

Sri-Sri-Stavavali

Part I

Collected prayers of
Sripad Raghunatha das Goswami



Commentaries by Radhakunda
Mahant Pandit Sri Ananta das Babaji
Translated by Advaita das

Śrī - Śrī - Stavāvalī

Collected prayers by
Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa
Gosvāmī

Commentaries by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Śrī Caitanyāṣṭakam (Eight prayers to Lord Caitanya). 9 verses	1
Śrī Gaurāṅga Stava Kalpatara (A Desire-Tree of Praises of Śrī Gaurāṅga) 12 verses	54
Śrī Manaḥ Sikṣā (Teachings for the Mind) 12 verses	139
Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāminaḥ Prārthana. (Four Prayers)	249
Śrī Govardhanāśraya Daśakam (Ten prayers for Shelter at Govardhana Hill)	277
Śrī Govardhana Vāsa Prārthana daśakam (Ten Prayers for Residence near Govardhana Hill). 11 verses	346
Śrī Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam (Eight Prayers to Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa). 9 verses	402

Śrī Caitanyāṣṭakam

"EIGHT PRAYERS TO ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAHĀPRABHU"

VERSE 1:

**harir dṛṣṭvā goṣṭhe mukura-gatam ātmānam atulaṁ
sva-mādhuryaṁ rādhā-priyatara-sakhīvāptum abhitaḥ
aho gaḍe jātaḥ prabhur apara-gauraika-tanu-bhāk
śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ**

hariḥ - Hari; *dṛṣṭvā* - having seen; *goṣṭhe* - in Vraja; *mukura* - mirror; *gatam* - gone; *ātmānam* - of one self; *atulaṁ* - incomparable; *sva* - own; *mādhuryaṁ* - sweetness; *rādhā* - Rādhā; *priyatara* - dearer; *sakhī* - girlfriend; *iva* - as if; *vāptum* - attaining; *abhitaḥ* - completely; *aho* - O!; *gaḍe* - in Bengal; *jātaḥ* - born; *prabhuh* - the Lord; *apara* - other; *gaura* - golden; *eka* - only; *tanu* - body; *bhāk* - having; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kiṁ* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *saraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

Aho! Will that Hari, Who took birth in Bengal in another, golden form as the son of mother Śacī, after He had seen His own incomparable sweetness in a mirror in Vraja and after becoming greedy to relish this sweetness, just like His dear most girlfriend Rādhā does, cross the path of my eyes again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: By the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī who is the Lord's dear associate, was able to do *bhajana* for a long time near Mahāprabhu's feet. By the grace of Lord Gaura, an extraordinary steadiness in *bhajana* and an anxious loving devotion, paired with pure dispassion, has manifested in his heart. After Lord Gaura disappeared from this world, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa came to Vraja, where he planned to commit suicide, because he could not tolerate anymore the pangs of separation. But Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī convinced him to give up this idea and do *bhajana* on the banks of Rādhākuṇḍa. From that moment on until the end of his blessed life, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was anxiously crying out day and night for the audience of his beloved goddess Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī on the banks of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. The nectarean Gaṅgā-stream of his pure devotion was strengthened by monsoon showers (of mercy) from above and it forcefully streamed towards the desired ocean, named Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, inundating both riverbanks on its way.

Those who discuss the topic of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's extraordinary character will frankly admit that such anxious and intense devotion was rarely found in world history. In his state of great devotional anxiety, he constantly showered his own body with streams of tears, while he was crying for the audience of his beloved Lord and the prayers he wrote down in this very elevated state of mind are collected here in this compilation, named "Stavāvalī". There is no collection of prayers found anywhere in the storehouse of Sanskrit poetry, which is so enriched with sweet feelings, transcendental flavours and expert choice of words like this Stavāvalī.

In the first verse of this Caitanyāṣṭakam, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, whose heart is agitated by anxious feelings of separation,

describes the original reason for Śrī Gaurāṅga's advent and expresses his desire to see Śrīman Mahāprabhu again. "The Original Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, became very eager to taste the nectar of His own sweetness in the mood of His dear most girlfriend Śrī Rādhā, after He saw His own incomparable reflection in a jewelled mirror in Vraja". Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī translates Kṛṣṇa's feelings at that moment as follows in his 'Lalita Mādhava'-play (Act VIII):

*aparikalita pūrvaḥ kaś camatkāra kārī
sphurati mama gariyān eṣa mādhyā pūrah
ayam aham api hanta prekṣya yaṁ lubdha cetāḥ
sarabhasam upabhoktuṁ kāmāye rādhikeva*

When Kṛṣṇa once saw His own extraordinary sweetness reflected in a jewelled wall, He was amazed and said: "How unprecedented and astonishing is this deep and indescribable sweetness of Mine! Alas! When I see it, even I become greedy to enjoy its sweetness, just like Rādhikā!"

*sva mādhyā dekhi kṛṣṇa korena vicāra
ananta adbhuta pūrṇa mora madhurimā;
trijagate ihāra keho nāhi pāya sīmā
ei prema dvāre nitya rādhikā ekali;
āmāra mādhyāmṛta āsvāde sakali*

When Kṛṣṇa beheld His own sweetness, He thought to Himself: "My sweetness is endless, wonderful, and complete, and no one in the three worlds can find its limit. Through Her great love only Rādhikā can always relish all the nectar of My sweetness."

*darpaṇādye dekhi yadi āpana mādhuri;
 āsvādite lobha hoy āsvādite nāri
 vicāra koriye yadi āsvāda upāya;
 rādhikā svarūpa hoite tabe mone dhāya*

"When I see My own sweetness in the mirror, I become eager to taste it, but I can't. After due consideration, I find that the only way to relish this sweetness is through the constitution of Śrī Rādhikā." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi ch. 4)

According to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's intimate associate Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara, there were three unfulfilled desires, which were the main causes for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to accept the mood and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī and to descend as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. It is thus described in Śrī Svarūpa Gosvāmī's notebook:

*śrī rādhāyāḥ praṇaya mahimā kīdṛśo vānayair vā
 svādyo yenādbhuta madhurimā kīdṛśo vā madiyaḥ
 saukhyaṁ cāsyā mad anubhavataḥ kīdṛśaṁ veti lobhās
 tad bhāvādhyāḥ samaṇi śacī garbha sindhau harīnduḥ*

"How glorious is Śrī Rādhā love for Me? How does She relish My wonderful sweetness through this love? How much bliss does She experience from relishing My sweetness?"

With these three kinds of sacred greed, Lord Hari, enriched with the feelings of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, appeared like the moon from mother Śacī's ocean-like womb! To relish this threefold happiness, Vrajendra-Nandana appeared in the holy abode of Navadvīpa in Gauḍa-deśa (West-Bengal) as Śrī Gaurasundara in the first phase of Kali-yuga, with the mood and the golden complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and He was filled with unprecedented devotional mellows. In scriptures like the

Śruti, Smṛti, Purāṇas, Saṁhitās as well as Śrīmad Bhāgavata, we can find lots of evidence about Śrī Gaurāṅga being the Original Personality of Godhead.

In the 6th Prapāṭhaka of the Puruṣa Bodhinī Śrūti in the Atharva Veda it is seen:

*saptame gaura varṇa viṣṇor
ityanena sva śaktyā caikyam
etya prānte prātar avatīrya
saha dvaiḥ svam anuśikṣayati*

"In the 7th Manvantara, or the Vaivasvata Manvantara, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will attain oneness with the essence of His pleasure potency, Śrī Rādhā, and will descend with His associates in the first part of the Kali - age to teach His devotees the *hare-kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*." In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.12) we see:

*mahān prabhur vai puruṣaḥ sattvasyaiṣa pravartakah
sunirmalam imān prāptim īśāno jyotir avyayah*

"He who promulgates *sattva* or *viśuddha sattva* is Mahāprabhu. He is the greatest *puruṣa*, or human-shaped *avatāra*. This Īśāna, Who is most pure, meaning free from desires for personal happiness like sense gratification or liberation, and who just bestows pure *prema bhakti*, is effulgent and eternal." In the Muṇḍakopaniṣad (3.1.3) we find these words:

*yadā paśyati paśyate rukma varṇaṁ
kartāram īśaṁ puruṣaṁ brahma yonim
tadā vidvān puṇya pāpe vidhūya
niranjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmīyam upaiti*

Bhāvārthaḥ: Simply by being initiated in the *mantra* of this *mahā puruṣa*, Who has a golden complexion, Who is the only performer of creation, maintenance and destruction and the bestower of all benedictions, Who descended in a human form in a *brāhmaṇa*-family, a human being can become free from material life, which consists of piety and virtue. The threefold miseries, such as *ādhyātmika*, are then uprooted and he will be blessed with the supreme peace."

A meditation on Śrī Gaurāṅga is described in the Uttara Vibhāga (63) of the Gopāla Tāpanī Śruti:

*hiraṇmayāṁ saumya-tanuṁ sva bhaktāyābhaya-pradam
dhyayan manasi māṁ nityaṁ veṇu śṛṅgadharaṁ tu vā*

"Always meditate on Mahāprabhu, the *sannyāsī* Who carries a bamboo rod, Whose *brāhmaṇa*-body is of golden complexion and Who bestows fearlessness upon His devotees." The Bṛhan Nāradya Purāṇa says (5.35):

*aham eva kalau vipra nityaṁ prachanna vigrahaḥ
bhagavad bhakta rūpeṇa lokān rakṣāmi sarvadā*

The Lord said: "O *brāhmaṇa*! I always protect all people in the age of Kali in a hidden form as a devotee - meaning, I cover My body with the complexion and the *bhāva* of Śrī Rādhā." Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in an Upapurāṇa:

*aham eva kvacid brahman sannyāsāśramam āśritaḥ
hari bhaktiṁ grāhayāmi kalau pāpa hatan narān*

"O *brāhmaṇa!* In the Kali-yuga (the one appearing in the 28th Catur-yuga at the end of the Vaivasvata Manvantara), I always take shelter of the *sannyāsa-āśrama* to bestow Hari-bhakti to the sinful people."

In the ninth Paṭala of the Kapila Tantra, it is seen how Śrī Kṛṣṇa shows to Śrī Rādhā His Gaura-*vigraha* in a dream, which is full of *bhakti rasa* and which is endowed with Her *bhāva* and luster,:

*rādhā bhāva kānti yutām mūrtim ekām prakāśayan
svapne tu darśayāmāsa rādhikāyai svayam prabhuh*

In the Śrī Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma-Stotram, the omniscient Mahā-Muni Śrī Vaiśampāyana has clearly mentioned Śrī Gaurāṅga's *avatāra*

*suvarṇa varṇo hemāṅgo varāṅga candanāṅgadi
sannyāsa kṛc chamaḥ śāntaḥ niṣṭhā śānti parāyaṇaḥ*

In Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Ādi 3) we can find a very beautiful explanation of this verse:

*tāpta hema sama kānti - prakāṅḍa śarīra;
ājānulambita bhujā - kamala locana;
tila phula jini nāsā - sudhāmśu vadana
śānta dānta kṛṣṇa bhakti niṣṭhā parāyaṇa;
bhakta vatsala, suśīla sarva bhūte sama
candanera aṅgada bālā, candana bhūṣaṇa;
nṛtya kāle porī korena kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana*

"His powerful body has the luster of molten gold, His arms stretch down to His knees and He has lotus like eyes. His nose

is more beautiful than a sesame flower and His face shines like the moon. He is peaceful, self-controlled, and fixed in devotion to Kṛṣṇa. He is kind upon the devotees, well-mannered and equipoised to all living beings. His ornaments, which He wears during the performance of Kṛṣṇa-*saṅkīrtana*, are made of sandalwood."

In the Ūrdhāmṇāya Saṁhitā is written:

*kalau purandarāt śacyāḥ gaura rūpo vibhuḥ smṛtaḥ
mahāprabhur iti khyātaḥ sarva lokaika pāvanah*

"In the age of Kali, the Lord will descend in a golden form from Jagannātha Miśra and Śacī-devī and will become famous as 'Mahāprabhu', the purifier of the whole world".

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the essence of the Vedānta, Śrī Prahlāda Mahāśaya has mentioned, that Śrī Gaurāṅga will come, concealing His original form with the *bhāva* and luster of His Beloved -

*itthaṁ nṛ-tiryag ṛṣi deva ṛṣāvatārair
lokān vibhāvayasi haṁsi jagat pratīpān
dharmān mahāpuruṣa pāsi yugānuvṛttaṁ
channaḥ kalau yad abhavas tri-yugo'tha sa tvam*

Śrī Prahlāda Mahāśaya said: "O Mahā-puruṣa! In this way, You descend as a human being, as an animal, a sage, a demigod and a fish to protect the people and to destroy the demons, who wish to wreak havoc. Thus You protect religious principles according to the *yuga*. But in the Kali-yuga You are *channa*, hidden, and (although You are not openly manifest to protect the saints and destroy the demons like in other Yugas) You promulgate the Yuga-dharma of Śrī Harināma-Saṅkīrtana.

Hence You are known as Tri-yuga: He who openly descends in the Satya-, Tretā- and Dvāpara-yuga and who descends in a hidden way in the Kali-yuga." (Bhāg. 7.9.38)

When Śrī Garga Muni, who is a *trikāla-darśī* (seer of past, present and future), performed the name-giving ceremony of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he clearly predicted a golden complexioned *avatāra* in the age of Kali -

*āsan varṇās trayo hyasya gr̥hṇato'nuyugam tanuḥ
śuklo raktas tathā pīta idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ*

Śrī Gargācārya said: "O Nanda! This son of Yours descends age after age and in each age He has another complexion. In the Satya-yuga He is white, in Tretā He is red and in Kali yuga He is yellow. Now, in Dvāpara-yuga He has attained a blackish complexion."

These words of Garga indicate, that Bhagavān will appear in Kali-yuga as Śrī Gaurāṅga. One of the omniscient Nava Yogendras, Ṛṣi Kara-bhājana, clearly mentioned Śrī Gaurāṅga and His associates when he told Mahārāja Nimi about the *avatāras* in Kali:

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam tviṣākṛṣṇam sāṅgopāṅgāstra pārśadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana prāyair yajanti hi sumedhasaḥ*

Śrīmat Kavirāja Gosvāmīpāda revealed a very beautiful explanation of this verse:

*śuno bhāi! ei sab caitanya-mahimā;
ei śloka kohe tāra mahimāra simā
'kṛṣṇa' ei dui varṇa sadā yāra mukhe;
athavā kṛṣṇake teṅho varṇe nija sukhe*

*kṛṣṇa-varṇa śabdera artha dui to pramāṇa;
 kṛṣṇa vinu tāra mukhe nāhi āise āna
 keho tāre bole yadi 'kṛṣṇa-varaṇa';
 āra viśeṣaṇe tāra kore nivāraṇa
 deha kāntye hoy teṅho akṛṣṇa-varaṇa;
 akṛṣṇa varaṇe kohe - pīta varaṇa*

"O brother, listen to all the glories of Śrī Caitanya! This verse describes the limit of His glories! The two syllables *kṛ-ṣṇa* are always in His mouth, or: He always describes Kṛṣṇa for His own bliss. There are two meanings of the word *kṛṣṇa-varṇa*. Nothing else but Kṛṣṇa comes from His mouth. If someone tries to describe Him as being of blackish complexion, the other adjective (*tviṣa akṛṣṇam*) will stop him. His complexion is not blackish. Actually the word *akṛṣṇa varṇa* means that He is yellow."

*jīvera kalmaṣa tamo nāśa koribāre;
 aṅga upāṅga nāma nānā astra dhare
 bhaktira virodhī - karma dharma vā adharma;
 tāhāra kalmaṣa nāma - sei mahātama
 bāhu tuli hari boli prema dṛṣṭe cāya;
 koriyā kalmaṣa nāśa premete bhāsāya
 śrī aṅga śrī mukha yei kore daraśana;
 tāra pāpa kṣaya hoy pāy prema dhana
 anya avatāre saba sainya śastra saṅge;
 caitanya kṛṣṇera sainya aṅga upāṅge
 aṅgopāṅga astra kore sva kārya sādhana;
 aṅga śabdera artha āra śuno diyā mana*

"He wears different weapons, named *aṅga* and *upāṅga* (His associates and devotees), to destroy the darkness of the peoples' *kalmaṣa*. These *kalmaṣas* are the irreligious or religious

activities, which are opposed to the principles of pure devotion - this is compared to deep darkness.

Raising His arms and saying 'Hari', He looks around with great love, destroying *kalmaṣas* and making everyone float in *prema*. The sins of anyone, who simply sees His divine body and His divine face, are destroyed and they attain the treasure of *prema*. All other *avatāras* appear with armies and weapons, but the army of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya consists of His devotees and associates. With these weapons He accomplishes His work. Now listen to another meaning of the word *aṅga*:"

*advaita nityānanda caitanyera dui aṅga;
 aṅgera avayava gaṇa kohiye 'upāṅga'
 aṅgopāṅga tikṣṇa astra prabhura sahite;
 sei sab astra hoy pāṣaṅḍa dalite
 nityānanda gosāi - sākṣāt haladhara;
 advaita ācārya gosāi sākṣāt īśvara
 śrīvāsādi pāriṣada sainya saṅge loiyā;
 dui senāpati bule kirtana koriyā
 pāṣaṅḍa dalana-bānā nityānanda rāya;
 ācārya huṅkāre pāpa pāṣaṅḍi palāya
 saṅkīrtana pravartaka śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya;
 saṅkīrtana yajñe tāre sei dhanya
 sei to sumedhā āra kubuddhi saṁsāra;
 sarva yajña hoite kṛṣṇa nāma yajña sāra*

"Advaita and Nityānanda are Lord Caitanya's two *aṅgas* (limbs), and the different other limbs are called *upāṅga*. With these sharp weapons of His *aṅgas* and *upāṅgas* the Lord pierces the atheists and heretics. Nityānanda Gosāi is Balarāma Himself and Advaita Gosāi is Lord Śiva Himself. Taking along these two generals and His troops, consisting of associates like Śrīvāsa, He wanders around performing *saṅkīrtana*.

Nityānanda Rāya is the destroyer of the atheists and heretics and the roaring of (Advaita) Ācārya Gosāi causes the sins of the atheists to flee.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya promulgates the *saṅkīrtana*, and those who are blessed take part in that *saṅkīrtana* sacrifice. These people are intelligent, while the fools remain in material existence. Of all sacrifices the Kṛṣṇa-*nāma yajña* is the best." (C.C. Ādi Chapter 3)

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī prays: "Will that son of mother Śacī ever cross the path of my eyes again?"

One may ask here: "A famous personality is always introduced in relation to his father. Why then has the blessed writer of this book introduced here Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the son of His mother?" The answer to this is: "Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has received mercy from Mahāprabhu like one could only receive from a mother, therefore he has introduced the Lord here in relation to His mother. There can't be a person in the entire world more merciful than a mother. A mother's love is unconditional and everlasting.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa thinks: "Although I was completely unqualified Śrī Gaurasundara gave me mercy like only a mother could and He has blessed me completely. Will that son of mother Śacī cross the path of my eyes again? Will I never see His merciful appearance again?"

vṛndāvana kuñjavane, niramala darapaṇe,
heri kṛṣṇa āpanāra rūpa.
mādhurya āsvāda chale, rāi aṅga kānti jāle,
dhākilen āpana svarūpa

"In Vṛndāvana's *kuñja*-garden Kṛṣṇa beheld His own form in a spotless mirror, and to be able to taste that sweetness, He concealed His own form with the lustrous aura of Rāi's body."

bhāva aṅgīkāra kori, gaura kānti rūpa dhari,
gauḍa-deśe śrī nandanandana.
sadā kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa bole, bhakta saṅge kutūhole,
dekhibo ki se śacīnandana?

"Accepting Śrī Rādhikā's mood and lustrous golden form, Śrī Nandanandana appeared in the land of Bengal. Will I see that Śacīnandana again, Who is always eagerly chanting with His devotees `Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!'"

VERSE 2:

purī-devayāntaḥ-praṇaya-madhunā snāna-madhuro
muhur govindodyad-vīsada-paricaryārcita-padaḥ
svarūpasya prāṇārbuda-paricaryārcita-padaḥ
śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ

purīdevasya - of Īśvara Purī, or Lord Jagannātha; *antaḥ* - heart; *praṇaya* - love; *madhuni* - of the honey; *snāna* - bath; *madhuraḥ* - sweet; *muhuh* - repeatedly; *govinda* - Govinda; *udyat* - rising; *vīsada* - splendid; *paricaryā* - worship; *arcita* - worshipped; *padaḥ* - feet; *svarūpasya* - of Svarūpa Dāmodara; *prāṇa* - life-air; *arbuda* - billions; *kamala* - lotus; *nīrājita* - worshipped; *mukhaḥ* - face; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kiṁ* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *saraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

Will the son of mother Śacī, Who has become more sweet after having been showered with a stream of love-honey from Īśvara Purī's heart, Whose lotus feet are always served splendidly by Govinda and Whose face is worshipped by billions of Svarūpa Dāmodara's lotus like life airs, cross the path of my eyes again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Although Śrīman Mahāprabhu is the *jagad-guru* (universal teacher), He still accepted Śrī Īśvara Purī as His *guru*. In this way, the Lord taught the *sādhakas* of the world by example, that the lotus feet of the Lord can't be attained without taking shelter of a *guru*.

In Caitanya Bhāgavata it is said: *śikṣā guru īśvara ye korāyen śikṣā; ihā ye mānaye sei jana pāya rakṣā:* "A person who follows the teachings of an instructing spiritual master, who is like God Himself, will be redeemed." The *guru* is the boatman, who helps the fallen conditioned souls to cross over the ocean of material existence.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

*nṛ deham ādyaṁ sulabhaṁ sudurlabhaṁ
plavaṁ sukalpaṁ guru karṇa-dhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritaṁ
pumān bhavābधिṁ na taret sa ātmahā*

"This human body is a great asset that is rarely attained. He who does not use this body as a vessel to cross over the ocean of material existence, even though it may be steered by an expert *guru* and pushed on by the favourable winds of My mercy, is committing suicide."

The *guru* is the embodiment of the Lord's mercy, who descends to the world for the benefit of the conditioned souls. When the Lord met Īśvara Purī at Gayā, He said:

*saṁsāra samudra hoite uddhāro āmāre;
ei āmi deha samarpilām tomāre
kṛṣṇa pāda padmera amṛta-rasa pāna;
āmāre korāo tumi ei cāi dāna*

"Please lift Me up from the ocean of material existence; I have given My body to you. Please bless Me by making Me drink the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet! This is the gift I want!" The night before, Īśvara Puri already had a dream in which he understood who the Lord actually was. As he showered the Lord with a stream of the love-honey from his heart, he said:

*bolena īśvara purī śunaho paṇḍita;
tumi ye īśvara aṁśa jāniluṁ niścita
ye tomāra pāṇḍitya ye caritra tomāra;
eho ki īśvara aṁśa bohi hoy āra
yeno āji āmi śubha svapna dekhilām;
sākṣāte tāhāra phala ei pāilām
satya kōhi paṇḍita tomāra daraśane;
parānanda sukha yeno pāi anukṣaṇe
yad avadhi tomā dekhīyāchi nadiyāya;
tad avadhi citte āra kichu nāhi bhāya
satya ei kōhi - ithe kichu anya nāi;
kṛṣṇa daraśana sukha tomā dekhi pāi*

"Listen, O Paṇḍita! I know for sure that You are an expansion of the Supreme Lord. Who else but an expansion of the Lord could be as qualified and learned as You? Tonight I had a sacred dream and today I directly obtained its fruit. I tell you truly, O

Paṇḍita, when I see You, every moment I feel most blissful! As soon as I saw You in Nadīyā, my mind could not be attracted to anyone or anything else anymore. I tell You the truth: When I see You, I feel as blissful as when I would see Kṛṣṇa Himself!"

The Lord was especially showered with the love-honey from Īśvara Purī's heart and thus He became even sweeter. Desiring to inundate the whole world with this sweetness, One day He went to ask for *mantra*-initiation from Īśvara Purī:

*āra dine nibhṛte īśvara purī sthāne;
mantra dikṣā cāhilen madhura vacane
purī bole mantra vā boliyā kon kothā;
prāṇa āmi dite pāri tomāre sarvathā
tabe tāra sthāne śikṣā guru nārāyaṇa;
korilena daśākṣara mantrera grahaṇa
tabe prabhu pradakṣiṇa koriyā purīre;
prabhu bole deha āmi dilām tomāre
heno śubha dṛṣṭi tumi koroho āmāre;
āmi yeno bhāsi kṛṣṇa premera sāgare
śuniyā prabhura vākya śrī īśvara purī;
prabhure dilena āliṅgana vakṣe dhari
doṅhāra nayana jale doṅhāra śarīra;
siñcita hoilo preme - keho nahe sthira*

"One day the Lord privately asked Īśvara Purī for *mantra*-initiation with a sweet voice. Īśvara Purī said: "What to speak of a *mantra*, I could give You my whole life!"

Then the instructing *guru* Nārāyaṇa (Nimāi) accepted the ten-syllable initiation-*mantra* from Īśvara Purī right there on the spot. The Lord circumambulated Īśvara Purī and said: "I have given you My body. Now cast an auspicious glance at Me, so that I may float in the ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa!"

When Śrī Īśvara Purī heard the Lord's words, he embraced Him. They showered Each other with their tears of love and they could not calm down.

Although the Lord is the ocean and the descension of Love Himself, He still became sweeter than He was (showing even more *prema* than He did before), after having been showered with the love-honey coming from Īśvara Purī's heart.

The word *purīdeva* in the text can also refer to Lord Jagannātha, the God of Jagannātha Purī.

The Lord was constantly showered with the love-honey oozing from the heart of the Lord of Nīlācala, Śrī Jagannāthadeva. According to His mood, Lord Caitanya sometimes saw Jagannātha playing a flute, like Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, and sometimes He saw Him as the Lord of Dvārakā, wearing a golden crown and sitting on the throne with Baladeva and Subhadṛā.

In this way, Lord Jagannātha made waves of bliss and suffering in the ocean like heart of Lord Gaura, Who was endowed with the feelings of Śrī Rādhā. Sometimes all the Lord's five senses would be greatly attracted to the sounds, forms, etc., of the Lord and His heart would be maddened, and sometimes His heart was showered with a wonderful sweet savour when the sweet nectar of His own lips (Jagannātha's *prasāda*) was distributed.

Gaura, the ocean of ecstatic love, had become sweeter than sweet because of Īśvara Purī's *rasika*-cleverness, and thus He sometimes showed amazing forms of Himself like a turtle (having retracted His limbs in His trunk) and sometimes an elongated form with the joints of His bones disconnected from each other.

When Īśvara Purī passed away, he ordered his personal servant Govinda to become the servant of Śrī Caitanya. The Lord followed the order of His *guru* and granted Govinda His

personal service. Nothing in the world can compare to Govinda's *paricaryā-sevā*. He served the Lord with all his heart, knowing well the Lord's mind.

There are two kinds of devotional service - *prasaṅga* and *paricaryā*. *prasaṅga-sevā* means to make the *sevya* hear the glories of the Lord and *paricaryā* means engaging in the personal physical service of the Lord. The fruits of *paricaryā-sevā* are greater than the fruits of *prasaṅga-sevā*. Govinda's *paricaryā*-service was completely pure and devoid of any desire for self-gratification.

When the Lord was tired of the *Beḍā-kīrtana*, Govinda stepped over the Lord's body (an act that is normally disrespectful to a saint), after spreading his outer cloth over Him, to be able to massage His feet. That was how pure and selfless his devotional service was! When the Lord asked Govinda why he was not going to take *prasāda*, Govinda replied:

*govinda kohe - mone āmāra sevā se niyama;
aparādha hauk, kibā narake gamana
sevā lāgi koṭi aparādha nāhi gaṇi;
sva nimitta aparādhābhāse bhoy māni*

Govinda said: "It is my duty to serve You, even if I must go to hell for formally offending You! I don't care if I must commit millions of offenses while serving You, but I am afraid of committing even a shadow of an offense for my own sake!" (C.C. Antya Chapter 10)

In this way, the Lord's lotus feet were always worshipped by Govinda with pure love.

Also, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara worshipped the Lord's divine face with billions of his lotus like life-airs. Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara was the Lord's most intimate associate, His second form!

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa was also known as Svarūpa's Raghū. The Lord had placed Raghunātha under the care of Svarūpa Dāmodara as his son and his servant, and Svarūpa told Raghunātha everything about the most confidential internal pastimes of the Lord.

*caitanya lilā ratna sāra, svarūpera bhāṇḍāra, tenho thuilā
raghunāthera kaṇṭhe* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 2):

"The pastimes of Śrī Caitanya are like the most excellent jewels, which have been kept in the storehouse of Svarūpa Dāmodara, who placed them in Raghunātha dāsa's throat."

The Lord sat in the most solitary room called the Gambhīrā and remembered Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja, while tears of love trickled from His eyes day and night like strings of pearls.

In the Gambhīrā, the most intimate assistants of the embodiment of *vipralambha rasa* (the spiritual flavour of separation), Śrī Gaurasundara, were Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya.

*utkaṭa viyoga duḥkha yabe bāhirāya;
tabe ye vaikalya prabhura varṇana nā yāya
rāmāndera kṛṣṇa kathā svarūpera gāna;
viraha vedanāya prabhura rākhaye parāṇa
dina prabhu nānā saṅge hoy anyā manā;
rātri kāle bādhe prabhura viraha vedanā
tāra sukha hetu saṅge rahe dui janā;
kṛṣṇa rasa śloka gīte korena sāntvanā*

"Words can't describe the Lord's agitation when the intense suffering of separation became externally manifest. Only

Rāmānanda Rāya, by speaking about Kṛṣṇa, and Svarūpa Dāmodara, by singing songs about Kṛṣṇa, could save the Lord's life from burning up in the fire of separation.

During the day the Lord would get distracted by associating with different people, but at night the pain of His separation increased. These two (Svarūpa and Rāma Rāya) stayed with Him to make Him happy and comforted Him by singing *rasika* songs and reciting *rasika* verses about Kṛṣṇa" (C.C. Antya Chapter 6). To pacify *vipralambha rasa prakāṣa mūrti* Lord Gaurasundara's pangs of separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Svarūpa sang songs about *Vraja-rasa* with a honey-sweet voice and Śrī Rāma Rāya pleased the Lord's heart by speaking nectarean *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* to Him. Whenever the Lord stared at Svarūpa's face, His agitated heart burning in the fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa and His eyes filled with tears, Śrī Svarūpa worshipped His face, which was moist with tears of love, with billions of his lotus like life-air.

Śrī Raghunātha once more wants to see that face of the Lord, which is filled with pangs of love-in-separation.

īśvara purī gosvāmīra, śuddha bhakti prema nīra,
pūrṇābhīseka korilo yāhāre.
govinda nāmaka bhakta, pade yei anurakta,
paricaryā korilo tāhāre.
śrī svarūpa gosvāmīra, asaṅkhyā prāṇa kamala,
yāra mukha kore nirmañchana.
bhakta vāñchā kalpataru, nija bhakta śikṣā guru,
dekhībo ki śacīra nandana?^᠑

"When will I see the son of mother Śacī, Who was fully showered with the nectar of pure devotional love by Īśvara Purī Gosvāmī, Whose feet were lovingly served by a devotee named

Govinda, Whose face was worshipped by billions of Svarūpa Dāmodara's lotus like life-airs, and Who is the wish-yielding tree and instructing *guru* for His devotees, again?"

VERSE 3:

***dadhānaḥ kaupīnam tad-upari bahir vastram aruṇam
prakāṇḍo hemādri-dyutibhir abhitaḥ sevita-tanuḥ
mudā gāyann uccair nija-madhura-nāmāvalim asau
śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ***

dadhānaḥ - wearing; *kaupīnam* - a loincloth; *tad* - that; *upari* - above; *bahiḥ* - outer; *vastram* -cloth; *aruṇam* - red; *prakāṇḍaḥ* - a tree-trunk; *hema* - golden; *adri* - mountain; *dyutibhiḥ* - with luster; *abhitaḥ* - everywhere; *sevita* - served; *tanuḥ* - body; *mudā* - joyfully; *gāyan* - singing; *uccair* - loudly; *nija* - own; *madhura* - sweet; *nāmāvalim* - names; *asau* - He; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kiṁ* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *saraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

Will the son of mother Śacī, Who wears a loincloth and a red outer cloth, Whose body resembles a tree trunk, Whose effulgence is served by the luster of a golden mountain, and Who always loudly and blissfully chants His (Kṛṣṇa's) own sweet names, cross the path of my eyes again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: To redeem the people the most merciful Lord Gaurasundara accepted the *sannyāsa*-order. Without understanding the Lord's glories the *māyāvādīs* (illusionists), *karma niṣṭha* (fruitive workers), *kutārkika* (those

who engage in false arguments), *pāṣaṇḍīs* (atheists), *adhama* (fallen souls), *poḍhuyā* (dry scholars), and *nindukas* (blasphemers) would simply make offenses to Him. The Lord wondered how He could save these people and then, His heart melting with compassion, accepted the *sannyāsa*-order.

*more nā mānile sab loka hobe nāsa;
ei lāgi kṛpārḍra prabhu korilā sannyāsa
sannyāsī buddhye more koribe namaskāra;
tathāpi khaṇḍibe duḥkha pāibe nistāra*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 8)

Thinking: "The people will be ruined if they don't accept Me", the Lord, who was melting with compassion, took *sannyāsa*. "Taking Me to be a *sannyāsī* they will offer obeisances unto Me and in this way they will still be saved from material suffering." The Caitanya Bhāgavata gives a beautiful description of the Lord's enchanting *sannyāsa*-garb:

*sannyāsa korilā vaikuṅṭhara cūḍāmaṇi;
porilen aruṇa vasana manohara;
tāhāte hoilā koṭi kandarpa sundara
sarva aṅga śrī mastaka candane lepita;
mālāya pūrṇita śrī vighraha suśobhita;
daṇḍa kamaṇḍalu dui śrī haste ujvala;
niravadhi nija prema ānande vihvala
koṭi koṭi candra jini śobhe śrī vadana;
prema dhāre pūrṇa dui kamala nayana*

"The crown jewel of Vaikuṅṭha (Nimāi) took *sannyāsa*, wearing an enchanting red cloth, which made Him as beautiful

as millions of Cupids. All His limbs, including His beautiful face, were anointed with sandalwood pulp and His whole body was covered with garlands. His brilliant hands held a staff and a water pot. He was constantly overwhelmed with feelings of ecstatic love and His lotus-eyes were filled with streams of loving tears."

The Lord's shining golden body was as big as a tree trunk and He was extraordinary tall. Persons of His size could not be found among humans; this tallness is a sign of a *mahā puruṣa* (a great soul or a superhuman person).

In Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Ādi-līla Chapter 3) it is said:

*tapta hema sama kānti - prakāṇḍa śarīra;
nava megha jini kaṇṭha dhvani ye gambhīra
dairghya vistāre yei āpanāra hāte;
cāri hasta hoy mahā puruṣa vikhyāte
nyāgrodha parimaṇḍala hoy tāra nāma;
nyāgrodha parimaṇḍala tanu caitanya guṇa-dhāma*

"His body shone like molten gold and it was as big as a tree-trunk, and the sound of His voice was deeper than the rumbling of fresh clouds.

A person who measures four cubits in height and in breadth by His own hand is known as a great personality named Nyāgrodha parimaṇḍala, the width of a Banyan-tree. The body of Lord Caitanya, the abode of all divine attributes, is compared to this Nyāgrodha parimaṇḍala."

The brilliant luster of the Lord's huge body looked like if it was served by a shimmering golden mountain. In other words, the luster of a golden mountain was defeated by the luster of the Lord's body. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in Stavamālā:

*yaṭinām uttamaṁs taraṇī kara vidyoti vasaṇaḥ
hiraṇyānām lakṣmī-bharam abhibhavann āṅgika rucā*

"He is the crown jewel of *sannyāsīs*. His garment shines with the reddish luster of the rays of the rising sun, and His bodily luster defeats the beauty of all kinds of gold!"

He loudly sings His own sweet names in topmost ecstasy. Śrī Rūpa has written:

hare kṛṣṇety uccaiḥ sphurita rasano (Stavamālā) "His tongue always loudly vibrates the Holy Names "*hare kṛṣṇa*".

Śrī Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comments on this verse:
*śoḍaśa nāmātmanā dvātriṁśad akṣareṇa mantreṇocair
uccāritena sphuritā kṛta nṛtyā rasanā yasya saḥ:*

"The *mahā-mantra*, consisting of sixteen words and 32 syllables¹, was always dancing on his tongue!" How wonderful is the ecstatic love with which this sweet Holy Name, which was loudly sung by Lord Caitanya, inundated the entire world with a flood of love of God!

*śrī caitanya mukhodgīrṇā hare kṛṣṇeti varṇakāḥ
majjayanto jagat premṇi vijayante tad āhvayāḥ*

"The syllables '*hare kṛṣṇa*' that were pronounced by Śrī Caitanya's mouth, inundated the whole world with love of God."

The Lord danced restlessly while He chanted the Holy Name, surrounded by His devotees. Gaṅgā and Yamunā-streams of ecstatic tears flowed from His eyes, and His skin was studded with goose pimples of ecstatic love, which resembled

¹ hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare/ hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare

the buds of a golden Kadamba-flower. How wonderful was His sweet dancing!

*nācata gaura, manohara adabhuta,
 (nayane) rājita suradhani dhāra
 trijagata loka, oka bhari pāola,
 bhakati ratana mañihāra
 hema varaṇa vara, sundara vighraha,
 surataru vara parakāśa,
 pulaka patra nava, prema pakka phala,
 kusuma manda mṛdu hāsa
 bhāva vibhava maya, rasa rūpa anubhava,
 subalita sukhamaya aṅga,
 dvirada matta gati, ati sumanohara,
 mūrachita lākha anaṅga*

"While Gaura danced His wonderful enchanting dance, He shed tears like the current of the Gaṅgā, which filled up the three worlds and which looked like a jewel necklace of devotion. His beautiful golden body was like the best of desire-trees, of which His goose pimples were the fresh leaves, His love was the ripened fruits, and His slight smile were the flowers. His strong blissful body was full of emotions and experiences of (Kṛṣṇa's) taste and form. He walked like a maddened elephant and He was so utterly enchanting that He caused thousands of Cupid to faint!"

In this way the Lord gave a great example to the world of how to relish the Holy Name of the Lord. He strung the Holy Names on a string of love and hung it around the necks of the people of the world. Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmīpāda has written:

VERSE 4:

***anāvedyām pūrvair api muni-gaṇair bhakti-nipuṇaiḥ
śruter gūḍhām premojjvala-rasa-phalām bhakti-latikām
kṛpāluḥ tām gauḍe prabhu atikṛpābhiḥ prakāṣayan
śacī-sūnuḥ kim me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ***

anāvedyām - unknown; *pūrvaiḥ* - by the previous; *api* - even; *munigaṇaiḥ* - by the sages; *bhakti* - devotion; *nipuṇaiḥ* - by the experts; *śruteḥ* - in the Vedas; *gūḍhām* - hidden; *prema* - love; *ujjala* - brilliant; *rasa* - flavour; *phalām* - fruit; *bhakti latikām* - vine of devotion; *kṛpāluḥ* - merciful; *tām* - Him; *gauḍe* - in Bengal; *prabhuḥ* - the Lord; *ati* - very; *kṛpābhiḥ* - with mercy; *prakāṣayan* - manifesting; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kim* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *saraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

Will the son of mother Śacī, Who very mercifully revealed in Bengal the vine of devotion, which bears the fruits of *ujjala-prema-rasa* (the flavours of amorous love), which is hidden in the Vedas and which was not previously known even to the wise men who were experts in devotion to God, cross the path of my eyes again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: This vine of devotion, which Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave to the people of the world, yields the fruit of brilliant *rasa*, the amorous love of Vraja, particularly the *rasa* of the most confidential personal service of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī, named *mañjarī-bhāva-sāadhanā*.

This great gift was not given before by any other descension of God; even the wise men who were experts in devotion to God did not know this secret fruit of the vine of devotion. They used to practice *vaidhi-bhakti*, regulated devotion to God, out of fear

and respect for the Supreme Lord, and even if there were any *rāga-bhaktas* in the *Vraja-bhāva* before Mahāprabhu's descension, they all would be serving Kṛṣṇa in the mood of a servant or a friend. Nobody knew the secret of the sweet devotional love of the *gopīs* for Kṛṣṇa, what to speak of the topmost *mādana-mahā-bhāva* of Śrī Rādhā, the crown jewel of all the *gopīs*!

The wish-yielding vine of devotion revealed by Mahāprabhu was also hidden in the Vedas.

In the Bhāgavata Purāṇa it is described that Uddhava Mahāsaya was stunned when he witnessed the glorious love of the *gopīs* and he prayed that he might take birth as a shrub or a bush in Vraja so that he might get the foot dust of the *gopīs* on his head. In this way, he revealed the glories of the *gopīs* to the whole world: *yā dustyajāṃ svajanam arya-pathaṃ ca hitvā bhejur mukunda padavīm śrutibhir vimṛgyām*

"The best way to attain Mukunda's lotus feet is to give up one's relatives and the path of traditional virtue, thus following in the footsteps of the spontaneous *gopīs*. This path is vainly sought for even by the Vedas, even nowadays!"

This verse shows that there is no limit to the glories of the *gopīs*' relish of extra-marital love for Kṛṣṇa and that there is no other way to learn it.

In the Vāmana Purāṇa, some incidents in the *gopīs*' previous lives are described. It is said there that in their previous births, they were the presiding deities of the Vedas who became greedy to attain the mood of the *gopīs*. They began to worship Kṛṣṇa in the spontaneous way of *raga-bhakti* and thus they took their next births in Vraja as *gopīs*, where they attained Kṛṣṇa's devotional service. But even they kept this ecstatic attainment

hidden in the baskets of their hearts, that's why it is said *śruter gūḍhām*: "It is hidden in the Vedas"²

In the pre-Caitanya era there was a cult of *sakhī-bhāva* (love for Kṛṣṇa as a participating amorous consort) preached by great devotees like the poet Jayadeva, Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati, Bilvamaṅgala and others, but the *mañjarī-bhāva-sādhanā*, the personal and exclusive service of Śrī Rādhā, was a new gift, introduced by Śrī Gaurasundara and the *ācāryas* who took shelter of His lotus feet.

The seed of this vine of devotion is given by a Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava saint or *guru* and it is sprinkled by the water of hearing, chanting and remembering, so that the vine will ultimately bear the ripened, delicious fruits of *rādhā-dāsyā-bhāva*. This is the *premojjvala-rasa-phalām* mentioned in the verse.

One may ask now: "Why did Śrīman Mahāprabhu reveal this confidential *bhakti-kalpalatā*, which is not perceived even by the great sages or the Vedas, to the degraded and sinful people of the present age of Kali (quarrel)?"

The plain reason is that Śrīman Mahāprabhu is the fully independent and most merciful descension of God, therefore it is said here: *kṛpālus tām gaude prabhur ati kṛpābhiḥ prakāṭayan*.

"The completely independent and capable Śrīman Mahāprabhu has most mercifully revealed this in Bengal." The mercy of the Lord completely erases the candidate's unworthiness. The *kṛpā-sakti* (power of compassion) is the

² This is beautifully described in Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī's commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata, Canto Ten, Chapter 87, the so-called '*śruti-stuti vyākhyā*'

crown jewel of all the Lord's innate potencies and makes Him truly worthy of the title **Bhagavān**, the Qualified One.

This mercy-potency finds its culmination in the Lord's giving something that precious to an undeserving soul.

In Śrīman Mahāprabhu this *kṛpā-śakti* is again manifest to its fullest extent, not tolerating any distinction.

Upset as He was about the misery the living entities in Kali must go through, He gives to them ecstatic love, particularly the love of the *gopīs* who serve Śrī Rādhārāṇī, which makes sense-enjoyment and even liberation insignificant, and which is practiced by the process of hearing and chanting. All glories to Śrī Gaurahari's mercy to the fallen souls! Śrīpāda desires to see again the lotus feet of this merciful Śrī Gaurahari.

*munigana vallabha, bhāvanā sudurlabha,
śruti gūḍha amūlya ratana
premojjvala phala dātā, prakāśilā bhakti latā,
dekhibo ki śacīra nandana*

"Will I ever see mother Śacī's son, who revealed the creeper of devotion that bears the fruits of brilliant amorous love, that is a precious jewel hidden in the Vedas and that was rarely conceived of even by the previous sages, again?"

VERSE 5:

*nijatve gauḍīyān jagati pariग्रhya prabhur imān
hare kṛṣṇety evaṁ gaṇana-vidhinā kīrtayata bhoḥ
iti prāyām śikṣām caraṇa-madhupebhyah paridiśan
śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ*

nijatve - as His own; *gaudiyān* - people of Bengal; *jagati* - in the world; *parigrhya* - accepting; *prabhuḥ* - the Lord; *imān* - them; *hare kṛṣṇa* - Hare Kṛṣṇa; *iti* - thus; *evam* - thus; *gaṇanā* - counting; *vidhinā* - according to rules; *kīrtayata* - chanting; *bhoḥ* - O!; *iti* - thus; *prāyam* - all; *śikṣām* - teaching; *janaka* - father; *iva* - just like; *tebhyaḥ* - to them; *paridiśam* - showing; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kin* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *śaraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

Will the son of mother Śacī, Who accepted the people of Bengal as His own in this world and Who taught them just like a father to chant a prescribed number of the hare-kṛṣṇa-mantra according to the rules, cross the path of my eyes again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: There is no end to Śrī Raghunātha's suffering of separation from Śrī Gaurāṅga. He humbly thinks to himself: "Is an unfortunate, unworthy wretch like me qualified to see the Lord?"

But then, in the next moment, the darkness of despair in his heart is illuminated by the light of hope as he remembers the Lord's natural love for the people of Bengal.

Although Mahāprabhu is the Universal Lord, His heart was still particularly attracted to the land of Bengal and its inhabitants. The perfection of devotional love is attained with *abhimāna*, which means having a feeling of **'the Lord is mine'**. In the kingdom of *bhāva* the *premābhimāna* finds the highest perfection.

Śrī Gaurasundara descended in Gauḍa-deśa (Bengal), therefore the people of Bengal naturally feel "The Lord is ours!", and the Lord reciprocates with these feelings, as He proclaims in Bhagavad-Gītā (4.11):

*ye yathā mām prapadyante taṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*³.
The father-child relationship is naturally sweet.

Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Thākura, the *vyāsavatāra* in *Gaura-līlā*, has written about the Navadvīpa-pastimes of the Lord:

*divasa hoile sab nagariyā gaṇa;
prabhu dekhibāra tare korena gamana
keho vā nūtana dravya, kāro hāte kalā;
keho ghr̥ta, keho dadhi, keho divya mālā
loiyā colena sabe prabhu dekhibāre;
prabhu dekhi sarva loka daṇḍavat kore
prabhu bole - kṛṣṇa bhakti hauk sabāra;
kṛṣṇa nāma guṇa bohi nā boliho āra
āpane sabāre prabhu kore upadeśa;
kṛṣṇa nāma mahā mantra śunoho hariṣe
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare;
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
prabhu bole kohilām ei mahā mantra;
ihā japa giyā sabe koriyā nirbandha
ihā hoite sarva siddhi hoibe sabāra;
sarvakṣaṇa bolo - ithe vidhi nāhi āra*

"When the day broke, all the villagers came to see the Lord. Some brought new articles, some held bananas in their hands, some had clarified butter, some brought yoghurt, and some brought beautiful garlands. They all went to see the Lord, and when they saw Him they offered prostrated obeisances unto Him.

The Lord said: "May you all be devoted to Kṛṣṇa, and may you not speak about anything else but Kṛṣṇa's names and attributes!"

³ "As one surrenders unto Me, I will worship that person accordingly."

The Lord blissfully instructed everyone:

"Listen to the *mahā mantra* with Kṛṣṇa's names:
hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare!
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare!"

Then Lord said:

"Now I told you the *mahā mantra*. When you repeat this *mantra* you will all be redeemed and you will attain all perfection. Always chant this *mantra* - there is no other rule than this." (Caitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Chapter 23)

In Nīlācala (Purī), Śrī Raghunātha dāsa was the direct witness of the Lord's great love and mercy for the Bengali devotees. These devotees came from Bengal every year to see the Lord and when they came, the Lord was floating in ecstasy. He would glorify each of these devotees with a thousand mouths, firmly embrace each of them, and make the whole world drown in ecstatic love by performing wild *kīrtanas* with them. How blissfully He spent the four months of the rainy season with them, seeing the deity of Lord Jagannātha and attending the Ratha Yātrā-festival!

Even a stone would melt after hearing the pitiful words of the Lord, Whose heart was suffering the pangs of separation when the Bengali devotees took leave of Him. With sweet words, the Lord told the people from Bengal:

prati vatsara sabhe āiso āmāre dekhite;
āsīte yāite duḥkha pāo bhālomate
tomā sabhāra duḥkha jāni nāri niṣedhite;
tomā sabhāra saṅga sukha lobha bāḍhe citte

"Come to see Me every year. You go through such great hardship to come and go here every year, and I know how much

pain it gives you, but I can't forbid you either, for My heart yearns ever more for your blissful association".

*sannyāsī mānuṣa mora nāhi kon dhana;
ki doyā to sabhāra ṛṇa koribo śodhana
deha mātra dhana āmāra koilo samarpaṇa;
tāhāi vikāi yāhā vecite tomāra mon
prabhura vacane sabhāra dravībhūta mon;
ajhara nayane sabhe korena rodana*

"I am a *sannyāsī* and I have no money; then how will I repay My debt to you? I can only give you My body; it is all I have. Now, if you like, you can sell it wherever you want!"

When all the devotees heard these words from the Lord their hearts melted and they began to shed many tears. When this mellow of great pity arose, the journey of the Bengali devotees was brought to a standstill, for their tears made the pathway too slippery to walk over.

In this way, they were held up for five to seven days. Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Advaita Prabhu then submitted to the Lord's lotus feet:

"The world is naturally sold (attracted) to Your divine attributes, and moreover, You have bound us with the ropes of Your pitiful words. Who could go anywhere in this situation, leaving You behind?"

Mahāprabhu then calmed down, consoled all the devotees, and took leave of them. All the devotees wept while they left the Lord, and the Lord became agitated with feelings of separation.

*advaita avadhūta kichu kohe prabhura pāya;
sahaje tomāra guṇe jagata vikāya
āra tāte bāndha aiche kṛpā vākya ḍore;*

*tomā' chāḍi kebā kothā yāibāre pāre
 tabe mahāprabhu sabhākāre prabodhiyā;
 sabhāre vidāya dilo susthira hoiyā
 colilā saba bhaktagaṇa rodana koriyā;
 mahāprabhu rohilā ghare viṣaṇṇa hoiyā (C.C.)*

Remembering all these pastimes, which he had personally witnessed, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa falls on the bank of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa and weeps. Flooding his chest with his tears, he cries out:

"O Lord of the lives of the Bengalis! Where are You? Show Yourself to me just once! Who else but You will be so eager that Bengali devotees come to Nīlācala? Who else will embrace them with more affection than millions of fathers? And who else will instruct them about the nectar of the Holy Name?" Śrī Raghunātha dāsa burns in the fire of separation when he remembers the Lord's compassion and this makes him unsteady:

"Separation from Lord Caitanya is intolerable!" Becoming agitated by the intolerable pain of separation Śrīpāda desires to see Śrī Gaura's lotus feet once more —

*yei prabhu gauḍiyāre, snehe ātmasāt kore,
 śikṣā diyā śrī nāma sādhana.
 pitā sama niravadhī, gaṇanā kīrtana vidhī,
 dekhibo ki śacīra nandana?*

"Will I see the son of mother Śacī, lovingly instructing the Bengali devotees, whom He considers to be His own, on chanting the Holy Name for a fixed number of times, being just like a father to them?"

VERSE 6:

***पुराह पाष्यान् निलाला-पतिम् उरु-प्रेमा-निवहान्
क्षरान-नेत्राम्बुध्रान् शनपिता-निजा-दीर्घोज्ज्वला-तनुम्
सदा तिष्ठान् देशे प्राणयि-गरुडा-स्तम्भा-कारामे
सुसुनुम् किम् मे नयाना-सराणाम् यस्याति पुनह्***

पुराह - before; *पाष्यान्* - seeing; *निलाला पतिम्* - the Lord of Nilācala, Jagannātha; *uru* - great; *प्रेमा* - love; *निवहान्* - with an abundance; *क्षरान्* - trickling; *नेत्राम्बुध्रान्* - with tears; *शनपिता* - showering; *निजा* - own; *दीर्घा* - long; *उज्ज्वला* - brilliant; *तनुम्* - body; *सदा* - always; *तिष्ठान्* - staying; *देशे* - in the country; *प्राणयि* - with love; *गरुडा स्तम्भा* - Garuda's pillow; *कारामे* - behind; *सुसुनुम्* - Śaci's son; *किम्* - whether; *मे* - my; *नयाना* - eyes; *सराणाम्* - path; *यस्याति* - goes; *पुनह्* - again.

Will I see the son of mother Śaci, Who showered His own tall and brilliant body with His incessantly trickling tears of great love while seeing before Him the Lord of Nilācala, Jagannātha, as He stood behind His beloved pillar of Garuda, again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: The ocean of Raghunātha das's heart is agitated by *prema* as he remembers Lord Gaura watching Lord Jagannātha from behind the Garuda-pillar. Remembering the mellow of separation is even more painful than feeling the separation directly.

