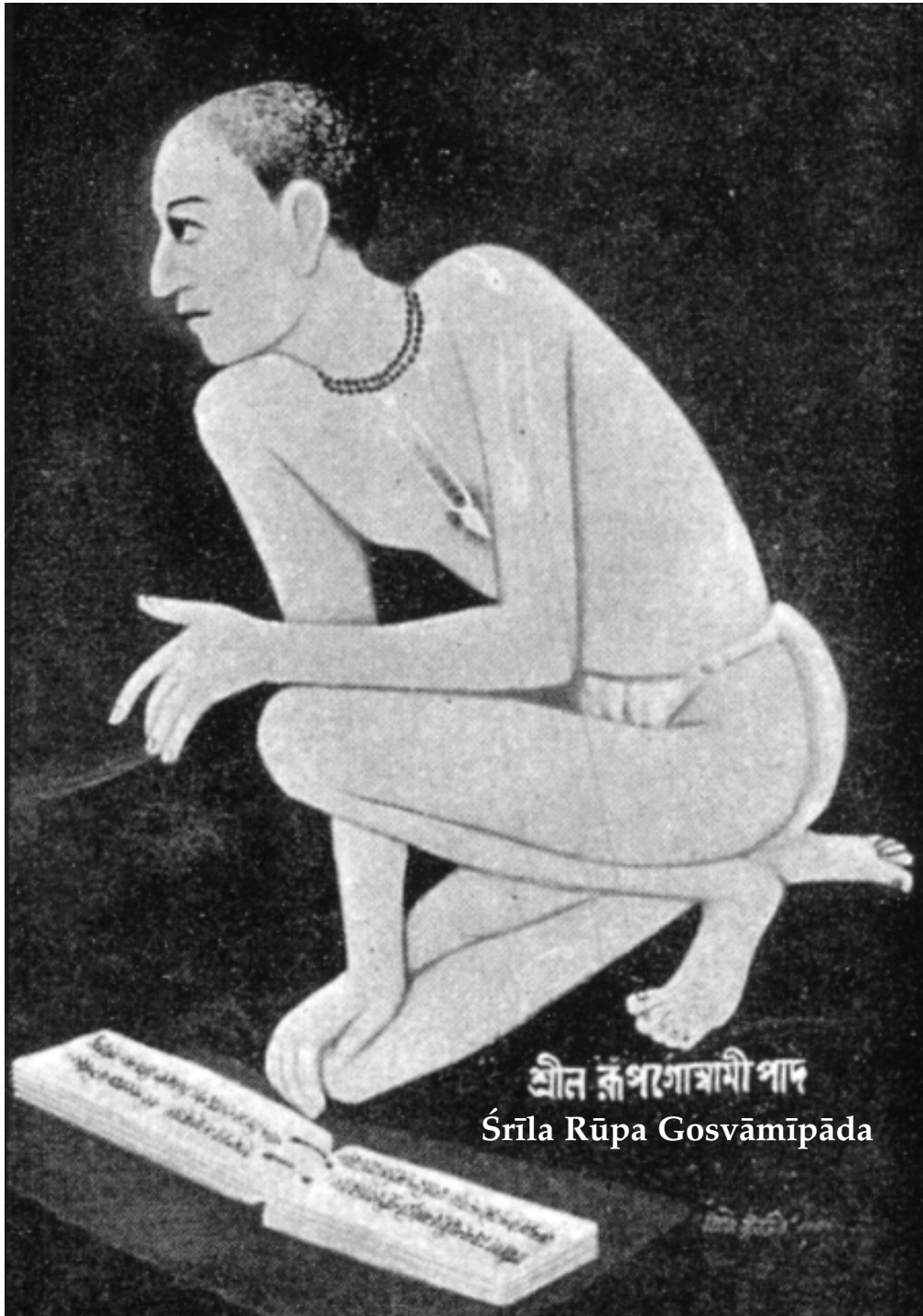




# Rays of The Harmonist



# Editorial

Nowadays it appears more than ever that when one uses the word “guru,” it means a political controversy is brewing. The reason for this is that guru is part of the infinite potency himself. For the infinitesimal soul to approach the infinite automatically means a contradiction. But this paradox is wisely solved by the sublimely simple statement of one of our former masters as, “If the infinite cannot make himself known to the finite, then He is not infinite.”

One may continue the line of argument here by ardently saying that his guru is the only *jagat guru*, the only universal teacher, and his guru is the guru for the next ten thousand years, the “*new sampradāyika guru*” and that people should initiate on behalf of his guru only as *ṛtvik*, but these remarks are all ignorant of the fact that Mahāprabhu mentioned Himself in *Śrī Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* that *āmāra ajñāya guru hañā tara ei deśa*, “Become guru on My order, deliver this land!” This order is couched within the instruction of first “be humbler than even a blade of grass.”

We must be intelligently discriminatory in understanding spiritual instructions, not calculative and rigid. We should not grasp at the ludicrous side of them and weather their literal meanings. Why is this? Because every word has its illusory side and its liberating side. Take for example the current popular phrase, “Guru is eternal.” If taken too literally here, we should *not* prepare a *samādhi* for our guru upon his transcendental disappearance. Rather, we should keep on daily worshiping his *selfsame* divine body on the *vyāsāsana* even after his soul has entered *nitya-līlā*. We should continue to cook for him, and wait patiently for his next order on what to eat. But the intelligent person will grasp the guru’s departure spiritually, and do the dire necessities for his beloved, departed guru. And if he is truly humble, he will try to sincerely become qualified to carry out the guru’s *mano’bhīṣṭa* himself, whether giving out simple instructions or *mantras* themselves, even though at heart always feeling unqualified, sincerely helping his guru who dedicated his life to save as many conditioned souls as possible. If we take the gist of this phrase in its truly *śāstric* sense, “Guru is eternal,” it will mean to always remember the *sādhaka-rūpa* of the guru, especially the *bhāva-netram*, internal eye of love, he has awakened in our hearts, then we will be safe. But the training to become a qualified guru ul-

timately has to be done by Vaiṣṇavas in our physical vicinity, otherwise the many bewildering passages in the scriptures will deter and hinder us from reaching the ultimate goal, pure love for Kṛṣṇa. So, we should not bother ourselves with ludicrous thoughts that we can become so powerful that our guru will come down from *nitya-līlā* to initiate on our behalf. But we should all be *rūpānugās*, sincere followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, always praying like Narottama Ṭhākura prayed:

*śuniyāchi sādhu-mukhe bale sarva-jana  
śrī-rūpa-kṛpāya mile yugala-caraṇa*

*hā hā prabhu! sanātana gaura-paribāra  
sabe mili vāñcha pūrṇa karaha āmāra*

*śrī rūpera kṛpā yena āmāra prati haya  
se pada āśraya yāra sei mahāśaya*

*prabhu lokanātha kabe saṅge laiñā yābe  
śrī-rūpera pāda-padme more samarpibe*

*hena ki haibe mora narma-sakhī-gana  
anugata narottama karibe śāsane*

All are saying, “I have heard from the *sādhus*’ mouth that by the mercy of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī we get the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala.”

Alas! Sanātana Prabhu! Oh, associates of Lord Gaurāṅga! All of you, please kindly help fulfil my desire—

Let the mercy of Śrī Rūpa and whichever *mahāśaya*, or exalted soul who has taken shelter at his lotus feet be upon me!

O, When will my Prabhu Lokanātha, Mañjualī, take me and offer me at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī?

O, When will the *priya-narma-sakhīs*, the dearest friends of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, then order their *pālya-dāsī*, this Narottama, Campakalata, to serve Them? ❀

# Contents

## First Ray ❁ Publications

The New IGVP Association	5
Gauḍīya Vedānta Publications Ltd.	6
Publications	7

## Second Ray ❁ Forum

Thākura Bhaktivinoda <i>Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura</i>	13
The Empty Cowshed <i>Letter from Mādhava Dāsa</i>	16
Mind and Intelligence <i>Poem from Dāsanudāsa</i>	17

## Third Ray ❁ Guru-Tattva

The Divinity of The Guru <i>Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda</i>	18
Vyāsadeva May Know or May Not Know <i>Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja</i>	21
Talks Between A Maulvi and A Vaiṣṇava <i>Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda</i>	24
Distinct Similarities Between Buddha and Śaṅkara Ācārya <i>Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja</i>	29

## Fourth Ray ❁ Govardhana

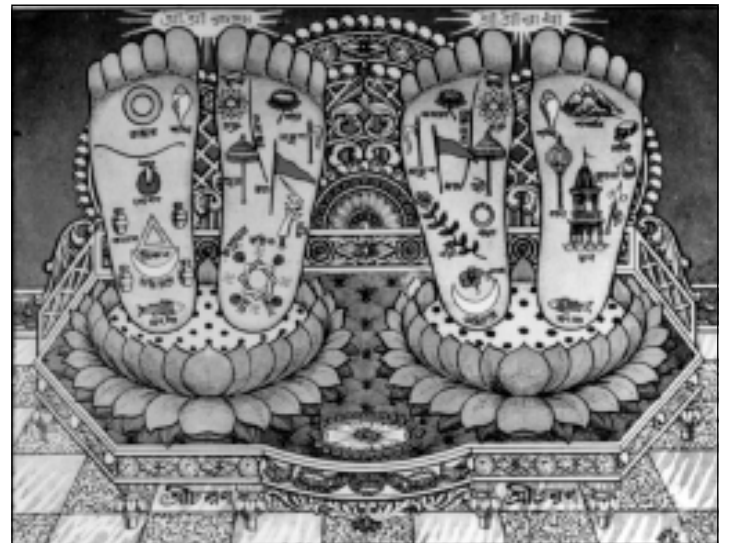
Govardhana's Appearance <i>Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāja</i>	34
Śrī Govardhana-Vāsa- Prārthanā-Daśakam <i>Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī</i>	35

## Fifth Ray ❁ The Six Gosvāmīs

Śrīla Narottama Thākura's Disappearance <i>Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja</i>	38
Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's Bhajana-Sthalī <i>Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja</i>	42

## Sixth Ray ❁ Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu 1 <i>Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja</i>	45
Yaṅ Kali Rūpa Śarīra Nā Dharata <i>Mādhava Dāsa</i>	49
Bhajāmi Rādhām Aravinda-Netrām <i>Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī</i>	50



**Front cover:** Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

**Inner Back Cover:** Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's first installed deity of Govinda, in New York City, USA.

**Back cover:** The lotus is compared to Vṛndāvana, with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the center. They are surrounded by their intimate *manjāris*, and then by the eight principal *gopīs*.

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Our purpose is to spread rays of illumination from the spirit of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, as desired by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. Our heritage is the *Harmonist*, or *Śrī Sajjanatoṣanī* journal, founded by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, later edited by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. May the present day Vaiṣṇavas bestow their divine grace upon our attempts to please them.

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# The Essence of All Advice

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The Nectar of Instruction by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Śloka 5

New Braja, May 18, 1997

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja has written a *tīkā*, an explanation, on Śrī Upadeśāmṛta, Nectar of Instruction. These instructions are for all devotees, from neophytes up to the highest stage. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu inspired Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Mahārāja at Prayāga, giving him many instructions, especially for doing *rāgānugā-bhakti* as *sādhana*. He gave outlines of all types of *bhakti*, culminating in *prema-bhakti*—how to enter it and how to cultivate it.

Kṛṣṇa came and tasted all kinds of *bhakti-rasa*, but He did not give the process by which neophyte devotees (*kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*) practice and how the *prākṛta* or *kaniṣṭha* devotee can advance into *madhyama-adhikāra*, how a *madhyama-adhikārī* will gradually cultivate his *bhakti* to *uttama-adhikārī*, how the *uttama-adhikārī* can come into *svārūpa-siddha-bhakti*, and how someone in *svārūpa-siddha-bhakti* can come into *sādhana-siddha* and become *vastu-siddha*, a *premi-bhakta*.

I have briefly explained the first four *ślokas* of Śrī Upadeśāmṛta in London in a simple manner. Now I will speak in more detail, beginning with the fifth *śloka*. We should not give our attention to anything else. Our whole meditation should be focused here. If you read something you should get absorbed in it, having the attitude that “I am serving this *grantha* and I am taking all these instructions in my heart.” We should not read superficially, hearing with one ear and letting it go out from the other.

There is a very beautiful story which illustrates this point. In India there was a king named Vikramāditya. He had so many jewels, nine court jewels (counselors). All nine were so learned, but among them Kalidāsa was supremely intelligent. One day a person looking like a madman came, holding a skull in his hand. He was quite naked and very dirty. He came in the council of Vikramāditya, and put that skull on the desk, saying, “I have heard there are so many intelligent jewels in your court, your council. Let them come here and test whether the person whose skull this is was intelligent or a fool and rascal.”

Eight jewels were there, very learned persons, and the whole council was full, but none of them were able to reply. Only the skull was there, nothing else, so how could they test it? Then that madman began to laugh and said, “You are all bogus, foolish persons with no sense. I had heard this, and now I have found out that it is true. So I am going.” And he took the skull, preparing to leave. In the meantime, Kalidāsa came. The King prayed to the madman, “Oh, wait a little. Another one of my counselors is coming, and he may answer your question.” That person put the skull on the desk again, and Kalidāsa came. Again this same question was asked to Kalidāsa, who then took a long coconut stick made of very fine, long strands used for sweeping and went to the skull. He put the stick in one ear and it came out the other side, through the other ear. Then he said, “Your question is answered. Do you understand?”

“Oh, you should clarify more,” the King said, “I do not understand.”

Kalidāsa explained, “If anything comes in one ear and goes out the other, that person is surely foolish. And if something goes in one ear and does not come out the other, but instead goes into the heart, then he is surely a very intelligent person. Thus, from his skull we can understand that this dead person was very foolish.”

So if we hear so many things but do not take them here in the heart, if we do not cultivate all these teachings, then we are like a foolish person and cannot develop our *kṛṣṇa-prema*. You have come from many distant, faraway places. So don't merely take these teachings in one ear and let them go out the other, but take them here in your heart and follow them.

Not one of us has come for any worldly gain. We have come here only to see how we can develop our *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Generally we are *kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*. It may be rare that some of us are *madhyama-adhikārī*, but not *uttama-adhikārī* in any case. As *kaniṣṭhas* and *madhyamas* we should try to develop by hearing the instructions of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, as explained by Śrīla Swāmījī. When I

say “Swāmījī” or “Bhaktivedānta Swāmījī Mahārāja,” you should understand that I am speaking of my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, your Prabhupāda.

Don’t think that Swāmījī Mahārāja is not in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī. And don’t think that Swāmījī is telling anything different from Rūpa Gosvāmī, even though Swāmījī has sometimes used different words and has elaborated further. What Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has told in two lines, in one *śloka*, Swāmījī has explained in ten pages, but he is not telling anything different. He is only illuminating the same thing for the benefit of those he is helping, those who are not understanding. So understand that Swāmījī is in the same line as Rūpa Gosvāmī. I am reading Swāmījī’s commentary, and I will explain it. Don’t think that, because his words are not the same as Rūpa Gosvāmī’s, he is telling something different. Swāmījī is not actually repeating the same words that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has told, but the meaning and the eternal motive are exactly the same.

I shall begin reading from Text 5.

*kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta  
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam  
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-  
nindādi-sūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā*

The fourth *śloka* was explaining relations with Vaiṣṇavas: how to serve and how to associate with Vaiṣṇavas by six activities. He has told:

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti  
guhyaṁ ākhyāti pṛcchati  
bhūṅkte bhōjayate caiva  
ṣaḍ-vidham pṛiti-lakṣaṇam*

I have explained this, so I am now coming to this fifth *śloka*: *kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta*.

You should read the translation.

#### Devotee reads from *The Nectar of Instruction*:

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

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja: In this translation or even in the text, has Swāmījī mentioned anywhere that “the devotee must be initiated by me,

myself only?” Has he said this? “We should deal with only those devotees initiated by me?” Has he told this? Or has he said, “We should consider that only my disciples and the disciples of my disciples are bonafide Vaiṣṇavas”? In the whole world no others are to be considered as Vaiṣṇavas? Has he said this? Is there any indication for this? No! We should not think that he is speaking about only “my disciples in my society.” No, he is speaking about the whole Vaiṣṇava community. This verse applies to someone who may not even be in Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s *sampradāya*. He may be from the Śrī or Rāmānuja or in one of the other *sampradāyas*. Even a person out of any of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* is to be accepted as Vaiṣṇava if he has heard anything about Kṛṣṇa’s glory. He may not even have taken initiation but he knows the glory of Kṛṣṇa’s name and is uttering *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*.

Swāmījī has given the example of his friend who was not in the Kṛṣṇa conscious society. He had not even taken any kind of initiation. He was a famous English musician who had not left all his bad habits in eating, drinking, and smoking, but he had some photos of Kṛṣṇa in his house that he was respecting. In his famous songs he used to sing *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare*. Swāmījī is telling in his explanation that we should think of such a person as a member of our family, and he should be respected, even if he’s drinking, taking intoxication, or anything else. And if he is initiated by any Vaiṣṇava or is in Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s family, we must respect him. If he’s coming, don’t criticize him.

So here he’s saying *kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta*. Yes, you should read the purport.

#### Devotee reads:

We can see from practical experience that there are different types of Vaiṣṇavas. The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* generally chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, yet they are attached to women, money and intoxication.

**BVNM:** You should know the definition of *sahajiyā*. Some devotees are telling that Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja is *pakkā sahajiyā*. But you should hear the definition of *sahajiyā*. What is the definition?

#### Devotee reads:

The *prākṛta-sahajiyās* generally chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, yet they are attached to women, money and intoxication.

**BVNM:** What things? Women, money, and intoxication. But you should not think that by “women” Swāmījī is referring only to men who are attached to women here but also to women who are attached to men. For men it is women, and for women it is men. Otherwise it will



be misunderstood, and it will be an offense for women devotees.

**Devotee reads:**

Although such persons may chant the holy name of the Lord, they are not yet properly purified.

**BVNM:** Wait a little. They think I am involved with women—can anyone say this? Do I drink and smoke, or do any bad habits? Do I wear my *sannyāsī* dress when I come to my room in the *mandira*, and I change my cloth when I go to other countries? And about money—I want pure hearts only, I don't want money. So who is the *sahajiyā*—myself or those who are telling like this? You can decide. Those who are telling like this and who are not following all these instructions are *sahajiyās*.

Kṛṣṇa has given you the intelligence to meditate on all these things. Don't accept blindly. Don't believe their rumors and propaganda. Don't. Today in Kali-yuga propaganda and rumors are the most prominent weapons, but a Vaiṣṇava is not affected by all these things. Read on . . .

**Devotee reads:**

Although such persons may chant the holy name of the Lord, they are not yet properly purified. Such people should be respected within one's mind, but their association should be avoided. Those who are innocent but simply carried away by bad association should be shown favor if they are eager to receive proper instructions from pure devotees, but those neophyte devotees who are actually initiated by the bonafide spiritual master and are seriously engaged in carrying out the orders of the spiritual master should be offered respectful obeisances.

**BVNM:** Now come to the purport. We will try to properly reestablish what Swāmījī is telling.

**Devotee reads:**

In order to intelligently apply the sixfold loving reciprocations mentioned in the previous verse, one must select proper persons with careful discrimination. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore advises that we should meet with the Vaiṣṇavas in an appropriate way, according to their particular status.

**BVNM:** What is the *paribhāṣā*, the definition of Vaiṣṇava? He has used the term Vaiṣṇava. What is the definition? Vaiṣṇava is one who has taken *mantra*, *kṛṣṇa* or *rāma-mantra*, and is worshiping his Deities by that *mantra* and following the Vaiṣṇava rules and regulations. Is Swāmījī saying that "he is my disciple so he is Vaiṣṇava, and all others are not Vaiṣṇavas"? This would

be an offense. We should not make offenses like this. We should adopt this complete *paribhāṣā* of Vaiṣṇava. Regardless of birth, caste or creed, we should accept anyone who is chanting, who is initiated in Vaiṣṇava *mantra* and worshiping Deities by that *mantra*, following the rules—all these persons are Vaiṣṇavas. The worshippers of Rāma, Nṛṣimha, Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa—all who are worshiping in the proper way—are Vaiṣṇavas. Māyāvādīs also chant Kṛṣṇa's name, but they are not in a proper Vaiṣṇava process. Then?

**Devotee reads:**

In this verse he tells us how to deal with three types of devotees—the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, *madhyama-adhikārī* and *uttama-adhikārī*. The *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is a neophyte who has received the *harināma* initiation from the spiritual master and is trying to chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

**BVNM:** If someone has taken *harināma*, what is the need of his taking *dīkṣā*? Can anyone reply?

**Devotee:** In *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* Prabhupāda says to bring one closer to the spiritual master.

**BVNM:** What is the difference, I want to know, between *harināma* and *dīkṣā*? Which is prominent? Name or *dīkṣā*?

**Devotee:** Name is nondifferent from *nāmi*, Kṛṣṇa.

**BVNM:** Suppose I went to cook somewhere. Was there any *cūlhā*? Yes, a stove was there, a pot was there, the fire was there, water was there, everything was there, but no rice. So will cooking be done or not? So take this *nāma* as rice. Without the help of a stove, water, fire, or pot, the rice cannot be boiled. If all things are there, but there is no rice, then we cannot cook. But if there is rice and all other needed items, then we can boil the rice, and we will take it. Understand my example?

Now, you can hear more. You should think that *nāma* is Himself Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, or Kṛṣṇa. This is like rice, and fire and all other things are like the *dīkṣā mantras*. To actually realize that the Name is Himself Kṛṣṇa, all items are required to purify ourselves, not to purify Kṛṣṇa's name. Kṛṣṇa's name is always pure:

*nāma-cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś  
caitanya-rasa-vingrahaḥ  
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto  
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

[Padma Purāṇa, quoted in  
CC. Mad. 17.133]

[The holy name of Kṛṣṇa is transcendently blissful. It bestows all spiritual benedictions, for it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure. Kṛṣṇa's name is complete, and it is the form of all transcendental mellows. It is not a material name under any condition, and it is no less powerful than Kṛṣṇa Himself. Since Kṛṣṇa's name is not contaminated by the material qualities, there is no question of its being involved with *māyā*. Kṛṣṇa's name is always liberated and spiritual. Because the name of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa Himself are identical His name is never conditioned by the laws of material nature.]

Kṛṣṇa is the same as His name—there is no difference. His name cannot be impure. It is always pure, always *cinmaya*, *sac-cid-ānanda-maya*. But in our stage, we cannot take the pure name. Understand? If we are full of ignorance, full of all kinds of worldly desires, full of so many kinds of *anarthas*, and full of offenses, then what we utter as *kṛṣṇa-nāma* will not actually be *kṛṣṇa-nāma*. At this time you are standing on the platform of *māyā*, *avidyā*, so that name will not be pure. To purify our hearts and to get a real taste in taking name, *dīkṣā* is needed. It is needed for so many other reasons as well: to have a link, a relationship between Kṛṣṇa and oneself, His name and oneself, and to give up all kinds of *anarthas*, *avidyā*. Fire is needed to boil water, but boiling water alone is not enough. Rice is also required. *Dīkṣā* is given to purify our heart and develop a link with Kṛṣṇa so that very soon we can realize that the name is Himself Kṛṣṇa. So, now are you understanding?

