brought this about. Instead he is retaliating, but in a secret way.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** If that other person is an advanced devotee, serving *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, should you honor him or not? Should you associate with him or not? Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is praying from his heart, "O Gurudeva, please bless me

that I can be so tolerant that, *sakale sammāna, korite śakati*, I will honor others with my heart.” Try to realize this. It is very important.

Suppose a high-caliber Vaiṣṇava like Śrī Abhirāma Gosvāmī chastises you. Do you know Abhirāma Gosvāmī? He had a very powerful whip. When he was happy with someone’s activities and service, he touched that person with his whip, and by this he gave that person his full mercy, the realization of *prema*. So you should try to honor and associate with pure devotees. If they want to help you, they will chastise or do anything to you.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore prays, “*sakale sammāna, korite śakati, deho nātha* – I should honor all others.” In what way? In accordance with their stage of advancement in spiritual life. You should not give a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* the respect of an *uttama-adhikārī*. If you give a person improper respect, then you do not know anything. And if you do not honor high-class devotees according to their qualities, then you may commit so many offenses. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore prays to Gurudeva, “O Gurudeva, I don’t know how to properly respect all Vaiṣṇavas. Please, by your causeless mercy, give me this quality, so that I can realize how to give proper respect. In this way I will be able to reconcile any problem.”

I have said so much in my class, and those who are fortunate will realize all these things.

*sakale sammāna, kôrite śakati, dehô nātha! jathājatha  
tabe tô’ gāibô, harināma sukhe, aparādha ha’be hata (2)*

*kabe henô kṛpā, labhiyā e jana, kṛtārtha hōibe nātha!  
śakti-buddhi-hīna, āmi ati dīna, karô more ātma-sātha (3)*

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** I am so fallen and wretched, I have no intelligence, Gurudeva...

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** Should one say this from his heart, or outwardly only? Is Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura saying this from the core of his heart, or is he only singing?

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** Gurudeva has such high qualities, so much intelligence, and so much understanding of how to help us become like him. He helps us to follow him, so that we can understand his heart and actually make our heart like his.

*ḥogyatā-vicāre, kichu nāhi pāi, tomāra karuṇā sāra  
karuṇā nā hōile, kāḍiyā kāḍiyā, prāṇa nā rākhibō āra (4)*

From the core of his heart he says that he doesn't find any good qualities in himself. Actually we are full of *anarthas*. Practically speaking, we are made only of *anarthas*. Gurudeva mercifully drives those *anarthas* away and replaces them with all good qualities.

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** What is he praying? *Gurudeva, kṛpā-bindu diyā.*

**Baṅki-bihārī prabhu:** He is praying, "Please, please do this for me," and he's weeping. In a very deep and serious way he feels, "I would rather give up my life than go on being without your mercy and remaining full of *anarthas*."

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** The devotee thinks in this mood: "I have no qualification at all. I am really not a Vaiṣṇava, but I want to be a Vaiṣṇava and honor all Vaiṣṇavas." If this mood is there, there will be no friction, quarrel, or misunderstanding between devotees. There will be no problems at all. I have come to make this point to all devotees.

We should not think, "Oh, he is [only] my *gurudeva*." Those with a different *guru* may think, "He is our *gurudeva*, and we are in this group," and others may think, "We are in this group." A pure devotee never thinks like this. His love and affection are

transcendental, above that of all *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*. He gives everyone respect according to their devotion. He never thinks, “He is rich, he is poor. That person is not giving me money; but another is giving me so much and helping me with worldly things.” How does a pure devotee think? He gives respect to others according to their level of devotion.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu used to give respect like this. All our *guru-varga* would love and honor others according to their grade of love and affection for Kṛṣṇa and *gurudeva*. A qualified *guru* never thinks, “This person is my disciple, but that person is the disciple of another *guru*; he is the disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, he is the disciple of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja, or Bon Mahārāja or anyone else.” He never thinks, “He is my disciple and therefore I have special affection and mercy for him; but he is a disciple of Svāmī Bhaktivedānta, so he is not welcome; he should be kept far away.” He gives proper respect to all, as is described here: *sakale sammāna, korite śakati, deho nātha*. *Sakale* means ‘not only in my group.’

A qualified devotee is above all narrow-mindedness. We, third-class, bogus *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*, however, cannot consider that we should give proper respect to everyone according to their level of love and affection for Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and for devotees. But if any problem comes, we should remember *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas and try to reconcile things, never quarrelling with each other. Otherwise *ārati* will be performed outwardly, with the ghee lamp, but not with the heart, and Gurudeva may not accept that worship. A *guru* who is not bona fide may say, “Oh, very good. His *ārati* to me was performed with five ghee wicks, but the other devotee used only one ghee wick, so his *ārati* was not good. Another person did it with seven ghee wicks, but he is doing it with only one. He is not respecting me. And where is my donation? There is no donation here? That devotee gave flowers but no money. That one at once gave me

one hundred dollars, but this other person gave nothing. He is not a good devotee.”

A high-class *guru* never thinks like this. He knows his disciple’s heart and how much affection he has for Śrī Guru, Vaiṣṇavas, Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. If a disciple is not performing *ārati* with a lamp, no harm; he will do it with his eyes, and Gurudeva will accept that *ārati* with his eyes. Actually, this is *ārati*. A devotee or disciple should be like this.

A high class *guru* will not be happy if his disciples quarrel with other devotees. Our community should be very elevated. We should try to respect each other. If anyone rebukes us, no harm. We should think, “It is my *karma*; it is due to the actions of my past births.” Or else we can understand, “Kṛṣṇa has arranged this to teach me tolerance.” We should try to realize all these teachings. Then my coming to New Vraja will have been successful.

❧ 'ĀMĀRA' BOLITE PRABHU! ❧  
(From Śaraṇāgati)

*'āmāra' bôlite prabhu! āra kichu nāi  
tumi-i āmāra mātra pitā-bandhu-bhāi (1)*

O Lord, apart from You, there is nothing else that I can call my own. You alone are my father, friend, and brother.

*bandhu, dārā, suta-sutā—tava dāsī-dāsa  
sei tô' sambandhe sabe āmāra prayāsa (2)*

My friends, wife, sons, and daughters are all Your servants and maidservants. My endeavors for them are based on that relationship only.

*dhana, jana, gr̥ha, dāra 'tomāra' bôliyā  
rakṣā kôri āmi mātra sevaka hôiyā (3)*

Considering my wealth, family members, home, and possessions to be Yours, I protect them, only as your servant.

*tomāra kāryera tare upārjibô dhana  
tomāra saṁsāra-byaya kôribô bahana (4)*

For Your service I shall earn money and bear the expenses of Your household.

*bhālô-manda nāhi jāni sevā-mātra kôri  
tomāra saṁsāre āmi viṣaya-praharī (5)*

I know neither good nor bad; I only serve. I am but a watchman, guarding the interests of Your household.

*tomāra icchāya mora indriya-cālanā  
śrāvaṇa, darśana, ghrāṇa, bhojana-vāsanā (6)*

I engage my senses – hearing, sight, smell, and taste – in accordance with Your desire.

*nija-sukha lāgi' kichu nāhi kōri āra  
bhaktivinoda bōle, tava sukha-sāra (7)*

I no longer do anything for my own pleasure. Bhaktivinoda says, “Your happiness is the essence of everything.”

Try to hear this explanation very attentively. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written this especially for married persons, for both lady devotees and male devotees. Try to follow it in your daily routine. If you really want to be a devotee, from today you can make a vow like this. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is our *śikṣā-guru*, more than our *dīkṣā-guru*.

## Only Serve Those Who Serve Kṛṣṇa

If a wife is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, should we support her or not? <sup>1</sup> If a father is not in the line of *bhakti*, we should have no relationship with him. If a husband is not chanting and remembering but instead thinking, “I am not the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa,” we should have no relationship with him. All our relationships must depend on whether a relative or friend thinks himself an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, and whether he is also acting as one. Then we can totally serve him. Otherwise, if our *guru* is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, we can give him up as Bali Mahārāja did. Bali

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<sup>1</sup> **Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja:** He should not spoil his life for a worldly wife and others, because they cannot help him to attain the transcendental world. If his wife is not a devotee and she tries to give some obstruction or problem, then better he not stay with her. On the other hand, even if she does not accept what he is doing, but she does not create any problems for him, then he should take *dīkṣā* and live with her. He will try to change her, and if she comes to me, she may be changed (*Walking With a Saint*, 2007, 17 April *darśana*). Also, please see footnote on page 28.

Mahārāja gave up his *gurudeva*, Śukrācārya. Disciples are not the property of *gurudeva*. All disciples are the property of Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu.

Some *gurus* think that their disciples are their own property, and for that they are going to hell. All the *gopīs* left their husbands. Bharata Mahārāja, the brother of Rāma, left his mother in a moment. As soon as he heard that she was opposed to Rāma, he gave her up. Vibhīṣaṇa promptly left his brother, Rāvaṇa, who was making a plan to quarrel with Rāma. He left him at once. We see that [after leaving these people] all these devotees were happy. Therefore, the center of all our relationships should be based on service to Kṛṣṇa.

Once there was a person who was very friendly with me. I saw that he was initiated by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, your Prabhupāda; so I was also on very friendly terms with him. When he first came to me he was renounced, but later he gave up his devotional practices like chanting and became like a Māyāvādī. He continued coming to me in a friendly way, but I told him, “Our friendship was only based on Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Now that you are not following, we can have no friendship at all. Not even for a moment will I have any relationship with you.”

If we want to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness, our relationships should be based on service to Kṛṣṇa. Rāvaṇa was a worshiper of Śaṅkara, Lord Śiva, and he offered his head to him in a fire sacrifice. Śiva became very happy and gave him ten heads. Although Śiva was always very pleased with Rāvaṇa, when Rāvaṇa kidnapped Sītā and became opposed to Rāma, Śaṅkara (Mahādeva), at once left him. Śiva never supported him in the battle, and Rāvaṇa was killed by Rāma. Kaṁsa, Bhaumāsura, and so many other demons were also worshipping Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara can give anything, even *kṛṣṇa-prema*, and they were worshipping him, but when they became offensive to Kṛṣṇa or Rāma, however,

Śaṅkara at once left them and they were killed.

In conclusion, if you want to be a good devotee, your relationships should be on this basis. Our honor for Vaiṣṇavas and godbrothers will depend on how much faith they have in Gurudeva and pure Vaiṣṇavas, and how advanced they are in *bhakti*. We should not think, “He’s my godbrother, so even if he is committing offenses, he is still my godbrother and superior to all others.” Never think like this.

Anyone who is chanting and remembering is in our Gaura family. He may be in Nityānanda’s family, Śrīmatī Jāhnavā’s family, Śrī Śyāmānanda’s family, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura’s family, or any devotee’s family. A person may be our most bosom friend, but if he is not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we have nothing to do with him. If you make friendship with him, you will be degraded.

Try to follow these words in Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s song, which are especially helpful for *gṛhastha-bhaktas*, householder devotees. By following them, all doubts will go away.

❧ **MĀNASA, DEHA, GEHA** ❧  
(From Śaraṇāgati)

*mānasa, deha, geha, jô kichu mor  
arpilu tuwā pade, nanda-kiśora! (1)*

Mind, body, and family, whatever else is mine, I have  
surrendered at Your lotus feet, O youthful son of Nanda!

