

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's

Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā

Spiritual instruction given to one's own mind

with the

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

commentary of

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

a translation with expanded purport of the

Bhajana-darpaṇa

commentary of

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



Vṛndāvana, Uttar Pradesh, India

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Contents

Preface	i
Introduction	xiii

Verse One

Translation	1
(1) <i>Śrī guru</i>	3
(2) <i>Goṣṭha</i> : Śrī Vraja-dhāma	4
(3) <i>Goṣṭhālayin</i> : The residents of Vraja	4
(4) <i>Sujana</i> : The Vaiṣṇavas	5
(5) <i>Bhūsuragaṇa</i> : The brāhmaṇas	5
(6) <i>Sva-mantra</i> : One's dikṣā-mantras	5
(7) <i>Śrī harināma</i>	6
(8) <i>Vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇa</i> : Surrender to the youthful Divine Couple of Vraja	6
(9) <i>Dambhaṁ hitvā</i> : Give up pride	6
(10) <i>Apūrva-rati</i>	7
(11) <i>Atitarāṁ kuru</i> : Make intensive endeavours	7
Anuvṛtti	8

Verse Two

Translation	23
<i>Pūrva-pakṣa</i> : The first objection to an assertion in any discussion	24
(1) <i>Na dharmāṁ nādharmāṁ śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru</i> : Do not perform the religious and irreligious activities mentioned in the Śrutis	25
(2) <i>Śacī-sūnuṁ nandīśvara-pati-sutatve (smara)</i> : Meditate on Śrī Śacinandana as non-different from Śrī Nanda-nandana	26

(3) <i>Guru-varaṁ mukunda-preṣṭhatve (smara):</i> Meditate on the spiritual master as very dear to Śrī Mukunda	27
Anuvṛtti	29

Verse Three

Translation	41
<i>Pūrva-pakṣa: Objection</i>	42
(1) <i>Rāgātmikā-bhakti</i>	43
(2) <i>Pratijanuḥ: Life after life</i>	50
Anuvṛtti	51

Verse Four

Translation	55
(1) <i>Mati-sarvasva-haraṇī asad-vartā-veśyā:</i> The prostitute of mundane talk plunders the wealth of wisdom	56
(2) <i>Sarvātma-gilanī mukti-vyāghryā kathā:</i> Talk of liberation is a tigress that devours the soul	57
(3) <i>Vyoma-nayanī lakṣmīpati-rati:</i> Love for Lakṣmīpati Nārāyaṇa leads to Vaikuṅṭha	59
(4) <i>Sva-rati-maṇi-da: Bestowing the jewel of love for Them</i>	62
Anuvṛtti	64

Verse Five

Translation	69
(1) <i>Kāmādi-prakaṭa-pathapāti-vyatikara:</i> Lust etc. – the assembled aggressors on the open road	70
(2) <i>Asac-ceṣṭā-kaṣṭa-prada-vikaṭa-pāśa:</i> The torturous, dreadful ropes of wicked deeds	72
(3) <i>Bakabhid-vartmapa-gaṇa: The protectors</i> of the path leading to the killer of Bakāsura	72

Verse Six

Translation	75
(1) <i>Prodyat-kapaṭa-kuṭināṭi-bhara-khara-kṣaran-mūtre snātvā</i> : Bathing in the trickling urine of the great donkey of full-blown deceit and hypocrisy	76
(2) <i>Gāndharvā-giridhara-pada-prema-vilasat-sudhāmbhodhau snātvā</i> : Bathing in the nectarean ocean of love for the lotus feet of Śrī Gāndharvā-Giridhārī	78

Verse Seven

Translation	82
(1) <i>Dhṛṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī pratiṣṭhāsā</i> : The desire for prestige is an audacious, dog-eating, outcaste woman	83
(2) <i>Nirmala-sādhu-prema</i> : Immaculate divine love	84
(3) <i>Prabhu-dayita-atula-sāmanta</i> : The incomparable army commanders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa	84

Verse Eight

Translation	88
(1) <i>Dainya-kākuṭi</i> : Humble, grief-stricken expression	89
(2) <i>Śaṭhatā me duṣṭatvam</i> : Pretention is my wickedness	92
(3) <i>Ujjvala-premāmṛta</i> : The nectar of amorous love	92
(4) <i>Śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana</i>	95

Verse Nine

Translation	97
(1) <i>Vraja-vipina-candraṁ smara</i> : Remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the moon of the forest of Vraja	98
(2) <i>Tāṁ vrajavaneśvarīm nāthatve (smara)</i> : Remember Śrīmatī Rādhikā as one's svāminī	100
(3) <i>Lalitām tad-atula-sakhīve (smara)</i> : Remember Śrī Lalitā as the peerless friend of Śrīmatī Rādhikā	100

- (4) *Viśākhām śikṣālī-vitarāṇa-gurutve (smara)*:
Remember Śrī Viśākhā as one's instructing
spiritual master 104
- (5) *Priyasaraḥ (Rādhā-kuṇḍa) tat-prekṣā-lalita-rati-
datve (smara)*: Remember Rādhā-kuṇḍa as granting
darśana of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and bestowing ecstatic
love for Them 108
- (6) Praying to Śrī Viśākhā (as bestowing darśana of
and ecstatic love for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa) 108
- (7) *Girīndrau lalita-rati-datve (smara)*: Remember
Girirāja-Govardhana as bestowing ecstatic love 109

Verse Ten

- Translation 112
- (1) The extraordinary qualities of Śrīmatī Rādhikā 112

Verse Eleven

- Translation 123
- (1) *Tad-gaṇa-yujoh*: With Their associates 123
- (2) *Smara-vilāsa-vivaśa*: Absorbed in amorous pastimes 123
- (3) *Vraje sākṣāt-sevā-labhana*:
Obtaining direct service in Vraja 124
- (4) *Śrī Rūpeṇa-samam*: In accordance with Śrī Rūpa 124
- (5) *Ijyā*: Worship of the deity 125
- (6) *Ākhyā*: Glorification 126
- (7) *Dhyāna*: Meditation 126
- (8) *Śravaṇa*: Hearing 127
- (9) *Nati*: Offering obeisances 127
- (10) *Govardhanam bhaja*: Worship Śrī Govardhana 127
- (11) *Nītyā*: In accordance with the rules (of devotion) 128

Verse Twelve

Translation	129
(1) <i>Sa-yūtha</i> : With his group	130
(2) <i>Rūpānuga</i>	131
(3) <i>Gokulavane</i> : In the forest of Gokula	131
(4) <i>Manah-śikṣā-da</i> : Instructing the mind	136
(5) <i>Varam</i> : Most excellent	136
(6) <i>Madhurayā-girā-uccaiḥ</i> : Loudly singing in a melodious voice	137
(7) <i>Samadhigata</i> : Thoroughly understood	137
Glossary	139
Verse Index	169

Preface

[translated from the Hindi edition]

Today by the causeless mercy of the lotus feet of my most worshipful spiritual master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, this edition of *Śrī Manaḥ-sīkṣā* composed by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the pre-eminent follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, is happily presented before the faithful readers. The commentary found in this edition is called *Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti*, the purport that examines every point of the commentary known as *Bhajana-darpaṇa*. It is a translation along with expanded notes of the *Bhajana-darpaṇa* commentary written by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who in this modern age reinitiated the flow of the Ganges-like river of *bhakti*, which had become practically invisible.

Śrī Manaḥ-sīkṣā – written by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu – is a collection of eleven verses that offer spiritual instruction to the mind. These verses are an excerpt from the book known as *Śrī Stavāvalī*, a compilation of all of the author’s prayers and deep spiritual yearnings. In a very concise manner, Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī has surcharged these eleven verses of *Manaḥ-sīkṣā* with the essence of the teachings of Śrī Gaurasundara, the *prema*-intoxicated embodiment of the combined forms of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, as well as those of His intimate associate Śrī

Svarūpa Dāmodara and the *ācārya* of the profound science of devotional mellows, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.

In the Gauḍīya devotional literatures such as *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the six *Sandarbhas* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, devotion has been classified in three divisions: *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti* and *prema-bhakti*. *Sādhana-bhakti*, devotion in the practice stage, is further divided into two stages: *vaidhī* (devotion based upon scriptural injunction) and *rāgānuga* (spontaneous devotion). *Bhāva-bhakti* that arises from *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti* and *prema-bhakti* that arises from *bhāva-bhakti* of that nature are predominated by *aīśvarya-jñāna*, knowledge of the Lord's opulence and majesty. But *bhāva* originating from *rāgānuga-sādhana-bhakti* and *prema* originating from that standard of *bhāva* is predominated by *mādhurya*, sweetness, without the slightest trace of *aīśvarya*.

Only by love that is predominated by such sweetness devoid of any scent of formality or reverence can one obtain the loving service of the lotus feet of the eternally youthful Divine Couple, Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Love that is predominated by awe and veneration causes one to attain to Vaikuṅṭha. Therefore there is a very subtle yet significant difference between the quality of *bhāva* and *prema* arising from *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti* and *rāgānuga-sādhana-bhakti*. This fundamental difference is the distinctive trait of the line of thought of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, as expressed in this statement from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 3.15–17):

sakala jagate more kare vidhi-bhakti
vidhi-bhaktye vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi śakti

aiśvarya-jñānete saba jagata miśrīta
aiśvarya-śīthila-preme nāhi more prīta
aiśvarya jñāne vidhi bhajana kariyā
vaikuṅṭhake jāya catur-vidha mukti pāñā

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:] Everywhere in the world people worship Me according to scriptural injunctions, but simply by following such regulative principles one cannot attain the loving sentiments of My exalted devotees in Vraja. Aware of My supreme majesty, the entire world worships Me in a mood of awe and veneration. Love that is weakened by such reverence gives Me no pleasure. Those who worship Me according to scriptural injunctions in a mood predominated by awe and veneration go to Vaikuṅṭha and obtain the four kinds of liberation: *sārṣṭhi* (opulence like that of the Lord), *sārūpya* (bodily features like those of the Lord), *sāmīpya* (nearness to the Lord) and *sālokya* (residence in the Lord's realm).

A deep attachment that is permeated by spontaneous and intense absorption in the object of one's affection is called *rāga*. Devotion unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa that is saturated with this deep attachment is known as *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. Devotion that follows in the wake of *rāgātmikā-bhakti* is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Greed to obtain the mood of the Lord's *rāgātmika* devotees is the sole qualification for *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Practitioners of such *rāgānuga-bhakti* should always reside in Vraja. By means of both the physical body and the internally contemplated spiritual body that is suitable to carry out the service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for which one anxiously aspires, one should always remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved *gopīs* of Vraja and constantly serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

While continuously residing in Vraja under the guidance of *rasika* devotees who are deeply immersed in the mood of

Vraja, one should hear, chant and remember the names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the method of *bhajana* for devotees who are traversing the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Out of all the limbs of devotion such as hearing and chanting that have been described in relation to *vaidhī-bhakti*, those which are favourable to the development of one's particular disposition may also be accepted on the path of *rāgānuga-sādhana*.

It is essential to know that by following the instructions that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave to the *jīvas* of this world, a strong yearning to pursue the path of *rāgānuga* will suddenly awaken in the *sādhaka's* heart. Śrī Caitanyadeva personally practised, propagated and tasted only that *bhajana* which is undertaken via the path of spontaneous devotion (*rāga-mārga*). If by great fortune the *jīvas* obtain the association of the beloved associates of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, then they will certainly develop greed for the mood of the eternal residents of Vraja. Until one receives such association, most *sādhakas* adopt the process of *vaidhī-bhakti*, which certainly must be done.

By taking shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanyadeva, one will inevitably enter into *rāga-mārga*. *Sādhakas* who are eagerly desirous of entering *rāga-mārga* must first practise the *sādhana* of *rāgānuga-bhakti*. The qualification that is required for *rāgānuga-bhakti* is extremely high. When greed actually develops towards the mood of the eternal residents of Vraja, one loses his taste for the things of this world and obtains release from pious and sinful activities, fruitive action (*karma*), inaction (*akarma*), prohibited action (*vikarma*), non-devotional renunciation (*vairāgya*), the cultivation of knowledge aimed at

impersonal liberation (*jñāna*), and the attraction for the practice of mystic *yoga*.

In *vaidhī-mārga* one first develops faith (*śraddhā*). Then one acquires the association of devotees (*sādhū-saṅga*). Thereafter, by practice of *bhajana* one is released from the impediments to spiritual advancement (*anarthas*). Gradually one then develops resolute steadiness (*niṣṭhā*), strong taste (*ruci*), firm attachment (*āsakti*) and ecstatic emotion (*bhāva*). By this system *bhāva* is obtained after a very long time. But when greed develops, all *anarthas* are very easily destroyed because of the absence of hankering for material sense enjoyment. *Bhāva* also arises concomitantly with this greed. In *rāga-mārga*, however, it is essential to cast off all falsity, deceit and desire for prestige. If one does not do so, *anarthas* will increase and one will be dangerously deviated. In this event, debased attachment, *rāga*, will be mistaken for *viśuddha-rāga*, pure attachment. Gradually the *sādhaka's* material association will increase, and he will fall down.

Here the meaning of *rāgānuga-bhakti* is *rūpānuga-bhakti*. Without becoming *rūpānuga*, a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, it is impossible to enter the path of *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. If by some great fortune a person develops an intense desire to enter the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, then one should certainly study and follow this *Manaḥ-śikṣā* of Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī, the principal follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī.

A brief history of the life of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī appeared in a respected and fabulously wealthy family of *kāyastha* landholders in a village

called Kṛṣṇapura (Saptagrāma) within the Hugali district of West Bengal around the year 1494. His father's name was Śrī Govardhana Majumadāra. Śrī Govardhana's older brother was named Hiranya Majumadāra. Although both brothers were opulent landowners, they were devoutly religious and maintained tremendous respect for and faith in the Vaiṣṇava *sādhus*. The renowned devotee of Lord Gaura and the *ācārya* of the holy name, Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura, used to visit their royal court. Their spiritual master and royal priest, Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya, was an intimate disciple of Śrī Advaita Ācārya and a close friend of Haridāsa Ṭhākura. It was Yadunandana Ācārya who was the initiating spiritual master of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa.

In his childhood Raghunātha dāsa received the association of pure devotees such as Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura and Śrī Yadunandana Ācārya, and in his early youth he met with Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and his associates. This influence left a very deep impression on him in regard to unalloyed devotion. He very quickly renounced wealth comparable to that of Indra, the king of the heavenly realms, and a wife who was as beautiful as a heavenly goddess. He went to Purī-dhāma and submitted himself at the feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who entrusted him into the hands of His second self, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara. Since that time he became known as “Svarūpera Raghu”, or the Raghu of Svarūpa, and by his mercy he acquired eligibility to render intimate service to Śrī Gaurasundara. Being very pleased with his unflinching dedication to *bhajana* and exemplary renunciation, Śrī Gaurasundara endowed him with the eligibility to serve Śrī Giridhārī in the form of a *govardhana-śilā* and Śrī Rādhikā in the form of a *guñja-mālā*.

After Śrī Gaurasundara withdrew His pastimes from the view of this world, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa became overwhelmed with the agony of intolerable separation. He left Purī-dhāma and went to Vṛndāvana with the intention of giving up his life by throwing himself off the peak of Śrī Govardhana Hill. There, however, Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī convinced him to give up this idea by showering him with the nectar of their mercy and sweet *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. From that time he became their third brother and took up permanent residence on the bank of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

At Rādhā-kuṇḍa he remained deeply immersed in worshipping Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in the mood of separation with severe, unearthly renunciation. At the advanced age of approximately one hundred years, while performing this standard of *bhajana*, he entered into the unmanifest pastimes of the Divine Couple by entering into Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa. He is understood to be Rati Mañjarī in *vraja-līlā*. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 10.98–102)*, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī has described Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's method of *bhajana* in the following words:

*anna-jala tyāga kaila anya-kathana
pala dui-tina māthā karena bhakṣaṇa
sahasra daṇḍavat kare, laya lakṣa nāma
dui sahasra vaiṣṇavere nitya paraṇāma
rātri-dine rādhā-kṛṣṇera mānasa sevana
prahareka mahāprabhura caritra-kathana
tina sandhyā rādhā-kuṇḍe apatita snāna
vraja-vāsī vaiṣṇave kare āliṅgana māna
sārdha sapta-prahara kare bhaktira sādhanē
cāri daṇḍa nidrā, seha nahe kona-dine*

When Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī came to Vraja, he took up residence at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa on the order of Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs and became immersed in *bhajana* in the mood of anguished separation. He practically gave up all food and drink. Every day he accepted only a few ounces of butter-milk in order to sustain his life. He never spoke or listened to mundane talks that had no connection to *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. Every day as a matter of regulation he offered one thousand prostrated obeisances unto Śrī Nanda-nandana, Śrīmatī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī, Their eternal pastime associates, and to the places of Their divine pastimes. He also offered two thousand obeisances unto different Vaiṣṇavas and chanted one hundred thousand holy names. Day and night he served Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa within his mind. He discussed the pastimes of Śrīman Mahāprabhu for three hours, bathed in Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa three times daily, and would regularly embrace the Vrajavāsī Vaiṣṇavas. In this way he used to perform *bhakti* for twenty-two-and-a-half hours a day out of twenty-four. Thus he would sleep for only one-and-a-half hours, and some days he would not sleep at all.

He has written three books that are very famous: (1) *Śrī Stavāvalī*, (2) *Śrī Dāna-carita (Dāna-keli-cintāmaṇi)* and (3) *Śrī Mukta-carita*. This book, *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā*, is included within *Śrī Stavāvalī*, a compilation of prayers and glorifications composed by him.

**Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, author of the
commentary known as Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa**

Śrī Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the eternal associate of Śrī Gaurasundara, reinitiated the current of pure devotion in this modern age, wherein almost everyone is addicted to material enjoyment steeped in the glitter of mundane knowledge. He has written a commentary on the verses of *Śrī*

Manah-sikṣā that is rooted in deep philosophical conclusions and full of *rasa*, the liquid mellows of devotion. In this commentary he has very carefully analysed every verse in relation to *rāgānuga-bhakti* or *rūpānuga-bhakti*. Supported by quotations from *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇī*, *Stava-mālā*, *Stavāvalī* and other Gosvāmī literature, he has indicated the essential method of *bhajana* for the benefit of *rāgānuga-sādhakas*. All *rāgānuga-sādhakas* will remain forever indebted to him for this extraordinary gift.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is an intimate associate of Śacīnandana Śrī Gaurasundara, who is adorned with the complexion and *bhāva* of Śrī Rādhā and who delivers the fallen souls in the age of Kali. Śrī Bhaktivinoda appeared in this world in order to spread *śrī harināma-saṅkīrtana* and to propagate pure *bhakti* and in particular *rūpānuga-* (*rāgānuga-*) *bhakti*, thus fulfilling the inner longing of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He appeared on 2nd September, 1838 in a highly educated and respected family in a village named Vīranagara near Śrī Māyāpura within the district of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, West Bengal. He disappeared from this world on 23rd June, 1914 in the city of Calcutta. He wrote approximately one hundred books on *bhakti* in Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, English, Oriya and other languages. For this reason enlightened persons have called him the “Seventh Gosvāmī” and the Bhāgīratha¹ who initiated the mighty flowing river of *bhakti* in the modern age.

He revealed the place of Śrī Gaurāṅga’s appearance at the *yoga-pīṭha* in Śrī Māyāpura and also begot Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta

1. Mahārāja Bhāgīratha is the ancient personality who by the strength of his austerities brought the holy Ganges river to this Earth. This is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Ninth Canto, Chapter 9.

Sarasvatī. Furthermore, by his influential and impeccable discourses, articles and books about pure *bhakti*, and by his establishing *śrī nāma-hāṭṭa*, or the marketplace of the holy name, in every town and village, he laid the foundation for widespread distribution of *rūpānuga-bhakti* throughout the world. Today the outcome of this is directly visible everywhere. The sound vibration of congregational chanting of the holy names of Gaura and Kṛṣṇa resounds in every corner of the world, and even in far off Western and Eastern countries enormous, opulent temples have been built.

My most worshipful spiritual master, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is a guardian of the Śrī Gauḍīya *sampradāya* and the founder-*ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti as well as the Gauḍīya temples that operate under the jurisdiction of that society. In addition to the books that he personally wrote, he republished the books of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and other previous *ācāryas* in the Bengali language. Now by his heartfelt desire, inspiration and causeless mercy, *Jaiva-dharma*, *Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta*, *Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhura-śikṣā*, *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka* and other books have been published in India's national language of Hindi, while others are still being published.

The present director and *ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, my most worshipful godbrother Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, is deeply immersed in transcendental knowledge and is an intimate servant of the lotus feet of our spiritual master. I humbly pray at his lotus feet that he may kindly offer this precious book, *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā*, into the lotus hands of our beloved *gurudeva*, thus fulfilling the inner longing of his heart.

I am fully confident that devotees who have a deep yearning for *bhakti* and particularly practitioners of *rāgānuga-bhakti* who covet the dust of Vṛndāvana will have tremendous appreciation for this book. Faithful persons who study this book will obtain qualification to enter into the *prema-dharma* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In conclusion, may our most worshipful spiritual master, who is the concentrated manifestation of the Lord's compassion, pour down a profuse shower of mercy upon us, thus enabling us to attain greater and greater eligibility in fulfilling the inner longing of his heart. This is our anxious, heartfelt prayer at his lotus feet, which bestow *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

*An aspirant for a particle of mercy
of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,
humble and insignificant,*

Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa

Śrī Guru-pūrṇimā

13th July, 1984

Mathurā, Uttar Pradesh, India

Introduction

It is with utmost pleasure that we present this second English edition of *Śrī Manaḥ-sīkṣā* before our faithful Vaiṣṇava readers. This new edition has been made possible by the inspiration and causeless mercy of our most worshipful Śrīla Gurudeva, *om viṣṇupāda paramahansa parivrājakācārya aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja*. Śrīla Gurudeva considers this book to be of great relevance to those aspiring for eternal servitude unto the eternally youthful Divine Couple of Vraja, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. He lectures often on it both in Hindi and in English and he encourages devotees to study it carefully as part of their spiritual practice.

Śrī Manaḥ-sīkṣā consists of twelve verses composed by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. These verses instruct the mind how to make progress on the path of *bhajana*. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written a commentary on these verses known as *Bhajana-darpaṇa*, or the mirror that reveals the nature of *bhajana*. In this commentary he has very carefully analysed every word of the verses written by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has produced a Hindi edition of this book with the original verses and the commentary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. His translation is not only an

exact rendering of the Ṭhākura's *Bhajana-darpaṇa* commentary, but it also includes elaboration of his own on select points to make the subject matter all the more accessible to practising devotees aspiring to take up the path of *bhajana*. Therefore his translation of the commentary is known as *Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti*, or the purport that reveals every point of the commentary known as *Bhajana-darpaṇa*.

This English edition is a translation of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's Hindi work. In addition to the material that is found in the Hindi edition, this book includes purports that were compiled from lectures spoken in Hindi by Śrīla Gurudeva on the first four verses. These are identified in this book as "Anuvṛtti", or a commentary that follows the line of thought previously given.

In providing word-for-word synonyms for the verses of *Śrī Manaḥ-sikṣā*, we have not followed the sequential order of the words as they appear in the verses but, rather, the natural order of the words as they appear in a sentence. This system is called *anvaya* in Sanskrit. *Anvaya* literally means the natural order or connection of words in a sentence. The order of words in a Sanskrit verse is not generally the natural order of words in a sentence in Sanskrit prose. Therefore translators commonly use the system of *anvaya* to transpose the words of verses into Sanskrit, Bengali or Hindi prose. Although this system may seem awkward at first in locating the words from the verse, it greatly facilitates being able to see how the words fit together to form the translation of the verse. The meaning of the verse becomes self-evident by the *anvaya* system. We hope that the readers will appreciate the advantage of this

system, as it helps one to delve deeper into the meaning of the verses. To bring this to the readers' attention in the book, we have identified the word-for-word synonyms simply as "Anvaya".

In his ongoing endeavour to publish Vaiṣṇava literature in the English language, Śrīla Gurudeva is always quick to mention that he is simply accepting the remnants and following in the footsteps of his dear friend and instructing spiritual master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda*. By publishing immaculate English editions of such important literatures as *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Śrīla Prabhupāda inundated the English-speaking world with the priceless nectar of devotion unto Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Single-handedly and in a relatively short period of time, he made "Hare Kṛṣṇa" a household word and forever changed the lives of countless people. The immensity of his unique contribution to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism can hardly be estimated, and the living entities of this world will remain forever indebted to him.

For this improved second edition of *Śrī Manah-sikṣā*, grateful acknowledgement is extended to Lavaṅga-latā dāsī for copy-editing the material, to Śānti dāsī and Giridhārī dāsa for proofreading the final manuscript, to Atula-kṛṣṇa dāsa and Ananta-kṛṣṇa dāsa for checking the Sanskrit, to Kṛṣṇa-prema dāsa for designing the new cover and to Subala-sakhā dāsa for providing the new photograph of Śrīla Gurudeva. On behalf of the many devotees serving in Gauḍīya Vedānta Publications, we humbly offer this current edition into the hands of Śrīla

Gurudeva, praying that he will bless us with the capacity to continue rendering service to his innermost desire.

*An aspirant for the service of the
lotus feet of śrī guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,*

Prema-vilāsa dāsa

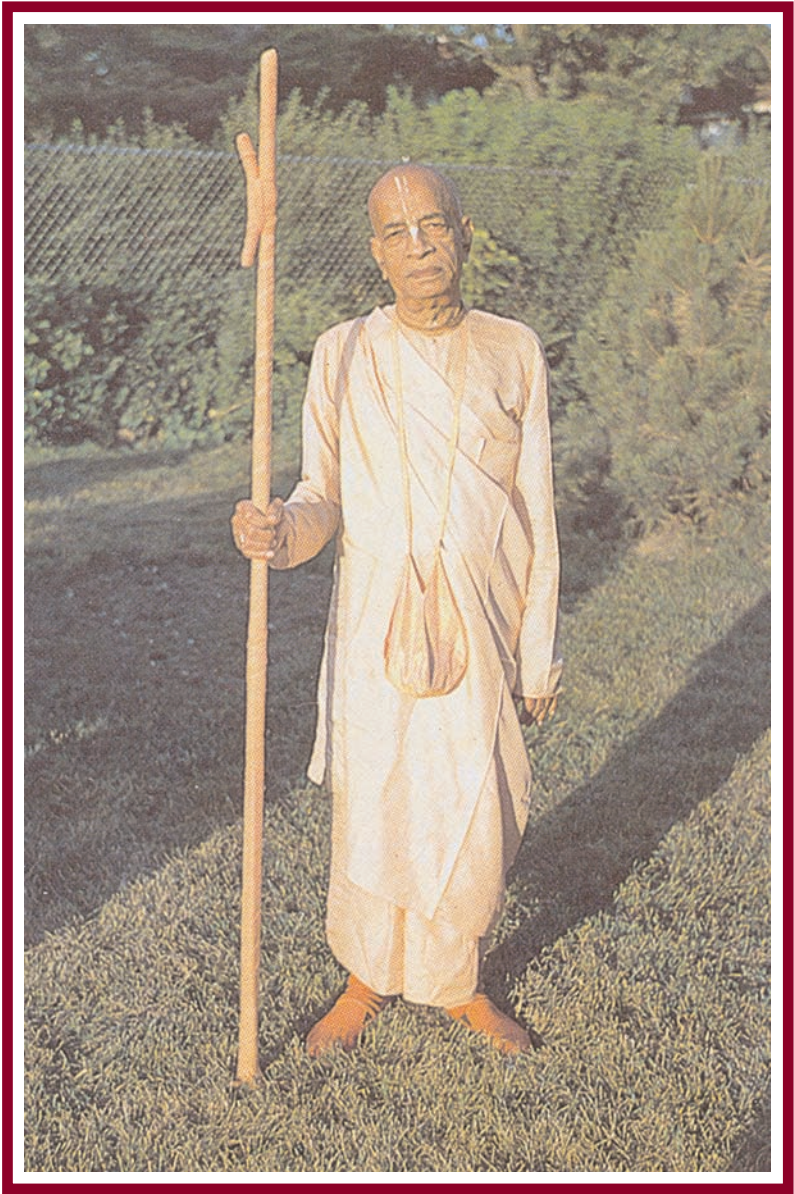
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23rd August, 2003

Gopīnātha-bhavana, Śrī Vṛndāvana



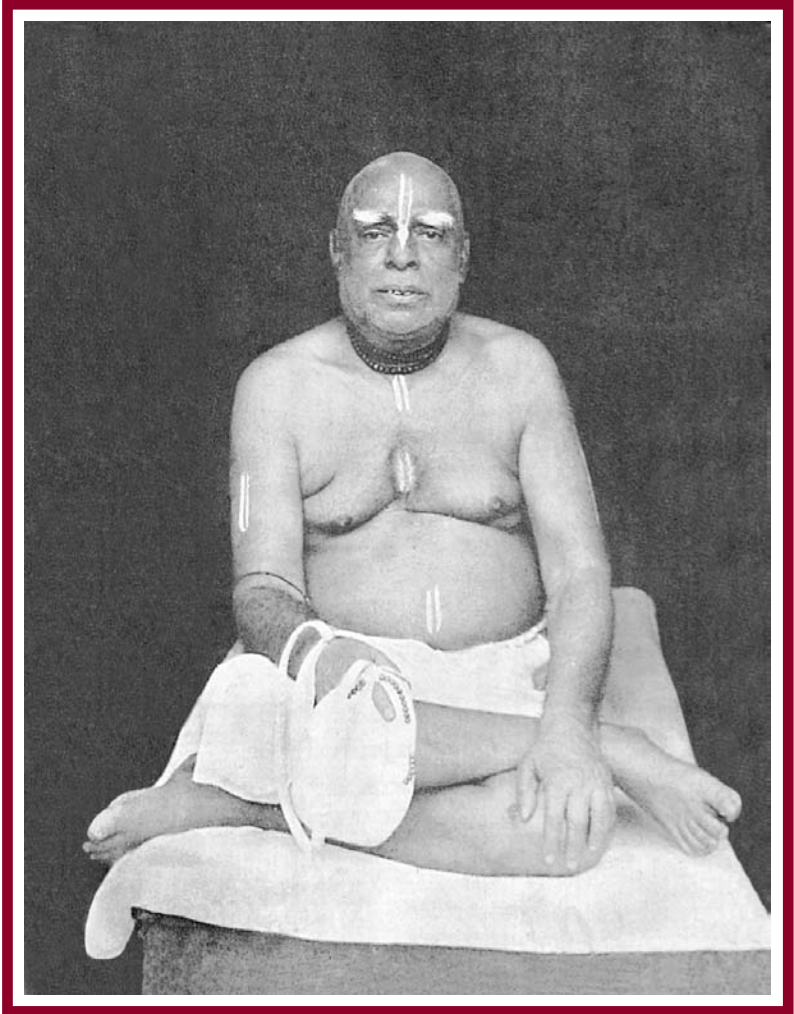
ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA MAHĀRĀJA



ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD A.C. BHAKTIVEDĀNTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA



ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTI PRAJÑĀNA KEŚAVA GOSVĀMĪ



ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA

Śrī Maṇḍ-śikṣā

śrī śrī gāndharvā-giridharābhyām namaḥ

Verse One

गुरौ गोष्ठे गोष्ठालयिषु सुजने भूसुरगणे
स्वमन्त्रे श्रीनाम्नि व्रजनवयुवद्वन्द्वशरणे ।
सदा दम्भं हित्वा कुरु रतिमपूर्वामतितरा-
मये स्वान्तर्भ्रातृश्चटुभिरभियाचे धृतपदः ॥१॥

*gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūsura-gaṇe
sva-mantre śrī-nāmnī vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe
sadā dambham hitvā kuru ratim apūrvām atitarām
aye svāntar bhrātaś caṭubhir abhiyāce dhṛta-padaḥ*

Anvaya

aye bhrātaḥ – O brother; *svāntaḥ* – mind; *dhṛta-padaḥ* – holding your feet; *abhiyāce* – I am praying; *caṭubhiḥ* – with sweet words; *sadā* – always; *hitvā* – giving up; *dambham* – pride; *atitarām* – exceedingly; *kuru* – adopt; *apūrvām* – unprecedented; *ratim* – spiritual attachment; *gurau* – in the spiritual master; *goṣṭhe* – in Vraja-dhāma; *goṣṭhālayiṣu* – in the Vrajavāsīs; *sujane* – in the Vaiṣṇavas; *bhūsura-gaṇe* – in the *brāhmaṇas*; *sva-mantre* – in one’s own *dikṣā-mantras*; *śrī-nāmnī* – in the holy names of the Lord; *vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe* – (and) in the shelter of the ever-fresh, youthful couple of Vraja.

Translation

O my dear brother, my foolish mind, taking hold of your feet, I humbly pray to you with sweet words. Please give up all pride

and quickly develop deep, loving attachment for the spiritual master, Śrī Vraja-dhāma, the residents of Vraja, the Vaiṣṇavas, the *brāhmaṇas*, your *dikṣā-mantras*, the holy names of the Supreme Lord, and the shelter of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the eternally youthful Divine Couple of Vraja.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

Maṅgalācaraṇa

First of all I pray at the lotus feet of my most worshipful spiritual master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa oṃ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*. Although I am unqualified in all respects, by a drop of his causeless mercy, I am undertaking the translation of *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā* and this *Digdarśinī-vṛtti*, a translation (with expanded purport) of the combined Sanskrit and Bengali commentary of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura named *Bhajana-darpaṇa*. Falling down at the lotus feet of the annotator, Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and the composer of *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā*, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who is the chief follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and eminent amongst the Six Gosvāmīs, I pray for their mercy.

śrī śrī guru-caraṇebhyoḥ namaḥ

śrī śrī caitanya-candrāya namaḥ

śrī śrī rādhā-kṛṣṇābhyāṃ namaḥ

Offering prostrated obeisances at the lotus feet of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, I begin the commentary on his *Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā* named *Bhajana-darpaṇa*. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī is revered throughout the world, for he severed all worldly connections and took complete shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari, the munificent incarnation of Kali-

yuga. He received the deep and confidential conclusions of *bhakti* from Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī on the order of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. The twelve verses of *Śrī Manaḥ-sikṣā* are the life and soul of all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. By targeting his own mind, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has instructed all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

By great fortune, as a result of pious merit (*sukṛti*) accumulated over many lifetimes, faith (*śraddhā*) in the Supreme Lord is awakened in the heart of the *jīva*. This small book comprises those instructions that constitute the prime duty of the living entity at that time. The deep and confidential meaning of each word of the first verse will now be given.

(1) Śrī guru

The topmost devotee of the Supreme Lord who completely destroys all impediments to spiritual advancement (*anarthas*) and who bestows transcendental knowledge of one's relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*sambandha-jñāna*) is known as *dikṣā-guru*, the initiating spiritual master. The topmost devotee who gives instructions about how to perform *bhajana* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa is known as *sikṣā-guru*, the instructing spiritual master. Knowing both to be non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and very dear to Him, one should serve them lovingly in accordance with the inner desire of their hearts. In all the revealed scriptures the spiritual master is considered to be the sum total of all the demigods and the eternal manifestation of the Supreme Lord. They should be worshipped and revered in the highest manner and should never be considered as ordinary human beings.

(2) Goṣṭha: Śrī Vraja-dhāma

The word *goṣṭha* here refers to Śrī Vraja-dhāma or, in other words, all the places within Vraja-maṇḍala wherein the eternal pastimes of the Divine Couple are enacted. These include Śrī Gokula, Śrī Vṛndāvana, Śrī Nandagrāma, Śrī Varṣāṇā, Śrī Yāvaṭa, Śrī Govardhana, Śrī Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and other such places. What is the deep meaning behind having love for residence in Vraja-dhāma? The following doubt may be raised. The conclusion of the scriptures is that one should engage in *bhajana* unto the Supreme Lord. Since this may be performed anywhere, what need is there to live only in Vraja? One should give up such doubts and antagonistic views and maintain special attachment for Vraja. If one cannot live in Vraja physically, then one should live there mentally and perform *bhajana* with great love.

