

Rays of The Harmonist

THE JOURNAL OF ŚRĪ GAUḌĪYĀ

VEDĀNTA SAMĪTĪ

NO. 12 ❁ GAURĀ-PURNĪMĀ 2003



In this issue:

Sad-guṇa and Bhakti
Sanātana-dharma
Jīva-sevā and Jīve-dayā
and more

vijayate śacī-nandanah

**caitanya-candra mama hṛt-kumudaṁ vikaśya
hṛdyaṁ vidhehi nija-cintana-bhṛṅga-raṅgaiḥ
kiñcāparādha-timiram nibiḍam vidhūya
pādāmṛtaṁ sadaya pāyaya durgataṁ mām**

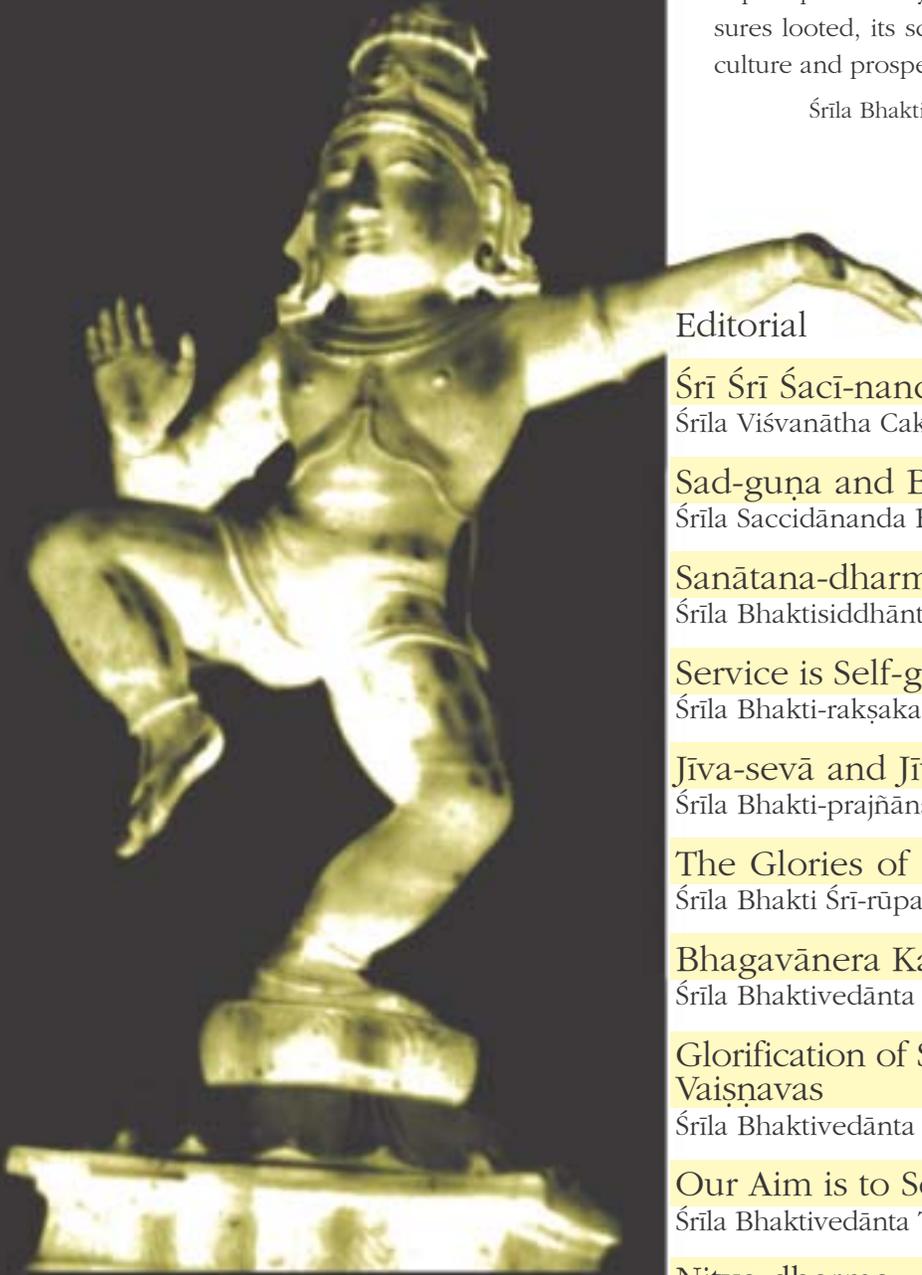
“O Caitanya-candra! I implore You to make the lotus flower of my heart bloom so that it will first attract and then enclose the bumblebee of remembrance of You. O merciful Lord! My second request is that after destroying the dense darkness of my offences, please make this miserable person drink the nectar of Your feet.”

Śrī Stavavali, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmi

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GAURĀ-PURṆIMĀ 2003



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Front cover:
Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Back cover:
(background landscape) Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa in
Navadvīpa and (inner photo) Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja speaking *hari-kathā* at Samudra-gaḍa
Campāhāṭī during Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā 2003

“If there is just one true performer of this *nitya-dharma* who keeps the fire of *hari-saṅkīrtana* ablaze, then his nation, caste and society can never be ruined – even after that nation is oppressed and kept dependent by another country and has its treasures looted, its scriptures burned to ashes, and its culture and prosperity destroyed.”

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

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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 which 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 Bhaktivīnoda 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, which glorifies transcendental sound (*śabda-brahmā*), has promised to deliver nothing but the message of Vaiṣṇava to the *jīva*'s door. As a fearless preacher of the Absolute Truth, it contains no topics to satisfy religions based upon the body and mind.

Unlike worldly magazines, the journal does not cater to the mundane enjoying propensity of the readers. Rather, by distributing *hari-kathā* and guiding the readers towards disinclination from worldliness, it inspires them to perform *bhajana* of Bhagavān.

Since *Rays of the Harmonist* is dedicated to propagating the glories of the transcendental Cupid, Śrī Gopīnātha, along with His *svarūpa-śakti*, Śrī Rādhārānī, and Their associates, it forever manifests itself in newer forms. One attains *hari-bhakti* by discussing the *siddhānta* realised by transcendental poets, philosophers and scholars; and one's faith becomes stronger by deliberating upon the writings of our previous Vaiṣṇava *mahājanas*. To discuss the eternal occupation (*nitya-dharma*) of the *jīva* is the sole purpose of this journal, as this alone will bring auspiciousness to the entire world.

Politics and diplomacy can never bring any good fortune in the form of equality of vision, independence and friendship; nonetheless, there is no end to politics and diplomacy in this world.

Never was there, and never will there be, anyone as benevolent as Śrī Gaura-sundara and His devotees. Whenever any nation, for its own selfish interests and for the so-called welfare of its people, causes harm to any other nation and consequently to all of humanity, its actions can never be called "welfare" in the real sense. Śrī Gaurahari and His devotees never perform such deceptive 'welfare work'. Their welfare, or gift, bestows complete auspiciousness at all times and in all circumstances. By thoughtfully reflecting upon this, one can realise Śrī Gaurahari's unprecedented compassion, which will completely astonish the heart.

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-dayā karaha vicāra
vicāra karile citte pābe camatkāra*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi 8.15)

If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply them to the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If you do so, you will find such mercy strikingly wonderful.

(The spirit of this Editorial has been taken from *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* 55/1)

***gadādhara! yadā paraḥ sa kila kaścānālokito
mayāśrita-gayādhvanā madhura-mūrtir ekas tadā
navāmbuda iva bruvan dhṛta-navāmbudo netrayor
luṭhan bhuvi niruddha-vāg vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ (1)***

gadādhara! – O Gadādhara; *yadā tadā* – at the time that; *mayā āśrita-gayā-adhvanā* – I travelled upon the road to Gayā; *kila ālokitaḥ* – I verily saw; *paraḥ saḥ ekaḥ kaścāna* – some supreme person; *iva* – resembling; *nava-ambudaḥ* – a new cloud; *madhura-mūrtiḥ* – He was the embodiment of sweetness; *bruvan* – His speaking was; *iva* – like; *nava-ambudaḥ* – the thundering of a new cloud; *netrayoḥ* – from His eyes; *dhṛta-nava-ambudaḥ* – fell a shower of tears as if falling from a new cloud; *luṭhan* – He rolled about; *bhuvī* – on the earth; *niruddha-vāg* – with choked voice; *vijayate* – may there be supreme victory; *śacī-nandanaḥ* – for the son of Śacī.

[One day Śrīman Mahāprabhu, while having a conversation with His beloved associate Śrī Gadādhara, said:] “O Gadādhara, when I was travelling along the road to Gayā, I saw one supremely attractive person. He was the very embodiment of unprecedented sweetness.” The son of Śacī spoke in a tone like the thundering of monsoon clouds, and from His eyes fell a shower of water as if from a thunder cloud. Then, immediately, His voice choked up and He rolled about upon the earth. May that Śrī Śacīnandana magnificently conquer my heart.

***alakṣita-carīm harīty udita-mātrataḥ kim daśām
asāv atibudhāgraṇīr atula-kampā-sampādikām
vrajan ahaha! modate na punar atra śāstreṣv iti
sva-śiṣya-gaṇa-veṣṭito vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ (2)***

vrajan – while strolling; *veṣṭitaḥ* – surrounded; *sva-śiṣya-gaṇa* – by the host of His students; *udita-mātrataḥ* – by the mere utterance; *hari iti* – of the name of Hari; *alakṣita-carīm* – from some unseen person (unintentionally); *kim daśām* – oh what a condition; *atula-kampam* – of indescribable trembling; *sampādikām* – took place; *ahaha!* – alas!; *asau* – He;

Śrī śrī sācī-nandana

atibudha-agraṇīḥ – the foremost of the intelligent; *atra* – now; *na puṇaḥ iti* – no longer; *modate* – delights; *śāstreṣu* – in the scriptures; *vijayate śacī-nandanah* – supreme victory, for the son of Śacī!

Aho! While surrounded by His multitude of students, He becomes overwhelmed by an unprecedented, indescribable state of wonderful trembling, merely upon hearing the syllables “Hari” uttered by them in the course of their studies or by anyone else. In this condition, He enjoys a delight that He, the foremost among the learned, no longer derives from discussing *śāstra*. May that Śrī Śacīnandana magnificently conquer my heart.

hahān kim idam ucyate paṭha paṭhātra kṛṣṇam muhur vinā tam iha sādhitām dadhati kim budhā! dhātavaḥ prasiddha iha varṇa-saṅghatita-samyag amnāyakaḥ sva-nāmnī yad iti bruvan vijayate śacī-nandanah (3)

hahā – alas!; *kim idam ucyate* – what are you saying; *atra* – now; *budhāḥ* – O intelligent boys; *muhur* – again and again; *paṭha paṭha* – chant, chant; *kṛṣṇam* – Kṛṣṇa’s name; *vinā* – without; *tam* – that name; *kim* – how; *dhātavaḥ* – can the recitation of Sanskrit verbal roots; *dadhati* – bestow; *sādhitām* – any good quality (auspiciousness); *iha* – to this world; *iti bruvan* – so saying; *prasiddhaḥ* – the celebrated; *amnāyakaḥ*; origin of the Vedas; *samyag* – completely; *varṇa-saṅghatita* – arranged the syllables of the Sanskrit alphabet; *sva-nāmnī* – in terms of His own names; *yad* – on account of which; *vijayate śacī-nandanah* – may there be supreme victory, for the son of Śacī!

One day when His students began their recitation of the Sanskrit verbal roots, Śrīman Mahāprabhu said, “Alas! O my dear intelligent boys, what are you reciting? Instead, just recite *kṛṣṇa-nāma* again and again, for without *nāma* how can the mere recitation of verbal roots bestow any redeeming good quality?” So saying, the celebrated Personality of

Godhead, who is the origin of the Vedas, taught the boys how each letter of the Sanskrit alphabet is originally a name of Kṛṣṇa. May that Śrī Śacīnandana Gauracandra magnificently conquer my heart.

navāmbuja-dale yad-īkṣaṇa-sa-varṇatā dīrghate sadā sva-hṛdi bhāvyatām sapadi sādhyatām tat-padam sa pāṭhayati vismitān smita-mukhaḥ sva-śiṣyān iti prati-prakaraṇam prabhur vijayate śacī-nandanah (4)

tat-padam – the feet of Śrī Hari; *yad-īkṣaṇa-sa-varṇatā-dīrghate* – whose eyes have the same reddish hue and are spread out; *nava-ambuja-dale* – as the elongated petals of a freshly blooming lotus; *bhāvyatām* – should be contemplated; *sādhyatām* – and attained; *sapadi* – now; *sadā* – and always; *sva-hṛdi* – within one’s heart; *smita-mukhaḥ* – with a smiling face; *saḥ pāṭhayati* – He instructed; *iti* – in this way; *vismitān* – He astonished; *sva-śiṣyān* – His students; *prati-prakaraṇam* – while teaching each part of speech (noun, verb, etc.) in Sanskrit grammar; *prabhuḥ vijayate śacī-nandanah* – may our Prabhu, the son of Śacī, be ever victorious!



One should now and forever contemplate and attain within one’s heart the feet of Śrī Hari (*tat-pada*), who has eyes of the same reddish hue and elongated shape as the petals of a newly blooming red lotus flower (for this is how one should come to the correct understanding of *tat-pada*, Sanskrit nouns). Thus, with a smiling face, He

- vijayāṣṭakam
Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

astonished His students while instructing them on the various components of Sanskrit grammar. May this Śrī Gaurāṅga-sundara, the son of Śacī, magnificently conquer my heart.

***kva yāmi karavāṇi kim kva nu mayā hariḥ labhyatām
tam uddiṣatu kaḥ sakhe! kathaya kaḥ prapadyeta mām
iti dravati ghūrṇate kalita-bhakta-kaṅṭhaḥ śucā
sammūrchayati mātaraṁ vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ (5)***

sakhe! – O friend; *kva yāmi* – where should I go; *karavāṇi kim* – what should I do; *kva nu* – where indeed; *hariḥ* – is Śrī Hari; *labhyatām* – to be attained; *mayā* – by Me; *kaḥ* – who; *uddiṣatu* – can direct Me; *tam* – to Him; *kathaya kaḥ* – tell Me who; *prapadyeta mām* – can bring Me my fulfilment; *iti* – thus; *dravati* – His heart melts; *ghūrṇate* – and He shakes, rolls about; *kalita-bhakta-kaṅṭhaḥ* – and clasps the devotees’ necks and embraces them; *saṅmūrchayati mātaraṁ* – and He causes His mother to faint (complete delusion); *śucā* – out of anxiety; *vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ* – may the son of Śacī be supremely victorious!

“O friend, where should I go, what should I do, and where shall I find Śrī Hari? Who can show Him to me? Tell me, who can I take shelter of who can fulfil my desire?” While speaking in this manner, Śrī Gaurasundara’s heart would melt and then, after rolling on the ground, He would clasp the necks of His *bhaktas* and embrace them, thus causing His mother Śacī to become completely deluded and faint in sorrow. May this son of Śacī magnificently conquer my heart.

***smarārbuda-durāpayā tanu-ruci-cchaṭā-cchāyayā
tamaḥ kali-tamaḥ-kṛtam nikhilam eva nirmūlayan
nṛnām nayana-saubhagam diviṣadām mukhais tārayan
lasann adhi-dharaḥ prabhur vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ (6)***

cchāyayā – by the reflection; *ruci* – attractive; *cchaṭā* – lustre; *tanu* – of His body; *durāpayā* – unrivaled; *arbuda* – ten-thousand; *smara* – of Cupids; *eva nirmūlayan* – He totally uproots; *nikhilam* – all; *tamaḥ* – ignorance; *kṛtam* – created; *kali-tamaḥ* – by the dark powers of Kali; *lasan* – that illustrious; *adhidharaḥ* – sustainer; *nayana* – eyes; *saubhagam* – fortune; *nṛnām* – for humanity; *tārayan* – bestowing upon them; *mukhais* – by the nectar of His lips; *divi-ṣadām* – to the celestials; *prabhur śacī-nandanaḥ vijayate* – may our Prabhu, the son of Śacī, be supremely victorious!

Simply by the reflection of the all-attractive lustre of His body, which is unrivaled by the combined lustre of ten-thousand Cupids, He fully uproots the ignorance of mankind created by the dark forces of Kali and bestows upon mankind the eyes of good fortune; and by the sweetness of

the nectar of His lips, He has brought delight to the demigods. May that illustrious Viśvambhara Śrī Śacīnandana magnificently conquer my heart.

**ayam kanaka-bhū-dharaḥ praṇaya-ratnam uccaiḥ kiran
kṛpāturatayā vrajann abhavad atra viśvambharaḥ
yad-akṣi-paṭha-sañcarat-suradhunī-pravāhair nijam
param ca jagat ārdrayan vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ (7)**

kṛpā-āturatayā – because of feeling pangs of compassion; *ayam* – this; *vrajan* – wandering; *kanaka* – golden; *bhū-dharaḥ* – mountain; *kiran* – scatters the rays (before all); *uccaiḥ* – from above; *praṇaya-ratnam* – the priceless gem of *prema*; *atra* – therefore; *abhavad* – He became known as; *viśvambharaḥ* – He who nurtures all beings (*viśvam*); *yad-suradhunī-pravāhair* – by the Gaṅgā-like currents; *sañcarat* – flowing from; *akṣi-paṭha* – the path of His eyes; *ardrayan* – He sprinkles; *nijam* – His own devotees; *param* – the non-devotees; *ca* – and; *jagat* – all beings; *vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ* – may our Prabhu, the son of Śacī, be supremely victorious!

Out of pangs of compassion, this wandering golden mountain, Śrī Gaurāṅga, eagerly distributed the priceless gem of *prema* to all without any consideration. Thus, by cherishing and nurturing the whole world, He became known as Viśvambhara. He not only drowned His own devotees with the Gaṅgā-like torrents gushing from His eyes, but the non-devotees also and, indeed, the entire world. May that Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, the son of Śacī, magnificently conquer my heart.

**gato 'smi mathurām mama priyatamā viśākhā-sakhī
gatā nu bata! kim daśām vada katham nu vedāni tām
itīva sa nijecchayā vraja-pateḥ sutah prāpitas
tadīya-rasa-carvaṇām vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ (8)**

bata! – alas!; *vada* – tell Me; *nu* – truly; *gato 'smi* – that I have departed; *mathurām* – for Mathurā; *kim* – what; *daśām* – is the condition; *mama priyatamā* – My dearest; *viśākhā-sakhī* – the friend of Viśākhā (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī); *gatā* – has come to; *katham nu* – how indeed; *vedāni* – can I have knowledge; *tām* – of Her; *itī* – thus; *iva* – it appeared; *sa sutah* – that son; *vraja-pateḥ* – of Nanda, the king of Vraja; *prāpitas* – attained; *tadīya-rasa-carvaṇām* – *rasa* relished by His consort; *tadīya-nijai-icchayā* – according to His own desire; *vijayate śacī-nandanaḥ* – may the son of Śacī be supremely victorious!

“Alas! Tell me truly. Now that I have departed for Mathurā what is the condition of My most beloved, the friend of Viśākhā? How can I know about Her state?” In order to know the *rasa* of separation relished by the friend of Viśākhā (Śrīmatī Rādhikā), Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Śyāmasundara, by His own sweet will, appeared as Śrī Gaurasundara. May that Śrī Śacīnandana magnificently conquer my heart.



**idam paṭhati yo 'ṣṭakam guṇa-nidhe! śacī-nandana!
prabho! tava padāmbuje sphurad-amanda-viśrambhavān
tam ujjala-matim nija-praṇaya-rūpa-vargānugam
vidhāya nija-dhāmani drutam urī-kuruṣva svayam (9)**

guṇa-nidhe! – O ocean of sublime qualities; *śacī-nandana!* – O son of Śacī; *prabho!* – O Lord; *urī-kuruṣva* – kindly accept; *tam yaḥ* – he who; *paṭhati* – recites; *sphurad-amanda-viśrambhavān* – with a very strong and intimate connection that shines brilliantly; *idam* – this; *aṣṭakam* – eightfold prayer; *tava padāmbuje* – at your lotus feet; *ujjala-matim* – as a sincere-hearted; *rūpa-varga-anugam* – follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; *nija-praṇaya* – endowed with love for You; *drutam* – and at once; *svayam* – personally; *vidhāya* – bestow on him; *nija-dhāmani* – residence in Your own abode.

O my master, the son of Śacī; O reservoir of all sublime qualities! You at once personally accept any sincere-hearted and fortunate person who recites this eightfold prayer at your lotus feet with an intimate and strong connection with You that shines brilliantly. Offering him the shelter of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's dear followers, who are filled with *prema* for You, You bestow upon that person residence within Your abode. 



Sad-guṇa

How many types of auspiciousness are there?

In the book *Śrī Hari-bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, auspiciousness (*śubhadṛvā*) has been described as one of the six glories of *bhakti*. The question, “How many kinds of auspiciousness are there?” is answered as follows:

*śubhāni prīṇanam sarva-jagatām anuraktatā
sad-guṇāḥ sukham ity ādīny ākhyātāni manīṣibhiḥ*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu
(Eastern Division, Sādhana-lahari 28)

Learned sages have described the meaning of auspiciousness as love for the entire creation, caring affection for all living entities, saintly character, happiness, and other such qualities.

The person in whom *bhakti* has arisen bestows affection to the whole world and becomes the object of attachment for everyone in the world. He effortlessly becomes the recipient of all saintly qualities and attains all types of pure happiness and auspiciousness. Learned scholars have described all these attributes as symptoms of auspiciousness.

