

Rays of The Harmonist

JOURNAL OF ŚRĪ GAUḌĪYA VEDĀNTA SAMĪTI

No.10 ✨ SUMMER 2002



Śrī Gaura-Janma-Līlā

Also inside: Prema Bhakti and Śrī Gaurāṅgeśvara ✦ A Talk About the Absolute
Atma Nivedana in Gitopaniṣad ✦ In This Very Critical Stage

*ājānu-lambita-bhujau kanakāvadātau / saṅkirtanaika-pitarau kamalāyatākṣau
visvambharau dvija-varau yuga-dharma-pālau / vande jagat-priya-karau karuṇāvatārau*



“I worship Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, whose long arms extend down to Their knees, whose beautiful complexions have the colour and radiance of molten gold and whose elongated eyes are like red lotuses. They have mercifully initiated the saṅkirtan movement. They are the maintainers of the universe, the topmost of the brahmaṇas, the guardians of religious principles for this age, the munificent benefactors of all living entities, and the most magnanimous and compassionate incarnations of Godhead.” (Caitanya-bhāgavata Ādi-līlā 1.1)

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Front cover:
Śrī Gauraharī's birthplace, Yoga Pīṭha, Māyāpur

Front inside:
Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi at Ambikā Kālānā

Back cover:
Śrīla Gurudeva leading
Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Parikramā 2002

Contents

Editorial	3
Śrī Gaura-Janma-Līlā Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī	4
Prema-Bhakti and Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Thākura	8
A Talk About The Absolute Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura	12
The Highest Degree of Dedication Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Gosvāmī Mahārāja	16
Śrī Gītopaniṣade Ātma-nivedana Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja	19
Bhagavānera Kathā Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja	22
The True Spirit of Separation Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja	24
Glorification of Hari, Guru, Vaiṣṇavas on Vyāsa-pūjā Day Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja	30
Self-Realization and Parā-Bhakti in Sādhu-Saṅga Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja	34
In This Very Critical Stage Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja	38
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Uḍupī Sampradāya-raksā vicāra	46
Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Parikramā 2002 A brief report	49



Ācārya Keśarī
Om Viṣṇupāda Aṣṭottara-Śata
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Founder Ācārya
of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti

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

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

1. To protect the *vicāra-dhārā* (current of conceptions) of the *svārūpārūpānugā-guru paramparā* as presented in the modern age by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura (i.e., to uproot opinions opposed to the genuine conclusions of the Śrī Gauḍīya-sampradāya).

2. To promote a cooperative effort to preach the message of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha as per the last instructions of Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

EDITORIAL

The journal *Sajjana Toṣaṇī* was established in 1881 by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and later renamed “The Harmonist” in 1927 by Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. In a world that appears to be a random chaos of mindless injustice and unresolved contention, the conception of harmony seems to be a pleasant yet wholly unrealistic notion. Enchanted by utopian aspirations, many social reformers toil arduously in their quest for harmony, yet all are ultimately forced to concede that the vicious beast of destiny is in fact untameable. Nevertheless, it seems that the human race is helplessly impelled by an irrepressible instinct to pursue the all-elusive ideal known as harmony. Does harmony actually exist, or are we cruelly cursed from birth with a frustrating predilection for the unattainable?

Furthermore, one might be forgiven for thinking that “The Harmonist” is a curious title for a journal promoted by probably the most controversial and uncompromising personality of his time. If Śrīla Prabhupada’s message was one of harmony, then why was he renowned as such a radical and even revolutionary philosopher?

The answers to these questions can be understood only by those who without prejudice sincerely open their hearts to the message of “The Harmonist” and its modern-day sequel, “Rays of the Harmonist.” Harmony entails the integration of all constituents, in which even contradictory elements co-exist in a state of mutual enhancement. That harmony for which we strive does not need to be established by us, but rather, it already exists despite our inability to perceive it. That state of harmony has been described by the Absolute Reality Himself in *Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā* (6.30):

*yo mām paśyati sarvatra sarvañ ca mayi paśyati
tasyāham na praṇaśyāmi sa ca me na praṇaśyati*

“For one who sees Me in all beings and sees all beings in Me, I am never lost, nor is he ever lost to Me.”

Thus it should be understood that the state of discord is simply a misconception arising from our indifference to

the loving service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The platform of harmony is readily available to anyone the moment they unequivocally abandon the path of sectarian self-interests and acknowledge their role in the scheme of things by selfless dedication to the complete whole, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This path of pure devotion is the antithesis of all the self-centered and extended pursuits prevalent in this world. Therefore it is inevitable that a genuine speaker of the truth will cause tumult and controversy in a misguided society that is rapidly advancing in the wrong direction, albeit in the name of spirituality.

It is immaculate transcendental love alone that has the power to reconcile all anomalies in this world and far beyond. As expressed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in His *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam*, eighth *śloka*, while deeply absorbed in the all-harmonizing and boundless affection of Śrī Rādhā:

*āśliṣya vā pāda-rataṁ pinaṣṭumām
adarśanān marma-hatām karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lamṇaṭo
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*

“Let Kṛṣṇa tightly embrace this maidservant who is attached to the service of His lotus feet and make me His very own, or let Him break my heart by not being present before me. He is a debauchee and can do whatever he likes. Even if He sports with other lovers directly in front of me, He is still my *prāṇa-nātha*. There is no one other than Him...”

This issue opens with the Advent Pastime of Śrī Gaurāṅga by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, then continues with the enlightening description of *prema-bhakti* by our *saptama* Gosvāmī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, then as our other *ācāryas* reveal more wonderful mysteries of Mahāprabhu and His contribution, we begin to feel a profound sense of gratitude for being able to take part in this *saṅkīrtana* movement. Perhaps, one day, by the grace of our *ācāryas* we may chant the holy names of Gaura-Nitāi with a genuine feeling that Nitāi and Gaura have finally come home.

Srī Gaura

The Advent Pastime

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa

*nadīyā-udayagiri, pūrṇacandra gaurahari,
kṛpā kari' haila udaya
pāpa-tamaḥ haila nāśa, tri-jagatera ullāsa,
jagabhari' hari-dhvani haya (1)*

By His causeless mercy Śrī Gaurahari, Who is like the full moon, rose over the district of Nadiyā, which is seen as Udayagiri, the place where the sun first becomes visible. His appearance dissipated the darkness of sinful life, and thus the three worlds became joyful with everyone chanting the holy name of Śrī Hari.

*sei kāle nijālaya, uṭhiyā advaita rāya,
ṅṛtya kare ānandita-mane
haridāse lañā saṅge, huñkāra-kīrtana-raṅge
kene nāce, keha nāhi jāne (2)*

At that time Śrī Advaita Ācārya Prabhu, in His own house at Śāntipura, stood up and started dancing in a blissful mood. Having Haridāsa Ṭhākura joining him, he danced and loudly roared in delight while performing *kīrtana*. But why they were dancing, no one could understand.

*dekhi' uparāga hāsi', śighra gaṅgā-ghāṭe āsi'
ānande karila gaṅgā-snāna
pāñā uparāga-chale, āpanāra mano-bale,
brāhmaṇere dila nānā dāna (3)*

Seeing the lunar eclipse and laughing, Advaita Ācārya and Haridāsa Ṭhākura immediately went to the bank of the Ganges and bathed in the river in great jubilation. Taking advantage of the occasion of this eclipse, Advaita Ācārya, by His mental strength, distributed various types of charity to the *brāhmaṇas*.

*jagat ānandamaya, dekhi' mane sa-vismaya,
ṭhāre-ṭhore kahe haridāsa
tomāra aichana raṅga, mora mana parasanna,
dekhi—kichu kārye āche bhāsa (4)*

Janma-Lilā

of Śrī Gaurahari

Kavirāja Gosvāmī

When Haridāsa Ṭhākura saw that the whole world was jubilant, his mind became astonished, and by hints and gestures he expressed himself to Advaita Ācārya: “Your delightful activities are very pleasing to my mind. I can understand that there is some special purpose in these actions.”

*ācāryaratna, śrīvāsa, haila mane sukhollāsa
yāi’ snāna kaila gaṅgā-jale
ānande vihvala mana, kare hari-saṅkīrtana
nānā dāna kaila mano-bale (5)*

Candraśekhara Ācāryaratna and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura were full of jubilation and immediately went to the bank of the Ganges to bathe in her waters. Their minds were overwhelmed with joy as they performed the *hari-saṅkīrtana*, and gave various types of charity by mental strength.

*ei mata bhakta-tati, yānra yei deśe sthiti,
tāhān tāhān pāñā mano-bale
nāce, kare saṅkīrtana, ānande vihvala mana,
dāna kare grahaṇera chale (6)*

In this way all the devotees, wherever they were situated, in every city and every country, were enlivened with spiritual strength and thus they danced, performed *saṅkīrtana* and gave charity on the plea of the lunar eclipse, their minds overwhelmed with joy.

*brāhmaṇa-sajjana-nārī, nānā-dravye thālī bhari’
āilā sabe yautuka laiṅyā
yena kāncā-sonā-dyuti, dekhi’ bālakera mūrti,
āśīrvāda kare sukha pāñā (7)*

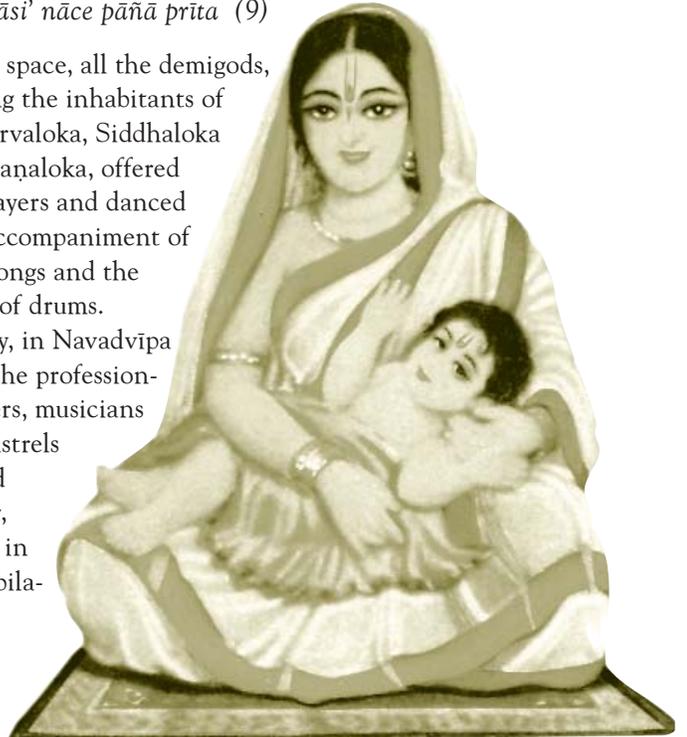
All sorts of respectable *brāhmaṇas*, gentlemen and ladies, carrying plates filled with various gifts, came with their presentations. Seeing the newborn child, who was effulgent like brilliantly shining gold, all of them happily offered their blessings.

*sāvitrī, gaurī, sarasvatī, rudrāñī, śrī arundhatī
āra yata deva-nārīgaṇa
nānā-dravye pātra bhari’, brāhmaṇīra veśa dhari’,
āsi’ sabe kare daraśana (8)*

Dressing themselves as the wives of *brāhmaṇas*, all the celestial ladies, including Sāvitrī, the wife of Lord Brahmā, Gaurī, the wife of Lord Śiva, Sarasvatī, the goddess of fortune, Rudrāñī, the wife of Rudra, and Śrī Arundhatī, the wife of Vasiṣṭha Ṛṣi, came there with plates filled with varieties of gifts to have the *darsana* of the newborn child.

*antarikṣe deva-gaṇa, gandharva, siddha, cāraṇa,
stuti-ṅṛtya kare vādya-gīta
nartaka, vādaka, bhāṭa, navadvīpe yāra nāṭa,
sabe āsi’ nāce pāñā prīta (9)*

In outer space, all the demigods, including the inhabitants of Gandharvaloka, Siddhaloka and Cāraṇaloka, offered their prayers and danced to the accompaniment of music, songs and the beating of drums. Similarly, in Navadvīpa city all the professional dancers, musicians and minstrels gathered together, dancing in great jubilation.



*kebā āse kebā yāya, kebā nāce kebā gāya,
sambhālīte nāre kāra bola
khaṇḍileka duhkha-śoka, pramoda-pūrita loka,
miśra hailā ānande vihvala (10)*

No one could understand who was coming and who was going, who was dancing and who was singing. Nor could they understand one another's language. Yet all unhappiness and lamentation were immediately dissipated, and people became full of jubilation. Thus Jagannātha Miśra was also overwhelmed with joy.

*ācāryaratna, śrīvāsa, jagannātha-miśra-pāśa,
āsi' tānre kare sāvadhāna
karāila jāta-karma, ye āchīla vidhi-dharma,
tabe miśra kare nānā dāna (11)*

Candraśekhara Ācārya and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura both came to Jagannātha Miśra and drew his attention in various ways. They performed the ritualistic ceremonies prescribed at the time of birth according to religious principles. At that time Jagannātha Miśra gave many types of charity.

*yautuka pāila yata, ghare vā āchīla kata,
saba dhana vipre dila dāna
yata nartaka, gāyana, bhāṭa, akiñcana jana,
dhana diyā kaila sabāra māna (12)*

Whatever riches Jagannātha Miśra collected in the form of gifts and presentations, and whatever he had in his house, he distributed among the *brāhmaṇas*, professional singers, dancers, poets and the poor. He honored them all by donating riches to them.

*śrīvāsera brāhmaṇī, nāma tānra 'mālinī',
ācāryaratnera patnī-saṅge
sindūra, haridrā, taila, khai, kalā, nārikela,
diyā pūje nārīgaṇa raṅge (13)*

The wife of Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīmatī Mālinī, accompanied by the wife of Candraśekhara Ācāryaratna and other ladies, came there in great happiness to worship the baby with vermilion, turmeric, oil, fused rice, bananas, coconuts and other items.

*advaita-ācārya-bhāryā, jagat-pūjitā āryā,
nāma tānra 'sītā ṭhākurāṇī'
ācāryera ājñā pāñā, gela upahāra lañā,
dekhite bālaka-śīromaṇi (14)*

Shortly after Śrī Gaurasundara was born, Advaita Ācārya's wife, Sītā Ṭhākurāṇī, who is worshipable by the whole world, took her husband's permission and went to see that crest-jewel of children with all kinds of gifts and presentations.

*suvarṇera kaḍi-bauli, rajata-mudrā-pāsuli,
suvarṇera aṅgada, kaṅkaṇa
du-bāhute divya śaṅkha, rajatera malabaṅka,
svarṇa-mudrāra nānā hāragaṇa (15)*

Sītā Ṭhākurāṇī brought different kinds of golden ornaments, including earrings, armlets set with conch shells, bangles, anklets and ear ornaments made of silver.

*vyāghra-nakha hema-jaḍi, kaṭi-ṭaṭṭasūtra-ḍorī
hasta-padera yata ābharaṇa
citra-varṇa ṭaṭṭa-śāḍī, buni photo ṭaṭṭapāḍī,
svarṇa-raupya-mudrā bahu-dhana (16)*

There were also tiger nails set in gold, waist decorations of silk and lace, ornaments for the hands and legs, nicely printed silken saris, and a child's garment, also made of silk. Many other riches, including gold and silver coins, were also presented to the child.

*durvā, dhānya, gorocana, haridrā, kuṅkuma, candana,
maṅgala-dravya pātra bhariyā
vastra-guṭṭa dolā caḍi' saṅge lañā dāsī ceḍī,
vastrālaṅkāra peṭāri bhariyā (17)*

Riding on a palanquin covered with cloth and accompanied by maidservants, Sītā Ṭhākurāṇī came to the house of Jagannātha Miśra, bringing with her a large basket filled with many auspicious articles, such as fresh grass, paddy, *gorocana*, turmeric, *kuṅkuma* and sandalwood.

*bhakṣya, bhojya, upahāra, saṅge la-ila bahu bhāra,
śacī-grhe haila upanīta
dekhīyā bālaka-ṭhāma, sāksāt gokula-kāna,
varṇa-mātra dekhi viparīta (18)*

When Sītā Ṭhākurāṇī came to the house of Śacīdevī, bringing with her many kinds of eatables, dresses and other gifts, she was astonished to see the newborn child, for she appreciated that except for a difference in color, the child was directly Kṛṣṇa of Gokula Himself.

*sarva aṅga—sunirmāṇa, suvarṇa-pratimā-bhāna,
sarva aṅga—sulakṣaṇamaya
bālakera divya jyoti, dekhi' pāila bahu prīti,
vātsalyete dravila hṛdaya (19)*

Seeing the transcendental bodily effulgence of the child, whose nicely constructed limbs, full of auspicious signs, resembled gold, Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī became very pleased, and her heart melted due to *vātsalya*, motherly affection.

*durvā, dhānya, dila śīrṣe, kaila bahu āśīṣe,
cirajīvi hao dui bhāi
ḍākinī-sāṅkhinī haite, śaṅkā upajila cite,
ḍare nāma thuila ‘nimāi’ (20)*

She blessed both the newborn child and His brother (Viśvarūpa) by placing fresh grass and paddy on Their heads and saying, “May You be blessed with a long duration of life.” But being afraid of ghosts and witches, she gave the newborn baby the name ‘Nimāi’.

*putra-mātā snāna-dine, dila vastra vibhūṣaṇe,
putra-saha miśrere sammāni’
śacī-miśrera pūjā laṅā, manete hariṣa haṅā,
ghare āilā sītā ṭhākuraṇī (21)*

On the day the mother and son bathed and left the maternity home, Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī gave them all kinds of ornaments and garments and then also honored Jagannātha Miśra. Then Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī, being honored by mother Śacīdevī and Jagannātha Miśra, was greatly happy within her mind, and thus she returned home.

*aiche śacī-jagannātha, putra pāñā lakṣmīnātha,
pūrṇa haila sakala vāñchita
dhana-dhānye bhare ghara, lokamānya kalevara,
dine dine haya ānandita (22)*

In this way mother Śacīdevī and Jagannātha Miśra, having obtained a son who was the husband of the goddess of fortune, had all their desires fulfilled. Their house was always filled with riches and grains. As they saw the transcendental body of the child, worshipable by all, their pleasure increased day after day.

*miśra—vaiṣṇava, śānta, alampāṭa, śuddha, dānta,
dhana-bhoge nāhi abhimāna
putrera prabhāve yata, dhana āsi’ mile, tata,
viṣṇu-prīte dvije dena dāna (23)*

Jagannātha Miśra was an ideal Vaiṣṇava. He was peaceful, restrained, pure and controlled. Therefore he had no desire to enjoy material opulence. Whatever wealth came because of the influence of his transcendental son, he gave in charity to the *brāhmaṇas* for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu.

*lagna gaṇi’ harṣamati, nīlāmbara cakravartī,
gupte kichu kahila miśrere
‘mahāpuruṣera cihna, lagne aṅge bhinna bhinna,
dekhi,—ei tāribe samsāre’ (24)*

After calculating the birth moment of the child, Nīlāmbara Cakravartī privately said to Jagannātha Miśra that he saw all the different symptoms of a great personality in both the body and birth moment of the child. Thus he understood that in the future this child would deliver all the three worlds.

*aiche prabhu śacī-ghare, kṛpāya kaila avatāre,
yei ihā karaye śravaṇa
gaura-prabhu dayāmaya, tāñre hayena sadaya,
sei pāya tāñhāra caraṇa (25)*

In this way Śrī Gaurasundara, out of His causeless mercy, made His advent in the house of Śacīdevī. If anyone will hear this narration of His birth, Śrī Gaurasundara, the embodiment of compassion, will bestow mercy upon him and thus such a person attains His lotus feet.

*pāiyā mānuṣa janma, ye nā śune gaura-guṇa,
hena janma tāra vyartha haila
pāiyā amṛtadhunī, piye viṣa-garta-pāni,
janmiyā se kene nāhi maila (26)*

If one attains a human body but does not hear the glories of Śrī Gaurasundara, his life goes in vain. Amṛtadhunī is a flowing river of the nectar of devotional service. If after getting a human body one drinks the water in a poisonous pit of material happiness instead of the nectar of such a river, it would be better for him to have died immediately upon taking birth.

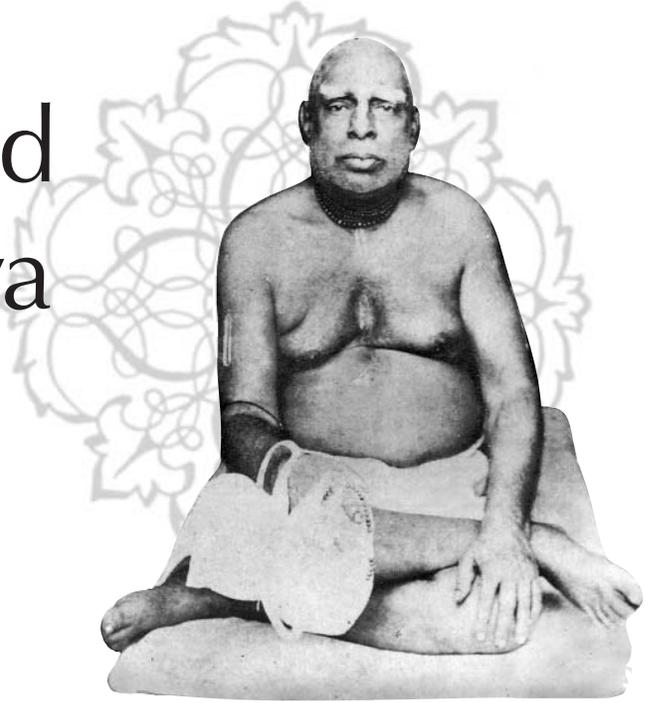
*śrī-caitanya-nityānanda, ācārya advaitacandra,
svarūpa-rūpa-raghunātha dāsa
inhā-sabāra śrī-caraṇa, śire vandi nija-dhana,
janma-lilā gāila kṛṣṇadāsa (27)*

Taking on my head as my own wealth the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, Ācārya Advaitacandra, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, I, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, have thus described the advent pastime of Śrī Gaurasundara. 



Prema-Bhakti and Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva

Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



DEFINITION OF PREMA: KRṢṢṢA IS THE SOLE OBJECT OF DIVINE LOVE

First I will define *prema*, and then I will try to describe *bhagavat-prema*. *Prema* has a unique tendency, and its nature is described as follows:

*ākarṣa sannidhau lauhaḥ pravṛttaḥ dṛśyate yathā
anor-mahati caitanye pravṛttiḥ prema-lakṣaṇam*

"When iron ore is placed near a magnet, there is a natural attraction. Similarly, a spontaneous attraction occurs when the *aṅu-caitanya* or minute conscious entity becomes inclined towards the *mahati caitanya* or Supreme Conscious Entity, thus causing the symptoms of *prema* to develop."

The *ādhāra* (support) of *prema* is the *bhakta-jīva*, and the *viśaya* (object) of *prema* is Kṛṣṇa. Neither *brahma*, the impersonal effulgence, nor *Īśvara*, the Supreme Controller, can be the *viśaya* of *prema*. Kṛṣṇa is the primary *tattva* and the ultimate limit of *bhagavat-tattva* and therefore He alone is the supreme object of *prema*.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KĀMA AND PREMA

Prema is completely transcendental and, although the *jīva* is *aṅu-caitanya* or an infinitesimal conscious entity, he is also a fully transcendental phenomenon. Somehow or other he has become corrupted by the transformations of material energy, and therefore now his '*prema*' is *jaḍa-viśaya-prema*, or 'lust for material objects.' According

to *vaiṣṇava-dharma*, that materialistic *prema* is *kāma* or lust, while lust for Kṛṣṇa is actually called *prema*. Lust is worthless, whereas *prema* is the ultimate benefit. *Kāma* or lust is temporarily pleasing, *preyaḥ* to the *jīva* whereas *prema* is the *jīva*'s eternal auspiciousness, *śreyaḥ*. Nowadays, not understanding the nature of *prema*, the materialistic conditioned souls imagine *prema* to be lust; but although *kāma* and *prema* appear to be identical, one is worthless, while the other is priceless.

