

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

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śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya
by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Vivṛti

by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda

translation and additional commentary
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja



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Preface

[translated from the Hindi edition]

Not only in Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature, but in the Śruti, Smṛti, Purāṇas and the entirety of Indian literature, Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, issued from the divine mouth of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, shines as a supremely radiant, transcendental jewel. It is a source of boundless happiness to me that today, by the inspiration and causeless mercy of my most revered spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, this Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka is presented to the reading audience in the Hindi language.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation who delivers the fallen conditioned souls in the age of Kali, is directly the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, overwhelmed with an intense desire to relish a particular sentiment, assumed the heartfelt ecstatic mood and bodily complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the embodiment of His own pleasure potency (*hlādinī-śakti*), and bestowed upon the entire world the gifts of His holy name and divine love for Him. By His deep scholarship, matchless renunciation, humility, supremely radiant spotless character and pre-eminent transcendental devotional sentiment, He not only astounded renowned scholars, but also very easily attracted ordinary religionists and elevated devotees to the religion of unalloyed spiritual love.

Due to the distinctive and magnanimous characteristics, not only of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, but of His followers as well, from Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Rāya Rāmānanda and the Six Gosvāmīs up to present day *ācāryas* and devotees, the

waves of devotion unto the Supreme Lord (*bhagavad-bhakti*) have spread to every town and village of the world. Everywhere, the sound of the congregational chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy names (*harināma-saṅkīrtana*) is resounding, accompanied by *mṛdaṅga* and *karatālas*.

It is truly a source of great honour and happiness for us that today the extensive Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literatures are appearing in many other major languages and Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism is being propagated around the world. Nevertheless, it is a matter of great astonishment that, in spite of being unlimitedly qualified, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu did not personally write any books like spiritual teachers who propounded other opinions. Instead, He inspired His followers to write books. Only eight verses are famous as His own composition. Some other verses have been attributed to Him, but up till now this has not been substantiated.

This *Śikṣāṣṭaka* is the very essence of all the Vedas. Although its Sanskrit language is quite simple, its import is so profound that even if one studies it throughout his life, his study will not come to an end. Each time one reads and deliberates on this subject, newer and newer meanings come to light. Therefore it remains eternally fresh. This *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka* is a veritable necklace for all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the modern age and author of many sacred texts expounding the glories of *bhakti*, has again initiated the flow of the mighty Ganges-like river of *bhakti*, inundating the entire world in the flood of love of God (*kṛṣṇa-prema*). He has written a soul-stirring commentary to these eight verses, filled with many important philosophical conclusions. This commentary is famous by the name of *Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya*, the commentary that brings delight to the devotees. To understand the hidden truths of the original

verses without careful study of this commentary is not only difficult, but impossible. Concealed in these verses is the paramount ecstatic sentiment (*bhāva*) of the full-blown, spiritually radiant mellow of amorous love (*ujjvala-prema-rasa*, or *śṛṅgāra-rasa*) situated within the heart of the incarnation of divine love, Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari. Beholding this incomparable *bhāva* with the help of this captivating commentary, one is sure to be astonished at every step. Furthermore, one's heart becomes deeply overwhelmed with transcendental pleasure, and unprecedented faith and devotional sentiment develop towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name.

This subject is most important and its greatness is unlimited. Moreover, the commentator has illuminated this subject in summary yet in a very significant manner. Therefore to write more is like holding a lamp to illuminate the sun.

The truths of *sambandha* (knowledge relevant to the development of one's relationship with the Lord), *abhidheya* (the process of devotional life) and *prayojana* (the ultimate goal of one's devotion) are very nicely included in Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka. Although instructions regarding *abhidheya* are inherent within all eight verses, Verses One through Five deal with devotion in the stage of practice (*sādhana-bhakti*), Verses Six and Seven deal with devotion on the level of ecstatic emotion (*bhāva-bhakti*), and Verses Seven and Eight describe devotion performed on the platform of divine love (*prema-bhakti*).

In Verses Seven and Eight, in particular, is found a pre-eminent example of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's deep emotional anguish due to love in separation (*vipralambha-prema-vaicittya*), instigated by Her own *adhīrūḍha-mahābhāva*. [*Prema-vaicittya* refers to a state in which even in the beloved's presence, the lover, out of intense love, fails to perceive the presence of the beloved and is thus aggrieved with feelings of separation.]

Jagad-guru nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, in the year 1929, edited and published *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka* in the Bengali language within a book entitled *Sādhana-paṭha*. It included the *Sanmodana-bhāṣya* and songs composed by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and a short commentary of his own known simply as *Vivṛti* (commentary). However, its non-availability in Hindi was acutely felt by me. It was the desire of my most revered spiritual master that these Bengali devotional literatures of unparalleled benefit be published in Hindi. He kindly inspired me to fulfil this purpose.

Lastly, I am especially obliged to the present day head and *ācārya* of the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, *parivrājakācārya Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja*. He is a very influential *ācārya*, deeply immersed in spiritual knowledge. Moreover, he is an object of great affection of our spiritual master. At this time, he himself is engaged in preparing and editing Gauḍīya devotional literature in the Bengali language. This edition is being published by his special enthusiasm and inspiration. May he kindly deliver this precious *Śikṣāṣṭaka* into the lotus hands of our revered *śrī gurudeva* and thus fulfil his innermost desire. This is our fervent prayer at his respected feet.

I have complete faith that this book will be respectfully received by faithful *sādhakas* possessed of yearning for *bhakti* and by learned circles as well. By studying this book, such persons may enter into the spotless religion of divine love (*prema-dharma*) propagated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This is our desire.

Being aggrieved at the distress of others, may Śrī Śācinandana Gaurahari and our most revered spiritual master, who is the direct embodiment of the Lord's mercy, be pleased

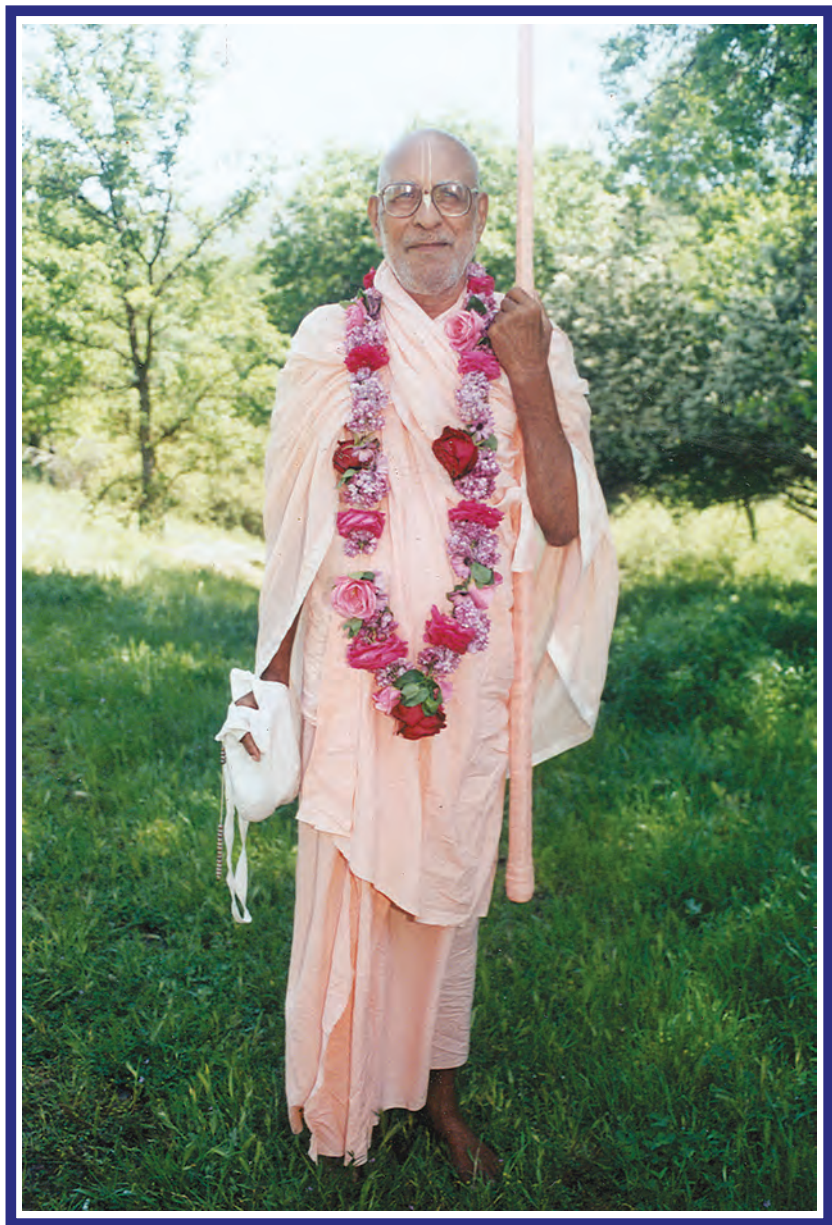
PREFACE

and bestow upon us eligibility to serve their inner heart's desire – this is our sole heartfelt prayer at their lotus feet.

*An aspirant for a particle of mercy
of śrī guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,*

Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa

Gaura-pūrṇimā, the divine appearance day
of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu
17th March, 1984
Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha
Mathurā, Uttar Pradesh, India



nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda
ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇuṇpāda
ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA VĀMANA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



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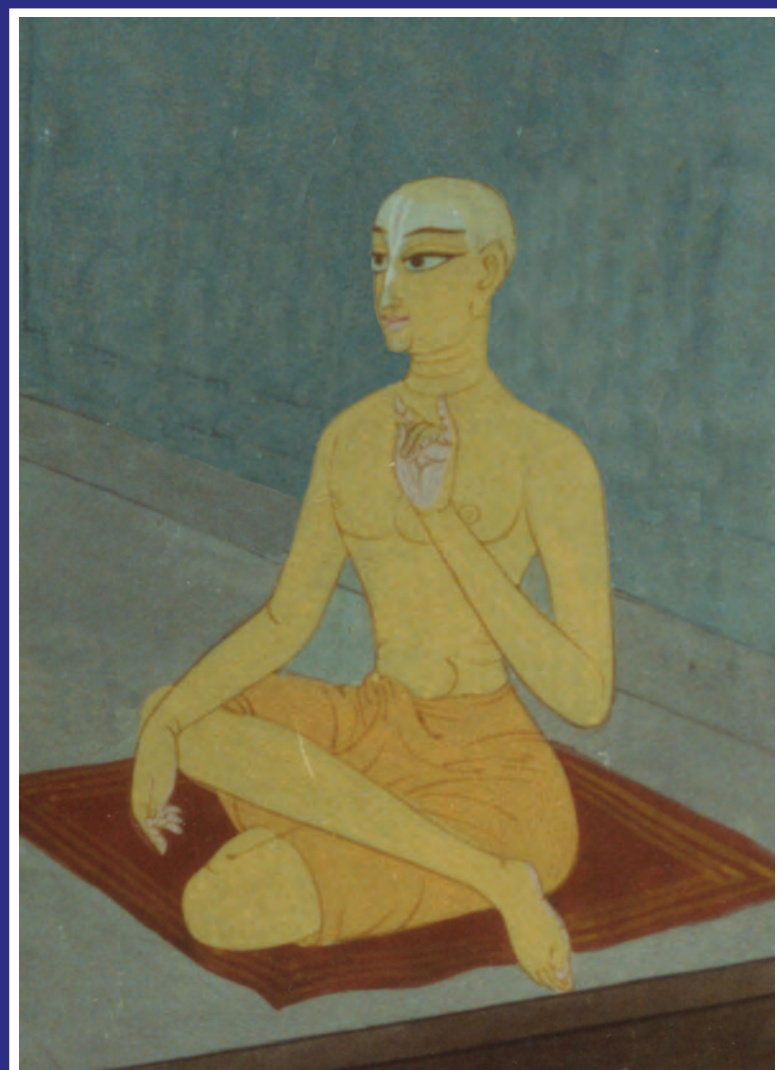
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nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda
ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ PRABHUPĀDA



ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA



ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU

Introduction

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, adorned with the inner sentiment and bodily splendour of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, appeared in this world in order to taste the ecstatic moods of Her love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Simultaneously, He distributed the holy name of Kṛṣṇa profusely for the deliverance of the fallen conditioned souls of the age of Kali. But which holy name did He distribute?

The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* already existed prior to the appearance of Mahāprabhu. The principles of Vaiṣṇavism were established and spread all over India by renowned preceptors such as Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Madhvācārya, Śrī Nimbāditya, Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī and others. But prior to the advent of Śrī Gaurāṅga, the practices of *bhakti* and even the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* were directed towards the attainment of Vaikuṅṭha.

The holy name can deliver to the performer whatever he may desire. But unless one is infused with the highest aspiration, its full potential will not be realised. Therefore Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's unique contribution was that He revealed the confidential loving moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and thus inspired the living entities to aspire for the highest attainment – the spontaneous loving service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana. This is indicated in the following verses from Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 4.15–16):

*prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādana
rāga-mārga-bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa*

*rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa parama-karuṇa
ei dui hetu haite icchāra udgama*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire to appear was born from two principal causes: He wanted to taste the sweet essence of the liquid mellows of divine love (*prema-rasa*), and He wanted to propagate *bhakti* in the world on the platform of spontaneous attraction (*rāga-mārga*). Thus He is known as *rasika-śekhara*, the topmost relisher of transcendental mellows, and as *parama-karuṇa*, the most merciful of all.

The chanting of the holy name must be accompanied by *sambandha-jñāna*, knowledge relevant to the development of one's relationship with the Lord. In the eight verses known as *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has expressed the essence of His teachings. If we chant according to the method outlined in these verses, we are assured of attaining that most precious and confidential gift which Śrī Gaurāṅga came to distribute.

The teachings of Śrī Gaurasundara, which appear in condensed form in the *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, have been expanded upon elaborately in the writings of His followers like Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura, Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and others.

It was the intention of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His confidential associates that His present-day followers should have access to all these literatures in order to firmly implant in their hearts the desire to follow in the footsteps of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal associates in Vraja. These books enunciate the exact method by which this goal may be attained.

With this in mind, our exalted Śrīla Gurudeva, *om viṣṇuṇṇāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, has inspired the presentation of this edition of *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka* in the English language. By studying its contents carefully, one can easily gain access to the wealth of literature left by the Gosvāmīs. The deep and confidential mysteries of *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*

have been revealed in this volume through the commentaries of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. Without their insights, we would have no access to the truths that are contained in these verses. Yet even in revealing these secrets, they have inserted in select places still other secrets to be discovered by those who have acquired the eyes to see. The insights of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja have been invaluable in bringing out all the subtleties of meaning in these commentaries. The result is an astonishingly clear presentation of very deep and esoteric truths. Śrīla Gurudeva has illuminated selected points of this book with his own comments. These give us a perception of topics that would otherwise have to remain beyond our vision. They have been identified in the book simply as “Comment”. The end of such comments are indicated by a lotus flower symbol, at which point the text returns to the translation of the commentaries.

In his commentary, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura often quotes *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. In some places we have added the comments of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī on those verses to clarify certain philosophical points. The commentary on Verse Seven has been greatly enlarged from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura’s original edition by adding verses and commentary from *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. The Ṭhākura’s commentary on Verse Seven is drawn from Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s *Pṛiti-sandarbhā* (*Anuccheda* 84), which describes the development of *pṛiti* from *rati* to *mahābhāva*. The verses and commentary that have been added significantly help the reader to understand each of the stages in this development.

In his ongoing presentation of Vaiṣṇava literature in the English language, Śrīla Gurudeva is quick to mention that he is merely following in the footsteps of his dear friend and

instructing spiritual master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda*. By publishing *Teachings of Lord Caitanya* and the entire *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in English, Śrīla Prabhupāda served as the great pioneer who broadcast the glories of Śrīman Mahāprabhu around the entire world. For this immense act of munificence the living entities of this world will remain forever in his debt.

This is the third English edition of *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*, translated directly from Śrīla Gurudeva's Hindi edition. Although the basic translation is the same as the first two editions, the language has been improved in some places to make the subject matter easier to understand. We have also endeavoured to minimise the use of Sanskrit terminology, thereby making the book accessible to a broader audience. Additionally, the typography has been brought up to professional standards. Grateful acknowledgment is extended to Lavaṅga-latā dāsī for copy-editing this edition, to Śānti dāsī and Giridhārī dāsa for proofreading the final manuscript, to Śrīpāda Bhaktivedānta Bhāgavata Mahārāja, Atula-kṛṣṇa dāsa and Ananta-kṛṣṇa dāsa for checking the Sanskrit, to Kṛṣṇa-prema dāsa for designing the new cover and to Subala-sakhā dāsa for providing the new photograph of Śrīla Gurudeva. On behalf of the many devotees serving in Gauḍīya Vedānta Publications, we pray that Śrīla Gurudeva will be pleased with this humble attempt.

*An aspirant for the service of the
lotus feet of śrī guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,
Prema-vilāsa dāsa*

Śrī Rādhāṣṭami, the divine appearance day
of Śrīmatī Rādhikā
4th September, 2003
Gopīnātha-bhavana, Śrī Vṛndāvana

Prayers to Lord Caitanya

*anarṇpita-carim̐ cirāt karuṇayāvatirṇaḥ kalau
samarṇpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ ṇurata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitah
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śaci-nandanah*

May Śrī Śacinandana Gaurahari, resplendent with the radiance of molten gold (having adopted the bodily splendour of Śrīmatī Rādhikā), ever manifest Himself within your hearts. He has descended in the age of Kali out of His causeless mercy to bestow upon the world that which had not been given for a long time, the most confidential wealth of devotion unto Him, the highest and most radiant mellow of amorous love.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, *Vidagdha-mādhava-nāṭaka* (1.2),
Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi-lilā 1.4)

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād
ekātmanāv aṇi bhuvī ṇurā deha-bhedam̐ gatau tau
cāitanyākhyam̐ prakṇtam̐ adhunā tad-dvayam̐ caikyam̐ āṇṇam̐
rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam̐ naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūṇam*

Although Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one in identity, They perpetually exist in two forms because of the eternality of the principle of exchanging amorous pastimes. This is brought about by the pleasure aspect (*hlādinī*) of the internal potency, which exhibits itself in the form of the transformation of Their love. At this time these two personalities have manifested as one person in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I offer my respectful obeisances unto Him who has assumed the form of Lord Gaura, but who is the very same Lord Kṛṣṇa, covered with the sentiment and bodily splendour of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, *Kaḍaca*,
Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi-lilā 1.5)

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

Verse One

What is the most excellent form of sādhana?

चेतोदर्पणमार्जनं भव-महादावाग्नि-निर्वापणं
श्रेयः-कैरवचन्द्रिकावितरणं विद्यावधू-जीवनम् ।
आनन्दाम्बुधिवर्धनं प्रतिपदं पूर्णामृतास्वादनं
सर्वात्मस्नपनं परं विजयते श्रीकृष्ण-सङ्कीर्तनम् ॥१॥

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam
śreyaḥ-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam
sarvātma-snaṇam param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*

Anvaya

param – only, or supreme; *vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam* – may the chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s holy names be especially victorious; *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam* – which cleanses the mirror of the heart; *nirvāpaṇam* – which extinguishes; *mahā-dāvāgni* – the blazing forest fire; *bhava* – of material existence; *candrikā-vitarāṇam* – which spreads the moonlight of spiritual ecstasy; *śreyaḥ-kairava* – bringing to bloom the living entity’s white lotus of good fortune; *vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam* – which is the life and soul in the form of transcendental knowledge, like a wife; *ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam* – which expands the ocean of transcendental bliss; *prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam* – which enables one to taste complete nectar at every step; *sarvātma-snaṇam* – and which cleanses and cools the self, one’s nature, one’s determination, and the body both inside and out, by a thorough bath.

Translation

Let there be supreme victory for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, which cleanses the mirror of the heart and completely extinguishes the blazing forest fire of material existence. *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* diffuses the soothing moon rays of spiritual ecstasy (*bhāva*) that cause the living entity's white lotus of good fortune to bloom. The holy name is the life and soul of transcendental knowledge, which is here compared to a wife. It continuously expands the ocean of transcendental bliss, enabling one to taste complete nectar at every step. The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa thoroughly cleanses and cools the self, one's nature and one's determination, as well as the body, both internally and externally.

Maṅgalācaraṇa

In spite of being very low and insignificant, and thoroughly incompetent, I am engaged in translating this *Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya* by the mercy of my most revered spiritual master, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja*; Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the eternal associate of Śrī Gaurasundara and writer of the *Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya*; and the original author of *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation who delivers the fallen conditioned souls of Kali-yuga, and who is the very self-same personality known as Śrī Nandanānanda. Holding in my heart their lotus feet, which grant all desires, I am engaged in this work in order to fulfil their inner hearts' longing.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

*pañca-tattvānvitāṁ nityāṁ
praṇīpatya mahāprabhuṁ
nāmnā sanmodanaṁ śikṣā-
ṣṭaka-bhāṣyaṁ praṇīyate*

Offering my humble obeisances at the lotus feet of the original Supreme Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the bestower of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa and love for Him, and who is eternally accompanied by His four primary associates in the *pañca-tattva*, I am writing a commentary named *Śrī Sanmodana* on *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*, which issued from the lotus mouth of the Lord.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.2.34) it is said:

*bhagavān brahma kārtsnyena
trir anvikṣya maṇiṣayā
tad adhyavasyat kūṭa-stho
ratir ātmany ato bhavet*

How can there be any benefit for the living entities who are oblivious to the Lord, having fallen into the cycle of repeated birth and death in material existence? Preoccupied with this question, Śrī Brahmā, who knows the fundamental truths regarding the Lord, thought long to find its solution. With resolute attention, he scrutinised all the Vedas three times, and by his intelligence he concluded that the topmost perfection of religion is that by which one can obtain exclusive love for Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the Supersoul of all existence.

This conclusion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.2.34) clearly establishes that only devotion unto the Supreme Lord (*bhagavad-bhakti*) is the topmost process of religion bestowing ultimate good for the living entities. Fruitive activity, the cultivation of knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation, the practice of *yoga*, the performance of austerities, and other processes do not bestow the ultimate good and therefore they are not the

topmost religious process. But this *bhakti* is extremely rare. It is obtainable only by transcendental faith (*pāramārthika-śraddhā*).

Such *pāramārthika-śraddhā* is of two kinds: (1) *sāstrārthā-avadhāraṇamayī-śraddhā* – faith that brings about engagement in the path of *bhakti* inspired by the governing principles of the scriptures and (2) *bhagavad-līlā-mādhurya-lobhamayī-śraddhā* – faith that brings about engagement in *bhakti* due to intense longing (*lobha*), arisen out of some extreme good fortune by hearing about the unparalleled sweetness of Bhagavān's pastimes.

Even if one of these two kinds of faith arises, unalloyed devotion (*śuddha-bhakti*) can develop only by continuous engagement in pure *hari-kathā* in the form of hearing (*śravaṇa*) and chanting (*kīrtana*) in the association of unadulterated pure devotees. If one does not regularly engage in such *hari-kathā* in the association of saintly persons, his faith will gradually dwindle and then vanish altogether. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.25) the Lord has said:

*satām prasāṅgān mama vīrya-samvido
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ*

In the association of saintly persons, one has the opportunity to hear narrations that illuminate My glories and that are very pleasing to both the ear and the heart. By such engagement in hearing and chanting saturated with love, ignorance is immediately destroyed and faith (*śraddhā*), intense loving attachment (*rati*) and devotion on the platform of divine love (*prema-bhakti*) develop one after another.

Therefore, by faithfully hearing and chanting about the names, form, qualities and pastimes of Bhagavān in the association of pure devotees, pure *saṅkīrtana* is possible – otherwise not.

The glories of pure *saṅkīrtana* are the very first thing spoken of in the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Because the

chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s holy names is the very identity of all auspiciousness, the word *param* has been used in the fourth line of Verse One. The word *param* (meaning “supreme”) here specifically indicates pure *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, which is obtained in progressive stages beginning from faith (*śraddhā*), followed by saintly association (*sādhū-saṅga*), and leading to execution of the limbs of *bhakti* (*bhajana-kriyā*). It does not refer to *hari-kīrtana* that is within the jurisdiction of *pratibimba-bhakti-ābhāsa*. [*Pratibimba-bhakti-ābhāsa* refers to a semblance of devotion that is undertaken by persons whose sole motivation is to attain liberation or promotion to the heavenly planets.]

In this *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka*, the ocean of mercy Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, appearing like a practitioner of the devotional path (*bhakti-sādhaka*), is singing the glories of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* and of the transcendental form and identity of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in order to enlighten the living entities with the truths of *sambandha* (knowledge relevant to the development of one’s relationship with the Lord), *abhidheya* (the process of devotional life) and *prayojana* (the ultimate goal of one’s devotion). In this commentary, the very same truths of *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prayojana* are being discussed in summary fashion.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the Supreme Lord of all and whose lotus feet are constantly served by pure Vaiṣṇavas, says, “*param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam.*” In other words let there be supreme victory only for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A question may be raised here. Can *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, which is non-material (*aprākṛta*) and beyond the range of the illusory potency (*māyā*), become victorious in this material world created by the external energy? Yes, even in this illusory material world *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* can be thoroughly victorious. Please hear how this is possible.

The absolute truth:

1. Prominence of the personal feature of the absolute truth

From the statement of the Śrutis the oneness of the absolute truth is established. This is expressed in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (6.2.1): “*ekam evādvitīyam* – the absolute truth is one without a second.” Another statement of the Śrutis establishes that the absolute truth is *nirviśeṣa*, devoid of material form, attributes and qualities. This is expressed in the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (4.4.19): “*neha nānāsti kiñcana* – other than the one non-dual absolute truth (*advaya-brahma*), there is no existence of any separate forms.” Yet another statement of the Śrutis establishes that the absolute is *saviśeṣa*, possessing eternal attributes and qualities. This is expressed in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (3.14.1): “*sarvaṃ khalv idaṃ brahma* – this entire creation is the form of the absolute truth.”

Therefore, according to the Śrutis, the absolute truth is simultaneously *saviśeṣa*, personal, and *nirviśeṣa*, impersonal. The impersonal feature, however, is imperceptible. The mere non-possession of material qualities and attributes does not define what is the absolute, and thus it remains but a vague notion. But the personal feature directly ascertains what is the absolute by describing His transcendental names, form, qualities, activities, associates and abode. Because of the intangibility of the impersonal feature and because of the eternal tangibility of the personal feature, it is the personal feature that is prominent and superior.

2. Four features of the absolute truth

In his *Bhagavat-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 16.16), Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, our *ācārya* on such philosophical conclusions, has stated that by the influence of His inherent inconceivable potency (*svābhāvīkī acintya-śakti*), the one absolute truth eternally

exists in four features: (1) *svarūpa* – His original form, (2) *tad-rūpa-vaibhava* – His personal splendour, which includes His abode, eternal associates, and expansions such as Lord Nārāyaṇa, (3) *jīvas* – the living entities and (4) *pradhāna* – the unmanifest state of the three modes of material nature.

He compares these four features to the four aspects of the sun: (1) the effulgence situated in the interior of the sun planet, (2) the sun globe, (3) the atomic particles of sunlight emanating from the sun and (4) the reflected rays of the sun. Although the sun is one, it exists in these four forms.

3. The absolute truth as potency and the possessor of all potency

The absolute truth described above is further explained here. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is replete with six opulences, is the absolute truth. He is *sarva-śaktimān*, the one who possesses all potencies. In the *Brahma-sūtra* it is said: “*śakti-śaktimātor abhedah* – there is no difference between *śakti*, the Lord’s potency, and *śaktimān*, He who possesses all potency.” According to this statement *śakti* and *śaktimān* are non-different. But that one transcendental potency known as *para-śakti* is perceivable in different forms – *parāsya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate* (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.8)).

From this Vedic *mantra* it is proved that the Lord’s inconceivable potency known as *acintya-śakti* is adept in carrying out that which is unfeasible. In the material world we cannot conceive of anything that is one and different simultaneously. If potency and the possessor of all potency are one, how can they be different? Yet if the Lord’s potency is one in all respects, how can it manifest in different forms as above stated? This inconceivable power is known as *aghaṭana-ghaṭana-ṭiṭiyasi*; in other words the Lord’s *acintya-śakti* makes possible even that which is impossible. Therefore the eternal difference

between *śakti* and *śaktimān* is also inevitable. The unqualified monists (*kevalādvaita-vādis*) advocate that the absolute truth known as Brahman is impersonal, formless and divested of potencies. The conclusion established above proves that this opinion is contrary to the scriptures and to reasoning.

The Lord's potencies:

1. The internal potency

The one *para-śakti*, or superior potency, described above, is manifest in three forms: (1) *antarāṅga-śakti* – the internal potency, (2) *taṭastha-śakti* – the marginal potency and (3) *bahirāṅga-śakti* – the external potency. By the Lord's internal potency, the supreme absolute truth in His complete and original feature eternally exists as Bhagavān, who is devoid of all faults, supremely auspicious and the basis of all transcendental qualities.

In addition to this the Lord's feature known as *tad-rūpa-vaibhava*, which refers to His transcendental abode, *Vaikuṅṭha-dhāma*, His eternal associates and the variegated manifestations of Lord Nārāyaṇa, is eternally established by the same all-accommodating internal potency for the accomplishment of His transcendental pastimes.

2. The marginal potency

The same absolute truth, when endowed with the marginal potency (*taṭastha-śakti*), exists as the innumerable, infinitesimal, conscious living entities, who are separated expansions of the Lord (*vibhinnāṁśa-svarūpa*). Just as innumerable tiny molecular particles of light continuously shimmer in the rays of the sun, the numberless, infinitesimal *jīvas* exist like atomic particles of spirit in the rays of the Lord's marginal potency.

The tiny molecular particles within the rays of sunshine have no independent existence from the sun, nor can they

ever be equated with the sun. Similarly, the infinitesimal, conscious living entities have no separate existence from the Lord, neither can they ever be addressed as the Lord, nor become the Lord.

3. The external potency

Again, the supreme absolute truth, Bhagavān, has manifested this entire material world, the display of His external splendour, by His inferior potency known as *bahiraṅga-māyā-śakti*. This material world is a transformation of the Lord's *māyā-śakti* or *pradhāna*, which refers to the sum total of material existence. Just as the reflected rays of the sun create a colourful rainbow, the Lord's *māyā-śakti* or *pradhāna* manifests this fascinating material world. The material world is a shadow of the spiritual world, which is manifested by the Lord's internal potency. As such, the material world is also not separate from the absolute truth.

4. Acintya-bhedābheda-tattva: Simultaneous oneness and difference of the Lord and His potencies

From the above discussion, it is proved that the living entities (*jīvas*), the material world (*jaḍa-jagat*) and the Lord's personal splendour as regards His Vaikuṅṭha existence (*tad-rūpa-vaibhava*) are inconceivably one with and different from His original spiritual form (*bhagavat-svarūpa*). The infinitesimal living entities, on account of being dependent on the Lord, are His separated parts and parcels – in this is found their non-distinction from the Lord (*abheda*). However, due to an absence of knowledge of the Supreme Lord, they are preoccupied with the material energy – in this lies their difference (*bheda*).

The process by which hari-kīrtana becomes successful for the living entity:

1. The meaning of the living entity as marginal potency

Just as the sun's rays are covered by the clouds, the living entities are covered by the influence of illusion (*māyā*) or ignorance (*avidyā*). How is it possible for a conscious entity to be covered by matter? In this we see application of the principle of *aghaṭana-ghaṭana-patīyasī*. That which is impossible is made possible by the Lord's inconceivable potencies. The infinitesimal living entity, manifested by the *taṭastha-śakti* of the Lord, becomes covered by *māyā* on account of being an instrument for the Lord's pastimes in the matter of the material creation. Otherwise how can the conscious *jīva* be covered by inert matter?

Because he is manifested by the marginal potency, the nature of the *jīva* is also marginal. This means that he is prone to be influenced either by the internal potency known as *svarūpa-śakti* or by the Lord's external potency known as *māyā-śakti*. When his connection with *svarūpa-śakti* is established, he obtains the happiness of serving the Supreme Lord in the liberated condition. When the living entity desires material enjoyment, he is covered by *māyā*.

The living entity, bewildered by *māyā*, suffers the pangs of material existence. But when he establishes his relationship with the *svarūpa-śakti*, the external potency in the form of ignorance is dissipated. As a result, he is liberated from the material condition and becomes situated in his pure constitutional form (*śuddha-svarūpa*).

2. The process of conquering illusion

The living entity, bewildered by *māyā*, is crushed again and again by the miseries of material existence. Becoming exasperated with these miseries, he may obtain the service of saintly

persons by some great fortune. At that time his faith awakens towards devotion unto the Supreme Lord as being the exclusive goal of the scriptures. Alternatively, he may awaken intense longing for the unparalleled sweetness of Bhagavān (this is a reference again to the two types of faith that one can develop, as previously mentioned). At that time, he attains eligibility for *bhakti*, which is predominated by the pleasure-giving aspect (*hlādinī*) of the Lord's internal potency.

Upon the awakening of faith, he first of all takes shelter of the lotus feet of a spiritual master by accepting *harināma* initiation from him. Thereafter, in the association of the spiritual master and pure Vaiṣṇavas, he obtains an excellent opportunity to hear the truths of the scriptures. When he begins to perform *kīrtana* of the holy names (*nāma*), form (*rūpa*), qualities (*guṇa*) and pastimes (*līlā*) of Kṛṣṇa, the process of conquering *māyā* begins. This means that his ignorance and the impediments that obstruct his spiritual progress (*anarthas*) begin to vanish. Simultaneously, the pure form of the *jīva* starts to become clear.

This is the process by which *hari-kīrtana* becomes victorious within the phenomenal world of matter. By this process, *hari-kīrtana* makes its descent into this illusory world. By performing *hari-kīrtana* according to this system, one obtains seven excellent results. These seven kinds of results are spoken of in Verse One by the words *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam* and so on. Each of these will now be separately discussed.

Seven excellent results of śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana:

1. Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam:

Cleanses the mirror of the heart

By the initial words *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*, the truth concerning the identity of the living entity is disclosed. The conclusion of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī regarding this subject is that the individual living entity is only one insignificant portion of the

supreme absolute truth who is endowed with the conglomerate potency represented by the sum total of all *jīvas*. Like the atomic particles of sunlight that have emerged from the accumulated effulgence within the sun, the living entities are infinitesimal particles of spirit emanated from the absolute truth who is always situated in His intrinsic form and who is the personification of undivided transcendental *rasa*.

