



SANDARSHAN

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Shrinivas Acharya, the Form of Mahaprabhu's Love

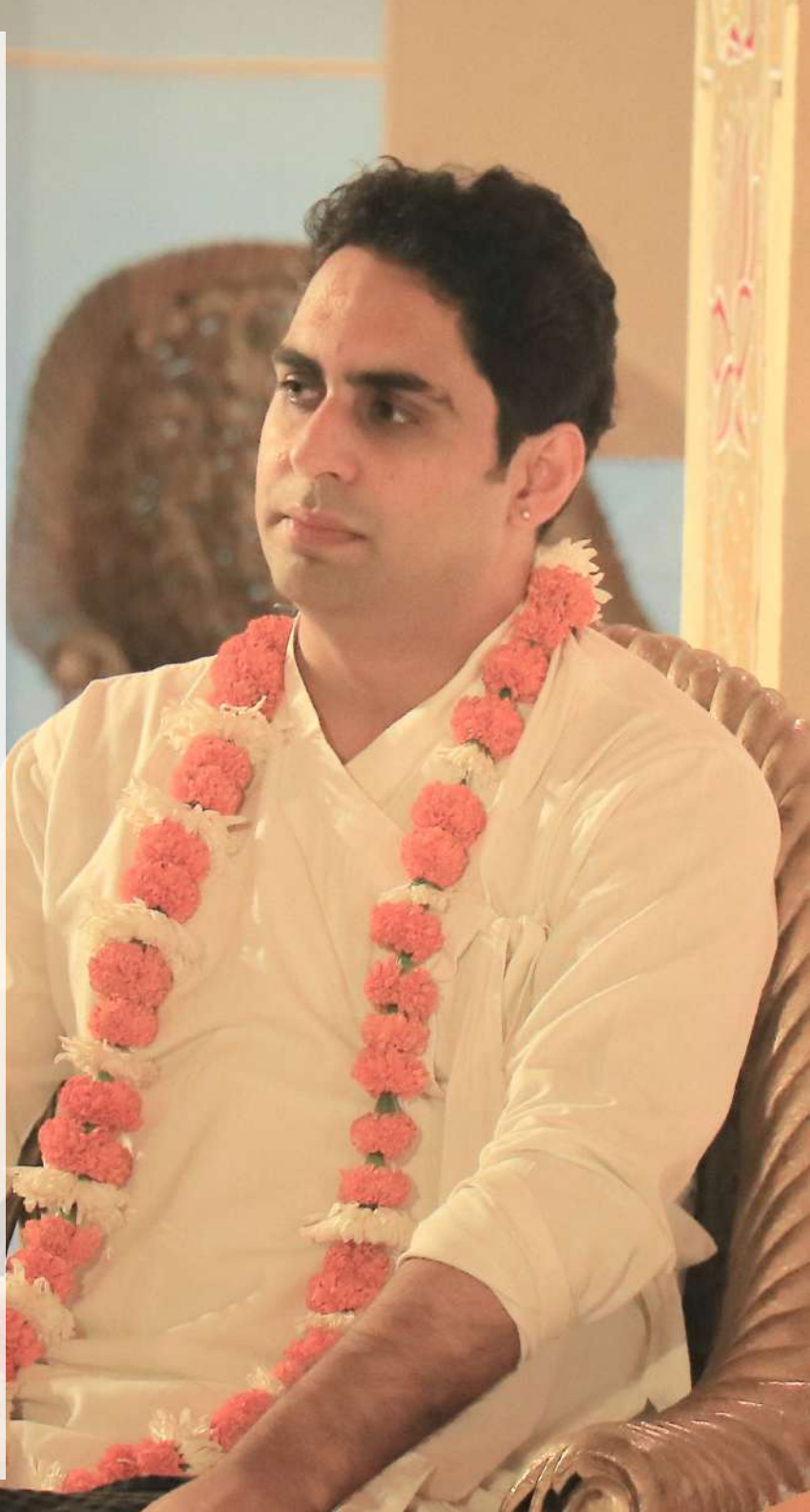
by Vaisnavacharya Chandan Goswami

श्री भट्ट गोपाल पदाब्ज भृङ्ग
श्री भक्ति रत्न प्रदानैक दक्ष ।
श्रीमच्छचीनन्दन प्रेमरूप
पाहि प्रभो श्रीनिवास द्विजेन्द्र ॥

*śrī bhaṭṭa gopāla padābja bhṛṅga
śrī bhakti ratna pradānaika dakṣa
śrīmacchacīnandana premarūpa
pāhi prabho śrīnivāsa dvijendra*

"O Shrinivas Acharya, like a honeybee you always relish the nectar of Gopal Bhatt Goswami's lotus-like feet. You alone are the most capable of granting the jewel of devotion. O manifestation of Mahaprabhu's love! O king of Brahmins, please protect me." (*Bhakti Ratnakar*, 1.3)

The combined incarnation of Shri Radha and Krishn, Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, came to this world to relish sacred love and to give that love to all souls.





