



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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THE PRIME AUTHORIZED MANTRA

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

Regarding the Radha-Shyama chanting that you have heard, it is not very good. In our temple, strictly Hare Krishna chanting should be given importance. This is no harm in this *mantra* you have heard, but it is not very important. There are many such common songs composed by common devotees out of sentiment. But our principle is to stick to the authorities and always remember that Hare Krishna is the prime authorized *mantra*. ❀
— Letter to Malati. 28 January 1969.

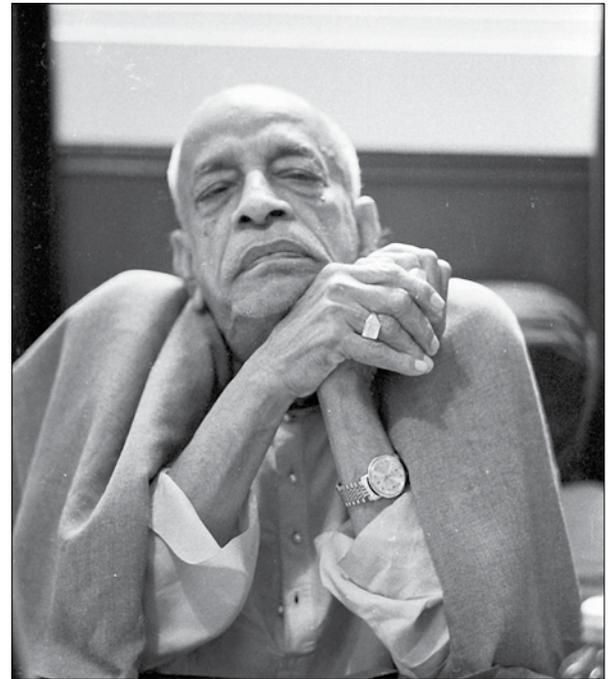
BALARAM'S RETURN TO VRINDAVAN PART TWO

Various aspects of Lord Balaram's return from Dwarka to Vrindavan are described in chapter sixty-five of the tenth canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, in Hari-varṇṣa, and by various Gaudiya ācāryas.

Meeting Nanda and Yasoda

Bathing Balaram with their words and with their tears that were like streams of nectar, Nanda and Yasoda said, "O son! You bring joy to the whole universe by your powers. May you and Krishna protect us!"

Vrajeshwari Yasoda asked, "O Bala! She who nurtures and cares for you and Krishna, your mother Rohini, is she keeping well in all respects? Alas! If only you could return here permanently and stay with me while Krishna stays there, I would



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

still experience the same unrestricted happiness as having both of you with me."

Mother Yasoda's words do not mean that she considered Balaram's association to be equivalent to that of both Krishna and Balaram. She is speaking in a loving way to welcome Baladev back to Vraja. Balaram's similar words to Yasoda in the next verse are also spoken in an intimate, loving way, and are not meant to be taken literally.

Balaram replied, "O *mātā*! If you stay always near me, then why would I feel the need for Mother Rohini!

And if you're not near me, then what joy will I get even in the company of Mother Rohini? Since you might be wondering why I did not return here to Vraja for so long, I should tell you that I spent a lot of time trying to get Krishna to come here to meet you again, and for that reason I was unable to come earlier.

Nandaraja said, "O son! After killing all the enemies and making the Yadus happy, how many enemies remain? If you two were to come to Vraja together and we could see you as previously, then we would be saved from death."

The night was spent discussing many topics which brought both joy and sorrow. As Balaram spoke with the residents of Vraja, his voice faltered because of his great love for them. The next morning, thinking of the benefit of Vraja, Balaram separately visited all the houses of Vraja to meet with his friends. Baladev also met privately with the elders of Vraja, their wives, and the younger cowherds. Balaram asked about everyone's welfare, and they also inquired from him about his health. The mind of a gentleman is one with his relatives.

Internally, the people of Vraja were deeply suffering without Krishna's association, and they

cared for the cows only to please Krishna. Seeing this, tears gushed from Balaram's eyes.

