



SANDARSHAN

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The Sins of the Disciple

by Chandan Goswami

Question: Does a guru take on the sins of his disciple?

Answer: The scriptures say:

मन्त्रिदोषश्च राजानं जायादोषः पतिं यथा।

तथा प्राप्नोत्यसन्देहं शिष्यपापं गुरुं प्रिये॥

*mantridoṣaśca rājānam jāyādoṣaḥ patiṁ yathā।
tathā prāpnotyasandeham śiṣyapāpaṁ gurum priye॥*

"Just as a minister's misdeeds affect the king and a wife's wrongdoings affect her husband, similarly, the disciple's sins are passed on to the guru." (*Kularnav Tantra*)

So, according to the scriptures, it is correct that a disciple's sins affect his guru. Disciples must always be cautious about their deeds. However, if the guru has immense faith in Harinaam alone, then all those sins are washed away in a moment, and thus the guru is unaffected by them.

In his commentary on *Shrimad Bhagwatam*, 6.2.16, Shridhar Swami states, "Harinaam can liberate one from every type of sin, whether it is great or small. The *smriti* declares that just by remembering Krishn, one becomes free from all kinds of sins." Shri Vishwanath Chakravarti comments on the same verse, "Mountains of sins are destroyed just by chanting an incomplete portion of one Holy Name of the Lord. This is due to the Holy Name's unimaginable power."

One may ask, when Harinaam can wash away all sins, then shouldn't the disciple already be sin-free? As I have stated before, immense faith is needed to remove sin, and this level of faith comes when the disciple no longer commits the ten offences to the Holy Name. Until then, he will continue to commit sins, and those sins will pass on to his guru.



Shrinivas Acharya, Part 6 of 12: Shrinivas Meets Narottam



In the previous edition, Shrinivas came to Vrindavan and received initiation from Gopal Bhatt Goswami. In the next part of the story, Shrinivas meets a very special devotee named Narottam.

After receiving initiation from Gopal Bhatt Goswami, Shrinivas served him just as an ideal disciple should. Every day, he would cook for his guru, and often, he would also serve the *prasad* to him with his own hands. With his guru's blessings, he continued to learn from Jeev Goswami. Shrinivas was taught everything that Jeev Goswami had learned from Roop Goswami.

Shrinivas Meets Narottam

One day, Shrinivas went for *darshan* of the great saint Loknath Goswami. Loknath's new disciple, Narottam, was present at his side. Although Shrinivas had already heard about Narottam, this was the first time the two had met. Their meeting occurred on Shravan Shukla Panchami, and the pair forged a deep friendship that would last forever.

In a way, Shrinivas and Narottam were twin souls. Mahaprabhu had infused Shrinivas with his

sacred love (*prem*) even before his birth, and Narottam had a similar experience as a child.

Around the year 1513 CE, when Mahaprabhu was travelling through Bengal, he suddenly started crying and repeating the name "Narottam! Narottam!" Everyone wondered who this Narottam could be.

Mahaprabhu told Nityanand, "Since I left my hometown of Navadwip to live in Puri, you have been preaching the path of devotion in Bengal. I know that as long as you are present, my love will remain in this world, and Harinaam *sankirtan* will continue. But what will happen when we both return to *nitya lila*? I must give my love to some special soul who can continue this *seva* . . .

नीलाचले जाइते जोतो कान्दियाछो तुमि
शेइ प्रेमा दिने दिने बान्धियाछि आमि ।
शे प्रेम राखिबो आमि पद्मावती तीरे
नरोत्तम नामे पात्र दिबो आमि तारे ॥

*nilaachale jaaite joto kaandiyaacho tumi
shei premaa dine dine baandhiyaachi aami ।
she prem raakhibo aami padmaavati tire
narottam naame paatra dibo aami taare ॥*

"When I left home and went to Puri, I saved each love-filled teardrop that you cried for me in my absence. Now I am hiding this love in the Padma River, and one day she will give it to a special soul, a vessel of my grace, named Narottam." (*Prem Vilas*, 8.74-75)

Many years later, Narottam was born in a nearby village. He was such a sweet and handsome boy that, when he was only twelve years old, his parents decided to arrange his marriage. Worried about his future, Narottam went to take a bath in the Padma River at the same *ghat* where Mahaprabhu had come.