*Dīkṣā* is to help the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and the devotee. That *gopī-jana vallabhāya svāhā*. *Svāhā* means I am offering myself, I am dedicating myself fully at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Which Kṛṣṇa? Name Kṛṣṇa. Name of *brahma*. With what relation? That same relation as the *gopīs* have with Gopi-jana-vallabha. By this relationship we should take name, giving up all, *kṣa*, *dī-kṣa*. *Dī* means *divya jñānam dadāti*, giving *divya-jñāna*. What is this *divya* relationship?—that Kṛṣṇa is my beloved. It makes no difference whether one is male or female. *Dīkṣā* gives this relation. If you do not take *dīkṣā*, this relationship will not come, and you will not be able to give up all your worldly desires and bad habits. So it is a help. But we see examples of devotees who have taken only the name, not *dīkṣā*, like Hariḍāsa Ṭhākura. There are so many examples of this—no initiation. But yet by chanting, chanting and being in the association of highly realized devotees, they have received *kṛṣṇa-prema*. But these cases are rare. So we should follow rules and regulations in this matter. We must take *dīkṣā*.

If you are thinking that I am like Hariḍāsa Ṭhākura, then nothing will come. So now I think that you have properly realized this point—what is the difference between *harināma* and *dīkṣā*. And if you have only taken

*dīkṣā* but not the name, what will you have? If you are not taking the name but only *dīkṣā mantra*, taking out the Kṛṣṇa name from that *gopāla mantra*, what remains? *Svāhā*, *svāhā*. Nothing remains—no liberation, nothing, zero. So the name has two functions. *Klīm* and *śrīm* are the *bīja mantras*, and mixing with *svāhā*, *namaḥ* or *namaskāra*, they give us a special kind of power to give up all our bad habits. Without *dīkṣā* you cannot give them up. The name can also work, but why should you use it for this? You should not use the name in this way. Something less powerful can be used instead. The name alone can do everything, but it will take a very long time. So our *ṛṣis*, our devotees, have manifested these *mantras* by which our *kṛṣṇa-nāma* will quickly develop into *śuddha-nāma*, pure name. That is why *dīkṣā* is given in our disciplic order. Swāmījī has explained this, and I am not telling anything different. “Oh, if you are telling that but not using the same words, then we will not accept.” I find that if I am telling in the same words as Swāmījī, you cannot understand what his deeper moods are. They are very hard to explain.

Now go on.

#### Devotee reads:

A *madhyama-adhikārī* has received spiritual initiation from the spiritual master and has been fully engaged by him in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. The *madhyama-adhikārī* should be considered to be situated midway in devotional service. The *uttama-adhikārī*, or highest devotee, is one who is very advanced in devotional service. An *uttama-adhikārī* is not interested in blaspheming others, his heart is completely clean, and he has attained the realized state of unalloyed Kṛṣṇa consciousness. According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the association and service of such a *mahā-bhāgavata*, or perfect Vaiṣṇava, is most desirable.

**BVNM:** Again I am repeating: should he be the disciple of the same *guru* or any other *guru*? Swāmījī is not saying, “among my disciples only.” He would never write like this. Never. Nor will you find this idea in any books, in *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta*, in *Upaniṣad*, or in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Who initiated Parīkṣit Mahārāja? Who was the *guru* of Parīkṣit Mahārāja?

*Devotee: Śukadeva.*

**BVNM:** He has not initiated him. But Parīkṣit Mahārāja is telling that Śukadeva is his Gurudeva. He is taking his *saṅga* and hearing *hari-kathā* from him. So you should not think that only one's initiating *guru* is a Vaiṣṇava and no one else. This mood is offensive. We should not think like this. It is not found anywhere. It is

*asat sampradāya*. Especially if someone coming in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *sampradāya* is qualified, he is a Vaiṣṇava. Even a *madhyama-adhikārī* should be honored and heard.

Go on. "One should . . ."

**Devotee reads:**

One should not remain . . .

**BVNM:** Listen very carefully to this line.

**Devotee:**

One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*.

**BVNM:** I am always telling this. Some are telling that you should always be distributing books, always, always, always, and making money, money, money, for your whole life and this will take you to Goloka Vṛndāvana in the service of *gopī-prema*. This is quite absurd, quite absurd. I am thinking that those who are telling this are foolish. Swāmījī is not telling this. These activities are meant for building up one's *sukṛti*. They are for newcomers, neophytes, who must do all these activities that Swāmījī has approved, but they should know that this book distribution alone will not be sufficient to achieve the final goal. They should go deep into Swāmījī's purports, then they will have success. If a devotee is only distributing *lākhās* and *lākhās* of books, he will continue coming and going in the cycle of birth and death. By these activities he will only accumulate some *sukṛti*.

Swāmījī has not told that one should always remain as a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*. Rather, he has told that one should **not** remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* forever. But some are insisting that we should be like that, and that this is the highest topic of service! They are simply bluffing. Quite bluffing. We should not bluff anyone. Why are they falling down? They are blaspheming persons for their own gain, and when collecting donations in the name of *guru*, they are giving 25 % and 75 % profit is coming in their own pockets. Swāmījī is seeing everything, and he cannot tolerate this. So we should advance. One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, he should try to move on, by hearing. Greed will come if he is hearing from a bona fide Vaiṣṇava. If he is cultivating and obeying the orders of bona fide Vaiṣṇavas, like Swāmījī, he will surely become a *madhyama-adhikārī*, and *madhyama-adhikārī* will go to *uttama-adhikārī*, and *uttama-adhikārī* will go to *kṛṣṇa-prema*, in *vastu-siddhi*. We have not come here to always be in the same *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* stage and make offenses. We have not come for this. Anyone who always remains as *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* will have limited satisfaction.

Then, "one who is situated on the lowest. . . ."

**Devotee reads:**

One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, one who is situated on the lowest platform.

**BVNM:** You should all try to become *madhyama-adhikārī*, and those who are in *madhyama-adhikārī* should come to *madhyama-madhyama-adhikārī* and those who are in *madhyama-madhyama* should come to *madhyama-uttama*, and those in *uttama* should try to realize *svarūpa-siddhi*. And after *svarūpa-siddhi*, *vastu siddhi*. Swāmījī has written everything, everything—*śravaṇa daśā* (stage), *varaṇa daśā*, *smaraṇa daśā*, then *āpana daśā*, and *sampatti daśā*. He has explained all of this. But we have no chance to go through these books, because we are always only distributing and distributing, but this will not take us to that higher goal.

**Devotee:** Gurudeva, so if one is hearing from a *rasika*, *tattvajña madhyama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava, and advancing from *kaniṣṭha* to *madhyama* stage, then if that person is still distributing books, is that *sukṛti*?

**BVNM:** No harm, no harm. At that time to distribute books is *bhakti*.

**Devotee:** It is the level of consciousness of the person who is distributing that makes the difference.

**BVNM:** Yes, in any activity. A man is brooming but it is not mentioned in the 64 kinds of *bhakti*, but brooming in the *kuñja* will be the highest type of *sevā*. So everything can be utilized— what we are doing and even what we should not do. Sometimes the nonsense of worldly persons, when performed by a devotee, can be the highest service to Kṛṣṇa. But it depends on our stage. So we must try to come to *madhyama-adhikārī*, and *madhyama-adhikārī* must try to come to *uttama-adhikārī*. Swāmījī Mahārāja is not saying that one should remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* forever, he should go on. He must make some endeavor. If he is not trying, then we should think that his association is not good. There is some weakness, some leakage there, either in his *guru* or in himself. If his *guru* is not qualified, then he should try to give up that *guru*.

If our eagerness, our enthusiasm, is not coming, and we are not trying to develop our Kṛṣṇa consciousness from *kaniṣṭha* to *madhyama-adhikārī*, then that *guru* should be given up.

**Devotee reads:**

One should not remain a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, one who is situated on the lowest platform of devotional service and is interested only in worshiping the Deity in the

temple.

**BVNM:** Only worshiping, worshiping for thousands of years, but not serving a high-class Vaiṣṇava, will not be sufficient. If you want to develop, you can do worship, but at the same time you will have to develop your Kṛṣṇa consciousness by association of *uttama rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. Otherwise you will not advance.

**Devotee:** Gurudeva, I was wondering what is the minimum qualification of a . . .

**BVNM:** You should hear all these things and gradually all your questions will be solved. But hear very patiently and very deeply. Try to absorb yourself in one thing. Don't let your mind go to other subjects. You should try to become absorbed in what we are doing now. Concentrate on one thing only, on what I am giving here, what Swāmījī is telling. Don't go out of line. Try to understand these words, the deep meaning of his statements and his mood, then you can develop.

**Devotee reads:**

A person who is very faithfully engaged in the worship of the Deity in the temple, but who does not know how to behave toward devotees or people in general is called a *prākṛta-bhakta*, or *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri*.

**BVNM:** You should know what is *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, and then take your hand here (pointing to his heart) and judge for yourself, what kind of *adhikāra* you have, what stage you are in. You can easily judge this for yourself. Otherwise you cannot advance. And then try to develop. Who is *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*? One who has no association of any advanced Vaiṣṇava, and is only worshiping the Deity may think that he is more advanced than all others. If anyone comes who may give so much money, the *pūjarī* will think, "If I do not honor him, he may leave and not give money. So I should honor him." He will take the garland of Ṭhākuraḥ, but how will he give it? Like this. He will not touch the person, he will throw it. If you go to Bihārījī Mandira, or any *mandira* of Vṛndāvana where all the *gosvāmīs* are *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*, you will see that they throw even to devotees who are *uttama mahā-bhāgavata*. If Śukadeva Gosvāmī will come, if Nārada Muni will come, they will throw the garland like this, because they don't know anything. They think, "Oh, that Deity is not mine so He can be dishonored, but this is my Ṭhākura, and only He is to be honored—not all others. Why are those people giving donations to that Deity? They should all give to my Deity." He is not thinking, "My Deity is everywhere, my Deity is fully Kṛṣṇa." They cannot think like this because they have not developed their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You should

# New And Improved Gauḍīya Gīti-Guccha

We are presenting the English edition of *Śrī Gauḍīya Gīti-Guccha* under the direction of our most worshipable Gurudeva, *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava songs were first brought to the West by the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, who introduced the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu outside India. Now Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching is being continued by Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, who is currently visiting Western countries and expanding our repertory of songs.

This book is a compilation of extraordinary poems, prayers, and songs which are expressions of the beautiful pure devotion which resides in the hearts of our greatest Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* such as Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja. By learning these prayers and reciting them regularly under the guidance of a *rasika* Vaiṣṇava, one will not only be meditating upon the divine attributes of Śrī Guru, Śrī Gaurāṅga-deva, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, but will also begin to feel the specific nature of the exalted authors' devotional moods. Indeed, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has said that regular recitation of these prayers is an important aspect of *bhakti-sādhana* and that one should even meditate on their contents while taking *harināma*.

Furthermore, it will be profitable to note that when Vaiṣṇavas who are accomplished in the practice of *bhajana* assemble together to do *kīrtana*, they always sing the devotional songs according to *krama* (sequence). In other words, in order to properly glorify one's *iṣṭadeva* (worshipable deity) it is essential to first offer *maṅgalācaraṇa* and *praṇāma mantras* to our *guru-varga*, to Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, to Their *dhāmas*, and to Their associates. Therefore, you will find a selection of appropriate prayers in the first section of the book. After that one should begin by singing the songs in honor of Śrī Guru, followed by songs to the Vaiṣṇavas, then to Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and finally to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. This practice is observed by all authorities in the Gauḍīya tradition in whose footsteps we eternally aspire to follow. *Kīrtana*, which is *bhāgavat-priya*, most dear to Kṛṣṇa, is the best service and should not be neglected. Therefore, we hope that this songbook will be helpful to the community of devotees all over the world.

Vaiṣṇava dāsānudāsa  
—The Publisher

# Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda

*Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura*

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We avail of the opportunity offered by the anniversary celebrations of the advent of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda to reflect on the right method of obtaining those benefits that have been made accessible to humanity by the grace of this great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda has been specifically kind to those unfortunate persons who are engrossed in mental speculation of all kinds. This is the prevalent malady of the present Age. The other *ācāryas* who appeared before Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda did not address their discourses so directly to the empiric thinkers. They had been more merciful to those who are naturally disposed to listen to discourses on the Absolute without being dissuaded by the specious arguments of avowed opponents of Godhead.

Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda has taken the trouble of meeting the perverse arguments of mental speculationists by the superior transcendental logic of the Absolute Truth. It is thus possible for the average modern readers to profit by the perusal of his writings.

That day is not far distant when the priceless volumes penned by Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda will be reverently translated, by the recipients of his grace, into all the languages of the world.

The writings of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda provide the golden bridge by which the mental speculationists can safely cross the raging waters of fruitless empiric controversies that trouble the peace of those who choose to trust in their guidance for finding the truth. As soon as the sympathetic reader is in a position to appreciate the sterling quality of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda's philosophy the entire vista of the revealed literatures of the world will automatically open out to his reclaimed vision.

There have, however, already arisen serious misunderstandings regarding the proper interpretation of the life and teachings of Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. Those who suppose they understand the meaning of his message without securing the guiding grace of the *ācārya* are disposed to unduly favor the methods of empiric study of his writings. There are persons who have caught by heart almost everything that he wrote without being able to catch the least particle of his meaning. Such study cannot benefit those who are not prepared to act up to the instructions lucidly conveyed by his words. There

is no honest chance of missing the warnings of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. Those, therefore, who are misled by the perusal of his writings are led astray by their own obstinate perversity in sticking to the empiric course which they prefer to cherish against his explicit warnings. Let these unfortunate persons look more carefully into their own hearts for the cause of their misfortunes. The personal service of the pure devotee is essential for understanding the spiritual meaning of the words of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. The Editor of this Journal [Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta], originally started by Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda, has been trying to draw the attention of all followers of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda to this all-important point of his teachings. It is not necessary to try to place ourselves on a footing of equality with Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. We are not likely to benefit by any mechanical imitation of any practices of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda on the opportunist principle that they may be convenient for us to adopt. The guru is not an erring mortal whose activities can be understood by the fallible reason of unreclaimed humanity. There is an eternally impassable line of demarcation between the Savior and the saved. Those who are really saved can alone know this. Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda belongs to the category of the spiritual world-teachers who eternally occupy the superior position.

The present Editor has all along felt it his paramount duty to try to clear up the meaning of the life and teachings of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda by the method of submissive listening to the transcendental sound from the lips of the pure devotee. The guru who realizes the transcendental meaning of all sounds, is in a position to serve the Absolute by the direction of the Absolute conveyed through every sound. The transcendental sound is Godhead, the mundane sound is non-Godhead. All sound has got these opposite aptitudes. All sound reveals its divine face to the devotee and only presents its deluding aspect to the empiric pedant. The devotee talks apparently the same language as the deluded empiric pedant who has got by heart the vocabulary of the scriptures. But notwithstanding the apparent identity of performance, one has no access to the reality while the other is absolutely free from all delusion.

Those who repeat the teachings of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda from memory do not necessarily understand the meaning of the words they mechanically repeat. Those who can pass an empiric examination regarding the contents of his writings are not necessarily also self-real-

ized souls. They may not at all know the real meaning of the words they have learned by the method of empiric study. Take for example the name "Kṛṣṇa." Every reader of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda's works must be aware that the Name manifests Himself on the lips of His serving devotees although He is inaccessible to our mundane senses. It is one thing to pass the examination by reproducing this true conclusion from the writings of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda and quite another matter to realize the nature of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa by the process conveyed by the words.

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda did not want us to go to the clever mechanical reciter of the mundane sound for obtaining access to the transcendental name of Kṛṣṇa. Such a person may be fully equipped with all the written arguments in explanation of the nature of the divine name. But if we listen to all these arguments from the dead source the words will only increase our delusion. The very same words coming from the lips of the devotee will have the diametrically opposite effect. Our empiric judgment can never grasp the difference between the two performances. The devotee is always right. The non-devotee in the shape of the empiric pedant is always and necessarily wrong. In the one case there is always

present the substantive truth and nothing but the substantive truth. In the other case there is present the apparent or misleading hypothesis and nothing but untruth. The wording may have the same external appearance in both cases. The identical verses of the scriptures may be recited by the devotee and the nondevotee, may be apparently misquoted by the nondevotee but the corresponding values of the two processes remain always categorically different. The devotee is right even when he apparently misquotes, the nondevotee is wrong even when he quotes correctly the very words, chapter and verse of the scriptures.

It is not empiric wisdom that is the object of quest of the devotee. Those who read the scriptures for gathering empiric wisdom will be pursuing a wild goose chase. There are more than a few dupes of their own empiric scriptural erudition. These dupes have their admiring under-dupes. But the mutual admiration society of dupes does not escape, by the mere weight of their number, the misfortunes due to the deliberate pursuit of the wrong course in accordance with the suggestions of our lower selves.

What are the scriptures? They are nothing but the record by the pure devotees of the divine message ap-



*Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's family (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura top left)*

pearing on the lips of the pure devotees. The message conveyed by the devotees is the same in all ages. The words of the devotees are ever identical with the scriptures. Any meaning of the scriptures that belittles the function of the devotee who is the original communicant of the divine message contradicts its own claim to be heard. Those who think that the Sanskrit language in its lexicographical sense is the language of the divinity are as deluded as those who hold that the divine message is communicable through any other spoken dialects.

All languages simultaneously express and hide the absolute. The mundane face of all languages hides the truth. The transcendental face of all sound expresses nothing but the absolute. The pure devotee is the speaker of the transcendental language. The transcendental sound makes His appearance on the lips of His pure devotee. This is the direct, unambiguous appearance of divinity. On the lips of non-devotees the absolute always appears in His deluding aspect. To the pure devotee the absolute reveals Himself under all circumstances. To the conditioned soul, if he is disposed to listen in a truly submissive spirit, the language of the pure devotee can alone impart the knowledge of the absolute. The conditioned soul mistakes the deluding for the real aspect when he chooses to lend his ear to the nondevotee. This is the reason why the conditioned soul is warned to avoid all association with non-devotees.

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda is acknowledged by all his sincere followers as possessing the above powers of the pure devotee of Godhead. His words have to be received from the lips of a pure devotee. If his words are listened from the lips of a nondevotee they will certainly deceive. If his works are studied in the light of one's own worldly experience their meaning will refuse to disclose itself to such readers. His works belong to the class of the eternal revealed literature of the world and must be approached for their right understanding through their exposition by the pure devotee. If no help from the pure devotee is sought the works of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda will be grossly misunderstood by their readers. The attentive reader of those works will find that he is always directed to throw himself upon the mercy of the pure devotee if he is not to remain unwarrantably self-satisfied by the deluding results of his wrong method of study.

The writings of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda are valuable because they demolish all empiric objections against accepting the only method of approaching the absolute in the right way. They cannot and were never intended to give access to the absolute without help from the pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. They direct the sincere inquirer of the truth, as all the revealed scriptures do, to the pure devo-

tee of Kṛṣṇa to learn about Him by submitting to listen with an open mind to the transcendental sound appearing on His lips. Before we open any of the books penned by Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda we should do well to reflect a little on the attitude, with which as the indispensable prerequisite, to approach its study. It is by neglecting to remember this fundamental principle that the empiric pedants find themselves so hopelessly puzzled in their vain endeavor to reconcile the statements of the different texts of the scriptures.

The same difficulty is already in process of overtaking many of the so-called followers of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda and for the same reason.

The person to whom the *ācārya* is pleased to transmit his power to is alone in a position to convey the divine message. This constitutes the underlying principle of the line of succession of the spiritual teachers. The *ācārya* thus authorized has no other duty than that of delivering intact the message received from all his predecessors.

There is no difference between the pronouncements of one *ācārya* and another. All of them are perfect mediums for the appearance of the divinity in the form of the transcendental name who is identical with His form, quality, activity and paraphernalia.

The divinity is absolute knowledge. Absolute knowledge has the character of indivisible unity. One particle of the absolute knowledge is capable of revealing all the potency of the divinity.

Those who want to understand the contents of the volumes penned by the piecemeal acquisitive method applicable to deluding knowledge available to the mind on the mundane plane, are bound to be self-deceived. Those who are sincere seekers of the truth are alone eligible to find Him, in and through the proper method of His quest.

In order to be put on the track of the absolute, listening to the words of the pure devotee is absolutely necessary. The spoken word of the absolute is the absolute. It is only the absolute who can give Himself away to the constituents of His power. The absolute appears to the listening ear of the conditioned soul in the form of the Name on the lips of the *sādhu*. This is the key to the whole position. The words of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda direct the empiric pedant to discard his wrong method and inclination on the threshold of the real quest of the absolute. If the pedant still chooses to carry his errors into the realm of the absolute truth he only marches by a deceptive bypath into the regions of darker ignorance by his arrogant study of the scriptures. The method offered by Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda is identical with the object of the quest. The method is not really grasped except by the grace of the pure devotee. The arguments, indeed, are

these. But they can only corroborate, but can never be a substitute for the word from the living source of the truth who is no other than the pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, the concrete personal absolute.


Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda's greatest gift to the world consists in this; that he has brought about the appearance of those pure devotees who are, at present, carrying on the movement of unalloyed devotion to the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by their own wholtime spiritual service of the divinity. The purity of the soul is only analogously describable by the resources of the mundane language. The highest ideal of empiric morality is no better than the grossest wickedness to the transcendental perfect purity of the bonafide devotee of the absolute. The word "morality" itself is a mischievous misnomer when it is applied to any quality of the conditioned soul. The hypocritical contentment with a negative attitude is part and parcel of the principle of undiluted immorality.

Those who pretend to recognize the divine mission of Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda without aspiring to the unconditional service of those pure souls who really follow the teachings of the Ṭhākura by the method enjoined by the scriptures and explained by Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda in a way that is so eminently suited to the requirements of the sophisticated mentality of the present Age, only deceive themselves and their willing victims by their hypocritical professions and performances. These persons must not be confounded with the bonafide members of the flock.

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda has predicted the consummation of religious unity of the world by the appearance of the only universal church which bears the eternal designation of the Brahma *sampradāya*. He has given mankind the blessed assurance that all theistic churches will shortly merge in the one eternal spiritual community by the grace of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. The spiritual community is not circumscribed by the conditions of time and space, race and nationality. Mankind had been looking forward to this far-off divine event through the long ages. Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda has made the conception available in its practicable spiritual form to the open-minded empiricist who is prepared to undergo the process of enlightenment. The keystone of the arch has been laid which will afford the needed shelter to all awakened animation under its ample encircling arms. Those who would thoughtlessly allow their hollow pride of race, pseudo-knowledge or pseudo-virtue to stand in the way of this long hoped-for consummation, would have to thank only themselves for not being incorporated into the spiritual society of all pure souls.

These plain words need not be misrepresented by arrogant persons who are full of the vanity of empiric ig-

norance as the pronouncements of aggressive sectarianism. The aggressive pronouncement of the concrete truth is the crying necessity of the moment for silencing the aggressive propaganda of specific untruths that is being carried on all over the world by the preachers of empiric contrivances for the amelioration of the hard lot of conditioned souls. The empiric propaganda clothes itself in the language of negative abstraction for deluding those who are engrossed in the selfish pursuit of worldly enjoyment.