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, who wrote a commentary on the *Vedānta-sūtra* known as *Śrī Govinda-bhāṣya*, has also analysed the Supreme Lord as *vibhu-caitanya*, the all-pervading consciousness, and the living entity as *aṇu-caitanya*, infinitesimal consciousness. Unlimited transcendental qualities that bestow all good fortune eternally exist in the Supreme Lord. In Him pure ego exists both as absolute knowledge and as the knower (ego is here defined as the sense of I-ness). Similarly, the *jīva* also has transcendental qualities in minute quantity and a pure ego that manifests both as knowledge and as the knower. This is not contrary to logic because qualities such as heat and light that can be seen in the sun are also observed in the particles of sunlight.

Amongst the Lord and the living entities, the Lord is one, independent and the embodiment of all potencies. He enters into material nature and regulates it. He creates the material world and maintains it. He is the concentrated form of spiritual bliss. Being eternally situated in His own intrinsic form and being the bestower of the ecstatic mellows of divine love (*prema-rasa*) through the medium of *bhakti*, He causes it to be tasted by others.

But the living entities are innumerable. They are situated in many conditions of life, both conditioned and liberated. When their vision is averted from the Lord, they become bound by material nature. When their attention is turned towards the Lord, the covering of *māyā*, which covers the pure

identity and qualities of the *jīva*, is withdrawn. Thereafter they directly perceive their own spiritual form.

From this conclusion it is clear that the *jīvas* are particles of spiritual consciousness. They have a spiritual identity that consists of pure ego, pure consciousness and a spiritual body. When their vision is averted from the Lord and engrossed in illusory material enjoyment, their pure ego and pure consciousness become contaminated with the filth of ignorance.

Here the heart has been compared to a mirror. Just as one's face cannot be seen in a dirty mirror covered by dust, the living entity cannot see his actual form in the heart that is contaminated by the filth of ignorance. When the practice of *bhakti* predominated by the *hlāḍini* potency of the Lord begins, one engages in the process of *śravaṇam*, hearing. Thereafter, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* automatically appears and thoroughly cleanses the filth of ignorance.

At that time the *jīva*'s pure consciousness manifests, and he becomes situated in his pure ego. From this, he begins to see factually in the mirror of his pure consciousness the following five truths: (1) *īśvara* – the Supreme Lord, (2) *jīva* – the living entities, (3) *prakṛti* – material nature, (4) *kāla* – time and (5) *karma* – fruitive activities. When the mirror of the heart is completely cleansed and purified, the vision of one's own constitutional form (*svarūpa*) and, consequently, his constitutional occupation (*svadharmā*), is made possible. The constitutional occupation of the living entity is to engage in the service of Bhagavān.

2. Bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam:

Extinguishes the forest fire of material existence

By engaging steadily in the service of Bhagavān, the materialistic demeanour is transformed into the inclination for rendering service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. The purport of the word *bhava*, or

mundane existence, is that the *jīva* has to take birth in this material world again and again. Repeated birth and death is compared to a great forest fire (*mahā-dāvāgni*). This blazing forest fire cannot be extinguished by any means other than *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*.

The question may be raised here that upon attainment of the knowledge of one's constitutional duty, does one cease to chant the holy name? The answer is that this never happens. *Hari-saṅkīrtana* is the eternal occupation of the living entity. The phrase *śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam* has been used in a qualifying sense to point out that the holy name is eternally the natural and characteristic function of the living entity.

3. Śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam:

Diffuses the moonrays of bhāva-bhakti

for the highest good of the living entity

For the living entities ensnared by *māyā*, material enjoyment alone is desirable, and it is on this account that they have to rotate in the cycle of repeated birth and death in this material world, suffering the threefold miseries. In complete opposition to this, aversion towards *māyā* and constant engagement in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the highest achievement (*śreyah*). This highest achievement is compared to the white water lotus. Just as the soothing rays of the moon cause the white lotus to blossom, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, diffusing the moon rays of *bhāva-bhakti*, causes the white lotus of good fortune to bloom for the living entities.

According to the statement of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.31): “*bhaktyā sañjātayā bhaktyā – bhakti* arises from *bhakti*”, one must first continuously engage in the process of *sādhana-bhakti* through hearing, chanting and so on. At this stage one's devotion is said to be an *ābhāsa*, or semblance, of real *bhakti*. By such practice, unalloyed devotion makes its appearance in the

heart of the faithful living entity. Here *śrī-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana* has been compared with the moon. Just as the nectarean light emitted from the moon causes the white lotus to bloom, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana* causes ecstatic emotion (*bhāva*), which is predominated by the *hlādinī* potency, to appear within the hearts of the living entities. All kinds of benedictions arise as a consequence of this.

4. Vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam:

It is the life of all transcendental knowledge

A question may be raised here: when will those who have already attained unalloyed devotion obtain their pure spiritual forms? In reply to this question, Śrī Śacīnandana Gauracandra says: “*vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam* – *sankīrtana* is the life of transcendental knowledge.” In reality Bhagavān has but one potency. Its two functions are *vidyā* (knowledge) and *avidyā* (ignorance). The Lord’s internal potency known as *Yogamāyā svarūpa-śakti* is called *vidyā*. The external potency or *Mahāmāyā*, which is responsible for the creation of the material world and which covers the original spiritual form of the living entity and the qualities associated with that form, is called *avidyā*.

When unalloyed devotion arises in the heart of the *sādhaka* by continual practice of hearing and chanting, *Bhakti-devī*, who dispels all desires other than that for the service of the Lord, removes this *avidyā*. By the function of the knowledge potency (*vidyā-vṛtti*), *Bhakti-devī* destroys the gross and subtle bodies of the living entity. Simultaneously, *Bhakti-devī* manifests the original pure spiritual form of the *jīva*, to the extent that one receives the purely spiritual form of a *gopī*, if by qualification one is fit to taste *mādhurya-rasa*, the mellow of amorous love. [One may attain a form in any of the five transcendental relationships of *sānta* (neutrality), *dāsya* (servitude), *sakhya* (friendship), *vātsalya* (parenthood) or *mādhurya*

in accordance with one's eligibility, or in other words, in accordance with the *sthāyibhāva*, one's eternal and dominant devotional sentiment.]

Thus, it is proved that *śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* is the life of all transcendental knowledge that has been compared to a *vadhū*, a wife or consort. The internal potency's being compared to Śrī Kṛṣṇa's consort is especially notable in context of the description of His sportive amorous pastimes known as *līlā-vilāsa*.

Comment

Bhakti is a function of the Lord's internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*). *Śuddha-sattva* is the essence of the combination of the *hlādinī* and *sāmvit* aspects of the internal potency. When *śuddha-sattva* is obtained, *bhakti* is also present. By executing the various practices of *sādhana-bhakti*, such as hearing, chanting and so on, *śuddha-sattva* arises in the heart. *Śuddha-sattva* is eternally existing in the hearts of the Lord's eternal associates. By performing *bhakti* under their guidance, *śuddha-sattva* manifests in the heart.

This *śuddha-sattva* is also known as *rati* or *bhāva*. By further execution of *bhakti* in the stage of *rati*, *bhāva-bhakti* is transformed into *prema-bhakti*. The essence of *prema-bhakti* is *bhāva* [not to be confused with *bhāva-bhakti*, but rather a stage that comes in the systematic development of *prema*, i.e. *rati*, *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva*, *mahābhāva*] and the essence of *bhāva* is *mahābhāva*. This *mahābhāva* is the very form of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, or otherwise stated, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. Therefore, where *mahābhāva* is present, the form of Rādhikā is present.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā is eternally the *hlādinī* aspect of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's internal potency. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the possessor of potency and Śrīmatī Rādhikā is His potency. Consequently They are one in Their identity. For the purpose of sportive transcendental

pastimes (*lilā-vilāsa*), They manifest as two personalities. Śrīmatī Rādhikā further manifests as all the *gopīs*. *Bhakti*, as the essential function of the internal potency, is always present within the hearts of the *gopīs*. In particular, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the personification of the *svarūpa-śakti* and, consequently, the personification of *bhakti*. Therefore the *svarūpa-śakti*, as well as *bhakti*, have been compared to the beloved consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. ❀

5. Ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam:

Increases the ocean of bliss

When the gross and subtle bodies of the living entity have been completely destroyed, his infinitesimal nature becomes evident. At that time, on account of the *jīva*'s inherent nature being infinitesimal, it may be assumed that his constitutional happiness is also infinitesimal. In order to dispel this apprehension, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu informs us that the holy name is an ever increasing ocean of bliss, *ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam*. In other words *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, performed in the liberated condition (upon the living entity's attainment of his pure spiritual form), unlimitedly expands the inherent transcendental pleasure of the living entity by virtue of the *hlāḍinī* potency.

6. Prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam:

Enables one to taste complete nectar at every step

In that condition, the *jīva*, being eternally situated in one of the transcendental *rasas* of *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* or *mādhuryā*, relishes complete nectar at every step by virtue of the ever-increasing freshness of his attachment to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa has four unique qualities: (1) *lilā-mādhuryā* – He is a surging ocean of astonishing pastimes, out of which the *rāsa-lilā* is supremely captivating; (2) *prema-mādhuryā* – He is surrounded

by devotees who possess incomparably sweet loving sentiments that develop up to the stage of *mahābhāva*; (3) *veṇu-mādhurya* – the sweet and mellow sound of His flute attracts the minds of everyone within the three worlds; and (4) *rūpa-mādhurya* – His extraordinary beauty astonishes all moving and non-moving entities. These four unique qualities of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa are eternally fresh. Although the *jīvas* who have awakened their love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa continuously drink these aspects of the Lord’s sweetness, they remain unsatiated and hanker for more. Therefore they unceasingly drink that sweetness in endlessly new varieties.

7. Sarvātma-snapanam:

Premānanda is completely pure

A doubt may be raised here. The longing or endeavour for one’s own enjoyment is opposed to purely spiritual love (*viśuddha-prema*). When the living entity is relishing the ever-fresh bliss of *prema*, he is also enjoying. So how can this condition be called *nirmala-premānanda*, the untainted spiritual bliss of divine love? As if to dispel this doubt, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the crest jewel of all *sannyāsīs*, has used the qualifying statement: “*sarvātma-snapanam – śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* thoroughly bathes the living entity both internally and externally, leaving him very clean and cool.”

In the condition of *prema*, Kṛṣṇa’s blissful feelings are completely pure. In other words, because the living entity in the status of *prema* gives unadulterated ecstatic pleasure to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is devoid of any selfish motives for personal enjoyment. Obtaining one’s spiritual form, the *jīva* becomes a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the embodiment of the *hlādinī* potency and who is always absorbed in the ecstasy of *mahābhāva*. The living entity thus tastes unlimited spiritual bliss in connection with the love sports (*prema-vilāsa*) of the

Divine Couple. Therefore there is no possibility of his having even the faintest trace of material desire (*kāma*), which is completely opposed to the nature of *prema*.

The two words *sarvātma-snaṇam* have been used to indicate supreme purity, completely devoid of the faults of merging into the impersonal Brahman, known as *sāyujya-mukti*, and selfish sense enjoyment.

Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana is thus decorated with seven transcendental qualities. It is the embodiment of eternity, bliss and knowledge. May *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* be thoroughly victorious, especially in revealing the astonishing pastimes of love of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala.

Comment

The holy name is like a new bud of a lotus flower. By constant chanting, the holy name first makes its appearance within the heart of the *sādhaka*. Thereafter, Kṛṣṇa's form, transcendental qualities, pastimes, and associates such as the *gopas* and *gopīs*, all become manifest within the heart. The devotee directly perceives all of these within his heart. He also perceives the amorous sports of the Lord. In the end, he gives up this material body and obtaining his eternal form, enters into the pastimes of the Lord. It is, therefore, said that the holy name that reveals the love sports (*prema-vilāsa*) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa should be especially glorified. ❀

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-lilā 20.11, 13–14)

*nāma-saṅkīrtana haite sarvānārtha-nāśa
sarva-śubhodaya, kṛṣṇa-premera ullāsa
saṅkīrtana haite pāpa-saṁsāra-nāśana
citta-śuddhi, sarva-bhakti-sādhana-udgama
kṛṣṇa-premodgama, premāmṛta-āsvādana
kṛṣṇa-prāpti, sevāmṛta-samudre majjana*

By the performance of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, all kinds of impediments to spiritual purification (*anarthas*) are destroyed and the heart becomes purified. The reactions to many lifetimes of sinful activities are eradicated and along with them, material existence consisting of repeated birth and death, which is a by-product of those sins. All kinds of benedictions arise from *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, which instigates all varieties of *sādhana* giving rise to *prema-bhakti*. *Kṛṣṇa-prema* appears and one begins to taste its nectar. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is then obtained. Finally, one achieves spotless purity and is thoroughly cooled and refreshed by complete immersion in the nectar ocean of service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song One (from Gītāvalī)

*pīta-varaṇa kali-pāvana gorā
gāoyai aichana bhāva-vibhorā
citta-darpaṇa-parimārjana-kāri
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya citta-vihārī
helā-bhava-dāva-nīrvāpaṇa-vṛtti
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya kleśa-nivṛtti
śreyah-kumuda-vidhu-jyotsnā-prakāśa
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya bhakti-vilāsa
viśuddha-vidyā-vadhū-jivana-rūpa
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya siddha-svarūpa
ānanda-payo-nidhi-varadhana-kīrti
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya plāvana-mūrti
pade pade pīyūṣa-svāda-pradātā
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya prema-vidhātā
bhaktivinoda-svātma-snapana-vidhāna
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya prema-nidāna*

Adopting the sentiment and golden lustre of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Śrī Śācinandana Gaurahari, the supreme deliverer of the fallen conditioned souls of Kali-yuga, would chant the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa absorbed in a deep emotional state. By the potency of His *kīrtana*, not only the sinful and materially afflicted

people of Kali-yuga were delivered, but the birds, beasts, insects and worms as well. While describing the glories of the holy name, He spoke as follows:

“The chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa thoroughly cleanses the mirror of the heart. It very easily extinguishes the blazing forest fire of material existence and dissipates, once and for all, the threefold miseries: (1) *ādhyātmika* – miseries arising from one’s own body and mind, (2) *ādhibhautika* – miseries arising from other living entities and (3) *ādhidaiivika* – miseries arising from material nature or the demigods.

“As the moon, by its nectarean soothing and cooling rays, causes the white lotus to bloom, the holy name brings to blossom the white lotus of *bhāva-bhakti*, which is the highest benediction for the living entities. May there be all victory for *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, the embodiment of the variegated manifestations of *bhakti*.

“Unalloyed devotion is the embodiment of the highest knowledge and it is like a new wife (*vadhū*). *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* is the life of transcendental knowledge in the form of *bhakti*. May there be all victory again and again for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which manifests the eternal constitutional form of the living entities.

“*Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* expands the unfathomable, unlimited ocean of transcendental bliss. May there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is an inundation of transcendental bliss. *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* enables one to taste ever-increasingly fresh nectar at every step.

“May there be all victory again and again for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which bestows love for Him. The holy name forever bathes and immerses the chanter in this love. May there be all victory again and again for the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is a storehouse of love of God.”

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda's Vivṛti (commentary)

śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtanāya namaḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana-kāri śrī gurudevera
o śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtana-vigraha
śrī-gaurasundarera jaya hauka

I offer my respectful obeisances unto *śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*. May there be all victory to the spiritual master, who is constantly engaged in the performance of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, and to Śrī Gaurasundara, who is the personification of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*.

Out of innumerable different kinds of *sādhana-bhakti*, many limbs of *bhakti* have been described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. In *sādhana-bhakti*, there are principally sixty-four limbs of devotion that have been described in connection with *vaidhī-* and *rāgānuga-bhakti*. In the statements of Prahāda Mahārāja as well, found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, we find reference to unalloyed devotion (*suddha-bhakti*). Śrī Gaurasundara has said, “*Śrī-nāma-saṅkīrtana* is the topmost performance out of all the various limbs of *bhakti*.”

Learned scholars of the absolute truth have described the supreme non-dual substance known as *advaya-jñāna-vastu* in three different stages. When that non-dual substance is realised exclusively by knowledge, or in others words through the function of the *cit* potency, it is referred to as Brahman. When realised through the combined functions of the *sat* and *cit* potencies, it is referred to as Paramātmā, and when realised through the functions of all potencies – *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda* – that supreme truth is referred to as Bhagavān.

When the absolute truth, or in other words Bhagavān, is viewed in terms of His opulences or majesty (*aiśvarya*), He is perceived as Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, and when viewed in terms of His sweetness (*mādhurya*), He is perceived as Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the topmost relisher of

transcendental *rasa*. Śrī Nārāyaṇa is the worshipful object of two-and-a-half *rasas*. He is served primarily in the moods of *śānta* and *dāsya*. The relationships of *sakhya* and *vātsalya* are faintly present, but because the natural feelings of intimacy are somewhat crippled by the sense of the Lord's majesty, they are only counted as half. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is served in all five principal transcendental *rasas* known as *mukhya-rasa*.

Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the supreme truth, the original source of all manifestations. His *vaibhava-prakāśa* expansion, Śrī Baladeva Prabhu, manifests the abode of Mahā-Vaikuṅṭha. He is situated there in His eternal *catur-vyuha* expansions: Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

When a *mantra* is recited only within the mind, it is called *jaṭa*. At that time the chanter attains the perfection of the goal upon which he has fixed his mind. But *kīrtana*, which is executed with vibration of the lips, yields a greater result than *jaṭa*. When chanting is done audibly with movement of the lips, it is called *kīrtana*. *Kīrtana* is superior to *jaṭa* within the mind, because one derives great benefit by hearing the sound vibration. Simultaneously, others who hear such *kīrtana* also derive benefit. Thus there is benefit both for the chanter and for the hearers.

The word *saṅkīrtana* means *sarvatobhāvena kīrtana*, complete *kīrtana*, or in other words, *kīrtana* that is performed in full knowledge of *sambandha-jñāna* and free from all obstructions (*anarthas*) and offences (*aparādhas*). This refers to that *kīrtana*, the performance of which requires no assistance from any other limbs of *sādhana*. Partial *kīrtana* of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is not called *saṅkīrtana*. When there is partial or imperfect chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the *jīva* does not attain the full effect. As a result, many people fall into doubt about the potency of the holy name. Therefore let there

be all victory for the perfect and complete chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

By discussing material topics, one obtains fragmentary material happiness. In the transcendental realm, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the only object of attainment. There is no possibility of any material objects being there. Therefore, by chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one obtains all kinds of perfections that are transcendental to material nature. Out of the various types of perfection, seven in particular are certainly obtained by *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*. These seven types of perfection are being described here.

1. Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam:

Cleanses the mirror of the heart

The chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa cleanses the dust from the mirror of the heart of the living entity. The mirror of the heart of the conditioned living entity is thoroughly covered by the dust of material contamination. This material contamination, indicative of the *jīva*'s disregard for the Lord, is of three types: (1) *anyābhilāṣa* – the living entity who is distracted from the Lord is filled with desires separate from the interest of the Lord, (2) *phala-bhoga* – enjoyment of the fruits of worldly activities and (3) *phala-tyāga* – renunciation that is not undertaken for the pleasure of the Lord.

The chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the most effective instrument for cleansing the dirt from the mirror of the living entity's heart. As long as the dirt of material contamination is present, the pure spiritual form of the living entity is not reflected in the mirror of his heart. Therefore the three kinds of contamination mentioned above are all forms of deceit that obscure the true vision of the self. They are obstacles that completely cover the heart of the *jīva*.

By the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, all these

obstacles are removed. Finally, when the mirror of the heart is cleansed by complete chanting of the holy name, one's pure spiritual form is reflected in the mirror of the heart and one understands, "I am the servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa."

**2. Bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāṇam:
Extinguishes the blazing forest fire
of material existence**

Externally, this material world appears very beautiful, charming and pleasing. But in reality, it is just like a blazing fire within a dense forest. This material world is blazing with innumerable sufferings, which come under three headings: (1) *ādhyātmika*, (2) *ādhidāivika* and (3) *ādhibhautika*.

As a blazing fire thoroughly destroys all the trees and animals of the forest, the forest fire of material existence in the shape of repeated birth and death constantly burns the living entities who are distracted from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But when one takes up the chanting of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa under the expert guidance of a qualified *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, then even while residing in this material world, one obtains relief from the blazing fire of material existence. This is due to one's adopting an attitude that is favourably disposed towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. By *śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana*, all these miseries are driven away.

**3. Śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam:
Diffuses the moonrays of bhāva-bhakti
for the highest good of the living entity**

Complete chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa diffuses the radiance of supreme auspiciousness. The word *śreyah* means "auspiciousness"; *kairava* means "white lilies"; and *candrikā* means "the rays of the moon". Just as the soothing rays of the rising moon cause the white lilies to bloom and thus enhance

their whiteness, the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa expands the good fortune of the living entities. Good fortune cannot be had by separate desires (*anyābhilāṣa*), fruitive activity (*karma*) or the cultivation of impersonal knowledge (*jñāna*). But *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* promotes the highest welfare of the living entity.

4. Vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam:

The life of all transcendental knowledge

Two kinds of knowledge have been described in the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*: (1) material knowledge (*laukiki-vidyā*) and (2) transcendental knowledge (*parā-vidyā*). Indirectly, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* is the life of material knowledge, but it is primarily the life of transcendental knowledge. By the influence of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, the living entity is liberated from the false ego arising from mundane knowledge, and he obtains *sambandha-jñāna*. The goal to be obtained by transcendental knowledge is *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* (that is, the chanting of the holy name of Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Śrī Kṛṣṇa). By this, Kṛṣṇa Himself is obtained.

5. Ānandāmbudhi-wardhanam:

Increases the ocean of transcendental bliss

Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana expands the ocean of transcendental bliss for the living entities. The word “ocean” cannot be applied to a small reservoir of water. Therefore the unlimited bliss that arises from the chanting of the holy name is comparable only with a boundless ocean.

6. Prati-padaṁ pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam:

Enables one to taste nectar at every step

Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana causes one to taste complete nectar at every step. In the relishing of transcendental *rasa*, there is

neither deficiency nor incompleteness of pleasure (*ānanda*). By the performance of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, one relishes the complete and uninterrupted bliss of *rasa* at every moment.

7. Sarvātma-snapanam:

Completely bathes the body, mind and soul

Even transcendental objects become softened by the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the material realm, the body, mind and soul are not only purified by *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana*, but are undoubtedly softened as well.

The living entity who is engrossed in bodily designations becomes covered with the dirt of the gross and subtle bodies. By the power of the holy name, all these contaminations are cleansed away. When attachment towards mundane existence is vanquished, the living entity devoted to Śrī Kṛṣṇa obtains the cooling and soothing service of His lotus feet.

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has written in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (273) and in his *Krama-sandarbhā* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*ata eva yadyapy anyā bhaktiḥ kalau kartavyā
tadā kīrtanākhyā-bhakti-saṁyogenaiva*

This means that although in Kali-yuga it is necessary to perform the other eight limbs of *bhakti* (that is, hearing (*śravaṇam*), remembering the glories of the Lord (*smaraṇam*), serving His lotus feet (*pāda-sevanam*), worshipping Him (*arcanam*), praying to Him (*vandanam*), carrying out His orders (*dāsyam*), making friends with Him (*sakhyam*), and offering one's very self to Him (*ātma-nivedanam*)), they must be performed in connection with the chanting of the holy name (*kīrtanam*). By this method, *bhakti* is fully accomplished.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's
Śrī Bhajana-rahasya verses

Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam

In material existence, the heart is covered by attachment for mundane enjoyment, offensive conduct, lust, anger, greed, intoxication, illusion and envy. The mirror of the heart is cleansed from all these impurities by the chanting of the Lord's holy names. This is possible because the holy name is eternal, fully cognisant and spiritually blissful (*sac-cid-ānanda*), as described by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Śrī Nāmāṣṭaka* (7), taken from *Stava-mālā*:

*sūditāśrita-janārtir-āśaye
ramya-cid-ghana sukha-svarūpiṇe
nāma! gokula mahotsavāya te
kṛṣṇa! pūrṇa-vaṇuṣe namo namaḥ*

O Holy Name, O Kṛṣṇa, You destroy all the sufferings (arising from offences committed unto You) of those who have taken shelter of You. You are the form of supreme beauty, concentrated consciousness and spiritual happiness, and You are the embodiment of bliss for the residents of Gokula (the *gopas*, *gopīs*, cows, calves and all other life forms of Gokula). Therefore I offer repeated obeisances unto You, who are the personification of the complete manifestation of Vaikuṅṭha.

Bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nīrvāpaṇam

The blazing forest fire of material existence in the form of repeated birth and death, and the threefold miseries arising thereof, is effortlessly extinguished by performing *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. This is confirmed in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.371), quoting from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.2.46):

*nātaḥ paraṁ karma-nibandha-kṛntanaṁ
mumukṣatām tīrtha-padānukīrtanāt
na yat punaḥ karmasu sajjate mano
rajas-tamobhyām kalilam tato 'nyathā*

Therefore, for persons desiring release from material bondage, there is no method superior to the chanting of the holy name of the Supreme Lord, at whose feet all the places of pilgrimage reside. Such chanting destroys the root cause of sinful activity. Consequently, by the performance of *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, one will never again become implicated in fruitive activities (*karma-kāṇḍa*). This is not the case, however, with material methods of atonement, because even after such performances, the heart again becomes contaminated by the modes of passion and ignorance.

Śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitaraṇam

The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa emits nectarean rays that cause the white lily of supreme fortune to bloom. As the moon, by its rays, causes the white lilies to blossom and become very fragrant, the holy name, by the transmission of its potency, causes all kinds of good fortune to arise for the *jīvas*. The following verse from the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa* has been cited as evidence of this in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.451):

*madhura-madhuram etan maṅgalaṁ maṅgalānām
sakala-nigama-valli-sat-phalaṁ cit-svarūpaṁ
sakṛd āpi paṛigītaṁ śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛgu-vara nara-mātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa-nāma*

Of all that is auspicious, the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa stands supreme. Of all that is sweet, the holy name is sweeter still. It is the eternal spiritual fruit of the wish-fulfilling tree of the entire Vedas and the embodiment of the absolute truth endowed with full consciousness. O best of the Bhṛgus, if anyone even once chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, either with faith or indifferently, the holy name delivers him from the ocean of material existence.

Comment

In his *Dig-darśinī* commentary on the verse above, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has explained that the word *cit-svarūpaṁ*

means *caitanya-brahma-svarūpam*. This means that the holy name is the embodiment of that Brahman which is endowed with full consciousness. In other words the holy name is identical with the Supreme Lord Himself. The words *sakṛd api* mean that if the holy name is chanted even once, everything even up to liberation follows as a necessary result. Sanātana Gosvāmī emphasises this point by using the imperative form (*bhavet*) meaning that it must be so. He says that the suffix *pari* in *parigitam* indicates that even if the holy name is uttered indistinctly or incompletely, it will deliver such a result.

The suffix *pari* alters the meaning of words in many different ways. It expresses the following ideas: against, opposite to, away from, except, round about, abundantly, richly, in high degree, and so on. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda has interpreted the word *pari* in a different sense. He takes it in the sense of distinctly or fully, meaning that the holy name should be chanted without offence. If the holy name is chanted in this way, it will immediately deliver the chanter. ❀

Vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam

The holy name is the life of all transcendental knowledge, which is here compared to a wife. This is supported in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.441), quoting from the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

*yadicchasi param jñānam
jñānād yat paramam padam
tadādareṇa rājendra
kuru govinda-kīrtanam*

O best of kings, if you desire to obtain that topmost knowledge by which the supreme goal is attained, then with great respect and devotion, chant the holy name of Śrī Govinda.

Comment

In his *Dig-darsinī* commentary on this verse, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī explains that the word *jñānam* here refers to knowledge concerning the glories of the topmost *bhagavad-bhakti*. By chanting the holy name of Govinda one easily obtains such knowledge and, consequently, the supreme destination known as *param padam*. *Param padam* does not refer to impersonal liberation. Beyond Brahman, beyond Vaikuṅṭha, beyond even Ayodhyā and Mathurā – the attainment of the service of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vraja is what is here referred to as *param padam*. This fruit is obtained by the chanting of the name of Govinda, not by any ordinary knowledge. ❀

It is further stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.5.40):

*dhātar yad asmin bhava īsa jīvās
tāpa-trayeṇābhihatā na śarma
ātman labhante bhagavams tavāṅghri-
cchāyām sa-vidyām ata āśrayema*

O maintainer of the universe, O Lord, in this material world the living entities who disregard the Lord are always overwhelmed by the threefold miseries: *ādhyātmika*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaiivika*. Thus they are unable to find any happiness or peace. Therefore, O Bhagavān, in full knowledge, we are taking shelter of the shade of Your lotus feet.

Comment

The words *sa-vidyām* – with full knowledge – mean “with *bhakti*”. Out of all types of knowledge, *bhakti* is the best, because by it Bhagavān becomes known. ❀

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.29.49) it is stated: “*sā vidyā tanmatir yayā* – that by which one’s attention is concentrated upon the Supreme Lord is called *vidyā*.” Śrīla Bhaktivinoda

Ṭhākura has composed two verses in this connection explaining how the holy name of Kṛṣṇa is the life of such knowledge (*Bhajana-rahasya* (1.21)):

*ye śaktite kṛṣṇe mati kare udbhāvana
vidyā-nāme sei kare avidyā-khaṇḍana
kṛṣṇa-nāma sei vidyā-vadhūra jivana
kṛṣṇa-pāda-padme ye karaye sthira mana*

That potency by which one's intelligence is aroused towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as *vidyā*. Only by *bhakti* can one's attention be drawn upon the lotus feet of Bhagavān. Therefore the knowledge being referred to here is *bhakti*. This knowledge dissipates ignorance. The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the life of transcendental knowledge by which the consciousness becomes firmly situated at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, and one is engaged in the service of His lotus feet.

Ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam

Nāma-kīrtana expands the ocean of transcendental bliss within the heart, as it is stated in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (10.193), quoting from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (8.3.20):

*ekāntino yasya na kañcanārtham
vāñchanti ye vai bhagavat-praṇānāḥ
aty-adbhutaṁ tac-caritaṁ sumaṅgalaṁ
gāyanta ānanda-samudra-magnāḥ*

Devotees who are fully and exclusively surrendered unto the Lord become immersed in the ocean of bliss by chanting and reciting His transcendental pastimes, which are astonishing and supremely auspicious. They have no desire other than to obtain the lotus feet of Bhagavān. I pray unto that supreme Brahman, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam

When the mirror of the heart is cleansed by chanting the holy name of the Lord, then all types of good fortune arise for the chanter. Thereafter, he attains perception of his constitutional identity. For one who chants the holy name in that stage of attainment, the ocean of transcendental bliss is enlarged, and he tastes complete nectar in newer and newer varieties at every step.

Comment

An ordinary conditioned soul will not experience spiritual pleasure when he chants the holy name. When, however, one chants the holy name according to this process – in other words after having freed oneself from all impediments to his devotion (*anarthas*) and having realised one's eternal identity (*svarūpa*), one then chants the holy name with love and spiritual emotion (*bhāva*) – he will taste the nectar of the name at every step. ❀

It is therefore said in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.504), quoting from the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*tebhyo namo 'stu bhava-vāridhi-jirṇa-paṅka-
sammagna-mokṣaṇa-vicakṣaṇa-pādukebhyaḥ
kṛṣṇeti varṇa-yugalaṁ śravaṇena yeṣāṁ
ānandathur bhavati nartita-roma-vṛṇdaḥ*

I offer my respectful obeisances again and again unto the sandals of the lotus feet of that person whose heart trembles with bliss upon chanting and hearing the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose bodily hairs stand on end and dance due to ecstasy, and who is expert in delivering the conditioned souls who are sunk in the mud of the ocean of material existence.

Sarvātma-snapanam

The self is thoroughly cleansed by bathing in the holy name, as it is stated in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.359), quoting from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.12.48):

*saṅkirtyamāno bhagavān anantaḥ
śrutānubhāvo vyasanam hi puṁsām
praviśya cittaṁ vidhunoty aśeṣam
yathā tamo 'rko 'bhram ivāti-vātaḥ*

By describing the transcendental characteristics or pastimes of Bhagavān Śrī Hari, or by hearing of His glories, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa enters within the heart (as *hari-kathā*) and drives away all ignorance exactly as the sun drives away darkness. And as a powerful wind blows away a mass of clouds, the hearing of narrations of the Lord's pastimes eradicates all the sufferings of material existence.

The ignorance referred to here means the various contaminations of the heart such as *anarthas* and *aparādhas*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed the following Bengali verses in this connection (*Bhajana-rahasya* (1.24)):

*śruta anubhūta yata anartha-saṁyoga
śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtane saba haya ta viyoga
je rūpa vāyute megha sūrya tamaḥ nāṣe
citta praveśiyā doṣa aśeṣa vināṣe
kṛṣṇa-nāmāśraye citta-darpaṇa-mārjana
atiśighra labhe jīva kṛṣṇa-prema-dhana*

All varieties of *anartha* that have ever been heard of or experienced are destroyed by chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. As the wind disperses the clouds or as the sun dissipates the darkness, the Supreme Lord, through the medium of hearing narrations of His transcendental pastimes, enters the heart and completely destroys the extensive material contamination. By taking shelter of the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the mirror of the heart is cleansed and very quickly the living entity attains the treasure of love for Him (*kṛṣṇa-prema*).

The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *caitanya*, fully conscious, and it is the personification of *mādhurya*, sweetness, and of transcendental *rasa*. As stated in the *Nāmāṣṭaka* (8):

nārada-viṇojjivana!
sudhormi-niryāsa-mādhuri-pūra!
tvam kṛṣṇa-nāma! kāmam
sphura me rasane rasena sadā

O holy name of Kṛṣṇa, You are the life-support of Śrī Nārada's *viṇā*. You are the crest upon the waves of nectar arising from the ocean of sweetness. May You, by Your sweet will, always appear very prominently on my tongue, accompanied by great attachment.

The holy name is worshipful particularly for liberated persons. Simply by *nāma-ābhāsa*, a semblance of pure chanting, all misery and distress are dissipated. As stated in the *Nāmāṣṭaka* (2):

jaya nāmadheya! muni-vṛnda-geya!
jana-rañjanāya param akṣarākṛte
tvam anādarād api manāg udiritam
nikhilogra-tāpa-ṭatalim vilumpasi

O Nāmadheya (Kṛṣṇa appearing in the form of the holy name), great sages such as Nārada and others constantly chant Your glories. For the delight of all humanity, You have appeared in the form of transcendental syllables. Although You are directly the supreme Brahman, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, You appear in the form of syllables for the benefit of people in general. Even if one chants the holy name of the Lord indifferently, or in other words, with the four kinds of *nāma-ābhāsa* – to indicate something else, jokingly, for musical entertainment and neglectfully – the holy name is competent to destroy the most grievous sins and thus nullify all severe material afflictions. Therefore, O Holy Name, may there be all victory unto You!

