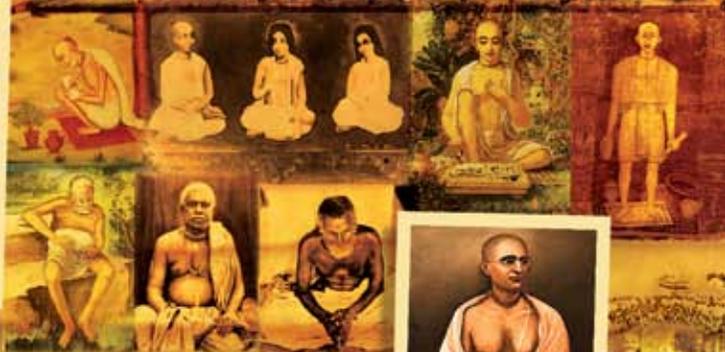
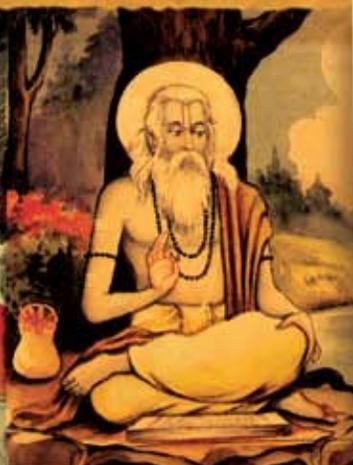


Rays of The Harmonist

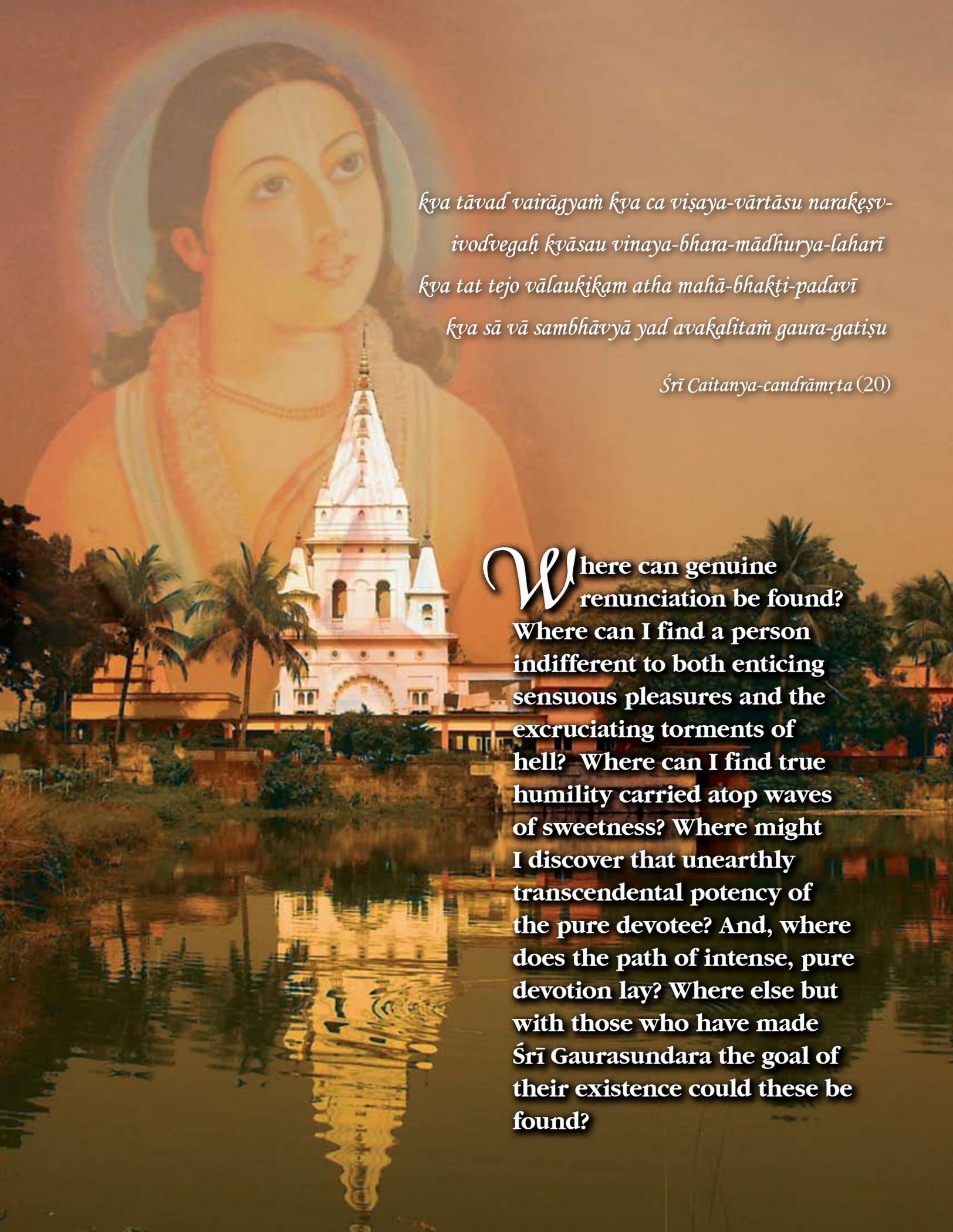
GAUDIYA VEDANTA PUBLICATIONS

No. 18 ✽ KARTTIKA 2008



Śrī Guru-paramparā

INSIDE: Vaiṣṇava-sevā • Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana – The Root of Successful Sādhana
• Uttamā-bhakti • Śrī Guru-sevā • and more



*kṛpā tāvad vairāgyam kṛpā ca viśaya-vārtāsu narakṣv-
ivodvegah kṛpāsau vinaya-bhara-mādhurya-laharī
kṛpā tat tejo vālaukikam atha mahā-bhakti-padavī
kṛpā sā vā sambhāvyā yad avakalitam gaura-gatiṣu*

Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta (20)

Where can genuine renunciation be found? Where can I find a person indifferent to both enticing sensuous pleasures and the excruciating torments of hell? Where can I find true humility carried atop waves of sweetness? Where might I discover that unearthly transcendental potency of the pure devotee? And, where does the path of intense, pure devotion lay? Where else but with those who have made Śrī Gaurasundara the goal of their existence could these be found?

Rays of
The Harmonist

Gaudiya Vedanta Publications

Kārttika 2008



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Dedicated to

ĀCĀRYA KEŚARĪ NITYĀ-LĪLĀ PRAVIṢṬĀ
OM VIṢṆUPĀDA AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA ŚRĪ

*Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*

Founder-Ācārya
of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti

He earnestly desired to re-institute the publication of all the magazines and journals that were being published during the manifest presence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

1. To protect the *vicāra-dhārā*, or current of conceptions, of the *svārūpa-rūpānuga-guru-paramparā* as presented in the modern age by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (i.e. to uproot opinions opposed to the genuine conclusions of the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya*).
2. To promote a co-operative effort to preach the message of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha in accordance with the last instructions of Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

Editorial

Unlike a mundane magazine that coaxes its reader to pursue sensuous indulgence, *Rays of The Harmonist* promotes discussions of Śrī Hari (*hari-kathā*), thereby inspiring its readers to walk the path of true renunciation and engage in the loving service of Śrī Bhagavān. The words of the *ācāryas* in *Rays of The Harmonist* always manifest for the readers in new and fresh ways. This is because the magazine's uncompromising, immovable purpose (*niṣṭha*) is to extol the glories of the ever-new transcendental Cupid – Śrī Gopīnātha; His inner potency – Śrī Rādhārāṇī; and all Their associates.

By studying and contemplating the philosophical truths that transcendental poets, philosophers and scholars have personally realized, a person attains *bhakti* for Śrī Hari. And by reading and discussing the works of the previous Vaiṣṇava *mahājanas*, especially the associates of Śrī Gaurasundara, one's *śraddhā* is strengthened and becomes resolute. The purpose of the journal is to discuss the soul's *nitya-dharma*, or eternal nature. Within that activity lies the welfare of the world.

A genuine preacher of *śuddha-bhakti* broadcasts the glories of *śrī nāma* throughout the world. As Śrīman Mahāprabhu instructed, such a preacher presents the lost souls with the holy name (*kṛṣṇa-nāma*), the intimate worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-bhajana*), and teachings and truths regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-śikṣā*). Truly, this is the ideal of *Rays of The Harmonist*, the conduct and preaching it advocates, and its uncompromising purpose.

Longing to see universal brotherhood and true benefit for all, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura said, “When the flaws of all religions are dispelled, then people of all colours, castes and countries shall unite in brotherhood and easily perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* of the all worshipful Supreme Lord. May currents of love flow in every soul

toward that Supreme Lord, who appears in unlimited forms. May *vaiṣṇava-dharma*, which embodies ultimate joy, evolve to reach from one end of the universe to the other. May the hearts of those seeking the Lord melt in their realization of the Absolute Truth. Invigorated by the Lord's mercy and sheltered by the company of saints, may those respected souls who have but delicate faith, realize the truth of devotion. May they thereby rise to the highest of qualifications and find shelter in sublime, loving devotion (*bhakti-tattva*). May the world echo with the sound of *śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana!*”

The ardent endeavour to perpetually perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, without any selfish motivation, is true service to Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas. By the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the most compassionate incarnation of Godhead, our *kīrtana* will become successful, and Śrī Gurudeva will confer upon us knowledge of the Absolute Truth so that we will truly be able to perform transcendental *guru-sevā*. At that time, overwhelmed by the flow of transcendental humility coming from Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself in His aspect of Śrī Gurudeva, through the *guru-paramparā*, we will realize that it is impossible to requite our debt to Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas who, by their own causeless mercy, reveal the transcendental world to us, along with our eternal place there.

Our exclusive prayer at the lotus-like feet of the Śrī Jagannātha-Vinoda-Gaura-Sarasvatī-Keśavādi Guru-paramparā is this, “May you mercifully shower your profuse blessings on insignificant persons like us, who arrogantly assume themselves to be the servants of your servants. By these blessings we may be able to bring success to our lives by following your teachings and instructions. May Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga Rādhā-Vinoda-bihāri-jiu protect us in every way.”



adapted from Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmāna Gosvāmī Mahārāja's editorial of *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year 24, Issue 1



Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa writes in
Śrī Prameya-ratnāvalī (1.7):

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-brahma-devarṣi-
bādarāyaṇa-samjñakān
śrī-madhva-śrī-padmanābha-
śrīman-nṛhari-mādhavān
akṣobhya-jayatīrtha-
śrī-jñānasindhu-dayānidhīn
śrī-vidyānidhī-rājendra-
jayadharmān kramād vayam
puruṣottama-brahmaṇya-
vyāsātīrthāṁś ca saṁstumah
tato lakṣmīpatiṁ śrīman-
mādhavendraś ca bhaktitaḥ
tac-chiṣyān śrīśvarādvaita-
nityānandān jagad-gurum
devam īśvara-śiṣyān
śrī-caitanyaṁ ca bhajāmahe
śrī-kṛṣṇa-prema-dānena
yena nistaritam jagat*

With great devotion we glorify the succession
of spiritual masters in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava
sampradāya. A list of their names follows:

1. Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa
2. Śrī Brahmā
3. Śrī Nārada
4. Śrīla Vyāsadeva
5. Śrī Madhvācārya (Śrī Anandatīrtha)

Śrī Gurū

by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

6. Śrī Padmanābhatīrtha
7. Śrī Nṛharitīrtha
8. Śrī Mādhavatīrtha
9. Śrī Akṣobhyatīrtha
10. Śrī Jayatīrtha
11. Śrī Jñānasindhu
12. Śrī Dayānidhi
13. Śrī Vidyānidhi (Śrī Vidyādhīrājatīrtha)
14. Śrī Rājendratīrtha
15. Śrī Jayadharmā (Śrī Vijayadhvajātīrtha)
16. Śrī Puruṣottamatīrtha
17. Śrī Brahmaṇyatīrtha (Śrī Subrahmaṇyatīrtha)
18. Śrī Vyāsātīrtha
19. Śrī Lakṣmīpatīrtha
20. Śrī Mādhavendra Purī
21. Śrī Iśvara Purī, Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu (who were disciples of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the disciple of Śrī Iśvara Purī. He is the object of our loving devotional service and He liberated the entire universe by giving the treasure of *śrī kṛṣṇa-prema* to everyone.

The first five stanzas of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's *Śrī Guru-Paramparā* are based on these verses. Stanzas six through nine are his own unique compositions, and stanzas ten and eleven were added by his grand-disciples and great grand-disciples in the course of time.



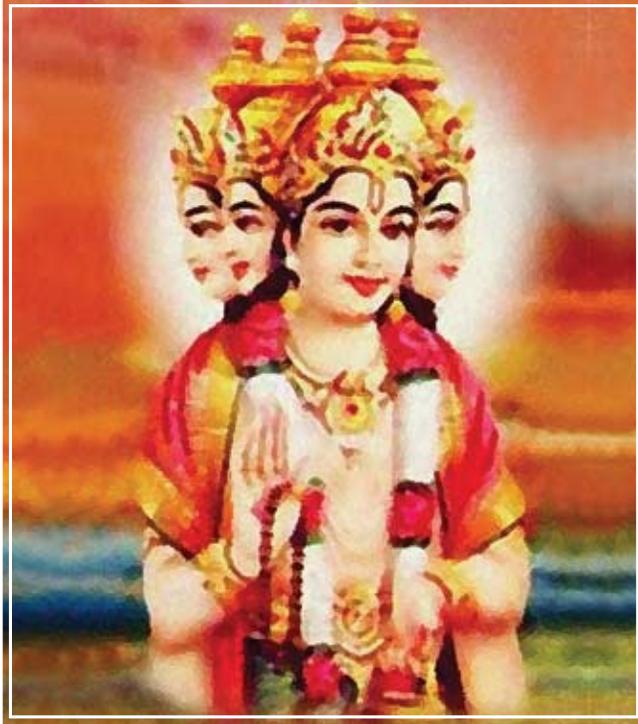
***kṛṣṇa haite catur-mukha, haya kṛṣṇa-sevonmukha,
brahmā haite nāradera mati
nārada haite vyāsa, madhva kahe vyāsa dāsa,
pūrṇaprajña padmanābha-gati (1)***

kṛṣṇa – Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *haite* – from; *catur-mukha* – four-faced Lord Brahmā; *haya* – became; *kṛṣṇa-sevā-unmukha* – unflinchingly inclined toward serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *brahmā haite* – from Lord Brahmā; *nāradera mati* – Śrī Nārada Muni's conviction; *nārada haite* – from Śrī Nārada Muni; *vyāsa* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vedavyāsa; *madhva* – Śrī Madhvācārya; *kahe* – called himself; *vyāsa dāsa* – the servant, or devoted follower of Śrīla Vyāsadeva; *pūrṇaprajña* – Śrī Pūrṇaprajña (one of Madhvācārya's titles before he took *sannyāsa*, literally meaning “thoroughly saturated with transcendental knowledge”); *padmanābha-gati* – Śrī Padmanābhatīrtha's destination.

In the beginning of creation, Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke the transcendental science of devotional service to four-faced Lord Brahmā, whose inclination toward serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa thus came into full bloom. Infused with this mature devotional mood, Lord Brahmā then passed Śrī Kṛṣṇa's teachings on to Śrī Nārada Muni, in whom a strong conviction to engage in *bhakti* subsequently awakened. From Śrī Nārada these transcendental instructions, endowed with the moods of devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, were bestowed upon Śrīla Vedavyāsa. Śrī Madhvācārya, his devoted follower, inherited this transcendental knowledge from him.

The Succession of bona fide gurus in the Śrī Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-Sampradāya

= paramparā



Lord Brahmā



Śrī Nārada Muni

Thereafter, Śrī Pūrṇaprajña Madhvācārya, who was also called Anandatīrtha, became the sole refuge for Padmanābhatīrtha.



***nṛhari-mādhava-vaṁśe, akṣobhya-paramahaṁse,
śiṣya bali' aṅgikāra kare
akṣobhyera śiṣya 'jaya-tīrtha' nāme paricaya
tān'ra dāsye jñānasindhu tare (2)***

nṛhari – Śrī Nṛharitīrtha; *mādhava* – Śrī Mādhavatīrtha; *vaṁśe* – lineage; *akṣobhya-paramahaṁse* – the swan like renunciant Śrī Akṣobhyatīrtha; *śiṣya* – disciple; *bali* – as; *aṅgikāra kare* – did accept; *akṣobhyera śiṣya* – the disciple of Śrī Akṣobhyatīrtha; *jayatīrtha* – Śrī Jayatīrtha; *nāme* – named; *paricaya* – known as; *tān'ra* – his; *dāsye* – in service; *jñānasindhu* – Śrī Jñānasindhu; *tare* – for the purpose.

Following forth from Śrī Madhvācārya were Nṛharitīrtha, Śrī Mādhavatīrtha, and then the swan like Śrī Akṣobhyatīrtha. The principal disciple of Śrī Akṣobhyatīrtha was known as Śrī Jayatīrtha, and Śrī Jñānasindhu devoted himself to the service of Śrī Jayatīrtha in order to receive transcendental knowledge from him.

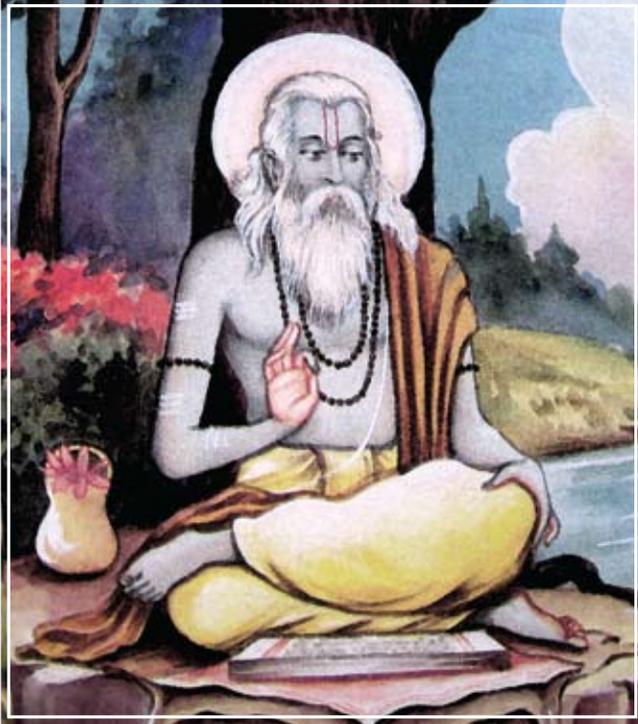


***tānhā haite dayānidhi, tān'ra dāsa vidyānidhi
rājendra haila tānhā ha'te
tānhāra kiṅkara 'jaya-dharma' nāme paricaya,
paramparā jāna bhāla-mate (3)***

tānhā haite – from him (Śrī Jñānasindhu); *dayānidhi* – Śrī Dayānidhi; *tān'ra dāsa* – his servant; *vidyānidhi* – Śrī Vidyānidhi (Śrī Vidyādhīrājatīrtha); *rājendra* – Śrī Rājendratīrtha; *haila* – came; *tānhā ha'te* – from him; *tānhāra* – his; *kiṅkara* – dedicated servant; *jayadharmā* – Śrī Jayadharmā (Śrī Vijayadhvajātīrtha); *nāme* – named; *paricaya* – acquainted; *paramparā* – succession of bona fide gurus;¹ *jāna* – should be understood; *bhāla-mate* – thoroughly.

From Śrī Jñānasindhu the *paramparā* continued with Śrī Dayānidhi and from him it continued with his

¹ The *paramparā* being described is ascertained in terms of the internal relationship between the *guru* and disciple and is known as the *bhāgavat-guru-paramparā*. It is not the *pāñcarātrika-śiṣya-paramaparā*, the disciplic succession based on formal initiation.



Śrī Vedavyāsa

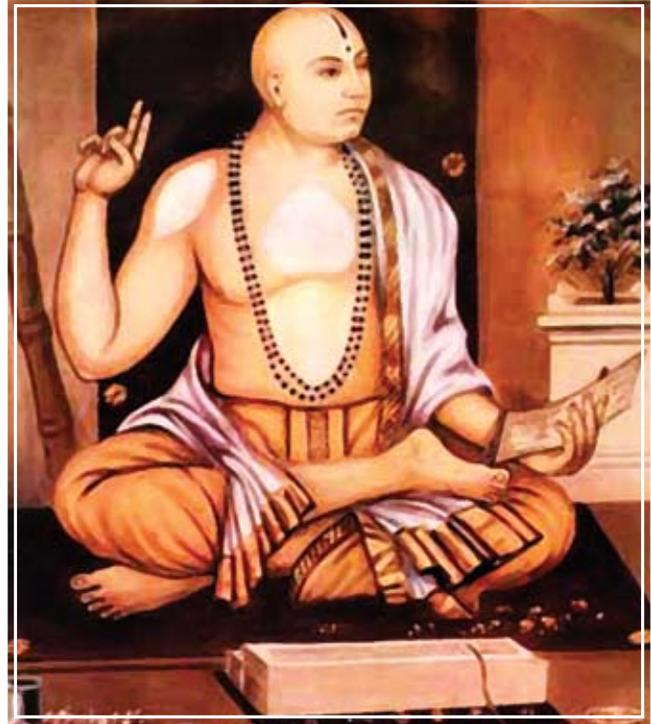
devoted servant Śrī Vidyānidhi. It was then continued by Śrī Rājendratīrtha, whose dedicated servant was named Śrī Jayadharmā and who was also known as Śrī Vijayadhvajatīrtha. One should properly understand the *guru-paramparā* in this way.



***jayadharmā-dāsyē khyāti, śrī puruṣottama-yati,
tān' ha'te brahmaṇya-tīrtha-sūri
vyāsatīrtha tān'ra dāsa, lakṣmīpati vyāsa-dāsa,
tānhā ha'te mādhavendra purī (4)***

jayadharmā-dāsyē – in the service of Śrī Jayadharmā; *khyāti* – renowned; *śrī puruṣottama-yati* – the great *sannyāsī* Śrī Puruṣottamatīrtha; *tān' ha'te* – from him; *brahmaṇya-tīrtha* – Śrī Brahmaṇyatīrtha (Śrī Subrahmaṇyatīrtha); *sūri* – erudite and wise; *vyāsatīrtha* – Śrī Vyāsatīrtha; *tān'ra dāsa* – his servant; *lakṣmīpati* – Śrī Lakṣmīpatīrtha; *vyāsa-dāsa* – the devoted servant of Vyāsatīrtha; *tānhā ha'te* – from him (Śrī Lakṣmīpatīrtha); *mādhavendra purī* – Śrī Mādhavendra Purī.

The great *sannyāsī* Śrī Puruṣottamatīrtha was renowned as the servant of Śrī Jayadharmā. From Śrī



Śrī Mādhvācārya

Puruṣottamatīrtha the succession of bona fide *gurus* continued with Śrī Brahmaṇyatīrtha, who was very erudite and wise. Śrī Vyāsatīrtha, who carried out his order, was his devoted servant, and Śrī Lakṣmīpatīrtha was Śrī Vyāsatīrtha's devoted servant. From him the line continued with Śrī Mādhavendra Purī.



***mādhavendra purī-vara-śiṣya-vara śrī īśvara,
nityānanda, śrī advaita vibhu
īśvara-purīke dhanya, karīlena śrī caitanya,
jagad guru gaura mahāprabhu (5)***

mādhavendra purī – Śrī Mādhavendra Purī; *vara* – eminent; *śiṣya-vara* – prominent disciple; *śrī īśvara* – Śrī Īśvara Purī; *nityānanda* – Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu; *śrī advaita* – Śrī Advaita Ācārya; *vibhu* – the Supreme Lord; *īśvara-purīke* – to Īśvara Purī; *dhanya* – blessed; *karīlena* – made; *śrī caitanya* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *jagad guru* – the spiritual master of the entire world; *gaura mahāprabhu* – the Golden Lord of lords, Śrī Gaurahari.

Śrī Īśvara Purī was the most prominent *sannyāsa* disciple of the great Śrī Mādhavendra Purī, whose

“ Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu,
who is none other than
Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in one form,
is the very life of the
rūpānuga Vaiṣṇavas. ”



disciples also included the *avatāras* Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Advaita Ācārya. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Golden Lord of lords and the spiritual preceptor of all the worlds, made Īśvara Purī greatly blessed by accepting him as His *dikṣā-guru*.