But there is a positive and concrete function of the pure soul which should not be perversely confounded with any utilitarian form of worldly activity. Mankind stands in need of that positive spiritual function of which the hypocritical impersonalists are in absolute ignorance. The positive function of the soul harmonizes the claims of extreme selfishness with those of extreme self-abnegation in the society of pure souls even in this mundane world. In its concrete realizable form the function is perfectly inaccessible to the empiric understanding. Its imperfect and misleading conception alone is available by the study of the scriptures to the conditioned soul that is not helped by the causeless grace of the pure devotees of Godhead .

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## The Empty Cowshed

*Letter from Mādhava Dāsa*

Dhruva Mahārāja, although he was only five years old, went to the forest to search for Lord Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa was not unaware of his efforts. Nārada Muni did not have any difficulties in finding him. Dhruva Mahārāja obtained the Lord by the strength of his determination. He never thought for an instant that, "Oh, there is nothing in this forest except dangerous animals! Perhaps, Nārāyaṇa stayed here in the past but things must have changed by now! Let me go and take shelter of some bogus person who will tell me what I want to hear, and thus I will pass my life without undue commotions."

Dhruva never thought this way and he was therefore successful in his spiritual life. He received the mercy of a bonafide guru, Nārada, and then the *darśana* of the



Lord.

Putting unflinching faith in *guru*, *sādhu*, and *śāstra* the Vaiṣṇavas hear this pastime and understand that Kṛṣṇa always arranges for the success of his *bhaktas*, those who are sincerely hankering for him. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is full of prayers by great personalities for the association of the Lord's pure devotees.

Prahlāda Mahārāja prays,

"My dear Lord, now I have complete experience concerning the worldly opulence, mystic power, longevity, and other material pleasures enjoyed by all living entities from Lord Brahmā down to the ant. As powerful time, You destroy them all. Therefore, I do not wish to possess them. My dear Lord, I request You to place me in touch with Your pure devotee and let me serve him as a sincere servant." (SB 7.9.24)

Vṛtrāsura prays,

"O my Lord, my Master, I am wandering throughout this material world as a result of my fruitive activities, therefore, I simply seek friendship in the association of Your pious and enlightened devotees. My attachment to my body, wife, children, and home is continuing by the spell of Your external energy, but I wish to be attached to them no longer. Let my mind, my consciousness, and everything I have be attached only to You." (SB 6.11.27)

Yet the "rṭviks" say, "Oh, now there are no more pure devotees, so we can not follow the recommendations of the *śāstra*. We have to make a new system to accommodate ourselves. The system that we have manufactured is as good as the processes given by Kṛṣṇa Himself, and our initiations are equal to the initiations given by pure devotees." It is extremely offensive to all Vaiṣṇavas. They have understood that it is useless to worship an unqualified guru and that is to their credit. An empty cowshed is better than a wicked cow. If they would simply pray for the association of pure devotees then everything would be all right. Even if they did not find any association in this life, they would be sure to succeed in future births. Instead they have abandoned their faith entirely. By means of a concocted theory they justify taking shelter of their own minds, because they are too proud to accept the opulences of Kṛṣṇa's devotees. Thus they have no shelter at all.



## Mind and Intelligence

One day Mind resolved  
to give up Intelligence:

"Intelligence," Mind admitted,  
"I'm tired of your complacency,  
you're no longer needed,  
please, go away!"

"Mind," Intelligence reasoned,  
"I'm glad we realize some difference,  
proving all is not one,  
and who likes a quitter?"

"Intelligence," Mind repeated,  
"I'm braindead with your flattery  
and your meddling,  
I'm sick of your constant belittling."

Mind," Intelligence concluded,  
"Where will you go without my common sense?"

"Intelligence," Mind reminded,  
"You are more right than wrong,  
but I do not have to be put on the defense!"

"Mind," Intelligence now pleased,  
"Give me one last chance!"

"Intelligence," Mind concluded,  
"I no longer trust your cunning and  
what you call better judgement!  
It's a world of cheaters and the cheated!"

"Mind," Intelligence relented,  
"What a shame, if without pure reason  
we cannot work together with diversity,  
together we'll go a longer way..."

Then Mind left Intelligence senseless,  
not hearing as he madly sped away:

"Mind, don't degrade yourself, elevate  
yourself, you've been the best of friends,  
don't be my worst enemy as well!"

Intelligence then turned to False Ego  
With nothing left to say but "What should we do?"



—Dāsanudāsa

# The Divinity of the Guru

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda

First published in the  
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**Theism** necessarily implies the distinctive personality of the guru. If there is to be any real distinction between God and man there must also be a means for making this distinction possible. This third entity is the guru. He is the means.

There is another line of argument by which also the personality of the guru can be **entertained**. This line of argument is concerned with the nature of worship. If God and man exist separately from one another it becomes also necessary to find out their relation to one another. This gives rise to an endless series of considerations which is represented by the conception of the divine power or *śakti*. Man is subservient. God is absolute master.

Absolute subserviency is the characteristic quality of power. Between subserviency and mastership there should be an unbridgeable gulf of separation, the one being separated from the other by the difference of functioning. But as nature abhors a vacuum, the very basis of thinking requires us to find out some principle of intermediacy between the two. Guru or the principle of this intermediacy is absolute master as well as absolute servant. In his relationship to man guru is absolute master. The guru is the divine giver of efficient as well as material relationship between the master and his relative subservients.

In his aspect of absolute servant the guru is the source of all relative subservient entities. He is the cause of the soul of man and of all spiritual entities by whose help the soul of man is enabled to serve God in and through the guru. In His aspect as master the guru allows or disallows man the service of God. But the guru is never disallowed the service of God.

All these considerations have to be carefully kept in one's mind if one is to approach with the proper atti-

tude of enlightened faith and submission, the subject of the "Divinity of the Guru."

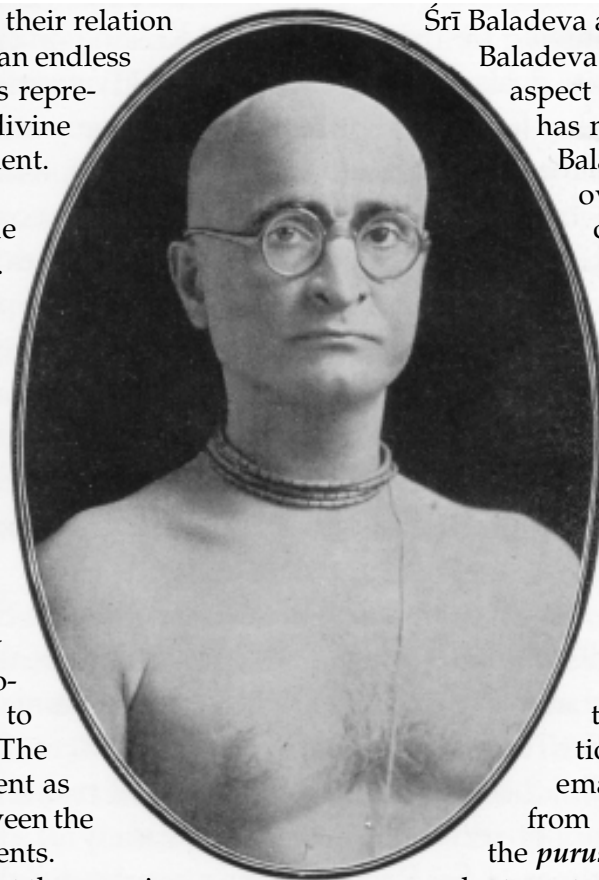
## Guru—A Double Personality

Let us now turn to the concrete reality Himself. The **Guru Himself** has a double personality. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is served by Śrī Rādhikā and Śrī Baladeva. There is a distinction between the services rendered to Śrī Kṛṣṇa by Śrī Baladeva and Śrī Rādhikā. The aspect of Śrī Baladeva is subordinate to Śrī Rādhikā. The aspect of the mastership of Śrī Baladeva has no authority over Śrī Rādhikā. Śrī Baladeva has His master's jurisdiction over entities that are collectively called "*jīva*." Over the realm of the *jīvas* Śrī Baladeva rules with absolute supremacy. This realm is divided into the lower half of the absolute sphere, Vaikuṅṭha, and the shadow of the absolute sphere, namely, the mundane world.

Śrī Baladeva is the object of worship of the entities of Vaikuṅṭha. His domination is not directly exercised over the concerns of the mundane world. The creation and government of the mundane world are the function of distinctive, divine persons emanating as His plenary portions from Śrī Baladeva. They are known as the *puruṣas*. The *puruṣas* are the transcendent creators and immanent sustainers of the mundane world. There is also no direct contact even between Them and this mundane world.

## Māyā—The Principle of Limitation and Ignorance

That aspect of the power of Śrī Kṛṣṇa which serves as the principle of limitation and ignorance enshrouding the *jīva* is called *māyā*. Individual souls emanating



from Śrī Baladeva are permitted the option of being dissociated from Śrī Baladeva by the exercise of their freedom of will. *Jīvas* who choose to be separated from Śrī Baladeva are, by the will of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, deprived of the sight of Śrī Baladeva by the contrivance of the deluding potency which functions in this mundane world.

*Māyā* means “that by which things are capable of being measured.” In the realm of Vaikuṅṭha things are not measurable by the faculties of the *jīvas*. It is only on the plane of *māyā* in this phenomenal world that it is possible for the *jīva* to comprehend anything by his unaided faculties. But such comprehension is useless for the real purposes of the *jīva* in as much as it does not give him access to the real entity of anything.

The subject, object, as well as the process of knowledge in this world are a contrivance of the deluding energy for enabling *jīvas* who are averse to Śrī Baladeva to have a plane of existence that is congenial for the practice of their aversion to Śrī Baladeva.

Those souls who are not with Śrī Baladeva are necessarily against Śrī Baladeva. The faculty of reason in man is capable of going against itself. But as soon as it chooses to do so, it cannot also claim to be reasonable.

### The Absolute Will

The ultimate reality is the personality who manifests Himself as the absolute will behind the activities of the plenary, undivided, **cognitive** principle. The operations of the cognitive principle in the *jīva* tend to lose all cognitive value as soon as they cease to consciously manifest the divine will behind them. They cease to manifest the guiding hand behind them as soon as the *jīva* chooses to become unreasonable.

It is not possible for the cognitive faculty of the *jīva* to function on its own unguided initiative. In other words, the will in man is not the master. The will in man is a will to choose to act. It is not free to **encroach** upon the equal freedom of choice of any other individual. When it chooses to suppose that it is the master and desires to behave accordingly, it is degraded to the level of limited choice that prevails in this world. But the unreasonable mastership that it thus chooses to have is a contradiction in terms. It is not really mastership but the deliberate stunting of itself by the sheer desire for the **commission** of suicide. It is malice against oneself and against all entities. It is the height of folly and the lowest depth of possible degradation for reason in the *jīva*.

It is not possible for the individual to avoid this degradation till it agrees to submit to the guidance of the absolute will in all sincerity. The *jīva* is not the source of his own being. He does not become the source by merely wishing to be so, against the dictates of his own reason,

and for no other purpose except to do harm to himself and to others. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, fortunately for us, knows full well how to deal with such meaningless **perversity**, without Himself ceasing to be perfectly reasonable.

Instead of allowing the perverse soul to function in Vaikuṅṭha, Śrī Kṛṣṇa permits him to choose this mundane realm for his permanent place of residence and the congenial sphere of his malicious activities. But as the soul can never be master, he is deluded into the belief that it is quite open to him to aspire for the domination of this world. He is constantly tempted to accept the offer of the **Tantalus’ cup** of unlimited enjoyment of the so-called mundane **felicities**. These felicities themselves are **proverbially**, and are doled out to the miserable exiles from the realm of real felicity by a power that has no intention of serving such unworthy masters. So instead of the promised domination of the world man only receives the empty punishment of constantly broken promises. He becomes in fact the slave of *māyā*, and not her master. But he always chooses to suppose that he is her present and would-be master.

### Objection to the Guru— An Objection to Fundamental Individuality

The principle of the individual soul is **co-ultimate** with the **Absolute Integer**. There is room for both in the final position. Any doctrine that tends to **contentless** monism is a denial of the fundamental principle of intelligence.

The proper employment of the faculty of judgment, that happens to be the prerogative that distinguishes man from all other entities of this world, is to seek to be acquainted with the nature of the distinction in respect of function as between the Integer and the individual soul, *jīva*, instead of seeking to perversely ignore the existence of the distinction. There would be no necessity of exercising one’s judgment for any rational purpose if the only object of such functioning was to find the effective method of committing the final suppression of this meaningless faculty by the attainment of the state of complete mergence in the One.

The objection to the guru is at the bottom an objection to the fundamental nature of individuality. If there is distinction between the individual soul and the Absolute Integer also, in the final position there is necessarily room also for the respective functions of both. The function of the Integer is, however, self-complete. The Integer is both master and servant. The function of the absolute as servant is the function of the guru. As servant the absolute is the stay of the functions of all individual souls. The individual soul is an eternal, dissociable infinitesimal potency of the absolute as ser-

vant, and not as master. As part of the potency of the absolute servant, the individual soul is also servant of the divine servant.

The form of the absolute as servant is necessarily distinct from his form as master. We thus get the specific personality of the guru identical with that of the absolute as servant. The absolute nature of the further distinction between the function of one individual and another is established by the fact of their associated co-existence in the function of the divine service of the guru.

### Glossary

**Absolute Integer**—a perfect whole number, a number that is complete in itself, in other words, “God is One.” God is for Himself and by Himself.

**cognitive**—(the *sañvit* or *cit* potency) awareness.

**commission**—the authority to perform a task or certain duties.

**contentless**—voidistic, or without content and subject.

**co-ultimate**—“co” means “mutually” or “jointly,” and “ultimate” means “final” or “primary,” thus co-ultimate means “mutually primary” or “jointly final.”

**dissociated**—declare oneself separated from.

**encroach**—intrude, especially on another’s territory or rights.

**entertained**—give attention or consideration to an idea, feeling, or proposal [not to be confused with one of its other meanings, “amused”].

**felicities**—a cause of happiness.

**Guru Himself**—refers to *svayam bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead [the previous “Himself” refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa also].

**master**—God is the original guru.

**perversity**—deliberately or stubbornly departing from what is reasonable or required.

**precarious**—uncertain, dependent on chance.

**proverbially**—as well known as a proverb (short, pithy sayings that are in general use and are held to embody a general truth), notorious.

**puruṣas**—Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu.

**stay**—support or shelter, the *aśraya*.

**Tantalus’ cup**—[mythical Greek king who was condemned to stand in water that receded when he tried to drink it and under branches that drew back when he tried to pick its fruit] tantalize, torment or tease by the sight or promise of what is unobtainable.

**Theism**—belief in the existence of a god or gods, especially a God that is revealed to man and sustaining a personal relation to his souls.

hare kṛṣṇa  
 hare kṛṣṇa  
 kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa  
 hare hare  
 hare rāma  
 hare rāma  
 rāma rāma  
 hare hare

# Vyāsa Vetti Nā Vetti Vā— “Vyāsadeva May Know or May Not Know”

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja

A Discussion on 5 March 1982

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja (SSM):** So, Mahārāja is the leading man, senior...

**Devotee (D):** He is the seniormost. Śrīla Prabhupāda's [Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja's] first disciple.

**SSM:** Yes, first disciple, and he has installed him there like a king.

**D:** Yes, actually millions of people are coming to see Śrīla Prabhupāda now.

**SSM:** In a “royal style” he has installed him there.

**D:** So, we wanted to come and speak to you a little bit, because we are anxious for your blessings, and we are more anxious that you understand us, what we are trying to do for Prabhupāda...

**SSM:** Who is talking? Yes, yes, Svāmī is a very sober man, and he does not speak much. Is it not?

**D:** Well, when one is a fool, if he opens his mouth very much, he will be detected...

**SSM:** You speak a little slowly, I can't follow. That was the cause, though I was requested by my Guru Mahārāja to go to the West, I didn't because I can't follow the intonation of the Western pronunciation. This is a defect in me.

**D:** I said that I usually don't talk so much, because I am a fool, and a fool can pass undetected, if he does not open his mouth.

**2nd Devotee:** Mahārāja said that, “I don't speak so much, because,” very humbly, he said, “I am a fool.”

**SSM:** Fool?

**2nd D:** Yes, and if he opens his mouth, then you can detect who is the fool.

**SSM:** Of course, it is in *Kautila śāstra*: *tavat yaśo bati, mukha yavat kiñcid nā bhāṣate*. But we are interested to talk about the Supreme Lord, and by that process all undesirability within us may vanish. Take to *kīrtana*, speak, that is our general advice. Speak always, and only about Kṛṣṇa. Speaking means “re-producing.”

When we speak something we cannot but be all-attentive. All-attentive. We cannot speak nonsense. So, when we speak, we must be all-attentive. It is difficult to have concentration within, so preaching or speaking forcibly makes us concentrate on a particular call. Re-production, so it cannot be nonsense to the public. I must be alert in what I am speaking. In that way, it has been

selected as the highest end in this Kali-yuga especially. But, speaking must be done in a proper way:

*na yad vacaś citra-padaṁ harer yaśo  
jagat-pavitram pragṛṇta karhicit  
tad vāyasaṁ tīrtham uśanti mānasā  
na yatra haṁsā niramanty uśikṣayāḥ*

“Those words which do not describe the glories of the Lord, who alone can sanctify the atmosphere of the whole universe, are considered by saintly persons to be like unto a place of pilgrimage for crows. Since the all-perfect persons are inhabitants of the transcendental abode, they do not derive any pleasure there.” (SB 1.5.10)

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo  
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavadaty api  
nāmāny anantasya yaśo'nikitāni yat  
śṛṇvanti gāyanti grṇanti sādhaṁ*

“On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, and so on, of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung, and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.” (SB 1.5.11)

Only when the content of our speech, the subject matter of our speech is the Absolute—it may not be ornamented, it may not be grammatically correct, or it may have any defect, it does not matter, but the theme must be about the Absolute, and those sort of words we should always try to pronounce. It has been advised in *Bhāgavatam*, in those ten selected stanzas that were given by Nārada to Vedavyāsa. That is the basis of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as we find it now. *Gaura hari bol...* Is your name given by your Gurudeva? And you say that you are afraid of *kīrtana*?

So, your *kīrtana* must be bonafide. We should not chant unnecessary and insubstantial things. Whatever you speak, speak the truth. We have to take it that way...

**D:** I am trying simply to remember what Prabhupāda told me, and to stick to that instruction.

**SSM:** It is good. But at the same time we should think that *vyāsa vetti nā vetti vā*, “Vyāsadeva may know or may not know”—so Vyāsadeva who is considered to be a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*, who gave most of the revealed scriptures, but still we see Devarṣi Nārada has come and given strictures [critical or censorious remarks] to him. In this way, that “What you have given to the world so far, you have done positive mischief to the people.” His guru is chastising him in that way. So, to understand the words of gurudeva is not so very easy. It is infinite. Gurudeva is infinite. *ācāryaṁ māṁ vijānīyān* (SB 11.17.27, CC *Ādi-līlā* 1.46). In his words, he deals also with the infinite, and we can’t put it under limitation, that we have finished what he wanted to give us, we have understood it, we have finished. We are always a student; we shall remain a student forever, because the infinite cannot be finished. We shall have to remain a student all through...all through...If we think that we have finished everything, then we are in the relativity of *māyā*, not in the relativity of the infinite.

**D:** His instruction is always there...

**SSM:** Our Guru Mahārāja told that he is a monitor [a school pupil] in a class, leader of the students. In his Madras speech, in a written speech, he expressed, “Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhu,” he told that, “I am a monitor.” Something like that. We are all students, and will continue to be students, and we consider it to be fortunate to remain a student all along in our life. Can’t finish. None can finish. Even the highest devotees of every type, they are also of the same opinion. They are unsatisfied always. Unsatisfied that ‘I am unable to do real service to the Lord.’ This should be the attitude.

So far we have understood, we have come to understand the thing...

**D:** Prabhupāda has given us so many, many volumes of books, we cannot begin to understand all that he has given us.

**SSM:** Yes, he did an extensive work. But it’s not a question of *his* side. We have to question it on *our* side. “You are full, but I am such a fool that I can’t understand your fullness.” That should be the attitude of a real student of the spiritual world. Especially those that are students of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Mahāprabhu Himself, He is saying, “I have not a bit of divine love within Me.” [*na prema gandho’sti darāpi harau*—CC. *Madhya-līlā*, 5. 2.45] Kavirāja Gosvāmī is posing that ‘I am the worst of the worst, the meanest of the mean.’ That is not a formal statement only. That is a sincere feeling. And how he could produce such a magnanimous work? That explanation is also given, “Something is forcing me to write.” Sanātana Gosvāmī also said, “Who am I to relate about

the internal affairs of the “harem” of the Lord? The queens? What audacity! But someone is forcing me, my hand, forcing me to write all these things. But we are very low, we are so mean...” They stood by that side. We are nothing, but He is everything.

One gentleman of the Arya Samāj asked me there in Karachi, the leader of the Arya Samāj of the place, “If finite can know infinite, then He is not infinite.” I could also answer him in his own coin—“If the infinite cannot make Himself known to the finite, then He is not infinite.”

*nāyam ātmā pravacena labhyo  
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena  
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas  
tasyaiṣa ātmā vīvṛṇute tanūm svām*

“The Lord in the heart cannot be known by argument, intelligence, or any amount of erudite learning. When the *jīvātmā* turns its face towards the Lord and begins to serve Him, the Lord gives him the mercy to understand. At that time the Lord Himself manifests before him as *śrī vighraha*.” (Kaṭha 1.2.23)

Only one way, the way down. He can be met on the way down. We cannot meet Him by going up. Everything depends on Him. He is *adhokṣaja*, beyond the mundane senses.

**D:** That knowledge is coming down through guru.

**SSM:** Through guru, through scripture, we may not think that guru is limited in a particular body, or in a particular mind. In *Bhāgavatam*, Mahāprabhu told, that every word is Kṛṣṇa, every word is infinite. We must have to come in connection in the relativity of the infinite. When Mahāprabhu gave explanations of the *ātmārāma śloka* in sixty-one ways, Sanātana Gosvāmī said, “Oh, You are the Lord infinite, You can give infinite ways of meaning.” Mahāprabhu replied, “Why do you praise Me, Sanātana? Don’t you know that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is Kṛṣṇa Himself, and every letter is Kṛṣṇa?” Every part of the infinite is infinite. Not that any number of the finite can make infinite. So, we shall try to come very near the infinite, but, at the same time, we must be conscious that He is infinite, not finite. However near I may aspire to come I shall always try to remain under the relativity of the infinite, in connection with the infinite.

**D:** Yes, we accept Prabhupāda that way, because he is *our* guru.

**SSM:** That is a material conception: *mat gurusi jagat guru*. “My guru is *jagat guru*.”

*Ācāryaṁ māṁ vijānīyān*—“One should know the *ācārya* to be My very self.” (SB 11.17.27) A universal conception we must have about our guru.

**D:** But that is the way he has taught us.

**SSM:** Taught? No. He cannot have taught that. Our Guru Mahārāja once told that, "If I am required to give an explanation of this *śloka* of *Bhāgavatam*, *ācāryam mān vijānījān*—'One should know the *ācārya* to be My very self'— if I am under necessity to explain this *śloka*, should I leave the seat and run away? I shall have to give an explanation of that very *śloka*." How? So, he might have given an explanation of this *śloka* and so many other *ślokas*—the guru is infinite. He also says that *his* guru is infinite. In a telescopic system, the infinite is going up. Everyone thinks, in his place, that his guru is infinite. I am nothing, and everything is coming from my guru. In this way, it is possible. Otherwise, this is the *sahajiyā* section that will say, "I am guru, I am infinite." A guru never says so. In *Prakṛta-Śata-Duṣani*, Madhvācārya has written *Māyāvāda-Śata-Duṣani*, so our Guru Mahārāja, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, he has written *Prakṛta-Śata-Duṣani*, there it is mentioned that the guru *never* says, "I am guru, I am infinite."

