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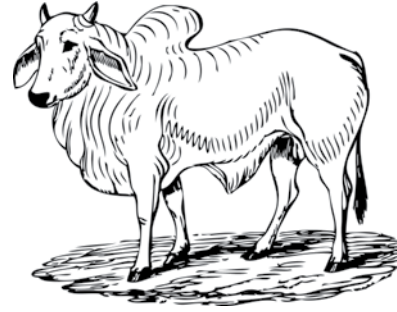
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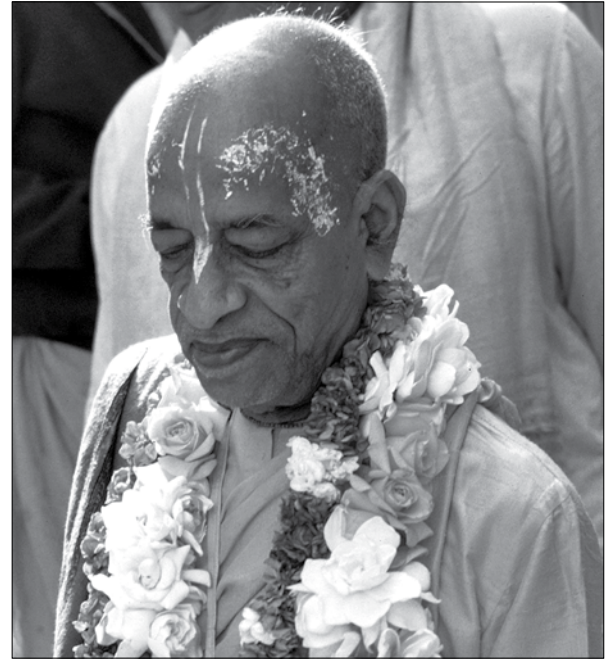


THE KING OF ALL EDUCATION

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

When Chaitanya Mahaprabhu began his preaching, his first disciple was Sanatan Goswami. He was a finance minister of Nawab Hussain Shah, but being attracted with Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's movement he retired from service and joined Lord Chaitanya. So when he came to Chaitanya for the first time, his inquiry was, "What is education?" Sanatan Goswami was highly educated. In those days, Persian language was being taught in India. Just like during British rule the English language was taught to us, during Pathan rule the Persian language was the state language. Besides that, Sanatan Goswami was a great scholar in Sanskrit as well. Still, he inquired, "What is education?"

Why did he inquire like that? He said, "People in general call me very educated, and I am also such a fool that I accept that I am educated." So the next question is, "Why do you think that you are not educated? You are a great scholar in Sanskrit. You are a great scholar in the Persian language. Why do you think that you are not educated?" He replied, "I am thinking myself to be not educated because I do not know what I am. I do not wish to suffer, but these material miseries are forced upon me. I do not know wherefrom I have come, where I have to go, and still



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

people, they think that I am very educated and they designate me as a great scholar, and I am satisfied, but I am such a fool that I do not know what I am."

Actually, this is the position of our present situation. We are very proud of our advancement of education. But if you inquire from various persons, "Who are you?" hardly any will answer what he actually is. Everyone is under the conception of this body. But we are not actually this body. This question

we have discussed many times. After passing this examination that, “I am not this body”, then one comes to real knowledge.

That is real knowledge, “Who am I?” That is the beginning. The knowledge about which Lord Krishna is imparting, giving instruction to Arjuna. He says, “This is *rāja-vidyā*.” *Rāja-vidyā* means to know oneself and act accordingly. If I do not know what I am, what is my position, then I am mistaken about my situation, and then all activities, whatever I am doing, are all mistaken. They are all illusion. Therefore this position, *rāja-vidyā*, means that one should know himself, what he is, and act accordingly. Simply by knowing, “I am not this material body,” is not sufficient. You must act accordingly, that you are not material. You are spiritual. That spiritual activity is called Krishna consciousness, and that is called *rāja-vidyā*, the king of all education. 🙏

— From a lecture in New York on 22 November 1966.

DO NOT DISCLOSE YOUR BHAJANA

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada*

The *ācāryas* have ordered: *āpana bhajana kathā nā kahibe yathā tathā* — one should not disclose ones confidential *bhajana* to anyone. If people like us openly sing about or describe Radha and Krishna’s most confidential loving pastimes, then will not such a thing create a nuisance in society?

