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ENTERING INTO VRINDAVAN

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

If someone comes to this Vrindavan *tīrtha* with the bodily concept of life, he does not derive any benefit. *yat-tīrtha-bud-dhiḥ salile* — his mentality is that a *tīrtha* simply means *salila*, a body of water. (*Bhāg.* 10.84.13) Just like generally people come here, take their bath in the Yamuna River, and think, "Now my business is finished. I came to Vrindavan. I have taken my bath in the Yamuna and purchased some things. Now let me go home. I have finished my *tīrtha*." But *śāstra* says, "No. That is not *tīrtha*." *Janeṣv abhijñeṣu* — if you want to purify yourself, then in the *tīrtha* you must search out *abhijñā*. *Abhijñā* means one who knows. One who knows Krishna. ❀

— Lecture in Vrindavan, 14 March 1974.

THE GOPIS' WORSHIP OF GODDESS KATYAYANI

Excerpts from

*Srila Kavi Karṇapura's
Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū, chapter 12*

The *gopīs* set the excellent *pūjā* items on the sandy white banks of the Yamuna,

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which glistened like camphor powder. They chose a clean, quiet place for *pūjā*. It was a secluded location, undisturbed by the wind and free from the contamination of Yamuna foam and the footprints of birds and animals. Desiring to make a *mūrti* of goddess Katyayani out of sand, the highly qualified *gopīs* spoke in sweet voices resembling the soft cooing of cuckoos.

One *gopī* said, "O my friends! We have never before observed the *kātyāyanī-vrata*. Are we going to conduct the worship individually or all together? Let us decide in such a way that we do not end up with a disaster. With faith and intelligence we should take a decision."

The other *sakhis* concluded, "We should do the *pūjā* all together in a group. To perform *pūjā* separately is not good. Worshiping together will be more beneficial."

The experts in *pūjā* chanted sweet verses praising Krishna's attributes while offering handfuls of fragrant flowers to a *mūrti* of Katyayani that they had molded from sand. Seeing the elegant *mūrti*, the *gopīs* felt that Bhagavati Katyayani herself had appeared in that *mūrti*. The *gopīs* thought, "How fortunate we are to perceive goddess Bhagavati, even though we have not yet installed the deity!" Understanding that they had satisfied Devi Katyayani, the *gopīs* felt elated, and this

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strengthened their determination to execute the vow. To properly please Katyayani, the *gopīs* did *manasi-pūjā* of the *mūrti* before commencing the worship. While concealing the confidential desires within their hearts and controlling their minds, the *gopīs* silently fetched water from the Yamuna. The *gopīs* kept Krishna locked inside their hearts like a precious treasure. After washing their hands and doing *ācamana*, they sat down on seats made of kusa grass. Fixing their minds in the mode of goodness, the *gopīs* silently worshiped Katyayani. To invoke Katyayani's presence in the *mūrti*, the expert *pūjārīs* among them respectfully uttered the *mantra*:

*ihāgacchāgaccha devī, sannidhānam ihācara,
kṛṣṇasya sannidhānam naḥ, prāpayasva namo namaḥ*

"Come, Devi! Please enter this *mūrti*. Please help us come close to Krishna. We pay obeisances to you again and again." (Text 16)

After invoking Katyayani-devi in this way, the young *gopīs* carefully placed an *āsana* before her. With great bliss, they humbly requested the glorious Katyayani:

*svāgataṁ tava he devī svāgataṁ te nivedyate
kṛpayā kārayāsmākaṁ svāgataṁ kṛṣṇam antike*

"Welcome Devi! We offer our heartfelt respects to you. Please accept this splendid *āsana*. O Devi! May your visit be auspicious! We secretly request you to be merciful to us and bring Krishna before us." (Text 18)

While bathing Katyayani's feet in water mixed with the appropriate ingredients, the *gopīs* said:

*upapādyam idaṁ pādyam pādāyor abhivādyayoh
sompādyatām anādye naḥ kṛṣṇasyādye samāgamaḥ
kṛṣṇa-prasveda-pādyam naḥ śīśīri-kurutām uraḥ*

"O eternal Durga! Please accept this worship of your feet! May our breasts be cooled by this foot water, which reminds us of Krishna's perspiration! Please help us meet our beloved Krishna." (Text 20)

Following the foot wash, the *vraja-kumārīs* offered priceless *arghya*, water mixed with various other valuable substances that are fit to be offered at the respectful reception of guests.

*apy arghitaughair arghyā tvam tubhnyam argho 'yam arghitah
mahārghah śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅgah kriyatām so-argha eva naḥ*

"O Devi! You are the highly valued worshipable object of all the demigods. We offer this valuable presentation in hopes that you will soon award us the most valuable association of Krishna." (Text 22)

After *arghya*, the *gopīs* presented *ācamana* (mouthwash).