It is therefore stated in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya-khaṇḍa* 23.76–8):

ŚRĪ ŚIKṢĀṢṬAKA

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
ṣṛaḥṇu kahe – kaḥilāṇ ei mahā-mantra
ihā jaṇa, giyā sabe kariyā nirbandha
ihā haite sarva-siddhi haibe sabāra
sarva-kṣaṇa bala' ithe vidhi nāhi āra*

[Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said:] I have spoken this *mahā-mantra*, now all of you return home and perform *jaṇa* and *kīrtana* of the holy name with great love and faith, keeping track of the number of rounds you chant. By this practice, all types of perfection will arise. Always chant the holy name, for there are no rules and regulations regarding its performance. At every moment, utter this *mahā-mantra*.

Verse Two

Why is the holy name so accessible?

नाम्नामकारि बहुधा निजसर्वशक्ति-
स्तत्रार्पिता नियमितः स्मरणे न कालः ।
एतादृशी तव कृपा भगवन्ममापि
दुर्दैवमीदृशमिहाजनि नानुरागः ॥२॥

*nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-saktiḥ
tatrārpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālah
etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam idṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*

Anvaya

(he) *bhagavan* – O Bhagavān (being compelled by causeless mercy); *akāri bahudhā nāmnām* – You have manifested innumerable names such as Kṛṣṇa and Govinda just to benefit the living entities; *tatra* – and in all those names; *arpitā* – You have invested; *nija-sarva-saktiḥ* – all the potencies of Your respective personal forms; *smaraṇe kālah api* – moreover, in remembering the holy names of the Lord; *na niyamitaḥ* – You have not imposed any restrictions as is the case with *sandhyā-vandanā*, or *sāvitrī-gāyatrī*, which must be chanted by *brāhmaṇas* only at specified times of the day. In other words, at any time of the day or night, the holy name can be chanted and remembered. This is the provision You have made; *tava etādṛśī kṛpā* – although Your mercy is so great; *mama idṛśam durdaivam* – my misfortune (in the form of offences to the holy name) is such that; *anurāgaḥ na ajani* – I have not awoken attachment; *iha* – for these holy names, which award all benedictions and are so easily accessible.

Translation

O Bhagavān, Your holy name bestows all auspiciousness upon the living entities. Therefore, for the benefit of the living entities, You eternally manifest Your innumerable names, such as Rāma, Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Mukunda, Mādhava, Govinda, Dāmodara and so on. You have invested those names with all the potencies of Your respective personal forms. Out of causeless mercy, You have not even imposed any restrictions on the chanting and remembrance of such names, as is the case with *sandhyā-vandanā*, which must be chanted only at specified times of the day. In other words, at any time of the day or night, the holy name can be chanted and remembered. This is the provision You have made. O Lord, this is Your causeless mercy upon the living entities. Nonetheless, I am so unfortunate due to committing offences that I have not awoken any attachment for Your holy name, which is so easily accessible and bestows all good fortune.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

Śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana is of four varieties, being distinguished by names (*nāma*), forms (*rūpa*), qualities (*guṇa*) and pastimes (*līlā*). The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original seed of all happiness. The word *nāmī* literally means “one who possesses a name”. It is used almost exclusively with reference to the Supreme Lord to indicate the personality whom the holy name addresses. *Śrī-nāma*, the holy name, and *śrī-nāmī*, the possessor of the name, are one and the same fundamental truth; there is no difference between Them. *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana* is extremely beneficial for everyone in all respects. Therefore, in order to arouse faith in the living entities towards the holy name of the Lord, Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally broadcast the supreme utility of *kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana*.

He says, “O Bhagavān, O most merciful one, seeing me devoid of all shelter, You have manifested Your holy names, being moved by Your causeless mercy. You have many names, which are all non-different from You. These are classified into two groups: (1) *mukhya* – principal and (2) *gauṇa* – secondary. The names Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, Acyuta, Rāma, Ananta, Viṣṇu and so on, are principal names, whereas the names Brahma, Paramātmā, Niyantā (the controller), Pātā (the maintainer), Sraṣṭā (the creator) and Mahendra (the supreme monarch) are secondary names. Furthermore, You have invested Your principal names with all the potencies and perfect competence of Your *svarūpa-śakti*.”

This is proved by the statements of many scriptures. The first reference describes the holy name’s power to destroy sins. This verse is found in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.486), quoting from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.16.44):

*na hi bhagavann aghaṭitam idaṁ
tvad-darśanān nṛṇāṁ akhila-pāpa-kṣayaḥ
yan-nāma sakṛc chravaṇāt
pukkaśo ’pi vimucyate saṁsārāt*

O Bhagavān, just by seeing You, all the sins of mankind become destroyed. This is not at all impossible, for even a low-class dog-eater (*caṇḍāla*) who hears Your holy name but once is liberated from material existence.

The next two verses explain the superiority of chanting the holy name to study of the Vedas. These verses are found in *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (*Anuccheda* 265), quoting from the *Viṣṇu-dharmottara Purāṇa*. The second verse in this series is also found in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.378):

*vedākṣarāṇi yāvanti
paṭhitāni dvijātibhiḥ
tāvanti harināmāni
kīrtitāni na saṁśayaḥ*

*ṛg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ
sāma-vedo 'py atharvaṇaḥ
adhītās tena yenoktaṁ
harir ity akṣara-dvayam*

The extent to which the twice-born *brāhmaṇas* recite the syllables of the Vedas, they most certainly (indirectly) chant the holy name of the Lord. Of this there is no doubt. But one who has uttered the two syllables “Ha-ri” should be understood to have completed his study of all the Vedas – the *Ṛg Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sāma Veda* and *Atharva Veda*.

The next verse is also on the same theme. It is found in *Bhakti-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 265) and in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.379), quoting from the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*mā ṛco mā yajus tāta
mā sāma paṭha kiñcana
govindeti harer-nāma
geyaṁ gāyasva nityasaḥ*

Therefore do not study the *Ṛg*, *Yajur*, *Sāma*, *Atharva* or any other of the Vedas. Just sing the name of Govinda, and in this way engage constantly in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord.

The next verse shows the effect of disrespecting the holy name. It is found in *Bhakti-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 265) and in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.509), quoted from the *Vaiśākha-māhātmya* of the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*avamanya ca ye yānti
bhagavat-kīrtanaṁ narāḥ
te yānti narakam ghoram
tena pāpena karmaṇā*

Those persons who disrespect the chanting of the holy name of the Supreme Lord and go about their way fall down into formidable hell as a consequence of such a sinful act.

The next verse establishes that the chanting of the holy name is the most effective method of *sādhana* both for the

practising devotees and for the perfected souls. This verse is found in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.11). It has been cited in *Bhakti-sandarbha* (Anuccheda 265), *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.414) and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.230):

*etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītam
harer nāmānukīrtanam*

[Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:] O King, it is the opinion of all scriptures and all previous *ācāryas* that whether one is an unalloyed devotee, detached from material existence on account of direct experience of the misery of material life, whether one is desirous of elevation to the heavenly planets or liberation, or whether one be a self-satisfied *yogī* (*ātmārāma*), one should chant the holy name of the Lord with great love.

In his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* commentary on this verse, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the term *nirvidyamānānām* means “of those who are devoid of all desires, including the desire for liberation”. This term refers to the devotees who are fully and exclusively surrendered (*ekānta-bhaktas*). The word *icchatām* means “of those who seek the heavenly planets and liberation”. This refers to the *jñānis* and *karmīs*. The word *yoginām* means “of the *yogīs*”. This refers to the *ātmārāmas*, those who take pleasure in the self.

The word *akuto bhayam* means that there is absolutely no doubt about the efficacy of *nāma-kīrtana*. It does not depend on time, place, person, articles of worship, purity or impurity. Even if the holy name comes in contact with an uncultured meat-eater (*mleccha*) who is intolerant of the service of the Lord, the holy name will act. The words *nāma-anukīrtanam* mean either “constant chanting” or “chanting to an extent that is appropriate for one’s practice of *bhakti*”. This practice is suitable in the stage of both *sādhana*, practice, and *sādhya*, perfection. The purport of the word *nirṇītam* (meaning “it has

been decided”) is that this fact has been decided by the common consent of previous sages who became devoid of all doubt after direct experience and realisation.

The next verse describes the self-revealing power of the holy name and its ability to deliver the living entities from material existence. This verse is found in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.512), quoted from the *Ṛg Veda* (1.156.3):

*āsya jānanto nāma cid-viviktana
mahas te viṣṇo sumatiṁ bhajāmahe
om̐ ity etad brahmaṇopadiṣṭaṁ nāma
yasmād uccāryamāṇam eva saṁsāra
bhayāt tārayati tasmād ucyate tāraḥ*

O Viṣṇu, Your name is fully spiritual, and thus it is self-manifested. Although we are not perfectly acquainted with the glories of uttering Your holy name, if we chant, knowing just a little of its glories, we will obtain full knowledge of that subject. Brahmājī propagated the transcendental sound *om̐*, the mere utterance of which liberates one from the fear of material existence. Therefore the vibration *om̐* is known as *tāraka-brahma*.

The word *tāraka-brahma* means “that form of Brahman which liberates or enables one to cross over”.

The next verse shows how the mere utterance of the holy name makes one a fit candidate for liberation. This verse is quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.417), taken from the *Padma Purāṇa* (*Uttara-khaṇḍa*, Chapter 46):

*sakṛd uccāritaṁ yena
harir ity akṣara-dvayam
baddhaḥ parikaras tena
mokṣāya gamanaṁ prati*

Those who are free from all offences and who utter even once the two syllables “Ha-ri” become resolute to obtain liberation from material existence and the service of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In his *Dig-darśinī* commentary on this verse, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has explained that the words *baddhaḥ parikarah*, to tighten one's girth, mean "he becomes immediately prepared", and *mokṣāya gamanaṁ prati* mean "for obtaining liberation". He says that by this simple act one's *sādhana* is complete, *sādhanaṁ samyag anuṣṭhitam ity arthaḥ*.

The next verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.24) shows by indirect indication the power of the holy name to melt the heart. It is cited in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.505):

*tad aśma-sāraṁ hṛdayaṁ batedaṁ
yad gṛhyamāṇair hari-nāmadheyaiḥ
na vikriyetātha yadā vikāro
netre jalaṁ gātra-ruheṣu harṣaḥ*

O Sūta, if one's heart does not melt and begin to flow towards the Supreme Lord upon hearing and chanting His holy name, if one's eyes do not fill with tears and the hairs of one's body do not stand on end due to ecstasy, then one should know that one's heart has become as hard as iron due to committing *nāma-aparādha*.

The next verse confirms that the holy name is the ripened fruit of all the Vedas and can thus easily deliver one from material existence. This verse is found in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.451), quoting from the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*madhura-madhuram etan maṅgalaṁ maṅgalānām
sakala-nigama-valli-satphalaṁ cit-svarūpam
sakṛd api pariḡitaṁ śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛgu-vara naramātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa-nāma*

Of all that is auspicious, the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa stands supreme. Of all that is sweet, the holy name is sweeter still. It is the eternal spiritual fruit of the wish-fulfilling tree of the entire Vedas and the embodiment of the absolute truth endowed with full consciousness. O best of the Bhṛgus, if anyone even once chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, either

with faith or indifferently, the holy name delivers him from the ocean of material existence.

The next verse, from the *Ādi Purāṇa*, proves the power of the holy name to bring Kṛṣṇa under control. This verse is quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.446) and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.231):

*gītva ca mama nāmāni
vicaren mama sannidhau
iti bravīmi te satyaṁ
krīto 'ham tasya cārjuna!*

O Arjuna, I declare this truth unto you, that those who approach Me chanting My name certainly purchase Me. I become completely subservient to them.

The last two verses in this section, quoted from the *Padma Purāṇa*, establish that the holy name is completely beyond material nature and, therefore, cannot be grasped with the material senses. These verses appear in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.233–4). The first verse in the series also appears in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.503):

*nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇas
cāitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrnaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ*

The holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa awards all benedictions, just like the *cintāmaṇi* stone. It is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the embodiment of all transcendental mellows (*cāitanya-rasa-vigraha*). The holy name is complete, beyond the influence of *māyā* and eternally liberated, since Kṛṣṇa's name and Kṛṣṇa Himself are non-different.

*ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi
na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau
svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*

Therefore the transcendental names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot be perceived with the gross material senses. They automatically manifest themselves on the tongue and other senses that have awakened eagerness for the transcendental service of the Lord.

Thus the existence of all potencies in the holy name is established by the statements of the Śruti, the Smṛti and the Tantras. After explaining how Bhagavān has mercifully invested all powers in His holy names, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, “In the processes of fruitive activity (*karma*), impersonal knowledge (*jñāna*) and mystic *yoga*, emphasis is placed on the rules or considerations regarding time, place and performer. But in the chanting and remembering of Your holy name, You have not imposed any restrictions regarding time, place and performer. This is an example of Your limitless mercy upon us. In spite of this, we are so unfortunate that we have failed to obtain even the slightest attraction towards Your most munificent names.”

The word *durbhāgya*, misfortune, indicates the presence of offences to the holy name (*nāma-āparādha*). *Nāma-āparādha* will be briefly described in the discussion ahead. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu continues, “In this material world fashioned by the illusory energy, the living entities who are distracted from the Lord are bound by attachment to innumerable types of sense gratification. They never make any endeavour to direct their attention towards the Lord. They are always engrossed in *karma*, *jñāna* and other methods that simply produce misery. But the *jīva* can never achieve eternal welfare by these methods.

“Thinking thus, the unlimitedly merciful Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifested His holy names to the living entities as the method of obtaining *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is predominated by the *hlādinī* potency of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *svarūpa-śakti*, and by the chanting of the holy name it is transmitted into the hearts of the living entities. But

in spite of hearing and chanting, the *jīvas* do not obtain attachment towards the holy name on account of offences. Therefore persons possessing faith should receive the holy name from the mouth of a spiritual master. Being attentive to avoid committing offences, they should perform *japa* and *nāma-saṅkīrtana* with great faith, as far as their capacity allows.”

Offences are of ten kinds

The ten offences to the holy name are mentioned in the *Padma Purāṇa* (*Svarga-khaṇḍa* 48). They have also been quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.521–4) and *Bhakti-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 265):

(1) *satām nindā nāmnah paramam aparādham vitanute; yataḥ khyātim yātam katham u sahate tad vigarhām* – To criticise the devotees of the Lord is a very grievous offence to the holy name. How can Śrī Kṛṣṇa tolerate criticism of those great souls who are deeply devoted to the holy name and who spread its glories throughout the world? Therefore criticism of saintly persons and devotees is the first offence against the holy name.

(2) *śivasya śrī-viṣṇor ya iha guṇa-nāmādi-sakalam; dhīyā bhinnam paśyet sa khalu harināmāhita-karah* – In this world, those persons who, by mundane intelligence, see a difference in the all-auspicious, transcendental holy names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Viṣṇu – in other words who consider them to be like material phenomena and thus different from the Lord Himself – commit an offence against the holy name. Furthermore, one who considers the qualities, names and other attributes of Lord Śiva to be different from those of Viṣṇu commits a serious offence.

In his *Dig-darśinī* commentary on this verse quoted in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.521), Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī has said: “*ādi-śabdena rūpa-lilādi, dhīyāpi harināmni ahitam aparādham karotiti tathā saḥ* – the word *ādi* refers to the other attributes of Śrī Śiva

such as his form and pastimes. If one even thinks that Śiva's names, forms, qualities and pastimes are different from those of Śrī Viṣṇu, he commits a serious offence against the holy name."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has nicely explained the meaning of this statement in *Bhakti-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 265). He says that if the possessive case is used, then the word *ca* (meaning "and") must be used after Śrī Viṣṇu. This means that the names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Śiva and those of Śrī Viṣṇu are identical. The meaning here is that the Śiva being referred to is none other than Viṣṇu in another form. The word *śrī* in the verse appears in front of Viṣṇu and not in front of Śiva to give prominence to Viṣṇu. The word *nāma-aparādha* used with reference to Śiva signifies that the name Śiva here simply indicates Śrī Viṣṇu. The name of Śiva has also been listed in this way in the thousand names of Viṣṇu. Therefore the oneness referred to simply means that Śiva is nothing but a manifestation of Viṣṇu in another form. Consequently one should not see any difference between them. Otherwise if one thinks that Śiva is a separate and independently powerful Lord, that is an offence to the holy name.

(3) *guror avajñā* – To disregard the spiritual master who is established in all the truths regarding the holy name, considering him to be an ordinary man possessing a perishable body composed of material elements, is the third offence against the holy name.

(4) *śruti-sāstra-nindanam* – The fourth offence is to find fault with the Vedas, the Purāṇas that are in the mode of goodness [some are considered to be in the lower modes], and other scriptures.

(5) *tathārtha-vādo* – The fifth offence is to consider the glories of the holy name to be exaggerated.

(6) *hari-nāmni kalpanam* – The sixth offence is to ascribe one's own imaginary meaning to the holy name.

(7) *nāmno balād yasya hi pāpa-buddhir na vidyate tasya yamair hi suddhiḥ* – Persons who have the tendency to commit sinful actions on the strength of the holy name cannot be purified by any artificial processes of yoga, such as *yama* (control of the senses), *niyama* (control of the mind), *dhāraṇā* (steadying the mind), *dhyāna* (meditation) and so on. This is certain.

(8) *dharma-vrata-tyāga-hutādi-karma-śubha-kriyā-sāmyam api pramādaḥ* – To consider routine religion, penances, renunciation, sacrifices and other ordinary pious activities in the material mode of goodness (*sat-karma*) to be equal to the transcendental holy name of the Lord is negligence and is thus considered an offence.

(9) *aśraddadhāne vimukhe 'py aśṛṇvati yaś copadeśaḥ śiva-nāma-āparādhaḥ* – To instruct the glories of the holy name to faithless persons who are averse to hearing and chanting the holy name is also an offence.

(10) *śrutvāpi nāma-māhātmyam yaḥ pṛiti-rahito 'dhamah aham-mamādi-paramo nāmni so 'py aparādha-kṛt* – Those who, in spite of hearing the astonishing glories of the holy name, maintain the conception that “I am this material body” and that worldly objects are “mine”, and who display no persistence in or love for the utterance of the holy name, are also offenders to the holy name.

It is essential to chant the holy name free from these ten kinds of offence. A chanter of the holy name does not have to endeavour to dissipate sins by *sat-karma*, nor does he endeavour to accumulate pious credits like the fruitive workers. Such fruitive activities are no longer under his jurisdiction. In other words he has already relinquished the authority as well as the obligation to perform them.

If, however, one commits any offence against the holy name, he should constantly chant the holy name, feeling very aggrieved at heart. By such constant chanting of *harināma*,

there will be no opportunity to commit further offences and all previous offences will be destroyed.

This is stated in the *Padma Purāṇa* (*Svarga-khaṇḍa* 64):

*nāma-āparādha-yuktānām
nāmāny eva haranty agham
aviśrānti prayuktāni
tāny evārtha-karāṇi ca*

Only the holy name is able to destroy the sins of persons who are infested with *nāma-āparādha*. Therefore one should constantly chant the holy name of the Lord. By this process, all offences will be dissipated and one will obtain love for Kṛṣṇa, the highest attainment of life.

When all offences have thus been nullified, attachment will awaken for the holy name. At that time complete spiritual perfection will be attained. Here “complete spiritual perfection” implies love for Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-prema*). This is the second instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 20.17–19)

*aneka-lokera vāñchā – aneka-prakāra
kṛpāte karila aneka-nāmera pracāra
khāite suite yathā tathā nāma laya
kāla-deśa-niyama nāhi, sarva siddhi haya
“sarva-śakti nāme dilā kariyā vibhāga
āmāra durdaiva – nāme nāhi anurāga!”*

Those who are distracted from the Lord, being bound by the illusory energy, have innumerable desires for sense enjoyment in their hearts. Therefore they are cheated and deprived of their constitutional occupation, which is to engage in *bhagavad-bhakti*. The Supreme Lord is very merciful. Moved by great compassion, He has manifested His many names, and in the vibration of such names, He has not imposed any restrictions in regard to time, place or person. Even by chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the time of eating, drinking

and sleeping, all perfection is attained. Alas, Kṛṣṇa has invested all His potencies in His holy names, but I am so unfortunate that I have not even the slightest attachment for them.

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Two (Gitāvalī)

*tunhu dayā-sāgara tārayite prāṇi
nāma aneka tuyā śikhāoli āni'
sakala śakati dei nāme tohārā
grahaṇe rākhali nāhi kāla-vicārā
śrī-nāma-cintāmaṇi tohāri samānā
viśve bilāoli karuṇā-nidānā
tuyā dayā aichana parama udārā
atisaya manda nātha bhāga hāmārā
nāhi janamala nāme anurāga mora
bhaktivinoda-citta dukkhe vibhōra*

O ocean of mercy Śrī Kṛṣṇa, You have manifested Your innumerable names in this world just to deliver the living entities from the ocean of material existence. Out of Your kindness, You have invested all the potencies of Your respective transcendental forms into those names. In the chanting of the holy name, You have not placed any restrictions regarding time, place or other considerations. At any time, in any place, under any circumstance, the practising devotee can perform *japa*, *kīrtana* or *smaraṇa* of the holy name. Like Your transcendental form, the holy name is eternal, fully cognisant and spiritually blissful (*sac-cid-ānanda*), and it is superior even to *cintāmaṇi*, touchstone. You have distributed this touchstone-like holy name throughout the entire world. This is the topmost display of Your mercy. On the one hand Your mercy is extremely generous and beyond compare. Yet my misfortune is very great, for I have not even the slightest attraction towards the magnanimous name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Bhaktivinoda says, “My heart is overwhelmed with sadness. What shall I do? O Lord! Now I am simply waiting expectantly upon Your causeless mercy.”

Vivṛti

“O Bhagavān, out of Your causeless mercy, You have manifested innumerable names for the benefit of the entire world. You have invested each of those names with all the potencies of Your respective personal forms. In the chanting and remembrance of these names, You have not imposed any restrictions regarding when such chanting should be done. Even while eating, reclining or sleeping – at any time – one can chant the holy name of the Lord. There is no inconvenience in this whatsoever. Yet I am so unfortunate that I have not even the slightest attachment for chanting or remembering such liberal and magnanimous names.”

Primary and secondary names

It is mentioned above that the Lord manifests innumerable (*bahu*) names. The word *bahu* indicates that the Lord’s holy names are of two types: primary (*mukhya*) and secondary (*gauna*). The primary names are also of two types: *mādhurya* – names that represent the sweet, intimate, loving feature of the Lord, and *aiśvarya* – names that represent His opulent and reverential feature. Included in the first category are Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-ramaṇa and Gopījana-vallabha; in the second category are Vāsudeva, Rāma and Nṛsiṃha. The separated expansions of the Lord, or in other words, His partial manifestations such as Brahma, Paramātmā and so on, are included in the secondary names of the Lord. The principal names of the Lord are non-different from Him and are endowed with all the potencies that are to be found within His personal form. The secondary names are only partially endowed with select potencies.

The meaning of durdaiva

The living entity is *cetana*, conscious. The principal meaning of the word *cetana* is that the living entity has independence.

But when the *jīva* misuses his independence and remains uninterested in the Lord, he is bound in the perishable kingdom of *māyā*. This is his *durdaiva*, misfortune. The word *durdaiva* refers to the living entity's apathy towards the service of Bhagavān known as *bhagavat-sevā-vimukhatā*.

When the living entity embarks upon the threefold path of enjoyment – namely, *anyābhilāṣitā*, *karma* and *jñāna* – he forgets his true identity and thus meets with disaster. The term *anyābhilāṣitā* literally means “desirousness”. It refers to the state of being driven or impelled by material desires. Under the sway of *anyābhilāṣitā*, the living entity becomes intoxicated with desires to satisfy his own mind and body. In this way he becomes attached to the happiness of this inert material world.

The word *karma* refers to the duties prescribed in the Vedas directed towards superior enjoyment. The living entity engages in *sat-karma* in order to obtain fleeting heavenly pleasures. When, in the midst of such enjoyment, he is forced to experience distress, he renounces the inclination for material enjoyment. He then cultivates knowledge (*jñāna*) directed towards the liberation of merging into the impersonal, undifferentiated feature of the Supreme.

The name chanted with offences, the semblance of the holy name and the pure name

By some great fortune, the *jīva* obtains the association of the Lord's devotees. By the association of those devotees, by the instructions received from the spiritual master and by the mercy of the Lord, the living entity awakens a desire to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the eternal occupational duty of the *jīva* in his constitutional position.

At present, because the living entity remains covered by the impurities of the three paths cited above, his good fortune is severely impaired. Sometimes he remains busy in the pursuit of

threefold material happiness – namely, religiosity (*dharma*), accumulation of wealth (*artha*) and sense enjoyment (*kāma*). Sometimes, being disgraced by irreligiosity, personal defects and unsatisfied material desires, the *jīva* takes up the chanting of the holy name. Because he is infested with the ten offences, he commits still more offences to the name. At that time, the name he chants is not the pure holy name (*śuddha-nāma*), but the name chanted with offences (*nāma-āparādha*).

Sometimes, being harassed by his restless state, he avoids material sense gratification, hoping to obtain peace. For his welfare, he takes up the chanting of the holy name, but remains indifferent towards the cultivation of *sambandha-jñāna*. At that time also, the name that he chants is not the pure name, but *nāma-ābhāsa*, a semblance of the holy name. By chanting in the stage of *nāma-ābhāsa*, he becomes liberated from the materialistic conception of life and becomes eligible to take up the service of the Lord.

Pure devotees, having rid themselves of misfortune in the shape of mundane existence and impersonal liberation, chant the pure holy name of the Lord; consequently, they attain unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-prema*).

The process to attain freedom from *nāma-āparādha*

Observing the predicament of the conditioned living entities, Śrī Gaurasundara instructed them on the system for performing *nāma-bhajana*. The *jīvas*' absence of attachment for the holy name of Bhagavān is their misfortune. But in spite of such misfortune, the mercy of Bhagavān is always present. There is a method of becoming freed from the hands of *nāma-āparādha*. Considering offences to be like a thunderbolt, one should never engage in them, and by incessantly chanting the holy name, there will be no occasion to commit such offences.

By chanting a semblance of the name, one obtains *mukti*, or

in other words, freedom from attachment to material sense enjoyment. Thereafter, the *jīva* obtains qualification to chant the holy name purely. The attainment of all such opportunities is an indication of the mercy of Bhagavān. By the influence of the primary names – that is, Rādhā-kānta, Rādhā-ramaṇa, Madana-mohana, Govinda, Madhusūdana and other such names – the living entities attain exceptional and exclusive benefit.

Niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ

As far as the fulfilment of desires for insignificant material sense enjoyment is concerned, there are rigid considerations regarding time, place, person, eligibility and so on. But out of His mercy, Bhagavān has exonerated those who chant the holy name from the iron shackles of such inflexible strictures. At all times and in any condition, one can chant the holy name of Bhagavān.

In this connection, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has said the following in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya-khaṇḍa* 28.28, 23.78):

*ki śayane, ki bhojane, kivā jāgaraṇe
ahar-niśa cinta kṛṣṇa, balaha vadane*

Whether sleeping, eating or waking – day and night – chant and remember the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

sarva-kṣana bala' ithe vidhi nāhi āra

Just chant the holy name of the Lord at every moment! Other than this, there is no strict rule or regulation.

It is further stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-līlā* 20.18):

*khāite suite yathā tathā nāma laya
kāla-deśa-niyama nāhi, sarva siddhi haya*

The holy name may be chanted at any time, even while eating or sleeping. In this matter, there are no considerations of time

and place. By chanting the holy name, one will attain all perfection.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

Nija-sarva-śaktiḥ tatrārpitā

Śrī Kṛṣṇa has invested all potencies in His holy names, as stated in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.398), quoting from the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

*dāna-vrata-tapas-tīrtha-kṣetrādīnām ca yāḥ sthitaḥ
śaktayo deva-mahatām sarva-pāpa-harāḥ śubhāḥ
rājasūyāśvamedhānām jñānasyādhyātma-vastunaḥ
ākṛṣya hariṇā sarvāḥ sthāpitāḥ sveṣu nāmasu*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa invested all potencies in His holy names. Whatever potencies are to be found within the demigods to destroy sins or to bestow benedictions, as well as all potencies that are present within charity, vows, penances, holy places, the royal and horse sacrifices, or knowledge of spiritual phenomena, have been assembled by the Supreme Lord and invested in His holy names.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed the following Bengali verse in this connection (*Bhajana-rahasya* (2.3)):

*dharmā-yajña-yoga-jñāne yata śakti chila
saba hari-nāme kṛṣṇa svayam samarpila*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa extracted all the potencies that are present in the strict observation of the rules and regulations related to one's caste or creed (*dharmā*), the performance of sacrifices (*yajña*), the practice of mystic *yoga* and the cultivation of spiritual knowledge (*jñāna*), and conferred them upon His holy names.

Niyamitaḥ smarṇe na kālah

There are no rules regarding the time for chanting and remembering the name of Bhagavān. In the performance of *nāma-bhajana*, there are no considerations such as whether one is clean or unclean, purified or unpurified, or whether the

occasion is timely or untimely. This is corroborated in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (11.411), quoting from the *Vaiṣvānara-saṁhitā*:

*na deśa-kāla-niyamo
na śaucāśauca-nirṇayaḥ
paraṁ saṅkīrtanād eva
rāma-rāmeti mucyate*

In *nāma-bhajana*, there are no rules regarding time and place, nor are there any considerations of cleanliness or uncleanness. Simply by repeating the holy names “Rāma, Rāma”, the living entities obtain liberation from material existence.

Durdaivam idṛṣam ihājani nānurāgaḥ

But we are so unfortunate that we have not even the least attachment for Your holy name, which bestows all benedictions. The characteristics of such misfortune have been stated in *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (10.466), quoting from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.9.7):

*daivena te hata-dhiyo bhavataḥ prasaṅgāt
sarvāsubhoṣaṁānād vimukhendriyā ye
kurvanti kāma-sukha-leśa-lavāya dinā
lobhābhībhūta-manaso 'kuśalāni śaśvat*

O Bhagavān, by hearing, chanting and remembering narrations of Your divine pastimes, all misfortune is driven away. Persons who are averse to such hearing and chanting, which mitigate all distress, continuously engage in inauspicious activities, their hearts being overcome with an obsession to enjoy worthless material sense gratification. Due to their ill-fate, they are unfortunate and bereft of all good sense.

Verse Three

What is the process of chanting the holy name?

तृणादपि सुनीचेन तरोरपि सहिष्णुना ।
अमानिना मानदेन कीर्तनीयः सदा हरिः ॥३॥

tṛṇād api sunīcena
taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

Anvaya

tṛṇāt api sunīcena – being completely free from materialistic pride and considering oneself even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass that has been trampled beneath everyone’s feet; *taror api sahiṣṇunā* – being more tolerant than a tree; *amāninā* – being prideless; *mānadena* – giving respect to others in accordance with their respective positions; *sadā hariḥ kīrtanīyaḥ* – always incessantly chant the holy name of Śrī Hari.

Translation

Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass that has been trampled beneath everyone’s feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless and offering respect to all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Śrī Hari.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

Four symptoms are observed in the *sādhaka* who chants the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa free from all offences: (1) natural

humility born of complete detachment from material sense gratification, (2) pure compassion devoid of envy, (3) purity of heart free from materialistic false ego and (4) an attitude of respect towards everyone in accordance with their respective positions.

1. Tṛṇād api sunīcena: Humbler than a blade of grass

When the holy name, which is the personification of transcendental *rasa*, makes its appearance in the heart of the *sādhaka*, it overwhelms his heart and he begins to think thus: “Aho, I am by nature infinitesimal consciousness and a servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I have absolutely no use for mundane material objects. Alas! Alas! Due to my apathy towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I now find myself in a miserable plight. I have fallen into the cycle of repeated birth and death, and I am being scorched by various kinds of afflictions. By the mercy of the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas, I have now understood that my indifference can be dissipated only by executing the *sādhana* of devotion unto the Supreme Lord.

“By becoming situated again in my constitutional identity, I can obtain love for the Lord. Therefore until, by the grace of Bhagavān, I obtain release from material existence, I shall have to take support of the principle of appropriate renunciation (*yukta-vairāgya*). While cultivating that knowledge which is relevant to the development of my relationship with Bhagavān (*sambandha-jñāna*), I will accept only those things which are appropriate for the maintenance of life.

“Misery arising from scarcity, disease, lamentation and old age, as well as happiness arising from wealth, good health, strength, knowledge and so on are all manifest reactions of previous activities, known as *prārabdha-karma*. These I will certainly have to enjoy or suffer. Loss and gain, life and death, happiness and distress are not *pāramārthika*, meaning that they

have nothing to do with ultimate spiritual reality. Therefore I have absolutely no use for these mundane subjects. Thinking in this way, I shall say with great humility, ‘Alas, Alas! Kṛṣṇa! Gauracandra! O Lord of my very life! When shall I obtain unadulterated service unto You? Please be merciful upon this wretched and fallen soul, and accept me without delay.’ Speaking in this way, I shall pass my days, somehow or other, living either at home or in the forest.

“Even though grass is a material object, its ego in respect to matter is natural and reasonable. But my ego in respect to the present subtle and gross material bodies is fundamentally wrong, because it is not related to my pure constitutional nature. The ego of grass is real, but my material ego is unreal. Therefore it is only proper for me to become even lower than a blade of grass.”

2. **Taror api sahiṣṇunā: More tolerant than a tree**

The meaning of the statement *taror api sahiṣṇunā* is that the tree is so tolerant it does not neglect to offer its shade and sweet fruits even to the person who comes to cut it down. Because the devotee of Kṛṣṇa is even more merciful than the tree, he does good to all – both friend and enemy. This compassion, free from envy, is the second symptom of saintly persons engaged in the performance of *harināma-kīrtana*.