Shrinivas Acharya

His eternal associates like Adwait Acharya, Nityananda and the Six Goswamis were his helpers in spreading this love far and wide. And in the following generation, Shrinivas Acharya was at the heart of Mahaprabhu's mission.

Shrinivas Acharya was a disciple of Gopal Bhatt Goswami, and the incarnation of Radharani's maidservant named Mani Manjari. He is also known as "Shri Chaitanya *premer prakash*" or the incarnation of Mahaprabhu's love. For the next twelve editions, we will attempt to bring you the details of this great soul's beautiful life of service for Mahaprabhu, beginning with the story of his birth.



Shrinivas Acharya, Part 1 of 12: The Story of His Birth



The author of *Bhakti Ratnakar*, Shri Narahari Chakravarti, writes that he heard the following story personally from an elderly Brahmin resident of Shrinivasji's ancestral village. When Mahaprabhu came to Kankarnagar to accept *sannyas* (the vows of a renunciate), many people gathered to watch the ceremony. Gangadhar Bhattacharya, Shrinivas Acharya's father, was also in the crowd. Being Radha and Krishna in a single form, Mahaprabhu was the object of everyone's love and it was painful for anyone to imagine his delicate divine form being subjected to the hardships of renounced life.

Knowing that part of the *sannyas* ceremony included shaving the initiate's head, everyone kept staring at Mahaprabhu's dark, curly locks with anxiety. When the barber finally came and did his work, neither him nor those in the crowd could contain their sorrow. Overwhelmed by the sight of

Mahaprabhu's beautiful hair falling to the ground, Gangadharji lost consciousness. *Bhakti Ratnakar* says that he almost died at that moment; only Mahaprabhu's will kept him alive.

During the ceremony, Mahaprabhu received the name "Shri Krishn Chaitanya". The moment Gangadharji heard it, he started chanting "Chaitanya! Chaitanya!" without stopping. When Gangadharji returned to his hometown of Chakhandi the villagers thought he had gone mad. He neither ate nor slept, but only chanted "Chaitanya" and cried all the time. His family and friends tried to comfort him, but nothing worked.

Finally, one man said, "Gangadhar is Chaitanya's *das* (servant). Only Chaitanya can cure him." From then on, the people of the village started calling him Chaitanya Das and slowly, he returned to a calmer state.

Chaitanya Dasji Prays for a Son

Chaitanya Dasji and his wife Lakshmipriyaji never had children, but despite any societal pressure or personal considerations, this did not bother them at all, for they only valued devotion in their lives. However, by the Lord's will, one day a strong desire arose in their hearts to have a son.

This longing was so powerful that it started to become an obsession for them. Although they did not want to ask the Lord for material things, Mahaprabhu was their only shelter and their only means of overcoming this burning desire. After *sannyas*, Mahaprabhu went to live in the holy city of Puri and Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji decided to make the journey there to ask for Mahaprabhu's help.

In Puri, Mahaprabhu had immersed himself in the bliss of Radha Bhav whilst his companions and followers, like the six Goswamis in Vrindavan, and Adwait Prabhu and Nityanand Prabhu in Bengal, spread his message of love far and wide. But Mahaprabhu worried about what would happen to the world when he and his eternal companions returned to *nitya lila*. One day, he said to his companions, "I am living so blissfully here with you all. But when I think of the future, my heart is filled with anxiety."

मोर दत्त अनर्पित महाप्रेम सार ।

भविष्यते के वा ताहा कोरिबे प्रचार ॥

*mor datta anarpita mahaa-prem saar
bhavishyate ke vaa taahaa koribe
prachaar*

"For so long, that supreme treasure of sacred love was not bestowed on this world, and I have now come to give it. But who will spread

my treasure throughout the world in the future?" (*Shri Shrinivas Acharya Thakurer Suchak Kirtan*)

With great pain in his heart, Mahaprabhu went to the temple, where he offered all his worries at the lotus feet of Jagannath. At that moment, Jagannath's huge garland fell from his neck, and the *pujari* gave it to Mahaprabhu. Taking this as a sign, Mahaprabhu was filled with happiness and returned home.