All good qualities, and the demigods themselves, reside in bhagavad-bhaktas

The following words of the *Bhāgavata* describe that devotee who possesses all good qualities:

*yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
mano-rathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12)

One who has unflinching devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead has all the good qualities of the demigods. But one who is not a devotee of the Lord has only material qualifications that are of little value. This is because he is hovering on the mental plane and is certain to be attracted by the glaring material energy.

All good qualities along with the *devatas* take shelter of that person who has *akincanā-bhakti* for Bhagavān. How can all good qualities appear in a non-devotee whose mind always runs towards temporary worldly affairs? The *Skanda Purāṇa* states:

*ete na hy adbhutā vyādha tava himsādayo guṇāḥ
hari-bhaktau pravṛttā ye na te syuḥ para-tāpinaḥ*

O hunter! Good qualities, like non-violence, which you have developed, are not very astonishing, for those who are engaged in *hari-bhakti* are by nature never inclined to give pain to others.

and Bhakti

Good Qualities and Devotion

Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

*antaḥ-śuddhir bahiḥ-śuddhis
tapah-sānty-ādayas tathā
amī guṇāḥ prapadyante
hari-sevābhikāminām*

Internal and external purity, austerity, peacefulness and so on, take shelter of a person desiring to serve Hari.

The good qualities of a Vaiṣṇava

A list of good qualities has been compiled in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*kṛpālu, akṛta-droha, satya-sāra sama
nirdoṣa, vadānya, mṛdu, śuci, akiñcana
sarvopakāraka, śānta, kṣṇaiika-śaraṇa
akāma, nirīha, sthira, vijita-saḍ-guṇa
mīta-bhuk, apramatta, mānada, amānī
gambhīra, karuṇa, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, maunī*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.78–80)

Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, exclusively surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and fixed in devotional

service. They completely control the six bad qualities: lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent.

All these good qualities accompany *bhakti*. Now the following question arises: Does Bhakti-devī manifest after the appearance of all these qualities, or do all these good qualities take shelter of the *bhakta* in whom *bhakti* appears?

All good qualities automatically appear in a bhakta; there is no need to endeavour for them

The above question is answered as follows. According to the *bhakti-śāstras* a *jīva* develops faith in *bhakti* on the strength of *sukṛti* caused by a desire to perform *bhakti*. On attaining faith in *bhakti*, the *jīva* takes shelter at the feet of a *sādhu* and engages in *bhajana*. Immediately before engaging in *bhajana*, many *anarthas*, meaning those things that are opposed to good qualities, remain in him. By the strength of *bhakti* and *sadhu-saṅga*, all *anarthas* effortlessly melt away while performing *bhajana*, and in their place all good qualities naturally arise. Until *anarthas* are annihilated and auspicious qualities manifest, one remains on the stage of *bhajanābhāsa* or *nāmābhāsa*. As one performs *śuddha-bhajana* – that is, chants *śuddha-*

**“Auspicious qualities are cultivated on the paths of yoga and morality,
but a *bhakta* does not need to separately cultivate them.
Persons on other paths may attain all good qualities,
but in the absence of *bhakti*, these qualities are like many ornaments
on an ugly lady, and can never actually be beautiful.”**

nāma – *anarthas* are destroyed and simultaneously saintly qualities manifest. At this time, the *sādhaka* has no taste for sinful activities or *anarthas*. For this reason Śrī Mahāprabhu said:

*eka kṛṣṇa-nāme kare sarva-pāpa kṣaya
nava-vidhā bhakti pūrṇa nāma haite haya*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 15.107)

Simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa once, a person is relieved from all the reactions of a sinful life. One can complete the nine processes of devotional service simply by chanting the holy name.

All the good qualities, such as *jīve-dayā* (mercy to all living entities), *niṣpāpatā* (a non-sinful nature), *satyasāratā* (truthfulness), *samadarśitva* (equal vision), *dainya* (humility), *śānti* (peacefulness), *gām-bīrya* (gravity), *saratā* (simplicity), *maitrī* (amiability), *daksatā* (expertise), *asat-kathāy audasīnya* (indifference to mundane talk), *pavitrātā* (purity), *tuccha-kāma tyāga* (the renunciation of useless work) and many others, naturally arise along with the appearance of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. It is not for the *bhakta* to attempt to attain other qualities separately from performing *bhajanā*. The cultivation of *śuddha-bhakti* is indeed sufficient to achieve this. By cultivating *śuddha-bhakti*, *anarthas* are quickly destroyed and auspicious qualities are quickly awakened.

The appearance of good qualities is possible only by taking *sādhū-saṅga*, not by following the path of yoga and morality

To cultivate the traditional practices of *yoga* such as *yama*, *niyama*, *pratyāhāra* and so on, is troublesome; and success, which only comes after a long period of practice, is checked by unwanted obstructions. As long

as the *jīva* does not develop faith leading to *bhakti*, known as *bhakti-unmukhī śraddhā*, the determination to develop these qualities of the *yoga* path remains in him. Therefore only by performing *bhajanā* in the association of a *sādhū* will all good qualities appear in that person in whom *śraddhā* has arisen. Auspicious qualities are cultivated on the paths of *yoga* and morality but a *bhakta* does not need to separately cultivate them. Persons on other paths may attain all good qualities, but in the absence of *bhakti*, these qualities are like many ornaments on an ugly lady, and can never actually be beautiful. On the other hand if, by the mercy of a *sādhū*, they fortunately gain *bhakti-unmukhī śraddhā*, they will undoubtedly perform *sādhana* immediately to achieve *uttamā-bhakti*.

The instruction to accept the shelter of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* in *sādhū-saṅga*

O brothers who are filled with good qualities! Do not waste your time uselessly. Please make your life and *dharma* successful by taking shelter of the lotus feet of a devotee. This is the highest fruit of whatever auspicious qualities you have attained. It is incorrect to think that just by accumulating auspicious qualities one will get *bhakti*. Auspicious qualities will automatically appear in a person who has *bhakti*. One may have all auspicious qualities other than having taken one-pointed shelter of Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇaikaśaraṇa*), but until he develops faith in *bhakti*, he will not attain *bhakti*. Without possessing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, even auspicious qualities are not glorious. You should know that the life of a *jīva* who is endowed with all auspicious qualities but bereft of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, is useless. 

[Translated from Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā 1/8]

Sanātana-dharma

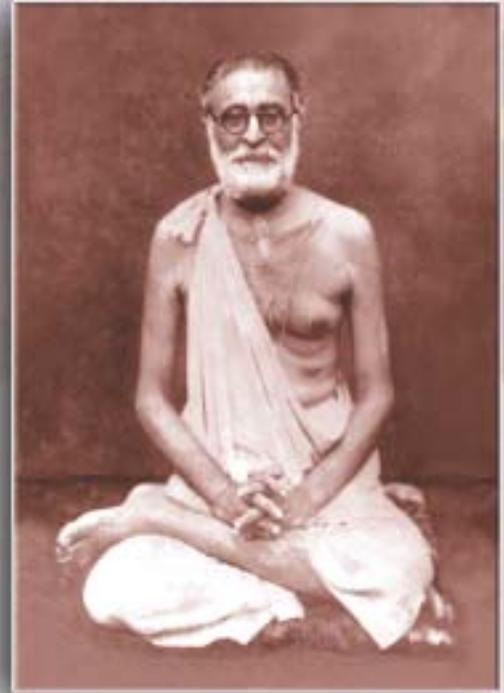
Lecture at Bāṇī-bhavan (Benares City)

By

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

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There was a large gathering of residents and visitors at Bāṇī-bhavan on 18th Nov. 1931, to listen to lectures that had been arranged to be delivered by the Bengali Ṭola Durgā-pūjā Association. The speakers were His Holiness Tridaṇḍi-svāmī Śrīmad Vana Mahārāja and His Divine Grace *parivrājakācārya* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, *ācārya* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Community, who follows the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. His Divine Grace was President of the meeting. The subject of the discourse was “*sanātana-dharma*” (the eternal natural function of the soul).

After Śrīmad Vana Mahārāja had placed before the audience the general bearings of the subject by his speech, the President delivered his learned discourse. A few of the points of the lecture, which took about two hours in delivery, are presented in the following imperfect summary.

The speaker introduced himself as the “meanest of the mean” in the language of one of his superiors, namely the *ācāryas*, who had adequately dealt with the subject, and requested his audience to overlook

any austere-ness of his language on the ground that he has been tied to his method by long habit.

Power and the Source of All Power

The soul’s eternal function is that which is unchangeable and suitable for all time and all persons, and which has for its support the one eternal, supreme *puruṣa*. In the sphere of pure cognition, *puruṣa* signifies dominating activity. The reciprocal term to *puruṣa* is *prakṛti*, whose function is to be dominated by the *puruṣa*. The eternal function may be located in the sphere of the dominated or it may be supposed to belong to the realm of the Possessor of Power. In this mundane world we find ourselves in the realm of the dominated, supposing ourselves to be the possessors of dominion.



**“The objects that are knowable to man are products of nature
and are also made cognisable to him by the same agency.
They are part and parcel of the mundane power.
They do not take us beyond the category of that power.”**

The eternal function is not directed to Power but to the Possessor or Source of Power, the real entity of the *Bhāgavatam*, as distinct from the plurality of entities that are the products of nature. The Absolute Reality of the Source of all Power distinguishes Himself from the category of Power. The Source of Power is not identical with Power. The *Bhāgavatam* does not tell us of the products of nature, but of non-produced, eternal entities. The terms used to designate the two divisions of entities are *prākṛta* (products of nature) and *apṛākṛtā* (entities not produced by nature).

Knowledge, the Knower and the Known

The objects that are knowable to man are products of nature, and are also made cognisable to him by the same agency. They are part and parcel of the mundane power. They do not take us beyond the category of that power. There can be no function without power. Philosophy accordingly aims at the elimination of the normal activity, characterised by the triple texture of knowledge, the knower and the known, in order to get at the source of power. The cognitive function of our senses is confined to the activities of nature. The empiricist is limited to the examination of the transformations of physical power. Such examination leads to the proposal for elimination of the triple condition. Indivisible knowledge has the opportunity of manifesting His appearance only on the elimination of the triple mundane quality.

Transitoriness is the characteristic of all phenomena on this mundane plane. The transitory activity cannot be designated as the eternal function. That which transcends “*a-tat*” (the non-Absolute) is “*tat*” (the Absolute) – the real, indivisible knowledge. That knowledge is

different from all so-called knowledge obtained by us as enjoyers or as abstainers from worldly enjoyment. Inanimation offers itself to our consciousness as the goal, at the point where the faculty of mundane enjoyment is sought to be artificially extinguished. The triple specification of knowledge, the knower and the object of knowledge, is concomitant of the limiting activity of the senses. This activity creates all difference and discord, and is the real impediment of uninterrupted harmony and love. In the attempt to avoid limitation, the dualistic principle is sought to be discarded by dint of mere metaphysical argument. We seek to get rid of our separate free existence to extinguish the triple texture of the mundane activity. Those conclusions are the products of imagination and do not touch the real issue. They are the products of the operation of the deluding potency, the result of the inaptitude to receive the enlightening meaning of the words of the scriptures.

Had this not been so, our pure spiritual essence would find Vāsudeva in everything. The opening verses of the *Bhāgavatam* instruct us to address our prayers to the Ultimate Truth as distinct from the mundane. The Ultimate Truth cannot be realised except by His own light. Those who realise Him are many. There are distinctive, individual personalities of servitors in the realm of the Absolute.

How to Access the Unalloyed Spiritual Essence

I do not see because my vision is liable to be eclipsed when I am located in the realm of three dimensions. These wrong conceptions are not got rid of till I am established in the purely spiritual state, which is free from all mundane conditions. They have established their firm hold on me by my neglect to take



**We are disposed to accept, as our eternal function,
nothing short of the ideal of the service of the milkmaids of Vraja,
taught and practised by Śrī Caitanya.**

into my serious consideration the claims of the transcendental existence. In the *Bhāgavatam*, Viśvanātha (Lord Śiva) instructs Satī as to the proper nature of Vāsudeva. He tells her of the activities and realisations of the unalloyed spiritual essence. Viśvanātha makes his obeisance to Vāsudeva. Those who are willing to hear those words, in the spirit of humility exhibited by Viśvanātha, can hear them. Those who covet fame and wealth are given those things by *mahā-māyā*.

The Eternal Function of the Soul

The teachings of Śrī Gaurasundara refer to the same unalloyed function of the soul. The person in whom the real hankering for listening to *hari-kathā* (word of Godhead) manifests itself, displays total absence of every form of worldly pedantry and vanity. To such a person it is not the summum bonum to attain even a high degree of material civilisation. The alternative of merging in the Brahman presents itself to the choice of the soul as the summum bonum at a certain stage of development of mental speculation. The formulation of such a doctrine marked an advance on the Buddhist position, which had put the principle of mercy to all animation above the acquirements of worldly elevationism. The service of Puruṣottama is beyond the range of speculation of those who regard merging in the indivisible cognitive principle as the goal. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has accordingly advised us to cease from all such speculations and concentrate on the consideration of the real entity. It is, therefore, necessary to turn our attention to the serious consideration of the function of the pure soul in the positive eternal world.

The unborn has precedence over the born. The Truth was revealed in the heart of Brahmā before he

began to create this world. Subsequently, by the operation of the influence of time, different speculations on the subject of the Ultimate Reality made their appearance in this world. At that time, Kṛṣṇa came down to the mundane plane in different forms to prevent different erroneous views regarding the nature of the Absolute, which had sprung into existence, from eclipsing the knowledge handed down by Brahmā through the medium of the bona-fide spiritual teachers. The ten *avatāras* of Kṛṣṇa were for the purpose of re-establishing in this world the eternal function of the soul (*sanātana-dharma*).

That function is not limited to the narrow scope of the partial visions of Bodhāyaṇa Ṛṣi and Lakṣman Deśika. Ānanda-tīrtha could rise above them to the conception of the worship of boy Gopāla. The son-hood of Kṛṣṇa is inconceivable to the reverential serving attitude. Śrī Rāmānuja has offered his arguments against the desirability of intimate relationship with Godhead on the ground that it would give rise to great evils. But Śrī Caitanyadeva, Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, Vidyāpati, Caṇḍīdāsa, Jayadeva and the followers of Śrī Caitanyadeva have helped to extend our spiritual vision.

The Pinnacle of Theism

We are disposed to accept, as our eternal function, nothing short of the ideal of the service of the milkmaids of Vraja, taught and practised by Śrī Caitanya. Consort-hood constitutes the highest plank of theism. Other opinions are for the enlightenment of the ignorant. They are of no further use, on the attainment of enlightenment. Those opinions have different objects in view, and have put very different interpretations on the scriptural evidence. They are hampered by this

“The worship of those who praise Godhead by offering their reverential homage, is inferior to the intimate service of Vraja. ... Godhead is cherished with the tenderest affection. They do not know whether Kṛṣṇa is any other’s friend. They really know that He is certainly theirs.”



radical defect and by their poverty of convincing power. The *Śaṅkarṣaṇa-sūtra* has dealt with this vital point. The enlightening potency of the transcendental sound purges our minds of all preventive dirts and enables us to accept the true meaning of the words of the scriptures. We are thereby enabled to avoid all hasty conclusions that have a tendency to drive us, more or less, to seek to merge in the impersonal aspect of the Absolute.

The worship of those who praise Godhead by offering their reverential homage, is inferior to the intimate service of Vraja. We should not remain content with the level of service of Arjuna. Citraka, Patraka, Śrīdāmā and Sudāma stand on a much more intimate footing. They offer to Kṛṣṇa the remainders of their tasted food. Godhead is cherished with the tenderest affection. They do not know whether Kṛṣṇa is any

other’s friend. They really know that He is certainly theirs. The son is served by his parents from his infancy. Kṛṣṇa is not served by Nanda and Yaśodā in expectation of any return of service from Him in their old age.

If we remain confined to the two and a half varieties of reverential service by accepting the tidings of Rāmānuja we would not be relieved thereby from the cultivation of the remaining two and a half varieties of intimate relationships to be found in this world. But there can be no absence of fullness in Godhead. In the theistic exhibition it has been demonstrated how we can see only the lower half of the Supreme when we look up to Goloka from below. Śaṅkara and some of his followers have taken exception to Vaiṣṇavism, alleging that it is opposed to the Vedas. Śaṅkara’s views had an undoubted efficacy for his times to prevent the abuses of the Buddhist thought. But his disregard of considerations in favour of the distinctive transcendental activities of pure souls,

is altogether untenable. The point of view of Śaṅḍilya Ṛṣi, whom he attempts to refute, stands fully vindicated to all sincere inquirers. This has been conclusively shown by many distinguished writers.

We are also not satisfied by the level of worship of Rāma-Sītā, which stands in the way of the pastimes of non-conventional divine amour. It is not possible for us to realise the nature of the service of the milkmaids of Vraja as long as the existence of the gross and subtle physical bodies persist to obscure our vision. The desire of the Ṛṣis of Daṇḍakāraṇya to serve Rāmacandra in the relationship of consort-hood was not fulfilled till after they had been reborn in Vraja. The cult of Vāsudevism as imagined by Bhandarkar and European scholars is not reconcilable with the needs of complete self-realisation. The perfection of service is not thereby attained. ❀

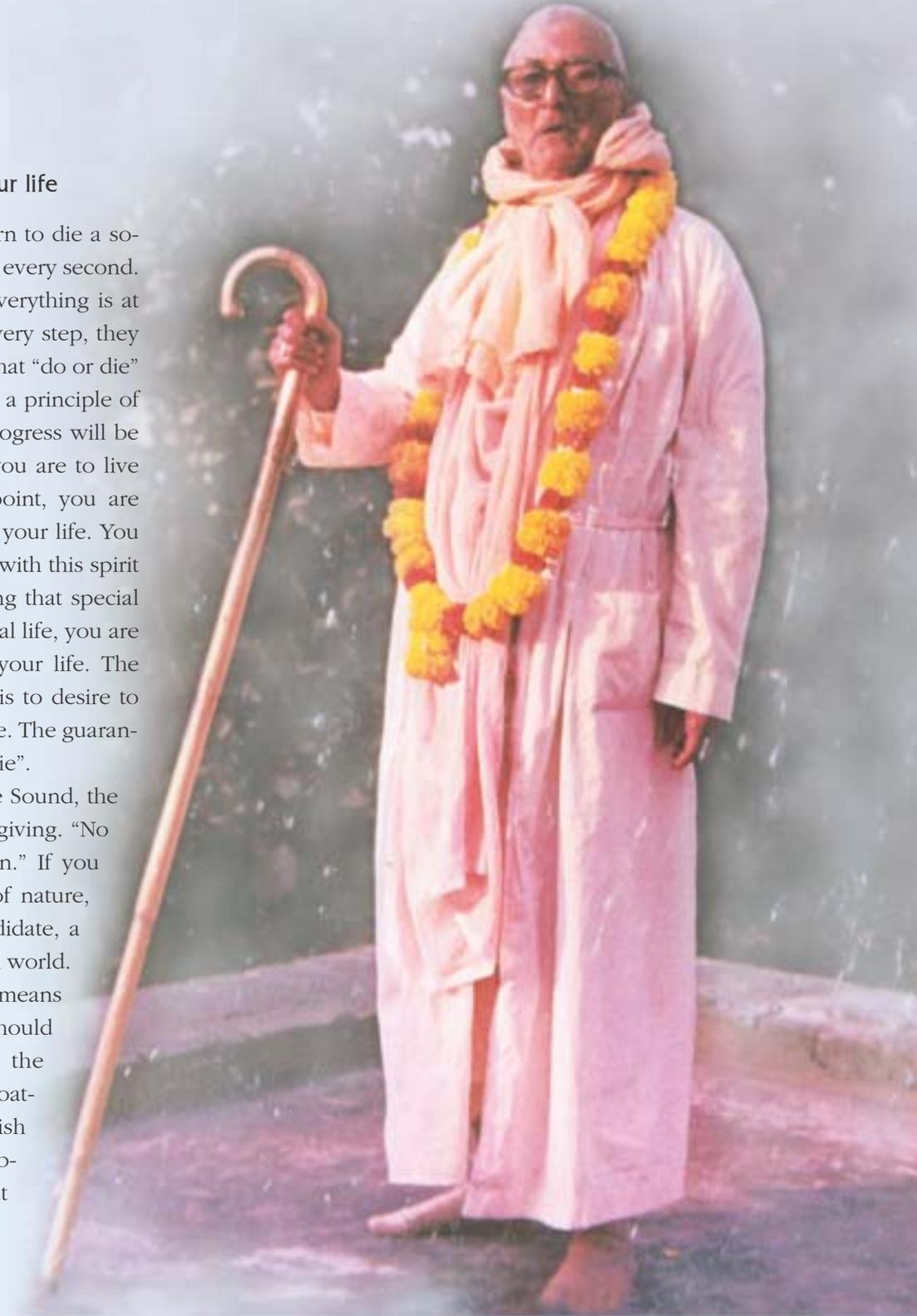
Service is Self-giving

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Invite death at every point in your life

Learn to give yourself. Learn to die a so-called death; embrace it at every second. In this political and social world everything is at the cost of life. In every duty, at every step, they are ready to give up their lives for that “do or die” conception. One who accepts such a principle of life is sure to progress. And this progress will be very, very intense. “Do or die” – you are to live with such an attitude. At every point, you are ready to do anything at the cost of your life. You will be a great success if you serve with this spirit at heart. When you are approaching that special spiritual substance, that high spiritual life, you are to invite death at every point of your life. The most intense desire you can have is to desire to “do or die” at every point in your life. The guarantee is, “I shall attain that or I shall die”.

You are to approach the Divine Sound, the Holy Name, with this spirit of self-giving. “No giving, no getting; no risk, no gain.” If you want to give with such intensity of nature, then you will be adored as a candidate, a bona fide candidate, of that spiritual world. So self-giving is necessary. Service means self-giving, self-dedication. That should be our attitude in approaching the higher plane. In this way, all the coatings of the material ego will vanish one by one, and the genuine substance from within will come out and select its own soil. “This is my home, this is my sweet home.”



