

The Harmonist

Rays of

THE JOURNAL OF ŚRĪ GaudiYA VEDĀNTA SAMITI

No. 13 ❁ KĀRTIKĀ 2003

IN THIS ISSUE:

**INITIATION INTO
SPIRITUAL LIFE**

ŚRĪ RĀDHĀṢṬAMĪ

**THE HIGHEST
SUMMITS OF
PREMA**

AND MORE

LOVE



Sri Sri Rādhā-dāmodara

*aṅga-syāmalima-cchaṭābhir abhito mandikṛtendīvaraṁ
jādyam jāguḍa-rociṣām vidadhataṁ paṭṭāmbarasya śriyā
vṛndāranya-nivāsinam hṛdi lasad-dāmābhir āmodaram
rādhā-skandha-niveśitojjvala-bhujam dhyāyema dāmodaram*

(*Śrī Stava-mālā, Rādhā-dāmodara-dhyāna*, Rūpa Gosvāmī)

I meditate upon that Śrī Dāmodara – whose dark bodily luster is millions of times more beautiful than the blue lotus flower, whose brilliant yellow garments rebuke the radiance of golden *kunkuma*, whose residence is Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, whose chest is beautified by a swinging *vaijayantī* garland, and whose splendorous left hand rests upon the right shoulder of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Rays of
The Harmonist

Journal of Śrī Gauḍiya Vedānta Samiti

Kārttika 2003



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Front cover:
Śrī Rādhā-kunḍa

"How can we demonstrate that one man is in universal brotherhood with another? Many people are quick to declare that we are all humans, but what is there to support this claim? Man's humanity lies in his being governed by moral principles and ideals. Thus, only when we love Bhagavān can we love each and every living entity."

Çréla Bhaktivedānta Vämana Gosvämé Mahäräja (p. 53)

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

Founder-Ācārya
of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti

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

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

1. To protect the *vicāra-dhārā* (current of conceptions) of the *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-sampradāya).
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

Rays of The Harmonist is nourished by the powerful words of our Gauḍeya *guru-varga*, line of disciplic succession. Carrying their message of divine love, the journal is duty-bound to bring real welfare to the people of the world, which is to be secured through *sādhu-sāṅga*, the association of highly exalted Vaiñēavas.

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (11.26.26) directs us as follows:

*tato duūsaī gam utsājya
satsu sajjeta buddhimān*

An intelligent person should reject all bad association and instead become attached to the association of saintly persons.

This instruction is indeed the journal's foremost principle and ideal.

The divine instructions of the *mahājanas*, great personalities, are the very soul of *Rays of the Harmonist*, and the journal is beautifully ornamented with their transcendental moods. Every issue carries the grave, unassailable and deeply transformative writings of our *guru-varga*, that is, of Çréla Bhaktivinoda Öhákura, Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Öhákura Prabhupāda and Çréla Prabhupāda's eternal associates. By reflecting upon their teachings, and embracing them within our lives, one attains ever-newer realizations in the realm of *sādhana*, which is indispensable for spiritual progress.

The divine message of some *mahājanas* may at times appear harsh or unpalatable to us because of our low *adhibhāra*, level of eligibility; nonetheless, their statements impartially convey the true conception for our genuine spiritual upliftment. One should not be disheartened by such words as they are intended for our ultimate welfare.

Today's world faces problems and crises on many fronts, viz. conflicts between developed and developing countries, nuclear proliferation, bio-chemical armament, worldwide terrorism and so on. It is greatly in need of spiritual direction. The combined attempts of the leaders of various nations to bring about peace and harmony in the world can only be fruitless because these efforts are driven by selfish intent.

This issue of *Rays of the Harmonist* offers the world a permanent solution to its problems through the divine message of self-realized souls, God's goodwill ambassadors. The essence of their teachings is that by placing Çré Kāñëa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the centre of all our activities, we can bring harmony to this world, which is a jungle of disparate interests. Such unity in diversity is possible only by developing for Çré Kāñëa sentiments of selfless "Love".



The spirit of this Editorial has been taken from *Çré Gauḍeya Patrikā*, Year 36, Issue 1

*smaratu mano mama niravadhi rädhäm
madhupati-rüpa-guëa-çravaëodita-sahaja-manobhava-bädhäm
(refrain)*

mama manaù – my mind; *smaratu* – may remember; *niravadhi* – incessantly; *rädhäm* – Çré Rädhä; *bädhäm* – the impediment; *manobhava* – of (the pangs of) Cupid; *sahaja* – spontaneously; *udita* – arises (in Her heart); *çravaëa* – upon hearing; *guëa* – about the qualities; *rüpa* – and beautiful form; *madhupati* – of Çré Kåñëa, the master of *madhu* (honey-filled pastimes).

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä. The affliction of the pangs of Cupid spontaneously arises within Her heart upon hearing about the qualities and beautiful form of Çré Kåñëa, the master of supremely sweet pastimes.



*vara-sémanta-rasämåta-saraëé-
dhåta-sindüra-surekhäm
çré-våñabhänu-kulämbudhi-sambhava-
subhaga-sudhákara-lekhäm (1)*

vara – on the excellent; *sémanta* – parting of Her hair; *amåta* – (which is like the) nectarean; *saraëé* – pathway; *rasa* – of *ujjvala-rasa*, sweet paramour love; *su-rekhäm* – a sublime line; *sindüra* – of red vermillion; *dhåta* – is kept; *sudhákara-lekhäm* – She is the moon; *ambudhi* – (arising from) the ocean; *kula* – of the dynasty; *çré-våñabhänu* – of Çré Våñabhänu Mahäräja; *sambhava* – bringing; *subhaga* – auspiciousness (to the world).

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä, the fine parting of whose hair, which is like the nectarean pathway of *ujjvala-rasa*, is decorated with a sublime line of *sindüra*. Çré Rädhä emerges from the dynasty of Çré Våñabhänu Mahäräja as the moon arises from the ocean, bringing auspiciousness to the world.



smaratu mano
Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda

*surucira-komala-kavaré-viräjita-
parimala-malli-sumäläm
mada-cala-khaijana-khelana-gaijana-
locana-kamala-viçäläm* (2)

sumäläm – exquisite garlands; *parimala* – of fragrant; *malli* – jasmine; *viräjita* – shine; *surucira* – on Her very lustrous; *komala* – soft; *kavaré* – braid; *viçäläm* – Her large; *komala* – lotus; *locana* – eyes; *gaijana* – mock; *mada* – the intoxicated; *khelana* – to-and-fro; *cala* – movement; *khaijana* – of the wagtail bird.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä, upon whose lustrous and soft braid shine exquisite garlands of fragrant jasmine. The restlessness of Her large lotus eyes mocks the intoxicated to-and-fro movement of the wagtail bird.



*mada-kari-räja-viräjad-anuttama-
calita-lalita-gati-bhaï gém
ati-sukumära-kanaka-nava-campaka-
gaura-madhura-madhuräi gém* (3)

lalita – the graceful; *bhaï gém* – curves; *gati* – of Her gait; *calita* – as She strolls; *anuttama* – are incomparably more sublime; *viräjad* – and splendid; *madakari-räja* – than those of the King of elephants in rut; *aï gém* – Her body; *atisukumära* – at the zenith of very sweet youth; *madhura-madhura* – imbued with ever-increasing charm; *gaura* – shines; *kanaka* – with a golden hue; *nava-campaka* – like fresh campaka flowers.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä, the graceful curves of whose strolling gait are incomparably more sublime and splendid than those of the king of elephants in rut. Her body, being at the zenith of

very sweet youth and imbued with ever-increasing charm, shines with a golden hue like fresh campaka flowers.



*maëi-keyüra-lalita-valayävalé-
maëöita-mådu-bhuja-vallém
pratipadam adbhuta-rüpa-camatkåti-
mohana-yuvati-matallém* (4)

mådu – Her soft; *lalita* – and graceful; *vallém* – creeper-like; *bhuja* – arms; *maëöita* – are ornamented; *avalé* – by bunches; *valaya* – of bangles; *maëi* – and bejewelled; *keyüra* – armlets; *adbhuta* – and Her wonderful; *rüpa* – form; *pratipadam* – at every moment; *camatkåti* – causes astonishment; *mohana* – and enrapture; *yuvati* – (even among) the young girls (of Vraja); *matallém* – who possess such excellence.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä, whose soft, graceful, creeper-like arms are bedecked with bunches of bangles and bejewelled armlets, and whose wonderful, sweet form at every moment provokes astonishment and



mama niravadhi radham

Translated into English for the first time



enrapture even among the young maidens of Vraja, who are similarly endowed with such excellence.



*mådu-mådu-häsa-lalita-mukha-maëòala-
kåta-çaçi-bimba-viòambäm
kiï kini-jäla-khacita-påthu-sundara-
nava-rasa-räçi-nitambäm (5)*

lalita – Her lovely; *maëòala* – resplendent; *mukha* – face; *mådu-mådu* – (emanates) very, very gentle; *häsa* – peals of laughter; *kåta-viòambäm* – and mocks; *bimba* – the orb; *çaçi* – of the moon; *påthu* – on Her broad; *sundara* – beautiful; *nitambäm* – rounded hips; *räçi* – which are filled with; *nava-rasa* – ever-fresh mellows; *jäla* – a net; *kiï kini* – of tiny bells; *khacita* – is fastened.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä, the circle of whose lovely face emanates very, very gentle peals of laughter and mocks the orb of the full moon. A net of tiny bells is fastened upon Her charming, rounded hips, which are filled with ever-fresh mellows.



*citrita-kai culikä-stthagitodbhaïa-
kuca-häöaka-ghaïa-çobhäm
sphurat-aruëädhara-svädu-sudhä-rasa-
kåta-hari-mänasa-lobhäm (6)*

çobhäm – the beauty; *udbhaïa* – of Her excellent; *kuca* – breasts; *häöaka* – (which resemble) golden; *ghaïa* – waterpots; *sthagita* – is concealed; *citrita* – by a patterned; *kai culikä* – bodice; *mänasa* – the heart; *hari* – of Çré Hari; *kåta-lobhäm* – is captivated; *sudhä* – by the nectarean; *rasa* – mellows; *svädu* – of Her relishable; *sphurat* – trembling; *aruëä* – reddish; *adhara* – lips.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rädhä, the beauty of whose excellent breasts, which resemble golden waterpots, is concealed by a patterned bodice. By the nectarean mellows of Her relishable, trembling, ruddy lips, She captivates the mind of Çré Hari.



*sundara-cibuka-viräjita-mohana-
mecaka-bindu-viläsäm
sa-kanaka-ratna-khacita-påthu-mauktika-
rucı-rucirojjvala-näsäm (7)*

mohana – an infatuating; *viläsäm* – pastime; *bindu* – dot; *mecaka* – blue-black like the eye of a peacock; *viräjita* – shines; *sundara* – upon Her beautiful; *cibuka*

– chin; *pāthu* – and a large; *ruci* – and lustrous; *mauktika* – pearl ornament; *sa-kanaka* – set in gold; *ratna* – and gems; *Khacita* – is affixed; *ujjvala* – upon Her brilliant; *rucira* – and beautiful; *näsäm* – nose.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rādhā, upon whose beautiful chin is an infatuating pastime-dot that is blue-black like the eye of a peacock, and whose brilliant, beautiful nose is ornamented by a large and lustrous pearl set in jewels and gold.

*ujjvala-prema-rasämåta-sägara-
sära-tanüä sukha-rüpäm
nipatati mädhava-mugdha-mano-måga-
näbhi-sudhä-rasa-küpäm* (8)

tanüm – Her body; *sära* – which is the essence (churned) from; *amåta* – the nectarean; *sägara* – ocean; *rasa* – of the *rasa*; *ujjvala-prema* – of amorous love; *rüpäm* – is the essential form; *sukha* – of all happiness (for Mädhava); *mädhava* – Mädhava; *nipatati* – falls; *küpäm* – into that well; *sudhä-rasa* – of ambrosial mellows; *manau* – His mind; *mugdha* – bewildered; *måga-näbhi* – like the musk deer.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rādhā, whose form is the quintessence churned from the nectar-ocean of amorous love and is the very embodiment of all happiness for Mädhava. Indeed, Çré Mädhava falls into that well of ambrosial mellows, His mind bewildered (by His own internal potency), like the musk deer captivated by its own fragrance.

*nüpura-hära-manohara-kuëöala-
kåta-rucim aruëa-dukülam
pathi pathi madana-madäkula-gokula-
candra-kalita-pada-müläm* (9)

manohara – Her enchanting; *nüpura* – anklebells; *hära* – necklace; *kuëöala* – and earrings; *kåta* – create; *rucim* – an effulgence; *aruëa-dukülam* – (She wears) a dress the colour of the rising sun; *gokula-candra* – and Kåñëa, the moon of Gokula; *äkula* – distressed; *mada* – and maddened; *madana* – by (the arrows) of Kämadeva; *kalita* – is forcibly impelled;

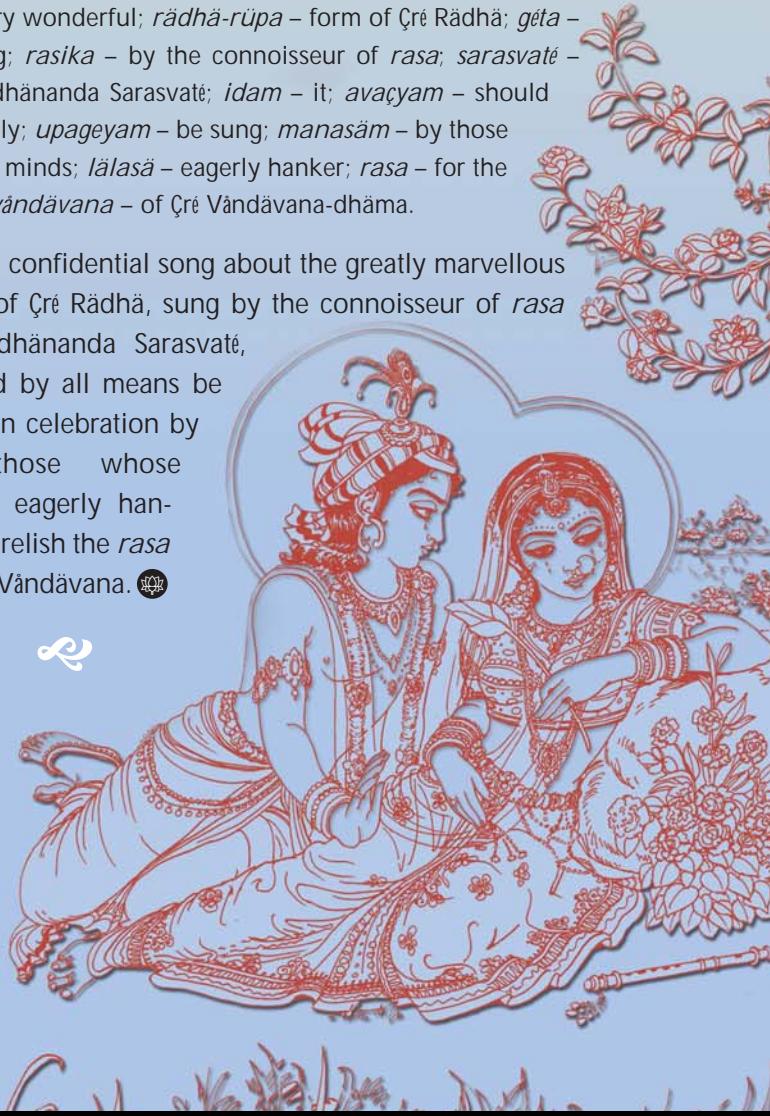
pada-müläm – to take shelter of Her feet; *pathi pathi* – by any recourse.

May my mind incessantly recall Çré Rādhā, whose enchanting anklebells, necklace and earrings create an effulgence. She wears a dress the colour of the rising sun, and at Her lotus feet Gokula-candra, Kåñëa, distressed and maddened by the arrows of Kämadeva, is forcibly impelled to take shelter by any means possible.

*rasika-sarasvaté-géta-mahädbhuta-
rädhä-rüpa-rahasyam
vändävana-rasa-läläsä-manasäm
idam upageyam avaçyam* (10)

rahasyam – this confidential song; *mahä-adbhuta* – about the very wonderful; *rädhä-rüpa* – form of Çré Rādhā; *géta* – is sung; *rasika* – by the connoisseur of *rasa*; *sarasvaté* – Prabodhänanda Sarasvaté; *idam* – it; *avaçyam* – should certainly; *upageyam* – be sung; *manasäm* – by those whose minds; *läläsä* – eagerly hanker; *rasa* – for the *rasa*; *vändävana* – of Çré Vändävana-dhäma.

This confidential song about the greatly marvellous form of Çré Rādhā, sung by the connoisseur of *rasa* Prabodhänanda Sarasvaté, should by all means be sung in celebration by all those whose hearts eagerly hanker to relish the *rasa* of Çré Vändävana. ☩



The sweetness of the word “love”

Love* is a very sweet word. When it is spoken, a very sweet mood arises in the hearts of both the speaker and the listeners. Though few are able to understand its true meaning, everyone still likes to hear the word. All beings are controlled by love. Many will even give up their lives for it.

All beings are controlled by love

To love is the sole purpose of human life. Many think that the fulfilment of their selfish desires is the primary purpose of their existence, but that is wrong. For love, man can sacrifice all of his own interests.

Selfishness causes man to strive only for his own happiness and autonomy, but love causes him to sacrifice all of his own interests for the sake of that thing or person that is dear to him. Whenever there is a clash between selfishness and love, love is victorious. In particular, even when selfishness is very intense it still remains subordinate to love. What is selfishness? Selfishness is to endeavour for that which is dear to oneself. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to say that human life is directed by love. Love becomes the primary purpose of man's life, even when he strives to fulfil his selfish desires.

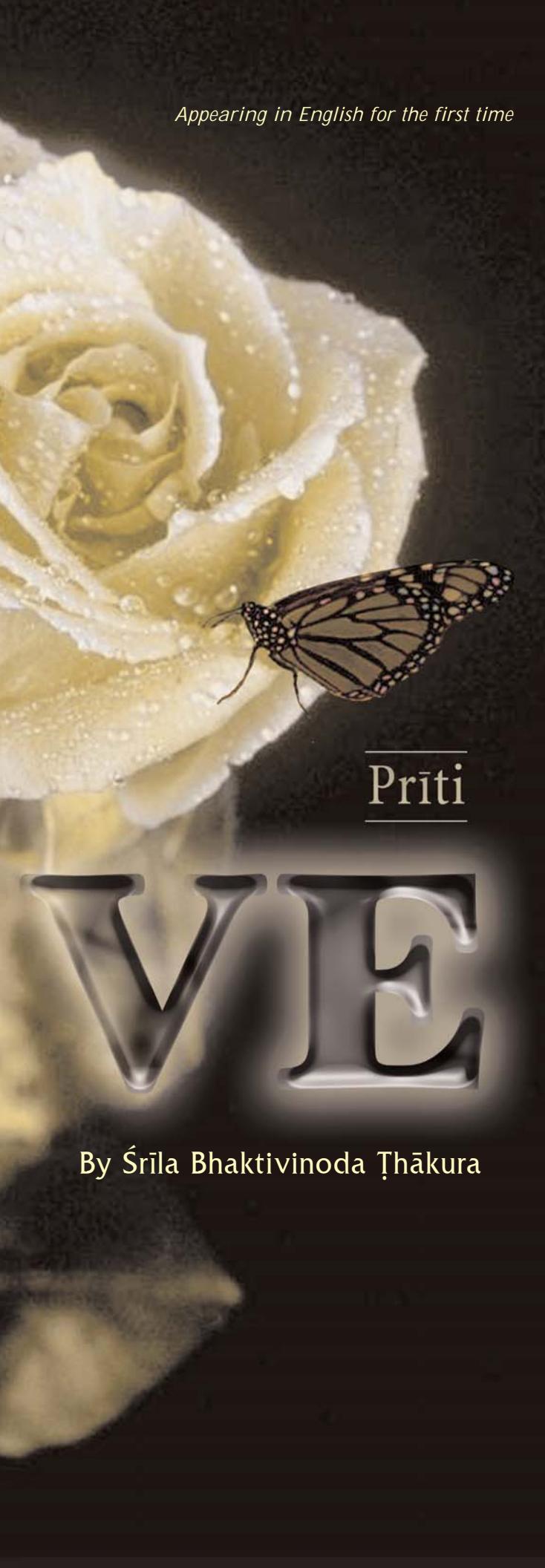
Materialists and liberationists strive for enjoyment and liberation, out of love for them

Love is pre-eminent on the path of transcendentalism also. Those who seek spiritual pleasure, considering worldly pleasure to be temporary, are of two kinds: those overcome by an urge to enjoy and those driven by a desire to be liberated. Those overcome by an urge to enjoy are presently either

* The original word used is *prēti*, translated as “love”.



LO



Appearing in English for the first time

Prīti

VE

By Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

preoccupied with their search for wealth, kingdom, wife or children, or encumbered with a desire for the position of Indra or any other demigod in Svarga or for happiness in the higher planets such as Brahmaloka. Because they have a love for those things, they constantly endeavour to have them.

Those who crave liberation have no love for such worldly enjoyments, but cherish instead the desire to be liberated from worldly affairs. Hence, because they have a love for liberation, they strive for it. Love is what the materialist seeks from his enjoyment and the liberationist from liberation. Hence, to attain love is the final object for both kinds of people. Love is the single aim of all spiritual endeavour.

What Cañḍī dāsa says about love

In regard to love, the Vaiñēava poet Caëōē dāsa says:

*pirēti baliyä, e tina äkhara,
e tina bhuvana-sära
ei mora mane, haya räti-dine,
ihä vai nähi ära (1)*

*vidhi eka cite, bhävite bhävite,
niramäea kaila "pi"
rasera sägara, manthana karite,
tähe upajila "ré" (2)*

*punaù je mathiyä, amiyä haila,
tähe bhiyäila "ti"
sakala sukhera, e tina äkhara,
tulanä diba se ki (3)*

*jähära marame, paçila yatane,
e tina äkhara sära
dharama karama, sarama bharama,
kivä jäti kula tära (4)*

*e hena pirēti, nä jäni ki réti,
pariéäme kivä haya
pirēti-bandhana, baða-i viñama,
dvija caëöedäse kaya (5)*

The three syllables *pi-ré-ti* (love) are the essence of the three planetary systems. They remain in my mind day and night. I think of nothing but them. (1)

Concentrating deeply, Brahmä created the syllable *pi*. Then when the ocean of *rasa* was churned, the syllable *ré* emerged. (2)

When the ocean was churned a second time, nectar emerged, which was prepared into the syllable *ti*. How can I compare anything to these three syllables, which are the abode of all happiness? (3)

That person in whose heart the essence of these three syllables has forcibly entered finds *dharma*, *karma*, shyness, commonsense, caste and family tradition useless. (4)

I do not know what the nature of that love is or what its result will be. The twice-born Caëöe däsa says, "The bondage of love is truly terrible." (5)

Insettent objects are shadows of sentient objects

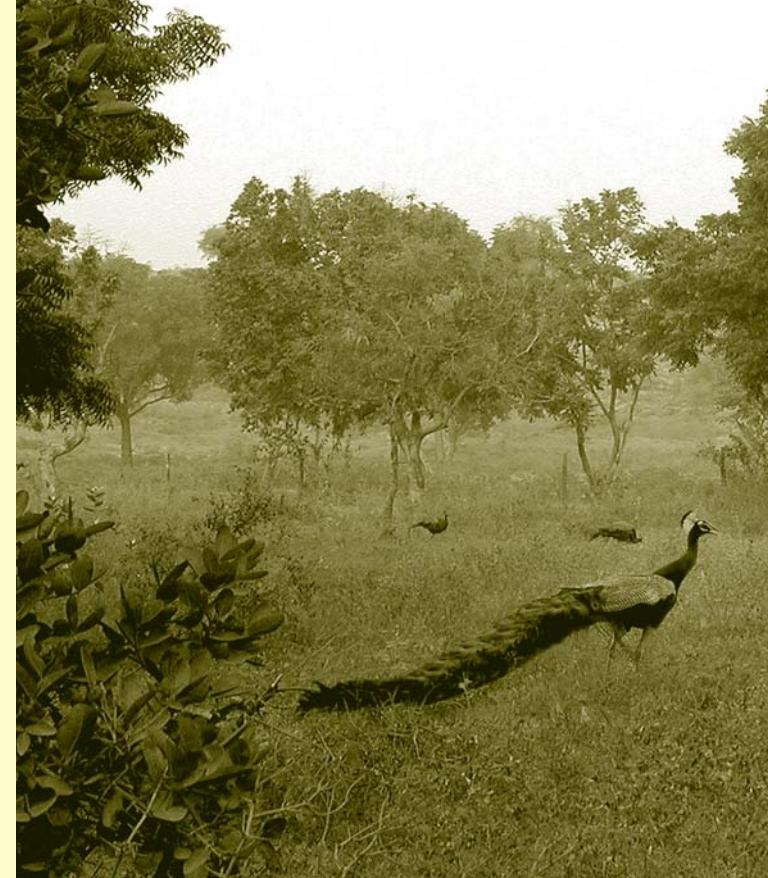
Objects are of two kinds: sentient objects and insentient objects. Sentient objects are original, whereas insentient objects are perversions of sentient ones. They can be called the shadows or reflections of sentient objects. Whatever is present in an object is also present in some way in its shadows. Hence, whatever is present within the original, sentient objects must also be present in their insentient counterparts.

To love is the nature of sentient objects, and love's perversion is found in insentient objects

If we examine the nature of sentient objects, we find that to love is their sole nature. This nature must also exist in some way as a reflection within insentient objects. Just as insentient objects are perversions of sentient ones, attraction and motion are perversions of love. They make up the nature of insentient objects and are present in every insentient atom. Let us now examine the nature of love.

The nature of love

Attraction and motion are present in their pure form within sentient objects as love. The soul is a sentient object. Here, "soul" refers to both the supreme sentient being, the Supersoul, and the minute sentient being, the soul. Their nature is to love. Pure love is found only within the soul. Only a perversion of that



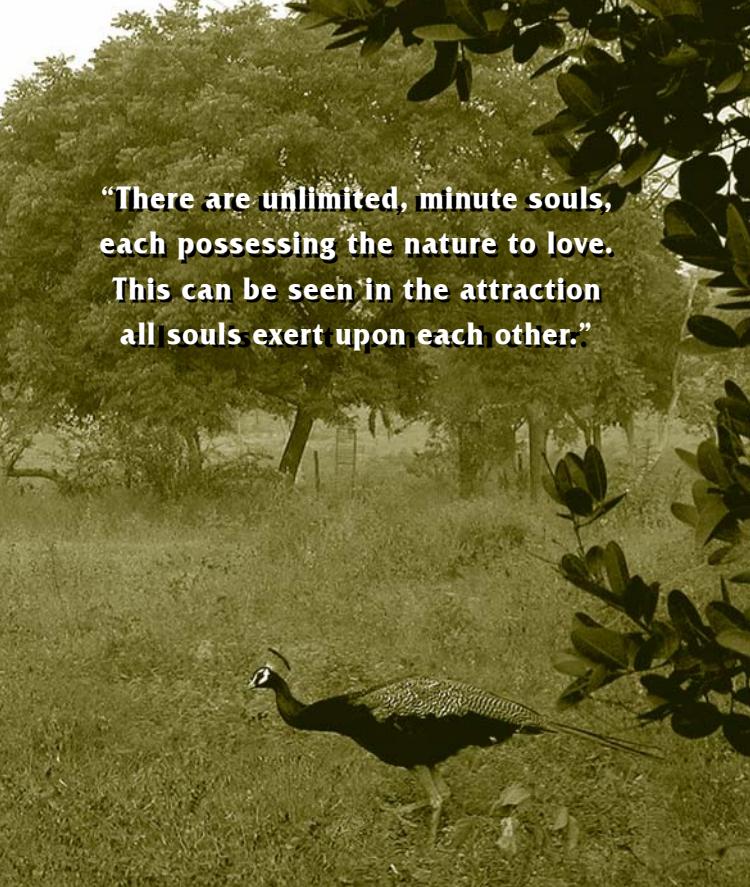
pure nature, not the pure nature itself, is to be found within the soul's reflection – that is, within insentient objects. Hence, pure love is not to be found in any material object of this world. Rather, its perversion, which is mere attraction and motion, is to be found in them.