Mahaprabhu offers his worries to Jagannath

Mahaprabhu Grants his Darshan

The *Bhakti Ratnakar* goes on to describe how Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji arrived in Puri, excited and desperate to have Mahaprabhu's *darshan*. Mahaprabhu could sense the longing in his devotee's heart. Thus, as he made his way towards Jagannath's temple along with his companions, he appeared before Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji to grant them his *darshan*.

As Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji lost themselves in Mahaprabhu's beauty, Mahaprabhu looked at them from the corner of his eye, bathing them in the nectar of his mercy.

Mahaprabhu asked Chaitanya Dasji to go and receive *darshan* of Jagannath. This, he said, would fulfil whatever desire he may have, and without hesitation, Chaitanya Dasji obliged. Mahaprabhu came into the temple too, and as Chaitanya Dasji offered prayers to Jagannath, Mahaprabhu watched him and smiled.

That night, Jagannath appeared in Mahaprabhu's dream, wearing the biggest smile, and said, "Today the Brahmin named Chaitanya Das asked me to give him a son. He cried so sincerely that I decided to bless him in such a way that he will never suffer again. He is a most worthy vessel of my grace; you should bestow your sacred love (*prem*) upon him."

With that, Mahaprabhu awoke from his dream, crying and calling out "Jagannath! Jagannath!"

Mahaprabhu Gives His Prem in the Form of Shrinivas

With all his fears and anxieties gone, Mahaprabhu went to Jagannath's Temple and, standing in front of him with folded hands, cried out, "Shrinivas! Shrinivas!", to summon his dearest Mani Manjari from eternal Vrindavan in this new incarnation. At that very moment, he blessed Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji with his *prem* in the form of their child.

When asked by his companions who Shrinivas was, Mahaprabhu said, "Shrinivas will be the son of the Brahmin who came to pray for a child. He is taking birth on Jagannath's direct orders, to drown this world in Radha and Krishn's *lila*."

श्री रूपादि द्वारे भक्तिशास्त्र प्रकाशिबो ।
श्रीनिवासद्वारे ग्रन्थरत्न वितरिबो ॥
मोर शुद्ध प्रेमेर स्वरूप श्रीनिवास ।

*shri roop-aadi dwaare bhakti shaastra
prakaashibo
shrinivaas dwaare granth ratna vitaribo
mor shuddha premer swaroop shrinivas*

"Through Shri Roop and the rest of the Six Goswamis, I shall reveal the scriptures of devotion, and Shrinivas will be the one to

bring their writings to the world. Shrinivas is the very form of my pure love." (*Bhakti Ratnakar*, 2.122-123)

Meanwhile, Jagannath also appeared in Chaitanya Dasji's dream, instructing him to return to Bengal. Although they accepted the dream as true, it was difficult for Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji to think of going away and leaving Mahaprabhu. However, when Govind arrived to give them a message from Mahaprabhu, the couple gathered the strength to leave. Govind told them, "Mahaprabhu says that your wish will be fulfilled very soon; therefore, you must go to Bengal quickly." After offering their obeisances at Mahaprabhu's feet and receiving his instructions to remain absorbed in singing Harinaam, they left Puri.

Back in Chakhandi, Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji submerged themselves in their spiritual practices. Soon, they discovered that Lakshmipriyaji was pregnant. The life growing inside Lakshmipriyaji was so magnetic, it attracted everyone who saw her. As the time drew near for the baby to be born, many divine visions blessed Chaitanya Dasji's dreams.

At last, in 1518 C.E., on Vaishakh Purnima, the same day on which Radharamanji would eventually appear, Shrinivas Acharya was born (*Gaudiya Vaishnav Abhidhan*). The *Bhakti Ratnakar* says:

अपूर्व पुत्रेर शोभा सर्वसल्लक्षण ।
कनकचम्पक पारा अङ्गेर किरण ॥
महानन्द ब्राह्मण ब्राह्मणी दुइ जने ।
समर्पितो पुत्रे गौरचन्द्रेर चरणे ॥

*apoorva putrer shobhaa sarva sallakshan
kanaka champaka paaraa angera kiran
mahaananda braahman braahmani dui
jane
samarpilo putre gaur chandrer charane*

"The child's beauty was like no other, and he had all the divine markings of a great soul. His skin was golden like *champa* flowers, but all the more radiant. Overjoyed to have this child in their life, the couple offered him unto Mahaprabhu's lotus feet." (*Bhakti Ratnakar*, 2.159-160)

To be continued ...