SUCCESSIVE STAGES LEADING TO PREMA

The perfection of all goals is obtained when *kṛṣṇa-prema* is awakened in the heart. Mahāprabhu has called *prema* the *pañcama-puruṣārtha* or the fifth goal of life (beyond religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation). But how does that supremely rare *kṛṣṇa-prema* dawn within our hearts? There is certainly a necessity to endeavor by the appropriate means. What is that endeavor? *Sādhana-bhakti*. Mahāprabhu has explained the gradual sequence of stages leading to achievement of that *prema*:

*kona bhāgye kona jīvera 'śraddhā' yadi haya
tabe sei jīva 'sādhū-saṅga' karaya*

*sādhū-saṅga haite haya 'śravaṇa-kīrtana'
sādhana-bhaktiye haya 'sarvānārtha-nivartana'*

*anārtha-nivṛtti haile bhakta 'niṣṭhā' haya
niṣṭhā haite śravaṇādye 'ruci' upajaya*

*ruci bhakti haite haya 'āsakti' pracura
 āsakti haite citte janme kṛṣṇe prīty-aṅkura
 sei rati gāḍha haile dhare 'prema'-nāma
 sei premā-'prayojana' sarvānanda-dhāma*

“If by some inexplicable good fortune the living entity develops faith in Kṛṣṇa, that soul begins to associate with devotees. *Sādhana-bhakti* entails hearing and chanting in the association of devotees, and the performance of that *sādhana-bhakti* causes all *anarthas* or futile desires to dwindle. With the cleansing away of these *anarthas*, firm faith in devotional service develops, and from firm faith, *ruci* or a taste in the heart for hearing and chanting awakens. After a spontaneous taste has awakened, *āsakti* or deep-rooted attachment arises. This is followed by *prīti* or *rati*, the seed of love for Kṛṣṇa, sprouting in the heart. When deep emotional attachment intensifies, that *prema-prayojana*, the ultimate goal of divine love, manifests as the abode and reservoir of all happiness.” (CC Madhya 23. 9-13)

EIGHT TRANSFORMATIONS OF ECSTASY AFTER ACHIEVING KṚṢṆA-PREMA

When the sprout of *prema* arises, bodily transformations appear, such as horripilation, tears, perspiration, trembling, and a change of bodily color. All these symptoms are *anubhāvas*, the indication of *prema*. See how rare and absolutely necessary is *prema*, that even *mukti* becomes insignificant before it. Although *prema* is eternally perfect, it's blossoming is caused by *sādhana*.

Nowadays many persons claim to have *prema* and display duplicitous symptoms, The *yātrā* Vaiṣṇavas (professional, religious performers) and *Kālānemī* of the *Rāmāyaṇa* (who later became *Kaṁsā* in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*)—these are examples of counterfeit *prema*. All these deceptive men and women are simply cheated themselves. Fie on our ill-minded natures!

SANĀTANA-DHARMA OR VAIṢṆAVA-DHARMA MEANS PREMA-DHARMA

If we have a desire to obtain that *prema*, which is even rare in *Vaikuṅṭha*, then what other course do we have except to take shelter of the lotus feet of *Gaurāṅga*, our life and soul? *Vaiṣṇava-dharma* or *jaiva-dharma* is actually this *prema*. If we can acquire even a particle of this *prema* in our hearts, then our lives are successful.

Every religion in the world has been propagated in the name of this *prema*, but *vaiṣṇava-dharma* alone is

**“Vaiṣṇava-dharma
 or jaiva-dharma
 is this *prema*.
 If we acquire
 even a particle
 of this *prema*,
 then our life
 is successful.”**

supreme. As far as we can see, there is no other example of this unalloyed *prema*.

In wandering from country to country, or searching throughout heaven, earth and hell, we do not find *viśuddha-cinmaya* (pure transcendental) *prema-dharma* anywhere else. Having roamed throughout every land and observed all the *sam-pradāyas*, we encounter *prema* in *vaiṣṇava-dharma* as propagated by Śrī Navadvīpa-candra Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya alone. Only then do the fruits of *prema* appear and cause transformations on our bodies as all of our senses become enlivened. Only then does our entire existence vibrate with all kinds of variegated spiritual bliss.

ŚRĪ GAURĀṄGA-TATTVA—HE IS THE AVATĀRĪ OF ALL AVATĀRAS, NON-DIFFERENT FROM VRAJENDRANANDANA, AND HE IS THE BESTOWER OF KṚṢṆA-PREMA

“O Brothers! Who is my *Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu*? The mere inquiry contains all auspiciousness. My *Gaurāṅga* is the crest-jewel of those worthy of worship, the Supreme Guru among *gurus*, and the crown-jewel of *avatāras*. My Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, the bestower of *prema*, is none other than the coronet of worshipable realities, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the principal *ācārya* of all *ācāryas*, and He is the *avatārī* or fountainhead of unlimited *avatāras*, who fulfilled the requirements of some lack to complete the *svarūpa* (nature) of Kṛṣṇa. This is my Śacīnandana *Viśvambhara*!”

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES REGARDING THE ŚRĪ CAITANYA-AVATĀRA

Na caitanyāt kṛṣṇāj jagati para-tattvaṁ param iha: "He is the Supreme Personality Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. He is the Absolute Truth, one without a second. There is no truth superior to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu." (CC Ādi 1.3) My Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *svayaṁ* Bhagavān Himself, the hidden *avatāra*, and there is no greater truth in the world than this. Although the *Purāṇas* narrate His glory in an inconspicuous manner, all the *Vedas*, *Purāṇas* and so many *śāstras* widely glorify Him and illuminate His identity.

The *Vedas* (*Śvetāśvatara* 3.12) states, “mahān prabhur vai puruṣaḥ sattvasyaīṣa pravartakaḥ—That exalted personality Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, is certainly the Supreme. He is *svāmī*, the Master who propagates *viśuddha-bhakti* to those having sufficient intelligence.” “*Yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukma-varṇam* (*Muṇḍaka* 3.3)—When the *jīva* perceives the Lord, he sees that His color is an extremely attractive golden color.” “...*suvarṇa-jyotiḥ puruṣaḥ*—that golden effulgent personality...” Manu also states, “*rukmaḥam svapnadhīgamyam*—That golden complexioned *puruṣaḥ* propagates the function of *buddhi*, that is *bhakti*.”

The *Gītā* states, “*āditya-varṇam tamaśaḥ parastāt*—He is luminous like the sun, and He is transcendental, beyond this material nature.” *Mahābhārata* (*dāna-dharma* section) states, “*suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgaḥ*—His limbs are golden and He is continuously chanting...”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.32) says, “*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam*—He is Kṛṣṇa Himself, appearing in a golden color and chanting the two syllables *kṛṣ* and *ṇa*...”

In this way, all the *Purāṇas* and *Tantras* describe the *avatāra* of Śrī Caitanya, and *ṛṣīs* or realized sages have recorded their perception in countless *śāstras*.

BHAGAVAT-TATTVA IS REALIZED BY THE MERCY OF BHAGAVĀN. PLIGHT OF THOSE WHO DO NOT ACCEPT THE SHELTER OF GAURĀṄGA

The Lord manifests Himself to those upon whom He bestows His mercy, and this form of self-revelation is the only testimony. Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has said:

*avatīrṇe gauracandre vistīrṇe prema-sāgare
su-prakāśīta-ratnaughe yo dīno dīna eva saḥ
avatīrṇe gauracandre vistīrṇe prema-sāgare
ye na majjanti majjanti te mahānartha-sāgare*

**“My Mahāprabhu is *prema-mūrti*,
the embodiment of divine love.
Ardently beseeching the fallen
living entities with all humility,
He distributes His *prema* to all.”**

“The Advent of Śrī Gauracandra is like a vast ocean of nectarean *prema*. One who neglects to gather the priceless jewels from that ocean is certainly the poorest of the poor. The golden moon of Gauracandra has now created a great tidal wave in the ocean of *prema*, and those who do not dive deep into that vast ocean will find themselves floating instead on that great ocean of futile deeds and useless goals.”

**PREMA-MŪRTI ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU’S
PASTIME OF MAKING HIS PREMA-DĀNA-LĪLĀ
AVAILABLE TO ALL CLASSES OF LIVING ENTITIES**

My Mahāprabhu is *prema-mūrti*, the embodiment of divine love. Ardently beseeching the fallen living entities with all humility, He distributes His *prema* to them. He establishes *prema* in the hearts of the *paṇḍitas* by displaying His vast erudition, and He favors the sense enjoyers by instructing them to enjoy their sense objects in a mood of detachment and thus gradually obtain *prema*. He makes doctors and physicians qualified to administer the medicine of *prema* to relieve the disease of material existence, and He shows the renunciates how to perform continuous *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* by completely rejecting all association with the material world.

**NOURISHING THE DESIRE TO
SPREAD THE RELIGION OF
PREMA-DHARMA THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD**

To the degree that *gaura-kathā*, topics of Gaurāṅga, are broadcast, mundane opinions will fall mute. Like the rising sun, *Gaura-dharma* will very soon manifest everywhere. Śrī Kavi Karṇapura has said:

*punīmaś-caṇḍālān api khalu
dhunīmo’ khila-malam
lunīmaḥ saṁskārān api hṛdi
tadīyān ati-dṛḍhān
kṛpā devī tasya prakatayati
dṛk-pātam iha cet
tadā teṣām antaḥ kamapi
rasa-bhāvañ ca tanumaḥ*

“If someone gets the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, then undoubtedly he is able to purify all, including the *caṇḍālas*, (low-class dog-eaters) wash away all their sins, cut away their deep-rooted *saṁskāras* of past bad impressions, and immerse their hearts in an indescribable *rasa*.”



[Translated from Śrī Gaudīya Patrika 50/1]



A Talk

[The following article is from Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's original Harmonist magazine. This article was published around 1930. We have left it as it was presented there, without any editing, so that the respected reader can taste the flavor of that magazine in that era.]

We require the fullness of things. The plenary transcendence is to be approached. The difficult problem is to solve how we can do so. First of all we find that the mind is meant for dealing with the external finite things of this world. Our senses are reciprocated with the objects, but these objects are found to be inadequate for our purpose. When we are in search of more than is available here, or when we require a continuity of those very things, we are simply denied. We cannot have our desirable objects in full, so we try to devise some means that a continuity may be preserved.

THREE DIFFERENT QUALITIES

Here we find three different trends, I mean, qualities. One quality tends to appear for creating purposes, the next for sustenance, and the third for destruction; thus we have got three situations. When there is nothing, something comes up for our sensuous inspection, something which was not in existence before or whose existence we could not trace before, just like an entry on the stage. It exists for some time, and then it takes its exit from the stage. These are the three things we mark in this world, whereas, in the Absolute, these are not the current condi-

tions, though they have got their existence in order to foster the ecstasy of the Absolute.

We require to eliminate all sorts of undesirable impediments. We require to get rid of the alloyed portions, the defective portions, which we have incorporated with us. All sorts of imperfections should be avoided.

THREE DIFFERENT ENERGIES

In the region of the Absolute we know there are three different energies working, one of which is His ecstatic energy by which bliss is conferred to us, and by which He is found to be inebriated with the ecstatic exploitations. That very Absolute indulges Himself in an ecstatic mood and is delighted. And, when we find that He is delighted, we, being more or less part and parcel of the transaction, get a share as well; We, being not the mind but the soul proper. When He is delighted, we necessarily get the advantage of that delightful temper of the Absolute. When He is surcharged with all beatific phases, we are also endowed with a part of that as per our own eligibility, as per our affinity of serving Him, we enjoy a part. Here, where we are passing through the nonabsolute region, our enjoyment is nothing but depriving Him of

About The Absolute

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda's talk

to Herr Baron H.E. Von Koeth and Herr E. G. Schulze

His enjoyment. We should take proper care not to carry our defective ideas there. The passionate desires of this mundane world need not be carried to the Absolute region.

The second is the true energy, the energy of diffusing true knowledge; and the third is existence. In the mundane region, we find three things: existence, sustenance and destruction. Destruction is a thing which is quite undesirable here in this world. But in the Absolute region we find the very association or separation has got a factor in inebriating us. Here, we are deprived of something, we are rather helpless. There, we get more opportunities of serving Him in case of separation. The very procedure of approaching Him is to realize the condition of separation.

Here, we do not find Him. The Absolute cannot be had here, though we may have ample inclination of having Him. The very formation of our equipments, the mind and the senses, is quite inadequate to have an approach of the transcendence, neither can we expect Him to be confined here as one of the objects of phenomena. We need not think that He should come under our sensuous jurisdiction. If He came as an object, we would accuse Him of His finiteness. He is not to be dealt as one of the material objects which can be reciprocated by our senses. We need not think so. He keeps Himself quite out of our vision and out of the touch of our senses. Unless we have devotional aptitude, we cannot invoke Him here. He does not condescend to come to this region and become an object of the activities of our senses. We should find out a means to approach Him, and this is known as sadhana bhakti, that is, the procedure to be adopted in our case. The Supreme Lord has not given us any privilege of

exposing Himself to our senses. Phenomenal objects are presented to us, for duping us, for deluding us.

A CASE OF SEPARATION

So we require to be in touch with Him, but He has denied us this privilege. This is a case of separation. When He, the lover, the center of all love, has denied the beloved His presence, our inclination and activities should double, or triple, to have His association. So this sort of separation is an essential point, is the cardinal point, that will help us to have the inclination of approaching Him. All our attempts should tend to associate with Him, because that association is denied for the purpose of studying our heart. He has given us this facility to have an easy track to reach Him. The very condition of separation is a good thing for His servitor, as he can culture his affinity or inclination for the Absolute more than when he is allowed to appear before Him. He has intentionally deprived us of His presence.

He was found to be of a loving temperament, but the lover has deserted us, and we are to follow Him. When we are disappointed to have His presence, we should thank our stars that our lover has gained much by dissociating Himself from us. I mean, the Autocrat has got the right of making Himself quite happy by denying His presence to us. He finds Himself very happy by deserting us, and we are to submit to His pleasure and wish, we are to submit to His whims. We must abide by His decision. This I consider to be service. That is, I need not satisfy my senses by approaching Him.¹

But when he has managed to shut Himself off from my senses, I know He wants that I should acquire more affin-

ity for Him, and He has given me that opportunity. If He came within our perception, we would simply gratify our senses, which would be a detriment to our cause and would prove an obstacle to our service. An illustration is quoted:

One infinitesimal absolute was fanning the Absolute Infinity. The moment he thought that the Lord was delighted by his services—that the Master had accepted his services—he became overpowered and could fan no more. Thus he became negligent in offering his services. The fanner should have known that he ought not to satisfy his senses by stopping his services by considering that the Master had accepted his services. He should not have become inebriated, because it proved rather a bar to his offering further service.²

SERVICE IS BEST OFFERED BY CHANTING THE NAME

Instead of being taken away by our emotional sentiments, we should always be alert in offering our service. Service is best offered by chanting the Name. The Supreme Lord is keeping Himself at a distance and we are to seek after Him; this is the proper way of chanting the Name. The Name of the Absolute should be chanted continually so that we may be mindful and not diffident to offer our services. As soon as we show our diffidence to serve Him, and stop chanting His Name, we are necessarily led to lord it over this phenomena, and we get a quite different occupation. The occupation or the sole function of the soul is nothing but to associate himself with the Supreme Lord. As soon as we are negligent of our services, we miss the opportunity of associating with Him. We are His eternal servitors (bhaktas) and as such we have no other occupation but to serve Him. If we neglect this injunction, we will have to become engaged with temporal things. But these engagements will not be continued for long. They will cease to exist.

The transcendental Name is quite different from the ordinary sounds. The ordinary sounds carry the impression of things of this world for our own purposes. All things of this phenomena are meant to serve us; but we are to serve Him. Service is to be rendered to the Absolute, and we need not hanker after receiving service

from the non-absolutes. Anything done for the purpose of our own self, is not service. Whatever is offered to the Absolute is known as service or bhakti. When the service is done properly, when it is not dominated by some regulation, that service is pure. All gnostic transactions or associations with the mundane things are quite opposed to service, because they are meant for our own purpose and not for the purpose of the Absolute. When we know we are absolute infinitesimals, our vision is then fully restricted to the Absolute Infinity and not to any non-absolute thing.

BHAKTI AND UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER

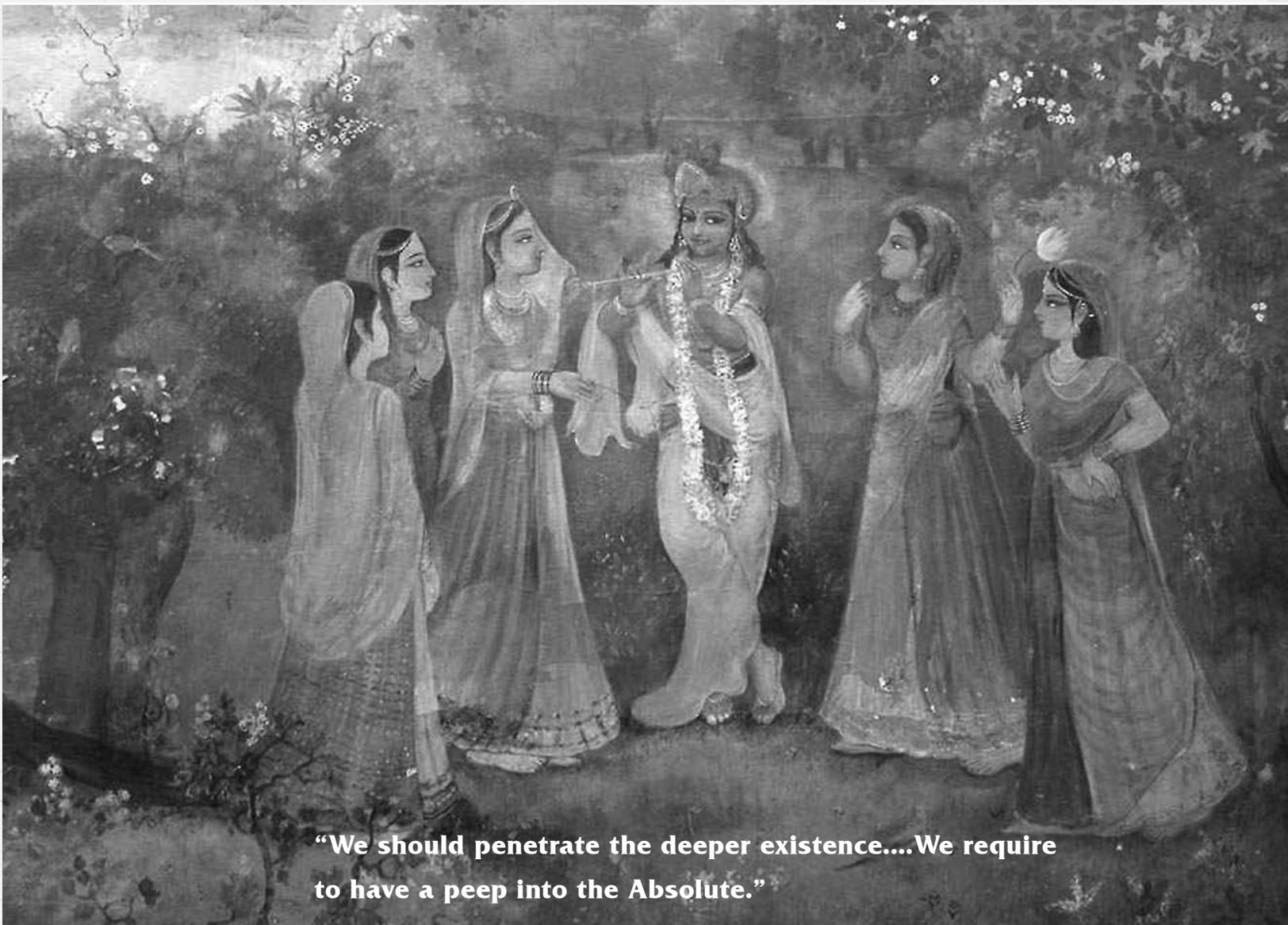
Devotion or bhakti is the policy of approaching Him, and unconditional surrender should be performed at all costs. When we surrender, we will have an opportunity of depending on Him fully, otherwise we will be thinking of other things, whether or not the Absolute is at all prepared to rescue us from this troublous region. Unconditional surrender will give us the assurance that we will be rescued from the worldly affinity. If we chant the Name continuously, we will be able to get rid of our inclination of accepting worldly things; we will be simply relieved from the invasion of phenomenal finite objects. So chanting should be the process. We need not trouble ourselves in the beginning to enter into the details of the Absolute; the very chanting of His Name will take us to Him.

This world is a place of trial. We are to educate ourselves in the transcendental science. We should not fail to do so now that we have got a human frame, We must avail our present opportunity, leaving aside everything else for our next life. This life should be engaged solely in the pursuit of the Absolute, and that sort of pursuing will be effected if we adopt the process of devotion.

We have very little to do with worldly people, but we have everything to do with those who are engaged in the service of the Supreme Lord. Association with people, who are busy with their limited temperament, will not be congenial for our purpose, for we should not culture our enjoying temperament as people are doing. If we have to meet an undesirable person, we should always make it a point to proselytize him in the transcendental education.

¹ The above paragraph is applicable only to the pure devotees, like Śrīmatī Rādhikā. In the mood of Rādhikā, Mahāprabhu says: “*Āpana-duḥkha, sabe vāñchi tāñra sukha, tāñra sukha āmāra tātparya / more yadi diyā duḥkha, tāñra haila mahā-sukha, sei duḥkha mora sukha-varya*—I do not mind My personal distress. I only wish for the happiness of Kṛṣṇa, for His happiness is the goal of My life. However, if He feels great happiness in giving Me distress, that distress is the best of My happiness.”

² This paragraph applies to a disciple serving the Deity or his Gurudeva. It does not refer to the pure devotee.



“We should penetrate the deeper existence...We require to have a peep into the Absolute.”

The only aim of our life should be to make progress towards that concealed transcendental region. People may accuse us that we are talking of mysticism which cannot be examined by the senses. But we do not talk of mysticism, we talk of positivism. As seekers of positive knowledge, we should try to peep into the veiled region. People are busy in examining things from the point of view of illusory identities. Seeming positions are not to be confused with the actual positions, as a wrapper (envelope) should not be considered to be the letter.

We should penetrate the deeper existence. The outer case, the bahiranga maya-sakti, external illusory energy, has produced paraphernalia to be measured by our senses, but this sort of measuring is not at all congenial to our purpose. We require to have a peep into the Absolute.

We should not take our physical and astral bodies to be our real self. At present we know nothing, due to

ignorance, and this ignorance is to be dispelled. We cannot deny the fact that we will have to die and leave this fleshy tabernacle. We cannot retain it, so the real owner of the body should be targetted first. This is svarupa-jnana. We should not be know by not our bodies.

The external aspect of Sree Krishna is prohibitive. As long as we know we are seers, He will not disclose ourselves as seers, He will not disclose Himself to us. He will show us His bluish-black face, but only when we are eligible to see Him and be attracted. His beauty should not be should not be enjoyed by us, but our beautiful transcendental form should be shown to Him for His pleasure. As soon as we show Him our spiritual beauty, He will disclose Himself to us. Then we will have no occasion to remark that the bluish-black face should not be the face of the Absolute. 



