

Śrī Caitanya Līlā for Children

*A journey through the life and teachings
of the Golden Avātara Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu*



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Śrī Caitanya-līlā for Children


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Śrī Caitanya-līlā for Children

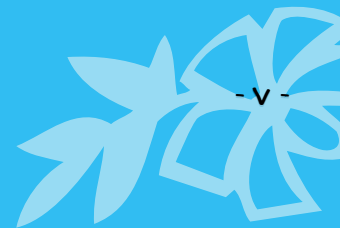
A journey through the life and teachings of the Golden Avatāra
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

compiled under the guidance of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Adaptations from

- Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta by Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī,
- Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavatā by Śrīla Vṇḍāvana dāsa Ṭhākura
- the lectures of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja





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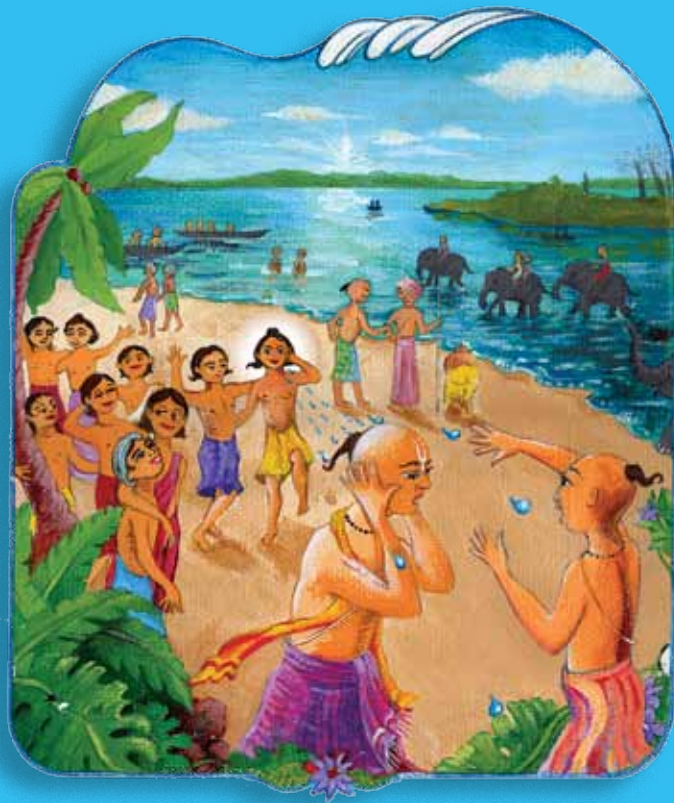
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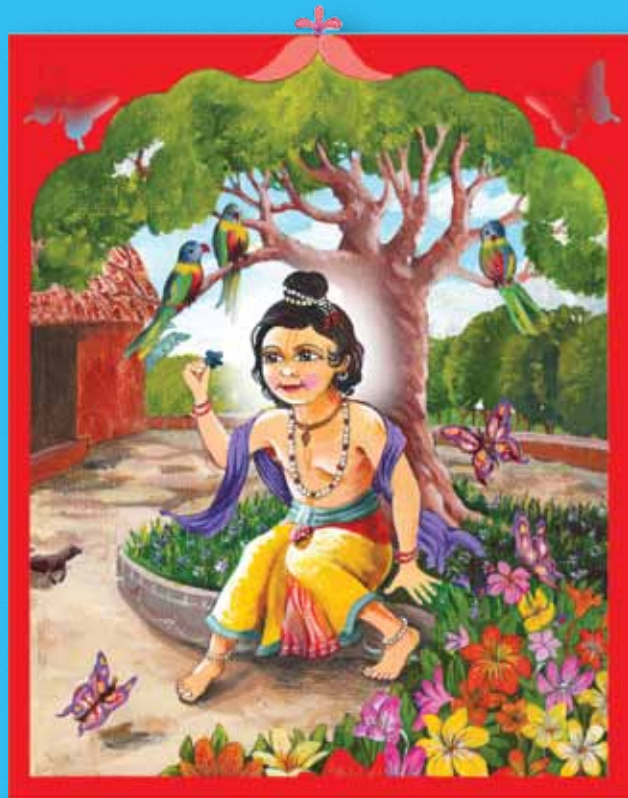
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“As the days passed by,
the small son of Śacī-devī
became quite naughty. Yet
God’s naughtiness is not
like ours. He is the Supreme
Lord, and His naughtiness is
charming and worshipful.”

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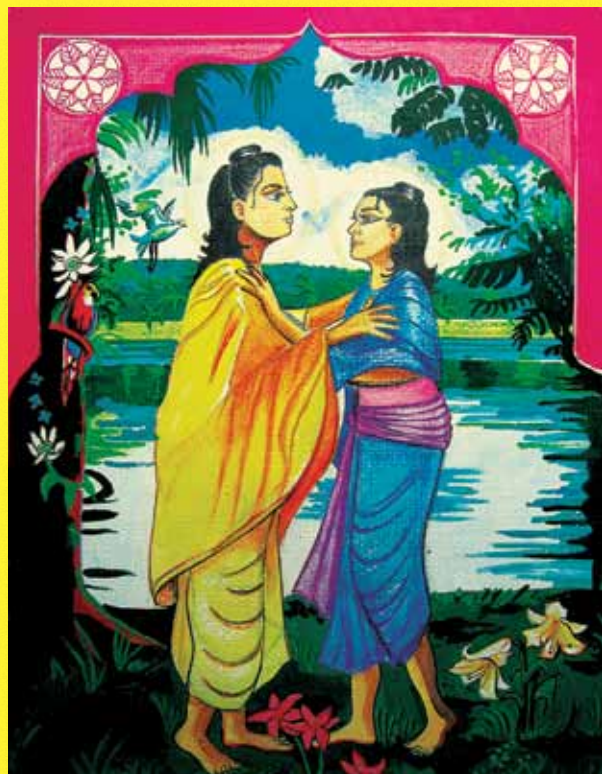


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“As you know, yesterday Nimāi Paṇḍita came back from Gayā,’ Śrīman Paṇḍita told them. ‘I went to see Him, and He is not the same Nimāi as before. Now He is so humble and sweet. He told us that while He was in Gayā, He met the great Vaiṣṇava Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda at a place called Pādapadmā-tīrtha. He even received initiation

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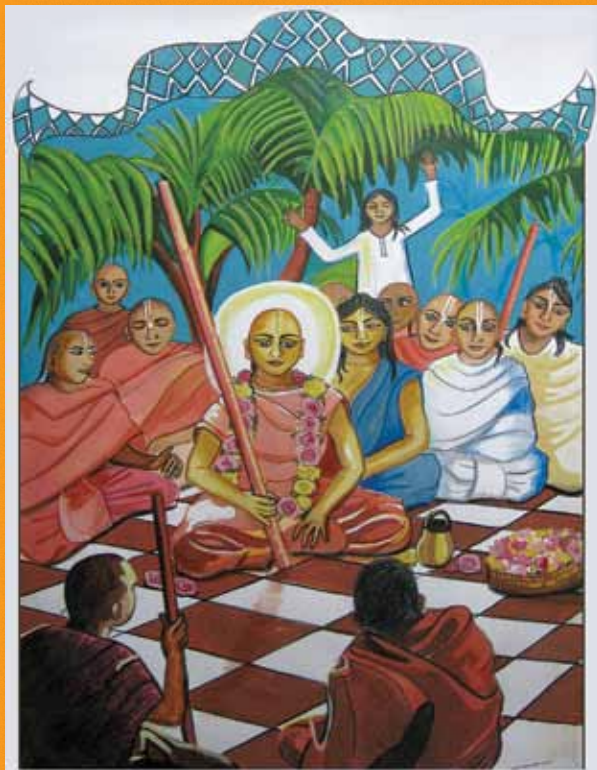
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"His departure from this planet was fully transcendental. He disappeared into the deity of Śrī Śrī Ṭoṭā-gopinātha. In this way, the Lord concluded His pastimes on this Earth, leaving His beloved devotees to become absorbed day and night in remembrance of Him."

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The true stories in this book about the life of Srī Caitanya Mahāprabhu were written down by His eternal associates. These records were then handed down through generations of bona fide spiritual masters to the present day.



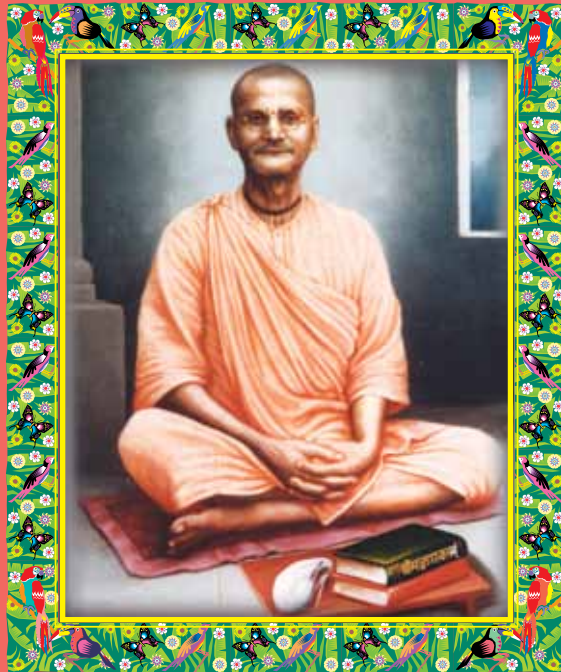
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
intently travels the world to impart to as many as possible
the reasons for Mahāprabhu's advent
* Founder ācārya of the International Pure Bhakti Yoga Society



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
perfectly exemplified the humility of a servant of
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
* Ācārya of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti 1968--2004



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja
ingeniously distributed the mercy of Mahāprabhu
to the residents of Western countries
* Founder ācārya of the International Society for
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Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
vigorously spread the mission of Mahāprabhu
throughout India
* Founder ācārya of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda
powerfully spearheaded the campaign to flood the world
with the mercy of Mahāprabhu
* Founder of the Gauḍīya Maṭha

Preface

The Vedic scriptures explain that a person who wants to engage in devotional service to the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with the aim of becoming His eternal servant, must take shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. Under the guidance of such a *guru*, one must hear and read about spiritual topics, such as those described in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and other scriptures. This practice is beneficial for one's progress on the path of loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

The young, yet interested, audience often finds these literatures difficult to read and understand. The subject matter is deep and the language complex. I am therefore delighted that we are presenting *Śrī Caitanya-līlā for Children*. The contents of this compilation have been taken from *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* by Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, and from some of my own commentaries on these pastimes.

This delightful and charming journey through the life and teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is presented in a very simple manner. I hope that by making this important book available to young readers, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and all Their associates will be pleased.

♦ Tridaṇḍi Bhikṣu Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa

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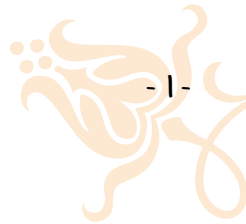
Introduction

In every millennium, for all of time, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears in each of the unlimited universes.

In this present age of Kali, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appeared in this world as Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. He descended as the son of Jagannātha Miśra and Śacī-devī in Navadvīpa, adorned with the moods and lustre of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. His unlimited friends, servants, family members and beloveds descended along with Him to join Him in His unique pastime in which His generosity has no limit and His transcendental sweetness abounds.

In His previous incarnations He killed the demons with mighty weapons, but as Lord Gaurāṅga, He conquered everyone with His divine love. In this incarnation, His weapons were His own sweet names.

Taking the role of a devotee, He taught the world the principles of religion by following and practising them Himself. He also distributed the very rare jewel of loving service to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa to all humans, animals, trees and creepers. Yes, He freely gave this treasure to everyone and immersed the universe in true, fully spiritual love, leaving no place for misery or lamentation. May that Lord, who is known as the Son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart.



śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

*suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgo varāṅgaś candanāṅgaḍī
sannyāsī-kṛc chamalḥ canto niṣṭhā-śānti-parāyaṇaḥ*

Mahābhārata (Dāna-dharma 149) /

Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 3.49)

Krṣṇa first appears as a householder with a golden complexion. His limbs are the colour of molten gold. His body is extremely beautiful. He is decorated with sandalwood pulp and continuously chants “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.” He then accepts sannyāsa and is always equipoised. He is firmly fixed in His mission of propagating harināma-saṅkīrtaṇa, and He defeats the impersonalist philosophers who are opposed to bhakti. He is thus the highest abode of peace and devotion.



First Part





The Beginning of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Mission

Five thousand years ago, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all Lords, performed His astonishing pastimes on this very Earth planet and then returned to His own home, Goloka Vṛndāvana. He later considered returning to the Earth, but this time in the role of a devotee. In this way, He would show the world the beauty of the loving devotion His devotees have for Him and He has for them. He wanted to give this gift of loving service, which only He can give, to everybody. How? Just by gathering people together and chanting the holy names of the Lord:

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

Why should we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra? The Lord's names are the same as the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, so this mahā-mantra is non-different from Him. It is a transcendental sound vibration. Mahāprabhu invested pure loving devotion in this mahā-mantra.

One who chants this great mantra will understand that one does not belong to this material world, which makes us happy only for a short time and is full of suffering. By chanting, one can become free from this material existence and go to the spiritual world. There one can be with the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa and eternally play with Him in His pastimes.

In His heart, the sweet Lord had three desires that He yearned to fulfil:

First, Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to understand the glory of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's love for Him. Who is Rādhārāṇī? She is His dear most sweetheart. In Her heart, She is never separated from Kṛṣṇa and serves Him lovingly at every moment and at every step. Rādhārāṇī's love for Kṛṣṇa melts His heart.

Second, He wanted to taste the nectar of His sweetness as only She does. Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of sweetness – inside sweet, outside sweet, just like a toy cow that is made of sugar. Everyone in the company of Kṛṣṇa, like His father and mother, Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā; His friends like Subala and Madhumaṅgala; and His true loves, like Lalitā, Viśākhā, and especially Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, taste how sweet He really is, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot taste His own sweetness, just like sugar cannot taste itself.

And third, Kṛṣṇa yearned to enjoy Her happiness Himself. He wanted to feel the happiness She feels when relishing His sweet nature because only this makes Her happy.

In order to do this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa planned to return to this world with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's moods and also with Her lustre. He knew that if He would have them, He might be able to fulfil these three deep desires.

By the wish of the Lord, His companions had already arrived on the planet Earth. Two of them were Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Lord Balarāma, His elder brother. Śrī Advaita Ācārya saw that most people were miserable and living in ignorance because they lacked faith in the Supreme Lord. His soft heart melted and, wanting to give them real help, He decided to call for the Saviour of all, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He offered Tulasi buds and water from the holy river Gaṅgā to the Lord's lotus feet and called loudly from the core of His heart, "Kṛṣṇaaaaaaaaa! Kṛṣṇaaaaaaaaa!"

His calls to Śrī Kṛṣṇa were so powerful that they shook Lord Nārāyaṇa's throne in Vaikuṇṭha. When Kṛṣṇa heard Advaita Ācārya's loud, heartfelt calls, He decided to appear there immediately as Lord Gaurāṅga. Gaurāṅga means "one whose body is golden, just like Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's". Thus, taking Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's lustre and Her moods, He came to fulfil His three wishes, and to respond to the pleas of Śrī Advaita Ācārya.

At the right moment, Śrī Kṛṣṇa arranged a lunar eclipse on the full moon night in the month of Phālguna [February–March], which inspired everyone to chant the holy names of the Lord. At that special time, the most merciful Lord descended to this Earth with the mood and lustre of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He took birth in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma as Śrī Gaurāṅga, the son of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra and Śacī-devī. His mother and father, as well as His elder brother Viśvarūpa, were overjoyed by His glorious appearance in their home.

Above the sound of everyone chanting the holy name was another unique sound, like that of a proud lion, loudly roaring in victory. That roaring vibration filled the whole universe, intriguing everyone. What was that sound? From whom was it coming? The wise immediately knew that this sound came from the village of Ekacakrā.

Before Śrī Kṛṣṇa took birth as the son of Śacī-devī, Śrī Balarāma had taken birth in Ekacakrā as the son of Śrī Hāḍai Paṇḍita and Śrī Padmavātī-devī. His name was Śrī Nityānanda. When His younger brother arrived on this planet, Śrī Nityānanda began roaring in bliss.

Like Lord Caitanya, Lord Nityānanda also has a golden hue. He is always absorbed in thoughts of Śrī Gaurāṅga and He serves Him in all kinds of ways. All glories to the extremely merciful Lord Nityānanda. His kindness is unlimited.

Lord Gaurāṅga was an astonishingly beautiful, sweet golden baby. For a few reasons, the ladies present at His birth named Him Nimāi. First of all, He was born under a large neem tree. And secondly, the leaves of the neem tree are very bitter. Anything bitter is known to give protection. They called Him Nimāi to protect Him from danger. And Paṇḍita Nīlāmbara Cakravartī gave him the name Viśvambhara which means "one who maintains the entire universe".

Demigods and goddesses descended from the heavenly realms just to see our golden Lord on the night of His appearance. Bearing many, many gifts, they disguised themselves as human beings. In this way nobody recognized them. Some sang beautiful songs, while others played on musical instruments. Some praised Nimāi and others danced and danced in happiness. Some demigods were in a fun-loving mood and teased everyone by moving around the house like shadows. "Thief! There's a thief!" some cried out. In this way the demigods had great fun.

The mother of the demigods, Aditi, also came to visit baby Nimāi, carrying a special grass in her hand. She touched it to Nimāi's head and blessed Him with a long life. In this way everyone was floating in the happiness of the birth festival of the God of Love.

Captivating the Hearts of All

The people of Navadvīpa celebrated the birth of baby Nimāi. They had heard about the good fortune of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra and Śrī Śācī-devī, and the special beauty of their child.

From the beginning of His life, He was spreading love of God. How? Well, He cried often, and whenever His family or friends tried to pacify Him, He would cry even louder until some ladies chanted, “Hari! Hari!” At that very moment He would laugh joyfully, and everyone’s heart would melt with love for Him. They quickly came to understand that when baby Nimāi was upset, this was the only way to make Him happy.

As the days passed by, the small son of Śācī-devī became quite naughty. Yet God’s naughtiness is not like ours. He is the Supreme Lord, and His naughtiness is charming and worshipful. When there was nobody around, He used to take oil, milk, flour, wheat, and other foodstuffs and throw them all over the floor. Hearing His mother’s footsteps, He would quickly sneak back to His bed and loudly cry, “Whaaaaaaah! Whaaaaaaah!”

Once, mother Śācī took her little baby in her lap and calmed Him down by chanting the names of Lord Hari. She then saw the many foodstuffs strewn all over the floor. “Ooooh,” she gasped, “how did this happen?” She turned to her son, who smiled at her with such sweetness and innocence. He was so cute that she tightly embraced Him, grateful that He had not come to any harm.

Various guests arrived at that time, and they too wondered how this mess had been made. Nimāi’s father was intrigued. There was no trace of anybody entering the room. They concluded that this was the work of

an angry ghost or a big demon. Unable to harm Nimāi, this demon had thrown everything on the floor and then disappeared.

Nimāi had another name: Viśvambhara. His grandfather Nīlāmbara Cakravartī and other learned gentlemen had given Him this name. Nīlāmbara Cakravartī was an astrologer. He made a special birth chart for Him, which stated that Nimāi was just like Lord Nārāyaṇa.

Before the birth of Viśvambhara, who is the saviour of all, people were not happy. There was also much poverty, as it had not rained for a long time and the fields of grains, vegetables and fruit had dried up. As soon as He appeared in this world, good fortune for all appeared. Rain fell at exactly the right times for the crops to grow in abundance, so there was no more shortage of food. The very sight of Viśvambhara filled everyone with joy.

Indeed, you can see that He takes care of every living being. That is why He is called Viśvambhara, the protector of the universe.

As Nimāi grew, He began to crawl about the house on His hands and knees. At that time He ventured outside, where the insects, ducks, frogs, porcupines and other animals became His playmates. One day, while playing in the courtyard, He saw a huge snake, all coiled up. He grabbed that snake and then sat down on its coil, as though it were a nice soft pillow. The snake raised its hood and held it above Nimāi's head like an umbrella, as if protecting Nimāi from the heat of the sun.

When His family and others in the house saw their darling boy joyfully sitting on top of a coiled snake, they cried out in fear. Their neighbours heard their loud cries and hastened to the spot, to find baby Nimāi,

sitting carefree and relaxed on top of the snake's coils. They could not believe their eyes and sent up shouts of "Garuḍa! Garuḍa!"

Garuḍa is a marvellous and extremely large eagle who carries Lord Nārāyaṇa wherever He wants to go. When Garuḍa is hungry he eats snakes.

Now, because of the big commotion, the snake silently began to slither away, but little Nimāi wanted it to stay and tried to stop it. Mother Śacī picked Nimāi up and then she, along with the other ladies of the house, went inside.

