



# SANDARSHAN

Monthly Newsletter

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## The Nature of Love

by Chandan Goswami

Once there was a debate on the topic of love. A scholar from Benares said, "Everything we see in this world is love. You, me, your clothes, this chair, the dust, everything is love, which is complete in itself. Once you understand this fact, you become happy. This love gives you all the happiness you need, therefore you have no desire to seek it from other people or things." His proposed theory attracted the listening audience, as they turned to each other and nodded.

The judge of the debate looked around to see if anybody was going to offer a counter-argument. Then one Brajwasi<sup>1</sup> stood up and said, "Dear friends! This scholar has just said that everything is love, and once you realise this, you become happy.

<sup>1</sup>A resident of Vrindavan



So, Mr. Scholar, are you completely content, since you understand the nature of love?" The scholar replied, "Yes, I am."

The Brajwasi said, "Evening has come. Shall we all take a break for our meal? I trust the scholar does not need to eat, because he is fully satisfied in the love that he is. Or will he feel dissatisfied if he goes without food? If this is the case, his philosophy is not concrete." The scholar was left speechless.

When you experience real love, you are completely absorbed in it; you forget everything, even your own existence. I was reading about a mother whose son was stranded 1,400 kilometres away from home because of the nationwide coronavirus lockdown. He was helpless, but his mother drove an old motor scooter across many forests and dark streets, through villages and cities, crossing borders, explaining to every officer at each checkpoint that she had to bring her child back. The thought of bathing, eating, the danger of the pandemic and even her own wellbeing didn't cross her mind for a moment, because she was so absorbed in the love that she has for her child. You may say that what she did is an act of madness; but the 17th-century Spanish poet Pedro Calderon de la Barca says, "Love that is not madness is not love."

The same can be said about the nature of Krishn's lovers. For example, the *Shrimad Bhagwatam*, 7.4.38, describes the qualities of of Krishn's dearest devotee Prahlad:

आसीनः पर्यटनश्नन् शयानः प्रपिबन् ब्रुवन् ।  
नानुसन्धत्त एतानि गोविन्दपरिरम्भितः ॥

*āśīnah paryatnashnann śayānah prapibann bruvan ।  
nānusandhata etāni govinda-parirambhitah ॥*

"Whether sitting or walking, eating or drinking, lying down or speaking to others, he had no consciousness of these external acts, for he felt he was constantly embraced by the arms of his Lord."



## Shrinivas Acharya, Part 7 of 12: A Most Important Seva



*In the last edition, Shrinivas met Narottam Das Thakur. Now, he is asked to take the books of the six Goswamis to Bengal.*

In Vrindavan, Shrinivas meditated on the eternal *lila* of Shri Radha and Krishn under the divine guidance of his *diksha* guru, Gopal Bhatt Goswami, and his *shiksha* guru, Jeev Goswami.

Chapter six of the *Bhakti Ratnakar* says that once during his meditation, Shrinivas had a vision of Mahaprabhu in Navadwip. After lovingly decorating Mahaprabhu's form with *chandan* (sandalwood paste) and flower garlands, he started cooling him with a *chamar*<sup>2</sup> fan. Absorbed in Mahaprabhu's *darshan*, tears of sacred love flowed from Shrinivas's lotus eyes and he trembled, almost losing consciousness in bliss. Mahaprabhu then removed the garland he was wearing and placed it around Shrinivas's neck. When Shrinivas became aware of his physical surroundings again, he saw that he was actually wearing the same garland from his meditation.



Shrinivas receives Mahaprabhu's garland

<sup>2</sup> A *chamar* is a type of fan made from yak tail hair.

On another occasion, Shrinivas was meditating on Holi *lila*. He saw that Shri Radha and her *sakhis* were attacking Shri Krishn with coloured powder to the accompaniment of beautiful Holi songs. Shrinivas's seva was to stand near Radha and continue supplying her with more coloured powder. Krishn, in turn, soaked his Beloved and her friends with water scented with saffron and musk. Then he embraced Radha tightly, filling everyone with delight. Finally, Radha's maidservants asked the Divine Couple to take a seat, and Shrinivas's dreams were fulfilled as he soothed them with a *chamar* fan. When he came to external consciousness, he found that his physical body was completely covered with the shimmering, divine Holi powder from the *lila*.

## **Shrinivas is Chosen to Take the Books to Bengal**

Mahaprabhu never wrote any books, but he chose Shri Roop and Sanatan to put his heart's desire into words. Their writings formed the foundation of the Gaudiya Sampradaya's philosophy, and so it was vital that these books reached the devotees in Bengal. However, to send them such a long distance was risky, because in those days, all books were handwritten. Many of the books that needed to be transported were the original manuscripts, whilst the others were rare, painstakingly-crafted copies. The Goswamis of Vrindavan felt that Shrinivas should be given the responsibility of taking the books to Bengal.