In *māyā* or illusion, it is difficult for us to digest the truth that “I am small.” We don’t like to digest this and that is the rub. Our inner evil tendency is to capture the right of others, but we are to understand what is freedom. Here we really are accustomed to think that we can encroach over the freedom of others of the environment. That is the disease. Alternately, the reactionary tendency is to think, “I shall commit suicide, that is, let us enter the tomb, *samādhi*. If I cannot exercise my freedom on the environment outside, then rather I shall enter the tomb, the grave, but I won’t accept slavery, the serving attitude to the environment.”

We are frightened of becoming a servant. “I want to be an exploiting unit, but not a serving unit, that I shall give my freedom to another superior hand.” It is there where we shrink away and that is the inner defect. By freedom we understand that we have freedom to exercise right over the environment. But why should we not accept service for the environment? Why? We think that we shall be reduced to the minimum position. But to do for others, to become a servant, is healthy for us and there we can thrive. We can thrive by serving the environment, and especially the Lord of the whole. We think that when we are rendering service, we are dying. That false temperament, has grown within us, and that is a foreign element which has covered the *jīva* proper. It is a bitter pill to swallow.

SERVICE PROPER: DIE TO LIVE

So what is service proper? Hegel’s philosophy is: Die to live, dissolve your ego as it is at present. Dissolve it mercilessly, die. Die means to dissolve mercilessly. Throw

yourself into the fire and you will come out with a bright self. Learn to die as you are: That mentally concocted body, that concocted energy. To take the name of the Lord and die.

Forget yourself as you are at present and you will find your proper self there that does not die. Death is ordained for our existence, so give to death that part of you that is ordained to die, and the eternal part of you will remain. But Mahāprabhu has discouraged the physical death. He told Sanātana Gosvāmī :

*sanātana, deha tyage kṛṣṇa yadi paiye
koti-deha kṣaneke tabe chaḍite pariye*

“I am ready to die millions of crores of times in a second if that would give me Kṛṣṇa , but that dying is nothing.” (CC Antya 4.55)

This physical death is *tāmasika*, ignorance; it is very much of a lower bait. Not only physical death, but real death, the wholesale death, is necessary. Then also I may only get that *taṭasthā*, borderline, stage. But Mahāprabhu says, “Die or not die, go on with the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the company of a *sādhu*. Go on with the company of a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Try to accumulate that internal wealth by whatever means possible.”

DEDICATION TO THE AUTOCRAT

This internal capital can be had only from the *sādhu*. Wherever you can get it and with whatever price you must pay, try to secure that innermost wealth. Not mere physical death or mental death has the reach to take you

The Highest Degree of Dedication

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Srīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja

to that higher stage. You are to dive deep into Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Wherever and whenever you find someone with such strong attachment for Kṛṣṇa, you must try to secure it from him at any price and that will be the best utilization of your life and energy. You are to purchase the higher thing and that is also at the sacrifice of the higher type of substance within you. You are to have innermost hankering and the transaction will be by the surrendering of your innermost existence. The encasements, the physical encasements and mental encasements of different types are many: *bhūr, bhūvaḥ, svāh, mahāḥ, janaḥ, tapāḥ, satya*. There are so many varieties and types of physical and mental encasements. These so many subtle encasements from gross to finer do not end only in Virajā and Brahmāloka, but even consciousness where the dedication is intense to its highest capacity, and that is dedication to the Autocrat. Dedication there is to the Autocrat, not to a constitutional king where there is justice, but dedication to Kṛṣṇa, to that Autocrat where everything can happen! The highest degree of dedication is necessary there. The gain is also similar; it is also of the highest type.

As much as you risk, so much you can expect to gain. That is, Mahāprabhu gives the direction: “Don’t be a miser, but surrender yourself to the Autocrat, the Absolute Good, and you will be the best gainer!” If you find a proper place, then give yourself totally, *ātmanikṣepa*. We have come to the proper place to offer our service, and Kṛṣṇa is the highest bidder. He is the highest bidder in the auction and He will pay most. He will pay so much that none can match His bid. He is the highest capitalist. But He is whimsical and He is prodigal! Kṛṣṇa is

only known and knowable by the highest type of love and affection. *Bhaktiāham ekayā grāhya* (SB 11.14.21): “By *bhakti* alone I can be approached, not otherwise. Exclusive devotion is necessary for you to come to Me. There is no other way.”

*nāhaṁ vedair na tapasā
na dānena na cejyayā
śakya evaṁ-vidho draṣṭuṁ
dṛṣṭavān asi mām yathā*

“It is not possible to see Me in this form, as you see Me now, merely by studying the *Vedas*, practicing austerities, giving in charity or performing sacrifices.” (BG 11.53)

“In no way am I approachable except by exclusive devotion.” We are not satisfied by ordinary things which are available in nature. We have come to try for our prospect of something so high, so rare, so real. Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna:

*hato vā prāpsyasi svargaṁ jivā vā bhokḍyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛta-niścayaḥ*

“If killed in battle you will attain heaven, or by gaining victory you will enjoy the Earth. Therefore, O Arjuna, being confident of success, rise for battle!” (BG 2.37)

For him to give up the fight would be ruinous. Our campaign is so adventurous! If we are successful we have got the highest thing, but if unsuccessful then our prospect and our whole life is gone, gone! With this risk we have come to search for the most precious thing. We must remember this and not go back. We are to proceed with the search and enquiry, for if He is known then everything is known. With

this temptation we have come: “*Yasmin jñāte sarvam idam vijñātam bhavati, yasmin prāpte sarvam idam prāptam bhavati, tad vijijñāsasva tad eva brahma.*”

Try to have experience about the root of everything, then everything will be at your command and in your hand. *Kṛṣṇānusandhana*: search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa What is that Brahma, that Parabrahma, and all these stale things? Kṛṣṇa is the very gist of them. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is necessary. Everything is His, He has the monopoly. So, search after Kṛṣṇa. He is such, He is an Autocrat but He is a thief and He is a cheat!

“GOPI, GOPI, GOPI,...”

Mahāprabhu, one day in Navadvīpa, was taking the name, “Gopī, Gopī, Gopī...” One gentleman who was from an educated class of that time objected, saying: “O Paṇḍita, O Nimāi Paṇḍita! Why do You take the name ‘Gopī, Gopī, Gopī’? That recommendation has not been found in any *śāstra*, but we have found the name of Kṛṣṇa in some scriptures and there it is told that some sort of good result may be expected by chanting that. So you may take the name of Kṛṣṇa, but why do you take the name of ‘Gopī, Gopī, Gopī’? It is out of the scriptures. Are you mad? What do you do, wasting your time? You are a brilliant scholar, but what is your degradation, deplorable degradation?”

Mahāprabhu was in a mood of “Who will take the name of Kṛṣṇa? He is a traitor! Just see how He has treated the *gopīs*! With so much sincere love they approached Him, but then He was so cruel that He left them and went away, leaving them, and so I shall teach you a lesson!” And Mahāprabhu went to beat that gentleman with a stick. That man thought Mahāprabhu to be stark mad. He thought Nimāi Paṇḍita to be finished, totally mad, and ran away! Returning to his own group, he told, “Nimāi Paṇḍita came to strike me with a bamboo stick. Now we must have to teach Him a good lesson!”

Mahāprabhu said, “Don’t take the name of Kṛṣṇa! He is very cruel, a treacherer (a cheat). He gives hope to His servitors and then flies away. So don’t go to that side. We shall rather worship the *gopīs* who can give but cannot come back. They can approach us, but they do not come back to retrace... We must worship them!”

THE HIGHEST GIVER, THE HIGHEST DICTATOR

The foremost *gopī* is Rādhārāṇī. She is the highest giver, the highest dictator. None can venture to come beside Her except Vrajendra-nandana. She is *mahābhāva-svarūpiṇī*. Sacrifice at its zenith is there; the highest standard ever is eternally represented there. Nowhere else is

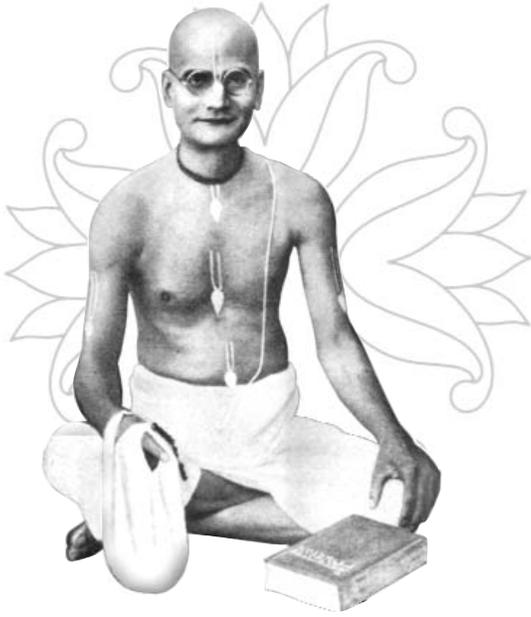
there such sacrifice, self-giving, or self-surrendering. It is beyond all standards ever known to the world of scriptures. Lakṣmīdevī has no place near Kṛṣṇa, and similarly Nārāyaṇa cannot approach towards Rādhārāṇī, nor even Dvārakādhiśa, Māthureśa, nor even Gopeśa, what to speak of others. It may seem that all the *gopīs* were of equal rank in the *rāsa* dance, but some fine jealousy arose in the mind of Rādhārāṇī, and after showing Her superiority in chanting, dancing and so on, She suddenly disappeared. She conquered the common *gopīs*, and after defeating them She disappeared suddenly. Kṛṣṇa unexpectedly found Himself vacant. All the source of His energy was coming from that one point, and the dance was taking place. But when that very vitality was taken away He was feeling himself vacant. He searched after Her but could not find Her. He then stealthily left the company of all the *gopīs* in search for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

‘*Rādhā-madhava hṛdaye tat yāya brajasundarī.*’ Jayadeva Gosvāmī said that so many *gopīs* are on one side but they are outweighed by Rādhārāṇī. They are all abandoned and Kṛṣṇa goes out to search for Her. This is also admitted in Mahāprabhu’s discussions with Rāmānanda Rāya, where it is told that there is a categorical difference between the quality of the loving service of the *gopīs* and that of Rādhārāṇī. I composed one verse that tells that at every point in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* there is the presence of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, because She is the goal there:

*yad amiya-mahimā-śrīr-bhāgavatyaḥ kathāyaṁ
prati-padam anubhūtaṁ cāpy alābdhvābhidheya
tad akhila-rasa-mūrti-śyāma-lilāvalāmbhaṁ
mādhura-rasādhi-rādhā-pada-padmaṁ prapadye*

She is the conclusion to be established in *Bhāgavatam* by so many description of events, so many stories of devotion, and so forth. The highest aim of *Bhāgavatam* is to establish *rādhā-dāsyam*, service to Rādhārāṇī, and everything in *Bhāgavatam* is preparatory towards that end. But still Her name is not mentioned anywhere in *Bhāgavatam*. Everywhere in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* every word is used only to prove Her noblest position, but still no name is expressively given there for Her. Kṛṣṇa is *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*. He is the combination of all sorts of ecstasies, and the main support of that *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ* is Śrīmatī Rādhikā. She is the only support of that *lilā* of Śyāma, the sole support, the fountainhead of *mādhura-rasa*. I surrender myself to the holy feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī who is the only support, the gist, the all-in-all of the whole life of *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*: He who consists in Himself of all sorts of high *rasa*, ecstasies. She is His only support and I surrender myself to Her holy feet.”

 [Courtesy—Sermons of Devotion]



Śrī Gītopaniṣade Ātma-nivedana

Self-surrender in Bhagavad-gītā

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Ārya-ṛṣis have glorified Śrīmad Bhagavad-gīta as Upaniṣad-cūḍamaṇi, the crest jewel of all the Upaniṣads. In comparison to other Upaniṣads, Śrī Gītā specifically establishes Bhagavān's *līlāmayatva* (being endowed with *līlā*). Also, in the verses that sing the glories of Gītā (*Gītā-māhātmya*), it has been described as the essence of all Upaniṣads.

*sarvopaniṣado gāvo
dogdhā goṣāla-nandana
pārtho vatsaḥ su-dhīr bhoktā
dugdham gītāmṛtaṁ mahat*

“This Gītopaniṣad, Bhagavad-gītā, the essence of all the Upaniṣads, is just like a cow, and Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is famous as a cowherd boy, is milking this cow. Arjuna is just like a calf, and learned scholars and pure devotees are to drink the nectarean milk of Bhagavad-gītā.” (*Gītā-māhātmya* 6)

The speaker of Gītā, which is a part of Mahābhārata, is Devakī-nandana Śrī Vāsudeva. However, in the above verse it is said ‘*dogdhā goṣāla-nandana*’ i.e. the milkman (speaker) is Goparāja-nandana Kṛṣṇa. It is thus clearly understood that Vrajendra-nandana Vṛndāvana-bihāri Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is the speaker of Śrī Gīta. Although He has spoken Gīta in His Vāsudeva form, His own statements have revealed His real *rasamaya-svarūpa*. Our *gosvāmīs* have indicated in their literatures that another name of Mother Yaśodā is Devakī, and Devakī-putra (the son of Devakī) is indeed another name of Yaśodā-putra. Although Devakī-putra Vāsudeva is apparently the speaker of Śrī Gītā, Śrī Nanda-nandana Kṛṣṇa is the actual speaker.

By discussing the beginning, the conclusion, and so on of Śrī Gītā, it can be understood that Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is

the Supreme (*parama-deva*), and the topmost worshipable reality. He is worshiped only by *bhakti*, and *prema-bhakti* is the climax of that worship.

Now we will discuss the nature and development of *ātma-nivedana* explained in Śrī Gītā. From an external point of view, the instructions of Gītā are universal. From *karmārpaṇa* (offering the results of activities) up to *śaraṇāgati* (surrender) and *ātma-nivedana* (full self-surrender)—everything related to *bhakti* is sung there in condensed form.

Ātma-nivedana is of two kinds—ordinary (common) and extraordinary (uncommon). In Śrī Bhakti-sandarbhā, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda has classified these two types of *ātma-nivedana*: ordinary *ātma-nivedana* is *bhāvam vinā*, devoid of any *sthāyi-bhāva* or permanent mellow, and extraordinary *ātma-nivedana* is *bhāva vaiśiṣṭena ca*, endowed with specific *bhāva* or permanent mellow.

‘*Tadetātma-nivedanam bhāvam vinā bhāva vaiśiṣṭena ca dṛśyate*’ (*Bhakti-sandarbhā* 309 *anuccheda*). To illustrate the first type, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda has quoted the following verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11. 29.34):

*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīṣito me
tadāmṛtatvaṁ pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

“A person who gives up all fruitive activities and offers himself entirely unto Me, eagerly desiring to render service unto Me, achieves liberation from birth and death and is promoted to the status of sharing My own opulences.”

To illustrate the second type, *bhāva-viśiṣṭa ātma-nivedana*, he has quoted the statement of Śrī Rukmiṇī-devī in the verse:

*tan me bhavān khalu vṛtaḥ patir aṅga jāyām
ātma-rpitaś ca bhavato 'tra vibho vidhehi
mā vira-bhāgam abhimarśatu caidyā ārād
gomāyu-van mṛga-pater balim ambujākṣa*

“Therefore, my dear Lord, I have chosen You as my husband and I surrender myself to You. Please come swiftly, O Almighty One, and make me Your wife. My dear lotus-eyed Lord, let Śiśupāla, who is like a jackal stealing the property of a lion, never touch the hero's portion.” (SB 10.52.39)

Here the word *bhāva* means *sambandha*, relationship in terms of *rāganuga bhakti* in *dāsya-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa* and so on. According to *Bhakti-sandarbha* verse 309, ‘*bhāva vaiśiṣṭena*’ refers to four *bhāvas--dāsya*, *sakya*, *vātsalya*, and *madhura bhāva*. The *ātma-nivedana* at the lotus feet of Bhagavān which is endowed with any one of these four *bhāvas* or specific relationships is *bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana*, and the *ātma-nivedana* that is performed at the lotus feet of Bhagavān before the awakening of any of these four *bhāvas* is called *bhāva-hīna ātma-nivedana*.

Bhāva-hīna ātma-nivedana is visible in the life of Śrī Bali Mahārāja, and Śrīla Jīvapāda has shown this elsewhere in his *Sandarbha*. Śrī Bali Mahārāja's *dāsya* is *bhāvahīna dāsya*, devoid of any *bhāva* or *sambandha*, and is not *rāganuga-dāsya*. The most confidential and topmost instruction of *Gītā* is:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

“Completely abandoning all bodily and mental dharma, such as *varṇa* and *āśrama*, fully surrender to Me alone. I shall liberate you from all reactions to your sins. Do not grieve.” (BG 18.66)

The *śloka* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* beginning ‘*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā*,’ quoted by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī as an example of *bhāvahīna ātma-nivedana*, and the *śloka* ‘*sarva-dharmān parityajya*,’ which is the topmost instruction of *Gītā*, convey the same meaning. Moreover, ‘*ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*’ is only the explanation of the words ‘*vicikīrṣito me*’ (desirous of doing something special) clearly instructs *bhāvahīna ātma-nivedana* for the common masses.

Now we have to consider whether or not the indication or hint of *bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana* is given in *Gītā*. An intelligent lover, who is the object of love for everyone, will speak to common people in a general way about affectionate service to him. If his beloved is also present among the general people, then, in midst of his general topics, he will hint to his beloved in a hidden manner about how to please

him in a special way. Although ordinary people will be unable to understand such hints, those who are extraordinarily dear to him will certainly be able to comprehend them.

Similarly, *vidagdha-cūḍāmaṇi*, the crest jewel of intelligent lovers, Gopāla-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while aiming at ordinary people, has given hints about extraordinary service or extraordinary *ātma-nivedana* (*bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana*) for those who are so desirous. What to speak of *karmis* (fruitive workers), even *jñāna-miśra-bhaktas* cannot understand such hints. On the other hand, *bhaktas* who desire an extremely intimate relationship with Him in *rāganuga-bhāva* not only comprehend His hints about *bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana*, but also realize His clear instructions on the subject.

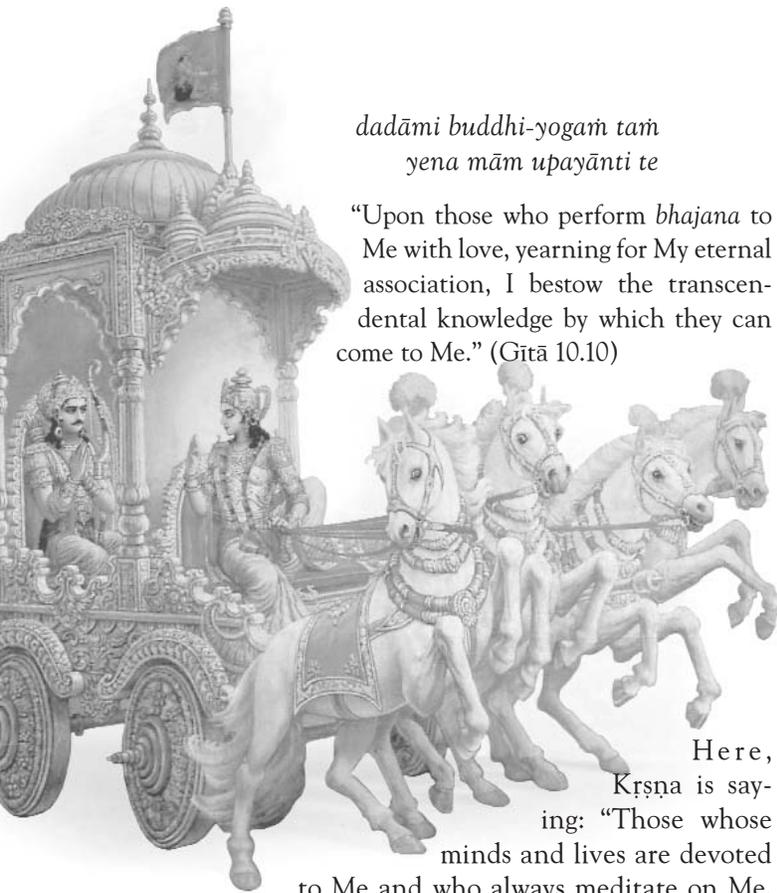
In the Tenth Canto, Śrī Rukmiṇī-devī prays to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in her letter: “*Tan me bhavān khalu vṛtaḥ patir aṅga jāyām...*, I accept You as my husband and fully dedicate myself (*ātma-nivedana*) at Your lotus feet.” Here, *ātma-nivedana* is performed by possessing *kāntā-bhāva*, a conjugal relationship, in the heart.

Bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana is clearly expressed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10. 9-10) and (11.44). There, Śrī Bhagavān has said:

*mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā
bodhayantaḥ paraśparam
kathayantaś ca mām nityam
tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*

“Those whose minds are absorbed in Me and whose lives are wholeheartedly devoted to My service, derive great satisfaction and bliss from constantly enlightening one another about My *tattva* and performing *kīrtana* of My name, form, qualities and pastimes.” (*Gītā* 10.9)

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānām
bhajatām prīti-pūrvakam*



*dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ
yena mām upayānti te*

“Upon those who perform *bhajana* to Me with love, yearning for My eternal association, I bestow the transcendental knowledge by which they can come to Me.” (Gītā 10.10)

Here,
Kṛṣṇa is say-
ing: “Those whose
minds and lives are devoted

to Me and who always meditate on Me, always speak about Me and derive satisfaction in Me alone. Their minds feel relaxation and comfort only by thinking about Me, and they are constantly desirous of perpetual union with Me. I bestow upon such *bhaktas* *buddhi-yoga*, transcendental intelligence and knowledge by which they can attain Me.”

Most *Gītā* commentators, including Śrīla Śrīdhara Swāmīpāda, explained these two *ślokas* from the perspective of common people only. However, *vidagdha-śiromaṇi* Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot check Himself from speaking the core instructions, even in the midst of speaking His general instruction. That essential instruction is to render *viśrambha-seva*, intimate loving service unto Him. These commentators give a general explanation of the component ‘*ramanti ca*’ in their purport which is similar to the explanation of ‘*tuṣyanti ca*’. Thus, there remains no specific significance to the phrase ‘*ramanti ca*’. However, unless there is a specific meaning to these words, there would have been no reason for Kṛṣṇa to use them. Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura have therefore excluded the general meaning of ‘*ramanti ca*’ and have only accepted its specific meaning through its verbal root (which carries its innate meaning). *Ram-dhātu* i.e. the verbal root ‘*ram*’, means ‘*kṛīdā*’, sport or play. Use of the verbal root ‘*ram*’ not only indicates *bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana*, but it indeed also indicates the topmost among all *bhāvas--madhura-bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedana*.

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu has said in his commentary: ‘*ramanti ca yuvati-smīta-kaṭakṣādiṣu eva yuvānaḥ.*’ Only that *ātma-nivedana* that is characterized by accepting Bhagavān as the object of *madhura- prīti* is referred to here. That *kānta-bhāva* (conjugal relationship) has the attributes of smiles, sidelong glances and so on. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpāda quotes a part of Śrī Rukmiṇī-devī’s letter (*tan me bhavān khalu vṛtaḥ patir...*), as an example of *bhāva-yukta ātma-nivedanam*, which has the same meaning as the inner meaning of the ‘*ramanti ca*’ portion of the *Gītā*’s *śloka*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives a similar meaning for ‘*ramanti ca*’. He explains that *rāgānuga-bhakti* is expressed in these words of Bhagavān. The only satisfaction and delight of the *ananyā bhaktas* is the performance of *bhakti*. This is the secret. Even in the stage of *sādhana* they attain satisfaction by the unobstructed performance of *bhajana*. While meditating on their future stage of perfection, *sādhya-daśā*, they experience delight. In other words, they enjoy with their Prabhu, Kṛṣṇa, within their minds.