Why didn't Nimāi want the snake to go away? This snake was actually Nityānanda Prabhu, His big brother. One of the forms of Nityānanda Prabhu is Ananta Śeṣa, a beautiful, transcendental snake that has millions and millions of hoods. With these millions of hoods Ananta Śeṣa tells fascinating and sweet stories about His Lord, Śrī Gaurāṅga. He wanted to see Nimāi so much that He came to visit Him in the form of an ordinary snake.



Childhood

As time passed by, Jagannātha Miśra's small son started to walk. Now that He could play further away from the house, He became even naughtier than before. Every day He sneaked into the neighbours' houses and ate their rice and drank their milk. If He could not find a way to make mischief, He would get upset and gleefully break the earthen pots in their homes. And if there were a little baby in the house, He would pinch it so hard that it would sob loudly. Of course, Nimāi quickly ran away in fear of being caught, but sometimes He actually was caught. Looking at His captor with His large lotus eyes, He would solemnly say, "I will never do it again."

With these words, Nimāi melted everyone's heart. No one was seriously angry with this darling child. Thus charmed and amused, they let Him go.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa stole butter from the houses of the gopīs. That butter represented their pure love for Him, and they were actually happy that He had stolen it. Now this same naughty Kṛṣṇa was performing similar pastimes as Nimāi.

The Foolish Thieves

Nimāi's mother used to dress Him in beautiful clothes and golden ornaments. Once, when He went out to play, two thieves spotted Him and plotted a theft. "If we take Nimāi to our home," they thought, "it will be easy to steal His ornaments." They walked over and greeted Him as if they knew Him. One thief picked up little Nimāi and softly said, "Oh, my dear, dear child!" The other one said, "Where have you been all this time? Come, let us go home."

"Yes," Nimāi said, "Let us go home."

The thief who had picked up little Nimāi put Him on his shoulder, and off they went. The thieves were so happy thinking about the wealth they were about to attain that they did not notice which path they were taking. Nimāi loved this sight-seeing tour and laughed in glee, and He was most satisfied by the nice milk sweet the thieves gave Him to eat.

Meanwhile, Nimāi's family noticed Him missing and started looking for Him. When they were unable to find Him, they became very worried.

The thieves walked for a long, long time, and finally they arrived at what they thought was their hiding place but it was Nimāi's home. They put Nimāi down so that they could take off all His golden ornaments.

How could the thieves be so fooled? The Lord had tricked them with His magic spiritual energy, known



as Yogamāyā. She is the inner power of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and she makes special arrangements for the Lord's pastimes. Anyway, as soon as He was put down, He ran inside the house and jumped on to His father's lap. Everyone was so happy that they loudly called out, "Hari! Hari!"

When the thieves heard that sound, they looked at each other and said, "Hari, Hari? Hey! Where are we?" They came back to their senses and, afraid of being seen, quickly ran away. Nimāi, now home safe and sound, explained to His family that He had gone to see the Gaṅgā, but had forgotten His way home, and two kind men had helped Him to find His way .

Later, when the puzzled thieves arrived back at their place, they said, "What happened to us? We were truly tricked! It was only thanks to goddess Durgā that we were saved."

Stealing the Brāhmaṇa's Offerings

One day, a brāhmaṇa who was visiting holy places came to the house of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra. This brāhmaṇa was a very good devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and he carried a deity of baby Kṛṣṇa and a śālagrāma-śilā (sacred stone form of the Lord). Nimāi's father welcomed him and offered him a seat.

"Where do you come from?" he asked.

"I do not stay in any fixed place," the brāhmaṇa said. "Rather, I like to roam from one place to another."

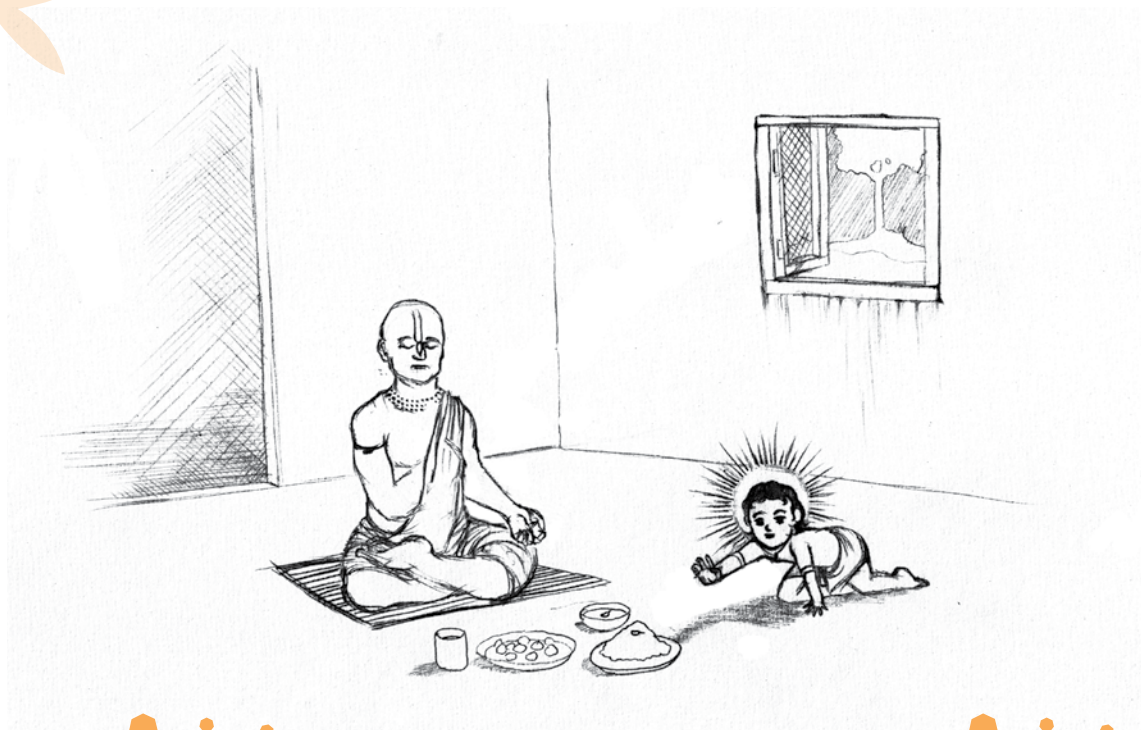
"Would you like to honour prasādam, or would you prefer to cook something for your deities?" Śrī Jagannātha Miśra asked.

The brāhmaṇa told him that he wanted to cook, and so they cleaned the kitchen and brought herbs, vegetables and rice so that he could make an offering.

After cooking the rice and vegetables for Kṛṣṇa, he began to offer it. At that time Nimāi came there, completely naked, and happily started to eat that offering.

"Oh, no, the boy is eating the Lord's meal!" the brāhmaṇa cried.

Nimāi's father saw what his son was doing and wanted to spank Him, but the brāhmaṇa said, "Oh, He is just a little boy and does not know what is good or bad. Do not beat Him." Śrī Jagannātha Miśra was still upset, but the brāhmaṇa told him not to worry about it. He then asked for some more rice and vegetables so that he could cook again.



Mother Śacī took Nimāi to the house of a neighbour, where the girls of the house teased Him: "O Nimāi, is this the way to treat a guest, by stealing from him?"

"Hey, girls," Nimāi said, "you do not know anything. It is not My fault that I took that offering; the brāhmaṇa called Me."

The girls laughed. "Oh, yes! He called You, and that is why he was crying out to You! No, no Nimāi, You have lost Your position as a brāhmaṇa because You have eaten food cooked by a holy man when You do not even know his family lineage or where he comes from."

With an enchanting smile, Nimāi replied, "Ladies, how can I possibly lose My birthright? I am from a cowherd caste and always eat food cooked by brāhmaṇas."

In the meantime, the brāhmaṇa prepared a second meal and started to offer it to his deity of baby Kṛṣṇa. When Viśvambhara heard him doing this, He sneaked out of the house where His mother had put Him, and without being seen, ran back to His own house where the offering was being made. Taking a handful of rice from the offering plate, He ate it and ran off.

The brāhmaṇa could not believe that this was happening again. "Oh, no!" he cried in surprise. "The little boy has eaten the offering of rice!"

Nimāi's father heard his cries of despair. He took up a stick and ran after the rice-thief, ready to give Him a good beating. Everybody tried to stop father Miśra, but he was really angry with Nimāi and wanted to teach Him a good lesson.

The brāhmaṇa tried to calm him. "Do not be upset with your son. He is very young and cannot understand what is going on. He did not do anything wrong. What must happen, will happen. This is called destiny."

A little while later, Viśvarūpa, the older brother of Nimāi, came home. When the brāhmaṇa saw Viśvarūpa, he was so enchanted by his beauty that he gaped in wonderment.

"Who is the father of this wonderful, effulgent young boy?" He asked.

"Oh, this is Viśvarūpa, the older son of Śrī Jagannātha Miśra," someone in the house answered.

The brāhmaṇa immediately felt a deep love in his heart for Viśvarūpa. This is not at all strange, for Viśvarūpa is Lord Nityānanda in another form.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His big brother Lord Balarāma can do anything and take any form They like. They are the greatest magicians.

Viśvarūpa bowed down to the brāhmaṇa in respect and spoke sweet words to him. "We are exceedingly fortunate to have you in our home, but we are most disappointed that you are going away without having taken prasādam."

"Oh, do not worry," the brāhmaṇa said, "I feel completely satisfied just by seeing you. I am not hungry or thirsty. And besides, generally I live in the forest and mostly eat fruits and raw vegetables. You can give me that if you like, and I will be happy. I only take rice when it comes to me easily."

Śrī Viśvarūpa replied, "You are a ocean of mercy. We feel very bad about what has happened. Please, cook for Kṛṣṇa one more time."

"Oh no," the brāhmaṇa said. "If Kṛṣṇa does not want something to happen, it will not happen, no matter how hard we try. I have already cooked twice for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but it seems that He did not want me to eat today. No need to go to so much trouble again. It is almost two o'clock in the morning; it is too late to cook and eat."

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa can eat at any time; no problem," Viśvarūpa said, and he touched the brāhmaṇa's feet.

At that time, the residents of the house requested the brāhmaṇa, "Oh, please cook again."

Enchanted by Śrī Viśvarūpa, the brāhmaṇa conceded and started to cook for a third time. Nimai's father put Him in His room and left Him in the charge of a few ladies so they could keep an eye on Him. He then closed the windows of that room from outside and stood guard at the door.

Despite all endeavour, when the brāhmaṇa started to make his offering, Nimai suddenly appeared before him again. As before, the brāhmaṇa called out in disbelief that his offering had been taken, but no one could hear him as they had all been put into a deep and restful sleep.

Nimai turned to the brāhmaṇa and said, "O brāhmaṇa, because you are a pure-hearted soul, when you called for Me I came. Do not blame Me for this. I cannot help it. It is because you think of Me day and night that I always come as soon as you call. Don't you know Me?"

The Lord then showed the brāhmaṇa His very wondrous eight-armed form. In four of His hands, He was holding a conchshell, a disc, a club and a lotus flower. With two other hands, He was eating butter, and with yet two more, He was playing the flute. Around His neck was a garland of forest flowers, and He wore ornaments made of special gems. The king of all jewels, called Kaustubha, sparkled brightly in the middle of His chest. His hair was decorated with nicely scented flowers and a beautiful peacock feather. The ankle-bells

on His feet made a sweet tinkling sound, and He was smiling beautifully. Struck with wonder, the brāhmaṇa saw Śrī Vṛndāvana with many cowherd boys and girls, peacocks, and beautiful trees like tamāla and kadamba.

Love for Kṛṣṇa then flooded his heart with such a force that he fainted. The Lord gently touched him with His hand and the brāhmaṇa returned to consciousness, but he was unable to utter a word. Tears of joy flowed from his eyes and such powerful spiritual emotions moved in his heart that he began to perspire and shiver, and the hairs of his body stood on end. He tightly clasped the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga and wept.

When Śrī Gaurāṅga saw the brāhmaṇa overwhelmed with love and affection for Him, He smiled and said, "O brāhmaṇa, please listen. You served Me in many of your previous lives, and that is why I wanted to reveal Myself to you. Once, when I was in My form of Kṛṣṇa, you came to the house of Nanda Mahārāja, My father in Gokula Vṛndāvana, and gave Me something to eat. You have forgotten this, but I have not. Stay here for some time and you will see more of My activities, but do not say anything about this to anyone. It will be our special secret."

Smiling sweetly, the Lord resumed His form as little Nimāi and went back to His room. The brāhmaṇa started to dance and sing, "Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare" and shouted, "All glories to Śrī Bāla-gopāla Kṛṣṇa" so loudly that this time his calling out really did wake everyone up, and they came to see if he was all right.

Fortunately, just before anyone could ask him what happened, he remembered what Nimāi had told him about keeping it a secret, and he gave his full attention to quietly honouring Gaurāṅga's prasādam. The members of the household were so relieved to see him finally taking prasāda that they asked him no questions.

Nimāi's Naughtiness

One day, father Miśra said to mother Śacī, "The time has come for Nimāi to go to school. I will check the horoscope to find a good day for Him to start, so there will be no hindrances to His studies."

Nimāi's father found an auspicious day for Him to start school. When that day came, he put a piece of chalk in Nimāi's hand, to mark the beginning of His school life. Later, when Nimāi became old enough to hear and study the explanations of the holy books like the Vedas, His parents had His ears pierced.

Nimāi excelled at school, and, much to everybody's surprise, He was able to write the alphabet within three days. He eagerly wrote the names of the Lord, like Kṛṣṇa, Murāri, and Śyāma, and studied hard along with the other children.

In His play time at school, Nimāi would walk about with His friends and tease other boys until a big quarrel would break out. Of course, Nimāi was so smart that He and His friends would always win. After school they would go to the Gaṅgā to take bath – jumping, diving and splashing each other in their boisterous water games.

Other people would also be at the Gaṅgā taking bath, and Nimāi would harass them, kicking His lotus feet hard so as to splash them, and then swimming away fast. They would angrily shake their finger at Nimāi and His friends and call out, "Hari! Hari! What are you naughty boys doing?"

Sometimes, Nimāi would take water in His mouth and spit it out on some brāhmaṇas, so they would have to take bath again.

Once He sneaked up to a man, stole his Śiva deity and ran away.

Another time, He took the clothes of the ladies who were bathing and exchanged them with the clothes of the men, thus embarrassing them all.

He would spoil the offerings that people were making for Lord Viṣṇu by throwing away the flowers and eating the food. When they complained He would say, “Why be upset? I am the Lord of your worship!”

The people were horrified at Nimāi’s behaviour and could not believe what they were hearing.

Once He jumped on somebody’s back, as though that person were a bull, and yelled, “I am Mahesh!” Another name of Lord Śiva is Mahesh, and he rides on a bull.

Once, these people were so upset about the mischief Nimāi was causing that they came to the house of Jagannātha Miśra to complain. And the girls went to Śacī-devī to inform her that her naughty Nimāi was stealing their clothes when they were bathing in the Gaṅgā. “He also uses really bad language,” they told her, “and when we ask Him to stop, He quarrels with us. Sometimes He sneaks up on us from behind and shouts loudly in our ears, and sometimes He spoils our offerings, which are meant for Gaṅgā-devī. If we refuse to give Him our offerings, He threatens to curse us to marry an ugly old man with no teeth and many wives.”

Hearing the girls’ complaints, mother Śacī spoke sweetly to them and embraced them. “I will bind Nimāi and give Him a good spanking,” she said. “Then He will never bother you again.” Somewhat pacified, the girls returned to their houses.

Father Miśra, however, was angry and went to look for Viśvambhara.

The girls who had made complaints felt sorry for Nimāi. “Nimāi! Your father is angry with You and is coming this way to find You! Run away quickly!” they warned Him.

Gaurāṅga turned to His friends and said, “When My father comes and asks about My whereabouts, you should say that I have not yet come to the Gaṅgā, and that you are waiting for Me.” Nimāi then went home by a different path. On the way, He carefully put ink spots on His body, to make it look as if He had come directly from school.

Father Miśra arrived at the Gaṅgā in an angry mood. “Have you seen Nimāi?” he asked the boys.

“No, He has not yet come to take bath,” they replied. Śrī Jagannātha Miśra continued his search but was unable to find his son. This made him even more upset.

When the brāhmaṇas who had complained about Nimāi saw how angry Śrī Miśra was, they told him, “Viśvambhara ran home because He was scared of you. We will come home with you so you will not beat Him when you find Him. We know that if you do beat Him, you will feel sorry later. Do not worry. If He plays these naughty pranks again, we will personally catch Him and bring Him straight home. Dear Miśra, although we complained, we are not so angry. You must be the happiest father in the world to have a son like Nimāi.”

Jagannātha Miśra then said with a smile, “Nimāi is not only my son; He is also yours.” Jagannātha Miśra and the brāhmaṇas heartily embraced each other, and father Miśra happily went home.

In the meantime, Nimāi had arrived at His house. “Mother, I’m home!” He called. “I want to take a bath; please give Me some oil.” When mother Śacī saw her son standing before her with dust and ink spots on His

body, she was both surprised and relieved. "What are these girls saying about Him?" she wondered, "And the brāhmaṇas? My Nimāi must have come straight home from school. His tender body is covered with ink spots and He is still wearing His school clothes."

Just then, father Miśra returned and Nimāi jumped into his lap to embrace him. Now that he was caught in his little boy's embrace, Jagannātha Miśra's heart sparkled with joy. "My dear son," he asked Nimāi gently, "are You teasing people when they are taking a bath? Are You eating the offerings meant for Lord Viṣṇu? Then, when upset, do You say, 'Who are you thinking of? Look at Me, I am Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of your worship?' My boy, You should know better than that!"

Nimāi said, "Father, I have not yet been to the Gaṅgā to bathe. My friends are waiting for Me to go. These people are telling lies. They just imagined everything. If they speak like that again, I will surely do exactly what they are accusing Me of."

The Lord smiled brightly and ran off to meet His friends. Arriving in their midst, He was embraced by them all.

"Hey, Nimāi," one boy said, "We saw Your father not so long ago. He was very upset."

Nimāi told His friends His story of trickery. They laughed and praised the clever way He had escaped a good spanking.

Gentle Viśvarūpa

Nimāi was so naughty that when His parents chastised Him, He would get upset and break all the earthen pots in the house. He was afraid of no one, not even His parents; but whenever He saw His elder brother Viśvarūpa, He would become sweet and humble. Śrī Viśvarūpa's heart was as soft as butter and everybody loved him. He was always listening to stories about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or else he was telling them. In fact, he never did anything else.

At that time, people in general did not believe in the Supreme Lord, and they would tease and abuse those people who did.

"O you God-believers," they taunted, "all of you are so poor. You do not have any money. We are rich and have so many servants, and we always eat sumptuously. You people are always begging door to door for food, and you eat dry rice with only some green spinach leaves. We think that your God does not exist. And if He exists then He must be displeased with you, because you are always yelling 'Hari, Hari,' keeping us awake, and not allowing us to rest."

Śrī Viśvarūpa was worried for these people. He did not want them to suffer, but to be happy in loving service to Kṛṣṇa. Seeing the wonder in little Nimāi's naughty antics, Viśvarūpa concluded that He was Kṛṣṇa Himself. Looking at Nimāi, he made up his mind not to divulge this to anyone. He went to the house of Śrī Advaita Prabhu to hear the stories about Kṛṣṇa and also to speak about Him.

After a while, mother Śacī asked Nimāi to go to Śrī Advaita Prabhu's house and bring His big brother home because it was time to take prasāda. When Nimāi arrived, all who were there stared at Him, being captivated by His beauty. Śrī Advaita Prabhu was also wonderstruck and could not understand why He was so attracted to this sweet golden boy. Nimāi simply gazed at Śrī Advaita Prabhu with a big smile and thought, "My friend, You do not recognize Me now, but later I will show You who I am and this will fill You with joy." Then, just like an ordinary small child, He tugged at Viśvarūpa's dhotī and the two brothers went home.

One day Śrī Viśvarūpa overheard his parents saying that now he was old enough to marry. But deep down in his heart, Śrī Viśvarūpa had one interest only: to chant Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names and glorify Him. "I cannot marry," he thought. "I will leave home and put on saffron cloth. In this way, carrying a staff in my hand, I will abandon the world. Anyone who sees me will know that my only interest is to serve my beloved Kṛṣṇa."

Viśvarūpa is an expansion of Nityānanda Prabhu. When he wants something to happen, it is bound to occur. Thus, a few days later, he left his home and took another name – Śrī Śaṅkarāraṇya Mahārāja. When this news reached mother Śacī and father Miśra, grief overwhelmed them and all they could do was cry again and again, "O Viśvarūpa! O Viśvarūpa!"