In the *Gambhīrā-līlā* the Lord was mainly relishing the separation of Śrī Rādhā when Kṛṣṇa had gone to Mathurā. Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja has written:

*uddhava darśane yaiche rādhāra vilāpa;
krame krame hoilo prabhura se unmāda vilāpa
rādhikāra bhāve sadā prabhura abhimāna;
sei bhāve āpanāke hoy rādhā jñāna*

"The Lord madly lamented just like Rādhā, when She saw Uddhava (who came to bring a message from Kṛṣṇa to the *gopīs*) and He gradually went mad in this lamentation. The Lord always identified Himself with Śrī Rādhā and He was always immersed in Her mood." (C.C. Antya Ch. 14)

Śrī Rādhā's *vipralambha-rasa* was the Lord's *sthāyi-bhāva* in the Gambhīrā. It was also in the mood of Śrī Rādhā, that the Lord behold His Lord Jagannātha, and the ocean of His heart was stirred then:

*ye kāle dekhe jagannātha, śrī rāma subhadrā sātha,
tabe jāne - āilām kurukṣetre.
saphala hoilo jivana, dekhilum padma locana,
juḍāilo tanu mana netra*

"Whenever the Lord saw Jagannātha with Balarāma and Subhadrā in the temple, He thought: "I came to Kurukṣetra! My life has become a success, for I have seen lotus eyed Kṛṣṇa! This vision has soothed My body, mind and eyes!"

*garuḍera sannidhāne, rahi kori daraśane,
se ānandera ki kohibo bole.
garuḍa stambhera tale, āche eka nimna khāle,
se khāla bharilo āśru jale*

"Who can describe the Lord's ecstasy while He looked at Lord Jagannātha from near the Garuḍa-pillar? At the base of

this pillar was a low canal, which was filled with the Lord's tears!" (Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya 2)

The ocean of the Lord's ecstasy increased when He looked at Lord Jagannātha, feeling Himself to be Śrī Rādhā Who is meeting Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Kurukṣetra after a long separation.

He showered His tall, shimmering golden body with a powerful stream of tears and filled up with these tears a canal below the Garuḍa-pillar. Why so many tears? How many waves of ecstasy are emanating from the heart of the ocean of ecstasy! Simply on seeing Lord Jagannātha, He became unsteady because of transcendental bliss, and the next moment, a black cloud of sorrow covered the sky of His heart again. What a wonderful shower of tears of distress emanated from His eyes! She⁴ looked like a beggar in Kurukṣetra. Anyone who had any property could not relish this⁵. What pain! Weeping and weeping, She thought to Herself:

*vṛndāvana govardhana, yamunā pulina vana,
sei kuñje rāsādika līlā.
sei vraje vrajajana, pitā mātā bandhugaṇa,
boḍo citra kemone pāsārīlā*

"Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, the forest on the bank of the Yamunā, and the *kuñjas* where We danced the Rāsa-dance and performed other pastimes, this Vraja, the people of Vraja, Your father, Your mother, and Your friends - how amazing! How did You forget them?"

⁴ Mahāprabhu is absorbed in the ecstasy of Śrī Rādhā now. Ed.

⁵ Anyone who had any prestige or any ego left. Ed.

*tomāra ye anya veśa, anya saṅga anya deśa,
 vraja-jane kabhu nāhi bhāya
 vrajabhūmi chāḍite nāre, tomā nā dekhile more,
 vrajajanera ki hobe upāya?*

"Now You dress differently, You have other friends, and You live elsewhere. You never bother about the people of Vraja. They can't leave Vrajabhūmi (like You), and when they do not see You, they die. What shall they do now?"

Sometimes the Lord dreamt that He met Kṛṣṇa personally in the Rāsa-*līlā* and then He went to see Lord Jagannātha in the temple in topmost absorption, where He saw the Lord as Muralī Vadana (Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, playing the flute) Himself, without Balabhadra and Subhadrā.

In this way, His long separation was terminated and He entered an extensive period of *sambhoga* (enjoyment in union) while His chest was drowned in His ecstatic tears. He thought to Himself:

*āju rajanī hom, bhāge pohāyṇu,
 pekhaluṁ piyā mukha candā
 jivana yauvana, saphala kori mānaluṁ,
 daśa diśa bhelo niradandā
 āju majhu geḥa, geḥa kori mānaluṁ,
 āju majhu deha bhelo dehā
 āju vihi mohe, anukūla hoyalo,
 tuṭalo sabahu sandehā*

"Tonight I saw the moon-like face of My beloved! I considered My life and My youth successful and all the ten directions have become free from malice and strife! Today I could consider My home to be a home and My body to be a

body. Today fate was favourable to Me and all My doubts were destroyed!"

At that moment an Oriyan woman stepped on the Lord's shoulders and held on to the Garuḍa-pillar to be able to see Lord Jagannātha, and while the Lord's personal servant Govinda reprimanded the woman, the Lord came to external consciousness. The Lord praised the woman again and again for her eagerness to see Lord Jagannātha, but meanwhile He Himself had fallen away from the vision He coveted.

*pūrve yabe āsi koilo jagannātha darāṣana;
jagannāthe dekhe - sākṣāt vrajendra-nandana
svapnera darāṣanāveśe tad rūpa hoilo mana;
yāhā tāhā dekhe sarvatra muralī vadana
ebe yadi strī dekhi prabhura bāhya hoilo;
jagannātha subhadrā balarāmera svarūpa dekhilo
kurukṣetre dekhe kṛṣṇa' aiche hoilo mana;
kāhāñ kurukṣetra ālāñ kāhā vṛndāvana
prāpta ratna hārāilo - aiche vyagra hoilā
(C.C. Antya Ch.14)*

Once more He saw Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Balarāma in Kurukṣetra and He thought: "How did I end up in Kurukṣetra? Where is Vṛndāvana?" And thus he became very upset like someone who had lost a newly found jewel. The Lord shed many tears of sorrow. In this way, ecstasy and pain succeeded each other, like the succession of light and shade, while Mahāprabhu sprinkled His huge golden body with His tears in the Jagannātha temple. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa is the Lord's eternal associate in His Nīlācala-*hilā*, and now he has the strong desire to see the Lord's sweet form, as He feels separation, one more time.

*garuḍa stambhera pāṣe, sadā darśanera āṣe,
 nimeṣa vihīna du'nayana.
 śatadhāre aśru jale, siñce aṅga nirantara,
 dekhibo ki se śacīnandana?*

"When can I see mother Śacī's son constantly sprinkling His body with hundreds of streams of His tears as He stands near the Garuḍa-pillar, always yearning to see the Lord with His two eyes?"

VERSE 7:

***mudā dantaiḥ dṛṣṭvā dyuti-vijita-bandhūkam adharaṁ
 karaṁ kṛtvā vāmaṁ kaṭi-nihitam anyam parilasan
 samutthāpya premṇāgaṇita-pulako nṛtya-kutukī
 śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ***

mudā - joyfully; *dantaiḥ* - with the teeth; *dṛṣṭvā* - having bitten; *dyuti* - splendor; *vijita* - defeating; *bandhūkam* - Bandhūka-flowers; *adharaṁ* - lips; *karaṁ* - hand; *kṛtvā* - having done; *vāmaṁ* - left; *kaṭi* - waist; *nihitam* - placing; *anyam* - the other; *parilasan* - shining; *samutthāpya* - raising; *premnā* - with love; *agaṇitā* - innumerable; *pulakaḥ* - goosepimples; *nṛtya* - dancing; *kutukī* - eagerly; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kiṁ* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *saraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

**Will the son of mother Śacī, Who blissfully bit His lips,
 which defeat the splendour of the red Bandhūka-flowers,
 Who placed His left hand on His hip and Who raised His**

other hand as He danced in endless ecstatic love while His hairs stood on end, cross the path of my eyes again?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa feels great separation from Śrī Caitanya in his mind and heart as he remembers one sweet pastime of Him after the other.

In this verse, he describes the sweet pastime of the Lord's ecstatic dancing in the madly ecstatic *saṅkīrtana*. The Lord's dancing is most enchanting because in Vraja, He relished the sweetness of the Rāsa-dance together with Śrī Rādhā and the *gopīs*.

In this extraordinary sweet dance, which is decorated with *śṛṅgāra-rasa* (erotic flavours) and different wonderful rhythms and tunes, different *sāttvika* ecstatic symptoms like tears, goose pimples and shivering automatically came to ornament the Lord's golden body.

When the Lord performed *saṅkīrtana* with His Bengali devotees, the dance took on an altogether new form: when He was with them, the flood of the Lord's ecstatic love inundated everything! With how much love and attention He personally served them *mahā-prasāda*, flower garlands and sandalwood pulp!

In the evening, Nāṭyā (the great dancer) Gaura went to the temple of Lord Jagannātha, relishing the *rasa* of dancing and chanting with His devotees. After seeing the evening *ārati* of Lord Jagannātha, the Lord was adorned with leftover garlands and sandalwood pulp from the deities and He began a great *kīrtana*.

*cāri dike cāri sampradāya kore saṅkīrtana;
madhye nṛtya kore prabhu śacīra nandana
aṣṭa mṛdaṅga bāje batriśa karatāla;*

hari-dhvani kore vaiṣṇava kohe 'bhālo bhālo'
kīrtanera mahā maṅgala dhvani ye uṭhilo;
caturdaśa loka bhari brahmāṅḍa bhedilo
puruṣottama-vāsī loka āilo dekhibāre;
kīrtana dekhi uḍiyā-loka hoilo camatkāra
tabe prabhu jagannāthera mandira beḍiyā;
pradakṣiṇa kori bule nartana koriyā
āge pāche gāna kore cāri sampradāya;
āchādera kāle dhare nityānanda rāya
aśru pulaka kampa prasveda huṅkāra;
premera vikāra dekhi loka camatkāra
picakārīra dhārā yeno aśru nayane;
cāri dikera loka sab koroye sināne

"Four *kīrtana*-parties were doing *saṅkīrtana* in four directions and Lord Śacīnandana was dancing in the middle. Eight drums and thirty-two cymbals resounded and the Vaiṣṇavas chanted "Hari! Hari! Bravo! Bravo!"

When the greatly auspicious sounds of the *kīrtana* arose, it filled the fourteen planetary systems and pierced the walls of the universe.

The people of Purī came to witness the uproar and all the people of Orissa were amazed to see this *kīrtana*. Then the Lord circumambulated the Jagannātha-temple while chanting and dancing. He was followed and preceded by four singing *kīrtana*-parties and when He fell, He was caught by Lord Nityānanda. The people were quite amazed to see the Lord's ecstatic symptoms, such as shedding tears, horripilation, shivering, perspiring, and roaring. His tears were squirting from His eyes like from a syringe and they showered the people all around."

*mahā nṛtya mahāprema mahā saṅkīrtana;
dekhi premānande bhāse nīlācalera jana*

"There was great dancing, great chanting, and great loving ecstasy. All the people of Purī floated in ecstatic love when they saw it." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya Ch. 11)

It was a most amazing thing to see the Lord's sweet dancing before Lord Jagannātha during the Ratha Yātrā-festival. When Mahāprabhu saw Lord Jagannātha in the temple, different streams of sorrow and bliss came through Him. We shed a light on this in our comment on the previous verse. But when Mahāprabhu saw Lord Jagannātha in front of the chariot, there was a single, unbroken stream of bliss flowing through His heart and mind. The chariot took Lord Jagannātha from Nīlācala (the blue mountain) to Sundarācala (the beautiful mountain), a place which is flanked on both sides with sub-forests, and the Lord, absorbed in the feelings of Śrī Rādhā, thought to Himself: "Today I have taken the Lord of My life from Dvārakā to Vṛndāvana!" This made an end to His intense feelings of separation. An amazing stream of bliss welled up in Him and caused Him to dance wonderfully in the sweet mood of *rasanmāda* (the ecstasy of union). Svarūpa Dāmodara, understanding the Lord's feelings, sang with a sweet voice:

*sei to parāṇa-nātha pāilum;
yāhā lāgi madana dahane jhuri genu*

"Now I have gotten the Lord of My life for Whom I was burning in Cupid's fire!"

The pinnacle of ecstatic love welled up in the Lord's heart when He heard this sentence, which exactly corresponded to His own strong feelings of union, and when He stared at

Jagannātha's face, He bit His lips, which defeated the luster of red Bandhūka-flowers⁶.

The Lord placed His left hand on His hip and raised His other hand in the air with wonderful gestures, singing, acting, and dancing very sweetly. What to speak of others, even Lord Jagannātha Himself was highly astonished when He saw the Lord's sweet dancing and He slowed down His journey to Sundarācala to relish the Lord's unprecedented dancing-*rasa*.

*jagannāthe magna prabhura nayana hṛdaya;
 śrī hasta yuge kore gītera abhinaya
 gaura yadi āge nā yāy - śyāma hoy sthire;
 gaura āge cole - śyāma cole dhīre dhīre
 eimata gaura śyāma kore thelāṭheli;
 saratha śyāmere rākhe gaura mahābali*

"The Lord's eyes and heart were absorbed in Jagannātha and He made a dramatic performance of the singing with His beautiful hands. When Gaura did not move ahead, Śyāma (Jagannātha) stayed in His place, and when Gaura moved ahead, Śyāma also slowly moved. In this way Gaura and Śyāma pushed Each other. Gaura was so powerful that He could keep Śyāma (at a standstill) along with His chariot."

Śrī Raghunātha das' heart is impatient when he remembers the ecstatic loving dancing of this greatly powerful Gaura!

*aruṇa adhara ābhā, hare bandhujīva śobhā,
 dante tāhā koriyā dāśana.
 kaṭite vāma manohara, ūrdhete dakṣiṇa kare,*

⁶ The purpose of the Lord's biting His lip is: "You are very expert in running away, but today I caught You and I won't let You go anymore!"

bhaṅgi kori koroye cālana.
saṅkīrtana rasāmodī, viraha bhāva vinodī,
sarva aṅge prema śiharaṇa.
sarva jana sukhadātā, prema bhakti rasa dhātā,
dekhibo ki śacīra nandana?

"When will I see the son of mother Śacī, the giver of joy to everyone and the presiding deity of the flavours of devotional love, biting His red lips, which defeat the luster of a beautiful Bandhujīva-flower, keeping His charming left hand on His hip and lifting His right hand, swaying it back and forth? Feeling great separation from the Lord, He rejoices in the flavours of *sankīrtana* while His whole body shivers of ecstatic love!

VERSE 8:

sarit-tīrārāme viraha-vidhuro gokula-vidhor
nadīm anyām kurvan nayana-jala-dhārā-vitatibhiḥ
muhur mūrcchām gacchan mṛtakam iva viśvaṁ viracayan
śacī-sūnuḥ kiṁ me nayana-saraṇīm yāsyati punaḥ

sarit - river; *tīra* - bank; *ārāme* - in the garden; *viraha* - separation; *vidhuraḥ* - suffering; *gokula vidhoḥ* - from Kṛṣṇa, the moon of Gokula; *nadīm* - a river; *anyam* - another; *kurvan* - making; *nayana* - eyes; *jaladharaḥ* - streams of tears; *vitatibhiḥ* - with an abundance; *muhuh* - repeatedly; *mūrcchām* - fainting; *mṛtakam* - dead; *iva* - as if; *viśvaṁ* - the world; *viracayan* - making; *śacī sūnuḥ* - Śacī's son; *kiṁ* - whether; *me* - my; *nayana* - eyes; *saraṇīm* - path; *yāsyati* - goes; *punaḥ* - again.

Will the world-enchanting son of mother Śacī, Who was agitated by feelings of separation from the moon of Gokula (Kṛṣṇa) in a garden on the bank of a river, Who made another river with the streams of His tears, Who repeatedly fainted and Who thus made all the people as if dead, again cross the path of my eyes?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Another ecstatic pastime of his beloved Śrī Gaurasundara appears in Śrī Raghunātha das' heart, which is afflicted by pangs of separation from the Lord.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa was an eye-witness of Mahāprabhu's extraordinary Purī-*līlā*, in which the Lord was going up and down in the ocean of Śrī Rādhā's *vipralambha-bhāva*. The Lord's Nīlācala-pastimes are the ground for relishing *vipralambha-rasa*. Therefore we assume that he has also described Nīlācala-*līlā* in this verse.

The words *sarīt tīrārāme* in the beginning of the verse suggest that the Lord remembered Vṛndāvana when He stood at the bank of some river near Nīlācala and He became overwhelmed by the feelings of Śrī Rādhā when She was separated from Kṛṣṇa, who had departed for Mathurā. It is difficult to ascertain, though, which river and which garden in Purī it was, because there is no such river with a garden anywhere near Purī or by the shore of the Indian Ocean. One explanation can be that the Lord mistook the glistening, moonlit water of the ocean to be the river Yamunā and the sub forest on the shore of the ocean as the forest of Vṛndāvana. There is such a description in the Caitanya Caritāmṛta. Virahī Raghunātha also has a shadow of the Lord's vast feelings of ecstatic love-in-separation, therefore he has also mistaken the shore of the ocean for the bank of a river. Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa

Kavirāja has given some indication of the Lord's ecstatic *udyāna-vihāra* (garden pastimes):

*sarat kālera rātri śarac candrikā ujvala;
prabhu nija gaṇa loiyā beḍāno rātri sakala
udyāne udyāne bhrame kautuka dekhite;
rāsa līlāra gīta śloka poḍite śunite
kabhu premāveśe korena gāna nartana;
kabhu bhāvāveśe rāsa līlānukaraṇa
kabhu bhāvonmāde prabhu iti uti dhāya;
bhūmi poḍi kabhu mūrccā kabhu gaḍi yāy*

"One autumn night when everything was illuminated by the bright autumnal moonlight the Lord wandered around with His devotees. They were up all night, blissfully admiring all the different gardens and hearing and singing verses and songs about Kṛṣṇa's Rāsa *līlā*. Sometimes they sang and danced in ecstatic love, sometimes they imitated the Rāsa-*līlā*, sometimes the Lord ecstatically ran here and there, sometimes He fainted and fell on the ground and sometimes He rolled around." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 18)

*dui netra bhari aśru bohoye apāra;
samudre mililo yeno gaṅgā yamunā dhāra*

"When the Lord, accepting the mood of Śrī Rādhā, was agitated by feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa, He cried and shed so many tears, that it looked like from His eyes as if the Gaṅgā and the Yamunā were meeting the ocean". (C.C.)

It is impossible to draw a picture of this ecstasy with words. The only language of love is tears: Tears of bliss, tears of sorrow, tears of union, and tears of separation! In one teardrop of a

lover of God, there is a great indication of his ecstatic love. Who can say which indication the Lord gave by crying a river of tears? He is like a great ocean full of high waves of ecstasy! This ocean has no end, no bottom, and no shore, and it can't be crossed. The associates of Mahāprabhu are swimming in this ocean day and night. They swim between the high sorrowful waves in the ocean of love-in-separation and they look as if they are in a lifeless condition.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who is one of these associates, wants to see Gaurahari, the ocean of *vipralambha-rasa*, one more time.

*nadikula vadhū prāya, viraha vidhurā hāya;
 ārtibhare koroye krandana.
 aśru-jala bohi yāya, svatantra nadira prāya,
 bāra bāra bhūmite luṅṭhana.
 sakala janāra prāṇa, kore mṛtaka samāna,
 sei gorā viśva vimohana.
 rādhā bhāve vibhāvita, sadā rahe vyākulita,
 dekhibo ki śacīra nandana?*

"Alas! Will I see again the son of mother Śacī, standing on the bank of a river like a young bride, agitated by feelings of love-in-separation? The flow of tears from His eyes form a separate river and He rolls on the ground again and again.

All the devotees become like dead while world-enchancing Gaura, Who is in the mood of Śrī Rādhā, always remains agitated!"

VERSE 9:

***śacī-sūnor asyāṣṭakam idam abhīṣṭam viracayan
sadā dainyodrekād ati-vīsada-buddhiḥ paṭhati yaḥ
prakāmaṁ caitanyaḥ prabhur ati-kṛpāveśa-vivaśaḥ
pṛthu-premāmbhodhau prathita-rasade majjayati tam***

śacī sūnoḥ - of Śacī's son; *asya* - this; *aṣṭakam* - eight verses; *idam* - these; *abhīṣṭam* - beloved; *viracayat* - granting; *sadā* - always; *dainya* - humility; *udrekād* - abundance; *ati* - very; *vīsada* - pure; *buddhiḥ* - intelligence; *paṭhati* - recites; *yaḥ* - anyone; *prakāmaṁ* - according to His wish; *caitanyaḥ* - Caitanya; *prabhur* - Lord; *ati* - very; *kṛpā* - mercy; *āveśa* - ecstasy; *vivaśaḥ* - overwhelmed; *pṛthu* - great; *premāmbhodhau* - in an ocean of love; *prathita* - known; *rasade* - in giving flavours; *majjayati* - immerses; *tam* - him.

Anyone who recites these eight verses praising the son of mother Śacī with a pure heart and with great humility, will be thrown in the great and famous *rasa*-ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa by Śrī Caitanya, Who is totally overwhelmed by feelings of compassion.

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa describes the *phalaśruti* (auspicious benediction on a reciter) of Śrī Caitanyāṣṭakam.

A pure-hearted reciter has no other desire than Kṛṣṇa in his heart, and thus he continues hearing and chanting, knowing that to maintain any other desire is like cheating and it will keep him from attaining Kṛṣṇa.

*bhukti mukti siddhi vāñchā mone yadi roy;
sādhana korile-o prema utpanna nā hoy (C.C.)*

"When the desires for enjoyment, liberation, and perfection remain in the heart, love of God can't arise, even if one practices devotional *sādhana*!"

One should hear and recite these eight verses in a humble state of mind, for humility is the heart of devotion. Devotion without humility is devotion without life. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself explained how *prema* can be swiftly achieved through the practice of *nāma*:

*ye rūpe loile nāma prema upajāya;
tāhāra lakṣaṇa śuno svarūpa rāma rāya
tṛṇād api sunīcena tarora iva sahiṣṇunā;
amāninā mānadena kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

"Listen, o Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya, how *prema* can swiftly be achieved:

One should chant the Holy Name of Lord Hari in a humble state of mind, being more humble than a blade of grass, as tolerant as a tree, giving all respect unto others and not expecting any honour for oneself."

Therefore Śrī Caitanyadeva will be full of mercy for those who recite this *aṣṭaka*, which fulfills all desires, with humility and a humble heart, and will thrust such humble and pure-hearted reciters into the large and famous *rasa*-ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Caitanyadeva is the embodiment of endless mercy and there has never been such a compassionate descension of God. Compassion culminates in giving of love of Kṛṣṇa. No one else but Mahāprabhu is giving this *prema*, which is difficult to attain even through the normal process of continuously hearing and chanting about the Lord, without considering who is worthy or unworthy.

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written:

*pātrāpātra vicāranām na kurute na svam paraṁ vikṣyate
deyādeya vimarṣako nahi na vā kāla pratikṣaḥ prabhuḥ
sadyo yaḥ śravaṇekṣaṇe praṇamana dhyānādīnā durlabham
datte bhakti-rasam sa eva bhagavān gauraḥ param me gatih*

(Caitanya Candrāmṛta - 77)

"He does not consider who is worthy or unworthy, who is His own or who is an outsider, who it should be given to and who it shouldn't be or whether the time is right or not. The Lord at once gives the flavour of devotion, which is difficult to attain even by hearing the glories of the Lord, seeing the Deity, offering obeisances, meditating, or other practices. That Lord Gaura is my only shelter!"

Mahāprabhu will thrust a humble and pure-hearted reciter of this *stotra* in the vast and celebrated *rasa*-ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa, particularly the sweet love of Vraja and most particularly, the love of the *mañjarīs* for Śrī Rādhikā, which is known as the highest love in the kingdom of God, both in quality and in quantity. How large the ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa is, is described in Caitanya Caritāmṛta:

śuddha prema sukha sindhu, pāya tāra eka bindu, sei bindu jagat dubāya.

"Just one drop from the blissful ocean of pure love of Kṛṣṇa can inundate the entire world". Śrīla Raghunātha offers this blessing to the reciter of this *stotra*:

*śuddha citte yei jana, koroye aṣṭaka paṭhana,
dainya yāra sarva śreṣṭha dhana*

*kṛpā kori gaurahari, rādhā dāsya dāna kori,
kṛṣṇa preme kore nīmajjana*

"Lord Gaurahari mercifully bestows His greatest treasure, Śrī Rādhā's service, on a pure-hearted person who humbly recites these eight verses, and thus immerses him in the ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa."

**Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's "Śrī
Caitanyāṣṭakam"**

Verses translated by Advaita dāsa in 1989
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Śrī Gaurāṅga Stava Kalpataruḥ

"The wish-yielding tree of praises of Śrī Gaurāṅga"

VERSE 1:

*gatiṁ dṛṣtvā yasya pramada-gaja-varye'khila-janā
mukhaṁ ca śrī-candropari dadhati thūtkāra-nivaham
sva-kāntyā yaḥ svarṇācalam adharayat chīdhu ca vacas
taraṅgair gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati*

gatiṁ - gait; *dṛṣtvā* - having seen; *yasya* - whose; *pramada* - intoxicated; *gajavarye* - best of elephants; *akhila* - all; *janā* - people; *mukhaṁ* - face; *ca* - and; *śrī candra* - beautiful moon; *upari* - above; *dadhati* - placing; *thūtkāra* - spitting; *nivaham* - multitudes; *sva* - own; *kāntyā* - with luster; *yaḥ* - who; *svarṇa* - golden; *acalam* - mountain; *adharayat* - placing; *sīdhu* - nectar; *ca* - and; *vacaḥ* - words; *taraṅgaiḥ* - with waves; *gaurāṅgaḥ* - Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayan* - rising; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

When people watch His gait and His beautiful face, they spit at the graceful gait of a mad elephant and at the beauty of the moon. His luster defeats that of a golden mountain and the waves of His words defeat the sweetness of nectar. Thus Śrī Gaurāṅga rises in my heart and maddens me (with ecstatic love)!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In Śrī Caitanyāṣṭakam Śrī Raghunātha dāsa had revealed his intense feelings of separation from Śrīman Mahāprabhu and his anxious desire to see Him again. Śrī Raghunātha dāsa was showered with the unlimited loving grace of Śrī Caitanya, and by that grace his heart was suddenly filled with wonderful visions of the Lord's sweet pastimes and qualities.

Such visions caused him to be overwhelmed with ecstasy, and he revealed these ecstatic visions in this Gaurāṅga Stava Kalpataru.

Śrī Gaurāṅga's graceful motions, which resemble the gait of a mad elephant, arise in Śrī Raghunātha's heart, and the cavity of his heart is suddenly illuminated by the transcendental moonlight, which emanates from the Lord's face.

The Lord's form is transcendental - *sac cid ānanda* - and it is not like a material body, which is made of five material elements. When you see any material form, you become weary of it after a while, but when you see the form of Śrī Gaurāṅga, ever-new desires awaken (to see it again), and you feel like this: *janama avadhi hām rūpa nehārinu, nayana nā tirapita bhelo* -

"I have seen that form ever since I was born, but my eyes have not yet been satiated."

The blissful form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa enchants all creatures in the world and even Kṛṣṇa Himself. It is the essence of all beauty and the ornament of all ornaments:

vismāpanam svasya ca saubhagardhe param padam bhūṣaṇa bhūṣaṇāṅgam (Bhāgavata 3.2.12). "Kṛṣṇa's form is the ornament of ornaments, and its beauty astonishes even Himself!"

The beauty of each of Śyāma's limbs, which even make Śyāma forget everything, is now also combined with the luster

of each and every limb of the puppet of *mahā bhāva* (*mahā bhāva putalikā*) Śrī Bhānu-dulālī (Rādhikā).

rāi kānu duṭi tanu yeno dudhe jale milāye gelo —

"Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's two bodies have merged into Each other like water merging with milk."

All of Śyāma's black limbs have now been concealed by shimmering golden limbs. The very form of amorous *rasa* (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) is now tightly embraced by *mahā bhāva*. Rāi and Kānu in One Form!

Śrīla Govinda dāsa has described Śrī Gaurāṅga's graceful motions and the beauty of His loving face as follows:

*lākho bāṇa kanaka, kaṣilo kalevara,
mohana sumeru jiniyā suṭhāma
gada gada nira, thira nāhi pāoi
bhuvana mohana kiye nayāna sandhāna*

"His body is tanned with gold molten a hundred-thousand times and it has become more enchanting than the golden Sumeru-mountain. His eyes, which are never steady and which always shed tears of love, enchant the whole world."

*dekho re māi sundara śaci nandanā;
ājānulambita bhuja bāhu subalanā (Dhru)
mayamatta hāti bhāti gati calanā;
kiye ve mālatira mālā gorā aṅge dolanā
sarada indu jini sundara vayanā;
prema ānande paripūrita nayanā
pada dui cāri calata ḍagamagiya;
thira nāhi bāndhe padata pahu ḍhaliyā*

"Behold the beauty of Śacī's lad! His strong arms reach down to His knees, His gait is splendid like that of a mad elephant and a garland of jasmine-flowers oscillates on His golden body. His beautiful face defeats the autumn moon and His eyes are filled with ecstatic love. The Lord stumbles on for two or four steps more, but He can't keep steady and He collapses and falls on the ground."

These Mahājana-songs can't be explained, they must be experienced. The Mahājanas know very well how to draw pictures of the personification of ecstatic love (Śrī Gaurāṅga) with the pencils of their words and feelings. What to speak of directly seeing the form of Gaurāṅga:

If you simply hear or read about it, you feel like spitting on all the forms and objects of the material world! What more can be said?

Enchanted by the sweetness of Śrī Gaurasundara's words and the luster of His transcendental form, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says:

"His words defeat the sweetness of nectar and His bodily luster defeats that of a golden mountain. This sweetness can't be compared to anything sweet of this material world.

Material luminaries give pain to the eyes with their flashy light, but this transcendental light simply soothes and pleases the eyes! Still, if we do not make comparisons with material objects, then how can we describe such transcendental forms? If material things like nectar could even slightly resemble the transcendental form of *prema*, then we could follow the expert descriptions of Śrīla Locana dāsa Ṭhākura:

*amiyā mākhiyā kevā, lavani tulilo go,
tāhāte gaḍilo gorā deha.*

*jaḡata chāṇiyā keṅā, rasa niṅgāriḷo go,
eka koila sudhai suleha*

"Can the elegance of His golden body be compared to a body which is anointed with nectar, or has the universe been kneaded and the juice squeezed out of it, turning it into this one nectar(ean appearance)?"

*akhaṇḍa pīyūṣa dhārā, keṅā āṅṅiḷo go,
sonāra varaṇe hoilo cini.
se cini māriyā keṅā, pheṇi tulilo go,
heno vāsi gorā aṅga khāni*

"Or has a constant stream of nectar been stirred, so that His golden complexion turned into sugar? Or has His golden body turned from sugar into a *pheṇi* (hollow sugar drop)?"

*anurāgera dadhi, premāra sācanā diyā,
ke nā pāṅṅiyāche āṅkhi duṅṅi
tāhāte adhika mahu, lahu lahu kathā-khāni,
hāsiyā kohoye guṅṅi guṅṅi*

Who has displayed His two eyes with the yoghurt of *anurāga* through genuine love? Besides this, there is even more honey in the soft words He slowly speaks with a smile on His face."

*bijuri bāṅṅiyā keṅā, gā khāni māṅṅiḷo go,
cāṅṅde māṅṅiḷo mukha khāni.
lāvanya bāṅṅiyā keṅā, citra nirmāṅa koilo,
aparūpa rūpera balani*

"Has anyone ground the lightning to paste and smeared it on Gaura's body? Has anybody ground the moon to paste and

smeared it on His face? Has anyone ground elegance to paste and made a picture of His wonderful form with it?"

We do not think that after reading or hearing these descriptions of the Mahājanas, anyone will have the courage to write another comparison to Śrī Gaurasundara's sweet words and bodily luster!

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has personally seen this form and heard these words in Puri, and thus his heart is absorbed in a wonderful mood of ecstasy! In this way a succession of relish continues in this *stava*.

sakala janera mana, koribāre ākarṣaṇa,
vidhātā ki pātiyāche phāṅd
eka bāra yei here, se āṅkhi phirāte nāre,
mana unmādanā gorā cāṅd

"Has the Creator spread out a net to catch the minds of all the people of the world? When you see this intoxicating golden moon even once, you can't turn away your eyes anymore!"

heriye gaurāṅga gati, thutkr̥ta gajendra gati,
gaja se sāmānya made mātā.
gaurāṅga vadana here, sakalaṅka candropare,
ghṛṇā kore sakala janatā

"When you see Gaurāṅga's motions, you spit on the gait of the king of mad elephants, considering him to be just very ordinary, and when the people see Gaurāṅga's (spotless moon-like) face, they spit on the spotted moon in the sky in disgust!"

gaura kānti jhālamala, tāra āge svarṇācala,
acala se tāre ki gaṇibo

gaurāṅga madhura vāṇī, amṛta taraṅga jini,
pīle mona kore 'pībo pībo'

"How can I mention an ordinary golden mountain in front of Gaura's shimmering luster? Gaurāṅga's sweet words defeat waves of nectar and when you drink it, you only think 'I will drink (more)! I will drink (more)!'"

āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye udita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart You madden it, and I can never forget You!"

VERSES 2-3:

alaṅkṛtyātmānaṁ nava-vividha-ratnair iva vala-
dvivarṇatva-stambhāsphuṭa-vacana-kampāśru-pulakaiḥ
hasan svidyan nṛtyan śīti-giri-pater nirbhara-mude
puṛaḥ śrī-gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati

rasollāsais tiryag-gatibhir abhito vāribhir alam
dṛṣoḥ siñcan lokān aruṇa-jala-yantratvam itayoḥ
mudā dantair dṛṣtvā madhuram adharam kampa-calitair
naṭan śrī-gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati

alaṅkṛti - ornamented; *ātmānām* - self; *nava* - new, or nine; *vividha* - different kinds; *ratnaiḥ* - with jewels; *iva* - as if; *balad* - beautiful; *vivarṇatva* - becoming pale; *stambha* - stunned; *asphuṭa* - unclear; *vacana* - words; *kampa* - shivering; *aśru* - shedding tears; *pulakaiḥ* -

with goosebumps; *hasan* - laughing; *svīdyan* - perspiring; *nṛtyan* - dancing; *śītīgiri* - Jagannātha Puri; *pateḥ* - of the Lord; *nirbhara* - absorbed; *mude* - in bliss; *puraḥ* - before; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

rasollāsaiḥ - with *rasika* ecstasy; *tiryag gatibhiḥ* - staggering; *abhitaḥ* - everywhere; *vāribhiḥ* - with water; *alan̄* - greatly; *dr̥śoḥ* - of eyes; *siñcat* - sprinkling; *lokān* - the people; *aruṇa* - red; *jala-yantratva mitayoḥ* - like a syringe; *mudā* - joyfully; *dantaiḥ* - with the teeth; *daṣṭvā* - having bitten; *madhuram* - sweet; *adharaṁ* - lips; *kampa* - shivering; *calitaiḥ* - moving; *naṭan* - dances; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Just as a great dancer decorates himself with many new ornaments for his dance, Śrī Gaurāṅga decorates Himself with the ornaments of *sāttvika-bhāva*, like turning pale, becoming stunned, perspiring, changing the voice, shivering, shedding tears, and being studded with goose pimples.

That Gaurāṅga, Who laughs in topmost bliss as He dances beautifully before Lord Jagannātha, the Lord of Nīlācala, maddens me with ecstasy as He awakens in my heart!

Śrī Gaurāṅga's red eyes are like syringes, which squirt great streams of loving tears as He is overwhelmed by *rasollāsa* (the ecstasy of union). He sprinkles everyone with these ecstatic tears, while He shivers and bites His sweet lips with His row of teeth, thereby staggering about with His sweet lotus feet while He dances.

That Śrī Gaurāṅga maddens me as He awakens in my heart!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In these two verses, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa describes Lord Gaurāṅga's wonderful dancing before Śrī Jagannātha's chariot and how Mahāprabhu was thus decorated with ornaments of *sāttvika-bhāvas*.

Just as a great dancer decorates himself with exquisite jewels and ornaments for his enchanting dance, which will astonish the minds of his audience, Śrī Gaurāṅga astonished hundreds of thousands of people who assembled for Śrī Jagannātha's Ratha Yātrā by decorating Himself with the exquisite jewels of *sāttvika*- ecstasies while performing His ecstatic dance of love before Śrī Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Balarāma.

The *sāttvika*-ecstasies increase the beauty of the soul, therefore they are the proper ornaments for a loving devotee.

*kṛṣṇa sambandhibhiḥ sāksāt
kincid vā vyavadhānataḥ
bhāvaiś cittam ihākrantaṁ
sāttvam ity ucyate budhaiḥ
sattvād asmāt samutpanna
ye ye bhāvas tu sāttvikaḥ*

(Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 2.3.1-2)

"When the heart is directly touched by emotions (in the form of the five basic relationships of servant hood, friendship, etc.) or indirectly (in the form of the seven secondary moods such as laughter, chivalry etc.) related to Kṛṣṇa, the wise call it *sattva*, and the emotions coming from that are called *sāttvika-bhāvas*." There are eight kinds of *sāttvika bhāvas*:

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

(Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 2.3.16)

"These eight *sāttvika bhāvas* are - being stunned, perspiring, horripilation, changing of the voice, shivering, turning pale, shedding tears, and fainting."

*ekadā vyaktim āpannāḥ
pañca-śāḥ sarva eva vā
ārūḍhā paramotkarṣam
uddīptā iti kīrtitāḥ
uddīptā eva suddīpta
mahā-bhāve bhavanty amī
sarva eva parām koṭim
sāttvikā yatra vibhrati*

(Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 2.3.79 and 81)

"When five or six *sāttvika* ecstasies simultaneously arise to the greatest extent, they are called *uddīpta*. In *mahā bhāva* all the *sāttvika-bhāvas* become fully manifest and then they are called *suddīpta*."

First of all, the Lord divided the Gauḍīya devotees into seven chanting-parties and then He commenced the *kīrtana* after personally anointing all the devotees with sandalwood pulp and garlands.

jagannāthera āge cāri sampradāya gāya;
dui pāṣe dui - pāche eka sampradāya
sāta sampradāya bāje caudda mādala;
yāra dhvani śuni vaiṣṇava hoilo pāgala
śrī vaiṣṇava ghaṭā meghe hoilo bādala;
saṅkīrtanāmṛta saha varṣe netra jala
tribhuvana bhari uṭhe saṅkīrtana dhvani;
anya vādyādīra dhvani kichui nā śuni
sāta thāyī bule prabhu 'hari hari' boli;
'jaya jaya jagannātha' kohe hasta tuli
kīrtana dekhiyā jagannātha haraṣita;
kīrtana dekhe ratha koriyā sthagita

"In front of Lord Jagannātha, four parties were singing, on each of His sides one party and behind Him another one.

In these seven parties, fourteen drums resounded, and when the Vaiṣṇavas heard them, they went mad of ecstasy. All the Vaiṣṇavas assembled like a bank of clouds, and tears fell like rain from their eyes along with the nectar of the ecstatic *kīrtana*. All the three worlds were filled with the sound of the *kīrtana*; other sounds could not be heard at all anymore!

The Lord wandered through all seven *kīrtana*-parties, raising His arms and chanting "Hari! Hari! Jaya Jagannātha!"

Lord Jagannātha was very happy to see the *kīrtana*, so He stopped the chariot (to enjoy the sight)."

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya Līlā Chapter 13)

When the Lord wished to perform His *uddaṇḍa-nṛtya* (dance with high jumps), He brought the seven parties together and began to dance in wonderful absorption. Sometimes He quickly turned around like a firebrand, causing the earth to tilt with its oceans and mountains. While dancing, the Lord was adorned with flower-like ornaments of *sāttvika*- ecstasies, such

as dancing, rolling around, and laughing. Sometimes He showed signs of humility, pride, or joy, and sometimes He fell to the ground, rolling around like a golden mountain.

*uddaṇḍa nṛtya prabhu koriyā huṅkāra;
cakrabhrami bhrame yaiche alāta ākāra
nṛtye prabhura yāhā yāhā paḍe padatala;
sasāgara śaila mahī kore ṭalamala
stambha sveda pulakāśru kampa vaivarṇya;
nānā bhāve vivaśatā garva harṣa dainya
āchāḍa khāiyā paḍi bhūmi gaḍi yāy;
suvarṇa parvata yeno bhūmite loṭāya*

Thousands of people were astonished when they saw the Lord's wonderful dancing and how He was decorated with these different ornaments of ecstasy. Even Lord Jagannātha was astonished, and He made His chariot stop, so that He could stare at the Lord's enchanting style of dancing.

Baladeva and Subhadrā smiled when They saw the sweet dancing of the Lord, Who was nothing else but another manifestation of Lord Jagannātha, Who Himself sat on the chariot watching it all in great astonishment.

All eight *sāttvika*-ecstasies simultaneously appeared on the Lord's body to their utmost extent.

*uddaṇḍa nṛtye prabhura adbhuta vikāra;
aṣṭa sāttvika bhāvodaya hoy sama kāla
māṁsa-braṇa saha roma-vṛnda pulakita;
śimulira vṛkṣa yeno kaṇṭake veṣṭita
ekeka dantera kampa dekhi lāge bhoy;
loke jāne danta sab khasiya poḍoy
sarvāṅge prasveda chuṭe - tāte raktodgama;
'jaja gaga jaja gaga' - gadgada vacana*

*jala-yantra dhārā yeno bohe asru jala;
 āśa-pāśa loka yoto bhijilo sakala
 deha-kānti gaura kabhu dekhiye aruṇa;
 kabhu kānti dekhi yeno mallikā puṣpa sama
 kabhu stabdha kabhu prabhu bhūmite poḍoy;
 śuṣka kāṣṭha sama hasta pada nā coloy
 kabhu bhūmi poḍe, kabhu hoy śvāsa hīna;
 yāhā dekhi bhakta-gaṇera hoy prāṇa kṣīṇa*

"The Lord showed amazing transformations as He danced and leaped high in the air, all eight *sāttvika*-ecstasies appearing on His body at once, and all the hairs on His body stood on end like the thorns on a Śimulī-tree.

When the people saw the Lord's teeth chattering, they were afraid that they would all fall out of His mouth. His whole body perspired and blood oozed out of it. With faltering voice the Lord said: "*Jaja gaga jaja gaga*," wanting to say Jaggannātha! Jagannātha!

Tears streamed from His eyes as if they squirted out from syringes, moistening all the people who stood around Him. The Lord's golden luster sometimes turned reddish and sometimes it resembled a Mallikā-flower (a kind of jasmine). Sometimes the Lord became stunned and sometimes He fell to the ground, His hands and feet becoming motionless like dry pieces of wood. Sometimes He fell to the ground and sometimes He stopped breathing. Seeing this, the devotees felt as if they lost their lives."

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya 13)

When the Lord saw Jagannātha, Subhadrā and Balarāma in the temple, He assumed the mood of Māthura Virahiṇī Rāi (Rādhā in separation from Kṛṣṇa, Who had left for Mathurā) and He thought: "I'm seeing Kṛṣṇa in Kurukṣetra!" Even on

such a blissful day as this Ratha-Yātrā-day the ocean of His (Her) sorrow swelled!

Even after seeing His (Her) Prāṇanātha after such a long separation He (She) could not enjoy it, because He (She) can only play with Kṛṣṇa in solitary Vṛndāvana. Today Jagannātha has mounted His chariot to go from Nīlācala to Sundarācala, but the Lord, in Śrī Rādhā's mood, thought:

"Today I have taken My Prāṇanātha back to Vṛndāvana!"
Thus, feelings of *rasollāsa*, an increase of the ecstasy of union, arose within the Lord's heart. He thought to Himself:

*bahu dina pore bañdhuyā ele;
dekhā nā hoito parāṇa gele
eteko sahilo abalā bole;
phāṭiyā yāito pāṣāṇa hole
dukhinīra dina dukhete gelo;
mathurā nagare chile to bhālo
e sab duḥkha kichu nā gaṇi;
tomāra kuśale kuśala māni
sab duḥkha āji gelo he dūre;
hārāṇa ratana pāilām kore*

(Pada Kalpataru)

"After many days My friend has come. If I had not seen Him, My life would have left Me. How much can a tender girl tolerate? Even a stone would burst from this pain! The day of a heartbroken girl passed miserably. It would have been better if He had stayed at Mathurā. Still, I don't care about all this suffering - when You are happy, I am also happy. Today all misery has gone far away, for I got My lost jewel back."

Mahāprabhu was so much in ecstasy that tears squirted from His reddish eyes like water squirting out of a syringe, and all

the pilgrims were showered with these precious tears of love. The Lord's teeth chattered of ecstasy and He bit His red lips as He sweetly danced.

The reason for the Lord biting His lips was:

"You're expert in making Me suffer the pangs of separation by hiding Yourself from Me. Today I've found You, and I will not let You go anymore!"

He was admonishing Jagannātha, and therefore He was biting His teeth and staggering about in His sweet dance. When Śrī Raghunātha dāsa gets such a transcendental vision of his most beloved Gaura, he gets beside himself of ecstasy!

*āre mora gaura naṭarāja!
śrīla jagannātha āge, bāḍāiyā anurāge,
nāce porī bhāva ratna sāja.*

"O My king of golden dancers! You are dancing in front of Lord Jagannātha with ever-increasing ecstasy, decorated with jewels of *bhāva*!"

*vaivarṇa stabdhatā āra, gadagada vākyoccāra,
kampa aśru pulaka sagharma.
ei sab sātṭvika bhāva, āra dui anubhāva,
hāsya nṛtya sab prema dharma*

"You are adorned with all the *sātṭvika-bhāvas*, namely turning pale, getting stunned, speaking with faltering voice, shivering, shedding tears, horripilation and perspiration, and two *anubhāvas*, namely laughing and dancing. All this completes the religion of ecstatic love."

*nava ratna alaṅkāra, aṅge śobhe camatkāra,
heri jagannātha pramodita.
se kautuka ye dekhilo, sei se rase mātīlo,
mora mana kore unmādita*

"His body is astonishingly beautiful as it is adorned with the new jewels of ecstasy, and when Lord Jagannātha sees it He is very happy. My mind also goes mad when he sees this *rasika* fun!"

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye uḍita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart, You madden it, and I can never forget You!"

*rasera avadhi mora gorā
rasera ullāsa bhare, aparūpa nṛtya kore,
du nayane bohe premadhārā.*

"My Gaura is the climax of *rasa*! He dances wonderfully when He experiences *rasollāsa* (the ecstasy of reunion) and tears of ecstatic love stream from His eyes."

*aparūpa se mādhuri, smarāṇa koriyā hari,
vāri bohe rāṅgā dui netre.
vasanta utsava kāle, secana koroye jale,
yeno picakāri jalayantre*

"As He remembers the wonderful sweetness of Hari, tears stream from His eyes like the water, which is sprinkled from syringes during the spring-festival (Holi)."

Once in the house of Kāśī Mīśra, Śrī Gaurāṅga felt so much separation from Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja that the joints of His bones became disconnected and His arms and legs were elongated.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, Who then rolled on the ground and pitifully cried with a faltering anxious voice, He awakens in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Here Śrī Raghunātha dāsa reveals another one of Śrī Gaurāṅga's very astonishing pastimes, which he personally witnessed.

After the night in which Mahāprabhu dreamt of the Rāsā-dance, He went for His morning bath and then He went on to see Lord Jagannātha, still absorbed in His divine trance. In the temple, He saw Lord Jagannātha as Muralī-vadana (Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, Who holds the flute to His mouth) and as He stood near the Garuḍa-pillar, one Oriyan woman stepped on His shoulders to see Lord Jagannātha.

This incident caused the Lord to return to external consciousness and to see Jagannātha in His true form again (as Kṛṣṇa situated in Dvārakā). Mahāprabhu saw Kṛṣṇa in Kurukṣetra again and felt very upset, as if He had lost a precious jewel that He just found:

*prāpta ratna hārāilo - aiche vyagra hoilā;
viṣaṅṅa hoiyā prabhu nija vāsā āilā
bhūmīra upara bosī nija nakhe bhūmī lekhe;
aśru gaṅgā netre bohe, kichu nāhi dekhe
pāilum vṛndāvana nātha, puna hārāilum;
ke mora nileka kṛṣṇa, kothā mui āilum
rātri hoile svarūpa rāmānanda loiyā;
āpana monera vārtā kohe ughariyā*

"I've lost the jewel I just found!" - The Lord thought. This made Him upset and unhappy, and He returned to His own residence, where He sat on the ground and made marks in the soil with His nails. Tears flowed from His eyes like the current of the Gaṅgā, so He could not see anything anymore. He only thought:

"I've gotten the Lord of Vṛndāvana, and I lost Him again! Who has taken My Kṛṣṇa? Where have I come?"

When the night came He took Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya into confidence and revealed His mind to them.

*prāpta pranaṣṭācyuta vitta ātmā
yayau viśādojjhita deha gehaḥ
grhīta kāpālīka dharmako me
vṛndāvanam sendriya-śiṣya vṛndaḥ*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 14)

"I attained the treasure of Acyuta, but He went again. Thus I left My body and house in great sorrow and accepted the *dharma* of a Kāpālīka-*yogī*, taking My disciples, My senses, along to Vṛndāvana."

Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmīpāda has composed the following extensive song with deep meaning to explain the anxious love for Kṛṣṇa which is expressed in the above verse:

*prāpta ratna hārāiyā, tāra guṇa smariyā,
mahāprabhu santāpe vihvala.
rāya svarūpera kaṅṭha dhari, kohe hā hā hari hari,
dhairya gelo hoilo capala.*

"Mahāprabhu became overwhelmed by burning emotions, when He lost the jewel He just found and remembered its qualities. Claspng Rāya Rāmānanda and Svarūpa Dāmodara around the neck, He exclaimed: "Hā hā Hari! Hari!" and He became restless, thereby losing His patience".

*śuno bāndhava! kṛṣṇera mādhuri!
yāra lobhe mora mana, chāḍi loka veda dharma,
yogī hoiyā hoilo bhikhārī.*

"Listen, O friends, as I tell you about Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, which made My mind so greedy that it gave up all local and Vedic traditions to become a *yogī*, a begging mendicant!"

*kṛṣṇa līlā maṇḍala, śuddha śaṅkha kuṇḍala,
goḍiyāche śuka kārīkara.
sei kuṇḍala kāne porī, tṛṣṇā lāu thālī dhari,
āśā jhulī kāndhera upora.*

"The circle of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes is like a pure conch shell-earring, made by the craftsman named Śukadeva. I wear this earring on My ear, holding a bowl of desire made of a gourd in My hand, and carrying a begging-bag of hope around My shoulder."

*cintā kānthā uḍhi gāya, dhūli vibhūti malina kāya,
hā hā kṛṣṇa pralāpa uttara.
udvega dvādaśa hāthe, lobhera jhulani māthe,
bhikṣā bhāve kṣṇa kalevara.*

"My (mind's) body wears a quilt of thoughts and is covered with dust and *vibhūti* (sacred ashes). The only thing I can reply is: "Hā hā Kṛṣṇa!" and I wear twelve bangles of anxiety on My

wrists and a turban of greed on My head. My whole body is skinny because I subsist on begging."

*vyāsa śukādi yogijana, kṛṣṇa ātmā nirañjana,
vraje tāra yoto lilāgaṇa.
bhāgavatādi śāstra-gaṇa, koriyāche varṇane,
sei tarjā paḍhe anukṣaṇa.*

"My mind constantly reads the descriptions of all the Vrajapastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Self, Who is free from all attributes, told by Vyāsa, Śuka and other *yogīs* with poetic verses in scriptures like the Śrīmad Bhāgavata."

*daśendriya śiṣya kori, mahā bāul nāma dhari,
śiṣya loiyā korilo gamana.
mora deha sva sadana, viṣaya bhoga mahā dhana
sab chāḍi gelā vṛndāvana.*

"I am named the great Bāul (devotional madman) and, making My ten senses My disciples, I left My body, My house, all sense enjoyments and great wealth and I have gone to Vṛndāvana."

*vṛndāvane prajāgaṇa, yoto sthāvara jangama,
vṛkṣa latā grhastha āśrame.
tāra ghare bhiksāṭana, phala mūla patrāṣana,
ei vṛtti kore śiṣya sane.*

"The mobile and immobile creatures of Vṛndāvana, like the trees and vines, are living in the *grhastha-āśrama* (domestic life), and I beg for fruits and roots from their houses with My disciples."

now void, I have no mind, no senses! Oh! What suffering! What an anguish!"

Saying this, Mahāprabhu became quiet and unconscious like a *yogī* whose meditation was broken.

Seeing the Lord's condition Rāmānanda Rāya recited a verse which suited the Lord's mood and Svarūpa Dāmodara sang a sweet song about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

In this way they managed to bring the Lord back to external consciousness with great effort.

Half the night passed in this way, and when the Lord had slightly come back to His senses, Svarūpa and Rāma Rāya laid Him to rest in His Gambhīrā-cell. Rāmānanda Rāya then returned to his abode, but Svarūpa Dāmodara and Govinda, observing the Lord's condition, lay down to rest in front of the door of the Gambhīrā.

The whole world was silent, lying on the lap of the goddess of sleep. Only the eyes of Mahāprabhu, Who was suffering the pangs of separation from Kṛṣṇa, could not be touched by the goddess of sleep. He was simply crying out:

"O Kṛṣṇa! O Kṛṣṇa! Where are You?"

