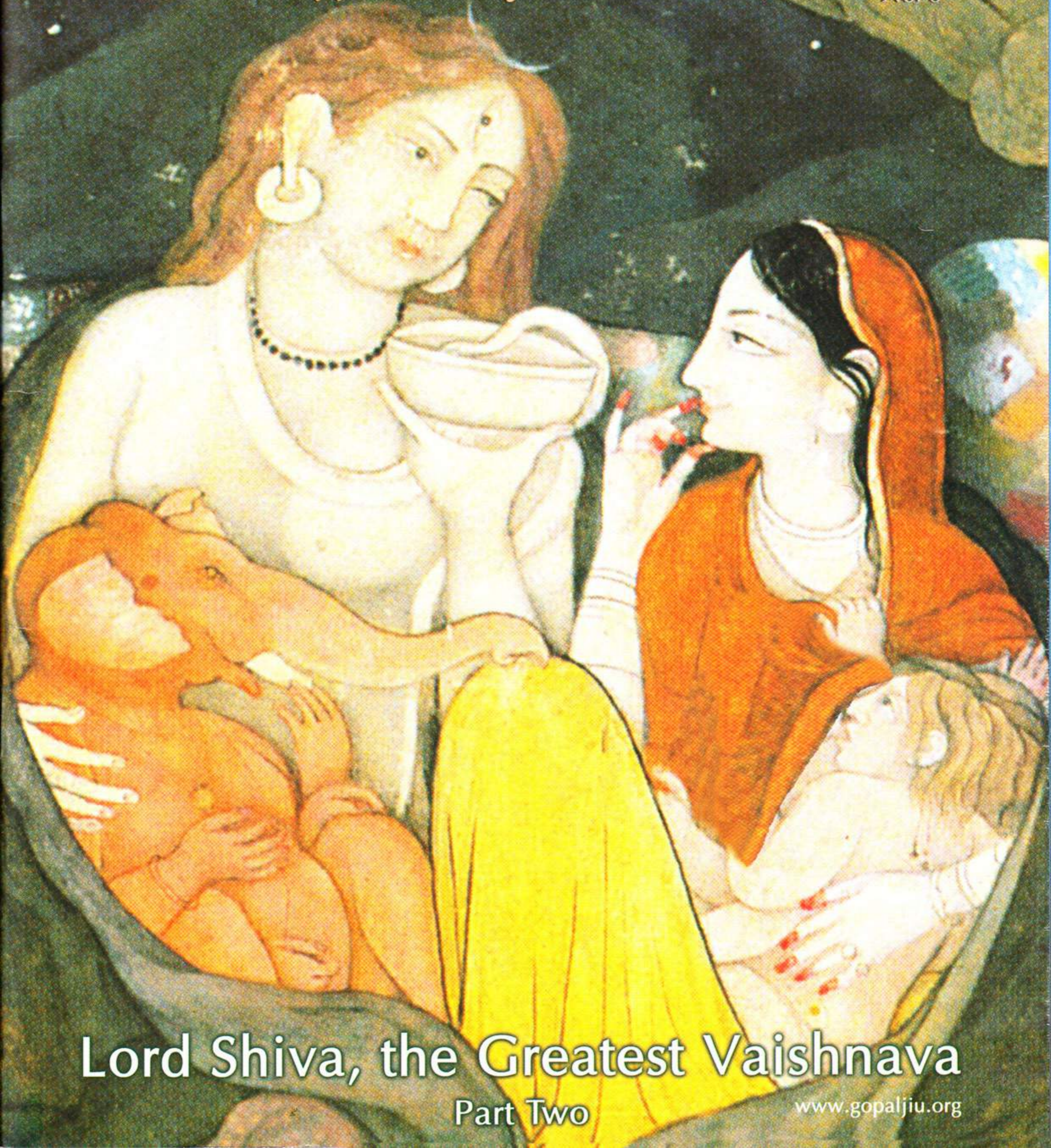


tava kathāmṛtam tapta-jīvanam

Sri Krishna Kathamrita

vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ

No. 8



Lord Shiva, the Greatest Vaishnava

Part Two

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Sri Krishna Kathamrita

Sri Sri Guru Gaurāṅga Rādhā-Gopinātha Jayati

Lord Shiva The Greatest Vaishnava

Part Two



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His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada
Founder Acharya of
the International
Society for Krishna
Consciousness

Statement of Purpose

Srila Prabhupada states in his introduction to *Krishna Book*:

It is essential for persons who are actually liberated to hear about the pastimes of Krishna. That is the supreme relishable subject matter for one in the liberated state. Also, if persons who are trying to be liberated hear such narrations... then their path of liberation becomes very clear. ...Lord Chaitanya has therefore advised His followers that their business is to propagate *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

In keeping with this desire of Srila Prabhupada, the purpose of this magazine is simply to propagate *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. For that end we intend to research the history and literature of the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition, particularly in Orissa. Through the medium of this journal we want to help establish how everything is in Srila Prabhupada's books, and we will consider our efforts successful if this publication is a source of inspiration for the preachers of Krishna consciousness to continue their efforts to push on Lord Chaitanya's movement.

Sri Krishna Kathamrita

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Cover: Shiva and his family on Mount Kailash. Painting ascribed to a master at the court of Guler. Circa 1800-1810. Found in the Government Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh.

Garga-saṁhitā verse on the back cover of this issue translated by Sri Kusakratha Das. Pictures and quotes from the books of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, such as *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* © Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International. All other materials, unless specified, © ISKCON Gopal Jiu Publications. All rights reserved.

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Finally, and most especially, we would like to offer our *sāṣṭāṅga-praṇāmas*, prayers, and gratitude unto Sri Shankar Mahadev, the intimate friend of Sri Krishna and guardian of the Lord's abode, for somehow giving us an opportunity to attempt to glorify him. May he bestow on the editors and readers of this journal, love for the lotus feet of the divine couple Sri Sri Radha Madhava, who perform joyous pastimes in Vraja.

Letters

Regarding [part one of] the Lord Shiva issue of Krishna Kathamrita, I can hardly wait until the next Shiva-ratri to share some of the insights you have given. After years of attempts, I can fully agree with the statement that Lord Krishna is the only one who understands Lord Shiva in total. All glories to your seva. — Ganapati Das Swami

(Letters continue on opposite page)

Exploring Shiva in Vraja

This issue of *Sri Krishna Kathamrita* magazine continues our focus on the glories of Lord Shiva, the greatest *vaiṣṇava*. In the article, "Lord Shiva in Vraja" on page 20, we explore Lord Shiva's ecstatic pastimes in Krishna's divine land of Vraja. The *Skanda Purāṇa*, *vaiṣṇava-khaṇḍa* 1.4-6, describes the work performed by Krishna's great-grandson Vajranabha to discover and preserve the places connected with Krishna's pastimes in Vraja:

*vajras tu tat-sahāyena sāṅḍilyasyāpy anugrahāt
govinda-gopa-gopīnām līlā-sthānāny anukramāt
vijñāyābhīdhayāsthāpya grāmān āvāsya bahūn
kuṇḍa-kūpādi-pūrtena śivādi-sthāpanena ca
govinda-haridevādi-svarūpāropanena ca
kṛṣṇaika-bhaktim sve rājye tatāna ca mumoda ha*

With the help of Maharaja Parikshit, and by the mercy of Sandilya Rishi, Vajranabha discovered the pastime places of Govinda and His *gopas* and *gopīs*, one after another. He established many villages, constructed ponds, wells, and other public works, and installed deities of Lord Shiva and others. He also installed the Krishna deities of Govinda, Harideva, and so on. He thus spread pure devotion for Krishna throughout his kingdom, which gave him great pleasure.

Vajranabha is credited with establishing four deities of Lord Shiva in the Vraja area, namely Sri Bhuteshwar in Mathura, Sri Gopishwar in Vrindavan, Sri Chakleshwar at Manasi Ganga near Govardhan, and Kameshwar in Kamyavan. These four deities of Lord Shiva are considered by Gaudiya Vaishnavas to be the principal *kṣetrapālas*, the protectors of Vraja Mandala. Other *vaiṣṇavas* consider eight *śiva-liṅgas* in Vraja as

being the principle protectors of the dhama. These are Bhuteshwar and Gokarneshwar at Mathura, Chakleshwar at Govardhana, Kameshwar at Kamyavan, Nandishwar and Budhe Babu at Nandagaon, Uttreshwar at Gokula, and Gopishwar at Vrindavan.

In the course of our extensive research in the Vraja area, we were informed of many thousands of *śiva-liṅgas*, and the locals in each place often speak of the deity's antiquity. But it is very hard to certify which ones are ancient and which ones are not. In the words of Sri Gopal Ghosh, Sahitya Ratna, librarian at the Vrindavan Research Institute, "There are many *śiva-liṅgas* in Vrindavan that were established within the last one or two hundred years. Often, rumors start that they are from the time of Krishna, and within a few years many people accept it as fact. Thus we can only be sure of those *liṅgas* that are described in the literatures of the goswamis." Hence, for this issue of *Sri Krishna Kathamrita* we have mainly focused on those deities described in the goswami literatures. Occasionally we have included information about other well known *liṅgas* and have cited the existing evidences for them, as well as any scholarly doubts as to their antiquity that came to our attention.

The conclusion after our research is that one article cannot do justice to the topic. The subject is so vast that many books could be written about Shiva's services and pastimes in Vraja. Although this issue is certainly insufficient, if our humble endeavor brings some pleasure to Hari, guru, and the *vaiṣṇavas*, then we will consider it a success.

Śrī guru vaiṣṇava-kṛpā-prārthī,

Madhavananda Das



(Letters continued)

Thank you millions and millions of times for the magazine about Lord Shiva. For years I have wondered why Shiva had a crescent moon on his head, and I was so happy to read the story. Your publications are both beautiful and enlivening. — Urmila Dasi, North Carolina

Please continue your good work. Every ISKCON leader should read this latest magazine [No. 7], because most of them fumble while answering questions about Lord Shiva. I originally hail from Kashmir, J & K. Many Kashmiri pandits have misunderstandings about Lord

Shiva, so I purchased 50 copies of your last magazine and sent them to Kashmir to my friends. Everyone who received a copy had multiple praises for your magazine. In spite of my having stayed in Kashmir for 20 years in my childhood, I found many things in your magazine that I didn't know. You have cleared up many points. — Suradas, Mumbai

I read the magazine on Lord Shiva from cover to cover and found it quite informative and very enlightening. I really enjoyed it. I am going to give it to a friend of ours who is from a Shaivite family. I think it will help him to understand the union between Lord Krishna and His great devotee Lord Shiva much more. I am presently reading the Bindu compilation and it is great. I really can't read it on the net so I am very happy to see it in this format. The short pieces make it easy to read and everything is simply fixed on Krishna. It is a balm for the soul. Thank you for being so diligent about keeping this magazine going. It is excellent. — Laxmimoni Dasi, Alachua, Florida

Your letters are welcome. Write to :

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THE WORSHIP OF LORD SHIVA

Sri Srila Jiva Goswami Prabhupada
Bhakti-sandarbha annucheda 106

Pure *vaiṣṇavas* give all honor to Lord Shiva because he is a pure *vaiṣṇava* also, or else sometimes because he is a manifestation of Lord Vishnu. This is explained in the *Ādi-varāha Purāṇa*:

*janmāntara-sahasreṣu samārādhyā vṛṣa-dhvajam
vaiṣṇavatvaṁ labhed dhīmān sarva-pāpa-kṣaye sati*

By worshipping Lord Shiva for many thousands of births a person becomes wise and free from all sins. Then he becomes a *vaiṣṇava*.

Between the devotees of Lord Nrisingha and Lord Shiva there is thus a very big difference. This is described in *Śrī Nṛsiṁha-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.5.10):

*anupanīta-śatam ekenopanītena tat-samam, upanīta-śatam
ekena gr̥hasthena tat-samam, gr̥hastha-śatam ekena
vānaprasthena tat-samam, vānaprastha-śatam ekena yatīnā
tat-samam, yatīnāṁ tu śataṁ pūrvam ekena rudra-jāpakena
tat-samam, rudra-jāpaka-śatam ekam atharvāṅgīrasa-
śākhādhyāpakena tat-samam, atharvāṅgīrasa-
śākhādhyāpakena-śatam ekam ekena mantra-
rājādhyāpakena tat-samam*

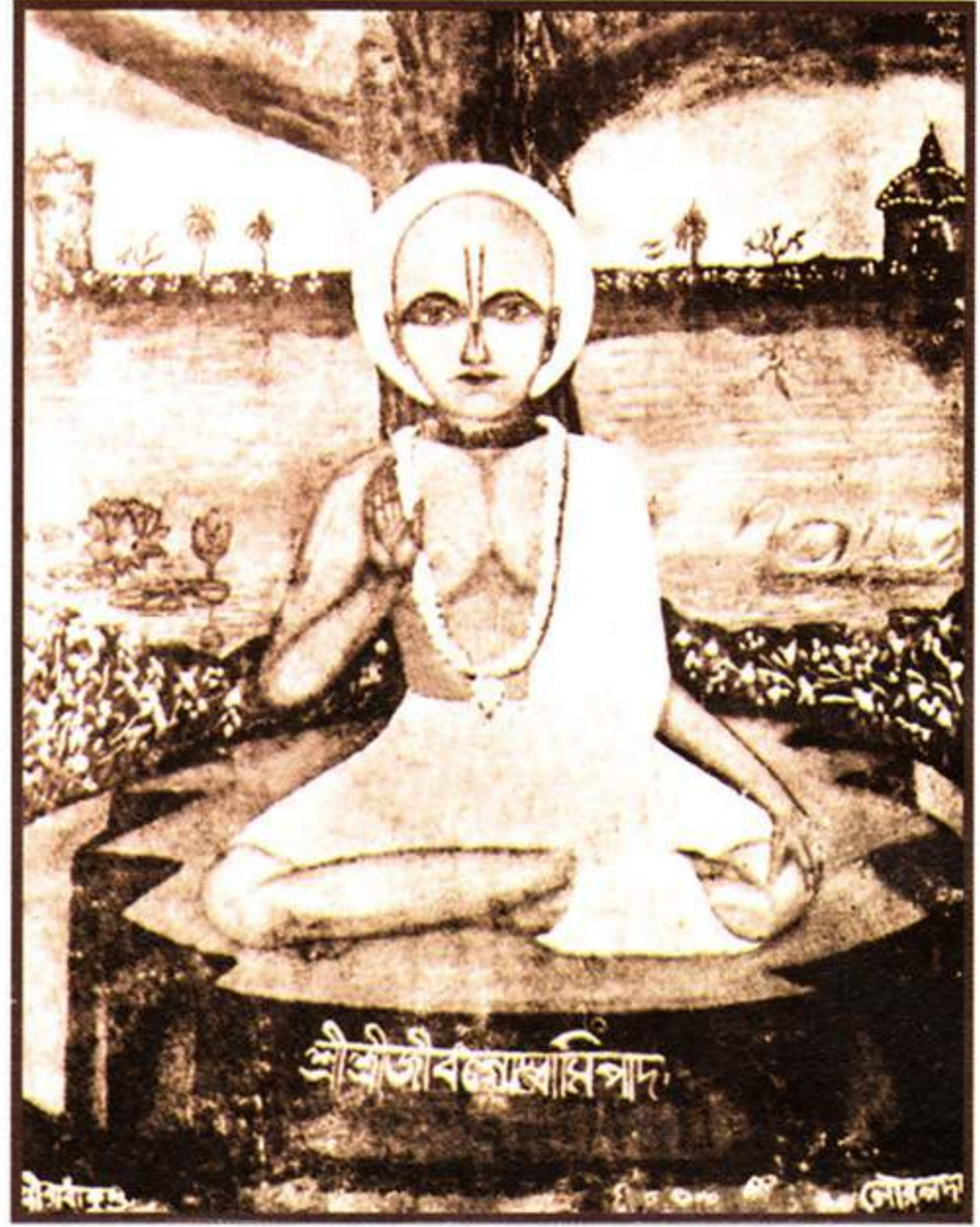
A hundred uninitiated *brāhmaṇas* equal one who is initiated as a *brahmacārī*. A hundred *brahmacārīs* equal one *gr̥hastha*. A hundred *gr̥hasthas* equal one *vānaprastha*. A hundred *vānaprasthas* equal one *sannyāsī*. A hundred *sannyāsīs* equal one chanter of *śiva-mantras*. A hundred chanters of *śiva-mantras* equal one teacher of the *Āṅgīrasa* branch of the *Atharva Veda*. A hundred teachers of the *Āṅgīrasa* branch of the *Atharva Veda* equal one teacher of the king of mantras.

The “king of mantras” mentioned here is the mantra dedicated to Lord Nrisinghadeva.

But if one worships Lord Shiva as independent, he cannot avoid the curse of Bhrigu Muni. This is explained in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (4.2.27-28):

*tasyaivaṁ vadataḥ śāpam śrutoṽ dvija-kulāya vai
bhriguḥ pratyasṛjac chāpam brahma-daṇḍam duratyayam
bhava-vrata-dharā ye ca ye ca tān samanuvratāḥ
pāṣaṇḍinas te bhavantu sac-chāstra-paripanthinaḥ*

When all the hereditary *brāhmaṇas* were thus cursed by Nandishwar, the sage Bhrigu, in retaliation, condemned the followers of Lord Shiva with this very



Srila Jiva Goswamipada

strong curse: “One who takes a vow to satisfy Lord Shiva or who follows such principles will certainly become an atheist and be diverted from transcendental scriptural injunctions.”

In these verses, vows enjoined in the Vedas for worshipping Lord Shiva are being described. There would be no use in proclaiming the worshiper an atheist in the case of the vows enjoined elsewhere than the *Vedas*, since then he must have already been an atheist beforehand. It is thus obvious that *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and other books that oppose these vows are authorized Vedic scriptures, and the *Sūta-saṁhitā* and similar books that support them are not authorized. Therefore, the fault indicated here is in worshipping Lord Shiva as independent. Lord Janardan, Vishnu, is the root from which the Vedic scriptures have grown, as is described in the same passage (*Bhāg.* 4.2.31):

*eṣa eva hi lokānām śivaḥ panthāḥ sanātanaḥ
yam pūrvē cāmusantasthur yat-pramāṇam janārdanaḥ*

The Vedas give the eternal regulative principles for auspicious advancement in human civilization that have been rigidly followed in the past. The strong evidence of this principle is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is called Janardan, the well wisher of all living entities.

श्री कृष्णकथामृत

This [path] of the *Vedas* has as its foundation of authority, as its root, Lord Vishnu. As confirmation of this, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 1.2.23-26 also emphasizes the importance of devotional service to Lord Vishnu. Furthermore, in the *Hari-varṁśa* Lord Shiva says:

*harir eva sadā dhyeyo bhavadbhiḥ sattva-saṁsthitaiḥ
viṣṇu-mantram sadā viprāḥ paṭhadhvani dhyāta keśavam*

O *brāhmaṇas* learned in the transcendental scriptures, you should always meditate on Lord Hari, always recite the mantras glorifying Lord Vishnu, and always meditate on Him, Lord Keshava.

Therefore, since a devotee of Lord Shiva is also in this category [of learned *brāhmaṇas*], the *vaiṣṇava āgamas* and other scriptures consider deities other than Lord Vishnu to be servants of the Lord in His external entourage, and enjoin worship only of their transcendental counterparts. The Lord's associates, who manifest humanlike pastimes as the Lord also does, perform Vedic sacrifices only to please the Lord. This was seen, for example, when King Yudhisthira performed the *rājasūya* sacrifice. It should be understood that the demigods worshiped in these rituals are worshiped as material representatives of the Lord's great potencies.

This is also shown in the behavior of Prahlad Maharaja (*Bhāg.* (7.10.32):

*tataḥ sampūjya śirasā vavande parameṣṭhinam
bhavaṁ prajāpatīn devān prahrādo bhagavat-kalāḥ*

Prahlad Maharaja then worshiped and offered prayers to all the demigods, such as Brahma, Shiva and the Prajapatis, who are all parts of the Lord.

Similarly, Yudhisthira Maharaja said (*Bhāg.* 10.72.3):

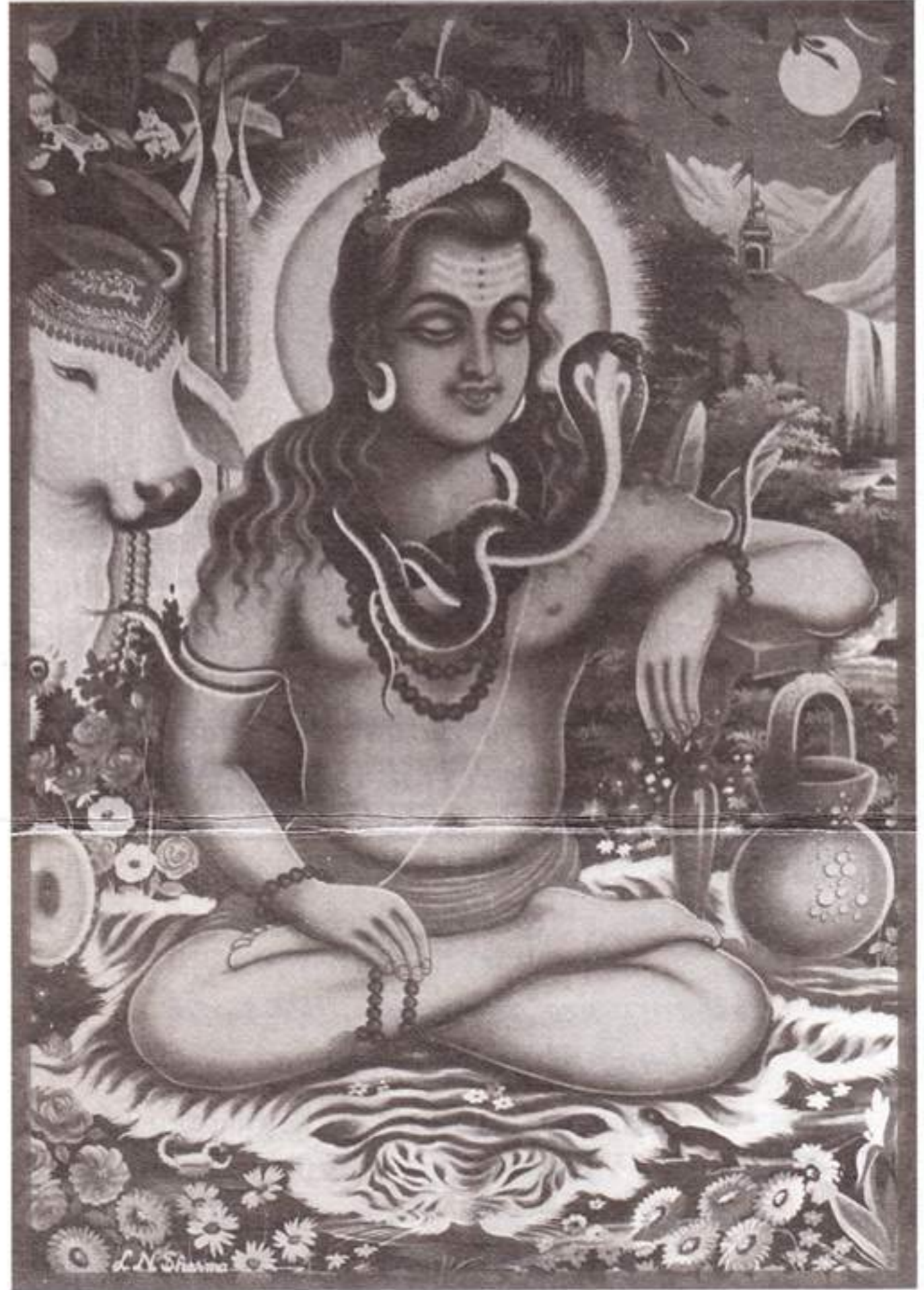
*kratu-rājena govinda rājasūyena pāvanīḥ
yakṣye vibhūtīr bhavatas tat sampādaya naḥ prabho*

O Govinda, I wish to worship Your material expansions by the *rājasūya* sacrifice, the king of Vedic performances. Please grant that we may do this, my Lord.

Sri Krishna speaks to Sri Satyabhama Devi in the *Padma Purāṇa* (6.88.43-44) and describes the demigods as material opulences:

*śaivāḥ saurās ca gāṇeśā vaiṣṇavāḥ śakti-pūjakāḥ
mām eva prāpnuvantīha varṣāmbhaḥ sāgarāṁ yathā
eko'ham pañcadhā jātaḥ kṛḍayan nāmabhiḥ kila
deva-datto yathā kaścit putrādy-āhvāna-nāmabhiḥ*

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



The worshipers of Surya, Shiva, Ganesa, Vishnu, and Sakti eventually attain Me, just as rivers attain the ocean. Although I am one, I appear in five ways. As a person named Devadatta may be the son of someone and have relationships with other people, and in this way manifest different features and names in different circumstances, so I appear with different names and pastimes.

In truth, however, the *vaiṣṇavas* are the best of all. This is explained in the following verse, which appears both in the *Skanda Purāṇa* in the conversation between Narada and Brahma, as well as in the *Prahlāda-saṁhitā* in the description of keeping a vigil during *Ekādaśī*:

*na sauro na ca śaivo vā na brāhmo na ca śāktikaḥ
na cānya-devatā-bhakto bhaved bhāgavatopamaḥ*

Neither a devotee of Surya, a devotee of Shiva, a devotee of Brahma, a devotee of Sakti, nor a devotee of any other demigod is equal to a devotee of Vishnu.



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Questions About Lord Shiva

Srila Saccidananda
Thakur Bhaktivinode

Bhaktivinoda-vāṇī-vaibhava is a collection of the teachings of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode compiled by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode, a prominent disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, and published in 1938. The book is in the form of a series of questions composed by the compiler, with answers extracted from Thakur Bhaktivinode's teachings. The following are some extracts from chapter 22.

In what category are demigods like Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva?

Lord Shiva and Lord Brahma did not take birth from the womb. They are not counted among the living entities who possess fifty qualities in minute quantity, but Lord Brahma and Lord Shiva are separated parts of the Supreme Lord. Since they possess not only the fifty qualities in a greater quantity but also five other qualities, they are known as the principal demigods. Ganesh and Surya, the sun-god, are also principal demigods, and they are worshiped on the same level as Lord Brahma. The other demigods are considered ordinary living entities. All the demigods are separated parts of Krishna. Their wives are also separated parts of the spiritual potency. Before the advent of Krishna, Lord Brahma ordered the demigoddesses to take birth in this world for Krishna's pleasure. (*Jaiva Dharma*, Chapter 32)

What are the activities of Lord Shiva?

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam verses such as *vaiṣṇavānāṃ yathā śambhuḥ* glorify Shambhu as a *vaiṣṇava*. The purport of such statements is that Shambhu unites with Durga Devi according to his own time potency and the will of Govinda. Thus, he accomplishes his tasks. In many scriptures headed by the *tantras*, he teaches religious duties that are a ladder for the *jīvas* of various qualifications to come to *bhakti*, devotion. By Govinda's sweet will, Shambhu (indirectly) protects and



Drawing by Bhaktin Aleksandra

sustains *śuddha-bhakti*, pure devotion, by preaching the doctrine of *māyāvāda* (illusionism) and intellectual or imaginary fabrications of the scriptures.

The fifty qualities of the *jīva* are present within Shambhu in copious proportion, and five more great qualities unattainable by the ordinary *jīva* are also found in him in partial proportion. So Shambhu cannot be categorized as a *jīva*. He is the lord (*īśvara*) of *jīvas*, although he partakes of the nature of a separated part (*vibhinnāṃśa*) of the Supreme Lord. (*Śrī Brahma-saṃhitā* 5.45)

Is Lord Shiva a separate truth from Krishna? What is the difference between Sadashiva and Rudra?

