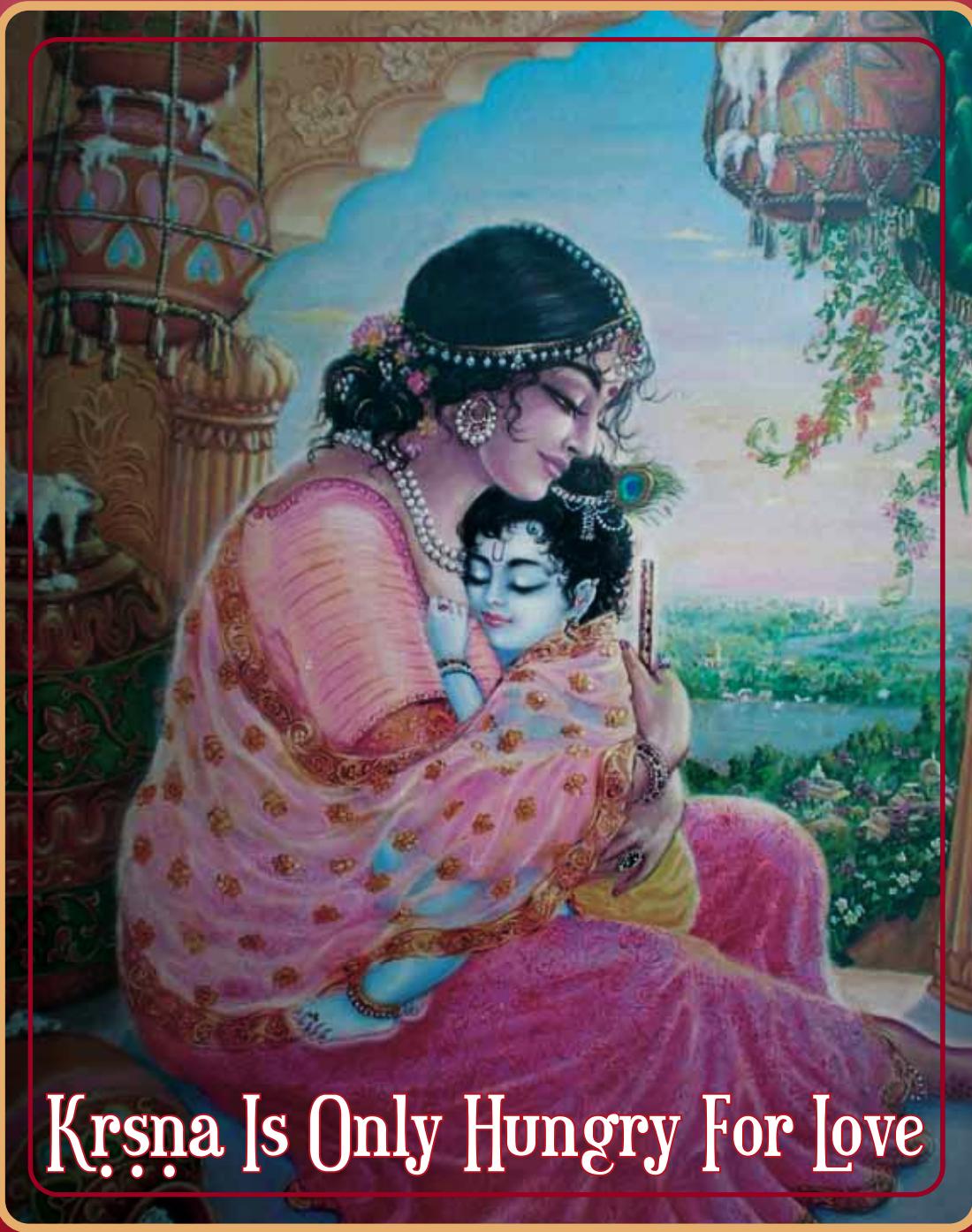


The Harmonist

Rays of

GAUDIYA VEDANTA PUBLICATIONS

NO. 22  KĀRTTIKA 2010



Kṛṣṇa Is Only Hungry For Love

INSIDE:

- Śrīla Prabhupāda Vandana
- Mātsarya - 'Envy'
- Only Hear From Śrī Guru
- An Invocation in Separation
- and more...



*sodhavā pāda-prahārānapi ca śataśatam̄ dhika-kṛtīnāñca koṭīḥ
kṣutṛṭa-sītādi bādhā śatamapi satatam̄ dhairyam-ālambya sodhavā
muñcana śokāśru-dhārāmati-karuṇa-girā rādhikā-kṛṣṇa-nāma-
nyudgāyan karhi vṛndāvanam-ati-vikalo 'kiñcanaḥ sañcarāmi*

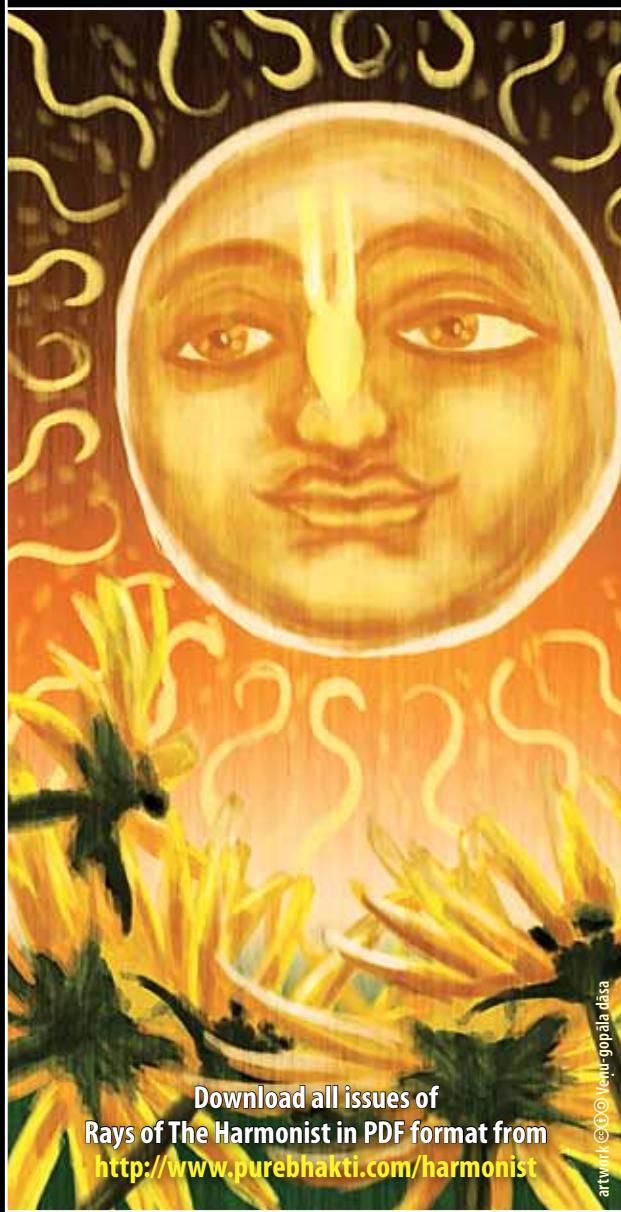
Śrī Vṛndāvana-mahimāmṛta (Śatāka 1, Verse 23)
by Śrīla Prabhodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda

When will the day come? I will even endure being kicked hundreds upon hundreds of times or being insulted millions of times. With constant forbearance I will even tolerate hunger, thirst, cold and a hundred other trials all day, every day. But when will that day come when tears of grief flow in a constant stream from my eyes as my voice falters while singing the names of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa? When will that day come when I wander in Vṛndāvana, utterly destitute and overwhelmed by the pain of separation?

Rays of The Harmonist

Gaudiya Vedanta Publications

Kārttika-pūrṇimā 2010



Download all issues of
Rays of The Harmonist in PDF format from
<http://www.purebhakti.com/harmonist>

Rays of The Harmonist is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported License to ensure that it is always freely available.

You may redistribute this magazine or any part of it if you include this license and attribute it to Rays of The Harmonist. Please ask for permission before using the Rays of The Harmonist banner-logo.

Except where otherwise noted, this work is licensed under
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>

Printed at: Paras Offset Pvt. Ltd, India

Contents

Editorial	3
Śrīla Prabhupāda Vandanā	6
Vaiṣṇava dāsa	
Mātsarya – ‘Envy’ Śrīla Saccidānanada Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura	13
Only Hear From Śrī Guru Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda	17
An Invocation in Separation Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja	21
The Ultimate Godhood of Śrī Caitanyadeva Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja	24
The Unparalleled Speciality of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas (Part One) by the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda	30
Selected Instructions of Śrī Madhvācārya	33
Selected Instructions of Śrī Rāmānujācārya	35
The Renounced, Pure Devotee’s Practice of Begging Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja	37
Kṛṣṇa Is Only Hungry For Love Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja	43
Offerings Unto the Lotus Feet of a Vaiṣṇava Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja	49
Preaching Report	55



Dedicated to

ĀCĀRYA KEŚARĪ NITYĀ-LILĀ PRAVIṢṭA
OṂ VIṢṇUPĀDA AṢTOTTARA-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 that were being published during the manifest presence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

The *Rays of* Harmonist

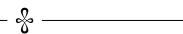
Published by
GAUDIYA VEDANTA PUBLICATIONS



under
BHAKTIVEDANTA TRUST INTERNATIONAL

FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA
and founder of *Rays of The Harmonist*

oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣtottara-śata śrī
Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



EDITORS

Jaya-gopāla dāsa
Vaijayantī-mālā dāsī

ASSISTANT EDITORS

Venu-gopāla dāsa
Vicitri dāsī
Kundalatā dāsī

TRANSLATORS

Prema dāsa
Gaurasundara dāsa
Gaurāṅga dāsa
Śravaṇa dāsa
Śrīvāsa dāsa
Rasika-mohana dāsa
Kṛṣṇa-kānta dāsa
Kundalatā dāsī

FIDELITY

Amala-kṛṣṇa dāsa

PROOFREADING

Giridhāri dāsa
Śānti dāsī
Sulatā dāsī

BOARD OF CONSULTANTS

Svāmī B. V. Mādhava
Śyāmarāṇī dāsī¹
Sundara-gopāla dāsa

TRANSLATION ADVISORS

Svāmī B.V. Tīrtha
Svāmī B.V. Vana

LAYOUT & DESIGN

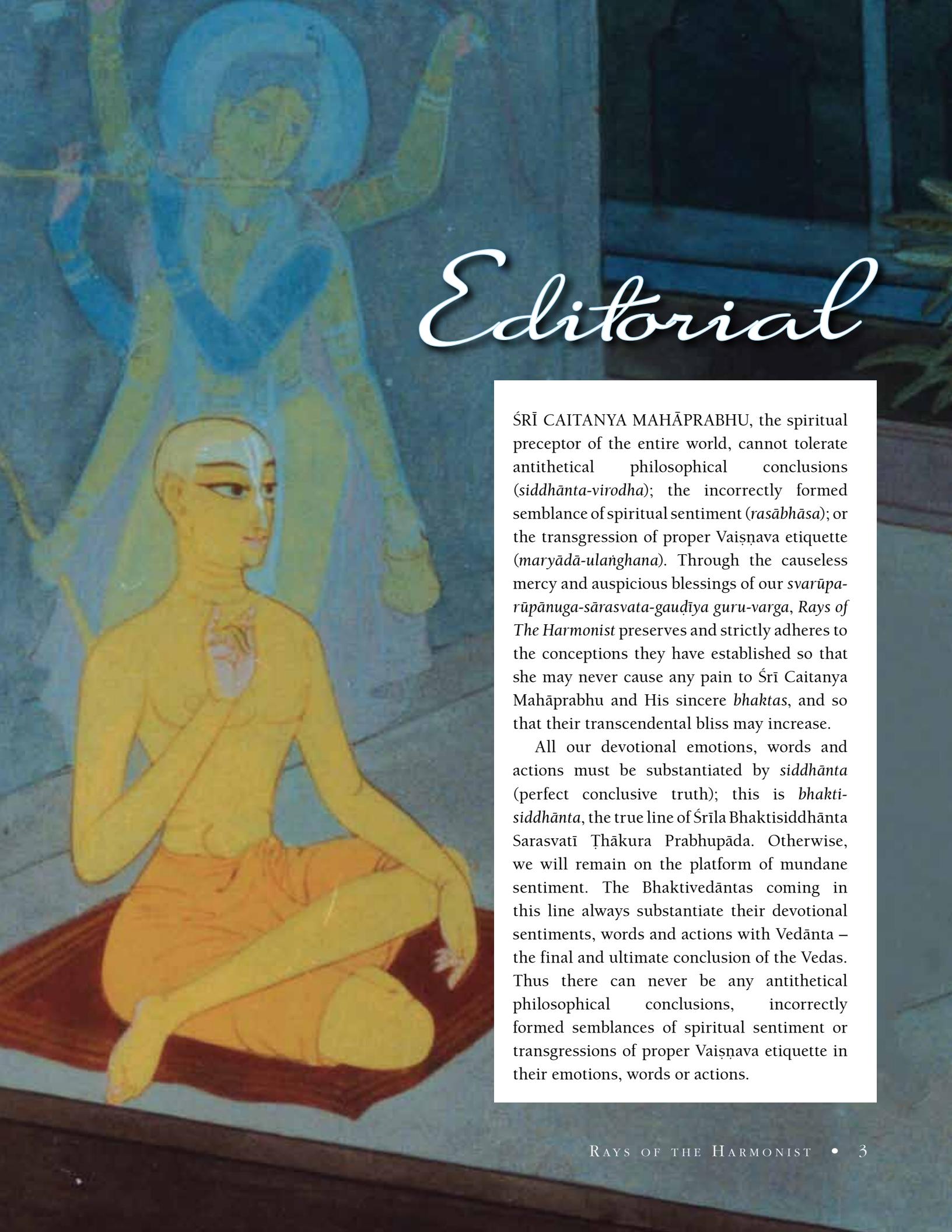
Kṛṣṇa-kāruṇya dāsa
Anupama dāsa
Jayadeva dāsa

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Tīrthapāda dāsa
Brajanātha dāsa
Mādhava-priya dāsa
Vijaya-kṛṣṇa dāsa
Vraja-mohan dāsa
Madhukara dāsa
Anaṅga-mohana dāsa
Gauragopāla dāsa
Janakī dāsī
Vṛṇdā dāsī

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

1. To protect the *vicāra-dhārā*, or current of conceptions, of the *svārūpa-rūpānugā-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 *saṃpradāya*).
2. To promote a co-operative effort to preach the message of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha in accordance with the last instructions of Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.



Editorial

ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU, the spiritual preceptor of the entire world, cannot tolerate antithetical philosophical conclusions (*siddhānta-virodha*); the incorrectly formed semblance of spiritual sentiment (*rasābhāsa*); or the transgression of proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette (*maryādā-ulanghana*). Through the causeless mercy and auspicious blessings of our *svarūpa-rūpānuga-sārasvata-gaudīya guru-varga*, *Rays of The Harmonist* preserves and strictly adheres to the conceptions they have established so that she may never cause any pain to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His sincere *bhaktas*, and so that their transcendental bliss may increase.

All our devotional emotions, words and actions must be substantiated by *siddhānta* (perfect conclusive truth); this is *bhakti-siddhānta*, the true line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. Otherwise, we will remain on the platform of mundane sentiment. The Bhaktivedāntas coming in this line always substantiate their devotional sentiments, words and actions with *Vedānta* – the final and ultimate conclusion of the Vedas. Thus there can never be any antithetical philosophical conclusions, incorrectly formed semblances of spiritual sentiment or transgressions of proper Vaiṣṇava etiquette in their emotions, words or actions.



Photo ©The Bhaktivedānta Book Trust International, Inc. www.krishna.com. Used with permission. All rights reserved.



“The Bhaktivedāntas coming in this line always substantiate their devotional sentiments, words and actions with Vedānta.”

Furthermore, proper conduct (*maryādā*) must always be maintained toward an *ācārya*, through our emotions, words and actions. If we do not, then those who are on the mundane platform will not be able to see the *ācārya* as the non-different manifestation of the Supreme Lord. The fortunate *jīvas* entering into the line of Śrīman Mahāprabhu need to be properly educated under the guidance of Vaiṣṇavas in respect to all philosophical truths (*tattva*), including *guru-tattva*, *māyā-tattva*, *jīva-tattva*, *rasa-tattva*, *sādhana-tattva* and so on, otherwise their emotions, words and actions will yield the opposite of the desired results.

All scriptures proclaim that *śrī guru* is non-different from the Supreme Lord – *sāksād-haritvena samasta-sāstrair* – but he is also the Lord's most dear companion – *kintu prabhore yah priya eva tasya*. These two aspects exist in him simultaneously. This is called *acintya bheda-abheda-tattva*, or the philosophical principle of inconceivable simultaneous difference and non-difference. In a similar way, the two opposite aspects of omniscience (*sarvajñatā*) and unawareness (*mugdhatā*) exist in Śrī Kṛṣṇa simultaneously, and therefore they also exist in *śrī guru* simultaneously.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa can accomplish anything He desires through any of His limbs or senses – *aṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimānti* – and therefore *śrī guru*, who is His eternal loving associate as well as His non-different expansion, can also manifest anything he wishes in the course of his pastimes. Yet, although *śrī guru* is always omniscient and independent because he is the non-different manifestation of the Supreme Lord, he can simultaneously manifest the pastime of being unaware and dependant. The pure devotee accepts hunger, thirst or sickness and wanders from door to door just to uplift wretches like us.

"Jagato mohanārthāya bhagavān puruṣottamah darśayen-mānuṣīm ceṣṭām tathā mṛtakavat-vibhuḥ – For the sake of bewildering worldly people, Bhagavān Puruṣottama displayed the pastime of being like an ordinary human being. Although He was omnipotent, He made a display of departing from this world like a mortal man."

He who brought His *guru*'s son back from Yamaloka in his same body and returned him to his parents and who brought Mother Devakī's six sons back to her from Satalaloka; He who brought back the *brāhmaṇa*'s dead son

from Mahakāla-pura and who protected His surrendered devotee, Viṣṇurata Śrī Parīkṣit, from the scorching heat of the *brahmāstra* in the womb of his mother; He who defeated the conqueror of death, Śrī Śāṅkara, in battle and who transferred the old hunter to Vaikuṇṭha in his same body – there is no doubt whether or not that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is capable of protecting Himself.

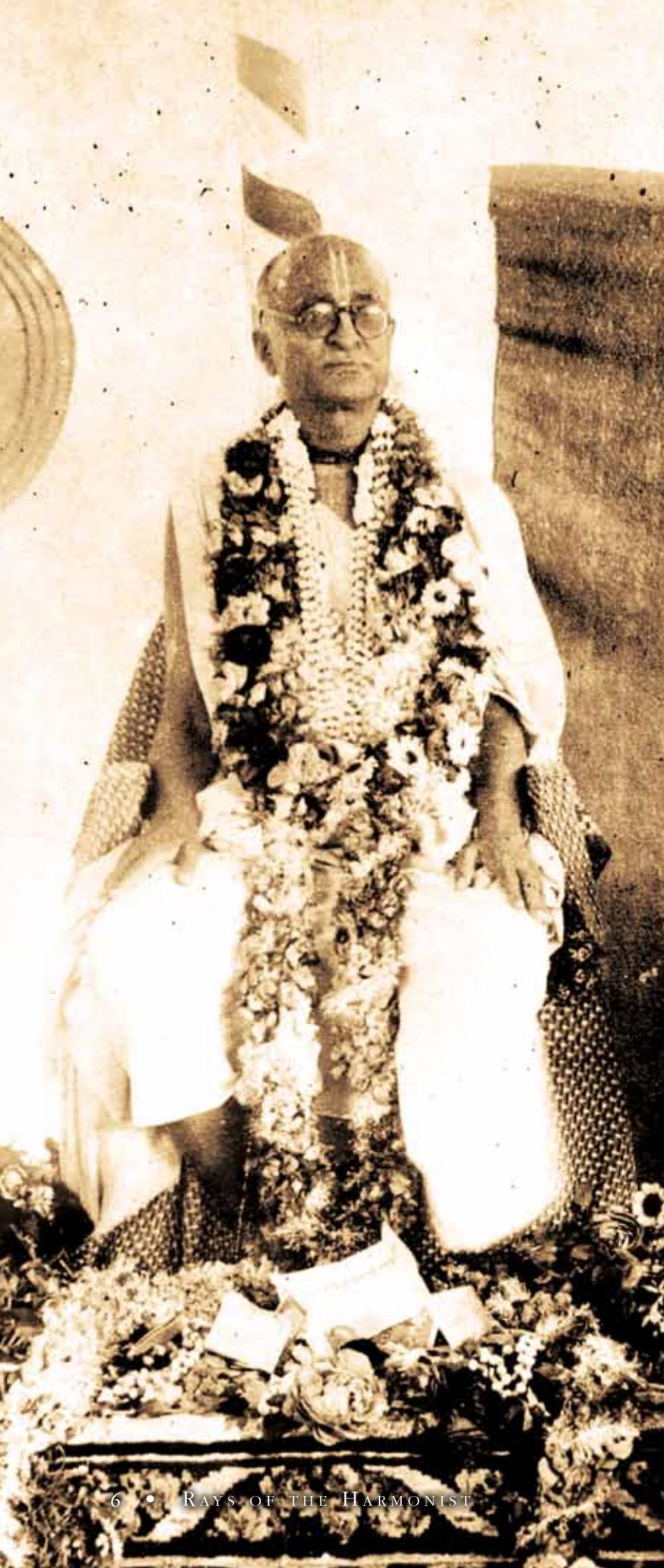
The same also applies to *śrī guru*.

When pure *hari-kathā* is all but absent in this world, when a true spiritual environment is almost nowhere to be found and when various forms of atheism have become overwhelmingly prominent, then it becomes extremely difficult to preserve the current of the *śrauta-āmnāya* (the descent of sacred wisdom through hearing) or the *sat-sampradāya* (the bona fide philosophical school). At such times, the internal differences within the Vaiṣṇava society or between individual devotees are a matter of extreme agony. In this situation, some degree of preservation may temporarily come by exercising our intellectualism, but where can we find the embodiment of that preciously rare disposition and behaviour that is befitting an *ācārya* who can truly protect the *sampradāya*?

"The perfect preservation of the pure school of philosophy is the glory of the ancient, noble religion (*ārya-dharma*).” How can these words of that *mahājana* be honoured in this situation? The prominent and foremost obligations of the *rūpānuga-sārasvata Gauḍīya* Vaiṣṇava society is to somehow refute any conception that is opposed to *bhakti*; to propagate the correct codes of devotional conduct (*bhakti sadācāra*); to manifest service to the transcendental deity (*śrī vigraha sevā*); to print devotional literature (*bhakti-granths*) and propagate their message; to revive the lost holy places; and to spread *śrī nāmaḥāṭṭa* (the market place of the holy name) – or in other words, to establish every home and every community as a centre for the practice and propagation of *śrī harinām-saṅkirtana*.

This has truly been the deepest heart's desire (*mano'bhiṣṭa*) of our *vinoda-sārasvata-gauḍīya* guru-varga, and it is the true meaning of *svarūpa-rūpānuga sevā*. 

The spirit of this editorial is adapted from the writings of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, especially his editorials to *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year 23 and Year 29



Srila

by Vaiṣṇava dāsa

[The author of this song, Śrī Gopāla-govinda Mahānta, has introduced himself herein as Vaiṣṇava dāsa. Śrī Gopāla-govinda Mahānta was a resident of Śrihaṭṭa, in present day Bangladesh. He had been completely unacquainted with Śrī Gaudīya Maṭha, yet after hearing the glories of Śrīla Prabhupāda's spiritual mastery (*ācāryatva*), in 1925 he composed this simple and extremely charming song, giving a brief account of Śrīla Prabhupāda's preaching activities. He sent this song to Śrī Gaudīya Maṭha at the time of the *matha*'s anniversary festival.

Over time it naturally gained great appreciation and acceptance from all of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples and followers because it is full of the sweetness of Śrīla Prabhupāda's compassion and the perfection of his teachings. Now it is sung in almost all Gaudiya Maṭhas on the appearance and disappearance days of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and it has been included in the Bengali edition of *Śrī Gaudīya-gīti-guccha*, authorized by Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. And we are fortunate to have an audio recording of Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja personally singing and relishing this song (available at purebhakti.com/sp-vandana as of Kārttika 2010).

Generally, everyone glorifies their own *gurudeva* and the Vaiṣṇavas who are already well known to them. Yet in this case, a person who had never met Śrīla Prabhupāda has glorified him with matchless beauty after simply hearing and reading his teachings. This demonstrates Śrīla Prabhupāda's extraordinary eminence among the Vaiṣṇavas of his time.]

Prabhupāda Vandanā

*jaya-re jaya-re jaya, paramahāṁsa mahāśaya,
śrī bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatī
gosvāmī ṭhākura jaya, parama karuṇāmaya,
dīna-hīna agatira gati (1)*

jaya-re jaya-re jaya – hear my call, glory be, glory be, glory be!; *paramahāṁsa* – topmost, swan-like devotee of Śrī Bhagavān; *mahāśaya* – magnanimous personality; *śrī bhaktisiddhānta sarasvatī* – Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda; *gosvāmī* – one who is the master of his senses; *ṭhākura* – noble lord; *jaya* – glory be; *parama* – topmost; *karuṇāmaya* – filled with compassion; *dīna* – unfortunate; *hīna* – destitute; *agatira* – of those without refuge; *gati* – refuge.

Glory be, glory be, glory be to Śrī Bhagavān's topmost, swan-like devotee, that most magnanimous personality, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. Glory to that noble lord, who is the master of his senses. He is filled with the greatest compassion and he is the refuge of the most unfortunate, destitute souls who have no other refuge.

n

*nīlācale haiyā udaya,
śrī gauḍa-maṇḍale āsi', prema-bhakti parakāśi',
jīvera nāśilā bhava-bhaya (2)*

nīlācale – in Nilācala (Śrī Jagannātha Purī Dhāma); *haiyā* – after having; *udaya* – appeared; *śrī gauḍa-maṇḍala* – in Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala (the present day regions of West Bengal and Bangladesh, which are centred around Śrī Navadvīpa

Dhāma); *āsi* – coming; *prema-bhakti* – pure loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *parakāśi* – revealing; *jīvera* – of the living entities; *nāśilā* – have destroyed; *bhava* – material existence; *bhaya* – fear.

Your divine appearance took place in Śrī Nīlācala, Purī, the holy *dhāma* of Śrī Jagannātha-deva. When you came to Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, you enlightened everyone about pure, loving devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this way you have destroyed the living entities' fear of material existence.

n

*tomāra mahimā gāi, hena sādhya mora nāi,
tabe pāri, yadi deha' śakti
viśva-hite avirata, ācāra-pracāre rata,
viśuddhā śrī rūpānugā-bhakti (3)*

tomāra – your; *mahimā* – greatness; *gāi* – I sing; *hena* – such; *sādhya* – capability; *mora* – my; *nāi* – not; *tabe* – only then; *pāri* – I can; *yadi* – if; *deha* – you give; *śakti* – power; *viśva* – the universe; *hite* – for the welfare; *avirata* – continuously; *ācāra* – observance of religious principles; *pracāre* – preaching; *rata* – devoted to; *viśuddhā* – supremely pure; *śrī rūpānugā-bhakti* – devotional service following the current of thought of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Of my own accord, I do not have the capability to sing your unlimited glories. I can only do so if you empower me. For the welfare of the entire world, you are continuously devoted to practising and preaching

supremely pure devotional service, following the current of thought of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

॥

*śripāṭa khetari-dhāma, ṭhākura śrī narottama,
tomāte tāñhara guṇa dekhi
śāstrera siddhānta-sāra, śuni' lāge camatkāra,
ku-tārkika dite nāre phāṅki (4)*

śripāṭa – the beautiful tract; *khetari* – Śrī Khetari (the natal village of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, within East Bengal, now Bangladesh); *dhāma* – holy place; *ṭhākura śrī narottama* – Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura; *tomāte* – in you; *tāñhara* – his; *guṇa* – qualities; *dekhi* – I see; *śāstrera* – of the holy scriptures; *siddhānta* – conclusive truths; *sāra* – the essence; *śuni* – hearing; *lāge* – it feels; *camatkāra* – astonishing; *ku-tārkika* – one who engages in illogical, philosophical debate that contradicts the infallible conclusions of *śāstra*; *dite* – giving; *nāre* – cannot; *phāṅki* – deceit.

