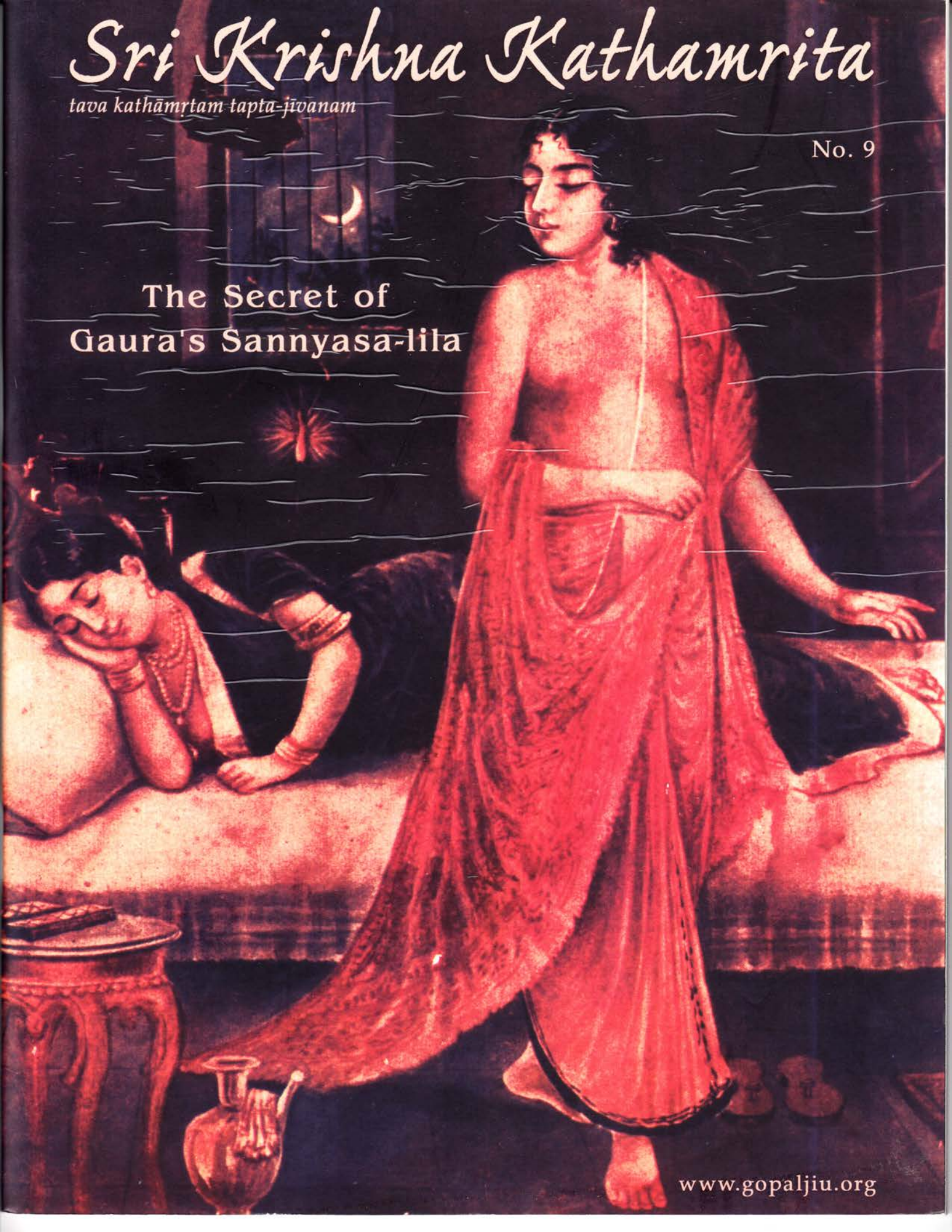


Sri Krishna Kathamrita

tava kathāmṛtam tapta-jīvanam

No. 9

The Secret of
Gaura's Sannyasa-lila



Sri Krishna Kathamrita

Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Rādhā-Gopinātha Jayati

The Secret of Gaura's Sannyasa-lila



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Background photo: Ganga in Mayapur at sunset



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: Chaitanya Mahaprabhu leaves home. From a Bengali print circa 1950.

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Many kind *vaiṣṇavas* have helped to put this magazine together. If somehow we have forgotten to mention any of them, we beg apology — *doṣa kṣami' mo adhame koro nija dāsa*.

Our apologies to Srila Swarup Das Babaji Maharaja of Barshana for getting his name wrong in the acknowledgments column of our last issue.

From the Editor
**Why Did the Lord
 Take Sannyasa?**

Vedic literature describes that one seeking liberation from the illusion and bondage of this material world must accept the *sannyāsa āśrama*. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.2), Krishna explains to Arjuna what is *sannyāsa*:

*kāmyānāṁ karmaṇāṁ nyāsaṁ
 sannyāsaṁ kavayo viduḥ
 sarva-karma-phala-tyāgaṁ
 prāhuḥ tyāgaṁ vicakṣaṇāḥ*

Giving up activities that are based on material desire is what learned men call the renounced order of life (*sannyāsa*). And giving up the result of all activities is what the wise call renunciation (*tyāga*).

Renunciation is described in *Uttara-gītā*, a portion of the *Bhīṣma-parva* of *Mahābhārata*:

*nityaṁ naimittikaṁ kāmyaṁ
 karma trividham ucyate
 sannyāsaḥ karmaṇāṁ nyāso
 nyāsi tad dharmam ācāraṁ*

There are three kinds of activities, namely *nitya*, *naimittika*, and *kāmya*. Giving up all such activities is called *nyāsa*, renunciation, and one who practices renunciation is called a *nyāsi*, renunciate.

Renunciation is possible only for one who is attached to something. According to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, the word *tyāga*, renunciation, can be used when one gives up an enjoyable object. But what does it mean to renounce that which one is already detached from? Since the Lord is completely aloof from His external energy, why does He formally renounce it? Krishna tells Arjuna:

*na ca māṁ tāni karmaṇi nibadhnanti dhanañjaya
 udāsīna-vad āsīnam asaaktaṁ teṣu karmasu*

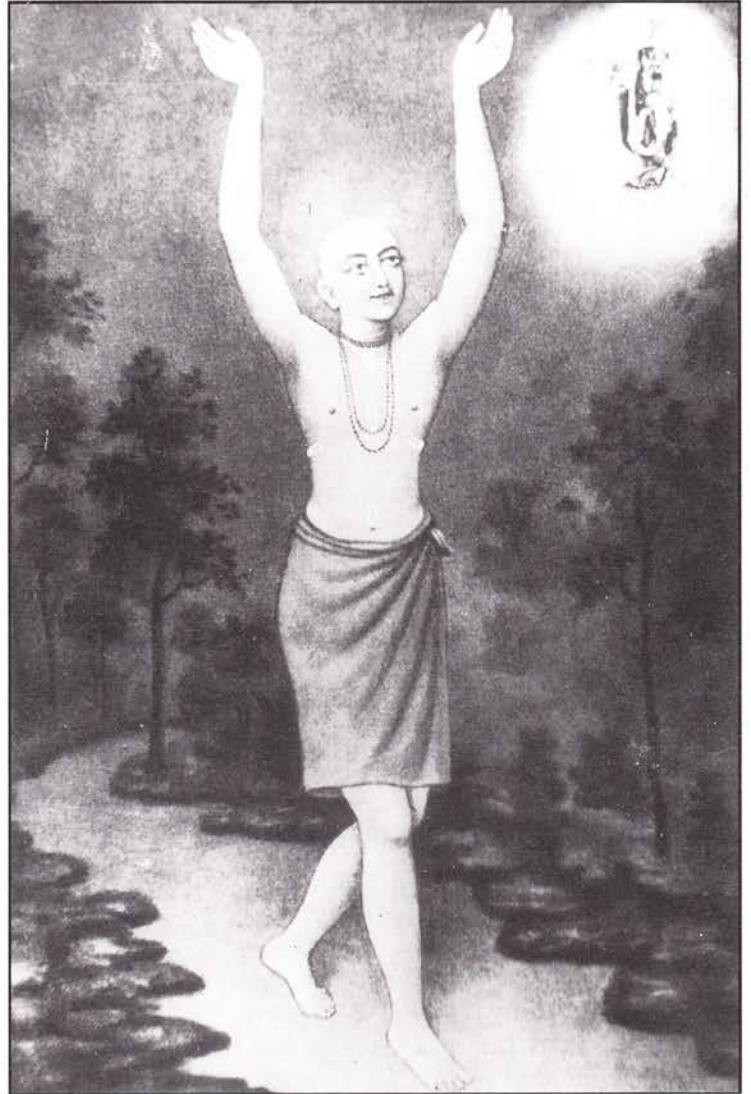
O Dhananjaya, all this work cannot bind Me. I am ever detached from all these material activities, seated as though neutral. (Bg. 9.9)

Your letters are welcome. Write to :

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Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu enters Vrindavan

Since the Lord's pastimes are fully spiritual, there is no question of illusion or mundane bondage being associated with them. As the ultimate possessor of and bestower of renunciation from matter, there is no need for Him to renounce family life and take *sannyāsa*. What, then, was the purpose of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's taking *sannyāsa*?

This issue of *Sri Krishna Kathamrita* examines that question and explores various aspects of *sannyāsa*, ranging from institutional considerations in today's Gaudiya Vaishnava society, to the heart-rending story of how Lord Gauranga left home, to the inner reason why Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa*, to an amazing account of how Krishna once took *sannyāsa*. We pray that it will bring some pleasure to the followers of Sri Sachinandana Gaura Hari.

Vaiṣṇava-kṛpā prārthī,
 Madhavananda Das



GRIHASTHAS AND SANNYASIS

**Srila 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.

Should a householder ācārya set the example of awarding sannyāsa?

When the devotee householders act as ācārya and award mantras and symbols of sannyāsa, great inauspiciousness is created for the recipient of the sannyāsa. (Sajjana-toṣaṇī 4/2)

Can a householder award one sannyāsa?

One should take sannyāsa only from a renounced vaiṣṇava. Since a devotee householder has not relished the behavior of a renunciate, he should not give sannyāsa to anyone. (Jaiva Dharma, chapter 7)

How does one measure the different levels of the vaiṣṇavas?

The renunciate vaiṣṇavas should not think that they are more respectable than the gṛhastha vaiṣṇavas. One should know that the difference in respect among the vaiṣṇavas lies only between *uttama-adhikārī* and *madhyama-adhikārī*. Both *uttama-adhikārīs* and *madhyama-adhikārīs* are found among the gṛhasthas. This also applies to the renunciate vaiṣṇavas. The glories of the renunciate vaiṣṇavas are that they have given up the association of women, greed for money, and bodily pleasure. The gṛhastha vaiṣṇavas have special glories. Many of them work hard to earn money, and after serving Krishna, they serve gṛhastha and sannyāsī vaiṣṇavas. Whether one is a gṛhastha or a sannyāsī, the principal cause for respect is the attainment of devotional service. One should be respected as a vaiṣṇava according to one's advancement in devotional service.

There is no other cause to distinguish the level of a vaiṣṇava. (Sajjana-toṣaṇī 5/11)

Does one's position as a vaiṣṇava depend on varṇāśrama, high birth, opulence, scriptural knowledge, or beauty?

One who has devotion is a vaiṣṇava, whether he is gṛhastha, sannyāsī, rich, poor, learned, foolish, weak, or strong. (Sajjana-toṣaṇī 10/2)

Should a devotee become a sannyāsī or a householder?

For a devotee to remain a householder or to become a sannyāsī is the same thing. (Sajjana-toṣaṇī 11/12)


What is the position of a householder? Should one remain a householder forever?

The position of the householder is like a school for the living entity to learn and awaken the science of the self. (Jaiva Dharma, chapter 7)

Why is dry renunciation not pleasing to Krishna? How does Sri Hari bestow His mercy on one who favorably cultivates devotional service to Krishna and is devoid of material enjoyment, fruitive activities, and mental speculation?

The role of sannyāsa is a sort of karma befitting an āśrama and is not pleasing to Krishna when it aims at liberation. Sannyāsīs receive the fruits of their karma and even if they are unmotivated, their karma ends in ātma-mamatā, self-pleasure. Pure devotees always serve Krishna by gratifying His senses. They forsake all attempts of karma and jñāna, being free from all desires except to serve Krishna. Krishna has fully destroyed the karma, desires and nescience of such devotees. (Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5/54)

Is it proper to accept a living entity or a sannyāsī as Lord Narayan?

The māyāvādī sannyāsīs consider themselves Brahman and address each other as Narayan. It is the custom of the smārtas that if the brāhmaṇas and the householders see a sannyāsī, they should offer him obeisances, thinking him to be Narayan. To stop this wrong belief, Srīman Mahāprabhu said that any living entity, including a sannyāsī, can never become Krishna, who is full of six opulences. The living entity is only a spiritual spark; therefore he is like a particle of the rays of the sun Krishna. It is improper to offer obeisances to a living entity because one considers him to be Narayan. (Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya, Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 18/112 to 116) 

— Bhaktivinode-vāṇī-vaibhava. English Translation by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Vrindavan. 2002.

The Living Mrīdangas of Sri Chaitanya



**Srila
Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur
Prabhupada**

The following is an excerpt from a lecture given by Srila Saraswati Thakur on the occasion of sending his first sannyāsī preachers to the West.

The happy day has come when we are about to spread the message of our great master to distant corners of the earth. The spiritual service to which we are dedicated has now passed the bud stage and blown fully into a flower whose aroma we have to carry across the seas — with the same eagerness that characterized Sri Hanuman when he leapt over the wide ocean with the message of Sri Rama. This extension of Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's spiritual gift to foreign countries is our humble offering at His Feet....

The words of instruction of Sri Gaurasundara are verily His beautiful body. The preachers of His word through the ages are His secondary limbs. The teaching

of Sri Gaurasundara is His potent weapon. And the grace of Sri Hari Himself, established in the word of Sri Chaitanya, is His eternal associate. Therefore, for truly presenting Sri Gaurasundara, the Lord of the Gaudiyas, to the aliens, I am addressing a few words to the preachers who are about to proceed to countries beyond India.

We find the following great precepts (*mahāvākyas*) in the body of the teaching that has been vouchsafed to us by the supreme master of all masters:

To chant constantly the discourse of Hari, being extremely more humble than the blade of grass, being as forbearing as the tree, seeking no honor for oneself and offering due honor to all entities. This is the highest natural function of the unalloyed individual souls (*jīvas*).

The lotus feet of my Sri Gurudeva attracted me to his service by his manifestation as the living embodiment of these four great precepts. My friends will be in a position to attract all souls of the world to the foot stool of the real truth by purchasing the same unfailing method.

The crest jewel of the order of the *sannyāsīs* of the triple-staff, Srila Prabhodananda Saraswati Goswamipad, has taught the same process to those who assume the triple staff of renunciation in the following words:

I say this by holding the straw between my teeth, by falling at your feet, and by uttering hundreds of the humblest entreaties. All ye good souls, by throwing off everything to a distance, should practice love to the feet of Sri Chaitanya, who is so surpassingly beautiful.

Following in the footsteps of all the predecessor devotees, I am making my submission to them to pursue the identical method of propaganda.

Sri Krishna Chaitanya Deva is the supreme teacher of all teachers of this world and the ideal possessor of intelligence that is the highest of all. It should be our only duty to constantly chant those words regarding the cleansing of the mirror of the heart of which He speaks in His eight precepts (*Śikṣāṣṭakam*). We are only the bearers of the transcendental word. We shall never in any way hesitate to offer every honor and facility, for which they are eligible, to all persons of this world. We must pray to all for the boon of an aptitude for the service of Krishna. We shall come across many persons in this world possessing an endless variety of characters disposed or hostile to the service of Krishna.

But we should not slacken in our loving service of the Lord of our hearts and should offer due honor to all persons.

We will have opportunities, as we approach different persons in all parts of the world with the vendor's bag of the discourse of Hari, to see a good many sights, to hear much, and to seek to derive much benefit from our experience. May we never forget that all entities of this world are essentially proteges of the lotus-feet of Sri Guru for helping the expansion of His service. May we always remember that they are excellent only if they are prepared to wait with the utmost eagerness on the particle of dust of the lotus feet of my Sri Guru, and that otherwise they are merely the mirage devised by the deluding potency for our ruin. I wish to remind those friends of mine who are proceeding to the west for preaching the words of Sri Chaitanya, of the two precepts of my master Sri Rupa:

- (1) The constant endeavor for cultivating relationship with Krishna of a person who, being free from all mundane affinity, enjoys the entities of this world, having due regard to the propriety of each case, in pursuance of his purpose, is called the proper kind of renunciation.
- (2) The abnegation, by persons desirous of liberation, of entities that have an affinity with Hari, in considering their mundane nature, is termed renunciation possessing little real value.

Those nations to whom you are going for the propagation of the chant of Hari are mounted on the summit of proficiency in all affairs of this world. They are practiced in the exercise of their rational judgment and are endowed with the quality of good manners. This should maintain our hope unshaken that they will prove to be the worthiest recipients of the heard transcendental voice, if we unlock to them the gates of the natural exhibition of abiding argument and enduring judgment. If we unpack our baggage of the genuine discourse of Hari by relying on the qualities of forbearance, it will certainly receive the garland of welcome from the hearts of nations gifted with keen intelligence.


We have not been actuated by any attempt of rivalry or hostility in undertaking this propaganda. This should always be borne in mind. We should call at the door of every seeker of the truth, bearing on our heads the baggage of the real truth to be offered to them. It is no business of ours to be elated or discouraged by the praise or neglect of any person. We must be constantly alive to the duty of enhancing the pleasure of our Master by serving Him with perfect sincerity.

We must not look at the world by being weighed down with the mentality that is oppressed with the sense of deficiency or otherwise, by the poverty or otherwise, of the display of worldly erudition, rank, etc., by any

particular person. This is the state of forgetfulness of our real selves. All persons of this world are superior to us in every way as far as this world is concerned. Such material matters are not commodities that are to be coveted by us. We are merely beggars carrying the triple staff of renunciation and devoted to the chanting of the words of Sri Chaitanya. We have no more, nor any higher desirable object than the pleasure of serving *śrī-hari-guru-vaiṣṇavas*.

We are not the operators of the instruments. We are only the instruments. We must always bear this in mind. The triple *bhikṣus*, *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsīs*, are the living *mṛdaṅga* drums of Sri Chaitanya. We must constantly give forth our music at the lotus feet of Sri Guru. We should practice the function of the peripatetic preacher, *parivrajakācārya*, of carrying aloft the victorious banner of the commands of the divine Sri Gaurasundar by constant submission to Sri Guru and the *vaiṣṇavas*, fixing our eye on the pole-star of the heard transcendental voice. We must always bear in mind that we have been initiated in the vow of peripatetic preacher for the sole purpose of promulgating the heart's desire of Sri Guru and Gauranga. If we are constantly inspired with the duty of discoursing about the truth under the guidance of Sri Guru, then no hankering after traveling, nor any veiled form of desire other than the chanting of *hari-nāma*, will ever strike any terror in our hearts.

The vowed service of the name, the transcendental abode, and the desire of Sri Gaurasundara, is our only eternal function. We are *bhikṣus* of the triple-staff. The in-gathering of the smallest alms, even such as are gathered by the bees, is our only means for serving the manifestation of the manifestive divine form of Sri Chaitanya Math all over the world. We are neither enjoyers nor abnegators of mundane entities. We recognize as our highest objective the desire for carrying with veneration the shoes of the order of the *paramahamsas*.

It will be our only duty to proclaim to all the people that complete reliance on the transcendental absolute truth is by far the highest form of freedom. That freedom is infinitely superior to the partial independent mastery over the distorted reflected entity in the shape of this mundane world. By holding the straw between our teeth in supplication, we shall carry aloft the banner of that real freedom to all persons. We should be constantly engaged in chanting the exhilarating name of Sri Hari by adopting as our fundamental enlightening principle that the highest path is the path of submission, endorsed by Sri Rupa, with the further exhortation to cherish the unwavering faith that He will always protect us. 

— Lecture given in Madras, 18 March 1933. From *Shri Chaitanya's Teachings*, pages 383-384. Sree Gaudiya Math. Madras. 1989.

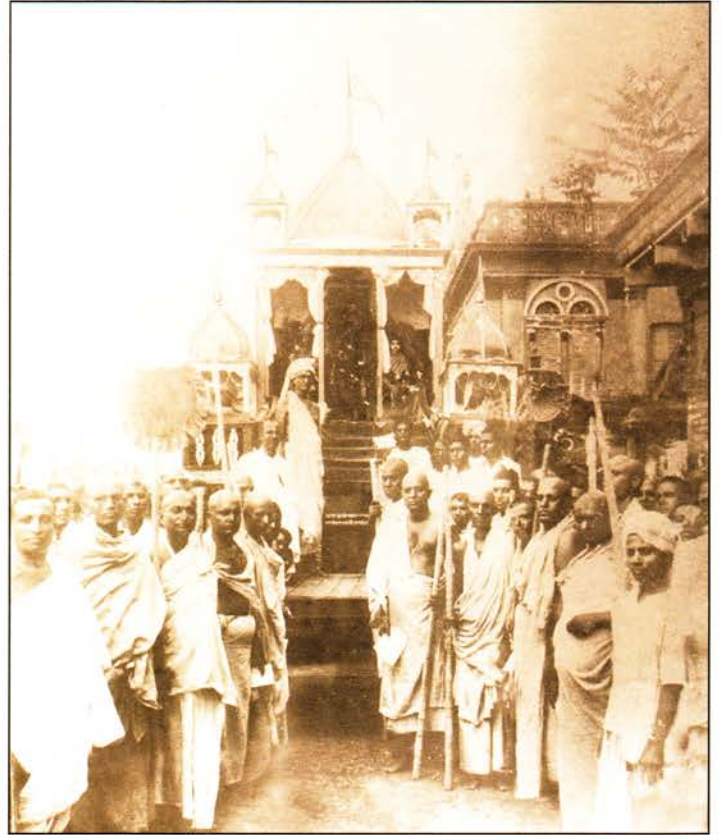
SANNYASA AND SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA

Five thousand years ago, at the end of the *Dvāpara-yuga*, Krishna spoke *Bhagavad-gītā* for the upliftment of all mankind. In the last chapter of the *Gītā* (18.66 and 18.34), Krishna gave His most confidential instructions: *sarva-dharman parityajya* and *man-manā bhava mad-bhaktaḥ* — one should surrender to Krishna and become His devotee. Yet, seeing the fallen condition of the people of *Kali-yuga*, Krishna thought that they were not capable of understanding the *Gītā*. Theoretical instructions were not enough; they would need a practical example. Therefore, to personally show how to follow the *Gītā*'s instruction to surrender, Krishna decided to conceal His divine powers and reappear in the guise of His own devotee.

That incarnation is Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, famous as *parama-karuṇa*, the most merciful incarnation, because He is *kṛṣṇa-prema-pradātā*, the giver of ecstatic love for Krishna. But the Lord found that because He had come in disguise, some of the sinful living entities, not understanding His divine nature, were unwilling to accept His teachings. Some even criticized and offended Him. Consequently, He was unable to give them the love of God that He had come to distribute. Thus, since the people of that time had great respect for *sannyāsīs* in the line of Sripad Shankaracharya, to deliver the fallen souls of this age the supremely merciful Lord accepted the order of *sannyāsa*. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada writes in his purport to *Cc. ādi 3.3.4*:

During the time of Lord Chaitanya, the influence of Shankaracharya in society was very strong. People thought that one could accept *sannyāsa* only in the disciplic succession of Shankaracharya. Lord Chaitanya could have performed His missionary activities as a householder, but He found householder life an obstruction to His mission. Therefore He decided to accept the renounced order, *sannyāsa*. Since His acceptance of *sannyāsa* was also designed to attract public attention, Lord Chaitanya, not wishing to disturb the social convention, took the renounced order of life from a *sannyāsī* in the disciplic succession of Shankaracharya.

But in the early twentieth century, the intellectuals of India were largely enamored of western ideas. The Brahma Samaj and other groups had experimented with combining western concepts with Indian tradition and achieved some success. The Ramakrishna Mission, started in 1897, became very popular in Bengal using a system of monasteries and temples serving as bases for *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs*



Srila Bhaktisiddhanta and some of his sannyāsa disciples

to study and preach. For the common pious people of the time, it was not important that the *sannyāsīs* of the Ramakrishna mission were wearing shoes, driving in cars, and so on. Just by seeing the *sannyāsa* garb, the people respected those *sannyāsīs* as *sādhus*.

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinoda was the first prominent Gaudiya Vaishnava *ācārya* to present the teachings of Mahaprabhu in a modern context. His desire was to spread Mahaprabhu's movement all over the world in a dynamic way. Under his direction, his fourth son, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, also began preaching. Following in the mood of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who accepted *sannyāsa* so that the mass of people would accept His teachings, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur also introduced *sannyāsa* and founded a formal institution of temples and preachers. In March of 1918, on the day of Gaura Purnima, at the age of 44, he took *sannyāsa* from a picture of Srila Gour Kishore Das Babaji. Although certain persons sometimes criticize this act, considering it to be against scriptural injunctions and not authorized by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, its sole purpose was to induce the conditioned souls to follow the instructions of Mahaprabhu and thus be delivered. Thus, Srila Saraswati Thakur accepted it and encouraged some leading disciples to accept *sannyāsa* as well. 🍌



Sannyasa in the Age of Kali

His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada

We pose certain commonly asked questions about sannyāsa in the following article, with answers from the teachings of Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

What is the proper etiquette of respect to be offered to a sannyāsī?

One who does not offer respect to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to His deity in the temple, or to a *tridaṇḍī sannyāsī* must undergo *prāyaścitta* [atonement]. If one does not offer obeisances to such a *sannyāsī*, the prescribed *prāyaścitta* is to fast for one day. (Purport to Cc. ādi 17.265)

Regarding your questions how to offer respects to *sannyāsīs*. Every *sannyāsī*, even if you see a Mayavadi *sannyāsī*, offer him your respects — there will be no harm. As you have observed, we shall follow Lord Chaitanya's instruction that we give all due respects to others regarding their position, but there is no need of associating with each of them. Even if one is *vaiṣṇava*, but not of good character, we can give him the *vaiṣṇava* respect, but we cannot associate with him. (Letter to Jayapataka, 30 April 1970)

What is the definition of sannyāsa?

Sat nyāsa, sannyāsa. This is the combination. "Sat" means the Supreme, the ever-existing, and "nyāsa" means renunciation. That means one who has renounced everything for serving the Supreme, he is real *sannyāsa*. He may take this dress or not, that doesn't matter. Anyone who has sacrificed his life for service of the Supreme Lord, he's a *sannyāsī*. (Lecture in Los Angeles, 20 December 1968)

What is Tridaṇḍa-sannyāsa?