(3) Goṣṭhālayin: The residents of Vraja

Only pure devotees who live in Vraja with the motive to serve the Divine Couple are true residents of Vraja. They do not aspire even for eternal residence in Vaikuṅṭha, what to speak of impersonal liberation or sense enjoyment. They reside in Vraja both in body and in mind and render loving service to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. They are considered to be devotees of the highest level (*uttama-bhāgavatas*). Without their mercy one cannot enter *rāgānuga-bhakti*. One should give up the pride by which one thinks, “I am a virtuous devotee of the Lord, fully conversant with all the devotional truths and not inferior to the residents of Vraja in any respect.” Rather, one should have great love for them.

(4) Sujana: The Vaiṣṇavas

Sujanas are devotees who belong to the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* or their corollary branches but do not live in Vraja in the true sense. This means that although they may physically take up residence in Vraja, they do not serve Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala with spontaneous attachment in the mood characteristic of Vraja. One should not look down upon them, but have a respectful attitude towards them. They are intermediate devotees (*madhyama-bhāgavatas*).

(5) Bhūsuragaṇa: The brāhmaṇas

Brāhmaṇas who follow *daiva-varṇāśrama*, the Vedic system of social duty related to advancement in devotional life, and who are teachers of the Vaiṣṇava way of life, are known as *bhūsuras*, lords of the Earth. They are inferior devotees (*kaniṣṭha-bhāgavatas*). One should show affection to them also. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.64.41), within the context of the narration of King Nṛga, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa informs the residents of Dvārakā:

*vīpraṁ kṛtāgasam api
naiva druhyata māmakāḥ
ghnantam̐ bahu śapantam̐
vā namas-kuruta nityaśaḥ*

My dear relatives, do not bear malice even towards *brāhmaṇas* who are sinners and offenders. Even if they beat you or curse you, you should always offer obeisances unto them. Therefore do not maintain an attitude of contempt or disrespect towards them.

(6) Sva-mantra: One's dikṣā-mantras

One's personal *mantra* or the *mantra* received from the spiritual master is known as *sva-mantra*. One should chant this

mantra regularly with special love, in accordance with the method instructed by the *guru*.

(7) Śrī harināma

Śrī Hari, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, Gopīnātha, Rādhā-kānta and so on are the principal names of the Supreme Lord. Patita-pāvana, Paramātmā, Brahma and so on are His secondary names. Only the principal names should be chanted, especially the *mahā-mantra*:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

This *mantra* consisting of sixteen names is called the *mahā-mantra* for deliverance in Kali-yuga. Therefore one should perform *japa* and *kīrtana* of this *mantra* with love.

(8) Vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇa:

Surrender to the youthful Divine Couple of Vraja

Surrender means to take complete and exclusive shelter at the lotus feet of the eternally youthful Divine Couple (*yugala-kīśora*), Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In his song entitled *Śrī Rādhā-niṣṭhā* from *Gītāvalī*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has stated:

*rādhikāra dāsī yadi hoya abhimāna
śighrai milai taba gokula-kāna*

If one prides himself as a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, then very quickly he will attain Vrajendra-nandana of Gokula.

(9) Dambhaṁ hitvā: Give up pride

Illusion (*māyā*), deceit (*chala*), hypocrisy (*kapaṭatā*), ignorance (*avidyā*), dishonesty (*kuṭilatā*) and depravity (*śaṭhatā*) are different aspects of pride. In the cultivation of *bhakti*, all desires and aspirations in the mind other than those which increase one's pure love for one's most worshipful deity (*iṣṭadeva*) are

known as *kapaṭatā*, hypocrisy. The influence of *avidyā* increases when there is a predominance of fruitive activity, impersonal knowledge or mystic *yoga* practice in the performance of *sādhana-bhakti*. When there is any type of unfavourable attitude in the cultivation of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, it is the covering of *māyā*. All these should be abandoned very diligently. All kinds of false pride arising out of strictly adhering to the occupational duties corresponding to one's caste and stage of life (*varṇāśrama-dharma*), from material aspirations, and from misconceptions about one's true identity are removed by taking shelter of unalloyed devotion (*śuddha-bhakti*).

(10) Apūrva-rati

Ātma-rati is the pure spiritual attachment intrinsic to the soul. The *jīva* is by nature a servant of Kṛṣṇa. Pure attachment for Kṛṣṇa is present in his pure spiritual form. But when the living entity is diverted from Kṛṣṇa and bound by *māyā*, his attachment is directed towards perishable material objects. This perverted attachment that is connected with *māyā* is incidental and distressful. It is only in pure *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* that *rati* of the soul finds its place. In other words, pure love for Kṛṣṇa is itself *ātma-rati*, because Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul of all souls. In its mature state, the more this pure *ātma-rati* evolves, the more it is known as *apūrva-rati*, or unprecedented spiritual attachment.

(11) Atitarāṁ kuru: Make intensive endeavours

One should endeavour with great eagerness to obtain *ātma-rati*. One should not remain complacent, thinking that *bhakti* will arise of its own accord by some good fortune. The more one's spiritual strength increases, the more the effects of one's fruitive activities will diminish, and without doubt one will obtain the mercy of pure devotees and the Supreme Lord.

The purport of this instruction is that as long as the desire for reward-seeking activity is not diminished by the association of devotees, deep faith (*śraddhā*) will not arise. As long as this faith does not arise, one is unfit to hear and assimilate *hari-kathā* and spiritual instructions. When, by good fortune, transcendental *śraddhā* arises, one should take shelter of an initiating spiritual master and receive the *śrī yugala-mantra*. Having obtained this *mantra*, one should worship the initiating and instructing spiritual masters with intense attachment, or *ātma-rati*.

One should not be satisfied simply to offer respect to the *guru*, considering him to be a mere sage. Rather, one should serve him with love and devotion, accepting him as one's dearest friend and well-wisher. The three kinds of Vaiṣṇava devotees – neophyte (*kaniṣṭha*), intermediate (*madhyama*) and topmost (*uttama*) – should be offered respects suitably and received with affection. One should cultivate true attachment to the holy name and the *mantra* given by one's *dikṣā-guru*. Considering Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala to be one's life and soul, one should take shelter at Their lotus feet.

Anuvṛtti

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is giving instructions to the unrestrained and unsteady mind. Through the mind only, a conditioned living entity becomes favourable or unfavourable to *bhajana*. One gets worldly faith through the mind and the mind pervades a person's life. Spontaneous *bhajana* is performed only when the mind is under control. Therefore Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī composed these verses of *Manah-śikṣā* for the benefit of the *sādhakas*. He developed

intense greed for the service of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava after hearing *hari-kathā* from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī. Although he is an eternally perfected soul, he presented himself as a *sādhaka*.

“O mind, please give up all pride and deceit, and develop *apūrva-rati* for the lotus feet of the spiritual master, Śrī Vrajadhāma, the residents of Vraja, the Vaiṣṇavas, the *brāhmaṇas*, your *dikṣā-mantras*, the holy name and the shelter of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala.”

The word *goṣṭhālayin* refers to the topmost devotees of the Lord who live in Vraja in their eternal identity (*svarūpa*) all the time. The word *sujana* refers to the Vaiṣṇavas of other *sampradāyas* who live and perform *bhajana* in Vraja but not in their *svarūpa*. The word *bhūsuras* means the *brāhmaṇas* who follow *smārta* customs but have devotion for Kṛṣṇa. One should develop love for all of them. *Rati*, affection, is of two types: one is general and the other is *apūrva*, unprecedented. One should have *apūrva-rati* for the spiritual master and perform service that is imbued with a deep sense of faith and intimacy (*viśrambha-guru-sevā*). Service to the *guru* and resolute faith in the *guru* are the foundation of *bhajana* because the spiritual master is the guide of one’s devotional life.

There are four kinds of *guru*: one who provides original guidance along the path (*vartma-pradarśaka-guru*), the initiating spiritual master (*dikṣā-guru*), the instructing spiritual master (*śikṣā-guru*) and the Lord Himself as Supersoul (*caitya-guru*). One should have faith in and deep attachment for all of them. The initiating and instructing spiritual masters are equal in all respects and are of the same status. The initiating spiritual

master is *bhagavad-rūpa*, the embodiment of the Lord's form, and the instructing spiritual master is *bhagavad-svarūpa*, the embodiment of the Lord's personality.

Sometimes one spiritual master acts as both *dīkṣā-* and *śikṣā-guru*. I received both initiation and instruction from my *gurudeva*. If there are two spiritual masters, then both should be given the same respect. The *guru* should be a *mahā-bhāgavata*, otherwise the disciple will lose faith. True faith comes from the heart; it is not a thing of the imagination. A *mahā-bhāgavata* initiating spiritual master comes down to the intermediate level (*madhyama*) and gives instructions. He nourishes the disciples' *sambandha-jñāna* and removes their impediments to advancement (*anarthas*). One who gives instructions for *bhajana* and upgrades and nourishes it is an instructing spiritual master. One's *dīkṣā-guru* can act as a *śikṣā-guru* for others, and somebody else's *dīkṣā-guru* can act as one's *śikṣā-guru*. There can be some differences of a small degree in both, but one is not less than the other. Therefore the word *guru* is used for both, and both should be given equal respect.

There are two kinds of service rendered to the *guru*. One kind is ordinary and arises out of the consciousness of duty. The other kind is performed by the loving affection of the heart (*anurāga*), and this service is extraordinary. This is *viśrambha-guru-sevā*. In this verse the service of *anurāga* has been described.

One simple *sādhaka* leaves home, comes in contact with a spiritual master, takes initiation and gradually takes instruction also. He makes progress in *bhajana*. He offers obeisances to his *guru* every morning, touches his feet and performs

ninefold devotion: hearing (*śravaṇam*), chanting (*kīrtanam*), remembering the glories of the Lord (*viṣṇu-smaraṇam*), serving His lotus feet (*pāda-sevanam*), worshipping Him (*arcanam*), praying to Him (*vandanam*), carrying out His orders (*dāsyam*), making friends with Him (*sakhyam*) and offering one's very self to Him (*ātma-nivedanam*). These are the nine limbs of *bhakti* mentioned in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.5.23).

There are also five limbs of *bhakti* mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā* 22.128):

sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana

One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside in Mathurā-maṇḍala and serve the deity with great faith.

Of all the methods prescribed for performing *bhajana*, to always chant the holy name of the Lord is topmost. This is expressed in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 4.70, 71):

bhajanera madhye śreṣṭha nava-vidhā bhakti
tāra madhye sarva śreṣṭha nāma-saṅkīrtana

Of all the limbs of *bhajana*, the nine types of devotion are the best, and amongst these *nāma-saṅkīrtana* is best of all.

So one type of disciple places more emphasis on executing the activities of *sādhana* and on hearing, chanting and remembering. This is ordinary service to the spiritual master. The second service, which is performed with spontaneous feelings of love, is when the disciple serves the spiritual master first and then chants the holy name and performs other types of *sādhana* if he finds time after serving his *guru*. He gives

preference to serving the spiritual master rather than to *sādhana*. This is special and extraordinary service.

Yasya deve parā bhaktir, yathā deve tathā gurau: One should have equal devotion for one's *guru* as he does for Kṛṣṇa Himself; this is an eternal truth. In the early stages of *sādhana* one should have more devotion for the *guru* than for Bhagavān, because hearing, chanting and so on have *sambandha* – a relationship with the worshipful object – but in the beginning we really don't have much of a relationship with Kṛṣṇa or render service directly unto Him. On the other hand, service to the spiritual master bestows all kinds of perfection.

One noteworthy example of service to the *guru* is found among the disciples of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. This particular disciple, named Giri (later Toṭakācārya), was illiterate. He used to wash his spiritual master's clothes, cook for him and perform other menial services. Even while Śaṅkarācārya was giving a lecture, Giri would be engaged in the service of his *guru*, but he tried to hear also. Other disciples considered him to be a fool. One day he went across the river to wash clothes and got delayed. Meanwhile his spiritual master was scheduled to speak, but did not start the lecture. The other disciples, numbering six thousand, asked their *gurudeva* to start the class. They said, "Except for that one ignorant disciple, all others are present. And he does not understand anything anyway, so please start the class." But Śaṅkarācārya kept waiting for Giri. After finishing his service, Giri came running and sat for class, and began reciting Sanskrit verses that were full of beautiful poetry and metaphors. The others were astonished at his knowledge. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya explained that this was the result of *viśrambha-sevā*, service rendered unto the spiritual master with intimacy and great love.

There are several such examples of *guru-sevā*. Govinda dāsa used to serve Śrīman Mahāprabhu with great love and intimacy. He used to tell Svarūpa Dāmodara, “Why do you come and make Mahāprabhu cry?” It is not so that he did not understand the dealings of Mahāprabhu; he was not a fool. He understood the deep spiritual emotions (*bhāvas*) of Mahāprabhu. He could write Sanskrit verses, and he recorded the pastimes of Mahāprabhu in his notebooks, which are known as the *kaḍacā*, or notes, of Govinda dāsa. These writings were used by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī in composing his *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

A competent spiritual master, who has controlled Kṛṣṇa and has a fully mature relationship with Him, is an *uttama-bhāgavata*, a topmost devotee of the Lord. He can instill his *bhakti* in the heart of his disciples. Service to the spiritual master can bestow everything and, in particular, all perfection in *bhakti*.

We have so many *anarthas*, impediments: lust, greed, anger, pride, envy, illusion, offences committed to the holy name, offences committed to the deity, and so on. Each *anartha* is removed by a separate method. To remove anger, one should not have any desire; because when a desire is unfulfilled, it leads to anger. A topmost devotee has no desire except the desires to please the spiritual master and Bhagavān and to attain *prema-bhakti*. The heart of such a devotee is the abode of the Lord. Lust can be removed by associating with saintly persons and by abandoning all objects of attachment. There is no guarantee that these impediments will not return, but service rendered to the spiritual master can vanquish all *anarthas* without the possibility of their return. The *guru* gives the disciple saintly association, speaks *hari-kathā* to him, and engages

him in Kṛṣṇa's service; thus gradually all of the disciple's impediments are eradicated.

Goṣṭha, or *Vraja-dhāma*, and *goṣṭhālayin*, the residents of *Vraja*, are also served in the same two ways, i.e. ordinary and extraordinary. *Rāga-bhakti* cannot be attained without residence in *Vraja*. If one cannot reside there physically, then one should do so mentally. Śrīman Mahāprabhu said: “*jekhāne sādhuḡaṇa sekhāne vṛndāvana* – that place where *sādhus* reside is known as *Vṛndāvana*.” This is all right, but Mahāprabhu very keenly desired to go to *Vṛndāvana*. Wherever He stayed, He remained absorbed in the meditation of *Vṛndāvana*. While in *Purī*, He considered the sand dune of *Caṭaka-parvata* to be *Govardhana Hill*, and the ocean as the *Yamunā*. When Mahāprabhu visited *Vṛndāvana*, He became overwhelmed in ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa. Seeing *Rādhā-kuṇḍa*, *Govardhana*, the *Yamunā* and other places of pastimes, His condition became uncontrollable in the madness of ecstasy in love of Kṛṣṇa. In this ecstasy He was embracing *Govardhana*, jumping into the *Yamunā*, weeping and rolling on the ground. Mahāprabhu's servant *Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya* became afraid that the Lord might encounter some serious accident in this madness, and therefore brought Him back to *Purī* after eight or ten days.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in his *Upadeśāmṛta* (8):

*tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-
smṛtyoḡ krameṇa rasanā manasī niyojya
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī
kālaṁ nayed akhīlam ity upadeśa-sāram*

Devotees should gradually withdraw the tongue and mind from all other objects and engage them exclusively in chanting and remembering the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names, form, qualities and pastimes. They should spend all of their time in this way,

living in Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala under the guidance of a spiritual master and Vaiṣṇavas who are deeply attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the essence of all advice.

How does Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī serve? While one servant massages the legs of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, internally absorbed in the perception of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's and his own eternal forms as maidservant assistants to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, smiles and recites the following verse (*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (1)):

*tvam rūpa-mañjari sakhi prathitā pure 'smin
puṁsaḥ parasya vadanam nahi paśyasīti
bimbādhare kṣatam anāgata-bhartṛkāyā
yat te vyadhāyi kim u tac-chuka-puṅgavena*

O dear friend Rūpa Mañjarī, you are famous in Vraja as a very chaste girl. You never so much as look at the face of any other man. Your husband has been away at another village for the past few days, and yet your lips are freshly cut. Can it be that some excellent parrot has bitten them, having mistaken them for a *bimba* fruit?

Hearing this, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī smiled.

Further absorbed in this internal mood, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī expresses the service for which he anxiously longs (*Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (72)):

*śrī-rūpa-mañjari-karārcita-pāda-padma
goṣṭhendra-nandana-bhujārpita-mastakāyāḥ
hā modataḥ kanaka-gauri padāravinda-
samvāhanāni śanakais tava kim kariṣye?*

Śrīmatī Rādhikā is fatigued from the labour of amorous pastimes and is resting with Her head in the lap of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is gently stroking Her hair, and Rūpa Mañjarī is gently massaging Her legs and fanning Her. Rati Mañjarī (Raghunātha

dāsa Gosvāmī) is watching this with greedy eyes and praying to obtain the remnants of Rūpa Mañjarī's service.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī understood the inner desire (*mano bhīṣṭa*) of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and therefore he was very dear to Him. We should also understand the inner desire of our spiritual master (*śrī guru*), the holy *dhāma* (*goṣṭha*) and the residents of the *dhāma* (*goṣṭhālayin*), and we should serve them according to our ability and eligibility with deep faith and firm conviction, even if we have to lose our life in their service. Do not consider the practice of *sādhana* to be higher than their association. *Yasya prasādād bhagavat prasādaḥ*: one gets the mercy of Kṛṣṇa only by the mercy of the spiritual master. If the spiritual master is not pleased, then even pleasing the whole world will not help. We are under his shelter and have surrendered to him. One's own independent endeavours to serve will turn into fruitive activity (*karma*). One should come so close to the spiritual master that he becomes worried even for our eating and other bodily necessities.

Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the best place in all of Vraja-dhāma, and Govardhana is better than Nandagrāma, Gokula and Varṣāṇā. In regard to ordinary and extraordinary service towards the residents of Vraja, ordinary service is *dṛśyamāna-prakāśa*. This means whatever we can see with our material vision. One who sees in this way understands that although this is the holy *dhāma*, everything here is not eternal. There are all kinds of people in the *dhāma*, even thieves and rogues who are trying to cheat the pilgrims. When an ordinary person sees this, he becomes somewhat disillusioned and starts disliking Vraja. But how does Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī see Vraja? His vision is expressed in the following verse:

*yat kiñcīt tṛṇa-gulma-kīkaṭa-mukhaṁ goṣṭhe samastaiḥ hi tat
sarvānandamayaiḥ mukunda-dayitaiḥ līlānukūlaiḥ param
śāstrair eva muhur muhuḥ sphuṭam idam niṣṭāṅkitaiḥ yācñyā
brahmāder api sasṛjheṇa tad idaiḥ sarvaiḥ mayā vandyate*

Stavāvali (Vraja-vilāsa-stava (102))

With great longing I worship all the living entities of Vraja including the grass, bushes, flies and birds, which are filled with transcendental bliss. Their fortune is so great that it is aspired for even by exalted personalities like Śrī Brahmā and Uddhava. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other scriptures have repeatedly and clearly propounded their glories. They are very dear to Śrī Mukunda and assist in His pastimes.

Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī finds that the trees, creepers, grass, animals, birds, tigers, bears, flies, rats and even mosquitoes are fully spiritual and favourable to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Can we think like this? Our firmness in devotion is not so steady as this. Suppose a bull is rushing towards us. If we don't save ourselves from him, the bull will hit us with his horns. So at our stage of eligibility, our ordinary vision (*dṛśyamāna-prakāśa*) is all right.

The word *goṣṭhālayin* refers to the residents of Vraja. Those residents of Vraja who have inner sentiments like the eternal *rāgātmika* Vrajavāsīs, even though they may not have taken birth in Vraja, are the real Vrajavāsīs; especially if they have the topmost *mādhurya-bhāva* of the *gopīs* and are performing *bhajana* in this mood. We should understand these to be the true residents of Vraja and serve them. How should they be served? We should hear the *hari-kathā* emanating from their mouths and serve the dust of their feet. What is the meaning of "the dust of their feet"? It means to develop excellent loving attachment (*rati*) for them through service; this in

turn will improve one's *bhajana*. Always remember that everything in Vraja – even the trees, creepers, birds and animals – are all transcendental (*cinmaya*) and favourable to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Whatever Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says is the eternal truth. We have to reach up to that stage where we can also have the same vision as he has.

Do not have any relationship with those who have taken birth in Vraja but are antagonistic to *bhakti*. Associate with those residents of Vraja who have a similar mood to ours. We are engaging in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. An impersonalist (*māyāvādī*) considers Kṛṣṇa to be illusory and accepts impersonal liberation to be superior to eternally serving the Lord. He may be pious, renowned and virtuous in all his dealings, but he believes in the famous impersonalist aphorism “*sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma* – all this is indeed Brahman.” Another person is serving Kṛṣṇa but is not yet on the liberated platform; he simply has attraction for the path of *bhakti*. So who is worthy of respect? Of course, those who are serving Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The association of *māyāvādīs* will ruin one's devotion completely.

Sujane bhusura gaṇe – This refers to the Vaiṣṇavas of other *sampradāyas* and the *brāhmaṇas*. One should respect them also. Do not disrespect *brāhmaṇas*. Don't disrespect anyone, but associate only with those who help increase our *bhakti*.

Sva mantrē – One's *dikṣā-mantras* are chanted three times a day. Such daily performance of religious rites at scheduled periods of the day is called *āhnikā*. Some persons chant all three in the morning and not during the rest of the day. Some chant only the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* given by their spiritual master. The *mantras* given by the *guru* are the *brahma-gāyatrī*

(for men only), the *guru-mantra*, *guru-gāyatrī*, *gaura-mantra*, *gaura-gāyatrī*, *gopāla-mantra*, *kāma-gāyatrī*, *pañca-tattva-mantra* and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. These should be chanted with deep faith. Consider these *mantras* to be the form of Bhagavān and chant them with love and affection. The spiritual master gives these *mantras* after some consideration. But service to the spiritual master should be done first, and *mantras* can be chanted afterwards.

Don't think that these *mantras* are ordinary. In the story of Gopa-kumāra in *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, the importance and power of *mantra* is illustrated very nicely. Due to some good influence from his previous birth, Gopa-kumāra took birth in a cowherd family of Vraja. He used to take the cows out for grazing. Once, he saw a saintly personality crying out and singing and shedding profuse tears. He could not understand the reason behind this behaviour, but he became attracted to that saint and started visiting and serving him. He used to bring him milk, butter and other milk products. One day the saint asked Gopa-kumāra to bathe in the Yamunā and afterwards gave him the *gopāla-mantra*. But he could recite only half the *mantra* to Gopa-kumāra before tears started falling from his eyes. Eventually he fell unconscious after somehow completing the recitation of the *mantra* to Gopa-kumāra. The saint had no chance to even mention the method and rules of chanting the *mantra*. Gopa-kumāra went to search for some water, but when he returned, his *guru* had disappeared. Gopa-kumāra had faith in the *mantra*, and therefore started chanting it. All his material desires gradually vanished. Slowly he travelled from the Earth planet to Brahmaloaka to Śivaloka, and crossed Vaikuṅṭha, Ayodhyā, Dvārakā, Mathurā

and finally in Vṛndāvana he met Kṛṣṇa. He achieved this by chanting the *gopāla-mantra*.

Mantra nourishes *sambandha*, one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa. *Mantra* means that which controls the mind and removes *anarthas*. Therefore never neglect your *mantras* and chant with concentration. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 7.77, 78) Mahāprabhu has said:

*nāma laite laite mora bhrānta haila mana
dhairya dharite nāri hailāma unmatta*

By chanting the holy name again and again my mind has become bewildered. I can no longer maintain my composure and have become mad.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu saw a beautiful dark-complexioned boy standing in a threefold-bending posture (*tribhaṅga-lalita*) and playing the flute. He was very attractive. Mahāprabhu ran after Him to catch Him but He disappeared. Mahāprabhu started weeping and became mad for Him.

All sinful reactions are burnt forever by chanting the *mantra*. By the chanting of impersonalists, the unmanifest reactions to one's activities (*aprārabdha-karma*) will be removed, but one has to undergo the effects that have matured (*prārabdha-karma*). This means that due to sins committed in previous lives, one gets this body and its concomitant afflictions, which are to be tolerated. But Vaiṣṇavas do not undergo these sufferings because they take shelter of the holy name. One should chant the holy name by following the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas.

Mahotsavāyate means "to enjoy bliss". How? Kṛṣṇa is running forward. His earrings are swinging on His cheeks. He is wearing *pītāmbara*, a yellow cloth. Mother Yaśodā has

decorated her small child very beautifully. Kṛṣṇa looks backwards, and seeing Yaśodā coming to catch Him, runs again. Yaśodā is very full-bodied, and as she is running, her body is trembling. This is the *mahotsava*, blissful festival, of Gokula. Whosoever sees this becomes enchanted. Such *mahotsavas* are manifested to a devotee’s perception by the holy name. The holy name reveals the blissful pastimes of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Vṛndāvana – but according to one’s qualification to see them. To attain the eligibility to see them, we should perform *bhajana* like the *rāgānuga* Vaiṣṇavas – with firm, resolute determination.

Ideally one should not chant less than one *lākha*, or one hundred thousand names, per day, and this chanting should be done with a steady and stable mind. This is *bhajana*. The aim of *bhajana* is to attain *bhāva-bhakti*. Those who aim at *bhāva-bhakti* and perform uninterrupted *bhajana* receive all opportunities and facilities from the Lord Himself. Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura received such facilities from birth in the form of association with Śrī Advaita Ācārya and Śrīman Mahāprabhu. This was due to the chanting of the holy name.

“Unless I complete the chanting of fifty thousand names, I shall not eat or drink. And I shall not sleep until I complete the full number of rounds” – this should be the firm resolve of a *sādhaka*. Haridāsa Ṭhākura’s body became very weak in his final days. When Mahāprabhu asked him about his disease, he replied that his disease was that he could not finish his regular number of rounds. Do we have such attachment for chanting the holy name? We should perform exclusive, resolute *bhakti* towards the spiritual master, the Vaiṣṇavas, the holy name and the holy land of Vraja.

Dambham hitvā – As you perform your *sādhana* and *bhajana*,

give up all kinds of cunning and deceit and aim only at the attainment of *prema*. “O mind, give up illusion and ignorance and perform *bhajana*.” Within the mind there should always be our worshipful deity Kṛṣṇa and His associates – the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas. Our only concern should be how to increase our love for the spiritual master, the Vaiṣṇavas and Kṛṣṇa. One should have firm faith that Kṛṣṇa will take care of us and our daily needs. He is fully capable. This firm faith is the doorway to surrender.

One should perform the practices of *bhakti* with great eagerness. One should not be complacent and think, “Oh, if *bhakti* is in my astrological chart, I will get it.” Do not simply depend on “luck”; make some endeavour to obtain *bhakti*, strive day and night and do not waste even a moment, for one may die at any moment. One’s body becomes spiritual by the chanting of the holy name. Gradually by the unfolding of spiritual power the body becomes *cinmaya*, transcendental.

The essence of these instructions is that the desire for worldly activities is not vanquished unless one gets the association of devotees. One attains pure chanting in the association of saints, and thus his *bhakti* grows and flourishes.

Verse Two

न धर्मं नाधर्मं श्रुतिगणनिरुक्तं किल कुरु
व्रजे राधाकृष्णप्रचुरपरिचर्यामिह तनु ।
शचीसूनुं नन्दीश्वरपतिसुतत्वे गुरुवरं
मुकुन्दप्रेष्ठत्वे समर परमजस्रं ननु मनः ॥२॥

*na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktam kila kuru
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām iha tanu
śacī-sūnum nandīśvara-pati-sutatve guru-varam
mukunda-preṣṭhatve smara param ajasram nanu manaḥ*

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *kila* – indeed; *na kuru* – do not perform; *dharmam* – routine religious activities resulting in piety; *adharmaṁ na* – nor irreligious activities resulting in sin; *niruktam* – mentioned; *śruti-gaṇa* – in the Vedas; *param* – rather; *tanu* – perform; *pracura* – profuse; *paricaryām* – service; *rādhā-kṛṣṇa* – for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; *iha* – here; *vraje* – in Vrajadhāma; *nanu* – (and) certainly; *ajasram* – always; *smara* – remember and meditate upon; *śacī-sūnum* – the son of Śacī; *nandīśvara-pati-sutatve* – as the son of the master of Nandagrāma; *guru-varam* – (and) the spiritual master; *mukunda-preṣṭhatve* – as most dear to Śrī Mukunda.

Translation

O my dear mind, please do not perform either the routine religious activities resulting in piety (*dharma*) or the irreligious

activities resulting in sin (*adharmā*) as mentioned in the Śrutis or Vedas. Rather, you should render profuse loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala here in Vraja, for the Śrutis have ascertained Them to be the highest principle of supreme worship and the Supreme Absolute Truth. Always meditate on Śācīnandana Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is richly endowed with the complexion and sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, as non-different from Śrī Nanda-nandana. And always remember the spiritual master as most dear to Śrī Mukunda.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

Pūrva-pakṣa: The first objection to an assertion in any discussion

The advice given in the first verse to give up all pride and serve the eternally youthful Divine Couple with single-minded devotion raises some doubts. The first doubt is that if one completely gives up all pride and takes exclusive shelter of devotion unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa, how will one maintain and support oneself? Life cannot be maintained without performing *nitya-* and *naimittika-karma* (daily and occasional prescribed duties), which consist of pious and impious result-oriented activities. The second doubt is that if one adopts single-minded worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala, then how is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to be regarded? If one performs *bhajana* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu considering Him also as one's object of worship, then, there being two objects of worship, the devotion is not single-minded (*ananya*). The third uncertainty is in what devotional mood should one meditate upon the spiritual master? These three doubts are reconciled in the explanation that follows.

**(1) Na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ
kila kuru:**

**Do not perform the religious and irreligious
activities mentioned in the Śrutis**

Dharma and *adharmā* are described in the Śrutis – the original four Vedas and the Upaniṣads – and the Smṛtis such as the Purāṇas and Itihāsas, which follow the precepts of the Śrutis. Whatever activities are performed by humankind come under these two categories of *dharma* and *adharmā*. If they are completely prohibited, then it is not possible to live even for a moment. Therefore Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has not prohibited all activities of the sense organs. There are two kinds of persons in the world – the learned (*vijñā*) and the ignorant (*ajñā*). The ignorant do not work unless disciplined, and if they do act independently, it only results in inauspiciousness. Therefore all activities described in the Śrutis and their attendant literature, the Smṛtis, have been divided into *dharma* and *adharmā* for the welfare of such persons so that they may easily abstain from inauspicious activities and engage in auspicious ones.

Those who are learned are conscious of their spiritual identity. The disciplinary injunctions of the scriptures are not meant for them. They have been ordained to act on the platform of the pure spiritual attachment intrinsic to the soul (*ātma-* or *kṛṣṇa-rati*), or in other words to render unalloyed service to the Divine Couple. Those who are faithful are included in the category of learned persons. The instruction of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī to abandon all *dharma* and *adharmā* mentioned in the Vedas and remain engaged exclusively in the loving service of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala is for

such learned self-realised souls. Whatever activities must be carried out in the life of a *sādhaka* should be done in the mood of service to the Supreme Lord.

Even the activities prescribed in the Vedas for those who are firmly established in the *varṇāśrama* stage of life should be performed in this mood. Householder devotees should worship deities at home, and all activities like earning money, maintaining family members, protecting assets, building a house, and so on should be done as an offering to the deities. One should consider oneself simply as a servant of the Lord. Under no circumstance should one think oneself to be an enjoyer and thus exploit the fruits of activity for one's own selfish enjoyment. Religious rituals such as the offering of foodstuff to the forefathers (*śrāddha*) prescribed in the book *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* should also be done in the mood of service to the Lord. Upon attaining eligibility, one transcends his attachment to and dependence upon the principles of *varṇāśrama*. At such a time factual residence in Vraja and unalloyed service to the Divine Couple becomes natural and easy. Those who cannot physically live in Vraja should do so mentally.

(2) Śaci-sūnuṃ nandīśvara-pati-sutatve (smara):

Meditate on Śrī Śacinandana as non-different from Śrī Nanda-nandana

In order to distribute the holy name and the most radiant divine love that was never previously given (*anarpita-unnatojjvala-prema*) to the living entities diverted from Kṛṣṇa and entangled in worldly affairs, Śrī Nanda-nandana appeared in the form of Śrī Śacinandana Gaurahari. In particular, He assumed the complexion and sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in order to

taste the unparalleled sweetness of Her loving sentiments.

There are two questions that may arise in this connection. Since Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the combined embodiment of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, why not worship only Him, by which the worship of the Divine Couple will automatically be accomplished? Or should one worship Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu separately? Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the spiritual master of the entire universe, has settled these questions by personally appearing in the mood of a devotee. He demonstrated by His own example how to perform devotion unto Lord Kṛṣṇa and advised the *jīvas* to do the same. Following His instructions, we should worship Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. But before rendering service unto the Divine Couple, one should first of all meditate upon the spiritual master and upon Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, otherwise one will not be able to attain the supreme spiritual perfection (*paramārtha-siddhi*).

In answer to the second question it may be noted that by worshipping Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari separately, one is unable to understand how He is non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When one is established in the consciousness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa being non-different from Śrī Gaurahari, one is then able to remember Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu even while worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

**(3) Guru-varaṁ mukunda-preṣṭhatve (smara):
Meditate on the spiritual master as very dear
to Śrī Mukunda**

The spiritual master is known as *mukunda-preṣṭha*, or one who is very dear to Śrī Mukunda, who bestows liberation (*mukti*) from material bondage. Devotees should think, “Śrī

Kṛṣṇa, who is an ocean of mercy, has sent His very dear associate as my spiritual master in order to deliver me.” It is, therefore, fully appropriate to consider the spiritual master as an intimate servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. According to the statement of the scriptures (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27)) *ācārya mām vijānīyāt*, the spiritual master is known as the embodiment (*svarūpa*) of Bhagavān. In *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and elsewhere this has been explained to mean that the *guru* is very dear to Bhagavān or that he is equally worshipful as the Lord. But to reject Bhagavān and worship only the spiritual master, thinking him to be God, is an offence.

*prathamam tu gurum pūjya
tataś caiva mamārcanam
kurvan siddhim avāpnoti
hy anyathā niṣphalam bhavet*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (4.344)

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:] A devotee who worships the spiritual master first and then worships Me attains perfection. It is fruitless to worship Me alone.

In direct opposition to this, if an evil-minded, arrogant and wretched man disregards the spiritual master and worships only Bhagavān, he becomes a target for the Lord’s wrath. When a lotus flower is situated in water, the rays of the sun cause it to blossom. The same sun, however, will wither a lotus that is not situated in water. In this example the spiritual master is compared to water and the Supreme Lord is compared with the sun. This is the purport of the following verse (from *Jayadākhyāna-saṁhitā*).