Real fortune is acquired by self-giving

So many coverings cause us to deviate in different directions. These foreign things are taking us far, far away from our *svarūpa*, that noble self of a servant in the highest plane of the whole organism. The Beautiful is playing and dancing in His own sweetness and affection. We can reach Him there, but we have to follow this course of “do or die” at every moment. We can acquire our fortune through self-giving and not by sitting in one place and collecting information about different places. What utility can we get from collecting that information? What benefit can we derive from it? As a master, “I sit in my room, in my chair, and I will gather different information to be utilised for my self-interest”. This kind of mentality is not acceptable.

The process of self-giving is given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī:

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt
tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ
athāsaktis tato bhāvas
tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayam premaḥ
prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.4.15–16)

Ādau śraddhā means to go forth with this faith, to “do or die” at every point in your life, not in the physical sense, of course, but in the internal sense [the ego].

Embrace the twenty-four hour connection

Bhajana-kriyā means self-giving with the spirit of “do or die” – self-giving, inner self-giving, ego-giving. If you can adopt this process, then the undesirable things within you will disappear very easily and quickly. Then, *niṣṭhā* will come and you will find a continuous connection with this sort of principle in your life. This principle will act continuously in you, and other fleeting, mean desires will not be able to approach you or touch you. You will then find *ruci*, a taste, a real taste, for that most charming substance. Otherwise, before that continuous connection with



“The Beautiful is playing and dancing in His own sweetness and affection. We can reach Him there, but we have to follow this course of ‘do or die’ at every moment.”

Him, whatever taste we think we possess is all treachery. It is not real taste. We want a twenty-four hour continuous connection with that charming substance. Real taste will come after we attain that continuous twenty-four hour connection in divine thought of Him. That taste we can rely on. The taste we may find when we are in other positions is not reliable, but the taste that comes from a twenty-four hour connection, eliminates all other charms of this world and is reliable. That *ruci*, that taste, will guide us. Then *āsakti* comes and then *bhāva*. There are so many signs when you get to that *bhāva* stage. This *bhāva-bhakti* expresses itself as a ray of the sun of *prema*. In this way we are to progress through the process of self-giving.

Our Guru Mahārāja especially stressed this point and attracted us to this way of making progress. No imitation is allowed as it has no good effect. We will imitate for some time, then we will make some

offences that will disqualify us. This will slow down our progress in the process of self-giving. It may even bring it to a complete stop. If we are taken to the examiner, and we get a stamp of disqualification, it will hamper our future progress. So, *aparādha*, offence, we must be very careful about this. That circle records this as a discredit, a disqualification. The examiners will give a stamp of disqualification for *aparādha* – a criminal offence. It makes us unfit and will go against us; therefore, we shall be very much careful not to commit any offence. We should remain newcomers, always seeking a new introduction. We should not have a criminal record against us. We must always be careful to protect ourselves from committing any offences against the devotees. It will slow down our spiritual progress.

Learning the gift of giving yourself

When we follow the highest object of our eternal life we must be very, very careful. This warning was especially given by our Guru Mahārāja – “*sevon mukhe*”. We were not allowed to read much – even about ordinary subjects dealing with *sādhana*, devotional practices,



“It is rare to find what is necessary for our progress. It comes from a higher plane and to substantiate that reality within us we must surrender ourselves to it.”

what to speak of the higher literatures. But we were encouraged by “*śravaṇa, kīrtana*”, hearing from the real source and doing accordingly. In this way, by serving, learn to give yourself

properly. There are different methods of service: *śravaṇa*, hearing; *kīrtana*, chanting; *smarana*, remembering; *vandana*, praying, etc. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has mentioned sixty-four kinds of devotional practices and a thousand kinds of devotional practices are further mentioned.

Work under the guidance of a Vaiṣṇava

Practices, however, are not very important. The very life of the practice is all-important and that is self-dedication, self-giving. So be very particular to learn dedication and self-giving. This means practically to work under the guidance of a Vaiṣṇava devotee, getting ready to work under a proper agent. This will help you a great deal to learn, to practise, what is dedication to that Sweet Lord. Guidance must come from those above you. It is very rare, but it is most valuable to us. Whatever directions are coming from above, we must selflessly embrace them as all in all. This is the clue;

this is the key to the hidden treasures in your heart. I will not work with my whims or serve men on my level, but I shall very eagerly obey what directions come from the above plane. This is service proper and it will be a real help for progressing on the path of dedication and self-giving.

Once in his final days, our Guru Mahārāja said to a *sannyāsī* who had led a full twenty years in service to the mission, “You did not see me. You could not see who I am. Like a *zamīndār* you have kept some householder servitors under you and from time to time, you try to give something from them to me. You

have become a broker. You are keeping something under you, and now and then you try to give some contribution from them to me. You are a broker, but you should be wholesale mine – my agent. Whatever service you do in this world you do on my behalf as you are only my agent. But you are not doing acting according to this truth. You are dependent on those householders while keeping a connection with me. This is not necessary. You are not a member of this world. You are mine alone. Whatever I say, you should do that and not sell yourself to any proposal of this world. You are wholesale my servant.”

It is rare to find what is necessary for our progress. It comes from a higher plane and to substantiate that reality within us we must surrender ourselves to it.

*viracaya mayi daṇḍam dīna-bandho dayāmī vā
gatir iha na bhavattaḥ kācid anyā mamāsti
nīpatatu śata-koṭi-nirbharam vā navāmbhaḥ
tad api kila-payodaḥ stūyate cātakena*

The *cātaka* bird is a kind of bird that only drinks rain water from above. This class of bird is always looking high in the sky for rain drops to fall. There may be much water available here on the ground, but they will not take a drop of it. They are waiting for that rain water that comes from above. Sufficient rain water may come, or thunder may come, still they will not take a single drop from the earth. Our attitude should be like this. Whatever directions come from above, we shall take on our heads as our life and soul. But we shall never take any plan from this mundane world. The director, the master, the Lord, is there and I am connected with Him.

This sort of practice is helpful. We may take the holy name, or hear devotional musical chants, but the very life will be that it is coming from the above place; and “I am carrying out that order”. In this way, I may be taken above to the higher planes. I shall be directed to the higher layers and I may go there eternally. I am preparing myself only to carry out this spotless, uncoloured order and surrender to it without questions. If we are sure it is coming from the higher layer, then we shall live selflessly at His disposal. We want selfless service to the higher source; not to any mundane source. This is necessary for real progress in the line of self-dedication and self-giving. This is service. There

are so many signs and symptoms to indicate the higher directions descending from Gurudeva. We shall wholeheartedly embrace the directions given by Gurudeva.

Truth cannot come within our jurisdiction

The sum and substance is that by obeying the directions from the Higher, we can make progress towards higher planes. By serving the Higher, we can hope to be selected by the Higher. We may then be taken to that higher layer if our dedication is considered qualified. If we want to go towards that high, high super-conscious region, this process of self-giving will be the main tenure of our lives.

Revealed truth is necessary. No intelligence or reason can be applied here. If we apply any reason, we will be nowhere. A man who is expert in argument will defeat another man not so qualified, but the Truth remains regardless. Intellect and reason have no position there because Truth, super-consciousness and dedication do not come within the jurisdiction of intellect, logic and reason. We can only invite that high quest by serving, by honoring, by self-giving and by heart-giving, never otherwise.

It is not possible to enforce, capture or encase Him by any intrigue or by any conspiracy. This will have the opposite effect and is considered as Satan in another colour. God realisation means *śaraṇāgati*, self-surrender unto Him. We can approach Him not only through self-abnegation, but with deep self-surrender. This self-surrender, *śaraṇāgati*, will put us in connection with the higher, nobler substance. This self-surrender, self-giving, is to be cultivated at all cost.

Service is to God, and not to *māyā*, misconception. We must be very careful that we are not serving a charming form of *māyā*. In the form of god – a godly form –



**“Intellect and reason
have no position there
because Truth,
super-consciousness
and dedication
do not come
within the jurisdiction
of intellect,
logic and reason.”**

some *māyā* is coming to take us away from our service. In our present position we must be very attentive to whom we are serving.

Try to connect to where you are never the master

Jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva – “To hatefully give up all proposals that the intellect offers to you, to hatefully throw out what your intellect comes to propose or give you.” What the intellect is able to judge and accept or not accept must be of a lower type. So, summarily, you are to reject it and understand that you must bow down your head, *namanta eva*. We are to approach the higher substance in this way. Try to connect with that section where you will always be a servant with folded palms and never a master. Such abnegation, such courageous of self-giving, is necessary if you want to live in the higher plane; otherwise you will become a master and reign in hell. In Satan’s words, “It is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven.” But, in wholesale self-giving, just the opposite is necessary.

Even tears and cries will have no value if the inner tendency of self-giving is not awakened. *Sevā*, “service is self-giving,” is the main principle of life in the devotee. This self-giving is really meant for the higher planes and not here and there around us in this mortal world. Otherwise, this self-giving tendency may be captured by the hateful things of this perishable world. *Jñāna*, knowledge, is supposed to be very, very pure and free from doubt. The majority of persons consider knowledge to be very innocent as it does not mix with these gross material things. Higher personalities consider knowledge to be very pure, very innocent and spotless, but if this knowledge is not connected with Kṛṣṇa it must be hatefully rejected.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.12) it is written:

*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam
na śobhate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam
kutaḥ punaḥ śaśvad abhadram īśvare
na cārpitam karma yad apy akāraṇam*

Knowledge is widely considered as pure, innocent and spotless. But if it is not connected with the Positive Absolute Good, then it is your enemy and it will devour you. If you are to consider like that, then you will become a qualified candidate. This is *jñāna-sūnyā-bhakti*. *Śaraṇāgati*, self-surrender is so pure that connection with *jñāna*, which is considered to be very innocent and spotless, is also hatefully rejected. Such a degree of self-surrender is necessary for the higher association of devotion proper. *Jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam*, the charm of material acquisition and the charm of mastery, of knowing everything, are both rejected. We do not know anything in the Infinite, even in magnitude or quality. We cannot know anything in the Infinite. It is a flow of autocracy. What can we know?

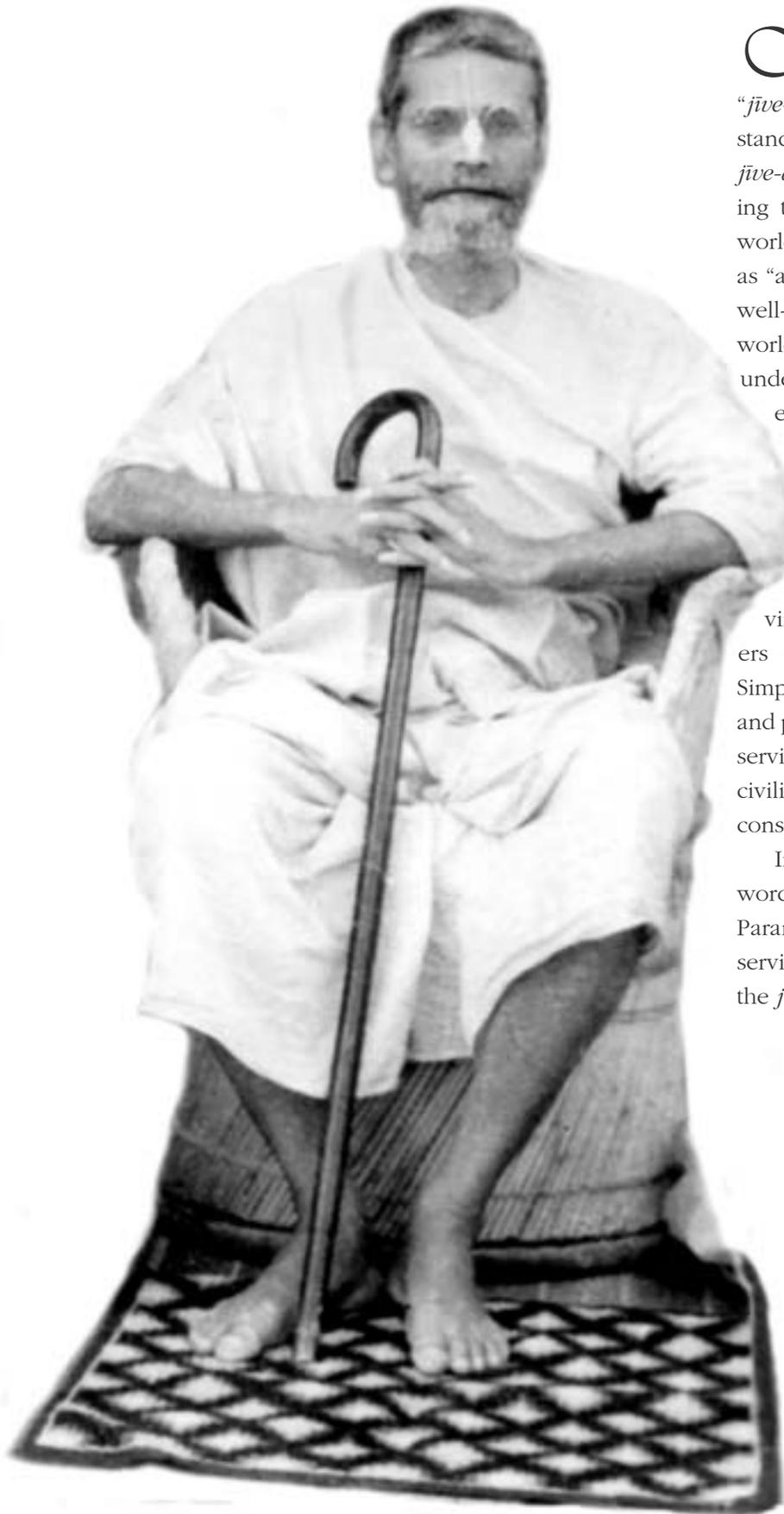
“Higher personalities consider knowledge to be very pure, very innocent and spotless, but if this knowledge is not connected with Kṛṣṇa it must be hatefully rejected.”

The noble, higher, super-conscious region

Knowledge does not mean to store so many false incidents and sell them to the world for some name and fame. No! That is to be hatefully rejected – given up. But service, unconditional self-giving, is noble and will take you to the higher, super-conscious region. *Jñāna* and *karma* are both discouraged. We are dis-

couraged from handling matter and knowledge. Knowledge will not apply in that plane of dedication. That is the plane of Absolute Will, the flow of Absolute Autocracy and no rule or regulation can work there. False gathering, false storing, has no value there, no market value. No market is there! Therefore, only by self-surrender, self-giving, will you have such high quality of devotion. So, a serving or self-giving attitude is our friend. We are a unit of serving attitude, and service means to surrender to the Higher. The Higher means “uncontaminated with material and intellectual acquisition”. This sort of higher devotion swiftly carries us to His divine abode where love, beauty and charm reign supreme. 

[Courtesy of Śrīpad B.P. Hṛṣīkeśa Mahārāja]



Most people do not finely differentiate between the two words, “*jīva-sevā*” and “*jīve-dayā*”. Usually a person fails properly to understand the distinguishing characteristics of *jīva-seva* and *jīve-dayā*, and therefore ends up with an understanding that is completely opposite to the truth. In this world many people cherish the desire to be celebrated as “a great thinker”, “magnanimous”, “benevolent”, “a well-wisher of the society” and “a well-wisher of the world”; but because such people do not properly understand this subject, the culmination of all their efforts is like the labour of animals.

The people of the world are so engrossed in their bodily comforts and in fulfilling their selfish desires that if even a scent of an attitude to serve others is perceived in someone, it is greatly appreciated. Service to others (*para-sevā*) is a virtue; however, if it becomes the deceiving of others (*para-chalnā*), it can never be praiseworthy. Simply applying the label “service” to acts of deception and propagating them as ‘service’, does not make them service in the true sense. Will the thoughtful and civilised human society of the twentieth century not consider this fact just once?

In the terms “*para-sevā*” and “*para-upakāra*”, the word “*para*” means “topmost”. In other words it means Paramātmā-Viṣṇu. Thus the word “*para*” refers only to service to Paramātmā, the topmost entity. In one sense, the *jīva* is also *para* (superior); however, as long as he

Jīva-

has *anarthas* he is bound by the three modes of nature.

*yayā sammohito jīva
ātmānam tri-guṇātmakam
paro 'pi manute 'nartham
tat-kṛtam cābhipadyate*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.5)

Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks himself to be a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries.

To render service to the *jīva* who has been conditioned from a time without beginning, whose consciousness is covered by the three modes of *māyā* and who is distracted from his constitutional nature, is to render service to his condition plagued by *anarthas*. In other words service is rendered to enable him to fulfil his enjoying propensity.

Many considerations are inseparably tied to the concept of *sevā*. First, one has to consider whether or not the entity to whom service is to be rendered is in fact *sevya*, an object worthy of worship; in other words, is he *prabhu-tattva*, the supreme worshipable reality? Second, service entails pleasing the object of service in a manner that is favourable to him. And third, one must consider the state of consciousness of the servant (*sevaka*) himself.

Is the *jīva* who has been averse to his constitutional nature and who has been covered by the three modes of material nature from a time without beginning, in fact *prabhu-tattva*? Will increasing the pleasure of one who possesses *anarthas* bring auspiciousness to him? And what benefit will the *sevaka*, who is trying to bring pleasure to others, derive from these acts? By answering these questions in an impartial manner we can observe that the term *jīva-sevā* is itself not even logical. The *jīva* is never *prabhu-tattva*.

*'māyādhīśa' 'māyā-vaśa' – īśvare-jīve bheda
hena-jīve īśvara-saha kaha ta' abheda*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 6.162)

The Lord is the master of all potencies, and the living entity is their servant. That is the difference between the Lord and the living entity. However, you declare that the Lord and the living entities are one and the same.

The terms *sevyābhimāna* (possessing the ego of being the object of service), *sevakābhimāna* (possessing the ego of being the servant) and *sevābhimāna* (possessing the ego of being one who renders service), are meaningless if they are used in relation to one who is bound by *māyā* and if they are put into practice by offering that person sense enjoyment. To render service to debauchees, thieves, cheaters, donkeys, horses, trees and creepers, etc. is nothing but supplying sense

sevā and Jīve-dayā

Service to the Jīva and Compassion upon the Jīva

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

“But acting for the satisfaction of the *jīva* in his bound stage, while he still has *anarthas*, cannot be termed real *sevā*. Only compassion (*dayā*) can be shown to such a person.”

enjoyment to *jīvas* who are bound by *māyā*. None of these entities is *sevya*, or *prabhu-tattva*.

A debauchee and a thief are both bound by *māyā*. It is true that by providing a debauchee with a woman or by giving a thief another’s wealth, one renders service to them by furnishing them with sense enjoyment. However, it is also true that these persons will achieve only perpetual inauspiciousness, and by their association other *jīvas* will surely suffer as well. Rendering service to a *jīva* bound by *māyā* – that is, providing him with sense enjoyment, however well it may be dressed up – results only in the suffering of other *jīvas*. This is because trying to satisfy the senses of a particular *jīva* bound by *māyā* results in inauspiciousness for that *jīva* as well as in suffering for many other *jīvas*.

In regard to *jīvas* who are in the stage of bondage, the term *jīva-sevā* (service to living entities) does not apply, yet the term *jīve-dayā* (compassion upon other living entities) is credible. And in relation to *jīvas* who are in the liberated stage, *vaiṣṇava-sevā* is possible. But acting for the satisfaction of the *jīva* in his bound stage, while he still has *anarthas*, cannot be termed real *sevā*. Only compassion (*dayā*) can be shown to such a person.

Moreover, we cannot show *dayā* to a liberated soul (*mukta-puruṣa*) – someone to whom we should render service. The term *jīva-sevā* is irrational, but the terms *guru-sevā*, *vaiṣṇava-sevā* and *śīva-sevā* are completely reasonable. To render service to or please the senses of *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas is essential. To serve those who are liberated from this world and to show compassion towards those who are bound to it are indeed *śuddha-sanātana-dharma*, or the *jīva*’s unalloyed eternal occupation.

The *jīva* bound by *māyā* is not Prabhu (Master). In other words he is not *sevya-tattva*, the supreme worshipable reality. Many who hear this conception will reveal their loyalty to the opinion of the Bāulas [one of the *sahajiyā* sects], in their attempt to deceitfully pre-

sent the *jīva* as *sevya-tattva* and to thus try to proclaim the conditioned soul to be Nārāyaṇa.

Those who follow the incorrect conception of the Bāulas, consider the state of Lord Nārāyaṇa, who is the controller of *māyā*, to be the same as the state of those *jīvas* who are bound by *māyā*. Thus they name the living entities *jīva-nārāyaṇa* (“living entity Nārāyaṇa”), *daridra-nārāyaṇa* (“poor Nārāyaṇa”), *aśva-nārāyaṇa* (“horse Nārāyaṇa”), *mṛga-nārāyaṇa* (“deer Nārāyaṇa”), *manuṣya-nārāyaṇa* (“human Nārāyaṇa”) and so forth. They preach that the satisfaction of two mundane objects, the body and mind, is indeed service to Nārāyaṇa. The terms *daridra-nārāyaṇa*, *manuṣya-nārāyaṇa* and so forth are as illogical and dishonest as saying “My clay pot is made of gold”. Simply adding the names “Nārāyaṇa” or “Īśvara” to the name of a *jīva* cannot convert that *jīva* into *prabhu-tattva*; rather, it makes him a hypocrite.