There are four *daṇḍas*. One *daṇḍa* symbolizes the self, and the other three *daṇḍas* symbolize the body, mind, and words. ... So *tridaṇḍī-sannyāsī* means one who has devoted his life, meaning his body, his activities, and his words. Anyone who has devoted his mind, body and words for the service of the Lord, he is a *sannyāsī*. *Sannyāsī* does not mean simply changing the dress and thinking otherwise. No. It does not matter whether the dress is changed or not. If one is fully engaged with his body, mind and words, he is a *sannyāsī*. (Lecture in Hawaii, 20 January 1974)

What are the qualifications to take sannyāsa?

Who has no more material desires, he is fit for taking *sannyāsa*. *Sarvopādhi. Anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam. Śūnyam* means zero. All material desires made into zero. Then *sannyāsa. Sannyāsī, anāsakta*. (Lecture in Melbourne, 29 June 1974)

No more desire of material enjoyment — he is fit for *sannyāsa*. Anyone who sees: "Oh, this car is very nice, a beautiful woman is very nice," he should not think of taking *sannyāsa*. (Morning walk conversation in Mayapur, 26 February 1976)

Is taking sannyāsa required?

Not everyone can [take *sannyāsa*]. Especially in this age. Especially in your country, to take *sannyāsa* is a very difficult job. It should not be given; neither it should be taken. Actually, *sannyāsa* is forbidden in this age. But if one is very strong, he can accept *sannyāsa*. So better to remain a *gṛhastha* and cultivate Krishna consciousness. That is better. Don't accept whimsically

sannyāsa and then do all nonsense. No. It is better to remain *gṛhastha*. But not *gṛhamedhī*. *Gṛhamedhī* means that he does not know anything else than to support the wife and children and live very comfortably, well-dressed, and... That is called *gṛhamedhī*. His center is only that apartment. He does not know anything more than that apartment. That is called *gṛhamedhī*. And *gṛhastha* means that he knows many things, Krishna, beyond this apartment. (Lecture in Paris, 9 June 1974)

Preach — that is *sannyāsa*. What is the use of changing dress? Do, actually. (Letter to Bhaktijana, 25 September, 1976)

There is no need of taking *sannyāsa*. If you are sincere in preaching, you can do in this dress. Where is the harm? Simply by changing, taking a rod, you'll not become God immediately. You have to work, steadily. What is there in *sannyāsa*? Do you mean to say that by taking a rod one becomes *sannyāsa*? *Sannyāsa* means you must be sacrificing everything for Krishna. That is *sannyāsa*. (Room Conversation in London, 15 August 1971)

Should one take *sannyāsa* before being qualified?

Don't cheat by accepting *sannyāsa* and indulging in these things. Don't be a cheater. That is very bad. *Sannyāsa* means to take a vow. In other stations of life there may be fall down, but *sannyāsa* means no fall down. Unless one is found completely competent to accept *sannyāsa*, there is no more use of awarding *sannyāsa*. (Lecture in Mayapur, 4 April 1975)

What is the duty of one who has left *sannyāsa* and married?

Especially in this age, *Kali-yuga*, it is advised that no one take *sannyāsa*.

*aśvamedham gavāmbham sannyāsam pala-paitykam
devareṇa sutopattiṁ kalau pañca vivarjayet*

Drawing by Anuradha Dasi

Sri Krishna-kathamrita

[*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa, kṛṣṇa-janma-khaṇḍa* 185.180 quoted in *Cc. ādi* 17.164]

From this, we can understand that in this age the *sannyāsa-āśrama* is forbidden because people are not strong. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu showed us an example in taking *sannyāsa* at the age of twenty-four years, but even Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya advised Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to be extremely careful because He had taken *sannyāsa* at an early age. For preaching, we give young boys *sannyāsa*, but actually it is being experienced that they are not fit for *sannyāsa*. There is no harm, however, if one thinks that he is unfit for *sannyāsa*; if he is very much agitated sexually, he should go to the *āśrama* where sex is allowed, namely the *gṛhastha-āśrama*. (Purport to *Bhāg.* 8.2.30)

You should not consider taking *sannyāsa* again, but in your country it is not a great thing. Although officially it is a fall down from *sannyāsa*, in your country no one understands *sannyāsa*. The more important principle is that we should purify our thoughts and engage them in Krishna's service. (Letter to Rupanuga, 8 June, 1974)

What is the purpose of giving *sannyāsa* in this age?

Of course, because Lord Chaitanya accepted this *sannyāsa*, so we are maintaining that system. The actual point of *sannyāsa* is not *mukti*, but is to satisfy Krishna. That is *sannyāsa* — how will Krishna be satisfied, how will Krishna's representative be satisfied. (Lecture in Bombay, 9 April 1971)

Following in His footsteps — we are preaching Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's cult and giving *sannyāsa* for preaching. That is not unauthorized. One who criticizes this action, he does not know the principle of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. (Lecture in Vrindavan, 16 October 1972)

Didn't Chaitanya Mahaprabhu reject *sannyāsa* in this age?

It is sometimes said that Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu disapproved of the acceptance of the *sannyāsa* order in this *Kali-yuga*, because in the *śāstra* it is said:

*aśvamedham gavāmbham sannyāsam pala-paitykam
devareṇa sutotpattiṁ kalau pañca vivarjayet*

In this Age of Kali, five acts are forbidden: the offering of a horse in sacrifice, the offering of a cow in sacrifice, the acceptance of the order of *sannyāsa*, the offering of oblations of flesh to the forefathers, and a man's begetting children in his brother's wife.

Nevertheless, we see that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Himself accepted *sannyāsa* and approved of the *sannyāsa* of His elder brother, Visvarup. It is clearly said here:

*bhāla haila, — viśvarūpa sannyāsa karila
pitṛ-kula, māṭṛ-kula, — dui uddhārila*

Therefore, should we think that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu made contradictory statements? No, actually He did not. It is recommended that one accept *sannyāsa* to dedicate his life for the service of the Lord. Everyone must take that kind of *sannyāsa*, for by accepting such *sannyāsa* one renders the best service to both his paternal and maternal families. But one should not accept the *sannyāsa* order of the Mayavada school, which has practically no meaning. We find many Mayavadi *sannyāsīs* simply loitering in the street thinking themselves Brahman or Narayan, and spending all day and night begging so they can fill their hungry bellies. Mayavadi *sannyāsīs* have become so degraded that there is a section of them who eat everything, just like hogs and dogs. This type of degraded *sannyāsa* is what is prohibited in this age. Actually, Srila Sankaracharya's principles for the acceptance of *sannyāsa* were very strict, but later the Mayavadi so-called *sannyāsīs* became degraded because of their false philosophy, which propounds that by accepting *sannyāsa* one becomes Narayan. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu rejected that kind of *sannyāsa*. (Purport to Cc. ādi 15.14)

Did Chaitanya Mahaprabhu take *sannyāsa* from a Mayavadi *sannyāsī*?

Yes. That is a formality. It is not very important. Because Mayavadi *sannyāsīs*, they are also Vedic *sannyāsīs*. They are not outsiders. Their interpretation of Veda is different, but they follow the Vedic rules. Acceptance of *sannyāsa* is following the Vedic rules. So you can accept *sannyāsa* even from Māyāvādī. It doesn't matter. But you have to transcend the limits of the Vedic rules. That is Krishna consciousness. Although Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa*, He did not assume the *sannyāsa* title. His *sannyāsa* guru was Keshava Bharati. So naturally He should have accepted the Bharati title. "Sri Krishna Bharati", or something like that. However, He remained as

Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Chaitanya is the name of a *brahmacārī* under the guidance of Bharati *sannyāsīs*. But even after His acceptance of *sannyāsa*, He did not assume the title Bharati. That means that actually He did not take *sannyāsa*. That was simply a formality. Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* think that they are God, But Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was preaching that we are servants of God. Therefore, He did not assume that title.


Besides that, when Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was going to Jagannath Puri, His rod was taken away by Nityananda, Who broke it and threw it away. At that time He apparently became very angry, "You have broken My *sannyāsa* rod. So I am not going with You." And He separated from the party.

In one sense, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu did not require to accept any *sannyāsa* guru, but He accepted the formality that if one takes *sannyāsa*, one has to take *sannyāsa* from another *sannyāsī*. That is the system. Just like if you want to get married, you have to call for a priest. But it does not mean that you have to agree with the priest's personal opinion. (Lecture in Los Angeles, 27 November 1968)

Why did Srila Bhaktisiddhanta introduce saffron cloth and *sannyāsa*?

Actually, a *vaiṣṇava* is above *varṇāśrama-dharma*. But we don't claim that we have become perfect *vaiṣṇavas*. We are not so impudent. We want to remain under the *vaiṣṇavas*. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* you'll find that *vaiṣṇava* is *paramahansa*. A *vaiṣṇava* has no saffron cloth. A *vaiṣṇava* wears white cloth because *vaiṣṇava* is *paramahansa*. We don't claim the position of *vaiṣṇava*. We want to remain the servants of the *vaiṣṇavas*. Therefore, this *sannyāsa* order is below the position of *vaiṣṇava*. The order of *sannyāsa* is a material classification, but *vaiṣṇava* is *paramo nirmatsarāṇām satām*, a *paramahansa* free from envy [Bhāg. 1.1.2], and, *sa guṇān samatītyaitān brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*, above the material modes of nature [Bg. 14.26].

The position of being a *vaiṣṇava* is not an easy thing. It is above all material qualities. Therefore, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur introduced *sannyāsa* so as not to become imitators of Rupa, Sanatan, the Goswamis of Vrindavan — they are *paramahansas*.

... The *paramahansa* stage should not be imitated. To stop this imitation, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur introduced this system, *sannyāsa*. He personally became a *sannyāsī*, and he gave *sannyāsa* to many of his disciples. (Lecture in Mayapur, 21 October 1974) 

Merciful Lord Govinda Took Sannyasa

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

A lecture in Bhubaneswar, 17 May 1991

*more nā mānile saba loka habe nāśa
ithi lāgi' kṛpāndra prabhu karila sannyāsa*

Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu thought, "Unless people accept Me, they will all be destroyed." Thus the merciful Lord accepted the *sannyāsa* order.

PURPORT

In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (12.3.51) it is said, *kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgaḥ param vrajet* — "Simply by chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, or Lord Krishna's name, one is liberated and goes back home, back to Godhead." This Krishna consciousness must be achieved through the mercy of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. One cannot be complete in Krishna consciousness unless he accepts Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates as the only means for success. It is because of these considerations that the Lord accepted *sannyāsa*, for thus people would offer Him respect and very quickly come to the platform of Krishna consciousness. Since Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who is Krishna Himself, inaugurated the Krishna consciousness movement, without His mercy one cannot be elevated to the transcendental platform of Krishna consciousness.

(Cc. ādi 8.10, translation and purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.)

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Because He came in the mood of a devotee, *mūḍhās*, rascals, cannot accept Gaurahari as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Gauranga Mahaprabhu



Diorama photo courtesy of ISKCON Mayapur

assumed the attitude of a devotee — *bhakta bhāva angikāra*. He is Krishna Himself, the object of the love of the devotees, but He came instead as a devotee, the possessor of love for Krishna. Why? To personally teach *bhakti*. Demonstrating in His life by His own example, He is teaching how to surrender unto Krishna.

Krishna came five thousand years ago in His original form. On the battlefield of Kuruksetra, He gave His most confidential instruction:

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

"Give up all varieties of dharma and surrender unto my lotus feet." That is *bhakti*, that is *ātma-vṛtti*, the activity of the soul, *ātma-dharma*. Surrender unto the lotus feet of Krishna, and engagement in His loving service, is the soul's dharma. Krishna instructed this theoretically. He is the only well-wishing friend of the living entities, therefore, while in His abode He thought: "O, I have only said this theoretically. I have not practically demonstrated it. So the people, especially those of *kali-yuga*, cannot understand it, they cannot practice it in their lives. So I must go again." Therefore, He came again in *kali-yuga* as a *bhakta*. Mahaprabhu said (Cc. ādi 3.2):

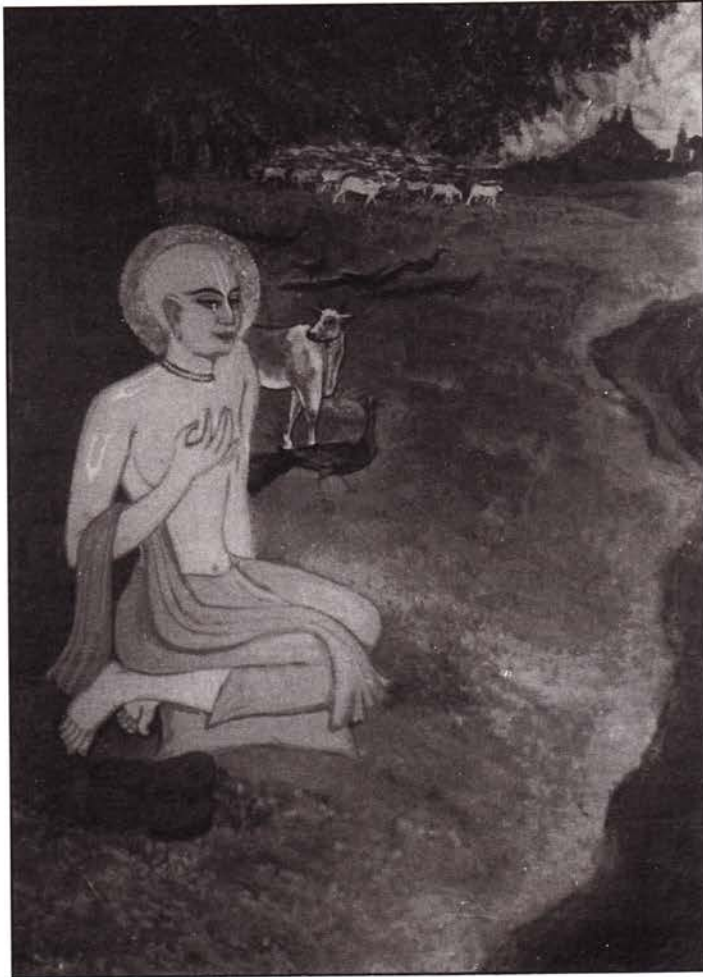
āpani karimu bhakta-bhāva aṅgikāre
āpani ācari' bhakti śikhāimu sabāre

I shall accept the role of a devotee, and I shall teach devotional service by practicing it Myself.

This is Mahaprabhu's motto. Practice in your own life, then you can teach. Otherwise you have no right to teach. Theoretical speaking will not do. So, although He is *bhagavān*, He came as a *bhakta*. Some rascals speak like the demon Jarasandha.¹ They strictly follow Vedic regulative principles and worship Vishnu, but they don't accept Krishna. That is demoniac. In other *yugas*, one or two such demons were there. But in *Kali-yuga*, all are demons. Mahaprabhu is Krishna Himself, but He came as a *bhakta*. How can the demons accept it? When he came as *bhagavān*, they did not accept, so what to speak of when He came as a devotee? Mahaprabhu knew this, and said (*Cc. ādi 8.10*):

more nā mānile saba loka habe nāśa
ithi lāgi' kṛpādra prabhu karila sannyāsa

Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu thought that unless people accept Him as the Supreme Lord, they would be destroyed. Thus the merciful Lord accepted



the order of *sannyāsa*. The general etiquette in human society was that people offer respect to *sannyāsīs*, especially Mayavadi *sannyāsīs*, because Mayavadi *sannyāsīs* think themselves Lord Narayan. When they offer obeisances to a Mayavadi *sannyāsī*, they say, *om namo nārāyaṇāya* — "I offer my obeisances to Lord Narayan." These Mayavadi *sannyāsīs* considered themselves to be Lord Narayan, and common people also accepted them as such. That was vogue in society then, and it is still current today. So Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa* from Mayavadi *sannyāsīs* for this reason. He is Narayan Himself, but He came as a *bhakta*. People were not being respectful to Him, were committing offenses, and were thereby destroying themselves. However, Mahaprabhu is so merciful. He is wonderfully merciful, wonderfully munificent, and wonderfully magnanimous. His mission in coming is to deliver everyone.

Mahaprabhu is the Lord. He thought, "If these people commit offense, they will be destroyed and My mission will fail." So He took up *sannyāsa*. He thought, "If I take *sannyāsa*, then automatically they will offer Me respect and they will be delivered. Otherwise they won't offer Me respect." When the rascals and demons are not paying respect to Krishna, why will they pay respect to a devotee? In *Kali-yuga*, everyone is a demon.

So for this purpose He took *sannyāsa* from a Mayavadi *sannyāsī*. However, He preached *vaiṣṇava-dharma* and Nityananda Prabhu broke his Mayavadi *sannyāsī eka-daṇḍa*.² *Vaiṣṇava sannyāsīs* carry three combined rods — *tri-daṇḍa*. Mahaprabhu took *ekadaṇḍi-sannyāsa*, because people respected Mayavadi *sannyāsīs*. Therefore it says here, *ithi lāgi' kṛpādra prabhu karila sannyāsa* — the merciful Lord therefore accepted the order of *sannyāsa*. Otherwise people would not pay him respect. That was His purpose. Mahaprabhu is so merciful. One should understand Mahaprabhu, *gaura-tattva*, then he can understand *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, otherwise it is not possible to understand *kṛṣṇa-tattva*.

So when we open a temple, we install Jagannath, we install Krishna-Balaram, but we also install Gaurasundara. This is a perfect temple. Without *gaura-bhakti*, without the mercy of Gauranga Mahaprabhu, no one can understand Krishna; no one can enter the path of Krishna consciousness. Without worshipping Mahaprabhu, one's so-called *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* is demoniac. The deity of Jagannath may be there, Krishna may be there, Radha Govinda may be there, but if there is no Gaura, it's not complete, not perfect. The *bhakti* will be not complete. Rather, it will be non-devotional. Gaura must be there.



Without the mercy of Gaurasundara, no one can develop Krishna consciousness. That is why Mahaprabhu took up *sannyāsa*. Otherwise, what is the need for the Supreme Personality of Godhead to take *sannyāsa*? Mahaprabhu did not disregard social customs, because through those customs one should teach. It is not that all of a sudden one can disregard or change those customs. The *ācāryas* know this, and they act according to time, place, and circumstances. Otherwise, the teaching will be a failure. One should teach according to time, place and circumstances, and gradually they will come to the path of perfection. Not all of a sudden. Mahaprabhu knows this. So as an ideal teacher, ideal *ācārya*, ideal *sādhu*, He took *sannyāsa* from the Mayavadi *sannyāsīs*.

There is also another reason. He came to deliver everyone, so the Mayavadis should also be delivered. Without the mercy of Gauranga, the Mayavadis would never be delivered. *Māyāvādī kṛṣṇa aparādhi* — they are great offenders at the lotus feet of Krishna, thinking themselves to be the Lord.

A similar pastime took place in Mahaprabhu's *līlā* when He was in Vrindavan. There was a rumor that Krishna had appeared at Kaliya-daha.³ Many people were going there to have *darśana* of Krishna. In the morning, people

were talking about it, saying that at night Krishna had appeared at Kaliya-daha and was dancing on the hoods of the serpent Kaliya. Mahaprabhu had a servant named Balabhadra Bhattacharya. He heard people saying that Krishna had appeared at Kaliya-daha, so one day he asked Mahaprabhu, "Please give me permission that I can go and have *darśana* of Krishna in Kaliya-daha. Many people are saying that He has appeared there, so I must go." Mahaprabhu is Krishna Himself. Balabhadra Bhattacharya was already with Krishna, yet he could not understand, because Mahaprabhu was acting like a devotee. So he spoke like this to Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu then became angry, slapped him, and said,

*kṛṣṇa kene darśana dibe kali-kāle?*⁴ — "Why would Krishna incarnate Himself in *Kali-yuga*?" Then Mahaprabhu said, "All right, tomorrow you can go. Not today." Later that day, some nice gentlemen came, and Mahaprabhu asked them, "Have you seen Krishna in Kaliya-daha at night?"

The gentlemen said, "No. That's not Krishna. Every night a fisherman has been going with his net to Kaliya-ghat to catch fish. When people saw him from a distance, his boat looked like the Kaliya serpent, the boatman looked like Krishna standing on the hoods of Kaliya, and his torch looked like the jewels on the snake's hood. Because of this, people have been saying that Krishna has appeared. But it is not the real fact."

Mahaprabhu then told Balabhadra Bhattacharya, "You see? You nonsense. *kṛṣṇa kene darśana dibe kali-kāle?* — Why will Krishna give *darśana* in *Kali-yuga*? Nonsense."

Caitanya-caritāmṛta describes: (*madhya* 18.109-110)

prabhu kahe,—'kāhān pāilā kṛṣṇa darśana?'
loka kahe,—'sannyāsī tumi jaṅgama-nārāyaṇa'

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu then asked them, "Where have you seen Krishna directly?" The people replied, "You are a *sannyāsī*, a renunciant; therefore You are a moving Narayan [*jaṅgama-nārāyaṇa*]."

*vrndāvane ha-ilā tumi kṛṣṇa-avatāra
tomā dekhi' sarva-loka ha-ila nistāra*

The people then said, "You have appeared in Vrindavan as an incarnation of Krishna. Just by seeing You, everyone is now liberated."

These people said, "You are Narayan." And actually He is Narayan. "We see Narayan here. You have come to Vrindavan, so Krishna has incarnated Himself in Vrindavan. That is You. So we are all delivered now." Mahaprabhu closed his ears and said: (Cc. madhya 18.111-113)

*prabhu kahe,—'viṣṇu' 'viṣṇu' ihā nā
kahibā!*

jīvādhame 'kṛṣṇa'-jñāna kabhu nā karibā!

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu immediately exclaimed, "Vishnu! Vishnu! Do not call Me the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A *jīva* cannot become Krishna at any time. Do not even say such a thing!

*sannyāsī—cīt-kaṇa jīva, kirāṇa-kaṇa-sama
ṣaḍ-aiśvarya-pūrṇa kṛṣṇa haya sūryopama*

"A *sannyāsī* in the renounced order is certainly part and parcel of the complete whole, just as a shining molecular particle of sunshine is part and parcel of the sun itself. Krishna is like the sun, full of six opulences, but the living entity is only a fragment of the complete whole.

*jīva, īśvara-tattva—kabhu nahe 'sama
jvalad-agni-rāśi yaiche sphuliṅgera 'kaṇa'*

"A living entity and the Absolute Personality of Godhead are never to be considered equal, just as a fragmental spark can never be considered the original flame."

This is Mahaprabhu's teaching. He said, "No, no, no! Vishnu! Vishnu! Don't speak like that. I am a mere *jīva*. I am not Narayan. I am not Krishna". Actually, He is Krishna Himself. "I am a mere *jīva*. Don't say that a *jīva* is Narayan or Krishna. That is offense." — *jīvādhame 'kṛṣṇa'-jñāna kabhu nā karibā!* Mahaprabhu was posing Himself as an ordinary *jīva* for teaching *bhakti*. He said, *sannyāsī — cīt-kaṇa jīva, kirāṇa-kaṇa-sama — "I am a sannyāsī, I am a mere jīva. I am not Krishna. I am just a spark from the spiritual sun of Krishna. Krishna is ṣaḍ-*

aiśvarya-pūrṇa — unlimitedly full with six types of opulence. He is as effulgent as the spiritual sun."

People accept a Mayavadi *sannyāsī* as Narayan. In

order to correct that misconception, Mahaprabhu said, "No, a *sannyāsī* is a *jīva*. He is not Narayan. I am a *jīva*. Narayan or Krishna is *ṣaḍ-aiśvarya-pūrṇa*, full in six opulences.

In this way, Mahaprabhu was teaching. He took *sannyāsa* from Mayavadi-*sannyāsīs*, and accepted *eka-daṇḍa*, the single staff of the Mayavada school. People would accept Him, offer obeisances to Him, and thereby they would not commit any offenses and be delivered. Although He took *sannyāsa* in the Mayavada line, He was teaching *bhakti-tattva*. Therefore, when people addressed Him as Narayan, He said, "No, no, no! I am not Narayan. Narayan is Krishna. A *sannyāsī* is a mere *jīva*. Don't accept a *sannyāsī* as Narayan." Using *sannyāsa*, He was teaching in this way. This is how an ideal *ācārya* teaches according to time, place and circumstance. 🍊



Sri Srimad Gour Govinda
Swami Maharaja

Endnotes

¹ Jarasandha was a king at the time of Lord Krishna. Although he was very learned in the Vedic literatures, Jarasandha was critical of Krishna and did not accept Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

² The *sannyāsīs* in the line of Sripad Sankaracharya accept a *sannyāsa* staff consisting of only one rod (*eka-daṇḍa*). Lord Nityananda Prabhu broke Mahaprabhu's *eka-daṇḍa* into three pieces indicating the ideal of *vaiṣṇava tridaṇḍi-sannyāsa* that one should offer one's mind, body and words to the lord.

³ The lake in the Yamuna river where Krishna punished Kaliya.

⁴ Cc. madhya 18.101

Questions about Sannyasa

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

In this article, we pose certain commonly asked questions about sannyāsa, with answers from the teachings of Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja.

Do Gaudiya Vaishnavas worship Mahaprabhu as a sannyāsī?

We worship Mahaprabhu after He came back from Gaya. When Mahaprabhu went to Gaya, He met His guru Iswara Puri, and became initiated. When He came back, He cried for Krishna and started His mission of *sankīrtana*. We worship Mahaprabhu in that mood. Very soon after that, He took *sannyāsa* and left His newly wedded wife, Vishnupriya, and His old mother, Sachi Devi. (Questions after a *Bhāgavatam* lecture, Atlanta, Georgia, 19 June 1994.)

When Srila Prabhupada gave sannyāsa to devotees, why didn't He give them one of the 108 traditional sannyāsa names?

In the Gaudiya Math you will find that there are 108 *sannyāsī* names. But our names are not among them. Our names are *brahmacārī* names. Some Gaudiya Math *sannyāsīs* criticize us: "Why didn't your Guru Maharaja give you *sannyāsa* names?" I give this answer: "Why didn't Mahaprabhu accept a *sannyāsa* name? Why did He keep His *brahmacārī* name?" My Guru Maharaja did like that. (*Darśana*, Bhubaneswar, 17 December 1989.)

Why did Srila Prabhupada give sannyāsa to persons who later fell down?

