

Religion
of the
Heart

His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj



His Divine Grace

Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar
Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Present spiritual master of
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh,
he was trained for this service
from the age of seventeen by his
Gurudev Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak
Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj
and appointed by him in 1986 to
the position of Successor Āchārya.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's
unprecedented service is exemplary
in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava lineage.
He widely distributes the seeds
of bhakti and he is the caring
guardian of the sincere followers
of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunāth.



Śrī Chaitanya
Sāraswat Maṭh

A spiritual association dedicated
to sharing with the world
the life and precepts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa
Chaitanya Mahāprabhu,
the Maṭh was founded in 1942
by the highly renowned Vaiṣṇava
saint Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak
Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.
It started as a simple thatched hut
on the banks of the Ganges River
in Nabadwīp Dhām, West
Bengal, India. Today, its glories
continue to be spread across the
globe by sincere devotees from all
nations as they share in the
congregational chanting of the
Holy Names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa,
Reality the Beautiful.

All glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

*Religion
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Heart*

*His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj*

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Religion of the Heart

by
Om̐ Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa
Parivrājakāchārya-varya
Sarva-śāstra-siddhānta-vit
Aṣṭottara-śata-śrī
**Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj**

who gives us the Supreme Conception of
Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu

Compiled from informal lectures and talks
affectionately delivered to disciples and the public
in various parts of the world including
Italy, India, Ireland and California

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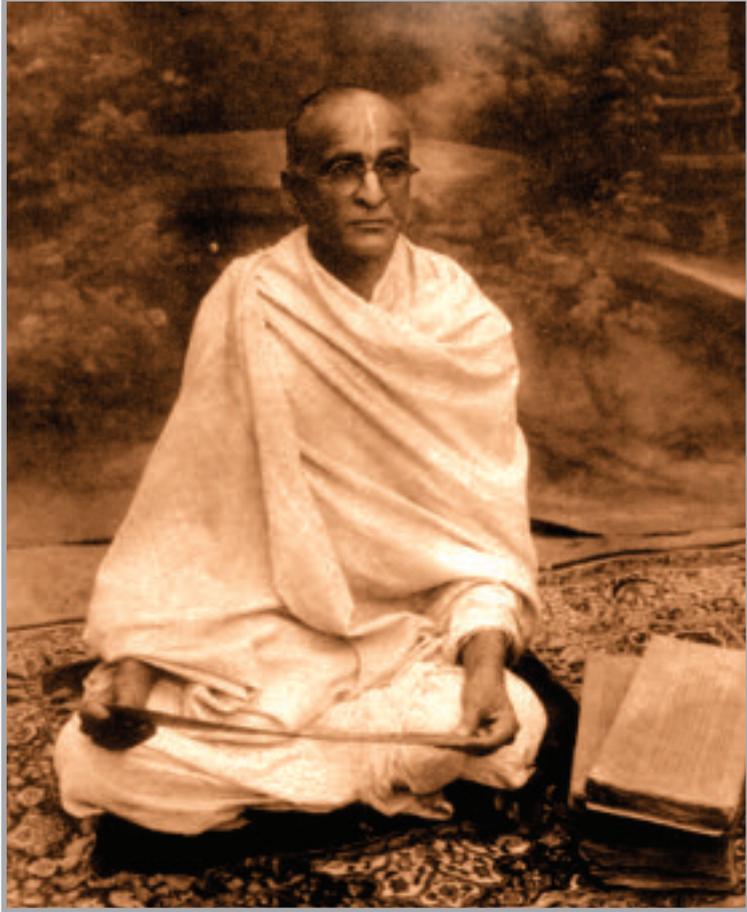
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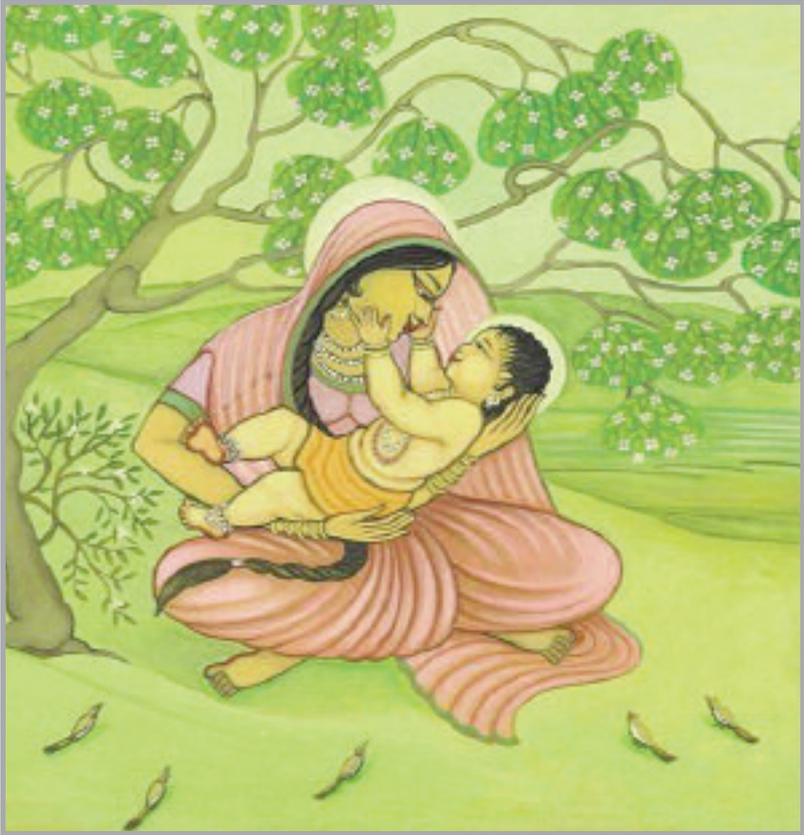
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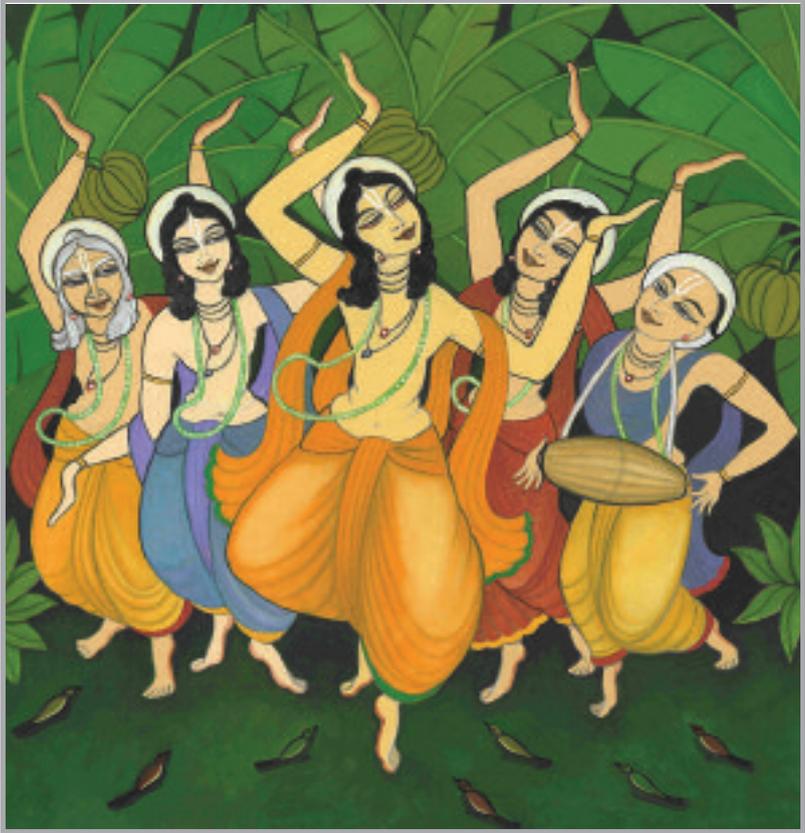
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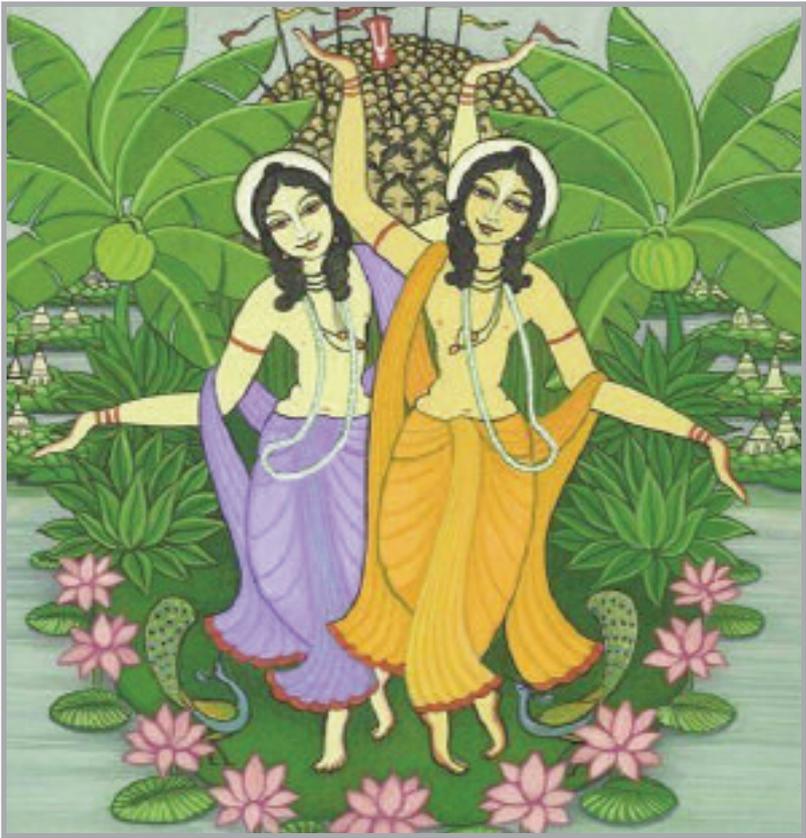




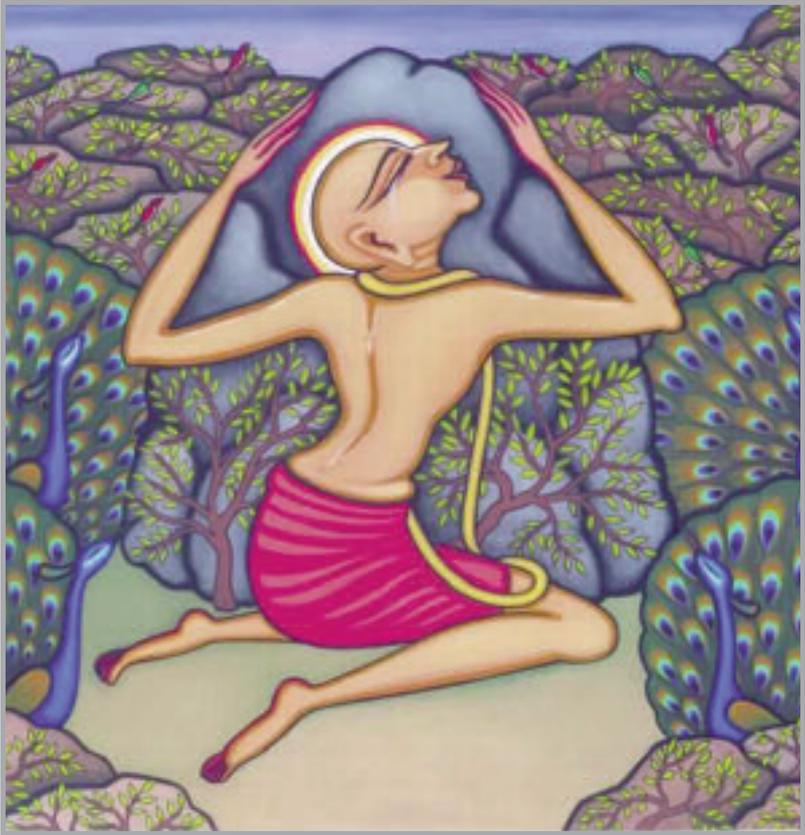
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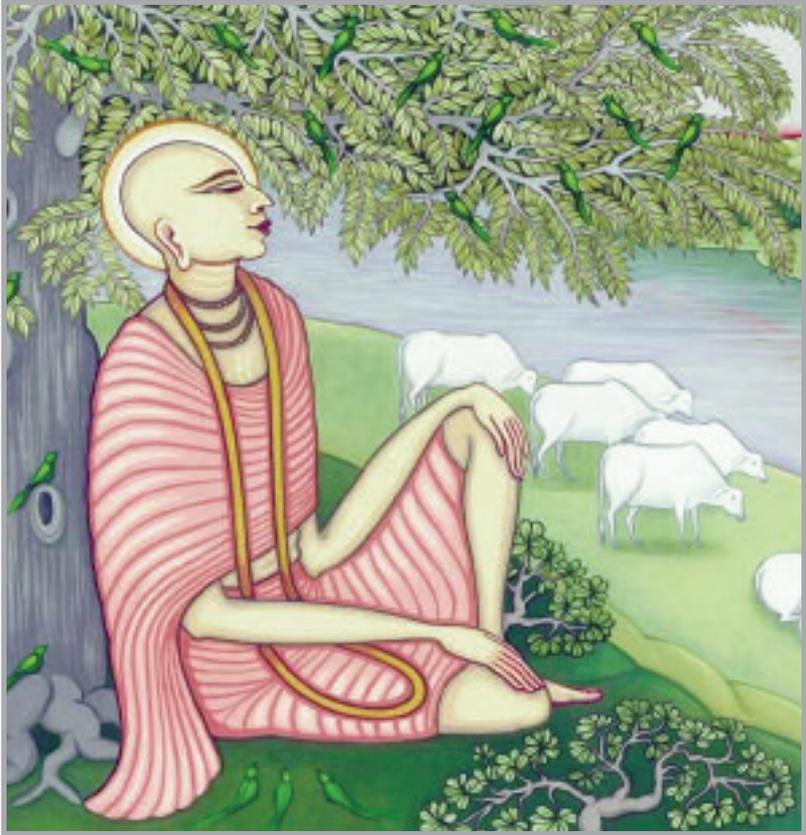
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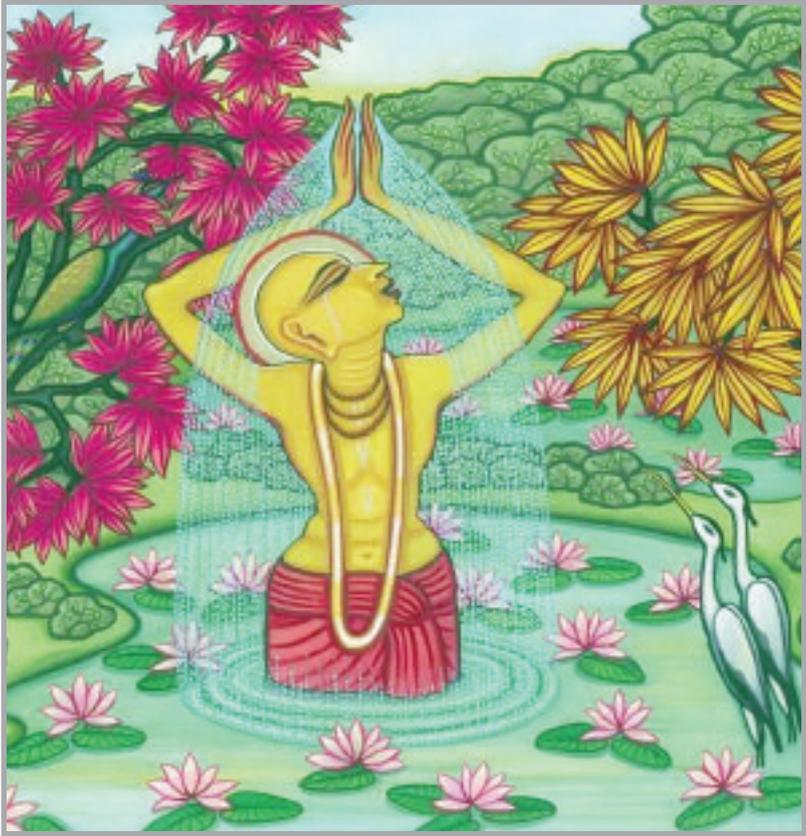
Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi



Mahāprabhu in Govardhan



Mahārabhu contemplates Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām



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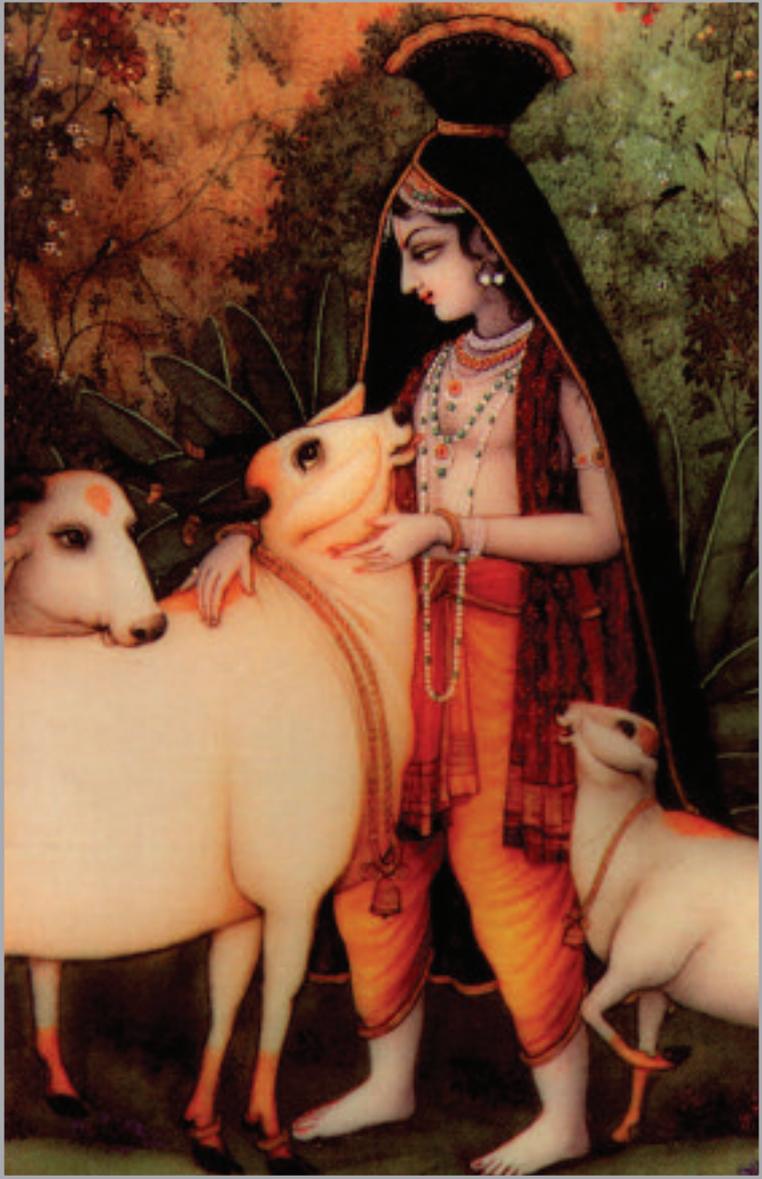
Śrī Chaitanya Mahārabhu, The Golden Avatār



Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and associates



*Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvikā Gīṛdhārī,
of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āśram, Soquel, U.S.A.*



Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Reality the Beautiful



Introduction

I would like to begin by first offering my respectful obeisances to my *dīkṣā* Guru, His Divine Grace Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda and my *sannyāsa* Guru, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, the author of this book. These two great *Mahā-Bhāgavatas* as well as His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj have given me shelter and a chance to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Although I am very fallen and helpless and full of faults, they have been kind and given their valuable energy to me as well as to so many others. I can only pray that one day I may at least come close to trying to do some service for them.

This book is an inadequate attempt to show a small part of the vast treasure of transcendental knowledge His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj has been imparting to the world for the past eighteen years. Most know that Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was personally given charge of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's Mission before his departure from this world. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj said publicly in 1985 that Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has tirelessly and wholeheartedly assisted in the duties of organizing and developing his Maṭh, and also in the duties of establishing and developing other Maṭhs, as well as arranging many donors for these Maṭhs. He said he has provided much encouragement to even himself in managing and maintaining his Maṭh and is naturally disposed to serve the Maṭh and its residents, and that he is always endeavoring for the progressive development of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh. Above all Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj said 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 himself as well as his Divine Master, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has shown this to be the truth as he has spread this perfect transcendental knowledge of Bhakti as he learned from his Guru Mahārāj.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has been on twenty-four world tours (as of this writing) where he has met with sincere seekers and distinguished persons from all walks of life, and he preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness vigorously everywhere he went. He has appeared on weekly internet radio broadcasts as well as regular radio and TV shows for the past ten years and under his direction and inspiration over seventy centers of Śrī Chaitanya Sārasvat Maṭh have been established in over forty countries. 350 books and related articles in over twenty languages have been published under his direction establishing the perfect conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness that he has carried from his Guru Mahārāj. By his influence so many sincere souls suffering under the horrible influence of Kali-yuga now have a chance to take shelter under the cooling rays of the Supreme Lord's lotus feet.