*sampade-vipade, jīvane-maraṇe  
dāya mama gelā tuwā o-pada varaṇe (2)*

In good fortune and in bad, in life and in death, all my  
difficulties have absconded by accepting those feet of  
Yours [as my shelter].

*mārôbi rākhôbi—jô icchā tohārā  
nitya-dāsa-prati tuwā adhikārā (3)*

Slay me or protect me as You wish, for You have ownership  
of Your eternal servant.

*janmāobi moe icchā jâdi tora  
bhakta-grhe jani janma hau mora (4)*

If it is Your will that I be born again, then may that birth be  
in the home of Your devotee.

*kīṭa-janma hau jathā tuwā dāsa  
bahirmukha brahma-janme nāhi āśa (5)*

May I even take birth as a worm, so long as I remain Your  
devotee. I have no desire for a birth as a Brahmā averse  
to You.

*bhukti-mukti-sprhā vihīna je bhakta  
labhaite tā'ka saṅga anurakta (6)*

I yearn for the association of that devotee who is completely devoid of all desires for worldly enjoyment and liberation.

*janaka, jananī, dayita, tanay  
prabhu, guru, pati—tuhu sarvamaya (7)*

Father, mother, beloved, son, lord, preceptor, and husband –  
You are everything to me.

*bhaktivinoda kahe, śunô kāna!  
rādhānātha! tuhu hāmāra parāṇa (8)*

Bhaktivinoda says, “O Kāna, please hear me! O Lord of Rādhā,  
You are my very life and soul!”

## Śaraṇāgati

This song is for those who want to begin *bhakti*. It is about *śaraṇāgati*, surrender to Kṛṣṇa. First you must come to this stage and then you can be a devotee, otherwise not. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written this song, and if you want to be a pure devotee, then you must follow it. When performing *kīrtana*, do not look here and there. Try to understand the meaning of this *kīrtana* and be totally absorbed in it; then you can gain something. This song should be sung daily in order to remind your senses to follow the path of *śaraṇāgati*. Try to promise that from today, from just now, you will follow this.

*Mānasa, deha, geḥa, jô kichu mor arpilu tuwā pade, nanda-kiśora!* What is the meaning? My mind, my body, my family, and whatever I possess, I am offering at Your lotus feet, O Nanda-kiśora. We should not only say the words, but truly surrender by action. Do not say, “I am giving You everything, but the lock and

key will be with me.” Rather, we must totally serve and give Him everything.

“If I have offered everything at Your lotus feet, I have no worry about anything. There is no need to worry. ‘What should I do? What should I do? I have so many problems.’” Now [having offered everything to Kṛṣṇa] there is no anxiety because of the belief that Kṛṣṇa will solve the problems. You need only be like watch dogs of Kṛṣṇa, guarding<sup>1</sup>. Always be like a guard. Be free from the endeavour to maintain yourself.

Do you understand what Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is saying? “Whether You look after me or not, whether I am happy or unhappy, in all circumstances I am Yours. Now it is Your job to look after me or not. I have given You everything and therefore, I never worry. If death comes, if problems come, still I have no worry. I will be like a watch dog, always sitting at Your door. If You give me Your remnants, just as a person may give his remnants to his dogs, I will take that; otherwise I will wait for it. I will only chant and remember You.” This is really *śaraṅāgati*. “Whether You give me good things or problems, no harm. Now I am happy. I have given everything to You.”

## Mānasa, Deha, Geha

Often, nowadays, I hear from devotees, “My wife has left me and now my children are like orphans. There are so many problems.” Lady devotees come and say, “I have a very big problem. My husband left me. I cannot do anything to prevent him from leaving. What should I do? Can you help?” There are so many problems, so many problems. They do this and that to solve the problems, but everything fails, every time.

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<sup>1</sup> Here, ‘guarding’ means ‘to protect and defend the proper *siddhānta* and to defeat material logic and cheating philosophies.’

This is because the root of all these problems is that you are not *śaraṅāgata* (not surrendered to *guru* and Kṛṣṇa). You have no relation with Kṛṣṇa and you have no trust in Kṛṣṇa and His name; that is why all these problems come. Kṛṣṇa has not advised, “Now that you have been *brahmacārī* for thirteen, fourteen, twenty years in the *maṭha* (temple) of your Prabhupāda, you can have a girlfriend.”

Śrīla Svāmī Prabhupāda was very merciful and he engaged you in devotional service. Has he told you that you should marry? Has Kṛṣṇa advised you to get a boyfriend or girlfriend? Who made all these problems? Only you yourself have made your problems. If you always serve Kṛṣṇa, and depend on Him, no problem can come to you. Can any problem come to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī or Śrī Nārada Gosvāmī? They always depend on Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, anyone who depends on Kṛṣṇa has no problem at all. Whoever we touch, all his problems go. If you want [your heart] to be touched, try to understand from today onward, with firm faith, that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He has created the whole world and He is supporting and nourishing the whole world. Why, then, can He not support and nourish you? You are the root cause of all your problems. Kṛṣṇa wants to take you out of your problems, but you keep making them. When there was only one son you were not satisfied. You begot two daughters and then again one more son. Later, when they became somewhat mature, they went against you and their mother and created so many problems for you.

Therefore, for freedom from all problems, you should become *śaraṅāgata*. *Nāma* (the holy name of Kṛṣṇa) is so much more merciful than Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa has invested all His mercy, power, opulence, and so on in *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, but you neglect it. You depend on your job and on making money, but this money-making creates more problems – problems, after problems, after problems.

You can realize all these truths because *śāstra* has explained them. You cannot be happy by endeavoring to solve all these

problems. There is only one problem at the root of all others: you have forgotten Kṛṣṇa and you are neglecting Kṛṣṇa and *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, especially *kṛṣṇa-nāma* in this Kali-yuga.

If you chant like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, you will see that Lakṣmī will come and follow behind you. She will ask, “Oh, how can I serve you?” Have you this faith [in *nāma*]?

We have this faith and that is why Lakṣmī is always with us, but we tell her, “Wait a little. I have no service for you to do. Please remain far away from me.” We fear even the shadow of Lakṣmī-devī, what to speak of Lakṣmī-devī Herself.<sup>2</sup> If you can be like this, you will be able to think, “Very good, very good; I have no problem at all, no problem at all.” Kṛṣṇa will quickly solve all of your problems.



[After explaining *Mānasa, Deho, Geho*, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja announced the new names of the newly initiated devotees and then spoke a few words about the meaning of initiation.]

You have been given initiation so that you can serve Kṛṣṇa. But actually you have not yet received initiation; you have been admitted into the class of initiation. Try to understand this. *Dikṣā* means ‘*di*, *divya-jñāna*, transcendental knowledge.’ You have not yet received transcendental knowledge, but you should try to get it from your *guru* and other devotees. You have entered the process of *dikṣā*, but this [in itself] is not actually true *dikṣā*. A fire sacrifice alone will not give *dikṣā*. To follow and practice is essential.

*Kṣa* means ‘washing away of sin.’ All your sinful activities, bad practices, unwanted habits and mentalities, and *anarthas* are washed by this process. They have not yet been washed away completely, but you have entered the process [by which that

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2 This means fear of entanglement in material wealth, or even fear of becoming attracted to going to Vaikunṭha instead of Goloka Vṛndavana.

will happen]. By following all these teachings you will [one day] receive *dīkṣā*.

I know so many disciples who have taken initiation from a bona fide *guru*. Why, then, do they fall down? It is because they do not actually try to follow the process. They think, “We have received *dīkṣā*.” Actually they have only received external *dīkṣā*. It may take some years to achieve transcendental knowledge, but try to have real, internal *dīkṣā*. Without following all these processes you will be weak. After being *brahmacārī* for ten, fifteen, twenty years, you will again become a mouse – *punar mūṣiko bhāva*. You know [the story of] this mouse? [See endnote] Do not be a mouse. Try to advance. When you graduate you will become a very good devotee. At that time, there will be no fear of falling down and becoming weak.

## Endnote

[The following is an excerpt from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja’s lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.12.2), spoken in Mumbai, India, on April 13, 1976:]

There is a story that a mouse approached a saintly person.  
“Sir, I have come to you for some favor.”

“What is that?”

“Now, I am mouse. The cats gives me much trouble. I cannot live peacefully on account of the cats.”

So the saintly person asked, “What do you want to become?”

“I want to become a cat.”

“All right, you become a cat.”

Then after some time, he again came. “Sir, I am still bothered.”

“Why?”

“The dogs, they bother me.”

“Then what do you want?”

“Now, let me become a dog.”

“All right; you become a dog.”

Then again after some time he came back. “Still they bother me, sir.”

“What do you want?”

In this way, after, one after another, he at last begged the saintly person to become a tiger. The saintly person said, “All right, you become a tiger.”

Then, when he became tiger, he began to stare his eyes on the saintly person. The saintly person said, “What do you mean by this?”

“I shall eat you,” [said the tiger].

“Oh, you shall eat me? All right. *Punar mūṣiko bhāva* – again you become a mouse. I have made you tiger, and you want to eat me. So you become again mouse.”

So our civilization is like that, that in the gradual process of evolution we have come to the platform of human being. This human being is meant for understanding God, but they are forgetting God. Therefore the next stage is *punar mūṣiko bhava*, “Again become a monkey.” That is waiting us. Nature’s law is like that, that from being a monkey we have become human being, and in the human form we are dancing like a monkey, so nature will say, “All right, you again become monkey.” You cannot check that.





*PART 3*

*ENTERING THE PROCESS*

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❧ **OBSERVANCE OF PURUṢOTTAMA MONTH** ❧  
(16 May to 13 June 1999)

**T**his is Puruṣottama month. Kṛṣṇa is Puruṣottama, and therefore, this month is actually Kṛṣṇa's month. Among all the incarnations [of Bhagavān], Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person, Puruṣottama. This month is also supreme among all months, as is the month of Kārttika. We are so fortunate to be here in New Vraja, very near to Girirāja-Govardhana. Śyāma-kuṇḍa and Rādhā-kuṇḍa are also here. All pastime places in Vraja are here. Vṛndāvana itself has manifested. Peacocks are dancing. So much here reminds us of Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma.

In India we observe this Puruṣottama month in the presence of Śrī Puruṣottama, in His own place, Nīlādri, Jagannātha Purī. Devotees spend the month there, observing certain rules and regulations and rising early in the morning at four o'clock. Those who want *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and who therefore want to observe this Puruṣottama month, follow many regulations from the beginning of the month.

In India [during Puruṣottama month] we do not shave, but I am not telling you what you should do; it depends on you. Here Puruṣottama month is not followed so strictly because Śrīla Bhaktivedanta Svāmī Mahārāja gave some concession to Western devotees. You can follow by always hearing *hari-kathā* and by observing those regulations you can easily maintain performing. At least try to wake up very early in the morning, put on *tilaka*, and perform all *sandhyā* [the chanting of one's *dīkṣā-mantras* at

the three junctures of the day – sunrise, midday, and sunset]. If *guru* has given you the *gāyatrī mantras*, then with all faith and honor, these *mantras* should be chanted.