Persons who chant the holy name free from all offences think as follows: “O Lord, my associates, who are all among the group of conditioned souls, are very unfortunate. How may they obtain attachment for Your all-auspicious holy name? Being blinded by the illusory energy, they are submerged in the happiness and distress of wife and children, wealth and property, victory and defeat, loss and gain, and birth and death. They are filled with *anarthas*, and have not even the slightest detachment from mundane matter. They are bound by the stringent ropes of innumerable desires for sense enjoyment. At

all times, they are busily engaged in seeking the fruit of *karma* and *jñāna*. The fruit of *karma* is the momentary happiness of material enjoyment available in this world or in the heavenly planets. This momentary happiness ultimately leads to suffering. The fruit of *jñāna* is impersonal liberation. How may the desire be awakened in them to perceive their actual form?" Speaking thus, the practising devotee, being deeply moved with emotion, begins to sing in a very loud voice (*Bṛhan-nāradiya Purāṇa* (38.126)):

*harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

In Kali-yuga, there is no other way, there is no other way, there is no other way, than chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari.

3. *Amānī*: Absence of false prestige

The word *amānī* indicates the third symptom of the *sādhaka* engaged in the performance of *kīrtana*, namely that he is free from false ego. All egotism arising from mystic powers, material opulence, wealth, beauty, high birth, social status, strength, prestige and high position associated with the gross and subtle bodies of the living entity who is bound by the illusory energy, is false and opposed to his real identity. To be free from such false designations is to be devoid of false ego.

One who, in spite of possessing all these qualifications, is further ornamented with the qualities of tolerance and freedom from false ego is most competent to chant the holy name. Such a pure practising devotee, completely renouncing the pride of being a *brāhmaṇa* householder, or the egotism of being in the renounced order of life, fixes his mind exclusively on the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and engages constantly in the *kīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa's name.

4. Mānada: Offering all respect to others

Lastly, the word *mānada* indicates the fourth symptom of a *sādhaka* engaged in the chanting of the holy name, namely that he offers respect to everyone as befits their respective position. Understanding all living entities to be servants of Kṛṣṇa, they bear no attitude of malice or vengeance towards anyone. They please everyone with their sweet words and auspicious behaviour, which are intended for the good of the entire world. They humbly offer respect as befits any individual's position, whether he be a qualified *brāhmaṇa* or other dignified person of this world, or whether he be an exalted demigod such as Brahmā or Rudra. They pray to them for the awakening of devotion unto the Supreme Lord. In particular, they thoroughly and lovingly engage themselves in the service of the pure devotees of the Lord.

Thus *śrī-kṛṣṇa-sankīrtana*, performed with the four above-mentioned symptoms, is the only method of attaining the topmost perfection of human life. This is the instruction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the incarnation who delivers the conditioned souls in Kali-yuga.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 20.22–6)

*uttama hañā āpanāke māne tṛṇādhama
 dui-prakāre sahiṣṇutā kare vṛkṣa-sama
 vṛkṣa yena kāṭileha kichu nā bolaya
 sukāñā maileha kāre pāni nā māgaya
 yei ye māgaye, tāre deya āpana-dhana
 gharma-vṛṣṭi sahe, ānera karaye rakṣaṇa
 uttama hañā vaiṣṇava habe nīrabhimāna
 jīve sammāna dibe jāni' 'kṛṣṇa'-adhiṣṭhāna
 ei-mata hañā yei kṛṣṇa-nāma laya
 śrī-kṛṣṇa-carāṇe tāñra prema upajaya*

In spite of being very exalted, a chanter of the holy name considers himself to be even more worthless and insignificant than lowly grass. He is as tolerant as a tree in two ways. Even at the time of being cut, a tree raises no protest. Although being dried up and on the verge of death, it will ask water from no one. Yet to anyone who requests something from it, the tree will offer its fruit, flowers, wood, bark and sap – everything that it has. The tree, while personally tolerating all kinds of heat and rain, offers protection to others from the same hardships. Similarly, a Vaiṣṇava desires nothing for himself, but gives everything to others and offers them protection to the extent of giving them their constitutional occupation of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. In spite of being the most elevated person, a Vaiṣṇava is devoid of false ego. He offers respect to everyone as befits their position, knowing everyone to be the residence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such a person is genuinely fit to chant Kṛṣṇa's name. Only those who chant the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa endowed with such qualifications obtain love for Him.

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Three (Gītāvali)

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-kirtane yadi mānasa tohāra
parama yatane tañhi labha adhikāra
tṛṇādhika hīna, dīna, akiñcana chāra
āpane mānabi sadā chāḍi' ahankāra
vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa karabi sādhana
pratihimsā tyaji' anye karabi pālana
jīvana-nirvāhe āne udvega nā dibe
para-upakāre nija-sukha pāsaribe
haile-o sarva-guṇe guṇi mahāsaya
pratiṣṭhāsā chāḍi' kara amāni hṛdaya
kṛṣṇa-adhiṣṭhāna sarva-jīve jāni' sadā
karabi sammāna sabe ādare sarvadā
dainya, dayā, anye māna, pratiṣṭhā-varjana
cāri guṇe guṇi hai', karaha kīrtana*

*bhaktivinoda kāṇḍi, bale prabhu-pāya
hena adhikāra kabe dibe he āmāya*

If you desire to chant the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then you must sincerely endeavour to acquire proper qualification. Give up your false material ego and consider yourself to be more fallen and insignificant than lowly grass. Become as tolerant and forgiving as a tree. Abandon violence and the spirit of vengeance, and give protection and maintenance to all. For the maintenance of your own existence, do not create anxiety for anyone. Renounce your own happiness and work for the welfare of all others. Although you may be a repository of all good qualities, shun the aspiration to acquire reputation and prestige. Know all living entities to be the residence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and humbly offer respect to everyone according to their position. Being thus possessed of four qualities – humility, compassion, respect for others and renunciation of the desire for personal prestige, chant the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Crying again and again, Bhaktivinoda prays at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord: “O my Lord, when will You give me the qualification to chant the holy name?”

Vivṛti

By his constitutional nature, the *jīva* is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, whether residing in this world or in the spiritual world, the chanting of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the eternal occupational duty of the living entity. The holy name is both the means of attainment (*upāya*) as well as the object to be obtained (*upeya*), both for self-fulfilment and for rendering benefit to others. Nothing else can compare with it. By the chanting of the holy name, all types of auspiciousness arise, both for oneself and for others. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, out of His mercy upon the living entities, composed the verse *ṭṭṇād api sunicena* in order to describe how the *jīvas* may chant the holy name free from *nāma-āparādha* and *nāma-ābhāsa*.

Those who have no inclination at heart to serve Kṛṣṇa and who are intoxicated with material enjoyment can never acknowledge their insignificance. Such recognition is foreign to the functional make-up of the hedonists. Tolerance is also absent from their character. The hedonists can never give up their false ego and material prestige. No material sense enjoyer is inclined to offer respect to another material sense enjoyer. Their nature is to be envious of one another.

On the other hand, the Vaiṣṇavas, who are forever dedicated to the worship of the holy name, are even humbler than a blade of grass; they are more tolerant than a tree; and while remaining indifferent towards their own prestige, they are always eager to offer respect to others. In this material world, they alone are competent and able to chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.

The respect that pure Vaiṣṇavas offer to their respective spiritual masters and other Vaiṣṇavas is inspired by their innate propensity to honour others. This is known as *svabhāvika-mānada-dharma*. In order to enthuse their followers or dependents in *bhajana*, pure devotees display affection and encouragement towards them. This is done out of their natural pridelessness. This is known as *amāni-svabhāva*. In other words the respect, honour and affection that such devotees offer is due to the innate feeling of the heart. Pure devotees do not consider such affectionate words of appreciation to be cheap material flattery. Furthermore, by tolerating the taunting remarks of the foolish, they exhibit their quality of forbearance.

Pure devotees constantly engaged in chanting the holy name consider themselves to be even lower than the straw in the street that is trampled beneath the feet of all living entities in this world. They never think of themselves as *gurus* or Vaiṣṇavas. They consider themselves to be disciples of the

entire world and the most fallen and insignificant of all. Knowing every atom and every infinitesimal living entity to be the residence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they do not consider anything to be inferior to themselves. Devotees absorbed in chanting the holy name never desire nor request anything for themselves from anyone else in this world. Even if others bear malice towards them or commit violence against them, they never retaliate nor adopt a vengeful attitude; on the contrary, they pray to the Lord for the welfare of their tormentors.

The devotees who chant the holy name adorned with the above-mentioned qualities never abandon the devotional process received from their spiritual master in order to propagate new and divergent views. They do not fabricate concocted verses and chant those in place of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. To preach the glories of the holy name, to write books based on unalloyed devotion and to perform *kirtana*, all under the guidance of the spiritual master, is not opposed to the principle of Vaiṣṇava humility. In such activities there is no transgression of humility, for the devotee always considers himself to be low and fallen. Conversely, a false display of humility through speech or behaviour to deceive others for some ulterior motive, in one who is lacking genuine simplicity, is not the true sign of humility.

The topmost devotees of the Lord (*uttama-mahā-bhāgavatas*), while engaged in chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, never consider the moving and stationary entities within this material world to be items for their own enjoyment; rather, they see this entire material world as favourable for the service of Kṛṣṇa and the devotees of Kṛṣṇa. In other words they see everything in this world as related to Kṛṣṇa; they see all moving entities as servants of Kṛṣṇa and all non-moving entities as enjoyable by Kṛṣṇa.

They never think this material world to be for their own

enjoyment, but for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment. They never invent new *mantras*, giving up the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* that they obtained from their spiritual master. They do not engage in propagating new theories and opinions.

To regard oneself as a *guru* of Vaiṣṇavas is an impediment to one's humility. Those who do not listen to the instructions of Śikṣāṣṭaka set forth by Śrī Gaurasundara, who are forgetful of their actual spiritual identity, who are greedy for prestige and material gain and who are thus anxious to obtain the status of Vaiṣṇava or *guru* to satisfy their senses, can never chant the holy name of the Lord. A disciple who has faith in the *kīrtana* performances of such persons also cannot obtain qualification for hearing the holy name. Therefore one should chant the holy name of the Lord while considering oneself lower than the straw in the street, being more tolerant than a tree, devoid of false prestige and offering all respect to others.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

Kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ

Everyone should chant the holy name of the Lord at all times. This is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.11):

*etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto bhayaṁ
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītam
harer nāmānukīrtanam*

[Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said:] O King, it has been decided by previous *ācāryas* that whether one be an unalloyed devotee, thoroughly detached from material existence, whether one be desirous of elevation to the heavenly planets or liberation, or whether one be a self-satisfied *yogī*, one should in all cases hear, chant and remember the transcendental names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Hari. These three activities are considered to be the supreme form of *sādhana* and *sādhya*. In other words previous *ācāryas* have determined that these three activities are

VERSE THREE

both the means of attaining perfection as well as the goal to be obtained by such practice for all types of persons.

First of all, one must give up the bodily conception of life. This is stated by Śrīman Kulaśekhara in the *Mukunda-mālā-stotra* (37):

*idaṁ sarīraṁ śata-sandhi-jarjjaraṁ
pataty avaśyaṁ pariṇāma-peśalam
kim auśadhīm ꣳcchasi mūḍha durmate
nirāmayam kṛṣṇa-rasāyanam ꣳiba*

O fool, O dull-headed creature, this constantly mutable body, which is afflicted by innumerable attachments, will surely perish one day. What medicine are you seeking to remedy this situation? Just incessantly drink the medicine of the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which destroys the disease of this material existence, the source of all other diseases.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed the following Bengali verses in this connection (*Bhajana-rahasya* (3.3)):

*śata sandhi jara-jara, tava ei kalevara,
patana haibe eka-dina
bhasma, kṛmi, viṣṭhā habe, sakalera ghrṇya tabe,
ihāte mamatā arvācīna
ore mana, śuna mora e satya-vacana,
e rogera mahauśadhi, kṛṣṇa-nāma-niravadhi,
nirāmaya kṛṣṇa-rasāyana*

Your material body, which is afflicted by hundreds of attachments, will undoubtedly perish one day. It will then transform into ashes, worms and stool, and become most abominable to all. Therefore to become attached to this body is certainly foolish. O mind, just listen to my truthful words. The only remedy for this disease is to constantly hear, chant and remember the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This elixir (*rasāyana*) of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy name is the only cure for all diseases.

Verse Four

What is the desire of the sādḥaka?

न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरीं कवितां वा जगदीश कामये ।
मम जन्मनि जन्मनीश्वरे भवताद्भक्तिरहैतुकी त्वयि ॥४॥

*na dhanam na janam na sundarīm
kavitām vā jagadīśa kāmaye
mama janmani janmaniśvare
bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi*

Anvaya

(he) jagadīśa! (aham) dhanam na, janam na, sundarīm kavitām vā na kāmaye – O Lord of the universe, I do not desire wealth, followers such as wife, sons and relatives, or mundane knowledge expressed in poetic language; *mama janmani janmani* – my only prayer is that in birth after birth; *tvayi īśvare ahaitukī bhaktiḥ bhavatāt* – (I) may have unadulterated devotion unto You, my dear Lord.

Translation

O Lord of the universe, I do not desire wealth, followers such as wife, sons, friends and relatives, or mundane knowledge expressed in poetic language. My only desire, O Lord, is that in birth after birth I may have unmotivated devotion unto Your lotus feet.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

The sādḥaka possessed of faith should first of all hear the holy name of Śrī Hari emanating from the mouth of the spiritual master. Thereafter, being freed from all offences, he should

chant *harināma* with great faith. By chanting the Lord's name according to this method, the four symptoms mentioned in Verse Three will manifest in his heart. But accompanying this positive assertion (*anvaya*) is a negative consideration (*vyatireka*). If the *sādhaka* does not give up all connection with the sensual happiness of this material world, his pure spiritual form will not arise. Without the awakening of his real spiritual identity, *bhakti*, whose essence is the *hlādinī* potency, cannot be transformed into *bhāva-bhakti*, devotion characterised by ecstatic love.

It is in consideration of this that the pure character of *sādhana-bhakti* in the form of *śrī-nāma-saṅkīrtana* is being clearly described by negative indication in the first two lines of this verse (*na dhanam na janam*, etc.). The positive indication refers to *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*, the intrinsic characteristic of *bhakti*. In defining an object the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa* refers to those characteristics which are part of its fundamental nature (*svarūpa*). The intrinsic characteristic of *bhakti* is that it involves the cultivation of activities favourable to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is known as *ānukūlyamaya kṛṣṇānuśilana*.

The negative indication refers to *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa*, the extrinsic characteristics of *bhakti*. In defining an object the *taṭastha-lakṣaṇa* refers either to those characteristics which are visible by-products of the inherent quality, or symptoms which are excluded from the object. In the second case they help to define the object by describing what it is not. There are two extrinsic characteristics of *bhakti*: (1) *anyābhilāṣitā-śunya – bhakti* is devoid of all desires for anything other than the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa and (2) *jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛta – bhakti* should not be covered by fruitive activity (*karma*), the cultivation of impersonal knowledge (*jñāna*) and so on. As long as the cultivation of activities favourable to Śrī Kṛṣṇa remains covered by *anyābhilāṣa*, *karma*, *jñāna* and *yoga*, it does not become

śuddha- or *uttama-bhakti*; rather, it remains as a mere semblance of *bhakti*.

In order to dissipate the semblance (*ābhāsa*) referred to here, the following instruction is being given: “O Jagadīśa, I do not desire wealth, followers or beautiful poetry.” The word *dhana* refers to the wealth of religiosity of those who are devoutly engaged in the performance of duties in *varṇāśrama*. It also refers to all varieties of desires for material enjoyment in this world and in the heavenly planets, and all paraphernalia for the enjoyment of the gross and subtle senses, such as wealth, property and so on.

The word *jana* refers to women, sons, servants, maidservants, subjects, friends and relatives. The word *vidyā* is defined in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.29.49): “*sā vidyā tan-matir yayā* – that by which the intellect remains firmly situated at the lotus feet of Bhagavān is known as real knowledge.” But the words *sundarī kavitā* refer to ordinary knowledge related to mundane poetry. They do not refer to transcendental poetry related to the descriptions of Bhagavān’s pastimes, philosophical principles establishing Him as the Supreme, and glorifications of Him.

Lord Caitanya, praying in the mood of a devotee, says: “I do not pray to You for all these things. My only prayer is that birth after birth I may have unmotivated devotion (*ahaitukī-bhakti*) unto You, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of my life.” *Ahaitukī-bhakti* is here defined as having the following characteristics: (1) *phala-anusandhāna-rahita* – it is devoid of the result-seeking mentality, (2) *cinmaya-svabhāva-āśraya* – it is fully transcendental and sentient in nature, (3) *kṛṣṇānanda-rūpa* – it gives pleasure to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, (4) *śuddha* – it is pure, (5) *kevalā* – it is exclusive, (6) *amiśrā* – it is unmixed and (7) *akiñcana* – it is free from all material attachments.

The endeavour to remove the miseries of material existence in the form of repeated birth and death is a matter beyond the ability of the living entities, for it depends exclusively on the will of Bhagavān. One's liberation from all miseries occurs automatically upon cessation of the cycle of birth and death, which takes place by the will of the Lord. Therefore what is the need of praying for the removal of such miseries, when such a mentality is opposed to *bhakti*? Lord Caitanya thus prays: "Until the cycle of birth and death is terminated by the will of Bhagavān, let me have unmotivated devotion unto His lotus feet birth after birth, regardless of my material circumstances – this is my only prayer."

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 20.27, 28, 30–1)

*‘suddha-bhakti’ kṛṣṇa-thāñi māgite lāgilā
 premera svabhāva – yāhāñ premera sambandha
 sei māne,—‘kṛṣṇe mora nāhi prema gandha’
 dhana, jana nāhi māgoñ, kavitā sundarī
 ‘suddha-bhakti’ deha’ more, kṛṣṇa kṛpā kari
 ati-dainye punaḥ māge dāsya-bhakti-dāna
 āpanāre kare saṁsāri jīva-abhimāna*

Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, considering Himself to be an ordinary conditioned soul, prays to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for unalloyed devotion. The nature of divine love (*prema*) is such that whoever possesses it begins to think that they have not even a scent of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Therefore Śrīman Mahāprabhu, who is the very embodiment of *prema*, says: "I do not want wealth, followers such as wife, sons, friends and relatives, or the pleasure of mundane knowledge expressed in poetic language. O most compassionate Śrī Kṛṣṇa, please bestow causeless mercy upon me and give me only pure devotion for You. Again and again I humbly beg for the gift of devotional service at Your lotus feet."

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Four (Gitāvali)

*prabhu tava pada-yuge mora nivedana
 nāhi māgi deha-sukha, vidyā, dhana, jana
 nāhi māgi svarga, āra mokṣa nāhi māgi
 nā kari prārthanā kona vibhūtira lāgi'
 nija-karma-guṇa-doṣe ye ye janma pāi
 janme janme yena tava nāma-guṇa gāi
 ei mātra āsā mama tomāra caraṇe
 ahaitukī bhakti hṛde jāge anukṣaṇe
 viṣaye ye prīti ebe āchaye āmāra
 sei-mata prīti hauka caraṇe tomāra
 vipade sampade tāhā thākuka samabhāve
 dine dine vṛddhi hauka nāmera prabhāve
 paśu-pakṣi ha'ye thāki svarge vā niraye
 tava bhakti rahu bhaktivinoda-hṛdaye*

O merciful Lord, this is my specific submission at Your lotus feet. I do not ask for bodily happiness, knowledge, wealth, followers, attainment of the heavenly planets, liberation from material existence, or any other such thing. I do not ask You for any kind of opulence or perfection. In whatever species I may take birth as a consequence of my good and evil deeds, may I continuously chant Your sweet names and describe Your transcendental qualities. In every birth, may unmotivated devotion ever remain awakened within my heart – this is my only prayer at Your lotus feet. Let whatever attraction I presently have for material sense enjoyment be transformed into attraction and affection for Your lotus feet. I pray not only that this affection for Your lotus feet remain steady in all circumstances of happiness and distress, but that day after day it continues to grow by the influence of the chanting of Your holy names. Wherever I take birth, be it in the animal species, in the heavenly planets, or in hell, may unadulterated devotion ever grace the heart of this servant, Bhaktivinoda.

Vivṛti

“O Lord of the universe, I do not desire wealth, followers or the pleasure of chanting beautiful poetry adorned with literary embellishments. You are my worshipful Lord birth after birth. My only desire is that I may have unmotivated devotion unto Your lotus feet.”

The words *sundarī kavītā* refer to material religiosity prescribed in the Vedas. The word *dhana* refers to wealth, and *jana* refers to wife, children, family and so on.

“I reject not only *bhukti*, material enjoyment, in the form of religiosity (*dharma*), accumulation of wealth (*artha*) and sense enjoyment (*kāma*), but liberation (*mokṣa*) as well. I do not desire liberation from the cycle of repeated birth and death. I do not desire engagement in service unto You in order to obtain the four Vedic goals: *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*. I desire to serve You only for Your own pleasure.”

The prayer of King Kulaśekhara from *Mukunda-mālā-stotra* (4–5) is worthy of consideration here:

*nāhaṁ vande tava-caraṇayor dvandvam advandva-hetoh
kumbhīpākaṁ gurum api hare nārakaṁ nāpanetum
ramyā-rāmā-mṛdu-tanu-latā nandane nābhirantuṁ
bhāve bhāve hṛdaya-bhavane bhāvayeyaṁ bhavantam*

O Lord Hari, I do not pray to Your lotus feet to obtain monistic liberation. I do not pray for deliverance from the hell known as Kumbhīpāka or any other dreadful hell. I do not pray to enjoy the company of exquisitely beautiful, heavenly damsels in the Nandana-kānana pleasure gardens of the heavenly planets. I only pray that life after life I can meditate upon You with great love in the temple of my heart.

*nāsthā dharme na vasu-nicaye naiva kāmopabhoge
yad yad bhavyaṁ bhavatu bhagavan pūrva-karmānurūpam
etad prārthyāṁ mama bahu-mataṁ janma-janmāntare 'pi
tvat-ṣādāmbhoruha-yuga-gatā nīscalā bhaktir astu*

O Bhagavān, I have no regard for *varṇāśrama-dharma*, which consists of pious activities related to the body and mind. I have no desire to accumulate wealth, nor to enjoy material pleasure. Whatever reactions I am destined to suffer or enjoy for the activities of my previous life, let them come. My only prayer is that in birth after birth I may have unflinching *prema-bhakti* towards Your lotus feet.

Persons possessing faith in the Vedas and who are desirous of routine religiosity worship Sūrya, the sun-god. Those who desire wealth worship Gaṇeśa. Those who desire varieties of sensual enjoyment worship the goddess Durgā. Those who desire liberation worship Śiva, and the adulterated devotees worship Lord Viṣṇu through *sakāma-bhakti*, devotion mixed with material desires. Worship of these five personalities is known as *pañcopāsana*. *Pañcopāsana* is *sakāma-upāsana*, worship with material desires. Whereas worship of the Lord's undifferentiated impersonal feature, Brahman, is effected in the *niškāma* stage of freedom from attachment to the results of one's activities, Lord Viṣṇu is worshipped purely by devotion free from adulteration or personal motivation.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

Exclusive unmotivated devotional service, known as *ekāntikī-ahaitukī-bhakti*, is depicted in various places in the scriptures, as in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.14):

*tasmād ekena manasā
bhagavān sātvatām paṭiḥ
śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca
dhyeyaḥ pūjyaś ca nityadā*

With one-pointed attention, pure devotees, being devoid of all desires for mundane religiosity, accumulation of wealth, sense enjoyment and liberation, should constantly hear about, glorify, meditate upon and worship the names, form, qualities and pastimes of Bhagavān Śrī Hari, who is the protector of the devotees.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says in this connection (*Bhajana-rahasya* (4.6)):

*ananya-bhāvete kara śravaṇa-kirtana
nāma-rūpa-guṇa-dhyāna-kṛṣṇa-ārādhana
saṅge saṅge anartha-nāsera yatna kara
bhakti-latā phala-dāna karibe satvara*

One should hear about, glorify and meditate upon the transcendental names, form, qualities, pastimes and associates of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with undivided attention. Simultaneously, one should worship Kṛṣṇa in all respects. One should endeavour to eliminate all *anarthas*, the impediments to spiritual advancement. Only then can the creeper of devotion quickly bear fruit.

The devotee has no desire to attain the heavenly planets, Brahmaloḥa, sovereignty over the entire earth, rulership of Rasātala, or the eight or eighteen mystic perfections. All these things are worthless to him. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.11.25):

*na nāka-prṣṭham na ca pārameṣṭhyam
na sārva-bhauṁam na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā
samañjasa tvā virahasya kāṅkṣe*

[Śrī Vṛtrāsura prayed:] O Lord, who are the abode of all auspiciousness, I have no desire to attain Dhruvaloka, Brahmaloḥa or sovereignty over the Earth. I do not desire the eight mystic perfections (such as *añimā* and *mahimā*), the nine priceless jewels of Kuvera (*padma*, *mahāpadma*, *śaṅkha*, *makara*, *kacchapa*, *kunda*, *mukunda*, *nila* and *kharva*), nor even liberation, if I have to give up service to You.

The symptoms of advancement in unmotivated devotion are given in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.42):

*bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣud-apāyo 'nughāsam*

[Śrī Kavi said:] With each morsel of food that a hungry person takes, three effects are simultaneously accomplished: he obtains satisfaction, nourishment and cessation of hunger. Similarly, surrendered souls engaged in the performance of *bhajana* simultaneously experience three effects: the awakening of *bhakti* ultimately developing into *prema*, direct manifestation of the Lord's beloved form and detachment from material objects.

One should endeavour to attain devotion that is purely unmotivated. This is stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.5.18):

*tasyaiva hetoḥ prayateta kovido
na labhyate yad bhramatām upary-adhaḥ
tal labhyate duḥkhavad anyataḥ sukhaṁ
kālena sarvatra gabhīra-ramhasā*

[Śrī Nārada said:] As misery is obtained without any endeavour by the effect of one's past fruitive activities, material happiness is also acquired automatically by the unfathomable influence of irrepressible time. Therefore intelligent persons should strive for that supreme object which cannot be achieved even by wandering from the highest region of the universe, Brahmāloka, down to the lowest position of stationary life.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has expressed the same in these Bengali verses (*Bhajana-rahasya* (4.15)):

*vinā yatne duḥkhera ghaṭanā yena haya
sei rūpa kāla-krame sukhera udaya
ataeva caudda-loke durlabha ye dhana
sei bhakti janya yatna kare budha-gaṇa*

As misery is obtained without any endeavour, happiness will also come of its own accord in due course of time. Therefore intelligent persons do not endeavour even slightly for mundane religiosity, accumulation of wealth, sense gratification, liberation and so forth. They endeavour only for *bhakti*, which is the rarest treasure within the fourteen planetary systems.

Verse Five

What is the intrinsic form of the *sādhaka*?

अयिनन्दतनुज किङ्करं पतितं मां विषमे भवाम्बुधौ ।
कृपया तव पादपङ्कजस्थितधूलीसदृशं विचिन्तय ॥५॥

*ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram
patitam mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-pankaja-
sthita-dhūli-sadṛśam vicintaya*

Anvaya

ayi nanda-tanuja – O son of Mahārāja Nanda; *mām kṛpayā* – being merciful upon me; *kiṅkaram* – Your eternal servant; *patitam* – fallen; *viṣame bhava-ambudhau* – in the dreadful ocean of material existence; *vicintaya* – please consider (me); *dhūli-sadṛśam* – like a particle of dust; *tava pāda-pankaja-sthita* – affixed to Your lotus feet (in other words as Your eternally purchased servant).

Translation

O son of Nanda Mahārāja, please be merciful upon me, Your eternal servant, fallen in the dreadful ocean of material existence as a result of my fruitive actions. Please consider me as a particle of dust affixed to Your lotus feet and accept me forever as Your purchased servant.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

Is it proper for the *sādhaka* who has taken up the process of *harināma-saṅkīrtana* to reflect upon the miseries of material existence? To dispel this doubt, Śrī Gaurasundara has presented us this verse.

“O Nanda-nandana, in reality, I am Your eternal servant. But now I have fallen into this dreadful ocean of material existence as a result of my own misdeeds. Lust, anger, envy and other contaminations are like crocodiles with ferocious gaping mouths ready to swallow me up. Drifting here and there in the waves of wicked hopes and misplaced anxieties, I am severely oppressed. The powerful blasts of wind in the form of corrupt association have scattered my wits. In such a condition, I have no shelter other than You.

“Fruitive activity, impersonal knowledge, mystic *yoga*, austerity and so on are like bunches of straw that are seen floating here and there. But has anyone succeeded in crossing the ocean of material existence by taking shelter of them? Sometimes persons drowning in the ocean of material existence grab hold of these bunches of straw and pull them down along with them.

“Now there is no refuge other than Your mercy. Your holy name alone is the only sturdy boat, taking shelter of which, the *jīva* can easily cross the ocean of material existence. Considering all this, I have taken shelter of the very firm boat of Your holy name by the causeless mercy of the lotus feet of the spiritual master. You are very affectionate to the surrendered souls. Please forgive all my faults, because I am without any other shelter, and consider me as a particle of dust at Your lotus feet. Then I shall never be separate from Your lotus feet.”

This is the purport of the above-mentioned verse. It is to be understood from this that the *bhakti-sādhaka* must completely renounce the desires for material enjoyment and liberation.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 20.33–5)

*tomāra nitya-dāsa mui, tomā pāsariyā
paḍiyāchoṅ bhavāṛṇave māyā-baddha hañā*

*kṛpā kari' kara more pada-dhūli-sama
tomāra sevaka karoṅ tomāra sevana
punaḥ ati-utkanṭhā, dainya haila udgama
kṛṣṇa-ṭhāñi māge prema-nāma-saṅkirtana*

“O Lord, I am Your eternal servant. Due to great misfortune, I have abandoned You. Being bound by *māyā*, I am drowning in the bottomless ocean of material existence. Kindly accept me as a particle of dust at Your lotus feet. I shall become Your servant and eternally render service unto You.” Speaking in this way, great longing welled up within the heart of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In a very humble mood, He again began to pray to Śrī Kṛṣṇa to awaken love for *nāma-saṅkirtana*.

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Five (Gitāvalī)

*anādi karama-phale, paḍi' bhavārṇava jale,
taribāre nā dekhi upāya
e viśaya-halāhale, divā-niśi hiyā jvale,
mana kabhu sukha nāhi pāya
āśā-pāśa śata-śata, kleśa deya avirata,
pravṛtti-ūrmira tāhe khelā
kāma-krodha-ādi chaya, vāṭapāḍe deya bhaya,
avasāna haila āśi' belā
jñāna-karma-ṭhaga-dui, more pratāriyā lai,
avaśeṣe phele sindhu-jale
e hena samaye bandhu, tumi kṛṣṇa kṛpā-sindhu,
kṛpā kari' tola more bale
patita-kiṅkare dhari,' pāda-padma-dhūli kari,'
deha bhaktivinoda āśraya
āmi tava nitya-dāsa, bhuliyā māyāra pāśa,
baddha ha'ye āchi dayāmaya*

O supremely merciful Kṛṣṇa, I am drowning in the bottomless ocean of material existence as a consequence of my fruitive activities, which are without any beginning. I can see no means of crossing this ocean. My heart is being scorched with the deadly poison of sense gratification. My mind is greatly

perturbed. I am continuously troubled, being bound by the stringent ropes of unlimited lusty desires. I am being tossed here and there, struck by the violent crashing of the waves of material nature. On the one hand, my life duration is dwindling and death is approaching. On the other hand, lust, anger, illusion, envy, greed and madness are like six thieves that have pounced upon me. *Karma* and *jñāna* are like two swindlers who have cheated me and thrown me into a bottomless ocean. O ocean of mercy, at such a time of formidable distress, You are the only friend. O Kṛṣṇa, kindly deliver me. I am Your eternal servant. I have forgotten You and thus become tightly bound by the illusory energy. Please accept this fallen servant, Bhaktivinoda, and fix me as a particle of dust at Your lotus feet.

Vivṛti

Śrī Nanda-nandana is the worshipful object for all living entities. Every *jīva* is by nature a servant of Kṛṣṇa. Servitude unto Kṛṣṇa is inherent within the eternal, constitutional nature of every living entity. The *jīva*, having become indifferent to the sense of servitorship towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is drowning in the insurmountable and fearful ocean of material existence. On this account he is tormented by the threefold miseries of material life. In this condition, the living entity's only support is the mercy of the Lord. If Śrī Kṛṣṇa, out of His causeless mercy, accepts the *jīva* as a particle of dust at His lotus feet, then the *jīva*'s covered identity and eternal disposition of servitorship to Śrī Kṛṣṇa can become manifest once again.

The attempt to attain the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by one's own endeavour is called *āroha-panthā*. Kṛṣṇa cannot be obtained by this method, because it is opposed to the *jīva*'s inherent function. Only by adopting a service attitude that is in accordance with Kṛṣṇa's will is it possible to attain His lotus feet. Endowed with such firm faith, one should engage in the process of *sādhana* and *bhajana*. The words *pāda-dhūli*, dust

particle, indicate the living entity's eternal identity as an infinitesimal part and parcel of Bhagavān known as *vibhinnāṁśa*.

As long as the *jīva* is not situated in his inherent spiritual form, unwanted things that impede his advancement (*anarthas*) are inevitable. In such a condition, ascertainment of the ultimate goal remains ambiguous. Pure *harināma-sankīrtana* begins upon the awakening of *sambandha-jñāna*, and only by such pure chanting is *prema* obtained. When the heart is purified by continuous chanting of the pure name of the Lord, *rati* is manifested in the heart of the living entity. This *rati*, also known as *bhāva*, is the initial sprout of unalloyed love for Kṛṣṇa. It is a combination of the *saṁvit* and *hlādinī* potencies of the Lord's internal potency and is eternally situated in the hearts' of the Lord's eternal associates. By the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, this *bhāva* is transmitted into the living entity's heart, at which time he is known as a *jāta-rati-bhakta*, a devotee in whom *rati* or *bhāva* has manifested.