In 1941 Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj wrote a *śloka* and hoisted a large flag atop a tall bamboo pole in his Maṭh, which was just a small thatched hut at that time. That *śloka* forecast the future glories of Śrī Chaitanya Sārasvat Maṭh and said one day they would be sung all over the world:

śrīmach-chaitanya-sāraswata-maṭhāvāra-
 udgīta-kīrttir jaya-śrīm
 bibhrat sambhāti gaṅgā-ṭaṭa-nikaṭa-
 navadvīpa-kolādri-rāje
 yatra śrī-gaura-sāraswata-mata-niratā-
 gaura-gāthā gṛṇanti
 nityam-rūpānuga-śrī-kṛtamati-
 guru-gaurāṅga-rādhā-jitāśā

At that time some of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Godbrothers chided him by saying he had only a small Maṭh with a few buildings and a few devotees, so how, they said, would the glories of his Maṭh be heard all over the world?

Now due to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's unflinching spirit of self-sacrifice and complete dedication to his Guru Mahārāj he has successfully established the supreme conception of his Guru Mahārāj in all parts of the world so those with a clean heart and desirous of real spiritual life can practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master. Due to his grace the sun never sets on Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, and the flag that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj hoisted in 1941 waves in the favorable breezes on every continent.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is the real Hidden Treasure of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and our entire *sampradāya*. By his causeless mercy he is attracting the entire world and inspiring everyone from all walks of life and countries to chant the Holy Names of the Lord. From the North Pole to the South Pole and on every continent the sun is never setting on his divine conception. It is said Śrīla Prabhupāda built a house in which the whole world could live. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has built a temple for Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīman Mahāprabhu in which the whole world can worship and thus get free from the hard knot of material life that is so strongly trapping the *jīva*-souls in this age. He has strung a garland of the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa around the world and made the world more beautiful by it.

When we hear Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj speak about the Lord's Pastimes, or for that matter about any subject, we are reminded of the third *śloka* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* which says:

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

“The subject matter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is very sweet because it deals with Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes but those Pastimes have been made even sweeter because they were spoken by Śrīla Śukadev Goswāmī.”

I hope we can see in this book that the sweet nature of Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes are made even sweeter because they come through the lotus lips of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is a natural *paramahansa*. He is taking the sweet fruits of Kṛṣṇa’s Pastimes and making them even sweeter and more relishable by adding his own sweet nature to them.

In 1955, when Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda received the first copy of the *Śrī Gaudīya Darśan* magazine published by Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, he commented that Govinda Mahārāj was a “transcendental humorist,” and “people would like to read articles written by him with great relish because they are not only instructive but also amusing.” I hope the reader will find this book both instructive and amusing.

The preface is a Bengali poem “Your Fearless Lotus Feet,” written by Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj in 1957 for the glorification of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj on the occasion of his Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā. In this poem we are shown the perfect spirit of dedication and devotion an expert disciple has for his Guru as well as the perfect example of humility a disciple should have for his spiritual master. The poem also shows the deep insight into the higher *siddhānta* that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was so expert in, and that comes so naturally to him. Guru Mahārāj said he was a natural *paramahansa* and this is evident in this poem.

In Part One he explains the gist of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s supreme conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness based on the *śloka*: *Ārādhyo Bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad-dhāma Vṛndāvanam*, composed by Śrīla Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākura. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj takes this *śloka* and adds new life and a beautiful meaning to it just as he does with so many *ślokas*. He explains and shows by logical reasoning how the Absolute Truth is a person, not an impersonal void or an abstract entity, and that person is

Śrī Kṛṣṇa whose land is Vṛndāvan Dhām, the highest plane in the spiritual world. In Vṛndāvan Dhām all the residents worship Kṛṣṇa with great devotion but in different moods such as *śānta-rasa*—passive, *dāsyā-rasa*—servitorship, *sākhya-rasa*—friendship, *vātsalya-rasa*—parental relation, and *madhura-rasa*—conjugal love, which is divided in two parts: wedded and paramour. The highest worship is shown by the Vraja-*gopīs*, and this is thoroughly explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* which is the supreme Scripture recommended by Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj gives us this conception in a very beautiful, simple and straightforward manner and adds new life by drawing on many beautiful *ślokas* from different Scriptures to paint a picture of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as only a true transcendental poet can do.

In Part Two he takes us deeper into the subject matter of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and shows us beyond a doubt that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the emporium of all *rasa*, *Akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*, by presenting a fascinating description of His sweet Pastimes, His wonderful associates, His transcendental flute and His exquisite beauty, based on *ślokas* from *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta (Madhya 23.82-83)*:

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

But before he does this he cautions us in Chapter Four to first hear about Kṛṣṇa consciousness in a step-by-step process from a bona fide spiritual master. He says a bona fide spiritual master will not instruct his disciple in the higher Pastimes of the Lord in the beginning. When a spiritual master sees a disciple is ready to hear about those higher Pastimes, then he will instruct him, not before. If we don't follow this caution we will get only "imitation Pastimes" or an "imitation diamond" as he says. We won't get the real thing.

Throughout the book Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj stresses the importance of worshiping Kṛṣṇa and shows us that the real way to worship Him is through Rādhā-*dāsyam*, service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. And the way to worship Her is through Śrī Gurudev who is the embodiment of Rādhārāṇī in the highest aspect, and of Nityānanda Prabhu in a little lower form. We get this knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the descending process beginning with Kṛṣṇa Himself who spoke it to Lord Brahmā. This was passed on to Nārada and Vyāsadev and ultimately to our Gurudev His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. The knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is always descending through the hearts of the pure souls and we can understand where a pure soul is by seeing “the shining light-bulb of transcendental knowledge that is burning in his pure heart.” This is the knowledge given by Vedavyāsa, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj and now Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

The theme of the book is *vidvadbhiḥ sevitaḥ sabbhir, nityam adveṣa-rāgibhiḥ hr̥dayenābhyanujñāto, yo dharmas tam nibhodata*, that real religion extends from the Infinite Quarter, and when it comes to the finite, it will always come through those who are proficient in the Scriptures, advanced in their realizations, and deeply dedicated in their service. It cannot be man-made. It is coming from the highest quarter and those who carry it are also from that plane.

We are very fortunate Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is presenting the proper conception of Śrīman Mahāprabhu as he heard it from his Guru Mahārāj, adding his own deep realizations and sweet nature to this, and we are even more fortunate that he can present it in a clear and straightforward manner, as only a great teacher and devotee can do. And we are even more fortunate he is going all over the world, even in his ill health, trying heart and soul to give this great wealth to everyone who wants it.

In trying to make this book as an offering to His Divine Grace Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj I am sure I have committed errors, for which I am asking everyone's forgiveness.

I am from a very low born, sinful and offensive family where I was taught it is alright to engage in sinful and offensive activities, therefore I am a very fallen person and not qualified to do any service to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj.

Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī said he was lower than the worms in stool (*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 5.205*):

**jagāi mādhai haite muṇi se pāpiṣṭha
purīsera kīṭa haite muṇi se laghiṣṭha**

I feel lower than them because at least they have a position in this world. However, due to my offenses to my Gurudev and the Vaiṣṇavas, I cannot be counted amongst the living or the dead.

Myself being in such a position, how is it possible this book has been so well received by His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj? I can only consider that any success has come from this endeavor due to his own causeless mercy and the grace of the devotees who have helped such as Śrīpād Sāgar Mahārāj, Śrīpād Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīpād Tridaṇḍī Mahārāj, Bhuvana Mohan Prabhu, Mahānanda Prabhu, Jagadānanda Prabhu, Viśākhā Devī Dāsī and others too numerous to mention.

Knowing this book to have appeared by the grace of the Vaiṣṇavas, I offer with my whole heart this second edition to the lotus hands of His Divine Grace Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj.

Om Tat Sat

Swāmī B.P. Siddhāntī

Finished on Śrī Guru Pūrṇimā—

Śrīla Vyāsadev's appearance day: July 11, 2006

Second edition finished Śrī Govardhan Pūjā, 2009

Nabadvīp Dhām

Preface

Your Fearless Lotus Feet

*Vyāsa-pūjā offering for His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak
Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj written by His Divine Grace Śrīla
Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, in 1957.*

“Your Fearless Lotus Feet”

- 1) They come from such faraway lands
 Bearing gifts of worship in their outstretched hands,
 Fervently they hasten—your kinsmen in bands
 To greet you on this, your Holy Birthday.
- 2) At your Fearless Lotus Feet they happily rejoice
 With streaming eyes and stuttering voice,
 Horripilating body and a love that’s choice—
 Considering themselves most fortunate.
- 3) O most Magnanimous Master, gracefully forgiving,
 On this Holy Day to offer I have practically nothing,
 What little I have is sullied and trifling,
 Not worthy of offering to thee.
- 4) Burning in repentance
 for my one time thoughtlessness,
 Your feet’s shelter I beg in all repentance
 May I not ever lose you from inadvertence,
 Please grant only fearlessness to me.
- 5) Having lost myself in Māyā’s delusion
 I’ve found only flickering pleasure and convulsion
 On the giant wheel of virtue and indiscretion—
 And a garland of cradles and sepulchers.
- 6) Absorbed in a great purposeless search
 Away I have pushed the true wealth of this birth,
 And tossed between heaven and earth,
 I’ve gotten only a burning fever.

-
- 7) An abysmal hellfire ignites all around
Projecting its snout while flames leap and bound,
Expanding a huge cavernous mouth—
Intending only to devour me.
 - 8) World-engulfing and world-scorching flames
Cause me to run hither and thither in torment
And wearied I drop into a slumbering suspense
In Mahāmāyā's dense trickery.
 - 9) This great sinner, this fallen outcaste
Infatuated by the six enemies is aghast
As lust and greed propel him fast—
To the shore of the ocean of death.
 - 10) My uncontrolled mind—a will o' the wisp
Takes no good counsel, though I give it the whip
Carrying its burden in a subconscious grip—
Hastens me to doom's doorstep.
 - 11) Please save me Lord!
Out of your own kind goodness
Your glance alone defeats Māyā's madness
O shelter of all the poor and helpless
May the world behold your grace.
 - 12) Māyā's bonds I cannot break
Your Lotus Foot Dust for to take
Do sever these bonds and forever make
Your Holy Lotus Feet my serving place.

- 13) Many a helpless wretch has found
Shade and shelter 'neath your ground
But this fallen soul by Māyā bound—
Can only heave long sighs.
- 14) The Nectar Ganges Name you brought
Saved many helpless souls distraught
And yet this worthless slave is caught—
Deceived by day and night.
- 15) My self-surrender is just a farce
To call my own, my wealth is sparse
O Redeemer Lord! Do make me yours
And call me your very own.
- 16) Your Lotus Feet I humbly entreat
May Forever be my Object Sweet Lord,
Bind and nourish me with daily service
And the rope of your kind compassion.

Part One

*The Glories
of
Devotional Service*

Chapter 1

The Service of Vṛndāvan

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is non-different from Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. He appeared in this world to relish the sweetness of the transcendental mellows which Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī tasted in love of Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa did not have that opportunity; therefore He appeared as Śrī Gaurāṅgadev. We can understand this by this *śloka* of Śrīla Svarūp Dāmodar Goswāmī:

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād
ekātmanāv api bhuvi purā deha-bhedam gatau tau
chaitanyākhyam prakāṣam adhunā tad-dvayam chaikyam āptam
rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-sualitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 1.5)

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī has also written:

śrī-rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā kīdṛśo vānayaivā-
svādyo yenādbhuta-madhurimā kīdṛśo vā madīyaḥ
saukhyam chāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīdṛśam veti lobhāt
tad-bhāvādḍhyaḥ samajani śachī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, 1.6)

The supreme devotee of the Lord

Once our Guru Mahārāj, Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, was preaching in South India and he was invited to speak at an assembly of *paṇḍits*. When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was seated the *paṇḍits* asked him some questions. They were all expert in Sanskrit and vastly learned in all respects. They asked him who, in his opinion, was the supreme devotee of the Lord? They said they considered the *chatuḥsan*—the four Kumār sages, Sanak, Sanātan, Sanandan, and Sanat Kumār—to be the supreme devotees of the Lord.

At first Śrīla Guru Mahārāj did not say anything, so the head *paṇḍit* directly asked him, “Can you tell us, Sir, who you think the best devotee of the Lord is?”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, “I can tell you but can you accept what I say?”

The head *paṇḍit* replied, “Yes, if it is reasonable we can accept it.”

Then Guru Mahārāj said, “In our conception the *chatuḥsan* are primary grade devotees.”

The *paṇḍits* were shocked to hear this. They asked Guru Mahārāj who, in his opinion, was a higher-class devotee.

Guru Mahārāj answered, “There is a *śloka* in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that differs from your claim and since you have all read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* why do you say the four Kumāras are the supreme devotees?”

Then Guru Mahārāj quoted that *śloka*:

**na tathā me priyatama, ātma-yonir na śaṅkaraḥ
na cha śaṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr, na eva ātmā cha yathā bhavān**
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.14.15)

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava, “The *chatuḥsan*’s father, Lord Brahmā, is their Guru; but he is not as dear to Me as you are. Even Śaṅkar, Lord Śiva, who is the greatest Vaiṣṇava and who is

always chanting My Holy Name, is not as dear to Me as you. Lakṣmīdevī, the Goddess of Fortune who resides on My chest, is also not as dear to Me as you. Even My own Self, *naivātmā*, is not as dear as you are. You are My most dear devotee.”

Kṛṣṇa told Uddhava he is His most dear devotee and when Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave this answer the *paṇḍits* were stunned.

But after Uddhava went to Vṛndāvan and saw the Vraja-*gopīs* and the Vraja-*vāsīs* mood of devotion, dedication and wholehearted service, he said:

**āsām aho charaṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syām
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām
yā dustyajam̐ sva-janam̐ ārya-patham̐ cha hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padaṁīm śrutibhir vimṛgyām
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.47.61)**

“If I can take my birth as a piece of grass on the footpaths of Vṛndāvan where the Vraja-*gopīs* walk so the dust of their feet will bless me, I will feel my life is successful.”

There is no doubt Kṛṣṇa is more satisfied by the devotion of the *gopīs* than He is satisfied with His dearest disciple Brahmā, or with His dear brother Saṅkarṣaṇ, or with Śrī Lakṣmīdevī, who always resides on His chest, or even with His dearmost devotee, Lord Śiva.

The Vraja-*vāsīs*, especially the Vraja-*gopīs*, have this type of dedication, devotion and wholehearted service attitude; and Uddhava, the dearest devotee and disciple of Lord Kṛṣṇa, declares this. This is real Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and real Kṛṣṇa consciousness is proceeding in this line.

Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna’s charioteer

Many people have many different ideas and conceptions about Kṛṣṇa consciousness but they all accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme

Personality of Godhead. In some of them, Kṛṣṇa's position is like that of a master. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna like a spiritual master. He gives spiritual knowledge to him, so the followers of this line generally worship the "Gītā-Kṛṣṇa," or the Kṛṣṇa who presented the *Bhagavad-gītā* to this world.

An example of this is when Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra and they saw millions of soldiers ready to fight.

Previously Duryodhana and Arjuna both wanted to ask Kṛṣṇa for His help in the battle, so when Kṛṣṇa was sleeping, they both went to see Him. When Kṛṣṇa awoke He saw Arjuna first. Duryodhana was a great personality and like an elder brother to Arjuna but when Kṛṣṇa saw Arjuna first, He asked him why he had come.

Arjuna said, "King Yudhiṣṭhir has sent me to ask for Your help in the battle of Kurukṣetra."

Kṛṣṇa said, "I thought that was the reason you came and I think Duryodhana has also come for the same reason, but I am not going to fight in this battle. I shall not use any weapons. If I can give any other help I will do that. I have millions of soldiers and they can fight. I am giving you first choice, Arjuna, please choose."

Arjuna said, "I need You!"

Kṛṣṇa said, "Alright, alright!"

Then Kṛṣṇa looked to Duryodhana and said, "Is that alright with you? Are you happy?"

Duryodhana said, "Yes, that is very good, especially if You will not fight. Is that Your promise?"

Kṛṣṇa replied, "Yes! Yes, I shall not fight."

Then Duryodhana said, "If You will not fight, then what Arjuna said is alright with me. Shall I get all Your soldiers?"

Kṛṣṇa agreed and said, "Yes!"

Both left very happily. Duryodhana was thinking he had all

Kṛṣṇa's soldiers, and Arjuna was happy because Kṛṣṇa had accepted his proposal.

After Duryodhana left, Arjuna stayed and Kṛṣṇa said, "Arjuna, you are very foolish! Why did you take Me when you heard I would not fight? You could have had all of My soldiers."

Arjuna said, "I am not afraid to fight with that group. It is not difficult to fight with them. I can fight with everybody but I need Your help in this battle. I have one request from You."

Kṛṣṇa said, "What is your request?"

Arjuna asked, "Will You be my chariot driver while I am fighting?"

Kṛṣṇa was very happy to hear this. He said, "To be a chariot driver is not such a respectable position but to be your driver is very respectable. I accept your proposal. I will be very happy to stay with you."

When both sides were ready to fight, Arjuna said, *Senayor ubhayor madhye, ratharṇi sthāpaya me 'chryuta (Bhagavad-gītā, 1.21)*, "O Kṛṣṇa! Please, place my chariot between the two armies. I want to see who has come to fight." This is very nice and expresses one form of Kṛṣṇa. He is carrying out the order of Arjuna and then He instructs Arjuna as a spiritual master.

Subjective perceptions of the Lord

When Kṛṣṇa was fighting with Kāṁsa in Mathurā He was young and apparently unqualified. When He came to kill Kāṁsa, He wasn't carrying much with Him. He had only a flute and a stick for herding the cows. His *dhotī* was rolled up like short pants. Kāṁsa had invited Kṛṣṇa in order to kill Him. Externally Kāṁsa announced there would be a wrestling match so there could be some sport between Kṛṣṇa and Balarām and his wrestlers but secretly Kāṁsa wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa.

One *śloka* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* explains how different types of persons saw Kṛṣṇa when He entered the arena:

mallānām aśanir nṛṇām nara-varaḥ
 strīṇām smaro mūrtimān
 gopānām sva-jano 'satām kṣiti-bhujām
 śāstā sva-pitroḥ śiśuḥ
 mṛtyur bhoja-pater virād aviduṣām
 tattvaṁ paraṁ yoginām
 vṛṣṇīnām para-devateti vidito
 raṅgaṁ gataḥ sāgrajaḥ
 (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.43.17)

All the wrestlers saw Kṛṣṇa as death personified, *mallānām aśanir*. They were very much afraid to see this fourteen-year-old boy who looked like He was twenty-one. He was tall and wore His *dhotī* very short, like short pants. When He entered the arena, all the fighters were thinking death personified had come to kill them.

Nṛṇām nara-varaḥ, all the kings and their sons, the princes, saw Kṛṣṇa as the King of kings. He was actually a cowherd boy but He appeared as the greatest of all kings.

Strīṇām smaro mūrtimān, the women were also invited to see the fighting and when they saw Kṛṣṇa they saw Him as the embodiment of Cupid. When they saw Kṛṣṇa's beauty and effulgence, they fainted.

The cowherd men were also invited, *gopānām sva-jano 'satām*. Everyone was invited. The cowherd men were thinking, "Our friend is coming! Now a member of our society is coming, our boy is coming!"

The evil kings who were always harassing their people were thinking, "Our ruler is coming to punish us," *kṣiti-bhujām śāstā*.

Nanda Mahārāj and his fatherly group of friends were thinking, "Our own boy has come," *sva-pitroḥ śiśuḥ*. Kamsa was thinking his death had come in the form of Balarām and Kṛṣṇa, *mṛtyur bhoja-pater*.

All the religious experts were thinking, "Paramātmā has come

in the form of Balarām and Kṛṣṇa,” *virāḍ aviduṣāṁ tattvam*. The *yogīs* were thinking, “The Supreme Personality of Godhead has come,” *Tattvam Param yoginām*. And, *vṛṣṇinām para-devateti*, the members of the Yadu dynasty were thinking, “Our worshipable relative has come”—*vidito raṅgam gataḥ sāgrajaḥ*.

The perfect conception of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

But a very few exceptional devotees and those who have the finest conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who come in the line of Śrīman Mahāprabhu think the perfect conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is fully manifest in Vraja Dhām where there are five kinds of divine ecstatic relationships playing freely and happily with the Lord.