You should also see *ārati*. You can either perform it yourself or come here, where we have a temple in Nirguṇa’s house and *maṅgala-ārati* is performed. If the devotees live very far away, they can do *ārati* where they reside. After *ārati*, some *kīrtanas* should be sung, as we are doing here: *guru-vandanā* (prayers), *guru-paramparā vandanā*, *vaiṣṇava-vandanā*, *gaura-nityānanda vandanā*, and *nāma-kīrtana* like *hari haraye namaḥ kṛṣṇa yādavāya namaḥ*, *yādavāya mādhavāya keśavāya namaḥ*, and then *rādhā-kṛṣṇa vandanā*.

In the morning or evening you can make arrangements to sing “*jaya rādhā jaya kṛṣṇa jaya vṛndāvana*” and perform *tulasī-parikramā*. Wherever you are you can offer some water to *tulasī*, even one or two drops, and do *tulasī-parikramā* and *kīrtana* daily.

Without the mercy of *tulasī*, Vṛnda-devī, you cannot enter the realm of pure *bhakti*. This is true for both Vṛnda-devī and Yogamāyā. Yogamāyā arranges all the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, Mahāprabhu, and so on.

In Navadvīpa, there is Praudhā Yogamāyā, and in Vraja, Yogamāyā Pūrṇimā. The *kuñja-līlā* (pastimes performed in the groves) in Vṛndāvana is especially arranged by Śrīmatī Vṛndā-devī. In fact, Vṛndāvana is named after her. Without the mercy of Vṛnda-devī you cannot enter the realm of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *yugala-sevā*, nor can you enter Vṛndāvana. Even if you are outwardly in Vṛndāvana, you may still be in the net of *māyā*. If you want to actually be in Vṛndāvana, you will have to receive the mercy of Vṛnda-devī, so perform *parikramā* of her form as *tulasī*, at least in this month.

Offer all *bhoga* to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Mahāprabhu, or any Deities. Then, at the time of taking *mahā-prasāda*, recite the *jaya-dhvani* prayers and sing,

*śarīra abidyā-jāla, joḍendriya tāhe kāla,  
jīve phele viṣaya-sāgare  
tā'ra madhye jihvā ati, lobhamāya sudurmati,  
tā'ke jetā kaṭhina saṁsāre (1)*

O brothers, the material body is a web of ignorance and its inert senses are the cause of its ruination, for they throw the soul into the ocean of material enjoyment. Among the senses, the tongue is the most greedy and wicked. It is very difficult to conquer in this world.

*kṛṣṇa baḍō dayāmoya, kôribāre jihvā jaya,  
sva-prasād-anna dilā bhāi  
sei annāmṛta pāo, rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa gāo,  
preme dākô caitanya-nitāi (2)*

Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that He has given us His own food remnants to help us conquer the tongue, O brothers. Honor these nectarean foods, sing the glories of Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, and with *prema* call out, "Caitanya! Nitāi!"

You should not 'take' *mahā-prasāda* and you should not 'eat' *mahā-prasāda*. You should try to serve it. You should not 'chant' *harināma*, but serve *harināma*. You should not 'hear' *hari-kathā*, but you should serve *hari-kathā* with your ears. Never go to 'see' the Deities. Instead you can think, "I'm going before the Deity so that He may see me." You cannot see the Deities, but you can pray, "Oh, please see me. Please give me Your mercy. I cannot see You. With these eyes I see You like a statue made of stone, gold, copper, or brass." Kṛṣṇa is not like this and Śrī Mahāprabhu is not like this [made of stone, gold, etc]. Therefore, try to follow these rules and regulations so that your observance of Puruṣottama-vrata in this month will be successful.

On Sunday we will make a festival for Girirāja-Govardhana. From today, try to prepare some offerings. Some dry preparations

can be made beforehand. At least three hundred sixty preparations should be made.

Also, any devotee coming from a distant place should be looked after. They should be hosted with gentle, sweet words. Try to look after their problems very politely.

## ❧ OBSERVANCE OF ANNAKŪṬA FESTIVAL ❧ (At Gīri-Govardhana in New Vraja)

### Devotion in Household Life

**T**here are two kinds of devotees. Those who are in the renounced order, like *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs*, have left their homes, wealth, reputation, and everything else. They have left all kinds of worldly requirements without regret. Their only desire is to serve Gurudeva, devotees, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Mahāprabhu, and Nityānanda Prabhu, and they practice *bhajana* like Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. You know that despite being the son of a king, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī gave up everything – wealth, wife, father, and mother. We can give up these things very easily, but to give up the false ego related to this body and mind, to give up lust and enviousness, and to give up desire for *pratiṣṭhā*, self-praise, is very, very rare. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī renounced everything.

Those who have left their homes, wives, and children should be like Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī. When Sanātana Gosvāmī understood that one gold coin remained in the possession of his servant Īśāna, he said, “O Īśāna, you should take this gold coin and return to your home. Do not come with me. You don’t know that this coin is *kāla*, death,<sup>1</sup> so you should return.”

<sup>1</sup> This means that if Īśāna were to keep the coin, someone would kill them for it. It would just be a matter of time. One meaning of *kāla* is ‘annihilating time.’

Īśāna replied, “Oh, I am giving it up.”

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī said, “No. You will again become attached to it. Go home.”

These are the ideals of *brahmacārīs* and *sannyāsīs*, as well as those who may not be called *brahmacārīs* or *sannyāsīs* but who are renounced. You know Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. Was he a *brahmacārī* or a *sannyāsī*? Can anyone say? He was *paramahansa*. He also gave up his wife and everything else and was living in Vṛndāvana. In order to not be influenced by false ego, he kept the name ‘Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura’ until his last days.<sup>2</sup>

A *gṛhastha bhakta*, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, lived with his wife and children. Before his marriage, he requested Kṛṣṇa, “Please give me and my brothers very beautiful wives, very qualified children, great wealth, and a very big kingdom.” Why? To serve Kṛṣṇa. How? Not directly with that wealth and other paraphernalia. The Pāṇḍavas were thinking of the many devotees in the world who want to serve Kṛṣṇa but who fear, “If we chant and remember Kṛṣṇa, He will take away all our wealth and possessions.” This fear makes them worship Kālī, Durgā, Gaṇeśa, Śaṅkarā, and other deities instead. Some worship Nārāyaṇa and Dvārakādhīśa, but they will not worship Kṛṣṇa because they fear He will take everything from them and make them street beggars. Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja therefore prayed, “Please give us a high-class kingdom, very beautiful wives, very qualified children, and great wealth and reputation.”

Kṛṣṇa began to laugh. “Why are you praying like this? It is against My nature to fulfill this request.”

Yudhiṣṭhira replied, “I am not asking for our sake. We are worried about the general people who think, ‘If we chant, remember, and worship Kṛṣṇa, we will become beggars.’ We want to show that

<sup>2</sup> This means he did not take a name that signifies renunciation.

even though we worship You, have friendship with You, and serve You, we are still wealthy like You. If our wives are very beautiful and our sons very qualified, and if we give hundreds of thousands of gifts in charity, people will then think, “The Pāṇḍavas are serving Kṛṣṇa, and they are healthy and wealthy and have such a high position. We should also serve Kṛṣṇa. We have nothing to fear; nothing to fear at all. Kṛṣṇa will give us everything. We need not go to Gaṇeśa, Durgā, Kālī, Śaṅkarā, and other demigods. We should always serve Kṛṣṇa because He will give all these things more easily.’”

Kṛṣṇa smiled and said, “Oh, you are really My *bhakta*.”

The Pāṇḍavas are high-class *bhaktas*, even higher than Nārada. Kṛṣṇa does not go to Nārada’s *āśrama*. Actually Nārada has no *āśrama*, so how could Kṛṣṇa go to it? He never goes to the *āśrama* of any *ṛṣi* or *maharṣi*. We see from the Mahābhārata, however, that He is often in the house of the Pāṇḍavas, resting or performing so many other pastimes, and sometimes serving Arjuna. This establishes the high-class devotion of the Pāṇḍavas. The Dvārakā *mahiṣīs* (queens), such as Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā, are still higher, and higher still are the *gopīs*.

We should come to Śrī Mahāprabhu’s *lilā*. Do you know Kolaveca Śrīdhara? He used to quarrel with Mahāprabhu, saying, “I will not give You these banana flowers or this bundle of *sak* (spinach).”

Mahāprabhu would reply, “I will have it,” and then take it by force.

Śrīdhara would say, “You can go to other shops. There are so many rich shopkeepers. Why do You always come to me and quarrel? I am such a poor person, with only a very small garden. When I sell my produce, I use half of the profits to worship the Ganges, and half of the remainder I use to support some devotees. I barely maintain my life with the little that is left.”

Mahāprabhu responded, “You should not worship the Ganges. She is My wife. If you give all that to Me and worship Me, your worship will be complete.”

“Don’t say that!” Śrīdhara would cry, “That is offensive. You shouldn’t say that.” To alleviate this offense he would block his ears and chant, “O Rāma! Rāma!” Then he would say to Mahāprabhu, “You should not call Yourself the husband of Ganges. I do not want to hear that from You.”

“One day you will know that I am the husband of Ganges, Lakṣmī, and everyone else.”

Śrīdhara and Mahāprabhu used to quarrel in this way.

Was Śrīdhara a family man or a renunciant? He was not a family man. He lived alone, without any family, but he was also like a *grhastha*, because he had his own house. All the rain water used to fall in his room, because there were numerous holes in the roof. There were no rats in his house because he had no grains. He had a *loṭa* (drinking cup) made of iron that had many holes. Still, Mahāprabhu used to take it and drink water from it.

I think Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita was higher than Śrīdhara, and he was a householder. One night, his son died while Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita was performing *kīrtana* for Mahāprabhu. He told his family, “If you weep and disturb the *kīrtana*, I will jump in the Ganges and give up my body. Do not disturb the *kīrtana*.” What a high-class devotee he was.

One day he was clapping his hands three times and said, “One! Two! Three!” Mahāprabhu asked, “Why are you clapping and calling, ‘One, two, three?’”

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita immediately answered, “We have nothing to eat today. There is nothing in my house, and we have so many people living here. There are we four brothers, our wives, and the children as well, but we have no grains. What will we take at midday and in the night? Nothing. But we are performing *kīrtana* with *karatālas* day and night. If we have nothing to eat one day, that is all right. If we still have nothing to eat on the second day, that is still all right, and if there is still nothing on the third day and Kṛṣṇa does not arrange anything, then all of us will jump in the Ganges.”

Mahāprabhu began to smile and said, “Even if Lakṣmī, the goddess of wealth and fortune, goes begging with a *bhikṣā-pātra* (begging bowl), you will never have to beg; never, never. Kṛṣṇa may beg for you. He will do everything by His *kaṭākṣa*, His sidelong glance. He will do everything for you.”

So we should try to be devotees. If you are in the renounced order, then give up everything like Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and all the other Gosvāmīs. And if you are a householder, offer everything to Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu.