Shambhu is not another god separate from Krishna. Those who hold such a biased view are blasphemers of the Supreme Lord. Shambhu's control is subject to the control of Govinda, and so they are not really different from each other. Their non-difference is illustrated by the example of milk transformed into yoghurt by the addition of an agent. Similarly, the Lord becomes transformed into another form, which is dependent. (*Śrī Brahma-saṃhitā* 5.45)



— *Bhaktivinode-vāṇī-vaibhava*. Translation by Bhumiapati Das. Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

HOW TO FIND GURU

*Sri Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

This is excerpted from Prabhupader Upadeśāmṛta, a collection of the teachings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati compiled by Sri Bhakti Mayukh Bhagavata Maharaja, and published in Bengali. The book is in the form of a series of questions composed by the compiler, with answers extracted from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's teachings.

Who is the ācārya?

Only a devotee of the Lord who is fixed in the activities of devotional service and preaching the message of the Lord can be considered an ācārya. The ācārya is free and independent. He sets the perfect example of completely abandoning the company of the impious and always engaged in hearing and speaking about Krishna. One who preaches to others fearlessly, and without any constraint induces them to similarly give up bad association, is the ācārya.

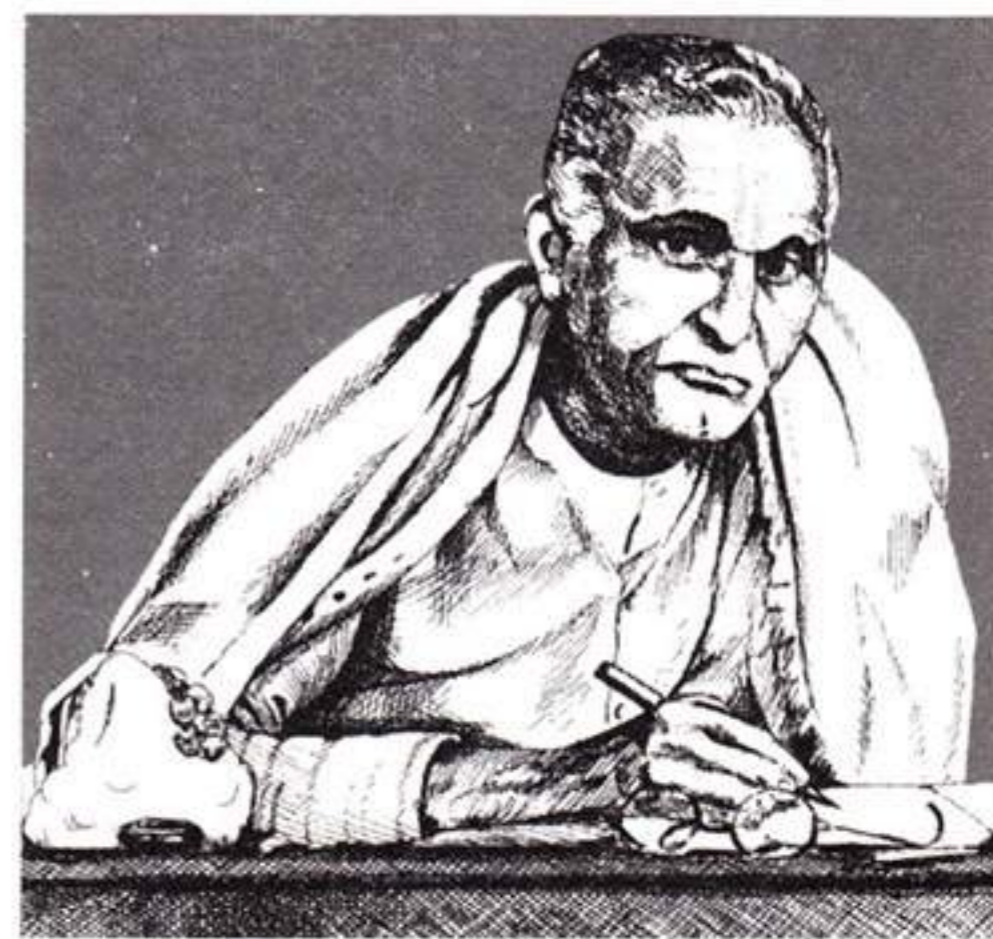
How will I be able to recognize a bona fide guru?

When you make judgments based on your own intelligence, that such and such a person is guru, you are in fact projecting the qualities of guru on him. Such a person is never truly the guru. In such cases, you are thinking that the guru is somehow under your control, or within the purview of your sensory knowledge. When Krishna himself decides to send you someone to act as your spiritual master, that person will be manifest before you as the mahānta-guru.

How will I find a bona fide guru?

The Supreme Lord acts as guru in two ways: as the caitya-guru within the heart, and externally as the mahānta-guru, or pure devotee. If I am sincere, then the Lord reveals the mahānta-guru to me. We can go to a thousand different people with a petition in hand, but until the one person who can approve our application approves it, we get nowhere. The Supreme Lord is that person. Why He does or does not approve our request is something we cannot fathom. He is not a field

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Drawing by Ananta Sakti Das

laborer working in our personal garden. We have to be patient and wait. In the meantime, we should prepare ourselves by cultivating a service attitude and trying to eliminate extraneous desires. If we pray sincerely for the Lord's blessing, then He will graciously bless us. Through His grace we will find a bona fide spiritual master.

*kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne
guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*

When Krishna decides to be kind to some fortunate soul, then He personally directs that person from within as the Supersoul and from without as the spiritual master. (Cc. madhya 22.47)

Who is the genuine guru and how can we find him?

The road to auspiciousness begins with taking shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. In accordance with God's plan, everyone on this earth finds a teacher that meets his or her particular needs and qualifications. Thus, the Christians have their Jesus and the Muslims their Mohammed. Some less fortunate individuals think that some materialistic individual with formal traditional ties to the family is their guru, with the result that they become embroiled in householder life themselves. If we are fortunate, if we truly seek out a genuine guru with complete sincerity and persistence, and if we pray feelingly to the Lord to encounter such a spiritual master, then the Lord will surely lead us in this lifetime to a genuine guru by taking shelter of whom we will be able to attain the greatest blessings.

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

In the course of wandering through Brahma's universal creation, some fortunate soul may receive the seed of the creeper of devotion. This happens by the grace of the guru and Krishna. (Cc. madhya 19.151)

*kṛṣṇa yadi kṛpā kare kona bhāgyavāne
guru-antaryāmi-rūpe śikhāya āpane*

If Krishna is merciful to a particularly fortunate soul, then He comes Himself to teach him, either externally as the spiritual master or from within as the Supersoul. (Cc. madhya 22.47)

*guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana śāstrera pramāṇe
guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā karena bhakta-gaṇe*

According to the revealed scriptures, the spiritual master is the manifestation of Krishna. Krishna comes in the form of the guru to show His mercy to the devotees. (Cc. ādi 1.45)

*yadyapi āmāra guru—caitanyera dāsa
tathāpi jāniye āmi tānhāra prakāśa*

Although my spiritual master is the servant of Lord Chaitanya, I know that he is a direct manifestation of the Lord. (Cc. ādi 1.44)

*jīve sākṣāt nāhi tāte guru caitya-rūpe
śikṣā-guru haya kṛṣṇa-mahānta-svarūpe*

Since one cannot directly experience the guru as the Supersoul, Krishna appears as the śikṣā-guru in the form of a highly advanced vaiṣṇava. (Cc. ādi 1.58)

“O my beloved Krishna! Please be kind and accept me as your servant. For all my life I have thought of myself as the master of my house and the enjoyer of the fruits of my work, but I shall give all this up for you.” When a *jīva* sincerely prays to Krishna in this way, then Krishna appears to him in the form of the *mahānta-guru*.

Without receiving transcendental knowledge from a bona fide spiritual master, no one gains the eligibility to serve Krishna. Neither god nor human can give such transcendental knowledge. This is why we have such a great need for a genuine spiritual master.

How should we understand the guru?

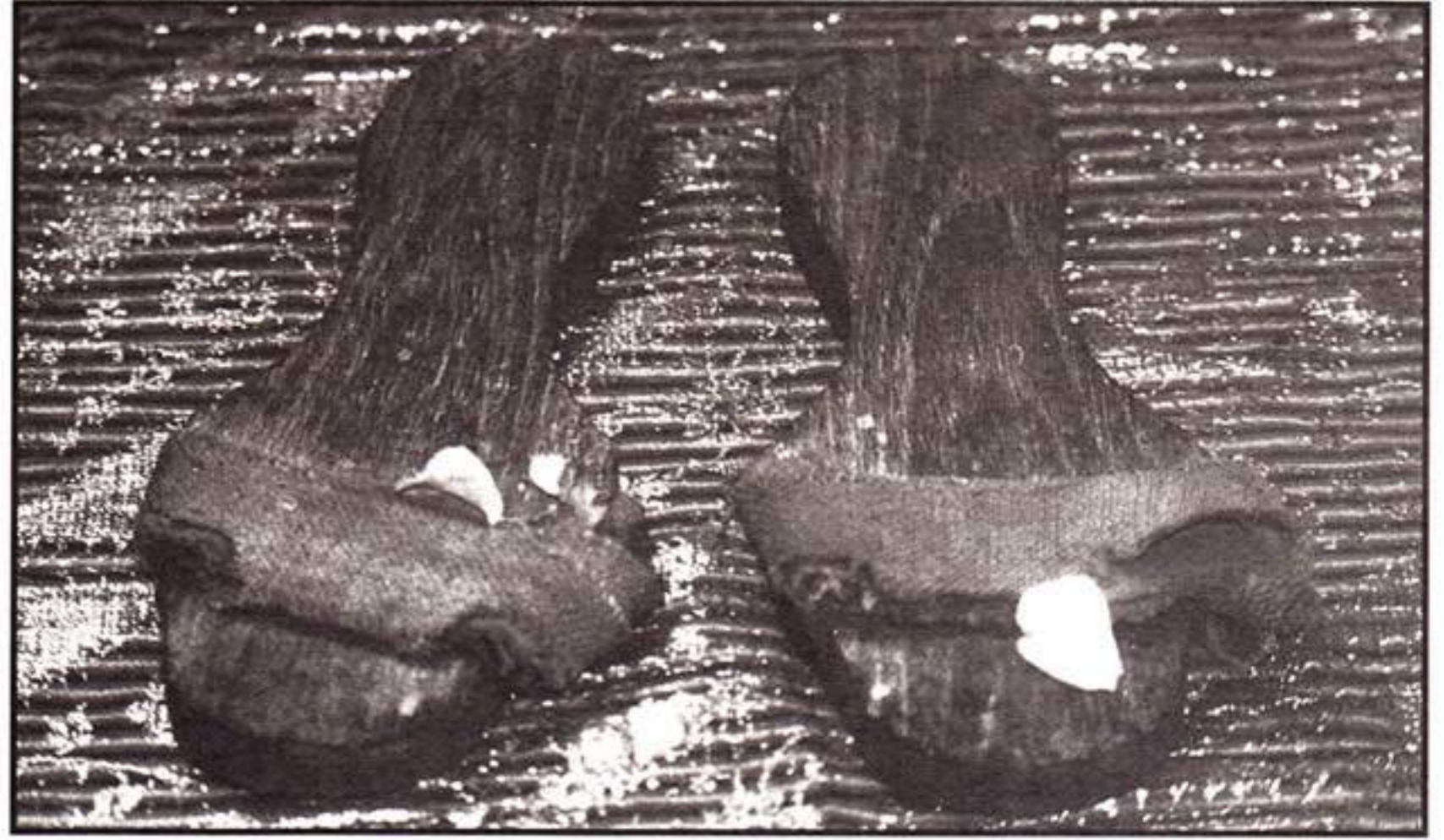
One has to be devoted to the spiritual master in the same way one is devoted to Krishna. One should think of the spiritual master in the same way that one thinks of Krishna, for he is in no way less than or inferior to Krishna. It is the duty of a pious person to recognize the spiritual master as equal to Krishna and to worship him and serve him in that way. If one does not do so, then one is not a real disciple.

Those who see the guru and Krishna as the same will be able to understand the essence of the scriptures. They alone will be able to chant

the holy names, and they alone will be able to speak about Krishna.

Sri Krishna himself has descended in the form of the spiritual master in order to teach service to himself. Those on whom fortune smiles will be able to understand this spotless scriptural truth. If not, their doubting minds will plunge them into the ocean of *samsāra*.

The spiritual master is neither the ultimate object of devotion, *viśaya-vigraha*, nor the original reservoir of devotion, *āśraya-vigraha*. He is a manifestation, *prakāśa-vigraha*, of the original reservoir of devotion. Sri Krishna is the supreme object of all love, whereas the guru is the reservoir of divine love. Krishna is the predominating absolute, the *bhoktā-bhagavān*, while the guru is the predominated absolute, or *sevaka-bhagavān*; he is God as worshiper or servant. Although the spiritual master is the reservoir of love, he is Krishna himself; at the same time he is the most beloved of Krishna. This is the inconceivable paradox of *guru-tattva*. Krishna is the complete omnipotent, and the spiritual master is his complete potency. The spiritual master is not an ordinary living



Shoes of Srila Saraswati Thakur at Radha Kunda

entity. He is the master of all living entities. The spiritual master is the supreme consciousness, the plenary manifestation of the Lord's potency, his internal potency. We ordinary *jīvas*, on the other hand, are atomic particles of consciousness, Krishna's marginal potency and separated parts.

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Lord Shiva the Greatest Vaishnava

Part Two

His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada



In this article, we pose certain commonly asked questions about Lord Shiva, with answers from the teachings of Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

What is the nature of the worshipers of different gods?

When the mode of goodness is mixed with the mode of passion, one worships the sun god, Vivasvan. When the mode of goodness is mixed with the mode of ignorance, one worships Ganapati, or Ganesh. When the mode of passion is mixed with the mode of ignorance, one worships Durga, or Kali, the external potency. When one is simply in the mode of ignorance, one becomes a devotee of Lord Shiva, because Lord Shiva is the predominating deity of the mode of ignorance within this material world. However, when one is completely free from the influence of all the modes of material nature, one becomes a pure *vaiṣṇava* on the devotional platform. (Cc. *madhya* 24.330)

What is the difference between Krishna and Shiva?

Learned scholars in transcendental subjects have carefully analyzed the summum bonum, Krishna, to have sixty-four principal attributes. All the expansions or categories of the Lord possess only some percentages of these attributes. But Sri Krishna is the possessor of the attributes cent percent. And His personal expansions such as *svayam-prakāśa* and *tad-ekātmā*, up to the categories of the *viṣṇu-tattva avatāras*, possess up to ninety-three percent of these transcendental attributes. Lord Shiva, who is neither *avatāra*, nor *āveśa*, nor *Sri Krishna-kathamrita*

in-between them, possesses almost eighty-four percent of the attributes. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 1.3.28)

Can one get the same result by worshipping Shiva or Krishna?

One particular mission regularly propounds that worship of any demigod will lead one to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or the supreme goal. But worship of demigods is thoroughly discouraged herein, because even the greatest demigods like Brahma and Shiva represent only part of the opulence of the Supreme Lord. He is the origin of everyone born, and no one is greater than Him. He is *asamaurdhva*, which means that no one is superior to Him and no one is equal to Him. In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is said that one who considers the Supreme Lord Krishna in the same category with demigods — be they even Brahma or Shiva — becomes at once an atheist. (Purport to *Bg.* 10.42.)

Many foolish persons say that one can chant Hare Krishna or chant the name of Kali or Durga or Shiva because they are all the same. If one thinks that the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the names and activities of the demigods are on the same level, or if one accepts the holy name of Vishnu to be a material sound vibration, that is also an offense. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 3.15.25)

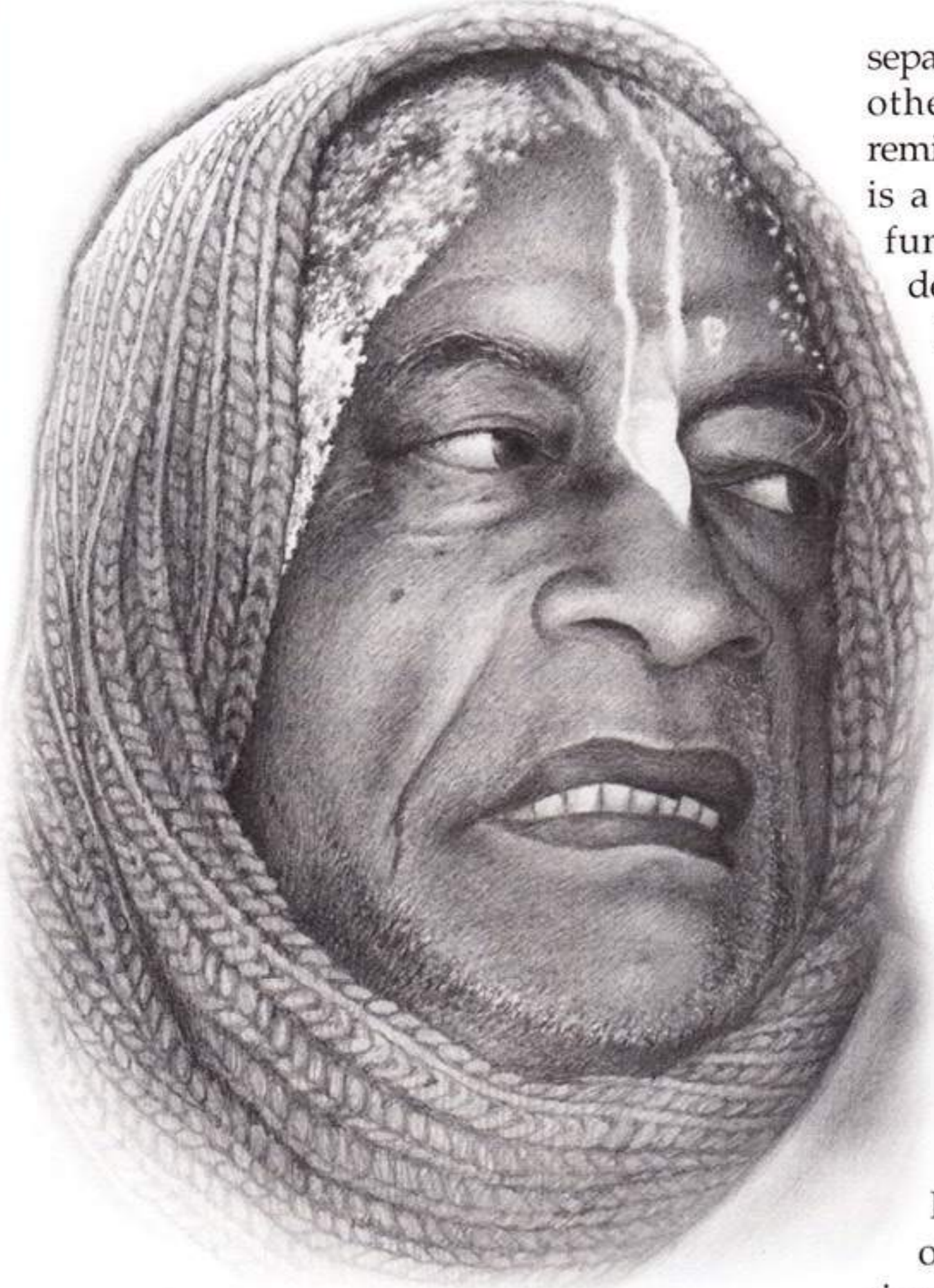
How is Lord Shiva auspicious?

Lord Shiva is always great and auspicious, but since he has accepted on his head the Ganges water, which emanated from the lotus feet of the

(continued on page 11)

amṛta-bindu

Bhakti for Shiva?



His Divine Grace A.C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Srila Prabhupada encountered another long-standing South Indian feud — between the *śaivites* (followers of Lord Shiva) and the *vaiṣṇavas* (followers of Lord Vishnu). The *śaivites* generally espoused an impersonalistic philosophy, declaring God to be the impersonal “one”, appearing in many forms, such as Shiva and Krishna. But since all the forms were one ultimately, fighting as to which god was best was petty and childish. Prabhupada’s disciples found this philosophy difficult to deal with, and when Giriraj had argued with a wealthy *śaivite*, Mr. Ramakrishna, they had

separated with hurt feelings. But in meetings with other persons in Madras, Giriraj was often reminded, “Have you met Mr. Ramakrishna? He is a very good man and a leader in religious functions.” Giriraj became embarrassed and decided to make another attempt to win Mr. Ramakrishna’s friendship.

They talked again, but remained unsatisfied. Giriraj then informed Prabhupada and asked if he would meet Mr. Ramakrishna himself. Prabhupada agreed.

When they met, Mr. Ramakrishna began by saying, “Swamiji, we have been having some discussion about devotion to Lord Krishna and devotion to Lord Shiva. What do you say? Who is greater? Krishna or Shiva?”

Prabhupada replied that actually the word *bhakti*, or “devotion,” could not properly be applied to the worship of Lord Shiva. *Bhakti*, he said, meant service without any material desire, whereas *pūjā* included service with the desire for some return. *Bhakti*, therefore, could only be applied to Krishna.

“But isn’t it possible,” asked Mr. Ramakrishna, “for someone to be a *bhakta* of Lord Shiva and to worship Lord Shiva simply out of devotion, without desiring any material benefit?”

“It may be possible,” Prabhupada replied, “but generally not. Just like when a person enters a liquor shop, generally it’s taken that he is going for drinking, although there may be some exception.”

Prabhupada gave the example of the *gopīs*’ worship of the goddess Katyayani; their worship had not been for material benefit but for devotion to Krishna. Similarly, if one worshiped Lord Shiva with the aim of serving Lord Krishna, that would be *bhakti*. But people generally approach Shiva for material benefit. Although Mr. Ramakrishna was usually prone to argue these points, Prabhupada’s answer satisfied him. (Srila Prabhupada *Lilamṛta*, chapter 38.)

(continued from page 9)

Lord, he has become even more auspicious and important. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 3.28.22)

How is it that Gaudīyā Vaiṣṇavas say they respect Shiva as a devotee, but they often don't seem to appreciate him?

We worship Lord Shiva as a *vaiṣṇava*, but as a demigod we reject him. (Letter to Nityananda Das, 16 August 1972)

Is it acceptable to worship Shiva before Krishna?

That you may do. There is no harm. But you should understand what is Shiva and what is Vishnu. If you first offer prayers to Lord Shiva, there is no harm. It is good. He is *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ*. He is our spiritual master. He is a *vaiṣṇava*. Why not offer first respect to him? But if you take Lord Shiva as the Supreme, that is an insult. You are giving me respect as spiritual master, but if you overestimate my position and say that, "You are the king of the whole world," that is an insult. That is not a prayer. If you offer me prayers that befit my position, then it is all right. But if you offer me prayers that are not befitting, then that is an insult. So you must know what the position of Lord Shiva is. He is a *vaiṣṇava*. He is the greatest devotee. You may praise him as the number one demigod. That would be all right. But if you praise him saying that he is the Supreme, then he will feel insulted, "What is this nonsense person saying?" So don't insult him in that way. That will go against your credit. He doesn't like that. (Morning walk conversation, 5 October 1975, Mauritius)

If Lord Shiva is a great devotee, how can he be influenced by māyā?

In his constitutional form, Shiva is a *mahā-bhāgavata*, a supreme devotee of the Lord. But because he accepts *māyā's* association — especially the quality of ignorance — he is not free from *māyā's* influence. Such an intimate association is completely absent in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu. Lord Shiva accepts *māyā*, but in the presence of Lord Vishnu *māyā* does not exist. Consequently, Lord Shiva has to be considered a product of *māyā*. When Lord Shiva is free from *māyā's* influence, he is in the position of a *mahā-Sri Krishna-kathamrita*

bhāgavata, a supreme devotee of Lord Vishnu, *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ*. (Cc. *madhya* 20.311)

Why did Lord Ramachandra worship Shiva?

He [Lord Krishna or Lord Rama] likes to worship His devotee. Sometimes the father takes the child on his shoulder. Does it mean that the child is more important than the father? They say that in the original *Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa* there is no such incident as Ramachandra worshipping Shiva, that it has been added later — an interpolation. But even if He does so, what is the wrong? (Morning walk conversation, 23 December 1975, Bombay.)

What advice does Lord Shiva give his devotees?

Lord Shiva is the supreme devotee of Lord Vishnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ* — The most exalted *vaiṣṇava* is Lord Shiva. Those who are actually devotees of Lord Shiva follow Lord Shiva's advice and take shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Vishnu. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 4.30.38)

Who are the real followers of Lord Shiva?

It is especially significant that Lord Shiva is a pure devotee of Lord Vāsudeva. *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ* — Amongst all *vaiṣṇavas*, Lord Shiva is the topmost. Consequently, Lord Shiva has a *sampradāya*, a *vaiṣṇava* disciplic succession, called the *Rudra-sampradāya*. Those who belong to the present-day *Viṣṇusvāmi-sampradāya* of *vaiṣṇavas* come from Rudra, Lord Shiva. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 4.24.76)

What is the relationship between Lord Shiva and the devotees of Krishna?

Because Lord Shiva is a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he loves all the devotees of the Supreme Lord. Lord Shiva told the Prachetas that because they were devotees of the Lord, he loved them very much. Lord Shiva was not kind and merciful only to the Prachetas. Anyone who is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very dear to Lord Shiva. Not only are the devotees dear to Lord Shiva, but he respects them as much as he respects the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 4.24.30)



How Vishnu Gave His Names to the Gods

Sri Srīmad Gaur Govindā Swami Maharaja

Lecture on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 8.16.32

Bhubaneswar, 11 July 1992

*namaḥ śivāya rudrāya namaḥ śakti-dharāya ca
sarva-vidyādhīpataye bhūtānāṃ pataye namaḥ*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, Lord Shiva, or Rudra, who are the reservoir of all potencies, the reservoir of all knowledge, and the master of everyone.

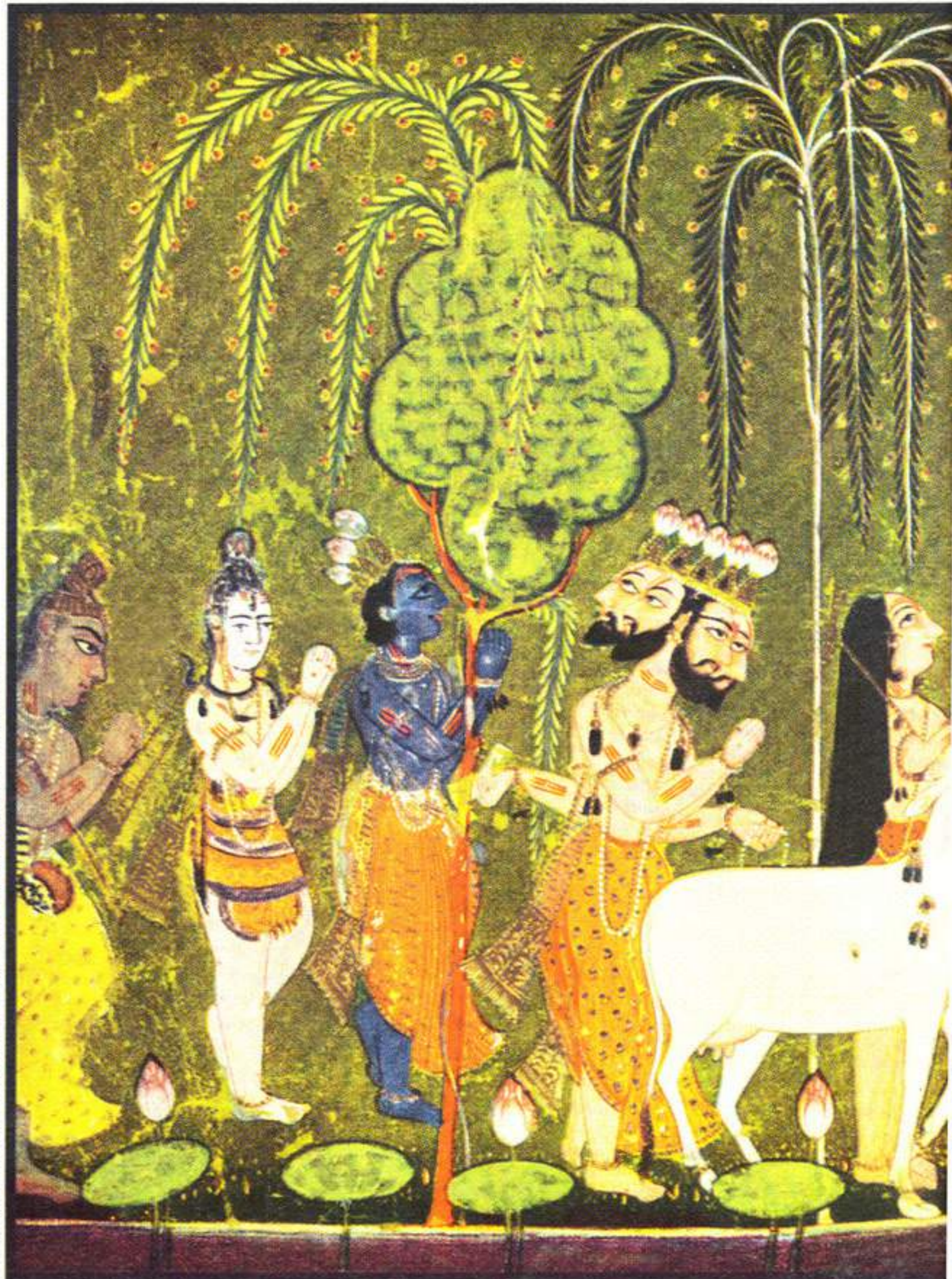
PURPORT

It is the system for one to offer obeisances unto the expansion or incarnation of the Lord. Lord Shiva is the incarnation of ignorance, one of the material modes of nature.