*idam ācamanīyam te kamanīyam upāhṛtam
kṛṣṇasyācamanīyam tvam ānayāsmākam ānanam*

"O Devi! We offer this pleasant *ācamana* to you in hopes that we will be able to drink the nectar of Krishna's kisses." (Text 23)

Then they offered *madhuparka* (a pleasant drink composed of honey, *ghee*, and yogurt), saying,

*madhuro madhuparkas te mukha-samparkam ārpitaḥ
kuru kṛṣṇādharma-putī madhuparka-kṣamā hi naḥ*

"O Devi! We offer you this sweet *madhuparka* with the desire to taste Krishna's honey-sweet lips." (Text 24)

Absorbed in *samādhi* and overcome with *prema-rasa*, those young, pure-hearted girls with thin waists then offered *ācamana* again, while saying,

Nāma-tattva

THE PURE NAME Sri la Thakur Bhaktivinode's Jaiva Dharma, chapter 23

Raghunath Das Babaji: Chanting of the pure name of Krishna can only be attained when *śraddhā*, faith, fully matures into *ananya-bhakti*, single-minded devotion. Any chanting at a level lower than *ananya-bhakti* is either *nāmābhāsa*, the semblance of chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, or *nāmāparādha*, offensive chanting of *kṛṣṇa-nāma*.

Vijaya: Gurudeva, should chanting *harināma* be considered the *sādhyā*, goal, or the *sādhana*, process to attain the goal?

Raghunath Das Babaji: At the stage of *sādhana-bhakti*, chanting *harināma* may be considered the *sādhana*. But at the stage of *bhāva-bhakti* or *prema-bhakti*, then chanting *harināma* is indeed realized as the *sādhyā-vastu*, the supreme goal of spiritual attainment. The pure chanting of *kṛṣṇa-nāma* manifests in degrees proportionate to the intensity of pure devotion of the chanter. ❀

— Adapted from the edition translated by Sri Sarvabhavana Das. Published by Brhat Mrdanga Press. Vrindavan. 2003.

*punar-ācamānīyaṁ te kamaṁīyaṁ idam punaḥ
punar ācamānīyaṁ bho kṛṣṇasyānanam astu naḥ*

“We offer you this pleasant *punar-ācamana* with the desire to repeatedly drink the nectar from Krishna’s mouth.” (Text 25)

They brought aromatic oil in a jeweled container for massaging the body. Even without any wind, it automatically dispersed its rich fragrance through the air. It was an attractive, deep red oil just suitable for massage. To remove the oil they used a soft scented powder, which seemed like a spray from a fountain of concentrated bliss. They then respectfully offered bathing water scented with the finest camphor and kept it in a golden vessel. Next, the *Vraja kumaris* very methodically offered a neatly folded *sari* woven with golden threads. They brought the best quality flawless jewels and ornaments made by expert goldsmiths and attractive ointments made of *aguru*, camphor, and musk.

*anulepanam etat te devi divyam upāhṛtam
kṛṣṇānulepa-saurabhyaiḥ surabhī-kārayasva naḥ*

“O Devi! We offer you these opulent ointments. Please make us fragrant with the fragrance of Krishna’s ointments.” (Text 32)

The air attained good fortune by carrying the pleasing, celestial aromas of the various scents presented by the *gopīs*.

*gandhair gandha-vahānandī devi gandho ‘yam arpitaḥ
kṛṣṇāṅga-gandhenāsmākam aṅgāni surabhī-kuru*

“O Devi! We offer you these scents that enliven the nostrils. Please make our limbs fragrant with the aroma from Krishna’s body.” (Text 33)

They offered Vrindavan flowers from all six seasons, which were very colorful, covered with sweet pollen, and surrounded by bees.

*idam vṛndāvanodbhūtaṁ prasūnam devi gṛhyatām
rada-prasūnaiḥ kṛṣṇasya pūjitāḥ santu no ‘dharāḥ*

“O Devi! Please accept this flower that has arisen from the land of Vrindavan. And in return, let our lips be worshiped by the flower of Krishna’s teeth.” (Text 34)

They offered incense made from black *aguru*, *khus* root, and clusters of the finest *gulgul*, saying,

*su-gandhir dhūpa-dhūmo ‘yam dhūpas te devi kalpitaḥ
dhūpitā bhava naś cittam dhūpitaṁ śitalī-kuru*

“O Devi! We offer you this fragrant incense smoke. Please become fragrant and cool our burning hearts.” (Text 35)

While offering opulent *ghee* lamps mixed with camphor, the *gopīs* prayed,

*karpūra-varti-surabhir devi dīpo ‘yam arpitaḥ
kṛṣṇa-kaustubha-dīpena dīptaṁ nas stād uro-grham*

“O Devi! We offer you this lamp fragrant with camphor. Please illumine the house of our bosom with the lamp of Krishna’s *kaustubha* jewel.” (Text 36)

They offered milk, butter, rock candy, bananas, coconuts, *mung dal*, sun-dried rice, cakes soaked in sugar water, *malpoa*, sweet rice, cooked grains, *amṛta-keli*, and assorted small tasty cakes covered with powdered rock-candy icing. While presenting these delicacies to *Katyayani*, the girls prayed,

*niravadyam devi hṛdyam naivedyam upayujyatām
sampādayasva kṛṣṇasya naivedyam no navam vayaḥ*

“Please eat all these pure and pleasing food offerings. And please give us the ever-fresh food remnants of Krishna.” (Text 37)