But Viśvarūpa did not hear their cries, and he never came home again.

When Nimāi heard that Viśvarūpa had left home, the tears that flowed from His eyes resembled the river Gaṅgā. He became so distressed that He fell to the ground in a faint. Śrī Advaita and other devotees also wept when they heard the news. Everyone felt the pain of separation from their beloved Viśvarūpa.

At around this time, people were rapidly becoming more sinful. The devotees were concluding that they should go and live in the forest so that their practice of bhakti would not be disturbed by them. But Śrī Advaita told them, "Oh, no, do not go. My heart is joyful, and I feel that something auspicious is going to happen. This must surely be a sign that the Lord has come to this world! Come, let us all do kīrtana; then surely He will appear among us."

Then they all started to sing:

śrī kṛṣṇa gopāla hare mukunda govinda he nanda-kīśora kṛṣṇa

The sound was so powerful that it reached the house of Nimāi, who was playing with His friends. When He heard it, He immediately went to Advaita Prabhu's house. The devotees there asked Him if He needed something. "I came because You called for Me," Nimāi said. "Why did you call?" And then He ran off with His friends. Still, nobody there was able to guess who He was.

Nimāi's Studies Begin

After Viśvarūpa left home, Nimāi became less mischievous. He did not play outside as He used to, but stayed at home and helped His father and mother, who were full of sorrow. He became absorbed in His studies and became the best student in His class. In fact, some people said that He was smarter than Śrī Bṛhaspati, the teacher of the demigods.

His father became concerned. He said to mother Śacī, "If Nimāi studies the holy books like His big brother, He will also leave home and go to the forest. The holy books say that there is no happiness in this temporary world. Viśvarūpa knew this and that is why he left. I will no longer send Nimāi to school."

Śacī-devī said, "But if He doesn't go to school, He will not be educated. How will He earn His livelihood? Nobody will want Him to marry their daughter."

Father Miśra replied, "No, no, Śrī Kṛṣṇa protects us and gives us all of our needs, including a wife. It is not necessary to go to school. It is Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all lords, who gives everyone what they need. Look at me. I have studied the scriptures so much, but still, there is not enough food in the house. Starting today, Nimāi will stay at home." He then called his son and told Him the news.

But Nimāi did not like to stay at home. He became 'Nimāi the rebel'. Whatever He saw in His house, He smashed on the floor. He did this not only in His own house, but also in the neighbours' houses. He and His friends would dress like bulls at night and plunder the gardens they had seen in the daytime, and they would



take all the bananas from the trees there. Before the owner could stop them, they would run away. Day and night, they were so naughty. They would even lock the neighbours in their houses by bolting the doors from the outside.

Once, with a smile on His face, Nimāi sat down on a pile of dirty cooking pots that had been put out to be cleaned. His golden body was covered with black soot from the pots, and He looked even more enchanting. Some friends went to mother Śacī and told her what Nimāi was doing. Mother Śacī came outside to see her son perched on the pots. "Nimāi," she scolded, "come away from there immediately! Can't you see that the pots have not been cleaned? Now you have to take a bath."

Gaurāṅga replied, "Mother, you do not want Me to go to school, so I am ignorant about what is clean and what is not. I am foolish, so how can I tell the difference? Clean and unclean look the same to Me. And besides, you have cooked for Lord Viṣṇu in these pots, so how can they be unclean?"

Everyone smiled. Mother Śacī still insisted that He take a bath, but Nimāi did not move an inch.

Śacī Mā urged, "Come down from there quickly, before Your father comes home."

Nimāi replied, "I will not come down until you allow Me to go back to school."

Some neighbours supported Him. "Please let Him go to school," they requested her. They then turned to Nimāi and said, "Dear son, if your parents do not allow You to go to school, keep on breaking things, inside the house and out."

At last, mother Śacī took Nimāi down from the pots and gave Him a bath. When father Miśra returned home, she told him what had happened.

Those neighbours also came to see Jagannātha Miśra. "O brother Miśra," they said. "You believe in the Lord, so you must know that everything happens as He wishes. You are lucky that Viśvambhara wants to go to school. Let Him study. You will surely be proud of Him."

After hearing from them, father Miśra had a change of heart. "O my friends," he said, "you are right; Nimāi can go back to school."

Nimāi happily returned to school on the very next day.

A few years later, the time came for Nimāi, the golden moon of Navadvīpa, to be initiated and receive the sacred thread. Śrī Jagannātha Miśra asked his friends to come and assist in that ceremony, which they did with great enthusiasm. The ladies sang kīrtanas and others played mṛdaṅga, flute, drums and other musical instruments. Brāhmaṇas read out loud from holy books and others softly uttered beautiful verses about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Nimāi looked lovely, with the holy thread draped across His chest. Joyfulness abounded.

After the ceremony, Nimāi took a bag and stick and went out to beg for alms. He knew what houses to go to for the best bananas and the best sweets. Everybody gave Him something. Even the goddesses from the heavenly planets and great sages came in disguise so that they could give alms to this brilliant brāhmaṇa boy.

Nimāi did well at school and passed His school exams with high grades. After that, father Miśra asked Him what He wanted to do next. Nimāi said that He wanted to continue His studies. In Navadvīpa, there was a teacher by the name of Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita. Of all teachers, he was topmost. Because Nimāi asked for this teacher, father Miśra went to the place where Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita had his school and asked him to further Nimāi's studies. The famous teacher replied that he would be happy to do so.

Nimāi's new teacher treated Him like his own son and kept Him by his side. Nimāi's intelligence was stunning and He immediately grasped whatever His teacher explained to Him.

One day, mother Śacī saw Nimāi's father praying to the Lord to protect his son, and to let Him get married and stay at home forever.

"Why are you suddenly praying for this kind of blessing from the Lord?" she asked.

Father Miśra answered, "In a dream, I saw Nimāi shaving His head and wearing saffron cloth. He was singing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names and dancing, laughing and crying at the same time. His friend Śrī Advaita and other devotees were with Him. I saw millions and millions of devotees following Him and they were singing, 'Jaya Śacīnandana! Jaya Śacīnandana!' Everybody was glorifying Him. When I woke up, I became afraid that Nimāi would leave us. It is because of this dream that I am praying like this."

Śacī-devī said, "Oh, do not worry; Nimāi will never leave us."

A few days later, something very sad happened. Nimāi's father suddenly left this world. Śacī Ma was plunged into an ocean of distress. She only remained alive because of the absolute charm and beauty of her golden child, and her love for Him grew day by day.

One day He said to her, "Mother, soon I will give you a very beautiful gift. This gift is desired by the heavenly gods themselves, but they are not so fortunate. I will tell you later what it is."

Mother Śacī smiled and looked at the beautiful face of her boy. His smiling eyes were like large pink lotuses, His shining cheeks like two big full moons, and His smile sweeter than nectar. Mother Śacī's heart melted completely and she forgot all her worries.

One day, mother Śacī had nothing in the house to cook because Nimāi had been so restless that he had destroyed everything in the house. He had wanted to take bath in the Gaṅgā and then make an offering to Gaṅgā of fragrant sandalwood and a flower garland. He asked His mother to bring the items for worship.

Mother Śacī said, “Wait for just one moment and I will bring You a flower garland.” But Nimāi did not want to wait and became furious. She tried to pacify Him, but He would not listen. He took up a stick and smashed everything in the house. Nothing was safe from Him. The furniture was destroyed and all the clothes were torn to pieces. Still not satisfied, He started beating the doors, windows, and the earth. After that, He threw Himself on the ground and fell into a deep sleep.

Mother Śacī cleaned the house and placed the items her son needed for His worship of the Gaṅgā on a plate. She went to the courtyard where Nimāi had fallen asleep and gently woke Him up. She wiped the dust and sand from His body and said, “My darling son, now You should go to the Gaṅgā and take a bath. Do not worry. All inauspiciousness is now gone from the house.”

Nimāi looked ashamed. He stood up, took the offering plate from her, and went to the Gaṅgā. After returning from the Gaṅgā He went to school. When He came home, He handed His mother two gold coins, saying that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had given them to Him. Then He went to bed.

Mother Śacī was amazed when she saw the gold coins and wondered where they had really come from. She asked her neighbours about it, but nobody knew. She then went to the market and bought what she needed for the service of Śrī Viṣṇu.

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu

Now, come to Ekacakrā, the place of Lord Nityānanda, also known as Nitāi. Here we find Nitāi putting on dramas – some about Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa playing with His friends and others about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's activities in His other incarnations. Just now they are enacting "Kṛṣṇa and Pūtanā the witch". That pastime goes like this:

When Kṛṣṇa was a tiny baby, the evil Pūtanā assumed the form of a beautiful lady and, pretending to have all the motherly affection of a nursemaid, came to His house. Having smeared her breast with deadly poison, Pūtanā tried to feed that most beautiful of babies the milk from her breast. But Kṛṣṇa, although in the form of a mere baby, outsmarted her. He instantly killed her by sucking not just her milk but her life air as well.

After this drama, Śrī Nitāi and His friends performed "Lord Vāmana and King Bali." Śrī Nityānanda played the role of Vāmana, Kṛṣṇa in His dwarf form. One of His friends played the part of Bali, the king of the demons.

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and His friends would also act out the pastime of Lord Rāmacandra. Rāvaṇa, a demon with more than ten heads, had kidnapped Lord Rāmacandra's wife Sītā and brought her to Śrī Laṅkā.

Lord Rāma's younger bother was Śrī Lakṣmaṇa, and that same Śrī Lakṣmaṇa had now appeared on this earth as Nitāi. In this drama, Śrī Nityānanda played the role of Lakṣmaṇa, His own self, and some other boys played the roles of Hanumān, Nala, Nīla, Sugrīva, and Tara, who were the monkeys in Lord Rāma's army. They all marched to Śrī Laṅkā. Lord Rāma then killed Rāvaṇa in battle and rescued Sītā-devī.



Lord Nityānanda and His friends passed their time always thinking about the Lord of their lives and His astonishing activities.

One day, when Nitāi was playing with His friends, an elderly brāhmaṇa came to Ekacakrā. He asked Nitāi's father, Śrī Hāḍāi Paṇḍita, for his permission to take Nitāi on parikramā to the holy places where Śrī Kṛṣṇa had played. Although father Hāḍāi and mother Padmāvātī did not want their beloved son to go anywhere, they agreed to the brāhmaṇa's proposal.

Nityānanda Prabhu went on parikramā to holy places like Gayā, Kāśī, Mathurā and Vṛndāvana. While travelling in West India, He met a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa named Śrī Mādhavendra Purī. When Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Mādhavendra Purī first saw each other, they became overwhelmed with bliss. And upon embracing each other tightly, they lost consciousness. All the disciples of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, such as Śrī Īśvara Purī, shed tears of love to see this.

Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Mādhavendra Purī spoke day and night about Kṛṣṇa. Their happiness knew no bounds and they did not even stop to sleep. After a few days, Śrī Nitāi continued His journey to other holy places.

Until now, Nitāi had not met Nimāi, yet He never stopped thinking about Him. "When My Gaurāṅga begins His preaching, I will go to meet Him."

Nimāi did well at school. By the time He was sixteen, He had become a handsome young boy and the best of students. He was now a respected scholar, or paṇḍita. He became famous as Nimāi Paṇḍita, and nobody could defeat Him in logic and argument. Whenever someone asked Him a question, He answered it easily. Many students came to listen to His lectures. His teacher, Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita, was proud of Him.

Nimāi Weds Lakṣmī-priyā

One day, when Gaurāṅga was in school, a brāhmaṇa named Vanamālī came to His house. Mother Śacī welcomed the brāhmaṇa and inquired why he had come.

Vanamālī wanted to suggest a bride for Nimāi. He suggested the beautiful and sweet natured daughter of Śrī Vallabha Ācārya. But mother Śacī remembered how Viśvarūpa suddenly left home at the suggestion of marriage, and she became fearful. “Let Him study for now,” she said, “and I will think about it.” With that, the disappointed brāhmaṇa left.

On his way home after seeing mother Śacī, he passed Nimāi on the path. Nimāi was curious to know where Vanamālī was coming from, and Vanamālī told him all that had happened. Without saying a word, Nimāi smiled, offered the brāhmaṇa obeisances and continued home.

“Mother,” He said, “why didn’t you accept the offer of Vanamālī?” With these words, Nimāi conveyed to His mother that He did not object to marrying. Her heart filled with both joy and relief, and she immediately sent word to Vanamālī to return and make all arrangements for the wedding.

Previously, Nimāi had been taking bath in the Gaṅgā when He saw a young girl of unparalleled beauty. They had glanced at each other, and Nimāi gave her a very sweet smile. The girl returned that sweet smile, and then they went back to their own homes in bliss. Nimāi knew that this girl was none other than His eternal consort, Śrī Lakṣmī-devī, who always serves His lotus feet. It was this girl that Vanamālī was arranging for Him to marry.

Vanamālī happily went to the house of Śrī Vallabha Ācārya to request him to give his daughter Śrī Lakṣmī in marriage to Viśvambhara. Śrī Vallabha was delighted. "My dear brother," he said, "you can certainly arrange this marriage, but I must tell you that I am a poor brāhmaṇa with no dowry to give. All I can offer is five pieces of haritaki fruit. Please see if this is acceptable."

Vanamālī gave the fruit and happily completed the arrangements. The wedding day was soon fixed.

It quickly became universal news that Nimāi was getting married. Even Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā came to the festivities in disguise.

On the day before the marriage, there was a special ceremony. Many people danced and sang while others played musical instruments. Brāhmaṇas recited mantras from Vedic holy books. Gaurāṅga, the jewel of the twice-born, appeared like a splendid moon in their midst. Śrī Vallabha, Lakṣmī-devī's father, came with special offerings for Nimāi. After the ceremony, all received garlands, sandalwood, incense and other gifts.

The day of the grand wedding arrived. Mother Śacī's house was full of joyous people dressed in colourful attire. Some danced and others sang, and some ladies served delicious prasādam. Śacī Mā gave gifts of fragrant oils and fruits. All were in a festive mood and passed the day in bliss.

Before sunset, a procession accompanied Nimāi to the house of Śrī Vallabha, performing kīrtana the whole way. The family members merrily welcomed Nimāi. After offering Him a seat, her father, Śrī Vallabha, brought his daughter Lakṣmī to Him. The bride, who was both beautiful and enchanting, was then lifted off the ground and carried around Nimāi seven times. She placed a flower garland at His lotus feet and sat to His left.



In this ceremony they met each other for the first time. Before the marriage arrangement, they had only seen each other once at the Gaṅgā and had smiled sweetly at each other. At that time Nimāi knew that she was His eternal consort and she knew that He was her Master, and then they both went their separate ways.

People sang the holy names of Lord Hari and showered them with flower petals. The next day, as Nimāi brought Lakṣmī-devī to His home, everyone they passed gazed at the charming sight of them both. Upon their arrival, mother Śacī brought them inside. Seeing her beautiful new daughter, her heart swelled with happiness.

Some days later, Śrī Īśvara Purī, the disciple of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, came to Navadvīpa, but because he came in the disguise of a Māyāvādī sannyāsī, nobody could recognize him. Māyāvādīs don't believe that the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a person, and they say that this world is false. Their ideas are against devotion to the Lord.

Śrī Īśvara Purī went to the house of Śrī Advaita, who at that time was preparing an offering for His Deities. Śrī Īśvara Purī humbly sat down in the courtyard. He looked so beautiful that Śrī Advaita could not stop gazing at him. He understood that this person was in fact not a Māyāvādī sannyāsī but a pure Vaiṣṇava.

After worshipping him, Advaita Prabhu said, "O dear holy person, who are you? I can see that you are a Vaiṣṇava sannyāsī. What is your name?"

The sannyāsī answered, "I am a low class person who has come to take the dust of Your lotus feet."

The expert singer Mukunda was present at that time. He knew that the sannyāsī was really a Vaiṣṇava, and began to sing a song about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Tears of happiness streamed from the eyes of the sannyāsī and he

fell to the ground in bliss. The sannyāsī's reaction thrilled Śrī Advaita and He embraced him. For the pleasure of the Vaiṣṇavas, Mukunda continued to sing beautiful songs. Later, that sannyāsī informed them that his name was Śrī Īśvara Purī. Upon hearing this news, kīrtana burst forth from those in the room.

One day after giving class at His school, Nimāi was on His way home when He saw Śrī Īśvara Purī wandering about Śrī Navadvīpa. Nimāi offered His obeisances to him. Śrī Īśvara Purī, seeing Nimāi's beautiful form, knew that He was a pure personality and asked His name.

"This is Nimāi Paṇḍita," one of Nimāi's students answered.

"Oh, You are Nimāi!" said Śrī Īśvara Purī jubilantly.

Viśvambhara was equally jubilant to meet him and immediately invited him to His house for prasādam. Śrī Īśvara Purī then enraptured all there with charming stories about Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thereafter, Śrī Īśvara Purī and Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita stayed for a few months in the house of Śrī Gopīnātha Ācārya. Śrī Īśvara Purī kept Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita close by him and would request Gadādhara to read aloud from a book he had written called Kṛṣṇa-līlāmṛta, nectarean stories about Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Īśvara Purī explained this text as Gadādhara read it.

Śrī Īśvara Purī had written a book about Kṛṣṇa, and he asked Viśvambhara, who came to see him daily, to check it for errors.

"Pure devotees like you never make mistakes," Viśvambhara said. "Only a sinful person sees that they make them."

"No, no, I really want You to check it for me," Śrī Īśvara Purī insisted.

Viśvambhara could say nothing more. Every day they sat together and discussed what was written in the book. Once Viśvambhara pointed out a word that He did not think was used correctly. Śrī Īśvara Purī took note of the word, and after Nimāi left, he contemplated what Nimāi said. The next day, when Nimāi came to him, Śrī Īśvara Purī told Him that there was no error in how he had used that word.

He explained to Nimāi that this word had two meanings. “You corrected this word because You had never heard this particular meaning.” Nimāi was satisfied with this explanation and found nothing more in the book to correct.

Viśvambhara saw Śrī Īśvara Purī every day until he left Śrī Navadvīpa.

Loving Dealings in Navadvīpa

Nimāi would wander here and there throughout the town of Navadvīpa. Sometimes He would harass Vaiṣṇavas like Gadādhara Paṇḍita and Mukunda by grabbing them by the hand and demanding that they answer His questions, and then He would go from shop to shop asking the shopkeepers to give Him some of their goods for free.

Those who made garlands gave Him a beautiful flower garland, and the man who made fragrant perfume gave Nimāi his finest specimens. When He came to the house of the milkman, He demanded free milk and yoghurt, which the milkman happily gave Him. The milkman lovingly joked with Nimāi, saying, “Uncle, please come to my house and take rice.” Then another milkman would pull Him by the arm and say, “No, no, come to my place.”

Nimāi liked their joking moods and sprinkled His merciful glance upon them.

Nimāi also went to the astrologer and showed him His forms of Lord Vāmana and Śrī Rāmacandra. By doing so, he left the astrologer in a state of joyful confusion.

After that, He would go to the house of His dear friend Śrīdhara.

Nimāi lovingly quarrelled with Śrīdhara about the price Śrīdhara was charging for pumpkins, banana flower and other vegetables. Although Śrīdhara would offer Nimāi the lowest price, Nimāi would still bargain for a lower one.



Sometimes He would snatch a pumpkin out of Śrīdhara's hand and run. Śrīdhara would shout and run after Him, trying to catch Him. "O Śrīdhara," Nimāi teased, "you ceaselessly chant the name of Lord Hari, the husband of the goddess of fortune Śrī Lakṣmī, but still you are poor. Your clothes are so full of holes. Everybody worships Durgā-devī for wealth. You should also do so. Or are you secretly hiding a big treasure somewhere under your house?"

Mind you, Śrīdhara's house was nothing more than a little hut made of clay, with a straw roof. Śrīdhara would cleverly retort, "My clothes may be full of holes, but they still cover my body. And, by the way, my beloved Lord Hari always gives me what I need. I am quite content with my life."

"Ha!" Nimāi would say, "I will not give up that easily. I know you have stashed your wealth somewhere. I will take that another time, but for now, if you just give Me the root and stalks of the banana tree for free, I will not quarrel with you." They would haggle with each other for hours on end, thus bringing each other the greatest happiness.

Śrīdhara thought, "I had better give this boy what He wants before He beats me! Actually, I will give it to him because he is so dear to me. I am happy to give Him whatever He asks." Thus, Śrīdhara would satisfy Nimāi's demands, and in return Nimāi would cease His wrangling.

In this way, the Golden Lord of lords Viśvambhara, the enjoyer of all transcendental moods, roamed about Navadvīpa with a happy heart and blessed all with His merciful glance.

