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LONGING FOR VRINDAVAN

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

At present I am anxious to return to Vrindavan. Here I stay in a palatial building. There are always four of them ready to serve me, and there is no want of *prasāda*, lodging, or any care. However, I still feel that my broken *kutira* without any opulence, bathing in the Yamuna, *darśana* of the temples, and the ripped cotton quilt of the *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* are so very sweet. Being so far

from Vrindavan I am realizing its *māhātmya* (greatness). Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "As Krishna is to be worshiped, so is Vrindavan." Now I am somewhat realizing that. As Krishna is sweet, Vrindavan is similarly sweet. You bless me so that I can return to Vrindavan. I am old now. I am not afraid to die, but if my life air passes away in the lotus dust of the *vaiṣṇavas* in Vrindavan then that would be very blissful. As soon as I am well I want to return to Vrindavan. Then, if I feel better I will return here and preach. The foundation of preaching has become good here. In the future, even if I do not come, any sincere *vaiṣṇava* can come and do *hari-kīrtana* here. 🙏

— Letter to Narayana Maharaja. 14 July 1967.

ILLUSORY HARI-BHAJANA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

I have read your long letter. I have heard that your son and his mother have gone to her parents' house for the occasion of your brother-in-law's marriage.

You should understand that the affection for a son and other relatives by an attached householder devotee will certainly disturb his worship of Hari. The mentalities

of an attached householder devotee and the residents of the *maṭha*, where there is only *hari-sevā*, are two separate things. Under illusion, when family life is taken as service to Hari, an attempt is made to transform one's home into a *maṭha*. Service to Hari is never possible while being attached to temporary illusory objects, such as a son. Once one becomes attached to them, affection for one's son, etc., becomes one's only object of worship.

“Who is the son of whom?” Countless sons are present everywhere all over the world. Why then is the paternal affection for a particular son devouring you? I can't understand. If after many births, even in the liberated stage, the adverse association of a son, native land, house, and mother appears to be favorable for devotional service, then it is to be understood that the actual form of pure *hari-bhajana* has been forgotten.

Many dangerous things, like the rope of affection for sons and the happiness of enjoying conjugal life with a wife, take us away from the worship of Lord Hari forever. Due to the influence of bad association, one mistakes household topics to be *hari-kathā*. Such an unwanted thing has happened! It is better to hear *śāstra* and associate with devotees.

Know that I have become very sad after reading your letter. You need to hear *hari-kathā* constantly. Why did you become so materially attached to your wife, son, house, and wealth rather than seeing them in relation to Lord Krishna? I pray that Lord Krishna will give you better intelligence than this. 🙏

— From *Patrāmṛta* - Nectar from the Letters (1.29). Touchstone Media. Kolkata. 2012.

MADHUMANGAL GIVES RADHA TO KRISHNA

Adapted from act six of

Srila Rupa Goswami's Śrī Vidagdha-mādhava

When Krishna was once searching for Radharani, who was hiding in the forest, his dear friend Madhumangal emphatically declared, “Friend, I have your Radha.”

Krishna became full of joy and said, “My friend! I hope you're not lying to me like that Lalita.”

Madhumangal replied, “On the strength of the *gāyatrī* mantra I speak the truth.”

Trusting Madhumangal, Krishna said, “Friend, where is she? Show her to me.”

Madhumangal answered, “I shall place her in your hand, but first you must give me a reward.”

Hearing the words of Madhu, Krishna respectfully put a garland of *mālātī* flowers around his neck. Madhumangal

then said, “Now you may take her!” and he gave Krishna a leaf on which the word “Radha” was written.

Krishna smiled and said, *sakhe, satyam anenāpi bhavad-arpitena tarpito 'smi* — “Oh friend, I am truly pleased by your gift. With great feeling Krishna then said:

*kramāt kaksām akṣṇoḥ parisara-bhuvanā vā śravaṇayor
manāg adhyārūḍhaṁ prañayi-janānām akṣara-padam
kam apy antas-toṣaṁ vitarad avalambād anupadam
nisargād viśveṣāṁ hṛdaya-padavim utsukayati*

“When the footsteps of the syllables of the name of a beloved person climb up and walk around the open spaces of one's eyes or ears they act as a constant source of reassuring support for all the lovers of the world, while giving immense satisfaction at every step. Such syllables also increase the eagerness of the heart.” 🙏

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— Srila Rupa Goswami. *Vidagdha-mādhava nāṭakam*. P. 309. Mahesh Library. Kolkata. 1996.

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INSTRUCTIONS TO THE MIND

Srila Narottam Das Thakur's Prema-bhakti-candrikā

*saṁsāra bātojāre kāma-phāṁse bāndhi māre
phūkāra karaha haridāsa
karaha bhakata-saṅga prema-kathā-rasa-raṅga
tabe haya vipada vināśa*



Nāma-tattva

DELIGHTING IN HARINAM

Padma Purāṇa uttara-khaṇḍa, 254.23

*rakārādīni nāmāni śṛṇvato mama pārvati
manaḥ prasannatām yāti rāma-nāmābhīṣaṅkayā*

[Lord Shiva said], “O Parvati! As soon as I hear a name beginning with the syllable ‘Ra’ my mind starts taking delight in the possibility that a person may now be about to utter the name — Rama.”