• • •

In this section of the *Bhāgavatam*, Kasyapa Muni is speaking about the rituals and procedures of *payo-vrata* worship. He is instructing his wife Aditi that she should chant these mantras, all of which are directed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vishnu.

In his purport, Srila Prabhupada says that one should offer obeisances unto the expansion or incarnation of the Lord. And Lord Shiva is one of the *guṇa-avatāras* — Lord Vishnu is the incarnation of *sattva-guṇa*, the mode of goodness, Brahma is the incarnation



Bhāgavata Purāna Illustration. Early 18th century. Punjab Museum, Patiala

of *rajo-guṇa*, the mode of passion, and Shiva is the incarnation of the mode of ignorance, *tamo-guṇa-avatāra*.

But sometimes some confusion arises here due to the misinterpretation of the *māyāvādīs*. *Māyāvādīs* don't know *tattva*. Therefore they say Shiva, Brahma, and all demigods are also *bhagavān*, like Vishnu. Because they don't come under this bona fide disciplic succession, hearing process, they never hear from the bona fide *ācārya*. They adopt the ascending process.

There are two processes followed for attempting to understand the supreme truth — the ascending process and the descending process. The absolute truth can only be understood through the descending process, *śrota-pāramparya* — hearing from the bona fide *ācārya* who has heard from his guru. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6.14.2) states, *ācāryavān*

puruṣo veda. He is *ācāryavān puruṣaḥ* who has heard from and taken shelter of the *ācārya*. Out of causeless mercy, the *ācārya* imparts *tattva-jñāna* unto one who has pleased him by service and submissive inquiries. *Ācārya* is one who has heard from his *ācārya*, and that *ācārya* is one who has heard from his *ācārya*. This is the descending process. *Śabda-brahma* descends.

Misconception of the Mayavadis

The *māyāvādīs* don't follow this process of hearing from a bona fide *ācārya* in disciplic succession. They adopt the ascending process to try to understand the absolute truth. They try to understand the absolute truth by the thinking process, by dint of their own material knowledge, scholarship, merit and speculation. But one cannot understand Krishna in this way. In the tenth canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.14.29), Lord Brahma has said:

*athāpi te deva padāmbuja-dvaya-
prasāda-leśānugrṛhīta eva hi
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvan*

O Lord, only one who has gotten a little mercy of Your lotus feet can understand Your *tattva*. Those who speculate about You cannot understand You even after many, many lives — *ciraṁ vicinvan*.

But the *māyāvādīs* do not follow this process. For example, it is found in *śāstra* that names such as "Brahma", "Rudra", "Shiva", and "Indra" are included amongst the names of Lord Vishnu. Since *māyāvādīs* do not know *tattva*, they misinterpret such *śāstric* statements and create confusion by saying that all of the demigods are also Vishnu, the Supreme Lord. But what is the real *tattva* behind it?

Representative of the Lord

Srila Vyasadev and bona fide *vaiṣṇava acaryas* have described this topic. In his *Siddhānta-ratnam* (3.9), Srila Baladev Vidyabhusan states:

*abhedokta-vastu tad-āyatta-vṛttikatvādibhiḥ
saṅgacchante,*

*srjāmi tan-niyukto 'haṁ haro harati tad-vaśaḥ
viṣṇuḥ puruṣa-rūpeṇa paripāti tri-śakti-dhṛk,*

brahmā śambhus tathaiivārkaḥ

*ity-ādi-smṛtyānugūṇyāt. tasmād viṣṇur eva
sarveśvara iti siddham.*



The demigods are sometimes described in the *śāstra* as being non-different from Lord Vishnu. Great authorities explain that these descriptions mean that the demigods are non-different in the sense that they have functions that are delegated by Lord Vishnu. These authorities base their explanations on statements of the *smṛti* such as, "By His will, I, Brahma, create, Lord Shiva destroys, and He Himself, in His eternal form as the Personality of Godhead, maintains everything. He is the powerful controller of these three energies [creation, destruction and maintenance]," as well as "Brahma, Shambhu, and also the sun." Thus it is proven that Vishnu alone is the Lord of all.

Abheda means "non-different". Because Shiva, Brahma and all of the demigods are very dear to Vishnu, and are consequently His subordinates and are under His control — *tad-āyatta-vṛtti* — therefore they are non-different from Him. The *ācāryas* give the example of a viceroy under the control of the emperor, *samrāj*. When India was ruled by the British, there was a viceroy, a representative of the king, who worked under the control of the king. Sometimes this viceroy was referred to as "emperor" or "king". Still, he was under the control of the king. Similarly, Shiva and Brahma are under the control of Vishnu. They are representatives of Lord Vishnu and are incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Therefore, they are sometimes said to be as good as Lord Vishnu. Brahma says, "I have created this world under the direction of Lord Hari." And Shiva is obeying the will of Lord Hari by annihilating. Brahma, Shiva, Indra, and all of the demigods are empowered by Lord Vishnu. But Lord Vishnu is the Supreme Lord.

Names of Vishnu

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushanpad says (*Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.12):

*sahasra-nāma-stotre śarva-śiva-śambhu-rudrādi-śabdā
viṣṇu-nāmāni paṭhyante. teṣāṃ tatra pravṛttau nimittāni
coktāni brahmāṇḍe,*

*rujaṃ drāvayate yasmād rudras tasmāj janārdanaḥ
īśanād eva ceśāno mahā-devo mahattvataḥ*

*pibanti ye narā nākaṃ muktāḥ saṃsāra-sāgarāt
tad-ādihāro yato viṣṇuḥ pīnākīti tataḥ smṛtaḥ*

*śivaḥ sukhātmakatvena sarva-saṃrodhanād dharaḥ
kṛty-ātmakam idaṃ viśvaṃ yato vaste pravartayan*

*kṛttīvāsās tato devo viriñcaś ca virecanāt
br̥mhaṇād brahma-nāmāsāv aiśvaryaḥ indra ucyate*

*evam nānā-vidhaiḥ śabdair eka eva trivikramaḥ
vedeṣu sa-purāṇeṣu gīyate puruṣottamaḥ*

In the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma-stotra*, the thousand names of Lord Vishnu, you will find that "Sharva",

"Shiva", "Shambhu", and "Rudra", are all names of Vishnu. The *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* describes that Lord Vishnu, Janardana, controls Rudra. Therefore, Lord Vishnu is known as "Rudra". Lord Shiva works under the control of Lord Vishnu, therefore Shiva is known as "Ishan". "Ishan" is also a name of Lord Vishnu. One of the names of Shiva is "Mahadev". "Mahadev" is also a name of Lord Vishnu because He is the Lord of the Lords, the Lord of Shiva and Brahma. "Śiva" means, "all-auspicious", or "all-good". One of the names of Lord Vishnu is "Shiva" because He is all-auspicious and all-good. "Hara" means, "one who annihilates". Thus, one of the names of Lord Vishnu is "Hara". One of the names of Lord Shiva is also "Hara", because he annihilates. "Bṛhat" means "very great". Thus "Brahma" is also a name for Lord Vishnu. And because He is full of all opulences, so His name is also "Indra". Thus the one same Lord Trivikrama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is glorified by various different terms in the *Vedas* and *Purāṇas*.

Baladeva Vidyabhushan in *Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.13 explains with evidence from the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*nārāyaṇādini nāmāni vinānyāni sva-nāmāni
druhiṇādibhyo dadau*

*kṛte nārāyaṇādini nāmāni puruṣottamaḥ
prādād anyatra bhagavān rājevarte svakaṃ puram*

Lord Purusottama kept some names for Himself, like "Narayana", etc., and others of His own names He gave to the demigods:

A king keeps a palace for himself and he gives residential quarters to his ministers and subordinate officers. Like that, Lord Vishnu keeps some of His names like "Narayan" for Himself, and other names He gives to demigods because they are His subordinates.

Baladeva then comments on further evidence from the *Brahma Purāṇa*:

*catur-mukhaḥ śatānandī brahmaṇaḥ padma-bhūr iti
ugro bhasma-dharo nagnaḥ kapālīti śivasya ca
viśeṣa-nāmāni dadau svakīyāny api keśavaḥ*

svakīyānī rudra-viriñcy-ādini ca

Lord Kesava also gave away these particular names, even though they are actually His own. He gave "the one with four heads", "the one with hundredfold bliss", and "the one born from a lotus" to Brahma, and "the fierce one", "the one who wears ashes", "the naked one", and "the one with a skull" to Shiva.

Thus His own names include the names "Rudra", "Virinchi", etc.

Only a Hint

Here in this purport [see beginning of this article] it says, "I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, Lord Shiva, or Rudra...." The letter "Y" in "You" is capitalized here. Why is it capitalized? Because it is referring to Lord Vishnu. In his purport, Srila Prabhupada just hinted at this.

The meaning of this verse is, "I offer my respectful obeisance unto You."

"You" means whom? The Supreme Personality of Godhead Vishnu, Lord Shiva. The verse is saying, "O Vishnu, You are *śiva*, all-auspicious, You are also *rudra*, the destroyer, and You are the reservoir of all potencies."

Who is the reservoir of all potencies? Lord Vishnu. The verse describes, "You are the reservoir of all knowledge."

Who is that? It is Lord Vishnu. And, "You are

the master of everyone." Who is that? It is Lord Vishnu.

Everything in this verse refers to Lord Vishnu. But the names given are Shiva and Rudra — *namaḥ śivāya rudrāya*.

This is because Shiva is as good as Vishnu. Shiva is also a name of Vishnu, and in the purport Srila Prabhupada says, "It is the system

for one to offer obeisances unto the expansion or incarnation of the Lord." So Shiva is also an incarnation. Prabhupada has not described all of these intricacies, but the *ācāryas*, especially Baladev Vidyabhusan, have.

Why did Krishna Worship Shiva?

The *Mahābhārata* describes that Lord Krishna worshiped Rudra, Shivaji. Why? It is said that He prayed for a son to be born from His wife Jambavati. That son was Samba. The *Mahābhārata* also says that all of the demigods have come from the body of Rudra, and therefore Rudra is *parameśvara*. This is because Rudra is one of the names of Vishnu. One should understand these things in *tattva* — why

Sri Krishna-kathamrita

Krishna worshiped Rudra, Shivaji, and why it is said that all of the demigods came from the body of Lord Shiva. Lord Rama also worshiped Shiva. Before going to Lanka to kill Ravan, before building the bridge over the ocean, Lord Rama worshiped Shivaji. In Rameshwaram there is a Mahadev

Shiva temple known as "Rameshwar", meaning the *īśvara* (lord) of Lord Rama. Lord Rama said, "I worship My master, My lord, Rameshwar Shiva."

Why does the *Mahābhārata* describe that all of the demigods emanated from the body of Rudra? This is because Rudra is one of the names of Vishnu. What is the purport behind Krishna's worship of Lord Shiva? Two reasons are there:

One reason is to teach people that devotees should be worshiped. Lord Shiva is

a *vaiṣṇava* — *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhuḥ*, to teach people, Krishna worships him. Krishna thinks, "Unless I worship Shiva, the people won't worship him."

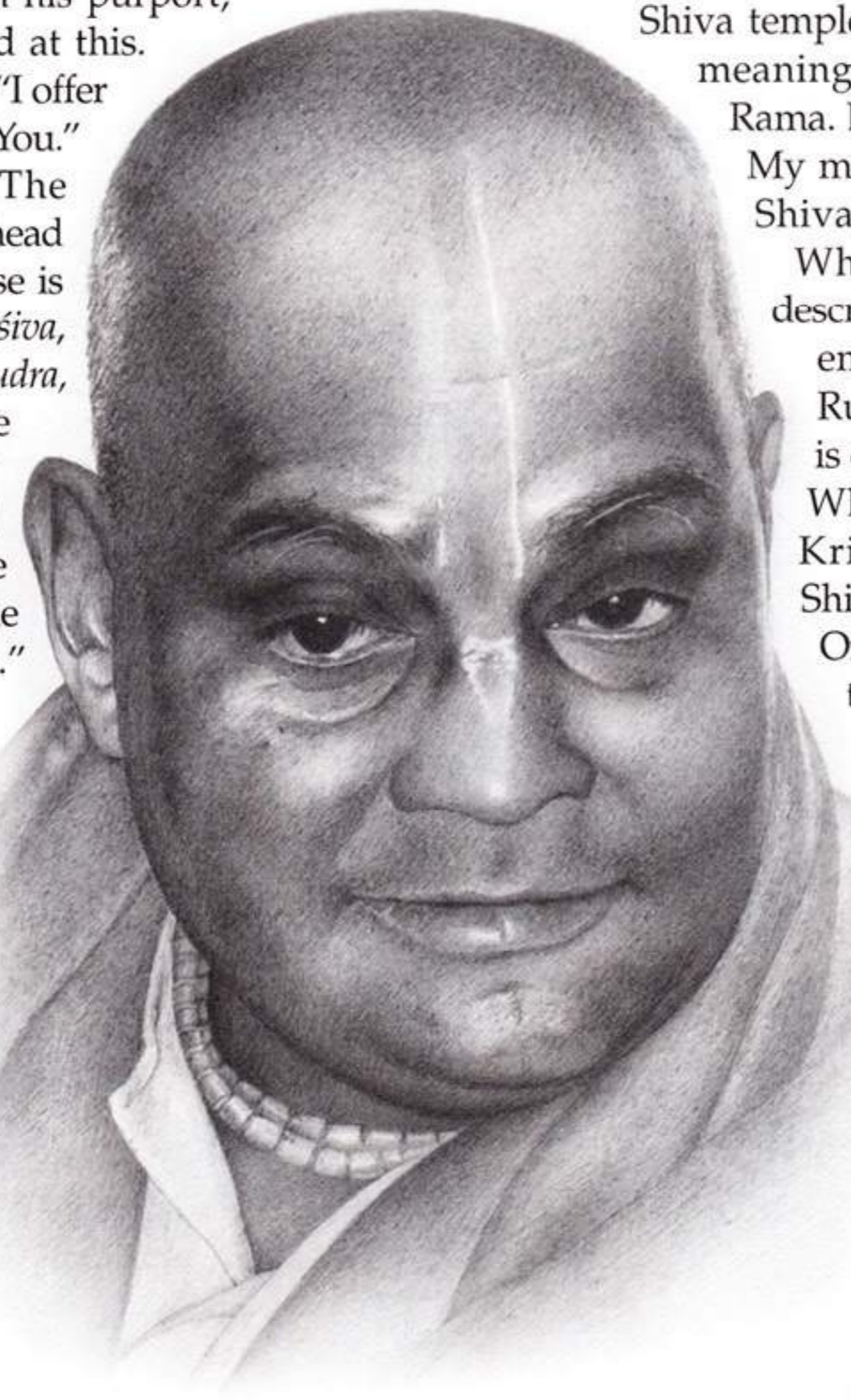
Krishna says in the *Gītā* (3.23),

mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ — "O Arjuna, although

I have nothing to do here, if I don't act, then people

won't, because they will follow Me." Why has He to do anything? Krishna says, "I am completely full. I don't feel any deficiency. Why shall I engage in activity? People are engaged in their activities to fulfill their deficiency. But I have no deficiency. Why shall I engage in activity? Because, unless I do so, people won't act." So here in this verse [see beginning of this article] it says, "I worship Shiva, who is a *vaiṣṇava*, to teach people that a devotee should be worshiped.

Krishna offered worship to His dear friend and dear devotee Sudama Vipra. He offered *ārati* to him, washed his feet, and sprinkled that water on His head. Why? Because Sudama Vipra is a very dear devotee. Krishna is showing that he should be worshiped. In the *Bhāgavatam* (9.4.63) Krishna said to Durvasa



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja



Muni, *aham bhakta-parādhīno* — “Though I am supreme, still I am subordinate to My devotee. Although I am supremely independent, I am dependent on My dear devotee. I am the supreme controller, but I am under the control of My devotee. He has bound Me up.”

Krishna accepts the bondage of love. The dear devotee binds up Krishna with the rope of love in his heart. Although Krishna is almighty, He has no power, no strength to break this bondage. In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.32.22) He said, *na pārāye*, “I cannot break it.” I have no power. This bondage of love is so tight. This is *bhakta-vātsalya*, because He is so dear to His devotees. So in order to teach people that Shivaji as a *vaiṣṇava* should be worshiped, He offered worship to him.

“I Worship Myself”

The second reason why the Lord sometimes worships Shiva is described by Krishna to Arjuna in the *Nārāyaṇa Tantra* (quoted in *Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.22):

*aham ātmā hi lokānām viśveṣām paṇḍu-nandana
tasmād ātmānam evāgre rudraṁ sampūjayāmy aham*

*mayā kṛtaṁ pramāṇaṁ hi lokaḥ samanuvartate
pramāṇāni hi pūjyāni tatas taṁ pūjayāmy aham*

*kaṁ hi viṣṇuḥ praṇamati kasmaicid vibudhāya ca
ata ātmānam eveti tato rudraṁ bhajāmy aham*

O beloved son of Pandu, I am the soul of all the worlds. Therefore, in the beginning of creation I worship Myself as Rudra. The whole world follows the precedent that I set. It is those who set a proper example who are worshipable. Therefore, I worship him. Vishnu offers respect to Brahma and to certain demigods. Thus I worship Rudra, since he is actually Myself.

Krishna says, “O Arjuna, I am the Soul of the universe, *viśvātmā*, but I worship Lord Rudra. Why? That is My own worship. By worshiping him, I worship Myself, I worship My soul.”

The *Viṣṇu-dharmottara* describes how a demoniac person once forced a *vaiṣṇava brāhmaṇa* to worship Lord Shiva. That *vaiṣṇava* thought to himself, “Lord Shiva is the incarnation of the mode of ignorance and Lord Nrisimhadev kills this ignorance.” So he worshiped Shiva with the mantra, *om nṛsīmhāya namaḥ*. Seeing this that demoniac person drew out

his sword to cut off the *vaiṣṇava*’s head. When he drew his sword, Lord Nrisimhadev suddenly came out of that *śiva liṅga* and cut off the head of that person. This story shows that Lord Nrisimhadeva is there in Shiva.

Therefore, Krishna says, “I

worship Rudra.” meaning, “I worship Myself. I worship Myself because whatever I do, people will follow. In order to teach people, I am doing.” Krishna says in *Gītā* (3.21):

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas
tat tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇaṁ kurute
lokas tad anuvartate*

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. Krishna is the supreme authority, the supreme truth. So He says, “Therefore I establish this truth. Unless I worship Rudra, people won’t do so.”

This is the purport behind Krishna’s worship of Shivaji, one reason is to teach people that Rudra, Shivaji as a devotee, *vaiṣṇava* should be worshiped, and the second point is that Krishna says that “By doing so, I worship Myself.”

Supersoul of the Universe

*viśveṣām antaryāmy aham atas taptāyaḥ-piṇḍa-vad
aviviktaṁ rudrāveśinaṁ mad-amśam ahaṁ pūjayāmi.
rudrādayo devāḥ pūjyā iti pramāṇaṁ mayā kṛtaṁ tad-
anyathā vyākupyeta, tad-arthaṁ ahaṁ tān pūjayāmi.
svotkrṣṭasyābhāvād eva tad-buddhyāham na kañcid
bhajāmi, kintu tādṛśaṁ mad-amśam ahaṁ bhajāmīti
visphuṭam. brahma-rudrādi-sarvāntaryāmī viṣṇur iti
tatraiva rudraṁ praty uktam brahmaṇā:*

*tavāntar-ātmā mama ca ye cānye dehi-samjñitāḥ
sarveṣām sāksi-bhūto ’sau na grāhyaḥ kenacit kvacit*

Krishna said, “I am the indwelling controller of all, therefore I worship My own expanded part, who takes the role of Rudra and is nondifferent from Me just as a red-hot ball of iron is nondifferent from fire. Otherwise, the standard I have Myself established, that Rudra and the other demigods are worshipable, would be contradicted. Thus, I worship them. But such worship is not performed with the idea that they are superior to Myself, since no one is superior to Me. Rather, I worship My own partial expansion as being such.” This is self-evident.

That Vishnu is the inner controller of Brahma, Rudra, and everyone else was spoken to Rudra by Brahma:



Chandan-yatra festival in Gadei-giri Orissa, on the left side are Sri Radha Madhava the ancestral deities of Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode. On the right are Sri Radha Gopal Jiu, the family deities of Srila Gour Govinda Swami.

He is the inner Self of you, me, and everyone else who can be called an embodied being. He is the witness of everyone, but no one can ever fully perceive Him. (*Siddhānta-ratnam* 3.23)

“O Arjuna, I am the soul of the universe, *antaryāmi*. I worship Rudra, who is My expansion.” Lord Shiva is the incarnation of ignorance, one of the material modes of nature. Prabhupada writes in the purport to this verse [see beginning of this article], “It is the system for one to offer obeisances unto the expansion or incarnation of the Lord.” This is also described here by Krishna: “Rudra is one of My incarnations or expansions, and I worship him as being My incarnation or expansion. All of these demigods headed by Brahma and Rudra are to be worshiped because they are My subordinates, My representatives. I am establishing this here, as otherwise people won’t follow it. There is no one superior to Me. As the Supreme Lord, I am not required to worship anyone, because I am to be worshiped by everyone. But to teach people that My subordinates should be worshiped, I offer worship.”

Lord Brahma said, “Lord Vishnu is the soul of all souls, the supersoul. Vishnu is the supersoul of myself. Vishnu is the supersoul of Rudra. Vishnu is the supersoul and controller of every living entity. He has given His own names to the demigods, because the demigods are His subordinates. They are carrying out His orders, executing His will. Thus they are His

representatives, as good as Himself, Lord Vishnu. Therefore, they are to be worshiped.

You Must Inquire

Some confusion may arise as to whether the demigods are also the Supreme Lord. The *Māyāvādīs* say like that, based on certain *śāstric* statements. This verse [see beginning of this article] says, “I offer my respectful obeisances unto You, O Supreme Personality of Godhead Shiva, or Rudra...” The Supreme Personality of Godhead is also Shiva and Rudra. What does it mean? There is a purport behind it. *Vaiṣṇava ācāryas* have given this *tattva*. It is very subtle. If one knows this *tattva*, then there will be no confusion for him. Otherwise there will be confusion.

Srila Prabhupada has not quoted all these things. He has only given a hint. Then you will have to inquire as to why it is so. Inquiry should be there. He left it for you, just to inspire you, to see how inquisitive you are. The *ācārya* does like that. If you have no inquiry, how can you get the answer? If you have no inquisitiveness then it proves that you are superfluous and careless, that you are not serious. You say, “Yes, yes, yes.” but you are not going deeper and deeper to the deepest regions. You are not inquiring, so how can you get it? Baladev Vidyabhusan has given all of these answers in his book *Siddhānta-ratna*. Unless you go to that book, how can you understand this topic?



Nandi - Shiva's Bull Carrier

*Adapted from Chapter 36 of the
Brahmavaivarta Purāna,
Kṛṣṇa-janma-khaṇḍa*

The mysterious origin of Shiva's bull carrier, Nandi, is related in the Brahmavaivarta Purāna. Chapter five of the brahma-khaṇḍa describes how Srimati Radharani once emerged from the left side of Krishna's body, followed by millions of gopīs and cowherd boys. Several young cows, including bulls, high breed surabhi cows, and kamadhenu cows, also emerged from Krishna's body. Krishna then gave away a beautiful bull that was as strong as ten million lions to Lord Shiva to serve him as his carrier. Coming from the body of the Lord, Nandi is thus an expansion of Krishna. This is also described in the following story from the Kṛṣṇa-janma-khaṇḍa of Brahmavaivarta Purāna (chapter 36, texts 42 to 57):



Desiring the welfare of the universe, Lord Shiva once went to fight the demon Tripurasura. Shiva's mind was full of pride. He considered that as he was the destroyer of all the three worlds, how could this demon, who was just like a firefly, engage in battle with him? He began fighting with Tripurasura, but, to his surprise, he found that it was not such an easy battle. Although the two fought day and night for one continuous year, neither was victorious. They appeared to be equal in prowess.

Employing his illusory potency, the demon suddenly rose into space. Shiva also flew up to fight with the demon. In space, they continued fighting for one month. The powerful demon then shattered Shiva's bow, broke his chariot, and destroyed all of his other weapons. Enraged, Shiva delivered a powerful blow with his fist on Tripurasura's chest. Reeling from Shiva's blow, the demon fainted. Regaining consciousness in a moment, the demon picked up Shiva and threw him down. Seeing Shiva defeated and his chariot broken, all the gods felt panicky.

Shiva started offering prayers to Krishna. Finding himself in danger, Lord Shiva repeatedly began to meekly call out Krishna's name. Krishna manifested Himself in the form of a beautiful bull and lifted Shiva up onto His back. Krishna then gave Shiva some armor and a trident. Taking that trident given to him by the Lord, Shiva struck Tripurasura with it. The demon was reduced to ashes and fell to the ground.

Understanding that his pride had been the cause of his difficulties, Lord Shiva renounced it and began offering prayers to Krishna.