The Proud Scholar

One day, a famous and learned scholar, or paṇḍita, called Keṣava Kaśmiri, came to Navadvīpa accompanied by a great number of men, elephants and horses. Wherever he went, this proud paṇḍita defeated all learned persons in debates on Vedic knowledge.

The scholars of Navadvīpa were horrified at the news of his arrival and fearful that they would be next on his list of the vanquished. It was well known that he had received the mercy of Śrī Sarasvatī-devī, the goddess of learning, and that he was therefore unbeatable.

One evening, Nimāi Paṇḍita was sitting on the bank of the Gaṅgā when His students told Him about the famous paṇḍita who was coming to Navadvīpa. Nimāi said, "The Lord is not pleased if somebody is proud, even if that person has a lot of knowledge. For this reason, out of His love for them, He cuts their pride at the root. The branches of a tree full with ripe and juicy fruits automatically hang to the ground. In the same way, when someone has good qualities, his head bows down to the ground. In other words, one becomes humble."

Whilst Nimāi was speaking, the renowned scholar arrived there. He asked one student, "What is the name of the person giving class?"

"Nimāi Paṇḍita," the student replied.

The scholar sat down. Nimāi noted him and smiled at him kindly. In this way, He welcomed him. Nimāi asked the paṇḍita if he would recite some verses glorifying Śrī Gaṅgā. The learned paṇḍita immediately



composed one hundred lyrical verses, and in this way, much to the amazement of the students, he was able to glorify Śrī Gaṅgā continuously for three hours.

“Now, please explain these verses,” Nimāi requested him.

“Which verse do You want me to explain?” Keṣava Kaśmiri asked.

“This one,” Nimāi answered, and effortlessly quoted a verse from the poem that described the glories of the Ganges.

Keṣava Kaśmiri was astounded. “I spoke all those verses as swiftly as the wind blows,” he thought. “How could He remember a complete verse?”

Keṣava Kaśmiri proceeded to explain the meaning of the verse. When he had finished, Nimāi Paṇḍita gently pointed out to him the five faults that were in the verse. Keṣava Kaśmiri was completely unaware that the verse had any faults at all. Nimāi Paṇḍita did not want to hurt the Keṣava Kaśmiri’s feelings, so He described five beautiful aspects of the verse as well.

In this way, Nimāi defeated the world famous champion poet, even though he merely appeared to be an expert in Sanskrit grammar. The highly intelligent scholar was most embarrassed and at a complete loss for words. He could understand that his worshipful goddess of learning, Sarasvatī devī, was displeased with him, but he did not know why.

The soft-hearted Nimāi then encouraged the poet, saying, “You are so skilled in creating beautiful verse that it flows from you just like Ganges flows from its source. There is no one who can match your ability. Please overlook My childish impudence. Let us meet again tomorrow, and you can explain the śāstra to Me.”

Later that day, when Keṣava Kāśmiri was alone, he began to meditate on mother Sarasvatī, his worshipful goddess of learning. When he finally lulled off to sleep, she appeared to him in a dream and told him not to be embarrassed that he had been defeated by such a young man. She explained that this very Nimāi was the Supreme Lord Himself, and that he should certainly go and see Him again the next day.

Early the next morning, Keṣava Kāśmiri went to Nimāi in a humble and happy mood. He bowed down before Him and Nimāi lifted him up and embraced him.

Keṣava Kāśmiri told Nimāi that “Mother Sarasvatī explained to me who You really are,” he said. “Thank You so much for the great kindness You have shown me.” Then, for Nimāi’s pleasure, he sweetly uttered many poetic prayers to Him. In this way, Nimāi blessed Keṣava Kāśmiri, who had become sincerely humble and soft-hearted.

The Disappearance of Lakṣmī-priyā devī

One day Nimāi told His mother that He was going to visit East Bengal, in the company of some of His students. Upon seeing the charming river Padmāvatī, He decided to camp out for a couple of days on her beautiful banks. When the news spread that the great Nimāi Paṇḍita had come to their village, the townspeople joyfully came to welcome Him, and He blessed them all.

But His dear wife, Lakṣmī-priyā, missed Him. In fact, her pain was so great that she almost stopped eating. Finally, overwhelmed by sorrow, she left this world. Oh, how anguished was mother Śacī, who wept and wept for days. And with aching hearts, the blessed people of Navadvīpa cried along with her.

When Nimāi returned to Navadvīpa He paid His obeisances to His mother and gave her the gifts given to Him by various people during his travels. He then went to the Gaṅgā and upon His return, shared news of His travels with His family and friends.

Later when everyone had left, Nimāi noticed His mother's doleful mood. He tried to get her to tell Him why she seemed so sad, but she was unable to speak. It was then that a member of the household told Him that Lakṣmī-priyā had left her body.

Nimāi's heart at once filled with sorrow. He had always been satisfied by His wife's sweet mood and her

loving service to Him. Nevertheless, He said, "Mother, do not feel sad. Whatever the Lord wants to happen will happen. He brings people together, but if it is His desire, He also separates them. Do not feel unhappy." The next day, Nimāi resumed giving classes.

One day, Nimai noticed that one of His students was not wearing tilaka on his forehead. "My dear boy," He said, "why didn't you put tilaka on your body? The Vedas say that if you do not put tilaka on your forehead, your body is as good as the cremation ground, where dead bodies are burned. If one worships the Lord, but does not wear tilaka, one's worship will be useless. Quickly, go home and put on tilaka. Then worship the Lord again and come back."

The boy felt ashamed. He ran home and later returned with beautiful tilaka marks decorating his body. In this way, all of the students of Śrī Gaurāṅga performed their duties conscientiously.

Śrī Viṣṇu-priyā

One day, mother Śacī was looking at her son and thinking, “My Nimāi should marry again.” Earlier that day, while she was taking a bath in the Gaṅgā, she saw a beautiful and qualified girl that she instinctively knew would be the perfect bride for her Viśvambhara. She later found out that the name of this girl was Viṣṇu-priyā and that she was the daughter of Śrī Sanātana Miśra, who himself was a treasure house of noble qualities and the Rājā Paṇḍita, or the priest of the king.

Next, mother Śacī needed to know if the girl’s parents would agree to this idea, so she sent a messenger to their house. They were more than happy with this proposal. The glorious news spread quickly, and the pious people of Navadvīpa were joyous.

The wealthy Buddimanta Khān said that he would pay all the costs of the wedding. At the ceremony feast the day before, Nimāi gave garlands and gifts to everyone. Some greedy brāhmaṇas pretended they had not received anything and came back to receive a second gift.

The compassionate, all-knowing Lord, who has a soft heart for brāhmaṇas, knew that their greed would not benefit them. To protect them from the reactions to their greed, He kindly said that everybody should come three times to take gifts. The brāhmaṇas clearly saw that they were being greedy and felt ashamed. In this sweet way, Viśvambhara corrected and protected the brāhmaṇas.

The next day, Gaurāṅga, along with friends, musicians and others, travelled on a palanquin to the home of the bride. He was welcomed with great pomp and graciously seated. Śrī Sanātana Miśra then offered his daughter Viṣṇu-priyā to Nimāi. Viṣṇu-priyā placed a garland at the feet of Nimāi, which Nimāi picked up and tenderly placed over her head. Everyone present showered flowers on the blessed couple.

The following day, Nimāi and Viṣṇu-priyā returned to Nimāi's house, where many people joyfully awaited them. Mother Śacī was in total bliss and brought the charming couple inside. Nimāi gave clothes and other gifts to all of the guests. For Buddhimanta Khān, who had paid for everything, Gaurāṅga had saved a deeply warm embrace. After receiving this very special gift, Buddhimanta Khān was in ecstasy and returned to his home.

Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura

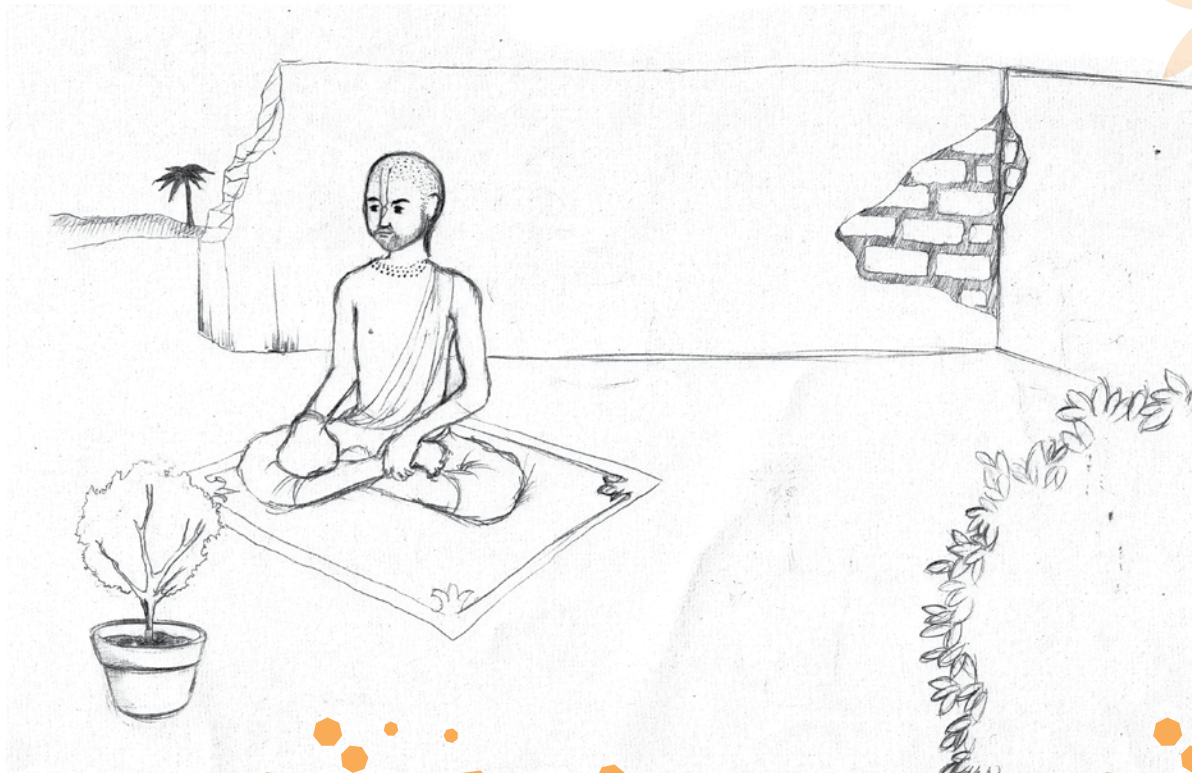
Some time later, an exceptional devotee of the Lord named Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura came to Navadvīpa. He had left his birthplace, the village of Buḍhana, and gone to live in Phuliyā near Śāntipura. Although born in a Muslim family, Śrī Haridāsa was a high class devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. His body shone with a bright lustre, and he incessantly chanted the Lord's names.

Upon arriving in Navadvīpa, people thronged to see him. In his wondrous meeting with Advaita Ācārya Prabhu, both of them shed tears of happiness as they joyfully embraced. Humility, sweetness and generosity flowed from Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura's heart, and he soon became cherished by all.

Everyone loved him except for the wicked local Muslim judge known as Kazi. The Kazi's heart filled with jealousy as he heard of Śrī Haridāsa's growing popularity, and he went to the Nawab, the evil Muslim ruler. "This Haridāsa is actually a Muslim, but he is living like a Hindu. You should have him arrested and punish him."

The Nawab agreed. He ordered his arrest and had him brought to court and thrown into jail. There were other pious people in the jail, and when they saw that Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura had been arrested they were most perturbed. At the same time, they felt blessed to have the good fortune of meeting him.

As he was brought into the jail, these pious souls paid their full obeisances at his lotus feet. Haridāsa looked at the prisoners with eyes full of compassion, and as he did so, his love for Kṛṣṇa was transmitted into their hearts. When he saw this love blossoming within them, he blessed them by saying, "Just remain as you are."



These words of Śrī Haridāsa confused the prisoners, and they became most disappointed. They thought that with this blessing from Haridāsa, they would have to stay in the jail for the rest of their lives.

Śrī Haridāsa smiled to see their reaction and said, "Do not think that I am wishing you to suffer here. I simply meant that you are now feeling love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and I want this sweet love to always remain in your hearts. In two or three days, they will free you from the prison. Do not worry. Always chant the names of Kṛṣṇa and speak about Him."

After giving his mercy to the prisoners, Haridāsa Ṭhākura was brought to the Nawab. Seeing his beautiful lustre, the Nawab automatically stood up and offered him a seat. "Why are you living like a low-class Hindu?" he asked Haridāsa. "We don't even take rice that has been touched by Hindus. It is obvious that you do not respect your high birth as a Muslim. How do you expect to get freedom from this world? You should speak about our books and follow the Koran. This is the perfect path. Unless you change your ways right now, I will have to punish you."

Without any fear, Śrī Haridāsa said, "Even if my body is cut into pieces and I die, I will never give up the chanting of the holy names of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa: Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare."

Seeing that Haridāsa was not about to give up the practices of a Vaiṣṇava, the Nawab turned to the Kazi. "What kind of punishment should I give to this person?"

"Let him be beaten in twenty-two marketplaces," the wicked Kazi replied, "and then if he is still alive after that, I will accept that he is a saint."

The Kazi's guards dragged Haridāsa away and beat him with whips in twenty-two market places. However, by the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who always protects His devotees, Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura felt no pain and remained absorbed in constantly chanting the names of Śrī Hari. In fact, he was such an exalted saint, that he even prayed to Kṛṣṇa not to punish the guards who were beating him.

When they finally came to the twenty-second marketplace, Śrī Haridāsa was still alive and happily chanting "Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare."

The guards looked incredulously at Śrīla Haridāsa. "He is still alive!" they cried in amazement. "And he is even smiling at us!"

One guard said, "If he is alive, the Kazi will be furious, and it is we who will soon be dead. Ahh! What to do? What to do?"

"Let us ask him to die," another said. "After all, he must be a saint. A normal person would have died after the beating in the second or third marketplace. He is not even in pain."

With fear in their hearts, they turned to Śrīla Haridāsa and said, "O Haridāsa, because you are still alive, the Kazi will kill us. Please die."

Haridāsa said, "I do not want you to be distressed because of me. I will die immediately."

Using his special powers, he went into a very deep sleep. It was so deep, in fact, that it was not possible to see him breathing. The relieved guards thought that he was dead and quickly took his body to the Nawab, who ordered it to be buried.

The Kazi was elated that Haridāsa was dead and said, "Oh, no. Do not bury him. If you bury him, he will go to heaven. He wanted to be a Hindu, so let him be one. Throw his body into the Gaṅgā and let him suffer forever."

The guards carried Haridāsa's body to the Gaṅgā and threw him into the water, where he drifted downstream.

A short time later, Śrīla Haridāsa emerged from his deep sleep. He came out of the water loudly chanting, "Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare."

The Muslims were astounded and realized that he must surely be a saint. They offered their obeisances to him and worshiped him with honour. The Nawab immediately came to him with folded hands and begged forgiveness for his offences.

Viśvambhara Journeys to Gayā

Meanwhile Viśvambhara had decided to reveal His actual identity to the world. But first He planned to go to Gayā. Taking His students with Him, He left in a happy mood.

One day, Gaurāṅga fell ill with a high fever. His worried disciples brought medicines, but none of them were able to reduce the fever. The Lord told them that He would only be cured by drinking water that had washed the feet of a pure Vaiṣṇava brāhmaṇa.

Quickly, the disciples found such a brāhmaṇa and washed his feet. They then brought this pure water to the Lord, who drank it and immediately became better. In this way Nimāi taught the world that the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas and the water that bathed the lotus feet of the Vaiṣṇavas was the cure for all kinds of pains and illnesses.

Continuing on their way they saw the holy river Punpunā, where Viśvambhara offered worship to the soul of His departed father. A short while later, they arrived in Gayā. Gaurāṅga went to Chakra-tīrtha for darśana of the footprint of Lord Viṣṇu, and He saw many brāhmaṇa priests offering incense and flowers and glorifying the lotus feet of the Lord. Hearing their glorification, Śrī Gaurāṅga became so blissful that tears poured forth from His beautiful lotus-like eyes.

Then, in the midst of the brāhmaṇas, Śrī Gaurāṅga beheld the divine form of Śrī Īśvara Purī, whom He had met in Navadvīpa. He quickly found His way to him, and with a melted heart He fell before him like a

stick, offering full obeisances. Śrīla Īśvara Purī tenderly lifted Him up and embraced Him. Śrī Gaurāṅga said, “Now that I have seen your lotus feet, which are the resting place of all the holy abodes, My visit to Gayā has become successful.”

Śrī Īśvara Purī said, “O Paṇḍita, last night I had a dream that I would meet the Lord of all lords. I know that You are that person. I feel the same love and affection in my heart for You as I do for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Nimāi then went to Dakṣiṇa-mānasa and other places. Upon returning to His place in Gayā, He started to cook and just as He finished, Śrī Īśvara Purī came to visit Him. Gaurāṅga came out of the kitchen, and paid His obeisances. He then gave him a seat and offered him prasādam. Only after Śrīla Purīpāda was fully satisfied did Nimāi Paṇḍita take His meal.

Later, Nimāi went to Kumārahaṭṭa, the holy birthplace of Śrī Īśvara Purī. He threw Himself to the ground, and as His golden form rolled in the dust of that holy place, He became overwhelmed with love for Śrī Īśvara Purī. With a choked voice, He called out, “Śrī Īśvara Purī, Śrī Īśvara Purī, Śrī Īśvara Purī!” He took a little earth from that holy place and tied it in the end of His cloth, cherishing it as His only possession.

When Nimāi met with Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda the next day, He humbly asked to receive initiation from him and the fortunate Śrī Īśvara Purī agreed. In this way, the Supreme Lord personally showed that if one genuinely aspires to serve Kṛṣṇa eternally, one must accept a genuine guru.

Viśvambhara circumambulated His Gurudeva and offered him full obeisances. “I have given My life to you.” He said. “Please always give Me your merciful glance, so that I may be forever immersed in pure love for Kṛṣṇa.” Śrī Īśvara Purī’s heart was touched by Gaurāṅga’s sweet words, and he embraced Him tightly.

One day, Gaurāṅga was fully absorbed in reciting the mantra that His Gurudeva had given Him at His initiation and meditating on Kṛṣṇa. When He opened His eyes, He looked around sadly. "Kṛṣṇa is not here," He lamented. He missed Kṛṣṇa so greatly that He loudly called out, "O Kṛṣṇa, where are You? O thief of My heart! Come back! Come back!" He then fainted and fell to the ground.

Some of His students brought Him back to consciousness, and He said, "You can all go home, but I am never going back to My family. I will go to Mathurā to find My Kṛṣṇa."

The students spoke sweet words to Him in an attempt to change His mind, and at first it seemed that they were successful. But then, one day in the early morning, He sneaked out of the house as fast as He could and went in the direction of Mathurā.

On His way, a voice in the sky said to Him, "O dear Lord, do not go to Mathurā. The reason You came to this Earth planet with Your devotees was to give love of God to the suffering entities of this world by chanting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. If You go to Mathurā now, this will not happen. We, Your servants, are begging You to now go back to Navadvīpa. Later You will go to Mathurā."

Śrī Gaurāṅga and His students then returned to Navadvīpa with joyful hearts.

Thus completes the first part of Nīmāi Paṇḍita's glorious pastimes.



Second Part





Nimāi the Vaiṣṇava

The news that Nimāi had returned to Navadvīpa spread like wildfire. Everyone ran to greet Him and cried with joy upon seeing Him. Like bees around a honey pot, the devotees encircled their dear Nimāi and walked Him home. Mother Śacī became elated to see Him again. A boundless happiness swept over Viṣṇupriyā that banished all her sadness. And the happiness of the Vaiṣṇavas cannot be described in words.

With deep humility, Śrī Viśvambhara sat with the Navadvīpa-vāsīs. He showered them with affection and pacified their hearts with His gentle words. He was no longer the proud Nimāi Paṇḍita who had played the role of a brilliant scholar. Instead, He exuded nothing but love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Viśvambhara told them about His pilgrimage to Gayā, and afterwards He asked a few devotees to come to His room. There He secretly told them about the love for Kṛṣṇa that now soared in His heart. He wanted to tell them more, and the next day He again met with those devotees, this time in the house of Śuklāmbara Brahmācārī. He asked one devotee named Śrīmān Paṇḍita to be there early with Śrī Murāri Gupta and Sadāśiva.

The next morning, Śrīmān Paṇḍita hurried to the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. In the garden was a lovely jasmine tree. It was not an ordinary tree but a desire tree as found in the spiritual world. Śrī Gadādhara, Gopīnātha, Rāmāi and other Vaiṣṇavas regularly went there to pick the sweetly scented flowers from this tree to offer to their worshipful deities. No matter how many flowers they picked, the tree remained full of flowers.