***mahāprabhu śrī caitanya, rādhā-kṛṣṇa nahe anya,
rūpānuga-janera jīvana
viśvambhara-priyaṅkara, śrī svarūpa dāmodara,
śrī gosvāmī rūpa, sanātana (6)***

mahāprabhu śrī caitanya – Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *rādhā-kṛṣṇa* – Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa; *nahe-anya* – none other than; *rūpānuga-janera* – Vaiṣṇavas who follow Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī; *jīvana* – the life; *viśvambhara-priyaṅkara* – the dearest servant of Lord Viśvambhara (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya); *śrī svarūpa dāmodara* – Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī; *śrī gosvāmī* – the chief Gosvāmī; *rūpa* – Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī; *sanātana* – Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is none other than Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in one form, is the very life of the *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas, those who follow Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī were the dear most servants of Lord Viśvambhara (Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya).



***rūpa-priya mahājana, jīva, raghunātha hana,
tān'ra priya kavi kṛṣṇadāsa***

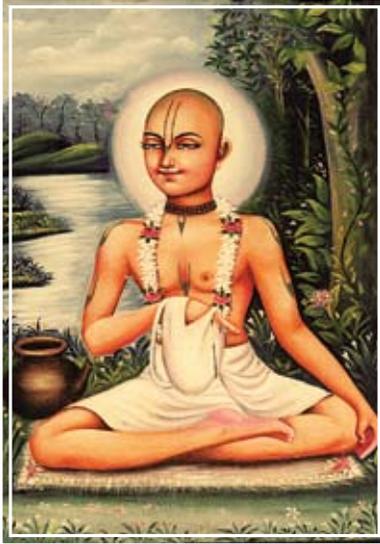
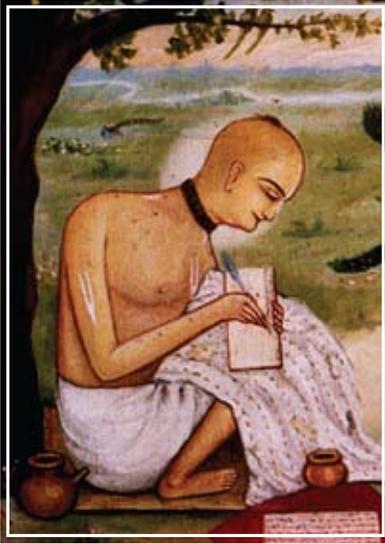
***kṛṣṇadāsa-priya-vara, narottama sevā-para,
yānra pada viśvanātha-āśa (7)***

rūpa-priya – dear to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī; *mahājana* – great saintly personalities; *jīva* – Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī; *raghunātha* – Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī; *hana* – are; *tān'ra* – his (Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's); *priya* – dear, or intimate one; *kavi kṛṣṇadāsa* – the great Vaiṣṇava poet Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja; *kṛṣṇadāsa* – Śrī Rūpa Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja; *priya-vara* – the most dear, or intimate one; *narottama* – Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura; *sevā-para* – devoted to serving; *yānra* – whose; *pada* – lotus feet; *viśvanātha* – Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura; *āśa* – hope and aspiration.

The great saintly personalities (*mahājanas*) Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, were very dear to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. The intimate follower of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was the great *kavi*, or Vaiṣṇava poet, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja. The dear most follower of Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja was Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, who was always engaged in *guru-sevā* with great devotion and exalted moods. Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura's lotus feet became the only hope and aspiration for Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.



***viśvanātha bhakta-sātha, baladeva, jagannātha,
tān'ra priya śrī bhaktivinoda
mahā-bhāgavata-vara, śrī gaurakiśora-vara,
hari-bajanete yānra moda (8)***



“ Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī
and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī
were the dear most servants
of Lord Viśvambhara
(Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya). ”

viśvanātha – Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura; *bhakta-sātha* – in the company of devotees; *baladeva* – Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa; *jagannātha* – Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja; *tān'ra priya* – his dear most; *śrī bhaktivinoda* – Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura; *mahā-bhāgavata-vara* – the greatest *mahā-bhāgavata* devotee; *śrī gaura-kiśora-vara* – the exalted Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja; *hari-bhajanete* – in loving devotional service to Śrī Hari; *yānra* – whose; *moda* – delight.

From among all the Vaiṣṇavas surrounding Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the *guru-paramparā* then continued with his most prominent disciple Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. It then continued with Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and his dear most Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. From Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura it continued with the best of the *mahā-bhāgavata* devotees, Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, whose only delight was *hari-bhajana*, internal absorption in loving service to Śrī Hari.

In the original composition, verse twelve appeared as the first part of the next stanza. In his humility, Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura did not include himself in the *guru-paramparā*, but as is customary, only mentioned his name as the author. Śrīla Prabhupāda concluded his song *Śrī Guru-paramparā* with this stanza, humbly revealing his identity as Śrī Vārṣabhānavī dayita-dāsa, the servant of the beloved of the daughter

of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja. However, his disciples appropriately accepted him as the next *ācārya* in the *paramparā* through this very stanza.



***śrī vārṣabhānavī-varā, sadā sevya-sevā-parā,
tānhāra 'dayita-dāsa' nāma (9)***

'*śrī vārṣabhānavī*' – Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the daughter of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja; *varā* – the best; *sadā* – always; *sevya* – the worshipful object of service; *sevā-parā* – devoted to serving; *tānhāra* – her; *dayita* – beloved; *dāsa* – servant; *nāma* – the name.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the daughter of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, is the best of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloveds, as She is always engaged in loving service to Her worshipful Lord. This song was composed by the humble servant of the beloved of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.



***prabhupāda-antaraṅga, śrī svarūpa-rūpānuga,
śrī keśava bhakati-prajñāna
gauḍīya-vedānta-vettā, māyāvāda-tamohantā,
gaura-vāñī-pracārācāra-dhāma (10)***

prabhupāda-antaraṅga – the confidential disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda; *śrī svarūpa-rūpānuga* – follower of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's line; *śrī keśava bhakati-prajñāna* – Śrīla Bhakī Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī

Mahārāja; *gauḍīya-vedānta-veṭṭā* – one who fully knows Vedānta in accordance with the Gauḍīya conception; *māyāvāda* – doctrine of impersonalism; *tamaḥ-hantā* – the annihilator of the darkness of ignorance; *gaura-vāṇī* – the message of Śrī Gaurahari; *pracāra-ācāra* – practice and preach; *dhāma* – the abode.

Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the most confidential disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. He perfectly followed the path established by Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and through his knowledge of Vedānta in accordance with the conception of the Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, he annihilated the darkness of ignorance spread by Māyāvāda, or the impersonalist doctrine. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja was the abode of all of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s teachings, and he simultaneously imparted those teachings to others and practiced them in his own life.

This stanza was composed by disciples of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja – grand-disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

tā’ra pradhāna pracāraka, śrī bhaktivedānta nāma, patita-janete dayā-dhāma (11a)

tā’ra – his (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda’s); *pradhāna* – foremost; *pracāraka* – preacher; *śrī bhaktivedānta nāma* – is known by the name Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja; *patita-janete* – for all fallen souls; *dayā-dhāma* – the abode of mercy and compassion.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja is foremost among those who propagated Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda’s teachings. He spread the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the world because he is the abode of mercy and compassion for all fallen souls.

This stanza was composed by disciples of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja – grand-disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda.



keśava-priya-mahājana, vāmana, nārāyaṇa hana, gauravāṇī tā’dera prāṇa-dhana (11b)

keśava – Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja; *priya* – dear; *mahājana* – exalted saints; *vāmana* – Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja; *nārāyaṇa* – Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja; *hana* – are; *gauravāṇī* – the teachings of Mahāprabhu; *tā’dera* – their; *prāṇa-dhana* – the treasure of their lives.

Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja considered the exalted saintly personalities Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja to be his most dear disciples.

This stanza was composed by the great grand-disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda.



ei saba hari-jana, gaurāṅgera nija-jana, tā’dera ucchiṣṭe mora kāma (12)

ei saba – all these; *hari-jana* – devotees of Śrī Hari; *gaurāṅgera nija-jana* – personal associates of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva; *tā’dera* – of their; *ucchiṣṭe* – the remnants from their lotus mouths, in the form of their words, or whatever else they leave us out of their causeless mercy; *mora kāma* – my desire.

All of these devotees are the personal associates of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. My sole desire is to serve the remnants (*ucchiṣṭa*) from their lotus mouths in the form of their words, or whatever divine instructions they have left for us out of their causeless mercy.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda’s original composition, this stanza preceded the ninth stanza. In the course of time, more names were added to the *guru-paramparā*, and this verse was appropriately placed at the end of the song.





Appearing in English for the first time

Vaiṣṇava-sevā

by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



In answer to the question raised by the *bhaktas* of Kulīna-grāma about the obligatory duties of householders, Mahāprabhu gave this instruction:

*prabhu kahena,—‘kṛṣṇa-sevā’, ‘vaiṣṇava-sevana’
‘nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana’
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 15.104)*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Serve Kṛṣṇa, reverently attend to the Vaiṣṇavas and perform *śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana* without cessation.”

After hearing this instruction and deliberating upon it, we can discern that the prime duty, or *dharma*, for householders is *vaiṣṇava-sevā*. Therefore, it is necessary to contemplate how that *vaiṣṇava-sevā* is performed.

The tradition these days is when someone desires to perform ‘*vaiṣṇava-sevā*’ he fetches the wandering *pūjārī* (cook) of the son of any caste *gosvāmī*¹ and engages him in arranging a presentation of a variety of dishes made from grains and vegetables as well as many sweets and so on. Then he invites many people and, considering them to be Vaiṣṇavas, he feeds them all. We cannot call such actions *vaiṣṇava-sevā*. Fetching a group of Vaiṣṇavas through invitations in this way is simply self-conceit.

.....
¹ The term “caste *gosvāmī*” refers to those who claim to be in the hereditary line of one of the associates of Mahāprabhu. It says nothing about their actual development as Vaiṣṇavas.

While answering the questions raised by the devotees of Kulina-grāma, Mahāprabhu personally explained the kind of Vaiṣṇava one should serve:

*prabhu kahe,—“yāñra mukhe śuni eka-bāra
kṛṣṇa-nāma, sei pūjya,—śreṣṭha sabākāra”*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 15.106)

The Lord said, “He from whose mouth *śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma* is heard even one time is worshipful and the best of all people.”

*yāñhāra darśane mukhe āise kṛṣṇa-nāma
tāñhāre jāniha tumi ‘vaiṣṇava-pradhāna’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 16.74)

Know that one who makes *śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma* come in the mouth merely by seeing him is *vaiṣṇava-pradhāna*, the most exalted Vaiṣṇava.

*krama kari’ kahe prabhu ‘vaiṣṇava’-lakṣaṇa
‘vaiṣṇava’, ‘vaiṣṇavatara’, āra ‘vaiṣṇavatama’*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 16.75)

The Lord thus sequentially explained the different grades of Vaiṣṇavas – *vaiṣṇava*, *vaiṣṇavatara* and *vaiṣṇavatama* – according to their symptoms.

By uttering *kṛṣṇa-nāma* even once, one attains the stage of being a Vaiṣṇava. However, what kind of *nāma* must it be? This is stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

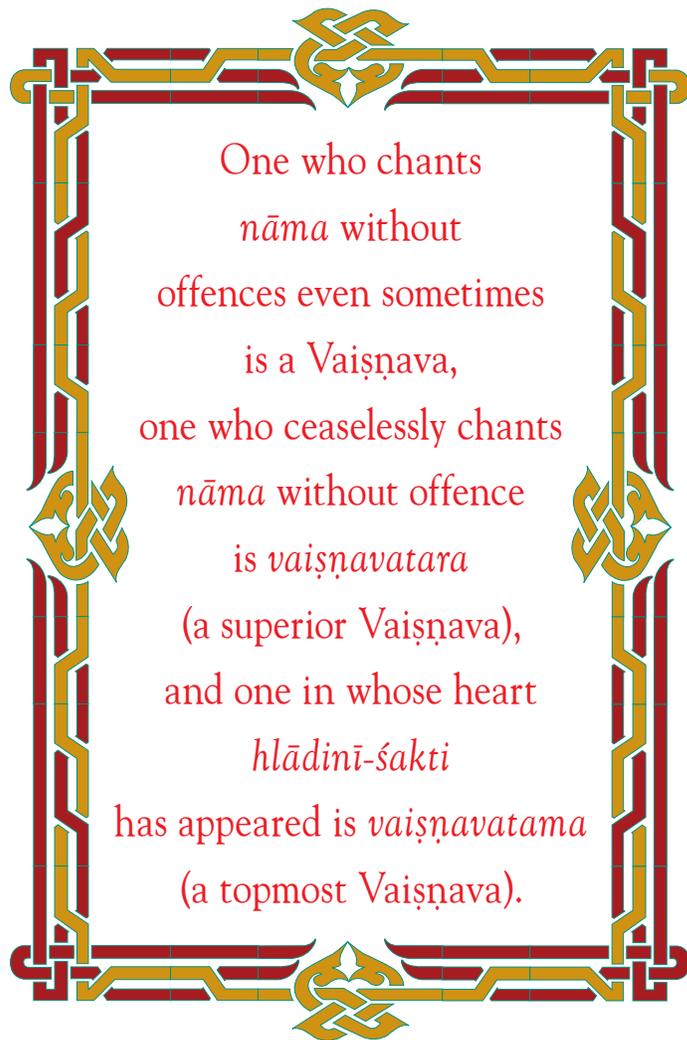
*eka ‘nāmābhāse’ tomāra pāpa-doṣa yābe
āra ‘nāma’ ha-ite kṛṣṇa-caraṇa pāibe*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 25.199)

By a single *nāma-ābhāsa*, all your sinful reactions will flee, and by chanting pure *nāma* you will attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.²

Here, it is to be understood that as long as one is committing *nāma-aparādha* (offences to the holy name) it is not possible to chant the holy name. In this stage, only *nāma-ābhāsa* (a semblance of the pure holy name) may occur. As a result of *nāma-ābhāsa* all of one’s sins are diminished, and with the diminution of sins, one’s *citta* (consciousness reflected in the heart and mind) becomes pure. In the purified *citta*, *nāma*.....

² The distinction between “*nāma-ābhāsa*” and “*nāma*” in this verse implies that the word *nāma* refers to *suddha-nāma*, the absolutely pure holy name, this applies here and in the preceding context.



aparādha cannot find any place, and when there is thus no chance of committing *nāma-aparādha*, one’s chanting of the holy name automatically becomes pure.

One who chants *nāma* without offences even sometimes is a Vaiṣṇava, one who ceaselessly chants *nāma* without offence is *vaiṣṇavatara* (a superior Vaiṣṇava), and one in whose heart *hlādinī-śakti* has appeared is *vaiṣṇavatama* (a topmost Vaiṣṇava). The householders should serve these Vaiṣṇavas. Such Vaiṣṇavas might be householders or renunciants, but in *vaiṣṇava-sevā* it is not merely the devotee’s *āśrama* that commands respect. Rather, gradation among Vaiṣṇavas is gauged according to their advancement in *bhakti*.

The present tradition is extremely harmful. A mace-bearer³ extends invitations to one-hundred ‘Vaiṣṇavas’.....

³ A person who carries a mace – a symbol of authority – in ceremonial processions or preceding the arrival of a high dignitary.



and upon receiving the invitations, such Vaiṣṇavas give up all their other activities and proceed to decorate themselves with *tilaka* and so forth.

“Now we will get *purīs* and pancakes to the full satisfaction of our bellies! And along with that, we will receive some *dakṣiṇa*.”

Hoping for such wealth, they start manifesting ‘*bhakti*’.

In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.259) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has said:

*dhana-śiṣyādibhir-dvārair yām bhaktir upapādyate
vidūratvād uttamatāhānya tasyās ca nāṅgatā*

He who tries to indirectly awaken his own *bhakti* by engaging his wealth, students and so forth in devotional service, actually separates himself from the highest expression of *bhakti* (*svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti*) by a great distance. His engagement in this way is not even a limb of *bhakti*.

“Now we will get *purīs* and pancakes to the full satisfaction of our bellies! And along with that, we will receive some *dakṣiṇa*.”

Hoping for such wealth, they start manifesting ‘*bhakti*’.

This statement shows that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has not accepted these activities as *bhakti*. If there is no *bhakti* in these activities, then those who perform them cannot be accepted as Vaiṣṇavas. If we consider every *jīva* to be a Vaiṣṇava, then service to them can be called *jīva-sevā*,

but according to the instructions of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, such service cannot be called *nāma-parāyaṇa vaiṣṇava-sevā* – service to Vaiṣṇavas who are devoted to chanting the holy name.

These days, there is a particular enterprise that goes by the name “Vaiṣṇava Society”. Its members wear the dress of Vaiṣṇavas but are Vaiṣṇavas in name only. The custom of deity worship is always present in such societies, and uninvited, renounced Vaiṣṇavas are satisfied by being offered the deity’s *prasāda*. This activity is not bad, but the growing trend wherein householders invite Vaiṣṇavas from such societies and offer them food and *dakṣiṇa* is not Vaiṣṇava behaviour. Vaiṣṇavas are most admirable and noble. They are the well-wishing friends of the whole world. It is the duty of the householders to serve them when they come to their house. To help the Vaiṣṇavas in the matter of their food, rest and travel is indeed *vaiṣṇava-sevā*.

It is extremely appropriate for householders to whole-heartedly attend to any uninvited, renounced Vaiṣṇavas, but to simply feed them and offer them *dakṣiṇa* is essentially a part of *karma-kāṇḍa* (that section of the Vedas dealing with fruitive activity). In truth, there is no *dakṣiṇa* for Vaiṣṇavas.⁴ The tradition

⁴ Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says, “The Vaiṣṇava’s heart is the perpetual residing place of Govinda; and Govinda says that the Vaiṣṇavas are His *prāṇa*—His life and soul.” Vaiṣṇavas are fully satisfied in every respect so it is incorrect to think that they need any *dakṣiṇa*. Such an attitude is against *bhakti* because it supposes that the Vaiṣṇavas depend on us for their material needs when in fact they are fully dependent on Kṛṣṇa, who is their only maintainer. Furthermore, the practice of giving *dakṣiṇa* may become *karma* in two ways. First, if the *dakṣiṇa* is not given as selfless service but rather as payment for the religious benefits conferred by the visiting Vaiṣṇava it may become *karma*. *Brāhmaṇas* depend upon such *dakṣiṇa* for their livelihood, but Vaiṣṇavas are completely different. Whatever they kindly accept from us is for our eternal benefit. Second, giving *dakṣiṇa* to a Vaiṣṇava and thereafter abandoning any commitment to serving him is comparable to invoking a deity (*āvāhana*) for a mundane ritual and abandoning it afterward (*visarjana*). *Vaiṣṇava-sevā* is *nitya-dharma* (eternal occupational duty) and our relationship with Vaiṣṇavas is eternal. The statement that “there is no *dakṣiṇa* for Vaiṣṇavas” can be interpreted in this way.

of giving *dakṣiṇa* to the Vaiṣṇavas has sprung up from the custom of feeding the *brāhmaṇas* and offering them *dakṣiṇa*. It is extremely important to give up this trend.

O devotees, in every respect, please the Vaiṣṇavas who are devoted to chanting *śuddha-nāma*. However, do not make *vaiṣṇava-sevā* subordinate to *karma-kāṇḍa*, by only offering them food and *dakṣiṇa*. Inviting and feeding many renunciant Vaiṣṇavas is not the advice of Mahāprabhu.

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya once said:

*bahuta sannyāsī yadi āise eka ṭhāñi
sammāna karite nāri, aparādha pāi*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 15.197)

If many *sannyāsīs* come together in one place, all of them cannot be honoured and offences will be committed.

The uninvited, renounced Vaiṣṇava is called *abhyāgata*. If, by chance, one or two such Vaiṣṇavas come to a householder’s home, it is proper for the householder to serve them. By his doing so, he indeed performs *vaiṣṇava-sevā*. However, if he gathers many renunciants in one place he will not be able to properly honour all of them and the result will be *aparādha*. In the simple act of extending an invitation, the conduct meant for *abhyāgata* is lost. Although such activities are considered to be *sannyāsī-bhikṣā* (giving charity to *sannyāsīs*), they are not *vaiṣṇava-sevā*.

When a Vaiṣṇava is brought into one’s home and served with great care, no offence is made. However, in fetching many renounced Vaiṣṇavas by invitation, with pomp and show, there is every chance of *aparādha*. The householder Vaiṣṇavas must reflect upon this matter specifically. They must understand that *vaiṣṇava-sevā* is a part of *nitya-dharma*. However, they should not act against *bhakti* by inviting many Vaiṣṇavas, serving them and then offering them *dakṣiṇa*, out of a desire for their own fame and popularity. Always remember that this is the time of Kali. Kali will create many deviant paths to obstruct those attempting to cultivate *śuddha-bhakti*. But if one follows the life and precepts of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Kali will not be able to interfere with one’s practices.

 Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year 14, Issue 8
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Appearing in English for the first time

Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana =

The Root of
Successful Sādhana

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

Spoken to retired Deputy Collector Śrī Amarendranātha Pāla Chaudhary

11 April 1936, at Caṭaka-parvata,
Jagannātha Purī, Śrī Puruṣottama-dhāma

Hari-kathā – the basis of hearing and chanting

Our single, most essential concern is to remember Śrī Hari. Such remembrance relies upon the process of *śravaṇa*, or hearing about Śrī Hari, and of *kīrtana*, or reciting His names and glories. After hearing about Śrī Hari, one can recite His glories; and by reciting those glories, one is able to retain them.

“We are beleaguered by vicissitudes.” This type of wisdom frequently impels us to cultivate a proclivity to hear *hari-kathā*, topics related to the transcendent pastimes of Śrī Hari. Only through the practice of hearing *hari-kathā* do recitation and remembrance occur. Indeed, whenever we glorify Śrī Hari, remembrance of Him comes simultaneously. When a natural relish to hear and chant awakens, it marks the stage of self-surrender.

*ārāadhanānām sarveṣāṃ viṣṇor ārāadhanām param
tasmāt paratarām devi tadīyānām samarcanam*

Padma Purāṇa (6.253.176)

In other words, we will actually lead a life of full surrender when we comprehend that while serving Śrī Viṣṇu is the best engagement, associating with and serving those who serve Śrī Viṣṇu is an engagement still superior.

Remaining ever attentive to our eternal benefit

In this world we court the harmful association of various types of people. We have abandoned service to Kṛṣṇa, who exists beyond the purview of material sense perception, and we engage in public service. But public service will only yield temporary results. Only if Bhagavān bestows His mercy upon us will we obtain the association of the *sādhu*, who performs *kīrtana* of unalloyed *hari-kathā*.

We must consider the life that will result from our transgression. A vast gulf separates us from the Supreme Controller; and it is necessary to bridge this gulf and then to cross that bridge without falling into the chasm, so that we may come before Him.

Form, taste, smell, sound and touch – these sense objects are constantly alluring us. We must hear how we can become associated with Bhagavān. Some of us are employed at work, others are running a business, and still others are busy with something else. But even after

retiring from these engagements, we are left to ruminate over our memories of them.

Life after life we have engaged in public service. Animals, too, act in various ways for the sake of their own kind. However, as humans, are we not eligible for a higher promotion? In this world everything is momentary and perishable; but have we discussed that which is eternal?

The utility of this human life is that it enables discussion of the next life and of eternal life. In this life we are able to hear and speak *hari-kathā*, the glories and pastimes of Śrī Hari. Indeed, this is the only means by which remembrance of Śrī Hari is awakened. Our only engagement in this world is to hear *hari-kathā*. King Parīkṣit had just seven days left to live; but there is no certainty that we have even seven days remaining. Therefore, we need to perform *kīrtana* by discussing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Such discussions are not meant for earning a living.

Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of compassion, and He is also the complete Absolute Entity. His compassion is therefore imbued with the attribute of bestowing completeness. In such compassion, the Complete Entity bestows Himself upon the incomplete entity, and by this the incomplete can easily attain the Complete Entity. It is impossible to attain complete auspiciousness without approaching the Complete Entity. Our hopes are not fulfilled by receiving only partial, or limited, happiness.