The lamp was flickering dimly. Svarūpa Dāmodara also could not sleep; he was simply listening to the Lord chanting Kṛṣṇa's names. In this way, the third quarter of the night passed. Suddenly the Gambhīrā became silent and the nectar-stream of the Lord's chanting of Kṛṣṇa-*nāma* stopped. Svarūpa was always very anxious about the Lord's welfare, and therefore -

*prabhura śabda nā pāiyā svarūpa kapāṭa koilo dūre;
tina dvāra deoyā āche prabhu nāhi ghare
cintita hoilo sabhe prabhu nā dekhīyā;
prabhu cāhi bule sabhe dīyaṭi jvāliyā
sinha-dvārera utara diśāya āche eka ṭhāi;*

*tāra madhye paḍi āchena caitanya gosāi
dekhi svarūpa gosāi ādi ānandita hoilā;
prabhura daśā dekhi puna cintita hoilā*

When he did not hear anything anymore, he opened the door of the Gambhīrā and he saw that the Lord had disappeared, although all three doors of the cell were closed.

All the devotees were very worried when they heard that the Lord was gone, and they went out with lamps to search for Him.

After a long search, they found Him lying north of the Siṁhadvāra (the lion-gate of the Jagannātha temple). At first Svarūpa Dāmodara was very happy to see the Lord, but when he saw the Lord's condition, he became worried. The devotees saw that their golden Lord Gaurāṅga was greyed by dust and that He had fallen flat on the ground in an unconscious state. All the joints of His bones had become disconnected and His arms and legs, that were already long, had become even longer. His bones were now just connected by the skin that covered them; He didn't move, He didn't breathe from His nose, foam was coming from His mouth, and the pupils of His eyes were left lifeless. When the devotees saw the Lord in this condition they were about to give up their lives and they cried out "Alas! Alas!"

*prabhu paḍi āche dīrgha - hāta pāñca chay;
acetana deha, nāsāya śvāsa nāhi boy
ekeka hasta pada - dīrgha tina tina hāta;
asthi granthi bhinna, carma āche mātra tāta
hasta pada grīvā kaṭi asthi sandhi yoto;
ekeka vitasti bhinna hoiyāche toto
carma mātra upare sandhira āche dīrgha hoiyā;
duḥkhita hoilā sabhe prabhuke dekhīyā*

*mukhe lālā phena prabhura uttāna nayāna;
dekhitei saba bhaktera dehe chāḍe prāṇa*

The devotees decided that the only way to bring the Lord back to life was to loudly chant the name of Kṛṣṇa in His ears, so Svarūpa Dāmodara and the devotees loudly chanted the name of Kṛṣṇa in the Lord's ear, and after a long time some signs of motion appeared in the Lord's body again.

Suddenly the Lord got up and loudly chanted "Hari! Hari!".

All His bones were connected again like before. The Lord looked all around and asked Svarūpa:

"Svarūpa, what are you all doing here? This is the Simha-dvāra! Why am I here?"

Svarūpa replied:

"My Lord, please return to Your abode and there I will tell You everything!"

The Lord returned to the Gambhīrā with the devotees, and there Svarūpa told Him everything that had happened.

The Lord said:

"I was not aware of all these things! I only know that Kṛṣṇa appeared before Me and He disappeared again, just like a lightning flash!"

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya Ch. 14)

*svarūpa gosāi tabe ucca koriyā;
prabhura kāṇe kṛṣṇa-nāma kohe bhaktagaṇa loiyā
bahu kṣaṇe kṛṣṇa nāma hṛdaye paśilā;
'haribol' boli prabhu garjīyā uṭhīlā
cetana hoite asthi sandhi lāgilo;
pūrva prāya yathāyogyā śarīra hoilo
simha-dvāre dekhi prabhura vismaya hoilo;
'kāhā koro ki ' ei svarūpe puchilo
svarūpa kohe - uṭho prabhu colo nija ghara;*

*tathāi tomāre saba koribo gocara
eto boli prabhu dhari ghare loiyā gelā;
tāñhāra avasthā saba tāñhāre kohilā
śuni mahāprabhura boḍo hoilo camatkāra;
prabhu kohe - kichu smṛti nāhiko āmāra
sabe dekhi - hoy mora kṛṣṇa vidyamāna;
vidyut prāya dekhā hoy antardhāna*

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has seen this wonderfully playful Lord personally and the remembrance of Him maddens his heart!

*hari! hari! eka dina kāśī miśrāloye,
bosiyāchen mahāprabhu, nā dekhi nā śuni kabhu,
heno bhāva udilo hṛdaye*

"Hari Hari! One day Mahāprabhu sat down in the house of Kāśī Misra and a mood arose in His heart which I've never seen or heard of before!"

*śrī nandanandana hari, viraha āveśa bhari,
aṅga sandhi sab ślatha hoilo.
bhujā pada dirghākāra, gadgada vadanoccāra,
bhūme poḍi kānde savaikalya.*

"All the joints of His bones loosened when He was absorbed in feelings of separation from Vrajendra-Nandana Hari. His arms and legs became longer, He spoke with faltering voice, and He fell to the ground, anxiously crying."

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye udita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart You madden it and I can never forget You!"

VERSE 5:

***anudghāṭya dvāra-trayam uru ca bhitti-trayam aho
vilāṅghyoccaiḥ kāliṅgika-surabhi-madhye nipatitaḥ
tanūdyat-saṅkocāt kamaṭha iva kṛṣṇoru-virahād
virājan gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati***

anudghāṭya - not opening; *dvāra* - doors; *trayam* - three; *uru* - great; *ca* - and; *bhitti* - walls; *trayam* - three; *aho* - O!; *vilāṅghya* - crossing over; *uccaiḥ* - very high; *kāliṅgika surabhi* - cows from Kāliṅga; *madhye* - among; *nipatitaḥ* - falling; *tanu* - body; *udyat* - arising; *saṅkocāt* - from shrinking; *kamaṭha* - turtle; *iva* - like; *kṛṣṇa* - Kṛṣṇa; *uru* - great; *virahāt* - out of separation; *virājat* - shines; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Although the three doors of the Gambhīrā were closed and the walls were very high, the Lord managed to come out of the house. That Lord Gaurāṅga, Who felt so much separation from Kṛṣṇa that He contracted His body like a turtle and fell down between the cows from Kāliṅga, He awakens in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrīpāda Raghunātha, who personally witnessed Śrīman Mahāprabhu's pastimes, now perceives a pastime, which took place on another day.

One evening, the waves of Kṛṣṇa-*kathā* and *rasa-kīrtana* were freely flowing in Mahāprabhu's solitary room, the

Gambhīrā. Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya recited verses, which fitted well with the Lord's mood and Śrīpāda Svarūpa Dāmodara sweetly sang songs of Vidyāpati, Caṇḍidāsa and Gīta Govinda to console the Lord, Who was suffering the pangs of separation from Kṛṣṇa. Half the night had passed and Mahāprabhu had reclined on His bedding in the Gambhīrā. Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara had both gone to their bedrooms, but Mahāprabhu, in the mood of *virahinī* Rāi, could not fall asleep. He passed the night loudly chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, so loud that His personal servant Govinda could also not sleep.

At the end of the night the Gambhīrā was silent. This abnormal silence frightened Govinda, who doubtfully pricked up his ears, thinking that maybe the jewel of the Gambhīrā, Mahāprabhu, was no longer there.

He lit up a lamp, went inside, and found that it was true. Govinda's heart trembled; and saying 'Hā Gaurāṅga! Hā Gaurāṅga!' he went to Svarūpa Dāmodara to wake him up and bring him the news.

Svarūpa's head was spinning when he heard the grave news. He lit a torch and took different devotees with him to search for the Lord in the house of Kāśī Mīśra (where the Lord was residing in the Gambhīrā), which was surrounded by three successive walls, but he couldn't find the Lord anywhere.

All the gates were locked, but still the Lord couldn't be found anywhere. Everyone was speechless of astonishment.

No one can stop the course of love. The Lord had found some way to cross over the three high walls and had gone outside. The devotees then went outside of the house and started searching for the Lord everywhere, until they saw an amazing sight that stunned them:

*iti uti anveṣiyā simhadvāre gelā;
 gābigaṇa madhye yāi prabhure pāilā
 peṭera bhītorā hasta pada - kūrmera ākāra;
 mukhe phena, pulakāṅga netre jaladhāra
 acetana poḍi āche yeno kuṣmāṅḍa phala;
 bāhire jaḍimā antare ānanda vihvala
 gābī sab caudige suṅkhe prabhu aṅga;
 dūra koile nāhi chāḍe mahāprabhura saṅga*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 17,15-18)

"They searched everywhere until they came to the lion gate, where they found the Lord lying between the cows.

His arms and legs were retracted into His abdomen as if He was a turtle, He had foam on the mouth, goose bumps on the skin and tears in His eyes. He had fallen unconscious and was lying there like a pumpkin.

Externally He was inert, but internally He was overwhelmed by ecstasy. The cows surrounded Him and sniffed at His body, and although the devotees tried to keep them away they would not leave Mahāprabhu."

When the devotees saw Mahāprabhu's lustrous face from a distance, they immediately understood:

„This is our lost treasure, rolling in the dust between the cows from Kaliṅga, which are ecstatically sniffing His nectarean fragrance! But alas! Where are now the Lord's arms that reach to His knees? Where are His long lotus like legs? They have retracted into His belly as if He is a turtle! Goose pimples are blossoming on His limbs, foam is coming from His mouth, and a vast stream of tears is flowing from His lotus petal-like eyes! Externally He is totally inert, but we understand from the lustre of His face that within Himself He is totally overwhelmed by

ecstasy! The Lord is unconscious - He looks just like a fallen pumpkin!"

The devotees wanted to keep the cows away from the Lord, but these fortunate cows were so enchanted by the Lord's *divya gandha* that they could not leave Him. Since the devotees were not able to revive the Lord on the spot, however much they tried, they brought Him back to the Gambhīrā and revived Him there by loudly chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa into His ears.

As soon as the Lord returned to consciousness His arms and legs came back to their normal position.

The Lord got up and looked all around. Seeing Svarūpa Dāmodara before Him, He asked him:

"Where have you brought Me? I heard Kṛṣṇa playing His flute, so I went to Vṛndāvana, where I saw Vrajendra-Nandana playing His flute. When Śrī Rādhārāṇī heard the call of Govinda's flute She came and entered into a grove with Him, and I followed Them. How sweetly Rādhā and Mādhava were laughing and joking with the *gopīs*! How much They delighted My ears with the jingling of Their ornaments! Just at that time you all came and rudely disturbed Me by making all this noise! Alas! I could not hear this flute song, these jingling ornaments and Their nectarean words anymore!"

Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written:

*aneka korilo yatna nā hoy cetana;
prabhure uṭhāiyā ghare ānilo bhaktagaṇa
ucca kori śravaṇe kore kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana;
aneka kṣaṇe mahāprabhu pāilo cetana
cetana pāile hasta pada bāhirāilo;
pūrvavat yathāyogyā śarīra hoilo
uṭhīyā bosiyā prabhu cāhe iti uti;
svarūpe kohe - tumi āmā ānile koti?*

veṇu śabda śuni āmi gelāṅ vṛndāvana;
dekhi - goṣṭhe veṇu bājāya vrajendra-nandana
saṅketa veṇu-nāde rādhā āni kuñja ghare;
kuñjere colilā kṛṣṇa kṛīḍā koribāre
tāra pāche pāche āmi korinu gamana;
tānra bhūṣā dhvanite āmāra harilo śravaṇa
gopī-gaṇa saha vihāra hāsa parihāsa;
kaṅṭha-dhvani ukti śuni mora karṇollāsa
heno kāle tumi saba kolāhala kori;
āmā ihāṅ loiyā āilā balātkāre dhari
śunite nā pāilum sei amṛta sama vāṇi;
śunite nā pāilum bhūṣaṇa muralira dhvani

Tears streamed from the Lord's eyes and His voice faltered as He spoke these words, overwhelmed by intense feelings of sorrow.

After some time, the Lord told Svarūpa, with a voice stuttering of ecstasy:

"Svarūpa! My ears are dying of thirst! Please pour some reviving nectar of *rasa* in them!"

Svarūpa, knowing the Lord's mind, sweetly sang a prayer the *gopīs* had sung to Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the beginning of the Rāsa dance:

kā sṛy aṅga te kala padāmṛta veṇu gīta
sammohitārya caritān na calet trilokyām
trailokya saubhagam idam ca nirikṣya rūpaṁ
yad go dvija druma mṛgāḥ pulakāny avibhran

"O Kṛṣṇa! Which girl would not be enchanted by Your nectarean flute song and thus swerve from the Vedic path of chastity? Even the cows, trees, deer, and birds are studded with goose pimples of ecstasy when they see Your form, which is the

fortune of beauty for all the three worlds!" (Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.29.40)

When Bhāvanidhi (Mahāprabhu, the ocean of ecstatic love) heard this *rasāmṛta* verse sung so sweetly by Svarūpa Dāmodara, hundreds of waves of ecstasy arose in His ocean-like heart.

Assuming the mood of the *gopīs* and seeing Kṛṣṇa standing directly before Him, He angrily told Him:

*nāgara! koho tumi koriyā niścoy!
ei trijagata bhari, āche yoto yogyā nārī,
tomāra veṇu kāhā nā ākarṣaya?*

"O Hero! Tell Me decisively, which qualified girl within the three worlds would not be attracted by Your flute song?"

*koilo yoto veṇu dhvani, siddha mantrādi yoginī,
dūtī hoiyā mohe nārīra mana
mahotkaṇṭhā bāḍāiyā, āryapatha chāḍāiyā,
āni tomāya kore samarpaṇa.*

"Your flute song is like a *yoginī* who acts like a *dūtī* expert in pronouncing perfect *mantras* which enchant the women's minds, increase their great eagerness, make them give up their virtuous traditions and finally make them surrender to You".

*dharma chāḍāya veṇu dvāre, hāne kaṭākṣa kāma sare,
lajjā bhaya sakala chāḍāya
ebe amāya kori roṣa, kōhi pati-tyāge doṣa,
dhārmika hoiyā dharma śikhāya*

"With Your flute-playing You cause them to give up religious principles and when You pierce them with Your arrow-like glances You make them give up all shame and fear. Now You are angry at us and say that it is wrong of us to give up our husbands. Now You suddenly become very religious and teach us religious principles!"

*anya kathā anya mana, bāhire anya ācaraṇa,
ei sab śaṭha paripāti
tumi jāno parihāsa, hoy nārira sarva nāśa,
chāḍo ei sab kuṭināṭi*

"You say one thing but You think something else, and again You act differently. This is all false hypocrisy! You know how to ruin the women with Your jokes. Stop all this trickery now!"

*veṇu-nāda amṛta ghole, amṛta samāna mithā bole,
amṛta samāna bhūṣaṇa śiṅḡita
tina amṛte hare kāna, hare mana hare prāṇa,
kemone nārī dharibeka cita.*

"The sound of Your flute is like nectarean buttermilk. Your speech is like nectar and the jingling of Your ornaments are nectarean also. These three ambrosias steal our ears, our minds, and our life-air. How will a woman stay alive in this way?"

All the other hundreds of waves of emotion in the Lord's ocean-like heart are described in Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says:

"This astonishingly playful Śrī Gaurahari awakens in my heart and maddens me!"

*śayana mandire gorā rāya.
kṛṣṇera viraha bhare, mandire rahite nāre,
bāhire yāite mana dhāya.*

"Lord Gorā (Gaura) could not remain in His bedroom. He felt so much separation from Kṛṣṇa that His mind ran out of the house."

*kṛṣṇera virahe rādhā, yeno utkaṇṭhitā sadā,
kṛṣṇa veṇu śuni bone yān.
ei mata ācambite, vaṁśī pāiyā śunite,
āvege bāhire yete cān.*

"Just as eager Virahinī Rādhā instantly went into the forest when She heard Kṛṣṇa's flute, the Lord also anxiously wanted to leave His room when He heard this flute."

*tina dvāra āche ruddha, tina bhitti ucca ūrdhva
tāhā laṅhe āveśera bole.
teleṅgā gāiyera mājhe, dekhi gorā rasarāje,
poḍi āche śvāsa nāhi cole.*

"The three doors were closed and the three walls surrounding the house of Kāśī Miśra were very high, but in great ecstasy the Lord managed to come out. Now I see that Gorā-rasarāja having fallen between the cows of Tailaṅga, is not breathing anymore."

*bhāve bujhe nāhi yāya, prabhu dekhi kūrma prāya,
aṅga sab saṅkucita aṅge.
anveṣiyā bhaktaḡaṇa, dīpa jvālī daraśana,
kore kūrmaḡṛti śrī gaurāṅge.*

"His moods can't be understood. Now I see the Lord looking like a turtle, having all His limbs retracted into His body. When the devotees went out to search for Śrī Gaurāṅga, holding burning torches in their hands, they found Him in this Kūrmākṛti (turtle-form)."

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye udita hoiyā, māṭāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart You madden it, and I can never forget You!"

VERSE 6:

***svakīyasya prāṇārbuda-sadṛśa-goṣṭhasya virahāt
pralāpān unmādāt satatam ati kurvan vikala-dhīḥ
dadhad bhittau śasvat vadana-vidhu-gharṣeṇa rudhiram
kṣātottham gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati***

svakīyasya - of His own; *prāṇa* - life-airs; *arbuda* - billions; *sadṛśa* - as if; *goṣṭhasya* - of Vraja; *virahāt* - out of separation; *pralāpān unmādāt* - from speaking madly; *satatam* - constantly; *ati* - very; *kurvan* - doing; *vikala* - upset; *dhīḥ* - consciousness; *dadhad* - oozing forth; *bhittau* - on the wall; *śasvat* - constantly; *vadana* - face; *vidhu* - moon; *gharṣeṇa* - by rubbing; *rudhiram* - blood; *kṣata* - bruises; *uttham* - coming forth; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayati* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, Who was constantly speaking like a crazy person because of His intense feelings of

separation from the Goṣṭha (Vraja), which is billions of times dearer to Him than His own life-air, and Who therefore rubbed His moon-like face against the wall in great agitation, causing blood to ooze out from the resultant injuries, He rises in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Another vision of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's madly ecstatic pastimes arises in Śrīpāda Raghunātha's heart.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu is known as *māṭṛ-bhakta śiromaṇi*, the crown jewel of sons devoted to their mothers.

Every year He sent Jagadānanda Paṇḍita from Puri to Navadvīpa to console His mother, who was suffering from separation of Her Prāṇa Gaura.

Once Jagadānanda met Śrī Advaita Ācārya in Śāntipura, and Advaita Prabhu took the opportunity to send a message along to Mahāprabhu in the form of a riddle through Jagadānanda —

*prabhuke kohiyo āmāra koṭi namaskāra;
ei nivedana tāra caraṇe āmāra:
bāulke kohiyo - loke hoilo bāul;
bāulke kohiyo - hāte nā bikāya cāul
bāulke kohiyo - kāje nāhiko āul;
bāulke kohiyo - ihā kohiyāche bāul*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya līlā chapter 19)

"Tell the Lord that I offer Him millions of obeisances and submit this message to His lotus feet:

Tell the Bāul (religious madman) that all the people have become Bāul (mad with ecstatic love of God).

Tell the Bāul that there is no more rice on the marketplace.

Tell the Bāul that there is no more work for the *āul* (same as Bāul).

Tell the Bāul that this was spoken by (another) Bāul."

When Jagadānanda returned to Puri, he laughed and gave this sonnet from Advaita Prabhu to the Lord, Who simply said: "Whatever He orders", and became silent again.

Svarūpa Dāmodara then told the Lord:

"Prabhu, I can't understand anything of this sonnet!", so the Lord gave him the following hint:

*prabhu kohe - ācārya pūjaka prabala;
āgama śāstrera vidhi vidhāne kuśala
upāsana lāgi deve kore āhvāna;
pūjā lāgi kotho kāla kore nirodhana.
pūjā nirvāha hoile pāche kore visarjana;
tarjāra nā jāni artha - kibā tāra mon?
mahā yogeśvara ācārya tarjāte samartha;
āmiho bujhite nāri tarjāra artha*

"The Lord said: "Advaita Ācārya is a powerful temple-priest, and He knows the injunctions of the Vedic scriptures perfectly. He calls the deity for being worshipped and He keeps Him for some time. After He finishes the worship He sends the deity off again. I don't know the meaning of the sonnet, nor do I know what's on His mind! Advaita Ācārya is a great mystic, who can write deep riddles. I also can't understand their meaning."

The Lord meant to say, that Advaita Ācārya had called Him down to earth to distribute ecstatic devotion to God, and now, that His mission was accomplished, Advaita told Him it now was time for Him to go, and so he bade Him farewell with this riddle.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja has written:

*sei dina hoite prabhura āra daśā hoilo;
 kṛṣṇera viccheda daśā dviguṇa bādhilo
 unmāda pralāpa ceṣṭā kore rātri dine;
 rādhā bhāvāveśe viraha bādhē anukṣaṇe
 ācambite sphure kṛṣṇera mathurā gamana;
 udghūrṇa daśā hoilo unmāda lakṣaṇa
 rāmāndera galā dhari kore pralapana;
 svarūpe puchaye māni nija sakhi-jana
 pūrve yeno viśākhāke rādhikā puchilā;
 sei śloka poḍi pralāpa korite lāgilā*

"From that day on, the Lord's condition changed.

His feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa doubled in intensity. Day and night He was speaking and acting like a madman, and His feelings of Rādhā in separation increased at every moment. Suddenly He had a transcendental vision of Kṛṣṇa's departure (from Vraja) to Mathurā and His madness began to show all signs of the *udghūrṇa*-stage. Embracing Rāmānanda Rāya around the neck, He spoke like mad, and he asked Svarūpa Dāmodara questions as if he were His *sakhi* (girlfriend). Just as Rādhikā previously inquired from Viśākhā, He began to utter the following verse as if He had gone mad:

*kva nanda kula candramāḥ kva śikhi candrakālaṅkṛtiḥ
 kva mandra murali ravaḥ kva nu surendra nila dyutiḥ
 kva rāsa rasa tāṅḍavī kva sakhi jīva rakṣausadhī
 nidhir mama suhṛttamaḥ kva bata hanta vā dhig vidhim*

(Lalita Mādhava Act III)

"O Sakhi! Where is the moon from Nanda's clan, Whose crest is decorated with peacock feathers? Where is His soft flute-playing, and where is His splendor of sapphires? Where is that *rasika* Rāsa-dancer, the herb that can save My life? Where is My jewel, My most beloved One? O! Curses be on fate!" Nothing in the world can compare to Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja's song-translation of this verse written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī:

vrajadra kula dugdha sindhu, kṛṣṇa tāhe pūrna indu,
janmi koilo jagat ujora.
kāntyamṛta yevā piye, nirantara piyā jiye,
vrajjanera nayana cakora.

"The family of Vraja's king Nanda is like the milk-ocean, Kṛṣṇa is the full moon, which rose from that ocean to illuminate the world, and the eyes of the Vrajavāsīs are like Cakora-birds, which keep themselves alive by constantly drinking the nectar of His luster".

sakhi he! kothā kṛṣṇa korāho daršana!
kṣaṇeka yāhāra mukha, nā dekhile phāṭe buka,
śighra dekhāo nā rahe jivana.

"O *sakhi*! Show Me My Kṛṣṇa! Where is He? If I don't see His face even for a moment, My heart breaks! Quickly show Him to Me, otherwise I will die!"

ei vrajera ramaṇī, kāmārka tapta kumudinī,
nija karāmṛta diyā dāna.
praphullita kore yei, kāhā mora candra sei,
dekhāo sakhi rākho mora prāṇa!

"Where is My moon, Who soothes the Vraja-*gopīs*, who are like lilies, burning in the sunshine of lust, and Who makes them blossom by giving them His nectarean hands (moonrays)? Show Him to Me, O *sakhi*, and thus save My life!"

*kāhā se cūdāra ṭhāna, śikhi piñchera uḍāna,
nava meghe yeno indra dhanu
pītāmbara taḍid dyuti, muktā mālā baka pāṅkti,
navāmbuda jini śyāma tanu.*

"Where is that peacockfeather-crown, looking like a rainbow upon a new cloud? His yellow *dhoti* shines like lightning, His pearl necklace resembles a row of ducks, and His whole body looks like a fresh raincloud!"

*eka bāra yāra nayane lāge, sadā tāra hṛdaye jāge,
kṛṣṇa tanu yeno āmra āṭhā.
nārīra mana paiśe hāya, yatne nāhi bāhirāya,
tanu nahe, seyā kulera kāñṭā*

"When that body of Kṛṣṇa, which resembles mango-sap, once catches the eyes, it always awakens within the heart. Alas! When He enters into the women's minds, they can't get Him out anymore, not even with the greatest effort! It is not a body, it is a thorn of the Seyā berry-tree!"

*jiniyā tamāla dyuti, indranīla sama kānti,
sei kānti jagata mātāya.
śṛṅgāra rasa tāte chāni, tāte candra jyotsnā sāni,
jāni vidhi niramilo tāya.*

"His luster, which defeats that of a Tamāla-tree and which resembles a sapphire, maddens the whole world! I know that

the Creator has made it transparant by refining the essence of erotic flavours and by mixing it with moonshine."

*kāhā se muralī dhvani, navābhra garjita jini,
jagadākarṣe śravaṇe yāhāra.
uṭhi dhāya vrajajana, tṛṣita cātaka gaṇa,
āsi piye kāntyamṛta dhāra.*

"Where is that flute sound, which defeats the rumbling of fresh clouds and which attracts the ears of everyone in the world? The people of Vraja get up and run to drink the nectar of this luster like thirsty Cātaka-birds!"

*mora sei kalānidhi, prāṇa rakṣā mahauṣadhi,
sakhi! mora teho suhṛttama.
deha jīye tāhā vine, dhik ei jīvane,
vidhi kore eto viḍambana.*

"That Kalānidhi (the moon-like Kṛṣṇa, or the ocean of arts) of Mine is the great medicine that saves My life. O Sakhi! He's My dear most beloved! Curses be on this life that I remain alive without Him! How the Creator has deprived Me!"

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya 19 ch.)

In this way the Lord restlessly lamented in different ways, becoming very impatient with agitation. Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāmānanda Rāya consoled Him by singing different songs about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's meeting to Him. That surely pacified the Lord to some extent, but it did not altogether silence the resonance of His mad utterances, which came out of His burning heart through His mouth like high flames in the form of words. In this way half of the night passed.

After Svārūpa and Rāma Rāya laid the Lord to rest in the Gambhīrā, Rāmānanda (being a householder) returned to his own abode, while Svarūpa Dāmodara and Govinda took rest by the door of the Gambhīrā. The Lord stayed awake, loudly chanting Kṛṣṇa's names.

While Svarūpa and Govinda were overcome by sleep, a heart-rending thing happened within the Gambhīrā: Mahāprabhu's feelings of separation increased to such an extent that He began to rub His face against the walls, making big wounds on His nose, mouth, and cheeks, from where blood oozed out.

The Lord spent the rest of the night in this terrible condition, making sounds like *goṅ goṅ*, totally overwhelmed by ecstasy. These sounds of *goṅ goṅ* awoke Svārūpa, who lit up a torch and entered the Gambhīrā. When he saw the Lord's condition, he was greatly shocked and cried out: "Alas! Alas!"

His heart broke when he saw that blood was dripping from the Lord's nose, mouth, and cheeks, and with the help of Govinda, he managed to pacify the Lord somewhat. Svarūpa asked: "My Lord! What have You done?"

The Lord replied:

"What can I do? I can't stay in this room when My heart is so startled! I looked for the door, but I couldn't find it anywhere! In this way I injured My cheeks, mouth and nose at the walls, causing them to bleed! O Svarūpa! Where is My Kṛṣṇa, Who is dearer to Me than millions of My own life-air? I could not see Him! What can I do now, and where should I go, tell Me!"

*ei mata vilapite ardha rātri gelo;
gambhīrāte svarūpa gosāi prabhuke śoyāilo
prabhuke śoyāiyā rāmānanda gelā ghare;
svarūpa govinda śūilo gambhīrāra dvāre*

premāveśe mahāprabhura gara gara mana;
 nāma saṅkīrtana kore bosī kore jāgaraṇa
 virahe vyākula prabhura udvega uṭhīlā;
 gambhīrāra bhittye mukha gharṣite lāgilā
 mukhe gaṇḍe nāke kṣata hoilo apāra;
 bhāvāveśe nā jāne prabhu poḍe rakta dhāra
 sarva rātri kore bhāve mukha saṅgharṣaṇa;
 goṇ goṇ śabda kore svarūpa śunilo tokhon
 dīpa jvālī ghare gelo, dekhi prabhura mukha;
 svarūpa govinda doṅhāra hoilo mahā-duḥkha
 prabhuke śayyāte āni susthira korilo;
 kāhān koile ei tumi? svarūpa puchilo
 prabhu kohe - udvege ghare nā pāri rahite;
 dvāra cāhi buli śīghra bāhire hoite
 dvāra nāhi pāi, mukha lāge cāri bhite;
 kṣata hoyā rakta paḍe nā pāri yāite

This Gaurāṅga, Who performs such astonishing pastimes,
 awakens in Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's heart and maddens him.

eka dina se āpana, prāṇārbuda samāna,
 vraja lāgi virahe vibhora.
 korena pralāpa ati, tāpa vikala mati,
 avirata unmādera ghora.

"One day the Lord was so absorbed in feelings of separation from Vraja, which is dearer to Him than billions of life-airs, that He spoke like mad with a greatly disturbed mind, being constantly inebriated."

bāhire yāite cān, yāite nā pāiya puna,
 bhitte gharṣe vadana kamala.

*poḍe rudhirera dhāra, mukhe gaṇḍe apāra,
heri svarūpa govinda vikala.*

"He wanted to go out of His room, but He couldn't, so He rubbed His lotus face against the walls, causing a lot of blood to ooze from His mouth and cheeks. Seeing this, Svarūpa and Govinda were very upset."

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye uḍita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart You madden it, and I can never forget You

VERSE 7:

***kva me kāntaḥ kṛṣṇas tvaritam iha taṁ lokaya sakhe
tvam eveti dvārādhipam abhivadann unmada iva
drutaṁ gaccha draṣṭuṁ priyam iti tad-uktena dhṛta-tad-
bhujāntar gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati***

kva - where; *me* - my; *kāntaḥ* - lover; *kṛṣṇaḥ* - Kṛṣṇa; *tvaritam* - quickly; *iha* - here; *taṁ* - Him; *lokaya* - show; *sakhe* - O friend!; *tvam* - You; *eva* - only; *iti* - thus; *dvārādhipam* - gatekeeper; *abhivadann* - saying; *unmada* - mad; *iva* - as if; *drutaṁ* - quickly; *gaccha* - go; *draṣṭuṁ* - for seeing; *priyam* - beloved; *iti* - thus; *tad* - His; *uktena* - by words; *dhṛta* - holding; *tad* - his; *bhujā* - arm; *anta* - end; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, Who in madness told the gatekeeper of the Jagannātha temple: "O friend! Where is My lover Kṛṣṇa? Show Him quickly to Me!", and Who was then taken into the temple by that gatekeeper, who told Him: "Quickly come and see Your beloved! ", He rises in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: One confidential, honey-sweet Nilācala-pastime of Śrī Gaurāṅga follows the other in Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's enlightened consciousness, maddening his heart, which is burning in separation from Śrī Gaurahari.

One day Mahāprabhu very anxiously went to the temple to see Śrī Jagannātha-deva. When the gatekeeper of the temple saw the Lord's ecstatic eagerness, he came in front of the doorway and offered his obeisances unto the Lord.

The Lord suddenly took his hand and anxiously asked him with tear filled eyes:

"O My friend! Where is My Kṛṣṇa? I can't stay calm for even a moment without Him anymore! Quickly show Me My Prāṇa Vallabha, I can't wait even half a moment anymore!"

When the gatekeeper of the temple saw Mahāprabhu's eagerness, he also became anxious and said:

"Come, I will show You Your Prāṇa Vallabha Śrī Kṛṣṇa right now!"

So he took Mahāprabhu by the hand inside the temple and showed Him Śrī Jagannātha-deva, saying:

"Here is Your Prāṇanātha Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Look to Your heart's fulfillment!"

Mahāprabhu stood near the Garuḍa-pillar and gazed at Jagannātha with thirsty eyes.

He saw Lord Jagannātha as Kṛṣṇa playing His enchanting flute, and so His eyes and all His other senses drowned in the vast ocean of Kṛṣṇa's sweetness.

About this Śrīpāda Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written this sweet story:

*eka dina prabhu gelā jagannātha darśane;
 simha-dvārera dalai āsi korilo vandane
 tāre kohe - kāhān kṛṣṇa mora prāṇanātha;
 'more kṛṣṇa dekhāo' boli dhare tāra hātha
 sei kohe - ihān hoy vrajendranandana;
 āiso tumi mora saṅge, korān darśana
 tumi mora sakhā, dekhāo kāhān prāṇanātha;
 eto boli jaga mohana gelā dhari tāra hātha
 sei bole - ei dekho śrī puruṣottama;
 netra bhariyā tumi koroho darśana
 garuḍera pāche rahi kore daraśana;
 dekhena - jagannātha hoy murali-vadana*

The pastime the Lord performed the next day, was also greatly astonishing, for it revealed the great glories of Śrī Mahāprasāda. Although Śrīpāda Raghunātha did not mention this event in the original verse, we still mention this shortly for the relish of the devotees, quoting from Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta.

When Mahāprabhu was bereft of external consciousness, He drank the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form. Just then the *ārati*-conchshells and bells for the Gopāla-ballabha-*bhoga*-offering were ringing.

After removing the *bhoga* from the altar, the *pūjārīs* of Jagannātha came to the Lord, taking *prasāda* and garlands with them, hanging the *prasādi* garlands around His neck and

placing the *prasādi* foodstuffs in His hand. They asked the Lord to relish some of this precious *prasāda*, so the Lord placed some of it in His mouth and had Govinda tie the rest in the endpiece of his cloth.

When the Lord relished the remnants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lips, which were millions of times more relishable than nectar, the Lord became overwhelmed with great ecstatic love and continued to repeat the saying *sukṛti labhya phelā-lava* (even a fragment of this is rarely attained through great merit).

*sukṛti labhya phelā-lava bole bāra bāra;
 īśvara sevaka puche - prabhu! ki artha ihāra
 prabhu kohe - ei ye dile kṛṣṇādharāmṛta;
 brahmādi durlabha ei - nindaye amṛta
 kṛṣṇera ye bhuktāvaśeṣa tāra phelā nāma;
 tāra eka lava pāya sei bhāgyavān
 sāmānya bhāgya hoite tāra prāpti nāhi hoy;
 kṛṣṇera yāte pūrṇa kṛpā sei tāhā pāya
 sukṛti śabde kohe - kṛṣṇa kṛpā hetu puṇya;
 sei yāra hoy phelā pāya sei dhanya
 eto boli prabhu tāñ sabhāre vidāya dilā;
 upala bhoga dekhīyā prabhu nija vāsā āilā*

"*sukṛti labhya phelā lava*", the Lord said again and again. The *pūjārī* of Lord Jagannātha inquired:

"O master! What does that mean?"

The Lord said:

"What you gave Me is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lip-nectar, which is rarely attained even by Brahmā and other gods and which rebukes the taste of nectar. The food-remnants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are called *phelā*, and anyone who attains even a crumb of it is fortunate. This is not attained through ordinary fortune - it is attained by those

who receive Kṛṣṇa's full mercy. The word *sukṛti* here does not mean ordinary virtue, but the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Anyone who gets even a drop of it is fortunate." Saying this, the Lord took leave of them all. After seeing the Upala Bhoga Ārati the Lord returned to His own abode."

The Lord had returned to the Gambhīrā indeed, but His mind and heart remained agitated the whole day by the intense vision of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lip-nectar. In the evening all the devotees came to see the Lord, surrounding Him as the stars surround the golden Gaura-moon. A stream of Kṛṣṇa-kathā was released. On the Lord's indication Govinda brought *prasāda*, and the Lord first had some sent to Paramānanda Purī and Brahmānanda Bhārati (the Lord's Godbrothers). Then He had the rest divided amongst the others, like Svarūpa, Rāmānanda and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya.

Everyone experienced the extraordinary sweetness and fragrance of the *prasāda*. Everyone was astonished by the extraordinary flavours and the Lord briefly told them about the transcendental status of the *prasāda*:

*prabhu kohe - ei sab prakṛta dravya;
aikṣava karpūra marica elāci labaṅga gavya
rasavāsa guḍatvak ādi yoto saba;
prakṛta vastura svādu, sabhāra anubhava
sei dravyera ei svādu gandha lokātita;
āsvāda koriyā dekho sabhāra pratita
āsvāda dūre rahu, yāra gandhe māte mana;
āpanā vinu anya mādhuriya korāya vismāraṇa
tā'te ei dravye kṛṣṇādhara sparśa hoilo;
adharera guṇa sab ihāte sañcārilo
alaukika gandha svādu - anya vismāraṇa;
mahā mādaka ei kṛṣṇādharera guṇa
aneka sukṛte ihāra hoiyāche samprāpti;*

*sabhei āsvāda koro kori mahābhakti
hari dhvani kori sabhe koilo āsvādana;
āsvādīte preme matta hoilo sabhāra mana*

"The Lord said: "These ingredients, like cane-sugar, camphor, black pepper, cardamom, cloves, *ghī*, spices, and licorice, are all material. Everyone has tasted them before, but now these dishes have an extraordinary taste and fragrance. Everyone should taste it and experience it. What to speak of the taste, even the fragrance is maddening and makes one forget all other sweetnesses but its own! The nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips have touched it and has infused the qualities of these lips in the food. The attributes of Kṛṣṇa's lips are greatly intoxicating and their extraordinary fragrance and taste make one forget all other experiences. This is attained by the performance of many pious acts. Now you all relish this with great devotion."

Everyone then relished the *prasāda* while chanting Hari-nāma, all going totally crazy with *prema*."

In the process the Lord's mind and heart entered into the deep kingdom of relishing Kṛṣṇa's lip-nectar. The Lord became absorbed in the mood of Śrī Rādhā, like She would be relishing the remnants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's meal. How many hundreds of waves of pride and self-esteem were not there, on which the Lord's heart floated in all directions?

On the Lord's order, Rāmānanda who understood the Lord's heart then recited a verse from the Gopī Gīta (Bhāg. 10.31.14):

*surata vardhanam śoka nāśanam
svarita veṇunā suṣṭhu cumbitam
itara rāga vismāraṇam nṛṇām
vitara vira nas te'dharāmṛtam*

When the Lord heard this verse He wonderfully explained
His relishing of it in ecstatic love:

*tanu mana kore kṣobha, bāḍhāya surata lobha,
harṣa śokādi bhāva vināśoy
pāsarāya anya rasa, jagat kore ātmavaśa,
lajjā dharma dhairya kore kṣoya
nāgara, śuno! tomāra adhara carita
mātāya nārīra mona, jihvā kore ākarṣana,
vicārite sab viparīta!*

"O Hero! Listen to the nature of Your lips! They agitate the body and mind, increase lusty desires, and destroy all other sentiments like joy and sorrow! They make one forget all other flavours, they control the whole world and destroy saintly qualities such as shyness, religiousness, and patience! They madden the minds of the women, attract the tongue, and turn all situations upside down!"

*āchuka nārīra kāja, kohite vāsiye lāja,
tomāra adhara boḍo dhṛṣṭa rāya
puruṣe kore ākarṣana, āpanā piyāite mana,
anya rasa sab pāsarāya*

"This may be the work of women, but I am ashamed to say that Your lips are so bold that they even attract Your flute, which is male. They make it drink as much nectar as they want to and make it forget all other flavours!"

*sacetana rahu dūre, acetana sacetana kore,
tomāra adhara - boḍo bājikara*

*tomāra veṇu śuskendhana, tāra janmāya indriya mana,
tāra āpanā piyāya nirantara*

"What to speak of conscious beings, they make even unconscious beings conscious! Your lips are great magicians! Your flute is just a dry piece of wood, but Your lips give it a mind and senses and make it drink themselves!"

*veṇu dhr̥ṣṭa puruṣa hoityā, puruṣādharma piyā piyā,
gopī-gaṇe jānāya nija pāna,
aho śuno gopī-gaṇa, bole piyo tomāra dhana
tomāra yadi thāke abhimāna*

"This flute is a bold male who drinks the lips of another male, telling the *gopīs*: "O *gopīs*! Listen! Drink Your property by force if you think you can!"

*tabe more krodha kori, lajjā bhaya dharma chāḍi,
chāḍi dimu koro āsi pāna
nahe pimu nirantara, tomāya mora nāhiko ḍara,
anye dekhoṅ tṛṇera samāna*

"Then the flute angrily told Me: "Give up Your shame, fear and religion and come to drink the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips! On that condition I shall give them up. If you don't give up your attachments to virtue, though, I will keep on drinking it forever more. I'm a little afraid of You *gopīs*, for you may have the power to compete with me, but all others I consider to be no more than blades of grass!"

In this way the stream of Mahāprabhu's ecstasy flowed wider and wider, and the minds and hearts of Svarūpa, Rāmānanda

(Her) Prāṇapati, by the hand and brought Him to His Prāṇanātha."

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye udita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart You madden it and I can never forget You!"

VERSE 8:

***samīpe nīlādreś caṭaka-giri-rājasya kalanād
aye goṣṭhe govardhana-giri-patiṁ lokitum itaḥ
vrajann asmīty uktvā pramada iva dhāvann avadhṛto
gaṇaiḥ svair gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati***

samīpe - nearby; *nīlādreḥ* - of Puri; *caṭaka girirājasya* - of the great Caṭaka-Hill; *kalanād* - from seeing; *goṣṭhe* - in Vraja; *govardhana giripatiṁ* - Govardhana Hill; *lokitum* - seeing; *itaḥ* - there; *vrajann* - going; *asmī* - I am; *iti* - thus; *uktvā* - having said; *pramada* - mad; *iva* - as if; *dhāvann* - running; *avadhṛta* - being held; *gaṇaiḥ* - by devotees; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Śrī Gaurāṅga Who saw the great Caṭaka Parvata Hill nearby and told His friends:

"O friends! I'm going from here (Puri) to Vraja to see Govardhana Hill!", that Gaurāṅga Who began to run towards the Caṭaka-Hill like mad and Who was

ultimately captured by His well-wishing friends, He awakens in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Here Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa once more perceives an ecstatic pastime of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in His most ecstatic Vraja-mood.

Although the Lord resided at Jagannātha Puri, His mind was always absorbed in thinking of Vraja and of Kṛṣṇa's Vraja-pastimes. His mind was particularly absorbed in the intimate pastime-places of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava —

Vṛndāvana, the Rāsa-sthalī, Yamunā, Girirāja Govardhana and so on.

When He saw a forest He thought it was Vṛndāvana, when He saw a river He took it to be the Yamunā, and when He saw a hill He thought it to be Govardhana Hill.

Any incitement of Vraja, which appeared before His external eyes immediately assumed the transcendental form it was mistaken for.

The Lord always meditated on the sweetness and beauty of Govardhana Hill and on the wonderful intimate pastimes, which were performed there by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

It was in this condition that Bhāvanidhi Gaurasundara once went out of the Gambhīrā and headed towards the ocean, feeling great separation from Kṛṣṇa. His physical servant Govinda followed Him.

Suddenly the Lord saw the Caṭaka Parvata Hill and His external consciousness vanished. He was convinced that He had come to Vrajabhūmi and that He was now facing Girirāja Govardhana.

Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmīpāda has written:

*eka dina mahāprabhu samudra yāto;
caṭaka parvata dekhilo ācambite
govardhana śaila jñāne āviṣṭa hoilā;
parvata diśāte prabhu dhāiyā colilā*

"One day Mahāprabhu went to the ocean and when He saw the Caṭaka Parvata He suddenly remembered Govardhana Hill and ran towards it".

*hantāyam adrir abalā haridāsa varyo
yad rāma-kṛṣṇa caraṇa sparśa pramodaḥ
mānaṁ tanoti saha go-gaṇayos tayor yat
pānīya sūyavasa kandara kanda mūlaiḥ*

"O girls! This mountain is the best of Lord Hari's servants, and he feels very happy when Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma's lotus feet touch him! He gives all honour to Them and Their cows by providing them with water for drinking, soft grass, caves and roots!"

(Bhāgavata 10.21.18)

*ei śloka poḍi prabhu cole vāyu vege;
govinda dhāilo pāche, nāhi pāya lāge
phukāra paḍilo, mahā kolāhala hoilo;
yei yāhā chilo, sei uṭhiyā dhāilo
svarūpa jagadānanda paṇḍita gadādhara;
rāmāi nandāi nīlāi paṇḍita śaṅkara
purī bhārati gosāi āilā sindhu-tīre;
bhagavān ācārya khañja colilā dhīre dhīre
prathame colilā prabhu yeno vāyu-gati;
stambha bhāva pathe hoilo - colite nāhi śakti
prati roma kūpe māṁsa braṇera ākāra;
tāra upore romodgama kadamba prakāra*

*prati rome prasveda paḍe rudhirera dhāra;
 kaṅṭha gharghara - nāhi varṇera uccāra
 du netra bhari aśru bohoye apāra;
 samudre mililo yeno gaṅgā-yamunā dhāra
 vaivarṇye śaṅkha-prāya śveta hoilo aṅga;
 tabe kampa uṭhe yeno samudra taraṅga
 kāṅpīte kāṅpīte prabhu bhūmite poḍilā;
 tabe to govinda prabhura nikaṭe āilā*

"While the Lord recited this verse, He ran forwards with the speed of the wind. Govinda ran after Him, but was not able to catch up with Him. A cry resounded and then a great tumult arose as all the devotees got up and began to follow the Lord. Svārūpa Dāmodara, Jagadānanda, Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Rāmāi, Nandāi, Nīlāi, Śaṅkara Paṇḍita, Paramānanda Purī and Brahmānanda Bhārati all came to the shore of the ocean, where the Lord was, slowly followed by the lame Bhagavān Ācārya. At first the Lord ran as fast as the wind, but later He did not have the power to go on anymore. All the pores of His skin were opened and blood and sweat oozed from them. His hairs stood on end like blossoming Kadamba-flowers and He could not pronounce any words, only some gargling sounds. Endless streams of tears flowed from His eyes like the currents of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā that meet the ocean, He became as pale as a conchshell, and the shiverings that came over His body resembled the waves of the ocean. Just as Govinda caught up with Him, the Lord shivered and fell to the ground.

Govinda sprinkled the Lord with water from His *karoa* (earthen pot) and fanned Him with his *bāhīrvāsa* (outer cloth of a *sannyāsī*). Then Svarūpa and the other devotees appeared on the scene.

Seeing the Lord's condition, all the devotees cried and said:
"Alas! Alas!"

Svarūpa Dāmodara loudly chanted Kṛṣṇa's name into the Lord's ear and another devotee sprinkled the Lord's body with cold water. After they had repeated this many times the Lord suddenly got up and said "Hari Bol!" causing the devotees to erupt into an ecstatic Hari-*kīrtana*.

Hundreds of people had come to the shore of the ocean now, and they all joined in the ecstatic Hari-*kīrtana*.

The Lord, in half-external consciousness, looked all around Him and His eyes filled with wonder. He couldn't find what He was looking for, so He asked Svarūpa, who stood before Him:

*govardhana hoite more ke ihāṅ ānilo;
pāiyā kṛṣṇera līlā dekhite nā pāilo
ihāṅ hoite āji mui geluṅ govardhana;
dekhon yadi kṛṣṇa kore godhana cāraṇa
govardhane coḍhi kṛṣṇa bājāilā veṇu;
govardhane caudike care sab dhenu
veṇu-nāda śuni āilā rādhā ṭhākuraṅi;
tāra rūpa bhāva sakhī! varṇite nā jāni
rādhā loiyā kṛṣṇa praveśilā kandarāte;
sakhīgaṇa kohe moke phula uṭhāite
heno kāle tumi sab kolāhola koilā;
tāhā hoite dhari more ihāṅ loiyā āilā
kene vā ānilā more vṛthā duḥkha dite?;
pāiyā kṛṣṇera līlā nā pāilun dekhite
eto boli mahāprabhu korena krandaṇa;
tāra daśā dekhi vaiṣṇava korena rodana*

"Who has taken Me here away from Govardhana Hill? I saw Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but now I can't see them anymore! Today I went to Govardhana Hill to see if Kṛṣṇa was maybe tending His

cows there. Kṛṣṇa mounted the Hill and began to play His flute, while the cows were grazing on and around the Hill. Hearing the flute song Śrī Rādhā came to see Kṛṣṇa there.

O *sakhi*! I don't know how to describe Her form and Her mood! Kṛṣṇa took Rādhā into a cave and the *sakhīs* told Me to go and pick some flowers! Just then you came and made all this noise, taking Me away from there!

Why have You made Me so unhappy by taking Me here? I saw Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but now I can't see them anymore!" When Mahāprabhu said this He began to weep, and when the Vaiṣṇavas saw this, they also began to weep.

Meanwhile Brahmānanda Bhāratī and Paramānanda Purī also came to the spot, and the Lord assumed His external mood again.

Becoming somewhat shy and uneasy, He offered His obeisances at their feet and asked them:

"Why have you come from so far to see Me here?"

Paramānanda Purī said: "We came here to see Your dancing!" The Lord became shy when He heard this and smiled slightly. Knowing that it was time for His bath, the devotees then brought the Lord to the shoreline of the ocean.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says:

"That Bhāvanidhi, Śrī Gaurasundara, awakens in my heart and maddens me with ecstasy!

nilācala nikaṭete, dekhi caṭaka parvate,
bhāve matta gaura naṭarāja.
yābo se āmi gokule, gaura guṇa-nidhi bole,
dekhite govardhana girirāja.

"Seeing the Caṭaka Parvata-Hill close to Nilācala, Lord Gaura, the king of dancers and the ocean of divine attributes,

became mad of ecstasy and said: "I will go to Gokula to see Girirāja Govardhana!"

*unmāda bātula yeno, pathāpatha nāhi jñāna,
mahāvege sei dīke dhāya.
heno kāle nija gaṇa, dvārā prabhu dhṛta hona,
adbhuta sātṭvika bhāvodaya.*

"He became like mad and did not know where He was walking anymore. He speedily ran just into that direction (of the Caṭaka Parvata). Right then the Lord was caught by His devotees, and wonderful *sātṭvika* ecstasies arose in Him."

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye udita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulite nāribo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart, You madden it and I can never forget You!"

VERSE 9:

***alam dolā-khelā-mahasi vara-tan-maṇḍapa-tale
svarūpeṇa svenāpara-nija-gaṇenāpi militaḥ
svayaṁ kurvan nāmnām ati-madhura-gānaṁ murabhidah
saraṅgo gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan māṁ madayati***

alam - greatly; *dolā* - swinging; *khelā mahasi* - during the festival; *vara* - great; *tat* - it; *maṇḍapa* - platform; *tale* - on the surface; *svarūpeṇa* - with Svarūpa; *svena* - with his own; *apara* - others; *nija* - own; *gaṇena* - with devotees; *api* - even; *militaḥ* - meeting; *svayaṁ* -

personally; *kurvan* - doing; *nāmnām* - names; *ati* - very; *madhura* - sweet; *gānaṁ* - singing; *murabhidaḥ* - of Kṛṣṇa; *saraṅga* - performing; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, Who personally sang the name of Kṛṣṇa in very sweet songs along with Svarūpa Dāmodara and His other devotees at the base of the platform where He performed the deity's swing festival, He awakens in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: It seems that in this verse, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa remembers Śrī Gaurasundara's celebration of the swing festival with His devotees in Purī-dhāma.

In Caitanya Caritāmṛta it is described how the Bengali devotees came to Puri every year to spend the four months of the rainy season (July-November) with the Lord, and how they blissfully joined Him in different festivals, in which the pastimes of Śrī Jagannātha were enacted, seen and relished.

*cāri māsa rahilā sabhe mahāprabhu saṅge;
jagannātha nānā yātrā dekhe mahāraṅge
ei mata nānā raṅge cāturmāsya gelā;
kṛṣṇa janma-yātrāya prabhu gopa-veśa hoilā
kṛṣṇa-janma-yātrā dīne nanda mahotsava;
gopaveśa hoilā prabhu loiyā bhakta sab
dadhi dugdha bhāra sabhe nija skandhe kori;
mahotsavera sthāne āilā boli 'hari hari'
kānāi khuṭiyā āche nanda-veśa dhari;
jagannātha māhitī hoiyāche vrajeśvarī
āpane pratāparudra āra miśra kāśī;
sārvabhauma āra paḍichā pātra tulasi*

*iha sabā loiyā prabhu kore nṛtya raṅga;
dadhi dugdha haridrā-jale bhare sabhāra aṅga*

On Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī and Nandotsava (the following day), for instance, Śrī Gaurāṅga and His devotees dressed as cowherd boys and carried heavy pots with yoghurt and milk on their shoulders.

When they came to the festival grounds, they chanted:
“Hari! Hari!”

Kānāi Khuṭiyā dressed as father Nanda and Jagannātha Māhatī as Queen Yaśodā.

The Lord took King Pratāparudra, Kāśī Mīśra, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and Tulasī Poḍichāpatra all along in a swinging dance, and everyone was sprinkled with yoghurt, milk, and turmeric-water.