When Śrīmān Paṇḍita arrived at the house, he was smiling from ear to ear.

The other devotees who had come to pick flowers were curious. “O Śrīmān,” they asked, “you are looking particularly joyful today. Is there any special reason for this?”

“There most certainly is!” he said.

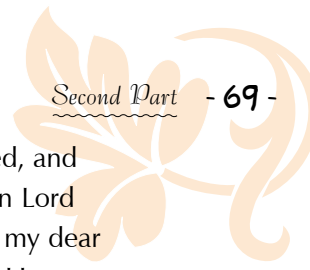
“Well, speak. Tell us what it is!” they cried.

“As you know, yesterday Nimāi Paṇḍita came back from Gayā,” Śrīman Paṇḍita told them. “I went to see Him, and He is not the same Nimāi as before. Now He is so humble and sweet. He told us that while He was in Gayā, He met the great Vaiṣṇava Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda at a place called Pādapadma-tīrtha. He even received initiation from him.

“Dear friends, when He uttered the name ‘Pādapadma-tīrtha’, tears poured from His eyes like the Gaṅgā and Yamunā Rivers. He wept so much that one could have easily watered the garden with His tears. He called out, ‘Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa!’ and trembled like a leaf in a strong wind. Goose-pimples erupted all over His body, and then He fainted. At long last, He came back to His senses, but then He started to cry again. Everybody was stunned. No one had ever seen such amazing symptoms of love for Kṛṣṇa.

“Then, after a while, Nimāi checked His display of emotion and said, ‘My dear friends, please go home now. I want to meet you all again tomorrow in the house of Śuklāmbara Brahmācārī.’ He told me to go there earlier, with Murāri and Sadāśiva. So now you know why I am so happy. It is because Nimāi Paṇḍita is now showing extraordinary love for Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita had been quietly listening to Śrīmān Paṇḍita from a distance. “Let me go to the house of Śuklāmbara myself,” he thought. “I want to hear what Nimāi has to say about Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” He went there and hid himself in a room.



Śrīmān Paṇḍita, Sadāśiva, Murāri and other Vaiṣṇavas went to that house as Gaurāṅga had asked, and waited to meet with Him. When the Lord arrived, they greeted Him and sat Him down. Our golden Lord recited one Sanskrit verse after another about the glories of serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But then He said, “O my dear brothers, I feel such sadness in My heart. I had found My beloved Kṛṣṇa, but then I lost Him again. Have you seen My Kṛṣṇa? Do you know where He went? Please tell Me, where did He go?”

Śrī Gaurāṅga could not control His emotions and, throwing His arms around a pillar, He fell to the ground as He cried in anguish, “Kṛṣṇa! O My beloved! Please come back!” Gaurāṅga’s feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa struck the hearts of the devotees there like a thunderbolt, and they started to sway and totter about the room.

Gadādhara watched as Śuklāmbara’s house drowned in an ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa, and in his hiding place, he fainted. The minds of all of those exalted personalities gradually became steady again, yet tears continued to pour from the eyes of Śrī Gaurāṅga. Finally, the high waves of His ecstasy also calmed down. He turned to the devotees present and asked, “Is anybody else in this house?”

“Yes. Your Gadādhara is here,” they answered.

Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita, having come back to consciousness, came out of his hiding place. He entered the room with his head lowered. Tears of love streamed down his cheeks. The sight of Gadādhara made Gaurāṅga’s heart melt.

“O Gadādhara,” He said, “you are truly fortunate. From your childhood, when you were just a little boy, your love for Kṛṣṇa was strong. As for Me, I simply wasted My time running after worldly wisdom, so when I finally found Kṛṣṇa, He would not stay with Me.”

Nimāi Paṇḍita's Perplexed Students

Later that day, Nimāi visited His teacher, Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita. He offered obeisances to Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita, who warmly embraced Him. “Viśvambhara,” he said, “Your students are waiting impatiently for You to teach them again. When You went to Gayā, they refused to continue with their study.”

Having been instructed by His teacher, Viśvambhara went to the school the very next day.

As His students opened their books, they uttered, “Hari, Hari,” as they had always done. But unlike before, Viśvambhara was now overflowing with love for Kṛṣṇa. When He heard the name “Hari,” He forgot everything but how blissful it was to chant Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names. He cast His glance of mercy upon His students and instead of giving His regular class on Sanskrit grammar, He simply spoke about Kṛṣṇa.

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name is the only truth. All of the Vedic holy books explain that the only worshipful Lord is Kṛṣṇa. He is the creator of all that exists, and He also is the maintainer and destroyer of all that exists. He is the topmost controller. My dear brothers, just worship the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

When Gaurāṅga finished His explanation, He became shy. “Oh, My students might think that I am imbalanced or mad,” He thought.

He wanted to find out if His students were thinking like this so He asked them, “How was My explanation?”

One student replied, “We could not understand any of your explanation, not even a little of it. But then, who can?”

Viśvambhara laughed. “Close your books,” He said, “and let us take bath in the Gaṅgā.” That happy group of students then went to the holy Gaṅgā with their dear teacher.

The next morning Viśvambhara went to teach in the school again. Once more He tried to make His students understand how everything is connected to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This time also they could not understand and they started to laugh.

One student whispered to another, “I think our teacher has too much air in His body. It has upset His mind.”

Another student directly asked Viśvambhara, “How did You get this explanation? Where does it come from?”

“This is the verdict of all Vedic scriptures,” Viśvambhara answered. “But if you cannot understand it, I will try to explain again this afternoon.”

When the morning class was over, Viśvambhara’s students went to see Śrī Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita. They had become confused and asked him, “Why is our teacher behaving in this way?”

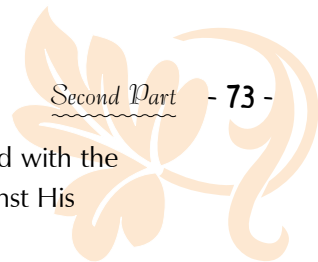
Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita laughed and told them he would talk with Viśvambhara about His behaviour. Later that day, when Viśvambhara came to see him, he told Viśvambhara that His students were confused about His new teaching methods. “Why don’t You teach the way You used to?” he asked Him.

The golden Lord answered, “By your mercy nobody can defeat Me in debate. I simply explain every word in relation to Kṛṣṇa. Is it possible for anyone to defeat that? Can anyone challenge My explanations, defeat them, and then explain something new? I am curious to see if anyone has the courage to try. I will go to the town and give my explanations there.” Viśvambhara offered His obeisances to His teacher and left. Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita was most pleased with Viśvambhara’s bold behaviour.

Viśvambhara walked toward the Gaṅgā with His students and sat upon the bank of the river Gaṅgā. There He began to explain verses from the Vedas, showing how everything was related to Kṛṣṇa. Scholars who came to the Gaṅgā heard His bold explanations, but fearing Him, they kept silent. “Can anyone find fault with any of My explanations?” He challenged. Nobody dared to come forward to correct Him. In this way, Nimāi Paṇḍita obliterated the scholars’ pride.

Thereafter, Nimāi visited the house of a most fortunate brāhmaṇa. His name was Ratnagarbha Ācārya, and he was born in the same village as Viśvambhara’s father. Ratnagarbha Ācārya was fond of reading from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and with great relish he recited the famous verse from the Tenth Canto (Chapter 23, Text 22), which describes the beauty of Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

“His dark-complexion is like a fresh rain-cloud. His yellow cloth, which defeats the splendour of gold, shimmers against His body. His head is decorated with a peacock feather, and every part of His body is ornamented with designs that are drawn with various coloured minerals. Sprigs of new leaves adorn His form, and around His neck is an enchanting forest-flower garland of five colours. Dressed in this way, He appears



as a fresh, youthful, expert dancer. He rests one hand upon the shoulder of His cowherd friend, and with the other He twirls a pastime lotus. His ears are decorated with earrings. Curly locks of hair splash against His cheeks, and His lotus face blossoms with a gentle smile.”

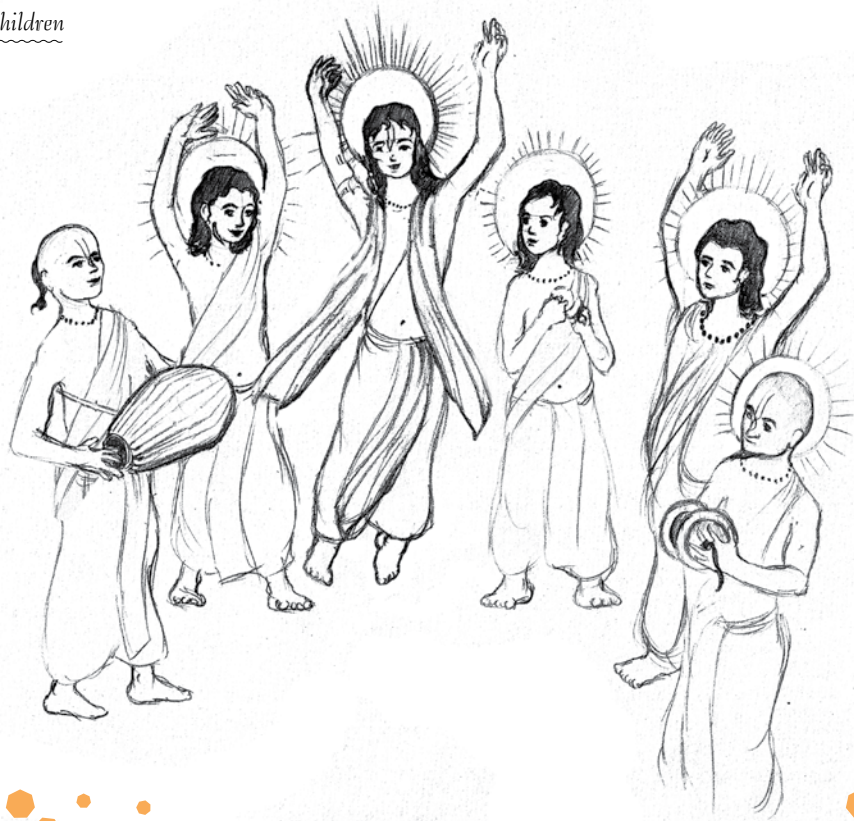
Hearing this sweet description of darkish Kṛṣṇa, Nimāi fainted in ecstatic bliss. The students were wonderstruck to see their teacher in this condition. Ratnagarbha Ācārya was most happy.

Later, when Gaurāṅga came back to His external senses, He told Ratnagarbha Ācārya, “Read on! Read on!” Ratnagarbha Ācārya happily continued to read the verses, and Gaurasundara, in trance, began to roll on the ground in bliss.

All of the people assembled there offered their obeisances to the Lord. When this happened, Gadādhara Paṇḍita told Śrī Ratnagarbha, “Read no further.” They all then sat down around the Lord.

Nimāi came out of His spiritual trance and asked, “What happened? Was I very restless?”

Nobody was able to tell Him about His exhibition of love for Kṛṣṇa.



Viśvambhara's Saṅkīrtana Movement Begins

The next day, Viśvambhara again gave class on dhātu, or Sanskrit verbal roots. He gave each and every definition in relation to Kṛṣṇa. He became so absorbed in the mood of being a servant of Kṛṣṇa that half the day passed without His noticing. His students did not want to open their mouths to interrupt Him. Finally, He came to external consciousness and asked, “Was My explanation on verbal roots all right?”

His students told Him, “For the last ten days, all You have done is explain that service to Kṛṣṇa and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa are within the meaning of every word in the scriptures. But as a result, we have not learnt any of the lessons in our books and our studies have come to a standstill. We were too fearful to tell You this before. What You say is correct. Kṛṣṇa is certainly the Supreme Absolute Truth. This is the essence of all the scriptures, but we were unable to understand them. This is our own fault and a result of our limited intelligence.”

Nimāi informed His students, “What you say is true. I see Kṛṣṇa everywhere and that is why I relate the studies in your Sanskrit grammar books to Him. I humbly apologise to you all. As of today, I will stop teaching you. You have My blessings to find another teacher.” With tears in His eyes, Nimāi closed His books and bound them.

His students could not bear the thought of being separated from Him. “We do not want another teacher,” they said. “We want to meditate on Your explanations birth after birth and take them into our hearts. We have learned enough. If You stop teaching, we will stop studying.”

Folding their hands, they offered praṇāma to Viśvambhara and then they also closed and bound their books. They loudly chanted, “Hari, Hari, Hari!” With tears in His eyes, that soft-hearted Lord embraced all of His students. He blessed them and affectionately said, “Chant the sweet names of Kṛṣṇa day and night and make Him the dear most object of your hearts. You do not need to study any further. Now we should all perform saṅkīrtana. In this way, the true meaning of all the scriptures will automatically manifest in your hearts.”

“How do we do saṅkīrtana?” the students asked. Viśvambhara began to sing:

haraye namaḥ, kṛṣṇa yādavāya namaḥ, gopāla govinda rāma śrī madhusūdana

and clap His hands.

His students surrounded Him and sang along.

This was the first of Viśvambhara’s kīrtanas. How powerful it was! The people of Navadvīpa ran to that very spot. The Vaiṣṇavas also came there and their hearts filled with joy. “Finally, kīrtana has appeared in Navadvīpa,” they thought with great happiness.

The saṅkīrtana movement of Lord Viśvambhara had now begun.

The Meeting of Viśvambhara and Nityānanda Prabhu

When Lord Nityānanda received word that Nimāi had begun His saṅkīrtana movement, He immediately came to Navadvīpa and hid Himself in the house of Śrī Nandana Ācārya. He thought, “If Viśvambhara is the Lord of lords, surely He will be able to find Me.”

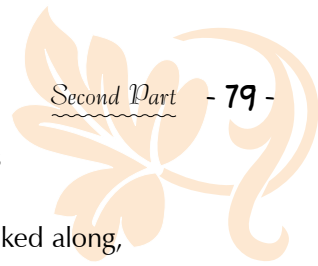
Within His heart, Viśvambhara knew that His dear Nityānanda had arrived in Navadvīpa. He met with His devotees and told them, “Last night I had a wonderful dream. In that dream a chariot came to My door, bringing a very tall person dressed in blue cloth and carrying a plough on His shoulder. He asked again and again, ‘Is this the house of Nimāi Paṇḍita?’

‘Who are You?’ I asked Him.

‘I am Your elder brother,’ He said. “We will meet tomorrow.” Taking the mood of Baladeva, Viśvambhara roared as His body swayed back and forth. “O Haridāsa, O Śrīvāsa, immediately go and find this great personality.”

With happy hearts Śrīla Haridāsa and Śrī Śrīvāsa set out to find Nityānanda Prabhu. They scoured the town for nine full hours, but they were unable to find Him. Finally, they returned to Viśvambhara. “We searched and searched, but we did not find anyone new,” they told Him.





Lord Nityānanda is indeed very mysterious. The only person who could reveal the secret of His whereabouts was Lord Viśvambhara Himself.

The Lord smiled and told them, “Come with Me. Together we will go to find Him.” As they walked along, the devotees happily chanted, “Jaya Kṛṣṇa, jaya Kṛṣṇa!” again and again.

Lord Viśvambhara walked straight to the house of Nandana Ācārya. Inside, they saw a wonderful personality who shone like millions of suns. This was none other than Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. He was absorbed in blissful meditation and a sweet smile played on His lips. The Lord and the devotees stood before Lord Nityānanda and offered their obeisances to Him. Upon standing, they respectfully and silently gazed at Nityānanda Prabhu’s divine form.

Śrī Nityānanda slowly opened His eyes to see the Lord of His life, Śrī Viśvambhara, standing before Him. Unable to speak, the two golden Lords embraced each other and tears of happiness poured from Their eyes, drenching the earth.

After this wonderful meeting, Nityānanda Prabhu stayed in the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Their devotees held roaring kīrtanas at Śrīvāsa’s house. It was there, also, that Lord Caitanya revealed His other forms like Śrī Rāmacandra and Nṛsimha to His devotees and freely gave them pure love for Kṛṣṇa.

The Story of Jagāi and Mādhāi

One day, Lord Viśvambhara said to Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Nityānanda Prabhu, “Listen, Haridāsa and Nityānanda, I want both of you to go from door to door, and earnestly beg people to chant Kṛṣṇa’s name, worship Kṛṣṇa and follow Kṛṣṇa’s instructions. Then, at the end of the day, report back to Me.”

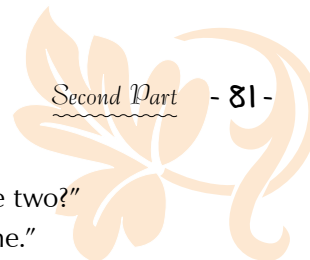
Śrī Nityānanda and Haridāsa Ṭhākura happily set out. Going from door to door, they begged one and all, “Please chant the sweet holy names of Kṛṣṇa.”

One day, as they chanted along the paths of Navadvīpa, they saw from a distance two large bodied men. They were obviously quite drunk and looked terribly ferocious.

Śrī Nityānanda turned to some people standing nearby and asked, “Who are these two men? Why are they behaving like this?”

The people replied, “Although they were born in a good, aristocratic family, they went astray and now they drink alcohol and eat meat. They also rob, steal, burn down people’s houses and kill brāhmaṇas. In fact, there is no sin they have not committed.”

This was indeed true, but despite performing heaps of sinful activities, they never offended the gentle-hearted and saintly devotees of the Lord. In this way, they did not completely lose all of their good fortune.



When Lord Nityānanda heard how sinful they were, His heart melted and He thought, “Lord Viśvambhara came to this world to save the most fallen souls. Who could be more fallen than these two?”

“Come, Haridāsa, let us go and speak to them. It is our duty to ask them to chant the holy name.”

They walked in the direction of the two rogues while singing Kṛṣṇa’s names. When they were within hearing distance, they called out to them, “Chant Kṛṣṇa’s name, worship Kṛṣṇa, give up your bad habits and surrender to the merciful Lord.”

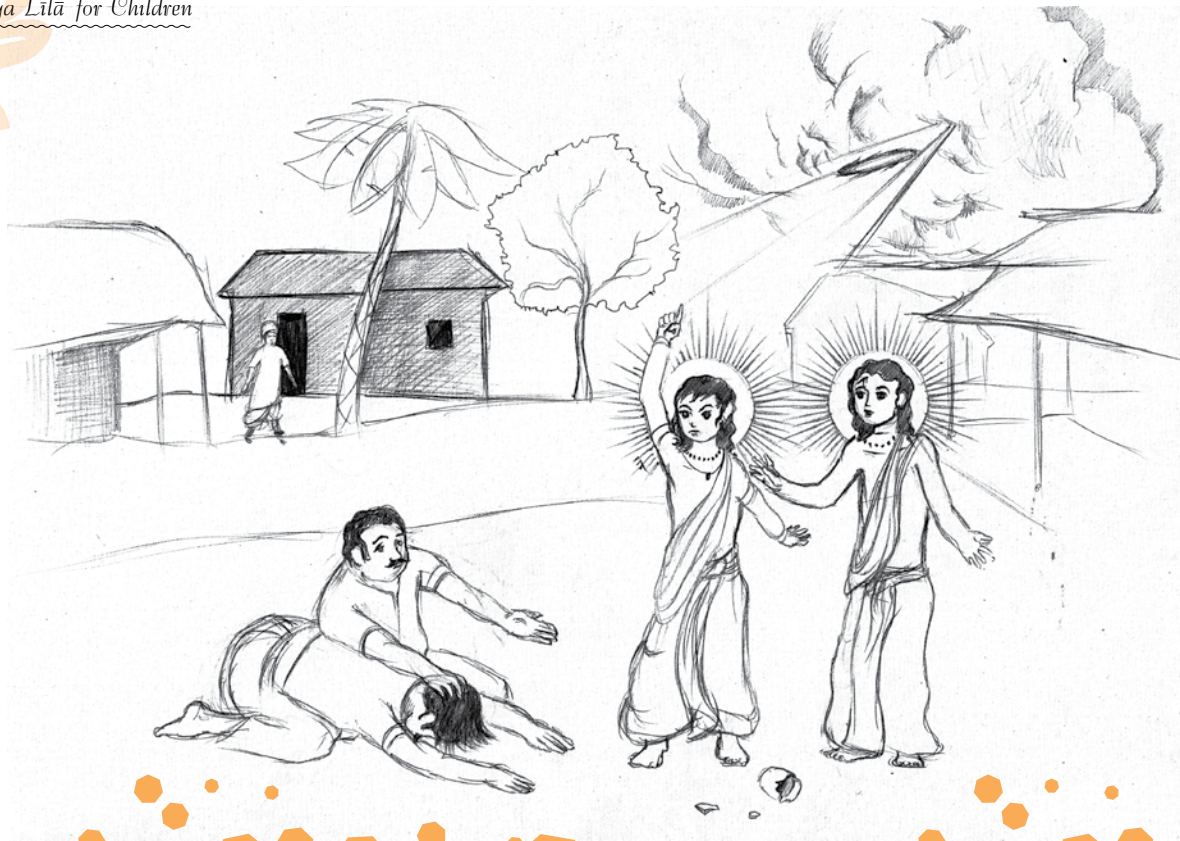
The two drunkards were infuriated. “Catch them!” they yelled. “Catch them!”