Do not keep anything for yourself. You are not the owner of anything and you are not the doer. If you have so much false ego that you think yourself the doer, and if you are very attached to your body, then you are not a follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. However, if you offer everything to Kṛṣṇa, you can have the mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal, and your high-class *gurudeva*. Maintain your life somehow or other, as best you can. Do not become so involved in your maintenance; try to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness instead. Always be hopeful and do not become absorbed in problems. Try to keep your feet on the head of your problems. Actually there is only one problem: how to remember and serve Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, and Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal. If this problem is solved, then all problems will be solved forever and ever. If you do not solve this problem, there will always be newer and newer problems, and your mind will be disturbed. If your only concern is to chant and remember Kṛṣṇa, then all your problems will serve you and help you, no matter what they are. Even if the whole world is kicking you and insulting you, you will think, “Oh, this is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. I wanted to be alone and to chant always, continuously. Now I have this opportunity.” Always remember this *śloka*:

*tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam  
hṛd-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.8)*

One who accepts as Your mercy the results of his own actions as well as the happiness and distress of his *prārabdha-karma*, who endures them with an undisturbed mind, and who maintains his life by offering himself unto You by body, mind, and words, is eligible to attain Your lotus feet, which are the shelter of liberation.

Try to understand and realize the meaning of this *śloka*, and then you will be happy forever. You will have no problems at all. Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī had no problems, Nārada had no problems, and you, actually, have no problems. My only problem is, “How can I inspire you in Kṛṣṇa consciousness? How can I fulfill the desire of my *gurudeva* and my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja?”

## ❧ THE HIGH-CLASS DISCIPLE ❧

**R**āmānujācārya was a very powerful *ācārya*; very powerful. Like Rāmānujācārya, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura took *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa*, not *eka-daṇḍa sannyāsa*. Rāmānujācārya had many learned disciples who were pure devotees. One of them was highly learned and perfectly knew all the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and other *śāstras*. He had some ego, however, thinking himself very highly cultured and knowledgeable. Rāmānuja wanted to take away that ego by giving him an operation [as follows]:

Rāmānuja had a disciple who was very beautiful. Also, she was from a wealthy, highly aristocratic family. From her childhood she used to come to him. She was always sitting with him, taking *prasāda* from him, and sometimes she used to sit on his lap. Gradually she became mature and she was given in marriage to a very high-class, wealthy person. At that time she went to her in-laws' house with her husband, but after six months she returned to her father in Śrī Raṅgam where Rāmānuja was living. She came to him and began to weep very bitterly.

She said, "O Gurudeva, I am so unhappy. My father-in-law, grandfather-in-law, and mother-in-law always chastise me. They tell me to go to a well about two miles from my home, up a very steep road. They give me two or three very big pots, and I have to carry them all. I have to cook alone for so many persons, and I have to wash all the clothes of the family – my husband, son-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, and so on. I cannot do it alone.

When I tell them I need help, they chastise me. They say, ‘Oh, your father is so rich. Go and bring two, three, or four servants. If you want to be here with us, you will have to bring water, wash the clothes and pots, cook for everyone, and do everything else.’ Day and night I have to do this, but I cannot.” She continued to weep, “They always chastise me. I want a servant.”

Gurudeva began to think and then called for that very high-class, learned scholarly disciple who was honored by all. He told him, “You should go to my initiated daughter’s house, and help her bring water, cook, and do other services. You should serve her without hesitation, as you would a queen, and never complain, ‘Why should I go there and cook, wash clothes, and do so much other service for this girl?’” Rāmānuja was a very powerful *guru*, and if this disciple had complained like this, Rāmānuja would have said, “Oh, get out!” He was not an ordinary *ācārya*; He was Lakṣmaṇa himself, the younger brother of Rāmā, so he was very powerful. The disciple, therefore, could not object. Without hesitating, he began to bring that girl water and was always cooking. The householders did not allow him to use soap or anything like that, so he looked like a dirty person, a cook. All the villagers knew him as a cook and a very low-class person who knows nothing, like a servant, but he was a servant without pay. He was a servant of his *gurudeva*, not of anyone else. He was therefore carrying out orders without hesitation, without any “noo noo, choo choo – I will not do, I will not do.”

After he had been there for over six months, a highly learned person came to that village. He knew all the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and other *śāstras* and he challenged the residents of that village: “If anyone wants to debate with me, he can come.” But no one came. He began giving classes. The cook came to his classes, only to see what was going on. All were charmed by his lectures, by his knowledge of Sanskrit, and by his knowledge of all the *śāstras*. He was very proud of his learning.

After some time this cook said, “May I say something?”

All the villagers, along with that learned person, looked at him. They said, “Oh, he is a cook, a dirty person, and his personality is not so good. He has a long beard and long hair, and his *dhotī* is dirty and torn, so what can he say? Stop, stop, stop!”

The cook said, “I want to speak.”

There were many good persons there, and they said, “Why are you stopping him? He can say anything he wants.”

At that time he spoke in Sanskrit. He began to recite from *śāstra*, and he totally cut all the arguments of that Māyāvādī speaker. Everyone looked at him. “How astonishing! How wonderful!” Everyone clapped, and they all wanted to take that cook’s foot dust.

That defeated person ran away, and where he went, nobody knew. All the villagers asked, “Who is that cook?” They knew he was a disciple of Rāmānuja. All of them collectively went to Rāmānuja and asked, “Why have you done this? Although that girl is your disciple, still you should not have made him her servant. We think that he has been insulted. Please be merciful to him and keep him with you.”

Rāmānuja called his disciple, “Now you have been operated upon. I think your false ego has gone. Now you are pure and you can come to me.” He gave him some service and he gave him the renounced order, *sannyāsa*. That disciple became a very high-class *sannyāsī* and preached everywhere throughout the world. Can you be a disciple like this? This is a real disciple. No false ego. If I ordered you to do what Rāmānuja ordered this disciple to do, you would be the first to tell me, “I cannot do it. Now I am leaving you.” There would be no *daṇḍavaṭ praṇāmas* at all. Giving up all faith in Kṛṣṇa and in *guru*, you would write a paper proclaiming, “He is a bogus *guru*. He wanted to engage me in the service of a girl.”

But this was a high-class disciple, and his *guru* was also a high-class *guru*. Rāmānuja gave him love and affection for Nārāyaṇa, and he became a realized soul.

## Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī

Here is another example of a very good disciple. Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was doing Navadvīpa *parikramā* along with thousands of pilgrims. On the third day he came to Navadvīpa town, in front of the Praudhā Māyā temple, which was surrounded by a large gathering of people. All the so-called *brāhmaṇas* and caste *gosvāmīs* there were opposed to Śrīla Prabhupāda, because they thought he felt himself superior to *brāhmaṇas*.<sup>1</sup> They made a conspiracy: “We will punish and kill him.” About a thousand of these *brāhmaṇas* took sticks, bricks, stones, soda water, and hot water, and threw them at the devotees. They wanted to kill many devotees along with Śrīla Prabhupāda. All the devotees ran away, ‘keeping their feet on their head.’<sup>2</sup> They were running here and there, wherever they could. This incident was reported to the police, but the police were silent, and suppressed news of this event; they favored the caste *brāhmaṇas*.

There was no way to escape. Śrīla Prabhupāda was alone; all his senior disciples had fled. One *brahmacārī* – in white cloth, not saffron – was with him. He at once signalled to Śrīla Prabhupāda and they both approached a house. The *brahmacārī* begged the householders, “Oh, please open the door. We want to stay for a moment. [Inside the house] he immediately gave Śrīla Prabhupāda his own white clothes and took his *sannyāsī* clothes and *daṇḍa*. In this way he actually took *sannyāsa* there, and then he somehow sent Śrīla Prabhupāda, in white cloth, to Māyāpura. No one knew about this, and the crowd surrounded that house.

<sup>1</sup> Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda preached that Vaiṣṇavas are the real *brāhmaṇas*, superior to caste *brāhmaṇas*. He was also giving sacred thread (*dīkṣā*) to those who were not *brāhmaṇas* by birth. The caste *gosvāmīs* believed that only if one is born in a *brāhmaṇa* family one is a *brāhmaṇa*.

<sup>2</sup> This is a Hindi expression meaning ‘running at great speed.’

They thought, “Oh, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī is here; we must take him.”

That *brahmacārī* knew this was a dangerous time. He was Vinodabihārī Brahmacārī. He was young, perhaps only twenty-one years of age, but he was bold and strong; he had no fear at all.

Some police came and after some time, and the gathering dissipated. After a while, Śrī Vinodabihārī Brahmacārī also went to Māyāpura, and everyone saw that he was now a *sannyāsī*; he was not Vinoda Bābū. That night he changed his cloth back again, but Śrīla Prabhupāda had accepted him as a *sannyāsī* disciple.

Now you should consider who Vinodabihārī Brahmacārī was. He was my *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. We should try to be disciples like Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He left his mother and so much wealth. He was a landlord, and at the age of only sixteen, he was in college. He left everything and went to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda in so many ways you cannot imagine. Everyone wanted to give him *sannyāsa*. Three times it was declared, “Tomorrow he will take *sannyāsa*.” Prabhupāda wanted it, and everything was ready – the *daṇḍa*, saffron cloth, and so on. However, Śrīla Prabhupāda’s secretary, Śrīla Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, who at that time was a *grhastha* named Kuñjabihārī Vidyābhūṣaṇa, requested Prabhupāda, “If you give *sannyāsa* to Vinoda, everything will be ruined. There is no one who can manage like he can. We cannot do it, so please wait. If we can find another who can manage, then you can give him *sannyāsa*.” Three times everything was prepared for his *sannyāsa* ceremony, but each time it was checked.

After Śrīla Prabhupāda disappeared from this world, he told Vinoda in a dream, “Even now you have not taken *sannyāsa*. You must take *sannyāsa*. My preaching has collapsed, so you should at once take it.” After that Vinoda took *sannyāsa*. At that time the three, four, or five magazines [publications established by

Śrīla Prabhupāda] had been stopped. There was no Navadvīpa *parikramā* or any other *parikramā*. All were stopped, and the preaching was also stopped. My *gurudeva*, however, with the same spirit [as Srīla Prabhupāda], again started everything. His first three *sannyāsīs* were Vāmana Mahārāja, Trivikrama Mahārāja, and me. I was so junior, so junior. But even though I was not qualified, even without his order I always used to jump to follow him. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja *kī jaya! Gaura premānande! Hari Haribol!*

**THE GLORY OF**  
**ŚRĪLA RAGHUNĀTHA DĀSA GOŚVĀMĪ**

**W**e must fix our goal. Our goal is the love that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to sprinkle: one-pointed *rādhā-dāsyam*.

*tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi  
na jīvāmi tvayā vinā  
iti vijñāya devī tvaṁ  
naya mām caraṇāntikam*

*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (96)*

by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Goṣvāmī

“I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O Devī (Rādhā), please understand this and bring me to Your feet.”

Even if Kṛṣṇa were to come directly and offer us many things, we would not take anything from Him. We would only pray to Him, “Please engage me in the service of Your Prāṇeśvarī, Rādhikā.

The object is to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā in Goloka Vṛndāvana; nothing less than this. For this you will have to perform more austerities than Dhruva Mahārāja did. He performed austerities for six months, and you will have to perform them for longer. Also, to first make platform to do this, you must be like Prahlāda Mahārāja. If you cannot be like Prahlāda Mahārāja, you cannot progress, because you will have so many desires. Nṛsiṁhadeva

Himself told Prahlāda, “I want to give you any boon you request. As you like, you can ask.”

