

soul. In His second verse He explained how powerful Kṛṣṇa and His Holy Name are, and also how much of an offender we are. In His third verse He gave us the remedy for our offensive condition, which can reveal to us the Holy Name’s power and our relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Then in His fourth verse Mahāprabhu prayed,

na dhanam na janam na sundarim  
kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye  
mama janmani janmanisvare  
bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi

[“O Lord, I do not desire wealth, followers, beautiful women, or liberation. I pray only for unconditional devotion to You birth after birth.”]

Once someone enters into practising life by following Mahāprabhu’s formula of chanting the Lord’s Holy Name with a mood of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others, then the only target and desire of their life becomes ahaitukī-bhakti, eternal devotion free from material motivations. A practitioner does not want any of his energy to be taken by offensive activity, and he desires that his full energy be engaged in service that pleases the Lord.

When a practitioner has entered into exclusive devotional life in this way, he can understand Kṛṣṇa’s position and see that his own position in the mundane world is an ugly, impious platform from which to serve the Lord. To express this mood of a practitioner, Mahāprabhu prays in the next verse of His *Śikṣāṣṭakam*,

ayi nanda-tanuja kinikaram  
patitam mam visame bhavambudhau  
krpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-  
sthita-dhūli-sadṛśam vichintaya

(Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam: 5)

“O Lord, I am Your eternal servant, but because of my misfortune I have fallen into this terrible ocean of birth and death.

mad-guṇa-śruti-mātreṇa  
mayi sarva-guhāśaye  
mano-gatir avichchinnā  
yathā gaṅgāmbhaso ‘mbudhau  
lakṣaṇam bhakti-yogasya  
nirguṇasya hy udāhṛtam  
ahaituky avyavahitā  
yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame

(SB: 3.29.11-12)

“The primary characteristic of supramundane devotion is that simply by hearing of My glory one’s thoughts uninterruptedly flow towards Me, the Lord who resides within the hearts of all, just as the waters of the Ganges naturally flow towards the ocean. Such pure devotion to Me, the Supreme Lord, is unconditional and unobstructed (self-manifest and unalloyed).”

I pray that by Your causeless mercy You will accept me as Your own and I will be connected with You like a particle of dust on Your lotus feet.”

Mahāprabhu’s prayer to Kṛṣṇa means, “If You give me Your merciful glance, I and everything I possess will become purified and useful for Your service. *Sthita-dhūli-sadyśam vichintaya*: my existence will enter the transcendental service world, and I will be able to serve You purely there for Your satisfaction.”

If the Lord will give even a little bit of His attention to a devotee then the devotee will be completely purified. As the sparking light of a match can remove 100 years of darkness from a closed room, so everything can be cleaned and cleared from anyone’s heart by the Lord’s divine influence.

### *Praying to chant without offence*

In the sixth verse of His *Śikṣāṣṭakam* Mahāprabhu prays,

nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā  
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā  
pulkair nichitam vapuḥ kadā  
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati

[“O Lord, when will tears stream from my eyes, my voice falter, and the hair of my body stand on end as I call Your Name?”]

These are the symptoms of a servant who purely serves the Lord and chants His Holy Name without offence. Mahāprabhu prays in this way to express His hankering to chant the Lord’s Holy Name without offence.

If we can purely chant the Lord’s Holy Name we will get His direct service and feel ecstatic joy in our life. *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* concluded,

nāma-saṅkīrtanam yasya sarva-pāpa-praṇāśanam  
praṇāmo duḥkha-śamanas taṁ namāmi hariṁ param  
(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam’s last verse: 12.13.23*)

“Nām-saṅkīrtan is supreme.”

*I offer my obeisance unto the  
Supreme Lord, Hari. Chanting  
His Name absolves all sin,  
and offering obeisance to Him  
dispels all sorrow.*

But Mahāprabhu commented,

tāra madhye sarva-śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana  
niraparādhe nāma laile pāya prema-dhana

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Antya-līlā, 4.71)

“Nām-saṅkīrtan is the supreme form of bhakti-yoga, but only if we chant the Lord’s Holy Name without offence will Kṛṣṇa-prema appear in our hearts.”

### *The Holy Name’s purifying power*

Mahāprabhu wants everyone to chant the Holy Name purely, without offence. Offences are very difficult to avoid and dangerous, but we must avoid them because they are our obstacle in chanting the Lord’s Holy Name. Mahāprabhu shows us His mood of prayer to the Holy Name to help us attract the Holy Name’s grace, which is what will truly free us from offences. With the proper mood of prayer and regular chanting, we can be hopeful that we can receive the Holy Name’s grace.

nāmāparādha-yuktānām nāmāny eva haranty agham  
aviśrānti-prayuktāni tāny evārtha-karāṇi cha

(Padma-purāṇa: Svarga-khaṇḍa, 48.49)

“When the Holy Name sees our heartfelt desire to try to chant Him purely, then He will be merciful to us; we will get the qualifications we need to chant properly, and all of our difficulties will go away by His grace.”

This is Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu’s realisation from the scriptures: “We cannot avoid making offences, but the Holy Name Himself will give us good nourishment and relieve us from our offences if we have love, affection, and a little connection with Him.” This is the main thing. If our desire is heartfelt, then we must always continuously try to chant the Lord’s Name. Continuous, attentive chanting will attract the grace of the Holy Name to mercifully clean our hearts, remove all our obstacles, and excuse our offences. Through His Śikṣāṣṭakam



Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu.  
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara  
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj  
described him as the greatest  
philosopher in the history  
of Vedic culture.

we can see that Mahāprabhu’s first expression and teaching, *cheto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*, cleaning the mirror of the mind, comes by the grace of the Holy Name to the practitioner in the last stage.

Mahāprabhu’s next prayer in His *Śikṣāṣṭakam* is:

yugāyitaṁ nimeṣeṇa chakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitaṁ  
 śūnyāyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ govinda-viraheṇa me

(Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam: 7)

[“O Govinda! In separation from You a moment seems like forever, tears pour from my eyes, and the whole world feels empty.”]

When one chants the Holy Name purely then one’s consciousness is purified (*cheto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*), and all the effects of the Holy Name Mahāprabhu described in His glorification of Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan—*bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam*, and so on—appear in one’s heart. Then, in pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, one feels viraha, separation from the Lord, and thinks, “I am chanting the Lord’s Name but still I am not chanting in the proper way.” One then desires to chant the Holy Name more and more purely.

### *The Lord of our heart*

Mahāprabhu ends His *Śikṣāṣṭakam* with this prayer:

āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ pinaṣṭu mām  
 adarśanān marma-hatāṁ karotu vā  
 yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo  
 mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ

(Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam: 8)

“Kṛṣṇa may embrace me or break my heart by denying me His darśan. Kṛṣṇa the Gopa-vadhū-lampaṭ [enjoyer of the cowherd men’s wives] may do whatever He likes; He will always be the Lord of my heart.”

When a servitor will enter into his service life with this type of mood he will have the mood of full dedication to the Lord.

cheto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-  
 dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam  
 śreyaḥ-kairava-chandrikā-vitarāṇam  
 vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam  
 ānandāmbudhi-varhdhanam prati-padaṁ  
 pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanaṁ  
 sarvātma-snapanam param vijayate  
 śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam  
 (Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam: 1)

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtan cleanses the  
 mirror of consciousness,  
 extinguishes the raging forest  
 fire of material existence,  
 shines moonlight on the  
 evening lotus of good fortune,  
 is the life of the wife of  
 divine knowledge, expands the  
 ocean of ecstasy, is the taste  
 of full nectar at every moment,  
 and soothes the entire self.  
 May Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtan be  
 supremely victorious!”

Different kinds of examinations, sometimes painful examinations, will come to him in his spiritual life, but he will not be able to leave the Lord's lotus feet. He will not see anything except the Lord's service and will not be able to leave the Lord's connection in any way; his only target will be Kṛṣṇa and His service.

The mood of Mahāprabhu's final expression is, "Kṛṣṇa can do anything and everything with Me. He has full right over me. I will always be His servitor's servitor's servitor. I have no other ego or ideal." This verse also has a deep, a deeper, and a deepest meaning, and all of them will automatically be revealed in our hearts through our service mood. We will naturally be able to see, feel, and embrace those ideals when they are revealed to us.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu did not write many verses or give many instructions. He simply gave the gist of all instructions in His *Śikṣāṣṭakam*. There is no way to proceed in our spiritual life or in our chanting of the Lord's Holy Names without following the directives of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu given in His *Śikṣāṣṭakam*. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣāṣṭakam* is our life and soul. We will try until death to proceed according to its instructions and we must be benefitted to the utmost by that.



## *Serving Under Proper Guidance*

**Question:** Mahārāj, when chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra, how should we consider the position of Gurudev? Should we chant to please Guru? Should we chant because it pleases Guru? Should we pray to Guru to help us chant?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** We can understand the proper ideal for practitioners through the example of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. His example shows us the importance of both following the order of Gurudev to chant and satisfying him through our practice of chanting.

### *Mahāprabhu's bright and exalted form*

When Mahāprabhu was in Kashi [Varanasi] He came to the assembly of the māyāvādī sannyāsīs headed by Prakāśānanda Saraswatī. When He arrived He sat in the place where all the sannyāsīs would wash their feet before entering the assembly room. When Mahāprabhu arrived He washed His hands and feet, and then sat down in the washing area. While He was sitting there He also revealed His glory by showing a great effulgence from His divine form.

prabhāve ākarṣiḷa saba sannyāsira mana  
uṭhila sannyāsī saba chhāḍiyā āsana

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 7.61)

When all the sannyāsīs saw this effulgence, which appeared like that of Brahma, they were very attracted and surprised: “Oh! He is as bright as the sun!”

Prakāśānanda Saraswatī was also surprised. Prakāśānanda Saraswatī had heard that Śrī Chaitanyadev had come to Kashi and was turning all the Kashi-vāsīs, the residents of Kashi, into Vaiṣṇavas. Prakāśānanda was very angry about this and had told all his disciples, “Don’t associate with that Chaitanya!”

Without Prakāśānanda’s knowledge, a brāhmaṇ had invited Mahāprabhu to his assembly. Mahāprabhu did not actually want to go there and join the company of the māvādīs, but He felt He needed to distribute His mercy to Prakāśānanda Saraswatī for the satisfaction of His devotees. For that purpose He went there.

When Prakāśānanda saw Mahāprabhu’s divine effulgence and then His divine form sitting in a dirty place, he was stunned and thought, “Oh! How beautiful and attractive is the form of this boy!” He could not stay in his chair. He got up and said to Mahāprabhu, “Why are You sitting there? You are very nice-looking and Your form is very exalted. Please come inside. We are all gathered here. You are a sannyāsī of our sampradāya. You are a little young but You are very bright. Why are You sitting outside? Please come in and take a seat.”

Mahāprabhu said, “No, no, no. I am very insignificant and inferior. You are the sampradāya’s guru and everyone here is a very great paṇḍit. I am not qualified to join you.”

When Prakāśānanda saw Mahāprabhu’s great humility his mind softened. He took Mahāprabhu’s hand and said, “O Śrīpād! Please come inside and take a seat.”

After they came inside Prakāśānanda began to very affectionately question Mahāprabhu, “I have heard Your name. I know that You are a great paṇḍit and that You are a sannyāsī



of our sampradāya. You have taken sannyās from the line of Bhāratī. That is not a high-class line of sannyās. It is a middle class, but You are certainly a member of our sampradāya. Why don't You come to visit us? You should practise jñāna-yoga, read the *Vedānta-darśana*, and discuss it with us. That is the duty of a sannyāsī. You should regularly hear the *Vedānta-darśana* and preach Śaṅkar Āchārya's teachings. You do not do that. Why? We cannot understand why You only chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra and dance. You are always chanting, dancing, crying, and laughing. Why do You always show Yourself in this way? Why are You always simply performing saṅkīrtan?"

### *Chant 'Hare Kṛṣṇa' and be happy*

Mahāprabhu very humbly replied to Prakāśānanda Saraswatī, "O sir, what can I say? My mind was not good when I took sannyās. I needed relief from the mundane environment; My mind went in a very renounced way, and I could not stay in the grhastha-āśram. I came to My Guru and prayed, 'Give Me sannyās.' Also, when I was initiated I asked, 'What is My duty?' My Guru said,

mūrkha tumi, tomāra nāhika vedāntādhikāra  
 'kṛṣṇa-mantra' japa sadā,—ei mantra-sāra  
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 7.72)

"You are foolish and unqualified. It is not necessary for You to read anything. You have no qualification to hear or read the *Vedānta-darśana*. You will not be able to understand its meanings. But You are coming to me for some advice, so I must tell You something. What can You do? You can do simply what is necessary in this Age of Kali:

harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam  
 kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā  
 (Bṛhan-Nāradya-purāṇa)

"No one can achieve liberation in this Age of Kali without chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra. Chanting the Hare

Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra is the only way to discover Your true nature and serve Kṛṣṇa eternally. If You can chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra without offence You will get a very good result. You will feel Kṛṣṇa-prema and get everything. Purely chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra is the goal of human life. You have a renounced nature, and You have fortunately taken a human birth. So chant ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’ and be happy. That is sufficient for You. It is not necessary for You to read the *Vedānta-darśana* or anything else.”

### *Dancing, chanting, crying, and roaring*

Mahāprabhu continued His explanation to Prakāśānanda Saraswatī, “Then on the order of My Guru I began chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra. I did not know what I was doing, and I did not feel that I was chanting, or dancing, or crying. I was simply following the order of My Guru to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra. For his satisfaction I was chanting. As I chanted in this way power came to Me from My Guru, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra automatically appeared in My heart. I felt the presence of Kṛṣṇa within Me, and I felt many different things about Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa began to dance in My heart and then dance upon My tongue in the form of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra.

“I do not dance actually, or chant, or cry. From within My heart, Kṛṣṇa dances, and then His Name takes control of Me. You may see Me dancing, chanting, crying, roaring and doing so many things, but they are all the movements of Hari-nām. It is not actually My desire to do all these things. I am very shy to act in that way. But what can I do? I am following the order of My Guru Mahārāj. By his power this type of result is coming to Me and giving Me this type of mood.

“When this began happening to Me I thought I had become mad. I went back to My Gurudev and asked,

kibā mantra dilā, gōsāñi, kibā tāra bala  
japite japite mantra karila pāgala

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 7.81)

“What kind of mantram have you given Me? I did not know how powerful this mantram was. When I chant it I become like a madman.’

“My Gurudev replied, ‘This is the actual result of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra. All mundanity stops if You chant this mantram properly. You are very fortunate that You have become filled with such transcendental knowledge and the full ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa.’

“My Gurudev encouraged Me in this way and also told Me to try to spread this consciousness to others. So what can I say?

nāma nāche jīva nāche nāche prema dhana  
jagata nāchāya māyā kare palāyana

(Hari-nāma-chintāmañi: 1.2.58)

“When someone chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra without offence Kṛṣṇa will dance in their heart and then upon their tongue.”

“When I began to follow the order of My Gurudev the Divine Name of Kṛṣṇa began dancing within My heart. As I continue to chant and dance by the will of Hari-nām whoever hears that dance of Kṛṣṇa in the form of sound vibration from My tongue also begins to dance. Then Kṛṣṇa enters their hearts and begins dancing there. And not only this, the wealth of Kṛṣṇa-prema that appears in everyone’s heart, that prema-dhana, also dances. I Myself do not know anything, but I am seeing that now the whole world has automatically begun dancing with Me by the will of Hari-nām and the wave of Kṛṣṇa-prema. Hari-nām has begun dancing and chanting from within My heart and automatically the attention of everyone’s mind has been overcome by that dancing movement. I am simply following the order of My Gurudev and all of this is happening. I do not actually know what is what.”

Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s Guru  
Śrī Īśvar Puri quoted this  
verse:

evaṁ-vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtiyā  
jātānurāgo druta-chitta uchchaiḥ  
hasaty atho roditi rauti gāyaty  
unmāda-van nṛtyati loka-bāhyaḥ  
(SB: 11.2.40)

“Chanting the Name of their beloved Lord, those who have dedicated their lives to Him develop deep loving attachment to Him. Their hearts melt and they loudly laugh, cry, shout, sing, and dance like madmen, unconcerned with the public.”

## *The power of Brahma*

Mahāprabhu expressed Himself in the assembly of sannyāsīs to Prakāśānanda Saraswatī in this way. Then Prakāśānanda argued, “Yes. This is good. But you must hear *Vedānta-darśana*.”

Mahāprabhu humbly replied, “Yes sir. You are master. You can read it, and I will hear from you.”

Prakāśānanda began to speak about the *Vedānta-darśana*, and while he spoke Mahāprabhu did not say anything. Finally Prakāśānanda asked, “Can You understand anything I am saying?”

Mahāprabhu replied, “By the mercy of My Gurudev I can understand the meanings of the sūtras from the *Vedānta-darśana* that you are reading. But I cannot understand the commentary you are giving.”

Prakāśānanda said, “What? You cannot understand my commentary?”

Mahāprabhu said, “No. I cannot understand, that is, I think what you are saying is wrong.”

Prakāśānanda began to debate, “Why? Why do You think it is wrong?”

Mahāprabhu said, “You are saying that the final attainment given in the *Vedānta-darśana* is nirākār, nirviśeṣ Brahma—formless, impersonal Brahma. But this is not true. I feel in My heart that Brahma has power, form, and beauty. And not only do I feel this in My heart; everyone who mixes with Me also feels it. So I must conclude that Brahma has a divine form and divine qualities. I also think that if Kṛṣṇa is merciful to you, then you will feel it also.”

In this way Mahāprabhu expressed His heart and through that explained to Prakāśānanda Saraswatī how Śaṅkar Āchārya’s interpretation of the *Vedānta-darśana* is wrong. After this Prakāśānanda was defeated. He held his tongue and the debate was finished. Even though he was defeated by Mahāprabhu, after the debate was finished, Prakāśānanda thought, “Oh! Mahāprabhu, how humble He is.”

### *“Why am I sitting on this throne?”*

The meeting of Mahāprabhu and Prakāśānanda Saraswatī passed in this way. Another day Prakāśānanda saw Śrī Chaitanyadev going to take His bath in the Ganges. Mahāprabhu was dancing on His way, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa with a crowd of people dancing along behind Him. Prakāśānanda was stunned to see Mahāprabhu’s saṅkīrtan. From far away Prakāśānanda saw Mahāprabhu dancing in Kṛṣṇa-prema with so many pious souls in saṅkīrtan in the middle of the road. He was very attracted, and thought, “Oh! I need this actually! What have I been doing my whole life? I have been a sampradāya guru for so long, but I see now that I need what this young man has. He is following His Guru’s order and has become intoxicated with a mood of divine ecstasy. He dances and chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra as tears pour from His eyes. His whole body trembles and He perspires. All ecstatic symptoms appear in His body. He is so happy and joyful. What am I doing sitting in the chair of an āchārya?”

### *The supreme wealth*

After seeing Mahāprabhu’s divine form in saṅkīrtan Prakāśānanda was heavily convinced that he could not remain in his position. Prakāśānanda thought that he would talk to Chaitanyadev when he saw the Lord again. Later when he saw Mahāprabhu coming down the road again chanting in a dancing mood, Prakāśānanda fell at Mahāprabhu’s lotus feet and took Mahāprabhu’s foot dust on his head. He said, “Oh! I am very foolish. You have everything and I have nothing. All ecstasy, joy, and happiness abide in Your body, and Your eyes show that. I have been practising jñāna-yoga for so long, but what have I got? Nothing. I have got nothing. I need Your mercy. You are the embodiment of Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan. You must be that, otherwise my mind could not have been attracted to You. And You must be Kṛṣṇa. You are distributing Kṛṣṇa

consciousness to everyone, and it is not possible for anyone to do this except Kṛṣṇa Himself. Only Kṛṣṇa has the power to do that, so You must be nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa.” In this way Prakāśānanda took shelter at the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu.

Mahāprabhu said, “What are you doing? You are a sampradāya guru.”

Prakāśānanda prayed, “Prabhu, please do not cheat me now. I feel it is necessary to surrender to You, and I feel You are distributing the supreme wealth to all jīva-souls. Please do not deceive me now.”

### *Inconceivable conversion*

There is a verse of Śrīla Bilvamaṅgal Ṭhākura which expresses the heart of Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī at this time:

advaita-vīthī-pathikair upāsyāḥ  
svānanda-simhāsana-labdha-dīkṣāḥ  
śaṭhena kenāpi vyaṁ haṭhena  
dāsī-kṛtā gopa-vadhū-viṭena

(Śrīla Bilvamaṅgal Ṭhākura)

“I was a Brahma-jñānī, and I was following the conception of so ‘ham: ‘I am Brahma.’ No one could defeat me or convince me of anything otherwise. I was happily situated with full regard in the conception of advaita-mārg [monism]. I was the worshipped headmaster of advaita-mārg, the guru of the sampradāya. I held the highest chair, and I sat on my throne in great satisfaction. But then all of a sudden Kṛṣṇa, the Gopavadhū-lampaṭ (cunning playful cowherd boy) attracted my mind with His qualities, beauty, glory, and love. By attracting my mind (śaṭhena) He tricked me and made me His maidservant. Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that He forcibly took my heart and engaged it in the service of the gopīs. He has not only made me His maidservant; He has captured my heart with His divine Pastimes and made me fall flat on the ground.”

This is Bilvamaṅgal Ṭhākura’s heart expression, and Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī’s heart expression is very similar: “Suddenly

Chaitanya Mahāprabhu came to Kashi and attracted my mind. He smashed my advaita (monistic) conception and made me His servant.”

It is greatly inconceivable to think that Prakāśānanda Saraswatī was transformed by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in this way, but already it has happened. Prakāśānanda Saraswatī clasped the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu and apologised: “I have made a great offence to You. You are doing what is actually necessary for everyone. Please give Your Hari-nām to me.” In this way Prakāśānanda Saraswatī re-took initiation (dikṣā) from Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Through this example we can understand that it is not necessary to read the Vedānta or the Vedas or anything, and that it is not necessary to imagine or focus on anything external. In Kali-yuga it is only necessary to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa without offence under the guidance of our Gurudev. The proper and best ideal for everyone is to follow the order given by our Gurudev. We may not know how much we will be able to do that, but with our full energy—heart and soul—we must try. If we can proceed in that way without offence a good result will come to us. There is no doubt.

### *Service beyond surrender*

In His conversation with Rāmānanda Rāy in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu rejected the famous verse from *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66): *sarva-dharmān parityajya Mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*. In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa explained to Arjuna many things on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra. For our benefit He explained karma-yoga, jñāna-yoga, abhyāsa-yoga, bhakti-yoga, and so on. Then at the conclusion of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa said,

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja  
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ  
(*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*: 18.66)

“You must avoid non-religion, and religion also. Exclusively take shelter at My lotus feet. If any sinful reactions come to you I will take care of them. Have no fear.”

This is the first and main task of our spiritual life. If we can take shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet then Kṛṣṇa will fully take our charge. Everyone generally thinks that this is the supreme, conclusive verse of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. But when Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu summarily rejects this verse, we are confused. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu asked Rāmānanda Rāy about the ultimate goal of life, and step by step Rāmānanda Rāy offered progressive conclusions: varṇāśram-dharma, karma-miśra-bhakti, jñāna-miśra-bhakti, yoga-miśra-bhakti, and so on. Mahāprabhu summarily rejected them all, including this celebrated verse of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *sarva-dharmān parityajya*. Who can explain the cause of this? Only an expert like Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. I once asked Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, “Why did Mahāprabhu summarily reject this verse?”



Śrīla Guru Mahārāj explained, “This verse advises one to take shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. Up to this point it is very nice advice, but what will one do once one has surrendered at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet? That is not explained in this verse. Mahāprabhu taught



exclusive devotion—surrendered life with service—but in this verse of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* there is no explanation of how to lead a life of service. For that reason Mahāprabhu rejected it.”

### *Surrendered and alive with mercy*

Later in their conversation Rāmānanda Rāy presented another verse to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu which offered an explanation of how one can begin to actively lead a life of surrendered service to Kṛṣṇa:

jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva  
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām  
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir  
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*: 10.14.3)

This verse explains, “Throw away whatever knowledge you have acquired prior to surrendering! *Jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā!* Your mundane knowledge has no place in the plane of transcendental devotion. A surrendered soul should throw out not only his previous knowledge but also all attempts for acquiring any further mundane knowledge. Then he can submit himself fully and live a life of real devotion. This is the vital point, ‘*Namanta eva jīvanti*: be surrendered and alive with mercy. Fully surrender to Kṛṣṇa and chant His Holy Name.’