**D:** No, no, Prabhupāda never said that he was infinite, that he was God. But we can see God through him.

**SSM:** Of course, try to see...if you can see rightly then. We must not think that we can see Guru Mahārāja rightly, but as much as possible, for my condition.

**D:** But for my seeing, I am dependent on him. Whatever he wants me to see, I will see.

**SSM:** We shall always try to think like that. At the same time, we shall think that, "I cannot attain the fullest degree. I shall try, I am out to try for that which is impossible, to know the infinite. I have come to try. But I can't try, I fail when I try!" That should be the healthy attitude. "I am trying, but I am not trying satisfactorily, so I am not getting, I am always in want..."

**D:** Our concern is not so much to know the infinite as

to serve the infinite. Śrīla Prabhupāda has asked us to serve him by preaching all over the world, therefore our movement is a preaching movement.

**SSM:** That is not a new thing. You are preaching, alright. Alright, you are preaching as directed by your Guru Mahārāja, as much as you can catch, as you can understand him, sincerely, you are to do. But there are so many like you. We are also trying to move in the same way.

**D:** We are not saying that we are the only ones, but we are trying to preach...

**SSM:** We don't think you are the only one. There are so many, and they aren't one; they are of different stages...

From their different stages they are trying their utmost, and some may not try also. *Guru-bhogī* is also there. *Guru-bhogī*, he wants to exploit in the name of guru. That is also there, we find. *Guru-bhogī*, exploitation of guru. It is also to be conceived, there may be. So, criticisms of many "so-called gurus" also in the Gauḍīya Maṭha, we have found...

**D:** I think you are mis-

understanding...

**SSM:** I think you are making much of formality, administration, and divorcing the very spirit from it. That is my understanding. You are all captured by the grandeur, the glamour, and not so much for the inner spirit or truth...

**D:** Personally, I have great affection, and I know that you had, that many of my Godbrothers...

**SSM:** Don't think that you have made a monopoly on the truth, of the Absolute Truth. You few heads, you have got monopoly, and it is the object of your trade, you think. I am not such a fool to give recognition to the committee which is effected by a few heads like you. I consider you students, all students, not professors. In my consideration, you are all students. And you will be healthy if you can think that you are students, and not professors...



Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja

# Talks Between A Maulvi And A Vaiṣṇava

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**I:**—You cannot say that truth revealed in the *Bible* is not higher than what is revealed in the *Koran*; still again, what is revealed in the *Bhāgavata* is also not the highest.

**M:**—But Hazrat Muhammad was the last and greatest Nabi.

**I:**—He might be the last, yet he might not be the greatest. Again he might be the greatest, yet might not teach the greatest. What parts will a professor show before a class of pupils not acquainted with the alphabet? The chronological order in the advent of the prophets does not make any difference in the quality of their teachings. The latter differ with the different capacities of the taught.

History shows that when the Hindu Aryans were reciting *Rg-Veda* hymns, the rest of humanity was being rocked in the spiritual cradle. The historians put this date at 4,000 B.C. But the people, versed in astrology, take the date as far back as 10,000 B.C. Evidently these two classes of human beings must at any time require different treatments for their spiritual growths. An adult and an infant cannot be made to sit at the same dish. Appearing as late as in the seventh century A.D. Muhammad had to deal with a class of people at a certain stage of spiritual evolution. They were idolators, deifying matter, worshipping Lat, Monat, and Gora as their original deities, till the number of their gods grew to be three hundred and sixty.

They observed national mourning if, by accident, any limb of any of these gods were broken. They understood brute force more than anything else. They were divided into different tribes and these tribes were always fighting with one another. When Muhammad began to preach they firmly stood for their traditions and began to conspire to put an end to his life. Muhammad averted the danger by taking to the sword. It was a necessity. What Christ did by love and suffering Muhammad did by love and violence. By the sword he gave them peace and by the sword his followers maintained it. Even now the custom prevails in the Muhammadan society of punishing a social crime by the method of public flogging.

It is supposed by many that the sword aggravates the peace-breaking tendencies. Whoever takes up the sword is supposed to break the peace. Again the sword, while it punishes the crime, leaves untouched the cause. Suffering love may also remove the cause and excite love

in return. The victory of the soul force over the physical force is thus consummated. Love manifests itself in a soul functioning in his full spiritual consciousness. All, in their relation to God, become the objects of love of such a soul.

Christ cannot be held to have succeeded among the Israelites, Muhammad was more fortunate among a neighbouring people, the Arabs. While the latter effected his object by making his enemies bleed under his stroke, the former laid down his life on the cross with no less powerful admonition—"Father forgive them for they know not what they are doing." Christ died, and with him died all that loved him. They died in the body to live in the spirit. "For," says St. Paul, "the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again."

The followers of Muhammad wanted to live properly in the body also. "Fight," says Muhammad, "in the way of Allah with those who fight with you. And kill them wherever you find them and drive them out from whence they drove you out." (Ch. II—190-191). Thus while Muhammad advised his followers, "Resist evil: Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." Christ advised His followers without in any way contradicting Muhammad, "Resist not evil: love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."

**M:**—Do you mean to say that Hazrat Muhammad mistook physical facts for spiritual ones?

**I:**—I don't say that. He could not make any such mistake. He did not resort to the sword as a method of preaching his faith. It was a necessity for him to fight with those who came with swords to turn out and kill the Muslims. He fought neither for conversion, nor for booty, but "to end persecution and establish religious freedom." It was a necessity from another consideration. He had to deal with people in a very different way from that in which Christ dealt with them. Christ's gospel of love in that form would not at all have a chance with these people who understood nothing better than physi-



cal force, and took material prosperity to be the emblem of the spiritual. Though for smallness of number the followers of Muhammad at first hesitated to risk their life in a battle with a large well-armed body of the enemies, Muhammad exhorted them to do so as ordained by Allah. He says, "Fighting is enjoined on you, and it is an object of dislike to you; and it may be that you dislike a thing while it is good for you, and it may be that you love a thing while it is evil for you, and Allah knows, while you do not know". (Ch. 11, 216)

The sword in the hand of Muhammad was like the magical rod of Moses. He wrought miracles in the battles. With 313 ill-equipped and inexperienced men, he routed a large well-trained and well-equipped army of Quaraish of Mecca at Badr. People began to flock to his camp. It was more the love for fighting and collecting booty, than his faith, that attracted those people in such large numbers. Islam began to manifest more as a power than as a faith. Soon after Muhammad had passed away his followers began to strike terror into the hearts of all by their cry, *Allah ho Akbar!* which losing all its spiritual significance became merely a war cry. The vast territory extending from Spain in the west to Burma in the east felt the weight of their arms. Many forceful conversions were made and many abominable atrocities were committed during all this time. It was all against the *Koran* and the pious wish of the prophet. For the *Koran* says, "Fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits. And kill them wherever you find them, and drive them out from whence they drove you. But if they desist you must also desist. And fight with them until there is no persecution; but if they desist then there should be no hostility except against the oppressors." (Ch. 11, 190-193)

Against all these clear injunctions of the *Koran* they began to fight aggressively with all the neighbouring nations. Instead of fighting in the way of Allah they began to fight in their own way. They fought these wars as *jihad* bringing untold sufferings upon millions, who were either defenceless or ill-defended, but certainly not aggressive. Muhammad fought "to end persecution and to establish religious freedom." But his followers began to fight and to establish religious intolerance.

Everywhere they were indeed, dreaded and not loved; though they themselves held in esteem all their military achievements as the emblem of spiritual progress leading them to *behest*. In fact the gospel of love that Muhammad wanted to preach, was entirely lost upon many of his followers. It is now very difficult to say whether by Islam as it was practised by most of the kings and conquerors that we would understand 'making of peace' or 'breaking of peace.'

**M:** Don't mind the bad followers. By the religion of that section of his followers you cannot ascertain the religion of the prophet. With regard to the actual creeds of the different prophets I think we cannot say any thing positively one way or the other.

**I:** It is true a tree is said to be known by its fruits. You cannot deny that the whole nation showed this mentality. But they could not leave the sword which Muhammad, compelled under certain circumstances, advised them to use. When any of the Muslim warriors committed an act of atrocity the whole nation acclaimed it. I shall be glad, if you admit that Muhammad's followers went astray as soon as Muhammad had passed away. They aggressively fought with the Hindus and the Christians, demolishing their temples and churches and building mosques in their stead. Are you prepared to characterise all these activities as un-Islamic?

I can give you from our own scriptures as instance how the prophets teach different things at different times. Lord Buddha has been described as a plenary manifestation of Viṣṇu in our scriptures. He is said to have preached a religion without having any reference to the Vedas. This is the view of Buddha's own followers in the historical period. And why?

The Hindus at the time misunderstood the teachings of the Vedas and were bathing their altars with blood of animals, nay of human beings. No religion can claim a high altitude that does not provide for the safety of the lives of the lower order. Slaughter of animals for food as well as for sacrifice is abominable. Whole India turned Buddhist. There was no altar to receive the blood of the animals, and no house to cook fish or meat. The object for which He came was achieved and He passed away. The people, however, could not be left for a long time without Godhead to love. Śaṅkarācārya, who is no other than Śiva, then appeared on the scene by the command of Viṣṇu. He showed the way how to investigate into the truth with the help of the scriptures. People began to worship the Vedas again. India then got rid of Buddhism.

Now should we take to Buddhism again? Certainly not; for in that case we would be attempting to go back. Our scriptures also prohibit it.

In the same way a follower of Islam who should follow Muhammad and respect the *Koran*, must not aggressively fight nor encourage others to fight with anyone under the pretext of a *jihad*. If anyone does so, he has but a lip-deep loyalty to the teachings of the *Koran*.

At the same time it is no harm if any one thinks a particular form of revealed worship, to be the best, and sticks to it. But he surely commits an unpardonable offense when he demands a general acceptance of his faith. It is wrong because, as I have already told you, people differ in spiritual gradation.

The apparently different teachings of the different prophets are really not different as regards to their fundamental principles. After we have received a sufficient measure of spiritual culture we should see all these different religions reconciled. We should then consider it practicable for a Hindu, a Christian and a Muhammadan to be shaking hands with one another.

Though prophets appear at different times in different places, yet one does not come to annul the teachings of another. Nay, one practically preaches the doctrine of those that went before him and will come after him. Thus in *Ampara* in *sura baiena* we get two *ayats* . . . 2. *Rasulum sinallahe italu suhufan motaha-haratan fiha kutubun, kaiimaha*. 3. *Ama takar chakal Lajina ootul kitaba illa mimbade ma ja-at homol bai-illaha*—which means, “He who is sent by Godhead recites all the holy documents where there are firm truths.”

In Chapter 2, verse 136 it has been definitely laid down



*A Maulvi studying the Koran in search of the Absolute Truth*

that Islamic baptism requires a belief in all the prophets of the world. We here below state the verse in the translation of Maulvi Muhammad Ali, M. A., LL. B., “Say: we believe in Allah and (in) that which has been revealed to us, and (in) that which was revealed to ‘Abraham and Ismael and Issac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to Moses and Jesus, and (in) that which was given to the prophets from their Lord, we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to him do we submit.” By “Prophets from their Lord” he wants us to understand “prophets of the world, prophets of all nations and all ages.”

Evidently you do not sufficiently respect your prophet, if you dishonor others. You dishonor the *Koran* if you dishonor the *Bible* or the *Bhāgavata*. All are His prophets and all are His books.

The imperfection which you see in Christianity is, in fact, no imperfection. In Christ’s “fatherhood” concep-

tion of Godhead we should not look for flesh-and-blood relation. Such relation does not obtain in that place of spiritual consciousness in which Christ lives. Things of the spiritual plane must not be confounded with those of the physical one, though they are expressed in human language. In the former, spirit responds to spirit, but in the latter, intercourse is possible only through the medium of matter. Matter is never sanctified into spirit nor does spirit degrade into matter. Spirit descends in the matter, but he should never be designated after the flesh. It is a sin to know a prophet after the flesh. When the people made mention of Christ as the son of David, Christ told them, “How then doth David in spirit call Him Lord?” The Lord said unto my Lord: “Sit thou on My right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?”

Any theistic philosophy must seek out relation between soul and soul, and between soul and Godhead. The former is automatically settled when the latter is settled. “Love your brothers because you are the sons of the same father.” Christ not only designates himself as the son of God but designates all as such. If you love God as Father, you must love all as your brothers. If you love Him as the creator, you must love all that are created by Him. If you love Him as the Lord, you must love all as His servants. Certainly the love shown into Him as father is much intenser than all the rest...

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Again the Vedic “sonhood” conception of Godhead stages love on a still higher pedestal. In all the stages enumerated above, love is controlled by fear of punishment and hope of reward. If you do not do what you are commanded to do then you are thrown into the hell or *dojak*; and if you do what you are commanded to do, then you are raised to the heaven or *behest*. In the hell the unbelievers along with stones are made the fuel of the fire. (Ch. II, 24—*Koran*). In the heaven the believers will have gardens abounding in beautiful rivers, and, young girls for their wives. (Ch. II, 25—*Koran*). These mark the initial stage in the service of Godhead. The real service does not manifest at this stage. Fear of punishment and hope of reward keep the servant on the way. He refrains from doing wrong, and that is all. What little service he attempts to do in this stage is, therefore, as yet hardly spontaneous. And he does so more for his own ease than for the pleasure of his Lord.

In Nanda’s affection for Kṛṣṇa there is no self-seeking and there cannot be any self-seeking. The love in this stage is spontaneous, and because the element of fear that naturally arises from the idea of greatness of the object of love is being entirely absent in this stage,

love expresses itself unchecked and fully. Again the father, having nothing to fear or hope from his son, his service is spontaneous and most disinterested. He takes every care of his Lord, but expects none from Him in return. He must serve Him. It does not matter whether he is put in the hell or in the heaven. He serves Him, that is all. Such complete service is not possible unless the Lord be made to hold a position much inferior to that of His servant. It is a singular triumph for the servant, a singular triumph for love, in which Godhead, to please His servant, comes down to such a level to accept.

There is one Nanda but also innumerable souls who are privileged to serve Nanda. Whoever attains such a spiritual height is enlightened regarding the real nature of the love of Nanda for his son and is privileged to experience actual fatherly affection for Kṛṣṇa without identifying himself with Nanda or Yaśodā. There are innumerable persons sharing the love of Nanda for Godhead, as counterparts of Nanda in that spiritual plane which has been designated in our scriptures as Vraja Dhāma. Even here on earth there may be persons who have attained to the sight of Godhead as son of Nanda. Godhead appears before their minds in the figure of the beloved son of Nanda, the beautiful pastoral lad, Kṛṣṇa.

When Kṛṣṇa chooses to manifest Himself on earth, He is ever born in the household of Nanda or Vasudeva. But it is a mistake to suppose that He is born in the physical sense of the term. No earthly womb can bear Him. But that He appears to be born is not also mere hallucination. We see what is really a divine event. Actually, we do not know the ways of Godhead as they really are, and we cannot know them except by His grace. Being born He is not

born in the worldly sense and being born He dies not. In the *Gītā* (4.9 & 9.11) Kṛṣṇa says, "My birth and actions connected therewith are all transcendental. Those who know them for what they are in reality, come to Me. Fools hold that I was formless but have recently assumed this form. They do not know that I, in this form, eternally exist. I simply manifest My form on this earth. And this I can do."

Godhead does not come down in the human form only to allow His servants to hold communion with Him. Those who are capable of holding communion with

Godhead, will see Him in His own form whether He comes down on this earth or remains beyond the ken of mortals in His eternal abode of Vaikuṅṭha. Kṛṣṇa may also be moving among us in His own divine form yet we may not hold any communion with Him. Not endowed with spiritual sight, we will not know that He, in that form, is fully divine. So, seeing Him, we see Him not. This is due to *māyā* or the power of illusion that He exercises upon the bound souls.

**M:**—I say, don't you put some limitations on Him, when you give Him a form and locate Him in a particular place?

**I:**—On the contrary we bring Him under limitation when we deny Him a form. We can neither give Him a form nor can we deny Him any. In both cases we shall be guilty of mental speculation. Godhead is what He is, and not what we

want to take Him. If He has a form we must not deny it, and if He has not, then we must not create any. In the scriptures He has been revealed with a form. His is certainly a transcendental form, made of the same elements of which He is made and unlike our body which is different from our soul, He and His form are one, an indivisible whole. Not only He but all the angels that live



*Nāmācārya Haridāsa Ṭhākura was a Muslim born Vaiṣṇava*

with Him, have such a form. In the *Bible* we find, Godhead has created man after His own image. This shows that Godhead has human form. But in this form He is also omnipresent.

**M:**—It is very difficult to believe that He appears to His devotees in a particular form. It may be hallucination as well.

**I:**—It may not also be so. Do you mean to say that Hazrat Muhammad was under hallucination, when He heard Gabriel talking to Him, when he saw *nur elahi* (light of Godhead) and fainted? Were the twelve disciples of Christ under hallucination, when they saw Christ, felt Him, talked with Him after His resurrection? Were Moses, Aaron, Abraham and many others of the *Old Testament* under hallucination when they heard Godhead talking from a veil of cloud? If Muhammad could see *nur elahi*, Nanda and others could see Kṛṣṇa in the *nur elahi*. If you believe in one place you should believe in another. If ear has heard Him, eye has also seen Him. Of course He is not to be perceived by this eye or this ear. We will have to acquire other eyes and other ears. We must not adopt the “grapes-are-sour” argument in our spiritual investigation.

Again it is not the question of our perceiving Him, but it is the question of His allowing us to perceive Him. We must remain contented with that much perception of Him as much He, out of His overwhelming mercy, allows us to have. Therefore, stop where you are, but do not say, ‘thus far and no farther’.

Now with regard to the question of Brahmā and Śiva sharing in godly virtues; our scriptures do not set them up as Kṛṣṇa’s equals. They are agents of Him. You also believe in the existence of a host of angels as His agents. Brahmā and Śiva are nothing but angels possessing varying measures of the divine potency. They carry out His mandates, but do not, and cannot, initiate a new policy in their respective spheres of activities. The supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa delegates certain powers to them to enable them to discharge their duties. Those *jīvas* of one creation who are found spiritually fittest, are appointed as Brahmā and Śiva in the next creation after dissolution. Then what is the harm of believing in the existence of such a class of *jīvas* with exceptional abilities to do the will of their Lord? Every one of the angels exercises in a more or less extent, godly powers. Moses, Christ, Muhammad are supposed to have exercised them.

**M:**—That’s a torture upon faith.

**I:**—Aye, it is so. “We shall go by faith and not by sight.” Verification of spiritual facts is impossible on the material plane of consciousness. On the spiritual plane of consciousness they are seen as they are believed. So long as we are not endowed with spiritual vision, we must accept them as they are represented to us. We would

believe what is revealed to us and we would believe what is not revealed to us. Torture on faith is everywhere. If we put up with it in one place we must put up with it in another.

**M:**—We have reason. Shall we not exercise it?

**I:**—We have; but how far can we trust it? Can we bring our intellect to bear upon a realm where it cannot go? The conditioned souls must have divine light to guide them. Muhammad is reported to have said to his writers, “Write what I tell you to write, but don’t write what I say” and why? Because human reasoning is defective, but divine reasoning is not so.

Now, with regard to respect for creatures of a lower order, the Vedas are ahead of all. They want us to have respect for all of them, for they are also souls enmeshed in different physical forms. The *Koran* in one place tells us to practice pure diet. But it is doubtful if it excludes meat and fish. Probably Muhammad advises his followers to take them as *halal* or pure food. Blood, according to Lord Caitanya, is an impure food, and it must, on no account, under any pretext, be taken as food. Such a diet, by justifying malice in a palpable form, incapacitates the consumer for spiritual thinking.

**M:**—Thanks. It is getting late. I am very glad to have had a talk with you. I have not made any comparative study of different religions. We shall meet another day. Now, one thing. Do all Hindus interpret the Vedas like you?

**I:**—You can’t say if all Muhammadans think like you. A true Hindu, a sincere follower of the Vedas, must think in the proper way...

I thank you for the opportunity you have afforded me to serve you. I shall be always at your service. Goodbye.

### —Glossary—

Note: The Original title of these articles was “A Talk With A Maulvi.” This issue incorporates all three talks. To see the harmonious adjustments between Vaiṣṇavism (sometimes called Hinduism by Muslims and Christians) and Islam gives fresh hope that different religions can live co-operatively and peacefully side by side with religious tolerance.

A “true Hindu” is a “sincere follower of the Vedas.”

**Koran**— (originally written Qu’ran) the Islamic sacred book, believed to be the word of God as dictated to Muhammad and written down in Arabic. As to the Christians the *Bible* is their sacred book, to the Muslims the *Koran* is their sacred book, and to the Vaiṣṇavas the *Bhāgavata* or *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is their sacred book.

**Maulvi**—A Muslim theologian; a scholar of Islam law

**Nabi**—a Nawab, the title of a distinguished Muslim in Pakistan

# Distinct Similarities Between Buddha and Ācārya Śaṅkara

## Introduction

In the last article the “Two Buddhas” concept was presented, and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja uncovered it by the process of *aitihya* or historical tradition and references. Now, because *aitihya* or historical tradition is not always acceptable to the masses, he will present the philosophies of Śākya-simha or Gautama Buddha and Śaṅkarācārya, the founder of *māyāvāda*, or impersonalism, side by side, showing them as essentially the same. It is essential to understand how Śaṅkarācārya has spread his philosophy of *māyāvāda*. In the beginning, it may be valid for someone to ask, “What is the purpose of harping on the same string about two different Buddhas?”

Two points here must be thoroughly clear. First, the original ninth Viṣṇu *avatāra* Buddha was a *līlā-avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Lord Buddha’s purpose for descending, although similar, was essentially different from Śākya-simha or Gautama Buddha’s meditative realizations and what he preached. Lord Buddha’s purpose was to firmly re-establish a secondary or sub-religious principle. That is, He preached the philosophy of *ahimsā*, non-violence to animals and other living entities. This same principle was inculcated into the philosophy of Gautama Buddha. In *Śrī Bhāgavatāmṛta-Kaṇā*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura lists Buddha as one of the twenty-five *līlā-avatāras*. In his *Kaṇā-prakāśikā-vṛtti* or Hindi commentary on this book, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, writes:

*kali-yugke prārambh mein atydhika nāstikoṅ aur adhārmkoṅke baḍa jāne para, unko mohita kara jagatkī rakṣāke liye gayā pradeśa mein aṅjana yā ajinke putrake rūp mein āvirbhūt hua the. agni-purāṇa, vāyu-purāṇa, skanda-purāṇādi inkā ullekha pāyā jātā he. inhoṅ yajñoṅ mein do jānevālī paśu-balikā ghora virodha kiyā thā, ye dayākī mūrti the.*

*kucha loga kapilavastuke rājā śuddhodhanke putra gautamko hī bhagavān buddha mānte haiṅ, kintu yaha mata savarthā bhrānta hai. gautam buddha jīva haiṅ. inhoṅne veda-virodha nāstik bauddh-dharmkā pracār kiyā hai. in gautam buddhne gayāmein bhagavad-buddhke āvirbhav yā ārāadhanā sthal par buddhatvakī prāpti kī thī. vahāṅ āj bhī bodhi-vaṭ-ṛkṣakā darśan hotā hai.*

“At the beginning of Kali-yuga, in this age overrun with atheism and irreligious principles, it is known that,

in order to bewilder the world and give protection to the cows, He appeared as the son of Añjana or Ajina in the province of Gayā. *Agni Purāṇa, Vāyu Purāṇa, Skanda Purāṇa*, and so on, have all described Him. He preached against the *yajñas* or sacrifices of horses, cows, and other living entities. He was the *dayā-mūrti*, or divine personification of mercy of the Lord.