As long as our material conceptions are prominent, we remain prideful in our worship. That pride is useless. Do I even have a tinge of attachment for the Lord? We should sincerely ask our inner selves this question. 🙏

— *Vakṛtāvālī Garland of Divine Discourses*. By His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada. Compiled by Sri Sundarananda Vidyavinode. Translated by Bhumipati Das. Produced and Published by Isvara Das.

EMBODIMENT OF KRISHNA’S MERCY

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

The Supreme Lord doesn’t directly shower mercy onto anyone. He showers mercy through his dear devotees. Therefore guru and *vaiṣṇavas* are known as *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā-śrī-mūrti* — the embodiment of Krishna’s mercy. If the mercy of Krishna assumes a body, that is *sādhu*, that is gurudeva. Another name is *sat-anugraha*. *Sat* means *vaiṣṇava*, *sādhu*, and *sat-anugraha* means the mercy and favor of the *vaiṣṇava*. By the mercy and

favor of a *vaiṣṇava* one can approach one can get the Supreme Lord. Therefore a *vaiṣṇava* is known as *sat-anugraha*. If someone wants to get the mercy of the Supreme Lord he must render service to the Lord’s dear devotee, *vaiṣṇava*. There is no other way.

In the eleventh canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, Krishna says to Uddhava, “O Uddhava, serve my dear devotee with full faith, pleasure, love and affection. The service rendered to my dear devotee is superior to service rendered directly to me.”

In *Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛta* (2.6.6), Rupa Goswami has quoted *Ādi Purāṇa*:

*ye me bhakta-janāḥ pārtha na me bhaktāś ca te janāḥ
mad-bhaktānām ca ye bhaktās te me bhakta-tamā matāḥ*

Lord Krishna told Arjuna, “Those who are my direct devotees are actually not my devotees, but those who are the devotees of my servants are factually my topmost devotees.”

In the eleventh canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.19.21) Krishna says to Uddhava:

*ādarāḥ paricaryāyām sarvāṅgair abhivandanam
mad-bhakta-pūjābhynchikā sarva-bhūteṣu man-matiḥ
mad-artheṣv aṅga-ceṣṭā ca vacasā mad-guṇeraṇam
mayy arpaṇam ca manasaḥ sarva-kāma-vivarjanam*

“My devotees take great care and respect in rendering me service. They offer obeisances to me with all their bodily limbs. They worship my devotee and see all living entities as related to me. For me they engage the entire energy of their body. They engage their power of speech in the glorification of my qualities and form. They also dedicate their mind unto me and try to give up all kinds of material desires. Thus are my devotees characterized. So, service and worship offered to such devotees is *mad-bhakta-pūjābhynchikā*, greater worship, superior to worship offered directly to me.”

Lord Shiva’s statement to Goddess Durga is also there in *Padma Purāṇa*:

*ārādhanaṅ sarveṣām viṣṇor ārādhanaṅ param
tasmāt paratarāṅ devi tadīyānām samarcanam*

“My dear Devi, although the Vedas recommend worship of demigods, the worship of Lord Vishnu is topmost. However, above the worship of Lord Vishnu is the rendering of service to *vaiṣṇavas*, who are related to Lord Vishnu. This is a superior type of worship.”

In *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Vrindavan Das Thakur has quoted the Supreme Lord:

“āmāra bhaktera pūjā—āmā haite baḍa”
sei prabhu vede-bhāgavate kailā daḍha

“The worship offered to my devotee is superior to direct worship of me.”

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu himself set the example of this.

How can one get *prema-bhakti*? One must receive it from someone who can give it — by associating with *premi-bhaktas*, rendering service to them and pleasing them. No other means is there. Therefore it is said that to offer worship, to glorify such *vaiṣṇavas*, to utter their name, to describe their fame and qualities, to render service to such *vaiṣṇavas*, to take the dust from their lotus feet, to accept the foot-washing water of such *vaiṣṇavas*, and to taste the remnants of such *vaiṣṇavas* — these are all very powerful.

In his *Prārthanā* (5.35), Srila Narottam Das Thakur has sung in this respect:

vaiṣṇavera pada-dhūli tāhe mora snāna-keli
tarpaṇa mora vaiṣṇavera nāma
... *vaiṣṇavera ucchiṣṭa tāhe mora mana-niṣṭha*
vaiṣṇavera nāmete ullāsa

The dust from the lotus feet of a *vaiṣṇava* is so purifying and powerful. It is more powerful and purifying than Ganges water. So, I shower with that dust. When Brahmins enter into the Ganges or some other river, they chant mantras. That is *tarpaṇa*. Narottam Das Thakur sings, *tarpaṇa mora vaiṣṇavera nāma* — “I will chant the name of a *vaiṣṇava*. That is my *tarpaṇa* mantra.” And, *vaiṣṇavera ucchiṣṭa tāhe mora mana-niṣṭha*, *vaiṣṇavera nāmete ullāsa* — “I am very greedy to have the remnants of a *vaiṣṇava*. If I get I become so blissful and ecstatic.”