In the same manner, the Lord also ecstatically celebrated with His devotees all the other festivals during the monsoon-time, like Vijayā-dasamī (Rama’s victory-festival), Rāsa-yātrā (Kṛṣṇa’s Rāsa-dance-celebration), Dīpāvalī (the lamp-giving festival), and Utthāna-yātrā (Lord Viṣṇu’s rising at the end of the four months of the rainy season).

*vijayā dasamī laṅkā vijayera dine;
bānara sāinya hoy prabhu loiyā bhaktaḡaṇa
hanumānāveśe prabhu vṛkṣa-sākhā loiyā;
laṅkāra gaḡe caḡhi phele gaḡa bhāṅgiyā
kāhān re rāvaṇā! prabhu kohe krodhāveśe;
jagan mātā hare pāpī, mārimu savaiṅse
gosāira āveśa dekhi loka camatkāra;
sarva loka ‘jaya jaya’ bole bāra bāra
ei mata rāsa-yātrā āra dīpāvalī;
utthāna dvādaśī-yātrā dekhilo sakali*

On Vijayā-Ḍaśamī the Lord took His devotees along like an army of monkeys, and in the ecstasy of Hanumān He took a huge tree trunk and therewith ascended Rāvana's fort of Laṅkā to smash it.

"Where are you, O sinful Rāvaṇā!?" the Lord angrily shouted out, "You have kidnapped the universal mother (Sītā)! I will kill you along with your whole dynasty!"

The people were astonished when they observed the Lord's ecstasy and they shouted 'Jaya! Jaya!' again and again! The same ecstasy was there during Rāsa-yātrā, Dīpāvalī and Utthāna-dvādasī.

Another one of the blissful festivals, which may be described in this verse is Jhulana-yātrā, or Rādhā-Govinda's swing festival. Seeing the deities' nicely decorated platform and the swing, which was beautified by different jewels, Bhāvanidhi Mahāprabhu became wonderfully absorbed in Rādhā-Govinda's swing-pastimes.

King Pratāparudra had opened his treasury in order to make different sublime arrangements for this celebration, so that Mahāprabhu could relish it in ecstasy. We can see this described in Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta's Śrī Lakṣmī Vijaya-līlā.

*horā pañcamīra dina āilo jāniyā;
kāśī miśre kohe rājā sayatna koriyā
kāli horā pañcamī - śrī lakṣmīra vijaya;
aiche utsava koro, yaiche kabhu nāhi hoy
mahotsava koro taiche viśeṣa sambhāra;
dekhi mahāprabhu yaiche hoy camatkāra
ṭhākurerā bhāṅḍāre, āra āmāra bhāṅḍāre;
citra vastra āra chatra kiṅkiṅī cāmāre
dhvaja patākā ghaṅṭā darpaṇa koroho maṅḍanī;
nānā vādya nṛtya dolā koroho sājanī*

*dviguṇa koriyā koro sab upahāra;
ratha yātrā hoite yeno hoy camatkāra
sei to koriho - prabhu loiyā nija gaṇa;
svacchande āsiyā yaiche korena darśana*

"Knowing that the Horā-Pañcamī day had come, the King diligently told Kāśī Mīśra:

"Tomorrow is Horā Pañcamī - Śrī Lakṣmī's victory-day. Make a festival like never before! Use all paraphernalia that will astonish Mahāprabhu! Take wonderful garments, umbrellas, bells, whisks, flags, banners, gongs and mirrors from both the deity's treasure and from mine, and decorate the swing with that. Also arrange for different dances and instrumental music. Double everyone's salary and be sure that the Ratha-yātrā will astonish everyone. Make sure that the Lord and His devotees will be able to freely see the festival."

Mahāprabhu sat at the base of the swing-platform with Svarūpa and other devotees. Before them the wonderful swing was standing, beautified by jewelled ornaments, and Śrī Madana Mohana was sitting on the swing. The Lord and His devotees began to sing *nāma saṅkīrtana* with very sweet voices. Svarūpa Dāmodara, knowing the Lord's mind, sweetly sang the following song about Jhulana-līlā:

*dekho sakhi jhulata yugala kiśora;
nīlamaṇi jaḍāola kāñcana jora
lalitā viśākhā sakhi jhulāyata sukhe
ānande magana heri donhe donhā mukhe*

"Behold, o *sakhi*, the Yugala Kiśora on the swing, looking like a sapphire embracing gold! Lalitā and Viśākhā blissfully push

the swing, while the Divine Pair is absorbed in bliss, admiring
Each other's faces!"

*garajata gagane saghane ghana ghora;
raṅginī saṅginī gherata cauttara
vividha kusume sabe raciyā hindolā
dolāya yugala sakhī ānande vibholā*

"Clouds loudly rumble in the sky as Raṅginī (playful Rādhikā) sits on the swing, which is decorated with different flowers, surrounded by Her girlfriends, which are ecstatically swinging the Divine Pair."

*jhulāota sakhīgaṇa karatāli diyā;
suvadani kohe pāche giraye bandhuyā
vigalita dukula udita sveda bindu;
amiyā jharaye yeno duhuṁ mukha indu*

"The *sakhīs* are pushing the swing with their handpalms (so hard that) Suvadani (fair-faced Rādhikā) says (to Kṛṣṇa):
"O friend! We will fall backwards!"
Their garments loosen and the sweatdrops, which appear on
Their moon-like faces resemble drops of nectar."

*heri sab sakhīgaṇa doṅhākāra śrama;
cāmara vījana lei koroye sevana
bhramara kokila sab bosī taru dāle;
rati jaya rādhā-kṛṣṇa rādhā kṛṣṇa bole*

"Seeing how the Divine Pair perspires, the *sakhīs* begin to serve Them by fanning Them with yaktail fans.

The bumblebees and cuckoos are sitting on the branches of the trees and are singing with great love: "Jaya Rādhā Kṛṣṇa! Jaya Rādhā Kṛṣṇa!"

The Lord became overwhelmed with ecstasy when He heard Svarūpa's song. His whole body was rocking and His eyes were filled with tears when, assuming the mood of Śrī Rādhā, He desired to drink the nectar of Śrī Madana Mohana's face with them. It was as if He (She) was sitting on someone's left side on a swing!

Seeing this, all the devotees too became absorbed in the ecstasy of the Jhulana-līlā.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who personally witnessed all this, says: "This Śrī Gaurahari awakens in my heart and maddens me with ecstasy!"

*dolā mahotsava kāle, bosī dola mañca tale,
svarūpādi nija gaṇa sane.
āpane gaurāṅga rāya, nija nāma gāna gāya,
paripūrṇa mādhyaya taraṅge.*

"During the swing-festival Lord Gaurāṅga sat at the base of the swing-platform and sang His own sweet name along with Svarūpa Dāmodara and His other devotees, filled with waves of sweetness."

*se aṅga ye nirakhilo, premāmṛte se mājilo,
āra ki bhulite pāre kabhu.
hṛdaye hoiyā udita, mātāya more satata,
prema sindhu svarṇa gaura prabhu.*

"Anyone who sees His form will be drowning in the nectar of *prema*! Can I ever forget this? That golden ocean of love, Lord Gaura, always awakens in my heart and maddens me!"

VERSE 10:

***dayāṁ yo govinde garuḍa iva lakṣmī-patir alam
purī-deve bhaktiṁ ya iva guruvarye yadu-varaḥ
svarūpe yaḥ snehaṁ giridhara iva śrīla-subale
vidhatte gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan māṁ madayati***

dayāṁ - mercy; *yaḥ* - who; *govinde* - in Govinda; *garuḍa iva* - like Garuḍa; *lakṣmī-patīḥ* - Lord Viṣṇu; *alam* - greatly; *purī-deve* - in Īśvara Purī; *bhaktiṁ* - devotion; *ya* - who; *iva* - as if; *guruvarye* - in the best teacher; *yaduvareḥ* - Kṛṣṇa, the greatest Yadu; *svarūpe* - in Svarūpa Dāmodara; *yaḥ* - who; *snehaṁ* - affection; *giridhara* - Giridhārī; *iva* - as if; *śrīla subale* - in Subala; *vidhatte* - placing; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *māṁ* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, Who was kind to His servant Govinda as Lord Viṣṇu is kind to His servant Garuḍa, Who was devoted to His *gurudeva* Īśvara Purī as Lord Kṛṣṇa was to His *gurudeva* Śrī Sāndīpani Muni, and Who was as affectionate to His friend Svarūpa Dāmodara as Giridhārī was to His friend Subala, this Śrī Gaurāṅga rises in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrīman Mahāprabhu is called the *akhila bhakta-bhāva-maya avatāra*, the descension of the

Lord, which carries the mood of all the different kinds of devotees. Described in this verse are:

His pure faithful devotion for His superiors, His loving friendship for His friends and His merciful affection for those younger than Him Śrī Raghunātha dāsa had seen it all with his own eyes.

Although Lord Viṣṇu (meaning literally: the All-pervading One) is all-pervading, He is subdued by the love of His devotees, and therefore He has given Garuḍa (the great eagle) the service of carrying Him.

In the same way Lord Caitanya, Who was the perfect example of a Vraja-devotee, although He performed all the harsh austerities, which belong to the *sannyāsa-āśrama*, blessed Govinda by giving him His foot-service, on the recommendation of His superiors.

Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta tells us about this:

*eka dina sārvabhaumādi bhaktagaṇa saṅge;
 bosī āchen mahāprabhu kṛṣṇa-kathā raṅge
 heno kāle govindera hoilo āgamana;
 daṇḍavat kori kore vinaya vacana
 īśvara purīra bhṛtya - govinda mora nāma;
 purī gosāira ājñāya āinu tava sthāna
 siddhi prāpti kāle gosāi ājñā koilo more;
 kṛṣṇa caitanya nikaṭa rahi sevaho tāhāre*

"One day Sārvabhauma and other devotees were sitting together with Mahāprabhu, discussing topics of Kṛṣṇa with Him when Govinda came, offered his obeisances, and spoke the following humble words:

"I am the servant of Īśvara Purī, and my name is Govinda.

I have come to You on Īśvara Purī's order. When he passed away (in a state of spiritual perfection), he ordered me: 'Stay with Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and serve Him'.

*gosāi kohe - purīśvara vātsalya kori more;
 kṛpā kori mora thāiy pāthāilā tomāre
 prabhu kohe - bhāṭṭācārya! koroho vicāra;
 gurura kiṅkara hoy mānya se āmāra
 ihāke āpana sevā korāite nā juyāy;
 guru ājñā diyāchen, ki kori upāya
 bhāṭṭācārya kohe - guru ājñā balavān;
 guru ājñā nā laṅghibe śāstra paramāna
 tabe mahāprabhu tāre koilo aṅgikāra;
 āpana śrī aṅga sevāya dilo adhikāra
 prabhura priya bhṛtya kori sabhe kore māna;
 sakala vaiṣṇavera govinda kore samādhāna*

Lord Caitanya replied: "Īśvara Purī is so kind to Me that he has sent you to Me."

The Lord then asked Sārvabhauma Bhāṭṭācārya: "Bhāṭṭācārya, please consider this: He (Govinda) is My *guru*'s servant, and therefore he is venerable for Me. I can't allow him to serve Me, but on the other hand My *guru* has ordered this. What should I do?"

Sārvabhauma Bhāṭṭācārya said: "The *guru*'s order is very powerful. The scriptures say that one should not violate the *guru*'s orders!"

So then Mahāprabhu accepted Govinda as His personal servant, and everyone honoured him as the Lord's beloved servant. From that day on, Govinda saw to all the needs of the Vaiṣṇavas." (Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya Līlā Chapter 10)

Govinda always followed the Lord like His shadow to serve Him. After the Lord had taken His meal, Govinda would massage His feet and only after the Lord had fallen asleep he would take his own meal.

Just to show the whole world what a selflessly dedicated servant Govinda was, the Lord one time fell asleep across the entrance of the Gambhīrā. Govinda then showed the whole world the example of loving service by spreading an outer cloth over the Lord and stepping over Him to serve Him (this is normally considered a great offense to a saint). Govinda also took care of Rāghava Paṇḍita's bags.

Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always served by all His knowledge-potencies and He Himself is the Lord presiding over all knowledge, He still accepted His education from Śrī Sāndīpani Muni and showed the limit of *guru-bhakti*.

In the same way, Mahāprabhu took *mantra*-initiation from Īśvara Purī, although He is the *jagad-guru* (universal teacher), and showed the perfect example of *guru-bhakti*.

At the time of initiation, the Lord offered His body, mind, and life-air at the lotus feet of His *guru* Īśvara Purī. Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata (Ādi khaṇḍa, ch.15) states:

*tabe prabhu pradakṣiṇa koriyā purīre;
prabhu bole deha āmi dilām tomāre
heno śubha dṛṣṭi tumi koroho āmāre;
yeno āmi bhāsi kṛṣṇa premera sāgare*

"Then the Lord circumambulated Īśvara Purī and said:
"I have given My body to You. Please cast a merciful glance at Me, so that I will float in the ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa!"

In Śrī Caitanya Bhāgavata Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura described how the Lord showed the limit of *guru bhakti* in an incomparable way:

*yoto prīta īśvarera īśvara purīre;
tāhā varṇibāre kon jana śakti dhare.
āpane īśvara śrī caitanya bhagavān;
dekhilena īśvara purīra janmasthāna
prabhu bole - kumāra haṭṭera namaskāra;
śrī īśvara purīra ye grāme avatāra
kāndilena vistara caitanya sei sthāne;
āra śabda kichu nāi īśvara purī vine
se sthānera mṛttikā āpane prabhu tuli;
loilena bahirvāse bāndhi eka jhuli
prabhu bole - īśvara purīra janmasthāna;
e mṛttikā āmāra jīvana dhana prāṇa*

"Who is able to describe Lord Caitanya's love for Īśvara Purī? Although Lord Caitanya is God Himself, He still went on pilgrimage to visit Īśvara Purī's birthplace.

The Lord said: "I offer My obeisances unto Kumāra Haṭṭa, where Īśvara Purī descended (took birth)!"

Lord Caitanya wept incessantly at this place, and He would not speak about anything else but Īśvara Purī. The Lord dug up some earth from this place and bound it in His outer cloth, saying:

"This soil of Īśvara Purī's birthplace is My life and My wealth!"

Innumerable devotees imitated the Lord and also collected soil from this place, which is now famous as "Śrī Caitanya ḍobā", and which even bears witness to Śrīman Mahāprabhu's incomparable *guru-bhakti*.

Just as Śrī Subala was Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dearest and most intimate friend in Vraja, Svarūpa Dāmodara was Mahāprabhu's dearest and most intimate friend in Nīlācala.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja describes Svarūpa Dāmodara's and Rāmānanda Rāya's intimate service of the Lord as follows in Caitanya Caritāmṛta:

*utkaṭa viyoga duḥkha yabe bāhirāya;
 tabe ye vaikalya prabhura varṇana nā yāya
 rāmānandera kṛṣṇa kathā, svarūpera gāna;
 viraha vedanāya prabhura rākhaye parāṇa
 dine prabhu nānā saṅge hoy anya manā;
 rātri kāle bādhe prabhura viraha vedanā
 tāra sukha hetu saṅge rahe dui janā;
 kṛṣṇa rasa śloka gīte korena sāntvanā
 subala yaiche pūrve kṛṣṇa sukhera sahāya;
 gaura sukha dāna hetu taiche rāma rāya
 pūrve yaiche rādhāra sahāy lalitā pradhāna;
 taiche svarūpa gosāi rākhe mahāprabhur prāṇa
 ei dui janāra bhāgya kohone nā yāya;
 prabhura antaraṅga kori yāre loke gāya*

"The pain and agitation the Lord felt when His severe pangs of separation became manifest, can't be described.

Only Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara could save the Lord from dying of pain by speaking about Kṛṣṇa and singing about Him respectively. During the day, the Lord was able to distract His mind by associating with different people, but at night the pangs of separation increased. For His pleasure these two (Svarūpa and Rāmānanda) stayed with Him to console Him with *rasika* verses about Kṛṣṇa.

Just as Subala previously pleased Kṛṣṇa by helping Him (in His affairs with Rādhā), Rāmānanda Rāya now made Lord

Gaura happy, and just as Lalitā previously helped Rādhā (in Her affairs with Kṛṣṇa), now Svarūpa Dāmodara saved Mahāprabhu's life. No one can describe the fortune of these two persons. They are glorified by everyone as the Lord's intimate friends."

Especially Svarūpa Dāmodara was very intimate with the Lord, being a veritable ocean of loving devotional mellows. Indeed, he was like the second form of the Lord!

*kṛṣṇa-rasa tattva vettā - deha prema rūpa;
 sākṣāt mahāprabhura dvitiya svarūpa
 grantha śloka gīta keho prabhu āge āne;
 svarūpa parikṣā koile - pāche prabhu sune
 bhakti siddhānta viruddha yei - āra rasābhāsa;
 śunite nā hoy prabhura cittera ullāsa
 ataeva svarūpa āge kore parikṣaṇa;
 śuddha hoy yadi korāya prabhuke śravaṇa
 vidyāpati caṇḍidāsa śrī gīta govinda;
 ei tina gīte kore prabhura ānanda
 saṅgite gandharva sama, śāstre bṛhaspati,
 dāmodara sama āra nāhi mahāmati*

"Svarūpa Dāmodara was the great knower of Kṛṣṇa-rasa, and his body consisted of *prema*. He was directly Mahāprabhu's second form.

If anyone brought a book, a verse or a song to the Lord, Svarūpa first examined it. Only after that examination the Lord would hear it.

The Lord's heart was not delighted if He heard something which was against devotional conclusions, or something which was not aesthetic, therefore Svarūpa first examined if a poem or book was pure or not and only then he would sing it to the Lord.

Svarūpa Dāmodara delighted the Lord by singing songs of Vidyāpati, Caṅḍīdāsa and Jayadeva's Gīta Govinda. He sang like an angel and he was as learned in the scriptures as Bṛhaspati; there was no one as elevated as Dāmodara."

(C.C. Madhya Chapter 10)

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says:

"That Gaurāṅga, Who showed such great affection for my master Svarūpa Dāmodara, awakens in my heart and maddens me!"

*govinda nāmaka bhakta, tāhe dayā anurakta,
yemon garuḍa lakṣmīpati.
purīdeve kore bhakti, yeno paramānurakti,
yadubarera sāndīpani prati.*

"Lord Gaurāṅga was as merciful to His servant named Govinda as Lord Viṣṇu was to His servant Garuḍa, and He was as devotedly attached to Īśvara Purī as Lord Kṛṣṇa was to Sāndīpani Muni."

*svarūpe korena sneha, yemon ekaha deha,
gīridhārī yemona subale.
se prabhu bhāvīyā mone, mana nā dhairaya māne;
sadā bhāse premāmṛta jale.*

"He loved Svarūpa like he were his own body, just as Giridhārī loved Subala.

The Lord's mind was never patient. He always floated in a nectar-ocean of divine love".

*āre mora sonāra gaurāṅga prabhu
hṛdaye udita hoiyā, mātāya āmāra hiyā,
bhulīte nārībo āra kabhu*

"O my golden Lord Gaurāṅga! When You awaken in my heart You madden it, and I can never forget You!"

VERSE 11:

***mahā-sampad-dāvād api patitam uddhṛtya kṛpayā
svarūpe yaḥ svīye kujanam api mām nyasya muditaḥ
uro-guñjā-hāraṁ priyam api ca govardhana-sīlām
dadau me gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayam mām madayati***

mahā - great; *sampad* - wealth; *dāvāt* - the wife; *api* - even; *patitam* - fallen; *uddhṛtya* - lifted up; *kṛpayā* - by his grace; *svarūpe* - in Svarūpa; *yaḥ* - who; *svīye* - in his own; *kujanam* - wretch; *api* - even; *mām* - me; *nyasya* - placing; *muditā* - joyfully; *uraḥ* - of the chest; *guñjā hāraṁ* - *guñjā*-necklace; *priyam* - ear; *api* - even; *ca* - and; *govardhana sīlām* - a rock from Govardhana; *dadau* - gave; *śrī gaurāṅgaḥ* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *hṛdaya* - heart; *udayat* - awakening; *mām* - me; *madayati* - maddens.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, Who mercifully lifted up even a wretch like me from the muck of great opulence, wife and other illusions, Who blissfully placed me into the care of His own dear devotee Svarūpa Dāmodara, and Who gave me His beloved *guñjā*-necklace from His chest and His own rock from Govardhana Hill, He rises in my heart and maddens me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: The remembrance of Gaura's great unchecked mercy, through which he was able to cut the ties with his family and which gave him His full shelter by which

he was blessed in all respects, now appears in Śrī Raghunātha dāsa's heart.

The illusion of gold and women keeps a man bound by material existence, causing him to suffer different tribulations in the 8,400,000 species of life as well as in hell.

Although Śrī Raghunātha who was a prince was sitting in the soft lap of tremendous opulence and although his wife was as beautiful as an angel, he began to consider this situation to be like a blazing forest fire, and by the causeless grace of Gaura, dispassion now became his natural wealth.

Seeing that Śrī Raghunātha was unattached to material life and that he repeatedly tried to run off to see the Lord, his mother thought him to have gone mad. She told his father to keep him tied up, but instead his father said:

*indra sama aiśvarya, strī apsarā sama;
e sab bāndhite yāra nārileka mana
daḍira bandhane tāre rākhibe kemate?;
janma-dātā pitā nāre prārabdha ghucāite
caitanya-candrera kṛpā hoiyāche ihāre;
caitanya candrera bātula ke rākhite pare*

"He is as rich as the heavenly king Indra, and his wife is as beautiful as an angel, but these things can't tie down his mind, what to speak of the ropes I may have to use? Alas! Even a father can't save a son from his previous birth's *karma*!

He has had the great mercy of Śrī Caitanya-candra, and who can tie down someone who has had His mercy?"

Although Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal associate of the Lord, he humbly considers himself fallen and despicable. He thinks himself a fallen wretch because of staying with this vast wealth and his wife, etc. *mahā-sampad dārād api*

mahā-sampad or vast treasures of enjoyment and *dāra* or wife.

Just as Raghunātha was the owner of vast wealth, similarly he had a most beautiful adolescent wife, who resembled an Apsarā (angel). By Mahāprabhu's grace his mind was definitely released from these two most powerful delusions.

The word *dārā* naturally ends in the plural tense, but here it has become a singular *samāhāra-dvandva* (compound indicating a number). *mahā-sampadaś ca dārāś ca teṣāṃ samāhārah*

The Lord saved Raghunātha from the power of both of them simultaneously.

Sometimes we also see the reading of *mahā-sampad dārād api*. From this it is understood that to Raghunātha this vast wealth felt like a burning forest fire.

When one is blessed with the taste of the soothing nectar of the Lord's lotus feet, all other things automatically feel burning hot like a forest fire.

When Raghunātha managed to renounce everything and came to Mahāprabhu's lotus feet in Nīlācala, the Lord was happy to accept him.

When He had placed him in Svarūpa Dāmodāra's hands, He became as carefree as one becomes happy and carefree to place a valuable jewel in the care of a dearly beloved friend.

Svarūpa Dāmodara was the Lord's best and most intimate friend, so the Lord was very happy to place Raghunātha dāsa, who was as dear to Him as His life, into his care.

*raghunātha kṣīṇatā mālīnya dekhiyā;
svarūpere kohe kṛpā ārdra citta hoiyā -
ei raghunātha āmi soṃpilu tomāre;
putra bhṛtya rūpe tumi koro aṅgikāre
tina raghunātha nāma hoyā ihāra nāme;
svarūpera raghunātha āji hoite ihāra nāme*

*eto kohi raghunāthera hasta dharilo;
svarūpera haste tāre samarpaṇa koilo*

"Seeing how emaciated and dirty Raghunātha was, the Lord melted with compassion and told Svarūpa Dāmodara:

"I have given this Raghunātha to you; accept him as your son or as your servant. Now I have three Raghunāthas:

From now on this one will be named 'Svarūpa's Raghunātha'. Saying this, the Lord held Raghunātha dāsa by the hand and placed him in the hands of Svarūpa Dāmodara."

(C. C. Antya Līlā chapter 6)

Surely Raghunātha was able to cut the ties to his household-life by the Lord's grace, but this was only a side effect.

The main result of the Lord's mercy on Raghunātha dāsa was that he was blessed with taste for the sweet pastimes in Vraja. Lord Caitanya is the actual *śikṣā guru* of the Vraja *rasa-mādhurya*, and He is that sweetness Himself in an embodied form!

Placing Raghunātha dāsa in Svarūpa's hand, the Lord said: "Svarūpa! Raghu is very dear to me! You should love him as your own son, and he should serve you as a menial servant! From now on this most dear person has become yours. Now I have three Raghunātha's. From now on he will be known as **Svarūpa's Raghunātha!**"

Svarūpa Dāmodara blissfully accepted the beloved gift of the Lord, saying:

*svarūpa kohe - mahāprabhura ye ājñā hoilo;
eto kohi raghunāthe puna āliṅgila*

"Whatever Mahāprabhu orders!", and then he firmly embraced Raghunātha dāsa.

When the Lord saw Raghunātha's gradual advancement in dispassion and devotional practice, He became most happy and gave him His heart's beloved *guñjā*-necklace and His own Govardhana-*śilā*.

*śaṅkarāraṇya sarasvatī vṛndāvana hoite āilā;
tāhā hoite sei śilā mālā loiyā gelā
pārśve gānthā guñjā-mālā, govardhanera śilā;
dui vastu mahāprabhura āge āni dilā
dui apūrva vastu pāiyā prabhu tuṣṭa hoilā;
smaraṇera kāle gale pore guñjā-mālā
govardhanera śilā kabhu hṛdaye netre dhare;
kabhu nāsāya ghrāṇa loy kabhu loy śire
netra jale sei śilā bhije nirantara;
śilāke kohen prabhu 'kṛṣṇa kalevara'
ei mata tina vatsara śilā mālā dharilo;
tuṣṭa hoiyā śilā-mālā raghunāthe dilo
prabhu kohe - ei śilā kṛṣṇera vigraha;
ihāra sevā koro tumi koriyā āgraha
ei śilāra koro tumi sāttvika pūjana;
acirāte pābe tumi kṛṣṇa prema dhana*

One day Śaṅkarāraṇya Sarasvatī came from Vṛndāvana and presented the Lord with this *guñjā*-necklace and the Govardhana-stone. The Lord was very happy with these wonderful gifts.

When He was engaged in remembering Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (or His *mantra*) He wore the *guñjā*-necklace around His neck. Sometimes He held the Govardhana-*śilā* before His heart or eyes, sometimes He smelled it and sometimes He held it on His head. The Lord called the *śilā*, which He sprinkled with His loving tears, 'the body of Kṛṣṇa'.

In this way the Lord kept the *mālā* and the *śilā* for three years, then He passed them on to Raghunātha dāsa, being very pleased with him.

The Lord said:

"This stone is Kṛṣṇa's body; serve it with great care, then you will swiftly gain the treasure of love for Kṛṣṇa!"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa was completely renounced. Although he was a prince, he turned into a begging monk! How could he find ingredients for the *śilā*'s worship?

The loving dispassion of a renunciant is the greatest ingredient for worship of Giridhārī. It does not depend on external ingredients, and therefore the Lord told Raghunātha this about *sāttvika-pūjā*:

*eka kujā jala āra tulasī-mañjarī;
sāttvika sevā ei śuddha bhāve kori
dui dīke dui patra madhye komala mañjarī;
ei mata aṣṭa mañjarī dibe śraddhā kori
śrī haste śilā diyā ei ājñā dilā;
ānande raghunātha sevā korite lāgilā*

"Use one jug of water and some Tulasī-buds and serve Him purely (this is called *sāttvika*). Offer eight pairs of Tulasī-leaves, four on each side of the *śilā*, and a soft *mañjarī* (flower) inbetween each pair, with great faith and love".

Svarūpa Dāmodara supplied the necessary paraphernalia, like a wooden platform, two cloths, and a jug with water to Raghunātha, and Raghunātha began his worship, floating in ecstatic love when he realized that the stone was Vrajendra-Nandana (Kṛṣṇa) Himself and that he had gotten the stone from Mahāprabhu Himself.

He found more pleasure from this simple worship with water and Tulasī-leaves than he would find in elaborate worship with sixteen different paraphernalia.

*eka vitasti dui vastra, piḍi eka khāni;
 svarūpa gosāi dilena kujā ānibāra pānī
 ei mata raghunātha korena pūjana;
 pūjā kāle dekhe śilāya 'vrajendra-nandana'
 prabhura sva hasta datta govardhana śilā;
 eto cinti raghunātha preme bhāsi gelā
 jala tulasīra sevāya tāra yoto sukhodaya;
 ṣoḍaśopacāra pūjāya toto sukha noy*

Raghunātha was not just ecstatic because Mahāprabhu had personally given him the garland and the stone, but because he realized the Lord's purpose with it:

*śilā diyā more samarpilā govardhane;
 guñjā mālā diyā dilā rādhikā caraṇe
 ānande raghunāthera bāhya vismaraṇa;
 kāya mane sevilena gaurāṅga caraṇa*

"The Lord has entrusted me to Govardhana Hill by giving me this rock and He placed me at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhikā by giving me this string of *guñjā*-beads!"

Raghunātha dāsa was beside himself of ecstasy and He served Lord Gaurāṅga's lotus feet with body and mind. Taking the memory of the Lord's boundless mercy into his heart, Raghunātha dāsa considered Śrī Caitanya's lotus feet to be the essence of everything. When this merciful Lord Gaurāṅga appears in Raghunātha's heart, He makes him restless of ecstasy!

*āmi ati abhājana, veṣṭita sampada vana,
tritāpa se vane dāvānala.
svarūpera āśraya diyā, karuṇāte uddhāriyā,
prakāśilā ānanda prabala.*

"I am very unworthy, being surrounded by a forest of wealth. This forest is ignited by the threefold suffering of material existence, but the Lord mercifully took me out and gave me the shelter of Svarūpa Dāmodara, showing me the greatest ecstasy."

*vakṣe dhṛta guñjā hāra, govardhana śilā āra,
sāmpūlena dayā kori more.
eheno dayāra nidhi, hṛdaye udoya yadi,
se ānanda dhairya kevā dhare*

"He mercifully gave me the *guñjā*-strand He wore on His chest and a Govardhana *śilā*. Who can restrain his ecstasy and calm when this ocean of mercy rises in his heart?"

VERSE 12:

***iti śrī-gaurāṅgodgata-vividha-sadbhāva-kusuma-
prabhā-bhrājat-padyāvali-lalita-śākhāṁ suratarum
muhur yo'tīsraddhauṣadhi-vara-balat-pāṭha-salilair
alam siñced vindet sarasa-guru-tal-lokana-phalam***

iti - thus; *śrī gaurāṅga* - Śrī Gaurāṅga; *udgata* - coming out; *vividha* - different kinds; *sad bhāva* - good feelings; *kusuma* - flower; *prabhā* - luster; *bhrājat* - shining; *padyāvali* - series of verses; *lalita* - lovely; *śākhāṁ* - branch; *suratarum* - desire-tree; *muhur* - repeatedly; *yaḥ* - who; *ati* - very; *śraddhā* - with faith; *auṣadhivaraḥ* - best herb; *balat* -

purified; *pāṭha* - reciting; *salilaiḥ* - with water; *alam* - greatly; *siñcet* - sprinkles; *vindet* - gets; *sarasa* - juicy; *guru* - great; *tad* - Him; *lokana* - seeing; *phalam* - fruit.

Anyone who waters this desire-tree of praises for Śrī Gaurāṅga, whose different, splendidly shining flowers are the ecstatic feelings, which bloom from Śrī Gaurāṅga, and whose lovely branches are its verses, with the water of repeated recitation, purified by the great herb of faith, he will obtain the big juicy fruits of the Lord's *darśana* (audience).

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa describes the *phalaśruti* (auspicious result) of reciting his "Gaurāṅga Stava Kalpataru".

The verses are the branches of this desire-tree of praise, and these branches are beautified by the splendidly shining flowers of the spotless feelings of Mahāprabhu's ecstatic love. All the pastimes described herein were personally witnessed by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa.

The extraordinary activities of Śrī Gaurasundara come forth from Śrī Rādhā's *divyonmāda* (divine madness), but the ecstatic manifestations like the loosening of the bones' joints, assuming the form of a turtle (with the limbs retracted into the body) and others were not shown by Śrī Rādhārāṇī in Vraja: They are visible in the form of Mahāprabhu alone. Śrī Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja has written:

kāhā nāhi śuni ye ye bhāvera vikāra;
sei bhāva hoy prabhura śarīre pracāra
hasta padera sandhi yoto vitasti pramāṇe;
sandhi chāḍi bhinna hoye - carma rahe sthāne

*hasta pada śira sab śarīra bhitore;
praviṣṭa hoy kūrma rūpa dekhiye prabhure
ei mata adbhuta bhāva śarīre prakāśa
(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 2)*

"I've never heard anywhere of such ecstatic transformations like they were manifest on Lord Caitanya's body.

His arms and legs became longer, so that the joints were disconnected and thus only connected with skin.

Again, on another occasion, the Lord retracted His head, legs, and arms into His body, just like a turtle.

Such were the amazing signs of ecstasy on His body!"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says:

"Anyone who waters this desire tree of praises of Śrī Gaurāṅga, whose different, splendidly shining flowers are the ecstatic feelings, which come from that Śrī Gaurāṅga and whose lovely branches are its verses, with the water of repeated recitation purified by the great herb of faith, that someone will obtain the big juicy fruits of His *darśana*".

Śraddhā means to have faith that the Lord's extraordinary pastimes and His devotion are inconceivable.

Such faith makes one a proper candidate for devotion or *bhajana*.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has written *ādau śraddhā*,
(B.R.S. 1.4.15)

"In the beginning there must be faith".

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī writes in his commentary on this verse:

*ādau prathame sādhu saṅga śāstra śravaṇa dvārā śraddhā
tad artha viśvāsaḥ*

"*Śraddhā* means unbreakable faith in the inconceivable power of the Lord and devotion to Him after hearing about this from the scriptures in the company of saints."

The first thing needed for *bhakti-sādhana* is faith. —
śraddhāvān jana hoy bhaktira adhikārī
 (C.C.)

Śraddhā here refers to:

The proper understanding of the *bhakti-sāstras*, firm fixation in the words of *śāstra*, *guru* and *sādhus*, endeavours to experience their meaning and reason, which lead to the right conclusion.

The pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, such as His coming out of the Gambhīrā although all three doors were bolted, His disconnecting the joints of His bones, His assuming the form of a turtle and His sprinkling tears from His eyes as if they were squirted from syringes — these are all naturally unbelievable for ordinary people and they are not described in any scripture, but they have been witnessed, realized and described by the Lord's eternal associates.

Each and every letter of these descriptions is absolutely true, and there is no reason to doubt it. The Lord's form is transcendental to all the laws of material nature, and there should (and can) be no argument about it. *alaukika līlā ei parama nigūḍha; viśvāse pāiye - tarke bahu dūra. ataeva alaukika prabhura ceṣṭā pralāpa śuniyā; tarka nā koriho śuno viśvāsa koriyā* (Caitanya Caritāmṛta) - "The Lord's pastimes are supernatural and most confidential, and one must have faith in them, casting arguments far away.

Therefore listen faithfully to the stories of the Lord's extraordinary activities and utterances and do not argue."

Hence Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says:

"A person who waters this desire-tree of Śrī Gaurāṅga's praises with the water of recitation and purifies that water with the magical herb of faith, will obtain the juicy fruit of His personal audience and be blessed forever with its endless relish!"

*stava kalpa vṛkṣa hoy ihāra ākhyāna;
ihā yei pāṭha-jale siñce bhāgyavān
śraddhā saha kore yei pāṭha avirata;
śrī gaurāṅga preme sei hoy unamata
paṭhane śravaṇe hoy vighna vināśana;
acirāte pāy sei caitanya caraṇa*

**Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's
"Śrī Gaurāṅga Stava Kalpataru",
"The desire-tree of praises of Śrī Gaurāṅga".**

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Manah Śikṣā

Teachings for the mind

By Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

TEACHING NR. 1:

*gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhū-sura-gaṇe
sva-mantre śrī-nāmnī vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-smaraṇe
sadā dambhaṁ hitvā kuru ratim apūrvām atitarāṁ
aye svāntar bhrātaś caṭubhir abhiyāce dhṛta-padaḥ*

gurau - in the teacher; *goṣṭhe* - in the meadows; *goṣṭhālayiṣu* - in the residents of Vraja; *sujane* - the saints; *bhū* - earth; *sura* - gods (*brāhmaṇas*); *gaṇe* - in the group; *sva* - own; *mantra* - in the mantra; *śrī* - beautiful; *nāmnī* - in the name; *vraja* - of Vraja; *nava* - new; *yuva* - youthful; *dvandva* - Couple; *śaraṇe* - in the shelter; *sadā* - always; *dambhaṁ* - pride; *hitvā* - giving up; *kuru* - do; *ratim* - love; *apūrvām* - wonderful; *atitarāṁ* - great; *aye* - O!; *svāntaḥ* - mind; *bhrātaḥ* - brother; *caṭubhiḥ* - with flattering words; *abhiyāce* - I beg; *dhṛta* - holding; *padaḥ* - the feet.

O Mind! O brother! I hold your feet and I pray to you with flattering words:

Always give up your pride and develop wonderful love for your spiritual master, the abode of Vraja, the people of Vraja, the saintly devotees, the brāhmaṇas, my initiation-mantra, the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa and the shelter of the eternally youthful Couple of Vraja, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!

Commentary:

Although Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he instructs his own mind, which is illuminated by *viśuddha sattva*, in the expertise of Vraja-*bhajana* in this Manah Śikṣā, for the benefit of all the practicing *rāgānugā* devotees of the world.

When we are able to actually practice these essential instructions in Manah Śikṣā, they will take us by the hand and bring us to the lotus feet of the beloved deity. It is the duty of a faithful and sincere devotee to follow these instructions and to make them a necklace to wear around his neck (meaning: One should memorize them and always remember them).

The main helper in *bhajana-sādhana* is the mind, the Lord of the senses. The mind of a materialistic person is by nature restless and attached to the sense-objects.

In the Bhagavad Gītā (6.34) Arjuna tells the Lord:

*cañcalaṁ hi manaḥ kṛṣṇa pramāthi balavad dṛḍham
tasyāhaṁ nigrahaṁ manye vāyor iva suduṣkaram*

"O Kṛṣṇa! The mind is restless, disturbing the senses, powerful and tenacious. To control him seems to be as difficult as to control the wind (in our bodies, by means of *kumbhaka* and *recaka*- exercises)."

The Lord agreed with this and said:

*asaṁśayaṁ mahā-bāho mano durnigrahaṁ calam
abhyāseṇa tu kaunteya vairāgyeṇa ca grhyate*

(Bhagavad Gītā 6,35)

"O mighty-armed one! Undoubtedly it is very difficult to subdue the naturally restless mind, but it can be accomplished through exercise and detachment."

By understanding how powerful and how hard to subdue the mind is, the *sādhaka* will slowly tread on the path of auspiciousness.

Any stream of thoughts which emanates from our minds keeps a *saṁskāra* (impression, mental conditioning) within our (sub-) consciousness, and the aggregate of these *saṁskāras* form our *svabhāva* (nature).

Just as our present nature is the result of previous *saṁskāras*, our future nature will be the result of our present thoughts and actions. By giving up our mundane *saṁskāras* and developing a spiritual *saṁskāra*, we can gradually control the mind and tread on the path of *bhajana*. There is no other way.

Śrī Raghunātha very tenderly addresses his mind by saying: "O mind, my brother! I hold your feet and I pray to you with flattering words, please listen! First of all, always give up *dambha*, or pride.

False ego, deceitfulness, and crookedness, these are all considered to be *dambha*. For innumerable births our *saṁskāra* has been the identification with our material bodies and everything related to it. This consciousness is a great obstacle in devotional practice.

*abhimānī bhakti-hīna, jaga mājhe sei dina, vṛthā tāra aśeṣa
bhāvanā* (Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"The proud non-devotees are the lowest people in the world. Their endless thoughts are all in vain!"

To destroy false pride devotees practice humility; hence humility is called the life-force of devotional practice. Deceitfulness and duplicity (thinking in one way and acting in another) are other great obstacles in devotional practice.

The Lord will never want to bestow His mercy on a crooked person, therefore Śrīpāda says:

"O mind! Always give up *dambha*, or vanity, which is a powerful obstacle to *bhajana*, and instead become very attached to some other objects!"

First of all he says: "O mind! Show great and peerless attachment to the *guru*, meaning the initiating *guru* and the instructing *guru*."

The *guru* is the Lord's *kāruṇya ghaṇa vighraha*, the embodiment of His great mercy.

Just as water becomes ice when it is exposed to severe coldness, the Lord also appears on earth, assuming the tangible form of the *guru* when His compassion becomes condensed.

All the vices, which are so hard to give up by one's own endeavours can easily be conquered by serving a *guru*. In this way, a practicing devotee can attain perfection and thus become blessed and fulfilled.

tat prasādo hi sva sva nānā pratikāra dustyajānārtha hānau parama bhagavat prasāda siddhau ca mūlam

(Bhakti Sandarbhaḥ - 237 anuḥ):

"The cause of perfection, which consists of God's grace, is based on the satisfaction of the *guru*. By serving him different kinds of mischief, which are otherwise hard to give up, disappear."

There are many kinds of *anarthas* (vices), such as offenses, which are very powerful and they hinder the progressive devotee from advancing towards the attainment of *prema*.

Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya sings:

antarāya nāhi yāy; ei se parama bhaya

"My greatest fear is that these obstacles won't disappear".

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata it is seen that there is a particular way to give up each specific vice, but there is only one way to give up all these vices at once:

Devotion to the lotus feet of Śrī Guru.

*asaṅkalpāj jayet kāmam
krodham kāma vivarjanāt
arthānarthekṣayā lobham
bhayam tattvāvamarsanāt
ānvikṣikyā śoka mohau
dambham mahad upāsaya
yogāntarāyān maunena
himsām kāmādy anihayā
kṛpayā bhūtajam duḥkham
daivam jahyāt samādhinā
ātmajam yoga-vīryeṇa
nidrām sattva niṣevayā
rajas tamaś ca sattvena
sattvam copaśamena ca
**etat sarvaṁ gurau bhaktyā
puruṣo hyañjasā jayet***

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 7.15.22-25)

Śrī Nārada told King Yudhiṣṭhira:

"To give up lust one must give up one's determination to enjoy.
To give up anger one must give up lust and to give up greed

one must see the evil of money. Fear can be given up by considering the truth. Lamentation and illusion can be given up by considering what is material and what is spiritual (rational thinking). Pride can be given up by serving a great soul and obstacles in *yoga*-practice (which serves the purpose of fixing the mind) can be overcome by perfecting a vow of silence. Violence is conquered by giving up endeavours for sense-gratification. Suffering caused by other living entities can be mitigated by developing the quality of compassion. Suffering caused by the elements can be mitigated by entering into *samādhi* (psycho-religious trance) and suffering caused by the own body and mind can be mitigated by practicing the eight-fold path of mystic *yoga* (*aṣṭāṅga-yoga*).

When the mode of goodness increases, sleep is conquered along with the modes of passion and indolence, and by controlling the senses the mode of goodness is transcended. But **all these vices and obstacles together can be conquered simply by being devoted to the *guru*.**"

Here we will have a short discussion on having a special attachment to and love for the *guru*.

After describing the path of surrender, Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmīpāda writes in *Bhakti Sandarbha* (237):

tatra yadyapi śaraṇāpattyaiva sarvaṁ siddhyati. śaraṇaṁ taṁ prapannā ye dhyāna yoga vivarjitāḥ. te vai mṛtyum atikramya yānti tad vaiṣṇavaṁ padam. iti gāruḍāt tathāpi vaiśiṣṭya lipsuḥ śaktaś cet tataḥ bhagavac chāstropadeṣṭṛṇām bhagavan mantropadeṣṭṛṇām vā śrī guru-caraṇānām nityam eva viśeṣataḥ sevām kuryāt.

"Although all worship reaches perfection by surrendering to the Lord, (since in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa* it is written:

"Those who surrender to the Lord will transcend the mortal world even without practicing *yoga* or meditation, and will attain the planet of Lord Viṣṇu. Of this there is no doubt."), still someone who desires a special perfection in worship (or relishing transcendental flavours) will always particularly serve and worship the lotus feet of his *guru*. It is either the *guru* who teaches him the holy scriptures about the Personality of Godhead or the *guru* who initiates him in the sacred *mantras* of the Personality of Godhead."

The 'special perfection' mentioned here means that in some cases the hearing, chanting and remembering of the Lord's glories is the primary practice (*aṅgī*) and the service of the *guru* is one of its items (*aṅga*). This is called 'ordinary service to the *guru*', but even in this case, the satisfaction of the *guru* is considered to be the cause of the Lord's satisfaction.

But when the *guru* himself becomes the main object of worship and the hearing, chanting and remembering of the Supreme Lord merely become different parts or side effects of the worship of the *guru*, we call it '**special service to the *guru*.**' Here the satisfaction of the *guru* is the main goal and the satisfaction of the Lord is concomitant. In this way the disciple is blessed. Hence

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has written:

tasmād anyad bhagavad bhajanam api nāpekṣate
(Bhakti Sandarbha):

"A devotee who is thus attached to the worship of his *guru* doesn't need to practice any worship of the Supreme Lord." In this special case the Lord will be more pleased with the devotee's service of his *guru* than of his service to Himself. In this connection Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī quotes a verse from Devahūti's praises in the Padma Purāṇa:

*bhaktir yathā harau me'sti tad variṣṭhā gurau yadi
mamāsti tena satyena sandarśayatu me hari*

"Surely Lord Hari will reveal Himself to me if I am even more devoted to my *guru* than to Him."

Hence Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya has said:

*śrī guru caraṇa padma, kevala bhakati sadma,
bandoṅ mui sāvadhāna sane
yāhāra prasāde bhāi, ei bhava tariyā yāy
kṛṣṇa prāpti hoy yāhā hoite*

"The lotus feet of the *guru* are the abode of pure devotion, and I carefully praise them. O brother! By his grace you will cross over the ocean of material miseries and attain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa!"

*guru mukha padma vākya, hṛdi kori mahāśakya
āra nā koriho mone āśā
śrī guru caraṇe rati, ei se uttamā gati,
ye prasāde pūre sarva āśā*

"Let the words flowing from the lotus mouth of your *gurudeva* become fixed in your heart. Don't desire anything else!

The highest goal of life is to love the lotus feet of the *guru*, for by his grace all desires will be fulfilled."

We think that Śrīmat Dāsa Gosvāmīpāda also speaks about such an excessive love for Śrī Gurudeva when he speaks about *apūrva rati*.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha Das desires such an excessive attachment to Śrī Vraja-dhāma too.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has taught that living in Vraja is one of the five most powerful items of devotion which will grant love to the lotus feet of the Lord (the others being: Associating with the devotees, worshipping the deity, hearing the Śrīmad Bhāgavata and chanting the Holy Name), because:

*anyeṣu puṇya tirtheṣu
muktir eva mahā-phalam
muktaiḥ prārthyā harer bhaktir
mathurāyām tu labhyate
aho madhupurī dhanyā
vaikuṅṭhācca garīyasī
dinam ekam nivāsena
harau bhaktiḥ prajāyate*

(Padma Purāṇa)

"In other holy places liberation is the great benefit, but Hari-*bhakti*, which is prayed for even by the liberated souls, is attained in (the district of) Mathurā.

O! Blessed is Mathurā, which is even greater than Vaikuṅṭha! Simply by living there for one day devotion to Hari awakens in the heart!"

The Gosvāmīs have said that living in Vraja is an indispensable item for someone who wants to attain the perfection of love of God: *kuryad vāsam vraje sadā*.

It has also been advised that those who are unable to live there physically should live there at least mentally, the condition being that one must be aware of the transcendental glories of the *dhāma* while living there.

One must live there with love, faith, and devotion. If this is not, possible, then one will consider the transcendental *dhāma* to be a material place and commit offenses there.

In this way one can't reap the devotional results of living in the *dhāma*.

Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī has written:

*sarvopari śrī gokula vraja-loka dhāma;
 śrī goloka śvetadvīpa vṛndāvana nāma
 sarva-ga ananta vibhu kṛṣṇa-tanu sama;
 uparyadho vyāpī āche - nāhiko niyama
 brahmāṇḍe prakāśa tāra kṛṣṇera icchāya;
 ekai svarūpa tāra nāhi dui kaya
 cintāmaṇi bhūmi, kalpavrkṣa-maya vana;
 carma cakṣe dekhe tāre prapañcera sama
 prema netre dekhe tāra svarūpa prakāśa;
 gopa gopī saṅge yāhā kṛṣṇera vilāsa*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Ādi 5)

"The topmost abode is Śrī Gokula, or Vraja-*dhāma*, which is also named Śrī Goloka, Śvetadvīpa and Vṛndāvana. This abode is endless, all-pervading, and omnipresent and it is just like Kṛṣṇa's body. It spreads below and above without any rule, but by Kṛṣṇa's wish, it is manifest in the material world in one form. It has no two forms. The soil is made of Cintā-jewels and the forests are full of desire-trees. The material eyes see it as a material place, but eyes filled with love of God see it in its real form, where Kṛṣṇa plays with the *gopas* and *gopīs*."

Transcendence can never be perceived with material senses, therefore the Lord has mercifully revealed His abode in this world in a form which is visible with the senses.

With this faith, with love and devotion, we must live in the *dhāma*. If not, then we will certainly commit offenses to this holy place, finding faults in it or seeing it as an inferior place. We will be blessed if we can live in the *dhāma* with great devotion and full faith that it is a transcendental place, for love for the holy *dhāma* is the highest pursuit of life. Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatīpāda has written:

*rādhā muralī manohara caraṇa vilāsenā dhanyāyām
vṛndāvana bhuvī manye parama pumartho manāg api praṇayaḥ*

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 4.65)

"If I even have a little love for Vṛndāvana, the place which is blessed with the pastimes of Rādhā-Muralī Manohara's lotus feet, I will consider myself to have reached the highest goal of life."

Śrīla Sarasvatīpāda, who is filled with love for Śrī Vṛndāvana, shows a wonderful fixation in devotion to and living in Vraja:

*śrī rādhā muralīdhara vara dhana
vṛndāvane varaṁ krimikaḥ
bhagavat pārṣada mukhyo'py
anyatrā'haṁ na cotsahe bhavitum
sarva duḥkha daśā ghorā
varaṁ vṛndāvane'stu me
prākṛtā'prākṛtā'śeṣa
vibhūtir api nānyataḥ
paśur ekaḥ khaga ekas
tṛṇam ekaṁ reṇur eko vā*

*śyāma rasādbhuta vanye
vṛndāraṇye bhavāmyahaṁ dhanyaḥ*

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛtam 4.57, 61, 64)

"I would rather be a worm in Vṛndāvana, the greatest treasure of Śrī Rādhā and Muralī-dhara, than to be a chief associate of the Lord elsewhere. May I get into the worst trouble in Vṛndāvana, but still I don't pray for having all the material and spiritual opulence of the world elsewhere.

I will feel blessed even if I become an animal, a bird, a blade of grass or even a speck of dust in Vṛndāvana, the wonderful forest which is endowed with Śyāma-rasa!"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha Das then prays for having a wonderful attachment to the Vrajavāsīs, the residents of Vraja-dhāma. Here 'Vrajavāsīs' must be understood to mean those who live in Vraja-dhāma in the broadest sense of the word.

The scriptures and the saints say that although the dhāma is a transcendental place it assumes a material form out of mercy to the people of the world.

In the same way the residents of the dhāma are also assuming a material nature, although they are completely transcendental. Therefore, although some rough edges may be perceived on the behaviour of the Vrajavāsīs, we should consider this to be due to the contaminated state of our minds, senses, and intelligence and remain fully devoted to them.

*vṛndātavī vimala cid-ghana sattva-vṛndā vṛndāraka pravara
vṛnda munīndra vandyā*

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 1.44)

"Those who reside in the forest of Śrī Vṛndāvana have all attained spiritual bodies, and they are praised by the demigods and the greatest sages."

Therefore Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī desires to serve all the moving and non moving creatures of Vraja with the topmost devotion:

*sevā vṛndāvana-stha sthira cara nikareṣv
astu me hanta kevā devā brahmādayaḥ
syu stuta uru mahitā vallabhā ye vrajendoḥ
ete hy advaita saccid rasaghana vapuṣodūra
dūrātidūra sphūrjjan mātmyā vṛndā bṛhad
upaniṣānandajānanda kandāḥ*

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 1.61)

"May I attain the service of the moving and non-moving creatures of Vṛndāvana. Aho! They are naturally very dear to Kṛṣṇa, the moon of Vraja, and they are even more worshipable than the demigods, headed by Lord Brahmā. The glories of these exclusively transcendental forms, which consist of condensed *rasa*, can't be understood by tiny human brains, and they are the cause of bliss even to the Upaniṣads!"

In the same way Śrī Raghunātha begs his mind to show great attachment to the *sujana* (good people, or Vaiṣṇavas).

For someone who wants to attain loving devotion to the Lord's lotus feet it is compulsory to be attached to the association of His devotees.

mahat-kṛpā vinā kon karme bhakti noy (No activity can be devotional service without the mercy of the saints) *avaśya milaye kṛṣṇa vaiṣṇava kṛpāya* (Surely, Kṛṣṇa is attainable by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas).

From these words we can understand that loving devotion to the Lord's lotus feet can only be attained by the grace of the saints. The Lord's mercy uses the saint's mercy or association

as a vehicle to infuse it into another living entity; it does not take place independently.