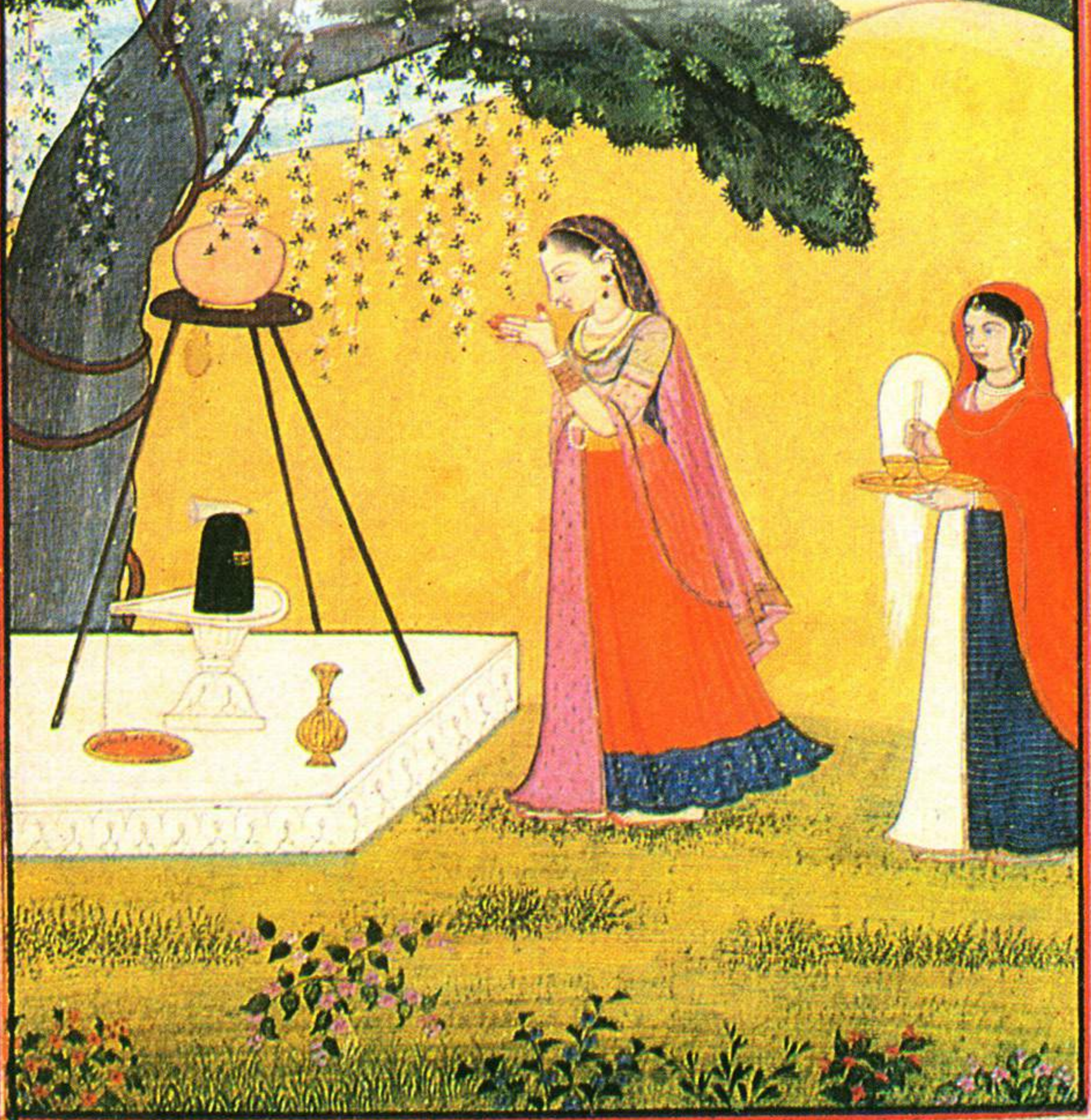
While relating this story to Srimati Radharani, Krishna concluded:

*tato 'ham vṛṣa-rūpeṇa vahāmi tena taṁ priyam
mama priyatamo nāsti trailokyeṣu śivāt parah*

Since then, I started carrying Shiva over My back as his vehicle because no one in the three worlds is dearer to Me than Shiva.

— Taken from the Parimal Publications edition of *Brahma-vaivarta Purāna*. Sanskrit with English translation. 2001. Delhi.

LORD SHIVA IN VARAJA



Kangra style painting, circa 1785. Unknown artist.



Four ancient deities of Lord Shiva residing at Mathura are known as *dik-pālas*, “protectors of the directions”. They stay in Mathura to protect the *dhāma*. Bhuteshwar Mahadeva is the protector of the western side of Mathura. Pippaleshwar Mahadeva resides near Vishram Ghat on the Yamuna. He guards the eastern side of Mathura. Rangeshwar Mahadeva is the protector of the southern side, and Gokarneshwar Mahadeva is the guardian of the northern side of the city.

Bhuteshwar Mahadeva

It is the tradition amongst *vaiṣṇavas* that when coming to Vraja one must first go to Mathura to take permission from Bhuteshwar Mahadeva to enter the *dhāma*. The reasons for this are described by Srila Rupa Goswami in his *Mathurā-māhātmya* (texts 234-238), wherein he has quoted the following verses from the *Ādi-varāha Purāṇa* recounting Krishna’s words about Bhuteshwar Mahadeva:

*mathurāyāṁ ca deva tvam kṣetra-pālo bhaviṣyasi
tvayi dr̥ṣṭe mahā-deva mama kṣetra-phalam labhet*

O *deva*! You will be the protector of Mathura. O greatest of the gods! Whoever sees you will attain My abode.

*dr̥ṣṭvā bhūta-patiṁ devaṁ varadaṁ pāpa-nāśanam
tena dr̥ṣṭena vasudhe māthuraṁ phalam āpnuyāt*

By seeing Bhuteshwar Mahadeva, all sins are destroyed. O Vasudha, one who sees him, achieves the land of Mathura.

*yatra bhūteśvaro devo mokṣadaḥ pāpinām api
mama priyatamo nityaṁ deva bhūteśvaraḥ paraḥ*

In Mathura is the deity Lord Bhuteshwar, who grants liberation even to the sinful. This Bhuteshwar deity is very dear to Me.

*katham vā mayi bhaktiṁ sa labhate pāpa-pūruṣaḥ
yo madīyaṁ paraṁ bhaktiṁ śivaṁ sampūjayen na hi*

How is it possible for a sinful person who tries to worship Me but will not worship Bhuteshwar Shiva, to attain devotion to Me?

*man-māyā-mohita-dhiyaḥ prāyas te mānavādhamāḥ
bhūteśvaraṁ na smaranti na namanti stuvanti vā*

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Bhuteshwar Mahadeva

Those who are bewildered by My *māyā*, who are the lowest of men, will not meditate on, bow down before, or offer prayers to Lord Bhuteshwar.

In *Garga-saṁhitā* (5.25.16) Narada explains to King Bahulasva how Lord Shiva came to stay in Mathura:

*bhūteśvaro deva-varaḥ satī-patis
taptvā tapo divya-śaran-madhora vane
kṛṣṇa-prasādān nṛpa-rāja sa-tvaraṁ
tasyaḥ pure māthura-maṇḍalasya hi*

O king of kings, Lord Shiva, who is the husband of Sati and the best of the demigods, performed



Krishna and Balaram fight with the wrestlers in Kamsa's arena

austerities in Mathura for an autumn of the demigods. In this way He attained Lord Krishna's mercy and became the gatekeeper of Mathura.

In his *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 17.191) Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami describes that when Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came to Vraja, He visited the deity of Bhuteshwar Mahadeva. Similarly, Bhuteshwar Mahadeva is mentioned in many histories as well as literatures of the followers of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.¹

F.S. Growse,² in his book *Mathura — A District Memoir* (pages 131-132), gives an interesting description of how Lord Bhuteshwar's temple looked in the 1800s:

Concerning the discovery of Buddhist antiquities, allusion has already been made to the temple of Bhuteshwar Mahadeva, which overlooks the old and ruinous Balabhadra-kunda. In its present form, it is a quadrangle of ordinary character with pyramidal tower and cloister built by the Maharatas towards the end of the last century. The site has probably been occupied by

successive religious buildings from most remote antiquity, and was at one time the center of the town of Mathura, which has now moved away from it more than a mile to the east. In the earlier days of *brāhmanism*, before the development of the Krishna cults, it may be surmised that Bhuteshwar was the special local divinity. There are in Braj three other shrines of Mahadeva that are also of high traditional repute, in spite of the meanness of their modern accessories, namely Kameshwar at Kama, Chakeshwar at Gobardhan, and Gopeshwar at Brindavan.

Pippaleshwar Mahadeva

Pippaleshwar Mahadeva resides in Mathura on the bank of the Yamuna near to Vishram Ghat. This *śiva-liṅga* was established in ancient times by Pippalada Rishi. *Skanda Purāṇa* (1.1.17.11) describes Pippalada as the son of the sage Dadhica and a partial incarnation of Rudra. *Padma Purāṇa* (2.61) describes the penances of Pippalada Rishi. He performed his meditation and austerities sitting as

motionless as a mountain. After a thousand years, ants began making a hill over him. Still the sage simply sat without moving. Poisonous black cobras began circling around him and still the sage did not move. Three thousand years went by like that, and then the devas began showering flowers on him. Brahma finally appeared and gave him the boon known as *sarva-kāma-siddhi*.

The *Ādi Varāha Purāna* (160.67-68) describes that Lord Shiva once saved Pippalada Rishi, and thus the sage established this *liṅga*.

Rangeshwar Mahadeva

“*Raṅga*” means sport or wrestling. The demoniac King Kamsa had a wrestling arena built near to the Yamuna in Mathura so that he could invite Sri Sri Krishna Balaram and have them killed by wrestlers. Kamsa installed a deity of Lord Shiva there, whom he worshiped before the wrestling match. Krishna and Balaram killed Chanura, Mustika, and the other wrestlers that Kamsa sent against Them, and then Krishna killed Kamsa.

Gokarneshwar Mahadeva

Srila Rupa Goswami’s *Mathurā-māhātmya* (461-462) gives a list of twenty-five great holy places of Mathura. The ninth *tīrtha* mentioned is Gokarnakhya, or the place of Gokarna Shiva. In verse 290 of the same book, Rupa Goswami quotes the following verse from the *Saura Purāṇa*:

*tato gokarṇa-tīrthākhyam tīrtham tri-bhuvana-śrutam
vidyate viśvanāthasya viṣṇor atyanta-vallabham*

There is a holy place in Mathura called Gokarna that is famous all over the three worlds. This place is extremely dear to Vishnu, the Lord of the universe.

Gokarnakhya is mentioned several times in *Bhakti-ratnākara*. It describes (5.320):

*ei viśvanātha-tīrtha ‘gokarṇākhyā’- nāma
viṣṇu-priya bhuvane vidita anupama*

This *viśvanātha-tīrtha*, place of Lord Shiva, is known as Gokarnakhya. It is a favorite of Lord Vishnu.

Bhakti-ratnākara 5.1847 relates how Raghava Pandit, Srinivas Acharya, and Narottama Das Thakur had *darśana* of Gokarna Shiva during their *parikramā* of Mathura. Text 13.385 recounts how the son of Lord Nityananda, Birchandra Prabhu, went to have *darśana* of Gokarna Shiva on his visit to Vraja. Gokarneshwar is also mentioned by Lalita in Rupa Goswami’s *Uddhava Sandeśa*, text 12.

The beautiful and ancient deity of Gokarneshwar Mahadeva is much different in appearance from the other presiding Shiva deities

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



*Rangeshwar Mahadeva
The Lord of Wrestling*

of Mathura. Gokarneshwar is not a *liṅga*, but has a human-like form with large cow ears. It is said that Gokarneshwar Mahadeva is so named because long, long ago, Gokarna, the famous speaker of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, worshiped him.³

Chapter 34 of the tenth canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* recounts how Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd men once went on a journey to the Ambika forest to worship Lord Shiva on the occasion of *Śiva-rātri*. While resting for the night, a great snake came and began to swallow Nanda Maharaja, and Krishna saved him. According to the *Bhakti-ratnākara* (5.1849-56), this pastime took place in Mathura at the Gokarneshwar temple.⁴



Gokarneshwar Mahadeva

According to different authorities, previously both Gokarna Rishi and Gokarneshwar Mahadeva were worshiped at this place, and that deities of Gokarna Rishi's wives named Gargi and Sargi were present here. Professor Srimati Uma Bhaskar, writing in her *Mathurā Māhātmya*, says that Hubishka, the king of Kushana, established the present deity of Gokarneshwar. In his *Mathura — A District Memoir* (page 133), F.S. Growse has described how the Gokarneshwar temple looked in the 1800's:

The adjoining hill is called Kailash, and on its slope is the shrine of Gokarneshwar, who is represented as a giant seated figure, with enormous eyes, long hair, beard and moustaches. In one hand is what appears to be a wine cup, in the other some flowers or grapes. The stone is much worn. The figure is certainly of great antiquity and might have been originally intended to represent some Indo-Scythian king. In a niche in the wall are two small statues, about one-and-a-half foot high, called by the *brāhmaṇas* as Sati and Parvati.

At the Gokarneshwar temple today there is sadly no sign of the Sati and Parvati deities mentioned by Mr. Growse.



Gopishwar⁵ Mahadeva

Gopishwar Mahadeva is one of the most prominent deities in the *Gauḍīya-sampradāya* and is mentioned in many Gaudiya literatures. He is the very ancient protector of Sri Vrindavan Dham. It is said that one cannot enter Vrindavan without his permission. The glories of Gopishwar are sung throughout the Goswami literatures.

*śrīmad-gopīśvaraṁ vande śaṅkaraṁ karuṇā-mayam
sarva-kleśa-haraṁ devaṁ vṛndāraṇya-rati-pradam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Sri Gopishwar, who is merciful Lord Shiva himself. He removes all troubles and grants spiritual love in Vrindavan. — *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* 5.3741.

*vṛndāvanāvani-pate jaya soma soma-
maule sanandana-sanātana-nāradeḍya
gopīśvara vraja-vilāsi-yugāṅghri-padme
prema prayaccha nirupādhi namo namas te*

O Shiva! O gatekeeper of Vrindavan! O you who are accompanied by Uma (Parvati)! O you who carry the moon in your hair! O Lord worshiped by Sanandan-kumar, Sanat-kumar, and Narada Muni! O Gopishwar,⁶ the worshipable deity of the *gopīs*! Desiring that you bestow upon me love for the lotus feet of the divine couple Sri Sri Radha Madhava, who perform joyous pastimes in Vraja, I offer my obeisances unto you again and again. — Srila Viswanath Chakravarti's *Śrī Sankalpa-kalpadruma*, text 103.

jaya jaya gopīśvara vṛndāvana-mājha

All glories, all glories to Gopishwara Shiva, who resides in the holy *dhāma* of Vrindavan. — From the song, *Vraja-dhāma-mahimāmṛta*.

*mudā gopendrasyātma-
sphurad-gopī-vṛndair yam iha bhagavantam prañayibhiḥ
bhajadbhis tair bhaktyā svam abhilaṣitam prāptam acirād
yamī-tire gopīśvaram anudinaṁ tam kila bhaje*

To obtain the jewel of being embraced by the arms of Vrajendra-nandana, Shyamasundar, the *gopīs*, who possess firm loving attachment for Sri Krishna, worshiped Sadashiva with great devotion and had all their internal desires fulfilled without delay. Daily I worship that Gopishwara Mahadeva, who resides on the bank of the Yamuna. — Text 87 of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami's *Vraja-vilāsa-stava*.

It is clear from Srila Sanatan Goswami's, *Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* (2.6.255-262) that Gopishwar was being worshiped in Vrindavan even at the time of Krishna's manifest pastimes. Text 259 describes:

*prāg āgatam vega-bhareṇa keśinam
pāda-prahāyeṇa nirasya dūrataḥ
paścād vṛṣam prāpya vibhidya nāsikām
baddhvāsu gopīśvara-sammukhe nyadhāt*

Krishna first came upon Kesi, and with a swift kick tossed him far away. Next, He found Arishta the bull, pierced a hole in Arishta's nose, tied him up, and brought him before Lord Gopishwar Shiva.

In his purport to this verse, Srila Sanatan Goswami explains that Krishna blessed Arishta by making him take the position of the traditional Nandi bull deity and sit before Gopishwara in his temple as Lord Mahadeva's carrier. Krishna kept Arishta tied up there for safekeeping so that he would not be free to wander about and cause more trouble.

Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur has described the location of Gopishwar Mahadeva in his *Vraja-rīti-cintāmaṇi* (texts 73-74):

*yad brahma-kuṇḍam śiva-koṇa-tuṇḍam
samantatas tasya ca kuñja-puñjāḥ
yad uttare sā sad aśoka-vāṭī
dhāṭīva yā tad-dvaya-dhairya-luṅṭhe*

To the north [of Vrindavan] is Brahma-kunda, surrounded by many pleasant groves. To the north of Brahma-kunda is an ashoka grove that enchants the divine couple and like a thief has stolen away their peaceful gravity.

*gopīśa īśaḥ sa tad-īśa-koṇe
gopī-janānām varado 'rcanīyaḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅgāya yathā sa dūṭi-
jano vinodena mano dhinoti*

North of that is Gopisha, where, worshiped by them, Lord Shiva pleased the *gopīs'* hearts by giving them the benediction to enjoy pastimes with Lord Krishna.

Narahari Chakravarti has described in his *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* (6.439-443) that before leaving Vraja to preach the teachings of the Six Goswamis in Eastern India, Srinivas Acharya, Shyamananda Prabhu, and Narottam Das Thakur first went to various temples to have *darśana* of the principal deities and get their blessings. As per the order of Srila Jiva Goswami, they also went to have *darśana* of Gopishwar Mahadeva. Srinivas Acharya became absorbed in offering prayers and gazing at Gopishwar. Lord Shiva was pleased with him and,

unknown to anyone, Gopishwar manifested the form of a *brāhmaṇa* and personally bade farewell to Srinivas. Thus Srinivas, Narottam, and Shyamananda Prabhus received the blessings of Gopishwar before beginning their famous preaching.

Mana-sarovar

There is an interesting explanation found in the local Vrindavan tradition⁷ and in *Śrī Garga-saṁhitā* (2.24-25) as to how Lord Shiva came to be known as Gopishwar. Once, while at Mount Kailash, Lord Shiva heard the sound of Krishna playing His flute. Mesmerized, he entered *samādhi*. He followed that beautiful sound until he



Painting by Susanta Kumar Sadangi

Krishna made Arishtasura sit before Gopishwar Mahadeva as Shiva's carrier

Sri Krishna-kathamrita

(main article continues on page 31)

Nandeshwar Mahadeva



Sri Deenabandhu Das

Nanda Maharaja's palace at Nandagaon is resting on top of the hill called Nandeshwar Parvat. This hill is an incarnation of Lord Shiva, who performed *tapasya* for thousands of demigod years to be able to take part in Krishna's Vraja pastimes. Six months of our earth years is one day for the demigods, and six months is one night, so thousands of those types of years.

When the Lord appeared before him to ask what benediction he was seeking, Shiva said that he knew that at the end of *dvāpara-yuga*, *svayam-bhagavān* Sri Krishna would appear in Vraja. Very eager to witness those pastimes, Lord Shiva asked Krishna if he could become a hill or a stone, or, thinking very humbly that perhaps that was too much to ask, he begged to become even a few grains of dust in Vraja to witness those pastimes.

Krishna told him, "Why a few grains of dust? You become a hill and My father will build his palace on top of that hill and then you will be able to see all of My transcendental pastimes. So Lord Shiva took the form of the hill known as Nandeshwar Parvat, and Nanda Maharaja's palace was situated on top of that hill.

Viswanath Chakravartipad explains in his *Vraja-rīti-cintāmaṇi* (1.15):

*tat-tac-chirobhūtam apāra-śobham
nandīśvaram sādhu-gaṇā vadanti
nandīśvaram tam ca yadīya-rūpaṁ
śrī-nanda-rājālaya-rājamānam*

The devotees declare that Nandishwar Hill, the form of Lord Shiva now shining as Nanda

Maharaja's capital, is an endlessly beautiful crown decorating Vrindavan.

When he says "tat", Viswanath is referring back to Vraja. "*Śirobhūtam*" means "the crown" or "crown jewel". So the crown of Vraja is this Nandeshwar hill. *Apāra-śobham*, means that the hill is of unlimitedly expanding beauty. But it's not that Viswanath Chakravartipad alone is saying this, but *sādhu-gaṇā vadanti*, all the *sādhus* are telling, *nandīśvaram tam ca yadīya rūpaṁ* — the hill is the form of Lord Shiva known as Nandeshwar Mahadeva. *śrī-nanda-rājālaya-rājamānam* — The word used is *rājālaya*, meaning the place of the *rāja*, the palace. Nanda Maharaja's palace is on top of this hill.

Shortly after Nanda Baba moved from Gokula to Nandagaon, Lord Shiva decided to come and visit his palace in order to have *darśana* of Nandalal Krishna. *yaḥ lālasā laya ke nanda ke lāla ka darśana hogā* — Shivaji was very eager, *lālasā*, to have *darśana* of Nanda's little *lāla*, his dear son. Shivaji was coming up the path playing his *ḍamaru*, drum. Lord Siva's *ḍamaru* is an X-shaped drum with two balls tied in the middle, which he shakes back and forth and the balls play on the heads "*bata-ta tata-ta bata-ta tata-ta*". Ma Yasoda came outside to see what was the racket going on. She saw a strange yogi standing there with ashes all over his whole body, a *sāmpa*, snake, around his neck, and *bicchu*, scorpions, and *makari*, spiders, all over him. Seeing this fearsome yogi standing there, she slammed the door.

But Shankara called out, *āre meiyā*, I came to get *darśana* of your *lāla*, please open the door.

श्री कण्ठकथामृत

Ma Yasoda said, "No! No! If my *lāla* will see you, He'll become frightened. You please go away."

"But, *meiyā*, I came from very far away to get *darśana* of your *lāla*. Please open the door."

"*Nahiñ!* *Nahiñ!* No, no! If my *lāla* sees you He'll get scared. You please go away."

Then Lord Shiva told her, "All right! I'm just going to sit here until He comes outside."

Ma Yasoda then came outside and said, "*Bābā*, you're not going to sit here all day. I know all you *bābās*. You just come for some *rotis*. So take some *rotis* and go away." Yasoda gave Lord Shiva a stack of *rotis* and sent him on his way.

Now Lord Shiva became hopeless and helpless. He went away to a nearby forest and began to meditate, hoping against hope that he would get *darśana* of Nandalal. *Āśa* means hope. So he became known as Asheshwar Mahadeva, the Lord of all hope, and that forest became known as Asheshwar Vana. He had the greatest of all hopes, hoping to get *darśana* of Nandalal.

Meanwhile, *lāla* knew that His dearest devotee Lord Shiva, *vaiṣṇavānām yathā śambhu*, had come to visit, but He couldn't see him. So Krishna began to cry. And everything Ma Yasoda did to stop him from crying failed.

All the elderly *gopīs* came and also tried to calm Krishna down, but they all failed. But there was one very old but very intelligent *gopī*. She said that someone has put the evil eye on Yasoda's *lāla*. *Nazar* means "evil eye". So she asked who had come there that day, as someone had put a spell on *lāla*.

Ma Yasoda began to recount, "Well, this morning Abhinanda came, and Sunanda, and Vrishabhanu Maharaja also came by. Oh! One yogi also came. He was very fearsome, covered with ashes and with a snake around his neck and scorpions and spiders."

"So where did that yogi go?" asked all the *gopīs*.

"I don't know. I gave him some *rotis* and sent him on his way."

All of the *gopīs* then spread out over the four sides of Nandagaon to look for that yogi. They found him sitting in meditation in Asheshwar Vana. They called out to him,

*calore yogī nanda bhavan meñ yasmāt mā bulābe
vaki lāla ko nazar lage to rainoñ karābe*

"Come, yogi, to Nanda Bhavan, Ma Yasoda is calling you. You come and make the medicine to cure the 'evil eye' that you put on Him."

Rai means mustard oil. The villagers all believe that one can make medicine with mustard oil to ward off the effects of the evil eye, *nazar*.

They brought that yogi to Nanda Bhavan. Then Ma Yasoda opened the door. As soon as *lāla* saw

Lord Shiva, He began to smile. Then Ma Yasoda again shut the door. Again *lāla* began to cry.

Yasoda called to that yogi, "*Āre bābā!* You got your *darśana*, now you stop Him from crying!"

"*Meiyā*, there's only one way to cure *lāl's* crying."

"So tell me! Tell me! What is it?"

"*Meiyā*, when your *lāl's* foot will come on my head, then His crying will be cured."

Ma Yasoda shrieked, "*Nahiñ!* *Nahiñ!* No, no! There's that snake, scorpions and all those spiders. No way my *lāla* will put His foot on your head!"

Then all of the older *gopīs* cried out, "*Hañ!* *Hañ!* Yes! Yes!"

And Ma Yasoda said, "*Nahiñ, nahiñ!* No, no!"

Somehow the older *gopīs* prevailed. So Ma Yasoda came outside held up her *lāla* and He put His foot on Lord Shiva's head. Then Lord Shiva began to dance as Nataraja and play his *damaru*, *bata-tata-ta bata-ta tata-tata-ta*.

Seeing Lord Shiva dancing, *lāla* began to laugh. When we see the laughing of little boys our hearts feel great joy, what to speak of seeing the laughing of Nanda-lala. Ma Yasoda told that yogi:

*rahre yogī nanda bhavan meñ brij meñ vason kije
jab jab mere lālā robe tab tak darśan dije*

"My dear yogi, please don't go, stay here in Nanda Bhavan. You should do *vraja-vāsa*, remaining here in Vraja. Whenever my *lāla* cries, then you come and give your *darśana*."

Lord Shiva said, "All right, I'll stay here. But there are two conditions."

"What are those conditions?"

"*Meiyā*, whenever you bathe your *lāla*, you come and sprinkle that water, that *caraṇāmṛta*, on my head. And whenever you feed your *lāla*, you bring the remnants of His plate to me. Then I will stay here in the courtyard of Nanda Bhavan and no demon will ever disturb you here."

Because of Shivaji's presence, no demon ever came to Nandagaon. All of the demon pastimes took place elsewhere. One can have *darśana* of Nandeshwar Mahadeva in the courtyard of Nanda Bhavan at Nandagaon. To this day the *pujāris* bring Krishna's *caraṇāmṛta* and sprinkle it on the *śiva-liṅga*, and whenever they make the *rāja-bhoga* offering they also bring the *mahā-prasada* to Lord Shiva.

This is the proper way to worship the *devī-devatās*. First we offer the *bhoga* to Lord Krishna, and then we offer the *mahā-prasada* to the *devī-devatās*.

Offering our respects to Nandeshwar Mahadeva we should beg for his mercy that one day we will also be able to get *darśana* of Nanda-lala.





Painting by Susanta Kumar Sadangi

When Yasoda put baby Krishna's feet on S



Shiva's head, he began to dance in ecstasy.



Lord Shiva and the devas watch Krishna's rāsa-līlā with the gopīs

(continued from page 25)

came to Vrindavan, where Krishna was getting ready to dance with the *gopīs*. However, when he came to the gateway, Yogamaya⁸ was stationed there as a gatekeeper. She told him, "No males except Krishna are allowed entry. First you must have *gopī-rūpa*, the form of a *gopī*, and then you can enter."

Lord Mahadeva asked, "How can I get *gopī-rūpa*?"

Yogamaya said, "Take shelter of Vrinda Devi. She will grant you the form of a *gopī*." Vrinda Devi instructed Shiva to take a bath in the waters of Mana-sarovar.⁹ After bathing there, Shivaji came out of the water with the form of a beautiful *gopī*.

Vrinda Devi took Shiva in her *gopī* form to one corner of the *rāsa-sthalī*. Shiva stood there and prayed to Sri Sri Radha Krishna, "Please give me devotion to Your lotus feet." Krishna came before the new *gopī* and said, "O Gopishwar, I am very pleased to see you in the form of a *gopī*. I give you the blessing that all of the *gopīs* will offer respect to you."

Hearing Krishna's words, Radha became angry. She asked Krishna, "Who is she? Till today you have never addressed me as "Gopishwara", but now you are addressing this nice looking lady as such. This is a great insult! I will leave this *rāsa-mandapa*."