Kīrtana bestows complete perfection

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-dayā karaha vicāra
vicāra karile citte pābe camatkāra*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā, 8.15)

If one deliberates on the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, his heart will be struck with wonder.

Out of compassion for everyone, Śrī Caitanyadeva has ordered the performance of *harināma-kīrtana* for all time. Anyone who has simply heard this order has been given this instruction. There is no time during which chanting of the holy name of Śrī Hari is prohibited: “*hariḥ sadā kīrtaniyaḥ* – Śrī Hari is to be glorified at every moment.”

Śrīman Mahāprabhu declared, “May *śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* be victorious in every respect.” By hearing



“The soul of one who performs *kīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa in a thorough way is completely bathed in *sevā-rasa*, the relish of loving service.”

kīrtana one becomes inclined to perform it; and by performing *kīrtana*, remembrance (*smaraṇā*) takes place. When the person performing *kīrtana* begins to recite the glories of Śrī Hari, topics relating to Śrī Hari enter his memory. Since Bhagavān is the embodiment of profuse compassion, He has given us the opportunity to perform *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* of such topics. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.3.51) states:

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇaḥ
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ paraṁ vrajet*

My dear King, this age of Kali is a veritable ocean of faults. Still, it has one most exalted attribute: one who simply performs *kīrtana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s names, form, qualities and pastimes, especially by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, can certainly become liberated from material bondage and receive entrance to the highest destination – the transcendental realm of Vraja.

In life and in death, we have no other refuge and no other activity than to perform *kīrtana* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. The soul of one who performs *kīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa in a thorough way is completely bathed in *sevā-rasa*, the relish of loving service. When a mirror is covered by dust, you cannot see your own reflection in it. Similarly, as long as we perform activities other than the *kīrtana* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, various coverings obscure our mirror-like heart and we cannot have *darśana* of our own *svarūpa*,

or eternal identity. But if we perform *kīrtana* of the glories of the supremely attractive Person, we can, by His mercy, easily become attracted to Him.

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārsadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair
yajanti hi su-medhasaḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.32)

In the age of Kali, Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears with a golden complexion (*akṛṣṇa*). He is constantly singing the two syllables *kr* and *ṣṇa*, and He is accompanied by His associates, servitors, weapons and confidential companions. Intelligent people worship Him by performing *saṅkīrtana yajña*.

Intelligent persons perform *kīrtana* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, while the unintelligent perform *anyābhilāṣa* (activities separate from the interest of Kṛṣṇa), *jñāna* and *karma*.

The daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja always utters the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is not merely the splendour of Kṛṣṇa; She is none other than Kṛṣṇa Himself. We can hear about the words of Śrī Rādhā in the songs of Caṅḍidāsa:

*sai, kevā śunāila śyāma nāma
kānera bhitara diyā, marame paśila go
ākula karila mana prāṇa*

(*Sai, Kevā Śunāila Śyāma-Nāma*, 1)

My dear *sakhī*, who is that person who first made Me hear the name “Śyāma”? When it entered My heart through My ears, it made my mind and life extremely restless.

The daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja is the topmost of all intelligent persons, and Śrī Gaura-sundara is the fountainhead of all who are intelligent:

*nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ
etādṛṣī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam idṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam (2)

O Bhagavān, Your names bestow all auspiciousness upon the *jīvas*. Therefore, for their benefit, You are eternally manifest as Your innumerable names, such as Rāma, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, Mādhava, Govinda and Dāmodara. You have invested those names with all the potencies of Their respective forms. Out of Your causeless mercy, You have not even imposed any restrictions on the chanting and remembrance of these names, as is the case with certain prayers and *mantras* that must be chanted at specific times. Indeed, the holy name of Bhagavān can be chanted and remembered at any time of the day or night. This is the arrangement You have made. O Prabhu, You have such causeless mercy upon the *jīvas*; nevertheless, due to my offences, I am so unfortunate that no attachment for Your holy name has awakened within me, even though it is so easily accessible and bestows all good fortune.

We are unacquainted with the Entity Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa has impregnated His name with all His potency, and has appeared in this world in the form of His holy name. His secondary names bear some distinction between the name (*nāma*) and Him (*nāmī* – He who is indicated by the name) but in His primary names no such distinction exists and He and His name are identical. Unlike in deity worship, one does not require any qualification to chant the holy name. For deity worship, one must have accepted *dīkṣā*, taken a bath and so on; but in the matter of *hari-kīrtana*, there is no consideration of time, place, circumstance or qualification.

Kīrtana is an act of compassion

It is essential to perform *kīrtana* loudly. If a person does not loudly perform *kīrtana* of *hari-kathā*, but instead indulges in ordinary chatter, as if he had five mouths, he will be devoured by the serpent of time. By loudly performing *hari-kīrtana*, one fulfils the injunction to show the highest compassion. Some, who do not understand this point, say:

*mālā jape sālā, kar jape bhāi
yo āpnā man man jape usko balihārī jai*

You are chanting on beads? *Sālā!* You are chanting on fingers? *He bhāi!*¹

But to whoever chants in his own mind, to him I say bravo! *Jaya!*

And they instruct, “Do not speak *hari-kathā*. Simply chant within your mind.” In so doing, they are themselves caught up in useless talk. Most people are, after all, always eager to engage in futile speech. Mahāprabhu has forbidden this. His sermon is “*kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ* – always perform the *kīrtana* of Śrī Hari” and “*nāma-līlā-guṇa-ādinām uccaiḥ bhāṣā tu kīrtanam* – His name, pastimes, qualities and so forth must indeed be recited loudly”.

One who performs *kīrtana* resoundingly is extremely magnanimous, and never commits violence towards others. However, the suppressed urge to speak of those who remain silent and do not perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* becomes inauspicious for themselves and for others. Such people always meditate on the sense objects within their minds, and thus perform violence to themselves and to others. Therefore, Mahāprabhu’s instruction is always to perform *kīrtana*. If your well-wishers hear your *kīrtana*, they will correct any discrepancies in it. Furthermore, if you perform your *kīrtana* without duplicity, *caitya-guru*, the indwelling Supersoul, will Himself rectify any mistakes there may be in that *kīrtana*.

People take shelter of the so-called practice of silence out of hypocrisy and a desire for reputation and honour that resides in their heart. Such people think,

¹ Literally, *sālā* means “brother-in-law” but, due to certain implications of this relationship, it is also used as an abuse, as in this case. The word *bhāi* just means “brother”, but it is commonly used between any two friends.



“By loudly performing *hari-kīrtana*, one fulfils the injunction to show the highest compassion.”

“*vakah paramadhārmikah* – the silence of the crane is supremely religious.” But actually those who take shelter of this process, impelled by hypocrisy, will suddenly end up performing sinful acts. Following rigid vows of silence and performing seemingly deep meditation, they simply behave in an unruly manner with others just to nourish their self interest.

If there is no *kīrtana* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* in this world, people’s anxieties will become more pronounced. He who shows cruelty to time, place and person by not bestowing Kṛṣṇa’s mercy eventually destroys himself.

Hari-kīrtana is the only worthy sound vibration

Two categories of people never perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. The first are those who are extremely foolish, such as Māyāvādīs, offenders (*aparādhīs*), persons absorbed in so-called meditation (*dhyānīs*) and professed observers of silence (*maumīs*). In the second category are those who do not actually perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* even though they believe they are doing so.

Everything besides *hari-kīrtana* is simply the screeching of a she-jackal. Nothing except *kṛṣṇa-kathā* should be allowed to enter our ear holes. Therefore, it is imperative that one hear about Gaura and what He ordains (*gaura vihita śravaṇa*). Only then can one speak about Gaura and what He ordains (*gaura vihita kīrtana*). To one who becomes an adherent of silence, even the doors to hearing about Bhagavān and remembering Him are closed. Only those who neglect the process of remembering Śrī Hari close the path to *śravaṇa* and *kīrtana* through their endeavours for solitude and their observance of silence. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.8.4) states:

*śṛṇvataḥ śraddhayā nityam
grṇataś ca sva-ceṣṭitam
kālena nātidīrghena
bhagavān viśate hṛdi*

To he who faithfully and regularly hears the most auspicious *kathā* of Śrī Hari, or who performs *kīrtana* of that *kathā*, Śrī Bhagavān Himself manifests in the heart within no time, even if that devotee makes no personal effort to attain this.

The Gauḍīya Maṭha’s broad conception of spreading *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*

“*Bahubhirmilitvā yat kīrtanam tadeva saṅkīrtanam – kīrtana* performed by a congregation is called *saṅkīrtana*.” What are the activities of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha at present? Many preachers perform *kīrtana* of *hari-kathā* in various ways – some with the help of melody and rhythm, some by dancing, some by giving discourses at exhibitions of devotional dioramas, and some by composing devotional literatures. *Saṅkīrtana* is not merely a loud outburst with melody, rhythm, harmony, metre and so forth to satisfy people’s senses or fulfil some other such purpose. In reality, *kīrtana* of this kind is not complete *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. The word *kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* refers to *kīrtana* of the transcendental name, transcendental form, transcendental qualities, transcendental pastimes and special attributes of the transcendental associates of transcendental Kṛṣṇa.

That said, *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is also not performed simply by rejecting melody, rhythm, metre and harmony. Indeed, these elements should all be dovetailed in *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*

only. The six *rāgas*, or personified melodies, and the thirty-six *rāginīs*, or melodic consorts of the *rāgas*, are the servants of *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. It is imperative that *hari-kīrtana* be performed with body, mind and speech simultaneously. If the mind is absent in one's performance of *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, then it is not complete *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*.

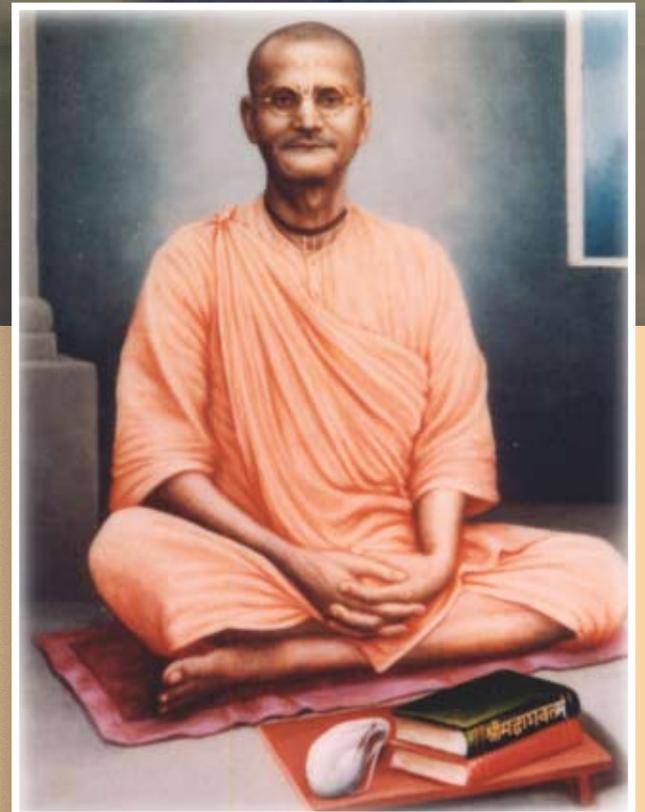
What does Śrī Nārada do? At every moment, he performs *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* with all his senses. What does five-headed Śiva do? *Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. What does four-headed Brahmā do? He engages in *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. Śrī Vyāsa, Śrī Śuka, the four Kumāras and Śeṣa all perform *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. Every personality in our *guru-varga* performs *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. None observes the so-called practice of silence. *Bhāgavat-dharma* is not a religious creed that observes such so-called silence; it the *dharma* of *kīrtana*, the *dharma* of *saṅkīrtana*.

In Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha, those who are preaching by composing devotional books or writing articles for periodicals and journals are certainly performing *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. They are doing this through the medium of the *brhad-mṛdaṅga*, which includes opening a “post-office”² and establishing a printing press. They are performing *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* by organizing exhibitions. Some are engaged in *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* through their own ideal, exemplary behaviour. To ensure that this *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* does not become lost in the ether, it is being recorded and presented as devotional literature. Thus, people in future epochs will also be able to hear this *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*.

However, those who perform solitary meditation, remaining locked in silence, are hardly able to benefit even themselves. Through their silence, they cannot bring any benefit at all to others today, let alone to people in the future.

🌸 Translated from the weekly *Gauḍīya*, Year 14, No. 37

² A post office sends messages to recipients. Similarly the Gauḍīya Maṭha “post office” distributes the message of Vaikuṅṭha, which is brought to the suffering *jīvas* of this world by the residents of Vaikuṅṭha – our *guru-varga*. This message is largely distributed through books, periodicals, magazines and so forth. Today, electronic mailings also perform this function





Translated into English for the first time

Uttamā-bhakti

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The original form of Bhagavān descended during this age of quarrel and hypocrisy as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to deliver all of the living entities. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is *priya-svarūpa*, the very embodiment of everything

dear to Him, and who is foremost among those who established the deepest wishes of His heart, has revealed the symptoms of *uttamā-bhakti*, the utmost culmination of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa:

*anyābhilāṣitā-śunyaṁ jñāna-karmādyanāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhaktir-uttamā*

Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.11)

anya-abhilāṣitā – prone to selfish, ulterior desires; *śunyaṁ* – devoid; *jñāna* – knowledge; *karma* – fruitive work; *ādi* – and so on; *anāvṛtam* – not eclipsed; *ānukūlyena* – through genuine kindness to Him; *kṛṣṇa* – Kṛṣṇa; *anu* – perpetual; *śīlanam* – ardent endeavour; *bhaktir-uttamā* – the utmost culmination of *bhakti* (devotional service to Kṛṣṇa).

Perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and performed out of genuine kindness¹ to Him, when neither prone to any selfish, ulterior desires nor eclipsed by impersonal knowledge, fruitive work, or any other occupation, is known as *uttamā-bhakti*.

The *sādhaka* who carefully reflects upon and studies this verse under the guidance and care of the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī will know the meaning of *bhakti* with lucid clarity and indeed, he will attain realization of *bhakti*.

The Perfect Definition

The statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, “*kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* – while all other forms of Godhead are expansions, Kṛṣṇa is personally the original form of Godhead” is accepted as the defining statement in any deliberation on *sambandha-tattva*, or existential relationships. Similarly, the verse at hand, the definition of *uttamā-bhakti* that we are now considering, must be accepted as the defining statement in relation to *abhidheya-tattva*, the means to the ultimate end, namely *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

It is said, “*sā cāniyame-niyama-kāriṇī* – the factual definition of something is the one that exceeds all others in authority and is thus regarded as the most prominent.”

Fruitive workers, speculative philosophers, mystics, those who offer the results of their work to God, sense enjoyers, whimsical religionists, and the members of various cults, all propagate their own conceptions of *bhakti*. This verse, from which the symptoms of *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa can be derived, has utterly subverted their opinions, understandings and inferences by proving these to be inconsistent, flawed and greatly misled.

¹ A gentle, sympathetic, or benevolent disposition; showing consideration for others. Synonyms include “affection, lovingness, fondness, intimacy, agreeableness, pleasantness, gratefulness, thankfulness, softness and tenderness. (Based on the definition of “kind” found in the Oxford dictionary)

Intrinsic Symptoms and Boundary Symptoms

“Perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and performed out of genuine kindness to Him, when neither prone to any selfish, ulterior desires nor eclipsed by impersonal knowledge, fruitive work, or any other occupation, is known as *uttamā-bhakti*.”

The symptoms described in the second half of this verse, *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇa-anu-śīlanam*, directly comprise *bhakti*’s own form. Hence, these symptoms are called the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* of *bhakti*. The symptoms described in the first half of this verse, *anya-abhilāṣitā-śunyaṁ jñāna-karma-ādi-anāvṛtam*, demarcate the boundary of *bhakti*. Hence, these symptoms are called the *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* of *bhakti*.²

A Technical Analysis of Interpreting the Verb-root śīl

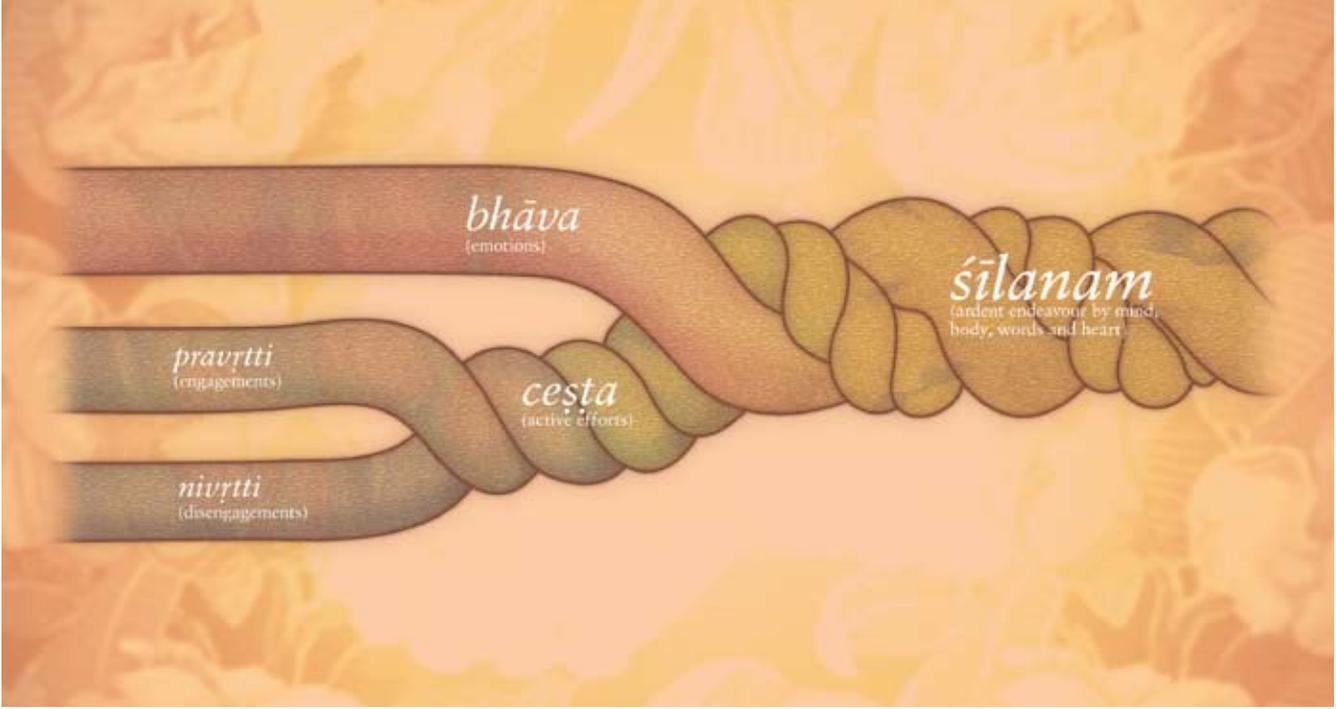
There is no verb in this verse, but the verb-root *śīl* within the noun *anuśīlanam* is perfectly obvious. The word *anuśīlanam* is formed by qualifying the verb-root *śīl* with the prefix *anu*. In Sanskrit grammar there are ten ways to interpret a verb, technically called *gaṇas*³. Within some of these *gaṇas* – headed by the *gaṇa* called *cura-gaṇa* – the verb-root *śīl* is interpreted as “repeated or permanent exercise or discipline” (*abhyāsa*). By this interpretation, *śīl* is conceived of as having progress or engagement (*pravṛtti*) as its essential characteristics. In contrast, within the other *gaṇas* – headed by the *gaṇa* called *bhvā-gaṇa* – the same verb-root, *śīl*, is interpreted as “profound stillness or concentration of thought, or intent contemplation of a particular object” (*samādhi*). By this interpretation, *śīl* is conceived of as having withdrawal or disengagement (*nivṛtti*) as its essential characteristics.

Active Efforts and Emotional States of Being

The expression of *bhakti* is accomplished both through active efforts (*ceṣṭā*) and emotional states of being

² The literal meaning of the words *svarūpa*, *taṭastha* and *lakṣaṇa* are as follows: *sva* means “own” or “intrinsic”; *rūpa* means “form”; *taṭa* means “boundary”; *stha* means “situated on” and *lakṣaṇa* means “symptom” or “symptoms”.

³ “A series of roots or words following the same rule and called after the first word of the series” – Monier Williams Sanskrit Dictionary



(*bhāva*). The verb root *śīl* accounts for both of these features of *bhakti*.⁴

Active Engagements and Active Disengagements

Continuing on, the active feature itself of *anuśīlanam* for the sake of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is expressed through one's body, one's mind and one's words. Each of these methods of expression is always seen in the two forms of engagements (*pravṛtti-rūpa*) and disengagements (*nivṛtti-rūpa*).

Engaging in the nine prominent limbs of *bhakti*, which constitute its very form, through one's body, mind and words is *kṛṣṇa-anuśīlanam* in the form of an active engagement (*pravṛtti-ātmaka-ceṣṭā*). On the other hand, resolutely abstaining from offending Kṛṣṇa's holy name or the process of serving Kṛṣṇa is *kṛṣṇa-anuśīlanam* in the form of an active disengagement (*nivṛtti-ātmaka-ceṣṭā*).

Perpetual and Without Obstruction

The prefix *anu* can be used to mean "following", "accompanying", "repeatedly" or "perpetually". In Śrī *Harināmāmṛta-vyākaraṇa* Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī comments on the use of the prefix *anu* in the context of *kṛṣṇa-pravacanīya* (cf. Pāṇini's *karma-pravacanīya*⁵).

⁴ Note from the preceding section that *abhyāsa* can be considered an action, and *samādhi* can be considered an emotional state of being.

⁵ "A term for certain prepositions of particles not connected with a verb but generally governing a noun (either separated

lakṣaṇa-vīpse-itthanī-bhūteṣvabhir-bhāge pariprati 'anu' reṣu saharthe ca hīne tūpaś-ca kathiyat

Śrī *Harināmāmṛta-vyākaraṇa* (4.107)

The characteristics that are repeated in each of the prefixes *pari*, *prati* and parts of *abhi* [especially "toward" and "severally", or "one after another"] are also included in *anu*. But it is to be mentioned that *anu* also exclaims "accompaniment" and "inferiority" like the prefix *upa*.

The prefix *anu* is used in this verse with the verb-root *śīl* to convey "perpetually and ardently endeavouring". In other words, the ardent endeavours (*śīlanam*) discussed in this definition of *uttamā-bhakti* must be perpetual and without obstruction. Furthermore, such perpetual, ardent endeavours must be exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When *anu-śīlanam* in both its features, namely active efforts and emotional states of being, is meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then it is part of *bhakti*. Hence *kṛṣṇa-anu-śīlanam*.

Flawed Definitions

Pleasing, active engagements exclusively meant for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is indeed *bhakti*. It stands to reason that perpetual, ardent endeavour (*anuśīlanam*) must be immediately pleasing to the person it is meant for. Thus, it would seem we have discovered the definition of *bhakti* in the term *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* itself.⁶

.....

from it or forming a compound with it)." – Monier Williams Sanskrit Dictionary

⁶ The definition presently under discussion is "perpetual,

However, this symptom of *bhakti* is tainted by two flaws (*doṣā*). In some respects it extends to include too much (*ativyāpti-doṣā*) and in other respects, it does not extend far enough (*avyāpti-doṣā*). Those symptoms that are not tainted by the faults of under-extension (*avyāpti*), over-extension (*ativyāpti*) or inconsistency are the correctly derived symptoms of *bhakti*.

Over-extension

If *bhakti* were defined solely as *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* (perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa), or to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then, as we will see, it would serve to establish even spiteful demons like Kaiṁsa's most fearsome wrestlers, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika, as devotees. Herein, the symptoms of *bhakti* have extended to include too much. In other words, *ativyāpti-doṣā* has arisen.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa heard the challenging words of Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika upon entering Kaiṁsa's royal wrestling arena, the joy of heroism (*vīra-rasa*) surged within Him. Whenever a warrior receives blows from his opponent, he is thrilled. Thus, when Kṛṣṇa received repeated blows from Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika, who perpetually endeavoured to attack Him, He naturally experienced the happiness that arises from heroism. Should one then deem Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika to be *bhaktas*? Since their endeavours were meant for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's undoing, and not at all for His enjoyment, no one will ever conclude that they are *bhaktas*.