One may ask here:

"The Lord can directly bestow His mercy in the form of devotion to His lotus feet, why is it so dependent on *mahat-kṛpā* (grace of the saints), or *mahat saṅga* (association with the saints)?"

The scriptures and the saints answer to this:

"Although the grace of the Lord is the major and self-perfect cause of attaining devotion which brings us to the Lord, it takes shape before us in this phenomenal world in the form of the grace of the saints".

santa evānugrahye yasya saḥ. tavānugraho yaḥ prāpañcike carati sa tad ākāratayaiva carati nānya rūpatayetyarthaḥ
(Bhakti Sandarbha 180)

"O Lord! The saints are the embodiments of Your grace! Whatever mercy You reveal in this phenomenal world wanders around there in the form of the saints, and in no other form!" Therefore it is nothing but self-deception to reject the direct mercy of the Lord in the form of the saints and to seek the Lord's *parokṣa-karuṇā* (roundabout, indirect mercy).

Thus the Lord told His dear devotee Uddhava:

mad bhakta pūjābhyādhikā

(Bhāg. 11.19.21)

"My devotees are more worshipable!"

abhyādhikā mat santoṣa viśeṣaṁ jñātvā mat pūjato'pīty arthaḥ

"You should be more attached to worshipping My devotee than to worshipping Me, for worship of My devotee particularly pleases Me."

This is because the Lord desires the devotee even more than Himself. He is more attracted to the bliss of His devotee's

devotion in the heart than to His own *svarūpānanda* (constitutional, internal, personal bliss), and He desires to relish that bliss more.

*nāham ātmānam āśāse mad bhaktaiḥ sādhubhir vinā
śriyaṁ cātyantikīm brahman yeṣāṁ gatiḥ ahaṁ parā*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 9.4.64)

The Lord told Durvāsā Ṛṣi: "O *brāhmaṇa!* I covet My devotees and the saints for whom I'm the only shelter even more than I covet Myself or My six-fold opulence!" Therefore it is said in the Śāṅḍilya Smṛti:

*siddhir bhavati vā neti saṁśayo'cyuta sevinām
na saṁśayo'tra tad bhakta paricaryāratātmanām*

"It may be doubted whether a devotee of Acyuta attains perfection or not, but there's no doubt about it that someone who is dedicated to serving Acyuta's devotee attains perfection!"

tasmād viṣṇu prasādāya vaiṣṇavān paritoṣayet

"Therefore, in order to get Lord Viṣṇu's mercy, one must please the Vaiṣṇavas with loving devotion."

Śrīmad Bhāgavata says:

*yaḥ sevayā bhagavataḥ kuṭasthasya madhudviṣaḥ
ratirāso bhavet tīvraḥ pādāyor vyasanārdanaḥ*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 3.7.19)

"By serving the saints, a festival of love for Madhusūdāna, the destroyer of material miseries, becomes firmly established within the heart."

Associating with saints and serving them means to lovingly worship them with body, mind, and words, hearing topics of Kṛṣṇa from them, remembering these topics, following their exemplary behaviour and doing *bhajana* according to their instructions.

Nowadays, *mahat-sevā* or *vaiṣṇava-sevā* has become known as 'giving some money, food, or clothes, feeding them some *khichuri* (hotchpotch)' or whatever the donor can think of and thereby treating the Vaiṣṇavas with contempt as if they are beggars.

An intelligent person will understand whether or not all of it is in adherence to the above-quoted holy words

mad bhakta pūjābhyādhikā or *ratirāso bhavet tīvraḥ*.

The Nārada Pañcarātra says:

vaiṣṇavānām parā bhaktiḥ

"One must serve the Vaiṣṇavas with the greatest devotion".

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*:

*yāvanti bhagavad bhakter aṅgāni kathitān iha
prāyas tāvanti tad bhakta bhakter api budhāḥ viduḥ*

The wise understand that each item of devotion to the Lord discussed in this book has a corresponding item of devotion to a devotee."

On the pretext of teaching his own mind, Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa teaches all the devotees that the flawless way to attain love for the lotus feet of the Lord is to serve the pure devotees with love.

After this Śrī Raghunātha instructs his mind to love the *brāhmaṇas* with *apūrvā rati*.

By devotion to *brāhmaṇas*, one awakens the grace of the Lord, Who is called *brahmanya deva*, the Lord of the *brāhmaṇas*. When there is a statement like:

śvapākam iva nekṣete loke vipram avaiṣṇavam

(One should not look at a non-devotee *brāhmaṇa*, he is just like a dogeater), it is only meant to attract such a non-devotee *brāhmaṇa* to devotion.

Such statements are not intended to blaspheme *brāhmaṇas*, for Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself gives instructions in *vipra-bhakti*:

*vipraṁ kṛtāgasam api naiva druhyata māmakaḥ
ghnantam̐ bahu śapantaṁ vā namaskuruta nityaśaḥ*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.64.41)

"O My kinsmen! Do not harm a *brāhmaṇa*, even if he offends you! Even if He assaults You or abuses you, you must always bow down to him."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda has described five levels of *rāgānugā-sādhana*, namely *svābhīṣṭa bhāvamaya* (practice that is full of the desired mood), *svābhīṣṭa bhāva sambandhī* (practice that is related to the desired mood), *svābhīṣṭa bhāvānukūla* (practice that is favorable to the desired mood), *svābhīṣṭa bhāvāvīruddha* (practice that is not unfavorable to the desired mood), and *svābhīṣṭa bhāva viruddha* (practice that is unfavorable to the desired mood).

Of the five, the practice that is not unfavorable to the desired mood contains items like honouring the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and the Banyan-trees. These practices can be beneficial to the practice of *rāgānugā bhajana*.

After this, Śrīpāda declares his wonderful love for his own initiation-*mantra*. In the Brahma Purāṇa the following definition is given of a *mantra*:

*omkārādi samāyuktam namaskārānta kīrtitam
sva nāma sarva sattvānām **mantra** ityabhidhiyate*

“A *mantra* is given by the Lord and the great sages, it starts with an invocatory syllable like ‘OM’, and it ends with a sign of obeisance, which is decorated with *bījas* (root-syllables such as *namaḥ* or *svāhā*). Furthermore it contains the names of the Lord and the special power to establish a certain relationship between the practitioner and the Lord: It blesses the practitioner in freeing him or her from the bondage of physical life and bestows a spiritual body which is suitable for serving the Lord.

As the *mantra-dīkṣā* emanates from the mouth of the *sad-guru*, a special divine *mantra*-power is then infused into the heart of the aspirant devotee which gives him the ability to do *bhajana*.

*dīkṣā kāle bhakta kore ātma samarpaṇa;
sei kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kore ātma sama
sei deha tāra kore cid-ānanda-maya;
aprākṛta dehe tāra caraṇa bhajaya*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Antya ch.4)

"At the time of initiation the devotee surrenders himself, and at that time Kṛṣṇa makes him equal to Himself, giving him a transcendental body, in which the devotee can worship His lotus feet."

Of all the *mantras*, which are discussed in the scriptures in connection with initiation, the Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-*mantra* is most prominent.

And again of all these the king of *mantras*, the 18-syllable or 10-syllable ‘*gopī-jana-vallabha*’-*mantra* which contains all the pastimes within *madhura-rasa*, is the crown jewel of all *mantras*.

The wonderful result of practicing this *mantra* will be experienced by someone who practices it with the greatest love and who learns its meaning from his initiating *guru*.

Only a reader of Sanātana Gosvāmī’s Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta knows how the hero, Gopa Kumāra, was able to travel through the entire spiritual sky by devoutly practicing this *mantra*.

Then Śrī Raghunātha dāsa prays for wonderful attachment to the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa.

The chanting of the Holy Name by a devotee who is genuinely attached to the Lord brings all perfection.

The chanting of the Holy Name is both the means and the goal of a devotee’s life, for there’s no difference between the Name and the Named:

*nāmaś cintāmaṇi kṛṣṇaś caitanya rasa vighrahaḥ
pūrṇa śuddho nitya mukto’bhinnatvān nāma nāmīno*

(Padma Purāṇa)

"The Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa is a Cintāmaṇi-jewel and is the very form of consciousness and transcendental flavour. It is completely pure and eternally liberated, and there is no difference between the name and the named."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī writes the following commentary to this verse:

*nāmaiva cintāmaṇiḥ sarvārtha dātṛtvāt. na kevalam tādṛśam
eva api tu caitanya lakṣaṇo yaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sa eva sākṣāt. tatra hetur
abhinnatvādītī.*

"The Holy Name is like Cintāmaṇi, a touchstone which is able to bestow all which is desired. It is not just able to bestow everything because it is equal to the Lord, but it is Kṛṣṇa Himself, who is endowed with the characteristics of *caitanya*, or consciousness. This is the meaning of the nondifference between the name and the named."

In other words, it is not that the Holy Name has been emancipated with the Lord because it has equal potency, but the Holy Name is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Not only that, but according to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī the Holy Name shows qualities like mercy even more than Kṛṣṇa Himself!

*vācyaṁ vācakam ityudeti bhavato nāma-svarāpa-dvayam
pūrvasmāt param eva hanta karuṇaṁ tatrāpi jānīmahe
yas tasmin vihitāparādha nivahah prāṇī samantād bhaved
āsyenedam upāsya so'pi hi sadānandāmbudhau majjati*

"O Holy Name! We know that you have appeared as the transcendental form of Kṛṣṇa (*vācya*) and as His Holy Name (*vācaka*), but of the two I consider the Holy Name to be more merciful, for if one offends the Lord one can be delivered from the reaction by loudly calling out His name and thus be immersed in an ocean of transcendental loving bliss!"

In this way it is known that all the **means** and all the **goals** of human perfection lie in the **Holy Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa**. The chanting of the Holy Name is the primary item (*aṅgī*) of devotional practice, and all the other items are secondary (*aṅga*).

Remembering this, the practicing devotees should chant the Holy Name with even more devotional attachment. In this way they will become swiftly blessed.

Finally Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says:

"O mind! Take shelter of the incomparable youthful loving couple of Vraja, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and thus increase your wonderful love for Them!"

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, known as Tulasī Mañjarī or Rati Mañjarī, and he has descended along with the Lord to teach the aspiring devotees the intricacies of the worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, thus taking them along to the Vraja-*nikuñja*.

The worship of the youthful Couple of Vraja as a *mañjarī* (spiritual maidservant) is the unprecedented and most merciful gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

One of the reasons for Mahāprabhu's descension is to mercifully bless the sinful and fallen souls of the age of Kali by giving them this intimate worship of the Divine Couple of Vraja, which is rarely attained even by Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Uddhava and other great souls.

Some may think:

"Mahāprabhu Himself has said (in Caitanya Caritāmṛta):

cāri bhāva bhakti diyā nācāimu bhuvana

'I will make the world dance by giving it devotion to Kṛṣṇa in four different moods (servanthood, fraternal love, parental love, and amorous love).' Then how can you say that He only came to give the intimate worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa?"

The answer to this may be that:

"He may have said that, but factually He established during His discussions with Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya and others, that the worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is the crown jewel of all human pursuits. He Himself as well as His direct disciples, the Six

Gosvāmīs, who are the *ācāryas* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya, mainly practiced and preached the amorous love for Kṛṣṇa as the highest attainment, and their books are filled mainly with this topic.

How Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was immersed in worshipping the Divine Couple in *mañjarī-bhāva* can be clearly experienced as we go on discussing his Stavāvalī-prayers.

It has been ascertained in various ways by the Gosvāmīs, who carry Śrīman Mahāprabhu's teachings in their throats, that simply by worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa without Śrī Rādhā, one attains only a drop of the relish of the Kṛṣṇa-ocean.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is like a bottomless ocean of sweetness, which is hard to enter into.

Nevertheless, the greatest way of experiencing God is relishing His sweetness. How can an insignificant living entity ever enter into this ocean of sweetness? Only if the living entities would receive a lot of mercy from a great energy through complete love would they be able to savour this complete sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and become blessed. That great energy is Śrī Rādhā.

Just as the ocean of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweetness increases unlimitedly when He is with Śrī Rādhā, Śrī Rādhā makes the living entities who surrender to Her lotus feet relish Kṛṣṇa's full sweetness in *sakhī-* or *mañjarī-bhāva*.

Not only that, She also makes them relish it even more than She relishes it Herself!

*rādhāra svarūpa - kṛṣṇa prema kalpalatā;
sakhīgaṇa hoy - tāra pallava puṣpa pātā*

*kṛṣṇa lilāmṛta yadi latāke siñcaya;
nija seka hoite pallavādyera koṭi sukha hoy*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 8)

"Rādhā is a desire-vine of love for Kṛṣṇa, and the *sakhīs* are the buds, leaves, flowers of that vine. When that vine is sprinkled with the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, the buds and flowers experience millions of times more happiness than the vine herself."

They experience happiness a million times more because Śrī Rādhā can relish the great sweetness of Kṛṣṇa with them, but the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* who are surrendered to Her lotus feet can relish the sweetness of both Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa when They are together. They can also relish the wonderful savour of the service to this sweet Couple, and thus be blessed.

The worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the mood of the *mañjarīs* is the highest stage the living entity can attain in the kingdom of divine flavours through the practice of loving devotional service. For this reason Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, though he is a *nitya-siddha-mañjarī*, has instructed the aspiring devotees of the world to become more attached to the lotus feet of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, on the pretext of instructing his own mind.

It's no wonder that a devotee who follows the instructions only of even this one verse, what to speak of all the other verses, will invoke a benediction for his *sādhana*.

*ohe bhrātaḥ mora mana, ei mama nivedana,
sadā dambha parityāga koro
hari bhakti niketana, śrī gurura śrī caraṇa,
anurāge tā' āśraya koro*

"O mind, my brother! I pray to you:
Always give up your pride and lovingly take shelter of your
gurudeva's lotus feet which are the abode of devotion to Hari!"

*aprākṛta cinmaya dhāma, vṛndāvana yāra nāma,
tāhe yoto sthāvara jaṅgama
gala lagnī kṛta vāse, sadā aśru nire bhese,
nityā tādera koroho praṇāma*

"Always offer your obeisances to all the moving and non-moving living entities of the transcendental abode named Vṛndāvana, thereby shedding tears of love and holding a piece of cloth around the neck (in humble submission)."

*vaiṣṇava mahānta-gaṇa, prema bhaktira mahājana,
jane jane patita pāvana
bhṛtya prāya saṅge phira, nitya paricaryā koro,
tabe hobe vāñchita pūraṇa*

"Always associate with the saintly Vaiṣṇavas who are the great teachers of loving devotion and who are redeeming one fallen soul after the other. If you always engage in their service like a menial servant all your (devotional) desires will be fulfilled."

*śrī kṛṣṇera priyavara, dvija-gaṇe bhakti koro,
āśīrvāda maṅgala kāraṇa
akhila brahmāṇḍa-pati, suprasanna hobe ati
tāhādera korile sevana*

"Serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa's most beloved *brāhmaṇas*, for they can give you auspicious blessings. If you serve them, the Lord of all the worlds will be very pleased with you."

kṛpā śakti sañcārīta, dikṣā mantra guru-datta,
japa mana loiyā śaraṇa
mantra-rāja ākarṣaṇe, prakāśiyā vṛndāvane
dekhā dibe madana mohana

"The initiation-*mantra* is invested with the grace of the *guru*. Practice this *mantra* and take shelter of it. Madana-Mohana will be so attracted to this king of *mantras* that He will reveal Himself to you in Vṛndāvana."

sarva śakti paripūrṇa, mahāprabhu mukhodgīrna,
bhuvana maṅgala hari-nāma
koro śravaṇa kīrtana, japa mana rātri dina,
premānanda yāra pariṇāma

"The Holy Name of Hari, which emanated from the mouth of Mahāprabhu, is filled with all transcendental potencies and is the source of auspiciousness to the whole world. Hear and chant this Holy Name and repeat it day and night. This will result in ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa."

nava vidhā bhakti ratne, anuśīlana kori yatne,
bhaja mana yugala caraṇa
daśanete tṛṇa dhare, ei cātu vākya dvāre,
tuyā pade kori nivedana

"O mind! Follow the nine jewel like types of devotion with care and worship the lotus feet of the Divine Couple. Holding a straw between my teeth I speak this flattering words to you and I pray to your feet."

TEACHING NR. 2:

***na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām iha tanu
śacī-sūnum nandīśvara-pati-sutatve guru-varaṁ
mukunda-preṣṭhatve smara param ajasraṁ nanu manah***

na - not; *dharmam* - religion; *na* - not; *adharmam* - irreligion; *śrutigaṇa* - Vedas; *niruktaṁ* - described; *kila* - certainly; *kuru* - do; *vraje* - in Vraja; *rādhā kṛṣṇa* - Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; *pracura* - abundant; *paricaryām* - worship; *iha* - here; *tanu* - body; *śacī sūnum* - the son of Śacī; *nandīśvara pati* - the Lord of Nandīśvara; *sutatve* - being the son; *guru* - teacher; *varaṁ* - the best; *mukunda* - Mukunda; *preṣṭhatve* - being dear to; *smara* - remember; *param* - great; *ajasraṁ* - always; *nanu* - indeed; *manah* - O mind!

O mind! Don't follow any of the religious or irreligious paths which are prescribed or forbidden by the Vedas. Intently worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja! Know that the son of mother Śacī (Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu) is the son of the king of Nandīśvara (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and that the best of spiritual teachers is dear to Lord Mukunda (Śrī Kṛṣṇa).

Commentary:

Śrīmat Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī instructs the aspiring devotees of the world in some of the compulsory duties of pure *rāgānugā-bhakti* and in the science of devotion on the pretext of instructing his own mind.

The Vedic scriptures are vast, and according to the eligibility of the many different human beings there are different instructions in them on fruitive activities, wisdom, and devotional service. Sometimes someone can give up a lower

occupation and become eligible to enter into a higher occupation. These things are also ascertained by the scriptures.

If by some inconceivable fortune one attains the mercy and the association of a great saint, one may gain faith in the process of hearing and chanting about the Lord and develop a liking for it.

In this way one will transcend the *varṇāśrama*-system of the four social and spiritual orders and the path of intellectual spiritual realisation (*jñāna*) and gain access to pure faithful devotional worship.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (11.20.9) Lord Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava:

*tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta na nirvidyeta yāvata
mat kathā śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate*

"One must continue performing one's occupational duties as they are prescribed by the Vedas, as long as one has not developed a liking for hearing topics about Me."

The purport of this is that as soon as one's heart is purified by performing Vedic fruitive activities one becomes callous towards worldly affairs and gains access to the path of *jñāna*, intellectual spiritual realisation. As long as one has not by chance become attracted to the topics of the Lord by the grace of a great saint, one must continue to perform all the different social duties. A faithful person becomes eligible to render pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord, and should not to engage in fruitive activities or contemplative wisdom.

The Lord Himself has instructed the world to give up the caste- and *āśrama*-system and to worship Him instead.

*ājñāyaiva guṇān doṣān mayādiṣṭān api svakān
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān mām bhajet sa ca sattamaḥ*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 11.11.32)

"He is the best of all men, who, having completely neglected all his duties though prescribed by Me, while knowing well the virtues (of following them) and the sins (of not following them), worships Me alone."

Śrīdhara Svāmī writes in his commentary on this verse:
*mayā veda-rūpeṇa ādiṣṭān api sva-dharmān santyajya yo mām
bhajet so'pyevam pūrvoktavat sattamaḥ. kim ajñānāt nāstikyād
vā? na, dharmācaraṇe sattva-śuddhyādīn guṇān vipakṣe
doṣānīs cājñāyāya jñātvāpi mad dhyāna vikṣepatayā mad
bhaktyaiva sarvaṁ bhaviṣyatīti dṛḍha niścayenaiva dharmān
santyajya*

"Such a person knows that such fruitive activities are simply disturbing his meditations on Me, so he becomes firmly determined to give them up and engage in My devotional service. He does not give up the Vedic rules and regulations out of atheism or ignorance".

At the end of the Bhagavad Gītā the Lord gave a similar instruction as being the most confidential of all teachings.

*sarva dharmān parityajya mām ekam śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvam sarva pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

"O Arjuna! Give up all forms of religion and simply surrender unto Me. I will free you from all sins. Do not fear."
This verse confirms that those who tread the path of pure devotion give up all connection with the religious and irreligious activities which are discussed in the Vedas.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa then says: *vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pracura paricaryām iha tanu*

"O mind! Give up the moral and immoral activities which have been described by the Vedas and elaborately serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja!"

The word *paricaryā* is a synonym for *pūjā*, *sevā*, *upāsanā* and so on. *pracura paricaryā* here means that on the path of *rāgānugā bhakti* the devotee thinks of himself as a devotee of Vraja both in his external body and in his mentally conceived spiritual body.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written:

*sevā sādḥaka rūpeṇa siddha rūpeṇa cātra hi
tad bhāva lipsunā kāryā vraja-lokānusārataḥ*

(Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 1.2.295)

"A person who desires love for the lotus feet of Rādhā and Mādhava should follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja, serving Them both in his external devotee-body (in allegiance to Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī) and in his spiritual body (in allegiance to Śrī Rūpa and Rati Mañjarī)."

*bāhya antara ihāra dui to sādḥana;
bāhya - sādḥaka dehe kore śravaṇa kirtana
mane - nija siddha dehe koriyā bhāvana;
rātri dine kore vraje kṛṣṇera sevana*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 22)

"There are two kinds of devotional practice: internal and external. In the external body one engages in hearing and

chanting and in the mind one conceives of one's own spiritual body, in which to serve Kṛṣṇa in Vraja day and night."

A devotee who desires love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa should persistently live in Vraja (if not physically, then mentally) and serve (the deity of) Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with flowers and dairy-products from Vraja, always chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and hearing about the loving pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa from the mouths of the *rasika* devotees.

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevana, ekānta koriyā mana,
caraṇa kamala boli yāu
dohāra nāma guṇa śuni, bhakta mukhe puni puni,
parama ānanda sukha pāu*

"Fix your mind on the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and praise Their lotus feet. You will become most happy by hearing Their names and qualities from the mouths of the devotees."

In this way one should always meditate on one's mentally conceived spiritual body, following in the footsteps of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī and mentally serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa throughout Their eternally revolving, eightfold daily pastimes.

Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya sings:

*śrī rūpa mañjarī sāra, śrī rati mañjarī āra,
anaṅga mañjarī mañjulālī
śrī rasa mañjarī saṅge, kasturikā ādi raṅge
prema sevā kori kutūhale*

"I will eagerly render loving service with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrī Rati Mañjarī, Anaṅga Mañjarī, Mañjulālī, Śrī Rasa Mañjarī, Kastūrikā and others."

*e sabā anugā hoiyā, prema sevā nibo cāiyā,
 iṅgite bujhibo sab kāja
 rūpe guṇe dagamagi, sadā hobo anurāgī,
 vasati koribo sakhī mājha*

"Following in their footsteps I will render loving service, and I will understand my duties simply on their hints. I will always be attached to Their forms and qualities and stay amongst the *sakhīs*."

*vṛndāvane dui jana, caturdike sakhī-gaṇa,
 samaya bujhiyā rasa sukhe
 sakhīra iṅgita hobe, cāmara ḍhulābo kobe,
 tāmbūla yogābo cānda mukhe*

"The Divine Couple resides in Vṛndāvana and is always surrounded by Their girlfriends. Let me serve Them in *rasika* joy, understanding the appropriate time. When can I, on the indications of the *sakhīs*, fan Them and offer betel leaves to Their moon-like faces?"

*yugala caraṇa sevi, nirantara ei bhāvi,
 anurāgī rahibo sadāya
 sādhanē bhāvibo yāhā, siddha dehe pābo tāhā,
 rāga-pathera ei se upāya*

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"I will always meditate on my service to the lotus feet of this Divine Couple and I will always remain attached to this. Whatever the *rāgānugā*-devotee thinks of during his practice, he will get when he receives his *siddha*- (spiritual) body. That is the way of *rāgānugā-bhakti*."

There is an endless variety of ways in which one can think of these services within one's *siddha deha*, therefore Śrī Raghunātha dāsa speaks of *pracura paricaryā*, an abundance of devotional service, here.

While worshipping the Divine Couple in this way Śrī Raghunātha dāsa instructs his mind to see Śrī Śacīnandana (Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu) as Śrī Nandanandana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) Himself, in the mood of Śrī Narottama dāsa:

vrajendra-nandana yei, śacī-suta hoilo sei

"He who is the prince of Vraja has now become the son of mother Śacī."

The purport here is that in previous ages even the great sages were hardly able to enter into the confidential worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Vrajendra-Nandana then became greedy after His own sweetness in the mood of Śrīmatī Bhānu-nandinī, accepted Her mood and complexion and thus became Gaura, relishing the sweetness of Vraja-*līlā* Himself and teaching His devotees how to relish this also.

*kṛṣṇa līlāmṛta sāra, tāra śata śata dhāra,
daśa dige bohe yāhā hoite
se caitanya līlā hoy, sarovara akṣaya,
mana haṁsa carāho tāhāte*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 25)

"The pastimes of Kṛṣṇa are the quintessence of nectar and hundreds of streams emanate from it, forming an endless lake of Caitanya-pastimes. Make your swan-like mind swim in this shoreless nectar-lake."

This is why the devotees think of Śrī Gaura relishing the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, before meditating on that

particular Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa-*līlā*. In this way the worship of the *rāgānuṅgiya* Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas becomes very beautiful and expert as they meditate on the eternal daily pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga alongside with the eternal pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Then Śrī Raghunātha dāsa thinks of his *guru* as being Śrī Mukunda's dear most devotee. The scriptures always order the devotees to think of the *guru* as being non-different from the beloved deity. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself tells Uddhava in Śrīmad Bhāgavata: *ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyāt* (11.17.27)

"Know the *ācārya* to be Me". *guru kṛṣṇa rūpa hon sāstrera pramāna* (C.C. Ādi 1)

"The scriptures have proven that the *guru* is a form of Kṛṣṇa". In this connection Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has written: *suddha bhaktās tv eke śrī guroḥ śrī śivaś ca bhagavatā mahābheda dṛṣṭim tat priyatamatvenaiva manyante* (Bhakti Sandarbha 213)

"But the pure devotees see the *guru*, as well as Śrī Śiva, as non-different from the Supreme Lord on the strength of their being His dear most beloveds." Such devotees are very rare, though, hence Śrī Jīva used the word *eke* (one).

In this consciousness Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī always remembers his *guru* as being Mukunda's dear most beloved.

śruti sāstre pratipādyā, āra niṣiddhādi pada,
dharmādharma sab parihari
nitya satya premāspada, vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pada,
bhajo mana divasa śarvarī

"O mind! Give up all the rules which are set by the Vedic scriptures, as well as all things which are forbidden there, like

all religiosity and irreligiosity. Instead, day and night worship the feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja which are eternal and real and which are the abode of love."

*vrajendra-nandana yei, śacī-suta hoilo sei,
ei bhāve gaurāṅga caraṇa
ohe mana! bhajo tumi, e minati kori āmi,
dibe prema anargha ratana*

"O mind! I humbly pray to you: 'Worship the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga in the mood of He Who is the son of Vrajendra and has now become the son of mother Śacī!', and He will give you priceless jewels of love of God!"

*gaura-govinda preṣṭha, śrī guru tāhāra preṣṭha,
kṛṣṇa-kṛpā guru-rūpa dhare
jivera māyā andhakāra, nāśibāre vrata yāra,
ghuriyā bedāya ghare ghare*

"The *guru* is Gaura-Govinda's most beloved, for he is the form of Kṛṣṇa who wanders from house to house, dedicated to destroy the darkness of illusion in the hearts of the conditioned souls."

*govinda vilāsa ghara, yāra śuddha kalevara,
bhaja mana śrī guru-caraṇa
locana ānanda dātā, nāma prema-bhakti dhātā,
avatīrṇa patita pāvana*

"O mind! Worship the lotus feet of the *guru*, whose pure body is the abode of Govinda's pastimes and who has descended to save the fallen souls, to delight the eyes and to

bestow upon us the chanting of the Holy Name and loving devotion."

TEACHING NR. 3:

***yadīccher āvāsaṁ vraja-bhuvi sa-rāgaṁ pratījanur
yuva-dvandvaṁ tac cet parīcaritum ārād abhilaṣeḥ
svarūpaṁ śrī-rūpaṁ sa-gaṇam iha tasyāgrajam api
sphuṭaṁ premṇā nityaṁ smara nama tadā tvaṁ śṛṇu manaḥ***

yadi - if; *iccheḥ* - of the desire; *āvāsaṁ* - residence; *vraja-bhuvi* - in Vraja; *sa* - with; *rāgaṁ* - sacred passion; *prati* - every; *januḥ* - birth; *yuva* - youthful; *dvandvaṁ* - Couple; *tac* - that; *cet* - if; *parīcaritum* - worship; *ārād* - near; *abhilaṣeḥ* - of the desire; *svarūpaṁ* - Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī; *śrī rūpaṁ* - Rūpa Gosvāmī; *sa-gaṇam* - with his group; *iha* - here; *tasya* - his; *agrajam* - elder brother, Sanātana Gosvāmī; *api* - even; *sphuṭaṁ* - clearly; *premnā* - with love; *nityaṁ* - eternally; *smara* - remember; *nama* - bow down; *tadā* - then; *tvaṁ* - you; *śṛṇu* - listen; *manaḥ* - mind.

O mind, listen! If you want to live in Vraja with great love birth after birth and if you want to attain the service of the youthful Couple of Vraja (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), then always lovingly remember and honour Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his devotees as well as his elder brother, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī!

Commentary:

In this verse Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī too instructs his mind about the secrets of *rāga bhajana*.

"O Mind! If you want to live in Vraja with love birth after birth..." — Now the question arises: Does a devotee have to take birth again and again?

The answer is: Devotional practice is not the same as *jñāna* or *yoga*-practice. The practice of *bhakti* is sweet and its resultant perfection is also sweet.

The experiences of *sādhana bhakti*, *bhāva bhakti* and *prema bhakti* are to some extent included in each other. The savour of *sāadhanā bhakti* is not less.

Especially the taste of living in Vraja is so great and astonishing that the devotee desires to take birth there again and again to relish it and the Lord, Who fulfills all of His devotee's desires, also thinks: "Let My devotee savour the nectar of living in Vraja!"

The devotee humbly thinks that he doesn't have any devotion and prays:

*nātha yoni sahasreṣu yeṣu yeṣu vrajāmyaham
teṣu teṣvacyuta bhaktir acyute'stu sadā tvayi*

(Prahāda praying in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa)

"O Lord Acyuta! May I have unflinching devotion for You in all the thousands of births I may still have to take!"

The devotee humbly thinks that he is so sinful that he will have to take many births more in the material world in different species, but it doesn't matter to him as long as he has devotion to God in his heart!

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa speaks here about living in Vraja with love, birth after birth. How beautiful is the picture of living in Vraja with love!

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, who showered themselves with tears of love while feeling anxious separation from their beloved deity, are the best examples of how to live in Vraja with love. They only wore loincloths and *chādars* (shawls) and floated on the waves of the nectar-ocean of the love of the *gopīs*. Everything in Vraja reminded them so much of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that they wandered all over Vrajamaṇḍala, lamenting and searching for their beloved deities:

*he rādhe vraja devike ca lalite he nanda sūno kutah
śrī govardhana kalpa pādapa-tale kālindi-vanye kutah
ghoṣantāv iti sarvato vraja-pure khedair mahā vihvalau
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī jīva gopālakau*

(Śrīnivāsācārya, Śrī-Śrī Ṣaḍ-Gosvāmyaṣṭakam - 8)

"O Rādhē! O goddess of Vraja! O Lalite! O Son of Nanda! Where are You? Now I am in Vraja-*dhāma*, the abode of Your eternal pastimes, where You are immersed in the *rasa* of Your pastimes, diffusing unlimited sweetness! Are Your pastimes going on at the foot of a wish-yielding tree near Govardhana Hill, or are You enjoying on the bank of the Yamunā?" In this way these six Gosvāmīs very anxiously cried out for Rādhā and Mādhava, and wandered throughout Vraja-maṇḍala looking for Them. I offer my obeisances unto these six Gosvāmīs!"

Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has sung in his 'Prārthanā Gītikā (song 25)':

*karaṅga kaupina loiyā, cheṇḍā kāntha gāye diyā,
teyāgiyā sakala viṣaya*

*kṛṣṇa anurāga hobe, vrajera nikuñje kobe,
jāiyā koribo nijāloya*

"When will I become so attracted to Kṛṣṇa that I will give up all sense enjoyment, wear only a loincloth and a torn up *chādar*, and carry only a clay pot (*kāruā*) with me? When can I go to the *nikuñjas* of Vraja and make them my home?"

*hari hari! kobe mora hoibe sudina?
phala mūla vṛndāvane, khābo divā avasāne,
bhramibo hoiyā udāsīna*

"Hari Hari! When will that great day be mine when I can wander around in Vṛndāvana, not caring about anything, eating only fruits and roots at the end of the day?"

*śītala yamunā jale, snāna kori kutūhole,
premāveśe ānandita hoiyā
bāhu por bāhu tuli, vṛndāvane kuli kuli,
kṛṣṇa boli beḍābo kāndiyā*

"I will eagerly take a bath in the cool Yamunā-water and in great loving ecstasy I will raise my arms and wander all over Vṛndāvana, crying out 'Kṛṣṇa!'"

*dekhibo saṅketa sthāna, juḍābe tāpita prāṇa,
premāveśe gaḍāgaḍi dibo
kāhā rādhā prāṇeśvari, kāhā giri-varadhāri,
kāhā nātha boliyā ḍākibo*

"I will soothe my burning heart by seeing Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's meeting place and I will roll around there in great loving

ecstasy, crying out: "Where are You, O Rādhē, Queen of my heart? O Lord Girivaradhāri! Where are You?"

This is a sweet picture depicting how the devotee lives in Vraja with *anurāga*, deep love. According to the experience of the *ācāryas*, this condition is even more relishable than directly meeting the Lord Himself.

The word *sarāgam* can also mean 'to live in Vraja together with other *rāgānugā* devotees'.

The devotion of Kṛṣṇa's eternal associates in Vraja is called *rāgātmika-bhakti*, and devotion in allegiance to them is called *rāgānugā-bhakti*.

*rāgamayi bhaktira hoy rāgātmika nāma;
tāhā śuni lubdha hoy kon bhāgyavān
lobhe vrajavāsi bhāve kore anugati;
śāstra yukti nahi māne rāgānugāra prakṛti*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 22)

"Devotion full of *rāga* (deep love) is called *rāgātmika* devotion. Any fortunate soul who becomes greedy for such devotion after hearing about it, will follow the mood of the inhabitants of Vraja without caring about scriptural injunctions or logical arguments. Such is the nature of *rāgānugā bhakti*." Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* (1.2.270):

*virājantam abhivyaktam vrajavāsi janādisu
rāgātmikam anusṛtā yā sa rāgānugocyate*

"The devotion which is fully manifest in the people of Vraja is called *rāgātmika* and those who follow in their footsteps are called *rāgānugā*-devotees."

This is the great gift of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* have practiced and preached it to bless all the people of the world.

This *rāgānugā-bhakti* is a vast subject matter and one must learn it in all its details from one's spiritual master.

Among all the kinds of *rāgānugā bhakti*, the sweet amorous devotion to Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa is the most favourite in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-tradition, therefore Śrī Raghunātha says here *yuva-dvandvam tac cet paricaritum ārād abhīlaṣeḥ*

"O mind! If you desire the worship of the youthful Couple of Vraja by taking shelter of *rāga-bhakti*, then worship and remember Śrī Svarūpa, Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana and all their devotees!"

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is intrinsically an eternal *rāgātmikā*-maidservant of Vraja and the above instruction is actually meant for the practicing devotees in this world.

Raga-bhajana can't be attained without the mercy of the greatest *rāgānugā*-devotees, therefore it is called *kṛpāika-labhya*, only attainable by mercy.

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in his *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* at the conclusion of his description of *rāgānugā bhakti* (1.2.309): *kṛṣṇa tad-bhakta kārūṇya mātra lābhaika hetukā* "Rāgānugā-devotion can only be attained by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa or His devotee."

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī comments on this:

mātra padasya vidhi-mārge kutracit karmādi samarpaṇam api dvāraṁ bhavatīti tad vicchedārthaḥ prayoga iti bhāvah

"The word *mātra* (only) indicates that *vidhi-bhakti* can sometimes be attained also through the gradual performance of fruitive activities, but *rāga-bhakti* can only be attained through grace."

Although Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa was placed in the care of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, his greatest shelter, by Lord Caitanya Himself, and although he was fully devoted to the lotus feet of his life-givers, Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana and their associates, devotion is by nature insatiable, so he still instructs his mind to always offer obeisances to them and to remember them, and at the same time he gives a valuable instruction to those who aspire for *rāgānugā bhakti* today.

*he mana śravaṇa koro, tumi yadi vāncḥā koro,
 anurāge vrajapure vāsa
 śrī rādhā-govinda devā, sakhī-sane kuñja sevā,
 ei yadi koro abhilāṣa
 prabhura abhinna rūpa, yāra nāma śrī svarūpa,
 vraja-rasa vaktā cuḍāmaṇi
 gambhīrāra antaraṅga, yāra saṅge śrī gaurāṅga,
 āsvādilā līlā śikharinī
 tāhāra caraṇe mana, poḍi thāko sarva kṣaṇa,
 mānasete koriyā smarāṇa
 bujhibe rasera rīti, bhāve vibhāvita mati,
 rādhā dāsya hobe āsvādana*

"O mind, listen! If you want to live in Vraja-pura with love and serve Śrī Rādhā-Govinda-deva and Their girlfriends in the bowers, then remember and offer obeisances to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, who is non different from Lord Caitanya, who is the crown jewel of speakers on the transcendental mellows of Vraja-līlā, and with whom Śrī Gaurāṅga intimately associated in

his room named the Gambhīrā, relishing the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's Vraja-pastimes. O Mind! Always stick to his lotus feet by remembering him! By doing so, you will understand the emotions and taste the mellows of Śrī Rādhā's service!"

*śrīla sanātana rūpa, prema-bhakti rasa-kūpa,
vṛndāvane yāra mahā-jana
daśanete tṛṇa dhare, praṇati koroho tāre,
kuñja sevā koroha prārthanā*

"Śrīla Sanātana and Rūpa are wells full of the *rasa* of devotion and they are the *mahājanas* (leading saints) of Vṛndāvana. O mind! Carry a straw between your teeth, offer obeisances unto them and pray to them for service in the *kuñjas*!"

*doñhe ati kṛpāvān, dibe śrī caraṇe sthāna,
unnata ujjvala rasa-nāma
añjali añjali bhari, dibe tomā kṛpā kori,
dhanya hobe yāhā kori pān!*

"They are both very merciful and they will give you a place at their feet, blessing you by making you drink handful after handful of the elevated erotic *rasa*."

TEACHING NR. 4:

***asad-vārtā-veśyā viśrja mati-sarvasva-haraṇiḥ
kathā mukti-vyāghryā na śṛṇu kila sarvātma-gilanīḥ
api tyaktvā lakṣmī-pati-ratim ito vyoma-nayanīm
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇau sva-rati-maṇidau tvam bhaja manah***

asad - nonsense; *vārtā* - subjects; *veśyā* - prostitute; *viśrja* - give up; *mati* - discriminating intelligence; *sarvasva* - the treasure; *haraṇiḥ* - stealing; *kathā* - talks; *mukti* - liberation; *vyāghrā* - the tigress; *na* - not; *śṛṇu* - listen; *kila* - surely; *sarva* - complete; *ātma* - self; *gilanīḥ* - devours; *api* - even; *tyaktvā* - give up; *lakṣmī* - the goddess of fortune; *pati* - the Lord; *ratim* - love; *itaḥ* - here; *vyoma* - Vaikuṇṭha; *nayanīm* - takes; *vraje* - in Vraja; *rādhā-kṛṣṇau* - Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; *sva* - own; *rati* - love; *maṇi* - jewel; *dau* - givers; *tvam* - you; *bhaja* - worship; *manah* - mind.

O mind! Give up the prostitute of speaking and hearing nonsense, which will rob you of the treasure of your heart! Don't listen to the words of the tigress of liberation which swallows your whole individuality and also give up your love for the Lord of Laksmī (Nārāyaṇa), for that will take you to the majestic realm of Vaikuṇṭha! Worship instead Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, the givers of the jewels of Love for Themselves!

Commentary:

Now Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī begins to describe the powerful obstacles to *bhajana* and to give very valuable instructions about the life of *sādhana* in this Manah Śikṣā on the pretext of instructing his own mind.

In Vedic culture, instructions come in the form of 'do's' and 'don'ts', and the 'don'ts' are mentioned first. "O Mind! Give up

your association with the prostitute called *asad-vārtā*, unreal topics, for she will take everything away from your consciousness!"

Except for topics of Kṛṣṇa, every topic is unreal. Our hearts are contaminated by desires for enjoyment of dead matter and fruitive results, and it is very difficult to wash that contamination off on one's own strength, since the individual soul has only very limited power. The senses are very powerful, independent and fixed on their material objects and without the mercy of the Lord, Who makes the devotee relish His own sweetness, no one can become free from their control on his own strength.

The devotee should nevertheless do his best to fix his mind on Kṛṣṇa and withdraw it from everything else.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu personally told Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī: *grāmya kathā na śunibe, grāmya vārtā na kohibe*

"Don't speak about village-topics and don't hear any village-topics".

grāmya-vārtā means topics on other subject matters than God. Both hearing and speaking nonsense will disturb the mind and will obstruct spiritual progress. Some people think that *grāmya-kathā* means only 'speaking about women', but Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī writes in his commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata 3.28.3: *grāmya-dharma nivṛttiś ca*: village religion (*grāmya-dharma*) consists of religiosity, economic development, and sense enjoyment⁷.

Hence *grāmya-vārtā* should be understood as any topic not related to Kṛṣṇa. 'sat' means that, which is real in all three phases of time: past, present and future. *Asat* is exactly the opposite of that.

⁷ *grāmyas traivargiko dharmah tasmān nivṛtīḥ*

All temporary creations of *māyā* are *asat* and hearing or speaking about *asat*-topics must be given up, for they take away everything from the discriminating intelligence.

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī writes at the end of his Laghu-Tosaṇī-commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata's verse 10.51.36, that the God-consciousness of a devotee who attains the association of great devotees is called **the seed of *rati***:

sat saṅgamena raty-aṅkura rūpaiva matir jāyata iti

"Discussion of nonsense topics destroys this seed of *rati*, which is the all-in-all of the consciousness, and in this way the vine of devotion which was planted by the grace of *guru* and Vaiṣṇava can't grow in the devotee's heart."

Just as a seemingly sweet and beautiful-looking prostitute takes away a man's wealth, beauty and reputation, so too the prostitute of *asad-vārtā* takes away the *mati*, or discriminating intelligence, from the living being.

Those who always speak and hear nonsense will think more and more about those subjects and less and less about Kṛṣṇa, until the whole consciousness has been taken over by nonsense thoughts, not allowing any thoughts of Kṛṣṇa to enter anymore. Especially a renunciant should be cautious that he does not fall from his vow by being callous and allowing his mind to become absorbed in bodily consciousness.

Devotion is pure when it has only the pure motivation to satisfy the Lord. Devotion becomes superficial when it has other purposes. The worst kind of *asad-vārtā* is hearing and speaking about other people's faults.

Lord Caitanya said in Caitanya Bhāgavata:

madyapera niṣkṛti āchaye kon kāle; para-carcakera gati kabhu nāhi bhāle

"A drunkard can be redeemed at any time, but the destination of someone who slanders others is never good."

The slanderer always sees other people's faults before him and gets more and more taste for speaking about them, so his mouth gradually becomes very coarse. As a result the saintly attitude will disappear from his heart and make place for an unsaintly attitude to sit down there. This is why hearing and speaking nonsense has been compared to a prostitute.

One may ask:

"Well, if the three goals of human life, namely religiosity, economic development and sense enjoyment are rejectable, then we can hear about (the fourth goal) liberation!"

But Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says here:

kathā mukti-vyāghrā na śṛṇu kila sarvātma gilaniḥ

"Do also not listen to the tigress called liberation, who swallows your whole *ātma*!"

Just as a tigress devours the whole body, talks about liberation devour the body, mind, intelligence and the individual soul⁸. The individual soul is an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, and thus the four goals of human life, religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation are all forms of deceit. Amongst them, liberation is the greatest form of deceit, for it makes the fortune of Kṛṣṇa-*bhajana* vanish forever.

*ajñāna tamera nāma kohiye kaitava;
dharma-ārtha-kāma mokṣa vāñchā ādi saba
tāra madhye mokṣa vāñchā kaitava pradhāna;
yāhā hoite kṛṣṇa-bhakti hoy antardhāna*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Ādi 1st chapter)

⁸ *ātma* means body, mind, intelligence, life, nature and ego.

The soul is an eternal servant of God and when it desires its own sensual happiness the soul is cheating.

This cheating goes on under the names of *dharma* (religiosity), *artha* (economic development), *kāma* (sense gratification), and *mokṣa* (liberation).

A person who desires liberation has become so blinded by desires for personal happiness that in his desire to become free from the suffering of birth, death and the three kinds of material misery (caused by his own body and mind, by the elements and by other living beings) he also destroys his servant-master relationship with God forever.

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa is my master, and I am His servant, being an individual living entity!"

This feeling of relationship is called *bhakti*, or devotion and can be awakened by the grace of a saint as long as the living entity is still engrossed in *dharma*, *artha* or *kāma*, but when the desire for liberation awakens and one merges with God, the servant-master relationship disappears forever and there is no more possibility of any exchange of love. This is opposed to the servant-consciousness and is therefore the major kind of deceit.

Just as one becomes afraid of hearing the word 'tigress', so a pure devotee also becomes afraid of hearing the word 'liberation'.

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya told Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *mukti śabda kohite mone hoy ghrṇā trāsa; bhakti śabda kohite mone hoy to ullāsa*

"When I hear the word 'liberation' my mind feels hatred and fear, but when I hear the word 'devotion' my mind becomes very happy."

Therefore it has been forbidden to listen to the words of the tigress named *mukti* which swallows one's entire self.

And if any reverentially worshipping devotee then says:

‘O Gosvāmīn! I understand! You have given up everything, desiring devotion to the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, Śrī Nārāyaṇa!’ then Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says:

api tyaktvā lakṣmī-pati ratim: "Also give up your reverential devotion for Śrī Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa which leads you to Vaikuṅṭha!"

Reverential devotion decreases the possibility to love Kṛṣṇa spontaneously, therefore those who want a pure loving relationship with the Lord do not desire such a respectful worship.

aiśvarya jñāna prādhānye saṅkocita prīti; dekhile nā māne aiśvarya - kevalāra rīti:

"The nature of *kevalā*, or pure and sweet devotion, is that the devotee may see Kṛṣṇa’s prowess, but he does not heed it, for knowledge of Kṛṣṇa’s prowess will cause his spontaneous love to shrink."

The devotees whose love is mixed with awe and reverence can’t love the Lord like this.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Ādi 4):

*aiśvarya jñānete sab jagata miśrita;
aiśvarya śīthila preme nāhi mora prīta
āmāre īśvara māne - āpanāke hīna;
tāra preme vaśa āmi na hoi adhīna
mora putra mora sakhā mora prāṇa-pati;
ei bhāve kore yei more śuddha bhakti
āpanāke boḍo māne - āmāre sama hīna;
sarva bhāve āmi hoi - tāhāra adhīna*

"The whole world is pervaded by awareness of My prowess and majesty, but such weakened love does not please Me.

I am not subdued by the devotion of someone who considers Me to be the Supreme Lord and thinks of himself as low and inferior. I am subdued in all respects by the love of anyone who is purely devoted to Me, thinking: 'He is my son, He is my friend or He is my lover', and who thinks that he's greater than or equal to Me."

Śrīmat Sanātana Gosvāmī wrote in his 'Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta' that when Śrī Gopa Kumāra, who had a relationship of pure friendship with Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, came to Vaikuṅṭhaloka, he could not become happy even by seeing Lord Nārāyaṇa due to His vastly majestic appearance.

One day Lord Nārāyaṇa, Who fulfills all the desires of His devotees, appeared before Gopa Kumāra in the form of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda. The goddess of fortune then became Śrī Rādhā, Dharādevī became Candrāvalī and all the devotees of Vaikuṅṭha became cowherd boys, but because the whole display took place in the majestic surroundings of Vaikuṅṭha, it could not please Gopa Kumāra, not even when Lord Nārāyaṇa imitated Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of tending the cows in one of Vaikuṅṭhaloka's gardens!

Śrī Gopa Kumāra himself said:

*tathāpi tasmin parameśa buddhe vaikuṅṭha lokāgamana smṛteś ca
saiṅjāyamānādara gauravena tat prema hānya sva mano na tṛpyet*

(Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta 2.4.113)

"Still I considered Him to be the Supreme Lord and I remembered that I had come to Vaikuṅṭhaloka. The reverential feelings which arose in my heart at that time hampered my sweet love and thus my mind could not feel satisfied." Vaikuṅṭhaloka or the Paravyoma is a place filled with such

aiśvarya. So much so that if Śrī Nārāyaṇa assumes the form of Śrī Vrajendra-Nandana there to fulfill the special desires of His devotees and even performs His pastimes there, still the *aiśvarya-buddhi* can't disappear there on the strength of the location.

With this in mind Śrī Raghunātha has used the words *vyomanayanīṁ*.

Of all the *bhāvas* of Vraja the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas again practice the greatest one, known as *gopī-bhāva*.

*gopikāra mon hārite nāre nārāyaṇa
nārāyaṇera kā kathā, śrī kṛṣṇa āpane;
gopikāra hāsya korāite hoy nārāyaṇe
catur-bhuja mūrti dekhāya gopī-gaṇera āge;
sei kṛṣṇe gopikāra nahe anurāge*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 9)

"(Kṛṣṇa, the Original Personality of Godhead, steals Lakṣmī's mind, but) Nārāyaṇa can't steal the *gopikās'* minds! What to speak of Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself even became Nārāyaṇa to make the *gopikās* laugh! Although Kṛṣṇa assumed Lord Viṣṇu's four-armed form, the *gopikās* did not feel attracted to 'that Kṛṣṇa'".

*gopikā bhāvera ei sudṛḍha niscoy;
vrajendra-nandana vinā anyatra nā hoy
śyāmasundara śikhi-piñcha guñjā vibhūṣaṇa;
gopa-veśa tri-bhaṅgima murali-vadana
iha chāḍi kṛṣṇa yadi hoy anyākāra;
gopikāra bhāva nā yāy nikaṭa tāhāra*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 17)

"The mood of the *gopīs* is based on the firm determination that they will not have anyone else but Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja. If Kṛṣṇa assumes any other form then that of flute-playing Śyāmasundara with His threefold bending form, His peacock-feather crest, His *guñjā*-bead-ornamentation and His cowherders' dress, the *gopīs* will not go to Him"

Finally Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: *vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇau sva rati maṇidau tvaṁ bhaja manah*

"O mind! Just worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja which are the bestowers of the jewel of love for Themselves!"

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will give the sweetest possible love for Their lotus feet, the love of the maidservants of Śrī Rādhā, to those who worship Their lotus feet and thus bless the devotees.

This is the crown jewel of all kinds of love of God, and it is most pure, just like golden molten a hundred thousand times.

Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya sings in Prema Bhakti Candrikā:

rādhā-kṛṣṇa koro dhyāna, svapne-o nā bolo āna,
prema vinā āna nāhi cāo
yugala kiśora prema, yeno lakṣa-bāna hema,
ārati pīriti rase dhyāu

"Meditate on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and don't speak of anything else but Them, even in Your dreams! Don't desire anything else but *prema*. The *prema* of the Yugala Kiśora is like gold molten a hundred-thousand times. Meditate on the *rasa* of Their deep attachment and love!"

The duty of *prema* is to bless the loving devotee with the sweet savour of the beloved deity. This *prema* will immerse the worshipper of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in an ocean of bliss by making him relish Their endless sweetness.

*kanaka ketakī rāi, śyāma marakata kī
darapa darapa koru cura
naṭavara śekharinī, naṭinīra śiromaṇi
duñhu guṇe duñhu mana jhura*

"Śrī Rādhikā's complexion resembles a golden Ketakī-flower and Śyāmasundara's complexion crushes the pride of an emerald gem. She is the Queen of dancers and He is the crown jewel of dancers and Their minds are absorbed in Each other's qualities."

*śrī mukha sundara vara, hema nīla kānti dhara,
bhāva bhūṣaṇa koru śobhā
nīla pīta vāsa dhara, gaurī śyāma manohara,
antarera bhāve duñhu lobhā*

"Their beautiful faces shine with golden and bluish lustre and are furthermore beautified with ornaments of ecstatic love. Gaurī (Rādhikā) wears an enchanting blue *sārī* and Śyāma wears a yellow *dhotī*. In this way They reveal Their innermost desires (for Each other)."

There are innumerable sweet forms of God eternally manifested in the spiritual kingdom and different devotees describe Them in different ways, according to their own mood, but the intelligent devotees may ask:

'Which form of God is more sweetly described than the one of Śrī Kṛṣṇa!'

There is no comparison to the sweetness of the divine Pair, there is no comparison to the love of the Yugala Kīśora! Śrī Raghunātha therefore says:

*he mon! minati dhara, sadā parityāga koro,
asad vārtā veśyā kulaṭāke
mati saravasa dhane, gopane kori haraṇe,
sei kāṅgāla koriyāche tomāke*

"O mind! Humbly pray! Always leave the prostitute of hearing and speaking nonsense, who secretly steals everything from your consciousness and turns you into a beggar!"