“*Sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vān-manobhir*: you can stay in the jungle, or a house, or an ashram or the ocean, or anywhere; that is not a problem. Anywhere at any moment you can engage yourself physically, mentally, and verbally in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s service. This means chanting the Lord’s Holy Name, and through that *ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*: the Lord Himself will be attracted and bestow His mercy upon you.

“But *san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām*: the source of your spiritual connection with Kṛṣṇa and your practice of service to Him is the *satām* (sādhu), and without the sādhu’s connection you cannot connect with Kṛṣṇa, satisfy Kṛṣṇa, or fully attract

His mercy. What you hear from the pure devotee, the sādhu, is the food with which you are alive in Kṛṣṇa consciousness; what you receive from the sādhu is your very spiritual existence.”

### *Nectar spilling everywhere*

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj composed a verse that beautifully explains how we connect with the Lord and His service through the sādhu. This verse is the dearest and highest verse for me in life. Still so much light comes to me from this verse, and with that I am fully satisfied.

śrī-śrīmad-bhagavat-padāmbuja-madhu-svādotsavaiḥ ṣaṭ-padair  
nikṣiptā madhu-bindavaś cha parito bhraṣṭa mukhāt guñjitaiḥ  
yatnaiḥ kiñchid ihāhṛtām nija-para-śreyo ’rthinā tan mayā  
bhūyo-bhūya ito rajaṁsi pada-samlagnāni teṣaṁ bhaje

(Śrī Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam: 10.14)

When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj composed and finished his *Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam* he wrote this verse confessing, “What I have presented in *Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam* is not my own property. I have actually only collected this ecstatic property from the devotees.”

His expression is: “The super devotees are like bees always tasting the ecstatic, honey-like nectar of the lotus feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the cause of all causes (*sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*), the Supreme Controller (Parameśvar), the origin who has no origin (*anādi-ādīḥ*). As a lotus is always full of nectar, so bee-like devotees are always collecting the nectar from the unlimited ocean of nectar that is the Lord’s lotus feet and tasting that through their super mood of devotion. As they taste that nectar they sing the glories of that nectar and their Master, Lord Kṛṣṇa.

“If anyone tastes honey and sings at the same time, then naturally a few drops of honey must fall down from his mouth as remnants. Devotees who ecstatically glorify their Lord—who are always drinking, and drinking, and drinking, and intoxicatedly glorifying their Lord—always spill many drops of nectar from their mouths in all directions as they dance and sing.



“Here in this book, *Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam*, I have collected those many drops of eternal, transcendental ecstasy that are falling from the mouths of the Lord’s devotees as their mercy. For both myself and you all I have collected those falling drops of nectar and made a plate for everyone to taste that nectar and be supremely benefitted. I am so grateful and indebted to all the devotees who glorify their Lord and taste the nectar of His lotus feet that here at the conclusion of my work, *Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam*, I now bow down to all of them again and again. *Bhūyo-bhūya ito rajaṁsi pada-saṁlagnāni teṣaṁ bhaje*: again and again I glorify the lotus feet of all of these devotees: the devotees who collect nectar directly from the Lord’s lotus feet, the

devotees who drink the nectar collected from the Lord’s lotus feet, the devotees who catch and distribute the drops of nectar which fall from the mouths of the devotees drinking the nectar collected from the Lord’s lotus feet, and the devotees who accept that nectar which is offered to them after it has been collected, tasted, dropped, caught, and distributed. I take upon my head the dust of the feet of all of these sincere devotees, whose hearts are filled with divine hankering.”

In this way Śrīla Guru Mahārāj finished his composition *Śrī Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam*. More explanation of this verse is possible, but shortly I have explained something. Through this you can understand the explanation of śaraṅāgati that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has given in his book, as well as the conclusion of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in His conversation with Rāmānanda Rāy: *jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadīya-vārtām* (SB: 10.14.3), surrendered devotional life means living on the remnants of the devotees who live on the Lord’s remnants, living on the mercy of the devotees who live on the mercy they receive from the Lord.

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

(SB: 10.47.63)

“I constantly offer my obeisance  
to the Vraja-gopīs, whose  
singing of Kṛṣṇa’s glory purifies  
the three worlds.”

### *Satisfying Kṛṣṇa’s devotees*

The Lord’s devotees are not only worshippable; they are most worthy of our service. Lord Śiva has explained the significance of serving the Lord’s devotees.

ārādhnanānām sarveṣām viṣṇor ārādhanam param  
tasmāt parataram devi tadiyānām samarchanam

(Padma-purāṇa)

Once Parvatī Devī asked her Lord, “Who is supremely worshippable?”

Lord Śiva said, “Viṣṇu is supremely worshippable. What question is there about that?”

Parvatī Devī thought, “I am not worshipping Lord Viṣṇu, I am serving my Lord, Śiva.” A little doubt came to her, “Is what I am doing right or wrong?”

Lord Śiva saw her face and said, “I am not saying I am a devotee of Viṣṇu, but that *is* actually who I am. So you have nothing to fear.”

Parvatī Devī thought, “My Lord, Śiva, is undoubtedly worshipping Viṣṇu. I am worshipping him. So that is the best for me.”

*Tasmāt parataram Devī Tadiyānām samarchanam:* Lord Śiva’s expression was, “Satisfying Viṣṇu’s devotees is even better than worshipping Viṣṇu Himself.”

Kṛṣṇa personally explains that service to His devotees is the best way to serve Him:

ye me bhakta-janāḥ pārtha na me bhaktās cha te janāḥ  
mad-bhaktānām cha ye bhaktās te me bhakta-tamā matāḥ  
(Ādi-purāṇa)

Kṛṣṇa says, “I do not consider someone who thinks, ‘I am Kṛṣṇa’s devotee’ to really be My devotee. He is My devotee, but I do not consider him so much. I consider someone who is a devotee of My devotee to be My real devotee.”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj very nicely explained Kṛṣṇa’s mood in this verse. Kṛṣṇa’s feeling is, “The flow of My mercy is always going everywhere to all of My devotees, but My devotees are constantly serving Me twenty-four hours a day and never giving Me a chance to worship or satisfy them. I always feel I am indebted to My devotees for their loving service, and when I do not get a chance to serve them I feel hopeless. When I see My devotees’ devotee serving My devotees I specially bestow My mercy upon them, and in that way I am able to serve My devotees.

“I also consider the service of My devotees’ devotee most valuable; the conditioned souls are suffering so much in the material world, and My devotees’ devotees try to collect those suffering souls and engage them in My service through their Gurudev, My devotee. I am always sad to see the conditioned souls’ sadness, and I am eager to serve My devotee. So I am



Lord Śiva and Parvatī Devī

especially interested in bestowing My mercy upon My devotees' devotees, to nourish them in their distribution of the service of My devotee. That dispels all the suffering of the conditioned souls and satisfies My own desire to satisfy My devotees."

In this way we can understand that serving Kṛṣṇa's devotees is the best way to serve, and that our service to Kṛṣṇa's devotees easily reaches Kṛṣṇa. If we are real worshippers of Kṛṣṇa, then we must try to satisfy Kṛṣṇa by serving His devotees.

### *The key to revelation*

Devotee: Gurudev, what do you expect from me as your disciple?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: As possible by you, always chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra without offence and try to serve Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvikā Giridhārī. If you have the opportunity to serve Them, do not waste that. Always remember your spiritual life by practising the nine forms of bhakti-yoga given in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*,

śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam  
archanaṁ vandanam dāsyam sakhyaṁ ātma-nivedanam

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 7.5.23)

iti puṁsārpitā viṣṇau  
bhaktiś chen nava-lakṣaṇā  
kriyeta bhagavaty addhā  
tan manye 'dhītam uttamam  
(SB: 7.5.23-24)

"Hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshipping, praying, considering oneself a servant, considering oneself a friend, and surrendering the self—if devotion consisting of these nine practices is first offered to the Supreme Lord and then directly performed I consider that the greatest learning."

Among these, the process of śravaṇ-kīrtan is best: hear from Guru-Vaiṣṇava and chant the glories of Guru-Vaiṣṇava, the Lord, and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra. Serve your Gurudev and your Śikṣā-gurus, the Vaiṣṇavas around you. If you proceed in that way you must be benefitted. *Śravaṇa-kīrtana-jale karaye sechana* (Cc: Madhya, 19.152): śravaṇ-kīrtan in the association of the devotees will best nourish us. If we hear and chant the Lord's glories in the association of the sādhus, the illusory environment will not be able to attack us. But we must hear from a proper Vaiṣṇava and chant without making Vaiṣṇava-aparādh. If we can proceed in that way with good association the result of our practice will increase ten times more, or maybe a hundred times more.



Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj installed Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvikā Giridhārī at Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Ashram in Soquel, California, and revealed that They are nondifferent from the Deities Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur installed at Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur.

Our practice in devotional life is always under the instruction of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur. Sometimes there is a little difference between Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur and Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur, but Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave us our method according to Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur’s line. We follow that. What method others may follow I cannot say, but we follow the method given by our Guru Mahārāj.

ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ  
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ

(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu: Pūrva-vibhāga, 2.234)

“Kṛṣṇa’s Name, Form, Qualities, and Pastimes cannot be grasped by our mundane senses, but They can be revealed to us through our service attitude.”

In this verse we find the key to Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur’s method, which Śrīla Guru Mahārāj followed and I am the example of and witness to. Prabhupād Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur gave us the line that a service attitude (*sevonmukhe*) means the service of Guru–Vaiṣṇava. His line is that Kṛṣṇa’s Divine Name and



Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur

so on will be revealed in your heart (*svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*) through the service of Guru and Vaiṣṇava. Many Vaiṣṇavas may read many śāstras and follow many different religious processes in their life, but our line is that nothing is necessary except a life of service to Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of a proper Guru and Vaiṣṇava. We need only to try to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness heart and soul under the guidance of a proper Guru or Vaiṣṇava. In that way we will proceed to our destiny in the plane of dedication, beyond the planes of exploitation and renunciation. Serving under the guidance of Guru-Vaiṣṇava brings us into that plane of dedication.

*The Supreme Lord is immediately bound within the heart by the fortunate souls who desire to hear Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (from the mouth of the Vaiṣṇava).*

**sadyo hṛdy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ śuśrūṣubhis tat-kṣaṇāt**  
(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 1.1.2*)

Through surrender to Kṛṣṇa's devotee gradually all property will come to us. Very easily and very suddenly all spiritual quality and qualification, which is very rare to receive, will appear in your heart. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.80.34) says, "Guru-śuśrūṣayā yathā: service to Guru-Vaiṣṇava is our line of progress." When we have the proper mood of surrender then we will engage in the practices of devotion under the guidance of a proper sādhu.

### ***Connecting with the pure flow***

*Ataḥ Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-Nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ*: we cannot see Kṛṣṇa's divine form or hear His Divine Name. If we try to go to Kṛṣṇa directly, overstepping the sādhu, we will never see Kṛṣṇa's real form. We will only go down into the garbage of illusion (sahajiyāism) again and again. It is necessary to understand what the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa is, and what it is not, if we actually want to chant the Holy Name. From our mundane position we do not understand Kṛṣṇa, but He can reveal Himself in our heart if we try to connect with Him with love, affection, chastity, and sincerity through the proper channel of His devotee.



The Holy Name appears in this world as the transcendental vibration form of the Lord, and that transcendental vibration appears through the channel of Guru-paramparā, through the heart of the Sādhu-Vaiṣṇava. Only a pure mood of devotion can inspire the Holy Name to descend, so if we connect ourselves with a devoted servitor of the Lord who has the pure mood of chanting, we can also come into connection with the Lord's Holy Name.

If we can receive the Holy Name from our Gurudev and remember the mood and process in which our Gurudev and the great Vaiṣṇavas chanted the Holy Name, then the Holy Name will gradually reveal Himself in our hearts. On our own we are not qualified to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra, but through the connection, inspiration, and guidance of the sādhu the mood and qualification to perfectly chant the Holy Name will come to us.

### *Proper conception*

Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was a very highly elevated sādhu with a very renounced mentality. He was always deeply connected with the Lord's eternal Pastimes in the transcendental world and feeling separation from Kṛṣṇa. He lived in isolation from society and sometimes would call out to the Lord spontaneously. He was a pure Vaiṣṇava who chanted the pure Holy Name.

Once someone heard the glories of Bābājī Mahārāj and began to imitate him. That person built a hut near Bābājī Mahārāj and began copying the practices and activities of Bābājī Mahārāj. When Bābājī Mahārāj heard of this he said that this man should not become an imitationist. He said to him, "You are chanting the Lord's Name and living in a hut, but you are not really chanting to please the Lord. You are seeking name and fame (pratiṣṭhā) in this world. You are trying to become famous as a perfected saintly person (siddha-mahāpuruṣ), and for that purpose you are chanting and showing yourself in this way.



Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās  
Bābājī Mahārāj

Your activities will neither be successful nor give you proper devotional results.

“If an unmarried woman goes to a labour room to produce a child and shows so many symptoms of giving birth, will a child be born? Never! First a woman is married, then she mixes with her husband, then she becomes pregnant, then a baby begins to grow in her womb, and then, after 280 days, she will produce a child. When the time comes for the woman to give birth it will not be necessary to tell her, ‘Now you should go to the labour room.’ Like an unmarried woman going to a labour room you have foolishly moved into a hut and begun to show to others that you are chanting, ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa.’ You may show many symptoms of ecstasy or renunciation, but your activities will not produce anything real. You don’t have any real connection with Kṛṣṇa or Kṛṣṇa-nām: you have not served any of Kṛṣṇa’s devotees or understood their devotional mood of chanting. You are only pursuing your mundane fame.”

This is a very hard but also very clear example for us. If we are sincere and actually want to satisfy Kṛṣṇa through our devotional life, then we will always try to serve Him under the guidance of our Gurudev in the association of sādhus.

### *Following versus imitating*

We must approach Kṛṣṇa and chant His Holy Name in the proper channel. There is a systematic way for us to proceed in our spiritual life:

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā  
tato 'nartha-nivṛtṭiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā ruchis tataḥ

(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu: Pūrva-vibhāga, 4.15)

First firm faith in Kṛṣṇa consciousness (śraddhā) is necessary. Through our sincerity and śraddhā we will get the association of a proper sādhu, not an imitation sādhu. If we do not serve a real Guru or a real Vaiṣṇava we will be cheated sometimes.

athāsaktis tato bhāvas  
tataḥ premābhyudañchati  
sādhakānām ayam premṇaḥ  
prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ

(Brs: 1.4.15–16)

First faith, then association with  
sādhus, then engagement in  
service, then the eradication of  
evils, then constancy, then  
taste, then attachment, then  
ecstasy, and then love. These are  
the stages in the awakening  
of a practitioner’s love.

A real sādhu serves Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day, and through a real sādhu's association our faith, service attitude, and devotional property will increase. We will be inspired by the sādhu to serve Kṛṣṇa twenty-four hours a day. But *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* instructs us that we should not immediately serve the Lord in the same way that the sādhu does:

īśvarāṇām vachaḥ satyaṁ tathaivācharitaṁ kvachit  
teṣāṁ yat sva-vacho-yuktaṁ buddhimāns tat samācharet

(*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*: 10.33.31)

“Do not imitate what the sādhu does. A sādhu may do something that is helpful for someone in a higher stage but not helpful for someone in a lower stage. Sādhu-saṅga means trying to practise our spiritual life under the guidance of a sādhu. Sādhu-saṅga means following the instructions given by the sādhu, not imitating the sādhu's behaviour.”

### *Love and affection*

If someone can properly follow the sādhu's instructions and proceed under the sādhu's guidance, then they will be engaged in bhajana-kriyā, real spiritual practising life. Through proper bhajana-kriyā we will come to the stage of anartha-nivṛtti, the removal of our unwanted habits. In the stage of anartha-nivṛtti our hankering for mundane things will leave us, our senses will become controlled, and our conditioned nature will be removed. Anartha-nivṛtti will not happen, however, unless we proceed in our bhajana-kriyā with strong faith, love, and affection.

For anartha-nivṛtti to come to us, love and affection for other practitioners is necessary. Practising life is ‘suffering life’—practising life is not an easy life. If we do not have love and affection for other practitioners it will be too painful and we will not be able to proceed successfully. Why should we suffer more than we already are in this mundane world? We should be humble, be tolerant, give honour to others, and make everyone our

friend. In this way we can proceed happily in our practising life. Someone may come and abuse us, “Oh! You are Vaiṣṇavas. You are very bad. You are doing this and that.” But we will not be influenced by their comments if we have love and affection for our practising life and other practitioners. Someone may make comments, but we will proceed systematically through sincere and chaste service with love and affection.

### *Beyond māyā’s jurisdiction*

If we engage in our spiritual practices of chanting the Holy Name, serving the sādhus, cleaning the temple, doing parikramā of the temple, and so on, with the desire to fulfil the instructions of our guardians—Sādhu, Guru, and Vaiṣṇava—with love, affection, and faith, then anartha-nivṛtti will automatically come to us. That is real exclusive devotional practice. Thereafter the stages of niṣṭhā (firm service), and ruchi (taste) will come to us.

Until the stage of ruchi no one is in a safe position; there is still possibility of falling down. During the stage of bhajana-kriyā we cannot say someone is really qualified. And even after the stage of anartha-nivṛtti, when material attachment has gone, we are still bound by the reactions to our previous sinful activities. Only when ruchi comes is everything cleared. Māyā thinks, “Aho! I must run away. He is not under my jurisdiction.” When ruchi, loving attachment for the Lord’s service, comes into our heart, then we will be safe.

*Seeing the Supreme, a wise soul’s taste for the mundane disappears.*

**raso ’py asya param dṛṣṭvā nivartate**

*(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā: 2.59)*

When we come to the stage of ruchi we will feel, “Oh! This is very beautiful and without this I cannot live.” When such taste will come to us we will be fully situated in devotion. Then all the auspicious symptoms of bhāva, prīti, prema, and so on will gradually appear in our heart.

In this way we understand the teachings of our Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur: “Serve Kṛṣṇa, serve Guru, serve

the Vaiṣṇava, and serve the Mission of our Gurudev. Gurudev gives us service that is satisfying to Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is satisfied when we serve Guru-Vaiṣṇava.”

### *Emotion and devotion*

**Question:** Can you please explain how we can avoid confusing emotion with devotion?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Sometimes we are practising and serving emotionally. That means we are blindly following our mind’s idea of what is good and bad. Sometimes our mind tells us something is good and we follow that idea of our mind. Acting in that way we do many things emotionally, but those activities may only be śubha-karma (pious acts). They will not be actual devotion.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave an example: Gurudev may perform pūjā and order us, “Bring some water.” We will then bring some water to Gurudev, but Gurudev may suddenly change his order and say, “Oh, water is not necessary now. Bring some flowers.”

If we say to Gurudev, “You ordered me to bring some water. I have followed your order to bring you water” and we give Gurudev that water, then our action will be śubha-karma. It will not be devotion (bhakti).

With primary enthusiasm we may want to do more and more service to Guru-Vaiṣṇava. But in the primary stage we won’t be attentive to see whether our service is appropriate, to see whether it is actually pleasing to Guru-Vaiṣṇava, to see whether it is what they actually want. In the primary stage we do not consider these things and only think that our own activity will take us to a higher position. We do not consider how and why the advice of Guru-Vaiṣṇava is coming to us.

Actual devotion means trying to satisfy Guru-Vaiṣṇava according to their instructions. A proper and attentive mood of devotion is to always keep our eyes open to see if what we are doing is really satisfying to our Master or not. Gurudev has told us, “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.” But if I am in a place where Gurudev

is discussing something important with some Vaiṣṇavas, and I begin making noise, “Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma Hare Hare” then that is not chanting in a mood of devotion. Devotional mood means considering whether Gurudev is happy or not with our activity. It is true that Gurudev has ordered us, “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly”, but it is always necessary to consider the place, time, and circumstances, and then wisely try to do service. This is devotion.

### *Heart-melting association*

A proper Guru or Vaiṣṇava has no self-interest or self-satisfying tendency. Such a real devotee has no interest in being served. Rather he is always engaged in Kṛṣṇa’s service. If we follow the service-order and guidance of a proper Vaiṣṇava to engage in service of Kṛṣṇa or His devotees, then our action will enter the category of devotion through that proper Vaiṣṇava’s qualification. Devotion begins by offering ourselves to Kṛṣṇa by taking a vow that we will not do anything that is not in service to Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is transcendental, and we cannot offer anything to Him directly. We do not have that capacity or qualification. We must offer our service to Kṛṣṇa through Guru–Vaiṣṇava—through the devotees who have the capacity to directly serve Kṛṣṇa. When you serve Kṛṣṇa under their guidance all responsibility for Kṛṣṇa’s service goes to them, and all the proper results of service come to you. Kṛṣṇa knows you are serving Guru–Vaiṣṇava for His satisfaction, not for their personal interest, so Kṛṣṇa must be satisfied with you.

Sometimes we may be going on in our practising life but feel that we are not progressing. We may be engaged in service and chanting the Lord’s Holy Name but feel that our faith is not becoming stronger, joy is not coming into our heart, and our mind is not becoming fulfilled by our devotional mood. At that time we must try to get the association of a good Vaiṣṇava.

We must search for a real practitioner who is practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness twenty-four hours a day and get his association.

dadāti pratigṛhṇāti guhyam ākhyāti pṛchchhati  
bhuṅkte bhojayate chaiva ṣaḍ-vidhaṁ prīti-lakṣaṇam

(Śrī Upadeśāmṛta: 4)

Sādhu-saṅga means associating with the sādhu like he is our own relative, associating with him in an affectionate, regardful way. This means giving him gifts (materials for service),



feeding him, asking him questions, taking his advice, and so on. Through this type of affectionate association with the sādhu we will be able to understand and feel why we are not inspired in our practising life. If there is any offensive mood within us, the good association of the sādhu will wash it away. The association of a great sādhu can melt our hard heart and inspire us with a mood of real dedication. When we see the sādhu engaged in the Lord's service twenty-four hours a day, our hearts will become joyful. We will feel much inspiration to follow him and connect with the devotional plane ourselves.

*Although Kṛṣṇa's Name, Form, Qualities, and Pastimes cannot be grasped by the material senses, They manifest themselves on the tongue and to the other senses through one's service attitude.*

**sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ**

*(Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu: Pūrva-vibhāga, 2.234)*

Devotion is so sweet, and gradually in the finest, most affectionate, and lovely way it will reveal itself in our heart by the grace of the Lord's devotee. Through the service and grace of the Lord's devotees we will see the Lord's divine play expressed everywhere. Through our tendency to serve, and our service to Guru-Vaiṣṇava, we will be cleanly and clearly qualified. Nowhere will we not see the sweet, affectionate, and lovely movements of the Lord's transcendental service world.



## *Recognising Devotion*

**Question:** How can we recognise a Guru or Vaiṣṇava? How can we know who we should serve under and take guidance from?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** It is very difficult to recognise a Vaiṣṇava.

vaiṣṇava chinite nāre devera śakati  
mui kona chhāra śiśu alpa-mati

“Even the demigods cannot recognise a Vaiṣṇava. So how shall I ever recognise one?”

It is very difficult to recognise a Vaiṣṇava, but we can have some idea about who Vaiṣṇavas are through the definitions of a Vaiṣṇava given in the scriptures. *Viṣṇur asya Devatā iti Vaiṣṇava*: someone whose worshippable Lord is Viṣṇu is a Vaiṣṇava. This is a standard definition. In *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu gave a variety of definitions of a Vaiṣṇava:

“ataeva yāra mukhe eka kṛṣṇa-nāma  
sei ta' vaiṣṇava, kariha tāhāra sammāna”

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 15.111*)



*The 1932 Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh  
Vraja Maṇḍal Parikramā  
party, led by Śrīla Bhakti  
Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.*

“Someone who has once chanted Kṛṣṇa’s Name is a Vaiṣṇava.  
He should be respected.”

**“kṛṣṇa-nāma nirantara yāhāra vadane  
sei vaiṣṇava-śreṣṭha, bhaja tāhāra charaṇe  
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 16.72)**

“Someone who constantly chants Kṛṣṇa’s Name is a great  
Vaiṣṇava. He should be served.”

**yāhāra darśane mukhe āise kṛṣṇa-nāma  
tāhāre jāniha tumi ‘vaiṣṇava-pradhāna’  
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 16.74)**

“Someone whose association makes others chant Kṛṣṇa’s Name  
is the greatest Vaiṣṇava.”

After Prabhupād Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura travelled throughout all of Vṛndāvan on parikramā, he slapped his forehead and said, “I am so unfortunate. I have come to Vṛndāvan to see the Vaiṣṇavas, but I have not seen even one Vaiṣṇava.”