I see in you the transcendental qualities of Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, who appeared in the beautiful and holy tract of land known as Śrī Khetari. Hearing from you the essence of the perfect conclusions of *śāstra*, one becomes struck with awe. And those who try to contradict *śāstra* using illogical philosophical debate, can never cheat anyone in the wake of your authority.

॥

*suḍḍha-bhakti-mata yata, upa-dharma-kavalīta,
heriyā lokera mane trāsa
hāni' su-siddhānta-bāna, upa-dharma khāna khāna,
sajjanera bāḍā'le ullāsa (5)*

suḍḍha – pure and unalloyed; *bhakti* – loving devotional service; *mata* – doctrine; *yata* – as much as; *upa-dharma* – false or concocted religious systems that resemble the true religion; *kavalīta* – gripped; *heriyā* – seeing; *lokera* – of the people; *mane* – in the mind; *trāsa* – intense anxiety; *hāni* – shooting; *su-siddhānta* – proper conclusive truth; *bāna* – arrow; *upa-dharma* – false or concocted religious

systems that resemble the true religion; *khāna khāna* – (the colloquial form of *khaṇḍa khaṇḍa*) completely shattered; *sajjanera* – of the virtuous; *bāḍā'le* – you increase; *ullāsa* – delight.

When people saw that the conception of pure, unalloyed devotional service had been strangled by false or concocted religious systems that only resembled the true religion, their minds became troubled by intense anxiety. But by assailing those false dogmas with your sharp arrows of perfect, conclusive truth, you have completely shattered them, and have made the hearts of the virtuous swell with delight.



॥

*smārta-mata-jala-dhāra,
suḍḍha-bhakti-ravi-kara,
ācchādila bhāviyā antare
śāstra-sindhu-manthanete,
su-siddhānta jhañjhāvāte,
uḍāilā dig-digantare (6)*

smārta-mata – the doctrines of orthodox brāhmaṇas who place all their faith in conventional rules of conduct; *jala-dhāra* – rain-cloud (literally, ‘water carrier’); *suḍḍha* – pure and unalloyed; *bhakti* – loving devotional service; *ravi* – sun; *kara* – ray; *ācchādila* – covering; *bhāviyā* – thinking; *antare* – within the heart; *śāstra* – holy scriptures; *sindhu* – ocean; *manthanete* – by churning; *su-siddhānta* – proper conclusive truth; *jhañjhāvāte* – of the hurricane; *uḍāilā* – you have caused them to scatter; *dig-digantare* – in all directions.

When your thoughts about how the dark storm-clouds of the *smārta* doctrine had blocked the rays of the sun of pure, loving devotional service began to weigh heavily within your heart, you churned the ocean of holy scripture and produced a great hurricane of perfect, conclusive truth that scattered the dark clouds in all directions.

॥

*sthāne sthāne kata matḥa, sthāpiyāčha niṣkapāta,
prema-sevā ūkhaite jive*

*maṭhera vaiṣṇava-gaṇa, kare sadā vitarāṇa,
hari-guṇa-kathāmṛta bhave* (7)

sthāne sthāne – in various places; *kata* – so many; *maṭha* – Gaudīya monasteries; *sthāpiyācha* – you have established; *niṣkapaṭa* – sincerely; *prema-sevā* – loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *sikhāite* – to teach; *jīve* – to the living entities; *maṭhera* – of those Gaudīya monasteries; *vaiṣṇava gaṇa* – all the devotees; *kare* – they do; *sadā* – always; *vitarāṇa* – distribution; *hari-guṇa-kathā* – narrations about Śrī Hari’s divine qualities; *amṛta* – the nectar; *bhave* – in the material universe.

You have established *maṭhas* in so many places in order to teach the living entities how to sincerely serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa with pure love. And the devotees of your *maṭhas* are incessantly engaged in distributing the nectar of the topics of Śrī Hari’s divine qualities, throughout the universe.

॥

*śuddha-bhakti-mandākinī, vimala pravāha āni’,
śītala karila tapta-prāṇa
deṣe deṣe niṣkiñcana, prerilā vaiṣṇava-gaṇa,
vistārite hari-guṇa-gāna* (8)

śuddha – pure and unalloyed; *bhakti* – devotional service; *mandākinī* – the river Mandākinī (Gāṅgā); *vimala* – utterly immaculate; *pravāha* – current; *āni* – bringing; *śītala* – cool; *karila* – have done; *tapta* – burning; *prāṇa* – life-breath; *deṣe deṣe* – in various nations; *niṣkiñcana* – those who have no possession apart from kṛṣṇa-bhakti; *prerilā* – you have dispatched; *vaiṣṇava gaṇa* – the devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *vistārite* – to spread; *hari* – Śrī Hari; *guṇa* – qualities; *gāna* – songs.

By bringing the immaculate current of the sacred Mandākinī (Gāṅgā) of pure, unalloyed devotional service into this world, you have soothed and pacified the burning life-breaths of all the souls who reside here. You dispatched your *niṣkiñcana*¹ devotees to every nation to spread sublime narrations of Śrī Hari’s transcendental qualities.

॥

¹ Having no possession apart from devotion to Śrī Hari

*pūrve yathā gaurahari, māyāvāda cheda kari’,
vaiṣṇava karilā kāśī-vāsi
vaiṣṇava-darśana-sūkṣma, vicāre tumi he dakṣa,
temati toṣilā vārāṇasī* (9)

pūrve – in the past; *yathā* – just as; *gaurahari* – Śrī Gaurahari; *māyāvāda* – the doctrine of impersonalism; *cheda* – to cut; *kari* – had done; *vaiṣṇava* – devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *karilā* – have made; *kāśī-vāsi* – the residents of Kāśī; *vaiṣṇava-darśana* – the tenets of Vaiṣṇava philosophy; *sūkṣma* – subtle; *vicāre* – in the deliberation; *tumi* – you; *he* – are; *dakṣa* – expert; *temati* – like that; *toṣilā* – you have satisfied; *vārāṇasī* – Vārāṇasī.

Just as Śrī Gaurahari once cut the doctrine of impersonalism to pieces and transformed all the residents of Kāśī into devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, you also have brought contentment to the city of Vārāṇasī through your masterful insights into the tenets of Vaiṣṇava philosophy (i.e. the prominence of the personal aspect of Godhead and the admission of the eternity of the worshipful, the worshipper and worship itself).

॥

*daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma, hari-bhakti yāra marma,
śāstra-yuktye karilā niścaya
jñāna-yoga-karma-caya, mūlyā tāra kichu naya,
bhaktira virodhī yadi haya* (10)

daiva-varṇāśrama – the authentic Vedic system of social order based on one’s natural activities and qualities and their progress through the phases of life; *dharma* – the religion; *hari* – Śrī Hari; *bhakti* – devotion; *yāra* – whose; *marma* – core; *śāstra-yuktye* – according to the logical conclusions of *śāstra*; *karilā* – you have done; *niścaya* – determined with certainty; *jñāna* – knowledge; *yoga* – mysticism; *karma* – fruitive work; *caya* – the accumulation; *mūlyā* – value; *tāra* – of that; *kichu* – any; *naya* – not; *bhaktira* – of pure devotional service; *virodhī* – against; *yadi* – if; *haya* – is.

In accordance with the logical conclusions of *śāstra*, you have determined with certainty that the heart and soul of the authentic system of Vedic social order (*daiva-varṇāśrama-dharma*) is in fact devotion to Śrī Hari. For even a vast amount of knowledge, of



mystic power or of the fruits of labour has no value at all if it is in any way opposed to *bhakti*.

*jagate kaile ghoṣ'ṇā, 'taroriva sahiṣṇunā',
hana 'kīrttanīyah sadā hariḥ'* (12)

॥

*śrī gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, bhakta-saṅge parikrami',
su-kīrti sthāpilā mahāśaya
abhinna vraja-maṇḍala, gauḍa-bhūmi premojjvala,
pracāra haila viśvamaya* (11)

śrī gauḍa-maṇḍala – Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala; *bhūmi* – land; *bhakta* – devotee; *saṅge* – with; *parikrami* – circumambulating; *su-kīrti* – eulogizing the glories; *sthāpilā* – established; *mahāśaya* – magnanimous personality; *abhinna* – non-different; *vraja-maṇḍala* – Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala; *gauḍa* – Gauḍa; *bhūmi* – land; *prema-ujjvala* – brilliantly resplendent with pure love; *pracāra* – preaching; *haila* – has occurred; *viśvamaya* – throughout the world.

O great-hearted soul, by circumambulating the land of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, bringing all the *bhaktas* with you on holy pilgrimage to the pastime places of Śrī Gaurāṅga, you have established its exquisite glories. Thus you have made the entire world aware that Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala is identical to Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala – it is that same, most sacred abode, which is brilliantly resplendent with divine love of Godhead.

॥

*kuṇḍiyāte pāṣanḍīrā, atyācāra kaila yā'rā,
tā-sabāra doṣa kṣamā kari'*

kuliyāte – in Kuliya (Navadvīpa Town); *pāṣanḍīrā* – all the atheists; *atyācāra* – great atrocity; *kaila* – have done; *yā'rā* – those who; *tā-sabāra* – of them all; *doṣa* – faults; *kṣamā* – forgiven; *kari* – you have done; *jagate* – in the world; *kaile* – you have made; *ghoṣāṇā* – proclamation; '*taroriva sahiṣṇunā*' – "as tolerant as a tree"; *hana* – becoming; '*kīrttanīyah sadā hariḥ*' – "continuously chant śrī harināma."

You have mercifully forgiven the offences of the atheists who perpetrated great atrocities against you in Kuliya (Navadvīpa Town). The lesson you taught us reverberates throughout the world: "become as tolerant as a tree and continuously chant śrī harināma."²

॥

*śrī-viśva-vaiṣṇava-rāja, sabhā-madhye 'pātrarāja',
upādhi-bhūṣane vibhūṣita
viśvera maṅgala lāgi', haiyācha sarva-tyāgi,
viśva-vāsi-jana-hite rata* (13)

śrī viśva-vaiṣṇava – all the graceful devotees in the universe; *rāja* – royal; *sabhā* – assembly; *madhye* – amidst; *pātra* – a most worthy person; *rāja* – the chief; *upādhi* – title; *bhūṣane* – with ornaments; *vibhūṣita* – decorated; *viśvera* – of the universe; *maṅgala* – auspiciousness; *lāgi* – for the sake of; *haiyācha* – you have become; *sarva* – totally; *tyāgi* – renounced; *viśva* – the universe;

² C.f. Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam, Verse 3

vāsi – residents; *jana* – the people; *hite* – for the welfare; *rata* – devoted to.

Within the royal assembly of Vaiṣṇavas throughout the universe, you are decorated by the title *pātrarāja* – the emperor among all worthy personalities. For the auspiciousness of the entire universe, you have totally renounced all forms of worldliness and devoted yourself to the welfare of all the residents of this material world.

॥

*karitecha upakāra, yā'te para-upakāra,
labhe jīva śrī-kṛṣṇa-sevāya
dūre yāya bhava-roga, khaṇḍe yāhe karma-bhoga,
hari-pāda-padma yā'te pāya* (14)

karitecha – you are doing; *upakāra* – welfare; *yā'te* – so that; *para* – supreme; *upakāra* – welfare; *labhe* – attains; *jīva* – living entity; *śrī kṛṣṇa* – Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *sevāya* – in service; *dūre* – far away; *yāya* – goes; *bhava* – material existence; *roga* – disease; *khaṇḍe* – destroyed; *yāhe* – by which; *karma-bhoga* – enjoyment of fruitive activity; *hari* – Lord Hari; *pādapadma* – lotus feet; *yā'te* – so that; *pāya* – attains.

You are engaged in welfare work so that the living entities will attain service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is the highest welfare of all. By this, their diseased state of transient, mundane existence will be cured, the reactions to their fruitive work will be smashed to pieces, and at last they will attain the lotus feet of Śrī Hari.

॥

*jīva moha-nidrā-gata, jāgā'te vaikuṇṭha-dūta,
'gauḍīya' pāṭhāo ghare ghare
uṭha-re uṭha-re bhāi, āra ta' samaya nāi,
'kṛṣṇa bhaja' bala uccaiḥ-svare* (15)

jīva – living entity; *moha* – delusion; *nidrā* – slumber; *gata* – engrossed; *jāgā'te* – to awaken; *vaikuṇṭha* – the kingdom of God, which is free from any material anxiety; *dūta* – messenger; *gauḍīya* – Gauḍīya; *pāṭhāo* – you send; *ghare ghare* – from house to house; *uṭha* – arise; *re* – please hear my call; *uṭha* – arise; *re* – please hear my call; *bhāi* – brother; *āra ta* – more; *samaya* – time; *nāi* – there is not; *'kṛṣṇa bhaja'* – “worship Kṛṣṇa”; *bala* – say; *uccaiḥ* – loud; *svare* – in the voice.

To awaken the living entities from the slumber of their delusion, you send the *Gauḍīya*³, the messenger from Vaikuṇṭha, from house to house with the message, “Get up, brothers! Please hear my call. Get up! There is no more time. Please just worship Kṛṣṇa now and loudly chant His names!”

॥

*tomāra mukhāravinda, vigalita makaranda,
siñcita acyuta-guṇa-gāthā
śunile juḍāya prāṇa, tamo-moha antardhāna,
dūre yāya hṛdayera vyathā* (16)

tomāra – your; *mukhāravinda* – lotus mouth; *vigalita* – emanated with compassion; *makaranda* – nectar; *siñcita* – showered; *acyuta* – the infallible Supreme Lord; *guṇa* – qualities; *gāthā* – narration; *śunile* – upon hearing; *juḍāya* – becomes fully satisfied; *prāṇa* – the life-force; *tamo* – ignorance; *moha* – delusion; *antardhāna* – disappears; *dūre* – far; *yāya* – goes; *hṛdayera* – of the heart; *vyathā* – affliction.

When a hymn eulogizing the divine qualities of the infallible Supreme Lord emanates from your lotus lips and falls upon anyone’s ears, like a compassionate shower of nectar, it quenches the deepest thirst of their being, their delusion born of ignorance disappears, and the agony within their heart goes far away.

॥

*jāni āmi mahāsaya, yaśo-vāñchā nāhi haya,
bindu-mātra tomāra antare
tava-guṇa vīṇā-dhārī, mora kanṭha-vīṇā dhari',
avašeṣe balāya āmāre* (17)

jāni – know; *āmi* – I; *mahāsaya* – great-hearted soul; *yaśo* – for fame; *vāñchā* – desire; *nāhi* – not; *haya* – is; *bindu* – a drop; *mātra* – the smallest measure; *tomāra* – of you; *antare* – inside; *tava* – your; *guṇa* – qualities; *vīṇā* – the Vedic lute (as carried by Nārada Muni); *dhārī* – holder; *mora* – my; *kanṭha* – throat; *vīṇā* – a Vedic lute; *dhari* – holding; *avašeṣe* – at last; *balāya* – makes me speak; *āmāre* – to me.

³ The proper noun, *Gauḍīya*, can be interpreted as Śrīla Prabhupāda’s famous weekly spiritual periodical, or as a *Gauḍīya* Vaiṣṇava.

O great-hearted soul, I know that in you there is not even the smallest drop of desire for fame. Your transcendental qualities play upon the chords of my voice like a musician playing the strings of his vīṇā, and at last they are making me sing your glories.

॥

*vaiṣṇavera gūṇa-gāna, karile jīvera trāṇa,
śuniyāchi sādhu-guru-mukhe
kr̄ṣṇa-bhakti samudaya, janama saphala haya,
e bhava-sāgara tare sukhe (18)*

vaiṣṇavera – of the devotees; *gūṇa* – qualities; *gāna* – singing; *karile* – by doing; *jīvera* – of the living entities; *trāṇa* – deliverance; *śuniyāchi* – I have heard; *sādhu* – saintly person; *guru* – spiritual master; *mukhe* – from the mouth; *kr̄ṣṇa* – Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa; *bhakti* – devotional service; *samudaya* – entirely awakens; *janama* – life; *saphala* – successful; *haya* – becomes; *e* – this; *bhava* – material existence; *sāgara* – ocean; *tare* – crosses; *sukhe* – blissfully.

I have heard from the mouths of saints and śrī guru that singing about the glorious qualities of Vaiṣṇavas is the cause of salvation for the living being, for it fully awakens *kr̄ṣṇa-bhakti* within his heart. His life then becomes completely successful and he blissfully crosses over the ocean of material existence.

॥

*te kāraṇe e prayāsa, yathā vāmanera āśa,
gaganera cāñḍa dharivāre
adoṣa-daraśī tumi, adhama patita āmi,
nija-guṇe kṣamivā āmāre (19)*

te – that; *kāraṇe* – for the reason; *e* – this; *prayāsa* – endeavour; *yathā* – as; *vāmanera* – of the dwarf; *āśa* – the hope; *gaganera* – of the sky; *cāñḍa* – moon; *dharivāre* – to hold; *adoṣa* – faultless; *daraśī* – seer; *tumi* – you; *adhama* – debased; *patita* – fallen; *āmi* – I; *nija* – by your own; *guṇe* – virtue; *kṣamivā* – you will forgive; *āmāre* – to me.

And so I am trying to sing about your glories, just like a dwarf trying to catch the moon in the sky. But because you do not perceive faults, please forgive me

out of your own great virtue, for I am but a debased, fallen soul.

॥

*śrī gaurāṅga-pāriṣada, ṭhākura bhaktivinoda
dīna-hīna patitera bandhu
kali-tama-vināśite, ānilena avanīte,
tomā' akalāṅka pūrṇa indu (20)*

śrī gaurāṅga – Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva; *pāriṣada* – associate; *ṭhākura bhaktivinoda* – Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura; *dīna* – unfortunate; *hīna* – destitute; *patitera* – of the fallen; *bandhu* – friend; *kali* – of the age of Kali; *tama* – darkness; *vināśite* – to destroy; *ānilena* – has brought; *avanīte* – on the earth; *tomā* – to you; *akalāṅka* – spotless; *pūrṇa* – full; *indu* – moon.

Śrila Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the eternal companion of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, is the greatest friend of the unfortunate and destitute fallen souls. In order to destroy the darkness of this age of Kali, he has brought you, shining like the spotless full moon, into this world.

॥

*kara kṛpā vitaraṇa, prema-sudhā anukṣaṇa,
mātiyā uṭhuka jīva-gaṇa
harināma-saṅkīrtane, nācuka jagata-jane,
vaiṣṇava-dāsera nivedana (21)*

kara – do; *kṛpā* – mercy; *vitaraṇa* – distribution; *prema* – pure love of God; *sudhā* – nectar; *anukṣaṇa* – incessantly; *mātiyā* – maddened; *uṭhuka* – let them become; *jīva-gaṇa* – all the living entities; *harināma* – the holy names of Lord Hari; *saṅkīrtane* – of the congregational chanting; *nācuka* – let them dance; *jagata-jane* – the people of the world; *vaiṣṇava-dāsera* – this servant of the Vaiṣṇavas; *nivedana* – humble entreaty.

Please distribute your mercy to all living beings. Make them drink the nectar of *prema* again and again, and let them go completely mad in pure love for Śrī Kr̄ṣṇa. Make all the people of this world dance in *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. This is Vaiṣṇava dāsa's humble entreaty. 

Appearing in English for the first time

MĀTSARYA Envy

Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

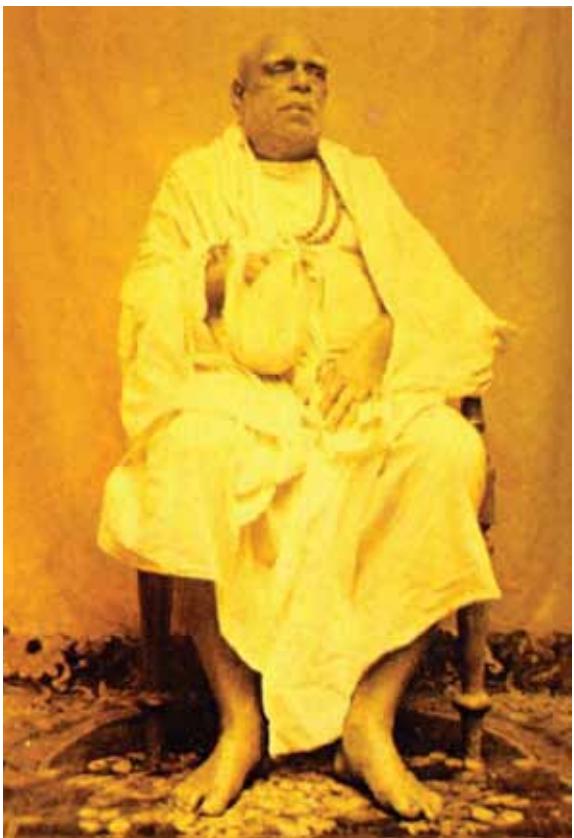


photo by Quasic ©①②③ http://www.flickr.com/photos/ripton/2621021144

The Meaning of the Word ‘Mātsarya’ & Who Is Fit For the Non-Envious Religion of Love?

The word *mātsarya* is used with different meanings in different contexts. Among its various meanings we find ‘enviousness of others’ good-fortune’, ‘distressed because of their success’, ‘malice’ and ‘jealousy’. Wherever the word *mātsarya* has been used in the Vaiṣṇava scriptures, it refers to that mood which is adverse to *prema* (pure love).

*dharmah projhita-kaitavo 'tra
paramo nirmatsarāṇāṁ satāṁ
vedyāṁ vāstavam atra vastu śivadām
tāpa-trayonmūlanam
śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte
kim vā parair iśvarah
sadyo hṛdy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ
śuśrūṣubhis tat-kṣaṇāt*
Srimad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.2)



“Those who feel distress upon seeing the happiness of others can never feel compassion for the living entities, and their hearts can never be suffused with the nectar of love of God.”

In this *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, where fraudulent religiosity and all other mundane goals of humankind have been utterly forsaken, the supreme spiritual duty (*parama-dharma*) has been expounded. That *parama-dharma* is pure *bhaktiyoga*, exemplified by those saints who are absolutely free from envy and full of compassion for all living beings. The Supreme Truth within uproots the three forms of misery and grants the highest form of bliss. When those with ample spiritual merit desire to listen to the message of this beautiful *Bhāgavatam*, which was authored by Mahāmuni Śrī Nārāyaṇa Himself, then the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari is immediately and permanently captured within their hearts. What is the need of any other message?

This statement defines who is fit to practise *parama-dharma* – that supreme spiritual duty propounded by *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. And to relish the liquid humours of pure love (*prema-rasa*) is truly the supreme spiritual duty that this gospel enjoins. Those who are without envy (*nirmatsara*) are the only ones fit to practise this *parama-dharma*. *Nirmatsaratā* means ‘the quality of being free from *mātsarya* (envy)’. Within the context of this verse, commentators have explained *matsaratā* as feeling happiness upon seeing the misery of others and misery upon seeing their happiness, but if the meaning of the word *matsaratā* is not illuminated in detail, it will not be understood by common people.

The Gang of Six Foes & The Cause of Their Combined Appearance

The *jīvas*, confined by ignorance, have been entrapped in mundanity by the rope of the six foes (*śad-varga*). Lust (*kāma*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*), pride (*mada*) and envy (*mātsarya*) – these six are called *śad-varga*, and they are nothing but other forms of the five types of misery, namely ignorance (*avidya*), egotism (*asmitā*), infatuation (*abhiniveśa*), vehemence (*rāga*) and hatred (*dveṣa*).

Extreme absorption in gross material objects gives rise to lust. In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, lust is described as follows:

*dhyāyato viṣayān pūṁsaḥ saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
 saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāt kroḍho 'bhijāyate
 kroḍhād bhavati sammohāḥ sammohāt smṛti-vibhrāmaḥ
 smṛti-bhrāmśād buddhi-nāśo buddhi-nāśāt prāṇasyati*

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (2.62–63)

The meaning of these verses is as follows: [By meditating on the sense objects, one inwardly mingles with them. As such] association with the sense objects, in the form of acute absorption in them, gives rise to lust (*kāma*), which inevitably leads to anger (*krodha*). Anger gives rise to (*sammoha*) – that

is, greed (*lobha*) to enjoy the sense objects even by unfair means. Greed for sense objects leads to loss of memory (*moha*) which in turn destroys the intelligence, or in other words it leads to pride (*mada*), wherein one fails to distinguish between virtue and evil. That pride leads to utter ruination – *mātsarya*, which severely distorts the living entity's natural, loving tendency.

The Means to Conquer the Enemy

Bhagavad-gītā instructs us:

evam buddheḥ param buddhvā
saṁstabhyātmānam ātmanā
jahi śatrum mahā-baho
kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (3.43)

The meaning is as follows: Realize that the soul, who belongs to the spiritual domain, transcends the intelligence. Controlling the mind through the principle of resolute determination, conquer that inextinguishable enemy known as *kāma*.

All the Foes Are Within Mātsarya

From all these instructions it is clearly understood that by misunderstanding the nature of our true self – in other words, due to *svarūpa-bhrama* – the seed of lust sprouts in our hearts and gradually grows into the tree of envy, thus sending *prema* – which is *jaiva-dharma*, or the true nature of all living entities – far away. Lust (*kāma*), anger (*krodha*), greed (*lobha*), delusion (*moha*) and pride (*mada*) are all included in envy (*mātsarya*). Lust is included in anger. Lust and anger are both included in greed. Lust, anger and greed are within delusion. And lust, anger, greed and delusion are found within pride, which refers to all kinds of pride, including pride in one's wealth, in one's beauty, in one's bodily prowess, in one's high caste and in one's erudition. But envy (*mātsarya*) encompasses all of this: lust, anger, greed, delusion and all kinds of pride.

All Sorts of Miseries Are Included In Envy & A Man Prone To Envy Is Devoid Of Compassion for Other Living Beings

All the miseries of the living beings are truly embodied in envy. Two types of ignorance, namely, unrighteous ignorance and righteous ignorance; wicked acts and the desire to act wickedly (*pāpa* and *pāpa-vāsanā*); and commendable acts and the desire to act commendably

(*puṇya* and *puṇya-vāsanā*), are all included within envy. The principles of Vaiṣṇavism (*vaiṣṇava-dharma*) – namely compassion for all living entities (*jīve-dayā*), the loving inclination to chant the holy name (*nāme-ruci*), and service to the Vaiṣṇavas (*vaiṣṇava-sevā*) – stand directly opposed to the condition of envy. Those who feel distress upon seeing the happiness of others can never feel compassion for the living entities, and their hearts can never be suffused with the nectar of love of God. They maintain hatred and jealousy towards Vaiṣṇavas, a hatred that arises from the long standing distortion of their constitutional nature.