*mukti vyāghrīra kathā, se prasaṅga hoy yathā,
karṇe kabhu na hoy śravaṇa
vyāghrīra kavale pore, sa-śarīre gile tāre,
tāra doyā nāhiko kokhono*

"Never lend an ear to the talks of the tigress named liberation! When you fall into her mouth you will be swallowed with your whole body. She never has any mercy!"

*sei rūpa mukti kothā, se prasaṅga hoy yathā,
śravaṇa mātṛe mukti grasta hoy
āmi nitya kṛṣṇa dāsa, e sambandha kore grāsa,
sāyujya loite vāñchā hoy*

"Simply by hearing about liberation incidentally or by desiring *sāyujya-mukti* you will be devoured by her, along with the identification of 'I am Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant'."

*lakṣmī nārāyaṇe bhakti, koro na tāy āsakti,
āśīrbāda koriyā grahaṇa
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa pada, amūlya se sampada,
anurāge bhaja mora mon!*

"Don't be attached to devotion for Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa and don't accept Their blessings, but lovingly worship the priceless treasure of Rādhā's and Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet in Vraja!"

*duhuṁ ati kṛpāvān, tribhuvane kore gāna,
yadī bhaje kon bhāgyavān
vrajera viśuddha prema, yeno jāmbu-nada hema,
se ratana tāre kore dāna*

"They are glorified by all the three worlds as being very merciful, and if any fortunate soul worships Them, then They will give that person the great jewel consisting of pure love of Vraja which is compared to gold taken from the Jāmbu-river!"

TEACHING NR. 5:

***asac-ceṣṭā-kaṣṭa-prada-vikaṭa-pāśālibhir iha
prakāmaṁ kāmādi-prakaṭa-patha-pāti-vyatikaraiḥ
gale baddhvā hanye'ham iti bakabhid-vartmapa-gaṇe
kuru tvam phutkārān avati sa yathā tvam mana itaḥ***

asat - wicked; *ceṣṭā* - endeavours; *kaṣṭa* - problems; *prada* - giving; *vikaṭa* - great; *pāśālibhiḥ* - with ropes; *iha* - here; *prakāmaṁ* - intense; *kāma* - lust; *ādi* - etc.; *prakaṭa* - manifest; *patha-pāti* highwaymen; *vyatikaraiḥ* - by the group; *gale* - around the neck; *baddhvā* - having bound; *hanye* - will die; *aham* - I; *iti* - thus; *bakabhid* - Kṛṣṇa; *vartmapa* — highway police; *gaṇe* - in the group; *kuru* - do; *tvam* - you; *phutkārān* - scream; *avati* - protects; *sa* - he; *yathā* - as; *tvam* - you; *manaḥ* - O mind!; *itaḥ* - here.

O mind! Anxiously cry out to the highway police of Bakabhid (Kṛṣṇa's devotees): "I am bound around the neck by the painful ropes of the highwaymen of lust and so and they are killing me!", so that they will save you from their grip.

Commentary:

When we are surrendering to the Lord's lotus feet it is necessary to remove all obstacles on the path of *sādhana*.

We can't advance on the path unless we remove the thorns lying on it. Some of them are external thorns and some are internal thorns. In the previous verse the poisonous results of associating with materialists and hearing material topics from them was discussed. These are the external thorns and now in this verse we will discuss the internal thorns:

lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy.

These six enemies of the spiritual soul are powerful obstacles on the way which pull the devotee's heart and mind into the realm of the sense objects.

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī compares these six enemies with highwaymen who attack helpless travellers and rob them of all their possessions.

These enemies are publicly stealing the wealth of a practicing devotee's *bhajana* and then strangle him. When Śrī Raghunātha says: "These highwaymen bind me around the neck with these terrifying ropes of wicked deeds which are striking me as much as they want", he speaks in his own name out of mercy for the devotees who are struggling with these obstacles and who are in a deplorable condition.

asac ceṣṭā means 'endeavour for temporary accomplishments'.

When one thinks of sense objects, the enemy named lust gradually appears and forcibly keeps the heart and mind of the devotee bound to endeavours for sense gratification. These material thoughts are compared here to the terrifying ropes of highwaymen. What poisonous fruits grow from the tree of sensual contemplation!

*dhyāyato viṣayān puṁsaḥ
 saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
 saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ
 kāmāt krodho'bhijāyate
 krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ
 sammohāt smṛti vibhramaḥ
 smṛti bhraṁsāt buddhi-nāśo
 buddhi nāśāt praṇaśyati*

(Bhagavad Gītā 2. 62-63)

"When one contemplates the objects of the senses, such as sounds and touches, thinking them to be the causes of happiness, attachment arises, from this attachment comes lust and when these lusty desires become frustrated, anger swoons up and from anger delusion overtakes, which steals away one's healthy discrimination of what is to be done and what is not to be done. When one is in illusion, memory is lost, thus one forgets that one is supposed to make efforts in doing *bhajana*. When memory is lost one's spiritual intelligence which causes one to persevere in spiritual advancement, is destroyed, and when the intelligence is destroyed everything is lost.

The devotee will then have to wander around in the material world in different species, birth after birth." (This is the gist of Śrīpāda Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's commentary on these verses).

A helpless traveller can never escape from the grip of these powerful highwaymen on his own strength, but if there's a powerful policeman or a soldier nearby, he can loudly call out for help, so that the policeman can save him.

In the same way the highway police of Bakabhid, or the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, will come to save the struggling soul from the attack of the six highwaymen called *lust, anger, greed, delusion, pride, and envy*.

In such times of danger one has to call out for the devotees with great pity.

Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura sings:

*e saṁsāra bāṭuyāre, kāma pāśe bāndhi māre,
phukāra koroḥo hari dāsa
koroḥo bhakata saṅga, prema kathā rasa-raṅga,
tabe hoy vipad vināśa*

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"The highwaymen of material desires are binding and killing with the ropes of lust. Cry out for Hari's servants, associate with the devotees and enjoy topics of *rasa* and *prema* with them. Then all mishap will be destroyed."

A person who wants to be freed from the grip of highwaymen like lust and who wants to fill his life with devotion is completely dependent on the association of the Vaiṣṇavas.

In the association of devotees one's *bhajana* becomes deep and one conquers over all obstacles to attain the supreme goal: **love of God**. As a concomitant factor one also acquires all divine qualities such as freedom from lust, non-violence, non-*envy*, good behaviour, equanimity, control of the mind and senses, humility and friendliness.

*mārjana hoy bhajana, sādhu saṅga anukṣaṇa, ajñāna avidyā
parājaya*

"Bhajana purifies. Always associate with saints, so that your ignorance will be defeated".

The purity that emanates from the body of a *sādhu* will bless even a human being who practices no *bhajana* with the gift of the great wealth of *bhajana*.

The darkness in their hearts which are contaminated by vile things like lust, is suddenly removed by the light of devotion which is diffused by the grace and the association of these devotees.

Is there therefore any doubt that when the example of the sinless lives of the great, pure-hearted saints always remains before the eyes, ordinary human beings can also become enthusiastic to attain the highest goal of life and that by the grace of these saints their insignificant material desires will disappear from their hearts?

In his Prema Bhakti Candrikā Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has written that by associating with great souls people who are attached to sense-gratification will be able to give up their attachments and turn towards God.

Such devotees are the greatest friends. The practicing devotees can turn the poison of the six enemies into nectar and become immortal by engaging these enemies in Kṛṣṇa's service. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

kṛṣṇa sevā kāmārpaṇa, krodha bhakta-dveṣī jane,
lobha sādhu-saṅge hari-kathā.
moha iṣṭa lābha vine, mada kṛṣṇa guṇa gāne,
niyukta koribo yathā tathā

"I offer my lust to the service of Kṛṣṇa, my anger towards those who envy His devotees and my greed towards association with saints and topics of Lord Hari. I am deluded without my beloved Lord and I am proud when I sing Kṛṣṇa's glories. Thus I engage all the enemies in Kṛṣṇa's service!"

*anyathā svatantra kāma, anarthādi yāra dhāma,
bhakti pathe sadā deya bhāṅga
kibā se korite pāre, kāma krodha sādhakere,
yadi hoy sādhu janāra saṅga?*

"Otherwise, if these desires are used for selfish purposes, they become the abodes of evil. What can lust and anger do to a practicing devotee when he is in the company of saints?"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa therefore says: "O mind! Call out to the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, which are like powerful policemen who will protect you from the hands of these powerful robbers. The wealth of your *bhajana* will then be in safe hands!"

*he mon yukati śuno, kāma krodhādi ripu-gaṇa,
mahā śakti-śālī bāṅoyāle
asat ceṣṭā kaṣṭa-prada, bhayaṅkara granthi yoto,
sei dore bāndhi mora gole*

"O mind, listen with reason! Lust, anger, and greed are like powerful highwaymen who are keeping me bound around the neck with their terrible and painful ropes of wicked deeds."

*vināśa korite cāya, asahya yātanā tāya,
pade pade hoi acetana
emon bāndhava ke, āmā uddhāribe ye,
se bandhana koriyā mocana*

"They want to destroy me and they give me intolerable pain, so much so that I fall unconscious at every step. Who is that friend who will save me and loosen this bondage?"

*he mon kātara svare, koro tumi phutkāre,
kothā ācho bakārira jana?!
sumālya tilaka dhārī, nāmāṅkita aṅga bhari,
kothā thākura vaiṣṇavera gaṇa*

"O mind, cry out with an anxious voice: 'Where are you, O devotees of Bakārī, wearing Tulasī-beads around the neck, *tilaka* on the forehead and Kṛṣṇa's Holy Names written all over your bodies? Where are you, O Vaiṣṇavas?"

*chay ripu nāśa kori, rakṣā koro keśe dhari,
kṛṣṇa boli koriyā huṅkāra
natuvā parāṇa gelo, śrī kṛṣṇa viśṛti bhelo,
kothā ācho bhakta parivāra?*

"Destroy these six enemies and save me by roaring out loud the name of Kṛṣṇa, otherwise my life will leave me and I will forget Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Where are you, O host of devotees?"

TEACHING NR. 6:

***are cetah prodyat-kapaṭa-kuṭināṭi-bhara-khara-
kṣaran-mūtre snātvā dahasi katham ātmānam api mām
sadā tvam gāndharvā-giridhara-pada-prema-vilasat-
sudhāmbhodhau snātvā tvam api nitarām mām ca sukhaya***

are -O!; *cetaḥ* - mind; *prodyat* - rising; *kapāṭa* - deceitfulness; *kuṭināṭi* - diplomacy; *bhara* - full; *khara* - ass; *kṣarat* - trickling; *mūtre* - in the urine; *snātvā* - having bathed; *dahasi* - you burn; *katham* - why; *ātmānam* - yourself; *api* - even; *mām* - me; *sadā* - always; *tvam* - you; *gāndharvā* - Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; *giridhara* - Kṛṣṇa; *pada* - feet; *prema* - love; *vilasat* - shines; *sudhā* - nectar; *ambodhau* - in the ocean; *snātvā* - having bathed; *svām* - yourself; *api* - even; *nitaram* - always; *mām* - me; *ca* - also; *sukhaya* - gladden.

O mind! Why are you burning me and yourself by bathing in the trickling ass-urine consisting of obvious deceitfulness and diplomacy?

Always bathe in the glistening nectar-ocean of love for Gāndharvā and Giridhārī (Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) and make me and yourself happy forever!

Commentary:

Through some indescribable good fortune a soul whose heart is pierced by lusty desires comes to the path of devotion, but then the vices he is accustomed to through innumerable births are still pulling at him.

The living being is Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant, therefore every desire other than the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa is falsification (deceit) of his *svarūpa*, his eternal constitutional position.

Vices such as diplomacy, deceitfulness, forbidden behaviour and violence towards others which come forth from his being accustomed to freedom in physical enjoyment, are creating so many obstacles on the devotee's way which stop him from advancing.

According to the dictionary the word '*kapaṭa*' can mean 'deceit', 'slyness', 'chicanery', 'fraud', 'swindling', 'untruthful behaviour', 'irreligious behaviour' and 'sin'.

satyaṁ jñānam ānandam: truth is knowledge and bliss.

How can the Supreme Truth (*satyaṁ param dhīmahī*) Śrī Kṛṣṇa ever be pleased with our hearing, chanting, *pūjā*, *smaraṇa* and *japa* when we are still lying and cheating (ourselves and others)?

When that lying, fraudulent and cheating propensity which is even considered a sin in ordinary worldly scriptures on morality, comes in contact with *bhagavad-bhajana*, it is no longer an ordinary sin but turns into a **great offense**.

In an unreal heart this cheating and stealing propensity will gradually extend towards the *sādhu*, *guru* and the Lord also. It is said 'Don't become a ghost by dying in Gayā', or: all the ghosts can be delivered in Gayā, except for Gayā's own ghosts! All cheating can be forgiven and can be removed by the *sādhus* and the *guru*, but if we cheat the *sādhus* and the *guru* we will be doomed.

Still we do not repent for this in any way, rather we try to cover up our sinful activities with a veil of hypocrisy and excuses, like: "There was no sin committed, actually it was allright!".

But the fortunate saints do not misbehave like that. They repent after feeling the burning sensation of regret within themselves for any injustice they may have committed and they become eager to atone in a proper way.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha has therefore compared this burning sensation with a bath in the trickling urine of an ass.

The word *kuṭināṭī* means ‘unreal activities’, ‘absorption in other things’, ‘mercilessness’, ‘violence’ and other things.

asat kriyā kuṭināṭī, chāḍo anya paripāṭī

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"Give up all these clever tricks and unreal activities known as *kuṭināṭī*!"

Bodily consciousness is the main obstacle in our lives of *bhajana*, and it is the main cause of the devotee performing unreal, merciless, and violent activities. Therefore Śrī Narottama Ṭhākura has said:

dehe nā koriho āsthā, morile se yama śāstā, duḥkhera samudra karma-gati

"Don't put your faith in your material body, for when you die you will be punished by Yamarāja. The course of *karma* is an ocean of suffering."

We don't pay attention to insignificant errors, but in the end they become very harmful obstacles to the execution of *bhakti*. "I have heard from the scriptures and the *sādhus* that all my *sādhanā* is useless like an elephant's bath if I consider Śrī Gurudeva to be an ordinary human being, and I try to bring that message to others also, but actually I am dealing with my Śrī Gurudeva in a worldly manner, quarrelling and arguing with him and at times treating him even worse than an ordinary human being. I profess that blasphemy of a Vaiṣṇava is an offense to the Holy Name, but meanwhile I like to make my mouth coarse by meeting with five or ten people and speaking bad about other devotees."

Lying and misbehaving towards others is an ordinary sin, but when this is done with a Vaiṣṇava it becomes an offense and destroys our devotion.

"I have only read this, but when I come to the market I'm lying during business transactions, and if someone by accident gives me too much change back I'm very happy with the profit that I stick in my pocket!"

Compassion, forgiveness, and humility are some of the ornaments (virtues) of the great devotees. *dayā* means that the heart melts when one sees the suffering of others; this is a stream of nectar. The hearts of Kṛṣṇa's devotees are naturally (soft and delicious) like nectar and are therefore naturally filled with compassion. "But as a result of my bodily consciousness a person like me is always giving different kinds of misery to the saintly Vaiṣṇavas with his words and behaviour, what to speak of ordinary people? I even consider it a kind of amusement to give all kinds of pain to others, it has become a kind of habit!" This habit will ultimately take the form of a terrible monster of violence and hatred.

Śrī Raghunātha says: "O mind! You are burning yourself to death by constantly bathing in the burning ass-urine of deceitfulness and diplomacy, and you're constantly burning me (the soul) with it as well! There's no other way to end this calamity and soothe yourself than to enter into the nectar-lake of love of God, that's why I say: *sadā tvaṁ gāndharvā giridhara prema vilasat sudhāmbhodhau snātvā svam api nitarāṁ māṁ ca sukhaya*. "Always bathe in the nectar ocean of the love of Gāndharvā and Giridhara and make yourself and me happy!"

kṛṣṇa prema sunirmala, yeno śuddha gaṅgā jala,
sei prema amṛtera sindhu
nirmala se anurāge, nā lukāye anya dāge,
śukla vastre yaiche masī bindu

"Love for Kṛṣṇa is spotless like pure Gaṅgā-water. It is like an ocean of nectar. It is so spotless that it does not leave any other stain, which would appear just like a drop of ink on a white cloth."

śuddha prema sukha sindhu, pāi tāra eka bindu,
sei bindu jagata ḍubāya
kohibāra yogya nahe, tathāpi bāule kohe,
kohile vā kevā pātiyāya

Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Madhya 2)

"The whole world can be inundated by even a single drop from that blissful ocean of pure love. Actually this should not be revealed, but still a madman like me speaks. Who would believe this, even if it was proclaimed?"

That Kṛṣṇa, a single drop of love for Whom can or does inundate the whole world, is Himself drowning in a single drop of love of Śrī Rādhā! The Mahājanas say in Kṛṣṇa's name:
tuyā anurāge prema, samudre ḍubiyāchi āmi, āmāre tuliyā loho pāre "(O Rādhē!)

"I'm drowning in the ocean of Your love (for Me), and only You can help Me cross it!"

It's easily understood then that a worshiper of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa floats in an ocean of ecstatic love for Them, which can't be explained with words.

yugala caraṇe prīti, parama ānanda tathi,
rati prema-maya parabandhe
kṛṣṇa nāma rādhā-nāma, upāya koro rasa dhāma,
caraṇe poriyā parānande

"Love for the lotus feet of the Divine Couple is a most blissful thing, filled with ecstatic *rati* and *prema*. Take to the Holy Names of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā which are the abode of *rasa*, falling at Their feet in topmost ecstasy!"

prema bhakti sudhānidhi, tāhe ḍubo niravadhi,
āra yoto kṣāra-nidhi prāya
nirantara sukha pābe, sakala santāpa yābe,
para tattva kohinu upāya

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"Always dive into the nectar-ocean of loving devotion! Everything else is like an ocean of alkali! You will always be happy and all suffering will go away. This is the highest truth and the highest means, I tell you!"

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has written that Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was always rolling and turning in the billowing waves on top of the vast ocean of love for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa:
rādhā-kṛṣṇa prema mahārṇavormi nivahe ghūrṇan sadā divyati.

To teach the conditioned souls he has descended to the platform of a *sādhaka* struggling with *anarthas* and he taught them by example that there's no other way to extinguish the fire of conditioned life than to swim in the love-nectar which trickles from Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

In this way he directs the conditioned souls to the path of *prema* on the pretext of preaching to his own mind.

he mon! durbodha cita, nāhi jāno nija hita,
kapaṭa kuṭināṭi yoto hoy

*viṣayābhisandhi yoto, anyatra āveśa cita,
gardabhera mūtra tulya hoy*

"O mind! O Foolish heart! You don't know what's for your own good! Don't you know that deceitfulness, diplomacy, endeavours for sense gratification and bodily consciousness are all just like the urine of an ass?"

*se khara-mūtre snāna kori, niḥe-o āmāre dhari,
dagdha keno koro nirantara
prema bhakti sudhānidhi, tāhe ḍubo niravadhi,
ei dina jane sukhī koro*

"Why are you constantly bathing yourself and me in this urine of an ass? Instead always dive into the nectar-ocean of loving devotion and make this wretch happy!"

*śrī gāndharvā giridhārī, pāda-padme thāko poḍi,
tabe se catura boli tore.
tumi āmi dui jane, līlāmṛta āsvādane,
divā-niśi hao nā vibhore*

"Always stay at the lotus feet of Śrī Gāndharvā and Giridhārī, then I will call you clever! Why shouldn't you and I be absorbed in relishing the nectar of Their pastimes day and night?"

TEACHING NR. 7:

***pratiṣṭhāsa dhr̥ṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī me hṛdi naṭet
kathaṁ sādhu premā spr̥ṣati śucir etan nanu manaḥ
sadā tvam̐ sevasva prabhu-dayita-sāmantam atulam̐
yathā tvam̐ niṣkāśya tvaritam iha taṁ veśayati saḥ***

pratiṣṭhā - distinction, position; *āśā* - desire; *dhr̥ṣṭā* - shameless; *śvapaca* - dog-eating; *ramaṇī* - woman; *me* - my; *hṛdi* - heart; *naṭet* - dances; *kathaṁ* - how; *sādhu* - beautiful ; *prema* - love; *spr̥ṣati* - touches; *śuciḥ* - pure; *etan* - this; *nanu* - indeed; *manaḥ* - mind; *sadā* - always; *tvam̐* - you; *sevasva* - serve; *prabhu* - to the Lord; *dayita* - dear; *sāmantam* - generals; *atulam̐* - incomparable; *yathā* - so that; *tām* - her; *niṣkāśya* - expelling; *tvaritam* - quickly; *iha* - here; *taṁ* - that love; *veśayati* - make to enter; *saḥ* - it.

O mind! The shameless dog-eating woman of the desire for prestige, distinction, and position is dancing in my heart. How can beautiful and pure love of God ever touch it then? Therefore always serve the matchless leading devotees who are dear to the Lord, so that this pariah-woman can quickly be chased out of the heart and love of God may enter it!

Commentary:

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha describes a terrible vice in the life of a devotee, named *pratiṣṭhāśā*. Even if we manage to give up lust, anger, speaking or hearing nonsense, bad company, greed and diplomacy, the desire for prestige and distinction does not want to leave our hearts, therefore it is compared to the shameless wife of a dog-eater.

"I am a great scholar, renunciator, devotee, lecturer, and preacher! Who is there as great as I am? I will lord it over the society of devotees and everyone will bow down at my feet!" This desire is called *pratiṣṭhāsā* and if a devotee wants to introduce himself to neophytes according to his *bhajana* it serves as quicksand which will suck the boat of his *sādhana* to hell.

This is the greatest and final obstacle to surrender for a practicing devotee, and this one does not allow itself to be caught so easily. Therefore it is mentioned in the appendix of the Hari Bhakti Vilāsa (Vaiṣṇava-smṛti):

*sarva tyāge'py aheyāyāḥ sarvānārtha bhuvāś ca te
kuryuḥ pratiṣṭhā viṣṭhāyā yatnam asparśane varam*

"Even those who were able to renounce everything were not able to renounce the desire for distinction. Therefore an intelligent person who desires *prema* should take care not to touch this stool-like desire."

In Caitanya Caritāmṛta this is called one of the weeds that cause the vine of devotion to suffocate. Weeds are terrible things that grow on the same water that has sprinkled the flowering vine of devotion. Such water is compared to the process of hearing and chanting Kṛṣṇa's glories.

*seka-jala pāiyā upaśākhā bādhi yāy;
stabdha hoiyā mūla sākhā bādhiṭe nā pāy
prathamei upaśākhā koriye chedana;
tabe mūla sākhā bādhi yāy vṛndāvana*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya 19)

"The original plant can't grow anymore when there are too many weeds around. All the sprinkled water (of hearing and chanting) will go to the weeds (of the desire for prestige). First one must uproot the weeds, and then the original vine can grow up to Vṛndāvana."

The desire for distinction can only appear in the heart of a devotee who has no taste for hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord (*bhajana*). The only target of the devotees who are free from desires, who are pure-hearted and who are fixed in worship of God is *prema*, love of God. These devotees are able to cast the vice of *pratiṣṭhāsā* far away by being ornamented by virtues like humility. As soon as one gives shelter to this shameless dog-eating woman in the heart even once the result will be terrible, for this woman is never alone. She will call her dog-eating husband named *mātsarya* (envy), the inability to tolerate another person's superiority. '*parotkarṣāsahanam mātsaryam*'. There is no more disgusting mentality than this, and it will turn a human heart into one of an animal.

The seed of the husband named *mātsarya* will conceive twin children in the womb of his wife *pratiṣṭhā*, named ***himsā*** (violence) and ***asūyā*** (malice, slander). Their terrible dancing will crush all virtues within the heart and fill it with great cruelty.

Then we will externally wear all the signs of a Vaiṣṇava and mechanically follow the process of hearing and chanting, but we will not hesitate to behave mercilessly toward other people for the sake of some insignificant temporary selfish desires. We will feel great pleasure while hurting other people's feelings with our words or behaviour for no just reason. It is most deplorable that even then we think of ourselves as greatly qualified scholars, devotees, and *bhajanānandīs*!

Śrīmad Bhāgavata opens with the words *nirmatsarānām satām*: this *bhāgavata* (Vaiṣṇava)-religion is accessible to good and non-envious people.

"How many verses haven't I memorised, how nicely can't I lecture on Bhāgavata-philosophy, but I did not manage to become **free from envy**! When I hear that there is a greater scholar, writer, lecturer or devotee than me somewhere, my heart starts burning, and I can't find any peace unless and until I can diminish his superiority by finding some fault in him!"

Can pure devotion ever awaken in the heart of such an ambitious and envious person? Hence Śrīpāda Raghunātha has said: *katham sādhu-premā spṛśati śucir etan nanu manah*

"O Mind! The shameless dog-eating woman of the desire for distinction is dancing in your heart! How can the most pure love of God ever enter such a foul heart?"

There is only one way to cast this shameless witch of the desire for distinction out of the field of the heart and that is to humbly serve the powerful generals amongst Śrī Kṛṣṇa's devotees, the great souls. They will chase this shameless dog-eating woman of the desire for distinction out of the heart and bestow love of God on such a fortunate servant, after infusing all saintly qualities like humility in him.

The victory over all these vices is actually just a concomitant factor. Love for the lotus feet of the Lord is the most important result.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Uddhava in Śrīmad Bhāgavata (11.26.31):

*yathopāśrayamāṇasya bhagavantaṁ vibhāvasam
sītāṁ bhayaṁ tamo'pyeti sādhuṁ samsevatas tathā*

"Just as cold, fear and darkness disappear for a man who takes shelter of the firegod, so the fear of ignorance and rebirth disappears from a man who serves the saints."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī gives the follow commentary on this verse:

*svīyaudana siddhyartham upāśrayamānasya apyeti naśyati.
tathaiva bhajana siddhyartham sādhuṅ samsevyaamānasya
karmādi jāḍyam saṁsāra bhayaṁ bhajana vighnaś ca*

"When one kindles the fire to cook food, then fear, cold and darkness disappear as an accompanying factor. In the same way, when one serves the saints one attains the perfection of *prema*, and as an accompanying factor one easily becomes free from fear of *karma* and material existence and one conquers over all obstacles to spiritual advancement."

Therefore, *ayaṁ hi paramo lābho nṛṇāṁ sādhu samāgamaḥ*
(Bhāg. 12.10.7)

"The highest gain of mankind is the company of saints."
All the spiritual scriptures repeatedly describe the glories of the service of and the association with the saints.

*pratiṣṭhāśā caṇḍālīnī, kulaṭā ye kalaṅkiṇī,
hṛdayete koriche nartane
sunirmala kṛṣṇa prema, yeno lākho bāna hema,
mora hṛdi sparsībe kemone*

"The contaminated dog-eating woman of the desire for distinction dances in my heart. How can spotless love for Kṛṣṇa which is as pure as gold molten a hundred thousand times over, ever touch my heart?"

*kṛṣṇera bhakata gaṇa, mahā-vīra sāmanta-gana,
mon! tādera nitya sevā koro*

*tomara durdaśā dekhe, pratiṣṭhāśā kulaṭake
hṛdoya hoite koribe bāhira*

"O mind! Always serve Kṛṣṇa's devotees who are like great heroic generals. When they see your miserable condition they will chase this dog-eating woman of desire for distinction out of your heart!"

*sādhu prema mahārāje, hṛdaya mandira mājhe,
divyāsane koribe sthāpana.
pābe prema phalāsvāde, pūrṇa hobe mano-sādha,
tabe dhanya hoibe jivana*

"They will bring the great king of divine love into the palace of your heart and seat him there on a divine throne. Then you will taste the fruit of *prema* and have your desires fulfilled. Then your life will be blessed!"

TEACHING NR. 8:

***yathā duṣṭatvaṁ me davayati śathasyāpi kṛpayā
yathā mahyaṁ premāmṛtam api dadāty ujjvalam asau
yathā śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye prerayati mām
tathā goṣṭhe kākvā giridharam iha tvaṁ bhaja manaḥ***

yathā - so that; *duṣṭatvaṁ* - wickedness; *me* - my; *darayati* - breaks; *śathasya* - of the wicked; *api* - even; *kṛpayā* - by grace; *yathā* - so that; *mahyaṁ* - unto me; *prema* - love; *amṛtam* - nectar; *api* - even; *dadāti* - gives; *ujjvalam* - glistening; *asau* - this; *yathā* - so that; *śrī gāndharvā* - Śrī Rādhikā; *bhajana* - worship; *vidhaye* - for the course; *prerayati* - He will engage; *mām* - me; *tathā* - in this way; *goṣṭhe* - in Vraja; *kākvā*

- anxiously; *giridharam* - Giridhārī; *īha* - here; *tvaṁ* - you; *bhaja* - worship; *manaḥ* - mind!

O mind! Eagerly worship Śrī Giridhārī in Vraja, so that He will be so kind as to remove the wickedness of a cheater like me, give me the splendid nectar of amorous love of God and engage me in the loving service of Śrī Gāndharvā (Rādhā)!

Commentary:

Although Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is Śrīman Mahāprabhu's eternal associate, he teaches the practicing devotees the intricacies of *bhajana* as if he himself is a neophyte struggling with so many vices.

It is also the nature of devotion that one is never satiated with it and so Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī considers himself to still be a neophyte.

premera svabhāva - yāhā premera sambandha; sei māne - kṛṣṇe mora nāhi prema gandha "It is the nature of *prema* that the devotee who has it thinks: 'I don't even have a whiff of love for Kṛṣṇa.'" (Caitanya Caritāmṛta)

This insatiable aspect of devotion awakens great eagerness in the heart of the genuinely humble devotee. Although he already relishes the Lord's sweetness in his *smaraṇa*, dreams and visions, the unsatisfied lover still anxiously laments and thinks himself to be an unqualified neophyte struggling with so many vices. The stream of love floats in his heart like the undercurrent of a subterranean river and on the outside there is want, humility, and lamentation. This is a desirable and elevated stage of *sādhanā*.

While mentioning these different vices, Śrī Raghunātha thinks to himself:

"So many vices are rooted in my heart! This is all because of my deceitfulness!"

A cheater is called a *śaṭha*. By nature the soul is Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant and it is his natural occupation to serve Kṛṣṇa. Giving up this service, he has come to this material world, desiring personal enjoyment and becoming engrossed in feelings of 'I am this' and 'this is mine'.

Cheating his eternal Lord, the soul wanders around looking for his own enjoyment. This deceit is the only cause of hundreds of other vices.

If all this mishap is caused by abandoning our eternal Lord, then naturally the only way to come out of this trap and to reach the highest good, love of God, is to give up cheating the Lord and to humbly surrender to His devotional service.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa now remembers Śrī-Śrī Giridhārī given to him by Mahāprabhu and he thinks:

"How merciful the Lord was to give me this Giridhārī and to reveal His real position to me, saying 'This stone is Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form (*ei śilā kṛṣṇera vighraha*).'"

Just as there is no limit to the Lord's mercy and love for His devotees, there is also no limit to Raghu's misfortune.

He could not worship and serve Giridhārī with the necessary enthusiasm! That's why he now prays:

tathā goṣṭhe kākkvā giridharam iha tvam bhaja manah

"O Mind! Eagerly and anxiously serve Giridhārī in the meadows of Vraja!"

When the Lord gave him the service of Giridhārī and told him to serve Him in pure goodness, Raghu showed the perfect example of loyalty, renunciation, and loving devotion.

Caitanya Caritāmṛta describes:

*pūjā kāle dekhe śilāya vrajendra-nandana;
prabhura sva hasta datta govardhana śilā
eto cinti raghunātha preme bhāsi gelā*

"When Raghunātha dāsa worshipped the *śilā*, he saw Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja, in it. Remembering that the Lord had given him the Govardhana-*śilā* with His own hands, Raghunātha dāsa floated in *prema*."

That's Raghunātha's position. But what he wants to teach us through his humble words is, that we often think our Govardhana- or Salagrāma-*śilā* and our deities to be mere pieces of stone, clay or metal. Unless we always realize that '*pratimā hahe tumi sākṣāt vrajendra-nandana*' (C.C. Madhya 5,96) "You are not a statue, You are the prince of Vraja Himself!", we can't worship the deity with eagerness (*kākkvā*) and sincerity.

Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmī writes in Bhakti Sandarbha: *paramopāsakāś ca sākṣāt parameśvaratvenaiva taṁ paśyanti; bheda-sphūrter bhakti vicchedakatvat tathaiva hyucitam*

"The highest worshippers see the deity as the Supreme Lord Himself. Their devotion would be broken if they saw a difference between the Lord and His image."

When the deity is seen as the Supreme Lord Himself, only then can one eagerly and anxiously serve Him. There is no shortage of examples of how the great devotees have seen God face-to-face in the deity and have gotten responses from Him.

Śrī Raghunātha says: "O mind! Serve Giridhārī so humbly and eagerly that by His grace you can give up deceitfulness!" No desire of the devotee can be fulfilled if his *sādhana* is not accompanied by the Lord's mercy. The Lord's mercy removes all the devotee's unworthiness. By the Lord's grace everything is possible. A person who says that something can't be

accomplished even with the mercy of the Lord is to be counted among the atheists, and a person who does not believe in mercy is unqualified to receive it. A loyal and faithful devotee knows that *kṛṣṇa kṛpā koribena dṛḍha kori jāne* (C.C.)

"He is firmly convinced that Kṛṣṇa will bestow His mercy". An accompanying result of mercy is that all the unwanted habits of a devotee disappear, and the main result is that he gets *prema*, or love of God.

Therefore Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: *premāmṛtam api dadāty ujvalam asau*: "So that Giridhārī will bestow brilliant nectarean *prema*, or amorous love of God, upon you!" Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states in his Laghu Bhāgavatāmṛta (Pūrva 5.37):

*santvatāra bahavaḥ puṣkara-nābhasya sarvato bhadraḥ
kṛṣṇād anya ko vā lateṣvapi premado bhavati*

"There may be many descensions of the lotus-naved Lord Viṣṇu which are auspicious in all respects, but Who else but Kṛṣṇa can bestow Love of God even on the vines?"

*yuga dharma pravartana hoy aṁśa hoite;
amā vinā anye nāre vraja-prema dite* (C.C.)

"I can promulgate the religious practice of the age through My expansions, but nobody but Me can give the love of Vraja!" Of all kinds of Vraja-*prema* the sweet love of the *gopīs* is the greatest. Although Śrīpāda Raghunātha is Vraja's *nitya siddha mañjarī* he humbly begs for *prema*, hence the service of Śrī Rādhā is all he asks from Śrī Giridhārī. The service of Śrī Rādhā is cherished the most by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, and it is their *upāsana* (mode of worship). The Gosvāmīs are our example,

therefore Dāsa Gosvāmī prays *yathā śrī gāndharvā bhajane vidhaye prerayati mām*

"O mind! Worship Giridhārī so that He will engage me in Śrī Rādhikā's devotional service."

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa is a *rādhā-snehādhika* devotee, who loves Rādhā more than Kṛṣṇa. He worships Giridhārī so that He will offer him to Śrī Rādhikā, and not for independent purposes. *āmāra īsvari hon vṛndāvaneśvari; tāra prāṇa-nātha boli bhaji giridhārī* "My goddess is Rādhikā, the Queen of Vṛndāvana, and I worship Giridhārī because He is the Lord of Her life!" Śrī Giridhārī's service can't be supreme without the *bhajana* of Śrī Rādhā. The *rasikas* (transcendental connoisseurs) know this. Śrī Giridhārī therefore desires:

"Let them serve Me by serving Śrī Rādhā!"

How sweetly the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* pray to the lotus feet of the Divine Couple!

Srīmat Rupa Gosvāmī prayed to Śrī Kṛṣṇa as follows in his 'Utkalikā Vallarī' (19):

*praṇīpatya bhavantam arthaye
paśupāendra kumāra kākubhiḥ
vraja-yauvata-mauli-mālikā
karuṇā-pātram imam janam kuru*

"O prince of the cowherders! I offer my obeisances unto You and I eagerly pray to You:

Please make me the object of the mercy of Śrī Rādhikā, Who is the crowning garland of all the young girls of Vraja."

And to Śrī Rādhā he prays in the following verse:

*bhavatīm abhivādya cāṭubhir varam ūrjeśvari varyam arthaye
bhavadīyatayā kṛpām yathā mayi kuryad adhikāṁ bakāntakaḥ*

TEACHING NR. 9:

***mad-īśā-nāthatve vraja-vipina-candraṁ vraja-vane-
svariṁ tan-nāthatve tad-atula-sakhīve tu lalitām
viśākhām śikṣāli-vitarāṇa-gurutve priyasaro-
girīndrau tat-prekṣā-lalita-ratīdatve smara manah***

mad - my; *īśā* - queen; *nāthatve* - as the Lord; *vraja* - of Vraja; *vipina* - the forest; *candraṁ* - moon; *vraja-vaneśvariṁ* - the queen of Vraja; *tan-nāthatve* - His mistress; *tad* - Her; *atula* - matchless; *sakhīve* - friendship; *tu* - but; *lalitām* - Lalitā; *viśākhām* - Viśākhā; *śikṣā* - instructing; *ali* - girlfriend; *vitaraṇa* - distributes; *gurutve* - as the teacher; *priya* - dear; *saraḥ* - lake; *girīndrau* - the king of mountains; *tat prekṣā* - the sight; *lalita* - lovely; *rati* - love; *datve* - as the giver of; *smara* - remember; *manah* - O mind!

O mind! Remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the moon of the Vraja-forests as the Lord of the Queen of Vṛndāvana, Rādhā. Remember Śrī Rādhā as Śrī Kṛṣṇa's most beloved girl, Lalitā as Their matchless girlfriend, Viśākhā as the teacher of all the other girlfriends and Śrī Rādhākunḍa and Girirāja Govardhana as the two places the mere sight of which bestows charming love of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!

Commentary:

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha paints a beautiful picture of a loving identification before the eyes of the *mādhuryopāsakas*, the practitioners of sweet amorous devotion on the pretext of instructing his own mind.

Causeless love for Kṛṣṇa is called *prema* and this *prema* is the goal of devotional service to the Lord.

Great devotees like Bhīṣma, Prahlāda, Uddhava and Nārada gave up their feelings of mineness towards everything else and established their one pointed feelings of mineness towards the lotus feet of the Lord. That is called *prema* in the Nārada Pañcarātra:

*ananya mamatā viṣṇau mamatā prema saṅgatā
bhaktir ityucyate bhīṣma prahlādoddhava nāradaih*

The feeling of mineness is based on a loyal relationship. If there is no feeling of relationship there can be no feeling of mineness. In *śānta rasa* (the tranquil, or neutral sentiments for God) there can be no feelings of mineness towards the Lord. *śāntera svabhāva - kṛṣṇe mamatā gandha hīna; param brahma-paramātma-jñāna pravīna* (C.C. Madhya 19)

"The nature of a *śānta*, or tranquil devotee is that he does not have any feeling of mine-ness towards Kṛṣṇa. His main knowledge of Kṛṣṇa lies in His Supreme (impersonal) *brahman*-aspect or His (localised) *Paramātma* (Supreme Self)-aspect."

These tranquil devotees are not only bereft of a feeling of 'mineness', they are also thought of as being unable to say '*tadīya* (I am His)'. They only worship the *svarūpa* (Kṛṣṇa's philosophical, constitutional aspect).

kevala svarūpa jñāna hoy śānta-rase (C.C.)

śānta rase svarūpa buddhye kṛṣṇaika niṣṭhatā etc.

brahmānanda is light and liquid, whereas the bliss of devotion to God (*iśvaramaya sukha*) is heavy and intense. Whatever Īśvara-bliss the *śānta*-devotees experience is the bliss of the Lord's constitution. They can't experience the sweetness-mixed-with-majesty or the pure sweetness that other devotees experience. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī teaches:

*tatrāpīśa svarūpānubhavasyevoru hetutā
dāsādivan manojñatva līlāder na tathā matā*

(Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 3.1.6)

"Although the *śānta*-devotees do experience the bliss of the Personality of Godhead in the form of His *svarūpa* (knowledge of God's constitutional position), they don't experience the attractiveness (beauty and tenderness) of His pastimes (such as lifting Govardhana Hill) as the other devotees, like His servants, do."

The *śānta*-devotees consider themselves blessed simply by seeing the Lord (without entering into His sweet pastimes). This is because they are bereft of any feelings of mineness towards the Lord.

For this reason Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī calls them 'marginal devotees' and their devotion 'marginal devotion'.

Anyone who attains one of the four relations of servanthood, friendship, parenthood or consortherhood with the Lord will attain a certain feeling of mineness towards Him. Among these four there is a certain distinction between higher and lower, culminating in the amorous relationship.

*pūrva pūrva rasera guṇa pare pare hoy;
dui-tina gaṇane pañca paryanta bādhaya
guṇādhikye svādādhikya bāḍhe prati rase;
śānta dāsya sakhya vātsalyera guṇa mādhubrete boise
ākāśādira guṇa yeno para para bhūte;
dui-tina krame bāḍhe pañca pṛthivīte
paripūrṇa kṛṣṇa prāpti ei premā hoite;
ei premera vaśa kṛṣṇa - kohe bhāgavate*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya 8)

"There is a gradual order of improvement from one *rasa* to the other. In each subsequent *rasa* there is one quality more than in the preceding one, counting from one up to five. As the qualities increase, so the taste also increases. Therefore the qualities of tranquility, servanthood, friendship, and parenthood are all present in amorous love. The qualities in the five gross material elements (sky, air, fire, water and earth) increase one after the other by a gradual process of one, two, three, four, until finally, in the element earth, all five qualities are manifest. Full attainment of Kṛṣṇa is achieved through *premā*, **and Śrīmad Bhāgavata says that Kṛṣṇa is captivated by this *prema*.**"

Although the amorous *rasa* is also present in Kṛṣṇa's Queens in Dvārakā, the full manifestation of amorous love can only be witnessed in the *Vraja-gopīs*. There is no hesitation and no reduction in the purely sweet love of Vraja.

By the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* the highest kind of amorous love for Kṛṣṇa, called *mañjarī-bhāva*, became relishable especially for the people of the present age of quarrel.

Śrīpād Sanātana, Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī are the great handicraftsmen of *Vraja-rasa*.

Just as goldsmiths make necklaces, bangles and earrings, etc., from one single material - gold -, similarly, by Śrīman Mahāprabhu's grace, the *ācāryas* have made wonderful ornaments of *rasika* poetry which was revealed within their hearts, and which was made of the 'ingredient' *śṛṅgāra rasa* (erotic flavours).

Here Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is hinting at the great gift of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, which had not been given for a long time: *mañjarī bhāva*.

This is the self-identification the practicing devotees desire for themselves.

First of all he says: *mad īśā nāthatva vraja vipina candram:* "O mind! Remember the moon of the Vraja-forest (Kṛṣṇa) as the Lord of my Īśvarī (mistress) Śrī Rādhā!"

How much nectar of love is there in that one word '*mad īśā*' which Śrī Raghunātha uses here! How much intense love can be relished in that word!

āmāra īśvarī hon vṛndāvanēśvarī; tāra prāṇanātha boli bhaji giridhārī: "My Īśvarī is Rādhikā, the Queen of Vṛndāvana! I worship Giridhārī, knowing that He is the Lord of Her life!" The *ācāryas* experienced this and preached it. The more the practicing devotees manage to recognise themselves as Śrī Rādhikā's maidservants and manage to give up their bodily consciousness, becoming absorbed in identification as **Rādhā's dāsī at every moment**, the more transcendental jewels they will find.

There is nothing more sweet and relishable than being absorbed in *svarūpāveśa*, absorption in one's transcendental identity. *Māyā* will stay far away from him whose heart is absorbed in relishing these transcendental flavours.

The *sādhaka* will be blessed when he can relish the flavour of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's forms, qualities, pastimes, and devotional service. Then he will experience something of the taste of this single word *mad īśā*.

Śrī Raghunātha instructs his own mind to meditate on Śyāmasundara, the moon of Vṛndāvana, calling Him the Lord of his *īśvarī* Rādhā's life. First Rādhā, then Śyāma! After introducing herself to Śrī Rādhā and attaining Her service, the maidservant of Rādhā introduces herself to Śyāmasundara.

Only then will she attain the service of the Lord of *īsvarī* Rādhā's life - not independently!

There is no comparison to Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa's *rādhā niṣṭhā* (loyalty to Rādhā)! He desires nothing else but the intimate service of Śrī Rādhā, the reader will experience that again and again in this 'Stavāvalī'-compilation.

The word *vraja-vipina-candra* means that the hearts of the people of Vraja are like Cakora-birds which are always absorbed in relishing the nectar oozing from the Kṛṣṇa-moon, such as His form, qualities, pastimes and love, but the hearts of Śrī Rādhā's maidservants are blessed like Cakorī- (female) birds which relish the nectar of the moon of Vraja's forest through the savour of Śrī Rādhā - not independently!

Again, he instructs his mind to remember Vṛndāvanēśvarī Rādhā as the beloved of Kṛṣṇa's heart: *vṛndavāneśvarīm tan nāthatve*.

Although there are innumerable beautiful girls in Vraja who are qualified and full of love for Kṛṣṇa, still Kṛṣṇa's heart and mind are always controlled by Śrī Rādhā. Only She has the full Mādana Mahā Bhāva and only She can fully control Kṛṣṇa, Who is the very form of full transcendental bliss.

They are absorbed in the sweetness of Each other's forms and qualities etc. and They both desire that Their mutual love will increase at every moment.

Śrīpāda Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has written:

*tvayi śyāme nitya praṇayini vidagdhe rasa nidhau
priye bhūyo bhūyaḥ sudṛḍha mati rāgo bhavatu me
iti preṣṭhenokta ramaṇa mama citte tava vaco
vadantīti smera mama manasi rādhā vilasatu*

(*Rādhā Rasa Sudhānidhi* 150)

“May Śrī Rādhā, Who smiles as She tells Her lover: ‘These words of Yours are also on My mind!’, after He told Her: ‘O Śyāme! O Eternally beloved, clever girl! O dearest One!’ May My mind always be firmly attached to the ocean of Your *rasa*!”

Then again, Dāsa Gosvāmī says: *tad atula sakhīve tu lalitām*: "O mind! Remember Lalitā as Śrī Rādhā's incomparable girlfriend." Śrī Lalitā is the chief of Śrī Rādhā's eight girlfriends, therefore no one can compare to her in beauty, qualities and love. She's respected by all the *sakhīs*, and she leads all the *mañjarīs* in their service to the Yugala Kīśora. Śrīla Narottama Dāsa has sung:

*lalitā kobe more, vījana deoyabo,
vījabo māruta mande
śrama-jala sakala, miṭabo duhuñ kalevara,
herabo parama ānande*

"When will Lalitā allow me to fan the Yugala, giving Them a cool breeze which will remove the sweatdrops of fatigue from Their bodies? I will be most blissful to see Them then!"

*lalitā ādeśa pāyā, caraṇa sevibo yāyā,
priya sakhī saṅge harṇa mone
duhuñ dātā śīromaṇi, ati dīna more jāni,
nikate caraṇe dibe dāne*

"Receiving Lalitā's order I will blissfully go to serve Their lotus feet with my dear girlfriends. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are the crown jewels of donors. They know that I'm very fallen and They grant me a place at Their lotus feet."

Then *viśākhāṁ śikṣāli vitarāṇa gurutve*: "Remember Viśākhā as the instructing teacher in the service of the Divine Couple".

In his *siddha-svarūpa* Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is in the *gaṇa* (party) of Śrī Viśākhā. When his heart was breaking out of separation from Śrī Rādhikā, Śrī Raghunātha was praying to Viśākhā's lotus feet to save his life:

*kṣaṇam api tava saṅgam na tyajed eva devī
tvam asi sama-vayas tan narma-bhūmir yad asyāḥ
iti sumukhi viśākhe darśayitvā mad iśāṁ
mama viraha hatāyāḥ prāṇa-rakṣāṁ kurusva*

(*Vilāpa Kusumāñjali* 99)

"O fair-faced Viśākhe! My Queen will not leave your company for even a moment! Because You are of the same age you are the realm of Her joking pastimes. Please save my life from the affliction of separation and show me my mistress!"

In his *Sva Saṅkalpa Prakāśa* stotram, Śrīpāda offers the following prayers to his/her *śikṣā guru* Viśākhā-*sakhī* for teaching her various kinds of expertise in the service of the Divine Pair, which is full of *madhura rasa*:

*mudā vaidagdhyaṅtar lalita nava karpūra milana
sphuran nānā narmotkara madhura mādhvika racane
sa-garvaṁ gāndharvā giridhara kṛte prema vivaśā
viśākhāṁ me śikṣāṁ vitaratu gurus tad yuga sakhī (4)*

"May the teacher Viśākhā, the dear friend who is overwhelmed by love for Gāndharvā and Giridhārī, joyfully and proudly teach me the art of preparing for Their pleasure the

sweet Mādhvika-nectar of different joking words mixed with the fresh camphor of elegant cleverness!"

*kuhū kaṅṭhī kaṅṭhād api kamana-kaṅṭhī mayi punar
viśākhā gānasyāpi ca rucira śikṣāṁ praṇayatu
yathāham tenaitad yuva yugalam ullāsyā sa-gaṇāl
labhe rāse tasmān maṇi padaka hārān iha muhuḥ (5)*

"I pray that Viśākhā, whose voice is sweeter than the cuckoos', will teach me the art of beautiful singing, with which I can please the youthful Couple and Their girlfriends during the Rāsa-dance and I will continually get jewelled medals and gold from Them as rewards."

Finally Śrī Raghunātha says: *priya saro girīndrau tat prekṣā
lalita rati-datve smara manaḥ*

"O mind! Remember my beloved Rādhākuṇḍa and Giri-Govardhana as the bestowers of the *darśana* of and the lovely attraction to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!"

Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is very dear to Śrī Rādhārāṇī, therefore it is also very dear to Śyāmasundara, namely as dear as Śrī Rādhā Herself is. Realizing this secret Śrī Raghunātha declares his one-pointed fixation in living near this crown jewel of Vraja-*bhūmi*, Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa:

*sva kuṇḍaṁ tava lolākṣi sa-priyāyāḥ sadāspadam
atraiva mama saṁvāsa ihaiva mama saṁsthiti*

(*Vilāpa Kusumāñjali* 97)

"O Lolākṣi (restless eyed girl)! Your lake is always the dwelling place of You and Your Beloved. Only here I will live and here alone I will stay!"

Because Śrī Rādhākunḍa is so dear to the Divine Pair it can bestow Their *darśana* and the tender love for Their lotus feet upon him.

Śrī Rāghunātha dāsa has described that in his ‘Vilāpa Kusumāñjali’ (15):

*yadā tava sarovaram sarasa bhṛṅga saṅghollasat
saroruha kulojvalam madhura vāri sampūritam
sphuṭat sarasijākṣi he nayana-yugma sākṣād vabhau
tadaiva mama lālasājani tavaiva dāsyē rase*

"O blooming lotus-eyed girl (Rādhe)! When my eyes directly saw Your pond (Rādhākunḍa), which is filled with sweet water and lotus flowers surrounded by blissfully humming bees, then I really got the desire to taste the nectar of Your service!" Therefore he also prayed to Rādhākunḍa for the *darśana* of Rādhārāṇī:

*he śrī sarovara sadā tvayi sā mad īśā
preṣṭhena sārddham iha khelati kāma raṅgaiḥ
tvam cet priyāt priyam ativa taylor iti mām
hā darśayādya kṛpayā mama jvitaṁ tām*

(Vilāpa Kusumāñjali 98)

"O beautiful lake (Śrī Rādhākunḍa)! My mistress always plays erotic games in you with Her beloved Kṛṣṇa. If you are dearer to Them than the dearest, then please show me my mistress, Who is my very life!"

There's no comparison to Śrī Rāghunātha dāsa's devotion to Girirāja Govardhana. At the base of Śrī Girirāja lie Śrī Rādhākunḍa and Śyāmakunda. Śrī Rāghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

lived at the base of Girirāja for the fulfillment of his desire to see and love the lotus feet of the Divine Couple and he offered the following prayer:

*pramada madana bilāḥ kandare kandare te
racayati nava yūnor dvandvam asminn amandam
iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagnakas tad dvayor me
nija nikaṭa nivāsa dehi govardhana tvam*

(Govardhana Vāsa Prārthana Dasakam 2)

"O Govardhana! The youthful couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa play passionate erotic pastimes in your every cave and I became very eager to witness them. Please allow me to live close to you and thus bless me!"

Śrī Raghunātha prays to his mind:

*he mana! tomāre boli, smaraṇa niyamāvali,
mad īsvari vṛndāvaneśvari
tāra prāṇeśvara jāni, rasikendra cūḍāmaṇi,
bhajo tumi giri-varadhārī*

"O mind! I tell you what to remember:

"Know that the crown jewel of relishers, Girivaradhārī, is the Lord of the life of my mistress Vṛndāvaneśvarī's. Worship Him like that!"