As soon as Narottam's foot touched the water, he had a vision of the river goddess, Padmavati. In his vision, the goddess was holding nectar in her hands. It was the nectar of sacred love that Mahaprabhu had given her so many years before. The goddess poured the nectar into Narottam's hands, saying, "Please keep this treasure of love very carefully. But beware; if you drink it, you will go mad!"



Narottam receives the nectar of love

Suddenly, Narottam became extremely thirsty, and despite the goddess's warnings, he could not stop himself from drinking that nectar of love. As soon as he drank it, his skin began to shine as bright as gold, and he was overwhelmed with the eight symptoms of ecstasy (*asht-sattvik-bhavs*). He went back home, but the *asht-sattvik-bhavs* continued to overwhelm him, as his heart was filled with sacred love.

Narottam felt that some golden-complexioned young man had entered his heart by force and was now living inside his body, and that this young man's presence was driving him mad. Now all he wanted to do was go to Vrindavan, and he begged his parents to let him go. (*Prem Vilas*, 10.75-76)

Later, Narottam came to Vrindavan and received initiation from Loknath Goswami.

Soon after, Narottam and Shrinivas became inseparable, and they spent lots of time together sharing Hari Katha. The two were so deeply connected that, at times, it became difficult for people to tell them apart.

Jeev Goswami Gives Shrinivas the Title of "Acharya"

Once, Jeev Goswami was reading Roop Goswami's writings about Krishn going to Mathura, and the separation that Shri Radha and the *gopis* felt for him at that time. There was a particular verse that caught his attention:

सखि रोपितो द्विपत्रः शतपत्राक्षेण यो व्रज द्वारि ।
सोऽयं कदम्बडिम्भः फुल्लो वल्लववधूस् तुदति ॥

*sakhi ropito dvipatraḥ śatapatrākṣeṇa
yo vraja dvāri ।*

*so'yaṁ kadamba-ḍimbhaḥ phullo
vallava-vadhūs tudati ॥*

Shri Radha told her *sakhi*, "Once, Krishn planted a baby *kadamb* tree with only two leaves near the gateway of the village. The tree has grown up and has so many beautiful leaves and flowers. Now that he is gone, the beauty of this tree is killing us." (*Ujjwal Nilmani*, 10.96)

As he meditated on this verse, Jeev Goswami went into a trance and fell unconscious. When he awoke, he saw that all the trees and creepers around his hut had wilted, and only the nearby *kadamb* tree still blossomed, just like in the verse he had been meditating on.

When Shrinivas came to see him later that day, Jeev Goswami said, "O my dear friend, I have a question, and it is troubling my heart. There has been no lack of rain, so why are the trees and creepers of this *kunj* wilting? And why is the *kadamb* tree still blossoming?"

"Gosain ji!" replied Shrinivas, "I am in no way fit to explain anything to you. Still, if you bless me, may your own answer to this question manifest within my heart." Shrinivas then sat alone to meditate, and after some time, he returned with an answer:

"All the trees and plants of Vrindavan are here to serve Krishn, but when he leaves, even if it is just to go home for the day, they wilt in sorrow. But when Krishn left for Mathura, one special *kadamb* tree remained in bloom. This is because Krishn planted the tree with his

own hands. In Mathura, he used to think about that *kadamb* tree and wonder how she was doing, how much she had grown, whether she had any flowers yet, and so forth. The tree thrived only through the touch of Krishn's loving memories."