Fixing their minds on their goal, the *gopīs* chanted the following *mantra* with full feeling:

*kātyāyani mahā-māye, mahā-yoginy adhiśvari,
nanda-gopa-sutaṁ devi, patiṁ me kuru te namaḥ*

“O goddess *Katyayani*! O great potency of the Lord! O possessor of great mystic power and mighty controller of all! Please make the son of the cowherd *Nanda Maharaja* our husband. We offer our obeisances unto you.” (Text 38)

Then they muttered *japa* with clear pronunciation. Next, while offering *tāmbula* and *ācamana*, the *gopīs* said,

*sailāla-vaṅga-karpūram tāmbūlam idam aśyatām
kṛṣṇasya tāmbūla-rasair adharāḥ santu no ‘ruṅāḥ*

“Please relish this *tāmbūla* made of *betel*, cloves, camphor, and cardamom. And please color our lips with the juice of Krishna’s *tāmbūla*.” (Text 39)

Performing *ārati*, they said,

*nīrājayāmi tvām dīpa-stavakena maheśvari
nīrājītāni kṛṣṇasya tvaiṅgāni bhavantu naḥ*

“O *Mahesvari*! We show these lamps to you in hopes that you will please illumine our limbs with the glow of Krishna’s limbs.” (Text 40)

After *ārati*, they gracefully bowed down on the ground and offered eloquent prayers disclosing their minds’ desires. The *gopīs* prayed,

*amba heramba mātā tvām stotum stokam apīśvaraḥ
na tvad-īso na prajeśo na vāg-īso ‘pare kutaḥ*

*rasanād eva rasanā-kaṇḍū-khaṇḍanataḥ param
vayam tathāpi stumahe ‘stu maheśvari te kṛpā*

*prabhaviṣṇor mahā-viṣṇor yoga-śaktis tvam uttamā
bhāsi kartum akartum cānyathā kartum apīśvari*

*tvam eva tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiś ca tvam śāntiḥ kṣāntir eva ca
tvam avidyā ca vidyā ca bandha-mokṣa-karī nṛṇām
mātaḥ sarvāṇi sarvāṇi jaganti tvad-apāṅgataḥ
unmīlanti nimīlanti bhavanti vibhavanti ca*

*sarva-maṅgala-mūrdhanye mūrdhany eva divaukasām
tavājñā ca samajñā ca rāja-haiṁsīva rājate*

*parāt paratare kṛṣṇa-pare parama-vaishnavi
paropakāra-parame parameśvārī te namaḥ*

*manojñāsi manojñāsi tvam sarvasyaiva dehinaḥ
dehi naḥ pati-rūpeṇa devī gopendra-nandanam*

“O mother of Ganesh! Neither your husband Mahadev, nor Brahma, nor Brihaspati, can offer suitable praise to you, what to speak of others! We are greedy only to taste Krishna. Therefore, we glorify you so that you will stop the itching of our tongues. O Mahesvari, please shower your mercy upon us!

“You are called Yogamaya, the potency of Maha Vishnu, who possesses all energies. You have the power to do the impossible. You are peace, tolerance, nourishment, satisfaction, knowledge and ignorance. Although you bind the living entities, you are the giver of liberation. O mother of all, by your glance the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world takes place!

“O Devi! You are the pinnacle of all auspiciousness. Your order and glories are sitting like a swan on the heads of all the *devatās*. You are expert in worshiping Krishna, and



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you are the supreme Vaishnavi. O Parameshwari! O supreme goddess! You always engage in the welfare of others. We pay our respects unto you. You perfectly understand the minds of all living entities. So please fulfill our desire to achieve Krishna as our husband.” (Texts 42-49) ❀

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A REAL SERVANT

IS NOT AN ENJOYER

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta

Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

*sādhavo hṛdayam mahyam sādhuṇām hṛdayam tv aham
mad-anything te na jānanti nāham tebhyo manāg api*

The devotees are always in my heart, and I am always in the hearts of the devotees. The devotee does not know anything beyond me, and I also cannot forget the devotee. There is a very intimate relationship between the pure devotees and me. Pure devotees in full knowledge are never out of spiritual touch, and therefore they are very much dear to me. (*Bhāg.* 9.4.68)

One of them offers worship and the other one accepts it. The Lord allows the subordinate to serve him. The mood of servant and master makes the Lord’s pastimes complete.

“I will enjoy the Lord as my order supplier.” This is the mentality of unfortunate materialistic people. *Karmīs* and *jñānīs* are sense enjoyers. They have a strong tendency to enjoy and they are not interested in the Lord’s enjoyment. “Let the Lord serve us so that we become the master.” This attitude is ridiculous.

By speaking the above verse, the Supreme Lord has refuted this attitude. The devotees always serve the Lord. They do not waste their time serving dogs, cows, elephants, horses, and so on. If we act in a way that will simply help us in our enjoyment, then we become disinterested in Krishna’s service. ❀

— Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. *Bhāgavat Tātparyā*. English translation by Bhumipati Das. Rasbihari Lal and Sons. Vrindavan. 2005. Pp. 183-184.