*yas tu nārāyaṇam devam brahma-rudrādi-daivataiḥ
samatvenaiva vīkṣeta sa pāṣaṇḍī bhaved dhruvam*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (1.17)

An atheist (*pāṣaṇḍī*) is one who considers great demigods such as Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva to be equal to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Nārāyaṇa.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu declares:

*yei mūḍha kahe – jīva īśvara haya ‘sama’
seita ‘pāṣaṇḍī’ haya, daṇḍe tāre yama*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 18.115)

A foolish person who says that the Supreme Controller is the same as the living entity is an atheist (*pāṣaṇḍī*), and he becomes subject to punishment by Yamarāja, the superintendent of death.

Daridratva, the state of poverty, is not the same as *nārāyaṇtva*, the state of being Bhagavān (*prabhu-tattva*). Rather, the state of poverty is completely

**“To serve those who are liberated from this world and to show
compassion towards those who are bound to it are indeed
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devoid of *nārāyaṇtva*. A deer and a human are not the controllers of *māyā*. Rather, they are controlled by *māyā*. Nārāyaṇa is constantly situated as the indwelling Supersoul within the poor, within animals and within humans; however the poor, the animals and humans cannot be regarded as Nārāyaṇa. The external covering of *māyā* leads one to perceive a living entity as poor, as an animal or as a human. Only when this covering and the influence of *māyā*’s “throwing potency” are dispelled, can one clearly witness the real existence of the indwelling witness (Nārāyaṇa) and the eternal nature of the pure *jīvātmā*, who is an *aṁśa* or part of Nārāyaṇa.

Guru and Vaiṣṇavas are not affected by the influence of the external potency of Nārāyaṇa; therefore they are liberated (*mukta*), pure (*śuddha*) and eternal (*nitya*). To render constant service to them is indeed the *jīva*’s eternal engagement. *Guru* and Vaiṣṇavas are not in the category of ordinary *jīvas*. As long as a *jīva* is seen to be conditioned, it is obligatory to show him compassion. And when a *jīva* is seen to be liberated, it is necessary to serve him. *Mahā-bhāgavatas* look upon all with equal vision – a cow, a horse, an ass and a dog-eater – and they see everyone as a Vaiṣṇava. With this knowledge they engage in rendering service to everyone. In their vision they do not imagine or impose transcendence upon mundane phenomena. For instance, they do not see the poor as Nārāyaṇa, humans as Nārāyaṇa or the deer as Nārāyaṇa. This is the misconception of the Bāulas or the Māyāvādīs.

Mahā-bhāgavatas do not imagine the *jīvātmā* to be Nārāyaṇa; therefore they do not render transitory service to the covering of *māyā* or to the phenomena of the mundane body and mind, which is nothing but the transformation of *māyā*’s “throwing potency”. Their *sevā* is eternal and their ego as a servant of Bhagavān is also eternal.

What depth of knowledge and intelligence do those persons possess who create chaos in the name of *jīva-sevā* or imagine that service to “poor Nārāyaṇa”,

“human Nārāyaṇa” and “deer Nārāyaṇa” is real service, and in so doing try to establish themselves as great benevolent religious leaders and philanthropists before the ignorant masses of the world? Thoughtful people can easily see through this. However, these fashionable arguments can weaken even wise thinkers within human society and cause them to be deluded by these ordinary matters.

Śrī Bhāgavata does not mention anything about *jīva-sevā*. Its message is to render service unto Śrī Hari, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas and have compassion upon the conditioned souls. In the example of King Bharata, *Śrī Bhāgavata* shows us that the great ṛṣi Bharata brought obstacles to his own path of self-realisation and to his supreme auspiciousness by serving a *jīva* in the conditioned state who had the body of a deer. By denouncing such *jīva-sevā*, *Śrī Bhāgavata* informs us of the conceptions of devotees who are *madhyama-* and *uttama-bhāgavatas*.

*īśvare tad-adhīneṣu
bālīṣeṣu dviṣatsu ca
prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣā
yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.46)

A *madhyama-bhāgavata* is one who loves Īśvara, is friendly towards His *bhaktas*, shows mercy towards those who are ignorant of *bhakti*, and neglects those who are inimical to Īśvara or His *bhaktas*.

*sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed
bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ
bhūtāni bhagavatya ātmany
eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.45)

One who sees his own *bhagavad-bhāva*, ecstatic mood of attraction towards Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, in the hearts of all *jīvas* (*sarva-bhūteṣu*) and sees all beings within Kṛṣṇacandra is an *uttama-bhāgavata*.

Because we have forgotten our *svarūpa* and lack transcendental intelligence, the service we perform with the body and mind is synonymous with enjoyment based on gratifying the mundane senses. The object of such service is not Bhagavān and His expansions; rather, it is the conditioned soul and the material energy.

*sthāvāra jaṅgama dekhe nā dekhe tāra mūrti
sarvatra haya nija iṣṭa-deva-sphūrti*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 8.274)

The *mahā-bhāgavata* certainly sees everything that is moving and non-moving, but he does not exactly see their forms. Rather, wherever he looks he sees the manifestation of the form of his most worshipable Lord.

A *madhyama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava should render service to one who is an *uttama-adhikārī*, and he should do so for the *uttama-adhikārī*'s happiness and satisfaction. The *madhyama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava should care for him in every respect, even rendering menial service to him; but he should not try to satisfy the senses of the conditioned souls, because by this he will gain no eternal welfare or auspiciousness either for himself or for others. We have to always keep in mind that when the *ātmā*'s eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa is awakened, the sole object of the *ātmā*'s eternal function – which is service (*sevā*) – is Śrī Hari, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas. In other words, service should be rendered to the independent, pure form of Bhagavān in *Vaikuṅṭha* (*bhāgavata-svarūpa*) and to Bhagavān's expansions (*tad-rūpa-vaibhāva*), but not to the bound *jīvas* or to the external energy (*pradhāna*).

Because we have forgotten our *svarūpa* and lack transcendental intelligence, the service we perform with the body and mind is synonymous with enjoyment based on gratifying the mundane senses. The object of such service is not Bhagavān and His expansions; rather, it is the conditioned soul and the material energy. Neither of these is a pure, conscious entity of *Vaikuṅṭha*. Presently the consciousness of the conditioned soul is averse to Kṛṣṇa. To redirect that consciousness toward Kṛṣṇa is to show the *jīva* the highest form of compassion.

Jīva-sevā is never possible. In other words, the function of the *jīva*'s transcendental senses can never be used to provide sense pleasure to the conscious entities who are covered by non-reality or ignorance. Rather, the function of his transcendental senses is to constantly be engaged in executing service for the pleasure of Īśvara, the Lord of the entire conscious and non-conscious creation, and to His consort Īśvarī. This is a fact.

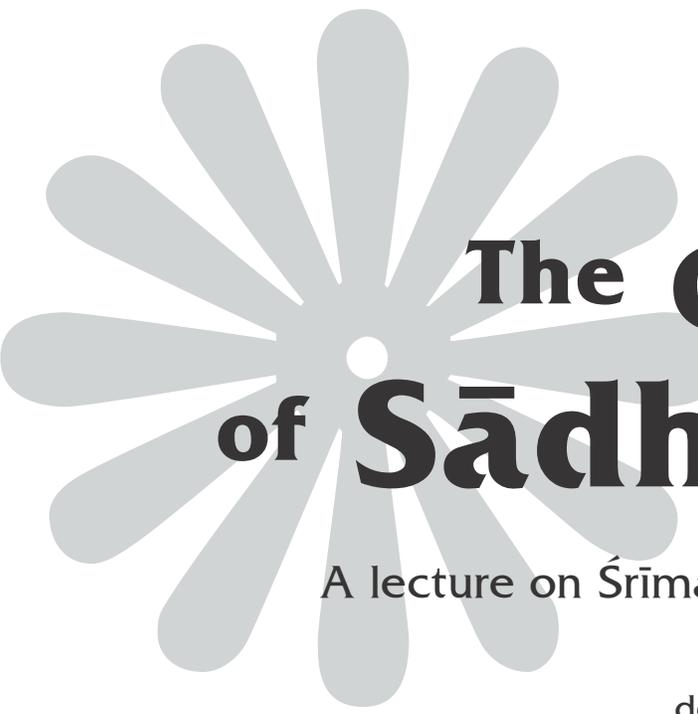
The terms *jīve-dayā* and *vaiṣṇava-sevā* are logical and bestow supreme auspiciousness. Śrīman Mahāprabhu displayed the ideal of this *jīve-dayā* and *vaiṣṇava-sevā*. By performing *kīrtana* of Bhagavān's glories, *amandodaya-dayā*, or pure compassion which never diminishes at any point in time and which never gives negative results, is shown to an unlimited number of bound *jīvas*. And by rendering service to the Vaiṣṇavas who are performing *kīrtana* in a way that is favourable in every respect, the soul's function fully awakens.

By personally preaching *bhāgavata-kathā* from village to village and by engaging His devotees as preachers, Mahāprabhu presented the example of *amandodaya-dayā*. Furthermore He also demonstrated the ideal of service to Vaiṣṇavas who are constantly engaged in *kīrtana*. We have to always remember that if we transgress the teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and Śrīman Mahāprabhu by becoming engrossed in modern opinions born of mental speculation, we will in fact be deceived of service to Bhagavān. After hearing a lengthy discourse on *jīva-sevā* we should not go on to become *Māyāvādīs*, *Bāulas*, *prākṛta-sahajiyās* or *cit-jāda-samanvyavādīs* (persons who equate transcendence with worldliness) and thus deviate from the genuine path. May *jīve-dayā* and *vaiṣṇava-sevā* be our sole ideal. May *jīve-dayā*, *nāme-ruci* and *vaiṣṇava-sevā* be our sole guiding principles. 

[Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* 15/4 (1964)]

**Śrīman Mahāprabhu
has indeed displayed
the ideal of this *jīve-dayā*
and *vaiṣṇava-sevā*.**





The Glories of Sādhu-saṅga

A lecture on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.18.10–13

delivered by

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Śrī-rūpa Siddhanti Gosvāmī Mahārāja

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, after replying to the inquiry of Śaunaka and other *ṛṣis* regarding the history of King Parikṣit, which is filled with narrations of Bhagavān Vāsudeva’s pastimes, Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī said:

*yā yāḥ kathā bhagavataḥ
kathanīyōru-karmaṇaḥ
guṇa-karmāśrayāḥ pumbhiḥ
samsevās tā bubhūṣubhiḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.18.10)

Those who desire to attain *sad-bhāva*, the pure state of existence, must thoroughly and submissively serve all the topics related to the transcendental qualities and wonderful activities of Bhagavān Vāsudeva.

The *kathā* of Bhagavān is abundant; there is no end to it. He performs wonderful activities and pastimes, and these are to be narrated and glorified by all. *Samsevās tā* – it is imperative to thoroughly serve (i.e. hear, glorify and remember) such pastimes. *Pumbhiḥ* – this is particularly true for those who desire to attain *sad-bhāva*, the pure state of existence. *Sad-bhāva cā*.

Sād-bhāva means the *bhāva*, or nature, of Bhagavān and His *bhaktas*. Therefore it is essential for those who desire to attain *sad-bhāva* to thoroughly serve (i.e. hear) all the topics related to Bhagavān’s activities (*karmā*) and qualities (*guṇa*). In this verse, *karma* refers to Bhagavān’s *līlas*.

Serving *kathā* means hearing (*śravaṇa*), glorifying (*kīrtana*) and remembering (*smarana*) that *kathā*. In his commentary, Śrīla Cakravartipāda says “*svasat-tāmicchadbhiḥ* – those who desire to maintain their *sattā*, existence, must hear *bhagavat-kathā*”; and “*anyathā jīvanmṛtatvam syat* – otherwise that person will become dead even while living”. Without hearing *bhagavat-kathā*, one is as good as dead.

*neha yat karma dharmāya
na virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pada-sevāyai
jīvann aṇi mṛto hi saḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.23.56)

Anyone whose work is not meant to elevate him to religious life, whose religious ritualistic performances



do not raise him to renunciation, and who is situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

Thus those who do not perform *kīrtana*, *śravaṇa* and *smarana* of *hari-kathā* are dead, even while appearing to live. Ordinarily we think that by eating and taking care of ourselves we remain alive. It is true that by eating and defending we can keep our body healthy, but to nourish the immortal existence of the *ātmā* is impossible without hearing *hari-kathā*. Therefore it is said that Bhagavān has ample activities. His wonderful qualities are to be glorified by all beings, and those who are eager to attain *sad-bhāva* must thoroughly serve (i.e. hear, glorify and remember) Bhagavān Vāsudeva's various pastimes, characterised by His qualities.

After hearing this, the *ṛṣis* headed by Śaunaka Ṛṣi said:

ṛṣaya ūcuḥ
sūta jīva samāḥ saumya
śāśvatīr viśadam yaśaḥ

yas tvam śamsasi kṛṣṇasya
martyānām amṛtam hi naḥ

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.18.11)

The good sages said: O grave Sūta Gosvāmī, may you live many years and have eternal fame, for you are speaking very nicely about the activities of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead. This is just like nectar for mortal beings like us.

The *ṛṣis* said: “O graceful Sūta Gosvāmī, may you live for an unlimited period of time.” The *ṛṣis* are hearing the *Bhāgavata* from Sūta Gosvāmī. However, they are not blessing him in the statement above; rather, with great respect and profuse eagerness, they are praying for his long life. Why? *Yas tvam śamsasi kṛṣṇasya martyānām amṛtam he naḥ* – “because you are speaking the most purifying and nectarine pastimes of Kṛṣṇa to mortal beings like us”. The *kathā* of Bhagavān is nectar. “You are distributing that nectar to mortal beings like us; therefore may you live for unlimited years.” Speaking like this, they are praying with great jubilation and eagerness. It is unfeasible for them to bless Sūta Gosvāmī, and therefore they are praying.

The *ṛṣis* further said:

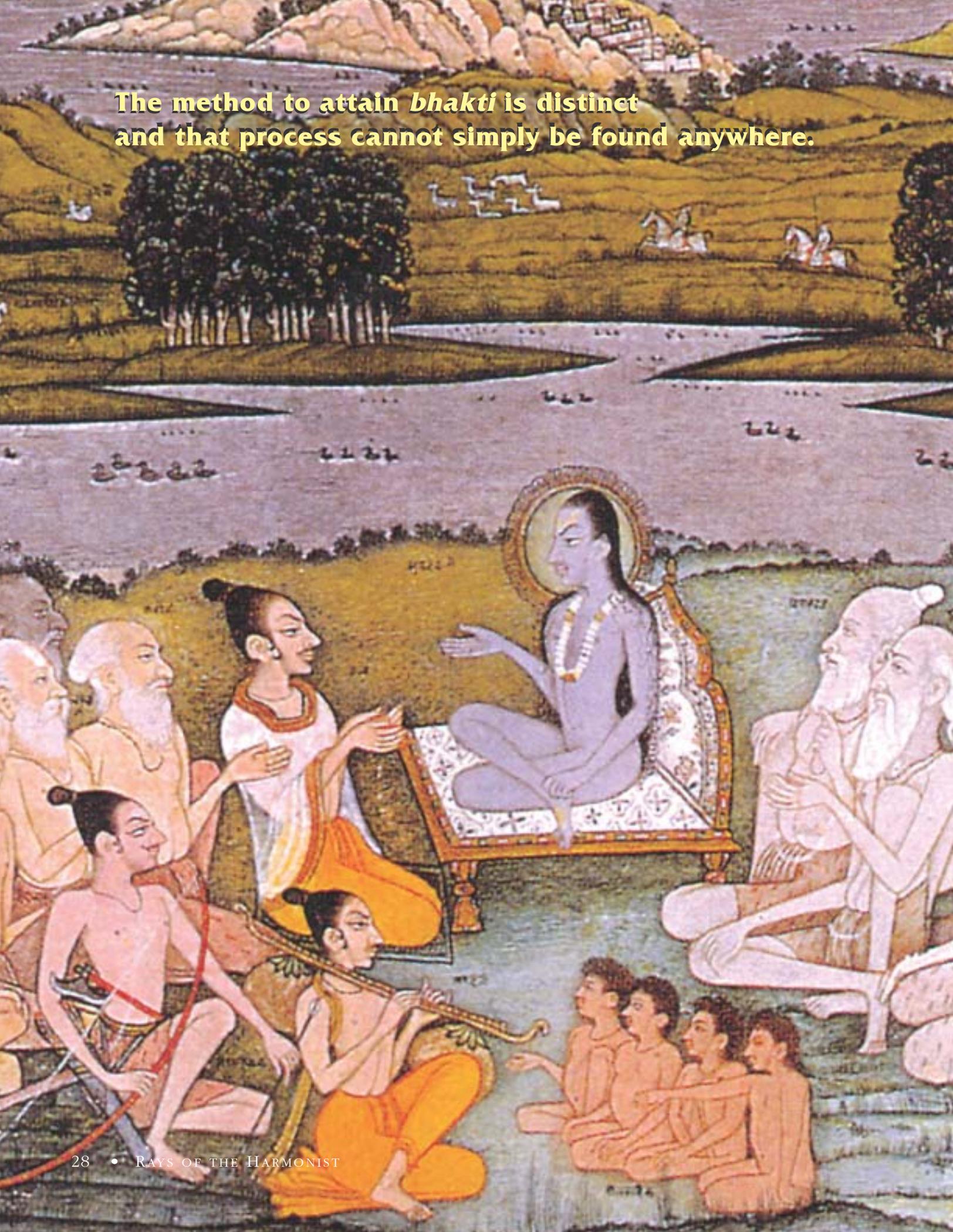
karmaṇy asminn anāśvāse
dhūma-dhūmrātmanām bhavān
āpāyayati govinda-
pāda-padmāsavaṁ madhu

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.18.12)

We have just begun the performance of this fruitive activity, a sacrificial fire, without certainty of its result due to the many imperfections in our action. Our bodies have become grey from the smoke, but we are indeed pleased by the nectar of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, Govinda, which you are distributing.

“We have started performing *karma* in the form of this *yajña*, but we are unsure whether we shall be able to attain the lotus feet of Bhagavān at any point

The method to attain *bhakti* is distinct and that process cannot simply be found anywhere.



through this endeavour. We have performed *yajña* for thousands upon thousands of years, but we have been unable to attain any realisation of Bhagavān. Our sole achievement has been *dhūma-dhūmrātmanām bhavān*: by the smoke of this *yajña* our *ātmā* – that is, our bodies – have become pale (ashy). This is what we have attained.” The *ṛṣis* were performing *yajña* for thousands of years, and therefore they are saying that they are uncertain about realising any results from the *yajña*.

The futility of such *yajñas* is mentioned in the *Bhāgavata*; however, people are performing *yajñas* to this day and they will continue to do so in the future also. All paths will endure. Man can follow any opinion, for who can obstruct his free will? But for him to attain *bhakti* by whatever path he treads, is impossible. The method to attain *bhakti* is distinct and that process cannot simply be found anywhere.

Therefore the *ṛṣis* are saying, “We have passed thousands of years in performing *yajña*, the results of which are uncertain, and consequently our bodies have become pale. But we have been unable to make progress towards Bhagavān, even by an inch. In this state of ours, *bhavān āpāyayati* (you have made us drink). Drink what? *Govinda pāda-padmāsava* – the nectar from the lotus feet of Govinda. You have made us drink the nectar of Govinda’s *kathā*.” *Madhu* means “the nectarean *kathā*”.

In his commentary Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartipāda says: “Why do we have no trust or confidence in this act of *yajña*? Why will we not achieve anything by performing *yajña*?”

vaiguṇya-bāhulyena phalaṇiścaṣyābhāvāt

While performing acts like *yajña* so many defects appear, that it becomes uncertain whether or not its fruits will be achieved. Thus, because the results are uncertain due to the presence of imperfections, no one knows what result will occur and when.”

What is being expressed in the *ṛṣis*’ statement?

tena bhakter viśvasanīyatvamukttam

“We have developed faith in whatever you have made us hear about, namely, those matters pertaining to *bhakti* and Bhagavān. This is the real path. By speaking

hari-kathā to us, you have arranged for us to attain Bhagavān’s lotus feet. This is trustworthy; we can understand this.”

*dhumena dhumrā vivarṇā ātmānścakṣur
ādyavyavā*

“By the smoke of this *yajña* our eyes have become like that of a blind man. People of this world hope to attain Bhagavān by performing *yajña*, *yoga*, *dhyāna* and so on, but there is no certainty of attaining Bhagavān by following these paths. This is because all these paths carry so many faults.” Therefore the *ṛṣis* are saying that they have developed faith in the path of *bhakti* to the extent that Sūta Gosvāmī has spoken *bhakti-kathā* to them, and thereby made them drink the sweetness of Bhagavān. “*Bhakteḥ sāksāt phaladatvamāha* – *bhakti* can bestow its results directly.” Many people, despite hearing something about the excellence of *bhakti*, nonetheless follow other paths, which leads them to *karma* and *samsāra*.

āsavam makrandarūpam madhu mādakam

This *hari-kathā* is so intoxicating that by once entering into the sweetness of *śravaṇa*, *kīrtana* and *smarana*, one cannot give it up or live without it, and one will most certainly relish it.

taditara sarva sukha dukhānanubhavāt

This *hari-kathā* is so sweet and so intoxicating that even despite its own sweetness, it will not let us experience the happiness and distress of any other topic of this world. Such is the glory of Bhagavān’s *kathā*.

pratiksaṇam tadīyasvādutvānuhavācca

At every moment this *hari-kathā* makes us relish and experience such *bhāvas* (moods), so that we do not develop a liking for any other topic. It makes one forget happiness, distress and all worldly affairs, and intoxicates one. 