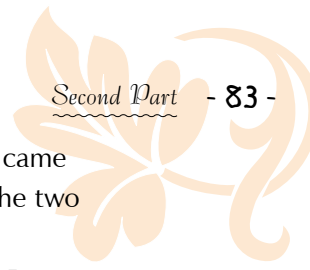
Now angry, as well as drunk, the two rogues chased Nityānanda and Haridāsa, shouting nasty words at them as they ran. This brought great pleasure to the atheistic people, but it distraught the pious brāhmaṇas, who called out, “O Kṛṣṇa! Save them! Save them!”

Haridāsa and Nityānanda ran with great speed. As they ran, Nityānanda said to Haridāsa, “My dear Haridāsa, we have gotten ourselves in a fine mess. We will be lucky to come out of this alive.”

Śrīla Haridāsa replied, “You wanted us to instruct these two drunkards about the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. In return for our kindness, we are about to meet a horrible violent death! The Lord saved me from my Muslim torturers, but now, because of Your restless nature and lack of intelligence, I will die very soon.”

Lord Nityānanda laughed and laughed. “You are wrong,” He joked. “By nature I am very peaceful. Any restlessness I show comes from being with your Master, Śrī Viśvambhara. We are going from door to door on His order only, so do not blame Me!” They laughed joyfully, as the two fatty drunkards chased after them.





Nityānanda and Haridāsa then called out, “Save us, Kṛṣṇa! O Govinda, save us!” Then, as they came close to Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita’s house, they began running faster and headed directly towards it, leaving the two rogues far behind them.

When they finally arrived, they saw Lord Viśvambhara and told Him all that had happened. Śrīvāsa and Gaṅgādāsa told the Lord that the names of the two drunkards were Jagāi and Mādhāi. When Lord Viśvambhara heard how they had greeted Lord Nityānanda and Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, He became upset and wanted to cut them to pieces, but the merciful Lord Nityānanda insisted on trying to convince them to chant Kṛṣṇa’s holy name.

The next day, on His way to the house of Lord Viśvambhara, Lord Nityānanda came face to face with Jagāi and Mādhāi. They were drunk, as was their custom, and demanded, “What is Your name?”

“My name is Avadhūta,” Nityānanda Prabhu replied. Avadhūta means “one who has no connection with the material world”.

Mādhāi became furious. He picked up a broken piece of an earthen wine pot and threw it at Nityānanda’s forehead, cutting Him and causing Him to bleed. Jagāi was totally shocked to see that Nityānanda was bleeding. Mādhāi wanted to strike the Lord again, but Jagāi stopped him.

“Why did you do such a brutal thing?” he asked. “This avadhūta is innocent! Do not strike Him again.”

The townspeople ran to Lord Viśvambhara and told Him what had happened. The Lord immediately ran there with His devotees. Seeing the blood on the forehead of Nityānanda Prabhu, He became furious and

called, “Cakra! Cakra!” thus summoning His Sudarśana disc. The frightening weapon appeared in the sky and moved threateningly towards Jagāi and Mādhāi.

The merciful Lord Nityānanda ran to Śrī Viśvambhara and pleaded, “I was hit by accident. Mādhāi wanted to hit Me, but Jagāi tried to stop him. I am bleeding but I do not feel any pain. I beg You to spare these two ruffians and give them to Me.”

Hearing this, Lord Viśvambhara went to Jagāi and embraced him. “You have purchased Me because you protected My Nityānanda.” The Lord blessed him instantly with pure love for Kṛṣṇa and revealed to him His four-handed form. Jagāi held the Lord’s lotus feet on his chest and started to weep.

Mādhāi also threw himself at the lotus feet of Śrī Viśvambhara, begging Him for His mercy.

“You have committed a big offence to Lord Nityānanda,” the Lord said. “Go to Him, fall at His lotus feet, and ask for His forgiveness.”

When Mādhāi did so, Śrī Nityānanda immediately forgave him and embraced him tightly. In this way, Jagāi and Mādhāi were most fortunate, because they received pure love for Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The Chand Kazi

Every day in the company of His devotees, Lord Viśvambhara would perform tumultuous kīrtanas and also instruct others to chant the mahā-mantra, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare”.

Once, when the envious Kazi, or Muslim governor, was out walking, he came upon some devotees doing kīrtana. He became enraged hearing the singing of Kṛṣṇa’s names accompanied by mṛdaṅgas, karatālas and conchshells. “Arrest them all!” he shouted. “Let us see what their teacher Nimāi Paṇḍita can do to stop that!”

The fanatical Muslims began beating the devotees and breaking their mṛdaṅgas.

When Nimāi heard that the Kazi had attacked the saṅkīrtana party, He became furious and called for Lord Nityānanda. “Tell all the Vaiṣṇavas to gather in the street this afternoon,” He roared. “I will lead a saṅkīrtana party through the streets of Navadvīpa! Let us see if anyone can stop Me! I will destroy the Kazi’s house and then I will do kīrtana right on his doorstep! Today I will shower love for Kṛṣṇa, and those atheists who want to stop Me will face their last hour. Tell everyone to come if they want to see Kṛṣṇa’s unbreakable strength! And tell all to bring torches with them!”

All the Vaiṣṇavas gathered outside Lord Viśvambhara’s house, and the Lord divided them into different kīrtana groups. The kīrtanas were tumultuous as He boldly led the devotees through the streets of Navadvīpa.

The sound of Kṛṣṇa's names thundered throughout the universe. Millions and millions of people joyfully and confidently joined the kīrtana party. Even the demigods came down from the heavenly planets, disguised as humans, and sang Kṛṣṇa's names and danced with the devotees.

On the instruction of the Lord, thousands of people carried torches, and at nightfall, the flames of all the torches miraculously lit up at the same instant! It was a magical sight. They shone with such brightness that it was not possible to discern whether it was day or night.

With a thundering voice, Lord Viśvambhara chanted "Hari! Hari!" He raised His long golden arms skyward and danced. Everywhere, men, women and children were drawn out of their homes, eager to experience the awesome sight of the Lord and His powerful kīrtana party. Although it seemed that Viśvambhara wanted to hurt the Kazi, in fact He only wanted to liberate him and show everyone the glories and power of the Lord's holy name. For this reason, He enacted this exciting pastime.

Viśvambhara led the huge party towards the house of the Kazi. Hearing the kīrtana from afar, the Kazi told his spies to find out what was happening. When he heard that Nimāi Paṇḍita was coming to his palace with millions of devotees, all carrying flaming torches, he fled upstairs and locked himself in his room.

Viśvambhara arrived at the palace door and He angrily called out, "Where is that offensive, troublemaking Kazi! Bring him to Me and cut off his head! Break open the doors and smash everything!"

Millions of people stormed into the palace and on the order of the Lord broke everything to pieces. It looked as if a hurricane had hit the palace.



“Set the palace on fire!” Lord Viśvambhara commanded. “Let the Kazi and his men burn to death! I will destroy anyone who tries to stop the chanting of the holy names!”

In this incarnation, Lord Viśvambhara gave love for Kṛṣṇa. He did not kill any demons. He only destroyed their demonic natures. He knew that by chanting Kṛṣṇa’s names, people would receive the greatest benefit. Chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is the recommended spiritual practice for this age of Kali, and Viśvambhara did not want anything to stop devotees from being able to do this. So out of love, to protect those souls who want to love Kṛṣṇa, He enacted this dramatic pastime. Out of His kindness, He made it quite clear how dear the devotees are to Him.

The soft-hearted devotees sang beautiful verses praising the Lord and begged Him to spare the Kazi. After a while the Kazi came out from his hiding place and went to the Lord with his head down. The Lord was now peaceful and in a serious mood. He offered the Kazi a seat, thus respecting his position as a leading government official.

They talked together in a way that was friendly, and the Kazi even called the Lord his nephew. The Kazi used to live in the same village as Śrī Nīlāmbara Cakravartī, the grandfather of Lord Viśvambhara. Because Śrī Cakravartī was older than the Kazi, the Kazi used to call him “uncle”.

In the course of speaking with the Kazi, Lord Viśvambhara explained to him how sinful it was to kill the cow and eat her flesh. And the Kazi told Viśvambhara about the complaints he had received about saṅkīrtana, even from Hindus. As he told these stories, he chanted the holy names of the Lord – Hari, Kṛṣṇa and Nārāyaṇa – and his heart became purified.

He then said, “After the mṛdaṅga was broken, I had a dream in which a half man-half lion had jumped on my chest and threatened to kill me because I had stopped the saṅkīrtana movement. I was filled with fear. When the lion saw how scared I was, He said that He would not take my life this time, but if I ever tried to stop saṅkīrtana again, He would certainly kill me, and all my family, and all meat-eaters. He said He would rip open my chest just as I had ripped apart the mṛdaṅga.”

With tears of remorse in his eyes, the Kazi took shelter of Lord Viśvambhara and promised that he would never interfere with the saṅkīrtana movement again. His words made Lord Viśvambhara peaceful. Viśvambhara stood up and chanted “Hari! Hari!” and then He and His saṅkīrtana party went on their way.



Nimāi's Sannyāsa

One day, Śrī Gaurāṅga was remembering a pastime of the gopīs of Vṛndāvana, and thus enchanted He called out, “Gopī, gopī, gopī!”

One atheistic brāhmaṇa student heard this, and not understanding the Lord's feelings, said, “O Nimāi Paṇḍita, why are you chanting gopī, gopī? You will not get any benefit from that. It would be better for You to chant Kṛṣṇa's name. This is advised in the Vedas.”

The Lord responded to him in the mood of the gopīs. “That thief Kṛṣṇa begged three pieces of land from Bali Mahārāja and left him with nothing,” He said. “How will I benefit by chanting His name?” He took a stick and ran towards that student who jumped up and fled in fear of his life. Seeing the Lord in this mood, the devotees quickly caught hold of Him and calmed Him down.

There is nothing more exalted than the gopīs' mood of loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When the gopīs serve Kṛṣṇa, their only desire is to give Him pleasure. They are totally selfless and do not expect anything from Him in return for their service.

The student who had rebuked Lord Viśvambhara ran and ran until he met up with his friends. He was out of breath and in a state of bewilderment. “What happened to you?” they asked with concern.

The student replied, “Everybody says that Nīmāi Paṇḍita is a very pious person, but today I heard Him chanting “Gopī, gopī.” He was even cursing and abusing Kṛṣṇa. I told Him to chant “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa” because that is advised in all holy books, but He became upset and chased after me with a stick! I am lucky to be alive!” His fellow students felt sorry for him and started to criticize the Supreme Lord Viśvambhara. They even considered beating Him.

Lord Viśvambhara knows everybody’s heart. He understood that His atheistic students were speaking badly of Him.

“I came here to save the people of this world by giving them love of God,” He thought, “but if people criticize Me, they will only become more bound to this material world of suffering. I should leave home, shave My head and take sannyāsa—I should become a renounced monk. People respect sannyāsis and do not harm them. If I am to save the whole universe, it is necessary that I accept the renounced order and become a sannyāsī.”

Fixed in His decision, the Lord took Śrī Nityānanda aside and asked His permission to leave home. Lord Nityānanda replied, “You always wish the best for all people. You can do whatever is best, but please first ask the Vaiṣṇavas what they think about Your plan.”

Following Śrī Nityānanda’s advice, Lord Viśvambhara spoke to Mukunda, Śrī Gadādhara and other Vaiṣṇavas. Although they were shocked and sad, they accepted His plan.

One day before taking sannyāsa, Śrī Viśvambhara said to Lord Nityānanda, “My dear Nityānanda, tomorrow is the day of Makara-saṅkrānti. The sun will change its route and move toward the northern direction. It is a

good day to go to Katwa and take sannyāsa from the great Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. Please, only tell five persons – My mother, Śrī Gadādhara, Śrī Brahmānanda, Śrī Candraśekhara Ācārya and Śrī Mukunda – about My decision.”

That night, a few hours before sunrise, Śrī Gaurahari the son of mother Śacī silently walked towards the door of His house, about to leave forever. Mother Śacī sat by the door, weeping. He sat next to her and took hold of her hands. “In billions and billions of years, I could never repay your love for Me,” He told her. Mother Śacī did not say a word. Tears simply rolled down her cheeks as she bore intolerable pain. Nimāi touched her feet and placed the dust on His head. He then respectfully walked a full circle around her and left.

Śrī Viśvambhara crossed the Gaṅgā, where He met with Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Gadādhara, Brahmānanda, Candraśekhara Ācārya and Mukunda. Together they went to the house of Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. When Śrī Keśava Bhāratī saw the divinely beautiful form of the Lord approaching, he rushed out to greet Him with great respect. The Lord offered His obeisances to Śrī Bhāratī and requested sannyāsa initiation from him. Śrī Keśava Bhāratī said, “I know that You are the guru of the universe, but to teach the world that one must accept a spiritual master to progress in spiritual life, You have chosen me to be Your guru.”

The next day, thousands wept as Lord Gaurāṅga’s beautiful, long curling hair was removed in a hair shaving ceremony. After bathing in the Gaṅgā, He sat down in the area where His sannyāsa ceremony was to take place.

The Lord said to Śrī Keśava Bhāratī, “I had a dream in which a great personality came to Me and spoke the sannyāsa mantra. Please listen and see if it is correct.” The clever Lord whispered the mantra in the ear of

Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. In this very simple way, Śrī Viśvambhara first made Śrī Keśava Bhāratī His disciple. When Śrī Bhāratī heard the mantra from the Lord's lotus mouth, he became amazed. "This is the best of mantras," he said. He then whispered that same mantra into the Lord's ear. In this way, Lord Viśvambhara received sannyāsa from Śrī Keśava Bhāratī.

At that moment, all who were present chanted the Lord's name. It made a thunderous sound that resounded in the sky. Śrī Viśvambhara had taken sannyāsa. He dressed Himself in the saffron garments of a sannyāsī and took up a staff and water pot.

Śrī Keśava Bhāratī thought, "Viśvambhara is unique. There is nobody like Him in the three worlds. I want to give Him a special sannyāsa name."

He placed his hand on the chest of the Lord and said, "You always cause others to chant Kṛṣṇa's holy name, and You began the practice of saṅkīrtana. From now on You will be known as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya!"

The crowd issued cries of "Hari bol! Hari bol!" The Lord was extremely satisfied with His new name.

Thus ends second part of Nimāi's life.



Third Part





The Lord Travels to Purī

Early the next morning, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya begged leave of His sannyāsa guru, Śrī Keśava Bhāratī. He told him, “Now I will enter the forest and there I will find the Lord of My heart, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Śrī Keśava Bhāratī said, “I will also come, and together we can take unlimited pleasure in performing saṅkīrtana.” Nityānanda, Gadādhara, Mukunda, Śrī Keśava Bhāratī and Govinda walked westward with Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu had said that He wanted to stay in the forest near the Vakreśvara Deity.

On the way to Vakreśvara, they passed through Rāḍhadeśa, and Mahāprabhu sprinkled His mercy on the people there. But eight miles before they reached Vakreśvara, He smiled and completely turned around. Now He walked towards the east. “I am going to Nilācala, Purī,” He told them, “because Lord Jagannātha has instructed Me to go there.

As they walked along on the path to Purī, Mahāprabhu turned to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and said, “Please return to Navadvīpa. Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, My mother and the other devotees are anguished because I am not with them. I must relieve them of their pain. You can tell them that I am on My way to Purī. First, I am going to see Haridāsa in Phuliyā. They can meet Me at Śrī Advaita’s house in Śāntipur.”

A few days later after visiting Śrī Haridāsa in Phuliyā and blessing all the people who came to see Him there, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu arrived in Śāntipur. When Śrī Advaita saw His beloved Lord, He fell at His

lotus feet. He clasped the Lord's feet, bathing them with tears of love. Śrī Gaurāṅga lifted the Ācārya up and affectionately embraced Him.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī also came to see Mahāprabhu. He fell at His lotus feet, and the Lord showered him with great mercy by touching him with His feet. Later, in Purī, by the mercy of Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Raghunātha stayed with Mahāprabhu, who placed him in the care of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara.

Meanwhile, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu arrived at Śāntipur with all the devotees from Navadvīpa. They were blissful to again be meeting with the Lord of their hearts. They sang beautiful prayers to Him. Śrī Caitanya danced in delight to see them again. Śrī Advaita secretly took the dust of His lotus feet and sprinkled it on his head.

The next morning, the Lord took His leave and journeyed with His devotees to Śrī Purī.

When they arrived at Kamala-pura just outside of Purī, the Lord could see in the distance the flags fluttering on the top of the Jagannātha temple. He immediately offered His obeisances in the direction of that most sacred temple. In fact, He offered His praṇāmas not just once, but again and again.

Mahāprabhu took permission from the devotees to go ahead of them. With great haste, He approached the temple of Lord Jagannātha. As He entered, He saw the deities of Lord Jagannātha, Balarāma, Subhadrā and Sudarśana and began to roar in bliss and jump up and down. A constant flow of tears poured from His lotus eyes and He fainted and fell to the ground.

The foolish guards of the temple, perceiving the Lord as just an ordinary person, thought that He was misbehaving and wanted to beat Him. Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, a local learned paṇḍita, was present at

that time. He noticed that the Lord had all the symptoms of transcendental ecstasy and thought, “I do not think He is an ordinary human being.”

The guards were just about to strike the Lord when Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya rushed over and stopped them. He waited for the Lord to come back to His external senses, but the Lord remained motionless. Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya had the Lord carefully carried to his home.

Meanwhile, the devotees who had been left behind finally arrived at the temple. When they heard that their Lord was at the house of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, they all went there.

The Bhaṭṭācārya welcomed them, and when he saw Nityānanda Prabhu, he fell to the ground before Him. He took His foot-dust and placed it on his head. He arranged for some guides to take those devotees to the temple of Lord Jagannātha so they could see the Lord.

On the way, the guides pleaded with the devotees, “Please stay calm in front of the deities. Do not act like your guru did.” Lord Nityānanda, Śrī Gadādhara, Govinda and the others laughed and promised the guides that they would act normally.

Mind you, a few days later Nityānanda Prabhu went to the Jagannātha temple, jumped on the golden altar and embraced the deity of Lord Balarāma. He took the flower garland from the neck of Balarāma and put it around His own neck. We are fortunate enough to know that Nityānanda Prabhu is Lord Balarāma Himself, but the guards did not know that. A large bodied guard wanted to pull Lord Nityānanda down from the altar, but as soon as the guard touched the Lord’s body, he flew backwards through the air and landed on

the temple floor. The Lord then gracefully walked out of the temple, strolling like the king of elephants. Later, the guard apologized to Lord Nityānanda, who happily forgave him.

The devotees visited the Jagannātha temple and thereafter returned to Lord Caitanya at Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya's house. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was still internally absorbed in spiritual bliss. He was not aware of the outside world. After nine hours He returned to His external senses, and Lord Nityānanda told Him that Śrī Sārvabhauma had protected Him when He had fainted in the temple.

Śrī Caitanya stood up and embraced Śrī Sārvabhauma. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya had observed the symptoms of ecstasy in Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. He knew that only someone who has no connection with this material world could manifest such symptoms. He knew that Śrī Caitanya was a most exalted person, but he did not know that He was actually the Supreme Lord. He was a monist, which means that he thought everyone could become God. He did not understand that God is a person and that it is our eternal, blissful nature to lovingly serve Him.

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya was concerned about Mahāprabhu. He thought that since He was only twenty-four years old, it might be difficult for Him to remain a strict sannyāsī. Śrī Gopīnātha Ācārya tried to tell the Bhaṭṭācārya that Mahāprabhu was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but Śrī Bhaṭṭācārya could not understand, even though he was a great scholar.

"I will speak Vedic philosophy to Śrī Caitanya," he said, "and in that way He will become detached from sense gratification. He will become a strong sannyāsī and enter the path of monism. Go to Śrī Caitanya and invite Him to come here," he said to Gopīnātha Ācārya.

For seven days continuously, the Bhaṭṭācārya explained Vedānta to our illustrious Lord, who simply sat there, listening. He did not say a word. On the eighth day, Śrī Bhaṭṭācārya said, “You have been listening to my explanation, but You have not said one word. I do not know if You think it is right or wrong, or if You understand my explanation or not.”