There is a difference between the *nāma-sankīrtana* of an *ajāta-rati-bhakta* (one in whom *rati* is not manifest) and a *jāta-rati-bhakta*. To deceitfully present oneself as a *jāta-rati-bhakta* before having attained to such a stage is completely improper. After cleansing oneself of the impediments to devotional practice (*anartha-nivṛtti*), one becomes situated in *nairantarya*, uninterrupted steadiness in the practice of *sādhana*. Next, one attains *svecchā-pūrvikā*, meditation on the pastimes of the Lord by one's own will. This is an advanced stage of remembrance of the Lord that comes in the stage of *āsakti*. This is followed by the condition known as *svārasikī* when the pastimes of the Lord automatically manifest in one's heart as an uninterrupted flow. This comes in the stage of *bhāva* after the pure spiritual energy of *śuddha-sattva* manifests in the heart. At last one comes to the stage of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

When *bhāva* manifests in the heart of the *sādhaka*, then *dāsyarati* is easily awakened. The *dāsyarati* mentioned here is general. It refers to the natural inborn inclination to serve Kṛṣṇa. Without the manifestation of *bhāva*, one's service to Kṛṣṇa is superficial. But when *śuddha-sattva* manifests in the heart, then one naturally wants to serve Kṛṣṇa with full expression of the heart. This is supported in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.11.24):

*aham hare tava pādaika-mūla-
dāsānudāso bhavitāsmi bhūyaḥ
manah smaretāsu-pater guṇāms te
grṇīta vāk karma karotu kāyaḥ*

[Śrī Vṛtrāsura said:] O Lord Hari, will I again be able to become a servant of Your servants who have taken exclusive shelter at Your lotus feet? I pray that my mind may always remain engaged in remembering Your transcendental qualities, my words in describing those qualities, and my body in rendering varieties of service to You, who are the Lord of my life.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura then says (*Bhajana-rahasya* (5.6)):

*chinu tava nitya-dāsa, gale bāndhi' māyā-pāsa,
samsāre pāinu nānā-kleśa
ebe punaḥ kari āśa, haña tava dāsera dāsa,
bhaji' pāi tava bhakti-leśa
prāṇeśvara tava guṇa, smaruka mana punaḥ punaḥ,
tava nāma jihvā karuka gāna
kara-dvaya tava karma, kariyā labhuka śarma,
tava pade sanpinu parāṇa*

I am Your eternal servant, but due to my own misfortune, I have forgotten You. Consequently, *māyā* has captured me and, binding me by the neck, she has cast me down into this material atmosphere. I have been wandering here and there in this material existence and rotating through thousands and millions

of different species of life. I am being crushed by varieties of different miseries. Now in the association of the Vaiṣṇavas, my intelligence has become aroused. Now the only aspiration in my heart is that I may become a servant of the servant of Your servants. I may then engage in *bhajana* unto You and obtain a particle of *bhakti*. O Lord of my life and soul, let my mind be constantly engaged in remembering Your transcendental glories and attributes; let my tongue be always engaged in chanting Your holy names, form, qualities and pastimes; let my two hands be engaged in rendering various types of service unto You. I shall thus taste the bliss of service to You. My entire being is offered at Your lotus feet.

By his constitutional nature, the living entity is meant to be enjoyed (*bhogyā*), whereas Kṛṣṇa is the supreme enjoyer (*bhoktā*). Therefore, by continuous practice of *bhajana*, an ardent desire will arise in the heart to become a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the embodiment of transcendental bliss (*ānandamayī*). At that time *gopī-bhāva*, the loving sentiment exhibited by the cowherd girls of Vraja, awakens in the heart. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.29.38):

*tan naḥ prasīda vṛjinārdana te 'ṅhri-mūlam
prāptā visṛjya vasatis tvad-upāsanāśāḥ
tvat-sundara-smita-nirikṣaṇa-tivra-kāma-
taptātmanām puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa dehi dāsyam*

[The *gopīs* said:] O master, You mitigate the sufferings of anyone who takes shelter of Your lotus feet. Now please be kind to us also and make us the objects of Your mercy. With a desire to serve You, we have abandoned our families, relatives, households and village, and come to take shelter at Your lotus feet. O dearest one, there is no opportunity to serve You there. O jewel amongst men, seeing Your enticingly sweet smile and compelling glance, our hearts are inflamed with anxious longing. Please accept us as Your maidservants and grant us the service of Your feet.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has expressed this in the form of Bengali verses (*Bhajana-rahasya* (5.7)):

*tava-dāsya-āse chāḍiyāchi ghara dvāra
dayā kari deha kṛṣṇa, caraṇa tomāra
tava hāsya-mukha-nirikṣaṇa-kāmi-jane
tomāra kainkarya deha praphulla-vadane*

With a desire to serve You, we have forsaken house and home. Please be merciful, O Kṛṣṇa, and give us the service of Your feet. Seeing Your sweet smiling face has kindled a burning fire within our hearts to meet with You. Please grant us the vision of Your blossoming lotus face and accept us as Your maidservants.

The necessity of taking shelter of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is expressed by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in *Śrī Stavāvalī* (*Sva-saṅkalpa-prakāśa-stotram* (1)):

*anārādhya rādhā-padāmbhoja reṇum
anāsritya vṛndātavīm tat-padānkām
asambhāsyā tad-bhāva-gambhīra-cittān
kutaḥ śyāma-sindho rasasyāvagāhaḥ*

If you have never worshipped the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, or taken shelter of Śrī Vṛndāvana, which is marked with the impressions of Her lotus feet, or spoken with the devotees whose hearts are deeply submerged in the profound loving sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, how can you become immersed in the blackish ocean of nectar known as *śyāma-sindhu-rasa*?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung (*Bhajana-rahasya* (5.10)):

*rādhā-padāmbhoja-reṇu nāhi ārādhile
tānhāra padānka-pūta vraja nā bhajile
nā sevile rādhikā-gambhīra-bhāva-bhakta
śyāma-sindhu-rase kise habe anurakta?*

If you have never worshipped the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā or the land of Vraja, which is marked with the

impressions of Her lotus feet, or have not served the feet of those devotees who taste the profound loving sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, how will you become attached to the blackish ocean of nectar known as *śyāma-sindhu-rasa*?

Attainment of the service of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the one and only goal of the devotees situated in the stage of ecstatic emotion (*bhāvuka-bhaktas*). This is exhibited in the eighth verse of *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*, taken from *Stavāvali*:

*devi duḥkha-kula-sāgarodare
dūyamānam ati-durgataṁ janam
tvaṁ kṛpā-prabala-naukayā 'dbhutaṁ
prāpaya sva-pada-paṅkajālayam*

O Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who are adept in amorous sports, I am drowning in an unlimited ocean of horrible miseries. I am severely oppressed and shelterless. Kindly place me on the infallible boat of Your causeless mercy and guide me to the extraordinary shelter of Your lotus feet.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung (*Bhajana-rahasya* (5.17)):

*duḥkha-sindhu-mājhe devi, durgata e jana
kṛpā-pote pāda-padme uthāo ekhana*

O Goddess, this wretched soul is drowning in the ocean of misery. Please lift me now on the boat of Your mercy and place me at Your lotus feet.

Comment

Those who taste *rasa* are called *rasika*, and those who taste *bhāva* are called *bhāvuka*. The *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa are both *rasika* and *bhāvuka*. When *viśuddha-sattva*, or in other words *bhāva*, descends from the *gopīs* upon those who are in the stage of *sādhana*, they attain *sva-rūpa-siddhi*, or perception of their permanent devotional sentiment (*sthāyibhāva*), but they have

not yet attained their perfected spiritual body. At that stage they are known as *bhāvuka-bhaktas*. When, by further advancement, the *sthāyibhāva* mixes with the elements of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyabhicāri-bhāva* and one is able to taste *bhakti-rasa*, instigated by hearing the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, then one is called a *rasika*.

Just like in the *rāsa-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa is dancing and all the *gopīs* are dancing. Kṛṣṇa is continuously taking cups of *rasa* and giving them to the *gopīs* – they are *rasika*, and those hearing all these things, who are drinking unlimited cups of that *rasa* within their hearts – they are also *rasika* and *bhāvuka*. Those who meditate upon and remember the *bhāva* exchanged between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, or that which is found in the *gopīs*, the *sakhās*, or in *vātsalya-rasa*, are called *bhāvuka*. *Bhāva* is the spiritual emotion of the soul; it is not of this bodily heart.

For example, Kṛṣṇa addressed Śrīmatī Rādhikā: “Who are You? How have You come here (at Govardhana or Rādhākuṇḍa)? Why are You stealing all My flowers and breaking all My creepers, which are very dear to Me?” Then Śrīmatī stopped, turned towards Kṛṣṇa, and without saying a word, She glared at Him with an angry mood. What does this mean? Although She said nothing, Her look expressed everything. This is *bhāva*. What *bhāva*? “Are You a thief, or am I a thief? You are a thief, so don’t accuse Me in this way.” She did not say this, but everything was expressed in Her gaze. ❀

Those devotees who aspire to become maidservants of Śrīmatī Rādhikā constantly seek Kṛṣṇa’s mercy through intent *saṅkīrtana*. This is stated in *Śrī Rādhā-rasa-sudhā-nidhi* (259):

dhyaṃs taṃ śikhi-piccha maulim anīsaṃ tan-nāma-saṅkīrtayan
nityaṃ tac-caraṇāmbujaṃ paricaran tan-mantra-varyaṃ japaṃ
śrī-rādhā-pada-dāsyam eva paramābhīṣṭaṃ hṛdā dhārayan
karhi syāṃ tad-anugraheṇa paramādbhutanurāgotsavaḥ

VERSE FIVE

Keeping in my heart my highest aspiration to obtain the service of the feet of Śrī Rādhā, I constantly meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose head is bedecked with a peacock feather, chant His sweet holy names, serve His lotus feet and utter His *mantras*. When, by His mercy, will the supreme festival of unabated love towards the service of the feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā awaken in my heart?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung (*Bhajana-rahasya* (5.14)):

*nirantara kṛṣṇa-dhyāna, tan-nāma-kīrtana
kṛṣṇa-pāda-padma-sevā tan-mantra-jaṇana
rādhā-pada-dāsyā-mātra abhiṣṭa-cintana
kṛpāya labhība rādhā-rāgānubhāvana*

My only desire is to obtain the service of the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhā. Having fixed this goal in my heart, I constantly meditate on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, chant His names, serve His lotus feet and utter His *mantras*. In this way I shall obtain His mercy, and deep spontaneous attachment will awaken towards Her lotus feet.

Verse Six

What are the external symptoms of perfection?

नयनं गलदश्रुधारया वदनं गद्गदरुद्धया गिरा ।
पुलकैर्निचितं वपुः कदा तव नाम-ग्रहणे भविष्यति ॥६॥

nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati

Anvaya

(O my Lord) *tava nāma-grahaṇe* – at the time of chanting Your holy name; (*mama* – my); *nayanam* – eyes; *galad-aśru-dhārayā* – flooded by a stream of tears; *vadanam* – my throat; *gadgada* – stammering; *ruddhayā girā* – with a choked voice; *vapuḥ* – and all the limbs of my body; *pulakaiḥ nicitam* – pervaded by rows of hair standing erect due to ecstasy; *kadā bhaviṣyati* – when will this take place?

Translation

O Lord, when will my eyes be filled with a stream of tears? When will my voice choke up? And when will the hairs of my body stand erect in ecstasy as I chant Your holy name?

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

In the five previous verses the systematic development of *parama-dharma* has been described. *Parama-dharma* refers to the unfolding of the eternal constitutional identity of the living entity, which takes place through the medium of *bhakti* predominated by the *hlādinī* potency of the Lord. This systematic development, which begins with faith (*śraddhā*), is described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.15–16):

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
 saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
 tato 'nartha-nivṛtīḥ syāt
 tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ
 athāsaktis tato bhāvas
 tataḥ premābhyudañcati
 sādhakānām ayaṁ premnaḥ
 prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ*

Faith leads one to associate with saintly persons, *sādhu-saṅga*. In their association one begins to practise the ninefold path of *bhakti* consisting of hearing (*śravaṇa*), chanting (*kīrtana*), remembering (*smaraṇa*), serving the lotus feet of the Lord (*pāda-sevana*), worship of the deity form of the Lord (*arcana*), offering prayers and obeisances (*vandana*), servitude (*dāsya*), friendship (*sakhya*) and full surrender of the self (*ātma-nivedana*). By execution of these items, one attains self-realisation (*ātma-svarūpa*), as a result of which all *anarthas* in the form of ignorance are destroyed. Thereafter, one attains steadiness (*niṣṭhā*), taste (*ruci*), attachment for the Lord (*āsakti*) and finally devotion steeped in feelings of ecstasy (*bhāva*).

Upon the attainment of *bhāva*, *bhakti* attains to its pure identity, which is now unbreakable. *Bhāva* is also called *rati*. It is regarded as the sprout (*aṅkura*) of *prema*. *Prema* is the fully blossomed state of *bhakti*. Of the various limbs of *bhakti*, such as hearing and chanting practised in the stage of *sādhana-bhakti*, *śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana* in particular becomes intensified in the stage of *bhāva-bhakti*.

Nine characteristics of *bhāva*

In the stage of *bhāva*, the following nine symptoms become manifest, as described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.3.25–6):

*kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ
viraktir māna-sūnyatā
āśā-bandhaḥ samutkaṅṭhā
nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ
āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne
pṛitis tad-vasati-sthale
ity ādayo 'nubhāvāḥ syur
jāta-bhāvāṅkure jane*

(1) *kṣānti* – even though a cause for agitation may be present, the devotee’s heart remains unagitated, (2) *avyārtha-kālatva* – a devotee does not waste time in activities that are not directed towards the cultivation of *bhakti*, (3) *virakti* – detachment from the objects of sense enjoyment, (4) *māna-sūnyatā* – pridelessness, (5) *āśā-bandha* – a firm hope of attaining Bhagavān, (6) *utkaṅṭhā* – intense longing for the Lord, (7) *nāma-gāne sadā ruci* – ever relishing a strong taste to chant the holy name, (8) *āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne* – attachment for hearing and chanting the qualities of Bhagavān and (9) *pṛitis tad-vasati-sthale* – love for the places where the Lord enacted His transcendental pastimes.

The constitutional nature of bhāva

Bhāva-bhakti is described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.3.1):

*suddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā
prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmyabhāk
rucibhiś citta-māśṛṇya-
kṛd asau bhāva ucyate*

When the heart becomes melted by *ruci*, or in other words an intense longing to attain the Lord, then what was previously *sādhana-bhakti* is called *bhāva-bhakti*. The primary characteristic of *bhāva* is that it is a phenomenon constituted entirely of *viśuddha-sattva*. *Viśuddha-sattva* is the self-revealing agency of the internal potency (*cit-śakti*), comprised of *hlādinī*, *sandhini*

and *samvit*, through which the Lord and His paraphernalia are revealed to the devotees. This means that *bhāva* is completely beyond the influence of material nature, and as such it is compared to a ray of the sun of *prema-bhakti*. The conclusion established by the above verse is that *bhāva-bhakti* is the sprout of *prema* and an atom of *prema*. This fact is further established by the following two verses from *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.3.2–3). The first verse is quoted from the Tantra and the second from the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*preṅṅas tu prathamāvasthā
bhāva ity abhidhīyate
sāttvikāḥ svalpa-mātrāḥ syur
atrāśru-pulakādayaḥ
dhyāyaṁ dhyāyaṁ bhagavataḥ
pādāmbhujā-yugaṁ tadā
īśad-vikriyamāṇātmā
sārdra-dṛṣṭir abhūd asau*

In its initial stage, *prema* is called *bhāva*. In that stage, various transformations of ecstasy arising from *viśuddha-sattva* such as tears, hairs of the body standing on end, and so on, are observed to a very slight extent. Because such symptoms arise from *viśuddha-sattva* they are known as *sāttvika-bhāvas*. In the stage of *bhāva*, while meditating on the lotus feet of Bhagavān, the heart melts and tears begin to flow from the eyes.

According to this statement, the *anubhāvas* and *sāttvika-bhāvas* that manifest very powerfully in the stage of *prema* are visible to a slight extent in the stage of *bhāva*.

Anubhāvas of bhāva-bhakti

The external transformations or symptoms that illustrate the emotions experienced within the heart are called *anubhāvas*. The *anubhāvas* are thirteen in number, as described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.2.2):

*nṛtyaṁ viluṭhitam gītaṁ
krośanaṁ tanu-moṭanam
huṅkāro jṛmbhaṇaṁ śvāsa-
bhūmā lokānapekṣitā
lālāsravo 'ṭṭa-hāsaś ca
ghūrṇā-hikkādayo 'pi ca*

(1) *nṛtya* – dancing, (2) *viluṭhita* – rolling on the ground, (3) *gīta* – singing, (4) *krośana* – loud crying, (5) *tanu-moṭana* – writhing of the body, (6) *huṅkāra* – roaring, (7) *jṛmbhaṇa* – yawning, (8) *śvāsa-bhūmā* – breathing heavily, (9) *lokānapekṣitā* – neglecting others, (10) *lālāsrava* – drooling, (11) *aṭṭa-hāsa* – loud laughter, (12) *ghūrṇā* – staggering about and (13) *hikkā* – a fit of hiccups.

Sāttvika-bhāvas of bhāva-bhakti

The *sāttvika-bhāvas*, or transformations of ecstasy arising from *viśuddha-sattva*, are eight in number, as described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.3.16):

*te stambha-sveda-romāñcāḥ
svara-bhedo 'tha vepathuḥ
vaivarṇyam aśru pralaya
ity aṣṭau sāttvikāḥ smṛtāḥ*

(1) *stambha* – becoming stunned, (2) *sveda* – perspiration, (3) *romāñca* – standing of the hairs on end, (4) *svara-bheda* – faltering of the voice, (5) *kampa* – trembling, (6) *vaivarṇya* – loss of colour, (7) *aśru* – tears and (8) *pralaya* – all activity is arrested and one loses consciousness. Out of all these symptoms (*sāttvika-bhāvas* and *anubhāvas*), dancing, singing, tears, standing of the hairs on end and faltering of the voice are especially observed in the stage of *bhāva*. The crest jewel of instructors, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, has indicated the condition of *bhāva* while speaking in this way: “O Kṛṣṇa, son of Nanda Mahārāja, when will streams of tears flow from my eyes while

chanting Your holy name? When will my throat become choked up due to a faltering voice? And when will the hairs of my body stand on end due to ecstasy? O Lord, please be merciful so that all these symptoms will arise in me as soon as possible while chanting Your holy name.”

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-līlā 20.37)

*prema-dhana vinā vyartha daridra-jīvana
‘dāsa’ kari’ vetana more deha prema-dhana*

Without the wealth of love of God, this wretched life is useless. O Lord, please accept me as Your servant and give me the wages of *prema*.

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Six (Gītāvalī)

*aparādha phale mama, citta bhela vajra-sama,
tuyā nāme nā labhe vikāra
hatāśa haiye hari, tava nāma ucca kari,
baḍa duḥkhe ḍāki bāra bāra
dīna dayāmayā karuṇā-nidāna
bhāva-bindu dei’ rākhaha parāṇa
kaba tuyā nāma uccāraṇe mora
naḡane jharaba dara dara lora
gadgada-svara kaṇṭhe upajaba
mukhe bola ādha ādha bāhirāba
pulake bharaba sarīra hāmāra
sveda-kamṡa-stambha habe bāra-bāra
vivarṇa-sarīre hārāobuṅ jñāna
nāma-samāśraye dharabuṅ parāṇa
milaba hāmāra kiye aiche dīna
ro-oye bhaktivinoda mati-hīna*

As a result of my offences, my heart has become as hard as a thunderbolt. Consequently, it does not melt even slightly when I chant Your holy name. O Lord, now I am feeling very

despondent. Being very aggrieved with distress, I am calling Your name again and again. You are very merciful. Kindly give me just a single drop of ecstatic love and save my agitated life. When will that auspicious day arrive when, upon chanting Your holy name, a stream of tears will flow from my eyes? When will my throat become choked up, causing my words to become garbled? When will the hairs of my body stand erect due to ecstasy? When will I become soaked with perspiration? When will the limbs of my body begin to tremble? O Lord, when will my body become stunned? Becoming overwhelmed with *bhāva*, when will my colour fade, and when at last will I lose all consciousness? Regaining my consciousness once again, I will maintain this life simply by taking shelter of Your holy name. Crying incessantly, this Bhaktivinoda, who is devoid of all intelligence, says, “Will there ever be such a day for this unfortunate soul?”

Vivṛti

“O Gopījana-vallabha, when will a stream of tears lovingly flow from the eyes of this *gopī* while chanting Your holy name? When will my voice choke up, and when will the hairs of my body stand on end due to ecstasy? When will I be overtaken by such a condition?” This prayer is an example of *lālasāmayi-vijñapti*. The word *vijñapti* means a kind of entreaty or submissive prayer. These have been described to be of three kinds: (1) *samprārthanātmikā* – a prayer with whole-hearted submission of mind, body and everything to the Lord. This is a prayer for the awakening of *rati* or *bhāva* of one in whom it is not yet aroused; (2) *dainya-bodhikā* – making known one’s insignificance and worthlessness; and (3) *lālasāmayi* – this kind of prayer applies only to one in whom *rati* has already been awakened.

Lālasā means “intense yearning”. After *rati* manifests in the heart, an intense yearning will come to serve the Lord in a

particular manner in accordance with one's permanent devotional disposition (*sthāyibhāva*). This is a prayer to obtain that service for which one always hankers. Another example of *lālasāmayi-vijñapti* is given in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.156):

*kadāhaṁ yamunā-tire
nāmāni tava kirtayan
udbāṣpaḥ puṇḍarikākṣa
racayiṣyāmi tāṇḍavam*

[Nārada Muni addressed the Lord as follows:] O lotus-eyed Lord Kṛṣṇa, while chanting Your holy name on the bank of the Yamunā, when will my throat choke up and my voice stammer with ecstasy? When will I become absorbed in deep spiritual sentiment and dance just like a madman, not caring for outsiders?

In regard to the secondary names of the Lord, such as Brahma, Paramātmā, Īśvara, Jagannātha and so on, it is not possible to perform *saṅkīrtana* with *prema*. Only while chanting the principal names of the Lord, such as Kṛṣṇa, Govinda and Rāma, is it possible to perform *saṅkīrtana* with *prema*. Therefore Śrī Gaurasundara has said: “*śrutam aṇy auṣaṇiṣadaṁ dūre hari-kathāṁṛtāt yan na santi dravac-citta-kampāśru-ṇulakā-dayaḥ* – the subject of the Uṇiṣads is far removed from the nectarean topics of Lord Hari. Therefore they are unable to melt the heart or cause one to experience ecstatic trembling, tears or standing of the bodily hairs on end.”

Comment

When anyone chants the secondary names of the Lord, there will be no expression of *prema* because there are no pastimes included within those names and no *mamatā*, a sense of intimate relationship with the Lord characterised by feelings of possessiveness. *Mamatā* is the primary characteristic of *prema*. When an intimate relationship is there, then so many beautiful

pastimes will also be there. Without these things there is no feeling of *prema*. But when one chants Kṛṣṇa's primary names and remembers His pastimes with the *gopīs*, a special kind of *prema* comes. Then the devotee automatically forgets his body and everything. Sometimes he rolls on the ground, sometimes cries, sometimes laughs, dances or sings. This cannot take place when one chants the secondary names because there are no pastimes and no sense of possessiveness. When you chant Yaśodā-nandana, "*hā śrī yaśodā-tanaya prasīda* – O son of Yaśodā, be pleased with me," so many expressions are coming. But when you chant the name Īśvara, for instance, nothing will come. ❀

The subject of Brahman that has been described in the Upaniṣads is far removed from the nectarean topics of Lord Hari. When there is a discussion of *hari-kathā*, the heart may become melted, giving rise to the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* such as shedding of tears, trembling of the bodily limbs, standing of the hairs on end, and so on. This verse does not refer to those who shed tears very easily by acquired nature, as is the case with women, nor does it apply to those who delight in making a show of such symptoms without actually being situated in *rati* or *bhāva*. Such a display is known as *bhāva-ābhāsa*, the semblance of ecstatic devotion; it is not pure *bhakti*.

But when the pure spirit soul becomes spontaneously inclined to the service of the Lord, his mind and entire body, which have become completely favourable to Kṛṣṇa's pleasure, can no longer stand in opposition to the *nitya-bhāva* situated in his heart. At such a time, the heart naturally melts and the *sāttvika-bhāvas* and bodily transformations of ecstasy are displayed in pure devotees who are free from all *anarthas*.

Those of weak faith deceive others by imitating the behaviour of the topmost devotees (*mahā-bhāgavatas*) and by

pretentiously displaying so-called symptoms of ecstasy. The emotion displayed by such imitative and deceptive practice is thoroughly opposed to the awakening of unalloyed devotion. By following in the footsteps of pure devotees and by continuous engagement in *bhakti*, the *sāttvika-bhāvas* and *anubhāvas* will arise automatically in a pure devotee in whom *rati* has manifested.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

The following references from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.30–1) show the necessity of performing ardent practice of *nāma-bhajana* and *kirtana* in the association of pure devotees in order to attain *bhakti* characterised by feelings of ecstasy (*rati*):

*parasparānu-kathanam
 pāvanam bhagavad-yaśaḥ
 mitho ratir mithas tuṣṭir
 nivṛttir mitha ātmanah
 smarantaḥ smārayantaś ca
 mitho 'ghaughā-haranī harim
 bhaktyā sañjātayā bhaktyā
 bibhraty utpūlakām tanum*

[Śrī Prabuddha said:] In the association of pure devotees, there is constant chanting and discussion of the glories of the Lord's transcendental pastimes, which are by nature purifying and produce the highest virtue. By such association there will be three effects: the feelings of mutual affection and love between devotees will be increased, mutual happiness will be experienced, and devotees will help each other to become free from all material attachments and distress. All this is learnt in the association of devotees. In this way, devotees constantly remember Lord Hari, who destroys all sins. They also cause the remembrance of the Lord to appear within each others' hearts. Thus by *prema-bhakti* awakened through the steadfast performance of *sādhana*, they always remain engaged in thinking of

Bhagavān and exhibit transcendental symptoms of ecstasy in their bodies such as standing of the hairs on end.

In this connection, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed the following verses (*Bhajana-rahasya* (6.12)):

*bhakta-gaṇa paraśpara kṛṣṇa-kathā gāya
tāhe rati, tuṣṭi, sukha paraśpara pāya
hari-smṛti nīje kare, anyere karāya
sādhane udita-bhāve pulakāśru pāya*

Devotees constantly hear and chant the topics concerning Lord Kṛṣṇa amongst themselves. They become intently absorbed in such discussions, which become the basis of mutual loving relationships, satisfaction and happiness. They themselves remember Bhagavān Śrī Hari and cause others to do the same. By continuous engagement in *sādhana*, *bhāva* is manifested in their hearts, giving rise to the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas*, such as tears and standing of the hairs on end.

The symptoms of ecstasy displayed by devotees in the stage of *bhāva* are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.32):

*kvacid rudanty acyuta-cintayā kvacid
vasanti nandanti vadanty alaukikāḥ
nṛtyanti gāyanty anuśīlayanty ajam
bhavanti tūṣṇīm parametya nirvṛtāḥ*

[Śrī Prabuddha said:] Thereafter, having obtained freedom from the misconception of identifying the self with the body, they are distinguished from ordinary worldly persons by their deep absorption in constant remembrance of the Lord in the stage characterised by consummated endeavours for *bhakti* (in other words in the stage of *bhāva*). In this condition, they sometimes cry, sometimes laugh, sometimes become delighted, sometimes speak out to the Lord, sometimes dance, sometimes sing and sometimes enact the transcendental pastimes of Lord Hari. Thereafter, having obtained the personal audience of the Lord, they become peaceful and silent.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says in this connection (*Bhajana-rahasya* (6.14)):

*bhāvodaye kabhu kānde kṛṣṇa-cintā phale
hāse ānandita haya, alaukika bale
nāce gāya, kṛṣṇa-ālocane sukha pāya
līlā-anubhave haya, tuṣṇimbhūta prāya*

After the awakening of *bhāva* within the heart, when one becomes deeply absorbed in thinking of Kṛṣṇa, sometimes tears come to the eyes, sometimes one laughs, sometimes one becomes overjoyed with deep ecstasy, sometimes one speaks in an extraordinary manner, sometimes one dances or sings, sometimes one experiences great happiness by a direct perception of Kṛṣṇa, and sometimes one becomes silent at heart by witnessing the pastimes of the Lord.

At that time, love towards the places that are dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is observed. This is stated in the following verse from *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.156):

*kadāhaṁ yamunā-tīre
nāmāni tava kirtayan
udbāṣpaḥ puṇḍarikākṣa
racayiṣyāmi tāṇḍavam*

[Nārada Muni addressed the Lord:] O lotus-eyed Lord, when, on the bank of the Yamunā, will my throat become choked up with ecstasy as I chant Your holy names, and when will I dance just like a madman, not caring for outsiders?

Verse Seven

What are the internal symptoms of perfection?

युगायितं निमेषेण चक्षुषा प्रावृषायितम् ।
शून्यायितं जगत् सर्वं गोविन्द-विरहेण मे ॥७॥

*yugāyitaṁ nimeṣeṇa
cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitaṁ
śūnyāyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ
govinda-virahaṇa me*

Anvaya

govinda virahaṇa – in separation from Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *nimeṣeṇa* – even a moment; *yugāyitaṁ* – seems like a millenium; *cakṣuṣā* – from my eyes; *prāvṛṣāyitaṁ* – tears flow like rain from the monsoon clouds; *sarvaṁ jagat* – this entire world; *śūnyāyitaṁ* – seems void; *me* – to me.

Translation

O *sakhī*, in separation from Govinda, even a moment seems like a millenium to me. Tears begin to shower from my eyes like rain from the clouds, and this entire world seems void to me.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

Rati has been described in the previous verse. When *bhakti* is endowed with this *rati*, it assumes the form of the *sthāyibhāva*, which refers to the ruling emotion of the heart in one of the five transcendental relationships with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. When it then mixes with the other four *bhāvas* – *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyabhicāri-bhāva* – it is transformed into the relishable

experience known as *bhakti-rasa*. In that state the *anubhāvas* and *sāttvika-bhāvas* of *bhakti* are fully exhibited. In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.1) Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī establishes the definition of *prema* in the following words:

*samyañ maṣṇita-svānto
mamatvātīśayāṅkitaḥ
bhāva sa eva sāndrātmā
budhaiḥ premā nigadyate*

Bhāva-bhakti which melts the heart much more thoroughly than in its beginning stage thus making it completely soft, which produces supreme exultation of transcendental bliss, and which gives rise to a very deep sense of possessiveness (*mamatā*) in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is called *prema* by learned persons.

According to the philosophical conclusion of this verse, *bhāva-bhakti* that is fully matured owing to the upsurge of a very powerful sense of *mamatā* in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa should be understood to be *prema*.

In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* it is described that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *viśaya* or object of *prema* for the devotees. The devotees are the *āśraya* or receptacle of *prema* for Kṛṣṇa. In the mutual exchange of love between Kṛṣṇa and the devotees, five types of relationships are possible: *sānta*, *dāśya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*. These five primary relationships are known as *mukhya-rati*.

In each of these there is a particular ruling emotion known as the *sthāyibhāva*. In *sānta* the ruling emotion is *sānti-rati*, tranquility. In *dāśya* the ruling emotion is *priti-rati*, affection in servitude. In *sakhya* the ruling emotion is *sakhya-rati*, affection in friendship. In *vātsalya* the ruling emotion is *vātsalya-rati*, parental affection. And in *mādhurya* the ruling emotion is *prīyatā-rati*, affection in amorous love. When these five types of *mukhya-rati* combine with the sentiments of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*, then affection

becomes converted into the relishable sentiment known as *mukhya-bhakti-rasa*, as described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.5.115):

*mukhyas tu pañcadhā śāntaḥ
 pṛitaḥ preyāms ca vatsalaḥ
 madhuraś cety amī jñeyā
 yathā-pūrvam anuttamāḥ*

Mukhya-rasa is of five varieties: (1) *śānta* – tranquility, (2) *pṛita* (*dāsya*) – servitude, (3) *preyas* (*sakhya*) – friendship, (4) *vātsalya* – parental affection and (5) *mādhurya* – amorous love. Each one of these is successively better than the previous one.

The primary ruling emotion is always present in a devotee who has awakened *prema* for Kṛṣṇa, and it is therefore known as the *sthāyibhāva*, permanent emotion. Yet sometimes the devotee’s ruling emotion recedes and gives nourishment to secondary emotions known as *gauṇa-rati*. *Gauṇa-rati* is of seven types and when they combine with the emotions of *vibhāva*, *anubhāva*, *sāttvika-bhāva* and *vyabhicāri-bhāva*, they produce the relishable sentiments known as *gauṇa-rasa*. These are described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.5.116):

*hāsyo ’dbhutas tathā viraḥ
 karuṇo raudra ity api
 bhayānakaḥ sa bibhatsa
 iti gauṇas ca saptadhā*

Gauṇa-rasa is of seven varieties: (1) *hāsya* – laughter, (2) *adbhuta* – astonishment, (3) *vira* – heroism, (4) *karuṇa* – compassion, (5) *raudra* – anger, (6) *bhayānaka* – fear and (7) *bibhatsa* – disgust.

Out of the five types of *mukhya-rasa*, *mādhurya-rasa* is the highest. As the intensity of *prīti* or love for Kṛṣṇa increases within the *mukhya-rasas*, it takes the form of *prema*, *praṇaya*, *māna*, *sneha*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva* and *mahābhava*.

Development of *prīti* from *rati* to *mahābhāva*

Rati

The development of *prīti* is described in *Prīti-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 84). The initial stage of *prīti* is known as *rati* and it is defined as follows: “*tatrollāsa-mātrādhikya-vyañjikā prītiḥ ratiḥ, yasyām jātāyām tad-ekam tātparyam anyatra tucchatva buddhiś ca jāyate – prīti* that is predominated only by a feeling of *ullāsa*, elation, is called *rati*. This *prīti* beginning from *rati* is exclusively fixed on Śrī Bhagavān, and therefore all other things that are not related to the Lord are considered as worthless.” *Prīti* that extends only to the level of *rati* is indicative of *śānta-rasa*.

Prema

Prīti that increases to the level of *prema* is defined as follows: “*mamatātiśayāvirbhāvena samṛddhā prītiḥ premā, yasmin jāte tat prīti-bhaṅga-hetavo yad iyam udyamaṁ svarūpaṁ vā na glaṇyitum iśate –* when *prīti* is augmented due to the appearance of a strong sense of possessiveness (*mamatā*) in relationship with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it is called *prema*. On the appearance of *prema*, *prīti* is so deep that even though multiple causes may appear to bring about a break in affection, they are completely unable to dampen either the enthusiasm or the fundamental character of that love.” *Prīti* that extends to the level of *prema* is indicative of *dāśya-rasa*. The character of *prema* in *dāśya-rasa* is illustrated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.2.169):

*dviṣadbhiḥ kṣodiṣṭair jagad avihatecchasya bhavataḥ
karād ākṛṣyeva prasabham abhimanyāv api hate
subhadrāyāḥ prītir danuja-damana! tvad-viṣayikā
prapede kalyāṇi na hi malini-mānaṁ lavam api*

[Śrī Nārada said to Kṛṣṇa:] O slayer of the demons, in this world no one can oppose Your will. Everything is happening according to Your desire. Yet, it was from Your hands that Abhimanyu was

forcibly snatched away and killed by trifling enemies like Karṇa and Jayadratha. Nonetheless, Subhadrā's endearing love for You was not tarnished even in the least.