A small hint of Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental abode is given in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. When Mahāprabhu was in South India He discovered the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. He had previously heard of it, but when He saw it, He was surprised and said, “*Sei punthi nila lekḥāiyā*, give me the fifth chapter. The whole book of one hundred chapters isn’t necessary. I want only the fifth chapter for My devotees.” He brought *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* as well as *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* back from South India to Jagannāth Purī.

Vṛndāvan Dhām is expressed in *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*

During Lord Brahmā’s meditation on the Gāyatrī Mantra, Lord Brahmā heard the transcendental sound vibration of Kṛṣṇa’s flute and the whole realm of Vṛndāvan Dhām revealed itself in his heart. He saw everything: the transcendental abode of Kṛṣṇa, the Vraja-*gopīs* playing, the cowherd boys, the trees, the plants, an infinite variety of beautiful flowers, lush ripe fruits and crystal clear water. He saw the complete environment of Vṛndāvan in his meditation and He expressed this in *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.56):

śrīyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntāḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo
 drumā bhūmiś chintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayī toyam amṛtam
 kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanam api vaṁśī priya-sakhī
 chid-ānandaṁ jyotiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api cha
 sa yatra kṣīrābdhiḥ sravati surabhībhyaś cha su-mahān
 nimeśārdhākhyo vā vrajati na hi yatrāpi samayaḥ
 bhaje śvetadvīpaṁ tam aham iha golokam iti yaṁ
 vidantas te santaḥ kṣiti-virala-chārāḥ katipaye

Śrīyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntāḥ parama-puruṣaḥ, all the women in Kṛṣṇa's abode are very beautiful. They are like beautiful goddesses and all wealth is with them. They are always trying to satisfy Kṛṣṇa and they always worship Him. In Vṛndāvan, Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer, and everyone supplies enjoyment to Him; therefore they get double enjoyment. When someone supplies food to another person, who gets the most enjoyment? The person who supplies the food gets the most enjoyment. Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer but those who supply enjoyment to Him get even more enjoyment than Him.

There is no sadness in Kṛṣṇa's abode. There everything exists in a very happy and ecstatic mood. When you eat an apple the apple is happy to be eaten by you and you are happy when you are eating the apple. Both are happy. When someone is eating a banana the banana is happy and laughing. When a person is eating he is very happy. Everyone is always very happy in Kṛṣṇa's abode.

In Kṛṣṇa's abode all the trees are wish-fulfilling trees, *kalpataru*. If you want a mango from a banana tree you can get a mango. If you want an apple from a jackfruit tree you can get an apple. And the earth—*bhūmiś chintāmaṇi*—can give you anything you want. If you want milk, wheat or anything you can get it from the earth.

The residents of Vṛndāvan don't wear any golden rings, pearls or any jewelry. It is not because there is no jewelry in Vṛndāvan,

it is because they like the flowers of Vṛndāvan. They wear flower jewelry. Every flower is very beautiful and glorious. There is one special flower in heaven called the *pārijāta* flower. Indra, the God of Heaven, is very proud because he has the *pārijāta* flower. There are millions of different flowers like the *pārijāta* flower in Vṛndāvan. Everywhere you will see beautiful flowers.

We have had a little experience of this. When we went to Badarikāśram on *parikramā* there were flowers growing everywhere. It is a natural flower garden. No one gives them any nourishment; they are growing naturally. If you could see this you would understand there are examples of Vṛndāvan on Earth. Of course one example is not fully sufficient by itself but it can give us an idea of the reality of that divine land.

Toyam amṛtam, all the water in that divine land is like nectar and the talking is like the sweet singing of birds, *kathā gānam*. From outside you can't distinguish whether they are talking or singing. You will think they are all singing but actually they are talking. *Nātyam gamanam api*, all the walking in Vṛndāvan is like dancing. You can't tell the difference between walking and dancing. They are always dancing.

Api vaṁśī priya-sakhī, the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute is always flowing over Vṛndāvan. Only one song comes from Kṛṣṇa's flute and that is the sound of the Gāyatrī Mantra, *Om*. It can deliver the entire world. Only one sound is necessary to rescue the whole world and that is the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

Complete fulfillment

We can't imagine how much happiness exists in Vṛndāvan. Everything is gracious, glorious, and extremely beautiful there. Paramour love (*parakīya bhāva*) is extremely beautiful there.

Sometimes Mother Yaśodā is frying food and when Kṛṣṇa smells it He says, "Give it to me now, I can't wait!" Mother Yaśodā says, "Wait, wait, I'll give it to you on a plate!" And Kṛṣṇa

says again, “I can’t wait! I don't want to wait! I must have it now!”

This is characteristic of the mood of *parakīya bhāva* which is more worshipable than other *rasas* and finds its highest expression in paramour love.

In Vṛndāvan, Kṛṣṇa is always playing with His friends. Sometimes when He plays His flute He says He would like to play in such and such *kuñja* (forest grove) with certain friends. Sometimes He puts His hand on His hair and all the girls think it is a signal He will play with them in Keśi Kuñja (*keśi* means hair), so the girls think of arranging things there for playing.

Lord Brahmā described the abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the prayers of *Brahma-saṁhitā* and Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has given the gist of that conception in a *śloka* composed by Śrīla Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākura:

ārādhyo bhagavān brajeśa tanayas
 tad dhāma vṛndāvanam
 ramyā kāchid upāsanā braja-vadhū-
 vargeṇa yā kalpitā
 śrīmad-bhāgavataṁ pramāṇam-amalaṁ
 premā pumartho mahān
 śrī chaitanya mahāprabhuḥ-matam-idaṁ
 tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ

The essence of this *śloka* is: “If you want to worship anything, for your complete fulfillment you must worship Kṛṣṇa.”

The supreme conception

What are the qualities and qualifications of Kṛṣṇa? What do you need? You need love, beauty, charm, ecstasy, affection and harmony. All these qualities are present in Kṛṣṇa.

If your Master is rich with all the wealth of love, beauty, charm

and ecstasy you won't experience any deficiency—you will get everything through His mercy. Kṛṣṇa has many expansions and they also possess these qualities of wealth, beauty, love and charm. This is the Vedic conception, the conception of Vedavyāsa and the supreme conception of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Chapter 2

The Lord is not Impersonal

The Lord has form and His form is very beautiful

Everywhere in the Scriptures it says the Lord has form. He is neither *nirākāra* nor *nirviśeṣa*, without form or qualities. He has form and qualities, *saviśeṣa*, whether we can see it or not. If He didn't have form the creation of this material world wouldn't be possible.

This is easy to understand. As a human being I have a brain and thus I have the ability to think, feel and will; so it is not possible the Lord, my Creator, does not have these qualities. The whole universe was created by a conscious power, and that power is a guardian power. It is a fully conscious power whether we can see it or not.

The *Upaniṣads* say:

**apāṇi-pādo javano grahītā
paśyaty achakṣuḥ sa śṛṇoty akarṇaḥ**
(*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad*, 3.19)

The Lord is present everywhere. He is in the smallest atom—*aṅor aṅīyān*—and He is in the biggest universe—*mahato mahīyān*. He can see and hear everything perfectly.

The Lord has an identity and an external form and that form is like the glow of a fire or the sunshine which emanates from the sun.

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* (verse 40) also says:

**yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṅḍa-koṭi-
koṭīṣv aśeṣa-vasudhādi-vibhūti-bhinnam
tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-bhūtaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi**

The external form of the original person, Govinda, is called *brahma*, or the *brahmajyoti*, and *brahma* is like the glow of a fire or the sunshine which emanates from the sun. *Brahma* is not the Lord's complete form. When you see the light of *brahma*, or glow, from a distance it appears to be His complete form but if you enter into that glow, what will you see? You will see, *jyotir abhyantare rūpam, atulaṁ Śyāmasundaram*—you will see the eternal form of the Lord, Śyāmasundar, who is very beautiful and who has a blackish complexion just like a rain cloud.

The *nyāya* (logic) Scriptures give an example of this. When we see a forest from a distance we may see a bird enter it. From a distance it appears the bird disappears or merges into the forest. We cannot see anything inside the forest; but if we can enter the forest we will see the bird has a nest, a husband and babies and she is playing with her babies. From inside the forest we see many things but from a distance we only see the outline of the forest.

The effulgence of the abode of Kṛṣṇaloka is similar. It is called *paravyoma*. From a distance *paravyoma* appears as *brahma*, but as it is said in the above *śloka*, *tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-bhūtaṁ*—inside that glow Govinda is living and He is playing with His family and associates just like an ordinary human being.

Natural tendency—real religion

Once a devotee of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, named Sanātan Goswāmī, asked Him, “Who am I and why do we go to different species of life after we leave this body, and why do we suffer so much in this material world?”

‘ke āmi’, ‘kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya’

ihā nāhi jāni—‘kemane hita haya’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 20.102)

Mahāprabhu replied that all the Scriptures say the *jīva*-souls have an eternal spiritual body. Through their own activities (*karma*) they are getting the results of those activities, and those results take them to different bodies such as a human body, an animal body or a plant body. We are now aware of this because science has proved that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. So the question is, how can we get relief and liberation from the illusory environment and how can we find our own joyful happy life where there is no sorrow or unhappiness?

Mahāprabhu said real religion (*dharma*) means everyone and everything has some natural tendency and it is necessary to discover what that natural tendency is. For example, water is liquid. Wherever it is, it will flow downwards. That is its natural tendency. Fire is hot and it will burn. If it gets cool or goes out, that is not its natural position. The sky also has its natural tendency or religion. It tries to observe everything in the universe. The planets have their own religion. They are always moving in a natural synchronized way.

Mahāprabhu said the natural tendency of everyone and everything is their real religion. All *jīva*-souls have their own religion (*jaiva dharma*), and the one thing everyone has in common is they are all able to think, feel and will; plus they all have their own spiritual bodies. And, since the *jīva*-souls are small, they will naturally be attracted by a greater power.

Magnetic attraction

In the *Ṛg Veda*, which contains seventy-five percent of the wealth of the *Vedas*, there is this famous mantra (1.22.20):

om̐ tad viṣṇoḥ paramam̐ padam̐ sadā
 paśyanti sūrayaḥ divīva chakṣur-ātataṁ
 tad viprāso vipanyavo jāgrvāmsaḥ
 samindhate viṣṇor yat paramam̐ padam̐

The primary meaning is that in our search for spiritual life and God, it is not necessary to immediately mention the Name of Kṛṣṇa. In this world and in the spiritual world there is a powerful glow which is like the glow of the Sun which is called the *brahmajyoti*. We, the *jīva*-souls, are like tiny rays of that glow and we exist in that glow. That glow has a powerful magnetic effect, and everything that exists in this mundane world exists in that glow, and the qualities that exist in the spiritual world are much greater than the qualities found here.

Since that glow has a strong magnetic power, everything is attracted by it. How are they attracted? By its beauty, its charm, its love, its affection and its harmonious dealings. Whatever we want exists in that large glow and is attracting us.

We have all come from that glow and we are small particles of that glow. We are like sun rays in the sunshine, or waves in the ocean. We are all very small, like atoms. All our power—our thinking, feeling and willing—comes from that powerful glow, and that powerful glow is attracting the smaller particles of power, the *jīva*-souls, like a magnet attracts iron particles. Unfortunately, the iron has become rusty, and the *jīva*-souls are not attracted; that magnetic power cannot attract them, so they are going to the mundane environment.

Clean your mirror

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said it is natural that the *jīva*-souls want to go to their own abode, because that abode is transcen-

dental and the *jīva*-souls are also transcendental.

When a particular *sādhū* came from India to the West some years ago, he was honored as a representative of Indian religion, although he wasn't actually a representative of the religion of the *Vedas*. When he gave a lecture at the University of Chicago, all religious leaders of the world were present. He began his lecture with these words, "My brothers and sisters in America!" Everyone was charmed when they heard this. Everyone was thinking, "We are brothers and sisters of this Indian *sādhū*." By his humble and inviting mood he showed the real mood of the Vedic religion. We are all brothers and sisters because we have all come from that same big glow and we all have the same qualities in our heart.

Naturally all the *jīva*-souls want to go to their own abode but because they are covered by the illusory environment they cannot see that glow, and because of their small ability to be attracted, that glow cannot attract them.

Mahāprabhu gave the example of a mirror. He said *chetodarpaṇa-mārjjanam*. When a mirror is covered by dust we cannot see ourselves. If we clean the dust, we can see ourselves. He said it is necessary to clean the dust from the *jīva*-soul's own form, then all the *jīva*-souls will get their own natural religion back. They will be attracted, naturally, by their own abode.

I am describing this glow, this effulgence of the Lord's abode as a transcendental glow, but actually it has an infinite form.

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (3.1) says:

yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena
jātāni jīvanti yat prayanty abhisam-
viśanti
tad brahma tad vijijñāsasva

"All the *jīva*-souls and all the universes have come from that abode. That glow is maintaining all the *jīva*-souls as well as all of the universes and it is the place where they will go at the end of

creation. It exists as part of the complete spiritual body of the Lord.”

It is said in our Scriptures, the *Vedas*: *śṛṇvantu viśve amṛtasya putrāḥ*, “O sons of nectar, sons of the nectarean ocean-sea, you are born of nectar, and you are born to taste nectar. Why are you suffering with birth and death and many other unwanted things? You have your own abode. Please come back to that abode.”

**asato mā sad gamah, tamasa mā jyotir gamah,
mṛtor ma amṛta gamah**
(*Bṛhadaranyaka Upaniṣad*)

“From the mortal, go to the eternal. From ignorance, from darkness, go to knowledge. Go to light. From unhappiness, go to happiness.” All Scriptures give us this advice: “Don't go to the illusory environment. Go to reality.”

Soul's choice

Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī said:

**kṛṣṇera yateka khelā, sarvottama nara-lilā,
nara-vapu tāhāra svarūpa,
gopa-veśa, veṇu-kara, nava-kiśora, naṭa-vara,
nara-lilāra haya anurūpa**
(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 21.101*)

Sometimes we see ourselves in a very fallen position, something like that of a beast, which is to say our feelings may come in that way if we can understand how great the difference between our material and spiritual form is. In the spiritual world there is form and in the material world there is form but the difference between the two is very great.

Kṛṣṇa has given everyone freedom. He says in the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (9.25):

yānti deva-vratā devān, pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā, yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām

“If you want to go to heaven you can worship the *deva-vratā*, the demigods. If you want to go to where your forefathers are you can worship the planet where they have gone, *pitṛ-loka*.” But finally Kṛṣṇa gives His advice: “Those who worship Me will come to My abode.”

When I first joined Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s Mission I would sometimes stay with Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda in Calcutta as the Calcutta branch of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh was in his house. Every day I went for collection and preaching and many people would ask me why they should worship Kṛṣṇa instead of Mother Kālī. I didn’t know what to tell them so I asked Prabhupāda and he said jokingly, to tell them: “What will you get by worshipping Mother Kālī? What will be your food and who will be your associates?”

Then he would say to tell them, “Mother Kālī lives in the cremation fields where there are many ghosts and other undesirable things. Her food is the blood of her sons, the *asuras*, after she kills them, and her garland is made of their skulls. This is Mother Kālī’s style. If you want to be her associate we don’t object, but our Kṛṣṇa lives in Vṛndāvan Dhām where He has many girlfriends, lots of cheese, milk, *sandesa*, butter, fruits, sweets and many other wonderful things. There we shall eat and play with the cows and cowherd boys in the fresh waters of the Yamunā. We shall play in the nice gardens and beautiful forests nestled around Govardhan Hill. There are many wonderful things described in Vṛndāvan and we will become associates of Kṛṣṇa there. We want that life! So you can do what you like.” Śrīla Prabhupāda always gave me good advice and nourishment like this.

Sometimes Prabhupāda would take me to preaching programs. He was firmly situated in the Bengali chemical industry

and had a lot of higher class friends. They would invite us to their homes for preaching programs and since I was wearing saffron, Śrīla Prabhupāda would have me sit on the *Vyāsāsan*. In India saffron is given more respect than white cloth. Also I was a good singer and could play the *mṛdaṅga* and I could read Sanskrit; so after the *kīrtans*, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who was sitting a little lower, would have me read the Sanskrit *ślokas*, and then he would explain everything. He was very enthusiastic to preach and we went to many programs at the houses of important and prominent gentlemen in Calcutta. Sometimes when he had a very big program he would take Guru Mahārāj and the three of us would go. This was our preaching style. Śrīla Prabhupāda was always giving me encouragement and nourishment in the preaching field.

The Lord's promise

The Lord promises in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, “Whoever worships Me will come to My abode and will not come back to this world.”

What is the abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa?

na tad bhāsayate sūryo, na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante, tad dhāma paramaṁ mama
(*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, 15.6)

“The sun and the moon cannot give light in My abode; it has its own light. Everything is new there.” If you go to Kṛṣṇa’s abode complete transcendental feelings and realization will appear in your heart and you will never come back to this mortal world.

Indra's awakening

There is nothing undesirable or unwholesome in the transcendental world. The saints and the Scriptures are showing us the

way to the spiritual world but unfortunately we are not always so receptive to that.

One time, Indra, the King of Heaven, was cursed by a *ṛṣi* to become a pig. When the curse was finished Brahmā, the creator, came to take Indra from his pig's body.

Brahmā said to Indra, "The time of your curse is finished. Come and take charge of the heavens. If you jump in the lake you will change your body from a pig's body to your heavenly body."

Indra was identifying himself with a pig's body. He was thinking his wife and children belonged to him. When he saw Brahmā he thought, "Who are you? You have four heads and a long beard. Why should I hear from you?"

Brahmā could understand that Indra was very involved with his family life, especially his children, so he took all of Indra's children and threw them in the lake. Indra became very upset. When all his children were dead he tried to catch Brahmā and kill him. He thought, "This four-headed man with a long beard has killed my children and now he is trying to kill my wife!"

Indra couldn't catch Brahmā so Brahmā suddenly grabbed Indra's wife and threw her in the lake.

Indra was lamenting because his whole family was dead. Again Brahmā said to him, "Please, jump in the lake and you will get a beautiful heavenly body. Your wife and children have already got their heavenly bodies back although you can't see them. If you jump in the lake you will get yours."

Finally Indra was thinking, "What value does this hog's body have? I am alone. I have nothing." He jumped in the lake, left his body, and got back his beautiful form as the King of Heaven.

Then Brahmā stood and said, "Do you want to go back to that hog's body? If you do I can arrange it. You were fighting with me. Now do you understand what your form is?"

Indra shyly said, "I do not want to see that body again."

This is also our position. We are thinking if we leave our body

and family it will be bad for us but our spiritual, conscious body—*svarūp-siddhi*—is very beautiful, and the abode of the Lord is also very beautiful. We have a relationship with the Lord, His abode and His paraphernalia and that relationship is always attracting us.

Five kinds of relationships

In Kṛṣṇa's abode all residents have one of five types of relationships with Him: *śānta*, *dāśya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *madhura-rasa*.

Śānta-rasa means peacefulness. It is the primary relationship and its main characteristic is firmness or steadiness in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

Dāśya-rasa means we will develop a loving serving mood towards Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. We will begin to hanker for service to Kṛṣṇa.

As we advance further we will develop a friendship with Kṛṣṇa, *sakhya*, and when we advance even further, more intimacy develops, and that relationship becomes parenthood or *vātsalya-rasa*.

Paramour: love's highest spiritual manifestation

Consorthood with Kṛṣṇa is called *madhura-rasa*, or a conjugal relationship. It is the highest. It has two parts: one pertains to marriage and the other to paramour love. In Vṛndāvan paramour love is the highest; it is the mother of all *rasas*.

In the mundane world we consider paramour love to be very bad. But if we understand for whom paramour love is really meant, all such bad feelings will go. "Who is my master? Who is the heart of my heart? Who is the wealth of my life and soul, my all in all?" If we really know this, all bad feelings will vanish.

In this material world we have seen how paramour love is manifested, but we must also see how that love shows itself through many different transcendental manifestations. There are

many varieties of tastes within paramour love and each one displays progressively more and more ecstatic manifestations.

During Mahāprabhu's first meeting with Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī in Rāmakeli on His way to Vṛndāvan, He advised them on how to harmonize their external positions as important government officials with their internal desire to render exclusive service the Lord.

He advised them:

**para-vyasaninī nārī vyagrāpi gr̥ha-karmasu
tad evāsvādayaty antar nava-saṅga-rasāyanam**
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 1.211)

“Continue your external life but keep your paramour relationship with Kṛṣṇa inside your heart. It is not important whether others see it or not. Keep it in your heart in a hidden way. Just as a married girl always thinks of her paramour lover when she is busily engaged in her household affairs, you also think of Kṛṣṇa while you do your external work.”

We have made many rules and regulations to live in this mundane world. We have divided one part of the land for ourselves and another part for others. We have said, “This food is for the cows and this is for me.” We have made many adjustments in this material world so bad reactions will not come to society. Whoever ignores these rules will be punished.

But when the mood of paramour love is firmly followed in the spiritual world there is nothing bad. There is nothing bad in the spiritual world. Everything is good there. That is why it is said in the Scriptures, “Here is water and there is nectar,” or, “That abode has its own light and is always effulgent. It never burns and is always pleasant.”