Quoting *Padma Purāṇa* in his *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (*anuccheda* 269), Srila Jiva Goswami has given the statement of the Supreme Lord:

teṣāṃ pūjādikaṃ gandha-dhūpādyaiḥ kriyate naraiḥ
tena prītiṃ parāṃ yāmi na tathā mama pūjanāt

“I become very pleased with those persons who offer worship to my dear devotees with incense, lamps, and paraphernalia. I am not so pleased if they directly offer such worship to me.”

In *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (10.113), Srila Sanatan Goswami has quoted:

ye bhajanti jagad-yonim vāsudevaṃ sanātanam
na tebhya vidyate tīrtham adhikaṃ rāja-sattama



Unknown artist

Vaiṣṇavas, those who are engaged in offering worship to Lord Hari, are greater *tīrthas*, greater holy places. Therefore, to offer worship to such *vaiṣṇavas* is the superior type of worship. To live with such *vaiṣṇavas* means to live in a holy place, *tīrtha*. Where such *vaiṣṇavas* take their bath, that place becomes a great *tīrtha*, a great holy place, because simply by the touch of a *vaiṣṇava* immediately all sinful reactions are completely destroyed. ❀

— From a class in Bhubaneswar on 5 April 1993.

EXPLAINING THE INEXPLICABLE

From Srila Rupa Goswami's *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* (5.508-516)

A frequently asked question is, “How did millions of gopīs assemble in the same limited space of Vrindavan at the time of the *rāsa-līlā*?” Srila Rupa Goswami answers:

sa tu māthura-bhū-rūpaḥ paricchanno 'py athādbhutaḥ
sphāraḥ saṅkucitaś ca syāt kṛṣṇa-līlānusārataḥ

atraivājāṅḍamālāpi paryāptim upagacchati
vṛndavana-pratike 'pi yānubhūtaiva vedhasā

ity ato rāsa-līlāyāṃ puline tatra yāmune
pramadāśata-kotyo 'pi mamūr yat tat kim adbhutam

Unknown artist. Circa early 1900's



svaiḥ svair līlā-parikarair janair drśyāni nāparaiḥ
tat-tal-līlādy-avasare prādurbhāvocitāni hi
āścaryam ekadaikatra vartamānāny api dhruvam
parasparam asaṁprakṛta-svarūpāny eva sarvathā

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kṛṣṇa-bālyādi-līlābhir bhūṣitāni samantataḥ
śaila-goṣṭha-vanādīnām santi rūpāny anekāśaḥ

līlādhyo 'pi pradeśo 'sya kadācit kila kaiścana
śūnya evekṣate drṣṭi-yogyair apy aparair api

ataḥ prabhoḥ priyānām ca dhāmnāś ca samayasya ca
avicintya-prabhāvatvād atra kiṁ ca na durghaṭam

evam eva dvārakāyām jñeyam sarvaṁ vicakṣaṇaiḥ

The *mathurā-maṇḍala* appearing on earth is extraordinarily wonderful. It expands and contracts according to the need of Krishna's pastimes. As was experienced by Lord Brahma at a particular place in Vrindavan, *mathurā-maṇḍala* is large enough to accommodate unlimited universes. Therefore, what is astonishing if a hundred million *gopīs* gathered at that place for the *rāsa-līlā*?

Various pastime places there are visible only to the participants in particular pastimes of *kṛṣṇa-līlā* and not to others. These various places (like mountains, trees, etc.) become manifest during appropriate times.

What is surprising is that at the same place, at the same time, completely different sets of mountains, forests, etc., decorated with the various pastimes of Krishna, are simultaneously present.

To the other extreme, there are people who are qualified for *kṛṣṇa-darśana* and there are those who are not qualified. Yet both types of individuals sometimes see all these places as devoid of Krishna, even though Krishna is always present there.

The conclusion is that the associates, places, and times associated with the Lord are all equipped with an inexplicable potency not within the grasp of ordinary imagination. Therefore nothing is impossible for them. The opinion of learned souls is that this is also the case with Dwaraka. 🙏

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.com)