*śrī kṛṣṇera priyatamā, śiro-ratna vraja-rāmā,
ei jñāne vṛndāvaneśvari
anurāge nitya nava, rādhā pada koka-nada,
bhajo mana! e minati kori!*

"Know that Vṛndāvaneśvarī Rādhā, the crown jewel of all Vraja-*gopīs*, is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dear most beloved. O mind, I humbly pray to you: Worship the ruddy lotus feet of this Rādhikā with ever-fresh passionate love!"

prāṇa śakhī śrī rādhāra, atula mahimā yāra,
sakhī śreṣṭha lalitā smaraṇe
śikṣā guru rūpe jāni, viśākhāya smaro tumi,
anugata rasāla bhajane

"Remember the best of *sakhīs*, Lalitā, as Śrī Rādhā's heart's friend, whose glories are matchless, and remember Viśākhā as the instructing *guru* of all the *gopīs*, while performing luscious *bhajana* in allegiance to her!"

rādhakuṇḍa govardhane, smaro mana rātri dine,
daraśana rati dāna tare
smaraṇete kṛpā dhārā, prema mandākinī pārā,
uthalibe hṛdi pārāvāre

"O mind! Remember Rādhākuṇḍa and Govardhana day and night for they bestow the *darśana* of and love for the Divine Couple upon you! The ocean of your heart then will swell as the nectarean Gaṅgā-stream of *prema* enters into it, brought down by Their mercy on the strength of your *smaraṇa*."

TEACHING NR. 10:

***ratim gaurī-līle api tapati saundarya-kiraṇaiḥ
śacī-lakṣmī-satyāḥ paribhavati saubhāgya-valanaiḥ
vaśīkārāis candrāvalī-mukha-navīna-vraja-satīḥ
kṣipaty ārād yā tām hari-dayita-rādhām bhaja manah***

ratim - Rati; *gaurīm* - Gaurī; *līle* - Līlā; *api* - even; *tapati* - burns; *saundarya* - of beauty; *kiraṇaiḥ* - with the rays; *śacī* - Śacī; *lakṣmī* - Lakṣmī; *satyāḥ* - Satyabhāmā; *paribhavati* - defeats; *saubhāgya* - fortune; *balanaiḥ* - with the strength; *vaśīkārāis* - controls; *candrāvalī* - Candrāvalī; *mukha* - headed by; *navīna* - youthful; *vraja satīḥ* - chaste girls of Vraja; *kṣipati* - throws; *ārād* - far away; *yā* - who ; *tām* - Her; *hari dayita* - dear to Hari; *rādhām* - Rādhā; *bhaja* - worship; *manah* - O mind!

O mind! Remember Haripriyā Rādhā, Who burns Rati, Gaurī and Līlā with the scorching rays of Her beauty, Who defeats Śacī, Lakṣmī and Satyabhāmā with the force of Her good fortune, and Who casts the young girls of Vraja, like Candrāvalī, far away with Her ability to control Śrī Kṛṣṇa!

Commentary:

In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha revealed his preference for Śrī Rādhā (*rādhā-snehādhika prīti*) on the pretext of instructing his own mind. The devotees who practice *mañjarī-bhava* mainly worship Śrī Rādhārāṇī, and their worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a concomitant factor.

The *mañjarīs* have given their lives to Śrī Rādhā; without Rādhā their world is dark.

tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jīvāmi tvayā vinā (Vilāpa Kusumāñjali)

"Hā Rādhe! I am Yours, I am Yours! I can't live without You!"
This is the main anthem of those who practice *mañjarī bhāva!*

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha instructs his mind:
hari-dayita rādhāṁ bhaja manaḥ

"O mind! Worship Hari's beloved, Rādhā!"

Without love no one can become dear to Kṛṣṇa. In Bhagavad Gītā Kṛṣṇa tells Śrī Arjuna: *yo mad bhaktaḥ sa me priya*

"He who is My devotee is dear to Me."

There are four different gradations of love of God:
aṇu (atomic), *āpekṣika nyūnādhika-maya* (more or less),
mahān (great), and *parama mahān* (topmost).

Ordinary devotees have an *aṇu*, or atomic fraction of love for God, and they are just slightly dear to Kṛṣṇa. Devotees like Nārada have more or less love and they are more dear to Kṛṣṇa than the first group. The people of Vraja like Subala, Nanda-Yaśodā, Lalitā and the eight *sakhīs*, have great love for Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa also has great love for them.

Only Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī has the **greatest love** for Kṛṣṇa, and She is **also most dear to Him**.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's written examples of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's mutual love are incomparable!

*govindānaṅga rājive bhānu śrīr vārsabhānavī
kṛṣṇa hṛt kumudollāse sudhākara kara sthitiḥ*

"As the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu She is the beautiful sun that shines on the lotus flower of Govinda's erotic desire, and She is the ambrosial moon which casts its rays on the Kṛṣṇa-lily and thus delights it".

*kṛṣṇa mānasa haṁsasya mānasi sarasī varā
kṛṣṇa cātaka jīvātu navāmbhoda payaḥ śrutih*

"She is the great Mānasa Sarovara where the swan of Kṛṣṇa's mind flies and She is the shower from the fresh monsoon cloud which gives life to the Cātaka-bird named Kṛṣṇa".

*mukunda matta mātaṅga vihārāpāra dirghikā
kṛṣṇa prāṇa mahā mīna khelanānanda vāridhiḥ*

"She is the endless lake of enjoyment for the mad elephant Mukunda and She is the ocean of bliss where the great fish of Kṛṣṇa's life-air plays".

*kṛṣṇa mañjula tāpiñche vilasat svarṇa yūthikā
govinda navya pāthode sthira vidyul latādbhutā*

"She shines like a golden Yūthikā-vine on the lovely Tamāla-tree named Kṛṣṇa and She is a wonderful steady lightning-vine on the fresh Govinda-raincloud".

*grīṣme govinda sarvāṅge candra candana candrikā
śīte śyāma śubhāṅgeṣu pīta paṭṭa lasat paṭi*

"In the summer She is soothing sandal paste, camphor and moonlight on all of Govinda's limbs and in the winter She is a beautiful yellow silken garment which covers Śyāma's auspicious limbs".

*madhau kṛṣṇa tarūllāse madhu śrīr madhurākṛtiḥ
mañju mallāra rāga śrīḥ prāvṛṣi śyāma harṣiṇī*

"In the spring She is the vernal goddess of fortune that delights the Kṛṣṇa-tree with Her sweet form, and during the monsoon She delights Śyāma with the beautiful Mallāra rāga".

*ṛtau śaradi rāsaika rasikendram iha sphuṭam
varitum hanta rāsa-śrīr viharantī sakhī-śritā*

"Āha! In the autumn She clearly accepts the only enjoyer of the Rāsa-dance (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) as Her husband and then enjoys the Rāsa-dance with Him and Her girlfriends as the Rāsa-Śrī, the goddess of fortune of the Rāsa-dance!"

*hemante smara yuddhārtham aṭantam rāja-nandanam
pauruṣena parājetum jaya-śrīr mūrti dhāriṇī
(Viśākhānandada Stotram 51-62)*

"In the Hemanta-season She wanders around with the prince (of Vraja) for the sake of an erotic battle and then She defeats Him with masculine power, assuming the form of the goddess of victory".

Such examples that show the people of the world how Śrī Rādhā is Hari Priyā are very rare in this world. Supernatural things are simply beyond the grasp of any earthly comparison. (An effort has been made, though, to explain this to the external world in this way)

Actually Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are One Self in two bodies, like one blue and one golden lotus on a single stem in a lake of love. Because of Their love They became non different in such a way that one can't even say anymore that "Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa's" and "Kṛṣṇa is Rādhā's".

The great poet Karnapura wrote:

*preyāñs te'hañ tvam api ca mama preyasīti pravādas
tvañ me prāṇā aham api tavāsmīti hanta pralāpaḥ
tvañ me te syām aham iti ca yat tac ca no sādhu rādhe
vyāhāre nau na hi samucito yusmad asmat prayogaḥ*
(*Alankāra Kaustubha* 5.34)

"Ayi Rādhe! It is simply hearsay when one says that I am Your beloved and You are My lover. One simply raves by saying that I am Your life and You are Mine. It is also not good to say that You are Mine and I am Yours, because such words indicate a difference. It is not proper to speak about Us in terms of You and Me."

(Śrīla Rāmānanda Rāya sang: *nā so ramaṇa nā hām ramaṇī; duhuñ mana manobhava peśala jāni*, Caitanya Caritāmṛta):

"He is not the lover and I am not the beloved. I know Their minds were squashed by Cupid."

Because of Their great love it is as if Their minds and hearts have merged with each other.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O mind! Worship Kṛṣṇa's beloved, Śrī Rādhā!". One may ask here: Why does Śrī Raghunātha, being a Yugala-upāsaka (worshiper of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa), worship only Śrī Rādhā?

Śrīmat Sanātana Gosvāmī provides the answer in his Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta (2.7.11):

*śrī rādhājñā pratipālanenaiva śrī kṛṣṇasya vaśīkaraṇāt svayam
evādhikādhika tat saṅga sukha saṁsiddher iti dik:*

"By serving Rādhā or following Her order, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is more easily captured than when one serves Him directly, and the bliss of His company automatically becomes more and more available."

In Viśākhānandada Stotram (131) Śrī Raghunātha dāsa writes:

*bhajāmi rādhām aravinda-netraṃ
smarāmi rādhāṃ madhura smitāsyām
vadāmi rādhāṃ karuṇā bharādraṃ
tato mamānyāsti gatir na kāpi*

"I worship Rādhā, Who has lotus like eyes, I remember Rādhā, who has a sweetly smiling face, and I speak of Rādhā, Who is melting of compassion. In this way there is no other goal for me".

While Śrī Raghunātha speaks about Śrī Rādhā's worship his mind becomes absorbed in Rādhā's sweetness and he expresses his experience by saying: *ratim gauri līle api tapati saundaryā-kiraṇaiḥ*

"With the rays of Her beauty She's scorching Cupid's spouse Rati, Lord Śiva's spouse Gaurī and the presiding goddess of the *līlā-śakti* (play-power) Līlā-devī."

The experience of Śrī Rādhā lies within *prema*. *premera svarūpa deha prema vibhāvita* (C.C.)

"Her body is made of *prema* and Her constitution consists entirely of *prema*."

Without practicing devotion with love one can't experience Śrī Rādhā's sweetness. If, by Her grace, one can experience one drop of the ocean of Rādhikā's self-manifest sweetness in one's heart, that is illuminated by *viśuddha sattva* (transcendence), then one can understand it. The ray of beauty that is described here is is not a ray of material light, it is the light of the quintessence of *prema*, *mahā bhāva*. This ray pleases the eyes - it doesn't dazzle them!

Once these rays of beauty which defeat millions of lightning strikes touch the eyes, the eyes always want to remain immersed in them. The scorching affliction caused upon Rati, Gaurī and Lilā described within here, comes from their bodily luster being defeated by the splendour of Rādhikā's form.

In this connection we will give an example from the Purāṇas: In the 40th chapter of the Patāla Khaṇḍa of Padma Purāṇa, Nārada Muni praises Śrī Rādhā as follows:

*bhrāntaṁ sarveṣu lokeṣu mayā svacchanda-cāriṇā
 asyā rūpeṇa sadṛśī dṛṣṭā naiva ca kutracit
 mahā-māyā bhagavati dṛṣṭā śailendra-nandini
 yasyā rūpeṇa sakalaṁ muhyate sa-carācaram
 lakṣmīḥ sarasvatī kāntir vidyādyās ca vara-striyaḥ
 chāyām api sprśantyaś ca kadācin naiva dṛśyate
 viṣṇor yaṁ mohanaṁ rūpa haro yena vimohitaḥ
 mayā dṛṣṭaṁ ca tad api kuto'syāḥ sadṛśaṁ bhavet
 asyāḥ sandarśanād eva govinda caraṇāmbuje
 yaṁ premābdhir abhūt sā me bhūta-pūrva na karhicit
 ayaḥ devi mahā yoge māyeśvari mahāprabhe
 mahā mohana divyāṅgi mahā mādhurya varṣiṇi
 mahādbhuta rasānanda śithilikṛta mānase
 mahā bhāgyena kenāpi gatāsi mama dṛk patham*

"I have freely wandered through all the worlds, but a form like Hers I have never seen anywhere! I have seen Mahāmāyā, the daughter of the mountain (Pārvatī), whose form enchants all moving and non-moving creatures, and I have seen Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kānti, Vidyā and all the best of women, but they could not even touch the shadow of Her sweet form!

I have seen the form of Mohinī that Lord Viṣṇu assumed and that enchanted the demons and even Lord Śiva, but even She did not look like Her (Rādhikā). I have never seen that form,

which has given me an ocean of love for Govinda's lotus feet on mere sight, before.

Ayi devi! O Mahā Yoge! O Goddess of *māyā*! O greatly effulgent goddess with the very enchanting divine form! O You Who showers great sweetness! O You Who softens the mind with very wonderful blissful *rasa*! By some great fortune You crossed the path of my eyes!"

Therefore it is said (in Caitanya Caritāmṛta):

yāra saundaryādi guṇa vāñche lakṣmī pārvatī

"The goddess of fortune, Pārvatī and all other goddesses covet Her qualities, like Her good fortune."

Then Śrī Raghunātha says *śacī lakṣmī satyāḥ paribhavati saubhāgya balanaiḥ*:

"By the force of Her good fortune or Her admirable love She defeats Śacī, Lakṣmī and Satyabhāmā".

The Hari Vaiṣṇava explains that Satyabhāmā is even more fortunate than Śacī and Lakṣmī:

satyabhāmottamā strinām saubhāgye cādhikam bhavet:

"Of all women, Satyabhāmā is the most fortunate".

Even this Satyabhāmā desired Śrī Rādhā's fortunate qualities, but did not get them.

yāhāra saubhāgya guṇa vāñche satyabhāmā (C.C.)

"Satyabhāmā desires Her (Rādhā's) qualities of fortune."

What then to speak of Śacī, the queen of heaven, and Lakṣmī, the goddess of fortune? There is no comparison to Kṛṣṇa's admiration for Śrī Rādhā.

In Śrī Kṛṣṇa's words:

*śuno rādhe ei rasa- āmi ye tomāra vaśa,
toma vine nāhi loy mane
japite tomāra nāma, dhairaya na dhare prāṇa,
tuyā rūpa koriye dheyāne*

"Listen, O Rādhē! I am under Your control! I don't like to think of anyone but You! My heart can't remain patient when I repeat Your name and I meditate on Your form!"

*śrī rādhe śrī rādhe vāṇī, ye dige yāra mukhe śuni,
sei dike dhāy mora mon
cātaka phukāre yeno, ghana cāhe variṣaṇa,
teno heri o cāṇḍa vadana*

"My mind runs in any direction where I hear from anyone's mouth the words: "Śrī Rādhē! Śrī Rādhē". I stare at Your moon-like face like a Cātaka-bird hankering for a shower from the raincloud."

*khene khene mukha tuli' ghana ḍāki rādhā buli,
tabe prāṇa hoy nivārana
tomā anusare āsi, kuñjera bhitore bosī,
tomā lāgi ei vṛndāvana*

"Crying and crying, I lift My face and loudly call for Rādhā. Only then My life is saved. I follow You and wait for You, sitting in a *kuñja*. I like Vṛndāvana only because of You!"

No girl in Vraja can madden and gladden Kṛṣṇa in such a way, not even Candrāvalī.

That's why Śrī Raghunātha states in the end: *vaśīkārāis candrāvalī mukha navīna vraja-satīḥ*.

"She controls all the young chaste girls of Vraja, headed by Candrāvalī."

Śrī Rādhikā has the mood of *madīyatā* (He is mine) towards Kṛṣṇa, while Candrāvalī has the (inferior) mood of *tadīyatā* (I am His).

In Govinda Lilāmṛta (11.131) it is described:

*candrāvalī praṇaya rūpa guṇaiḥ prayatnād
vyaktīkṛtair vyaracayat svavaśaṁ bakārim
śrī rādhikā tu sahaja prakāṭair nijais tair
vyasmārayat tam iha tām api hā kuto'nyāḥ*

"Candrāvalī must do some effort to somehow control Kṛṣṇa by showing her love, her form, and her qualities, but Śrī Rādhikā can naturally and easily control Kṛṣṇa with Her qualities, making Him forget even Candrāvalī, O! What to speak of other girls?"

Hence Śrī Raghunātha prays to his mind:

*yāra aṅga saundaryete, kāma-patnī rati tāpe,
śrī rādhāra caraṇe luṭāya
līlā śakti bhava gaurī, yāhāra saundarya heri,
manas tāpe māne parājaya*

*saubhāgya bolete yini, kṛṣṇa kāntā śiromaṇi,
śacī, lakṣmī, satyabhāmā dūre
vaśīkarā śrī govinde, candrāvali sakhī-vṛnde
santāpa pradāna yiho kore*

*he mana! se gāndharvikā, hari priyā śrī rādhikā,
jīvana sarvasva kori loho
prema taraṅgiṇī nāma, prema kaṅṭhe koro gāna,
ārati piriti rasa cāho*

"O mind! Take this Hari Priyā Śrī Rādhikā, or Gāndharvikā, the crown jewel of Kṛṣṇa's consorts, Whose bodily beauty scorches Cupid's spouse Rati and makes her roll at Her feet,

Who makes Līlā and Gauṛī accept defeat in anguish after they beheld Her beauty, Who casts Śacī, Lakṣmī and Satyabhāmā far away with the force of Her good fortune, Who controls Śrī Govinda and Who gives affliction even to Candrāvalī and her girlfriends, as the all-in-all of your life.

Sing the glories of this river of love with a loving voice, eagerly desiring the taste of love for Her!"

TEACHING NR. 11:

***samaṁ śrī-rūpeṇa smara-vivaśa-rādhā-giri-bhṛtor
vraje sākṣāt-sevā-labhana-vidhaye tad-gaṇa-yujoh
tad-ijyākhyā-dhyāna-śravaṇa-nati-pañcāmṛtam idam
dhayan nityā govardhanam anudinam tvaṁ bhaja manah***

samaṁ - with; *śrī rūpeṇa* - with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī; *smara* - Cupid; *vivaśa* - overwhelmed; *rādhā giribhṛtoḥ* - Rādhā Kṛṣṇa; *vraje* - in Vraja; *sākṣāt* - directly; *sevā* - service; *labhana* - attaining; *vidhaye* - in the course of; *tad* - Their; *gaṇa* - devotees; *yujah* - with; *tad* - Their; *ijya* - formal worship; *ākhyā* - glorifying; *dhyāna* - meditating; *śravaṇa* - hearing; *nati* - bowing down; *pañca* - five; *amṛtam* - nectar; *idam* - this; *dhayan* - drinking; *nityā* - with great devotional expertise; *govardhanam* - Govardhana Hill; *anudinam* - every day; *tvaṁ* - you; *bhaja* - worship; *manah* - mind.

O mind! For the sake of attaining the service of Rādhā and Giridhārī, Who are absorbed in erotic play along with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and her group, you should daily worship Govardhana Hill with five kinds of nectar, namely formal worship (ijya or pūjā), singing of his name

(ākhyā or kīrtana), meditation, hearing about his glories and bowing down to him with great devotional expertise!

Commentary:

In this final verse of Manāḥ Śikṣā Śrī Raghunātha dāsa instructs his mind on how to worship Girirāja Govardhana to attain the service and the *darśana* of his most beloved deity Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Giridhārī with Their boyfriends like Subala and Their girlfriends like Lalitā.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata it is seen that Śrī Rādhikā called Govardhana Hill **the best of Hari's servants** and only three devotees have been garlanded there with the title-of-honour 'best of Hari's servants':

King Yudhiṣṭhira, Uddhava and Govardhana Hill.

Amongst them, however, Govardhana Hill is again the greatest. The duty of a servant is to serve his master, and Govardhana's exclusive dedication to the Divine Couple is matchless. This will be well known through the following two *stavas* of Stavāvalī, which are entirely dedicated to Govardhana Hill.

It is even better to serve the Lord's devotees than to serve the Lord Himself, if one wants to attain the service of the Lord's lotus feet.

The Lord told His dear devotee Uddhava '*mad bhakta pūjābhyādhikā*': "It is better to worship My devotee."

It may still be doubted whether or not the Lord can be attained by serving the Lord directly, but it is sure that the method of serving the Lord's devotees is flawless! Therefore Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has said that all the items of devotional service to the Lord can also be practiced by serving the Lord's devotees. We have described this in the first verse of Manāḥ Śikṣā.

With this in mind Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says: *nityā govardhanam anudinam tvam bhaja manaḥ*

"O mind! Worship Govardhana Hill with great devotional expertise, every day!" This devotional expertise is called *sāsaṅga-bhajana*, devotion with attachment and free from offenses and *bhajana* which is not mechanically and ritually performed in an absent-minded way. This kind of *bhajana* blesses the devotee with the full savour of each item of the practice. In this way Śrī Raghunātha dāsa has described five items of *bhajana* here:

tad ijjākhyā dhyāna śravaṇa nati pañcāmṛtam idam dhayan:

"There are five kinds of nectarean worship of Govardhana Hill which can be drunk: *pūjā* (ritual worship), *nāma* (chanting his Holy Name), *dhyāna* (meditating on him), *śravaṇa* (hearing about him) and *namaskāra* (offering obeisances unto him).

ijyā means *pūjā* or ritual worship. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written: *śraddhā viśeṣataḥ prītiḥ śrī mūrter aṅghri sevane* (B.R.S. 1.2.90)

"The lotus feet of the deity should be served with special faith and love."

pratimā nahe tumi - sākṣāt vrajendra-nandana
(C.C. Madhya 5)

"You are not a statue - You are the prince of Vraja Himself!" This faith must be there while serving the deity with love, then the sweet touch, or another kind of personal response will be obtained from the deity. In this way the first of Śrī Raghunātha's five kinds of nectarean, expert worship, named *ijyā*, is relished.

ākhyā means *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. The devotees who perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* with great love and attachment, having firm faith in the statement of the scriptures that there's no difference between Kṛṣṇa and His name, and that **nāma-**

sañkīrtana is both the means and the goal, become blessed with the full relish of the nectar of the Holy Name. This means ‘expertise in *nāma sañkīrtana*’. The word *ākhyā* also refers to hearing topics about Śrī Hari in an assembly of devotees, or glorification in song of Hari’s qualities and pastimes (*līlā-kīrtana* or *rasa-kīrtana*).

Thirdly there is *dhyāna* or *smaraṇa*. According to Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī *dhyāna* is the third stage of meditation.

tad idaṁ smaraṇaṁ pañca-vidham. yat kiñcid anusandhānaṁ smaraṇam. sarvataś cittam ākṛśya sāmānyākāreṇa manodhāraṇaṁ dhāraṇā. viśeṣato rūpādi cintanaṁ dhyānam. amṛta dhāravad avichinnaṁ tat dhruvānusmṛtiḥ. dhyeya-mātra sphuraṇaṁ samādhir iti.

"There are five stages of *smaraṇa*. *smarana* itself is a random, accidental remembrance of Hari’s names and forms, *dhāraṇā* means drawing one’s mind away from all other topics and holding Śrī Hari’s names and forms within the mind in an ordinary way, *dhyāna* means specifically meditating on some forms and names, *dhruvānusmṛti* means to meditate continuously like a stream of nectar, and *samādhi* means simply to transcendently envisage the object of meditation. On the path of *raga-bhakti* a practitioner who is fixed in *smaraṇa* firmly fixes his mind on his *siddha-svarūpa* and forgets about his material body and everything that is related to it, entering into the kingdom of *līlās* and becoming blessed by attaining a greatly astonishing kind of relish. This is called expertise in meditation, or the relish of nectar.

Fourthly there is *śravaṇa*, hearing topics of Kṛṣṇa from the mouths of saintly devotees. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has called this item of devotional practice the most important one, because without hearing first one can’t develop a taste for all the other items of

devotional practice. One can taste the full nectar by hearing about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes from the mouth of a greatly realized and like-minded devotee and thus become most blessed with the taste of nectar. This is true expertise in hearing.

tatrāpi savāsana mahānubhava mukhāt sarvasya śrī kṛṣṇa nāmādi śravaṇaṁ tu parama bhāgyād eva sampadyate
(Bhakti Sandarbhaḥ - 262 anuḥ).

Finally there is *nati*, or offering obeisances. This is also a nectarean engagement if one keeps the sweet mercy of the Lord and His love for His devotees in the heart.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has attained these five kinds of nectar and always worships Govardhana Hill, faithfully residing at the base of the hill. He instructs his mind to serve and see the love-intoxicated Divine Couple along with Their friends like Subala and Their girlfriends like Lalitā, teaching his mind that this can't be accomplished without following in the footsteps of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in the *sādhaka*-body and of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī in the *siddha*-body.

The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas similarly should take shelter of the base of Govardhana Hill and follow in the footsteps of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in the present external body and of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī in the mentally conceived spiritual body. In this way they can also relish these five kinds of nectar. This is a flawless way of receiving the personal *darśana* and devotional service of the Śrī Yugala, which has been taught here by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

vrata kori vraja vāse, yugala ujvala rase,
nirantara yiho kore snāna
āmāra ārādhya guru, rūpa prema kalpa-taru
parama vairāgya balavān

"I vow to live in Vraja and I will always bathe in the brilliant erotic *rasa* of the Divine Couple. My worshipable master Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is a wish yielding tree of love of God, is a most powerful renunciate."

tāhāra saṅgete mana, lalitādi sakhigaṇa,
priya sakhā subalādi saṅge.
yugala kiśora kuñje, yadi cāo sevā puñje,
matta yārā madana taraṅge
śravaṇa, kirtana, smaraṇa, arcana, pāda sevana,
ei pañcāmṛta kori pāna.
girirāja govardhane, bhajo mana rātri dine,
kuñja sevā koribeka dāna

"O mind! If you want to render plenty of service to the Adolescent Couple in the groves, as They are accompanied by Their dear boyfriends headed by Subala and Their girlfriends headed by Lalitā, intoxicated by waves of erotic joy, then drink the five kinds of nectar of hearing, chanting, remembering, ritually worshipping and serving the feet of Girirāja Govardhana day and night. He will certainly give you these devotional services in the *kuñja*!"

BENEDICTION:

manah-śikṣā-daikādaśaka-varam etan madhurayā
girā gāyaty uccaiḥ samadhigata-sarvārthayati yaḥ
sa-yūthaḥ śrī-rūpānuga iha bhavan gokula-vane
jano rādhā-kṛṣṇātula-bhajana-ratnam sa labhate

manaḥ - the mind; *śikṣā* - teachings; *da* - giving; *ekādaśaka* - eleven verses; *varam* - the best; *etad* - this; *madhurayā* - with sweetness; *girā* - voice; *gāyati* - who sings; *uccaiḥ* - loudly; *samadhigata* - readers; *sarva* - all; *artha-tati* - desires; *yaḥ* - who; *sa* - with; *yūthaḥ* - the group; *rūpa* - Rūpa Gosvāmī; *anuga* - followers; *iha* - here; *bhavan* - being so; *gokula-vane* - in the forest of Gokula; *janaḥ* - person; *rādhā-kṛṣṇa* - Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; *atula* - matchless; *bhajana* - worship; *ratnam* - jewel; *sa* - he; *labhate* - attains.

Whoever loudly sings these eleven great instructing verses with a sweet voice and a fixed mind, being a follower of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his devotees, will attain the incomparable jewel of the worship of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the forest of Gokula.

Commentary:

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa bestows a benediction (*phala-sruti*) upon the readers of his Manah Śikṣā.

In his Manah Śikṣā Śrī Raghunātha dāsa described the rules to be followed by *rāgānugā*-devotees, the different obstacles they may face and the essential instructions for *rāgānugā-bhakti*.

It's no exaggeration to say that there are very few instructing poems in this world which are as beautiful as this one.

On the pretext of instructing his own mind in these eleven verses Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has given a matchless gift to all the devotees of the world, therefore the assembled devotees will undoubtedly always remain indebted to him. The devotees should try to enter deeply into the purports of these verses.

Not only has Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī given us valuable instructions in this Manah Śikṣā, in the end he even offers a great blessing to whoever chants this *stava*! His words are

already filled with the *rasa* of *bhajana*, and are able to take the minds of the hearer and chanter along to the kingdom of love of God like a powerful *mantra*, and the benediction he offers here is as infallible as the words of the sages of yore, for the Lord never fails to fulfill the desires of His pure devotee. Undoubtedly the Lord will make this benediction come true for whoever loudly recites this Manah Śikṣā with a sweet voice (and whoever hears it as well)! How very wonderful is this benediction:

*sayūthaḥ śrī rūpānuga iha bhavan gokula-vane jano rādhā-
kṛṣṇātula bhajana ratnaṁ sa labhate*

"The chanter of this Manah Śikṣā will be blessed by attaining the matchless jewel of worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the forest of Gokula, following in the footsteps of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and his devotees."

The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava way of worship is one of allegiance to Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī himself has said: *vraja-lokānusārataḥ*. A person who desires love of the lotus feet of Rādhā and Mādhava should follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja, serving Them both in his external devotee-body (in allegiance to Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī) and in his spiritual body (in allegiance to Śrī Rūpa and Rati Mañjarī). "

*bāhya antara ihāra dui to sādhana;
bāhya - sādha dehe kore śravaṇa kirtana
mane - nija siddha deha koriyā bhāvana;
rātri dine kore vraje kṛṣṇera sevana
(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Madhya 22)*

"There are two kinds of devotional practice - internal and external. In the external body one engages in hearing and

chanting and in the mind one conceives of one's own spiritual body, in which to serve Kṛṣṇa in Vraja day and night."

In the form of this blessed worship the devotee attains a priceless jewel, because *bhajana* is the means as well as the goal. *bhajana* is performed with the aim of doing more *bhajana*. When the external body of the devotee perishes he is blessed with attaining the long-cherished devotional service of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

*sādhane bhāvibe yāhā,
siddha dehe pābe tāhā,
rāga pathera ei se upāya*

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

"Whatever you think of during your devotional practice you will attain in your spiritual body. This is the way of *rāga bhakti*."

*dāsa raghunātha kṛta, ekādaśa madhura pada,
ānandete yei jana gāya
sādhaka dehe śrī rūpera, siddhite rūpa mañjarīra,
ānugatye yugala sevā pāya*

"Anyone who blissfully sings these eleven sweet verses composed by Śrī Dāsa Raghunātha, in allegiance to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī in his external devotee-body and to Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī in his spiritual body, will attain the devotional service of the Divine Couple."

*he mana! niyama kore, ei pada madhura svare,
ucca kaṅṭhe sadā koro gāna
pulake puribe aṅga, sāttvika bhūṣaṇa raṅga,
yugala kiśora hobe prāṇa*

"O mind! Always sing these verses with a loud and sweet voice as a rule. The hairs then will stand up on your limbs, you will be ornamented by *sāttvika* ecstatic symptoms and the Adolescent Couple of Vraja will become your very life!"

Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Manah Śikṣā, "Teachings for the mind".

Translated 1991 - 2000 by Advaita Dāsa.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmināḥ Prārthanāḥ

Four Prayers by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

PRAYER No.1

*prātaḥ pīta-paṭe kucopari-ruṣā ghūrṇābhare locane
bimboṣṭhe pṛthu vikṣate jaṭilayā sandṛśyamāne muhuḥ
vācā yukti-juṣā mṛṣā lalitayā tām sampratārya krudhā
dṛṣṭvemaṁ hr̥di bhīṣitā stutavatī rādhā dhruvaṁ pātu vaḥ*

prātaḥ - in the morning; *pīta* - yellow; *paṭe* - on the cloth; *kuca* - breasts; *upari* - upon; *ruṣā* - angrily; *ghūrṇābhare* - rolling; *locane* - eyes; *bimboṣṭhe* - on the Bimba-fruitlike lips; *pṛthu* - big; *vikṣate* - scratches; *jaṭilayā* - by the mother-in-law; *sandṛśyamāne* - being seen; *muhuḥ* - again and again; *vācā* - words; *yukti* - reasonable; *juṣā* - endowed with; *mṛṣā* - with lies; *lalitayā* - by Lalitā; *tām* - Jaṭilā; *sampratārya* - deceiving; *krudhā* - angrily; *dṛṣṭvā* - having seen; *imām* - this; *hr̥di* - in the heart; *bhīṣitā* - afraid; *stutavatī* - glorifying; *rādhā* - Rādhā; *dhruvaṁ* - certainly; *pātu* - may protect; *vaḥ* - you all.

In the morning, Jaṭilā becomes very angry when she sees a yellow cloth on Rādhikā's breasts. Time and again she looks at Rādhikā's rolling eyes and the big bruises on Her Bimba-cherry-like lips.

Lalitā-sakhī then deceives Jaṭilā by speaking false, but reasonable words to her and looking at Rādhikā with

false anger. May Śrī Rādhā, Who then fearfully praises Lalitā, protect you all!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In his *siddha svarūpa* Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī here offers four prayers and concomitantly relishes the sweetness of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's intimate pastimes.

The only means of survival for a *premika* (loving devotee) is the relish and experience of these sweet pastimes, whether in dreams or in visions. When he suffers the pangs of separation, great humility arises in his heart and his life-air comes up to his throat. Then these self-manifest sweet pastimes arise in his dreams and visions and save his life. Such visions are only normal to Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who is the Lord's eternally perfect associate⁹.

In Manaḥ Śikṣā he very humbly considered himself to be an ordinary neophyte, struggling with all kinds of obstacles. Now strong feelings of separation upset him and carry him into the kingdom of sweet and greatly relishable confidential pastimes.

It is the end of the night and the eastern horizon is filled with the morning-red. On Vṛndā's indication the male and female parrots awaken Śrī Rādhā and Mādhava, Who are served by

⁹ In Vraja Śrīmad Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's *svārūpa* is Śrī Rati Mañjarī, nicknamed Tulasi Mañjarī. In the Śrī-Śrī Gaura Govindārcana Smaraṇa Paddhati by Śrīla Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī it is written:

ratyambujākhyāḥ kuñjo'stīndulekhā kuñja dakṣiṇe;
tatraiva tiṣṭhati sadā surūpā rati mañjarī
tārāvalī dukūleyaṁ taḍittulya tanucchahiḥ;
dakṣiṇā mṛdvikā khyātā tulasīti vadanti yām
iyāṁ śrī raghunāthākhyāṁ prāptā gaura rase kalau (469-472)

Their attendant girlfriends and maidservants. Upset about Their impending separation, Rādhā and Mādhava slowly leave the Hemāmbuja-kuñja at Govinda Sthali¹⁰ and begin to return home. During Their nocturnal sports They had exchanged Their upper garments, and the *sakhīs* have a lot of fun when they see Rādhikā wearing Kṛṣṇa's yellow cloth and Kṛṣṇa wearing Rādhikā's blue cloth.

When they show each other how many bruises They have on Their limbs they giggle and cover their mouths with their veils. The enchanted Divine Pair doesn't understand why the *sakhīs* are laughing and just look around here and there.

Śrīmatī, in the company of Her *sakhīs*, angrily curses the sunrise. With wonderful, lust-inciting nectarean words Śyāmasundara then describes the wonderful beauty of the Vṛndāvana-forest and shows it to Her.

The Divine Pair simply forgets to return home while They are thus absorbed in Their clever conversations! Meanwhile, on Vṛndā's indication, an old female monkey named Kakkhatī indicates the coming of Rādhā's mother-in-law Jaṭilā, and then the Śrī Yugala fearfully and quickly leave for Their individual homes. At this stage the *sakhīs* forget that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa return home with Each others' clothes on. In such a state everyone goes to sleep in their own homes.

It is morning-time. The sun has risen for long illuminating the eastern direction of the universe with its golden rays. The world becomes filled with the sounds of work, but Śrī Rādhā and Her girlfriends, exhausted after dancing the Rāsa all night, are still asleep.

¹⁰ The golden grove situated near the present Govinda Temple in Vṛndāvana, Ed.

Then Jaṭilā enters the bedroom of her daughter-in-law and awakens Her for doing Sūrya-pūjā, saying:
 "Vadhū-mātā! Get up, get up! It's very late! Your time for doing Sūrya-pūjā is passing!"

When Lalitā hears Jaṭilā's voice she wakes up and awakens Rādhikā also. After being called by Lalitā many times Śrīmatī finally wakes up and sits up in Her bed. Her ruddy rolling eyes indicate that She's been up all night. Her chest is draped with a yellow cloth instead of Her own blue cloth and She has big bruises on Her cherry-like lips, indicating Her nocturnal enjoyments. Seeing this, Jaṭilā becomes startled with great anger and repeatedly casts crooked snake-like glances at Śrī Rādhā.

Lalitā, who understands that this is a very serious situation, then deceives Jaṭilā by speaking the following false but reasonable words to her:

"O mother! Your daughter-in-law is extremely self-willed, She doesn't listen to us! What can we do? Although we have forbidden Her, She still drank a lot of honey wine last night. That's why Her eyes are all red and rolling now! We told Her: 'Ayi Rādhe! There's a strong Malayan breeze blowing, it can bruise Your tender cherry-lips! Cover Your mouth with Your veil before You go to sleep!' But, O mother, She didn't listen to us and went to sleep with uncovered face. Now you can see the result! Then again, O venerable one, if you look at something after first having stared into the blazing sun-globe, you see everything yellow! The same thing happens to us sometimes, although we are still young girls! In this way you imagine that Śrī Rādhā wears a yellow dress instead of Her usual blue one! Factually, She doesn't wear yellow dresses even in dreams!"

Jaṭilā's anger subsides after she has been addressed in such a reasonable, but false way by Lalitā.

She becomes a little embarrassed and leaves the room, shaking her head. As soon as the venerable Jaṭilā is gone Śrīmatī fearfully praises Lalitā, who still stares at Her with falsely angry eyes, and Rādhikā praises her, saying:

"O Lalite! You are most conversant and you always act for My welfare! Your compassion on Me is endless! What calamity has overcome Me because I ignored your warnings! My heart is still thumping in My chest of fear! Tell Me how I can become well again!"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī relishes this pastime in a *sphūraṇa* as if he experiences it directly. The sensitive devotee who is fixed in *smaraṇa* will also occasionally think:

"I'm directly seeing these pastimes!" He will forget the idea of 'I'm doing *smaraṇa*!' when his *smaraṇa* becomes very deep.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa dwells in the kingdom of transcendental visions and relishes these visions very intensely. The practicing devotee should also identify himself with his *siddha-svarūpa* and experience as much as he can during his *smaraṇa*. These experiences will gradually carry him to the realm of deeper relish.

Śrī Raghunātha's vision has ended. To facilitate the *smaraṇa* of all the practicing *rāgānuga*-devotees of the world he most mercifully is keeping a loving picture of these relishable pastimes before them. The love-anointed mental eyes of those devotees who take shelter of Śrīmad dāsa Gosvāmī's lotus feet and who relish this verse with an ecstatic heart will soon perceive this *rasika* morning-pastime. They will perceive Śrī Rādhā's beautiful bedroom and Śrī Rādhā's pale face when She beholds Jaṭilā's angry face. They will see Jaṭilā shyly leaving the room after Lalitā deceived her with reasonable words, and they will see Śrīmatī praising Lalitā with love and fear at the same time, after She regained Her presence of mind.

These pastimes which are endowed with different emotions, will appear in the pure heart of a loving devotee, who is fixed in *smaraṇa* and take him to the kingdom of transcendental pastimes.

Most mercifully Śrīla Rāghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī blesses all the practicing devotees of the world, saying ***rādhā dhruvam pātu vah*** "May Rādhā always protect you all".

The question may now be asked: "If Rādhā asks Lalitā to save Her, then how can She Herself protect the devotees?"

Yes, She truly protects the devotees, for by remembering Her they will remember their *siddha-svarūpas* and leave the ocean of material suffering, where they are absorbed in bodily consciousness, to be gradually taken along to the kingdom of transcendental pastimes. All material desires of someone who hears, remembers, and describes these pastimes will be destroyed and he will swiftly attain the highest kind of devotion to God. This blessing was clearly propounded by Śrī Śuka Muni in the benedictory final verse of the Rāsa-līlā-chapters in Śrīmad Bhāgavata (*vikrīḍitaṁ vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ*).

*prātaḥ kāle bānarīra śunīyā vacana;
śaṅkāya satvara dhani kori gātrothhāna
bhrānti vaṣe pītāmbara uttariya pari;
grhe phire vinodini navinā kiśorī
śayana mandira śeje korilā śayana;
pitavāse stana yuga kori āchādāna
nidrāveśe ghūrṇyamāna nayana yugala;
bimbādhare kṣata cihna royeche sakala
suprabhāte e avasthā kori daraśana;
krodhe agni sama hoilo jaṭilāra mana
caturā lalitā sakhī cāturya chalete;*

mithyā yukti-pūrṇa vākye lāgilā kohite
 ayi mātāḥ ! tuyā vadhū ativa svādhinā;
 āmādera hita vākya kabhu to sone nā
 nivāraṇa korile-o gata rajanūte;
 atirikta madhupāna koilo icchā mate
 pratiphala du'nayane koro daraśana;
 vighūrṇita hoiteche o du'ṭi nayana
 hita lāgi kōhi morā yoto sakhīgaṇa;
 śayana koroho mukha kori ācchādana
 prabala ye pravāhita malaya pavana;
 bimbādhare braṇa hobe tāhāra kāraṇa
 e prārthanā korile-o nā śuni vacana;
 anāvṛta vadanete korilā śayana
 tāra phale adharete hoiyāche braṇa;
 duḥkhera upare duḥkha dekho sakhīgaṇa
 svapane-o pītāmbara nāhi pore rādhā;
 uttarīya dekhi aṅge lāgiyāche dhāndhā
 dina maṇi daraśane morā ye yuvati;
 āmādera nayane-o hoy se pratiti
 ayi mātāḥ ! he jaṭile! koro avadhāna;
 satya yā bolinu ithe nā bhāvīho āna
 ei mata jaṭilāya pratāraṇā kori;
 vidāya korilā tāre lalitā sundarī
 mithyā krodhe rādhā prati kori dṛṣṭipāta;
 bhūtā hoiyā kamalinī kore stutivāda
 he lalite! tuyā guṇa ki kohite jāni;
 tumi mora hitaiṣiṇī sakhī śīromaṇi
 ohe karuṇārdra cittā antaraṅgā sakhī;
 vacana laṅghiyā mora heno daśā dekhi
 ki rūpe vā svāsthya lābha koribo ekhana;

*tāhāra yukati bolo ei nivedana
sei guṇavati rādhā kṛṣṇa priyatamā;
rakṣā koru tomā' sabe ei to prārthanā¹¹*

PRAYER No. 2

***pika-paṭu-rava-vādyair bhṛṅga-jhaṅkāra-gānaḥ
sphurad-atula-kuḍuṅga-kroḍa-raṅge sa-raṅgam
smara-sadasi kṛtodyan nṛtyataḥ śrānta-gātram
vraja-nava-yuva-yugmaṁ nartakaṁ vījayāni***

pika - cuckoo; *paṭu* - expert; *rava* - sound; *vādyaiḥ* - with instrumental playing; *bhṛṅga* - bumblebee; *jhaṅkāra* - buzzing; *gānaḥ* - songs; *sphurad* - manifested; *atula* - matchless; *kuḍuṅga* - grove; *kroḍa* - courtyard; *raṅge* - on the dancing-stage; *saraṅgam* - with joy; *smara* - Cupid; *sadasi* - in the assembly; *kṛta* - done; *udyat* - rising; *nṛtyataḥ* - from dancing; *śrānta* - exhausted; *gātram* -body; *vraja* - Vraja; *nava* - fresh; *yuva* - young; *yugmaṁ* - couple; *nartakaṁ* - dancers; *vījayāni* - I fan.

I fan the young Dancing-Pair of Vraja, Who both have become exhausted from Their extensive dancing on the stage in the assembly of Cupid, situated in the yard of an incomparable forest-grove. They are accompanied by the instrumental music of the expertly singing cuckoos and the songs of the humming bees.

¹¹ Since the contents of this Bengali *pada* are entirely present in the above 'Stavāmṛta Kaṇā'-commentary we refrain from translating it, to avoid a bulk of the book.

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In his *siddha-svarūpa* Śrīmad Dāsa Gosvāmī perceives a sweet confidential pastime of the Yugala Kīśora in the Vilāsa Nikuñja, and, overwhelmed by ecstasy, he describes it in this verse.

The practicing devotees should endeavour to awaken their spiritual identity (*svarūpābhimāna*) and to similarly relish the flavours of these pastimes. Bodily consciousness is a powerful obstacle to perceiving the pastimes of the Yugala Kīśora. The highest aim of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is the loving service of the Yugala Kīśora in *mañjarī-bhāva*, in allegiance to the eternally perfect *mañjarīs*. Therefore the more the practicing devotees can give up bodily consciousness, identify themselves with their Guru-given *mañjarī-svarūpas* and become absorbed in internal *bhajana*, consisting of hearing, chanting and remembering, the more they will awaken a deep relish and a devotional ecstasy within their hearts which will carry them towards the kingdom of *līlās*.

These verses are the remnants of Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's relish of sweet Yugala-pastimes and it is the main internal practice of a practicing devotee to hear, chant, and remember these verse. These very powerful words will make the practicing devotee qualified in all respects.

On the bank of Śrī Rādhākunḍa is a solitary grove-temple. There Rādhā and Mādhava are seated on Their play-bed. No are *sakhīs* around, just Śrī Raghunātha dāsa in his *mañjarī-svarūpa*, engaged in fanning Them and massaging Their feet. How wonderful is the beauty of this *kuñja*, which is called Madana-Sukhadā-*kuñja*, the grove that delights Cupid, or: the grove in which Cupid delights the Yugala Kīśora! This *kuñja* is worthy of the name Madana-Sukhadā!

This famous Madana-Sukhadā-Kuñja is situated on the north-eastern corner of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa. In each of its four corners stand four huge Campaka-trees, whose red, green, yellow and blue flowers delight all directions with their delectable fragrance.

The parrots, cuckoos, and bees appear in various colours and sing their sweet songs, and the branches of these Campaka-trees, which are entwined by Mādhavī-vines and which meet overhead, provide a pleasant shade and form a kind of large regal temple in the *kuñja*.

Within the *kuñja* are different beautiful floral ornaments, dresses, beds, and canopies. The *kuñja* has four gates made of stakes on which leaves and a variety of flowers have been stuck, and the sweetly humming bees, that surround these flowers, serve as gatekeepers, which will not allow any hostile or unfavorable person to enter. The vertex of the *kuñja* is filled with cuckoos, which sing in the fifth note and sweetly humming bumblebees whose songs incite desires for amorous enjoyment in the hearts of Śrī-Śrī-Rādhā-Śyāma.

Understanding this, Śrīpāda who is engaged in Rādhā-Śyāma's devotional service as Tulasī Mañjarī, discretely leaves the *kuñja* and relishes the sweetness of Their amorous pastimes by peeping in through a hole in the *kuñja*-wall.

Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava become intoxicated in the course of Their pastimes. The *kuñja*-cottage is like a wonderful dancing stage for Their erotic dance where the bees sing sweet songs in the form of their humming and the cuckoos provide instrumental music with their sweet singing in the fifth note. The stage-manager of the *trauryatrika* (the trinity of song, dance, and instrumental music) is King Cupid himself or the causeless love of the Divine Pair.

The Divine Pair is so intoxicated because They both have the spotless desire just to make Each other happy. They dance (make love) exactly the way Their causeless love wants Them to. These pastimes have nothing to do with the disgusting bodily affairs of mundane heroes and heroines, who are simply centered on personal sense-gratification. This is the sweet meeting of Sac-Cid-Ānanda and the pinnacle of love, named Mādanākhyā-Mahā-Bhāva!

This is the most precious treasure of the Bhāgavata Paramahansa's (topmost theistic swan-like saints) meditations! A practicing devotee will be blessed if he can give up his habituation to the degraded lusty pastimes of men and women in this world, whose bodies are composed merely of the five gross material elements, and develop the transcendental mood of a *mañjarī*, thus attaining the pinnacle of savour.

The words *smara sadasi* in the text indicate that such wonderful pastimes of the Yugala Kīśora were accomplished the grace of Cupid, or of Their Own causeless mutual love. In other words, just as some male and female dancer try to please and astonish a king by dancing, singing and playing musical instruments for him on a decorated stage, Rādhā and Mādhava now try to please and astonish King Cupid, or causeless love, with Their erotic pastimes, accompanied by the instrumental music of the singing cuckoos and the songs of the humming bees.

In the course of Their dancing the Śrī Yugala becomes tired and starts perspiring, so Tulasī enters the *kuñja* to serve Them, as if she is the embodiment of Their playful ecstasy. The affectionate maidservant attains the great treasure of Rādhā-Śyāma's devotional service by fanning Them and massaging Their feet. This is the practice as well as the perfection of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas! In the stage of practice

this consists of meditation and in the stage of perfection it consists of direct devotional service corresponding to one's own mood.

Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya sings:

prāṇeśvari! kobe more hobe kṛpā dīṭhi?
ājñāya āniyā kobe, vividha phulavara,
śunibo vacana duhu miṭhi
mṛgamada tilaka, sindūra banāyabo,
lepabo candana gandhe
gānṭhi mālatī phula, hāra pahirāobo
dhāoyābo madhukara vṛnde
lalitā kobe more, vījana deoyabo,
vījabo māruta mande
śrama-jala sakala, miṭabo duhu kalevara,
herabo parama ānande

(Prārthanā)

"O Queen of my heart! When will You cast Your merciful glance on me? When will I, on Your order, bring different flowers and hear Your and Mādhava's sweet words? I will make *tilaka* of musk, apply *sindūra* (to Your forehead or part) and anoint You with perfumes and sandalwood pulp. I will string a garland of *Mālatī*-flowers for You, which will attract the bumblebees, and hang it around Your neck. When will *Lalitā* hand me a fan, so that I can offer You a soft breeze, drying up all the sweatdrops on Your bodies? I will be most happy when I see that!"

Sitting on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, Śrīpāda Rāghunātha has obtained the good fortune of relishing this pastime within a transcendental vision and by engaging in devotional service.

Then for the relish of the *sādhakas*, he has ecstatically kept this relishable pastime and service on record in this beautiful verse.

*rādhākuṇḍe kuñja-rāja, madana sukhadā mājha,
nāṭya śālā ati manohara
kokilera ye kākali, amṛta nichiyā pheli,
sumadhura vādyā nirantara*

"In the king of *kuñjas* nearby Rādhākuṇḍa, named Madana-Sukhadā-Kuñja, is a very beautiful dancing stage, where the cuckoos sprinkle nectar with their singing and constantly provide sweet instrumental music".

*bhramara jhañkāra gāna, rasāla pañcama tāna,
kandarpera uddīpaka-maya
dike dike nirupama, citra śobhā manorama,
dekhi rasamayī rasamaya*

"The humming of the bumblebees sounds like luscious songs in the fifth note that incite erotic feelings. In all directions I see the incomparably wonderful, enchanting beauty of Rasamayī Rādhikā and Rasamaya Śyāma."

*kandarpa samare matta, ārambhilā mahā-nṛtya,
śrī rādhikā madana mohana.
mane ei abhilāṣa, rahi kuñjera eka pāśa,
heri nṛtya parama mohana*

"Intoxicated by Cupid's battle, Śrī Rādhikā and Madana Mohana commence a great erotic dance there. I wish I could stay in a corner of Their *kuñja* and behold Their most enchanting dance!"

*śrānta klānta kalevara, yugala kiśora vara,
 bindu bindu jhare sveda jala.
 nṛtyera kauśala aṅge, vījana koribo raṅge,
 duhu anga hoibe śītala.*

"The bodies of the excellent Yugala Kiśora, Who are such experts in dancing, become exhausted and studded with sweatdrops. I will blissfully fan Them, so that Their limbs are cooled off."

PRAYER No.3

***kuhū-kaṅṭhī-kaṅṭhād api kamana-kaṅṭhī mayi punar
 viśākhā gānasyāpi ca rucira-śikṣām praṇayatu
 yathāham tenaitad-yuva-yugalam ullāsyā sa-gaṇāl
 labhe rāse tasmān maṇi-pradaka-hārān iha muhuḥ***

kuhū-kaṅṭhī - cuckoo; *kaṅṭhāt* - than the voice; *api* - even; *kamana* - attractive; *kaṅṭhī* - voice; *mayi* - to me; *punaḥ* - again; *viśākhā* - Viśākhā; *gānasya* - of the song; *api* - even; *ca* - and; *rucira* - beautiful; *śikṣām* - teaching; *praṇayatu* - may give; *yathā* - so that; *aham* - I; *tena* - with that; *etad* - that; *yuva* - young; *yugalam* - pair; *ullāsyā* - of joy; *sagaṇāt* - with Their associates; *labhe* - attaining; *rāse* - in the Rāsa-dance; *tasmāt* - from Them; *maṇi* - jewel; *padaka* - medallions; *hārān* - necklaces; *iha* - here; *muhuḥ* - repeatedly.

May Viśākhā, whose voice is sweeter than the cuckoos, teach me how to sing beautiful songs! By singing such songs during the Rāsa-dance I will make the young Couple of Vraja and Their friends very happy and I can

constantly get jewelled medallions and necklaces from Them!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in his *mañjarī-svarūpa*, sees himself serving the Yugala Kīśora when They dance the Rāsa, by singing sweet songs he (she) learnt from Viśākhā.

The *mañjarīs* subsist only on devotional service. Service is their life! Bhakti means devotional service. The verbal root 'bhaj' inflected to 'kti' forms the word *bhakti*.

In the Garuḍa Purāṇa it is written: *bhaj ityeṣa vai dhātuḥ sevāyām parikīrtitaḥ*.