How could he say this? Everyone in Vṛndāvan is a Vaiṣṇava; everyone there worships Kṛṣṇa and at least sometimes says, “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa”. There is some Vaiṣṇavism within everyone there. Through Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākur’s expression we can understand that it is necessary to realise that there is a gradation among Vaiṣṇavas. Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākur meant that he did not see a pure Vaiṣṇava on his Vṛndāvan parikramā.

If we see that someone has any of the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava, then we must consider that he is a Vaiṣṇava and give proper honour to him. We can first consider that anyone who leaves the association of other persons and joins in the association or ashram of the Vaiṣṇavas practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness has some Vaiṣṇava quality. And if someone who comes is recognised by Gurudev or an authority as a Vaiṣṇava, then we must consider that he is a Vaiṣṇava. Whenever Gurudev says that someone is a qualified Vaiṣṇava, then we must believe that and surrender to that qualified Vaiṣṇava.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj also explained to us other ways of practically understanding who is a Vaiṣṇava. He gave many examples: someone whom the Vaiṣṇavas are happy to see is a Vaiṣṇava; someone who is happy to see the Vaiṣṇavas is a Vaiṣṇava; someone who is happy to serve Vaiṣṇavas is a Vaiṣṇava, and so on. There are many varieties of definitions of a Vaiṣṇava.

### *Recognition and respect*

There is a very nice story in the *Mahābhārata* about the difficulty of recognising a Vaiṣṇava and the practice of respecting someone who is recognised as a Vaiṣṇava by an authority. After the great Rājasūya sacrifice, Kṛṣṇa, as well as many munis and ṛṣis, took prasādam at the mansion of the Pāṇḍavas. Lastly, Kṛṣṇa told the assembly, “When this Rājasūya sacrifice has been properly completed, a bell will ring.”

Bhīmasen heard Kṛṣṇa’s statement and took it seriously. When the sacrifice seemed to be finished and everyone had been satisfied with prasādam, the bell did not ring. Bhīmasen

asked Kṛṣṇa, “Why is the bell not ringing? You said it would ring automatically when the sacrifice was successfully completed. Have we done something wrong?”

Kṛṣṇa said, “You have served prasādam to so many people, but you have not served all the Vaiṣṇavas. There is a Vaiṣṇava who lives in the jungle under a tree not too far from your mansion. He was not invited to the sacrifice, and he has not taken prasādam. Because he has not been served, there is some fault in your sacrifice, and it cannot be considered fully complete.”

Bhīmasen and Arjuna understood that they needed to serve this Vaiṣṇava, but they knew that on their own they could not recognise him. Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa, “We cannot recognise who this Vaiṣṇava is on our own. Please come with us and show us who he is.”

Kṛṣṇa accompanied Bhīmasen and Arjuna to the jungle and showed them, “A great Vaiṣṇava lives near that tree in that broken thatched hut. He lives near you, but he does not come to your festivals. He has no hankering for anything mundane, even food.”

Arjuna and Bhīmasen went up to his hut and with folded palms said, “O Prabhu, please come and take prasādam at our sacrifice.”

The Vaiṣṇava said, “Oh! You are Arjuna and Bhīmasen. You have come to invite me, and it would be very offensive for me to not accept your invitation.”

He responded very humbly in this way. Bhīmasen and Arjuna said, “Kṛṣṇa Himself has said that you are a Vaiṣṇava. Please come and accept something from us.”

That Vaiṣṇava never went anywhere or took anything from anyone, but when he was invited by Arjuna, Bhīmasen, and Kṛṣṇa Himself, he accepted and came to take prasādam.

Draupadī was a very expert cook, and she prepared many varieties of food. She offered the Vaiṣṇava very opulent

prasādam. Others fanned him and gave him much nourishment. When he took the prasādam, he mixed all the different preparations together and took them all at once.

After he left, the bell still did not ring. Bhīmasen again asked Kṛṣṇa, “What happened? You said that if we fed that Vaiṣṇava, everything would be finished and fulfilled.”

Kṛṣṇa said, “You must have made some offence. You have called him and fed him, but you must have somehow made an offence to him.”

Kṛṣṇa asked Arjuna, “When you called him and fed him did you make any offence to him?”

Arjuna said, “No. I do not remember making any offence.”

Bhīmasen also said, “No. I do not remember making any offence.”

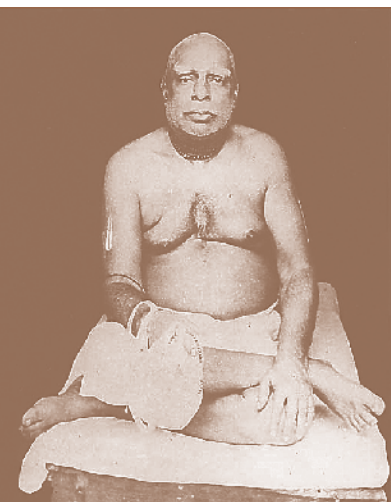
Yudhiṣṭhir and everyone else present also said, “I do not remember seeing any offence made to him. I don’t know what offence has been made.”

Finally, Kṛṣṇa asked His dear friend Draupadī, “Draupadī, have you done anything?”

Draupadī confessed, “I cooked so many varieties of prasādam for him, and when I saw him mix all of them together, I thought that he did not know how to properly accept this opulent prasādam. My thinking in this way may have been an offence.”

Kṛṣṇa said, “Yes. You are right. This was the offence. He should be called and fed again.”

The next day Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna went and called the Vaiṣṇava again. They brought him to the mansion and fed him again. When he took prasādam the second time, the bell began to ring, and the sacrifice was complete. This story shows us that it is very difficult to recognise a Vaiṣṇava, and that it also may be difficult to respect him even when we are told that he is a Vaiṣṇava.



Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura

## Praying to the Vaiṣṇavas

It is very essential to follow a pure Vaiṣṇava and happily try to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness under his guidance. Through our mundane knowledge we cannot understand who is a Vaiṣṇava and who is not. So we must pray to Kṛṣṇa, to Nityānanda Prabhu: “I do not know who my Guru is. I do not know who the Vaiṣṇavas are. Please reveal them to me. Please give me the association of a proper Guru and real Vaiṣṇavas.”

Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura gave us very important advice about the position of the Vaiṣṇava in one of his songs. He explained how to recognise the Vaiṣṇava and receive his mercy:

āmi ta’ durbhaga ati vaiṣṇava nā chini  
more kṛpā karibena vaiṣṇava āpani

(*Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru: Maṅgalāccharaṇa, 6*)

“I am so unfortunate, unqualified, and insignificant: I do not have the qualification to understand who is a Vaiṣṇava or Guru. I do not have the capacity to discover who is a Vaiṣṇava and who is not. This is a very difficult situation for me. My only hope is that the Vaiṣṇavas are merciful; they are oceans of mercy (*kṛpā-sindhubhya eva cha*) and can give me proper consciousness of who is a Vaiṣṇava and who is not: they can reveal themselves to me. If the door of my good fortune will open, then the real Vaiṣṇava will be merciful to me, and I will be able to understand his position. If I am a good boy, a good man, and I am humble and tolerant, and I give honour to others, then I will automatically attract the real Vaiṣṇava and receive his mercy and blessings. If I proceed with humility and tolerance, and give honour to everyone, then I will automatically honour the real Vaiṣṇava, and he will choose me to be a servitor of the Vaiṣṇavas.”

It is through the quality of our own practice that we can attract the vision of the real Vaiṣṇava and receive his mercy, affection, and service connection.

## *Self-knowledge*

The question of how to recognise a Vaiṣṇava is a very important question, and it is actually everyone's question. Here we find the answer in Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura's song, and it shows us that self-realisation is the best for us. If I want to be a Vaiṣṇava and associate with real Vaiṣṇavas, then I must ask myself, "Am I a Vaiṣṇava or not? Am I actually capable of associating with Vaiṣṇavas?" This type of self-examination is best for us.

*Ātmānam viddhi*: it is necessary to know your own self, to understand whether what you are doing, eating, and giving are really for the satisfaction of Guru and Vaiṣṇava. Self-knowledge, self-realisation, is best for us, and through that we will be promoted. If we are fully dedicated to the Lord, then help will come to us from His side. We must examine our own level of dedication. There is an Urdu or Arabian word, *sāltamāmi*, which means a calculated account of a year's debit and credit transactions. We must make a *sāltamāmi* of our own life: "Every day the sun rises and sets. What am I doing and giving each day during that time? Day by day is my practising life increasing or decreasing? Am I dedicated externally or internally?"

We must scrutinise what we are doing from morning to evening every day and make an account of that. It is necessary for us to realise how much good and bad was present within us in our previous days, and also to realise that whatever others are doing or will do is not so important for us. The biggest question for us must be what *we* are doing and what *we* are giving. If we can analyse ourselves in this way with a *sāltamāmi* every day, then we will become more perfect.

It is necessary for us to realise that we will get proper results in our spiritual life if we perfectly try to do our practice. It is no doubt difficult, but there is no other way to get out of the illusory environment. We must try as much as possible by us. It is necessary to see what is happening in our own lives. If we are not careful about our own activity, then we will be cheated.

Arise! Awake! Find a master and  
learn from him. The wise say  
the path is sharp as a razor's edge,  
difficult to traverse, and  
arduous (impossible to traverse  
without a Guru).

uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata  
kṣurasya dhārā nisītā duratyayā  
durgam pathas tat kavayo vadanti

(Kaṭha-upaniṣad: 1.3.14)

We must awaken, arise, and practise our own spiritual life, even if the path may seem like a razor's edge. *Durgam pathas* means that our spiritual path may not be very easy to pass through and may even seem to be impassable. But we have no other alternative. So we must try and proceed.

### *Revitalising association*

**Question:** Sometimes we get discouraged for one reason or another in our spiritual life. How can we best keep our enthusiasm strong?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** We must always follow the directions of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Then we will be enriched with humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others, and more and more our searching spirit will increase. It is necessary to develop within ourselves the qualities and qualifications for association with sādhus. Without humility we will not receive anything from others, without tolerance we will not be benefitted by others, and without giving honour to others we will always be disturbed. If we will try to cultivate these three qualities within ourselves, then quickly proper results will come to us.

bhaktis tu bhagavad-bhakta-  
saṅgena parijāyate  
sat-saṅgaḥ prāpyate pumbhiḥ  
sukṛtaiḥ pūrva-saṅchitaiḥ  
(Bṛhan-Nāradya-purana)

“Devotion arises through  
the association of the Lord's  
devotees. The soul attains  
the association of devotees  
through his previously  
acquired sukṛti.”

Whatever spiritual wealth you have, that is your property. And whatever spiritual wealth I have, that is my property. If I want to increase my spiritual property then I will have to look to you and find what more you have than I. In this way the tendency to associate with and learn from others will grow within us through the quality of humility. This is the best process to get association.

If we can sincerely practise in this way we will get proper association with the Lord's servants. By the grace of Sādhu, Guru, and Vaiṣṇava our enthusiasm in spiritual life will increase more



and more. They are always giving us hope; they are never making us hopeless. Any situation may come before us, or we may commit any offence, but they are always giving us some hope and some service to the Lord. Our enthusiasm will grow through their association. Association is the best thing for conditioned souls to get more enthusiasm in their practising life.

We should not be frustrated. The ego is very bad. Ego destroys so many things. But our ego will go down if we cultivate and increase within ourselves the qualities of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others. I am seeing that ego destroys our enthusiasm. What can I do? I can only give advice. If anyone will follow it they must be benefitted. Ego is very dangerous for everyone, and to leave ego is very difficult.

### *Controlling ego*

**Question:** Mahārāj, how can we recognise when we are suffering from false ego? How can we see ourselves under that influence? How do we know when we are displaying our false ego?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** It is only possible to recognise it through realisation. Suppose someone says to you, “This is your ego.” Your ego will not want to give that chance to them. But at that time if you will try to realise what they said and why they said it, if you try to realise how much there is something positive and beneficial for you in their statement, and how much is perhaps negative opposition, then you will be able to control your ego.

We have established ourselves within an egoistic position, so there is no other way our ego can be controlled than by our own realisation. Since the time when we were growing up we have chosen our own path and established ourselves upon our egoistic mountain. Only our own realisation can solve our problem, and it is best when our own realisation will come to us. Otherwise, if you have some faith in a particular person whom you consider superior to you, you can go to him and take his

advice. If you can take his advice wholeheartedly, then also your ego will go down. There is no other way. Good association is always beneficial for everyone. But our 'good association' must really be association that is good for us.

### *Realisation, faith, and prayer*

**Question:** How do we know who we should associate with? How can we recognise good association?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** This is a very good question and a difficulty for everyone. We must consider that we have some realisation and that our realisation has some power. Through that we will try to understand what will be good for us and whose association will be beneficial for us.

First we will try to know about someone, "Does he have affection for me or not? Does he have love for me or not? Does he consider what will be good for me or not? Is he sober in his relations with others or not?" In this way we will try to understand something about someone from our side. But at the same time we will pray to our Lord, "Give me good association. I have no capacity to discover who will be very good association in my life." It is necessary to both pray to the Lord and have some realisation from within our own self. In this way, from both sides, we will try to recognise good association. Also, in another way, if you have full faith in someone, you can ask him directly, "Is this person good association for me or not? Is that person good association for me or not?" Then from him you will also get some help. These are the general guidelines.

**Devotee:** Mahārāj, I read that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, "My relationship with someone should be seen by that person's relationship with the Centre and the Centre's relationship with that person. That is, if my Gurudev has much affection for that person and that person has much affection for my Gurudev, then I will think that that person is good association for me."

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** A little difficulty will come from that idea when someone wants not temporary but permanent

association. Based on that idea someone's choice will not be perfect. Sometimes through illusion we are misguided, and we need to take advice from an affectionate and wise friend. He may be a Guru or a Vaiṣṇava, but he must have a neutral personality and pure Vaiṣṇava qualities. He must not be envious. He must always be trying to help others and not be trying to misguide others or pursue personal interests. A person of that type will be most helpful for us.

If we have full faith in Guru then we can ask Guru directly, "Will this be good for me or not?" If the Guru has a good idea about that, then that is very good. But we are not always in the association of Guru. So we also have to try to realise and understand what will be good and what will be bad for us. In this way, many are misguided, and in this way also, many are benefitted.

### *Non-enviousness*

The main obstacle on our spiritual path is enviousness. Envy is very bad. I always see this, feel this, and am disturbed by it also. What shall I do? In the second verse of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* there is a short expression that is very important, sweet, and suitable for conditioned souls: *nirmatsarāṇām satām*. This expression gives light to everyone: "Be pure and free from enviousness. Appreciate others." This advice does not mean we should become pure like alloyed steel, but that we should become pure like gold. If we can make ourselves into generous, non-envious persons, then we will become pure like gold.

In this material world everything is moving up and down; everything is always shifting its position. Someone is becoming rich, someone is becoming poor; someone is becoming wise, someone is becoming foolish. Everything everywhere continues to move up and down in this world, but we must try to isolate ourselves from that and avoid being envious of anyone. We may not be able to understand how it will be possible, but we still must try. There is no other way to proceed in our spiritual life.

dharmāḥ projjhita-kaitavo 'tra  
paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām  
(SB: 1.1.2)

"*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* teaches the supreme dharma, which completely rejects all cheating and is for sādhus who are non-envious."

We will be able to harmonise everything when we truly take shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Kṛṣṇa is Reality the Beautiful, and with His connection we have the chance to feel the full form of His qualities and beauty. When we have the opportunity to get everything through our connection with the Lord, then we do not need to be envious of anyone else.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj trained me from my childhood: "Serve the Vaiṣṇavas without enviousness." If we see a devotee doing our job better than we are, then we must consider that he is doing good for us. We should not be envious of him. When a devotee is doing so much that I cannot do, I praise him for that. I do not criticise him.

We know that whenever anyone does something there must be something right and something wrong in their action. No one has full knowledge or is completely wise. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj used the phrase, "To err is human" in one of his articles. All the Vaiṣṇavas want to be right; they want to do things right, and they try heart and soul. We should always consider their service efforts and overlook their faults. This is necessary for our society.

If according to our knowledge it seems to us that someone is not serving perfectly, then we should not be angry with him, and we should not be envious of him. Rather, we should look at our own self. If we feel the desire to criticise others, then we should first try to criticise our own self and find our own faults.

#### **ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ**

*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (6.5) explains that I can be my own worst enemy and I can be my own best friend. When I criticise others, then I act as my own worst enemy. When I criticise myself, then I act as my own best friend. If we can continue our practising life in that way, then we will get a good result. "He may be bad, but why should I not be good? I see some bad quality in him, but I cannot correct him. So why should I not try to be good and correct myself? I shall be good; whether he is good or bad

is another thing. First of all I shall be good, knowing that I will be benefitted if I proceed in that way." We should look after ourselves in this way. That is very good for the continuation of our practising lives.

### *See the positive*

We must try to proceed in this way, otherwise we have no hope. There are so many practitioners around us who are not perfect. Everyone has some imperfections. If we act like a drain inspector, always looking for the faults of others, then we will be offenders, and we will not properly honour the devotees. Who is a perfect devotee? It is very difficult to find a devotee who is fully dedicated to the Lord's service. Still, we can think that every devotee has some devotion.

Once one of Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's disciples, Śrīpād Siddhāntī Mahārāj, came to speak with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. When they were speaking in a relaxed mood, Śrīpād Siddhāntī Mahārāj said to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, "Mahārāj, I consider that all of our godbrothers are Vaiṣṇavas. Because they were all servitors of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura they have some Vaiṣṇava quality. But, side by side, I have seen that all of our godbrothers have difficulties, faults, and bad qualities. I have decided to put our godbrothers into some categories. Someone is a foolish Vaiṣṇava, someone is a wise Vaiṣṇava, someone is an envious Vaiṣṇava, someone is a simple Vaiṣṇava, and so on." Śrīpād Siddhāntī Mahārāj explained many different categories of Vaiṣṇavas, and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj laughed so much to hear that.

Everyone is a Vaiṣṇava. This is correct. But how much? It is very good to use the idea of percentage. Someone may be five per cent Vaiṣṇava, someone may be ten per cent Vaiṣṇava, someone may be twenty per cent Vaiṣṇava, and someone who is 100 per cent dedicated to the Lord is a real Vaiṣṇava. If we consider all of the devotees in this way, that will be perfect.

We should not hate others. Everyone has some quality, and with that quality they are enjoying. I also have some quality, and I live in my own zone with that. Internally I may know something about someone's behaviour, but externally I will see the Vaiṣṇavas' qualities and proceed carefully. Otherwise I will be the loser, and I may become an offender. It is true that some persons may do wrong, and it is also true that it is not good to follow someone who is doing wrong. Still, when I see someone doing something wrong in front of me, I should not hold any grudge against him or be envious of him. I can ignore that wrong while I try to make myself a perfect servitor. This is the only way to live harmoniously in society. I have considered this many times, and in this way we must be careful about Vaiṣṇavas and non-Vaiṣṇavas. Otherwise we will be cheated and may become an offender.

### *The formula for harmony*

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has given us the supreme formula to collect the good qualities of others, properly relate to everyone, and harmonise everything:

*The Lord's Name is to be chanted constantly with more humility than a blade of grass, tolerance like that of a tree, respect for everyone, and without desire for respect from anyone.*

**ṭṛṇād api sunīchena taror iva sahiṣṇunā  
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ**

*(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 17.31)*

Within His formula Mahāprabhu gave us three very nice rules. *Ṭṛṇād api sunīchena*: be humble and do not disturb anyone. If we are humble, then we will not be a cause of anger for others, and everyone will be merciful to us. *Taror iva sahiṣṇunā*: tolerate everything going on in this mundane world. We are insignificant souls; we should not demand so much for ourselves. If we are tolerant, then we will not make any unnecessary disturbances for ourselves or others; in that way we will avoid the sinful, reactionary environment. *Amāninā mānadena*: give honour to everyone without desiring honour for yourself. Everyone has some ego, and we do not want to disturb others' egos.

We should humbly give honour to everyone, even to persons who are not honourable. Everyone has some good qualities, so why should you not give honour to them? What is the difficulty for us? If we give honour to everyone, then everyone will be happy with us, and not only will they not disturb us, but they will help us in our practising life.

The conditioned souls always think that they are already qualified. That is their misfortune. When someone sees himself as the biggest he cannot see anything beyond himself. He can only see tiny things like ants and insects. When someone sees himself clearly and feels himself to be small, then he can see the highest and biggest things around him. It is hopeful for us to see ourselves not as the best or greatest, but as the least and smallest: to see that we have a great need for improvement. Whatever good qualities we may have are already our property which no one can take away from us. If we see good qualities anywhere in others, we should try to collect them. We can always collect goodness from wherever we find it through our practice of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others.

### *Smooth progress*

Mahārabhu's formula states that anyone who is humble and tolerant, and gives honour to others without expecting honour for himself can properly practise Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan. This teaching of Mahārabhu gives us the proper spirit of spiritual life. When we follow the practice of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others, we will not do anything wrong to anyone, and we will not make offences to anyone. If we give honour to everyone, then we will never be in danger of making an offence to a Vaiṣṇava (Vaiṣṇava-aparādh). It is completely necessary to avoid making offences to Vaiṣṇavas because the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra descends to us from the upper level through the Vaiṣṇavas.

Mahārabhu gave us His formula because we cannot recognise Vaiṣṇavas. What can we do when we cannot recognise

a Vaiṣṇava? We can give honour to everyone, even to persons who do not appear honourable to us. If we do so, then we will always give honour to the Vaiṣṇava, even though we may not recognise him. Generally, we can understand that we should honour a Vaiṣṇava; there is no question about that. But because it is difficult to recognise a Vaiṣṇava we should give honour to everyone, even to someone who appears to have nothing. The Lord resides in the heart of everyone, and everyone is a Vaiṣṇava by nature. We must honour everyone; then we will always proceed clearly in our spiritual life. This is very important.

I always say that this procedure given by Mahāprabhu is the best procedure for practising spiritual life. Why? Because we are always doing something wrong, and we must avoid that. All souls have a very high prospect and property—they are all actually eternal servants of the Lord. Someone may be a tiny, insignificant soul who has not realised his own wealth, but we must give honour to everyone, no matter who they are. That way everyone will be merciful to us. If we do not make any enemies and rather make everyone our friend, then our practising life will proceed smoothly. We must proceed to our destiny, and for that we need the blessings of everyone, especially all the Vaiṣṇavas, in our practising life.

We need everyone's help and goodwill, and if we proceed to our destiny according to Mahāprabhu's formula, then everything will be very beautiful, fair, and good. We should be merciful to ourselves by giving honour to others. Then the whole world will become our friend, and all of the Lord's servants will be merciful to us.

### *Our hope and challenge*

Even when we understand the idea and mood given by Mahāprabhu in His formula *tr̥ṇād api sunīchena*, it is still very difficult for us to follow. I have spoken about Mahāprabhu's formula my whole life, and so many people have heard about



it from me. It is very easy to hear about it. And it is very easy, and very good, to speak about it with others also, no doubt. The difficulty is focusing on it in our own lives and following it properly. What Mahāprabhu has given as the aim and objective of Vaiṣṇavism is actually very difficult to follow. Some persons have spent a long life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness—thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years—but not become enriched with the three qualities of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others. There is an expression in Bengal,

vaiṣṇava haba bali' chhila mora sāda  
tṛṇād api śloke paḍi gela vāda

“I had a strong desire to become a Vaiṣṇava, but when I heard that I needed to follow Mahāprabhu’s prescription of *tṛṇād api sunīchena* ... then I felt very hopeless: ‘How will I ever become a Vaiṣṇava?’”

Everyone struggles to remember Mahāprabhu’s formula and practise it properly. Sometimes we easily forget it and do something wrong. But when we come back to our good sense, we can immediately begin practising it again. Every time we can start again anew, and there is no problem with that. We forget, our sense comes back to us, and then we can again do good with our life. In that way we must try to go on and make ourselves perfect.

Faith is our first necessity in this practice, and under the guidance of faith we can proceed properly in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So many disturbances may come to us, but we can cross over them by faithfully trying to practise Mahāprabhu’s simple formula: humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others. We are not always successful, but we are trying to do that. We should not be disappointed or frustrated. We must see that whatever situation comes to us has been given to us by Kṛṣṇa, and we will try to harmonise that situation through our practice of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others. If we are not able to harmonise something and practise properly,



then we can faithfully pray to our Master: “You see everything, and You properly look after everyone; please do whatever is best for me.” This type of faith in the Lord’s protection over us is necessary to have behind our practice of Mahāprabhu’s formula.

### *The quality of our existence*

If we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahāmantra with the qualities of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others, we will certainly get a proper result. Mahāprabhu has promised us this, and even Kṛṣṇa will not be able to check our result because our result will come to us through His devotee’s devotee. Humility, tolerance, and the offering of respect are the essential qualities of a devotee. Everyone must maintain those qualities in their devotional lives. If anyone is successful in practising Mahāprabhu’s procedure, then they will be very, very close to liberation, and after liberation they will see and feel how everything is transcendental and all right, by the will of the Lord.

How humble we are, how tolerant we are, and how much we give honour to others is the quality of our existence in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the teaching of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī, Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura, Prabhupād Śrīla Saraswati Ṭhākura, and my Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

SECTION SIX

# *Kṛṣṇa-prema*

Daśa-mūla-tattva

*Truth Ten:*

sādhyaṁ tat-prītiṁ

Love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the goal.



## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

# *Inconceivable Glory*

Everywhere throughout the scriptures Kṛṣṇa is glorified beyond all other Gods and demigods as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lives eternally in His divine abode of Goloka Vṛndāvan.

virajāra pāre śuddha-paravyoma-dhāma  
tad upari śrī-gokula-vṛndāraṇya nāma

*(Gītāvalī: Rādhāṣṭakam, 2.1)*

“Beyond Virajā, the river that divides the material and spiritual worlds, is Paravyoma Dhām, the spiritual sky, and the supreme, original abode within the spiritual sky is Goloka Vṛndāvan, Lord Kṛṣṇa’s eternal residence.”

In Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental abode everything moves according to Kṛṣṇa’s will for Kṛṣṇa’s satisfaction. We cannot conceive how much beauty, ecstasy, and love play in the Pastimes of the Sweet Absolute in Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām. In Vṛndāvan, time, space, and everything within the environment move, expand, and contract according to Kṛṣṇa’s will. But Kṛṣṇa Himself is not directly concerned with anything; He simply enjoys. Kṛṣṇa’s immediate expansion Saṅkarṣaṇ Balarām is the actual manager

of the transcendental world. He makes all the arrangements for Kṛṣṇa's play and satisfaction through His potency Yogamāyā. It is Yogamāyā, Kṛṣṇa's delegated power, who actually arranges all of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes.

Through her power Yogamāyā can understand all the desires that appear in the hearts of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, the sakhīs, the mañjarīs, and all the servitors in that abode. She can understand in which way Kṛṣṇa wants to play with the gopīs, in which way Kṛṣṇa wants to play with Rādhārāṇī, where He wants to play, and so on. She can understand everything. Kṛṣṇa only wishes in His heart, "I want this", or "I want that", and Yogamāyā arranges everything. When Rādhārāṇī wants to worship Kṛṣṇa in Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Yogamāyā arranges everything there. So, under the guidance of Yogamāyā and Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa's supreme servitors who fulfil all of His desires to the extreme, everything and everyone within the transcendental abode is engaged in satisfying Kṛṣṇa.

### *Wish-fulfilling servitors*

The glory of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental abode has been very beautifully described in *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*, the prayers of Lord Brahmā. Through meditation (dhyān) upon the gāyatrī-mantram, everything was revealed in Brahmā's heart. In *Brahma-saṁhitā* he expressed his divine vision of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's divine abode.

śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo  
drumā bhūmīś chintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayi toyam amṛtam  
kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanam api vaṁśī priya-sakhi  
chid-ānandaṁ jyotiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api cha  
sa yatra kṣīrābdhiḥ sravati surabhībhyaś cha sumahān  
nimeṣārdhākhyo vā vrajati na hi yatrāpi samayaḥ  
bhaje śvetadvīpaṁ tam aham iha golokam iti yaṁ  
vidantas te santaḥ kṣīti-virala-chārāḥ katipaye

(*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*: 5.56)

*Śriyaḥ kāntāḥ*: all the ladies in Goloka Vṛndāvan are like Lakṣmī Devī. Their ankle bells are made of wish-fulfilling gems, and they are full with all wealth, beauty, love, charm, and so on. They play with their beloved Kṛṣṇa, who is their only enjoyer. *Kāntaḥ Parama-Puruṣaḥ*: the sole enjoyer in Goloka Vṛndāvan is Kṛṣṇa, and He enjoys all the different moods of devotion present in the hearts of all His associates in His divine abode.

*Kalpa-taravo drumā*: all the plants in Goloka Vṛndāvan are also wish-fulfilling. All living entities in Goloka Vṛndāvan, all of the trees, bees, deer, and so on, are fully conscious servants of the Lord eager to be engaged in His service. No one in Kṛṣṇa's abode has any selfish desire for anything. Everyone there is a liberated soul who is permanently inspired to live in that transcendental service world, where everyone's happiness increases hundreds and hundreds of times by engaging in the Lord's service. Because all the living entities there have pure service inspiration, the Lord gives them infinite capacity to serve.

The plants of Goloka Vṛndāvan possess unlimited wealth and can produce anything for anyone, according to the necessity of service. Whatever anyone desires to prepare for the enjoyment of their Lord can be provided by any tree in Vṛndāvan. If you ask any tree there, "Give me an apple", then that tree will be able to give you an apple. If you ask a banana tree, "Give me a ripe mango that has no skin or seed", then the banana tree will give you that mango. When the Lord or His devotees eat that mango, they will be very satisfied, and when that mango is being eaten, that mango will also be very satisfied. This is achintya, inconceivable, but it is true. It is possible because everything in Goloka Vṛndāvan is transcendental.

If you ask a friend, "Give me a glass of water", your friend will bring you that glass of water from nearby or from far away. There, anything can be provided from anywhere. When you say, "Water", water will come before you. When you say, "Fruit", fruit will come before you. Anything you desire there is

also a servitor eager to be engaged. Whatever you conceive of immediately comes to you. This is the meaning of *chintāmaṇi* [wish-fulfilling]. All of Goloka Vṛndāvan is *chintāmaṇi*. The land there is made of *chintāmaṇi* gems: *bhūmiś chintāmaṇi gaṇamayī*. Everything you will ever need will always be there for you in that abode. All the plants and trees, and even the land itself, can give you anything and everything you require for Kṛṣṇa’s service.

### *The expansion and contraction of space*

Once, when I was a young boy, I went on *parikramā* with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj in Vṛndāvan Dhām. After we visited many different places we came to Varshana, and there I asked Śrīla Guru Mahārāj: “Rādhārāṇī’s father’s house is here in Varshana, but her husband Abhimanyu’s house is located eight kilometres away in Yavat. Externally Rādhārāṇī goes to worship Sūrya every morning with Her associates and then comes back to Her house to cook and take care of Her household work. She also travels to Rādhā Kuṇḍa, which is thirty kilometres away, for Her play with the Sweet Absolute. How is this possible for an innocent fourteen-year-old girl? Where does She get the time and energy necessary for all this travelling? Even if She had a helicopter or a motorcycle, She would hardly have time to travel back and forth every day in this way.”

Later in my life I studied a variety of subjects and learned something about ghost theory. If we are sitting in Govardhan and I ask a ghost, “What is going on right now in my room in Kolkata?” The ghost can answer me from Govardhan very quickly, “Your room is now locked, and someone is cleaning just outside your door.” But if I ask a ghost, “Can you see if Pavitra Sevan Prabhu is seated here before me?”, the ghost will say, “Please wait.” Then after some time the ghost will tell me, “Yes, I can see Pavitra Sevan Prabhu, Śrīpād Āśram Mahārāj, and Kṛṣṇachandra Prabhu sitting with you.” If you ask the





*Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj  
speaking to devotees at  
Śrīla Śrīdhara Swāmī Sevā  
Ashram in Govardhan.*

ghost, “Why can you immediately tell me what is going on in Kolkata but need to ask me to wait before you tell me who is sitting right in front of me?”, the ghost will say, “I cannot see what is close to me, but I can see things that are very far away, and can travel across the earth very quickly. I need to quickly go a little distance away and look before I can tell you who is next to you.”

This is ghost theory, but ghost theory is not transcendental theory. The devotees in Goloka Vṛndāvan are not like ghosts.

After I asked Śrīla Guru Mahārāj my question about Rādhārāṇī's service in Vṛndāvan he replied, “*Bhūmīś chintāmaṇi*: the land is made of wish-fulfilling gems. When Rādhārāṇī thinks, ‘I am going to Rādhā Kuṇḍā’, the earth contracts, and within five minutes She immediately arrives in Rādhā Kuṇḍā. This is the transcendental quality of Kṛṣṇa’s abode: it can expand and contract according to Kṛṣṇa’s desire and the service of His devotees. If anyone there thinks, ‘I shall go to Mathurā’, then they will see, ‘I am in Mathurā’. If anyone thinks, ‘I shall go to Varshana’, they will arrive there immediately even though it is thirty kilometres away.”

The nature of Vṛndāvan is *chintāmaṇi*: whatever devotees think of comes to them. In the material world a ghost may be able to see great distances and travel great distances very quickly in pursuit of its desires. But in the transcendental world the environment itself expands, contracts, and adjusts according to the desires of the Lord and His devotees.

In this way we can understand that everything in Vṛndāvan is transcendental. In Vṛndāvan *toyam amṛtam*: the water is like nectar. *Kathā gānam*: the talking is like singing. *Nāṭyam gamanam api*: the walking is like dancing. *Vaṁśī priya-sakhi*: Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song is heard everywhere. *Chid-ānandam jyotiḥ*: whenever it is necessary, inconceivable light appears everywhere coming from everything, and whenever it is not necessary, it is hidden.

### ***Unlimited cows with unlimited milk***

*Sa yatra kṣīrābdhiḥ sravati surabhībhyas cha sumahān*: in Kṛṣṇa’s abode oceans of milk flow from millions of Surabhi cows for nourishing Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. Surabhi is a cow who can give you whatever you desire. There is a story in the *Mahābhārata* that shows the glory of the Surabhi cow. Once, when Viśvāmitra was a kṣatriya king, he was travelling with his army and came to the dwelling of Vaśiṣṭha Ṛṣi. Vaśiṣṭha Ṛṣi insisted on feeding Viśvāmitra’s entire army, and within two hours he gave good nourishment to all Viśvāmitra’s soldiers.

Viśvāmitra was surprised, “How have you supplied food to thousands of my soldiers and satisfied my whole army within only two hours?”

Vaśiṣṭha Ṛṣi said, “I have one cow, and she gave me everything I needed to nourish everyone. My cow, Nandinī, will give me anything I ask from her.” Nandinī is the daughter of Surabhi, and she was mercifully staying in the house of Vaśiṣṭha Ṛṣi.

Viśvāmitra said, “I want to take this cow with me. I am a king, and I want to enjoy with this cow.”

Vaśiṣṭha said, “No. It is impossible. This cow is a wish-fulfilling cow who has come down from heaven. Wherever she lives, heaven appears. She is mercifully staying in my home, but she is a heavenly cow and cannot stay in any mundane house.”

Viśvāmitra objected, “I want to take her with me. I will take her forcibly with the help of the thousands of soldiers I have with me.”

Vaśiṣṭha Ṛṣi said to Nandinī, “I cannot resist Viśvāmitra. I have no power. But you mother, you can resist yourself.” Then Nandinī immediately produced thousands of soldiers for fighting, and Viśvāmitra was stunned as all of his soldiers were defeated.

Finally Viśvāmitra said, “*Dhig balaṁ kṣatriya-balaṁ brahma-tejo-balaṁ balam*: now I can see that the power of the brāhmaṇs is supreme in this world. I must become a brāhmaṇ.” Viśvāmitra then left his kingdom and began performing austerities (tapasya) to become a brāhmaṇ. That is another history, but through this story we can understand how much abundance can be produced by millions of Surabhi cows and how opulent the environment of Vṛndāvan Dhām must be.

### *The service-flow of time*

*Nimeṣārdhākhyo vā vrajati na hi yatrāpi samayaḥ*: in Vṛndāvan time follows Kṛṣṇa’s sweet will. According to Kṛṣṇa’s desire time passes or stands still. *Vrajati na hi* means *na gachchhati*:

time, *samayaḥ*, does not pass but stands by waiting to follow Kṛṣṇa's order. This means that every day, night, and moment in Vṛndāvan expands and contracts according to Kṛṣṇa's desire. One second, one blink of an eye, does not pass without notice and without bringing happiness to Kṛṣṇa.

When I first heard this expression, I was stunned. In the mundane world time is always passing. We are always saying, "Everything in this world is a passing show." But in the transcendental environment time does not pass without being engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service. Time may become infinitely long or short according to Kṛṣṇa's desire.

I once saw an advertisement, "All time is teatime." This is true in one sense in Vṛndāvan: there every moment is the best time. In Vṛndāvan, time is eternally present; there is no past or future. In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* it is described that when Kṛṣṇa would perform *rāsa-līlā* with the *gopīs*, the night would last the length of a night of *Brahmā*. That means that the *rāsa-līlā* Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* went on for billions and billions of years within one night. In this way we can understand how and why time flows in Vṛndāvan.

### *The transcendental environment*

*Bhaje Śvetadvīpaṁ tam aham iha Golokam iti yam*: Kṛṣṇa's divine abode is known as Śvetadvīp or Goloka Vṛndāvan. *Vidantas te santaḥ kṣīti-vīrala-chārāḥ katipaye*: in this world it is known only to a few saints who are clean-hearted, exclusive servitors of Kṛṣṇa. Only very clean-hearted persons can feel and understand Kṛṣṇa's transcendental world from within the material environment. If you give transcendental knowledge entrance and a clean position in your heart through prayer, then it will reveal itself in your heart. When transcendental knowledge wants to reveal itself in your heart, then it must be revealed; even you will not be able to check it. When Vṛndāvan Dhām is revealed in your heart, you will automatically feel everything.

From our mundane position we cannot gauge or feel the nature of Vṛndāvan. If we try to feel that abode from here, what we feel will be mundane. It is not necessary for us to discuss the matters of the transcendental world so much. That abode is not revealed through lectures or reading actually. It is revealed through dedication, devotion, determination, and divine grace. When one is fully enriched with those qualities, one will get everything automatically. We should only try to keep our faith. We will simply try to believe in what *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*, and the other scriptures have expressed about the Lord's Pastimes with His liberated devotees in His divine abode.

We use this word *devotee* often, but in the Lord's abode no one is actually a devotee in a way that we would recognise. Everyone there is an affectionate lover of Lord Kṛṣṇa. A 'devotee' means someone who always follows the instructions of Kṛṣṇa. But following orders only goes up to *dāsyā-rasa*, a service relationship with the Lord. In Vṛndāvan, Kṛṣṇa's associates are in the relationships of *sakhya-rasa* [friendship], *vātsalya-rasa* [affectionate guardianship], and *madhura-rasa* [paramour love]. Sometimes they push Kṛṣṇa, "Go and do this. Eat and enjoy that." Kṛṣṇa's lovers sometimes have a mood that is completely the opposite of Kṛṣṇa's.

We cannot gauge from the mundane plane anything about Kṛṣṇa's transcendental world. No one in the mundane environment can understand or feel Kṛṣṇa's transcendental abode without His mercy.

### *Kṛṣṇa's flute-song*

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu has written a very nice verse describing the transcendental, attractive power of the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute:

rundhann ambu-bhṛtaś chamatkṛti-param kurvan muhus tumburum  
dhyānād antarayan sanandana-mukhān vismāpayan vedhasam

autsukyāvalibhir balim chaṭulayan bhogīndram āghūrṇayan  
bhindann aṇḍa-kaṭāha-bhittim abhito babhrāma vamśī-dhvaniḥ

(Vīdagdha-mādhava: 1.27)

*Bhindann aṇḍa-kaṭāha-bhittim abhito babhrāma:* when Kṛṣṇa plays His flute, the sound travels not only everywhere throughout His divine abode but throughout all universes. The sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute travels through sky after sky, across all times and spaces. *Rundhann ambu-bhṛtaś:* the clouds within all the skies scatter. *Chamatkṛti-param kurvan muhus tumburum:* the Gandharvas, the singers and musicians of the heavenly planets, as well as Indra, Chandra, Vāyu, and so on, are astonished to hear the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute and cannot understand where it is coming from. The four kumāras—Sananda, Sanaka, Sanātan, and Sanat—who are always in meditation, cannot believe they are hearing Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song. They are never aware of anything in their external environment, and they wonder, “Where has this sound come from? How has it captured our attention?”

*Vismāpayan vedhasam:* Lord Brahmā, the creator of the universe, is very astonished to hear the flute’s sound: “This sound is not my creation. Where is it coming from?”

*Autsukyāvalibhir balim chaṭulayan:* Bali Mahārāj, who lives in Pātāloka [the underworld], hears the flute’s sound and becomes chañchal [excited]: “Where is this sound coming from?”

*Bhogīndram āghūrṇayan:* Satyarāj Vāsuki, Lord Ananta Śeṣa, who holds the earth on His heads, is struck by that sound and His heads shake.

In this way the tune of Kṛṣṇa’s flute makes the whole transcendental and material universe mad and attracts everyone everywhere.

Within Kṛṣṇa’s divine abode of Goloka Vṛndāvan, His flute-song is the very life of everyone (*vamśī priya-sakhī*). Through the transcendental sound vibration of His flute, Kṛṣṇa communicates with the hearts of all His devotees. All of Kṛṣṇa’s associates find their existence in the sound of His flute (*vamśī-dhvani*).

By Kṛṣṇa’s sweet will, everyone hears His flute-song and is inspired by it according to their relationship with Him. All the devotees—in their relationships of śānta, dāsya, sakhya, vātsalya, and madhura rasas—are filled with affection and given instruction by Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song; they are inspired as to how they can next serve Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa’s mother Yaśomatī hears Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song and begins preparing many opulent foods that Kṛṣṇa likes. Kṛṣṇa’s friends become inspired to play with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa’s girlfriends become inspired to meet Him. Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song simultaneously reveals Kṛṣṇa’s desires to everyone, according to their relationship with Him.

### *The source of Kṛṣṇa’s power*

Kṛṣṇa is irresistibly attractive as He plays His flute. Kṛṣṇa’s devotees become completely charmed by His attractive power as He plays His flute and cannot separate their existence from their desire for Kṛṣṇa.

śrī-kṛṣṇa-rūpādi-niṣevanam vinā  
vyarthāni me ’hāny akhilendriyāṅy alam  
pāṣāṇa-śuṣkendhana-bhārakāṅy aho  
bibharmi vā tāni katham hata-trapaḥ

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 2.28)

Kṛṣṇa’s devotees feel, “If we cannot serve Kṛṣṇa’s divine form, then all of our senses are useless. Why do we have eyes if we cannot see Kṛṣṇa?”

vaṁśī-gānāmṛta-dhāma, lāvṇyāmṛta-janma-sthāna,  
ye nā dekhe se chāda vadana

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 2.29)

As Kṛṣṇa plays His sweet song on His flute, His moon-like face blooms with unlimitedly attractive attachment and heartfelt affection.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has explained why Kṛṣṇa’s flute-song is so attractive. We know that the gāyatrī-mantram comes from

*What are the use of eyes that do not behold Kṛṣṇa’s moon-like face, which is the origin of the nectar of all beauty and the songs of His flute?*



the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. So through the gāyatrī-mantram we can understand the mood and intention of Kṛṣṇa as He plays His flute.

*gāyatrī muralīṣṭa-kīrtana-dhanaṁ rādhā-padaṁ dhīmahī*

*(Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj)*

Gāyatrī means muralī-dhvani, the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. *Muralīṣṭa-kīrtana*: muralī wants kīrtan; through His flute Kṛṣṇa performs His desired kīrtan. *Muralī-iṣṭa*: *iṣṭa* means Kṛṣṇa wants to perform kīrtan of His dearmost: Rādhārāṇī. Through His flute-song, gāyatrī, Kṛṣṇa calls the Name of Rādhārāṇī,



“Rādhā Rādhā Rādhā Rādhā”, and expresses His glorification of Rādhārāṇī. *Dhanam*, the real wealth of Kṛṣṇa, the real wealth of His play and the source of His attractive power, is Rādhārāṇī’s lotus feet, and only Rādhārāṇī’s lotus feet. *Rādhā-padam dhīmahī*: Kṛṣṇa plays His flute-song in meditation upon Rādhārāṇī’s lotus feet.

### *Rādhārāṇī’s divine qualities*

Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes are not ordinary human activities. They are not found within the material environment. They are called *līlā* (divine Pastimes). They are not material in any way; they are transcendental. Rādhārāṇī is Kṛṣṇa’s supreme Power, His *Parā-śakti*. She is also known as His *Hlādinī-śakti*. *Hlādinī* means ‘She who always gives joy to Kṛṣṇa’. It means that all of Her activities create great joy in Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s heart. Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī explained,

hlādinīra sāra ‘prema’, prema-sāra ‘bhāva’  
bhāvera parama-kāṣṭhā, nāma—‘mahābhāva’  
mahābhāva-svarūpā śrī-rādhā-ṭhākuraṇī  
sarva-guṇa-khani kṛṣṇa-kāntā-śiromaṇi  
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 4.68–69)

*The acme of pleasure is love; the  
acme of love is ecstasy; and  
the acme of ecstasy is Mahābhāva.  
The embodiment of Mahābhāva  
is Śrī Rādhā Ṭhākuraṇī,  
the mine of all good qualities,  
the crest jewel of Kṛṣṇa’s lovers.*

All qualities and qualifications; all beauty, love, charm, and ecstasy; all the wealth of service—everything—is in the hand of Rādhārāṇī. With everything She satisfies Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is fully satisfied with Her.

Rādhārāṇī’s names have special qualities and beauty. We know a very sweet and beautiful verse about Rādhārāṇī’s names.

devī kṛṣṇa-mayī proktā rādhikā para-devatā  
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva-kāntiḥ sammohinī parā  
(Bṛhad-Gautamīya-tantra)

This is a Sanskrit verse, and Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī has given an explanation of it in Bengali:

kṛṣṇa-mayī—kṛṣṇa yāra bhitarē bāhire  
yāhā yāhā netra paḍe tāhā kṛṣṇa sphure

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 4.85)

“Rādhārāṇī’s name is *Kṛṣṇamayī* because Her within and without are Lord Kṛṣṇa, and She sees Lord Kṛṣṇa wherever She casts Her glance.”

Kṛṣṇa is always present within, and in front of, Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa is within Her, and She sees Him wherever She looks. She does not see anything apart from Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa plays wherever Her eyes go. Rādhārāṇī’s name *Kṛṣṇamayī* has been described in Vidyāpati’s Padyāvalī in poetic form:

yadi nayana muḍe thāki’,      antare govinda dekhi,  
nayane khulile dekhi śyāme

[Rādhārāṇī says:] “If I close My eyes, I see Kṛṣṇa playing in My heart. If I open My eyes, I see Kṛṣṇa playing before Me.”

She who cannot see anything apart from Kṛṣṇa is called *Kṛṣṇamayī*.

Kavirāj Goswāmī also explained that Her name is *Rādhikā* because She satisfies Kṛṣṇa’s desires with all of Her senses, because She knows nothing other than constant worship of Kṛṣṇa.

*Para-devatā* means She who serves as the proprietor of the best of all the Gods: Kṛṣṇa. All administration and property in the transcendental service world are in Her hand. Thus She is known as *Para-devatā*. Because She is the wholesale proprietor of everything for Kṛṣṇa’s service, She is known as *Sarva-lakṣmī-mayī*. This name means ‘She from whom all beauty and fortune flow’, ‘She who is the fountain of all wealth, beauty, and qualities, the fountain of Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes’.

Rādhārāṇī can enchant Kṛṣṇa with Her mood and divine form. Thus She is known as *Sammohinī*. Śuka and Śārī, the male and female parrots of Vṛndāvan, playfully quarrel:

śuka bale, “āmāra kṛṣṇa madana-mohana”  
śārī bale, “āmāra rādhā vāme yata kṣaṇa”

Śuka says, “My Kṛṣṇa can attract Cupid.”

Śārī replies, “As long as my Rādhā is by His side.”

Cupid is known as Bhuvana Mohan, ‘he who attracts the whole world’. Kṛṣṇa is known as Bhuvana Mohan Mohan, ‘He who attracts Cupid’. Rādhārāṇī is known as Bhuvana Mohan Mohan Mohini, ‘She who attracts Kṛṣṇa, who attracts everyone in the whole world away from Cupid’. If Kṛṣṇa is separated from Rādhārāṇī, He becomes attracted by Cupid (lust). In this way we can understand Rādhārāṇī’s name Sammohinī, ‘She who is supremely attractive’.

‘devī’ kahi dyotamānā, paramā sundarī  
kimvā, kṛṣṇa-pūjā-krīḍāra vasati nagarī  
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 4.84)

Here in his explanation of Rādhārāṇī’s names Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī miraculously revealed the meaning of the Sanskrit word *devī*. Normally we think *devī* refers to a beautiful heavenly goddess, ‘she from whom all beauty comes’. Śrīla Kavirāj Goswāmī explained that *devī* comes from the root *div*, which means play (*div dhātu krīḍāyām*). He explained that *devī* also means ‘She in whom Kṛṣṇa plays in full’, ‘She in whose body there is nothing other than the worship and play of Kṛṣṇa’. Kṛṣṇa is satisfied by the full existence of the full form of Rādhārāṇī. He is fully satisfied with His play in madhura-rasa-līlā with Rādhārāṇī. Because Rādhārāṇī’s body is the supreme abode of Kṛṣṇa’s service and play, She is called *devī*. No one could conceive of this meaning of the Sanskrit word *devī*, but Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī revealed it.

### ***Rādhārāṇī’s divine guidance***

The divine play of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa is eternally going on in Vṛndāvan Dhām. Everything in Vṛndāvan exists to give joy to Kṛṣṇa. There Rādhārāṇī distributes Her power to everyone, and Kṛṣṇa enjoys with everyone. There Kṛṣṇa tastes divine love through Rādhārāṇī. Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur very simply expressed this in his song:



Śrī Śrī Rādhā Madan Mohan,  
the Deities worshipped by  
Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī Prabhu.  
Śrī Madan Mohan was orig-  
inally established by Kṛṣṇa’s  
grandson Vajranabha.

rādhā-bhajane yadi mati nāhi bhelā  
kṛṣṇa-bhajana tava akāraṇe gelā

(Gītāvalī: Rādhāṣṭakam, 8.1)

“If you do not worship Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī, everything you do will be lost. You will not get any ecstasy from the emporium of all ecstasy (Kṛṣṇa). You will not taste anything. *Akāraṇe gelā*: you can worship Kṛṣṇa, but no benefit will come to you if you do not worship Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī.”

Mirabai is an example of a famous devotee who did not approach Kṛṣṇa through Rādhārāṇī. We offer our daṇḍavat praṇām to all devotees of Kṛṣṇa, and we offer our daṇḍavat praṇām to Mirabai, but from a distance. We do not have a real connection with Mirabai, and we do not offer our affection or service to Mirabai. There are many devotees like Mirabai. We are not attached to them. If someone worships Kṛṣṇa without Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa gives them something, maybe He gives them five per cent. But if someone serves Kṛṣṇa under Rādhārāṇī’s guidance, they get everything. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself openly confessed,

*Your meeting with Me is  
irreproachable. You have served  
Me, completely severing  
yourselves from the difficult-to-  
overcome bondage of  
family life. I cannot compensate  
you for this even within  
the lifetime of a demigod.  
May your own virtuous acts be  
your compensation.*

na pāraye ‘ham niravadya-saṁyujām  
sva-sādhu-kṛtyam vibudhāyusāpi vaḥ  
yā mābhajan durjaya-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ  
saṁvṛśchya tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 10.32.22)

“I cannot reciprocate the love and affection that I have received from Rādhārāṇī.”

Thus when Kṛṣṇa sees His devotees serving Rādhārāṇī, He enriches them with His full mercy.

Rādhārāṇī manages and distributes all service to Kṛṣṇa. All of Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes happen through Her power. Her hlādinī-śakti is the source of all of Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure, and Her potency form of Yogamāyā manages the whole environment of the transcendental world.

Once when Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was explaining this point, someone said to him, “You are actually tantrics. You are always saying, ‘Under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī you are serving Kṛṣṇa’, so you are following the conception of prakṛtivād (energy worship).”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj replied, “Yes. We are tantrics. But we are viśuddha-tantrics, pure unalloyed tantrics. ‘Under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī’ means that under the guidance of Her transcendental energy we are serving Kṛṣṇa. Our service goes directly to Rādhārāṇī, not to Kṛṣṇa, and Rādhārāṇī arranges everything for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa with our service energy. So our service is present as Rādhārāṇī gives full nourishment to Kṛṣṇa, and in that way we fulfil the most important necessity of our existence: purely satisfying Kṛṣṇa.”

### *An enchanting breeze*

We can understand how much love and attachment Kṛṣṇa has for Rādhārāṇī, how supremely She satisfies Him, and how extremely valuable the service of Rādhārāṇī is, through an expression of Prabodhānanda Saraswatī Ṭhākur:

yasyaḥ kadāpi vasanañchala khelanotthadhanyātidhanya-pavenena kṛtārthamānī  
yogindra-durgama-gatir madhusūdano 'pi  
tasyāḥ namo 'stu vṛṣabhānubhuvo diśe 'pi

(*Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi: 2*)

This is Prabodhānanda Saraswatī’s praṇām mantram for Rādhārāṇī. In this verse he expresses, “When Kṛṣṇa feels the breeze of Rādhārāṇī’s sari as She distributes food to Kṛṣṇa and His friends, Kṛṣṇa feels, ‘I am fully satisfied’. *Dhanyātidhanya-pavenena kṛtārthamānī*: just by feeling the breeze of Rādhārāṇī’s sari Kṛṣṇa feels, ‘I am so fortunate. I am fully satisfied’. *Yogindra-durgama-gatir Madhusūdano 'pi*: all the munis, ṛṣis, and yogīs—everyone—are trying to get the dust of Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, but Kṛṣṇa thinks, ‘The breeze from Rādhārāṇī’s cloth gives Me full nourishment.’”



Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead:

īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ  
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

(Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā: 5.1)

Kṛṣṇa is not only an īśvar; He is the Parameśvar, who is the origin of everything, the Creator of all creation, and the universally worshippable, eternal Lord. Yet Kṛṣṇa thinks, “Oh ho! I am very fortunate that I have felt the breeze from Rādhārāṇī’s cloth.”

When we understand the identity of Kṛṣṇa and we hear that Kṛṣṇa is becoming maddened by feeling the breeze of Rādhārāṇī’s sari, then we can understand something about Rādhārāṇī. We can understand that Kṛṣṇa gets full satisfaction from Her, and that no one can satisfy Kṛṣṇa the way She can. We can also understand that even Kṛṣṇa Himself wants to serve Rādhārāṇī. So Rādhārāṇī’s position is supreme.

Prabodhānanda Saraswatī has also given us a very helpful caution in his verse: “We are not so expert. We are not qualified to take the Name of Rādhārāṇī. Actually we are not qualified to think about Her divine Pastimes with Kṛṣṇa. But what we can do is pay our daṇḍavat praṇām to the direction of Varshana, where Rādhārāṇī appeared and played in Her early age.”

### *The queen of Kṛṣṇa’s homeland*

We can also understand how high and exalted the position and Name of Rādhārāṇī are through Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. Śukadev Goswāmī did not want to take the Name of Rādhārāṇī in the public meeting described in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam because he understood that the ṛṣis there were not qualified to hear Her Name. Śukadev Goswāmī heard Rādhārāṇī’s glories from his Gurudev, Vedavyās, and through that he understood everything. But he did not want to give that knowledge to the ṛṣis in the public meeting. Ātreya Ṛṣi and many great, stalwart ṛṣis were there.

atrir vaśiṣṭhaś chyavanaḥ śaradvān  
ariṣṭanemir bhṛgur aṅgirās cha  
parāśaro gādhi-suto 'tha rāma  
dvaipāyano bhagavān nāradaś cha

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 1.19.9–10)

All the dignitaries of the spiritual world were seated there: Śukadev Goswāmī's grandfather, Parāśar, Śukadev's father, Vedavyās, Nārad Ṛṣi, and so many others. Everyone was present for the meeting during Parikṣit Mahārāj's final seven days. There Śukadev Goswāmī expressed everything, but He did not take the Name of Rādhārāṇī because He did not want to expose the harem of Kṛṣṇa in the middle of that meeting. Not everyone there could properly understand Kṛṣṇa's private life. To protect them from making any offences he did not take the Name of Rādhārāṇī.

Rādhārāṇī's position is supreme, but She is only known to those who have consciousness about Kṛṣṇa's private life. Kṛṣṇa is famous everywhere; everyone all over the world has heard of Kṛṣṇa. But only in Vṛndāvan will you hear the Name of Rādhārāṇī everywhere. If you go to Vṛndāvan even today, you will find that you will not hear the Name of Kṛṣṇa so much. There everyone only calls, "Rādhe Rādhe! Rādhe Rādhe!" Everywhere you go in Vṛndāvan you will hear, "Rādhe Rādhe!"

Vṛndāvan is Rādhārāṇī's zone, and there everyone always sings Her glories. Kṛṣṇa's position is secondary there. Kṛṣṇa is like a big administrator; He is known far and wide. But Rādhārāṇī is the Mistress of His exclusive private life, and She is supreme within Kṛṣṇa's homeland of Vṛndāvan.

### *The controller of Kṛṣṇa's heart*

Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa's relationship is completely transcendental. We cannot understand Their intimate Pastimes from our mundane position. So we do not show our mood of devotion for Them as though we are residents of Vṛndāvan. Rather we respect Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā from the proper distance.

brahmā śiva nārada śruti nārāyaṇī  
rādhikā-pada-*raja* pūjaye mānī'

(*Gītāvalī: Rādhāṣṭakam, 8.6*)

Śukadev, Śiva, Brahmā, Nārad—all the great persons in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*—worship Rādhārāṇī, but we always feel from them some caution: “You can worship Rādhārāṇī, but be careful.”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj fully explained the glorious and worship-pable position of Rādhārāṇī very carefully and cleverly through his verse about *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*:

*“I surrender to the lotus feet  
of the fountain of madhura-rasa,  
Śrī Rādhā. Though their name  
is not found within the  
narrative of the glorious, nectarean  
Śrīmad Bhāgavatam,  
Śrī Rādhā’s lotus feet are present  
within every word of it and  
are the basis of the Pastimes of the  
Akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti, Śyām.”*

yad amiya-mahimā-śrī-bhāgavatyaḥ kathāyām  
pratipadam anubhūtam chāpy alabdhābhidheyā  
tad akhila-rasa-mūrti-śyāma-līlāvalambam  
madhura-rasa-dhi-rādhā-pādapadmaṁ prapadye

(*Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj*)

“Every word in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* glorifies Rādhārāṇī, but Her Name is not specifically taken there. Kṛṣṇa is the *Akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti*, the emporium of all rasa, and Rādhārāṇī is *Śyāma-līlāvilamba*, the reservoir in which Kṛṣṇa plays and tastes the full ecstasy of madhura-rasa. Rādhārāṇī is the controller of Kṛṣṇa’s heart, the madhura-rasa adhikāriṇī. Her service is the source of all of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s madhura-rasa prema.”





*Mahārāj Pratāparudra, pictured in front offering his obeisance, commissioned this painting by Vakreśvar Paṇḍit's disciple Murāri Dās, which depicts Gadādhara Paṇḍit reading Śrīmad Bhāgavatam for (from left to right) Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī, Govinda Dās, Rāmānanda Rāy, Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Advaita Āchārya, Soarūp Dāmodar, Śrīvās Paṇḍit, and Haridās Ṭhākura.*



## *The Next Edition of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes*

Divine love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme wealth and goal of our lives (*premā pumartho mahān*). Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu preached this conception all over India, and now it has spread all over the world. Through that divine love everyone will get entrance into the Lord's divine abode, Śvetadwīp, which has two divisions: the mādhyura-līlā of the Divine Couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvan and the audārya-līlā of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in Nabadwīp. *Mahāprabhu Śrī Chaitanya Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa nahe anya*: Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is nondifferent from Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. He also has His own divine realm in the transcendental world, where He lives eternally with His associates and engages in inconceivable Pastimes of divine love.

### *The twofold appearance of Kṛṣṇa*

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā, and other scriptures have described for everyone in this world Kṛṣṇa's divine appearance and mādhyura-līlā in Vṛndāvan.

aṣṭāviṁśa chatur-yuge dvāparera śeṣe  
vrajera sahite haya kṛṣṇera prakāśe  
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 3.10)

“At the end of the Dvāpar-yuga in the twenty-eighth millennium of Vaivasvata Manu, Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears in this world with His eternal abode, Vṛndāvan.”

**īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ  
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam**

(Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā: 5.1)

Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa means ‘He who is the origin of everything transcendental and mundane’, ‘the cause of all causes’, the ‘Supreme Personality of Godhead’. This Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago and showed His mādhyura-līlā to the world. Then He withdrew with His associates, abode, paraphernalia, and so on.

When Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world, two forms actually appeared within Him.

*Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa is different from the Kṛṣṇa who appeared in the Yādu dynasty. He never leaves Vṛndāvan.*

**kṛṣṇo ’nyo yadu-sambhūto yaḥ pūrṇaḥ so ’sty ataḥ paraḥ  
vṛndāvanam parityajya sa kvachin naiva gachchati**

(Śrī Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta: Pūrva-khaṇḍa, 165)

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu explained that one form was the Yuga-avatār (the Avatār for the age), who came to demolish the demoniac activity going on and harmonise everything on the earth. The other form was Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who lives eternally in Vṛndāvan Dhām as the ever-playful Reality the Beautiful. That Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa is actually Avatārī Kṛṣṇa, the original Kṛṣṇa, who is the source of all Avatārs (*sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*). During His Pastimes on earth, the Yuga-avatār form of Kṛṣṇa came out of Vṛndāvan to fulfil His mission on the planet, but the original Kṛṣṇa, Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa—*īśvaraḥ Paramaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ*—never took one step out of Vṛndāvan. He stayed in Vṛndāvan through His Pastimes of union in separation with His devotees in Vraja Dhām. Then, when His Pastimes with the residents of Vṛndāvan and the Pastimes of the Dvāpar-yuga Avatār were completed, that original Kṛṣṇa, with His Yuga-avatār form, withdrew from the universe.

## Love and magnanimity

After the appearance of Kṛṣṇa the time came on the earth for the Kali-yuga-avatār, the Avatār who distributes the dharma of the Age of Kali: Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan. At that time the Lord appeared as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

śrī kṛṣṇa chaitanya prabhu jīve dayā kari  
sva-parṣada svīya dhāma saha avatari  
(Śaraṅāgati: 1.1)

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu descended from the transcendental world with His associates and divine abode. He revealed His audārya-līlā and bestowed His mercy upon all the fortunate souls of this world. But like Kṛṣṇa, inside Mahāprabhu there are two forms: one is the Yuga-avatār, who came to distribute Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan, and the other is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-milita-tanu: Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa combined—Avatārī Kṛṣṇa manifest with the heart and halo of His eternal consort, Rādhārāṇī.

The Lord's audārya-līlā (Pastimes of magnanimity), give the jīva-souls entrance into His mādhyura-līlā (Pastimes of sweetness). As Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the Lord could show His Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā like a jewel; He could reveal all of its facets and glory. During His appearance as Kṛṣṇa, the Lord enjoyed His mādhyura-līlā personally; He did not distribute entrance into His mādhyura-līlā to the jīva-souls. But in His audārya-līlā as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the Lord actively distributes His mādhyura-līlā everywhere. Because of this Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's audārya-līlā is honoured by the devotees as more than Kṛṣṇa's līlā.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam describes how Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu distributes Himself and His gift of Kṛṣṇa-prema, as well as how He gives the souls entrance into His mādhyura-līlā.

kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇaṁ saṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam  
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ  
(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 11.5.32)



Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurachandra,  
the presiding Deity at  
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Mission  
in Salt Lake City, Utah.

“Kṛṣṇa will take form as Lord Gaurāṅga to distribute divine love and His divine form through His Divine Name. He will distribute everything through the saṅkīrtan mahāyajñā, the great sacrifice of chanting the Lord’s Holy Names in congregation. He will be *Kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam*: He will always chant the Holy Name ‘Kṛṣṇa’, and His form will have a golden effulgence. *Sāṅgopāṅgāstra pārṣadam yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana*: with His associates—Nityānanda Prabhu, Advaita Āchārya, Gadādhara Paṇḍit, Śrīvās Thākura, and so on—He will chant, dance, and engage everyone in the sacrifice of Hari-nāma-saṅkīrtan. *Yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ*: all the fortunate souls will practise the procedure He distributes and feel Kṛṣṇa-prema in their hearts.”

### *Meeting with Rāmānanda Rāy*

During His Pastimes, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu first revealed His true identity as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa combined to His dear devotee Rāmānanda Rāy on the bank of the Godāvārī River. Mahāprabhu chose to bestow His divine mercy upon all conditioned souls through Rāmānanda Rāy. Within their conversation, which you can find in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, Madhyalīlā, Chapter 8, the full conception and gift that Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu came to give to the world is presented. Everything is explained there. If you read it, then you will understand how people will enter Kṛṣṇa consciousness, how they will proceed in their practising life, how they will offer themselves to Kṛṣṇa, and how Kṛṣṇa will accept their service—you will understand everything.

In the final portion of their meeting, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu revealed His internal identity and hidden Pastimes to Rāmānanda Rāy. Mahāprabhu began their conversation by asking Rāmānanda, “*Paḍa śloka sādhyera nirṇaya* (Cc: Madhya, 8.57): please recite a verse that reveals the ultimate goal of our lives.”

Rāmānanda replied with a verse, but Mahāprabhu said, “*Eho bāhya, āge kaha āra*: this is external. Go deeper.”

Rāmānanda recited another verse, but Mahāprabhu rejected it: “Oh! You are cheating Me! *Eho bāhya, āge kaha āra*: this is not the answer. Tell Me more.”

Mahāprabhu rejected one, two, three, four answers of Rāmānanda in this way: “*Eho bāhya, āge kaha āra*: this is not appropriate. You know more, so tell Me more.”

By rejecting his verses Mahāprabhu was teaching Rāmānanda, but Rāmānanda was also testing Mahāprabhu. Rāmānanda was suspicious about whether a sannyāsī would accept Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā as supreme, and did not want to mention it right away. He first glorified varṇāśram-dharma, and other elementary stages.

In this way Mahāprabhu examined Rāmānanda, and Rāmānanda examined Mahāprabhu. Finally, when they found very good relations between each other, they discussed the very essence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Rāmānanda described and supported rāga-mārg-sevā to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as supreme and Mahāprabhu was very, very happy. Rāmānanda said, “*Īhāra madhye Rādhāra prema—‘sādhyā-śiromaṇi’*: real service to Kṛṣṇa is given by Rādhārāṇī, and Rādhārāṇī’s prema, which is the greatest amongst all the gopīs, is the topmost perfection.”

Mahāprabhu was so satisfied to hear this, and after Rāmānanda described many things about Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s madhura-rasa-līlā, He said, “Yes. What you are describing is supreme, but is there anything more?”

Rāmānanda replied, “I cannot conceive that anyone could ask about anything more than this. I cannot find any verses from the scriptures that go beyond this, but if You like, You can hear something from me that may be satisfying to You.” Then Rāmānanda began to recite one of his own compositions:

pahilehi rāga nayana-bhaṅge bhela  
anudina bāḍhala, avadhi nā gela  
nā so ramaṇa, nā hāma ramaṇī  
dūhu-mana manobhava peṣala jāni’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.193)

[Rādhārāṇī sings:] Our attachment first arose through eye contact. It has increased daily and reached no limit. He is not man, and I am not woman. Understanding this, Cupid pressed our hearts together.

This is the most extreme expression of madhura-rasa, and Mahāprabhu finally covered Rāmānanda’s mouth with His own hand when He heard this expression. In this way, lastly, Rāmānanda surrendered to Mahāprabhu, and Mahāprabhu surrendered to Rāmānanda.

### *Bewildered by love*

**Student:** Can you explain a little bit about Rāmānanda Rāy’s poem? Is it impossible for us to understand?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** It is not for public discussion actually. That poem is Rāmānanda Rāy’s superlative answer to Mahāprabhu’s question about the goal of life. Chaṇḍī Dās also gave us one of Rādhārāṇī’s songs:

*Who caused Me to hear Śyām’s Name? Entering through My ears into the core of My being, Śyām’s Name overwhelmed My heart. I do not know how much nectar is present within Śyām’s Name. My heart is unable to leave Him. As I chant His Name, I am overcome. O friend! How shall I meet Him? The power of His Name affects Me so. What will the touch of His body do? If I see where He lives, how shall I maintain my vow of chastity? I decided to forget Him, but it was impossible. What shall I do? What is the solution? Dvija Chaṇḍī Dās says, ‘A chaste girl thus dishonours Her family and offers Her youth.’*

kebā sunāila śyāma-nāma  
 kānera bhitarā diyā, maramē paśila go,  
 ākula karila mama prāṇa  
 nā jāni kateka madhu, śyāma-nāme āchhe go,  
 parāṇa chhāḍite nāhi pāre  
 japite, japite nāma, avaśa karila go,  
 kemane pāiba sai, tāre  
 nāma-paratape yāra, aichhana karila go,  
 aṅgera paraśe kibā haya  
 yekhāne vasati tāra, nayane heriyā go  
 yuvatī dharama kaichhe raya  
 pāśarite kari mane, pāśarā na yāya go,  
 ki kāribe ki habe upāya  
 kahe dvija chaṇḍī-dāse, kulavatī kula-nāśe,  
 āpanāra yauvana yāchhāya

After hearing Kṛṣṇa’s Name Rādhārāṇī is moved. Inspiration to dedicate oneself comes through Kṛṣṇa’s Name. That is the meaning of this song.

In Rāmānanda Rāy’s song Rādhārāṇī says, “When Kṛṣṇa and I first saw each other, We became attracted to each other.”



Rādhārāṇī is naturally attracted to Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa is naturally attracted to Rādhārāṇī. The Power and Powerful cannot be differentiated, yet Kṛṣṇa is the Powerful, and Rādhārāṇī is the Power. They exist eternally in two forms, but They can become so attracted to one another that They cannot differentiate Themselves from one another. This song explains that this situation comes to Them. Rādhārāṇī wonders, “How is it that Kṛṣṇa is in Mathurā and I am here?” She tells a friend, “Today this situation has come: I cannot differentiate Myself from Kṛṣṇa. So, I am sending you as an ambassador to Kṛṣṇa to ask Him, ‘What is this? Is it real love? Real attachment?’”

Many things are inside this song of Rāmānanda Rāy. Rādhārāṇī wonders, “I do not know if I am woman and Kṛṣṇa is man, or I am man and Kṛṣṇa is woman. What is the truth? I have forgotten everything because such strong love, beauty, and charm have taken possession of Me.”

**Student:** Is this song saying that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s identities merge?

**Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj:** So many things are inside this song, but they are not for public discussion. Here māyāvādīs take the opportunity to say, “That is our situation”, but it is not. Simply we can say that strong love and affection can make a person blind and unable to see anything except some positive light, just as very bright light blinds the eye.

### *Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s hidden identity*

After hearing from Rāmānanda Rāy, Mahāprabhu was so happy that He could not hide His internal form from Rāmānanda. When their discourses were almost finished, Rāmānanda became very surprised by how Mahāprabhu’s divine form appeared to him. He knew what he was seeing, but he could not believe it. He asked Mahāprabhu:

pahile dekhilū tomāra sannyāsi-svarūpa  
ebe tomā dekhi muñī śyāma-gopa-rūpa

tomāra sammukhe dekhi kāñchana-pañchālikā  
tāra gaura-kāntyē tomāra sarva aṅga ḍhākā

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.268–269)

“Prabhu, what is this? What am I seeing? It is Your form, but I cannot believe it. At first I saw You as a sannyāsī, a glorious sannyāsī no doubt. But now I am not seeing You as only a sannyāsī: inside You I am seeing Kṛṣṇa Himself, and He appears to have the heart of Rādhārāṇī and to be covered by Her halo. What is this?”

Mahāprabhu first tried to hide Himself from Rāmānanda. Mahāprabhu said, “Oh! You are a great Kṛṣṇa-bhakta! You have so much love for Kṛṣṇa that you see Kṛṣṇa’s presence everywhere. Now you are looking at Me, and because you see Kṛṣṇa everywhere, you are seeing Me as Kṛṣṇa. Why would you not see Kṛṣṇa within Me?”

Rāmānanda Rāy replied very strongly:

rāya kahe,—prabhu tumi chhāḍa bhāri-bhūri  
mora āge nija-rūpa nā kariha churi

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.278)

“Prabhu, why are You trying to cheat me? I understand who You are; You cannot hide Your identity from Me. I can see that You are the divine form of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa combined, and it is not an illusion. Please do not cheat me. Tell me the truth. You have come here to see me and show me Your divine form. Why are You now hiding Yourself?”

Mahāprabhu said, “*Bhakti-bale pāra tumi brahmāṇḍa śodhite*: you know everything; what can I say? The power of your devotion can purify the whole universe. You are My very exclusive devotee, and I cannot hide Myself in front of you. Really, I am what you are seeing.”

tabe hāsī’ tāre prabhu dekhāila svarūpa  
‘rasa-rāja’, ‘mahābhāva’—dui eka rūpa

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.282)



Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā  
Govindasundar Jīu, the  
presiding Deities at Śrī Chaitanya  
Sāraswat Maṭh, Nabadwīp.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī  
Ṭhākur established worship of  
Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Rādhā-  
Kṛṣṇa on the same altar, in  
accordance with Śrīla Rāmānanda  
Rāy's vision.

Mahāprabhu smiled and showed Rāmānanda His full divine form as Rasarāj-Mahābhāva—Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa—combined: as the emporium of all rasa combined with the reservoir of all divine ecstasy.

dekhi' rāmānanda hailā ānande mūrchchhite  
dharite nā pāre deha, paḍilā bhūmite

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.283)

When Rāmānanda saw Mahāprabhu's form as Kṛṣṇa fully manifested with Rādhārāṇī's heart and halo, he could not stand; he fainted to the ground unconscious. Mahāprabhu touched Rāmānanda's body, and Rāmānanda returned to his normal consciousness. Rāmānanda then saw Mahāprabhu as a sannyāsī again and became puzzled. Mahāprabhu said,

āmi—eka bātula, tumi—dviṭiya bātula  
ataeva tomāya āmāya ha-i sama-tula

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.291)



*Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu wrote books, established worship at the sites of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes in Vṛndāvan, and set the example of pure devotional practice for all followers of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.*

"I am crazy, and you are also crazy. No one else has seen this divine form of Mine as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa combined, but it is My own true form. Do not tell others that you have seen this form. Keep what you have seen hidden in your heart."

### *The most merciful Avatār*

The hidden treasure of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's divine identity first came out in this way through the heart of Rāmānanda Rāy. Later Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu fully spread this consciousness to Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu wanted the flow of His mercy to continue in this world after His presence here, so when Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu met Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī in Prayag, He personally taught Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī everything He had revealed to Rāmānanda Rāy. Later, Mahāprabhu told all His devotees, "I have given everything to Rūpa Goswāmī." In this way He identified Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu as His successor. So there is no question whether there is a continuation of the flow of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy.

Later, by Mahāprabhu's mercy, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu composed some verses which gloriously and perfectly explain Mahāprabhu's appearance and gift to the world:

**namo mahāvadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te  
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-chaitanya-nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ**

*(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 19.53)*

*Mahā* is used as a superlative in this verse: "No one is more merciful, or has ever given more, than Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, who appeared to distribute Kṛṣṇa-prema to everyone."

Only Mahāprabhu can be known as the mahāvadānya Avatār because only He has fully distributed Kṛṣṇa-prema to the world. So many forms of the Lord have appeared in the world to bless the jīva-souls. Among them Kṛṣṇa and His Vṛndāvan-līlā are supreme, but Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is more merciful than Kṛṣṇa. Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing in the form of His devotee. A devotee's nature is to distribute Kṛṣṇa, and

when Kṛṣṇa Himself is a devotee, then He distributes mercy to the conditioned souls in the most merciful mood. And there is no question whether He can bestow His own mercy!

Sometimes we see that when the government of a country changes or some very respectable persons come to a country, prisoners are released. Sometimes thousands of prisoners are released. Similarly, when Kṛṣṇa appears as a devotee, everything changes, and He freely gives the souls His full mercy. He can give Himself, and there can be no opposition to that by any law. So Mahāprabhu Śrī Chaitanyadev is the supreme giver of His own self, and by His merciful appearance all souls can receive the supreme spiritual fortune: Kṛṣṇa-prema.

### *Distributing pure love*

The souls of this Kali-yuga are so fortunate because they are receiving the most special form of mercy in a very wide way. Without Mahāprabhu it is very rare to get a connection with Kṛṣṇa and His līlā in Vṛndāvan, where He plays with the gopīs. Kṛṣṇa has so many Avatārs: Yuga-avatārs, Līlā-avatārs, Manvantār-avatārs, Śaktyāveś-avatārs, and so on. To get a connection with Kṛṣṇa in His original form, the ever-playful Sweet Absolute, who is enjoying with the gopīs in mādhyama-līlā, is very rare. Only when Kṛṣṇa Himself wants to distribute that is it possible to enter there; only through Śrīman Mahāprabhu's audārya-līlā can we enter Kṛṣṇa's mādhyama-līlā.

In a more exclusive way we can say that Kṛṣṇa does not have full right to distribute Himself or entrance into His Pastimes. Only Kṛṣṇa's chief potency, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, who has 'all rights reserved' over Kṛṣṇa, can fully distribute Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa-prema. When Kṛṣṇa appears as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, with the heart and halo of His supreme devotee, Rādhārāṇī, He has the opportunity to distribute Himself, that is, Rādhārāṇī distributes Her own divine mood of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa.

The mood of a devotee is to always distribute, and Rādhārāṇī is always merciful. She does not want to taste the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes alone. *Ānuṣaṅge prema-maya kaile tribhuvana* (Cc: Madhya, 8.280): Mahāprabhu, as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa combined, could not hide His mood; He distributed Kṛṣṇa-prema to everyone, and for that He is truly the supremely merciful form of the Lord (the mahāvadānya Avatār). The Lord proved that He is infinitely merciful and that He attracts all souls and fills their hearts with ecstasy (Kṛṣṇa-prema) by appearing as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

### *The golden gift of the golden Lord*

Mahāprabhu appeared as the Yuga-avatār to rescue the conditioned souls through Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan. This is the external cause of His appearance, but there is also some speciality within that. Mahāprabhu is the combined form of Rādhārāṇī and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. When He comes in that way, the power of His gift in saṅkīrtan is much more than that of a general Yuga-avatār, who comes in other Kali-yugas to spread the yuga-dharma. If normally someone would feel 10 per cent of the power of saṅkīrtan, then they will feel 50 per cent or 100 per cent of Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan's power when it is distributed by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu described the gift which Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu distributed with His supreme power:

anarpita-charīm chirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau  
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam  
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ  
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śachī-nandanah

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 1.4)

*Anarpita-charīm chirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau*: so many forms of the Lord have appeared in this world—Matsya, Kūrma, Vāman, Balarām, Kṛṣṇa, and so on—and so many previous Yuga-avatārs have appeared to fulfil Their purposes. But in

this Kali-yuga, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has given the world the most hidden treasure that has never been given before by anyone at any time anywhere.

*Samarpayitum unnatojvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam:* Mahāprabhu not only gave the greatest mercy to the souls, with the greatest power through saṅkīrtan, He also gave them the highest possible attainment: the supreme process of serving the Lord. *Unnatojvala-rasām* means the most elevated rasa: madhura-rasa. Mahāprabhu gave souls entrance into that most elevated type of love, attachment, and service. The five rasas—śānta, dāsyā, sakhyā, vātsalyā, and madhura—are compared to types of metals: copper, silver, gold, and so on. Gold holds the highest rank, and Mahāprabhu Śrī Gaurāṅgadev, the golden Avatār, who appeared in Rādhārāṇī's golden colour, gave the highest, golden rasa of madhura-rasa.

*Hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ:* throughout His Pastimes the condensed brightness of Mahāprabhu's beautiful golden form appeared more exalted than freshly cut, glimmering gold.

*Sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ Śachī-nandanah:* we pray that the golden Lord Śrī Gaurāṅgadev may reveal His full golden form and golden gift in our hearts.

It was only possible for the Lord to show the exclusive and supreme position of extreme paramour love in madhura-rasa, in His Pastimes as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Only when the Lord appeared with Rādhārāṇī's heart and halo, with Her ati-gūḍha mahābhāva (most confidential ecstatic love) could the glory of madhura-rasa be fully revealed. The other Kali-yuga-avatārs do not appear with Rādhārāṇī's heart and halo; the other Kali-yuga-avatārs distribute Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan, but they do not taste Rādhārāṇī's love for Kṛṣṇa internally. Only in Svayam Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa's special appearance as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu does the Lord engage in those Pastimes. He does that for Himself, for His own interest, but at the same time the souls in this Kali-yuga become most fortunate.



*Śrī Gaurāṅgasundar presides in the Temple of Union in Separation at Śrī Chaitanya Śāraswat Maṭh in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, beside the embodiment of service in perfection, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.*

## *Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's glory*

We can truly understand the identity of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is ever-playful in Vṛndāvan with His flute and the gopas and gopīs, through the appearance of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

sarvādbhuta-chamatkāra-līlā-kallola-vāridhiḥ  
atulya-madhura-prema-maṇḍita-priya-maṇḍalaḥ  
tri-jagan-mānasākarsī-muralī-kala-kūjitaḥ  
asamānordhva-rūpa-śrī-vismāpita-charācharaḥ

*(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 23.82–83)*

“Kṛṣṇa’s divine Pastimes astonish everyone, His mādhyura-līlā is supreme, His flute melts everyone’s heart, and His divine form’s beauty is incomparable.”

These are the most exalted glories of Kṛṣṇa’s Vṛndāvan-līlā. Everyone is astonished by Kṛṣṇa: Nārāyaṇ, Baladev, and even Kṛṣṇa Himself. That is why Kṛṣṇa-līlā is supreme. Kṛṣṇa Himself is enchanted by His own Pastimes, and He proved this by appearing as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s appearance also shows Rādhārāṇī’s supreme position. When Kṛṣṇa wanted to appear to taste Himself fully, He did so by taking Rādhārāṇī’s heart. We can understand through Kṛṣṇa’s choice that Rādhārāṇī must have the topmost devotion for Kṛṣṇa. Beyond this we can also understand that Her devotion makes Her position even higher than Kṛṣṇa’s because He desired to taste Her mood.

Śrīla Svarūp Dāmodar has described these confidential aspects of Mahāprabhu’s appearance:

śrī-rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā kīḍṛśo vānayaivā-  
svādyo yenādbhuta-madhurimā kīḍṛśo vā madīyaḥ  
saukhyaṁ chāsya mad-anubhavataḥ kīḍṛśaṁ veti lobhāt  
tad-bhāvāḍhyaḥ samajani śachī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ

*(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 1.6)*

“When Kṛṣṇa wanted to know how deeply Kṛṣṇa-prema is present within Rādhārāṇī’s heart, how much She tastes Him, how



She serves Him, how She feels separation from Him—when Kṛṣṇa wanted to know everything in this way—He appeared from the ocean of Mother Śachī Devī’s womb as *Harīndu*: the golden moon Śrī Gaurāṅga. With the stolen heart and halo of Rādhārāṇī Kṛṣṇa engaged in tasting Rādhārāṇī’s ecstasy (mahābhāva).”

When the Sweet Absolute wanted to taste His own super-sweetness, His own loving mood, and the supreme love expanded from Goloka Vṛndāvan, He manifested in the form of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. This is the only way Kṛṣṇa could taste Himself fully. Rādhārāṇī has the highest mood of devotion, and without Her mood He could not taste Himself fully.

### *Loving affairs*

If we want to try to understand the supreme position of Rādhārāṇī’s devotional mood, which Mahāprabhu appeared to taste, then we must understand something about the loving affairs of Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa lived together in Their youth in Vṛndāvan, enjoying the play of Their intimate love. Eventually Kṛṣṇa, externally, left to protect Vṛndāvan and fulfil His mission as the Yuga-avatār. For Rādhārāṇī, both Kṛṣṇa’s Vṛndāvan-līlā and His Mathurā-līlā—His līlā outside of Vṛndāvan—are filled with mahābhāva, supreme ecstasy.

After Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvan, Rādhārāṇī felt unlimited separation from Him. During Her separation from Kṛṣṇa the depths of Her ecstatic love were revealed. And Kṛṣṇa, wanting to know the depth of the love for Him which She felt in separation, appeared as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Rādhārāṇī felt many different types of separation from Kṛṣṇa, and those moods have been expressed by different Vaiṣṇava poets. Śrīla Bilvamaṅgal Ṭhākura wrote,

tvach-chhaisavaṁ tri-bhuvanādbhutam ity avehi  
mach-chāpalam cha tava vā mama vādhigamyam

O Flute Player, You know that  
 Your youth astonishes the three  
 worlds, and both You and  
 I know of My anxiousness  
 (because of it). What can I do,  
 O Flute Player, to fully  
 behold Your beautiful lotus face  
 again in solitude?

**tat kiṁ karomi viralaṁ muralī-vilāsi  
 mugdhaṁ mukhāmbujam udīkṣitum īkṣaṇābhyāṁ**

(Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta: 32)

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī translated into Bengali  
 this verse from *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* which expresses Rādhārāṇī's  
 feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa:

tomāra mādhurī-bala,                      tāte mora chāpala,  
 ei dui, tumi āmi jāni  
 kāhā karō kāhā yān,                      kāhā gele tomā pān,  
 tāhā more kaha ta' āpani

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 2.62)

“The attractive power of Your sweetness, the wonder of Your  
 Pastimes, and Your flute-playing in Your youth are impossible  
 to imagine. How much My activity mixed with Your activity  
 in Our youth is known only to You and somewhat to Me. Only  
 You and I know how We played together during Our youth.  
 No one else can understand this. What right or wrong We have  
 done, what good or bad We have done in Our youth, that even  
 We cannot understand. But it has happened. We did not know  
 then how I became attracted to You and how You became at-  
 tracted to Me. Now those days have passed, and with the prop-  
 erty of Our relationship in My heart, I am feeling separation  
 from You which is too painful for Me. What shall I do now?”

Rādhārāṇī's deepest mood of separation from Kṛṣṇa is called  
*vipralambha*: union in separation. We cannot express this type  
 of separation. We do not know how to express this type of sep-  
 aration, and our language will never be sufficient to express it.  
 But we can express something that we have heard from Śrīla  
 Guru Mahārāj.

Within the deepest friendship, the deepest relationship in  
 madhura-rasa with Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī felt separation from Kṛṣṇa  
 to be like a fire-bed. *Vipralambha* means the most extreme mood  
 of separation. After Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvan Dhām, Rādhārāṇī  
 tasted that most extreme sentiment: union in separation.

sthāvara-jaṅgama dekhe, nā dekhe tāra mūrti  
sarvatra haya tāra iṣṭa-deva-sphūrti

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.274)

In the mood of vipralambha, when Rādhārāṇī was separate from Kṛṣṇa, She would see Kṛṣṇa in front of Her, all around Her—everywhere—and try to embrace Him.

kṛṣṇa-mayī—kṛṣṇa yāra bhitare bāhire  
yāhā yāhā netra paḍe tāhā kṛṣṇa sphure

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 4.85)

Everywhere Rādhārāṇī would see Kṛṣṇa with Her. When She would go for a walk She would see Kṛṣṇa all around Her, and everywhere She would try to embrace Him. She would be separate from Kṛṣṇa but feel filled with Kṛṣṇa's presence. From moment to moment She would feel Kṛṣṇa's presence and then feel separate from Him. Every day, all the time, union with Kṛṣṇa would come to Her and then leave Her. Lastly, She would think Kṛṣṇa was only a dream, feel hopeless, and show Herself in the most helpless way. Rādhārāṇī's love for Kṛṣṇa is most rare and exists only in Goloka Vṛndāvan. Her prema is known as *ati-gūḍha mahābhāva*, the most confidential form of ecstatic love.

### *The extremes of separation*

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's most extreme mood of vipralambha is expressed in this verse,

ayi dīna-dayārdra-nātha he  
mathurā-nātha kadāvalokyase  
hṛdayaṁ tvad-aloka-kātaram  
dayita bhrāmyati kiṁ karomy aham

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 4.197)

Her mood here is like someone who was extremely wealthy but has lost all of Her wealth and now has no property at all. *Ayi Dīna-dayārdra-nātha he*: She cannot feel Her own property and calls out to Kṛṣṇa as though She is very, very poor.

*O Lord whose heart is melted  
with mercy for the poor! O Lord  
of Mathurā! When shall I see  
You again? In separation from You,  
My broken heart trembles.  
O Beloved! What shall I do now?*

devī kṛṣṇa-mayī proktā rādhikā para-devatā  
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva-kāntiḥ sammohinī parā

(Bṛhad-Gautamīya-tantra)

Rādhārāṇī is the supreme proprietor of everything—love, beauty, charm, attachment, wealth, and so on—but in separation from Kṛṣṇa She feels She has nothing. She cannot feel Her own wealth because of the intensity of Her feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa. She gives up everything and expresses Her feelings to Kṛṣṇa: “You are My dearmost, and I cannot tolerate Your separation. But I cannot say that fully because I am not getting any hope from You. My dear friend, You have not given Me the wealth of any hope. *Ayi Dīna-dayārḍra-nātha*: You are merciful to those who are very poor. Can’t You see Me in front of You? I am very, very poor!

“O Mathurānāth, before You were Vṛndāvanēśvar [the Lord of Vṛndāvan]. You were Rāseśvar [the enjoyer of the rāsa dance]. You were Rādhā Ramaṇ [He who pleases Rādhā]. You filled My heart with joy in Our intimate relationship. You were fully present in Your Vṛndāvan-līlā with Myself and all the Vraja-gopīs. But now You have left and become the king of Mathurā Maṇḍal. Now You are Mathurānāth, the Lord of Mathurā. You are no longer Vṛndāvannāth, the Lord of Vṛndāvan. What can I say? *Kadāvalokyase*: I want to see You. At least I want to see You. *Hṛdayaṇi Tvad-aloka-kātaram*: not seeing You has given so much pain to Me, to My heart. *Dayita bhrāmyati kim karomy Aham*: what shall I do now? I do not know. I feel there is nothing I can do, but I also cannot tolerate Your separation. Feeling such extreme separation from You, I cannot leave My body, but I also cannot stay within My body.” This verse is the heart-expression of Rādhārāṇī.

mahābhāva-svarūpā śrī-rādhā-ṭhākuraṇī  
sarva-guṇa-khani kṛṣṇa-kāntā-śiromaṇi

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 4.69)

“Rādhārāṇī is Mahābhāva Herself, the supreme servitor of Kṛṣṇa.”

Who can express what is in Her heart? Who can feel and express Rādhārāṇī's deepest, hopeless mood of separation?

ei śloka kahiyāchhena rādhā-ṭhākuraṇī  
tāra kṛpāya sphuriyāchhe mādhavendra-vāṇī

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 4.194)

Only She Herself could reveal the full depth of Her separation from Kṛṣṇa. By Her grace only, Her feelings manifested in this world through the heart of Mādhavendra Purī. Mādhavendra Purī tasted Rādhārāṇī's ecstatic mood of separation through this verse, *ayi Dīna-dayārdra-nātha he*, as he departed from this world.

śeṣa-kāle ei śloka paṭhite paṭhite  
siddhi-prāpti haila purīra ślokera sahite

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 4.196)

When Mādhavendra Purī was leaving his body he constantly recited this verse and expressed its meaning. Later, Mahāprabhu Śrī Chaitanyadev tasted Rādhārāṇī's mood of devotion through this verse of Mādhavendra Purī. In *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* it is described that when Mahāprabhu visited the Temple of Gopīnāth in Remuna He was overcome with the mood of vipralambha expressed in this verse. He recited this verse only once or twice and then was unable to speak any further.

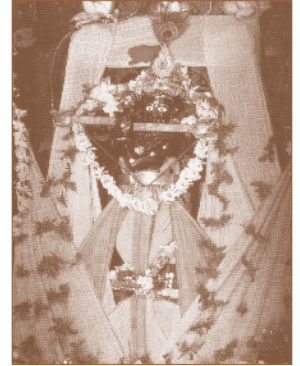
'ayi dīna, ayi dīna' bale bāra-bāra  
kaṅṭhe nā niḥsare vāṇī, netre aśru-dhāra

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 4.201)

He could only say, "Ayi dīna! Ayi dīna! I am so poor! I have nothing!" Over and over again this was all He could say. Crying in this mood of vipralambha, He fainted and fell to the floor of Gopīnāth's Temple.

kibā gaurachandra ihā kare āsvādana  
ihā āsvādite āra nāhi chauṭha-jana

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 4.195)



*Kṣīra-chora Gopīnāth, at whose lotus feet Mādhavendra Purī tasted Rādhārāṇī's feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa.*

“Mahāprabhu tasted the meaning of this verse and in that way opened the door of Kṛṣṇa-prema. No fourth man in this mundane world has tasted this verse like that. Only Rādhārāṇī, Mādhavendra Purī, and Mahāprabhu Śrī Chaitanyadev have tasted the meaning.”

This verse and the description of its manifestation in this world is explained by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī in his *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, so we can also say that Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī has given us this verse. He tells us that no one else can understand this verse’s meaning. He means that the deepest meanings of this verse cannot be opened by anyone. But Kavirāj Goswāmī himself opened a door to this verse for us through his *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. He did not open every door; He opened one door. Through that he gave some nourishment to others. There are many other doors to this verse, and he said, “Now I will not say anything more. What will be will be.” So we can say that he knows the meaning of the verse perfectly and that he is the fourth man who can taste it because he knows and is telling us that no one else can taste its meaning.

We will also say though that by the grace of Rādhārāṇī, Mādhavendra Purī, Kavirāj Goswāmī, and our Guru Mahārāj, we can feel something of this verse’s meaning. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was very much intoxicated with this verse and many times we heard from him his heart’s expression of this verse. By the grace of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj we know something of what is inside this verse. But what I have explained here about this verse is, no doubt, external. It only follows the language of the verse and is an explanation of this verse’s external meaning.

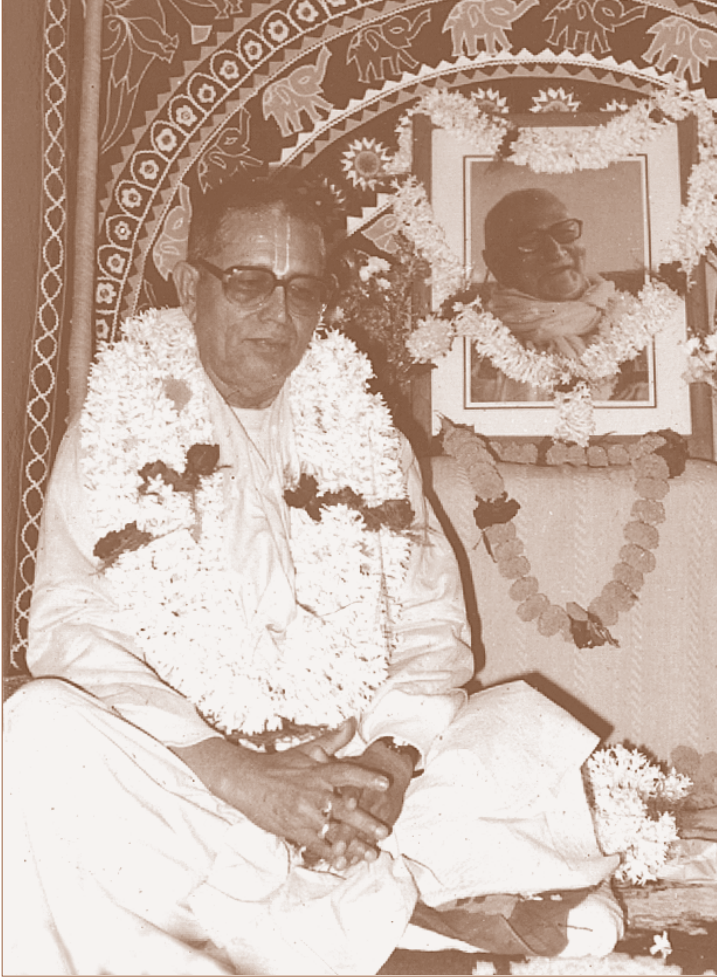
kṛṣṇa-lilā amṛta-sāra,  
tāra śata śata dhāra,  
daśa-dike vahe yāhā haite  
se chaitanya-lilā haya,  
sarovara akṣaya,  
mano-hamśa charāha’ tāhāte

(Cc: Madhya, 25.271)

“May the swan of your heart  
play in the inexhaustible  
reservoir of Śrī Chaitanya’s  
Pastimes, from which  
hundreds of streams of the  
ultimate nectar of  
Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes flow in all  
directions.”

### *Rādhārāṇī’s love and Kṛṣṇa’s desire*

We can understand that Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s Pastimes come as the next edition of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s eternal Pastimes. Kṛṣṇa wanted to taste the depth of Rādhārāṇī’s love and feelings of separation from Him; He wanted to taste His own beauty and love through Rādhārāṇī’s supreme devotional



mood. He Himself took Rādhārāṇī's heart and halo to appear in the form of Mahāprabhu, merged into His Kali-yuga-avatār form, and descended to the material world with His associates, abode, and so on. Śrīla Svarūp Dāmodar has explained this clearly for us:

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād  
 ekātmānāv api bhuvī purā deha-bhedam gatau tau  
 chaitanyākhyam prakāṣam adhunā tad-dvayam chaikyam āptam  
 rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 1.5)

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself, but He has now become the divine form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa combined to taste Rādhārāṇī's Kṛṣṇa-prema. Rādhārāṇī and Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu are actually nondifferent. Mahāprabhu appeared to taste the divine ecstasy of Kṛṣṇa-prema in the way that Rādhārāṇī tastes it and to see the way She gives Kṛṣṇa super joy and ecstasy through Her love, affection, charm, beauty, and so on. That is the hidden purpose of Kṛṣṇa's appearance as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.



## CHAPTER TWENTY

### *The Finest Conception*

When you are conscious, you want to eat something, you want to feel something, you want to do something, you want to enjoy something. You want a life in which everything is palatable and beautiful. In your room you choose your lights, your windows, different kinds of decorations, and so on. You make everything the way you like it. Your very nature shows that you want a beautiful life.

Where does beauty exist? How can we find beauty? There is a nice story in the Purāṇas about Mother Lakṣmī Devī's owl-carrier which explains this. Once, Mother Lakṣmī Devī tested her owl by giving her a garland of pearls and saying, "Give this garland to whomever you think is most beautiful. Go out and search. When you find someone who appears most beautiful to you, give them this garland."

The owl went out and searched all over the whole world for anyone, any animal, human or thing, who had completely attractive beauty. Everywhere she went, she could always find some deficiency. She saw so many persons who were beautiful but she could always find some deficiency in them. Finally she became thirsty and returned to her home. When she saw her

child, she immediately felt, “Oh! So beautiful!” and gave the pearl garland to her child. Later Mother Lakṣmī Devī asked, “What happened in your search?” The owl replied, “I went around the whole world but I did not see anyone who was perfectly beautiful. Finally I became thirsty and went to my house. There I saw that my own child was *so* beautiful! I gave the garland to her.”

### *Vision of love*

So, where is beauty? Beauty is in the heart. We see beauty through the love and affection in our heart. If someone wants to dissect everything then everything will appear ugly to them. Sometimes people say, “That person has a beautiful face.” Where is the beauty of that person’s face? If you perform a dissection in a laboratory will you find the beauty of that person’s face? No. You will find blood, tissue, DNA, and so on.

You will never find beauty if you search for it externally. Beauty exists within our consciousness. When we understand this then everything around us will become auspicious and beautiful to us through the love and affection we hold in our hearts.

*I serve the inconceivable,  
original Lord, Śyāmasundar  
Govinda, whom the sādhus  
always see within their hearts  
through eyes of devotion  
tinged with the salve of love.*

**premāñjana-chchhurita-bhakti-vilochanena  
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti  
yaṁ śyāmasundaram achintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ  
govindam ādi puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi**

*(Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā: 5.38)*

Nothing will feel beautiful to you if you do not have love and affection (prema) within your heart. When your heart’s eyes are decorated with love and affection then everything in front of you appears very beautiful. The vision necessary to see universal beauty comes to us through devotion (bhakti).

Many times Śrīla Guru Mahārāj explained, “Beauty is controlling everything.” His expression, “Search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Reality the Beautiful” means that beauty is controlling everything.

How does beauty come to us? Through love and affection for our Lord. We actually want to play and stay with our Lord in a beautiful place filled with beautiful paraphernalia and surrounded by a beautiful atmosphere. The first condition for this is devotion, and devotion will come through dedication. So everything—love, affection, beauty, devotion, dedication—is related and exists within the one chamber of our hearts.

**sādhyaṁ tat-prītim evety upadiśati janān gaura-chandraḥ svayaṁ saḥ**

*(Daśa-mūla-tattva-niryāsa)*

*Sādhya* means what you want, your destination, your ultimate hankering. Mahāprabhu taught us, *sādhyaṁ tat-prītim*: our *sādhya* is love for the Lord, as well as love for ourselves. When you have love for the Lord, love automatically returns to you.

**tach chātmane prati-mukhasya yathā mukha-śrīḥ**

*(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 7.9.11)*

If you put on tilak, in the mirror you will see that your face is beautifully decorated with tilak. Everything you give to your Lord returns to you a thousand times more beautiful. That is prīti, Kṛṣṇa-prema, our supreme aspiration, and Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has given that consciousness to us.

### ***Full nourishment***

The practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is our life, and it is necessary to practise that in a fair and perfect way. In our practising life, faith is the basis and love is our food. If our love for Kṛṣṇa increases then everything increases. If we realise what we have received from our Gurudev—pure consciousness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa—then in everything—every song, every verse, every advice, every thought—we will feel, “My existence is present there.”

All Kṛṣṇa conscious expressions have a very sweet nature.

**tad eva ramyaṁ ruchiraṁ navam navam**

**tad eva śāśvan manaso mahotsavam**

tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇam nṛṇām  
yad uttamaḥśloka-yaśo 'nugīyate

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 12.12.50)

*Tad eva ramyam*: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is very tasteful, beautiful, and ecstatic. *Ruchiram navam navam*: it can reveal new light and inspiration at every moment. As someone hears about Kṛṣṇa consciousness he will not be satisfied by hearing only a little bit of discussion; he will want to hear more and more. *Tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam*: Kṛṣṇa consciousness always gives everyone's heart the transcendental feeling of a great festival, just as we always happily expect there will be many varieties of very palatable mahāprasādam on a festival day. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is like a generator: it may be a little difficult to start, but once it is going and giving power it will run happily and give more and more light to everyone's heart. When Kṛṣṇa consciousness once enters the heart and receives good nourishment there, it will sprout, grow happily, and become strong enough to bind an elephant. Parīkṣit Mahārāj said,

yach-chhṛṇvatām rasa-jñānām  
svādu svādu pade pade

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 1.1.19)

“If you discuss Kṛṣṇa consciousness as much as possible at every moment, very tasteful nectar will come to you again and again and take on newer and newer forms.”

Vedavyās also said,

nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalaṁ  
śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṁyutam  
pibata bhāgavataṁ rasam ālayaṁ  
muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāḥ

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 1.1.3)

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is like a very sweet ripened fruit that has neither skin nor a seed. As you taste it, at every moment it gives you more and more ecstatic feelings and strength.

bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir  
anyatra chaiṣa trika eka-kālaḥ  
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus  
tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣud-apāyo 'nu-ghāsam

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 11.2.42)

How will you know whether you have Kṛṣṇa consciousness or not? You will feel it just as a hungry person feels the effects of taking prasādam: with every mouthful that prasādam gives good taste, good nourishment, and removes hunger. When Kṛṣṇa consciousness is revealed in our hearts, our devotional feelings and activity will increase, we will feel the joy and happiness of a connection with Kṛṣṇa in our hearts, and we will experience detachment from mundane attractions, the end of our hunger for material things.

### *Hankering for Kṛṣṇa-prema*

Kṛṣṇa consciousness has no end. The Upaniṣads say,

om pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam  
idaṁ pūrṇāt pūrṇam udachyate  
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya  
pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate

(Bṛhad-āraṇyaka-upaniṣad: 5.1.1)

“Kṛṣṇa consciousness is infinite, and a sincere seeker will really get that type of ecstasy—infinite ecstasy—through Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

As Kṛṣṇa consciousness reveals itself more and more in our hearts we may even become mad. What did Mahāprabhu Himself say?

na prema-gandho 'sti darāpi me harau  
krandāmi saubhāgya-bharam prakāśitum  
vaṁśī-vilāsy-ānana-lokanam vinā  
bibharmi yat prāṇa-pataṅgakān vṛthā

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 2.45)

“Really, I have no love for Kṛṣṇa. If I did then how could I be alive? I am living without Kṛṣṇa, so how can I say I have love for Kṛṣṇa?”

Mahāprabhu is full of Kṛṣṇa-prema, but His heart’s expression is, “*Na prema-gandho ’sti darāpi Me Harau*: I do not have even a little bit of hankering for Kṛṣṇa.”

Actually, Mahāprabhu was hankering for Kṛṣṇa-prema so much, and He showed us the degree of hankering that is necessary for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He showed us that if we clearly and perfectly, without any haziness, realise that we need Kṛṣṇa-prema, then even Kṛṣṇa will not be able to check us. We will get it. If I am very disturbed by the mundane environment and I sincerely pray to Kṛṣṇa, “Please give me Kṛṣṇa-prema”, then Kṛṣṇa must give that to me.

Kṛṣṇa knows everything, and Kṛṣṇa understands everything. Kṛṣṇa is everywhere, and His divine play as the Sweet Absolute never stops. Even if Kṛṣṇa does not want to give Kṛṣṇa-prema to us, His devotees will (*patitānām pāvanebhyo*). Sometimes Kṛṣṇa likes to hide, but His devotees are always merciful. If they see anyone drowning they will rescue him. The devotees will always give full support to a hankering soul.

Even if Kṛṣṇa ousts me from His jurisdiction, I still have hope if I have hankering for the service of Kṛṣṇa under the affectionate guidance of His devotees. That is my life experience; it is not only a theory. I have seen many things in my life, and through that I am sure that even if Kṛṣṇa wants to oust me, He will not be able to if I have the affection of His devotees. So only self-realisation is necessary: “Do I want Kṛṣṇa-prema or not?”

*Purchase ecstatic devotion  
to Kṛṣṇa wherever it is available!  
The only price is hankering.  
It is not attainable by acting  
piously (practising vidhi-bhakti)  
for ten million lifetimes.*

**kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ  
krīyatām yadi kuto ’pi labhyate  
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalaṁ  
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate**  
(*Padyāvalī: 14*)

We need transcendental ecstasy. We do not want sadness, sorrow, or inauspiciousness. We always need the opposite. We need something eternal, glorious, and beautiful. There is only one way to get that: hankering. Hankering gives us real property in our spiritual life.

If I have hankering for Kṛṣṇa-prema then I must search, “Where is Kṛṣṇa-prema?” It is very rare, but if I find anyone who has Kṛṣṇa-prema in their heart, then I must try to get his association. Through that person I can understand what Kṛṣṇa-prema is, how much I need it, how much I will be satisfied by it, and so on. I will be able to understand everything through the sādhu who has Kṛṣṇa-prema in his heart.

All the scriptures always praise the sādhus. A sādhu is chaste, honest, and dedicated to the Lord with extreme love and affection. If we have a connection with a sādhu, with our Guru, and we are conscious about that, then we can receive prema, love and affection, from him on the conscious level. Love and affection are transmitted from consciousness to consciousness, from heart to heart.

The presence of love within the sādhu’s consciousness can be transmitted to you and transform your consciousness. Hankering is our first necessity. Without hankering we will not find that sādhu or Kṛṣṇa-prema. Many frustrated persons are searching in the wrong way. Our search should be filled with happiness, peace, and beauty. In that way we will seek, “Is it here or there?” If we are frustrated in one place then we must look in another place, and wherever we can find the devotional mood of Kṛṣṇa-prema we must immediately buy it with our hankering. Hankering can give us everything. But *krīyatām* does not mean, “Try to buy it.” *Krīyatām* means, “Buy it!” The price of Kṛṣṇa-prema is hankering. Without hankering, without intense desire, we will never get Kṛṣṇa-prema, even if we have an ocean of sukṛti. The only qualification and means is hankering, and without that we will not get anything.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī  
 Ṭhākura leading devotees  
 through the streets of Kolkata  
 towards the Bag Bazaar  
 Gauḍīya Maṭh (pictured below).



### *Intoxicated with mundane activity*

During the Ratha Yātrā Mahāprabhu prayed to Lord Jagannāth:

nāhaṁ vipro na cha nara-patir nāpi vaiśya na śūdro  
 nāhaṁ varṇī na cha gṛha-patir no vanastho yatir vā  
 kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrnāmṛtābdher  
 gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 13.80)

“We are not brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, or śūdras. We are not sannyāsīs, vānaprasthas, gṛhasthas, or brahmachārīs. Our identity is not mundane. We are eternal servants of the servants of the servants of Reality the Beautiful Śrī Kṛṣṇa. *Gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*: we are the servants of the servants of the servant of the cowherd boy of Vṛndāvan who is the protector, prestige, and everything of the gopīs. That Kṛṣṇa is our enjoyer, and all our service is meant to supply enjoyment to Him.”

This is the conception of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and through His conception we are approaching Guru-Vaiṣṇava with strong faith and hankering to be engaged in service. How





we can properly serve the servants of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa according to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's conception in our lives has been revealed by Prabhupād Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur.

Our Param Gurudev, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur, composed a Bengali song during the inauguration festival of the Bag Bazaar Gauḍīya Maṭh in Kolkata. Before that ashram opened Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur and his disciples stayed in a rented house in Ultadanga. One gentleman, Jagabandhu Prabhu, donated three lakhs of rupees to Prabhupād so that he could establish the Kolkata headquarters of his Mission. Today that would equal a donation of at least one crore of rupees. All of Prabhupād's disciples were very happy and enjoyed their new ashram very much. All the activities of an ashram externally look like material activities (*viṣaya*). Internally they are the service of Guru and Gaurāṅga, but externally they look like material activities: eating, sleeping, singing, dancing, and so on (*viṣaya-raṅga*).

When the festival was held for the inauguration of the new ashram a Ratha Yātrā style procession brought the Deities Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvikā Giridhārī from Ultadanga to Bag Bazaar. At that time Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur composed this line explaining the activities of his Mission:

pūjala rāga-pātha gaurava-bhaṅge  
mātala sādhu-jana viṣaya-raṅge

Here Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur explains that the *sādhu-jana*, the devotees, all appear very intoxicated with mundane activity (*viṣaya-raṅge*), but their activities are actually not mundane at all: they are regulated worship of the higher path of *rāga-mārg*, the path of loving service to the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur gave everyone the divine knowledge that we should not emotionally jump into the external activities of the residents of Vṛndāvan. Rather, we should respect and honour their service as above us and pray for their mercy. If we try to jump from our egoistic mountain to the highest



Śrīmad Jagabandhu Bhakti Rañjan



plane of divine līlā we will fall down very close to where we started. It is not the proper procedure to try to enter the higher plane from our existing position. We need to transform ourselves and be empowered by the residents of that higher plane before we can enter there.

Hanumānjī can jump from mountain to mountain because He acts solely for service of His Lord, Rāmachandra. We need to have power like him, that is, a pure serving mood, before we can jump from our position into the divine Pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. *Pūjala rāga-pātha gaurava-bhaṅge*: until we are qualified with a pure serving mood we will honour the Divine Couple's Sweet Absolute Pastimes from a respectful distance.

## *The posture of Mahāprabhu's saṅkīrtan*

When I wanted to make a diorama expressing Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's siddhānta on the front of our Maṭh in Nabadwīp, I used this verse. However I changed one of the lines in the verse with the permission of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. Through Śrīla Guru Mahārāj we can understand the desire of Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and for preaching purposes I changed this verse to make it more understandable to general people. I engraved these two lines on our naṭ mandir:

mātala hari-jana kīrtana-raṅge  
pūjala rāga-pātha gaurava-bhaṅge

Later, I also posted this expression on the wall of my veranda so I could see it every day. Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's phrase *viṣaya-raṅge* is very deep. To say that work and activity which may appear completely material are actually completely transcendental is not easy for the public to understand. I wanted to show in the diorama that it is through Mahāprabhu's saṅkīrtan that we must worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Kali-yuga. For that reason I used the phrase *mātala Hari-jana kīrtana-raṅge* instead. It means that devotees are intoxicated with the practice of Mahāprabhu's saṅkīrtan. They are hearing and chanting the Holy Name and the glories of Mahāprabhu, and through that they are serving and satisfying the Divine Couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, whose nondifferent form is Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. In the formal posture (*gaurava-bhaṅge*) of Mahāprabhu's saṅkīrtan the devotees are offering their worship to Rādhā-Govinda and Their intimate servitors.

At present we do not live in the domain of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and we are not trying to forcefully enter that abode. Rather we are trying to honour that abode through our life in Kali-yuga under the proper shelter of the practice of saṅkīrtan at the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. So we are proceeding systematically towards the goal of our lives, the service of Rādhā-Govinda, under the guidance of Their intimate associates headed by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu.

*Intoxicated with the joy of saṅkīrtan, the surrendered souls worship rāga-mārg from within the posture of vidhi-mārg.*



*Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara  
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj's Bhajan  
Dhām at Śrī Chaitanya  
Sāraswat Maṭh, Nabadwīp.*

## *Service in Gupta Govardhan*

Once when we were painting Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's building in Nabadwīp I decided to put a verse on the front of the building above his veranda.

śrī-rādhāra bhāve yini suvarṇa varaṇa  
sāṅgopāṅge navadvīpe yāra saṅkīrtana  
kalite upāsya sei kṛṣṇa gaurahari  
navadhā bhaktite tāre upāsana kari

*(Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākura)*

[“Through the nine-fold practice of devotion I worship Kṛṣṇa's golden Avatār in Kali-yuga, Gaurahari, who performs saṅkīrtana in the mood of Śrī Rādhā with His associates in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām.”]

When I had this verse written on the front of his building Śrīla Guru Mahārāj did not say anything. Years later when we were maintaining the building we white-washed all the walls and that verse was painted over. When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj came out onto the roof of the naṭ mandir and saw the wall where the verse had been written he asked me, “Where is that verse? I do not see it.” Then I understood that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj noticed everything and that he was very happy when I put this verse on the front of his building. I felt that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj knew everything I was doing and was always watching over me. Then I had that verse written there again, and still it is there today.

Our Maṭh is located in Gupta Govardhan, Hidden Govardhan, in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. Govardhan is the primary place of rāga-mārg worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

*O Govardhan, the Divine Couple  
liberally enact Their Pastimes  
of maddened love in your caves.  
Please grant me a dwelling beside  
you so I can see Their Pastimes.*

pramada-madana-līlāḥ kandare kandare te  
rachayati nava-yūnor dvandvam asminn amandam  
iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagnakas tad-dvayor me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam

*(Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam: 2)*

Girirāj Govardhan is the highest place in Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's highest līlās happen in the groves around Govardhan Hill. Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Śyāma Kuṇḍa, Govinda Kuṇḍa, Kusum Sarovar, and many, many kuñjas surround Govardhan, and Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's confidential līlās happen at different times and in these places around Govardhan.

Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa enjoy Their intimate Pastimes around Govardhan as all the sakhīs and mañjarīs busily serve Them day and night. Chiefly Lalitā Devī organises the service of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and she gives the highest service to the group of Rūpa Mañjarī. *Gokula-pateḥ premāmṛtāplāvanāt*: in this way the nectar of Kṛṣṇa-prema overflows all around Govardhan Hill.

We presented our diorama on the front of our Maṭh to show everyone that through the saṅkīrtan of Mahāprabhu we can properly honour the most worshipping plane of rāga-mārg service of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa—Govardhan—and that we will automatically enter there when we become qualified through our sincere practice of saṅkīrtan. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj accepted all of my ideas. In that way we decorated the front of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh and adjusted Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura's expression.

### *The shelter of the sakhīs*

If you want entrance into Kṛṣṇa-līlā's special chamber of paramour love then you must go to the sakhīs, Rādhārāṇī's associates. All rights are reserved by the sakhīs in those Pastimes. You must go to the sakhīs, surrender to them, and get a visa from them to enter those Pastimes. If the sakhīs do not give you a visa then no one—neither Kṛṣṇa, nor Lord Śiva, nor anyone—can give you entrance into the Pastimes of paramour love. Lakṣmī Devī Herself was denied a visa. All rights are reserved by the sakhīs. In *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* it is written,

sakhī vinā ei līlā puṣṭa nāhi haya  
sakhī līlā vistāriyā, sakhī āsvādaya

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 8.203*)



*Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh,  
in Śrī Gupta Govardhan of  
Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām.*

“The sakhīs provide all the nourishment necessary for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes of paramour love. The sakhīs personally taste these Pastimes, and only they have the power to distribute them. No one else has the right to taste them, and without the sakhīs’ consent no one gets entrance into them.”

Rādhārāṇī is the leader of all the groups of sakhīs. She has eight principle sakhīs: Lalitā, Viśākhā, Chitra, Champakalatikā, Tuṅga Vidyā, Indulekhā, Sudevī, and Raṅga Devikā. They are the group leaders of all the servitors of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The mañjarīs, the younger sakhīs, serve under the eight primary sakhīs. The mañjarīs are led by Rūpa Mañjarī and her associates: Lavaṅga Mañjarī, Anaṅga Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī, Guṇa Mañjarī, and so on. Rādhārāṇī serves Kṛṣṇa directly while all of Her associates assist Her under the guidance of Lalitā Devī and Rūpa Mañjarī. Rādhārāṇī also sometimes sends Kṛṣṇa to satisfy the sakhīs. The sakhīs do not expect they will associate with Kṛṣṇa alone, but Rādhārāṇī makes many tactful arrangements for them. Rādhārāṇī wants to satisfy Kṛṣṇa and side by side all of Kṛṣṇa’s servitors.

In this way the Pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa go on, and service-entrance into those Pastimes is only available by surrendering to the sakhīs. Without their mercy no one can expect to serve Rādhārāṇī or Kṛṣṇa. The service of Rādhārāṇī is very rare to get, and without the mercy of the sakhīs no one will get it. The sakhīs give power to the mañjarīs, so if anyone can receive the mercy of Rūpa Mañjarī, the leader of the mañjarīs, then they will get full entrance into the service world of Goloka Vṛndāvan.

If we proceed properly we must get the association and mercy of the Divine Couple’s associates, the sakhīs, one day. That is our life’s goal. But before that it is necessary for us to understand the identities of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, and Their associates, as well as our own identity and necessity. We need realisation of these things, and we need to approach that highest plane through the proper channel. If we can approach properly then we reach our life’s goal.

mātala hari-jana kīrtana-raṅge  
pūjala rāga-pātha gaurava-bhaṅge

Our target is the service of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī's associates, but if we think we will get that very easily then we will be cheated. It is first necessary to practise Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan properly and try to attract Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa to appear in our heart by the grace of Their associates.

### *Mature taste and immature imitation*

At present Rādhā-Govinda-līlā is so far from us because we are bound by our material senses and have no control over them. We have a materialistic conception, and through that we fall into the garbage of illusion again and again. A proper practitioner who is qualified to remember Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā under the guidance of his Guru has no attachment to this mundane world. He has no lust, anger, greed, or illusion—nothing. But we are conditioned souls who are polluted by māyā, and we will be cheated even more by māyā if we are not careful and prematurely try to enter into the higher plane of Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvan Pastimes.

So many so-called big personalities and sādhus may preach about Vraja-bhajan, but before the stage of ruchi we are not qualified for that. Ruchi means extreme attachment, affection, and love that is free from anything mundane. Those who have ruchi can think about the Pastimes of Rādhā-Govinda, their position in those Pastimes, the aṣṭa-kāliyā-līlā, and many other things. But if we still have any anarthas [mundane desires], then any practice of that will be imitation. And imitationism, sahajiyāism, takes us to hell.

We have seen many bābājīs singing Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-līlā and crying so much: singing and crying, singing and crying, and finally foaming at the mouth. But simply showing many symptoms of ecstasy is not real Kṛṣṇa-prema. Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur clearly expressed in his song,

ki āra baliba tore mana  
mukhe bala prema prema, vastutaḥ tyajiyā hema  
śūnya-grantha añchale bandhana

(Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru: Upadeśa, 18.1)

“My dirty and naughty mind, what can I say to you? You are always saying, ‘Kṛṣṇa-prema, Kṛṣṇa-prema’, and making an exhibition of the symptoms of Kṛṣṇa-prema, but you actually do not have anything. Your activity is comparable to making a knot in the corner of your cloth to show others that you have a piece of gold there. Inside you have nothing. You think you are carrying a precious golden jewel within you, but actually you have nothing of value. You think your activities are giving you the wealth of Kṛṣṇa-prema but actually they are only deceiving you.”

The ecstasy and nectar of the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvan can only be tasted by liberated souls. We must wait for the stage of *ruchi* to come to us before trying to enter there. We should first make our heart and mind clean and engage in the service of Rādhā-Govinda under the guidance of a real sādhu, who is properly practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the line of exclusive service. Such a sādhu will guide us properly according to our stage of development. If we try to proceed in that way and engage in Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan as it was given by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu for the Kali-yuga, it will be possible for us to receive the purifying mercy of Rādhā-Govinda. We will be fully satisfied with that.