By the forces of attraction and motion, atoms assemble to form objects. Through attraction, objects are drawn towards each other. Also, on account of their independent motion, the planets revolve around the sun. Anything that is present in a perverted object or perverted nature is also present in the original object in its untainted form.

The independence, attraction and repulsion of the soul

Independence and attraction to other objects are also always found within the soul. The soul exists in a state of bondage in this world. There are unlimited, minute souls, each possessing the nature to love. This can be seen in the attraction all souls exert upon each other. Furthermore, because of their independence, each soul wants to remain separate from the others.

In this material world, every object draws other objects towards it; and these other objects in turn, by



**"There are unlimited, minute souls,
each possessing the nature to love.
This can be seen in the attraction
all souls exert upon each other."**

virtue of their independent motion, try to remain separate from that object. Big objects draw small objects towards them. The sun is big, attracting the planets and their satellites towards it. But owing to their own independent motion, those planets and satellites remain at a distance from the sun and, attracted by its gravitational force, orbit it. Moreover, the planets' attraction and motion also assist them in their orbit. What we see in this world is also found in the spiritual world in its unadulterated form.

The difference between the material sun and the transcendental sun

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (8.1.13) states:

*sa brūyād yāvān vā ayam äkācas tāvān eñō
'ntar hādaya äkāca ubhe asmin dyāvapāthivē
antar eva samāhīte ubhāv agniç ca vāyuç ca
sūrya-candramasāv ubhau vidyut nakñatrāëi
yac cäsyehästi yac ca nästi sarvaà tasmin
samähitam iti*

In the reflected creation, there are five elements, as well as the moon, the sun, lightning and the stars. All of these are present in their original form in Brahmapura, the spiritual world. The difference between the two worlds is that in the spiritual world

all the variegated affairs are pure, blissful and perfect, whereas in the material world everything is flawed, incomplete and the cause of happiness and distress.

To love is the fundamental nature of all beings in the spiritual world. Therefore, the poet Caëöe däsa says:

*brahmäëòa vyäpiyä, ächaye je jana,
 keha na dekhaye täre
premera pireti, je jana jänaye,
 sei se päite pare

pireti pireti tēnaë äkhara
 pi ré ti trividha mata
bhajite bhajite niguöha haile
 haibe eka-i mata*

No one has seen that person who pervades the universe. Only one who knows what love is can attain Him. *Pireti* (love) has three letters and is of three kinds, but when it becomes condensed as a result of continuous *bhajana*, it will be of only one kind.

The transcendental sun, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, attracts the jīvas to orbit Him, and this is eternal rāsa

The transcendental enjoyer of Vāndävana, Čré Kāñëa, is the sun of the spiritual world. The souls there are His associates in His pastimes. Through the force of the attraction of His love, Kāñëa draws them towards Him. But, on account of their own independent motion, they try to remain distinct from Him. Hence, while the strong force of attraction drawing those souls near to that sun-like Kāñëa defeats their motion, that force nonetheless makes them orbit Him. This is Kāñëa's eternal rāsa.

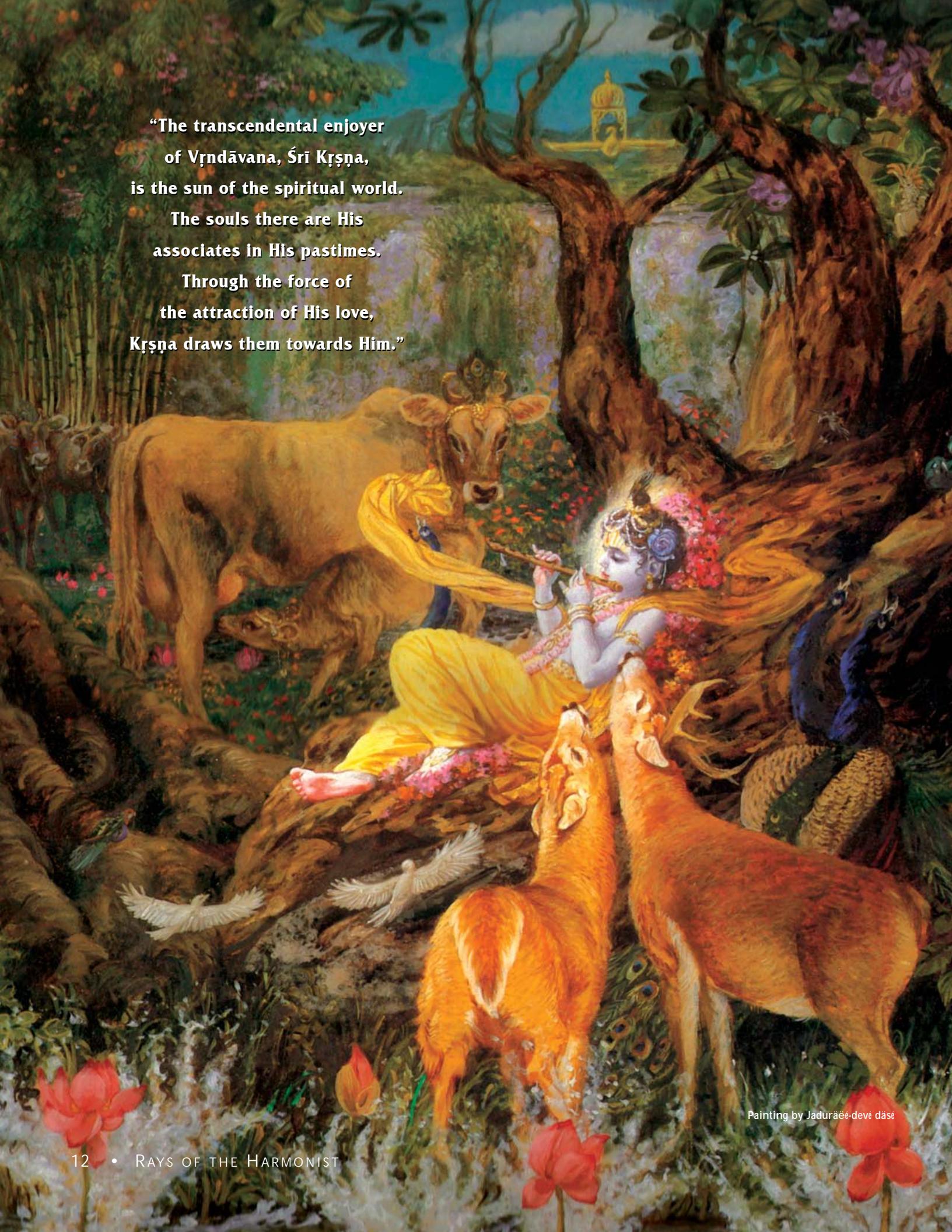
In that rāsa, His girlfriends who are part of His internal potency are very near to Him, and those who have attained perfection through their spiritual practice are somewhat further away. Kāñëa's transcendental pastimes reveal the true nature of love.

Liberated souls are greatly attracted to Kṛṣṇa

Does Kāñëa attract all souls? If so, why are all souls not favourably inclined towards Him?

Kāñëa does attract all souls. However, souls are of two kinds: the bound and the liberated. Because

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the attraction of His love,
Kṛṣṇa draws them towards Him."**



Painting by Jadurāē-devē dāsē

liberated souls experience their love clearly and keep it alive, Kāñëa's force of attraction naturally acts more effectively upon them.

The reason why bound souls are not attracted to Kṛṣṇa

Souls in bondage are of two types. The pure love of those who are completely oblivious to Kāñëa is extremely distorted due to their association with matter. They know nothing but love for objects of enjoyment, and therefore engage in sense gratification day and night. Forgetting themselves, they remain engrossed in seeking mundane pleasure.

Moreover, on account of their esteem for mundane science, which promotes mundane enjoyment, they remain absorbed in mundane worship. They continuously cheat themselves with statements like "the soul does not exist", "deliberating upon the soul is illusory" and "any attempt to develop the self is nothing but mental agony". Some cheat themselves of the pleasure of the plane of the soul by engaging in various pious activities with the aim of attaining the happiness of Svarga.

When the bound souls develop discrimination, renunciation and faith, they become attracted to Kṛṣṇa

Among the souls in bondage, some develop discrimination and renunciation, and attain faith in the soul. On the strength of this faith, they experience to some degree the pure attractiveness of Çré Kāñëa, the sun of the spiritual world, and are also drawn towards Him. Although they are engaged in various mundane, scientific or pious activities, they enjoy Kāñëa's association. Çré Caëöé däsa describes their moods:

känu je jévana, jäti präeadhana,
e duöi nayanera tärä
hiyära mähäre, paräea putali,
nimikhe nimikha härä (1)

torä kulavaté, bhaja nija pati,
jära mane jevä laya
bhäviyä dekhinu, çyäma-bandhu bine,
ära keha mora naya (2)

ki ära bujhäo, dharama-karama,
mana svatantré naya
kulavati haïi ä, piréti-äratí,
ära kära jäni haya (3)

je mora karama, kapäle ächilä,
vidhi miläila täya
torä kulavaté, bhaja nija pati,
thäka ghare kula lai (4)

guru durajana, bale kuvacana,
se mora candana-cuyä
çyäma anuräge, e tanu becinu,
tila-tulasé diyä (5)

paöasé durjana, bale kuvacana,
nä jäba se loka päöä
caëöädäse kaya, känura piréti,
jäti-kula çela chäöä (6)

Känu is my life, my caste, my treasure and the pupils of my eyes. He is the beloved within my heart who, in the blink of an eye, is lost to my vision. (1)

You are women of respectable family. Serve your husbands. Do as you please. After some thought I see that I have no one but my lover Çyäma. (2)

What more can you tell me about *dharma* and *karma*? My mind is not independent. If I am indeed a virtuous woman, then who is that person I long to love? (3)

Brahmä has made arrangements according to my *karma* and destiny. O virtuous women, serve your husbands and stay at home with your family. (4)

My wicked elders criticise me, but to me their criticism is like scented sandalwood paste. Out of my love for Çyäma, I have sold this body placing sesame seeds and a *tulasé* leaf on it. (5)

My wicked neighbours criticise me, but I will not go to their neighbourhood. Caëöé däsa says, "Love for Känu rejects caste, family and character." (6)

The nature of the souls who are unaware of their identity

The soul in this world has forgotten his own identity because he identifies with matter. He forms various

relationships with various people and behaves towards them in various ways. He identifies himself with his subtle body, and has imagined a new body consisting of mind, intelligence and ego. Because of that relationship with his subtle body, he values psychology and material science, considering them his wealth, and consequently becomes deluded.

Moreover, on account of identifying himself with his gross body, consisting of the five elements, he thinks "I am a Bhāoācārya" or "I am a gentleman", and thus he lives a life of abandon. He is sometimes born and he sometimes dies. Sometimes he is unable to contain his joy, and sometimes he is stricken with grief. Glory to this transformation and glory to Māyā's games!

Sometimes the soul is born as a man and marries a woman, and sometimes he is born as a woman and marries a man and establishes for himself a large cycle of worldly concerns. When he enters that cycle he honours his superiors and takes care of his dependants. He fears the ruler, and he hates his enemies. He fears disgrace and criticism when he is born as a woman in a respectable family. He remains far from his true identity when he establishes these false relationships in this world. What a horrible condition the soul endures in such a self-imposed life! Considering the various established rules of this world as his master, he has completely forgotten his eternal master, Kānēa.

Prior attraction, tryst and union with Kṛṣṇa

At this point a particular mood may arise in relation to Kānēa, expressed by Čréman Mahāprabhu in the following verse:

para-vyasaniné näre vyagräpi gāha-karmañu
tam eväsvädayaty antar nava-sai ga-rasäyanam
Çré Caitanya-caritämāta (Madhya-lélä 1.211)

An unchaste wife internally relishes newer and newer meetings with her lover even while engaged in her household chores.

This kind of prior attraction (*pürva-räga*) develops in a soul bound to the rules of this world before pure love for Kānēa awakens in him. Eventually this

soul will go for a rendezvous and meet Kānēa. Prior attraction appears by hearing about Kānēa's nature and qualities, seeing a picture of His transcendental form, remembering His attractiveness and hearing the sound of His flute. One in whom this prior attraction has appeared meets Kānēa by the help of like-minded girlfriends. Gradually the mutual love between this soul and the supreme enjoyer Çré Kānēa, who is the embodiment of eternity, knowledge and bliss, becomes deep.

Pure and impure love

Kānēa's transcendental pastimes in the spiritual world, Vraja, are eternal. The soul is a minute sentient particle, and is therefore eligible to participate in those pastimes. When the soul is in bondage, his transcendental identity appears in an illusory form as his subtle and gross bodies. Similarly, the pure love for Kānēa that is found within that transcendental identity appears in an illusory form as love for mundane science or mundane objects. Therefore, bodily love or mental love are simply distortions of pure love for Bhagavän. They are not true love. But because the soul has mistaken his own identity he considers them to be real love. Actual love, however, is the love that exists between two souls.

True love

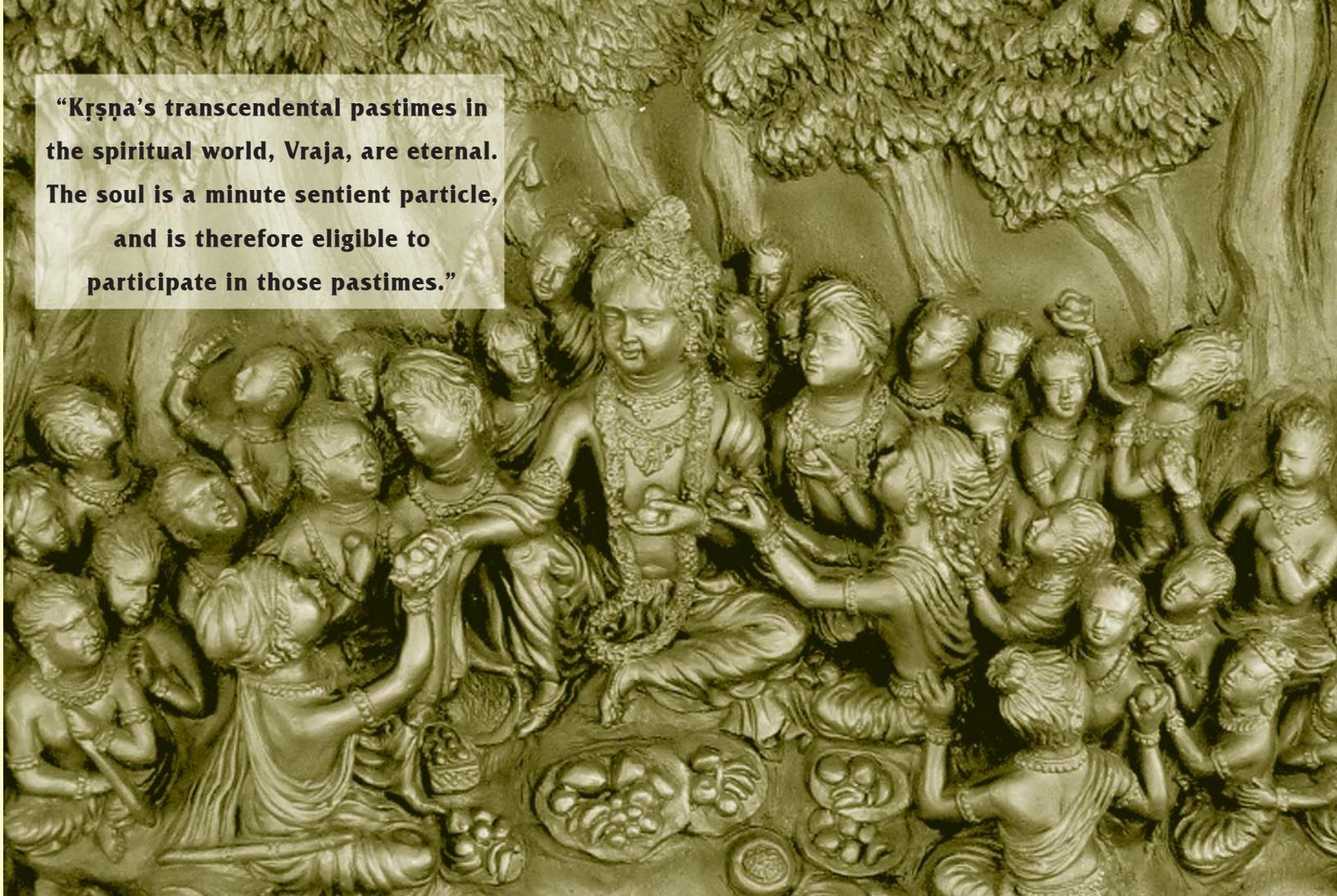
The *Bāhad-äraëyaka Upaniñad* (4.5.6) states:

na vä are patyuù kämäya patiù priyo bhavati
ätmanastu kämäya patiù priyo bhavati. (ityupakramya) na vä are sarvasya kämäya sarvaà
priyaà bhavati ätmänastu kämäya sarvaà
priyaà bhavati. ätmä vä are drāmavyaù çrotavyo
mantavyo nididhyäsitavyo maitraiyyätmani
khalu are dāññe çrute mate vijí äta idaà sarvaà
viditam iti.

When Yäjī avalkya's wife Maitreyé became detached from both the gross and the subtle planes, she approached her husband and requested him to give her some instruction.

Yäjī avalkya replied: "O Maitreyé, a wife does not in fact love her husband for his sake. Rather, in every instance she does so for her own sake. Similarly, a

"Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes in the spiritual world, Vraja, are eternal. The soul is a minute sentient particle, and is therefore eligible to participate in those pastimes."



husband loves his wife only for his own interests. This so-called love for husband, son, wealth and so on, is simply deceit. By completely rejecting this dishonesty you should worship Bhagavān, the eternal object of love and the soul of all souls, and love Him solely for love's own sake. Therefore, one who has become detached from the material world and the subtle body should look at, think of and inquire about that Soul who is the most beloved of the *jīvas*. By that he will come to know everything."

The import of this highly authoritative statement of the Vedas is that there is no love on the gross and subtle planes. Whatever semblance of love is found here is experienced only in relation to the soul. The pure soul is transcendental, and the love that exists between souls is pure love. Only that love is worthy of being searched after. Worldly love, or the love that exists between humans, is but a distortion of the soul's love. The love that exists between souls is the only true love.

"Love Kṛṣṇa" is the ultimate instruction

In *Çrémad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.55) it is stated:

*kāñēam enam avehi tvam
ätmānam akhilätmanäm*

Çré Kāñëa, who possesses sixty-four excellent attributes, is the soul of all souls. The love that all souls have for Kāñëa is free from mundane designations and is superlative. Those who have written about psychology and the intricacies of love without knowing love's true nature have simply wasted their time, despite all their reasoning, as if mixing ghee into ashes. Out of pride, such persons have simply endeavoured for fame. Rather than benefit the world, they have brought it great misfortune. Brothers! Stop listening to those people's grandiloquent talk and develop pure attachment for the soul, thus making your soul's nature shine by experiencing that love which is free from designations. ☩

Translated from *Çré Gauḍéya Patrikā*, Year 11, Issue 3

Initiation into

by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda



The Initial Impulse

The ceremony of *dēkñā* or initiation is that by which the spiritual preceptor admits one to the status of a neophyte on the path of spiritual endeavour. The ceremony tends to confer spiritual enlightenment by abrogating sinfulness. Its actual effect depends on the degree of willing co-operation on the part of the disciple and is, therefore, not the same in all cases. It does not preclude the possibility of reversion on the novice to the non-spiritual state, if he slackens in his effort or misbehaves.

Initiation puts a person on the true track and also imparts an initial impulse to go ahead. It cannot, however, keep one going for good unless one chooses to put forth his own voluntary effort. The nature of the initial impulse also varies in accordance with the condition of the recipient.

But although the mercy of the good preceptor enables us to have a glimpse of the Absolute and of the path of His attainment, the seed that is thus sown requires very careful tending under the direction of the preceptor if it is to germinate and grow into the fruit-and-shade-giving tree. Unless our soul chooses to serve Kāñëa of his own accord after obtaining a working idea of his real nature, he cannot long retain the Spiritual Vision. The soul is never compelled by Kāñëa to serve Him.

But initiation is never altogether futile. It changes the disciple's outlook on life. If he sins after initiation, he may fall into greater depths of degradation than the uninitiated. But although even after initiation temporary set-backs may occur, they do not ordinarily prevent the final deliverance. The faintest glimmering

Spiritual Life

Original essay penned in English in December 1928

of real knowledge of the Absolute has sufficient power to change radically and for good the whole of our mental and physical constitution, and this glimmering is incapable of being totally extinguished except in extraordinarily unfortunate cases.

Treating the Ailment of the Soul

It is undoubtedly practicable for the initiated, if only he is willing, to follow the directions of the preceptor that lead by slow degrees to the Absolute. The good preceptor is verily the savior of fallen souls. It is, however, very rarely that a person with modern culture feels inclined to submit to the guidance of another, specially in spiritual matters. But the very person submits readily enough to the direction of a physician for being cured of his bodily ailments, since these latter cannot be ignored without consequences that are patent to everybody.

The evil that results from our neglect of the ailments of the soul is of a nature that paralyses and deludes our understanding and prevents the recognition of itself. Its gravity is not recognised as it does not apparently stand in the way of our worldly activities with the same directness as the other. The average cultured man is, therefore, at liberty to ask questions without realising any pressing necessity of submitting to the treatment of spiritual maladies at the hands of a really competent physician.

The questions that are frequently asked are as these: "Why should it be at all necessary to submit to any particular person or to subscribe to any particular ceremony for the purpose of realising the Absolute who by His nature is unconditioned? Why should Kānēa require our formal declaration of submission to

Himself? Would it not be more generous and logical to permit us to live a life of freedom in accordance with the principles of our perverted nature, which is also His creation? Admitting that it is our duty to serve Kānēa, why should we have to be introduced to Him by a third party? Why is it impossible for one to serve Çré Kānēa directly?"

The Bad Preceptor

It would no doubt be highly convenient and helpful to be instructed by a good preceptor who is well-versed in the scriptures in understanding the same. But one should never submit to another to an extent that may furnish a rascal with an opportunity of really doing harm. The bad preceptor is a familiar character. It is inexplicable how those *gurus* who live in open sin contrive nevertheless to retain the unquestioning allegiance of the cultured portion of their disciples.

Such being the case, can we blame any person who hesitates to submit unconditionally to a preceptor, whether he is good or bad? It is of course necessary to be quite sure of the bona fides of a person before we accept him even tentatively as our spiritual guide. A preceptor should be a person who appears likely to possess those qualities that will enable him to improve our spiritual condition.

Bona Fide Preceptor & Willing Disciple

Those and similar thoughts are likely to occur to most persons who have received an English education, when they are asked to accept the help of any particular person as a spiritual preceptor. The literature, science and art of the West, body forth the principle of the liberty of the individual and denounce the

mentality that leads one to surrender to a person, however superior, his right of choosing his own course. They inculcate the necessity and high value of having faith in oneself.

But the good preceptor claims our sincere and complete allegiance. The good disciple makes a complete surrender of himself at the feet of the preceptor. But the submission of the disciple is neither irrational nor blind. It is complete on condition that the preceptor himself continues to be altogether good. The disciple retains the right of renouncing his allegiance to the preceptor the moment he is satisfied that the preceptor is a fallible creature like himself. Nor does a good preceptor accept anyone as his disciple unless the latter is prepared to submit to him freely.

A good preceptor is in duty bound to renounce a disciple who is not sincerely willing to follow his instructions fully. If a preceptor accepts as his disciple one who refuses to be wholly guided by him, or if a disciple submits to a preceptor who is not wholly good, such preceptor and such disciple are, both of them, doomed to fall from their spiritual state.

No one is a good preceptor who has not realized the Absolute. One who has realized the Absolute is saved from the necessity of walking on the worldly path. The good preceptor who lives the spiritual life is, therefore, bound to be wholly good. He should be wholly free from any desire for anything of this world,

whether good or bad. The categories of good and bad do not exist in the Absolute. In the Absolute everything is good. We can have no idea in our present state of this absolute goodness.

Unreserved Submission to the Absolute

Submission to the Absolute is not real unless it is also itself absolute. It is on the plane of the Absolute that the disciple is required to submit completely to the good preceptor. On the material plane there can be no such thing as complete submission. The pretence of complete submission to the bad preceptor is responsible for the corruptions that are found in the relationship of the ordinary, worldly *guru* and his equally worldly-minded disciples.

All honest thinkers will realize the logical propriety of the position set forth above. But most persons will be disposed to believe that a good preceptor in the above sense may not be found in this world. This is really so. Both the good preceptor and his disciple belong to the spiritual realm. But spiritual discipleship is nevertheless capable of being realized by persons who belong to this world. Otherwise there would be no religion at all in the world.

But because the spiritual life happens to be realizable in this world, it does not follow that it is the worldly existence that is capable of being improved into the spiritual. As a matter of fact the one is perfectly



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incompatible with the other. They are categorically different from one another. The good preceptor, although he appears to belong to this world, is not really of this world. No one who belongs to this world can deliver us from worldliness. The good preceptor is a denizen of the spiritual world who has been enabled by the will of God to appear in this world in order to enable us to realize the spiritual existence.

Liberty: A Dream

The much-vaunted individual liberty is a figment of the diseased imagination. We are bound, willingly or unwillingly, to submit to the laws of God in the material as well as in the spiritual world. The hankering for freedom in defiance of His laws is the cause of all our miseries. The total abjuration of all hankering for such freedom is the condition of admission to the spiritual realm.

In this world we desire this freedom but are compelled against our will to submit to the inexorable laws of physical nature. This is the unnatural state. Such unwilling, forced submission does not admit us into the spiritual realm. In this world the moral principle indeed claims our willing submission. But even morality is a curtailment of freedom necessitated by the peculiar circumstances of this world. The soul who does not belong to this world is in a state of open or court rebellion against submission to an alien domination. By his very constitution he is capable of submitting willingly only to the Absolute.