Balaram's friends told him, "We had faith that today or tomorrow you two would return. We have passed our time in that way only, maintaining our lives. Holding your feet, we pray that you bring Krishna from Dwarka and do not go anywhere else. Will you and Krishna again meet with any of us? Without the two of you we no longer have any attraction for herding the cows and performing pastimes in the forest as we did before you went to Mathura. Our lives and the cows' lives are now in a precarious position. Restore us so that we can live and play as we did before!"

Baladev spent half the day speaking politely with the elders and with affection to the juniors. While talking with his friends he would laugh and hold their hands. After that he went to Nanda's house, finished his meals, and went to the assembly, making everyone happy by telling them about Krishna's pastimes. Then, with Yasoda's permission, Balaram went to sleep.

Even if a blind man experiences happiness through all of his senses, he is still not completely happy because he cannot see. Similarly, even though Balarama once again played at the homes of the *gopālas*, he did not feel happiness within, for Krishna was the joy of the eyes both to him and the *gopas*. Distressed in separation from Krishna, Baladev simply looked at the cows in the morning and evening, but did not herd them.

The Gopis

In Dwarka, Krishna had instructed Balaram what to say to pacify the various people of Vraja. At that time, Krishna had not mentioned the *gopīs*. Noting Krishna's apparent disregard for them, with tears in his eyes, the son of Rohini said, "Do you not feel anything for the *gopīs* of Vraja? Have you forgotten them? Do you have no message for your beloveds whom we hear have almost died because of the pains of separation from you?"

Without saying a word, Krishna shyly looked at Uddhava's face. Understanding his Lord, clever Uddhava said, "I will inform him." Following Balaram when he went to his room, Uddhava described to him the condition of the *gopīs* as he had observed it during his own visit to Gokul, and he told Baladev about the intimate messages that Krishna had previously sent to his beloveds. Uddhava then returned to Krishna and

Drawing by Pierre Sonnerat, 1782. From Voyage aux Indes Orientales.



Lord Balaram

informed him, “When Balaram arrives in Vraja he will see the intensity of the *gopīs*’ madness. I have already seen this. No one can pacify them as well as Baladev can. He is the proper person to carry the message.” Writing down Krishna’s words, Uddhava penned a letter and passed it on to Balaram.

As instructed by Uddhava, Baladev sought out the *gopīs*, and on the third day he met with them. When the *gopīs* saw Balaram, they behaved very strangely. They loudly laughed and did not cover their heads as they would have normally done in the presence of their beloved’s elder brother. Krishna had promised that he would return to Vraja, but the *gopīs* were wondering if Krishna would quickly come back. When only Balaram returned and was respectful to them, in terrible grief they experienced the greatest pain, which they expressed as loud laughter. In this way, Baladev, like Uddhava, witnessed the madness of the *gopīs* caused by separation from their beloved Krishna.

The *gopīs* thought to themselves, “Uddhava was born in a far off place. He does not understand about us and Krishna. But Balaram, who has been living with Krishna since birth, understands everything.” When Baladev arrived, the *gopīs* smiled upon seeing him. One may ask how it is possible that the *gopīs*, who are naturally very shy, could smile in the presence of Balaram, who was a senior person? Srila Jiva Goswami says that the smiles of the *gopīs* indicated their divine madness which would lead them to ridicule Sri Krishna.

Mad Talks

The *gopīs* asked, “Is Krishna enjoying nicely in his capital city Dwarka?”

Baladev replied, “How can he be happy there without you?”

To which the *gopīs* said, “How can he who has gained the company of the beautiful women of the city suffer any unhappiness of separation from us village girls?”

The *gopīs* then asked Balaram, “Does Krishna ever remember his friends, his father, his mother or even his house? What is the use of our remembering him? Does he remember the service we did?” Then they began to speak again with doubtful minds, “Breaking their hearts, he has rejected those who gave up their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, nephews, and family members to worship him. But still our hearts keep following him.”

“But my dear beloved girlfriends of Krishna, since Krishna has such love for you, certainly he is always remembering you.”