*nārāyaṇo 'pi vikṛtiṃ yāti
guroḥ pracyutasya durbuddheḥ
kamalaṃ jalādapetaṃ
śoṣayati ravir na poṣayati*

Anuvṛtti

This Verse Two explains the method of *bhajana*. According to the instructions of Verse One, one should perform *bhajana* after giving up all kinds of pride. In such a condition, worldly life cannot be maintained. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī advises that *dharma* and *adharmā* both be given up if one has the desire to perform *bhajana*. In order to perform exclusive *bhajana* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, one should abandon all kinds of *dharma* and *adharmā* enjoined in the Vedas, Śrutis and other similar literatures. But by giving up one's daily and occasional duties (*nitya*- and *naimittika-karma*), life would become difficult and there would be several defects. Then what should we do? The activities that help us in the course of our life that are beneficial for this world as well as the next world are called *dharma*. To not follow this is *adharmā*, and to do what is contrary to this is called *vidharma*. We may not perform *adharmā*, *vidharma* or *kukarma* (unbeneficial activity), but we have to follow *dharma*. In the Śrutis religious duties are divided according to *karma* (fruitive activity), *jñāna* (the cultivation of knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation) and *bhakti* (devotion unto the Supreme Lord).

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

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.9)

Until one awakens detachment from the results of fruitive activity or until one develops faith in hearing discourses related to Me, one must carry out his daily and occasional obligatory activities.

The Vedas say: “*ahimsā paramo dharmah* – non-violence is the highest religious principle”; “*pitṛ-devo bhava mātṛ-devo bhava* – respect your elders and parents”; “*atithi-devo bhava* – respect those who are uninvited guests at your home”; and “*ācārya-devo bhava* – respect your teachers and preceptors”. In ordinary day-to-day life these cannot be abandoned, and this is how one gets entangled in *karma*. When one realises that fruitive activity and its fruits result only in suffering, then one wishes to become free: *na nirvidyeta yāvata*. No good *karma* results in eternal happiness, and the ultimate outcome will be suffering. One gets married for happiness but it turns out to be painful. Accumulation of wealth also results in suffering. When one comes to this realisation he awakens detachment from material activities: “*karma cetanī nirveda ...kṛtaḥ* – detachment is accomplished by awareness of the misery of material activity.”

Draupadī and the Pāṇḍavas were fully surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, yet even they underwent great suffering. King Hariścandra¹ followed the path of *dharma*, yet he had to suffer. If one comes to this understanding that *karma* and the fruits of *karma* result in suffering only, then he becomes eligible for *jñāna*. But even the elaborate commentaries on *jñāna* given in the scriptures do not contain real happiness because there is no acceptance of

1. The story of King Hariścandra is narrated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Ninth Canto, Chapter 7.

Bhagavān. They propound that Bhagavān is formless and devoid of qualities and designations. This kind of void perspective cannot contain happiness. If one listens to the glorification of the Lord, then by hearing such topics one develops the desire to perform *bhajana*, and he gives up fruitive activity and impersonal knowledge immediately. This is expressed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.11.32) as follows:

*ājñāyāivaiṅ guṇān doṣān
mayādiṣṭhān api svakān
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
mām bhajeta sa tu sattamaḥ*

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:] I have given duties to human beings in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads and explained what is *dharma* and what is *adharmā*, what are attributes and what are faults. To carry out one's religious duties is a positive attribute because it purifies the heart of the performer. To neglect such duty is a fault. One who knows all this and yet abandons his prescribed duty, considering it to be a distraction to *bhajana*, and who worships Me exclusively with the firm conviction that all perfection may be attained by *bhakti* alone, is the best amongst all humankind.

This is further explained in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66) in the verse *sarva-dharmān parityajya, mām ekam śaraṇam vraja*. Therefore Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī advises that one abandon all *dharma* and *adharmā* given in the Vedas. "Those things will not be beneficial to your eternal identity, so give them up and perform profuse service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa day and night." Dāsa Gosvāmī instructs his mind, which does not have *ruci* but has developed greed to attain the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and perform *bhajana* to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. From the very beginning he does not aim at

vaidhī-bhakti, devotion based on scriptural regulation, but at *rāgānuga-bhakti*, devotion steeped in spontaneous love.

If one does not develop greed after hearing the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one is the most unfortunate among all unfortunate persons. But Dāsa Gosvāmī says that all living entities are eligible for this *rāgānuga-bhajana* because everyone is a servant of Kṛṣṇa: *jīvera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsa*.

Some persons say, “Do not read the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*” – but who should not read it? Only those who lead an animalistic life. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says: “*rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām iha tanuḥ* – perform profuse service to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa here in Vraja.” What is *pracura-sevā*? It means to serve day and night. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.295) Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has said:

sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa
siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad-bhāva-lipsunā kāryā
vraja-lokānusārataḥ

A *sādḥaka* who has greed for *rāgānuga-bhakti* should serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa both in the *sādḥaka-rūpa* and the *siddha-rūpa* in accordance with the *bhāva* of the eternal residents of Vraja who possess the same mood for which he aspires. The *sādḥaka-rūpa* refers to the physical body in which one is presently situated, and the *siddha-rūpa* refers to the internally contemplated spiritual form that is suitable to serve Kṛṣṇa according to one’s cherished desire. In the *siddha-deha*, the perfected internal spiritual body, one should offer mental services to Śrī Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī and others. In the *sādḥaka-rūpa*, one’s physical body, one should render physical service under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and others.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has determined the nature of *uttama-bhakti* in the very beginning of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.11):

*anyābhlāṣitā-sūnyam
jñāna-karmādy anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
śīlanām bhaktir uttamā*

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

“Give up spurious desire, fruitive activity and the cultivation of impersonal knowledge, and serve Kṛṣṇa favourably.” How is this favourable *pracura-sevā* performed? Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prayed at the feet of Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī:

*vairāgya-yug-bhakti-rasam prayatnair
apāyayan mām anabhīpsam andham
kṛpāmbudhir yaḥ paraduḥkha duḥkhī
sanātanam tam prabhum āśrayāmi*

Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (6)

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī is an ocean of mercy who grieves for the distress of others. Although I was blinded by ignorance and unwilling to do so, he induced me with great diligence to drink the nectarean liquid mellows of devotion, which are endowed with renunciation. I take shelter of that Sanātana Gosvāmī Prabhu as my instructing spiritual master.

Sanātana Gosvāmī instructed him to serve Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and the aim of our *bhajana* should also be to serve Them. Sanātana Gosvāmī is very merciful. What Sanātana Gosvāmī has given in *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* is the desire to follow Gopa-kumāra and Nārada. *Vaidhī-bhakti* starts from *śraddhā*, faith, and progresses slowly up to *ruci*, taste. *Śraddhā* in *rāgānuga-bhakti* is different. It generally starts from the stage of *āsakti*, deep attachment, and due to the presence of greed it progresses very quickly.

If we are to accept the statement that one should not read the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then we should not study *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, the books of our Gosvāmīs, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and so on, because they are imbued with the same topics. We should not hear the dialogue between Rāya Rāmānanda and Mahāprabhu. Even the very first verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* – *satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmahī* – is full of *rādhā-prema*, so we should not read this either. In the third verse *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is described as *nigama-kalpa-taror-galitaṁ phalaṁ* – the mature fruit of the desire tree of Vedic literature. What is in this verse? The entire Tenth Canto and other pastimes exist within this verse in coded form. Therefore we should also be restricted from studying this. Then what is left?

When Mahārāja Parikṣit asked Śukadeva Gosvāmī, “Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān Himself; why did He break the religious principles and perform the *rāsa* dance with the wives of others? This is not proper,” Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied, “If one can obtain Bhagavān by means of anger, lust and envy, then why can’t one approach Him by *prema*, divine love, and *kāma*, spiritual desire?” Śukadeva Gosvāmī wanted to describe the beautiful

holī-lilā (colour-throwing festival) and *jhulana-lilā* (swing festival) along with the *rāsa-lilā*, but he did not describe those pastimes because he considered the audience ineligible to hear them. Therefore our *ācāryas* described all these in *Kṛṣṇa-bhāvanāmṛta* [by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura] and *Govinda-lilāmṛta* [by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī], thinking that unauthorised persons would not read them, but if one has a little taste he will surely read them.

The pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are described in the dialogue between Uddhava and Maitreya in the Third Canto. The pastimes of the *gopīs* are referred to in the Eleventh Canto. In every verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in some form or other, there is mention of the Tenth Canto. Therefore those who advise not to read the Tenth Canto are not authorised to read any part of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. They should not even touch *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. For whom did Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī write *pracura-sevā*, *tāmbulādi-arpaṇam* (offering of betel and so on) and *pāda-mardanam* (massaging the lotus feet)? For whom did he advise all this? For the devotees only. How can one learn these services if one does not read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? Yes, one does have to develop eligibility; one does have to have *śraddhā*, *niṣṭhā* and so on; but if this is not our aim, then even after several lifetimes one shall not obtain the qualification to hear this.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu says there are two types of services: external and internal. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says that externally we should follow hearing, chanting and so on – the five limbs of *bhakti* – and those who have greed will follow *tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu smṛtyoḥ* – recitation of and meditation upon Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names, form, qualities and

pastimes as quoted previously (*Upadesāmṛta* (8)). If we are living in Vṛndāvana, then why should we not read the Tenth Canto? If we go to Sevā-kuñja for offering obeisances, with what understanding will we go? Shall we offer obeisances only to the trees and bushes, or to the confidential pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that are not described even in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? What is the point in going to Nidhuvana² and Cīra-ghāṭa if all those pastimes do not overwhelm the heart? For what purpose shall we go to Girirāja-Govardhana, Candra-sarovara, Paiṭhagrāma and Rādhā-kuṇḍa? At present we may not have the qualification to perceive the pastimes that take place there, but this chapter cannot be forever closed to us, never to be read.

There are two kinds of *bhajana*: one is for *sādhakas*, practitioners, and the other is for *siddhas*, perfected souls. In this verse, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is instructing the *sādhakas* how to perform *bhajana* that will gradually lead to the perfectional stage. If you want to do this kind of *bhajana*, then consider Śacīnandana as Yaśodā-nandana; consider the son of Jagannātha Miśra to be the son of Nanda Bābā. The son of Mother Śacī is very merciful. He has come from Vṛndāvana

2. Nidhuvana is a place in Vṛndāvana where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa enacted many confidential pastimes. It is also the place where the deity of Śrī Baṅke-bihārī manifested. Cīra-ghāṭa is where the *gopīs* bathed in order to purify themselves before worshipping Kātyāyanī-devī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa stole the *gopīs*' clothes and climbed a *kadamba* tree there that is situated on the bank of the Yamunā. Candra-sarovara is a place in Vraja near Parāsaligrāma. After performing the *rāsa* dance of the spring season, Śrī Kṛṣṇa took rest there and dressed and decorated Śrī Rādhā with His own hands. Paiṭhagrāma is the place where Kṛṣṇa manifested his four-armed form before the *gopīs* after disappearing from the *rāsa* dance. But when He beheld Śrī Rādhā He was unable to maintain this form and two of His arms entered His body.

to bestow mercy upon the living entities. *Anarpīta-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau* – He has appeared in the age of Kali out of His causeless mercy to bestow the most priceless gift that was not previously given. He has come to do a favour and to give this confidential *prema*. He has come to relish *rādhā-bhāvā* Himself. He is so kind that He gives *prema* to everyone, even to the birds and beasts, as He did in the Jhārikhaṇḍa forest.

Kṛṣṇa gave *prema* occasionally, but Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave it freely. Those entangled in the material world have no other way to receive it except by chanting the holy name and associating with devotees. Caitanya Mahāprabhu and all His associates came to give this. Śrī Rādhā became Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Viśākhā and Lalitā appeared as Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara; Kṛṣṇa brought all eight principal *sakhīs* and their maidservants. Lord Brahmā and Prahlāda Mahārāja together became Haridāsa Ṭhākura. Nityānanda Prabhu preached the teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and *nāma-kīrtana*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Jagannātha Purī to relish *unnata-ujjala-prema*, the highest *mādhurya-prema* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and to inundate the world with the nectar of confidential service to Her. He came in the form of Mahāprabhu to taste the unparalleled sweetness of *rādhā-bhāva* and to preach *mañjarī-bhāva*.

Without performing *bhajana* to Caitanya Mahāprabhu, one cannot perform *bhajana* of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. But the scriptures say to perform *ananya-bhajana*, to worship only one deity. So what should we do? Should we worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, or Gauracandra? Some say that worshipping Caitanya Mahāprabhu is worshipping Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has

answered this question in his *Jaiva-dharma* and in *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*. Before Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appeared in this world, this mockery was going on: “Mahāprabhu is my *nāgara* (hero), and I am His *nāgarī* (heroine). If I am Kṛṣṇa’s *sakhī* – Rādhā’s *sakhī* – and if They perform the *rāsa* dance, then Mahāprabhu should also perform the *rāsa* dance, and we should take part in it as His *sakhīs*.” This is called *gaurāṅga-nāgarī-vāda*. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and all other *ācāryas* have rejected this theory, for it is not accepted by Mahāprabhu. Therefore Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura refuted it, and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda refuted it.

So should we worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Mahāprabhu separately? The *sahajiyās* say, “Do not worship Gaura-Nityānanda; accept only Mahāprabhu and not Nityānanda Prabhu.” But they don’t know the intricacies of *rasa*. In our temples Mahāprabhu-Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are there, and Gaura-Nityānanda are also there. They are non-different. Caitanya Mahāprabhu said to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and chant the name of Kṛṣṇa. But He did not mention His own name, so should we neglect Him? Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that before worshipping the Divine Couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, we should remember Mahāprabhu. He *is* Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. We should pray as follows, “Out of Your causeless mercy You have come with *rādhā-bhāva* to instruct the method of *bhakti*, and therefore I remember You.” Meditate like this and serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

All the scriptures declare the spiritual master to be the direct representative of Kṛṣṇa: *sākṣād-dharitvena-samastāśāstrair*. Kṛṣṇa says that one should know the spiritual master to be His very self – *ācāryam māṁ vijānīyāt* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27)). Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta also says to

serve both the initiating and instructing spiritual masters, considering them to be Kṛṣṇa's outward form (*rūpa*) and inward form (*svarūpa*), respectively. But without serving the spiritual master one cannot serve Kṛṣṇa. We should serve the *guru*, and by his mercy we can serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. We should not differentiate; rather, we should have more devotion for the spiritual master than for Kṛṣṇa. This is how you can serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; otherwise not.

Therefore in order to worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, meditate on Mahāprabhu and pray, "You are none other than Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa." One has to serve Mahāprabhu with a mood of *dāsyā*, servitude. When this sentiment is fully mature, then Mahāprabhu will grant His *darśana* in the form of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. At that time one's devotion progresses in one of the moods of *sakhya* (friendship), *vātsalya* (parenthood) or *mādhurya* (amorous love). But without meditating on Mahāprabhu one cannot perform *bhajana*.

The spiritual master is very dear to Mukunda, as stated in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (4.344):

prathamam tu guruṁ pūjya
tataś caiva mamārcanam
kurvan siddhim avāpnoti
hy anyathā niṣphalaṁ bhavet

By worshipping the spiritual master first and then Myself one will attain perfection; otherwise one's worship will be fruitless.

One should worship the spiritual master first in his form as a *sādhaka* and render intimate service (*viśrambha-guru-sevā*) unto him. Consider the *guru* to be your ever well-wisher. There should be internal and deep love for the spiritual master. One should aspire to inherit and receive the love for

Kṛṣṇa that is present in his heart. Serve the form (*vapu*) of the spiritual master by the medium of his words (*vāṇī*); otherwise that service will become material. The spiritual master is *āsraya-bhagavān*, the supreme receptacle of love for the Lord, and Kṛṣṇa is *viṣaya-bhagavān*, the supreme object of love.

Verse Three

यदीच्छेरावासं व्रजभुवि सरागं प्रतिजनु-
युवद्वन्द्वं तच्चेत् परिचरितुमारादभिलषेः ।
स्वरूपं श्रीरूपं सगणमिह तस्याग्रजमपि
स्फुटं प्रेम्णा नित्यं स्मर नम तदा त्वं शृणु मनः ॥३॥

*yadīccher āvāsam vraja-bhuvi sa-rāgam prati-janur
yuva-dvandvam tac cet paricaritum ārād abhilaṣeḥ
svarūpaṁ śrī rūpaṁ sa-gaṇam iha tasyāgrajam api
sphuṭam preṁṇā nityam smara nama tadā tvam śṛṇu manaḥ*

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *yadi* – if; *iccheḥ* – (you) desire; *āvāsam* – to live; *vraja-bhuvi* – in the land of Vraja; *sa-rāgam* – with *rāgātmikā-bhakti*; *cet* – (and) if; *abhilaṣeḥ* – (you) desire; *paricaritum* – to serve; *tat yuva-dvandvam* – that youthful Divine Couple, Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava; *ārāt* – directly; *tadā* – then; *tvam* – you; *śṛṇu* – hear (me); *iha* – here; *prati-januḥ* – in birth after birth; *nityam* – always; *sphuṭam* – distinctly; *smara* – remember; *nama* – (and) bow down; *preṁṇā* – with love; *sva-rūpaṁ* – to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī; *śrī rūpaṁ* – to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī; *tasya agrajam* – (and) to his elder brother Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī; *api* – also; *sa-gaṇam* – with their associates.

Translation

My dear mind, please hear me. If you are eager to gain residence in Vraja on the platform of *rāgātmikā-bhakti*, and if

you desire to obtain the direct service of the eternally youthful Divine Couple, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, then birth after birth always distinctly remember and bow down with great love to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his elder brother Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, and all other associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who are the recipients of His mercy.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

Pūrva-pakṣa: Objection

The question may be raised here whether it is possible to attain *rāgātmikā-bhakti* and residence in Vraja by accepting initiation and instruction from a Vaiṣṇava of any other *sampradāya*. This question is answered in this third verse.

The most munificent Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu bestows *rāgātmikā-bhakti* and *vraja-prema* for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. He reveals the supremely confidential mysteries of that *vraja-prema* and the method to obtain it. His most intimate associates Śrī Svarūpa, Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and other *gosvāmīs* are the principal storekeepers and guardians of this most rare *vraja-prema*. Through the medium of their disciplic succession and the authentic literatures composed by them, they have given the whole world the most valuable gift of the procedures of *vraja-rasa*, the manner of residence in Vraja, and the most confidential method of obtaining love for the Divine Couple. Without taking shelter of their lotus feet and following their instructions, it is not possible to obtain residence in Vraja on the platform of *rāgātmikā-bhakti* and the service of the Divine Couple, saturated with *anurāga*.

(1) Rāgātmikā-bhakti

The word *sa-rāgam* means “with *rāgātmikā-bhakti*”. Generally the practice (*sādhana*) and perfection (*siddhi*) of *bhakti* are divided into three categories: *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti* and *prema-bhakti*. When *sādhana-bhakti* matures, one is endowed with *bhāva-bhakti*, and fully matured *bhāva-bhakti* is known as *prema-bhakti*. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is fully acquainted with the inner truths of *bhakti*, has employed very fine discrimination in describing the gradual development of *prema* in his book *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.15–16) as follows:

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nārtha-nivṛttiḥ syāt
tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ
athāsaktis tato bhāvas
tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayaiṁ premṇaḥ
prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ*

In the beginning *śraddhā* develops by hearing the scriptures in the association of devotees. *Śraddhā* means to have firm faith in the words of the scriptures and the spiritual master. This leads to *sādhu-saṅga*, or associating with devotees, in order to learn from them the method of *bhajana*. Thereafter one takes up *bhajana-kriyā*, the practice of *bhajana*, which results in *anārtha-nivṛtti*, destruction of the reactions of *prārabdha*³ and *aprārabdha* sins. After this, *niṣṭhā* or steadiness develops, which means to

3. The term *prārabdha* refers to sinful reactions that are fully manifest and are thus bearing fruit at present. This body is the mature (*prārabdha*) effect of *karma* performed in one’s previous life. The term *aprārabdha* refers to those effects that are unmanifest and are thus not presently [cont. next page]

have continuity in *bhajana* without any disruption. This leads to the development of *ruci*, a conscious desire and taste for *bhajana*. Then one develops *āsakti*, in which one experiences spontaneous attraction both for the performance of *bhajana* itself and for the object of *bhajana*, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Thereafter *bhāva* manifests and finally *prema* arises. This is the general order of the development of *prema* in *sādhakas*.

Sādhana-bhakti, which is performed during the devotee's stage of practice, has two divisions: *vaidhī* and *rāgānuga*. At the stage of the fruition of *bhakti* also, a corresponding subtle difference remains. In other words there is a subtle difference between *prema* arising from *vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti* and *prema* arising from *rāgānuga-sādhana-bhakti*. The philosophical conclusion of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī concerning *vaidhī-bhakti* is expressed in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.6, 269) as follows:

*yatra rāgānavāptatvāt
pravṛttir upajāyate
śāsane naiva śāstrasya
sā vaidhī bhaktir ucyate

śāstroktayā prabalayā
tat tan maryādayānvitā
vaidhī bhaktir ayam kaiścin
maryādā mārga ucyate*

Engagement in *sādhana-bhakti* is sometimes inspired by intense greed (*lobha*) and sometimes by the disciplinary statements of the scriptures. When engagement in *sādhana-bhakti* is not inspired by spontaneous love but by the governing

experienced. The unmanifest (*aprārabdha*) effects gradually accumulate and then tend towards bearing seeds. This stage is called *kuṭa*. When these effects develop further, they produce the seeds of sinful desire. This stage is called *bija*. When the living entity acts on these sinful desires, then the effect that is directly manifest is called *prārabdha*.

directions of the scriptures, it is called *vaidhī-bhakti*. This *vaidhī-bhakti*, which consists of strict constraints outlined in the scriptures, is called *maryādā-mārga* also by some learned scholars (namely those coming in the disciplic succession of Śrī Vallabhācārya).

In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.270–3), Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī describes *rāgānuga-bhakti* as follows:

*virājantīm abhivyaktam
 vrajavāsi-janādiṣu
 rāgātmikām anusṛtā yā
 sā rāgānugocyate
 rāgānuga vivekārtham
 ādau rāgātmikocyate
 iṣṭe svārasikī rāgaḥ
 paramāviṣṭatā bhavet
 tanmayī yā bhaved bhaktiḥ
 sātra rāgātmikoditā
 sā kāmarūpā sambandha-rūpā
 ceti bhaved dvidhā*

That *bhakti* which is distinctly present in the eternal inhabitants of Vraja – including the cows, deer, parrots and other birds and animals – is called *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. *Bhakti* that follows in accordance with that *rāgātmikā-bhakti* is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*. In order to thoroughly understand *rāgānuga-bhakti*, *rāgātmikā-bhakti* is being described first. An unquenchable loving thirst for the object of one’s affection (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) that gives rise to spontaneous and intense absorption in that object is called *rāga*. Such *rāgamaya-bhakti*, or the performance of services such as stringing garlands with intense *rāga*, is called *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. This *rāgātmikā-bhakti* is of two kinds: (1) *kāma-rūpa* (that which is based on amorous attraction) and (2) *sambandha-rūpa* (that which is based on parental and other relationships).

Who is eligible for *rāgānuga-bhakti*? Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's conclusions regarding this topic are expressed in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.291–3) as follows:

*rāgātmikaika-niṣṭhā ye
vrajavāsī-janādayaḥ
teṣāṃ bhāvāptaye lubdho
bhaved atrādhikāravān
tat tad bhāvādi mādhye
śrute dhīryad apekṣate
nātra śāstraṃ na yuktiṃ ca
tal lobhotpati lakṣaṇam
vaidha bhakty adhikārī tu
bhāvāvirbhāvanāvadhi
atra śāstraṃ tathā tarkam
anukūlam apekṣate*

Those who have intense greed to obtain that *bhāva* which is exactly in accordance with the mood and sentiments of the residents of Vraja who are exclusively established in *rāgātmikā-bhakti* are alone eligible for the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*. The symptom of the awakening of such greed is that upon hearing the incomparably sweet pastime-narrations from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other books composed by *rasika* devotees concerning the sentiments, form, qualities and so on of Śrī Nanda, Śrī Yaśodā and other Vrajavāsīs, which are supremely attractive to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and satisfy all His senses, one automatically engages in *bhakti* with an intense desire to obtain those same sentiments. At that time one's intelligence is not even the least bit dependent on scriptural injunctions or logical reasoning. Those who are eligible only for *vaidhī-bhakti* remain dependent on scriptural injunctions and favourable reasoning until deep love for the Supreme Lord (*bhagavad-rati*) manifests in their hearts. After the appearance of *rati*, however, they are no longer dependent upon such things. But those who are eligible

for *rāgānuga-bhakti* are from the very beginning engaged in *bhakti* with greed to obtain the divine sentiments predominant in Vraja, and are never dependent on reasoning and scriptural injunctions. This is the supreme excellence of *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Nonetheless, when greed awakens it is essential to investigate the scriptures and to meticulously carry out the *sādhana* mentioned therein by which one's objective may be achieved.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's conclusions regarding the method for performing *rāgānuga-bhajana* are stated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.294–5) as follows:

*kṛṣṇam smaran janam cāsyā
preṣṭham nija samihitam
tat tat kathā rataś cāsau
kuryād vāsam vraje sadā*

One should constantly remember one's dearest, eternally fresh youth, Śrī Nanda-nandana, and the beloved associates of Kṛṣṇa who are possessed of the identical mood for which one aspires. One should always reside in Śrī Vraja-dhāma with great attachment for hearing topics regarding Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. If one is physically unable to live in Vraja, one should do so mentally. This is the method of *rāgānuga-bhakti-sādhana*.

*sevā sādharma-rūpeṇa
siddha-rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad-bhāva lipsunā kāryā
vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

A *sādhaka* who has greed for *rāgānuga-bhakti* should serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa both in the *sādhaka-rūpa* and the *siddha-rūpa* in accordance with the profound sentiments of the eternal residents of Vraja who possess the same mood for which he aspires.

The *sādhaka-rūpa* refers to the physical body in which one is presently situated, and the *siddha-rūpa* refers to the internally contemplated spiritual form that is suitable to serve Kṛṣṇa

according to one's cherished desire. One should serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa in these two forms by following (not imitating) under the guidance of Kṛṣṇa's beloved Śrī Rādhikā, Candrāvalī, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī and others, as well as their followers such as Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa.

A *sādhaka* of the sentiment of servitude should serve in accordance with the mood of Kṛṣṇa's associates in *dāsya-bhāva* such as Raktaka and Patraka. A *sādhaka* of *sakhya-bhāva* should follow Śrīdāma, Subala and others. A *sādhaka* of *vātsalya-bhāva* should serve according to the mood of Śrī Nanda and Yaśodā. In the *siddha-deha*, the perfected internal spiritual body, one should offer mental services to Śrī Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī and others. In the *sādhaka-rūpa*, one's physical body, one should render physical service under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and others.

*śravaṇotkīrtanādīni
vaidha-bhakti uditāni tu
yāny aṅgāni ca tānyatra
vijñeyāni mañisibhiḥ*

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.296)

The limbs of *bhakti* such as hearing, chanting and taking shelter of a bona fide spiritual master, which have already been described in regard to *vaidhī-bhakti*, are also useful and necessary in *rāgānuga-bhakti*. But judicious *sādhakas* will adopt only those limbs that nourish their specific *bhāva*, avoiding those that hamper it. A *sādhaka* who aspires for *vraja-bhāva* should not undertake those limbs that are opposed to that mood. These include the following: (1) *ahaṅgrahopāsana* – to

consider oneself as non-different from the object of worship; (2) *mudrās* – different procedures of intertwining the fingers during worship; (3) *nyāsa* – the breathing procedures known as *prāṇāyāma*; and (4) meditation on Dvārakā and worship of Śrī Rukmiṇī and other queens of Dvārakā.

After surpassing the stage of *sādhana*, one enters the stage of *bhāva*, which is also known as *rati*. In his book *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (*Sthāyibhāva*, texts 57, 59–62), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī describes *rati* as follows:

iyam eva ratiḥ prauḍhā
mahābhāva daśām vrajet
yā mṛgyā syād vimuktānām
bhaktānām ca varīyasām
syād dṛdheyam ratiḥ premā
prodyan snehaḥ kramādayam
syān-mānaḥ praṇayo rāgo
'nurāgo bhāva ity api
bījam ikṣuḥ sa ca rasaḥ
sa guḍaḥ khaṇḍa eva saḥ
sa śarkarā sitā sā ca
sā yathā syāt sitopalā
ataḥ prema-vilāsāḥ syur
bhāvāḥ snehādayas tu ṣaṭ
prāyo vyavahriyante 'mī
prema-śabdena sūribhiḥ
yasyā yādṛśa-jātīyaḥ
kṛṣṇe premābhyaudañcati
tasyām tādṛśa-jātīyaḥ
sa kṛṣṇasyāpy udiyate

Samartha-rati gradually matures and becomes transformed into *mahābhāva*. Therefore liberated souls and the topmost devotees strive to attain this *rati*. *Rati* gradually intensifies into *prema*,

which is known by different names in accordance with the distinctive character of each successive stage. It is thus identified as *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *bhāva*. This development is compared to the transformation of sugarcane seeds into sugarcane plants, sugarcane juice, molasses, crude sugar, refined sugar, sugar candy and rock candy. In this analogy *rati* is compared to sugarcane seeds because it is the seed of *prema*. *Prema* is compared to the sugarcane plant. Just as all six stages from sugarcane juice to rock candy are transformations of sugarcane only, all six stages from *sneha* to *bhāva* are the distinctive transformations of *prema*. Therefore learned authorities in the scriptures use the word *prema* in a general sense to refer to all six stages. It should be noted here that the particular type of *prema* that Kṛṣṇa has for the heroines (*nāyikās*) who are possessed of *samartha-rati* is exactly in accordance with the type of *prema* that arises in their hearts.

If one reflects in an unbiased and thoughtful manner, then it must be concluded that the *prema* related to the *śṛṅgāra-rasa* of Vraja is not found in other *sampradāyas*. If at all it exists, it is only to a very limited extent. Therefore Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī has instructed the *sādhakas* desirous of attaining *vraja-bhāva* to accept Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and other *gosvāmīs*, who are recipients of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mercy, as instructing spiritual masters.

(2) Pratijanuḥ: Life after life

Rāgātmikā-bhakti, which possesses the characteristics of *prema*, is perfected only after many lifetimes. If, however, one receives the mercy of Bhagavān or His devotees, it may be perfected quickly.

Anuvṛtti

Those who want to perform *bhajana*, especially under the guidance of our *gosvāmīs*, are instructed in Verse One to develop unprecedented spiritual attachment (*apūrva-rati*) for the spiritual master, the holy land of Vraja, the residents of Vraja, the Vaiṣṇavas, the *brāhmaṇas*, one’s *mantras* given at initiation and the holy name. This is *lobhamayī-bhakti*, devotion full of greed. *Apūrva-rati* begins from the initial stage of faith and goes up to the elevated stage of *bhāva*. This is not ordinary *bhakti*. In Verse Two the instruction is to live in Vraja and perform *pracura-sevā* (abundant service) to the Vrajavāsīs. “Abandon *adharma* and even *dharma* as enjoined in the scriptures; now you should perform *bhajana* by living in Vraja.”

In this verse it is said *yadiccher āvāsam*: if you have the desire to perform *bhajana* life after life with intense *anurāga* for the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, then the most effective method is *svarūpaṁ śrī rūpaṁ sagaṇam iha tasyāgrajam api* – you should weep and call out to Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāmānanda Rāya, Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī, along with their associates. They are eternal associates of the treasurer of *prema*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. You must always offer obeisances to them every day. “O mind, I hold your feet and pray to you to do the same.”

The word *pratijanuḥ* means “life after life”. This brings up the following question, “By worshipping the Supreme Lord, doesn’t the cycle of birth and death cease? Don’t the devotees of Bhagavān try to stop this transmigration?” Most people say that by performing *bhajana* we shall be liberated from birth

and death. *Bhakti* is of three kinds: *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti* and *prema-bhakti*. *Bhakti* is full of nectar even from the beginning of one's *bhajana*; therefore the devotees do not want to stop the cycle of birth and death until their *bhakti* reaches its final perfection of full maturity. Until then, they are prepared to take thousands of births, live in Vraja, and try to perform *bhajana* with love and devotion.

The devotee neither wants to merge in Brahman nor to accept any other type of liberation. He wants to take birth in Vraja and to attain the association of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas. Thus his faith reaches the stage of *bhāva*, and that *bhāva* matures into *prema*. So until a devotee attains the paragon of perfection in his *bhakti*, he does not mind taking birth again and again. The bud of a rose or lotus will not bloom into a flower if it is plucked as a bud. The bud does not have fragrance, beauty and nectar. All these characteristics come only when the bud blooms into a flower. At that time the bumblebee starts to visit the flower; similarly, a devotee does not mind taking several births to perfect his *bhakti* until he attains that *prema* which can control Kṛṣṇa and which provides the eligibility to receive the direct *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa. This *bhakti* is full of nectar, and a devotee derives tremendous bliss by absorbing his mind in *bhakti-rasa*. It gives pleasure to Kṛṣṇa, and subsequently a devotee also feels that pleasure. The paths of fruitive activity (*karma*), impersonal knowledge (*jñāna*) and mystic *yoga* are very difficult, but *bhajana* is full of bliss. Therefore the devotees of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya* do not want to stop the cycle of birth and death until they attain perfection.

Another question is raised, "Can one attain *rāgānuga-bhakti* or residence in Vraja in *rāgātmikā-bhakti* by taking initiation

and instruction in any other *sampradāya*? If someone has received the *mantra* of the Rāmānuja, Madhva or any other *sampradāya*, will he get *vraja-bhāva* after the maturity of his *bhajana*, or not?” Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says and Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that only the intimate associates of the greatly munificent Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu are the original treasurers and patrons of this topmost *prema*. The most intimate, confidential and highly esoteric mysteries of the method of *rāgātmikā-bhakti* to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala were bestowed upon Svarūpa Dāmodara and other intimate associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; therefore only they can give this rare and invaluable treasure of *vraja-prema*.

The word *sarāgam* means “to live in Vraja with *rāga*”. What is *rāga*? The natural affection that the *rāgātmikā* devotees have for Kṛṣṇa is known as *rāga*, and their service is known as *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. Those who follow these *rāgātmikās* are known as *rāgānugas*. This starts from the initial stage of faith and goes even beyond *prema*. For those who do not have such natural affection yet want to perform *bhakti*, there is *vaidhī-bhakti*. Their desire to perform *bhakti* is due to the regulation of the scriptures.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda and my spiritual master, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, were not ordered by anyone to perform service or *bhajana*. Their *bhajana* was natural and spontaneous. One who is serving the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas, performing deity service, and engaging in hearing, chanting and remembering the Lord without being ordered to do so, has natural, spontaneous love and affection (*anurāga*). One does not obtain this *anurāga* in one lifetime. It is attained over the course of several lifetimes.

Pratijanu means “several lifetimes”. *Vaidhī-bhakti* can be achieved quickly, but *rāga-bhakti* is perfected after several lifetimes. For one small mistake Bhārata Mahārāja⁴ had to take three lives. We are committing many mistakes, not only with our bodies but with our minds also, so we cannot help feeling that our perfection will come after several lifetimes.

4. The story of Bhārata Mahārāja is narrated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Fifth Canto, Chapters 7–8.

Verse Four

असद्वातविश्या विसृज मतिःसर्वस्वहरणीः

कथामुक्तिव्याघ्र्या न शृणु किल सर्वात्मगिलनीः ।

अपि त्यक्त्वा लक्ष्मीपतिरतिमितो व्योमनयनीं

व्रजे राधाकृष्णौ स्वरतिमणिदौ त्वं भज मनः ॥४॥

asad-vārtā-veśyā viṣṛja mati-sarvasva-haraṇīḥ

kathā mukti-vyāghryā na śṛṇu kila sarvātma-gilaniḥ

api tyaktvā lakṣmī-pati-ratim ito vyoma-nayanīm

vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇau sva-rati-maṇi-dau tvam bhaja manaḥ

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *viṣṛja* – abandon; *asad-vārtā-veśyā* – the prostitute of contemptible mundane talk; *haraṇīḥ* – plundering; *sarvasva* – all one’s wealth; *mati* – of pure intelligence; *kila* – (and) unequivocally; *na śṛṇu* – do not hear; *kathāḥ* – talk; *mukti-vyāghryāḥ* – of the tigress of impersonal liberation; *sarvātmā-gilaniḥ* – devouring the existence of the soul; *tyaktvā* – reject; *api* – even; *ratim* – attachment; *lakṣmī-pati* – for Śrī Nārāyaṇa, the husband of Lakṣmī; *vyoma-nayanīm* – leading to *Vaikuṅṭha* in the *paravyoma*; *itaḥ vraje* – in this *Vraja-dhāma*; *tvam* – you; *bhaja* – worship; *rādhā-kṛṣṇau* – Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; *dau* – bestowing; *maṇi* – the jewel; *sva-rati* – of love for Them.