It was decided that Shrinivas's dear friends Narottam and Shyamanand<sup>3</sup> would accompany him on the journey. Before leaving Vrindavan, the three of them made sure to visit Radhakund, Govardhan, and many other places in Braj which they loved dearly. They visited all the living Goswamis and their deities to seek their blessings for the journey. They also visited the tombs of Sanatan, Roop, and Raghunath Bhatt. The *Anuraag Valli*, 6.101, mentions how Shrinivas, Narottam and Shyamanand carefully gathered precious items like *prasadi* sandalwood paste, clothes and *tulsi manjaris*. They also gathered bags full of dust from the Raas Mandal<sup>4</sup> and from the lotus feet of the great souls.

When they visited Gopal Bhatt Goswami, Gopal Bhatt prayed to Radharaman Lal to bestow his mercy on Shrinivas and give him the strength needed to complete this important task. He also gave Shrinivas Radharamanji's *prasadi* flower garland, along with his blessings. Before they left, he embraced them and promised to see them off the next day.

After taking the blessings of so many dear *mahatmas*, Shrinivas went for *darshan* of Govind Dev before returning to his hut. That night he cried himself to sleep, thinking about how he might never see his guru and the other Goswamis again. As Shrinivas slept, he dreamt that Govind Dev left his temple and

came to his hut. He told Shrinivas, "You are the incarnation of my love and I am always with you ...

मोर मनोभीष्ट जे ता अनेक प्रकारे ।  
करितु प्रकाश रूपसनातन द्वारे ॥  
तोमा द्वारे ग्रन्थरत्न करि वितरण ।  
हरिबो जीवेर दुःख दिया प्रेमधन ॥

*mor manobhishta je taa anek prakaare ।  
karilu prakaash roop-sanaatan dwaare ॥  
tomaa dwaare grantha-ratna kori vitaran ।  
haribo jiver duhkha diyaa prem-dhan ॥*

"I have manifested my heart's desire (*manobhishtam*) through Shri Roop and Sanatan. You will be the one to bring their jewel-like writings to the people, and through you, I will take away all their pain and give them the treasure of sacred love." (*Bhakti Ratnakar*, 6.495-496)

Govind Dev went on to say, "I accept every person who takes your shelter. Your disciples are blessed, and you will enjoy the bliss of *sankirtan* together. Don't worry about anything. You will see me again from time to time." (*Bhakti Ratnakar*, 6.499)

At that moment, Govind Dev revealed himself as Mahaprabhu. After blessing and embracing Shrinivas, he transformed back into Govind Dev and returned to his temple.

<sup>3</sup> Shyamanand was a great saint and a vessel of Radharani's special grace. His story will be told in a future issue of *Sandarshan*.

<sup>4</sup> The place in Vrindavan where the divine Raas Lila occurred

Later, Narottam Das Thakur would echo the words Govind Dev spoke in Shrinivas's dream with his famous verse:

श्री चैतन्य मनोऽभीष्टं स्थापितं येन भूतले ।  
सोऽयं रूपः कदा मह्यं ददाति स्वपदान्तिकम् ॥

*śrī caitanya mano'bhīṣṭam sthāpitam  
yena bhūtale ।  
so'yam rūpaḥ kada mahyam dadāti  
svapadāntikam ॥*

"When will Shri Roop Goswami, the one who established Mahaprabhu's heart's desire (*manobhishtam*) upon this Earth, grant me the shelter of his lotus feet?" (*Prem Bhakti Chandrika*, verse 2)

When Shrinivas awoke, he saw that the sun had risen. It was almost time to go.

Later that morning, the Goswamis of Vrindavan along with many other sages and Brajwasis assembled at Govind Dev's temple. The *Anuraag Valli* says that, as Shrinivas took his final *darshan* of Govind Dev, no matter how many times he wiped his tears, they continued to stream down his lotus face. At that moment, Govind Dev's garland of flowers fell from his neck in blessing. The *pujari* then placed it around Shrinivas's neck. (*Anuraag Valli*, 6.103-104)

Four wooden crates containing the books were loaded onto a cart, and at an auspicious moment, the journey began. Ten armed guards and a guide accompanied Shrinivas, Narottam and Shyamanand, and they were

also given a special pass that would allow them to travel without hindrance by the Muslim government. Many great souls followed the cart for some distance before turning back, and Shri Jeev and a few others travelled with them to Mathura and beyond. But soon, it was time for Shrinivas and his team to continue alone.

Shrinivas's group took the same forest path that Mahaprabhu had used when he came to Vrindavan so many years ago. The journey was easy and they felt ecstatic seeing the places of Mahaprabhu's *lilas* on the way.

As they neared the end of their journey, Shrinivas and the others began to feel a sense of relief that their service would be successful. Unfortunately, rumours were spreading that the cart, which was so carefully guarded, was actually full of expensive jewels. One morning, when the group awoke from their night's sleep, the cart was gone.