“I am a fool,” Mahāprabhu said. “I am only listening because you told Me to do so, but I cannot understand a word of your explanation.”

“If You do not understand, why do You remain silent?” the Bhaṭṭācārya asked.

“Oh, I understand Vedānta-sūtra clearly,” Mahāprabhu answered. “I just do not understand your explanations, which are based on imagination.”

Mahāprabhu told him that the Supreme Lord is indeed a person who is eternal and who knows everything. He said the Lord is always blissful, and He has wonderful potencies, or śaktis. He gave many wonderful arguments to support this, and He also proved that Śrī Śaṅkarācārya had cheated the people with his false impersonalist philosophy, which claimed that the Lord has no form. He then said, “Actually, devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the perfection of human life. Even great sages who are free from bondage to this material world worship Kṛṣṇa.”

Mahāprabhu then quoted the famous ātmārāma verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to prove this point. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya said, “Please explain this verse.” Mahāprabhu responded, “First you explain it, then I will try.”

The Bhaṭṭācārya explained that verse in nine different ways, and the Lord was pleased with his scholarly presentation. “There is, however, another way of looking at it,” the Lord said. He then proceeded to explain the ātmārāma verse in great detail, according to the philosophy of devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Sārvabhauma was struck with wonder, and he understood that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was certainly the Supreme Lord Himself. “Oh, I have been so offensive,” he cried. Mahāprabhu then sprinkled His mercy on Śrī Sārvabhauma and revealed to Him His marvellous six-armed form.

All truths manifested in Sārvabhauma’s heart, and he understood the importance of chanting the holy name and giving divine love to one and all. He laughed, cried and danced and immediately composed one hundred prayers in glorification of Mahāprabhu. Gopīnātha Ācārya and the other devotees laughed to see the Bhaṭṭācārya dance in happiness out of love for Mahāprabhu.

Mahāprabhu Leaves for South India

One month later, Mahāprabhu told the devotees that He was going to South India. “I want to seek out My brother, Viśvarūpa,” He told them. Actually, Mahāprabhu knew that Viśvarūpa had already left this world. He wanted to go to South India to give bhakti to the people there. “I want to go alone,” He told them. The devotees were not only sad, but worried. “Who will protect Your belongings when You fall to the ground unconscious in ecstasy?” asked Nityānanda Prabhu. “Please allow this simple brāhmaṇa named Kālā Kṛṣṇadāsa to accompany You.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu agreed.

They all then went to the house of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, and Mahāprabhu told him of His plan and asked for his blessings. The Bhaṭṭācārya was not at all happy about this. “Finally, after many, many births, I have met You, and now You are leaving me. Please stay here for just a few more days so I can have darśana of Your lotus feet,” he requested. Mahāprabhu agreed.

After some days, they went to the temple of Jagannātha and circumambulated the altar. As Mahāprabhu was leaving Purī, Śrī Sārvabhauma begged the Lord that while on His journey in South India, He visit Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya, a great Vaiṣṇava who lived on the bank of the holy river Godāvārī. At that time, Rāmānanda Rāya was the governor of South India. Mahāprabhu assured him that He would. As the Lord set off for South India, travelling on foot, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, who was now filled with love for Him, fainted.

The devotees walked with Him as far as Ālānātha, which is just outside Purī. From Ālānātha, the Lord went on His way, walking along with Kṛṣṇadāsa. Dancing and singing, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! He!” Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya walked from village to village. He would say to whomever He saw, “Chant ‘Hari, Hari!’” and that person would automatically dance and sing “Hari, Hari!” In this way, all who saw Him would become His devotees.

Mahāprabhu would embrace them and fill them with spiritual potency. “Now, return to your home,” He told them, “and tell everyone there to chant ‘Hari, Hari!’” Each person did so and people came from other villages to see such a Vaiṣṇava. Just by that Vaiṣṇava’s glance, all who saw him would become like him.

The Leper Vasudeva

In one village along the way, He stayed with a brāhmaṇa named Kūrma. Mahāprabhu accepted the loving service offered by the brāhmaṇa and his family and with affection told them to always chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. The next morning He again went on His way.

Some time later, a saintly brāhmaṇa named Vāsudeva came to that house. Vāsudeva had heard that Mahāprabhu was staying there and was most eager to see the Lord. Vāsudeva's body was plagued with leprosy and filled with live worms. Still, he was so kind that if a worm fell from a sore, he would pick it up and put it back.

Upon Vāsudeva's arrival at Kūrma's abode, he discovered that Lord Caitanya had already left. He became so overwhelmed with sadness that he fainted. But the merciful Lord, knowing the heart of every living being, immediately returned to that place and lovingly embraced Vāsudeva.

At that moment, Vāsudeva's leprosy was cured and his distress caused by not being able to see the Lord, vanished. Dazed by this unbelievable mercy he offered prayers to the Lord. He thought, "I fear that now I will become proud because I have personally received the mercy of Mahāprabhu."

Mahāprabhu advised him, "If you chant Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare day and night, you will never become proud." He also told the brāhmaṇa to tell others about Kṛṣṇa. "If you do this, you will soon become Kṛṣṇa's devotee." Then, the merciful Lord left that place.



Lord Caitanya Meets Rāmānanda Rāya

Lord Caitanya walked for a few days and finally arrived in Vidyānagara, where he went to the bank of the enchanting Godāvarī River. He took bath in her waters and sat down, uttering Kṛṣṇa's name. At that time, Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya arrived there. He was being carried on a palanquin and surrounded by brāhmaṇas chanting beautiful Vedic hymns. It was a grand scene. The mere sight of Rāmānanda Rāya enchanted Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and in His heart, He ran to greet Him.

Rāmānanda Rāya saw the beautiful sannyāsī to be as radiant as one hundred suns. He was wonderstruck by His beauty and offered his obeisances. "Arise," the Lord said, "and chant 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.'" Mahāprabhu wanted to embrace him, but did not. "Are you Rāmānanda Rāya?" He asked.

"Yes, I am Your lowly servant," Rāmānanda answered. Moved by intense love, Mahāprabhu embraced him, and, having now met each other, they both fainted in ecstasy.

Śrī Caitanya asked Śrī Rāya, "Please recite a verse about the ultimate goal of life."

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya recited a verse, but the Lord was not satisfied because the verse was not about the soul's eternal and pure service to Kṛṣṇa. He then recited another verse, and again the Lord's reaction was, "This is also external; please tell us something more." And in this way their conversation continued

until Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya spoke a verse about pure devotional service. At that point, the Lord was satisfied, but still He said, “There is even a higher goal than that. Can you please speak another verse to describe that?”

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya spoke more and more verses, each time expressing a higher and more beautiful love for Kṛṣṇa as the goal of life.

Finally, he said, “The highest goal of life is loving service at the lotus feet of the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

How does one attain this loving service mood? Rāmānanda Rāya explained that if one practises bhakti by chanting and serving under the care of the gopīs of Vṛndāvana, or of their pure representatives who serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa day and night, one can attain this goal. No other process enables one to understand it.

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya spoke further on this point and Mahāprabhu embraced Him in great happiness.

He showed Śrī Rāmānanda His beautiful form as Kṛṣṇa, whose bluish limbs were covered by the hue of golden limbed Śrīmatī Rādhikā. No one had ever seen this form of the Lord before. Śrī Rāmānanda, seeing Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa together like this, became completely enchanted and he fainted. The Lord touched his hand and brought him back to his senses.

They spent the next ten days in great bliss discussing Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. Mahāprabhu then asked Rāmānanda Rāya permission to continue on His tour of South India. The Lord also ordered him to leave his post as governor of Madras and stay with Him in Jagannātha Purī. Even though he was the governor of South India, Śrī Rāya was eager to leave his position.

Mahāprabhu Defeats the Buddhists

*A*t one place in South India, a learned Buddhist leader and his followers came to meet with Śrī Caitanya. The Buddhist tried to present the nine philosophical conclusions of Buddhism to the Lord, saying it is the only true path.

The Buddhist leader gave the first of these conclusions: the creation is eternal, so a creator does not exist. He went on to give the other eight conclusions, but Mahāprabhu cut his arguments with His strong logic and defeated them. In this way, the Buddhists could not establish their false ideas as truth.

Some people, who were standing nearby, heard all this and laughed. This filled the atheistic Buddhists with shame and fear. They left that place in a hurry. Now they knew that Lord Caitanya was a Vaiṣṇava, and out of envy, they plotted against Him.

They prepared a plate of untouchable food and brought it before Mahāprabhu. “Please take this mahā-prasāda,” they deceitfully told Him.

Suddenly a massive bird appeared in the sky, swooped down and picked up the plate of contaminated food in its claws. Right then and there, it dropped that metal plate on the head of the Buddhist leader. The edge of the plate hit his head and cut it. He fell unconscious to the ground.

The disciples of the Buddhist leader wept loudly and ran to take the shelter of the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu. “You are indeed the Supreme Lord,” they cried. “We beg You to forgive us for this offence.

Please bring our guru back to consciousness.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu sprinkled His mercy on them, saying, “Loudly chant the names of ‘Kṛṣṇa’ and ‘Hari’ in unison in the ears of your master. If you do this, he will be revived.”

The disciples did as He said, and their teacher came back to consciousness. As he awoke, he cried, “Hari, Hari,” and then he himself took shelter of the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu. The local people who witnessed this event were truly amazed.

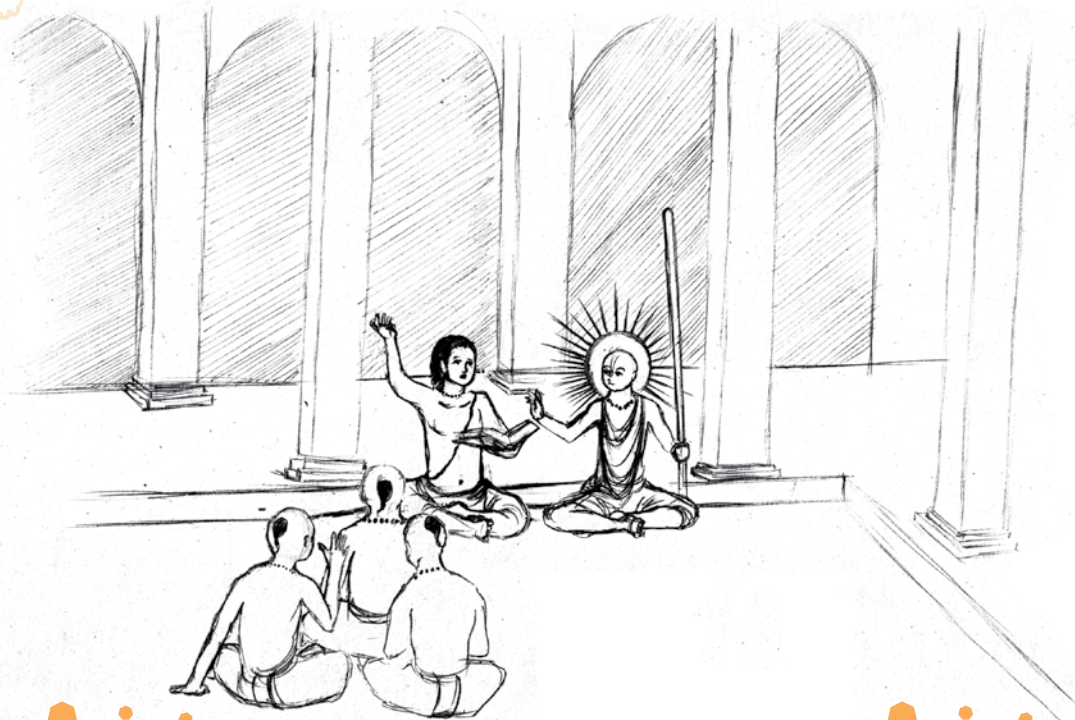
Pastimes in South India

Travelling throughout South India, Mahāprabhu arrived at Śrī Raṅgam and visited the temple of Śrī Raṅganātha. Overwhelmed by love upon seeing the huge deity of lying-down Viṣṇu, He sang and danced wonderfully in that temple. No one in Śrī Raṅgam had ever seen such a charming display of devotion. A Vaiṣṇava named Śrī Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa respectfully invited the Lord to his house. He bathed the Lord's lotus feet and then he and his family members honoured that foot-bathing water by sipping a little and sprinkling some on their heads.

The four month rainy season, known as Catūrmāsya, had started. Veṅkaṭa Bhaṭṭa humbly requested Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, "Please stay in my house during Catūrmāsya and tell us about Kṛṣṇa." Mahāprabhu agreed to do so and spent His time there in great happiness. This Śrī Veṅkaṭa had a devoted son named Gopāla, who became the Lord's personal servant. Later, this same Gopāla went to Vṛndāvana, where he became known as Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and devoted himself to Mahāprabhu's teachings.

The Brāhmaṇa and The Bhagavad-gītā

Every day the Lord bathed in the holy river Kāverī and every day He danced for hours in spiritual bliss. Thousands and thousands of people came to see Him. Indeed, when someone saw Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it was impossible for that person to remain unhappy.



In that same town there was a Vaiṣṇava brāhmaṇa who went every day to the temple of Śrī Rāṅganātha. He would loudly read Bhagavad-gītā, but he could not read the words properly. Sometimes people would laugh at him and criticize him, but that did not stop him from his reading. In great bliss, with tear-filled eyes and goose bumps all over his body, he kept on reading. Mahāprabhu was most satisfied to see the brāhmaṇa's pure absorption in Bhagavad-gītā, and asked, "Dear brāhmaṇa, which part of this holy book gives you so much spiritual happiness?"

The brāhmaṇa answered, "I cannot read properly. Sometimes I read the words correctly and other times I do not, but I am simply reading Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā because my spiritual master told me to. In fact, I only see beautiful, blackish Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Acting as Arjuna's chariot driver, He is holding the reins in His hands and giving Arjuna instruction. This is what makes me blissful. When I read Bhagavad-gītā, I see Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beautiful lotus face and I cannot think of anything else."

Hearing this, Mahāprabhu told the brāhmaṇa, "Yes, you know the real meaning of this holy book." He then embraced that brāhmaṇa with great affection.

The brāhmaṇa fell at the Lord's feet and clasped them. Weeping, he said, "Now I feel twice as happy as before. I can therefore understand that You are that same Śrī Kṛṣṇa." Śrī Kṛṣṇa had mercifully shown His form to that brāhmaṇa, and the mind of the brāhmaṇa was purified. For this reason he could recognize Mahāprabhu.

Because he was faithfully following the order of his spiritual master, he could understand the true meaning of Bhagavad-gītā, and thus he became happy forever.

Delivering the Seven Palm Trees

After leaving the house of Śrī Venkaṭa Bhaṭṭa, the Lord came to Saptatāla. Sapta means “seven” and tāla means “trees”. The trees were very old palm trees, enormous in size and very wide.

When Lord Rāmacandra was in combat with Vāli, the brother of Sugrīva, He shot the final arrow at Vāli from behind one of those trees. Mahāprabhu saw those trees and embraced them. Upon His doing so, they disappeared and went to Vaikuṇṭha-loka, the spiritual world.

The people could not believe their eyes when they saw that these massive trees had suddenly disappeared. “Only Lord Rāmacandra has the power to send these trees to Vaikuṇṭha,” they said. “This sannyāsī known as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu must be Lord Rāma Himself.”

As the golden Lord passed through many villages, He joyfully chanted, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.” By doing this, He freely distributed blissful love for Kṛṣṇa.

Reunited with Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya

After travelling for some time, He started His return journey to Purī, finally arriving again in Vidyānagara, the place of Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya. Word quickly reached Śrī Rāmānanda that Mahāprabhu had returned, and he hurried to meet Him. He fell at the feet of his beloved Lord, and they embraced and wept in the happiness of seeing each other again.

Mahāprabhu told him about His tour of South India. “While there,” the Lord said, “I came across two holy books about Kṛṣṇa. One was called Brahma-saṁhitā and the other Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta. He handed these books to Śrī Rāya, saying, “Everything you told Me about devotion to Kṛṣṇa is supported by these books.” The two of them sat together and read those books with great relish. For seven days and nights, they had sweet discussions about service to Kṛṣṇa.

“I am coming to Purī as You asked me to,” said Śrī Rāya.

“I came back to Vidyānagara just to bring you to Purī with Me,” Mahāprabhu replied.

“I am certainly coming,” said Śrī Rāya. “But for now, You should go alone, because when I come, I will be accompanied by horses, elephants and soldiers, and they will create quite an uproar. I will be there within ten days.”

The Lord then returned to Jagannātha Purī. When He came to Alālanātha, He sent His servant Kṛṣṇadāsa ahead to call Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and the other devotees. They all hurried to Alālanātha, and a blissful reunion between Mahāprabhu and the devotees took place. Later, at the house of Śrī Sārvabhauma, the devotees listened with rapt attention as the Lord described His journey to South India.



King Pratāparudra and the Ratha-yātrā Festival

One day Śrī Sārvabhauma said to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, “The King of Orissa, King Pratāparudra Rāya, is most eager to meet You.”

Upon hearing that a king wanted to meet Him, that Supreme Lord, in the role of a strict sannyāsī, immediately covered His ears. “I do not want to see a king,” He said. “Kings are busy with worldly matters, and I am a sannyāsī, so it is dangerous for Me to meet with those absorbed in worldly business. I will not meet him.”

“This king is not ordinary,” Śrī Sārvabhauma said. “He is a great devotee of Lord Jagannātha.” But the mind of the Lord would not be changed and, in His pastime of instructing everyone that a sannyāsī should avoid contact with anything that will bind him to this world, He remained fixed in His decision.

The yearly Ratha-yātrā festival was approaching. In this festival, Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma and Lady Subhadrā journey by chariot to the Guṇḍicā Temple. As they are carried from the temple to their own magnificent chariots, devotees fan them with cāmaras, or shimmering white yak-tail fans.

Adding to the wonder of this festival is the thunderous sound of hundreds of large hand-cymbals and drums filling the air. Musicians and singers glorify Lord Jagannātha, and colourfully dressed jugglers and others entertain the Lords with incredulous feats.

When the deities are all finally seated on their chariots, hundreds and thousands of devotees pull the long, thick ropes of the chariots until they arrive at the Guṇḍicā Temple, which represents Vṇḍāvana. This ceremony takes one full day. After eight days, the Lord returns to His temple.

On the day before this festival, Mahāprabhu took His devotees to the Guṇḍicā Temple, and with much merriment and chanting “Hari, Hari, Hari” they swept it and washed it spotlessly clean with hundreds of pots of water. With His own hands, Mahāprabhu cleaned the place where Lord Jagannātha was to be seated.

The next day was Ratha-yātrā. As Lord Jagannātha, the Lord of the Universe, came out of His temple the devoted King Pratāparudra humbly came before Him and, with a golden-handled broom, he swept the road in front of Lord Jagannātha. He then sprinkled the road with water that was scented with sandalwood. Mahāprabhu saw the King’s humble act of devotion, and He was silently most pleased.

The presence of Mahāprabhu at Ratha-yātrā made the festival more exciting than ever before. He organized seven kīrtana parties, and each party had its own singers, musicians and even dancers. The drums in all the parties played at the same time and the deafening sound thrilled the devotees.

Showing His mystic power, Mahāprabhu appeared in the midst of each kīrtana party at one and the same time! Each group was thinking that Mahāprabhu was only dancing with them! But King Pratāparudra and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya could see what was really happening.

Why did Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu bestow this mercy upon the King? He was extremely pleased with the King’s humility. Even though he was a great king, he had become a simple street sweeper in the service of Lord Jagannātha.

Who can describe Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's amazing dance at Ratha-yātrā? He jumped high in the air, spun around like a wheel, ran here and there and rolled on the ground. He looked like an effulgent golden mountain. Tears poured from His lotus eyes like a syringe, wetting everybody around Him. Foam came from His mouth like nectar pouring from the moon.

In this way Mahāprabhu, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, with the moods and lustre of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, became completely absorbed in Śrī Jagannātha's journey to Guṇḍicā.

When Lord Jagannātha's chariot came to Balagaṇḍi, it stood still, and Lord Jagannātha was offered a great feast. Nearby there was a beautiful flower garden, and Mahāprabhu, feeling tired, entered that garden to take some rest. He laid down and closed His lotus-like eyes.

According to the direction of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, King Pratāparudra also entered that garden in the dress of a Vaiṣṇava. He humbly turned to the devotees and with folded hands, requested their permission before falling at the lotus feet of the Lord and touching those feet. Then, he expertly massaged the legs of Mahāprabhu, while singing Gopī-gītā, beautiful verses from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

This brought unlimited pleasure to Śrīman Mahāprabhu and He embraced the king. "You are giving me indescribable wealth," He told him. "But there is nothing I can give you in return, except for My embrace." Tears flowed from the eyes of both of them, and they trembled in bliss.