You should understand this thing. The society gives opportunity. If one has been given a position in the society and he is really intelligent, he will understand, "I don't deserve it; I have no qualification. But still this opportunity has come to me. So I must make myself qualified. Then I can stay in the position. Otherwise I will lose it."

For the sake of maintaining the institution, opportunity is given. Unity must be there. We should not allow it to be split up. This is an organizational matter. Why should a member feel discouraged that he cannot get an opportunity?

Srila Prabhupada did the same thing. Prabhupada knew these people were not qualified. But he gave them *sannyāsa*. Prabhupada said, "Take this opportunity! Do it now!" Otherwise, how could he manage the society? He would give someone *sannyāsa*, and then put that *sannyāsī*



in one area to manage. In this way, the *brahmacārīs* and devotees will obey him, because he is a *sannyāsī*.

Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa* for this same reason. He was Mahaprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But because He was a *grhastha*, many were not accepting him and were criticizing. Mahaprabhu thought, "I have to take *sannyāsa*, because a *sannyāsī* has prestige." The general people have the notion that a

Mayavadi *sannyāsī* is Narayan. Mahaprabhu thought, "I must take *sannyāsa*, otherwise these people won't listen to Me." So He took up *sannyāsa* from Keshava Bharati, who was a *sannyāsī* in the Mayavadi *sampradāya*. However, Mahaprabhu preached *vaiṣṇava* philosophy. That was His purpose.

Similarly, Srila Prabhupada gave *sannyāsa*. Otherwise, how can you manage such a worldwide organization? All of the *brahmacārīs* and devotees will accept if a *sannyāsī* is the leader. They will offer him obeisances and accept what he says. But if he is a *grhastha*, if he is a *brahmacārī*, nobody will accept.

Prabhupada gave an opportunity. If you are intelligent, you will understand this. You should think, "I don't deserve it. I am not qualified. But he gave me an opportunity so I must make myself qualified and keep up the position." But instead of being intelligent, you are a fool. You are thinking, "Now I am a *sannyāsī*! Now I am great! Now I am guru, now I am *ācārya*!" You have developed pride. You commit *aparādha* and fall down. This is the reason for these fall downs. So, when we think of organizational matters we should consider all of these things. Otherwise how we will maintain the worldwide organization? These two aspects are there, the spiritual aspect and the organizational aspect. This is the organizational aspect. (*Evening darśana*, Bhubaneswar, 31 March 1992.)



The Son of Mother Sachi Takes Sannyasa

In *ādi-līlā* 7.28-33 of his *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami describes the *pañca-tattva*'s mission of spreading love of God:

*yata yata prema-vṛṣṭi kare pañca-jane
tata tata bādhe jala, vyāpe tri-bhuvane*

The more the five members of the *pañca-tattva* cause the rains of love of Godhead to fall, the more the inundation increases and spreads all over the world.

*māyāvādī, karma-niṣṭha, kutārkika-gaṇa
nindaka, pāsaṇḍī, yata paḍuyā adhama
sei saba mahādakṣa dhāñā palāila
sei vanyā tā-sabāre chuñite nārila*

However, the impersonalists, fruitive workers, false logicians, blasphemers, non-devotees and lowest among the student community are very expert in avoiding the Krishna consciousness movement, and therefore the inundation of Krishna consciousness cannot touch them.

*tāhā dekhī' mahāprabhu karena cintana
jagat ḍubāite āmi kariluñ yatana
keha keha eḍāila, pratijñā ha-ila bhaṅga
tā-sabā ḍubaite pātiba kichu raṅga*

Because the impersonalists and others were fleeing, Lord Chaitanya thought, "I wanted everyone to be immersed in this inundation of love of Godhead, but some of them have escaped. Therefore I shall devise a trick to drown them also."

*eta bali' mane kichu kariyā vicāra
sannyāsa-āśrama prabhu kailā aṅgikāra*

Thus the Lord accepted the *sannyāsa* order of life after full consideration.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada comments on this verse:

There was no need for Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to accept *sannyāsa*, for He is God Himself and therefore has nothing to do with the material bodily concept of life. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu did not identify Himself with any of the eight *varṇas* and *āśramas*, namely, *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*, *brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha* and *sannyāsa*. He identified Himself as the Supreme Spirit. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, or for that matter any pure devotee, never identifies with these social and spiritual divisions of life, for



a devotee is always transcendental to the different gradations of society. Nevertheless, Lord Chaitanya decided to accept *sannyāsa* because when He became a *sannyāsī* everyone would show Him respect, and in that way be favored. Although there was actually no need for Him to accept *sannyāsa*, He did so for the benefit of those who might think Him an ordinary human being. The main purpose of His accepting *sannyāsa* was to deliver the *māyāvādī sannyāsīs*.

Offense of the Students

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur, in his *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata*, *madhya-līlā* 26.87-177, describes that one day in Nabadwip, the Lord of the universe became absorbed in the mood of the *gopīs* and chanted, "vṛndāvana! *gopī, gopī, gopī!*"

One student overheard this and, not understanding the internal mood of the Lord, said, "O Nimai Pandita, why are You chanting '*gopī, gopī, gopī*'? You should stop this and chant the name of Krishna. What piety will You achieve by chanting, '*gopī, gopī, gopī*'? The Vedas say that

श्री कृष्णकथामृत

one achieves piety by chanting the name of Krishna." The Lord was absorbed in a different mood, which the ignorant student could not understand. The Lord said, "Krishna is a rogue. Who will worship Him? He mercilessly killed Vali for no fault of his. Being controlled by His wife, He cut off the nose and ears of another woman. He took everything away from Bali Maharaja and sent him to Patala. What will I gain by chanting His name?" After speaking in this way, Mahaprabhu, who was absorbed in ecstasy, took up a stick and rushed to beat the student.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur comments:

Considering Himself a resident of Vrindavan and the child of a cowherd, Sri Gaurasundar was chanting "gopī, gopī, gopī", addressing the daughter of Maharaja Vrishabhanu. On hearing Him, a young *brāhmaṇa* student who could not understand the internal mood of Lord Gauranga said, "Chanting the name of Krishna is the only way to be delivered from material existence. How have You become misguided to give up chanting such names and taken to the chanting of 'gopī'?" The young student did not know that one cannot attain the lotus feet of Krishna without taking shelter of the *gopīs*, who are Krishna's *āśraya-vigrahas*, the embodiments of love for Him. In particular, since that foolish student had not studied the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* verse, *āhuś ca te nalina-nābha*¹, he tried to induce Gaurasundar to chant the name of Krishna, as if such chanting was an abominable atonement prescribed by a *smarta* supervisor. This clashed with the internal mood of Gaurasundar, who therefore attempted to show that student the same treatment Sri Madhavendra Puri showed to his misguided disciple Ramachandra Puri. "What will I gain by taking shelter of that 'rogue' Krishna, who cut off the nose and ears of the lusty Surpanakha, who killed Vali, and who sent Bali to Patala after taking everything away from him?" After speaking such loving quarrelsome words, Mahaprabhu chased after that student.

Seeing the angry Lord with a stick in His hand, the student panicked and ran away to escape being beaten by His stick. Mahaprabhu chased after him, exclaiming, "Catch him! Catch him!" Not understanding the Lord's mood, the student ran for his life. The devotees quickly ran after the Lord, and soon caught Him and brought Him back. As they all pacified the Lord, the student fearfully ran far away. Breathing heavily and covered with perspiration, the student quickly joined his fellow students, who were less intelligent like him, and told them about Lord Gaurasundar's behavior. He told them, "Today I'm lucky to still be alive. Everyone

says that Nimai Pandita is a great saint, so I went to His house to see Him. I saw that day and night He was sitting and chanting, 'gopī, gopī, gopī'. So I asked Him, 'O Pandita, what are You doing? Chant the name of Krishna as the scriptures have prescribed.' On hearing my words, He burned with anger. He then picked up a stick and began to chase me. He also criticized Krishna with such filthy words that I am unable to repeat them. I was saved only by the will of destiny. This is what happened to me today."

Hearing this, some of his fellow students said, "We all studied together with Vishwambhar, how can He suddenly become a liberated *mahā-bhāgavata*? He may be the son of Jagannath Mishra, but we are also the sons of learned persons like Jagannath Mishra. He is not a king who can award punishment. If He comes to punish us, we will punish Him. Like Him, we are also the sons of *brāhmaṇas*. If He comes to beat a *brāhmaṇa*, why should

we tolerate it? If someone accepts Him as superior to a *brāhmaṇa* by calling Him a *vaiṣṇava*, then we should hear the name of Krishna coming from His mouth, as befitting a *vaiṣṇava*. Hearing the strange name 'gopī' coming from His mouth, no one will consider Him a *vaiṣṇava*. The duty of a

vaiṣṇava is to follow in the footsteps of the *brāhmaṇas*. Since He became angry enough to beat a *brāhmaṇa*, we can understand that He is envious of the *brāhmaṇas*."

In this way, the sinful students made a plan, which was understood by Sri Sachinandan, the Supersoul. One day, Mahaprabhu was sitting in the midst of His associates. Suddenly He spoke something strange, which no one could understand:

*karila pippalikhaṇḍa kapha nibārite
ulaṭiyā āro kapha baḍīla dehete*

"I made the medicine *pippalikhaṇḍa* to clear excess mucus, but instead of clearing the mucus in the body, it created more." (Text 121)

In his commentary on this verse, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati explains that by speaking the above, Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu means to say:

I attempted to preach to the suffering living entities of this world a truth that had never before been revealed. But rather than accepting it, they took the heavy burden of offense on their shoulders. I wanted to preach for the eternal benefit of the residents of Nadia, but they did not understand My intention, and seem to have become bewildered, so they are opposing the preaching of pure devotional service.

The Vedic literature prescribes the medicine *pippalikhaṇḍa* to cure a person who is afflicted by excessive mucus. But rather than curing the disease, the medicine has simply increased the mucus. The materialistic people of this world worship imaginary gods to increase their sense gratification. They do not perform any activities for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord, but simply remain busy gratifying their own senses. They consider sense gratification as the goal of life and do not inquire about the rarely attained loving devotional service of Krishna.

Informing the Devotees

After saying this, the Lord laughed loudly. The devotees could not understand why He was laughing and became anxious. However, Nityananda became absorbed in lamentation, as He understood that the Lord would soon leave home to take *sannyāsa*. Thinking that the Lord would shave off His beautiful hair, Nityananda became agitated with distress. After a while, Lord Gauranga took Nityananda by the hand and sat down with Him in a solitary place.

The Lord said, "Listen, Nityananda Prabhu! Let Me confidentially reveal My heart to You. I came to deliver the living entities of this world. However, I could not deliver them, and it now appears as if I came to destroy them. They were supposed to be freed from material bondage by seeing Me, but whereas they were previously bound by one rope, they are now bound by millions. As soon as they decided to beat Me, they were immediately entangled in unlimited bondage. Soon You will see Me shave My head and give up My *brāhmaṇa* thread. I will wander about begging as a *sannyāsī*. I will soon become a beggar at the door of those who have decided to beat Me. They will then fall at My feet when they see Me, and in this way I will deliver the entire world. Everyone offers obeisances to a *sannyāsī*; no one dares to beat one. I have thus revealed My heart to You. I will certainly give up household life. Do not feel distressed because of this. Give Me Your permission to take *sannyāsa*. I will do whatever You want, but I hope You will not forbid Me from taking *sannyāsa*. Do not feel unhappy for even a moment, for You know the purpose of My incarnation."

Nityananda's mind, body, and life airs were shattered when He heard that the Lord would shave His head. He had no advice to offer, for He knew that the Lord would certainly take *sannyāsa*. Nityananda said, "O Lord, You are supremely independent. Whatever You desire will certainly take place. Who can tell You what to do or what not to do? Whatever is in Your heart is inevitable. You are the maintainer and Lord of all planets. You know well what is proper for You. You

alone know how You will deliver the people of the world. You are independent and full of transcendental bliss, therefore whatever You wish to do will certainly be done. Still, You may ask Your servants to see what they have to say. Then do whatever You desire, O Lord, for who can change Your will?"

On hearing Nityananda's words, the Lord was satisfied and repeatedly embraced Him. After discussing with Nityananda in this way, Lord Gauranga went to speak to the *vaiṣṇavas*. As Nityananda realized that the Lord would leave home, He lost external consciousness and His body was stunned. After becoming pacified, Nityananda thought, "How will mother Sachi survive when the Lord leaves home? Realizing how mother Sachi would suffer, Lord Nityananda went to a solitary place and continuously cried.

Gaurachandra went to the house of Mukunda. When Mukunda saw the Lord, he felt great ecstasy. The Lord said, "Sing about the auspicious glories of Krishna." As Mukunda sang, the Lord became overwhelmed. On hearing the fortunate Mukunda's melodious singing, the crest jewel of the *brāhmaṇas* roared loudly, "Chant! Chant!" After a while, the Lord controlled His emotions and began to speak with Mukunda. The Lord said, "O Mukunda, listen to Me. I will not stay here. I will leave home. I will leave household life. I will give up My *śikhā* and *brāhmaṇa* thread and go where I please." Hearing that the Lord would shave His *śikhā*, Mukunda fell into lamentation and lost all sense of happiness. In great humility, Mukunda Mahasaya said, "O Lord, if You must take *sannyāsa*, then first please perform *kīrtana* a few more days as You have been doing. Then do as You please."

After hearing the appeal of Mukunda, Sri Gaurasundar went to the residence of Gadadhar. Gadadhar respectfully offered his obeisances to the Lord, who said, "Listen to what I have to say. O Gadadhar, I will not remain at home. I will go out to search for Krishna. I will give up My *śikhā* and *brāhmaṇa* thread. After shaving My head, I will go wherever I please."

On hearing that the Lord would give up His *śikhā*, Gadadhar felt as though he had been struck in the head by a thunderbolt. In distress, Gadadhar said, "O Lord, Your statement is quite puzzling. Are You saying that a *gr̥hastha* cannot be a *vaiṣṇava* and that one attains Krishna simply by giving up his *śikhā* and *brāhmaṇa* thread? O Lord, is this the benefit of shaving one's head? This is just Your opinion. It is not the opinion of the Vedas. How will You leave Your widowed mother? You will become responsible for Your mother's death. She will certainly not survive if You leave, for You are the only one she has, and

You are her life and soul. Is the Supreme Lord not pleased if one stays at home? A householder is liked by everyone. Still, if You are pleased by shaving Your head, then leave if that is what You desire."

Curse of the Brahmana

Another pastime leading up to Mahaprabhu's leaving home and taking *sannyāsa* is narrated in Srila Murari Gupta's, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya-carita Mahā-kāvya* (2.13.13-22). There it describes that once a certain *brāhmaṇa* came to see Mahaprabhu's dancing at the home of Srivas Thakur, but was forbidden entry by the doorman. Being unable to see the Lord, the man became angered. On the following day, seeing the guru of the three worlds on the bank of the Ganga, that *brāhmaṇas* face became consumed with fury, and he cursed the Lord. Breaking the sacred thread draped over his chest, the *brāhmaṇa* wrathfully delivered this curse, "Because I was forbidden entry by the doorkeeper when I came to see Your dancing, therefore You must now leave all the happiness of Your family life." When the Lord heard these words uttered by the *brāhmaṇa*, He felt very happy and thought:

*kruddha-brāhmaṇa-śāpo vai vara evābhavan mama
uddharāmi janān sarvān sannyāsāśramam āśritaḥ*

"This angry *brāhmaṇa*'s curse is actually his blessing on me. By this means, I shall deliver all living people. Accepting the *āśrama* of *sannyāsa*, I shall depart from my home!" (Text 22)

Mother Sachi's Lament

Caitanya-bhāgavat chapter 27 narrates that after Mahaprabhu discussed his plan with the *vaiṣṇavas*, the news spread from person to person until it eventually reached Mother Sachi. On hearing that her beloved Nimai would take *sannyāsa*, Sachi, the mother of the universe, became so distressed that she forgot where she was. She repeatedly fell unconscious to the ground and was unable to control the incessant flow of tears from her eyes.

Later, when the lotus-eyed Lord was sitting at home, Mother Sachi began to speak to Him with tears in her eyes. "My dear son, do not leave. Do not leave Your mother. This sinful person is existing only by looking at Your face. How will I survive without seeing Your lotus eyes, Your moon-like face, Your reddish lips, Your pearly teeth resembling *kunda* flowers, or Your elephant-like gait? And how will I survive without hearing Your words that shower nectar? Stay at home and happily perform *sankīrtana* in

Srī Krishna-kathamrita

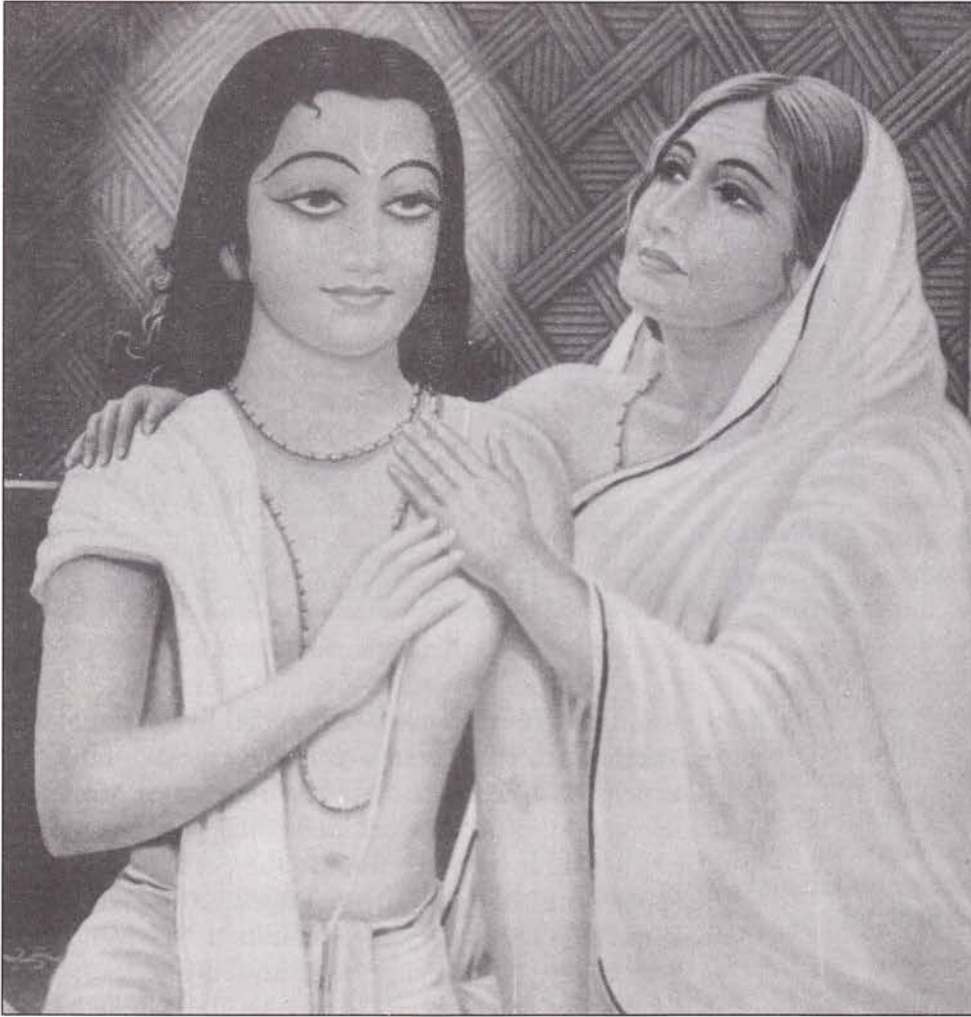


Gaura's saṅkīrtana party

the company of Your followers headed by Adwaita and Srivas, Your intimate companion Nityananda, and Your dear friends like Gadadhar. You incarnate to preach religious principles, but what kind of religious principle is it to leave Your mother? You are the personification of religious principles, yet You will leave Your mother? How will You then teach religious principles in this world?"

Sachi was grief-stricken with love as she spoke. As Viswambhar listened, His throat became choked, and He was unable to answer. "Your elder brother has left me, and Your father has gone to Vaikuntha. I have forgotten all my grief by looking at Your face. If You leave me, I will certainly die. My dear son, it is not proper for You to leave Your widowed mother. Perform *kīrtana* with the devotees in Your own house. Nityananda is there to assist You. I look at Your two eyes filled with love and Your two long arms. Your words shower nectar. Without a lamp, my house is illuminated by the effulgence of Your body. How much nectar emanates from Your reddish lotus feet."

As Mother Sachi lamented in this way, the Lord neither raised His head nor spoke a word. Sachi became pale and appeared like skin and bones. She was overcome with lamentation and had stopped eating. Realizing that His mother would not survive, the Lord took her to a solitary place and spoke some confidential words to her. "O mother, pacify your mind and hear how many lifetimes I have been your son. Hear attentively about your own glories. Sometime in the past, your name was Prishni and you were My mother. Later, you were in the heavenly planets as Aditi and I incarnated as your son Vaman. Later you became Devahuti, and I again became your son Kapila. Then you became Kausalya, and I again became your son



Mahaprabhu and Sachimata

as Ramachandra. Then you became Devaki in Mathura, and you were locked up within the prison of the demon Kamsa. At that time you were also My mother. You are that same Devaki, and I am your son.

*āro dui janma ei saṅkīrtanārambhe
ha-iba tomāra putra āmi avilambe*

"While inaugurating this *sankīrtana* movement, I will soon take two more births as your son. (*madhya* 27.47)

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati comments on this verse:

The deity form of the Lord is made of substances like clay, while the name of the Lord consists of sound vibration. So there are two incarnations of Sachinandan — the deity incarnation and the holy name incarnation. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (ādi 17. 22) it is stated: *kali-kāle nāma-rūpe kṛṣṇa-avatāra* — "In this Age of Kali, the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra*, is the incarnation of Lord Krishna." This is the statement of Gaurasundar. The deity form of the Lord is non-different from the Lord Himself and the holy names. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 17.131) it is stated:

*'nāma', 'vighraha', 'svarūpa' — tina eka-rūpa
tine 'bheda' nāhi, — tina 'cid-ānanda-rūpa'*

"The Lord's holy name, His form, and His personality are all one and the same. There is no difference between them. Since all of them are absolute, they are all transcendently blissful."

Mahaprabhu then told His mother, "In My form as the deity, you are My mother as the earth. In My form as the holy names, you are My mother as the tongue. In this way You are My mother birth after birth. There is never any separation between you and Me. I have sincerely disclosed this to you so that you should not feel any more grief." After the Lord spoke these most confidential topics, Sachi became somewhat pacified.

On the day that the Lord was going to leave home to take *sannyāsa*, He privately spoke to Nityananda. "O Nityananda Svarupa, please listen! On the coming *Makara-saṅkrānti* day [January 14 or 15], I will certainly leave home and take *sannyāsa*.

There is a village named Katwa near Indrani. At that place lives the pure soul, Keshava Bharati. I will certainly take *sannyāsa* from him. You should only tell the following five persons about this and no one else — My mother, Gadadhar, Brahmananda Bharati, Sri Chandrasekhar Acharya, and Mukunda." The Lord said this to Nityananda Svarup in private, so no one else knew. Thereafter, Nityananda Prabhu told those five persons about the Lord's coming departure.

The Lord passed that day joyfully engaged in *saṅkīrtana* along with the *vaiṣṇavas*. After happily taking His noon meal, the Lord went to see the Ganga in the evening. He offered obeisances to the Ganga, sat on the bank for some time, and then returned home. Sri Gaurasundar then sat at home surrounded by His followers. No one knew that the Lord would leave home that day, therefore everyone happily enjoyed His company. The lotus-eyed Lord sat there with His limbs decorated with a beautiful flower garland and scented sandalwood pulp. Every *vaiṣṇava* who came to see Him brought along sandalwood pulp and a flower garland. The Lord attracted so many people that no one knew where they had all come from. Even

Lord Brahma was unable to count the number of persons who came to see the Lord. Everyone who came offered obeisances by falling down flat. They then gazed continuously at the Lord's beautiful face. The Lord then gave each of them a garland from His neck and instructed them to sing the glories of Krishna:

*bolo kṛṣṇa, bhaja kṛṣṇa, gāo kṛṣṇa-nāma
kṛṣṇa vinu keha kichu nā bhāvīha āna*

Glorify Krishna, worship Krishna, and chant the name of Krishna. Do not think of anything other than Krishna.

*yadi āmā-prati sneha thāke sabākāra
tabe kṛṣṇa-vyatirikta na gāibe āra*

If you love Me, then follow My instructions. Don't chant, don't speak any other name, any other topics, than those about Krishna.

*ki śayane, ki bhojane, kibā jāgarane
ahar-nīsa cinta kṛṣṇa, bolaha vadane*

Whether you are sleeping, eating, or waking, day and night think of Krishna and chant His name." (Cb. 28.26-28)

The Lord thus cast His merciful glance on everyone who came, and after instructing them, He said, "Now go home." In this way many people came and went. They floated in such ecstasy that they did not recognize one another. The beautiful body of the Lord, decorated with sandalwood pulp and flower garlands, could not be compared to the insignificant beauty of the full moon. After receiving the Lord's mercy, all the people became ecstatic and left loudly chanting, "Hari! Hari!"

The pious Sridhar came with a bottle-gourd squash in his hand. Seeing the squash, Sri Gaurasundar thought, "Tomorrow I will leave. Therefore I'll not be able to eat this. "Yet whatever is brought by Sridhar cannot be wasted. So I must eat it today." He requested His mother to cook the squash. Just then, one fortunate person came and offered a pot of milk. The Lord smiled and told His mother, "This is very nice. Please cook these together." Mother Sachi immediately went to cook in great satisfaction. Such is the affection of the son of Sachi toward His devotees!

The Lord of Vaikuntha happily passed the evening in great ecstasy. After seeing everyone off, Lord Viswambhar sat down to take His dinner. When He finished eating, Lord Gauranga washed His mouth and went to His bedroom. There He rested under the influence of *yoga-nidra*, or mystic sleep, while Gadadhar and Haridas slept nearby. Knowing that the Lord would depart, Mother Sachi was unable to sleep and remained awake weeping.

Four *daṇḍas*, about two hours, before sunrise the Lord was awakened by his sense of smell. Gadadhar and Haridas also woke, and Gadadhar told the Lord, "I will accompany You."

Sri Krishna-kathamrita

The Lord, however, replied, "No. I will go alone."

When Mother Sachi realized that it was time for the Lord to depart, she came and sat in the doorway. Seeing His mother, the Lord held her hands and solaced her in various ways. "You have maintained Me very nicely. Because of you, I have studied and learned. Without caring a bit for your personal happiness, you have increased My pleasure throughout My life. The amount of affection you have shown Me at every moment is more than I can repay in millions of *kalpas*."