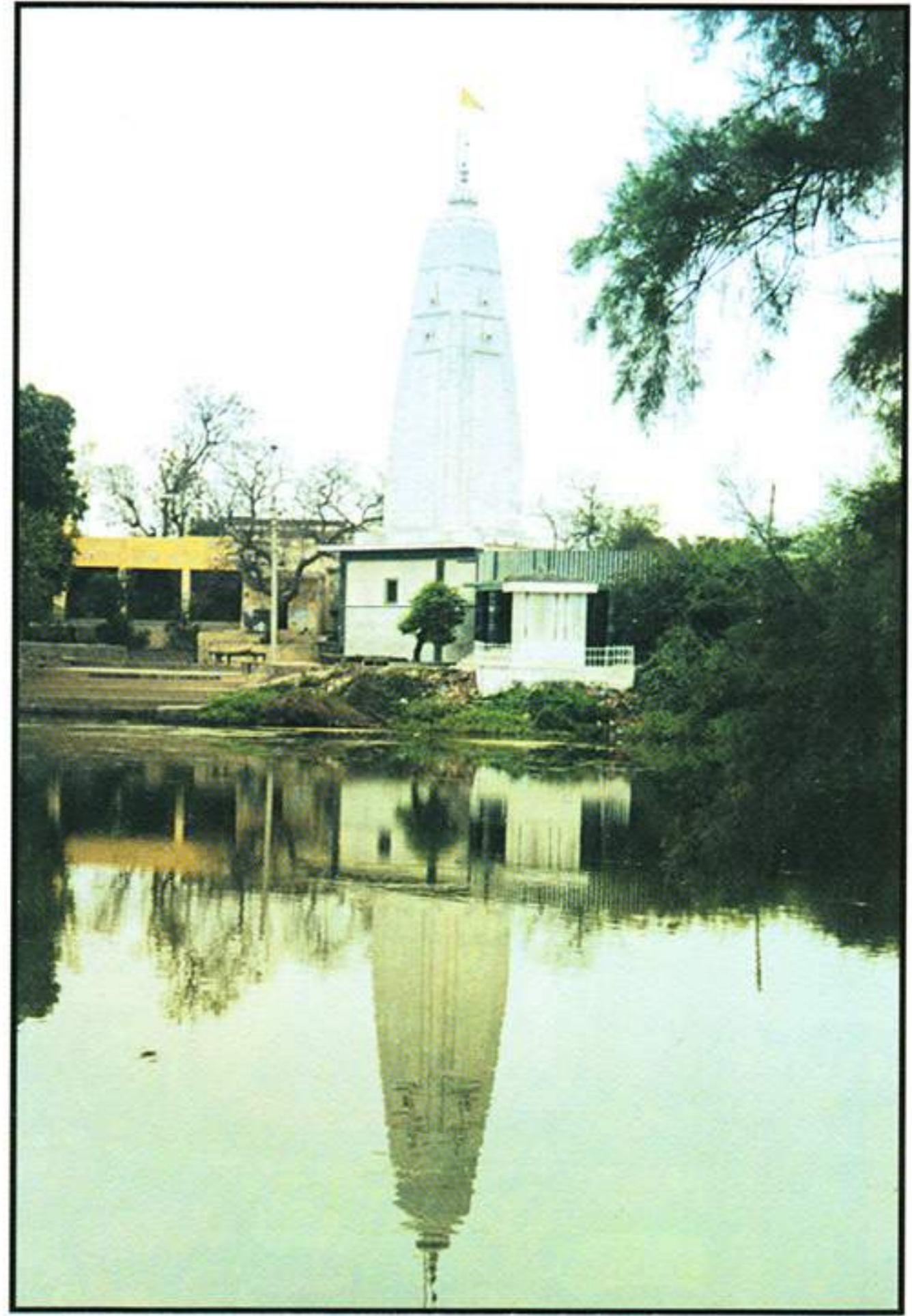
Krishna caught Her hand and spoke to Her and the other *gopīs*, "Please listen. This is not a *gopī*. This is Mahadeva Shiva. He has entered the *rāsa-mandapa* to enjoy with us. I hereby offer Gopishwar Mahadeva the post of *rakṣaka*, protector, of Sri Vrindavan Dham. All of you should offer daily *seva-pūjā* to Gopishwar.

From that time on, Gopishwar has been worshiped in Vrindavan in the form of a *śiva-liṅga*. Srila Narahari Chakravarti has described Lord Gopishwar Mahadeva in his *Bhakti-ratnākara* (5.3736-3740):

*ki apūrva śobhā ei vanera-bhitara
guṇātīta liṅga-rūpa nāma gopīśvara*

How wonderfully beautiful is this place in the forest! Here Lord Gopishwar Shiva is manifest as a *liṅga* beyond the touch of material nature's modes.

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Painting by Susanta Kumar Sadangi

Top: Present day Mana-sarovar in Vraja. Bottom: Shiva gets the form of a *gopī* while bathing at Mana-sarovar.

Painting by Susanta Kumar Sadangi



*ei sadāśiva vṛndā-vipina pālaya
inhāke pūjile sarva-kārya siddha haya*

This deity of Lord Sadashiva protects the Vrindavan forest. By worshipping this deity, one attains perfection in all one does.

*gopī-gaṇa sadā kṛṣṇa-saṅgera lāgiyā
nirantara pūje yatne nānā dravya diyā*

To attain Lord Krishna's company, the *gopīs* always worship this deity. Carefully they place many offerings before Him.

*kahite ki pāri ye mahimā gurutara
gopikā-pūjita teṅi nāma gopīśvara*

How can I have the power to describe all the great glories of this deity? Because the *gopīs* worship Him, this deity is called Gopishwar, master of the *gopīs*.

*indrādi-devatā stuti karaye sadāya
vṛndāvane prīti-vṛddhi inhāra kṛpāya*

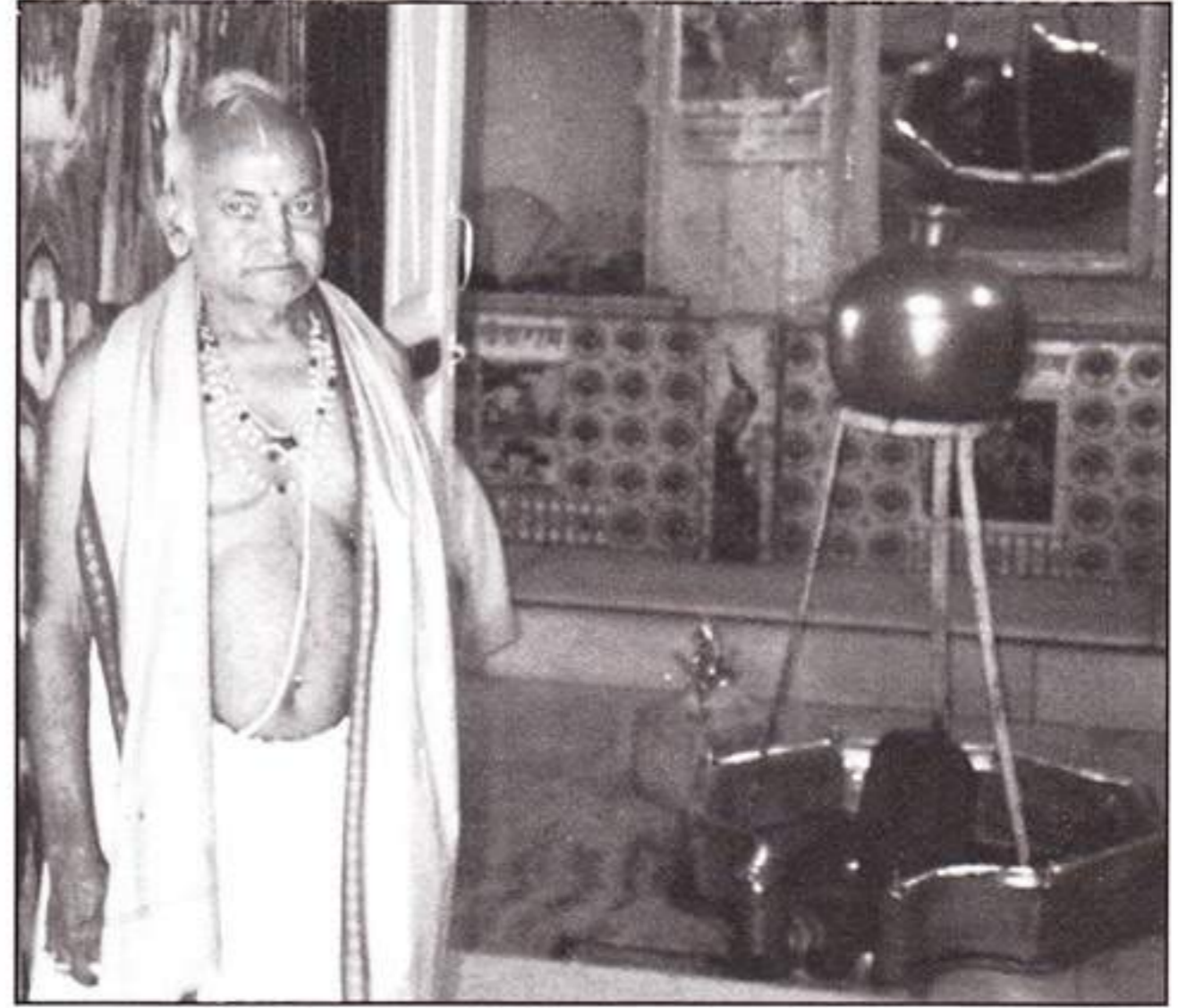
Indra and the devas always offer prayers to this deity. By this deity's mercy, one becomes advanced in the loving mood of Vrindavan.

As described above by Srila Narahari Chakravarti, Gopishwar Mahadeva is considered a manifestation of Lord Sadashiva. Since there is no difference between Lord Mahavishnu and Lord Sadashiva, the priests at the Gopishwar Mahadeva temple in Vrindavan have a special festival every year for Lord Shiva on the appearance day of *mahāviṣṇu-avatāra* Adwaita Acharya Prabhu.

With the help of Sandili Rishi and Garga Muni, Krishna's great-grandson Vajranabha discovered this *śiva-liṅga* in Vrindavan and re-established his *seva-pūjā*. Later, in the eighteenth century, the King of Bharatpur prepared a small temple to provide maintenance and protection for the deity.

Some years after this temple was constructed, Gopishwar's worship was taken over by a group of yogis who discarded the *vaiṣṇava* standard of worship that had previously been offered and started worshipping Gopishwar following the system of the Shaivas, who consider Lord Shiva as the supreme. Then, in the early 1930s, a Goswami of the Nimbarka *sampradāya* named Radha Govinda Goswami, an erudite scholar of the *Bhāgavatam* and other *śāstras*, who was living at Akrura Ghat, managed to recapture half of the rights to Gopishwar's *seva-pūjā*. Radha Govinda Goswami later turned the ownership over to his son, Pandit Rama Gopal Goswami, who is the current *sevait* of the temple. Radha Govinda Goswami and his son re-established the *vaiṣṇava* system of worship of Gopishwar, following the *Nārada-pañcarātra*. For the pleasure of Gopishwar Mahadeva, they instituted daily chanting of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and *Gopāla-sahasra-nāma*.

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Above: Rama Gopal Goswami and Gopishwar Mahadeva. Opposite top: Vrinda Devi brings Shiva in the form of a gopī to the rāsa-sthalī. Opposite bottom: Some of the many different faces of Gopishwar Mahadeva.

The pure Vrajabasi *vaiṣṇavas* do not consider the Shiva deities of Vraja to be manifestations of the Rudra or Shiva who is resident of Kailash. They see Shivaji in Vraja as a *vaiṣṇava-ācārya* and associate of Krishna. So, they worship him very simply. Unlike most Shiva temples, inside the Gopishwar Mandir there were no *kailāsa-parivāras*, associates of Lord Shiva at Mount Kailash, such as Parvati, Nandi, and Ganesh. It was only in recent years that a deity of Ganesh, Shiva's son, was installed on the request of a Vedic *brāhmaṇa*. Prior to this, Parvati, Ganesh, and Nandi were kept outside of the temple.

Bankhandi Mahadeva

Bankhandi Mahadeva is situated in the old part of Vrindavan at the junction of Bankey Bihari Bazar Road and Bankhandi Mahadeva Bazar Road, not far from Loi Bazar and just across the street from the temple where Murari Gupta's Gaura Nitai deities reside. "Ban-khandi" means "forest dweller". Although there are several stories in vogue about how Bankhandi Mahadev manifested to save Sanatan Goswami from walking a long distance for daily *darśana* of Shivaji,¹⁰ none of them are supported in *vaiṣṇava* literature. The book *Vṛndāvana-cakra-veḍi-parikramā*, a *parikramā* guide to Vrindavan written in the late eighteenth century by a *vrajavāsī-vaiṣṇava*

(main article continues on page 39)



Every year on the occasion of śiva-rātri, Gaudīyā Vaiṣṇavas from all over Vrindavan assemble at the temple of Gopishwar Mahadeva for a grand festival. Goswamis come in processions from the main temples of Vrindavan, including the temples of Radha Govinda, Radha Damodara, and Radha Gopinath, bringing kṛṣṇa-mahā-prasada to offer to Gopishwar. Many kīrtanas are sung for the pleasure of Gopishwar Mahadeva, including the following three rare songs, which have been sung on this day for hundreds of years. Our heartfelt thanks to Sri Rama Gopal Goswami, the Mahant at Gopishwar Mandir, and Sri Gopal Ghosh of the Vrindavan Research Institute for providing Gopal Jiu Publications with handwritten copies. Translations are by the kindness of Sri Naval Kishore and Sri Madhavendu Prabhus. Comments on the verses are by Sri Naval Kishore Prabhu.

Glories to Gopishwar Mahadeva

By Jagadananda

jaya jaya gopeśvara, jayati śrī digambara
tua pade ei vāra māgi

All glories, all glories to Gopishwar! All glories to the transcendental naked Lord. I pray at your lotus feet for this benediction:

nitāi gaura guṇa gāne, magna thāki rātri dine
sadāi ha-iyā anurāgi

May I always be merged day and night in chanting the transcendental glories of Sri Sri Gaurasundara and Nityananda in an eager mood of loving devotional service.

rādhā-kṛṣṇa-śrī-carāṇa smare jena mora mana
tila-ādha anyatra na jaya

May my mind always remember the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna. May it not deviate from there for even half a moment.

vraja-gītā-rasa-keli gāna kari bhakta-meli
ei śakti deha mahāśaya

O greatly magnanimous one, please give me strength that I may always sing about the sweet Vraja pastimes in the association of the Lord's pure devotees.

āmāra aśeṣa doṣa tumi hao āśutoṣa
ei bale nīvedī tomāre

My faults are unlimited, but you are easily satisfied. So I am offering my humble prayers unto you.

āmāra pāpiṣṭha mana thākura vaiṣṇavera-gana
kṛpā jena karena āmāre

My mind is very sinful. Because you are the lord of the vaiṣṇavas you bestow your mercy on me and take responsibility for my deliverance.

manuṣya janama pāilām nija prabhu nā bhajilām
pariṇāme nā dekhi upāya

Although I have attained this rare human birth I have not worshiped my Lord Sri Sri Radha Krishna. Now at the end of my life I don't see any other recourse than taking shelter of you.

ei kṛpā kara more vraje jena deha paḍe
e dīna jagadānanda kaya

This fallen Jagadananda prays that by your mercy I may leave this body in Vraja Dham.

In Vraja it is said that Yamaraja has no jurisdiction over those who leave their body in Vrindavan, but that such souls are under the jurisdiction of Bhuteswar Mahadeva, the deity of Shiva in Mathura who guards the holy dham.

Gopishwara

Holi-pada-kirtana

by Manohar Das

Holi is a popular festival in Vraja that celebrates the pastime of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna throwing scented colored liquids and powders on each other.

*śiva śaṅkaradeva khelata hori ho!
khelata hori gopī rūpa dhari ho!*

[The Brajabasis ecstatically shout:] Hori Ho! Hori Ho! Shiva Shankar is playing *holī* in the form of a *vraja-gopī*.

*(śiva) gopī bhāva dhara śubhra kalevara
paridhāne nīla sādī re*

Assuming the form and mood of a *gopī*, white-colored Shiva is looking very nice wearing a blue sari.

*bābā gopī rūpa dhāri re
nānā ābharāṇa aṅgahi pahiraṇa
mṛdu mṛdu hāsa ugāri re*

In that *gopī* form, Lord Shiva wears many jewels and ornaments all over her body, and she smiles softly.

*ḍhamaki ḍhamakī jāya ābīra golāla lei
śyāma vadana nehāri re*

Seeing Syamasundara, in a very humorous way she takes different colors in her hand and dances over to Him.

*māri māri bhāgata jhuma jhuma nācata
ānanda-rasa bihāri re*

She throws the colors on Syamasundara and then dances back, then she again dances near, throws more colors, and dances away, all the while smiling sweetly while her ankle bells make the sound, "jhum jhum". In this way she increases the transcendental mellow.



Gopishwar Mahadeva, with blocks of ice around him as in the Himalayas.

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Painting by Susanta Kumar Sadangi

Shiva as a gopī plays holi with Krishna

*śveta sakhī banī khelata śiva jāni
rasika maṇi śyāma hari re*

I know that this whitish *gopī* playing with Krishna is actually Shiva. He is the crest jewel or leader of all the *rasikas*. [The Brajabasis sing:] "Hari re!"

*premaka adhīna dei āliṅgana
vāma aṅga milāiya dhari re*

Controlled by *prema*, and holding each other's left limbs, they ecstatically embrace.

Why is the left side particularly mentioned? Because the heart is on the left side. This indicates that their embrace is not superficial.

*ardha aṅga śyāma ardha śveta vāma
eka ātmā hara āra hari re*

Half the body is bluish Syama. Half is the whitish *gopī*, Hara (Shiva). Hara and Hari have become one.

*cūdā ardha śire ardha veṇī dhare
'manohara' rūpa so heri re*

Looking at the form of Shiva as a *gopī* with a braid on one side of her head and the half moon on the other, Krishna becomes enchanted.

*śiva śaṅkara khelata hori ho!
gopīśvara khelata hori ho*

In this way, Gopishwara Shiva Sankara plays *holi* with Sri Syamasundara. [The Brajabasis call out:] "hori ho! hori ho!"

Half Vishnu, Half Shiva

by Govinda Das

As a manifestation of Sadashiva, Lord Shiva is an anśa-avatāra, part of Krishna, and in that sense They are non-different. They are also considered to be non-different since Shiva is the greatest worshiper of Krishna. Sometimes to show how intimately related They are, They manifest the form known as Hari-Hara, which is half Vishnu and half Shiva.

In the Padma Purāṇa, bhūmi khaṇḍha 83.37-38, Lord Shiva tells Maharaja Yayati:

antaram nāsti rājendra mama viṣṇor na samśayah

O lord of kings, have no doubt, there is certainly no difference between Vishnu and myself.

yo 'sau viṣṇu-svarūpeṇa sa vai rudro na samśayah
yo rudro vidyate rājan sa ca viṣṇuḥ sanātanaḥ

There is no doubt that Vishnu is the form of Rudra and Rudra is the form of Vishnu. You should know, O king, that Rudra is always the same as Vishnu.

There are many ancient deities of Hari-Hara to be found in India. There is famous deity of Hari-Hara found in Godrumadwip in Nabadwip Dham. Also the Lingaraj deity in Bhubaneswar is considered to be a manifestation of Hari-Hara. (See Krishna Kathamrita #7) In the following song, the poet Govinda Das describes his vision of the form of Shiva as Hari-Hara.

bābā bom bom bholā, darśana de jaṭā-dhārī
jaṭā-dhārī paṭā-dhārī, bābā laṭā-paṭā-dhārī

O bābā! You are free from everything. You have forgotten everything material. Please grant me your audience with your form of matted hairs! You keep matted locks, bābā, and you carry your own āsana, seat, and water pot wherever you go.

jaṭā-dhārī śiva śaṅkara, darśana de bābā
darśana de bholā, darśana de bābā

O Shiva Shankara! O keeper of matted locks! O bābā, please give me your darśana! O you who are free from everything material! O bābā, please grant me your darśana, please grant me your darśana!

hema hemagiri duṅhuṅka duṅhuṅ tanu śrī
kibā ādha nara ādha nārī re

Your body is beautiful like gold, and you reside on a golden mountain, hemagiri, the Himalayas. It's hard to say if you are male or female.

Another meaning of the word "hemagiri" is that Shiva's bodily complexion is like ice and he resides on the ice mountains, the Himalayas. Even though they are two different forms, Shiva and the mountains look like one. Similarly, when he is residing with Gauri it is hard to say if he is a male or a female. His form is like a male but his softness is like that of a female.



Hari-Hara: half Vishnu and half Shiva

By addressing Lord Shiva as both male and female, Govinda Das is indicating that he is transcendental and beyond genders.

ādha ujora āja kājara tinhu locana dhārī re
(dekha) duṅhuṅ mili eka gāta re

Shivaji has three eyes: one is blackish, one is white, while the brightly blazing third eye on the forehead is a combination of the other two.

Shiva has a blackish eye because Krishna is resting there. He has a whitish eye because Radha is there. His third eye is the combination of the two, and is blazing brilliantly because the form of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the combined form of Radha and Krishna is resting there.

bhakata nandita, bhuvana vandita
jagata tāpa nistāra re

You are always giving pleasure to the vaiṣṇavas who take shelter of you, and you are worshipped by the three worlds. You are the one who frees the world from the blazing fire of tāpa, sufferings.

ādha bāghāmbhara, ādha paṭṭāmbara
pindhana duṅhuṅ ujjyāra re

You are effulgent, dressed half in the yellow dress of Krishna and half in the tiger skin of Shiva.

ādha phaṇimaya, ādha maṇimaya
hṛdaye śobhita maṇihāra re

Half of your head is decorated with snakes, and half with jewels. On your chest is a jeweled necklace.

na deva kāmīnī! na deva kāmuka
kevala prema paracāra re

Neither Gauri nor Shivaji have lusty desires. They are both preaching pure love of God.

gauri-śaṅkara! caraṇa kiṅkara!
kṛpā māṅgata govinda dāsa re

Govinda Das, the servant of the lotus feet of Sri Gauri-Shankar, desires their mercy.



Pandit Rama Narayan Mishra, also known as Chandrabhaga, was a learned Brajabasi vaiṣṇava-ācārya in the line of the Radha-raman Goswamis who lived at the beginning of the nineteenth century. He is described in the encyclopedia Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Abhidhāna as a disciple of Harinath, the son of Damodar Das. Damodar Das was the younger brother of Gopinath Pujari, a priest of the Radha-raman deity who is mentioned in Nityananda Das' Śrī Prema-vilāsa as one of the prominent disciples of Srila Gopal Bhatta Goswami. Rama Narayan Mishra is famous for his elaborate commentary on the five chapters of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam describing the rāsa dance, titled Bhāvābhāva-vibhāvikā. He wrote a detailed and scholarly commentary titled Prabhu on the Śrī Gaurāṅga-candrodaya of the Vāyu Purāṇa, as well as a commentary on Vedānta-sūtra known as Sūkṣmatamā Vṛtti. He also composed the following Sanskrit prayer to Gopishwar Mahadeva entitled Gopīśvarāṣṭakam.

श्रीवृन्दारकवृन्देशवन्द्यपादारविन्दवे ।
वृन्दाविपिनसंवासवरदाय नमो नमः ॥ १ ॥

śrī'-vṛndāraka-vṛndeśa-vandyā-pādāravindave
vṛndā-vipina-saivāsa-varadāya namo namaḥ

śrī — opulent; vṛndāraka-vṛnda — of the host of gods; īśa — by the controllers; vandyā-pāda-aravindave — unto he whose lotus feet are worshipable; vṛndā-vipina — in Vrindavan; saivāsa — residence; varadāya — unto he who grants; namaḥ namaḥ — I offer my respectful obeisances again and again.

I offer my repeated obeisances to he whose lotus feet are worshipable by the opulent rulers of the host of gods, and who grants residence in the Vrindavan forest.

कृष्णस्नेहपरिस्रिग्धजटाकेशकलापिने ।
कलकेलिकलामानकोकिलालापिने नमः ॥ २ ॥

kṛṣṇa-sneha-parisnigdha-jaṭā-keśa-kalāpine
kala-keli-kalā-māna-kokilāpine namaḥ

kṛṣṇa-sneha — of affection for Krishna; parisnigdha — treated with oil; jaṭā-keśa-kalāpine — unto he whose bunch of matted hair; kala — melodious; keli-kalā — amorous songs; māna — having the form of; kokilā-ālpine — to he whose singing resembles that of a cuckoo; namaḥ — obeisances.

I offer my obeisances unto he whose bunch of matted locks is smeared with the oil of affection for Krishna. His singing resembles the sweet amorous songs of the cuckoo.

पूर्णेन्दुमन्दसद्भालचन्द्रमुक्तावतंसिने ।
वन्देऽहं गोपिकावृन्दनन्दनन्दनशंसिने ॥ ३ ॥

pūrṇendu-manda-sad-bhāla-candra-muktāvataṁsine
vande 'ham gopikā-vṛnda-nanda-nandana-śaṁsine

pūrṇa-indu — like the full moon; manda — gentle, soft; sat-bhāla — nice forehead; candra-mukta-avatamsine — whose crest is the pearl-like moon; vande — worship; aham — I; gopikā-vṛnda — the multitude of gopis; nanda-nandana — the son of Nanda Maharaja; śaṁsine — to he who is praising.

I worship he who wears the pearl-like moon as a crest on his soft handsome forehead, which itself is like the full moon. He is engaged in praising the son of Nanda Maharaja and the multitude of gopīs.

नमो योगजचिज्ज्योतिर्वह्निवेण्यर्धभासिने ।
कृष्णावासहृदब्जानुकारिदृक्कंजवासिने ॥ ४ ॥

namo yogaja-cij-jyotir-vahni-veny-ardha-bhāsine
kṛṣṇāvāsa-hṛd-abjānukāri-dṛk-kañja-vāsine

namaḥ — obeisances; yoga-ja — produced from meditation; cit — spiritual; jyotiḥ — of the effulgence; vahni — like the fire; venī — a braid; ardha — half; bhāsine — unto he who

is shining; *kṛṣṇa-āvāsa* — the abode of Krishna; *hṛt-abja* — the lotus of the heart; *anukāri* — imitating; *dyk-kamja* — in the lotus eyes; *vāsine* — unto he who resides.

I offer my obeisances unto he who is brilliant with a half-braid² shining like the fire of the divine effulgence produced from meditation. He bestows his *darśana* on³ one whose heart has become the dwelling place of Krishna.

कृष्णालिङ्गनसोत्साहसूच्चवक्षोऽधिशोभिने ।
नीलोत्पलाभकृष्णाङ्गमाधुर्यमधुलोभिने ॥ ५ ॥

kṛṣṇāliṅgana-sotsāha-sūcca-vakṣo-'dhiśobhine
nīlotpalābha-kṛṣṇāṅga-mādhurya-madhu-lobhine

kṛṣṇa-āliṅgana — for Krishna's embrace; *sa-utsāha* — enthusiastic; *sūcca* — nicely raised; *vakṣaḥ-dhi* — receptacles on the chest; *śobhine* — to he who is resplendent; *nīla-utpala* — blue lotuses; *ābha* — like; *kṛṣṇa-āṅga* — of Krishna's limbs; *mādhurya-madhu* — of the sweet nectar; *lobhine* — to he who is desirous.

[In his form as a *gopī*] he is resplendent with well-raised breasts that are enthusiastic for the embrace of Krishna, and is intensely greedy for the sweet nectar of Krishna's limbs, which resemble blue lotuses.

वृन्दाकाननगेहाय कृष्णस्नेहप्रदायिने ।
नमश्चिद्धनदेहाय भक्तमानसशायिने ॥ ६ ॥

vṛndā-kānana-gehāya kṛṣṇa-sneha-pradāyine
namaś cid-ghana-dehāya bhakta-mānasa-śāyine

vṛndā-kānana — Vrindavan; *gehāya* — to he whose home; *kṛṣṇa-sneha* — love for Krishna; *pradāyine* — to he who grants; *namaḥ* — obeisances; *cid-ghana* — full of spiritual energy; *dehāya* — unto he whose form; *bhakta-mānasa* — in the hearts of the devotees; *śāyine* — unto he who reclines.