Some people have thought that Gautama, the son of King Śuddhodhana of Kapilavastu, Nepal, is the Supreme Personality or Lord Buddha, but this idea is a widespread mistake. Gautama Buddha was a *jīva*, a living entity. He was opposed to the Vedas and preached an atheistic type of *bauddha dharma*. Gautama Buddha’s place of worship where he achieved *buddhahood* or “enlightenment” and Bhagavān Buddha’s appearance place are there in Gayā. Even today that same *bodhi* or *pīpal* tree is to be seen there.”

The second and most important point was stated in the final paragraph of the last article in the *Rays of the Harmonist*. It was italicized for emphasis: “*Certainly, by historical standards this difference of opinion may appear slight, nevertheless, the subject of the qualifications of a guru are absolutely necessary to be discussed.*” Gautama Buddha had no disciplic succession. He was not connected to the previous Lord Buddha by any *guru-paramparā*. Lord Buddha was a *līlā-avatāra*. Therefore, their philosophies were different in their conclusions. In the *Brahma Yāmala* it is stated, quoted from the *Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu* (1.2.101):

*śruti-smṛti-pūrāṇādi-pañcarātra-vidhiṅ vinā aikāntikī harer-bhaktir-utpātāyāiva kalpate*

“Overzealous concern and practice of *bhakti*, by disregarding the prescriptions and injunctions of the *śruti*, *smṛti*, *purāṇas*, *pañcarātra*, and so on, simply become a disturbance to society.”

Thus, this overzealous mood and subsequent speculative practices can be seen to be an improper understanding of both *vaidhi-sāadhanā-bhakti* and *rāgānugā-sāadhanā-bhakti*. The next verse (BRS 1.2.102) attempts to do away with such errant tendencies altogether:

*bhaktir-aikāntikī-veyam-vicārāt pratīyate  
vastutas tu tathā naiva yad-śāstrīyat-ekṣate*

“For lack of proper judgment, such *bhakti* only appears to be overzealous, but actually there is no *bhakti* at all and consequently no overzealousness in it, because it is found to be antagonistic to all the *śāstras* or scriptural injunctions.”

Thus, we begin to perceive the importance of the bonafide *guru-paramparā*. It is a simple, easy, and direct method for verifying the validity of one’s judgments of truth. It is a way to free us from our calculative mentality

and the cheating propensity of which the foremost is *mokṣa*, a desire for liberation, the goal of all *jñānīs*. Without a *paramparā*, Gautama Buddha had no way of verifying his meditations, so he preached an anti-Vedic doctrine. Now, we will see how Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja shows how Śaṅkarācārya took Gautama Buddha’s same philosophy of naturalism, used the same concepts with different word coatings, and then supplied Vedic meanings to the scriptures, thus leading the people back to the Vedas. It was a masterful plan that would set the stage for showing the supreme glories of Vaiṣṇavism that such *ācāryas* like Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, and Mahāprabhu Śrī Caitanya, would follow up on. —*ed.*



*Śaṅkara appeared in 786 A.D. and disappeared 818 A.D.*

As stated in the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (4.9), Kṛṣṇa’s birth and activities are mysterious and transcendental, and therefore only the devotees of Kṛṣṇa can know them perfectly. Śaṅkara was not such a fool that he would accept Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary man and at the same time offer Him all devotional obeisances, knowing Him as the son of Devakī and Vasudeva. According to the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, only by knowing the transcendental birth and activities of Kṛṣṇa can one attain liberation by acquiring a spiritual form like Kṛṣṇa’s. There are five different kinds of

liberation. One who merges into the spiritual auras of Kṛṣṇa, known as the impersonal Brahman effulgence, does not fully develop his spiritual body. But one who fully develops his spiritual existence becomes an associate of Nārāyaṇa or Kṛṣṇa in different spiritual abodes. One who enters into the abode of Nārāyaṇa develops a spiritual form exactly like Nārāyaṇa’s (four-handed), and one who enters into the highest spiritual abode of Kṛṣṇa, known as Goloka Vṛndāvana, develops a spiritual form of two hands like Kṛṣṇa’s. Śaṅkara, as an incarnation of Lord Śiva, knows all these spiritual existences, but he did not disclose them to his then Buddhist followers because it was impossible for them to know about the spiritual world. Lord Buddha preached that void is the ultimate goal, so how could his followers understand spiritual variegatedness? Therefore Śaṅkara said, *brahma satyam jagam mithyā*, or, material variegatedness is false but spiritual variegatedness is fact. In the *Padma Purāṇa* Lord Śiva has admitted that he had to preach the philosophy of *māyā*, or illusion, in the Kali-yuga as another edition of the “void” philosophy of Buddha. He had to do this by the order of the Lord for specific reasons. He disclosed his real mind, however, by recommending that people worship Kṛṣṇa, for no one can be saved simply by mental speculations composed of word jugglery and grammatical maneuvers. Śaṅkara further instructs:

*bhaja govindam bhaja govindam  
bhaja govindam mūḍha-mate  
samprāpte sannihite kāle  
na hi na hi rakṣati ḍukṛṇi-karaṇe*

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

*(Science of Self-Realization, Ch. 3)*

# Distinct Similarities in Buddha and Ācārya Śaṅkara

—In Accordance with the Buddhist Philosophy, Śaṅkara was a Buddhist—

*Oṃ Viṣṇupāda*

*Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*

From  
**Māyāvādera Jīvanī**  
*The Life Story of Māyāvāda*  
(Impersonalism)

—or—

**Vaiṣṇava Vijaya**  
*The Supreme Glories of The Vaiṣṇava*  
(Personalism)

Kiśorī Mohana Caṭṭāpādhyāya, an established Buddhist, declared in writing in his *Prajñā-Pāramitā Sūtra*—on page 177: “The *śūnya*, that is, the voidistic state of the Buddhists, and the *brahma* or ethereal plane of the Hindus (of Śaṅkarācārya) are not different. Therefore, the Buddhists’ *śūnyavāda*, the philosophy of voidism or nihilism, and the Hindus or Śaṅkara’s *brahmavāda*, the philosophy of monism, are simply different words that mean the same thing.”

Nobody differs in the opinion that Kiśorī Mohana was a leading supporter of the Buddhist *dharma*. He substantiated in his book that Ācārya Śaṅkara’s doctrine and Buddha’s doctrine were the same. The *sāṅkhya* philosophers and *paṇḍitas* led by Vijñāna Bhikṣu, the *pātañjala* philosophers and *yogīs*, the Vedānta philosophers, and so many *ācāryas* like Śrī Rāmānuja, Śrīla Madhva, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Vallabhācārya, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, and even Buddhist *paṇḍitas* have also supported Śaṅkara’s method of analysis to be like Buddha’s. Śaṅkara himself displayed so much honor and respect towards Buddha as we have previously mentioned. Various Purāṇas have ascertained the philosophy of Śaṅkara as *pracchanna bauddha-vāda*, covered or disguised Buddhism. Śaṅkara’s mass of followers have interpreted the irrefutability of these Purāṇic *ślokas* in a deceptive way. Actually though, there is no appropriate reason for them to have cast aside these *ślokas*.

**Siddhāntic Conclusions by  
Buddha and Śaṅkara are in Agreement**

By examining all kinds of *aitihyams* or various tradi-

tions and historical instructions, we will find many similarities between Śaṅkara’s philosophy and Buddha’s. Nevertheless, if we only substantiate Śaṅkara’s philosophy as covered Buddhism through history and tradition, we will simply bring on the protests of the *māyāvādīs* or impersonalists. Just to remove such objections and satisfy our own objective ends we are culling through both Śaṅkara’s *siddhānta* and Buddha’s *siddhānta* to show they are in agreement. Exactly how the present-day mainstream school of thought of the ‘*māyāvāda* or impersonalist’s life’ has gradually developed and flourished, having become the *status quo* or the acceptable norm—we are humbly submitting to our readers to become acquainted with.

*Prakṛti* or nature is *māyā*, or an aspect of *māyā*. Therefore, if Buddha’s *prakṛti-vāda*, naturalism, is also said to be *māyāvāda*, then they are, of course, nondifferent. The *dhātu* (root of a word) of *budh* plus the *kartrvācya* (active voice), *kta*—is *buddha*. The meaning of the root *budh* denotes intelligence or knowledge. *Buddha* is that knowledge which appears from the womb of *māyā* and is thus called *māyāvāda*. In fact, following the appearance of Gautama, *māyāvāda* assumed its distinct shape and was preached and proselytized throughout the world. *The advaitavāda of the previous Buddha era and the advaitavāda of the present-day Buddha and Śaṅkararācārya are completely different.* However, at this time, we will show Śaṅkara’s and Buddha’s philosophical unity. *Jagat*, the material universe, *brahma*, the ethereal plane of light, *śūnya*, the void, and the unity between the path of *mokṣa*, liberation, and *śūnya*, and so on, are the topics relating to Buddha and Śaṅkara’s philosophy that are not differentiated between—they are described as follows:

1) Buddha’s Opinion is *Jagat Mithyā*, the Universe is False.

*Jagat*, the universe, and the principle of *śūnya*, the void or zero, are the same in Buddha’s opinion. The beginning of the universe is *asat*, temporal, that is, *śūnya* and the *asat-svarūpa* or essential identity of the temporal in the end is also essentially *śūnya*. That which is *asat* in the beginning and *asat* in the end must be *asat* or *śūnya*

in the middle. The form of *kāla*, time, has not been the least accounted for. *Śūnya* at the beginning and *śūnya* at the end is the only consideration. *Atīta*, past, is *śūnya*; *bhaviṣya*, future, is *śūnya*; and what is between both, *vartmāna*, present, is *śūnya*. They explain, “Present is none other than time—past and future is just another name for it. Any phrase before it is spoken is future, and the moment after it is spoken, together, it is past. Therefore, the present is not able to be traced out at any time.” Maintaining this line of reasoning, the Buddhists want to prove that the present conception of the universe is null and void.

We say, if ‘Rāma has lived’, is this not sheer enough proof of Rāma’s existence? Having said the name of Rāma, must there be no person with that name? Thus, for that matter, must we even accept the giver of this reasoning for the present time? In fact, when we assume the existence of time, then present, past, and future are also there. In any case, in Buddhist ontology, the *tri-kāla* or threefold aspect of universal time is accepted as *mithyā*, false. Ācārya Śaṅkara also has accepted this opinion—it is clearly shown herein:

2) Śaṅkara’s Opinion is also *Jagat Mithyā*, the Universe is False. Ācārya Śaṅkara, following in the footsteps of Buddha, accepted the principle of the cause of the *jagat* or universe as *tri-kāla-śūnya*, threefold timelessness or void. He called it *avidyā*, forgetfulness or ignorance. This *avidyā* is an immense, inexpressible principle of the *sad-asat*, real and temporary, relationship. In Śrī Śaṅkara’s book, *Ajñāna-bodhinī*, the *jagat* is mentioned; if it is discussed here, this topic’s meaning will become more understandable. His eighth sentence says:

*bho bhagavān! yad bhrama-mātra-siddhim tat kim satyam? are yathā indra-jālam paśyati janah, vyāghra-jalata-dādi asatyatayā prati-bhāti kim? indra-jāla-bhrame nivṛtte sati sarvaṁ mithyeti jānāti. idantu sarveṣāmanubhava-siddhim.*

In these sentences he calls the *jagat* a *bhrama*, or illusory mistake, and thus everything is *mithyā*, falsely perceived like a juggler’s magic. In the sixth śloka of *Nirvāṇa-*

*Daśaka* he also says: *na jāgran na me svapnako vā susuptirna viśva*. Thus, in this sentence, Śaṅkarācārya has divided up the universe like Buddha. Furthermore, he has said:

*ābhātīdam viśvam-ātmany-asatyam  
satya-jñānānanda-rūpeṇa vimohāt  
nidrā-mahāt svapnavat tan na satyam  
śuddhaḥ pūrṇo nitya ekaḥ śivo’ham  
(ātma-prapañcaka, 3rd śloka, Śaṅkara)*

That is, *tan na satyam, svapnavat*—the world is not real, it is *asat*, temporary, and *mithyā*, false, like a dream. The existence of the world is perceived as a dreamlike sleep only. Actually, it is not real.

*Saiṁskāra*, inborn nature, and *svapna*, dream—Buddha has especially remarked about the *saiṁskāra*, or inborn nature, of the world in several places. Ācārya Śaṅkara expressed that the world is manifested as *svapnera*, dreamlike, only. Actually, *saiṁskāra* and *svapna* indicate the same conception, because both *saiṁskāra* and *svapna* evolve from the imagination. Whenever a dream is perceived as substantially real, then one’s inborn nature is its primary cause. This is the opinion of philosophers. Although Śaṅkara’s *Vedānta-Sūtra* commentary attacked the principle of *saiṁskāra* of the Buddhists, still he subtly considered the perception of the world to be like a dream and the principle of *saiṁskāra* to be the same—the sole difference being in the words only.



Śākyā-Simha Gautama Buddha

***Avidyā*, nescience and ignorance,  
and the *Tri-kāla-śūnya*, the timeless void.**

Ācārya Śaṅkara’s cause of the world is *avidyā*—*sad-asat-vilakṣaṇa-anirvacaṇīyatvera*—“the inexpressible nature of the *sad-asat*”—in this way, it is not even slightly different from the *tri-kāla-śūnya*, the threefold timelessness or void, of the Buddhists. He said it is like the example between abalone, the mother-of-pearl oyster, and silver. Silver is comparable to *avidyā*, born of ignorance; therefore, this silvery *jñāna* is only an illumination. An illuminated thing only lasts for a while; in the Buddhists’ idea it is only a flicker. Namely, knowledge that is momentarily silvery is merely ignorance. Past, future, and



present, these three times are imperceptible, an ignorance or nescience that is not real, only false. The eminent writer, Rājendranātha Ghoṣa Mahodaya, who published *Advaita Siddhi*, once put forth an amazing explanation while commenting on Ācārya Śaṅkara—he remarked, “That which does not exist gives off a reflection—and the world that exists does not give off any reflection, for example—*brahma*.” This explanation is very much like the Buddhist philosophy. The Buddhist Jñānaśrī said, *yat sat tat kṣaṇikam*—that is, whatever is *sat* or *satya*, existent or genuine, is temporary; it is momentary or “for that time,” therefore it is *mithyā*, false. Ācārya Śaṅkara has said in his book, *Aparokṣānubhūti*, in *śloka* 44, echoing the *kṣaṇika-vāda*, the momentary principle, of Buddha: *rajju-jñānāt kṣaṇe naiva yadvad rajjur hi sarpiṇī*. Namely, “a rope may be mistaken to resemble a snake, but that mistaken idea is momentary; thus, the *jagat* or world is like that mistake, it is also momentary.” If we accept this aspect of timelessness as a truly *śūnya* relationship of the world, then in the end how does it differ from the *tri-kāla-śūnya* moment of manifestation of the world by Buddha? Intelligent readers should muse over this.

### Glossary

**advaitavāda**—monism; God is One, became anothername for *māyāvāda*.

**avidyā**—forgetfulness of one’s real self and his relationship with God; to mistake a changeable and temporary object for an eternal entity.

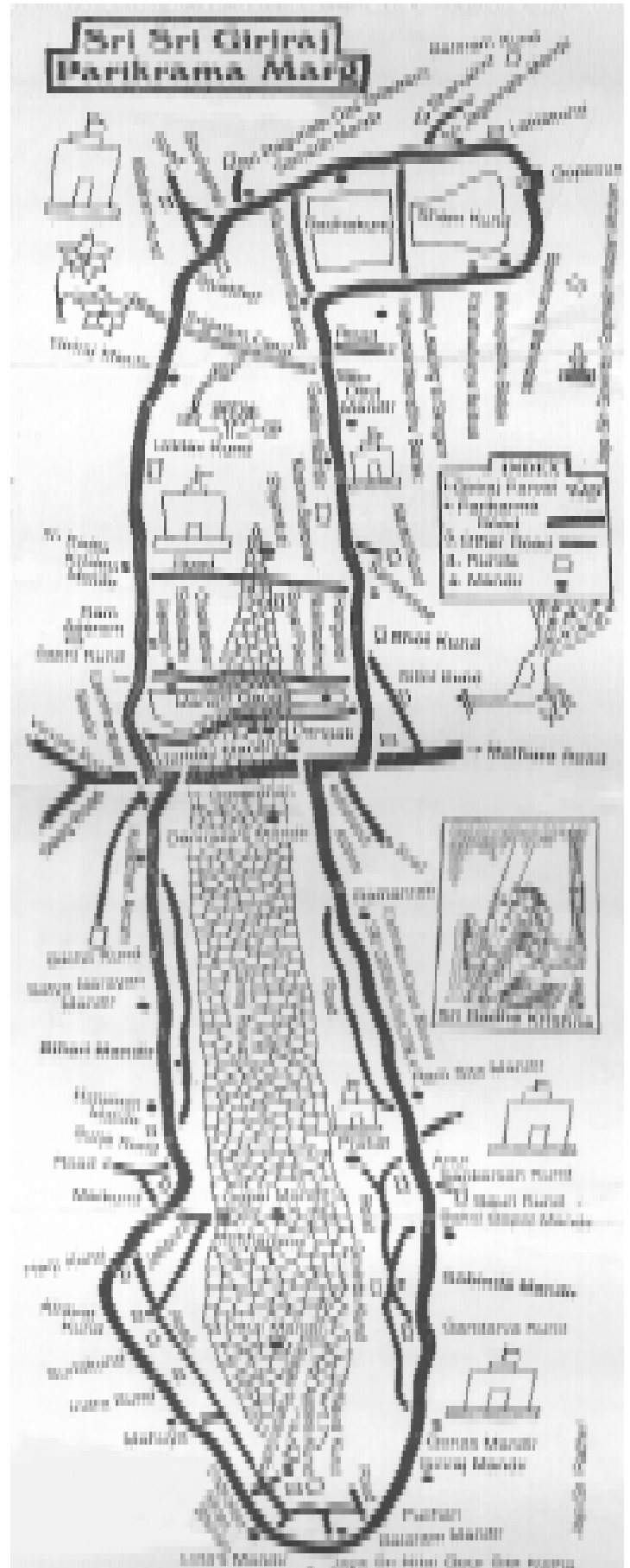
**aitihya**—traditional instruction, historical accounts; although Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī includes *aitihya* as a part of *śabda* or *śruti*, revealed knowledge, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* lists these four as the most authoritative:

*śrutiḥ pratyakṣam-aitihyam-anumānam catuṣṭayam  
pramaṇoṣvana-vasthānād vikalpāt sa virajyate*  
(SB 11.19.17)

“Among the ten types of *pramāṇas*, or ways of acquiring knowledge, four of them, *śruti*, revealed knowledge, *pratyakṣa*, direct perception, *aitihya*, tradition, and *anumāna*, inference, are the most authoritative.”

**Gautama**—Prince Siddhartha, son of King Śuddhodana and Queen Māyādevī; became known as the *samana* or ascetic Gautama after he renounced his family in his 29<sup>th</sup> year. Gautama Buddha is also the proponent of the *nyāya* philosophy, logical argument and reason. Another name for Gautama is Śākya-Simha Buddha.

**pātañjala—astāṅga-yoga**, the eightfold performances of *yoga* according to Maharṣi Pātañjali—*yama*, restraint of passions, *niyama*, various regulations including self-control, *āsana*, practice of different postures, *prāṇāyāma*, art of breath-control, *pratyāhāra*, curbing the senses to prevent them from wandering to the objects of the senses, *dhāraṇa*, concentration of mind, *dhyāna*, meditation, and *samādhi*, mystical trance and contemplation on the Divine.



# Govardhana's Appearance

from

Śrī Vraja-Maṇḍala Parikramā, 1984

Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The narration of Govardhana's *āvirbhāva*, or appearance, in this world and the receiving of the name of "Girirāja" is described in the second chapter of the *Vṛndāvana-khaṇḍa* of the *Garga-Saṁhitā*, by Śrī Gargācārya. In a counsel of wise and elderly *gopas* of Vraja that included Nanda Mahārāja and his brother Sananda amongst the discussion, the previously mentioned topics were deliberated upon. Paṇḍu and Bhīṣma raised the questions for discussion, and the narration was then told by Sananda to Nanda Mahārājī.

As Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire to appear with Śrī Rādhā in this world correlated with the desire to descend to relieve the burden of the world, She said, "Where there is no Vṛndāvana, Yamunā, Giri-Govardhana, there Rādhārāṇī refuses to appear." Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself sent His own *dhāma* of eighty-four *krośa*, one hundred and sixty-eight miles, of divine land, Govardhana, and Yamunā River to the Earth. [The Lord's transcendental Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala-dhāma is not some portion or transformation of this Earth. The Lord's *dhāma* has been sent to this world.]

On the western side of India is Śālmālādīpa, where the son of Droṇa Hill, Govardhana, descended. Govardhana's appearance made the demigods happily rain flowers down. Other regal mountains headed by Himālaya, Sumeru, and so on, became happy at heart and worshiped Govardhana. They sang the glories of Govardhana, saying, "Govardhana is the perfectly complete *svayam bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sporting place from Goloka; Govardhana is the king of all mountains, the *mukuta* or crown of Goloka, *purna-brahma* Kṛṣṇa's umbrella, with Vṛndāvana resting in its lap. From now on, Govardhana's name will be renowned as 'Girirāja'."

Once Pulastya, one of the seven *munis*, as he was touring all the holy places, became stunned upon seeing the beautiful trees, wonderful flowers, fruits, and gardens that the exquisitely beautiful son of Droṇacala, Girirāja Govardhana, possessed. Pulastya Muni went before

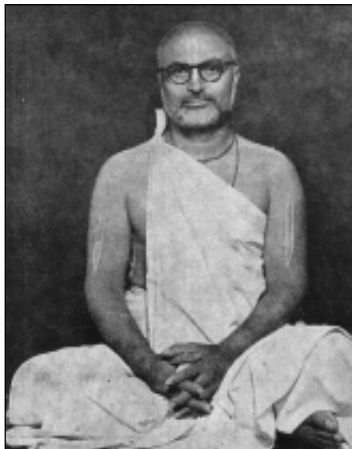
Droṇacala and, showing him great worship and honor, said to him, in this way, that he was a Kāśī-vāsī *muni*, Kāśī has the Gaṅgā, Viśveśvara Mahādeva, and sinful persons there receive *sādhyā-mukti*, liberation as their final goal, but they want to perform *tapasya* there by establishing Govardhana at Kāśī. Pulastya Muni prayed to Droṇacala like this to give his son, Govardhana, to him. Droṇacala was very affectionate to his son, but fearing the curse of the *muni* pointed out about the holy place of Bharata to the *muni*, "How will you be able to take Govardhana? Govardhana is eight *yojanas* (64 miles) long, five *yojanas* (40 miles) broad, and two *yojanas* (16 miles) high." This question was asked before Pulastya Muni who replied that he could easily take it on one hand! [The *Garga-Saṁhitā* describes Girirāja Govardhana's breadth as eight *yojanas*, namely sixty-four miles. But materialistic vision see and hear it as only seven miles at present. The *parikramā* path is fourteen miles.] Govardhana agreed to go along with the *muni* on one condition, "Muni, wherever you place me down due to the heavy weight, there I will remain." Pulastya

Muni promised, "He would take Govardhana to Kāśī, not putting him down anywhere on the road." The powerful father of Govardhana, Droṇacala, offered *praṇā-mas* and then the *muni* lifted up Govardhana in his right hand and slowly began to proceed forward. As he proceeded the best of the *munis* came to Vraja-maṇḍala.