Prahlāda replied, “I am not a businessman and I will never be one.” He never accepted anything material from Him.

Be like this. Do not serve Kṛṣṇa, either in your home or elsewhere, for money or for solving worldly problems. There is only one problem to solve: how to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal.

If we can develop the qualities of Prahlāda Mahārāja, then we will be like him. He had many good qualities, like *akṛta-droha* (tolerance), *maitrī* (friendship), *karuṇa* (compassion), and *kṛpālu* (mercy). If anyone did anything mischievous to him, he never retaliated. His father tortured him in many ways. He gave him poison, threw him into the ocean, dropped him from a mountain, put him in a pit of poisonous snakes, and sent mad elephants to trample him. Still Prahlāda never blamed his father. He was never upset; he never thought he had problems. Whatever problems came were solved by Kṛṣṇa. Prahlāda never told Kṛṣṇa, “Oh, so many problems are coming.” If you are not of the same quality as Prahlāda, you will always be upset and have many material desires. In such a condition, you cannot hear *hari-kathā*.

More advanced than Prahlāda is Citraketu Mahārāja. You should then become as elevated as Citraketu Mahārāja became in his next life. Also, always take lesson from Bharata Mahārāja regarding how to be detached from this world and attached to Kṛṣṇa. We cannot be truly satisfied by worldly things.

Ultimately, we will only be satisfied by following the character and teachings of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. He is many hundreds of thousands of times more advanced than Bharata, Prahlāda, and others. How sweet are his prayers in *Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*. The glory of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is not in his renunciation, not in his taking only *mahā-prasāda* in Jagannātha Purī, nor in his eating the rotten rice there. This is not his glory. This is for external persons. His glory is in the following prayers.

*śrī-rūpa-mañjari-karārcita-pāda-padma  
goṣṭhendra-nandana-bhujārpita-mastakāyāḥ  
hā modataḥ kanaka-gauri padāravinda-  
samvāhanāni śanakais tava kiṁ kariṣye?*

*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (72)*

O Rūpa Mañjarī, when, while golden-complexioned Rādhikā is lying with Her head in Kṛṣṇa’s lap and Her feet in your lap as you massage them, will you [with an indication] from the corners of your eyes give me your *mahā-prasādam sevā* of gently massaging Her feet while you fan Her?

And:

*hā nātha gokula-sudhākara su-prasanna-  
vaktrāravinda madhura-smita he kṛpārdra  
yatra tvayā viharate praṇayaiḥ priyārāt  
tatraiva mām api naya priya-sevanāya*

*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (100)*

O Natha! O nectar moon of Gokula, whose cheerful lotus face smiles so sweetly. O crown jewel of the merciful, if You are pleased with me, then give me this one benediction: I am about to die because I do not know where my Svāminī is. Please take me with You when You go to meet Her, so that I may engage in service to Her.

## Help from Guru

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī also prays, “I was here in Vṛndāvana, at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, with so great a hope. But, O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, if You are not merciful to me, then I have no connection with Kṛṣṇa. I do not need to live at Govardhana or Rādhā-kuṇḍa; I have no connection with them. O Kṛṣṇa, please take me to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Without Rādhikā I cannot live.”

These prayers are the glory of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. If a greed comes to take them into our heart, we will have no attraction to this world, to wife, husband, children, wealth or reputation; nothing will be there. I want to take you all to that realm. Do not be householders in the worldly sense. If you have lust or any attraction for this world, you cannot take what I want to give; you will be deprived of it. I want to give you this greed. If you are a householder, remain so, but do not be attached. Do not think, “My *gurudeva* is very merciful. He has given me in marriage to a very good devotee.” This is not really his mercy.

We must be like Nārada Ṛṣi. How cunningly he cuts all material attachments by his words, which are like swords. The *guru* has not come to give rupees, wealth, or worldly things. Some people think, “I have given so much. I am doing so much.” But do you know what Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given to this world? Has he given any money, a house, a lady, or a boy? He has not come to give this. He has come to give the elevated love of conjugal Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa.

Try to realize the glory of the pure devotee and thus advance step-by-step. For this I have come; I have not come to arrange a marriage for anyone. Because some people cannot control their senses, I say, “You should be married.” But this is not actually the message of Śrī Mahāprabhu and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

If you are a householder, always serve and train your children to be very high-class devotees. Give them some teachings about renunciation from the beginning, as Prahlāda Mahārāja taught his fellow students and as Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura taught Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. The *guru* may be very qualified, but at the same time, he may seem harsh. He may give some slaps with his words. He may say to a disciple, “You should go away.” Although he may say this, if that disciple leaves him, not understanding him [his intention], then he is more foolish than a donkey. If you think, “I am helping Gurudeva,” you are not correct. You are not qualified

to help him. He is helping you. What harm will there be for him if all his disciples go away? Will there be any harm to *gurudeva*? No. He is with us only by his mercy. You should realize this, and then you can understand advanced *hari-kathā*.

If you chant *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare / hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*, your senses will be controlled, your ears will be controlled, your mind will be controlled, and you will be controlled. All the creepers and trees will hear; they have ears to hear. The entire atmosphere and all atoms will hear, and they will benefit. Even if they do nothing, they will benefit. If you chant with love and affection, under the guidance of any *vraja-rasika* Vaiṣṇava, no one can stop you from progressing to Goloka Vṛndāvana.



## ❧ HONORING DEVOTEES ❧

**A**t the time of sitting for class or other functions, we should try to honor everyone. In the morning, when we do *parikramā* of the *mandira* or of *tulasī*, senior devotees should go first, and juniors behind. In this way we are always honoring others and not disturbing anyone. Without giving honor and being humble, we cannot progress. Juniors must give honor to seniors, and seniors will treat juniors with love and affection, as they would their sons or younger brothers. All the rules and regulations should be taught.

Moreover, if a disciple of a disciple of our *gurudeva* is advanced in devotion, has given up all worldly considerations, knows all the transcendental truths, and is serving *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, he also should be respected. In this way, by not galloping over the head of others, we can increase our Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja preached everywhere in the world, but Śrīla *pūjyapāda* Śrīdhara Mahārāja stayed in Navadvīpa. Yet, Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja honored Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja. Nowadays, these facts are perhaps concealed, and disciples do not know how Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja honored him. He always had so much honor for my *gurudeva* and his other senior godbrothers, and he treated some of them as *śikṣā-gurus*. I also honor my godbrothers as my *śikṣā-gurus*: Trivikrama Mahārāja, Vāmana Mahārāja, and others who are senior to me. They respect me and I also honor them. *Pūjyapāda* Svāmī Mahārāja is in the line of Vaiṣṇava *gurus*. He respected other Vaiṣṇavas like Śrīdhara Mahārāja and Bhakti

Vilāsa Tīrtha Mahārāja, and he wants you, also, to show them respect. We should know this Vaiṣṇava etiquette.

## The Lessons of Jagadānanda Paṇḍita

You have heard of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and perhaps you have also heard the name Jagadānanda Paṇḍita Prabhu. Jagadānanda Prabhu was an associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu from boyhood, and he was therefore a participant in *navadvīpa-līlā*. In *kṛṣṇa-līlā* he was Satyabhāmā, who had some *māna* (transcendental loving anger) toward Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī was the Prime Minister of the Muslim king. He was so intelligent and learned in all *śāstras*. He once came to Jagannātha Purī and met with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and then he returned to Vṛndāvana. Jagadānanda was also in Purī at that time, and he wanted so much to serve Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Once in Purī, Jagadānanda Paṇḍita brought a pot full of very fragrant Ayurvedic oil, because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would sometimes faint in the ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He brought that pot with great care, and gave it to Govinda. “Oh, you should put some oil on the head of Mahāprabhu daily.”

Govinda then told Mahāprabhu, “Jagadānanda has ordered me to put some oil on Your head. It is a very powerful Ayurvedic medicine.”

Mahāprabhu replied very humbly, “Take this oil to the Jagannātha temple and offer it to be used in the temple lamps.”

The next day Jagadānanda asked Govinda, “Have you put this oil on Mahāprabhu’s head?”

He replied, “I could not.”

Jagadānanda inquired, “Why not?”

“Mahāprabhu ordered me to give this oil to Lord Jagannātha.”

Jagadānanda became very upset, and taking the pot of oil, smashed it onto the floor in front of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All the oil splattered here and there. In anger, he went to his *bhajana-kuṭīra* and locked the door, where he remained crying for one

or two days. He did not come to see Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu thought, “Oh, he is angry at Me because I have not accepted his offering. This is why he has not come.”

One day, two days, three days passed. Then, on the morning of the fourth day, Mahāprabhu went to Jagadānanda’s *bhajana-kuṭīra* and knocked on the door. He called, “O Jagadānanda, Jagadānanda!” But Jagadānanda did not reply. He simply wept.

Mahāprabhu said, “For three days I have not eaten anything. I have an empty stomach and now I am so hungry. I am going to take bath in the ocean, and I will come back very soon. Prepare all kinds of preparations for Me.” After speaking in this way He went to the sea, took bath, and returned after one hour.

In the meantime Jagadānanda also took bath, changed his clothes, and began to prepare many kinds of vegetables, rice, *dhal*, *capātīs*, tamarind chutney, and so on. He made more than fifty-six preparations and served them all on two or three big banana leaves. Govinda was with Mahāprabhu. He requested Govinda, “Tell Mahāprabhu to take *prasāda*.”

Mahāprabhu said, “I cannot. There should be two seats and two leaves. I will sit with Jagadānanda and we will take *prasāda* together. If he does not take with Me, then I will leave here with an empty stomach.”

Jagadānanda replied, not directly, but to Govinda, “Tell Mahāprabhu He should gladly take. After He finishes, you and I will both take His remnants together.” Govinda then told Mahāprabhu, “You should take. He will take after You. He will only take Your remnants.”

Mahāprabhu then took *prasāda*. After that, the remnants were divided into two. Jagadānanda became happy, but he did not directly go and speak to Mahāprabhu about anything; he still had a scent of *māna*. After two or three days he went to Mahāprabhu and told Him, “I want to go to Vṛndāvana. Please order me to go. I want Your permission.”

Mahāprabhu asked, “Why do you want to go?”

“For a long time I had wanted to go with You, but You did not take me. Now I want to go there for *darśana*. I want to be there and serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa conjugal.”

Mahāprabhu said, “You can go, but do not stay for a long time. Go and see, and then return. Don’t climb on the top of Govardhana. You are not qualified to remain in Vṛndāvana. You may quarrel there because you will see everything according to your knowledge of rules and regulations. You will inspect whether the Vrajavāsīs are taking bath or not, and what they are doing or not doing. You will judge according to your mentality, and you may therefore commit offenses, so do not remain there for long. You should return shortly.”

Jagadānanda then left Purī for Vṛndāvana. When he arrived at the border, he sat under a tree and thought, “Why did I make such a mistake? I cannot remain alive without Mahāprabhu. I have done wrong. Should I return? But how can I return? What reason will I give?” He was in a dilemma about what to do and what not to do. He remained weeping in that place for one or two days. Later, he somehow consoled his mind and considered, “I should go.” He entered Vṛndāvana and there he met Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, who told him, “You should remain here, and together we will see all the places of pastimes.”

