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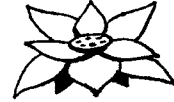
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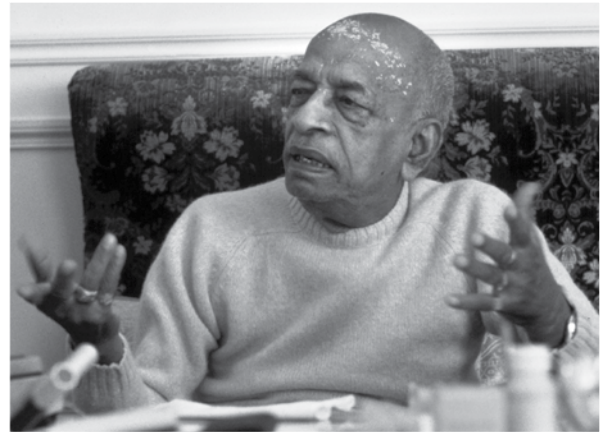


CHANTING AND REMEMBERING

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

Hearing the vibration of Hare Krishna automatically reminds one of Krishna's pastimes. Both of them arise simultaneously in the mind when one is sincerely chanting. You cannot make any distinction between listening to the sound and thinking of the pastimes. But the process is to hear, and then Krishna's pastimes, form, qualities, etc., will automatically come to mind. ❧

— Letter to Satsvarupa, 10 April 1969.



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

TOLERANCE AND RESPECT

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Bhaktivinode Thakur has sung in *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* (3.2.8):

'āmi ta' vaiṣṇava', e buddhi ha-ile,
amānī nā ha'ba āmi
pratiṣṭhāśā āsi', hṛdaya dūṣibe,
ha-iba niraya-gāmī

If I say, "I am *vaiṣṇava*," then I cannot become *amānī* and *mānada*; I'll be unable to offer respect to others. Rather, I will demand respect, "Hey, don't you know I am *vaiṣṇava*? You should pay respect to me, you rascal! Don't you know who I am?" Then, *pratiṣṭhāśā āsi hṛdaya dūṣibe ha-ibe niraya-gāmī* — I will run after name, fame, and adoration. If I do that then my heart will be polluted and I'll go to hell.

Then Bhaktivinode further describes:

amānī mānada, ha-ile kīrtane,
adhikāra dibe tumi

tomāra caraṇe, niṣkapaṭe āmi,
kāṇḍiyā luṭiba bhūmi

"O guru and Gauranga, only if I develop the mood of *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā amānīnā mānada* will I get the *adhikāra*, qualification, for chanting '*hare kṛṣṇa*'. Please grant this to me, otherwise I will not be able to chant without duplicity. If you grant me that mercy, then with a simple heart I will shed tears and roll on the ground at the lotus feet of guru and Gauranga." This is the mood. One who has this mood gets Krishna. One who has gotten Krishna can stay anywhere, in a palatial building or underneath a tree.

Devotee: One *vaiṣṇava* said that if someone wants to take my watch, I won't give it. There will be some fight. I'll punch the person in the face.

Gour Govinda Swami: No, that is not proper. If someone abuses or beats you then you should tolerate.

Devotee: But if I see that a *vaiṣṇava* has been attacked by somebody...

Gour Govinda Swami: If we see that a *vaiṣṇava* is being persecuted, we cannot tolerate it; Krishna cannot tolerate it. It is our duty to give protection. But the *vaiṣṇava* who is being persecuted, he will tolerate with no complaint.

Devotee: I've heard the example given of a snake. Sometimes we should act like a snake if someone is harassing us or causing disturbance.

Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, there is a story. Once there was a very big poisonous snake that was biting innocent men and animals. Narada Muni came, "Hey! What are you doing? Why are you killing innocent persons and animals? Don't do that. You must tolerate. Don't bite anyone."

The snake thought, "All right. If a *sādhu* says, then I'll not do it." So from that day he gave up biting. He just lay there as if dead. Some naughty boys came with a big stick and began pelting the snake with stones. He tolerated it, thinking, "Narada Muni has instructed me, so I won't bite." Then they came and started dancing on his body. Still he tolerated. His bones were broken and he became skinny. Finally, after two or three weeks, Narada Muni came and found him, "What happened?"