*To be continued...*

#### References

*Anuraag Valli* by Manohar Das

*Bhakti Ratnakar* by Narahari Chakravarti

*Prem Bhakti Chandrika* by Narottam Das Thakur

*Prem Vilas* by Nityanand Das



## Braj Animal Care



Recently, we received a call about a street puppy named Ginger who had a deep, painful hole near his eye and was suffering terribly. We believe that someone threw a stone at him, which caused the substantial wound. Upon examination, the doctor found that the wound was full of maggots, which had burrowed deep into Ginger's head. In the end, a total of 64 large maggots were removed from Ginger's little face. His digestive tract was also full of worms, which was treated using medication. He was literally being eaten alive.

Initially, it looked like Ginger would recover, but unfortunately, it seems the maggots burrowed all the way down into his brain and he lost his life. Maggot infestations are not uncommon amongst India's street animals, so it is absolutely vital to disinfect any wounds as soon as they are spotted and continue to keep them clean.

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions, we continue to serve the animals of Braj every day. Since the beginning of the lockdown in India, we have provided around 3,400 meals for cows, 6,800 meals for dogs and 7,200 meals for monkeys. Learn more about how you can help at [www.brajanimalcare.com/contribute](http://www.brajanimalcare.com/contribute) or contact us at [brajanimalcare@gmail.com](mailto:brajanimalcare@gmail.com).



## Maharajji's Latest Updates



May 7th, 2020, marked the 478th Appearance Day of Shri Radharaman Lal. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 lockdown, devotees were not allowed to attend the festival. Still, a grand *abhishek* was offered as every year, with only the serving Goswamis in attendance. In the evening, Shri Chandan Goswami Maharaj organised a livestream with a short *pravachan* followed by Radharamanji's traditional Brajwasi birthday songs (*badhaai gaan*). With over five thousand devotees in virtual attendance, the program brought great relief to hearts around the world that were burning in separation. Please click here to follow [Maharajji's official Facebook page](#) for information about future virtual programs.

## Upcoming Events

Maharajji will be serving on the altar at the Shri Radharaman Temple for a week beginning on May 31st, 2020. Our usual *sankirtans* have been temporarily postponed due to social distancing

measures implemented in response to COVID-19, however regular virtual *sankirtans* are being held. Please join our online *sankirtan* program on June 2nd, 2020, for the occasion of Nirjala Ekadashi. To receive the meeting link, and for updates on further programs, please join our WhatsApp group [Chandan Goswami Uvacha](#).



### Special Telecast of Maharajji's Katha on Disha TV

Earlier this year, Maharajji shared the nectar of Shri Radha Ras Katha at Bhagwat Niwas, Vrindavan. This *katha* will be broadcast on Disha TV from June 3rd to June 8th, between 4-7pm IST.

You can also receive Maharajji's association through his recorded *kathas* on YouTube at [ChandanjiOfficial](#) and [ODevOfficial](#). For more information about Shri Radharaman Lal and Maharajji, please contact us at [odev108@gmail.com](mailto:odev108@gmail.com) or WhatsApp us on [+91 83687 83201](#).

### Vaishnav Calendar

Shri Radharaman Lal's Jal Yatra festival will be held on June 5th, 2020. For more upcoming festivals and Ekadashi dates, please click [here](#) to view our Vaishnav calendar.



### Jal Yatra by Gunmanjari Das Goswami



लखत श्री राधारमण फुहरे ।

कबहुँ हजारा कबहुँ इकधारा कबहुँ कुंज अकारें ॥

बैठि लता सुन्दर सीतल जलकण अंगन धारें ।

नृत्य करत फल निरखें पहरें पट भूषण सुकु मारे ॥

सुन्दर फल पावत मिश्री को पनों पियें दोऊ प्यारे ।

गुणमंजरी गुलाब नीर को छोड़त हैं पिचकारे ॥

*lakhat śhrī rādhāraman̄ phuhārē ।*

*kabahū hajārā kabahū ikdhārā kabahū kuñj akārē ॥*

*baiṭhi latā sundar sītal jal-kaṇ aṅgan dhārē ।*

*nṛtya karat phal nirakhē paharē paṭ bhūṣhan̄ sukuṁāre ॥*

*sundar phal pāvat miśrī ko panōpiyē doū pyāre ।*

*guṇmañjarī gulāb nīr ko chodat haī pičhkāre ॥*



Radha and Krishn enjoy the festival of Jal Yatra

Just see how Radharaman is sitting in this *kunj*<sup>5</sup> in Vrindavan Dham, and how he enjoys the sprinkling shower of water! Sometimes thousands of streams pour upon him and sometimes just one. Shriji wears silk clothes and beautiful ornaments, and as he dances, he looks up at the different kinds of fruit hanging from the *kunj*. His beloved Priyaju sits at his side, drenched in a mist of cool droplets. Gunmanjari stands nearby, sprinkling the Divine Couple with rosewater from a *pichkari*.<sup>6</sup> The *sakhis* have made delicious *panna*<sup>7</sup> from ripe fruits selected by Shriji, juiced and mixed with *mishri*,<sup>8</sup> and the Divine Couple drink it together as they enjoy the festival of Jal Yatra.

<sup>5</sup> A forest hideaway

<sup>6</sup> An ancient water gun similar to a very large syringe

<sup>7</sup> A type of cooling summer drink

<sup>8</sup> Sugar crystals