Thus they lived together in Mahāvana. One day, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī left his *bhajana-kuṭīra* to do *mādhukarī*<sup>1</sup> while Jagadānanda was cooking. Jagadānanda never went for *mādhukarī* because he felt, “I’m not qualified. Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī are qualified, but I cannot

<sup>1</sup> *Mādhukarī* means ‘to beg cooked foodstuffs.’ It is the practice of the topmost renunciants, who are deeply immersed in *bhajana* day and night. They do not eat sumptuously at any one house but beg a little from each place, just as a bee (*madhu*) takes a little pollen from each flower.

digest it.” Actually it is we who cannot digest *mādhukarī*. We are not qualified.”<sup>2</sup>

So Jagadānanda remained at the *bhajana-kuṭīra*, cooking. And what happened? Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī took a saffron cloth from someone and wrapped it around his head like a turban. Then he returned to his *kuṭīra*. In the meantime, the pot of *kichri* was boiling on the stove, making a ‘*taka buk, taka buk*’ sound. Jagadānanda asked Sanātana Gosvāmī, “You are very faithful to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. From where have you collected His cloth?”

Sanātana Gosvāmī simply told him, “It is not Mahāprabhu’s. It belonged to a Māyāvādī. He gave it to me and I accepted it.”

“A Māyāvādī?” Jagadānanda at once picked up the cooking pot as if to throw it.

Sanātana Gosvāmī was very humble. With a smile he said, “You are so attached to Mahāprabhu. I was testing you. I know that you have such faith in Mahāprabhu that you cannot tolerate seeing any of His devotees wearing the saffron cloth of Māyāvādīs. He has rebuked you, but what is the meaning? He loves you very much, and thus He gives you the *madhura-rasa*, sweet taste, of loving rebuke. To me He says, ‘O Sanātana Gosvāmī, you are such an honorable person, such a high-class devotee. You are superior to all others.’ This is like *nimbā-rasa*, the very bitter juice of a neem tree.”

When Sanātana Gosvāmī was in Purī he felt, “I am so low, such a wretched person.” On his way to see Mahāprabhu, leeches

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2 Since a neophyte devotee is not absorbed in *bhajana* day and night, he needs to engage his body and mind in cooking for Kṛṣṇa and other services. If he prematurely does *mādhukarī*, he will simply be pretending to be a great Vaiṣṇava. He will thus cheat himself and will also become lazy. Also, if he performs *mādhukarī*, he will inevitably be affected by the consciousness of the person who prepared the foodstuffs, even if they have been offered to the Deity. All this creates obstacles in one’s *bhajana*. One will therefore not be able to digest the begging *mādhukarī* before one is actually qualified.

bit him and very foul smelling pus-like juice oozed from the pores of his body. But what did Mahāprabhu do? He embraced him. Sanātana Gosvāmī exclaimed, “Don’t touch me, Prabhu! Don’t touch me!” Sanātana Gosvāmī then met with Jagadānanda and asked him, “What should I do? Caitanya Mahāprabhu always wants to embrace me, but I am so wretched and full of disease. So much pus is oozing out and still Mahāprabhu touches me. What should I do? Should I return to Vṛndāvana?”

“Yes, you should go to Vṛndāvana.” Jagadānanda Paṇḍita said, “Do not remain here. Otherwise Mahāprabhu will touch you and He may get some disease. You should go quickly.”

Mahāprabhu heard this and told Jagadānanda, “O Jagāi, you are a boy of only two days old, and yet you are instructing Sanātana Gosvāmī? He is superior to you yet you have dared to give him advice. Do not think you are so advanced. You are only a two-day-old boy, with no intelligence.” Mahāprabhu taught that we should honor everyone, especially those who are pure devotees. We should be humble and try to give honor to others. This is the only way to progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## ❧ RIPPLES IN A POND ❧

I am so happy to have been here for nine days. Especially during this visit, I have explained clearly our objective. I have never spoken like this anywhere in Western countries, although I have explained all these truths in Mathurā and Vṛndāvana. Here, there are not so many advanced devotees; still I explained so many things. But I have only begun; I have given the *maṅgalācaraṇa*, auspicious invocation. On this basis we will discuss more in future years. We are not meant to always remain in the same class. Try to be like a river current, otherwise the ‘water’ will become stagnant and dirty and will not be of any use.

*Bhakti* is like a current, always new and becoming newer and newer. By this *bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa Himself, as well as *vraja-prema*, appears ever-fresh and new.

### Ideal Society

Try to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness by following the process of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, and others, especially Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhakisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura. Always try to honor all devotees without considering caste or creed, and think that we are all in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s family. Try, also, to respect devotees, not blindly, but according to their quality of *bhakti*. After so many years you are coming to the stage of *madhyama-adhikārī*, so try to realize all this.

I have heard somewhere that human beings are called ‘social animals.’ Without society we cannot live. We will have to choose a society or we will have to make a society, so we should try to make a society in which we can chant, remember Kṛṣṇa, and be happy. What is the meaning of preaching? It is only to make a very good society everywhere, so that everyone can be happy forever. For that purpose, such a society should be developed here, and for this society, training is required. If this society is Kṛṣṇa conscious, it will help everyone, and everyone will be happy.

Do not think only of yourself but of your children, because they will also be members of the society. Train them in the principles and teachings of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The school we have begun here should expand, and all children should be trained here. A committee will be required to meet and try to solve any problems that arise. If there is good will and everyone honors each other, all problems may disappear and the children will be very well trained and happy.

Whether one is junior or senior, everyone should be honored according to their position in *bhakti*. Those who are senior disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda should be honored, and they should have so much affection and love for their juniors. In this way a very ideal society can be made. Your Prabhupāda, my Svāmījī, also wanted this, and he tried for this. Some devotees, however, due to false ego, wanted to control by intelligence and not by love and affection, and therefore, they could not be successful. The process for achieving success has nothing to do with controlling. It has to do with love and affection, *viśva-prema*, universal love. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has that universal love, and we all must follow Him. If any problem comes, try to reconcile it. You should think, “It is due to my past *karma*,” or “Kṛṣṇa wants to test me and to operate on me.” These two things. We must not be angry and upset with disturbing occurrences. A school should be established for the purpose of teaching this.

[Aside from the school] meetings and classes may be held fortnightly, weekly, or on the occasion of any festival, for association and for developing love and affection for each other. Sometimes one *prabhu* can give class, sometimes another. Everyone can benefit from these classes. There should be harmony; this is most essential. By harmony you will be successful.

## Preaching and Distributing Books

We have published so many books, as Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja did. You can distribute Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja's books as well as mine. There are so many devotees, disciples, and supporters. If each person takes twelve books a year, thousands can be distributed, and if more, very good, very good. So many thanks to them. Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja's girl disciples used to distribute his books here and there, at a very young age; as teenagers. Perhaps all the boy devotees were book distributors and all were *brahmacārīs*. So why not take at least twelve books? And those who are expert can take so many. Do not forget. Try to take the books to your destinations and distribute them. If devotees have no money to pay, they may be given books now, and they will pay for them after the books have been sold.

The process Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja adopted for beginners and for others [to enthuse everyone for book distribution] was beneficial for all.

But my request is that you not only distribute the books; you should go through and read the books yourselves. Take the nectar and the essence of the books, then your preaching will be so high, and everyone will be attracted and energetic. Try to participate in *nagara-saṅkīrtana*, *harināma*, and *nāmahatta*, as Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura did. This is not just for human beings. The grass, creepers, animals, and trees, as well as the atoms in the air and water, will all hear the holy names, knowingly or unknowingly, and be liberated. Kṛṣṇa has promised this.

*jayati jayati nāmānanda-rūpaṁ murārer  
viramita-nija-dharma-dhyāna-pūjādi-yatnam  
katham api sakṛd āttam mukti-dam prāṇinām yat  
paramam amṛtam ekaṁ jīvanam bhūṣaṇam me  
Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta (1.1.9)*

All glories, all glories to the all-blissful holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which causes the devotee to give up all conventional religious duties, meditation, and worship. When somehow or other uttered even once by a living entity, the holy name awards him liberation. The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the highest nectar. It is my very life and my only treasure. \*

*Prāṇinām* means ‘those who have *cetana* (consciousness), even those with only a little consciousness, like the trees, creepers, or atoms.’ *Nagara-saṅkīrtana* should be performed for every living entity. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came and gave this best process to the world.

If you throw a stone in a pond, so many ripples will form around it, one after another, and they will touch all points on the banks. The pond is limited, but the ether, or sky, is endless. It extends throughout the entire *viśva*, universe, and it may even touch Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Similarly, if a sound vibration is impure, that impurity also goes everywhere. All are shouting politics, mundane sounds, and so many bad things. Now the whole world and the entire atmosphere has been polluted. This very powerful sound vibration of the holy name will also go and touch the entire world, even Vaikuṅṭha and Goloka Vṛndāvana. It will touch all the trees and creepers and all the atoms in the water, sky, and everywhere else. It will purify everything, whether you are aware of it or not.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu knew this, and that is why He brought the holy name. So you should also try to do *saṅkīrtana*. If you chant this *saṅkīrtana* softly or loudly – *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa*

*hare hare / hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare* – it will purify the whole world. It may reach hundreds of thousands of worlds. It is very powerful. Try to realize these facts.

If you are chanting or discussing *hari-kathā* anywhere, the vibration goes all over the world. This is called *kīrtana*. *Kīrtana* is not only performed with *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*. Discussion of *hari-kathā* is the most powerful *kīrtana*. It also purifies the whole world. You should know this and try to follow the process that Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja brought. Actually he did not bring it. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu brought it, and he, Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja, was in that line. He brought this process to the Western countries and Eastern countries outside India.

Sometimes, on occasions such as Janmāṣṭami, Nṛsiṃhadeva-caturdaśī, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s birthday, big festivals may be arranged. If this is not possible, then these holidays should still be celebrated somehow. Try to follow all the rules and regulations according to your ability. My blessings are always available to you, and your *gurudeva* will help you. Do not have any doubt about this. What is written in the *śāstra* is true to the fullest extent.

## Practicing the Process

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written two important lines in one of his songs. These are the essence of everything. In *bangalā-payāra* (Bengali verse) he writes,

*kṛṣṇera saṁsāra karo chādi’ anācāra  
jīve dayā, kṛṣṇa-nāma—sarva-dharma-sāra*

*Nadīyā-godrume* (4)

Give up all sinful behavior and live your life with Kṛṣṇa at the center. The essence of all forms of religion is to show compassion to all living beings and chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.

*Kṛṣṇera saṁsāra karo* – you can establish *kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra* (a life with Kṛṣṇa in the center). Remain with your children and husband or wife, but the center of all your activities should be to please Kṛṣṇa. Do not do anything that Kṛṣṇa does not like. To please Kṛṣṇa means to please Hari, Guru, Vaiṣṇavas, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, all the *gopas*, all the *gopīs*, and Śrīman Mahāprabhu and all His associates. Here ‘Kṛṣṇa’ means ‘all,’ to please all.