This is Mahāprabhu's supreme conception and this is our goal of life.

ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa tanayas
 tad dhāma vṛndāvanam
 ramyā kāchid upāsanā vraja-vadhū-
 vargeṇa yā kalpitā
 śrīmad-bhāgavatam pramāṇam-amalam
 premā pumartho mahān
 śrī chaitanya mahāprabhor-matam-idam
 tatrādarāḥ na paraḥ

“Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We have five special types of relationships with Him. The highest is that of the *Vraja-gopīs*, composed of conjugal relationship, which in its highest manifestation is paramour love.”

Chapter 3

Evidence of the Conception of a Personal God in the Scriptures of India

Where is the evidence of a personal conception of God in the Scriptures of India?

Mahārabhu said: *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* *pramāṇam-amalam*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the proof and evidence of this conception. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* contains the gist of all the *Vedas*, and its 18,000 *ślokas* are spotlessly pure and unalloyed, therefore it is given more honor than any other Scripture.

The third *śloka* of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says, *nigama-kalpa-taror galitaṁ phalam*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the mature fruit of the tree of Vedic literature and Vedic knowledge. If we try to realize the meaning of this verse we will realize *nigama* means the *Vedas*. *Kalpa-taror* means a wish-fulfilling tree, and *galitaṁ phalam* means a delicious and fully ripe fruit, which is without the skin or seed and is extremely palatable and enjoyable like condensed ecstasy.

And the knowledge given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is made even sweeter because it comes through the mouth of Śukadev Goswāmī, the son of Vedavyāsa. Vedavyāsa was searching for a disciple who could express transcendental knowledge, so he chose Śukadev Goswāmī because Śukadev Goswāmī was qualified to receive transcendental knowledge; that is, he is always situated in the plane of such knowledge:

pariniṣṭhito 'pi nairguṇya, uttama-śloka-līlayā
 gr̥hīta-chetā rājarṣe, ākhyānam yad adhītavān
 (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 2.1.9)

Kṛṣṇa: the Supreme Controller and Original Source

The Lord has many forms. He has manifested Himself as Dvārakeś, Mathureś and Gopeśvar. He has many different manifestations and forms. From His first expansion, which is Baladev, comes Vāsudev, Saṅkarṣan, Aniruddha and Pradyumna and a little lower, Nārāyaṇ. From Nārāyaṇ, there are various manifestations: *Guṇāvatāras*, *Līlāvatāras*, *Śaktyāveś Avatāras*, etc. Many *Avatāras* come from Nārāyaṇ and they are all manifestations of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

But it is stated in the *Brahma-saṁhitā: īśvaraḥ paramaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda vighrahā*. The different manifestations are *īśvaraḥ* but the *Param-īśvaraḥ* is Kṛṣṇa. He is *anādir ādir Govindah, sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*—the original One, the Cause of all causes.

No cheating religion

Mahāprabhu said the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* contains the gist of the Vedic knowledge. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is *pramāṇam-amalam*, which means its evidence, its proof and its statements are all pure and unalloyed. There are no alloys mixed with the statements of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. *Amalam* means unalloyed. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.1.2) itself states:

dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra
 paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām
 vedyam vāstavam atra vastu śivadam
 tāpa-trayonmūlanam
 śrīmad-bhāgavate mahā-muni-kṛte
 kim vā parair īśvaraḥ

**sadyo hr̥dy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ
śuśrūsubhis tat-kṣaṇāt**

Kaitavo means “cheating.” There is no cheating in the religion given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Once Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj told me I was “cheating my stomach.” When I was staying with him in Calcutta I used to study *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* from him in the morning. Sometimes he would ask me if I had taken breakfast, and whenever I would answer, “Yes,” he would say, “What did you have?” If I would answer, “*mudi*,” (puffed rice) he would say, “Oh, you are simply cheating your stomach!”

Religion can also cheat us. My “stomach” may be “full” of some religious conception, but it is being cheated! It is possible religion can fully exist in our body but in a cheating way. It may be possible we are being cheated of the real substance.

One must be a *sādhū*

*Sādhū*s have a variety of different qualities, but extremely good *sādhū*s are *paramo nirmatsarāṇām*. They are not envious or jealous of anyone. *Matsarāṇām* means enviousness. It is a very bad quality. Many *sādhū*s have *matsarāṇām*. The *Bhāgavatam* says, “There is no possibility of *matsarāṇām* in the knowledge I am giving. This is a unique type of knowledge; it is free of *matsarāṇām*.”

How will one get the knowledge of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? *Sadyo hr̥dy avarudhyate 'tra kṛtibhiḥ śuśrūsubhis tat-kṣaṇāt*. If one is fully surrendered and has a good service mood, he will immediately get this knowledge. If one is fully surrendered and does not mix with any bad qualities, he will get transcendental knowledge. But the first condition is one must be a *sādhū*.

A *sādhū* means one who is honest and saintly. A *sādhū* is not one who just wears a saffron cloth. Saffron cloth is a symbol of

Vedic identification. A deer hunter may be a *sādhū* if he is not envious and is surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. Another good quality of a *sādhū* is that his heart is always hankering for the service of Kṛṣṇa.

If one has these qualities he will get the transcendental knowledge given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Mahāprabhu said, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam pramāṇam-amalam*, “The knowledge which is revealed in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is spotlessly pure and it is the ripened fruit of all the *Vedas*, and that fruit is love for Kṛṣṇa, or Kṛṣṇa-*prema*.”

Real Kṛṣṇa-*prema*: stronger than a cobra’s poison

The English word “love” cannot fully express the real meaning of *prema* as given in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* but it is the only equivalent word we have heard in the English language. As conditioned souls we do not know what *prema* is and we do not know how to properly express it.

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, the highest cultural representative of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, has written many beautiful expressions about *prema*, but the word “love” is not sufficient to express the ideas he has written about. For example, he says:

pīḍābhir nava-kāla-kūṭa-kaṭutā-
 garvasya nirvāsano
 nisyandena mudāṁ sudhā-madhurima-
 ahaṅkāra-saṅkocanaḥ
 premā sundari nanda-nandana-paro
 jāgarti yasyāntare
 jñāyante sphuṭam asya vakra-madhurās
 tenaiva vikrāntayaḥ

(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Madhya* 2.52)

“Once you get love for Kṛṣṇa you cannot live without it for a moment or you would die. The ecstatic feelings you experience

in union with Kṛṣṇa are inconceivable. Kṛṣṇa-*prema* transcends all other types of ecstatic beauty and tastes. Nothing can surpass it. Whoever has a touch of Kṛṣṇa-*prema* cannot live without it. If he was to leave it, he could not conceive of the pain of separation. It is stronger than a cobra's poison. The burning sensation that comes from a cobra's poison is nothing compared to the feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa."

Expressions of Divine Love

Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī has given many beautiful expressions regarding the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute, His beautiful, charming and all-attractive personality, as well as the sweet association of chanting and dancing with Him.

vaṁśī-gānāmṛta-dhāma, lāvṇyāmṛta-janma-sthāna,
 ye nā dekhe se chānda vadana
 se nayane kibā kāja, paḍuka tāra muṇḍe vāja,
 se nayana rahe ki kāraṇa
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 2.29)

"Of what use are eyes if one does not see the face of Kṛṣṇa, which resembles the moon and is the birthplace of all beauty and the reservoir of the nectarean songs of His flute?"

kṛṣṇera madhura vāṇī, amṛtera taraṅgiṇī,
 tāra praveśa nāhi ye śravaṇe
 kāṅkaḍi-chidra sama, jāniha se śravaṇa,
 tāra janma haila akāraṇe
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 2.31)

"Topics about Kṛṣṇa are like waves of nectar. If such nectar does not enter one's ear, the ear is no better than the hole of a damaged conchshell."

mṛga-mada nilotpala, milane ye parimala,
 yei hare tāra garva-māna
 hena kṛṣṇa-aṅga-gandha, yāra nāhi se sambandha,
 sei nāsā bhastrāra samāna
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 2.33)

“One’s nostrils are no better than the bellows of a blacksmith if one has not smelled the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa’s body which is like the aroma of musk combined with that of the bluish lotus flower. Indeed, such combinations are actually defeated by the aroma of Kṛṣṇa’s body.”

Mahāprabhu showed these ecstatic symptoms of love of God when He was mad with Kṛṣṇa-*prema*. He could not live one second without Kṛṣṇa. He was always fainting. When he regained consciousness He would again madly search for Kṛṣṇa.

Revelation by hearing

All these things have been expressed in Bengali or Sanskrit in Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta but the language in which they appear is not the vital factor. Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī declares that you do not need to know Bengali, Sanskrit or any language in order to understand the expressions of the Chaitanya-charitāmṛta. You only need to hear them. Their meanings will reveal themselves in your heart simply by hearing.

The Vedānta is a good example of this. Who knows the meaning of the Vedānta? No one. When we initiate students we give them various mantras like the Guru Mantra, the Gāyatrī Mantra, the Kṛṣṇa Mantra, etc. The students do not know the meaning of these mantras, and it is not necessary to know the meaning. If one meditates on these mantras, their meaning will reveal themselves in one’s heart.

One day Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī was a little disturbed by others who were criticizing him for using so many Sanskrit verses, so he said:

yebā nāhi bujhe keha, śunite śunite seha,
 ki adbhuta chaitanya-charita
 kṛṣṇe upajibe prīti, jānibe rasera rīti,
 śunilei baḍa haya hita
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 2.87)

How will those who do not know Bengali or Sanskrit understand the meanings of the verses of Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta? He advised, “Just try and hear the transcendental sound of the verses. Take them into your heart. They will reveal themselves automatically and you will see everything. They are not dead matter but a living substance. The transcendental sound vibration is also a living entity. You can feel it and you can see it.” *Yebā nāhi bujhe keha, śunite śunite seha*, “Even if one does not know the language, he will understand the subject matter simply by hearing the verses of the *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* attentively.”

When Rādhārāṇī heard the Name of Kṛṣṇa, She said:

sai kevē śunāila śyāma nāma

kānera bhitara diyā marame paśila go
 ākula karila mora prāṇa
 nā jāni kateka madhu śyāmanāme āche go
 vadana charite nāhi pāre
 japite japite nāma avaśa karila go
 kemane pāiba sa-i tāre
 nāma paratāpe yāra aichana karala go
 aṅgera paraśe kivā haya
 yekhāne vasati tāra nayane dekhiyā go
 yuvati dharama kaiche raya

“I don’t know who said these two syllables, ‘Kṛṣ-ṇa,’ but when they entered My heart, My whole body became intoxicated with that Name. I do not know whose Name it is and I do not know

how sweet it is but I need that association.” Rādhārāṇī became mad with the Name of Kṛṣṇa, and Chaṇḍīdās has expressed this in his poetry.

Transcendental transmission

Transcendental knowledge exists everywhere. It is like ether. Ether exists everywhere but we cannot see it. Transcendental knowledge, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, exists in everyone’s heart—Kṛṣṇa is in everyone’s heart. A *Mahā-Bhāgavat* devotee can see Kṛṣṇa’s full manifestation everywhere: *yāhā yāhā netra pāre tāhā Kṛṣṇa sphure*—a *Mahā-Bhāgavat* will see Kṛṣṇa wherever he looks. Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur and Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj were like this.

The transmission of transcendental knowledge from one’s heart to another’s is possible. We can understand this if we take the example of a radio or television set. What is inside these machines? Electronic components: transistors, tubes, and other material elements. Electricity is a material element and it is also present.

When everything is properly adjusted and the electrical current is made to flow, the television set will work. It will give sound, picture and everything. If such transmission is possible in this mundane world through electricity then wherever there is transcendental knowledge, that transcendental knowledge can also certainly appear. It is only necessary to make our hearts like a radio or a television receiver.

Living substance

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, “Everything exists in consciousness.” We have a transcendental body and a transcendental form. So if we have such a body why can’t transcendental knowledge reveal

itself in our heart? It can and we can feel it. We can see transcendental knowledge. It is a living entity, a living substance. It is only necessary to adjust ourselves like a receiver, or a television set, and then transcendental knowledge will reveal itself in our hearts.

Once Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur was asked if he had seen Kṛṣṇa. His reply was, “What benefit will you get by knowing whether I have seen Kṛṣṇa or not? How will that benefit you? I can show you Kṛṣṇa but you must make your heart like a receiver by doing what I tell you. It is not important to know whether I have seen Kṛṣṇa or not. If you want to know Kṛṣṇa and if you come through the proper channel you will see Him.” This was the answer given by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur. Mahāprabhu said this is real Kṛṣṇa consciousness, or the full-fledged theism of the *jīva*-soul. We must try and get it.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur has given a very nice expression:

ṭānīyā ānīte vṛkṣa e karkaśa mana
 nāśīla ihāra śobhā śuna sādhujana
 tomrā sakale hao e vṛkṣera māli
 śraddhā-vāri diyā punaḥ kara rūpaśālī
 (*Kalyāṇa Kalpataru*)

“I brought a wish-fulfilling tree, the *kalyāṇa kalpataru*, down to this world from the spiritual sky. As I was bringing it down it lost some of its beauty; but if you water it, take care of it and give it good nourishment it will reveal itself in your heart.” This is the benedictine tree of divine aspiration.

Sacrifice, service, dedication

Mahāprabhu delivered transcendental knowledge to the conditioned souls in order to rescue them from the illusory environment and to give them their real service life, which is a life full of

service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He said real liberation is *muktir hitvānyathā-rūpaṁ svarūpeṇa vyavasthitih*—it is more than simply liberation from the material world. Real *mukti* is when we get a life of complete and full service in the service world.

There are three planes of existence: the plane of exploitation, the plane of renunciation and the plane of dedication. We need to go to the plane of dedication and leave the plane of exploitation. The plane of renunciation is also not a suitable place to exist. There is nothing there except equilibrium and non-differentiation (abscissa). The plane of dedication is necessary and it is the most important plane for us. We need to go there; we need to sacrifice ourselves there.

All the Vedic mantras say we must sacrifice ourselves in the plane of dedication. In the Vedic mantra, “*svāhā*” means, “First dedicate yourself. See to your own self first.” Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.5): *ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur, ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ*, “The mind is the conditioned soul’s best friend or his worst enemy.” We must see to our own self first—charity begins at home.

Since we live in this illusory environment we cannot see Kṛṣṇa, His devotees, His glories, His Dhām, His Pastimes or His Name and fame. We cannot see anything of Kṛṣṇa in this environment because our eyes are covered by illusion. First it is necessary to clean our mirror and then we can see our figure in the mirror.

Mahāprabhu said: *cheto darpaṇa-mārjjanam*. What should you do first? When you return home after a long trip there must be dust in your room, so first clean your room. When you first get Kṛṣṇa consciousness, try and clean the mirror of your mind—*cheto darpaṇa-mārjjanam bhava-mahādāvāgni nirvāpanam*—then you will see your position. You will see what is happening in your mental and physical position. Clean up everything and

then you will see Mahāprabhu's conception, which is expressed in this *śloka* by Śrīla Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākur:

ārādhyo bhagavān brajeśa tanayas
 tad dhāma vṛndāvanam
 ramyā kāchid upāsanā braja-vadhū-
 vargeṇa yā kalpitā
 śrīmad-bhāgavataṁ pramāṇam-amalaṁ
 premā pumartho mahān
 śrī chaitanya mahāprabhur-matam-idaṁ
 tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ

Chapter 4

Preparing to Understand Kṛṣṇa's Transcendental Pastimes

tava vikṛīḍitaṁ kṛṣṇa, nṛnām parama-maṅgalam
karṇa-pīyūṣam āsādyā, tyajanty anya-sprhām janāḥ
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 11.6.44)

Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes are unlimited and unfathomable. They are completely beyond our material and limited conception. Although we can't understand anything of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes from here, they are nevertheless supremely auspicious for everyone and are our goal of life.

Devotee: Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda published the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in a summary form as the *Kṛṣṇa* books. There he described the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs*. He says if someone reads these Pastimes, or hears about them from a bona fide authority in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, all that is lusty in his heart will disappear. Could you please explain how this is possible?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes. The *śloka* you are referring to is this:

vikṛīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam cha viṣṇoḥ
śraddhānvito 'nuśṛṅyād atha varṇayed yaḥ
bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhya kāmam
hrd-rogam āśv apahinoty achireṇa dhīraḥ
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.33.39)

“Anyone who with faith hears or describes the Lord’s playful affairs with the young *gopīs* of Vṛndāvan will attain the Lord’s pure devotional service. Thus he will quickly become sober and conquer lust, the disease of the heart.”

But there is a serious condition given in this *śloka* and Śrīla Prabhupāda has explained what that condition is: that it is necessary to hear about Kṛṣṇa consciousness from a bona fide authority in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And when one hears from a bona fide authority, that authority will not at first explain Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* but will start by trying to turn you into a good “receiver” of those Pastimes. He will prepare you so you can properly receive and understand those Pastimes. When you become a good receiver, or when you are qualified to hear those Pastimes, that authority will explain the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs*. Otherwise you will not be able to understand that supramental theory. It will not come to you in a proper way.

Faith: the basis of all religions

When one receives transcendental knowledge from his Guru and is firm in his faith to his Guru, that person will begin to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Without solid faith we cannot do anything. Faith is the basis of all religions, not only Vaiṣṇavism. In Christianity, Islam and Buddhism, faith is the basis. It is necessary to have firm faith in great personalities like Śrīla B.R. Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura as well as our entire Guru-*paramparā*. It is necessary to have faith in the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa as expressed in *Śrīmad Bhāgavad-gītā*. Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself said to Uddhava in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.12.14-15):

tasmāt tvam uddhavotsṛjya,
chodanām pratichodanām

pravṛttiṁ cha nivṛttiṁ cha,
śrotavyaṁ śrutam eva cha

mām ekam eva śaraṇam,
ātmānaṁ sarva-dehinām
yāhi sarvātma-bhāvena,
mayā syā hy akuto-bhayaḥ

“Take shelter of Me and you will get the love, beauty, charm and ecstasy for which you are searching. But you must keep faith in My words or you will not get what you want.”

Another important verse is:

tasmād guruṁ prapadyeta, jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare cha niṣṇātāṁ, brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 11.3.21)

“The Guru must be qualified and the disciple must have faith. Then Gurudev will come forward and one can approach him with humility, honor and faith.”

Faith is necessary, otherwise it is not possible. After one's faith develops, the seed of the *bhakti-latā* can be planted by a *sādhu* in the fertile ground of a faithful heart, and with good nourishment it will grow.

No imitation

When one begins to practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness all his *anāṛthas*, or impurities, will leave him. Then he will be able to understand the Pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. But first his Guru must consider him a qualified candidate, then that spiritual authority will describe the Pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—not before. If we hear those Pastimes without being qualified they will destroy our spiritual *bhakti-latā-bīja*, the seed of the creeper of devotion.

They will kill us—that is they will destroy our spiritual life of devotion and we will fall into the hellish garbage of *sahajiyāism*, or imitationism.

There is another *śloka* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.30) that describes how Lord Śiva can digest an ocean of poison:

**naitat samācharej jātu, manasāpi hy anīśvaraḥ
vinaśyaty ācharan mauḍhyād, yathārudro 'bdhi-jaṁ viṣam**

If one does not hold such a powerful position as Lord Śiva and drinks an ocean of poison, he will be destroyed. The play of the Sweet Absolute is like that, it is beyond the lustful plane of this world. Since we live in the lustful plane it is necessary to cross that plane by our practices. Then we will be able to understand the Pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and transcendental consciousness will appear in us.

Since these are higher level topics, before we can approach them, it is necessary to change our consciousness from material to spiritual consciousness. It is necessary to pass through all the stages and varieties of material consciousness and come to the *brahma-bhutaḥ* stage and we can do that by devotion. Then we will become qualified to hear the Pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and transcendental consciousness will appear within us.

If anything wrong remains within us in that plane it is known as a shadow of lust. This will be quickly demolished and very soon we will get clean Kṛṣṇa-*prema*, or love, affection and service to Kṛṣṇa. When our enjoying mood and spirit disappears we will become qualified for the service of the *Vraja-gopīs*. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has given us this caution but one phrase is very important in the above *śloka* and that is, “the qualified spiritual master.”

Devotee: How can one get a qualified spiritual master?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: It depends on the *jīva*-soul's own fortune, or his *sukṛti*. Not everyone is able to get a qualified

spiritual master, but in the age of Kali there is special help for the conditioned souls, like the many instructions Lord Kṛṣṇa gives in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. There are also many incarnations and associates of the Lord who have appeared in this world. If we are able to get at least some light from them, we may search for a great personality from whom we can get the property of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And this searching spirit will come by reading the literature of the divine devotees of the Lord.

Devotee: During the battle of Kurukṣetra not only perfected souls saw Kṛṣṇa but everyone saw Him. Duryodhana and others also saw Kṛṣṇa. I am an ordinary person then why am I not able to see Kṛṣṇa?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: We can see Kṛṣṇa but what kind of Kṛṣṇa do you want to see? You are seeing Kṛṣṇa. It may be in a photo or may be in the form of a deity.