Lakshmipriyaji and Shrinivas

References

Bhakti Ratnakar by Narahari Chakravarti
Shri Shrinivas Acharya Thakurer Suchak Kirtan
by Ramdas Babaji Maharaj
Gaudiya Vaishnav Abhidhan by Haridas Das Babaji

The Vision of Mahaprabhu's Beauty

As soon as they reached Puri, Mahaprabhu granted his *darshan* to Chaitanya Dasji and Lakshmipriyaji, and the author of *Bhakti Ratnakar*, Shri Narahari Chakravarti, has described this moment beautifully:

कि अपूर्व गमन गजेन्द्रगति जिनि । चरण चालनेर धन्य मानये धरणी ॥
कनक पर्वत जिनि गौरकलेवर । जिनिया से तेजः प्रभातेर प्रभाकर ॥
श्रीमुखमण्डले कोतो चान्देर उदय । मधुर हासिते सदा सुधा वृष्टि होय ॥
दशनच्छटाय कन्दर्पेर दर्प हरे । नासिकासौन्दर्य देखि केवा धैर्य धरे ॥

*ki apūrva gaman gajendra-gati jini । caraṇa cālaner dhanya mānaye dharaṇī ॥
kanaka parvata jini gaura-kalevar । jiniyā se tejaḥ prabhāter prabhākar ॥
śrīmukhamanḍale koto cāndera uday । madhura hāsīte sadā sudhā vṛṣṭi hoy ॥
daśanacchaṭāy kandarper darpa hare ।
nāsikāsaundarya dekhi kevā dhairya dhare ॥*

"Regal like an elephant, his beautiful walk made Mother Earth herself feel blessed to receive each of his divine footprints. His mighty body glistened like a mountain of gold emerging from the horizon just as the sun rises at dawn. His face shone with the light of a thousand rising moons, with a smile showering the sweetest nectar. The glistening of his teeth stripped even Cupid of his pride, the mere sight of his nose causing all to lose their senses."

आकर्णपर्यन्त दुइ नयनकमल । ललाटे चन्दनटीका करे झलमल ॥
भुवनमोहन कण्ठे तुलसीर दाम । हेरि परिसर वक्षः मुरचये काम ॥
परिधेय अरुण वसन मनोहर । आजानुलम्बित भुज जिनि करिकर ॥
अपूर्व उदरशोभा करये त्रिवली । नाभिपद्मे विलसे भ्रमर लोमावली ॥

*ākaraṇaparyanta dui nayanakamala । lalāṭe candanaṭikā kare jhalamala ॥
bhuvanamohana kaṇṭhe tulasīra dāma । heri parisara vakṣaḥ muracaye kāma ॥
paridheya aruṇa vasana manohara । ājānulambita bhuja jini karikara ॥
apūrva udaraśobhā karaye trivalī । nābhipadme vilase bhramara lomāvalī ॥*

"His wide eyes were soft like lotus petals and his brow was adorned with fragrant sandalwood paste. The sight of his neck, decorated with strands of *tulsi* beads, enchanted the whole universe, as did his arms, strong and graceful like elephant trunks. A line of delicate, soft hairs lay on his defined stomach like little honeybees reaching to drink the nectar from his lotus-like navel."

सिंहेर गरव हरे क्षीण माजाखानी । मधुर नितम्ब उरु रामरम्भा जिनि ॥
लखिमीलालित चारु चरणयुगल । नखेर किरणे करे धरणी उज्ज्वल ॥

*siṃhera garava hare kṣīṇa mājākhānī । madhura nitamba uru rāmarambhā jini ॥
lakhimīlālita cāru caraṇayugala । nakhera kiraṇe kare dharaṇī ujjava ॥*

"His hips were shapely, while his elegant waist put the lion to shame; his thighs held the strength and smoothness of a banana tree's trunk. Upon his lotus feet, eternally pampered by Goddess Lakshmi, lay toenails so radiant, they filled the whole world with divine light."

हेनो गौरचन्द्रे विप्र पत्निर सहिते । अनिमिषनेत्रे हेरे रहि एक भिते ॥
जे अङ्गे पडये दिठि सेइ अङ्गे रहे । अविरत नयने आनन्दधारा बहे ॥
से केशविहीन श्रीमस्तक निरखिते । जे दशा हड़लो ताहा के पारे कहिते ॥
श्रीकृष्णचैतन्य प्रभु चाहि नेत्रकोणे । कृपासुधा वृष्टि कइला विप्र भाग्यवाने ॥

*heno gauracandre vipra patnira sahite । animiṣa-netre here rahi eka bhite ॥
je aṅge paḍaye diṭhi sei aṅge rahe । avirata nayane ānandadhārā bahe ॥
se keśavihīna śrīmastaka nirakhite । je daśā haila tāhā ke pāre kahite ॥
śrīkṛṣṇacaitanya prabhu cāhi netrakōṇe ।
kṛpāsudhā vṛṣṭi kailā vipra bhāgyavāne ॥*

"Thus, Chaitanya Das and his wife remained lost in Mahaprabhu's beauty, drinking in his *darshan* with unblinking eyes. Whenever their gaze met with a part of his body, their eyes would be drawn in, relishing an unending stream of nectar. But when they noticed his beautiful head without any hair, they experienced a sadness too intense to describe. Then, Mahaprabhu looked at them from the corner of his eye, bathing them in the nectar of his mercy." (*Bhakti Ratnakar*, 2.89-102)

Shri Radharamanashtakam by Shri Hemang Goswami



भक्त्या गोपालभट्टस्य जनिदामोदराश्मनः ।
तं राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*bhaktyā gopāla-bhaṭṭasya jani-dāmodarāśmanah
taṁ rādhāramaṇaṁ vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud, and who manifested from Damodar *shaligram shila* by the blessed loving devotion of Shri Gopal Bhatt Goswami. (1)

विभ्राणं वदनाम्भोजे गोविन्द लपनद्युतिं ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*vibhrāṇaṁ vadanāmbhoje govinda lapana-dyutiṁ
śrī rādhāramaṇaṁ vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud, and whose lotus face shines with the divine beauty of Shri Govind Dev's face. (2)

गोपीनाथोरसः शोभां स्वोरसा दधतं प्रभुं ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*gopīnāthorasaḥ śobhāṁ svorasā dadhataṁ prabhuṁ
śrī rādhāramaṇaṁ vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud, and who has taken upon his chest the beautiful, sweet splendour of Shri Gopinath's chest. (3)

त्रिभङ्गललितां चारु सन्नीवीं दधतं कटौ ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*tribhaṅga-lalitāṁ cāru sannīvīm dadhataṁ kaṭau
śrī rādhāramaṇaṁ vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud, whose lovely pose is thrice-curved and who wears an elegant scarf tied around his waist. (4)

पदोर्मदनगोपालस्येवाभां दधतं पदोः ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*pador-madana-gopālasya-evābhāṁ dadhataṁ padoh
śrī rādhāramaṇaṁ vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud and whose lotus feet shine with the same magnificence as Shri Madan Mohan's feet. (5)

यो भुवि प्रादुरभवद् दृष्ट्वा नृन्दर्शनोत्सुकान् ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*yo bhuvi prādurabhavad dr̥ṣṭā nṛn-darśanotsukān
śrī rādhāramaṇam vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud, and who, upon seeing the devotees' intense longing for his *darshan*, appeared in this world. (6)

श्रीमद् गोपालभट्टस्य प्राणाधार स्वरूपकं ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*śrīmad-gopāla-bhaṭṭasya prāṇādhāra-svarūpakam
śrī rādhāramaṇam vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud, and who is the breath of life for Shri Gopal Bhatt Goswami. (7)

तदीय करुणा प्रार्थी गोपीनाथैक जीवनं ।
श्री राधारमणं वन्दे सार्णस्क घनमेचकम् ॥

*tadīya karuṇā prārthī gopīnāthaika-jīvanam
śrī rādhāramaṇam vande sārṇaska ghana-mecakam*

I offer my humble adoration to Shri Radharamanji, whose form is beautifully dark like a raincloud. I pray for the compassion of the only Beloved, the very life, of Gopinath Das Goswami. (8)

राधारमणदेवस्य योऽष्टकं सततं पठेत् ।
सद्यो श्रीगोपालभट्टस्यानुकम्पा-पात्रतां व्रजेत् ॥

*rādhāramaṇa-devasya yo'sṭakam satatam paṭhet
sadyo śrī-gopāla-bhaṭṭasy-ānukampā-pātratām vrajet*

One who recites this Shri Radharaman Dev *ashtakam* daily becomes a vessel of Shri Gopal Bhatt Goswami's grace. (9)



Upcoming Events: December 2019



Khichdi Mahotsav

Monday, December 9th until Tuesday, January 7th

Starting on Vyanjan Dwadashi, Radharamanji enjoys a one-month Khichdi Mahotsav. His *khichdi*, a delicious and healthy dish made of rice and lentils, is spiced with different ingredients throughout the festival, including nuts, grated coconut and heating, aromatic spices like cloves. A vast array of side dishes like pickles and fried foods are also served. The *khichdi*, along with elegant warm clothes and a special silver coal-burning stove, helps keep Shri Radharaman Lal warm during the coldest part of the year.