*Kṛṣṇera saṁsāra karo chādi’ anācāra* means to give up all unwanted activities and desires and always try to establish *kṛṣṇa-saṁsāra*. *Jīve dayā*, *kṛṣṇa-nāma* means to have mercy on all *jīvas*, all living entities. What is that mercy? People are suffering so much by forgetting Kṛṣṇa. We must be merciful and tell them, “Oh, you should chant and remember Kṛṣṇa and be happy forever.” Have confidence in this process. First have strong faith yourself, and then try to be merciful to others. In this way you will see that everyone is happy. Give *jīva dayā* according to each person’s level. *Nāma-ruci*. There should be *ruci*, taste, for the name. If there is *ruci*, there can be *āsakti*, attachment. Then *śuddha-sattva* (pure goodness), *bhāva* (the preliminary stage of transcendental love of God) will manifest, and that will lead to *prema* (transcendental love of God). If there is no *ruci*, chanting will only lead us up to *mukti*, liberation from this world. That is, your death may be stopped.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has said, “*prabhu kahena,— ‘kṛṣṇa-sevā’*. When the Chariot Festival in Purī was completed, the devotees were not willing to leave. They all wanted to remain with Mahāprabhu. But Mahāprabhu requested them to return to their homes. They asked, “Prabhu, You ordered us to return to our homes, but what should we do there?”

Now we are in the same situation. I may go back to Vṛndāvana, but you cannot go there because there are so many problems [obstacles], especially money problems. In the same way, they were asking Mahāprabhu, “By Your order we will return to our

homes. What should we do when we reach there?” Mahāprabhu replied in two lines:

*prabhu kahena,—‘kṛṣṇa-sevā,’ ‘vaiṣṇava-sevana’  
‘nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana’*

*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 15.104)*

“Serve Kṛṣṇa, and serve the Vaiṣṇavas.” *Prabhu kahena,—‘kṛṣṇa-sevā.’* Lord Caitanya said, “Engage in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. *Vaiṣṇava-sevana* – serve the Vaiṣṇavas. *Nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana* – always do *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.” According to your ability you can do *nāma-saṅkīrtana* at all times with some sense of a relationship with Kṛṣṇa and giving up all kinds of *anarthas*. Then the name you chant may be *nāmābhāsa* (a glimpse of the light of the holy name before its full light is perfectly visible). After *nāmābhāsa*, the pure name will come. So always perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, and try to introduce it to others.

## Serving the Vaiṣṇavas with Discrimination

The next year, the devotees again questioned Mahāprabhu, “We know something about *kṛṣṇa-sevā*, as performed by *arcanaṁ*, worshiping, and by all other means, and we also know *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. But how do we do *vaiṣṇava-sevā*?”

What did Mahāprabhu reply? He told them, “Try to realize that there are three kinds of Vaiṣṇavas: *kaniṣṭha* (neophyte devotee), *madhyama* (intermediate devotee), and *uttama* (a devotee possessed of unalloyed devotion).

*Kaniṣṭhas* are always serving the Deities, but they don’t care for Vaiṣṇavas. They are always engaged in this way, thinking, “This *kṛṣṇa-arcana* is sufficient.” *Madhyamas* are not engaged in worshiping the Deities only, but are always worshiping and serving Vaiṣṇavas. The *uttama mahā-bhāgavatas* are superior to the other two. They are always remembering Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes

and serving Kṛṣṇa by *manasi aṣṭa-kālīya-sevā* (serving by mind the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa throughout the eight time divisions of the day).

Not so much was said for the *kaniṣṭhas*. There is no duty, no order, for them. Regarding the *uttama-mahā-bhāgavatas*, they are beyond the control of the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and so on. *Na dharmam nādharmam*.<sup>1</sup> They are *paramahaṁsa*. They see that Kṛṣṇa is everywhere, and everyone is somehow serving Him. In their eyes no one is a conditioned soul; everyone is liberated. They think, “All others are more qualified than I am in service to Kṛṣṇa.” They are therefore *trṇād api sunīcena*, very humble within their heart. By their very constitution they will be like this. Therefore, it is only for *madhyama-adhikārīs* that Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given the order:

*prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣā  
yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ  
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.73)*

*A madhyama-bhāgavata* (intermediate devotee) is one who loves the Supreme Lord, is friendly towards His devotees, shows mercy towards those who are ignorant of *bhakti*, and neglects those who are inimical to the Supreme Lord or His devotees.

I think that almost all of you are entering the *madhyama-adhikārī* stage, and some have already entered. Therefore, you have the intelligence to consider who is a pure Vaiṣṇava, who is not a pure Vaiṣṇava, who is *kaniṣṭha*, who is *madhyama*, and so on. Most of you are entering the *madhyama-adhikārī* stage, and thus this instruction, *prema-maitrī*, is for you.

<sup>1</sup> They neither perform routine religious activities resulting in piety, nor irreligious activities resulting in sin (*Manah-sikṣā*, 2).

There should be *maitrī*, friendship. *Maitrī* is of three kinds. The first kind is towards those who are superior – either *madhyama-adhikārīs* or *uttama mahā-bhāgavatas* – serving them in a familiar way, with affectionate friendship. There should be *maitrī*, but with a service attitude.

The second kind is also bosom friendship to those who are equal in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. From superiors you can hear, and with bosom friends, equal to you in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you can have *iṣṭagoṣṭhī*, sharing ideas and realizations about Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana were like this. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, and Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī were like this with Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. And Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura, Śrī Śyāmānanda, and Śrīnivāsa also related with each other as equals.

The third kind of *maitrī* shows *kṛpa* (friendliness, compassion, and mercy) to those who are also *madhyama* but somewhat junior; helping them, but with friendship. You can tell them so many secrets about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, like *daśa-mūla* (ten fundamental principles) and the process given by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. Give mercy to those who are *kaniṣṭha*. You can offer them a glass of water and say, “Oh, you are a very good devotee.” In this way you are inspiring them.

Those who are opposed to Kṛṣṇa should be avoided. How should you avoid them? Should you quarrel with them by using a stick or harsh words? Never. But you should not associate with them in regard to transcendental matters. You can speak with them about worldly things and engage in worldly giving and taking with them, but without attachment. With pure Vaiṣṇavas, activities should be performed with attachment. If a beggar comes, like a Māyāvādī or a poor person, you can give him some *prasāda*. Don’t use harsh words like, “Go away, go away. I will not give you anything. If you become a devotee I will give you.” Don’t speak like this. Give him something, but not with attachment.

However, if there are any pure Vaiṣṇavas, serve them with attachment, to please Kṛṣṇa.

This behaviour should be there. Try to honor those who chant with some taste. They are *madhyama*, but *madhyama-kaniṣṭha*. The *madhyama-kaniṣṭha* has taste for the holy name, but not as much as the *madhyama-madhyama*, who is always chanting, and with great taste. And when *kṛṣṇa-nāma* automatically comes to your tongue upon seeing a devotee, that devotee is *madhyama-uttama* (entering the *uttama* stage). In the *uttama-bhāgavata* stage, there also are so many divisions: *uttama-kaniṣṭha*, *uttama-madhyama*, and *uttama-uttama*. Most superior is the *mahā-mahā-bhāgavata*, like Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and others.

Do not criticize anyone. Nityānanda Prabhu was a *brahmacārī* in the renounced order, but He married. He is *svatantra-bhagavān*, the supreme independent Bhagavān Himself. The Vedas and *śāstras* cannot control Him. If you see something 'wrong' in an elevated devotee with your yellow, jaundiced eyes, do not criticize them. Such devotees are beyond the control of rules and regulations. They are *sādhu* and you should not criticize them. Offer *praṇāma* to them, but don't associate. When your doubt goes away, or when his character becomes acceptable to you, then you can associate.

Associate with a Vaiṣṇava who is really *madhyama-adhikārī*, whose character is very high and spotless. You should have no doubt. Thus you can advance and make a very beautiful and strong community, and you can enter in the process of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and *Manaḥ-sikṣā* of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

You have heard all things. What I wanted to give, I gave through classes and dramas. Next year I want to come and see that all of you have very much developed, and that all of my children have become educated, are helping each other, and have some love and affection for all. In this way our objective may be successful, and we can love Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa conjugal.

## ❧ Glossary ❧

### A

**ācārya** – spiritual preceptor; one who teaches by example.

**adhirūḍha** – the highest state of *mahābhāva*, the most mature stage of *prema* (transcendental love), found only in the *gopīs* of Vraja.

**anartha** – *an-artha* means ‘non-value;’ unwanted desires, activities or habits that impede one’s advancement in *bhakti*.

**anurāga** – (1) attachment, affection or love; (2) an intensified stage of *prema* which comes just prior to *mahābhāva*.

**aparādha** – *apa* means ‘against’ or ‘taking away;’ *rādha* means ‘flow of affection;’ an offence committed against the holy name, Vaiṣṇavas, the spiritual master, the scriptures, holy places or the deity.

**apraḥṭa-līlā** – eternal pastimes that are unmanifest in this world.

**ārati** – the ceremony of offering articles to a deity, such as incense, lamp, flowers, and a fan, accompanied by the chanting of devotional hymns and bell-ringing.

**āsakti** – deep attachment. This refers to deep attachment for the Lord and His eternal associates. This is the sixth stage in the development of the creeper of devotion, and it is awakened upon the maturing of one’s taste for *bhajana*, spiritual practice.

**āśrama** – (1) spiritual order; one of the four stages of life – student (*brahmacārī*), married (*gṛhastha*), retirement from family life (*vanaprastha*), or full renunciation (*sannyāsa*) – in which one carries out corresponding socio-religious duties in the system known as *varṇāśrama*. (2) a hermitage, usually in the association of others, which is established to facilitate spiritual practices.

## B

***bhakta*** – one devoted in *bhakti-yoga*, or loving devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

***bhakti*** – the primary meaning of the word *bhakti* is to render service; *bhakti* is the performance of activities which are meant to satisfy or please the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which are done in a favorable spirit saturated with love, which are devoid of all desires, other than the desire for the Lord's benefit and pleasure, and which are not covered by *karma* (fruitive activity), and *jñāna* (the cultivation of knowledge aimed at merging one's existence into that of the Lord).

***brahmacārī*** – a celibate, unmarried student; the first *āśrama* or stage of life in the Vedic social system (*varṇāśrama*).

***brāhmaṇa*** – one who realizes *brahma* is to be known as a *brāhmaṇa*; one of the four *varṇas*, or social divisions, in the Vedic social system (*varṇāśrama*); a priest or teacher. *Brāhmaṇa* is not a mere designation based on heredity or a worldly occupation, it implies the unconditioned state of the soul

## C

***cit-śakti*** – the potency of the Lord which relates to His cognizant feature of transcendental knowledge. This corresponds to the *saṁvit* (knowledge) potency.

## D

***daṇḍa*** – a stick carried by *sannyāsīs*, renunciates, in the fourth stage of life according to the Vedic social system.

***darśana*** – seeing, meeting, visiting or beholding (especially in regard to the deity, a sacred place or an exalted Vaiṣṇava).

***dāsyā-rasa*** – relationship in servitorship.

***dhama*** – a holy place of pilgrimage; the abode of Śrī Bhagavān in which He appears and enacts His transcendental pastimes; the transcendental abode.