Sincerity & Complete Conviction

The good preceptor asks the struggling soul to submit not to the laws of this world, which will only rivet its chains, but to the higher law of the spiritual realm. The pretence of submission to the laws of the spiritual realm without the intention of really carrying them out into practice is often mistaken for genuine submission. It springs from the absence of fullness of conviction. In this world the fully convinced state is non-existent. We are, therefore, compelled in all cases to act on make-believes, viz. the so-called working hypotheses.

The good preceptor tells us to change this method of activity, which we have learnt from our experience

of this world. He invites us first of all to be really and fully informed of the nature and laws of the other world, which happens to be eternally and categorically different from this phenomenal world. If we do not sincerely submit to be instructed in the alphabets of the life eternal but go on perversely asserting, however unconsciously, our present processes and so-called convictions against the instructions of the preceptor in the period of novitiate, we are bound to remain where we are.

This also will amount to the practical rejection of all advice because the two worlds have nothing in common, though at the same time we naturally fail to understand this, believing all the time in accordance with our accustomed methods that we are at any rate partially following the preceptor. But as a matter of fact when we reserve the right of choice we really follow ourselves, because even when we seem to agree to follow the preceptor it is because he appears to be in agreement with ourselves. But as the two worlds have absolutely nothing in common, we are only under a delusion when we suppose that we really understand the method or the object of the preceptor, or in other words reserve the right of assertion of the apparent self.

Finding the Good Preceptor

Faith in the scriptures can alone help us in this otherwise unpracticable endeavour. We believe in the preceptor with the help of the *çästras* when we understand neither. As soon as we are fully convinced of the necessity of submitting unambiguously to the good preceptor, it is then and only then that he is enabled to show us the way into the spiritual world in accordance with the method laid down in the *çästras* for that purpose. He can apply the method properly and without perpetrating a fatal blunder, in as much as he himself happens to belong to the realm of the spirit.

The crux of the matter lies not in the external nature of the ceremony of initiation as it appears to us – because that is bound to be unintelligible to us, being an affair of the other world – but in the conviction of the necessity and the successful choice of a really good preceptor. We can attain to conviction of the necessity of the help of a good preceptor by the

"The crux of the matter lies not in the external nature of the ceremony of initiation as it appears to us but in the conviction of the necessity and the successful choice of a really good preceptor."



exercise of our unbiased reason in the light of our ordinary experience.

Once this conviction has been truly formed, Çré Kāñëa Himself helps us in finding the really good preceptor in two ways. In the first place, he instructs us as regards the character and functions of a good preceptor through the revealed *çästras*. In the second place, He Himself sends to us the good preceptor at the moment when we are at all likely to benefit by his instructions. The good preceptor also comes to us when we reject him. In such cases also it is certainly Kāñëa who sends him to us for no reason what-so-ever.

Guarding Ourselves Against Deceivers

Kāñëa has revealed from eternity the tidings of the spiritual realm in the form of transcendental sounds that have been handed down in the records of the spiritual scriptures all over the world. The spiritual scriptures help all those who are prepared to exercise this reason for the purpose of finding not the relative but the Absolute Truth, to find out the proper instructor in accordance with their directions. The only good preceptor is he who can make us really understand the spiritual scriptures and enable us to realize the necessity and the nature of submission to the processes laid down in them.

But there is still every chance of foul play. A very clever man or a magician may pass himself off as a person who can properly explain the scriptures by means of his greater knowledge or deceptive arts. It is very important, therefore, that we should be on our guard against such tricks. The scholar as well as the magician pretends to explain the scriptures only in terms of the objects or happenings of this world. But the scriptures themselves declare that they do not tell us at all of the things of this world.

Those who are liable to be deluded by the arts of pervert *yogés* persuade themselves into believing that

the spiritual is identical with the perversion, distortion or defiance of the laws of physical nature. The laws of physical nature are not unreal. They govern the relation of all relative existences. In our present state it is therefore always possible for another who possesses the power or the knowledge, to demonstrate the merely tentative character of what we choose to regard as our deepest convictions, by exposing their insufficiency or inapplicability. But such surprises belong to the realm of the phenomenal and have nothing to do with the Absolute.

Those who have an unspiritual partiality for scholarship or for magic fall into the clutches of the pseudo-religionists. The serious plight of these victims of their own perversity will be realized from the fact that no one can be delivered from the state of ignorance by the method of compulsion. It is not possible to save the man who refuses on principle to listen to the voice of reason. The empiric pedants are no exception to this rule.

In Conclusion

The plain meaning of the *çästras* should, therefore, be our only guide in the search of the good preceptor when we actually feel the need of his guidance. The scriptures have defined the good preceptor as one who himself leads a spiritual life. It is not any worldly qualifications that make the good preceptor.

It is by unreserved submission to such a preceptor that we can be helped to re-enter into the realm that is our real home but which unfortunately is veritable *terra incognita* to almost all of us at present. This realm is inaccessible to body and mind alike, which are the result of the disease of abuse of our faculty of free reason and the consequent accumulation of a killing load of worldly experiences, which we have learnt to regard as the very stuff of our existence.

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Hearing to See

An informal discourse by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Absolute Will and Absolute Vision

Man proposes and God disposes. Proposal is directed upwards, and disposal comes down. The waves of suggestion and acceptance are all the Lord's pastimes.

*naiva tasya kātenārtha
nākāteneha kaçcana
na cāsyā sarva-bhūteñu
kaçcid artha-vyapäçrayaù*

Bhagavad-gétä (3.18)

In this world, a self-realized person who rejoices in the soul does not accrue piety by the performance of actions, nor does he incur sin by abstaining from duties. Amongst all living entities, from the highest life-forms of the planet of Lord Brahmä down to the world of immobile organisms, he never depends on anyone for any personal demand whatsoever.

For one who is self-realized, any and every wave is welcome for he is able to read the deeper meaning.

*āte 'rthaà yat pratéyeta
na pratéyeta cātmāni*

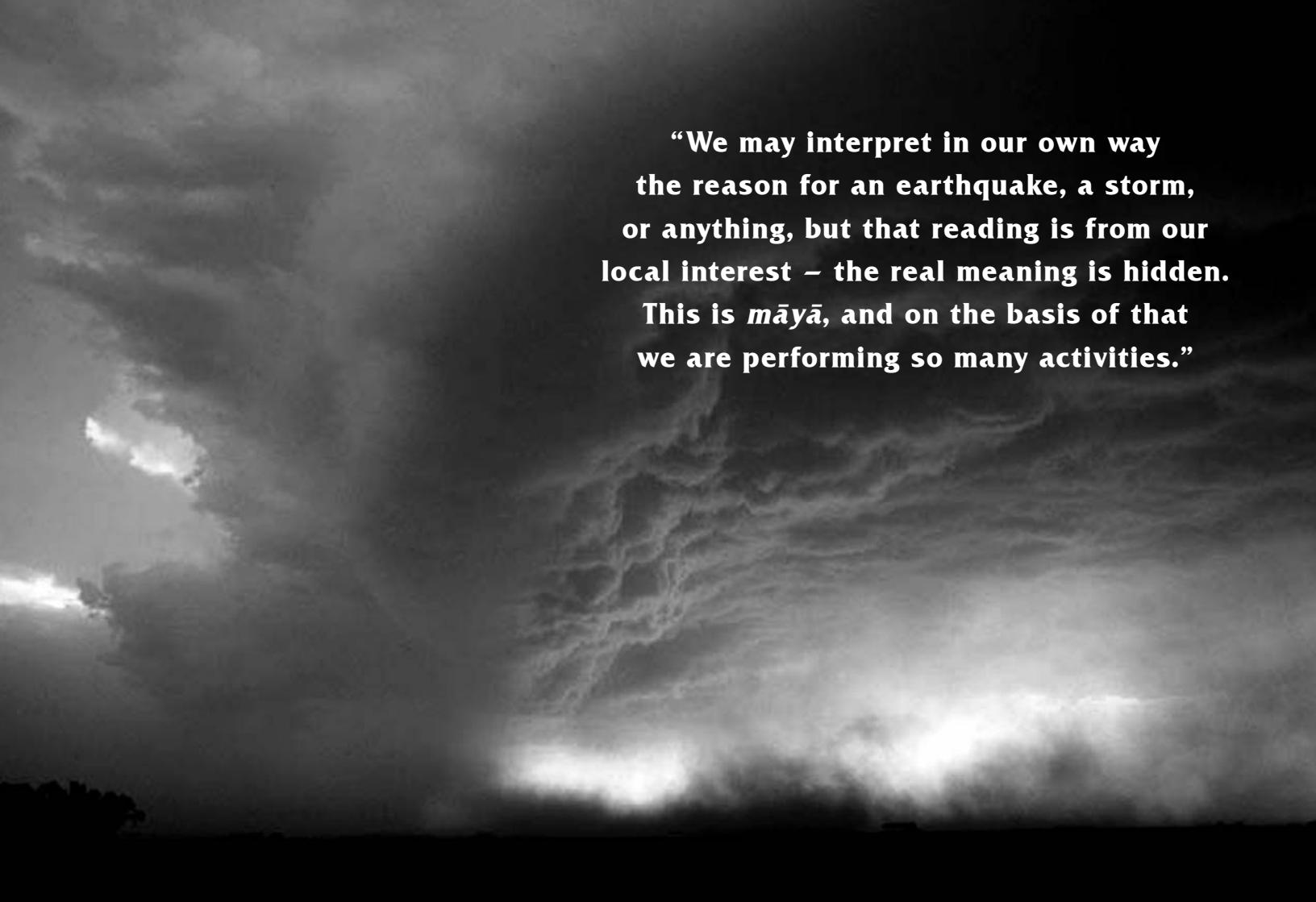
*tad vidyād ätmāno mäyäà
yathäbhäso yathä tamaù*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (2.9.34)

Çrémad-Bhágavatam asks, "What is the conception of *mäyä*?" *Āte 'rthaà yat pratéyeta* – what seems to us to be the correct reading of the environment, is actually not so. *Artheñu abhiji aù* – Kāñëa knows the meaning and purpose of every incident. Many events are harmonised and are for the purpose of serving Him. But when there is localised interest, there is a clash. Imperial and universal interests clash with provincial and local interests. *Artheñu abhiji aù*. He alone can know why each straw is moving to this side or that. He alone is the knower of everything.

Only Kāñëa knows what purpose is served by the grass bending in the wind to this side, not that. All these movements taken together in harmony, go to Him. *Artheñu abhiji aù svaräi*. He is not answerable to anything or anyone.

The universal meaning of every event and incident, even the movement of a piece of straw, is all-purposeful and all-meaningful to the Absolute. It all



**“We may interpret in our own way
the reason for an earthquake, a storm,
or anything, but that reading is from our
local interest – the real meaning is hidden.
This is *māyā*, and on the basis of that
we are performing so many activities.”**

contributes to the absolute satisfaction of Kāñëa. That is the meaning of the phrase, *āte 'rthaà yat pratéyeta*.

Artheñu abhijíi au. Artha means “universal”. And what is the real purpose of every movement? It is for the one Universal Absolute. That absolute current goes towards the satisfaction of Kāñëa.

The Plane of Ignorance and Error

But that reading is not possible for the superficial *jévas*. The *jévas* cannot read or conceive the real meaning of everything. The *jéva* will have his own reading of the circumstances, but that will be superficial, and that is *māyā*. We may interpret in our own way the reason for an earthquake, a storm, or anything, but that reading is from our local interest – the real meaning is hidden. This is *māyā*, and on the basis of that we are performing so many activities. All our interpretations are from the plane of local interest, so give it up!

*sarva-dharmän parityajya
mäm ekaà çaraëaà vraja*

Bhagavad-gétä (18.66)

Give up your local interest and identify yourself with the current of that plane of universal interest.

āte 'rthaà yat pratéyeta na pratéyeta cätmani

Without knowing the real meaning, what we feel and read is the wrong reading of the environment – it is *māyā*. We miss the universal purpose, and from local interest we read, “Oh, this is for this purpose, this is for that purpose.” But this is local interest. What we conceive, feel, trust and believe, is not in consonance with the universal reading; it is *māyā*. Even our belief is within the realm of *māyā*. Our conceptions will have no standing in the interest of the Absolute. What we read with our local interest, we will not find if we read from the universal interest.

Our disease of local interest and conception will be cured and removed when we see that everything is meant for Kāñëa and we become one with that interest.

*āte 'rthaà yat pratéyeta
na pratéyeta cätmani
tad vidyäd ätmano mäyäà
yathäbhäso yathä tamaù*

That feeling, that conception, is known as *mäyä*, "that which is not". It is apparent, but not real. What is not real, that is *mäyä*. Even what I think to be real is not. *Mä-yä – mä* means "no", and *yä* means "what" – "what is not." Apparently it seems to be so, but the fact is, it is not. That is *mäyä*. In such a plane we eliminate the infinite interest and instead see by measuring according to our own interest. We measure everything from the angle of vision and standpoint of our own selfish interest. In this way we ignore the infinite representation, position, duty and service. This is *mäyä*.

Yathäbhäso yathä tamaù – light and darkness both exist. The absence of truth is not truth: it is *tama*, darkness, ignorance, mistake and error.

*aham eväsam evägre
nänyad yat sad-asat param
paçcad ahaà yad etac ca
yo 'vaçiyeta so 'smry aham
āte 'rthaà yat pratéyeta
na pratéyeta cätmani*

* The following are the translations of these four "seed verses" of *Çrémad-Bhágavatam* (2.9.33–6) known collectively as *catuù-cloké Bhágavatam*:

(33) [Çré Bhagavân said to Lord Brahmä:] Before the creation of this world, only I existed. The gross and the subtle, up to the indefinable Brahman – in other words the cause (*sat*) and the effect (*asat*) – did not exist. Nothing other than I existed. What is manifested in the form of creation is also I, after creation it is also I, and after annihilation only I will remain.

(34) I, the Supreme Absolute Truth (*parama-tattva*), am the only real truth. Whatever appears to be of any value, if it is seen to be separate from Me, or not existing within

*tad vidyäd ätmano mäyäà
yathäbhäso yathä tamaù
yathä mahänti bhütäni
bhüteñuccävaceñv anu
praviñöany apraviñöäni
tathä teñu na teñv aham
etävad eva jiji' äsyaà
tattva-jiji' äsunätmanau
anvaya-vyatirekäbhyäà
yat syät sarvatra sarvadä*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (2.9.33–6)

The ontological base of the whole *Çrémad-Bhágavatam* is contained within these four *çlokas*.* The Lord is present everywhere in a direct or indirect way.

To Hear & To Serve

One in the *uttama-adhikära* (highest) stage makes no attempt to preach. Distribution of propaganda is for those in the *madhyama-adhikära* (middle) stage. It is there to take everyone from the narrow conception to the bright conception, from the improper to the proper conception; and according to their conception people will carry out their activities.

*siddhänta baliyä citte nä kara alasa
ihä haite kāñëa läge sudäöha mänasa*

Çré Caitanya-caritämåta (Ädi-lélä 2.117)

Me, know it to be the product of My illusory energy (*mäyä*), that reflection which appears to be in darkness.

(35) The five great elements of material creation enter into the bodies of all living entities, high and low, but at the same time exist independently. Similarly, I have entered into all living entities as the Supersoul, but at the same time I am situated independently in My own transcendental nature.

(36) One who is searching after the Supreme Absolute Truth must certainly search for it up to this, in all circumstances and by all possible means, in all space and time, through both direct (*anvaya*) and indirect (*vyatireka*) means of deliberation.

For us to be engaged more earnestly in service, sometimes hearing is necessary. To hear just for the sake of hearing is luxury. But hearing for engagement, that is proper hearing.

The master calls, "Oh you, please bring me a glass of water." But the student remains sitting. "Did you hear me?"

"Yes, I heard," the student says, but still he remains sitting tight. That sort of hearing won't do!

There is a saying amongst the *sahajiyā* section: "Gurudeva asked for a glass of water, but I am engaged in *harināma*. 'No, Gurudeva, I'm engaged in *harināma*.' " This is self-deception.

Especially in the beginning, the importance will be the consideration of urgency. *Bhajana* will be present in Gurudeva as service in a higher degree, but not in us. By serving him I can partake in *kertana* of a higher quality; and that can come within me and improve the quality of my *kertana*, and that can come within me

and improve the quality of my *bhajana*. *Sädhu-sai ga* and *näma-kertana* are important. *Näma-kertana* has been recommended, but not without the association of the *sädhu*. That *sädhu* will be the higher, superior quality devotee, and *sädhu-sai ga* means serving him.

Sai ga does not mean just bodily association. Rather, *sai ga* is possible only through the serving attitude – not by opposite dealing or idly sitting. *Sai ga* means *sat-sai ga*.

Sädhu-saṅga: Serving the Sädhu

*dadäti pratigähnaïi
guhyam äkhyäti pâcchati
bhuëkte bhojayate caiva
ñao-vidhaà prêti-lakñaëam*

Cré Upadeçämåta (4)

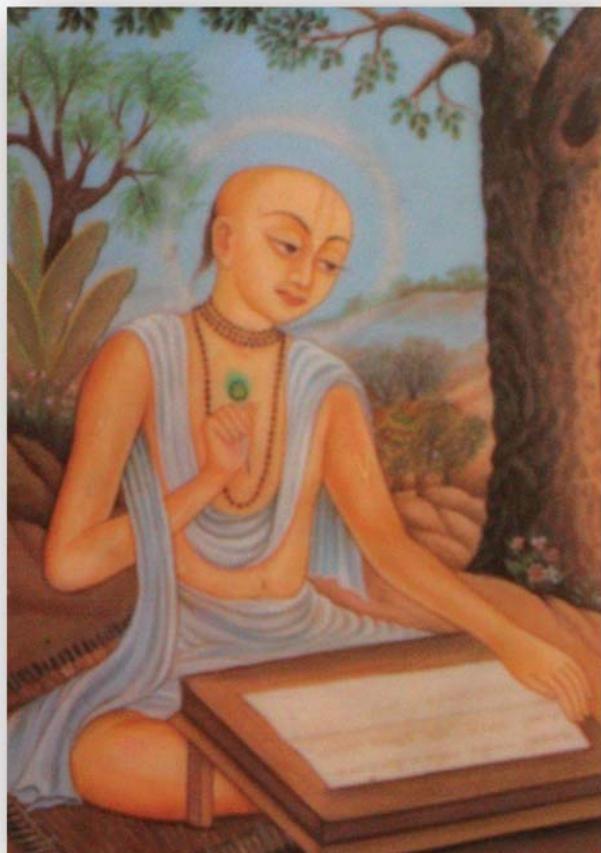
The six types of loving exchanges among devotees are offering gifts in charity, accepting gifts in charity, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasäda* and offering *prasäda*.

**"The Lord is there,
but His grace
is coming through
His agents,
so His agents
should be
welcomed
and dealt
with properly.**

**"Whatever
we can collect
with our energy
we should
devote towards
sädhu
and *sâstra*."**

These are the six kinds of association with a *sädhu*. It is possible to accept higher association only when one has a serving attitude; otherwise there is no *sai ga*. To take lower association means to exploit and enjoy, but higher association can only be achieved through service. By proper association the quality of your service will increase. Therefore *sädhu-sai ga* – *sädhu-sevâ* – is of most importance.

The Gauðéya Maõha stresses the importance of *sädhu-sai ga* – serving the *sädhu*. Whatever you do by the command of the higher devotee will, through him, surely connect you with a higher conception of the Absolute. Whatever you do, do with that connection from above and carry out his order.



We have the experience of one *sannyāsa* Godbrother who left the order and engagement of his Gurudeva and went to the holy place of Badarikāçrama. Our Guru Mahäräja punished him for that. We can therefore see that without the order from above, even going to the holy places may be punishable.

Without *sädhu-saì ga* we cannot connect with the higher level. Therefore even our chanting of the Name may not be *vaikuëîha-näma*.

ataù çré-kåñëa-nämädi
na bhaved grähyam indriyaiù
sevonmukhe hi jihvädau
svayam eva sphuraty adaù

Çré Bhakti-rasämåta-sindhu (1.2.234)

The universal necessity is to learn and acquire a serving attitude. If that is applied to *näma-bhajana*, or any *bhajana*, it will be of great help to you.

Jiüva means "the tongue", and *nämädi* means "*näma*, *rüpa*, *guëa* and *lélä*". On the tongue the Lord's name (*näma*) will appear; within the eye, His form (*rüpa*); within the mind, His qualities (*guëa*); and in the heart, His pastimes (*lélä*). All these will come down to you, and everything about you will connect with that *vaikuëîha-tattva*.

It is not just a question of increasing the quantity, but quality must be present. To be real *bhakti*, *sevonmukha* and *sevä* presuppose surrender, and all this presupposes *sädhu-saì ga*. It all originates from the association of a *sädhu*. From the positive direction it can come to us, so we must be thankful to that positive source. The Lord is there, but His grace is coming through His agents, so His agents should be welcomed and dealt with properly.

Whatever we can collect with our energy we should devote towards *sädhu* and *çästra*. *Sädhu* and *çästra* are our two friends everywhere.

Complete Surrender

My Guru Mahäräja, Çréla Bhaktisiddhänta Sarasvaté Prabhupäda, one day explained what is a *sädhu*, and what is *karma*. He then proceeded to explain that if a *sädhu* orders, "Bring me a flower", but when you bring the flower he says, "No, now bring me some

water", and you object, "No, you ordered a flower and I brought it. Please accept this flower", then it will be *karma*.

The *sädhu* is free. One who thrusts the *sädhu*'s previous desire upon him performs *karma*. At every moment he is free, so to follow his past will, will be *karma*. You are always to be ready for the immediate need.

In the battlefield, if the general orders the army, "March this side", then after noticing that the circumstances have changed he says, "No, go this other way!" then it won't do for the soldiers to object by saying, "No! You have already ordered us to go in this direction."

Similarly the *sädhu* and *guru* are always free, and their order should be taken in such a way. It is not that we shall stick firmly to their first order; *sädhu* and *guru* are living and independent.

On being asked to do a particular service, one disciple told our Guru Mahäräja, "I need to know my itinerary at least one week in advance." Çréla Prabhupäda replied, "But I received the order only five minutes ago; how could I inform you earlier?" It is not a dead matter.

Of course, beginners will not be able to accept that. They will receive their specific instructions just as a young boy is given the duty to every day practise writing the alphabet, "ABC..." That is a particular stage. He will then be taught how to spell by using those letters in a certain way. And then later at every moment he will be ready to use the letters in many ways according to the necessity of writing. The order may come to take down a dictation, to write this and that. Just repeating "ABC..." is not sufficient.

So, in the beginning of devotional life the student is asked, "Do this. Do that." But when he comes in connection with the living substance he will be prepared for a new order to come, and he will have to follow that with all alertness.

Connecting with the Living Conception

When I was in Vândävana I had a desire to meet with a *sädhu* who was the most famous and respected *siddha-bäbäjé* of that place. I had the chance to stay with him for a few days but, after circumambulating

Vraja-maëoala, my Çréla Prabhupäda told me he was a *kaniñöha-adhikäré*. He explained that this *bäbäjé*, like a student, was only copying the accepted practices of a *sädhü*. He was following the stereotyped direction, chanting the Lord's Names, doing *mädhukaré*, fasting, reading *Çrémad-Bhägavatam* and performing the various formal duties recommended for beginners, but he was not coming in contact with the living thing. He was simply undergoing training. He was simply following the routine of training.

In the armed forces when the new recruits are in the training period, they are asked to do something repeatedly, "Do this! Do this! Do this!" So they engage themselves in that way.

The *kaniñöha-adhikäré* does not know the spirit and therefore cannot connect with the living substance. He therefore is in the preparatory life of a devotee and will repeatedly engage in those practices.

The two or three times in the evening that I had gone to see this *bäbäjé*, I had sat there silently. He had many disciples there who respected him, two or four staying by his side. Nobody had said anything to me and he could not tell that I was from the Gauöeya Maëha. I tried my best to read him.

One such occasion was the holy Nåsiàha-caturdaçé day, and a reading from *Çrémad-Bhägavatam* was begun. He recited, and sometimes he spoke about various things. I continued my watch over his activities, movements, etc., and sometimes it was as if I was noticing Guru Mahäräja indicating to me that *bäbäjé*'s nature.

After two or three days I came to the conclusion that this man was trying his best from this plane to go up. But our Guru Mahäräja had come down from that plane and had a living programme with a purpose to fulfil. He did not belong to this world, but he came from the spiritual world on an order. Our Guru Mahäräja came down with something positive to give to the world. He had some order and plan: "Go and do this!"

But that *bäbäjé* was trying his best to follow what has been recommended in the scriptures. We can read about Rüpa, Sanätana and others, and accordingly have some idea and try to practise that. But that is

theoretical practising: "This has been recommended, let me practise all these things and then I will get my desired result." One who follows in this way is a *kaniñöha-adhikäré*. But the desired end and living result will come by working under the direction of *guru* and *sädhü* who are already members of that plane. And that is not theoretical; it is practical. The difference lies in the practical necessity of the service.

In this way I had also come to the conclusion, later to be confirmed by Çréla Guru Mahäräja, that this *bäbäjé* was a *kaniñöha-adhikäré*.

Duty & Service

Soldiers are sometimes ordered to do ordinary things – not only fighting but also shovelling, clearing jungle and many other duties. When marching against the enemy, they are to do whatever duty comes before them. The circumstances are practical and living. It is not mock fighting, but a real fight, yet they are not engaged in fighting at every moment. Preparing for a fight has more value than mock fighting during a training period, even though the mock fight seems like real fighting.