Subhadrā was the younger sister of Kṛṣṇa, and therefore she had the attitude of being cared for by Kṛṣṇa, which comes under the heading of *gaurava-prīti*, a division of *dāsya-rasa*. She knew that without Kṛṣṇa's sanction, her son Abhimanyu could never have been killed, yet her *prema* for Kṛṣṇa was not affected. This is the symptom of *prema*.

Praṇaya

Following *prema* is *praṇaya*: “*atha viśrambhātīśayātmakaḥ premā praṇayaḥ, yasmin jāte sambhramādi yogyatāyām api tad-abhāvaḥ* – when *prema* is imbued with an exceptional feeling of intimacy, known as *viśrambha*, it is called *praṇaya*. When *praṇaya* is present, there is a complete absence of awe and reverence towards the beloved even in the midst of a circumstance that would normally evoke such feelings.” A vivid example of this is given in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.3.109):

*surais tripurajin-mukhair api vidhiyamāna-stuter
api prathayataḥ parām adhika-pārameṣṭhya-śriyam
dadhat pulakinaṁ harer adhi-śirodhi savyam bhujam
samaskuruta pāmśulān śirasi candrakān arjunaḥ*

Even though Tripurāri (Lord Śiva) accompanied by the other demigods approached Śrī Kṛṣṇa and began to offer prayers proclaiming His supreme opulence and supremacy, His cowherd friend Arjuna lovingly placed his left arm on Kṛṣṇa's shoulder and flicked the dust from the peacock feather that adorned His head.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions in his commentary that such a pastime should be understood to have occurred after the killing of some demon. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura mentions that this occurred in Vraja and that the Arjuna referred to is a *priya-narma-sakhā*.

This *praṇaya* is the very life of *sakhya-rasa*. Its basis is the sense of deep faith devoid of reverence known as *viśrambha*. *Viśrambha* is defined as the feeling of being identical with the beloved. Such a feeling causes one to consider one's mind, life, intelligence, body and possessions to be one with the mind, life, intelligence, body and possessions of the beloved. The feeling of oneness being referred to means that out of great love one feels equally at ease with the beloved as one does with oneself, and this feeling is mutually experienced.

Māna

Māna is described as follows: “*priyatvātiśayābhimānena kauṭilyābhāsa-pūrvaka-bhāva-vaicitrīm dadhat praṇayo mānaḥ, yasmīn jāte śrī-bhagavān api tat-praṇaya-kopāt prema-mayaṁ bhayaṁ bhajate* – when the devotee's self conception of being extremely dear to the Lord causes *praṇaya* to assume a crooked appearance and thus attain to a surprising and unusual state, it is known as *māna*. When *māna* is present, even Śrī Bhagavān Himself becomes fearful out of love due to the *praṇaya-kopa* of His beloved.”

The term *praṇaya-kopa* means “anger out of affection”. When Kṛṣṇa's beloved exhibits *māna*, He is compelled to appease her, just to savour her loving sentiment of anger aroused by their lover's quarrel. The words *priyatva-atiśaya-abhimāna* literally mean “the egoism of being very dear to Kṛṣṇa”. Such a feeling causes the heroine to think thus: “My love for Him is so great that it has no limit. He is under the control of my *prema*.” It is due to this type of pride that *praṇaya* externally exhibits a feature of crookedness that is referred to by the words *kauṭilya-ābhāsa*. This crookedness in turn causes *praṇaya* to attain a most astonishing state, *bhāva-vaicitri*, which is then known as *māna*. In *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (15.74), the symptoms of *māna* are described:

*dam-ṣatyor bhāva ekatra
sator aṣy anuraktayoḥ
svābhiṣṭāśleṣa-vikṣādi-
nirodhī māna ucyate*

Although the lover and beloved are present together, although they are deeply attached to one another, and although their inner longing is to embrace, to behold each other and to exchange affectionate words, the sentiment that prevents them from doing so is known as *māna*.

If affection is lacking, if the lover and beloved are not present together, or if there is no desire to embrace, then there is nothing astonishing. But in *māna* all three conditions are present and yet the exchange that is desired by both of them does not occur. This is the *bhāva-vaicitrī* referred to above. Although rejection is exhibited externally, there is no diminution of attachment within due to the presence of *praṇaya*.

Sneha

Sneha is described as follows: “*ceto dravātiśayātmakah premaiiva snehaḥ, yasmin jāte tat-sambandhābhāsenāpi mahā-bāṣpādi-vikārah priya-darśanādy-atṛptis tasya parama-sāmarthyātau saty aṣi keṣāñcid aniṣṭāsaṅkā ca jāyate* – only that *prema* which melts the heart to an abundant extent is called *sneha*. Due to the appearance of *sneha*, even slight contact with the beloved gives rise to a great profusion of tears. One never feels satiated in beholding the beloved, and although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is supremely competent, the devotee becomes apprehensive that some harm may come to Him.” These last two symptoms are especially observed in *vātsalya-rasa*. The character of *sneha* in *vātsalya-rasa* is illustrated in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.4.58):

*piyūṣa-dyutibhiḥ stanādri-ṣatitaiḥ kṣirotkarair jāhnavi
kāliṇḍī ca vilocanābja-janitair jātāñjana-śyāmalaiḥ
ārān madhyama-vedim āṣatitayoḥ klinnā tayoḥ saṅgame
vṛttāsi vraja-rājñi! tat-suta-mukha-prekṣām sphutam vāñchasi*

[On the pretext of observing a solar eclipse, Śrī Yaśodā went to Kurukṣetra with an overpowering desire to see her son. When an ascetic lady who was previously acquainted with Yaśodā saw her, she said:] O Vrajeśvarī, the splendid stream of milk-nectar flowing from the mountain of your breasts is the Jāhnavī river. The stream of water from your lotus eyes, made blackish by mixing with your collyrium, is the Kālindī river. These two rivers have met at the Prayāga of your waist. Strange it is, though, that in spite of bathing in the confluence of these two rivers, you still openly desire only to see the face of your son.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains in his commentary on this verse that it is well known that people go to bathe at the holy place of Prayāga only with the desire of obtaining *darśana* of Bhagavān. But Yaśodā, in spite of having completed her bath, did not hanker for *darśana* of Bhagavān. She desired only to see the face of her son, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The symptoms of streams of tears, milk flowing from the breasts and unabated desire to see her son are all characteristics of *sneha* in *vātsalya-rasa*.

Rāga

Rāga is described as follows: “*sneha evābhilāṣātīśayātmake rāgaḥ, yasmīn jāte kṣaṇikasyāpi virahasyātyantaivāsahiṣṇutā, tat-saṁyoge param duḥkham api sukhatvena bhāti, tad-viyoge tad-viparītam – sneha* that is endowed with intense longing is called *rāga*. Due to the appearance of *rāga*, even a moment’s separation from the beloved is intolerable. In meeting, great sorrow appears like happiness, whereas in separation, it is just the opposite (that is, great happiness becomes a source of unbearable distress).” An example of pain being experienced as happiness due to *rāga* is found in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.127):

*tivrārka-dyuti-dīpatair asilatā dhārā karālāsribhir
mārttaṇḍoṇḍapala-maṇḍalaiḥ sthāpuṭite ’py adres tate tasthuṣi
paśyanti paśuṇḍra-nandanam asāv indivarair āṣṭṛte
talle nyasta-pādāmbujeva muditā na spandate rādhikā*

[Lalitā, accompanied by her friends, saw Śrīmatī Rādhikā from a distance. Savouring Rādhā's *rāga*, Lalitā said to her friends:] O *sakhīs*, just see! It is midday at the height of summer. The terrain of Govardhana is rugged and uneven and in some places the stones are as jagged as swords. The stones are like blazing coals at this time of day due to the intense heat of the sun. Although Śrīmatī Rādhikā, standing at the edge of Giri-Govardhana, is experiencing unbearable pain, She is merged in the ocean of bliss by beholding Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is grazing the cows nearby in great happiness, surrounded by His cowherd friends. Absorbed in the bliss of seeing Kṛṣṇa, it appears to Her as if Her lotus feet are placed on a bed of soft lotus petals, and thus She is not moving even an inch.

In this example the pain resulting from contact with extremely hot, jagged, hard stones is experienced as happiness because of seeing Kṛṣṇa. This is the symptom of *rāga*.

Anurāga

Anurāga is defined as follows: “*sa eva rāgo ’nukṣaṇam sva-viṣayam nava-navatvenānubhāvayan svayam ca nava-navī bhavann anurāgaḥ, yasmin jāte paraspara-vaśī bhāvātīśayaḥ, prema-vaicittyam, tat-sambandhiny aprāṇiny api janma-lālasā, vipralambhe visphūrtiś ca jāyate* – only that *rāga* which causes its object of affection to be experienced in newer and newer varieties at every moment, and which is itself experienced in ever new varieties, is known as *anurāga*. Due to the appearance of *anurāga*, four symptoms become manifest: (1) *paraspara-vaśī bhāvātīśaya* – a tremendous increase of the sentiment exchanged between the lover and beloved of having been brought under one another’s control, (2) *prema-vaicittya* – fear of separation from the beloved even while in their presence, (3) *aprāṇiny api janma-lālasā* – the desire to take birth as inanimate objects that are connected to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and (4) *vipralambhe visphūrti* – in separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the beloved begins to

see Kṛṣṇa everywhere, as if He were directly before her. This type of vision or appearance is known as *visphūr̥ti*.”

The quality of *anurāga* causing the beloved to be newly experienced is illustrated in two examples from *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.147–8). The first example is taken from *Dāna-keli-kaumudī* (28):

*prapañnah pañthānam harir asakṛd asman-nayanayor
apūrvō 'yaṁ pūrvam kvacid api na dr̥ṣṭo madhurimā
pratike 'py ekasya sphurati muhur aṅgasya sakhi yā
śriyas tasyāḥ pātum lavam api samarthā na dr̥g iyam*

[Seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa from a distance at Dāna-ghāṭī, Śrī Rādhā said to Vṛndā:] O *sakhī*, I have seen Śrī Kṛṣṇa many times, but I have never before seen such unprecedented sweetness. My eyes are unable to even partially relish the splendour that is radiating from even a single portion of His limbs.

*ko 'yaṁ kṛṣṇa iti vyudasyati dhṛtim yas tanvi karṇam viśan
rāgāndhe kim idaṁ sadaiva bhavati tasyorasi kṛḍati
hāsyam mā kuru mohite tvam adhunā nyastāsya haste mayā
satyam satyam asau dr̥g-aṅganam agād adyaiva vidyun-nibhaḥ*

[Once while talking about Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Rādhā became overwhelmed by intense longing that incited in Her heart a powerful upsurge of *anurāga*. She began to speak with Lalitā:] “O thin-waisted girl (Kṛṣṇodari), Lalitā, who is that person who goes by the name of Kṛṣṇa? When those two syllables enter My ears, My gravity completely vanishes.” Lalitā said, “O You who are blinded by attachment (Rāgāndhā), what are you saying? You are always sporting upon His chest.” Śrī Rādhā: “O *sakhī*, don’t ridicule Me. Why are you speaking such impossible words?” Lalitā: “Rādhā, what I am saying is neither impossible, nor derisive, nor false. O bewildered one (Mohitā), just a moment ago I offered You into His hands.” Śrī Rādhā: “Lalitā, you are certainly truthful, but it seems to Me that until this very moment, I have never in my life laid eyes on Him before, and even then the experience was so brief that it was like a flash of lightning.”

Each of the four symptoms of *anurāga* will now be illustrated by examples from *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*.

(1) *Paraspara-vaśibhāva* – (14.150):

*samārambham pārasparika-vijayāya prathayathor
apūrvā ke 'yam vām agha-damana samrambha-lahari
mano-hastī baddhas tava yad anayā rāga-nigadais
tvayāpy asyāḥ premotsava-nava-guṇais citta-hariṇaḥ*

[Impelled by intense longing, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, while searching for each other, met along the path by a *kuñja* and bathed each other in a stream of bliss. Kundalatā, who suddenly appeared there, tasted the sweetness that emerged from that meeting and with great delight and astonishment, she spoke to Kṛṣṇa:] O slayer of Agha, both You and Śrī Rādhā are expanding the waves of Your efforts to defeat each other. The astonishing zeal that You are both displaying in this attempt is indescribable. Just see, the mad elephant of Your mind has been bound by the ropes of Śrī Rādhā's *anurāga*, and You have bound the deer of Her heart with the new ropes of the festival of Your *prema*.

(2) *Prema-vaicittya* – (14.151):

*prema-vaicittya samjñas tu
vipralambhaḥ sa vakṣyate*

Prema-vaicittya will be described ahead under the heading of *vipralambha*, separation.

In other words, although *prema-vaicittya* is a symptom of *anurāga*, it is a special condition of *vipralambha* and is therefore described separately there. Consequently *prema-vaicittya* is a type of *vipralambha* that is inspired by *prema* in the condition of *anurāga*.

In the section on *vipralambha*, *prema-vaicittya* is defined as follows (*Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (15.147)):

VERSE SEVEN

*priyasya sannikarṣe 'pi
premotkarṣa-svabhāvataḥ
yā viśleṣa-dhiyārtis tat-
prema-vaicittiyam ucyate*

The distress that is experienced due to fear of separation even in the presence of the beloved, brought about by the inherent nature of an exceptional quality of *prema* is known as *prema-vaicittya*.

In his commentary on this verse, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī defines the word *prema-vaicittya* as *prema-janita-viceccatā*, the perplexity that arises due to *prema*. This refers to an altered state of consciousness wherein the mind becomes so absorbed in a particular thing that it loses touch with other objects of perception. When the consciousness meditates continuously on some object that is related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and becomes so deeply absorbed in it that it attains a state of total identification with that object, then at that time there is no perception even of other objects that are related to Kṛṣṇa. Thus even when Kṛṣṇa is directly present nearby, one cannot recognise Him. One thus becomes overwhelmed by the anguish of separation from Kṛṣṇa. This unique condition of *prema* is known as *prema-vaicittya*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that the exceptional quality of *prema* that brings about this condition refers to the *sthāyibhāva* in the state of *anurāga*. This is clear from the fact that *prema-vaicittya* was previously described as a symptom of *anurāga* (*Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.149)). This *anurāga* is rooted in such an overwhelmingly unquenchable thirst that even an object which has been experienced over and over seems as if it has never been experienced at all.

Sometimes in the state of *anurāga* the intelligence loses the subtlety to be able to experience Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the sweetness of His qualities at the same time. When one is experiencing

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one is unable to experience His qualities, and when one experiences His qualities, one is unable to experience Him directly. In *sambhoga-rasa*, the relishing of union with Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā sometimes becomes so totally immersed in thinking of Kṛṣṇa’s qualities, such as His expertise in loving affairs, the cleverness of His speech, His singing, musical ability, dancing and other unlimited qualities, that She loses perception of Kṛṣṇa directly. Then after some time She remembers the person who possesses those qualities and asks, “Where is He?” At that time She abandons Her absorption in His qualities and begins to seek Him out. Being overwhelmed by a feeling of separation, She is unable to see Kṛṣṇa, who is present right before Her. *Prema-vaicittya* is illustrated in this statement (*Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (15.148)):

*abhirendra-sute sphuraty api puras tivrānurāgotthayā
viśeṣa-jvara-sampadā vivaśa-dhīr atyantam udghūrṇitā
kāntam me sakhi darśayeti daśanair udgūrṇa śasyāṅkurā
rādhā hanta tathā vyaceṣṭata yataḥ kṛṣṇo ’py abhūd vismitaḥ*

[When Vṛndā saw the *prema-vaicittya* of Śrī Rādhā, she said to Paurṇamāsī-devī:] Even in the presence of Vrajendra-nandana, Śrī Rādhā’s intelligence became overwhelmed by an acute fever of separation arising from intense feelings of *anurāga* and, staggering about in delusion, She exclaimed, “O sakhi, where is My most dear one? Please show Him to Me just once.” Saying this, She took a piece of straw between Her teeth and began to behave in such a way that even Kṛṣṇa Himself became completely astonished.

(3) *Aprāñiny api janma-lālasā* – (14.152), taken from *Dānakeli-kaumudī* (6):

*tapasyāmaḥ kṣāmodari varayitum veṇuṣu janur
vareṇyam manyethāḥ sakhi tad akhilānām sujānuṣām
tapastomenocair yad iyam urarī-kṛtya murali
murārāter bimbādhara-madhurimāṇam rasayati*

[Śrī Rādhā, considering Herself unsuccessful in the attempt to attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa, said to Lalitā:] O thin-waisted girl, what is the use of us having attained these attractive human forms? We cannot attain Kṛṣṇa through these forms. I will perform austerities to take birth as a flute, because that is the highest possible birth one may take. Just see, by the fruit of its potent austerity, this flute is tasting the sweetness of the *bimba* fruit of Kṛṣṇa's lips.

(4) *Vipralambhe visphūrṭi* – (14.153):

*brūyās tvaṁ mathurā-dhvanīn mathurā-nātham tam ity uccakaiḥ
sandeśam vraja-sundarī kam api te kācin mayā prāhiṇot
tatra kṣmāpati-pattane yadi gataḥ svacchanda gacchādhunā
kiṁ kliṣṭām api visphuran diśi diśi kliṣṇāsi hā me sakhim*

[Lalitā said to a traveller who was on the way to Mathurā:] Go to the master of Mathurā and loudly tell Him that a *vraja-sundarī* has sent Him this message through you: “O Kṛṣṇa, now that You have gone off to the capital, You may go wherever it pleases You. But why must You manifest Your appearances (*visphūrṭi*) throughout the four directions and thus again and again harass my anguished friend?”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that when Śrī Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā, Śrī Rādhā was seeing His *sphūrṭi* in every direction due to the overwhelming experience of *anurāga*. When Śrī Rādhā, afflicted by separation, would see a *sphūrṭi* of Kṛṣṇa, She thought that Kṛṣṇa had come to Her directly. Becoming delighted, She would rush forward to embrace Him. But the vision would then vanish and, not being able to see Him anymore, She would sink into an ocean of grief. Her pain of separation would then be multiplied many times over. Lalitā could feel the acute suffering of Śrī Rādhā and therefore she sent this message to Kṛṣṇa not to trouble her *sakhī* in this way. Śrīla Cakravartīpāda also mentions that from the example of Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura it may be understood that *sphūrṭis* of Kṛṣṇa are possible in the stage of *rati* or *bhāva*.

But the *visphūrtis* experienced in the stage of *anurāga* are far more powerful.

Bhāva or mahābhāva

Mahābhāva is described as follows: “*anurāga evāsamorddhvacamatkāreṇonmādako mahābhāvaḥ, yasmin jāte yoge nimeṣāsahatā, kalpa-kṣaṇatvam ity ādikam, viyoge kṣaṇa-kalpatvam ity ādikam, ubhayatra mahodḍiptāśeṣa-sāttvika-vikārādikam jāyate* – when *anurāga* becomes matchless and filled with astonishment, it obtains a state of complete madness (*unmāda*) and is called *mahābhāva*. In the state of *mahābhāva*, when the devotee is in Kṛṣṇa’s association, even a moment’s obstruction in seeing Him due to the blinking of the eyes is intolerable, and an entire millenium (*kalpa*) appears to be but a moment. Conversely, when the devotee is separated from Kṛṣṇa, even a moment appears to be like a *kalpa*. In the state of *mahābhāva*, both in union and in separation, the *sāttvika-bhāvas* are displayed up to their highest possible limit of intensity known as *mahā-uddīpta*.”

In *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* a gradation of *sāttvika-bhāvas* is given of which *uddīpta* is the highest state. Yet in the condition of *mahābhāva* this state is converted into *suddīpta-sāttvika-bhāva*, in which all eight symptoms simultaneously manifest to the ultimate limit of their brilliance. This same condition is here referred to as *mahā-uddīpta*.

In *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has used the terms *bhāva* and *mahābhāva* interchangeably. He uses both words to refer to the same state. This is seen in at least two instances. In the section on *sthāyibhāva* (14.57) he says that when *samartha-rati*¹ is matured it attains to the state of *mahābhāva*. Immediately after that (14.59) he says that as *prema* intensifies

1. The word *samartha* means “capable, suitable, complete”; therefore *samartha-rati* means “capable of controlling Kṛṣṇa”.

it is transformed successively into *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *bhāva*. In this progression *bhāva* is mentioned as the final stage, which was just previously referred to as *mahābhāva*. Later on (14.154) he defines *bhāva*. Then he says (14.156), “This *bhāva* is extremely difficult for any of Kṛṣṇa’s queens to obtain. It can be experienced only by the damsels of Vraja, and it is known as *mahābhāva*.” Here again he has used the two terms to refer to the same state.

In Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary on the verse defining *bhāva* (14.154), he says: “*bhāva-śabdasya tatraiva vṛttiḥ parākāṣṭhā, bhagavac-chabdasya śrī kṛṣṇa iveti bhāvaḥ, mahābhāva-śabdasya tu kvacit tatra prayogaḥ svayaṁ bhagavac-chabdasyeva jñeyaḥ* – in this circumstance the word *bhāva* refers to the highest possible limit of the development of the function of *prema*. In this sense it is used in exactly the same way that Śrī Kṛṣṇa expresses the highest possible limit of the term Bhagavān. The word *mahābhāva* is sometimes used elsewhere and should then be understood in the same sense as the term Svayaṁ Bhagavān.” He is showing here how both *bhāva* and *mahābhāva* refer to the highest development of *prema* in exactly the same way that Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Svayaṁ Bhagavān both refer to the highest and original form of Bhagavān.

In Jīva Gosvāmī’s description from *Prīti-sandarbhā*, we do not find any separate mention of the state of *bhāva*. According to this description, when *anurāga* is intensified it is converted into *mahābhāva*. Therefore here also no distinction is made between *bhāva* and *mahābhāva*. *Bhāva* is defined in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.154):

*anurāgaḥ sva-saṁvedya-
daśām prāpya prakāśitaḥ
yāvad-āśraya-vṛttiś ced
bhāva ity abhidhiyate*

When *anurāga* reaches a special state of intensity, it is known as *bhāva*. This state of intensity has three characteristics: (1) *anurāga* reaches the state of *sva-saṁvedya*, which means that it becomes the object of its own experience, (2) it becomes *prakāśita*, radiantly manifest, which means that all eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* become prominently displayed, and (3) it attains the state of *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*, which means that the active ingredient of this intensified state of *anurāga* transmits the experience of Rādhā's and Kṛṣṇa's *bhāva* to whomever may be present and qualified to receive it. This includes both the practising and perfected devotees.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura have given detailed explanations of this verse. The word *saṁvedya* means “capable of being known or realised”. This comes from the word *saṁvedana*, which means “to thoroughly understand or experience”. The word *sva* means “one-self”. Thus the term *sva-saṁvedya* literally means “that which has the power to be fully tasted or experienced by itself”. When *anurāga* reaches the state where it becomes the object of its own experience, it is known as *sva-saṁvedya*.

There are three fundamental features of this heightened state of *anurāga*: (1) *bhāva-svarūpa* – the experience of tasting, (2) *kaṛaṇa-svarūpa* – the cause of tasting and (3) *karma-svarūpa* – that which is tasted. *Bhāva-svarūpa* refers to the act of experiencing Kṛṣṇa by virtue of the *hlādinī* aspect present within the intensified condition of *anurāga*. When Kṛṣṇa's sweetness is experienced along with a powerful yearning in the developed state of *anurāga*, then the relisher becomes so absorbed in the exceptional taste of that sweetness that he completely forgets himself and even the object he is tasting and simply becomes immersed in the act of tasting or experiencing itself. This is known as the *bhāva-svarūpa* of *anurāga*.

Next is the *kaṛaṇa-svarūpa* of *anurāga*. The word *kaṛaṇa* means “a cause”. That by which something is accomplished is

known as its *karāṇa*. Kṛṣṇa's sweetness is tasted by *anurāga* in its *saṁvit* aspect. Therefore the intensified state of *anurāga* is the cause of Kṛṣṇa's sweetness being tasted. When *anurāga* reaches its highest limit, Kṛṣṇa's sweetness can also be tasted to its highest limit.

Next is the *karma-svarūpa* of *anurāga*. *Karma* refers to the object of any action. That which is tasted is known as the object of taste. As the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa is tasted by the excellence of *anurāga*, the excellence of *anurāga* is also experienced by Kṛṣṇa's sweetness. By the influence of *anurāga*, Kṛṣṇa's incomparable sweetness increases, and as a result of tasting Kṛṣṇa's sweetness the eminence of *anurāga* also increases beyond measure. Thus both Kṛṣṇa's sweetness and *anurāga* itself are the *karma* of *anurāga*.

When *anurāga* is fully manifested in these three features – *bhāva*, *karāṇa* and *karma* – spiritual ecstasy (*ānanda*) is fully experienced. That state is known as *sva-saṁvedya*. *Anurāga* is a highly intensified condition of *rati*, and *rati* is a function of the Lord's internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*) predominated by the *hlādinī* and *saṁvit* potencies. Therefore *hlādinī* and *saṁvit* are present in *anurāga*. When it is said that *anurāga* attains the state of *sva-saṁvedya*, this means that the *bhāva*, *karāṇa* and *karma* of *anurāga* each become objects of the experience of *anurāga*. Each of these are realised one after another. First, by virtue of the *hlādinī* aspect in *anurāga*, the act of experiencing or tasting Kṛṣṇa is realised. Then by the *saṁvit* aspect in *anurāga*, Kṛṣṇa is tasted due to the causality of *anurāga*. Finally, by a combination of both the *hlādinī* and *saṁvit* potencies, *anurāga* itself becomes the object of taste due to the effect of tasting Kṛṣṇa. In reality, *rati* itself is imbued with taste, and it becomes the cause of tasting Kṛṣṇa.

The term *prakāśita* means that in the stage of *bhāva* the *sāttvika-bhāvas* manifest externally to the degree of intensity

known as *uddīpta*. When five, six or all eight of the *sāttvika-bhāvas* manifest simultaneously and attain supreme exultation, this condition is known as *uddīpta*. Thus, when the intensified condition of *anurāga* causes the *sāttvika-bhāvas* to manifest to this degree of intensity, *anurāga* is said to have attained the quality of *prakāśita*.

In the term *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*, *yāvat* means “whomever” and *āśraya* means “the receptacle or abode of the experience of *anurāga*”. This refers to both the practising and perfected devotees. The word *vṛtti* means “function” or “activity”. The function or transaction that extends its influence to whomever is in a position to receive it is known as *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*. When *anurāga* reaches the zenith of expression in Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and extends its influence to the hearts of whatever devotees may be present, then it is said that *anurāga* has reached the state of *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*.

The extent to which the heart is moved by the influence of the *anurāga* situated in Rādhā’s and Kṛṣṇa’s hearts is dependent on one’s eligibility. Not everyone’s heart is moved to the same extent. In the material world the moon is supreme amongst cool objects, and the sun is supreme amongst hot objects. Although the moon distributes its cooling rays equally, not all objects have the same degree of coolness. Similarly, the sun distributes its heat equally, but not all objects radiate the same degree of heat. In the same way, the *anurāga* in Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s heart, as it exists in its intensified state, is transmitted to whatever practising and perfected devotees are present to receive it. Yet the degree to which it is experienced is dependent on their eligibility.

Yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti has a second meaning. *Āśraya* can be taken to mean “basis” or “foundation”. In that case it means that *rāga* is the basis of *anurāga*. *Vṛtti* can also mean “state” or “existence”.

Yāvat will then mean “as much as” or “to its topmost limit”. When *rāga* reaches its ultimate state or condition, it is called *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*. The question may be raised as to why the word *rāga* is used here when it is a stage prior to *anurāga*. *Rāga* is defined as the condition wherein distress is experienced as great pleasure if it affords one the opportunity to meet with Kṛṣṇa. The word *rāga* is used here to indicate that when the extreme limit of distress is turned into the greatest happiness, *rāga* reaches its highest point and is known as *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*.

What is the highest limit of distress for the *vraja-sundarīs*? For chaste girls there is no greater suffering than to abandon the path of righteousness. To preserve their chastity such girls are prepared to enter a lake of fire and give up their life without flinching. But for the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa the chaste *vraja-sundarīs* give up family and the path of righteousness without hesitation. That supreme difficulty is experienced by them as the greatest happiness. This condition is known as the *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti* of *anurāga*.

To summarise, when *anurāga* reaches its highest limit of intensity, it causes one to fully experience the bliss of tasting Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s incomparable sweetness. As a result of tasting Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness, one fully experiences the relish produced from the supreme excellence of *anurāga*. By the combined experience of these two tastes, one becomes so immersed in the extraordinary quality of taste that one forgets himself and the object of relish and remains conscious only of the experience of tasting. In that state five, six or all eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* manifest very prominently. Due to the superexcellence of *rāga* in that condition the chaste girls of Vraja abandon without shame even their own families and the path of righteousness for the service of Kṛṣṇa and they experience such difficulty as the greatest happiness. In that intensified condition *anurāga*

extends its influence into the hearts of whatever practising and perfected devotees may be present at the time. When all this takes place, it is known as *bhāva*.

An example of *bhāva* is given in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.155):

*rādhāyā bhavataś ca citta-jatunī svedair vilāpya kramāt
 yuñjann adri-nikuñja-kuñjara-ṭate nīrdhūta-bheda-bhramaṇ
 citrāya svayam anvarañjayad iha brahmāṇḍa-harmyodare
 bhūyobhir nava-rāga-hiṅgula-bharaiḥ śṛṅgāra-kāruḥ kṛti*

[In a *kuñja* on Govardhana Hill, Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa were immersed in tasting each other's sweetness. Their bodies were decorated by *uddipta-sāttvika-bhāvas*. Appreciating the sweetness of Their *mahābhāva*, Vṛndā said:] O king of elephants who sports in the groves on Govardhana Hill, amorous love itself is a highly skilled artist who has slowly melted the shellac of Your hearts with the heat of Your perspiration, thus liquifying them into an undifferentiated, unified substance. He is mixing that with a full measure of the vermilion of Your new *rāga* in order to paint an extraordinary picture on the interior walls of the palace of this universe.

In his commentary on this verse, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that just as all incarnations are present in Svayam Bhagavān, all the stages of *prīti* beginning from *rati* are present in *mahābhāva*. He then explains how in this example all the stages of *prema* are exhibited, as well as the special symptoms of *mahābhāva*.

In the above verse the words *śṛṅgāra-kāruḥ kṛti* mean that the artist of amorous love is expert in his craft. This refers to *rati*, because *rati* is the basis of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*. In *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.1) it is said: “*sthāyi-bhāvo 'tra śṛṅgāre kathyate madhurā rati – madhura-rati* is the *sthāyibhāva* of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*.” The *sthāyibhāva* is the ruling emotion that brings all the subsidiary emotions under its control. This means that *madhura-rati* is an artist who deftly mixes the colours of various emotions and paints a picture of *śṛṅgāra-rasa*.

The words *rādhāyā bhavataś ca* mean “of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa”. The fact that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are mentioned together is suggestive of paramour love. Rādhā’s and Kṛṣṇa’s disregard for the infamy They may receive in this world and the next due to Their paramour love means that Their love is unaffected even when there is cause for that love to break. This is the symptom of *prema*.

Rādhā’s and Kṛṣṇa’s hearts are compared to shellac that is melted by the heat of Their *prema* exhibited in the form of perspiration. This melting of the hearts is a symptom of *sneha*. The word *yuñjan* means that Rādhā’s and Kṛṣṇa’s hearts are combined together into one substance. This complete intimacy is the symptom of *praṇaya*. The words *nirdhūta-bheda-bhrama* mean “having cast off the illusion of duality”. This means that Their hearts are so completely unified that there is no chance that any consciousness of duality may arise. This type of oneness is a symptom of *susakhya*, intimate friendship, which is described elsewhere as *viśrambha*. *Viśrambha* is also a symptom of *praṇaya*.

The word *kramāt* means “slowly” or “gradually”. This indicates the presence of *vāmya*, contrariety, which is suggestive of *māna*. If *māna* were not present, Their hearts would be melted all at once, without any hesitation.

The words *adri-nikuñja-kuñjara-pate* mean “the king of elephants who sports in the groves on Govardhana Hill”. This is suggestive of *rāga*. With an anxious longing to meet in day or night, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa come and go along the rough terrain of Govardhana Hill, which is full of sharp stones and thorns. This causes great pain to Their soft feet. Yet They experience this pain as great happiness. This is the symptom of *rāga*.

The words *nava-rāga-hiṅgula-bharaiḥ* mean “by a full measure of the vermilion of new attachment”. This is indicative of *anurāga*, because it shows the ever-fresh quality of *rāga* and its

abundance. The word *bhūyobhiḥ* means “with tremendous profusion”. This means that the ever-fresh quality of *anurāga* is experienced in a highly intensified condition that is indicative of *mahābhāva*.

After analysing how all the stages of *prema* from *rati* to *mahābhāva* have been illustrated in this verse, the three special characteristics of *mahābhāva* are now shown. The substance of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary on this is that Rādhā’s and Kṛṣṇa’s hearts are melted and unified to such an extent that not only is there no knowledge of duality between Their hearts, but there is not even an illusion of such duality. From this it may be understood that Their absorption in the experience of tasting each other is so complete that They have no awareness of anything else. Nothing else can penetrate Their awareness. Neither is this perception dependent on any other object. Their *anurāga* is both the cause and the object of its own experience. This is the symptom of *sva-sarṁvedya*.

Jīva Gosvāmī then explains that, when shellac is repeatedly exposed to the heat of fire, it becomes completely melted both inside and out. Similarly, when Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are repeatedly exposed to the upsurge of the *sāttvika-bhāva* known as *sveda*, perspiration, Their hearts melt both inside and out. This indicates the presence of *uddīpta-sāttvika-bhāva*, which is the symptom of *anurāga* manifesting its *prakāśita* feature.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that in order to paint a picture inside a wealthy person’s mansion, an expert artist slowly melts shellac, which is inherently red, by the heat of fire. He then mixes in an abundant quantity of vermilion to prepare an excellent colour. When he paints the inside of the mansion with that mixture, he attracts the hearts of all people and they become overwhelmed with astonishment. Similarly, *anurāga* melts the hearts of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, who are experiencing the condition of *mahābhāva*. Their hearts are

then infused with a great inundation of ever-fresh *rāga*. At the time of Their manifest pastimes (*prakāṣa-lilā*), the devotees within the universe experience the exhilaration of Rādhā's and Kṛṣṇa's hearts due to the condition of *mahābhāva* and become astonished. The effect of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's *mahābhāva*-saturated pastimes is experienced by whatever devotees are present there as far as their qualification allows. This is the symptom of *anurāga* manifesting the condition known as *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*. In this way all the symptoms have been displayed by this verse.

Thus with the help of the statements of *Pṛiti-sandarbhā*, it has been shown how Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in one verse, has very concisely expressed the essence of the systematic development of *prema* through its various stages. In particular, He has described the *gopis'* fully developed and radiant love in the amorous mellow (*unnata-ujjvala-mādhurya-prema-rasa*).

Comment

It may be noted that the order of the stages of *prema* that is given by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in the *Pṛiti-sandarbhā* differs slightly from that which is given by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*. In *Pṛiti-sandarbhā* the order is given as *rati*, *prema*, *praṇaya*, *māna*, *sneha*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *mahābhāva*; whereas in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* it is given as *rati*, *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *praṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *mahābhāva*. There is no contradiction between these two different views because sometimes the order of *sneha*, *māna* and *praṇaya* is reversed in accordance with different *rasas*. ❀

The word *yugāyitam*, meaning “appearing like a millenium”, is simple and straightforward. The phrase *govinda-virahaṇa* expresses the attitude of separation (*vipralambha*) from Govinda. *Vipralambha* is defined in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.5.25):

*sa pūrva-rāgo mānaś ca
pravāsādi-mayas tathā
vipralambho bahu-vidho
vidvadbhir iha kathyate*

Self-realised *rasika* devotees have described *vipralambha* to be of many varieties, such as *pūrva-rāga* – the mutual attachment and anticipation of meeting that exists between lovers who have not yet met, *māna* – anger which prevents a loving couple from consummating their desire for union, and *pravāsa* – separation due to living at a distant place.

The esoteric mystery implied in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s statement is that the practising devotee who is still within the world of matter is fit to taste love in separation only in the condition of *pūrva-rāga*.

Comment

It is essential for devotees in the stage of practice to cultivate the mood of separation, and because they have never experienced meeting with Kṛṣṇa, their feelings of separation will come only in the category of *pūrva-rāga*. But without having ever met with Kṛṣṇa, how can they experience separation from Him in *pūrva-rāga*?

By hearing narrations of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes from others, *pūrva-rāga* is awakened. This was the case with the *dvija-patnis* as well as the ladies of Mathurā prior to Kṛṣṇa’s arrival there. Rukmiṇī also had never seen Kṛṣṇa, but by hearing about Him from Śrī Nārada, *pūrva-rāga* arose within her heart. Thus, she became exceedingly anxious to meet with Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, by hearing from the spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas or by reading the scriptures, the living entities may have *vipralambha-pūrva-rāga* awakened within their hearts. The living entities have qualification only up to this extent because they have never experienced meeting with Kṛṣṇa. Therefore the other

types of separation such as *māna* and *pravāsa* are not possible for them. ❀

There are ten conditions which arise due to separation: (1) *cintā* – anxious consideration, (2) *jāgaraṇa* – sleeplessness, (3) *udvega* – agitation, (4) *tānava-kṛṣatā* – emaciation of the body, (5) *malināṅgatā* – discolouring of the limbs of the body, (6) *pralāpa* – incoherent speech, (7) *vyādhi* – being stricken with a tormenting ailment, (8) *unmāda* – madness, (9) *moha* – bewilderment and (10) *mṛtyu* – death, which is also known as *mūrcchā* – unconsciousness.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-lilā 20.40–1)

*udvege divasa nā jāya, 'kṣaṇa' haila 'yuga'-sama
varṣāra megha-prāya aśru varṣe nayana
govinda-virahe sūnya haila tribhuvana
tuṣānale ṭoḍe – yena nā jāya jivana*

[Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, absorbed in intense feelings of separation in the ecstasy of *mahābhāva*, speaks as follows:] O *sakhī*, without the son of Nanda Mahārāja, I am so agitated and distressed that my days simply do not pass. Each and every moment appears to be like an entire millenium. Tears are flowing incessantly from my eyes just like torrents of rain from the clouds. Now I simply cannot tolerate separation from Govinda. This entire universe appears as if void. My body is always burning in the fire of separation as if my limbs had been bound by straw and set ablaze. Yet I remain alive. What am I to do now?

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Seven in four parts (Gītāvalī)

(7-a)

*gāite gāite nāma ki daśā haila
kṛṣṇa-nitya-dāsa muṇi hṛdaye sphurila
jānilāma māyā-pāṣe e jaḍa-jagate
govinda-virahe duḥkha pāi nānā-mate*

*āra ye saṁsāra mora nāhi lāge bhāla
 kānhā yāi kṛṣṇa heri e cintā viśāla
 kāndite kāndite mora ānkhi variṣaya
 varṣā-dhārā hena cakṣe haila udaya
 nimeṣa haila mora śata yuga sama
 govinda-viraha āra sahite akṣama*

While repeatedly chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I was overtaken with a most astonishing condition. The realisation that I am the eternal servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa began to manifest within my heart. Because my attention has been diverted from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, I have been bound in the dreadful grip of *māyā*. Thus I am suffering from various kinds of miseries in this material world. Now this material world no longer holds any attraction for me. Where shall I go now? What shall I do? Where will I meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Without seeing Him, I can get no relief. This has become a great anxiety. As I cry repeatedly, the tears are flowing from my eyes in an incessant downpour, like rain falling from the clouds in the monsoon season. In separation from Śrī Govinda, a single moment appears like hundreds of millenniums. O *sakhī*, now I cannot tolerate separation from Śrī Govinda.

(7-b)

*śūnya dharātala, caudike dekhiye,
 parāṇa udāsa haya
 ki kari ki kari, sthira nāhi haya,
 jivana nāhika raya
 vraja-vāsi-gana, mora prāṇa rākha,
 dekhāo śrī rādhānāthe
 bhakativinoda, minati māniyā,
 laohe tāhāre sāthe
 śrī kṛṣṇa-viraha āra sahite nā pāri
 parāṇa chāḍite āra dina dūi cāri*

Now this entire universe seems void, and my life has become gloomy. Where shall I go? What shall I do? I am unable to

VERSE SEVEN

attain any sense of calm. My vital air is on the verge of quitting this body. O residents of Vraja-dhāma, give me a glimpse of Śrī Rādhānātha and save my life. Please hear the prayer of this Bhaktivinoda and take him along with you. Otherwise, I cannot tolerate separation from Kṛṣṇa anymore. Within a few days I shall give up my life.

(7-c)

*gāite govinda-nāma, upajila bhāva-grāma,
dekhilāma yamunāra kūle
vṛṣabhānu-sutā-saṅge, śyāma naṭavara raṅge,
vāṅsari bājāya nīpa-mūle
dekhīyā yugala-dhana, asthira haila mana,
jñāna-hārā hailuṅ takhana
kata-kṣaṇe nāhi jāni, jñāna-lābha haila māni,
āra nāhi bhela darasana*

Aho! When I began to chant the holy name of Śrī Govinda in a loud voice, various symptoms of ecstasy began to manifest in my body. Suddenly, I saw the beautiful shore of the Yamunā. In a charming and lush green grove beneath a *kadamba* tree, the best of dancers, Śyāmasundara, was displaying His graceful threefold bending form and playing the flute accompanied by Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī. Seeing the unprecedented couple, I could not remain steady. I lost consciousness and fell upon the ground. How long I lay in that condition, I do not know. When I awoke, I looked here and there. But in spite of searching for a long time with great effort, I was unable to obtain Their *darśana*.

(7-d)

*sakhi go kemane dhariba parāṇa
nimeṣa haila yugera samāna
srāvaṇera dhārā, āṅkhi varīṣaya,
sūnya bhela dharātala
govinda-virahe, prāṇa nāhi rahe,
kemane vāñciba bala*

*bhaktivinoda, asthira haiyā,
punaḥ nāmāśraya kari'
dāke rādhānātha, diyā darasana,
prāṇa rākha, nahe mari*

Now this entire universe has begun to appear void. Streams of tears flow from my eyes like torrents of rain during the month of Śrāvaṇa. O *sakhī*, the life air within this body has become very restless and agitated. I feel that my life is about to come to an end – how shall I go on? In separation from Govinda, a single moment appears like hundreds of millenniums. Deeply agitated, this Bhaktivinoda chants the holy name again and loudly cries, “O Kṛṣṇa! O Rādhā! Please, both of You give me Your *darśana* and save my life. Otherwise, I will surely perish.”

Vivṛti

“O Govinda, in separation from You, this entire universe seems void to me. A stream of tears is incessantly flowing from my eyes like torrents of rain during the monsoon season, and the batting of an eyelash appears like a millennium.”

This is a vivid example of *vipralambha-rasa*, the mellow taste of divine separation. For devotees in whom ecstatic feelings of *bhāva* have arisen (*jāta-rati-bhaktas*), it is absolutely essential that one seek to experience *vipralambha-rasa*, without concern for union with the Lord (*sambhoga*). This verse has been cited in order to demonstrate this point.

Feelings of separation that are experienced in material relationships are simply full of misery, whereas in transcendental *vipralambha-rasa*, one experiences supreme bliss within the heart even though externally it appears like intense suffering. Therefore it has been said regarding the feelings of separation experienced by a Vaiṣṇava: “*yata dekha vaiṣṇavera vyavahāra duḥkha, niścaya jānio sei parānanda-sukha* – although the feelings of separation experienced by a Vaiṣṇava appear like ordinary distress, you should know them to be transcendental bliss.”

Vipralambha-rasa always gives nourishment to *sambhoga*.

In the condition known as *prema-vaicittya*, which comes under the heading of *vipralambha*, there is an external appearance of *sambhoga*. In this condition, although one is directly in Kṛṣṇa's presence, one feels intense grief due to the internal conception of separation that is generated by the unique excellence of *prema*. By contrast with this, when one is physically separated from Kṛṣṇa, remembrance of Him is so intense that there is no possibility of forgetting Him even for a moment. This stage is the culmination point of all *bhajana*.

The group known as Gaura-nāgarī, who are actually oblivious to Lord Kṛṣṇa, make a licentious display of *sambhoga-rasa*. Due to their negligence of Kṛṣṇa, they simply create obstacles to the development of genuine, transcendental *rasa*. Those who aspire for *sambhoga* always endeavour for the selfish satisfaction of their own senses. Therefore they are devoid of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 4.165) it is said: “*ātmendriya-prīti-vāñchā tāre bali 'kāma'*, *kṛṣṇendriya-prīti-icchā dhare 'prema' nāma* – the desire to gratify one's own senses is *kāma*, but the desire to please the senses of Lord Kṛṣṇa is *prema*.” If the Gaura-nāgarīs understood the meaning of this verse, they would not be so quick to place Śrī Gaurāṅga in the position of *nāgara*, the enjoyer, and themselves as *nāgarī*, the enjoyed, with an urgent desire to promote their own *sambhoga-rasa*. One should abandon this and perform *bhajana* unto the Supreme Lord purely under the guidance of Vaiṣṇavas.

The confidential secret of Lord Gaurāṅga's pastimes is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, accepting the mood of an *āśraya-jātiya* (a receptacle of loving sentiments, or in other words, a devotee), is always situated in the mood of *vipralambha*. The fullest display of the sentiment of the *āśraya-jātiya-jīva* who is seeking to give nourishment to *sambhoga-rasa* is found in the mood of *vipralambha*. In order to demonstrate this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests

His eternal form of Śrī Gaura, who is the incarnation of *vīpralambha-rasa*. From this it can be concluded that the misplaced endeavours of those who aspire for *sambhoga* can never become successful.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

The following verse from Śrī Kṛṣṇa-*karnāmṛta* (41) is an example of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *pralāpa* (incoherence or speech filled with lamentation) instigated by feelings of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This verse is also quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.2.100) as an example of the *vyabhicāri-bhāva* known as *autsukya*, anxious longing, experienced in the condition of separation from Kṛṣṇa:

*amūny adhanyāni dināntarāni
hare tvad-ālokanam antareṇa
anātha-bandho karuṇaika-sindho
hā hanta hā hanta katham nayāmi*

O Anātha-bandhu (friend of the destitute), O Hari, O Karuṇā-sindhu (ocean of compassion)! Alas, alas! How can I bear the passing of these miserable days and nights, being bereft of Your association?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has composed the following verse in this connection (*Bhajana-rahasya* (7.14)):

*nā heriye tava mukha, hṛdaye dāruṇa-duḥkha
dīna-bandho karuṇā-sāgara
e adhanya divā-niśi, kemane kātābe dāsī,
upāya balaha ataḥ para*

Being unable to see Your face, my heart is filled with unbearable distress. O friend of the fallen, ocean of compassion! How shall I pass these miserable days and nights? I am Your maid-servant. Therefore please tell me immediately, what am I to do about this?

The following verse from *Padyāvalī* (330) is a statement of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī that illustrates Śrī Rādhā's *bhāvocchwāsa*. [*Bhāvocchwāsa* is a deep outburst of feeling that expresses the spiritual sentiment hidden in the heart of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. There are many different instances of this. The one mentioned here is instigated by feelings of separation. In the references from *Bhajana-rahasya* given in Verse Eight, there is a statement from *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* that shows an example of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *bhāvocchwāsa* instigated by meeting with Kṛṣṇa. See the comments given there on pp. 148 and 150 for further explanation of *bhāvocchwāsa*.]

*ayi dina-dayārdra-nātha he
mathurā-nātha kadāvalokyase
hṛdayam tvad-aloka-kātaram
dayita bhrāmyati kiṁ karomy aham*

○ Lord whose heart melts with compassion for the destitute,
○ Lord of Mathurā, when will I obtain Your *darśana*? Being bereft of Your association, My sorrowful heart has become greatly agitated and unsteady. ○ dearly beloved, what shall I do now?

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings (*Bhajana-rahasya* (7.7)):

*'he dina-dayārdra-nātha, he kṛṣṇa, mathurā-nātha,
kabe punaḥ pāba daraśana
na dekhi se cānda-mukha, vyathita hṛdaye duḥkha,
he dayita ki kari ekhana'*

○ Lord whose heart melts with compassion for the destitute,
○ Kṛṣṇa, master of Mathurā, when will I see You again? My heart is greatly distressed because of not seeing Your moonlike face. ○ beloved, what shall I do now?

The following verse from *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (15.167) describes ten conditions that arise due to separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa and that thus promote the state of *bhāvonmāda* in Śrīmatī Rādhikā. *Bhāvonmāda* is a kind of divine madness that comes in the stage of *mahābhāva*:

ŚRĪ ŚIKṢĀṢṬAKA

*cintātra jāgarodvegau
tānavaṃ malināṅgatā
pralāpo vyādhir unmādo
moho mṛtyur daśā daśa*

There are ten conditions that arise in *sudūra-pravāsa-vipralambha*, separation due to living at a distant place. These conditions are as follows: (1) *cintā* – anxious consideration, (2) *jāgarana* – sleeplessness, (3) *udvega* – agitation, (4) *tānava-kṛṣatā* – emaciation of the body, (5) *malināṅgatā* – discolouring of the limbs of the body, (6) *pralāpa* – incoherent speech, (7) *vyādhi* – being stricken with a tormenting ailment, (8) *unmāda* – madness, (9) *moha* – bewilderment and (10) *mṛtyu* – death, which is also known as *mūrcchā* – unconsciousness.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings (*Bhajana-rahasya* (7.11)):

*jāgara, udvega, cintā, tānavāṅga-malinatā,
pralāpa, unmāda āra vyādhi
moha, mṛtyu daśā daśa, tāhe rādhā suvivaśa,
pāila duḥkha-kulera avadhi*

When Śrī Rādhikā is stricken with these ten conditions due to separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, She attains to the ultimate limit of distress.

Verse Eight

Steadiness in perfection

आश्लिष्य वा पादरतां पिनष्टु मामदर्शनान्मर्महतां करोतु वा ।
यथा तथा वा विदधातु लम्पटो मत्प्राणनाथस्तु स एव नापरः ॥८॥

*āśliṣya vā pāda-ratām pinaṣṭu mām
adarśanān marma-hatām karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lamṭaṭo
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*

Anvaya

saḥ lamṭaṭaḥ – that debauchee, who acts for His own pleasure;
vā – either; *pinaṣṭu* – let Him crush (make me His very own);
mām – me (a maidservant); *pāda-ratām* – attached to the service
of His lotus feet; *āśliṣya* – by a deep embrace; *vā* – or; *marma-
hatām karotu* – let Him break my heart; *adarśanāt* – by not
being visible; *vidadhātu* – let Him do; *yathā tathā vā* – whatever
He likes (let Him even enjoy the association of other lovers);
tu eva – nonetheless (He only); *mat-prāṇa-nāthaḥ* – is the Lord
of my life; *aparaḥ na* – there is no one other than Him.

Translation

Let Kṛṣṇa tightly embrace this maidservant who is attached to the service of His lotus feet, and thus make me His very own. Or let Him break my heart by not being present before me. He is a debauchee and can do whatever He likes. Even if He sports with other lovers directly in front of me, He is still the Lord of my life. There is no one other than Him.

Śrī Sanmodana-bhāṣya

In this verse we are acquainted with the mental condition of the living entity upon attainment of the status of *prema*. “That crest jewel of debauchees may delight this maidservant who is attached to the service of His lotus feet by tightly embracing me. Or He may trample me, or break my heart by not being present before me. He may do whatever He likes. Even if He sports with other lovers directly in front of me, He is still the Lord of my life. There is no one other than Him.” This characteristic of one-pointed devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known as *kṛṣṇaika-niṣṭhitā*. This is also demonstrated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.29.34):

*martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditāmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmṛtatvaṁ pratīpadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

[Śrī Bhagavān said to Uddhava:] When mortal beings abandon all fruitive activities and surrender themselves fully unto Me, I become desirous of bestowing some special benediction upon them. At that time, I cause them to attain their immortal forms and promote them to the status of My dear eternal associates.

From this characteristic it is understood that in the stage of *prema*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the only life, wealth and heart of the devotee. In that condition, the perfection of religion is fully exhibited in the form of the mutual attraction between Bhagavān and the devotee. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (7.5.14) Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja has said:

*yathā bhrāmyaty ayo brahman
svayam ākarṣa-sannidhau
tathā me bhidyate cetaś
cakra-pāṇer yadrcchayā*

O *brāhmaṇa*, just as iron is automatically attracted towards a magnet, my consciousness has become released from this

mundane existence and forcibly attracted to Cakrapāṇi Bhagavān, the Lord who carries a discus in His hand, by the irresistible force of the Lord's willing potency, known as *icchā-sakti*.

This statement supports the idea that a *svabhāvika-dharma* or natural function does exist between the infinitesimal living entity and the all-pervading Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and that it involves mutual reciprocity. When the *jīva* is in the state of indifference to the Lord, this natural function is practically non-existent. But when, by some great fortune, the living entity's nature becomes cleansed and purified, this eternally established natural function that exists between Kṛṣṇa and the living entity is manifested again.

At such a time, the attraction of the living entity for the Lord is exactly like the attraction of clean iron for a magnet. Consequently, the sole purpose of religion is to bring into effect this eternally existing natural function. Religion has no purpose other than this. Therefore it should be understood that in the *sādhana* leading to the manifestation of *prema*, the pure living entity is completely devoid of desire for any other result. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.32.22) Kṛṣṇa Himself has given support to this in the following words:

*na pārāye 'ham niravadya-saṁyujām
sva-sādhu-kṛtyam vibudhāyuṣāpi vah
yā mābhajan durjara-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ
saṁvṛṣcya tad vah pratiyātu sādhunā*

My beloved *gopīs*, your meeting with Me is completely pure and faultless. You have completely broken the tenacious bonds of household life just to serve Me. Even if I obtain a fantastic span of life like that of the demigods, it will not be possible for Me to repay your love, service and renunciation. Therefore you will have to be satisfied by accepting your own auspicious activities as repayment.

By this statement of the Lord it is proved that love for Kṛṣṇa is itself the fruit of loving Kṛṣṇa. In other words the devotees are completely devoid of any desire for their own happiness. They serve Kṛṣṇa, offer their love to Him and meet with Him. The sole purpose of whatever they do is to please Kṛṣṇa.

In this verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, the words *adarśanān marmahatām* mean “breaking the heart due to separation”. In reality, the anguish of the heart related to separation is not a source of distress, but of supreme happiness. This is evidenced by Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s statement in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.32.21):

*evam mad-arthojjhita-loka-veda-
svānām hi vo mayy anuvṛttaye ’balāḥ
mayā parokṣam bhajatā tirohitam
māsūyitum mārthata tat priyam priyāḥ*

O beloved *gopīs*, O tender-hearted friends, for My sake, you abandoned social conventions, Vedic regulations and even your family relationships. I disappeared from you only to increase the intensity of your feelings for Me, and I was secretly listening to your love-intoxicated speeches. I am your beloved. Therefore don’t be displeased with Me.

Another important point spoken of in this Verse Eight is that in the statement “delighting me by your embrace”, there is not even a scent of desire for personal happiness. The purport of this statement is that the devotee simply wants to offer his love to Kṛṣṇa, and to bring happiness to Him. Therefore this statement is thoroughly appropriate. It is in complete conformity with the nature of *prema* and the conclusions of the scriptures.

Significance of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka as related through the life and experience of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

The glory of this Śikṣāṣṭaka will now be summarised. What is the greatness of the transcendental love of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the personification of the Lord’s internal potency

(*svarūpa-śakti*)? What is the extraordinary sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa that She tastes through Her love? And what is the indescribable happiness that She experiences when She tastes the sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa? The supreme absolute truth, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, desiring to fulfil these three inner longings, assumes the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Deeply absorbed in the mood of munificence (*audārya*), He eternally performs unlimited pastimes in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, which is situated in a special section of Vaikuṅṭha named Goloka. There in the seat of His eternal transcendental pastimes He tastes these three sentiments.

Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, united with the bodily complexion and sentiment of Śrī Rādhā, appears in this universe only once in a day of Brahmā in the form of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He appeared just recently on the sacred banks of the Bhāgirathī (Gaṅgā) within the Nadia district of West Bengal, in Śrī Navadvīpa-Māyāpura, which is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvana. He appeared in the year 1486, on a Saturday at dusk of the full moon night of the month of Phālgunī (February–March) during a lunar eclipse. At that time, due to the lunar eclipse, the entire town vibrated the melodious sound of *harināma-saṅkīrtana*.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu's father's name was Paṇḍita Śrī Jagannātha Miśra, and His mother's name was Śrīmatī Śacīdevī. By His transcendental pastimes, enacted at different stages of life, He inundated the entire land of Gauḍa with transcendental bliss. In childhood He displayed His childlike mischievousness, and occasionally demonstrated astonishing superhuman pastimes. In boyhood He was immersed in the pastimes of education and study. In youth He was married according to the regulations of scripture and set an ideal example of how to execute the duties of householder life. It was at this time also that He began to discourse on the principles of *bhakti*.

Thereafter He went to Gayā and accepted initiation into the ten-syllable *gopāla-mantra* from Śrī Īśvara Purī, who was the foremost mendicant of the Śrī Madhva *sampradāya*. By doing so, He instructed all living entities about their duty to take shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master who is endowed with all the characteristics described in the scriptures. Returning from Gayā, He submerged all of Gauḍa-bhūmi in the flow of the river of *bhakti* by performing *śri-harināma-sankīrtana* in the company of His devotees. At the age of twenty-four, He abandoned householder life for good, and accepted the renounced order of life from Śrī Keśava Bhāratī, who was a *sannyāsī* in the line of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya.

Afterwards, on the pretext of going for pilgrimage, He spent six years travelling throughout Bengal, Orissa, South India, Maharastra, Uttar Pradesh (Mathurā, Vṛndāvana, Prayāga and Kāśī) and Bihar (Kānāi Nāṭasālā and Rāja Mahala). During His travels, He inspired hundreds of thousands of people to obtain the ultimate goal by bestowing upon them love for the holy name. Everywhere He went, He propagated the doctrine of unalloyed devotion (*śuddha-bhakti*). Through logical debate He defeated many persons who subscribed to doctrines that were opposed to the principles of scripture. He clearly established His own doctrine that is the essence of all conclusions of the four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*. This is known as *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, the inconceivable truth of the oneness and difference that exists between the Lord, His energies and the living entities.

Thereafter, He remained in Śrī Jagannātha Purī continuously for eighteen years. In order to fulfil His three inner longings, He tasted the nectar of divine love in the company of His eternal associates. He sent His influential preachers of *śuddha-bhakti* all over and propagated His pure doctrine through them. Thus, He submerged all of India in the flow of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-prema*.

In the meantime, He empowered the hearts of His eternal associates like Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, Śrī Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī, Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, Śrī Gopāla-bhaṭṭa, Śrī Jīva, Śrī Kavi Karṇapura and others. He inspired them to write many jewels of transcendental literature and thus gave nourishment to His own ideals.

That very same Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva Himself composed the Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, which is filled with all the conclusions of *bhakti*, and instructed it to persons of all different levels of qualification. He often tasted the nectarean essence of this Śikṣāṣṭaka in a secluded place in the company of His two most confidential associates, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāya Rāmānanda. This topic is found in Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and other literatures.

In this way, by His pastimes as an ideal practitioner of *bhakti* within the *gṛhastha-āśrama*, Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva instructed all religious householders how to properly carry out family life. Likewise, by His pastimes as a *sannyāsī*, He instructed all renunciants, showing them an ideal example of renunciation combined with the highest devotional sentiment. The glory of this Śikṣāṣṭaka is unlimited.

Benediction for the readers of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

Faithful persons who with great devotion read and study this Śikṣāṣṭaka, which emanated from the lotus mouth of Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, will become infatuated with greed to taste the honey from the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurasundara. Moreover, they will be submerged in the reservoir of love for Murāri, Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra. Four hundred and one years after the appearance of Śrī Gaurāṅga, this commentary on Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka named *Sanmodana-bhāṣya* has been composed by me – Kedāranātha Bhaktivinoda.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's concluding words
to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda's commentary

For pure *rasika* Vaiṣṇavas who taste *mādhurya-rasa*, this *Śikṣāṣṭaka* is the essence of all the Vedas. Because it emanated from the lotus mouth of Svayam Bhagavān, it is an essential truth (*mahā-vākya*). Therefore all fortunate persons should adorn their necks with the garland of this *Śikṣāṣṭaka* by reading, studying and worshipping it daily as a fixed principle.

Thus ends the translation of the commentary on Śrī *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, known as *Sanmodana-bhāṣya*, composed by the greatly merciful eternal associate of Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya-lilā 20.48–52)

āmi kṛṣṇa-pada-dāsi, teṅho rasa-sukha-rāsi'
 āliṅgiyā kare ātma-sātha
 kivā nā deya daraśana, jārena mora tanu-mana,
 tabu teṅho mora prāṇa-nātha
 sakhi he, śuna mora manera niścaya
 kivā anurāga kare, kivā duḥkha diyā māre,
 mora prāṇeśvara kṛṣṇa – anya naya
 chāḍi' anya nāri-gaṇa, mora vaśa tanu-mana,
 mora saubhāgya prakāta kariyā
 tā-sabāre deya piḍā, āmā-sane kare kṛiḍā,
 sei nāri-gaṇe dekhāñā
 kivā teṅho lampāṭa, śaṭha, dhr̥ṣṭa, sakapāṭa,
 anya nāri-gaṇa kari' sātha
 more dite manaḥ-piḍā, mora āge kare kṛiḍā,
 tabu teṅho mora prāṇa-nātha
 nā gaṇi āpana-duḥkha, sabe vāñchi tāñra sukha,
 tāñra sukha āmāra tātparya
 more yadi diyā duḥkha, tāñra haila mahā-sukha,
 sei duḥkha mora sukha-varya

[In the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Śrīman Mahāprabhu said:]
 O *sakhi*, I am a maidservant of the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the ocean of the topmost happiness of transcendental *rasa*. He may take possession of me by tightly embracing me, or He may cause my body and mind to wither away by not giving me His *darśana*. Whatever He does, He is still the Lord of my life. O *sakhi*, please hear my heart's conviction. Whether He loves me or torments me, Kṛṣṇa is my master – there is no other. Abandoning the other beautiful cowherd girls, He may manifest my good fortune by submitting His mind and body to my control. By sporting with me in front of those girls, He will bring about their distress. Yet He is a wicked, impudent and deceitful debauchee, who is immersed only in the satisfaction of His own whims. He may mortify me by frolicking with other cowherd girls in my presence. Even then, He is the Lord of my life. I am not the least bit concerned about my own distress. I always desire His happiness alone. The basis of my life is simply to please Him in every way. If by giving me distress, He is pleased, that distress becomes my greatest happiness.

Śikṣāṣṭaka: Song Eight in two parts (Gītāvalī)

(8-a)

bandhu-gaṇa śunaha vacana mora
bhāvete vibhora, thākiye yakhana,
dekhā deya citta-cora
vicakṣaṇa kari', dekhite cāhile,
haya ānkhi-agocara
punaḥ nāhi dekhi', kāṇḍaye parāṇa,
duḥkhera nāhi thāke ora
jagatera bandhu sei kabhu more laya sātha
yathā tathā rākha more, āmāra se prāṇa-nātha
darśana-ānanda dāne, sukha deya mora prāṇe,
bale more praṇaya-vacana
punaḥ adarśana diyā, dagdha kare mora hiyā,
prāṇe more māre prāṇa-dhana

yāhe tā'ra sukha haya, sei sukha mama
 nija sukhe duḥkhe mora sarvadā-i sama
 bhaktivinoda, saṁyoge, vīyoge,
 tāhe jāne prāṇeśvara
 tā'ra sukhe sukhi, sei prāṇa-nātha,
 se kabhu nā haya para

O dear friends, please hear my words. How shall I describe the sentiment of my heart? When I am overwhelmed with emotion, then I see that alluring person who has stolen my heart. But as soon as I return to full consciousness, I see that He has disappeared. Even upon searching, He is not to be found anywhere. At that time there is no limit to my distress. My body begins to shake and tremble. My life air becomes restless and agitated. “Alas! Alas! What am I to do? He is the friend of the whole world. When will He take me with Him? Wherever He may keep me, He is the Lord of my life. By giving me His *darśana*, He may delight me, please me and appease me with affectionate words. Or He may scorch my heart by not giving His *darśana*. Let Him do whatever He likes. Even if He kills me by separation from Him, He remains the very wealth of my life. Whatever gives Him pleasure is my happiness. My own happiness and distress are all the same to me. He is the master of Bhaktivinoda both in separation and in union. My happiness is only in His happiness. He alone is the Lord of my life, there is no one else.

(8-b)

yoga-pīthopari-sthita, aṣṭa-sakhi-suveṣṭita,
 vṛndāraṇye kadamba-kānane
 rādhā-saha vaṁśī-dhārī, viśva-jana-citta-hārī,
 prāṇa mora tānhāra caraṇe
 sakhi-ājñā-mata kari donhāra sevana
 pālya-dāsī sadā bhāvi donhāra caraṇa
 kabhu kṛpā kari', mama hasta dhari',
 madhura vacana bole
 tāmbūla laiṅyā, khāya dui jane,
 mālā laya kutūhale

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adarśana haya kakhana ki chale
nā dekhīyā donhe hiyā mora jvale
jekhāne sekhāne, thākuka du'jane,
āmi ta' caraṇa dāsī
milane ānanda, virahe yātanā,
sakala samāna vāsī
rādhā-kṛṣṇa prāṇa mora jivane maraṇe
more rākhi' māri' sukhe thākuka du'jane
bhaktivinoda, āra nāhi jāne,
paḍi' nija-sakhi-pāya
rādhikāra gaṇe thākiyā satata,
yugala-caraṇa cāya

Śrī Nanda-nandana, who plays the flute and steals the hearts of the entire universe, is graciously seated on a jewelled throne with Śrīmatī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī, at the seat of Their transcendental pastimes, surrounded by the eight principal *sakhis* in a *kadamba* forest of transcendental Vṛndāvana. The lotus feet of this eternally youthful Divine Couple are my life and soul. I have offered myself at Their lotus feet. I am Their maidservant (*pālyadāsī*) engaged in the service of Their lotus feet. Sometimes They take hold of my hands, and with sweet voices, They request *tāmbūla* and then eat it. Sometimes with great wonder, They take a garland from me and wear it. While at other times, They disappear from me on some pretext. O *sakhī*, happiness is found wherever They are found. I am a maidservant of Their lotus feet. Bliss obtained in Their company and torture endured in Their separation are all the same to me. In life and in death – at all times – Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are my very life. Bhaktivinoda knows no one else but Them. Falling at the lotus feet of Their dearest *sakhis*, I beg for one thing alone: that they accept me into the personal group of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and engage me always in the service of the lotus feet of the Divine Couple.

Vivṛti

“I am a maidservant of the *gopīs* who are always engaged in serving the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in varieties of ways. He may embrace me, He may make me His very own, or He may break my heart by not being present before me. He is a debauchee who is always engaged in seducing the young wives of the *gopas*. He may do whatever He likes, yet He is the Lord of my life. There is no one other than Him. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the independent Supreme Person. Acting in accordance with His desire is my only religion. I have no interest separate from His, nor do I have any inclination for service that is contrary to His will.”

In the stage of perfection, the *jīva* is devoid of all material designations pertaining to both the body and the mind. At that time, the living entity becomes a female attendant of the *gopīs* in the Vṛndāvana situated in the spiritual sky, the place where Nanda-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa freely enacts His divine pastimes. There one is engaged in fulfilling the desires of Śrī Kṛṣṇa through spiritual senses in one’s spiritual body. This is the actual nature of *prema-bhakti*.

The living entity should never consider himself as the *āśraya-vigraha*. The *āśraya-vigraha* refers to the Lord’s eternal associates who are naturally the receptacle of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and under whose guidance the aspiring devotees place themselves in order to awaken their spontaneous attraction towards the Lord. The *āśraya-vigraha* here specifically refers to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. A devotee never considers himself to be identical with the *āśraya-vigraha*, but always feels himself to be their follower and an aspirant for their mercy. When one considers himself as the *āśraya-vigraha*, then his worship becomes *ahaṅgrahopāsanā*.

Ahaṅgrahopāsanā refers to a type of worship in which the devotee considers himself to be identical with the object of

worship. The unadulterated condition of the pure *jīva* is to remain always under the guidance of the *āśraya-jāṭīya*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Her confidential associates. Although the living entity is dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he is, by constitution and by the will of Kṛṣṇa, the separated part and parcel of the Lord (*vibhinnāmsa*).