In Arjuna’s words:

*iteva putrasya sakheva sakhyuḥ
priyaḥ priyāyārhasi deva soḍhum*

“O Deva, just as a father forgives his son, a friend tolerates a friend, or a lover excuses his beloved, please forgive all my offences.” (Gītā 11.44)

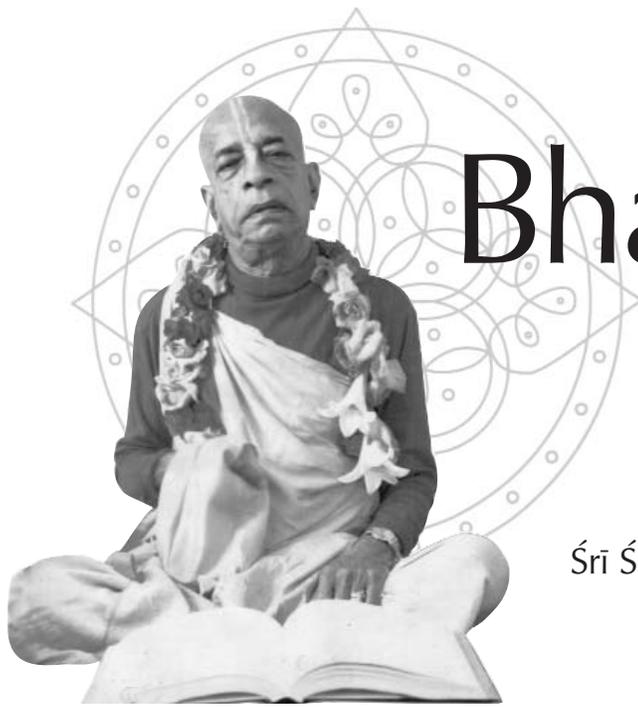
Here, the subject of *ātma-nivedana* that is endowed with *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *madhura bhāvas*, has been clearly expressed. ‘*Dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te.*’ Here, the prominent *mahājanas*, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu and Śrīla Cakravartīpāda, express that ‘*buddhi-yoga*’ is suggestive only of *bhāva-yukta sādhana*, (*sādhana* endowed with *bhāva* [relationship]).

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu states in his commentary: “I am *svabhakti-rasika*, the enjoyer of the *rasa* derived from the happiness of My own *bhakti*, and I bestow upon My devotees that *buddhi-yoga* by which they attain Me. I inspire their *buddhi* in such a manner that they can understand Me, who am replete with unlimited qualities and majesties. Thus, they can attain Me by their worship.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has said in his purport to this verse: “I bestow upon them *buddhi-yoga*. I inspire that *buddhi-yoga* within their hearts’ tendencies. That *buddhi-yoga* cannot be achieved by individual efforts, nor can it be obtained from anyone else. It is bestowed by Me alone, and only such *bhāva-yukta sādhakas* can receive it. This is the meaning of Kṛṣṇa’s words.”



(Translated from Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā 2/8)



Bhagavānera

The Message of Godhead

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja

There are many reasons for an *āsurika* or godless nature. However, in this present article I am discussing three that are prominent—namely, lust, anger and greed. These three propensities have been described as doorways leading to hell and destroyers of the soul.

Bhagavān is the sole master and enjoyer of creation. When we forget this, a strong desire to enjoy this visible world is born within us. When desires are unfulfilled they give rise to anger, under the influence of anger we become frustrated, and like the jackal's plea of "sour grapes"¹ we portray the act of renunciation. Lying at the root of this kind of pretentious renunciation is a greater greed and desire for sense gratification. It is one more layer of material desire. Unless a person crosses beyond these levels of *bhoga* and *tyāga*, enjoying and rejecting, and becomes situated on the platform of the soul, he cannot understand the message of Godhead and he will thus continue to remain under the influence of an *āsurika* mood.

If we want to make progress on the path of auspiciousness for the soul by becoming free from an *āsurika* existence, then the only method is to act according to the injunctions of *śāstra*. Irresponsible, independent and unlawful acts are all born of lust, by which one will never be able to cross beyond anger and greed and obtain true happiness and the ultimate destination. Thus, who will reveal how 'in the dispensation of providence'² mankind can obtain peace or the ultimate destination? *Śāstra* is

our only support. If we work according to its injunctions we can receive freedom from unlawful and whimsical acts.

The age in which we presently live is called Kali-yuga, the dreadful age of quarrel and hypocrisy. Almost all people of this age have short lives, dull intelligence and misfortune, and are always persecuted by disease and distress. Consequently, they do not have a natural inclination for the instruction of *śāstra*. Practically all the religionists of the world, be they Hindu, Muslim, Christian, and so on, live whimsically by transgressing the laws of their own scriptures. All these people, what to speak of following the laws of *śāstra*, misinterpret them. They gradually become firmly established in an *āsurika* nature in the form of sense enjoyment born out of their worldly desires. Bhagavān and His devotees are always concerned how to rescue the *kali-hat jīva*, conditioned souls frustrated by the effects of Kali-yuga.

The Vaiṣṇava devotees of Bhagavān are like desire-fulfilling trees and oceans of mercy. In order to deliver the *jīvas* tormented by Kali, the Vaiṣṇavas, even after fulfilling whatever desires or prayers the *jīvas* have, make arrangements to establish their *sambandha*, their relationship with Bhagavān. Whatever means the Saviour of the fallen, Gaurasundara Śrī Caitanyadeva, has prescribed, after having seen the *jīvas'* miserable condition is alone the sole injunction of the *śāstras* for all common people.

¹ Once a jackal came across a grapevine. The tasty looking fruits hung high above his head, and as he tried to reach up and pick one, he found to his dismay that it was beyond his grasp. Again and again he tried but to no avail. Finally, he scorned in frustration: "The grapes are sour," and ran off with his tail between his legs (*Pañca-tantra* stories).

² "In the dispensation of providence" means the living entities reception of his *karma-phala*, or the fruits of pious and impious deeds.

Kathā 3

*bhārata-bhūmite haila manuṣya-jaṅma yāra
jaṅma sārthaka kari' kara para-upakāra*

“One who takes a human birth in the land of Bhārata (India) should make his life successful, and then work for the ultimate benefit of others.” (CC Ādi 9.41)

The success of human life is attained by following the guiding path of those *mahājanas* from Bhārata. The sages of India have endeavored to find liberation from the hands of *māyā* and to become like a particle of dust at the lotus feet of Bhagavān. Such endeavors are not to be seen in any other place on the earth.

We can see in other places, especially in Western countries, that there has been great research and progress made in material science, which is only based on the mind and body created by *māyā*, the deluding potency. For this reason, Western people who are ‘in the dispensation of providence’, receive no rest of any kind. Indian people, being fond of imitating such people, are also walking on the path of destruction. At present they have given up their own culture to become beggars at the doors of others, and under the influence of this ‘dispensation’ of *māyā*, they boldly claim themselves to be an independent nation. There is nothing to gain by that.

The process and means of perfection in the eternal *sambandha*, *abhideya* and *prayojana* between the infinitesimal soul and the infinite Supreme have never been discussed in Western countries. Therefore, although these countries prosper from the mundane point of view, they are tossed about in the painful burning poison of materialism, and Indians also become corrupted in that burning poison, thinking themselves successful. Now many Western thinkers are looking towards India for peace, and therefore we can maintain a firm belief that the message of peace from India will soon arrive within their ears.

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, considering the distressful future of the living entities, instructed the *Bhagavad-Gītā* and His instructions flowed from His lotus mouth like a pacifying shower onto the poisonous fire of materialism. There is a need to understand the great difference between general *karma* and the *karma-yoga* mentioned in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. At present there are many who identify themselves as *karma-yogīs* in a so-called *karma sampradāya*. Nevertheless, they are seen enjoying the fruits of their own work.

In many places in *Bhagavad-gītā*, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has referred to the process of *buddhi-yoga*. The meaning of *buddhi-yoga* is *bhagavad-bhakti* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said: “*dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te*” (BG 10.10)—“I bestow the transcendental knowledge by which

Purifying the heart through the study of the *Vedas*, *Vedānta* and its supplementary parts was possible in other ages, but that is now no longer feasible. The previous system required maintaining strong celibacy, which is beyond the capacity of common people nowadays. Therefore, people with many impurities cannot gain anything through study of *Veda* and *Vedānta*. To explain *Vedānta* to these unqualified people devoid of *samskāra* is a total waste of time. Śrī Caitanyadeva indeed bestowed His mercy to this kind of *kali-hat jīva*. Consequently, those who are unable to accept the mercy of Śrī Caitanyadeva will remain deceived forever. Is there any doubt about this?

Those fortunate people who, after deliberating upon the compassionate process of Śrī Caitanya, have become able to receive it, are no longer ‘in the dispensation of providence’ punishable by *māyā*. However, for those under the control of the beginningless cycle of *karma* and tormented by *māyā*, Bhagavān has arranged *karma-yoga*.

Learned scholars say that after wandering amongst 8,400,000 species of life, (900,000 types of aquatics, 2,000,000 species of immobile life, trees, mountains and so on, 1,100,000 species of insects and worms, 1,000,000 species of birds, 3,000,000 species of animals and 400,000 species of humans in the gradual development of the state of material consciousness), one is born within the human society in India. How many millions of years pass by, wandering throughout the various aforementioned species? It is uncountable. Therefore, even after obtaining birth in India, if we remain floating in the grip of *māyā*, sinking and surfacing, ‘in the dispensation of providence’ there will be no limit to our misfortune. Therefore Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī has said:

they come to me.” Elsewhere He has said: *bhaktyā mām abhijānāti* (BG 18.55)—“It is only by unalloyed *bhakti* that one can behold Me; that is, know Me in truth.” He has also said: “*bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ*” (SB 11.14.21)—“I am to be obtained by unalloyed devotional service.” Therefore the *buddhi-yoga* by which one can obtain Him is none other than *bhakti*. It is a well-known fact that one can attain Bhagavān through *bhakti*; consequently one of His names is *bhakta-vatsala*, one who is especially affectionate towards His devotees.

Through *buddhi-yoga* one can adopt *karma-kauśala*, the art of work, and by that art alone mankind can be peaceful or find rest ‘in the dispensation of providence.’ We can clearly see the mood of *buddhi-yoga* in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.39, 40):

*eṣā te ’bhīhitā sāṅkhye / buddhir yoge tv imām śṛṇu
buddhyā yukto yayā pārth / karma-bandham prahāsyasi*

“O Pārtha, thus far I have explained this knowledge of *sāṅkhya-yoga*,³ but now I will impart to you the science of *bhakti-yoga*, by which you will become freed from the bondage of this material world.”

*nehābhikrama nāśo ’sti / pratyavāyo na vidyate
svalpam apy asya dharmasya / trāyate mahato bhayāt*

“Endeavors on the path of *bhakti-yoga* are neither fruitless nor subject to loss. Even a little progress frees one from fear and the greatest of dangers in this material world.”

It is a very difficult affair for the people of the modern world to discover peace by the analytical method of *sāṅkhya-yoga*. However, the peace one may obtain through *buddhi-yoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*, belittles the highest worldly gain or peace in the form of *brahmānanda*, the bliss experienced by being situated in the nature of *brahman*. The development of *karma* in relation to *bhakti* never goes in vain, or is destroyed. Therefore, to the degree it is performed, that amount will be permanently secured. Even a little performance of *bhakti* rescues one from the greatest of fears—the bindings of the material world.



(This is the third in the series of “*Bhagavānera Kathā*” articles by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, as translated from Śrī *Gauḍīya Patrikā*—1/11.)

³ *Sāṅkhya-yoga* is defined by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura as follows: “That which properly illuminates the *vastu-tattva* or essential reality of an object.” (BG Bhāv. 2.39)

Excerpts from

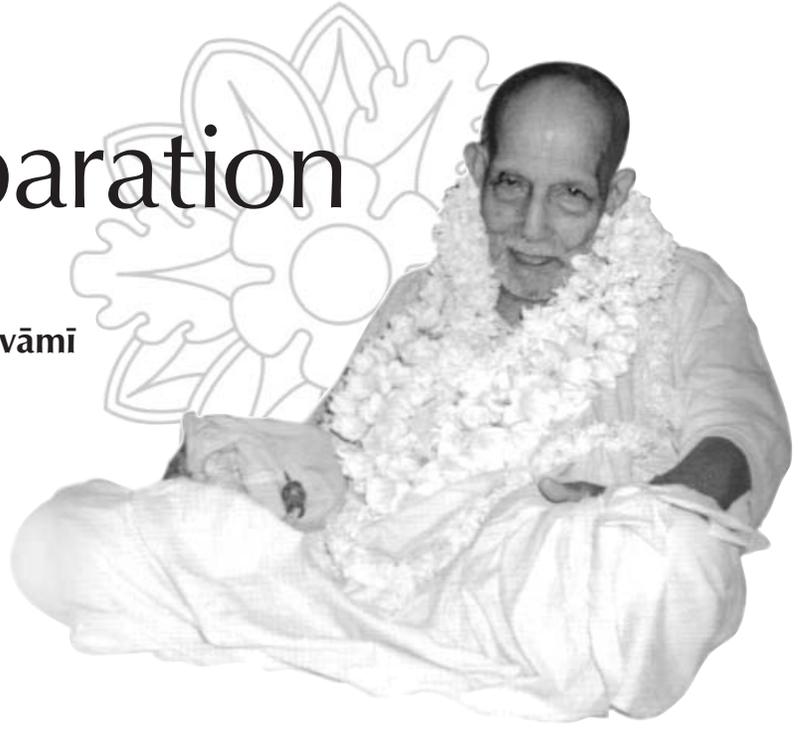
The True

After Gaurahari, Who descended to purify this age of Kali, made Himself invisible to the eyes of the world, the preaching of His religion of love carried on more or less uninterruptedly up until the time of Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa. In the time that followed, though there were still many advanced devotees present on the planet, a period of darkness descended on Mahāprabhu’s school of devotion. Many heterodox sects came into existence that vocally claimed to be following Mahāprabhu, but in fact were simply using His name to promote their own false doctrines. The Lord Himself could not tolerate deviation from the truths of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava doctrine and He would be greatly pained by misrepresentations of the divine relations between the Lord and His devotees. For this reason, Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī appeared again at the desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu through Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, to preserve and protect the doctrines taught by Srila Rupa Goswami. Preaching these doctrines of pure devotion, these two great souls gave great joy to the Lord Himself and to all of His followers in the Gaudiya Vaishnava school.

Between them, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote more than a hundred books on devotional subjects, including translations and commentaries on the *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Caitanya-bhāgavata*. By doing

Spirit of Separation

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī



so, they performed a truth and good qualities in others, lament the absence of these two great *ācāryas*, what to speak of their disciples and grand-disciples. Those who follow the teachings and example of these two great *ācāryas* sense their absence sorely. Nevertheless, those who truly feel their separation are fairly rare, for it is beyond the capacity of those who wish to equate materialistic activities with the spiritual to understand the contribution they made—namely their propagation and bestowal of pure devotional service consisting of the culture of those activities that are pleasing to Kṛṣṇa, without any desire for liberation or sense gratification.

I never had the good fortune to personally see Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, though I did have the opportunity to hear of his superhuman glories directly from Śrīla Prabhupāda, both through his spoken word and his writings. On the other hand, it is far beyond my finite capacities to adequately describe all the wonderful things that I heard and witnessed of Śrīla Prabhupāda's glories during my personal association with him.

Those who have deep love for their spiritual master in the most personal way. Now, however, in his absence, they are overwhelmed by most painful feelings of separation. The pain bursts out from their heart and tears flow from their eyes and onto their chest like the torrents of rain in the month of *Śravaṇa*. Their minds are disturbed by the desire, never to be again fulfilled, of hearing their Guru speak the nectarean topics of Kṛṣṇa. They repeatedly sing the verses written by Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura in which

he reveals the depth of his loss at being separated from the company of the great Vaiṣṇavas.

*je ānila prema-dhana karuṇā pracura
hena prabhu kothā gela vaiṣṇava ṭhākura*

“My lord, the worshipable Vaiṣṇava brought us the wealth of love for Kṛṣṇa out of his unlimited compassion. Alas, where has he gone?” violence to others.

How can any attachment or hatred for material objects find a place in the heart where attachment to the guru, the eternal associate of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, has awakened? In such a heart, there is constant awareness of the absolute necessity of attaining the supreme goal of life, loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This alone is the ultimate purpose of life for every single living entity. Śrīla Prabhupāda himself said: “The ultimate object of our desires is to become specks of dust at the lotus feet of the followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Remain united in following the *āśraya-vigraha* in order to satisfy the transcendental senses of the one, non-dual Supreme Truth... May we never under any circumstances become indifferent to the seven-tongued sacrificial flame of the Holy Name. If our attraction to it remains ever-increasing, we will achieve all perfection.”

We pray that our commitment to these last instructions of his manifest presence in this world may be unflinching. May we never interpret these words to elicit secondary meanings that allow us to engage in sense gratification,

but rather, single-mindedly dedicating all our energies and working together, aim for the pleasure of “the senses of the one, non-dual Supreme Truth,” making it the one and only goal of our lives. If we wish to show our love and faith for our spiritual master, it will be by following these teachings. However, rather than giving full attention to the desires of the spiritual master, we may focus on serving his body or the extensions of his body represented by temples and *āśramas*. If we do so, we will never be free of the pitfall of seeing the guru in purely human terms (*mar-tyāsad-dhīḥ*). The Lord can only be seen through the path of transcendental sound (*śrutekṣita-pathaḥ*) and the spiritual master, being his manifest representative, is also perceptible through divine sound vibration.

The words *śrutekṣita-pantaḥ* (SB 3.9.11) are broken down as follows: *śruta* means “through hearing” or “revelation”; *ikṣita* means “seen” or “perceived”; *pathaḥ* means “the way” or “the path.” This compound word thus means, “He to whom the way is perceived through hearing revealed knowledge.” For this reason we offer our respects to the guru with the words:

*tat-padam darśitam yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

“I pay my humble obeisance to the spiritual master who has shown me that Supreme Truth.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura interprets the words *śrutekṣita-pathaḥ* in a slightly different manner in his *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary:

*ādau guru-mukhāt śrutaḥ paścād ikṣitaḥ sākṣāt-kṛtaś ca
panthā yasya saḥ / yena pathā tvam ḥṛt-sarojam āyāto ‘si
tam / panthānaḥ sādhana-bhakti-prakārāḥ ta eva suṣṭhu
paricinvantīti dhvaniḥ / ato yasya tat-prāpticchā vartate sa
tata eva panthānam paricinvotv ity anudhvaniḥ /*

“O Lord, the way to reach You must first be heard from the guru; then it can be seen and directly realized. You then enter the lotus of our hearts by taking this path.’ The suggestion is that these devotees perfectly recognize the ways and means of the devotional path. The further suggestion is that if we wish to attain the Supreme Lord, then we too must try to gain knowledge of that path.”

Remember the words of the great authority Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura:

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya cittete kariyā aikya
āra nā kariha mane āśā
śrī guru caraṇe rati, ei se uttama gati
je prasāde pūre sarva āśā*

“Fix your mind on the words emanating from the lotus mouth of the spiritual master. Place your hopes in nothing else. Affection for the guru’s lotus feet is the ultimate goal, for by his mercy all of one’s aspirations are realized.” (Prema-bhakti-candrikā)

From faith in the words of the spiritual master, affection for his service increases. Someone who becomes a powerful preacher or learned writer but makes no effort to put the spiritual master’s words into practice shows no actual love for him. The spiritual master can see through those who only make a show of affection for him and will surely crown with success the sincere attempts of the disciple who genuinely follows his directions. The guru is the personification of Lord Gaurāṅga’s magnanimity, therefore he will mercifully transfer power or strength to his sincere disciple. With his blessings, the blessings of the Lord are not long to follow, for the mercy of the Lord comes through that of His intimate associates. *Yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādaḥ*.

If we make no effort to seek out the blessings of the spiritual master, we may worship the Lord for millions of lifetimes without His ever becoming satisfied with us. Kṛṣṇa Himself distributes His mercy to the living beings by taking the form of the spiritual master. For this reason, the Vedic scriptures have clearly stated that there is no means of attaining Kṛṣṇa’s blessings other than by following the spiritual master. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.23) have stated:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, who is His manifestation and not different from Him, are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.”

My most worshipable Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda, did not see the faults in anyone; he was most compassionate. We who aspire to become the servants of his servants and to partake of the remnants of his plate, pray to him with all the sincerity at our command that by his causeless mercy he will give us the worthiness to serve him. We pray to him to please make our hearts simple and free from deception; may he forgive us of our offenses, and consider us the servants of his servants, birth after birth. May he free us from the attractions and aversions of this world and keep us fixed in service to his lotus feet.

Raghunātha dāsa lamented the disappearance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī with such intensity that stones could have melted. In Rūpa’s absence, he felt the entire land of Vraja to be completely empty: Govardhana was like a great python, Rādhā-kunḍa the wide open mouth of a tiger, and he felt his own self to be void of life. Can we, ordinary mortals, imitate the eternal associates of the Lord in their feelings of separation?

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura also cried and prayed fervently to his *dikṣa-guru* Śrīla Lokanātha dāsa Gosvāmī to attain the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who had actualised Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s heartfelt desires on this earth. Narottama dāsa sang that Śrī Rūpa was the worshipable object of his devotion, the treasure of his life, his jewelled ornament, the very source of his life, the perfection of his desire, the ocean of ecstatic feeling, his Vedic religion, his vow, his penance, his prayer and his duty. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was everything to Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, and therefore he almost went mad out of his feelings of separation, crying day and night in the hope of receiving his mercy. If we could even feel a millionth part of what he did, our lives would be perfect; we would attain the greatest fortune. I do not know how many more lifetimes I will have to wait for this good fortune to be mine.

Devotion to the spiritual master is the only way to reach our Divine Lord. The spiritual master is the personal companion of Lord Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Gaurāṅga; he is most dear to Him. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja writes:

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

“At the time of initiation, when a devotee surrenders to the spiritual master, Kṛṣṇa makes him equal to Himself. He transforms the devotee’s body into spiritual substance; the devotee then worships the Lord in that spiritualized body.” (CC Antya 4.192-193)

Kṛṣṇa accepts us as a part of His own entourage to the extent that we surrender ourselves in body, mind and words to the spiritual master. He takes possession of us,

transforms our bodies and makes them spiritual so that we will be able to serve Him directly.

When asked how love for God develops, Prahlāda Mahārāja told the other boys in his school: *guru-śuśrūṣayā bhaktyā sarva-labdhārpaṇena ca*, “through serving the guru, being devoted to him and by offering him all of one’s gains.” (SB 7.730) Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments on this verse as follows:

*guroḥ śuśrūṣayā sṅgana-samvāhanādikayā tathā
sarveṣāṃ labdhānām vastūnām arpaṇena ca tac cārpaṇam
bhaktyaiva, na tu pratiṣṭhādīnā hetunā*

“Service to the guru means serving him through such things as bathing and massaging him; offering the guru all of one’s gains should be done with devotion and not out of personal motivations, such as the desire for personal prestige, etc.”