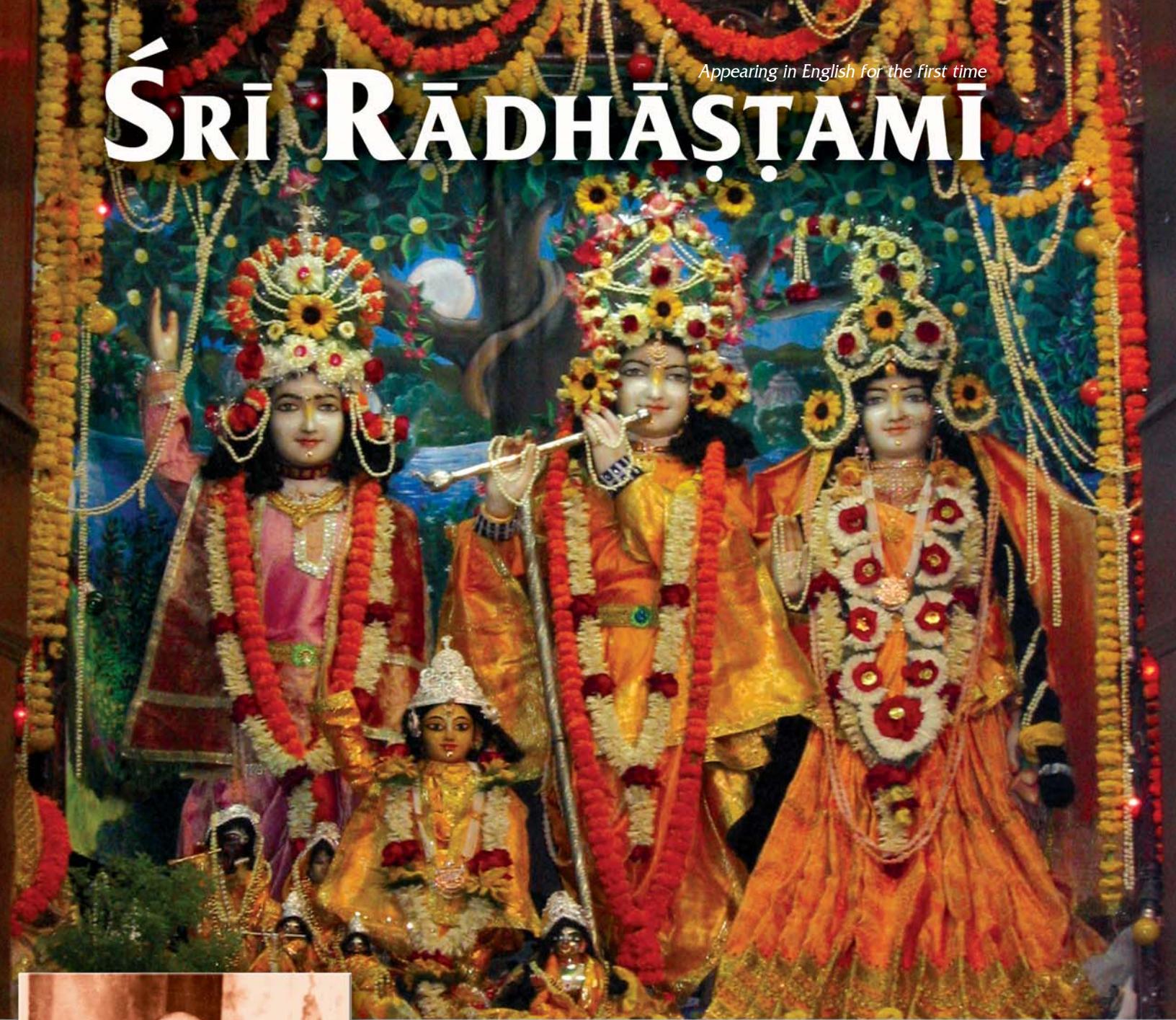
When the soldiers on the actual field find it necessary to do some other duties, such as clearing the jungle or making a bridge or a path, etc., it will have more value than a practice fight in peaceful circumstances.

Of course the position of the general – of Gurudeva – is all-important: he must be real, not a sham or imitation. If the *sädhü* or *guru* is genuine, to clean up his stool and urine may fetch more than worshipping the Deity. That is because such activity has a practical connection. So, under the guidance of a real *äcärya*, whatever we do – be it cooking, looking after the cows, personal service or so many other duties – will have more value than our independent reading of *Çrémad-Bhägavatam*. That is possible because the *äcärya* is actually leading a spiritual life and he has his mission to fulfil. If we can help him, that will fetch a higher result for us. And I will be paid by his coin, not by any gross thing. ☩

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ŚRĪ RĀDHĀSTAMĪ

Appearing in English for the first time



Excerpt from a lecture delivered by
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

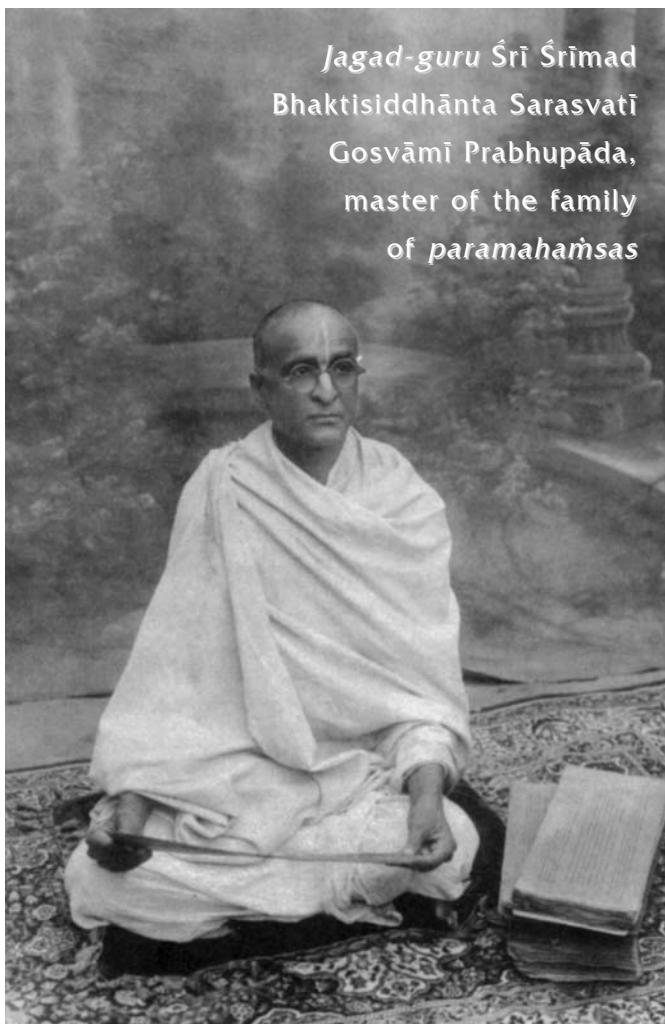
3 September 1965, Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha, Navadvīpa



Today is Çré Rādhāñāmē. This is the next *āñāmē-tithi*, half moon, after Janmāñāmē. Today we shall speak about Rādhāñāmē. The glorification of the *atimartya*, transcendental life and character, of my *gurupāda-padma* is the principal subject for discussion on this Rādhāñāmē day.* My *gurupāda-padma*, Çré Çrémad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Gosvāmē Prabhupāda, is situated here [in his deity form], in the Çré Mandira of Çré Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha.

We come across many *paramahaàsas* in this world. After due deliberation, however, we can perceive that they are not eligible to be compared to even an ordinary *aàça* of an *aàça*, or part of a part, of this great personality (*mahäpuruña*). Nevertheless such persons are honoured by the foolish masses of this world. Most of them do not have the qualification to be measured against even those who have attained but a single particle of dust from the lotus feet of this *mahäpuruña*. Therefore, many people address my *gurupäda-padma* as *paramahaàsa-cüòämaëé*, crest jewel among the *paramahaàsas*. I do not have any objection to this; still, in my opinion he is in fact *paramahaàsa-kula-svämé*, the master of the family of *paramahaàsas*. His eminence is such that he instructs even them. Therefore he is celebrated as *jagad-guru*.

In Navadvépa many *räsa-lélä*s take place these days. According to the teachings of this *mahäpuruña*, we know them all to be vulgar. These are the expressions



of the jealous thoughts of many people who are devoid of *çästric* knowledge. Therefore to educate the general masses in the teachings of *çästra*, we have been holding Kāñëa-lélä Pradarçané (an exhibition of Kāñëa's pastimes) since Janmänöamé.[†]

The word *pradarçané* is used in various ways. In using it here we do not refer to mere fun and entertainment. *Pradarçana* means *prakāñña-rüpeëa darçana*, thorough and complete *darçana*. In other words, *pradarçana* is seeing and understanding thoroughly. Our only conception (*vicära*) is that which the philosophically-minded *gosvämés* have stated regarding Çré Kāñëa's appearance. The meaning of *pradarçané* is *prakāñña vicära*, thorough and complete consideration or understanding. Thus, the true understanding of Çré Kāñëa's birth should be revealed. This *pradarçané* lies within the realm of philosophical instruction, and it is theistic. I am strongly against the *räsa-lélä* of the Naked Mother (Kälé) that takes place in Navadvépa.

This *pradarçané* has been open until today, Çré Rädhänöamé. There is one lunar fortnight (*pakña*) between Kāñëänöamé and Rädhänöamé. Thus, the dark fortnight (*kāñëa-pakña*) and the bright fortnight (*cukla-pakña*) have united to become a single *pakña*. The two fortnights have become one; they tend towards a single entity. Janmänöamé-tithi has become illuminated today, on *cuklänöamé* [i.e. Rädhänöamé-tithi]. The service of those who worship Kāñëa outside the guidance of Rädhäräëé is valueless. *Smärtas* do not observe Rädhänöamé. According to *käla-vicära*, consideration of time, Kāñëänöamé and Rädhänöamé have been taken together and regarded as a single fortnight.

Vedänta-sütra states, "çakti-çaktimatayor abhedaù – there is no difference between the energy and the energetic." All *çakti* has emanated from a toenail of

* Only through the medium of *çré guru* can one come to understand Çrématé Rädhäräëé, for he is intimately related to Her as Her personal associate and is our only connection with Divinity.

† In 1965 a beautiful dioramic display of Çré Kāñëa's pastimes was set up on Janmänöamé at Çré Devänanda Gauðëya Maöhä. Officially named "Kāñëa-lélä Pradarçané", it was due to remain until Rädhänöamé.

**“All *śakti* has emanated from a toenail of Rādhārāṇī.
Umā, Ramā, Satyā and all other goddesses
have appeared from Her toenails.”**

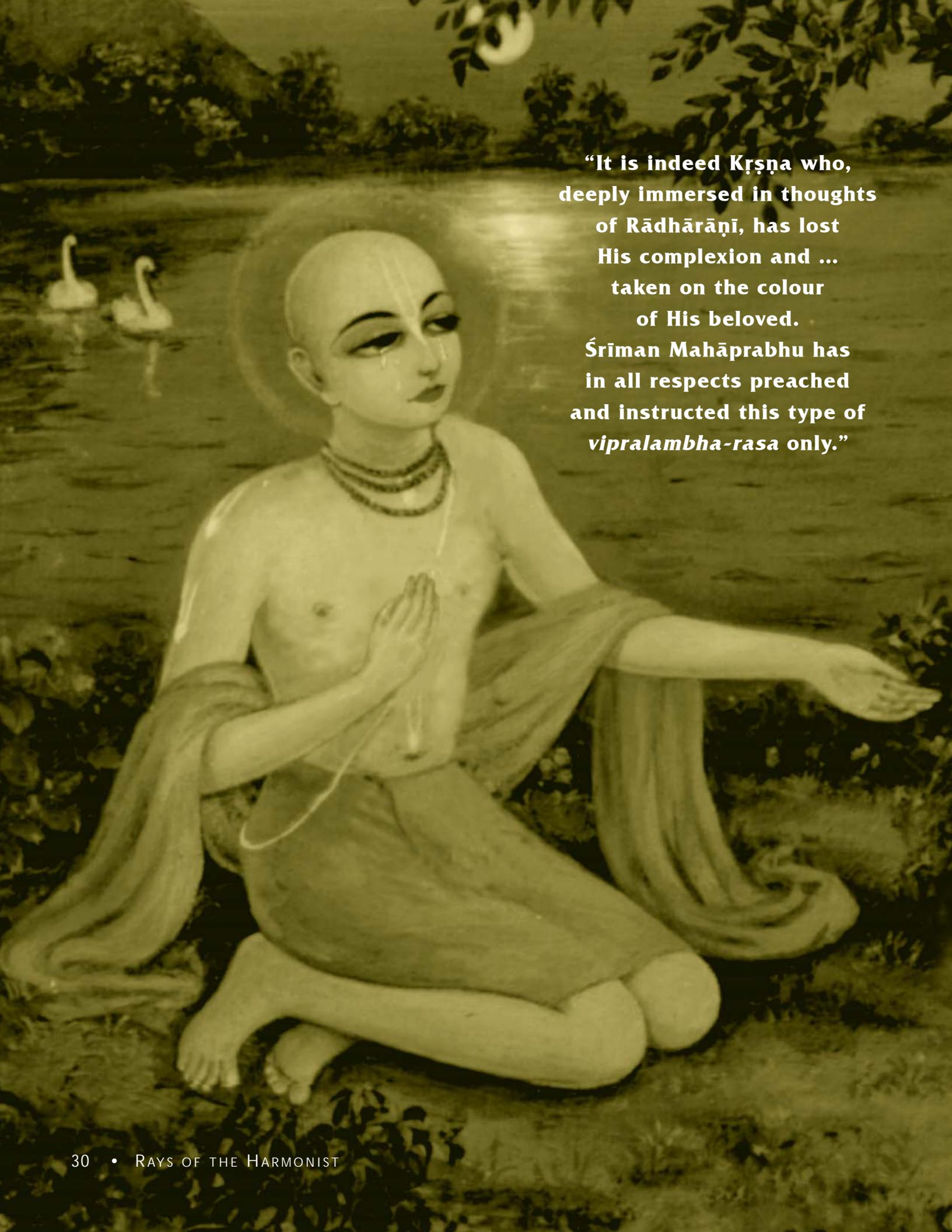
Rādhārāṇī. Umā, Ramā, Satyā and all other goddesses have appeared from Her toenails. All the goddesses that are found in Bengal, such as Kālē and Durgā, have come from Rādhārāṇī. People can worship various goddesses who are *aṅgas*, fragments, of potency; however, by excluding the *mūla-çakti*, the original potency, their worship is entirely worthless.

Mahāprabhu is none other than Rādhā and Kāñea. With Mahāprabhu's *mantra*, the worship of Rādhā-Kāñea is performed. There is no fault in this. Many people may ask why Kāñea, Rādhārāṇī and Gaura all have white complexions in this temple. The answer is that we are *rādhā-pakñeya*, partial to Çrématé Rādhārāṇī. Çréla Prabhupāda, the *mahāpuruṣa* situated in this temple, is *rādhā-pakñeya*. In all countries of the world, people know him as "Prabhupāda". Indeed we perform his *äratī* here first of all.

It is recommended that the *äratī* of this *mahā-puruṣa* be performed throughout the world. If his *äratī* is stopped, the entire globe will be devastated and will descend into the hellish planets known as Rasātala. *Bhakti-dharma* will disappear from the world. Therefore, the world calls him "Prabhupāda".

I entreat those who perform the *rāsa* of the Naked Mother (Kālē) not to come and hear my *kathā*. I will be happy if they do not hear me analytically explain the *tattva* of what *prabhupāda* means. They have descended to such a low level that they will have to wait many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes before they can understand this *rādhā-tattva*.

Rādhārāṇī sometimes possesses *vāmya-bhäva*, a contrary mood, towards Kāñea, which enhances the variety of Her service to Him. Once Rādhārāṇī was feeling jealous anger (*māna*). Being absorbed in



**"It is indeed Kṛṣṇa who,
deeply immersed in thoughts
of Rādhārāṇī, has lost
His complexion and ...
taken on the colour
of His beloved.
Śrīman Mahāprabhu has
in all respects preached
and instructed this type of
vipralambha-rasa only."**

thoughts of His beloved in this condition, Kāñëa took on Her very complexion:

*rādhā-cintā-niveçena yasya kāntir vilopitā
çré-kāñëa-caraëaà vande rādhāliì gita-vigraham*

I worship the lotus feet of Çré Kāñëa, whose own dark complexion vanishes and who assumes the bright, golden complexion of Çrématé Rādhikā, as if being embraced by Her, due to being thoroughly immersed in separation from Her.

This conception is explained in the opening verse of "Çré Rādhā Vinoda-bihäré Tattvāññakam".‡ The word *rādhāliì gita* has two meanings: *rādhāyä liì gita* and *rādhāyä äliì gita*. *Liì gita* means "marked" or "bearing a sign or impression", and *äliì gita* means "embraced".

In this phenomenal world we see that when a *kāï ca-pokä*, a type of bright-green insect, catches a *tela-pokä*, a variety of cockroach, the *tela-pokä* becomes so absorbed in thoughts of the *kāï ca-pokä* that it begins to resemble its predator. Accordingly, it is illegitimate and against the conclusion of *çästra* to assert that one can become *brahma* by performing *sädhana*. The Gauòëya Vedänta Samiti never preaches such bogus philosophy (*ku-siddhänta*) to the world. [By absorption in the features of the Absolute Truth] a person may attain a form like that of the Lord (*särüpya-mukti*), but he will not merge into the Lord (*säyujya*). None who actually knows the purport of the Vedas can claim or demonstrate that the practitioner (*sädhaka*) becomes one with the object of his practice (*sädhya*).

The *kāï ca-pokä* and *tela-pokä* never merge to become one insect. They merely become similar in form. This is an instance of *särüpya-mukti*, not *säyujya*.

Deeply absorbed in *vipralambha-bhäva*, the mood of separation, Kāñëa was overwhelmed by thoughts of Rādhäräëé, and He lost His own complexion. In other words, His black lustre disappeared and He assumed Rādhäräëé's hue. This, indeed, is *rādhāliì gita-vigraha*. This *vigraha* is manifest here. This *tattva* is explained in the *Svapna-viläsämätam* of Çréla Viçvanätha Cakravarté Öhákura, the king of *rasika* devotees. My

gurupäda-padma has revealed it to the world from the very core of his heart.

Çréla Prabhupäda was *rādhā-pakñéya*. Among those who serve *vipralambha-rasa* through the top-most path of *bhajana* [i.e. *räga-märga*], most will meditate upon Rādhäräëé's separation from Kāñëa. However, my *gurupäda-padma*, Çréla Prabhupäda, used to meditate on Kāñëa's separation from Rādhäräëé.

I want to clarify this with an illustration. When Çré Kāñëa is engaged in a competitive sport with Rādhäräëé, those who are *rādhā-pakñéya* always think about Her victory and Kāñëa's defeat. Her victory is their sole desire and purpose. And when Rādhäräëé wins, they experience profuse bliss and, clapping their hands, declare, "Kāñëa has lost, what a joy!" But those who are *kāñëa-pakñéya* are overcome by sadness.

My *gurupäda-padma* used to think more about Kāñëa's feeling separation from Rādhäräëé than Rādhäräëé's feeling separation from Kāñëa. In Her separation from Him, Rādhäräëé is stricken by grief. This type of perfection in *vipralambha-bhäva* is cherished by ordinary people. However, Çréla Prabhupäda's mood was entirely opposite to this. It is indeed Kāñëa who, deeply immersed in thoughts of Rādhäräëé, has lost His complexion and become *rādhāliì gita-vigraha* – taken on the colour of His beloved. Çréman Mahäprabhu has in all respects preached and instructed this type of *vipralambha-rasa* only. Let Kāñëa remain absorbed in His meditation on Rādhäräëé. This alone is the ideal of the Çré Gauòëya Vedänta Samiti.

Many people have requested that the Kāñëa-lélä Pradarçané continue for a few more days. Therefore, by the request of the locals, this exhibition will be extended until Ekädaçé. Ekädaçé is the day when Rādhä and Kāñëa meet. Just as Kāñëänämé-tithi is Bhagavän Himself, so too is Ekädaçé-tithi, whereas Rādhänämé-tithi is Bhagavän's *parä-çakti*, His supreme potency, which is non-different in *tattva* from Him. ☩

Translated from Çré Gauòëya Patrikä, Year 17, Issue 9 (1965)

‡ This *añiaka* was composed by Çréla Bhakti Prajña Keçava Gosvämé Mahäräja himself.

God



About the Author

Çréla Bhakti Säraì ga Gosvämé Mahäräja, famous for his scholarship and brilliant lectures, dedicated his life to the preaching mission of his spiritual master, Çréla Bhaktisiddhänta Sarasvaté Öhäkura Prabhupäda. His efforts extended even into Western countries. On his first visit to Çré Caitanya Maïha in Mäyäpura he was introduced to his Gurudeva by Çréla Bhakti Prajë äna Keçava Gosvämé Mahäräja with whom he shared a life-long, intimate friendship.

Inspired by the divine message of his spiritual master, Çréla Bhakti Säraì ga Gosvämé Mahäräja gave up his high-ranking government position and his home to join the mission of his Gurudeva. Preaching vigorously, he began raising funds for the mission among pious, wealthy merchants in Calcutta, Delhi, Bombay and other major cities. Once these people heard his *hari-kathä*, they sent truck-loads of rice, *däl* and vegetables for *maiha-sevä*.

After the disappearance of Çréla Prabhupäda, Çréla Bhakti Säraì ga Gosvämé Mahäräja founded Çré Gauöeya Saï gha and established preaching centres and *äçramas* in numerous cities, as well as in Mäyäpura and Vändävana. He was the editor of the weekly *Gauöeya* magazine and, to continue the mission of his Gurudeva, he started the English magazine *Çré Sajjana-toñiäë Patrikä*. He also regularly contributed articles to the *Harmonist*. His *samädhi-mandira* is situated in his *maiha* in Mäyäpura, while his *puri-pa-samädhi* is located at Imlétalä, Vändävana. ☩

The Mind: Unsteady and Prejudiced

To err is human. However learned and intelligent a man may be, he is prone to error and evil. The greatest philosopher should always remember that human nature is apt to make various errors at every moment, especially when we try to judge that which is spiritual and eternal using our empiric knowledge.

Reason is undoubtedly the greatest of all human excellences, but it has its own jurisdiction. Nature has indeed favoured some persons with superior powers of intellect. Yet our mind is always prone to change. We accept a theory today and reject it a few days later. Everyone experiences the fallacy of theories established by renowned men. The great differences in quality we often perceive between works crafted by the mind of the same man should discourage dogmatism.

The condition of the human body varies according to the time and weather, undergoing more transformations than the moon itself; so also must the state of the mind rise and fall like mercury in a tube. One hour the mind is as pure as ether, and the next moment it is as foul as the thickest fog. Where, then, is the reliability of the human intellect? Where are the grounds to boast its prowess? This fickleness of the mortal frame, this instability of human wisdom, should teach us humility and abate our pride.

This point is overlooked by many philosophers, most of whom are found to be strongly prejudiced in favour of their own preferred opinions. Prejudice, or prepossession, generally stands like a stumbling block in the way of justice and does not allow our reason to look beyond it. It is this fatal propensity that shamefully misleads our judgment. To avoid being led astray by such a dangerous error, we must be very careful to deprive ourselves of acquired prejudices and hear

- realization

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja

impartially before we pass a sweeping remark on any subject.

It is admitted on all counts that the powers of the mind depend upon the organs of the body, which alter over time. The mind, being inseparably connected with matter, cannot proceed beyond material phenomena. It therefore has no access to the spiritual world, the door to which is shut to all who want to enter with their prepossessions or dim light of worldly wisdom.

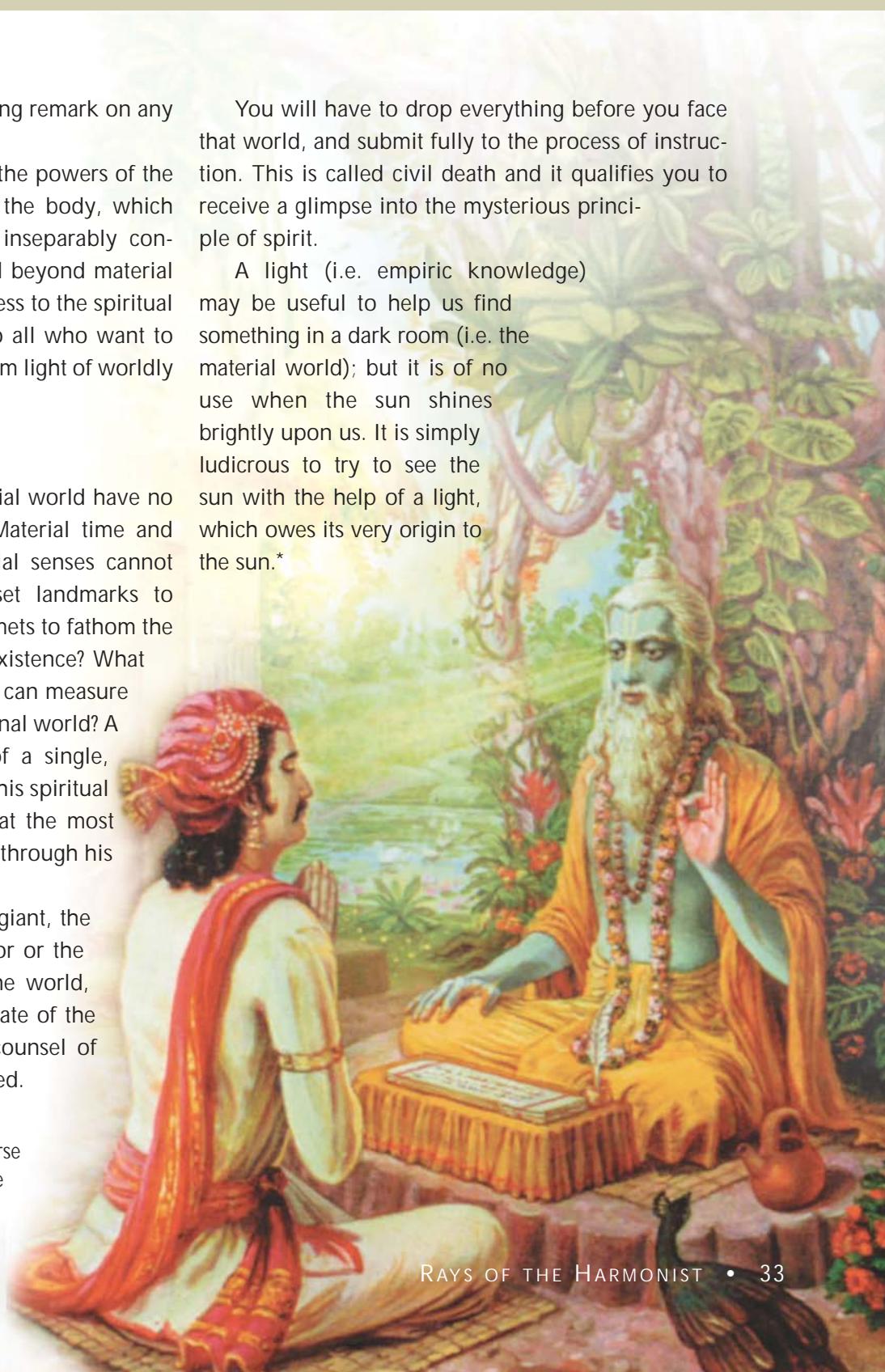
The Divine Sphere

The rules and laws of the material world have no access in that world of eternity. Material time and space have no place there. Material senses cannot approach that realm. Who can set landmarks to delimit its dimensions or find plummets to fathom the depth of that mighty, mysterious existence? What numbers can express and what line can measure the lengths and breadths of that eternal world? A theist cannot help but conceive of a single, spiritual Supreme Being present in this spiritual realm of eternity, in spite of all that the most obstinate atheist can say and devise through his own doubts.

Be you the greatest intellectual giant, the most learned scholar, the best orator or the single most experienced man in the world, you will have to stop dead at the gate of the Divine Sphere of spirit and seek counsel of sound judgment as to how to proceed.

You will have to drop everything before you face that world, and submit fully to the process of instruction. This is called civil death and it qualifies you to receive a glimpse into the mysterious principle of spirit.

A light (i.e. empiric knowledge) may be useful to help us find something in a dark room (i.e. the material world); but it is of no use when the sun shines brightly upon us. It is simply ludicrous to try to see the sun with the help of a light, which owes its very origin to the sun.*



* All sources of heat and light in this universe are said in the Vedas to originate from the great celestial body of fire, the sun.

God is self-effulgent. His powers are identified with His person. In the material sphere there is a difference between a person and his powers and between an object and its attributes, name, form and movements. But it is a spiritual truth that anything that is spirit is identical with its name, form, attributes and activities. Most Western philosophers have identified the mind as well as the perverted ego with the soul or spirit, and therefore have failed to rise beyond matter and that which is related to matter.