“That is not true! We no longer trust his love! We have no other goal in life than him. But in spite of that, for no reason he suddenly abandoned us and went away.”

Balaram said, “Why didn’t you do something to prevent him from leaving?”

“He broke off our loving relationship like one breaks a blade of grass. Therefore what could we have done?”

“But since you have maintained your lives in his absence you must have also broken off your love for him.”

“Not at all,” the *gopīs* answered. “By the words that he repeatedly sent through messengers, “I will return to you,” he retied the bonds of love even after they were broken. He again took hold of our life airs just as they were about to leave our bodies and reestablished them.

“But if you are thinking that he is going to return, then why are you so unsettled in mind?”

“Since even now he has still not returned, so we have concluded that what he spoke must have been false.”

“Then why did you trust what he said back then?”

To which the *gopīs* replied, “He speaks in such a sweet way. *katham nu tādr̥ṣam sribhir na śraddhīyeta bhāṣitam* — How could any woman fail to trust his promises?” (*Bhāg.* 10.66.12) “We women of the forest are unintelligent, yet the women of the city are very smart. How can these intelligent city ladies trust the words of him whose heart is so unsteady and who is so ungrateful? It must be that they have faith in what he says because he speaks so wonderfully and because their lust has been aroused by his beautiful smiling glances.”

Some other *gopīs* who were agitated by extreme jealous love then spoke up. “What is the use of speaking about him? We should discuss some pleasant topic. If he can spend his time without us, why can’t we pass our time without him? There is also a difference between us and these other women. If these other women are together with their lovers they live, and if they are separated they die. But in our case we neither live nor die. This is the fate that providence has written on our foreheads. What remedy can be found for it?”

While speaking these words, the young *gopīs* of Vraja began recollecting Krishna's attractive smile, his style of walking, his enchanting speech, his sidelong glances, and loving embraces. Thus, even though they were in the presence of Balaram, all the *gopīs* began to cry.

Seeing the condition of the *gopīs*, compassionate Balaram became stunned like an immovable pillar. Tears streamed from his reddened eyes and for a moment he stood there, bewildered what to do. Finally, Balaram told them, "Alas! O *gopīs*, who are just like my sisters-in-law! It's true! Just as I have possessed special parental love for Krishna since childhood, I am similarly disposed towards all of you. With deep regrets, I request you not to burn my heart with the tall flames of the fire burning in your hearts."

Balaram then described various disturbances which had caused Krishna's delay in returning. He frightening them by saying that if Krishna were to hear about their pain he would permanently faint. In this way Balaram spoke various conciliatory words to pacify the *gopīs*.

Balaram said, "Deeply knowing Krishna's heart, I have come to Vraja. If he was actually indifferent to you, then I would not have been able to come here or to speak with you. If I felt that he had no interest in you, I would be unhappy with Krishna. While staying in Dwarka, my brother has given liberation to many enemies. Ah! I do not accept it when you say that he has

given you up. He is so controlled by your qualities that he sent me to you, although I am elder, to please you. Krishna's messages are most attractive. Hearing them, you will attain happiness. (To be continued.) ❀ — MD



Unknown artist

Sri Sri Gaura Gadadhar

PRANAMS TO GADADHAR PANDIT

*gadādharam ahaṁ vande mādhavācārya-nandanam
mahābhāva-svarūpaṁ śrī caitanyābhinnarūpiṇam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Sri Gadadhar Pandit, the son of Madhava Acharya. He is the personification of *mahābhāva*, the highest devotional ecstasy, and non-different from Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

*śrī hlādinī svarūpāya gaurāṅga su-ḥṛdāya ca
bhakti-śakti-pradānāya gadādhara namo 'stu te*

I offer my obeisances to Sri Gadadhar Pandit, the personification of Lord Krishna's pleasure potency, the bestower of devotional strength, and the near and dear associate of Lord Gaura. ❀

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das, from Dina Narottam Das (chota)'s *Śrī Manohara Bhajana Dipikā*. Published by Sri Sudhasindhu Das, Govardhan, Gaurabda 519, Bengali

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Phone: (0674) 2553250, 2557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

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