In the Bhāgavatam, after telling Yudhiṣṭhira how to conquer over various character defects, Nārada summarizes by saying:

*etat sarvaṃ gurau bhaktyā
puruṣo hy añjasā jayet*

“We can conquer over all these defects by rendering devotional service to the spiritual master.” (SB 7.15.25)

In other words, the only way to conquer over lust, anger, greed, fear, lamentation, bewilderment, pride, envy, the three miseries and the three modes of material nature is by surrendering to the spiritual master. But if a disciple thinks the spiritual master to be nothing more than an ordinary mortal, then all his spiritual practices and worship of the Lord are simple a wasted effort.

Therefore, in the following two verses from the *Viṣṇu-smṛti* quoted in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, we are advised:

*na guror apriyaṃ kuryāt
tādītaḥ pīḍito ’pi vā
nāvamanyeta tad-vākyam
nāpriyaṃ hi samācaret*

“Never do anything unpleasant to your spiritual master, even if you are humiliated and beaten. Never disregard his words, and never act in a way that is displeasing to him.” (HBV 1.99, from *Viṣṇu-smṛti*)

*ācāryasya priyaṃ kuryāt
prāṇair api dhanair api*

*karmaṇā manasā vācā
sa yāti paramām gatim*

“Do things that are pleasing to your spiritual master with your life and your wealth, with your work, your thoughts and your speech, and you will go to the supreme destination.” (HBV 1.100, from Viṣṇu-smṛti)

It is never appropriate to criticize the words or deeds of the spiritual master by saying things like, “My spiritual master should not have said that, or it was improper for him to have done some particular thing.” By doing so, we reveal our mundane concept of the guru and ultimately we become offensive by showing disrespect to him. This is the offense known as *gurv-avajñā*.

The orders of the spiritual master are to be obeyed dilligently without reserve or delay—*ājñā gurūṇām hy avicāraṇīyā*. If one is incapable of following his orders, then one should fall down at his feet and pray to him with urgency for the strength and ability to do so. If the spiritual master rebukes or condemns the disciple, the disciple should still not attempt to make his case heard, even though it may be painful to listen in silence. If the disciple argues with the spiritual master, it is counted as the offense of disrespecting the guru. The disciple thus becomes unteachable and, due to his independence, falls down into indiscipline and wantonness, inevitably resulting in suffering.

Six kinds of unsatisfactory disciple are described in the scriptures:

*alir bāṇo jyotiśakaḥ
stabdhībhūtaḥ kimekakaḥ
preṣita-preṣakaś caiva
ṣaḍ ete sevakādhamāḥ*

“These six are: the ‘bee’ (*ali*), because of his fickleness; the *bāṇa*, who talks back, piercing his master like an arrow; the procrastinator (*jyotiśaka*); the servant who is lazy and inactive (*stabdhībhūta*) the one who refuses to try to do anything on his own (*kimekaka*), and the one who passes the buck (*preṣita-preṣaka*).”

All such unsatisfactory disciples (*sevakādhamas*) demonstrate an ignorance of the spiritual master’s divine nature by their lackadaisical attitude to service. They thus end up as offenders to the spiritual master and the Holy Name. Any disciple who wishes to attain perfection in the

spiritual practices given him by his spiritual master must pay careful attention not to offend him in this way.

The fact is that no one can be free of his debt to the spiritual master, even if he gives him everything he owns. A rich householder may make a show of giving opulent gifts, but this is not the real *dakṣiṇā*, for Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava in the Bhāgavatam (SB 11.19.39): *dakṣiṇā jñāna-sandeśaḥ*—the real gift to the spiritual master is to teach others what one has received from him.

In his commentary to these words, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes the following: “Here the word *jñāna* means that after experiencing the spiritual joy of *kīrtana*, etc., one instructs one’s own friends and relatives about his realizations. This is the real gift to the spiritual master and not donations of wealth, clothing or whatever (*utsavānte yat kīrtanādi-rasānubhavasya sandeśaḥ sveṣṭa-mitreṣu jñāpanaiva dakṣiṇā na tu dhana-vastrādy-arpaṇam*).”

Therefore, instructing one’s acquaintances and others in the knowledge of *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prayojana*, taught by the spiritual master, according to their capacities is the genuine *guru-dakṣiṇā*. This means that one must first strictly follow the appropriate spiritual practices, seriously engaging in *bhajana*. Unless one has exemplary behavior, he cannot hope to acquire the qualifications to preach the spiritual master’s message effectively. This means

that he will not be able to give the spiritual master the requisite gifts that follow initiation and instruction. The spiritual master is the manifest representation of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu’s message. Mahāprabhu said:

*jāre dekha, tāre kaha ‘kṛṣṇa’-upadeśa
āmāra ājñāya guru hañā tāra’ ei deśa*

“Teach everyone you see this message of devotion to Kṛṣṇa. On My command, become a guru and deliver this land.” (CC Madhya 7.128)

*bhārata-bhūmite haila manuṣya-janma jāra
janma sārthaka kari’ kara para-upakāra*

“Whoever has taken a human birth in the land of India should make his life successful and engage in welfare work for others.” (CC Ādi 9.41)

If we take these instructions seriously and do everything we can to realize them, then we will one day become capable of giving the spiritual master the gift that he desires above all others. The spiritual master will be pleased and transmit unlimited power to the disciple with whom he is pleased.

To the extent that we serve the spiritual master with sincerity and repeat his teachings, through the association with his words, our hearts will cry out with the desire for the good fortune to be associated with him by directly seeing, touching and serving him. Only then will we be able to understand the true spirit of separation. We will then know that he is Rādhārāṇī's personal associate who, in the form of Nayanamaṇī Mañjarī has entered Rādhā and Govinda's eternal pastimes and is there immersed in the ocean of service to the Divine Couple. When we feel this mood of separation, the desire to dedicate our lives for attaining this service will awaken. "The spiritual master, who has given me the eyes to see the true purpose of life, is my master birth after birth." *Cakṣu-dāna dila je, janme janme prabhu se.* He is our lord and master lifetime after lifetime. We pray that he will be merciful and transform us, lowly creatures, by giving us the strength to put his message into practice and to preach that message, and then, when the time of death comes, he will take us back to his lotus feet, making us his own for eternity.

Being distanced from the spiritual master is a source of great pain. We pray that Śrīla Prabhupāda will give us a place at his lotus feet even though we are the most unworthy servants of his servants, so that we may be able to render service to the Divine Couple according to his direction and by following his example. Our only authority to make such an audacious prayer is that we have taken the remnants of his servants' food. We know that we have no right to make such a request of you, but to whom can we turn other than you, our spiritual master? By your grace, everything that would ordinarily be impossible becomes possible in a moment. Though today all our efforts are nothing but a joke, like those of a dwarf who tries to touch the moon, are your blessings not capable of effecting any miracle? Will they not give us a love for chanting the Holy Names without

offense? Has Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura not sung of the power of the Holy Name to give us the realization of our eternal spiritual identity?

*iṣat vikaṣi punaḥ dekhāya nija-rūpa-guṇa
citta hari laya kṛṣṇa pāśa
pūrṇa vikaṣita hañā vraje more jāya lañā
dekhāya nija svarūpa vilāsa*

"When the Name is even slightly revealed, it shows me my own spiritual form and characteristics. It steals my mind and takes it to Kṛṣṇa's side. When the Name is fully revealed, it takes me directly to Vraja, where it shows me my personal role in the eternal pastimes." (Kṛṣṇa-nāma dhare kata bala? Śaraṇāgati)

**Service to the guru
in affection and love
is possible both in this
world and the next.
The spiritual master
is always participating
in the eternally pure realm
and is never under the
thrall of birth and death in
this world....By serving
his teachings when
he is no longer visible
to our mundane eyes,
we can get a vision of
his transcendental form.**

Thus, by the blessing of the spiritual master, we will be able to receive the mercy of the Holy Name and then, all perfections will come through the Holy Name as Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself promised: *iḥā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra.*

Service to the guru in affection and love is possible both in this world and the next. The spiritual master is always participating in the eternally pure realm and is never under the thrall of birth and death in this world. One should never think of him as an ordinary mortal. By serving his teachings when he is no longer visible to our mundane eyes, we can get a vision of his transcendental form. Just like the

Supreme Lord, the guru knows what is to be known, including all of us, but he is not known to anyone (sa vetti vedyam na ca tasyāsti vettā). We cannot know him through our own power; it is only when he mercifully decides to reveal himself to us that we will achieve the great fortune of being able to see him. Therefore, the famous saying, *guru-kṛpā hi kevalam* ("the spiritual master's blessings are our only salvation") is appropriate.

O Gurudeva, may my mind always repose in the shade of your lotus feet—*mama matir āstām tava pada-kamale.*



[Courtesy: Meditations on My Divine Master]



Glorification of Hari, on Vyāsa-pūjā Day

A presentation by

Śrī Śrīmad

Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja,

on his Vyāsa-pūjā day

7th January 2002

at Śrī Keśava Gosvāmī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Siligūḍi

Today is a special day. On the occasion of someone's appearance day, an arrangement is made for the special worship of Śrī Guru, Vaiṣṇavas and Bhagavān. *Turyāśramigaṇa* (those in the *sannyāsa* order), coming in the line of Śrī Vyāsa, perform the worship of previous *gurus* on their respective appearance days. The invocation and performance of Vyāsa-pūjā on the *guru's* appearance day, indeed, includes the worship of Bhagavān Śrī Vyāsadeva and that of the whole Vaiyāsaki-sampradāya (that *sampradāya* in which *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is spoken by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva). Without following Vyāsa, there is no real fruit of *guru-pūjā*. As His *prakāśa-vigraha*, Śrī Vyāsadeva is non-different from Bhagavān Himself. In order to reveal Himself, Bhagavān has manifested Himself in the form of transcendental sound as *Veda-śāstra*. Furthermore, since the *Vedas* are incomprehensible by ordinary intelligence, there was a need to expand and explain them. Bhagavān Himself, as Vyāsa, performed the act of expanding the *Vedas*. He Himself is *tattva-vastu*, the Absolute Reality, and unless He makes Himself known to others, no one can know Him in truth.

Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo vedānta-kṛd veda-vid eva cāham. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said (BG 15.15): "I am indeed that 'vastu' (reality) that is established by the *Vedas*, I alone know the import of the *Vedas*, and I alone have manifested *Vedānta*. Therefore, without the *anugātya* (guidance) of Vyāsa, there is no other bona-fide or proper means to know Bhagavān."

Śrī Gurudeva, as the representative of Śrī Vyāsadeva, reveals *bhagavat-tattva*. Through *guru-*

pūjā, Vyāsa-pūjā is indeed accomplished, and this is the *vaiṣiṣṭya*, (speciality) of the Vyāsānuga-sampradāya. *Śrī guru-tattva* and *śrī vyāsa-tattva* are the same. For this reason, Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā means to offer *pādya* to the lotus feet of Śrī Guru. The disciple who knows the *mano-bhiṣṭam* of Śrī Gurudeva, understands that the innermost desire of his *guru* is that he engages in perfect *bhajana*. That distinguished *bhagavat-seva* is not just an external offering, but it is the offering of *pādya* in a real way.

Śāstras say:

*tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
smit-pāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham*

"To understand these things properly, one must humbly approach, with firewood in hand, a spiritual master who is learned in the *Vedas* and firmly devoted to the Absolute Truth." (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12)

The word *tad-vijñānārtham* does not only mean *tattva-jñāna*, (knowledge of the Absolute Truth) but rather *tattva-jñāna* endowed with *vijñāna*, realization. In other words, one has to attain the *tattva-jñāna* of *prema-bhakti*.

In many instances, the understanding of *tattva-jñāna* leads to the conception of impersonal *brahma*, by which a *jīva* cannot attain deliverance from the spell of *avidya*, ignorance. The Transcendental Entity who is actually referred to by *śāstra* by the word *nirviśesa* cannot be comprehended or conceived by those endowed with mundane understanding. If *brahma* is devoid of variety, then from where have all the specialities and varieties of this



Guru, Vaiṣṇavas by Dīna-akiñcana



“Śrī Guru-tattva and Śrī Vyāsa-tattva are the same tattva. For this reason, another meaning of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā is offering pādya at the lotus feet of Śrī Guru.”

world come? The impersonalists have imagined a conception about *brahma*, the Transcendental Reality, however, *brahma* is not such an imaginary conception. Since in the very beginning of their *tattva-jijñāsa*, (inquiry about the Absolute), there is confusion in their attempt, therefore they can never attain auspiciousness for the soul.

Śrī Vyāsadeva has said in the very beginning of his *Vedānta-sūtra: athāto brahma jijñāsa*—“I do not know the identity of *brahma* and I do not know what is my relationship with Him. I want to know these truths. If this knowledge would have been within me, I would not have made such inquiry. I therefore need a teacher who can bestow such knowledge.” Therefore, the necessity of a genuine *brahmajñā-guru* is instructed within this *sūtra. Gurum eva abhigacchet*. The words *gurum eva* declare that it is imperative to approach a *guru*, and without *guru* there is no other source by which one can know that *brahma vastu. Abhigacchet*, therefore, one has to do *abhigamana* to that *guru*. *Abhigamana* means approaching *guru* with service temperament and honest enquiry.

*tad viddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

“Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.” (BG 4.34)

The explanation of *abhigamana* is found in this verse from *Gīta. Abhigamana* means approaching *guru* with *praṇipata*, *paripraśna* and *sevā*. *Praṇipata*, self-surrender, is the first requirement. The second requirement is *paripraśnena*, honest enquiry with sincerity devoid of a challenging mood in order to know and understand the Truth. The third requirement is *sevā*, a serving temperament. If these are not present, there will not be proper reciprocation with him.

*dadāti pratighṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidham pṛiti-lakṣaṇam*

“Offering pure devotees items in accordance with their requirements, accepting *prasādi*, the remnant items given by pure devotees, revealing to pure devotees one’s confidential realizations concerning *bhajana*, inquiring from them about their confidential realizations, honoring the *prasāda* remnants given by devotees with great love, and lovingly feeding them *prasāda*—these are the six symptoms

of loving association with devotees.” (Upadeśāmṛta verse 4)

Without complete *pṛīti*, love for that *guru*, one will not be able to understand the moods of his heart. Thus, without *abhiḡamana* a person cannot obtain *tattva-jñāna*, and he will only waste time. However, one must consider the nature and speciality of the person he is thinking to approach. *Śāstra* says: *śrottriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*. The *guru* must be *brahma-niṣṭha*, steadfast in the realization of Transcendental Reality, and coming down in *śrauto-panthā*, the line of aural reception.

The nature of *brahma*, the Transcendental Reality or Transcendental Entity, can only be known through *śrauta-panthā*, the line of aural reception. That Absolute Truth is not the subject of any kind of mental speculation, mundane argument or mundane logic. *Acintyā khalu ye bhāvā na tanīṣ tarkaṇa yo jayet, prakṛtibhyaḥ param yaca tadacintasya lakṣaṇam*. He is beyond *prakṛti*, material nature, and He cannot be measured or grasped by mundane reasonings. Such material endeavor does not give any evidence of good intelligence, and therefore, besides *śrauta-panthā*, there is no other means to know Him or understand Him.

What is the meaning of *śrauta-panthā*? It is not like the *paramparā* of ignorant people, where someone says anything and his statements are ‘repeated’ by one person after another. In *śrauta-panthā*, the original speaker is Bhagavān Himself and the listener is one of His own special devotees, the recipients of His mercy. As mentioned earlier, unless *brahma* reveals Himself, no one can know Him perfectly—and this is confirmed by the great-grandfather Brahmā, the Creator of the universe:

athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-prasāda-leśānugṛhīta eva hi jñāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno na cānya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan

“O Prabhu, O Bhagavān, without receiving a particle of Your mercy, no one can know You, even if he searches You for an unlimited period of time.” (SB 10.14.29)

īśvarera kṛpā-leśa haya ta' yāhāre sei ta' īśvara-tattva jānibāre pāre

“If one receives but a tiny bit of the Lord’s favor by dint of devotional service, he can understand the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (CC Madhya 6.84)

Thus, only those who have received a particle of the mercy of *īśvara* can know His *tattva*. It is said in the *Upaniṣad*:

Those who want to know and understand what is the topmost auspiciousness, what is complete and eternal auspiciousness, and how it can be attained, should surrender to a *guru* who is expert in the realization of *śabda-brahma*, *Vedas*, and *parabrahma*, Bhagavān



nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahudhā śrutena yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām

“The Supreme Lord is not obtained by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, or even by repeated hearing. He is obtained only by one whom He Himself chooses, and He manifests His own form.” (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.2.3)

If a person thinks that by his ample scholarship or sharp intelligence he can understand Bhagavān and imagine Him according to his whims, he is mistaken. *Tena labhyaḥ*—that person only who is accepted by Bhagavān can attain Him.

Bhagavān personally communicated with Brahmā. Why? Brahmā engaged in intense efforts to know Bhagavān, but when he gave up the ascending path and surrendered, then Bhagavān revealed the *Vedas* to him:

kālena naṣṭā pralaye / vāñīyaṁ veda-samjñitā mayādau brahmaṇe proktā / dharmo yasyām mad-ātmakaḥ

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: “By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the *Vedas*. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahmā.” (SB 11.14.3)

Kṛṣṇa is saying: “In the beginning of the creation I revealed *Veda*, *śabda-brahma*, unto the surrendered Brahmā.” What is there in the *Vedas*? *Dharmo yasyām mad-ātmakaḥ*: The *Vedas* contain the message and

process of *bhagavat-dharma*, by which one can attain *prema-bhakti* unto Me:

yāvān ahaṁ yathā-bhāvo
yad-rūpa-guṇa-karmakaḥ
tathaiiva tattva-vijñānam
astu te mad-anugrahāt

“By My causeless mercy, let everything about Me, namely My actual eternal form and My transcendental existence, color, qualities and activities, be awakened within you by factual realization.” (SB 2.9.32)

“O Brahmā! I bless you with *tattva-vijñāna* (realization) of My *tattva* (the established truths of Bhagavān) regarding Myself, My *bhāva* (nature), form, qualities and activities. Thus, *śrauta-panthā* has started from that *tattva-vastu* (Absolute Reality) Himself and the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* have manifested from Him alone.

sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ
śrī-brahmā-rudra-sankā vaiṣṇavaḥ kṣitipāvanāḥ

The four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*, Śrī-sampradāya, Brahmā-sampradāya, Rudra-sampradāya and Kumāra-sampradāya—these are four *śrauta-panthās*, and everything else is *aśrauta-vicāra*. Everything that is not heard in the line of aural reception is self-imagination. Those who only accept one aspect of *brahma*—the *nirviśeṣa* (varietyless and impersonal) aspect—are followers of *aśrauta-panthā*. In the *śrutis* where the impersonal aspect of Bhagavān is mentioned, however, in the very same *śrutis*, the truth of His personal aspect is also explained:

yā yā śrutir jalpati nirviśeṣam
sā sābhidhatte sa-viśeṣam eva
vicāra-yoge sati hanta tāsām
prāyo balīyaḥ sa-viśeṣam eva

“Whatever Vedic *mantras* describe the Absolute Truth impersonally only prove in the end that the Absolute Truth is a person. The Supreme Lord is understood in two features—impersonal and personal. If one considers the Supreme Personality of Godhead in both features, he can actually understand the Absolute Truth. He knows that the personal understanding is stronger, because we see that everything is full of variety. No one can see anything that is not full of variety.” (CC *Madhya*. 6.142)

Thus, although there are two simultaneous considerations, the personal aspect is indeed more important. The personal aspect is the *svarūpa-lakṣana*, intrinsic characteristic of *brahma*, and the impersonal aspect is just a *tatasta-vicāra*, extrinsic characteristic. The impersonal aspect is *vyatirek-vicāra*, the indirect (negative) aspect. *Nirviśeṣa*

means devoid of mundane or material characteristics, and *śaviśeṣa* means endowed with *aprākṛta-viśeṣatā* (transcendental characteristics), *aprākṛta-rūpa* (transcendental form), *guṇa* (qualities), and *aprākṛta-vilāsa* (transcendental pastimes). Indeed, both considerations have the same meaning. Where is any disagreement or contradiction between the two thoughts?

Those who see a contradiction in these two considerations, accepting the impersonal aspect alone to be *paramārthika* (spiritual), and thinking the personal aspect as false or temporary, imposes whimsical meanings to the statements of the *Vedas*. They are not *brahma-niṣṭham*, steadfast in the nature of *brahma*. They are offenders. By accepting one aspect of *brahma* and rejecting the other, considering it as unfavorable, does not prove someone’s *brahma-niṣṭhā*. However, Śrī Gurudeva is *brahma-niṣṭham*; he can reconcile both considerations in an excellent manner.

tasmād guruṁ praṇadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātām
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam

“Any person who is seriously desirous to achieve real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of a spiritual master is that he must have realized the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation and arguments, and thus he must be able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken complete shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, are to be understood as bona fide spiritual masters.” (SB 11.3.21)

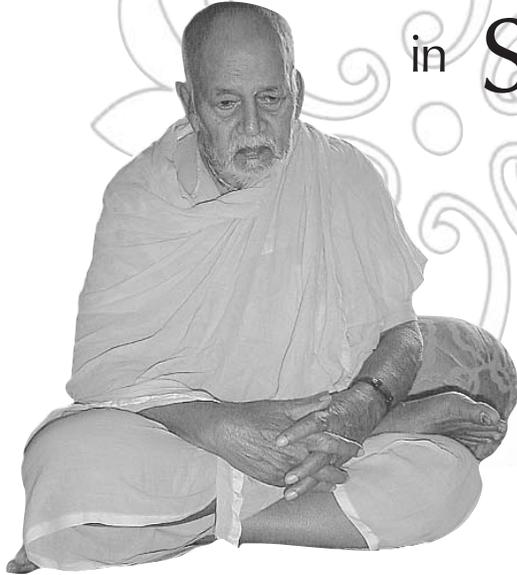
Those who want to know and understand the topmost, complete and eternal auspiciousness, and how to attain it, should surrender to a *guru* who is expert in the realization of *śabda-brahma* (the *Vedas*) and *para-brahma* (Bhagavān). *Śabda-brahma* means *nāma-brahma*—*vācaka-brahma*, the transcendental sound vibrations of the names, etc., of Bhagavān, and *para-brahma* means *nāmi-brahma*—*vācya-brahma*, Bhagavān Himself. *Śabda-brahma param brahma mamobhe śāśvatī tanū, vācyam vācakamity udeti bhavato nāma! svarūpa-svayaṁ*, the bona fide *guru* is a realized soul. He is well-versed, in both of these *svarūpas* of Bhagavān. He is not a professional priest nor is he a platform speaker. He is *tattva-darśī*—he sees *tattva-vastu* and realizes it. *Tattva-vastu* means Bhagavān and His *nāma, rūpa, guṇa, parikara, līlā* and *dhāma*. *Tattva-vastu* includes all of these, and Śrī Gurudeva is a *tattva-darśī*.

[To be continued in the next issue]



[Translated from Śrī Gaudīya Patrikā 54/1]

Self-Realization and Parā-Bhakti in Sādhu-Saṅga



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja

There are two types of perceptions, real and unreal, and their results are opposite. The result of real perception is real, or true, and that of unreal perception is unreal, or false. To accept an entity in a manner that is opposite to its nature is indeed an unreal perception, and this consideration is applicable in every field of life. For example, by accepting a foolish person as a learned scholar, one will deceive oneself. Therefore, when considering, “who am I?” a person can have true perception only when he develops a real understanding of who he is. Claiming that which is mine as mine is genuine truth, but claiming that which is not mine as mine is not. A person may cultivate someone else’s field as his own, but only the owner of the field has the right to the cultivated product. That person’s labor and expense will all go in vain.