Matter & Spirit

The demarcation line between the mind and spirit will be observed in the words of Kāñëa, the Lord of all lords, in the *Bhagavad-gétä* (7.4). Therein He says that five elements form the physical body or outer case of a being, namely, (1) solids, (2) liquids, (3) fire, (4) air and (5) space. A further three elements compose the astral body or inner case of a man, and these are (6) the mind, (7) the intelligence and (8) the perverted ego.

These eight substances are related to the creative principle of matter, whereas the soul, which is an atomic fragment of the Divine Soul, is of a different nature. He is of an energy that produces beings who are spiritual in nature but liable to be enthralled by *mäyä* (His illusory energy) when they forget their true and innate position as eternal servants of the Deity.

God has infinite powers, but the scriptures describe the attributes of His powers in three divisions, viz. (1) That power that exhibits spiritual existence is called *cit-çakti* and the spiritual kingdom is called *cit-jagat*. (2) *Mäyä-çakti* creates the material phenomena, known as *mäyika-jagat*. (3) *Jéva-çakti* manifests souls who are naturally located between the *cit-jagat* and *mäyika-jagat*. Such souls are so constructed that they are liable to be enthralled by *mäyä-çakti*. This is the consequence of their desire for power when unaided by the *cit-çakti* of the Deity. Those who prefer to serve their Master are protected from falling into the clutches of *mäyä* and undergoing troubles as a consequence. They are thus admitted to the *cit-jagat* as eternal servants.

The soul engrossed in matter loses himself to his mind, which takes over the seat of its master, the soul, and acts through his senses to enjoy this world. In fact the soul is the proprietor of both the mind and the body. When, by good fortune, the sleeping soul is made to turn back to hear, think of or move towards its original position, the mind and body follow suit till the final objective of spiritual existence is attained.

The mind engrossed in matter is doomed to wallow in the mud of this world, whereas the mind liberated from all the pressure of gross matter tends to go back to God, back to his home above. There is a wide gulf between mind and spirit that can only be bridged by spiritual cultivation.

There are so-called great men or rational thinkers who deny the existence of spirit. But this truth is not subject to dry reason or barren arguments; it is only to be felt by sincere men as the intuitive truth. Here intellect fails and submission to God triumphs.

Omnipotent God Beyond Error

Vaiñëava philosophers have discovered that all the mistakes we are guilty of making originate from (1) error, (2) inebriation, (3) the shortcomings of our senses and (4) an inclination to deceive others, and by these our boldest and strongest thoughts are lost.

(1) We mistake infamy for renown, and ruin for benefit. (2) We misunderstand something when the brightest rays of truth shine in vain upon our mind. (3) The senses we use for observation are always defective and incapable of giving us a perfect view of

what we have observed. For instance, when our eyes look at a glass of water, we do not see any germs in the water unless and until a microscope is used. Nor do we see in darkness. (4) A general inclination for deception creeps into our heart when we take a one-sided view and establish facts or theories with the greatest assurance.

All people are subject to fall victim to these defects. The only exception is God Almighty and His associate counterparts, who remain within the Absolute Truth. God is all-knowing, all-powerful and all-blissful. He is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, and none

**"There is a wide gulf
between mind
and spirit
that can only
be bridged by
spiritual cultivation."**

like Him can be found anywhere. He is one without a second and possesses infinite powers.

Out of His own supreme power and prerogative He appears before us in His incarnations (*avatāras*) or in the Deity form (*cré vigraha*). He comes down from His ever-blissful abode to this world in the form of a man when we actually require His help. Sometimes He sends His *pārīṇadas*, associate counterparts, who are fully empowered to act here on His behalf.

When theism is forced to give way to pantheism, atheism, scepticism and agnosticism, then irreligion, unscrupulousness and duplicity bring about chaos on earth. Sin and its consequences surge around us, tumultuously clamouring to have their way against our wishes, and we find ourselves in the midst of a whirlpool. He comes to save us from their clutches and re-establish peace and order.

He may remain here and at the same time remain everywhere, both inside and outside the universe. Mutually contradicting powers and attributes live in harmony within Him, ruled by His supramundane Self. With all His paraphernalia, majesty, might, glory, beauty, wisdom and supremacy, He reigns eternally in the spiritual world and exists simultaneously in every created object and place in His complete fullness.

The omnipotent author of Nature is a supreme will unto Himself and is above Nature and her laws and rules, because everything has come from His will and power.

The Spiritual Guide

The Supreme Lord Kāñëa Caitanya is at the centre of all spiritual and material phenomena. At that central point harmony shines eternally with her all-beautiful Lord, "the Absolute Truth". His injunctions are universally true at all times and must be universally relied upon. They are embodied in the Vedas, the *Gētā*, the *Upaniñads*, *Crēmad-Bhāgavatam* and other *sat-**çāstras*, which must be accepted as the only evidence in spiritual affairs. Fortunate and blessed persons hear and obey them. They are not intended for any particular sect, caste or creed, but for all beings and all souls, be they animal, human or celestial.

These injunctions are not based on partial or apparent truth, but on the absolute or unchallengeable truth. If brought to this platform by the grace of the Almighty, persons of conflicting interests and different sentiments become peaceful and live in eternal association with that Transcendental Being, a life of continuous joy, peace and success in this world and the next. Harmony lays her hand on the contending parties and brings all their differences to an amicable conclusion. Our first question should be, "How to arrive at this platform?"

I cannot approach His divine abode if I am unaided by the spiritual light emanating from one who realizes the principle of spirit. Now comes the question of *sat-guru*, our spiritual guide, who is nearest and dearest to the Supreme Being. He comes to this world in the form of a man to save dormant souls from

**"At that central point
harmony shines eternally
with her all-beautiful Lord,
'the Absolute Truth'."**

the clutches of *mäyä* (the Lord's illusory energy), to infuse divine power into every man to navigate through life victoriously and successfully, and to give every erring being the power to be reinstated to

his former position with all the rights and privileges of such a position – that is, eternal service of Godhead.

Generous friends, do you feel the need of such a friend, staunch and true, who will stand by you through thick and thin, who will give you power to win when you are strongly tempted to wrong either in accordance with or in contradiction to the dictates of your own reason and judgment?

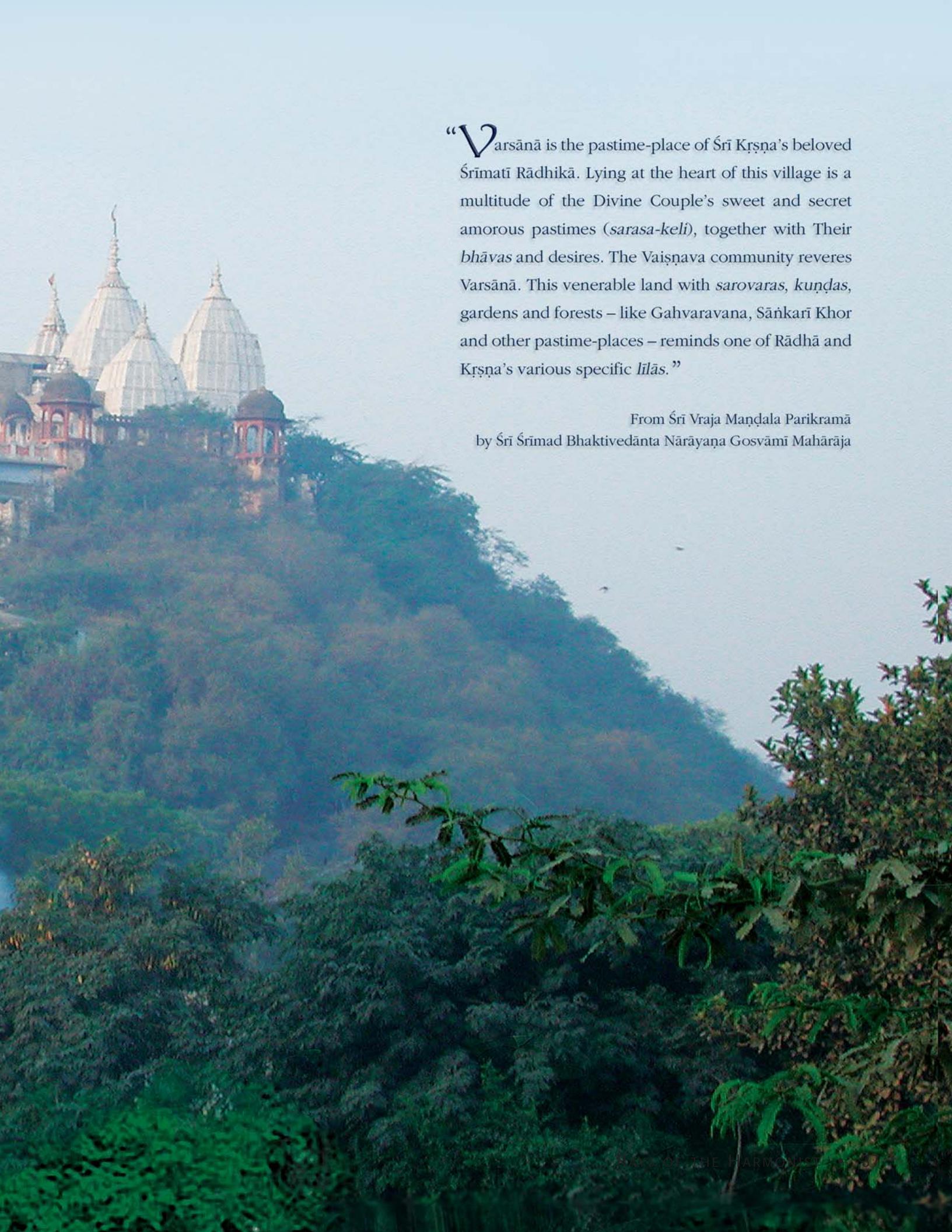
Our next question should be, "Where can I find our spiritual guide? How to get Him to be interested in me?"

If I am sincere and true in my desire, He will reveal Himself to me. He is ever ready to receive everyone who comes to Him. Many have found Him. Many are enjoying His friendship and living in close communion with Him. I should express my willingness to obey Him and then I will become conscious that He has heard my prayers. The next moment I shall find Him disguised before my eyes in a human form, a *mahänta-guru* or *sat-guru*. He welcomes me with outstretched arms and the gate to God's realm opens. ☩

Varsānā

(Vṛṣabhāṇupura)





“Varsānā is the pastime-place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beloved Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Lying at the heart of this village is a multitude of the Divine Couple’s sweet and secret amorous pastimes (*sarasa-keli*), together with Their *bhāvas* and desires. The Vaiṣṇava community reveres Varsānā. This venerable land with *sarovaras*, *kuṇḍas*, gardens and forests – like Gahvaravana, Sāṅkarī Khor and other pastime-places – reminds one of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s various specific *līlās*. ”

From Śrī Vraja Maṇḍala Parikramā
by Śrī Śrimad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The Glories of



In the first part of this lecture, published in the previous issue of *Rays of the Harmonist*, Çréla Bhakti Çré-rüpa Siddhánté Mahärája elucidates the deep import of *Çrémad-Bhägavatam*, 1.18.10–12. In these verses, the sages headed by Çaunaka Āñi pray for Süta Gosvämé's long life and go on to profusely glorify *hari-kathä*. They say that this *kathä* is so sweet and relishable that one cannot give it up or live without it.

Sādhu-saṅga: A Wealth Beyond Compare

After speaking in this way, the *āñis* declare that they cannot estimate the value of the kind of association that bestows such *hari-kathä*, what to speak of the association of one who has in fact embraced such *kathä* within his heart:

*tulayäma lavenäpi
na svargaà näpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saì gi-saì gasya
martyänäà kim utäciñau*
Çrémad-Bhägavatam (1.18.13)

Çaunaka Āñi says: "The association of a *bhagavad-bhakta* – that is to say, of one who has attained the direct association of Bhagavän – is very rarely achieved in the course of the jéva's destiny. We see thousands of saints and ascetics wandering about in groups; but to get the association of one who has in fact attained the association of Bhagavän, has

received His *darçana* and has entered into His *lélä*, is very difficult. What to speak of such a person, it is extremely rare to attain the association even of one who has associated with such a person."

How rare? "*Tulayäma lavenäpi* – The value of even a single moment (*lava*) of such association is incomparable. I do not consider anything equal to it.

"*Na svargaà näpunar-bhavam*. The heavenly kingdom (Svarga) and liberation from matter (*mokña*) are generally regarded as the highest of all goals, and therefore those who desire them endeavour very hard to achieve them. But *bhagavat-saì gi-saì gasya*. The result of just a moment's association with one who is in Bhagavän's direct company cannot be equated to or compared with the attainment of even Svarga or *mokña*. What an astonishing fact! *Lava* means 1/11th of a second, a very short interval."

Çaunaka Āñi continues: "We are speaking from experience, having had the association of Süta Gosvämé. This our realization. It is not that we have

Sādhu-saṅga

A lecture on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.18.10–13

delivered by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Śrī-rūpa Siddhāntī Gosvāmī Mahārāja



merely heard of the glories of *sādhu-saṅga* or have fabricated them with our imagination; we have directly experienced them. We performed *yajī a* for thousands of years with no result, but what we have attained in the very first instant, through only a moment's association with Sūta Gosvāmī, cannot be compared to the attainment of Svarga and *mokṣa*.

"What of similar value to *sādhu-saṅga* could we possibly attain by going to Svarga or achieving *mokṣa*, as a result of performing *yajī a*?

*tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaà näpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saì gi-saì gasya*

If even Svarga and *mokṣa* cannot be weighed against such association, what can be said of the kingdom and seemingly unlimited wealth of mortal beings? Of what importance, then, are the great personalities of this world – the vastly learned, the immensely rich, the famous, and those of high birth

and aristocratic lineage? All are inconsequential. If Svarga and *mokṣa* have become insignificant, then what comparative value can this worldly kingdom and wealth have?"

Eternal Union with God

Çréla Viçvanātha Cakravartipāda has written a wonderful commentary on this *çloka*. He states:

*tasmāt tādrçasādhusaì ga mahānidher
māhātmyam*

The *āñis* headed by Çauñaka Āñi are saying: "Asmadanubhava-gocarēkātaà – I have directly experienced and perceived the glory of *mahānidhi*, the great treasure of *sādhu-saṅga* about which I have spoken earlier. In other words, by having your personal association, Çréla Sūta Gosvāmī, we have now understood its glory."

"Çréla Çukadeva Gosvāmī is *bhagavat-saì gi* – he has attained the association of Bhagavān. And you

are his *sai gi* – you have associated with Çréla Çukadeva Gosvämé. Thus by having the association of a *bhagavad-bhakta* like you we have realized that this type of association is *mähänidhi*, a great treasure, and that its glory which we have experienced is indeed wonderful. What more can we say?"

Who is *bhagavat-sai ginaù*? The *bhaktas*. They always remain with Bhagavän; they never live outside His association. People may ask, "If the *bhaktas* are Bhagavän's associates, they ought to reside in Bhagavän's eternal abode. Why then are they living here?" But wherever the *bhaktas* may reside, whether it be here or elsewhere, they remain forever with Bhagavän.

Hiraëyakaçipu questioned his son Prahläda Mahäräja, "You are always chanting 'Hari Hari', but where is your Hari?"

Prahläda Mahäräja replied, "My Hari is everywhere."

Hiraëyakaçipu then asked, "Can you see Him everywhere? I have searched for Him everywhere but I was unable to find Him. If I had found Him, I would have killed Him. But you are saying that He is everywhere. Are you actually seeing Hari everywhere? Is He in this pillar? Can you see Him in this pillar?"

Prahläda Mahäräja replied, "Yes, He is in the pillar." Hiraëyakaçipu then struck the pillar with His fist and broke it, and Çré Nåsiàhadéva appeared. Just see, Prahläda Mahäräja lived in Hiraëyakaçipu's kingdom and, despite being in the dynasty of a demon, he was always associating with Bhagavän and always having His *darçana*. Even when Hiraëyakaçipu was torturing Prahläda in various ways, Bhagavän at all times kept the boy in His lap. When Prahläda was made to sit in fire, was thrown in water and was placed under the feet of an elephant, Bhagavän always kept him in His lap and protected Him.

Those devotees who have gained entrance into Bhagavän's eternal pastimes (*nitya-lélä*) reside in Bhagavän's abode as His eternal associates. By the will of Bhagavän, however, such associates also come and reside in this world. During their sojourn here also, they are not without Bhagavän's association;

they always remain with Him. Thus, even while in this world they are to be regarded as associates of the Lord. They never leave Bhagavän.

Therefore, Çréla Cakravartipäda has written that *bhagavat-sai ginaù* refers to the *bhaktas*. But who are those *bhaktas*, who always live with Bhagavän and with whom Bhagavän also always resides? This is a separate topic of discussion.

The Value of Only a Moment's Association

Tenäm sai gasya means the association of such type of *bhaktas*. *Yo lava* means for very short time, that is, for 1/11th of a second. Such association, even if only momentary, cannot be compared to attaining Svarga, the fruit of *karma*. By following the path of *karma* people hope to reach Svarga, believing Svarga to be the highest goal and the topmost fruit of *karma*.



"Even when Hirañyakaśipu was torturing Prahläda in various ways, Bhagavän at all times kept the boy in His lap."

Apunar bhavaà mokñaà ca. Apunar bhavaà refers to *mokña*, the fruit of *jí äna*. By cultivating *jí äna* people hope to attain *mokña*. But *na tulayäma*: the fruits of *karma* and *jí äna* cannot be measured against the fruit of even a moment's association with a *bhagavad-bhakta*. But people do not readily put their faith in the result attained by 1/11th of a second of such association, and this kind of good fortune does not easily come their way also. Therefore it is said: "na tulayäma martyänäà tucchä äciño räjyädyau kimuta – how, then, can it be compared with an insignificant worldly kingdom of mortal beings?"

The *åñis* headed by Çaunaka Åñi are now asking rhetorically, "Why is it that I do not wish to make any comparison with *sädhу-sai ga*? What result is in fact obtained from the association of Bhagavän's *sai gi* for even a very short time? What of significant value is gained in such a brief interval that cannot be measured against the attainment of Svarga and *mokña*?"

*paramdurlabhäyä bhakterankuro hädы
udbhavata iti bhävaù*

What is obtained is the supremely rare commodity known as *bhakti*. It cannot be attained even by thousands of different types of *sädhana*, including the *sädhanas* performed on the paths of *karma*, *jí äna* and *yoga*. This is because *bhakti* is *param-durlabha*, the rarest among all rarities. But it is that *sädhу-sai ga* that manifests within one's heart the sprout of this extremely rare *bhakti*. This is the result of associating with a *bhagavad-bhakta* for even a very short time, what to speak of associating with such a personality over a prolonged period.

*tatra bhakteù sädhanasyäpi sädhуси gasya
lavenäpi karmají änadeù phalaà sam-
purëamapi*

Sädhу-sai ga is the *sädhana* of *bhakti*. Whatever is achieved by *sädhу-sai ga* for a very little time cannot be compared against even the complete fruits of *karma* and *jí äna*.

Sädhу-sai ga is the method to achieve *bhakti*, and the fruits of *karma* and *jí äna* in their entirety do

**"The fruits of karma
and jñāna in their entirety
do not even bear
comparison with the result
of obtaining sādhu-saṅga
for a single moment."**

**"When as a result of bhakti,
prema is attained,
then where is the question
of drawing any
possible comparison?"**

not even bear comparison with the result of obtaining *sädhу-sai ga* for a single moment.

kimuta bahukäla vyäpinä sädhу-sai gena

And what can be said about the results one derives from *sädhу-sai ga* and *bhakti-sädhana* over a long time? They are *kimuta*, truly incomparable. Even if *bhakti-sädhana* in the form of *sädhу-sai ga* is momentary, it has no comparison.

kimutataräm tatphalabutayä bhaktyä

Now the word *kimutataräm* ("still more incomparable") is being used. The *åñis* are saying that this describes the nature of *bhakti* attained as a result of performing *bhakti-sädhana* (i.e. *sädhу-sai ga*). And finally the word *kimutatamäà* ("most incomparable") is used, denoting the highest fruit of *bhakti*, namely, *prema*. When as a result of *bhakti*, *prema* is attained, then where is the question of drawing any possible comparison? There simply cannot be any comparison whatsoever.

The words *kimuta*, *kimutataräm* and *kimutatamäà* are in the positive, comparative and superlative degrees respectively. The suffix *-tara* is used to convey the sense of "still more incomparable", and *-tama* the sense of "most incomparable". Thus, the highest idea is gradually revealed.

Meaningless Attempts to Calculate

tathātra sambhāvanārthak lotā tolene
sambhāvanāmeva na kurmaù

Someone may submit that whatever has been said previously is merely speculative, and that now some type of objective scale should be used to make verifiable comparisons. To this Çaunaka Āñi replies, "But I have no wish to compare *sädhu-sai ga* against the attainment of Svarga and *mokña* on a scale, setting aside the fact that such task is actually impossible."

"Why? What is the harm of such a comparative analysis?"

"For what purpose should I do it?" Çaunaka Āñi asks. He further states, rhetorically: "*na hi meruēä sariapam kaçcittulayaté* – can any meaningful comparison be made between a mountain and a sesame seed?"

In other words, it is quite sufficient simply to observe the incomparable nature of the two. No one in his right mind will think it necessary to place the two on either side of a scale. That which is widely accepted (*bahuvacanena bahünäà sammatyä*) cannot be denied by anyone (*naiñor thaù kenacida pramäëé-karttuà çakyate*). That is, one is simply unable to reject or disregard it.

Sädhu-saṅga: More Powerful Than Associating with Bhagavän

Now the potency of *bhagavad-bhaktas* will be highlighted further.

bhagavat sai gi sangasya ityanena –
na tathāsyā bhavet kleço
bandhaç cānya-prasaì gataù
yoñit-sai gäd yathä puàso
yathä tat-sai gi-sai gataù

Çréla Viçvanätha Cakravartipäda here offers an analogy from the Eleventh Canto of *Çrémad-Bhágavatam* (Chapter 14, verse 30) to elucidate the nature of *sädhu-sai ga*. He explains that by associating with a woman one is afflicted by bondage. But *yathä tatsai gisaì gataù*: the association of one who

**"Associating with women is harmful, but associating with persons addicted to associating with women is more harmful.
Similarly, associating with *bhaktas* of Bhagavän is more powerful than associating with Bhagavän Himself."**

associates with women is in fact more harmful than the direct association of a woman. Why? Because by knowing that the association of women will bind one, a person can at least try to remain aloof from such association. More harmful is the company of a man who associates with women, as greater bondage comes from such a relationship.

For this reason, it has similarly been said: *viñayer anna khäile malina haya mana* – by eating grains (foodstuffs) given by a worldly person (sense enjoyer), one's mind becomes polluted, and with such a contaminated mind one cannot perform *bhajana* of Çré Kāñëa. In this regard, it is also harmful to accept anything from a person who associates with women. There is a danger in associating with such a person.

Associating with women is harmful, but associating with persons addicted to associating with women is more harmful. Similarly, associating with *bhaktas* of Bhagavän is more powerful than associating with Bhagavän Himself. One attains auspiciousness by associating with Bhagavän, but one attains greater auspiciousness by associating with His *bhaktas*.

This same fact was explained by Dhruva Mahäräja when he attained *darçana* of Bhagavän. At that time Bhagavän asked him to accept any benediction. Dhruva said, "My only request is that I should always have the association of Your *bhaktas*. I do not desire anything else."



“My only request is that I should always have the association of Your *bhaktas*. I do not desire anything else.”

attained Your association today? I would have deviated from the path of attaining You by committing some offence. And even now, how will it be possible for me to remain in Your company if I am without the association of your *bhaktas*? At any time I may commit some offence and lose Your association.”

Thus, the association of *bhaktas* is more powerful than the association of Bhagavān Himself. This has been made clear. Since we are unable to understand this, the harmful effects of associating with a woman and with a man who associates with women has been illustrated. Of the two, the latter harm is the greater. But although people may hear this, do they pay any regard?

*iti yoñitsai gädapi yoñitsanginäà
sai go yathätinindya uktaù*

Just as associating with a man who associates with a woman has been denounced in *Çrémad-Bhägavatam* as more condemnable than associating with a woman, so associating with a *bhagavad-bhakta* has been glorified as more virtuous, advantageous and desirable than associating with Bhagavān directly. Indeed, there is nothing more virtuous and desirable than *sädhु-sai ga*. Through such association all one's desires are fulfilled.

Our Inability to Actually Associate

Real *sädhus*, however, are extremely rare and therefore difficult

Bhagavān replied, “What is this? You have finally attained Me, and now, having achieved this, you again desire the association of My *bhaktas*?”

Dhruva said, “O Prabhu, if I had not attained the association of your *bhaktas*, then how could I have

to find; and if they are found, it is very difficult to associate with them in the real sense. Although people of this world may attain the association of a *bhagavad-bhakta*, they remain unable to comprehend his *bhäva-dhara*, line of thought that is his

“Real sādhus, however, are extremely rare and therefore difficult to find; and if they are found, it is very difficult to associate with them in the real sense.”

moods. We may, by the accumulation of previous *sukāti*, come close physically to a *bhagavad-bhakta*; but we then discover that we cannot associate with him in any real sense. If those who have attained the *sāi ga* of *bhagavad-bhaktas* find themselves unable to benefit from it, what can be said of the predicament of those who have not even attained such *sāi ga*.

Why is this so? Why can we not properly associate with *bhagavad-bhaktas* despite being in their company? *Sāi ga* means “*samyak rüpeēa gamana* – to completely follow the *bhagavad-bhakta*.” It is difficult for us to comply with their instructions. Moreover, the foundation of *sāi ga* is *prēti*. Without *prēti*, there can be no *sāi ga*. We go to the market and see, meet and talk with many people, but can this be called *sāi ga*? No. *Prēti* is the real requirement.

What is *prēti*? Çréla Rüpa Gosvämé has written:

*dadāti pratigāhēäti
guhyam äkhyäti pâcchati
bhuî kte bhojayate caiva
ñiaò-vidhaà prêti-lakñaaëam*

Çré Upadeçämåta (4)

Offering pure devotees items in accordance with their requirements, accepting remnant items given by pure devotees, revealing to devotees one's confidential realizations concerning *bhajana*, inquiring from them about their confidential realizations, eating with great love the *prasâda* remnants given by devotees and lovingly feeding them *prasâda* – these are the six symptoms of loving association with pure devotees.

Are we able to deal with *bhagavad-bhaktas* with these six symptoms of *prêti*? We can have these six exchanges with worldly people, but not with *bhagavad-bhaktas*, because *mâyä* does not let us do so. Such is the oppression of *mâyä* that she will not allow us to associate with *sädhus*. Hence, the *sāi ga* of *bhagavad-bhaktas* is very rare; we are unable to

attain it even after attaining their company. This is our misfortune.

Why is this so? Man is the *sâi gi* (associate) of *mâyä* and likes associating with her. Ordinary people may come close to a *bhagavad-bhakta*, but they will prefer to discuss worldly topics with him and go away. They are not influenced by his association. It is very difficult for them. Therefore it is said that the result of associating with a *bhagavad-bhakta* for a single moment cannot be compared to the attainment of *Svarga* and *mokña*. What a significant matter! What a precious commodity is *sädhu-sâi ga*. Is such a highly worshipable and desirable thing attained in the course of everyone's fate?