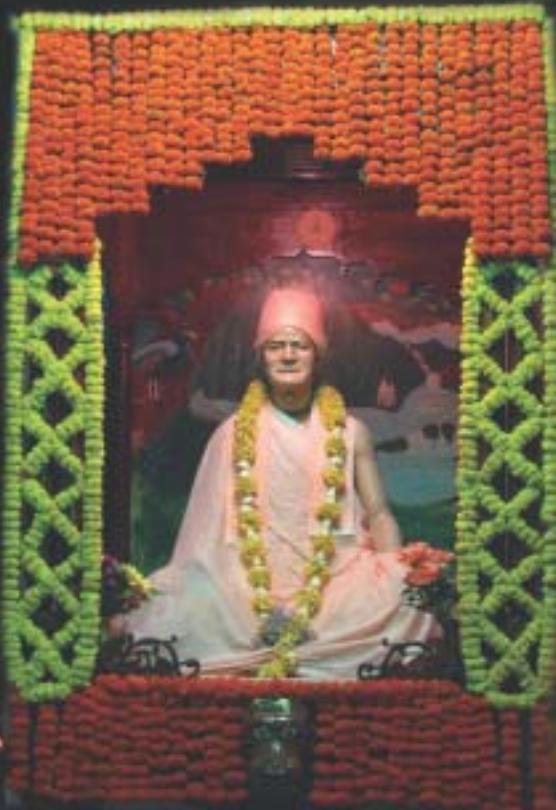
[To be continued in the next issue]

Audio recording courtesy of the disciples of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*rādhā-cintā-niveśena
yasya kāntir vilopitā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇam vande
rādhālingita-vigraham*

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

Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-Bihārī Tattvāṣṭakam (verse 1)
by Śrīla Bhakti-prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Śrī Śrī Gaura Rādhā-Vinoda-Bihārīju
Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha, Vṛndāvana





The laws created by the whimsical nature of a human mind, state that one receives capital punishment for taking a human life. There is, however, no such injunction for killing living entities other than humans. But the laws of providence are different. Bhagavān's law is that one will receive punishment for destroying any life, just as a person is punished for committing murder. Atheists refuse to accept the existence of Bhagavān, because to do so would impede their performance of sinful activities. *Smṛti-śāstra* describes that in the performance of household activities many types of sin occur due to the willing or unwilling destruction of life. Every household duty, such as cooking, grinding, storing pots and cleaning, incurs such sin without the householder wanting it. To free oneself from these sinful actions, one can perform *pañca-śūnā-yajña*. Therefore the only law is to accept *prasāda*, remnants of food that have been offered in sacrifice to Viṣṇu, the Lord of all sacrifice.

One who selfishly cooks for the satisfaction of his own senses and the lasciviousness of his tongue, and not for the service and pleasure of Viṣṇu, undergoes suffering as a result of his sinful acts. This is the law of providence.

Many householders, however, still take shelter of *sanātana-dharma* and follow the process of service to Viṣṇu to attain freedom from such sinful activities. Leaders of countries and societies are therefore instructed to work for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, thereby benefiting themselves and those who follow them. Because people follow their ideal, it is the leaders' duty to carefully study the various ways of performing *yajña*, sacrifice for the pleasure of Śrī Viṣṇu. For the benefit of society, spiritual universities are required to teach people how to perform *karma* as an offering to Viṣṇu. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa indicated to Śrī Arjuna that he should perform this type of *yajña*:

“The best and only diet for curing
the multiple diseases caused by nescience
is the remnants of sacrifice offered to Bhagavān,
bhagavat-prasāda. And the greatest medicine
is to surrender oneself completely to Him...”

THE MESSAGE OF GODHEAD

Bhagavānera Kathā

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

(Continued from the previous issue)

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas / tad tad evataro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute / lokas tad anuvarttate*

Bhagavad-gītā (3.21)

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

Alas! Such a time has come that most of those who are identified as superiors, as well as those who are great leaders of societies and countries, are inimical to Viṣṇu. What, then, will they do for Viṣṇu? If they do not perform *yajña* for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, how will they attain release from the fruits of their own sinful activities? If great leaders do not declare Viṣṇu to be the omnipresent Absolute Truth who, although possessing a form, remains present everywhere in his formless, non-distinct aspect, then how will the common man understand this? It is Hṛṣīkeśa, the master of the senses,

who is the sole proprietor of everything; we cannot be the masters and enjoyers of this world. We should gratefully accept only that which He mercifully gives us. We must not hanker after or claim the property of others.

*iśāvāsyam idam sarvaṁ / yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat
tena tyaktena bhun̄jīthā / mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*

Śrī Īsopaniṣad (1)

Everything animate and inanimate within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only that which is necessary for himself, that is set aside as his quota. One should not accept anything more, knowing well to whom it belongs.

Only if the leaders correctly perform their duties by placing Bhagavān at the centre of them will they and

**“The sinful activities performed to attain *lābha*, *pūja* and *pratiṣṭhā*
are subtly mixed with the mind, intelligence and false ego,
in the form of seeds of future sinful action.”**

their followers attain supreme auspiciousness. If, however, they do not place Bhagavān at the centre of their activities, and instead pose as Viṣṇu themselves, deceiving their disciples by accepting *lābha* (wealth), *pūja* (worship) and *pratiṣṭhā* (praise), many unfortunate people (followers) can fall on to the path of ruination upon seeing their example of pretentious renunciation. They will achieve nothing but this. Such leaders uselessly incite their ignorant flatterers to engage in many types of sinful activities. By thus increasing their own *lābha*, *pūja* and *pratiṣṭhā*, these leaders bring about the destruction of their followers. They do not understand that wealth, worship and praise are transient and will be destroyed along with their body. The sinful activities performed to attain *lābha*, *pūja* and *pratiṣṭhā* are subtly mixed with the mind, intelligence and false ego, in the form of seeds of future sinful action. Performing these sinful activities will compel the *jīva* to sink in the cycle of birth and death, as he wanders throughout the various species of life, birth after birth.

The mass of people follow the example set by leaders who are devoid of *tattva-jñāna*. It is therefore correct for those leaders to act with great care, having understood the art of performing *karma* as a sacrifice (*karma-yoga*). Only out of impudence will one who is not adept at curing his own illness prescribe treatment for the sick (the common masses). Unless one knows the specific disease he is treating, and the proper medicine and diet for it, he will not be able to benefit the sick. Similarly, prescribing a medicine that simply fulfils the desire for sense gratification will never benefit the common people. The disease will only spread, and the doctor (the leaders) will also suffer by being infected himself.

Human society's indifference to Viṣṇu is its fundamental disease. It is true that by failing to administer the proper medicine and showing only superficial sym-

pathy, the senses of the sick person may receive momentary relief, but no real benefit is achieved. If a sick person is not given the proper medicine and diet he will certainly rush into the jaws of death.

The best and only diet for curing the multiple diseases caused by nescience is the remnants of sacrifice offered to Bhagavān, *bhagavat-prasāda*. And the greatest medicine is to surrender oneself completely to Him by taking *darśana* of His deity form, worshipping Him (*arcana*), serving Him (*dāsyā*), being His friend (*sakhya*), and completely offering Him your very self (*ātma-nivedana*). This is all based on hearing and chanting the narrations of His glories. Performance of such devotional activities will bring auspiciousness for the whole world; anything else will bring inauspiciousness. If people perform these activities there will be no chance of problems arising for human society. In fact everything will be advantageous. Opportunists and economists should deliberate upon these facts.

Although the leaders of society, headed by Mahātmā Gandhi, have made great endeavours to bring about peace in the world, these endeavours are not bearing any fruit and they never will. This is because they lack encouragement by the *mahājanas*. The imaginary “God” of the impersonalists (*nirviśeṣa-vādīs*) cannot eat, see or hear; therefore their God can never bring peace to the world. How will He, who is bereft of sensory organs, see people's suffering or hear their prayers? The only result of worshipping Bhagavān as the *nirviśeṣa-vādīs* do, is inauspiciousness. It will never be auspicious. Very little of the Absolute Truth is attained by contemplating impersonal knowledge of Him. By studying and discussing dry empirical knowledge, the complete personal aspect of Bhagavān is not realised. Rather, one only attains suffering and difficulties. Therefore, leaders such as the respected Gandhi will only benefit the people if they endeavour to realise the personal aspect (*saviśeṣa*) of the Absolute.

**“These people thus claim dominance over material nature,
but the more they dominate, the more they themselves
are dominated and bound by the shackles of material nature.”**

On the other hand the general mass of people are gross materialists, expert in performing activities related to the body and mind. People with such a low level of consciousness are absorbed in such mundane activities and cannot develop faith in the existence of the spiritual world, which lies beyond this material world. They consider the body to be the all-in-all and they are so deeply absorbed in the animalistic mentality of eating, sleeping, fearing and mating that they cannot discriminate between sinful and pious activities. Tirelessly working like this to satisfy the senses is known as *mogha-karma*, useless activity, and it is inspired by *mogha-āśā*, useless desires.

Many mundane scientists, acting as reformers, engage in harmful activities to bring about world ruination. By producing various objects that satisfy the skin, tongue, nose, ears and eyes, they have created a dangerous rivalry among materialistic people, whose worldly entanglement they have intensified. These people thus claim dominance over material nature, but the more they dominate, the more they themselves are dominated and bound by the shackles of material nature. And the more they accumulate wealth, the more restless they become. The *lakṣmī* of Bhagavān is only to be enjoyed by Him. To the degree that one tries to seize Her, one falls into the jaws of ruination, just as the whole dynasty of Rāvana did. The result of making such great endeavours to maintain the body is that it becomes a great burden simply to sustain it with a little food.

The consciousness of some people is a little more advanced than this lower class of men. They are the fruitive workers who perform charity work and other pious activities with full faith that in their next birth they will be sure to receive a greater level of sense enjoyment. Both kinds of fruitive workers fail to understand that both sinful and pious activities are the cause of bondage. They do not understand that to perform

niṣkāma-karma-yoga (selfless action that is offered to Bhagavān) is the actual art of performing *karma* (action). *Karma-yogīs*, who are expert in the art of *karma*, skillfully perform *karma-yoga* with apparent attachment, in order to teach *karma-yoga* to the foolish fruitive workers and the world. This art of *karma-yoga* brings auspiciousness to both the performer and the society. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa has given this very same teaching in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.25):

*saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso / yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś / cikīrṣur loka-saṅgraham*

O descendant of Bhārata, ignorant people perform *karma* with attachment to maintaining themselves. Similarly you, being wise, should also work (perform *karma-yoga*) to set an ideal for the people in general.

Those learned in *tattva-jñāna* perform activities to maintain themselves just as ordinary people do, but as a *yajña* to please Viṣṇu. The general populace consider such wise persons to be sense enjoyers like themselves. Such persons, however, are not foolish fruitive workers but learned *karma-yogīs*. Nowadays we are witnessing the *karmī* world prosper in various ways due to the expansion of modern material science. Many factories, hospitals, universities and so on have sprung up, thus binding the world further in the ropes of *karma*, or action. In ancient times such mundane activities were not so prominent, but due to the effects of *asat-saṅga* these tight bindings and coverings of *karma* are being invented. Wise *karma-yogīs*, therefore, can engage all such activities in *yajña* for the satisfaction of Viṣṇu, thus attaining expertise in the art of performing *karma*. 

(To be continued)

[Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* 2/2]

Śāstra describes many kinds of *guru*: *caitya-guru*, *varṭma-pradarśaka-guru*, *śravaṇa-guru*, *bhajana-śikṣā-guru*, *mantra-guru* and so on.¹ *Caitya-guru* bestows the ability to discriminate in regard to what is and is not favourable for *bhajana*. He gives genuine transcendental knowledge only to those who have a sincere inclination to perform *bhajana* with affection. “*Dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena mām upayānti te* – I bestow the transcendental knowledge by which they can come to me” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 10.10). On the other hand, when the *jīvas* have selfish ulterior motives, *caitya-guru* remains silent, and through His *māyā* He makes them wander in the karmic cycle of birth and death.

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānāṁ
hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmāyan sarva-bhūtāni
yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

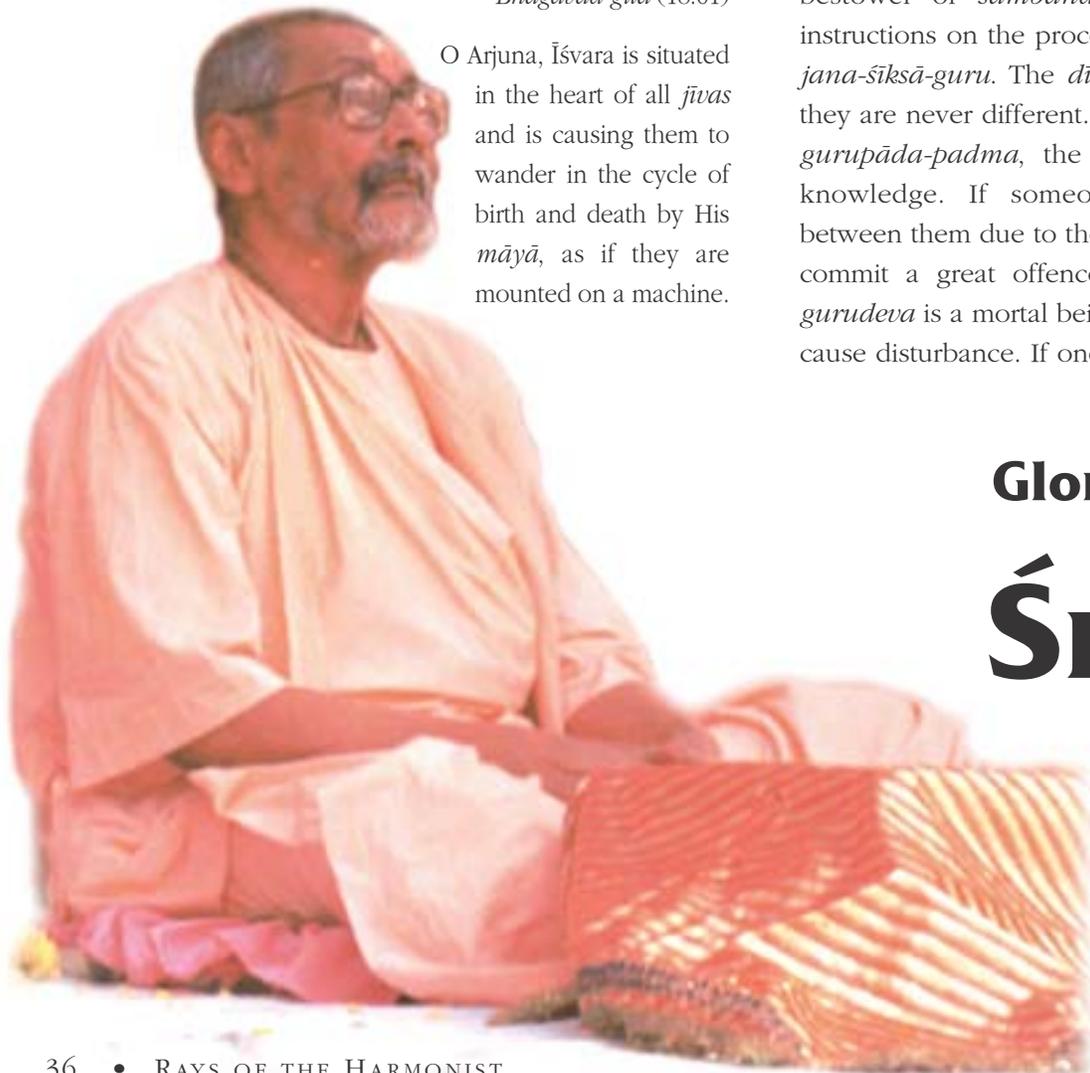
Bhagavad-gītā (18.61)

O Arjuna, *īśvara* is situated in the heart of all *jīvas* and is causing them to wander in the cycle of birth and death by His *māyā*, as if they are mounted on a machine.

When the *jīva* becomes ready to renounce his absorption in *māyā*, the indwelling Lord (*antaryāmi*), awakens the *jīva*' sense of wisdom regarding *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and externally He manifests as a *mahanta-sādhu*, a great saint. At that time the successive appearance of the *varṭma-pradarśaka-guru*, *śravaṇa-guru*, *dīkṣā-guru*, *bhajana-guru* and so on occurs in the life of that *jīva*. Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda said, “The abodes of love (*āśraya-jātiya*) – that is, our *guru-varga* – appear in various forms to bestow mercy upon me. All are the special manifestation of *gurupāda-padma*, the bestower of transcendental knowledge.”

Often the *varṭma-pradarśaka-guru* and the *śravaṇa-guru* are the same person. If the *śikṣā-guru* did not instruct us on how to take shelter of *gurupāda-padma* and on how to behave towards him, we would gain nothing auspicious. He teaches the importance of the *dīkṣā-guru* and how to worship him. We must submissively obtain the *mantra* from the *dīkṣā-guru*, the bestower of *sambandha-jñāna*, and we receive instructions on the process of *bhajana* from the *bhajana-śikṣā-guru*. The *dīkṣā-* and *śikṣā-guru* are one; they are never different. Both are the manifestation of *gurupāda-padma*, the bestower of transcendental knowledge. If someone perceives a difference between them due to their mundane conception, they commit a great offence. Until the conception that *gurudeva* is a mortal being is dispelled, such thoughts cause disturbance. If one is not particularly vigilant in

Glorification of Śrī Hari,



dealing with such thoughts, his pitiable condition will never be rectified. For this reason it has been said:

*śrī guru caraṇa padma
kevala bhakati-sadma
vando mui sāvadhāna mate*

Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā

With great care I worship and serve *śrī guru*'s lotus feet, which are a treasure house of unalloyed *prema-bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

On this special day (*vyāsa-pūjā*), I remember the super-human (*atimartya*) character of my *gurupāda-padma*. His foremost characteristic (*vaiśiṣṭya*) is his unparalleled *guru-niṣṭhā*. He is the glowing example of *gurudevātāmā*, perceiving *gurudeva* as being *devata* and regarding him as more dear than one's very own *ātma*, or soul. At every moment he is so eager for *guru-sevā*. This can only be compared to the highest chastity of a wife for her husband. In every respect he offers his own soul, mind, body and everything at the lotus feet of Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. My *śrī gurupāda-padma* dedicated his life to his *guru* just as Śrī Kureśa, the disciple of Śrī Rāmānuja, set such a glowing example by offering his life for *guru-sevā*. Offering his own life, my *gurupāda-padma* protected Prabhupāda from the challenging uproars of people with demoniac mentalities.

Prabhupāda also manifested a pastime to reveal the incomparable *guru-niṣṭhā* in the heart of *gurupāda-*

padma.² When the *guru-niṣṭhā* of the *mahopadeśaka* (great scholarly instructor) and *mahā-mahopadeśaka* (very great scholarly instructor)³ disciples is compared to the *guru-niṣṭhā* of a mere *upadeśaka paṇḍita* (instructing scholar)⁴ quietly engaged in performing deep and intimate service, it is like a glow-worm before the sun. By this pastime Prabhupāda destroyed their boastful pride.

Gurupāda-padma had so much *guru-niṣṭhā* in the *tattva-siddhānta* of Prabhupāda that it astounded people. When there was an attempt to challenge the *vicāra-dhārā* ("current of conception") of Śrīla Prabhupāda, *gurupāda-padma* roared like a lion, strongly refuting them: "I do not know the previous *gosvāmīs*, but I accept the *vicāra-dhārā* of Śrīla Prabhupāda as the unmistakable truth and I shall try to know and understand the previous *gosvāmīs* in light of Prabhupāda's *vicāra-dhārā*. *Ācāryera yei mata, sei mata sāra / āra yata mata yānka chārakhāra* – "The opinion of the *ācārya* is the sum and substance. Let all other opinions be destroyed.' This is my conclusion." To this all bowed their heads in amazement. This incident is very instructive.

There are many instances where the words *guru-niṣṭhā* and *guru-bhakti* are inappropriately used. *Niṣṭhā* for those who are *gurus* in name only is inevitably degraded. *Guru* means "he who is *vastava-vastu*, non-different from reality, and *kṛṣṇa-vastu*, non-different from Kṛṣṇa". The so-called *gurus* in the

(continued from the last issue)

Śrī Guru & Vaiṣṇavas

by Dīna-akiñcana
(Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja)

On the occasion of his *Vyāsa-Pūjā*, 7th January 2002
at Śrī Keśava Gosvāmī Gauḍīya Maṭh, Siligudī

“Gurudeva is the sole custodian of the entire service of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.”

various *apasampradāyas* are not *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*. The *niṣṭhā* and *bhakti* attributed to them is simply the product of the *jīva*'s ignorance. Therefore, our attempts to put our faith in such persons can never be termed *ādau guru-niṣṭhā* or *guru-bhakti*.

The *guru-niṣṭhā* of *gurupāda-padma* towards Prabhupāda is the identification of his internal confidential relationship with him, and his deep relationship with *vāstava-vastu*. *Gurupāda-padma* knew very well that there is no mistake in the conception (*vicāra*) of the previous *gosvāmīs*. *Jīvas* gripped by ignorance are susceptible to understanding these conclusions incorrectly. However, if one adopts the ideal, or the line of thought of Prabhupāda, it is impossible to come to the wrong conclusion.

If one who had had any connection with Prabhupāda came to *gurupāda-padma*, be he a temple devotee or renunciant, a householder, or an ordinary person, *gurupāda-padma* would become overwhelmed with bliss, and thereby open-heartedly manifest his intimacy with Prabhupāda. *Gurusevaka haya mānya āpanāra* – “The servant of *guru* is honourable for us.” *Gurupāda-padma* would feel grateful and indebted to anybody with any kind of service relationship with Prabhupāda, and since Prabhupāda is the only object of his heart, he would even offer that person financial assistance. His affection was bound in his relationship with those connected to Prabhupāda. On the other hand he was as hard as a thunderbolt with those who, on the pretext of performing *sevā* for Prabhupāda, acted against him. All this is quite natural and comes from a feeling of relationship.

Gurudeva is the sole custodian of the entire service of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. Whatever *sevā* is performed to Śrī Rādhā-Govinda is indeed service to *gurupāda-padma*. *Gurudeva* is so adjusted with the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa that his only bliss is to give pleasure to Kṛṣṇa. He has no other source of happiness. Therefore, by rendering service to Kṛṣṇa for His pleasure, service to *śrī gurudeva* is indeed performed, and therefore everyone is in fact the servant of *gurudeva*. *Gurupāda-padma* would feel indebted to anyone who was connected with that line of service, even if it was only for a moment. This is because Prabhupāda is the only wealth of his heart.

This unprecedented *guru-niṣṭhā* of *gurupāda-padma* is his primary quality. His countless other qualities, specialties and characteristics are all subordinate to this main quality. For want of time it is impossible to appreciate or discuss all these divine characteristics. *Vyāsa-pūjā* means to take shelter at the lotus feet of *guru* and offer *pādya* at those lotus feet. I have tried to accomplish this to the best of my ability. May *gurupāda-padma* be pleased with me by his causeless mercy. This is my humble prayer. All of you please bestow your blessings upon me so that *śrī gurupāda-padma* should remain pleased with me.

*vāñchā-kalpatarubyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubyā eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

I offer *praṇāmas* unto the Vaiṣṇavas who are just like desire trees, who are an ocean of mercy, and who deliver the fallen, conditioned souls. 

[Translated from *Śrī Gauḍīya-patrikā* 54/3]

1 *Caitya-guru* is Paramātmā in the heart of all beings. The *varma-pradarśaka-guru* is he who first introduces one to the line of pure *bhakti*. The *śravaṇa-guru* gives one initial instruction in *bhakti*, while the *bhajana-śikṣā-guru* gives one detailed instructions on how to achieve success in *bhajana*. The *mantra-guru*, also known as the *dīkṣā-guru*, initiates one into the *viṣṇu-mantra*, a process known as *dīkṣā*.

2 This refers to the time Śrīla Bhakti-prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja swapped clothes with Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta

Sarasvatī Prabhupāda to protect Prabhupāda from an angry mob bent on killing him. For a full account of this pastime, refer to *Ācārya Kesari Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktiprajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī: His Life and Teachings* by Tridaṇḍisvāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, pp 40–44.

3 Titles given by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda to a number of his followers

4 Title attributed to Śrīla Bhakti-prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Our Aim is to Serve the Lord

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Spoken on 2nd November 1996 at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā



*W*e are trying to attain which thing? What is our aim? Are we trying to attain God or service to God? We do not want God, but service to Him. Why is this? We cannot engage God. This is the kingdom of devotion, not of enjoyment. It is only by devotion that service to God can be attained. It is not available to us by our efforts to enjoy.

It is necessary for us to practise devotion, by devoting whatever we have to Him for His enjoyment. The more we will devote ourselves to Him the more we will proceed towards Him. This is the main point. But how is such devotion possible? One who does not devote himself to God cannot attain Him. We all want to enjoy everything. There are religions in this world in which the people are always praying for enjoyment, peace or

salvation, but none of this is devotion. They may offer something for His service, for His pleasure, such as sweetmeats, flowers or garlands, but their main objective is to get something from Him in return. By this process God's pleasure cannot be attained; His service cannot be attained.

*kṛṣṇa yadi chuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā
kabhu prema-bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi 8.18)

If a devotee wants liberation or material sense gratification from the Lord, Kṛṣṇa immediately delivers it, but pure devotional service He keeps hidden.

This is the statement of the wise men, the devotees.



**Devotion is attainable by keeping the company of the pure devotees.
The person who possesses devotion can manifest it
in the heart of every soul. Unless and until we get the association
of such a devotee, this is not possible.**

We are trying to devote everything, but it is difficult to do so by our own effort. It is very difficult to devote everything. It is only possible in the company of devotees.

*bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhakta-saṅgena pariṣṛjāyate
sat-saṅgaḥ prāpyate pumbhiḥ sukṛtaiḥ pūrva-saṅcitaiḥ*

Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa (4.33)

Bhakti is awakened when one associates with *bhaktas* of Śrī Bhagavān. Association with *śuddha-bhaktas* is attained only by the accumulation of transcendental pious activities performed over many lifetimes.

Devotion is attainable by keeping the company of the pure devotees. The person who possesses devotion can manifest it in the heart of every soul. Unless and until we get the association of such a devotee this is not possible.

But such a devotee is very rare in this world – very rare. And we can get his association by our good works. What does “good works” mean? It means work that renders service to Him and His devotees. This is what is meant by “good”. *Sukṛti* – good works. *Kṛti* means “activity”; *su* means “good”. What is that good activity? We currently think that service to man is service to God, but this is only a partial truth.

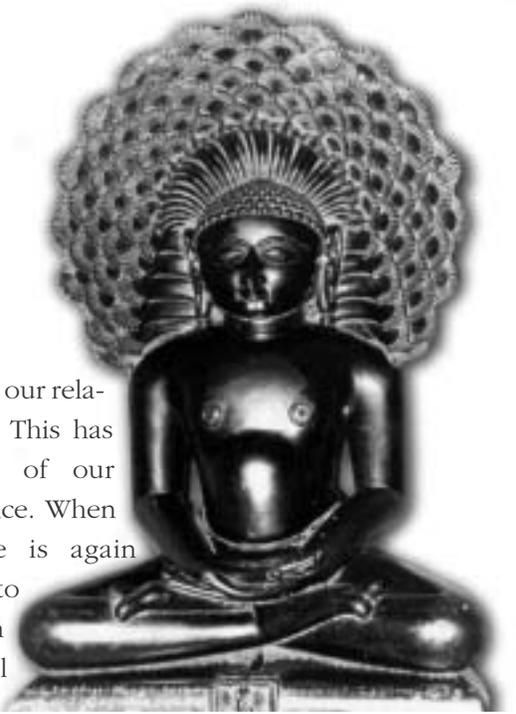
*ye 'py anya-devatā-bhaktā / yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya / yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam*

Bhagavad-gīta (9.23)

O Kaunteya, those who worship other demigods with faith actually worship Me alone, but in a way that is unauthorised.

This is stated by our Lord Kṛṣṇa – “Service to any demigods is service to Me.” Though it can be called

The true religion, or true relationship between Kṛṣṇa and us, is not available by freedom alone. If a person who is free from *māyā* does not possess love for Kṛṣṇa then that source of freedom is not the best thing for him.



this, such service is not rendered properly; it is not appropriate. This is not the proper law. “To serve man is to serve God.” Most of us in this present time think that service to man is service to God, but it is only a partial truth. Man is nothing without the position of God. He is a very small fraction of the spiritual subject.

*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke / jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ
manah-śaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi / prakṛti-sthāni karṣati*

Bhagavad-gīta (15.7)

The eternal *jīvas* in this material world are certainly My separated parts and parcels. Bound by material nature, they are attracted by the six senses including the mind.

Although the word “fraction” has been used here, it does not mean the fraction of the subject possessing all varieties of qualities and potencies. Rather, *amśa* refers to the fraction of the potency – *mamaivāṁśo* – not of the possessor of the potency. The possessor of potency is God, Lord Viṣṇu. So this is such a great difference. A part of the potency cannot be equal to the possessor of the potency. This is the main point that we should always remember. A potency always serves its master, the possessor. We are the potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and our relationship with Him is based on service to Him only.

In our present condition, however, we are doing the opposite, and instead of serving Him, we are serving our senses. How can this problem be removed?

*kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha hañā bhoga-vāñchā kare
nikaṭa-stha māyā tāre jāpaṭiyā dhare*

Śrī Prema-vivarta

Our current way of thinking occurred only by the influence of *māyā*. Why is *māyā* influencing us? Who is to blame, *māyā* or us? Is *māyā* doing wrong or are we? In the past, it is we who have done the wrong. We have

forgotten Kṛṣṇa and our relationship with Him. This has occurred because of our minute independence. When this independence is again used in service to Him we may attain real service, a real connection or relationship. How can we be relieved from the influence of *māyā*? Our religious scriptures give instructions on this. It is only possible when we are able to get the association of a devotee who himself is free from *māyā*.

This is of utmost importance – to have the association of such a person who is free from *māyā*. But not only that, as freedom is not our goal. The true religion, or true relationship between Kṛṣṇa and us, is not available by freedom alone. If a person who is free from *māyā* does not possess love for Kṛṣṇa then that source of freedom is not the best thing for him. Although it is better to become free, we are not very successful unless and until we attain a true connection in service to Him. That service is the best thing.

We do not want to enjoy Kṛṣṇa, but we are always eager to see Kṛṣṇa, to get something from Him, and to have His company. What then is our main objective? Is it to serve Him or enjoy Him? Why are we trying to enjoy Him? We are trying to enjoy Him because this is our character. By the influence of *māyā* we try to enjoy even when we serve. That is not devotion. We should give up that sense of enjoyment. Why are we trying to see Him? He is very beautiful, so we desire to see Him. But the devotee does not wish to see Him to enjoy His beauty; he wishes to serve Him. We cannot imagine what this is like. At present, our character is to enjoy, having turned towards that which is not in a pure condition. Hare Kṛṣṇa. 

The first annual function at Śrī Indrapraṣṭha Gauḍīya Maṭha, Delhi, a branch of Śrī Gauḍīya Saṅgha founded by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja was held on 29th/30th January 1964, with great celebration. On this occasion, an assembly of learned religious scholars gathered in the evening of the January 30th under the presidency of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, Śrī Dharmavirajī. After brief speeches by the founder-*ācārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Saṅgha and Śrī Dharmavirajī, the following *tridaṇḍi-sannyāsīs* and scholars made their respective speeches: (1) Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhakti-saurabha Bhaktisāra Mahārāja, (2) Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, (3) Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, (4) Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhakti-kamala Parvata Mahārāja, (5) Dr. Śrī R.V. Joshī M.A., Ph.D., Delele (Paris), (6) Dr. Śrī K.D. Bhardawaja M.A., Ph.D., Śāstrī-purāṇācārya Vidyāsāgara.

This is the lecture given in that auspicious assembly by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.



Nitya-

Śrī Śrīman

The Story of Indra and Virocana

The words *nitya-dharma* (eternal religion) automatically presuppose the inherent and unavoidable object of that *nitya-dharma*, he who performs it. This is due to the inseparable connection between *dharma* and *dharmī* (the practitioner of religion). The example is given of the inseparable relationship between water and liquidity or between fire and warmth. Before considering the *dharma* of any entity, it is essential to first reflect on the *tattva* of that entity. Thus, first we consider what *tattva* “I” actually is.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* narrates the story of Indra and Virocana by which this *tattva* of the soul can easily be understood.

At the beginning of Satya-yuga, the entire universe was divided into two camps, the demigods and the demons. The head of the demon party was



The first annual function of Śrī Indrapraṣṭha Gauḍīya Maṭha

Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja (speaking), Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhakti-saurabha Bhaktisāra Mahārāja (seated on left side), Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja (seated in the center), Tridaṇḍi Svāmī Śrīmad Bhakti-sāraṅga Gosvāmī Mahārāja (seated on right side).

dharmā

Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

King Virocana, and the leader of the demigods was Devarāja Indra. They rivalled for the attainment of unparalleled happiness and enjoyment. Thus bearing envy and spite towards each other, they approached Prajāpati Brahmā, the father of the universe, and asked him how they could fulfil their desires.

Prajāpati Brahmā said: “One is able to easily attain all the enjoyment available in all the worlds and to satisfy one’s every desire when one knows the soul. That soul is free from sin, old age, death, lamentation, hunger and desire, and he is *satya-kama* and *satya-saṅkalpa* – that is, his every endeavour and resolve is truthful and just.”

To realise the soul both Indra and Virocana resided with Brahmā and practised celibacy for thirty-two years. They then prayed to Prajāpati to tell them about the soul. Prajāpati said, “That person (self) you are now seeing with your eyes is the soul, and he is fearless and immortal.”

They enquired further, “Is the soul that person (self) seen in water or in a mirror?”

Prajāpati told them to look into separate clay pots filled with water. He asked them, “What do you see?”

Upon seeing their reflections in the water they said, “O Lord, we see the whole soul just as it is, from the hair on his head down to his toenails.” Prajāpati then asked them to cut their nails and hair and decorate themselves with ornaments. He again requested them to look into the clay pots. “Now what do you see?”

“We see that the two persons in these reflections have also been cleaned and decorated in very beautiful clothes and ornaments, just as we have; and thus they resemble us perfectly.”

Prajāpati said, “This is the soul and he is fearless and immortal.”

Hearing this Indra and Virocana departed with satisfied hearts. Upon reaching the abode of the demons, Virocana, who now understood the body to be the soul

and the object of worship and service, declared: “O demons, he who worships his body as the soul attains this world as well as the upper planets. All his desires are fulfilled and he attains full enjoyment.”

But Indra deliberated upon this on his journey home. “This body takes birth, dies, undergoes transformations, is subject to disease and so forth. How, then, can this be the immortal soul who is without birth, death, distress and fear?”

Although halfway home, Indra now returned to Prajāpati and told him about his doubt. Prajāpati made Indra live in celibacy for another thirty-two years and then said to him, “That person who is understood to be “I” within a dream is the soul, and he is fearless and immortal.”

Hearing this, Indra left with a peaceful heart; but upon his journey home he again began to reflect. He thought: “When someone is awake his body may be blind, yet in a dream his body will not be blind. Someone’s body may be diseased, yet in a dream that person may remain free from disease. But suppose that within a dream the person identified with as the self is beaten or killed. He still fears and cries, and upon awakening that ‘self’ ceases to exist. Thus, the form seen in a dream cannot in fact be the soul.”

Thinking like this Indra returned to Prajāpati. After practising celibacy for another thirty-two years, Prajāpati instructed him as follows: “The soul lies in that state of deep sleep where there is no vision or even the experience of dreaming.”

But as before, Indra began to contemplate Prajāpati’s words on his way home. “In the condition of deep sleep,” he thought, “there is no understanding of who one is, nor is anyone else being perceived. This condition is therefore a type of destruction.”

Thinking like this, Indra returned to Prajāpati once again. This time, after five years of celibacy, Prajāpati

instructed him anew. “Indra, the physical body, which is naturally subject to death, is only the abode of the soul. The *ātmā* is attached to the body, just as a horse or bull remains harnessed to a cart. In reality it is the person who has desires – such as “I shall look” – who is the soul. For this task there are senses, like the eyes. He who desires “I shall speak” is the soul, and for the act of speaking there is the tongue. He who wills “I shall hear” is the soul, and for the act of hearing there are ears. He who desires to think is the soul, and the mind carries out that thinking for him.

From this tale it is clear that the soul has three abodes, just as a peanut has three elements (the shell, the skin and the nut itself). The soul’s abodes are (1) the gross body consisting of five mundane elements;

(2) the subtle body which possesses a semblance of consciousness; and beyond these, (3) the pure body of the soul. Each of these bodies has its own separate *dharma*. The gross and subtle bodies are both impermanent. Thus their respective *dharmas* are also temporary. The soul, however, is eternal and everlasting. This is the established doctrine of Veda, Vedānta, the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas. Therefore the *dharma* of this soul is indeed *nitya-dharma* or *sanātana-dharma* (eternal function). It is

also called Vedic *dharma* or *bhagavat-dharma*.

Water is a substance whose *dharma* is fluidity; but when water solidifies into ice its *dharma*, or nature (i.e. fluidity), also transforms and becomes hardness. This quality of hardness has become the *nisarga*, distorted nature, of the water and it now acts in place of the water’s true nature of fluidity.

The Soul’s True and Acquired Natures

That which is called *dharma* should be understood. The word *dharma* is formed from the root syllable *dhṛ*, which means *dhāraṇa*, “to retain”. Therefore, *dharma* means “that which is retained”. The permanent nature or quality that is retained by a being is that being’s *nitya-dharma*. When, by the desire of the Lord, any being is created, that being’s eternal nature (*svabhāva*) also becomes evident simultaneously. This nature or quality is that being’s *nitya-dharma*. If a transformation later takes place within that entity, incidentally or

because of any connection with another object, then that entity's eternally present nature becomes transformed or distorted. Gradually the distorted nature becomes steady and it appears to be eternal and pure like his previous nature. Yet this transformed nature is not his actual nature. This nature is called *nisarga* ("acquired nature"), and it is temporary.

This acquired nature takes prominence over a person's true nature, and begins to assert its own identity as the 'real' nature. Water is a substance whose *dharma* is fluidity; but when water solidifies into ice its *dharma*, or nature (i.e. fluidity), also transforms and becomes hardness. This quality of hardness has become the *nisarga*, distorted nature, of the water and it now acts in place of the water's true nature of fluidity. *Nisarga*, however, is not permanent; it is temporary. Because it has come about by some cause or force, when this force is removed the *nisarga* itself is removed and the true nature manifests once more, just as ice again becomes liquid when placed near heat.

The Nature of the Infinitesimal Jīva

To understand this subject of the soul properly it is essential to understand the *tattva* and eternal nature of the *jīva*. By this knowledge one can very easily understand *nitya-dharma* (the living entities' eternal function) and *naimittika-dharma* (the living entities' temporary function).

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa – the creator, maintainer and annihilator of the universe, the origin of all and the cause of all causes – is the undifferentiated Absolute Truth. He is not formless (*nirākāra*) or devoid of features (*nirviśeṣa*); these are only his partial manifestations (*āṁśika-bhāva*). In reality He possesses a transcendental form. He is the inconceivable possessor of all power and He is endowed with six opulences. By the influence of His inconceivable *aghaṭana-ghaṭana-śakti*, the potency that makes the impossible possible, the supreme *tattva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifests in four aspects as *svarūpa*, *tad-rūpa-vaibhava*, the *jīva* and *pradhāna*.

To help us understand this, these four can be compared to the sun, the surface of the sun globe, the atomic particles within the sun's rays, and a reflection of the sun, respectively. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī states:

*ekam eva parama-tattvaṁ svābhavāvikācintya-śaktyā
sarvadaiva svarūpa-tad-rūpa-vaibhava-jīva-pradhāna-rūpeṇa
caturdhāvatīṣṭhate sūryāntar-maṇḍala-stha-teja iva
maṇḍala tad-bahirgata-tad-raśmi-tat-praticchavi-rūpeṇa*

The Absolute Truth is one. His unique characteristic is that He is endowed with inconceivable potency, through which He always manifests in four ways: (1) *svarūpa* (as His original form), (2) *tad-rūpa-vaibhava* (as His personal splendour, including His abode and His eternal associates, expansions and *avatāras*), (3) the *jīvas* (as individual spirit souls), and (4) *pradhāna* (as the material energy). These four features are likened to the interior of the sun planet, the surface of the sun, the sunrays emanating from this surface, and a remotely situated reflection, respectively.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī further states that if we liken Kṛṣṇa, the complete conscious entity (*purṇa-cit-tattva*), to the sun, the *jīvas* may be compared to the localised particles of the sun's rays. The description of the *jīva's svarūpa* is found in *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.7): "*mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ* – the eternal *jīvas* in this material world are certainly My separated parts and parcels." It is found in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (2.1.20): "*yathāgneḥ kṣudrā vi-phuliṅgā vyuccarnti* – innumerable *jīvas* emanate from *para-brahma* just as tiny sparks emanate from a fire." It is found in the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (5.9): "*bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca, bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ sa cānantyāya kalpate* – one should know that the *jīva* is the size of one ten-thousandth of the tip of a hair." It is also found in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 20.109): "*sūryāṁśa-kiraṇa, yena agni-jvālā-caya* – like a molecular particle of sunshine or fire."

These quotes confirm that the *jīva* is the separated part of the transformation of *sarva-saktimān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa's marginal potency. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.8) states: "*parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate* – a single supreme potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests as numerous powers (*śaktis*), of which three are prominent – namely, *cit*, *jīva* and *māyā*." By the Lord's desire, the *jīva-śakti*, being situated between the *cit*- and *māyā-śaktis*, manifests innumerable insignificant, atomically conscious *jīvas*. These *jīvas* are spiritual entities (*cid-vastu*) by nature and are capable of wandering throughout the spiritual or the material worlds. For this

As long as the *jīva* fails in his inclination to serve Kṛṣṇa he will continue to be scorched by the threefold miseries. At this time the *jīva*'s pure *svarūpa* is covered by the curtains of *māyā* and his *nitya-dharma*, or eternal nature, is also covered or perverted. This perverted nature is the *jīva*'s occasional function (*naimittika-dharma*), just as water becomes solid when transformed into ice.

reason the *jīva-śakti* is also known as the *tataṣṭhā-śakti*, or marginal potency, and the *jīvas* themselves are called *tataṣṭhā-dharmī-jīvas*, “*jīvas* who are neutral by nature”.

The Relationship Between Kṛṣṇa and the Jīva

Śakti-śaktimātor abhedah. According to this aphorism from *Vedānta-sūtra*, Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's *śakti* are non-different from each other. Therefore Kṛṣṇa and the transformation of His *śakti*, the *jīvas*, are also non-different. But this oneness is only from the perspective of their being equal as spiritually conscious beings (*cid-vastu*). Kṛṣṇa, however, is the complete conscious being and the master of *māyā*, while the *jīvas* are atomically conscious. Because of their marginal nature, the *jīvas* are capable of becoming subject to *māyā* even in their pure state. Kṛṣṇa is the possessor of all power and the *jīvas* are devoid of power. Thus there is an eternal difference between Kṛṣṇa and the *jīvas*.