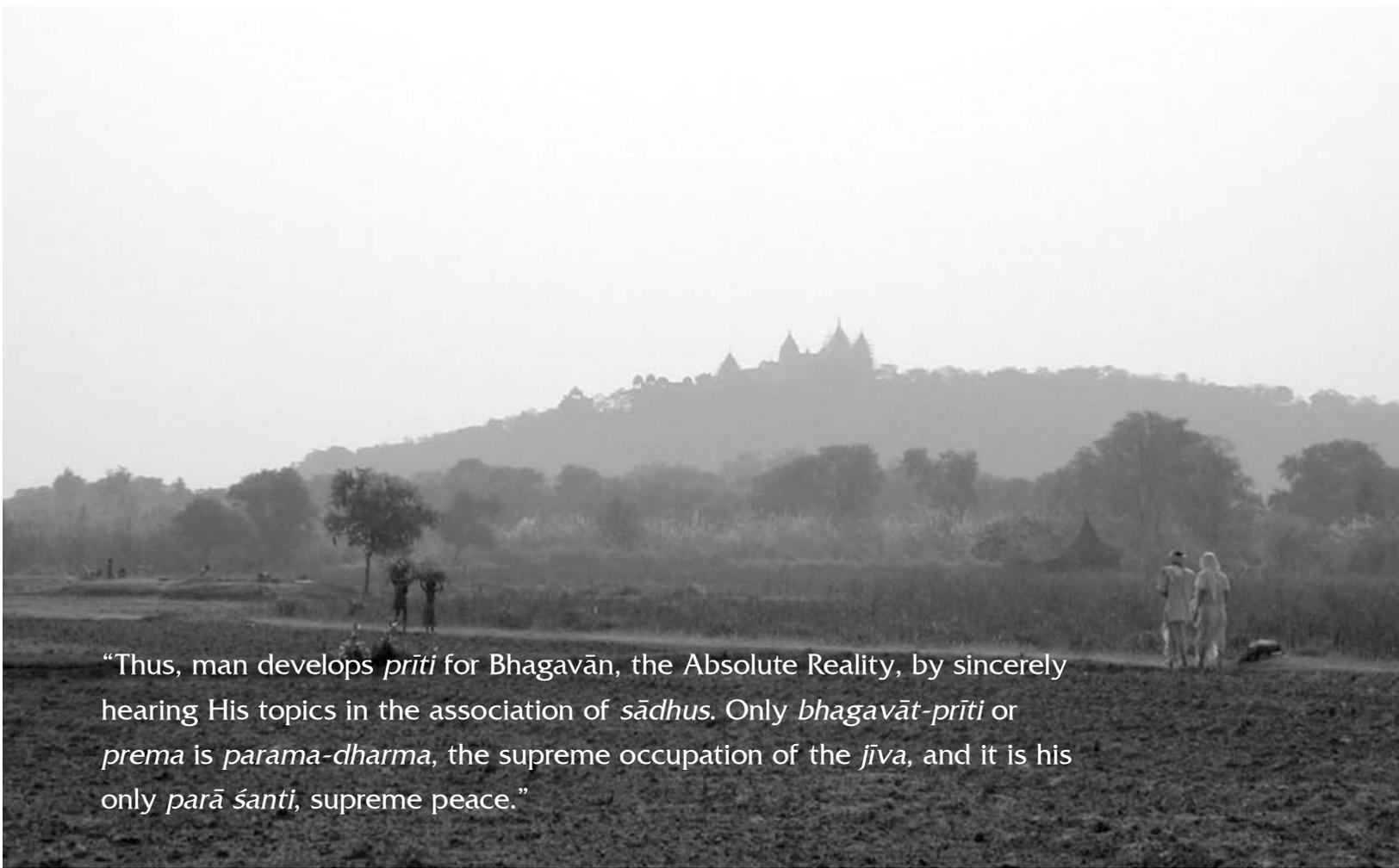
Besides human beings, no living entities have the capacity to deliberate on what is real and what is false. It is said that human beings are the topmost of all living entities, but, living entities who strongly identify with non-reality, even if they are humans, are degraded. Living beings other than humans cannot understand the difference between body and soul, and humans who do

not understand this difference are considered animals. Those who remain engrossed only in the bodily activities of eating, sleeping, mating and defending are counted in the category of animals, even if they have human bodies.

*āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunañ ca
sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām
dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣo
dharmeṇa hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samānāḥ*

“Human beings are equal to animals in the matters of eating, sleeping, fearing and mating. The quality of religion is unique to human beings, and therefore, without religion, they are no better than animals.” (Hitopadeśa 25)

Only the *dharma* (function) of the *ātma* is real, and that of the body is unreal. This indeed is the doctrine of *sanātana-dharma*. It is not an exaggeration to say that those nations in which bodily activities are prominent are dependent on non-reality. Their progress in the areas of eating, sleeping and so on should not be considered genuine. Such progress is false, and the people of those countries attain neither *para śanti*, transcendental peace, nor supreme happiness. They attain the opposite.



“Thus, man develops *prīti* for Bhagavān, the Absolute Reality, by sincerely hearing His topics in the association of *sādhus*. Only *bhagavāt-prīti* or *prema* is *parama-dharma*, the supreme occupation of the *jīva*, and it is his only *parā śanti*, supreme peace.”

As it is said in *śāstra*:

śrī-prabuddha uvāca
karmāṇy ārabhamāṇānām
duḥkha-hatyai sukhāya ca
paśyēt pāka-viparyāsam
mithunī-cāriṇām nṛṇām

“Śrī Prabuddha said, ‘Having accepted the roles of male and female in human society, conditioned souls unite in sexual relationships. Thus, they constantly make material endeavors to eliminate their unhappiness and unlimitedly increase their pleasure. But one should see that they inevitably achieve exactly the opposite result. In other words, their happiness inevitably vanishes, and as they grow older their material discomfort increases.’” (SB 11. 3.18)

Collective efforts by nations for happiness and peace and individual efforts for sex pleasure give instead unhappiness and misery, not happiness and peace. This is because they are related to the body, which is unreal. They are not related to reality—the soul. Skyscrapers, valuable assets, a beloved wife, a son, and so on are all

perishable, and one will certainly become disturbed by having affection and attachment towards them. The more something is endowed with worldly beauty and qualities, the more fearful one will be to lose it. This is a fact. The distress one feels upon losing something that is not very valuable is little. However, one becomes greatly distressed upon losing something ‘valuable’. The cause of distress is an attitude of possessiveness or myness, (*mamatva buddhi*) towards such perishable objects. A person does not get very disturbed at the death of someone else’s son because he does not have that feeling, i.e., *mamatva buddhi* towards him. However, that same person will surely become greatly distressed upon the death of his own son. Therefore, to have *mamatva buddhi* for perishable objects is the cause of distress. When a person becomes free from such *mamatva*, his sufferings are dispelled, and this is also stated in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* (11. 3.19):

nityārtidena vittena
durlabhenātma-mṛtyunā
gṛhāpatyāpta-ṇaśubhiḥ
kā prītiḥ sādhitaiś calaiḥ

“Wealth is a perpetual source of distress. It is most difficult to acquire, and it is virtual death for the soul. What satisfaction does one actually gain from his wealth? Similarly, how can a person gain ultimate or permanent happiness from one’s so-called home, children, relatives and domestic animals, which are all maintained by his hard-earned money?”

To attain eternal peace, therefore, one must develop attachment for the Real Entity, *ātma-vastu*, and give up attachment for unreal or illusory entities.

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

“The supreme occupation [*dharmā*] for all humanity is that by which men can attain loving devotional service unto the transcendent Lord. Such devotional service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self.” (SB 1. 2.6)

*nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām
eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān*

“He is the one supreme eternal being among all eternal beings, and the one supreme conscious being among all conscious beings. He alone is fulfilling the desires of everyone.” (Katho Upaniṣad 2.13) and (Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.10)

When the *jīva* gives up endeavors to satisfy his body, and instead endeavors to satisfy his *ātmā*, he identifies with the *ātmā*. By being absorbed in the eternal entity he can attain real happiness. When the *jīva* gives up attachment to his body and stops making efforts to please his senses, he develops *mamatva buddhi* for *paramātmā-vastu*, the Supreme Reality. Then, because he has accepted the shelter of Truth, he is able to attain *parā śānti*, transcendental peace.

It is not possible to become attached to *ātmā-vastu*, however, by remaining in bad association (*dusaṅga*), or by

being absorbed in the body and bodily pleasures. Only those who are fortunate enough to attain *sat-saṅga*, saintly association, become eligible to develop attachment to the Transcendental Reality.

*bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhakti-saṅgena parijāyate
sat-saṅgaḥ prāpyate puṁbhiḥ sukr̥taiḥ pūrva-saṅcitaiḥ*

**Only those who have
accumulated *sukṛti*
become attracted to *sādhus*.**

**For example, in a religious
assembly, everyone hears
the message of the *sādhū*.**

Even after hearing,

**however, those who are
devoid of *sukṛti* continue
to remain absorbed in their
wife, children, etc.**

No change is seen in them.

**Only one or two persons,
those who have accumulated
sukṛti, develop an eagerness**

**to become closer to the
sādhū and hear more**

***hari-kathā*—the *kathā*
of *ātmā-dharma*.**

**Therefore, *sukṛti* alone
is the basis of *sādhū-saṅga*.**

“The inclination for *bhakti* is awakened by association with Bhagavān’s *bhaktas*. The *jīva* obtains the association of *śuddha-bhaktas* by the accumulated effect of spiritually pious activities performed over many years.” (Bṛhan-Nāradya-Purāṇa 4.33)

*mahat-sevām dvāram āhur vimuktes
tamo-dvāram yoṣitām saṅgi-saṅgam
mahāntas te sama-cittāḥ praśāntā
vimanyavaḥ suhṛdah sādhavo ye*

“One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities, the *bhaktas*. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open. The *mahātmās* are equipoised. They do not see any difference between one living entity and another. They are very peaceful and are fully engaged in devotional service. They are devoid of anger, and they work for the benefit of everyone. They do not behave in any abominable way. Such people are known as *mahātmās*.” (SB 5. 5.2)

The *jīvas*’ disposition is influenced by his association. Through *asat-saṅga* he becomes attached to unreal objects and through *sat-saṅga* alone he develops an inclination for the

Real Entity. If from his birth a lion cub lives with a shepherd and his sheep, he learns to eat grass and ‘baa’ like a sheep. Similarly, The result of associating with a thief is that one becomes a thief, and, similarly, by associating with a *sādhū* one can become a *sādhū*. If a person lives with the misconception that the body is the soul, then,

because of living in the association or shelter of non-reality, he deviates from the path of truth. Bewildered by *māyā*, the *jīva* forgets that he is an eternal entity and puts his faith in the perishable body as his *svarūpa*. He cannot break the spell of this illusion on his own. As an accumulated result of serving Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas over many births, knowingly and unknowingly, he attains *sādhu-saṅga*. And, it is only by *sādhu-saṅga* that he develops *mamatva buddhi* for the Transcendental Reality.

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

“In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge, one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation. Thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. At that time, real devotion and devotional service begin.” (SB 3. 25.25)

By living in *sat-saṅga*, one develops faith (*śraddha*), and he gradually attains the stage of *prema-bhakti*. *Baddha jīvas* (conditioned souls) inclined towards *asat-saṅga* and endeavoring for bodily pleasure, remain uninterested in *sādhu-saṅga*. Only those who have accumulated *sukṛti* become attracted to *sādhus*. For example, in a religious assembly, everyone hears the message of the *sādhu*. Even after hearing, however, those who are devoid of *sukṛti* continue to remain absorbed in their wife, children, etc. No change is seen in them. Only one or two persons, those who have accumulated *sukṛti*, develop an eagerness to become closer to the *sādhu* and hear more *hari-kathā*—the *kathā* of *ātmā-dharma*. Therefore, *sukṛti* alone is the basis of *sādhu-saṅga*.

How can one accumulate this *sukṛti*? Knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly, if a *jīva* performs any act of auspiciousness for the *ātmā*, that becomes his *sukṛti*. For example, if one fasts on the day of Ekādaśī

because food is unavailable, it becomes ‘unknowing’ *sukṛti*—and will cause *bhakti* to appear in him. By donating anything to a *sādhu*, one attains the result of *sukṛti* performed in knowledge.

Sukṛti is also accumulated in living entities other than humans. A cow gives milk and her protector drinks the milk. One day a *sādhu* comes to his house and he offers that cow’s milk to this *sādhu*. By this, both the cow and her owner earn *sukṛti*.

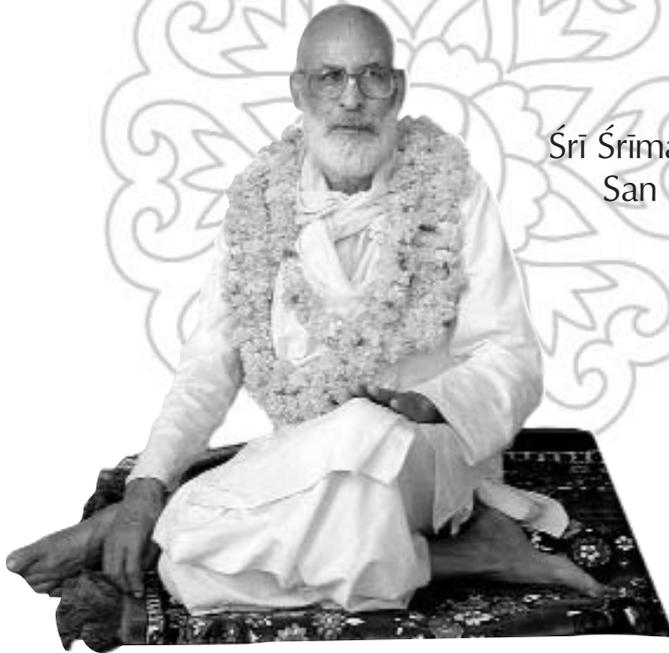
When *śraddha* appears in the heart, one develops firm faith in the words of *śāstra* and *sādhu*. At that time, a person gives up performing illusory activities and eagerly accepts the shelter of the Absolute Truth. A faith that “I am Kṛṣṇa dāsa” begins to develop, and a desire to serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of *sādhus* appears in him. At that time he becomes intent upon giving up the service of non-reality or illusion, in the form of wife, son, and so on.

Only those *jīvas* who have earned a lot of *sukṛti* develop *śraddha* in *sādhus*, and this *śraddha* is the root of *prema-bhakti*. When *śraddha* appears in the heart, one develops firm faith in the words of *śāstra* and *sādhu*. At that time, a person gives up performing illusory activities and eagerly accepts the shelter of the Absolute Truth. A faith that “I am Kṛṣṇa dāsa” begins to develop, and a desire to serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of *sādhus* appears in him. At that time he becomes intent upon giving up the service of non-reality or illusion, in the form of wife, son, and so on.

One who is devoid of *sukṛti* cannot give up such attachments. However, one who is endowed with *sukṛti* attains firm faith in statements such as ‘*jīvera svarūpa haya, kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa*’, the constitutional position of the *jīva* is that he is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. “*Kṛṣṇa bhakti karile sarva karma kṛto haya*—by rendering service to Kṛṣṇa, service to everyone else is performed.” Impelled by this faith, one attains the strength to give up his obligations to his mother, father, wife, son, daughter and other bodily relations. Thus, by *sādhu-saṅga* alone, the *jīva* becomes established in reality or truth.

Thus, man develops *prīti* for Bhagavān, the Absolute Reality, by sincerely hearing His topics in the association of *sādhus*. Only *bhagavāt-prīti* or *prema* is *parama-dharma*, the supreme occupation of the *jīva*, and it is his only *parā śanti*, supreme peace. 

In This Very Critical Stage



Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja
San Francisco, Ca, USA, May 3, 2001

I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my *gurudeva*, *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and also unto the lotus feet of my *śikṣā-guru*, *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja. By their mercy we are preaching in so many places, and everywhere we go the devotees are inspired. They are now always remembering their Śrīla Prabhupāda. I have come for this purpose. My main objective is to increase the devotees' faith and to re-inspire them in his teachings. My objective is to help the devotees, as he ordered me to do in his last days.

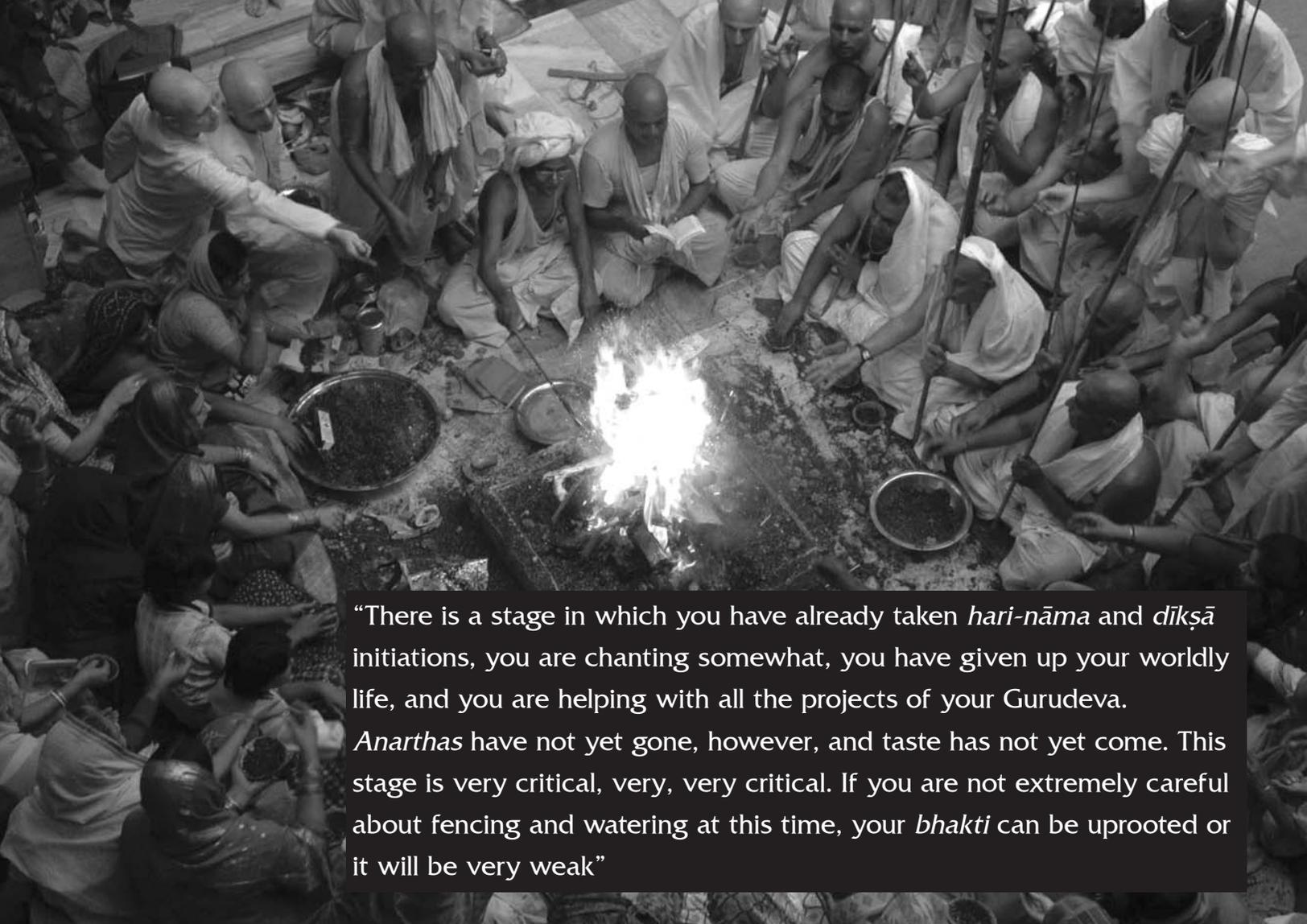
THE QUESTION: WHY DID SO MANY DEVOTEES LEAVE?

A question is raised, and intelligent devotees should think it over. Why did so many devotees leave Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's line? Why did they become weak? They took *harināma* and *dīkṣā* initiation, they rendered services to him, they remained with him in the *brahmācārya āśrama*, and some even took *sannyāsa*. They served in numerous ways, distributing thousands of books and becoming the

'number one' or 'number two' distributors in the entire world. They also gave abundant assistance to the *gurukulas*, opened several temples in different parts of the world, and they brought vast amounts of money. By hook, or by crook, they brought it.

Why did most of them become weak and leave? Why did they enter family life? Almost all of the *brahmacārīs* who were engaged in temple worship entered married life or gave up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They returned to a life of materialism, and some of them even became opposed to the line of *bhakti*. Why did this happen? We must think it over.

I know that most of the senior disciples of your Prabhupāda, my *śikṣā-guru*, were *brahmacārīs*. When they were with their Guru they were very energetic, and they gave their entire strength to serve him. Now, however, even those who took the *sannyāsa* order have left. Why? We should try to understand why, and in the future we should be very careful. This is the most important question to think over. So many senior Vaiṣṇavas who have left the line of *bhakti* are now present here in this class.



“There is a stage in which you have already taken *hari-nāma* and *dīkṣā* initiations, you are chanting somewhat, you have given up your worldly life, and you are helping with all the projects of your Gurudeva. *Anarthas* have not yet gone, however, and taste has not yet come. This stage is very critical, very, very critical. If you are not extremely careful about fencing and watering at this time, your *bhakti* can be uprooted or it will be very weak”

PLANTING THE SEED OF ANY BIG TREE

In this connection, I want to tell you something. When we plant the seed of any big tree—like a mango seed or other type of seed—then, first we give it water. We water it properly and protect it so that grazing animals cannot eat it. Even when it has grown somewhat, we still continue to give proper water and proper care. Later, when the roots go deep and begin to take water from the earth, there is no longer a need to give it so much water. At that time, however, we will have to make a fence to protect the plant. Otherwise it can still be destroyed by animals, and even a mad elephant may come to destroy it.

THE OFFENSE AND THE FENCE

That mad elephant represents offenses, and the fence represents the association of pure devotees. We must associate with Gurudeva. We must associate with the high class of devotees who have been taking water from the ground and are self-supported. They are now so big that

no elephant can do any damage to them. By associating with them, first *niṣṭhā*, steadiness in *bhakti*, will come, and after *niṣṭhā*, *ruci* will come. *Ruci* means taste in chanting and hearing *hari-kathā*. So much taste will come for hearing *hari-kathā* that if one finds out that any pure Vaiṣṇava is speaking anywhere, that person will come from a thousand miles away, giving up all his other jobs, duties and activities—because he will want to be in such company.

There is a stage in which you have already taken *hari-nāma* and *dīkṣā* initiations, you are chanting somewhat, you have given up your worldly life, and you are helping with all the projects of your Gurudeva. *Anarthas* have not yet gone, however, and taste has not yet come. This stage is very critical, very, very critical. If you are not extremely careful about fencing and watering at this time, your *bhakti* can be uprooted or it will be very weak.

KĀLĀ KRṢṆADĀSA AND RAGHUNĀTHA DĀSA

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's personal servant, Kālā Kṛṣṇadāsa, went with Him to South India for about four

months. He did not have a taste for chanting, remembering, or hearing *hari-kathā*, but he was helping Mahāprabhu. He was very lucky to serve, but he had no taste. Mahāprabhu was chanting “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa” in all the temples and making everyone Vaiṣṇavas, but what became of His servant? He had never said to Mahāprabhu, “Oh, I want to hear *hari-kathā*.” He never questioned Him and he never heard His teachings. He was therefore attracted by the *bhaṭṭatharīs*, gypsy girls, who were so beautiful that in a moment he gave up Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa Himself.