Under-extension

Conversely, defining *bhakti* simply as pleasing Śrī Kṛṣṇa, would imply that someone who causes Kṛṣṇa any displeasure at all is not a *bhakta* and that his actions are not expressions of *bhakti*.

For example, once when Mother Yaśodā was breastfeeding baby Kṛṣṇa, the milk she had been heating began to boil over. At once, she removed Śrī Kṛṣṇa from her lap, much to His displeasure, and ran to save the milk. Kṛṣṇa was so enraged that, biting His lips, He smashed a nearby clay pot that was full of yoghurt. He was so intensely unhappy at being denied His mother's breast milk to His full satisfaction that He burst into tears.

.....
 ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, along with the implication that "such perpetual, ardent endeavour must immediately gratify the person it is meant for".

When Mother Yaśodā denied Śrī Kṛṣṇa full satisfaction, He was not even slightly pleased with her. Hence, in this case, defining *bhakti* as *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* alone prevents the definition from extending to include these actions. In other words, *avyāpti-doṣā* has arisen.

Mother Yaśodā is the presiding goddess of immaculate *prema-bhakti* in *vātsalya-rasa* (parental love of God). Her every endeavour is for the sake of serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this pastime, she had thought to herself, "My breast milk alone will not fully nurture Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but the milk on the stove, which is now boiling over, will protect His life!" Although Mother Yaśodā was the queen of Vraja and was always surrounded by unlimited servants and maids, she would personally milk the best cows and heat their excellent milk. Then, with her own hands she would prepare the finest butter for Kṛṣṇa.

"Even if I displease Kṛṣṇa for the time being," she had thought, "I must save this milk for Him." Thoughts like this would cause her *prema-bhakti* to swell to exceptional heights and thereafter permeate all of Her actions. Her actions can never be anything but *bhakti*.

Genuine Kindness to Him

The word *ānukūlyena* prevents the faults of under-extension (*avyāpti-doṣā*) and over-extension (*ativyāpti-doṣā*) from tainting the definition of *bhakti*. In the instrumental case,⁷ the adjective *ānukūla* (kind) becomes *ānukūlyena* (by means of kindness). If someone aspires to perform *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* – perpetual, ardent endeavours meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa – then he must first become *ānukūla* – genuinely kind to Him. It must be his sole ambition to please and satisfy Śrī Kṛṣṇa and he must completely expel even the slightest trace of hostility (*pratīkūlatā*) from his heart. Even if someone's *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* temporarily seems to be entirely favourable for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, if it is not utterly devoid of any underlying adversity and any craving for personal gratification, then it is not *bhakti*. Although his endeavours may momentarily please his worshipful Lord, if they harbour any personal, selfish, ulterior motives or any motivation besides pleasing the Lord, he will fail to procure the actual fruit of *bhakti*, namely superlative

⁷ The instrumental case is expressed by the inflection *ena* in Sanskrit and with the prepositions "by means of" or "with" in English. For example, in "perceived directly *by means of* one's own eye" or "perceived directly *with* one's own eye", the noun eye is used in the instrumental case.

love of Godhead (*prema*). Instead, the result he obtains will simply correspond to his underlying motivations.

“Pleasing Śrīla Gurudeva Gives Me Life”

Many of the disciples of our Śrīla Gurudeva, *jagad-guru paramārādhyatama* Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāda, gave their bodies, minds, words and wealth to assist in fulfilling his heart’s deepest ambitions. Although he was immensely pleased by their service, or *anuśilana*, it is seen that some of them, even after serving him in this way for so many years, were willing to abandon him, their own *guru* (*guru-tyāgā*), and that others have developed *guru-bhoga*, the propensity to exploit him. That is, instead of striving to imbibe the ideal and character of our Śrī Gurupāda-padma, who was perpetually rapt in *bhajana*, they have simply imitated his external activities and audaciously costumed themselves as *gurus*. Not even the first stage of *bhakti* has manifested in their hearts.

If we contemplate the cause for this, we find that as they served him, they failed to maintain the attitude, “Śrīla Gurudeva will be pleased by accepting my service and pleasing him gives me life.” Since they served him with many other motives and not exclusively with the hope of pleasing him, they were cheated out of obtaining

the principal fruit of serving a *sādhu* and have instead attained whatever they secretly desired. If someone’s purpose is genuine then as *bhakti* appears in his heart all its symptoms, which are mentioned in the scriptures, will manifest in him and all hankerings and aspirations opposed to *bhakti* will gradually diminish.

Symptoms Identical with Bhakti

In our investigation thus far, we have seen that the use of the noun *anuśilanam* (perpetual, ardent endeavours) is far from meaningless. Surely therefore, we cannot assume that the adjective *ānukūlya* can sufficiently define *bhakti* on its own. As we have seen, on the one hand, perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇānuśilanam*) does not qualify as *bhakti* if it is not free from hostility; and, on the other hand, even if one’s *kṛṣṇānuśilanam* displeases Śrī Kṛṣṇa, if it is devoid of hostility, it may rightfully be called *bhakti*. Hence while simply pleasing Śrī Kṛṣṇa may not always be *bhakti*, *kṛṣṇānuśilanam* that is devoid of hostility certainly is *bhakti*.

Furthermore, without a consideration of the active efforts and emotional states of being involved in *ānuśilanam*, the mere absence of hostility will not be



bhakti. For example, pots and other inert objects harbour no hostility toward Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but due to their insentience, they cannot make any active effort for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sake nor express any emotion for Him. Therefore, the two terms *ānukūlyena* and *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* together verily express the intrinsic symptoms of *bhakti*.

It has been stated in the scriptures:

tad-abhinmatve sati tad-bhodakatvaṁ svarūpa-lakṣaṇam

That which remains identical with an object while causing comprehension of it to arise is called the object's *svārūpa-lakṣaṇa* (intrinsic symptom).

The joint term *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* – the extraordinary nature of perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and endowed with the characteristic of kindness to Him (*ānukūlya*) – allows one to comprehend the meaning of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. At the same time, *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* is truly identical with *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* itself. Hence *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* is the *svārūpa-lakṣaṇa* (intrinsic symptom) of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

Symptoms Distinct from Bhakti

Now we will consider the two boundary symptoms.

tad-bhinmatve sati tad-bhodakatvaṁ taṣṭha-lakṣaṇam

That which remains distinct from an object while causing comprehension of it to arise is called the object's *taṣṭha-lakṣaṇa* (boundary symptom).

In the first half of the verse – *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādyanāvṛtam* – the terms *anya-abhilāṣitā*, and *jñāna-karma-ādi* describe *uttamā-bhakti* through their distinction from it. Hence they are the *taṣṭha-lakṣaṇa* (boundary symptoms) of *uttamā-bhakti*.

Not Prone to Any Selfish, ulterior Motives

The purpose of the phrase *anya-abhilāṣitā-śūnyam* is to reveal that, while constantly engaged in the search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's happiness, one must exclusively wish to obtain *bhakti* without harbouring any selfish, ulterior motives, like the aspiration to attain celestial or bodily pleasures.

It is very significant that the term *anyābhilāṣitā* has been used instead of *anyābhilāṣa*. While the prayers of some devotees may at times appear to be in the form of

anyābhilāṣa, in other words motivated by some desire other than Śrī Kṛṣṇa's happiness, they are still not prone to foster these other desires (*anyābhilāṣitā*).

To illustrate this point, consider one example:

Śrī Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja yearned to become the emperor of the world in order to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. For this end, he supplicated Śrī Kṛṣṇa with his request to perform the Rājasūya-yajña.⁸ Actually, his apparent desire to be emperor was only *anyābhilāṣa*, but in fact, it was devoid of *anyābhilāṣitā*. His actual motivation was simply to have the necessary opulence to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a way befitting the Lord's position. In other words, his aspiration to have sovereignty over the whole world was not motivated by a desire to achieve personal greatness.

The word *anyābhilāṣitā* is comprised of the noun *anyābhilāṣa* (selfish, ulterior motive) and the suffix *ṇin*, which means “to foster”. Thus, the nature of fostering selfish, ulterior motives is called *anyābhilāṣitā*.

Moreover, if a *śuddha-bhakta* is faced with some imminent disaster, he may pray to Śrī Bhagavān to save him. Although his prayer may appear to be *anyābhilāṣa*, it will not hinder his *bhakti*.

Not Eclipsed

Perpetual endeavour in the form of active efforts and emotional states of being, meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, performed out of genuine kindness to Him, and uneclipsed by knowledge (*jñāna*) or fruitive work (*karma*) is, in fact, *uttamā-bhakti*.

In this context, *jñāna* refers to the search for the impersonal *brahma*; *karma* refers to daily rituals (*nitya-karmā*), and rituals meant for specific occasions (*naimittika-karmā*), as outlined in the *smṛti-śāstras*; and *ādi* (literally “and so on”) refers to futile forms of renunciation (*phalgu-vairāgyā*), mystic *yoga* (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*), *abhyāsa-yoga* as delineated in *saṅkhya-śāstra* (the scriptures dealing with empiric enumeration of universal elements); and so forth.

All of the above disciplines are to be rejected by the *sādhaka* because they eclipse his devotion and because their purpose is not even remotely meant to make the Lord happy. Through these disciplines, the *sādhaka*

⁸ The Rājasūya-yajña may only be performed by a king, and prospective world emperor, who has already subjugated the entire world, either by force or by consent, and has formalized his conquest by the particular means outlined in *śāstra*.

can attain some supernatural powers, all of which are diametrically opposed to the longing search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's happiness. Since these forms of *jñāna* and *karma* thoroughly eclipse devotion, they have been forsaken.

The word *anāvṛtam*, which means “not eclipsed”, has been used in connection with *jñāna* and *karma* instead of *śunya*, which means “devoid of”. The significance of this is that certain forms of both *jñāna* and *karma* are integral parts of *bhakti*. Supremely pure *jñāna* is present within *bhakti* as the search for one's worshipful deity and as knowledge of the reality of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *bhagavat-tattva-jñāna*. And what appears to be *karma* (literally action), is present within *bhakti* as serving the Supreme Lord by cleaning His temple, cooking for Him and so on. Factually these activities are included among the nine limbs of *bhakti*; they are not mundane *karma*. Had the phrase *jñāna-karma-ādi-śunya* been used, which means devoid of *jñāna*, *karma* and so on, the aforementioned *viśuddha-bhakti-tattva-jñāna* (knowledge of the reality of supremely pure *bhakti*), as well as service to Bhagavān, would have also been forsaken even though these forms of *jñāna* and *karma* do not eclipse *bhakti*. In fact, they solely and indispensably nurture it.

The Highest Perfection of Bhakti

In our evaluation of the term *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam*, we must surely include *anuśīlanam* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa in any of His forms, like Rāma and Nṛsiṃha. Still, in light of this understanding, it would be most excellent if Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the original and most revered *guru-pāda-padma* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, has left some intimation of the utmost culmination of *uttamā-bhakti* within this perfectly derived definition; that culmination which is observed in the most exalted stages of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas' *bhajana*.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī was a most distinguished associate of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Due to their great intimacy, he understood what was in Śrīla Rūpa

Gosvāmī's heart and has therefore written “*anukūlye sarvendriye kṛṣṇānuśīlana*” within his translation of this verse. He has used the words *sarva-indriya*, “with all senses”, in order to indicate the highest stage of *bhakti*. That is to say, it is impossible for anyone but the *vraja-gopīs* who are in *madhura-rasa*, the mode of amorous love of Godhead, to perform *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam* with all of their senses. It is even impossible for those

within *vātsalya-rasa*, the mode of parental love of Godhead, to perform *kṛṣṇānuśīlanam*, in its highest perfection, with all of their senses.

The Fruit of Bhakti

Hearing, chanting, remembering and so on comprise the very form of *uttamā-bhakti*. If a *sādhaka* performs his *sādhana-bhakti* with the sole intention of making Śrī Bhagavān happy, he will attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*, the fruit of his *sādhana*, very quickly and with ease. Thereafter, he will gradually advance through each successive stage of *prema*. Therefore, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.3.22) it is said:

bhakti-yogo bhagavati tan-nāma-grahaṇādibhiḥ

Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society.⁹

Here, although it suffices to simply say *bhakti-yoga*, the word *bhagavati* is included in order to convey that the activities of *bhakti*, such as chanting and remembering, are only known as *bhakti-yoga* when they are performed exclusively for Śrī Bhagavān's pleasure. Only this *bhakti-yoga* can bestow *prema*. If the activities of *bhakti* such as chanting and remembering are performed with any purpose other than pleasing Śrī Bhagavān, they cannot be called *bhakti-yoga* and they will never bear the fruit of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

 Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*

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⁹ Translation by Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, © Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

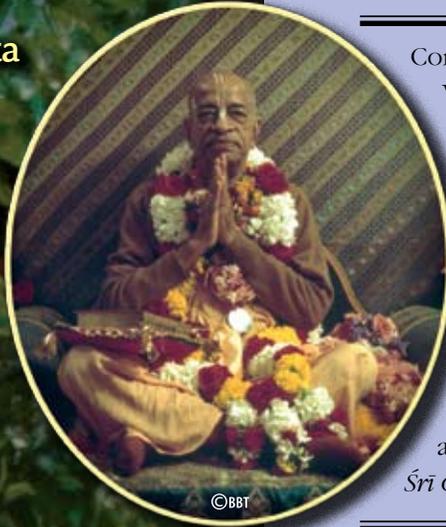
-APPEARING IN ENGLISH FOR THE FIRST TIME-

The Most Compassionate *Avatāra Part 3*

KĀRUṆAYĀ-AVATĪRṆAḤ-KALAU



by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Svāmī Mahārāja



Continued from *Rays of The Harmonist*,
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In Part Two of this article, Śrī Rāmanānda Rāya explained to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu the value of *varṇāśrama-dharma* as a means to satisfy the supreme Lord Viṣṇu. When Mahāprabhu rejected this as external, Rāmanānda Rāya told Him that to offer Śrī Kṛṣṇa the results of one's action is the essence of all perfection. Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 8.58–9)

Only the servants of Bhagavān can accept all things on His behalf

The tendency to live an unrestrained lifestyle is opposed to the principles of *varṇāśrama-dharma*. A person thus inclined, in the course of his life, will not accept the necessity of completely surrendering the results of his actions to Bhagavān.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī donated half of his acquired wealth to the *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas.¹ *Śāstra* repeatedly emphasizes service to the *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas, because only those who are servants of Bhagavān, that is, His devotees, are able to accept all things on His behalf.

Mlecchas and *yavanas*, who are outside the *varṇāśrama* system, can also accumulate *sukṛti* (spiritual merit) by giving in charity to the *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas. In other words, the Lord actually extends His own hands to accept every offering made to Him through the medium of serving the *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas. Yet the members of modern civilized society, who are prone to pampering their own whims, cannot accept this fact. Now they have become accustomed to seeing the Lord as impoverished.

Śrī Bhagavān is never impoverished

The greatest downfall of a *nirviśeṣa-vādi* is that he considers himself and everyone else to be the Lord,

¹ A brief description of this is found in the beginning of Chapter 19 of Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā*.

“The prime reason that Śrī Gaurasundara advented in this world was to deliver to its inhabitants the message of Vaikuṅṭha and to bestow upon them immaculate, transcendental and spontaneous love of God - bhagavata-prema.”



and consequently he ultimately maintains the concocted idea that everyone is the poverty-stricken Lord – *daridra-bhagavān* or *daridra-nārāyaṇa*. Therefore, when such *nirviśeṣa-vādis* have themselves eaten, they say,

“Now the Lord has eaten.”

And they support this by quoting *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.14):

*ahaṁ vaiśvānara bhutvā
prāṇināṁ deham āśritaḥ
prāṇa-āpāna samāyuktaḥ
pacāmy annaṁ catur-viddhaṁ*

As the fire of digestion in the bodies of the living entities, I combine with the out-going and in-coming airs to digest the four types of foodstuffs.

“When the Lord is sitting in people’s stomachs, what need is there to feed Him elsewhere? And furthermore, does a God made of wood or stone have the ability to eat?”

Driven by such demoniac tendencies, these atheists have gradually diminished the royal standard of service in many ancient temples. It is said that even in Śrī Puri-dhāma, the excellent standard of service to Śrī Jagannātha-deva has drastically deteriorated. It is sheer madness to think that such an atheistic world would consent to offering everything into the hands of the Lord. For this reason, Śrī Gaurasundara rejected this injunction as external.²

² Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Recite a *śloka* revealing the ultimate aim of life.” Rāmānanda Rāya answered, “Performing one’s own occupational duties, or *sva-dharma*, is *viṣṇu-bhakti*.” He then quoted a verse from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: “The Supreme Person, Śrī Viṣṇu, is worshipped by properly executing one’s duties in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to please Him” – *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* (8.57–9), Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.

Qualification for sannyāsa

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya then mentioned the next topic: the renunciation of fruitive action, or *karma-sannyāsa*. In Kali-yuga, *sannyāsa* has come to mean the mere acceptance of *sannyāsa* garb, but the actual prerequisite for *sannyāsa* is a purified heart. When one becomes detached from the fruits of action by performing selfless work (*niṣkāma-karma*), one’s renunciation is perfect. On the other hand, if anyone accepts *sannyāsa* while his heart is still impure, then the thirst for enjoyment will fully remain. His *sannyāsa* is not a means to achieve love for Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-prema*).

First of all, in Kali-yuga, it is not possible for everyone to accept *karma-sannyāsa*. Moreover, even for those who can accept it, such *sannyāsa*, which is a way of living above *karma*, is simply a state of harmony with the three modes of material nature. It cannot help one attain love of God (*bhagavat-prema*).

The reason for this is that the Virajā River (the dividing line between the material and spiritual natures) is the very place where the three modes of material nature exist in a state of harmony, and although the predominance of the three modes is not perceived in the Virajā River, the internal potency of Bhagavān is still not active there.

Bhagavad-bhakti, loving devotion to the Supreme Lord, is possible when one is in the shelter of His internal potency known as *yoga-māyā*: “*mahātmanas tu* – the great souls always remain in the shelter of My divine energy”³. A person may achieve deliverance from the illusory potency, or *mahā-māyā*, but unless he receives the shelter of the internal potency, or *yoga-māyā*, it is impossible for him to grasp the message of Vaikuṅṭha.

The prime reason that Śrī Gaurasundara advented in this world was to deliver to its inhabitants the message of Vaikuṅṭha and to bestow upon them immaculate,

³ C.f. *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (9.13)

*“This prema is devoid of any scent of awe and reverence
and issues from the ocean of bhāva (transcendental emotions)
in the incomparable realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana -
the topmost place in Vaikunṭha.”*



transcendental and spontaneous love of God: *bhagavata-prema*. This *prema* is devoid of any scent of awe and reverence and issues from the ocean of *bhāva* (transcendental emotions) in the incomparable realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana – the topmost place in Vaikunṭha. What, therefore, can renunciants (*sannyāsīs*) understand about the Unparalleled Entity, regardless of whether their hearts are pure or impure? Understanding that those renunciants lack eligibility to receive *kṛṣṇa-tattva-rasa*⁴, Śrī Gaurasundara also rejected the acceptance of such *sannyāsa*, regarding it as external.

Devotion mixed with empiric knowledge

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya then spoke about *jñāna-miśra-bhakti*, or devotion that is mixed with a desire for liberation. On this path, after a person finally attains the stage of self-realization called *brahma-bhūta* and subsequently becomes full of bliss (*brahma-bhūta-prasannātmā*), he may then perceive the path of devotion to the Lord. However, until he actually sees it, the prospect of merging with the impersonal aspect of the Supreme (*nirviśeṣa-sāyujya-mukti*) blinds him. For a pure devotee of Bhagavān, this *sāyujya-mukti* is no better than hell. He refuses any kind of salvation other than loving service to Bhagavān even though the Lord is eager to award him various other kinds of *mukti* like attainment of a form similar to His own (*sarūpya-mukti*) and residence on the same planet as Him (*salokya-mukti*).

Thus, in *jñāna-miśra-bhakti* there is no hope of ever attaining pure love. A person with the egotism that he is already liberated can have no realization of the variegated features of Absolute Reality – He who casts

⁴ *Kṛṣṇa-tattva-rasa* is the ambrosia of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, or the ambrosia of the reality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

away all delusion. Therefore such egotism reflects the tendency to be antagonistic to Bhagavān.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu imparted to the world the eternal object of the eternally pure living entity’s worship (the *nitya sevya-vastu* of the *nitya śuddha-jīva*). The worship of the *nitya sevya-vastu* is not a concocted religion that has arisen from someone’s imagination; it is the soul’s intrinsic function. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu descended to personally give this. He thus embodies the statement “*karuṇayā-avatīrṇaḥ-kalau* – the most compassionate incarnation, who has descended in this age of Kali”.

Devotion devoid of empiric knowledge

Ordered by Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya then introduced the transcendental, natural religion – the path of devotion to Bhagavān devoid of empiric knowledge (*jñāna-miśra-bhakti*). This can be pursued by everyone, and it is the only universal path that is suitable for all living entities – the young and the old, women, scholars, wretches, fools, *yavanas* (those from tribal castes like the Kirāta and Hūnāndhra), *brāhmaṇas*, Hindus and Muslims, natives and foreigners, and all societies of humans. Indeed, it is even suitable for souls in every species of life, such as animals, birds, insects and worms, in whatever species they appear. For the first time in their conversation, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu responded by saying, “This is all right.”

In order to express the process for attaining *jñāna-śūnya-bhakti*, Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya quoted the prayers that Brahmā offered after he stole Kṛṣṇa’s cows and calves:

*jñāne prayāsam-udapāsya namanta eva
jīvanti sanmukharitāṁ bhavadiya vārtāṁ
sthāne sthitāḥ sruti gatam tanu vāṅmanobhir
ye prāyaśo’jita-jito’pyasi tais-trailokyām*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.3)

O Lord, in all the three worlds You are unconquerable, yet You are easily defeated by those devotees who shun the endeavour to acquire knowledge empirically by meditating on undifferentiated *brahma*; who hear about You through the narrations emanating from the mouths of *sādhus*; and who thus carry out their life following the path of the saints with their body, mind and words.

This, indeed, is the first and quintessential explanation of the means to attain Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's gift: the form of *kṛṣṇa-prema* indicated by the statement *anarpita-carīm carat*.

Upon hearing about this process from Śrī Rāmānanda Raya's lotus mouth, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu immediately accepted it. "This is all right," He said, "but speak further." Until this point, they had discussed topics that related to observing the duties of one's caste and social order (*varṇāśrama-dharma*); offering the results of one's actions to the Lord (*niṣkāma karma-yogā*); ceasing all action performed for a fruitive reward and thus renouncing action (*karma-sannyāsa*); and engaging in devotion that is mixed with dry, speculative knowledge (*jñāna-miśra-bhakti*), with the desire to attain liberation. The entire world has taken these topics and changed and twisted them to concoct innumerable philosophies. However, it is imperative to carefully consider how all of these philosophies are unable to give *premā-pumārtho-mahān*, the fifth and ultimate goal of human life, *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Bhakti herself destroys the three-fold miseries

The greatest obstacle to achieving love for Kṛṣṇa is the effort to search out the impersonal aspect of the Supreme (*brahma-anusandhānā*).

*tāra madhye mokṣa vāñchā kaitava pradhāna
jāhā hoite kṛṣṇa-bhakti haya antardhāna*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 1.92)

Among all types of deception, hankering for impersonal salvation is more full of conceit than any other. In its presence, loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa vanishes.

Those who secretly hanker for liberation should not try to understand Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu propagated *bhagavat-*



The deity of Mahāprabhu installed by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja in Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha where He is still being worshipped to this day.

*dharmā*⁵, and in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the hankering for liberation has been thoroughly denounced.