I offer my respects to he whose home is the Vrindavan forest. He grants love for Krishna and his form is full of spiritual energy. He dwells within the heart of the devotee.

राधाराधाधवाराध्यभवबाधापहारिणे ।
क्लेशघ्नकेशवेशानगोपेशाय नमो नमः ॥ ७ ॥

rādhā-rādhā-dhavārādhyā-bhava-bādhāpahāriṇe
kleśa-ghna-keśaveśāna-gopeśāya namo namaḥ

rādhā — Srimati Radharani; *rādhā-dhava* — the lover of Radha; *ārādhyā* — worshipable; *bhava-bādhā* — the obstacles of material existence; *apahāriṇe* — to he who takes away; *kleśa-ghna* — the destroyer of miseries; *keśava-īśāna* — the Lord of Kesava; *gopa-īśāya* — unto the Lord of the cowherd men; *namaḥ namaḥ* — I offer my respectful obeisances again and again.

He is worshipable by Radha and Her lover, Krishna, and he removes the obstacles of material existence. He destroys all miseries and is the Lord of Keshava and the cowherd men.

नित्यं राधारमाकान्तलीलानन्दप्रकाशिने ।
आशुतोषाय श्रीनाथभक्तिविघ्नविनाशिने ॥ ८ ॥

nityam rādhā-ramā-kānta-līlānanda-prakāśine
āśu-toṣāya śrī-nātha-bhakti-vighna-vināśine

nityam — always; *rādhā* — Srimati Radharani; *ramā-kānta* — Krishna, the husband of the goddess of fortune; *līlā-ānanda* — the ecstasy of the sportive pastimes; *prakāśine* — to he who is shining; *āśu-toṣāya* — to he who is quickly pleased; *śrī-nātha* — Krishna, the husband of the goddess of fortune; *bhakti-vighna* — the obstacles of devotion; *vināśine* — to he who destroys.

I bow down to he who is always bright with the ecstasy of Radha-Krishna's sportive pastimes. He is easily pleased and is the destroyer of the obstacles of devotion to the husband of the goddess of fortune, Krishna.

चन्द्रभागाविष्णुसख्यागीतं गोपीश्वराष्टकम् ।
कष्टनष्टकरमिष्टमिष्टदं ब्रजवासिनाम् ॥ ९ ॥

candrabhāgā-viṣṇu-sakhyā-gītaṁ gopīśvarāṣṭakam
kaṣṭa-naṣṭa-karam iṣṭam iṣṭa-dam vraja-vāsinām

candrabhāgā-viṣṇu-sakhyā — of Candrabhaga Vishnusakhya Rama-Narayan Mishra; *gītam* — the song; *gopīśvara-āṣṭakam* — the eight verses glorifying Gopishwar; *kaṣṭa-naṣṭa-karam* — making difficulties disappear; *iṣṭam* — cherished, sweet; *iṣṭa-dam* — bestowing what is desired; *vraja-vāsinām* — for the Vrajavasis

Singing this sweet *Gopīśvarāṣṭakam* of Chandrabhaga Vishnusakhya frees one from all difficulties and gives pleasure to the *vrajavāsīs*.

— Translated by Sri Matsya Avatar Das



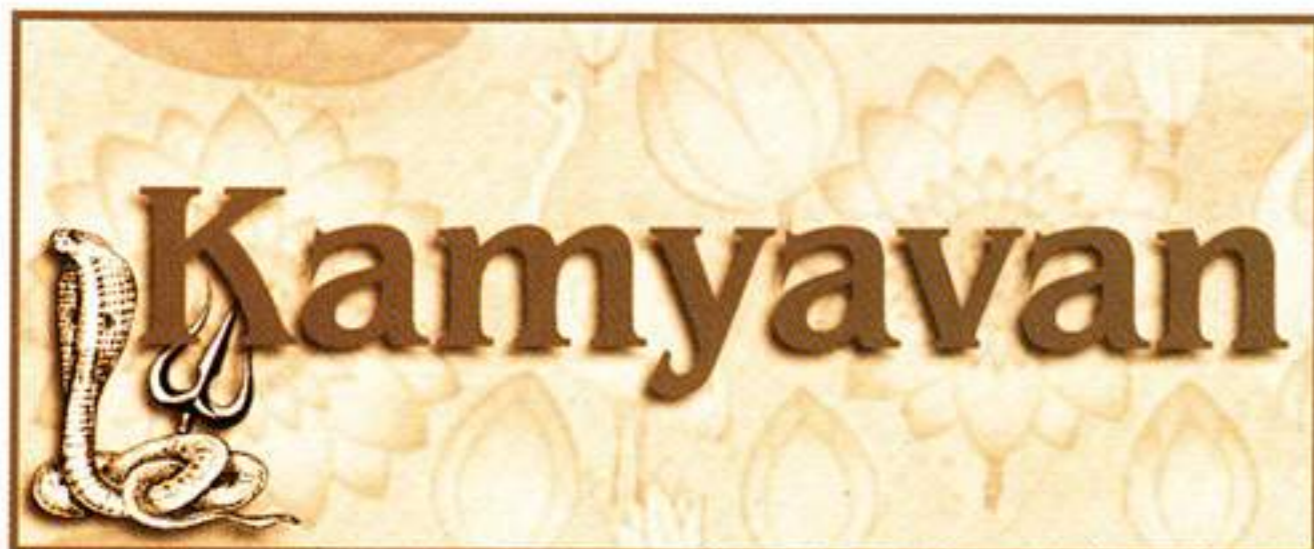
Translator's Notes:

1. The word "śrī" did not appear in our source material, but has been inserted here as it seems necessary to fulfill the requirements of the poem's meter.
2. The mention of a half-braid here suggests Lord Shiva's form as *ardha-nārīśvara*, the Lord who is half female and half male as a combination of Shiva and Parvati
3. Literally, "dwells in the lotus eyes of".



(continued from page 33)

named Gopal Kavi, gives a different account as to how Bankhandi Mahadeva came there: In ancient times a *sādhu* was coming in a bullock cart from the Himalayas with a number of *śiva-liṅgas*. While passing through Vrindavan, he came to a heavily forested area. The cart struck a tree, and one of the *liṅgas* fell off. When the *sādhu* tried to pick up the *liṅga*, he found that it had mysteriously become so heavy that he could not move it. He left it, and later the *vrajavāsīs* named the *liṅga* Bankhandi, after the forest there, and started worshipping him.



Kameshwar Mahadeva

Srila Narahari Chakravarti has described Kameshwar Mahadeva in his *Bhakti-ratnākara* (5.841):

dekha mahā-tejomaya 'śiva-kāmeśvara'

See here the most powerful Shiva known as Kameshwar.

Kameshwar Mahadeva resides in Kamyavan in the western part of Vraja-mandala. According to the tradition in Vraja, Vrishabhanu Maharaja worshiped Kameshwar to get a daughter. He already had a son, Sridama, but he wanted a daughter. Kameshwar Mahadeva granted his desire and he obtained the most illustrious Srimati Radharani as his daughter.

"*Kāma*" means "desire". It is said that Kameshwar Mahadeva is the fulfiller of one's desires. Thus, for thousands of years, *sādhus* have worshiped Kameshwar Mahadeva in Vraja to get *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Gopishwar at Kamyavan

In Kamyavan there is a lake called Gopikunda.¹¹ It is said that once Krishna was performing a *rāsa-līlā* here with the *gopīs*. The sounds of the ankle bells and bracelets on Krishna and the *gopīs* attracted all of the three worlds. Hidden in the sky, all of the devas came to see the



A Brijbasi woman worships Kameshwar Mahadeva

wonderful festival, and thus got a small taste of *gopī-bhāva*. They were all amazed, and tears fell from their eyes. Seeing the ecstatic dancing of Krishna and the *gopīs*, Lord Shiva could not control himself. He immediately came down, assumed the form of a *gopī*, entered into the *rāsa* dance, and began to dance with Krishna in a very expert way. Krishna became pleased and told him:

*tuṣṭo 'ham te bhūtapate
strī-bhāvena rasenvayā
dadāmi te vane vāsam
kāmyake mama sannidhau
gopīśa iti nāmā tvam
gopīnāthābhido hy aham
gopī-kuṇḍam nāma tīrtham trayam guhyam kali-yuge*

O Lord of the living entities! I have become very pleased with your feminine mood, which is so full of *rasa*, and thus I grant you a residence close to me in this forest of Kamyavan. You are known as Gopish (the Lord of the *gopīs*), I am Gopinath, and this holy-place is named Gopi Kunda. In *Kali-yuga* these three things are secret.¹²

Rameshwar at Kamyavan

It is said that Krishna once came to Kamyavan with many *gopīs*. They each started worshiping Him according to their particular nature. Those expert in dance started dancing, those expert in singing sang beautiful songs, others expertly played musical instruments. Each *gopī's* service pleased Krishna, Who then asked them, "What boon do you want?"

The *gopīs* said, "We would like to see what Rama and Lakshman looked like while They were in Lanka. Also, we are curious to know how Ramachandra built the bridge to Lanka and killed all of the *rākṣasas*."

Krishna replied, "I'm just a simple cowherd boy. How can I know all of these things?"

Srimati Radharani then pressured Krishna to show His form as Lord Ramachandra. Krishna agreed and disappeared. A few minutes later He appeared before them as Lord Ramachandra with Lakshman. Immediately all of His friends such as Sridam, Ananta Bhadra, Charu, Sucharu, and others took the form of monkeys. From a nearby pond appeared Ravana's



Rameshwar Mahadev in Kamyavan

kingdom of Lanka. Seeing Lanka, Krishna/Ramachandra established a *śiva-liṅga* of Rameshwar Mahadeva, worshiped him, and then with the help of His monkey friends started building a bridge out of stones across the pond. Before the *gopīs*, Krishna then displayed His pastime of fighting and killing Ravana and his soldiers. This *śiva-liṅga* in the western part of Kamyavan is still present today in the area called Lankagarh.

The *Bhakti-ratnākara* (5.851) describes this pastime:

*ei 'setubandha-kuṇḍa' — ithe bahu kathā
samudra-bandhana-līlā kaila kṛṣṇa ethā*

This is Setubandha-kunda, about which much can be said. Here Krishna enacted His pastime of bridging the ocean [as Lord Ramachandra].

There is also an old song in Kamyavan that describes this pastime in a slightly different way:

*gopī yaśodā nanda bābā, kṛṣṇate rahe pukār
tretā-yuga meñ āpane, śrī rām liyo avtār*

*kesi laṅkā rāmeśvar, deo darśan karvāy
suna kṛpā nidhi muskarā, dīnī laṅka banāy*

*rāmeśvar kara sthāpnā, diyo vṛjbāsī darśkarāy
yaha līlā dvāpar hui, kahrahe lekh batāy*

Once the *gopīs*, Mother Yasoda, and Nanda Maharaja told Krishna, "We want to see the form You manifested in Treta-yuga. We also want to see Lanka and Rameshwaram." Hearing this, Krishna smiled and made the kingdom of Lanka appear. He also established Rameshwar Shiva and brought all of the *vrajavāsīs* to have *darśana*. This pastime happened in Dvāpara-yuga, and is written here.



Lord Shiva is a great devotee of Krishna and of Srimati Radharani. In text 113 of the *Rādhā-sahasra-nāma Stotra*, Lord Shiva mentions two names of

श्री कृष्णकथामृत



Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda flooded and joined together during the rainy season

Radharani connected with himself. He says that She is known as *śaiva* — “the worshiper of Lord Shiva”, and *śaivalānanda-dāyini* — “She who gives happiness to the worshipers of Lord Shiva.”

Of all the *līlā-sthālīs*, pastime places of the divine couple, Radha Kunda is the topmost. In order to protect Radha Kunda, and also to give himself the opportunity to observe some of the intimate pastimes that Sri Sri Radha Krishna perform at this place, Lord Shiva has manifested himself here in the forms of several *liṅgas*. The oldest and chief ones are:

1) Kundeshwar Mahadeva. This very old *śiva-liṅga* is installed on the southwest side of Radha Kunda. It is said that in 1545, Srila Raghunath Das Goswami found ancient deities of Radha Krishna and this *śiva-liṅga* buried in the divine mud of Radha Kunda during his excavation work. Pilgrims commonly first go to him to seek his blessings before taking bath in Radha Kunda. Some say that this *liṅga* is actually a *govardhana-śilā*.

- 2) Bankhandi Mahadeva, also known as Barkhandi Mahadeva. Barkhandi (*baḍa-khaṇḍi*) seems to be a corruption of *vaṭa-khaṇḍi*, meaning “resident of a banyan tree forest”. He guards the eastern side of Radha Kunda.
- 3) Ranuva Mahadeva. “*Ranuva*” means “celibate”. This *śiva-liṅga* is called Ranuva because there is no deity of Parvati here.



Kundeshwar Mahadeva, protector of Radha Kunda

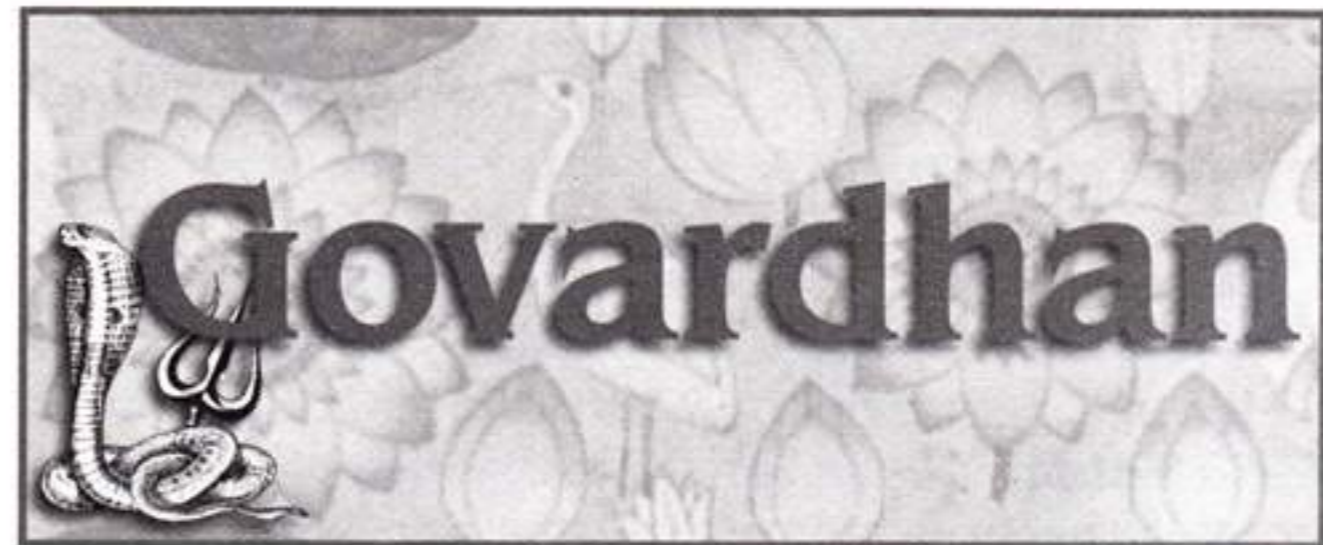


*The five ancient śiva-liṅgas of Chakleshwar Mahadev at Manasi Ganga.
Behind them are different carvings, including Krishna lifting Govardhan hill.*

Ranuva Mahadeva is situated on the northeastern side of Syama Kunda, near the Jagannath temple and behind the Radha Kunda town hall.

- 4) Laliteshwar Mahadeva. Situated near Lalita Kunda on the northeastern side of Syama Kunda.
- 5) Rameshwar Mahadeva. Situated next to the cremation grounds and the lake named Shiva Puskarini, just west of Radha Kunda. He guards the western side of Radha Kunda.

There is also a śiva-liṅga at the place known as Vallabha Pataka, where Srila Vallabhacharya performed his *bhajana*. Although this *liṅga* is said to have been worshiped by Vallabhacharya, some scholarly residents of Radha Kunda doubt this to be true. According to them, while Vallabhacharya was staying at Radha Kunda he was daily going to have *darśana* of the ancient Shiva deity of Bankhandi Mahadeva mentioned above. So perhaps this *liṅga* is a recent addition, *i.e.* less than 500 years old.



Chakleshwar Mahadeva

On the northern bank of Manasi Ganga, by Govardhan Hill, is a group of five śiva-liṅgas that are famous by the name Chakleshwar Mahadeva. These five śiva-liṅgas, also known as the Pancha Mahadevas, are considered to be Lord Shiva's five faces. They protect the area of Govardhan. This part of Manasi Ganga is known as Chakra Tirtha, and because he stays at this place, this śiva-liṅga was originally known as Chakreshwar, but now he is known as Chakleshwar. It is said that this place is named Chakra Tirtha because when Krishna lifted Govardhan Hill, He requested¹³

श्री कृष्णकथामृत

the Sudarshan Chakra to appear above the mountain to dry up all of the rain coming down on Govardhan so that the *vrajavāsīs* standing underneath would not drown.¹⁴ After Indra withdrew the *sāmvartaka* clouds that he had sent to destroy Vraja and the danger was over, Sudarshan requested Krishna to give him a place to rest. Krishna gave him this place on the northern bank of Manasi Ganga.

The present temple of Chakleshwar Mahadeva is recent; the original one was destroyed by Muslims. However the deities here are very old and are said to have been established by Krishna's great-grandson Vajranabha. The deity of Ganesh in the temple and the carvings on the wall behind Lord Chakleshwar are very ancient. The figures in the carvings include the *nava-graha*, nine planets, *gīrājā-dhāraṇā*, Krishna lifting Govardhan hill, with Parvati on the left side and Jaya and Vijay on either side of Krishna in the back.

Srila Sanatan Goswami was very devoted to Lord Shiva. Wherever he did his *bhajana*, it was his daily practice to have *darśana* of the nearest deity of Lord Shiva to pray for his blessings. According to the local tradition, when Ramdas Kapoor constructed the Madan-Mohana temple, Chakleshwar Mahadeva appeared before Sanatan Goswami and told him to leave that place and come to Manasi Ganga to do his *bhajana*. Shivaji told him that now that the temple was constructed, Madan Mohan would receive opulent food offerings, and as a renunciate it was not proper for Sanatan to take it. So Sanatan

Goswami left the Madan Mohan temple and shifted to Manasi Ganga near to Govardhan Hill, where he did his *bhajana* next to the temple of Chakleshwar Mahadeva and lived by doing *mādhukarī*, begging.

He stayed here beside Lord Shiva and performed his *bhajana* for some time, but after a while he decided to move, as the mosquitoes were troubling him. Lord Shiva is very attached to the devotees of Krishna, and he was particularly fond of hearing Sanatan Goswami's chanting. Seeing him about to leave, Shiva came to him in the form of a *brāhmaṇa*, requested him to stay, and assured him that the mosquitoes would no longer trouble him. It is said that due to the blessing of Lord Shiva, to this day there are few or no mosquitoes at this place.

There is also a temple of Sri Sri Gaura Nitai just opposite the Chakleshwar Mahadeva temple. It is said that first Lord Nityananda Prabhu visited this

Sri Krishna-kathamrita

place and had *darśana* of Chakleshwar, and later Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu came. Both of them rested here during their visits.

Rudra Kunda

This *kuṇḍa* is known locally as Hara Kunda or Harji Kunda. In *Bhakti-ratnākara* (5.659) Srila Narahara Chakravarti mentions Rudra Kunda :

*dekha 'rudra-kuṇḍa' – śobhā nirjana kānane
ethā mahādeva magna hailā kṛṣṇa-dhyāne*

In this beautiful and lonely forest is Rudra Kunda. Here Mahadeva sat absorbed in meditation on Krishna.

It is said that while sitting at this place and meditating on his worshipable Lordships Sri Sri Radha Krishna, Shiva felt great pangs of separation



Rudra Kunda — formed from the tears of Lord Shiva

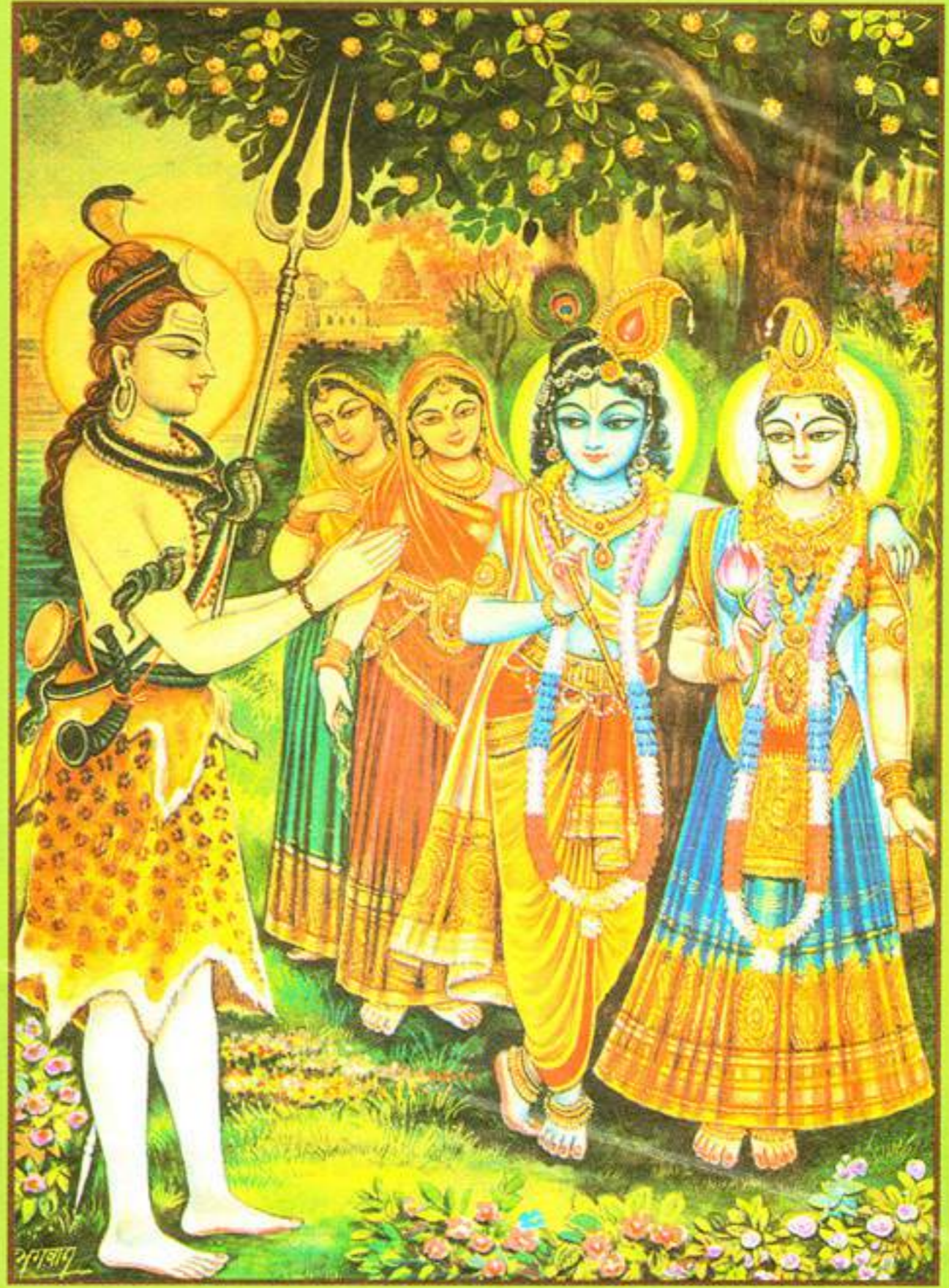
from them and started to cry. His tears (*rudan*) created this *kuṇḍa*. Thus it is called Rudra Kunda, or sometimes Rudan Kunda. Radha and Krishna are said to come to this *kuṇḍa* to take bath. At the back of Rudra Kunda is a temple of Lord Shiva named Bole Baba Mandir.¹⁵ Srila Murari Gupta in his *Śrī Caitanya-carita* (4.8:16-17) says that Chaitanya Mahaprabhu visited here.¹⁶

In the year 2000, the water in Rudra-kunda was very low, so the villagers decided to drain it and clean out the mud. At the bottom of the lake, they found a small ancient temple made out of marble with a *śiva-liṅga*. Although they had heard about this temple, no one in the village had ever seen it.

Half a kilometer west from Harji Kunda is another kunda that the locals call Purana (old) Rudra Kunda. No one uses this kunda, and today it is the garbage dump for the village of Jatipur.

Relisher of Radha-Krishna Lila

Lord Shiva is always relishing the intimate pastimes of the divine couple, and he is the speaker of many of the most confidential Vedic literatures dealing with Their topics and pastimes. A few examples follow: The *Śrī Yugala-kiśora-aṣṭottara-śata-nāma* "108 names of the youthful divine couple", from the *Rāsollāsa Tantra*, was spoken by Lord Sadashiva. In the *Nārada Pañcarātra*, Lord Shiva instructed Narada Muni about Srimati Radharani and how to worship Her. Lord Mahadeva spoke the *Gopāla-sahasra-nāma*, "thousand names of Gopal", to Parvati Devi. In the *Rudra-yāmala Tantra*, Shiva gave the *Rādhā-sahasra-nāma*, "thousand names of Srimati Radharani". The book *Govinda-vṛndāvana* is a conversation between Brahma and Shiva about Radha Krishna and their divine abode of Vrindavan. In the *Urdhvāmnāya Tantra*, Shiva has spoken many things to Parvati Devi about Radha and Krishna, including the beautiful and famous prayers known as *Rādhā-kṛpā-katākṣa-stava-rāja* and *Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā-katākṣa-stava-rāja* (The king of prayers glorifying the merciful glances of Radha and Krishna). The *Śrī Sanat-kumāra Saṁhitā*, a book that speaks about Radha, Krishna, the land of Vrindavan, and the process of pure devotional service, was spoken by Shiva to Narada Muni. The *Sātvata Tantra* is a conversation between Shiva



Shivaji offers prayers to Radha Krishna

and Narada describing the various incarnations of the Lord as well as Krishna's pastimes in Vrindavan. In the *Padma Purāṇa, pātāla-khaṇḍa*, chapter 83, Lord Shiva spoke to Narada Muni about Radha Krishna's *aṣṭa-kāliya-līlā*, "pastimes performed in eight different times of the day".

Chintahara Mahadeva

The Chintahara or Chintaharana Mahadeva temple is situated on the eastern side of the Yamuna River, south of Gokul and about one kilometer south of Brahmananda Ghat, where Krishna manifested His universal form to Mother Yasoda. This ancient deity of Shiva is known as Chintahara, "the remover of anxieties", because it is said that Mother Yasoda was regularly coming here from Gokula to worship this *śiva-līṅga* to remove her worries. As a baby, Krishna was constantly performing many mischievous acts. Sometimes He would catch hold of the tail of a calf and have it pull Him through the dirt and mud. Sometimes, much to the horror of His mother, He would play with snakes or wild animals. Sometimes

He would eat dirt or steal butter and break the pots of the elderly *gopīs*. Sometimes He would pass urine in the houses of other *gopīs*. Other times He would pinch their sleeping babies and make them cry. Seeing all of His naughty activities filled Mother Yasoda with a kind of ecstatic anxiety for the well being of her beloved child. In this mood, Krishna's mother would pray to Lord Chintahara Mahadeva to protect the jewel of her heart.

Another local tradition has it that this deity of Chintaharana Mahadeva was situated here even before Mother Yasoda started coming to worship him. Once, Mahadeva Shambhu wanted to see the beautiful form of Krishna. With this desire in mind, he left Kailash and came to this *ghāṭa* on the bank of the Yamuna, where he began

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meditating on Krishna. Eventually Krishna appeared and captured (*harana*) the mind (*cintā*) of Shiva with His beauty.

The ancient *śiva-linga* at this place is said to be the same one that was originally worshiped by Mother Yasoda. In a side temple here there are also deities of Mother Yasoda and Krishna.



From top: Temple of Cintahara Mahadeva, Deities of Yasoda and Krishna, Deity of Cintahara Mahadeva

Nandagaon

Asheshwar Mahadeva

Aside from Nandeshwar Mahadeva, who resides on the top of Nandeshwar hill [see article on page-26], there is another ancient *śiva-liṅga* in Nandagaon known as Asheshwar Mahadeva. East of Ter Kadamba and the *bhajana-kutir* of Srila Rupa Goswami, is a platform for the *rāsa* dance. Asheshwar Mahadeva is near there. It is said that Parjanya Maharaja, the grandfather of Krishna, regularly came, took bath at Asheshwar kunda, and prayed to Asheshwar Mahadeva for his blessings. Some persons say that it was by the blessings of Asheshwar Mahadeva that Parjanya Maharaja had five exalted sons and the most wonderful grandson Sri Krishna.

Bhadraavan

Bhadreshwar Mahadeva

The forest of Bhadravan is situated on the eastern side of the Yamuna River, eight miles from Vrindavan, two miles northeast of Bhandiravan, and two miles southeast of Nanda Ghat. This forest is named after Lord Balaram, and is one of the places where Krishna and Balaram go to graze the cows. In this forest at a place called Vatsavan, Sri Krishna killed the demon known as Vatsasura. There is a *śiva-liṅga* in Bhadravan named Bhadreshwar Mahadev, who, according to some, was installed by Vajranabha, Krishna's great-grandson.¹⁷ The priest at this temple offers the following story as to the origin of this *liṅga*: After Krishna killed Vatsasura, Srimati Radharani told Krishna that as He had killed a calf He had to perform some *bhadra-prāyaścitta*, auspicious atonement. Krishna had His head shaved and worshiped Lord Shiva, who became known as Bhadreshwar Mahadeva. Some say that Krishna's *cūḍā-karaṇa-saṁskāra*, the traditional childhood hair-cutting ceremony, took place at this forest.

Narayan Bhatta Goswami cites the following *praṇāma-mantra* to Bhadreshwar Mahadeva:



Asheshwar Mahadeva

*bhadreśvarāya devāya sarvadā śubha-dāyine
namo bhadra-svarūpāya vāmadeva namo 'stu te*

O Bhadreswar Mahadeva! You are the giver of all auspiciousness. Obeisances unto you, who possess a gentle and pleasing form.

Barshana

Vrajeshwar Mahadeva

In his *Vraja-bhakti-vilāsa*, Sri Narayan Bhatta Goswami describes an ancient *śiva-liṅga* in Barshana known as Vrajeshwar Mahadeva. Vrajeshwar Mahadeva is a little difficult to find. He is situated about a half-mile east of the road to Govardhan in some agricultural fields next to an irrigation canal, about two miles south of Barshana. According to some local *vrajavāsīs*, this *liṅga* was originally installed by Vrishabhanu Maharaja, the father of Srimati Radharani. This point is a little controversial. Since this *liṅga* is not mentioned in any other standard books describing Vraja Mandala, some scholars and devotees question its antiquity. Those who claim it is authentic say that Vrishabhanu Maharaja first worshiped this *liṅga* in Raval, the birthplace of Srimati

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Left: Temple of Vrajeshwar Mahadeva. Right: Liṅga of Vrajeshwar Mahadeva

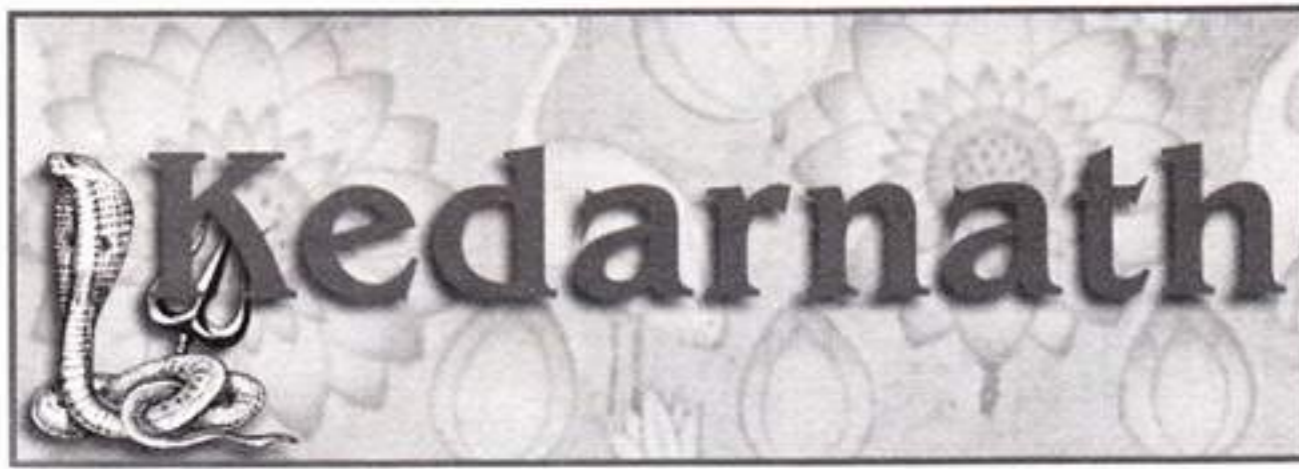
Radharani, and when he brought Radharani from Raval to Barshana he also brought this *liṅga*. For this reason, they say the area around Vrajeshwar Mahadeva is now known as Ravalban.

Another local story is that once some *vrajavāsīs* decided to move Vrajeshwar Mahadeva away from his current place at Barshana. They started digging around him so they could lift him up. However, it is said that no matter how deep they dug they could not find an end to the *liṅga*. Seeing that Lord Shiva did not want to move, they became frightened and offered prayers and begged forgiveness.

Narayan Bhatta Goswami cites the following prayer to Vrajeshwar from the *Gauri-tantra*:

*vrajeśvarāya te tubhyaṁ mahā-rudrāya te namaḥ
vrajaukaṣāṁ śivārthāya namas te śiva-rūpine*

O Vrajeshwar, O Maha-rudra, obeisances to you! You have appeared here for the auspiciousness of all the *vrajavāsīs*. You are the *svarūpa* of Lord Shiva. Obeisances to you!



Vraja Dham is the eternal abode of Krishna. As Krishna is the source of everything, including all of the living entities, Vishnu expansions, and various potencies, similarly it is said that all *tīrthas* and holy places originally exist in Vraja. In chapter four of his *Śrī Karṇānanda* (Sloka 37), Srila Yadunandan Das Thakur has quoted the following *śloka*:

*guhyād guhyatamaṁ ramyaṁ madhye vṛndāvanaṁ sthitam
pūrṇa-brahma-sukhaiśvaryaṁ nityam ānandam avyayam
vaikunṭhādi tad evāṁśaṁ svayaṁ vṛndāvanaṁ bhuvī*

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Of all confidential things, Sri Vrindavan Dham is the most confidential and attractive. Vrindavan Dham is complete, transcendental, and full of happiness, opulence and bliss. It never diminishes or dwindles. Vrindavan Dham is the original source of all spiritual abodes, and the Vaikuntha planets are its plenary expansions.

Kedarnath and Badrinath in the Himalayas are two of the most famous sacred pilgrimage places in India. However, most pilgrims are not aware that these places are expansions of the original places situated in Vraja, where they are known as Adi (original) Kedarnath and Adi Badrinath. It is said that once Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd men decided to go on pilgrimage to Kedarnath and Badrinath in the Himalayas. But Krishna told them that Kedarnath and Badrinath were present in Vraja and that He would take them there. He told them that there was no point in going to these places outside of Vraja, because the benefit of visiting the Kedarnath and Badrinath in Vraja were thousands of times greater than that of visiting the same places in the Himalayas. Krishna then showed them Badrinath and Kedarnath, and they worshiped Lord Kedarnath Shiva with Bilva leaves. Kedarnath is situated in a remote part of Vraja, on the far western side, south of Kamyavan and one mile west of the village of Vilonda.

Adi Badri looks much the same as the Badrinath in the Himalayas. There are deities there of Radha Krishna, Krishna lifting Govardhan Hill, Uddhava, and the sages Nara Narayan. There is also a large *śiva-liṅga* at Adi Badri, called Kedarnath Mahadeva by some and Rameshwar by others.

About 10 miles north of Adi Badrinath is Adi Kedarnath. The word "*kedarnath*" means "field". The place Kedarnath is said to be the field where liberation grows. Shiva, as the supreme yogi, is known as Kedarnath, the lord of this place. While the sacred place Kedarnath in Himalayas is 11,482 feet high, the Adi Kedarnath in Vraja is more accessible. There are only 270 steps to get from the



base to the top. However, it is quite a large hill for the Vraja area and can be seen for some distance. There is an ancient temple of Lord Shiva at the top.

Just as there is a famous kunda at Kedarnath in the Himalayas named Gauri Kunda, so there is also a Gauri Kunda found at Adi Kedarnath in Vraja. Gauri is another name for Parvati Devi. It was at Gauri Kunda where Parvati performed austerities to get Lord Shiva as her husband. Gauri Kunda is also the place where Lord Shiva once, out of anger, cut off the head of his son Ganesh and replaced it with the head of an elephant.



From top: Gauri Kunda and Adi Kedaranath, Peak of Adi Kedaranath, Deity of Adi Kedaranath

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Notes

¹ Two examples are *Garga-saṁhita* (5.25.9) and Srila Murari Gupta's *Śrī Caitanya-carita* (4.4.21).

² An Englishman who served the British government in the mid 1800s as the District Magistrate and Collector for Mathura.

³ Described in the *Bhāgavata-mahātmya* of the *Padma Purāṇa*, canto six, chapters 196-197.

⁴ In his commentary on this pastime, Srila Jiva Goswami says that Ambika is in the province of Gujarat. This does not necessarily negate Srila Narahari Chakravarti's version in *Bhakti-ratnākara*, for Krishna's pastimes are eternal and in different *divya-yugas* the same exact pastimes are often enacted, only with slight differences. It is possible that Narahari Chakravarti's account took place in a different era.

⁵ This ancient deity of Lord Shiva, located near to Vamsi Vata, is known both as Gopishwar, the worshipable deity of the *gopīs*, as well as Gopeshwar, the worshipable deity of the *gopas*, or the cowherd people of Vraja.

⁶ In the Gaudiya Mission edition of *Bhakti-ratnākara*, Sri Navin Krishna Dās Vidyānāra has given word for word meanings for the Sanskrit. For "gopīśvara" he gives "he gopa-gopīnān vāñchā-pūraaka!" — "O fulfiller of the desires of the cowherd men and women!"

⁷ There are several slightly different versions. This one is based on a very old drama performed yearly in Nandagaon.

⁸ Some say Lalita Sakhi, others merely say "some *gopīs*".

⁹ Mana-sarovar is a small lake on the eastern side of the Yamuna about five kilometers south of Kesi Ghat. While the *Garga-saṁhita* describes this pastime as taking place at Mana-sarovar, some say that this happened at Brahma Kund, and others say it happened at the Yamuna.

¹⁰ Some say that Sanatan Goswami was living in Vrindavan at the Madan Mohan temple and was walking daily to have *darśana* of Gopishwar Mahadeva in Vrindavan. Others say that while he was living at Madan Mohan he was daily walking 25 kilometers to Govardhan to have *darśana* of Chakleshwar Mahadeva.

¹¹ Over the years, this lake has filled in and farmers are now growing crops on it.

¹² From the *Ādi Varāha Purāṇa*. Cited in Narayan Bhatta Goswami's *Kāmavan Māhātmya* 27.2.

¹³ Some say that Lord Shiva made the request.

¹⁴ Another version is that Lord Shiva held up his trident like a *cakra* over Govardhan hill to protect the *vrajavāsīs*.

¹⁵ Alan W. Entwistle in his book *Braj, Centre of Krishna Pilgrimage*, conjectures that this *liṅga* could be the Budhe Babu *liṅga* mentioned in a song by Surdas, a *vaiṣṇava* in the line of Srila Vallabhacharya.

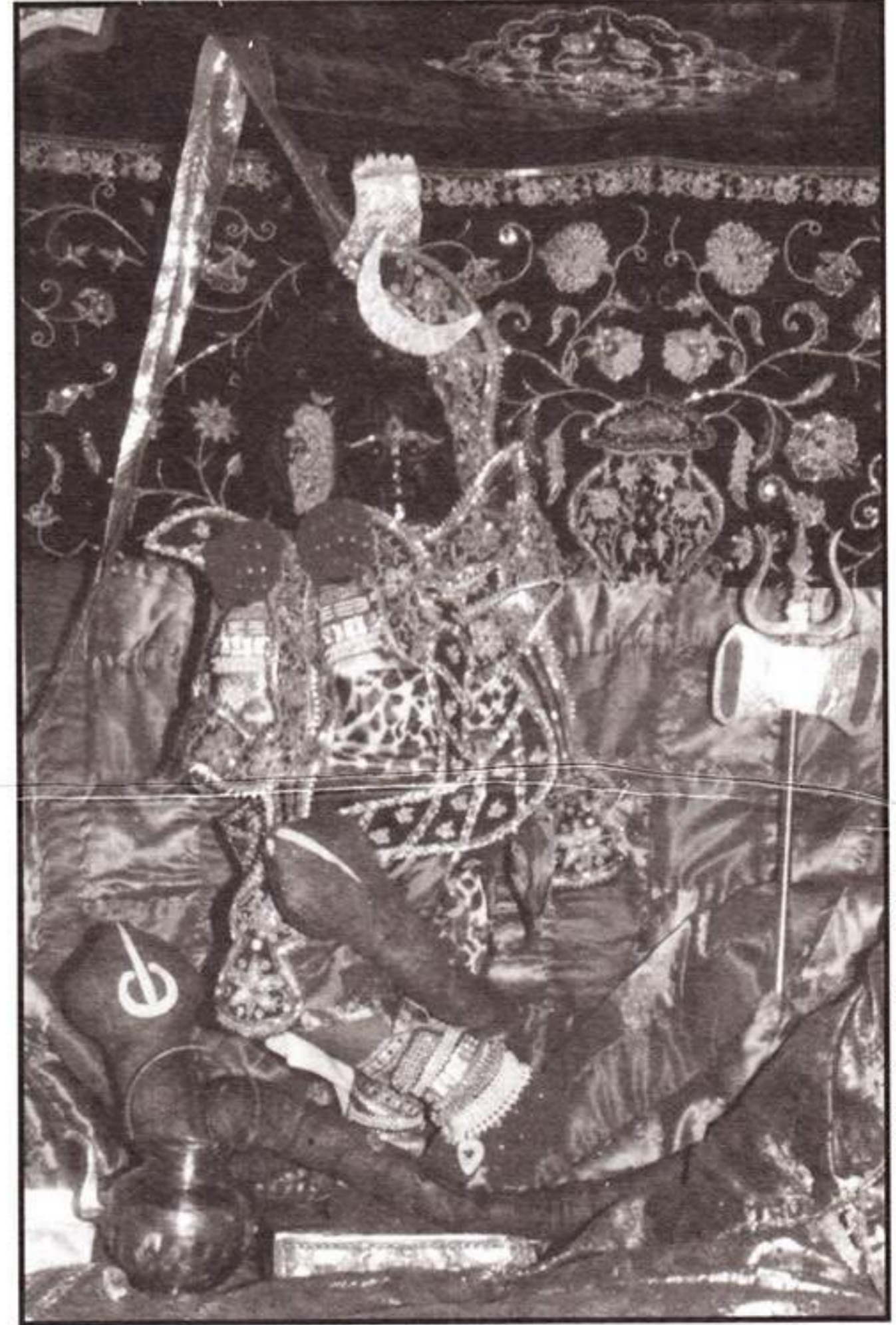
¹⁶ Srila Raghunath Das Goswami has also described Hara Kunda in *Govardhanāśraya-daśaka* 3.

¹⁷ Jada Bharata Das, *Vrindavan and Braja Mandala*, p. 296.

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Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Courtesy Mohan Studio Sagar, Vrindavan

The Vallabhaji deity of Vrindavana dressed as Lord Shiva on the day of Śiva-ratri

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Lord Shiva and Srila Rupa Goswami

In the introductions to *Lalita Mādhava* and *Vidagdha Mādhava*, his two immortal works of the intimate pastimes of Radha and Krishna, Srila Rupa Goswami has revealed that Lord Shiva appeared and ordered him to write these two dramas.

Lalita Mādhava (1.3):

*bhagavato gopīśvaratayā prasiddhasya candrārdha-
mauleḥ svapnāvīrbhūtam ādeśam*

Lord Shiva, who is crowned with the half-moon and who is famous as the master of the *gopīs*, appeared to me in a dream and ordered me [to write this play].

Vidagdha Mādhava (1.4a):

*tasyaiva keli-sudhā-kallolinīm ullāsayatā parirakṣaṇīyā
bhavatā. mat-kṛpāiva te sāmāgrīm samagrāyīṣyati iti.
tenādiya jagad-guror asya nideśam evānuvartīṣye*

“O Rupa Goswami, please protect the devotees by giving them a little of the nectar river of Lord Mukunda’s pastimes. My mercy will give you the power to do this.” In this way, Lord Shiva, the spiritual master of the universe, spoke. I will now obey His order.”



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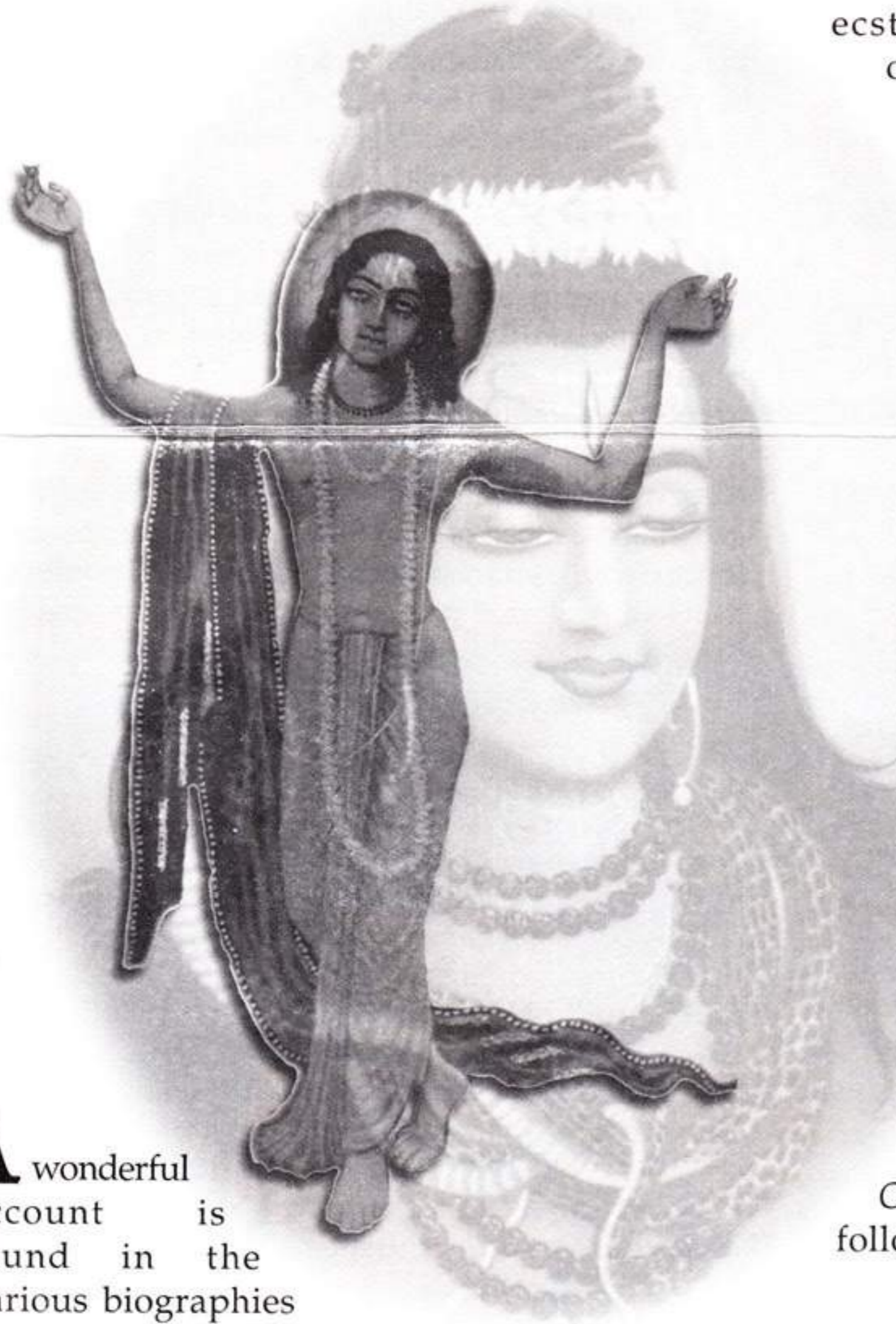
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Mahaprabhu in The Mood of Shiva



A wonderful account is found in the various biographies of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu describing how He once assumed the mood of Lord Shiva and danced in ecstasy with His devotees. Srila Lochan Das Thakur has described in *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala, madhya-līlā* 7.16.50-63 that one day a follower of Lord Shiva came to see Lord Gauranga. He offered respects to Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and then began to joyfully praise Lord Mahesh. "Shiva! Shiva!" he joyfully called out. Pure devotion for Lord Shiva was manifest in his body.

Hearing the glories of Mahadeva, Vishvambhar felt His joy increase more and more. Then, manifesting the mood of Lord Shiva, Lord Gauranga began to dance in

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ecstasy. Seeing this, that Shaivite became overwhelmed with happiness.

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then climbed on that devotee's shoulders. The fortunate *śiva-bhakta* began dancing madly. No one is fortunate like that devotee. Gauranga's eyes turned red, and He began talking like Shiva. Visvambhara held a trident and a *damaru*, Shiva's small x-shaped drum, and He roared like the sound of a horn.

Loudly chanting, "Krishna! Rama!" and filled with the sentiments of Lord Shiva, Gauranga laughed and wept. To pacify the Lord, Srivas Pandit and Mukunda Datta began reciting prayers to Lord Shiva. Gauranga's associates began to joyfully dance beside the Lord. Lord Gauranga deeply relished Shiva's ecstasy of glorifying and serving Lord Hari. After some time, Mahaprabhu climbed down from the Shaivite's shoulders.

Srila Kavi Karnapur has described this pastime in chapter seven of his *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Mahākavya* in the following Sanskrit verses:

*aparedyur asya karuṇāmbu-nidheḥ
purataś ca kaścana sugāyanakaḥ
śiva-gītam uttama-sukhena jagau
karuṇāśayasya karuṇasya vibhoḥ*

On another day, a talented singer sang a song about Lord Shiva with great joy in front of Lord Chitanya, who is compassionate and an ocean of mercy. (86)

*niśamayya gītam atidhīra-padaṁ
lalitaṁ babhūva bhagavān muditaḥ
adhiruhya tasya lasad-aṁsa-taṭaṁ
naṭanaṁ cakāra sa ca dhūrjaṭivat*

Hearing the charming song of skillful composition, the Lord became joyful. Climbing on the shoulders of that singer, he danced like Lord Shiva. (87)

*mada-ghūrṇitākṣi-yugalo vipulaiḥ
pulaḥair atīva-ruciro rucimān*

sa tad-aṁsa-mūlam adhiruhya tadā
śivavan nanarta karuṇāmbu-nidhiḥ

The Lord's eyes rolled with intoxication, He was effulgent and looked beautiful as His hair stood on end. Climbing on the shoulders of that singer, the Lord, the ocean of mercy, danced like Lord Shiva. (88)

bhuvi yas tu nārada iti prathitaḥ
sa papāṭha tatra giriśa-stavanam
atisusvaraḥ sa tu mukunda-bhiṣak-
stavanam mahimna iha hanta jagau

He who is famous on the earth as Narada (i.e. Srivas Thakur) recited prayers to Lord Shiva, and the physician Mukunda, who had an exquisite voice, sang a song praising Lord Shiva's glories. (89)

In his *Śrī Caitanya-carita Mahākāvya* (2.11.16-17), Srila Murari Gupta describes that on this occasion Srivas Thakur composed some Sanskrit verses glorifying Lord Shiva. Mukunda Datta then sweetly sang them for the pleasure of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu:

mahokṣe sa haris tatra vartulāmbuja-locanaḥ
jaṭilaḥ śṛṅga-ḍamaru-vādako rāma-gāyakaḥ
babhūva jagato nāthaḥ sarva-deva-mayo haraḥ

Lord Shiva, whose eyes resemble the whorls of lotuses, is seated on a great bull. His hair is matted and He plays the horn and ḍamaru drum while singing the praise of Sri Ramachandra. Thus Hara, the destroyer, is the lord of all worlds and living beings. In Hara are the powers of all the devatās.

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur and Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur have given nearly identical descriptions of this pastime in their *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata* (madhya 8.96-103) and *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* (12.1841-44). However, Vrindavan Das Thakur writes (Cb. madhya 8.99), *huṅkāra kariyā bale, 'muñi se śaṅkara'* — "While on the shoulders of that śiva-bhakta, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu shouted loudly, 'I am Shankar! I am Shankar!'" By making this declaration, Mahaprabhu showed that He and His dear devotee Shiva are non-different. Similarly, the *Bhakti-ratnākara* describes that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu directly assumed the form of Lord Shiva.

By performing this *lilā*, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu taught many things. He showed that Lord Shiva is the greatest devotee of Krishna, and as such is worshipable by all of the three worlds. By manifesting Himself as Mahadeva, Lord Gauranga also showed that Shiva is so dear to Him that there is no difference between them. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (9.4.68), Krishna tells Durvasa Muni: *sādhavo hṛdayam mahyam sādhuṅām hṛdayam tv aham* — "The pure

devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee."

However, while commenting on this pastime in his purport to *Sri Chaitanya-caritāmṛta*, ādi 17.100, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada cautions that one should not misunderstand this non-difference between Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Shiva:

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu adopted the mood of Lord Shiva, for He is Shiva also. According to the philosophy of *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, Lord Shiva is not different from Lord Vishnu, but still Lord Shiva is not Lord Vishnu, just as yogurt is nothing but milk and yet is not milk nevertheless. One cannot get the benefit of milk by drinking yogurt. Similarly, one cannot get salvation by worshiping Lord Shiva. If one wants salvation, one must worship Lord Vishnu. This is confirmed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.4): *mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni na cāham teṣu avasthitaḥ*. Everything is resting on the Lord, for everything is His energy, yet He is not everywhere. Lord Chaitanya's adopting the mood of Lord Shiva is not extraordinary, [since He is the source of Lord Shiva] but one should not therefore think that by worshiping Lord Shiva one is worshiping Lord Chaitanya. That would be a mistake.

In his purport to *Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata*, madhya 8.89, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta has offered a similar comment:

No one should misunderstand here that Mahaprabhu taught the devotees the philosophy of *antaḥ-śākto bahiḥ śaivaḥ sabhāyām vaiṣṇavo mataḥ* — that one should internally be a śakta, externally a śaivaita, and publicly a vaiṣṇava. In order to reveal that various pastimes of Lord Vishnu are performed out of His own sweet will and that the living entities who are part and parcel of the Lord are His eternal servants, whatever Sri Krishnachandra exhibited in His *śrī gaura-lilā* is simply a display of the distinctions between the shelter and the sheltered. That is why the followers of Sri Rupa have particularly warned everyone not to consider the Supreme Lord as one of the sheltered parts.