Translation

O my dear brother mind, please abandon altogether the prostitute of contemptible mundane talk, which plunders the entire

treasure of pure wisdom. You must unequivocally give up hearing all talk of impersonal liberation which, like a tigress, devours your very soul. Furthermore, please abandon even the attachment to Lakṣmīpati Śrī Nārāyaṇa, which leads to Vaikuṅṭha. You should live in Vraja and worship Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, who bestow upon devotees the precious jewel of love for Them.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

This fourth verse describes various elements that obstruct the attainment of *prema*.

**(1) Mati-sarvasva-haraṇī asad-vārtā-veśyā:
The prostitute of mundane talk plunders
the wealth of wisdom**

Just as a prostitute deprives a debauchee of his riches, mundane talks rob the living entity of his wealth of good intelligence. Intelligence that is directed towards spiritual attainment is the only treasure of the living entity who has adopted the path of *bhajana*. Mundane talks ruin such wisdom and turn it towards sense enjoyment and liberation. Discussions of fleeting sense enjoyment and any kind of connection with such topics are *asat*, useless.

Study of scriptures that bestow only temporary, insignificant benefits, greed for wealth, and intimate association with women or with men attached to women are all *asat*. Householder Vaiṣṇavas who are selfishly attached to their wives, and householders or renunciants who associate with women on the pretext of sharing *hari-kathā*, but with a lusty motive, are also included in the category of *asat*. To pursue such useless

objects with great attachment is called *asad-vārtā*. Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, the chief associate of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, has said the following about good intelligence (*Padyāvalī* (14)):

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
kriyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalanī
janma-koti-sukṛtair na labhyate*

O men of virtue, if intelligence that is infused with the mellows of devotion unto Lord Kṛṣṇa is available anywhere, then buy it at once, without delay. The only price to get it is an intense desire to obtain *vraja-rasa*. Without this greed, it cannot be obtained even by accumulating pious activities for millions of births.

(2) Sarvātma-gilanī mukti-vyāghryā kathā:

Talk of liberation is a tigress that devours the soul

The word *mukti* here refers to *brahma-nirvāṇa*, which is also known as *sāyujya-mukti*, or merging into the Lord's bodily effulgence. *Sāyujya-mukti* very easily and thoroughly consumes the individual spiritual existence of the soul, or *ātma-sattā*. Although spiritual existence is admitted in the conception of *mukti*, the idea that the individual *ātmā* becomes the all-encompassing supreme Brahman is misleading and phantasmagoric like a flower in the sky. In reality it is the possessor of all potencies, Śrī Bhagavān, who is the one and only Supreme Absolute Truth.

The Supreme Lord has one eternal and supreme divine potency, or *para-śakti*. This *para-śakti* serves the Lord in various capacities. As the internal potency, *Yogamāyā*, she manifests the transcendental pastimes of Bhagavān. As the external potency, *Mahāmāyā*, she produces both the unlimited material

universes and the gross and subtle material bodies of the conditioned living entities. As the marginal potency, she manifests the innumerable, infinitesimal living entities.

Those who are antagonistic to the eternal names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Bhagavān imagine a state of emancipation from the reactions of their fruitive activities known as *brahma-laya*, or dissolution into Brahman, which brings about annihilation of the individual self. They derive some sort of pleasure by discussing such so-called liberation. But the pleasure of that liberation is exactly like that of a prisoner who commits suicide in order to obtain everlasting relief from material suffering. One should carefully abandon all discussion of the methods of worship and procedures for the attainment of such liberation, as well as the association of persons who are intent upon it. Just as a man-eating tigress consumes a man's body, the tigress of liberation devours the individual existence of the soul. Therefore devotees of the Lord consider impersonal liberation as equivalent to self-annihilation.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's conclusions on this subject are stated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.22, 25) as follows:

*bhukti-mukti-sprhā
yāvat piśāci hṛdi vartate
tāvad bhakti-sukhasyātra
katham abhyudayo bhavet
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāmbhoja-
sevā-nirvṛta-cetasām
eṣāṁ mokṣāya bhaktānām
na kadācit sprhā bhavet*

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

awakened there? In other words, pure *bhakti* can never arise in such an impure heart. Devotees whose minds are immersed in the happiness of service to the lotus feet of Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa do not have even a scent of desire for liberation.

(3) Vyoma-nayani lakṣmīpati-rati:

Love for Lakṣmīpati Nārāyaṇa leads to Vaikuṅṭha

The word *vyoma* or *paravyoma* here refers to Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma. It is the abode of Lakṣmīpati Śrī Nārāyaṇa, who is characterised by supreme opulence and majesty. By attaining perfection in *sādhana-bhakti* directed towards Śrīman Nārāyaṇa, one can get four kinds of liberation in Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma: *sārūpya* (obtaining the same features and form as the Lord), *sāmīpya* (living in the Lord's association), *sālokya* (living on the same planet as the Lord) and *sārṣṭi* (having the same opulences as the Lord). Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's conclusions on this subject are stated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.55–9) as follows:

*atra tyājyatayaivoktā
muktiḥ pañca-vidhāpi cet
sālokyādīs tathāpy atra
bhaktyā nāti-virudhyate
sukhaiśvaryottarā seyaṁ
prema-sevottarety api
sālokyādir-dvidhā tatra
nādyā sevājuṣāṁ matā
kintu premaika-mādhurya-
juṣa ekāntino harau
naivāṅgīkurvate jātu
muktiṁ pañca-vidhāṁ api*

*tatrāpy ekāntinām śreṣṭhā
 govinda-hṛta-mānasāḥ
 yeṣāṁ śrīśa-prasādo 'pi
 mano hartuṁ na śaknuyāt
 siddhāntatas tv abhede 'pi
 śrīśa-kṛṣṇa-svarūpayoḥ
 rasenotkṛsyate kṛṣṇa-
 rūpam eṣā rasa-sthitiḥ*

Though all five forms of liberation listed here are to be disregarded by a pure devotee, the first four – *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya*, *sālokyā* and *sārṣṭi* – are not altogether incompatible with *bhakti*. These four forms of liberation are of two kinds: (1) *sukhaiśvaryottarā* – liberation in which the individual desires his personal pleasure from the grandeur and wealth of *Vaiṣṇava*; and (2) *prema-sevottarā* – liberation in which the dominant desire is to serve the Lord for His pleasure. The first of these, *sukhaiśvaryottara-mukti*, is not accepted by devotees who are attached to the loving service of the Lord, because it is tainted with the desire for self-pleasure and enjoyment of the Lord's opulence. The second, *prema-sevottara-mukti*, is accepted by some devotees, but even in this there remains a trace of indirect desire for personal enjoyment. Consequently, devotees who are fervently attached to the service of the Lord consider even *prema-sevottara-mukti* to be opposed to *bhakti* (which is characterised by unalloyed loving service). Therefore exclusive devotees, who drink deeply the mellow sweetness of *prema-bhakti* for Lord Hari and whose only interest is to give pleasure to the Lord, certainly do not accept any of the five forms of liberation, even though they may be offered by the Lord Himself.

Of all the exclusive devotees of the different incarnations of the Supreme Lord, the *parama-premātura-bhaktas*, those desirous of the highest *prema*, whose hearts have been stolen by Śrī Nanda-nandana, are the topmost. Even the grace of Lakṣmīpati Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of the *paravyoma*, cannot attract their minds. Although there is no difference between Śrī Nārāyaṇa and Śrī Kṛṣṇa in terms of existential truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form is superior due to the superexcellence of *prema-rasa*. The very nature of *rasa* itself reveals the supreme excellence of the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The ultimate climax of *prema-rasa* is found only in the condition of *mahābhāva*. The only object for this kind of *rasa* is Vrajendra-nandana – not Mahā-Nārāyaṇa or other incarnations. Therefore even Lakṣmī, who is always situated at the chest of Mahā-Nārāyaṇa, underwent severe austerities in order to obtain this extraordinary quality of *rasa*.

Śrī Haridāsa has expressed the following sentiment in this regard (*Padyāvalī* (102)):

*alam tri-diva-vārtayā kim iti sārvabhauma-śrīyā
vidūratara-vartinī bhavatu mokṣa-lakṣmīr api
kalinda-giri-nandinī-ṭaṭa-nikuñja-puñjodare
mano harati kevalam nava-tamāla-nīlam mahāḥ*

I have no use for talk about attaining the heavenly planets, what to speak of acquiring sovereignty over the entire Earth. Even the names Mokṣa (liberation) and Lakṣmī (attainment of the opulent realm of Vaikuṅṭha) afford me no pleasure. My mind is captivated only by that cluster of bluish brilliance whose colour resembles a young *tamāla* tree and who graces the groves situated on the banks of the Yamunā.

(4) Sva-rati-maṇi-da:

Bestowing the jewel of love for Them

The Soul of all souls, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, are the bestowers of the jewel of *ātma-rati*. The infinitesimal living entity is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. The spontaneous attraction for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa that the *jīva* experiences in his constitutional state is called *ātma-rati*. Although this *ātma-rati* is eternally present in the original identity (*svarūpa*) of the living entity, in the conditioned state it remains covered by material desires born of ignorance.

Śrī Īśvara Purī's transcendental attraction is exemplary in this regard (*Padyāvalī* (75)):

*dhanyānāṁ hr̥dī bhāsatām girivara-pratyagra-kuñjaukasām
satyānanda-rasam vikāra-vibhava-vyāvṛttam antar-mahaḥ
asmākaṁ kila vallavī-rati-raso vṛndāṭavī-lālaso
gopaḥ ko 'pi mahendranīla-ruciraś citte muhuḥ krīḍatu*

Those fortunate pure souls, the non-dualistic *brahma-jñānīs*, dwelling in the secluded forests of the Himalayas, may experience indescribable transcendental bliss within their hearts as a festival of perfect mental equilibrium and freedom from all anxiety. Let them do so; I have no use for that. Indeed, always sporting within my heart is an eternally youthful cowherd boy whose complexion is more enticing than a blue sapphire, who is the embodiment of *rasa* imbued with love for the *gopīs*, and who exhibits playful sportive pastimes in Vṛndāvana.

Śrī Mādhavendra Purī's firm attachment is also very beautifully expressed (*Padyāvalī* (76)):

*rasam praśamsantu kavīva-niṣṭhā
brahmāmṛtaṁ veda-śiro-niṣṭhāḥ
vayaṁ tu guñjā-kalitāvataṁsaṁ
gr̥hīta-vaiṁsaṁ kam api śrayāmaḥ*

Let the poets extol the sweet taste of poetry. Let the Vedic scholars extensively eulogise the nectar of Brahman realisation. I myself will take shelter of a youthful cowherd boy who is decorated with a garland of *guñjā* berries and other ornaments and who holds a flute to His blossoming lips.

Śrī Kaviratna also states (*Padyāvalī* (78)):

*jātu prārthayate na pārthiva-padañ naindre pade modate
sandhate na ca yoga-siddhiṣu dhiyañ mokṣaṃ ca nākāñkṣati
kālindī-vana-sīmani sthira-taḍin-megha-dyutau kevalaṃ
śuddhe brahmañi vallavī-bhuja-latā-baddhe mano dhāvati*

My mind never hankers to become emperor, nor can it derive any pleasure from the post of Indra. It is unable to enlist the intelligence in seeking the mystic perfections, nor aspire for liberation. My mind runs only in pursuit of that indescribable, pure Brahman who is embraced by the creeper-like arms of the *gopīs*, and who thus resembles a lustrous fresh raincloud interlaced with steady streaks of lightning in the Vṛndāvana forest on the banks of the Yamunā.

Śrī Mādhavendra Purī expresses a similar glorious sentiment (*Padyāvalī* (96)):

*anañga-rasa-cāturi-capala-cāru-netrāñcalaś
calan-makara-kuñḍala-sphurita-kānti-gaṇḍa-sthalaḥ
vrajollasita-nāgarī-nikara-rāsa-lāsyotsukaḥ
sa me sapadi mānase sphuratu ko 'pi gopālakaḥ*

Alas! May that extraordinary cowherd boy soon appear within the temple of my heart, who is cunning in the art of amorous affairs, who casts sidelong glances from the corners of His charming, restless eyes, whose cheeks reflect the glittering radiance of His trembling *makara*-shaped⁵ earrings, and who is

5. The *makara* is a large sea creature that is said to be the epitome of sensual desire.

extremely anxious to enjoy the *rāsa* dance with the blissful *gopīs* of Vraja.

Only by the worship of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala in Vraja is this jewel of *rati*, ecstatic love for Them, awakened within one’s heart. Upon receiving further nourishment, it is promoted to the stage of *mahābhāva*.

Anuvṛtti

There are two types of instruction regarding the performance of *bhajana*: one is prescription (*vidhi*) and the other is prohibition (*niṣedha*). Both are necessary. “Always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him.” This is the primary injunction of all the Vedas, and all other injunctions are subordinate to this. Always remember Kṛṣṇa is *vidhi*, and never forget Kṛṣṇa is *niṣedha*. Also, “Accept whatever is favourable for *bhakti*, and reject that which is unfavourable.” Actually, we do not have the qualification to know what is really favourable and what is not; but we can find out from elevated devotees and the scriptures. Mundane talk is *niṣedha*. We have been warned not to engage in worldly talks. *Grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe* (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 6.236)): Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī to avoid *grāmya-kathā*, which literally means “village talk”. *Grāmya* means *dharma* (mundane religiosity), *artha* (economic development), *kāma* (sense gratification) and *mokṣa* (liberation). The spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas, being very merciful, bestow upon us this power of discernment.

Asad-vārtā-veśyā – “The worst impediment in the realm of *bhakti* is mundane talk; therefore never gossip – instead, always speak about *bhakti*.” This instruction was given to Raghunātha

dāsa Gosvāmī by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also decries mundane conversation and advises one to keep away from it. A mind that is polluted is a great impediment in *bhakti*, and so Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam* – one should cleanse the mirror of the mind through the chanting of the holy name.

The mind itself is a storehouse of pollution. It is formed by the activities performed in previous lifetimes. It carries the impressions of all the good and bad actions performed by a person through countless lifetimes. These impressions are to be cleansed away by the chanting of the holy name as advised by Mahāprabhu. One cannot perform *bhajana* with a mind that is under the grip of the qualities of material nature. One must get rid of the qualities of passion and ignorance. The quality of goodness has some virtues in it, like good behaviour, respect of elders, and so on, but there is no *bhajana*. A little bit of goodness has to be accepted for normal daily life, but later on it should also be given up because it comes under the jurisdiction of material nature. All three qualities are contaminated and provoke one to sense enjoyment. *Bhakti* cannot flourish in such a mind.

The effect of bad association pollutes the mind and ruins *bhakti*. The association of materialistic people, of those who associate with women and of impersonalists is harmful for an aspirant of pure *bhakti*. When one's mind is attracted to speaking about useless topics, one becomes implicated in the blasphemy of the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas and finally Kṛṣṇa, and he thus falls down from the path of *bhakti*. Do not indulge in idle talk even for a minute. This will displace *bhakti* from the heart and destroy the seed of *rati*, ecstatic love.

One gets this rare seed of ecstatic love by associating with advanced devotees, and such association is received by the accumulation of pious merit (*sukṛti*) over millions of lifetimes. A person who smokes or drinks liquor can be delivered in some lifetime, but one who indulges in idle talk cannot be saved in any life. One person smokes tobacco and takes intoxicants, and another person embezzles the money of Vaiṣṇavas and the deities – whose sins are more serious? A smoker will give up smoking in some lifetime, but all future lives of the second person are ruined.

In *Jaiva-dharma* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura mentions an incident wherein Paramahansa Bābājī forbids Sannyāsī Ṭhākura to change his dress and says, “Learn some Vaiṣṇava philosophy, imbibe the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava, and change your mind. Dress is external and can be changed at any time in a minute.”

The wicked and evil nature of the mind is very detrimental to *bhakti*. *Asad-vārtā* is the mother of all nonsense talk, and therefore one should give it up with sincere efforts. Any speech that derides the service of the spiritual master, the Vaiṣṇavas and Kṛṣṇa is *asad-vārtā* or *grāmya-vārtā*, which destroys the inclination and resolve for *bhakti*. This resolve is known as *mati*. Which *mati*? *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ* – that resolve which is enthused by the taste of the liquid mellows of devotion unto Lord Kṛṣṇa. This resolve seems very small, but it is the seed of the creeper of devotion, which develops through the stages of *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, *āsakti*, *bhāva*, *prema*, and further up to *mahābhāva*. Protect this creeper very carefully and do not let it wither. This resolve that “I will

perform *bhajana*” comes by the association of Vaiṣṇavas. This resolve is very rare and precious like a *cintāmaṇi* gem. Its creeper grows up to Goloka Vṛndāvana and produces the fruit of *prema*, so prevent it from being destroyed at any cost.

The desire to lead an easy and comfortable life is the real impediment. We want all the activities of our daily life like eating, sleeping, travelling and so on to be comfortable not only today, but every day and even in the future. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu advised Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī to give up such comforts (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 6.236)): “*bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe* – do not eat palatable food or dress very nicely.” We remain in anxiety to fulfil these *asad* desires. Give up all this. If we are cooking for the deity but with a desire to enjoy the result later on, this also comes under the classification of *asad-vārtā*. The mind is a cheater; it cheats in many ways. Always remain very alert to save yourself from all kinds of *asad-vārtā*.

Mukti, liberation, is like a tigress. Even the talk of liberation is very dangerous. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that the word *mukti* means *brahma-nirvāṇa* or *sāyujya-mukti*, which can devour the very existence of the soul. In this definition, the word *ātmā* refers not only to the soul but to the body, mind and intelligence to perform devotion unto the Supreme Lord. If there is no soul, there cannot be *bhajana*. “We want escape from miseries and relief from birth and death. This can be attained by *sāyujya-mukti*.” We do not want the sufferings and miseries of life, and therefore all *ācāryas* have thought about liberation. Relief from material existence is the greatest liberation, and a Vaiṣṇava attains this very easily by *bhakti*. If

we obtain *bhakti*, then liberation is attained automatically. We need not endeavour for liberation separately, while others strive very hard to obtain liberation.

It is believed that *mukti* bestows *brahma-sattā*, or that one merges into Brahman. This is absurd. It is like being possessed by a ghost, a *bhūta*,⁶ and therefore they say *brahma-“bhūtaḥ” prasannātmā*. In reality Kṛṣṇa is all-powerful; He is the Supreme Absolute Truth. He has one *para-śakti* or *svarūpa-śakti*. This potency manifests all the *dhāmas* of Vaikuṅṭha. The mundane *jaḍa-śakti*, which is the shadow of *para-śakti*, manifests the material world, and the *taṭastha-śakti* manifests the living entities. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the original potency and the source of all other potencies.

The desire to please Bhagavān and His associates, the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas comes in *bhakti*. Besides this, any other desire for self-enjoyment or the desire to go to Vaikuṅṭha and enjoy the opulence there does not come under the heading of *bhakti*. One has to undertake all kinds of efforts for Kṛṣṇa: *akhila-ceṣṭā-parāyaṇa* – one should be intent to carry out all one’s endeavours for the sake of Kṛṣṇa. Do not delay; start this right now.

6. The word *bhūta* means “existence” or “having the nature of something”, and it also means “a ghost”. While the actual meaning of the *Bhagavad-gītā* verse (18.54) *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā* is that they become fully satisfied by attaining to their spiritual nature, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has humorously used this statement in regard to the aspirants for impersonal liberation to imply that they attain the happiness of becoming a Brahman ghost.

Verse Five

असच्चेष्टाकष्टप्रद-विकटपाशलिभिरिह
प्रकामं कामादिप्रकटपथपातिव्यतिकरैः ।
गले बद्ध्वा हन्येऽहमिति बकभिद्रूर्मपगणे
कुरु त्वं फुत्कारानवति स यथा त्वां मन इतः ॥५॥

*asac-ceṣṭā-kaṣṭa-prada-vikaṭa-pāśālibhir iha
prakāmaṁ kāmādi-prakaṭa-pathapāti-vyatikaraiḥ
gale baddhvā hanye 'ham iti bakabhid vartmapa-gaṇe
kuru tvam phutkārān avati sa yathā tvāṁ mana itaḥ*

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *iha* – in this material existence; *prakāṭa-pathapāti-vyatikaraiḥ* – the assembled aggressors on the open road; *kāmādi* – of lust, anger and so on; *gale baddhvā* – binding the neck; *prakāmam* – licentiously; *kaṣṭa-prada-vikaṭa-pāśālibhiḥ* – with the torturous, dreadful ropes; *asac-ceṣṭā* – of wicked deeds; *hanye* – are killing; *aham* – me; *iti* – (speaking) thus; *tvam* – you; *kuru* – loudly; *phutkārān* – call out; *vartmapa-gaṇe* – to the Vaiṣṇavas, the protectors of the path; *bakabhid* – of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the killer of Baka; *yathā* – as a result of which; *saḥ* – those devotees; *avati* – (will) protect; *tvāṁ* – you; *itaḥ* – from their hands.

Translation

“Lust, anger and so on are a band of dacoits who assail one suddenly on the open road of material life. They have bound

my neck licentiously with the torturous, dreadful ropes of wicked deeds and are thus killing me.” O mind, speaking in this way, you must grievously cry out to the powerful and merciful devotees who are the protectors of the path of devotion leading to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the killer of Bakāsura. Hearing your piteous cry, they will surely protect you from such a condition.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) Kāmādi-prakaṭa-pathapāti-vyatikara:

Lust etc. – the assembled aggressors on the open road

Lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride and envy are six dacoits on the open road of material life. The word *vyatikara* means “meeting together”. Having assembled together, these six dacoits assail their victims on the path of material life. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.62–3) we find the following statement regarding lust, anger and so on:

*dhyaṅyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ
saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ
kāmāt krodho ’bhijāyate
krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ
sammohāt smṛti-vibhramaḥ
smṛti-bhraṁśād buddhi-nāśo
buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati*

While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them; from such attachment, lust to enjoy those objects is aroused. From lust that is impeded, anger arises. From anger, delusion arises; and from delusion, bewilderment of memory. From bewilderment of memory, intelligence – or in other words *jñāna-śakti*, the faculty of wisdom – is vanquished.

When intelligence is vanquished, one becomes immersed in material enjoyment once again. In this way one becomes entrapped in the cycle of material existence and suffers the results of one's worldly activities.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has explained the meaning of these verses in his commentary known as *Gītā-bhūṣaṇa-bhāṣya* as follows:

*vijitendriasyāpi mayyaniveśita-manasaḥ punar anartha
durbāra ityāha – dhyāyata iti dvyābhyām. viṣayān śabdādīn
sukha-hetutva buddhyā dhyāyataḥ punaḥ punaś cintayato
yoginas teṣu saṅga āsaktir bhavati; saṅgād dhetos teṣu kāma-
tṛṣṇā jāyate; kāmāc ca kenacit pratihatāt krodhaḥ citta-jvālas
tat pratighātako bhavati. (62) krodhāt sammohaḥ kāryākārya-
viveka-vijñāna-vilopaḥ; sammohāt smṛter indriya-vijayādi-
prayatnānusandher vibhramo vibhramśa; smṛti-bhramśād
buddher ātma-jñānārthakasyādhyā-vasāyasya nāśaḥ; buddhi-
nāśāt prapaśyati punar viṣaya-bhoga-nimagno bhavati
saṁsaratītyarthaḥ – mad anāśra-yaṇād durbalaṁ manas tāni
sva-viṣayair yojayantīti bhāvaḥ. tathā ca mano-vijigīṣuṇā mad
upāsanaḥ vidheyam. (63)*

It is absolutely impossible to become free from the *anarthas* of lust, anger and so on solely by restraining the mind through the cultivation of impersonal knowledge, practice of mystic *yoga* and performance of austerities, without fixing the mind on the lotus feet of Bhagavān. When one considers the objects of the senses – namely form, taste, smell, touch and sound – to be sources of happiness, one constantly meditates upon them within the mind. By so doing, even great *yogīs* develop attachment to them. Attachment leads to the desire for enjoyment. When enjoyment is obstructed, then anger arises.

From anger, delusion arises, which here refers to the loss of

intelligence or wisdom by which one discriminates between what is to be done and what is not to be done. From this delusion, memory is bewildered, which means that one is deviated from the attempt to conquer the senses. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is vanquished. This means that the cultivation of knowledge of self-realisation (*ātma-jñāna*) is destroyed. Finally, when intelligence is destroyed, there is total extinction, or *praṇāśyati*. The word *praṇāśyati* used here means that one becomes immersed once again in sensual enjoyment.

The conclusion is that it is impossible to conquer the irrepressible mind without taking shelter of Śrī Bhagavān. The uncontrolled mind is the root cause of all severe *anarthas*. Therefore those who are desirous of controlling the mind must certainly worship the Supreme Lord. This is the principal and exclusive duty of all living entities.

(2) Asac-ceṣṭā-kaṣṭa-prada-vikaṭa-pāśa:

The torturous, dreadful ropes of wicked deeds

The living entity is bound by the neck with the painful, fearful ropes of wicked deeds enacted by the above-mentioned six enemies of lust, anger and so on.

(3) Bakabhid-vartmapa-gaṇa:

The protectors of the path leading to the killer of Bakāsura

The word *bakabhid* refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the killer of the demon Baka, the personification of duplicity. The word *vartma* means “a path”, or in other words the path of the cultivation of love for Kṛṣṇa. The suffix *pa* means “a guardian or protector”, which here refers to the Vaiṣṇavas. The purport is that to save oneself from the aforementioned impediments, one should

cry piteously and call upon the Vaiṣṇavas, because they are the guardians and protectors on the path of cultivating *kṛṣṇa-prema*. These powerful, most merciful Vaiṣṇavas will certainly protect you upon hearing your piteous cry.

Śrī Rāmānujācārya prays as follows (*Padyāvalī* (52)):

*prahlāda-nārada-parāśara-puṇḍarīka-
vyāsāmbarīṣa-śuka-śaunaka-bhīṣma-dālbhyan
rukmaṅgadoddhava-vibhīṣaṇa-phālgunādīn
puṇyān imān parama-bhāgavatān namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to the great saintly devotees of the Lord headed by Prahlāda, Nārada, Parāśara, Puṇḍarīka, Vyāsa, Ambarīṣa, Śuka, Śaunaka, Bhīṣma, Dālbhya, Rukmāṅgada, Uddhava, Vibhīṣaṇa and Arjuna.

The devotee poet Śrī Sarvajña, who is full of faith in the devotees, describes their condition as follows (*Padyāvalī* (56)):

*tvad-bhaktaḥ saritām patīm culukavat khadyotavad bhāskaram
meruṁ paśyati loṣṭravat kim aparām bhūmeḥ patīm bhṛtyavat
cintāratna-cayam śilā-śakalavat kalpa-drumam kāṣṭhavat
saṁsāram tṛṇa-rāśivat kim aparām deham nijam bhāravat*

O Bhagavān, Your devotees consider the ocean to be a mere puddle, the sun a firefly, Mount Meru a clump of earth, a powerful emperor of the world an insignificant servant, a pile of *cintāmaṇi* jewels mere fragments of stone, a wish-fulfilling *kalpadruma* tree an ordinary stick, and the entire world a bunch of straw. What more can be said? In separation from You, they consider their own bodies to be heavy burdens.

Śrī Mādhava Sarasvatī explains further (*Padyāvalī* (57)):

*mīmāṁsā-rajasa malīmasa-dṛśām tāvan na dhīr īśvare
garvodarka-kutarka-karkaśa-dhiyām dūre 'pi vārtā hareḥ
jānanto 'pi na jānate śruti-sukham śrī-raṅgi-saṅgād ṛte
su-svādum pariveśayanty api rasam gurvī na darvī sprśet*

Those whose eyes of wisdom have been sullied by the dust of *mīmāṃsā* philosophy, which promotes only *karma-kāṇḍa*, cannot fix their intelligence on Bhagavān. Those whose intelligence has become stiffened by fallacious arguments, whose ultimate end is but pride, have no interest in hearing narrations of Your pastimes. Even learned scholars of the Vedas who are devoid of attachment to Śrī Kṛṣṇa are unable to know the actual conclusion of the Vedas. They are exactly like long-handled ladles that serve out delicious food but remain bereft of the sweet taste.

The glories of associating with devotees are described in *Śrī Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* (quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.229)):

*yasya yat saṅgatiḥ puṁso
mañivat syāt sa tad-guṇaḥ
sva-kūlarddhyai tato dhīmān
sva-yūthyān eva samśrayet*

The influence of like-minded association is demonstrated in the following example: as a crystal reflects the colour of nearby objects, so also does a person imbibe the qualities of those with whom he associates. Therefore intelligent persons should associate with like-minded, respectable individuals in order to increase the prestige of their families.

The purport of this verse is that the contamination of the heart cannot be eradicated by dry renunciation, the cultivation of impersonal knowledge, the practise of mystic *yoga* or the performance of austerities. It is only by the influence of association with Vaiṣṇavas who are free from all pride and upon the attainment of their mercy that the heart very easily becomes cleansed of all misgivings.

Verse Six

अरे चेतः प्रोद्यत्कपटकुटिनाटीभरखर-
क्षरन्मूत्रे स्नात्वा दहसि कथमात्मानमपि माम् ।
सदा त्वं गान्धर्वागिरिधरपदप्रेमविलसत्-
सुधाम्भोधौ स्नात्वा स्वमपि नितरां मां च सुखय ॥६॥

are cetaḥ prodyat-kapaṭa-kuṭināṭī-bhara-khara
kṣaran-mūtre snātvā dahasi katham ātmānam api mām
sadā tvam gāndharvā-giridhara-pada-prema-vilasat
sudhāmbhodhau snātvā svam api nitarāṁ mām ca sukhaya

Anvaya

are – O; *cetaḥ* – mind; *snātvā* – bathing; *kṣaran-mūtre* – in the trickling urine; *bhara-khara* – of the great donkey; *prodyat* – of fully developed; *kapaṭa* – deceit; *kuṭināṭī* – (and) hypocrisy; *katham* – why; *dahasi* – are you burning; *ātmānam* – yourself; *mām api* – and me also; *tvam* – you; *sadā* – always; *snātvā* – bathing; *sudhā-ambhodhau* – in the ocean of nectar; *vilasat* – arising; *pada-prema* – from love born of the feet; *gāndharvā-giridhara* – of Śrī Rādhā-Giridhārī; *sukhaya* – delight; *svam* – yourself; *ca* – and; *mām api* – me also; *nitarāṁ* – thoroughly.

Translation

[In spite of having subdued the enemies of lust and anger, one may not have conquered the great enemy of deceit. This verse instructs us how to gain victory over this powerful enemy.]
O wicked mind, although you adopt the path of *sādhana*, you

imagine yourself purified by bathing in the trickling urine of the great donkey of full-blown deceit and hypocrisy. By doing so, you are simultaneously burning yourself and scorching me, a tiny *jīva*. Stop this! Delight yourself and me by eternally bathing in the nectarean ocean of pure love for the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) Prodyat-kapaṭa-kuṭināṭi-bhara-khara-kṣaran-mūtre snātvā:

Bathing in the trickling urine of the great donkey of full-blown deceit and hypocrisy

The overt deceit and hypocrisy that are present in a devotee even after adopting the path of *sādhana* are compared to the urine of a donkey. Considering oneself to be intently engaged in *bhajana* while remaining devious and hypocritical at heart is like considering oneself pure by bathing in the filthy, burning urine of a donkey. A *sādhaka* should carefully abandon this pitfall.

There are three kinds of *bhakti-sādhaka*: (1) *pariniṣṭhita*, (2) *svaṇiṣṭha* and (3) *nirapekṣa*. The *pariniṣṭhita-sādhaka* completely discards the rules and prohibitions prescribed within *varṇāśrama* and endeavours incessantly simply to please Bhagavān Śrī Hari. The *svaṇiṣṭha-sādhaka* performs all his activities in accordance with the rules and prohibitions laid down for the service and attendance of Bhagavān. Both these types of *sādhakas* are householders (*gṛhasthas*). The *nirapekṣa-sādhaka* is a renunciant. All three are benefited only when they become thoroughly honest. Otherwise, by resorting to

deceitfulness, they are surely vanquished. The hypocrisy demonstrated by these three is described below.

(1) Deceit of the *pariniṣṭhita-sādhaka*: (a) indulging in sense enjoyment on the pretext of *sādhana-bhakti*, (b) serving wealthy and influential materialists instead of unpretentious devotees, (c) accumulating wealth beyond one's needs, (d) having great enthusiasm for futile, temporary enterprises, (e) indulging in illogical arguments on the pretext of cultivating knowledge and (f) adopting the dress of a renunciant to get material prestige.

(2) Deceit of the *svaniṣṭha-sādhaka*: (a) making an external show of strict adherence to rules and regulations but remaining inwardly attached to material subjects and (b) preferring the association of philanthropists, mundane scholars, *yogīs* and materialistic people to that of resolute, loving devotees.

(3) Deceit of the *nirapekṣa-sādhaka*: (a) maintaining pride by thinking oneself to be an elevated Vaiṣṇava, (b) adopting the dress of a renunciant and, due to false ego, regarding other *sādhakas* as inferior, (c) accumulating wealth and materials beyond the basic necessities of life, (d) associating with women on the pretext of *sādhana*, (e) keeping close contact with materialistic people with the intention of collecting funds and donations instead of going to the temple, (f) worrying about collecting funds on the pretext of performing *bhajana* and (g) enfeebling one's attachment for Kṛṣṇa by attributing importance and respect merely to the external dress and symbols of the renounced order and by being overly attached to the rules and regulations of renunciation.

Therefore the defects of mundane arguments (*kutarka*), false philosophical conclusions (*kusiddhānta*) and impediments to

advancement (*anarthas*), all arising from deceit in the domain of *bhajana*, have been compared to the urine of a donkey. Many *sādhakas* consider themselves purified by bathing in this unholy urine of the donkey of deceit, but in reality it only consumes their soul.

(2) Gāndharvā-giridhara-pada-prema-vilasat-sudhāmbhodhau snātvā:

Bathing in the nectarean ocean of love for the lotus feet of Śrī Gāndharvā-Giridhārī

Gāndharvā refers to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*) of Bhagavān. Giridhara refers to the Supreme Person, Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the possessor of all potency (*sarva-śaktimān*). One is here advised to bathe in the ocean of nectar that consists of *viśuddha-cid-vilāsa*, or divine spiritual transformations born of love for the lotus feet of the eternally youthful Divine Couple.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī himself prays in this regard in *Śrī Prārthanā-paddhati* (*Stava-mālā*):

śuddha-gāṅgeya-gaurāṅgīm
kuraṅgī-laṅgimekṣaṇām
jita-koṭīndu-bimbāsyām
ambudāmbara-samvṛtām (1)

O Vṛndāvaneśvarī, Śrī Rādhikā, the complexion of Your limbs is like molten gold. Your eyes are as charming as the restless, elongated eyes of a doe. Your face defeats the brilliance of millions of moons. You are gracefully dressed in a blue *sārī* the colour of a fresh cloud.

navīna-ballavī-vṛnda-
dhammillottphulla-mallikām
divya-ratnādy-alaṅkāra-
sevyamāna-tanu-śriyam (2)

You are the crowning garland of jasmine flowers on the decorated braided hair of the young *gopīs* of Vraja. Your limbs are splendidly adorned with divine jewels and other ornaments.