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur comments:

The eternal Sri Gaurasundar never leaves His eternal mother. That is why Sri Sachidevi, who the shelter of transcendental *vātsalya-rasa*, is the shelter of Sri Gaurasundar's *vātsalya-rasa* in His eternal unmanifest pastimes. She never leaves His association for even a moment. (Purport to Cb. 28.53)

Mahaprabhu continued, "Only by your mercy will I be relieved of My debt. Yet I will remain indebted to you life after life. Please listen, dear mother. This entire creation is under the control of the Supreme Lord. No one has the power to be independent. Who can understand the Supreme Lord's will, by which living entities sometimes meet and sometimes separate? You should not lament. I take full responsibility for both your worldly and spiritual needs." Placing His hand on mother Sachi's chest, the Lord repeatedly solaced her, saying, "I will take full care of you."

Mother Sachi quietly listened to what the Lord said. She made no reply but simply shed incessant tears. Thus Sachi, the mother of the universe, became as grave and quiet as Mother Earth. Who can understand the inconceivable pastimes of Krishna?

The Lord then took the dust of His mother's feet on His head, and after circumambulating her, immediately departed. The Lord, who is the hero of Vaikuntha, thus left home to take *sannyāsa* for the deliverance of the fallen souls. When the Lord left, the universal mother, Sachi, became almost inert and unable to speak.

When the devotees took their morning bath, they were unaware of the Lord's departure. When they went to offer obeisances to the Lord, they found mother Sachi sitting outside the doorway. The magnanimous Srivas was the first to inquire, "O mother, why are you sitting at the doorway?"

Mother Sachi was almost inert. Except for the incessant flow of tears from her eyes, she was unable to reply. After some time she said, "Please listen all of you! The *vaiṣṇavas* are eligible to share the Lord's property. You may all distribute the items He has left among yourselves. The *sāstras* declare that those

items belong to you. So be satisfied, do as you please, and let me go from here."

On hearing about the Lord's departure, all the devotees immediately fell unconscious to the ground. Placing their arms around one another's necks, they loudly wept in distress. They cried out, "O Gopinatha, what a terrible night we have passed!" as they held their heads and sobbed. "How will we live without seeing that moonlike face? What is the use of this sinful life? Why has this thunderbolt suddenly struck?" Speaking in this way, some of them rolled on the ground, and some of them beat their chests. The Lord's house resounded with the devotees' uncontrolled weeping. The devotees incessantly wept and fell to the ground, exclaiming, "The Lord has left us to take *sannyāsa*! The Lord of the forlorn has left and thrown us in an ocean of lamentation." All the devotees cried and fell unconscious. They loudly exclaimed, "Hari! Hari! What is the use of our wealth, our families, or even our lives, when the Lord has left?" The devotees were covered with dust and tears. As the devotees fell to the ground in the Lord's courtyard, Mukunda, Murari, Sridhara, Gadadhar, Gangadasa, Srivas and his family, Chandrasekhar, and Haridas all continuously cried.

Hearing the crying of the devotees, the people of Nadia rushed to see what had happened. When they saw that the Lord's house was empty, they were also stricken with grief and began to cry while holding their heads. Both young and old, man and woman — all the devotees who came from the town cried incessantly. Even the offenders and atheists became aggrieved while hearing the people lament. "We are very sinful, therefore we could not recognize Him." As they repented in this way, they also began to cry.

The people of the town wept and rolled on the ground, lamenting, "We will not see His moonlike face again!"

Someone said, "Let us burn our homes and leave this place. We can become mendicant yogis and accept the sign of a mendicant by wearing an ivory earring. When the Lord has left Nabadwip, why should we continue living?"

Parting from Vishnupriya

In his *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, Lochan Das Thakur sorrowfully describes Mahaprabhu's pastimes with His wife Vishnupriya the evening before His leaving home to take *sannyāsa*:

Vishnupriya's heart was agitated. From the people's mouths, she heard whispered rumors. From hints, she could understand the truth that the Lord would soon leave home and take *sannyāsa*. It was as if she was struck by a thunderbolt. Poor Vishnupriya fell

unconscious. At the day's end, Lord Gaura cheerfully returned home. He ate and drank. Then He lay down on His bed. Vishnupriya approached Him. Touching His lotus feet, she sighed. Her face anxious, she gazed at Him. Wrapping the vines of her arms around the feet of her master, more dear to her than life, she pressed those feet to her heart. Tears from her eyes soaked her bodice. The flooding streams of her tears washed the Lord's feet. Lord Gaura suddenly awakened. He asked Vishnupriya what she was doing. "You are most dear to Me. Why do you weep? O goddess, please tell." He placed her on His lap. He put His right hand on her chin. With sweet words, again He asked His question.

Goddess Vishnupriya wept. Her heart was broken and she could not speak a word. The life breath in her heart was filled with suffering. She felt that she could no longer stay in her body. Tears streamed from her eyes. Again and again, Lord Gaura asked, but saintly-hearted Vishnupriya didn't answer. She only held His feet and wept. Lord Gaura knows every art. With the cloth from His own body, He wiped away her tears. Mahaprabhu spoke sweet words to her that made the love within her grow. His words could make a stone burst into flowers.

In a voice choked with emotion, moon-faced Vishnupriya finally spoke, "Please listen. O master of my life, please place Your hand on my head and tell me truly. Will You accept *sannyāsa*? I have heard that you intend to do so. Hearing this, my heart is broken. I will enter fire. My life, wealth, beauty, youth, garments, grace, playfulness, love, and skill, are meant only to please You. If You leave me, what will I, a worthless like a pile of ashes, do? My heart will burn in flames of poison.

"Anyway, let my body perish. My concern is how will You walk barefoot on the pathways? Your feet are soft like *śiriṣa* flowers. I fear to even touch Your feet with my hands. When You stumble and fall like a stick to the ground, my life breath trembles and streams of tears flood my limbs. How will You place Your reddish feet on the bramble-filled forest paths? When You exert Yourself even the slightest, I see drops of perspiration appear on the moon of Your face. In *sannyāsa*, the sufferings are great. The monsoon will come, and some days the sun will shine brightly. I know nothing but Your feet. Why do You throw me away? Do You not fear breaking the rules of religion?"

"Why will You leave Your elderly Mother Sachi, who is already halfway to her death? Why will You accept *sannyāsa*? Why will You leave Murari, Mukunda Datta, Srivas, Haridas, Adwaita

Acharya, and all the other devotees? You are filled with love. You live in everyone's heart. Still, Your actions are very troublesome. When they hear that You have gone to a faraway country, Murari and all the devotees will perish.

"What will I do? I am worthless like a pile of ashes. I am the material attachment You wish to renounce. It is because of me that You wish to accept *sannyāsa*. That is my fear. Very well, I will take one last look at You, and then I will swallow poison. Then You may happily live in Your own home.

"O master, please don't go to another country. There is no one but You in my world. My heart is on fire to gaze at Your face." Vishnupriya had no power to speak any more. Her heart filled with sorrow, she grasped Gaura's feet and wept.

Hearing Vishnupriya's words, Gaura smiled, picked her up, and placed her on His lap. With His garment, He wiped the tears from her face. He joked with her in many ways. Don't be unhappy for no reason." He said. "Who said that I would leave you and accept *sannyāsa*? Whatever I do, I will tell you. Don't perish with this needless sorrow."

After saying these words, Lord Gaurahari kissed and embraced her. He then enjoyed many wonderful loving pastimes with Her, and satisfied her. Thus, They passed the night.

In the middle of the night, flames again rose in Vishnupriya's heart. Gazing at the face of her beloved, who was more dear to her than life itself, she again questioned Him. Placing her Lord's hand on her breast, Goddess Vishnupriya said, "Please don't lie to me. Tell me the truth. Will You leave me? You are the supreme master. You will do whatever You like. You are never controlled by anyone. If You wish to accept *sannyāsa*, what can I say to stop You? Please tell me the truth."

The Lord gently smiled and said, "O dearest beloved. Please listen carefully. What I say is for your benefit. Whatever you see in this world is an illusion. Only the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the *vaiṣṇavas* are real. Children, husband, wife, father, and mother are all illusions. They are all temporary. Who has a relationship with whom? Lord Krishna's feet are our only family. In truth, we have no other family. Who is a husband and who is a wife? Both are spirit souls. Their relationship is false. It is only the shackles of material illusion.

"Lord Krishna is the husband of all. All living entities are His wives. Seed and egg join, and an infant is born from the place where urine flows. Filled with ignorance, the infant falls to the ground. That infant grows to become a child, then a youth, and

then an elderly person. He suffers many troubles. Still, he is very proud of his body and home. For many years, he maintains his family, but in his old age, his family only insults him. In old age, he has no honor. Gradually he grows blind and deaf. Despondent, he weeps. He never worshiped Lord Krishna. He accepted a human body in this world of birth and death to have an opportunity to worship Lord Krishna. But, bound by *māyā*'s shackles, he forgets his true purpose. Intoxicated with pride, he forgets his true master. At the end he dies and goes to hell.

"Your name is Vishnupriya — she who is dear to Lord Vishnu. Please make your name appropriate for you. Please don't needlessly lament in your heart. Throw your worries far away and dedicate your body and mind to serving Lord Krishna."

Lord Gaura then manifested His power as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He dispelled His bewildering potency *māyā* and made Vishnupriya joyful at heart. Her heart was filled with bliss and her suffering and lamentation fled far away. Suddenly she saw four-armed Lord Vishnu standing before her. Although she saw her Lord in the form of four-armed Lord Vishnu, Goddess Vishnupriya did not abandon the idea that Gaura was her husband.

VISHNUPRIYA'S IDENTITY

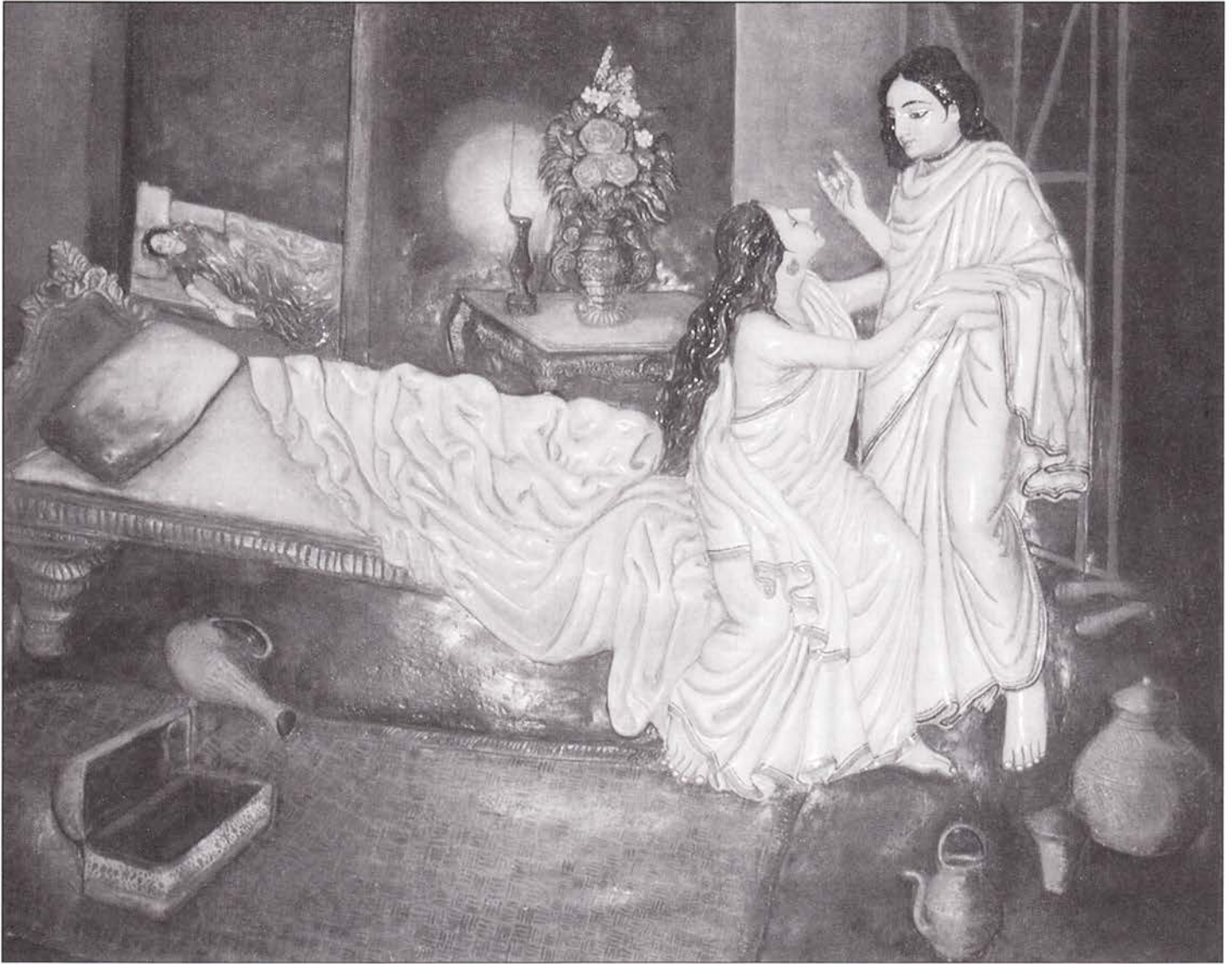
In chapter 14 of Jaiva Dharma, Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode has described the following conversation:

Vrajanath: Which potency of Lord Gauranga is Sri Vishnupriya?

Babaji: Generally, the devotees say she is the Lord's *bhū-śakti*. But the truth is that she is the *samvit-śakti* accompanied by the essence of the *hlādinī-śakti*. This means that she is the goddess of devotion, Bhakti-devi, and during Lord Gauranga's advent she comes to help Him preach the glories of the holy name. As the nine islands of Sri Nabadwip Dham embody the nine kinds of devotional service, so Srimati Vishnupriya is also the nine kinds of devotional service personified.

Vrajanath: Can it be said, then, that Sri Vishnupriya is the Lord's internal potency?

Babaji: How can there be any doubt? Is not the internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*) the same as the *samvit-śakti* accompanied by the essence of the *hlādinī-śakti*? (Translation by Bhanu Swami)



Mahabharata leaves Vishnupriya

Falling down at the Lord's feet, she said, "O Lord, please hear the one request I place before You. I, a person worthless like a pile of ashes, have taken birth in this world of birth and death. You are the dear master of my life. You are my great treasure. I am Your maidservant. Why then, do I feel like I am falling down into hell?" Speaking these words, Vishnupriya wept in sorrow.

Seeing His dear devotee's distress, Lord Gaura also wept, the tears flowing from His eyes. Then He embraced her and gave her His mercy. He said, "Please hear, O Goddess Vishnupriya. Whenever you think of Me, I will come to you. I solemnly tell you this is the truth. It is the truth."

Hearing the Lord's promise, Vishnupriya thought for a moment and said, "You are the independent Supreme Lord. You will do whatever You wish. What power do I have to stop You? I will never say anything to stop You."

Vishnupriya bowed her head. Tears flowed from her eyes. Gazing at her, the Lord spoke sweet words.

When Nimai Left Nadia

Rising at dawn and performing His morning duties, Lord Gaurahari decided, "Now I will accept *sannyāsa*. Keshava Bharati Goswami is now staying in the town of Katwa. I will go and accept *sannyāsa* from him." Thinking thus, Mahabharata then offered obeisances to the Ganga, crossed over, and left Nabadwip. This act was like a thunderbolt striking the heads of all the devotees. Although it was midday, the sun hid. The swans suddenly abandoned the lakes. Where did they go? The bumblebees were now averse to the lotus flowers. It was as if the life breath had suddenly left their bodies.

A great grief of separation filled Nabadwip. It was as if a mountain of anguish crushed everyone. Hugging Vishnupriya, Sachi-devi wept. Vishnupriya fainted and

श्री कृष्णकथामृत

fell to the ground. There she stayed as if she were dead. The life breath seemed to have left her limbs. Then both Sachi and Vishnupriya wept and rolled on the ground.

Sachi-devi sobbed and called out, "Nimai!" It was as if her heart was ablaze with flames. She lamented, "Why have the ten directions become a desert covered by blinding darkness? How has my home become filled with horrors? My house is devouring me! The sweet words of my relatives have become poison! Now no one will call out to me, 'Mother!' No one remembers me. Even Yamaraja forgets me. Why am I tormented in this way? Why has my son left me? I had only one son. Now He has abandoned me. Where did He go? Alas! Alas! My son is merciless. Where did my son go? Who will bring Him back to me? Dear son, when I remember Your sweetness, my heart breaks. O Gaurahari, again and again You called out, 'Mother!' You would not even utter any other word. Dear son, leaving me without a master to protect me, where did You go? In Your heart, did You think how You would make Your mother suffer? I am filled with sorrows. O son, You read, and listened, and learned so much. Still You made Your mother so unfortunate, a mother without anyone to protect her. Abandoning Vishnupriya, where did You go? You did not think of the love the devotees bear for You."

Vishnupriya wept. Her heart was no longer wise. One moment she stood. The next moment she fell down. Her heart was wild. She placed no garments on her limbs. She didn't tie her hair. She wept and wept. She became a wild madwoman. She said, "Holding to my heart the garland that touched my master's body, I will burn in a fire's flames. Thus I will die."

Someone said, "I have no rope to hang myself, so I will stab my heart."

Another said, "This is punishment for our past misdeeds."

Saying, "O Lord, Your glories were sweeter than nectar," everyone wished to enter a fire's flames. No one has the power to understand the confidential pastimes of these devotees. Their hearts became blazing fires, and they wept, making a great wail of their grief. The four directions were filled with devotees whose hearts were tormented with sorrow. How could they restrain themselves? They had no power to do that.

Walking like a graceful wild elephant, Lord Gaurahari proceeded to Katwa. Rivers of tears of spiritual love flowed from His eyes. The hairs on His

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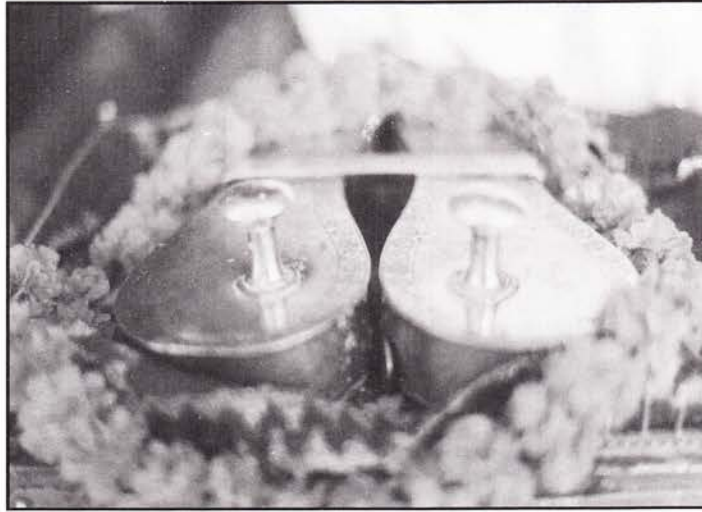
Vishnupriya

golden limbs stood erect. His hair was tied. He walked like a wrestler of Mathura. He was overcome with thoughts of separation from Sri Radha. He thought, "Where is Radha? Where is My Gokula?" One moment He walked quickly. Another moment He went slowly. Another moment He slapped His arms and then another moment He looked in the four directions. He thought, "My Lord Jagannath is the master of all."

In this way, Lord Viswambhar came to Katwa and approached Keshava Bharati, the best of the *sannyāsīs*. With great devotion, Lord Viswambhar bowed down to Keshava Bharati. The *sannyāsī* respectfully lifted up Lord Viswambhar. Seeing Mahaprabhu, the *sannyāsī* was reminded of Lord Narayan. They both thought themselves very fortunate. Lord Viswambhar said, "Please give Me *sannyāsa*."

As these two thus met, Lord Nityananda, Chandrasekhar, and the others suddenly arrived. They offered obeisances to the *sannyāsī* and to Lord Viswambhar. Viswambhar smiled and said, "It is good You have come. Your arrival is auspicious for Me. I will accept *sannyāsa*. Now My birth in this world will bear its fruit."

After speaking these words, the Lord again said to the *sannyāsī*, "I bow down before you. I humbly submit to you, I wish to accept *sannyāsa*."



Right: Dhameswar Mahaprabhu, the deity of Gauranga worshiped by Vishnupriya after Mahaprabhu left home. Above: Mahaprabhu's shoes worshiped by Vishnupriya



VISHNUPRIYA'S JAPA

Vishnupriya Devi was 14 years old when the Lord left home and took *sannyāsa*. After the Lord left, it is said that with the exception of taking bath daily in the Ganga along with Mother Sachi, Vishnupriya always remained within the house. When devotees went there to take *prasādam*, they would only see Vishnupriya's feet. Never did they see her face, nor hear her voice. A constant flow of tears continually streamed from her eyes. She ate only the remnants of food left by Mother Sachi, and constantly chanted the holy name. She worshiped a deity of Lord Gauranga, and offered service to it with great love and devotion. After the departure of Sachi Devi, her brother acted as her guardian.

Srila Narahari Chakravarti describes Vishnupriya's suffering in separation from the Lord in his *Bhakti-ratnākara* (4.48-51) as follows: "Due to separation from the Lord, Vishnupriya lay on the floor with wide-open eyes, seldom able to sleep, and her bright golden complexion grew pale. She gradually became extremely thin, like the moon on the fourteenth day of the dark fortnight. While chanting the holy name, she collected a few grains of rice, which she cooked and ate. No one knew how she maintained her life."

— Adapted from Srila Narahari Chakravarti's *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* and Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Maharaja's *Sermons from the Guardian of Devotion*.

Keshava Bharati replied, "Please hear, O Viswambhar. My heart trembles to offer You *sannyāsa*. Your form is handsome and youthful. From the time of Your birth You have known neither trouble nor suffering. You have no children. I will not offer You *sannyāsa*. When You are fifty years old and You have turned away from the passions of youth, then it will be right to offer You *sannyāsa*."

Hearing these words, the Lord gently said, "What shall I say to you? Please do not bewilder Me. Please hear, O wise *sannyāsī*. Who but you knows the difference between right and wrong? In this world of birth and death a human birth is rare and difficult to attain. In that human birth, devotion to Lord Krishna, the highest religion, is also uncommon and hard to achieve. Association with Lord Krishna's devotees is especially rare and difficult to get. At any moment, in a single sesame seed's worth of time, this human body may be broken into pieces. If I delay, this human body may be lost. How, then, will I attain the association of another great *vaiṣṇava* like yourself? Please don't try to bewilder Me. Give Me *sannyāsa*. By your mercy I will become Lord Krishna's servant." When the Lord spoke these words, His eyes became red with distress. Tears of sorrow streamed down His face. Then, more ferocious than a lion, Lord Gaura roared. His body was marked with the signs of ecstatic spiritual love. In a voice like a thundering cloud, He called out, "Hari! Hari!" Streams of tears flowed without stop from His two eyes. He manifested the threefold-bending form of Lord Krishna and called out, "Flute! Flute!". Then He joyfully leapt in the air and called out, "*rāsa-maṇḍala!*" The Lord loudly laughed and called out, "Govardhan! Radhakund!"

Seeing this, Keshava Bharati, the king of *sannyāsīs*, was filled with wonder. But his heart was afraid. He thought to himself, "He who is the master of all, who is the guru of the three worlds, now stands before me with folded hands and calls me 'guru'."

Sannyasa Initiation

Keshava Bharati said, "If You want to accept *sannyāsa*, then first return to Your home. Go to Your mother and get her permission. Go to Your saintly wife. Go to all Your associates and get their permission. Then return to me."

In his heart, Keshava Bharati thought, "When Gaurachandra goes to get permission, I will leave this place and go away."

Lord Gaura, who is the Supersoul present in every heart, knew Keshava Bharati's thoughts. Smiling, the Lord said, "I will obey Your command." Then Gaura started to depart for Nabadwip.

Seeing this, Keshava Bharati thought in his heart, "All the universes rest in the pores of His body. What country

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can I go to where I can escape Him? He is the life of everyone. He is the witness who watches everyone."

Thinking in this way, the *sannyāsī* called out, "O Gaurahari! I have a humble request to place before You. O Viswambhar, please hear my words. I am afraid to offer You *sannyāsa*. You are the guru of all the worlds. Who can be Your guru? Why do You try to trick me and mock me in this way?"

Hearing these words, Viswambhar Raya wept. He grasped the *sannyāsī*'s feet, and said, "Why do you speak so harshly to a surrendered soul? If I leave you, I will die.