It is said in *Çré Caitanya-caritämåta* (*Madhya-lélä* 22.54):

‘sädhu-sâi ga’, ‘sädhu-sâi ga’ sarva-çästre kaya
lava-mätra sädhu-sâi ge sarva-siddhi haya

The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a *sädhu*, one can attain all success.

Smearing One's Body with a Sâdhu's Foot Dust

In *Çrémad-Bhägavatam*, Bhärata Mahäräja speaks as follows to King Rahügaëa:

*rahügaëaitat tapasä na yäti
na cejyayä nirvapaëäd gähäd vä
na cchandasä naiva jalagni-süryair
vinä mahat-pâda-rajo-’bhiñekam*

Çrémad-Bhägavatam (5.12.12)

How significant are the words spoken by Bhärata Mahäräja to King Rahügaëa. “O Rahügaëa, you want to know Bhagavän, but He cannot be known by austerity (*tapasya*), nor by worship, nor by giving up one's home, nor indeed by living in one's home. He cannot be known by reciting the Vedas nor by worshiping the demigods such as the Sun-god, Varuëa and so on.

Why? Because *vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-'bhiñekam*: as long as one does not smear himself with the foot dust of the *mahat*, great saintly personalities, one cannot achieve any result by performing all these other activities. So one should first seek the *sāī ga* of a great saintly personality, and only when he can smear himself with the foot dust of this personality, can Bhagavān be known to him."

Prahlāda Mahārāja gave the same instruction to the sons of his *guru*:

*naiñāā matis tävad urukramāī ghriā
spācaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthaū
mahēyasāā pāda-rajo-'bhiñekaā
niñkii canānāā na vāēēta yāvat*

Çrémad-Bhāgavatam (7.5.32)

Prahlāda Mahārāja told the sons of his teacher that they should give up everything. "What benefit can you derive from your father Çukrācārya, who you consider a great *paēōita*?" he asked. "His consciousness is unable to touch the lotus feet of Bhagavān, who performs uncommon activities. These lotus feet have the effect of removing a person's *anarthas* and awarding him complete perfection. They deliver to him his *prayojana*, or goal.

About the Speaker

The very embodiment of *bhakti*, Çré Çrémad Bhakti Çré-rūpa Siddhānté Gosvāmī Mahārāja was one of Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Prabhupāda's foremost disciples. As Siddhā-svarūpa Brahmācārī, he once created an uproar in an assembly of followers of Vivekānanda and Rāmakāñēa by exposing them as charlatans, inducing the people to assail him with slogans and stones. His Godbrothers reported this disturbance in their preaching to Çréla Prabhupāda but, to their surprise, he was thrilled to hear of such fearless and uncompromising preaching of the truth.

Çréla Prabhupāda then himself came to that town and called for another assembly. He now called upon Siddhā-svarūpa Brahmācārī to defeat the philosophy of Vivekānanda, which he did, point for point. This time the people lauded him.

"So how can we attain Bhagavān? Can everyone attain him? *Mahēyañāā pāda-rajo-'bhiñekam*: one must smear himself with the dust of the lotus feet of *mahat*, a saintly personality. Who is such a saintly personality? *Niskii canānaāā na vāēēta yāvat*: one who possesses no wealth other than Bhagavān. As long as we do not accept and smear upon our bodies the foot dust of a *niskii cana mahāpuruña*, we will achieve nothing at all."

The essence of the whole subject, in the language of my *gurupāda-padma* Çréla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvaté Öhākura Prabhupāda, is that the *jéva*'s supreme auspiciousness comes about by hearing *hari-kathā* in *sādhu-sāī ga*. This is because *sādhu-sāī ga* is the sole means to attain *kāñēa-bhakti*:

kāñēa-bhakti-janma-müla haya 'sādhu-sāī ga'

Çré Caitanya-caritāmāta (Madhya-lélā 22.84)

The root cause of *bhakti* to Çré Kāñēa is association with *sādhus*.

Hare Kāñēa. 

Original Bengali lecture transcribed and translated into English.

Audio recording courtesy of the disciples of
Çré Çrémad Bhakti Pramoda Puré Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Çréla Bhakti Çré-rūpa Siddhānté Gosvāmī Mahārāja was very close with his Godbrother Çréla Bhakti Viveka Bhāraté Mahārāja, whom he honoured as his *cikñā-guru*. After Çréla Prabhupāda's disappearance, they jointly founded the Çré Sārasvata Gauòeya Āsana & Mission.

Çréla Bhakti Çré-rūpa Siddhānté Gosvāmī Mahārāja's worked tirelessly in the service of his Gurudeva, and this is reflected in his outstanding literary contribution. By translating Çréla Baladeva Vidyabhūñana Prabhu's *Çré Govinda-bhāñya* into Bengali, he satisfied one of his Gurudeva's unfulfilled inner desires. He also wrote commentaries on the twelve principal Upaniñads, and translated Çréla Baladeva Vidyabhūñana's and Çréla Viçvanātha Cakravartipāda's Sanskrit commentaries on *Bhagavad-gétā*, for which the Gauòeya Vaiñēava community remains deeply indebted. 

Śrī Kṛṣṇa:



Transcendental Communism

Our previous *mahājanas* have created a platform upon which people can perform *karma-yoga*, by establishing service to Viñēu in the ordinary household through the rules of *arcana*. Arrangements for people to serve Viñēu must similarly be made in every big factory, commercial enterprise, large hospital and other worldly institution. This will in fact establish transcendental communism.

Do not designate Näräyaëa as *daridra-näräyaëa*, "destitute Näräyaëa". It is enjoined in the scriptures that one is to show mercy to the poor by establishing the worship of Näräyaëa, the Lord of all beings. This Näräyaëa is *viñēu-tattva*, in the category of the Personality of Godhead.

Although many forms of *viñēu-tattva* are manifest eternally, the *mahājanas* have revealed the process of service to three principal deities – namely, Çré Lakñmé-Näräyaëa, Çré Sétä-Räma

The Absolute Centre

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

Published in 1950

and Çré Çré Rādhā-Kāñëa. Service to Them is propagated throughout India.

I request the owners of the large factories and mills to establish the service of one of these three forms of Bhagavän accompanied by His *çakti*, and to distribute Their *prasäda*. If this is done, hostility between the wealthy and the working class will cease, because by such service both will become *karma-yogés*.

The workers in big factories are usually unable to maintain their natural innocence, and thus they gradually regress to the lowest levels of society. There can be no auspiciousness for society if most of its people are infused with such *tama-guëa*, the material mode of ignorance.

Therefore, if the factory owners can simply distribute this *bhagavat-prasäda*, which is the remnants of sacrifice, to their workers, then gradually an inclination for Bhagavän will awaken in both the distributors (i.e. the wealthy) and the people who honour that *prasäda* (i.e. the working class). Thus people in all divisions of society will unite in their affection for each other. As long as people are controlled by their own selfish desires, however, apparent unity will be temporary and indeed the cause of all calamities.

If those who are driven by self-interest try to agitate the working class, whose members have fallen from their true nature, they will be unable to better themselves or perform any welfare work for such

labourers. Opposition to the ideal expressed above actually results in the workers becoming the enemy of the wealthy. What, then, can be said about their fate? By acting with envy towards Viñëu, both the prosperous and the working class are tainted by the influence of Kali-yuga and resort to fallacious arguments. This leads to great enmity between them and to a general state of chaos in the world.

The members of the communist party, for instance, have expended so much wealth, mental prowess, and energy, even to the point of sacrificing their own lives, just to promulgate the communist ideal. On the strength of communism, the Bolsheviks cherished dreams of happiness within a large family, and to safeguard their own interests the working class have formed unions and persecuted those of wealthy descent. The only easily achieved remedy for this kind of complicated crisis is the performance of *karma-yoga*, or activities for the purpose of *yajña*.

Service to the Absolute Centre

Our human society has created UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, to forge an ideal unity centred around the family unit. UNESCO's message broadens out from the family to include the village, from the village to incorporate the nation, and from the nation to embrace the continent. The Organisation was meant to expand and disseminate its ideas through this

strategy. However, if propaganda will be spread in this way, we should devote our attention to redirecting people's focus towards the Supreme Lord, the centre of everything.

If we apply UNESCO's strategy of aiming for the centre to our own bodies, we see that prominent within the body are the senses, but superior to the senses is the mind. The intelligence is higher than the mind, and the false ego is still higher than the intelligence. Although the false ego is pre-eminent, the pure, conscious self – the "I" – is even superior to the false ego, as it is a part and parcel of *viñëu-tattva*. In the universe, the root cause of attraction and the absolute centre is *viñëu-tattva*.

Prahläda Mahäräja therefore states:

*na te viduù svärtha-gatià hi viñëuà
duräçayä ye bahir-artha-mäninaù*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (7.5.31)

They are wicked-hearted who, having turned away from the centre, consider the external world to be of great value. Such sinful people are quite blind, and are therefore unable to accomplish anything auspicious for the world. They may put forward many deceitful proposals for the welfare of their fellow blind men, but such persons remain subject to "the will of ... Providence". Therefore, it behoves us to understand that *çré viñëu-tattva* is the original centre of this visible creation, and that Çré Kāñëa is the top-most manifestation of this *viñëu-tattva*.

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead

In the *Bhagavad-gétá* (7.7) Çré Kāñëa declares:

*mattaù parataraà nānyat
kiñcid asti dhanaï jaya*

O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me.

Hence, the non-dual original centre can be none other than Çré Kāñëa, because He alone is the supreme fundamental attractor of all that is moving and non-moving. Our great thinkers from previous ages and our scholars have established through their

investigations that Çré Kāñëa alone is the Supreme Person and the root cause of all *viñëu-tattva* manifestations. This is proclaimed in *Çrémad-Bhágavatam* (1.3.28):

*ete cāàça-kaläù puà saù
kāñëas tu bhagavän svayam*

All incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Supreme Lord, but Çré Kāñëa is Svayam Bhagavän, the original Personality of Godhead.

Despite the fact that all *viñëu-tattva* expansions are essentially one in nature (*svarüpa*), according to the vision of *siddhänta*, some are parts of *viñëu-tattva* while others are *kaläs*, parts of a part. We shall provide a detailed exposition of *viñëu-tattva* later on. At this point we need to understand that Çré Kāñëa alone is *parameçvara*, the supreme controller. In this regard, *Çré Brahma-saàhitä* (5.1) states:

*éçvaraù paramaù kāñëaù
sac-cid-änanda-vigrahaù
anädir ädir govindaù
sarva-käraëa-käraëam*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Kāñëa, who has a body of eternity, knowledge and bliss. He has no beginning, for He is the beginning of everything. He is the cause of all causes.

Hence, we can be related to each other in any meaningful sense only by accepting that original enjoyer, Bhagavän Çré Kāñëa, as the original centre and thereby crossing this ocean of illusion. Only on the basis of establishing our relationship with Kāñëa can we actually understand the meaning of such terms as "fraternity" and "equality".

Realizing Our Perfect State

In India, one refers to one's brother-in-law, with whom one will not have had any previous connection, by reference to one's sister. He is called a *bhaginié-pati*, "sister's husband". Similarly, his son is called *bhänjä*, "sister's son", and his daughter *bhänjé*, "sister's daughter".



Painting by Jadurāēśa-devē dāsē

“Only after establishing our relationship with Kṛṣṇa can we actually understand the meaning of such terms as ‘fraternity’ and ‘equality’.”

In the same way, by making their country the central reference point, many people identify themselves as “Bengali”, “Punjabi” and so on. Moreover, by keeping religion at the centre, people identify themselves as Hindu, Muslim and so forth. But if we accept such inadequate designations, the results we obtain will be worthless and deficient, despite all our

efforts to use them in promoting ourselves. We are parts and parcels of the *virāōa-puruōa*, the Supreme Person, and by not directing our service efforts towards Him we have deviated from our constitutional position and become completely degraded.

If any part of the body becomes incapable of performing its natural function, it becomes useless.

Similarly, by not placing the original, supreme enjoyer, Çré Kāñëa, at the centre of all our activities, our every effort has become futile. We must place Kāñëa at the centre for we are all His servants. Bereft of activities that accord with our constitutional nature, we are experiencing various types of difficulties and becoming degraded. To reawaken our intrinsic nature towards the centre is therefore the one and only duty of human life. Performing one's duties in *karma-yoga* is the first step toward this.

*'kāñëa-nitya-däsa' – jéva tähä bhuli' gela
ei doie mäyä tära galäya bändhila*

Çré Caitanya-caritämåta (Madhya-lälä 22.24)

The *jéva* is the eternal servant of Çré Kāñëa. He is known as *vibhinäàça-tattva*, a separated part and parcel of the Supreme. In order to help others again manifest this eternally true state of existence, *karma-yogés* are able to very skilfully bring supreme benefit to those who are attached to their *karma*, without causing any disturbance in their minds:

*na buddhi-bhedaà janayed
ají änäà karma-sai ginäm
joñayet sarva-karmäei
vidvän yuktaù samäcaran*

Bhagavad-gétä (3.26)

A learned person should not disrupt the minds of ignorant people attached to the fruits of their labour by inducing them to give up their work. Rather, by properly working in a spirit of devotion, he should encourage them to engage in their own prescribed duties.

The Bewildered Fruitive Worker

It is very difficult to reinstate the materialists, who are attached to the fruits of their work, in the eternal service of Kāñëa. This is because the majority of them

are foolish, degraded and entirely bereft of any pious credits. On account of their demoniac activities, which are induced by their unbridled desires and behaviour, their intellects and knowledge are fully engaged in activities inimical to the Supreme Lord. Such persons are devoured by *mäyä*. Either imagining themselves to be Kāñëa or becoming one of Kāñëa's competitors under the guidance of Çiçupäla, they attempt in various ways to enjoy the world. Their misguided desire to enjoy is induced by *mäyä*, and their delusions of enjoyment quite fittingly cheat them.

Nonetheless, such persons are unable to abandon their misguided desire to enjoy, and have therefore been described as *mäyayä apahäta-jí änäü*, "those whose knowledge has been stolen by illusion", and *müöhäü*, "grossly foolish". Upon seeing their attempts to enjoy bear no fruit, they may exhibit a deceitful renunciation, but this too is simply their fantasy of securing a greater form of enjoyment and is another bewildering trick of *mäyä*.

In pursuing their various schemes, the fruitive workers labour very hard like oxen, and, thinking themselves the enjoyers, they are completely bewildered by the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord.

Those who are intelligent must therefore engage such misguided

and delirious fruitive workers in performing whatever type of work they are most skilled at while keeping Çré Kāñëa at the centre, without disturbing their intelligence. By such work they will gradually re-establish their eternally perfect relationship with Kāñëa. This is true expertise in *karma*, held by the wise and intelligent. Therefore, the devotees of Kāñëa, who are free from the bondage of *karma*, perform *karma-yoga* like ordinary workers attached to the fruits of their labour, in order to educate the people of the world and secure their supreme welfare. ☩

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Sanātana-dharma: The Solution to World Conflict

A speech delivered by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

1st September 1983

Śrī Meghalaya Gauḍiya Maṭha, Tura, India



First of all I offer my unlimited prostrated obeisances at the lotus feet of my *gurupāda-padma*, *jagad-guru nitya-līlā-pravīñā oā viñēupāda* Čréla Bhakti Prajī āna Keçava Gosvämé Mahäräja, and my due *pranāmas* and regards to the assembled Vaiñëavas and wise listeners respectively.

Cheating Religions

The subject of our discussion today is *sanātana-dharma* and the problems of the world; or, rather, *sanātana-dharma* as the solution to the problems of the world. We have up till now been hearing various learned speakers discuss the nature of *sanātana-dharma*. We must begin by understanding that most of the *dharmas*, or types of socio-religious duties, prevalent in the world today are mundane and perishable.

*pâthivête yâha kichu dharma näme cale
bhägavata kähe taha paripürëa chale*

Çré Vândävana däsa Öhakura

The *Çrémad-Bhägavatam* condemns whatever goes on in this world in the name of *dharma*, or religion, as nothing but deception.

The various *dharmas* in this world deal with its mundane attributes. *Sanātana-dharma*, however, illuminates the function of the soul. It is the *dharma* in which the soul and the Supersoul, or Bhagavän,

exist eternally. The soul bound in this world must investigate how he can be released. Is there any means for him to achieve such freedom?

Asking the Right Questions

Çré Çai karäcärya has provided us a weapon to cut away our delusion in this regard in the following verse:

kā tava kāntā kaste putraù
saàsäro 'hyamativa vicitraù
kasya tvaà vā kuta äyätaù
tattvam cintaya tadaidam bhrätaù

O brother, where were you before you came to this world? And after death where will you go? Did your dear relatives – your wife, son and other family members – come to this world with you? Can you take them with you when you leave? How long will you remain here? You should inquire into these philosophical truths.

This is precisely the subject of our deliberation and the realm of our *sädhana*, or spiritual practice. "Who are you?" "Where were you before coming to this world?" "For what purpose have you come here?" "What activities have you performed in your life so far and have they made you happy?"

The scriptures invite us to ask these questions. In this world, we are flanked by birth and death, and whatever we do in between these two is temporary. One poet has therefore written, "We are but actors on the stage of this world." The human condition has also been described as follows:

yävajjananaà tävan maraëam
tavajjanané jaïhare çayanam
iti saàsäre sphuñatara-doñiaù
kathama-ihā mänava tava santoñaù

**"The soul bound in this world must investigate how he can be freed.
Is there any means for him to achieve such freedom?"**

O human being, you have come to this world for some time, and after playing your part you must leave it. So long as there is birth there will also be death, and you will again have to enter into the womb of a mother. Whatever peace and happiness you hope to attain from this world is not real peace and happiness.

Therefore, in the scriptures on *sanätana-dharma*, the *ärya-äñis* have said:

bälas tävat kriòasaktas
tarueás tävat taruëé-raktaù
väddhas tävat cinta-magnaù
parame brahmaëi ko 'pi na magnaù

Çré Çai karäcärya

In childhood one is engrossed in playing, in youth he becomes captivated by the opposite sex, and in old age he becomes immersed in anxiety; thus he never becomes absorbed in thoughts of the Supreme Absolute Truth.

In this world we pass our time eating, sleeping, defending and so on; rather, we should consider that the time allotted to us in this body is fixed.

The Secret to World Unity and Peace

To develop love for Bhagavän, the supreme object of love, is the fundamental message of *sanätana-dharma*. Thus far, we have discussed the temporary nature of religious activities, both bodily and mental. The *dharma* of the soul, however, is eternal. Today's thinkers claim that the Twentieth Century is the age of



science and mechanisation. However, there is no peace in today's world. If this is indeed the great scientific age, why isn't mankind attaining peace?

There is a well-known saying in the West: "Science ends in philosophy and philosophy ends in religion." The science referred to here is material science. *Dharma*, or religion, is the sole subject of our discussion today. *Dharma* can completely reverse the world's present situation.

In a religious assembly in the West, a Pope once admitted, "India guided by God can lead the world back to sanity." Modern society is overridden by quarrel and dispute, and is completely demented. It can, however, be reformed by spiritual India, religious India.

The whole world is looking to the true inner spirit of India and its people; however, we Indians are so foolish and unlucky that we cannot understand this. Although we possess everything valuable, we are unable to utilise these assets properly. We are unable to embrace, as our life and soul, the contribution of our *āñis*, and thus our present plight is extremely miserable. How will we attain auspiciousness and peace so long as this wretched condition is not dispelled? If science could have delivered peace, it would indeed have deserved the credit.

Where is peace? The last speaker mentioned the United Nations Organisation (UNO). This organisation has taken responsibility for our welfare, but has it brought any peace to the world? When everything is driven by politics, can we ever hope to gain anything? The world today is divided into two camps, each willing to help anyone who submits to it. When such politics prevail, how can we ever offer the real recipe for peace? We will be unable to find it.

Unable to remedy the troubles facing humanity, the scientific and Western worlds are gripped by anxiety and fear. How can we, who are troubled by limitless problems, ever attain peace? We can never attain it simply by shouting, in various assemblies, "Peace!

Peace!" However, our *sanātana-āñis*, or great sages on the path of *sanātana-dharma*, have given us a clue by which we may attain peace: if we love Bhagavān, the Supreme Controller, and place our faith in Him, all human beings will come to see themselves as part of a single race.

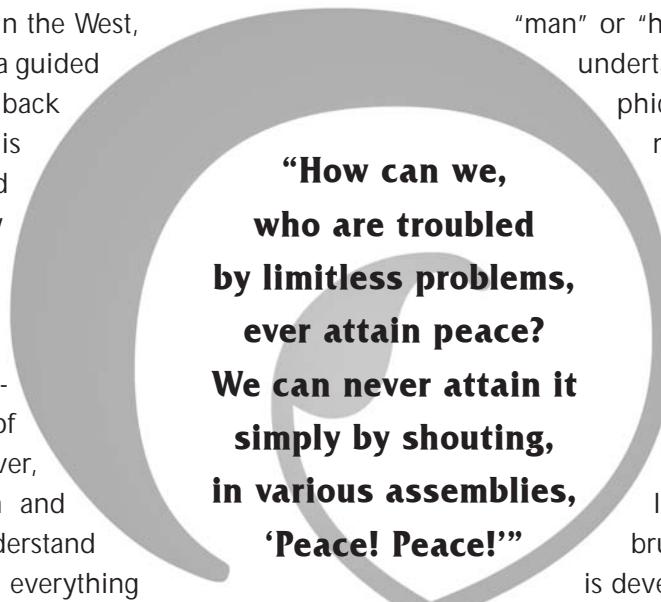
Who Classifies as Being Human?

Yesterday I explained the meaning of "man" or "human". The *ārya-āñis* have undertaken meticulous philosophical research into what is meant by the term "human". One poet has written, "More than man you cannot be." What does he mean? Does his use of the word "human" or "man" refer simply to facial features? No. When humaneness is lacking, man is known as a brute; and when humaneness

is developed to its highest extent, a person is to be regarded as a human being. Such humaneness is divine. Why, then, are we not endeavouring to love Bhagavān, the embodiment of love, who is one without a second?

Three words are often used in the religious rhetoric of today – "equality", "liberty" and "friendship". How can we attain these qualities? How can we establish the true ideal of communism in the world? How can we demonstrate that one man is in universal brotherhood with another? Many people are quick to declare that we are all humans, but what is there to support this claim? Man's humanity lies in his being governed by moral principles and ideals. Thus, only when we love Bhagavān can we love each and every living entity. How can one who does not even love his own father, mother or guardian, preach world-brotherhood?

These days, in an effort to create social unity, many people will try to say that the same blood flows through everyone's veins. According to medical scientists, however, this claim is quite false. Blood is graded A, B, AB, O and so forth; a person cannot be



"Although countless rivers flow into the ocean, it never overflows. Similarly, various desires flow into the mind of one who is fixed in transcendence, yet his equilibrium is never disturbed. Such a person alone can attain peace, not he who strives always to fulfil his desires."



given any type of blood. Thus, even in blood there is differentiation. It is therefore impossible to forge a universal brotherhood or socialism on the basis of this phenomenal world.

How, then, can it be created? It can be established perfectly by considering how one can bring auspiciousness to the self through the process of self-realization. The *ārya-āñis* have described a type of communist ideal that is able to situate us in real universal brotherhood. We can never attain peace through mere material endeavours.

The Solution to All Problems

In the *Gītā*, we see that Bhagavān Āre Kāñēa directs His instructions on self-realization to Arjuna. He did not, however, intend these teachings for Arjuna. By making His dear friend Arjuna His instrument, He

instructs us all on how to treat the disease that is causing the entire world to suffer.

Arjuna asked, "How can one attain peace?" Āre Kāñēa replied:

*āpūryamāēam acala-pratinōhaā
samudram āpaū praviçanti yadvat
tadvat kāmā yaā praviçanti sarve
sa çāntim āpnoti na kāma-kāmē*

Bhagavad-gītā (2.70)

Although countless rivers flow into the ocean, it never overflows. Similarly, various desires flow into the mind of one who is fixed in transcendence, yet his equilibrium is never disturbed. Such a person alone can attain peace, not he who strives always to fulfil his desires.

In this world our hopes and desires are endless. We are advised to limit our hankерings, because they have caused us to be afflicted by multifarious problems. If we do not control them we are not safe.

In today's world, it is indeed we who generate our own feelings of scarcity. We are at the root of our own vociferous complaints. Upon reflection, we see that we no longer feel the level of satisfaction we felt twenty or twenty-five years ago. Rather, our sense of scarcity has increased a million-fold. The *çästras* inform us that we will only attain peace when we put an end to this imagined sense of scarcity. But how will we find peace when this world is filled with restlessness? *Çästra* has provided a clue:

*tam eva çaraëaà gaccha
sarva-bhävena bhärata
tat-prasädät paräà çäntià
sthänaà präpsyasi çäçvataṁ*

Bhagavad-gétá (18.62)



O scion of Bharata, surrender fully to the Supreme Lord in every respect. By His grace you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme and eternal abode.

Bhagavân is instructing His devotees "*tam eva çaraëaà gaccha* – surrender unto Me." Until a person does this he will never attain peace. As long as we think we can solve our own problems, we will be unable to discover a solution. Wherever we find a solution, we should embrace it. Bhagavân has given us instructions on "complete surrender" through the medium of the *Géta*, *Bhágavatam*, *Vedas*, *Vedānta* and so on, so that these teachings never escape our memory.

The world's unlimited problems, such as lack of food, clothing, accommodation and education, can be solved if we lead our lives by properly maintaining a focus on the original centre. This means establishing our trust in Bhagavân and our faith in and devotion to Him. Who is that Bhagavân? Is He devoid of form, qualities and variety? No, he is not devoid of potency.

He has everything. He is *çaktimän*, the possessor of all potency, and He has form and attributes. His form, which is composed of eternity, knowledge and bliss, is that of Çyämasundara.

Çré Kâñëa is indeed that Bhagavân who is the

embodiment of love. He can give love to unlimited *jévas* and He knows how to receive love from them. Only when we, the minutely conscious *jévas*, try to love Bhagavân, is it understood that our actual perception of ourselves (*ätma-darçana*) has awakened fully. At that time we are able to execute our duty admirably and properly. Only by accepting the instructions of the *ärya-äñis* and *ärya-çästras* can all the problems of the world be resolved. ☩

Translated from *Çré Gauòëya Patrikâ*, Year 35, Issue 10 (1983)

The Glory of Exclusive Devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

The deeper meaning of the verse *api cet su-durācāraḥ*

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja

In Çrémad Bhägavad-gétä (9.30) Çré Kāñëa declares:

*api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaù
samyag vyavasito hi saù*

If even a man of abominable character engages in My exclusive *bhajana*, he is to be considered a *sādhu*, due to his being properly situated in his determination.

In his commentary to this verse, Çréla Viçvanātha Cakravarté Öhákura quotes Çré Kāñëa as saying:

"It is My nature to be attached to My devotees, even that devotee who performs *durācāra*, abominable deeds. I nevertheless elevate him. A person engaged in My *bhajana* is saintly, even if he happens to be attached to committing extremely detestable acts – such as violence upon others, theft and illicit connection with another man's wife."