Only Those Who Are Free from Envy Can Embrace the Import of 'Even Humbler Than Grass'

Only those who are free from envy have imbibed the true meaning of the verse beginning *tṛṇād api*. Śrīman Mahāprabhu has said:

*tṛṇād api sunīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyah sadā hariḥ*

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka (3)

Only he who feels lower than a blade of grass and who is more tolerant than a tree; who expects no honour for himself but who is able to give due respect to all others is qualified to perpetually chant the holy names of Hari.

A person who is free from envy possesses no false pride for wealth, beauty, high caste, education or mundane physical strength, and therefore regards himself as even more insignificant (*sunīcena*) than a blade of grass. Such a person is also free from anger, aggressiveness and violence. On account of that he is even more tolerant (*sahiṣṇunā*) than a tree. That is, he is exceedingly compassionate. A person such as this, who is free from envy and false pride in his caste, education and so on, despite being blessed with all virtue, never craves recognition or adoration from others. Thus he is *amāni*, one who does not expect honour from anyone. That person, being free from envy, always feels happiness in the happiness of others, and pain in their sorrow. And so, he treats all living beings with due honour (*mānādā*).

In general, by being compassionate toward all living beings, he shows respect to them all. By offering great honour to noble souls like *brāhmaṇas* (priests) and *vaiṣṇava-praya* (unperfected Vaiṣṇavas), he pleases them. And while devoting himself to the lotus feet of perfected Vaiṣṇavas, he serves them.

The Ten Symptoms of the Non-Envious

- (1) He who is free from envy, by his very nature, never criticizes *sādhus* (saints).
- (2) He does not consider demigods to be independent lords, for his intelligence is absorbed only in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, yet he does not disregard them.
- (3) He has faith (*śraddhā*) in *śrī guru* and all other superior devotees as befits each of them.
- (4) He offers respect to the *bhakti* scriptures like Śruti¹.
- (5) Abandoning meaningless arguments, he apprehends how the holy name is the topmost, meaningful attainment (*paramārtha*), a perception rooted in perfect conviction that the holy name (*nāma*) and its owner (*nāmī*) are one and the same.
- (6) He never engages in wickedness while depending on the protection of the holy name.
- (7) He does not consider the auspiciousness of ordinary piety – such as societal *dharma*, religious vows (*vrata*) or renunciation – to be comparable in any way to chanting the holy names.
- (8) He tries to inculcate faith in the faithless, but never grants them the holy name until that faith has awakened.
- (9) He believes completely in the glories of the holy name as described in the scriptures.
- (10) And he is devoid of any sense of 'I' and 'mine' in relation to mundanity.

O readers! Non-enviousness alone is liberation for the living being, and envy his only bondage. In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta it has therefore been said:

*caitanya-carita śuna śraddhā-bhakti kari'
mātsarya chādiyā mukhe bala 'hari' 'hari'*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 9.361)

Endowed with full faith and devotion, listen to the lifework of Śrī Caitanya... Cast aside envy and let your mouth sing, "Hari, Hari!" ☺

Translated from Śrī Gaudīya Patrikā,
Year 5, Issue 5

1 Which includes Śrimad-Bhāgavatam and the Upaniṣads.



ONLY HEAR FROM ŚRĪ GURU

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

[On Wednesday, 16 September 1930, in the late evening, the renowned landlord of Nadiyā district, Śrī Nafara-candra Pāla Caudhurī – known by the title Bhaktibhūṣana – arrived at the *bhajana-mandira* of Śrīla Prabhupāda at the Śrī Gauḍiya Maṭha situated at No. 1, Ultādingi Junction Road, Kolkata. Śrī Nafara-candra was a contemporary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and was the executive officer for the committee of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Pracāriṇī Sabhā (the association for the widespread acclaim of Śrī Navadvipa-dhāma). For quite a few days, he had regularly come to Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāda to hear *hari-kathā* from him. These were the questions he asked:]

Nafara Bābū: Before, when Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was present, I saw that practically every year in Śrī Māyāpura, during the birth festival of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, performance artists like Gaṇeśa Kirtaniya used to sing *līlā-kirtana* (theatrical songs that depict the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa). Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura had no objection to it. If it is true that “*mahājano yena gatah sa panthāḥ* – one should follow the footsteps of the *mahājanas*”, then why do you object to hearing *līlā-kirtana*?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I do not object to *śravaṇa* (hearing) and *kirtana* (chanting) of the pastimes of Śrī Hari. Indeed, the pastimes of Śrī Hari are the only subject that should be heard and chanted, for only then can the conditioned souls be relieved of their addiction to hearing and chanting about their own heroic deeds or about other ordinary, mundane topics. Apart from this, there is no other remedy.

Nafara Bābū: Then why do you not permit *līlā-kirtanas* like *pūrvā-rāga* (the escalating love before the

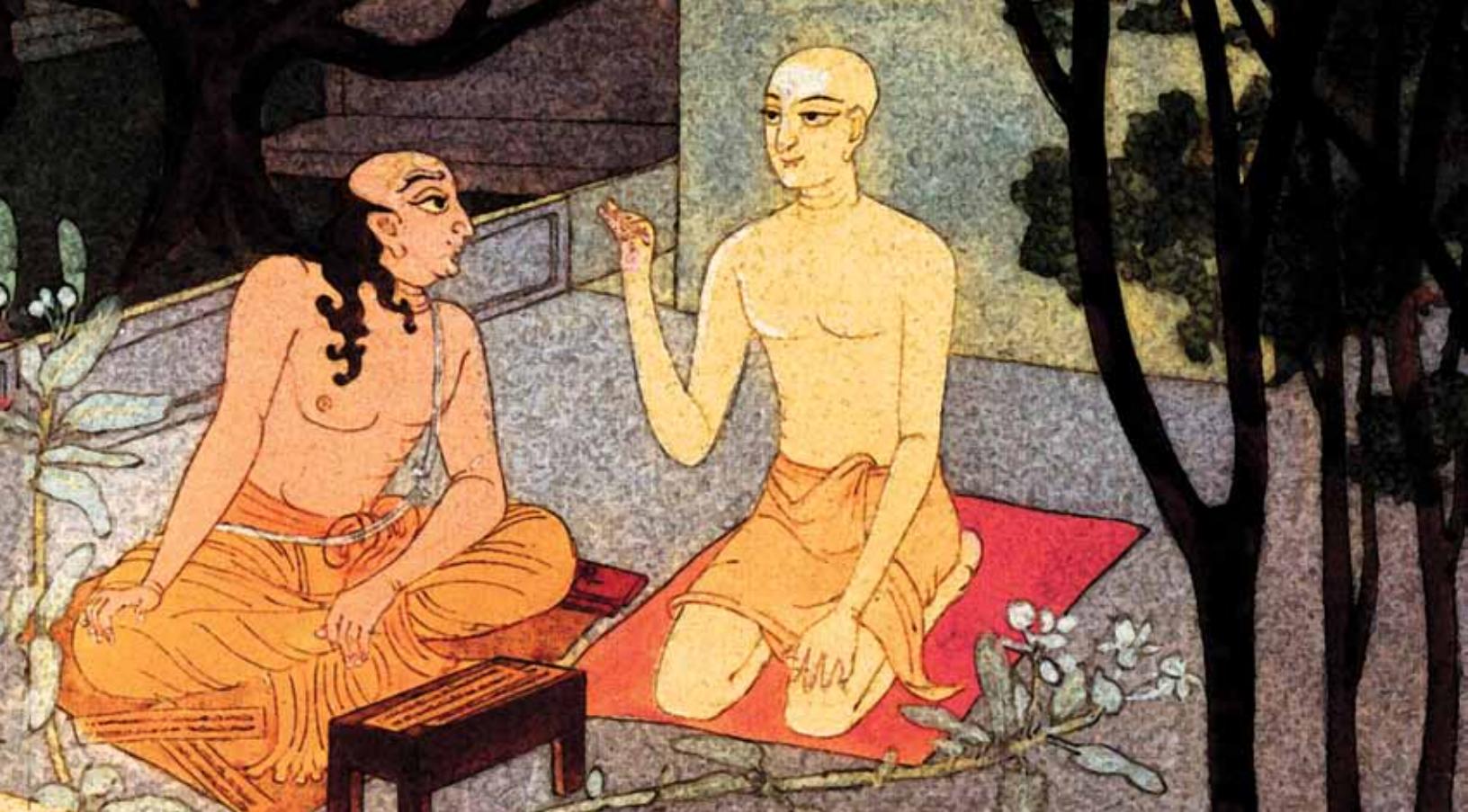
first meeting) or the *kirtanas* of the Padavāli-singers to be arranged here at the Gauḍiya Maṭha or in Māyāpura?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There is a distinction between *līlā-kirtana* and *kirtana* in relation to *śringāra-rasa* (transcendental amour). Jīvas who are full of *anarthas* (conditioning that is opposed to true well-being) can perform *śravaṇa* and *kirtana* of the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu or of the childhood pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but if they try to hear or sing *kirtana* in relation to the pastimes of *śringāra-rasa*, it will do their spiritual life more harm than good.

Nafara Bābū: But at least the devotees can engage in hearing and singing about it. What is objectionable in that?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But who will distinguish the devotees from the non-devotees? And why would devotees subordinately accept the rulings of materialists in assessing and determining who is and who is not a devotee? Devotees will themselves engage in *kirtana*. Why would they mix with the society of non-devotees and go to hear the *kirtana* of a hired performance artist? *Kirtana* should be heard exclusively from the lips of *śrī gurudeva*. Genuine devotees reflect, “I will never listen to any *kirtana* apart from the *kirtana* emanating from the lotus lips of Śrīla Gurudeva. That is to say, I will only listen to the *śrī bhāgavat-kathā* that once manifested from the lotus lips of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī and to the *saṅkīrtana* prescribed and performed by Śrī Gaurahari – in other words, *śrī rūpānuga-saṅkīrtana* – which are received through the *śrauta-paramparā*¹.”

¹ The *śrauta-paramparā* refers to the succession of authentic spiritual masters through which the message of Godhead is transmitted by means of aural reception.



“Never listen to hari-kathā from someone who is not practising its teachings himself. If your own practices are lacking, then do not jump to preach hari-kathā; preach to yourself behind closed doors.”

Genuine devotees of Bhagavān never listen to any other *kīrtana*, especially *kīrtana* performed by hired performance artists, professional consorts, ignoble women, businessmen, materialists or the public performances organized by *pāñca-miśali*² and *bāroyāri*³ groups. We should only hear *kīrtana* from those who have the same spiritual aspirations as we do, whose hearts are inclined toward Bhagavān with the same special mood as our own, and who are more advanced than we are. One will never attain any spiritual benefit by hearing *kīrtana* from a worldly materialist who just wants to acquire wealth, women and recognition.

Nafara Bābū: But Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura did listen to and organize professional *kīrtana* performances, so were his actions the antithesis of *bhakti*?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura never, ever listened to *kīrtana* sung by professionals, materialists, debauchees or wanton women. A trained female elephant may be employed to capture a wild male elephant, and thereafter to relieve him of his madness. In the same fashion, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was merely using cleverness to gradually rescue common men from their intoxicated stupor – men who are grossly absorbed in transient material pursuits and hence fond of the fleeting fashions of society.

² A band comprised of five kinds of performance artists with distinct styles, who have joined for a public performance.

³ A public performance by and among friends.

If those who have become addicted to hearing such songs happen to visit Śrī Māyāpura on account of heeding the dictates of their own greed, then by the influence of the holy *dhāma* and by the strength of associating with *sādhus*, they may gradually attain spiritual welfare. By unknowingly rendering some service to Śrī Gaurahari's holy *dhāma*, a powerful semblance of devotion may arise in their hearts. If those who are completely addicted to hearing such songs do not get to hear the music that is nectar to their ears, they may remain totally averse to visiting the *dhāma* and will thus be deprived of the fortune of listening to the *hari-kathā* of the *sādhus*. It was solely with this consideration that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura had employed such tactics.

This is truly a sign of his mercy. To those upon whom he bestowed his genuine mercy, he specifically cautioned, from the very beginning, never to hear the melodic songs of mundane, professional singers. He used to warn me, "Beware! You should not go to that side. You should never ever listen to *hari-kathā* from the mouth of a professional speaker, from a mundane woman or from a non-devotee. You should never listen to any *kathā* apart from the *hari-kathā* emanating from the lotus mouth of śrīla gurudeva."

Nafara Bābū: Then, did he use to preach in two different ways? One for his internal associates (*antaraṅga*) and another for outsiders (*bahirāṅga*)?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: There is no such imposed division between *antaraṅga* and *bahirāṅga*. Those who, with their life and soul, have accepted and will continue to accept his genuine mercy and unpalatably strong words of truth will alone be able to become *antaraṅga*. Those who have accepted or will continue to accept their own sense gratification or transient comforts will remain *bahirāṅga*.

In the magazine *Śrī Sajjana-toṣani* and books like *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta* and *Śrī Jaiva-dharma*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura has addressed the subject of hearing *rasa-kīrtana* in length. In his article entitled *Bhakti-siddhānta-viruddha and Rasābhāṣa*⁴, which was published in *Śrī Sajjana-toṣani* (Volume 6, Issue 2) and which you may have previously read, he wrote,

"There is no place for *bhakti-viruddha-siddhānta* or *rasābhāṣa* in the statements of a *mahājana* (renowned spiritual authority). A singer, or anyone, who is *arasā-*

jñā (not conversant in the science of *rasa-tattva*) while combining syllables, may haphazardly compose something that is *rasābhāṣa* and contrary to the principles of devotion. The philosophical conclusions (*siddhānta*) of Vaisnavism are extremely profound. Those who have deliberated upon pure *vaiṣṇava-dharma* for a long time in the association of *sādhus* will definitely be free from opposing *siddhānta*. But those who perform *līlā-kīrtanas* professionally never associate with genuine *sādhus*, nor are they conversant with the *siddhānta* of Vaiṣṇavas, so their words hurt the Vaiṣṇavas' ears as much as the fiercest thunder.

Within this topic there is another grave point to consider. Singing and listening to the *śringāra-līlā* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda is the topmost form of worship and it constitutes *nitya-bhajana* (eternal, perfected, internal service). It is improper and offensive to sing such *bhajana-līlā* in front of common people. If we listen to *rasa-gāna*, songs about the most private matters of *rasa*, from the mouths of professional singers, who are womanizers and hungry for worldly recognition, we dishonour our previous *acarya*'s statement, "āpana bhajana-kathā, nā kahibe yathā tathā – do not give an open account of your personal *bhajana* just anywhere" (*Prema-bhakti-candrika*, Song 9, Verse 19), and thus we commit a terrible offence.

Whenever there is a gathering of people with varying degrees of spiritual qualification, it is appropriate to chant *hari-nāma* and to sing humble prayers (*prārthanā*) and narrations of pastimes that pertain to the transcendental moods of *dāsy-a-rasa*, that is, the moods of a loving servant of the Supreme Lord. Only when everyone present in the gathering is a pure and exclusively devoted Vaiṣṇava established in the art of relishing *rasa* (*śuddha rasika vaiṣṇava*), may they listen to the most elevated *rasa-gāna*. At that time, they may experience the ecstasies of their perfected internal service in accordance with their intrinsic, spiritual form.

Yet, even if by this strict prohibition the tradition of *rasa-gāna* ceases to exist, then let it be so, for even in that there will be welfare for the Vaiṣṇavas. To allow elevated *rasa-gāna* to be performed openly here and there by those whose sole aim is to collect money and gratify their senses is no less than the act of Kali."

Nafara Bābū: Then is it that Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura did not himself follow what he preached to others? When he did not object to the performance of *rasa-kīrtana* by professional singers at Śrī Māyāpura,

⁴ *Bhakti-siddhānta-viruddha* literally means 'against (viruddha) the perfect conclusions of *bhakti* (*bhakti-siddhānta*)' and *rasābhāṣa* literally means 'a semblance of *rasa*', but the term *rasābhāṣa* implies a malformed semblance of spiritual emotions or, more precisely, a discordant mixture of devotional sentiments.

and in fact encouraged it, then did his preaching and his actions not contradict each other?

Śrīla Prabhupāda: After some time my contemporaries might also talk about me along the same lines. Some people think that just because I do not object to or directly oppose various things, it implies that I agree with them. Such people will only be deprived, for in reality, I have some other profound objective.

*śrīmad-bhāgavatārthānām āsvādo rasikaiḥ saha
saṁjātīyāśaye snigdhe sādhau saṅgah svato vare*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (*Pūrvavibhāga* 2.40)
Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*
(*Madhya-līlā* 22.131)

A practising devotee should relish the deep meanings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the company of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. Associating in this way with elevated Vaiṣṇava saints who have spiritual aspirations similar to his own and who are affectionately disposed towards him is the greatest thing he can do for himself.

Those who are concerned about their own spiritual welfare should always remember this verse composed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. If someone can help me achieve my objective in totality, only then will I approach him. If I want to become wealthy, I will approach someone wealthier than myself. If I were to approach a poor man or one less wealthy than I, he would surely want to siphon from my wealth and gradually make me penniless. We should only hear *hari-kathā* from those who have bound Śrī Hari with the ropes of their love so tightly that He can never escape from their hearts, and who are one hundred percent absorbed in rendering loving service to Him.

Hari-kathā should only be heard from śrīla gurudeva. One should never hear from *laghu*.⁵ Only those who have truly accomplished *śravaṇa* (hearing) of *hari-kathā* can subsequently engage in genuine *kīrtana*, just as sons only become fathers, siring sons of their own, in their maturity. Therefore, one should not hear *hari-kathā* from those who have not realized the topics of *hari-kathā* they try to speak about, and who have been unable to assimilate those topics or follow them in their

.....
⁵ The word *guru* literally means ‘heavy’, ‘grave’ or ‘immovable’. Its antonym is *laghu*, which means ‘light’, ‘superficial’ or ‘whimsical’.

lives. If, first of all, I myself am unable to completely assimilate and follow the topics of *hari-kathā*, and then, after that, I take advice from someone who is equally unqualified, I will be inviting greater trouble.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura used to organize professional song performances for unworthy, fashionable men, but those performances were by no means the final objective he cherished. He fostered the hope that his so-called relatives and all others would secure the same immense benefit as he had, by serving Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

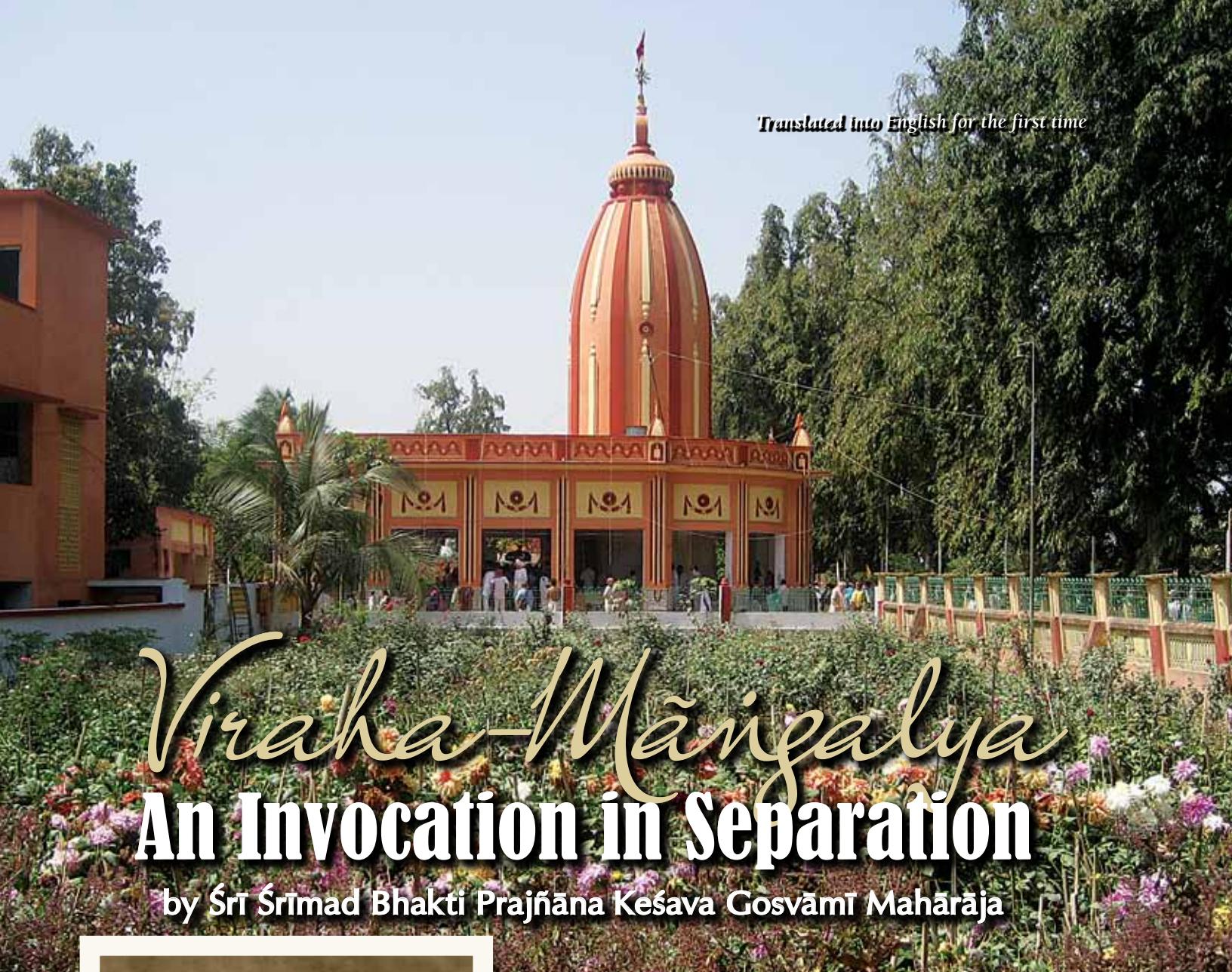
To the public, he appeared to be like a common man of this world. So, considering the eligibilities of all these people, he implemented various strategies to attract them to the lotus feet of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. But his instructions to me were, “Never listen to *hari-kathā* from someone who is not practising its teachings himself. If your own practices are lacking, then do not jump to preach *hari-kathā*; preach to yourself behind closed doors.” In order to truly discern the spiritual practices of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, one must have the right kind of vision. Many have feigned close association with him, but in spite of seeing and hearing his personal practices (*ācāra*) and his preaching (*pracāra*), they could not truly see or hear anything about him.

Nafara Bābū: The very prohibitions he gave you, he also warned me about, in the same manner.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: The only reason I mingle with others is because of his instructions to me. I tell people, “You should hear *hari-kathā* at every moment.” If someone says, “But my son is on the verge of death,” then I reply, “Even if your son is about to die, let him; you should listen to *hari-kathā*.” One has to overcome feebleness of mind. The mind, which is bent on material sense gratification, must be diverted towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

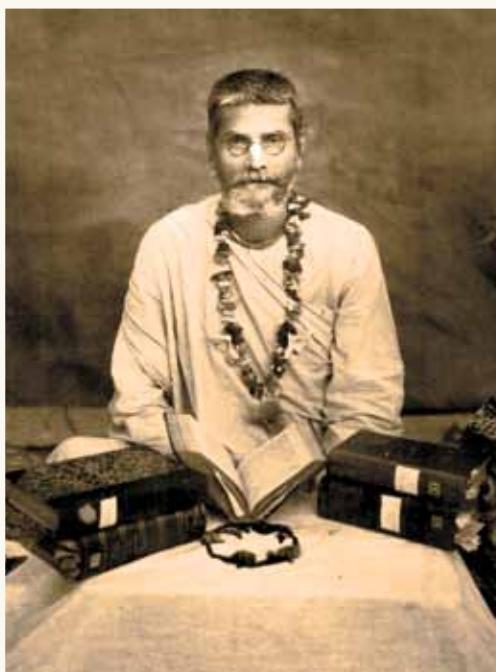
Whatever is already fixed in one’s destiny will inevitably come true of its own accord. What is the need for separately endeavouring anew for the same results? If one must engage in new endeavours then they should be for *hari-bhajana*. And yet I only consider those who induce me to seek happiness in sense pleasure to be my own kin. I never heed those who prohibit sense pleasures, rather, presuming such people to be quite outside my own clan, I become their enemy. ☩

Translated from weekly *Gaudīya*,
Year 9, Issue 7, September 1930



Viraha-Māigalya An Invocation in Separation

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



[Every issue of the *Rays of The Harmonist* is dedicated to Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja with these words: "He earnestly desired to re-institute the publication of all the magazines and journals that were being published during the manifest presence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda." On the day of Śrī Gaura-pūrnimā, 1949, some time after the disappearance of both Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrī Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja composed the following editorial for the inaugural issue of Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā, a magazine he founded, that would continue the work that began with Śrīla Prabhupāda's own magazine, *Gauḍīya*.]

Today, in the midst of profuse joy and elation, all that has been awakening within me are the pangs of grief. Although I have been trying to conceal these painful emotions within my heart, my heavy sighs betray me, revealing them to the outside world. That burdened breath tumbles and heaves restlessly, and has now become the sounds of words. Those words are the very form of weeping. This language is either completely indistinct or partially indistinct as the throat chokes up and the voice falters. Still, I



*That śrī gurupādapadma – the greatest of all the exalted souls...
The residents of this world address him with utmost respect as Śrīla Prabhupāda.*

model within the clan of *paramahamsas*¹ – concealed the glory of his true identity from the world out of humility, and instead introduced himself as *oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura. The residents of this world address him with utmost respect as Śrīla Prabhupāda.

He has not just captivated all the residents of India, but the entire world with the brilliance of his scholarship. When the great thinkers of distant Western countries beheld his visionary, philosophical genius, they became astounded and fell at his feet. The adherents of opposing schools of thought, who know that his logical refutations of their doctrines are as severe as bolts of lightening, remain perpetually terrorized. The immovable, impenetrable, expanse of his philosophical conclusions regarding service to Adhokṣaja, He who exists beyond sense perception, has forced the peaks of towering, snow-capped mountains to bow to him in veneration. Today, many people are tormented by the anguish of separation that arose because he has concealed himself from us.

His form, shining with the most captivating, supramundane effulgence, has embarrassed all worldly beauty. In refuting philosophies that are opposed to the conclusive truth, his heart seemed to be harder than stone, yet his heart would become overwhelmed with joy whenever he saw someone performing even a very small service with excellence. He is the prime embodiment of that wonderful quality of Vaiṣṇavas summed up by the words, “A Vaiṣṇava considers even the most insignificant service we render to be great and becomes at once indebted to us.” Indeed, whenever he saw us render even the most insignificant service, he would heap praises upon us. And whenever he saw us make even the smallest mistake, he would shower nectar-like rebukes upon us, which were always pregnant with meaningful instruction.

Śrī Caitanya Maṭha is the original Gaudīya Maṭha. It is the king of all Śrīla Prabhupāda’s other *maṭhas* and the

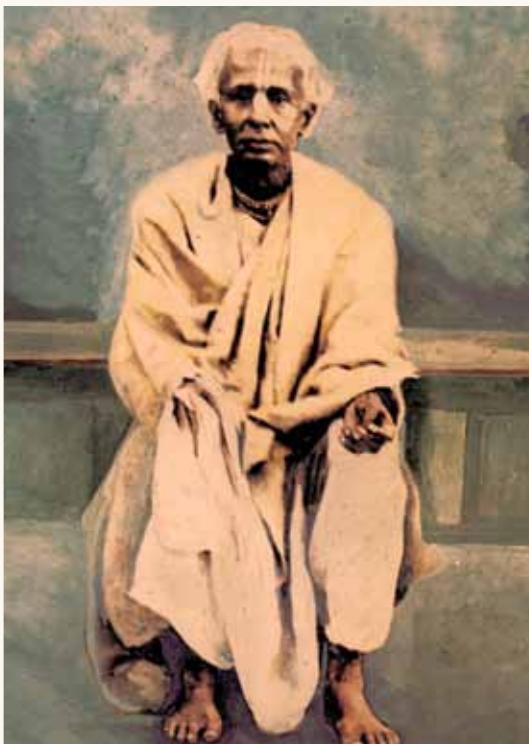
believe that only when this concealed pain of separation is professed and exposed will it subside even slightly.