Bhagavad-bhakti is herself the destroyer of suffering and the eradicator of the three-fold miseries. If those who hanker for *mukti* with the hope of becoming free from the three-fold miseries take shelter of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet and become initiated into the *harer-nāma-mantra*⁶ which He propagated, then as soon as they bear the victory flag of *śrī kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, the mirror of their heart will be cleansed and the blazing forest fire of their material existence will be

⁵ *Bhagavat-dharma* refers to eternal and pure loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as revealed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

⁶ This refers to "harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam, kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā— In the age of Kali, *hari nāma, hari nāma, hari nāma* is the only way; there is no other way, no other way, no other way." *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 17.21)*

*“As a result of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy,
a heart that would ordinarily have to be purified by the performance of
many sacrifices, charitable acts, and austerities, can be cleansed
even by just the initial result of inoffensive kṛṣṇa-kīrtana.”*



extinguished. Indeed, by this, one becomes acquainted with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s compassion.

The fruit of Śrī Kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana

As a result of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy, a heart that would ordinarily have to be purified by the performance of many sacrifices, charitable acts, and austerities, can be cleansed even by just the initial result of inoffensive *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. Liberation from the three kinds of suffering or from the mundane realm, which is governed by the three modes of material nature, is but the secondary result of *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, yet those in the impersonalist school (*jñāni-sampradāya*) undergo painstaking austerities birth after birth just to achieve it.

After liberation from matter, along with the blossoming of the supremely beneficial *bhagavad-bhakti*, the very life of the goddess of transcendental knowledge is revived, the ocean of bliss swells, the soul achieves complete good fortune, and all other fruits of *bhagavad-bhakti* are realized in a natural sequence. Those who search after these fruits through awareness of non-differentiation cannot find them. Therefore, from the very beginning, it is proper to abandon endeavours to find undifferentiated *brahma* through knowledge.

The snare of impersonalism

This search for undifferentiated *brahma* is merely an artificial, wicked endeavour. Every human being naturally accepts that Bhagavān is beyond compare. Those on a lower level of God-realization admire His potencies, and those on a higher platform acknowledge the Lord Himself as *sarva-śaktimān*, the possessor of all potencies. As a matter of misfortune, people have fallen into the clutches of the wicked, impersonalist

non-devotees and have gradually undertaken the pursuit of the impersonal aspect of reality. The last trap of *māyā* is the endeavour to gain knowledge about undifferentiated *brahma*. When human society displays its erudition, its intelligence is stolen by illusion in this way.

Otherwise, everyone generally accepts that the Lord has no equal and it is their position to serve Him. For this reason, the common men who have not associated with the impersonalists, are qualified to hear Mahāprabhu’s message. However, by the influence of Kali, this destructive doctrine of impersonalism has cast its net in various ways and is ensnaring innocent people.

The duty of those who introduce themselves as the servants of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is to instruct these innocent people about Kṛṣṇa and protect them from the clutches of impersonalism. If we are to protect people from the clutches of unauthorized sects, who are malicious towards the Lord, then it is necessary to firmly preach the conceptions of the *bhagavata-sampradāya* (the lineage of the highest order of exalted *gurus*).

All are qualified to hear about Kṛṣṇa

The second proposal made in the *jñāne prayāsam* verse formerly cited is to hear *bhagavat-kīrtana* (the singing of Bhagavān’s glories) from the mouths of *sādhus*. Everyone has the qualification for this. The high-born as well as the low, scholars and the uneducated, natives and foreigners, adherents of one religion or of another, animals and birds, worms and insects all have the eligibility to hear *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* from the mouths of *sādhus*. Qualifications like high birth, wealth, scholarship or beauty are not required for this.

Mahārāja Parikṣit achieved the mercy of Bhagavān simply by hearing (*śravaṇa*) and Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī by chanting (*kīrtana*). Thus, everyone can hear *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* from the mouths of *sādhus* and carry out their lives

in a humble manner. *Kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* refers to that *kīrtana* which Kṛṣṇa Himself has sung, as well as *kīrtana* that describes everything related to His name, form, qualities, pastimes and the specialities of His associates. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*. He instructed it to the sun-god, who in turn imparted it to Manu and Manu then told it to Ikṣvāku. In this way, through the disciplic succession, the saintly kings became acquainted with the *yoga* system propounded in *Bhagavad-gītā*.

The importance of hearing from the right source

The secret of *Bhagavad-gītā* cannot be discovered without accepting the shelter of a bona fide *paramparā*, nor can it be unravelled by the tedious wrangling of the Māyāvādīs. The manner in which the devotees of Bhagavān explain *Bhagavad-gītā* is the only manner of explanation worth hearing. “*Māyāvādīra bhāṣya śunīle haya sarva-nāśa* – one’s spiritual life will be completely destroyed if one hears the commentary of the Māyāvādīs.”

The *paramparā* resumed with Arjuna, a most glorious devotee of the Lord. Arjuna accepted the Lord as the Eternal Personality, the Unborn, the Indivisible, the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Shelter and the Complete Whole. His words concur with the opinion of various *ṛṣīs*, such as Devarṣi Nārada, Vyāsa, Devala, Asita and other exalted *mahājanas*. In *Bhagavad-gītā*, even the Lord Himself declares His unprecedented Supreme Personhood.

If someone rejects all these conclusions and instead hears the impersonalist commentaries of the Māyāvādīs, which present the conception that the Absolute Truth is devoid of attributes (*nirveśesa-vāda*) or if he listens to those who maintain the conception that one should identify one’s own self as the object of worship (*aham-grahopāsana*), then he will surely go to the darkest regions of hell.

As a matter of fact, for the devotee, every form of mundane enjoyment, from the happiness found in the lower planets all the way up to the happiness of being one with the Absolute (*kaivalya-sukha*), is the darkest hell.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the immaculate Purāṇa, which describes the names, qualities and pastimes of the Lord and His devotees. It is proper to hear these descriptions from the *paramparā*: “*jāho, bhagavata paḍo vaisnavera sthāne* – one must study the *Bhāgavatam* by approaching a Vaiṣṇava and accepting his shelter” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 5.131). Except for the

bhakta-bhāgavata, who never explains *Bhāgavatam* to earn a living, no one can explain the *grantha-bhāgavata*. The word *sādhū*⁷ implies the *bhakta-bhāgavata*.

Those who exclusively perform *bhagavad-bhajana* are indeed *sādhus*. If one can hear powerful narrations about Bhagavān from the mouths of such *sādhus* and apply the instructions within these narrations to one’s own life, then Ajita, the unconquerable Lord, will become *jīta*, conquered. To do this, one will have to establish oneself in *brahmaṇya-dharma*, in which one acquires the nature and qualities of a *brāhmaṇa*. By the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, all human beings have the qualification to situate themselves in *brahmaṇya-dharma*. Furthermore, according to the verse, “*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya*” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 8.128), anyone established in *brahmaṇya-dharma* has the qualification to continuously perform *kīrtana* of the narrations about Kṛṣṇa.

If one is to establish himself in *brahmaṇya-dharma*, one must become endowed with such qualities as truthfulness, control over the mind, control over the senses, tolerance, simplicity, knowledge, practical realization, belief in the Lord, and cleanliness. Only those who live their lives, keeping deceit, cunning, untruthfulness, deception, cheating, theft and abominable desires at a distance, and who hear *hari-kathā* from *sādhus* who are expert in *bhajana*, can completely drive away the tendency to collect knowledge, which takes the form of searching for the undifferentiated aspect of the Absolute. On the strength of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy, such people are qualified to achieve the fifth goal of human life, *bhagavat-prema*.

This indeed is the greatly generous gift of the most compassionate *avatāra*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is thus shown conclusively that He gives full meaning to the statement “*karuṇayā-avatīrṇaḥ-kalau* – the most compassionate *avatāra*, who descends in this Kali-yuga.”

THIS CONCLUDES THE THIRD AND FINAL PART OF THE SERIES OF
ARTICLES ENTITLED *KĀRUṆAYĀ-AVATĪRṆAḤ-KALAU*

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year 7, Issue 3, 1956

⁷ In the *jñāne prayāsam* verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.3) cited previously, the word *sat* in the term *sat-mukharitam* refers to *sādhus*, and *mukharitam* literally means “emanating from the mouths”. Hence *sat-mukharitam* refers to narrations by *sādhus*.



— Appearing in English for the first time

GURU-SEVĀ

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The Benefit of Sincere Sri Guru-sevā

Śrī Bhagavān bestows His mercy upon the *jīva* by appearing before him in the form of Śrī Guru. Other than serving Śrī Guru's lotus feet, there is no way for the *jīva* to achieve the Lord's mercy. The indirect, secondary result of serving Śrī Guru (*śrī guru-sevā*) is that all *anarthas*, such as lust and anger, which are unfavourable for the development of *śuddha-bhakti* and

which originate from the three modes of material nature, are easily conquered. The direct result of Śrī Guru *sevā* is that one attains service at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

*yasya sākṣād bhagavati
jñāna-dīpa-prade gurau
martyāsad-dhīḥ śrutam tasya
sarvaṁ kuñjara-śaucavat
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.15.26)*

The meaning of this verse is that those who maintain the ill-conception that Śrī Guru is an ordinary mortal will find that all their efforts to recite *mantras* and hear and meditate upon the purports of scripture ultimately bear no fruit. They are like the elephant who takes his bath only to immediately roll in the mud again. Śrī Guru is *pratyakṣa-bhagavān*, the directly perceivable form of the Supreme Lord, and it is he who bestows the light of transcendental knowledge upon the *jīva*.

The Mysterious truth of Śrī Guru-tattva

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has said: “*sākṣād bhagavatīti bhagavad-aṁśa-buddhir api gurau na kāryeti bhāvaḥ* – never even consider Śrī Gurudeva to be a partial expansion of the Lord (*bhagavad-aṁśa*)”, and, “*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair uktas tathā bhāvya eva sadbhiḥ kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam* – All scriptures and saints declare that Śrī Gurudeva is the direct manifestation of Śrī Hari Himself. Śrī Gurudeva is in fact that selfsame *viṣaya-vidyā* – Śrī Hari, who is the object of the devotees’ love – but in His aspect of *āśrayā-vidyā*, the dear most devotee of Kṛṣṇa, or the abode of love for Him. The form of Śrī Gurudeva is inconceivably one with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and different from Him (Śrī Gurvāṣṭakam 7).”

Truly, the worshipful object of our service, Śrī Bhagavān, has personally appeared before me in the form of Śrī Guru. Śrī Guru is Śrī Bhagavān’s own manifestation as the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa (*nitya-sevaka-vidyā*) and at the same time he is Śrī Bhagavān’s most dear one. All this is to be carefully considered.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura raises the question: “Śrī Gurudeva’s own father, children and neighbours consider him to be an ordinary human. Why is it that only his disciples consider him to be *parameśvara*, the Supreme Lord Himself?” Śrīla Ṭhākura then answers this question himself:

He explains that whether Śrī Bhagavān appears as Yadu-nandana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) or as Raghu-nandana (Śrī Rāma), He is certainly the Supreme Lord of all creation. Among those who took birth at the time of one of His appearances, some thought of Him as an ordinary human being, but does their opinion factually make Him one?

In the same manner, regardless of what other people may think of Śrī Gurudeva out of ignorance or according

to a worldly relationship with him, his disciples will always consider him to be the non-different manifestation of Śrī Bhagavān.

Śrī Bhagavān Himself has declared:

*nanvartha-kovidā brahman
varṇāśrama-vatām iha
ye mayā guruṇā vācā
taranty aṅjo bhavārṇavam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.80.33)*

O *brāhmaṇa*, among those who adhere to *varṇāśrama*, they who easily cross beyond the ocean of material existence through the instructions I give as *guru* are truly knowledgeable in matters of spiritual well-being.

*nāham iḥyā-prajātibhyāṁ
tapasopāśamena vā
tuṣyeyāṁ sarva-bhūtātmā
guru-śūśrūṣayā yathā
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.80.34)*

Not by the ritual worship of ordained *brāhmaṇas*, nor by austerity, nor by self-restraint, can I, the soul of all-beings, be so satisfied as by faithful service to Śrī Guru.

In this world the birth giving father is the first *guru*, the one who gives brahminical rights and instructions is the second *guru*, and the one who instructs us in *bhagavat-tattva* and gives us the *dīkṣā-mantra* is the third *guru*. This third *guru*, the *dīkṣā-guru*, is indeed the most prominent and venerable. By his grace alone the *jīva* crosses over the ocean of material existence and attains the fortune of finding the lotus feet of Śrī Bhagavān. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa-candra, along with His dear friend Śrī Sudāmā Vipra, resided in the home of their *gurudeva*. There He exhibited the highest ideal of *guru-sevā*. Bhagavān Śrī Caitanyadeva also exhibited the same glorious ideal of accepting shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Guru (*śrī guru-pādāśraya*) and rendering service to him.

Pretentious Guru-sevā will never bear any real fruit

With body, mind and words – or with one’s very life, one’s wealth, one’s intelligence and one’s speech – one must whole heartedly serve Śrī Guru. That which results

in bringing joy to the object of worship (*sevya-vastu*) is indeed called *sevā*, but a mere display of service predominantly motivated by the ill-purpose of securing personal gains, worship or fame can never be called *sevā*.

*dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama
sei deha kare tāra cid-ānanda-maya
aprākṛta-dehe tāra caraṇa bhajaya
Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 4.192-193)*

When the *bhakta* fully dedicates himself at the time of receiving *dīkṣā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes him as spiritual as Himself, permeating the *bhakta's* body with transcendence and bliss. With his spiritual body, the *bhakta* then worships Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

According to this statement compiled by a *mahājana* (a great devotee and authority),¹ to the extent that someone surrenders himself at the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva, he will be established in *dīkṣā* according to its actual meaning and he will attain the qualification to render service to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand, if he simply identifies himself with the words 'initiated disciple' but neglects *śrī guru-sevā*, or, on the pretence of performing *guru-sevā*, if he leads an independent life absorbed

in sense-gratification it cannot be accepted that he is actually living a life of devotion or even truly searching for the supreme goal of human life (*paramārthā*).

Filling the belly of oneself and one's bodily relatives with alms, wealth or ingredients that have been collected under the pretext of using them for the service of Śrī

¹ Although these passages were spoken by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the *mahājana* being Referred to here is Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, the compiler of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

Bhagavān and His devotees is such an extremely serious offence that simply thinking of such an activity makes one's whole body tremble in fear. No offence is worse than maintaining one's livelihood by displaying *śrī vigraha* for money; selling *mahā-prasāda*, *caraṇāmṛta* or *nāma-mantra*; or professionally discoursing on holy scriptures like the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Those who identify themselves as disciples cannot defend their identity as "disciple" or *guru-dāsa* if they live whimsically in transgression of the standards of discipline established by *sad-guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas,

or if they abandon fulling the heart's desire (*mano'bhīṣṭa-sevā*) of Śrī Gurudeva and thereafter seek shelter in personal sense-gratification on the pretext of doing *sevā* and *pūjā* (ceremonial worship). Their style of living can never be considered pursuant of *paramārtha*, or transcendence. If one does not precisely follow the orders and instructions of Śrī Gurudeva, without changing them, one can never do true good to oneself or others.

Real Guru-sevā

We must assemble in an *iṣṭagoṣṭhī* and deliberate specifically upon the eternally beneficial instructions, or *vāṇī*, of Śrīla Gurudeva that have emanated from his lotus lips or that he has recorded in devotional literatures, published in periodicals and

journals, and so on. Accordingly, we must endeavour to fulfil his deepest wishes. This will indeed be called *śrī guru-sevā*. Otherwise, as in Ekalavya's case, the efforts of someone who serves *guru* according to his own whims, without considering whether the *guru* is satisfied or not, can never be called *guru-sevā*. Śrī Gurudeva never accepts the service rendered by one so arrogant.

Conceited so-called service performed by one whose motive is to compete with the Vaiṣṇavas for personal name and fame as though they were his opponents, or who hankers for disciples and wealth, can never

“Filling the belly of oneself and one's bodily relatives with alms, wealth or ingredients that have been collected under the pretext of using them for the service of Śrī Bhagavān and His devotees is such an extremely serious offence that simply thinking of such an activity makes one's whole body tremble in fear.”

be equivalent to real *sevā*. On the other hand, what to speak of being free from pride, someone who engages in true *sevā*, will feel a mood of utter humility rising in his heart day by day, and he will feel himself to be more insignificant than the straw on the street. Along with that, he will become as tolerant as a tree, which never asks for anything yet gives everything; he will become devoid of the desire to be respected by others; and he will develop the tendency to give respect to all. Filled with transcendental humility, he will always be absorbed in chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

One attains perfection in all types of endeavours exclusively by pleasing Śrī Gurudeva. By pleasing him one's perception of difference (*bheda*) between Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name (*śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma*), His deity form (*śrī kṛṣṇa-vigraha*) and His own internal form and nature (*śrī kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*) will be dispelled and knowledge will awaken within him that the holy name (*śrī-nāma*) is personally Śrī Kṛṣṇa's own form of eternity, knowledge and bliss (His *sat-cit-ānanda svarūpa*). His form is the very embodiment of all transcendental humours, it is eternal, pure and completely liberated, that is to say it is free from even the faintest scent of illusion. When the conception arises that *nāma* and *nāmī*, or *śrī hari-nāma* and Śrī Hari Himself, are non-different, then the ten offences to the holy name will be eradicated and one will become qualified to attain the real mercy of *śrī nāma*.

The Truly Magnanimous Nature of Śrī Guru

Śrī Gurudeva is the non-different manifestation of Śrī Bhagavān. He appears in this material world just to dispel the darkness of ignorance and bestow *viśuddha-prema-bhakti* (absolutely pure loving devotion) upon the *jīvas*. Śrī Gurudeva, who is the ocean of mercy and who becomes distressed upon seeing the suffering of others, accepts so much pain for the sake of distributing this precious love. For this great treasure, the only price is sincere greed. That invaluable love will never be achieved through mockery. One who displays such mockery, which is completely disrespectful to Śrī Guru, will suffer in hell for an unlimited period of time.

If without duplicity someone accepts the shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Guru, which are the source of fearlessness and freedom from grief, and which are the basis of immortality, then, even if he is sinful, aggressive,

a fool, a wretch, poorly behaved, ill behaved, or even the worst behaved person, then Śrī Guru will never deprive him of mercy. Such a *guru* never sees the faults of others and always delivers the fallen souls. No one is the friend of our heart like he is. Our sole aspiration, our sole source of life, is his causeless mercy and our unpretentious dedication to him.

The Antithesis of Real Service

Those unfortunate arrogant disciples, who pretentiously display themselves as more knowledgeable than their *guru*, go as far as trying to rectify Śrī Gurudeva. They try to change the example he set for proper conduct (*acāra-dhara*) as well as the precepts he propagated (*pracāra-dhara*), and they attempt to introduce their own special style of conduct and precepts. Due to the severe *aparādha*² (offence) of disrespectfully considering Śrī Gurudeva to be an ordinary, mortal being, they bring about their own destruction and pave the way to destruction for many others. Just as it is an *aparādha* to consider a bona fide *guru* to be a false one, promoting a false *guru* as bona fide is equally offensive. None of the endeavours to perform *sevā* by someone entangled in the *aparādha* of disrespecting Śrī Guru can be considered *guru-sevā* or *bhagavat-sevā*. This so-called *sevā* accomplishes nothing more than simply exposing the self-pride of such people.

“Is the service I am rendering being accepted by Śrī Gurudeva?” This question must be reflected upon at every moment and at every step. Without considering this, the only thing one can accomplish through one's whimsically motivated activities or use of energy, wealth, intelligence and words, is the momentary gratification of one's senses. When mimicking the loving service of Śrī Gurudeva's dear most associates, through hard work and large donations, is rooted in a spirit of competition and when it is done out of envy by those who are discontented by the glories of others, then it will never be *śrī guru-sevā*.

In genuine endeavours to perform *śrī guru-sevā*, envy and arrogance do not exist at all; rather humility is quickly kindled and any intention to cause distress to others is unable to find a place in one's heart. Then a heart rending prayer full of intense, earnest

.....

2 Literally, “against loving service”.

pleading for the opportunity to perform *sevā* will arise: “Will *śrī-guru-pāda-padma* be merciful upon me, his fallen servant, and accept my service?”

The Greatest Danger for the Jīva

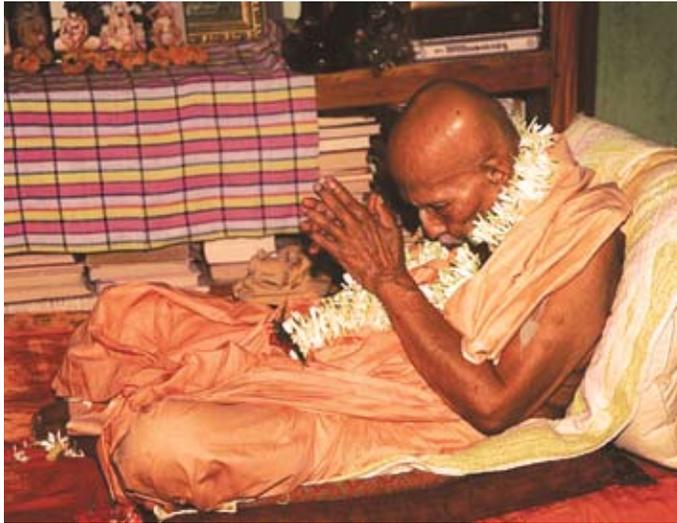
“What is “*sevā*”? I will certainly show them! What do they know about *sevā*? Only I know its real meaning.” This arrogant mentality is completely unfavourable for *śrī guru-sevā*.

If someone’s heart is full of dispositions that are unfavourable to *bhakti*, such as enviousness, enmity and violence, then, no matter how much he makes an external display of *bhajana*, then he is certainly deprived of

Bhakti-devī’s mercy. As a result of his offences at the lotus feet of Bhakti-devī, attachment to mundane sense-objects will at once manifest in his heart. Thereafter, the tendency to profess himself to be a Vaiṣṇava will manifest, a tendency rooted in the wickedness of fulfilling his desires to enjoy sense-objects on the pretence of serving Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas. At that time the predilection to remain under the guidance of Vaiṣṇavas and serve them will no longer prevail.

Surely, being cast out of *bhakti*’s shelter is the only factual disaster for the *jīva*. The cause of this severe disaster is none other than his offences at the lotus feet of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavas. As a consequence, the desires to enjoy wealth, women and fame drastically

increase within his heart. In fact, according to the logic “*yādṛśī bhāvanā yasya siddhir bhavati tādṛśī* – the fulfilment of one’s desires upon attaining perfection is in accordance with the thoughts one had during the phase of spiritual practice”, these worldly enjoyments become easily available to such people. However, the unfortunate *jīvas* cannot understand their own undoing. They simply spend all their time madly engaged in sensual



pleasures. They lose all sense of proper conduct in relation to *bhakti* and become entangled in various forms of ill-behaviour. Thus their hypocrisy and artificiality verily increases.

May the most worshipful *śrī guru-pāda-padma*, out of his causeless compassion, bestow his mercy upon me so that I may attain the qualification to selflessly

serve his lotus feet according to his *mano’bhīṣṭa*, while remaining in the *ānugatya* of his dear most associates.

This is the sole prayer of a fallen soul like me, according to the principle of subservience to the servant of the servant of the servant.

*āmi to’ vaiṣṇava e-buddhi hoile
amāni nā haba āmi
pratiṣṭhāśa āsi hṛdaya duṣibe
hoiba nirayagāmi*

Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru (3.2.8)

I will not be free from expectations of honour if I maintain the mentality that “I am a Vaiṣṇava”. Desiring prestige, my heart will become dirty and I will be bound for hell.