Upon seeing Vraja-maṇḍala's unparalleled beauty where Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *bālyā-līlā*, childhood pastimes, and *kaiśora-līlā*, adolescent pastimes, were performed, and remembrance of the Yamunā, *gopas* and *gopīs*, and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with the youthful Śrī Rādhikā and Her associates,

Govardhana had no desire to go to any other place, leaving Vraja. In this way Govardhana became so heavy that the *muni* felt ill and forgot his own promising talk and thus set Govardhana down upon the ground of Vraja. The best of *munis*, upon completing his bodily purifications, again began to request Govardhana to come and sit upon his hand as he had done previously. But Govardhana did not accept his requests to get up.

The best of the *munis* then tried himself to lift but he was unable do so. Again by the condition of the prayer Govardhana did not want to go, so Pulastya Muni became extremely angry and said, "Because you did not fulfil my aspiration, every day you will decrease one sesame seed." From that time on Govardhana Hill shrunk one sesame seed per day. . .



Śrīla Bhakti Dayita  
Mādhava Mahārāja

# Śrī Govardhana-Vāsa-Prārthanā-Daśakam

Ten Prayers for Residence at Śrī Govardhana

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

-1-

*nija-pati-bhuja-daṇḍacchatra-bhāvam-prapadya  
prati-hata-madadhṛṣṭod-daṇḍa-devendra-garva  
atula-prthula-śaila-śreṇi-bhūpa! priyam me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*nija*—own; *pati*—of the Lord; *bhuja*—arm; *daṇḍac*—handle; *chatra*—an umbrella; *bhāvam*—shape; *prapadya*—assumed; *pratihata*—checked; *mada*—arrogance; *dhṛṣṭa*—bold; *uddaṇḍa*—upraised handle-like arm; *devendra*—King Indra; *garva*—pride; *atula*—matchless; *prthula*—enormous; *śaila*—mountains; *śreṇi*—best class of; *bhūpa*—king; *priyam*—dear; *me*—to me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O matchless king of enormous mountains! O Śrīman Govardhana! Please bestow upon me residence near your side—This is my most cherished desire. Because you assumed the shape of an umbrella held up by the umbrella handle arm of your master Śrī Kṛṣṇa, you pulverized the arrogance of Indra who became intoxicated on his own proud opulences.**

-2-

*pramada-madana-līlāḥ kandare kandare te  
racayati nava-yūnor dvandvam asminn-amandam  
iti kila kalanārtham lagnakas-tad-dvayorme  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*pramada*—ecstatic; *madana*—amorous; *līlāḥ*—pastimes; *kandare kandare*—in every cave; *te*—of you; *racayati*—performs; *nava-yūnor dvandvam*—the youthful couple; *asminn*—in this; *amandam*—great; *iti*—thus; *kila*—indeed; *kalana*—of seeing; *artham*—for the purpose; *lagnakaḥ*—surety; *tat*—that; *dvayorḥ*—of the two; *me*—of me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! You please grant me a dwelling-place near your side where I can easily witness the divine youthful lovers, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala, performing ecstatic amorous pastimes within all of your caves.**

-3-

*anupama-maṇi-vedī-ratna-simhāsanorvī-  
ruhajhara-darasānudroṇi-saṅgheṣu raṅgaiḥ  
saha bala-sakhibhiḥ saṅkhalayan sva-priyam me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*anupama*—incomparable; *maṇi*—pearl-studded; *vedī*—altars; *ratna*—jeweled; *simhāsana*—lion-thrones; *ūrōruha*—trees; *jhara*—waterfalls and swift-flowing mountain brooks; *dara*—caves; *sānu*—peaks; *droṇi*—valleys; *saṅgheṣu*—in the multitudes; *raṅgaiḥ*—with happiness; *saha*—with; *bala*—Lord Balarāma; *sakhibhiḥ*—with friends; *saṅkhalayan*—playing; *sva*—own; *priyam*—dear; *me*—to me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! Please grant me a dwelling-place near your side. If you say to me, “Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa also perform pastimes in the forests at such places as Saṅketa, so why don’t you want to stay and hear them?”**

**I will reply that upon your incomparable pearl-studded altars, on your jeweled *simhāsanas*, below your trees, in your cracks and crevices, upon your crest, and in your multitude of caves, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva always enjoy playful sports accompanied by the *sakhās* headed by Śrīdāmā.**

-4-

*rasa-nidhi-nava-yūnoḥ sāksīṇīm dāna-keler-  
dyuti-parimala-viddham śyāma-vedim prakāśya  
rasika-vara-kulānām modam āsphālayan me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*rasa*—nectar; *nidhi*—ocean; *nava-yūnoḥ*—of the youthful divine couple; *sāksīṇīm*—the witness; *dāna-keleḥ*—of the *dāna-keli* pastime; *dyuti*—splendor; *parimala*—fragrance; *viddham*—filled; *śyāma*—dark; *vedim*—courtyard; *prakāśya*—manifested; *rasika-vara-kulānām*—best of exalted devotees who are expert at relishing melodious, sweet pastimes; *modam*—happiness; *āsphālayan*—causing; *me*—of me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! Please grant me residence near your**

side because, having manifested a lustrous black altar with an enchanting scene, you facilitated and witnessed the *dāna-keli* pastime enacted by the youthful lovers, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, who Themselves are a ocean of delicious *rasa*, or mellows. Thus you increase the transcendental pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's exalted *rasika* devotees who relish those mellows.

-5-

*hari-dayitam apūroam rādhikā-kunḍam ātma-  
priya-sakham iha kaṅṭhe narmaṇā 'liṅgya guptaḥ  
nava-yuva-yuga-khelās tatra paśyan raho me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*hari*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *dayitam*—dear friend; *apūroam*—unprecedented; *rādhikā-kunḍam*—Rādhā-kunḍa; *ātma*—own; *priya-sakham*—dear friends; *iha*—here; *kaṅṭhe*—on the neck; *narmaṇā*—playful; *āliṅgya*—embracing; *guptaḥ*—hidden; *nava-yuva-yuga*—of the youthful divine couple; *khelāḥ*—pastimes; *tatra*—there; *paśyan*—seeing; *rahaḥ*—in a solitary place; *me*—of me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! Please grant me residence near your side. The unprecedented Rādhā-kunḍa is most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and your own dear friends. Embracing Rādhā-kunḍa to your neck in a playful mood, you remain hidden there while watching Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa enjoy pastimes in Their freshly blossoming youth. That secluded spot is also perfectly suitable for me—may I also sit there and relish Their pastimes with you.**

-6-

*sthala-jala-tala-śaṣpair-bhūruhacchāyayā ca  
prati-padam anukālam hanta samvardhayan gāḥ  
tri-jagati nija-gotram sārthakam khyāpayan me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*sthala*—land; *jala*—water; *tala*—grounds; *śaṣpaiḥ*—fresh grasses; *bhūruha*—of trees; *chāyayā*—with their shade; *ca*—and; *prati-padam*—at every step; *anukālam*—at the right time; *hanta*—indeed; *samvardhayan*—nourishing; *gāḥ*—the cows; *tri-jagati*—throughout the three worlds; *nija*—own; *gotram*—name; *sārthakam*—meaningful; *khyāpayan*—proclaiming; *me*—of me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! Please grant me residence near your side. With your nice spacious grounds, streams and waterfalls, forests, fresh grass, and shade trees, you**

**nourish and increase the numbers of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved cows at every moment and step. Thus your very name of Govardhana—*gāḥ* means cows, and *vardhayati* means to nourish and increase—is profoundly renown and nourishes the three worlds.**

**If I can reside near you, I will also be able to receive the *darśana* of my *iṣṭadeva* or worshipable Deity Śrī Kṛṣṇa who comes near you when He brings His cows out to graze.**

-7-

*sura-pati-kṛta-dīrgha-drohato goṣṭha-rakṣām  
tava nava-grha-rūpasy āntare kurvataiva  
agha-baka-ripuṅccair-dattamāna! drutaṁ me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*sura-pati*—Indra, king of demigods; *kṛta*—made; *dīrgha*—long; *drohataḥ*—from the enmity; *goṣṭha*—of Vraja; *rakṣām*—protection; *tava*—of you; *nava*—new; *grha*—house; *rūpasya*—in the form; *antare*—within; *kurvatā*—doing; *eva*—indeed; *agha-baka-ripuṅcā*—Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Aghāsura and Bakāsura; *uccaiḥ*—greatly; *datta*—given; *māna*—honor; *drutaṁ*—quickly; *me*—of me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! Please bestow upon me residence in your vicinity. Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the slayer of Aghāsura and Bakāsura, showed you special honor by establishing Vraja beneath you while holding you aloft, thereby turning you into a new home for the Vraja-vāsīs and protecting them from the hostility of King Indra. Kṛṣṇa's nature is that He is merciful to those who, although unqualified, reside near those whom He honors, so by residing near you I also will certainly obtain Kṛṣṇa's mercy.**

-8-

*giri-nṛpa! haridāsa-śreṇī-varyeti-nāmā-  
mṛtam idam uditam śrī-rādhikā-vaktra-candrāt  
vraja-nava-tilakatve klpta! vedaiḥ sphuṭam me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*giri-nṛpa*—Girirāja Mahārāja; *haridāsa*—servants of Hari; *śreṇī*—multitude; *varya*—best; *iti*—thus; *nāmā*—name; *amṛtam*—nectar; *idam*—this; *uditam*—spoken; *śrī-rādhikā*—Śrī Rādhikā; *vaktra*—mouth; *candrāt*—moonlike; *vraja*—Vraja; *nava*—new; *tilakatve*—as the tilaka marking; *klpta*—conceived; *vedaiḥ*—by the Vedas; *sphuṭam*—manifested; *me*—of me; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you. (If it is said that *pañca-yojanam-evāsti vanam me deha-rūpakam*, these forty

some miles of forest are identical with the form of Kṛṣṇa's body, and that by residing within Śrī Vṛndāvana one's complete desires are fulfilled, then why should one not want to reside here? The answer is given that—)

**O Girirāja Mahārāja! Listen, from the moonlike mouth of Śrīmatī Rādhikā issued the following words: *hantāyam adrirābalā hari-dāsa-varya*, "Oh, this Govardhana Hill is the best of those who are known as Haridāsa." These words from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.21.18) have revealed the nectar of your name, and all the Vedas have established you as the fresh *tilaka* of Vraja-maṇḍala. Thus, according to the logic of *adhikasyādhikam phalam*, that is, "good fruits increase more and more," then the most desirable place to reside is near your side—O Govardhana! Please grant me a dwelling-place near you.**

-9-

*nija-janayuta-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-maitrī-rasākta-  
vraja-nara-paśu-pakṣi-vrāta-saukhyāika-dātaḥ  
agaṇita-karuṇatvān-mam urī-kṛtya tāntam  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam*

*nija*—own; *jana*—people; *yuta*—endowed with; *rādhā-kṛṣṇa*—Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; *maitrī*—friendship; *rasa*—mellow; *ākta*—annointed; *vraja*—Vraja; *nara*—people; *paśu*—animals; *pakṣi*—birds; *vrāta*—for the hosts; *saukhyā*—of happiness; *eka*—sole; *dātaḥ*—giver; *agaṇita*—infinitely; *karuṇatvān*—compassionate; *mam*—me; *urī-kṛtya*—accepting; *tāntam*—distressed; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! You are absorbed in the mellow of friendship towards Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa who are surrounded by Their *sakhīs* and *sakhās*, and you are the unparalleled source of happiness for the hosts of men, women, birds, animals, and living entities of Vraja. Since you are infinitely compassionate, please accept this most fallen, miserable person and mercifully bestow upon me residence near your side—make me a worthy recipient of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's affection.**

-10-

*nirupadhi-karuṇena śrī-śacīnandanena  
tvayi kapaṭi-śaṭho 'pi tvat-priyeṇārpito 'smi  
iti khalu mama yogyāyogyatām tāmāgrhṇan  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

*nirupadhi*—boundless; *karuṇena*—by the mercy; *śrī-śacīnandanena*—by the divine son of Śaci, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya; *tvayi*—in you; *kapaṭi*—cheater; *śaṭhaḥ*—rascal;

*api*—although; *tvat-priyena*—by your beloved; *arpitaḥ*—given; *asmi*—I am; *iti*—thus; *khalu*—certainly; *mama*—me; *yogyā*—fit; *ayogyatām*—unfit; *mām*—me; *tāmāgrhṇan*—without considering; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**O Govardhana! Although I am a rascal and a cheat, by the boundless mercy of your beloved Śacīnandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva He offered me unto you—and you were therefore obliged to accept me. Without considering whether I am fit or unfit, please grant me a dwelling-place near your side.**

-11-

*rasada-daśakamasya śrīla-govardhanasya  
kṣīti-dhara-kula-bhartur yaḥ prayatnādadhīte  
sa sapadi sukhade 'smin vāsamāsādyā sākṣā-  
chubhada-yugala-sevā-ratnam āpnoti tūrṇam*

*rasada*—nectarean; *daśakam*—ten prayers; *asya*—of this; *śrīla-govardhanasya*—of Śrī Govardhana; *kṣītidhara*—monarch of mountains; *kula*—amongst all types; *bhartur*—the lord; *yaḥ*—one who; *prayatnād*—with diligence; *adhīte*—studies and remembers; *sa*—he; *sapadi*—at once; *sukhade*—blissful; *asmin*—in this; *vāsam*—residence; *āsādyā*—attaining; *sākṣād*—directly; *chubhada*—auspicious; *yugala*—the Divine Couple; *sevā*—of the service; *ratnam*—the jewel of; *āpnoti*—attains; *tūrṇam*—quickly; *nija*—own; *nikaṭa*—near; *nivāsam*—residence; *dehi*—please give; *govardhana*—O Govardhana; *tvam*—you.

**Whoever diligently studies and remembers this *Govardhana-Vāsa-Prārthanā-Daśakam*, "Ten Prayers for Residence at Śrī Govardhana" that glorifies Śrīman Govardhana, the monarch of all mountains, will quickly obtain that blissful dwelling-place directly near Govardhana, thereby getting very soon the fortunate jewel of direct service to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. [This *Prārthanā-Daśakam* of ten prayers is sung in the melody known as *Mālinī*. A *Mālinī* has fifteen syllables in a quarter].**



# Disappearance Day of Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura

Mathurā, 2 November 1996.

Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

Today is the disappearance day of Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura, so it is a most sacred day. He took birth in West Bengal as the son of a great king. Actually, there were two brothers serving as king, but they had only one son. From the beginning of his life, Narottama Dāsa was so pure and devoted that he did not agree to marry. He left his home at the age of sixteen and came to Vṛndāvana. He wanted to take *darśana* of Caitanya Mahāprabhu who was in Purī at that time. But on the way to Purī, he heard that Mahāprabhu and His associates like Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda, and Gadādhara Paṇḍita had all disappeared one by one.

His heart was broken and he changed his direction instead to Vṛndāvana. On the way there he heard that Rūpa and Sanātana had also disappeared. Śyāmānanda Prabhu and Śrīnivāsa were also on their way to Vraja. Together the three went to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. At that time he was in Vṛndāvana at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple.

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī was staying at Rādhā-kuṇḍa; his *arādhana* or worship was so intense that no one could follow his example—not eating anything, always weeping, always chanting, remembering, full of tears, and rolling down on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Raghunātha Dāsa was in Jagannātha Purī when Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda, and also Gadādhara Paṇḍita all disappeared. At that time he decided to go to Vṛndāvana and give up his life by jumping in the Yamunā. But when he arrived, he saw that there was very little water. Feeling separation from Kṛṣṇa, Yamunā had dried up. Then he thought, “I should go to Govardhana and jump off from the top and in that way I will give up my life.” Rūpa and Sanātana were in Vṛndāvana at that time. They consoled him, “If by giving up one’s life one can have *darśana* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and serve Them, then we will be the first persons to give up our lives. But we know that Kṛṣṇa is not achieved in this way. So you should not do it. Rather, you should do *bhajana*.”

After that he went to Govardhana, but when he heard that Rūpa Gosvāmī had left this world and entered *aprakāṣa-līlā*, he was feeling so much separation. At that time he had no tears in his heart to express his lamentation. He said, “I don’t want to live in Rādhā-kuṇḍa because it seems like...

*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭhaṁ girīndro ‘jaḡarāyate  
vyāḡhra-tuṇḍāyate kuṇḍaṁ jīvātu-rahitasya me*

‘Like the mouth of a tiger, *vyāḡhra-tuṇḍāyate*. Girirāja Govardhana seems like a very big snake, a python. Everything in Vraja seems to be like zero. I cannot live.”

He wrote many prayers expressing his separation in this way.

In the meantime Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya came to Vṛndāvana. They were all in this separation mood. They were seeking the shade of any Vaiṣṇava’s feet, for *anugatyā*, for shelter. They approached the lotus feet of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, who was present there. Jīva Gosvāmī became very happy upon meeting them. He thought that Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu had arranged to bring these three young devotees to him for instruction. He wanted to give them all the teachings of Rūpa Gosvāmī, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Sanātana Gosvāmī, and all. He became very pleased to have them as his students and began to teach them all *śāstras*, *Ṣat-Sandarbhā*, *Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta*, the explanations of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, the *Bṛhad-Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇi*, *Hari-Bhakti-Vilāsa*, *Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu*, *Ujjava-Nīlamanī* and all the authentic books. Very soon they became masters in all these subjects. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī asked them to take initiation from any qualified Vaiṣṇava. Śyāmānanda Prabhu was already initiated by Hṛdaya Caitanya of Kalna, but Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya were not initiated yet. They declared, “We want to be initiated by you. We don’t think that there is anyone in this whole Vraja as qualified as you. You are *akiñcana*, *niṣkiñcana*, and a *parama-tattva-jñā rasika* Vaiṣṇava. We want you to initiate us.” But Jīva Gosvāmī objected, “I am not qualified for this.” He directed Narottama Ṭhākura to go to Lokanātha Gosvāmī, the associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who had come first to Vṛndāvana with Bhūgarbha Gosvāmī to do *bhajana*. Lokanātha Gosvāmī had made Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī promise not to mention anything about him in his writings, so Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī honored this request. He was so *akiñcana*. Under Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s direction, Narottama Ṭhākura went to Lokanātha Gosvāmī and fell flat at his lotus feet, praying, “You should initiate

me. I'm not qualified but yet I want initiation from you." Lokanātha Gosvāmī refused, saying, "You are the son of a very big king. You are so beautiful, so energetic, and learned. You have taken everything from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. So I cannot initiate you. I have no disciples and I don't want any." But Narottama Dāsa vowed, "I will be initiated by you only. I will not accept any other guru." That night he returned and cleaned the path and the place where Lokanātha Gosvāmī would go to pass stool in the night. He threw his stools very far away from that place and spread cow dung to make the place pure. Narottama Dāsa did this every night for some time.

After so many days Lokanātha Gosvāmī started wondering, "Who is the person who is daily cleaning this place of my stools, clearing the path and everything?" He began watching for that person. He used to do *bhajana* without sleeping, so one night he saw that person who was coming and cleaning his latrine place. At midnight a very beautiful prince, this Narottama Ṭhākura, came. When he was about to throw away the stools, Lokanātha Gosvāmī caught hold of his hands and asked, "Who are you?"

You should tell me, and why are you doing this?" Narottama Ṭhākura began to weep and answered, "I am *duhkhī*, unhappy Narottama. I am a worthless and useless person, but I want to do *bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa. So you should be merciful to me." Lokanātha Gosvāmī replied, "Yes, I'm so glad. I'm satisfied by your service. At first I had made up my mind not to make any disciples, but I see that you are a qualified person. So only one. I will accept a disciple like you." He told him to take bath in the nearby Yamunā in the morning and then to come to him.

Narottama Ṭhākura took his bath in the Yamunā and came. He began to serve Lokanātha Gosvāmī and to follow his instructions. He gave initiation with the *gopāla mantra* and the *kāma-gayatrī*, "*klīm kṛṣṇāya*" and "*klīm kāmādevāya*," these two. And he gave him so many instructions. "You should not have any kind of worldly desires. Give up all these things. Be *trṇād api sunīcena*,

*taror api sahiṣṇunā* in order to follow all these teachings." He began to practice, sitting and chanting in his cottage in a solitary place.

One summer day a farmer came, saying, "I'm so thirsty. You should give me water." He went first to Lokanātha Gosvāmī, who did not reply because he was so absorbed in taking *harināma*, "*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare*," and remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. He was sinking in the ocean of *rasa* and had no outward *jñāna* or anything, being quite absorbed. Then the farmer came to the young *mahātmajī* and requested, "O Chota Bābā, I'm so thirsty. I have no rope or bucket. Please give me water." Narottama Ṭhākura was doing *bhajana*, but he at once left his *harināma* and went to get him water. Then the farmer was satisfied and went away. In the mean-



Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura

time Lokanātha Gosvāmī became conscious, he came into his senses, and he knew everything. He called, "Young *bābājī*, Narottama Ṭhākura, at once you should go to your home. I don't want a disciple like you. You should at once leave this place. Why did you give that water?" Narottama Ṭhākura began to weep and answered, "He was so thirsty." But Lokanātha Gosvāmī replied, "Perhaps you don't know that *nāma* and *nāmī* are one and the same. When you are chanting the holy name, you should think that you are serving Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa both. Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Rāma. Hare is Śrīmatī

Rādhikā, and Rāma is Rādhā-Ramaṇa Kṛṣṇa. And Hare is that Śrīmatī Rādhikā who controls the mind and heart of Kṛṣṇa. She steals His heart, so She's Hara, and from Hara comes Hare. Hare Kṛṣṇa means Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. And by chanting, we are remembering and serving Their pastimes. But giving up the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, you went to quench the thirst of some person. You thought that to give water is more important than to serve Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. So you should go stay in the world and do some pious work there. I don't like you." Understand his *siddhāntic* viewpoint? Very high, but it is factual. What is that *śloka*?

*nāma cintāmanih kṛṣṇaś-  
caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ  
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto  
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ  
(BRS. Pūrva-vibhāga 2.108)*

*Nāma* and Kṛṣṇa Himself are the same. In other words, Kṛṣṇa has manifested all His power in *nāma*, even more than in His *svarūpa*. From the beginning of this world and at the end of this world, Kṛṣṇa's name can deliver anyone, but Kṛṣṇa Himself cannot do these things. For a *nāma-aparādhī*, an offender to the Name, Kṛṣṇa will not do anything but His *nāma* can deliver him. So in some cases Kṛṣṇa's *nāma* is superior to Kṛṣṇa Himself because He has invested all His powers in the Name.