But even bearing this in mind, today, as I set out to write, the torment I feel by not being able to see Śrī Śrī Gurupādapadma or Ṭhākura Śrīla Narahari Sevā-vigraha Prabhu, who was devoted solely to serving him, mingles with my pen, causing it to falter at every step and proceed so slowly across the page.

He who has even attracted the all-attractive Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and made Him a captive within his heart; he who has overpowered all-powerful Bhagavān with endearment and who can therefore deliver Him into the hearts of others as he pleases; he who has gathered all the qualities of Śrī Hari, proving the deceived condition of the *nirguṇa-brahmavādīs*, who believe that Absolute Reality is ultimately devoid of personal qualities – that śrī śrī gurupādapadma Śrīla Prabhupāda incarnated at the site of Puruṣottama-kṣetra, Śrī Puri Dhāma, as the spiritual master of the entire universe to unfold and fulfil the deepest message of Śrī Caitanya and Śrī Vyāsa.

I am an addict of gross pleasures, my nature is heinously untameable and I am a fallen wretch, and yet he firmly grabbed me by the hair on my head and dragged me into his shelter, allowing me to be a particle of dust on the soles of his sacred lotus feet. His compassion surpasses even God’s compassion. That śrī gurupādapadma – the greatest of all the exalted souls, he who is indeed the ideal

¹ Literally supreme (*parama*) swan (*hamsa*), indicating the highest class of realized saints who can extract the sweetest essence from the lake of spirituality, just as a swan extracts milk from water.



O Narahari dā! You are known to everyone as Thākura Mahāśaya. Just by uttering your beautiful, most auspicious name, we are all reminded of the constancy with which you performed your service.

As long as we were in your company, we felt as if we were truly living in Śrī Caitanya Maṭha. You have shown the way to ideal service through your unperturbed and supremely blissful self (*akrodha paramānanda svarūpa*), and striving for that ideal has become the sole aim of Śrī Gauḍiya Vedānta Samiti. Please see me as I try to serve your beloved Śrī Gauḍiya Patrikā and shower your kind grace upon me. And if I ever commit any offence, please reprimand me.

Just as there is a want of exemplary personalities to reprimand me when I make mistakes in my services, there is similarly a dearth of those who will express great joy when they see my small efforts to serve and encourage me congruously. O Śrīla Thākura Mahāśaya! O Śrīla Prabhupāda! The two of you are the sole captains of my spiritual life. Even though you both remain forever immersed in the bliss of your most exalted services within the apical realm of the spiritual domain, please remember this fallen wretch and bestow profuse blessings upon me. Again and again I beg you: please bestow profuse blessings upon me, please bestow profuse blessings upon me! Today, this prayer, full of anguish, is my only supplication at your lotus-like feet.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you called your beloved magazines *vaikuṇṭha vārtāvaha*, carriers of the Vaikuṇṭha message. They carried all the divine messages that your predecessor ācāryas transmitted to you in this mortal world. Today, please convey a message to me from your supremely exalted place within the spiritual world so that I can publish it and win the merit of the name *vaikuṇṭha vārtāvaha* for the magazine I now begin.॥

Translated from Śrī Gauḍiya Patrikā, Year 1, Issue 1
Gaura-pūrnimā, March 14, 1949

.....
original position through the association and guidance of those whose Kṛṣṇa consciousness is eternally awakened – in other words, the transcendental residents of the eternally existing Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, such as Śrī Narahari Sevavigraha Prabhu.

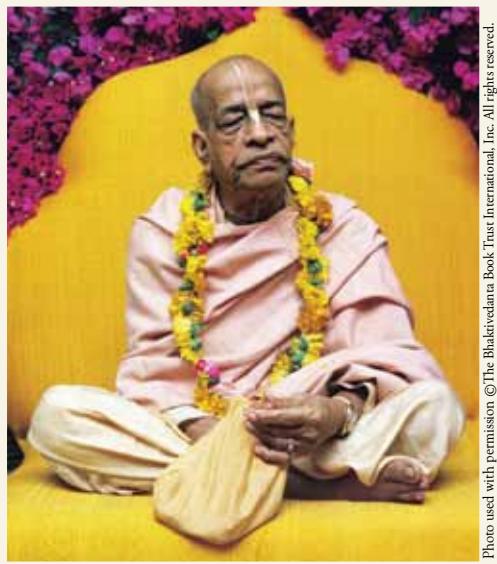
most beloved by him. Upon obtaining his most intimate and trusted servant, Śrī Narahari Brahmacāri Sevāvigraha Prabhu, who was supremely worshipful for all, Śrīla Prabhupāda entrusted him with the entire burden of service to Śrī Caitanya Maṭha. Rid of worrying about the *maṭha* and in great ecstasy, he was able to preach in far off lands without the slightest hesitation. Today I realize that since the company of such a vile, fallen wretch as me is thoroughly poisonous, they have abandoned me and gone to a place where even getting any news of them is extremely difficult for me.

O Narahari dā²! You are known to everyone as Thākura Mahāśaya. Just by uttering your beautiful, most auspicious name, we are all reminded of the constancy with which you performed your service. You personally embody Śrīla Prabhupāda's beloved Śrī Caitanya Maṭha.³

² Dā – elder brother (Bengali)

³ According to passages taken from several Gauḍiya articles, we derive the following three revelations:

(1) Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda named the original *matha* Śrī Caitanya Maṭha because it is the birth place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and thus non-different from the Absolute Godhead. (2) The purpose of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu's appearance, and thus the purpose of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, is to revive the original Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or *kṛṣṇa-caitanya*, of the living entities and thus reinstate them in their roles of eternal loving service. (3) It is only possible for the living entities to regain their



Srī Caitanyadevera

THE ULTIMATE GODHOOD OF

By Srī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

dhye Yam sadā paribhava-ghnam abhiṣṭa-doham
tīrthāspadām śiva-viriñci-nutām śaraṇyam
bhṛtyārti-ham praṇata-pāla bhavābdhi-potam
vande mahā-puruṣa te caranāravindam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.33)

I offer my obeisances at the divine lotus feet of Srī Caitanyadeva millions and millions of times. He is the source of all other *avatāras*, He is the deliverer of the fallen, He is supremely munificent and He is the sole maintainer of surrendered souls. Mahāprabhu Srī Caitanyadeva appeared among us, bringing His own abode and all His associates. His purpose was to deliver living entities like us, who are afflicted by the misfortunes of Kali-yuga, by bestowing pure *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* upon us. That pure *bhakti* is in the form of constant eagerness to act kindly toward Srī Kṛṣṇa (*anukūla kṛṣṇa-anuśilana*) without any ulterior motives (*anyābhilāṣa*). It is neither eclipsed by the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake (*jñāna*) nor by reward seeking activities (*karma*).

Srī Caitanyadeva is the sole protector of the most prominent *sampradāya* among the four Vaiṣṇava *saṁpradāyas*, which had been preserved by Srī Ānanda Tīrtha (Srī Madhvācārya), the *ācārya* of Srī Brahma *saṁpradāya*. Srī Caitanyadeva is eternally worshipped by Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura – the incarnation of the original poet, Lord Brahmā – and by Śrīla Advaita Ācārya – the incarnation of Srī Sadāśiva. Srī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva, the deliverer of the fallen souls, is the exclusive shelter

(*āśraya*) of all living beings. He cured Kuṣṭhi-vipra, His *brāhmaṇa* servant, of the painful affliction of leprosy, and as though He were a sturdy ship to carry them across the ocean of material existence, He was the only deliverance for Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, who was drowning in the desire for liberation, and for King Pratāparudra and others, who were drowning in worldly enjoyments.

tyaktvā su-dustyaja-surepsita-rājya-lakṣmīm
dharmiṣṭha ārya-vacasā yad agād aranyam
māyā-mrgam dayitayepsitam anvadhāvad
vande mahā-puruṣa te caranāravindam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.34)

With a certain purpose in mind, Srī Caitanyadeva seemingly accepted *sannyāsa*. Yet internally He nourished a secret mood: He wished to relish Kṛṣṇa's sweetness in the same way that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī had. He therefore remained constantly tormented by separation from Srī Kṛṣṇa, and thus taught the living beings the secrets of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. I offer my obeisances at His divine lotus feet millions of times.

His two eternal consorts, Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā-devī and Śrīmatī Lakṣmīpriyā-devī, are even worshipped by the demigods. Yet Srī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva gave up their association and adopted the severe vow of *sannyāsa* just to bestow *kṛṣṇa-prema* upon all living beings, which is extremely rare even for Lord Brahmā. The Vedas, Purāṇas and other scriptures foretold that Srī Bhagavān would personally accept *sannyāsa* and deliver all souls. Honouring that ancient prophecy, Srī Gaura-nārāyaṇa

Bhagavatā

ŚRĪ CAITANYADEVA

became a *sannyāsī* and delivered all the living beings suffering under the reign of Kali.

These two verses are eternally preserved in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the greatest of all Purāṇas, as the *pranāma-mantra* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva, the original form of Godhead (*avatārī*) from whom all other *avatāras* emanate.

The conversation between King Nimi and the Nava-yogendras has been reflected upon in the first five chapters of the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Therein, the Nava-yogendras explain in detail which forms of Godhead appear in each *yuga*. Śrīla Karabhājana Ṛṣi, who is prominent among the Nava-yogendras, has analytically described which incarnations of Bhagavān will appear in each *yuga* and by what symptoms they would be known. In his description he has also described the symptoms by which Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva's *avatārītvā* (quality of being the source of all other *avatāras*) would be known. After describing the symptoms of different incarnations of Bhagavān in Satya, Treta and Dvāpara-yugas, he has depicted the characteristic features of the incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva in the following manner:

*kṛṣṇa-varnam tviṣākṛṣṇam sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārśadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkirtana-prāyair yajanti hi su-medhasah*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.32)

In this Kali-yuga, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, accepting a golden, or yellowish, complexion, will appear along with His own expansions (*sa-aṅga*), His attendant

Photo of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's beloved deity, presently worshipped in Śrī Keśavajī Gaudiya Maṭha, Mathurā.



*“Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva
is the preacher of
bhāgavata-dharma, and
the original propagator
and instructing spiritual
master (śikṣā-guru)
of the performance of
saṅkīrtana-yajña.”*



servants (*upāṅga*), His powerful armaments (*āstra*) in the form of the holy name, and His dear companions (*pārśadas*). Although this *avatārī* Śrī Gaurasundara, adorned with the mood and complexion of Śrī Rādhā, is Kṛṣṇa inside, outside He is Gaura.¹ Therefore, those with great intelligence will make their lives successful by worshipping Him through *saṅkīrtana-yajña*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva is the preacher of *bhāgavata-dharma*, and the original propagator and instructing spiritual master (*śikṣā-guru*) of the performance of *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. He has accepted *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as the natural commentary on *vedānta-darśana*, or *brahma-sūtra*, which contains the *sūtra* “*janmādy-asya*”² And in this very *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the ultimately original Godhood (*avatārītva*) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva has been acknowledged. In fact, His *avatārītva* has not only been confirmed there, but in other scriptures as well, including the *Upaniṣads*, the *Purāṇas* and the *Mahābhārata*.

Hence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanyadeva is not the imaginary Bhagavān born in the minds of whimsical men and subsequently fostered by the opinions of fools. Rather, He is Svayam Bhagavān, identical to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as affirmed and proclaimed in the perfect conclusions of *śāstra*. He is known, therefore, by the name “Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya”.

Śrī Vāsudeva Sarvabhauma also knew the absolute truth regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, that He was Śrī Kṛṣṇa

¹ The word *kṛṣṇa* also means deep bluish-black and *gaura* means the hue of molten gold.

² The invocation verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also begins “*janmādy-asya...*”

Himself. Hence he glorified Him in the following two verses, which are especially celebrated as the necklace worn by all Gauḍīya Vaishnavas:

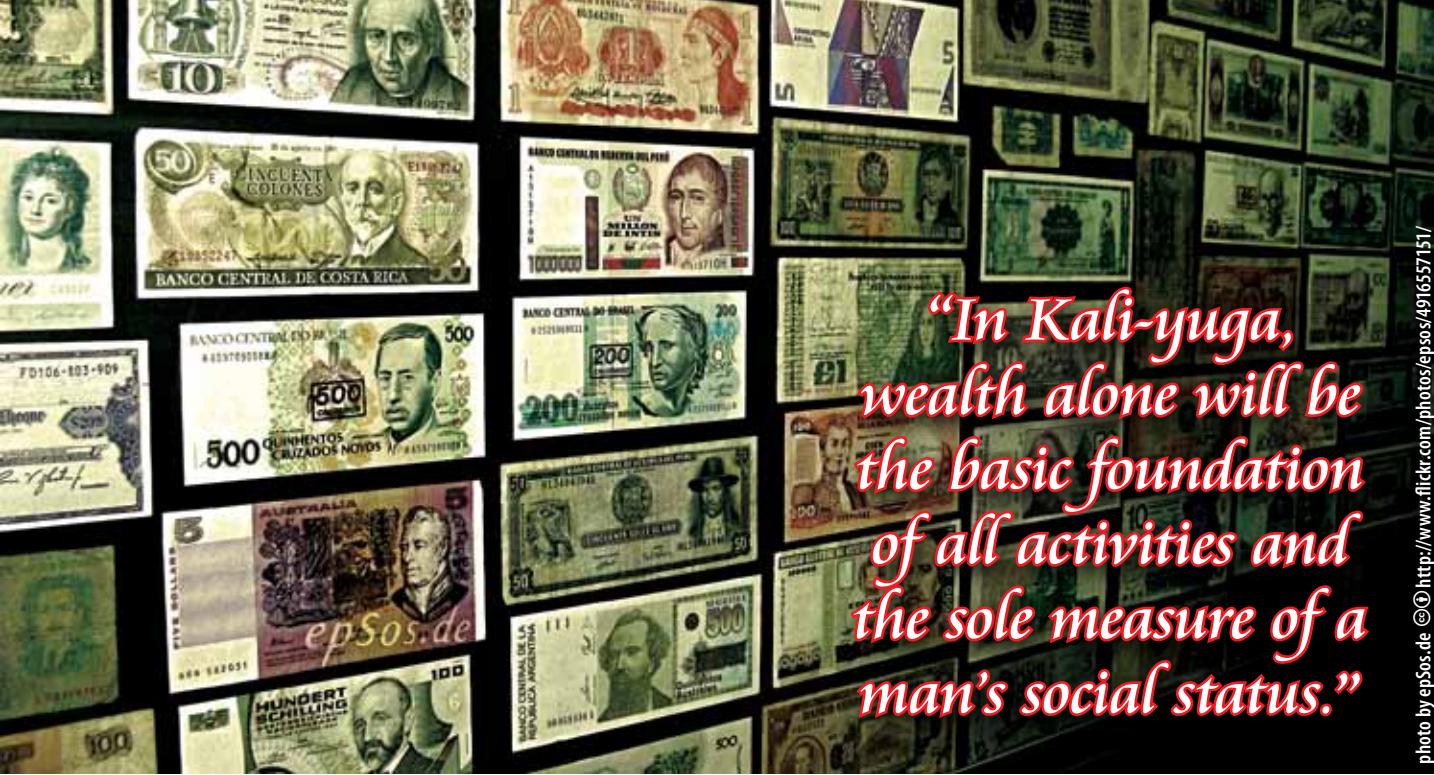
vairāgya-vidyā-nija-bhakti-yoga-
śikṣārtham ekah purusah purāṇah
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-śarīra-dhārī
krpāmbudhir yaś tam aham prapadye

kālān naṣṭam bhakti-yogaṁ niṣṭam yah
prāduṣkartum kṛṣṇa-caitanya-nāmā
āvirbhūtas tasya pādāravinde
gādham gādham liyatām citta-bhṛngah

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 6.254–255)
Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka (6.74–75)

With the purpose of imparting to all souls detachment from mundanity – that is, anything that does not nurture *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* – and to bestow upon them transcendental knowledge and *bhakti-yoga* to Himself, the Supreme Primeval Lord took the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. I offer myself to that endless ocean of transcendent compassion.

To revive the culture of performing *bhakti-yoga* to Himself, which had been destroyed in the course of time – that is to say, it had been destroyed due to the increasing prominence of ulterior motives, greed for the fruits of labour, the pursuit of impersonal knowledge, and material attachment – that Primeval Lord appeared, bearing the name Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. May my mind, like a honeybee, merge very, very deeply in the nectar of His lotus-like feet.



*“In Kali-yuga,
wealth alone will be
the basic foundation
of all activities and
the sole measure of a
man’s social status.”*

photo by epSos.de ©① http://www.flickr.com/photos/epSos/4916557151/

In the Second Chapter of the Twelfth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam the symptoms of the present age, the age of Kali, have been described in detail. In the age of Kali the following activities and symptoms will become visible to us:

In Kali-yuga, wealth alone will be the basic foundation of all activities and the sole measure of a man's social status. The freedom of men, all verdicts, equality of rights and so on will be settled by wealth alone. Physical beauty will be the sole cause of attraction between man and woman and thus the sole impetus to enter into family life. And in practical day to day life, a man's success in his undertakings will be proportionate to the degree to which he employs deceit and sly dealings.

Males will gain supremacy over females in accordance with their sexual prowess, and females will also use sexuality to gain control over males. Gradually the divine varṇāśrama system will disintegrate, thrown into chaos by men from the higher castes who will claim to have spiritual authority simply because they wear a thread.

If a man shall be unable to bear the expenses connected with court proceedings, he will not receive a fair verdict from the judicial system of the state. But a man who shall manoeuvre to establish himself by force or fraudulence will be revered by the people.

The impoverished will be deemed unrighteous by the rest of society, while traits like deceit and egoism will be the mark of righteousness. Marriage and divorce will take place whimsically, simply by signing a contract. And simply by taking bath, people will consider themselves fully decorated.

Any river will be regarded as a holy place if it is somewhat far away, and just by growing long hairs on their scalps, people will believe they have become beautiful and lustrous. People will try to ascertain the truth through utterly unholly or demoniac practices, completely ignoring scripture. The expertise of householders will be judged simply by their ability to support their families, and they will earn distinction in society just by being able to maintain their wives and children.

When the organization of society is turned upside down by all of this, men will take command of nations simply by winning support by popular vote, whether they are actually qualified or not and irrespective of their natural varṇa. Thus unqualified leaders of state will unfailingly be greedy for wealth, selfish, cruel, envious and self-conceited. They will therefore plunder the wealth and assets of their powerless subjects and make themselves the sole power.

Constantly disturbed and tormented by such leaders of state, the powerless subjects will flee from one state to another and be known as homeless refugees. Inflicted by famine, disease, depression and the unbearable burden of government taxation, these refugees will become helpless, and will be forced to eat varieties of grass, roots, seeds and the like, that are unfit for human ingestion. And when constant cycles of excessive rainfall and severe draught cause the soil's capacity to bear crops to dwindle, food grains will gradually disappear from the face of the earth, one by one.



“In Kali-yuga, the only path to salvation is harināma, harināma, harināma. There is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way.”

The people afflicted by the age of Kali will suffer from all kinds of anxiety due to conflicts between cults, as well as from hunger and thirst, disease, depression, and inadequate clothing and shelter to protect them from excessive cold, heat and rain. The average height of a man will continuously decrease. The four social divisions and the four phases of human life will no longer be determined by one's actions and nature, but rather, divisions in society will be imposed on people by the ambitions of wicked men. And the conduct of the people in general will eventually become the antithesis of what is prescribed in the Vedas.

Since people will be attracted by such conduct, they will accept unfair and unholy means to attain high positions. And once they have secured their positions, they will busy themselves in robbing the masses. Therefore, the only varṇa that will remain in Kali-yuga will be śūdra.

The cow will become like the she-goat. Discrepancies will be observed in the attire and conduct of those who have accepted the renounced order. Householders will accept the occupation of begging by donning the robes of a renunciant and will thus be totally degraded from their prescribed duties. Relationships will only last as long as the sexual ties upon which they will be based. Medicinal trees and plants will lose their medicinal properties and trees will no longer grow very tall. The clouds will be full of lightning but no rain will fall from them. At that time Bhagavān Kalkideva will appear like a blazing comet descending to lay waste to the legions of demonic men.

Even now, at the very dawn of the age of Kali with four hundred and twenty-seven thousand years remaining out of four hundred and thirty-two, all of these symptoms are already visible and even prominent. It is obvious therefore that the difficulties faced by the common people will continue to increase. Eventually, when the state of humanity deteriorates so far that even bare necessities like sufficient food and sleep are unobtainable, people will become like ghosts. When all forms of higher education, both spiritual and secular, are completely inaccessible, human beings, who are already predisposed toward sense enjoyment, will become increasingly enthralled by debased sexuality, both subtle and gross, until at last they are engrossed in it to the exclusion of all else. Even now, pornography is already rampant and pervasive in the form of erotic dramas and novels, magazines and cinema. This is all testimony to the predictions from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam just mentioned.

Thus, degraded men will abandon service to Vaiṣṇavas, to their parents and to their superiors, and they will even

abandon their responsibility of maintaining their wives and children, whom they are truly meant to protect. Blinded by their degrading selfish interests, they will totally reject their eternal relationships with Śrī Bhagavān, He who is even worshipped by Śiva and Brahmā, and they will become hostile to śrī guru and adopt *prākṛta-sahajiyāism* (the practice of illegitimately superimposing mundane conceptions on transcendental subjects).

In the end, after describing the symptoms of Kali-yuga in great detail, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī – the foremost of *mahā-bhāgavatas*, who was a perfected yogī from birth – gave us a ray of hope:

*kaler doṣa-nidhe rājann asti hy eko mahān guṇah
kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgah param vrajet
kṛte yad dhyāyato viṣṇum tretāyāṁ yajato makhaiḥ
dvāpare paricaryāyāṁ kalau tad dhari-kīrtanāt*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.3.51–52)

Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults. But this age has one exalted quality: simply by performing *śrī kṛṣṇa-nāma kīrtana*, people can become liberated from material bondage and attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Whatever result was obtained in Satya-yuga through meditating on Viṣṇu, in Tretā-yuga through performing Vedic fire-sacrifices for Him, and in Dvāpara-yuga through worshipping His deity, can all be obtained in Kali-yuga simply by performing *śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana*.

Since the results of all forms of worship in all the ages are available in Kali-yuga simply by performing *nāma-kīrtana* of Lord Śrī Hari, the Āryans – that is, the most esteemed class of man, who have appraised the merits of all the ages – have verily eulogized this age. The *dharma* of *śrī kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* is the only resort for those born in Kali-yuga, and the founder of the *saṅkīrtana* movement is Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

It is mentioned in Śruti that He who is beautifully radiant with the lustre of molten gold is Śrī Gaurasundara:

*yadā paśyāḥ paśyate rukma-varṇam
kartāram iśam puruṣam brahma-yonim
tadā vidvān punya-pāpe vidhūya
nirañjanah paramām sāmyam upaiti*
Mūḍaka Upaniṣad (3.3)

When the living entity sees that the Supreme Personality of Godhead – He whose complexion is beautiful like brilliant gold, and He who is the

Supersoul of all and the Supreme Mover – has manifested this universe and that He is the source of the god of creation, Lord Brahmā, then that wise living entity attains transcendental knowledge and becomes free from both pious and sinful karmic reactions. Thus freed from his connection with the material energy and the body comprised of that energy, he attains supreme, qualitative equality with the Lord by attaining a spiritual form like His.

Besides Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which reveals the import of *Mahābhārata*, it is mentioned in the *Dāna-parva* of *Mahābhārata* itself:

*suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgo varāṅgaś candanāṅgadī¹
sannyāsa-kṛc chamah canto niṣṭhā-śānti-parāyanāḥ*

Mahābhārata, Dāna-parva (149)

Śrī Gaurasundara has the complexion of molten-gold and His body is supremely beautiful. In His pastimes as a householder He wore an exquisite garland and smeared the pulp of sandalwood on all His limbs. In those pastimes He preached *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* in Nadiyādhāma. In His later pastimes, when He accepted the renounced order, His disposition was peaceful and equipoised. Then also, as an *ācārya*, with steadfast determination in the supreme sacrifice (*mahā-yajña*) known as *śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana* and with complete devotion to *mahābhāva* (the highest mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā), He preached the message of Veda.

That message is,

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

Bṛhan-nāradīya Purāṇa (38.126)

Quoted in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 17.21)

In Kali-yuga, the only path to salvation is *harināma*, *harināma*, *harināma*. There is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way.

Considering all of this, it is clear that, as mentioned in the scriptures, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya is the Supreme Absolute Truth – Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In fact, this alone is the final truth, accepted and affirmed by all authorities. 

Translated from Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā

Year 5, Issue 7 (1954)

The Unparalleled Speciality

by the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda



Translated from *Four Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Gauḍīya Darśana*
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Many people have the conception that the path of *bhakti* is covered by a bed of tender flowers. They also believe that blind faith, transgression of rules and regulations, whimsical temperament, the absence of valid conceptions, sentimentality and speculation are all included within *bhakti*. However, through the statements of *sāstra* and the words of the *ācāryas*, we can understand that although the path of *bhakti* is the one and only royal road for the *jīvas* to attain the supreme goal, it is obstructed by thorns. Especially in Kali-yuga, this age of argument and dispute, the path of *bhakti* is blocked by millions upon millions of thorns.

The *ācāryas* are oceans of causeless mercy and they have been sent by Bhagavān Himself. To enable travellers on the path of *bhakti* to fearlessly reach the desire tree of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet without hindrance, and thereupon

taste the nectar of the fruit of *prema*, they caution the earnest travellers about the countless obstacles on the path of *bhakti*, from the very beginning.

This natural, innate and causeless disposition of the *ācāryas* is an example of their *amandodaya-daya*¹.

When someone sets out to clear a path of thorns, he may be wounded or even bitten by serpents or other violent and cruel natured creatures living in the thorn forest. Even though this person will be fully aware of the dangers, he will continue clearing the thorns from the path without becoming even slightly discouraged. In fact, we find in him exceptional effort and increasing

¹ Compassion that exclusively awakens immense good fortune, without granting any insignificant results or causing any harm or loss, is called *amandodaya-daya*. In particular, this refers to compassion that awakens *suddha-bhakti* in the heart of the living entity.

of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas

Part One

enthusiasm in accomplishing the particular tasks by which travellers on the path will not be harmed by thorns or by the violent creatures living in the forest. Similarly, it is seen that throughout the lifetime of the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas that their enthusiasm to clear away the countless millions of thorns that obstruct the path of *bhakti* increases constantly.

Those who are self-centred, who desire only their own happiness, who are gripped by laziness or who are afraid of the difficulties that irreligious people will make for them, leave their real duties because of the endless shouting of antagonistic people. Otherwise they think, ‘I only need to fulfil my own selfish interests and secure recognition and personal happiness, so what is the need of getting into so many quarrels in the endeavour to benefit others? And what is the need of listening to the insults and abuses of antagonistic people?’

Another type of person considers that in *nirjana-bhajanānanda*, the bliss of solitary *bhajana*, he will not have to become entangled in all these quarrels and other troubles, nor will he have to listen to anyone’s comments or be involved in their troubles.

On the other hand, the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas, who feel pain upon seeing others suffer, are not in any way self-centred or desirous of personal happiness. They are never seized by laziness and they are not afraid of ordinary people. They speak boldly in the following way:

Even if countless people – even all the adverse *jīvas* from all the universes combined – come together and, in one loud voice, shower the harshest abuses upon me, I will tolerate them all, and in an equally powerful voice I will express the Absolute Truth.

Within the unlimited expanse of universes, trillions upon trillions of *jīvas* are submerged from head to toe in averseness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But if even one *jīva* could become aware of that message, if the Truth could enter into his ears and dispel the darkness of aversion to Bhagavān from his heart, then, and then alone, would I consider myself capable of serving the deepest heart’s desire of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

I know that all of the *jīvas* are wandering throughout all these material universes, which are

full of nothing but misery, only because they are averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, from the smallest creatures up to Brahmā, the creator, these trillions upon trillions of *jīvas* in the infinitude of universes are all averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa – that is, they are forgetful of the Absolute Truth – so almost no one in the world will listen to the Truth. Nevertheless, if even one soul out of ten million others listens to the Absolute Truth, it is enough. Once that *jīva* is established in the Truth, he can convey it to others.

In light of this, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes:

Those *bhaktas* who disregard the act of preaching, while submerged in the bliss of *bhajana* that arises according to the natural flow of their spiritual taste, do not benefit the world as much as those who preach, even though they are still following the *dharma* of the *sādhus*.

(*Sajjana-toṣaṇī*, Year 4)

* * *

The Vaiṣṇava ācāryas are not fearful of preaching the Truth even at the cost of their own life, nor, by staying exclusively submerged in the bliss of their own *bhajana*, do they remain indifferent to the eternal welfare of any soul, even one who is averse to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Rather, they follow the footsteps of Śrī Gaurasundara, who descended to spread and teach us the substance of His own *bhajana*. Hence, the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas display their activities to the inhabitants of this world just to bring about their eternal benefit, interacting with them in a natural way. But seeing this, ordinary, antagonistic people, who have envious and critical vision, perceive Vaiṣṇava ācāryas in a degraded way.

When the society comprised of the antagonists of Śrī Viṣṇu commit atrocities against each and every preacher of the Truth, ordinary people see or hear about such atrocities.

There is a deep reason for using the term ‘ordinary people’ in this context. Rāvaṇa set out to steal *svarūpa-sakti* Sītā, but in fact he could not even touch her. The person ordinary people saw him steal was in reality Māyā

Sītā. In the same manner, it is not even possible for Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas, who are beyond the material creation, to be touched by the envious atrocities of worldly people.

The child Prahlāda was the son of the demon king, Hiranyakaśipu. Although he was actually a Viṣṇu *bhakta*, as long as he had not started preaching about the Absolute Truth, he remained the apple of his father's eye, and the beloved prince of the whole demon society. As the necklace that adorned their necks and the treasure that graced their hearts, he was the object of everyone's respect, care, affection, parental love, praise and admiration.

Yet, from the day Prahlāda opened his mouth in front of the king of demons and began preaching about the Absolute Truth, more and more people became his enemy. He had begun preaching about one-pointed devotion to Viṣṇu; about how essential it is to perform *hari-bhajana* by renouncing one's ties to household life; about the fallacy of *kula-gurus*², who are completely infatuated with their families; and about the importance of serving the *paramahaṁsa* clan (the topmost swan-like devotees). And he had begun preaching to the young sons of the demons, his peers in school, about the absolute necessity of performing *hari-bhajana* after rejecting the association of their demon families, who had all accepted the vows of household life. From that time on, more and more demons turned against him.

In the *jīva*'s conditioned state, he is enamoured by the very deep illusory relationship that exists between father and son. Under the spell of that illusory relationship, a father sees his ugly, drab son as beautiful as pure shining gold, he thinks his blind son has lotus eyes, and he considers even the most disgraceful son to be the ornament of the entire dynasty. Thus, in the deluded vision of the father, a son's thousand faults are seen as a thousand good qualities. Yet as soon as Prahlāda started preaching about the Absolute Truth, even his beloved father, Hiranyakaśipu, what to speak of others, considered this simple act such a great fault that he made thousands of attempts to murder his own son, he who had been more dear to him than his own soul.

In the history of this world, can we find any example where, out of extreme selfishness, a father has tried to kill his small son, a son more dear to him than his own life, a son who had not yet learned to disrespect his father in any way, either because of the temptation of a woman or because of greed for the throne, like the Muslim king Aurangzeb? Would any father throw such a tender five year old boy under the feet of a frenzied elephant hoping

² So-called *gurus* who maintain their disciplic succession solely through heredity.

to see him crushed and killed; or feed him poison, throw him from the top of a cliff, or even attempt to burn him alive in a blazing fire?

Prahlāda's only 'fault' was that he began preaching about the Absolute Truth. If, in preaching the Truth, even a father can become the enemy of his own son, is there anything surprising if those who are adverse to the Absolute Truth and prone to selfishness deem the expounders of Reality their enemies? Thus it is seen that even in Satya-yuga, when all four legs of religion were intact, a father did not hesitate to commit such atrocities against his own son, regarding him as an enemy, simply because he was a preacher of the Absolute Truth.

Even the heart of a father, which was filled with innate paternal affection, could become cruel towards the son who was a preacher of Truth! How blessed is the power of animosity to Viṣṇu! It makes the impossible possible by turning the innate parental affection a loving father feels for his own son into severe cruelty and animosity, simply for speaking the Absolute Truth.

From the tips of their toenails to the tops of their scalps, the living entities in the material world are so averse to Śrī Viṣṇu that they absolutely refuse to hear the Truth – that is, about the transcendental features of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They avoid the Truth as if they had made a solemn vow of aversion to Kṛṣṇa, or as if it were the irrevocable dictate of their true nature.

If such a poignant example of disdain for the Truth and atrocities against the preachers of the Truth can even be seen in Satya-yuga, then is it at all surprising if in this age of Kali, the time of argument and dispute, we encounter widespread indifference to the Truth and hundreds of varieties of antagonistic ventures against the preachers of the Truth?

Whenever the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas begin preaching the Truth, inimical people, who are in the majority in this world, vow to destroy themselves by battling the propagation of Truth. But the ācāryas feel so much distress upon seeing the suffering of others that, despite all opposition, these great personalities unceasingly and increasingly distribute their *amandodaya-daya*. ☩

(To be continued...)

Originally published in Bengali in *Gauḍīya* (weekly)
Year 6, Issue 2, August 1927

Translated from *Four Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Gauḍīya Darśana*
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



SELECTED INSTRUCTIONS OF ŚRĪ MADHVĀCĀRYA

Translated from *Four Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Gauḍīya Darśana*
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

THE EXCELLENCE OF THE VAISÑAVAS

*sa nāma sukṛtī loke kulam tenābhylaṅkṛtam
ādhāraḥ sarvabhūtānām yena viṣnuḥ prasāditaḥ*

Kṛṣṇāmṛta-mahārṇavam (5)

In this world, he who has pleased Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu is truly virtuous. He is the jewel of his dynasty and the personified refuge of all living beings.

*kalau kalimaladhvāṁsi sarva pāpaharam harim
ye 'caryanti narā nityam te 'pi vandhyā yathā hariḥ*

Kṛṣṇāmṛta-mahārṇavam (7)

In Kali-yuga, that person who daily performs worship (*arcana*) of Śrī Hari, the destroyer of the filth of Kali and the annihilator of all sins, becomes as worshipful as Śrī Hari.

THE GLORIES OF ŚRĪ NĀMA

*nāmno 'sti yāvatī śaktih pāpa-nirharane hareḥ
tāvat kartum na śaknoti pātakam pātakijanaḥ brahmā*

Kṛṣṇāmṛta-mahārṇavam (36)

Lord Brahmā, the original guru, said: “It is impossible for a sinful person to commit more sins than Śrī Hari’s name can steal, for even within a semblance of śrī

harināma there is unlimited power to steal the sinful reactions of the living entities."

*hṛdi rūpaṇi mukhe nāma
naivedyamudare hareḥ
pādodakaṇca nirmālyan
masta ke yasya so 'cyutah*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (44)

When the form of Śrī Hari is in someone's heart and the name of Śrī Hari is on his tongue, when the food remnants of Śrī Hari are in his belly and the *caraṇāṁṛta* and *nirmālyā* (offered flowers, *tulasi* and so on) of Śrī Hari are present upon his head, then that person is non-different from the infallible Lord Śrī Viṣṇu.

*kurukṣetreṇa kim tasya kim
kāśyā puṣkareṇa kim
jihvāgre varttate yasya
harirityakṣaradvayam*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (72)

If the two syllables 'ha-ri' dance upon a man's tongue, what need has he of visiting the places of pilgrimage, such as Kurukṣetra, Kāśi and Puṣkar?

*sā jihvā yā harim stauti
taccittam yattadarpaṇam
tāveva kevalau ślāghyau
yau tat pujākarau karau*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (74)

The tongue that glorifies Śrī Hari is the only true tongue, the heart (*citta*) that is surrendered to Śrī Hari is the only true heart, and the two hands that are always engaged in worshipping Śrī Viṣṇu are truly worthy of praise.

WORSHIPPING VARIOUS DEMIGODS IS PROHIBITED

*svadharmantu parityajya
paradharmam cared yathā
tathā harim parityajya
yo 'nyam devamupāsate*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (115)

Rejecting worship of Śrī Hari to worship various *devatās* is as useless as giving up ones own *dharma* (prescribed duties) and adopting the *dharma* of another.

WORSHIPPING VIṢNU IS OUR REAL DUTY

*samasta-lokanāthasya
devadevasya śāringīnah
sāksādbhagavato viṣnoḥ
pūjanam janmanah phalam*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (14)

The worship of Bhagavān Śrī Viṣṇu Himself, the Lord of all beings, the God of all gods, is in fact the true fruit of obtaining a human birth.

*yāvat svāsthyaṁ śarīreṣu
karaṇeṣu ca pāṭavam
tāvat arcya govindamā-
yuṣyam sārthakam kuru*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (121)

As long as one's body is healthy and one's senses are sharp, one should make his life successful by worshipping Śrī Hari.

REFUTATION OF THE SMĀRTA DOCTRINE

*svadṛto pañcagavyaṇca
daśamyā duśitāṁ tyajet
ekādaśīṁ dvijaśreṣṭhāḥ
pakṣayorubhayorapi*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (129)

Just as the best of *brāhmaṇas* discard even *pañca-gavya*¹ if it is kept in a receptacle made of dog-skin, they certainly also discard the Ekādaśī *tithi* of both fortnights if it is invaded by Daśamī.²

*athavā mohanārthāya
mohinyā bhagavān hariḥ
arthitaḥ kārayāmāsa
vyāsarūpī janārdanāḥ*
*dhanadārcāvivṛḍhyartham
mahāvittalayasya ca
asurāṇāṁ mohanārtham
pāṣandānāṁ vivṛddhaye*
*ātmasarūpāvijñaptiyai
svalokāprāptaye tathā*

*evaṁ viddhāṁ parityajya
dvadaśyāmupavāsayet
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam* (150-152)

In answer to the prayers of Mohini, Bhagavān Śrī Hari has bewildered the fruitive materialists. As Vyāsadeva, the Supreme Lord Śrī Janārdana (He who provokes mankind), He has spread a form of *arcana* meant for those who simply desire riches. That same Supreme Lord has concealed the path to Absolute Reality, bewildered the demons and increased the ranks of wicked men, and He has made His own *svarūpa* incomprehensible. He has done all of this through the scheme of *viddhā*, or mixed, Ekādaśī so that not just anyone can attain His eternal abode, Viṣṇu-loka. Therefore, one should abandon the observance of *viddhā* Ekādaśī and observe the *vrata* on Dvādaśī instead.

*varam svamātrgamanam
varam gomāṁsabhadhakṣanam
varam hatyā surāpānam
ekādaśyannabhakṣanāt*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (180)

On the day of Ekādaśī the consumption of grains is even more sinful than engaging in sexual activities with one's own mother, eating the flesh of mother cow, murder or other such depraved activities.

*tiryak puṇḍram na kurvīta
samprāpte marane 'pi vā
na cānya nāmavibrūyat
parānnārāyanādṛte*
Kṛṣṇāṁṛta-mahārṇavam (221)

One should never wear horizontal *tilaka*.³ One should not chant any name apart from the names of the Supreme Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa, especially at the time of death.

¹ A mixture of the five pure ingredients produced by the cow: milk, yogurt, ghee, cow urine and cow dung

² If Ekādaśī does not begin one hour and thirty-six minutes before sunrise, observe Dvādaśī instead

³ Those who are inimical to Lord Viṣṇu, including Māyāvādīs and modern so-called Saivaites, decorate their foreheads with three white horizontal lines.

THE SUPREMACY OF VAIŚNAVA-SEVĀ

viṣṇorbhāgavatānāñca
pratīpasyākṛtih sadā
parasparavirodhe tu
viśiṣṭasyānukūlatā
priyam viṣṇostadiyānām
api sarva samācaret
dharmamapya priyam teṣām
naiva kiñcit samācaret
hari bhaktāvanuccastu
varṇoccopi na pūjyate

Mahābhārata-tātparya-
nirṇaya (29.21)

One should never be hostile or act harmfully towards Śrī Viṣṇu or His devotees. If there is a difference of opinion between two Vaiṣṇavas, one should favour the more advanced Vaiṣṇava.

One should engage in activities that are dear to Śrī Viṣṇu and His devotees. But one should not engage in religious activities (*dharma*), even to the slightest extent, if they do not please the Vaiṣṇavas.

Even someone born in a low class family is worshipful if he is a devotee of Śrī Hari. Yet even someone born in a family that belongs to a high caste is not worshipful if he is not a devotee.

BRAHMINHOOD IS DETERMINED ON THE BASIS OF ONE'S PROPENSITIES

ārjavam brāhmaṇe sākṣat
śūdra nārjavalakṣaṇaḥ
gautamastviti vijñāya
satyakāmamupānayat
Chāndogya-bhāṣyam

A true *brāhmaṇa* is simplicity personified, whereas the heart of a *śūdra* is always tainted by deviousness. In this way, solely by considering a person's manifest propensities, Hārīdrumata Gautam conferred brahminhood upon Satyakāma by performing the *sāvitrya saṃskāra* for him, that is, by granting him the sacred thread. ☸

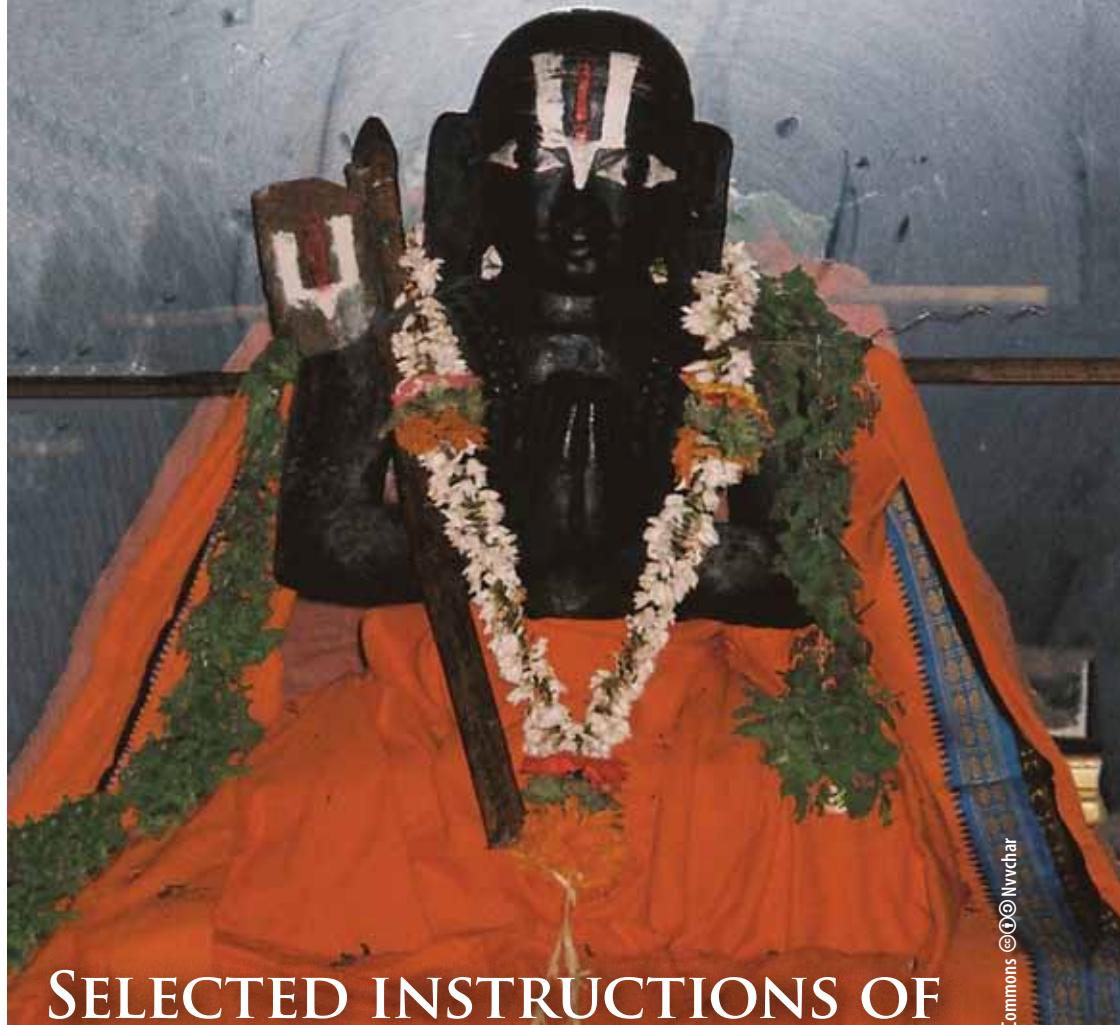


photo from Wikimedia Commons © CC BY-SA Nvchar

SELECTED INSTRUCTIONS OF ŚRĪ RĀMĀNUJĀCĀRYA

Translated from *Four Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Gauḍīya Darśana*
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

svadeśikasya kainkaryo
vaiṣṇavasya ca
pratipattiṁ samāṁ kṛtvā
kainkaryam kāryet sadā
pūrvacāryoyktavākyeṣu
vīsvāsenāiva vartayet

Prapannāmrta (65.24)

One must accept oneself to be the servant (*dāsa*), and perpetually serve both *gurudeva* and the Vaiṣṇavas, giving them equal respect. One must place one's trust in the words of the previous *ācāryas*.

na vartayedindriyāñām
kiṅkarañca divāniśam
sāmānya-śāstra-nirato
naiva tiṣṭhet kadācana

Prapannāmrta (65.25)

One must not spend all one's time, day and night, engaged as the servant of one's senses. Apart from *pāramārthika śāstra* (scripture concerned solely with Absolute Reality), all other scriptures are quite ordinary. Do not be attached to them.

puspa-candana-tāmbula
dravyādiṣu sugandhiṣu
vāsanā-ruci-kāryāṇi
kadācinaiva kāryet

Prapannāmrta (65.28)

Flowers, sandalwood paste, betel and other fragrant ingredients must never be used simply to satisfy our taste for enjoyment. In other words, devotees must accept them as the remnants of Bhagavān for activities that foster progress in *bhakti*, but never for their own enjoyment.

yā pṛītirāśīta satatam
bhagavan-nāmkīrtane
sā syāt pṛītirhi tadbhakta
nāma-sāṅkīrtane ca vah
Prapannāmṛta (65.29)

Let whatever affection (prīti) you have developed for the unending nāma-kīrtana of Śrī Bhagavān be truly the same for the nāma-sāṅkīrtana of Śrī Bhagavān's devotees.

kāraṇam bhagavatprāpteh
mahābhāgavatāśryaḥ
iti matvā drḍham teṣām
ājñayā vartayet sadā
Prapannāmṛta (65.30)

The shelter of the feet of the mahā-bhāgavatas is the sole cause of attaining Bhagavān. Knowing this, one must obey their orders with steadfast determination.

vihāya viṣṇu-kaiñkaryam
kaiñkaryam vaiṣṇavasya ca
vinaśyeta sa narah prājñāḥ
rāgādiprерito yadi
Prapannāmṛta (65.31)

As attachment to the objects of sensual pleasure ruins even the wisest of men, so too by forsaking one's transcendental nature of loving service (dāsava) to Viṣṇu and Vaiṣṇavas, one shall verily destroy oneself.

vaiṣṇavānāmanuṣṭhāne
na-upāyamatim unnayet
upeyameva satatam
unnayeta sumahāmanāḥ
Prapannāmṛta (65.32)

An intelligent person will unfailingly abandon upāya buddhi – the idea that by serving Vaiṣṇavas some extrinsic reward can be attained – and shall perpetually adopt upēya buddhi instead – the realization that such service is itself the greatest reward, only available to those who have performed a vast amount of good deeds (sukṛti).

śrutvā na vismayam
gaccheddevatāntara kīrtanam

viṣṇorvā vaiṣṇavānāca
nāma-sāṅkīrtanāni ca
Prapannāmṛta (65.45)

Do not become struck with amazement upon hearing kīrtana in glorification of various demigods. On the other hand, it is offensive if the sight of devotees performing nāma-sāṅkīrtana of Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas does not bring you any joy.

yadi praṇamate pūrvam
dāsoham iti vaiṣṇavah
anādare kṛte tasmin
apacāro mahān bhavet
Prapannāmṛta (65.49)

If a Vaiṣṇava first offers obeisances to you and states, "I am your servant," then it constitutes severe aparādha if you do not honour him in return.

vaiṣṇavānānāca janmāni
nidrālasyāni yāni ca
drṣṭvā tānyaprakāśyāni
janebhyo na vadet kvacit
Prapannāmṛta (65.50)

We must be very discreet regarding a Vaiṣṇava's natal background, or conditions that may arise in him such as sleepiness or fatigue. Indeed, if we perceive any apparent insufficiency in a Vaiṣṇava, we must never reveal it or speak about it to anyone.

mānca bhāgavataih sārddham
sāmyabuddhim na kārayet
prākṛtānānāca saṁsparśam
prāptah prāmādikāt yadi
snātah sacailah sahasā
vaiṣṇavānghri jalām pibet
Prapannāmṛta (65.55)

One must not consider oneself to be equal to Vaiṣṇavas. If out of carelessness one touches the body of a gross materialist, then, after bathing with all of one's clothes on, one must at once drink the water that has bathed the lotus feet (caranāmṛta) of a Vaiṣṇava.

prasāde pāvane viṣṇoh
sarva-pāpa-hare hareḥ

kadācidapi cauchiṣṭam
pratipattiṁ na kārayet
Prapannāmṛta (65.62)

Bhagavān Śrī Hari's pure prasāda, which takes away all sins, must never be considered contaminated.

dehābhīmānīnā sārddham
sahavāsaṁ na kārayet
śrīvaiṣṇavānām cīhnāni
dhṛtvāpi visayāturaīh
taih sārddhami vañcakajanaih
sahavāsaṁ na kārayet
Prapannāmṛta (65.65–67)

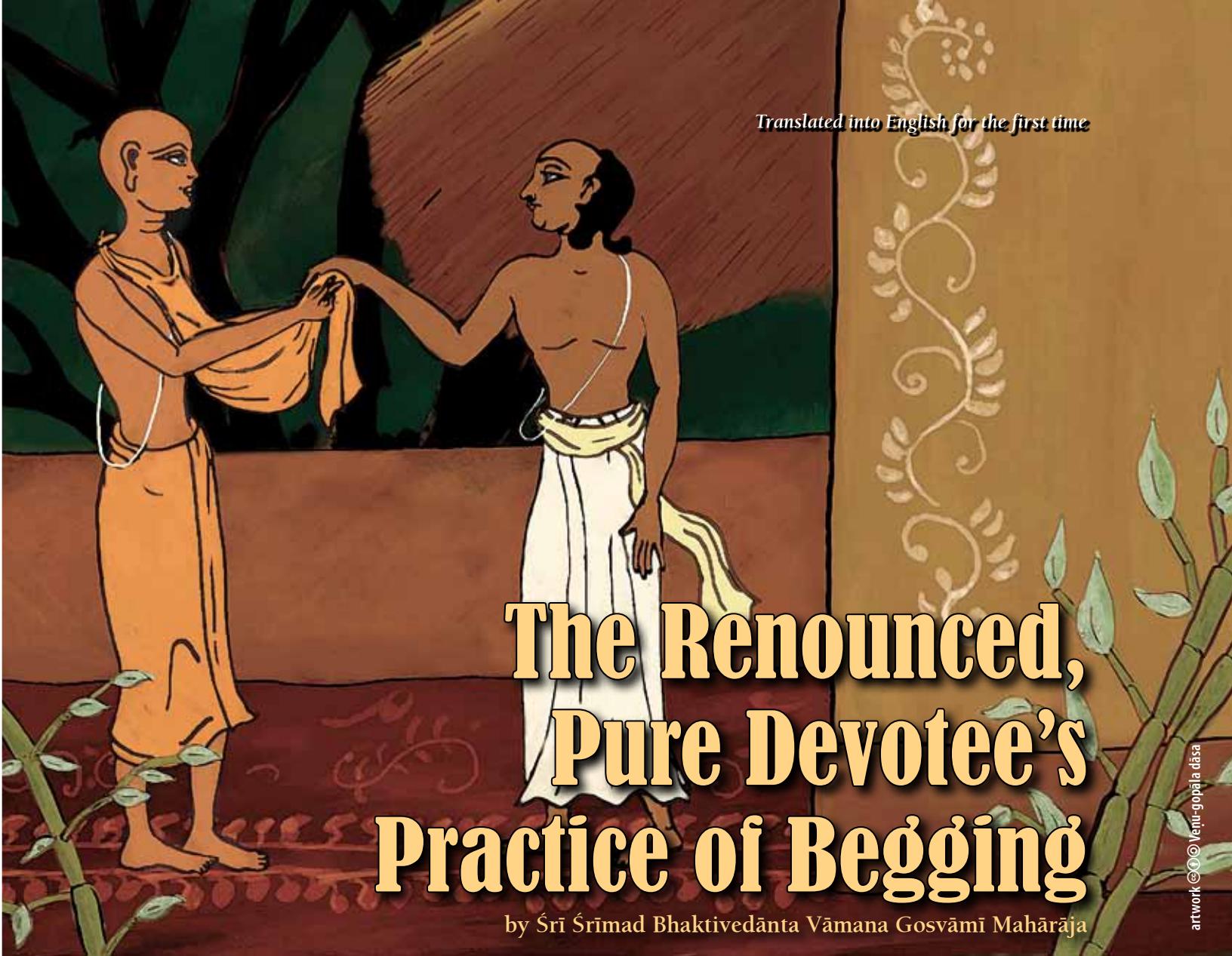
One must not associate with those who consider their body to be their self. Even if they don all the outward signs of a Vaiṣṇava, one must never associate with such cheaters, for, without doubt, they are attached to the objects of sense pleasure.

vaiṣṇavena tiraskārah
kṛtorhi bhavatām yadi
apakāram smṛtim tasmād-
amatvā maunato vase
Prapannāmṛta (65.74)

If one is chastised by the Vaiṣṇavas, one must remain silent and never contemplate causing them any harm.

śrīmad bhāgavatārcanām
bhagavataḥ pūjā vidheruttamam
śrī viṣṇoravamānanād gurutaram
śrīvaiṣṇavallāṅghanam
tīrthādacyutapādajād gurutaram
tīrthām tadīyāṅghrajam
tasmān-nityam-atandrito
bhavasatām teṣām samārādhane
Prapannāmṛta (65.86)

The worship of the Vaiṣṇavas is truly the highest form of service to Bhagavān. Disrespecting the Vaiṣṇavas is a more severe offence than disrespecting Viṣṇu Himself. And the caranāmṛta of Vaiṣṇavas is even greater than the caranāmṛta of Śrī Viṣṇu. Know all of this to be true and, free from lethargy, worship the Vaiṣṇavas with full dedication as you would worship Śrī Viṣṇu. 



The Renounced, Pure Devotee's Practice of Begging

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

According to the opinion of most people, there is no practice (*vṛtti*) in this world more disgraceful than begging (*bhikṣā*). There is no difference, they presume, between begging and the propensities of a dog. Begging degrades people, makes them lazy and dependent on others, and robs them of the priceless jewel of independence. The conception of our *ācāryas*, however, is the complete opposite of this popular opinion. Our preceptors explain that begging is, in fact, a practice in the mode of goodness (*sāttvika-vṛtti*).

The livelihood of the *brāhmaṇa* is to collect the leftover grain from the field after the farmer has harvested his crop. The *brahmacārī* should reside in the house of his *guru* and serve him by studying the Vedas and collecting alms (*bhikṣā*). The livelihood of both the *sannyāsī* and *vānaprasthī* is to accept food obtained by begging. And finally, it is the duty of the *grhasthā* to earn virtuous merit

(*sukṛti*) by offering alms to those in the three orders of life just mentioned.

Pure Vaiṣṇavas are not swindlers who make a living by exploiting a mendicant's garb. They have no other purpose than serving *śrī guru* and Kṛṣṇa. Their lives are not devoted to sense gratification but filled only by service. They are incessantly preoccupied with trying to bring about eternal benefit for the people of the world.

*mahāntera svabhāva ei tārite pāmara
nija kārya nāhi tabu jāna tāra ghara*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.39)

The nature of exalted saintly devotees is verily to deliver the fallen. Therefore, they visit people's homes despite having no personal business at any of them.



“The pure devotee accepts the experience of hunger and thirst and wanders from door to door just to uplift wretches like us.”

ARE WE NOT THIEVES?

I am the greatest sense enjoyer. I have exploited the objects that are meant for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure for my own personal gratification. Kṛṣṇa is the sole enjoyer of everything. Casting Him far away, I now endeavour to take His place. If for even a moment we contemplate this with a clear conscience, would we not deem ourselves thieves? We have misappropriated the property of Bhagavān and therefore, in the prison of this material world, we are being tormented day and night by the threefold miseries.

īśāvāsyam idam sarvam yat kiñca jagatyām jagat
tena tyaktena bhuñjithā mā grdhah kasya svid dhanam

Śrī Īśopaniṣad (1)

Everything animate and inanimate within the universe is situated in Īśvara, and is also pervaded by Him. Therefore, in a detached mood, one should accept only what is necessary for one's maintenance, considering all things to be the remnants of Īśvara. One should not be attached to another's wealth, considering oneself to be the enjoyer.

Parameśvara is the sole proprietor of the universe. Every corner of the universe is pervaded by Him alone. One should only accept His remnants and not entertain desires for anything else.

Furthermore, it has been described in Śrī Gītā:

iṣṭān bhogān hi vo deva dāsyante yajña-bhāvitāḥ
tair dattān apradāyaibhyo yo bhuṅkte stena eva saḥ
yajña-śiṣṭāśināḥ santo mucyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
bhuñjate te tv aghāṁ papa ye pacanty ātma-kāraṇāt

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (3.12–13)

Upon being pleased by your *yajña*, the demigods will award you the fruit you seek. But he who enjoys the ingredients given to him by the demigods without first offering them back to the demigods is certainly a thief.

Saintly persons who accept the remnants of *yajña* become free from all sins. But those who cook grains and other foodstuffs for themselves are sinful and verily partake of sin.

Those who consume grains and other edibles without first offering them to the demigods are guilty of the offence of theft. On the other hand, those who accept the remnants of sacrifice are freed of all sins, including unavoidable sins such as those incurred by farmers at the time of harvest, by unintentionally harming insects and small creatures. But those who regale themselves with culinary treats exclusively out of self-interest are sinners, and they suffer for every sin they commit.

When we engage in mere eating we verily eat only sin and become offenders guilty of theft. The pure devotee, anguished by our suffering, tries to deliver miscreants like us, tolerating our abuses as he stands at our door solely to benefit us. But because we are blinded by worldly notions, we look upon the pure devotee as a mortal man just like us. We see that, like us, he has worldly needs and stands at our doorstep because he has some craving he wishes us to fulfil. But the Vaiṣṇava never lacks anything at any time, for he is perpetually situated in his true self.

He is a being from Vaikunṭha, so no limitations exist in him. When the Supreme Lord, who is full in all six opulences, resides in someone's heart, how can that person ever experience worldly hunger and thirst? The pure devotee accepts the experience of hunger and thirst and wanders from door to door just to uplift wretches like us.

WE BENEFIT OURSELVES IF THE PURE DEVOTEE MERCIFULLY ACCEPTS SOMETHING FROM US

Śrī Gauraharī, who is Vrajendra-nandana Himself, personally went from door to door with Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, propagating *harināma-saṅkīrtana* and begging alms:

*eka dina śuklāmbara brahmacārī sthāne
kṛpāi tāhār anna māgila āpane*
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya-khaṇḍa, 26.1)

One day, Lord Śrī Caitanya went to the place of Suklāmbara Brahmacārī and showed him great mercy by personally begging food from him.

*dekha nā śūdrāra putra vidurera sthāne
anna māgi khailena bhaktira kāraṇe*
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya-khaṇḍa, 26.11)

Just as The Supreme Lord begged food from Vidura, the son of śūdra woman, during His pastimes as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, so too He begged from Suklāmbara Brahmacārī during *gaura-līlā*. He did this simply because of their *bhakti* for Him.

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu said, "hena jāti nāhi nā khāila kāra ghare – There is no caste that has not seen Mahāprabhu feasting in one of their own homes."

It has also been said:

madyapera ghare kaila snāna o bhojana'
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya-khaṇḍa, 19.114)

Lord Caitanya bathed and ate in the home of a man who drank wine.

The pure devotee has no dearth:

*yata dekha vaisṇvera vyāvahāra-dukha
niścaya jāniha sei paramānanda sukha*
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya-khaṇḍa 9.240)

Although externally a Vaiṣṇava may appear to be suffering from ordinary distress, you should know that, in truth, he is experiencing the highest transcendental bliss.

However, it is also stated:

*viṣaya-madāndha sab kichui nā jāne
jāti-vidyā-dhanmade vaisṇava nā cine*
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya-khaṇḍa 9.241)

Bewildered by sense enjoyment, pride in their esteemed birth, great learning, vast wealth and so on, ignorant people cannot recognize the transcendental position of a Vaiṣṇava.

The pure devotee is a servant of śrī guru and Kṛṣṇa. He adopts proper renunciation (*yukta-vairāgya*) and roams the earth for the benefit of all living beings. Moreover, he only accepts the remnants of food left by śrī guru and Kṛṣṇa:

*tava nija jana, prasāda seviyā, uchiṣṭa rākhibe jāhā
āmāra bhojana, parama ānande, pratidina habe tāhā*
Śaraṇāgati, Sarvasva Tomāra (3)

Every day, in supreme bliss, I will partake of whatever remnants Your dear devotees leave after honouring Your *prasāda*.

These are truly the heartfelt words of a pure devotee. A pure devotee is not affected by the urges of the tongue or belly:

*jihvārā lālase yei iti-uti dhāya
śiśnodara-parāyaṇa kṛṣṇa nāhi pāya*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā, 6.227)

Those who run here and there just to satisfy their greedy tongues become busy filling their bellies and prone to carnal pleasures. They never obtain Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

If, out of compassion, a pure devotee accepts something from us, then we generally believe that we have done a favour to that Vaiṣṇava by giving something to him that had been our own property. But this belief is erroneous. No one's fortune is his own. Everything belongs to the Lord of the universe. We have neither the ability to create nor destroy even a single blade of grass, so we are not the owners of wealth nor are we the enjoyers of it. You and I have no ability whatsoever to benefit the pure devotee. Rather, we benefit ourselves



“The disposition of a pure devotee is one of unconditional service, entirely free from deceit.”

if he mercifully accepts something from us. We may thus consider ourselves fortunate to have been able to return something to the Supreme Lord, its rightful owner, to be used for His own pleasure.

A great Vaiṣṇava has sung:

*tomāra kanaka, bhogera janaka,
kanakera dvāre sevaha mādhava*

Your wealth is the root of selfishness and indulgence.
Just use your wealth to serve Mādhava.

GOD DOES NOT ACCEPT ALL OFFERINGS

You and I might argue: “Can we not offer things for the Lord’s service ourselves? Must we instead give them to the Vaiṣṇavas to offer on our behalf?” In this regard, *sāstra* states that Bhagavān does not accept anything from the hands of anyone but the pure devotee.

*patram puṣpam phalam toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad aham bhakty-upahṛtam aśnāmi prayatātmanah*

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (9.26)

If any pure-hearted devotee offers Me a leaf, a flower, fruit or water with love and devotion, I will surely accept his gift.

Kṛṣṇa does not accept the offerings of professional scholars (*bhādātiyā jñānis*) who charge fees for their lectures on the subject of devotion, workers (*karmīs*) who are excessively attached to the fruits of their actions, or bogus so-called devotees, for all of them commit offences in their outward display of devotional service – they are *sevā-aparādhīs*.

If we reflect on the matter, we can understand that a professional scholar is a servant of money. He may call himself a servant of the Lord but in fact there is no love, not even a trace of devotion, within his heart. He is simply interested in making money. If you pay him, he will put on a show of serving Śrī Hari, but as soon as you stop, he will not hesitate to abruptly end the event he started and quit his so-called service. Out of greed for money, the professional scholar tries to sell us the form of Śrī Bhagavān by means of his so-called professional recitation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He shows you the deity simply to collect donations; he utters *mantras* in your ear just for goods or money – an act as futile as blowing some air in your ear – and he accepts the position of a *pūjārī* (the priest responsible for worshipping the deity) for a wage. Hence, the professional scholar is a minion of wealth, women and prestige.

So, if not him, then who is, in fact, a true servant of Bhagavān?

The orthodox *jñānī* seeks emancipation from suffering. He concocts the idea that he is himself *brahma*, the totality of infinite spirit, so the proclivity to serve the Supreme Being cannot exist in him. While seeking liberation he occasionally conjures up a false sense of devotion. The general public believes this show of devotion to be actual servitude (*sevā*). However, his display of devotion is fraudulent; it is brimming with deceit. What to speak of rendering service to Bhagavān, he attempts to make himself the object of worship (*sevya*) and is even ready to engage Bhagavān in serving him. Although those who seek liberation outwardly show that they have no desires, in reality, they are more engrossed in selfish desires than anyone else. It is true that the *jñānī* does not seek insignificant attainments like enjoyment in the heavenly planets, wealth, followers and so on. But instead, all he wants is to seize the position of the Lord in one move.

Only a foolish servant bothers his master for petty objects of enjoyment like food and water, money or clothes. A cunning servant thinks, “If I can become the outright master, all at once, I will not lack for anything. Everything will be within my reach and I will be happy forever.” In contrast, a truly devoted servant thinks, “Whether I myself am happy or sad does not matter. May I be forever able to serve my master solely for his own happiness.” This mood is the spirit of a true servant. The disposition of a pure devotee is one of unconditional service, entirely free from deceit.

As such, the Lord does not accept offerings from those who seek emancipation from suffering, either:

*madyapera ghare kailā snāna bhajana
ninduka vedānti nā pāila darśana*
Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (Madhya-khaṇḍa 19.114)

Lord Caitanya bathed and ate at the home of a man who drank wine, yet He would not even show Himself to the blasphemous Māyāvādīs.

*dhika tāra krṣṇa-sevā śravaṇa-kīrtana
krṣṇa ange vajra hāne tāhāra stavana*
Śaraṇāgati, Bhakti-Pratikūla-Bhāva
Varjanāṅgikāra, Song 3

Shame on their so-called service to Kṛṣṇa, and their pretentious hearing and chanting of His glories! Their empty praises are like thunderbolts striking Kṛṣṇa’s body.

The seemingly devotional endeavours of he who seeks liberation are not for the pleasure of Śrī Bhagavān. Rather, his purpose in making such endeavours is solely to secure his own selfish interest, namely the attainment of liberation. Śrī Bhagavān does not accept anything he

offers, for his devotion is full of deception and ulterior motives.

An act that is motivated by the desire for sense enjoyment or heavenly pleasures can never be an act of service to Bhagavān. In fact, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.12) states, “*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam / na sōbhate...* – Even selfless action, if it is bereft of sentiment for the Infallible Lord, is no more than a karmic shackle.”

It is also stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.23.56):

*neha yat karma dharmāya na virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pada-sevāyai jīvann api mṛto hi sah*

Any activity that is not spiritually motivated (*dharma*), any spiritually motivated activity that does not produce detachment, and any detachment that ceases to be aimed at serving or pleasing Śrī Bhagavān, the abode of all holy places, is actually worthless.

In light of this, the process of offering all the results of one’s actions to Bhagavān – whether those actions are physical, verbal, or mental – has been described in devotional scriptures like *Bhagavad-gītā*. Action, or *karma*, that is favourable to serving Śrī Hari surely constitutes *bhakti*.

SUDDHA-BHAKTI

Bhagavān accepts only the offerings of a pure devotee. The characteristics of pure devotion are described in *sāstra* as follows:

*śuddha-bhakti’ haite haya ‘premā’ utpanna
ataeva śuddha-bhaktira kahiye ‘lakṣaṇa’*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 19.166)

Pure devotion (*śuddha-bhakti*) is that from which *prema* is born. I shall now, therefore, describe the symptoms of *śuddha-bhakti*.

*anya-vāñchā, anya-pūjā chāḍī ‘jñāna’, ‘karma’
ānukūlye sarvendriye krṣṇānuśilanam*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 19.168)

Give up all other desires and the worship of anyone besides the Supreme Lord, and relinquish the pursuit of dry knowledge and fruitive activity. With all of your senses, just constantly try to serve Kṛṣṇa out of kindness to Him.

*sarvopādhī-vinirmuktam tat-paratvena nirmalam
hṛṣikeṇa hṛṣikeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 19.170)

When undisguised and unadulterated service is rendered through all one’s senses to that Supreme

Being, who is the origin and master of the senses, then it is called *bhakti*.

*bhukti-mukti-sprhā yāvat piśācī hṛdi vartate
tāvad bhakti-sukhasyātra katham abhyudayo bhavet*

Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.22)
Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*
(*Madhya-līlā*, 19.76)

As long as the two witches, namely the desire for material enjoyment and the desire for impersonal liberation, remain within the heart of the *sādhaka*, how can the happiness of unalloyed devotion be awakened there?

The desire for sense enjoyment (*bhukti*) and the desire for liberation (*mukti*) are like two witches. There is no greater obstacle to serving Śrī Bhagavān. In pure *bhakti*, there is not even a scent of desire for liberation. Ultimately, this proves that when a pure devotee begs, it is only to show compassion to the living entities.

He goes from door to door and pleads: “*prabhur kṛpāya
bhāi magi ei bhiṣṭā, bala kṛṣṇa bhaja kṛṣṇa kara kṛṣṇa
śikṣā* – O brothers, by the Lord's grace I beseech you, chant Kṛṣṇa's name, worship Kṛṣṇa, and follow Kṛṣṇa's teachings (*Gitāvalī* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura).”

These teachings pertaining to Kṛṣṇa liberate the living entities from the misery of seeking out sense gratification. The pure devotee accepts the items and money we offer him in order to serve Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's devotees, not to enjoy them himself. Thus, unlike others, he does not just become a person who maintains himself by begging. Those who lack wisdom cannot comprehend the fact that the pure devotee's practice of begging is a special act of *bhakti*.

SOLVE ALL PROBLEMS FOREVER

Nowadays, it is the opinion of one group of people that giving and taking alms is only justifiable and worthwhile if the money collected by begging is utilized to help the poor, to improve the nation, or to aid in the treatment of the mentally or physically ill. Otherwise, they maintain that begging is simply another unwanted tax on householders. But I ask, for how long can you and I help the poor, the entire nation, and its citizens; and to what extent? Perhaps a very wealthy person can feed ten thousand poor people for one month, but has he truly removed their poverty through that endeavour?

Suppose we concede that the problem of their hunger has been solved. The problem of adequate clothing

remains. Even if their food and clothing is provided, there is still the problem of their physical illnesses. Supposing all of their diseases are treated, there are then uncountable mental illnesses to combat – anxiety, countless disorders, grief, depression and fear, and finally there is death. Thus as one deficiency is addressed, new deficiencies arise, one after another, forever.

Hence, true visionaries, those who are endowed with the wisdom to distinguish between the real and unreal, say that one should address the deficiencies of the living entity in such a manner that he will be rid of all of them forever. Establish him in the true nature of his self. The living entity is the eternal servant of Bhagavān, but he has forgotten this and is maintaining the false self-conception that he is a slave of the illusory energy, *māyā*. This alone is the cause of all his deficiencies.

*tāvad bhayam dravina-deha-suhṛṇ-nimittam
śokah sprhā paribhavo vipulaś ca lobhah
tāvan mamety asad-avagraha ārti-mūlam
yāvan na te 'ngṛim abhayam pravṛṇīta lokah*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.9.6)

O Bhagavān! As long as one does not completely take shelter at Your lotus feet, which grant fearlessness, he remains fearful for the loss of his wealth, and for the death of his body and relatives. Upon losing any of these things, he experiences intense grief and the desire to regain them. His severe longing for all these perishable things causes him to become bewildered by misconceptions pertaining to 'me' and 'mine'. This is the sole cause of his misery.

Repeat these words to the living beings in need again and again, and thus revive his dormant state of God consciousness. By doing so, both the speaker and the listener will be benefited. By performing *kirtana*, your enlightened self will awaken and the other living beings around you will awaken as well.

Hence, the pure devotee does not attempt to secure any seeming or transient welfare through begging and then performing relief work or opening rehabilitation centres in an effort to earn recognition from the spiritually inimical people of the world, who are overly attached to their bodies. The great souls in this world have always tried, are now trying, and will forever continue to try to bring about the eternal benefit of all living beings. ☩

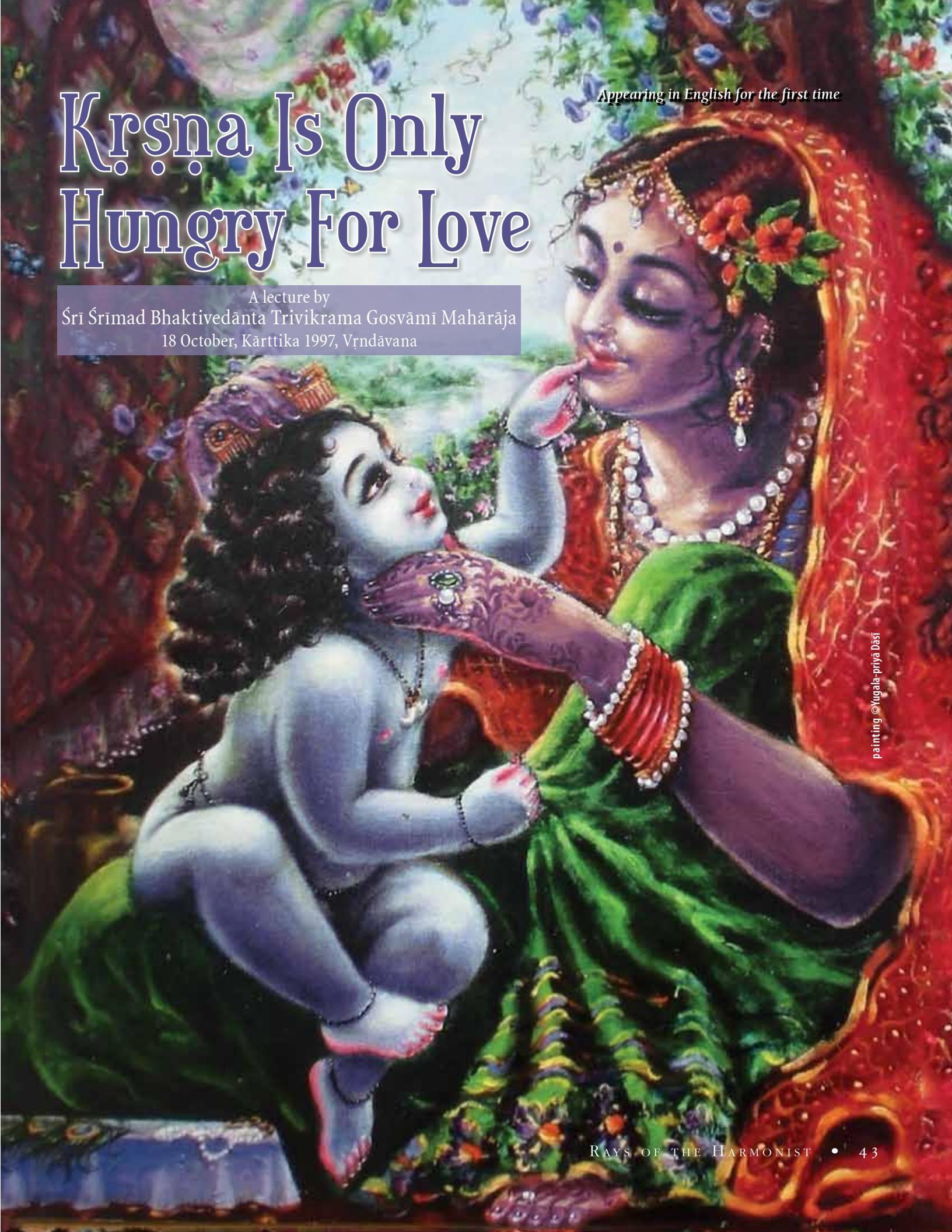
Translated from *Śrī Gaudiya Patrikā*,
Year 43, Issue 8

Appearing in English for the first time

Kṛṣṇa Is Only Hungry For Love

A lecture by
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
18 October, Kārttika 1997, Vṛndāvana

painting © Yugala-priyā Dasi





“The Vaiṣṇavas are agents. . .They will give mercy to everyone according to what they are fit to receive.”

In *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said:

samo 'ham sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyah
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy aham
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (9.29)

I am equally disposed to all living beings, and am neither inimical nor partial to anyone. But as those who serve Me with *bhakti* are attached to Me, so too am I bound by affection for them.

“I am impartial to all.” He has openly declared this. “I am impartial. *Samo 'ham sarva-bhūteṣu* – I see all equally.” But He also says, “But those who love Me with pure devotion, I also love. If you love Me sincerely, I shall love you sincerely. If someone, in the core of his heart, sincerely wants Me, then I will also bestow mercy upon him from the core of My heart.”

It depends upon us, not upon Lord Kṛṣṇa. Bhagavān is not at fault in this matter. After examining the student’s test sheet, the examiner grades it. The grade he awards is in accordance with how many questions the student answered correctly. Is this partiality? No. If you can give answers like a first class student, you will be awarded full marks. Such is the case.

Whose fault is this? “*Ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy aham* – I am bound by affection to he who engages in loving devotional service to Me.” But we simply engage in shouting, “Why do I not attain Bhagavān?”

Why are we not attaining Him? Is it Bhagavān’s fault?

“Oh, you Vaiṣṇavas are not giving mercy,” we claim, “and therefore we are not attaining Him.” How and to whom do the Vaiṣṇavas give their mercy? The Vaiṣṇavas are agents. How and to whom do the agents of Bhagavān distribute their mercy? They will give mercy to everyone according to what they are fit to receive. Whatever is happening to us, whatever we attain, is all due to our own inclinations and is thus exactly what we deserve.

In *śāstra* everything has been explained: how we can attain Him and what will prevent us from attaining Him. Despite having heard these instructions, and knowing them well, we still do not become sincere in our attempts to follow them. Why are we knowingly doing wrong? Whose fault is this?

All *ācāryas* instruct us by practising these instructions in their own lives. But we do not accept their example. If we don’t accept it, then what will happen? Whose fault is it? Is it the fault of the *ācāryas*?

Likewise, we reject everything that is auspicious for us. We do not want any part of it; instead, we want inauspiciousness. We want to hear nice music and singing. We want to hear the nice playing of instruments. We accept this as *kīrtana*.

Have the *ācāryas* demonstrated such a teaching? Will this behaviour of ours be accepted as properly following the example of the *ācāryas*? This is disobedience. Will those who disobey attain any good? This is indeed a fault. *Kirtana* is not the same as merely singing and playing instruments.

In merely singing and playing instruments one may be seeking one's own sense gratification. It has therefore been prohibited. But in real *kirtana* there is no question of seeking one's own sense gratification. Through *kirtana* we want to please the senses of Bhagavān. How will we do that? We cannot see or understand Bhagavān. What do the senses of Bhagavān need or desire? If we do not know the answer to this, then how will we ever be able to serve or please His senses? Can we gratify His senses simply with sweet melodies?

What to speak of humans, even a snake raises his hood when he hears a sweet melody. Even deer silently follow

a sweet sound. Such is the attraction of beautiful melody. These melodies have a powerful effect on the mundane senses, so of course we are attracted when we hear them. But this attraction is not *bhakti*! Musical sounds attract everybody, but mere music is not *kirtana*. According to the tenets of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it must be rejected.

*suyantre misaiyā gā'bo sumadhura tāna
ānande karibo duṇhāra rūpa – guṇa gāna*

Hari Hari Kabe More Hoibe Sudina (Verse 2)

As the sounds of the divine instruments mix and create the sweetest melodies, I will blissfully sing songs about Their forms and qualities.

He only accepted *khol* (*mṛdaṅga*) and *karatāla* for use in *kirtana*. This is the order of our divine master, also. During their time, they did not use other musical instruments, so why shall I? [continued next page]

*The following is an excerpt from a lecture
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
in Badger, California on May 19, 2003:*

[Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja requested a new disciple to sing a *bhajana*, after which he began his class.] My *gurudeva*, *parama-ārādhya*tama Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, was once staying with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's home – Śrī Jagannātha Bhavana at Yogapīṭha in Śrī Māyāpura. At that time, a disciple of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura came and told my Gurudeva, "I want to sing some songs while playing harmonium." This disciple pressured my Gurudeva, saying, "You are a very good boy; you should stay and hear." The disciple then began to do his *rāga-rāginī* (a display of various melodic modes) with the harmonium, as he sang this song: "Rāya jāgo rāya jāgo rāya jāgo re." Rāya means Rādhikā, and the line means, "O Rādhikā, now it is morning. You should wake up."

Śrīla Prabhupāda somehow heard that Śrī Vinodabihari Brahmācārī was hearing that song. He at once called him and told him, "Oh, rāya jāgo rāya jāgo? He should first awaken himself and then he can awaken Rāya! He should not be worried about Rāya. Kṛṣṇa is sufficient to awaken Her, and Lalitā and Viśākhā are also sufficient. You should not hear from him again." From that very day, my *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja became very careful to avoid that type of singing.

The harmonium should be used only when necessary. Otherwise, those who are singing while playing the harmonium will think, "I know I am the best among all. I know that I sing in a very good tune, because Mahārāja always allows me to sing while playing the harmonium."

There is a song by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura:

*hari hari, kabe mora hoibe sudina
bhajibo śrī rādhā-kṛṣṇa hoiya premadhīna
suyantre misaiya gā'bo sumadhura tāna
ānande karibo duṇhāra rūpa-guṇa-gāna*

Hari Hari Kabe More Hoibe Sudina (Verse 1-2)

O Śrī Hari, when will that auspicious day be mine? Filled with *prema*, when will I worship Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa? As the sounds of the divine instruments mix and create the sweetest melodies, I will blissfully sing songs about Their forms and qualities.

Guru Mahārāja would tell his followers to explain that in the line, "suyantre misaiya gā'bo sumadhura tāna", *suyantre* (sounds of divine instruments) means *khol* and *karatāla*. Otherwise people will think that *suyantre* means harmonium and all other similar instruments. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda was very strict – a thousand times more than I am. ☩



©Yugala-priya Dāsi

*“...he who performs
bhajana of Me but asks
for the pleasure of sense
objects verily begs for
poison while forsaking
nectar.”*

IS GOD HUNGRY?

Whenever one seeks to gratify one's own senses, *bhakti* is hindered. Hence, nice food and nice clothing have also been prohibited: “*bhāla na khāibe āra bhāla na paribe* – do not eat delicious food and do not dress opulently” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 6.236*).

If we do *kīrtana* with a harmonium, sitar, violin or the like, it is so pleasing to us. But who can perform *kīrtana*? Can the instruments like the harmonium or violin do it?

Mother Yaśodā used to call for Kṛṣṇa. Did she do it while playing a harmonium or violin: “*He Lālā! Come!*”? Or did Kṛṣṇa come running to her because of her melodious voice? What attracted Him? *Bhakti*.

*nānopacāra-kṛta-pūjanam ārta-bandhoḥ
premnaiva bhakta-hṛdayam sukha-vidrutam syāt
yāvat kṣud asti jathare jarathā pipāsā
tāvat sukhāya bhavato nanu bhakṣya-peye*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.70)

When the devotee makes various offerings to the Supreme Lord – He who is the best friend of the distressed – if the offerings are filled with love, then the Lord becomes overjoyed, just as food and drink become the source of immense joy for one who is extremely hungry and thirsty.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has given us such instructions. If we make nice sweets and nice food and give them to Kṛṣṇa, will He eat them? Is He hungry? Should we conclude that Kṛṣṇa has never seen nice food before? Should we conclude this about Kṛṣṇa, that He has never eaten nice food before? This is a misconception.

Duryodhana offered Kṛṣṇa so many opulent preparations. He had the nicest food prepared and presented to Kṛṣṇa on a golden plate. But Kṛṣṇa didn't even glance at them! On the other hand, when He visited the house of His dear devotee, Vidura, He gladly ate banana peels with utmost satisfaction. He thoroughly enjoyed the offering there.

Now, what is devotion? What did Sudāmā Vipra bring for his friend, Kṛṣṇa? He brought broken flat rice. But when he saw Kṛṣṇa's vast opulence first hand, he was too ashamed to show Kṛṣṇa his meagre offering. “How can I give this to Him?” he thought. “My friend is such a big king, and he has such opulent arrangements for nice food and enjoyment. My offering is not fit for Him.”

Yet Kṛṣṇa forcefully took the broken flat rice away from him. Then He ate it and said to His friend Sudāmā, “You were going to deprive Me of such nice things?”

This must be remembered, always!

“Only he who has lost all knowledge of his real self will crave mundane things. ‘Give me money, give me a house, give me children, give me a wife, give me honour, give me a husband, give me everything.’”

Premnaiva bhakta-hṛdayam sukha-vidrutam syāt. The only thing Kṛṣṇa craves is the sincere love in the heart of His devotee. Are we sincere? Do we love Kṛṣṇa sincerely? Or do we love others? My babies, my husband or wife – are they not more dear to me than Kṛṣṇa? Are they not the most dear to me? They are. Then why should Kṛṣṇa come to me?

But if someone has given up all other connections, Kṛṣṇa will surely go to him. Kṛṣṇa is not a shareholder. No partial settlement will please Him. “I shall love You, I shall love my father, I shall love my mother and my daughter, and I shall love my husband. I shall love everyone. I am equal to all of you.” This will not do. This is not pure devotion; it is not *bhakti*. This is a lower grade of devotion like *karma-miśra bhakti*, *jñāna-miśra bhakti*, or *yoga-miśra bhakti*. It is to be rejected.

anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śilanam bhaktir uttamā

Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.11)

Perpetual, ardent endeavour meant exclusively for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and performed out of genuine sympathy for Him, when neither prone to any selfish, ulterior desires nor eclipsed by impersonal knowledge, fruitive work, or any other occupation, is known as *uttamā-bhakti*.

Adulterated devotion to Bhagavān will never suffice in place of *uttamā-bhakti*. Everything must be given up for Bhagavān's sake. Have you left everything? Who have you left? Have you left your wife? You consider yourselves to be very elevated devotees, but have you actually left anything? We want to go along, taking everything with us. That is a lower form of devotion.

Some people pray, “Dhanam dehi yaśo dehi manorma bharya dehi sarvam kāmamś ca dehi – O Lord! Give me wealth, give me fame, and give me a beautiful wife. Fulfil all my desires.”

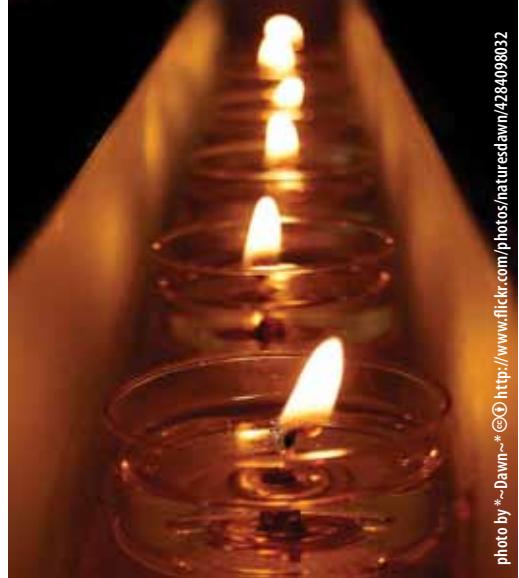


photo by *~Dawn~* ©① http://www.flickr.com/photos/naturestlawn/4264098032

This kind of mentality is sheer foolishness. Only he who has lost all knowledge of his real self will crave mundane things. “Give me money, give me a house, give me children, give me a wife, give me honour, give me a husband, give me everything.” What will Kṛṣṇa tell such people? He will say, “āmā bhaje, māge viṣaya-sukha amṛta chāḍī’ viṣa māge, ei bāḍa mūrkha – he who performs *bhajana* of Me but asks for the pleasure of sense objects verily begs for poison while forsaking nectar (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.38–39).”

“He is a great fool!” He will say. “He is the most foolish of men.” Why? “Such people do not know what My glories are, or what can be achieved by attaining Me. They do not know and so they do not love Me. They do not understand what a valuable thing I am, because their intelligence is completely lost.” Not everyone knows what Kṛṣṇa is. They do not realize that He is the highest and most precious thing. A customer searching for something precious should have the proper intelligence, enthusiasm and inclination to acquire it.

WHAT WOULD WE DO WITH BHAGAVĀN?

There is nothing inferior about Kṛṣṇa. He has therefore said,

avajānanti māṁ mūḍhā mānuṣīṁ tanum āśritam
param bhāvam ajānanto mama bhūta-maheśvaram

Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (9.11)

When I appear in My human-like form, foolish people with mundane intelligence disrespect Me, because they cannot comprehend My nature as the Supreme Lord of all beings.

Through this verse, Kṛṣṇa warns us, “Those who are bound by *māyā* and who have regard for the objects of *māyā* do not know Me. They cannot understand what I

am, and therefore they disregard Me. They disobey and underestimate Me."

If Bhagavān were to come in front of us now, what would we say? What would we do with Him? A person will follow whatever tendencies he has and beg for something accordingly. Will they love Kṛṣṇa as Mother Yaśodā loves Him? Will they give up loving those whom they love now? We are staying in Vraja for one month for Kārttika, but how often do we daydream about returning to our homes? We think, "Many days have gone by. Soon I'll go home and see how the children are and how my father is doing." Where is our consciousness? Is it directed towards Bhagavān?

I cannot adulterate the truth, for I am my *gurudeva*'s disciple. The truth must be told.

Even if we only speak a little bit, it should be pure. *Suddha-bhakti* is what we must achieve. How can we achieve *suddha-bhakti*? How can we attain pure devotion? Impure devotion is not the best thing, for it cannot help us attain Lord Kṛṣṇa. We must be purely devoted and our devotion must be of the highest rank, like the *Vrajavāsīs*, like the *gopīs* and others.

What to speak of the *gopīs* there are many devotees in Vrndāvana whom we must aspire to be like. But we are not following any of them. Instead we are busy trying to enjoy our senses. We should give up that sort of enjoyment.

Melodious sound is not *kīrtana*. In fact, it is actually prohibited in *śāstra*. Even when it is the name or pastimes of Kṛṣṇa that are being chanted or explained, if the speaker is not a pure devotee, we should not hear from him. This is the order given in *śāstra*.

*avaiṣṇava-mukhodgirṇāṁ pūtaṁ hari-kathāṁṛtam
śravaṇāṁ naiva kartavyāṁ sarpocchiṣṭāṁ yathā payāḥ*

Padma Purāṇa

One should not hear anything about Kṛṣṇa from a non-Vaiṣṇava. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent is poisonous; similarly, talks about Kṛṣṇa given by a non-Vaiṣṇava are also poisonous.

Why is this warning and order found in *śāstra*? We give so much praise, "O, this *kīrtana* is so great! Everyone was completely enchanted." But was it *kīrtana*? In the name of *kīrtana* there was sense enjoyment. Even if we don't like it, we should hear it. If someone praises us or says to us, "Bravo!" or, "That was so beautiful!" then we consider, "yes, he is a very good man." But their words are not good for us. One should not hear one's own praise. He who reprimands us is actually our friend. He is the cause of auspiciousness for us.

LEAVE EVERYTHING FOR KRŚNA

What is told in *śāstra*?

*tāvat karmāṇī kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvataḥ
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9)

One should continue to engage in his prescribed duties (*karma*) as long as one has neither developed renunciation nor faith in hearing and reciting topics about Me.

Karma means endeavouring for one's own sense gratification. If we want sense gratification, and therefore get married, what will we attain? Will we attain Bhagavān? Splendid! What a nice arrangement. But if that is the case, why does *śāstra* instruct us to leave everything for Bhagavān?

*sarva-dharmāṇ parityajya mām ekāṁ śaranāṁ vraja
ahāṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucāḥ*

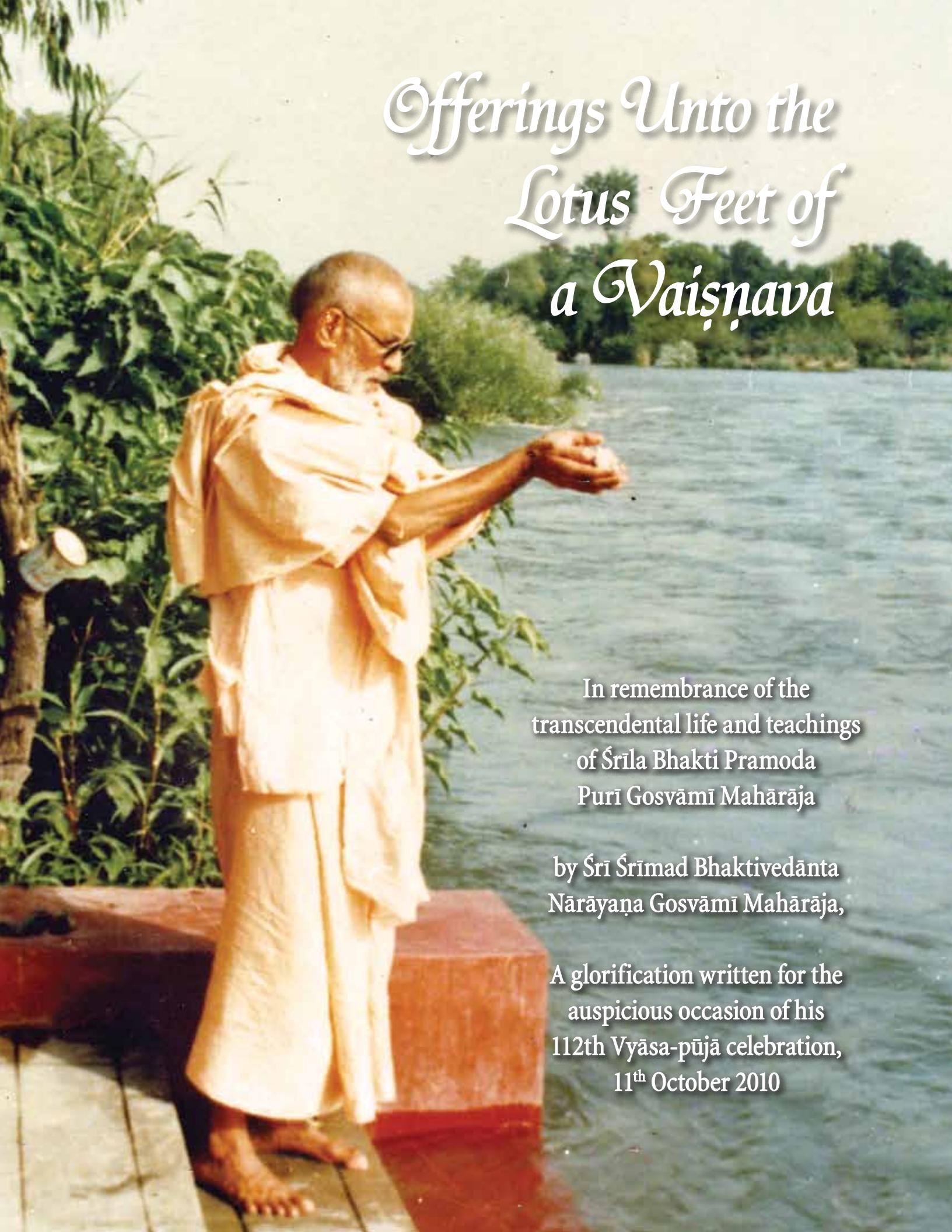
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā (18.66)

Completely abandoning all bodily and mental *dharma*, such as duties prescribed according to *varṇa* and *āśrama*, fully surrender to Me alone. I shall liberate you from all reactions to your sins. Do not grieve.

Why has this been told? Kṛṣṇa tells us, "Leave everything! Wife, husband, father, mother – give up your service to all of them and serve Me. Everything must be left for Me. If one tries to serve Me and continues to serve everyone else, it will not work." Yet we want to see all as equal. "Splendid," He will say. "Such devotion! You see Me as equal to other men; equal with *jīvas* who are imprisoned in *māyā*; equal to birds and dogs? Splendid! You are such faithful followers of *dharma*!"

We insist, "No! I see everyone equally. All is one. One should view everyone equally. The idea that someone is inferior and someone is superior is not proper." This conception is prominent nowadays. All exists in equality? Where is everything equal? Any two things are not equal, what to speak of everything. All things are separate, with differences between each of them.

An intelligent man sees someone for what he really is. We should understand *māyā* to be *māyā*; we should not think that by serving *māyā* we are somehow serving Bhagavān. Through bondage to *māyā*, one is barred from serving Bhagavān. 



Offerings Unto the Lotus Feet of a Vaiṣṇava

In remembrance of the
transcendental life and teachings
of Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda
Puri Gosvāmī Mahārāja

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja,

A glorification written for the
auspicious occasion of his
112th Vyāsa-pūjā celebration,
11th October 2010



HIS APPEARANCE AND HIS TAKING SHELTER OF ŚRĪ GURU

Most worshipful *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja appeared in the village of Gangānapura, in the district of Yaśohara in present day Bangladesh. His childhood name was Śrī Pramoda Bhūṣaṇa Cakravārtī. In his youth he had the good fortune to listen to recitations of the sacred literatures written by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. In 1915, on the auspicious day of Utthānā-ekādaśī, Paramahaṁsa Śrīla Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja entered *nitya-līlā*. On that most auspicious day, Śrī Pramoda Bhūṣaṇa had the fortune of taking his first *darśana* of his eternally worshipful *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thereafter, in 1923, on the auspicious day of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī, Śrī Pramoda Bhūṣaṇa completely surrendered unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda and accepted both *harināma* and *mantra-dīkṣā* (initiation) from him. He was given the name Śrī Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī.

SERVING THE INNERMOST DESIRE OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA'S HEART

Śrīla Prabhupāda entrusted Śrī Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī with the responsibility of two extremely important services: *mṛdaṅga* (*kirtana*) and *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga* (book publication). Under the guidance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrī Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī used to lead *kirtana* at

many events. And at times, his *kirtana* performances would even be aired on the radio. Many times when Śrīla Prabhupāda heard him sing “*gopinātha! mama nivedana suno*,” he would experience deep pangs of separation and wanted Śrī Praṇavānanda Brahmacārī to sing the song again and again.

Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura rested the responsibility of serving the *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga* upon Śrīla Mahārāja (Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja). For many years Śrīla Mahārāja offered his services as the editor of the daily spiritual journal *Dainika Nadiyā-Prakāśa*, carrying out the orders of Śrīla Prabhupāda with steadfast dedication. Many articles of his were also published in the weekly periodical, *Gauḍiya*. Recognizing his genius for preaching Śrī Caitanya's message, Śrīla Prabhupāda awarded him the titles *upadeśaka* (instructor) and *pratna-vidyālānkara* (exquisitely decorated with all ancient scriptural wisdom).

Even after the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Mahārāja served as the editor of the then monthly periodical *Gauḍiya*, which was published directly from Śrī Caitanya Maṭha (in Māyāpura), and for nearly forty years after that he remained the editor of the periodical *Śrī Caitanya-vāṇi*, which was published from Śrī Caitanya Gauḍiya Maṭha (in Kolkata).

Along with his service to the *mṛdaṅga* and the *bṛhad-mṛdaṅga*, he also had the fortune of directly serving Śrīla Prabhupāda's transcendental body when Śrīla Prabhupāda exhibited the pastime of being ill.

HIS SERVICE AFTER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

For almost seven years after the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Mahārāja rendered service by accepting the responsibility of head *pūjārī* in the temple at Śrī Yoga-pītha in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura. But a number of years after that, when some disturbances arose in Śrī Caitanya Maṭha by the will of providence, Śrīla Mahārāja, seeing no other alternative, left Śrī Caitanya Maṭha with a heavy heart. My beloved *gurupādapadma*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, established Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti, and Śrīla Mahārāja stayed with him for some time. It was then that I had his *darśana* for the first time and was fortunate enough to render some service to him.

HIS ACCEPTANCE OF SANNYĀSA

After the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrī Praṇavānanda Brahmācārī accepted *sannyāsa* from his Godbrother Śrīmad Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānasa Mahārāja on the most auspicious day of Śrī Gaura-pūrṇimā, in 1947, at Śrī Gaura Gadādhara Matha, in the village of Śrī Campakahatta, Śrī Navadvīpa. Upon accepting *sannyāsa*, he received the name Śrī Bhakti Pramoda Purī Mahārāja.

A LIFE FULL OF ĀNUGATYA

Śrīla Mahārāja was truly the embodiment of “*tṛṇādapi sunīcena...*”. He would always speak *hari-kathā* with perfect impartiality, keeping his eyes closed. He would profusely glorify the *śrī bhāgavata-paramparā* and *śrī harināma*. Śrīla Mahārāja lived an exemplary life, full of *ānugatya* (being under guidance). From the beginning of his devotional life and for many, many years after that, Śrīla Mahārāja demonstrated the ideal of living and practising devotional life while remaining completely under the guidance of his very qualified Godbrothers. Even after establishing Śrī Gopīnātha Gaudīya Maṭha some time around 1990, he used to say, “I am not the *ācārya* or governor of this *maṭha*; rather I am an insignificant servant. Indeed Śrīla Prabhupāda and his associates are the *ācārya* and governors of this *maṭha*.”

Nowadays, most people practising devotional life find it quite difficult to genuinely accept as their superiors those who are on the same platform as they are or even those who are more advanced. However, it was seen in the exemplary life of Śrīla Mahārāja that whoever he saw as the object of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mercy, in whomever he saw an intense desire to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda, he

unconditionally bowed his head to. For instance, although Śrīla Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānasa Mahārāja was his junior Godbrother, he still accepted him as his *sannyāsa-guru*. And even though Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja took shelter of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lotus feet much later than Śrīla Mahārāja, he nevertheless devoted almost thirty-five years of his life to fulfilling the innermost desires of Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja by editing books and magazines for him and by contributing articles to the magazines.

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja was first drawn to the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda on account of regularly hearing *hari-kathā* in Kolkata from the divine lips of this same great personality, Śrīla Mahārāja. Yet, when the intimate associates of Śrīla Prabhupāda accepted Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja as a highly exalted devotee, Śrīla Mahārāja did not even slightly hesitate in also accepting him as his *sikṣā-guru*. And even though it was Śrīla Mahārāja in fact, along with Śrīla Bhakti Hṛdaya Vana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who first brought Śrīla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja from his home to the *maṭha* during his childhood, later, Śrīla Mahārāja personally used to inspire so many devotees to take shelter of Śrīla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. It is impossible to find so much magnanimity in an ordinary person.

ENTERING INTO THE ETERNAL PASTIMES OF THE DIVINE COUPLE

During the last days of his manifest pastimes (*prakāta-līlā*), he lived in *vipralambha kṣetra*, Śrī Jagannātha Purī¹. It was there that by the orders of his *īśvarī* (the empress of Vraja, Śrīmatī Rādhikā), to enhance the beauty of Her service, Śrīla Mahārāja entered into the eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple on the eve of the autumnal *rāsa-pūrṇimā* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha on the 21st of November, 1999.² On the autumnal *rāsa-pūrṇimā* of Kārtika, in the courtyard of Śrī Śrī Gopīnātha Gaudīya Maṭha in Iṣodīyāna (the garden of his *īśvarī*), which is very close to *śrī rāsa-maṇḍala* – or in other words, Śrīvāsa Āṅgana in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, which is non-different from *śrī rāsa-maṇḍala* in Vraja – he entered into the permanent state of complete absorption in his eternal service (*samadhi*).

¹ The place where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu relished the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

² His divine body was transported from Jagannātha Purī to Śrīdhāma Māyāpura.



“It was then that both of you made your unqualified, fallen brother full of intense enthusiasm to serve, by completely opening to him the unlimited storehouse of your affection.”

HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH MY GURUPĀDAPADMA

Most revered Śrīla Mahārāja had a very intimate transcendental relationship with my beloved *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. In 1990, for the occasion of my śrīla *gurudeva*’s disappearance day, Śrīla Mahārāja penned his humble expression of separation, which was published in *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā* (Year 41, Issue 4). Therein he wrote,

“Due to receiving divine guidance in the shelter of your feet and due to being affectionately blessed by both³ of you, in the initial days of his *māṭha* life this fallen younger Godbrother of yours had the good fortune of serving the lotus feet of the most worshipful Śrīla Prabhupāda for three years. It was then that both of you made your unqualified, fallen brother full of intense enthusiasm to serve, by completely opening to him the unlimited storehouse of your affection. At that time, I had thought that I would spend my whole life in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, serving our most worshipful Śrīla Prabhupāda, while constantly protected and guided solely by your divine affection for me.”

From these words, it is clear that Śrīla Mahārāja spent the first three years of his devotional life in Śrīdhāma Māyāpura, and that he had deep *niṣṭhā* in my worshipful *gurudeva*. Because of that, he wrote elsewhere that Śrīpād Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī was not just one of the exalted, renounced disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda living in the *māṭha*, rather, he was the greatest of them all.⁴

Śrīla Mahārāja has also expressed in his article entitled “A Humble Submission – My Life Story”:

“Śrīla Prabhupāda used to address all of his disciples with *āpa*, the respectful form of ‘you’. But when he spoke to Paramānanda Prabhu, Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī, Narahari ‘Sevā-vigraha’ Prabhu and Vaiṣṇava Dāsa Bābājī, he used the extremely intimate form, *tū*. It is certainly true that Vinoda-bihārī Prabhu and Narahari Prabhu were the life and soul of the Māyāpura *āśrama* (Śrī Caitanya Maṭha). Their pleasing, lovable conduct would fill the hearts of the devotees with bliss, and that is why they were objects of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s boundless affection. I think that throughout my entire life I have never received such guileless affection from anyone as I have received from these two Godbrothers.”

³ The two Godbrothers mentioned here are Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja – who was known as Śrīpāda Vinoda-bihārī Brahmācārī at the time – and Śrī Narahari ‘Sevā-vigraha’ Prabhu.

⁴ From an article published in *Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā* (Year 41, Issue 12)

ACCEPTING RŪPĀNUGATYA, FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA

Under the guidance of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his internal associates, and in their association, the path that Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja traversed to achieve perfection in following the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*rūpānugatya*) – he who fulfilled the innermost desire of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's heart – is truly evident in the internal emotions he has expressed through his writings.

For example, in the preface to the edition of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* published by Śrī Caitanya Gaudīya Maṭha, Śrīla Mahārāja has explicitly stated:

"In *Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda Samvāda*, the love experienced by Śrīmatī Rādhikā is recognized as the crest-jewel of perfection (*sādhyā-śiromāṇi*). But when Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda further explained about *prema-vilāsa-vivārtā* – the aspect of love in which the experience of actual meeting occurs even at the time of separation, by virtue of *adhirudha-bhāva*⁵ – Śrīman Mahāprabhu accepted that form of love as the highest limit of perfection. Subservience (*ānugatya*) to the *sakhīs* is the only way to achieve the *sādhyavastu*, the ultimate objective of life.

nijendriya-sukha-vāñchā nāhi gopikāra
kṛṣṇe sukha dite kare saṅgama-vihāra
sei gopī-bhāvāmṛte yānra lobha haya
veda-dharma-tyajī' se kṛṣṇe bhajaya
rāgānuga-mārge tānre bhaje yei jana
sei-jana pāya vraje vrajendra-nandana

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.217, 219–220)

There is no desire for personal enjoyment in the heart of any *gopī*. They meet with Kṛṣṇa and joyfully play with Him only to give Him happiness.

Whoever develops greed for the ambrosia of love of God tasted by these *gopīs* abandons the religious duties prescribed in the Vedas in order to render perfect loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

And he who worships Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the path of spontaneous love (*rāgānuga-mārga*) attains Vrajendra-nandana in Vraja.

⁵ *Adhirudha-bhāva* is the final limit of *mahābhāva*, which is the very essence of Kṛṣṇa's pleasure-giving potency. *Adhirudha-bhāva* is characterized by the feeling that each moment is like a day of Brahmā when one is separated from Kṛṣṇa, and that a day of Brahmā is like a moment when one is meeting with Him.

"Therefore, one cannot earn the qualification to perform *vraja-bhajana* (perfected internal service in the mood of the residents of Vraja) if there is even a trace of desire for the pleasure of gratifying one's own senses. It is a fact that, "vidhi-bhakte vṛaja-bhāva pāte nāhi sakti – devotion governed by the regulative principles (*vaidhi-bhakti*) has no power to grant *vraja-bhakti*" (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā 3.15). And since *rāga-bhakti* is so difficult to attain, it has been explained that, "nāma-saṅkīrtana—kalau parama upāya – in this age of Kali, *nāma-saṅkīrtana* (chanting of the holy names) is the ultimate limb of *bhakti*" (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Antya-līlā 20.8). When someone is able to chant *harināma* without offences, then *harināma* alone mercifully bestows upon him the qualification to enter into *rāga-bhajana*. Merely displaying that one has acquired the qualification to perform *rāga-bhajana* without taking complete shelter of the holy name is nothing more than impertinence. It never leads to favourable results."