“ ‘Is the service I am rendering being accepted by Śrī Gurudeva?’ This question must be reflected upon at every moment and at every step. Without considering this, the only thing one can accomplish through one’s whimsically motivated activities or use of energy, wealth, intelligence and words, is the momentary gratification of one’s senses. ”



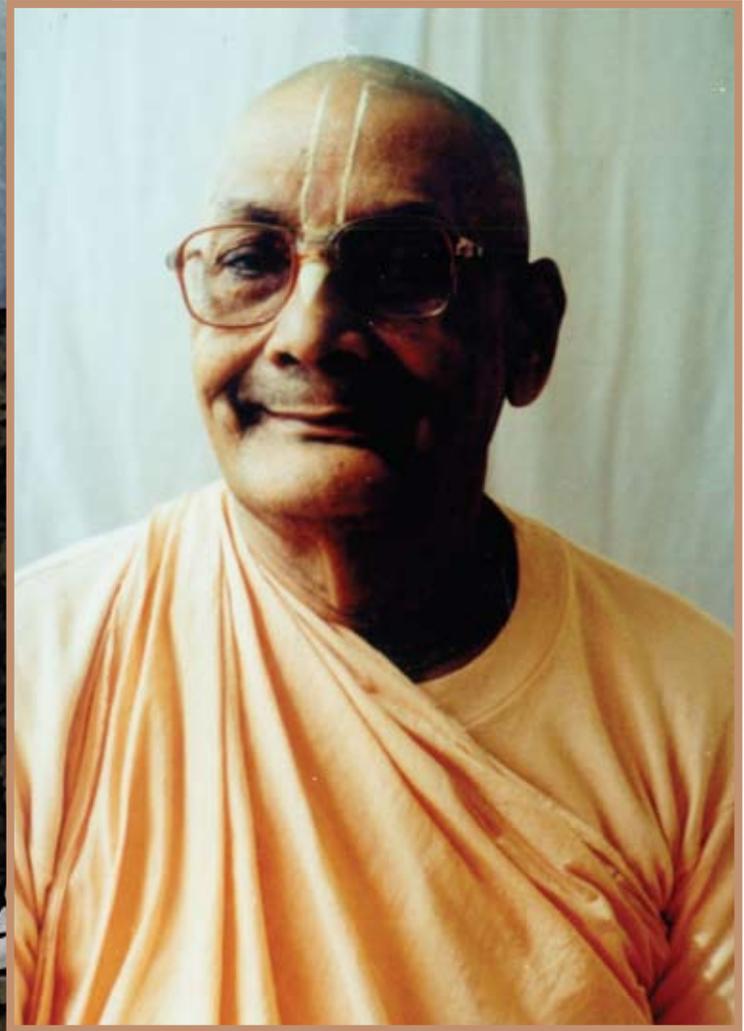
Translated from the monthly *Gauḍīya*, Year 4, No. 5

Appearing in English for the first time

King Jānaśruti and Raikva Muni



by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja



In ancient times there was an exceptionally generous king named Pautrāyaṇa Jānaśruti. To ensure that everyone in his kingdom was adequately fed, he established charitable boarding houses throughout his empire. One day, pleased by his generous nature, which is rare even among the heavenly beings, a group of celestial saints assumed the form of swans and, during the night, descended to the king's palace to give him their audience from the sky above. It was summer and the king was sleeping in the highest open terrace of his palace.

As they flew above him, the swan flying behind all the others spoke to the swan at the front. “Do you not see the magnificent bodily effulgence of King Jānaśruti, glowing like bright daylight in the night sky? Do not pass through that radiance, as its blazing heat may scorch you.”

Disregarding his praise, the swan flying ahead of him said, “To which fellow do you refer? You speak as if he is Śakatvān Raikva.”

The former swan enquired, “Who is Śakatvān Raikva?”

“Raikva is a great sage who is conversant with all that is worth knowing, for he has attained *brahma-jñāna* (knowledge of the Absolute Truth). The pious activities performed by Raikva encompass every possible pious activity that can be performed. This is but a brief introduction of him.”

King Jānaśruti listened in dismay as the swan decried him and glorified Raikva Muni. Disheartened by what he had heard, he restlessly reflected on the swan’s words for the remainder of the night. When he awoke the next morning, he narrated the entire incident to his charioteer and then ordered him: “Go now, and seek out Śakatvān Raikva. I would like to see him in person.”

The charioteer searched throughout many towns and villages, to no avail. He then returned to the king.

“Search for the exalted Raikva Muni on the banks of rivers,” ordered the king. “Search for him in deserted forest areas and in any other places unspoiled by the company of immoral men. These are the places where saintly personalities normally reside.”

On the order of the king, the charioteer resumed his search. Finally, he came to a deserted place where he found a man sitting under a bullock cart, scratching the itches on his body. The charioteer sat down beside him and enquired from him, “O revered sage, are you Śakatvān Raikva?”

“Yes, I am,” replied the *muni*.

The charioteer returned to the king at once and informed him about the sage. Thereafter, King Jānaśruti went to Raikva Muni, bearing the gift of six hundred cows, one golden necklace and one chariot. He offered the gifts to the *muni* and addressed him, “Please inform me about the deity you worship.”

The king’s gifts could not satisfy the saint.

“O peasant,” said the *muni*, “you are in the grip of sorrow and envy. I would say, in fact, that you are a peasant and not a king. You can keep your necklace, chariot and all these cows for yourself.”

The king became overwhelmed with anxiety and after some time, returned to the saint. This time he came with one thousand cows, an even more opulent

golden necklace, a chariot driven by the fastest horses and his own beloved daughter. He approached the saint and with folded hands, he begged the *muni*, “Please accept all these gifts. Accept my daughter as your own wife and bless me by making this village a place for your *āśrama*. O muni, mercifully instruct me about your worshipful deity.”

Raikva Muni spoke to the king again, “O grief-stricken peasant, your host of gifts is not my impetus to instruct you. You have offered me your daughter simply to impel me to instruct you. But without first rendering service to the spiritual master, What profound knowledge can you hope to elicit from him simply by offering him some remuneration (*dakṣinā*)?”

After speaking in this way, Raikva Muni began instructing the king in spiritual science (*brahma-vidyā*). He taught him to worship Vāyu – the destroyer of the external world – together with Prāṇa, or Paramātma (Supersoul) – the destroyer of the internal world – as the very form of spirit (*brahmā*). In this way he imparted *prāṇa-vidyā*¹ to the king. The place where Raikva Muni imparted these divine teachings to King Jānaśruti was later known as Raikvaparnā, a village in the state of Mahāvṛsa.

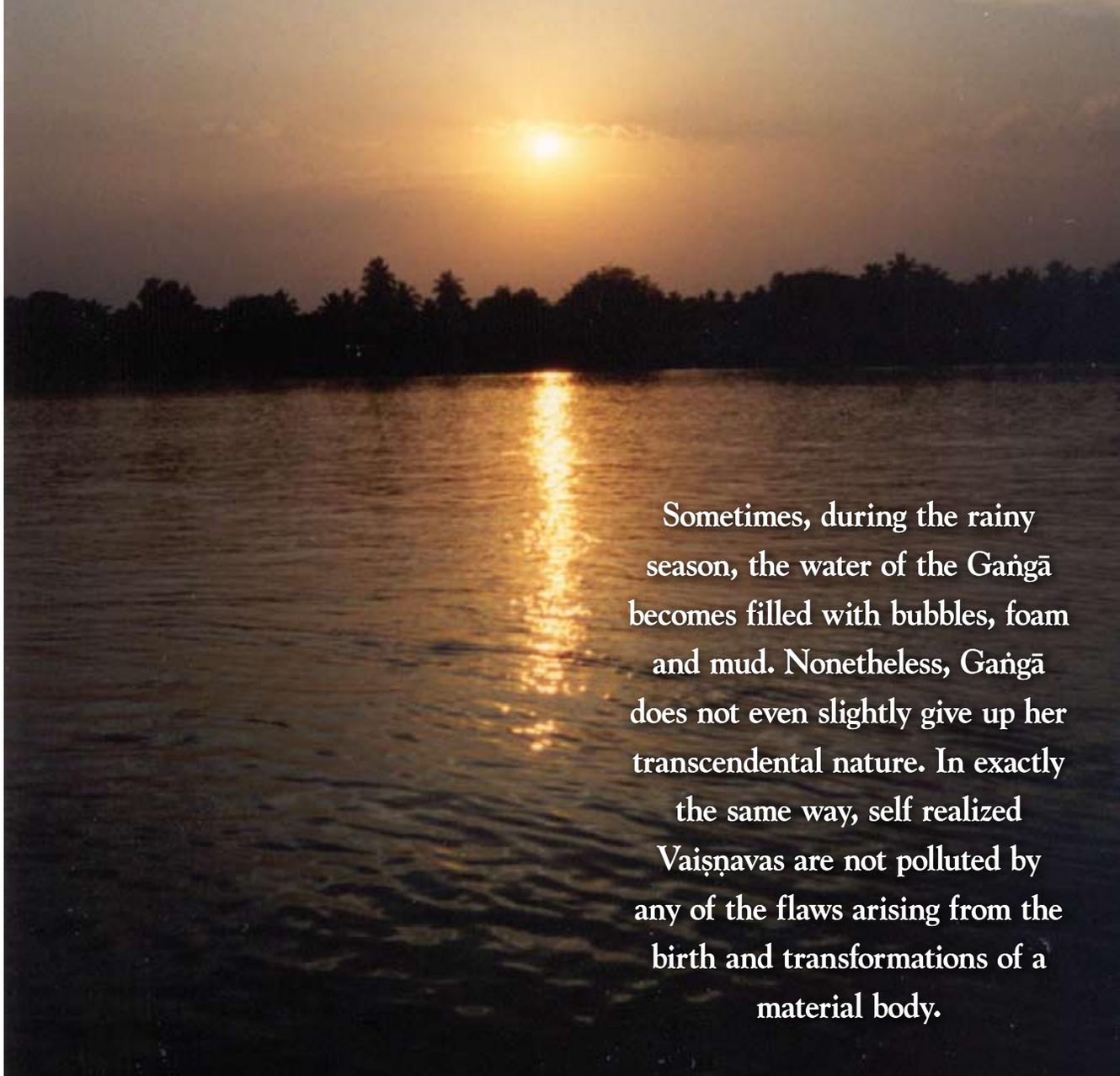
The above *upākhyāna* (moral history) from *śruti* teaches us the following:

Qualities and Abilities Dictate Societal Stratums

Four stratums (*varṇas*) have been created in society based on the various qualities and abilities of mankind. It is entirely scientific, natural and in accordance with the revealed scriptures to ascertain a person’s *varṇa* according to his actual qualities, and not simply according to his birth. Raikva Muni had initially addressed King Jānaśruti as a peasant (*śūdra*) because even though the king was a generous and affluent aristocrat (*kṣatriya*) he had become overwhelmed with grief. Moreover, the sole reason for his lamentation had been his envy of Raikva Muni’s superior fame. However, when the king understood the importance of serving the spiritual master, he was relieved from his sorrow and was subsequently granted *brahma-vidyā* by the *muni*.

.....

¹ The science of the vital life-force.



Sometimes, during the rainy season, the water of the Gaṅgā becomes filled with bubbles, foam and mud. Nonetheless, Gaṅgā does not even slightly give up her transcendental nature. In exactly the same way, self realized Vaiṣṇavas are not polluted by any of the flaws arising from the birth and transformations of a material body.

Never Condemn a Vaiṣṇava's Apparent Flaws

More often than not, we will fail to ascertain the qualifications of the spiritual master if we judge him on the basis of the apparent flaws in his nature or body or in his social conduct and personal behaviour. If someone considers the spiritual master, who knows the absolute truth, to be a man of worldly intelligence and subsequently disobeys him, he commits *aparādha*. As a result, *bhakti* can never arise in his heart.

Raikva Muni resided under a bullock-cart. His condition was extremely wretched and he had inflamed soars all over his body. He appeared to be just like an ordinary person who is attached to his body and bound to suffer the results of his activities. Yet King Jānaśruti did not perceive his spiritual master as a mortal living being,

and he was therefore qualified to learn the mystery of *prāṇa-vidyā*.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī Prabhu was constantly absorbed in the ecstasy of his own internal realizations. And yet he manifested the pastime of suffering from a type of leprosy. To consider him an ordinary living being, bound by the results of his past activities, is a grave offence. Therefore the scriptures have forewarned the *sādhaka*:

*dṛṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair
na prākṛtatvam iha bhakta janasya paśyēt
gaṅgāmbhasāṁ na khalu budbuda-phena-paṅkair
brahma-dravatvam apagacchati nīra-dharmaiḥ*

Upadeśāmṛta (6)

This verse declares that it is wholly inappropriate to perceive a pure devotee as mundane or lowly based on the physical or behavioural flaws visible in him. There is no possibility that a pure devotee will ever be in bad association or that he will ever offend the Lord's holy name.

Here, the term “physical flaws” refers to unattractiveness, aches and pains, deformity and the infirmity of old age. The term “behavioural flaws” refers to birth in a low caste, rudeness, laziness and so on. Sometimes, during the rainy season, the water of the Gaṅgā becomes filled with bubbles, foam and mud. Nonetheless, Gaṅgā does not even slightly give up her nature as liquid transcendence. In exactly the same way, self realized Vaiṣṇavas are not polluted by any of the flaws arising from the birth and transformations of a material body. Surely therefore, if someone who is endeavouring to perform *bhajana* considers the apparent material flaws of the *śuddha-vaiṣṇavas* to be contemptible, he will certainly become an offender.

When A Disciple Does not Accept Discipline

Gentle punishments and reprimands by *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas are highly beneficial for their disciples and servitors. The resolve to accept discipline finds its success in the title “disciple”. Even though I became the disciple of Śrī Gurudeva, who is most compassionate, whenever he mildly disciplines me out of his causeless mercy and with the determination to eliminate all the obstacles from the path of my devotional practice, I find it totally unacceptable. At that time, I am even audacious enough to claim that he is heartless, that he lacks affection and that he is biased, unintelligent and so forth.

I am willing to be humiliated, reprimanded and heavily beaten by *māyā* hundreds of times, but I cannot accept or tolerate the affectionate, transcendental discipline of Śrī Gurudeva. Consequently, I forever relinquish devotional service to Kṛṣṇa and thus I commit spiritual suicide. At that time, with the intention of lording it over my *gurudeva* and trying to approach Śrī Bhagavān directly, I become entangled in transgressing proper etiquette and, as I begin to consider myself more intelligent than my *gurudeva*, I fancy myself as his instructor.

King Jānaśruti did not lose heart even after repeatedly hearing crude words from Raikva Muni. Therefore, Raikva Muni considered him a suitable disciple and

imparted to him knowledge of the Absolute Truth. It was with this same intention that *jagad-guru* Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda used to chastise his most intimate disciples. He would tell all his disciples that the most important quality for anyone living in the temple is the ability to learn tolerance.

Offer Everything to Śrī Guru, Including Yourself

It is not possible for someone to obtain knowledge of the Absolute Truth from Śrī Gurudeva if he does not offer him all that he possesses and, indeed, his very self. It is not possible to obtain Śrī Gurudeva's mercy simply by offering him material objects. Someone qualifies as a true disciple only if he becomes *niṣkiñcana* by offering Śrīla Gurudeva everything he has, including his own self.

If I simply declare, “O Gurudeva, everything belongs to you alone!” but I “keep the keys to my safe with me”, then I am revealing that I do not trust him, which is not at all indicative of the most elevated stage of genuine service to Śrī Guru (*guru-seva*). When the disciple surrenders from within and keeps nothing as his own, then Śrīla Gurudeva considers that intimate and loving disciple (*viśrambha-sniḡdha śiṣya*) as his own.

*dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama
sei deha kare tāra cid-ānanda-maya
aprākṛta-dehe tānra caraṇa bhajaya*

Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 4.192-193)

When the *bhakta* fully dedicates himself at the time of receiving *dīkṣā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes him as spiritual as Himself, permeating the *bhakta*'s body with transcendence and bliss. With his spiritual body, the *bhakta* then worships Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

This is why Raikva Muni had said to King Jānaśruti that one cannot become the servitor of Śrī Guru just by offering him material objects. Only if the disciple offers everything to Śrī Guru, including his very self, can he attain spiritual knowledge (*brahma-vidyā*). That is to say, he will be able to perform transcendental *guru-seva*.

 Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*
Year 7, Issue 12

Divine Expressions of Humility

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Gurudeva's expressions of humility are of divine significance. On the other hand, the prayers of praise for the spiritual master that are produced by disciples who are still in gross material bondage are full of duplicity, they are rooted in the desire for prestige, and they are entirely artificial.

In the third verse of His Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, Śrīmān Mahāprabhu has vividly explained:

*trṇād api sunīcena
taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

Only he who feels lower than a blade of grass and who is more tolerant than a tree; who expects no honour for himself but who is able to give due respect to all others is qualified to perpetually chant the holy names of Hari.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta:

*jagāi mādhai haite muṇi se pāpiṣṭha
purīsera kīṭa haite muṇi se laghiṣṭha
mora nāma śune yei tāra puṇya kṣaya
mora nāma laya yei tāra pāpa haya*



*emana nirghṛṇa more kebā kṛpā kare
eka nityānanda vinu jagat bhītare*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 5.205–207)

“I am more sinful than Jagāi and Mādhāi and even lower than worms in stool. Anyone who hears my name loses the results of his pious activities. Anyone who utters my name becomes sinful. Who in this world but Nityānanda could show His mercy to such an abominable person as me?”¹

*mo-pāpiṣṭhe ānilena śrī-vṛndāvana
mo-hena adhame dīlā śrī-rūpa-caraṇa*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 5.210)

“Although I am most sinful, He has brought me to Śrī Vṛndāvana and conferred upon one as degraded as me the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.”

*nityānanda-dayā more tāṅre dekhāila
śrī-rādhā-madana-mohane prabhu kari’ dīla
mo-adhame dīla śrī-govinda daraśana
kahibāra kathā nahe akathya-kathama*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 5.216–217)

“The mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu has revealed Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana to me and made Them my divine masters. It has even granted one as low as me the *darśana* of Śrī Govinda. This cannot be explained by words, and it is not even fit to be disclosed.”

Since I am apprehensive about making this article too long, I supplicate the readers to also read the remaining portion of this fifth chapter of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

By reading these poetic couplets, we can easily embrace Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī’s greatness within our hearts. Within these couplets, the crown jewel of Vaiṣṇavas has manifested his exalted humility in such a way that expert and intelligent devotees will not find it difficult to comprehend. Is it even possible to think that if someone sings along with these transcendental descriptions or recites them, he will go to hell? On the contrary, it is needless to say that, by the mercy of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, he will attain *bhakti* instead.

Only he who feels lower than
a blade of grass and who is
more tolerant than a tree;
who expects no honour
for himself but who is able to
give due respect to all others, is
qualified to perpetually chant
the holy names of Hari.

¹ Translation by Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,
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On the other hand, a fallen and unqualified disciple, who is unable to follow the order of Śrīla Gurudeva, simply exhibits his neglectfulness and lack of respect for him. It is even seen that through his performance of abominable acts, the disciple shrouds the glories of *gurudeva* in darkness. Such a disciple may thereafter praise his *gurudeva* with many hymns and eulogies and exhibit excessive lamentation, but can Śrī Gurudeva not comprehend such duplicity, despite it being so obvious? The extent to which such exhibitions of devotion to Śrī Gurudeva are free from duplicity is easily deduced.

The humility of transcendental poets like Śrī Gurudeva, which stems from great auspiciousness, is manifest in their writings, as is their pure devotion. But the devotion or prayers and praise for *guru* exhibited by those who are still conditioned by *māyā* are nothing but an external show of cheating and insincerity.

The poetic verses by our divine Gurudeva use words like *dīna* (lowly), *adhama* (degraded), *abhāgā* (unfortunate) and so on to describe him. This is the transcendental expression of his humility. By reciting and performing the *kīrtanas* he composed, one will surely attain supreme auspiciousness in the form of *prema-bhakti*. Of this there is no doubt. Some say that reciting and performing these *kīrtanas* will lead to inauspiciousness, but the devotees will never accept this conclusion.

Following are many quotations by the *mahājanas* and from the literature of our *guru-varga*. They express divine humility in words like *adhama* (degraded), *dīna* (lowly), *abhāgā* (unfortunate) and so on, which have been written down for us to observe. Are these expressions of their humility to be abandoned by us? Are they not worthy of our esteem? Will it facilitate the awakening of our *bhakti* if we modify them somehow? Such an action would simply be an expression of foolishness. For the convenience of the readers, these expressions of humility, which were published by Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samitī in the fifth Bengali edition of *Śrī Gauḍīya-Gīti-Guccha*, are presented here with the page reference first, followed by the passage itself, and at last the name of the exalted Vaiṣṇava poet who wrote it:²

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² see Additional References at the end of the article.

- (100) “*dīna narottama kānde*— This fallen Narottama is weeping.” – Narottama Ṭhākura
- (102) “*sparsīyā vaiṣṇava-deha e durjana chāra*— having touched a Vaiṣṇava’s body, this wicked, contemptible person...” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (105) “*kāṅgālera sukāṅgāla durjana e jana* – this wicked person is the poorest beggar of beggars.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (110) “*e dīna pāmara haibe uddhāra* – deliver this fallen, sinful person.” – Kṛṣṇadāsa
- (115) “*devakīnandana bole mui abhāgīyā* – Devakīnandana says, I am so unfortunate!” – Devakīnandana
- (131) “*dīna hīna mūḍha-mati, rāmānanda dāsa ati* – This most wretched, fallen and foolish Rāmānanda Dāsa...” – Rāmānanda Dāsa
- (144) “*āmi ta’ durjana ati... e patita chāra* – I am indeed the most abominable person... useless and fallen!” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (151) “*dhik dhik abhāgīyā kena nāhi mare* – With a heart full of pain, I say, I am so disgusting, why don’t I die?” – Kṛṣṇadāsa
- (161, 164, 165) “*dhik dhik narottama dāsa* – Fie! Shame on this servant Narottama!” – Narottama Ṭhākura
- (176) “*lalitā sakhīra ayogyā kiṅkari* – an unfit servant of Lalitā Sakhī.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (186) “*mūḍhera maṅgala, tumi anveṣibe* – you will search for this fool’s auspiciousness...” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (190) “*mo-hena adhama jane* – a fallen person like me.” – Narottama Ṭhākura
- (193) “*kahe dīna narottama dāsa* – says this fallen Narottama dāsa.” – Narottama Ṭhākura
- (194) “*dīna narottama dāsa kahaye* – this fallen Narottama dāsa says...” – Narottama Ṭhākura
- (198) “*dīna hīna vinodera gati* – the goal of this fallen, worthless Bhaktivinoda...” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (200) “*dīna kṛṣṇadāsa kahe nāma-saṅkīrtana* – this fallen Kṛṣṇadāsa sings *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.” – Kṛṣṇadāsa
- (200) “*āmi ati manda* – I am so dull.” – Kṛṣṇadāsa
- (242) “*roye bhaktivinoda mati-hīna* – devoid of intelligence, this Bhaktivinoda wails.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (246) “*āmi ta’ patita* – I am very fallen.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (251) “*sakalera pada-rajah yāce dīna hīna* – this fallen, worthless person is begging for the dust of the lotus feet of everyone.” – Dayita Dāsa
- (256) “*e bhaktivinoda dīna hīna* – this fallen, worthless Bhaktivinoda.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (284, 300, 301) “*kahe dīna premānanda* – says this fallen Premānanda.” – Premānanda Ṭhākura

- (304) “*kāndīyā kāndīyā bale āmi ta’ adhama* – Weeping, I say I am indeed most fallen.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (314) “*bhaktivinoda ati dīna akiñcana* – Bhaktivinoda is very fallen, possessing nothing.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (330) “*e bhaktivinoda dīna sadā śuddha-bhakti-hīna* – this fallen Bhaktivinoda is always without pure devotion.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (332) “*e bhaktivinoda chāra* – this contemptible Bhaktivinoda...” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (342) “*dhik mora e jīvana* – fie, shame on my whole life!” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (358) “*tomāra caraṇe āja e kāṅgāla chāra* – this menial beggar is at your feet today.” – Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
- (400) “*abhāgā keśava kare nāma-saṅkīrtana* – this unfortunate Keśava performs *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.” – Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Those who accept disciples without genuinely attaining the competence to bestow *mantra* upon their disciples are inauthentic *gurus*. The difference between the authentic *guru* (*sad-guru*) and inauthentic *guru* (*asad-guru*) has been described in the revealed scriptures.

It is written in the Purāṇas that Śivajī spoke the following verse to Pārvatī:

*guravo bahavaḥ santi
śiṣya-vittāpa-hāraḥ
durlabhaḥ sad-gurur devi
śiṣya-santāpa-hāraḥ*

O Devī, marauding *gurus* who steal away their disciples’ wealth are many, but an authentic *guru* who is able to relieve his disciples from birth, death, old age, disease, suffering and lamentation is extremely rare.