Shri Jeev Goswami was extremely pleased by Shrinivas's answer. He embraced him and declared, "From today you shall be known as Shrinivas Acharya." He then took Shrinivas to the temple of Govind Dev, and the *pujari* honoured him by placing Govind Dev's *prasadi* garland around his neck.

To be continued . . .

References

Bhakti Ratnakar by Narahari Chakravarti

Prem Vilas by Nityanand Das

COVID-19 Relief Efforts in Vrindavan



Due to the nationwide lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many people in Vrindavan are now out of work. Vulnerable seniors, who depend on the kindness of strangers, are left without any means to sustain themselves.

The animals, too, are suffering. On a normal day, many street dogs and other animals survive on food scraps from homes and restaurants. But at the moment, most families can't afford to leave anything behind for them, and all the local restaurants are closed. As a result, even that little amount of nutrition is unavailable to them.

To help relieve this suffering, Ocean of Devotion is providing groceries and other essentials to help people get through this extremely difficult time. So far, we have distributed food rations of rice, *daal*, cooking oil and so forth to more than 300 people in need. And under our Braj Animal Care project, we are feeding a minimum of 50 dogs, 20 cows and 200 monkeys every day.

Funding is urgently needed in order to sustain and increase these vital services to the community. Please contact us to join the COVID-19 relief effort in Vrindavan or visit our websites to contribute:

Donation Link For Rations:

www.oceanofdevotion.com/covid-19-relief

Donation Link For Animal Feedings:

www.brajanimalcare.com/contribute

Instagram:

[@odev.seva](https://www.instagram.com/odev.seva)

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Maharajji's Latest Updates



Our regular *sankirtans* have been temporarily postponed due to social distancing measures implemented in response to COVID-19, however you can still receive Maharajji's association through his recorded *kathas* on YouTube at [ChandanjiOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCChandanjiOfficial) and [ODevOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCODevOfficial). For more information about Shri Radharaman Lal and Maharajji, please contact us at odev108@gmail.com or WhatsApp us on [+91 83687 83201](https://wa.me/918368783201).

Radharamanji's Appearance Day

May 7th, 2020, marks the anniversary of Shri Radharaman Lal's appearance. It was 478 years ago that Radharamanji appeared from a *shaligram shila* through the power of Gopal Bhatt Goswami's love.

About 4,500 years before the appearance of Radharamanji, during the Raas Lila, Krishn had disappeared from Radha's sight under a *peepal* tree. At that time, Radha cried, "O my dearest Beloved (Raman), where are you?"

हा नाथ रमण प्रेष्ठ क्वासि क्वासि महाभुज ।

hā nātha ramaṇa preṣṭha kvāsi kvāsi mahābhuja ।

(*Shrimad Bhagwatam*, 10.30.39)

Thereafter, in great longing, Radha and the *gopis* looked for him, sparing no corner of the forest in their search. Eventually, sensing the yearning in their hearts, Krishn reappeared.

Gopal Bhatt Goswami used the spot under that same *peepal* tree for his *bhajan* because of the separation Radharani had felt when Krishn disappeared from beneath it. Gopal Bhatt also longed for Krishn and, just as Krishn had appeared again after Radha and the *gopis* searched for him with all their hearts, he also appeared for Gopal Bhatt. Because Radha had called him "Raman" when he disappeared during the Raas Lila, the deity was named "Radharaman" (Radha's Beloved).

Each year, Radharamanji's Appearance Day is celebrated with a grand *abhishek* ceremony in the temple, just like the one that was celebrated when he first appeared in this world. Due to the situation surrounding COVID-19, the temple may not be open to the public during his Appearance Day celebrations this year. However, updates will be posted on the [Shri Radharaman Temple Facebook page](#) and [Maharajji's Facebook page](#). Updates will also be emailed to subscribers of the ODev mailing list.

Vaishnav Calendar

For upcoming festivals and Ekadashi dates, please click [here](#) to view our Vaishnav calendar.



Maharajji performs *abhishek* of Shri Radharaman