— Translated from *Padma-purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍam and Kriyā-yoga-sāra-khaṇḍam*. Gurumandal Series No. XVIII. Printed by Avadh Kishor Singh. Gopal Printing Works. 1946 A.D.





Drawing by Anna Zaitseva

Madhumangal gives Radha to Krishna

The highway robbers of material existence are killing you by strangling you with ropes of lust. Cry out to the eternal servants of Lord Hari. Associate always with devotees, engaging with them in the joys of the mellows of loving *hari-kathā*. Only then will all obstacles be destroyed.

*strī-pūtra bālaka kata mari jāra śata śata
āpanāke hao sābadhāna
mūñi se viṣaye hata nā bhajinū hari-pada
mora āra nāhi paritrāṇa*

Be cautious and remember that hundreds of wives and children have been born and died. I am frustrated with material sense objects and have not worshiped the lotus feet of Hari. Therefore, I have no protection or deliverance.

PURPORT by Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur: O mind, hundreds of wives and children who have been born and died are binding your neck with the ropes of lusty desires since time immemorial! Call out to the devotees of Krishna immediately and convey your pathetic condition, because only they are able to deliver you! 🙏

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LESSONS FROM THE YAMALA ARJUNA TREES

Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode

Krishna-saṁhitā, chapter 4 texts 17-20

*dr̥ṣṭvāca-bāla-cāpalam gopī sūllā-sarūpiṇī
bandhanāya manaś cakre rajjvā kṛṣṇasya sā vrthā*

After seeing Krishna's childish mischief in the form of stealing the heart [in the form of butter], Yashoda, the form of joyfulness, labored in vain to bind Krishna with ropes.

*na yasya parimāṇam vai tasyaiva bandhanam kila
kevalam prema-sūtreṇa cakāra nanda-gehinī*

He who has no material form was bound by Yashoda with only a thread of love. One cannot attain the perfection of binding Krishna with material ropes.

*bāla-kṛīḍā-prasaṅgena kṛṣṇasya bandha-chedanam
abhavad vārṣa bhāvāt tu nimeṣād deva-putrayoḥ*

In the course of Krishna's childhood pastimes, the two sons of Kuvera were easily delivered from their forms as trees.

*anena darśitam sādhu-saṅgasya phalam uttamam
devopi jaḍatām yāti kukarma-nirato yadi*



Unknown artist

We can understand two instructions from the deliverance of the Yamala Arjuna trees. The first is that by a moment's association with a devotee, the living entity is freed from bondage. Secondly, by the association of non-devotees, even the demigods become materialistic and engage in sinful activities. 🙏

— Śrī Kṛṣṇa-saṁhitā, pages 56-57. Translated by Bhumipati Das, edited by Pundarik Vidyandhi Das. Vrajraj Press. 1998. Vrindavan.

THE WELL-WISHER OF THE ARJUNA TREES

From Mahakavi Dhundhiraja Shastri's Bhāgavata-vyañjanam

The Bhāgavata-vyañjanam is a book containing 456 verses composed in various meters by Mahakavi Dhundhiraj Shastri. This book describes the various pastimes of Lord Krishna from a sweet, poetic point of view. The poet was born around 1809 A.D. and his ancestors served the Peshwa rulers of Maharashtra. The poet was part of the paṇḍita-sabhā (assembly of pundits) at Chitrakut, Madhya Pradesh in India and was profusely learned in Sanskrit grammar, Vedānta, Purāṇas, Rāmāyaṇa and other Vedic literature.

If devotees are asked, “Who bestowed the greatest favor on the two Arjuna trees?” some may say, “Lord Damodara”, whereas others may say “Narada Muni”. Mahakavi Dhundhiraj Shastri has his own answer:

उपकृतं यमलार्जुनयोर्ध्रुवं सिततनूजनुषैव यशोदया ।
विदितबन्धनपीड इवैष तौ मुनिविनिग्रहतो यदमूमुचत् ॥

upakṛtaṁ yamalārjunayor dhruvaṁ
sita-tanū-januṣaiva yaśodayā
vidita-bandhana-pīḍa ivaiṣa tau
muni-vinigrahato yad amūmucat

[For me] it is certain that the greatest favor on the twin Arjuna trees was bestowed by the radiant-bodied Mother Yashoda. [It is she who tied Krishna to the mortar, and by this] she made him understand the pain of bondage, and as a result of understanding this pain, the Lord immediately delivered the two trees from the pain of bondage caused by the curse of the sage Narada. 🙏

— HPD. Based on Bhāgavatam-vyañjanam (Chapter 2, Verse 25) from the edition published by Govind Jaikrishna Kale. Nagpur. 1965 A.D.

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