He who hopes to extract name, fame and kingly service from his disciples is certainly not fit to be regarded as *guru*. This has also been described in the revealed scriptures. Is it truthful or justified for the initiated disciple of such a bogus *guru* to call out the name of his *guru* with such exalted accolades as “*sad-guru*”, “*jagad-guru*”, “*paramahansa-kula-cuḍāmaṇi*”, “*aṣṭottara-śata-śrī*”, “*viṣṇupāda*”, “*prabhupāda*”, “*anaṅga mañjarī*”, “*gosvāmī*” and so on? Are such declarations of their equality with our *guru-varga*, those like Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and the others, not inappropriate and offensive? This should be carefully considered.

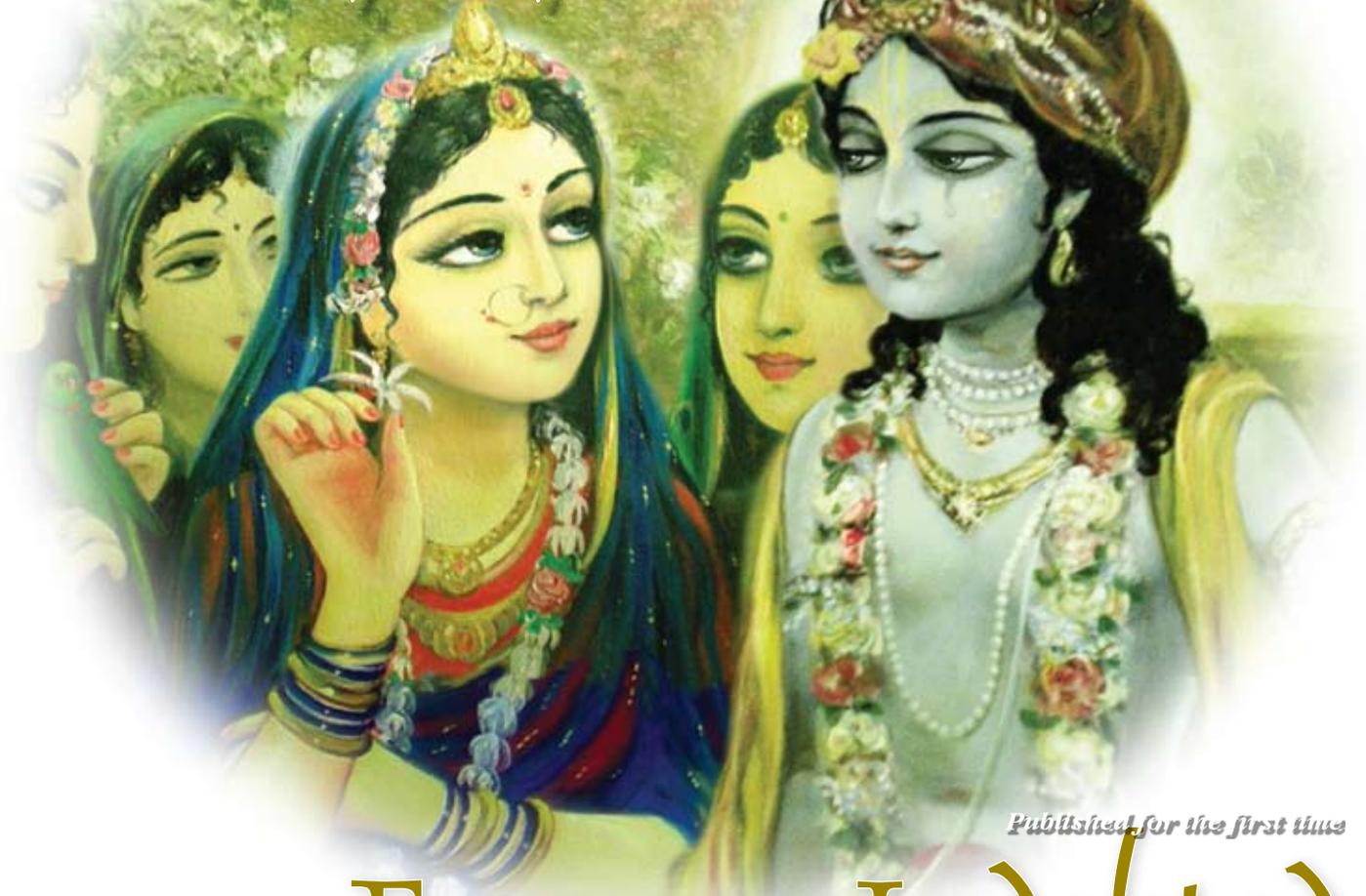
Again, it is wrong and abominable to give the same respect that is fit for an authentic *guru* to an inauthentic *guru*, who hankers for wealth, women and prestige. Similarly, it is wrong, unjustified, ignorant and offensive for a disciple of an inauthentic *guru* to use the same words of glorification and respect for their *guru* as those used by the disciple of an authentic *guru*. Know for certain that, although such words of glorification may be artificially attributed to an inauthentic *guru*, they can neither be true nor perfect.

 Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*,
Year 51, Issue 1

Additional References:

- | | | |
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| (100) <i>Ṭhākura Vaiṣṇava-pada, Prārthanā, Śrī Vaiṣṇava Mahimā</i> , Song 44, Verse 4 | (176) <i>Śrī Rādha-Kṛṣṇe Vijñapti, śrī rādha-kṛṣṇa pada-kamale mana</i> | (246) <i>Śaraṅāgati, Bhajana-lālasā</i> , Song 2, Verse 4 |
| (102) <i>Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru</i> (3 rd Branch), Section 2, <i>Lālasāmayī Prārthanā</i> , Song 3, Verse 7 | (186) <i>Śrī Kalyāṇa Kalpa-taru</i> , Part 3, Chapter 1, Song 3, Verse 8 | (251) No additional reference could be found. |
| (105) <i>Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru</i> (3 rd Branch), Section 2, <i>Dainyamayī prārthanā</i> , Song 4, Verse 8 | (190) <i>Prārthanā, Dainya-bodika</i> , Song 5, Verse 4 | (256) <i>Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam</i> by Śrīla Śrīdhāra Mahārāja, Chapter Four |
| (110) The <i>ācārya</i> ’s songs glorifying Lord Gaurāṅga, Lord Nityānanda, Song 61 | (193) <i>Prārthanā, Sadhaka-deocitta</i> , Song 26, Verse 5; or <i>Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā</i> , Song 8, Verse 15 | (284, 300, 301) <i>Dhānāśi-rāga</i> , Song 1 |
| (115) The <i>ācārya</i> ’s songs glorifying Lord Gaurāṅga, Lord Nityānanda, Song 71 | (194) <i>Prārthanā, Sadhaka-deocitta</i> , Song 28, Verse 6 | (304) <i>Śaraṅāgati</i> , Introductory Song, Verse 7 |
| (131) The <i>ācārya</i> ’s songs glorifying Lord Gaurāṅga, Gaura’s pastimes of dancing in <i>saṅkīrtana</i> , Song 6 | (198) <i>Śrī Kalyāṇa Kalpa-taru</i> , Part 3, Chapter 4, Section 3, Song 2, Verse 5 | (314) <i>Śaraṅāgati, Tūmi Sarveśvareśvara</i> , Verse 8 |
| (144) <i>Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru</i> , Part 3, Chapter 1, <i>Dainyamayī prārthanā</i> , Song 2 | (200) Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas, <i>Jaya Rādhe Jaya Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Vraja-dhāma-mahīmāmṛta</i> , Verse 11 | (330) <i>Gītā-mālā</i> , Song 7, Verse 3 |
| (151) Songs of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas, Song 1 | (200) Writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, <i>Śrī Gītā-mālā, Kārpaṇya-pañjikā</i> , or <i>Vijñapti-nibedana</i> , Part 2, Verse 10 | (352) <i>Gītā-mālā</i> , Part 1: <i>Yāmuna-bhāvavālī</i> or <i>Śānta-dāśya-bhakti-sādhana-lālasā</i> , Song 5 and 10, Verse 3 |
| (161) <i>Prārthanā, Dainya-bodika</i> , Song 3, Verse 4 | (242) <i>Gītāvalī</i> , Part Eleven, <i>Śikṣāśaka</i> , Song 6, Verse 7 | (342) <i>Śrī Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru</i> , Second Branch, Part 1, Song 1, Verse 5 |
| (164) <i>Prārthanā, Ākṣepa</i> , Song 43 | | (358) <i>Śrī Śrī Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru</i> , Third Branch, Part 1, Song 3, Verse 9 |
| | | (400) <i>Maṅgala Ārati, Śrī Gauḍīya Gīti-guccha</i> , Verse 9 |

na pārāye 'ham



Published for the first time

Forever Indebted

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

(A class on the commentaries of *Rāsa-pañcādhyāya* originally spoken in English,
July 8–9, 1993, at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha)

When Kṛṣṇa left the *rāsa* dance the *gopīs* sang *Gopī-gīta*, their song of separation from Him. When He reunited with them, He accepted their worship and consoled them by explaining why He had disappeared. That explanation culminates in this verse:

na pārāye 'ham niravadya-saṁyujām
sva-sādhu-kṛtyam vibudhāyusāpi vaḥ
yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhālāḥ
samvṛścya tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.32.22)

na – not; pārāye – able to; aham – I; niravadya – sacred; saṁyujām – meeting; svā-sādhu-kṛtya – own saintly activity (sādhu-kṛtya also means “compensation”); vibudha – demigod; āyusā – lifetime; api – even; vaḥ – to you; yāḥ – who; mā – Me; abhajan – adoring service; durjara – difficult to overcome; geha – house; śṛṅkhālāḥ – shackles; samvṛścya – totally broken; tat – that; vaḥ – of you; pratiyātu – to be returned; sādhunā – by the excellence.

My darling *gopīs*, your meeting Me is innocent and immaculate in every respect because it is devoid of even a single iota of desire for your own happiness. It is overflowing with supremely pure love. Although the bonds of affection for the members of one's own home are impossible to overcome, you have completely demolished them. Thus, for loving service to Me, you have transgressed the moral laws of this world. Even if I lived as long as the gods I would be unable to requite even one drop of your love, sacrifice and service. All of you may free Me from debt simply by your own gentle nature, but I am forever the debtor of your *prema*, and will always continue to be.

“O My dear *gopīs*,” said Śrī Kṛṣṇa, “My beloved *sakhīs*, our love-laden meeting is *niravadya*; it is so pure, so sacred, just like gold melted in fire. Is there any flaw in it?”

“In this world,” He continued, “husbands and wives inevitably have self-interest in meeting one another. In fact, this is the case when any two people meet. Even the *gurus* and disciples of this world, if they are not highly advanced, have some self-interest in meeting each other. The only person who may be selfless is he who has crossed beyond external nature (*māyā*). And yet you and I have bodies, we have eyes, we have minds...”¹

The *gopīs* do not want anything from Kṛṣṇa

Everyone especially craves one thing. They crave prestige. Even if someone declares that he is in fact selfless or holy, he surely still hankers for this. We find that even brothers and sisters want something from each other: affection. But Kṛṣṇa has explained that the *gopīs* do not even want this from Him. They want nothing but to serve Him. Their mood is expressed in the final verse of *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*:

*āśliṣya vā pāda-ratām pīnaṣtu mām
adarśanān marma-hatām karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo
mat-prāna-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ
Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka (8)*

¹ Śrī Kṛṣṇa puts forth their apparent physical existence as contradictory evidence that they have crossed beyond the external nature.

Let that debauchee (Kṛṣṇa) tightly embrace this maidservant, who is devoted to serving Him, and thus delight Me; or let Him trample Me under His feet, or break My heart by not giving Me His *darśana*. He may do whatever He desires. Even if He sports with His other beloveds directly in front of Me He is still the Lord of My life. In My heart there is none other than Him.

Kṛṣṇa extolled the *gopīs* for their selflessness, but He did not claim to be selfless like them. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer. As such, His wishes may be self-centred or in the mood of a charming lover who wants to enjoy (*ramaṇa*), and by the words “*ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* – As they become devoted to Me, surely, I become similarly devoted to them” (*Śrīmad-Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11), He has revealed that He indeed wants something from His devotees.² Yet the *gopīs* do not want anything from Him.

You Have Broken Unbreakable Bonds

He continued, “Our mutual meeting is sacred and infinitely pure. There is not even a trace of any flaw in it.”

yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ

The shackles that bind one to his home, *geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ*, are *durjara*, impossible to break free from. And yet, going against all the moral laws of this world, you have broken them and sacrificed everything for Me.

Each of us, as *sannyāsis*, has left our wife and children, but if our wife were to come before us, we would at once recall, “She is my wife.” The *gopīs* on the other hand, had so utterly renounced their homes that such ideas never came to them.

Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs*, “I have nothing to give you in return for serving Me like this. What to speak of My own lifetime, even if I lived hundreds of thousands of times longer than the gods, I would be unable to return a single drop of such service. Only you, by your graciousness and liberal character, can set Me free from that debt.

² This verse indicates that Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants His devotees to surrender to Him.

Your Sainly Activity

What the *gopīs* have done, Kṛṣṇa explained, is *sādhukṛtya* (sainly activity). Although it is entirely irreligious for a lady to meet with any man other than her husband, Kṛṣṇa has lauded the *gopīs* with the words *sādhukṛtya* for doing just this by meeting with Him. Why? Because Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *parama-pati*, the supreme husband or master of all.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains in his commentary on this verse that Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs* that what they have done is *asādhāraṇa sādhukṛtya*. The word *asādhāraṇa* (exceptional or unique) indicates that the sainly activities of the *gopīs* are not possible for any one else. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī answers the question, “What have the *gopīs* done that is so exceptional?” by explaining that their actions were *niravadya*, or sacred and pure. We should understand the implications of the word *niravadya* in the following way:

One with external vision may perceive fault and irreligion in the *gopīs* tryst with Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa says that the *prema* of both He and the *gopīs* is so sainly (*sādhū*), so immaculate (*nirmala*) and so pure. He goes on to say, “Neither you nor I have any selfish desire (*kāma*). I only wanted to please you and you wanted to please Me. I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead and you are My divine energy known as *hlādinī-śakti* (the transcendental pleasure potency). Our meeting is *niravadya*, sacred and pure.

“Although our meeting is utterly devoid of selfish lust, it appears to be the same as lust. Therefore, the people of this world will perceive self-interest in your actions as well as Mine, and they will conclude that it is the only motivation for our tryst.”

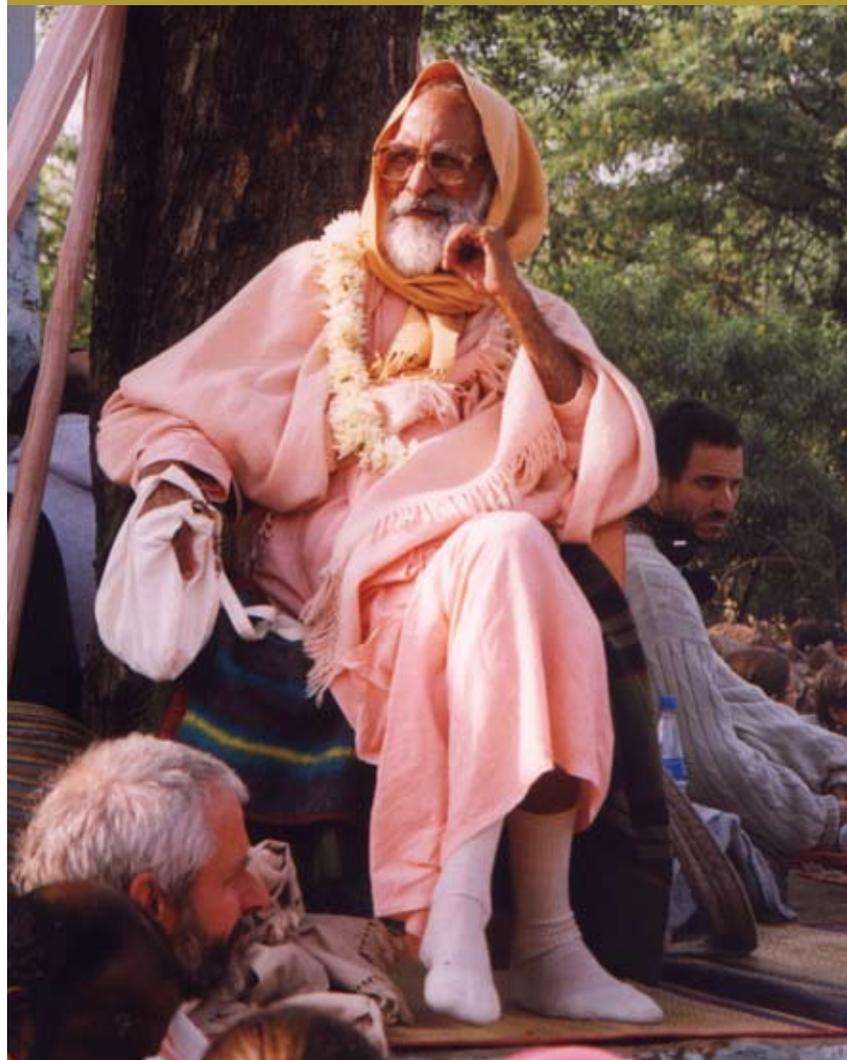
The people of this world cannot imagine that a tryst, or any action, can be free from self-interest, but liberated souls indeed act selflessly, and their sincere followers, who can at least comprehend such actions, also endeavour for selflessness.

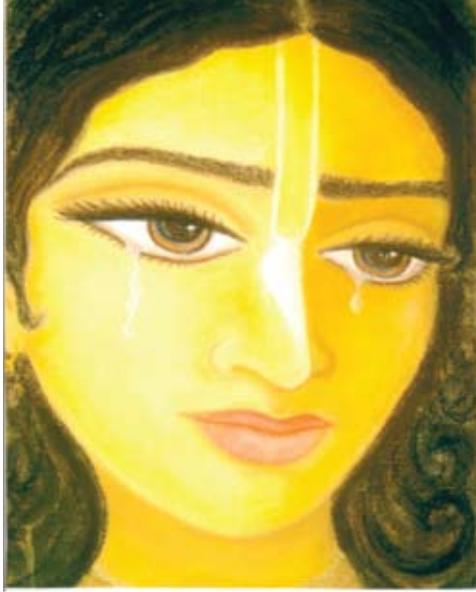
This *gopī-prema* is the *dharma* of the *gopīs*. In other words, it stems from their inherent nature (*svabhāva*). Just as fire naturally burns, the *gopīs* love Kṛṣṇa. They cannot but love Him.

I Do Not Deserve Your Love

Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs*, “You are respectable wives; the newly married wives of respectable *gopas*. You are from an exalted dynasty, and yet you have abandoned

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It should be mentioned that when Śrī Kṛṣṇa reflected upon the selfless love of the *gopīs* He thought, “I want to experience all of this Myself and truly realize it.” Later, in His pastimes as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He fulfilled this desire.



your social status. You have broken the unbreakable iron shackles that bound you to your homes and have easily crossed completely beyond the vast ocean of shame, or the ocean of the disapproving words of your worshipful elders. You have abandoned everything, including all the moral laws of society and, keeping nothing for yourselves, you have offered your intense and affectionate love (*anurāga*) entirely to Me.”

“Why have you done this?” Kṛṣṇa asked the *gopīs*, “I do not deserve your *anurāga*. Had my *anurāga* been as exalted as Yours, perhaps I would have deserved your love, but, in truth, by virtue of your superior love, I am so much lower than you. And yet, out of your great generosity and graciousness, your *sādhu-kṛtyam*, you have offered your *anurāga* to Me. Even after innumerable lifetimes, I cannot requite My debt to you. If I ask you, as you have suggested, what I can give you in return, you will simply ask to serve Me, and again I will be indebted to you.

“I have abandoned all hope that My debt may ever be absolved. But, if you desire, you can release Me from your debt by your own sweet will. I have not offered Myself to you, like you have offered yourselves to Me, and therefore I have broken my promise: *ye yathā mānī prapadyante tānī tathāiva bhajāmy aham* – as they become devoted to Me, surely, I become similarly devoted to them” (*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11).

One-pointed Love

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī next explains that Kṛṣṇa told the *gopīs*, “While your love is dedicated to Me alone, Mine is divided among many. I have so many loving devotees, but you have only one love – Me. Therefore, I can never serve you as you have served Me.

“I am also shackled to My home by the affection of My father and mother, but unlike you I have not broken these bonds nor have I broken the chains of proper conduct, religion or shame. I have not even abandoned My shyness in stealing away to meet with you while hiding from everyone’s sight. I have not given up My self-interest at all, nor My shame, nor My mother and father, nor anything.”

We Cannot Repay Svāmī

What is Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s mood? “Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has given us the *sūtra*³ containing this conception and has thus conferred upon us the immense treasure of *gopī-prema*.” He considers that, “Now I am indebted to ‘Svāmī’ (Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī) in the same way that Kṛṣṇa is indebted to the *gopīs*, and I cannot requite my debt to him. He should simply be satisfied by his own saintly acts. I offer my *praṇāma* to Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī’s lotus feet.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

It should be mentioned that when Śrī Kṛṣṇa reflected upon the selfless love of the *gopīs* He thought, “I want to experience all of this Myself and truly realize it.” Later, in His pastimes as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He fulfilled this desire.

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³ A *sūtra*, which literally means “thread”, is a concise sentence or aphorism that runs through and holds together a particular concept or that enfolds a complex conception into a single short passage.

You Have Left Everything But I Have Left Nothing

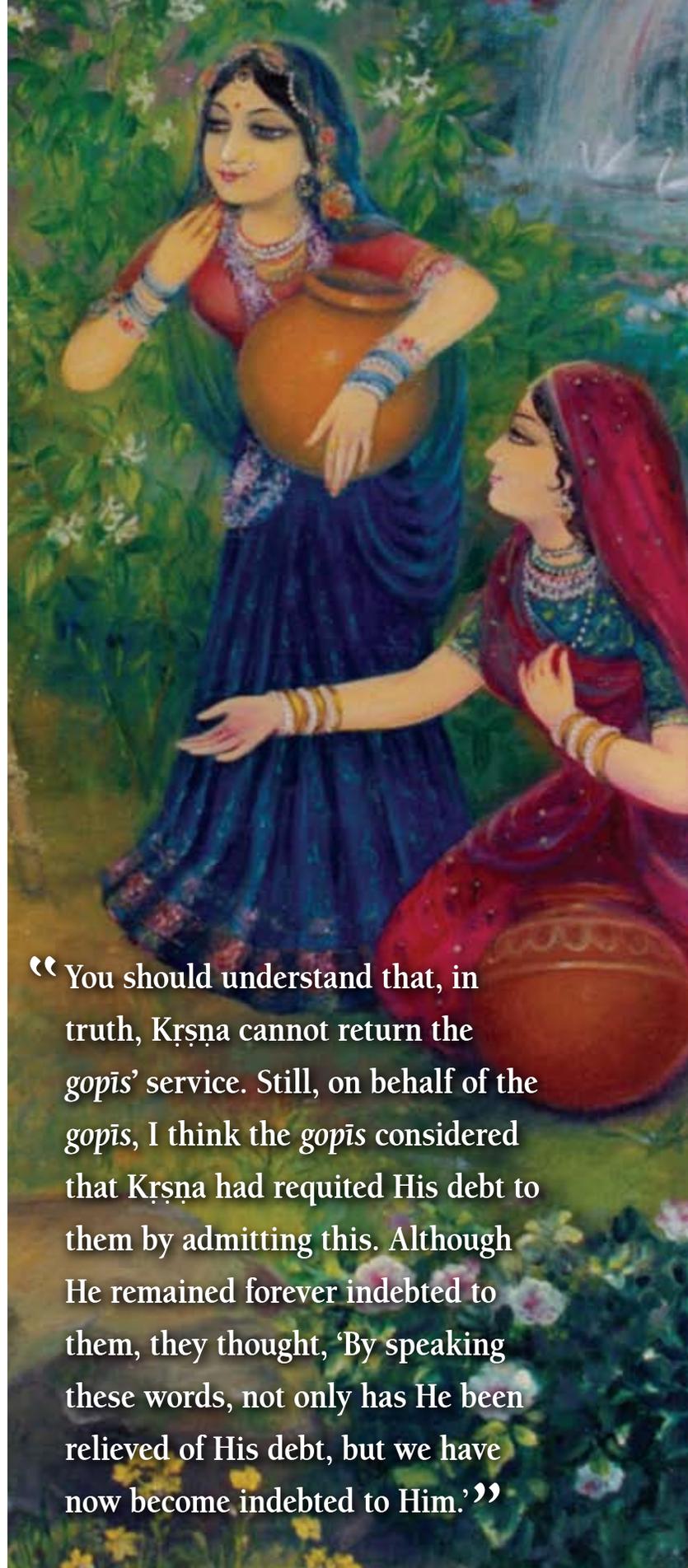
According to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on this verse, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said to the *gopīs*, "O My dear *priya*, one thing I want to tell is that I always remember you within My heart." For the purpose of stating this special truth, Kṛṣṇa has spoken the words, "*na pāraye 'ham niravadya-saṅhyujāṁ* – Your meeting with Me is *niravadyam*; it is sacred. In it there is no lust, no fruitive work, no religiosity, no consideration of the dictates of revealed scripture regarding right and wrong, and no consideration of what people in general claim to be right and wrong. Nothing."