*vidagdha-maṇḍala-guruṁ
guṇa-gaurava-maṇḍitām
ati-preṣṭha-vayasyābhir
aṣṭābhir abhivēṣṭitām* (3)

You are the best amongst all the elegant and dexterous *gopīs*. You are ornamented with unlimited transcendental virtues and eminence. You are surrounded by the eight principal *sakhīs*, who are most dear to You.

*cañcalāpāṅga-bhaṅgena
vyākulī-kṛta-keśavām
goṣṭhendra-suta-jīvātu-
ramya-bimbādharaṁṛtām* (4)

You agitate Kṛṣṇa by Your compelling sidelong glances. The nectar of Your beautiful *bimba*-fruit lips is the life-giving elixir for Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*tvām asau yācate natvā
viluṭhan yamunā-taṭe
kākubhir-vyākula-svānto
jano vṛndāvaneśvari* (5)

O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, rolling on the ground by the bank of the Yamunā with an agitated heart, I humbly appeal to You out of despair.

*kṛtāgaske 'py ayogye 'pi
jane 'smin kumatāv api
dāsya-dāna-pradānasya
lavam apy upapādaya* (6)

Even though I am an offender, unqualified in all respects, and have crooked intelligence, I beg You to make me fortunate by bestowing upon me even the smallest service at Your lotus feet.

*yuktas tvayā jano naiva
duḥkhito 'yam upekṣitum
kṛpā-dyota-drava-citta-
navanītāsi yat sadā (7)*

O most merciful one, it is not fitting for You to neglect this anguished person, for Your butter-like tender heart is always melting with compassion.

In his *Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhavayor nāma-yugāṣṭakam (Stava-mālā)*, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written:

*rādhā-mādhavayor etad
vaksye nāma-yugāṣṭakam
rādhā-dāmodarau pūrvaṁ
rādhikā-mādhavau tataḥ (1)*

Now I will sing this prayer that consists of eight verses glorifying the names of the Divine Couple, Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. First I will sing the praise of Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara and then of Śrī Rādhikā-Mādhava.

*vṛṣabhānu-kumārī ca
tathā gopendra-nandanaḥ
govindasya priya-sakhī
gāndharvā-bāndhavas tathā (2)*

Śrīmatī Rādhikā is Vṛṣabhānu-kumārī, the young daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Gopendra-nandana, the son of the king of the cowherds. She is the dearest friend of Govinda, and He is the dearest friend of Gāndharvā, Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*nikuñja-nāgarau goṣṭa-
kiśora-jana-śekharau
vṛndāvanādhipau kṛṣṇa-
vallabhā-rādhikā-priyau (3)*

She is Nikuñja-nāgarī, the heroine of the groves of Vraja, and He is Nikuñja-nāgara, the hero. She is *mukuṭa-maṇi*, the crown

jewel of all the graceful maidens of Vraja, and He is *śirobhūṣaṇa*, the head-ornament of all handsome youths. She is *adhiṣṭhātrī*, the presiding goddess of Vṛndāvana, and He is *adhīśvara*, the presiding chief. She is Kṛṣṇa-vallabhā, the lover of Kṛṣṇa, and He is Rādhā-vallabha, the lover of Rādhā.

I will live in Vraja with great love, glorifying the names of my beloved Divine Couple and remembering Their eternal eightfold daily pastimes (*aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā*) within my heart. By doing so, O mind, when will I be submerged and cause you to become submerged in the nectarean ocean of the variegated manifestations of love for the lotus feet of Śrī Gāndharvā-Giridhara?

Verse Seven

प्रतिष्ठाशा धृष्टा श्वपचरमणी मे हृदि नटेत्
कथं साधुप्रेमा स्पृशति शुचिरेतन्ननु मनः ।
सदा त्वं सेवस्व प्रभुदयित सामन्तमतुलं
यथा तां निष्काश्य त्वरितमिह तं वेशयति सः ॥७॥

pratiṣṭhāsā dhṛṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī me hṛdi naṭet
katham sādhu-premā spr̥śati śucir etan nanu manaḥ
sadā tvam sevasva prabhu-dayita-sāmantam atulam
yathā tāṁ niṣkāśya tvaritam iha taṁ veśayati saḥ

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *āsā* – the desire; *pratiṣṭhā* – for prestige; *dhṛṣṭā* – an audacious; *śvapaca-ramaṇī* – outcaste woman from the tribe of dog-eaters; *naṭet* – if she dances; *me hṛdi* – in my heart; *katham* – (then) how; *nanu* – indeed; *śuciḥ* – pure; *sādhu-premā* – divine love; *spr̥śati* – can touch; *etat* – that heart; *tvam* – (therefore) you; *sadā* – always; *sevasva* – serve; *atulam* – the incomparable; *dayita* – beloved; *sāmantam* – commanders (of the army); *prabhu* – of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *yathā* – so that; *saḥ* – they; *tvaritam* – quickly; *niṣkāśya* – expelling; *tām* – that (outcaste dog-eater); *veśayati* – cause to enter; *taṁ* – that (divine love); *iha* – in this heart.

Translation

[Why is it that deceit still lingers in the heart despite one's having given up all material sense enjoyment? This verse has

been composed in order to answer this question.] O mind, how can pure divine love appear in my heart as long as the shameless dog-eating, outcaste woman of the desire for prestige is audaciously dancing there? Therefore always remember and serve the immeasurably powerful commanders of the army of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the beloved devotees of the Lord. They will at once banish this outcaste woman and initiate the flow of immaculate *vraja-prema* in your heart.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) Dhṛṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī pratiṣṭhāsā:

**The desire for prestige is an audacious,
dog-eating, outcaste woman**

The desire for honour and distinction is called *pratiṣṭhāsā*. Although all other *anarthas* may be dispelled, the desire for prestige is not easily removed. From this, all kinds of deceit and hypocrisy arise and are gradually nourished. The desire for prestige is called shameless, for although it is the root of all *anarthas*, it fails to acknowledge its own fault. It is also called *cāṇḍālīnī*, a female dog-eater, for it is engaged in eating the dogmeat of fame.

The *svaniṣṭha-sādhaka* mentioned in the previous verse yearns to be recognised as virtuous, benevolent and free from all sin. The *pariniṣṭhita-sādhaka* thinks, “I am a devotee of Bhagavān, I understand things clearly, and I’m uninterested in material enjoyment.” In this way he nourishes the desire to expand his fame. The *nirapekṣa-sādhaka* thinks, “I am a strict renunciant, I have perfectly understood the conclusions of the scriptures, and my *bhakti* has come to the perfectional stage.”

In this way he maintains the desire for prestige.

As long as the desire for honour and distinction has not been driven from the heart, deceit will remain; and until one becomes free from deceit, he cannot obtain pure, unalloyed divine love.

(2) Nirmala-sādhu-prema: Immaculate divine love

In this regard, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has expressed the following conclusion in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.1):

*samyañ masṛṇita-svānto
mamatvātīśayāṅkitaḥ
bhāvaḥ sa eva sāndrātmā
budhaiḥ premā nigadyate*

When *bhāva-bhakti* deepens and matures, the *sādhaka*'s heart becomes completely soft and melted. At that time the devotee experiences the supreme exultation of transcendental bliss and awakens an overwhelming sense of possessiveness (*mamatā*) towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Learned authorities describe this condition as *prema*.

(3) Prabhu-dayita-atula-sāmanta:

The incomparable army commanders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa

The words *prabhu-dayita* mean those who are extremely dear to Lord Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The word *atula* means “that which has no comparison”. The word *sāmanta* means “a general or commander of an army”. Always serve the powerful generals of the army of Kṛṣṇa's devotees. Their mercy is unparalleled and they are very dear servitors of Śrī Nandanandana. The divine rays of *hlādinī-śakti* are reflected in the hearts of pure Vaiṣṇavas. From their hearts, these rays of *hlādinī-śakti* are transmitted into the hearts of other faithful *sādhakas*, thus dispelling the *anarthas* of wickedness, deceit

and hypocrisy and manifesting *vraja-prema*. The embrace of pure Vaiṣṇavas, the dust from their lotus feet, the nectar from their lips (that is, the remnants of their *prasāda*), the water that washes their feet, and their instructions are all fully competent to transmit *hlādinī-śakti* into the heart. Therefore in the *Padma Purāṇa* worship of the Vaiṣṇavas is declared to be even higher than the worship of Bhagavān.

*ārāadhanānām sarveṣāṁ
viṣṇor ārādhanām param
tasmāt parataram devī
tadīyānām samarcanam*

[Śrī Mahādeva said:] O Pārvatī, the worship of Śrī Viṣṇu is the highest of all different types of worship. But even superior to that is the worship of His devotees.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.7.19–20) it is further stated:

*yat sevāya bhagavataḥ kuṭa-
sthasya madhu-dviṣaḥ
rati-rāso bhavet tīvraḥ
pādayor vyasanārdanaḥ
durāpā hy alpa-tapasah
sevā vaikuṅṭha-vartmasu*

[Vidura said:] By serving the lotus feet of the devotees of Bhagavān, highly concentrated divine love, existent in all three phases of time, develops for the lotus feet of Śrī Madhusūdana; and as a concomitant result, one obtains everlasting deliverance from the bondage of material existence. For those whose austerity and pious credits are very meagre, it is extremely difficult to obtain the service of such devotees who are very dear to the Lord.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 16.60–1) it is said:

*bhakta-pada-dhūli āra bhakta-pada-jala
bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa, – tīna mahābala
ei tina-sevā haite kṛṣṇa-premā haya
punaḥ punaḥ sarva-śāstre phukāriyā kaya*

The dust of the lotus feet of devotees, the water that washes their feet and the remnants of their *prasāda* – these three are very powerful. By honouring these three, one attains love for the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This has been proclaimed in all the scriptures again and again.

In this regard, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī says (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.219)):

*yāvanti bhagavad-bhakter
aṅgāni kathitāniha
prāyas tāvanti tad-bhakta-
bhakter api budhā viduḥ*

Most of the limbs of *bhakti* described thus far [in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*] in relationship to the Supreme Lord may also be practised in regard to His devotees. This is the opinion of learned scholars who know the esoteric truths of *bhakti*.

In describing the five most potent limbs of *bhakti*, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that they possess such inconceivable, extraordinary power that even slight performance of any one of them can cause *bhāva-bhakti* to arise in persons who are free from offence, even though they may be lacking faith. He cites the following example to show how *bhāva-bhakti* arises by association with devotees who have *bhāva* (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.241)):

*dṛgambhobhir dhautāḥ pulaka-pāṭalī maṇḍita-tanuḥ
skhalann-antaḥphullo dadhad ati-pṛthuim vepathum api
dṛśoḥ kaḁṣāṁ yāvan mama sa puruṣaḥ ko 'py upayayau
na jāne kiṁ tāvan matir iha gṛhe nābhiramate*

I don't know why my mind no longer remains attached to household affairs since that extraordinary person appeared on the pathway of my eyes, whose body is drenched in showers of tears, whose bodily hairs stand on end in ecstasy, who falters at every step, who is submerged in transcendental bliss within his heart, and who trembles feverishly, being overcome by spiritual emotion.

Śrī Mukunda dāsa Gosvāmī has commented on this verse as follows: The words *dr̥śoḥ kakṣām yāvat* – since he has appeared on the pathway of my eyes – indicate very slight contact with a devotee. Although seeing the extraordinary devotee is undoubtedly the cause of the man's detachment, he says that he does not know the cause. This is indicative of a lack of faith. Lastly, the words *iha gr̥he nābhiramata* – unattached to this household – are indicative of the appearance of *bhāva-bhakti*.

It is concluded from the above verses that the beloved devotees of Bhagavān are the incomparably powerful generals of the Lord's army. Serving them eradicates all *anarthas* very easily and generates the very rare divine love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Verse Eight

यथा दुष्टत्वं मे दवयति शठस्यापि कृपया
यथा मह्यं प्रेमामृतमपि ददात्युज्ज्वलमसौ ।
यथा श्रीगान्धर्वाभजनविधये प्रेरयति मां
तथा गोष्ठे काक्वा गिरिधरमिह त्वं भज मनः ॥८॥

yathā duṣṭatvaṁ me davayati śaṭhasyāpi kṛpayā
yathā mahyaṁ premāmṛtam api dadāty ujjvalam asau
yathā śrī gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye prerayati mām
tathā goṣṭhe kākvā giridharam iha tvam bhaja manaḥ

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *iha goṣṭhe* – in this Vraja; *tvam* – you; *bhaja* – worship; *giridharam* – Śrī Giridhārī; *tathā* – in such a manner; *kākvā* – with humble words; *yathā* – so that; *śaṭhasya api* – although (I am) corrupt; *asau* – He; *kṛpayā* – mercifully; *davayati* – drives away; *me* – my; *duṣṭatvam* – wickedness; *yathā* – so that; *dadāti* – He gives; *ujjvalam* – the radiant; *amṛtam* – nectar; *prema* – of divine love; *api* – also; *mahyam* – to me; *yathā* – (and) so that; *prerayati* – He impels; *mām* – me; *śrī gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye* – in the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Translation

[By the association of advanced devotees, *hlādinī-śakti*, which dispels all corruption and brings about the highest perfection, is transmitted into the *sādhaka*'s heart. But that type of association is not easily obtained.] Therefore, O mind, with utter

humility and grief-stricken words, just worship Śrī Giridhārī-Kṛṣṇa in Vraja in such a way that He will become pleased with me. By His causeless mercy He will remove my wickedness, bestow the nectar of His supremely radiant love, and confer upon me the inspiration to worship Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) **Dainya-kākuti: Humble, grief-stricken expression**

“I am completely helpless and destitute.” A humble and sincere prayer with this mood is called *dainya-kākuti*. In his *Śrī Gāndharvā-samprārthanāṣṭakam (Stava-mālā)*, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has prayed in such a humble and guileless manner:

*vṛndāvane viharator iha keli-kuñje
matta-dvīpa-pravara-kautuka-vibhrameṇa
sandarśayasva yuvayor vadanāravinda-
dvandvañ vidhehi mayi devi! kṛpāñ prasīda (1)*

O Devī Rādhikā, being enthralled like two intoxicated elephants, You and Śrī Kṛṣṇa constantly delight in amorous pastimes in the pleasure-groves of Śrī Vṛndāvana. Therefore, O Gāndharvikā, please be kind and mercifully grant me the *darśana* of Your two lotus-like faces.

*hā devi kāku-bhara-gadgadayādya vācā
yāce nipatyā bhuvī daṇḍavad udbhaṭārtiḥ
asya prasādam abudhasya janasya kṛtvā
gāndharvike! nija-gaṇe gaṇanāñ vidhehi (2)*

O Devī Gāndharvikā, I am greatly distressed. Therefore, falling to the ground like a rod, I submit the following prayer to Your lotus feet in a choked-up voice full of despair. Please be merciful upon this ignorant person and consider me as one of Your maidservants.

*śyāme ramā-ramaṇa-sundaratā-variṣṭha-
saundarya-mohita-samasta-jagaj-janasya
śyāmasya vāma-bhuja-baddha-tanuṁ kadāham
tvām indirā-vīrala-rūpa-bharām bhajāmi?* (3)

O Śrīmatī Śyāmā (Rādhikā), You are far more beautiful than Lakṣmī-devī. When shall I worship You who are embraced by the left arm of Your beloved Śrī Śyāmasundara, whose beauty eclipses that of Śrīman Nārāyaṇa and captivates the entire creation?

*tvām pracchadena mudīra-cchavinā pidhāya
mañjira-mukta-caraṇām ca vidhāya devī
kuñje vrajendra-tanayena virājamāne
naktam kadā pramuditām abhisārayiṣye* (4)

O Devī Rādhikā, when will I become Your handmaiden and dress You appropriately for Your lover's rendezvous by removing the ankle bells from Your lotus feet and covering Your graceful limbs in a blue *sārī* the colour of a fresh cloud? When will I lead You to the bower at night, Your heart filled with rapture and anticipation to meet with Your lover, Śrī Nanda-nandana?

*kuñje prasūna-kula-kalpita-keli-talpe
sañviṣṭayor madhura-narma-vilāsa-bhājoh
loka-trayābharaṇayoś caraṇāmbujāni
sañvāhayiṣyati kadā yuvayor jano 'yam?* (5)

O Devī, You and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are the ornament of the three worlds. In the forest grove when both of You recline on a soft bed of a beautiful variety of flowers and partake in amorous pastimes abounding with merriment, will I be blessed to serve You and Your beloved's lotus feet?

*tvat-kuṇḍa-rodhasi vilāsa-pariśrameṇa
svedāmbu-cumbi-vadanāmburuha-śrīyau vām
vṛndāvaneśvari kadā taru-mūla-bhājau
sañvījayāmi camarī-caya-cāmareṇa* (6)

O Vṛndāvanēśvarī, when the lotus faces of You and Your beloved are decorated with drops of perspiration due to the labour of love-sports, You sit in the shade of a beautiful *kadamba* tree on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in order to rest. At that time will I, as Your maidservant, fan Your bodies with a jewelled *cāmara*?

*līnām nikuñja-kuhare bhavatīm mukunde
citraiva sūcitavatī rucirākṣi nāham
bhugnām bhruvaṁ na racayeti mṛṣāruṣāṁ tvām
agre vrajendra-tanasya kadā nu nesye (7)*

O charming-eyed Śrī Rādhikā, when You playfully hide in a secret place within the forest grove, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will come to know of Your whereabouts and appear before You. You will then question me reproachfully, “O Rūpa Mañjarī, did you disclose My hiding place to Him?” Then I will answer, “No, no, I said nothing. It was Citrā Sakhī who told Him, so please don’t frown upon me.” When will I be blessed to see You feigning such anger towards me, and when will I get the opportunity to appease You with sweet words in the presence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa?

*vāg-yuddha-keli-kutuke vraja-rāja sūnuṁ
jītvonmadām adhika-darpa vikāsi-jalpām
phullābhir ālibhir analpam udīryamāṇa-
stotrām kadā nu bhavatīm avalokayiṣye (8)*

When, in a prankish mood, You defeat Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a battle of words, You become exceedingly jubilant and exult in the pride of Your oratory prowess. The *sakhīs*, being overjoyed with the victory of their *svāminī*, praise You, cheering, “*Jaya Rādhā, jaya Rādhā!*” When will I behold You in such a state?

*yaḥ ko ’pi suṣṭhu vṛṣabhānu-kumāri-kāyāḥ
samprārthanāṣṭakam idaṁ paṭhati prapannaḥ
sā preyasā saha sametya dhṛta-pramodā
tatra prasāda-laharīm urarī-karoti (9)*

Anyone who takes shelter of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandini, Śrī Rādhikā, by regularly reciting this entreaty with great faith and an attitude of pure devotion, will surely please Her along with Her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, thus becoming the recipient of Their profuse mercy.

(2) Śaṭhatā me duṣṭatvam:

Pretention is my wickedness

Pretention is the vice of the conditioned living entities. In their pure state the *jīvas* are by nature simple and honest. When the living entities take shelter of ignorance (*avidyā*), they at once become deceitful, proud, obsessed with honour and prestige, hypocritical and immoral, and thus they stray far from the truth of their spiritual identity in relationship with the Lord. By the power of devotee association, when they consider themselves to be far more insignificant than a blade of grass and offer respect to others as befits their respective positions, they take shelter of the holy name. Then Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His beloved devotees will bestow mercy upon them, and they will obtain the rare commodity of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

(3) Ujjvala-premāmṛta: The nectar of amorous love

The word *ujjvala* refers to *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, which is also known as *mādhurya-rasa*. In *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (1.2–3), in the chapter known as *Nāyaka-bheda-prakaraṇa* (Varieties of Heroes), Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī describes *mādhurya-rasa* as follows:

*mukhya-raseṣu purā yaḥ
saṅkṣepeṇodito 'ti rahasyatvāt
pṛthag eva bhakti rasarāt sa
vistāreṇocyate madhuraḥ*

*vakṣyamāṇair vibhāvādyaiḥ
svādyatām madhurā ratih
nītā bhakti rasah prokto
madhurākhyo manīṣibhiḥ*

In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* it is described that the cultivation of *bhakti* may be undertaken in five different *rasas*: *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* and *mādhuryā*. These are known as *mukhya* or primary *rasas*. *Mādhuryā-rasa* is chief amongst all varieties of *bhakti-rasa*. Although it is foremost of all, the first four *rasas* have been described very elaborately, whereas *mādhuryā-rasa* is described only in brief. This is because *mādhuryā-rasa* is very confidential. There are three reasons for its confidentiality. (1) Because it is meant only for those devotees who have taken exclusive shelter of *mādhuryā-rasa*, it is unsuitable for devotees of the other four *rasas* (*śānta*, *dāsyā* and so on). (2) Although there are many devotees who have taken shelter of *mādhuryā-rasa*, they are inept in tasting it because they are devoid of the appropriate impressions in the heart (*saiṅskāras*) for this *rasa*. For such persons *mādhuryā-rasa* is difficult to comprehend. (3) *Mādhuryā-rasa* deals principally with the path of spontaneous love (*rāga-mārga*), and as such it discusses many different confidential moods. Because *sādhakas* whose hearts are bound by many desires are unacquainted with the confidential mysteries of *rāga-mārga*, their minds are obsessed with *vaidhī-mārga*. Therefore this *mādhuryā-rasa* is not fit to be broadcast before them.

For all these reasons *mādhuryā-rasa* is very confidential, and it is inappropriate to describe it in conjunction with the other *rasas*. Consequently, in *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, *mādhuryā-rasa* has been described very elaborately in order to make only

those devotees who are pursuing *rāga-mārga* with exclusive recourse to *mādhurya-rasa* eligible to taste this *rasa*. When *madhura-rati* is instigated by the elements of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyābhicārī-bhāva* and becomes extremely relishable, learned scholars of the profound science of devotional mellows call it *mādhurya-rasa*.

When that *rati* which is the *sthāyibhāva* of *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya* or *vātsalya* combines with the four elements of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyābhicārī-bhāva*, it attains to the status of *rasa*. The same is to be understood in regard to *mādhurya-rasa*. In *mādhurya-rasa* Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the object of love (*viṣayāmbana*), and the *gopīs* are the receptacles of love (*āśrayāmbana*). Their qualities are stimulants (*uddīpanas*) to *mādhurya-rasa*. While enacting their amorous pastimes, the beloveds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and even Kṛṣṇa Himself sometimes display the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* and thirty-three *vyābhicārī-bhāvas*, which rise up like waves causing the ocean of *bhakti-rasa* to swell. When *sādhana-bhakti* is transformed into *bhāva-bhakti*, the *sthāyibhāva* becomes manifest. When the *sthāyibhāva* combines with *vibhāva*, *anubhāva* and so on, and attains to the state of *rasa*, it signifies the appearance of *prema* and is known as *bhakti-rasa*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Vṛndāvana pastimes and all the pastimes He enacted with His beloved *gopīs* throughout Vraja-maṇḍala are examples of this *rasa*. Those who, by great fortune, awaken greed to obtain this *mādhurya-rasa* must follow in the wake of the *gopīs*, praying repeatedly with intense longing and anguish in a voice choked with emotion (as described previously). When Śrīmatī Rādhikā bestows Her mercy upon such persons, the rays of *hlādinī-śakti* enter their hearts and thus manifest

this *rasa*. There is no other way to obtain this *mādhurya-rasa*.

(4) Śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana

Sometimes the infinitesimal living entity pursues the cultivation of impersonal knowledge with the intention of becoming liberated, and thus becomes absorbed in the experience of *brahmānanda*, the bliss derived from realisation of impersonal Brahman. But that experience is thoroughly insignificant in comparison to *paramānanda* or *prema-sevānanda*, the transcendental ecstasy of service to the Lord in unalloyed love. It thus pales like the light of a firefly before the sun. As long as the infinitesimal living entity remains unacquainted with the bliss derived from pure divine love (*premānanda*), he considers the negligible pleasure of Brahman realisation to be all-in-all. Without gaining the mercy of the *hlādinī-śakti*, one is ineligible to obtain the topmost spiritual ecstasy. The means to receive this mercy is as follows.

Upon hearing of the *bhāva* of the eternal residents of Vraja who are situated in *rāgātmikā-bhakti*, greed may awaken in the heart to obtain this *bhāva*. When this occurs one should take shelter of the lotus feet of one of the *sakhīs* or *mañjarīs* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and serve her with great humility. By thus rendering continuous service, one's eligibility for increased service is augmented directly in proportion to the advancement of one's capability. Only by the mercy of the *sakhīs* can one receive the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The more one obtains this mercy, the more *hlādinī-śakti* will be transmitted into one's heart. Thus gradually one will obtain the eternal loving service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in accordance with one's eligibility.

Those who do not accept the existence of eternal divine

pastimes within the realm of transcendence are guilty of denying the completeness of the absolute truth who is the supreme potent (*sarva-śaktimāna*) and the embodiment of *rasa*. Such persons are cut off from the path of mercy and are thus cheated from loving service.

A further consideration is that as long as a *sādhaka* maintains the conception within himself of being a mundane, material male, he is ineligible for this service imbued with the ecstatic moods found in Vraja. Service of this type has no relationship whatsoever with the mundane female or male bodies. The female mood (*strī-bhāva*) that arises in the constitutional form of the pure, infinitesimal *jīva* is the only identity that is suitable for such service. *Sādhakas* who at the time of performing *sādhana* superimpose upon the mind the mundane conceptions of male or female that are born of contact with the material body are deviated from the path of *sādhana*. To isolate oneself from such persons and perform *bhajana* under the guidance of a *rāgānuga*, *rasika-bhakta* who has taken exclusive shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is known as *śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana*.

Verse Nine

मदीशानाथत्वे व्रजविपिनचन्द्रं व्रजवने-
श्वरीं तां नाथत्वे तदतुलसखीत्वे तु ललिताम् ।
विशाखां शिक्षालीवितरणगुरुत्वे प्रियसरो-
गिरीन्द्रौ तत्प्रेक्षाललितरतिदत्त्वे स्मर मनः ॥९॥

*madiśā-nāthatve vraja-vipina-candraṁ vraja-vane-
śvarīm tāṁ-nāthatve tad-atula-sakhīve tu lalitām
viśākhāṁ śikṣālī-vitarāṇa-gurutve priya-saro-
girīndrau tat-prekṣā-lalita-rati-datve smara manaḥ*

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *smara* – remember; *vraja-vipina-candram* – Śrī Vṛndāvanacandra, the moon of the forest of Vraja; *madiśā-nāthatve* – as the Lord of the life of my mistress; *tām* – that; *vrajavaneśvarīm* – Śrī Vṛndāvaneśvarī, the queen of the forest of Vraja; *nāthatve* – as my mistress; *lalitām* – Śrī Lalitā; *tu* – indeed; *tad-atula-sakhīve* – as the peerless friend of Śrī Rādhā; *viśākhām* – Śrī Viśākhā; *śikṣālī-vitarāṇa-gurutve* – as the spiritual master who imparts all instructions; *priya-sarogirīndrau* – the precious pond Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Girirāja-Govardhana; *tat-prekṣā-lalita-rati-datve* – as bestowing *darśana* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and ecstatic love for Them.

Translation

[This verse is instructing us as to what the mutual relationship should be between *rāgānuga-bhajana* and *mādhurya-rasa*.]

O mind, always remember Vṛndāvanacandra Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of my *svāminī* Śrī Rādhikā's life, Vṛndāvaneśvarī Śrīmatī Rādhikā as my mistress, Śrī Lalitā as the peerless friend of my *svāminī*, Śrī Viśākhā as the instructing spiritual master in the arrangements of service rendered unto the Divine Couple, and Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Girirāja-Govardhana as those who grant *darśana* of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and bestow ecstatic love for Their lotus feet.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) *Vraja-vipina-candraṁ smara:*

Remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the moon of the forest of Vraja

In this regard two verses are quoted from Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Mukunda-muktāvalī-stava*, taken from *Stava-mālā*.

*nava-jaladhara-varṇaṁ campakodbhāsi-karṇaṁ
vikasita-nalināsyam viṣphuran-manda-hāsyam
kanaka-ruci-dukūlaṁ cāru-barhāva-cūlaṁ
kamapi nikhila-sāraṁ naumi gopī-kumāram (1)*

I worship a *gopī's* darling son whose complexion is like that of a fresh raincloud, whose attractive ears are decorated with *campaka* flowers, upon whose charming face a mild smile blossoms like a blooming lotus flower, who wears a yellow garment that resembles the lustre of molten gold, whose head is adorned with a beautiful peacock feather, and who is the quintessence of the three worlds.

*mukha-jita-śarad-induḥ keli-lāvaṇya-sindhuh
kara-vinihita-kandur-ballavī-prāṇabandhuḥ
vapu-rūpa-sṛta-reṇuh kakṣa-nikṣipta-veṇur
vacana-vaśaga-dhenuh pātu māṁ nanda-sūnuḥ (2)*

May I be protected by that Śrī Nanda-nandana whose face is far more attractive than the autumn moon, who is an ocean of

elegance suitable for the enactment of amorous pastimes, whose hands are equipped with a ball for playing games, who is the dearest friend of the young maidens of Vraja, whose body is beautified by the dust raised from the hooves of the cows, whose flute is kept prominently on His left side, and who subdues the cows by His melodious voice.

The next two verses are supplementary verses to the *Tri-bhaṅgī-pañcakam*, also taken from *Stava-mālā*.

*viracaya mayi daṇḍam dīna-bandho dayām vā
gatir iha na bhavataḥ kācid anyā mamāsti
nīpatatu śata-koṭīr nirbharam vā navāmbhas
tad api kila payodaḥ stūyate cātakena (1)*

O friend of the fallen, whether the clouds pour down a shower of water upon the thirsting *cātaka* birds or hurl a lightning bolt at them, the *cātaka* birds never tire of propitiating the clouds, for they have no other recourse. Similarly, whether You are merciful to me or punish me, I have no support in this world other than You. You may do as You like.

*prācīnānām bhajanam atulam duṣkaram śṛṇvato me
nairāśyena jvalati hṛdayam bhakti-leśālasasya
viśvadrīcim agha-hara tavākarnya kārūṇya-vīcim
āśā-bindū kṣitam idam upaity-antare hanta śaityam (2)*

O slayer of Aghāsura (or the destroyer of sins), when I hear of the extremely rigorous *sādhana* and *bhajana* undertaken by great souls like Śrī Śuka and Mahārāja Ambarīṣa in former times, my heart, which is devoid of any trace of *bhakti*, becomes stricken with remorse and hopelessness because such difficult *bhajana* and *sādhana* will never be possible for me. Thus I feel that I will never be able to obtain Your lotus feet. But when I see the waves of mercy You have diffused everywhere from Lord Brahmā down to the most heinous sinners, my heart becomes pacified again and instilled with a ray of hope.

(2) Tām vrajavaneśvarīm nāthatve (smara):

Remember Śrīmatī Rādhikā as one's svāminī

In his *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (7–8), quoted below, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has acknowledged Śrīmatī Rādhikā as his *svāminī*. With great fervour and perturbation he has prayed in a mood of single-minded devotion in order to obtain service unto Her.

*aty utkaṭena nitarām virahānalena
dandahyamāna hṛdayā kila kāpi dāsī
hā svāminī kṣanam iha praṇayena gāḍham
ākrandanena vidhurā vilapāmi padyaiḥ*

O Svāminī Śrī Rādhikā, I am Your maidservant, but my heart is burning due to the virulent fire of separation from You. I cry repeatedly and thus I have become thoroughly aggrieved. Seeing no other means of reprieve, I reside at Śrī Govardhana by the bank of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and lovingly supplicate Your lotus feet with these few lines of lamentation.

*devi duḥkha-kula-sāgarodare
dūyamānam ati durgataim janam
tvam kṛpā-prabala-naukayādbhutaīm
prāpaya sva-pada-paṅkajālayam*

May You be pleased. O Vraja-vilāsini Śrī Rādhikā, having fallen into the unfathomable ocean of intense grief, I am severely tormented and seized by calamity. O supremely compassionate one, kindly place me upon the indestructible boat of Your mercy and grant me the direct service of Your lotus feet.

(3) Lalitām tad-atula-sakhīve (smara):

**Remember Śrī Lalitā as the peerless friend
of Śrīmatī Rādhikā**

This mood is clearly expressed by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Śrī Lalitāṣṭaka*, taken from *Stava-mālā*.

*rādhā-mukunda-pada-sambhava-gharma-bindu
nirmañchanopakaraṇī-kṛta-deha-lakṣām
uttuṅga-sauhṛda-viśeṣa-vaśāt pragalbhām
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (1)*

I offer obeisances unto the haughty Śrī Lalitā-devī, who is the charming repository of qualities such as beauty, sweetness and gravity, who is engaged in wiping away the glittering drops of perspiration from the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, and who is perpetually immersed in the most elevated mellows of *sauhārda-rasa*, undivided absorption in fulfilling the heart's desire of her intimate friend Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*rākā-sudhā-kiraṇa-maṇḍala-kānti-daṇḍi-
vaktra-śriyaṁ cakita-cāru-camūru-netrām
rādhā-prasādhana-vidhāna-kalā-prasiddhām
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (2)*

I offer obeisances unto Śrī Lalitā-devī, whose beautiful face mocks the brilliance of the full moon, whose eyes are ever restless like those of a startled doe, who is famous for her extraordinary expertise in the art of dressing Śrīmatī Rādhikā and who is the repository of unlimited feminine qualities.

*lāsyollasad-bhujaga-śatru-patatra-citra-
paṭṭāmśukābharaṇa-kañculikāñcitāṅgīm
gorocanā-ruci-vigarhaṇa-gaurimāṇaṁ
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (3)*

I offer obeisances unto Śrī Lalitā-devī, whose body is adorned with a splendidous silk dress as brilliantly multicoloured as the tail-feathers of an ecstatically dancing peacock, whose upper body is covered with an immensely attractive bodice, whose hair partition is decorated with shimmering red vermillion and who wears various necklaces and other jewelled ornaments. Her golden complexion defeats even the lustre of *gorocanā* (a bright yellow pigment used in painting, dyeing and *tilaka*) and she possesses innumerable good qualities.

*dhūrte vrajendra-tanaye tanu suṣṭhu-vāmyam
mā dakṣiṇā bhava kalaṅkini lāghavāya
rādhe giram śṛṇu hitām iti śikṣayantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ sulatitām lalitām namāmi (4)*

I offer obeisances unto Śrī Lalitā-devī, the charming treasure-house of all good qualities, who instructs Śrīmatī Rādhikā in this way: “O Kalāṅkinī (unchaste one), Rādhikā, listen to my beneficial words! Vrajendra-nandana is very guileful. Don’t display Your mood of gentle submission to Him (*dākṣiṇya-bhāva*); instead, always be contrary (*vāmya-bhāva*) in all circumstances.”

*rādhābhi-vrajapateḥ kṛtamātmajena
kūṭam manāg apī vilokya vilohitākṣim
vāg-bhaṅgibhis tam-acireṇa vilajjyantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (5)*

I offer obeisances unto the abode of all good qualities, the supremely charming Śrī Lalitā-devī, who upon hearing Śrī Kṛṣṇa speak even a few crafty words to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, immediately becomes furious and embarrasses Kṛṣṇa by speaking sarcastic words such as, “You are so truthful and simple-hearted, and such a chaste lover!”

*vātsalya-vṛnda-vasatim paśupāla-rājñyāḥ
sakhyaṅśikṣaṇa-kalāsu gurum sakhinām
rādhā-balāvaraja-jīvita-nirviśeṣām
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (6)*

I offer obeisances unto the supremely charming Śrī Lalitā-devī, who possesses the aggregate of all divine qualities. She is the recipient of the parental affection of Śrīmatī Yaśodā-devī, the queen of Goparāja Śrī Nanda Mahārāja. She is the spiritual master of all the *sakhīs* who instructs them in the matter of friendship, and she is the very life of both Śrīmatī Rādhikā and the younger brother of Baladeva.