THE DAY JAHNAVA'S WAVES STOPPED DANCING

Srila Narahari Chakravarti, in *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* 3526-3529, has sung:

(*rāga deśapāla*)

gorācānda chāḍi' jābe naidā ethe,
taraṅga-rahita jahnavī-dhārā
śambhu bhagavatī, gaṇapati mūrti,
ṣata chila haila malinapārā

When Gaurachandra left Nadia
Jahnavi's waves stopped dancing.
Sambhu Bhagavati, the deity of Ganapati,
became very gloomy.

tarūlatā-kula, pallavita nahe,
nāvika se puṣpa sugandha-hinā
tāhe nā baise, nā piye puṣpa-rasa,
nā guñje bhramara-bhramarī dīnā

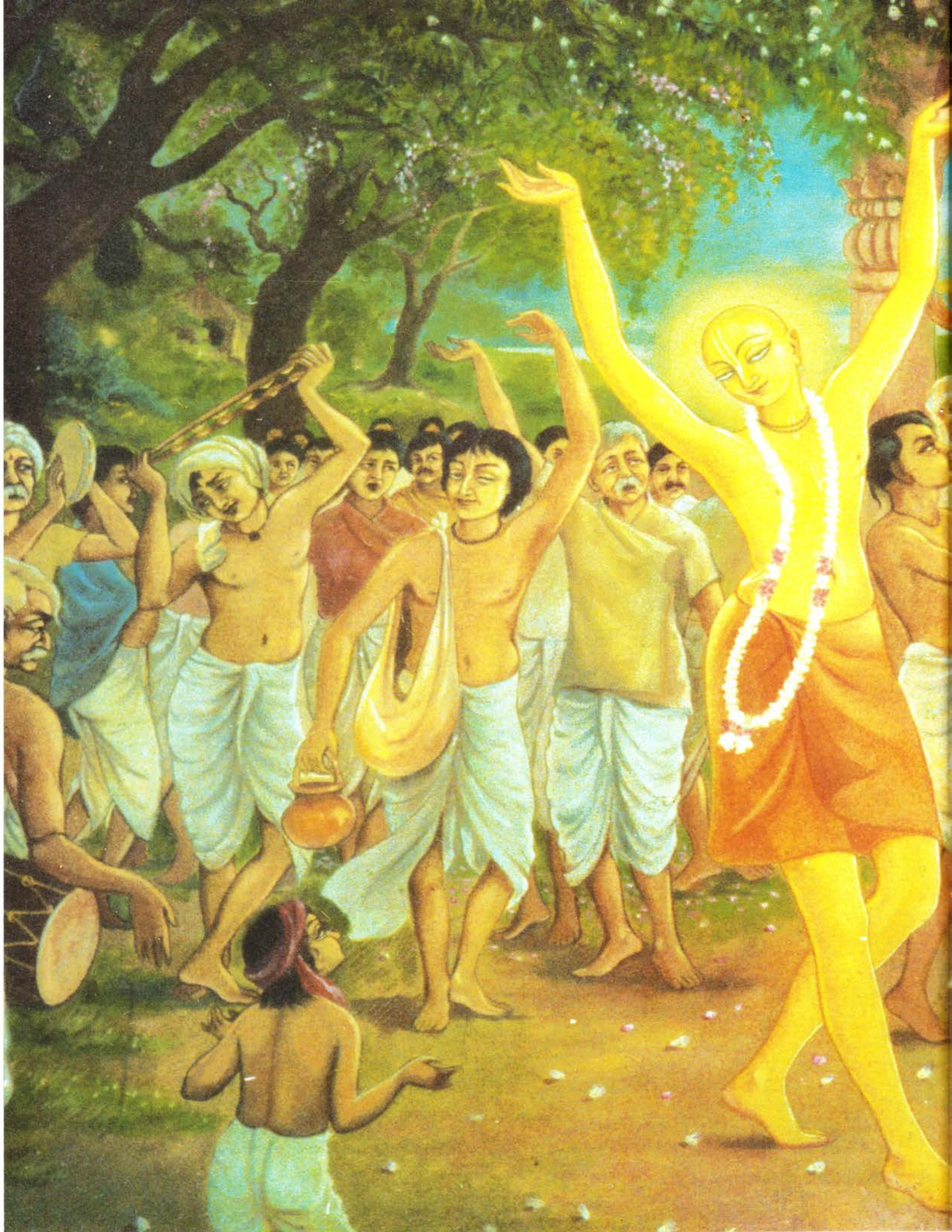
The trees did not bloom.
The flowers lost their scent.
The bumblebees stopped sucking honey
by not sitting on the flowers.

pikakula-kala- rava virahita—
nā nāce mayūra-mayūrī sane
śārī-śuka nana pāthī ānṭhi jhure
nāre ūḍibāre vyākula vane

The cuckoos stopped cooing.
The peacocks stopped dancing.
The parrots began crying
and would not fly.

dhenu-gaṇa hāmbā rave nā dhāyaye,
mṛgādi paṣu nā dharaye dhvati
bhaṇe narahari, śobhā dūre dukha,
sambarite nāre nadīyā kṛiti

The cows stopped grazing.
The beasts stopped preying
Narahari says, all pleasure left
from the minds of the Nadia-basis.





SHYAMAL
VANDANA

My heart accepts whatever you say. Still, I have one request. Please hear My words.

*eka-dina rātri-śeṣe dekhiluñ svapana
sannyāsera mantra more kahila brāhmaṇa*

“Once, at the end of night, I had a dream in which a brāhmaṇa came and told Me the *sannyāsa* mantra. (Text 89)

*dekha dekhi ei baṭe haya kibā nahe
ihā bali’ bhāratīra karṇe mantra kahe*

“Is this the *mantra* or not? Please listen.” Saying this, the Lord whispered the *mantra* in Keshava Bharati’s ear. (Text 90)

*ihā bali sannyāsīra karṇe kahe mantra
prakāre ha-ilā guru āpani svatantra*

Speaking the *mantra* in the *sannyāsī’s* ear, Lord Gaura, the supremely independent Personality of Godhead, initiated him and became his guru. (Text 91)

Keshava Bharati Goswami understood all that had happened. “Please listen, O Nimai. I will offer You *sannyāsa*.”

Hearing these words, the Lord joyfully danced, and in a voice like a thundering cloud, called out, “Hari! Hari!” The hairs on His fair form stood erect. The sweetness of His limbs was like a flood of nectar. Tears flowed without stop from His reddish eyes. Seeing Him, everyone loudly called out, “Alas! Alas!”

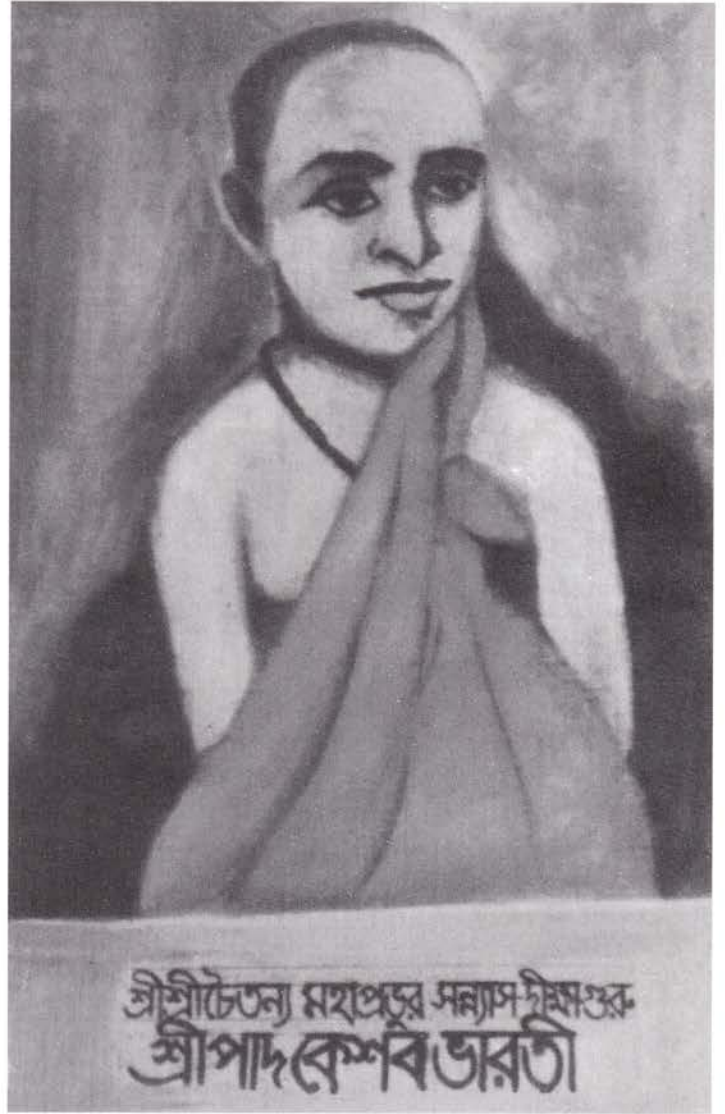
The people of Katwa town ran to see Him. Gazing at Him, their eyes and hearts were filled with cooling bliss. The elders, the blind, women, men, *paṇḍitas*, fools, and children all ran to see Him. Running, the beautiful respectable girls paid no attention to their attractive dress and ornaments. Resting water-pots on their hips, some women stood still like sticks and gazed at the Lord. They had no power to move. Grasping staffs, some ran to watch. The lame, the sick, and the pregnant women all gazed at the Lord’s wonderful form, saying, “Glorious! Glorious!” They thought, “Fortunate is the mother that bore Him in her womb. We hear that in her previous birth she must have been Devaki herself. As the people gazed at the Lord’s form, tears flowed from their eyes. They could not bear to

Keshava Bharati

*In his Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭakam (4.145)
Sriila Kavi Karnapur has described the meaning of
keśava-bhāratī:*

keśava-bhāratī hi śrutir eva tasyāḥ keśavasya bhāratīvāt

Because Keshava is a name of Lord Krishna, and “*bhāratī*” means “words”, “*keśava-bhāratī*” means the Vedic literatures, which are Lord Krishna’s words.



Sripad Keshava Bharati

see the Lord accept *sannyāsa*. “How can His mother continue to live? Simply by hearing that He will accept *sannyāsa*, we girls feel on the verge of death.” Thinking in these ways, everyone wept.

Then Gaura called out to them, “Please don’t lament. Please bless Me. You are all like My mothers and fathers. Please hear Me. I yearn to bow My head before Lord Krishna’s feet. Krishna is My master. I yearn to see Him. I yearn to tie My heart to Him. A person who employs His grace, youth, and beauty to worship His true master attains all good fortune. Please think in your hearts. Everyone knows that without serving her husband a young girl wastes her life. In the same way, without serving Krishna’s feet I have no auspicious future. Dedicating My body to His service, I will worship the master of My life.” Speaking these words, Mahaprabhu wept. For a moment, everyone felt stunned at heart.

KIRTANA WITH KESHAVA BHARATI

In his Śrī Caitanya-carita (3.2.14, 16, 18), Srila Murari Gupta has given a beautiful description of the kīrtana of Gaurasundara and His guru Keshava Bharati:

*nanarta tasmin jagatām guror-guruḥ
kṛṣṇena sārddha mahatā sukheṇa*

*ānanda-pūrṇas tu punaḥ sa mene
brāhmaṇam sukhaṁ tucchatarāṇam mahātmā*

In great bliss, the guru of the guru of all embodied beings danced there with his disciple, Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Filled with *ānanda*, which ever increased more and more, that *mahātmā* then considered *brahma-sukha* to be insignificant.

*tato 'ham ānanda-paripluto mudā
praviśya nṛtyaṁ kṛtavān su-vihvalaḥ*

*śruto vā vacas tasya su-vismītās te
sa vaiṣṇavāḥ prema-vibhinna-dhairyaḥ*

"Now that I have begun to dance, I am wholly overwhelmed and happily float in an ocean of bliss." Hearing the words of this former monist, the *vaiṣṇavas* became astonished, and also lost external perception within the waves of *prema*.

*sa bhārati prema-pariplutātmā
kamaṇḍaluḥ daṇḍam apīha dūre*

*kṣiptvā nanarta prabhūṇā samāṇam vai
sannyāsa-dharmasya pavitra-hetunā*

Keshava Bharati became a soul fully immersed in love of Krishna. Tossing far away his *daṇḍa* and *kamaṇḍalu*, he danced with Mahaprabhu to purify his *sannyāsa-dharma*.

Hearing that the Lord's head was then to be shaved, the people felt sorrow in their hearts. As the Lord was about to be shaved, the people covered their faces with their garments. Lord Gaura's hair, the most graceful hair in all the three worlds, the hair Goddess Lakshmi playfully fondles, the flower-decorated hair that rests on graceful elephant shoulders, the hair that charms all the worlds, the hair on which the devotees meditate, the hair that sustains the devotees' lives, the hair that made the *gopīs* renounce their shyness, the hair that destroyed the *gopīs'* fear of losing their families, honor, and righteousness, the hair that Shiva, Brahma, and Narada glorify with many songs, the hair the devotees in their hearts think the most glorious of all treasures — that glorious hair Gaura now wished to shave away. Everyone shed tears. Trembling in fear, the barber would not place His hand on the

Sri Krishna-kathamrita

Lord's head. The men and women of Katwa town wept and wept. They made a piteous sound.

The barber said, "Lord, I place these words before Your feet. Who, after placing his hands on Your head, has the power to remain alive? I have no power to shave Your graceful curly hair, hair that charms the three worlds. Gazing at Your hair, every eye and heart becomes filled with cooling bliss. O Lord, do whatever You wish, but please do not shave Your hair. No other person in this universe is like You. You are the master of all the worlds. You know what is in every heart."

Hearing these words, Lord Gaura was displeased. Aware of this, the barber was afraid at heart. Again, he begged, his heart filled with sorrow, "How can I place my hand on Your head? I fear I will offend You. What will be the fate of someone who places a hand on Your head? I am the lowest person. I am born in a low family. I am worthless like a pile of ashes."

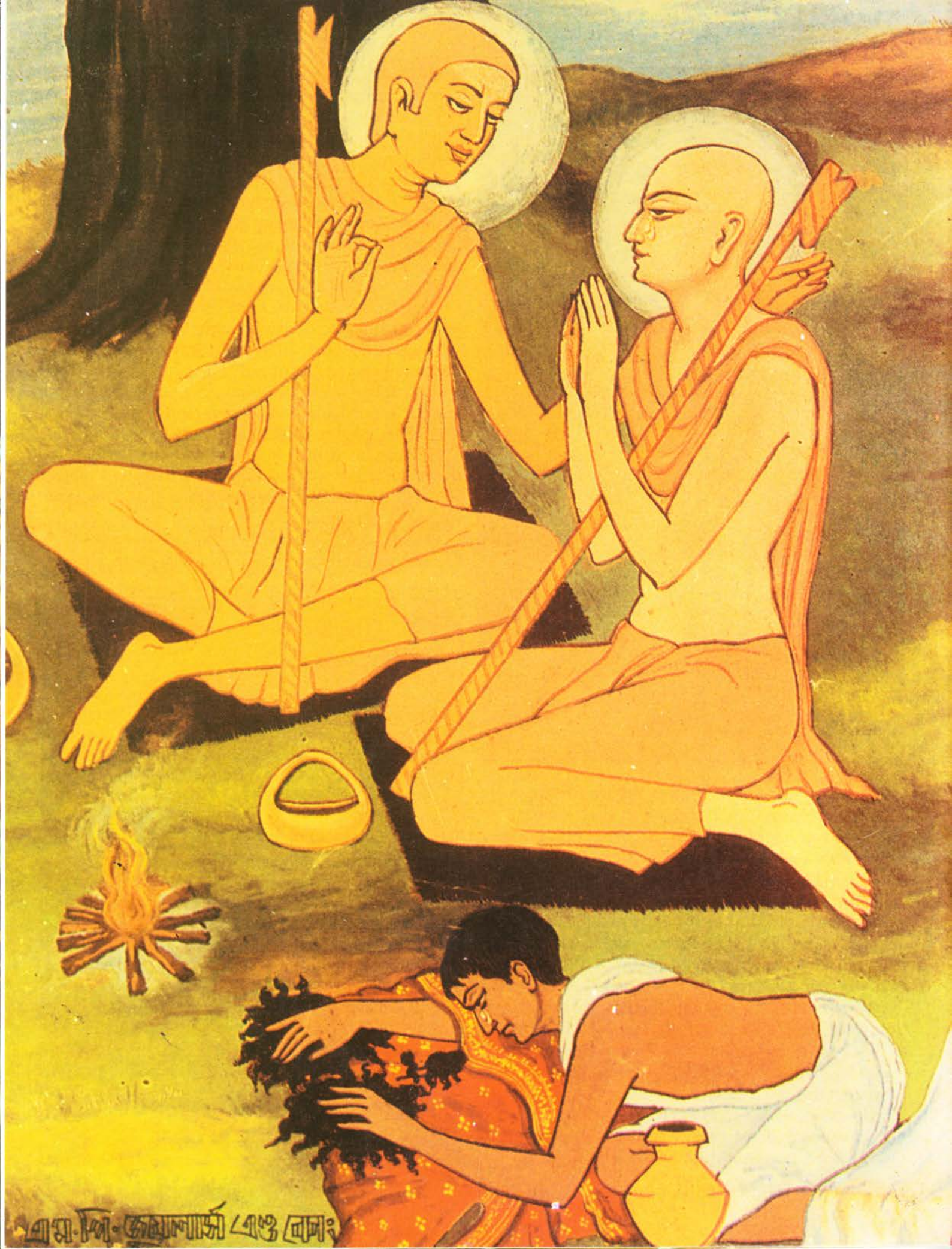
Hearing his words, kindhearted Lord Gaura said, "No misfortune will befall you. By Krishna's mercy, you will happily pass this lifetime. At the end you will go to My abode."

When Lord Viswambhar heard the *sannyāsa* mantra, the hairs of His body stood erect. He was

THE NAME "CHAITANYA"

In his Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata (chapter 28 texts 169-176), Srila Vrindavan Das describes how the Lord received the name "Chaitanya":

The magnanimous Keshava Bharati began to think to himself about a name to give the Lord. "I cannot find such a *vaiṣṇava* in the fourteen worlds. This is my conviction. I will give Him a name that is not found anywhere, then my desire will be fulfilled. Although the disciple of a Bharati should be named Bharati, that name is not appropriate for Him." As that fortunate, topmost *sannyāsi* was thinking like this, Suddha Saraswati, the transcendental goddess of learning, appeared on his tongue. Selecting the suitable name, the pure-hearted Keshava Bharati placed his hand on the chest of the Lord and spoke. "You have induced the people of the world to chant the name of "Krishna", and by inaugurating the movement of *sankīrtana*, You have awakened people's consciousness, "chaitanya". Therefore, Your name will be Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Because of You, everyone will become fortunate."



শ্রীমতী. কল্যাণী ১৯৩৩

SHAVING THE LORD'S HEAD

In chapter 28 of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata*, Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur has described that while the barber was trying to cut His hair the Lord was constantly jumping about and roaring, "Haribol!" Because of this, the barber was unable to perform his task. Finally by evening the act was complete. It took the barber the entire day to shave the Lord's head.

tossed about by waves of ecstatic love for Lord Krishna, waves that were hundreds and hundreds of times greater than ever before. Tears flowed from His reddish eyes without stop. He slapped His arms. He let out a roar, "The *sannyāsa* is done!" Repeatedly He loudly laughed in the bliss of spiritual love.

After taking initiation, Lord Gaura happily and devotedly served His guru Keshava Bharati Goswami. In this way, the day passed. When evening came, the *vaiṣṇavas* gathered and performed *saṅkīrtana* of Lord Hari's holy names. Dancing with His guru, Lord Gaura enchanted all the worlds. Filled with the bliss of spiritual love, Lord Gaura and Keshava Bharati danced. Everyone chanted, "Hari!" Both Lord Gaura and Keshava Bharati forgot Themselves. They both thought the bliss of impersonal *brahmān* very insignificant.

In this way, the night blissfully passed. When morning rose, Lord Gaura requested permission to depart. He circumambulated His guru and offered him obeisances. Mahaprabhu thought, "If I go to Jagannath Puri, I will attain an auspicious situation." Lord Gaurasundar placed this request before His guru's feet.

Keshava Bharati's heart trembled. Tears of sorrow flowed from his eyes. At the time of bidding farewell, he embraced Lord Gaurachandra. "You are the supremely independent Personality of Godhead. Because You are compassionate, with Your own feet You will wander this world. You have shown how a disciple should be devoted to his guru. Now You will establish the religion of *saṅkīrtana*. Manifesting Your mercy, You will deliver everyone in the world. You tricked me into offering You *sannyāsa*. O Lord Viswambhar, please deliver me also. In Your heart please agree to my request."

Left: Mahaprabhu takes *sannyāsa* from Keshava Bharati


Sri Krishna-kathamrita

After touching His guru's feet, Lord Gaura departed. Walking on the path, He was overcome with spiritual bliss and love. With great joy and love, He called out, "Krishna! Krishna!" One moment He wept. The next moment He loudly laughed. Like the celestial Ganga flowing from the summit of Mount Sumeru, a river of tears flowed from His eyes onto His chest. Defeating the filaments of the kadamba flowers, the hairs of his body stood erect. One moment He wildly ran. Another moment with great love He sang "Krishna!" Another moment He became stunned and fell to the ground. Another moment He called out, "Haribol!" and leapt in the air. One moment He felt the ecstasy of the *gopīs*. Another moment He felt the ecstasy of *dāsyā-rasa*, service to the Lord. One moment He was calm and peaceful. Another moment He swiftly ran. Overcome with bliss, He did not know if it was day or night.

Vrindavan Das describes in chapter 28, texts 165-168 of *Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata*:

That wonderful *sannyāsī* form of the Lord will one day be elaborately described by Vedavyas. Sri Vedavyas has described in his *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma* that the Lord appears in one of His incarnations as a *sannyāsī*. Now this statement has been fulfilled by the best of the *brāhmaṇas*. This secret is well known to the society of *vaiṣṇavas*. In the *Mahābhārata*, *dāna-dharma*, *viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma-stotra*, it is stated: *sannyāsa-kṛc chamaḥ canto niṣṭhā-sānti-parāyanah* — [That Lord Vishnu] accepts *sannyāsa*, is detached from sense gratification, is fully surrendered to Krishna, is fully determined to engage in the sacrifice of chanting the holy name of Krishna, and is fully absorbed in *mahābhava*, which ridicules the peaceful state attained by the non-devotee impersonalists.

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta comments:

The names of the Lord mentioned in this regard in the *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma* are *sannyāsa-kṛt* (He who takes *sannyāsa*), *śama-sānta* (He who is detached from material enjoyment), and *bhagavan-niṣṭha* (He who is attached to the Supreme Lord). Sri Gaurasundar fulfilled the meaning of these names. 

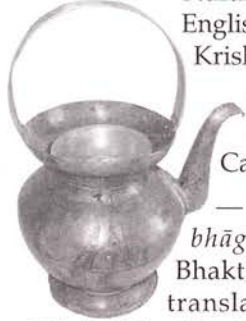
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The Holder of the Flute Now Carries a Danda

The medieval Gaudiya Vaishnava poet Balaram Das sings:

(Gāndhāra-rāga)

*pūrave bāndhala cūḍā ebe keṣa-hīna
naṭa-bara-veṣa chāḍī parilā kaupīna*

Formerly His hair was bound in a topknot. Now He has no hair. Rejecting His colorful garments of a dancing actor, now He wears a *sannyāsī's kaupīna*.

*gābhī dohana bhāṅḍa chila vāma kare
karaṅga dharilā gorā sei anusāre*

Formerly He carried a pot for milking cows. Now He carries a *sannyāsī's* waterpot. Now His complexion is fair.

*tretāya dharila dhanu dvāparete vāṁśī
kali-yuge daṅḍa-dhāri ha-ila sannyāsī*

In *Tretā-yuga* He carried an archer's bow. In *Dvāpara-yuga* He carried a flute. In *Kali-yuga* He carries a *daṅḍa*. Now He is a *sannyāsī*.

*balarāma kahe śuna nadiyā-nivāsī
balarāma avadhūta kānāi sannyāsī*

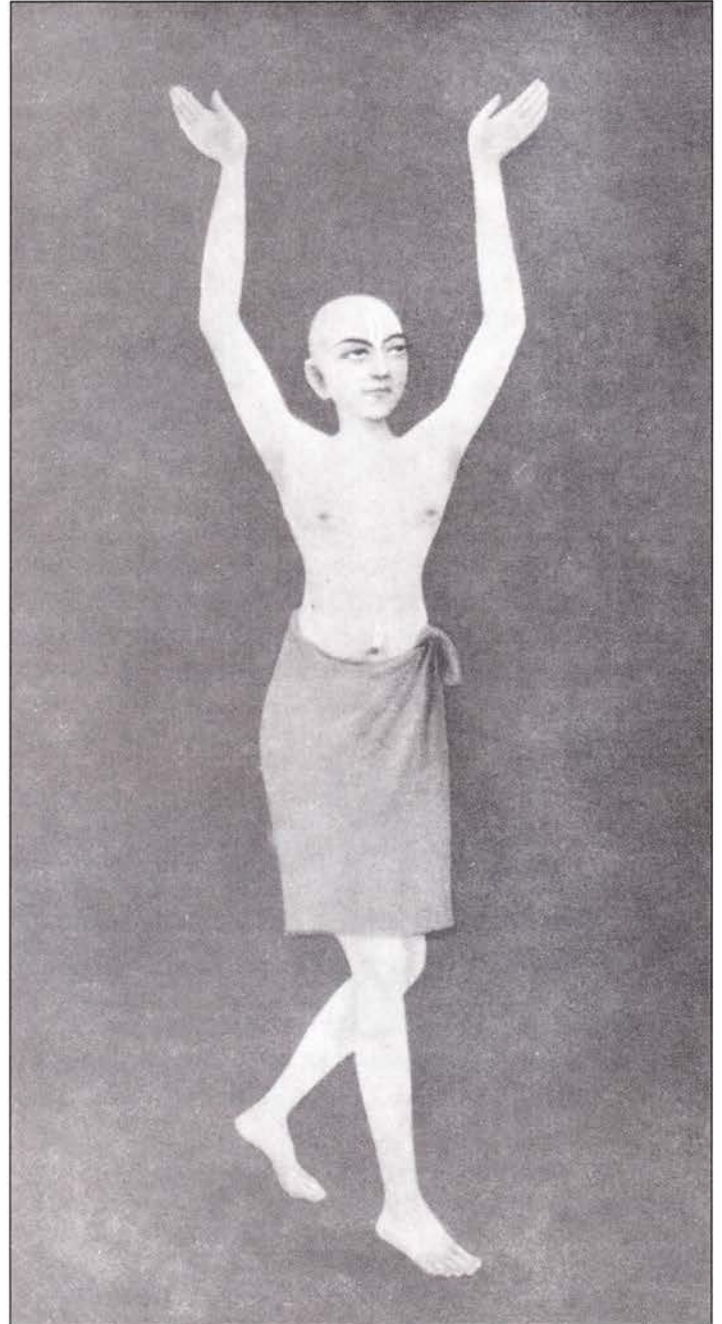
Balarām Das says: O residents of Nadiya, please hear. Balarām has become an *avadhūta*, and Krishna has become a *sannyāsī*.

Endnotes

¹ Bhāg 10. 82. 48:

*āhuś ca te nalina-nābha padāravindam
yogeśvarair hr̥ḍi vicinityam agādha-bodhaiḥ
saṁsāra-kūpa-patitottaraṅāvalambam
geham juṣām api manasy udiyāt sadā naḥ*

The *gopīs* spoke thus: Dear Lord, whose navel is just like a lotus flower, Your lotus feet are the only shelter for those who have fallen into the deep well of material existence. Your feet are worshiped and meditated upon by great mystic yogis and highly learned philosophers. We wish that these lotus feet may also be awakened within our hearts, although we are only ordinary persons engaged in household affairs.



श्री कृष्णकथामृत

The Secret of Gaura's Sannyasa-lila

In the introduction to his *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala* (1.1.113), Srila Lochan Das Thakur has written:

*aneka rahasya kathā kahiba tāhāte
vairāgya adbhuta prabhura uthe yenamate*

I will tell many secrets, such as the secrets of the Lord's wonderful renunciation.