RAGHUNĀTHA DĀSA GOSVĀMĪ HAD THE TASTE TO HEAR

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was also an associate of Mahāprabhu, but he had the taste to hear. From the very beginning of his childhood, he heard about Kṛṣṇa in the association of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura and his Gurudeva, Yadunandana Ācārya. Restless, he quickly came to Purī to be in the assembly of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates. Mahāprabhu became very happy to see him and said, “Oh, you have come out from the ditch of stool. Very good.” Mahāprabhu then placed him in the hands of Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara and told him, “From today you belong to Svarūpa Dāmodara. You can know more by hearing from him than from Me. Treat him as your teacher—your *śikṣā-guru*.”

Raghunātha dāsa gave up all worldly attachments and requirements, and totally surrendered unto the lotus feet of Svarūpa Dāmodara. He was always hearing from him, and he noted down everything in his diary and in his heart. He always wanted to hear more and more from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, and all other associates. He heard them very patiently, recording everything in his heart, and he followed them fully.

After the disappearance of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Svarūpa Dāmodara and Gadādhara Paṇḍita, he could not tolerate their separation. He at once left that place and came to Vṛndāvana to commit suicide. Continually weeping, he thought, “I cannot tolerate the separation from my Gurudeva, all the Vaiṣṇavas, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They have left me and I am now alone.” He came to Vṛndāvana to give up his life by jumping in the Yamunā or by jumping from Govardhana, but instead he attained the association of Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, and all the Gosvāmīs. He resided on the bank of Rādhā-kuṅḍa twenty-four hours a day, and he always engaged in the following way:

*saṅkhyā-pūrvaka-nāma-gāna-natibhiḥkālāvasānī-kṛtau
nidrāhāra-vihārakādi-vijitau cātyanta-dīnau ca yau
rādhā-kṛṣṇa-guṇa-smṛter madhurimā-nandena sammohitau
vande rūpa-sanātana raghu-yugau śrī jīva gopālakau*

“I worship the Six Gosvāmīs, who passed all their time in chanting the holy names, singing songs, and offering *daṇḍavat praṇāma*, thereby humbly fulfilling their vow to complete a fixed number daily. In this way they utilized their valuable lives and conquered over eating and sleeping. Always meek and humble and absorbed in the highest bliss, they were enchanted by remembering Sri Sri Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's sweet qualities.” (Śrī Ṣaḍ-Gosvāmī Aṣṭakam, 6)

Raghunātha dāsa was following these principles. You can see the difference between Kālā Kṛṣṇadāsa and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

CHOṬA HARIDĀSA'S DHARMA MĀ, OR 'RELIGIOUS MOTHER'

Mahāprabhu rejected one of His very high-class of devotees, Choṭa Haridāsa. Choṭa Haridāsa was always with Caitanya Mahāprabhu, but Mahāprabhu saw that he had some connection with a lady, Śikhi Māhitī's sister, Mādhavī Devī. Although she was very old, Choṭa Haridāsa used to think, “Oh, she is my *dharma mā*, my ‘religious mother,’ my ‘new mother.’” He had given up his own mother, father, and everyone else, and now he was making a relationship with her. This is a very bad thing. Don't make anyone your ‘religious’ sister, mother, brother, or father. Your *guru* is your mother and father. He is everything. Why do you need these new relationships? You will be destroyed by them. Always be careful about this.

TRY TO DO AS RAGHUNĀTHA DĀSA GOSVĀMĪ AND ŚUKADEVA GOSVĀMĪ

We should try to do as Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī did, and we should try to understand and follow Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Though He was previously a *nirviṣeṣa-vādī*, absorbed in the feature of the Supreme Truth that has no variety or characteristics, Śukadeva Gosvāmī became attracted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa by the association of his father, Śrī Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva. Vyāsadeva was a very elevated devotee, and he was like Nārāyaṇa; Nārāyaṇa had invested His *bhakti-śakti* in him. He was therefore like Nārāyaṇa, but he was not Nārāyaṇa. He was His *śaktyaveśa-avatāra*.

How qualified Vyāsadeva was! He divided the *Veda* into four, he wrote *Brahma-sutra* and all the *Purāṇas*, and still he was not satisfied. By the mercy of Śrīla Nārada Ṛṣi, his

gurudeva, he arose from his depression and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* entered his heart. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is transcendental and *Bhagavad-gītā* is transcendental. They are not like ordinary books which, if you put them in a fire they will be burned. The *Gītā* cannot be destroyed, but sometimes its teachings are covered and sometimes they are manifest. These teachings are *śabda-brahma*, transcendental sound, coming from Kṛṣṇa, God Himself. They are the *vani*, the words of Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Vyāsadeva taught the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to Śukadeva Gosvāmī who, in the assembly of Śrīla Parikṣit Mahārāja, repeated it. All those who heard his recitation became advanced devotees.

THIS VERY CRITICAL STAGE

So this stage is very critical. When a devotee has left his wealth, reputation, wife, children, position, and so on, but he has no taste—it is a very critical time. At this stage you should not give up the association of high-class devotees. If you always try to be far away from such association, you will become very weak, and after some time *māyā* will come and attract you.

This was the case after Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja left this world and joined his Prabhu in conjugal service. The devotees became very weak, and they could not understand what to do. There were not so many advanced devotees to save them and to tell them *hari-kathā*, and therefore they became weaker and weaker and weaker. They began to think, "Previously we were in the institution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. "What will happen in the future?" This was a problem for them. They had no faith in Kṛṣṇa and no *śaraṅgati*, and thus they became weaker and weaker, and left everything.

They began to depend on wealth and became concerned with how to collect money and be materially happy. They were very intelligent in this, because they had previously served their Gurudeva in that way. By that, they have now become so wealthy. They think, "We are doing very well," but we think they are not doing well. Of what use is all one's wealth without *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*? If *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is there, and nothing else is there, it is very good. Even to be poor, but to somehow maintain our life, is very good—if *bhakti* is there.

TWO KINDS OF HAPPY PERSONS

Now we are in the 'iron age' of computers and all other technologies, and it is flourishing. We are discovering so

many ways in which to be happy—but no one is happy. Only two kinds of persons can think themselves happy. One kind consists of those who really have some taste in Kṛṣṇa's name and hearing *hari-kathā*, and the other kind consists only of mad persons. These mad persons take many drugs and fall down in a gutter, and dogs come, lick their faces and pass warm water on them. Still, they are thinking, "We are the monarch of all. We are very happy."

Only these two can be happy. There is no third kind of person.

You should be very careful to remember that one day, very soon, old age will be coming, running towards you. Now you are beautiful, but one day your faces will dry up. So many problems will very quickly come, and at the time of death you will not be able to take anything you are now collecting. Remember all these things. Be again very inspired, chant more and have

strong faith in the words of Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam
bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam
śreyaḥ-kairava-candrikā-vitaraṇam
vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam
prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam
sarvātma-snapanam
param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*

"Let there be supreme victory for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, which cleanses the mirror of the heart and completely extinguishes the blazing forest fire of material existence. *Śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* diffuses the soothing moon rays of *bhāva* which causes the white lotus of good fortune for the *jīvas* to bloom. The holy name is the life and soul of transcendental knowledge, which is here compared to a wife (*mādhurya-rasa*). It continuously expands the ocean of transcendental bliss, enabling one to taste complete nectar at every step. The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa thoroughly cleanses and cools the self, one's nature and determination, as well as the body, both internal and external." (Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, 1)

You have forgotten this, and therefore you should again hear about it. We have so much faith in this, and only by this can you be happy. Otherwise, you can never, never, never be happy.

You should know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and He is very powerful. Even His manifestations can create thousands and thousands of universes in

a second, they can then destroy them, and again they can create them. At the same time, Kṛṣṇa is very merciful, He is very sweet, He is very beautiful, and He is the abode of all good qualities.

In Kali-yuga, He has invested all His qualities, all His power, and all His mercy in these sixteen names. All the names are Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Themselves, and they are even more powerful than Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Themselves. By chanting you can fulfill all your desires. If you can see Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, all your desires will automatically be fulfilled, but you should know that They will not come and we cannot take Their *darśana* without the help and mercy of Their holy names.

Kṛṣṇa has made His name in this way, but we don't have very much faith. Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura has faith, Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja has faith, and all our *ācāryas*, from top to bottom, have faith. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja and my Gurudeva also have faith. We also have faith, and therefore we don't want any worldly things. We only want to have love and affection for chanting the holy name. If you follow this principle, you will not fall down.

CHANTING WITH RELATION IN HIGH ASSOCIATION

By sincere chanting, your heart becomes like the books kept in a glass *almirah* bookcase. You can see what books are there, and you can read their names, but you cannot touch them because they are under lock and key. If a person is in high association, chanting with relation and giving up all of their *anyābhilāṣa*, material desires, *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, *tapasya*, and attachment to worldly things, what becomes of him? The mirror of his heart becomes clear, even if it is still locked...

[Araṇya Mahārāja:] When the conditioned soul, being in this world, begins his process of *nāma-saṅkīrtana* and his heart becomes clear...

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:] You may be thinking to ask Araṇya Mahārāja, “You are telling this to us, but have you first realized it? We have been chanting the name for twenty years with Prabhupāda, and we have heard so

many things. You are a very young boy, and yet you are teaching us? Have you realized something of what you are speaking? Have you realized *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam*? (the first and second excellent results of *śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*)”

I can tell you that I have some realization. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has realization and I also have some realization. You can therefore believe in me and chant the name.

Many fell down because they have not chanted and heard in the real process, as we are doing. We are in the real process. I don't know from where this came, from the beginning of my life, when I was a child, I used to chant,

“Rāma Rāma; Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare.” Later, when I was about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age I came in the association of my Gurudeva and I was so attracted. At that time I had a very good job as an officer. I had not yet been initiated, but I was chanting one *lakh* of names, 64 rounds, every day without any fail. In 1946 I was initiated and I had the association of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja, your Gurudeva, and also Puṅgavāda Śrīdhara Mahārāja, Puṅgavāda Śrautī Mahārāja, Puṅgavāda Vaikhāna Mahārāja, Puṅgavāda Nemi Mahārāja, and Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja. In due process I used to chant and hear *hari-kathā* and serve them and all kinds of *b h a v a - m a h ā - d ā v ā g n i - n i r v ā p a ṇ a m*, miseries felt in worldly life, quickly disappeared.

I am very happy now. I have thousands and thousands of children, but I am not attached to

them. I only want their welfare. I want that they should be devotees. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja was like this, as was my Gurudeva, and I am following their line. I may therefore tell you that I have realized that all my problems have gone. *Bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam*. Also, *śreyāḥ-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam*. This has also come. You can realize this, if you can follow your Gurudeva. You can also follow me, because Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja has told me, “You should help my devotees.”

By sincere chanting, your heart becomes like the books kept in a glass *almirah* bookcase. You can see what books are there, and you can read their names, but you cannot touch them because they are under lock and key. If a person is in high association, chanting with relation and giving up all of their *anyābhilāṣa*, material desires, *karma*, *jñāna*, *yoga*, *tapasya*, and attachment to worldly things, what becomes of him? The mirror of his heart becomes clear, even if it is still locked...

Sreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitaranam. All the good qualities possessed by high-class devotees will manifest in that devotee who follows. *Bhakti* has six leaves or six symptoms. If you are really chanting under the guidance of a bona fide *guru*, with a sense of a relationship with Kṛṣṇa, and giving up all worldly desires, then all kinds of bad habits will easily disappear. All kinds of attachments will disappear at once. No attachment for *māyā* will remain if you are chanting the holy names, hearing *hari-kathā*, and serving Gurudeva. If so many worldly desires are remaining, and so much lust is remaining, it means you are not following the process in a good way. There is a loophole—and you should try to repair it. Otherwise, all the water of your *bhakti* will drain out.

You have read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* so many times, and you become teachers and tell others about it. In India there are so many professional *Bhāgavatam* reciters. When such reciters explain *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, all are attracted and charmed, and all may weep. Their own eyes, however, are always on money. They are always wondering how much money is coming. Such professional reciters are not pure devotees, they are not even devotees, and they may be Śaṅkara *māyāvādis*. All their offenses and attachments will remain, and none will go.

The first symptom of *bhakti* is that all your worldly attachments will go. If they are not going, you can know that there is a loophole, and you should try to repair it very carefully. If you do not do this, you will go down and you are bound to be weak. We see that many seniors are very weak, and they cannot give up worldly attachments. Therefore, this should come first. Second, all kinds of good qualities should come. We should be very careful to see that this is developing.

Then, *vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam*. Seven symptoms result by taking *harināma*. If they are not coming, you should be very careful to search out your loopholes and try to repair them. Otherwise, you cannot realize anything:

*trṇād api sunīcena / taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena / kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ*



“One can chant *śrī-hari-nāma* in a humble state of mind, thinking himself lower than the straw in the street and more tolerant than the tree. One should be devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind, one can chant *śrī-hari-nāma* constantly.” (*Śikṣāṣṭaka* 3)

These four qualities will come. If they are not present, there is no pure name. So try to first be like this. What is *vidyā*? You should know that *vidyā* is Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself, and Her activities of love and affection can control Kṛṣṇa. Transcendental *vidyā*, is the knowledge of how to serve Kṛṣṇa and Rādhikā, and especially Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā's love goes up to *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva*, *mahābhāva*, *modana*, and *madana*. Kṛṣṇa does not have all these qualities. He has no *madana*. Śrīmatī Rādhikā has *madana*, and therefore She is really *vidyā*. She is *parā-vidyā*, transcendental knowledge. Rādhikā is *svarūpa-śakti* or *hlādinī-śakti*, and She is called *vadhū*. *Vadhū* means beloved. If you chant the name in the correct process, then, after some days, in the fourth stage, you will realize *vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam*. You will realize that this name is the most beloved, the life and soul, of Rādhikā, who is the embodiment of *bhakti*.

The fifth stage is *ānandāmbudhi-varadhanam*. You should realize these things, and from today, begin chanting the holy name like this. You will then very soon be able to realize what Caitanya Mahāprabhu has taught.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu used to go to the temple of Jagannātha, but He never saw Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā. Rather, He saw Vrajendra-nandana Syāmasundara. Sometimes, when He was in His external consciousness, He could see Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā. Usually, however, He used to see only Vrajendra-nandana Syāmasundara with a flute in His hand. *Vrajendra-nandana vina pate mora*. “My heart is going to break. Where is Kṛṣṇa? Where is Kṛṣṇa?” When Mahāprabhu was going to Vṛndāvana through the dense Jarikhaṇḍa forest, so many elephants, tigers, bears, snakes, and other very furious animals were there. Many elephants came when Mahāprabhu was taking bath, and a very big miracle occurred. Mahāprabhu took some water and sprinkled it on them, at which time all the mad elephants raised their trunks, went down on their knees, and began to chant, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.”

This is the case at that stage. Mahāprabhu did not know who He was. He only knew that He was searching for Kṛṣṇa, “O Kṛṣṇa, where are You, where are You? My beloved Kṛṣṇa, where are You?” When this stage manifests, even a little bit, your life is successful. Try to search for this Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Nandanandana with Śrīmatī Rādhikā, in this process. You will very soon realize what you would not realize up to the age of sixty or seventy. You will realize all these things very soon.

How will you realize all this? Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself is the example. When He was in Kāśī, Vārāṇasī, He met with Prakaśānanda Sarasvatī. Prakaśānanda asked, “You are in a good disciplic line. Being a *sannyāsī*, why are You chanting, dancing and singing? We don't do this.”

Mahāprabhu said, “I am very foolish. My Gurudeva told Me, 'You are not qualified to study *Vedānta*. You should only remember one *śloka*:

*harer nāma harer nama / harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva / nasty eva gatir anyathā*

“In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.” (CC *Ādi-līlā* 17.21)

“Only by chanting the name, chanting the name, and chanting the name. There is no other process. You can never be happy by any other process.” Mahāprabhu continued, “My Gurudeva gave Me the holy name, Hare Kṛṣṇa, and he also gave Me the *kṛṣṇa-mantra*. I began to chant these *mantras*, and I very quickly became mad—totally mad. I could not understand why was I becoming so mad.

“I saw a boy. These names became like a very beautiful teenaged *syāma*-colored boy. I saw that He was playing on a flute and smiling towards Me with sidelong glances. At once I was charmed. I wanted to follow Him. I quickly ran toward Him, but He was moving backwards. Oh, I ran very fast, but He quickly moved here and there and I could not touch Him. Then, when I came very near, just about to catch Him, He at once disappeared. I then became maddened and fell down, rolling on the earth and crying, 'Where is My Kṛṣṇa? Where is My Kṛṣṇa!'

“I don't know how My heart realized all these things. When I chant the name, I see My beloved Kṛṣṇa and I cannot check Myself. Sometimes I chant and sing, sometimes I dance, and sometimes I roll down on the earth and cry, 'Alas, Kṛṣṇa! Alas, Kṛṣṇa! Where are You?' I went to My Gurudeva and told him, 'O Gurudeva, what kind of *mantra* have you given that has made Me so mad? The whole world is telling Me that I am mad, and I also realize

that I have become mad, mad, and mad. Why did you give Me this *mantra*?' Gurudeva then at once embraced Me and said, 'Your life is successful. This is the reality of chanting *harināma*. I am so proud to have You as a disciple.'”

You should try to be disciples like this, so that your *guru* will have great pride in you. If you do not do this, on the other hand, you will be very weak and go to hell. Then, instead of being proud, your *gurudeva* will be very worried for you. Perhaps he will have to come again for you. Or, he will have to send any of his representatives by telling them, “Go and help him.”

Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī were always swimming in the waves of *ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam*, the ever-increasing, endless ocean of love and affection. In separation from Kṛṣṇa, Caitanya Mahāprabhu became totally mad and jumped in the sea. He remained there throughout the night and, due to all His joints being separated by eight inches, He became very long. He was like a dead person, but He was not dead. Svarūpa Dāmodara went with his colleagues to search for Him, and they finally discovered Him on the seashore. Surrounding Him, they began to perform *saṅkīrtana*. Gradually Caitanya Mahāprabhu became conscious and began to dance and chant, “Hari bol! Hari bol!”

How will you realize these stages? The wonderful, powerful devotees have written about them in their books. *Ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam*. You cannot realize this now. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was at the bank of Rādhā Kuṅḍa, continually shedding tears. You cannot imagine this at present, but you can imagine it if you are chanting in the real process. Otherwise it will never, never be possible.

THE MARRIAGE PARTY

A wedding was fixed to take place the next day at the bank of the Gaṅges, and the family decided that the marriage party should go to the house of the bride by boat. They hired a boatman, and so many family members of the bridegroom got into the boat. They took with them wine, a prostitute to sing and dance, and also marijuana and then they went inside the boat, downstairs, and began to enjoy. The head of the groom's family gave money to the boatman and told him that he should reach the place of marriage by the next morning—otherwise the marriage could not take place. The auspicious time was the next morning at 4:00 a.m.

Everyone on the boat was enjoying, and at the same time the boatman's several rowers were rowing and perspiring. At four o'clock the next morning the father of

the family came out to the deck to see if they had reached their destination. He looked in wonder when he saw that they were in the same place. The boat had not moved one inch. He became very angry at the rowers and said, “We are in the our own village! The same coconut palms are here, our houses are here, and the same riverbank is here! I gave you so much money! I gave you what you wanted; so why is our boat still here? How is this possible! We have missed the auspicious time for the marriage!”

The boatman came forward and told him, “O master, you have given us all these things and we have been rowing for the whole night without taking any rest. We were rowing with great effort, and you can see that we have not rested.” When they looked around, they could see what was wrong. The anchor was down, and it had been going deeper into the mud as they rowed. The boat had only been rocking back and forth all night.

In the same way, if you are chanting and at the same time taking marijuana and other drugs, and at the same time absorbed in your body, wife, sister, and so on, it will be like rowing your boat with the anchor down. You will not be able to go forward. If anyone has attraction to worldly things, he cannot advance.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore says:

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

“O Bhagavān, Your holy name bestows all good fortune for the living entity. Therefore, for the benefit of the jīvas, You eternally manifest Your innumerable names, such as Rāma, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, Mādhava, Govinda, Dāmodara, and so on. You have invested those names with all your potencies of Your respective forms. Out of causeless mercy, You have not even imposed any restrictions on the chanting and remembrance of such names as is the case with sandhya-vandanā, which must be chanted only at specified times of the day. In other words, at any time of the day or night, the holy name can be chanted and remembered. This is the provision You have made. O Lord! This is Your causeless mercy upon the living entities. Nonetheless, I am so unfortunate due to committing offenses that I have not awoken any attachment for Your holy name, which is so easily accessible and bestows all good fortune.” (Śikṣāṣṭaka 2)

First of all, give up your bad association:

*asat-saṅga-tyāga, ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra
'strī-saṅgī' eka asādhu, 'kṛsnābhakta' āra*

“A Vaiṣṇava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaiṣṇavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa.” (CC Madhya 22.84)

If you are lusty, if you are weak, and if you have so many unwanted habits, no harm. You should be sincere; what you are, you are. Don't hide anything. However, you must give up the association of *māyāvādīs*. *Māyāvādī* association is like a very dangerous, ferocious tigress. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and Mahāprabhu have told us, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has also told us, that if you want to be happy and if you want to be a devotee, never associate with *māyāvādīs*. There is no harm if you are lusty. Lust may go away and all *anarthas* may also go away, but if you are being devoured by this ferocious tigress of *māyāvādī-saṅga*, no one can help you. No devotee will be able to help you, and even Kṛṣṇa will not be able to help you. You should therefore very carefully cut all connections with those who are *māyāvādīs*.

Even if those *māyāvādīs* are friends and relatives, they should quickly be given up for your whole life. Secondly, the association of those who are attached to worldly lust, and those who are the friends of lusty persons, should also be abandoned. It is better to die in a burning fire than to maintain their association. If we embrace a fire, there is relatively no harm in that. It is even better to enter the mouths of crocodiles and tigers than to associate with these two types of persons. Suffering from fire and so on is only for this life. In the next life we may again be okay. For a person who is associating with *māyāvādīs*, however, his devotion will go away for thousands of lives—or forever.

My dear friends, my dear brothers and sisters: make up your minds. If you are associating with any friends who are *māyāvādīs*, promise that, “I will not continue to do this.” I am telling you this to save you; otherwise you will go to hell. Not only will you go to hell, but your life will be ruined forever. Even in the future you will not be able to come in this line. So, my dear friends, please remember these things. Don't mix with *māyāvādīs*. If they come to you, do *praṇāma* to them with folded palms and say, “Oh *prabhu*, please remain far away.”

[Devotee:] Mahārāja, you have inspired fear in my heart. How do I recognize a *māyāvādī*?

[Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:] You will know. He will tell you, “There is no God,” or “God has no shape. I am God, and you, yourself, are God. *Ahaṁ brahmāsmi. Sarvam kalvidam brahma.*” Such a person is not chanting and remembering, and he is not coming to associate with any high-class devotee. You will recognize him very easily.



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in Uḍupī

[Refutation of the misconception concerning Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's acceptance of Śrī Madhva Sampradāya]

*prabhu kahe,—karmī, jñānī, dui bhakti-hīna
tomāra sampradāya dekhi sei dui cihna*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “Both the fruitive worker and the speculative philosopher are considered devoid of devotion. I see both elements present in your *sampradāya*.” (CC Madhya 9.276)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu refuted the *sādhya-sādhana-vicāra*, (the conception of *sādhya*, the goal, and *sādhana*, the means to attain the goal), of Śrī Raghuvārya Tīrtha, the then *tattvavādī-ācārya* of the original Maṭha of Śrī Madhvācārya in Uḍupī. For this reason, and especially because Śrīman Mahāprabhu addressed the *ācārya* with the words ‘*tomāra sampradāya*’ (your disciplic line), some people think that Mahāprabhu is not included within the Śrī Madhva-sampradāya. Such persons conclude from the aforementioned conversation that in Śrī Madhvācārya’s conception of *sādhana* as *karmārpaṇa* (offering the fruits of one’s own prescribed duties), and *sādhya* as the liberation attained by following the path of knowledge, there exists a sign of *jñāna* and *karma* devoid of *bhakti*. They say this is completely different from the conception of *sādhana* in the form *śuddha-bhakti* and *sādhya* in the form of *kṛṣṇa-prema* revealed by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Therefore, possessing a different conception of *sādhya* and *sādhana*, they consider Śrīman Mahāprabhu to be the initiator of a fifth *sampradāya*. It is not unusual for ignorant people who have no idea of the glory and science of the *sampradāya* to think in this way.