*yām kām api vraja-kule vṛṣabhānujāyāḥ
prekṣya svapakṣa-padavīm anuruddhyamānām
sadyas-tad-iṣṭa-ghatanena kṛtārthayantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (7)*

I offer obeisances unto the supremely charming Śrī Lālītā-devī, the treasure-house of all good qualities. Upon seeing any young maiden anywhere in Vraja and discerning that she is inclined towards her dearest friend Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Lalitā immediately fulfils all of that maiden's internal desires and makes her successful in all respects.

*rādhā-vrajendra-suta-saṅgama-raṅga-caryām
varyām viniścītavatīm akhilotsavebhyaḥ
tām gokula-priya-sakhī-nikuramba-mukhyām
devīm guṇaiḥ sulalitām lalitām namāmi (8)*

I offer obeisances unto Śrī Lalitā-devī, the embodiment of all divine virtues and the foremost of the *priya-sakhīs* of Gokula. Her most deeply cherished task is providing enjoyment for Śrī Rādhā-Govinda by arranging for Them to meet. She has far greater longing to perform this exquisite task than to enjoy the entirety of other types of festivals.

*nandann-amūni lalitā-guṇa-lālitāni
padyāni yaḥ paṭhati nirmala-dṛṣṭir aṣṭau
prītyā vikarṣati janān nija-vṛnda-madhye
tām kīrtidā-pati-kulojvala-kalpa-vallī (9)*

If a person with a cheerful and pure heart recites this composition in praise of Lalitā-devī, who is superbly ornamented with the qualities of beauty, grace and charm, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the effulgent wish-fulfilling creeper in the family of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, affectionately draws that person towards Her and adopts her amongst Her group of *sakhīs*.

**(4) Viśākhāṁ śikṣāli-vitarāṇa-gurutve (smara):
Remember Śrī Viśākhā as one's instructing
spiritual master**

The Yamunā river is considered non-different from Śrī Viśākhā. Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa has cited the following verse in confirmation of this:

*viśākhorasi yā viṣṇor
yasyām viṣṇur jalātmani
nityam nimajjati prityā tām
saurīm yamunām stumaḥ*

Lord Viṣṇu daily immerses Himself and plays with great pleasure and affection in the water of the Yamunā, the liquid form of Viśākhā-devī. I offer prayers to Yamunā-devī, the daughter of the sun-god Sūrya.

Śrī Vidyābhūṣaṇapāda comments on this verse as follows:

*viśākhā yamunā-vapur iti vicāreṇa
yamunā-stutyā tat-stutir, iti vidyābhūṣaṇaḥ*

Śrī Viśākhā is considered as the embodiment of Yamunā. Therefore by offering prayers to the Yamunā one automatically offers prayers to Viśākhā.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has composed the following prayer in glorification of the Yamunā known as *Śrī Yamunāṣṭaka*, taken from *Stava-mālā*.

*bhrātur antakasya pattane 'bhipatti-hāriṇī
prekṣayāti-pāpino 'pi pāpa-sindhu-tāriṇī
nīra-mādhuribhir apy-aśeṣa-citta-bandhini
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (1)*

May Yamunā-devī, the daughter of Sūryadeva, who delights the friend of the lotus (Sūrya), always purify me. She saves those who touch her from going to the realm of her brother Yamarāja, and merely seeing her enables wicked sinners to cross the ocean

of sin. She binds the hearts of everyone by the uninterrupted sweetness of her waters.

*hāri-vāri-dhārayābhimaṇḍitoru-khāṇḍavā
puṇḍarīka-maṇḍalodyad-aṇḍajālī-tāṇḍavā
snāna-kāma-pāmarogra-pāpa-sampad-andhinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (2)*

Yamunā-devī adorns Indra’s immense Khāṇḍava forest with her enchanting current, and upon her blooming white lotuses, birds such as wagtails always dance with great jubilation. To say nothing of those who bathe in her waters, even vile sinners are absolved from dreadful sins simply by desiring to bathe in the Yamunā. May Yamunā-devī, the daughter of Sūryadeva, who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

*śīkarābhimṛṣṭa-jantu-durvipāka-mardinī
nanda-nandanāntaraṅga-bhakti-pūra-varadhinī
tīra-saṅgamābhilāṣī-maṅgalānubandhinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (3)*

Yamunā-devī destroys the reactions to the atrocious sins committed by those who merely touch a drop of her water. She increases the flow of *rāgānuga-bhakti* for Nanda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa within one’s heart and blesses anyone who simply desires to reside on her banks. May Yamunā-devī, the daughter of the sun-god, who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

*dvīpa-cakravāla-juṣṭa-sapta-sindhu-bhedinī
śrī-mukunda-nirmitoru-dīvyā-keli-vedinī
kānti-kandalibhir indranīla-vṛnda-nandinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (4)*

Yamunā-devī is so inconceivably powerful that although she flows through the seven oceans which surround the seven giant islands of Bhū-maṇḍala, she never merges into them as ordinary rivers do. Being an intimate witness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s wonderful, transcendental pastimes, she causes those pastimes

to arise in the hearts of those who take shelter of her. Her dark, shimmering beauty defeats that of even a precious blue sapphire. May the daughter of the sun-god, Yamunā-devī, who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

*māthureṇa maṇḍalena cāruṇābhimaṇḍitā
prema-naddha-vaiṣṇavādhva-varadhanāya paṇḍitā
ūrmi-dor-vilāsa-padmanābha-pāda-vandinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (5)*

Ornamented by the supremely enchanting land of Mathurā-maṇḍala, Yamunā-devī is adept in propelling advancement upon the path of Vaiṣṇavism for those devotees who are bound by *prema*. In other words, she directly manifests *rāgānuga-bhakti* in the hearts of those devotees who bathe in her waters. With her waves, which are like playful arms, she worships Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. May the daughter of the sun-god, Yamunā-devī, who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

*ramya-tīra-rambhamāṇa-go-kadamba-bhūṣitā
divya-gandha-bhāk-kadamba-puṣpa-rāji-rūṣitā
nanda-sūnu-bhakta-saṅgha-saṅgamābhinandinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (6)*

Yamunā-devī is further beautified by the presence of the cows mooing in deep subdued tones on both sides of her supremely attractive banks. She is scented by the celestial fragrance emanating from the flowers of the *kadamba* trees that line her shores. She is always overjoyed by the gathering of the dear devotees of Śrī Nanda-nandana. May Yamunā-devī, the daughter of Sūryadeva, who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

*phulla-pakṣa-mallikākṣa-haṁsa-lakṣa-kūjītā
bhakti-viddha-deva-siddha-kinnarāli-pūjītā
tīra-gandhavāha-gandha-janma-bandha-randhinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (7)*

Yamunā-devī reverberates with the captivating sound of hundreds of thousands of elated white swans who glide upon her waters. She is always worshipped by the *devas*, *siddhas*, *kinnaras* and human beings whose hearts are dedicated to the service of Śrī Hari. By the slightest touch of the breezes that gently blow upon her banks, the living entities' bondage to repeated birth and death is cut to pieces. May the daughter of the sun-god, Yamunā-devī, who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

cid-vilāsa-vāri-pūra-bhūr-bhuvah-svarāpinī
kīrtitāpī durmadoru-pāpa-marma-tāpinī
ballavendra-nandanāṅgarāga-bhaṅga-gandhinī
mām punātu sarvadāravinda-bandhu-nandinī (8)

Yamunā-devī pervades the entire three worlds known as Bhū, Bhuva and Sva by the flow of her water, which carries in it the direct revelation of the uncommon transcendental pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. Thus she causes those pastimes to be broadcast throughout the three worlds. By singing her glories the deeply-rooted core of insurmountable, abysmal sins are completely burnt to ashes. She has become supremely fragrant due to the sandalwood paste and *kuṅkuma* that anoints the body of Vrajarāja-kumāra Śrī Kṛṣṇa and that melts in her water as He enjoys His water-sports. May Yamunā-devī, who is the daughter of the sun-god and who delights the friend of the lotus, always purify me.

tuṣṭa-buddhir aṣṭakena nirmalormi-ceṣṭitām
tvām-anena bhānu-putri sarva-deva-veṣṭitām
yaḥ stavīti vardhayasva sarva-pāpa-mocane
bhakti-pūram asya devi puṇḍarīka-locane (9)

O daughter of Sūryadeva, O divine goddess, Śrī Yamunā, I submit this prayer at your feet, that you may benedict those intelligent and contented persons who recite this composition in glorification of you who are surrounded by all the demigods

and who are possessed of immaculate activities in the form of your transparent waves. May you expand the current of their *bhakti* for the lotus-eyed Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who liberates people from all sins including ignorance.

(5) Priyasaraḥ (Rādhā-kuṇḍa) tat-prekṣā-lalīta-ratī-datve (smara):

Remember Rādhā-kuṇḍa as granting darśana of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and bestowing ecstatic love for Them

One should remember that Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa bestows ecstatic love for the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. Such a prayer has been expressed by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in his *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (98):

*he śrī-sarovara sadā tvayi sā madīśā
preṣṭhena sārḍham iha khelati kāmaraṅgaiḥ
tvam cet priyāt priyam atīva tayor itīmān
hā darśayādya kṛpayā mama jīvitam tām*

O Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, my *svāminī* Śrī Rādhikā always enjoys amorous sportive pastimes with Her beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa along your banks. You are more precious to Them than life itself. Therefore kindly grant me *darśana* this very day of Śrī Rādhikā, who is the life of my life.

(6) Praying to Śrī Viśākhā (as bestowing darśana of and ecstatic love for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa)

In *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (99) Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays to Śrī Viśākhā in a similar manner.

*kṣaṇam api tava saṅgam na tyajed eva devi
tvam asī sama-vayas tvān-narmabhūmir yad asyāḥ
iti sumukhi viśākhe darśayitvā mad-īśān
mama viraha-hatāyāḥ prāṇa-rakṣām kuruṣva*

O Sumukhī (beautiful-faced girl), O Viśākhā, because you are precisely the same age as my mistress, Śrī Rādhikā, you are the

abode of Her playful pastimes. Consequently, She cannot give up your association even for a moment. I have become extremely agitated and distressed due to separation from Her. Kindly grant me *darśana* of Her lotus feet and thus preserve my life.

(7) Girīndrau lalita-rati-datve (smara):

**Remember Girirāja-Govardhana as
bestowing ecstatic love**

In his *Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam* (8), taken from *Śrī Stavāvalī*, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays for residence at Śrī Govardhana.

*giri-nṛpa hari-dāsa-śreṇi-varyeti nāmā-
mṛtam idam udītaṁ śrī rādhikā-vaktra-candrāt
vraja-nava-tilakatve kṛpta vedaiḥ sphuṭaṁ me
nīja-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

O Girirāja-Govardhana, the nectar of your name as Haridāsa-varya (best of the servants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) has been manifest directly from the lotus mouth of Śrīmatī Rādhikā when She uttered the words (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.21.18)): “*hantāyam adrir abalā haridāsa-varyaḥ – O sakhīs, this Girirāja-Govardhana is the best of all the devotees of Śrī Hari.*” Thus all the Vedas have established you as the fresh *tilaka* mark adorning the forehead of Vraja. Therefore O Govardhana, kindly grant me residence by your side.

The purport of this statement is that by being granted residence at the feet of Girirāja-Govardhana, Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays that Govardhana will cause ecstatic love for the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala to awaken in his heart.

By seeing, remembering and reciting the glories of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Girirāja-Govardhana, one obtains *prema-bhakti* that is steeped in the mood of *rāgānuga*. All the places wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa enacted His transcendental pastimes bestow

firm attachment for the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala.
Therefore one should always remember them with great love.

Verse Ten

रतिं गौरीलीले अपि तपति सौन्दर्यकिरणैः

शचीलक्ष्मीसत्याः परिभवति सौभाग्यवलनैः ।

वशीकारैश्चन्द्रावलिमुखनवीनव्रजसतीः

क्षिपत्याराद्या तां हरिदयितराधां भज मनः ॥१०॥

ratim gaurī-līle api tapati saundarya-kiraṇaiḥ
śacī-lakṣmī-satyāḥ paribhavati saubhāgya-valanaiḥ
vaśī-kāraiś candrāvali-mukha-navīna-vraja-satīḥ
kṣipaty ārād yā tāṁ hari-dayita-rādhāṁ bhaja manaḥ

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *bhaja* – worship; *tām* – that; *rādhā* – Śrī Rādhā; *hari-dayita* – the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *yā* – who; *tapati* – burns or afflicts; *rati* – Rati-devī, the wife of Kāmadeva; *gaurī* – Gaurī-devī, the wife of Lord Śiva; *api* – and; *līlā* – Lilā-devī, the personal energy of Lord Nārāyaṇa; *saundarya-kiraṇaiḥ* – by the rays of Her beauty; *paribhavati* – (who) defeats; *śacī* – Śacī-devī, the wife of Indra; *lakṣmī* – Lakṣmī-devī, the eternal consort of Lord Nārāyaṇa; *satyāḥ* – (and) Satyabhāmā-devī, one of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s principal queens at Dvārakā; *saubhāgya-valanaiḥ* – by the superabundance of Her good fortune; *kṣipati* – (and who) casts; *ārāt* – to a distant place; *navīna-vraja-satīḥ* – the chaste young girls of Vraja; *candrāvalī-mukha* – headed by Candrāvalī; *vaśī-karaiḥ* – by Her quality of being able to bring Śrī Kṛṣṇa under Her control.

Translation

[Without taking shelter of the Lord's internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*), one can never obtain the fullest aspect of the absolute truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the possessor of that potency. Therefore the following statement is expressed.] O mind, give up attachment for all others and just worship the most beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who inflames Rati, Gaurī and Līlā by the effulgent rays of Her beauty; who vanquishes Śrī Śacī, Śrī Lakṣmī and Śrī Satyabhāmā by the profusion of Her good fortune; and who dissipates the pride of the chaste young girls of Vraja headed by Śrī Candrāvalī by Her ability to bring Śrī Kṛṣṇa under Her control. This Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the most beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) The extraordinary qualities of Śrīmatī Rādhikā

In his *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, in the chapter entitled *Śrī Rādhā-prakaraṇa* (4.11–15), Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has described the twenty-five principal qualities of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*atha vṛndāvaneśvaryaḥ
 kīrtyante pravaraṅ guṇāḥ
 madhureyaṁ nava-vayāś-
 calāpāṅgojjvala-smitā
 cāru-saubhāgya-rekhādhyā
 gandhonmāḍita-mādhavā
 saṅgīta-prasarābhijñā
 ramya-vāk narma-pañḍitā*

vinītā karuṇā-pūrṇā
vidagdhā pāṭavānvitā
lajjāśīlā sumaryādā
dhairyā gāmbhīrya-śālinī
suvilāsā mahābhāva-
paramotkarṣa-tarṣiṇī
gokula-prema-vasatir
jagac-chreṇī-lasad-yaśāḥ
gurvarpita-guru-snehā
sakhī-praṇayitā-vaśā
kṛṣṇa-priyāvalī-mukhyā
santatāśrava-keśavā
bahunā kiṃ guṇās-tasyāḥ
saṅkhyātītā harer iva

I shall now describe the principal qualities of Vṛndāvanēśvarī, Śrīmatī Rādhikā: (1) *madhurā* – She is charming; (2) *nava-vayāḥ* – She is eternally situated in the middle of blooming youth; (3) *calāpāṅgā* – She casts sidelong glances from Her restless eyes; (4) *ujjvala-smitā* – She smiles radiantly and sweetly; (5) *cāru-saubhāgya-rekhāḍhyā* – Her feet and other parts of Her body are marked with beautiful, auspicious lines; (6) *gandhonmā dita-mādhavā* – the fragrance of Her body drives Śrī Kṛṣṇa mad; (7) *saṅgīta-prasarābhijñā* – She is expert in the art of singing and music; (8) *ramya-vāk* – Her speech is charming; (9) *narma-paṇḍitā* – She is quick-witted and accomplished in the use of joking words; (10) *vinītā* – She is modest; (11) *karuṇā-pūrṇā* – She is merciful; (12) *vidagdhā* – She is highly skilled in the sixty-four arts and in all varieties of amorous sports; (13) *pāṭavānvitā* – She is dexterous; (14) *lajjāśīlā* – She is shy; (15) *sumaryādā* – She never deviates from the path of righteousness; (16) *dhairyā-śālinī* – She is forbearing and tolerant in the face of distress; (17) *gāmbhīrya-śālinī* – She is grave; (18) *suvilāsā* – She is always decorated with various types of ornamental gestures of the body such as *hāva*, *bhāva* and *helā*

(various feminine gestures that entice the beloved) as well as smiling, horripilation, and variations of the voice, which are indicative of Her ecstatic moods in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; (19) *mahābhāva-paramotkarṣa-tarṣiṇī* – She is extremely eager to display the highest manifestation of *mahābhāva*; (20) *gokula-prema-vasati* – She is the object of love for all the residents of Gokula; (21) *jagat-śreṇī-lasad-yaśā* – Her fame is spread throughout the entire universe; (22) *gurvarpita-guru-snehā* – She is the recipient of great affection from Her elders; (23) *sakhī-praṇayitā-vaśā* – She is controlled by the love of Her *sakhīs*; (24) *kṛṣṇa-priyāvalī-mukhyā* – She is foremost of all Kṛṣṇa’s lovers; and (25) *santatāśravā-keśava* – She always keeps Śrī Keśava under Her control. What more need be said? Like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, She is fully endowed with unlimited transcendental qualities.

The glories of Śrīmatī Rādhikā are further described by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (4.3–6):

*tayor apy ubhayor madhye
rādhikā sarvathādhikā
mahābhāva-svarūpeyaṁ
guṇair ativarīyasī*

Between Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Candrāvalī, Śrī Rādhā is superior in all respects. She is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. No one can compare with Her in the possession of transcendental qualities.

*gopālottara-tāpinyāṁ
yad gāndharveti viśrutā
rādhety ṛk pariśiṣṭe ca
mādhavena sahoditā
atas tadīya-māhātmyaṁ
pādme devarṣinoditam*

In the *Gopālottara-tāpani* She is, therefore, celebrated by the name Gāndharvā. In the supplement to the *Rg Veda*, Her name has been mentioned together with Śrī Mādhava. This is

expressed in the following words: “*rādhayā mādhave devo mād-havenaiva rādhikā* – Mādhava is always with Śrīmatī Rādhikā and She is always with Him. They always remain together and are never separated from one another.” Therefore Śrī Devarṣi Nārada has described Her glories in the *Padma Purāṇa*.

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇoḥ
tasyāḥ kuṇḍaiṁ priyaṁ tathā
sarva-gopīṣu saivaikā
viṣṇor atyanta-vallabhā*

Just as Śrīmatī Rādhikā is most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Her pond Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa is equally dear to Him. Amongst all the beloved *gopīs*, none are as dear as Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*hlādinī yā mahā-śaktiḥ
sarva-śakti-varīyasī
tat-sāra-bhāva-rūpeyam
iti tanre pratiṣṭhitā*

The supreme potency known as *hlādinī* is superior to all the other potencies of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The concentrated form of this *hlādinī-śakti*, which finds its ultimate expression in the stage of *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*, is none other than Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This conclusion has been established in the Tantras.

In his *Cāṭu-puṣpāñjali* from *Stava-mālā*, Rūpa Gosvāmī has glorified Śrīmatī Rādhikā as follows:

*nava-gorocanā-gaurīm pravarendīvarāmbārām
maṇi-stavaka-vidyoti-veṇī-vyālāṅganā-phaṇām* (1)

O Vṛndāvanēśvarī, I offer prayers unto You. Your golden complexion is like fresh *gorocana*. Your *sārī* is the colour of a beautiful blue lotus, and the upper part of Your long, braided hair is studded with jewels, making it appear like the hood of a black serpent.

upamāna-ghaṭā-māna-prahāri-mukha-maṇḍalām

navendu-nindi-bhālodyat-kastūri-tilaka-śriyam (2)

Your exquisite face shames the brilliance of the full moon, a fully-blossomed lotus flower, or any other possible object of comparison. Your forehead, which resembles a newly-risen crescent moon, is splendorously adorned with musk *tilaka*.

*bhrū-jitānaṅga-kodaṇḍāṁ lola-nīlākāvalim
kajjalojjvalatā-rājac-cakorī-cāru-locanām* (3)

Your curved eyebrows put Cupid's bow to shame. Your swaying tresses of black, curling hair are splendid, and Your eyes, which are wonderfully decorated with *kājala*, look like a pair of youthful *cakorī* birds (which are said to be enamoured by the moon and are therefore a symbol of amorous desire).

*tila-puṣpābha-nāsāgra-virājad-vara-mauktikām
adharoddhūta-bandhūkām kundālī-bandhura-dvijām* (4)

A splendid pearl adorns the sesame-flower tip of Your nose, Your lips are like deep red *bandhūka* flowers, and Your rows of teeth glitter like sparkling white jasmine buds.

*sa-ratna-svarṇa-rājīva-karṇikākṛta-karṇikām
kastūri-bindu-cibukām ratna-graiveyakojjvalām* (5)

Jewel-studded stamens of golden lotus flowers decorate Your ears, Your chin is decorated with a dot of musk, and You wear a necklace bedecked with jewels.

*divyāṅgada-pariṣvaṅga-lasad-bhuja-mṛṇālikām
valāri-ratna-valaya-kalālambi-kalāvīkām* (6)

Your beautiful arms, which are like lotus-stems, are adorned with armlets, and on Your wrists are bracelets composed of blue sapphires that jingle sweetly as You move.

*ratnāṅguriyakollāsi-varāṅguli-karāmbujām
manohara-mahā-hāra-vihāri-kuca-kuṭṭmalām* (7)

The fingers of Your lotus hands are decorated with rings

mounted with jewels, and Your breasts are adorned with an enchanting, precious necklace.

romāli-bhujagī-mūrdha-ratnābha-taralāñcitām
vali-trayī-latā-baddha-kṣīṇa-bhaṅgura-madhyamām (8)

Sitting atop the line of hairs that cross Your navel, the central jewel of that necklace appears like the jewel on the head of a female snake. Your fine, slender waist, bent slightly by the weight of Your breasts, is marked by three lines that appear like entwining creepers.

maṇi-sārasanādhāra-vīsphāra-śroṇi-rodhasam
hema-rambhā-madārambha-stambhanoru-yugākṛtim (9)

Around Your broad hips is a splendid, tinkling, jewel-studded waist-band, and Your shapely thighs crush the pride of the golden trunk of the plantain tree.

jānu-dyuti-jīta-kṣulla-pīta-ratna-samudgakām
śaran-nīraja-nīrājya-mañjīra-viraṇat-padām (10)

The splendour of Your beautiful knees puts to shame the radiance of round, yellow sapphire jewellery cases, and Your beautiful feet, which are adorned by tinkling anklets, gleam with red lotuses that blossom in autumn.

rākendu-koṭi-saundarya-jaitra-pāda-nakha-dyutim
aṣṭābhiḥ sāttvikair bhāvair ākulī-kṛta-vigrahām (11)

The resplendence of the nails of Your lotus feet defeats the beauty of millions of full moons, and Your entire form is pervaded by the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas*, such as perspiration and becoming stunned.

mukundāṅga-kṛtāpāṅgām anaṅgormi-taraṅgitām
tvām ārabdha-śrīyānandām vande vṛndāvaneśvari (12)

As you flash sidelong glances at Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You swell with waves of amorous desire, and then You meet with Him and experience infinite bliss. O Vṛndāvaneśvari, I worship You, the

reservoir of divine qualities.

*ayi prodyan-mahā-bhāva-mādhurī vihvalāntare
aśeṣa-nāyikāvasthā-prākāṭyādbhuta-ceṣṭite* (13)

O Śrīmatī, Your heart is inundated by the combined sweetness of all the symptoms of *mahābhāva* arising simultaneously in You. Because You possess all the attributes of the unlimited varieties of heroines, everyone is astonished upon witnessing Your varied moods and gestures.

*sarva-mādhurya-viñcholi-nirmañchita-padāmbuje
indirā-mṛgya-saundarya-sphurad-aṅghri-nakhāñcale* (14)

All the attributes of a heroine such as sweetness attend Your lotus feet, and that beauty which even Lakṣmī-devī prays for shines forth from the nails of those feet.

*gokulendu-mukhī-vṛnda-sīmantottaiṃsa-māñjari
lalitādi-sakhī-yūtha-jīvātu-smīta-korake* (15)

You are the crest jewel and flower-bud of all the women of Gokula, and Your sweet, gentle smile is life-giving tonic for all the *sakhīs* headed by Lalitā.

*caṭulāpāṅga-mādhurya-bindūnmādita-mādhave
tāta-pāda-yaśaḥ stoma-kairavānanda-candrike* (16)

The sidelong glances from Your restless eyes act as drops of ambrosia that madden Mādhava, and You are the moon that expands the flower of Your father's fame.

*apāra-karuṇā-pūra-pūritāntar-mano-hrade
prasādāsmīn jane devi nija-dāśya-sprhā-juṣi* (17)

Your heart is like a fathomless reservoir that is overflowing with compassion. Therefore, O Goddess, be pleased with this humble soul who longs to become Your maidservant.

*kaccit tvam caṭu-paṭunā tena goṣṭhendra-sūnunā
prārthyamāna-calāpāṅga-prasādā drakṣyase mayā?* (18)

After Your mood of jealous anger has broken, the cunning Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa entreats You to meet with Him with words of flattery. At that time You become ecstatic and shower Him with sidelong glances. When will I be able to witness such emotions?

*tvām sādhu mādhavī-puṣpair mādhavena kalā-vidā
prasādhyamānām svidyantīm vijayiṣyāmy aham kadā? (19)*

As the skilful and artistic Śrī Kṛṣṇa decorates You with *mādhavī* flowers, the touch of His lotus hands causes the symptoms of ecstasy to break out over Your entire form, thereby drenching You in perspiration. Oh, when at this time will I be able to gently fan You with a palm-leaf?

*keli-vistramśino vakra-keśa-vṛndasya sundari
samśkāṛāya kadā devi janam etaṁ nidekṣyasi? (20)*

O Devī, O Sundarī, after Your loveplay with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Your hair is left dishevelled and in need of being arranged again. When will You order this surrendered soul to perform this service?

*kadā bimbhoṣṭhi tāmbūlam mayā tava mukhāmbuje
arpyamānam vrajādhiśa-sūnur ācchidya bhokṣyate? (21)*

O Bimboṣṭhī (one whose lips are like *bimba* fruits), after You accept my offering of *tāmbula*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will remove it from Your lotus mouth and place it in His own mouth. When will I witness such loving pastimes?

*vraja-rāja-kumāra-vallabhā-kula-simanta-maṇi prasida me
parivāra-gaṇasya te yathā padavī me na davīyasī bhavet (22)*

O Śrīmatī, since You are the crown jewel of Vrajendra-nandana's beloved *gopīs*, be pleased with me and ever-so-quickly consider me a member of Your family. Please show me this kindness.

*karuṇām muhur arthaye param tava vṛndāvana cakravartini
api keśi-riporyayā bhavet sa caṭu-prārthana-bhājanam janaḥ (23)*

O Queen of Vṛndāvana, I beseech You at Your lotus feet time and again. Please be compassionate and make me Your maid-servant (*pālyadāsī*). After You have become indignant due to a lover's quarrel, in order to meet with You again Śrī Kṛṣṇa will speak many flattering words to me, knowing me to be Your dear attendant. At that time I will take His hand and lead Him to You. O Svāminī, when will You grant me this mercy?

*imaṁ vṛndāvaneśvaryā jano yaḥ paṭhati stavaṁ
cāṭu-puṣpāñjaliṁ nāma sa syād asyāḥ kṛpāspadam* (24)

A fortunate soul who faithfully recites this *Cāṭu-puṣpāñjali* in glorification of Vṛndāvaneśvarī Śrīmatī Rādhikā will very quickly become the recipient of Her mercy.

One should worship Śrīmatī Rādhikā by reciting prayers like this and by rendering all types of service. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has expressed this mood in his *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (101–2).

*lakṣmīr yad aṅghri-kamalasya nakhāñcalasya
saundarya-bindum api nārhati labdhum-īśe
sā tvam vidhāsyasi na cen mama netradānain
kiṁ jīvitena mama duḥkha-dāvāgni-dena?*

O Prāṇeśvarī Śrī Rādhikā, Śrī Lakṣmī-devī is unable to obtain even a drop of the beauty that radiates from the tips of the toenails of Your lotus feet. If You do not grant me the eyes to behold Your splendid form, qualities and pastimes, then of what use to me is this miserable life, which blazes in a raging conflagration of anguish?

*āsābharair amṛta-sindhumayaiḥ kathañcit
kālo mayāti-gamitaḥ kila sāmpratam hi
tvam cet kṛpāṁ mayi vidhāsyasi naiva kiṁ me
prāṇair vrajena ca varoru bakāriṇāpi?*

O Varoru (girl with beautiful thighs), it is decidedly only with the hope of obtaining the nectarean ocean of service unto You

and the vision of Your transcendental pastimes that I have been able to maintain my life thus far with severe difficulty. But if You are not merciful unto me even now, then of what use to me is this life, residence in Vraja-dhāma or even Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself?

If a person is greatly fortunate, ecstatic love that is steeped in the mood of Vraja may be awakened in him by the causeless mercy of Bhagavān or His devotee. At that time one comes to know of his eternal constitutional identity from a *rāgānuga-guru*. Equipped with this understanding and being desirous of taking up appropriate services and *sādhana*, the spiritual aspirant should first take shelter of the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, perceiving him in his eternal spiritual form as a *mañjarī*. He should then engage in *bhajana* and *sādhana* with heart and soul. By continuous practice of *sādhana* and *bhajana*, he will obtain the service of one of the *sakhīs* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā by the mercy of his *mañjarī-guru*. By continued service unto that *sakhī* and by receiving her mercy, one will obtain the direct *darśana* of Vṛndāvaneśvarī Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Finally, by Her mercy, one will be able to serve the Divine Couple in Their transcendental pastimes. All this can be accomplished only by unpretentious humility, intense hankering and one-pointed focus on the goal.

Verse Eleven

समं श्रीरूपेण स्मरविवशराधागिरिभृतो-
व्रजे साक्षात्सेवालभनविधये तद्गणयुजोः ।
तदिज्याख्याध्यानश्रवणनतिपञ्चामृतमिदं
धयन्नीत्या गोवर्धनमनुदिनं त्वं भज मनः ॥११॥

samaṁ śrī-rūpeṇa smara-vivaśa-rādhā-giribhṛtor
vraje sākṣāt-sevā-labhana-vidhaye tad-gaṇa-yujoh
tad-ijyākhyā-dhyāna-śravaṇa-nati-pañcāmṛtam idaṁ
dhayan nītyā govardhanam anudinaṁ tvam bhaja manaḥ

Anvaya

manaḥ – O mind; *vidhaye* – for the method; *labhana* – of obtaining; *sākṣāt-sevā* – the direct service; *rādhā-giribhṛtoḥ* – of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Giridhārī; *smara-vivaśa* – who are entranced with amorous desire; *tad-gaṇa-yujoh* – along with Their associates; *vraje* – in Vraja; *tvam* – you; *dhayan* – drink; *śrī-rūpeṇa-samaṁ* – in accordance with Śrī Rūpa; *idaṁ* – this; *pañcāmṛta* – nectar consisting of five ingredients; *tad-ijyā* – (in the form of) Their worship (*arcana*); *ākhyā* – descriptions of Their names, forms, qualities and pastimes (*saṅkīrtana*); *dhyāna* – meditation; *śravaṇa* – hearing of Their names, forms, qualities and pastimes; *nati* – bowing down to Them; *bhaja* – (and) worship; *govardhanam* – Śrī Govardhana; *anudinam* – every day; *nītyā* – with the precepts of devotion.

Translation

[Now the method of performing very deep and confidential *bhajana* is being explained.] O my dear mind, in order to obtain the direct service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Giridhārī, who are always entranced by amorous desire, and the service of Their eternal associates in Vraja, one should drink the *pañcāmṛta* of service to Them in accordance with the method prescribed by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. This *pañcāmṛta* is ambrosial nectar comprised of the following five ingredients: worship of the Divine Couple (*arcana*), chanting the glories of Their transcendental names, forms, qualities and pastimes (*sañkīrtana*), meditating upon Them (*dhyāna*), hearing the glories of Their names, forms, qualities and pastimes (*śravaṇa*), and offering obeisances unto Them. In addition one should worship Śrī Govardhana daily in accordance with the precepts of devotion.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) Tad-gaṇa-yujoḥ: With Their associates

This refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa surrounded by His friends such as Śrīdāma and Subala, and Śrīmatī Rādhikā surrounded by Her girlfriends such as Śrī Lalitā and Viśākhā.

(2) Smara-vilāsa-vivaśa: Absorbed in amorous pastimes

Śrī Rādhā-Giridhārī are deeply immersed in *śṛṅgāra-rasa*, considering it to be more attractive than *dāśya-*, *sakhya-* or *vātsalya-rasa*.

(3) Vraje sākṣāt-sevā-labhana:

Obtaining direct service in Vraja

The service that one performs in the stage of *sādhana* is a simulation of direct service. In the stage of perfection one first obtains remote service. By serving regularly from a distant place under the guidance of a *mañjarī*, one gradually obtains the service of the *sakhīs*. Thereafter, she obtains the direct service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. There are unlimited varieties of services such as cleansing the *kuñja* where Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa enact Their pastimes, arranging Their bed, bringing water, stringing garlands, preparing *tāmbula* and offering camphor. Innumerable maidservants are each engaged in their respective services.

The direct service of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda is possible only when the *jīva* obtains his eternal, perfected spiritual form (*nitya-siddha deha*). The conditioned living entity cannot perform direct service with his material gross or subtle body. In direct service one experiences unbounded bliss and perpetually innovative *rasa* at every instant owing to the profound emotions originating from *mādhurya-rasa*. At this stage the happiness one derives from direct service is so great that one has not even the slightest trace of desire for personal enjoyment. Situated on this platform, a devotee's heart is never touched by any kind of misery. The distress that is exhibited in *mādhurya-rasa* in the mood of separation (*vīpralambha*) is but a transformation of divine ecstasy. This experience has no connection whatsoever with the grief associated with the material body.

(4) Śrī Rūpeṇa-samam: In accordance with Śrī Rūpa

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the *ācārya* of *mādhurya-rasa*, has set forth

the procedures for *rāgānuga-sādhakas* pursuing *mādhurya-rasa* in his books named *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī*. One should adopt these methods and drink the *pañcāmṛta* mentioned in this Verse Eleven. These methods are described in *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.90–3) as follows.

*śraddhā viśeṣataḥ prītiḥ
 śrī-mūrter-aṅghri-sevane
 śrīmad-bhāgavatārthānām
 āsvādo rasikaiḥ saha
 sajātīyāśaye snigdhe
 sādhou saṅgaḥ svato vare
 nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ śrīman-
 mathurā-maṇḍale sthitiḥ
 aṅgānām pañcakasyāsyā
 pūrvam vilikhitasya ca
 nikhila śraiṣṭhya bodhāya
 punar apy atra kīrtanam*

(1) One should serve the lotus feet of the deity with faith and especially with love; (2) one should taste the meaning of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the company of *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas; (3) one should associate with devotees who are situated in the same mood, who are soft-hearted and affectionately disposed, and who are more advanced than oneself; (4) one should perform *śrī-nāma-saṅkīrtana*; and (5) one should reside in Mathurā-maṇḍala, or in other words Vraja-maṇḍala. Although these five limbs of *bhakti* have already been mentioned, they are repeated again in order to establish their superiority to the other limbs.

(5) Ijyā: Worship of the deity

The limbs of *bhakti* that are incorporated under this heading include service to the lotus feet of the deity (*arcana*), observing Ekādaśī and certain Dvādaśīs, wearing *tulasī* neck beads and

tilaka, honouring *caraṇāmṛta* and *mahā-prasāda*, undertaking vows like *kārttika-vrata*, and serving the *tulasī* plant.

(6) Ākhyā: Glorification

Study of the devotional scriptures, hearing and reciting *hari-kathā* in the association of devotees, and chanting the glories of the holy names, form, qualities and pastimes of the Lord are known as *ākhyā*, glorification.