So when we are chanting Kṛṣṇa's name, we should become quite absorbed in that, remembering the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu. We should try to follow like Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, and Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. They were chanting the Name and serving Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā always. They used to sit sometimes quite absorbed, and whether the night and day went, they were not aware. They could not remember when it was day and when it became night or how the time passed. So Lokanātha Gosvāmī ordered him, "You should leave this place and go to your *gṛhastha āśrama*." Narottama Ṭhākura begged him to reconsider but he could not allow it.

At last Narottama Ṭhākura left and began to preach everywhere the glories of his Gurudeva, the glories of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and everything. He established seven temples in Bengal and invited all the Vaiṣṇavas of Vraja, Navadvīpa-dhāma, Navadvīpa-maṇḍala, Kṣetra-maṇḍala, Gauḍa-maṇḍala, all. Everyone came there. Jāhnava-devī was presiding over an assembly at Kheturī. Narottama Ṭhākura was singing all his *kīrtanas*. At that time he was singing this *Gaurāṅga balite habe pulaka śarīra* and was quite absorbed. At once Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Advaita Ācārya,

Gadādhara Paṇḍita and all of Mahāprabhu's associates appeared there and joined the *kīrtana*, mixing their songs with Narottama Ṭhākura's. Everyone present in that assembly was amazed. "How has this happened? What are we seeing? Is this a dream or are we actually seeing this?" Then, when his *kīrtana* ended, they all disappeared. Narottama Ṭhākura was a very pure *bhakta*; it is seen that he had some *śakti*, some power from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Narottama Ṭhākura, accompanied by Śyāmānanda Prabhu and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, was bringing all the *bhakti* books from Vṛndāvana to Bengal for preaching. But on the way a dacoit king looted all the books. The king thought that they were all very valuable treasures and jewels. They were jewels, indeed, but not worldly jewels. They were spiritual jewels. Śrīnivāsa sent Śyāmānanda and Narottama Ṭhākura to other places to search for the books. Śrīnivāsa was also searching and at last found the books in the hands of the king of Bengal, Vir Hambhir. The king was a qualified Vaiṣṇava. Understanding what he had done, he apologized and fell flat at the lotus feet of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and became his disciple.

Narottama Ṭhākura was by caste a *kāyastha*, like a *vaiśya*. But actually he was not in any caste. Being an eternal associate of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he was beyond the caste system. We should not try to look at any Vaiṣṇava in terms of caste or creed, otherwise we will be committing an offense. They are beyond all caste and creed. The *ātmā* has no caste or creed, nothing of this world.

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyo na śudro  
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gṛha-patir no vanastho yatir vā  
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrnāmṛtābdher  
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ  
(Padyāvalī 74)*

We are only the servants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, servant of the servant of the servant of the dust of Her lotus feet. This is our identification. We are not *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriyā*, *vaiśya*, or *śūdra*. Nor are we *gṛhastha*, *brahmacārī*, *vānaprastha*, or *sannyāsī* or anything of this world. We are only the *dāsa* of Kṛṣṇa. This is our pure identification.

So, as the associate of Kṛṣṇa, Narottama Ṭhākura was beyond caste and creed. He had come to serve Caitanya Mahāprabhu by directing all the people of this world towards Kṛṣṇa. But the *brāhmaṇas* did not understand Narottama Ṭhākura's glory. They thought, "He's a *śūdra*, not a *brāhmaṇa*. We are *brāhmaṇas* and he's giving initiation to *brāhmaṇas* also, so he will go to hell. He's bound to go to hell and he'll suffer in this world and in the



next. *Śāstra* says that a *brāhmaṇa* can initiate any *brāhmaṇa* and all others. *Brahmaṇa* is *jāgat guru*. But you, being a *śūdra*, are giving initiation to *brāhmaṇas* and all castes of devotees. It is quite wrong and it is against *śāstra*."

At that time, Narottama Ṭhākura was very sick. He was eighty years or more and could not walk. He wanted to return to his holy master and to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The caste *brāhmaṇas* wanted to debate with him, but he told them that he could not come. So instead Rāmacandra Kavirāja and all his other disciples came to that place and disguised themselves as the shopkeepers of that town. They were such learned scholars, but they presented themselves as ordinary shopkeepers. Some were selling betel nut, rice, wheat, some were brooming and doing other ordinary things activities when the advance party of *brāhmaṇas* came to the town. These *brāhmaṇas* were having such big, big titles, big, big Mahā-Śāstrī, Sat-Ācārya, Pañca-Ācārya, Pañca-Nyāya, Nyāya-Ratna—all had come there. It was announced that tomorrow there would be a debate. Narottama Ṭhākura also agreed to come to that meeting.

*Paṇḍitas* who had come here from all parts of India went for shopping. Some were fond of betel nut. Some who wanted to cook with their own hands went for dry wood, clay pots, rice, and all these things. When one of them went to a wood shop, he met a very simple Vaiṣṇava there who asked, "What do you want? *Kahas tvam?* Who are you?" Then that *brāhmaṇa* told what his name was. The shopkeeper answered in Sanskrit, "No, you are telling a lie." Then he asked, "Who am I?" They entered in a great discussion with the shopkeeper telling that we are Kṛṣṇa *dāsa* and the *brāhmaṇa* was insisting, "I am a *brāhmaṇa*, or *kṣatriyā*." The shopkeeper insisted, "You are talking about the *jāti*, lineage, of this physical body, matter, but we are *ātmā*, so you cannot be all these things."

So in discussing in this way, all the *brāhmaṇas* were completely defeated. Those who went to the betel nut shop were also greeted in the same way. That shopkeeper asked, "Who are you?" Those *brāhmaṇas* told their worldly designations, and thus arguing with the shopkeeper, they were also defeated. All the *brāhmaṇas* were *mahā-mahā-vidvan*, *bhaṭṭācārya*, but all were defeated. In the night they met and said, "How can we show our faces tomorrow? Here in this village if all the shopkeepers are so learned that they defeated us, how we can go in the assembly of Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura?" So in the night all fled away from there.

After that, Narottama Ṭhākura became paralyzed. Actually he purposefully made himself like that. Displaying this condition, he had his disciples take him to the Ganges. All of his disciples were there and were praying, "O Ṭhākurajī, O Gurudeva! If you give up your

body now and go to Kṛṣṇa, then all the *brāhmaṇas* will say, 'He initiated *brāhmaṇas* and that is why he was paralyzed. Thus, he was suffering so much and he has gone to hell.' So we pray that you should be cured. Be as you were before." Hearing this, Narottama Ṭhākura became quite young and began to run here and there. Then he returned to his *āśrama*, displaying no symptoms of sickness or paralysis. The *brāhmaṇas* who had opposed him saw his miraculous cure. Some of them became paralyzed, some became blind, some were bitten by a snake, and so many other afflictions attacked them. At last they became so worried that they came to the lotus feet of Narottama Ṭhākura and apologized. Narottama Dāsa excused them. After that, he again assumed his seemingly paralyzed condition and returned to the bank of the Ganges. From there he entered the realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana-dhāma or Navadvīpa-dhāma, Svetadvīpa.

There are so many things to tell about Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura. He had a very good friendship with Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, and that is why one disciple of Śrīnivāsa Ācārya named Rāmacandra Kavirāja was also Narottama Ṭhākura's most bosom friend. Narottama Ṭhākura wrote so many songs: *Gaurāṅga balite habe pulaka śarīra*, *Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa prāṇa mora yugala kiśora*, *Ye ānilo prema dhana karuṇā*—all good songs. In the whole Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-paramparā, he was the greatest writer of *padāvalī*, devotional songs. And after him, only the *saptama* or seventh Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, was like this. No one can compare to them, they are unparalleled. Both were associates of Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu. So we beg at Narottama Ṭhākura's lotus feet that today he should bestow his mercy upon us. We are so unqualified, unworthy, and insignificant. By his mercy we can chant purely and can come in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates, in *guru-paramparā* and thus we can become qualified. So we should try to pray to him today. We are praying that the songs he has written should manifest in our hearts and that we can realize and practice all these things sincerely.



# Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's Bhajana-Sthalī at Ter Kadamba

Śrī Vraja-Maṇḍala Parikramā—8-11-1997

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

You've reached this place known as Ter Kadamba, midway between Nandagaon and Yāvaṭa. Śrīmatī Rādhikā, by the blessings of Durvāsa Rṣi, was perfect in cooking and whatever She cooked was nectar. That's why Yaśodā was thinking, "My boy Kṛṣṇa never takes anything and He's getting weaker and weaker. He's now so weak—and everywhere there are demons—so how will He fight with these demons, and if He's not taking anything, He will become more lean and thin." She used to bring Śrīmatī Rādhikā by the help of Yogāmāyā and Kuṇḍalatā. So Yogāmāyā told the mother-in-law of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, "Jatila, if you are not sending Rādhikā, then all your cows will die—so quickly send."

So Śrīmatī Rādhikā with all Her *sakhīs*, guided by Kuṇḍalatā, used to come through this very dense forest. Sometimes Rādhikā was coming with so many *sakhīs*. Kṛṣṇa was milking cows here. He blocked the way, only some passage He kept open, a narrow passage near where He was milking. Lalitā said, "We should not go by that narrow passage, there are so many paths we can go by." But Rādhikā said, "Don't fear Him—this black one! We will go, especially on this path." So She came through this path surrounded by all *sakhīs*; when She came nearer to Kṛṣṇa, who was milking the cows, He milked in such a way that He squirted the milk all over Rādhikā's face and covered Her in milk everywhere. All the boys were clapping, Kṛṣṇa was so happy, but Rādhikā became somewhat angry. When She proceeded further, Her thread on Her necklace of pearls broke, and all Her pearls were scattered here and there. Rādhā began to collect them, but in such a way that She was looking towards Kṛṣṇa. She had untied the knot of the thread so that the pearls scattered. This was Her plan and no one could know why it scattered. All only knew, "Oh, they have become scattered here!" So ever-new kinds of pastimes used to take place here when Rādhā used to come from Yāvaṭa.

Kṛṣṇa used to call by His flute the lakhs and lakhs of cows—Śyāmālī, Padma, Thanlī, Kṛṣṅgī, Gargī, Yamunā. Nanda Baba had 9 lakhs, Vṛṣabhānu—11 lakhs, Upa-nanda—8, and Śrīdama, Subala—all their cows. Śrīdama was the master of 11 lakhs of cows. He's the son of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja and brother of Rādhikā. So all cows gathered here, and in the evening Kṛṣṇa used to climb up on the top of this tree and call all the cows. And all

cows made a "flakking" sound with their tails—like this and jumping on all four hooves they used to come running. Kṛṣṇa used to count on His garland all the cows. If even one cow did not come He would see that it was injured and that is why it has not come. He would call that same cow with His flute, she would at once jump up spiritedly and come here. This was at about midday time. In the night, what? He used to climb on the top of the Kadamba. He used to call by *klim*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā. "Rādhe! Rādhe! Lalite, Viśākhe, Citre, Campakalate, Tungavidyā, Indulekha, Rangadevī, Sudevī, Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī! Like all these *sakhīs* they used to come. They used to think, "None are seeing me. I am alone coming here." That's why it is called "Kadamba Ter." Ter means "to call." Pukharna, Pukharatha, Kokilvan, are very near to this place. We will go there tomorrow.

Yāvaṭa has so many places of very sweet pastimes. That's why Rūpa Gosvāmī, after 5,000 years came here. At that time it was very dense forest. Now, still so many dacoits are here. No one can live alone here. Dacoits would injure anyone who came here, who would flee to Nandagaon. Anyhow, they can stay here up to sunset, after that it becomes very dangerous. In the night it becomes the center of dacoits. One can live here only by grace of Rūpa Gosvāmī. At that time, it was full of serpents, tigers also, so many dangerous animals. But Rūpa Gosvāmī used to live here. He was a *niṣkīncana* Vaiṣṇava. Rādhikā used to give *pahara*, to guard Rūpa Gosvāmī Herself. She cooked even for Rūpa-Sanātana here. So many pastimes are here.

Rūpa wrote so many books here and composed so many *ślokas* of meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. At that time, while describing their meeting, fresh, new leaves used to come on this tree, and when he used to explain the separation mood of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, at that time all the leaves used to dry up and come down.

In *Vilapa-Kusumañjalī* 1, Raghunātha has given a *praṇāma* to his Gurudeva. What *praṇāma*?

*tvaṁ rūpa mañjari sakhi prathitā pure 'smin  
pūṁsaḥ parasya vadanāṁ nahi paśyasīti  
bimbādhare kṣata manāgata-bhartṛkāyā  
yat te vyadhāyi kim utac-chuka-puṅgavena*

He prayed like this, “O Rūpa Mañjari, O *sakhī!* You are famous throughout Vraja as a very chaste girl. You never so much as look at the face of any other man. Your husband has been away at another village for the past few days, and yet your lips are freshly cut. Can it be that some excellent parrot has bitten them, mistaken them to be a *bimba* fruit?”

One day Rūpa Gosvāmī was doing *bhajana* here with Sanātana. Sanātana came and they were discussing how Rādhā had come and how Kṛṣṇa met Her. So many *līlās* here. How Rādhā is so beautiful! How She is so kind, so generous. So they were discussing about Her like this and it became midday. They had not taken anything since midnight. Rūpa Gosvāmī thought that I should give him something but I have nothing to give him. At once he saw that a girl, very beautiful, who came alone with some milk in a pot, told Rūpa Gosvāmī, “Bābā, My mother has sent Me, you were talking and talking, and kept on talking from morning to midday, and you had still not taken anything. So My mother has sent this milk and rice. You should make something and give it to your brother and the rest you should take.” They could not give attention to what She was telling. They thought She was a common village girl. After this She left from there. After some time She again returned. “Bābā, you have not made anything? Oh, I should make!” and saying this at once She collected some cow dung and She blew some air from Her mouth and at once a fire came. And very quickly a very good sweet *khīra* with a fragrant sweet aroma was there. She said, “Bābā, you should offer it to your Prabhu, and then you should take it. I’m coming. My mother will chastise Me. ‘Why have you come so late?’ So I’m going, but you should take it.”

Rūpa Gosvāmī thought, “Who is She?” Quickly he did something. So he offered to his Conjugal and after that he gave it to Sanātana Gosvāmī. Sanātana Gosvāmī took some and he gave in his mouth. He began to weep loudly, “Rādhe! Rādhe! Rādhe! Oh, this is not a common aroma? How sweet! How fragrant! I have never had such a taste in my whole life anywhere, not even in Remunā or anything. I have gone everywhere. I have gone to Kṣīra-Cora Gopinātha and Nāthādvara or anyplace in Vṛndāvana, but I have never taken such delicious sweet rice.” And then he became full of *prema* of Rādhikā and he began to weep. When he somewhat subsided, then he said, “My brother, Rūpa Gosvāmī, what have you done? This girl was not any common girl. She was surely Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Have you desired anything?”

“There was nothing to give my elder brother.”

“What did She give?”

“In the meantime...I saw that this girl had come with rice and milk.”

So Sanātana Gosvāmī told him, weeping, that, “Don’t desire anything. Otherwise, to fulfil your desire, She must have come and served you. Don’t take anything. Try to serve Her.”

So things like that are here. Sanātana used to come here and Rūpa Gosvāmī used to go to Kusuma-sarovara to discuss all these things. Do you know that *kīrtana*: *yañ kali rūpa śarira nā dharata?* “What if Rūpa Gosvāmī had not come?” The meaning of this *kīrtana* is that if Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī had not come then who would have written all these things? There was a very big storehouse of *prema*, an ocean of *prema*. All was in a very big storehouse, and there was a very strong door to that storehouse. Before Rūpa Gosvāmī came, only *bhakti* was there. Four *ācāryas*—but they used to do *bhakti-sādhana* by *śravaṇam*, *kīrtanam*, *viṣṇu-smaraṇam*, by all these things, which are told about in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.6):

*sa vai puṁsaṁ paro dharmo yato bhaktir adhokṣaje  
ahaituky apratihātā yayātmā suprasīdhati*

All had been explained, but there was no *bhakti-rasa*. There is great difference between *bhakti* and *bhakti-rasa*. So before Rūpa Gosvāmī, it was *bhakti*, but not *bhakti-rasa*. Rūpa Gosvāmī came. And he told what is *bhāva*. What is *sthayi-bhāva*. What is *alambana*, *uddīpana*, *vibhava*, *anubhāva*, *sattvikā* and *vyabhicārī*. And in what proportion to mix them so it will become a very sweet *rasa*. And what *rasa*? *Prīta-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, *vātsalya-rasa*, and then *madhura-rasa*. And *madhura-rasa* is of so many kinds. Before they didn’t analyze all these things anywhere, but Rūpa Gosvāmī came, and by the power and mercy of Rūpa Gosvāmī who was empowered by Mahāprabhu, he wrote all things: *Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu*, *Ujjoala-Nīlamanī*, and he narrated *Lalita-Mādhava*, *Vidagda-Mādhava*. Why did he write them? There were no examples anywhere in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also; so he set an example in these and he took two like *mahābhava*. He gave definitions of *mahābhāva*, *adhirūdhā mahābhāva*, what is *modana*, what is *madana*? And for this he took examples from all these books. And that became *bhakti-rasa*. After this Raghunātha Gosvāmī has made it into *rasa*.

Rūpa Gosvāmī has narrated all these things: *bhāva*, *mahābhāva*, *sañcari*, *svarūpa-siddhi*, *ruci*, *asakti*, *vastu-siddhi*, *prema*, *sneha*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva* or *mahābhāva*, *māna*, *pranaya*. He narrated all these. Never before has anyone done this. So Rūpa Gosvāmī has opened the very strong doors of that *khajānā* or treasurehouse of *bhakti-rasa*. And then when he opened the door, *bhakti-rasa* began to flow like the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, with a strong current, and it flooded over the whole of Bengal, and after that the whole of South India, and also in Vraja, everywhere. So

if Rūpa Gosvāmī was not here, then who could have explained all these things? No one...

He told that:

*nīra-kṣīra haṁsan, pāna-vidhāyan  
kaun pṛthak kari pāyat*

*Nīra-ksīra*—What is *sakhya-rasa*? What is *vātsalya-rasa*? How it becomes *vātsalya-rasa*? How it is *madhura-rasa*? Any Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava will do *praṇāma* to *sakhya-rasa*. They will do *praṇāma* to Hanumān for *dāsyā-rasa*. They have so much regard for *vātsalya*—for Yaśodā Maiyā and Nanda Bābā. All were coming and singing. All, they are followers of Nanda Bābā and Yaśomatī there. And they are doing *kīrtana*—some beautiful—but only of *vātsalya-rasa* there. And you are singing what? Oh, *parakīya-rasa*—so high! They cannot imagine. Rūpa Gosvāmī has done. *Nīra-kṣīra haṁsan*. *Haṁsa* means a “swan.” He will not take water. He will divide water and he will take milk. So where, where is *vātsalya-rasa*? Where is *dāsyā-rasa*? Everything. They will separate it and they will taste what? *Mādhura-rasa*. What *madhura*? *Parakīyā*, and in *parakīyā*—both! What thing? *Tat-tat-bhāvecchātṁikā*. Only then will they take. This is the highest thing. That—Rūpa Gosvāmī has told...

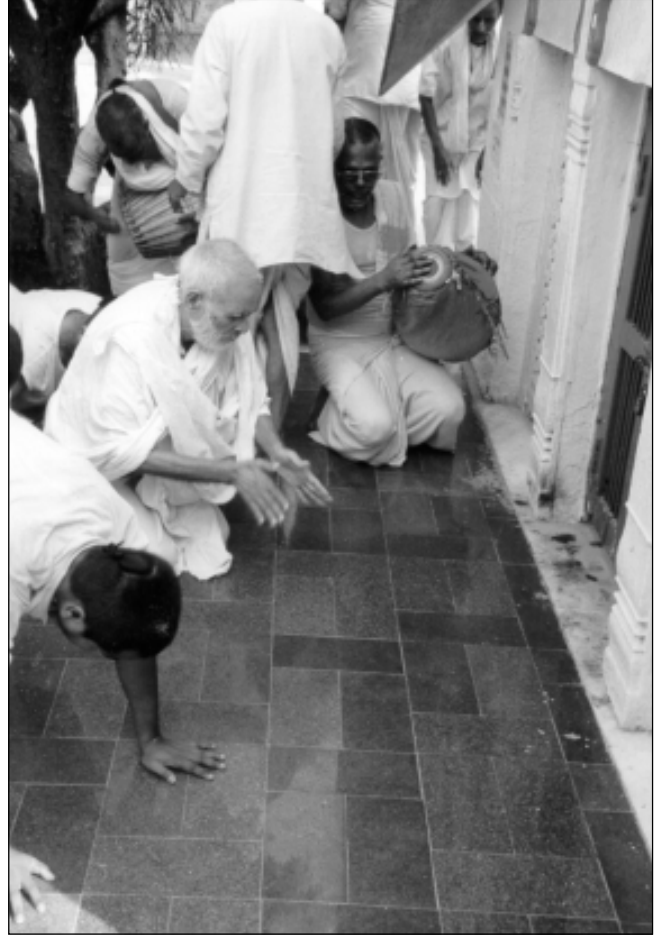
Lalitā, Viśakhā, Citra, all are so high. They are heroines—equal to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Rūpa Mañjarī is a special *dāsī* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. So when Lalitā will come to meet Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa when They are in conjugal mood, then she will have to take permission from Rūpa Mañjarī. Otherwise they cannot come. But where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are enjoying, playing, Rūpa Mañjarī has nothing to tell anyone and she will come directly there. So this is the benefit of being the *dāsī* under Rūpa Mañjarī. The whole of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas follow this. They are *palya-dāsī*, maidservant, of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. So who’s established this but Rūpa Gosvāmī? Our entire *paramparā* from Rūpa Gosvāmī up to now are indebted to this Rūpa Gosvāmī. He has cleared all these things. So now that we have come to this place, we should take the foot dust of Rūpa Gosvāmī and pray in what way?

*śrī caitanya mano’bhīṣṭam sthapitam yena bhūtale  
svayam-rūpa kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padaṅtikam*  
(Śrī Prema-Bhakti-Caṅdrikā—  
Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura)

When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who has established the mission in this world of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s innermost desire, give me the shelter of his lotus feet?

*ādadānas tṛṇam dantair idam yāce punaḥ punaḥ  
śrīmad-rūpa padāmbhoja-dhulih syām janma janmani*  
(Śrī Mukta-caritraṁ—Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī)

Taking a piece of straw between my teeth, I humbly pray again and again, “O Śrīmad Rūpa Gosvāmī, let me be a dust particle at your lotus feet birth after birth!”



Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja pays obeisances at Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī’s samādhi, Parikramā, Kartika 1998.

*priya-svarūpe dayita-svarūpe  
prema-svarūpe saha-jābhirūpe  
nijānurūpe prabhur eka-rūpe  
tatāna rūpe sva-vilāsa-rūpe*

“Indeed, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, whose dear friend was Svarūpa Dāmodara, was the exact replica of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and he was very, very dear to the Lord. Being the embodiment of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s ecstatic love, Rūpa Gosvāmī was naturally very beautiful. He very carefully followed the principles enunciated by the Lord, and he was a competent person to explain properly the pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Caitanya Mahāprabhu expanded His mercy to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī just so he could render service by writing transcendental literatures.”