From the philosophical perspective this difference and non-difference is beyond human intelligence, and is therefore called the doctrine of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, the science of inconceivable difference and non-difference. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Svayam Bhagavān, completely harmonised the contextual doctrines of the Vedas with those of the previous Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. He took Śrī Rāmānuja Ācārya's *viśiṣṭādvaita* doctrine, Śrī Madhvācārya's *śuddhādvaita* doctrine, Śrī Viṣṇusvāmī's *śuddhādvaita* doc-

trine and Śrī Nimbāditya Ācārya's *bhedābheda* doctrine and revealed their synthesis – the *acintya-bhedābheda* doctrine, which is the universal, absolute understanding of the Vedas.

Thus, Kṛṣṇa is *amśi*, the source of all expansions, and the *jīvas* are His *vibhinnāṁśa-tattva*, or separated parts and parcels. Kṛṣṇa is the attractor and the *jīvas* are the attracted. Kṛṣṇa is the object of service and the *jīvas* are the performers of service. Service to the completely conscious being, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is the real nature (*svabhāva*) of the atomically conscious *jīvas*. This service is indeed called *aprakṛta prema-dharma*, the transcendental religion of unalloyed love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus, this service to Kṛṣṇa, this *kṛṣṇa-prema*, is the constitutional nature (*nitya-dharma*) of the *jīva*. “*Jīvera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya dāsa* – the constitutional nature of the *jīva* is to be an eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.108).”

But if that *jīva*, whose nature is marginal, and who is atomically conscious, becomes adverse to the service of Kṛṣṇa, then Kṛṣṇa's *māyā-śakti* covers that pure *jīva*'s atomic, conscious nature with the subtle and gross material bodies. *Māyā* thus causes these *jīvas* to habitually wander throughout the 8,400,000 species of life.

When the *jīvas* are reinstated in their service to Kṛṣṇa, they are released from their bodies imposed by *māyā*. As long as the *jīva* fails in his inclination to serve Kṛṣṇa he will continue to be scorched by the threefold miseries. At this time the *jīva*'s pure *svarūpa* is covered

by the curtains of *māyā*, and his *nitya-dharma*, eternal nature, is also covered or perverted. This perverted nature is the *jīva*'s occasional function (*naimittika-dharma*), just as water becomes solid when transformed into ice. This temporary *dharma* is of many types according to the time, place and recipient.

Divisions of Dharma

All the varieties of *dharma* in this world can be divided into three general categories: *nitya-dharma*, *naimittika-dharma* and *anitya-dharma*. *Anitya-dharma* is that *dharma* which does not accept the existence of the Lord and the eternality of the soul. *Naimittika-dharma* is that *dharma* which accepts the eternality of the Lord and the *jīvas*, but only prescribes temporary means to attain the Lord's mercy. And *nitya-dharma* is that *dharma* which endeavours by the means of pure love to obtain the servitorship of Kṛṣṇa. This *nitya-dharma* is one, although different countries, castes and languages identify it by various names. This is the supreme occupation of all *jīvas*.

In India this *dharma* is presented as *vaiṣṇava-dharma*. *Vaiṣṇava-dharma* is eternal and the highest ideal of supreme *dharma*. In the performance of occasionally prescribed duties there is no direct execution of *nitya-dharma*. Rather it indirectly aims at *nitya-dharma*. Thus it is of very little use. Those processes that make up *anitya-dharma* are devoid of *nitya-dharma* and are described as the function of animals. They are fit to be rejected.

*āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunam ca
sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām
dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣo
dharमेṇa hīnāḥ paśubhiḥ samāna*

Hitopadeśa (25)

That *dharma* in which the function of the self (the soul) is not cultivated; in which endeavours are made to increase eating, sleeping, mating and defending; and in which enjoyment of the temporary sense objects is supported as the ultimate objective of human life, is the *dharma* of animals.

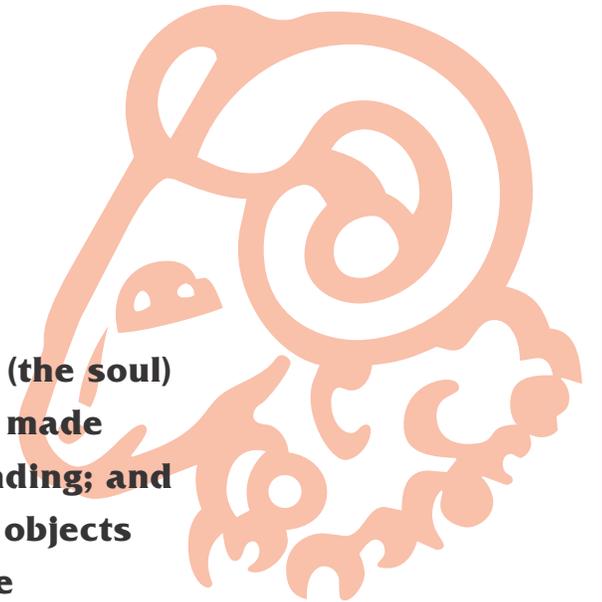
Human beings are equal to animals in the matter of eating, sleeping, fearing and mating. Yet the quality of religion is unique to human beings. Without religion, they are no better than animals.

That *dharma* in which the nature of the self (the soul) is not cultivated; in which endeavours are made to increase eating, sleeping, mating and defending; and in which enjoyment of the temporary sense objects is supported as the ultimate objective of human life, is the *dharma* of animals. In this so-called *dharma*, it is in fact completely impossible to escape all sorrow and attain pure happiness, which is the goal of human life. Therefore, it has been stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.18):

*karmāṇy ārabhamāṇānām
duḥkha-hatyai sukhāya ca
paśyēt pāka-viparyāsām
mithunī-cāriṇām nṛṇām*

All men in this world are inclined to perform *karma* for the purpose of becoming liberated from sorrow and attaining happiness. But the opposite results are seen. In other words, sorrow is not dispelled and happiness is not attained.

For this reason *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives the highest instruction for all people of the world:



*labdhvā su-durlabham idaṁ bahu-sambhavānte
mānuṣyam artha-dam anityam apīha dhīraḥ
tūrṇaṁ yateta na pated anu-mṛtyu yāvan
niḥśreyasāya viṣayaḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.9.29)

After wandering throughout 8,400 000 species of life one achieves the rare human form of life, which, although temporary, affords one the opportunity to attain the highest perfection. Thus, a sober human being, without wasting even a moment, should endeavour for the ultimate welfare of life as long as his body, which is always subject to death, has not fallen down and died.

Some persons accept *karma*, while others accept *jñāna* or *yoga* to be the means to attain ultimate prosperity. But this is refuted in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.12):

*naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta-bhāva-varjitam
na śobhate jñānam alaṁ nirañjanam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.12)

Knowledge of self-realisation, even though free from all material affinity, does not look well if devoid of a conception of the Supreme Lord.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.20) further states:

*na sādhayati mām yogo
na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā*

O Uddhava, *yoga*, *sāṅkhya*, study of the Vedas, austerity and giving in charity cannot overpower Me as does the intense *bhakti* performed solely for Me.

The meaning of this verse is that *bhagavad-bhakti* is the only means by which one can attain his ultimate benefit. This instruction is also given in the Śrutis: “*bhaktirevainaṁ nayati bhaktiramvainaṁ darṣayati bhaktirvaśoḥ puruṣo bhaktireva bhūyasī* – It is *bhakti* that reveals Bhagavān to the *jīvas*. That Supreme Person is controlled by this *bhakti* only.” Therefore *bhakti* is superior to all other practices and is the *nitya-*

dharma of the *jīva*. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.14.21) Kṛṣṇa also says: “*bhaktiyāham ekayā grāhya* – I can be attained by *bhakti* alone.”

The Nature and Science of Bhakti

What is the *svarūpa* of *bhakti*? *Śaṅḍilya-sūtra* states: “*sā parānuraktirīśvare* – *bhakti* is supreme attachment or love for the Lord; moreover, since it has the propensity to control the supreme controller, its nature is immortal.” Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describes the intrinsic nature of *bhakti* as follows:

*anyābhilāṣitā sūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam bhakir uttama*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.11)

Uttamā-bhakti, pure devotional service, is the cultivation of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa – in other words, the uninterrupted flow of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed through all endeavours of body, mind and speech, and through the expression of various spiritual sentiments (*bhāvas*). It is not covered by *jñāna* (knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation) and *karma* (reward-seeking activity), *yoga* or austerities; and it is completely free from all desires other than the aspiration to bring happiness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Bhakti has two stages: the stage of practice and the stage of perfection. The stage of practice is called *sādhana-bhakti* and the stage of perfection is called *sādhyā-bhakti* or *prema-bhakti*. Eternally perfect love for Kṛṣṇa is *sādhyā-bhakti*, and it is the *jīva*'s only eternal religion (*nitya-dharma* or *svarūpa-dharma*). This *sādhyā-bhakti*, although eternally perfect, remains covered in those *jīvas* who have fallen into materialism. When a person in this state attempts to uncover this *kṛṣṇa-prema* by the practice of *bhakti* through his present senses, it is called *sādhana-bhakti*. This *sādhana-bhakti* is also *nitya-dharma*. It is the immature state of *nitya-dharma*, whereas *sādhyā-bhakti* is said to be the fully matured and ripened state of *nitya-dharma*. Thus, although *nitya-dharma* is one, it has two stages.

Sādhana-bhakti is also of two types: *vaidhī* and *rāgānugā*. Until a spontaneous attachment and taste for Kṛṣṇa appears in the heart of a *sādhaka*, he follows

the regulative activities and rules prescribed in *śāstra*. In this way, by observing the discipline of *śāstra*, he engages in *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Performance of such *sādhana-bhakti* is called *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti*. By contrast, one is engaged in *rāgānugā-sādhana* when a spontaneous attachment (*rāga*) and taste arises in the heart; when, without regard to the rules and regulations of *śāstra*, one becomes intensely eager to possess the moods of the *vrajavāsīs*, which are full of attachment for Kṛṣṇa; and when one performs *sādhana* to follow those *vrajavāsīs*.

The Glories of Saṅkīrtana

Generally there are sixty-four limbs of this *sādhana-bhakti*. After taking shelter of the lotus feet of *śrī guru* (*gurupādāsraya*) the prominent limbs are hearing (*śravaṇam*), chanting (*kīrtanam*), remembering (*smaranam*), offering prayers (*vandanam*), worshipping (*arcanam*), rendering service (*dāsyam*), friendship (*sakhyam*) and offering one's very self (*ātma-nivedanam*). Of these nine limbs, the three limbs of hearing, chanting and remembering are superior to the others; and of these three, *hari-kīrtana* is supreme. All the limbs of *bhakti* are fully included in *harināma-saṅkīrtana*.

According to *tattva*, Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's names are non-different from each other. The glories of *harināma* are found in profusion throughout *śāstra*. Especially in Kali-yuga, *harināma-kīrtana* is the sole *dharma* or refuge:

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

Bṛhan-nāradya Purāṇa



**“It is *bhakti* that reveals
Bhagavān to the *jīvas*.
That Supreme Person is
controlled by this *bhakti* only.
Therefore *bhakti* is superior
to all other practices and is the
nitya-dharma of the *jīva*.”**

In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.3.22) also states that *harināma-saṅkīrtana* is the only supreme *dharma* of the living beings:

*etāvān eva loke 'smin
pumsām dharmāḥ paraḥ smṛtaḥ
bhakti-yogo bhagavati
tan-nāma-grahaṇādibhiḥ*

Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society.

The Development from Śraddhā to Prema

The sequential progression of the cultivation of *nitya-dharma* as revealed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is surely unparalleled and most wonderful in this world:

*ādau śraddha tata sādhu-saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriya
tato 'nartha-nivṛtti syattato niṣṭhā rucistataḥ
athāsaktis tataḥ bhāvstataḥ premabhayudañcati
sādhakānāmaya premnaḥ prādurbhave bhavet kramaḥ*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (Eastern Division 4.11)

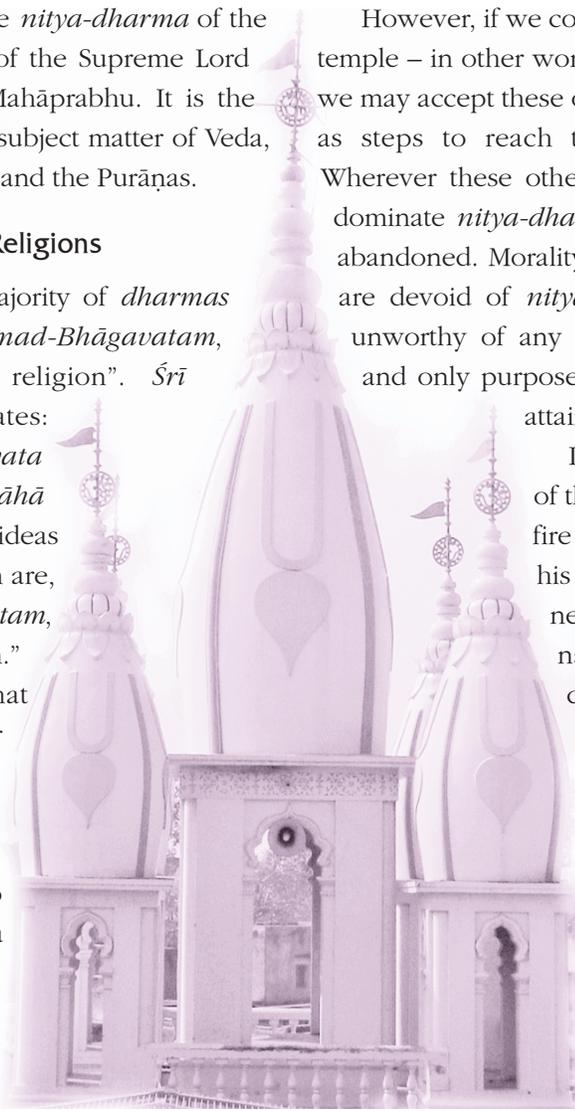
In the beginning, faith in *bhakti* will arise in a very fortunate person due to the accumulated result of *sukṛti*, previous transcendental pious activities. This faith is the seed of the *bhakti* creeper. Thereafter comes the association of *sādhus* and *guru*, and under their guidance one performs *bhajana*. As a result of performing *bhajana*, *anarthas* are destroyed. One thus attains *niṣṭhā* and then *ruci*, *āsakti* and *bhāva*. *Bhāva* is said to be the sprout of *prema*. When the fully matured state of *bhāva* becomes condensed it is called

prema. This *prema* alone is the *nitya-dharma* of the *jīvas*. This is also the advice of the Supreme Lord Himself, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is the most confidential, established subject matter of Veda, Vedānta, *śāstra*, the Upaniṣads and the Purāṇas.

True Dharma and Cheating Religions

In the world today the majority of *dharmas* are, in the words of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *kaitava-dharma*, “cheating religion”. Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavat also states: “*prthivīte dharma nāme yata kathā cale, bhāgavata kahe tāhā pariṣṭūrṇa chale* – all worldly ideas that go by the name of religion are, according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, nothing more than a deception.”

Anitya-dharma is that *dharma* in which prayer for bread and butter is the highest form of worship of the Lord; in which one changes his moral conduct from that of a Hindu to that of a Muslim, a Buddhist, a Christian and a Hindu once again; and in which one attempts to rid oneself of bodily diseases, considering his body to be his soul (self) and his soul to be the Lord. Feeding the people *kicharī* with the misconception that they are poor; constructing hospitals and godless educational centres believing this to be the top-most service to God; thinking that *nitya-dharma*, *anitya-dharma* and all other varieties of *dharma* are one; neglecting *nitya-dharma* and propagating secularism; sacrificing harmless animals and birds in the name of love for the world; and serving man and nation, are all *anitya-dharma*. None of these activities ever brings permanent welfare to the world.



However, if we consider *nitya-dharma* to be like a temple – in other words, to be our highest objective – we may accept these other *dharmas* partially, but only as steps to reach this temple of *nitya-dharma*. Wherever these other *dharmas* contradict, cover or dominate *nitya-dharma*, they should be completely abandoned. Morality, humanity or worldly love that are devoid of *nitya-dharma* are meaningless and unworthy of any glorification. The real objective and only purpose of humanity and morality is to attain *kṛṣṇa-prema*, love for Kṛṣṇa.

If there is just one true performer of this *nitya-dharma* who keeps the fire of *hari-saṅkīrtana* ablaze, then his nation, caste and society can never be ruined – even after that nation is oppressed and kept dependent by another country and has its treasures looted, its scriptures burned to ashes, and its culture and prosperity destroyed. This *saṅkīrtana* makes possible the eternal welfare of the world and of one’s country, society, caste and self.

I complete my lecture by repeating the final instruction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the founder of *dharma*, as found in the *Gītapaniṣad* (18.66):

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

Completely abandon all varieties of *dharma* relating to your body and mind, and just surrender fully unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear. 

“However, if we consider *nitya-dharma* to be like a temple – in other words, to be our highest objective – we may accept these other *dharmas* partially, but only as steps to reach this temple of *nitya-dharma*. Wherever these other *dharmas* contradict, cover or dominate *nitya-dharma*, they should be completely abandoned.”

[Translated from Śrī Bhāgavata-patrikā 9/9]



NASA Discovery and the Power of God's Names

A report by Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja

*M*y śikṣā-gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is preaching the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu extensively throughout the countries of the East and West. While in Australia during his previous world preaching tour, he elucidated the glories of *nāma-tattva*, and of Vedic heritage and culture. In one lecture he said that modern archaeologists do not accept the true age-old Vedic civilisation and claim that Harappā and Mohenjo-Daro, which are only 5000 years old, constitute India's ancient past. They also maintain that at the dawn of

mankind there was Stone Age, followed by an Iron Age, Bronze Age and today's 'Golden Age'. Such are the claims of foolish and ignorant people.

Indian culture is very ancient and was systematic, prosperous in every respect, and designed for people who observed proper moral conduct. Even if the modern scientists and archaeologists were to make a collective effort to try to understand its age, they would be baffled in their attempt.

The people of the West are far more advanced in technology and communications than are the people of

India today. In the United States, however, which claims to be the world's most advanced country, NASA has recently uncovered historical facts that establish India's ancient and sophisticated heritage. A recent news article reported the find as follows:

**NASA Images Discover
Ancient Bridge between India and Sri Lanka**
(Courtesy: NASA Digital Image Collection)

Space images taken by NASA reveal a mysterious ancient bridge in the Palk Strait between India and Sri Lanka. The recently discovered bridge, currently named Adam's Bridge, is made of a chain of shoals, c. 18 miles (30 km) long.

The bridge's unique curvature and composition by age reveal that it is man-made. According to both archaeological studies and legend, the first signs of human inhabitants in Sri Lanka date back to the primitive age about 1,750,000 years ago, and the bridge is of almost an equivalent age.

This information provides a crucial insight into the mysterious legend called "Ramayana", which was supposed to have taken place in Treta-yuga, more than 1,700,000 years ago. In this epic there is mention of a bridge that was built between Rameshvaram in India and the Sri Lankan coast, under the supervision of a dynamic and invincible figure called Ram, said to be the incarnation of the Supreme.

This information may be of little importance to the archaeologists interested in exploring the origins of man, but it is sure to open the spiritual floodgates as people across the world come to know of an ancient history linked to the Indian mythology.

After hearing this news report, a member of the audience asked my *sikṣā-guru* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, for his opinion on the report.

Śrīla Mahārājajī: This recent report by NASA has given a glimpse into the culture of ancient India.

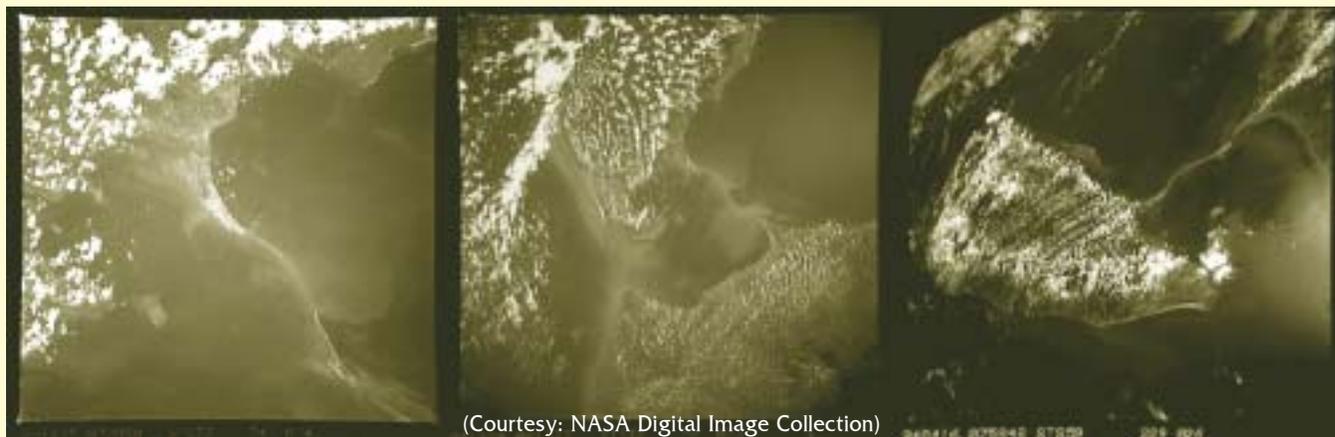
Member of the audience: Can you please say more about this, with examples so that the newcomers here may understand.

Śrīla Mahārājajī: The span of Indian, Vedic culture is given in the Vedic scriptures. According to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other scriptures, the four *yugas* (Satya-, Tretā-, Dvāpara- and Kali-yuga) form one *divya-yuga*. Seventy-one *divya-yugas* equal the duration of one *manvantara*. Fourteen *manvantaras* make up one day of Brahmā, whose night is of the same length. Brahmā has a year of 360 days, and a life-span of one-hundred years.