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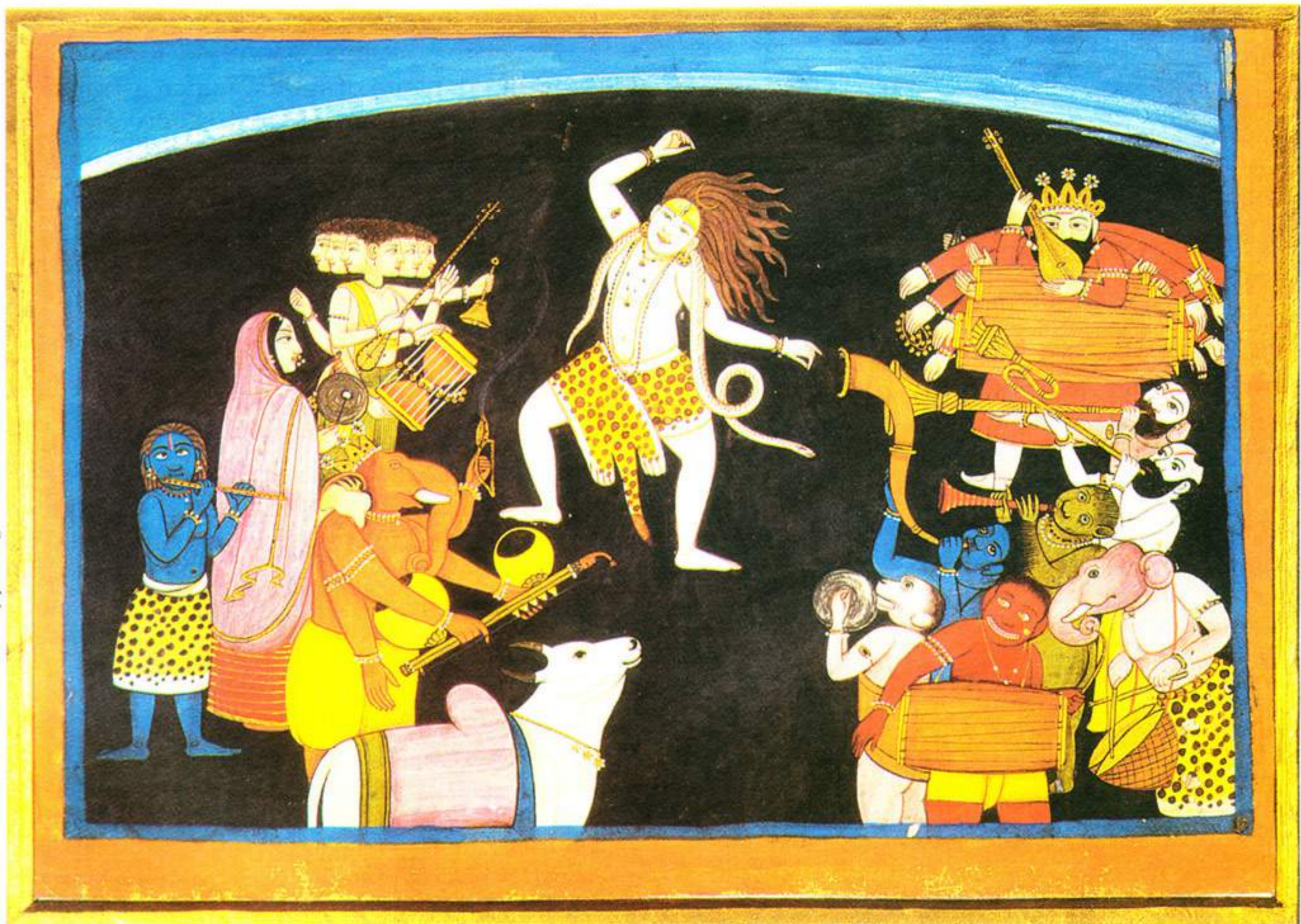
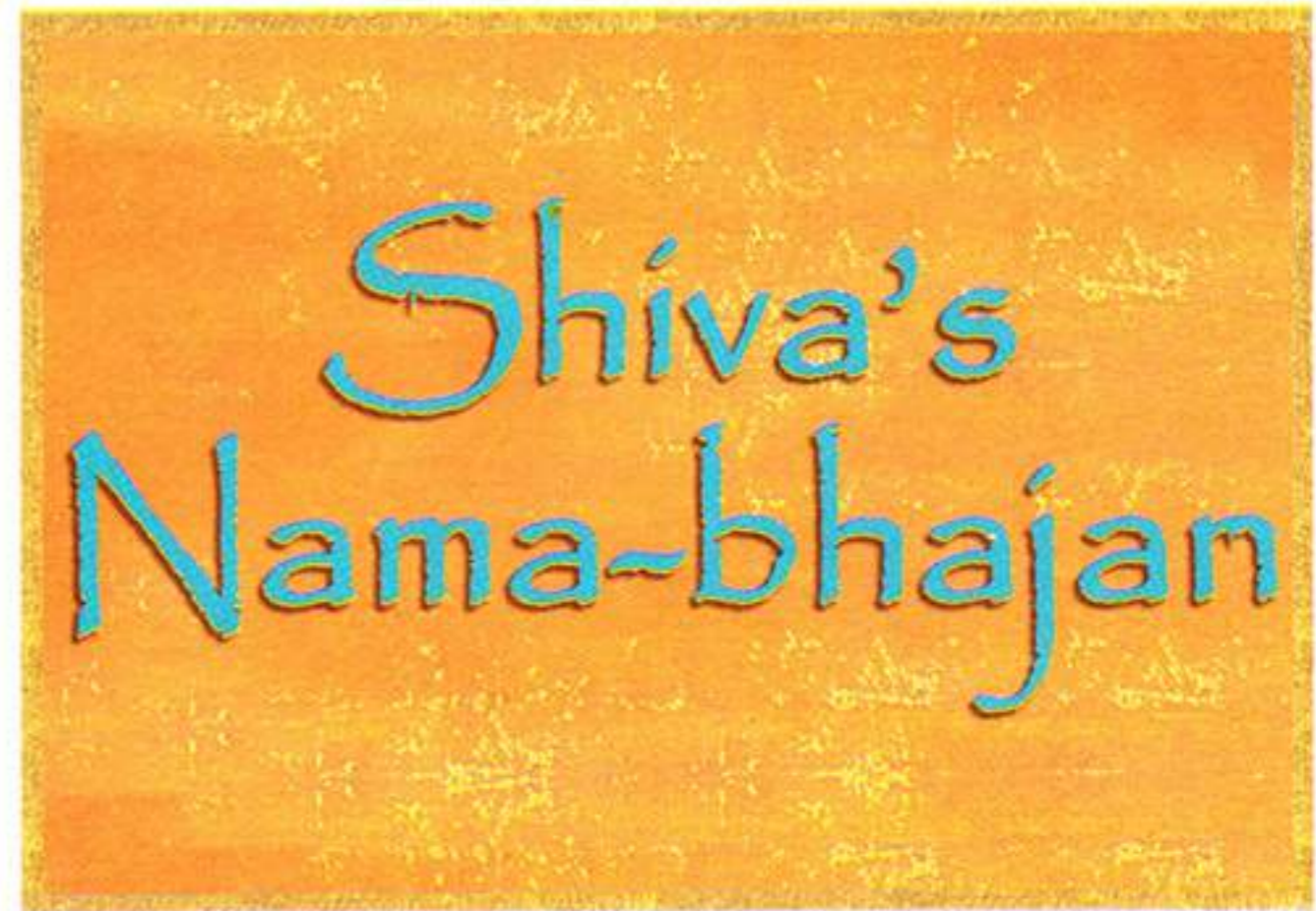
is Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada has described Shiva's attachment to hearing Krishna's name in chapter forty-three of his *Nectar of Devotion*:

When the great sage Narada was chanting the glories of the Lord, the bluish line on the neck of Lord Shiva disappeared. Upon seeing this, Gauri, the wife of Lord Shiva, suspected Lord Shiva of being someone else disguised as her husband, and out of fear she immediately left his company.

Krishna tells Shiva to Marry

Shiva is not only attracted to hearing Krishna's name, but he is also very attached to chanting it. This fact is illustrated in many different Vedic literatures. The *Brahma-vaivarta-Purāṇa* (1.6.4-16) recounts a discussion between Lord Krishna and Lord Shiva:

Krishna once summoned Shiva, who is famous as the best of the yogis, and told him, "You should accept the goddess who rides a lion as your wife."



Late 18th century painting, National Museum, New Delhi, India

The nāma-saṅkīrtana of Lord Shiva and his associates

Hearing Krishna's words, Shiva smiled and meekly replied, "I am unable to accept the goddess of nature, because she will distract my mind from Your devotion and obstruct the path of serving You. She can overshadow true knowledge. She is passionate and can increase one's lusty desires. She can destroy one's austerity. She is the storehouse of illusion. She is the strong base of terrible worldly bondage, and attachment to her leads to evil ways, destroys noble ideas, and diverts one from the noble path.

"O my Lord! I do not wish for a wife. Please give me my desired benediction. My desire to render devotional service to You is always increasing. I am never satiated by chanting Your names and serving Your lotus feet.

*tvān-nāma pañca-vaktrena guṇaṁ ca maṅgalālayam
svapne jāgarāṇe śaśvad gāyan gāyan bhramāmy aham*

"O my Lord, may I constantly sing Your most auspicious names and qualities with my five mouths as I wander about in dream or in wakefulness. (12)

*ākālpa-koṭi-koṭiṁ ca tvad-rūpa-dhyāna-tat-param
bhogecchā-viśaye naiva yoge tapasi man-manah*

"Material enjoyment, yoga, and austerities do not appeal to my mind, for I wish to eagerly meditate on Your enchanting form for millions of kalpas. (13)

*tvat-sevane pūjane ca vandane nāma-kīrtane
sadollasitam eṣāṁ ca viratau viratiṁ labhet*

"My happiness is uninterrupted while serving You, worshiping You, offering prayers to You, and chanting Your names. But when these activities are finished, my happiness is also finished. (14)

*smaraṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ nāma-guṇayoḥ śravaṇaṁ japaḥ
tvac-cāru-rūpa-dhyānaṁ tvat-pādam evābhivandanam
samarpaṇaṁ cātmanaś ca nityaṁ naivedya-bhojanam
varaṁ vareśa dehīdaṁ navadhā-bhakti-lakṣaṇam*

"O Lord! O giver of benedictions! Please bestow on me the nine forms of devotional service so that I may constantly remember Your pastimes, chant and hear Your glories and qualities, meditate on Your attractive form, offer obeisances at Your lotus feet, surrender fully to You, and eat the remnants of Your foodstuffs." (15-16)

Parvati's Vow of Chanting

In the sixth canto, chapter 254, of the *Padma Purāṇa*, Bhagavan Vyasa recounts how Parvati once appealed to the great sage Vamadev to

initiate her into the worship of Lord Vishnu. Thus requested by the goddess, Vamadev gave her the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma-stotram*. Parvati then began to daily worship Vishnu in the morning by chanting the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma*. A few days later, Parvati offered her obeisances to the sage and returned to her abode. There, on a charming peak of Mount Kailasa, Shankar Mahadeva was seated after having worshiped Lord Vishnu on the *dvādaśī* day. Seeing that his wife had returned, he told her, "O goddess worshiped by all of the three worlds, come and eat with me."

Parvati replied, "O my lord, you may go ahead. I shall take my meal only after I have completed my chanting of the thousand names of Vishnu."

Smiling, Lord Shiva said, "O Parvati, you are fortunate and blessed. You are Vishnu's devotee. O goddess, without good fortune it is very difficult to obtain devotion to Vishnu.

*rāma rāmeti rāmeti rame rāme manorame
sahasra-nāma tat-tulyaṁ rāma-nāma varānane*

"I am reciting, 'Rama', 'Rama', 'Rama'. I delight in the name of Rama, which attracts my mind. O woman with a lovely face, Rama's name is equal to the thousand names of Vishnu. (20)

*ra-kārādini nāmāni śṛṇvato mama pārvatī
manaḥ prasannatām yāti rāma-nāmābhīṣaṅkayā
rāmety uktoā mahādevi bhūikṣva sārdaṁ mayādhunā*

"O Parvati, whenever I hear a name that begins with the syllable 'ra' my mind becomes pleased, expecting it be the name of Lord Rama. O goddess, chant the name of Rama and come and eat with me." Parvati uttered the holy name of Lord Rama and then took her meal with Shankar." (21)



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The Names of Shiva and Krishna

As described in this issue (Page 12: “How Vishnu Gave His Names to the Gods”), the intimate connection between Krishna and Lord Shiva extends even to their names. In his text and purport to *Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta*, (1.2.86) Srila Sanatan Goswami also speaks about the intimacy between the names of Shiva and Krishna:

*kṛṣṇāc chivasya bhedekṣā mahā-doṣa-karī matā
āgo bhagavatā svasmin kṣamyate na śive kṛtam*

To consider Lord Shiva different from Krishna is a serious spiritual deviation. The Personality of Godhead tolerates offenses against Himself, but not against Lord Shiva.

PURPORT

Lord Shiva is described as a recipient of Lord Vishnu’s mercy, but this does not mean that the two Lords are different from one another in the same way that Lord Vishnu differs from the *jīvas*. The *Padma Purāṇa* includes the *Nāmāparādha-bhañjana-stotra*, a list of ten offenses against chanting Lord Vishnu’s names. Therein it is said:

*śivasya śrī-viṣṇor ya iha guṇa-nāmādi sakalam
dhiyā bhinnam paśyeta sa khalu hari-nāmāhita-karaḥ*

“One who sees differences between any of Lord Shiva’s qualities and names and those of Sri Vishnu is an antagonist to *hari-nāma*.” (*Padma Purāṇa, Brahma-khaṇḍa* 25.15) Lord Vishnu cannot tolerate offenses against Lord Shiva, because Lord Shiva is the greatest of Lord Vishnu’s empowered incarnations. Lord Shiva is especially empowered to distribute in the material world the elevated tastes of pure devotional service.

While describing this second offense to the holy name in his *Mādhurya Kādambinī*, Srila Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur also speaks of the non-different nature of Shiva and Vishnu:

Those without knowledge in the matter may say that Vishnu is the Lord, not Shiva, or they may say that Shiva is the Lord and not Vishnu: “Since I am a devotee of Vishnu, I will not give regard to Shiva.” —or vice versa. Absorbed in such arguments, such people also commit offenses to the holy name. If such offenders can become enlightened by a devotee with thorough knowledge of the matter, then they can realize in what way Shiva and Vishnu are non-different. With this realization, and by doing *nāma-kīrtana*, they can nullify their offenses.



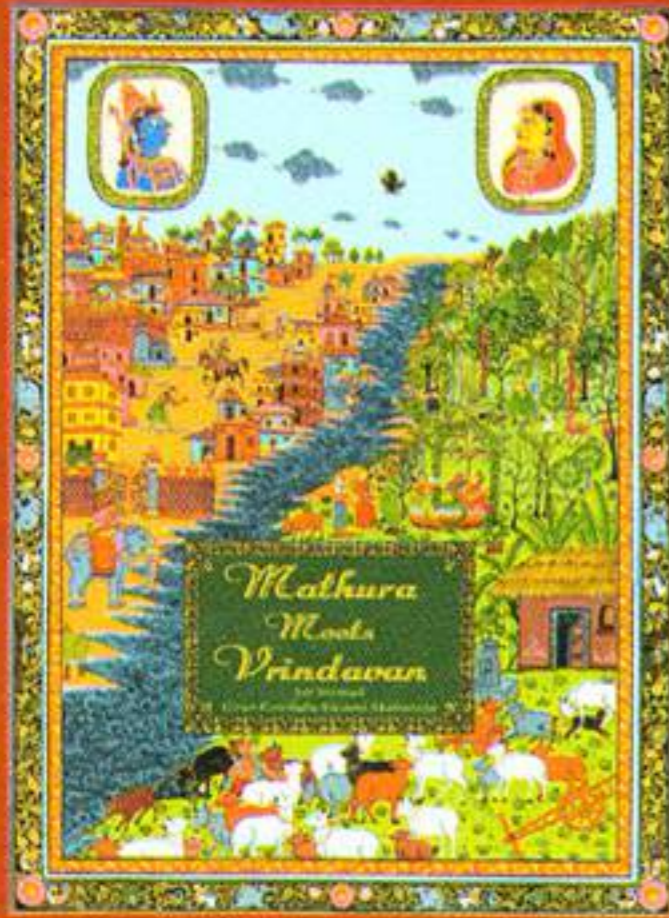
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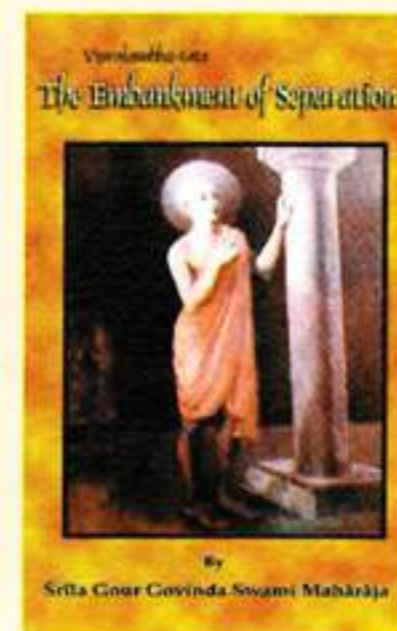
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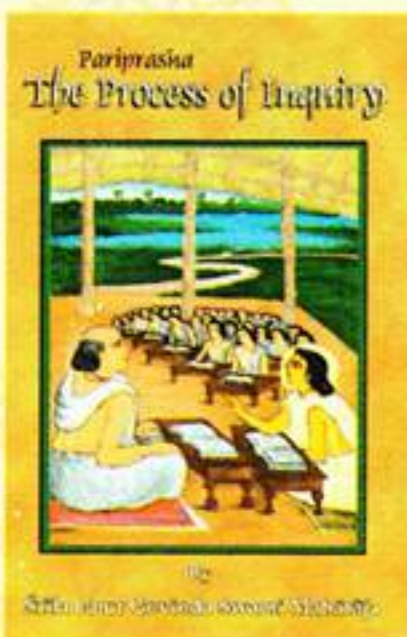
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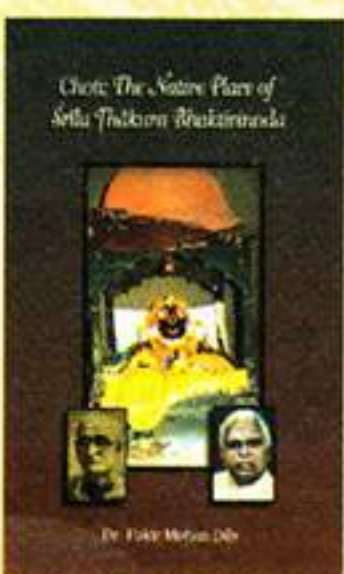


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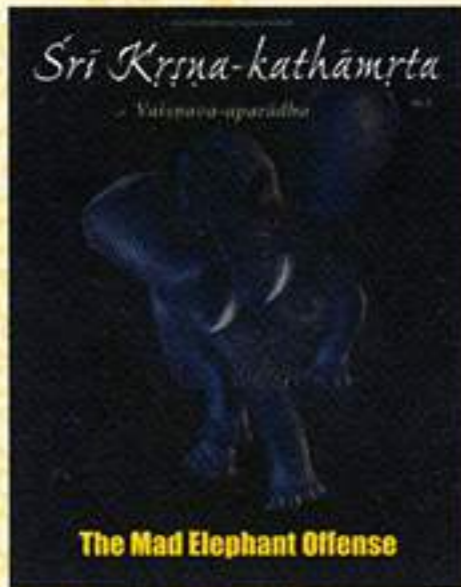


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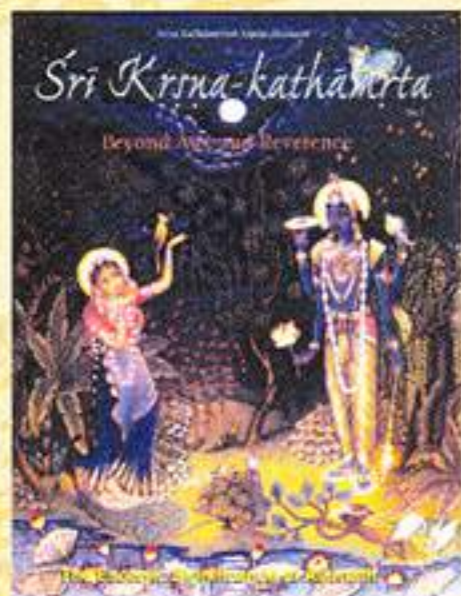


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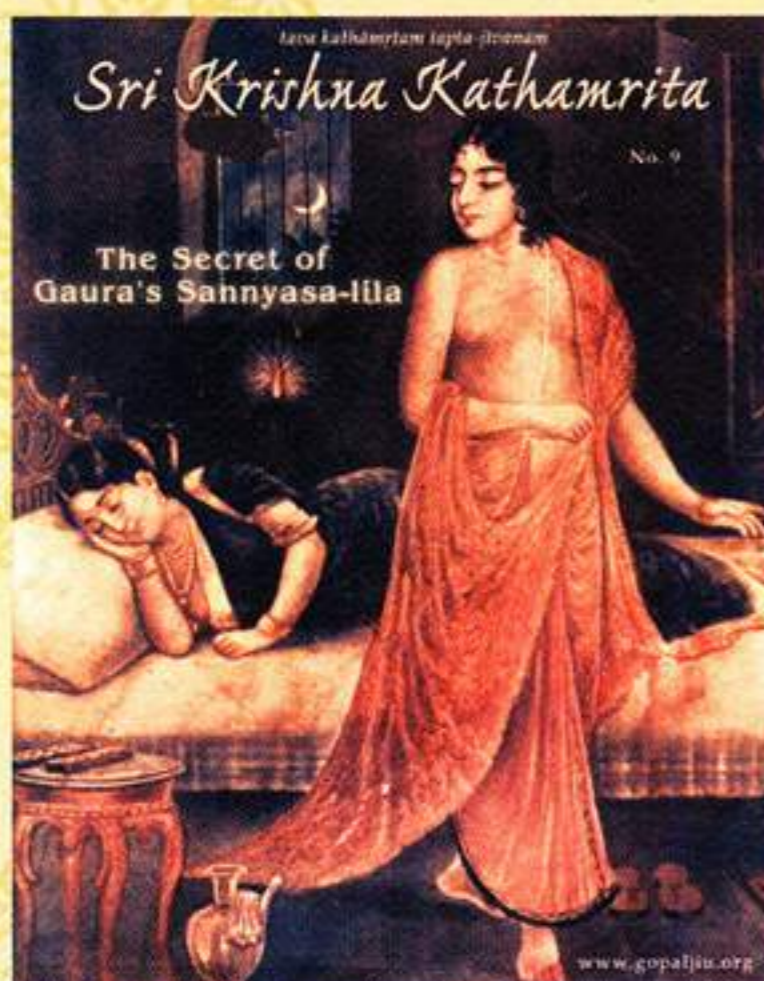
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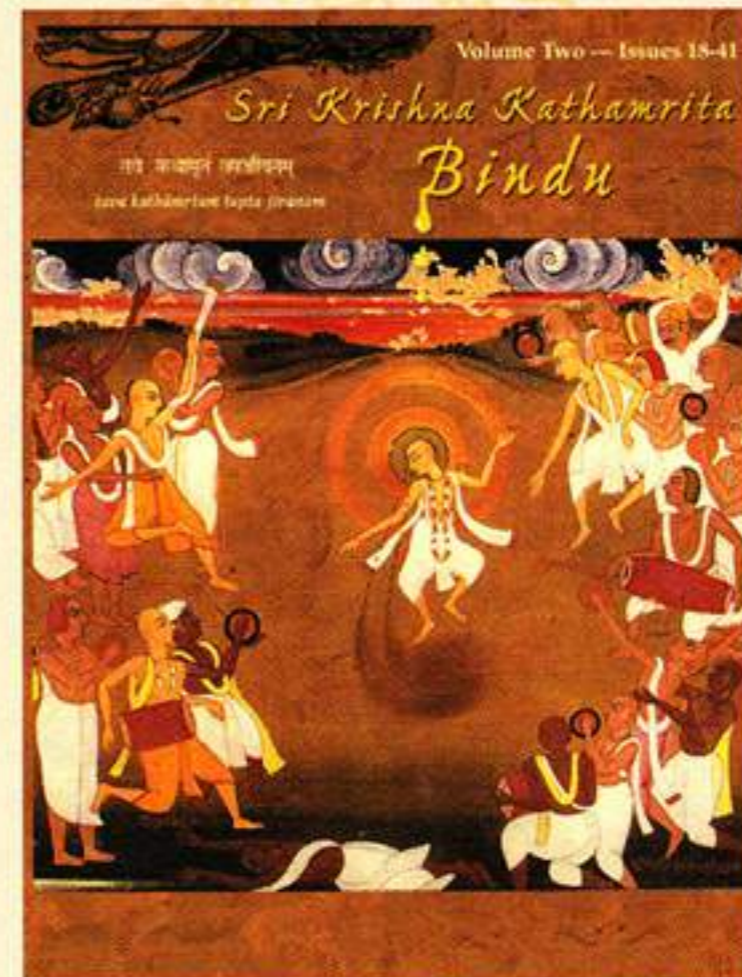
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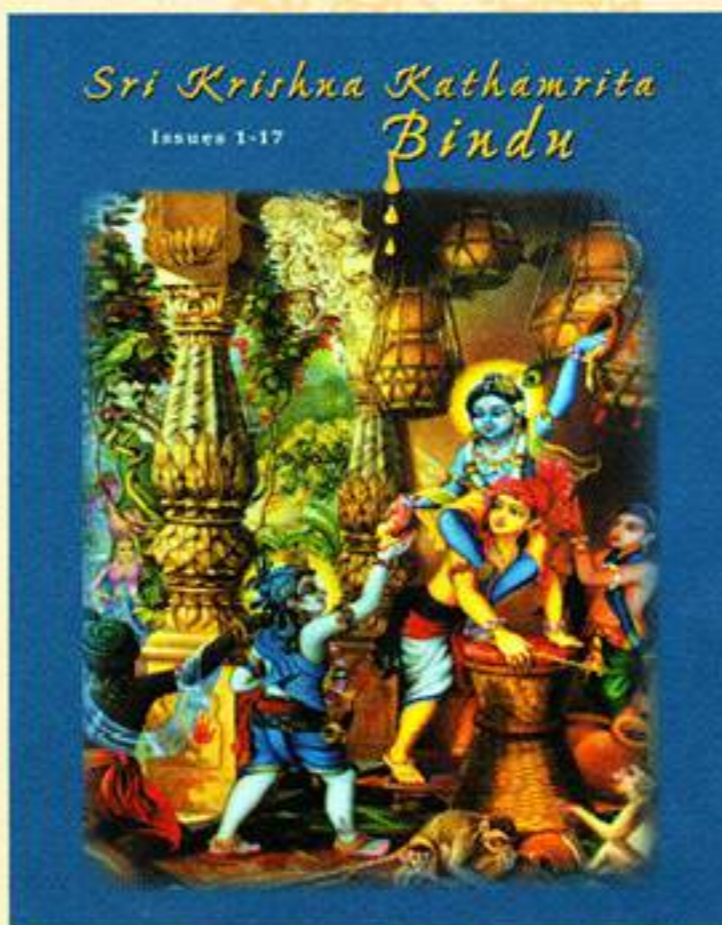
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*tat-kṛṣṇa-varṇa-vilasat-su-kalām samīkṣya
 tasmin vilagna-manasā su-sukhaṁ vihāya
 unmatta-vad vrajati dhāvati nīlakaṇṭho
 bibhrat kaparda-viṣa-bhasma-kapāla-sarpān*

[Radha said:] Gazing at Krishna's dark handsomeness, Shiva became attached to Him. Giving up all normal happiness, Shiva now walks and runs about like a madman, wearing matted hair, drinking poison, covered with ashes, and decorated with snakes and skulls.

— *Garga-saṁhita* 2.18.23