Devotee: In the human form just like everybody. How can I recognize the 'human' form of Kṛṣṇa?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes, we can see that if we will get that vision. Arjuna wanted to see the Viśvarūpa, Universal Form of Kṛṣṇa, but before showing that to Arjuna, Kṛṣṇa said, "You cannot see Me with these eyes so I am giving you divine eyes. Now you can see Me."

nā tu mām śakyase draṣṭum, anenaiva sva-chakṣuṣā
divyam dadāmi te chakṣuḥ, paśya me yogam aiśvaram
(*Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, 11.8)

In this *śloka* Kṛṣṇa said to Arjuna, "I am giving you transcendental vision, now you can see Me." If I get transcendental vision by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, then I can see Kṛṣṇa. If we wait a few years maybe through science we will be able to see many things. Through scientific research we can see many things and that is not transcendental, no doubt, but it is one kind of vision, which is recognized as 'transcendental' by mundane people.

Proper source

It is necessary to discover where our deficiency or disease is. After we hear about Kṛṣṇa consciousness, more and more hankering for Kṛṣṇa consciousness should develop within us. This hankering is a good sign but to get such hankering it is necessary to go to the proper source or the proper “university.” All universities are not the same. If you want to study physics, mathematics or chemistry you must go to a teacher who can teach you those subject matters. You must train under his guidance. If we want everything in a cheap way, you won’t get anything; you will only get imitation knowledge. You will get an imitation stone, not a real diamond.

If I feel it is necessary to elevate myself from my present position in this mundane environment to a higher stage, I must go to that type of qualified source who can take me from this world. I must practice under his guidance. When the time for higher study comes, we must go to the proper type of expert who can give us higher knowledge.

Devotee: My experience is that the lust within me is not disappearing. At times it is suppressed but again it comes back. I think it hasn’t actually disappeared. Is this correct?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes. It will completely disappear if we can keep ourselves in the plane of service; and the stage by stage process for doing that is given in the *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* (1.4.15-16):

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo ’tha bhajana-kriyā
tato ’nārtha-nivṛtṭiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā ruchiḥ tataḥ

Lust will remain with us up to the plane of *ruchi*. *Ruchi* means “taste.” Lust will disappear from our hearts when we become firmly situated in the plane of *ruchi*. When a special kind of attraction or taste for service to the Lord appears, I will be pro-

moted to that plane of service. Then lust will leave and *ruchi* will develop. Lust will exist below the standard of *ruchi*. Sometimes it will come and sometimes it will go, and sometimes it will be suppressed.

Conditions for growth

Lust has a very sweet name. It is called *mano-bhāva*. *Mano-bhāva* means it takes birth in the mind; it appears in the mind. If the mind is clear, lust will automatically go to Kṛṣṇa. Lust will not come to your mind. We can understand lust grows in the mind because if the mind is absent, or if your mind is disturbed, lust will not come to you. This is the proof lust grows in the mind. When the mind is absent, lust is not present. It will grow in your mind when a particular situation arises.

Once the demigods and *asuras* were churning the ocean. After they finished, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in the form of Mohinī Mūrti to distract the *asuras*. When Lord Śiva saw her, he chased after her. Normally Lord Śiva isn't like that, but a particular situation developed and he ran after Mohinī Mūrti.

This proves lust grows in the mind. Everyone can understand this if they will try. In the primary stage it is necessary to control lust; and in the final stage it will not appear because Kṛṣṇa is Reality the Beautiful. All attachment, attraction and service will automatically go to Kṛṣṇa. Love, affection and everything will go to Kṛṣṇa and lust will disappear. It will not come again. Before that it will come and go. But don't be fearful—it will be removed; it will be removed by *dharma-buddhi*. Lust can be removed by *dharma-buddhi*, and *dharma-buddhi* means religious intelligence.

Once Kṛṣṇa asked Mahārāj Yudhiṣṭhir about this subject. Kṛṣṇa is very naughty, and He asked Mahārāj Yudhiṣṭhir this question because Mahārāj Yudhiṣṭhir never told a lie. His question was very dangerous.

Kṛṣṇa said, “Your mother looks like an eighteen or twenty-

year-old girl. She is very beautiful. Have you ever been polluted in your mind by seeing her?”

Yudhiṣṭhir said, “Yes. Sometimes I am shocked to see her, but I control everything with my religious intelligence.” This answer is found in the *Mahābhārat*.

Hare Kṛṣṇa: all in all

Devotee: Could you please speak about Gāyatrī *dīkṣā* or second initiation?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: *Dīkṣā* means initiation. *Harinām dīkṣā* is the main initiation in our Vaiṣṇava religion. In the age of Kali-yuga, if you do not take second initiation—called Gāyatrī *dīkṣā* in our society—that will not be harmful if you took the *Harinām* Mahāmantra from a bona fide Guru.

Generally people take initiation from a bona fide Guru in order to save themselves from the material environment. The Gāyatrī *dīkṣā* mantra is for second initiation but the Lord Himself has given a special prescription for the age of Kali: the Lord has manifested Himself through the Guru-*paramparā* in the form of the *Harinām* Mahāmantra. There are no rules and regulations for chanting the *Harinām* Mahāmantra. This is stated in the Scriptures, but if I say this, I will be an offender to Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda, but the *śloka* is this (*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 15.110*):

ākṛṣṭiḥ kṛta-chetasām sumanasām
 uchchāṭanam chāmhasām
 āchaṇḍālam amūka-loka-sulabho
 vaśyaś cha mukti-śriyaḥ
 no dīkṣām na cha sat-kriyām na cha
 puraścharyām manāg ikṣate
 mantro 'yam rasanā-sṛḡ eva phalati
 śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmātmakah

The gist is, “You chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahāmantra and be happy.” This *śloka* is very strong. Śrīla Prabhupāda gave four directives; but what will happen if someone cannot follow these four directives?

Medicine and diet

Prabhupāda's instructions were, “If you want the proper results of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahāmantra, you must follow the four directives.” If you want good results in curing a disease, you must take medicine—but you must also follow a proper diet. Then the disease will go away very easily. This is the harmony between this *śloka* and Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions.

Prabhupāda said if you engage in nonsense activities and take the *Harinām* Mahāmantra it will take time before the results of chanting come to you. Prabhupāda considered everyone a sick man. A sick man must have a good diet. On some days I am taking only milk and sago (tapioca), because my health isn't always good. If I take too many fried foods my sugar will increase. So the diet must be appropriate.

Prabhupāda knew Western society has no rules and regulations of life. They hold a big license for enjoyment, and the name of that license is “teenager.” Society has given young people a big license for sense enjoyment and that is, “Oh, he is a teenager.” That means a teenager can do anything. The parents and the society are all giving enthusiasm for this.

But Prabhupāda wanted to control this. At least he thought it was necessary to give them the knowledge that they should not kill others. If a father has a lot of money and takes his teenager gambling and loses everything, that is not good. Prabhupāda said: “Do not kill others, do not gamble, and do not take drugs.” He also said don't take other intoxication or have illicit sex.

The life of this world is a sexual life. Through that, birth and death and happiness and sadness come to us. But you can use this

process in your practicing life. Sexual life can also give you the supreme benefit. You only have to be a devotee and serve Kṛṣṇa with your wife and children. That is legal and in this way you can proceed in your practicing life and difficulties will not come to you.

It is necessary to know the meaning of everything and for that a Guru is necessary. A Guru will say what is good and what is bad. Prabhupāda also said this. He had some experience of the Western world, but not full experience.

In the beginning Prabhupāda wanted to make a “Guardian ruled family” in which everyone in the family would happily worship Lord Kṛṣṇa. He wanted to make a Vaiṣṇava village in Māyāpur, but I have seen this was not possible.

Everything is within us

Many different kinds of activities are going on in the Western world and this influence is entering the Indian culture and destroying it. It is destroying the Vedic culture but what can be done? Kali is the master of this age. He is the guardian now. To avoid Kali’s influence is difficult but those who are Kṛṣṇa conscious must try to proceed under the shelter of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then other influences will not come.

An example is everyone takes food, but one who is Kṛṣṇa conscious does not take food. What do you think? Is he fasting? No. He takes *mahā-prasādam*. First he offers food to Lord Kṛṣṇa and then he takes the remnants of that *prasādam*. Then reactions won’t come to him. Kṛṣṇa says in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*:

**yajña-śiṣṭāśinaḥ santo, muchyante sarva-kilbiṣaiḥ
bhuñjate te tv agham pāpā, ye pachanty ātma-kāraṇāt**

“Whoever cooks for himself eats sin but when one prepares food for the Lord and offers it to Him, those preparations become transcendental because the Lord Himself is transcendental.”

The remnants of *prasādam* give us spiritual strength and life. This is the Kṛṣṇa conscious person's life. Everything is within you but you must be Kṛṣṇa conscious.

Valuable property

When we have a physical body, there will be physical problems. But everything is valuable if I can use it properly. Narottam Dās Ṭhākur said, *karmārpaṇe krodha bhakta-dveṣi jane, lobha sādhu-saṅge Hari-kathā (Śrī Prema-bhakti-chandrikā)*.

We can use everything for Kṛṣṇa consciousness; we must use what is within us wisely. This is the meaning of the four directives given by Śrīla Prabhupāda. But that *śloka—ākṛṣṭiḥ kṛta-chetasām sumanasām uchchāṭanam chārihasām*—should not give us enthusiasm to break the rules or to do anything and everything as we may like.

We are getting Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the cheapest way. Because of this we cannot understand what we are getting and what we are losing. If you pay a thousand dollars for one day you will think it is very valuable but if you get it very cheaply how will you understand its value? You offer one flower at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa or Gurudev and afterwards you throw it away. It may not be in an inauspicious place, but you throw it away.

Everything can produce spiritual property—*śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha*: experience by sound, touch, sight, taste and smell—all can give us good results if we adjust them in the proper way for our spiritual benefit.

Part Two

*Kṛṣṇa's Four
Super-excellent
Qualities*

Kṛṣṇa's Four Super-excellent Qualities

sarvādbhuta-chamatkāra-lilā-kallola-vāridhiḥ
atulya-madhura-prema-maṇḍita-priya-maṇḍalaḥ

tri-jagan-mānasākārṣi-muralī-kala-kūjitaḥ
asamānordhva-rūpa-śrī-vismāpita-charācharaḥ

lilā premṇā priyādhikyam, mādhyam veṇu-rūpayoḥ
ity asādhāraṇam proktaṁ, govindasya chatuṣṭayam

evam guṇās chatur-bhedās, chatuḥ-ṣaṣṭir udāhṛtāḥ
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 23.82-85)

Apart from His sixty transcendental qualities, Kṛṣṇa has additionally four transcendental qualities, which are not manifest even in the personality of Nārāyaṇ.

These are the four super-excellent qualities that belong exclusively to Kṛṣṇa and not to any other form of the Lord. Nārāyaṇ has sixty qualities and Baladev sixty-two. Kṛṣṇa has sixty-four:

- (1) *Kṛṣṇa is like an ocean filled with waves of Pastimes that evoke wonder within everyone.*
- (2) *In His activities of conjugal love, He is always surrounded by His dear devotees who possess unequalled love for Him.*
- (3) *He attracts the minds of all the three worlds by the melodious vibration of His flute.*
- (4) *His personal beauty and opulence are beyond compare. No one is equal to Him, and no one is greater than Him. He is so beautiful that He is called Kṛṣṇa.”*

Lord Kṛṣṇa is more exalted than ordinary living beings and demigods like Lord Śiva. He is even more exalted than His personal expansion Nārāyaṇ. In all, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has sixty-four transcendental qualities in full.

Chapter 1

Kṛṣṇa's Sweet Pastimes

sarvādbhuta-chamatkāra-līlā-kallola-vāridhiḥ

“Kṛṣṇa is like an ocean filled with waves of Pastimes that evoke wonder within everyone in the three worlds.”

Question: Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī says Kṛṣṇa has four super-excellent qualities that no other form of the Lord or incarnation has. Could you please explain what these are.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes. The first quality, *sarvādbhuta-chamatkāra-līlā-kallola-vāridhiḥ*, is that Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes are extremely sweet and relishable all the time. They are far superior to the Pastimes of any other form of the Lord, including Nārāyaṇ. No other form of the Lord has such wonderful Pastimes as Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes take place in Vṛndāvan Dhām with the Vraja-*gopīs*, the Vraja-*bālakas* and all the Vraja-*vāsīs*. They take place in effulgent, ecstatic and sweetest of sweet ways. Nārāyaṇ doesn't have these qualities in His Pastimes. These qualities don't exist in the Pastimes of Nārāyaṇ, Nārāyaṇ-*līlā*.

Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes begin from His birth. Nārāyaṇ doesn't have a birth. He is called the unborn. Whoever doesn't have a birth will not have pastimes associated with birth. He won't have a father or mother, or any relatives, so he won't have the pastimes associated with birth and childhood, etc.

Kṛṣṇa has a father, a mother, a brother and a sister and He also has many friends, lovers and paramours. He is always playing

with the cows and calves and enjoying with the opulent fruits and sweet smelling trees in the forests of Vṛndāvan. He gives pleasure to the Yamunā by bathing in her with the Vraja-*gopīs* and He has many Pastimes in the different *kuñjas* (forest groves) of Vṛndāvan. His life is a life full of sweet and wonderful Pastimes. Nārāyaṇ, the supreme creator Viṣṇu, doesn't have such extraordinary Pastimes.

When Kṛṣṇa was present on Earth all other forms of the Lord as well as the demigods and all the great sages were astonished to hear about His wonderful Pastimes. In fact all the transcendental and material worlds were astonished to see the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa who appeared as the son of Nanda Mahārāj.

Nanda Mahārāj, the foster father of Kṛṣṇa, was the king of a society of cowherd men but he didn't own a castle; he didn't have an opulent house or even any fixed residence. He moved from pasturing ground to pasturing ground making a thatched house or living in whatever place was available, but in his courtyard the Supreme Personality of Godhead played.

Brahmā's illusion

Once, Lord Brahmā came to join that play. When he came to join that play he became confused. He couldn't understand who Kṛṣṇa was. He thought, "Who is this boy playing here? I didn't create Him! What is going on here?"

Brahmā meditated and through meditation understood Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Personality of Godhead—but he couldn't believe it. He thought, "How could the Supreme Personality of Godhead be playing in the courtyard of Nanda Mahārāj just like an ordinary child? This is impossible!"

To see if Kṛṣṇa really was the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Brahmā stole all cows, calves and cowherd boys, put them in a cave and left.

The next day he returned and saw to his amazement every-

thing was the same. Kṛṣṇa was outside playing with everyone!

Brahmā became puzzled and thought, “I put everyone in a cave yesterday and left, and now they are here exactly like they were yesterday. Maybe there was a hole in the cave and they escaped?”

Brahmā went to the cave and saw Kṛṣṇa playing inside with everyone. He left the cave and again saw Kṛṣṇa playing outside and enjoying with all of His paraphernalia!

Then Brahmā understood. With folded hands he approached Kṛṣṇa and said, “O my Lord, I have done wrong. You are always giving consciousness and remembrance to me, and I am always forgetting You. I have forgotten You, and again You have checked me. Please forgive me for my offenses. I confess that anyone who says they know You, Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or Your unlimited Pastimes, can say so but I say I cannot understand anything about You with my mind, words or deeds.”

**jānanta eva jānantu, kiṁ bahūktyā na me prabho
manaso vapuṣo vācho, vaibhavaṁ tava go-charaḥ**
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.14.38)

“I can't say anything more. I can only say whoever says they know You or understand Your Pastimes can say so but I say I cannot understand even a small amount of Your unlimited Pastimes.”

This is one example of the first quality Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī mentions as belonging to Kṛṣṇa and not to any other incarnation or *Avatār*: Kṛṣṇa's super-excellent Pastimes in Vṛndāvan Dhām.

Brahmā at the gate

Another incident which shows the superiority of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes was when Brahmā went to Dwārakā to visit Kṛṣṇa.

When he arrived he saw many gatekeepers. Brahmā has a lot of power but he saw his power was useless there, otherwise he could have suddenly appeared before Kṛṣṇa.

Brahmā waited at the gate and asked the gatekeeper to inform Kṛṣṇa he had come. When the gatekeeper informed Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa replied, “Which Brahmā?”

Brahmā heard this through his mystic power, and thought, “What sort of nonsense question is that? I am Brahmā! Kṛṣṇa knows I am Brahmā.”

Then Brahmā—who is a gentleman—asked the gatekeeper to inform Kṛṣṇa he was the *chatur-mukhī* Brahmā, the Brahmā with four heads. When the gatekeeper informed Kṛṣṇa of this, Kṛṣṇa said, “Oh, that Brahmā! Bring him, bring him in.”

After Brahmā entered, Kṛṣṇa showed him a lot of respect. He said, “You have been waiting at the gate a long time. Please don’t mind. Come and take your seat. Why have you come?”

Brahmā said, “I will answer that question later but first tell me why did You ask, ‘Which Brahmā?’ Is there another Brahmā besides me?”

Kṛṣṇa gave a little smile and remembered all the Brahmās. There are many Brahmās. Each universe has its own Brahmā and there are many, many universes. One by one all the Brahmās came. One with four heads, one with eight heads, one with ten heads, one with a hundred heads and one with a thousand heads—many thousands of Brahmās came to see Kṛṣṇa, and one by one they all bowed to Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. Miraculously, accommodation for all of them took place and the four-headed Brahmā appeared like an insect in front of them. Then suddenly they all stood and asked, “Why are we so fortunate, O Lord, that You have remembered us? What is your wish?”

Kṛṣṇa said, “It isn’t anything important. I just wanted to see you. I haven’t seen you in a long time. Now you can all go back to your own abodes.”

After all the Brahmās left, the four-headed Lord Brahmā said,

“I have my question answered. I am very fortunate Your Pastimes are going on in my *brahmāṇḍa* (universe). I feel very fortunate indeed.” Brahmā offered many prayers to Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa gave him His mercy, and Brahmā returned happily to his abode.

These are the types of Pastimes that take place in Kṛṣṇa-*līlā*. Especially in Vṛndāvan Dhām they are all full of ecstasy and miraculous for everyone—*sarvādbhuta-chamatkāra-līlā-kallola-vāridhiḥ*. In Nārāyaṇ-*līlā* there aren't such Pastimes—with the cows, the Vraja-*bālakas*, the Vraja-*gopīs* and all the Vraja-*vāsīs*—which take place in Vṛndāvan Dhām twenty-four hours a day and which are so wonderful for everyone.

Inconceivable Pastimes

Mahāprabhu said that all of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes are inconceivable—*achintya-bhedābheda-tattva*. It is not possible to understand them from here. We live within the materially conscious world so it is not possible to understand transcendental consciousness and Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes from here.

Every evening in Purī, Mahāprabhu would talk with Svarūp Dāmodar and Rāmānanda Rāya in the Gambhīrā. One evening they were discussing the poetry of Chaṇḍīdās. Chaṇḍīdās said in one poem, “Whoever can conceive a garland can be made from the peaks of mountains with a tiny thread, or an elephant can be bound with a spider's web, can understand Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes.” You must believe you can bind an elephant with a spider's web before you can understand Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes.

When I first joined Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Mission he asked me if I could do two things. He said, “Can you not follow your mind, and can you follow my instructions?” I said, “Yes,” and Guru Mahārāj was happy. Then he said, “Can you forget the songs you know?” I was born in a Vaiṣṇava family and my father was a famous professional singer. Because of that I had some singing capacity and had memorized all of the Vaiṣṇava songs.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj tested me as to my singing style, meter, etc. by having me sing in front of Kṛṣṇa Dās Bābājī Mahārāj. I sang in front of Bābājī Mahārāj and he told Guru Mahārāj that I knew many songs and was a good singer.

A few days later Guru Mahārāj told me to forget those songs. He said they were *sahajiyā* songs and that condition would increase if I sang them. I said I would not sing those songs. He gave me a book named *Śaraṇāgati* and marked thirty-two songs. He asked me to memorize them within a week and said the songs of *madhura-rasa* would come later. He said, “They will reveal in your heart after *ruchi*. When you will get the position of *ruchi*, or taste, you can learn them.”

Rūpa Goswāmī showed this in a step-by-step sequence:

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo ’tha bhajana-kriyā
tato ’nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā ruchis tataḥ
(*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*, 1.4.15)

When it is necessary for the devotee to know what Vṛndāvan is, what Govardhan is, what the Yamunā is and what the forests of Vṛndāvan are and what the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* are, everything will reveal itself in the heart of a surrendered soul. This is the meaning of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s book, *Śrī Śrī Prapañna-jīvanāmṛtam*, the “Life Nectar of the Surrendered Souls.”