Mahaprabhu's purpose in accepting *sannyāsa* is a very deep and multifaceted topic. To understand the secrets of His *sannyāsa-lilā*, one has to first consider that for the Lord to take *sannyāsa* He had to give up the association of Mother Sachi and all the loving devotees of Nabadwip. If one contemplates on this fact, several perplexing questions arise about Mahaprabhu's relationships with His dear devotees.

Caitanya-Bhāgavata (*madhya* 9.215) describes the influence of pure devotion upon the Lord:

*yāhā haite āpanāra parābhava haya
sei bada gopya, loke kāhāre na kaya*

You are conquered by love. This is a great secret, a secret the people of this world do not understand.

This is an intrinsic characteristic of *bhakti* — it binds up the Lord. In his commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra* (3.3.53), Srila Madhvacharya has written: *bhaktivaśaḥ puruṣo bhaktir eva bhūyasī* — The Lord is controlled by *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is the best of all. Krishna Himself describes the same thing in *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* (14.29):

*sadā mukto 'pi baddho 'smi bhaktena sneha rajjubhiḥ
ajito 'pi jito 'ham tair avaśo 'pi vaśi kṛtāḥ*

Though I am eternally free and independent, still I become bound up with the rope of love of My devotees.

In the ninth canto of *Bhāgavatam* (4.63), the Lord tells Durvasa Muni:

*aham bhakta-parādhīno hy asvatantra iva dvija
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

I am completely under the control of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotees are very dear to Me.

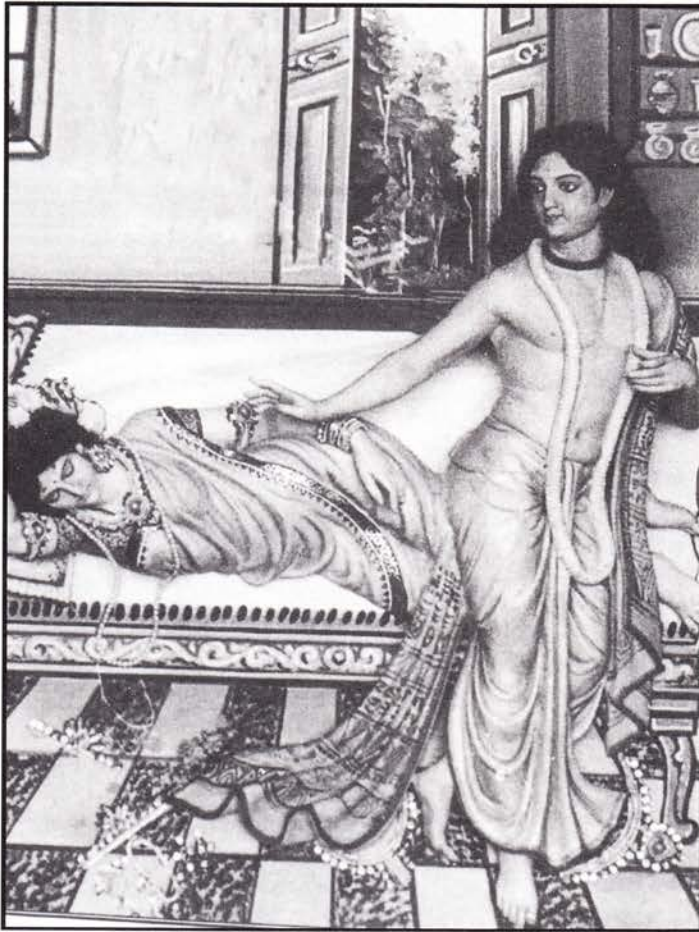


Because the lord was bound by the love of His pure devotees in Nabadwip, how was it possible for Him to renounce them? The Lord certainly knew that Mother Sachi could not live without seeing His lotus-like face. How then could He leave His loving mother, His wife Vishnupriya, and the others?

Yuga Dharma

One may say that the Lord left them and took *sannyāsa* so that He could preach to the students and impersonalists, and thereby establish the religion of this age. However, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami describes that establishing the *yuga-dharma* was an external, secondary desire of the Lord. What then was the internal, primary purpose of the Lord's *sannyāsa-lilā*? Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami describes:

*prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādāna
rāga-mārga bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa
rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa parama-karuṇa
ei dui hetu haite icchāra udgama*



Mahaprabhu leaves home

The Lord's desire to appear was born from two reasons: the Lord wanted to taste the sweet essence of the mellows of love of God, and He wanted to propagate devotional service in the world on the platform of spontaneous attraction. Thus, He is known as supremely jubilant and as the most merciful of all. (Cc. ādi 4.15-16)

*bhāva-grahaṇera hetu kaila dharma-sthāpana
tāra mukhya hetu kahi, śuna sarva-jana*

To accept ecstatic love is the main reason He appeared and reestablished the religious system for this age. I shall now explain that reason. Everyone please listen. (Cc. ādi 4.53)

*ei vāñchā yaiche kṛṣṇa-prākāṣya-kāraṇa
asura-saṁhāra — ānuṣaṅga prayojana
ei mata caitanya-kṛṣṇa pūrṇa bhagavān
yuga-dharma-pravartana nahe tāñra kāma*

Just as these desires are the fundamental reason for Krishna's appearance whereas destroying the demons is only an incidental necessity, so for Sri Krishna Chaitanya, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, promulgating the dharma of the age is incidental. (Cc. ādi 4.36-37)

Inner Purpose for Sannyasa

Mahaprabhu's internal reasons for taking *sannyāsa* are described by Srila Nityananda Das, the disciple of Jahnava Mata, in his book *Prema-vilāsa*. In chapter seven (texts 87

to 136), he narrates an intimate conversation between Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Lokanath Goswami:

One day, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu privately revealed His innermost thoughts to Lokanath Goswami. Mahaprabhu explained everything to him about the internal and external unhappiness that was influencing His conduct. The Lord said, "I feel dissatisfied remaining silent about the nature of My appearance and mission. But to whom can I speak about this confidential subject matter? I can influence some to respect Nityananda Prabhu and Adwaita, but who will actually hear from Me and understand My mission? Some people criticize Me, and others even jeer at Me. I have come to Gauda Desh, manifesting the mood of Srimati Radharani. I want to experience Radha's feelings of separation from Her beloved Krishna. For My sake, Srimati Radhika has given up her family and wealth and has completely dedicated Herself to My service. The memory of Me has caused Her to become lean and thin. She is not even concerned about Her appearance, and She never looks at the face of another man. Eager for My company, She remains constantly absorbed in hearing and chanting about Me. Being angry with Me, She used to complain about My character to the flower groves and the Yamuna, but upon seeing Me, she would immediately forget Her anger. To Radharani, one day's separation from Me is like a hundred years. She is My beloved; together We enjoyed transcendental pastimes in Vrindavan. She is the reason why I live in Vrindavan. She is My life, and I am the same to Her.

*sakhā dāsa pitā mātā ye rase vañcita
sabe sakhigaṇa jāne ye rase mohita*

"My friends, servants, father and mother are all bereft of this mellow. Only the *gopīs* can understand it. (Text 108)

*guṇe prīte tāñra sthāne ha-i āchā ṛṇī
tomā sthāne lokanātha kahilāma āmi*

"O Lokanath! I tell you, Radha has such love that I remain indebted to Her. (Text 109)

Mahaprabhu said, "This indebtedness is one cause of My unhappiness. Please listen to another cause. There is a *brāhmaṇa* who has committed a great sin by criticizing Me. This *brāhmaṇa* does not recognize Krishna's supreme position. Not obeying Krishna as guru, he has worshiped Krishna's servants, the *devas*. Due to this offense, he will go to hell.

"It is My plan that on the third day of the month of Magha I shall accept the renounced order of life and leave home. I will become the guru of all the *brāhmaṇas* who carry *danḍas*. For the sake of these *brāhmaṇas*, I will take *sannyāsa*, leave My home, and move from country to country.

*e bāhya vicāra āra manera āśaya
śuna lokanātha ihā kahila niścaya*

*rādhikāra bhāva lañā saba prayojana
kebā bujhe kebā sune yei mora mana*

“This is My external consideration. Listen, O Lokanath! Accepting the mood of Radha is My only necessity. Who is there who can listen to or understand the state of My mind? (Text 122-123)

*mora aṅgera varaṇa vasana rādhā gāya
ei lāgi nila-vastre sukha ati pāya*

“Radha wears blue-colored garments, the color of My complexion, and in this way attains happiness. (Text 124)

*āmāra vicchede pare aruṇa vasana
āpanāke nija-dāsi māne sarva-kṣaṇa*

“But when separated from Me, Radha would wear a saffron-colored dress and always think of Herself as my maidservant. (Text 125)

*āmāra lāgiyā rādhā ādi sakhi-gaṇa
virahe vyākula haiyā tejila jīvana
āmiha tejiba prāṇa tāñhāra lāgiyā
se daśā ha-ibe tumi śunibe thākiyā*

“Feeling separation from Me, Radha and the *gopīs* have given up Their lives. Now I shall also give up My life for her. You will see Me in that condition, O Lokanath. (Text 126-127)

*dhariba tāhāra kānti pariba aruṇa vasana
ha-iba tāñhāra dāsa ānandita mana*

“Adopting Radha’s complexion and the saffron-colored cloth of separation, I’ll become Her maidservant and get happiness. (Text 128)

*ei lāgi aruṇa vasana diba gāya
japiba tāñhāra guṇa kahilu tomāya*

“Wearing the saffron-colored dress of separation on My body, I will sing the glorious qualities of Radharani. (Text 129)

*tāñhāra yateka guṇa nāriba śodhite
śata-janma āyu yadi haya pṛthivīte
guṇe pṛite tāñra sthāne ha-iyāchi ṛṇī
tomā sthāne lokanātha kahilāma āmi*

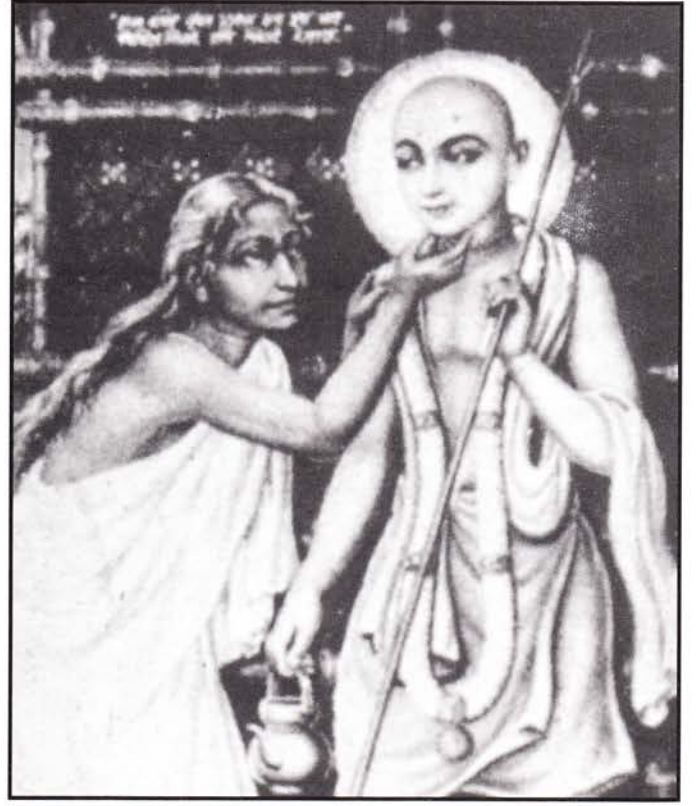
“Her wonderful qualities are not possible to describe. Even if I took birth a hundred times in this world I could not describe them all. I tell you, Lokanath, by the wonderful qualities of Her love She has put Me in Her debt. (Text 130-131)

*jaḡat bhāsāiba āmi tāñra yaśa kīrti
tabe jāni kṛpā more karena emati*

“Singing Her glories, I will flood the universe with Her fame. Then She will give Me Her mercy. (Text 132)

*pa-iba tāñhāra prema kāndiba nayane
dhūlāya dhūsara haiyā nāciba sañkīrtane*

“Getting Her *prema*, I’ll cry and dance in *sañkīrtana* with dust all over My body.” (Text 133)



Mahaprabhu and Sachimata

*ihā bali phukariyā kānde gaura-rayā
rādhā vṛndāvana bali dharaṇī loṭāya*

Saying this, Lord Gaura Ray began to cry. Chanting, “Radha!” “Vrindavan!” he rolled on the ground. (Text 134)

Repaying His Debt

Caitanya-caritāmṛta (ādi 4.177-180) elaborates on Krishna’s debt to the *gopīs*:

*kṛṣṇera pratijñā eka āche pūrva haite
ye yaiche bhaje, kṛṣṇa tāre bhaje taiche*

Lord Krishna has a promise from before to reciprocate with His devotees according to the way they worship Him.

*ye yathā mān prapadyante tāms tathaiḥva bhajāmy aham
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ*

“In whatever way My devotees surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly. Everyone follows My path in all respects, O son of Pritha.” (Bg. 4.11)

*se pratijñā bhaṅga haila gopīra bhajane
tāhāte pramāṇa kṛṣṇa-śrī-mukha-vacane*

That promise has been broken by the worship of the *gopīs*, as Lord Krishna Himself admits.

*na pārāye hañ niravadya-saṁyujām
sva-sādhu-kṛtyam vibudhāyusāpi vaḥ
yā mābhajan durjaya-geha-śrīkhalāḥ
sañvṛṣṇya tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā*

“O *gopīs*, I am not able to repay My debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahma. Your connection with Me is beyond reproach. You have worshiped Me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation.” (*Bhāg.* 10.32.22)

As described above by Nityananda Das, the only way Mahaprabhu saw to repay His debt to Srimati Radharani and the *gopīs* was for Him to take *sannyāsa*. One may ask, what is the necessity of His taking *sannyāsa* to repay His debt. Wasn't there some other way to repay the *gopīs* other than leaving His home and devotees in Nabadwip? The answer is found in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.41), where Krishna has described the nature of the path of love:

*vyavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana
bahu-śākhā hy anantāś ca buddhayo 'vyavasāyinām*

Those who are on this path are resolute in purpose, and their aim is one. O beloved child of the Kurus, the intelligence of those who are irresolute is many-branched.

In loving dealings, by nature Krishna is *bahu-śākhā*, many branched, for as the Supreme Lord He is worshiped by unlimited devotees manifesting many varieties of moods towards Him, such as servitorship, friendship, parental relationship and the conjugal mellow. As such, Krishna has to appropriately reciprocate with each mood. However, the *gopīs* in their love towards Krishna have *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ* — one-pointed intelligence. They are not interested in the form of Lord Narayan. They do not even want to see Krishna in Mathura, Dwarka, or Kurukshetra. They only want to serve Krishna as the son of Maharaja Nanda, playing His flute under the *keli-kadamba* tree in Vrindavan on the bank of the Yamuna. Mahaprabhu has expressed Srimati Radharani's one-pointed attitude in the final verse of His *Śikṣāṣṭaka*: *mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ* — “I know no one other than He (Krishna) as My lord.”

In their exclusive, selfless devotion to Krishna, the *gopīs* gave up everything for Him. They left their homes, families, husbands and children and ran to Krishna in the dead of night. For Krishna to repay the *gopīs*, He also had to give up everything, even His home and the



Krishna wanted to repay His debt to the *gopīs*

association of His loving mother and wife. He had to have a one-pointed focus — *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ*. He had to leave everything, put on the saffron-colored cloth of separation, and cry in the same way that Radharani cried for Him. This is the internal reason for Mahaprabhu's taking *sannyāsa*.

In their *ekāntika*, one-pointed devotion, the *gopīs* went mad for Krishna, and by so doing, they glorified the Lord. To repay them, Krishna came as Mahaprabhu, adopted Radharani's ecstatic mood of one-pointed devotion, and experienced their madness of love-in-separation. In that way, Mahaprabhu repaid His debt to them and, making the world aware of the depth of their love, glorified them in return. Vasu Ghosh has written:

*yadi gaura nā hoito, tabe ki hoito,
kemone dharitām de
rādhār mahimā, prema-rasa-sīmā,
jagate jānāto ke*

If Gauranga Mahaprabhu had not come, then what would have become of us? How could we have tolerated living? Who in this universe would have ever learned about the topmost limits of loving mellows that comprise the glory of Sri Radha?

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History of the Gauranga Mahaprabhu Temple in Katwa

The town of Katwa (*kāṭoyā* in Bengali) is located 36 kilometers north of Nabadwip on the western side of the Ganga. It is connected to Nabadwip and Howrah by train. Another name for Katwa is Kantaka-nagara. *Nagara* means "town" and *kaṇṭaka* means "thorn, fault, or a sharp stinging pain." It is said that Mother Sachi gave this name to the town after Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa*.

The medieval temple of Gauranga Mahaprabhu at the *āśrama* of Keshava Bharati in Katwa contains a number of places sacred to Gaudiya Vaishnavas. As one enters the temple compound, to the left (west) is the tree under which Mahaprabhu's hair was cut by the barber Madhu. Across from that tree is the *keśera-samādhi*, the shrine where the original cut hair is kept, combined with the full *samādhi* of Srila Gadhadhar Das, an intimate associate of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.¹ Further inside and to the left, along with the footprints of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and of His *sannyāsa* guru, Keshava Bharati, is the *samādhi* of Madhu, the barber. To the left of that are some *samādhis* of different temple *sevakas*, and behind it is the *bhajana-kuṭīra* of Keshava Bharati.

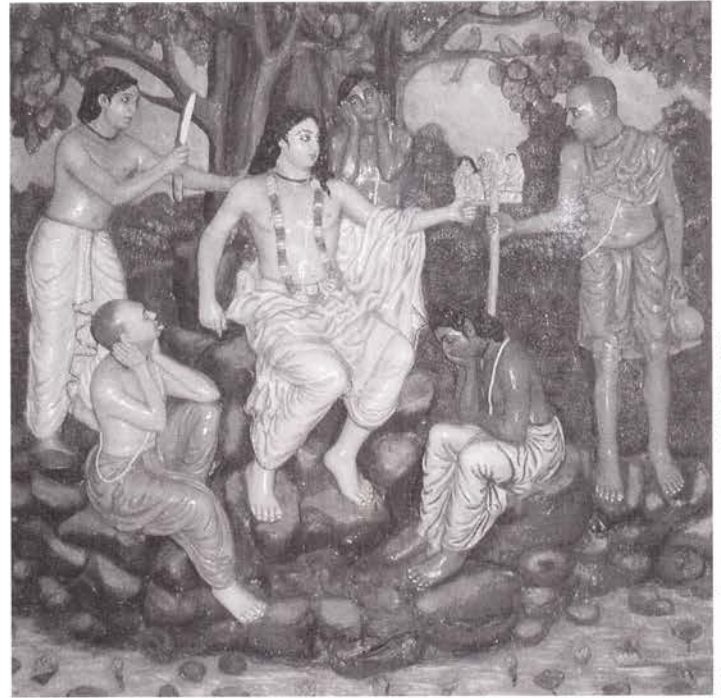
The barber Madhu was so distraught after shaving Mahaprabhu's hair that he vowed never again to shave another person's head. Thereafter he became a sweet maker, performed *bhajana* at this site, and upon leaving his body was placed in *samādhi* here.

Srila Narahari Thakur

The deity of Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu at this temple dates back to the time of Lord Chaitanya and has a special history, being intimately connected with two associates of Lord Gauranga, Srila Narahari Sarkar Thakur and Srila Gadadhar Das.

Srila Narahari Sarkar appeared in a family of physicians in Sri Khandā in the district of Burdwan, West Bengal. In *ādi* 10.78-79 of *Sri Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraja Goswami describes Narahari and his family as a branch of the tree of Mahaprabhu. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada comments in his purport:

Narahari Das Sarkar was a very famous devotee. Lochan Das Thakur, the celebrated author of *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, was his disciple. In the *Caitanya-maṅgala* it is



Diorama photo courtesy ISKCON Mayapur

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's head shaving in Katwa

stated that Sri Gadadhar Das and Narahari Sarkar were extremely dear to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Narahari Thakur participated in many of Mahaprabhu's pastimes in Nabadwip. In the *sutra-khaṇḍa*, text 645, of *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala*, Lochan Das writes that Narahari was an incarnation of the *gopī* Madhumati. Narahari wrote many poems about Mahaprabhu, as well as several books, including *Bhakti-candrikā*, *Krishna-Bhajanāmṛta*, *Caitanya-sahasra-nāma*, *Nāmāmṛta-samudra*, and *Bhāvanāmṛta*.

Gadhadhar Das

Srila Gadadhar Das was an intimate associate of both Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. He is described by Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami (*Cc. ādi* 10.53) as the twenty-third branch of the Chaitanya tree. According to *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (154-155), in his past incarnations, Prabhu Gadadhara Das was Candrakanti Devi, described by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta in his purport to *Cc. ādi* 10.53 as *śrī rādhā-vibhūti-rūpa*, the effulgence of Srimati Radharani, and as the *gopī* named Purnananda. In his purport to the above-mentioned verse, Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada comments:

About eight or ten miles from Calcutta, on the banks of the Ganges, is a village known as Endiyadaha Gram. Srila Gadadhar Das was known as an inhabitant of this village — *eṇḍiyādaha-vāsī gadādhara dāsa*. The *Bhakti-ratnākara* (Seventh Wave) informs us that after the disappearance of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Gadadhar Das went from Nabadwip to Katwa. Thereafter, he came to Endiyadaha and resided there. He is stated to be the

luster of the body of Srimati Radharani, just as Srila Gadadhar Pandit Goswami is an incarnation of Srimati Radharani Herself. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is sometimes explained to be *rādhā-bhāva-dyūti-suvalita*, or characterized by the emotions and bodily luster of Srimati Radharani. Gadadhar Das is this *dyūti*, or luster. In the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (154) he is described to be an expansion of the potency of Srimati Radharani. He counts among the associates of both Srila Gaurahari and Nityananda Prabhu. As a devotee of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu he was one of the associates of Lord Krishna in conjugal love, and as a devotee of Lord Nityananda he is considered to have been one of the friends of Krishna in pure devotional service. Even though he was an associate of Lord Nityananda Prabhu, he was not among the cowherd boys, but was situated in the transcendental mellow of conjugal love. He established a temple of Sri Gaurasundara in Katwa.

Mahaprabhu Deity

According to the local history in Katwa, the deity of Mahaprabhu at this temple was originally made at the request of Srila Narahari Sarkar Thakur. It is said that after Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa* and departed from Nabadwip, Narahari Thakur was crying and remembering the Lord. One evening he had a dream in which Mahaprabhu told Him that the two brothers Kamsari and Daitari Ghosh² in the nearby village of Kulain should make a deity of Him. When Narahari spoke with them the next day, he found that they had had the same dream. The brothers then showed Narahari a large neem tree that was growing in the garden next to their house. From that tree they made three deities of Mahaprabhu. The biggest deity was sent by Narahari to Gadadhar Das in Katwa, the medium-sized deity was kept by Narahari, and the smallest deity was sent to Ganga Nagara.

After Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu left home and took *sannyāsa*, Sri Gadadhar Das was staying with Vishnupriya and Sachimata. After the disappearance of Vishnupriya, Gadadhara Das became very sad. Hearing that Sriman Mahaprabhu's original hair was present somewhere in Katwa, Gadadhar Das went there and met a devotee named Vidyananda Pandit. Gadadhar Das made a hut in Katwa and started performing his *bhajana*. Because of this it is generally said that Gadadhara

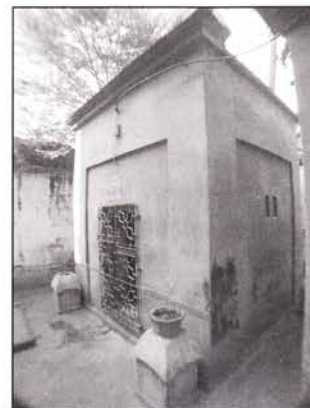


Temple kirtana hall

Das is the original founder of the temple of Gauranga Mahaprabhu in Katwa. But Dr. Kalicharan Das and Sri Samir Chatterjee, two local *vaiṣṇava* historians in Katwa, disagree with this. In their book, *Gaura Gaurabāḍī Gaurapādā*, they mention an old manuscript from Sri Khanda that describes that prior to the arrival of Gadadhar Das, the worship of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in Katwa was being carried out by Vidyananda Pandit in a small thatched hut. The present temple is on the same site. Gadadhara Das gave the deity commissioned by Srila Narahari Sarkar to Vidyananda for installation. Before passing away from this world, Srila Gadadhar Das entrusted the service of the deity to his disciple Yadunandan Chakravarty. Most of the present *sevakas* in charge of the worship are descendants of Yadunandan. Today it is a popular temple, and many local residents attend the *ārati* ceremonies and classes on devotional scriptures.

The first proper temple on the site was built in 1718 by Sri Vaman Das Thakur, a *sevaka* in the family line of Yadunandan Chakravarty. It was said to be very beautiful, but in 1897 it was destroyed by a severe earthquake. The present temple was built in 1909 by the donation of Parana Chandra Das, a cloth merchant in Katwa.

Top to bottom: The tree under which Mahaprabhu's hair was cut. Samādhi of Gaura's hair. Keshava Bharati's bhajana-kuṭīra. Samādhi of the barber Madhu.