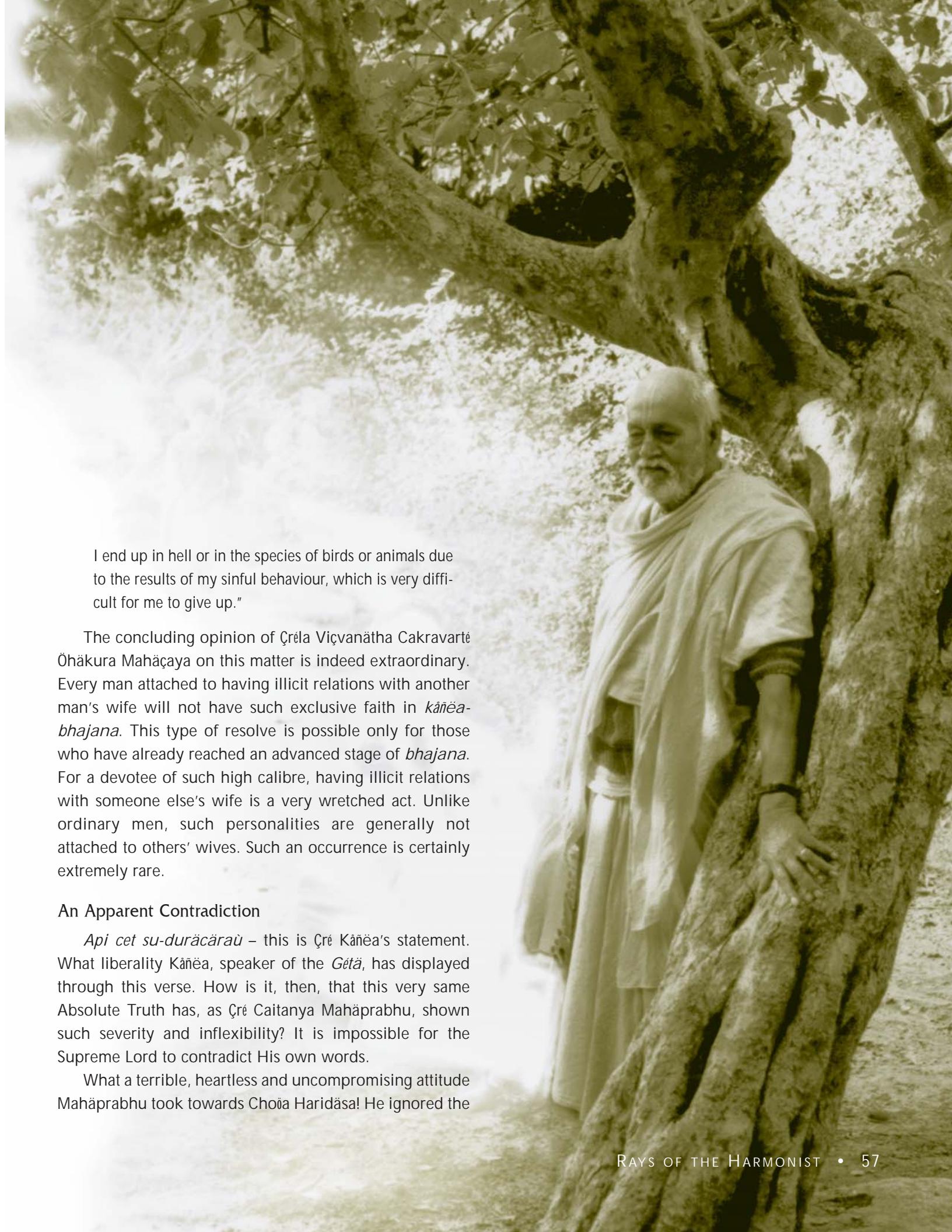
Çréla Viçvanātha Cakravarté Öhákura continues:

What kind of *bhajana* must such a person perform to be regarded as saintly? In answer to this, Çré

Kāñëa says "ananya-bhāk – My exclusive *bhajana*, in other words, *bhajana* directed at no demigods or other personalities besides Me."

Someone may question how a *bhakta* can possibly be regarded as a *sādhu* if some type of wickedness is to be seen in him. Anticipating this doubt, the word *mantavyaù* has been used, meaning that he nonetheless must be considered a *sādhu*; it is obligatory to accept him as such. The word *mantavyaù* indicates that it is imperative. If one disobeys this instruction, he will be guilty of neglect. Çré Kāñëa is saying here, "In this regard My order is final."

A person may have the idea that a *bhakta* engaged in *bhajana* of Çré Kāñëa who has an illicit connection with another man's wife, may be regarded as only partially a *sādhu*. In answer to this, it is declared in this verse that such a *bhakta* must be considered a *sādhu* in every respect. One should be blind to his unsaintly behaviour, because he is *samyag-vyavasitaù*, "of resolute intelligence, perfect in resolve". Such a person is endeavouring with the following kind of determination, "I will never give up my exclusive *bhajana* of Çré Kāñëa, whether



I end up in hell or in the species of birds or animals due to the results of my sinful behaviour, which is very difficult for me to give up."

The concluding opinion of Çréla Viçvanätha Cakravarté Öhäkura Mahäcaya on this matter is indeed extraordinary. Every man attached to having illicit relations with another man's wife will not have such exclusive faith in *kāñëa-bhajana*. This type of resolve is possible only for those who have already reached an advanced stage of *bhajana*. For a devotee of such high calibre, having illicit relations with someone else's wife is a very wretched act. Unlike ordinary men, such personalities are generally not attached to others' wives. Such an occurrence is certainly extremely rare.

An Apparent Contradiction

Api cet su-duräcäraù – this is Çré Kāñëa's statement. What liberality Kāñëa, speaker of the *Gétä*, has displayed through this verse. How is it, then, that this very same Absolute Truth has, as Çré Caitanya Mahäprabhu, shown such severity and inflexibility? It is impossible for the Supreme Lord to contradict His own words.

What a terrible, heartless and uncompromising attitude Mahäprabhu took towards Choïa Haridäsa! He ignored the

humble entreaties of all types of devotees committed to helping Choīa Haridāsa, even the petitions of His superiors and intimate companions. Was this act of Mahāprabhu's meant only to make the devotees cautious in their dealings with women? Or does it have some deeper significance concealed within it?

Even if we set aside this apparent difference in attitude between Cré Kāñea and Mahāprabhu, we find that Mahāprabhu Himself appears to have reacted inconsistently to a *bhakta*'s misconduct.

Why was Mahāprabhu not severe with Kälä Kāñeadāsa in the same way that He was with Choīa Haridāsa? Kälä Kāñeadāsa's error was far graver than Choīa Haridāsa's, who merely made conversation with a woman and was not accused of cohabiting with one. Kälä Kāñeadāsa, by contrast, was found living with a woman of the Bhaīmāthāri caste.

Moreover, Choīa Haridāsa was *ananya-bhāk*, one-pointed in his devotion. He never performed *bhajana* of any worshipable truth other than Mahāprabhu. Indeed, even after giving up his body, he would serve Mahāprabhu by singing *kertanas* for Him while remaining invisible to others.

By contrast, Kälä Kāñeadāsa, having been allured by the gypsy women, gave up Mahāprabhu's service and joined the Bhaīmāthāri group. Although Kälä Kāñeadāsa possessed such an abominable propensity, Mahāprabhu never rejected him, nor did He suggest that he take his own life by way of atonement, by tying a big pitcher around his neck and drowning himself in the river. Rather, to rectify him, Mahāprabhu handed him over to the devotees, thereby freeing Himself from His responsibility towards him.

What deeper grounds are there in these two cases for Mahāprabhu's seemingly inconsistent behaviour? The answer is certainly inaccessible to ordinary people.

Choīa Haridāsa's Case

It should be noted that Créla Viçvanātha Cakravartē Öhākura did not accept *sannyāsa*, the renounced order of life. As such, he does not specifically discuss the circumstances of a renunciant (*vairāge*) in his commentary to the verse *api cet su-durācāraū*. He addresses people of all social orders simply as "*bhaktas*", without any further differentiation. Although this term includes both the householder



Mahāprabhu saves Kälä Kāñeadāsa

and the renunciant, Çréla Viçvanätha Cakravarté Öhäkura does not specifically employ the word *tyägë*, renunciant. Çréman Mahäprabhu, however, says the following regarding Choña Haridäsa:

*prabhu kahe – "vairägë kare prakåti sambhäñiaëa
dekhite nä päroì ämi tähära vadana*

Çré Caitanya-caritämåta (Antya-lélä 2.117)

Mahäprabhu replied, "I cannot tolerate seeing the face of a person who has accepted the renounced order of life but who still talks intimately with a woman.

*"kñudra-jéva saba markaña-vairägya kariyä
indriya caräi ä bule 'prakåti' sambhäñiyä"*

Çré Caitanya-caritämåta (Antya-lélä 2.120)

"There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women."

The *äcäryas* themselves observe all the regulative principles of their respective social order and never indulge in any inappropriate discussion. Since Choña Haridäsa Prabhu was a renunciant in the fourth social order, Mahäprabhu's judgment on him was in accordance with *çästra* and appropriate to his *adhikära*, level of eligibility. Unless one is not himself in the fourth social order, passing judgment on a renunciant is improper.

Kälä Kṛṣṇadäsa's Case

Why did Mahäprabhu apply a different standard to Kälä Känädäsa? Why was strict action taken in Choña Haridäsa Prabhu's case but not in Kälä Känädäsa's? In this regard, it may be observed that *çästra* itself lays down a different set of guidelines, excusing the householder's weakness of associating with women:

*streäà nirékñaëa-sparça-saàläpa-kñvelanädikam
präeino mithuné-bhütän agähastho 'gratas tyajet*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (11.17.33)

Those who are unmarried – that is, *sannyäsés*, *vänaprasthas* and *brahmacärés* – should never associate with women by glancing, touching, conversing, joking, flirting or cavorting. Neither should they keep the company of anyone who engages in sexual activity.

Renounced devotees should give up the association of those who look upon, touch, converse with, sport with or indulge in sex with a woman. By use of the word *agähasthaù* ("those who are unmarried") in this verse, an exemption is implicitly provided for *gähasthas*. It is forbidden for a *brahmacäré*, *vänaprastha* and *vairägë* (i.e. *sannyäsë*) to engage in these acts. In other words, these activities are permissible for *gähasthas* who are not so advanced. However, if a *gähastha* is *niñkiiñ cana*, inclined towards *bhajana* and wants to cross over the ocean of nescience, then these prohibitions apply to him also.

This is supported by Mahäprabhu's distressful words in Çré Caitanya-candrodaya-näïaka:

*niñkiiñ canasya bhagavad-bhajanomukhasya
päraà paraà jigamilior bhava-sägarasya
sandarçanaà viñayièäm atha yoñitää ca
hä hanta hanta viña-bhakñaëato 'py asädhuh*

Çré Caitanya-candrodaya-näïaka (8.23)

"Alas, for a person who seriously desires to cross the ocean of nescience and engage in the transcendental loving service of Çré Känëa without any material motivation, seeing a materialist engaged in sense gratification or seeing a woman who is similarly interested is more abominable than willingly drinking poison."

Kälä Känädäsa was a householder, and therefore he was not treated severely. Choña Haridäsa, however, was a *vairägë*, who had renounced his household life. Severity was therefore appropriate in relation to him.

Two Different Approaches

Both Çré Känëa and Çréla Viçvanätha Cakravartepäda manifested *gähastha* pastimes in this world, and have therefore not discussed or passed judgment on

renunciants such as *sannyäsés*. Being a *sannyäśe*, however, Çréman Mahäprabhu behaved appropriately in being befittingly severe with the renunciant Haridäsa Prabhu.

Although the verses previously quoted evince a different approach for householders and renunciant, each is auspicious for those to whom it applies considering a person's individual qualification (*adhikära*); moreover, both approaches should be understood as having the same end purpose as each other. Çré Caitanya Mahäprabhu and Çré Kāñëacandra are the same Absolute Reality, but Kāñëa was a *gähashtha* and Mahäprabhu a *sannyäśe*. This difference of *äçrama* in Their pastimes is reflected in Their instructions, and does not result in any *apasiddhänta*, incorrect conclusions.

Indulgence in sex with a woman is unfavourable for *paramärtha*, the ultimate goal of life for all humans. On account of having a lower qualification, a householder is given the arrangement of marriage. The only purpose of marriage is to curtail his propensity for sense enjoyment – this should be understood. This idea has been expressed in Çrémad-Bhágavatam (11.3.44) in the statement "*karma-mokñaya karmäei* – material activities meant for liberation from material pursuits." In the verse from Çrémad-Bhágavatam (11.5.11) beginning with the words *loke vyaväyämiña-madya-sevä*, the same idea is conveyed through the statement "*äsu nivåttir inöä* – the cessation of these is the desired end."

There is no scope for even a scent of lust (*käma*) on the path of *prema* propagated by Mahäprabhu. Lust is darkness, while *prema* is the transcendental sun. The pastimes of *ujvala-rasa*, the mellow of amorous love, are not like the meeting of ordinary men and women with a mood to enjoy each other. They cannot be understood by the bound *jéva*. It is therefore forbidden to discuss such pastimes while in the conditioned state of consciousness.

Persons of Low Eligibility

It is further to be noted that the instructions of *çästra* are generally applicable to all human beings, whether they be male or female. Here, however, men alone appear to be restricted – viz. from looking

upon women, touching them and so on. Why are women not brought under similar strictures? Are we to infer that women are superior to men, or does it imply they are altogether beneath the level of even being regulated?

We see that *çudras*, women and the uncultured members of *brähmaëa* and other high-order families (*dvija-bandhus*) are not given the right to study the Vedas. Does the statement "*api cet su-duräcäraù*", then, contradict this injunction of the *çästras*?

There can never be any conflict between the statements of *çästra*. As such, this verse does not in itself discuss the status of women. Rather, it illuminates the highest glories of exclusive *bhajana* to Çré Kāñëa by declaring that by performing such *bhajana* even persons of the lowest qualification (*adhikära*) are fit to be counted as highly worshipable and saintly.

It should be understood that it is certainly very difficult to perform *ananya-bhák*, one-pointed *bhajana* of Çré Kāñëa. If this were not so, the statement "*stré-sai gé eka asädhu* – the person who associates with women for sense gratification is unsaintly" in Çré Caitanya-caritämäta (Madhya-lélä 22.87) would be deprived of its truth. The *Gétä* (9.33) goes on to describe those who are naturally eligible to perform such one-pointed devotion:

*kià punar brähmaëäù puëyä
bhaktä räjariyas tathä*

What doubt then can there be that pious *brähmaëas* and saintly kings can become *bhaktas*?

The Power of Exclusive Bhajana

Although there are many worshipable deities, in the verse *api cet su-duräcäraù* and the verses that follow it, the worship of Çré Kāñëa is declared to be topmost, bestowing the highest results. If someone engages in one-pointed *bhajana* of the worshipable reality Çré Kāñëa, even if he is thoroughly unqualified, Çré Kāñëa very quickly dispels his greatest disqualifications and bestows upon him the quality of being a *sädhu* and supreme peace (*parä-çänti*).

In order to firmly and indubitably express this, Kāñëa ordered His intimate devotee and friend Arjuna to take a vow to this effect:



**“The pastimes
of *ujjvala-rasa*,
the mellow
of amorous love,
are not like
the meeting
of ordinary
men and women
with a mood
to enjoy each other.
They cannot be
understood
by the bound *jīva*.”**

*kñipraà bhavati dharmätmä
çaçvac-chäntià nigacchati
kaunteya pratijänéhi
na me bhaktaù praëacyati*
Bhagavad-gétá (9.31)

He quickly becomes virtuous and attains eternal peace. O son of Kunté, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.

This also illustrates Kāñëa's nature of protecting the vow of His devotee, even at the expense of breaking His own vow.

Kāñëa bestows the supreme destination and eternal peace to anyone who performs one-pointed *bhajana* of Him, thereby making that worshipper's life

successful, even if he is extremely unqualified and degraded, a wicked outcaste (*mleccha*), a woman of bad character, a merchant engaged in farming and trading, a *çūdra*, or a man or woman born into the lower castes.

This type of result cannot be attained by performing the *bhajana* of any worshipable reality other than Çré Kāñëa. This is indeed expressed here. Therefore every human being is enjoined to engage his body, mind and words in the service of Çré Kāñëa and thereby become blessed. For such *bhajana*, however, it is desirable that one possess the quality described in *Çrémad-Bhágavatam* (2.7.42) as "yadi nirvyalékam – surrender without pretension". ☩

Translated from *Çré Gauḍeya Patrikā*, Year 50, Issue 12 (Feb. 1999)

The Highest



Summits of Prema

Rāgavats

Excerpt from a lecture on Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's
Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmrta

delivered by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

25 May 2003
San Francisco, California

The Ultimate Attainment

hat kind of *kāñēa-prema* do we want? Not the *prema* of Hanumān or the Pāeōavas or even Uddhava. We will not reject their *prema*; we will offer *praēāma* to it. But we do not want it. What do we want? Do we want to serve Kāñēa as Çrématé Rādhikā is serving Him? No. We also offer so many *praēāmas* to that *prema*. Our goal is to serve that *prema*, but we do not desire it ourselves.

We want to serve Çrématé Rādhikā and Çré Kāñēa in the way Çréla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Çré Rūpa Maī jaré serve Them. By this one will be perfect. It is the top-most status for the *jéva*. You should realize this and not waste a single moment in sense gratification. Try to maintain your life, but make this status the aim and object of your life.

Arjuna Laments

We have discussed the various stages of devotees up to the Pāeōavas, whom we have been glorifying. They are Kāñēa's bosom friends, and Kāñēa is their servant. What to speak of serving them, Kāñēa even grooms and massages their horses. Kunté is like Kāñēa's mother, Yudhiṣṭhīra His father and elder

brother, and Bhēma His brother and friend. Arjuna has more intimate a friendship with Kāñēa than does Bhēma, and Draupadé has even more intimacy with Kāñēa than do any of the Pāeōavas, although she sometimes also has a mood of reverence towards Him. She is a *sakhé* of Kāñēa. Try to know all these facts.

Speaking to Nārada Āñi, Arjuna explained that he and the other Pāeōavas are actually bereft of good fortunate. "Kāñēa teaches us the *Gétā*," he said. "He tells us to be *caraēāgata*, surrendered souls; but we are His intimate associates, His friends. I cannot say how many lives ago we surrendered to Him. Thus we are very unfortunate.

"Also, when Kāñēa performs any service for us we become quite ashamed. One time, against our wishes, He became my charioteer and was even washing and massaging my horses. Why did He do this? It was not in fact for me. It was simply part of His overall plan to kill the demons.

"I did not want to slay Bhēma-pitāmaha, Droēacārya and my other worshipable superiors, but I had to do so. I told Kāñēa that I could not fight with Droēa and Bhēma-pitāmaha because they are my

gurus; nonetheless Kāñëa obliged me to kill them. How painful it was. Bhéñma was an exalted *bhakta*, and to kill him was very sinful.

"I further told Kāñëa, 'You are known as Madhusüdana, killer of the Madhu demon, and not as "killer of your *guru*".' No one is to kill his *guru*, who should be regarded as superior to one's own father. Nonetheless Kāñëa repeatedly urged me to shoot my *gurus*. He has not actually served us, nor are we near and dear to Him. Why has Kāñëa come to this world? To protect the entire universe, to assist the demigods and vanquish the demons. This is His sole purpose."

Arjuna continued, "If you really want to see an exalted reservoir of love and affection for Kāñëa, you should at once fly to Dvärakä and seek out Uddhava."

The Speciality of Uddhava

Who is Uddhava?

çré-çuka uväca
vânëenäà pravaro mantré
kâñëasya dayitaù sakhä
ciñyo båhaspateù sâkñiad
uddhavo buddhi-sattamaù

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (10.46.1)

Çukadeva Gosvämé said: The supremely intelligent Uddhava was the best counselor of the Vâñëi dynasty, a beloved friend of Çré Kāñëa and a direct disciple of Båhaspati.

Kṛṣṇa Himself told Uddhava:

na tathä me priyatama
ätma-yonir na çäì karaù
na ca saì karñaëo na çré
naivätmä ca yathä bhavän

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (11.14.15)

Kāñëa said, "Uddhava, you are most dear to Me. Brahmä, who is My son; Çäì kara, who is non-different from Me; My brother Saì karñaëa; the goddess of fortune Çré Lakñmí; and even My very own life, are not



Sri Närada Rishi

Painting by Jadurâî-devé dâsé

as dear to Me as you are. You are so close to Me." Kāñëa has also declared, "Do not think that Uddhava is even slightly inferior to Me. He is as good as I am, and sometimes he may even be greater." How exalted Uddhava is.

Närada thus left Arjuna and traveled to Dvärakä to meet Uddhava. He glorified Uddhava and the Yädavas, to which Uddhava replied, "Don't speak like this. I know that I am a high-class devotee of Kāñëa and that Kāñëa's queens are also very dear to Him. Kāñëa once gave a *pärijäta* flower to Rukmiëé, and He also stole an entire *pärijäta* tree from heaven and planted it in Satyabhämä's courtyard."

The Story of the Pärijäta Flower

One day Kāñëa was sitting among His wives in Dvärakä – all 16,108 queens were present, including Rukmiëé and Satyabhämä. Närada arrived there with a *pärijäta* flower plucked from heaven and told Kāñëa, "Please take this flower and give it to Your favourite queen." Kāñëa thought, "Närada is very tricky; he wants to throw Me in a dilemma. If I give this flower to Rukmiëé, then Satyabhämä and the other queens will be angry, and it will take great effort to pacify them.

And if I hand it to Satyabhämä, then Rukmiëe will be jealous."

Närada interrupted His thoughts, "Don't delay. I have pressing business to complete. Please give the flower to one of Your queens now, in my presence, before I leave." Kāñëa wondered what to do. Närada kept insisting, so He took the flower, closed His eyes, and gave it to Rukmiëe. He thought that by closing His eyes, the other queens would be unable to tell that He was intentionally selecting her. At once, breathing heavily like a serpent, Satyabhämä ran to her palace. She threw off all her garments and ornaments, put on some old, ragged and dirty clothes and, weeping, entered her *kop-bhavan*, "anger-room".

Kings used to build "anger-rooms" for their queens. If a queen took shelter there, the king knew he would have to pacify her. Now Satyabhämä went into her *kop-bhavan* and began to weep loudly. Her many maidservants were pacifying her, in a way that Kāñëa would know He had committed a great wrong. Kāñëa approached Satyabhämä and gently put His hand on her, but she immediately pushed Him away. "Go away at once," she said bitterly. "Return to Your dearest queen. You are a liar. You ridiculed and insulted me in front of the entire assembly."

Kāñëa said, "Listen, I gave a single *pärijäta* flower to Rukmiëe, and you have become so upset. I will bring an entire *pärijäta* tree from the heavenly planets and plant it in your courtyard."

Satyabhämä replied, "You could not give me even a single flower, and now You say You will bring me a whole tree."

"Come with me," Kāñëa said. At once he called Garuòa and, sitting on his back, they traveled to the heavenly planets together. There, Kāñëa fought against Indra and the demigods and defeated them. He uprooted a *pärijäta* tree and planted it in Satyabhämä's courtyard.

The Glorious Yädavas

Uddhava continued speaking to Närada Åñi: "After defeating the demigods, Kāñëa also forcibly took away Sudharmä-sabhä, their famed heavenly assembly house, and brought it back with Him. Why? He knew the demigods had the false ego of being

masters of the universe; so to crush their false pride He stole away Sudharmä-sabhä and brought it to Dväarakä. Just see how Kāñëa is serving the Yädavas in Dväarakä.

"Also, you should know that Kāñëa established Ugrasena, Kaàsa's father, as emperor and said to him, 'I am your servant. Please order Me and I will collect taxes for you from across the universe. Don't be concerned.' Kāñëa thus became his subordinate.

"Sai karñaëa, the son of Vasudeva Mahäräja and Rohiëe, is Kāñëa's own brother. Kāñëa also has ten sons and one daughter from each of His queens – that is, 11 x 16,108 children in all. Through them He has so many grandchildren. These are all Kāñëa's blood-relatives, His *svajana*. Although the Päëoavas are like Kāñëa's brothers, they have no blood relation with Him; they are His friends. So how glorious are the residents of Dväarakä, the Yädavas."

Uddhava admitted to Närada, "We are very high-class devotees and most dear to Kāñëa. I accept everything Kāñëa has said to me – that I am His advisor, friend, servant and so on. Nonetheless, I still lament."

"Why do you lament?" asked Närada.

"I was proud that I was serving Kāñëa in so many ways, but my false ego was crushed when I went to Vändävana and witnessed the *gopés'* glories. Their love is as high as Mount Everest and as deep as the Pacific Ocean. It has no limits. I could not measure it. If you want to see how glorious the Vrajaväsés are, go to Vraja."

The Blessed Land of Vraja

Lord Brahmä declares:

*aho bhägyam aho bhägyaà
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasäm
yan-mitraà paramänandaà
pürëaà brahma sanätanam*

Çrémad-Bhägavatam (10.14.32)

Kāñëa is the supreme authority, the Lord of lords. He is unrivalled and all-powerful, and yet He is very sweet. He can destroy an entire universe in a moment, and create millions of universes in another. Nevertheless, that same Kāñëa wants to serve the

gopés. He is the dear friend and son of everyone in Vraja-Nandagram.

Uddhava himself has prayed:

*etäù paraà tanu-bhåto bhuvi gopa-vadhvo
govinda eva nikhilätmani rüöhä-bhäväu
väi chanti yad bhava-bhiyo munayo vayaà ca
kià brahma-janmabhir ananta-kathä-rasasya*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (10.47.58)

In this world the land of Gokula is most blessed. Why? Because the *gopés*, who alone have perfected their lives through their spotless love for Çré Govinda, reside there; without them it would not be as glorious. Çré Govinda, who sustains all universes, is especially the very life and soul of the Vrajavásés, such as the *gopas*, *gopés*, calves and cows.

Although Çré Govinda lives in Goloka-Vändävana, He also sustains and nourishes all beings in all parts of His creation. Therefore Uddhava has prayed, "Those who fear material existence, as well as others such as myself and so many *āñis* and *munis*, hanker to serve that Kāñëa, especially when He is in the company of the *gopés*. We have no desire to take birth in a *brähmaëa* dynasty, or even to become Brahmä himself."