(CC. Ma

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's

# Śrī Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu

(The Nectar of Devotion)

From **Back to Godhead**, Vol. III, Part 17, April 5, 1960

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja

**Text 1**

*akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ prasṛmāra-ruci-ruddha tārakā-pāliḥ  
kalita-śyāmā-lalita rādhā-preyān vidhur jayati*

*akhila, rasa, amṛta, mūrti, prasṛmāra, ruci, ruddha, tārakā,  
pāli, kalita, śyāmā, lalita, rādhā, preyān, vidhu, jayati.*

*akhila*—all-inclusive; *rasa*—mellow, zest; *amṛta*—nectar; *mūrtiḥ*—form; *prasṛmāra*—expanding; *ruci*—attractive features; *ruddha*—controlling; *tārakā*—of the name; *pāli*—of the name; *kalita*—influenced by; *śyāmā*—of the name; *lalitā*—of the name, *rādhā*—Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; *preyān*—dearest; *vidhuḥ*—consort; *jayati*—exists with glories

**Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is the dearest consort of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī exists eternally with all glories. He is the all-inclusive personality of mellows, transcendental in His eternal form. By the expansion of his multi-attractive features, He is the controlling Deity of the cowherd damsels like Tārakā and Pāli, with influence over Śyāmā and Lalitā.**

**Purport**

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is the Personality of Godhead in His eternal form is glorified because He has endeared Himself by His acts of benevolence in disseminating the different kinds of *rasa* or “zests.” *Rasa* is psychologically described as a sense perception. But the sense perception which we experience in our material conception of life is a perverted reflection of the reality. The reality is approached by the realization of understanding the all-inclusive personal form of the Supreme who is all-attractive Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The very name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is suggestive of a conception of complete attraction by dint of wealth, strength, influence, beauty, knowledge and renunciation. Complete embodiment of all these opulences combined together in their fullness is exhibited by the manifested activities of the Lord when He is, out of His causeless mercy, within our view, although the Supreme Person is transcendental to the speculative actions of thinking, feeling and willing of a living being.

The eternal consort of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa—who is plenarily manifested as the speaker of

the *Bhagavata-Gīta*—has His innumerable beams of expansions, and each and every one of them is complete *vidhuḥ* or “the one who vanquishes all kinds of distresses of the devotee.” Even the *asuras* or the atheists who are enemies of the Lord are benefited by His causeless mercy although superficially they appear to be slain by the Lord. *Asuras* who are killed by the Lord also attain to the platform of *mukti* or liberation which is the destination of the impersonalist empiric philosophers. As such He is all-attractive both for the *asuras* or the materialistic-living non-devotees and the *suras* or the devotees. He is glorified evidently both by *suras* and *asuras* alike. In the battlefield of Kurukṣetra Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was glorified even by the opposite camp of Arjuna when Bhiṣma addressed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be the relative of Arjuna the victorious warrior. And those who died in the battlefield of Kurukṣetra attained the highest stage of liberation simply by fixing up their eyes over Him while dying in the field.

By His fullness of opulences and on account of His becoming the One without a second competitor and His being the Lord of all creatures, He is worshiped even by the supreme directors of the cosmic creations. He is attractive even by His personal decorative features. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always observed decorated with multi-ornaments of apt position. His ear-rings, His crown, His bangles, His necklace, and belt, and so on, bedecked with most valuable jewels and His attractive smiling face smeared with the pulp of sandalwood on the forehead, and His yellowish, silken garments all combined together make His full attractive Personality.

The whole *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is practically a vivid description of His fullness of attraction and in the beginning of the same scripture Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is discriminated from all other plenary manifestations or incarnations with emphasis on His becoming the original form of Godhead and the Personality of Godhead as He is. Considering all these features of His personal and transcendental qualities as described in all the Vedic revealed scriptures, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is undoubtedly the all-attractive eternal form of all *rasas*.

In the present context of His transcendental features He is the predominating Lord of the primary *rasas* called *sānta*, transcendental inaction, *dāsya*, transcendental

servitorship, *sakhya*, transcendental fraternity, *vātsalya*, transcendental parenthood, and *madhura*, transcendental conjugation. In His transcendental form in relation with the denizens of Vrajabhūmi, He is the embodiment of spiritual bliss. This spiritual bliss is described in the Brahma-Sūtras also.

So, for other *rasas* which are secondary and individually connected with Him, He is appropriately described in the *Bhāgavatam* (10.32.17) on the arena of King Kāṁsa of Mathurā. He is described there as follows: “*Mallānāmaśani*, a thunderbolt for the wrestlers [*vīra-rasa*]; *nṛṇāṁ naravara*, for ordinary man He is the most perfect form of man [*adbhuta-rasa*]; *śtrīṇāṁ smaro mūrtimān*, for the women He appeared to be personified Cupid or the most desired of the opposite sex [*madhura-rasa*]; *gopānāṁ svajana*, for the cowherdsmen He appeared to be the most beloved kinsman [*sakhya-vātsalya-hāsyā*]; *asatām kṣiti-bhūjām śāstā*, for the culprit-minded rulers He appeared to be the most redundant governor [*raudra-rasābhāsa*]; and *sva-pitroḥ śiśuḥ*, for the parents He appeared to be a small child [*vātsalya* and *karuṇa-rasa*]; *mṛtyur bhojapater*, He appeared to be death personified before the King of Bhoja, or Kāṁsa [*bhayānaka rasābhāsa*]; *virāṭa-viduṣāṁ*, He identified Himself with the all-pervading universal self for the less intelligent persons [*vībhatsa-rasābhāsa*]; *tattvaṁ param yogināṁ*, He appeared to the mystics to be the Absolute Truth [*śānta-rasa*]; *vṛṣṇinam paradeva*, for the Vaiṣṇavas or to the descendants of Viṣṇu He appeared to be the highest worshipable deity [*dāsyā-rasa*]—And thus known to the respective knowers according to their respective power of knowing Him, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the arena of King Kāṁsa accompanied by His elder brother Śrī Baladeva.”

In the revealed scriptures the *rasas* are described to be of twelve different sets. They are as follows: 1) *raudra*, anger; 2) *adbhuta*, wonderful; 3) *śṛṅgāra*, conjugal; 4) *hāsyā*, comic; 5) *vīra*, chivalrous; 6) *dayā* or *karuṇa*, merciful; 7) *dāsyā*, servitorship; 8) *sakhya*, fraternity; 9) *bhayānaka*, ghastly; 10) *vībhatsa*, shocking; 11) *śānta*, neutral; and 12) *vātsalya*, parental. *Śṛṅgāra* and the *madhura-rasa* are one and the same. These twelve *rasas* are standard *rasas* and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is evidently the embodiment of all these *rasas*. He is not only the enjoyer of the *madhura-rasa* or the *śṛṅgāra-rasa* with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī but He is the enjoyer of the *vībhatsa-rasa* when He kills *asuras* like Kāṁsa and Jarāsandha.

In the creation of the Lord, there is nothing more than the above-mentioned standard twelve *rasas* in the matter of dealing with one another. Activities of the living being are accelerated by one of the *rasas* either in its original form or in a perverted form. But all the *rasas* are emanations from the transcendence. There is no existence of any sort of reciprocation of *rasa* if it is not emanated from the Supreme.

Everything that he has its original source of emanation from the Supreme Being and that is the confirmation by the first *sūtra* of the *Vedānta-Sūtras* (*janmādyasya yataḥ*). And Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being the original form of Godhead, is conclusively the reservoir and fountainhead of all the *rasas* described above. And as such *rasa* in relation with Him becomes absolute in nature. The Lord, being the Absolute Truth, and any one of the above *rasas* is absolute in nature in relation of reciprocation with His service. The Lord, being the enjoyer of all the *rasas*, is the reciprocator either directly or indirectly with the constitutional servitor of the Lord, exchanging the different *rasas*. And therefore the devotees who serve the Lord directly in the primary *rasa* of *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *madhura* are super-servitors or eternal servitors, moreso than those who serve Him in the secondary *rasas* of *raudra*, *adbhuta*, *hāsyā*, and so on, which are seven in all.

The actual position of the living being is to serve the Lord and nothing more. The living being cannot become the absolute master at any stage of his existence, namely, materially or spiritually. Materially he can falsely pose himself as the master and being baffled in that attempt such a servitor desires to annihilate his existence by becoming one with the Lord. This desire of becoming one with the Lord is not even within the jurisdiction of the *śānta-rasa*, and therefore except for the five primary *rasas* all other *rasas* are exhibited outside the spiritual realm. But his oneness is transcendently realized in the primary five *rasas* because in the absolute realm, although there is constant reciprocation of the primary *rasas* between the Lord and His eternal reciprocators or eternal servitors; qualitatively there is no difference between the Lord and His servitors.

In the absolute realm there is no difference between Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa or between Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa and so on. The reciprocators in the absolute realm and in the relative world are essentially and qualitatively one and the same but quantitatively there is difference between both, namely, the Lord and His servitors. The Lord is the immense source of supply of all the *rasas* while the living entities are recipients only in their different capacity. In other words, the Lord is the whole while His servitors are constitutional parts and parcels only. The parts and parcels have, therefore, limited potency to enjoy, and as such the parts and parcels of the Lord can not be actually called enjoyer in the proper sense of the term. Such reciprocators of the *rasas*, therefore properly termed as the enjoyed or the servitor partaker of the enjoyment, are enjoyed by the Lord. Although the *rasa* of reciprocation is equally partaken both by the Lord and the servitors, the Lord is the predominator enjoyer while the parts and parcels are predominated enjoyer.

Real enjoyment of the living entity is realized in that way, otherwise he can simply merge himself with the Lord by annihilating his constitutional position as he is emanated from the Supreme. This constitutional position of parts and parcels are predominantly existent in the absolute realm whereas the secondary *rasas* are manifested in the relative world. When the Lord, therefore, desires to enjoy the secondary *rasa* with His servitors, such reciprocation is brought into existence in the relative world by the desire of the Lord. These secondary *rasas*, when they are actually dovetailed with the absolute person, result in the same as that of other primary *rasas*. Therefore the *vibhatsa-rasa* displayed between the Lord and Kāmsa also terminated in the liberation of Kāmsa on account of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's being the Absolute Person.

Therefore the servitor living being, if at all he wants to relish any one of the above *rasas*, must reciprocate the same with Śrī Kṛṣṇa who is the unlimited ocean or source of all *rasas*. One can derive any amount of *rasa* of a particular type from that which gives the resources simply by such reciprocation with Kṛṣṇa. *Gopāla-Tāpanī* directs, therefore, conclusively that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme fountainhead of all the *rasas* which are also confirmed by the Śruti or the Vedas. One should therefore always meditate upon Kṛṣṇa to derive a particular type of *rasa* according to one's choice and under proper direction of the spiritual master.

Kṛṣṇa appeared to Kāmsa as death personified because Kāmsa chose to kill Kṛṣṇa from the beginning of His appearance. Similarly, the *gopīs* wanted to have Kṛṣṇa as their lover and therefore Kṛṣṇa treated them as the most fascinating lover displayed by the *madhura-rasa* of a transcendental paramour.

The conclusion is that the Personality of Godhead reciprocates with His servitors in the proportion and quality of service rendered unto Him. Nobody is doing anything except this reciprocation of *rasas* between Kṛṣṇa and himself and thus one is reaping the desired result in the proportion and quality of service illusioned in contamination with the material energy, whereas such service is transcendental in the Absolute Realm where illusion is conspicuous by its absence only. The quality of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the highest plane form is exhibited by the *gopīs* and such service is eulogised in the *Bhāgavatam* in the following words: "What is that penance which the *gopīs* had performed so that they are privileged to enjoy the drinking of the nectar of Lord's beauty which is as much unfathomed as His other opulences are."

Therefore with the *gopīs* the highest transcendental quality of *rasa* is reciprocated by the Lord, and out of them the specifically mentioned *gopīs* of the name Tārakā, Pālī, Śyāmā, Lalitā, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī are significant. In the *Purāṇas* the names of the *gopīs* like Gopālī, Pālikā,

Dhanyā, Viśākhā, Daniṣṭha, Rādhā, Anurādhā, Somābhā, Tārakā, and so on, are mentioned. And in the *Dvārakā Māhātmya*, the names of Lalitā, Śyāmālā, Śaibyā, Pādmā, Bhadrā, along with Viśākhā are mentioned as the chief of the damsels of Vrajabhūmi. There is such mention of the names of the *gopīs* in *Skāndha Purāṇam* also. Such *gopīs* were attracted by the beautiful and attractive features of the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They were not only attracted but also they were actually under the control of Lord by the paramour feeling of the lover and the beloved. Such transcendental feelings of the pure *gopīs* are never to be compared with the erotic principles of the mundane world. In these transactions of highest reciprocations of *rasas* Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī stands to be the supermost partaker. She is therefore actually the counterpart emblem of all the *rasas* which are reciprocated between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā in a specific manner unknown even to Kṛṣṇa—both being equally full and perfect, there is constantly an overflow of transcendental bliss which is the purest form of competition of the *hladinī* energy or the transcendental pleasure-giving element, potent in the Lord but displayed by Rādhārāṇī.

In the *Uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Pādma Purāṇa* such reciprocation of highest transcendental mellows is affirmed by eulogizing the place called by the name Rādhā-kuṇḍa, where Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī exhibited Their reciprocal fullness—"Rādhā-kuṇḍa is therefore as much dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī." "In *Dvārakā Rukmiṇī* is mentioned as the topmost queen of the Lord, and, similarly, in *Vṛndāvana Rādhārāṇī* is the topmost of the *gopīs*." — (*Mātyasa-skānda*).

The pastime functions of *Vṛndāvana* represent a greater degree of *rasa* reciprocation than *Dvārakā*. As such Rādhārāṇī is more conspicuous than Rukmiṇī. She is there the all-attractive counterpart of the all-attractive Lord and therefore She is the highest embodiment of the *hladinī* potency of the Lord. Voluntarily the Lord bifurcated Himself both as Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and again joined together in the still more attractive form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In other words, the devotees of the Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are eligible candidates for approaching the fountainhead of all *rasas*.

According to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī the names of both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are mentioned in the *Rg Veda* as Rādhā and Mādhava. Men with poor fund of knowledge and so-called adherents of the Vedas indulge in pragmatic discussions concerning Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa without consulting the authoritative statements of the Gosvāmīs headed by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and followed by Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī. Śrī Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura therefore recommends to the serious students of *rasa* science to surrender unto the protection of the merciful Gosvāmīs who left all material association of aristocracy and comfort and

voluntarily accepted the part of a rigid mendicant to bestow upon the fallen souls like us their highest gift of benediction in the matter of the love affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

The transcendental science of the love affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is not a thing easily understandable even by the highest talented persons and materialistic opportunists. Those who therefore try to realize the affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the puffed-up manner of materialistic scholarship will vanish in the womb of oblivion if they are reluctant to consult the books left by the Gosvāmīs. *Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu*, on which we are attempting an English version following in the footprints of the Gosvāmīs, is the first of a series of books in this connection. This preliminary study in the science of devotional service is therefore cautiously done by burrowing into the transcendental subject with the purview of a serious student.

Metaphorically *vidhuh* means the “moon.” As such the Lord is compared with the moon although He is sometimes compared with the most powerful sun. He is compared with the moon *par excellence* not in the sense that the moon is less powerful than the sun. On the other hand, He is not compared with the sun on account of the sun’s inability to counteract the fatigue of a tiresome man. It is the light of the moon only which is soothing to such a tiresome person. We want to drink *rasa* for getting ourselves relief from the tiresome effect of dry material life. Tiresome people in order to mitigate the fatigue of the day’s labor try to eschew a particular type of *rasa* from

the more tiresome sounds of radio and other materialistic instruments of relaxation, but the foolish people do not know that real *rasa* is flowing under the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is constantly disseminating the flow of transcendental *rasas* in the soothing way of the moonlight. Therefore He is compared with the moon which



has a specific cooling effect on the fatigued person. In the spring the moonlight is still more soothing. The spring moon is the sum total of all the *rasas* of other seasons and thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa is compared with the moon delightfully displayed along with the twinkling stars of the name Tārakā, and so on. In that metaphorical explanation the word *ruddha* means “covered” and *pāli* means the “range.” In other words, the rays of the moon have covered the twinkling light of the range of stars. These beautiful features of the moon are exhibited at night which is compared with the name of dark Śyāma. In this metaphorical combination of words

*lalitā* means “pastime” and *amṛta* is “the moonlight” itself.

As the moonlight, stars, and their reciprocal pastime all concerned in the night alone, so also Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastime in the highest zest of transcendental *rasa* is possible at night alone along with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her eternal associates. In that night illuminated by the moon the stars known as Anurādhā or Rādhā is more intimately connected with the star known by the name Viśākhā. As the moon is more beautiful on the full moon night of spring, similarly the attraction of Kṛṣṇa is fully displayed in the matter of exchanging *rasa*.



# Yaṅ Kali Rūpa Śarīra Nā Dharata?

What If Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī Had Not Appeared?

1)

yaṅ kali rūpa śarīra nā dharata  
taṅ vraja-prema- mahānidhi-kuṭharika,  
kaun kapāṭ udhārata

2)

nīra kṣīra haṁsan, pān-vidhāyan,  
kaun pṛthak kari pāyat  
ko sab tyaji bhaji vṛndāvan,  
ko sab grantha viracita

3)

jab pitu vanphula, phalat nānā-vidhi,  
manorāji aravinda  
so madhukar vinu, pān kaun jānata,  
vidyamān kari bandha

4)

ko jānata, mathurā-vṛndāvan,  
ko jānata vraja-gīta  
ko jānata, rādhā-mādhav rati,  
ko jānata soi prīta

5)

jākar caraṇa, prasāde sakal jan,  
gāi gavāi sukha pāvāt  
caraṇa-kamale, śaraṇāgata mādho  
tab mahimā ura lāgat

yaṅ—if; kali—Kali-yuga; rūpa—Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; śarīra—the form; nā dharata—not appeared; taṅ—then; vraja-prema—the love of the vraja-gopīs for Kṛṣṇa; mahānidhi—great treasure; kuṭharika—great storehouse; kaun—who; kapāṭ—the door; udhārata—opened;

nīra—water; kṣīra—milk; haṁsan—swan; pān-vidhāyan—who is drinking; kaun—who; pṛthak—each separate; kari pāyat—drink the milk; ko—who; sab—everything; tyaji—abandoning; bhaji—worship; vṛndāvan—Vṛndāvana; ko—who; sab—all; grantha—scriptures; viracita—written.

jab—when; pitu—yellow flowers; vanphula—forest flowers; phalat—fruit; nānā-vidhi—various kinds of; manorāji—fancy; aravinda—lotuses; so—he; madhukar—like a bee; vinu—without; pān—drinking; kaun—who; jānata—known; vidyamān—present; kari bandha—closed.

ko jānata—who would have known; mathurā-vṛndāvan—glories of Mathurā and Vṛndāvana; ko jānata—who would have known; vraja-gīta—the glories of Vraja; ko jānata—who would have known; rādhā-mādhav—Rādhā and Mādhava; rati—the love; ko jānata—who would have known; soi prīta—such a love.

jākar—whose; caraṇa—lotus feet; prasāde—by the mercy of; sakal jan—all persons; gāi—sing; gavāi—giving instructions to sing; sukha—happiness; pāvāt—get; caraṇa-kamale—the lotus feet of; śaraṇāgata—surrendered souls; mādho—Mādhō Dāsa; tab—then; mahimā—the glories of; ura lāgat—embracing.

If Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī would not have appeared in this age of Kali, then who could have opened the great storehouse of vraja-prema that contained the topmost love of the vraja-gopīs? Who could have opened the door and distributed its contents freely everywhere?

Just as a swan separates the milk from water and only tastes the sweet nectar of milk, who could have been more expert to separate the nectarean mellows—dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya, madhura—to taste? Abandoning everything to go and perform bhajana in Vṛndāvana, he wrote everything down in such rasika scriptures such as Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu, Ujjvala-Nīlamanī, Vidagdha-Mādhava, and Lalita-Mādhava, and so many other devotional songs and poems.

During the season when the yellow forest flowers are in full-bloom and various kinds of fruit ripen, he lived like a bee taking nectar from the enchanting lotus flowers—Who could have understood the wonderful nectar he was collecting? Even today, it would have been sealed.

Who could have understood Kṛṣṇa's divine pastimes in Mathurā and Vṛndāvana? How could we have known the sweet pastimes of Vraja and the loving exchanges between Śrī Rādhā and Mādhava? Who could have understood Their prema—sneha, māna, praṇaya, rāga, anurāga, mahābhāva, adhirudha mahābhāva, modana, mohana, madana?

By the mercy of his lotus feet all persons can now sing and give instructions on how to attain such a stage of divine bliss! This surrendered soul, Mādhō Dāsa, is at Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's lotus feet, praying to always embrace his sweet glories.



*bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netrām  
smarāmi rādhām madhura-smitāsyām  
vadāmi rādhām karuṇā-bharādrām  
tato mamānyāsti gatiṁ na kāpi*

Śrī Viśakhānandābhidha-Stotram, 131  
—Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

“I worship lotus-eyed Rādhā. I meditate on sweetly smiling Rādhā. I glorify the supremely merciful Rādhā. She is the only goal of my life. I have no other life.”

I have heard from my Gurudeva, or any Vaiṣṇava, that Rādhā is so beautiful, so merciful, and so madhura, so sweet—so I pray to Her feet. I have no qualification for hearing all these things, but seeing the qualities of Śrīmatī Rādhikā I have dared to pray to Her, and I know that She will hear because She is sarvajña, all-knowing. Certainly She will hear. *Bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netram*. *Aravinda-netram* means eyes like lotus petals. Why? Because lotus petals are fragrant, they have some smell, a good smell, and are very soft, so soft. Here “soft” means that if someone is in any distress or difficulty and is weeping, then Her heart becomes soft and Rādhā will certainly bestow mercy upon them. So Raghunātha Dāsa is giving the example of a lotus. Her eyes are lotus-like.

*Anurāga* means “red.” She is immersed in *kṛṣṇa-anurāga*, and the corners of Her eyes are like a lotus, somewhat reddish. I want this kind of *anurāga* upon me and You can do it. So there are some hidden meanings in these words.

O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, *bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netrām, smarāmi rādhām madhura-smitāsyām*. I am remembering Your sweet smiling face. Why is She smiling? She has done *māna*, and Kṛṣṇa was trying to pacify Her but She was not pleased. Rādhā told Kṛṣṇa, “You cannot love anyone but Me, no one else.” Kṛṣṇa does what Rādhā tells Him, so She was pleased. Now She is smiling, “I have conquered Kṛṣṇa and He is doing everything I tell Him to do.” She is *madhura-smitāsyām*. She is looking to the *gopīs* as if to say, “Now I have conquered Kṛṣṇa” and He is *saubhāgyavatī*, feeling fully fortunate.” I want to remember all these *līlās*. *Vadāmi rādhām karuṇā-bharādrām*: I am always uttering the name of Rādhā who is always so much merciful. She is always giving mercy to everyone who wants to serve Her. *Tato mamānyāsti gatiṁ na kāpi*: I have no goal except You. I have no one else but You to look to. I only want to serve You. There are none except You.

—Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja