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s solace

When Kṛṣṇa met Rādhārāṇī and the Vraja-*gopīs* at Kurukṣetra, He said:

mayi bhaktir hi bhūtānām, amṛtatvāya kalpate
diṣṭyā yad āsīn mat-sneho, bhavatīnām mad-āpanaḥ
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.82.44)

“Devotional service unto Me is the only way to attain Me, My dear *gopīs*. The only reason for My returning to you is the love and affection you have attained for Me by good fortune.”

In India it is customary to go to Kurukṣetra during a solar eclipse and bathe in a lake there. People from all over India do this. Kṛṣṇa went to Kurukṣetra from Dwārakā with His queens, and Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* went from Vṛndāvan to meet Him.

When the *gopīs* met Kṛṣṇa's queens, the queens said to them, “We have not actually had Kṛṣṇa's presence. We think He is absentminded because we can't tell what He is thinking. When He is asleep and dreaming sometimes He calls, ‘O Lalitā, O Viśākhā, O Yaśodā, O Mother Rohiṇī!’ He says many things when He is dreaming. We have heard all the Vraja-*gopīs*' and Vraja-*bālakas*' names many times, and now you are here. Whether Kṛṣṇa lives in Mathurā or Dwārakā, He always remembers you.” Kṛṣṇa's queens glorified the Vraja-*gopīs* in this way.

When Kṛṣṇa first met the Vraja-*gopīs* in Kurukṣetra, they asked Him, “How long will we wait for You?”

He said, “In a short time, in a few years, I shall go back to Vṛndāvan. Don't think I won't go. I am bound to go. Don't think that I live here. Actually I live with all of you in Vṛndāvan. Every day you are getting My association in Vṛndāvan. What you are doing with Me is positive. You think it is negative, but it is positive. What I am doing here is negative. Every day in Vṛndāvan My Pastimes are going on and every day you are getting My association. You are giving Me nourishment every day and that is positive. Whatever you are doing there is positive.”

When Kṛṣṇa said this to the *gopīs*, *Mayi bhaktir hi bhūtānām* [Implying: “I shall come back to Vṛndāvan to see you.” —Ed.], they believed it. That is why Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī gave this *śloka* before the above one in the *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*:

eta tāñre kahi kṛṣṇa, vraje yāite satṛṣṇa,
 eka śloka paḍi' śunāila
 sei śloka śuni' rādhā, khāṇḍila sakala bādhā,
 kṛṣṇa-prāptye pratīti ha-ila

“While speaking to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Kṛṣṇa became very anxious to return to Vṛndāvan. He made Her listen to a verse which banished all Her difficulties and which assured Her that She would again attain Him.”

If you say something to someone in an exclusive way they will understand it. If you say to someone, “Yesterday we were taking *prasādam* together and you were giving me fried *subji* and we were talking and laughing”, if you say that in an exclusive way that person must believe it. He will think, “Yes, yes, that happened.”

So after hearing the following *śloka* Rādhārāṇī got good nourishment:

mayi bhaktir hi bhūtānām, amṛtatvāya kalpate
 diṣṭyā yad āsīn mat-sneho, bhavatīnām mad-āpanaḥ
 (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.82.44)

“If You, Rādhārāṇī, hear what I am saying You will see this is the truth. Every day I am living with You. Every day there are My Pastimes in Vṛndāvan and every day You are getting My association. Every day You are giving Me nourishment, and that is positive.”

Mother Śachī's joy

Mahāprabhu sent Dāmodar to Nabadwīp and instructed him to tell Mother Śachī, “Every day I come to take the *prasādam* you prepare for Me.” Mahāprabhu said: “Mother Śachī thinks she is dreaming. It is not a dream. I eat from her hand every day. You

tell her that and remind her that yesterday I came and took *prasādam* from her. She cooks many nice preparations for the Deities such as *śāka*, etc. and afterwards she gives them to Me and when I eat them she becomes very happy. But she thinks she is dreaming. When she sees the plate has nothing on it, she thinks she forgot to put food from the pots on the plate. She goes to the kitchen and sees there is no food in the pots and she thinks she is dreaming. The positive truth is that I ate everything. Remind My mother of that and she will believe it.” This is an example of telling someone something in an exclusive way.

Kṛṣṇa always lives in Vṛndāvan

When Kṛṣṇa said to Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs* that He goes to Vṛndāvan every day and plays with them, they believed it.

Actually Kṛṣṇa never leaves Vṛndāvan. He always lives in Vṛndāvan.

kṛṣṇo 'nyo yadu-sambhūto,
yaḥ pūrṇaḥ so 'sty ataḥ paraḥ
vṛndāvanam parityajya,
sa kvachin naiva gachchhati
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya 1.67)

Vṛndāvanam parityajya, sa kvachin naiva gachchhati. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī said Kṛṣṇa does not leave Vṛndāvan, not even for one moment. He lives there with the *Vraja-bālakas*, the *sakhīs* and the *gopīs*, etc. Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes are always going on in Vṛndāvan.

Ecstatic revelation

Every night with His two confidential associates, Svarūp Dāmodar and Rāmānanda Rāya, Mahāprabhu heard and tasted the ecstasy of Jayadev's *Gītā-Govinda*, the *Jagannātha-vallabha-*

nāṭaka, the *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* and the songs of Chaṇḍīdās and Vidyāpati:

chaṇḍīdāsa, vidyāpati, rāyera nāṭaka-gīti,
 karṇāmṛta, śrī-gīta-govinda
 svarūpa-rāmānanda-sane, mahāprabhu rātri-dine,
 gāya, śune—parama ānanda
 (*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 2.77*)

They were able to get and to take the real and direct association of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. After Jayadev, Vidyāpati and Chaṇḍīdās, only Rūpa Goswāmī could sing those types of songs.

Once you start expressing Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* you cannot stop. There is so much ecstasy you cannot stop.

madhuram madhuram vapur asya vibhor
 madhuram madhuram vadanam madhuram
 madhu-gandhi mṛdu-smitam etad aho
 madhuram madhuram madhuram madhuram
 (*Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta, by Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura*)

When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would express Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* he would forget who was in front of him. As he was speaking he would forget who was there, who was hearing.

Guru Mahārāj gives the meaning of the Gāyatrī Mantram

One day I said to Guru Mahārāj, “You are giving the meaning of the Gāyatrī Mantram, the *Ṛg Veda* mantra, etc., and the *Vedas* say one isn’t supposed to give their meaning. It is a private matter, so why are you giving it?”

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, “O Govinda Mahārāj, what are you thinking? What expressions and ideas come from the Gāyatrī Mantram? We are giving the Gāyatrī Mantram to others and they will meditate on it and feel it after reaching perfection. No

one is giving anything before perfection. If I don't give it, I think no one will give it in the future. No one has given it before so I feel I should give it. It is necessary for the conditioned souls. Many devotees want to know the meaning, so I am giving it.”

The meaning was published from the San Jose Maṭh in the *Guardian of Devotion*. Everyone in our *sampradāya* was amazed to see it. What Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave is extremely worshipable: the inner meaning of the Gāyatrī Mantram, etc. He knew everything and he was the only one who knew everything.

Once he told he went to feed the cows in the field and when he sat underneath a tree and was meditating on the Gāyatrī Mantram he suddenly saw the whole Viśvarūp form of the Lord. The whole effulgence of the Gāyatrī Mantram became manifest before him. That was his first experience with the Gāyatrī Mantram.

After that, Guru Mahārāj had many experiences but if he would tell them, it would be difficult for others to understand. That is, if you don't have a good instrument for receiving, how will you receive it? The wall cannot receive radio waves. Our insides are not adjusted to receive transcendental knowledge. It may exist within us but we are not adjusted to receive it. If we can fine-tune or adjust ourselves, everything will be revealed in our heart.

hṛdaya haite bale jihvāra agrete chale
 śabda-rūpe nāche anukṣaṇa
 kaṇṭhe more bhaṅge svāra, aṅga kaṅpe thara thara
 sthira haite nā pāre charaṇa
 (Śaraṇāgati, by Śrī Bhaktivinod Thākura)

When we are internally adjusted to receive transcendental knowledge the mantra will forcefully come and dance on our tongue. This is the real dance of Mahāprabhu or the real dance of the Holy Name.

tuṇḍe tāṇḍavinī ratim vitanute tuṇḍāvalī-labdhaye
 karṇa-kroḍa-kaḍambinī ghaṭayate karṇārbudebhyaḥ sprhām
 chetaḥ-prāṅgaṇa-saṅginī vijayate sarvendriyāṇām kṛtim
 no jāne janitā kiyadbhir amṛtaiḥ kṛṣṇeti varṇa-dvayī
 (*Vidagdha-mādhava*, 1.15)

When Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī expressed these glories of the Holy Name, Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākur said, “I have never heard this type of *śloka* describing the Holy Name before. I have heard many glories of the Holy Name, but I never heard this type of *śloka*.” Haridās Ṭhākur said this, and he was a *siddha mahātmā* (perfected soul).

“When we are chanting, the mantra is revealing itself on our tongue. At that time an eagerness for millions of tongues will come to us. If we will get those we will be satisfied. We are hankering for millions of ears when we hear of the real form of Kṛṣṇa. *Chetaḥ-prāṅgaṇa-saṅginī vijayate sarvendriyāṇām kṛtim*. When the Mahāmantra dances in our mind, the mind is dancing.”

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur said that when the Holy Name is revealing on the mental plane, devastation comes to the mind through the presence of Kṛṣṇa-*Nāma*. That is real Kṛṣṇa-*Nāma*.

Chapter 2

Kṛṣṇa's Wonderful Associates

atulya-madhura-prema-maṇḍita-priya-maṇḍalaḥ

“In His activities of conjugal love He is always surrounded by His dear devotees who possess unequaled love for Him.”

The next quality Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī explains that belongs exclusively to Kṛṣṇa and not to any other form of the Lord is that Kṛṣṇa has wonderful associates who are always serving Him with love and affection: *atulya-madhura-prema-maṇḍita-priya-maṇḍalaḥ*. All the *Vraja-vāsīs* and associates of Kṛṣṇa in Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām give pleasure to Kṛṣṇa's heart twenty-four hours a day with their miraculous service, miraculous faith and miraculous love. Nārāyaṇ and other incarnations of the Lord do not have this quality. They do not have such an all-attractive character that attracts such spontaneous loving devotional affection from Their servitors.

Five types of relationships

In Vṛndāvan Dhām, Kṛṣṇa is always served by His devotees with five types of divine relationships: *śānta-rasa*, *dāsya-rasa*, *sakhya-rasa*, *vātsalya-rasa* and *madhura-rasa*.

In *sakhyā-rasa*, Kṛṣṇa’s friends always try to give pleasure to His heart as if they are in an equal position with Him. When they eat something and feel it is very good, even if it is half-eaten, they give it to Kṛṣṇa saying, “O Kṛṣṇa, this apple is very good, taste it. This *śa* is so nice, please try it. This mango is wonderful, take it!” Or, “This type of play is very nice. Let’s play.” They play with Kṛṣṇa and feel Kṛṣṇa and themselves are equal—only that Kṛṣṇa is a little more special.

In Govardhan-*dharāṇ-līlā* Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhan Hill and held it for seven days. All the cowherd boys, cowherd men and even the cowherd girls took sticks to help Him.

They thought, “Kṛṣṇa has taken the whole of Govardhan Hill in His hand. He has some special power, no doubt, but still we must help Him.”

Parental service: *vātsalya-rasa*

Everyone has heard how much Kṛṣṇa’s father and mother—Nanda Mahārāj and Yaśodāmayī—and Rohiṇī serve Him. An example of this intense servitorship is shown in the *śloka* of Śrī *Dāmodarāṣṭakam*:

rudantaṁ muhur netra-yugmaṁ mṛjantaṁ
karāmbhoja-yugmena sātāṅka-netram
muhuḥ śvāsa-kampa-trirekhāṅka-kaṇṭha-
sthita-graiva-dāmodaraṁ bhakti-baddham

The expression in this *śloka* is very nice. Mother Yaśodā is angry. She is chasing Kṛṣṇa and wants to capture Him and beat Him for being naughty. Kṛṣṇa is running and looking over His shoulder and then can’t see anymore because His eyes are full of tears. He is so afraid, *rudantaṁ muhur netra-yugmaṁ mṛjantam*. He is out of breath and so tired. He is suffering so much, *muhuḥ śvāsa-kampā-trirekhāṅka-kaṇṭha*.

You won't see these qualities in the Pastimes of Nārāyaṇ-*līlā*. Kṛṣṇa is *Sach-chid-ānanda-vigraha*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and this is vividly expressed in other *ślokas* of Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam. The last verse is especially nice:

namas te 'stu dāmne sphurad-dīpti-dhāmne
 tvadīyodarāyātha viśvasya dhāmne
 namo rādhikāyai tvadīya-priyāyai
 namo 'nanta-līlāya devāya tubhyam

Mother Yaśodā wants to bind Kṛṣṇa with a rope. An effulgence has come from that rope and the author says, "I bow down to that rope," *namas te 'stu dāmne sphurad-dīpti-dhāmne*. Who has Mother Yaśodā bound? She has bound the Creator of the Whole Creation with a rope. Mother Yaśodā has bound Kṛṣṇa's belly with a rope! These are the Pastimes of *vātsalya-rasa* which take place in Vṛndāvan Dhām between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees.

Madhura-rasa, the Pastimes of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī

In the last *śloka* of *Dāmodarāṣṭakam* the author mentions *madhura-rasa*, the conjugal Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. He says, *Namo Rādhikāyai tvadīya-priyāyai, namo 'nanta-līlāya Devāya tubhyam*—"I do not want to say anything more; I can only say I bow to Rādhikā and the Supreme Lord. I can't say anything about Your transcendental Pastimes which are manifest in this material world with Your divine associates. Your Pastimes are infinite. There is no end and no beginning to them."

Here the author also indicates the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī: "I can't say anything more about Rādhārāṇī's Pastimes. They are beginningless and continue twenty-four hours a day with Her Lord, Kṛṣṇa, Her *prāṇa-vallabha*, Her heart and soul. She is the dearest of the dearest and nearest of the nearest."

More examples of *madhura-rasa*

Rādhārāṇī's service is briefly expressed in the above *śloka*. Śrīla Baladev Vidyābhūṣaṇ has given another very nice *śloka*:

**govindābhidha mandirāśrīta
padam hastastha ratnadivat
tattvam tattva vidhuttama
kṣititale yo darśayan chakratuḥ**

He says, "If one holds a jewel high in his hand he can show the beauty of that jewel by slowly turning its various facets. Rūpa and Sanātan Goswāmīs have each held the beautiful jewel who is known by the Name of Govinda, and who is always served by the Supreme Goddess of Fortune, high in their hands and shown His beautiful form to the world."

Only Rādhārāṇī can do this type of service. Rūpa and Sanātan Goswāmīs can also do it; but without Rādhārāṇī's mercy no one can do it. No one can give a second example of this type of exclusive service. She is Her own example.

A sparkling light of the jeweled Pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa has come to this world through Jayadev Goswāmī, Chaṇḍīdās, Rūpa Goswāmī, Rāmānanda Rāya and from various Goswāmīs. A small amount of sparkling light comes to this world and through that we understand a very little.

We can't conceive of Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes and of Kṛṣṇa's relations with His devotees that take place in *madhura-rasa* in Vṛndāvan Dhām. There are three groups of Vraja-*gopīs*. One is the adolescent group, another is mature and married and the third is the paramour group. We cannot conceive of these Pastimes from our present position. Jayadev Goswāmī has written many *ślokas* about Rādhārāṇī's Pastimes and they are of the first group, the adolescent group, and it is best not to try and explain them.

Loving affection: the law of Vṛndāvan

Another example of *madhura-rasa* with the Vraja-*gopīs* is shown in a verse composed by Prabodhānanda Saraswatī. In this verse Kṛṣṇa says, “When Rādhārāṇī walks in front of Me and I feel a little breeze from Her cloth I think, ‘Oh, I am so fortunate.’”

yasyāḥ kadāpi vasanāñchala-khelanottha-
dhanyātidhanya-pavanena kṛtārthamānī
yogīndra-durgama-gatir madhusūdano 'pi
tasyāḥ namo 'stu vṛṣabhānubhuvodiṣe 'pi

Prabodhānanda Saraswatī composed this miraculous *śloka*. The meaning is, “I bow to the direction where Rādhārāṇī lives—whether it is in the East or the West—I bow to that direction. I do not bow to Her lotus feet or Her house but only to the direction where Her father’s house is.” When Kṛṣṇa feels a little breeze from Rādhārāṇī’s cloth He feels this way.

Every day in Vṛndāvan, Rādhārāṇī would distribute food to the Vraja-*bālakas* by the order of Mother Yaśodā. Rādhārāṇī cooked one item for Kṛṣṇa because Durvāsā Muni had very mercifully given Her a boon that whoever She cooked for would get a long life:

durvāsāra ṭhāṇi teṅho pāñāchena vara
amṛta ha-ite pāka tānra adhika madhura
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya 6.116)

Mother Yaśodā knew this, so every day she requested Jaṭilā and Kuṭilā to send their sister-in-law to make a *subji* for Kṛṣṇa. When Rādhārāṇī would distribute that, a breeze from Her cloth would come to Kṛṣṇa, and He would feel, “Oh, I am so fortunate. I am so happy.” Kṛṣṇa feels His life is blessed and fulfilled by feeling

only a little breeze from Rādhārāṇī's cloth. He thinks this breeze inspires Him so much that He wants to feel it again and again. He is fully satisfied by feeling the breeze from Rādhārāṇī's cloth. Kṛṣṇa gets these feelings from only the breeze of Rādhārāṇī's cloth so you can imagine how much Kṛṣṇa must be satisfied by getting Her intimate association. This is *madhura-rasa*.

These are the types of Pastimes that take place between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī and Her associates in Vṛndāvan Dhām. They take place in *madhura-rasa* twenty-four hours a day in Govardhan, Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Śyāma Kuṇḍa, the Mānasa-gaṅgā, the Yamunā and in Her house. They take place everywhere in Vṛndāvan Dhām.

Nārāyaṇ can't taste these Pastimes. They won't come to His taste. If they would He would feel they are bitter. Nārāyaṇ lives by rules and regulations. He is a law-abiding personality. In Vṛndāvan Dhām the only law is love and affection, or Kṛṣṇa-*prema*.

Chapter 3

Kṛṣṇa's Transcendental Flute

trijagan-mānasākārṣi-muralī-kala-kūjitaḥ

*“He attracts the minds of all three worlds
by the melodious vibration of His flute.”*

The third quality mentioned by Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī as belonging exclusively to Kṛṣṇa and not to any other form of the Lord is that Kṛṣṇa is the player of the transcendental flute: *trijagan-mānasākārṣi-muralī-kala-kūjitaḥ*.

The transcendental sound that comes from Kṛṣṇa's flute is so sweet it attracts all the universes; and there are millions and millions of universes in the sky. Everyone becomes half-mad and crazy when they hear the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. The courtyard looks like the ocean, and the ocean like the courtyard. No one can conceive where this very sweet sound vibration is coming from. Brahmā and others, who are all expert about *śabda*, sound, are stunned to hear the miraculous sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

Service attraction

The transcendental sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute attracts His dear servitors' hearts according to their own service mood. From only one

sound His various servitors get a variety of inspirations. Mother Yaśodā hears, “O Mother, I am hungry. Give Me some milk and butter, etc.” *Yaśodā śūnye nanī dei mā bale, haila goṣṭhera belā śunaye rākhāle*. The cowherd boys hear, “Kṛṣṇa wants to play with us. He wants our association.” Rādhārāṇī hears something else and others hear something different. Everyone hears the same sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute according to their own service mood and everyone is simply astonished and amazed to hear the miraculous sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute.

The original song is the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute

Once a lady from Russia asked me if it was alright to play music for Kṛṣṇa. She was very creative but she said she never used the Name of Kṛṣṇa in her music. She wanted to know if it is possible to make advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness by playing music for Kṛṣṇa even though she never mentioned Kṛṣṇa’s Name.

I told her in order to get the highest benefit of life it is necessary to make contact with the original sound vibration and that sound is the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute. I quoted the following *śloka* of Dhruva Mahārāj:

sthānābhilāṣī tapasi sthito ’haṁ
tvām prāptavān deva-munīndra-guhyam
kāchaṁ vichinvann api divya-ratnaṁ
svāmin kṛtārtho ’smi varam na yāche

(*Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, 7.28)

Quoted in *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Madhya* 22.42)

When Viṣṇu asked Dhruva Mahārāj to accept a boon from Him Dhruva Mahārāj said, “Why should I accept a boon from You? You are like a jewel standing before me and I have come searching for a broken piece of glass. When I see You standing before

me, You appear like a jewel. Why should I accept a broken piece of glass?"

This is the real song and this is the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. All vibrations in this material world come from Kṛṣṇa's flute and that vibration travels everywhere. It is not only in this world but it is in the transcendental world as well. All songs in this world are illuminated and activated by the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

Illumination and activation

Through the effulgence of light we can see everything but we can't see the effulgence's source, the original light. When we are connected with the original light we automatically see the effulgence. It is not necessary to try and see only the effulgence separately from the original light. This idea is stated in another way in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.20.19):

**na rarājodupaś channaḥ, sva-jyotsnā-rājitair ghanaiḥ
aham-matyā bhāsitayā, sva-bhāsā puruṣo yathā**

"When a cloud covers the moon we cannot see the moon but we see the cloud because of the effulgence of the moon."

The original sound is the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute in the transcendental world and because of this all songs in this world are illuminated and activated. Everything in this world is activated by the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

When we get a connection with the original sound, the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute, everything in this world becomes *sach-chid-ānanda-maya*, perfect. Sometimes we try to get pleasure here through songs, and we may get ecstatic feelings, but they are nothing compared to the feelings that come from the transcendental song of Kṛṣṇa's flute. Once we get that connection any song we sing must be for the glorification of Kṛṣṇa, because the original song of everything comes from Kṛṣṇa's flute.

Tānsen's Guru

Once there was a famous singer in India named Tānsen. When he sang, a cloud would form in the sky, fire would manifest and rain would fall. He was the king's musician and a great singer. His Guru was Haridās. King Akbar asked Tānsen where he had learned to sing so nicely.

Tānsen said he had not really learned anything but had only learned a small percentage from his Guru, Haridās. He said, "If you hear my Guru sing, you will never forget it."

Akbar asked Tānsen if he could bring his Guru to him but Tānsen said his Guru would never come to a king's assembly because he did not live within the jurisdiction of a king. He lived within the Lord's jurisdiction.

Akbar was very intelligent and said, "I want to see your Guru at least one time. Can you take me to him?"

Tānsen said, "You can see my Guru but you can't hear his song. His song is a transcendental song and you are not qualified to hear that song. His mercy has given me some power and through that everything is revealed to me."

Still, Akbar wanted to hear Haridās sing.

Haridās sang early in the morning. He glorified Kṛṣṇa and lived in a thatched hut, so Akbar dressed in ordinary clothes and went to hear him sing. After Akbar heard Haridās sing he was stunned. He fell at Haridās' feet.

Later Haridās' Guru, Śivajī, gave his entire kingdom to Haridās. Haridās said he had taken his kingdom because he was Śivajī's disciple and Śivajī wanted him to take it. Haridās asked Akbar to try and protect everything nicely.

This is a long story but the meaning is that through the light of the transcendental sound vibration everything in this world is activated. All songs in this world are activated by the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. All sounds are transmitted through ether, and ether is mundane. If we can connect our songs with the transenden-

tal song, which means the transcendental sound vibration of Kṛṣṇa's flute, our songs will become transcendental.

Sound: shadow and reality

It is said in the Vedic Scriptures that sound is *śabda-brahma*—it is a spiritual vibration. It exists on the borderline of Goloka. When sound in this world gets a connection with the spiritual world, it must go to Kṛṣṇa. Here all sounds come through the flute of Kṛṣṇa but they are shadow sounds. When the shadow takes form, it becomes reality. It has pure form. Since the mere shadow can give us so much pleasure, how much pleasure can the real song give us? Because of this we need to search for that reality.

It is also said in the *Vedas* that sound is the origin of the *Vedas* and that the *Vedas* are a transcendental sound vibration, not a mundane vibration. They are called *sat-guṇa* or *veda-guṇa*. Everything in this world comes through transcendental vibrations and everything here is activated by those vibrations which come from Kṛṣṇa's flute.

Kṛṣṇa's flute is the original song and the life of the whole creation. Song is good no doubt and if it is good here it must be even better there. We can say Kṛṣṇa's flute song is the super-most excellent song.

Stunned by sound

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī has composed many *śloka*s glorifying the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

rundhann ambu-bhṛtaś chamatkṛti-param
 kurvvan muhus tumburuṁ
 dhyānād antarayan sanandana-mukhān
 vismāpayan vedhasam

autsukyāvalibhir baliṁ chaṭulayan
bhogīndram āghūrṇayan
bhindann aṇḍa-kaṭāha-bhittim abhito
babhrāma vaṁśī-dhvaniḥ
(Vidagdha-mādhava 1.27)

“The sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute travels throughout the entire transcendental and material worlds. It encompasses everything with joy, ecstasy, beauty and charm. Everything takes form from that wonderful sound. When Lord Brahmā hears the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute, he wonders where it comes from. Everyone is astonished to hear the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute. Anantadev, who holds the Earth on his head, turns his head after hearing the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute.”

Gāyatrī, the flute-song

When Lord Brahmā took birth from the lotus flower born from the navel of Lord Viṣṇu he saw everything was dark. He tried to remember who he was and where he had come from but he couldn’t understand anything. Then he heard one sound and that was “*tapa*.” He was awakened by that sound and began to search where it had come from and which sound he should meditate on. Then he heard the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute and that was the sound of the Gāyatrī Mantram.

Guru Mahārāj said, *Gāyatrī muraliṣṭa-kīrttana-dhanam Rādhāpadam dhīmahī*. The Gāyatrī Mantram is the original song of Kṛṣṇa’s flute. We should try and connect with that song. Songs are good here but if we are addicted to mundane songs we will be cheated. When we know that songs are very beautiful, tasteful and charming here we should try and connect with the original song.

The flute sings the glories of Śrī Rādhā

The extreme explanation of Kṛṣṇa’s flute is given by Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

He said, “Everything comes from the flute of Kṛṣṇa. All mantras including the whole Gāyatrī Mantram come from Kṛṣṇa's flute. *Gāyatrī muraliṣṭa-kīrttana-dhanam Rādhāpadaṁ dhīmahi*. What is the heart of the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute? The heart of that sound is Rādhārāṇī because without Rādhārāṇī Kṛṣṇa cannot think of anything.

rāya kahe—kṛṣṇa haya ‘dhīra-lalita’
nirantara kāma-kṛīḍā—yānhāra charita
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 8.187)

Kṛṣṇa is always playing with Rādhārāṇī, so without Rādhārāṇī, He cannot think of anything. Therefore Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, “If you want to meditate on the Gāyatrī Mantra, take shelter of the lotus feet of Rādhārāṇī. You need to meditate on the Gāyatrī Mantra to fulfill your spiritual desires. You will be supremely benefited if you try to understand the meaning of the Gāyatrī Mantra.”

Gāyatrī muraliṣṭa-kīrttana-dhanam. *Muralī* means “flute,” and *iṣṭa* means “what one wants to express,” and that is the glories of Rādhārāṇī, the beauty of Rādhārāṇī and everything concerning Rādhārāṇī. Everything about Rādhārāṇī has come from the flute-song of Kṛṣṇa. The Gāyatrī Mantra has simultaneously come from the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. The whole Gāyatrī Mantra has given us this inspiration.

Prachodayāt means: what you meditate on must go to the lotus feet of Rādhārāṇī. Go there. Go where you will get gold and diamonds. Go to the gold mine for gold. Go to the diamond mine for diamonds. Don't go to the coal mine to search for gold. If you want gold, go to the gold mine. You won't get it in the market. It is in a special and protected area guarded by Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī and others.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said:

śrī-gaurānumataṁ svarūpa-viditaṁ rūpāgrajenādṛtaṁ
 rūpādyaiḥ pariveśitaṁ raghu-gaṇair āsvāditaṁ sevitaṁ
 jīvādyair abhiraḥṣitaṁ śuka-śiva-brahmādi-sammānitaṁ
 śrī-rādhā-pada-sevanāmṛtam aho tad dātum iśo bhavān
 (Śrīmad Bhaktivinod-viraha Daśakam—
 Prayers in Separation of Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura)

If you want the property of service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, service to your lover Kṛṣṇa, surrender to Rādhārāṇī and go there.

How to approach Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī

When Kṛṣṇa would enter the forest of Vṛndāvan playing His flute He would beautify it with the marks of His footprints. He had a peacock feather ornament on His head, blue *karṇikāra* flowers on His ears, a yellow garment as brilliant as gold and a garland made of Vṛndāvan wild flowers.

As He would play His flute birds would rise to the top of the trees, stop their singing and simply listen to Him playing His flute.

prāyo batāmba vihaḡā munayo vane 'smin
 kṛṣṇeḡṣitaṁ tad-uditaṁ kala-veṇu-gītam
 āruhya ye druma-bhujān ruchira-pravālān
 śṛṇvanti mīlita-dṛśo vigaṡānya-vāchāḥ
 (Śrīmad-Bhāḡavatam, 10.21.14)

When I first came to the Maṡḡ I would sometimes do exercises as I had a lot of energy. Guru Mahārāj told me it wasn't necessary to do exercises. He said if I took a shovel and worked in the garden I would get plenty of exercise.

I planted many fruit trees—mango, guava, papaya, jackfruit, fig, chico and many banana trees. Then so many birds came and they are still there. There are so many different varieties and they

are always singing beautiful songs. I can see them all day long from my veranda. They play happily all day and live in the peaceful environment of the Maṭh. They never quarrel and even sometimes they are completely silent. I think this is all the mercy of Guru Mahārāj.

As Kṛṣṇa would wander, the *gopīs* would lament that the bamboo flute was enjoying the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips, which was meant for them, *gopyaḥ kim ācharad ayam kuśalam sma veṇur, Dāmodarādhara-sudhām api gopikānām (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.21.9)* and the peacocks would dance madly when they heard the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

**vṛndāvanam sakhi bhuvo vitanoti kīrtim
yad devakī-suta-padāmbuja-labdha-lakṣmi
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.21.10)**

The deer would come and worship Kṛṣṇa when they would hear the sweet sound of His flute.

**dhanyāḥ sma mūḍha-gatayo 'pi hariṇya etā
yā nanda-nandanam upātta-vichitra-veśam
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.21.11)**

And the cows and calves would drink the nectar flowing out of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

**gāvaś cha kṛṣṇa-mukha-nirgata-veṇu-gīta,
pīyūṣam uttabhita-karṇa-putaiḥ pibantyaḥ
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.21.13)**

**nadyas tadā tad upadhārya mukunda-gītam
āvarta-lakṣita-manobhava-bhagna-vegāḥ
āliṅgana-sthagitam ūrmi-bhujair murārer
grhṇanti pāda-yugalam kamalopahārāḥ
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.21.15)**

When the rivers of Vṛndāvan would hear Kṛṣṇa's flute their minds would become agitated and the flow of their currents would break. Their water would rush in whirlpools, and with outstretched arms they would try to embrace Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet with offerings of lotus flowers.

Gāyatrī Mantram, the original song of Kṛṣṇa's flute

This morning when I went down to attend *ārati* I saw our Maṭh's logo written on the Temple. I noticed how nicely it was decorating the Temple. In the center is a lotus flower (the disciple) which is sheltered in the water of Śrī Gurudev from the shining sun of *Om*, or Kṛṣṇa. Below is the flute of Kṛṣṇa with its divine sound, the song of liberation, descending into this world. Around the outside there is one line from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's explanation of the Gāyatrī Mantra: *Gāyatrī muralīṣṭa kīrttana-dhanam Rādhāpadam-dhīmahi.*

Singing, dancing, liberation

Gāyatrī means *gānāt trāyate iti Gāyatrī*, which means a type of song which if you sing you will get liberation. This is such a nice process. Simply by singing and dancing you will get liberation! This is the Gāyatrī Mantra and this is the original sound, the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute: *gānāt trāyate.*

Nowhere else in the material world has anyone ever given such a nice explanation of the transcendental sound vibration coming from Kṛṣṇa's flute. No religion can make this statement: simply chant and dance and you will get liberation!

Gāyatrī: Rādhā-dāsyam

What is the form of the Gāyatrī Mantra? Guru Mahārāj said, *muralīṣṭa kīrttana-dhanam.* *Muralī* means the flute of Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa's flute is for singing. It is not for blasting or for making violence. It is for making the heart peaceful—and a very sweet sound has come from Kṛṣṇa's flute.

What does Kṛṣṇa's flute sing? If you sing you must have a purpose, a target, a meter or a regulated flow and that target is the Name of Rādhārāṇī. No other sound comes from Kṛṣṇa's flute, only “Rādhe, Rādhe, Rādhe, Rādhe, Rādhe;” and that sound comes in a variety of different ways.

We can conceive something about the character of Kṛṣṇa's flute from Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī's character. Every day in Vṛndāvan he sang:

**rādhe vṛndāvana-vilāsinī rādhe rādhe
rādhe kanu-mano mohinī rādhe rādhe
rādhe aṣṭa-sakhīra śiromaṇi rādhe rādhe**

Vṛndāvana-vilāsinī Rādhe Rādhe, Rādhe kanu-mano mohinī, Rādhe Rādhe. The last words are *Rādhe, Rādhe*. Every day in the Rādhā-Dāmodar Temple in Vṛndāvan they sing this song. Every day while walking on the road or sitting at his *bhajan* place Śrīla Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj would sing this song. This sound is the only sound that comes from Kṛṣṇa's flute and it has manifested itself and spread itself all over the transcendental and material worlds. We get this information from the *Rāsa-līlā* of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The original call of Kṛṣṇa's flute is a call for everyone

When Kṛṣṇa wants to begin the *Rāsa* Dance He first calls the *gopīs* by playing His flute. Only one call comes from Kṛṣṇa's flute and that is a clarion call.

Once a Vaiṣṇava used the term “Clarion Call.” What does this term mean?

Devotee: It was a term used in the Middle Ages to wake the

troops up for battle. It isn't used much anymore. It also means a loud and clear call. Any call that is loud and clear is a clarion call.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Very good! What is its origin?

Devotee: It comes from the Christian tradition.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: That is very nice but it is not their father's property. It is the property of all the *jīva*-souls. It is not the property of Hindus or Christians, or anyone. It is the property of all the *jīva*-souls. The original clarion call of Kṛṣṇa's flute is a call for everyone.

How can we understand this? We understand this through Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura. Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura wrote in one song, *jīva jāgo, jīva jāgo, Gaurachānda bole*. Is this the clarion call or not? *Kota nidrā jāo māyā-pisāchīra kole*. We are asleep and the clarion call comes and says, "Wake up, wake up you sleeping soul! You are sleeping in the lap of illusion."

The *Upaniṣads* also say, *uttiṣṭhata jāgrata prāpya varān nibodhata*, "Wake up, arise and search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Reality the Beautiful, where you will get love for Kṛṣṇa!"

The *Upaniṣads*, Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura and Kṛṣṇa's flute, all—the gist of that sound is *muraliṣṭa kīrttana-dhanam*. Kṛṣṇa is attracted only by His Divine Potency. She is Rādhārāṇī. She is serving Kṛṣṇa wholeheartedly and very extensively with Her associates, therefore Kṛṣṇa is always thinking of Her.

But the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute is not only meant for *madhura-rasa*, where the chief is Rādhārāṇī, but for all the other *rasas* as well. All other *rasas* are maintained by *madhura-rasa*, and maintaining means preserving, so the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute is preserving and maintaining all the other *rasas*.

***Kīrttana-dhanam*—the real wealth of our life**

Generally we refer to the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahāmantra, or any devotional song, as either *kīrttan* or *saṅkīrttan*. We use these terms interchangeably but there is a little difference between them.

Kīrttan means when one person is glorifying the Lord, and *saṅkīrttan* means, *bahubhir militvā yat kīrttanam, tad eva saṅkīrttanam*. *Tad eva saṅkīrttanam* means: when a group of devotees gather together for *kīrttan*, what comes from their melted hearts, that is *saṅkīrttan*. *Saṅkīrttan* is congregational chanting with the mood of tolerance, humility and giving honor to others.

But here our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has specifically mentioned *kīrttana-dhanam*. It is a very particular word. *Kīrttan* is not only meant for everyone, but *kīrttana-dhanam* means it is the “wealth of our life.” Through *kīrttan* we will get everything. Through *kīrttan* we will get full and complete entrance into the *Rāsa-līlā* where Kṛṣṇa is playing and chanting and dancing with the *Vraja-gopīs*. This is the real wealth of our life and this is the wealth for all the liberated *jīva*-souls as well. This is why Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said not only *kīrttan*, but “*kīrttana-dhanam*,” when he gave his explanation of the *Gāyatrī* Mantra. *Kīrttan* is the wealth of our life.

Kṛṣṇa's flute has its own freedom

Then Guru Mahārāj said, *Gāyatrī muralī*. Kṛṣṇa's flute is not only a bamboo stick. It is not just made of metal but it has its own life. It is *chetan*—it has a conscious form. It is a conscious living being.

Kṛṣṇa's flute has its own desire and its own freedom for the service to Him. Everyone has freedom. Kṛṣṇa has given freedom to everyone, so Kṛṣṇa's *muralī* has *iṣṭa kīrttana-dhanam*. *Iṣṭa kīrttan* means a desirable *kīrttan*. His flute has freedom to perform its own *kīrttan* and this is how Kṛṣṇa's flute will be happy.

sakhi murali viśāla-chchhidra-jālena pūrṇā
 laghur atikaṭhinā tvaṁ granthilā nīrasāsī
 tad api bhajasi śāśvach chumbanānanda-sāndram
 hari-kara-parirambhaṁ kena puṇyodayena
 (*Vidagdha-mādhava*, 4.7)

This *śloka* of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī praises Kṛṣṇa's *muralī* because Kṛṣṇa's *muralī* has its own life. It is performing its own *iṣṭa kīrttan*. *Iṣṭa kīrttan* means a desirable and palatable song and I can see this everywhere. I can see this in everyone's eyes.

Śrī *Garga-saṁhitā* fully describes the glories of Rādhārāṇī. Whenever I open the *Garga-saṁhitā* I immediately see this, and I am sure this must be the mercy of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. When I stand in the *ārati* ceremony and see *Gāyatrī muralīṣṭa kīrttana dhanam* written in our Maṭh logo, my brain is working.

The word *dhīmahi* in *Gāyatrī* is very famous in Sanskrit literature. Two words are present most in *Gāyatrī* Mantrams: *dhīmahi* and *prachodayāt*. The last word of the meditation is *prachodayāt*. It's not that we will only meditate, but the Mantram will pressure us to serve Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

We need to know the spiritual regulations and injunctions, *chodanām—pratichodanām*. That scriptural advice is found in the *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Mahābhārat*, etc.

Śruti and *smṛti*: *Bhagavad-gītā* is *smṛti*, and *śruti* is *Vedānta*, *Upaniṣads*, etc. But here *chodanām* means *preraṇa*, inspiration. What kind of inspiration? Forceful inspiration—inspiring forcefully. The Mantram's nature is like that: to capture the *jīva-soul's* mind through inspiration and forcefully engage one in the service of Rādhārāṇī. This is the extraordinary meaning Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has given of the *Gāyatrī* Mantra: *Gāyatrī muralīṣṭa-kīrttana dhanam Rādhāpadam dhīmahi*.

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's hidden glories

The glories of Rādhārāṇī are fully expressed and exposed in the *Garga-saṁhitā*. I have seen this in *Śrī Garga-saṁhitā* at least a thousand times.

Śrī *Garga-saṁhitā* was written by the great sage Garga Ṛṣi who is the Guru of the *Yadu-kula* (Yadu dynasty, Kṛṣṇa's dynasty), and a friend of Paraśurāma as well as of many other big expo-

nents of Vedic mantras such as Atri, Chyavana, Śaradvān, Ariṣṭanemi, Bhṛgu, Vasiṣṭha, Parāśara, Viśvāmitra, Aṅgirā, Dvaipāyan Vyāsa and Bhagavān Nārada. All these old ṛṣis were present when the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was spoken to Parīkṣit Mahārāj. Vedavyāsa himself said this.

atrir vasiṣṭhaś chyavanaḥ śaradvān
ariṣṭanemir bhṛgur aṅgirās cha
parāśaro gādhi-suto 'tha rāma
utathya indrapramadedhmavāhau

medhātithir devala āṛṣṭiṣeṇo
bhāradvājo gautamaḥ pippalādaḥ
maitreya aurvaḥ kavaṣaḥ kumbhayonir
dvaipāyano bhagavān nāradaś cha
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 1.19.9-10)

Even though all these senior ṛṣis were present at the meeting of Mahārāj Parīkṣit when the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was spoken, Śukadev Goswāmī did not fully expose Goloka Vṛndāvan and the glories of Rādhārāṇī. They were all friends of Garga Ṛṣi but Vedavyāsa didn't expose very much of Rādhārāṇī's glories. He only exposed a small amount of Her glories. He didn't give Her glories the way Mahāprabhu did.

Śrī Garga-saṁhitā

I was very surprised when I opened the *Garga-saṁhitā* and found the word "Rādhāpati". I have never seen this word anywhere except in the *Garga-saṁhitā*. We have heard many stories of Kṛṣṇa-līlā from our childhood and now I see they have all originated from the *Garga-saṁhitā*. Some other *Purāṇas* have presented some stories but most of the stories of Kṛṣṇa-līlā originated from the *Garga-saṁhitā*.