(7) Dhyāna: Meditation

Dhyāna refers to a specific practice that is included within the broader discipline of *smaraṇa*, remembrance. But in this verse the entire practice of *smaraṇa* has been referred to simply as *dhyāna*. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has elaborated on this subject in his *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (Anuccheda 278):

smaraṇam manasānusandhānam. atha pūrvavat krama-sopāna-rītyā sukha-labhyam guṇa-parikara-sevā-lilā smaraṇam cānu-sandheyam. tad idam smaraṇam pañca-vidham – yat kiñcid anusandhānam smaraṇam. sarvataś-cittam ākṛṣya sāmānyākāreṇa manodhāraṇam dhāraṇā. viśeṣato rūpādi cintanam dhyānam. amṛta-dhārāvadanavacchinnaṁ tad dhruvānusrītiḥ. dhyeyamātra-sphūraṇam samādhir iti.

Close inspection with the mind is called *smaraṇa*, remembrance. Thereafter, one should practise remembrance according to the step-by-step method described previously. In other words, one should first remember the names, then the form, then the qualities of the Lord, and in accordance with this progression one should practise the easy method of remembering the qualities, associates, services and pastimes of Śrī Hari. This remembrance is of five types: (1) A little investigation or examination of Śrī Hari's names, form and so on is called *smaraṇa*. (2) To withdraw the mind from all external objects and fix it in a general way upon the names, form, etc. of Śrī Hari is called *dhāraṇa*. (3) To contemplate the Lord's names, form, etc. in

a distinctive manner is called *dhyāna*. (4) When that remembrance proceeds in an uninterrupted manner like a continuous flow of nectar, it is called *dhruvānusmṛti*. (5) That meditation in which the object of one's contemplation is the only thing manifest in the heart is called *samādhi*.

(8) Śravaṇa: Hearing

To hear about the names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Bhagavān from the mouths of pure devotees is called *śravaṇa*. Hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other devotional scriptures every evening in the association of pure devotees and other similar arrangements for hearing are also included within this item.

(9) Nati: Offering obeisances

To offer prostrated obeisances before the deity at the time of taking *darśana*, or to bow down at the places where the Lord enacted His pastimes or at places that stimulate one's remembrance of the Lord, is called *nati*.

(10) Govardhanaṁ bhaja: Worship Śrī Govardhana

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has targeted this instruction towards himself as well as towards everyone else. Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally gave His *govardhana-sīlā* to Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī, who describes this himself in his *Śrī Gaurāṅga-stava-kalpataru* (11), taken from *Stavāvalī*.

*mahā-sampad-dārād api patitam uddhṛtya kṛpayā
svarūpe yaḥ svīye kujanam api mām nyasya muditaḥ
uro-guñjāhāraṁ priyam api ca govardhana-sīlāṁ
dadau me gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati*

Although I am atrociously fallen and despicable, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu out of His causeless mercy delivered me from

great material opulence, wife and so on. He handed me over in great pleasure to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, His confidential associate. Considering me to be very dear, He gave me the *guñjā-mālā* that adorned His own neck and His *govardhana-śilā*. May that Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva appear in my heart and intoxicate me with divine ecstasy.

“*Śrī-govardhana-śilā* is a direct manifestation of the Supreme Lord. Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī used to reside by Śrī Govardhana at Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and never went anywhere else. Following his example, I will never give up residence at Govardhana.” To have this kind of firm determination is another means of worshipping Śrī Govardhana.

Śrī Govardhana worship has two meanings for the ordinary *sādhakas*. The first is that one should consider *govardhana-śilā* as a venerable deity and therefore worship Him in accordance with the rules previously mentioned [under heading (5) Ijyā on pp. 125–6]. The second is that one should reside at Śrī Govardhana, a place wherein the Lord enacted His pastimes, and worship Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala. By indirect implication (*upalakṣaṇa*), this signifies residence anywhere in Vraja-maṇḍala. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that to live in Mathurā-maṇḍala is one of the principal limbs of *bhakti*; therefore, here the same thing is being expressed in different words.

(11) Nītyā: In accordance with the rules (of devotion)

One should not think that the word *nīti* used here refers only to *vaidhī-mārga*. Those who are eligible for *vaidhī-bhakti* will worship according to the rules set forth by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī for *vaidhī-mārga*, and those who are eligible for *rāgānuga-bhakti* will worship by adopting the procedures of *rāga-mārga* enunciated by him.

Verse Twelve

मनःशिक्षादैकादशकवरमेतन्मधुरया
गिरा गायत्युच्चैः समधिगतसर्वार्थतति यः ।
सयूथः श्रीरूपानुग इह भवन् गोकुलवने
जनो राधाकृष्णातुलभजनरत्नं स लभते ॥१२॥

*manaḥ-sīkṣā-daikādaśaka-varam etan madhurayā
girā gāyaty uccaiḥ samadhigata-sarvārtha-tati yaḥ
sa-yūthaḥ śrī-rūpānuga iha bhavan gokulavane
jano rādhā-kṛṣṇātula-bhajana-ratnam sa labhate*

Anvaya

yaḥ janaḥ – anyone who; *śrī-rūpānugaḥ bhavan* – becomes a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī; *sa-yūthaḥ* – with his group; *iha gokulavane* – in this forest of Gokula (in Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala near Śrī Govardhana); *uccaiḥ* – (and) loudly; *gāyati* – sings; *etat* – these; *varam* – excellent; *ekādaśaka* – eleven verses; *manaḥ-sīkṣā-da* – which give instruction to the mind; *madhurayā girā* – with a sweet voice; *samadhigata* – having thoroughly understood; *sarva* – all; *artha-tati* – the many meanings; *saḥ* – he; *labhate* – obtains; *atula* – the incomparable; *bhajana-ratnam* – jewel of worship; *rādhā-kṛṣṇa* – unto Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Translation

[While instructing his own mind, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī offers the following benediction in order to inspire other devotees to study and recite this composition known as

Manah-śikṣā.] Anyone who, adopting the line of Śrī Rūpa and his followers, takes up residence in Gokulavana and loudly sings these eleven excellent instructions to the mind in a melodious voice with full understanding of their meaning, will certainly obtain the matchless gem of worshipping Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa-digdarśinī-vṛtti

(1) Sa-yūtha: With his group

The word *sa-yūtha* – with his group or followers – refers to *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas who are possessed of the same inclination, who are soft-hearted and affectionate, and who are more advanced than oneself. One should remain under the guidance of such persons. Although Lalitā-devī and other *sakhīs* are independent *nāyikās* (heroines) and *yūtheśvarīs* (group leaders), they remain under the guidance of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Similarly, although *uttama-bhāgavata* Vaiṣṇavas may be spiritual masters for many disciples, they are followers of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. In this connection we find the following statement from Śrī *Ujvala-nīlamanī* (*Hari-priyā-prakaraṇa* 3.61):

*yūthādhipātve 'py aucityam
dadhānā lalitādayaḥ
sveṣṭa-rādhādibhāvasya
lobhāt sakhya-ruciṁ dadhuḥ*

Although Lalitā and the other principal *sakhīs* are fully competent as group leaders (*yūtheśvarīs*), they are extremely eager to please their dearest Śrīmatī Rādhikā and therefore they prefer to adopt the mood of attendant *sakhīs*. They do not care to assume the mood of independent *yūtheśvarī-nāyikās*.

(2) Rūpānuga

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī enunciated the principles of *rasa* on the order of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. He performed his own *bhajana* in accordance with those principles and thereby established the ideal standard of *vraja-bhajana* for the whole world. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī and other *rasika-ācāryas* followed this system. To follow this method of *bhajana* is known as *śrī-rūpānuga-bhajana*.

(3) Gokulavane: In the forest of Gokula

This refers to any charming place in Śrī Mathurā or Vraja-maṇḍala wherein the Lord enacted His pastimes. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī describes the glories of Śrī Mathurā-maṇḍala in his *Stava-mālā* (*Śrī Mathurā-stava*).

*mukter govinda-bhakter vitarāṇa-caturaiṅ sac-cid-ānanda-rūpaiṅ
yasyaiṅ vidyoti vidyā-yugalam-udayate tārakaiṅ pāraakaiṅ ca
kṛṣṇasyotpatti-lilā-khanir akhila-jagan-mauli-ratnasya sā te
vaikuṅṭhād yā pratiṣṭhā prathayatu mathurā maṅgalānāiṅ kalāpam* (1)

Śrī Mathurā-purī is thoroughly adept at conferring liberation in the form of *bhakti* for the lotus feet of Śrī Govinda. She enables the living entities to cross over the ocean of material existence and bestows love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and is thus fully endowed with two types of knowledge known as *tāraka* (taking across) and *pāraka* (causing to reach the ultimate end). She is the crest jewel of all places in the entire creation, being the abode where Śrī Kṛṣṇa enacted His childhood pastimes and other *līlās*. May that Śrī Mathurā-purī, who is worshipful even for Vaikuṅṭha, bestow all auspiciousness upon you.

*koṭīndu-spaṣṭa-kānti rabhasa-yuta-bhava-kleśa-yodhair ayodhyā
māyā-vitrāsivāsā muni-hṛdayam uṣo divya-lilāḥ sravanti
sāśiḥ kāśīśamukhyāmarapatibhir alam prārthita-dvārakāryā
vaikuṅṭhodgīta-kīrtir diśatu madhupurī prema-bhakti-śriyaiṅ vaḥ* (2)

The radiance of Śrī Mathurā-purī is superior to many millions of moons. The five types of misery beginning with ignorance, which are like powerful warriors perpetuating this raging material existence, are unable to conquer her. By residing there, one is easily freed from the sufferings of material existence. The mystical demigods, being aware of the greatness of residing in Mathurā-purī, are also fearful of doing anything to her inhabitants. The pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which steal the hearts of great sages like Śrī Śuka and Śaunaka, are eternally enacted there. She fulfils all the desires of her worshippers. Even Lord Śiva and the demigods hanker to carry out the duty of being her watchman. Śrī Varāhadeva has sung her glories. May that Śrī Mathurā-purī bestow *prema-bhakti* upon you.

*bijaṁ mukti-taror anartha-paṭalī-nistārakam tārakam
dhāma-prema-rasasya vāñchita-dhurāsainpārakam pārakam
etad yatra nivāsinām udayate cic-chakti-vṛtti-dvayaṁ
mathmātu vyasanāni māthurapurī sā vaḥ śriyaṁ ca kriyāt (3)*

Śrī Mathurā-purī is the seed of the tree of liberation and she delivers one from all *anarthas*. She protects one from all inauspiciousness and is the foundation of *prema-rasa*. She fulfils all desires, thus enabling one to attain complete submission unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *cit-śakti*, which has the functions of giving Kṛṣṇa pleasure and nourishing His pastimes, and which is eternally existent, composed of spiritual consciousness and full of transcendental bliss (*sac-cid-ānanda*), is eternally manifest there. May that Śrī Mathurā-purī eradicate all your sins even to the extent of the subtle body, and endow you with *prema-bhakti*.

*adyāvanti patad-graham kuru kare māye śanair-vijaya
cchatram kañci ghāṇa kāsī purataḥ pādū-yugam dhāraya
nāyodhye bhaja sambhramam stuti-katham nodgāraya dvārake
devīyam bhavatiṣu hanta mathurā dṛṣṭi-prasādam dadhe (4)*

O Avantī (Ujjain), today please pick up the receptacle for chewed betel nut. O Māyāpurī (Haridvāra), you should fan with

a *cāmara*. O Kāñcī, you hold up the umbrella. O Kāśī, stay in front with the wooden sandals ready in your hands. O Ayodhyā, don't feel apprehensive that your service may be rejected. O Dvārakā, don't offer prayers now, for today Mahārāja Śrī Kṛṣṇa's queen, Śrī Mathurā-devī, is pleased with all of you who are her maidservants.⁷

In *Stava-mālā* (*Śrī Vṛndāvanāṣṭaka*), Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has described the glories of Vṛndāvana.

*mukunda-muralī-rava-śravaṇa-phulla-hṛd-ballavī-
kadambaka-karambita-pratī-kadamba-kuñjāntarā
kalinda-giri-nandinī-kamala-kandalāndolinā
sugandhir anilena me śaraṇam astu vṛndāṭavī* (1)

Śrī Vṛndāvana's luxuriant groves of *kadamba* trees abound with *gopīs* whose hearts are greatly delighted upon hearing the melody of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute, and those groves are made even more fragrant due to a gentle breeze carrying the scent of lotus flowers blossoming upon the waters of Śrī Yamunā, the daughter of Mount Kalinda. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*vikuṅṭha-pura-saiśrayād vipinato 'pi niḥśreyasāt
sahasra-guṇitām śriyaṁ praduhatī rasa-śreyasīm
catur-mukha-mukhair api spṛhita-tārṇa-dehodbhavā
jagad-gurubhir-agrimaiḥ śaraṇam astu vṛndāṭavī* (2)

Residence in Śrī Vṛndāvana is far superior to the position of liberation in Vaikuṅṭha, and therefore thousands of times more beneficial. In other words, Śrī Vṛndāvana bestows the priceless treasures of *dāsyā-*, *sakhya-*, *vātsalya-* and *mādhurya-rasas*. Even four-headed Lord Brahmā, the spiritual master of the entire

7. In this verse the seven sacred cities that bestow liberation are being referred to. They are Avantī, Haridvāra (Māyā), Kāñcī, Kāśī, Ayodhyā, Dvārakā and Mathurā. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī here broadcasts the superiority of Mathurā by describing how the other six holy places are engaged as maidservants in the service of Śrī Mathurā-purī.

universe, prays to obtain birth there even as an insignificant blade of grass or a bush. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*anārata-vikasvara-vratati-puñja-puṣpāvali-
visāri-vara-saurabhodgama-ramā-camatkāriṇī
amanda-makaranda-bhṛd-viṭapi-vṛnda-vandī-kṛta-
dvirepha-kula-vanditā śaraṇam astu vṛndāṭavī (3)*

The multitudes of blooming creepers in Vṛndāvana always exude a sweet aroma that extends a great distance and astonishes even Śrī Lakṣmī-devī. Vṛndāvana is eulogised by swarms of buzzing bumblebees hovering about the trees, which emit an abundant shower of nectar from their blossoming flowers. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*kṣaṇadyuti-ghana-śriyor vraja-navīna-yūnoḥ padaiḥ
suvalghubhir alaṅkṛtā lalita-lakṣma-lakṣmī-bharaiḥ
tayor nakhara-maṇḍalī-śikhara-keli-caryocitair
vṛtā-kīśalayāṅkuraiḥ śaraṇam astu vṛndāṭavī (4)*

The entire area of Vraja is marked with charming and artistic symbols, such as the lightning bolt and goad, that have been made by the lotus feet of the eternally youthful lovers, Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Yugala, whose bodily complexions when They meet together resemble a flash of lightning intermingled with a fresh monsoon cloud. That land is always laden with fresh buds and shoots that emulate the beauty of the nails on the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*vrajendra-sakha-nandinī śubhatarādhikāra-kriyā-
prabhāvaja-sukhotsava-sphurita-jaṅgama-sthāvarā
pralamba-damanānuja-dhvanita-vaiśikā-kākali-
rasajña-mṛga-maṇḍalā śaraṇam astu vṛndāṭavī (5)*

In the land of Vṛndāvana, on the order of Śrīmatī Rādhikā – the daughter of Nanda Mahārāja’s intimate friend Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja – Vṛndā Sakhī delights and invigorates both moving and non-moving living entities in order to increase the festival

of divine bliss for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In that land herds of deer wander about, expert at relishing the sweet, melodious sound of the flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the younger brother of Baladeva – the slayer of the Pralamba demon. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*amanda-mudirārbudābhyadhika-mādhurī-medura-
vrajendra-suta-vikṣaṇonnaṭita-nīla-kaṇṭhotkarā
dineśa-suhṛd-ātma-jā-kṛta-nijābhīmānollasā-
latā-khaga-mṛgāṅganā śaraṇam astu vṛndātavī (6)*

In Vṛndāvana the peacocks dance in jubilation, being intoxicated by seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s dark bodily complexion, which resembles a fresh raincloud. Out of deep loving attachment for this land, Śrī Rādhikā, the daughter of the sun-god’s friend Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja, proclaims, “This Vṛndāvana is mine,” thereby greatly delighting the creepers, doe, peahens, female cuckoos and the females of all the species of birds found there (due to the pre-eminence of femininity established by Śrī Vṛndāvaneśvarī Śrīmatī Rādhikā). May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*agaṇya-guṇa-nāgarī-gaṇa-gariṣṭha-gāndharvikā
manoja-raṇa-cāturī-pīśuna-kuñja-puñjjojjvalā
jagat-traya-kalā-guror lalita-lāśya-valgat-pada-
prayoga-vidhi-sākṣiṇī śaraṇam astu vṛndātavī (7)*

The divinely beautiful, splendorous *kuñjas* of Vṛndāvana testify to the cleverness in lovers’ quarrels of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who possesses countless virtues. That land is witness to the captivating dance steps of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is supremely expert in all the arts. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana be my shelter.

*variṣṭha-harī-dāsatā-pada-samṛddha-govardhanā
madhūdvaḥ-vadhū-camatkṛti-nivāsa rāsa-sthalā
agūḍha-gahana-śriyo madhurima-vrajenojjvalā
vrajasya sahajena me śaraṇam astu vṛndātavī (8)*

In Vṛndāvana-dhāma, Śrī Girirāja-Govardhana – having been awarded the extremely rare title of being the topmost servant of Hari by the *gopīs* – is gloriously manifest. In that land is situated the arena of the *rāsa* dance, which thoroughly astonishes the *gopīs* or the queens of Dvārakā like Śrī Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā. Being surrounded by forests of trees full of fragrant flowers, foliage and blossoms, Śrī Vṛndāvana radiates a lustrous splendour glowing with sweetness. May that Śrī Vṛndāvana naturally become my sole shelter.

*idaṁ nikhila niṣkuṭāvali-variṣṭha-vṛndātavī-
gūṇa-smaraṇa-kāri yaḥ paṭhati suṣṭhu padyāṣṭakam
vasan vvasana-mukta-dhīr anīsam atra sad-vāsanaḥ
sa pīta-vasane vaśī ratim avāpya vikrīdati (9)*

If a sinless person who has conquered his senses is intently engaged in the cultivation of unalloyed devotion, and if while residing in Vṛndāvana he lovingly recites this composition that stimulates remembrance of the qualities of Śrī Vṛndāvana, the best of all forests, he will obtain ecstatic love for the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who wears a yellow garment and is accompanied by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and he will become happily immersed in Their pastimes.

(4) Manah-śikṣā-da: Instructing the mind

This composition known as *Manah-śikṣā* offers instructions to the minds of persons who are anxiously desiring to pursue the path of *bhajana*.

(5) Varam: Most excellent

These verses are filled with the most elevated and confidential instructions that were revealed by Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī via the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

(6) Madhurayā-girā-uccaiḥ:

Loudly singing in a melodious voice

One should sing these verses with the proper metre and melody, either alone or accompanied by other faithful *sādhakas*, in a loud voice overflowing with love and intense feeling.

(7) Samadhigata: Thoroughly understood

One should recite these eleven verses with a thorough understanding of their deep and confidential meanings.

*yeṣāṁ sarāga-bhajane vraja-rāja-sūnoḥ
śrī-rūpa śikṣita matānugamanānurāgaḥ
yatnena te bhajana-darpaṇa nāma bhāṣyaṁ
śikṣāda-śloka sahitaṁ prapaṭhantu bhaktyā*

Those who have an intense desire to worship Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala with deep attachment by adopting the methods of *vraja-bhajana* in full accordance with the instructions of *rasa-ācārya* Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī should study *Maṇaḥ-śikṣā* with great love and serious attention to this commentary known as *Bhajana-darpaṇa*.

Thus ends this *Digdarśinī-vṛtti*, the translation and purport of the combined Sanskrit and Bengali commentary known as *Bhajana-darpaṇa* composed by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Glossary

A

ācārya – spiritual preceptor; one who teaches by example.

adharmā – (1) irreligion. (2) failure to carry out one's socio-religious duties prescribed in the scriptures.

aiśvarya-jñāna – knowledge of the Lord's opulence, splendour, magnificence, majesty and supremacy. In regard to *bhakti* this refers to devotion that is inspired by the opulence and majesty of the Lord, especially in His feature as Lord Nārāyaṇa. This type of devotion restricts the intimacy of exchange between the Lord and His devotees.

ananya-bhajana – exclusive or pure devotion; devotion that is unmixed with any other desires; devotion that has no other object than Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

anartha – unwanted desires in the heart that impede one's advancement in spiritual life. *Anarthas* are of four types: (i) *duṣkṛtoṭtha* – those arising from past sins; (ii) *sukṛtoṭtha* – those arising from previous pious activities; (iii) *aparādhotoṭtha* – those arising from offences; and (iv) *bhakti uttha* – those arising in relation to one's devotion.

anartha-nivṛtti – elimination of unwanted desires in the heart. This is the third stage in the development of the creeper of devotion and it occurs by the influence of devotee association (*sādhū-saṅga*) and performance of devotional activity (*bhajana-kriyā*).

anubhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*. The actions that display or reveal the emotions situated within the heart are called *anubhāvas*. The *anubhāvas* are thirteen in number: (i) *nṛtya* (dancing), (ii) *viluṭhita* (rolling on the ground), (iii) *gīta* (singing), (iv) *krośana* (loud crying), (v) *tanu-moṭana* (writhing of the body), (vi) *huṅkāra* (roaring), (vii) *jṛmbhaṇa* (yawning), (viii) *śvāsa-bhūmā* (breathing heavily), (ix) *loka-anapekṣitā* (giving up concern for public image), (x) *lālāsṛāva* (salivating), (xi) *aṭṭahāsa* (loud laughter), (xii) *ghūrṇā* (staggering about) and (xiii) *hikkā* (a fit of hiccups).

anurāga – (1) attachment in general. (2) spiritual attachment. (3) an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. In *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.146) *anurāga* has been defined: “Although one regularly meets with and is well acquainted with the beloved, the ever-fresh sentiment of intense attachment causes the beloved to be newly experienced at every moment, as if one has never before had any experience of such a person. The attachment that inspires such a feeling is known as *anurāga*.”

apūrvā – unprecedented, extraordinary, unparalleled.

āsakti – attachment. This especially refers to attachment for the Lord and His eternal associates. *Āsakti* occurs when one’s affection for *bhajana* leads to a direct and deep attachment for the person who is the object of that *bhajana*. This is the sixth stage in the development of the creeper of devotion and it is awakened upon the maturing of one’s taste for *bhajana*.

ātmā – the soul.

B

Bhagavān – the Supreme Lord; the Personality of Godhead. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (6.5.72–4) Bhagavān is defined as follows: “*suddhe mahāvibhūty-ākhye pare brahmaṇi varttate maitreya bhagavac-chabdaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇe; sambhartteti tathā bharttā bha-kāro ’rtha-dvayānvitaḥ netā gamayitā sraṣṭā ga-kārārthas tathā mune; aiśvaryasya samagrasya dharmasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ jñāna-vairāgyayoś caiva ṣaṇṇām bhaga itiṅganā* – the word *bhagavat* is used to describe the supreme Brahman who possesses all opulence, who is completely pure and who is the cause of all causes. In the word *bhagavat* the syllable *bha* has two meanings: one who maintains all living entities and one who is the support of all living entities. Similarly the syllable *ga* has two meanings: the creator and one who causes all living entities to obtain the results of fruitive activity and scholastic pursuit. Complete opulence, religiosity, fame, beauty, knowledge and renunciation are known as *bhaga*, fortune.” The suffix *vat* means “possessing”. Thus one who possesses these six fortunes is known as Bhagavān.

bhajana – (1) the word *bhajana* is derived from the verbal root *bhaj*, which is defined in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* (*Pūrva-khaṇḍa* 231.3): “*bhaj ityeṣa vai dhātuḥ sevāyām parikīrtitaḥ tasmāt sevā budhaiḥ proktā bhaktiḥ sādhana-bhūyasī* – the verbal root *bhaj* is used specifically in the sense of service. Therefore, when *sādhana* is performed with the consciousness of being a servant, it is called *bhakti*.” According to this verse, loving devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is called *bhakti*. Such service is the intrinsic attribute of *bhakti*, or *bhajana*. Therefore whatever services are performed in this consciousness may be referred to as *bhajana*. (2) in the general sense *bhajana* refers to

spiritual practices; especially hearing, chanting and meditating upon the holy names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

bhakta – a devotee.

bhakti – the word *bhakti* comes from the root *bhaj*, which means “to serve” (see *bhajana*). Therefore the primary meaning of the word *bhakti* is to render service. The performance of activities that are meant exclusively for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that are done in a favourable spirit saturated with love, that are devoid of all other desires, and that are not covered by fruitive activity (*karma*) and scholastic pursuit (*jñāna*) is called *bhakti*.

bhāva – (1) spiritual emotions, love, sentiment; a particular mood of love wherein the devotee serves Kṛṣṇa in the attitude of a servant, friend, parent or lover. (2) an intensified stage of *prema*, which in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* has been equated with *mahābhāva*. In *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.154) *bhāva* is described: When *anurāga* reaches a special state of intensity it is known as *bhāva* or *mahābhāva*. This state of intensity has three characteristics: (i) *anurāga* reaches the state of *sva-samvedya*, which means that it becomes the object of its own experience, (ii) it becomes *prakāśita*, radiantly manifest, which means that all eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* become prominently displayed, and (iii) it attains the state of *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*, which means that the active ingredient of this intensified state of *anurāga* transmits the experience of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s *bhāva* to whomever may be present and qualified to receive it. This includes both the practising (*sādhaka*) and perfected (*siddha*) devotees.

bhāva-bhakti – the initial stage of perfection in devotion. A stage of *bhakti* in which *śuddha-sattva*, the essence of the

Lord's internal potency consisting of spiritual knowledge and bliss, is transmitted into the heart of the practising devotee from the hearts of the Lord's eternal associates where it softens the heart by different kinds of taste. *Bhāva-bhakti* is the first sprout of *prema*, pure love of God.

bimba – the red gourd.

Brahman – the impersonal, all-pervading feature of the Lord, which is devoid of attributes and qualities.

brāhmaṇa – one of the four *varṇas*, or castes, in the *varṇāśrama* system; one who is a member of that caste, such as a priest or teacher.

C

cāmara – a fan made of the hair of a yak's tail, employed especially as part of the paraphernalia offered to the deity.

campaka – the fragrant yellowish-white flower of the *Michelia campaca* tree.

caraṇāmṛta – nectar from the feet of the Lord. Substances such as milk, honey, yoghurt, clarified butter and rose water are used to bathe the feet of the deity. The nectar that is collected from that is known as *caraṇāmṛta*.

cātaka – a particular type of bird. The characteristic of this bird is that it drinks only the drops of water falling directly from the clouds and then only during the constellation known as *svāti-nakṣatra*. This bird will die before it accepts any other type of water. The *gopīs* are often compared to *cātaka* birds because they live only to see Kṛṣṇa, and without Him they are on the verge of giving up their lives.

cintāmaṇi – a fabulous gem that can yield all that one desires. The word *cinta* means “to think” and *maṇi* means “gem”.

Therefore this gem can produce anything one can think of. The earth in the spiritual world is made of *cintāmaṇi*.

cit-śakti – the internal potency of the Lord (see ***svarūpa-śakti***).

D

darśana – seeing, meeting, visiting with, beholding.

dāśya – (1) one of the five primary relationships with the Lord that is established in the heart when one is in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love for or attraction to the Lord that is expressed in the mood of a servant. (2) in this world the general relationship of practising devotees with the Lord is known as *kṛṣṇa-dāśya* or *bhagavad-dāśya*. This means simply to recognise that one's true identity is to be a servant of the Lord.

devas – higher beings situated in the heavenly planets who are entrusted with specific powers for the purpose of universal administration; celestial deities.

dhāma – a holy place of pilgrimage; the places wherein the Lord appears and enacts His transcendental pastimes.

dharma – (1) the natural, characteristic function of a thing; that which cannot be separated from its nature. (2) religion in general. (3) the socio-religious duties prescribed in the scriptures for different classes of persons in the *varṇāśrama* system. (4) material religiosity.

dikṣā-guru – initiating spiritual master. One who gives a *mantra* in accordance with the regulations of scripture to a qualified candidate for the purpose of worshipping the Lord and realising the Lord through that *mantra* is known as a *dikṣā-guru*.

dikṣā-mantra – the *mantras* given by the spiritual master at

the time of initiation. These *mantras* include the *mahā-mantra*, *brahmā-gāyatrī*, *guru-mantra*, *guru-gāyatrī*, *gaura-mantra*, *gaura-gāyatrī*, *gopāla-mantra* and *kāma-gāyatrī*. The *guru*'s internal mood of service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is transmitted through the medium of these *mantras*. This is indicated in the following verse from *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (*Anuccheda* 237): “*yo mantraḥ sa guruḥ sākṣāt yo guruḥ sa hariḥ svayam gurur yasya bhavet tuṣṭas tasya tuṣṭo hariḥ svayam* – the *mantra* (that is given by the spiritual master) is itself the *guru*, and the *guru* is directly the Supreme Lord Hari. He with whom the spiritual master is pleased also obtains the pleasure of Śrī Hari Himself.” These *mantras* are invested with transcendental knowledge of the Lord's form and one's specific relationship with the Lord.

Dvādaśī – the twelfth day of the lunar fortnight.

E

Ekādaśī – a fast observed on the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight.

G

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava sampradāya – the school of Vaiṣṇavism following in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava ācāryas – prominent teachers in the line of Lord Caitanya.

gopīs – the young cowherd maidens of Vraja, headed by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of amorous love. This may also refer to the elderly *gopīs*, headed by Mother Yaśodā, who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of parental affection.

goṣṭha – an abode for cattle, a cow-pen, a stable or station for animals, a place where cows are kept. This may also refer to the cowherd village of Vraja where Kṛṣṇa performs His pastimes.

gōsvāmī – one who is the master of his senses, a title for those in the renounced order of life. This often refers to the renowned followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu who adopted the lifestyle of mendicants.

govardhana-sīlā – a stone from Govardhana Hill that, being non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s body, is as worshipful as Kṛṣṇa Himself.

guñjā-mālā – a necklace of *guñjā*, which are small, bright-red seeds with a black patch on the top. *Guñjā* berries are said to be representative of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

guru-sevā – to render service to one’s spiritual master. In the *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (*Anuccheda* 237) Jīva Gosvāmī establishes that by constant and distinguished service to one’s spiritual master, one easily surmounts all obstacles that cannot be overcome by any other method. Only by such service can one obtain the supreme mercy of the Lord.

H

hari-kathā – narrations of the holy names, form, qualities and pastimes of the Supreme Lord Hari.

harināma – the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. Unless accompanied by the word *sankīrtana*, it usually refers to the practice of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* softly to oneself on a strand of *tulasī* beads.

hlādinī – this refers to *svarūpa-śakti* that is predominated by *hlādinī* (see *svarūpa-śakti*). *Hlādinī* is the potency that relates

to the *ānanda*, or bliss, aspect of the Supreme Lord. Although the Supreme Lord is the embodiment of all pleasure, *hlādinī* is that potency by which He relishes transcendental bliss and causes others to taste bliss.

J

japa – very soft utterance or whispering of the holy name of the Lord to oneself; usually refers to the practice of chanting the holy name on *tulasī* beads.

jīva – the eternal individual living entity, who in the conditioned state of material existence assumes a material body in any of the innumerable species of life.

jñāna – (1) knowledge. (2) knowledge of the soul’s separate-ness from matter and its identity with Brahman. This type of knowledge leads to impersonal liberation.

K

kājala – an ointment used to darken the edges of the eyelids.

Kali-yuga – the present age of quarrel and hypocrisy, which began five thousand years ago.

kalpadruma – a tree which fulfils all desires. The word *kalpa* means “to invent, imagine, create or produce”, and the word *druma* means “tree”. Therefore, whatever one can imagine, this tree can produce. The trees in the spiritual world are of this nature. They can supply the devotees with anything they desire for the service of the Lord.

karma – (1) any activity performed in the course of material existence. (2) reward-seeking activities; pious activities leading to material gain in this world or the heavenly planets after death. (3) fate; former acts that lead to inevitable results.

karma-kāṇḍa – a division of the Vedas that relates to the performance of ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites directed towards material benefits or liberation.

kārttika-vrata – spiritual vows undertaken in the holy month of Kārttika (October–November).

kāyastha – a particular caste within Indian society that is generally quite wealthy and often engaged in important government services.

kinnara – the word *kinnara* comes from the Sanskrit “*kim nara* – is it a human being?” The *kinnaras* are living entities who have facial and bodily features similar to human beings, but who reside in Bhuvanloka, the region of space between Earth and the heavenly planets.

kīrtana – congregational singing of the Lord’s holy names that is sometimes accompanied with music. This may also refer to loud individual chanting of the holy name as well as oral descriptions of the Lord’s names, form, qualities, associates and pastimes. *Kīrtana* is one of the nine most important limbs of devotion.

kṛṣṇa-kathā – narrations of the holy names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

kuñja – a grove or bower; a natural shady retreat, the sides and roof of which are formed mainly by trees and climbing plants.

L

līlā – divine sportive pastimes. The Lord’s activities whether in the matter of the creation of the material world or in the matter of transcendental exchanges of love with His devotees are never under the influence of material nature. They are all manifestations of His self-willed potencies and therefore they

are known as *lilā*, or divine sport. These pastimes are heard, described and meditated upon by devotees as part of the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*.

M

mādanākhyā-mahābhāva – *prema* in its supreme feature; the highest stage of *mahābhāva*. *Mādana* is described in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.219): “That particular aspect of *prema* that is the condensed essence of the *hlādinī* potency and in which all the other stages of *prema* from *sneha* up to the *modana* aspect of *adhiruḍha-mahābhāva* meet together and enjoy supreme exultation, is known as *mādana*. This is the very pinnacle of *prema*, beyond which there is nothing superior. This type of *prema* is eternally present in Śrīmatī Rādhikā and no one else. Sometimes She exhibits this *prema* externally and sometimes She conceals it within Her heart.”

mādhura-rati – the permanent devotional sentiment (*sthāyī-bhāva*) of the devotees who serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mellow of amorous love (*mādhurya-rasa*).

mādhurya – sweetness or beauty. In regard to *bhakti*, this refers to devotion that is inspired by attraction to the Lord’s sweet and intimate feature as a beautiful young cowherd boy. This type of devotion allows for the greatest exchange of love between the Lord and His devotees.

mādhurya-rasa – one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa established in the heart when one is in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love or attachment towards Kṛṣṇa that is expressed in the mood of a lover. This mood is eternally present in the *gopīs* of Vraja.

mahā-bhāgavata – a great devotee (see *sādhū*).

mahābhāva – the highest stage of *prema*, divine love. In *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.154) *mahābhāva* is defined thus: “When *anurāga* reaches a special state of intensity, it is known as *bhāva* or *mahābhāva*. This stage of intensity has three characteristics: (i) *anurāga* reaches the state of *sva-samvedya*, which means that it becomes the object of its own experience; (ii) it becomes *prakāśīta*, radiantly manifest, which means that all eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* become prominently displayed; and (iii) it attains the state of *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*, which means that the active ingredient of the intensified state of *anurāga* transmits the experience of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s *bhāva* to whomever may be present and qualified to receive it.”

māna – an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.96): “When *sneha* reaches exultation, thus causing one to experience the sweetness of the beloved in ever-new varieties, yet externally takes on a crooked feature, it is known as *māna*.”

mañjarī – all the *gopī* friends of Śrīmatī Rādhikā who intensify the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda may, in a general sense, be referred to as *sakhīs*. But according to the types of service they perform they may be divided into two groups: (i) *sakhīs* and (ii) *mañjarīs*. Those who, like Śrīmatī Rādhikā, are independent in their service are called *sakhīs*, such as Lalitā and Viśākhā. Those whose service follows in the wake of Lalitā, Viśākhā and other intimate friends of Śrī Rādhā are known as *mañjarīs*. These include Rūpa Mañjarī, Rati Mañjarī, Anaṅga Mañjarī and others. They are a little younger than Rādhikā and because they are in the mood of maidservants they perform intimate services which even Lalitā and Viśākhā

cannot perform. They always favour Rādhikā and therefore they are known as *asama-sneha* or *rādhikādhika-sneha*. They fit into the categories of *nitya-sakhīs* or *prāṇa-sakhīs* (see *sakhī*).

mañjarī-bhāva – love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that is expressed in the mood of an intimate maidservant of Śrī Rādhā is known as *mañjarī-bhāva*. The *mañjarīs* have no independent sense of happiness and distress. When Śrī Rādhā is pleased they feel happy, and when She is distressed they feel morose. They have no independent desire to meet with Kṛṣṇa. Even if Kṛṣṇa desires to please them by uniting with them, they remain indifferent to His advances. The *mañjarīs* internally experience the transformations of Śrī Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa through their mood of intimate service to Her, and not by independently meeting with Kṛṣṇa. This type of selfless love is eternally present in the *rāgātmikā* associates of the Lord such as Rūpa Mañjarī, and it is the highest goal for *sādhakas* of this world.

mantra – an incantation composed of the names of the Lord that addresses any individual deity. *Mantras* are given to a disciple by a spiritual master at the time of initiation.

māyā – illusion; that which is not; the Lord's external potency, which influences the living entities to accept the false egoism of being independent enjoyers of this material world.

māyāvādī – one who advocates the doctrine of illusion, a theory advocated by the impersonalist followers of Śaṅkarācārya that holds that the Lord's form, this material world and the individual existence of the living entities is *māyā*, or false.

mīmāṃsā – a philosophical doctrine that has two divisions: (i) *pūrva-* or *karma-mīmāṃsā*, founded by Jaimini, which

advocates that by ritualistic worship, God is obliged to supply the result; and (ii) *uttar-mīmāṃsā*, founded by Bādarāyana, which deals with the nature of Brahman.

mokṣa – liberation from material existence.

mukti – liberation from material existence.