Summary of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

In all eight verses of *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, three subjects have been explained: *sambandha* (knowledge relevant to the development of one's relationship with the Lord), *abhidheya* (the process of devotional life) and *prayojana* (the ultimate goal of one's devotion). In Verse One, *sādhana* in the form of *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* has been described in a general way. In Verse Two, the awareness of one's incompetence to execute this super-excellent form of *sādhana* is shown. Verse Three teaches the method for chanting the holy name; Verse Four, the necessity of eliminating unfavourable desires and deceit in the form of the aspiration for liberation; Verse Five, knowledge of the living entity's original spiritual identity; Verse Six, how one achieves good fortune by attaining proximity to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; Verse Seven, the mood of separation in those who have acquired the highest qualification; and Verse Eight, the ultimate perfection of one's cherished goal.

In Verses One through Five, instructions have been given on *sambandha-jñāna*, which is the basis of *abhidheya*. In all eight Verses, *abhidheya-tattva* has been described. In Verses Six through Eight, instructions regarding *prayojana*, the ultimate goal, are found. In Verses One through Five, the process of *sādhana-bhakti* is described under the heading of *abhidheya-tattva*, and in Verses Six and Seven, *bhāva-bhakti*. Verses Six to Eight, and particularly Verses Seven and Eight, deal with *sādhya*, the perfectional stage of *bhakti*, which culminates in *prema*.

Presenting the following verse composed by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, I offer my obeisances at the feet of all the readers:

*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeṣa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam
ramyā kācid upāsanaṁ vraja-vadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā
śrīmad-bhāgavatam pramāṇam amalam premā pum-artho mahān
śrī-caitanya-mahāprabhor matam idam tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ*

Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental abode Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma are my worshipful objects. The most excellent method of worshipping Kṛṣṇa is that adopted by the young wives of Vraja. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the flawless and most authoritative scripture, and *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the fifth and highest achievement of human life beyond mundane religiosity (*dharma*), accumulation of wealth (*artha*), sense enjoyment (*kāma*) and liberation (*mokṣa*). It is thus known as *pañcamapurūṣārtha* or *parama-puruṣārtha*. This is the opinion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We have supreme regard for this conclusion. We have no inclination or respect for any other cheating opinions.

Śrī Bhajana-rahasya Verses

The following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.31.11) gives an example of the *gopīs*' highly developed love for Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa was wandering about in the forest with bare feet chasing after the cows, the *gopīs* felt tremendous anxiety thinking of the pain that Kṛṣṇa might be experiencing, and spoke as follows:

*calasi yad vrajāc cārayan paśūn
nalina-sundaram nātha te padam
śīla-tṛṇāṅkuraiḥ sidatīti naḥ
kalilatām manaḥ kānta gacchati*

O master, O lover, when You set out from Vraja and head for the forest to graze the cows, our hearts become greatly anguished with the thought that Your feet, which are softer and

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more delicate than a lotus flower, will be pricked by jagged stones, spiked husks of grain, and rough grass, shoots and thorns.

Śrīla Bhaktivīnoda Ṭhākura sings (*Bhājana-rahasya* (8.14)):

*dhenu la'ye vraja ha'te yabe yāo vane
nalina-sundara tava kamala-caraṇa
silānkure kaṣṭa habe manete vicāri'
mahā-duḥkha pāi morā ohe citta-hāri*

O beloved who have stolen my heart, when You leave Vraja and go to the forest taking the cows, my mind simply thinks how Your beautiful, soft lotus feet will be pained by sharp stones, and thus I experience tremendous sorrow.

When the *gopīs* are unable to behold the lotus face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is encircled by curling locks of hair, they consider each and every moment to be like hundreds of millenniums. (The exact words used here to express a moment are *nimeṣa*, which means the blinking of an eye, and *truṭi*, which is the time occupied in the integration of eighteen atomic particles, or in other words, 1/1687.5 of a second.) This is expressed in the following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.31.15):

*aṭati yad bhavān ahni kānanam
truṭi-yugāyate tvām aṣaṣyatām
kuṭīla-kuntalam śrī-mukham ca te
jaḍa udikṣatām pakṣma-kṛd dṛṣām*

[The *gopīs* said:] O dear beloved, when You go to the forest to herd the cows, we are unable to see You and thus even a single moment (*truṭi*) appears to us to be like an entire millennium. At the day's end, we are able to behold Your beautiful face encircled by curling locks of hair. Yet even at that time, the blinking of our eyes presents an obstruction in seeing You, which we are unable to tolerate for even a moment (*nimeṣa*). We then consider the creator of our eyelids to be a great fool.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings (*Bhajana-rahasya* (8.15)):

*pūrvāhne kānane tumi yāo go-cāraṇe
truṭi yuga-sama haya tava adarsane
kuṭīla-kuntala tava śrī-candra-vadana
darsane nimeṣa-dātā vidhira nindana*

At forenoon when You go to the forest to graze the cows, a single moment in Your absence appears to us like an entire millennium. When we behold Your beautiful moonlike face encircled by curling locks of hair, the blinking of our eyelids interferes with our seeing You and thus we severely rebuke the creator.

The following verse from *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* (12) is an example of the *gopīs'* *bhāvocchwāsa* at the time of union with Kṛṣṇa:

*nikhīla-bhuvana-lakṣmī-nitya-lilāspadābhyām
kamala-viṭina-vithi-garva-sarvaṅkaṣābhyām
praṇamad-abhaya-dāna-praudhi-gādhādṛtābhyām
kim aṅi vahatu cetaḥ kṛṣṇa-pādāmbujābhyām*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet are the abode wherein Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the original source of all goddesses of fortune, conducts Her eternal pastimes. The beauty of those feet completely shatters the pride of the forest path decorated with rows of lotus flowers. They are powerful and deeply attentive in bestowing fearlessness upon the surrendered souls. May His lotus feet be ever manifest in my heart, transmitting the indescribable happiness of serving them.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sings (*Bhajana-rahasya* (8.17)):

*nikhīla-bhuvana-lakṣmī rādhikā-sundarī
tānra nitya-lilāspada parama-mādhurī
kamala-viṭina-garva kṣaya yāhe haya
praṇata-abhaya-dāne praudha-śakti-maya
hena kṛṣṇa-pāda-padma, kṛṣṇa, mama mana
apūrvā utsava-rati karuka vahana*

May an unprecedented festival of love awaken in my heart for Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His lotus feet, which are the highest sweetness, being the abode of the eternal pastimes of the divinely beautiful Śrīmatī Rādhikā, the source of all goddesses of fortune, which shatter the pride of the forest path bedecked with lotuses, and which are fully competent to bestow fearlessness upon the surrendered souls.

Comment

Śrī Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura is here praying with intense longing to become immersed in the pleasure of serving the Lord's lotus feet. The word *vahatu* means "to bear" or "to carry", but it is used here in the sense of shelter. Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura prays that his mind may take shelter of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. The words *kim api* used in combination with *vahatu* mean "vehemently" or "to a great extent". This means that he not only wants to take shelter of those feet but he wants to serve them. Or the word *sukham*, happiness, may be understood here. In that case *kim api* means "a certain happiness". The fact that it is indefinite implies that it is so extraordinary it cannot be described. This refers to the happiness of serving Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet by massaging them and so on. He prays that his mind take shelter only of that happiness.

What is the attraction of those feet? The term *nikhila-bhuvana-lakṣmī* refers to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. It means that She is the original source of all goddesses of fortune, who are of three types: the *lakṣmīs* of Vaikuṅṭha, the queens of Dvārakā and the damsels of Vraja. The words *nitya-lilāspadābhyām* mean that Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet are the abode wherein Śrīmatī Rādhikā enacts Her eternal pastimes. *Nikhila-bhuvana-lakṣmī* also refers to the beauty, opulence and splendour of all the worlds including Vaikuṅṭha. In that case the words *nitya-lilāspadābhyām* mean that all opulence, beauty and splendour eternally and

joyfully reside at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. In either case the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's feet are beyond compare. Consequently they completely shatter the pride of a beautiful forest lined with rows of fragrant lotuses.

How may those extraordinary feet be obtained? *Pranamat* – simply by bowing down to them with great respect. To those who bow down in this way, Kṛṣṇa's feet bestow fearlessness. And in doing so, they are *praudhī*, which means that they are audacious. They display uncommon boldness, and therefore nothing can stand in their way. Furthermore, he says that they are *gādhādrta*, deeply attentive in bestowing such fearlessness. Thus although those feet are so precious, he is confident of attaining his goal.

The term *bhāvocchwāsa* [referred to on page 148] means “an outburst of feeling that expresses the spiritual sentiments hidden in the hearts of the *gopīs*”. How does this occur?

The *gopīs* were silent and Kṛṣṇa was silent. They were feeling the mood of separation. The *gopīs* were weeping and feeling very distressed at heart. But suddenly Kṛṣṇa approached Śrīmatī Rādhikā from behind and clasped His hands in front of Her eyes. She knew it was Him by the touch of His hands, but She did not let on that She knew. She exclaimed, “Viśākhā,” and Kṛṣṇa laughed, trying to restrain Himself. Śrīmatī Rādhikā was feeling overjoyed. Then, just to increase Kṛṣṇa's mood, She said, “Yes, I know. You are Lalitā.”

Then Kṛṣṇa could not check Himself anymore and He at once began to laugh very loudly. Then Śrīmatī Rādhikā said, “Oh You, You, You, You!” After this They embraced.

This is an example of *bhāvocchwāsa*. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is always experiencing *bhāva* within Her heart. But if any stimulus comes and makes these moods come out from the heart so that everyone can see, it is called *bhāvocchwāsa*. This *bhāvocchwāsa* is so powerful that it cannot be checked by

anything, just as the flow of a swift-moving river cannot be checked. ❀

**Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's concluding words
to Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka**

Now in conclusion, this translator, who aspires for the service of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, cites a verse from Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and humbly bows at the respected feet of the faithful readers.

*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanam
ramyā kācid upāsānā vraja-vadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā
śrīmad-bhāgavatam pramāṇam amalam premā pum-artho mahān
śrī-caitanya-mahāprabhor matam idaṁ tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ*

Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental abode Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma are my worshipful objects. The most excellent method of worshipping Kṛṣṇa is that adopted by the young wives of Vraja. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the flawless and most authoritative scripture, and *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the fifth and highest achievement of human life beyond mundane religiosity (*dharma*), accumulation of wealth (*artha*), sense enjoyment (*kāma*) and liberation (*mokṣa*). It is thus known as *pañcama-puruṣārtha* or *parama-puruṣārtha*. This is the opinion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We have supreme regard for this conclusion. We have no inclination or respect for any other cheating opinions.

Glossary

A

abhidheya – the means by which the ultimate goal is achieved; the practices of *sādhana-bhakti*.

ācārya – spiritual preceptor; one who teaches by example.

adhirūḍha-mahābhāva – the highest state of *mahābhāva*, found only in the *gopīs* of Vraja. The mood in which all the *anubhāvas* that are manifest in resolute *mahābhāva* attain special characteristics that are even more astonishing than those *anubhāvas* in their normal forms (see **mahābhāva** and **anubhāva**).

ānanda – (1) transcendental bliss. (2) the potency of the Lord that relates to His aspect of bliss. This corresponds to the *hlādinī* potency (see **hlādinī**).

anartha – unwanted desires in the heart that impede one's advancement in spiritual life. These *anarthas* are of four types: (i) *duṣkṛtoṭtha* – those arising from past sins, (ii) *sukṛtoṭtha* – those arising from previous pious activities, (iii) *aparādhotoṭtha* – those arising from offences and (iv) *bhakti-uttha* – those arising in relation to *bhakti*.

anubhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*. The actions that display or reveal the emotions situated within the heart are called *anubhāvas*. The *anubhāvas* are thirteen in number, as described on pp. 91–2.

anurāga – (1) attachment in general. (2) spiritual attachment. (3) an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. In *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.146) *anurāga* has been defined as follows: “Although one regularly meets with the beloved and is well acquainted with the beloved, the ever-fresh sentiment of intense attachment causes

the beloved to be newly experienced at every moment as if one has never before had any experience of such a person. The attachment that inspires such a feeling is known as *anurāga*.” **āsakti** – attachment. This especially refers to attachment for the Lord and His eternal associates. *Āsakti* occurs when one’s affection for *bhajana* leads to a direct and deep attachment for the person who is the object of that *bhajana*. This is the sixth stage in the development of the creeper of devotion and it is awakened upon the maturing of one’s taste for *bhajana*.

B

Bhagavān – the Supreme Lord; the Personality of Godhead. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (6.5.72–4) Bhagavān is defined as follows: “*śuddhe mahāvibhūty-ākhye pare brahmaṇi vartate maitreya bhagavac-chabdaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇe; sambharteti tathā bhartā bha-kāro ’rtha-dvayānvitaḥ netā gamayitā sraṣṭā ga-kārārthas tathā mune; aiśvaryasya samagrasya dharmasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ jñāna-vairāgyayoś caiva ṣaṅṅām bhaga itiṅganā* – the word *bhagavat* is used to describe the supreme Brahman who possesses all opulence, who is completely pure and who is the cause of all causes. In the word *bhagavat* the syllable *bha* has two meanings: one who maintains all living entities and one who is the support of all living entities. Similarly the syllable *ga* has two meanings: the creator and one who causes all living entities to obtain the results of *karma* and *jñāna*. Complete opulence, religiosity, fame, beauty, knowledge and renunciation are known as *bhaga*, fortune.” The suffix *vat* means “possessing”. Thus one who possesses these six fortunes is known as Bhagavān.

bhajana – (1) the word *bhajana* is derived from the verbal root *bhaj*, which is defined in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* (*Pūrva-khaṇḍa* 231.3): “*bhaj ity eṣa vai dhātuḥ sevāyām parikirtitaḥ tasmāt sevā budhaiḥ proktā bhaktiḥ sādhana-bhūyasī* – the verbal root *bhaj* is

used specifically in the sense of service. Therefore, when *sādhana* is performed with the consciousness of being a servant, it is called *bhakti*.” According to this verse, loving devotional service to Kṛṣṇa is called *bhakti*. Such service is the intrinsic attribute of *bhakti* or *bhajana*. Therefore, whatever services are performed in this consciousness may be referred to as *bhajana*. (2) in the general sense *bhajana* refers to spiritual practices, especially hearing, chanting and meditating upon the holy names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

bhakti – the word *bhakti* comes from the root *bhaj*, which means “to serve” (see ***bhajana***). Therefore the primary meaning of the word *bhakti* is “to render service”. The performance of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which are done in a favourable spirit saturated with love, which are devoid of all other desires and which are not covered by *karma* or *jñāna* is called *bhakti*.

bhāva – (1) spiritual emotions, love, sentiment; a particular mood of love in which the devotee serves Kṛṣṇa as a servant, friend, parent or lover. (2) an intensified stage of *prema* that in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* has been equated with *mahābhāva*. An elaborate description of *bhāva* has been given in the commentary to Verse Seven.

bhāva-bhakti – the initial stage of perfection in devotion. A stage of *bhakti* in which *viśuddha-sattva*, the essence of the Lord’s internal potency consisting of spiritual knowledge and bliss, is transmitted into the heart of the practising devotee from the heart of the Lord’s eternal associates and softens the heart by different kinds of taste. *Bhāva-bhakti* is the first sprout of *prema*, pure love of God, and it is also known as *rati*. Thus it should be distinguished from the *bhāva* referred to under (2) above, which is an intensified stage of *prema* in the development from *rati* to *mahābhāva*. This is the seventh stage in the development of the creeper of *bhakti*.

Brahman – the impersonal, all-pervading feature of the Lord, which is devoid of attributes and qualities. The supreme Brahman or Parabrahman refers to the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
brāhmaṇa – one of the four castes (*varṇas*) in the *varṇāśrama* system; one who is a member of that caste, such as a priest or teacher.

C

cit – the potency of the Lord that relates to His cognisant feature or transcendental knowledge. This corresponds to the *sāvit* potency (see *sāvit*).

D

darśana – seeing, meeting, visiting with, beholding.

dāsyā – (1) one of the five primary relationships with the Lord that is established in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love for or attraction to the Lord that is expressed in the mood of a servant. (2) in this world the general relationship of practising devotees with the Lord is known as *kṛṣṇa-dāsyā* or *bhagavad-dāsyā*. This means simply to recognise that one's true identity is to be a servant of the Lord.

dhāma – a holy place of pilgrimage; the places wherein the Lord appears and enacts His transcendental pastimes.

dharmā – (1) the natural, characteristic function of a thing; that which cannot be separated from its nature. (2) religion in general. (3) the socio-religious duties prescribed in the scriptures for different classes of persons in the *varṇāśrama* system. (4) material religiosity.

dvija-patnīs – the wives of *brāhmaṇas*, as described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Tenth Canto, Chapter 23.

G

Goloka Vṛndāvana – the highest realm of the spiritual world. The abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa where He is manifest in His original and topmost feature as a cowherd boy, surrounded by His intimate and loving devotees, the *gopas* and *gopīs* of Vraja.

gopas – the cowherd boys, who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of intimate friends. This may also refer to the elderly *gopas*, who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of parental affection.

gopīs – the young cowherd maidens of Vraja, headed by Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of amorous love. This may also refer to the elderly *gopīs*, headed by Mother Yaśodā, who serve Kṛṣṇa in the mood of parental affection.

H

hari-kathā – narrations of the holy names, form, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Hari.

harināma – the chanting of the holy names of the Lord. Unless accompanied by the word *saṅkīrtana*, it usually refers to the practice of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* softly to oneself on a strand of *tulasī* beads.

hlādinī – this refers to the internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*) that is predominated by *hlādinī* (see *svarūpa-śakti*). *Hlādinī* is the potency that relates to the bliss aspect (*ānanda*) of the Supreme Lord. Although the Supreme Lord is the embodiment of all pleasure, *hlādinī* is that potency by which He relishes transcendental bliss and causes others to taste bliss.

J

jaṇa – very soft utterance or whispering of the holy names of the Lord to oneself; usually refers to the practice of chanting *harināma* on *tulasī* beads.

jīva – the eternal individual living entity, who in the conditioned state of material existence assumes a material body in any of the innumerable species of life.

jñāna – (1) knowledge. (2) knowledge of the soul's separateness from matter and its identity with Brahman leading to impersonal liberation.

K

Kali-yuga – the present age of quarrel and hypocrisy which began five thousand years ago.

karatālas – small brass hand cymbals used in devotional music.

karma – (1) any activity performed in the course of material existence. (2) reward-seeking activities; pious activities leading to material gain in this world or in the heavenly planets after death. (3) fate; former acts as leading to inevitable results.

kīrtana – congregational singing of the Lord's holy names sometimes accompanied with music. This may also refer to loud individual chanting of the holy name as well as oral descriptions of the Lord's names, form, qualities, associates and pastimes. One of the nine most important limbs of devotion.

kuñja – a grove or bower; a natural shady retreat, the sides and roof of which are formed mainly by trees and climbing plants.

L

līlā – divine sportive pastimes. The Lord's activities, whether in the matter of the creation of the material world or in the matter of transcendental exchanges of love with His devotees, are never under the influence of material nature. They are all manifestations of His self-willed potencies and therefore they are known as *līlā*, divine sport. These pastimes are

heard, described and meditated upon by devotees as part of the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*.

M

mādhurya-rasa – one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa established in the stage of *bhāva* and *prema*; love or attachment towards Kṛṣṇa that is expressed in the mood of a lover. This mood is eternally present in the *gopīs* of Vraja.

mahābhāva – the highest stage of *prema*, divine love. In *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.154) *mahābhāva* is defined thus: “When *anurāga* reaches a special state of intensity, it is known as *bhāva* or *mahābhāva*. This stage of intensity has three characteristics: (i) *anurāga* reaches the state of *sva-samvedya*, which means that it becomes the object of its own experience; (ii) it becomes *prakāśita*, radiantly manifest, which means that all eight *sāttvika-bhāvas* become prominently displayed; and (iii) it attains the state of *yāvad-āśraya-vṛtti*, which means that the active ingredient of the intensified state of *anurāga* transmits the experience of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s *bhāva* to whomever may be present and qualified to receive it.”

māna – (1) jealous anger. (2) an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described as follows in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.96): “When *sneha* reaches exultation, thus causing one to experience the sweetness of the beloved in ever new varieties, yet externally takes on a crooked feature, it is known as *māna*.”

mantra – a mystical verse composed of the names of the Lord that addresses any individual deity. *Mantras* are given to a disciple by a spiritual master at the time of initiation.

māyā – illusion; that which is not; the Lord’s external potency, which influences the living entities to accept the false egoism of being independent enjoyers of this material world.

mṛdaṅga – a double-headed clay drum that is used in the performance of devotional songs.

N

nāma – the holy name of the Lord, which is chanted by devotees as part of the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*.

P

Paramātmā – the Supersoul situated in the hearts of all living entities as the witness and source of remembrance, knowledge and forgetfulness.

pranaya – an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.108): “When *māna* assumes a feature of unrestrained intimacy known as *viśrambha*, learned authorities refer to it as *pranaya*.” The word *viśrambha* used in this verse means “complete confidence devoid of any restraint or formality”. This confidence causes one to consider one’s life, mind, intelligence and body to be one in all respects with the life, mind, intelligence and body of the beloved.

prema – (1) love for Kṛṣṇa which is extremely concentrated, which completely melts the heart and which gives rise to a deep sense of *mamatā*, or possessiveness, in relation to the Lord (this is the general definition of *prema* given in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.1)). (2) when *rati* becomes firmly rooted and unchecked by any obstacle, it is known as *prema*. When *prema* is augmented it is gradually transformed into *sneha*, *māna*, *pranaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga* and *bhāva*. When some cause arises that could conceivably ruin the relationship between the lover and beloved and yet it remains completely unaffected, such an intimate loving bond is known as *prema*. (*Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.59, 63)). (See also *sneha*, *māna* and so on.)

prema-bhakti – a stage of *bhakti* that is characterised by the appearance of *prema*; the perfectional stage of devotion. This is the eighth and final stage in the development of the creeper of devotion.

prīti – love for Kṛṣṇa, which is also known as *prema* or *bhakti*. Jīva Gosvāmī has defined *prīti* in *Prīti-sandarbha* (*Anuccheda* 65): “*tasyā hlāḍinyā eva kāṇi sarvānandātiśāyini vṛttir nityam bhakta-vṛndeṣv eva nikṣipyamāṇā bhagavat-prītyākhyayā vartate* – when the eternal pleasure-giving faculty of the *hlāḍini* potency, which alone has the power to bring supreme delight to Kṛṣṇa, manifests in the devotee’s heart, it is known as *bhagavat-prīti*, love for the Supreme Lord.” The symptom of this *prīti* is an uninterrupted desire to please the object of love, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Purānas – the eighteen historical supplements to the Vedas.

R

rāga – (1) a deep attachment that is permeated by spontaneous and intense absorption in the object of one’s affection. The primary characteristic of *rāga* is a deep and overpowering thirst for the object of one’s affection. (2) an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described as follows in *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi* (14.126): “When *praṇaya* reaches exultation, thus causing even extreme misery to be experienced within the heart as happiness, it is known as *rāga*.” In his commentary on this verse Jīva Gosvāmī explains that if by accepting some misery there is a chance of meeting with Kṛṣṇa, then that misery becomes a source of great happiness. And where happiness affords one no opportunity to meet with Kṛṣṇa, that happiness becomes the source of great distress. When such a state is experienced, it is known as *rāga*.

rāgānuga-bhakti – a stage of *bhakti* that is motivated by spontaneous attraction or love; devotion that follows in the wake

of the *rāgātmikā* nature present in the hearts of the Lord's eternal associates in Vraja.

rasa – the spiritual transformation of the heart that takes place when the perfectional state of love for Kṛṣṇa, known as *rati*, is converted into liquid emotions by combination with various types of transcendental ecstasies.

rāsa-līlā – Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dance with the *vraja-gopīs*, which is a pure exchange of spiritual love between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, His most confidential servitors.

rati – (1) attachment, fondness for. (2) a stage in the development of *bhakti* that is synonymous with *bhāva* (see ***bhāva-bhakti***).

rūpa – form, shape, appearance; when used in relationship with Kṛṣṇa this refers to His transcendental eternal form, which is heard about, described and meditated upon by devotees as part of the practice of *sādhana-bhakti*.

S

sādhaka – one who follows a spiritual discipline to achieve a specific goal; especially a practitioner of *bhakti*.

sādhana – the method one adopts in order to obtain a specific goal is called *sādhana*. Without *sādhana* one cannot obtain *sādhya*, the goal of one's practice. There are many different types of *sādhana* corresponding to various goals. Those who desire material enjoyment adopt the path of *karma* as their *sādhana*. Those who desire liberation adopt the path of *jñāna* as their *sādhana*. And those who aspire for the eternal loving service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa adopt the path of *bhakti* as their *sādhana*. The *sādhana* of *bhakti* refers to spiritual practices such as hearing, chanting and so on.

sādhana-bhakti – a stage of *bhakti* in which the various spiritual disciplines performed for the satisfaction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are undertaken through the medium of the senses for the purpose

of bringing about the manifestation of *bhāva*, spiritual love of God. The practice stage of devotion.

sakhī – a female friend, companion or attendant.

sakhya – one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa that are established in the heart at the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love or attachment for the Lord that is expressed in the mood of a friend.

śakti – the Lord’s potencies, which are innumerable. They are generally grouped into three categories: (i) *antaraṅga-śakti* – the internal potency, (ii) *taṭastha-śakti* – the marginal potency and (iii) *bahiraṅga-śakti* – the external potency.

śaktimān – the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who possesses all potencies.

sambandha-jñāna – knowledge regarding *sambandha-tattva*, the mutual relationship between the Lord, the living entities and the material energy. The word *sambandha* means “connection”, “relationship” or “binding”. The living entities are eternally and inseparably connected to the Supreme Lord. Therefore He is the true object of relationship. The general relationship between the living entities and the Supreme Lord is one of servant and served. However, in the perfectional stage of *bhakti* one becomes established in a specific relationship with the Lord either as a servant, friend, parent or beloved.

sampradāya – a line of disciplic succession; a particular system of religious teaching.

saṁvit – this refers to the internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*) that is predominated by *saṁvit* (see *svarūpa-śakti*). It is the potency that relates to *cit*, the cognisant aspect of the Supreme Lord. Although the Supreme Lord is the embodiment of knowledge, *saṁvit* is the potency by which He knows Himself and causes others to know Him.

sandhinī – this refers to the internal potency (*svarūpa-śakti*)

that is predominated by *sandhini* (see *svarūpa-sakti*). *Sandhini* is the potency that relates to *sat*, the existential aspect of the Supreme Lord. This is the potency by which the Lord maintains His own existence and the existence of others.

saṅkīrtana – loud congregational chanting of the Lord’s holy names.

sānta – one of the five primary relationships with the Lord that is established in the heart when one is in the stage of *bhāva* or *prema*; love for Kṛṣṇa in His four-armed feature as Paramātmā, which is expressed in the mood of perfect equilibrium of mind.

sat – the potency of the Lord that relates to His existential aspect. This corresponds to the *sandhini* potency (see *sandhini*).

sac-cid-ānanda – that which is composed of *sat* (eternal existence), *cit* (full spiritual consciousness) and *ānanda* (spiritual bliss); often refers to the transcendental form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

sāttvika-bhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*; eight symptoms of spiritual ecstasy arising exclusively from *viśuddha-sattva*, or in other words, when the heart is overwhelmed by emotions in connection with the primary or secondary forms of *rati*.

Smṛti – the body of sacred literature that is remembered (in contradistinction to Śruti, what is directly heard from or revealed to the sages).

sneha – an intensified stage of *prema*; a stage in the development from *prema* up to *mahābhāva*. It is described as follows in *Ujjvala-nīlamanī* (14.79): “When *prema* ascends to its ultimate limit, intensifies one’s perception of the object of love, and melts the heart, it is known as *sneha*.”

śṅgāra-rasa – another name for *mādhurya-rasa*, the devotional sentiment that is a transformation of love in the mood of amorous attraction.

Śruti – the body of literature that embodies the infallible

knowledge that was received by Brahmā or by the great sages in the beginning of creation and that descends in disciplic succession from them; the original four Vedas and the Upaniṣads.

sthāyibhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *bhakti-rasa*; the permanent sentiment in one of the five primary relationships of *sānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* or *mādhuryā*, which are known as *mukhya-rati*. This also refers to the dominant sentiment in the seven secondary mellows (*gauṇa-rati*) of laughter, wonder, heroism, compassion, anger, fear and disgust.

śuddha-sattva – the state of unalloyed goodness (see **viśuddha-sattva**).

svarūpa – (1) form, identity, nature. (2) the eternal constitutional nature and identity of the self that is realised in the stage of *bhāva*.

svarūpa-śakti – the Lord's divine potency is known as *svarūpa-śakti*. It is called *svarūpa-śakti* because it is situated in the Lord's form. This potency is *cinmaya*, fully conscious, and thus it is the counterpart and antithesis of matter. Consequently it is also known as *cit-śakti*, or potency endowed with consciousness. Because this potency is intimately connected with the Lord, being situated in His form, it is further known as *antaraṅga-śakti*, or internal potency. Because it is superior to His marginal and external potencies both in form and glory, it is known as *para-śakti*, or superior potency. Thus, by its qualities, this potency is known by different names – *svarūpa-śakti*, *cit-śakti*, *antaraṅga-śakti* and *para-śakti*. The *svarūpa-śakti* has three divisions: (i) *sandhinī* – the potency that accommodates the spiritual existence of the Lord and all His associates, (ii) *saṁvit* – the potency that bestows transcendental knowledge of the Lord and (iii) *hlādinī* – the potency by which Kṛṣṇa enjoys transcendental bliss and bestows such bliss upon His devotees.

Svayam Bhagavān – the original Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Although the word Bhagavān may be used for any incarnation of the Lord, the term Svayam Bhagavān specifically refers to the original form of the Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the source of all incarnations (see **Bhagavān**).

T

tattva – truth, reality, philosophical principle; the essence or substance of anything.

V

vaibhava-prakāśa – a particular type of expansion of Lord Kṛṣṇa. This has been defined in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya-līlā* 20.171). When an expansion manifests some difference from the original form in bodily features and in complete absorption in a particular mood, it is known as *vaibhava-prakāśa*.

vaidhī – a stage of *bhakti* that is prompted by the rules and prohibitions of the scriptures.

Vaikunṭha – the spiritual world. The majestic realm of the spiritual world that is predominated by Lord Nārāyaṇa or His various expansions.

Vaiṣṇava – a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

varṇāśrama-dharma – the Vedic social system, which organises society into four occupational divisions (*varṇas*) and four stages of life (*āśramas*).

vātsalya – one of the five primary relationships with Kṛṣṇa that are established in the stages of *bhāva* or *prema*; love or attachment for the Lord expressed in the mood of a parent.

vibhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*; that in and by which *rati* is stimulated and thus caused to be tasted is called *vibhāva*. *Vibhāva* is of two kinds: *ālabhana* (the support) and *uddīpana* (the stimulus). He for whom *rati* is aroused is

called *viṣayāmbana* (the object of *rati*) and one in whom *rati* is aroused is called *āśrayāmbana* (the receptacle of *rati*). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the *viṣayāmbana* of *kṛṣṇa-rati* and the devotees are the *āśrayāmbana*. *Uddīpana-vibhāva* refers to all those things which stimulate remembrance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa such as His dress and ornaments, the spring season, the bank of the Yamunā, forest groves, cows, peacocks and so on.

vipralambha – love in separation. This *vipralambha* is of many varieties, chief of which are *pūrva-rāga*, *māna* and *pravāsa*. *Pūrva-rāga* is a mutual feeling of attachment that exists between the lover and beloved prior to their meeting. *Māna* refers to jealous anger in the heroine aroused by the unchaste behaviour of the hero, thus resulting in temporary separation. *Pravāsa* refers to separation due to living at a distant place.

viśuddha-sattva – the state of unalloyed goodness; the quality of existence that is beyond the influence of material nature; Śrīdhara Svāmī has defined *viśuddha-sattva* in his commentary on a verse from the *Viṣṇu Pūrāṇa* (1.2.69): “*tad evaṁ tasyās try-ātmakatve siddhe yena svaprakāśatā-lakṣaṇena tad-vṛtti-viśeṣeṇa svarūpaṁ vā svarūpa-śakti-viśiṣṭaṁ vāvirbhavati, tad-viśuddha-sattvaṁ tac-cānya-nirapekṣas tat-prakāśa iti jñāpaṁ jñāna-vṛttikatvāt samvid eva. asya māyayā sparsābhāvāt viśuddhatvam* – the Lord’s *cit-śakti* is known as *svaprakāśa*. The term *svaprakāśa* means that it reveals itself and illuminates others also. Just as when the sun rises, it makes itself known and illuminates other objects, so when *cit-śakti* arises in the heart, one can know what is *cit-śakti* and one can know oneself in one’s true spiritual identity. Because the *cit-śakti* is *svaprakāśa*, its *vṛtti* is also *svaprakāśa*. The word *vṛtti* literally means ‘function’, which refers to the active agency through which the *cit-śakti* operates. The *cit-śakti* is composed of *hlādinī*, *sandhinī* and *saṁvit*. The particular *svaprakāśa-vṛtti* of this threefold *cit-śakti* that reveals Bhagavān, His form and the transformations of His *cit-śakti*,

such as His associates and *dhāma*, is known as *viśuddha-sattva*. In other words *viśuddha-sattva* is the self-revealing agency of the *cit-śakti* through which the Lord and His paraphernalia are revealed to the devotees. Because it has no contact whatsoever with the external energy, it is known as *viśuddha-sattva*.”

Vraja – the eighty-four square mile area in the district of Mathurā wherein Kṛṣṇa enacted His pastimes.

vraja-sundarī – the *gopīs* of Vraja. The word *sundarī* means “a beautiful young woman”.

vyabhicāri-bhāva – one of the five essential ingredients of *rasa*; thirty-three internal spiritual emotions that emerge from the nectarean ocean of *sthāyibhāva*, cause it to swell and then merge back into that ocean. These include emotions like despondency, jubilation, fear and anxiety, as well as the concealment of emotions.

Y

yoga – (1) union, meeting, connection, combination. (2) a spiritual discipline aimed at establishing one’s connection with the Supreme. There are many different branches of *yoga* such as *karma-yoga*, *jñāna-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga*. Unless specified as such the word *yoga* usually refers to the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* system of Patañjali.

yugala – a couple or pair.

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