Actually I was inspired by Śrīpād Madhusūdan Mahārāj, who is a Godbrother and *sannyāsī* disciple of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, to publish the *Garga-saṁhitā*. He had been searching for a Bengali edition of this book throughout all of India but failed to find one. He was very excited when he noticed there was one available in my cupboard. I was taken by surprise that he knew it was in my cupboard as I myself had not noticed it. It was then I first read a little bit of the contents and found Garga Ṛṣi had fully mentioned everything that would be impossible for us to relate.

When we try to conceive what Vyāsadev looks like we picture him as someone with at least a four or five foot long beard, but when I opened the *Garga-saṁhitā* I was surprised to see Garga Ṛṣi's expression of Vedavyāsa's *praṇām mantra* as "*vadara-vana-bihāraḥ satyavatyaḥ kumāraḥ.*" This expression *satyavatyaḥ kumāraḥ* or *vadara-vana-bihāraḥ* will not come to our mind but his *praṇām mantra* came as a realization to me that I am only recognizing Vedavyāsa's form in his old age and not remembering his childhood as Satyavatyaḥ Kumār, the son of Satyavatī.

Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu followed this process very nicely. In every *praṇām mantra* of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu he refers to Him as Śachīnandan, the son of Śachīdevī. Śachīnandan. In the Pastimes of Mahāprabhu, Śachīdevī is always mentioned first within the *praṇām mantra* and we are habituated with this but we have not considered the same process with Vedavyāsa as Satyavatyaḥ Kumār or *vadara-vana-bihāraḥ*. When I read this I was very impressed. I read a few pages and thought, if Madhusūdan Mahārāj cannot print it I shall try to print it with the help of our devotees. Finally I feel Garga Ṛṣi chose me to publish the *Garga-saṁhitā* as I asked Śrīpād Sāgar Mahārāj to do it and he was able to do it.

The full-fledged theism that was given to us by our Guru Mahārāj is fully mentioned in the *Garga-saṁhitā*. Vṛndāvan-*līlā*'s virtual place and position has originated from the *Garga-saṁhitā*.

Vedavyāsa has mentioned everything in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but very cautiously.

Śukadev Goswāmī was just a sixteen-year-old boy so how much could he express in front of the older *ṛṣis*? Even though they were all highly qualified in *madhura-rasa* they could not taste what Śukadev Goswāmī had given. Vedavyāsa himself commented about Śukadev Goswāmī that after hearing the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* he became mad with ecstasy and then went back to his father to hear the rest of Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* he had not presented in full.

What is given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the gist of Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* and it is sufficient. No other Scripture can cross over the prestige of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Vedavyāsa himself as well as other *ṛṣis* have mentioned in other *Purāṇas* that it is a full manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We can see the glorification of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in this way, so we cannot deny the highest prestige of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Śukadev Goswāmī has given the gist of what he hesitated to reveal in full in that assembly and in that way has fulfilled the desire of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī.

Mahāprabhu came to give the glories of Rādhārāṇī

Mahāprabhu came to give the glories of Rādhārāṇī. He came to give honor to what was not given in this material world before.

anarpita-chariṁ chirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
 samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasāṁ sva-bhakti-śriyam
 hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
 sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śachī-nandanah
 (Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, *Adi* 1.4)

And not only did Mahāprabhu give what was not given before, He gave what was not given in any material universe as well, and there are millions of material universes in the sky. Nowhere were

the glories of Rādhārāṇī given before Mahāprabhu came, and this is mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

But Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākur said clearly, if you will search for evidential records of this you will be considered foolish because the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the junior-most Scripture but with the senior-most thought.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—highest reality

After all the Scriptures were written Vyāsadev was not happy. His Guru, Nārada Muni, came to see him and gave him instructions. He gave him a mantra and instructed Vedavyāsa to meditate on that mantra, and after meditating he saw the complete spiritual and material worlds. Then he composed the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Therefore it is the junior-most Scripture. Yet, no other Scripture had given such complete knowledge of the spiritual and material worlds before.

In his mature meditation Vedavyāsa saw all the senior-most beautiful theories of the highest reality and presented them in a well-organized way and gave them to the *jīva-chaitanya*. This is Guru Mahārāj's expression, *jīva-chaitanya*. The conscious *jīva*-souls may be in the material atmosphere, but still this world is a conscious world because everything exists in consciousness.

Secret of the *Bhāgavat*

Sometimes a little suspicion may come to the mind of a pure devotee as to why Rādhārāṇī's Name is not mentioned in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has given us this theory in one of his original *ślokas*:

yadamīya-mahimā-śrī bhāgavatyām kathāyām
 pratipadam anubhūtam apyalabdhābhidheya
 tadakhila-rasa-mūrteḥ syāma-lilā valamvaṁ
 madhura-rasadhī-rādhā-pādapadmam prapadye

In every letter and every *śloka* of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the Name of Rādhārāṇī is glorified, but we cannot see Her particular form there. The play of the Sweet Absolute takes place in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* so it is not possible that Rādhārāṇī's Name is not mentioned there. Everywhere in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Rādhārāṇī is glorified, but we can't see Her full form there because Śukadev Goswāmī is hiding Her a little bit.

It is like the marriage system in India. When an Indian girl is married she always covers her head with a cloth. When a senior honorable person comes, she pulls the cloth over her head a little more. This is also the style of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: to conceal Rādhārāṇī yet reveal Her. Such idea is included in that *śloka* of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

Without Rādhārāṇī's association Kṛṣṇa is nothing! The Sweet Absolute's play in Goloka Vṛndāvan depends on Rādhārāṇī. Only She can fully exchange *rasa* with Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa is the emporium of all *rasas*, *akhila-rasāmrta mūrti*. But where is that nectar stored? It is stored in the pot of Rādhārāṇī. So Kṛṣṇa keeps all His wealth in the pot of Rādhārāṇī and He tastes Her mood of devotion. Otherwise everything will be spoiled.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has given this extraordinary explanation of the Gāyatrī Mantra, which is the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. No one in this material conscious world has ever given an explanation like this before. In the last part of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's life, Guru Mahārāj was always discovering many things. Actually everything was within him but he had not found the proper person to explain everything to.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's original Gāyatrī Mantram explanation

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's original Gāyatrī Mantra explanation is written in eleven lines published in our *Śrī Gaudīya Gītāñjali*, the Bengali song-book.

bhvādes tat savitur vareṇya-
 vihitaṁ kṣetrajñā-sevyārthakaṁ
 bhargo vai vṛsabhānu-jātma-
 vibhavaikārādhānā-śrīpuram
 (bhargo jyotir achintya-lilāna
 sudhaikārādhāna-śrīpuram)
 (bhargo dhāma-taraṅga-khelana-
 sudhaikārādhānā śrīpuram)
 (bhargo dhāma-sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ
 prajñāna-lilā-puram)
 (devasyāmṛta-rūpa-lilā-rasadherārādhā-
 dhīḥ preṣiṇaḥ)
 (devasyāmṛta-rūpa-lilā-puruṣasyārādha-
 dhīḥ preṣiṇaḥ)
 devasya dyuti-sundaraika-puruṣasyārādha-
 dhīḥ preṣiṇaḥ
 gāyatrī muralīṣṭa kīrttana-dhanam
 rādhā-padam dhīmahi
 (gāyatrī-gaditaṁ mahāprabhu-matam
 rādhā-padam dhīmahi)
 (dhīrārādhānam-eva nānyad iti tad
 rādhā-padam dhīmahi)

I took four lines from this explanation (the ones not in brackets) to make the Gāyatrī Mantra *śloka*. I put this *śloka* on Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's *Samādhi Mandir*. I asked Śrīla Guru Mahārāj permission to take these four lines and he gave his permission.

But it was especially my desire that I shall take this one line: *Dhīrārādhānam-eva nānyad iti tad Rādhā-padam dhīmahi*. *Dhī* comes from the root word *buddhi* which means intelligence. Where should *buddhi* go? Our intelligence should go for the service of the Lord. Without one's intelligence going for the service of the Lord, no other conception can exist. This is Guru Mahārāj's explanation.

There are two kinds of intelligence. One is *parā* and another is *aparā*. *Parā* intelligence is always serving the Lord. Then, *dhīrā rādhānam-eva nānyad iti*, without one's intelligence going to serve the Lord, no other conception can exist. This is Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's explanation.

But sometimes for my explanation I have taken the next to the last line, *Gāyatrī-gaditam Mahāprabhu-matam*, because this line is hiding Rādhārāṇī, *Rādhā-padam dhīmahi*, a little bit.

The Ṛg Veda mantra

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj also gave an explanation of the *Ṛg Veda* mantra. The original *Ṛg Veda* mantra is:

om tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ
divivā chakṣur ātatam viṣṇor yat paramaṁ padam

But Śrīla Guru Mahārāj expanded the *Ṛg* mantra:

om tat viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ
srutimataṁ muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ
draṣṭā chakṣur iva prasārita-mahā-
sūryeva divivā tatam
dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ
satyaṁ paraṁ śabditaṁ
jyotiḥ prīti-tanuṁ hiraṇya-puruṣaṁ
paśyanti taṁ sūrayaḥ

The last line is especially significant: *jyotiḥ prīti-tanuṁ hiraṇya-puruṣaṁ*. *Jyotiḥ* means effulgence and love and this has taken its form as the heart and halo of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Here is Guru Mahārāj's miracle. So many *paṇḍits* can understand the Sanskrit language but they cannot understand the gist of the ecstasy inside the Sanskrit language. This is a fact.

The *Upaniṣads* very clearly say, *nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyo, nāyam ātmā pravachanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena*. “You may know so many things, and you may have much intelligence, *medhayā*, but without the grace of Nityānanda Prabhu, and Baladev, you cannot understand anything.”

But, *yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas*, “When Kṛṣṇa in the form of Śrī Gurudev will give you the Gāyatrī Mantram and you meditate on it with your full existence, you will understand it.” Here there is no question. Everywhere there are many questions and everywhere there are many difficulties, but this fact is very clear, *tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*.

If you do not have the ability to see—like owls do not like to see the sun—how will you see? How will a man with no eyes see? *Andhi bhūta cakṣu yāra viṣaya dhūlite kemane se para-tattva pāibe dekhite*. How will one whose eyes are blinded by the dust of material conceptions see?

We need the eyes to see

In Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s explanation of the *Rg Veda* mantra he used the word *sūrayaḥ*. Guru Mahārāj used it only to give honor to the Vedas, especially the *Upaniṣads*. *Sūrayaḥ* means the demigods but Guru Mahārāj did not explain the meaning that way. He gave this meaning: “The demigods can see but they can never see the *hiraṇya-puruṣam* (the Golden Lord, Mahāprabhu) without the mercy of *jyotiḥ prīti-tanuṁ*. Without the mercy of Mahāprabhu and without the mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu, *sūrayaḥ*, the demigods, can never see. Without Their mercy they cannot see.”

This is a fact and Lord Brahmā himself said it:

**jānanta eva jānantu kiṁ bahūktyā na me prabho
manaso vapuṣo vācho vaibhavaṁ tava gocharaḥ
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.14.38)**

“Whoever will say they know Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes can say that. But I say I cannot understand even a small amount of Your unlimited glories. My whole existence is blind without Your mercy. Therefore I am misguided. I don't want to say too much. The only thing I can say is I do not want to say too much because I cannot understand mentally, verbally or bodily Your unlimited Pastimes.”

Kim bahūkyā na me means, “It is not necessary to say many things, only that I cannot understand Your unlimited Pastimes.”

Chapter 4

Kṛṣṇa's Unparalleled Beauty and Opulence

asamānordhva-rūpa-śrī-vismāpita-charācharaḥ

“Kṛṣṇa’s personal beauty and opulence are beyond compare.”

The fourth quality Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī presents as the unique possession of Kṛṣṇa, which no other form or incarnation of the Lord has, is Kṛṣṇa’s incredible beauty: *asamānordhva-rūpa-śrī-vismāpita-charācharaḥ*.

Mad by beauty

How much beauty does Kṛṣṇa have? Kṛṣṇa’s beauty is beyond compare. Kṛṣṇa becomes mad when He sees His own beauty. In Kṛṣṇa’s house there are so many mirrors that sometimes He is afraid to go inside because when He sees His own beauty He forgets Himself. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said Kṛṣṇa has so much beauty because He is Reality, and Reality’s nature is the Supreme Personality of Godhead—Reality the Beautiful.

śyāmaṁ hiraṇya-paridhim vanamālya-barha-
dhātu-pravāla-naṭa-veṣam anavratāmse
vinyasta-hastam itareṇa dhunānam abjaṁ
karṇotpalālaka-kapola-mukhābja-hāsam
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.23.22)

This verse describes the beauty of Kṛṣṇa. “Kṛṣṇa always has a crown with peacock feathers and flowers in it. His cloth is golden and He is always bedecked with flower garlands made from fresh wild flowers. He is always dancing and playing on His flute.” There are no weapons in Vṛndāvan. When Kṛṣṇa killed the various demons—Pūtanā, Vatsāsura, Keśī, etc.—He did it all by hand. Sometimes He uses an arm or leg or another part of His body, but never any weapon.

Also we see in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.24.65):

yasyānanam makara-kuṇḍala-chāru-karṇa-
bhrājat-kapola-subhagam saviḷāsa-hāsam
nityotsavam na tatṛpur dṛśibhiḥ pibantyo
nāryo narās cha muditāḥ kupitā nimeś cha

“Kṛṣṇa’s face is so beautiful. It is decorated with ornaments such as earrings that resemble sharks. His ears are beautiful, His cheeks brilliant and His smile is attractive to everyone. Whoever sees Kṛṣṇa sees a festival. Simply by seeing Kṛṣṇa one sees a festival taking place.

“When the demigods are flying in their airplanes with their wives and they see Kṛṣṇa walking through the forest of Vṛndāvan herding His cows and playing His flute, they are having a festival in their airplanes. Kṛṣṇa’s beauty is so overwhelming for everyone that the *gopīs* are angry at the creator, Lord Brahmā, for making eyes that blink because in that split second they can’t see Kṛṣṇa.”

When the *gopīs* see Kṛṣṇa and Balarām roaming in the Vṛndāvan forest they say:

mālānupṛkta-paridhāna-vichitra-veśau
madhye virejatur alam paśu-pāla-goṣṭhyām
raṅge yathā naṭa-varau kvacha gāyamānu
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 10.21.8)

“Dressed in a charming variety of garments, decorated with

garlands, peacock feathers, lotuses, lilies, newly grown mango sprouts and clusters of flower buds, Kṛṣṇa and Balarām shine forth magnificently among the assembly of cowherd boys. They look just like the best of dancers appearing on a dramatic stage, and sometimes They even sing.”

Unique loveliness

In *Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā* there are many *ślokas* describing Kṛṣṇa's beauty.

**ālola-chandraka-lasad-vanamālya-varṁśī-
ratnāṅgadam praṇaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam
śyāmaṁ tri-bhaṅga-lalitāṁ niyata-prakāśam
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi**
(*Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā*, 5.31)

Ālola-chandraka-lasad-vanamālya-varṁśī: Kṛṣṇa's dearest lover has made a *vanamālya* (forest garland) with peacock feathers and forest flowers and given it to Him. There is nothing else on that garland except forest flowers and peacock feathers gathered from the forest. There are no jewels, diamonds or anything else, only forest flowers and peacock feathers. *Ratnāṅgadam praṇaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam*. Since Kṛṣṇa is playing with the *gopīs* it is necessary to dress like them. Mother Yaśodā has given Kṛṣṇa some nice dress, golden ornaments, bracelets, ankle bracelets, etc. and He is wearing them and playing with the *gopīs*.

Śyāmaṁ tri-bhaṅga-lalitāṁ niyata-prakāśam: Kṛṣṇa's color is so beautiful that it gives peace to the eyes. It isn't effulgent like Nārāyaṇ's. It is soothing the eyes and attracting them like a magnet.

**veṇuṁ kvaṇantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣam-
barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam
kandarpa-koṭi-kamaṇīya-viśeṣa-śobham
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi**
(*Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā*, 5.30)

Kṛṣṇa's eyes are like blooming lotus petals and He always has a peacock feather in His hair. His beauty is like the form and color of a blue rain cloud and He charms millions and millions of cupids. *Koṭi-kamanīya-viśeṣa-śobham*: when millions of cupids see Kṛṣṇa they faint. His divine form is that beautiful. This is Lord Brahmā's description so we must believe it.

Alive with the mood of love

In Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's composition, *Śrī Śrī Prema-dhāma-deva-stotram*, he wrote *rūpa-rāsa-raṅgaram* (verse 2), Kṛṣṇa's limbs are "alive with the mood of love that emerges and continually flows from His beautiful form." His beauty is inconceivable, *rūpa-rāsa-līlā*.

Every part of Kṛṣṇa's body wants to show itself to other parts. A hand wants to show itself to the other hand. A leg wants to show itself to the mouth and the mouth wants to show itself to other parts. Every part wants to show its beauty to others. All parts of His body want to show their beauty to the other parts.

aṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛtti-manti
paśyanti pānti kalayanti chiraṁ jaganti
ānanda-chinmaya-sad-ujjvala-vigrahasya
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi
(Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā, 5.32)

"With each part of His transcendental body He can do the function of any other part. With any part He maintains and manifests all the universes, both spiritual and material. All the parts of His body are interchangeable, each being as beautiful as any other. His form has that type of truth, beauty and the most dazzling splendor."

When Kṛṣṇa was present the whole creation was stunned to see His divine form. There were sixteen thousand girls waiting to marry Him. They were arrested by King Jarāsandha, but when

they were released, they became mad when they saw Kṛṣṇa. Everyone ran towards Him and gave Him a garland.

We need to search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Reality the Beautiful

Kṛṣṇa is the Cause of all causes. This is essentially explained in the first *śloka* of *Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā*:

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

Lord Nārāyaṇ or other forms of the Lord do not have such beauty. These are the four qualities Kṛṣṇa has that Nārāyaṇ or other forms or incarnations of the Lord do not have.

Good question, good answer—conclusion

The question about Kṛṣṇa's unique qualities was a good one and I think the answer was also good because through these topics many things have entered your heart and also through this answer another desire was fulfilled. We are searchers of the spiritual world, of spiritual life and of God, and through these topics we have got a chance to explain something about the glories of Kṛṣṇa. We have received a clue as to whose lotus feet we should worship and who we should take shelter of. There are many demigods and many forms of the Lord—Keśava, Govinda, Dāmodar and many others as well. Mahāprabhu expressed His mind in this way:

kāhān mora prāṇa-nātha muralī-vadana
kāhān karoṇ kāhān pān vrajendra-nandana
(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, *Madhya* 2.15)

“Where is the Lord of My life who is playing His flute? What

shall I do now? Where should I go to find the son of Mahārāj Nanda?”

There is also a *śloka* in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.8.46):

**nandaḥ kim akarod brahman, śreya evaṁ mahodayam
yaśodā cha mahā-bhāgā, papau yasyāḥ stanāṁ hariḥ**

“O *Brāhmaṇa*, what pious activities did Nanda Mahārāj perform to receive the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa as his son? And what pious activities did mother Yaśodā perform that made the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa call her ‘Mother’ and suck her breasts?”

The supreme benefit of our life

At the opening of the Chandrodaya Mandir in Māyāpur in 1973, I spoke the following *śloka*:

**kaṁ prati kathayitum īse, samprati ko vā pratītim āyātu
go-pati-tanayā-kuñje, gopa-vadhūṭi-ṅgaṁ brahma**
(*Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya 19.98*)

The meaning is, “Whom shall I tell, and who will believe me, when I say the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is playing in the courtyard of Nanda Mahārāj? He is playing with the *gopīs* and *gopa-bālakas* on the banks of the Yamunā. He is playing in Śyāma Kuṇḍa, Rādhā Kuṇḍa and in the caves of Girirāj Govardhan. He is fighting in the arena with Kāmsa. His Pastimes are going on everywhere in *madhura* Vṛndāvan. If one leaves this area, he cannot go to any other place and find such Pastimes.”

Whoever will hear Kṛṣṇa-*līlā* will be attracted by Kṛṣṇa. He will never go to any other place. The Name of Kṛṣṇa attracts everyone and gives joy to our hearts. This is the meaning of the word “Kṛṣṇa.”

Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, *Bhaja Kṛṣṇa kaha Kṛṣṇa laha Kṛṣṇa Nāma*. This is the way to surrender to Kṛṣṇa: take the Name of Kṛṣṇa, surrender to Kṛṣṇa and give everything to Kṛṣṇa. You will be supremely benefited in your spiritual life. All the Scriptures say this. Never abuse any god or demigod or any incarnation of the Lord, but supremely glorify Lord Kṛṣṇa.

**ete chāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ, kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokaṁ, mṛdayanti yuge yuge**
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 1.3.28)

Kṛṣṇa is the Creator of the whole creation. This is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and in *Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā*. We must remember this. Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, give attention to Kṛṣṇa and be happy.

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