Śrīla Mahārāja has also stated in an article entitled "Śrī Śrī Rādhāstamī"⁶ published in *Śrī Caitanya Vāṇī*,

"With such a vast depth of emotion, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and other Gosvāmīs have lovingly sung the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda has relished the nectar of Her glories in such an unprecedented and astonishing way in his *Śrī Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi*. And the way Śrī Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed *Sva-nyiamāṣṭaka* and other prayers gloriously demonstrates his intense longing to attain *śrī rādhā-dāsyam*, the role of a maid servant of Śrī Rādhā.

"This same mood is also found in the writings of the most worshipful Śrī Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. It is found in his *Anubhāṣya* commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and in his *Anuvṛtti* on Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*. It is found in his poetic translations of *Śrī Bhramara-gītā*, *Śrī Mahiṣī-gītā* and the ten states of *divyonmāda* that Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī described in *Śrī Ujjvala-nilamani*. And it is found in the *māngalācarāṇa*, or auspicious invocation, of his *Prārthanā-rasa-vivṛti* commentary on Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya's *Prārthanā* and in the *māngalācarāṇa* of his *Gaudīya-bhāṣya* commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*. The goal of our constant endeavour is to imbibe these wonderful expressions of yearning for *śrī rādhā-dāsyam*.

⁶ Published in English in *Rays of The Harmonist*, No.14, Kartika, 2004.

"The day when my most revered spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, first met his spiritual master, *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīla Gaura-kīsora Prabhu, he saw him walking towards Śrī Svānanda-sukhada-kuṇja. His appearance was that of an *avadhūta*⁷ and he was singing one particular song over and over. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote that song down with his own hand and kept it with him, regarding it as the dearmost treasure of his *bhajana*. As the servants of the servants of Śrīla Prabhupāda, our sole objective is to seek out that secret treasure. The Six Gosvāmīs have demonstrated the ideal of weeping in profound anxiety as they wandered throughout Vraja, crying "hā rādhe! hā rādhe!" In performing *bhajana*, our sole asset is our unpretentious cries to attain the undisguised mercy of the embodiment of mercy Herself, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. There is no other means to attain this treasure of devotion than by the causeless mercy of śrī gurudeva. The song of devotion that Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja used to sing goes like this:

*kothāya go premamayī, rādhe rādhe
rādhe rādhe go, jaya rādhe rādhe*

Only when I sincerely offer my life and soul to attain this extremely valuable treasure, feeling true anxiety and deep yearning for it, shall I understand that Śrīla Gurudeva has genuinely accepted me. Oh, when will such good fortune arise for me! The number of days of my life is almost exhausted!

So many examples such as these can be given, but for now, to prevent this offering from becoming too lengthy, I have only presented these two.

THE CAUSELESS MERCY MY ŚRĪLA GURUDEVĀ AND OTHER DISCIPLES OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA BESTOWED UPON ME

In 1954 my most worshipful spiritual master, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, established Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha in Mathurā and entrusted me with the complete responsibility of caring for the *maṭha*, from that time on. Because of this causeless mercy from Śrīla Gurudeva, I had the great fortune of serving and associating with most of Śrīla Prabhupāda's intimate disciples. Whenever they would come to Vraja, they would unfailingly visit Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha, since the only inter-city bus and railway stations in Vraja are both located in Mathurā. Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja also came and stayed in

⁷ Monier Williams Sanskrit dictionary defines an *avadhūta* as 'one who has shaken off from himself worldly feeling and obligation'.

Mathurā Maṭha many times. Moreover, on many occasions like Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā, various special festivals, deity installations and so on, I received the association of Śrīla Mahārāja. In this way, I had the great fortune to hear about the precious treasure of *bhajana* that I mentioned before, directly from the lips of the associates of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to store the glory of this precious treasure in the core of my heart by virtue of rendering service to them and receiving their mercy.

To prevent this extremely rare treasure of *rupānuga-bhajana* from disappearing from this world with the passage of time, and to prevent the conditioned souls from being deprived of it forever, wherever I travel in my service of preaching, I provide aspiring devotees clear insights, in line with the current of thought of our *rūpānuga guru-varga*; insights about śrī guru and śrī guru-paramparā; about the message of Śrī Rūpa-Ragunātha and the teachings of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta; about the profound purpose of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's advent and the speciality of His contributions to the world; about the glory of śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana; about chanting without making offences; and insights into the glories of *vraja-bhakti*, the transcendental love of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and the *sādhyā* (ultimate goal) and *sādhana* (process) of devotional service. In truth, my śrīla gurudeva along with Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the other associates of Śrīla Prabhupāda are the inspirational source of every insight I have. I am simply an insignificant servant of my beloved gurudeva, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and of the other intimate followers of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, totally dependent upon the spiritual inheritance they have left for me. Besides this, I do not have any independent existence or identity.

On the auspicious occasion of the appearance day of Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, I offer my *daṇḍavat pranāmas* unto the lotus feet of my śrīla gurudeva, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Mahārāja, and I beg for their causeless mercy so that by following in their footsteps I may attain the qualification to engage in fulfilling the innermost desire of their hearts (*mano'bhiṣṭa-sevā*) – that is, to practice and preach that most precious treasure of *bhajana*, more and more.

Praying for a particle of the mercy of
Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiśnavas,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa ☸

(Originally written in Hindi)
Translated from Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā, Year 7, issues 8–9



Preaching Report –

Summer 2010

by Svāmī B.V. Mādhava

Photo © ITM Madhuvrata Jāsa

This summer, from Gaura-pūrṇimā until Jhūlana-yātra, Śrīla Gurudeva travelled to various places in America, Europe and Russia. The following report is a synopsis of some special points he spoke on.

On the celebrated day known as Akṣaya Tr̄tīyā, Śrīla Gurudeva explained that the fruit of any endeavour performed on this date, whether worldly (*laukika*) or spiritual (*pāramārthika*), will be *akṣaya* – incorruptible and everlasting.

At the dawn of each cycle of the four ages, Satya-yuga, the golden age of truth and purity, commences on this holy day. We see that divorce is prevalent nowadays. Therefore, many families perform weddings on this holy day so that the bonds of marriage will not be broken. On this holy day, the doors to the Lord Badrīnārāyaṇa Temple open for *darśana*.

It is said that for six months out of the year, humans perform the worship of Lord Badrīnārāyaṇa, and for the other six months the demigods perform the worship. In the winter the entire temple is covered with snow, so there is no way to reach it, and the extreme cold makes it too difficult for any mortal to survive. However, when

the human worshippers return to Lord Badrīnārāyaṇa's temple after six months, they always find that fresh Tulasī leaves have been offered at Thākuraji's lotus feet.

Many people presume that this Tulasī is six months old and only appears to be fresh because the temple has been covered with snow, just as vegetables may stay green for a long time when they are kept in a freezer. Even if we accept this, for the sake of argument, then there is still another mystery that must be explained. It is impossible for the ghee lamp that is lit prior to closing the temple doors to continue burning for six months, regardless of the temperature. However, when the doors are reopened, the ghee lamp is found still burning, six months later. The actual explanation is that for six months humans perform the worship of Lord Badrīnārāyaṇa, and for six months demigods perform the worship.

Among all the varieties of grain present in the world, barley is the best. Barley was first created on this holy day of Akṣaya Tr̄tīyā. Also, one special thing to mention is that Śrīla Gurudeva's own beloved śrī guru, *paramārādhya* tāma Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, established Śrī Gauḍiya Vedānta Samiti on this day.



Photo © Vasanti dasi

Badger

From June 11th to June 15th Śrīla Gurudeva stayed in Badger, California, where over a thousand devotees assembled to hear from his lotus lips. Śrīla Gurudeva has been visiting Badger since his first Western tour in 1996, fourteen years ago. This small community of devotees is so dear to him that he named it New Braja. Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Niṣkiñcana Mahārāja (formerly Brajendra-nandana Prabhu), who was the headmaster of the former *gurukula* there, recalls Śrīla Gurudeva's words that first year: Śrīla Gurudeva explained, "I was attracted to come to this small village because I heard hearts crying here." Many years later, Śrīla Gurudeva predicted that the *hari-kathā* he spoke in New Braja over the years will be remembered for a very, very long time into the future.

Govinda-priya Dīdī, who has lived in Badger her whole life, recalls the words of another Vaiṣṇavī:

"Gopanandini Dīdī said something that really touched my heart. She explained that in Badger everything is so beautiful – we have many trees, peacocks, cows, flowers – but all those things are just there to decorate Śrīla Gurudeva's *hari-kathā*. It made me realize how fortunate we are to hear *hari-kathā* from his lotus lips." ☺

All people desire love. Wherever there is love, people want to stay there. To transgress this rule is even impossible for Bhagavān. So, if this is the custom and rule, why did Śrī Kṛṣṇa leave Vraja and go to Mathurā and Dvāraka? And having left, why did He not at least visit Vraja from time to time? We may concede that He could not return to Vraja for various reasons, but then why did He not take all the Vrajavāsīs with Him to Mathurā and Dvāraka? How can the same Śrī Kṛṣṇa who gave the demoness Pūtanā the position of His eternal nursemaid be so cruel? Has He no compassion?

After Śrīla Gurudeva put forward these questions, he provided the answers. He explained that Vrajendranandana Śyāmasundara is hungry for *prema*. To mitigate His hunger for love He came to this world in the form of Śrī Gaurahari. Although there were many reasons for Kṛṣṇa to leave Vraja and go to Mathurā, it was what He saw at *prema-sarovara* that finally convinced Him to leave.

He and Śrī Rādhā were sitting together, affectionately embracing. Meanwhile a bumblebee appeared. The bumblebee was sure that Śrī Rādhājī's feet were actually lotus flowers, and began hovering over them, searching for honey to drink. As the bumblebee returned to Her lotus feet again and again, Śrī Rādhājī became afraid.

Madhumaṅgala saw what was happening. He picked up a stick and chased the bumblebee far away. When he had succeeded, he exclaimed, "I chased Madhusūdana very far away. Now he will never come back." Hearing this, Śrī Rādhājī called out, "Hā Madhusūdana! Hā Madhusūdana!" and fell unconscious in Kṛṣṇa's lap.

Kṛṣṇa already knew that sometimes, when Śrī Rādhājī would see a dark cloud in the sky, She would think it was Kṛṣṇa coming to see Her and begin decorating Herself for Him. Other times She would embrace a *tamāla* tree mistaking it for Kṛṣṇa. Considering all of this, Kṛṣṇa thought to Himself, "I should not stay here anymore. If I do, Śrī Rādhājī's distress will only increase." It was this notion that finally made Him decide to leave Vraja and go to Mathurā and then Dvārakā.

Just as a lone drop of water simply sizzles and evaporates when it falls on a burning pan or as a fine drizzle makes the surface of the earth unbearably hot when it has been baking in the summer heat, if Śrī Kṛṣṇa had returned to Vraja for brief visits, the Vrajavāsīs' mood of separation would have become more intense and unbearable for them. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's heart is very soft. He can never be so cruel as to cause any pain to the



Painting © Śāmaranī dāsi

Vrajavāsīs. Moreover, He is *parama-rasika*, the ultimate taster of *rasa*.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has said:

*rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa parama-karuṇa
ei duī hetu haite icchāra udgama*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 4.16)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire to enact His pastimes in this world is born of two reasons: He is the ultimate taster of *rasa* (*rasika-śekhara*) and He is supremely compassionate.

In Vraja there is only *madhura-bhāva*, wherein all the Vrajavāsīs think of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their son, friend or beloved. But in Mathurā and Dvārakā there is *aiśvaryabhadāva*, or awareness of Kṛṣṇa's majesty, so the mood that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like an ordinary mortal boy does not prevail there. Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot be controlled by this *aiśvaryabhadāva*. To bring the Vrajavāsīs from Vraja to Mathurā or Dvārakā would be *rasābhāsa* (a mere semblance of *rasa*), *kurasa* (malformed *rasa*) or *rasaduṣṭa* (repugnant *rasa*). *Rasika-śekhara* Śrī Kṛṣṇa can never create these faulty *rasas* even in His imagination. Śrīla Gurudeva explains that these are the conceptions of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

“In Vraja there is only madhura-bhāva, wherein all the Vrajavāsīs think of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their son, friend or beloved.”

Russia

Śrīla Gurudeva arrived in Russia on the 9th of August, 2010. At that time, the infrastructure in many parts of Russia was in a terrible condition on account of a severe forest fire. All three airports in Moscow had all but been shut down. The blazing wildfire had burnt over two thousand homes to ashes over a five hundred mile wide area, producing the worst heat wave Russia had felt in one hundred thirty years.



Italy

From July 1st to July 7th Śrīla Gurudeva stayed near Pisa, Italy. In the evenings he spoke beautiful *hari-kathā* from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to over one thousand devotees, and under his guidance many of his *sannyāsīs* and senior disciples spoke beautifully as well. Śrīla Gurudeva guided everyone through the pastimes and topics of the first nine cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, concluding with the childhood pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as described in the Tenth Canto.

Vicitri Dīdī recalls,

"Usually the festival culminates with Śrīla Gurudeva telling the glories of the *gopīs*. However, this year, when he got to the Tenth Canto, he instructed his *sannyāsīs* to speak on the demons and which *anarthas* they represent... Śrīla Gurudeva was trying to help us remove the particular *anarthas* that those demons represent." ☺

This was a natural disaster. In the face of such disasters, mortal men are utterly helpless. The day after Śrīla Gurudeva arrived in Russia, the sky above and the air on the ground became clear and free of pollution. Of course, we do not suppose this was the first time such a rapid atmospheric change had occurred in Russia, but still, wherever Śrīla Gurudeva goes within the whole world, Śrī Bhagavān arranges favourable situations so that His dear devotee does not undergo any inconvenience.

Śrīla Gurudeva said on the flight to Russia, "This natural disaster is not very severe. During the time of universal devastation, there is no rain for one hundred years. Then for one hundred years it rains without end. It rains so much that the entire universe becomes immersed in water. At the time not even the highest mountains can be seen. Even after so many troubles in material existence, humans are so unfortunate that they do not perform *bhajana* of Bhagavān. If they perform *bhajana* they will not be affected by all these troubles."

One devotee asked about the natural disasters that even seemed to appear during the pastimes of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, such as a tornado and torrential rain. Śrīla Gurudeva explained that the tornado was arranged by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to fly in the sky, so He gave the indication to Yogamāyā and she sent Trṇāvarta to Vraja. After that you know what happened.

Śrīla Gurudeva further explained one other secret about these pastimes: Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is hungry for *prema*. Therefore, whenever He saw that the Vrajavāsīs' *prema* wasn't intense enough, Śrī Kṛṣṇa would call some form of disturbance to Vraja just to make their *prema* for Him swell. In this way, the Vrajavāsīs' *prema* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was constantly being renewed.

The doubt was raised that, since Śrī Kṛṣṇa could have easily subdued the anger of Indra simply by His desire alone, why did He intentionally allow all the Vrajavāsīs, including all the animals and birds in Vraja, to undergo so much suffering when Indra caused torrential rains to fall for seven days, as furiously as they would at the time of the universal devastation?

In response, Śrīla Gurudeva explained that it was correct to say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa could have subdued Indra's wrath by His desire alone, but in doing so there would be no opportunity to manifest this special pastime, which is so full of sweetness. By performing these sweet pastimes, humankind can easily remember Kṛṣṇa for many generations, even ages, and thus they can be liberated from this world and obtain the opportunity to enter the spiritual world. Kṛṣṇa also had one secret reason for inventing this pastime.

I have told this secret many times before, but listen to it again. The *gopīs' pūrva-rāga* – that is, the intense, swelling love and affection they had for Śrī Kṛṣṇa even before their

Photo © CC BY-NC-ND Madhuvrata dāsa



Painting © Śyāma-rāmā-dasi

first meeting with Him – had been increasing more and more, but they still had not been able to meet Him. Seeing their intense love for Him, Śrī Kṛṣṇa began to consider a way by which all the gopīs could come close to Him.

The gopīs could not easily come close to Śrī Kṛṣṇa because they felt extremely shy in the presence of their elders. For this reason Śrī Kṛṣṇa invented this calamity, and on the pretext of this disturbance His beloved gopīs could come close to Him so they could see each other face to face, with hearts full of *anurāga*. Because they were in the midst of a calamity, there was no shame for them in being so close to Kṛṣṇa, even in the company of their elders. Being face to face with each other, the mutual, deep attachment between the lover and His beloveds increased and their yearning to meet began increasing more and more, each moment.



Śrīla Gurudeva further explained that, regarding the suffering of the Vrajavāsīs, we should always remember this important point: since Śrī Kṛṣṇa was so near to the Vrajavāsīs, they did not experience even the slightest amount of suffering.

*“Śrī Kṛṣṇa invented this calamity, and on the pretext of this disturbance His beloved gopīs could come close to Him so they could see each other face to face, with hearts full of *anurāga*.”*

In *brahma-vimohana-lilā* also, Śrī Kṛṣṇa apparently allowed the *sakhās* to remain unconscious for one full year. Yet in reality the *sakhās* did not feel any distress. In this pastime, Kṛṣṇa actually caused three identical sets of *sakhās* to manifest.

The *sakhās* and calves that Śrī Brahmā stole and closed inside the cave were actually all figures constructed by *yogamāyā*, but Brahmājī had no notion of this.

Like a spinning firebrand, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes constantly pass from one universe to another, so the real

*Arrival of
Śrīla Gurudeva
in Moscow.
9 August 2010*



Photo © Madhuvrata dāsa

sakhās and calves were instantly transferred to a different universe and continued to play with Kṛṣṇa there.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself became the third set of all the sakhus and calves, and for one year He spoke, acted and behaved just as the originals would. No one had any suspicion that this was happening. During this time, all the sakhus, who were actually all Kṛṣṇa, were married to all the young girls of Vraja. The question may arise, wherever the real sakhus were, when they returned after one year, how did they know to consider a particular gopī their wife? The answer is that at the conclusion of this pastime Śrī Kṛṣṇa had His internal potency, Yogamāyā, imbibe the sakhus with memories of being married to a particular gopī.

One may ask, "Why does Śrī Kṛṣṇa perform pastimes in such a way that it outwardly seems that the Vrajavāsīs were enduring great suffering?"

The answer is simply that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is icchāmaya, He is full of beautiful, transcendental desires. As soon as a desire arises in Him, He performs a pastime in which He fulfills His desire. And there is another consideration:

eka līlā karena prabhu kārya pāñca-sāta

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 2.169)

Thus, through performing one pastime He accomplishes five or seven purposes.

In other words, by performing a single pastime, Śrī Kṛṣṇa accomplishes many tasks. Now listen to all the tasks Śrī Kṛṣṇa accomplished through *brahma-vimohana-līlā*:

- (1) When Brahmājī desired to see the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord showed him many of His pastimes. He even showed him a pastime by which Brahmājī could not return to his own personal abode in Brahmaloka. Śrī Kṛṣṇa took the form of Brahmā and instructed the guards to prohibit the impostor Brahmā, who would be arriving soon, from entering

the palace. When Brahmājī reached his palace gate, his own guards accused him of being an impostor and forced him to turn away, something Brahmājī could never have even imagined would be possible.

Later, Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed Brahmājī that, what to speak of the calves and sakhus, even the sticks the sakhus carried were actually four-armed Viṣṇu forms, each carrying a conch, chakra, club and lotus. Through this pastime, Śrī Kṛṣṇa instructed Brahmājī, "Oh Brahmā, Even the sticks in Vraja are worthy of your worship."

- (2) The mothers in Vraja constantly longed to have Kṛṣṇa as their own son. "If Śrī Kṛṣṇa was my own darling baby boy," they thought, "then I would always be able to affectionately caress Him as Yaśodā does now." To answer this prayer, Śrī Kṛṣṇa became the sons of all those mothers for one year and fulfilled the desires of all the elderly gopīs who were filled with parental love for Him.
- (3) The mother cows thought, "If Kṛṣṇa was my calf, I would give Him my milk until He became totally full." So Śrī Kṛṣṇa became their calves for one year and fulfilled the desires of all the mother cows.
- (4) But the most important thing He accomplished was fulfilling the desire of all the young gopīs. With intense desire, all the young gopīs in Vraja constantly prayed, "If Kṛṣṇa was my husband, my life would be successful." Therefore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa became the sakhus and married all of the gopīs. Thus in that year He actually fulfilled their heart's desire.

In this way, one should understand the actual purpose for the apparent calamities that took place in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

While Śrīla Gurudeva was in Russia, he and the preachers under his guidance related the pastimes from *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, beginning from the First Canto and culminating in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's childhood pastimes in the Tenth Canto. ☩



Paśya Śacī-Sutā
 Śrī Rādhā-mohana dāsa

*paśya śacī-sutam-anūpama-rūpam,
kalitāmrta-rasa-nirupama-kūpam*

paśya – behold; *śacī-sutam* – Śrī Gaurahari, the son of Mother Śacī; *anūpama* – unparalleled; *rūpam* – beautiful form; *kalita* – composed of; *amṛta* – nectar; *rasa* – humour; *nirupama* – incomparable; *kūpam* – a deep well.

Behold the unparalleled beauty of the son of Mother Śacī. He is an incomparable reservoir of nectarean *rasa*. (1)

*kṛṣṇa-rāga-kṛta-mānasa-tāpam,
līlā-prakaṭita-rudra-pratāpam*

kṛṣṇa – the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *rāga* – intense transcendental loving attachment; *kṛta* – generated; *mānasa* – within the mind; *tāpam* – anguish; *līlā* – pastime; *prakaṭita* – became manifest; *rudra* – fearful; *pratāpam* – splendour.

Tortured by the pangs of separation that arose in His mind because of His intense attachment to Kṛṣṇa, He manifested the most exquisite yet terrifying pastimes of ecstasy. (2)

*prakalita-puruṣottama-suviṣādam,
kamalā-kara-kamalāñcita-pādam*

prakalita – thoroughly sheltering; *puruṣottama* – the Supreme Person, Lord Jagannātha; *suviṣādam* – extremely sorrowful; *kamalā* – Śrī Lakṣmī; *kara* – hands; *kamala* – lotus; *añcita* – decorates; *pādam* – lotus feet.

Totally absorbing Himself in thoughts of the Supreme Being, Lord Jagannātha, He constantly experiences the pain of separation. Yet He is the very same Supreme Personality whose adorable feet are decorated by the lotus hands of Kamalā (Lakṣmī Devī). (3)

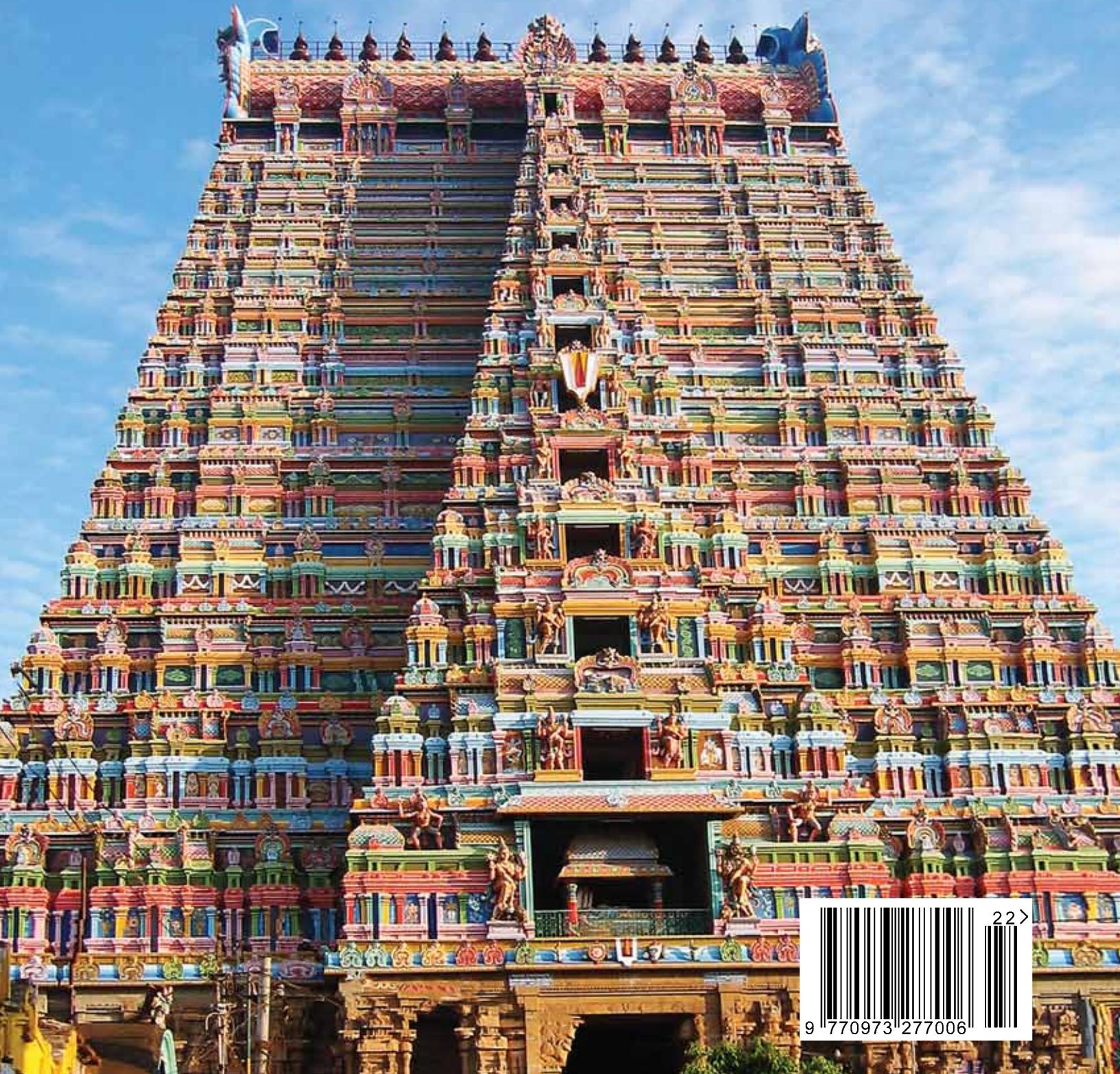
*rohitā-vadana-tirohita-bhāṣam,
rādhā-mohana-kṛta-caranāśam*

rohitā – reddish; *vadana* – face; *tirohita* – loses; *bhāṣam* – speech; *rādhā-mohana* – the author, Rādhā-mohana dāsa; *kṛta* – through composing this song; *caranā* – lotus feet; *āśam* – hoping for.

The transformations of ecstasy appear in His body, such as His face becoming intensely flushed and His voice faltering. This Rādhā-mohana dāsa, finishing this song, is simply hoping to attain His lotus feet. (4)

An intelligent person will unfailingly abandon *upāya buddhi* – the idea that by serving Vaiṣṇavas some extrinsic reward can be attained – and shall perpetually adopt *upeya buddhi* instead – the realization that such service is itself the greatest reward, only available to those who have performed a vast amount of good deeds (*sukṛti*).

Śrī Rāmānujācārya's *Prapannāmṛta* (65.32)



22>



9 770973 277006