"You said that I should not bite anyone. Some naughty boys are coming and are dancing on my body, beating me, and pelting me with stones."

Narada said, "I said that you should not bite, but I never told you not to hiss! Don't bite anyone, but you should hiss. Then they'll become frightened and leave you alone. ❀"

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar on 23 April 1992.

GOPI VASTRAHARANA LILA

PART THREE

Sri Srimad Purnachandra Goswami

Transcendental Thievery

Krishna crept like a thief while the *gopīs* were bathing. But first he tied his beautiful thick black hair under his turban, pulled up his *dhoti*, and took off his ankle bells. Krishna flashed a stern look towards his small, giggling friends to quiet them. He crouched down and cast smiling, mischievous glances as he carefully tiptoed towards the *gopīs'* clothes. Assuming the mood of a thief, he expertly snatched the *gopīs'*

clothes even though they were placed in full view, slung them over his shoulders and stealthily returned to his spot under a Kadamba tree. He turned to his little friends, "Shhhhhhh! Keep quiet!" He then climbed to the top of the Kadamba tree.

He sat on a branch in the tree, looked at the *gopīs* and listened to them as they chattered in the water. As the *gopīs* were bathing they glanced around and suddenly noticed that their clothes were gone. They thought, "Oh! Who took our clothes!? There's no one here except the rays of the sun, and there are no footprints on the sandy banks except those of birds. Maybe the demigods have come and hidden them because when they visit the earth, their feet never touch the ground. So maybe it was them." The *gopīs* quickly looked around in all directions. Their glances appeared like glittering *śapharī* fish darting back and forth. Not seeing their clothes, they sunk into an ocean of sorrow. Sri Krishna, however, took on a very beautiful glow as he sat in the kadamba tree. He laughed loudly followed by his little friends.

The *gopīs* recognized the deep laughter of Krishna, and they looked at one another innocently. But since they noticed that their clothes were not there, they lowered themselves into the water. For a moment they stood mid-stream, lowering their eyes, but as they started to feel the cold, they glanced up into the kadamba tree where Krishna had now come out in the open, sitting on a branch in order to be seen by them.

As Krishna looked down from the kadamba tree at the faces of the girls standing in the water, his eyes became like bumblebees drinking the nectar of lotus flowers. Meanwhile, the eyes of the girls became like chataka birds thirstily looking at a cloud.

The little boys laughed uproariously. The girls became enraged, and said, "These deeds of yours will surely be well thought of by the village elders."

The boys, who had been well-trained by Krishna, responded, "We haven't got the slightest idea about what deeds should or should not be done. So we have come here to learn from you, and we have certainly been doing so."

Embarrassed by the boys' words, the *gopīs* looked at each other and then said, "We see that you have learned your lessons well. Go and repeat them in the village. That will surely enhance your *guru's* reputation."



Krishna speaking with the gopīs

The young boys again repeated what Krishna had told them to say: “We don’t know why you chide us in this way, for you are aquatic creatures while we are residents of the treetops.”

The girls answered, “You climb trees, and this is indeed a fitting display of a plunderer’s prowess. Having been robbed, however, our poverty is proven by our immersion in the water.”

Divine Joking

Then Krishna himself began to address the *gopīs* as follows, “O girls of Vraja, do you know who might have taken these clothes and placed them on the branches of this tree? I was grazing my cows far away, and seeing these clothes I thought, ‘What is this new kind of kadamba tree that bears different kinds of clothes as its fruits and flowers?’ Curious to see this wonder, I quickly came here and climbed this tree.”

The *gopīs* replied, “But all these garments belong to us, so don’t speak like this. Surely, you have stolen them and taken them up there. Why have you taken them so high on the branches of the kadamba tree?”

Krishna said, “That may be true. But I, the thief who is the son of King Nanda, reserve the right to make this accusation.”

“But, our dear boy, please control your mind. Just look at the garments and consider whether they belong to women or men.”

Krishna, “Well, indeed, intelligent girls, it does seem that they are women’s garments. But what does that mean? Are you the only women in this world? Aren’t there any others?”

“Dear boy, there are indeed others, but what other ladies besides us young *gopīs* are coming to this solitary place in the forest?”

Krishna, “O my dear young travelers to secluded places, why is it that you and no one else are playing in this secret place?”