The *prema* of the *gopīs* is causeless and completely innocent. They have left everything, so their actions are irreproachable. Kṛṣṇa continued, "Your saintly actions (*sādhu-kṛtya*) for My sake are impossible for any other man or woman. You alone could have done this. Even if I were to endeavour throughout My life to return your service I would be unable to, because you have utterly destroyed *geha-śṛṅkhalaḥ*, the very strong shackles of your homes, and have come to Me. What to speak of your other relationships, you have severed the bonds of intense possessiveness for your husbands, fathers, fathers-in-law, brothers and all those to whom you were affectionately bound."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura continues his explanation of Kṛṣṇa's words: "Yet I have not left anything or anyone. I have lovingly come to you without abandoning my connection to my father, mother, brothers and all My other relatives, but, to come to Me, you have cut off all affection and love for everyone but Me. I have failed to keep my promise: "*ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiiva bhajāmy aham* – as they become devoted to Me, surely, I similarly become devoted to them" (*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* 4.11) because I cannot return the devotion you have given Me, so what good are my words or promises? In fact, there is nothing I can give you in return for your service."

The Requit

You should understand that, in truth, Kṛṣṇa cannot return the *gopīs'* service. Still, on behalf of the *gopīs*, I think the *gopīs* considered that Kṛṣṇa had requited His debt to them by admitting this. Although He remained forever indebted to them, they thought, "By speaking these words, not only has He been relieved of His debt, but we have now become indebted to Him." It was for



“You should understand that, in truth, Kṛṣṇa cannot return the *gopīs'* service. Still, on behalf of the *gopīs*, I think the *gopīs* considered that Kṛṣṇa had requited His debt to them by admitting this. Although He remained forever indebted to them, they thought, 'By speaking these words, not only has He been relieved of His debt, but we have now become indebted to Him.'”

these words alone that they kept their lives after Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana to go to Mathurā and Dvārakā.

Kṛṣṇa's Unmatched Love

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has expressed the essence of all this:

“I know that all of you are very gracious. If you consider Me to be in your debt, then I must be. Only if you consider Me to be relieved of My debt will I be relieved of it. But even then, in truth, I am always indebted to you.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that upon hearing this, each of the *gopīs* began to reflect within her heart, “Kṛṣṇa is Himself the Personality of Godhead. His nature is overflowing with all auspicious qualities and He is utterly devoid of any fault. Because He is factually the knower of *rāsa*, He truly appreciates and honours *rāsa*. This is His highest eminence. Yet He tries to intimate to us that He is quite the opposite of great by telling us that He is lowly and that we are exalted. He admits His faults and says, ‘I have failed to keep My promise. I am now indebted to you.’ Kṛṣṇa is so glorious for speaking these words of confession.

“We thought that He had left us, but now we see that He had not. We wanted to defeat Kṛṣṇa, and certainly, now that He has confessed His faults, it seems we have won, but in truth Kṛṣṇa has defeated us. We are glorious, but Kṛṣṇa is even more glorious. We are unable to confess any of this, but He has confessed everything. Therefore, we have been defeated by Kṛṣṇa's unmatched love.”

Becoming very jovial, Kṛṣṇa brought all the *gopīs* together and re-initiated the *rāsa* dance.

We Can Pray to Śrīmatī Rādhikā

In the matters of *prema*, the *gopīs* are glorious and Kṛṣṇa is even more glorious. However, Śrīmatī Rādhikā and some other special *gopīs* are still more glorious than Kṛṣṇa.

All glories to the *prema* of the *gopīs*!

We can pray to Kṛṣṇa; we can pray to all of the *gopīs*; and especially, we can pray to Śrīmatī Rādhikā that, somehow, a very small drop of greed to realize all of this may come in our hearts and we may gradually progress.

This is the effect of reading, and explaining, and hearing these topics. 🌸



So often we have heard the *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnya* verse explained in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Once, in Fiji, Śrīla Gurudeva (Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja) explained this verse in relation to *maryādā-puruṣottama* Śrī Rāmacandra:

The word *kṛṣṇānūśīlanam* in this verse does not necessarily refer only to devotion for *līlā-puruṣottama* Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In fact, it addresses devotion to all forms of *viṣṇu-tattva*, or incarnations of the Lord.



Preaching Report 2008

by Svāmī B. V. Mādhava

Śrī Rāmacandra, along with *bhagavatī* Śrī Sitādevī and His brother Lakṣmaṇa, set out to dwell in the forest for fourteen years to honour and protect the word of His father, Daśaratha Mahārāja. Yet, in the pain of separation from Śrī Rāmacandra, Daśaratha Mahārāja left his body, crying, “O Rāma! O Rāma!”

Bharata was visiting his uncle at the home of his maternal grandmother when Vasiṣṭha Muni sent word for him to return. Upon his arrival in Ayodhyā, he came to know what had happened there. He then

decided to bring to the forest everything needed for a coronation in order to crown Śrī Rāmacandra as king and bring Him back to Ayodhyā. Under the supervision of *guru* Vasiṣṭha, Bharata arrived in Citrakūṭa with the three mothers of the royal household, the royal minister Sumanta, and all the citizens of Ayodhyā.

Bharata began to wonder, “My brother Śrī Rāma is fixed in His vow. How am I to persuade Him otherwise?” Knowing Śrī Rāma always respected His

superiors and would never disobey their orders, Bharata approached Śrī Rāma's mother Kauśalyā.

He offered his respects, and asked her, "Mother, can you kindly persuade brother Rāma to return to Ayodhyā? He can never neglect your wishes."

Kauśalyā-devī replied, "Son, how can I order Rāma to come back to Ayodhya?"

"But wouldn't you be so happy to see Him return?" asked Bharata.

"I would be overjoyed," said Kauśalyā. "Everyone would be delighted. But how can I order Him?"

Bharata was puzzled, "What wrong am I doing in wanting Him to return?"

"Son," she smiled, "Rāma is adhering to the path of proper conduct. I cannot instruct Him to do otherwise."

"Why can't you just tell Him to come back?"

"Because, a mother is never selfish."

Bharata left her and went to see Guru Vasiṣṭha. He paid his respects and asked him, "Gurudeva, can you please order Śrī Rāma to come back to Ayodhyā?"

"How can I tell Him what to do?" said Vasiṣṭha. "I myself am bewildered. I cannot decide what is right or wrong."

"But Gurudeva, will He not obey your order?" Bharata questioned.

"Of course, He will obey me," Vasiṣṭha sighed, "but on one side is your endless love and on the other is Śrī Rāma's determination to uphold His vow. Seeing the two, I cannot think properly. I am overwhelmed with emotion, and unable to decide what I am to do."

Just then, King Janaka and his wife Sunayanā-devī reached Citra-kūṭa. His voice still choked with emotion, Vasiṣṭha welcomed the king. "You have come at the perfect time," he said. "At the moment, the boat of the Raghu dynasty is drifting in open water with no captain and no crew. Only you can captain this Raghu family. We will stop here for now and let Janaka Mahārāja rest, but tomorrow we will assemble again."

The next day found everyone so anxious for the assembly to commence that it seemed as if time had come to a halt. That day, on one side of the assembly, Śrī Rāma sat with His younger brother Lakṣmaṇa, surrounded by the saints and *munis*.

Bangalore - December



In South India, no one knows about Śrīmatī Rādhikā. But in the main program about one thousand people listened with rapt attention while Śrīla Gurudeva established the pre-eminence of *vraja-bhakti* over all other modes of worship, quoting irrefutable evidence from *sāstra*. A very prominent *ācārya* from the Madhva-sampradāya was our honourable guest, and he was overwhelmed and convinced by Śrīla Gurudeva's *hari-kathā*. The *ācārya's sevakas*, who were concerned for his health, wanted him to leave, but he refused to go even though Śrīla Gurudeva spoke unusually late into the night. – Giridhārī dāsa

Malaysia - December

Gurudeva and his party travelled on the roadways from Singapore to Penang, where Śrīla Gurudeva stayed for three weeks with Parameśvarī dāsa and Mālātī dāsi, in order to work on his translations. He would rise extremely early every morning and by about four in the morning he would begin writing. Then between six and six thirty he would go on his morning walk along the beach. He really liked how flat the beach was. After his stay in Penang he

Across from them was Guru Vasiṣṭha with Bharatajī and the royal minister Sumanta. *Bhagavatī* Śrī Sītā-devī sat with the three mothers in another area. It was a gorgeous sight to behold.

When King Janaka adorned his seat as the chairman of the assembly, all eyes were fixed on him, everyone wondering what his decision would be. Surely, as a father, Janaka Mahārāja would never let his daughter wander bare foot through forests infested with thorns, stumps and jagged rocks.

went to Kuala Lumpur for a program on Christmas day. Many guests brought him Christmas presents! – Madhuvrata dāsa

New Zealand - January

In New Zealand, Śrīla Gurudeva gave lucid descriptions of the gradations of *bhakti*. Since more than half of the devotees who attended were native Hindi speakers, Śrīla Gurudeva spoke in Hindi and Śrīpāda Dāmodara Mahārāja translated. After his morning walks



With Dāmodara Prabhu (left) at the ground-breaking ceremony of the new temple

we would gather for family-like *darśanas* in the house of Dāmodara Prabhu where he was staying. The devotees would take advantage of that unique opportunity to ask him questions and introduce new people. Even the neighbours commented on the wonderful atmosphere created by Gurudeva's presence. – Bhadra dāsi

Lautaka, Fiji - January

Each night about two-hundred devotees of Indian descent came to Śrīla Gurudeva's programs held in the Viṣṇu Mandir. He spoke on *rāma-līlā* because the devotees there are mostly *rāma-bhaktas*. After each morning walk he would visit a different devotee's home, but he wouldn't announce whose home he would visit until after his walk, so all the devotees had to be ready. One morning, one

First Janaka Mahārāja turned to Bharata and asked him, "Bharata, my son, will you accept what I decide?"

"To me, you are not simply 'like a father', you are my father. I will accept whatever you decide without second thought and with a bowed head."

Turning to Śrī Rāma, Janaka Mahārāja asked, "My son Rāma, will You obey my order?"

Śrī Rāma nodded, "You are My father. Whatever decision you present, I will accept without further consideration or argument."



Ground-breaking ceremony for the Fijian temple, which is designed to seat three-hundred people

devotee inquired, "is it really true that Bhīma used to eat grains on Ekādaśī?" Śrīla Gurudeva said "No, Bhīma took Ekādaśī *prasāda* only, but the other Pāṇḍavas and Draupadī observed *nirjala-ekādaśī*." – Jagannātha dāsa and Kṛṣṇa-līlā dāsi

Australia - February

Torrents of rain flooded Murwillumbah and the showground where Śrīla Gurudeva spoke each night. During one class, as thunder clapped overhead, Śrīla Gurudeva charmed everyone's heart by quoting *śloka* after *śloka* describing Kṛṣṇa's beauty, comparing Him to the rain-clouds; Kṛṣṇa's glory in raising Govardhana Hill despite the heavy rain; and even the *pralaya* (universal devastation). The weather forced us to vacate the showground, but nothing stopped the flood of *hari-kathā* that Śrīla Gurudeva sent forth, bathing the devotees' hearts and delighting us all. On the seventh of February, over four-hundred devotees came, several from the larger devotee community, to celebrate Śrīla Gurudeva's *vyāsa-pūjā*. – Braja-kiśorī dāsi

The crowd was speechless in anticipation. What was to happen? Whose wishes would succeed? Would the divine Goddess Sītā-devī roam the forests or would she beautify the throne as a queen?

King Janaka addressed everyone, "I will speak as my *gurudeva* inspires me."

With these words, he closed his eyes. He offered his respects to his spiritual master, Śaṅkarājī, and prayed to his divine lotus-like feet. After a few moments, he opened his eyes and spoke, "Bharata, your love is immaculate,



After canoeing across a river to Mathuranātha Prahū's land, Gurudeva visited the home of Vraja-vallabha Prahū

Hong Kong - April

I have never seen devotees as enthusiastic to do *kīrtana* as the Chinese devotees. During *kīrtana* you would never see anyone doing anything else. They were ready and willing to do anything for Śrīla Gurudeva. They always approached him with humility and respect and never came to see him empty-handed. While he was in Hong Kong, Śrīla Gurudeva began to dictate a book



on the four *ācāryas* [of the four *sampradāyas*]. Every morning he would walk along the beach between the two lines of devotees camping there who would offer him *dandavat-pranāma* as he passed. – Acyutananda dāsa

Canada - April

People came from all parts of Canada to see Śrīla Gurudeva. On the first night in Vancouver he spoke in Hindi about the instructions given by Sūta Gosvāmī, and Rāmacandra Prahū translated. On the second night he spoke on Rāmananda-samvād, in English. He then went to Toronto for a four day visit. During his last visit to Canada six years ago he had touched the devotees' hearts so sweetly. The devotees, who deeply appreciated getting his *darśana* again, dropped everything that they had been doing to see him, honour him and serve him once more. – Śrīvāsa dāsa



At the Hindu temple, Vancouver

Alachua - April, May

For six days, Śrīla Gurudeva systematically recited the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu from *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, culminating in the conversation with Śrī Rāmananda Rāya. He wanted to complete the entire volume there but had to continue it in Badger. One evening there was a lively, transcendental competition; four contestants each had five minutes to present the reasons for Mahāprabhu's descent. Also, I was inspired by the non-sectarian spirit of the Vaiṣṇava youth. We shared many *kīrtanas*, not only at the festival site but in the

pure and selfless as well as fathomless and endless like the ocean. Such love is truly rare in this world. In other words, you have won."

The assembly was delighted as if they had been given new life. "This is splendid!" everyone thought, "Now Śrī Rāma will have no alternative but to return to Ayodhyā."

Janaka Mahārāja spoke again. "Listen Bharata, there is one rule to love: love only knows how to

give, not to take. If you truly love Śrī Rāmacandra, you will sell yourself at His feet without question. You will fall at His feet and ask Him what He wants; what will make Him happy."

Bharatajī looked at Janaka Mahārāja, "As my father, you have shown me proper conduct. You have opened my eyes. Until now, I was concerned only with my own happiness, not at all with that of Śrī Rāma. Should Śrī Rāma have returned to Ayodhyā, the subjects would have been happy,

homes of local devotees. I think we all shared the desire to unify as members of Gaura's *parivāra* (the family of Śrī Gaurāṅga). – Mañjarī dāsī



A morning walk in Alachua

Houston – June

During the festival Śrīla Gurudeva ordered four of us to start a preaching centre – Śrī Govindaḥi Gauḍiḥa Maḥa – in cooperation with the local Houston devotees. Hundreds of devotees attended the festival, and cooking for so many was a rewarding experience for me. Śrīla Gurudeva's lectures on *rāsa-līlā* were so potent, the first half of them being in English, the second half in Hindi. The host of a popular radio show met with Gurudeva



Program at Śrī Govindaḥi Gauḍiḥa Maḥa

in the home of one of his disciples. Śrīla Gurudeva gave many relevant answers to his many questions. – Abhirāma dāsa

Badger – June

The highlight for me this year was the *annakūta* festival. As Śrīla Gurudeva entered, I noticed two or three peacocks standing on the hill, as if they were waiting for him. Gurudeva was so happy and energetic and we were all swept up in that. He personally fed the cow and did the *go-pūjā* himself. He put his hand in the coloured



Girirāja Govardhana before the *annakūta* festival began

powder and then on the cow. He really tried to inspire everyone to make more preparations than ever and we actually broke our record. Every single person carried a colourfully covered basket on their head. Everyone was so happy even though it was so hot outside. – Kīrtana dāsa

Italy – July

When Śrīla Gurudeva was in San Francisco, his health was not so good, so he was unable to arrive for the Italy festival on schedule. Obviously, the devotees felt a lot of separation from him. Before he arrived, there was a

but I never thought whether Śrī Rāma would be pleased or not.”

Bharata fell at the lotus-like feet of Śrī Rāmacandra and asked, “Brother, what do You want? What will satisfy You more than anything else?”

Śrī Rāma smiled, “You have won the battle, and I am defeated.”

When they heard this a second time, the inhabitants of Ayodhyā leapt for joy. They shivered with delight, their

hair standing on end, as if they were about to leave for Ayodhyā and decorate it like a lovely bride for Śrī Rāma.

Śrī Rāmacandra continued, “Bharata, it is My cherished wish that you take care of Ayodhyā for fourteen years on My behalf.”

And Bharata did exactly that, out of love for Śrī Rāmacandra. If he had not surrendered himself to his brother's wishes, it would not have been *bhakti*; it would have only been blind selfishness. 🌸



kīrtana concert that many people came to. The *kīrtana* was really nice and lively and everyone was dancing. But when Śrīla Gurudeva finally arrived, one thing became very apparent: Śrīla Gurudeva has so much potency. The entire atmosphere instantly changed by his presence and everyone became increasingly focused. He only spent a short time there, but in every class he personally spoke almost the entire time. – Caru-candrikā dāsī

Istanbul – September

In Turkey, which is predominantly Muslim, people have no idea about Kṛṣṇa. Since Turks are open-minded, many people came to see Śrīla Gurudeva. There were programs on two nights. About fifty people attended each night, all brand new, and about twenty to twenty-five people came to his *darśanas*. Everyone who came brought Śrīla Gurudeva gifts. Gurudeva commented that Turkish people are like Indian people. My mother came and was so moved by Śrīla Gurudeva that she donated one apartment to be used for his preaching centre in Istanbul. – Savitri dāsī



Room *daršana* in Istanbul

Odessa – September

Devotees came from all over Russia, some travelling for four days to get to Odessa. By Śrīla Gurudeva's mercy, the

festival was very successful, despite all odds – financial, political and climatic. Its success was largely because the devotees who organized the festival worked really well as a team and had a very strong mood of service. This created a family atmosphere that several devotees later commented on. Each night we all relished Śrīla Gurudeva's class on *Śrī Prema-vivarta* as well as the sweet and melodic *kīrtanas* that followed, some of which lasted two hours. – Śrīpāda Nemi Mahārāja



Delhi – October



Greeted by Śrīmatī Sushma Swaraj, former chief minister of Delhi and a member of parliament

On October 3 a magnanimous Ratha-yātrā program was organized by the devotees of Delhi's Śrī Rāmana-bihari Gauḍiṃya Maṭha, specifically those from the Karol Bagh *saṅga*. Gurudeva blessed the event in Ajmal Khan Park by his presence. Before the Ratha-yātrā there was a paṇḍala program. It was attended by about two and half thousand devotees and honoured guests. The mayor of Delhi, Arati Mehra, came and inaugurated the festival by sweeping the road in front of Jagannātha's chariot and then pulling the cart. – Rāmacandra dāsa 🌸

Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī Vijnāpti

By Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya Prabhu

A prayer to his guru, Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī

*premaḥ puñjari, śuna guṇa-mañjarī
tuhūn se sakāla śubha-dāi
tohāri guṇa-gaṇa, cinta-i anukhaṇa
majhu mana rahala bikāi (1)*

premaḥ – immaculate love; *puñjari* – treasure-house; *śuna* – hear me; *guṇa-mañjarī* – O Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī; *tuhūn* – you; *se* – those; *sakāla* – all; *śubha* – auspicious; *dāi* – she who bestows; *tohāri* – your; *guṇa* – qualities; *gaṇa* – multitude; *cinta-i* – meditate; *anukhaṇa* – always; *majhu* – my; *mana* – mind; *rahala* – remains; *bikāi* – sold.

You are a treasure-house of immaculate *prema*. O Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī, kindly hear me. You grant all the auspiciousness my heart cherishes. Forever contemplating the multitude of your charming qualities, my mind has been sold to you.

*hari hari kabe mora śubha-dīna hoyā
kiśorī-kiśora-pada, sevana-sampada
tuyā sane milaba moyā (2)*

hari hari – O Hari, Hari; *kabe* – when; *mora* – mine; *śubha-dīna* – blessed day; *hoyā* – be; *kiśorī-kiśora* – the youthful divine couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; *pada* – lotus feet; *sevana* – service; *sampada* – treasure; *tuyā* – your; *sane* – in the company; *milaba* – will attain; *moyā* – me.

O Hari, O Hari! Will that blessed day ever be mine, when I will attain the wealth of service to the lotus feet of the divine couple Śrī Śrī Kiśorī-Kiśora, in your company?

*hera-i kātara jana, kuru kṛpā-nirikhaṇa
nija-guṇe purabi āśe*

*tuhūn nava-ghana binu, bindu-variṣaṇa punu
ko puraba pipiya-piyāse (3)*

hera-i – seeing this; *kātara* – anguished; *jana* – person; *kuru* – grant; *kṛpā-nirikhaṇa* – merciful glance; *nija-guṇe* – by your own qualities; *purabi* – fulfil; *āśe* – hopes; *tuhūn* – you; *nava-ghana* – fresh rain-cloud; *binu* – without; *bindu* – droplets; *variṣaṇa* – showers; *punu* – again and again; *ko* – who; *puraba* – will fulfil (quench); *pipiya* – sparrow (*cataka* bird); *piyāse* – thirst.

Seeing this grief-stricken person, please bless him with your merciful glance. By the grace of your own exceptional qualities, fulfil my hopes. You are a fresh rain-cloud showering droplets of mercy. But for you, who can quench the thirst of a sparrow (*cataka* bird) like me?

*tuhūn se kevala gati, niścaya niścaya ati
majhu mana iha paramāṇe
kaḥa-i kātara bhāse, punaḥ punaḥ śrīnivāse
kaṛuṇāya kaṛu avadhāne (4)*

tuhūn – you are; *se* – that; *kevala* – exclusive; *gati* – refuge; *niścaya niścaya* – surely and certainly; *ati* – exceedingly; *majhu* – absorbed; *mana* – mind; *iha* – this; *paramāṇe* – faith; *kaḥa-i* – I say; *kātara* – distressed; *bhāse* – voice; *punaḥ punaḥ* – again and again; *śrīnivāse* – to this Śrīnivāsa; *kaṛuṇāya* – with mercy; *kaṛu* – grant; *avadhāne* – consideration.

Certainly, you alone can fulfil my hopes; certainly you alone are my shelter. My mind is entirely immersed in this conviction. In anguish, Śrīnivāsa repeatedly cries out, “O Śrī Guṇa Mañjarī, kindly consider my fate and bestow your mercy upon me!” 

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By the causeless mercy of Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga, the Rays of The Harmonist team welcomes you to this monthly On-line Edition, which features some of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvātī Ṭhākura's discourses.

Saraswativinode.com is the domain name of our mailing list. Sarasvātī is the name of transcendental knowledge herself and also the embodiment of transcendental knowledge Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvātī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, and *vinoda* means "spiritual bliss" or more particularly "one who increases Śrīla Sarasvātī Ṭhākura's transcendental bliss". In other words, *vinoda* refers to Śrīla Sarasvātī Ṭhākura's illustrious disciple Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī, later known as Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the sannyāsa guru of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja and the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

If the souls suffering in this world receive this transcendental knowledge with faith, they will experience spiritual bliss. At the same time, the aim of distributing this transcendental knowledge is to enhance the *vinoda* of Sarasvātī Prabhupāda.

We hope these articles nourish you. In this way, we may all increase the bliss of Śrīla Sarasvātī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.



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