***dharma*** – (1) from the verbal root *dhr* = to sustain; thus, *dharma* means ‘that which sustains;’ (2) religion in general; (3) the socio-religious duties prescribed in the scriptures for different classes of persons in the Vedic social system (*varṇāśrama*) that are meant to liberate one to the platform of *bhakti*.

***dīkṣā-guru*** – initiating spiritual master; one who gives a *mantra* in accordance with the regulations of *śāstra* (scripture) to a qualified candidate for the purpose of worshipping the Lord and realizing Him through that *mantra* is known as a *dīkṣā-guru* or *mantra-guru*.

***divyonmāda*** – a wonderful, divine state that resembles delusion, which is found virtually only in Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

## G

***gopas*** – (1) a cowherd boy who serves Kṛṣṇa in a mood of intimate friendship; (2) and elderly associate of Nanda Mahārāja who serves Kṛṣṇa in a mood of parental affection.

***gopī*** – (1) one of the young cowherd maidens of Vraja, headed by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who serve Kṛṣṇa in a mood of amorous love; (2) an elderly associate of Mother Yaśodā, who serves Kṛṣṇa in a mood of parental affection.

***gṛhasthas*** – the word *stha* means ‘to reside.’ The word *gṛha* means ‘house,’ and also refers to the family members who inhabit a house; a householder; one who is in family life.

***guru-paramparā*** – the disciplic succession of bona-fide *gurus* or spiritual masters, through which spiritual knowledge is transmitted.

## H

***hari-kathā*** – narrations of the holy names, form, qualities, and pastimes of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa) and His associates

***harināma*** – the chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s holy names. Unless accompanied by the word *saṅkīrtana*, it usually refers to the

practice of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* softly to oneself on a strand of *tulasī* beads.

***hlādinī-śakti*** – Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure potency; the potency which relates to the bliss aspect (*ānanda*) of the Supreme Lord. Although the Supreme Lord is the embodiment of all pleasure, *hlādinī* is that potency by which He relishes transcendental bliss and causes others to taste bliss.

## J

***japa-mālā*** – a strand of *tulsī* beads used for chanting Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s holy names

***jīva*** – the eternal individual living entity who, in the conditioned stage of material existence, assumes a material body in any of the innumerable species of life.

***jīva-śakti*** – the potency comprised of the living entities.

## K

***Kali-yuga*** – the present age of quarrel and hypocrisy which began 3102 B.C. the day on which Śrī Kṛṣṇa departed from this earth for His abode. It lasts for 432,000 years. Approximately five thousand of those years have now passed.

***kamaṇḍalu*** – a type of waterpot.

***kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*** – a novice devotee; a neophyte practitioner of *bhakti* (devotional life).

***karatālas*** – small brass hand cymbals used in the performance of devotional songs.

***karma*** – (1) any activity performed in the course of material existence; (2) reward-seeking activities; pious activities leading to material gain in this world or in the heavenly planets after death; (3) fate; previous actions which lead to inevitable reactions.

***kaupīna*** – the loincloth of an ascetic.

**kāya-vyūha** – direct expansions, either from Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s personal form or from Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s personal form (*nitya-siddha gopīs*).

**kṛṣṇa-bhajana** – internal worship of Kṛṣṇa.

**kṛṣṇa-prema** – pure love for Kṛṣṇa.

**kuñjas** – a grove or forest bower for the pleasure-pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

## L

**līlā** – the divine and astonishing pastimes of Śrī Bhagavān and His eternal associates, which grant all auspiciousness for the living entity, which have no connection with this mundane world, and which lie beyond the grasp of the material senses and mind.

**lotā** – a thin steel container for water.

## M

**mādana** – highly advanced ecstasy is divided into two categories: *mādana* and *mohana*. Meeting together is called *mādana*, and separation is called *mohana*.

**mādhurya** – (1) sweetness or beauty; (2) conjugal love.

**madhyama-adhikārī** – an intermediate devotee; a practitioner of *bhakti* who has reached the intermediate stage of spiritual development.

**mahā-bhāgavata** – a pure devotee of Bhagavān in the highest stage of devotional life, who is expert in Vedic literature, has full faith in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and can deliver the whole world.

**mahā-prasāda** – literally means ‘great mercy;’ especially refers to the remnants of food offered to the deity; may also refer to the remnants of other articles offered to the deity, such as incense, flowers, garlands, and clothing.

**maṅgala-ārati** – daily predawn ceremony worshipping the deity of the Lord.

**manvantara** – the duration of one Manu’s reign, which is 306,720,000 years; the duration of one *manvantara* is seventy-one *yugas*, and each *yuga* is 4,320,000 years.

**māyā-śakti** – the Lord’s deluding potency; that which is not; the Lord’s external potency, which influences the living entities to accept the false egoism of being independent enjoyers of this material world. Also called *mahāmāyā* or *māyā-śakti*.

**māyāvādī** – one who advocates the doctrine of impersonalism.

**modana** – that *adhirūḍha-mahābhāva* (see definition at the beginning of the glossary) which is found only in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s party.

**mṛdaṅga** – a double-headed clay drum which is used in the performance of devotional songs (*kīrtana*).

**mūrti** – (1) individual form, shape, or embodiment; (2) the deity form of Śrī Bhagavān or His devotee.

## N

**nagara-saṅkīrtana** – act of singing religious songs in procession through a city or village.

**nāma-haṭṭa** – a system of preaching where devotees hold public preaching programs in their homes.

**nirviśeṣa-brahma** – the impersonal feature of Bhagavān.

**niṣṭhā** – firm faith; steadiness in one’s devotional practices. The fifth stage in the development of the creeper of devotion. *Niṣṭhā* occurs after the elimination of the major portion of one’s spiritual impediments

**nitya-siddha** – eternally perfected devotees.

## P

**para-śakti** – Śrī Bhagavān’s transcendental or superior potency which has three divisions: *cit*, *taṭasthā*, and *māyā*

**praṇāma** – obeisances.

**praṇaya** – intimate love. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī defines *praṇaya* in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* as that state where the lover and beloved become one due to the intensity of their affection.

**prema** – love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa that is extremely concentrated, that completely melts the heart, and that gives rise to a deep sense of *mamatā*, possessiveness, in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

## R

**rāga** – when spontaneous loving thirst to please the object of one’s affection becomes so intense that in the absence of such service one is on the verge of giving up his life, it is known as *raga*.

**rāga-mārga** – the path of natural, spontaneous love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

**rāgānuga-bhakti** – spontaneous devotion, which follows in the wake of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s eternal associates in Vraja, whose hearts are permeated with *rāga*, an unquenchable loving thirst for Kṛṣṇa.

**rasa** – (1) the spiritual transformation of the heart which takes place when the perfectional state of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, known as *rati*, is converted into “liquid” emotions by combining with various types of transcendental ecstasies; (2) taste, flavor.

**rāsa-līlā** – Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s dance with the *vraja-gopīs*, which is a pure exchange of spiritual love between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, His most confidential servitors.

**rati** – (1) attachment, fondness for; (2) synonymous with *bhāva*, the eighth stage (just before *prema*) in the development of the creeper of *bhakti*;

**ṛṣi** – a great sage, learned in the Vedas.

**rūḍha** – in *rūḍha-mahābhāva*, even the passing of a moment is unbearable; this *rūḍha-mahābhāva* churns the heart of those present; a *kalpa* (4,320,000,000 years), or a day of Lord Brahmā, seems to pass like a moment; one feels dejected

because of the apprehension that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is undergoing some inconvenience, although He is actually happy; one becomes forgetful of everything, even oneself although one is not bewildered.

**rūpānuga** – one who follows the mood and service of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in order to receive the eternal service of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala in Goloka-Vraja. Rūpa Gosvāmī is the most exalted servitor of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

## S

**sādhu** – a saint or saintly person; one who is perfect in *sādhana* (the practice of devotional service) and who engages others in *sādhana*.

**sādhu-saṅga** – the association of highly advanced devotees; it is the second stage in the development of the creeper of devotion and the most important factor for advancement in *bhakti*.

**saṁvit-śakti** – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's knowledge potency. Although the Lord is the embodiment of knowledge, *saṁvit* is the potency by which He knows Himself and causes others to know Him.

**sandhinī-śakti** – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's existence potency; the potency that maintains the spiritual existence of the Supreme Lord and His associates; embodied by Lord Baladeva.

**sannyāsī** – a person in the renounced order of life; the highest order in the Vedic social system; one who renounces the fruits of activity.

**śāstras** – Vedic scripture; derived from the Sanskrit verbal root *śās* (to govern, command). Thus, *śāstric* injunctions are authoritative and should be accepted as Absolute Truth.

**siddhānta** – philosophical doctrine or precept.

**śikṣā-guru** – the person from whom one receives instructions on how to progress on the path of service is known as *śikṣā-guru*, or instructing spiritual master.

**śloka** – in Sanskrit composition, poetry is expressed in the form of *ślokas* or verses and stanzas.

**sneha** – “that aspect of *prema* in which the melting of the heart for the lover is concentrated is called *sneha*, or affection. The symptom of such affection is that the lover cannot for a moment remain without the association of the beloved.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 19.178, purport)

**spūrti** – momentary vision, or glimpse; a manifestation.

**śraddhā** – initial faith; faith in the statements of *guru*, *sādhu*, and scriptures.

**śṛṅgāra-rasa** – another name for *mādhurya-rasa*, the devotional sentiment in the mood of conjugal attraction.

**sūdra** – the last of the four *varṇas*, or castes, in the Vedic social system, *varṇāśrama* system; artisans and laborers; the working class.

## T

**tilaka** – clay markings worn on the forehead and other parts of the body by Vaiṣṇavas, signifying their devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu, and consecrating the body as the Lord’s temple.

**tulasī** – a sacred plant whose leaves and blossoms are used by Vaiṣṇavas in the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; a partial expansion of Vṛndā-devī; the wood is used for chanting beads and neck beads.

## V

**Vaiṣṇava** – literally means one whose nature is ‘of Viṣṇu’, in other words, one in whose heart and mind only Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa resides. A devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

**veṇu** – a very small flute of Kṛṣṇa’s that is not more than nine inches long and has six holes on its body.

**Vrajavāsī** – a resident of either the Vṛndāvana situated in the spiritual world (Goloka) or the Vṛndāvana situated within the material realm (Gokula)

**vrata** – a vow undertaken for self-purification and spiritual benefit.

## Y

**yuga-avatāra** – the *avatāras*, incarnations of Kṛṣṇa, who teach the *yuga-dharma* in the four ages; In Kali-yuga, the present age, the *avatāra* is the most glorious and magnanimous Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu who inaugurated the *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana-yajña*, the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s holy names.

**yuga-dharma** – the religious practice prescribed for a particular millennium. In the modern age of Kali the *yuga-dharma* is the chanting of the Lord’s holy names.

**yuga** – one of the four ages that are described in the Vedas: Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga, and Kali-yuga. These four *yugas* rotate, like calendar months. The duration of each *yuga* is different – they are said to be respectively 1,728,000; 1,296,000; 864,000; and 432,000 years. The descending number represents a corresponding physical and moral deterioration of mankind in each age.