“O wise boy, we have come here for a different purpose, not to play. Rather, we have come here to worship Durga, the presiding deity of this tree.”

Krishna, “So you are just worshipers of Durga?”

“Yes, we are nothing else.”

Krishna, “Well, then, foolish girls, you should know that goddess Durga is worshiped every midnight by demigoddesses who come here in their airplanes.”

“That is all right. Let them do their worship. But why would these demigoddesses leave their clothing to the goddess Durga when they go away?”

Krishna, “Come now, girls, you do not understand the facts of the matter. They’re coming back this very night to worship her again. They have left them to put on after they’ve taken their bath here.”

“But, our dear Krishna, you are the one who does not understand the facts. While taking bath, they have been put here today by us who are going to perform worship. The garments have been taken and placed on the high branches of the tree by the presiding deity of this forest.”

Krishna, “Truly, if you each come at your leisure and pick out your own respective garments from all of these, and then, taking a vow of confidence, each of you offer some payment as retribution to satisfy me, who have kept watch over your property, then I will give the garments back to you and you may take them away.” Krishna thought, “If they all come in two’s or three’s, that would be risky because such girls might be greedy for clothes and take more than their share.”

The *gopīs* objected, “We are not capable of coming there.”

Krishna (laughing), “O girls, I know that it is because of being fatigued from your austerities that you cannot come here. But then I will not give you these clothes, and what can you do to me, who am stronger than you?”

“But we cannot trust your words since you are so duplicitous.”

“I vow that I am telling the truth. Besides, I can see that you have become quite emaciated by your vow.”

“But we cannot have faith even in your vow, because you simply speak falsely.”

Krishna openly said, “I cannot think of any time that I spoke falsely from the time I took birth until my present age.”

“What evidence do you have of this?”

Krishna answered, “These young boys are witnesses. They naturally remember whatever they have seen, and they also speak honestly.”

The *gopīs* objected, “But they know your intentions, and thus they have adopted the same vocation as you. So just throw the garments out here into the water, or else send one of the young boys to give them to us.”

Krishna insisted, “Come, come now! It is impossible for me to tell which garments are yours and which belong to someone else. So how can I just throw them to you?”

The *gopīs* countered, “Such religious persons as us would never even touch with our fingernails someone else’s property.”



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Krishna concluded, “Therefore I say that you should come forward and pick out your garments. Each finding your own garment, you may take them back. After all, I also have principles: I never give, take, or even touch any clothing belonging to someone else.”

The *gopīs* maintained, “But out of fear that you will forcefully play some trick on us, we aristocratic maidens are not going to come near you.”

Krishna responded, “Hmm. I have a suggestion: First, one you who is less important may come forward, and when I do not play any trick on her, the others may also safely come forward.”

The *gopīs* were astounded how Krishna had unlimited arguments. Surely they had met their match. They remained standing in the water up to their necks, appearing like a row of beautiful blue lotuses.

Krishna continued, “O slender-waisted ones, since the head is called ‘the topmost limb’, and your heads are indeed very beautiful, and since you are already showing them to me, why be embarrassed to show me your other beautiful limbs in the middle?”

The *gopīs* were drowning in pure love of Godhead. In such ecstasy, they wondered, “In order to satisfy this boyfriend of ours, what semblances of self-respect will remain with us?” Externally they were looking at one another with embarrassment, but they still joked among themselves: “Alas, O lotus-eyed girl, He is calling you.” One said, “O thin-waisted girl, why don’t you go? Another said, “O Sudhamukhi! You go ahead since he is making us drink nectar, *sudhā*.” Thus they began joking amongst themselves, but they would still not come out of the water.

(To be continued) ❀

THE COWS OF MY WORDS

***Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur’s
Concluding comment on the tenth canto of
Śrīmad Bhāgavatam***

*mad-gavīr api gopālah svī-kuryāt kṛpayā yadi
tadaivāsām payah pītvā hr̥ṣeyus tat-priyā janāḥ*

O Gopal! Please accept and maintain the cows in the form of my words. Please experience the pleasure of drinking the milk from those cows and inspire others to do the same. ❀

— *Sarartha Darsini*. Translated by Bhanu Swami. Edited and published by Mahanidhi Swami. Vrindavan. 2004.