N

nāma – the holy name of the Lord, which is chanted by devotees as part of the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*.

nāyikā – heroine. Amongst all the *gopīs* of Vraja, those who have union with Kṛṣṇa directly are known as *nāyikās*. All the *yūtheśvarīs*, or group leaders, are also *nāyikās*. There are other types of *gopīs* who sometimes act as *nāyikās* at the prompting of their *yūtheśvarīs*.

niṣṭhā – firm faith; steadiness in one’s devotional practices. This is the fourth stage in the development of the creeper of devotion. It occurs after the elimination of a significant portion of one’s *anarthas*.

P

paravyoma – the spiritual sky with innumerable spiritual planets, each presided over by Lord Nārāyaṇa or His various expansions.

praṇaya – an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.108): “When *māna* assumes a feature of unrestrained intimacy known as *viśrambha*, learned authorities refer to it as *praṇaya*.” The word *viśrambha* used in this verse means “complete confidence devoid of any restraint or formality”. This confidence causes one to consider one’s life,

mind, intelligence, body and possessions to be one in all respects with the life, mind, intelligence and body of the beloved.

prasāda – literally means “mercy”; especially refers to the remnants of food offered to the deity; may also refer to the remnants of other articles offered to the deity such as incense, flowers, garlands and clothing.

prema – (1) love for Kṛṣṇa that is extremely concentrated, that completely melts the heart and that gives rise to a deep sense of possessiveness in relation to the Lord (this is the general definition of *prema* given in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.1)). (2) when *rati* becomes firmly rooted and unchecked by any obstacle it is known as *prema*. When *prema* is augmented it is gradually transformed into *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *bhāva*. When some cause arises that could conceivably ruin the relationship between the lover and beloved and yet it remains completely unaffected, such an intimate loving bond is known as *prema*. (*Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.59, 63)).

prema-bhakti – a stage of *bhakti* that is characterised by the appearance of *prema*; the perfectional stage of devotion.

prema-dharma – the religion of divine love.

priya-sakhī – a dear girlfriend.

R

rādhā-bhāva – the particular mood of ecstasy or divine loving sentiments that Śrīmatī Rādhikā experiences in Her mood of unalloyed service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as *rādhā-bhāva*. The happiness that She experiences in the position of being the receptacle of love exceeds the happiness that Kṛṣṇa experiences as the object of love. Anxious to taste this type of love,

Kṛṣṇa takes the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, endowed with the sentiments and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

rāga – (1) a deep attachment that is permeated by spontaneous and intense absorption in the object of one’s affection. The primary characteristic of *rāga* is a deep and overpowering thirst for the object of one’s affection. The desire for water is called thirst. When the body is deprived of water this thirst arises. The greater the thirst the greater the longing for water. When this thirst reaches the point that without water, one can no longer maintain the body, it is known as an overpowering thirst. Similarly, when the loving thirst to please the object of one’s affection becomes so intense that in the absence of such service one is on the verge of giving up his life, it is known as *rāga*. This *rāga* is the basis of the *rāgātmikā* devotees’ *bhakti*. (2) an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described as follows in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.126): “When *praṇaya* reaches exultation, thus causing even extreme misery to be experienced within the heart as happiness, it is known as *rāga*.” In Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary on this verse, he explains that if by accepting some misery there is a chance of meeting with Kṛṣṇa, then that misery becomes a source of great happiness. And where happiness affords one no opportunity to meet with Kṛṣṇa, that happiness becomes the source of great distress. When such a state is experienced, it is known as *rāga*.

rāga-mārga – the path of *rāga* or spontaneous attachment (see *rāgānuga-bhakti*).

rāgānuga-bhakti – a stage of *bhakti* that is motivated by spontaneous attraction or love; *bhakti* that follows in the wake

of the *rāgātmikā* nature present in the hearts of the Lord's eternal associates in Vraja.

rāgātmikā – one in whose heart there naturally exists a deep spontaneous desire to love and serve the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa; one whose devotion is permeated with *rāga*. This specifically refers to the eternal residents of Vraja.

rasa – (1) the spiritual transformation of the heart that takes place when the perfectional state of love for Kṛṣṇa, known as *rati*, is converted into liquid emotions by combination with various types of transcendental ecstasies. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.1.5) *bhakti-rasa* is defined: “When the *sthāyibhāva*, or the permanent emotion of the heart in one of the five primary relationships of neutrality, servitude, friendship, parental affection or amorous love, mixes with *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*, and produces an extraordinary taste in the heart of the devotee, it is called *bhakti-rasa*.” This explanation of *bhakti* as *rasa* is the unique contribution of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. The theory of *rasa* was well known even at his time, originating from Bharata Muni's *Nāṭya-śāstra*, the famous work on Sanskrit poetics and drama. Rūpa Gosvāmī has explained how *rasa* is generated exactly in accordance with Bharata Muni's definition. Yet he has explained the experience of *rasa* in terms of devotional love for Kṛṣṇa, whereas the common view is that *rasa* applies to the emotional experience of poetry or drama. Thus there is both a transcendental and secular conception of *rasa*. The definitions that follow give some insight into the ordinary conception of *rasa* as it applies to drama and poetry. (2) the state of aesthetic consciousness; the word *rasa* primarily means “taste, flavour,

savour or relish”, but metaphorically it means the emotional experience of poetry or drama; the taste or character of a poetic or dramatic work, the feeling or sentiment prevailing in it; the aesthetic experience on witnessing a dramatic performance or reading or listening to a poem; the spectator identifies with a particular emotion, such as being the hero or heroine, and that is known as the dominant emotion (*sthāyibhāva*). When that emotion is aroused by a skilful dramatic performance and combines with other sentiments, it is consummated into a relishable sentiment known as *rasa*.

rāsa-lilā – this is described by Jīva Gosvāmī in his commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.29.1): “When an artistic dancer dances with many female dancers who are moving in a circle, learned authorities refer to it as *hallīśa*, a circular dance. This *rāsa* is not found even in the heavenly planets so what to speak of the Earth planet.” Śrīdhara Svāmī (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.2)) has defined it as follows: “A special type of dance performance with many female dancers is known as *rāsa*.” Sanātana Gosvāmī has also defined it (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.2)): “When many male and female dancers dance together in a circle and each pair embraces and clasps each others’ hands while dancing, it is known as *rāsa*.”

rasika – one who is able to relish the mellows of devotion within his heart.

rati – (1) attachment, fondness for. (2) a stage in the development of *bhakti* that is synonymous with *bhāva* (see **bhāva-bhakti**).

ruci – taste. The awakening of taste for hearing, chanting and other such devotional practices means that one has a greater liking for these activities than for any type of material activity.

At this stage one's attraction to spiritual matters exceeds one's attraction to material things. This is the fifth stage in the development of the creeper of devotion. It occurs after one has acquired steadiness in *bhajana*.

rūpānuga – a follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; devotion that follows the particular devotional sentiment cherished within the heart of Śrī Rūpa.

S

sādhaka – one who follows a spiritual discipline to achieve a specific goal; especially a practitioner of the devotional path.

sādhana – the method one adopts in order to obtain a specific goal is called *sādhana*. Without *sādhana* one cannot obtain *sādhya*, the goal of one's practice. There are many different types of *sādhana* corresponding to various goals. Those who desire material enjoyment adopt the path of *karma* as their *sādhana*. Those who desire liberation adopt the path of *jñāna* as their *sādhana*. And those who aspire for the eternal loving service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa adopt the path of *bhakti* as their *sādhana*. The *sādhana* of *bhakti* refers to spiritual practices such as hearing, chanting and so on.

sādhana-bhakti – (1) the practice stage of devotion. (2) a stage of *bhakti* in which the various spiritual disciplines performed for the satisfaction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are undertaken through the medium of the senses for the purpose of bringing about the manifestation of *bhāva*, or spiritual love of God.

sādhū – although in a general sense this may be translated as a saintly person or a devotee, it refers to devotees who are highly advanced. Such devotees are also known as *mahat* (great souls) or *bhāgavata* (devotees who embody the characteristics

of Bhagavān). Their symptoms are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.5.2–3): “*mahāntas te sama-cittāḥ praśāntāḥ vimanyavaḥ suhr̥daḥ sādhaso ye. ye vā mayīse kṛta-sauhr̥dārthā janesu dehambhara-vārtikeṣu gr̥heṣu jāyātmajārātimatsu na prīti-yuktā yāvad-arthās ca loke* – the great souls are endowed with the following qualities. They see all living entities with equal vision. They are fully peaceful due to their intelligence being firmly fixed in the Lord. They are devoid of anger. They are well-wishing friends to all living entities. They are *sādhas*, meaning that they never consider others’ faults. They are firmly established in a loving relationship with the Supreme Lord, and they consider that love to be the supreme object of attainment. They do not consider any other object to be worthy of interest. They have no attachment for persons who are absorbed in material enjoyment, nor for wife, children, wealth or home. They have no desire to accumulate wealth beyond what is necessary to maintain their body for the service of the Lord.”

sādhu-saṅga – the association of highly advanced devotees who possess the qualities described above. The word *sādhu-saṅga* does not mean merely to be in the proximity of advanced devotees. It means to seek them out, to remain with them, to offer them obeisances, to serve them as far as possible, to hear spiritual instructions from them, to perform spiritual practices under their direction, to follow in the footsteps of their behaviour, and to conduct one’s life according to their instructions. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.91) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī specifically defines what type of *sādhu-saṅga* we should seek out – *sajātīyāśaye snigdhe sādhasu saṅgaḥ svato vare*. He says that we should associate with devotees who are significantly

more advanced than ourselves, who are soft-hearted and who are established in the mood of service to Kṛṣṇa for which we aspire. This is the first development of the creeper of devotion after its initial inception in the form of faith.

sahajiyā – a section of so-called spiritualists who consider the stages of advanced devotion to be easily attained and therefore imitate the symptoms of those stages.

sakhī – the girlfriends of Śrīmatī Rādhikā are described in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (4.50–4): “The beautiful young maidens of Vraja in the most exalted group of Śrīmatī Rādhikā all have charming eyebrows, they are decorated with all-auspicious qualities, and they always attract Śrī Mādhava by the captivating transformations of their youthful amorous sentiments. These *sakhīs* of Vṛndāvaneśvarī are of five types:

- (i) *sakhī* – Kusumikā, Vindhya, Dhaniṣṭhā and others
- (ii) *nitya-sakhī* – Kastūrikā, Maṇi Mañjarī and others
- (iii) *prāṇa-sakhī* – Śaśimukhī, Vāsantī, Lāsikā and others
- (iv) *priyasakhī* – Kuraṅgākṣī, Sumadhyā, Madanālasā, Kamalā, Mādhurī, Mañjukesī, Kandarpa-sundarī, Mādhavī, Mālatī, Kāmalatā, Śaśikalā and others
- (v) *parama-preṣṭha-sakhī* – Lalitā, Viśākhā, Campakalatā, Citrā, Tuṅgavidyā, Indulekhā, Raṅgadevī and Sudevī.”

The *sakhīs*, *nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* are said to be almost equal in form and nature to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that this means they are almost equal in *prema*, beauty, auspicious qualities and so on, not that they are equal in all respects. If they were equal in all respects they would attain to the position of *priya-sakhīs* and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs*. He says that although the *sakhīs* are of five types, they are further divided into two categories: (i) *sama-*

sneha – those who have equal affection for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; and (ii) *asama-sneha* – those who display greater affection either for Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa.

The *sakhīs* have greater affection for Kṛṣṇa. The *nitya-sakhīs* and *prāṇa-sakhīs* have greater affection for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. The *priya-sakhīs* and *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* have equal affection for both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Equal affection means sometimes they display greater affection for Śrī Rādhā and sometimes for Kṛṣṇa. When Śrī Rādhā is kept waiting by Kṛṣṇa and finally He shows up with signs of having been with another lover, Rādhā is in a morose and scornful state known as *khaṇḍitā*. At that time the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* display greater affection for Śrī Rādhā. When Kṛṣṇa comes in a humble mood, falls at the feet of Rādhikā and begs forgiveness, yet She does not give up Her jealous anger, the *parama-preṣṭha-sakhīs* take the side of Kṛṣṇa. They cannot tolerate the distress of either Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa and when they see that one is the cause of the other's distress, they become inclined towards the one who is forlorn.

sakhya – one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa that is established in the heart when one is in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love or attachment for the Lord that is expressed in the mood of a friend.

samarthā-rati – the *gopīs'* *rati* for Kṛṣṇa is known as *samartha-rati*. The permanent or predominant emotion of the heart that determines one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa is known variously as *sthāyibhāva* and also as *kṛṣṇa-rati*, or love for Kṛṣṇa. This *kṛṣṇa-rati* is of different types according to the devotee's relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs'* *rati* is defined in *Ujjvala-nīlmaṇi* (14.52–3): “The desire for amorous union,

which has attained oneness with the very nature of *rati* itself and which is thus distinguished from *sādhāraṇī-rati* (the *rati* of Kubjā) and *samañjasā-rati* (the *rati* of the queens of Dvārakā) is known as *samarthā-rati*. By even a trace appearance of this *rati*, arising out of the *gopīs*' very nature without any outward impetus, or by even the slightest contact of anything related to Kṛṣṇa, all obstacles such as family, religion, gravity and shyness are forgotten. This *rati* is so highly condensed that no trace of any other mood can penetrate it.”

sambandha-jñāna – knowledge regarding the mutual relationship between the Lord, the living entities and the material energy. The word *sambandha* means “connection”, “relationship” and “binding”. The living entities are eternally and inseparably connected to the Supreme Lord. Therefore He is the true object of relationship. The general relationship between the living entities and the Supreme Lord is one of servant and served. However, in the perfectional stage of *bhakti* one becomes established in a specific relationship with the Lord either as a servant, friend, parent or beloved.

sampradāya – a line of disciplic succession; a particular system of religious teaching. According to the *Padma Purāṇa*, in the age of Kali there are four authorised lines of Vaiṣṇava disciplic succession: “*ataḥ kalau bhaviṣyanti catvāraḥ sampradāyinaḥ śrī-brahma-rudra-sanakā vaiṣṇavāḥ kṣiti-pāvanāḥ* – in the age of Kali four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* will purify the Earth. These are known as the Śrī (Lakṣmī), Brahmā, Rudra and Sanaka (Catuḥsana) *sampradāyas*.” These *sampradāyas* are renowned by the names of the *ācāryas* who established their doctrines in recent times: “*rāmānujaṁ śrīḥ svīcakre madhvācāryaṁ caturmukhaḥ śrī-viṣṇusvāmināṁ rudro nimbādityaṁ catuḥsanaḥ* –

Śrī, (Lakṣmī-devī) accepted Rāmānuja; Caturmukha Brahmā accepted Madhvācārya; Rudra accepted Viṣṇusvāmī; and Catuḥsana, the four Kumāras, accepted Nimbāditya as the respective heads of their *sampradāyas*.” Although Śrī Caitanya is accepted as belonging to the Madhva *sampradāya*, His line is distinguished as the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* because He is the Supreme Lord Himself and He presented the highest conceptions of love of God that were previously unknown to any of the *sampradāyas*.

śānta – the mood of neutrality, one of the five primary relationships with the Lord that is established in the heart when one is in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*.

sāttvika-bhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*; eight symptoms of spiritual ecstasy arising exclusively from the state of unalloyed goodness (*viśuddha-sattva*), or in other words, when the heart is overwhelmed by emotions in connection with the primary or secondary forms of *rati*. The eight symptoms are as follows: (i) *stambha* (becoming stunned), (ii) *sveda* (perspiration), (iii) *romāñca* (standing of the hairs on end), (iv) *svara-bhaṅga* (faltering of the voice), (v) *kampa* (trembling), (vi) *vaivarṇa* (pallor or change of colour), (vii) *aśru* (tears) and (viii) *pralaya* (loss of consciousness or fainting).

sevā – service, attendance on, reverence, devotion to.

siddha – (1) realised or perfected; liberated souls who reside in the spiritual world. (2) a class of semi-divine beings who possess the eight supernatural mystic perfections and reside in Bhuvanloka, the atmosphere between the Earth and heaven.

śikṣā-guru – the instructing spiritual master, from whom one receives instructions about how to progress on the path of *bhajana*.

smārta – an orthodox *brāhmaṇa*. This commonly refers to one who rigidly adheres to the Smṛti (in particular the scriptures that delineate the codes of religious behaviour), being overly attached to the external rituals without comprehending the underlying essence of the scriptures.

Smṛti – (1) that which is remembered. (2) the body of sacred literature that is remembered (in contradistinction to Śruti, what is directly heard from or revealed to the sages). These include the Purāṇas and the scriptures that delineate the path of *dharma*, such as *Manu-saṁhitā*.

sneha – an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.79): “When *prema* ascends to its ultimate limit, intensifies one’s perception of the object of love, and melts the heart, it is known as *sneha*.”

śraddhā – faith. This refers to faith in the statements of the scriptures that is awakened after accumulating pious devotional activities over many births. Such faith is aroused in the association of saintly persons and it is the external manifestation of the seed of the creeper of devotion. The inner essence of that seed is the conception that is planted in the heart of the disciple to serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in a particular capacity.

śṛṅgāra-rasa – another name for *mādhurya-rasa*, the devotional sentiment that is a transformation of love in the mood of amorous attraction.

Śruti – (1) that which is heard. (2) infallible knowledge that was received by Brahmā or by the great sages in the beginning of creation and that descends in disciplic succession from them. (3) the original four Vedas (also known as the *nigamas*) and the Upaniṣads.

sthāyibhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *bhakti-rasa*; the permanent sentiment, or *mukhya-rati*, in one of the five primary relationships of *śānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* or *mādhurya*. This also refers to the dominant sentiment in the seven secondary mellows, or *gauṇa-rati*, of laughter, wonder, heroism, compassion, anger, fear and disgust.

svāminī – in a general sense this is an address that a female maidservant might use to refer to her mistress or proprietress. The *mañjarīs* very affectionately address Śrī Rādhā in this way to indicate their dearest intimate relationship with Her.

svarūpa – (1) form, identity, nature. (2) the eternal constitutional nature and identity of the self that is realised in the stage of *bhāva*.

svarūpa-śakti – the Lord’s divine potency is known as *svarūpa-śakti*. It is called *svarūpa-śakti* because it is situated in the Lord’s form. This potency is *cinmaya*, fully conscious, and thus it is the counterpart and antithesis of matter. Consequently it is also known as *cit-śakti*, or potency endowed with consciousness. Because this potency is intimately connected with the Lord, being situated in His form, it is further known as *antaraṅga-śakti*, or internal potency. Because it is superior to His marginal and external potencies both in form and glory, it is known as *para-śakti*, or superior potency. Thus, by its qualities, this potency is known by different names – *svarūpa-śakti*, *cit-śakti*, *antaraṅga-śakti* and *para-śakti*.

T

tāmbula – betel-leaf; a preparation of betel-leaves with lime, catechu, arecanut and other spices, which is chewed as a refreshment.

taṭastha-śakti – the Lord’s marginal potency comprised of innumerable, infinitesimal living entities.

tilaka – clay markings worn on the forehead and other parts of the body by Vaiṣṇavas signifying their devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

tulasī – a sacred plant whose leaves, blossoms and wood are used by Vaiṣṇavas in the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

V

vaidhī – a stage of *bhakti* that is prompted by the rules and prohibitions of the scriptures.

Vaikuṅṭha – the spiritual world. The majestic realm of the spiritual world that is predominated by Lord Nārāyaṇa and His various expansions.

Vaiṣṇava – a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

varṇāśrama-dharma – the Vedic social system, which organises society into four occupational divisions (*varṇas*) and four stages of life (*āśramas*).

vātsalya – one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa that is established in the heart when one is in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love or attachment for the Lord expressed in the mood of a parent.

vibhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*; that in and by which *rati* is stimulated and caused to be tasted is called *vibhāva*. *Vibhāva* is of two kinds: *ālabhana* (the support) and *uddīpana* (the stimulus). He for whom *rati* is aroused is called *viṣayālabhana* (the object of *rati*) and one in whom *rati* is aroused is called *āśrayālabhana* (the receptacle of *rati*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *viṣayālabhana* of *kṛṣṇa-rati* and the devotees are the *āśrayālabhana*. *Uddīpana-vibhāva* refers to those things

which stimulate remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, such as His dress and ornaments, the spring season, the bank of the Yamunā, forest groves, cows, peacocks and so on.

Vraja-dhāma – the eighty-four square mile area in the district of Mathurā wherein Kṛṣṇa enacted His pastimes.

Vraja-maṇḍala – same as Vraja-dhāma.

vraja-prema – *prema* that is of the nature of the love for Kṛṣṇa that is possessed by the residents of Vraja; *prema* that is imbued with intimacy and totally devoid of formality or reverence. The residents of Vraja have no conception that Kṛṣṇa is God. They think of Him as their dearest friend, son or lover. This is the highest type of *prema* and is the only type of *prema* that brings Kṛṣṇa under control.

vyabhicāri-bhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*; thirty-three internal spiritual emotions that emerge from the nectarean ocean of the *sthāyibhāva*, cause it to swell, and then merge back into that ocean. These include emotions like despondency, jubilation, fear and anxiety, as well as the concealment of emotions.

Y

Yogamāyā – in his *Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.29.1), Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has defined Yogamāyā: “*yogamāyā parākhyācintya-śaktiḥ* – Yogamāyā is the inconceivable potency known as *parā*.” Therefore in essence Yogamāyā is the Lord’s *para-śakti* or *svarūpa-śakti*. Both Yogamāyā and Mahāmāyā are potencies endowed with inconceivable power to bewilder and delude. However, the application of this deluding power is not identical. Mahāmāyā deludes those who are diverted from the Lord, and Yogamāyā

deludes those who are in contact with the Lord. Mahāmāyā deludes the *jīvas* who are averse to the Lord and covers their knowledge in order to prompt them to reap the fruits of their *karma*. Yet why does Yogamāyā delude those who are in contact with the Lord? Those who are in touch with the Lord refers to His associates. They serve the Lord in His pastimes. Yogamāyā bewilders the Lord’s associates only for the purpose of enhancing the sweetness and beauty of the Lord’s pastimes. The Lord’s pastimes with His associates are known as *antaraṅga-līlā*. Therefore Yogamāyā, the Lord’s internal potency, serves the Lord in His *antaraṅga-līlā*. Yogamāyā is personified in Vraja in the form of the ascetic lady Paurṇamāsī. **yogī** – one who practises the *yoga* system with the goal of realisation of the Supersoul or of merging into the Lord’s personal body.

yugala – two, a couple.

yugala-mantra – a *mantra* for worshipping Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; can refer to either the eighteen-syllable *gopāla-mantra* or the *kāma-gāyatrī*.

Verse Index

A

<i>ādau śraddhā tataḥ</i>	43
<i>adyāvanti patad-graham</i>	132
<i>agaṇya-guṇa-nāgarī-</i>	135
<i>aiśvarya jñānete</i>	iii
<i>aiśvarya jñāne vidhi</i>	iii
<i>ājñāyaivam guṇān doṣān</i>	31
<i>alam tri-diva-vārtayā</i>	61
<i>amanda-mudirārbudā...</i>	135
<i>anaṅga-rasa-cāturi-</i>	63
<i>anārata-vikasvara-</i>	134
<i>aṅgānām pañcakasyāsya</i>	125
<i>anna-jala tyāga</i>	vii
<i>anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam</i>	33
<i>apāra-karuṇā-pūra-</i>	118
<i>ārādhanaṅām sarveṣām</i>	85
<i>are cetaḥ prodyat-kapaṭa-</i>	75
<i>āśābharair amṛta-sindhūm...</i>	120
<i>asac-ceṣṭā-kaṣṭa-prada-</i>	69
<i>asad-vārtā-veśyā</i>	55
<i>ataḥ prema-vilāsāḥ syur</i>	49
<i>athāsaktis tato bhāvas</i>	43
<i>atha vṛndāvaneśvaryaḥ</i>	112
<i>atra tyājayatayaivoktā</i>	59
<i>aty utkaṭena nitarām</i>	100
<i>ayi prodyan-mahā-bhāva-</i>	118

B

<i>bhajanera madhye śreṣṭha</i>	11
<i>bhakta-pada-dhūli</i>	86
<i>bhrātur antakasya pattane</i>	104
<i>bhrū-jitānaṅga-kodaṇḍām</i>	116
<i>bhukti-mukti-sprhā</i>	58
<i>bijam ikṣuḥ sa ca rasaḥ</i>	49
<i>bijam mukti-taror</i>	132

C

<i>cañcalāpāṅga-bhaṅgena</i>	79
<i>cāru-saubhāgya-rekhādhyā</i>	112
<i>caṭulāpāṅga-mādhurya-</i>	118
<i>cid-vilāsa-vāri-pūra-</i>	107

D

<i>devi duḥkha-kula-</i>	100
<i>dhairya dharite nāri</i>	20
<i>dhanyānām ḥṛdi bhāsatām</i>	62
<i>dhūrte vrajendra-tanaye</i>	102
<i>dhyāyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ</i>	70
<i>divyāṅgada-pariṣvaṅga-</i>	116
<i>dṛgambhobhir dhautāḥ pulaka-</i>	86
<i>durāpā hy alpa-tapasāḥ</i>	85
<i>dvīpa-cakravāla-juṣṭa-</i>	105

E		<i>krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ</i>	70
<i>ei tīna-sevā haite</i>	86	<i>krodhāt sammohaḥ</i>	71
		<i>kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-</i>	57
G		<i>kṛṣṇaṁ smaran janam</i>	47
<i>giri-nṛpa hari-dāsa-</i>	109	<i>kṛtāgaske 'py ayogye 'pi</i>	79
<i>gokulendu-mukhī-vṛnda-</i>	118	<i>kṣaṇadyuti-ghana-</i>	134
<i>gopālottara-tāpinyām</i>	114	<i>kṣaṇam api tava saṅgam</i>	108
<i>gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭālayiṣu</i>	1	<i>kuñje prasūna-kula-</i>	90
<i>gurvarpita-guru-snehā</i>	113		
		L	
H		<i>lakṣmīr yad anghri-kamalasya</i>	120
<i>hā devi kāku-bhara-</i>	89	<i>lāsyollasad-bhujaga-</i>	101
<i>hāri-vāri-dhārayābhīm...</i>	105	<i>līnām nikuñja-kuhare</i>	91
<i>he śrī-sarovara sadā</i>	108		
<i>hlādinī yā mahā-śaktiḥ</i>	115	M	
		<i>madīśā-nāthatve vraja</i>	97
I		<i>mahā-sampad-dārād api</i>	127
<i>idaṁ nikhila niṣkuṭāvali-</i>	136	<i>manaḥ-śikṣā-daikādaśaka-</i>	129
<i>imam vṛndāvaneśvaryā</i>	120	<i>maṇi-sārasanādhāra-</i>	117
<i>iṣṭe svārasikī rāgaḥ</i>	45	<i>māthureṇa maṇḍalena</i>	106
<i>iyam eva ratiḥ prauḍhā</i>	49	<i>mīmāṁsā-rajāsā malīmasa-</i>	73
		<i>mukha-jīta-śarad-induḥ</i>	98
J		<i>mukhya-raseṣu purā yaḥ</i>	92
<i>jānu-dyuti-jīta-kṣulla-</i>	117	<i>mukter govinda-bhakter</i>	131
<i>jātu prārthayate na</i>	63	<i>mukundāṅga-kṛtāpāṅgam</i>	117
		<i>mukunda-muralī-rava-</i>	133
K			
<i>kaccit tvam cātu-ṣaṭunā</i>	118	N	
<i>kadā bimboṣṭhi tāmbūlam</i>	119	<i>na dharmam nādharmam</i>	23
<i>karuṇām muhur arthaye</i>	119	<i>nāma laite laite mora</i>	20
<i>keli-vistraṁsino vakra-</i>	119	<i>nāma-saṅkirtanam śrīman-</i>	125
<i>kintu premaika-mādhurya-</i>	59	<i>nandann-amūni lalitā-</i>	103
<i>koṭindu-ṣpaṣṭa-kānti</i>	131	<i>nārāyaṇo 'pi vikṛtiṁ</i>	29

<i>nava-gorocanā-gaurīm</i>	115	<i>sahasra daṇḍavat kare</i>	vii
<i>nava-jaladhara-varṇam</i>	98	<i>sakala jagate more</i>	ii
<i>navīna-ballavī-vṛnda-</i>	78	<i>samañ śrī-rūpeṇa smara-</i>	122
<i>nikuñja-nāgarau goṣṭa-</i>	80	<i>samyañ masṛṇīta-svānto</i>	84
		<i>sārdha sapta-prahara</i>	vii
		<i>sarva-mādhurya-viñcholī-</i>	118
P		<i>śāstrokṭayā prabalayā</i>	44
<i>phulla-pakṣa-mallikākṣa-</i>	106	<i>sevā sādḥaka-rūpeṇa</i>	32, 44
<i>prācīnānām bhajanam</i>	99	<i>siddhāntatas tv abhede</i>	60
<i>prahlāda-nārada-parāśara-</i>	73	<i>śīkarābhīmṛṣṭa-jantu-</i>	105
<i>prathamam tu gurum</i>	28, 39	<i>smaraṇam manasānu...</i>	126
<i>pratiṣṭhāsā dhṛṣṭā</i>	82	<i>śraddhā viśeṣataḥ prītiḥ</i>	125
		<i>śravaṇotkīrtanādīni</i>	48
R		<i>śrī-kṛṣṇa-caraṇāmbhoja-</i>	58
<i>rādhāmabhi vrajapateḥ</i>	102	<i>śrīmad-bhāgavatārthanām</i>	125
<i>rādhā-mādhavayor etad</i>	80	<i>śrī-rūpa-mañjari-karārcita-</i>	15
<i>rādhā-mukunda-pada-</i>	101	<i>śuddha-gāṅgeya-gaurāṅgīm</i>	78
<i>rādhā-vrajendra-suta-</i>	103	<i>sukhaiśvaryottarā seyam</i>	59
<i>rādhikāra dāsī yadi</i>	6	<i>suvilāsā mahābhāva-</i>	113
<i>rāgānuga vivekārtham</i>	45	<i>syād dṛḍḥeyam ratiḥ</i>	49
<i>rāgātmikaika-niṣṭhā ye</i>	46	<i>śyāme ramā-ramaṇa-</i>	90
<i>rākā-sudhā-kiraṇa-</i>	101		
<i>rākendu-koṭi-saundarya-</i>	117	T	
<i>ramya-tīra-rambhamāṇa-</i>	106	<i>tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-</i>	14
<i>rasam praśamsantu</i>	62	<i>tāra madhye sarva śreṣṭha</i>	11
<i>ratiṁ gaurī-līle apī</i>	111	<i>tatrāpy ekāntinām śreṣṭhā</i>	60
<i>ratnāṅguriyakollāsī-</i>	116	<i>tat tad bhāvādi mādhurye</i>	46
<i>rātri-dīne rādhā-kṛṣṇera</i>	vii	<i>tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta</i>	29
<i>romāli-bhujagī-mūrdha-</i>	117	<i>tayor apy ubhayor madhye</i>	114
		<i>tila-puṣpābha-nāsāgra-</i>	116
S		<i>tīna sandhyā rādhā-kuṇḍe</i>	vii
<i>sā kāmārūpā sambandha-</i>	45	<i>tuṣṭa-buddhir aṣṭakena</i>	107
<i>sa-ratna-svarṇa-rājīva-</i>	116	<i>tvad-bhaktāḥ saritām patim</i>	73
<i>sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana</i>	11		

<i>tvām asau yācate natvā</i>	79	<i>viśākhā yamunā-vapur</i>	104
<i>tvām pracchadena mudira-</i>	90	<i>viśākhorasi yā viṣṇor</i>	104
<i>tvām rūpa-mañjari sakhi</i>	15	<i>vraja-rāja-kumāra-vallabhā-</i>	119
<i>tvām sādhu mādHAVI-puṣpair</i>	119	<i>vrajendra-sakha-nandinī</i>	134
<i>tvat-kuṇḍa-rodhasi</i>	90	<i>vṛndāvane viharator</i>	89
		<i>vṛṣabhānu-kumārī ca</i>	80

U

<i>upamāna-ghaṭā-māna-</i>	116
----------------------------	-----

V

<i>vāg-yuddha-keli-kutuke</i>	91
<i>vaidha bhakty adhikārī tu</i>	46
<i>vairāgya-yug-bhakti-rasaṁ</i>	33
<i>vakṣyamāṇair vibhāvādyaiḥ</i>	93
<i>variṣṭha-hari-dāsatā-</i>	135
<i>vātsalya-vṛnda-vasatiṁ</i>	102
<i>vidagdha-maṇḍala-gurum</i>	79
<i>viḥitendriyasāpi mayyaniveśita-</i>	71
<i>vikunṭha-pura-saṁśrayād</i>	133
<i>vinitā karuṇā-pūrṇā</i>	113
<i>vipraṁ kṛtāgasam api</i>	5
<i>viracaya mayi daṇḍam</i>	99
<i>virājantim abhivyaktam</i>	45

Y

<i>yadiccher āvāsam vraja</i>	41
<i>yaḥ ko 'pi suṣṭhu vṛṣabhānu-</i>	91
<i>yām kām api vraja-kule</i>	103
<i>yasyā yādṛśa-jātīyaḥ</i>	49
<i>yasya yat saṅgatiḥ puṁso</i>	74
<i>yathā duṣṭatvaṁ me</i>	88
<i>yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos</i>	115
<i>yat kiñcīt tṛṇa-gulma-</i>	17
<i>yatra rāgānavāptatvāt</i>	44
<i>yat sevāya bhagavataḥ</i>	85
<i>yāvanti bhagavad-bhakter</i>	86
<i>yeṣāṁ sarāga-bhajane</i>	137
<i>yuktas tvayā jano naiva</i>	80
<i>yūthādhipātve 'py</i>	130

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