Uddhava Weeps

*äsäm aho caraëa-reëu-juñäm ahaà syäà
vändävane kim api gulma-latauñadhénäm
yä dustyajaà sva-janam ärya-pathaà ca hitvä
bhejur mukunda-padavéà çrutibhir vimägyäm*

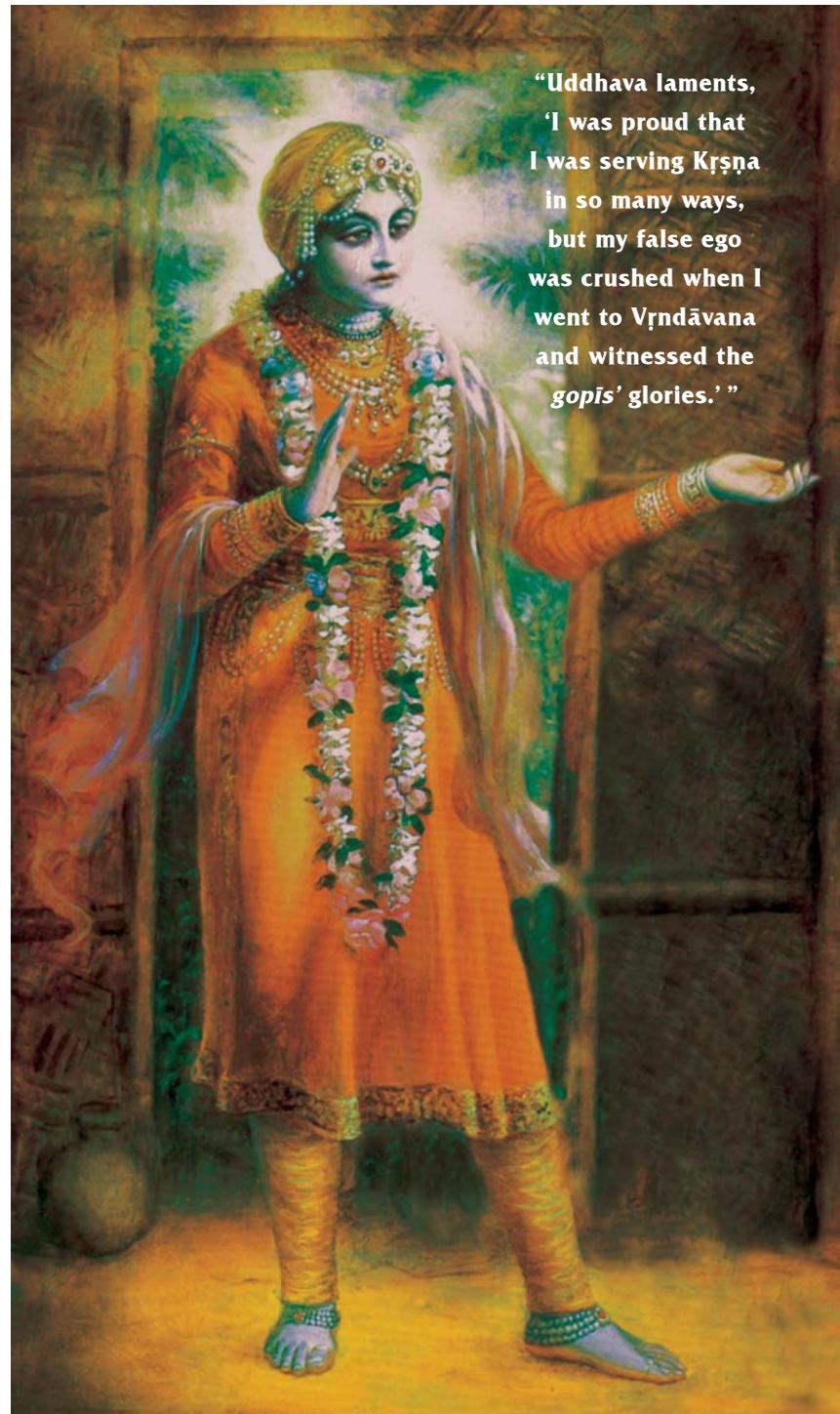
Çrémad-Bhágavatam (10.47.61)

Uddhava desired to become grass in Vändävana. He prayed, "When Kāñëa associates with the *gopés* or when the *gopés* go to meet Kāñëa, they will place their feet on that grass and my life will be successful." What is the status of the *gopés* and their love and affection for Kāñëa, and how does it compare with the love of Uddhava?

*yä vai çriyärcitam ajädibhir äpta-kämair
yogeçvarair api yad ätmani räsa-gonöhyäm
kåñëasya tad bhagavataù caraëärvindaà
nyastaà staneñu vijahuù parirabhya täpam*
Çrémad-Bhágavatam (10.47.62)

Brahmä, Çai kara and all other demigods perform *arcana* of the feet of Lakñmé, and that very Lakñmé performed austerities to serve Kāñëa in Vändävana, but was unable to attain His service. She wanted to enter the *räsa-lélä*, but Kāñëa did not accept her.

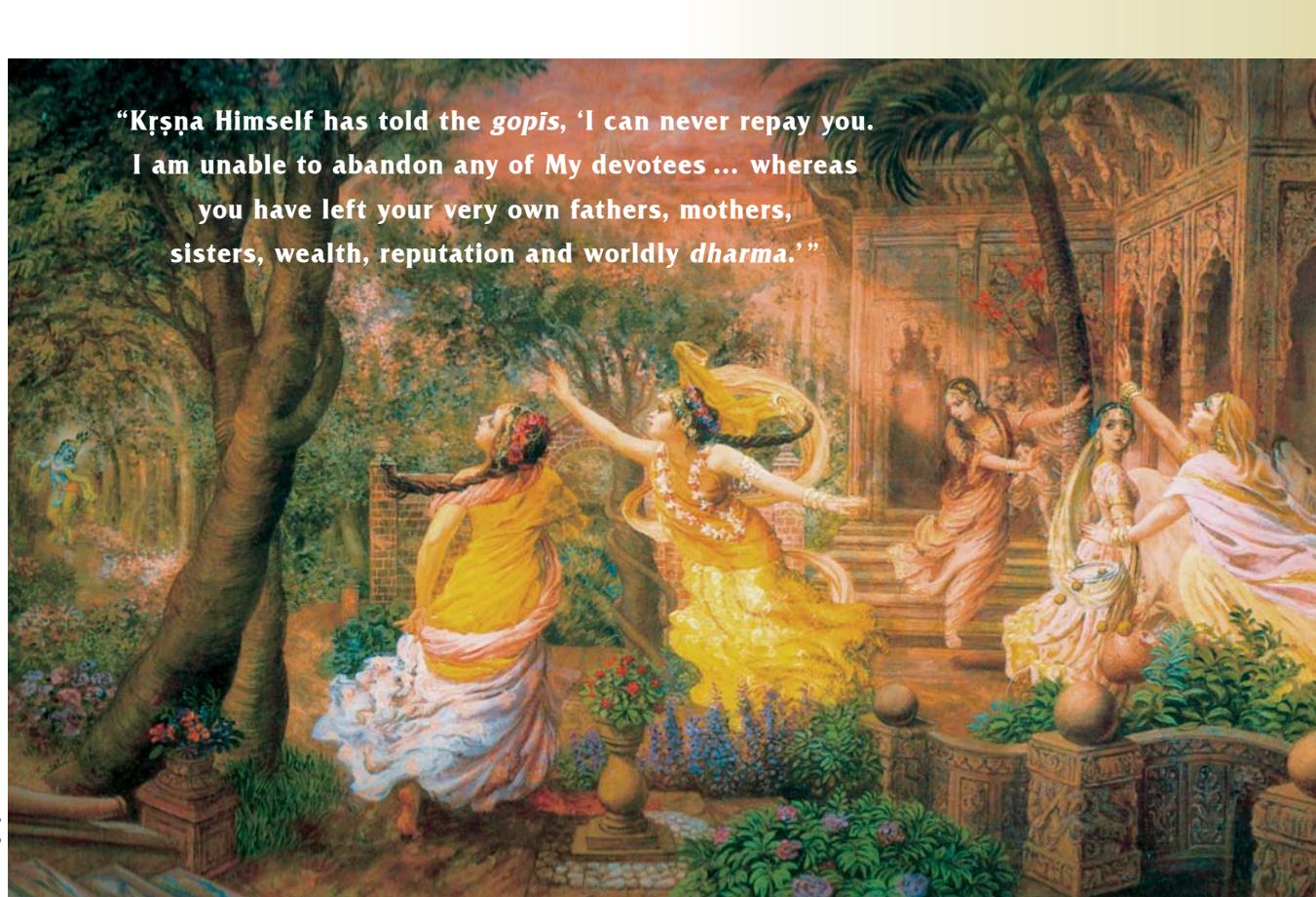
Uddhava began to weep as he continued:



"Kṛṣṇa Himself has told the *gopīs*, 'I can never repay you.

I am unable to abandon any of My devotees ... whereas

**you have left your very own fathers, mothers,
sisters, wealth, reputation and worldly *dharma*.'**"



Painting by Jadurāē-dvē dāsē

*vande nanda-vraja-strēäà
päda-reëum abhēkñëaçaù
yäsäà hari-kathodgētaà
punäti bhuvana-trayam*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (10.47.63)

We are gradually approaching the aim and object of our *sādhana*. You should have some greed to collect this jewel. Uddhava is saying here, "O *gopīs*, I want to be the dust of your lotus feet; not many dust particles, but only a single one, as I cannot digest good fortune greater than this." There are countless *gopīs*, but in his mind Uddhava has selected one particular *gopī*, namely, Çrématé Rādhikā. He desired just one particle of Her foot-dust.

Uddhava prayed to the *gopīs*:

*sarvätma-bhävo 'dhikåto
bhavaténäm adhokñaje
viraheëa mahä-bhägä
mahän me 'nugrahaù kåtaù*

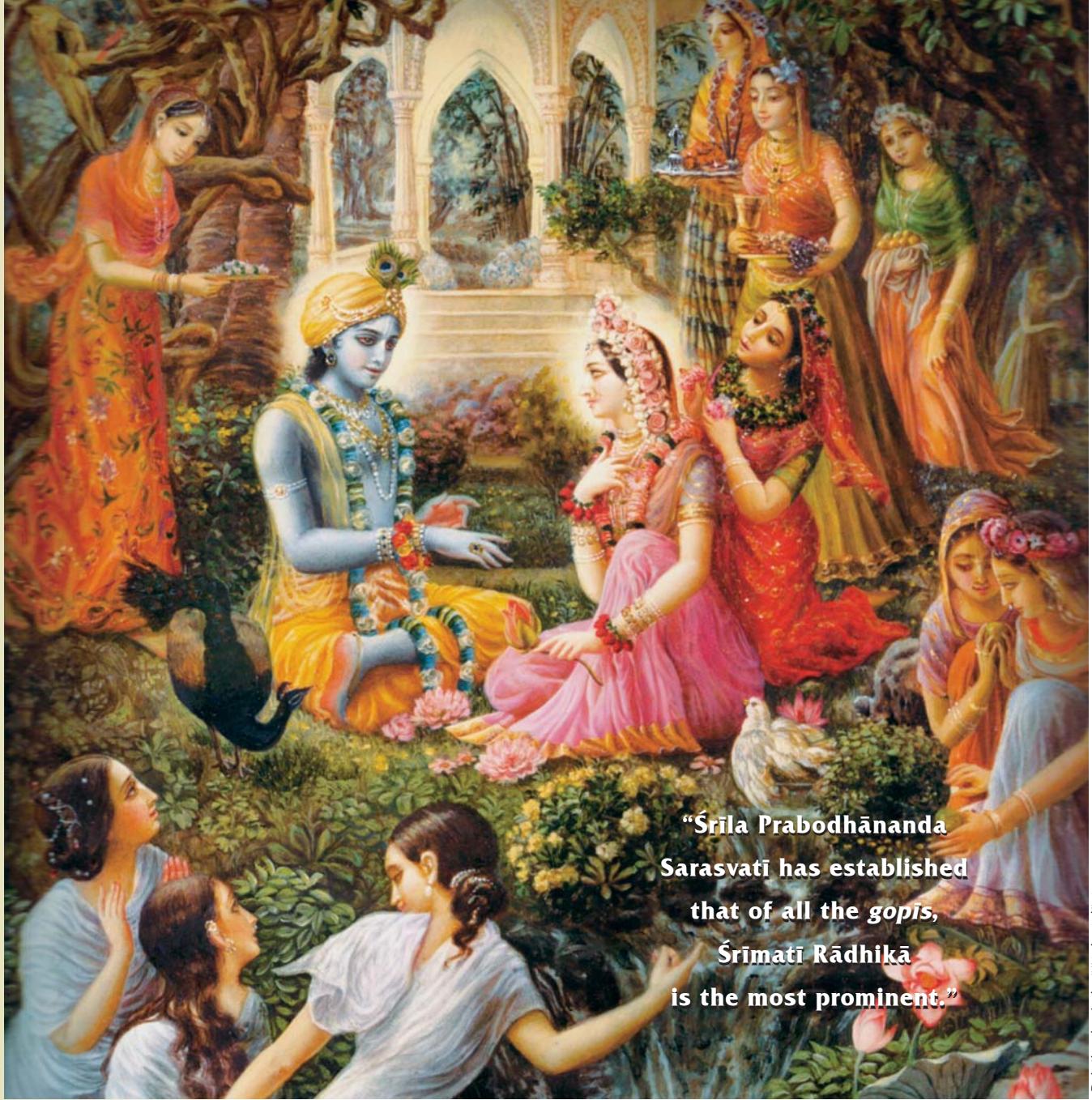
Çrémad-Bhágavatam (10.47.27)

He is saying, "O *gopīs*, you have conquered Kāñëa and controlled Him in all respects. He is now totally yours. I am unable to convey to Him what you have said out of separation from Him. He may even die upon hearing it. I do not have your mood of separation. You are *mahä-bhägä*, most fortunate. You are superior to Yudhiñöhira, me and even Giriräj-Govardhana. You have bestowed so much mercy upon me, but I am very unfortunate, being unqualified to receive it." And thus Uddhava wept.

The Height of Selfless Service

Hearing the glories of the Vrajavāsés, the old and senile Padmävaté, mother of wicked Kaësa, shook her head and said, "Alas! Those merciless cowherd men are very cruel. They made Kāñëa take their cows out to graze all day, from His early childhood. They never gave Him any shoes or an umbrella to shield Him from the blazing sun. They never even fed Him. And when, tortured by hunger, He ate a little butter, the cowherd women tied Him up!"

To this, Rohiët replied sharply: "Padmävaté, you are shameless and have no heart. You are the one



**“Śrīla Prabodhānanda
Sarasvatī has established
that of all the *gopīs*,
Śrīmatī Rādhikā
is the most prominent.”**

Painting by Jadvirāt-devī dāsī

who is very cruel. You have spoken as you have because you know nothing of love and affection.

“Vraja was beset by great calamities. Many demons, like Pūtanā, Aghäsura, Bakäsura and Keçē, came to create a huge disturbance and torment the Vrajavāsés. Nonetheless, the Vrajavāsés never blamed Kāñēa for this. Everything they do is out of love for Him and is only to please Him. They are unequalled in their love and affection; they are indeed unique in this world.

“Indra also wanted to destroy Vraja, and for this he sent torrential rain and thunderbolts to Vraja. Then the *yamala-arjuna* trees almost crushed Kāñēa. In every such incident, the *gopīs* only desired Kāñēa’s welfare.

They uttered *mantras* like ‘*mai galam bhavatu*’ and ‘*kalyānam bhavatu*’ – ‘May auspiciousness be upon You.’ In whatever they do, whether it is the worship of Girirāja-Govardhana, Närāyaëa or any other deity, they pray, ‘O Närāyaëa, please let me behold Kāñēa.’ Just see the glory of the *gopīs*.

Kāñēa Himself has told the *gopīs*, “*na pāryaye haà niravadya-saàyujāà* – I can never repay you. I am unable to abandon any of My devotees, not even a *sādhaka* in this world, whereas you have left your very own fathers, mothers, sisters, wealth, reputation and worldly *dharma*. I cannot do this, and so I am unable to repay you. I therefore pray that you will be merciful to Me and be satisfied by your own good

activities. Only in this way can I be freed from my debt to you."

Śrī Rādhā's Victory

And who is the most glorious of all?

*venuà karän nipatitaà skhalitaà cikhaëðaaà
bhraññaà ca pëta-vasanaà vrajäräja-sünoù
yasyäù kaiäkña-çara-ghäta-vimürchitasya
täà rädhikäà paricarämi kadä rasena*

Çré Rädhä-rasa-sudhä-nidhi (39)

Çréla Prabodhänanda Sarasvaté has established that of all the *gopés*, Çrématé Rädhikä is the most prominent. He explains here: "As Kāñëa was on his way to go cow-herding, Rädhikä threw a sidelong glance at Him, which pierced Him like an arrow. It went straight into His heart, and at once His *vaàçé* fell from His hands.

"Brahmä, and indeed all living creatures, are attracted by Kāñëa's *vaàçé*. Upon hearing its sweet sound, the *gopés* immediately abandoned the service of their husbands and the cooking in their homes. Their *chapätés* were burning on the fire and their milk was boiling over, but they left all their duties. That same *vaàçé*, which controls all the *gopés*, now dropped out of Kāñëa's hands, due to the sidelong, arrow-like glance of Çrématé Rädhikä.

"Day and night, Kāñëa carries His *vaàçé*, and His peacock feather always rests on His head. But having been shot by Çrématé Rädhikä's side-long glance, Kāñëa began to reel and lose consciousness – His peacock feather fell at Çré Rädhä's feet, and His yellow *cädara* slid down from His shoulders. When will Rädhikä sprinkle Her mercy on me so that I may serve Her with *rasa*? What *rasa*? *Prema*, *sneha*, *mäna*, *praëaya*, *räga*, *anuräga* and so on."

The Unrivalled Status of the Mañjaris

What to speak of Rädhikä, Kāñëa falls at the feet of even Her maidservants:

*yat-kiì kareñu bahuçaù khalu käku-väëë
nityaà parasya puruñasya cikhaëðaa-mauleù*

*tasyäù kadä rasa-nidher vânabhänu-jäyäs
tat-keli-kuì ja-bhavanäì gana-marjané syäm*

Çré Rädhä-rasa-sudhä-nidhi (8)

Once Rädhikä was in a sulky mood in a forest grove, and She ordered Rüpa Maï jaré and others to guard Her. She said, "Go to the entrance of this *kuì ja*, and when that black cheater comes you should stop Him. Don't let him enter My grove."

Thus, when black Kāñëa arrived, Rüpa Maï jaré and Rati Maï jaré, standing guard at the entrance, checked Him: "You may enter only if Rädhä orders us to let You in. But now She is angry with You, so return to Candrävalé. Don't come here." Placing His head on the lotus feet of those *kiì karés* (maidservants), Kāñëa begged for forgiveness. Çré Prabodhänanda Sarasvaté is praying to become one stick in the broom used for sweeping *kuì jas*. How glorious are those *kiì karés*.

*tämbülärpaëa-päda-mardana-
payo-dänäbhisärädibhir
våndäraëya-maheçvaréà priyatayä
yäs toñayanti priyäù
präëa-preñöha-sakhé-kuläd api
kiläsaì kocitä bhümikäù
kelé-bhüminu rüpa-maï jaré-mukhäù
tä däsikäù aàçraye*

Stavävalé, Vraja-viläsa-stava (38)

These *kiì karés* serve Çré Rädhä alone or the Divine Couple together in all Their pastimes. They offer Them betel nuts (*tämbüla*), massage Them, fetch water, serve Rädhä when She goes out to meet Kāñëa, and engage in many other services. Here Çréla Raghunätha däsa Gosvämé prays, "I take shelter at the lotus feet of those *kiì karés*, who have Çré Rüpa Maï jaré as their leader, because they and no one else can perform all these services."

I too bow down at the lotus feet of the *mai jarés* headed by Çré Rüpa Maï jaré, and I pray that they will sprinkle their mercy on me. Beyond this, I don't know anything.

Gaura-premänande! ☩

God's Goodwill Ambassador

A report by Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja





Çréla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja with dignitaries, including the Lord Mayor of the City of Birmingham, Mr. John Alden (far right).

*janasya kāñéäd vimukhasya daiväd
adharma-çelasya suduùkhitasya
anugrahäyeha caranti nūnaà
bhütäni bhavyäni janärdanasya*

Çrémad-Bhágavatam (3.5.3)

Great philanthropic souls travel the face of this world on behalf of the Supreme Lord, Janärdana, the well-wisher of all living entities, simply to show compassion to the fallen souls who, having turned away from Çré Kāñëa by the influence of *mäyä*, are steeped in irreligion and always deeply unhappy.

*A*s Çré Çrémad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaēa Gosvāmē Mahārāja travels the face of this world, spreading Çré Caitanya Mahäprabhu's message of pure *bhakti*, he continues to touch the hearts and lives of everyone he meets. This summer, the Mayors of two cities across the world from each other warmly welcomed him, praising his philanthropic work and expressing their appreciation for the non-sectarian tenets of Vaiñëavism.

On 31 May 2003 in Texas, the Mayor of the City of Houston, Mr. Lee P. Brown, appointed Çréla Mahārāja an "Honorary Citizen of the City of Houston" and a "Goodwill Ambassador" of the city, to acknowledge the valuable contributions Çréla Mahārāja has made and is making "through unselfish public service for the benefit and welfare of humanity".

Then on 14 June, at Çréla Mahārāja's opening public engagement in England this year, the Lord Mayor of the City of Birmingham, Mr. John Alden, came to welcome him. He was accompanied by the Lady Mayoress and numerous dignitaries and representatives of the local community, including Mr. Sapra (Indian Consulate-General), Dr. Chris Hewer (Bishop of Birmingham and Theologian of the Church of England), Mr. O. P. Sharma, M.B.E. (President of the Hindu Council of Temples, UK, and chairperson of the National Interfaith Conference), Susan Halliday (Interfaith peace worker), Mohammed Imtiaz Ahmed (member of the

Ahmadiya Muslim Association, Walsall) and other representatives of the local Muslim community.

Warmly thanking Çréla Bhaktivedänta Näräyaëa Gosvämé Mahäräja for returning to Birmingham, the Lord Mayor said the city was indeed honoured to be graced by his presence. Mr. Sapra, the Indian Consulate-General, also thanked Çréla Mahäräja for coming each year to bless Birmingham, and said that he was always filled with happiness and peace at such times.

Mr. O. P. Sharma was next to welcome Çréla Mahäräja. Being familiar with Vedic philosophy, Mr. Sharma explained that *sanätana-dharma* is not a religion or a sect, but rather, a way of life meant for the well-being of all people. As such, it does not conflict with any religion. He concluded his speech by saying that this world is God's creation, and that we are one family. The Bishop of Birmingham, Dr. Chris Hewer, also thanked Çréla Mahäräja for coming to share his spiritual wisdom, and he prayed that all would learn from him how we can better live in unity with respect for our diversity.

Next to speak was a Mr. Elder Hunter, representative of the Western European Church of Jesus Christ and Latter Day Saints. He said that although his community does not fully understand the Vaiñëava culture and methods of worship, it does understand the universal language of love, peace, devotion and respect. He concluded by saying that he felt these qualities were in Çréla Mahäräja, and that he was convinced he was sitting at the feet of a great spiritual leader.

After the guests had made their presentations, Çréla Mahäräja spoke on the universal nature of love

for God, stressing such love as the only means to attain lasting happiness, peace and unity in this world:

What is the meaning of unity in diversity, or diversity in unity, if there is no love and affection for God and all living entities? One can call the Lord by different names, in any language, but God is one without a second. We should try to realize this fact, and try to have love and affection for all humans, animals, trees, plants and other living creatures.



Certificate of appointment as "Honorary Citizen of the City of Houston" and "Goodwill Ambassador"

If we love the Supreme Lord, why do we quarrel among ourselves? He is the same one God, and yet we are quarrelling. This is because we don't know what actual love and affection is. If we had real love and affection for the one God, we would naturally also have love and affection for each other. We are all parts and parcels of the same Supreme Lord, yet we have divided up this

earth, saying, "This is my country, this is your country." The sun is one, the air is one, and we should therefore also be as one. This is unity in diversity.

Excerpts from Birmingham lecture, 14 June 2003

The audience listened intently. When it was time for the dignitaries to leave Çréla Mahäräja presented them with copies of Çréla Bhaktivinoda Öhäkura's *Jaiva-dharma* and some of Çréla Bhaktivedänta Svämé Mahäräja's books. These teachings, he had earlier explained, hold the secret to global peace and prosperity. ☩

Kabe Kṛṣṇa-Dhana Pāba

(māthura viraha)

by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura

*kabe kāñēa-dhana pāba, hiyāra mājhāre thoba,
juoāiba täpita-parāea
sājāiyā diba hiyā, väsaiba prāea-priyā,
nirakhiba se candra-bayāna (1)*

kabe – when; *kāñēa* – Kāñēa; *dhana* – the treasure; *pāba* – will attain; *hiyāra* – heart; *mājhāre* – within; *thoba* – will hold; *juoāiba* – to cool; *täpita* – burning; *parāea* – life; *sājāiyā* – decorating; *diba* – will do; *hiyā* – heart; *väsaiba* – will make sit; *prāea* – of life; *priyā* – beloved; *nirakhiba* – will behold; *se* – that; *candra* – moon-like; *bayāna* – face.

When will I attain Kāñēa, the treasure of my life, and hold Him in my heart, thus relieving my life of the burning pain of separation from Him? After decorating my heart, I shall seat the beloved of my life there and behold His moon-like face.

*he sajani! kabe mora hoibe su-dina
se prāea-nāthera saīge, kabe vä phiriba rāige,
sukhamoya yamunā-pulina (2)*

he – O; *sajani* – female friend; *kabe* – when; *mora* – my; *hoibe* – will come; *su-dina* – auspicious day; *se* – that; *prāea* – of life; *nāthera* – the master; *saī ge* – with; *kabe* – when; *vä* – possibly; *phiriba* – will wander; *rāige* – sportingly; *sukhamoya* – delightful; *yamunā* – Yamunā; *pulina* – banks.

O my dear confidante, when will that fortunate day come when I will wander playfully with the Lord of my life along the delightful banks of the Yamunā?

*lalitā-vičākhā loyā, tāhāre bheōiba giyā,
sājāiyā nānā upahāra
sadaya hoiyā vidhi, milāibe guēa-nidhi,
hena bhāgya hoibe ämära (3)*

lalitā – Lalitā; *vičākhā* – Vičākha; *loyā* – accompanying; *tāhāre* – to Him; *bheōiba* – will meet; *giyā* – going; *sājāiyā* – decorating; *nānā* – various; *upahāra* – gifts; *sadaya* – compassionate; *hoiyā* – having become; *vidhi* – Providence; *milāibe* – will reunite; *guēa* – qualities; *nidhi* – the treasure; *hena* – such; *bhāgya* – fortune; *hoibe* – will occur; *ämära* – mine.

When, in the company of Lalitā and Vičākha, will I go out to meet Him, having decorated various gifts for Him? Will Providence ever be merciful upon me and bestow the good fortune of being reunited with my Lord, the treasure-house of transcendental qualities?

*dāruēa vidhira näā, bhāgila premera häā,
tila-mätra nä rākhila tā'ra
kahe narottāma-däsa, ki mora jēvane äça,
chāoi' gela vrajendra-kumära (4)*

dāruēa – cruel; *vidhira* – Providence; *näā* – the dance; *bhāgila* – has scattered; *premera* – of love; *häā* – the market; *tila-mätra* – even an iota; *nä* – not; *rākhila* – is left; *tā'ra* – of that (*prema*); *kahe* – saying; *narottāma-däsa* – Narottāma dasa; *ki* – what; *mora* – my; *jēvane* – life; *äça* – hope; *chāoi'* – is left; *gela* – has gone; *vrajendra* – the king of Vraja; *kumära* – the son.

Alas! The cruel dance of Providence has broken up the market-place of love and not even a particle of love remains. Narottama dāsa laments: "What hope is there for me to live now that the son of the King of Vraja has left me?" 

"Love is a very sweet word. When it is spoken, a very sweet mood arises in the hearts of both the speaker and the listeners. Though few are able to understand its true meaning, everyone still likes to hear the word. All beings are controlled by love."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