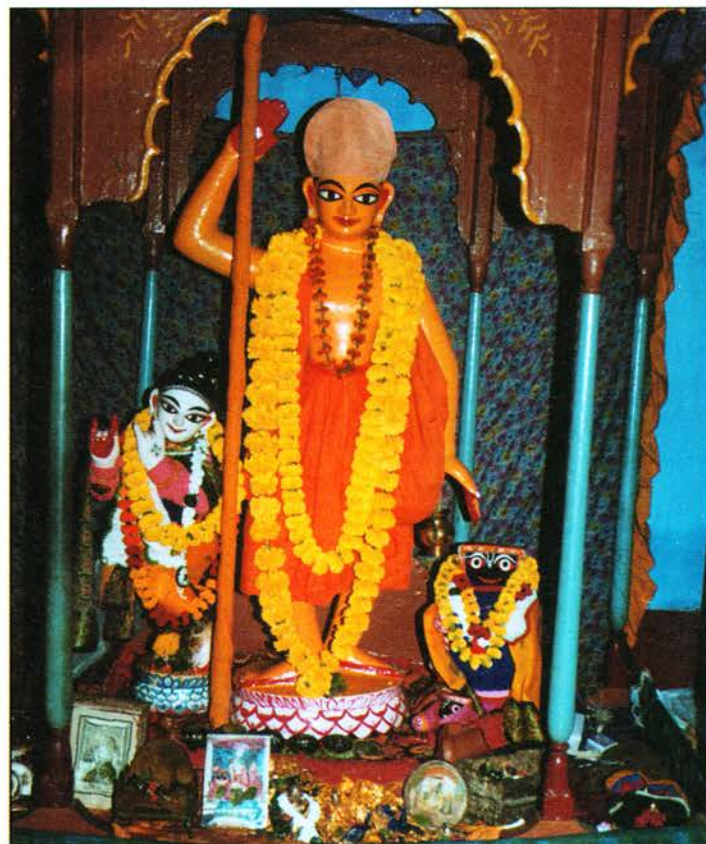




Main temple altar, from left to right: Balaram Nitai, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and Lord Jagannath

Nitai and Jagannath

Three main deities are present on the altar of this temple: the deity of Mahaprabhu that was originally worshiped by Gadadhar Das, a deity of Balaram Nitai, and a deity of Lord Jagannath. The deity of Balaram Nitai is very beautiful. He is white, much smaller than the deity of Mahaprabhu, and playing a flute while standing in a three-fold bending posture. Together the deities are known as Gaura-Nitai. Some say that this deity was previously worshiped by the famous devotee of Lord Nityananda named Minaketana Rama Das, and that he would carry it with him wherever he went. The story describes that since Minaketana Rama's body was very strong, he would carry Balarama on a throne mounted on his back; and when in old age it became difficult for him to carry the *simhāsana*, Minaketana Rama assigned the worship of his deity to the priest of the Mahaprabhu temple in Katwa. But Dr. Kalicharan Das, Samir Chatterjee, and other locals have not heard this story. They say that about 300 years after the deity of Mahaprabhu was established, a traveling *sannyāsī* who was worshiping a deity of



Special dress as a *sannyāsī*, offered every year to the deity on the anniversary of the day Mahaprabhu took *sannyāsa*.

Lord Nityananda Prabhu once stopped to visit this temple and mysteriously left the deity there and disappeared. The temple *sevaks* then established that deity on the altar next to Gauranga.

The Jagannath deity was previously worshiped by a family in nearby Sakhai Gram. After some time, that family died out and the deity was shifted here. 🍌

Endnotes

¹ Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada in his purport to *Cc. ādi* 10.83 writes that the *samādhi* of Gadadhar Das is in the village Endiyadaha Gram.

² Some persons say these two brothers were disciples of Srila Narahari Thakur.

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The Day Krishna Took Sannyasa

Although Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He relishes being subordinate to His devotees — especially Srimati Radharani, the topmost devotee. Sometimes in Her loving dealings with Krishna She manifests transcendental anger toward Krishna and refuses to see Him. Krishna relishes Radharani's anger and becomes overwhelmed with ecstasy. Krishna has to devise some method to break Radharani's loving sulkiness, and this pastime is known as māna-bhañjana-līlā, the pastime of breaking Srimati Radharani's anger.

Regarding such pastimes, Srila Prabhupada has described:

Krishna wants to be controlled by Yasodamayi. Krishna wants to be defeated by His friends. Krishna wants to be refused Radharani's *darśana*. [When] Radharani is angry, She refuses [to allow Krishna to see Her]. She has ordered the *sakhīs*, "Don't allow Krishna to come here!" [Then] Krishna flatters [the *sakhīs*], "Kindly let Me go." "No sir, You cannot go." This is Krishna. (Excerpt from a lecture on *Nectar of Devotion*, Bombay, 10 January 1973).

The following translation is adapted from a series of songs that have been passed down by the Giri family in Gadeigiri, Orissa for hundreds of years. Written principally by two medieval Gaudiya poets Sri Chandan and Jnana Das, the songs describe a wonderful way in which Krishna once broke Radharani's angry mood. They are still sung on festive occasions to this day.

Krishna's Offense

Not finding Krishna in the *kuñja* where He was supposed to meet Her, Radharani inquired, "O My dear Lalita! Where is the friend of My heart? Please show Me His moonlike face!" With a trembling body, She continued, "O *sakhī*, where did Krishna go? I have decorated the *kuñja* nicely for Him. I cannot walk even one step without Shyam, Krishna. In His absence, the bed has become poison. O My *prāna-sakhī*, My life will go! Where has My beloved gone, leaving Me here? This disgrace is worse than death — Krishna gave up My beautiful bed.

He took Me to *kuñja-vana*, the forest grove, and My caste and prestige are now gone. Because of Shyam,



it is declared in all of the villages of Vraja that Radha is unchaste. Tolerating infamy and reproach for the sake of Shyam, My golden body is becoming crushed. Where is that holder of the flute? O *sakhī*, has He given you any message or signal?

"O My dear *sakhī*! Without Krishna, this flower-bed is useless. I decorated this bed with varieties of flowers and sprinkled camphor powder on it. I brought a jeweled *camara* here for His service. O *sakhī*! All merciful Shyam captivated My heart.

"For Him I became known as unchaste and carry a burden of disgrace. For Shyam I have tolerated so many reproaches in Vraja. Seeing His beautiful threefold bending form and His crooked glance, I forgot everything. I died, drowning in the ocean of beauty of that hero. I go to take bath in the Yamuna, fearing that Kanu, Krishna, will

come and grab the end of My sari. What kind of flute does He have? It has stolen My mind. His melodious tunes charm a person and they become paralyzed.

“O *sakhī!* Who has kept the friend of My heart, Krishna, tonight? I am distressed and unfortunate, for Krishna has not arrived. Thinking of Him, this night will not end. I made and carefully folded a new outfit for Krishna out of unfading cloth. I strung together garlands of *campaka* and *nāgeśvara* flowers for Him. All of these things have become useless and withered, for Lord Hari never came. I prepared betel nuts with cardamom, and also mixed scented oil, sandalwood paste and camphor to smear on Shyam’s body. O My dear friend, what has the holder of the flute done to Me? There is no certainty that I will survive. I am surrounded by enemies. Struck by the five arrows of cupid¹, the five airs² of My life are going to leave. O My dear friend! What has that *bhāvagrāhi* Krishna, who knows My innermost desire, not done to Me? Who is that cruel lady in Vraja who is hiding that holder of the flute?

The poet Sri Chandan says, “Now Kishori, beautiful young Radha, has sulkiness, *māna*.”

Debauchee Womanizer

Seeing the situation, the beautiful Lalita consoled Vinodini Radha, and went out to search for Madhava. She looked for Vanamali Krishna in every *gopī’s kuñja*. At last, she came to Chandravali’s *kuñja*. There she found Banamali, maddened after the love of Chandravali. Seeing Him there, Lalita became very surprised. She took a *ketakī* flower leaf from the decoration on her hair, wrote a letter on that leaf and threw it on the road in the place where Shyam would depart from the *kuñja*. With much anger, Lalita *sakhī* then came to Radhika and said, “O my dear friend! What shall I tell You? Chandravali has bound up Muralidhara, that *lampāṭa nāgara*, debauchee womanizer.

The poet Sri Chandan says, “Oh Kishori, Lord Hari has rejected You.”

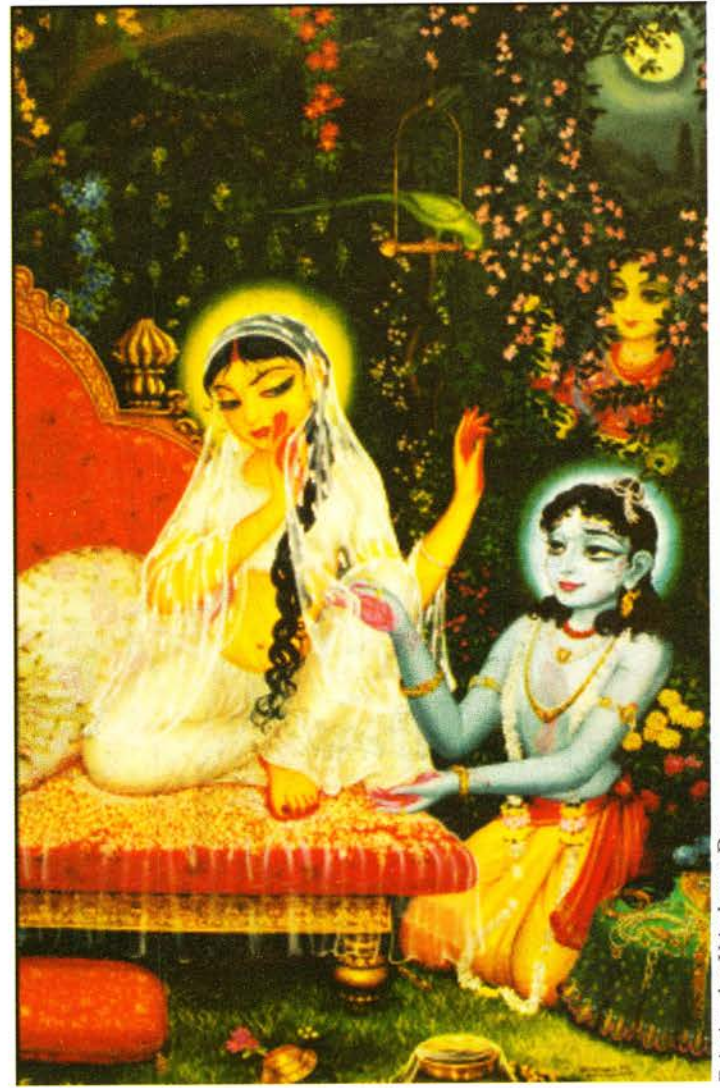
Restless Krishna

At dawn, Shyam woke up and found the *ketakī* leaf letter. He picked it up and immediately knew that it was Lalita’s handwriting. His chest trembled. He thought, “Giving up the love of Kamalini, lotus-like Radha, I am here with Chandravali.” Breathing heavily, His mind disturbed, Krishna thought, “How did They know I was here? Oh what I will do now?”

The poet Sri Chandan says, “Kanu, Krishna, became restless and apprehensive.”

Radhika’s Anger

Like a thief, Shyam then went to meet Kishori. With folded hands, a cloth around His neck, and straw in His



Painting by Vrindavan Das

Krishna had marks on His body from Chandravali

teeth,³ He came before Kishori and began to plead, “O merciful Radhe! Please forgive Me for My offenses.” Humbly offering His obeisances again and again to Her, Shyam said, “O life of My heart, please show Me Your moon-like face. I am *dīna-jana*, a fallen person, but You are *dīna-bandhu*, the friend of the fallen. Please be merciful to Me. O *karuṇā-sindhu*, ocean of mercy. Please excuse this offender.” Hearing Shyam’s humble prayer, Kishori became even angrier. Radharani was keeping Her back to Shyam, Her moonlike face looking down at the ground. She began drawing lines on the earth with Her fingernail. At that time, Lalita held a mirror in front of Radhika’s face. Seeing Shyam’s reflection, Radha became even angrier and began to chastise Lalita.

But lotus-like Radha noticed that Krishna was wearing a piece of Chandravali’s cloth. She said, “What kind of cloth are you wearing? There is *kajjala* and vermilion on Your lips. Go back to Your dearest Chandravali and try to console her.” Seeing bite marks on Krishna’s cheek, and seeing that His peacock feather was bent and the



Vrinda Devi speaks to Radha on behalf of Krishna

hair on His head completely disheveled, Radhika said, "Go present Yourself to Chandravali! You have no shame! Even though the Yamuna River is nearby, You have not washed Your face. O Braja-bandhu, Krishna, friend of the Vrajabasis, now Your name 'Radha-bandhu' no longer applies. Before You were *mugdha-nātha*, lord of bewildered persons. Now You have become Chandravalinath, the Lord of Chandravali."

Krishna said, "O affectionate Radha! You are most forgiving! Please forgive Me. O foremost of young girls, I became bewildered and mistakenly touched a lily, thinking that it was a lotus.

"O *kṣamā-nidhi*, ocean of forgiveness, Sri Kishori! Please excuse Me for all of My offenses. Unable to bear Your harsh insulting words, I must jump into the Yamuna river and end My life. I am like the body and You are the life. Without You, everything is empty.

Radhika angrily responded, "Don't touch me. Get out of here! I don't want to see You. I don't even want to see Your shadow. O shameless one, go! Take bath in the Yamuna, feed the *brāhmaṇas*, and became free from sin."

All of the *sakhīs* then spoke to Radhika on behalf of Krishna. They said, "O crest jewel of young women! Why are You so angry with Giridhari? Not getting a taste of nectar, You are throwing it away. This will only bring You lamentation. You know how He danced on the heads of Kaliya and how He lifted Govardhan Hill. What kind of love do You have? Sukadeva Goswami, Sanaka Kumar, Janaka Maharaja — all of the sages and all of the three worlds are meditating on His name. That same Krishna is now standing before You with folded hands. Please don't make Him more miserable and depressed. Show Him Your face and relieve Shyam of His sorrow.

Nothing Black

But taking all Her girl companions to a secluded place, Radhika expressed Her anger to them. She said, "Henceforward, anyone who speaks to Me about Krishna, or anyone who even utters His name, will be considered My enemy. From today on, I will not look at any black or deep-blue colored things — even new clouds or black dresses, etc.

Hearing this, Lalita said, "O Radha! You are always thinking of that black boy and thus always carrying that contamination in Your mind. How can You give up thinking of Him? The Yamuna's water is black — will You stop going there to collect water?"

Radhika replied, "I will no longer go to the Yamuna! I will no longer bind My black hair or apply black kajjala to My eyes. I will not look at the black rain cloud. Black is My enemy. O Visakha! That black enemy stung Me."

Visakha said, "O Radhika, what kind of vow have You taken? Don't reject Him for whom You have already lost Your caste and family. The cage for Your pet parrots is black. What You will do with that?"



The gopīs encouraged Radha to take Krishna back

Radhika replied, "O *sakhīs*, break that cage and set the parrots free. Take this blue *marakata*-jeweled bangle off My hand and replace it with a golden one. Take this blue *sari* and throw it in the Yamuna. Smear white sandalwood on all of these black pictures or break them. Don't put any black-colored cloth on My bed, make My *kuñja* white, and don't let that Shyam into My *kuñja*."

Citra *sakhī* told Radhika, "O My dear Kishori! Please listen to me. O princess! How long will You banish all of these things? Your black hair looks beautiful on Your head. What You will do with it? There are black circles inside of Your eyes. What will You do with them? Please tell me."

Hearing her words, Radhika became very angry and replied, "I will not look at the mirror to see My black hair. I will make My black hair white by smearing sandalwood on it. I will not listen to the sound of the black crow and cuckoo, not will I see the dark night. O Visakha, My heart is burning with so much distress, please don't speak any *kṛṣṇa-kathā*."

Ever youthful Radha then broke the birdcage with Her own hands and let the parrots out. Throwing away that *marakata*-jeweled bracelet, She replaced it with a golden one.

One *gopī* said, "O Radhika! If Mohana plays His flute, how can You tolerate it? How can You stay steady? As soon as He plays His flute, all of Your tolerance and resolution will fade away. What kind of promise are You making? As soon as You hear the sound of Mohana's flute, You must run. He is like a magnet and You are like iron. You will go mad for Him."

Radha said, "My dear friend! Listen to the painful story of what that thief Nilamani did to Me yesterday. He for whom I have become a disgrace in Vraja, that same person yesterday night took rest at Chandravali's *kuñja*. Yesterday on the bank of the Yamuna, Shyam gave some indication to meet Me at My *kuñja*, but He did not show up. I have been keeping this *guñjā-mālā* necklace as the sign of His signal, but Chandravali usurped Him. What type of *mantra* did that woman apply to Shyam that the flower bed I made for Him became useless? I made a lamp of flowers for Him, but the boat of My hope drowned in the water. Last night I wasted the entire evening. O friend! Don't speak to Me the name of Krishna. Whoever speaks that name will be My enemy. This is the vow of Radha. From today onwards I give up all types of black-colored things. I will not use black eyeliner anymore in My eyes."

Another *gopī* said, "O Radha! Will You not cross the Yamuna to go to the market in Mathura to sell yogurt? How is it possible for You to give up thinking of the black form of He for whom, by not seeing for a single moment, You feel like millions of *yugas* have passed? How is it possible for you to give up thinking

of He for whom you are carrying that reputation of being unchaste on Your head? How can You stop going to the Yamuna to meet that black gold?"

Radha replied, "I will not go to the Yamuna for water or bath. O *gopī*, don't quarrel with Me. Previously I did not know about that debauchee's activities. My whole body is burning with poison from that black womanizer. Uproot the *tamāla* tree that is near the *kuñja*. Drive that black bee out. I don't want to wear any black bangles or hear the sound of the black peacock.

"For Him, I bore the burden of a scandalous reputation. I had to tolerate so much slander, indignity and insults for Him. With great fear I go to take bath in the Yamuna, and Kanu always comes and harasses Me on the way. What kind of *mantra* does He keep in His flute that steals My mind? Don't allow the gardener to bring blue flowers to My home. My heart is breaking seeing that blue lily flower. Bring that golden *campaka* flower to Me, along with sandalwood. Smear it on Me and I will become white-colored."

Another *gopī* said, "O Radhika! Don't be angry with Giridhari. He is Your real wealth. O my friend, unable to taste that nectar, the day will come when You will repent. He is controlling Sukadeva Goswami, Sanaka Kumara and others. For seven days Indra made it rain, but he was defeated by Krishna. Now You are not speaking with Him, but the day will come when You will speak to Him first."

Another *sakhī* said, "Whatever happened, let it go. Now we have to go for *sūrya-pūjā*. O Rai, let us go. That Shyam came and requested You to forgive Him, but You would not even look at Him. You are angry with Him, but He has no fault." Ignoring the advice of Her *sakhīs*, Radha refused to give up Her anger.

Disguise of the Lady Barber

In the meantime, wandering around Vraja feeling unbearable separation from Radhika, Krishna met with Vrindadevi. He humbly told her, "O My friend, I am drowning in an ocean of grief. Please save Me! My heart is crying. How can I attain the lady of My life? I am ill-fated, as the ocean of anger has come to Me. Due to My fault, I have attained this situation. What shall I do now? Where will I go? In which way can I meet My *prāneśvarī*? Please show Me some means out of this predicament. I am a great offender, but Kishori is very merciful. I am suffering in separation from Radhika. Please save My life and reunite Us."

The goddess of the forest Vrinda said to Shyam, "The fire of Radhika's sulky anger is increasing more and more. Who can approach Radha and pour the ghee of Your humility on the fire of Her anger? She has closed Her ears and refuses to hear anything. Even She considers Her hair the same as poison. She has



Radha said, "Whenever I go to the Yamuna, Kanu always harasses Me."

stopped going to the Yamuna for water, and will not even look at the dark night. She banished all of Her girl companions who had blackish complexions. She threw Her blue jewel necklace away. She freed the parrots and broke their cage. She uprooted the black tamal tree that She was personally taking care of. She has smeared sandalwood all over all the dark pictures, and trembles with anger when She sees the blue sky."

Crying, His heart troubled, Shyam said, "O Vrinda, how can I attain My lover? Please give Me some intelligence whereby I can have Her *darśana*."

Vrinda Devi replied, "O Nilamani, listen. There is one way, You have to dress as a *nāpiti*, a female barber, and go Radhika's place. There You should smear *kumkum* on Rai's feet, and You can thus have Her *darśana*. Hearing Vrinda's words, immediately Kalachand agreed, and requested Vrinda to dress Him appropriately."

Vrinda dressed Shyam up as a lady barber. She made a braid in His hair and fixed a *ketakī* flower on it. She dressed Him in a colorful sari. On His nose she placed

a jeweled ornament, on His neck a wonderful necklace, and also placed bracelets, arm bands, a jeweled waist belt, and many other types of ornaments. Finishing, Vrinda Devi told Him, "O crest jewel of dancers! This is a very wonderful dress. You look very beautiful." Saying this, Vrinda showed a mirror to Shyam. Seeing His dress, Shyam thanked Vrindadevi for her kind intelligence and help.

Beggar of Prema

Taking a box of *kumkum*, Shyam hid at the entrance to Yavat and waited for Radhika and Her girl companions. After some time, Radhika came, accompanied by Lalita and other *sakhīs*. Lalita noticed a beautiful lady barber waiting to offer Her service of smearing color on ladies' feet. Lalita saw that this wonderful lady looked far more beautiful than the heavenly damsels, and that nectar was falling from Her laughter. Lalita inquired, "O beautiful lady, where do You stay? Are You living here in Vraja or somewhere else?"

The lady barber replied, "I stay at Madhupuri (Mathura). I am a *prema-kāṅgālīnī*, a beggar of *prema*. I have come here to put some color on the feet of Kishori. Please show Me where is the daughter of Vrishabhanu Maharaja, who is famous as Raseswari, the queen of the *rāsa* dance, Kamalini, the lotus like one, and Kishori-ratana, the jewel of young girls?"

The poet Jnana Das says, "Please show me Her feet."

With Trembling Hands

Lalita said, "O lady, our *sakhī* Srimati is very sad. She is not interested in wearing any kind of ornament or decoration. Radhika is now uncontrollably angry at Krishna. She has given up all kinds of decorations and says that Her body is burning. Even if we smear cooling sandalwood paste and *kastūrī* musk on Her body, it simply increases Her pain twice over."

Hearing all this, the lady barber addressed Radharani, "O Srimati, give up Your sadness. Your moonlike face looks black — seeing that, My heart is breaking. O Rasarangini, one who delights in pleasure pastimes, please give up Your sulkiness. O Radha with beautiful hair, please be merciful to Me. You are a resident of Yavat. You are the giver of mercy. O Rasarangini, don't be angry in Your mind." Speaking these words of consolation to Radhika, Krishna then opened His little box. Touching Radhika's lotus feet, Krishna began cleaning Her nails and then putting red-colored *kumkum* on the bottom of Her feet. With shaking hands, Krishna disguised as a lady barber started writing "Shyam" on Radhika's foot. When Radhika saw this, She pulled Her foot back and became very angry at that lady. With great indignation, Radhika said, "Who taught You to write this name?"



Painting by Anjana Das. Courtesy of ISKCON New Delhi.

Krishna disguised as a lady barber started writing "Shyam" on Radhika's foot

You are such a shameless lady! Are you fearless? Get out from here!" Saying this, Radhika drove Her out of that village. That lady barber became very fearful and left that place, chanting Radha's name with tears in Her eyes.

Disguise of the Lady Florist

Crying and crying in separation from Radhika, Shyam again came to Vrinda Devi. "O Vrinda Devi, please save Me! O goddess of the forest, show Me how I can reunite with that beautiful girl of Vraja. How can I meet with Her and how can Her sulkiness be dissipated? The fire of anger inside of the heart of Radharani is increasing more and more."

Vrinda Devi told Shyam, "O Nilamani, if You want to have *darśana* of Radha You should accept the dress of a *mālinī*, a lady florist.

Krishna said, "O Vrinda, how can you be so bold as to again suggest that I disguise Myself and approach Radha? Following your instructions, I dressed as a lady barber and came near Radhika at Yavat. The only result

was that I had to run away. With great anger, Radhika pushed Me with Her hand and threw Me out from there."

Vrinda Devi replied, "Don't think that all is hopeless."

The poet Jnana Das says, "Krishna, You are *māyādhara*, the Lord of illusion. Who understands Your pastimes? All of this is a joke arranged by You."

The Moonlike Lady

Vrinda then decorated moonlike Krishna as a lady florist. She ornamented His hair with many different kinds of flowers and placed a jeweled ornament known as a *sīmantinī* on the part in His hair. She then fixed an ornamental pearl on His nose and necklaces and shark shaped earrings on His neck and ears. What can be more wonderful than the *sindura* on His forehead, which appeared like the full moon shining above the blossoming lotus of His face? On His arms, Vrinda Devi placed jeweled bracelets. On His feet, she attached jeweled ankle bells.

The poet Jnana Das says, "Also, there is red *kumkum* on His feet."

Tears of Shame

Dressed in a white sari, Krishna's beauty was so great that it could even divert the mind of a *sannyāsī*. Vrinda brought a basket that was full of garlands made from *nīlotpala*, *campaka*, *nialī*, *punnāga*, *ketaki*, *mālatī*, *mādhavī*, *raṅganī*, *kunda*, *bakula*, and other kinds of flowers.

After adopting the dress of a *mālinī*, Shyam went to Yavat. The master of illusion is now mad and bewildered in *rādhā-bhāva*, thinking, "When will this sulkiness leave My beloved?" With a blissful mood, that *mālinī* entered Radha's house. Looking at the faces of Lalita and the other *sakhīs*, She said, "Please help Me!"

Seeing that beautiful *mālinī*, who possessed a most wonderful blackish complexion, Visakha asked Her, "O dear one, where are You from?"

The *mālinī* replied, "O My friend, please listen. My birthplace is Mathura. Due to fear of Kamsa, I stay in Vraja. Where is your Radharani? I am a *mālinī* with fresh flower garlands. Please accept them quickly, for My time is running out and I have to return to My home soon."

Lalita said, "Rai's situation is very bad. Your blue lily flower garland will not be pleasing to Her. Nor do we need flowers for anything else. We no longer have time for *sūrya-pūjā*, nor are we going to the Yamuna anymore for bath, because the Rahu planet of *māna* is attacking Radhika."

Lalita then indicated to that *mālinī* that She should put a garland on Radhika. The *mālinī* then placed garlands of *mallikā*, *campaka* and *mālatī* (all white-colored flowers) on Radhika, and became very happy.

The *mālinī* then inquired, "O Rasarangini Radha, what kind of dress are You wearing? I do not see any black bangles, which would look very beautiful on Your wrists. Nor are there any blue *marakata*-jeweled ornaments on Your arm. I don't see any blackish *gopīs* in Your house, nor do I see the famous black tamal tree in Your courtyard. Moreover, I am surprised to find that all of the dark-colored pictures in Your house have been smeared with white sandalwood."

The *mālinī* then went to offer Radhika a blue lily flower garland. The *mālinī* told Her that it would help Her to remember Krishna. As soon as Rai saw that garland, She became very angry and threw the garland away. She said, "You are a low-class person! What are You saying? You are nonsense. Get out of here!"

The poet Jnana Das says, "With tears of shame in His eyes, Lord Shyamasundar immediately left that place and went back to Vrinda Devi's cottage kutir."

Sannyasi Dress

Shyam told Vrinda Devi that the *māna*, sulky anger, had still not left Radha. "O Vrinda Devi," He said, "My heart is crying. I will give up My life by jumping into the Yamuna river."

Vrinda told Him, "O Shyam, please be patient. You should dress as a *sannyāsī*. Then You should go to Radhika and beg for the alms of Her sulkiness. When the jewel of *prema* becomes a beggar of *prema*, then Radha's unconquerable sulkiness must break."

Krishna said, "Without delay, quickly arrange that *sannyāsī* dress for Me, and I will go to that beautiful girl to beg alms."

Vrinda Devi replied, "No, it is not possible for me to give that dress to You. To obtain it, You will have to go to Kailash and approach Lord Bholanath, Shiva. Let us go there at once."

In Kailash, Shyam called out "O Mahesh, where are you? Please give Me your *darśana*. My heart is crying for Radhika."

Hearing that voice, the Lord of Durga stood up from his seat, and understanding that it was Krishna, he became surprised.

Krishna said, "O holder of the trident, please dress Me in your form. Give Me ashes, matted hair, and *ḍamaru* drum. O Mahesh, only in this way will the *māna* of Radha go away."

Hearing Shyam's words, five-headed Shiva pondered, and said, "You are *brahmāṇḍa nāyaka*, the hero of the entire universe. What can I say to You? You are the Lord of *māyā*, illusion. You are playing a joke on me. Seeing You here today in Your enchanting Mohana form, my *bhajan-kuṭīra* has become successful. How can I matt the hair on that head decorated with the peacock feather? How can the *tripuṇḍra*, three-lined *tilaka*, look nice on that forehead decorated with two beautiful upright lines of *tilaka*? How can that ear, decorated with jeweled earrings, now wear a copper earring? How can I put a garland of bones on the same neck where Radharani has placed a *vaijayantī* garland? How can that same shoulder that has been decorated with golden cloth now carry a *bhikṣā-jhuli*, a cloth bag for begging? How can that beautiful hand which carries the flute now carry a *kamaṇḍalau*, a *sannyāsī's* water pot? How can I smear ashes on that body which is always scented with fine camphor and sandalwood? How is it possible to place a tiger skin on that waist which is decorated with yellow silken garments? How can there be a *kaupina*, loincloth, on the same waist that has borne a belt of fine bells that produce the captivating sound of "runu jhunu"?

Krishna said, "O Mahesh, for *mānamayi* Radha, please decorate Me with matted hair and *sannyāsī* dress."

Lord Shiva then decorated Krishna as a *sannyāsī*. He smeared ashes on the Lord's body, gave Him a *japa-mālā* and a *bhikṣā-jhuli*, bag for begging. He put a tiger skin on the Lord, a garland of *rudrākṣa* beads around His neck, and placed in His hand a *ḍamaru* drum making the sounds "dibi dibi".

A Song for Radha

Dressed as a *sannyāsī* beggar, Braja-bandhu arrived in Vraja, singing the following song over and over again: ⁴

māna-mayī rādhe māna-bhikārī- tomā-lāgi hailu dambaru-dhārī
yāmāra aparādha kṣama-māna-dhana dāna-niba

“O *māna-mayī* Radhe, I am a beggar of *māna*. Just for You I have become a holder of the *damaru* drum. Please forgive Me for My offenses. I have come to beg the wealth of Your sulky anger.”

bandhure to lāgi āji bhaṣmajaṭā anurāgi
māna-dhana bhikṣā-māgi āñibi sate
tora śrī-mukha prasanna sate karibi darśana
chanā sudhā vacana ki bhāsibu mote
tora nāma mālā āśrīta
māna-mayīre muñ tora kiñilā bhṛtya

O My friend! Today, out of love for You, I have accepted ashes on My body and matted locks of hair. I will go and beg from You *māna-dhana*, the wealth of Your loving sulkiness. In this way, I will make You happy and I will get to have Your *darśana*. Will You speak to Me and shower the rain of Your mercy upon Me? I will chant *japa* of Your name on My beads. O *mānamayi*, I am Your paid servant.

teji to durjyaya-māna bhaji jamunā pulina
sakhi-saṅge majji-jibu phula toḷāre
gunthi nilotpala mālā lambāibu mo gaḷā
setebele pāibi muñ buḍibā bhelāre
tebe naṭabara mo veśa
śikhi puccha bāñka-cuḷa hoichi dhvañsa

When will You give up Your unconquerable sulkiness? When will You again come to the bank of the Yamuna? When will You absorb Yourself in picking flowers with Your girl companions? When will You make a garland out of blue lotus flowers and put it on My neck? This will fulfill all of My desires. Then My sinking boat will be rescued. But now, My dress as the best of dancers, My peacock feather, and My curly hair have all been discarded.

teji muññ dhandā-phandā geruā vasana pindhā
andhāra hoichi vṛndā-ramya mandire
mandāra mālinī tsa pindhāile yogiveśa
nāññ kārya mora rādhe nanda mandire
pindhā-pitavāsa ambara
tā vadāḷe vyāghra carma-kaṭī ambara

Giving up all of My duties, I have accepted saffron cloth. Vrinda’s beautiful temple has been dark.⁵ Shiva has given Me the dress of a *yogi-sannyāsī*. O Radha! I have no more work in the temple of Nanda Maharaja. Instead of yellow-colored cloth, I am now wearing a tiger-skin dress.

kali-yuge avatāra gaurāñga rūpare
tomāri guna gāibi nagare nagare
praveśila yāvaṭare bolyā śiva śiva
śrī candana carana dhulā kabebā pāiba

Sri Krishna-kathamrita



Krishna disguised as a lady comes before Radha

In Kali Yuga, in the form of Gauranga Mahaprabhu, I will sing Your glories in every town. Uttering, “Shiva Shiva”, the *sannyāsī* beggar proceeded towards the village of Yavat. The poet Sri Chandana is thinking, “When will I get the dust of Radhika’s feet?”

Alms from Yasoda

The *sannyāsī* beggar first came to the palace of Nanda Maharaja. Rattling the *damaru* drum, He said, *jaya hara hara jaya damaru-dhara* — “All glories, all glories to Hara, Lord Shiva, the holder of the *damaru* drum.”

Looking at that yogi, Nandarani Yasoda, the queen of Nanda Maharaja, thought, “I have never see this type of yogi before. Is this my Nilamani Gopal coming to me in the dress of a yogi?” She asked, “O best of the yogis, where is Your house? Please tell me. What kind of foolish parents do You have? How could Your mother let You be a yogi from such an early age? How could Your parents tolerate it? They must be in great distress. O yogi, come and play with my Kana! Just now, my Nilamani has gone outside to play. As soon as He returns, You can make friendship with Him. The two of will get great pleasure playing.”

That best of yogis replied, "O mother, I have come from Mathura. My mother's name is Devaki Yogini, and father is Vasunatha. Please quickly give Me some alms. I have to return to My place."

Hearing the yogi's words, Mother Yasoda called for her son, "O my dear son, Kana! Where are You? Please come. I want You to make friends with this yogi who looks just like You." At that time, Lord Chakrapani created an illusion. He expanded Himself and came to the lap of Mother Yasoda.

Then Nandarani brought her illusion son to make friendship with that yogi. She prepared bowls of milk cream and gave them to the boys to eat. She said, "O yogi, You should stay in my house and play with My Nilamani."

The *sannyāsī* yogi replied, "Listen, O mother, I am going to the village. I will come back to your house afterwards." Then, rattling His *ḍamaru* drum, that yogi left.

The poet Sri Chandan says, "Always think of that Cintamani Krishna."

Begging from Radharani

Seeing a young yogi from a distance, all Radhika's girl companions started speaking amongst themselves. "O *sakhī*, just see this effulgent *yogī-sannyāsī*. We have never seen such a *sannyāsī* before!"

One *sakhī* asked the *sannyāsī*, "O Maharaja, where is Your *maṭha*? Are You staying in Vraja? How is it that from such an early age You have become a yogi? How is it possible for Your parents to allow You to go and beg?"

The enchantingly beautiful yogi replied, "Listen, O girls of Vraja! From an early age, Dhruva became a devotee. I am newly a yogi. I will perform My *yoga-ṽrata*. To do that, I have to accept alms from a woman who is *pativrātā*, chaste. This is My guru's order. O girls, if I can get some alms from such a chaste lady, I will be very happy."



Devotees at ISKCON Gadeigiri sing for Gopal Jiu

One *gopī* jokingly said, "O yogi, I am a chaste lady. If You accept alms from My hand then You will attain the perfection of yoga."

The *yogī sannyāsī* said, "I have heard of a young lady named Radha. Please introduce Me to Her."

The poet Sri Chandan says, "I will accept alms from Her hand."

Treasure of Anger

The *sannyāsī* said, "Please show Me the lotus feet of Sri Radha. This is the order My guru gave Me."

At that time, Jatila, Radharani's so-called mother-in-law, said, "O youthful yogi, please accept alms from my hand."

The yogi replied, "O lady, please tell Me what is your name?"

Jatila said, "You want alms. What will You get from knowing my name?"

"O mother, that is My guru's order. He told Me that I should only accept alms from the most chaste woman."

Hearing this, Jatila told Visakha, "O Visakha, bring that girl whose name has become the subject of scandal all over Vraja. This *sādhu* is saying that She is *pativrātā*, chaste. Let Her give a plate of alms to this *sannyāsī-yogī*."

Surrounded by *sakhīs*, Kishori Radha, taking a plate of offerings, then came out of the house. Lalita said, "Listen, O *sannyāsī*. You are requesting alms from the most chaste woman, but all over Vraja it is declared that Radha is a disgrace to Her family."

That yogi said, "O Kishori, please listen to Me. I have come here to see Your lotus feet. First, in the name of *dharma*, You must agree that You will give Me whatever particular alms I want. I don't need the plate You have brought. On My guru's order, I have come here. Now please tell Me truthfully if You will give Me what I want. My eyes have now become auspicious by seeing Your lotus feet. O crest jewel of chaste ladies, O You who delight in pastimes in Vraja, O wave-filled stream of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, it is getting late. I have to return to My *āśrama* very soon. Please, O Srimati, why are You delaying? Please consider quickly and tell Me yes or no." O You who always enjoy pastimes of dancing, O personified internal pleasure potency of Krishna, O queen of the *rāsa* pastime, please tell, please tell."

Hearing all these things from that *yogī-sannyāsī*, Rasamayi Radha, began breathing deeply. Meditating on *dharma*, and fearing *dharma*, She spoke Her truth, "O best of the dancing yogis, ask for whatever alms You want. I must give them to You. Three times I state this to be true."

Stretching out His two hands, the young *sannyāsī* said, "O dear one, My desire will be fulfilled if You will give Me whatever sulkiness You have towards the son of Nanda Maharaja. O resident of Yavat, please give Me



Krishna came to Radharani dressed as a yogī-sannyāsi
painting by Vrindavan Das. www.vrindavanart.com



Sri Sri Radha Gopal Jiu in Gadeigiri, Orissa

those alms. Please give them quickly. I have to go back to My *maṭha* soon."

Full of both happiness and distress, Radharani put Her palms together. Looking at the face of the handsome young yogi, said, "O yogi, please take this. I am giving You all of My sulkiness towards Krishna."

Gaining the treasure of Radharani's loving anger, Lord Vamsidhari left Yavat in great happiness. As soon as He left, He immediately discarded the *sannyāsa* dress. Standing underneath the *keli kadamba* tree, He began singing the name of Radha with His flute. Hearing that sound, even the stones began to melt. When that enchanting flute song reached the ears of Radharani and the *sakhīs*, they all became captivated. The *sakhīs* said, "O Radha, can you hear that sound which is touching our hearts?"

The poet Sri Chandan says, "Discarding all hindrances of the heart, let us run to that flute player."

At that time, from inside the *kuñja*, the *sakhīs* began an uproarious *kīrtana*:

rādhe rādhā govinda bolo!
govinda bolo bhaja gopāla bolo!
rādhe rādhā govinda bolo! ⁶ 🌸

Endnotes

1) The five arrows of cupid are described in *Shiva Purāṇa* 3.2.3.12: *harṣaṇa* - delighting; *rocana* - appealing; *mohana* - deluding; *śoṣaṇa* - withering; and *māraṇa* - killing.

2) In his purport to *Bhāg.* 3.6.9, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada describes the five principle airs in the body as: *prāna*, the main air passing through the nose in breathing; *apāna*, the air which passes through the rectum as evacuated bodily air; *samāna*, the air which adjusts foodstuff in the stomach and which sometimes sounds as belching; *udāna*, the air which passes through the throat and the stoppage of which constitutes suffocation; and *vyāna*, the total air which circulates throughout the entire body.

3) Wearing a cloth around the neck and holding straw in the teeth are signs of abject humility in Vedic culture.

4) This song can be found on Gadeigiri *kīrtana* CD "Krishna takes Sannyāsa" from Gopal Jiu Publications.

5) In Vraja, Vrinda Devi is in charge of facilitating the pastimes of Radha and Krishna by providing *kuñjas*, parrots, peacocks, and other paraphernalia. As Radharani is angry with Krishna and is refusing to see Him, Vrinda's "temple" (her service) has become dark.

6) This song can be found on Gadeigiri *kīrtana* CD "Krishna takes Sannyāsa" from Gopal Jiu Publications.

THE DEITY OF AMIYA NIMAI

Sri Padmanabha Goswami

Photos by Bhakta Charles

Sri Sarvabhauma Madhusudan Goswami was a devotee in the disciple succession of Srila Gopal Bhatta Goswami and a worshiper of the self-manifested deity Sri Radha Ramanji in Vrindavan. He was a scholar of *nyāya* and Sanskrit grammar, a preacher, a social reformer, and was famous as a great devotee. During his lifetime, he toured several times around India spreading the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Madhusudan Goswami had intimate relations with many great saints and scholars of his time, including Shishir Kumar Ghosh, Sri Kedarnath Bhaktivinode Thakur, Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati, Pandit Rasik Mohan Vidyabhushan, Sri Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Sri Haridas Goswami.



Sri Madhusudan Goswami

Goswami is also credited with inspiring Sri Krishna Gopal Duggal in his Urdu language book on Mahaprabhu's life.

In Nabadwip, Sri Madhusudan obtained a very old, life-sized deity of Mahaprabhu, which he named "Sri Amiya Nimai Gauranga Mahaprabhu". On Sri Madhusudan's order, his disciple Sri Radha Govinda Goswami installed the deity in a temple in Kolkata's Bag Bazar district. Radha Govinda Goswami was born in a



high-class *brāhmaṇa* family, and his ancestors were great devotees of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

A highly skilled musician, he lived by teaching music. Whatever he earned, he spent in the service of Mahaprabhu. Radha Govinda Goswami did not see Amiya Nimai as a deity. In his dealings with the Lord he viewed and worshipped Him as a living manifestation of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

As Radha Govinda Goswami started growing older, he began to worry about the future worship of Amiya Nimai. There was no successor in his family. Once, in a helpless condition, Sri Goswami asked Mahaprabhu, "In the future, how and by whom will Your service be performed?"

That night, Mahaprabhu came to him in the dream and said, "Stop worrying. Take Me to Vrindavan where your guru's son lives."

After receiving this order from the Lord, Sri Radha Govinda Goswami wrote a letter to his guru's son, Sri Krishna Chaitanya Goswami. He explained the instruction Mahaprabhu had given him, and requested, "Please arrange to take Amiya Nimai to Vrindavan."

Krishna Chaitanya Goswami thought, "How can such a big deity be carried to Vrindavan? Where will the Lord be seated? How can His service and worship be arranged for?" In this way, he expressed his inability before Sri Radha Govinda Goswami. Again, Radha Govinda Goswami wrote and requested him. Like this, letters were exchanged between them for some time. Then one evening, while singing *Gītā Govinda* in front of Amiya Nimai, Sri Radha Govinda Goswami left his body. It was a heart-rending tragedy for the local devotees. Everyone began to worry, "Radha Govinda



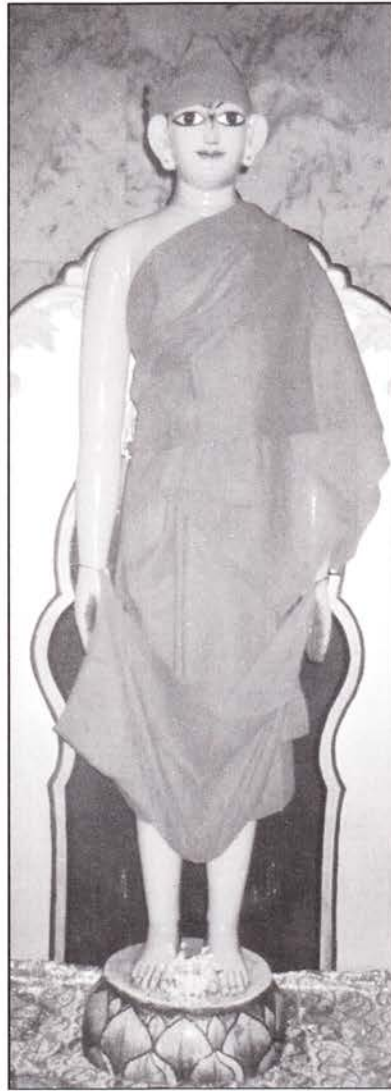
Sri Krishna Chaitanya Goswami

Goswami has no successor. How will Mahaprabhu's order to bring the deity to Vrindavan be executed?"

Because there was no successor to Radha Govinda Goswami, the police came and sealed off the temple. The devotees then started performing the worship mentally, and offered *bhoga* in front of the locked gate. After a short time, the police unlocked the gate and searched the temple. They found the letters exchanged between Radha Govinda Goswami and Krishna Chaitanya Goswami concerning bringing Amiya Nimai to Vrindavan. They also found a will left by Sri Radha Govinda Goswami that left the service of Amiya Nimai to Sri Krishna Chaitanya Goswami. Based on these documents, the police wrote to Krishna Chaitanya Goswami and requested him to bring Amiya Nimai to Vrindavan. Having no other alternative, Goswamiji went to Kolkata. There he discussed the matter with the local devotees.

In November of 1936, a group of devotees, including Sri Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, Sri Ramdas Babaji Maharaja, and others brought Amiya Nimai to Hathras in a reserved coach of the Toofan train from Kolkata. At Hathras, Amiya Nimai was given a grand welcome by the devotees. Amiya Nimai stayed in Hathras for four days, during which time the devotees worshiped Him with *bhajans*, *hari-kathā*, and various other devotional activities. After that, the deity was brought to Vrindavan by truck.

When Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu originally came to Vrindavan, He arrived on the full moon day of the month of *Kārtika*. On that same day, 26 November 1926, the full moon day of *Kārtika*, the deity of Sri Amiya Nimai Mahaprabhu arrived in Vrindavan. All the *vaiṣṇavas* of Vrindavan assembled and extended an unprecedented welcome with tumultuous *kīrtana*. As immediately there was no suitable place to install such a large deity of Mahaprabhu, Amiya Nimai was temporarily worshiped outside the main gate of the Radha Raman temple, in an area known as the *rāsa-maṇḍala*. Amiya Nimai stayed there for four or five years. Then, Sri Shah K.S. Gupta, the present servitor of Sri Shahji's Temple, Vrindavan, and his grandmother



On Haridas Thakur's disappearance day, Amiya Nimai is dressed as a sannyāsi.

Srimati Ram Devi, constructed two large rooms on the bank of the Yamuna in what was then the garden of Shahji's temple, also known as Jugal Bagicha, and the deity was shifted there. For approximately sixteen years, Amiya Nimai remained at that spot.

As the years passed, Sri Krishna Chaitanya Goswami thought, "Mahaprabhu must have His own temple where His worship can be conducted smoothly and regularly." Sri Goswami had a property in Gopinath Bazar, Vrindavan. There, around the year 1954, construction of a temple was started for Amiya Nimai. Much help and contributions for this temple's construction came from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* publication group in Kolkata. The temple was finished in 1956, and Amiya Nimai was ceremoniously installed with great pomp and rejoicing. Since that day, Mahaprabhu's worship and service has been carried on continuously and regularly.

After the departure of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Goswami, his only son, Sri Vishwambhar Goswami took over the responsibilities of Amiya Nimai's service. After Sri Vishwambhar Goswami, his sons Sri Padmanabh Goswami and Sri Padmalochan Goswami are sincerely continuing the service.

Special Festivals in Amiya Nitai's Worship

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Appearance Day (Gaura Purnima):

This festival is celebrated for four days. On the first day, *vaiṣṇavas* perform *adhivāsa kīrtana*. On the second day, learned men recite *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and other scriptures. On the third day, the pastime of Mahaprabhu's birth is recited, and then an elaborate *abhiṣeka*, bathing ceremony, of Mahaprabhu is conducted. Following that, *prasādam* is distributed amongst the devotees. Then on the last day there are feasts for the *vaiṣṇavas*. In the evening there is a *kīrtana* procession around the town carrying a painting of Mahaprabhu.

Disappearance Day of Haridas Thakur:

On this day, Mahaprabhu is dressed in the same mood He manifested on the occasion of Haridas Thakur's



Amiya Nimai dressed as Srimati Radharani

disappearance. That day, Mahaprabhu went as a *sannyāsi* beggar and collected alms and organized a feast for Haridas Thakur in Jagannath Puri. Thus, Amiya Nimai is dressed as a *sannyāsi* on this day and carries a begging-bag in His hand. Special *khicari*¹ *bhoga* is offered to Mahaprabhu and distributed among the devotees.

Arrival of Mahaprabhu in Vrindavan:

During His manifest pastimes in this world, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu first came to Vrindavan on the full moon day of the month of *Kārtika*. Mahaprabhu then visited various places in Vrindavan connected with the pastimes of Sri Sri Radha Krishna. This festival is conducted every year in remembrance of those pastimes.

The program goes for four days. On the first day, *adhivāsa kīrtana* is performed by the followers of the late Ramdas Babaji Maharaja. These devotees come all the way from Nabadwip, Kolkata, and Puri to participate and extend their full cooperation for the festival. On the next day, learned scholars recite aloud various scriptures. On the third day, *kīrtanas* are performed telling the story of Akrura coming to Vrindavan. This particular subject is chosen because Mahaprabhu came to Akrura Ghat one day before his arrival in Vrindavan.² After this, a feast is given to all of the *vaiṣṇavas*. On the fourth day, which is

the full moon day of *Kārtika* month, Mahaprabhu's pastimes of arriving in and touring Vrindavan are discussed. Then in the afternoon a *kīrtana* procession goes out to the places in Vrindavan that Mahaprabhu visited on the day He first arrived. During this procession, various *kīrtanas* are performed that describe what Mahaprabhu felt when he saw the various pastime places of Sri Sri Radha Krishna. Then, after returning to the temple, full *prasādam* is distributed to all of the devotees.

Swing Festival:

In the month of *Śrāvāṇa* (July-August) from the day of *Pavitrāropani Ekādaśi* up to the full moon day, Amiya Nimai is daily pushed on a swing.

Radharani Dress:

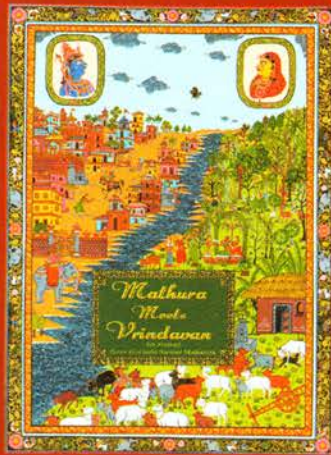
The day after the full moon, Amiya Nimai is dressed up as Srimati Radharani. ☂

Endnotes

- ¹ A traditional stew consisting of beans, rice and vegetables.
² Akrura Ghat is situated four miles north of Mathura and one mile south of Vrindavan.

Sri Padmanabha Goswami is a great-grandson of Sri Sarvabhauma Madhusudan Goswami, and is currently one of the sevaks of the Radharaman temple in Vrindavan. He shares joint responsibility for the service of Sri Amiya Nimai Mahaprabhu.

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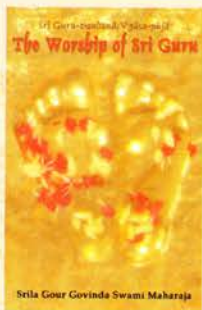


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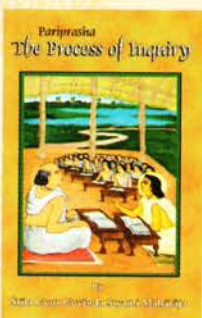
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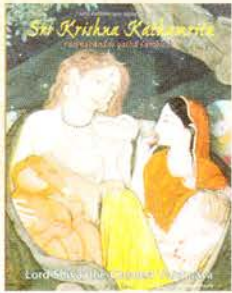
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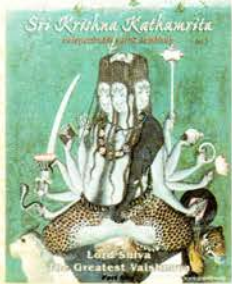


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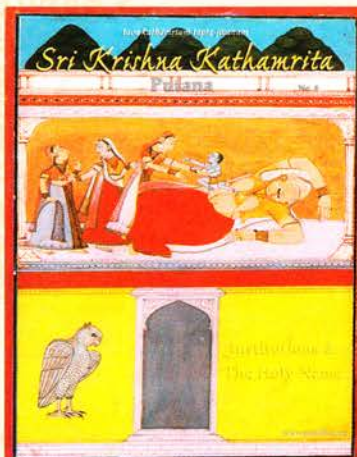
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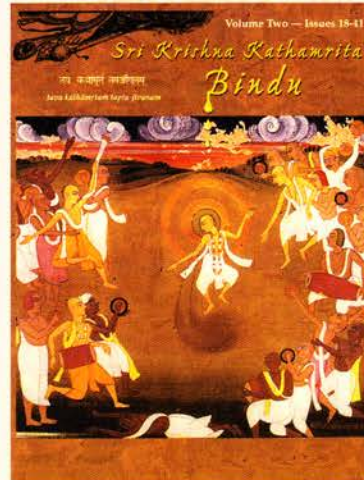


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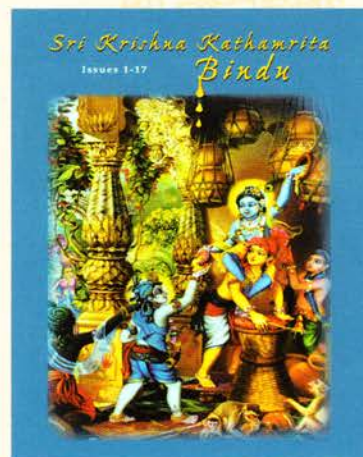
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[Krishna said:] "O Radhe, today, out of love for You, I have accepted ashes on My body and matted locks of hair. I will go and beg from You *māna-dhana*, the wealth of Your loving sulkiness. Giving up all of My duties, I have accepted saffron cloth. Shiva has given Me the dress of a *yogi-sannyāsī*."

(The poet Sri Chandan)