### *The treasurer of our fortune*

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu appeared to show us the path of our life and the glories of Rādhā-Govinda. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s greatest gift to the world and the way that He distributes it have been explained by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

sarvāchintyamaye parātpara-pure goloka-vṛndāvane  
chil-līlā-rasa-raṅginī parivṛtā sā rādhikā śrī-hareḥ



vātsalyādi-rasaiś cha sevita-tanor-mādhurya-sevā-sukhaṁ  
 nityaṁ yatra mudā tanoti hi bhavān tad dhāma-sevā-pradaḥ  
 śrī-gaurānumataṁ svarūpa-viditaṁ rūpāgrajenādṛtaṁ  
 rūpādyaiḥ pariveśitaṁ raghu-gaṇair āsvāditaṁ sevitaṁ  
 jīvādyair abhirakṣitaṁ śuka-śiva-brahmādi-sammānitaṁ  
 śrī-rādhā-pada-sevanāmṛtam aho tad dātum īso bhavān

(Śrīmad Bhakti Vinod Viraha Daśakam: 8–9)

In the highest plane of the inconceivable realm—Goloka Vṛndāvan Dhām—Rādhārāṇī and Her associates serve Kṛṣṇa in the supreme rasa of paramour love. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu appeared to distribute the service of Rādhārāṇī under the guidance of Her associates. Svarūp Dāmodar understood this perfectly. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī, Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī, and Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī wholeheartedly practised this throughout their lives and showed everyone the proper way to approach it. Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī worshipped it, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī distributed it, Śrīla Raghunāth Goswāmī tasted and served it, and Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī protected it. Śukadev Goswāmī, Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā, Devarṣi Nārada, Uddhava and others fold their hands and gave their full respect to it. *Śrī-Rādhā-pada-sevanāmṛtam*: the nectar of the service of Rādhārāṇī’s lotus feet, the highest conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, *aho tad dātum īso bhavān*: the treasurer of that wealth is Gurudev. Only Gurudev has the capacity to distribute that final destination and highest property to the conditioned souls.

The gist of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s expression in these two verses is, “The strength, quality, qualification—everything—necessary to worship Rādhārāṇī’s lotus feet comes through Gurudev.”

Everything we want to know we can understand through our Gurudev. Gurudev’s position is always supreme. Gurudev is the Lord’s best servitor. In the scriptures it is said:

harau ruṣṭe gurus-trātā gurau ruṣṭe na kaśchana

(Āditya-purāṇa)

“If Kṛṣṇa is angry with you, Gurudev can save you, Rādhārāṇī can save you, but if Rādhārāṇī is angry with you, Kṛṣṇa cannot save you.”

Our protection, our environment, our everything, comes to us through Gurudev’s mercy, and through that we will be gracious, fortunate, and exalted practitioners. In that way we will practise to serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the line of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. That is called Kṛṣṇānuśīlanam: serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

We know that Gurudev is nondifferent from Rādhārāṇī. It is written everywhere in the scriptures, but Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur specially and sweetly mentioned, “If I want to see my Gurudev, I shall see that he is the nondifferent form of Rādhārāṇī. I do not know and I do not want to know the position of another person’s Guru. I only know that my Guru is my rescuer, my master, my everything, and if I want to see him more deeply then I see that he is a nondifferent form of Rādhārāṇī.” Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur expressed his vision in this way, and we honour that fully.

Śrīla Bhakti Vinod Ṭhākur, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur, and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj are all deeply attached to the service of Rādhārāṇī. We shall try heart and soul as possible by us to serve them, our Guru-paramparā, and through that telescopic system our service will go directly and perfectly to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. This is the finest and highest conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are so fortunate to be in the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the guidance of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur, who are the dearest associates of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and Rādhārāṇī.



## *Abbreviations*

Bg: *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*  
Brs: *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*  
Bs: *Brahma-saṁhitā*  
Cc: *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*  
Gs: *Śrī Garga-saṁhitā*  
Īu: *Īśopaniṣad*  
Pbc: *Prema-bhakti-chandrikā*  
Pp: *Padma-purāṇa*  
SB: *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*

Subdivision within texts, such as the lilās of *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, have been abbreviated with numbers.

APPENDIX

## *Daśa-Vidha Nāmāparādha*

The Ten Offences to the Holy Name

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

*A poetic Bengali translation of the verses  
listing the offences to the  
Holy Name in the Padma-purāṇa.*

hari-nāma mahāmantra sarva-mantra-sāra  
yādera karuṇā-bale jagate prachāra  
sei nāma-parāyaṇa sādhu, mahājana  
tāhādera nindā nā kariha kadāchana [1]

The Hari-nām mahāmantra is the best of all mantras and is distributed throughout the world by the mercy of the sādhus devoted to the Name. Never criticise such great souls.

vrajendra-nandana kṛṣṇa sarveśvareśvara  
maheśvara ādi tāra sevana-tatpara  
nāma chintāmaṇi kṛṣṇa-chaitanya-svarūpa  
bheda-jñāna nā karibe līlā-guṇa-rūpa [2]

Vrajendra Nandan Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of all Lords. Śiva and all other gods are dedicated to His service. The Name is a wish-fulfilling jewel and a spiritual form of Kṛṣṇa Himself. Do not consider Kṛṣṇa's Name to be distinct from His Form, Qualities, or Pastimes.

“guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana śāstrera pramāṇe  
guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā kare bhāgyavāne”  
se gurute martya-buddhi avajñādi tyaji  
iṣṭa-lābha kara, nirantara nāma bhaji [3]

“The scriptures confirm that Guru is a form of Kṛṣṇa (*SB*: 11.17.27). In the form of Guru, Kṛṣṇa bestows His mercy upon the fortunate.” Give up the conception that Guru is a mortal, and all other types of disrespect, and attain your cherished goal: serving the Name eternally.

śruti, śruti-mātā-saha sātвата purāṇa  
śrī-nāma-charaṇa-padma kare nīrājana  
sei śruti-śāstra yebā karaye nindana  
se aparadhīra saṅga karibe varjana [4]

The Vedas, their mother, Gāyatrī, and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* worship the Holy Name’s lotus feet. Reject the association of any offender who criticises these scriptures.

nāmera mahimā sarva-śāstrete vākhāne  
atistuti, hena kabhu nā bhāviha mane  
agastya, ananta, brahmā, śivādi satata  
ye nāma-mahimā-gāthā saṅkīrtana-rata  
se nāma-mahimā-sindhu ke pāibe pāra?  
atistuti bale yei—sei durāchāra [5]

The Name’s glories are proclaimed in all the scriptures. Never consider such glorification to be exaggerated praise. Agastya, Ananta, Brahmā, Śiva, and so on are always devoted to chanting the Name’s glories. Who can cross the ocean of those glories? Anyone who considers them exaggerated praise is wicked.

kṛṣṇa-nāmāvali nitya golokera dhana  
kalpita, prākṛta, bhāve—aparādhi-jana [6]

Kṛṣṇa’s Names are the eternal wealth of Goloka. Anyone who considers Them imaginary or mundane is an offender.

nāme sarva-pāpa-kṣaya sarva-śāstre kaya  
sārā-dina pāpa kari sei bharasāya—

emata durbuddhi yāra sei aparādhī  
māyā-pravañchita, duḥkha bhūñje niravadhi [7]

All the scriptures declare that the Name destroys all sin. The wicked who sin all day long in expectation of this are offenders. They are deluded by māyā and suffer perpetually.

atulya śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma pūrṇa-rasa-nidhi  
tāra sama nā bhāviha śubha-karma ādi [8]

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's incomparable Name is a brimming reservoir of rasa. Chanting the Name should never be considered equal to pious worldly action (such as adhering to vows, practising renunciation, performing austerities, making sacrificial offerings, and so on).

nāme śraddhā-hina-jana—vidhātā vāñchita  
tāre nāma dāne aparādha suniśchita [9]

Those who have no faith in the Name have been deceived by Providence. To give the Name to them is certainly an offence.

śuniyāo kṛṣṇa-nāma-māhātmya apāra  
ye prīti-rahita, sei narādhama chhāra  
ahaṁtā matatā yāra antare bāhire  
śuddha kṛṣṇa-nāma tāra kabhu nāhi sphure [10]

Those who remain devoid of love for Kṛṣṇa's Name even after hearing His boundless glories are deplorable, fallen souls. The pure Name of Kṛṣṇa never reveals Himself to those who are internally and externally ridden with egotism and possessiveness.

ei daśa aparādha kariyā varjjana  
ye sujana kare harināma saṅkīrtana  
apūrva śrī-kṛṣṇa-prema labhya tāre haya  
nāma-prabhu tāra hṛde nitya vilasaya [11]

Great souls who avoid these ten offences and engage in Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan attain unprecedented Śrī Kṛṣṇa-prema. The Name Himself plays within their hearts eternally.





Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj



## *About the Author*

gurvābhīṣṭa-supūrakam guru-gaṇair āśīṣa-sambhūṣitam  
chintyāchintya-samasta-veda-nipuṇam śrī-rūpa-panthānugam  
govindābhidham ujjjvalam vara-tanuṁ bhakty anvitam sundaram  
vande viśva-guruṁ cha divya-bhagavat-premṇo hi bīja-pradam

“I offer my obeisance unto Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, who perfectly fulfils his Gurudev’s most cherished desires; who is fully adorned with the blessings of his Gurudev’s associates; who is expert in all aspects of Vedic knowledge, both conceivable and inconceivable; who is the pre-eminent follower of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu’s line; whose beautiful, exalted, effulgent form is filled with devotion; who is the Guru of the world; and who distributes the seed of divine love for the Supreme Lord.”

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj made his appearance in this world on 17 December 1929 in the holy land of Śrī Gaura Maṇḍal in a village known as Bamunpara within the Burdwan district of West Bengal, India.

Like the sun rising and inspiring lotuses to bloom, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj appeared in a brāhmaṇ family and filled the land of Śrīman Mahāprabhu with joy. His family’s ancestors were followers of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, and from his boyhood he engaged in the service of his family’s Deities, Śrī Śrī

Rādhā-Gopināth, who were installed by Nityānanda Prabhu's son Vīrachandra Prabhu. At the age of seventeen he met his Divine Master, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

### *Gurvābhīṣṭa-supūrakam*

*He perfectly fulfils his Gurudev's most cherished desires.*

Almost immediately after he arrived, Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj recognised his divine qualities and publicly declared that he would prepare him to be the future Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh.

Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj's mission was to propound the glory of Śrīman Mahāprabhu according to the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu and his followers, led in modern times by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj acted to fulfil this desire of his Gurudev in every possible way. He set up a printing press and published numerous books and magazines filled with the writings of the Rūpānuga sampradāya's Āchāryas. He led tours to the pilgrimage sites all over India that are associated with Sāraswat Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. He established the annual Śrī Nabadvīp Dhām Parikramā festival at Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, which has continued without interruption since 1948. He made the arrangements for the installation of the Maṭh's Deities Śrī Śrī Gāndharvā-Govindasundar and collected the funds needed to construct the domed Temple in which They reside. He travelled to towns and villages both near and far to spread Śrīman Mahāprabhu's Nām-saṅkīrtan-dharma and inspire souls to take shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Guru. The countless endeavours he made in service to his Gurudev cannot be summarised.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj also served Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj intimately as his doctor and confidant. Their relationship was so developed that many have described them as a shining example of the perfect Guru and perfect disciple. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has described himself as being "bound by affection"

to his Gurudev's feet, and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj felt such attachment to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj that at times he could not tolerate his separation for even a few hours.

### *Guru-gaṇair āśīṣa-sambhūṣitam*

*He is fully adorned with the blessings of his Gurudev's associates.*

Over the course of the forty-two years that they lived together, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj had the fortune of serving many of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's godbrothers and observing their loving interactions with Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj.

Leading preachers like Śrīpād Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīpād Bhakti Prajñān Keśava Mahārāj, Śrīpād Bhakti Vichār Jājāvar Mahārāj, Śrīpād Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāj, and Śrīpād Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāj would come to Śrī Chaitanya Sārasvat Maṭh to honour Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, and while there would always affectionately encourage Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's sister, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupād's sister Bhāvanī Didi, and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's sister Ramā Didi, and other noble ladies, also blessed Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj during his youth.

During the late '40s and early '50s Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupād ran a preaching centre on behalf of Śrī Chaitanya Sārasvat Maṭh in Kolkata. As a young brahmachārī, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj would stay with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj for a few months each year. Daily, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj would teach him verses from *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, and he would cook for Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. During this time Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj also trained him as a preacher by engaging him as the first distributor of *Back to Godhead* magazine. When Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj started Śrī Chaitanya Sārasvat Maṭh's *Śrī Gauḍīya Darśana* magazine, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj wrote a letter of appreciation for his service: "[Your writing] is not only very amusing but instructive. ... In time you can become a great transcendental humourist in the art of journalism. You have

complete mercy from your Divine Master and you can depend on his blessings for your future improvement. I sincerely wish you all success. Undoubtedly you are now in the highest order of varṇāśram-dharma, but we cannot forget that you belong to the category of our affectionate sons. We cannot forget all such filial love for you, and when we see that you are improving in all respects it gladdens our heart.”

### *Chintyāchintya-samasta-veda-nipuṇam*

*He is expert in all aspects of Vedic knowledge, both conceivable and inconceivable.*

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj’s command of the revealed scriptures amazed everyone who met him. From his childhood he had a remarkable memory, and when he came to the Maṭh he quickly memorised hundreds of songs and thousands of verses on his Gurudev’s order. From that time until his final days he could readily recite *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, large portions of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and countless verses from other texts. Within two or three years of joining he could lecture with more authority than many of his Guru’s godbrothers. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj’s capacity to recount and explain the scriptures pleased Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj so much that when Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was a brahmachārī of only two years, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj gave him the title ‘Vidyā Rañjan’ [one whose knowledge delights others].

Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj also later stated in his last will and testament: “Above all, he [Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj] is well-known and unanimously acclaimed as being firmly established in the philosophy of the perfect axiomatic truth of bhakti as propounded by both myself as well as by my Divine Master.”

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj wrote numerous poems and articles in Sanskrit and Bengali, which he published in the magazine he ran on behalf of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, *Śrī Gauḍīya Darśan*. His writings blend siddhānta with wit, sweetness, and humour to melt both the heart and mind. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj’s

godbrothers sometimes mistook his compositions for those of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, which they revered as nondifferent from Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu's writings.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's expertise also went beyond scriptural theory; he was adept at leadership, organisation, fundraising, construction, cow care, gardening, and cooking. As the Maṭh's manager, he excelled at all services by virtue of his extraordinary intelligence and could expertly put the teachings of the scriptures in practice according to time, place, and circumstance.

### ***Śrī-Rūpa-panthānugam***

*He is the pre-eminent follower of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu's line.*

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj was empowered by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura to be the self-effulgent Āchārya of the Rūpānuga sampradāya. At the time of his departure, Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura requested Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj to sing the sampradāya's anthem, *Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī Pada*. As Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's beloved disciple, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, and only Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, sang this song for him on suitable occasions. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj served Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj as a servant, a friend, and an affectionate guardian. All the stages of the relationship between Guru and disciple described in the Rūpānuga sampradāya were present between Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's service to Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj illustrates the meaning of *Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī Pada*, that the service of Śrī Rūpa (Śrī Guru) is one's life, wealth, joy, fulfilment—everything.

### ***Govindābhidham***

*He is known as Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj.*

In 1985 Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj conferred sannyās upon Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, giving him the name 'Bhakti Sundar Govinda'. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj once asked Śrīla Śrīdhara

Mahārāj about his name, and Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj replied, “My Deity is Govinda and my kuṇḍa is Govinda, so your name must be Govinda.”

Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj established his Maṭh on the bank of Śrī Govinda Kuṇḍa and Śrī Govindasundar as its central Deity. Holding both this place and this form of the Lord most dearly within His heart, he gave the name Govinda to his dearest associate, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, who he treasured like his most precious jewel (*Govindābhidham Indirāśrita-padam hastastha-ratnādivat*).

### ***Ujvalam vara-tanum bhakty anvitam sundaram***

*His beautiful, exalted, effulgent form is filled with devotion.*

Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj has the deepest esteem for Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. He remarked, “Actually in many ways he is more qualified than I am.” Also: “He came [to me] with some previous wealth”; “He is a natural paramahaṁsa”; “His service never leaves the nirguṇa plane”; and “If you get to know him more intimately, you will come to understand what sort of transcendental character he has.”

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj created the atmosphere of Vraja Dhām wherever he went. His seemingly simple, yet deeply loving and profound personality can only be understood as a manifestation of the aprākṛta realm. His seniors, peers, and followers all marvelled at the beauty of his form and the sweetness and strength he exhibited as he related naturally and intimately with all. His captivating affection awakened the dormant spirit of devotion from within the hearts of thousands and forcibly inspired them to dedicate their lives to the service of Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga.

### ***Viśva-gurum***

*He is the Guru of the world.*

Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupād requested Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj to tour the world with him in the mid '70s to

preach to his disciples. Because Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's personal doctor and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's health was unstable at that time, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj declined. At that time both Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj prophesied that in the future he would tour the world and inspire their followers on the path of pure devotion.

In the early '80s, when Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj's disciples and admirers, who were mostly Westerners, started to frequent Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, seeking guidance and shelter, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj did not readily accept them because of his advanced age and ill health. It was only when Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj promised to look after them following Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's passing that Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj sheltered and initiated them.

Following the disappearance of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj in 1988, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, as the President-Sevāite-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, toured the world twenty-four times over the course of eighteen years. He oversaw the opening of over 100 centres on six continents and the distribution of over 350 publications in twenty languages. He crossed linguistic and cultural boundaries and inspired thousands of people of all ages by communicating with them heart-to-heart. He would often recall with a beaming smile, "The sun never sets on Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh."

### ***Divya-Bhagavat-premṇo hi bīja-pradam***

*He distributes the seed of divine love for the Supreme Lord.*

In 1986 Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj fulfilled the desire he had cherished for almost forty years and established Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj as the President-Sevāite-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh and all of its centres worldwide. Thereafter Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj initiated the sincere seekers who approached Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh into the service of Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga. Initiation is compared to the planting of a seed, the seed of divine love, within the heart. As seeds must be

nourished and protected in order to bear fruit, so Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj affectionately guided the disciples of Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, and himself in their practising lives. His wisdom, experience, character, and charm inspired deep faith within all, and his instructions dispelled all inauspiciousness. He encouraged everyone, regardless of the position they were in, and emphasised chastity, sincerity, love, and affection. He showed by example that serving Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇava and practising Śrīman Mahāprabhu's saṅkīrtan-dharma is the real path towards the service of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vraja Dhām. His foremost advice was to adhere to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's formula for chanting the Holy Name: to be humble, be tolerant, and give honour to others without expecting it for oneself.

### *Beyond*

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj departed from this world on 27 March 2010. Since then his Samādhi Mandir, the Temple of Love and Affection, has been erected in his honour at Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh Nabadwīp, and his faithful followers continue to serve Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga according to his instructions.

Before his departure, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj declared Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj to be his Successor as the Sevāite-President-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and appointed Āchāryas from Western countries to lead the development of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh worldwide.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's divine grace continues to shine brightly in the hearts of his sincere followers and through his divine instructions.

Summarising the glory of His Divine Grace is an impossible task, yet Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj himself has done so in a poem he wrote in his youth, in which he expressed his aim in life.



# *Svarūpodbodhana*

Awakening the True Self

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

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āmi guru-dāsa—nahi anya

I am a servant of Guru—nothing else.

āmi kariba bhramana chaudda-bhuvana  
svarūpe sabāya kari' udbodhana  
hāte la'ye yāba premera niśāna  
dharāba svarūpa chihna [1]

I will travel throughout the fourteen worlds awakening everyone to their true self. I will go with the banner of divine love in hand and cause everyone to recognise the sign of the true self.

āmi chhāḍāba sakale sarva-dharma  
kariba chūrṇa jñāna o karma  
rachiba viśāla bhakati-harmya  
guru-dāsa nahi anya [2]

I will induce everyone to abandon all religions. I will demolish the pursuits of liberation and worldly enjoyment. I will construct a grand palace of devotion. I am a servant of Guru—nothing else.

āmi bhāṅgiba chhanda lāgāba dhanda  
vāchālera mukha kariba banda  
mṛtyure dhari dāniba śanda  
nāhi kapaṭatā dainya [3]

I will break the customs, bemuse everyone, shut the mouths of the garrulous, hold back death, and distribute good fortune to all. I will do so humbly, without deceit.

sei mahābhāratera mahān parva  
yāhāra prakāśe hayechhe kharva  
dekhāba tāhāra asīma garva  
kaitave kari khinna [4]

I will show the unlimited glory of He whose manifestation brought the great portion of the Mahābhārata to an end, and efface all duplicity.

āmi bājāba jagate vijaya-ḍaṅkā  
ghuchāba sakala dvandva-śaṅkā  
bahāba viśve bhakati-gaṅgā  
tuṣī' hari labhi puṇya [5]

I will sound the kettle-drums of victory throughout the world, dispel all quarrel and fear, and cause the Ganges of pure devotion to flow throughout the universe. Satisfying the Lord in this way, I will attain good fortune.

āmi āryānārya mlechchha sabāya  
lāgāiba ba'le kṛṣṇa-sevāya  
chaḍāiba sabe golokera nā'ya  
pṛthvī kariba sūṇya [6]

I will forcibly engage all—the noble, the ignoble, and the barbarous—in Kṛṣṇa's service. I will board them all in the boat to Goloka and empty the earth.

āmi chālāba sakale guru-pada bale  
vādāma tuliba hari-bola bale  
mahāmāyā-vinī chhalanā chhalile  
kariba chinna-bhinna [7]

I will guide them all by the power of my Guru's feet. I will hoist the boat's sails by the power of chanting 'Hari'. If Mahāmāyā presents any illusion, I shall cut it asunder.

āmi chinmaya-dhāme chālāiba tarī  
chatur-bhuja habe yata nara-nārī  
sthāvara jaṅgama sabe labhi hari  
habe deva deva mānya [8]

I will drive the boat to the spiritual world, and all the men and women will become four-armed. All moving and inert beings will attain Hari and become worshippable to the demigods.

sabe eka parichaye dibe parichaya  
labhibe svarūpa amṛta-maya  
pūjibe śrī-hari dibe jaya jaya  
nehāri' ha-iba dhanya [9]

Everyone will identify with the same identity, realise their immortal self, worship Śrī Hari, and call out, 'Jay! Jay!' Seeing this, I will be satisfied.

āmi guru-dāsa nahi anya

I am a servant of Guru—nothing else.

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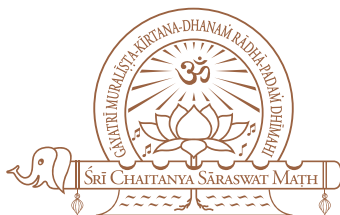
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Om Tat Sat





# Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh

*The Home of Pure Devotion*



“Displaying the victory flag of its celebrated glory, the great Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh shines near the bank of the Ganges in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām within Śrī Koladwīp, Śrī Gupta Govardhan. There the followers of the conception coming from Śrī Gaurāṅga to Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur, who eternally aspire to serve Śrī Guru, Śrī Gaurāṅga, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in the line of Śrī Rūpa, chant Śrī Gaurāṅga’s glory.”

Stating his ideal in this way, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj founded Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh in 141<sub>9</sub>. He was joined by his beloved disciple Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj in 741<sub>9</sub>. Together they created a shelter for surrendered souls to dedicate their lives to the cultivation of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava siddhānta, which may be summarised as follows: Kṛṣṇa is supreme and all fulfilment is found in Him; the soul is Kṛṣṇa’s eternal servant; pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa is the way; and love for Kṛṣṇa is the goal.

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj and his followers, led by Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj, have expanded Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh throughout India and around the world by publicising the teachings of the Rūpānuga sampradāya’s Āchāryas, establishing centres where they are practised, and engaging everyone in Śrī Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan, the congregational chanting of the Lord’s Holy Names.

Valuing quality over quantity, substance over form, depth over breadth, sincerity over recognition, truth over persuasion, beauty over power, and sacrifice over acquisition, Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh is the home of those who idealise union in separation from the Lord and aspire only to relish the prapanna-jīvanāmṛta, the nectar in the life of a surrendered soul.

निगमकल्पतरुर्गलितं फलं  
शुकमुखादमृतद्रवसंयुतम् ।  
पिबत भागवतं रसमालयं  
मुहरहो रसिका भुवि भावुकाः ॥

“O devotees! O relishers of rasa! Until your death in this world constantly drink the rasa of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, the ripened fruit of the wish-fulfilling tree of the Vedas enriched with nectar from the mouth of Śukadev Goswāmī.”