The wish of the devotee king to meet the Lord was finally fulfilled. The Lord knew, within His heart, that this person dressed as a Vaiṣṇava was really the King, but externally He acted like He did not know. The

King's humble service of sweeping the road had stimulated the Lord's mercy. This is the power of a humble mood of service to Kṛṣṇa.

"Who are you?" Mahāprabhu asked.

"I am the humble servant of your servants," the King answered.

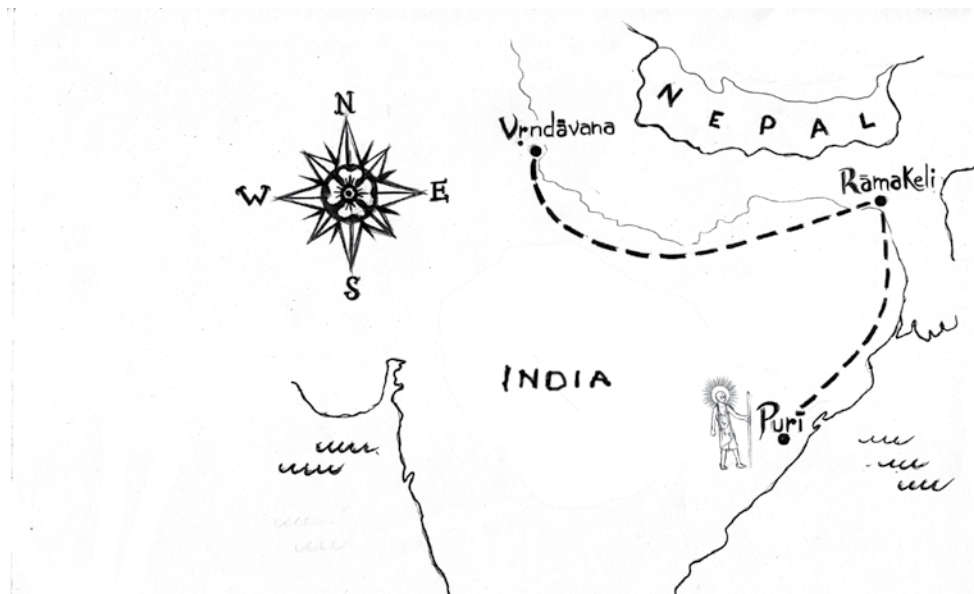
The Lord then showed the King just some of His divine opulence, but said, "Do not tell anyone about this."

Finally it was time for the chariot of Lord Jagannātha to continue its journey, but the chariot would not move a single inch. King Pratāparudra arranged for especially powerful wrestlers to pull the chariot, but still it would not move. Next, he brought large elephants and harnessed them to the chariot, but it did not budge, even though they pulled it with all their strength. In an attempt to stimulate them to do this task, they were beaten by their keeper with an elephant goad, but it had no effect.

Mahāprabhu heard what was going on and came with His devotees to look at the situation. Seeing the commotion, He set the elephants free and handed the ropes to His devotees. Then He went to the back of the chariot. He placed His head against the chariot, and pushed it...with His head.

Suddenly, the chariot made a loud rattling sound and began moving forward, without even being pulled! The devotees just held the ropes loosely in their hands. Nothing could be heard but the deafening shouts of, "Jaya Jagannātha! Jaya Jagannātha!" resounding in the air.

Finally the chariot reached its destination, the Guṇḍicā Temple. Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma and Śrī Subhadrā were brought inside and placed on their thrones. That evening, Lord Caitanya left the Guṇḍicā temple and went to rest for the night in the garden called Āiṭoṭā.



Lord Caitanya Journeys to Śrī Vr̥ndāvana Dhāma

Some time later, Lord Caitanya travelled towards Vr̥ndāvana. Many devotees followed Him. When He arrived at Rāmakeli-grāma, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura introduced Him to two brothers who held high positions in the court of the Muslim king. Their names were Dabira Khāsa and Sākara Mallika.

Upon seeing their eternal Lord, they fell like two sticks at His lotus feet, and in their humility they offered Him many prayers. Śrī Caitanya was overjoyed to be reunited with His eternal servants and gave them the names Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana.

Śrī Sanātana said to Mahāprabhu, “It would be better for You not to go to Vṛndāvana surrounded by so many followers.” Mahāprabhu journeyed on just a little further to Kānāi Nāṭaśālā, but eventually He returned to Jagannātha Purī, according to Śrī Sanātana’s idea.

Then, just a few days later, Mahāprabhu again left for Śrī Vṛndāvana, this time secretly. He took only Śrī Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya with Him. Chanting the holy name, He travelled through the dangerous Jhārikhaṇḍa forest, where He caused wild animals like tigers, elephants and deer, to dance and chant “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Actually, love for Kṛṣṇa brimmed in their hearts. In that bliss the tigers and deer kissed and embraced each other. When Mahāprabhu saw this, He smiled sweetly.

After some time He arrived in Mathurā. He first visited Viśrāma ghāṭa, then Kṛṣṇa’s birthplace and then He went to other holy places. Thereafter He went to Vṛndāvana and blissfully roamed here and there. He asked the local people, “Do you know where Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Syāma-kuṇḍa are?”

The people said, “We do not know of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Syāma-kuṇḍa. We only know of two fields called ‘the black field’ and ‘the golden field’.” Mahāprabhu decided to investigate. Indeed, within the fields He found two little ponds. Understanding that they were Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śrī Syāma-kuṇḍa, He joyfully took bath in them.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

From Vṛndāvana, Mahāprabhu went on to Prayāga. Śrī Rūpa heard that Mahāprabhu was in Prayāga, and left his position in the court of Nawab Hussein, the Muslim king of Bengal, to come to meet Mahāprabhu. He brought his younger brother, Śrī Anupama, along with him.

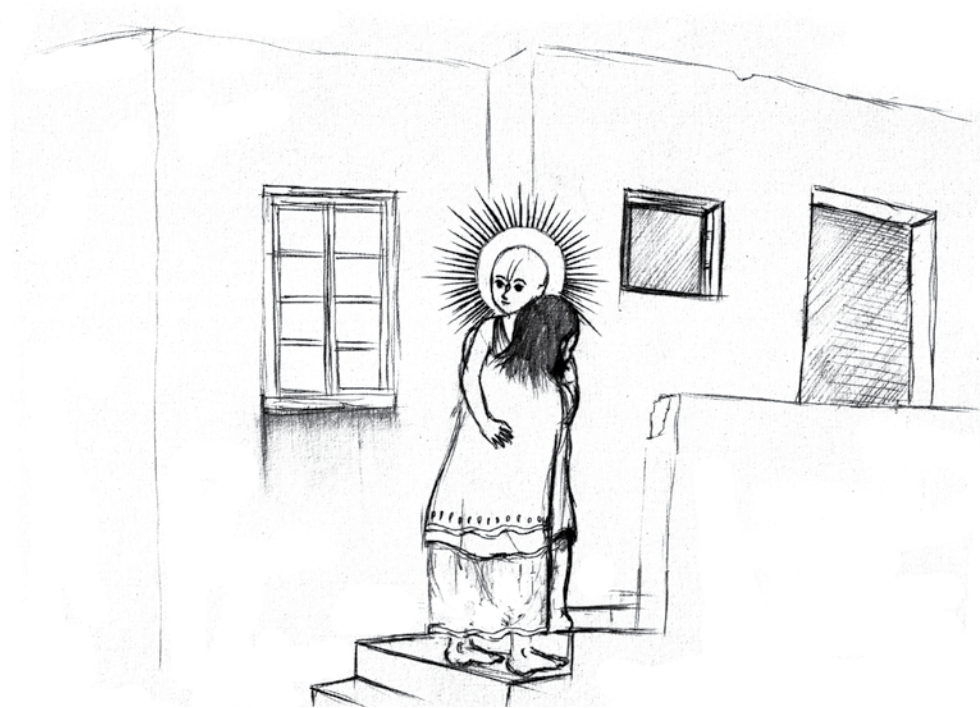
His resignation displeased the king, but he still had Śrī Sanātana working for him, so he agreed to accept Śrī Rūpa's decision to leave. However, not long after this, Śrī Sanātana also wanted to leave his important post and join Śrī Caitanya. At this point, the king became furious and threw Śrī Sanātana in prison!

Locked up in a prison cell, Śrī Sanātana received a brief letter from Śrī Rūpa. The letter said, "Anupama and I are meeting Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Prayāga. Somehow, you should join us there soon."

Sanātana was desperate to meet with them all. He cleverly bribed the jail keeper with some money that Śrī Rūpa had left him. In this way, he escaped from the clutches of the Muslim ruler and began to make his way to Prayāga.

In Prayāga, Śrī Caitanya visited the temple of Bindu-mādhava. It was there that He met with Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Anupama. "Where is Śrī Sanātana?" He asked.

"He is in jail," Śrī Rūpa explained. "The king became angry when he wanted to leave like I had. Please save him from this predicament."



“Your brother is already out of jail. He will be able to meet with Me soon.”

In Prayāga, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu deposited in the heart of Śrī Rūpa a vast treasure chest of unique, priceless jewels. What were those jewels? They were the complete art of pure loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rūpa happily distributed those precious jewels to all, in the form of the books that he wrote.

Ten days later, Mahāprabhu went to Vārāṇasī, where he stayed in the house of Śrī Candrasekhara. Śrī Sanātana also arrived in Vārāṇasī. He hurried to the house of Śrī Candrasekhara and sat at his door.

The Lord knew that Śrī Sanātana was there. He told Śrī Candrasekhara, “A Vaiṣṇava is sitting at your door. Please call him inside.”

Śrī Candrasekhara opened the door, but he did not see any Vaiṣṇava, so he went back inside.

“Is there no one sitting at the door?” Śrī Caitanya asked.

“Only a Muslim mendicant,” replied Candrasekhara. Śrī Sanātana looked like a Muslim, with his long hair and beard.

“Bring him in,” said Mahāprabhu.

Candrasekhara told the mendicant to come inside. Śrī Sanātana entered the courtyard, and as soon as Mahāprabhu saw him, He ran to embrace him. Their eternal love for each other welled in their hearts and they both wept.

Candrasekhara was very intrigued by the deep love this ‘Muslim mendicant’ and Mahāprabhu obviously had for each other. Mahāprabhu lovingly took the hand of Śrī Sanātana, sat him down beside Him, and cleansed his body with His own lotus hands.

Śrī Sanātana then went to bathe and put on clean cloth. When he returned to Mahāprabhu he humbly said, “I am a most fallen and lowly person. I do not know what is good for me. Please tell me, who am I? What is my duty, and why do so many difficulties arise in my life?”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained, “The bond between Lord Kṛṣṇa and the living being is eternal. Everybody is a servant of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and therefore, one should lovingly serve Him. When one forgets Kṛṣṇa, one becomes addicted to material wealth. This is the root cause of so many problems in a person’s life. Someone may become Kṛṣṇa conscious with the help of the pure devotees of the Lord. Then all problems and sadness quickly go far away. When you know this deeply, you can go to the eternal home of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Goloka Vṛndāvana, and happily serve and play with Him there forever.”

In this way Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu sprinkled Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī with His mercy. He then advised him to go to Mathurā. While in Vārāṇasī, Mahāprabhu also inspired the impersonalist Māyāvādīs to become devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

Śivānanda Sena and the Dog

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu finally arrived back to Purī and went with the devotees to the temple to see Lord Jagannātha.

Under the loving care of Śivānanda Sena, the devotees from Bengal, including Mother Śacī, also travelled to Purī to meet with Mahāprabhu. On the journey, Śivānanda Sena came across a stray dog. That dog adopted their party and began to travel with them. Śivānanda Sena fed that dog and cared for him nicely.

One day, they needed cross a river by boat, but the boatman would not allow the dog on board. Śivānanda Sena successfully bargained with the boatman, offering him extra money. In this way, the dog was allowed to continue with them.

A few days later, while Śrī Śivānanda was busy paying a road tax, his servant forgot to feed the dog and the dog disappeared. Śivānanda Sena was most upset and sent out a search party, but the dog was nowhere to be found. That evening, Śivānanda Sena fasted. The following morning they again looked for the dog but without success.

They arrived in Purī and met with Mahāprabhu, who took them to the Jagannātha Temple. They honoured prasāda with Him and went home. The next day they again went to meet with Mahāprabhu, and to their surprise, that very dog was sitting at His side.

Mahāprabhu was feeding the dog the remnants of coconut pulp and saying, “Chant ‘Rāma’! Chant ‘Kṛṣṇa’! Chant ‘Hari’!”

The dog was gulping down the coconut pulp and chanting “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Śivānanda Sena was incredulous. He offered his obeisances to that dog, to remove his offence of neglecting him. The next day nobody saw the dog, who had gone to Vaikuṇṭha in his pure spiritual body. Such is the rare fortune of the association of Mahāprabhu and His pure devotees.

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī had left Vṛndāvana to meet with Mahāprabhu in Purī. The journey was many hundreds of miles, and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī travelled on foot all the way. As he walked through the jungles of the Jhārikhaṇḍa forest, he became so thirsty that he drank some contaminated water. Wet itching sores developed all over his body.

Śrī Sanātana’s only sadness was that now his body was useless for performing devotional service. “I will not be able to see Mahāprabhu and Lord Jagannātha,” he thought. “I will give up my life by throwing myself in front of the wheel of Lord Jagannātha’s chariot at the Ratha-yātrā festival.”

When Śrī Sanātana reached Purī, he went to see Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura who welcomed him with a warm embrace. At that time Mahāprabhu arrived there, coming on his daily visit.

When Mahāprabhu saw Śrī Sanātana, He went to embrace him, but Śrī Sanātana stepped back. “O Lord, please do not touch me. I am a low caste person and my body is covered in wet sores.” But the Lord forcibly embraced him, not caring that unclean sores covered Śrī Sanātana’s body.

A few days later, they met again. Mahāprabhu said, “My dear Sanātana, if I could attain Kṛṣṇa by committing suicide, I would give up millions of bodies without a second’s delay. You cannot get Kṛṣṇa by killing yourself. You have given yourself to Me, so now your body is My property. Give up this nonsensical idea and just chant and hear about Kṛṣṇa.” Sanātana Gosvāmī fell at the lotus feet of the Lord and Mahāprabhu embraced him again.

Some time later, Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita advised Śrī Sanātana to return to Vṛndāvana, but Mahāprabhu did not like this idea. He asked Śrī Sanātana to stay with Him for one year and again embraced him. By the touch of the Lord’s body, the wet itching sores on Śrī Sanātana’s body disappeared completely, and his body became as brilliant as gold.



The Gambhīrā

Once, late at night, in the Lord's small room called Gambhīrā, Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda laid the Lord down in His bed. They then bolted the three doors leading to Mahāprabhu's room, and left. Govinda, Mahāprabhu's servant, laid himself down on the floor in front of the last of these doors. He could hear the Lord chanting loudly, "Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare."

Suddenly, there was no sound coming from the Gambhīrā. Govinda quickly sent for Svarūpa Dāmodara. They opened all three doors and saw that the room was empty. Mahāprabhu had left the room mysteriously.

With a burning torch, Svarūpa Dāmodara and the other devotees went looking for the Lord. At last, after searching everywhere, they found Him unconscious in the cow shed of the Jagannātha temple. His transcendental body was completely transformed. His arms and legs had gone inside His body, just like tortoises do. Tears were flowing from His lotus eyes and foam came from His lotus mouth.

The devotees carried the Lord back home as they chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. After a while the Lord came back to His senses and His body returned to normal again. He told the devotees, "I heard Kṛṣṇa's flute sound and went to see Him. In Vṛndāvana, I saw Him in a grove in the forest, laughing and joking with Rādhārāṇī and the gopīs. And now, by your loud chanting, I was brought back here."



Lord Caitanya and the Fisherman

One autumnal full-moon night, Mahāprabhu was walking by the sea with His devotees. The waves glittered beautifully in the light of the moon. Thinking that the sea was the Yamunā River, He became overjoyed. Losing all external consciousness, He ran and jumped into the water, unseen by the others.

His devotees searched for Him, but could not find Him anywhere. They came across a fisherman, whose behaviour was most unusual. He carried his fishing net over his shoulder and was laughing, crying, dancing and singing, “Hari, Hari, Hari, Hari.”

“My dear fisherman, why are you acting in this way?” Svarūpa Dāmodara asked.

“I threw my net into the water and caught a dead body,” the fisherman replied. “At first I thought it was a big fish, but when I saw that it was a dead person, I tried to get it out of the net. I touched that body and a ghost came into my heart. Now it is haunting me. Do not go over there or that ghost will enter your body, too. I am going to find an exorcist to relieve me of this ghost.”

Svarūpa Dāmodara understood the situation and assured the fisherman, “Oh, I am a very famous exorcist. I know how to free you from this ghost.”

He recited some verses, putting his hand on the fisherman’s head. He then slapped the fisherman three times and said, “Now the ghost has gone.”

The fisherman calmed down, and Svarūpa Dāmodara explained to him that he had not been affected by a ghost at all, but by the Supreme Lord Himself. By touching the Lord's body, love for Kṛṣṇa had entered his heart and agitated his mind.

The fisherman replied, "I have seen the Lord before, but the body I caught in my net is not He. It is completely twisted."

"Sometimes, because of His love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord's spiritual body undergoes very special extraordinary changes," Svarūpa Dāmodara explained to the fisherman. "Sometimes His limbs enter His body, just like those of a tortoise, and sometimes they become dislocated and very long."

Hearing this, the fisherman became relieved and took the devotees to where the Lord was lying unconscious on the beach.

The devotees saw Mahāprabhu's body all stretched and twisted, with His limbs dislocated from their joints. They gently washed the sand off Him and loudly chanted Kṛṣṇa's name. Mahāprabhu came back to external consciousness, and His body returned to its normal appearance.

Final Pastimes

Every year Śrī Jagadānanda Paṇḍita went from Purī to Navadvīpa. The Lord had requested him to visit mother Śacī, Śrī Advaita Ācārya and other Vaiṣṇavas there. But this time Śrī Advaita Ācārya sent a message back to the Lord with Jagadānanda Paṇḍita. This message took the form of a mysterious riddle.

Śrī Advaita said, “Tell Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, whose behaviour is like that of a madman, that all here have become mad like Him, so in the marketplace, rice is no longer needed.”

Śrī Advaita had called Mahāprabhu to this world, but in this riddle He was telling the Lord that everybody had now received love for Kṛṣṇa and that His mission had been completed. The time had come for Mahāprabhu to leave this world and return to His own eternal abode.

After receiving that message, Mahāprabhu’s mood of separation became twice as intense. Day and night, in His little room called the Gambhīrā, He tasted the sweet and deep moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in separation from Kṛṣṇa. He talked illogically and rubbed His face against the walls, thus revealing powerful emotions. Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda were with Him, and they expertly sang beautiful, melodious songs about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa meeting each other. This made Mahāprabhu calm and peaceful.

Once, in great happiness, Mahāprabhu said, “My dear Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda, in this age of Kali, chanting the holy names of the Lord is the best way of worshipping Kṛṣṇa. If one does this, one

will quickly reach His lotus feet.” The Lord then spoke Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, eight verses describing how this good fortune can come to us.

Ṭoṭā-gopīnātha

The deity of Ṭoṭā-gopīnātha was given by Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Śrī Gadādhara. The word ṭoṭā means “garden”. One day while Mahāprabhu was listening to Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita speak on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, His lotus hand played with the sand.

“O Gadādhara, I want to give you something. Will you accept it?”

Gadādhara Paṇḍita replied, “I will happily accept whatever You give me.”

“I want to give you My heart,” He said. At that time the beautiful deity of Gopīnātha, in a three-fold bending form, became visible from under the sand.

Gadādhara Paṇḍita was overjoyed and began to worship this deity.



In this way Mahāprabhu roamed around this Earth planet for forty-eight years. He distributed love for Kṛṣṇa to all living beings; He tasted the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā to His full satisfaction, and He brought joy to

all His devotees. Now fully blissful, because all His wishes were fulfilled, the Golden Avatāra Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu returned to His own abode.

His departure from this planet was fully transcendental. He disappeared into the deity of Śrī Śrī Ṭoṭā-gopīnātha. In this way, the Lord concluded His pastimes on this Earth, leaving His beloved devotees to become absorbed day and night in remembrance of Him.

Shortly after Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu left this world, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita's body became very frail in separation from Mahāprabhu. It became almost impossible for him to properly serve Ṭoṭā Gopīnātha. Out of extreme kindness, Śrī Gopīnātha sat down. Now He could continue receiving the service of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita.



We have now completed our short journey through the life of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. These pastimes are sweeter than nectar. They fill the heart with happiness and drive away all inauspiciousness. They quench the soul's natural thirst to love the Supreme Lord, and therefore, they are the tonic for all misery.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma
Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