During one day of Brahmā, *maryāda-puruṣottama* Bhagavān Śrī Rāmacandra, *līlā-puruṣottama* Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and, in the Kali-yuga that follows Kṛṣṇa's appearance, *prema-puruṣottama* Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari, descend to this world. However, Bhagavān Śrī Rāmacandra does not descend in the Tretā-yuga just previous to the Dvārpara-yuga in which Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears. It is beyond the ability of modern scientists to correctly calculate these events.

An Indian resident of Australia: Swāmijī, does this report bear any other significance?

Śrīla Mahārājajī: Listen. You are a scientist. One of our *bhaktas* pointed you out to me before class. At that time



in ancient India, India's science and architecture were so advanced, beyond your understanding. NASA's recent discovery shows that this thirty-kilometre bridge does not have even one pillar, nor is it built with any cement or iron. Could the unified efforts of all the scientists of the world accomplish anything like this? At that time India was highly civilised and its technology was also advanced. All of this is beyond your grasp.

Scientist: Swāmijī, you have commented on the subject of advanced technology. Was there computer science during the time of ancient India? Indians have learned computer knowledge from Western countries.

Śrīla Mahārājajī: Your question makes me laugh. Knowledge of Indian science is of a special type, meaning it comes from realisation. Your knowledge, however, is devoid of realisation and is not actual knowledge. In one way you people are innocent. Your family lineage is Indian but how can you possibly understand these things? Without the aid of ancient India and Indian culture, the world could not progress

even one inch. Have you heard of the scripture named *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?

Scientist: Yes, I know of it. Even though I am a scientist, I try to study the *Bhāgavatam* daily.

Śrīla Mahārājajī: I will give you an example of computer science from this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Do you know the story of Śṅgi Ṛṣi, the son of the Ṛṣi Śamīka, who cursed King Parīksit at the mere age of five years?

Scientist: Yes, Swāmijī, I do know it. I heard from my mother that due to this curse the *Bhāgavatam* manifested in this world.

Śrīla Mahārājajī: Your mother has told you correctly. She must be a *bhakta*. No ordinary person can understand this secret; only devotees can do so. Immediately after this curse all the *munis* and *ṛṣis*, taking a vow to fast until death, at once arrived on the banks of the Gaṅgā with King Parīksit. The sage Maṅgal from Mongolia and the sage Kaśyapa from the shore of the Kaiśipayana Ocean also arrived there. Just see ancient India's internet system. Communications



“The potency of nāma can not only make a bridge on the ocean to help the army of Śrī Rāma cross over, but the potency of nāma is so great that it can make a bridge for the jīva to cross over this ocean of nescience to his real home.”

Sunrise at Dhanuśakoṭi, the place in Rāmeśvaram from where Lord Rāmacandra's army built the bridge to Śrī Lankā.

and transportation were so advanced at that time, that everyone assembled there within just a few moments.

Devotee: Gurudeva, We heard from you the glory of ancient Indian culture as described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. At that time, you were speaking in relation to the glories of *śrī nāma*. What connection does *nāma* have with NASA's discovery? I don't understand.

Śrīla Mahārājaji: The technology that was used to construct this bridge, which has been discovered by NASA, was *nāma* technology and nothing else. At the time of building this bridge Nala, Nīla, Hanumān and all others would place stones in the water while uttering Bhagavān's names, "Rāma, Rāma". By the influence of this name the stones did not sink; rather they all joined together.

In their childhood Nala and Nīla were very mischievous; they used to throw the sages' *kuśa-āsanas* and other possessions into the water, thus causing them to sink. The sages became angry and declared, "Anything you throw into the water will float." There was so much power in the words of those *nāma-parāyaṇa* sages (sages who are fully devoted to Bhagavān's holy name) that anything Nala and Nīla threw into the water refused to sink. This curse became a benediction for them, just as the curse of *nāma-parāyaṇa* Ṛṣi Nārada upon the two sons of Kuvera, Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, enabled them to attain Vrajendra-rīnandana Śyāmasundara.

If *nāma-parāyaṇa* Deva Ṛṣi had not cursed Nalakūvara and Maṇigrīva, they would not have attained Bhagavān.

The potency of *nāma* can not only create a bridge on the ocean to enable Śrī Rāma's army to cross over it, but is so great that it can even build a bridge for the *jīva* to cross over this ocean of nescience and reach his real home. Other than *nāma* technology, no technology has this ability. This is the real glory of *nāma*. 

Restoring the

By Śrīpād Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā dāsa

Under the guidance and leadership of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, both Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa and Uddhava-kyāri are currently being excavated and restored. Unfortunately, many of the holy places in Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala are falling into disrepair and gradually becoming lost to us due to neglect, and this project aims to help preserve the heritage of Vraja for future generations.

What follows is a brief account of the history and astonishing glories of Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa and Uddhava-kyāri.



Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa



Uddhava-kyāri (Śrī Viśākhā-kuṇḍa)

Heritage of Vraja



Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa (at the base of Śrī Govardhana)

Below the Śrī Harideva temple, beside Manasā-devī on the southern side of Śrī Mānasī-gaṅgā, is a very ancient and holy *tīrtha*, Śrī Brahma-kuṇḍa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyana Veda-vyāsa has described the glories of this ancient *kuṇḍa* in the *Śrī Kūrma Purāṇa* and *Śrī Varāha Purāṇa*. In the *Śrī Kūrma Purāṇa* it is said:

*yātra brahmādayo devāḥ samājagmurbhuva-sthale
brahma-stutyābhiṣekam ca hareścakre vidhānataḥ
sāmāvedodbhavair-mantraiḥ sarva-kāmārtha-sidhaye
brahma-kuṇḍam yato jātam brahmādibhir vinirmitam*

Out of a desire to take *darśana* of the sweet *līlās* of Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā stole all the calves and cowherd boys and hid them in a cave. Then, being very merciful, Kṛṣṇa Himself assumed the forms of all the stolen calves and cowherd boys, thus showing His astonishing opulence (majestic power) to Brahmājī. This verse explains that upon his illusion being dispelled, Brahmājī, surrounded by Māhadeva Śaṅkara and many other demigods, came near to this presently situated Śrī Harideva temple and fell at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, begging forgiveness for his faults. To fulfil his cherished desire, he performed *abhiṣeka* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by reciting all the appropriate *mantras* from the *Sāma Veda*. From the water of this *abhiṣeka*, Brahma-kuṇḍa was formed. Brahmā and the others demigods bathed in that *kuṇḍa*, and from that day onwards this pond became known as Brahma-kuṇḍa.

In the same *Kūrma Purāṇa* the following *mantras* have been prescribed for taking bath and performing *ācamana* in Brahma-kuṇḍa:

*brahmādi nirmitastīrtha śuddha-kṛṣṇabhiṣecana
namah kaivalyanāthāya devānām muktikāraka*

*iti mantram daśāvṛtyā majjanācamanairnaman
dvayormadhye kṛtam dānam sahastram guṇitam bhavet*

“O *tīrtha* created by Brahmā and other *devas*! O supremely pure *kuṇḍa*! O bathing place of Kṛṣṇa, O *kaivalya-nāyaka*! I am offering obeisances to you, who release the demigods from their material bondage.” Recite this *mantra* ten times, perform *ācamana*, offer *pranāmas* and then bathe in the waters of this *kuṇḍa*.

*puṇyam mānasikam yatra phalamakṣyam āpnuyāt
manasi samsthitān kāmān cintanāt sarvamāpnuyāt
guptadānam prakurvīta svarṇagaurajatādikam
annavastrādikam caiva pātra pṛthvigrhādikam*

*daśāyutaguṇam puṇyam phalam tad dvidaguṇam labhet
nārikelaphalādīnām hastaśvādividhāyinām
puṇyam lakṣaguṇam jātam phalam syāttaccaturguṇam
manasā kriyate dānamakṣyam phalamāpnuyāt*

The result of performing charitable acts here is increased one-thousand times. If anyone performs these pious acts here, even within his mind, he will gain imperishable results. All types of desires are fulfilled here. The results of giving away gold, silver, clothing or ornaments is increased 100,000 times here, and then by four times again.

On a nearby shore lies the temple of Manasā-devī, who fulfils all of one’s heartfelt desires. Manasā-devī is Kṛṣṇa’s *yogamāyā* potency, who carries out Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās* and unites all *jīvas* with Him. The Vaiṣṇavas know her to be the worshipable deity of Mānasī-gaṅgā, who is the self-same form of Bhagavatī-gaṅgā.

According to the *Vāyu Purāṇa*, on the eastern side of this *kuṇḍa* lies Indra-tīrtha; on the southern bank lies Yama-tīrtha; on the western bank is Varuṇa-tīrtha;



Mānasī-gaṅgā and Manasā-devī Mandira

and on the northern bank is Kuvera-tīrtha. These four demigods are performing worship here to receive Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Nearby is Mānasī-gaṅgā, who manifested from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mind. She dispels all types of sin, as well as the sufferings of birth and death, for all those who merely bathe in her waters. In the centre is Mukhāravinda of Śrī Girirājaji. On the pretext of taking the *gopīs* across this Mānasī-gaṅgā, Kṛṣṇa performed boat-sporting pastimes here.

Cakleśvara Mahādeva is situated nearby on a bank of this Mānasī-gaṅgā. He protected Girirāja and the Vrajavāsīs from the torrents of rain, thunderbolts and lightning of Indra. This Brahma-kuṇḍa is therefore a prominent *tīrtha* among all the holy places of Govardhana. By serving this *kuṇḍa* all of the *jīva*'s cherished desires are fulfilled.

Uddhava-kyārī (Śrī Viśākhā-kuñja)

This place, which is also known as Kadamba-kyārī, is situated a short distance from Nandīśvara Hill, to the south-east. This is in fact the *kuñja* of Viśākhāji, and nearby lies Viśākhā-kuṇḍa. In this secluded and beautiful place surrounded by *kadamba* trees, Viśākhāji used to arrange meetings between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa also used to perform *rāsa-līlā* here with Rādhāji and Her friends. There is a *rāsa-vedī* (sit-

ting place in *rāsa-līlā*) here, reminding us of that *rāsa-līlā*. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa also enjoyed many kinds of playful water-pastimes in the clear and fragrant waters of Viśākhā-kuṇḍa.

After Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā, all of Vraja drowned in an ocean of separation from Him. Even the birds and animals gave up eating and drinking, feeling distressed in separation from Kṛṣṇa, what to speak of the distress felt by the *gopas* and *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa's beloved *gopīs* followed Akrūra's chariot to this point and then fell to the ground unconscious. They never returned home again. Grievously afflicted by separation from Kṛṣṇa, Rādhāji stayed in this dense forest in seclusion. In the hope of Kṛṣṇa's return, She counted each passing day, remaining on the verge of death.

At that time Kṛṣṇa's messenger, Uddhavaji, came here to console the *gopīs*, but upon seeing Śrīmatī Rādhikā's state of separation, he paid his obeisances to Her from afar, unable to say anything.

Acutely afflicted by separation from Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā saw a bumblebee and thought it to be a messenger from Kṛṣṇa. In the state of *divyonmāda*, She started manifesting *citrajalpa*, *prajalpa* and other moods of transcendental madness. At times She chastised the bee, and at times She complained to it. At times She gave the bee instructions and at times respect, and still at other times She enquired from it about the well-being of Her beloved. Uddhava was



Nandīśvara Hill

amazed to see and hear all this. He had come as *guru* to deliver instructions, but instead he became a disciple.

To console the *gopīs*, Uddhava relayed some of Kṛṣṇa’s messages to them, but this only intensified their pain of separation from Him. They said, “*uddo man na bhayos das bīs, ek huto so gayo śyām saṅga, ko ārādhe īśa* — Uddhava, we don’t have ten or twenty hearts each. We had only one, which has now left us along with Śyāma. With which heart shall we now worship God?” They also said, “*udo joga kahān rākheṅ yahān rom rom śyām hai* — Uddhava, how can we perform *yoga* when Śyāma pervades every particle of our bodies?”

Finally, Uddhavajī desired to take birth in Vraja in the form of a small shrub, creeper or blade of grass, so that he could be blessed with the dust of the *gopīs’* feet. He worshipped their foot-dust with the following prayers:

*āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syām
vrndāvane kim api gulma-latauśadhīnām
yā dustyajam̐ sva-janam̐ ārya-pathaṅca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padavīm̐ śrutibhir vimṛgyām*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.61)

If I become a shrub, creeper or medicinal herb, here in Vṛndāvana, it will be my great fortune. Oh! I shall then be able to serve the dust of these

gopīs’ feet, and will be blessed by bathing in that foot-dust. These *gopīs* are the most fortunate of all. They have given up those things that are extremely difficult to renounce – their relatives, religious principles prescribed in the Vedas, and acceptable social conduct. Having become so completely absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they have obtained supreme *prema* for Him and become as worshipable as Him.

*vande nanda-vraja-strīnām
pāda-reṇum abhīkṣṇaśaḥ
yāsām hari-kathodgītām
punāti bhuvana-trayam*

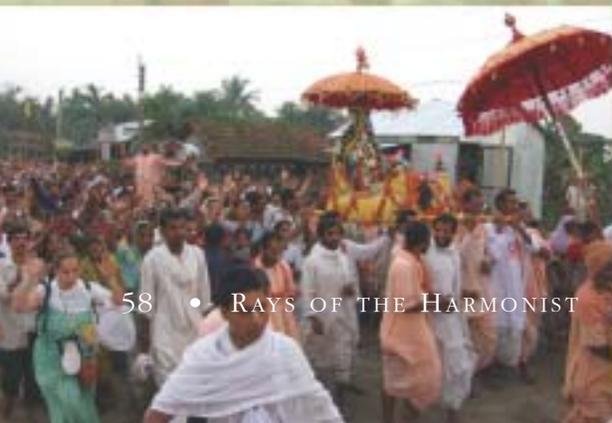
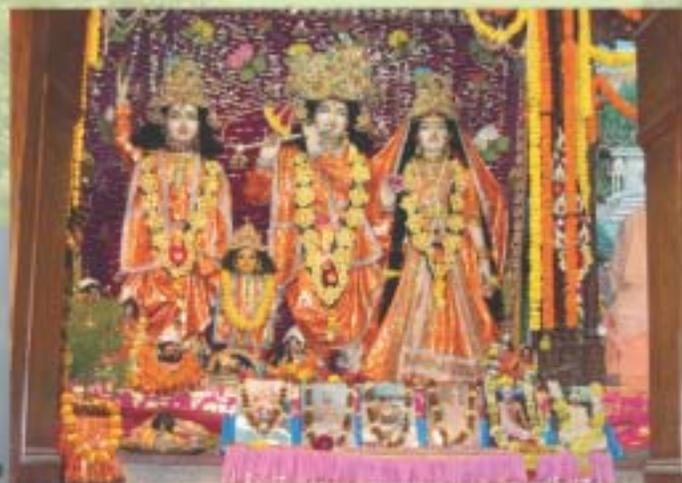
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.63)

I bow down to the dust of the feet of the *gopīs* residing in Nanda Bābā’s Vraja. Oh! Whatever these *gopīs* have sung about Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes is purifying the whole world and will continue to do so.

This pastime-place is filled with the *rasa* of the highest level of meeting (*mahā-sambhogā*) with Kṛṣṇa; and, simultaneously, it is filled with the *rasa* of the highest degree of separation (*mahā-vipralamba*) from Him. The life of a *sādhaka* becomes successful by taking *darśana* of and touching this place. 



Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

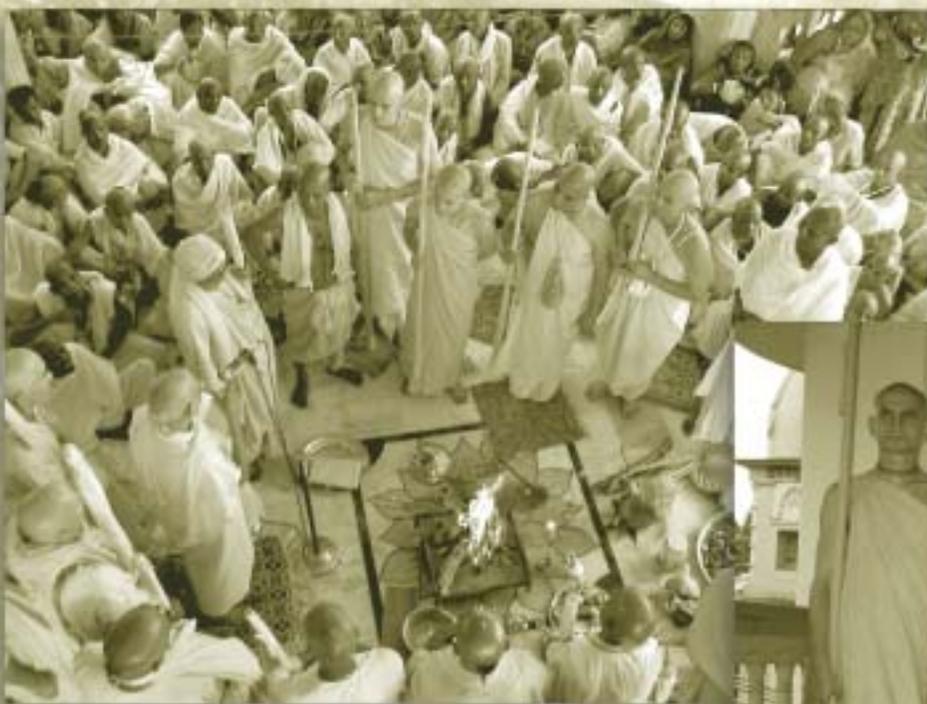




Parikramā 2003



Śrī Gaura Janmohatsava abhiṣeka



The New Sannyāsīs: (standing from left to right)
 (1) Śrī Ananta-kṛṣṇa brahmacārī - Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Rāddhantī Mahārāja (2) Śrī Kṛṣṇa-
 bhajan vanacārī - Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Sajjana Mahārāja (3) Śrī Svarupānanda brahmacārī - Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Akiñcana Mahārāja (4) Śrī Rādhānātha brahmacārī - Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Dāmodara Mahārāja

Sannyāsa Initiation



Sagaṇa Śrī Gaura-mahimā

e'lo gaura-rasa-nadī kādambinī ha'ye
Locana dāsa Ṭhākura

**e'lo gaura-rasa-nadī kādambinī ha'ye
bhāsāila gauḍadeśa premavr̥ṣṭi diye (1)**

e'lo – has come; *gaura-rasa-nadī* – the river of *gaura-rasa*; *kādambinī* – cloud bank; *ha'ye* – being; *bhāsāila* – flooded; *gauḍadeśa* – the land of Gauḍa; *preavr̥ṣṭi* – shower of love; *diye* – giving.

The river of *gaura-rasa* has come as a cloud bank and flooded the land of Gauḍa with a shower of love.

**nityānanda-rāya tāhe māruta sahāya
yāñhā nāhī premavr̥ṣṭi tāñhā la'ye yāya (2)**

nityānanda-rāya – Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu; *tāhe* – its; *māruta* – wind; *sahāya* – helper; *yāñhā* – wherever; *nāhī* – no; *preavr̥ṣṭi* – shower of love; *tāñhā* – that (place); *la'ye* – has taken; *yāya* – to go.

Śrīman Nityānanda Rāya, as the helping wind, carries that cloud bank to any place that remains bereft of its shower of love.

**huḍ huḍ-śabde āila śrī advaita candra
jala-rasadhārā tāhe rāya-rāmānanda (3)**

huḍ huḍ-śabde – (making) the sound of thunder; *āila* – has come; *śrī advaita candra* – Śrīmad Advaita Ācārya; *jala-rasadhārā* – the flow of liquid mellow; *tāhe* – that (cloud); *rāya-rāmānanda* – Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya.

The thundering sound of that cloud is Śrīmad Advaita Ācārya, and Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya is its shower in the form of a stream of *rasa*.

**cauṣaṭṭi mahānta āila meghe śobhā kari'
śrī rūpa – sanātana tāhe haila vijuri (4)**

cauṣaṭṭi – sixty-four; *mahānta* – great saints; *āila* – have come; *meghe* – cloud; *śobha* – beauty; *kari* – do; *śrī rūpa-sanātana* – Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī; *tāhe* – that (cloud); *haila* – have become; *vijuri* – lightning.

Sixty-four great saints have beautified that cloud, with Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī as its lightning.

**kṛṣṇadāsa kavirāja rasera bhāñḍārī
yatane rākhila prema hemakumbha bhari' (5)**

kṛṣṇadāsa kavirāja – Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja; *rasera* – of *rasa*; *bhāñḍārī* – storekeeper; *yatane* – with care; *rākhila* – conserved; *prema* – love; *hemakumbha* – golden pot; *bhari'* – filling.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī is the storekeeper of that *rasa* (flowing mellows of love), carefully conserving the *prema* in a golden pot.

**ebe sei prema la'ye jagajane dila
e dāsa locana-bhāgye bindu nā milila (6)**

ebe – now; *sei* – that very; *prema* – divine love; *la'ye* – taking; *jagajane* – to all the people of the world; *dila* – has given; *e* – this; *dāsa* – servant; *locana-bhāgye* – in the destiny of Locana dāsa Ṭhākura; *bindu* – a drop; *nā* – not; *milila* – obtained.

Now taking that *prema*, he (Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja) has distributed it to the entire world, but Locana dāsa's destiny is such that he is unable to obtain a single drop of it. ❀

*gaura āmāra, je sāba sthāne,
koraḷo bhramana raṅge
se-saba sthāna, heribo āmi,
praṇayi-bhākata saṅge*

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura



*In the company of praṇayi-bhaktas
(devotees possessing love for Kṛṣṇa),
I will behold all the places
where my Gaura has travelled.*