Although the process of *karmārpaṇa* is accepted at the beginning stage of the *kaniṣṭha* devotee, *amala-bhakti*, unalloyed devotion, has been established as the principle form of *sādhana* in the doctrine of Śrī Madhvācārya. The person, who is attached to the activities of the body and who desires to enjoy the fruits of its activities is called a

karmī. There is no other way in the beginning for such a person to become attentive to Kṛṣṇa without *karmārpaṇa*. For this reason, Śrī Madhvācārya has, in a general sense, accepted *karma* which is subordinate to *bhakti* and is favorable for *śuddha-bhagavat-jñāna*, pure knowledge of Bhagavān.

om sahakāritvena om

(Brahma-sūtra 3.4.33)

In his commentary on this *sūtra*, Śrī Madhvācārya has written: *yathā rājñah sahakārye mantrī tathā ṛatehatra ksitīpaḥ kāryam ṛche / evaṁ jñānam karma vināpi kāryam saḥāyabhūtam na vicārah kutaścīd iti kamaṭha śrūtau sahakāritvokteś ca*.

The purport is that a minister is always present as the assistant of the king; but even without the minister, the king is able to carry out the work himself. In the same way, *śuddha-bhagavad-jñāna* is able to give *mokṣa*, liberation, without the aid of *karma*, although in some places its support has been accepted. Therefore, it is clear that Śrī Madhvācārya has not accepted *karma* as the principle means or *sādhana* to attain *mukti*. He has only given it the position of assistant. There is no contradiction between this conception and the conception of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and this can be understood by discussing the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.24):

*dāna-vrata-tapo-homa-
japa-svādhyāya-samyamaiḥ
śreyobhir vividhaiś canyaiḥ
kṛṣṇe bhaktir hi sādhyate*

“Devotional service unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa is attained by charity, meaning by donations given to Śrī Kṛṣṇa or His devotees, by strict vows, such as Ekādaśī, by austerities, meaning renunciation of sense gratification for Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s sake, by fire sacrifices that are dedicated to Viṣṇu, by japa (chanting the

holy names of the Lord), by study of Vedic texts such as Gopāla Tapaṇi Upaniṣad, by observance of regulative principles, and, indeed, by the performance of many other auspicious activities.”

However, whatever activities are performed to fulfill one’s own desires, such as *yāga* (offering oblations), *yajñā*, and so on, even if offered to Viṣṇu, could never be an assistant of *bhakti*, even secondarily. *Karma* is generally performed with the aim of fulfilling one’s own desires, and therefore Śrīman Mahāprabhu has stated:

*karma-nindā, karma-tyāga, sarva śāstre kahe
karma haite prema-bhakti kṛṣṇe kabhu nahe*

“In every revealed scripture karma is condemned. Everywhere, śāstra advises us to give up engagement in karma, for no one can attain prema-bhakti by that means.” (CC Madhya 9.263):

Nevertheless, *karma* which is performed with the aim of *dharma*, and *dharma* which is performed with the aim of renunciation, and renunciation which is performed with the aim of obtaining the lotus feet of Bhagavān—all of these can be considered as *abhidheya*, in a secondary way. Śrīman Madhvācārya has given only this type of *karma* the position of an assistant to *bhakti*. He has very clearly indicated that those *karmas* which do not aim to attain *paramārtha* are to be condemned or rejected. It is stated in *Sūtra-bhāṣya* (3.3.50):

*karmanā baddhyate jantur vidyayā ca vimucyate
tasmāt karma na kurvanti yatayaḥ pāradarśinaḥ*

“Karma causes the bondage of the *jīva* in this material world, whereas through (transcendental) *vidyā* the *jīva* attains complete deliverance i.e. he attains prema. Therefore, the yatis, ascetics, who are well-versed in the understanding of the Absolute Reality, never engage in karma.”

In the doctrine of Śrī Madhvācārya pure unalloyed devotion has been ascertained as the only form of *sād-hana*, and within his *sampradāya* this conception has been expressed in the well-known verse:

*madhvamata prakāśa—
śrīman madhvamate hariḥ paratarah
satyaṁ jagat tattvato bhedo
jīva-gaṇā harer-anucarā nīcoccabhāvaṁ gataḥ
muktir-naija-sukhānubhūtir-amalā bhaktiś ca tat sādhanam
hy aksādi tritayaṁ pramaṇamakhilamnayaikavedyo hariḥ*

Śrīmad Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu has stated a parallel verse in his book *Śrī Prameya-Ratnāvalī: Śrī mad-*

hvaḥ prāha viṣṇuṁ paratamam showing the non-difference of opinion between Śrī Madhvācārya and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrī Madhvācārya himself has proclaimed repeatedly in his various commentaries that *bhakti*, characterized by hearing and chanting, is the only form of *sādhana*:

*dvāpariyair janer viṣṇuḥ pañcharātrais tu kevalaiḥ
kalau tu nāma-mātraṇ pūjyate bhagavān hariḥ*

“In Dvāpara-yuga, Śrī Viṣṇu is worshipped by the means stated in Pañcaratra, and in Kali-yuga, Bhagavān Śrī Hari is worshipped only through śrī harināma.” (*Muṇḍakopaniṣad bhāṣya-dhrta nārāyaṇa-saṁhitā-vacana*)

*bhaktir evainaṁ darśayati, bhakti-vaśaḥ puruṣo,
bhaktir eva bhūyasīti māṅhar śrūteḥ*

“Only through *bhakti* can one have darśana of Bhagavān. That Supreme Personality of Godhead is controlled by *bhakti* alone. *Bhakti* alone is the topmost means.” (*Sūtra-bhāṣya* 3.3.53)

*bhaktyaiva tustim ebhyati viṣṇur nānyen kenacit
sa eva mukti dātā ca bhaktis tatraiva kāraṇam*

“Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu is satisfied only through *bhakti* and not by any other means. He alone bestows *mukti*, and only *bhakti* is the cause of attaining such *mukti*.” (*Mahābhārata-tātparya* 1.118)

Quoting from various scriptures like this, he has again and again stated that without *bhakti* there is no way to obtain *mukti*. In the opinion of Śrī Madhvācārya, the *mukti* which is ascertained as the *sādhyā* is not the impersonal *sāyujya-mukti* in the form of the oneness of the *jīva* and *paramātmā* (which is included within five types of *mukti*). If Śrī Madhvācārya accepted the union of *jīva* and *paramātmā*, he would be considered an *aupacārika-bhedavādī*, a follower of dualism in name only like Bhāskara Bhaṭṭā. Śrī Madhvācārya is a *śuddha-dvaitavādī*, a follower of pure dualism. He is *nitya pañcha-bhedavādī*, a follower of fivefold eternal differences. He has described the *jīvas* as the eternal servants of Śrī Hari. He has boldly declared the difference between *īśvara* and the *jīva* in the liberated state, that state in which the *jīvas* worship *īśvara*.

*na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer
anuvratā yatra surāsurārcitā
ityādi śrūti-smṛtiṣu tātparya
muktānām bhedasyaivokteḥ*

“That is the place where the servants of Śrī Hari, who are worshipped by both devatas and *asuras*, reside. Even *māyā*

cannot enter that region, what to speak of others.” (Chāndogya-bhāṣya, Chapter 6)

The purport of these *śrutis* and *smrtis* is that there is certainly always, in all states, a difference between Bhagavān and the liberated souls.

kṛṣṇo muktair ijjate vītamohaiḥ
(Mahābhārata tātparya 2.62)

The meaning is that Kṛṣṇa is worshiped by liberated souls who are free from illusion. *Muktā api hi kurvanti svecchayopāsanam hare (Sūtra-bhāṣya 3.3.27), muktānām api bhaktir hi nityānanda-svarupīṇī (Manu-saṁhitā 1.105)*. It has been expressed within these *sūtras* that even the liberated souls worship Śrī Hari—and *bhakti* is their only source of pleasure. *Bheda vyapadeśācca (1.1.17)*. In his commentary of this *sūtra*, Śrī Madhvācārya has explained that the conclusion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* reveals the intrinsic nature of *mukti* (SB 2. 10.5):

muktir hitvān yathā rūpaṁ svarūpeṇa vyavasthitaḥ

“*Mukti* is the state of renunciation of both the gross and subtle illusory forms. It is the state of being established in one’s pure constitutional form as an eternal associate of Bhagavān.”

In the doctrine of Śrī Madhvācārya, even the different levels or gradations of liberation and of liberated souls, and the different levels or gradations of their *ānanda* in liberated state, are also accepted. *Jīva-gaṇā harer anucarā nīcocc bhāvaṁ gatāḥ (saṁkṣipta madhva-mata), muktāvānando viśiṣyate (Sūtra-bhāṣya)*. Therefore, the conception of the *sādhya* of liberation as propounded by Śrī Madhvācārya, the conquerer of *māyāvāda*, is certainly devotional and in line with the conception of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There can be no question of its contamination with *jñāna*, speculative impersonal knowledge. Śrīmad Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Prabhu has described Śrī Madhva’s previous statement of *mukti* as *mokṣam viṣvaṅhrilābham*: “Liberation is the attainment of the lotus feet of Viṣṇu.” For example, ghee has originality of milk. In the same way, Śrī Madhvācārya’s conception of *sādhya* as *mukti*, seen in the light of attainment of the lotus feet of Viṣṇu, is included within the *prema-sādhya* propagated by Śrī Gaurasundara (i.e. the conception of

Śrī Gaurasundara is the essence of the conception of Śrī Madhvācārya.)

Due to the influence of time, the conceptions of the then *tattvavādi-ācārya* Raghuvarya Tīrtha and his disciples, as well as that of the subsequent generations of *tattvavādīs*, have altered considerably from the real conception of Śrī Madhvācārya. This is clearly understood by deliberating on the literature of Śrīman Madhvācārya, in comparison to the teachings, practises, and literature of the modern-day *tattvavādīs*. Therefore, this distorted conception can in no way be established as the conclusion of the original *ācārya*. Although Śrī Raghuvarya Tīrtha has accepted the Madhva-sampradāya, the words of Śrī Mahāprabhu “*tomāra sampradāya*” (your disciplic succession) spoken to him indicate that the respected *ācārya* had greatly deviated from the conception of the original *sampradāya* and had become independent.

By the words “*tomāra sampradāya*,” Mahāprabhu has indicated to him, “You have misunderstood the true significance of the Madhva-sampradāya which is approved and accepted by me. Bound by the net of external (secondary) considerations, you have created a different *sampradāya*. I see no *śuddha-vaiṣṇava siddhānta* here, other than the acceptance of the eternality of Śrī Vighraha. Therefore I, and also Śrī Madhva, the disciple of Vyāsa, have no relation with your imaginary *sampradāya*.”

There are many societies, such as *āul*, *bāul*, *prākṛta saha-jīyā*, and so on, who identify themselves as the followers of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and the Gauḍīya-sampradāya. But their misconceptions can never be

accepted as the opinion preached by Mahāprabhu. If one refutes the misconceptions of the aforementioned societies, it doesn’t mean he refutes the conception of Mahāprabhu. It would be completely unreasonable to think so. Therefore, since Śrīman Mahāprabhu cut the misconceptions of those so-called *tattvavādīs* through many scriptural arguments. Those who argue that He denied the *śrauta-mata*, (disciplic path) established by Śrī Madhva, who is one of the prominent *ācāryas* of the four genuine *sampradāyas*, or that He never accepted the *sampradāya* of Śrī Madhvācārya, are foolhardy and childish.

[Translated from Śrī Gaudīya Patrikā 53/10]

Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Parikramā 2002

A BRIEF REPORT ON THE PARIKRAMĀ
Mukunda Dāsa and Tīrthāpada Dāsa



O invincible Time, our attention has been captured by *vimukha-mohinī-māyā* (*Mahāmāyā*)—when will the day come when we will sail above you? For us, the search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya lies beyond our purview, as our feet and eyes never touch upon or chance to see the real splendor of this dhāma. This place is not a geographical consideration; you won't find it on any map. Even at the time of dissolution, this wonderful dhāma remains, waving its flag of victory and divine eternal glories! Only through hearing the salient empowered words of those enchanted by *unmukha-mohinī-māyā* (*Yogamāyā*) may we stumble into the mystique of this transcendental realm.

This unprecedented Navadvīpa Dhāma Parikramā is a testimony to the glory of such an enchantment. The

founder of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, planted the seed of Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha in the fertile soil of Navadvīpa, and he re-established the flow of *hari-kathā* around Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Parikramā for the welfare of the suffering masses. That flowering plant has been blossoming for many years now. Its fragrance carries further and further afield each year, under the guidance of the stalwart disciples of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, such as the present *ācārya* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja (who unfortunately was absent this year due to delicate health), Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta

Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, and his many *sannyāsīs* and devout followers.

More than twenty thousand devotees from as far afield as land-masses go, gathered at Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Māṭha for the annual *dhāma parikramā*. Throughout the festival, the many assembled *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs*, returning from their respective preaching duties, glorified the nine islands. They also explained many other wide-ranging topics, such as the different faces of *yogamāyā*, the superiority of the Bhāgavat-paramparā, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s reconciliation of the teachings of the four *sampradāyas* in His philosophy of *acintya-bheda-abheda-tattva*. They also glorified with full *śāstric* support *guru-niṣṭhā*, *Ekādaśī-tithi* and the supremacy of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja quoted the verse,

*bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣud-apāyo ’nu-ghāsam*

“Devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things—these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the same way that pleasure, nourishment and relief from hunger come simultaneously and increasingly, with each bite, for a person engaged in eating.” (SB 11.2.42)

He then asked the piercing question, “Are we actually devotees? We think we are performing *bhakti*, but without realization there is no *bhakti*. Ninety-nine percent are in this category.” He continued, “Who is our friend? Only *gurudeva*; only *gurudeva* can take us to Kṛṣṇa. But how much *guru-bhakti* and *guru-niṣṭhā* do we have? How much faith in *guru* do we have? Why is the real mercy of *guru* not showing in us?” Then, throughout the *parikramā*, many instances of the inspirational *guru-niṣṭhā* shown by Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja were highlighted to demonstrate the deeper meaning of these profound words—*guru-niṣṭhā*.

We had arrived in the land of *śaraṇāgati*, the land of *prema-dhāma*. The devotees expressed their wonder in reaching even the outer covering of Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma, the very place where Mahāprabhu performed so many of His glorious pastimes, revealing to the world the process of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, and tasting that mood of Kṛṣṇa’s foremost beloved, Śrīmatī Rādhikā. On the first day, we made our *saṅkalpas* (vows) at the Ganges so that our *parikramā* would be successful. Then, on the next day,



the exhilarating morning march towards Nṛsimha Palli began. The days passed, and at one point, Śrīpāda Paryāṭaka Mahārāja pointed to an elderly, bent-over Bengali woman, moving speedily along with her bamboo cane towards Nirdayāḥ-ghaṭa and Rudradvīpa. He said, “It is the mercy of Mahāprabhu. Just see, it is the mercy of Mahāprabhu that is keeping her going...” And, at every place, the glories of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s *Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma Māhātmya* were sung.

On day four, the *parikramā* reached Modadrūmadvīpa and the village of Māmagāchi. Here, and also back at Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Māṭha in the evening, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja very beautifully expounded on the subtleties of *prema*. He explained that Lord Rāmacandra came here with Sītā Devī and Lakṣmaṇa. One day, resting under a banyan tree, He smiled quietly to Himself. Seeing this, Sītā Devī inquired as to the cause, and Rāma replied: “In Kali-yuga I will appear as the son of a *brahmana* in Navadvīpa Dhāma. I will accept *sannyāsa* at a young age, and my mother and her daughter-in-law will



weep in separation. You will be that daughter-in-law.” “What happiness is there in giving sorrow to your wife?” asked Sītā, and Rāma replied, “*Prema* is tasted in two ways—in *sambhoga*, meeting, and in *vipralambha*, separation.” Śrīla Mahārāja explained that *viraha* actually means a special kind of union. Some say that there should only be meeting, but we disagree; we always see both aspects. The purpose of separation is to increase the pleasure of meeting by intensifying the feeling of reunion. Separation naturally depends upon meeting, and one of the attributes of separation is the constant yearning for union. After separation, when meeting occurs, the happiness felt is a million times greater than before. When Sītā was stolen from Rāma, He wandered throughout the forest calling out to the birds “*Hā* Sītā, where are you?” and when Hanumān saw Sītā in Lañka, she looked as thin as a crescent moon as she cried, “*Hā* Rāma! *Hā* Rāma!”

After Rāma killed all the demons, He told Sītā, “I only saved you to uphold my prestige; now you may go where

you like.” After being tested by the fire-god for her chastity, Sītā returned to Ayodhyā with her reputation vindicated. Many years later, Rāma heard from others about a washerman who rebuked his wife who had been absent from the house for one night. He had told her, “I am not like Rāma. I won’t have you back after you have been in another’s house.” Concerned about public opinion, Rāma ordered Lakṣmaṇa to take Sītā to the forest and leave her there. Taking shelter of the *aśrama* of Vālmīki, Sītā gave birth and raised her two sons, Lava and Kuśa. One day, Lava and Kuśa arrived at the assembly of Lord Rāma and began to narrate the *Rāmāyaṇa*, having heard it from Vālmāki. Amazed, Rāma asked Lakṣmaṇa to find out the identity of their parents. They replied to Lakṣmaṇa: “Within such a learned assembly, you remain a fool, asking *brahmācārīs* who their father is. Don’t you know that *guru* is all in all?” Lakṣmaṇa then tried to offer them gifts, but they refused, saying, “We subsist on fruits and cover our bodies with the bark of the trees.” Then, returning home they inquired: “O Mother,

today we saw an astonishing thing. Next to Rāma stood a golden figure who looked just like you. The only difference is that you walk and talk but that figure didn't. Who is she?" Hearing of Rāma's separation, Sītā Devī wept and thought, "The king has left his queen, but Rāma has never left Sītā." Although Rāma rejected her twice, and would later do so a third time, Sītā never rejected Rāma. Rather, her love for Him continued to increase. This is the unique characteristic of *prema*, that even when there is a cause to break—a very good cause—still it doesn't break. Rather, it increases.

In this way Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja spoke into the night, filling the devotees hearts with joy at the sweet waves of *prema*.

The days seemed to end just as they were beginning, as the *kīrtana* parties rolled over this green and lusciously rich land. Reaching Śrī Caitanya Maṭha on the final day, the devotees glorified Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. They explained how, by the inspiration of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and unaided by the monied people of the times, Śrīla Prabhupāda inspired a new wave of young boys and sent them out to carry the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu on their heads. They described how his disciple Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja carried that order, and how he received the blessings of Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja that he would remove all obstacles from his path, how he initiated Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāja into the *sannyāsa* order before Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja left India to flood the world with Kṛṣṇa consciousness—and who in turn inspired Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja to follow in his footsteps and shower mercy on so many fortunate souls.

This year, two more recipients of that mercy entered into the renounced order of life, as they reconfirmed their dedication to the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīpād Urukrama prabhu received the title Bhaktivedānta Padmanābha Mahārāja and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja said of him, "Urukrama prabhu is a very senior devotee of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, after Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja's departure he went to *pujyapāda* Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja, and then came to me for instruction.

I am giving him the title Bhaktivedānta Padmanābha." He then said, "Śrīpād Dṛṣṭadyumna prabhu received *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāja, and now I am again establishing his *sannyāsa* and giving him the title Bhaktivedānta Bhaktisāra Mahārāja." The new *sannyāsīs'* new *daṇḍas* were, as per tradition, passed around to take the blessings of the other *sannyāsīs* who were present. All the other devotees offered their obeisances to them and wished them well in their new stage of life. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja then explained that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda would often speak of three *mṛdaṅgas*: The clay drum or *mṛdaṅga*, the *brhad-mṛdaṅga* (print-

ing press), and *jīvanta-mṛdaṅga* (the living preacher *sannyāsīs*). What sweet sounds those living *mṛdaṅgas* are now echoing! Carved out by the loving hand of our *guru-varga*, they will resonate the deepest conclusions of the life and teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His pastime places. The *sannyāsa mantras* had been given the morning before, as Śrīla



Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja told them specifically, "I want my *sannyāsīs* to assist me in spreading the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu everywhere. Always be very humble, soft-hearted and kind to all."

Who can describe the devotees exhilarated feelings as Śrīpāda Paryāṭaka Mahārāja began to sing Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's "Śrī Gaura Janma-Līlā" during the Gaura Purṇīma *abhiṣeka*, which was performed by Śrīpāda Tirtha Mahārāja. Who can describe the *bhajan*s that echoed throughout these days? Even those present could not fully comprehend how they were feeling that something mercifully was accumulating in them—some wonderful, mystical *sukṛti* in the association of all the *gaura-bhaktas*.

After the seven-day Dhāma Parikramā, glorious festival came to an end, and the dust settled once more as the over 15 thousand pilgrims sadly packed their blankets, Bengali-style, with wonderous sounds ringing in their ears and impressions etched in their hearts, and with the promise of more transcendental nectar to flow out of this eternal *dhāma* in the future. 

Nagara Bhramiyā Āmāra Gaura



nagara bhramiyā āmāra gaura elo ghare
gaura elo ghare āmāra nitāi elo ghare

pāpī tāpī uddhāra diyā gaura elo ghare
pāpī tāpī uddhāra diyā nitāi elo ghare

nama-prema vilaiyā gaura elo ghare
nama-prema vilaiyā nitāi elo ghare

dhūla jhari' śacimātā gaura kole kare
dhūla jhari' padmavatī nitāi kole kare

After roaming throughout every town and village of Śrī Navadvīpa Dhāma, my Gaurāṅga and my Nityānanda came back home. Having delivered so many suffering sinners from their threefold miseries, Gaura-Nitāi came back home. Gaura-Nitāi had roamed about, distributing the holy names and prema everywhere. Afterwards, Gaurāṅga's body was covered with dust, so Śacimātā took Him in her lap and brushed off the dust, and Padmavatī took Nityānanda in her lap and brushed off the dust from His body.



nagara—town and village; bhramiyā—after roaming; āmāra—my; gaura—Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu; elo—came back; ghare—home; gaura—Gaurāṅga; elo—came; ghare—home; nitāi—Nityānanda Prabhu; elo—came back; ghare—home.

pāpī—sinners; tāpī—sufferers; uddhāra diyā—having delivered; gaura—Gaurāṅga; elo—came back; ghare—home; pāpī—sinners; tāpī—sufferers; uddhāra diyā—having delivered; nitāi—Nityānanda; elo—came back; ghare—home.

nama—prema—the holy names and pure love; vilaiyā—after distributing; gaura—Gaurāṅga; elo—came back; ghare—home; nama—prema the holy names and pure love; vilaiyā—after distributing; nitāi—Nityānanda; elo—came back; ghare—home.

dhūla jhari'—brushing off the dust; śacimātā—Mother Śacidevī; gaura—Gaurāṅga; kole kare—took Him in her lap; dhūla jhari'—brushing off the dust; padmavatī—Mother Padmavatī; nitāi—Nityānanda; kole kare—took Him in her lap.

param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtanam



kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