This stanza clearly shows that the verbal root *bhaj* indicates service. The topmost manifestation of devotional service is *mañjarī-bhāva*. The *mañjarīs* are the embodiments of devotional service themselves. Although in beauty and sweetness they equal the Yūtheśvarīs (*gopī*-group leaders), they don't care for that position and are simply absorbed in the savour of devotional service to the Yugala Kīśora.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda writes in Kṛṣṇa Bhāvanāmṛta (3.2):

*tā vidyud udyuti jayi prapadaika rekhā
vaidagdhya eva kila mūrtibhutas tathāpi
yūtheśvarītvam api samyag arocayitvā
dāsyāmṛtabdhim anusasnur ajasram asyāḥ*

"Each line on the toes of these *mañjarīs* defeats the bright splendour of the lightning. They are cleverness personified and although they are qualified to be *yūtheśvarīs* (*gopī*-group leaders) they have no taste for this at all. They are always immersed in the nectar ocean of Śrī Rādhikā's service."

The intimate *nikuñja*-service of The Yugala Kiśora is their very own treasure. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has written in his Vraja Vilāsa Stava (38):

*tāmbulārpaṇa pāda-mardana payo dānābhisārādibhir
vṛndāraṇya maheśvarīṃ priyatayā yās toṣayanti priyāḥ
prāṇa preṣṭha sakhikulād api kilāsaṅkocitā bhūmikāḥ
kelī bhūmiṣu rūpa mañjarī mukhās tā dāsikāḥ saṁśraye*

"I take shelter of Śrī Rādhikā's maidservants, headed by Rūpa Mañjarī, Who always engage in serving betel leaves, massaging the feet, serving water and arranging for the Divine Couple's secret trysts. These maidservants are even more dear to the great Queen of Vṛndāraṇya (Śrī Rādhikā) than the *prāṇa-preṣṭha-sakhīs* (the girlfriends who are dearer to Her than life), and She is therefore not at all shy before them!"

Suddenly the *Rāsa-līlā* appears before *svarūpāviṣṭa* Śrī Raghunātha's eyes. There are two kinds of Rāsa-dances: Nitya-Rāsa and Mahā-Rāsa. The Nitya-Rāsa is described in the Ādi Purāṇa and the Mahā-Rāsa in Śrīmad Bhāgavata. The Mahā-Rāsa is the dance of Rāseśvarī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and three billion *gopīs* and the Nitya-Rāsa is the Rāsa-Vihāra of Śrī Rādhārāṇī, thousands of Her *sakhīs* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī perceives the Nitya Rāsa.

In his *svarūpāveśa* Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī sees:

*maṇḍalī-bandhe gopigaṇa korena nartana;
madhye rādhā saha nāce vrajendra-nandana* (C.C.)

"The *gopīs* are dancing in a closed circle and in the middle Śrī Rādhā dances with the prince of Vraja".

How many tunes, rhythms, *rāgas* and *rāginīs* are They using! The *gopīs'* throats are coloured by *anurāga* (constant loving

attachment) and their voices are sprinkled with the nectar of love, hence their singing is most sweet. Śrī Śuka Muni says in Śrīmad Bhāgavata - *uccair jagur nṛtyamānā rakta kañṭhyo rati-priyāḥ* (Ś.B. 10.33.9)

"The *gopīs*, who were Rati-priyā (dear to Cupid's wife, or to love personified) were dancing and singing loudly, their throats coloured (sweetened) by different *rāgas* (or by love)."

In the Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī-commentary on this part of the verse it is written: *rakta-kañṭhyaḥ prema snigdha kañṭhya iti parama madhuratvam uktam*

"The sweetness of the *gopīs*' voices was endless, because their throats were smoothened by love". The golden bangles on their wrists were jingling due to their restless dancing, the Jasmine-garlands in their braids loosened and the flowers fell on the ground.

parāge dhūsara sthala, candre kore suśītala,
mañimaya vedira upore
rāi kānu kara jori, nṛtya kore phiri phiri,
paraśe pulaka tanu bhare
mṛgamada candana, kore kori sakhīgaṇa,
variṣaye phula gandha rāje
śramajala bindu bindu, śobhā kore mukha indu,
adhare muralī nāhi bāje

"Rāi and Kānu hold hands and dance around and around on a jewelled stage which is greyed by dust and cooled by the moon, Their hairs standing on end of ecstasy when They touch Each other. The *sakhīs* keep musk and sandal paste in their hands and throw fragrant flowers. Rādā and Kṛṣṇa's moon like faces are beautified by sweatdrops and Kṛṣṇa can't play His flute anymore."

Śrī Viśākhā sings with a voice sweeter than a cuckoo and Mukunda, the teacher of all arts, is astonished and enchanted and praises her again and again. Rāseśvarī Herself plays the Vīṇā while Śrīmatī Lalitā gives the rhythm. The sweet flood of Viśākhā's honey sweet voice singing so many *rāgas*, Śrīmatī's twanging Vīṇā and Lalitā's amazing percussion takes shape and inundates everyone.

*nīraja nayanī loilo vīṇa
sakala guṇaka ati pravīṇa
madhura madhura bāoi tāla
madana mohana mohinī*

"The lotus eyed Rādhikā (*nīraja-nayanī*) took the Vīṇā and being very expert in all arts, She began to play ever-so-sweetly. She enchants the enchanter of Cupid!"

*jhaṅkṛta jhaṅkṛta jhanana jhaṅka
colato aṅgulī lolata aṅga
kuṭīla nayane koroto bhaṅga
bhāṅg bhaṅgī śohinī*

"Her body sways as She makes Her fingers move over the strings and She plays the Śohinī¹² with crooked eyes."

*lalitā lalita dharata tāla
mohita mana mohana lāla
kohotahi ati bhāli bhāla
rādhā guṇa śālinī*

(*Padāmṛta Mādhurī*)

¹² Musical mode.

"Lovely Lalitā gives the rhythm, enchanting mind-enchanting Kṛṣṇa, who says: "Well done, well done!" Rādhā is a reservoir of attributes!"

The dancing has come to an end. Śrī Rādhā-Syāma are sitting on a jewelled throne, and Their *sakhīs* take place beneath Them, facing Them. Rādhā and Śyāma are leaning against Each other in exhaustion. Everyone is sweating and panting.

The maidservants are busily engaged fanning, massaging feet and serving betel leaves. Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Tulasī Mañjarī are engaged in fanning the Yugala with a yaktail-fan.

How incomparable is Rūpa and Tulasī's friendship! Rūpa takes Śyāma's side and leaves Rādhārāṇī's side to Tulasī. This is the kingdom of matchless *prīti rasa* (flavours of love). Tulasī's heart and mind are absorbed in Śrīmatī's devotional service and in Her endless sweetness and beauty.

After enjoying a little rest like this, Śyāmasundara looks at Śrīmatī and says:

"Rādhē! I've heard that Your maidservants are also very expert in the art of dancing! Why, none of them have ever shown Me any of their dexterities!"

When Śrīmatī hears Her Priyatama's words She slightly smiles and looks at Rūpa Mañjarī. Śrī Rūpa knows that Tulasī has become as expert in singing and dancing (*gāndharvā vidyā*) as Viśākhā by learning it from her. No one but Tulasī can astonish now such a big assembly as this by showing how Viśākhā enchants everyone with her expertise in singing, therefore Śrī Rūpa tells Tulasī: "Tulasī! Let Śyāmasundara hear one song!" Tulasī is shy, standing before an assembly of superiors. Seeing Tulasī lowering her head out of shyness Viśākhā says:

"Why should you be shy? You will show your knowledge to an assembly of superiors! This will increase the pride of your superiors!"

Being thus ordered by Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Viśākhā, Tulasī stands before the Śrī Yugala and begins to sing a sweet song while dancing along with it. Viśākhā's expertise in teaching has taken shape in Tulasī's dancing and singing. Everyone praises Tulasī again and again and Rādhā and Mādhava and the *sakhis* repeatedly present her with gifts like jewel medals and gold necklaces. Viśākhā's bliss knows no bounds! She sees that she has given her knowledge to the right pupil. Everyone is enchanted by Tulasī's dancing and singing. Suddenly the transcendental vision vanishes and Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, coming to half-external consciousness, prays as follows:

*kokilā kākali jini, madhu yāra kaṇṭha-dhvani,
se viśākhā kṛpā dṛṣṭipāte
madhura saṅgita kalā, śikṣā dibe surasālā,
sarva bhāve uttama rūpete*

"Viśākhā, whose voice is sweeter than that of a cuckoo, casts her merciful glance on me and teaches me all the arts of sweet luscious song in the best possible way!"

*śrī rāsa maṇḍala mājhe, rasamayī rasarāje,
naṭarāja navinā kiśorī
rasera pratimā yoto, sakhī-gaṇe parivṛtā,
bosiyāche koto bhaṅgī kori*

"In the circle of the Rāsa-dance Rasamayī Rādhikā and Rasarāja Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the young adolescent girl and the king of dancers, sit down, surrounded by Their girlfriends, that are so many embodiments of *rāsa*, and making so many gestures."

rādhikāṁ - Rādhikā; *tām* - Her; *prathama rasa* - erotic *rasa*; *kalā* - arts; *keli* - play; *saubhāgya* - fortune; *mattām* - intoxicated; *āliṅgya* - embracing; *ālāpa* - prattling; *bhaṅgyā* - crookedly; *vrajapati-tanayaṁ* - Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja; *smerayanta* - smiling; *smarāmi* - I remember.

I remember the prince of Vraja (Vrajendra-Nandana Hari), Whose sweet bodily lustre defeats the beauty of a host of fresh monsoon clouds, Who wears a *dhotī* which shines like molten gold, Whose lotus like face is beautified by a slight smile, Whose limbs are adorned with different ornaments, Who keeps Śrī Rādhikā (Who is intoxicated by Her fortunate pastimes in the first erotic *rasa*) on His left lap, and Who makes Her smile by speaking crooked words to Her.

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has deep visions of these *rasika* pastimes and his heart is filled with a strong desire for attaining his beloved deity.

His *svatūpāveśa* is very strong, so he is not aware of what goes on in the external world. His strong love causes his mind and heart to submerge in the sweetness of the Yuga Kīśora. The heart of a devotee who practices *smaraṇa* always wanders around in the kingdom of ecstatic love. Why should the mind go elsewhere after relishing the sweetness of the Lord?

Śrī Ṭhākura Mahāśaya sings in Prema Bhakti Candrikā:

maranda bhramara yeno, cakora candrikā teno,
pativratā jana yeno pati
anyatra na cole mon, yeno daridrera hema,
eimata prema bhakti rīti

"The devotee does not think of anyone else but the Lord, just as the bee is fixed in the honey, the Cakora-bird in the moonlight, the chaste wife in the husband and the poor man in gold. Such are the ways of devotion."

The Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas meditate on the sweet Divine Pair. Their bee like minds do not go away from Their lotus like feet. This is the supreme savour in the spiritual kingdom.

yugala caraṇe prīti, parama ānanda tathī, rati premamaya parabandhe: "Love for the lotus feet of the Divine Pair is the highest ecstasy of love. Let me be lovingly attached to the *premika* books written by the *rasika ācāryas*!"

(Prema Bhakti Candrikā)

Śrī Raghunātha's heart and mind are in the kingdom of *līlās*. In his *smaraṇa* a sweet *līlā*-picture appears before his spiritual eyes: He sees Rādhikā and Mādhava meeting in a solitary *nikuñja* through the endeavours of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*. When the Yugala Kīśora sits down on Their jewelled throne They illuminate the whole *kuñja*-house with Their endless sweetness, and the eyes of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* blissfully swim in the ocean of this sweetness. Śrī Raghunātha, as Tulasī Mañjarī, is engaged in the service of the Yugala, and her eyes are immersed in Śyāma's sweetness. Śyāma's sweetness is anyway endless, but in front of the spotless mirror of Śrī Rādhikā's love this sweetness takes ever-new forms. Kṛṣṇa Himself says in Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Ādi 4):

yadyapi nirmala rādhāra sat prema darpaṇa;
tathāpi svacchatā tāra bāḍhe kṣaṇe kṣaṇa
āmāra mādhyā nāhi bāḍhite avakāṣe;
e darpaṇera āge nava nava rūpe bhāse

"Although the mirror of Rādhā's love is spotless, its clarity increases at every moment. There's no end to the increase of My sweetness, but before this mirror it floats in ever-new forms!"

The heart of *kiṅkarī* Tulasī is absorbed in the ever-fresh blackish lustre of tender Govinda's body. She sees: *kāntyā nindantam udyajjaladhara nicayam*

"His bodily lustre rebukes the beauty of a host of fresh rainclouds". The great poet Kaṇṇapura has written: *sūtāmara ratna dalitāñjana megha-puñja pratyagra nīla jalajanma samāna bhāsam* "Kṛṣṇa's body shines like a sapphire, crushed collyrium, a host of monsoon clouds or a blue lotus flower." *kuvalaya nīla ratna, dalitāñjana megha-puñja jini varaṇa suchānda* (Mahājana) truly, nothing can compare to Śyāma's glossy lustre! The *rasa sūkta: śyāmāc chabalaṁ prapadye* from the Upaniṣads has announced the glories of this Śyāma-lustre. Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya said in his commentary on this *sūkta: śyāmācchabalaṁ prapadye ityādi mantrāmnāyaḥ pāvano japārthaśca dhyānārthe vā. śyāmo gambhīro varṇa - śyāma iva śyāmaḥ hārdaṁ brahma atyanta duravagāhyatvāt*

"This sacred *mantra* can be recited, repeated in *japa* or meditated upon. Śyāma is a deep colour and with Śyāma is meant the most beloved Supreme Brahman, who is very difficult to perceive."

Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura has written:

*cāturyaika nidāna sīmā capalāpaṅga cchaṭā mantharam
lāvaṇyāmṛta vīci lolita dṛśam lakṣmī kaṭākṣādṛtam
kāliṅdi pulināṅgana praṇayinam kāmāvatārāṅkuraṁ
bālam nīlam amī vyaḥ madhurimā svārājyamārādh numah*

(Kṛṣṇa Kaṇṇāmṛtam -3)

"We worship an adolescent boy of bluish complexion, Who is the limit of cleverness, Who slows down Śrī Rādhā with the luster of His restless eyes, that are swaying on the waves of nectarean elegance, Who is honoured by the glances of the goddess of fortune (Śrī Rādhā), Who is loved by the girls on the bank of the Yamunā, Who is the seed of all the descents of Cupid and Who is the emperor of sweetness."

The *kiṅkari* then sees that this bluish body is beautified by a *dhotī* shining like molten gold: *tapta kārtasvarābhaṁ vāso vibhrānam. vāsaṁ dravat kanaka-vṛnda nibhaṁ dadhān* "When you see this Pītāmbara (yellow cloth) it looks as if someone is pouring out a great amount of liquid gold." *ārdra mākhīyā kebā sārādra bonāilo re, aichana dekhi pītāmbara* (Caṇḍī Dāsa)

"Who is smearing out this green, making it yellow? That's how I see this Pītāmbara!" It is as if He hugs Preyasī Śīromaṇi Śrī Rādhikā by wearing this yellow cloth, that corresponds exactly with Her beautiful bodily splendor. In Śrī Rādhārāṇī's Rasodgāra (amorous recollection) it is seen: *āmāra aṅgera varaṇa lāgiyā pītavāsa pore syāma* "Śyāma wears this yellow cloth because He loves My bodily lustre so much!" (Jñāna Dāsa)

Then again he says *smīta rucira mukhāmbhojam*: "His lotus-face is beautified by a honey-sweet slight smile" How sweet is that smile! The Mahājanas sing: *īṣat hāsira taraṅga hillole madana mūrachā pāya*

"Cupid faints when he touches the billowing waves of that slight smile!" That honey-smile has a most intoxicating effect on the *gopīs*. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written:

*prapanna janatā tamaḥ kṣapaṇa sārārendu prabhā
vrajāmbuja vilocanā smara samṛddhi siddhausadhīḥ*

*viḍambita sudhāmbudhi prabala mādhuri ḍambarā
vibhartu tava mādharma smita kadamba kāntir mudam*

"O Mādhava! May the luster of Your smile, that shines like the autumn moon, that rebukes the sweetness of an entire ocean of nectar, that destroys the darkness in Your devotees' hearts and that nourishes the herbs of the *gopīs*' amorous desires, give me boundless bliss!" Especially when Kṛṣṇa smiles at Rādhārāṇī there's no end to the nectar of His smile. *hāsira hilole mora, parāṇa putali dole, dite cāi yauvana nichani* "The puppet of My life-airs oscillates on the waves of His smile, so I want to give Him My youth as a present."

Śyāma's limbs are also decorated with different clothes and ornaments - *ākalpitāṅgam*. Śyāma's body is the ornament of ornaments itself: *bhūṣaṇa bhūṣanāṅgam* (Ś. Bhāgavata). Kavi Karṇapura has written: "Whatever enters into this nectarean body will become nectarean: *mādhurya sindhum adhi yasya bhaven nipātas tat kevalam madhurimānam urīkaroti* (Ānanda Vṛndāvana Campū)

Kiṅkarī Tulasī sees that Śyāma, the ocean of sweetness, keeps Śrī Rādhikā, who is intoxicated by the *rasa* of erotic pastimes, on His left lap and is making Her laugh by telling Her all kinds of funny and untrue things. He embraces Her in a curved way and kisses Her. *o rūpa lāvanya rāśi amiyā poḍiche khasi, hāsya parihāsa sambhāṣaṇe* (Prārthanā)

"Nectar drips from Their beautiful forms as They converse in a joking way."

While thus floating on the waves of the ocean of nectarean elegance of the Śrī Yugala, *kiṅkarī* Tulasī takes a fan in the hand and steps forward to start her devotional service. Just then the transcendental vision stops, and, returning to his *sādhakāveśa* (external consciousness) Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "If I can't

see these sweet forms directly, then may I at least remember them!"

*keli kuñja abhyantare, ratana vedira pare,
madana mohana śyāma rāya.
jini nava jaladhara, rase aṅga dhara dhara,
lāvanya taraṅga bohi yāya*

"In a play-grove on a jewelled platform sits Madana Mohana, Śyāma Rāya. Rasa drips from His body, that defeats the beauty of a fresh monsoon-cloud and is carried on waves of elegance."

*tapta hema kānti hara, paridhāne pītāmbara,
meghe saudāminī jhālamala.
niṅgāḍiyā sudhānidhi, gaḍeche rasika vidhi,
hāsi mākhā vadana kamala*

"He wears a yellow *dhotī* that destroys the luster of molten gold and that shimmers like a lightning-strike under a monsoon-cloud. From the ocean of nectar the *rasika* Creator has made His lotus-face, anointed with a smile."

*bhūṣaṇe bhūṣita aṅga, yeno abhinaya raṅga,
abhinava rūpa manohārī.
vāma kroḍe śrī rādhikā, kṛṣṇa keli ārādhikā,
dyotamānā paramā sundarī*

"His body is decorated with ornaments, so that His youthful enchanting form resembles an actor on the stage. Śrī Rādhikā, the most beautiful worshipper of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, shines on His left lap."

*rasika nāgara chale, rasera prasaṅga tule,
hāsyā parihāsa sambhāṣaṇe
vilāsa cāturyera vākye, mugdha kori priyājīke,
bāra bāra kore āliṅgane.*

"The Rasika Nāgara engages in so many frivolous, crooked *rasika* talks with His beloved. He enchants His Priyājī with these clever, playful words and embraces Her again and again."

*sei vrajarāja suta, vidagadha līlāmṛta,
anudina koriye smaraṇa
raghunāthera e prārthanā, divya cintāmaṇi sonā,
hariṇāda bhajana ratana*

"I remember the clever, nectarean pastimes of this prince of Vraja every day. These prayers of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī are the divine jewels, gold and Cintāmaṇi-gems of Hariṇāda Śīla's worship."

Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's Prārthanā

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Śrī-Śrī Govardhanāśraya Daśakam

Ten verses in which I take shelter of
Govardhana Hill

By Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

VERSE 1:

*saptāhaṁ murajit-karāmbuja-paribhrājat-kaniṣṭhāṅguli-
prodyad-valgu-varātakoparimilan-mugdha-dvirepho 'pi yaḥ
pāthahaḥ-kṣepaka-śakra-nakra-mukhataḥ kroḍe vrajaṁ drāg apāt
kaś taṁ gokula-bandhavam giri-varam govardhanam nāśrayet*

sapta - seven; *ahaṁ* - days; *murajit* - Kṛṣṇa; *kara* - hand; *ambuja* - lotus; *paribhrājat* - shines; *kaniṣṭha* - smallest; *aṅguli* - finger; *prodyad* - manifest; *valgu* - beautiful; *varāṭaka* — lotus whorl; *upari* - on top; *mīlad* - meeting; *mugdha* - charming; *dvirepha* - bumblebee; *api* - even; *yaḥ* - who; *pāthahaḥ* - water; *kṣepaka* - thrower; *śakra* - Indra; *nakra* - crocodile; *mukhataḥ* - from the mouth; *kroḍe* - in the lap; *vrajaṁ* - Vraja; *drāk* - quickly; *apāt* - protected; *kaḥ* - who; *taṁ* - him; *gokula bandhavam* - the friend of Gokula; *girivaram* - the best of mountains; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter

Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, the best of mountains and the friend of Gokula, who protected the people of Vraja from the rains which came from the mouth of the crocodile-like king Indra, like an innocent blackbee sitting on the seedhusk-like little finger of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus like hand for seven days?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In *sādhakāveśa*¹³ Śrīpāda Raghunātha reveals the glories of Śrī Girirāja Govardhana in this Govardhanāśraya Daśakam.

In his Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has mentioned that five of the sixty-four items of *bhajana* are extraordinarily powerful and one of them is living in Vraja or taking shelter of Vraja-*dhāma*.

durūhādbhuta vīrye'smin śraddhā dūre'stu pañcake. yatra svalpo'pi sambandhaḥ sad dhīyam bhāva janmane

"These five items - serving the *śrī mūrti*, hearing Śrīmad Bhāgavata, associating with devotees, congregationally chanting the Holy Name of the Lord and living in Vraja - are very confidential and amazing. What to speak of faithfully executing these five items of devotion, when an offenseless person even casually comes in contact with them they will swiftly cause love of God to take birth in him."

The whole abode of Vraja is a transformation of *viśuddha-sattva*, the Lord's transcendental existence-potency *sandhinī*.

*sandhinīra sāra amśa - śuddha sattva nāma;
bhagavānera sattā hoy yāhāte viśrāma*

¹³ Absorption in his 'external' male form, as a practitioner of *rāgānuga bhakti*. Ed

*mātā pitā sthāna grha sayyāsana āra;
e sab kṛṣṇera śuddha sattvera vikāra*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4)

"The essential portion of the *sandhinī-śakti* is called 'śuddha *sattva*' (pure existence). It is here that the Lord's *sattā* rests. (The word *sattā* means 'existence' and the word *viśrāma* mean 'blissful residence'.) His mother, His father, His residence, His house, His bed, and His chairs - all are transformations of Kṛṣṇa's *śuddha-sattva*."

In the holy *dhāma*, which is the culmination of *śuddha-sattva*, which is again a ray of the *sandhinī*-potency, the Lord is able to reside, relishing the blissful mellows of His pastimes. The only abode where Kṛṣṇa can stay enjoying purely sweet and intimate pastimes, which are devoid of even a whiff of reverence is this **Vraja-dhāma**. But even within this Vraja there is again distinction between the different confidential pastime-places. Girirāja **Govardhana** is said by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī to be at the summit:

*vaikuṅṭhāj janito varā madhu-purī tatrāpi rāsotsavād
vṛndāraṇyam udāra pāṇi ramaṇāt tatrāpi govardhanaḥ
rādhākuṇḍam ihāpi gokula pateḥ premāmṛta plāvanāt
kuryād asya virājato giri-taṭe sevām vivekī na kaḥ*

"Greater than Vaikuṅṭha is Mathurā. Better than Mathurā is Vṛndāvana because the Rāsa-dance took place there. Better even than Vṛndāvana is Govardhana because it was touched by Kṛṣṇa's beautiful hand and best of all places is Rādhākuṇḍa (the abode of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's most passionate pastimes),

which is inundated by the stream of nectarean love of the Lord of Gokula (Śrī Kṛṣṇa).

Who will not serve this sacred pond at the base of Govardhana Hill?"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha has taken shelter at Śrī Rādhākunḍa. Indeed, he is exclusively fixed in staying at Rādhākunḍa!

As soon as we mention Rādhākunḍa, we remember Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, the great priest of the sacrifice of *rāgānugā-bhakti*, who constantly bathed in his own tears of love for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī on the bank of the *kunḍa* and who gave the whole world a perfect example of fixation in *bhajana*, renunciation, and anxious loving devotion. This *kunḍa* is one of the special holy places at the base of Govardhana Hill.

Śrī Raghunātha says: "Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, the friend of Gokula?"

No one can independently take shelter of the holy *dhāma*. Just as by the grace of the *sādhu* or the *guru* someone may become devoted to the Lord and the Lord becomes favorable to him, thinking: "This person has taken shelter of Me, so he will be protected by Me in all respects!" Similarly by the grace of the holy *dhāma* a fortunate practicing devotee will become attracted to living there, and the *dhāma* will mercifully bless him with a place of residence and protect him, thinking: "This devotee is my protégé in all respects!" This is how the word *āśraya* can be understood.

By calling Śrī Girirāja Gokula-Bāndhava Śrī Raghunātha reminds us of how Girirāja protected Gokula. The king of the demigods Indra had committed a great offense by accepting offerings from Śrī Nanda, Upānanda and other cowherders, who are worshipping even for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. To protect him from the grip of this offense and to establish the service and the glories of Śrī Girirāja the merciful

Lord stopped the sacrifice to Indra and had the sacrifice to Śrī Govardhana commenced.

The king of the demigods Indra, intoxicated as he was with pride of his opulences, was unable to understand this merciful pastime of the Lord and began to engage clouds like the Sāmvartaka which are used to destroy the universe, to vanquish Gokula with showers of rain and thunderbolts.

When these destructive storms and showers of rain, hail, and thunderbolts began, the distressed Vrajavāsīs took shelter of their only resort, Śrī Kṛṣṇa-

*kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa mahābhāga
tvan nātham gokulam prabho
trātum arhasi devān naḥ
kupitād bhakta vatsala*

(Bhāgavata 10.25.43)

"O Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! O highly fortunate One! O protector of the devotees! O most powerful One! Please protect Gokula from the hand of Indra, who has become angry with us!"

Seeing that the Vrajavāsīs were suffering from Indra's atrocious behaviour and hearing their distress-calls, Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:

"With My own power I will protect the Vrajavāsīs, who are surrendered to Me, who are My protegees and who are My beloved relatives. My only vow is to protect the souls who surrender unto Me."

Saying this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly lifted Govardhana Hill and playfully held it on His left hand, just as a child is holding a mushroom.

*tasmān mac charaṇam goṣṭham
man nātham mat parigraham*

*gopāya svātma-yogena
so'yaṁ me vrata āhitaḥ
ityuktvaikena hastena
kṛtvā govardhanācalam
dadhāra līlayā kṛṣṇaś
chatrākam iva bālakaḥ*

(*Bhāgavata 10.25.18-19*)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa easily held Girirāja with the little finger of His left hand, gave shelter to all the people and cows of Vraja beneath it and remained standing motionlessly like this for seven days.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Śrī Girirāja remained on the lotus seed-like little finger of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus like hand like an innocent bumblebee".

This means that just as a kingbee who is engaged in drinking the honey from a lotus flower remains on the lotus seed in an intoxicated state, similarly Govardhana who is the greatest of Lord Hari's servants, got a place on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus like hand for seven consecutive days and nights and remained absorbed there in relishing the mellows of the beauty of the lotus like hand of his most dearly beloved. In this way he easily saved the Vrajamaṇḍala from the grip of the crocodile-like Indra, who was showering it vehemently.

Bumblebees drink the honey from lotus flowers in the lakes, but when a crocodile comes into the lake and splashes that lotus flower with water, the lotus flower can't protect himself, nor the blackbee that may sit on it. But in Kṛṣṇa's kingdom it is quite the other way around. Here the Indra-crocodile threw a lot of water over the abode of Vraja, but not only Kṛṣṇa's lotus like hand, even the blackbee-like Govardhana Hill was able to protect the lake of Vraja. The metaphor called *vyatireka* is used

in this verse. When the object of comparison is distinctly described from the standard of comparison because of some quality or fault it is called a *vyatireka alaṅkāra*. *upamānāt vilakṣaṇa iti guṇena doṣeṇa ca* (Alaṅkāra Kaustubha 8.142) Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Which person would not take shelter of this Girirāja?"

*sapta dina śrī kṛṣṇera kara-padma śeṣe
kaniṣṭhāṅguli-rūpa mañju padma-koṣe
tāhe mugdha bhṛṅga nyāya hoye avasthite
vṛṣṭikāri deva-rāja nakra mukha ho'te
yihho ei vraja-bhūmi rakṣā koriyāche
gokula bāndhava boli khyāta giri-rāje
hari dāsa varya se giri govardhane
kon prāṇī āśraya nā kore sarva kṣaṇe?*

"Who will not take shelter of Giri Govardhana, the best of Hari's servants, who is famous as the friend of Gokula and who protected Vrajabhūmi from the mouth of the showering crocodile named Devarāja Indra by sitting on the lovely lotusseed-like little finger of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus like hand like an innocent bumblebee for seven days?"

VERSE 2:

*indratve nibhṛtaṁ gavāṁ suranadī-toyena dīnātmanā
śakreṇānugatā cakāra surabhir yenābhiṣekaṁ hareḥ
yat-kacche 'jani tena nandita-janaṁ govinda-kuṇḍaṁ kṛtī
kas taṁ go-nikarendra-paṭṭa-sikharaṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

indratve - kingdom; *nibhṛtam* - lonely; *gavām* - cows; *sura-nadī* - Ganga; *toyena* - with water; *dīna* - lowly; *ātmanā* - by a person; *śakreṇa* - by Indra; *anugatā* - following; *cakāra* - doing; *surabhiḥ* - cow; *yena* - by whom; *abhīṣekaṃ* - bathed; *hareḥ* - of Hari; *yat* - who; *kacche* - close by; *ajani* - was manifested; *tena* - by him; *nandita* - gladdened; *janam* - person; *govinda kuṇḍam* - Govinda Kunda; *kṛtī* - pious soul; *kaḥ* - who; *taṃ* - him; *go* - cow; *nikara* - group; *indra* - king; *paṭṭa śikharam* - of mountains; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

Which pious soul will not take shelter of the king of mountains, Govardhana Hill, who delights everyone and close to whom is Govinda Kuṇḍa, where Lord Hari was secretly bathed to crown Him as the king of cows with celestial Gaṅgā-water by the Surabhī-cow of the humbled king Indra?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: For seven days and nights Śrī Kṛṣṇa stood and held up Śrī Girirāja with steady hand.

Like thirsty Cātaka-birds the people of Vraja relished the sweet nectar of this black monsoon cloud (Kṛṣṇa) for seven days and nights:

giri-dhara vadanendo raśmi pūyūṣa-dhārāṃ
pibad iha paśu-jātaṃ sapta rātrindivāni
kṣudham api satṛṣaṃ tannāyayau tarhi tasya
praṇayi jana gaṇānāṃ kiṃ bruve na bruve kim
śrī mukhena janatā sudhā-rasair
asya bhū-dhara-dharasya pūryate;
evam apy-avayati tadā prasus
tan muhur bahu-rasair apūrayat

"Even the cows and buffaloes of Vraja were constantly engaged for seven days and nights in relishing the streams of nectar emanating from Giridhārī Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lustrous moon-like face and so they did not feel any hunger or thirst. Who can then describe the ecstasy felt by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dear most Vrajavāsī *gopīs* and *gopas* when they saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa's face for seven days? Seeing that the *gopas* and *gopīs*, who were standing in a circle under the mountain, were constantly drinking the nectar of the vision of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus like face, mother Yaśodā was filling Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus like mouth with butter and sweet rice every half hour."

Seeing Kṛṣṇa's glorious power, the king of heaven Indra became afraid like an elephant attacked by a lion, so he called his clouds back and fled to his celestial abode.

But alas! Could he find any peace there after offending the source of all peace, Śrī Kṛṣṇa? At every moment he expected Kṛṣṇa's faithful Sudarśana-disc to come and burn the heavenly planets and their inhabitants. Who knows what kind of harsh punishment may be my fate?"

In the scripture Śrī Gopāla-Campū it is described:

*ito gatvā dainyaṁ matvā skhalad oṅā vidaujāḥ kṣayam
gacchan apyasau kṣayam ṛchann iva sthitavānnatu śacīm
acīkamata. na ca nirjara sadasi nirjagāma*

"Humiliated, Devarāja Indra miserably returned to his heavenly abode, but when he came there he could find no peace. It was as if he withered away each day in great fear. He found no more joy in the loving conversations with his wife Śacīdevī or in the meetings of the assembly of demigods.

He constantly spent his time in a solitary section of his abode Amarāvati. When the *guru* of the demigods, Bṛhaspati, heard this he went to see him and chastised him, saying:

*yasmād abhajasi viṣṇuṁ jīṣṇo tasmād anedhitāse tvam
na vinā candraṁ vindati jīvana vṛttiṁ vanaspatiḥ ko'pi
athavā sahasra dṛśam apyaho bhavādṛśam abhibhūya
bhṛṣī-bhavanti tādṛśi madāddhatā nāsadrṣī. yataḥ sureśo'si.
indra uvāca - avicāritam evācaritam idaṁ mayā. bhavadbhis tu
sāmpratam sāmpratam upadiśyatām
brhaspatir uvāca - śatamanyo tādṛśa visadrṣatāyām śata dhṛtir eva
dhṛtiṁ āśādayitā. tasmāt tad anusaraṇam eva śaraṇam. tad evaṁ
jantabhedī sakhedibhavann avadhāya dhātāram eva gatvā
saṅkocamamatvā svāparādham avadhārayāmāsa*

(Gopāla Campūḥ)

"O King of the demigods! Although you are victorious over all the demons, you can't make any spiritual advancement unless you worship the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Can any tree or herb stay alive without the aid of the moon? Although you have a thousand eyes, you are still blind! That is because you are *sureśa*, (king of demigods, or one who is drunk of wine) and this intoxication (*mada* means pride or intoxication), the intoxicating opulence of heaven, has blinded you!"

Hearing these chastising words of Bṛhaspati, Devarāja Indra replied: "O master! I've done a great mischief by trying to destroy Vrajabhūmi! It was a great injustice! Now please tell me how to become free from the reactions to such an offense!"

Bṛhaspati said: "O Indra! Only Lord Brahmā can advise you in these days of woe, so quickly go to him!"

So Indra went to see Lord Brahmā and elaborately told him of the offense he had committed. Hearing the words of Devarāja, Brahmā told him:

*hanta vibudhādhipē nāpyabudhena bhavatā bhavatā
duḥśādhārādhaḥ so'yaṁ mahān evāparādhaḥ kṛtaḥ. yaḥ*

*khalu sādavaḥ sakṛd apyavadhārayantas tām
 avadhīrayantaḥ sāvadhānaḥ śrotam apidadhate. tathāpi sṛṣṭi-
 vidhitasā dur-vidhinā vidhinā mayā tad idam upadiśyate.
 pūrvam tan mahima jijñāsaya dhāṛṣṭyam anuṣṭhitam astīti tan
 mātra kilbiṣa viśama sahamānena mayā durmāṇa mayāgādha
 bhavad aparādha kṣamāpañāya kṣamatā na labhyate. kintu
 gavām kaṇḍuyanām kuryād go-grāsam go-pradakṣiṇām.
 nityam goṣu prasannāsu gopālo'pi prasīdati. iti gautamādi
 sammatyā go jātiṣu prītirīti parītasya tasya kṣamāpañāya
 kātaras tvam taj jāti mātaram surabhim eva bhajasva na ced
 asurataḥ surabhī saṅgatir bhaviṣyati*

"Alas! Alas! Although you are the king of the demigods, you committed such a foolish offense! The wise men carefully block their ears when they hear about your misbehaviour even once! Nevertheless I shall advise you what to do in order to protect my creation! Some time ago I became so impudent as to try to know the greatness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa¹⁴, and even now I can't find the means by which I can be forgiven for that offense! But Gautama and other sages advised me to daily carress the cows, feed them grass and circumambulate them. By serving the cows, the Lord of cows, Govinda, will swiftly be pleased. Therefore if you want to satisfy the Lord, who is naturally a great lover of the cows, then go to the mother of cows Surabhī, otherwise the demons will surely cause fear and havoc in heaven!"

Hearing Brahmā's advice Indra swiftly went to mother Surabhī, told her about the offense he had committed and brought her along to Vraja-bhūmi.

¹⁴ By stealing His calves and cowherd boys, see Śrīmad Bhāgavata Canto Ten, chapters 13 and 14. Ed.

The all-merciful Śrī Kṛṣṇa had already engaged His cowherd boys elsewhere and waited for Indra to come. Smilingly He sat on a jewelled boulder of Govardhana Hill when Indra slowly and shyly approached Him, offered prostrated obeisances unto Him and began to praise Him while sitting on his knees before Him. He revealed all the great glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with a faltering and fear-filled voice. After Indra had completed his praises of the Lord, mother Surabhī also praised Śrī Kṛṣṇa and showered Him with her own milk. Devarāja Indra also had Kṛṣṇa bathed, with a shower of celestial Gaṅgā-water, pumped up by the trunk of his Airāvata-elephant and had Him named Govinda, or king of cows, in everyone's presence. The water that had showered Govinda created Govinda Kuṇḍa, a lake that lies at the base of Govardhana Hill even today, delighting the eyes of everyone. Śrīpāda said: "Which fortunate soul will not take shelter of Girirāja Govardhana, the resting-place of Govinda?"

*śrī govinda govardhana uttolana kori;
vraja-maṇḍala rakṣā koilo ei dṛśya heri
indra dainye surabhīre āni govardhane;
govinda caraṇe luṭāya sahasra locane
mandākinī jale kṛṣṇe abhiṣeka kore;
yāhā hoite āvirbhūta divya sarovare
bhakata nayanānanda śrī govinda kuṇḍa;
pavitra koroye yei akhila brahmāṇḍa
vrajendranandanera hoy viśrāmera sthāna;
bhauma vṛndāvane śrīla govardhana nāma
sei girirāje kon kṛtī mahāśaya;
āśraya nā kore yāte sarva labhya hoy?*

"When thousand-eyed Indra saw how Śrī Govinda lifted Govardhana Hill to protect Vraja-maṇḍala he humbly took Surabhī along to Govardhana and rolled before Govinda's feet.

By showering Kṛṣṇa with the water of the celestial Mandākinī-river he created a divine lake named Śrī Govinda Kuṇḍa that delights the eyes of all the devotees and purifies the entire universe. Which fortunate soul will not take shelter of this king of mountains named Śrīla Govardhana, which is the resting place of Vrajendra Nandana, which is situated in the terrestrial Vṛndāvana and where all desires are fulfilled?"

VERSES 3-4:

*svaḥ-dhuny-ādi-vareṇya-tīrtha-gaṇato hṛdyāny ajasraṁ hareḥ
sīri-brahma-harāpsaraḥ-priyaka-tat-śrī-dāna-kuṇḍāny api
prema-kṣema-ruci-pradāni parito bhrājanti yasya vrati
kas taṁ manya-munīndra-varṇita-guṇaṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

*jyotsnāmokṣaṇa-mālya-hāra-sumano-gaurī-balāri-dhvajā
gāndharvādi-sarāṁsi nirjhara-giriḥ śṛṅgāra-simhāsanam
gopālo 'pi hari-sthalaṁ harir api sphūrjanti yat-sarvataḥ
kas taṁ go-mṛga-pakṣi-vṛkṣa-lalitaṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

svaḥ - heaven; *dhuni* - river; *ādi* - and so; *vareṇya* - best; *tīrtha* - holy waters; *gaṇataḥ* - multitude; *hṛdyāni* - charming; *ajasraṁ* - always; *hareḥ* - of Hari; *sīri* - Balarāma; *brahma* - Brahmā; *hara* - Śiva; *apsaraḥ* - Apsarā; *priyaka* - dear; *tat* - that; *śrī dāna kuṇḍāni* - Śrī Dāna Nirvartana-kuṇḍa; *api* - even; *prema* - love; *kṣema* - welfare; *ruci* - taste; *pradāna* - bestows; *paritaḥ* - surrounded; *bhrājanti* - shines; *yasya* - whose; *vrati* - avowed soul; *kaḥ* - who; *taṁ* - him; *manya* - worshipable; *munīndra* - best of sages; *varṇita* - described; *guṇaṁ* - glories; *govardhanaṁ* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

jyotsnā - Candra Sarovara; mokṣaṇa - Ṛṇa Mocana Kuṇḍa; mālyahāra - Mālyahāra-kuṇḍa; sumanaḥ - Kusuma Sarovara; gaurī - Gaurī-tīrtha; balāri dhvajā - Indra-dhvaja-vedī; gāndharvā - Gāndharvā-kuṇḍa; ādi - and so on; sarāṁsi - lakes; nirjhara - cascades; giriḥ - mountain; śṛṅgāra simhāsana - Ratna Simhāsana; gopālah - the Gopāla-deity; api - even; hari-sthala - Hari-sthala; hariḥ - Harideva; api - even; sphurjanti - shine; yat - that; sarvataḥ - everywhere; kaḥ - who; tam - him; go - cows; mṛga - deer; pakṣī - birds; vṛkṣa - trees; lalitām - charming; govardhanaṁ - Govardhana; na - not; āśrayet - will take shelter.

Which avowed person will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, whose glories are sung by the best of munis¹⁵, who is surrounded by many splendid holy lakes like Śrī Dāna Nirvartana kuṇḍa which all bestow love of God, blessings and taste for bhajana and are more glorious than such holy waters as the Gaṅgā, and which are dear to Lord Hari, Balarāma, Brahmā, Śiva and the Apsarās?

Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, who is the throne for the erotic mellows, where Lord Hari is always manifest, who is beautified by cows, deer, birds and trees, and where there are many beautiful places like Candra-Sarovara, Ṛṇa-Mocana-Kuṇḍa, Mālyahāri-kuṇḍa, Kusuma-Sarovara, Gaurī -Tīrtha, Indra-dhvaja vedi, Gāndharvā-kuṇḍa, Nirjhara-Giri, Gopāla and Hari-sthala?

¹⁵ The 'best of munis' is Śrī Śukadeva Muni, who glorified Govardhana Hill extensively in his Śrīmad Bhāgavata.

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: After describing the glories of taking shelter of Śrī Girirāja, Śrīpāda Raghunātha now describes all the innumerable holy places around Girirāja that bestow devotion, everlasting auspiciousness and taste for *bhajana* in these two verses.

Each and every playground of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Baladeva and the cowherd boys around Govardhana Hill is a great holy place. Apart from that there are also famous *kuṇḍas* and other holy places which are very dear to Brahmā, Mahādeva, Surabhī, Indra, the Gandharvas and the Apsarās and which are named after them, all around Govardhana Hill.

In the Garga-Saṁhitā it is described how Mahārāja Bahulāśva, the king of Mithilā, asked Devarṣi Nārada about the exact identity of each and every holy place around Govardhana Hill —

*kati mukhyāni tīrthāni girirāje mahātmani
etad brūhi mahā-yogin sāksāt tvam divya darśanaḥ*

"O great *yogi!* You are personally endowed with a divine vision, therefore I am asking you which are the main holy places around Girirāja Govardhana. Please describe them to me." On the request of the king of Mithilā Devarṣi Nārada said:

*paripūrṇatamaḥ sāksāt śrī kṛṣṇo bhagavān svayam;
asaṅkhyā brahmāṇḍa patir golokeśaḥ parātparaḥ
asmīnsthitaḥ sadā kṛḍam arbhakaiḥ saha maithila;
karoti tasya mātmyam vaktum nālam caturmukhaḥ
yatra vai mānasi gaṅgā mahā-pāpaughā-nāśinī;
govinda kuṇḍam śubhadam śubhaś candra sarovaraḥ
rādḥakuṇḍam kṛṣṇakuṇḍam lalitakuṇḍam eva ca;
gopāluṇḍam tatraiva kusumākara eva ca*

śrī kṛṣṇa mauli saṁsparsāt mauli cihnā śilābhavat;
 yasyā darśana mātrena deva maulir bhavejjanaḥ
 yasyām śilāyām kṛṣṇena citrāni likhitāni ca;
 adyāpi citritā punyā nāmnā citra śilā girau
 yām śilām arbhakaiḥ kṛṣṇo vādayan kṛdane rataḥ;
 vādanī sā śilā jātā mahā pāpaugha-nāśinī
 yatra śrī kṛṣṇacandrena gopālaiḥ saha maithila;
 kṛtā vai kanduka-kṛdā tat kṣetram kandukam smṛtam
 dr̥ṣtvā śakra-padam yāti natvā brahma-padam ca tat;
 viluṅghan yasya rajasā sāksād viṣṇu-padam vrajet
 gopānām uṣṇinānyatra corayāmāsa mādhaveḥ;
 auṣṇiṣam nāma tat tirtham mahā pāpa-haram girau
 nīpa palāśa patrānām kṛtvā droṇāni mādhaveḥ;
 aghāsa bālakaiḥ sārddham picchilāni dadhīni ca
 droṇākārāni patrāni vabhūvaḥ sākhinām tadā;
 tat kṣetram ca mahā-punyam droṇam nāma nṛpeśvara
 dadhi-dānam tatra kṛtvā pūtvā patra-dhṛtam dadhi;
 namaskuryān naras tasya golokān na cyutir bhavet
 netre tvācchādya yatraiva lilo'bhūn mādhave'rbhakaiḥ;
 tatra tirtham laukikam ca jātam pāpa-praṇāśanam
 kadamba-khaṇḍa tirtham ca līlā-yuktam hareḥ sadā;
 tasya darśana mātrena naro nārāyaṇo bhavet
 yatra vai rādhayā rāse śṛṅgāro'kāri mādhaveḥ;
 tatra govardhane jātam sthalaṁ śṛṅgāra-maṇḍalam
 airāvatasya surabheḥ pāda cihnāni yatra vai;
 tatra natvā naraḥ gopī vaikuṅṭham yāti maithila
 hasta-cihnam pāda-cihnam śrī kṛṣṇasya mahātmanah;
 dr̥ṣtvā natvā naraḥ kaścit sāksāt kṛṣṇa-padam vrajet
 etāni nṛpa tirthāni kuṇḍādyāyatanāni ca;
 aṅgāni girirājasya kiṁ bhūyaḥ śrotam icchasi

"O King of Mithila! The complete, primeval, and supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is the maintainer of all the universes and the Lord of Goloka, always plays on Govardhana Hill with His

cowherd boyfriends. Therefore even four-faced Lord Brahmā can't describe His glories."

Near Govardhana Hill is the Mānasī-Gaṅgā, which destroys all sins, Govinda-Kuṇḍa, which is filled with clear water, Candra-Sarovara, Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, Śyāmakuṇḍa, Lalitākuṇḍa, Gopāluṅḍa, Kusuma-Sarovara and other great holy tanks.

On one part of Govardhana Hill is a stone which bears the sign of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's head because He touched it with His head. Anyone who sees this stone is worshipable even for the demigods. All the different sacred rocks on Govardhana Hill that Śrī Kṛṣṇa painted pictures on are still there and are known as 'Citra-Śilā'. The stones on which Śrī Kṛṣṇa played (music) while playing with His cowherd boyfriends are known as 'Vādānī-śilā' and they destroy all sins. The place on Govardhana Hill where Kṛṣṇa played ball (*kanduka*) with His friends is known as 'Kanduka-kṣetra'. Anyone who sees these places attains the position of Indra, anyone who offers obeisances unto them attains the position of Brahmā and anyone who rolls in their dust attains the position of Viṣṇu. The place on Govardhana Hill where Śrī Kṛṣṇa kept the turbans of the cowherd boys after stealing them as a joke is called 'Auṣṇiṣa-tīrtha' and destroys all sins.

Once upon a time the *gopīs* went down the road alongside the base of Govardhana Hill on the pretext of wanting to sell yoghurt. At that moment the cowherd boys, on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's indication, dragged the vessels of yoghurt from their heads and threw them on the ground. The *gopīs* then went to Nanda and Yaśodā to tell them about this impudence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys, while Śrī Kṛṣṇa made innumerable leaf-cups of Kadamba- and Palāśa-leaves and ate the yoghurt that had fallen on the ground with His cowherd boyfriends. At this place the leaves on the Kadamba- and Palāśa-trees are naturally shaped

like leaf-cups. O King of Mithilā! This very sacred place is known as Droṇa-tīrtha. Anyone who donates yoghurt or drinks yoghurt here from a Droṇa-leafcup and devotedly offers his obeisances unto this place will never fall down from Goloka."

The place on Govardhana Hill where Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd boyfriends were playing hide-and-seek by covering each other's eyes is called 'Laukika Tīrtha' and destroys all sins. The place on top of Govardhana Hill which is called 'Kadamba Khaṇḍa' is an abode where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed different pastimes. A person who simply sees this place attains *sārūpya-mukti* (liberation in which one attains the same form) with Lord Nārāyaṇa. The place on Govardhana Hill where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed different erotic (*śṛṅgāra-rasa*) pastimes with Śrī Rādhā is known as 'Śṛṅgāra Maṇḍala'.

Even if a great sinner offers his obeisances to the place on Govardhana Hill where Airāvata's and Surabhī's footprints are he will become qualified to ascend to Vaikuṅṭha. At different places on Govardhana Hill one can find the handprints and footprints of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A person who beholds these signs will directly attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. O Lord of Mithilā! Thus I told you about all the different holy places and holy tanks around Śrī Girirāja that form his limbs. Now tell me what more you want to hear!"

Hearing everything about the holy places around Govardhana Hill from Devarṣi Nārada, King Bahulāśva of Mithilā was most ecstatic and told Śrī Nārada with folded hands: "O Devarṣe! You are omniscient! Please tell me which holy place is situated on which limb of Govardhana Hill, and thus make my life blessed!" Being most pleased with the plaintive words of the king of Mithilā, Devarṣi Nārada said:

yatra yasya prasiddhiḥ syāt tadaṅgam paramaṁ viduḥ;
kramato nāstyāṅgacayo govardhanasya maithila
yathā sarva-gataṁ brahma sarvāṅgāni ca tasya vai;
vibhūter bhāvataḥ śasvat tathā vakṣyāmi mānada
śṛṅgāra maṅḍalasyādho mukhaṁ govardhanasya ca;
yatrānnakūṭaṁ kṛtavān bhagavān vrajavāsibhiḥ
netre vai mānasi gaṅgā nāsā candra sarovarah;
govinda-kuṇḍaṁ hyadharau cibukaṁ kṛṣṇa kuṇḍakam
rādhā-kuṇḍaṁ tasya jihvā kapolau lalitā-sarah;
gopāla-kuṇḍaṁ karṇau ca karṇāntaḥ kusumākaraḥ
mauli-cihnā śilā tasya lalāṭaṁ viddhi maithila;
śirāś citraśilā tasya grīvā vai vādinī-śilā
kāndukaṁ pārśva-deśāś ca auṣṇīṣaṁ kaṭir ucyate;
droṇa-tīrthaṁ pṛṣṭha-deśe laukikaṁ codare sthitam
kadamba-khaṇḍam urasi jivāḥ śṛṅgāra maṅḍalam;
śrī kṛṣṇa pāda-cihnaṁ tu manas tasya mahātmanaḥ
hasta-cihna tathā buddhir airāvata-padaṁ padam;
surabheḥ pāda-cihneṣu pakṣau tasya mahātmanaḥ
puccha-kuṇḍe tathāpucchaṁ vatsa-kuṇḍe balaṁ smṛtam;
rudra-kuṇḍe tathā krodhaḥ kāmāḥ śakra sarovare
kuvera tīrthaṁ codyoge brahma-tīrthe prasannatā;
yama-tīrthe hyahaṅkāro vadantīthaṁ purāvidaḥ
evam aṅgāni sarvatra girirājasya maithila;
kathitāni mayā tubhyaṁ sarva-pāpa harāṇi ca
girirāja vibhūtiṁ ca yaḥ śṛṇoti narottamaḥ;
sa gacched dhāma paramaṁ golokaṁ yogi durlabhaṁ

(Garga Samhitā)

"O King! I will now tell you what holy places represent which limbs of Govardhana Hill! There is no serial order or qualitative distinction between these places, though. Just as the supreme *brahman* is all-pervading and there is no qualitative distinction between its limbs, similarly there is no serial order or qualitative

distinction between the limbs of Śrī Girirāja, which is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's playground, which directly emanates from His body.

Anyway, there are holy places situated on each and every limb of Govardhana Hill. Of them, the lower part of Śṛṅgāra-maṇḍala, the place where Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Vrajavāsīs perform the Annakūṭa-sacrifice, is Govardhana's mouth. Mānasī Gaṅgā is Govardhana's eyes, Candra Sarovara his nose, Govinda Kuṇḍa his lips and Kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍa his chin. Rādhākuṇḍa is Govardhana's tongue, Lalitā-kuṇḍa his cheeks, Gopāla-kuṇḍa his ears and Kusuma Sarovara his earlobes. The rock that bears the sign of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's head is Govardhana's forehead, Citra-śilā is Govardhana's head, Vādānī-śilā is Govardhana's neck, Kanduka-tīrtha is his side and Auṣṇīṣa-tīrtha is his waist. Droṇa-tīrtha is Govardhana's back, Laukika-tīrtha is his belly, Kadamba-khaṇḍa his chest and Śṛṅgāra-maṇḍala is Govardhana's life-force. Govardhana's mind is the place where Śrī Kṛṣṇa's footprints can be seen, Govardhana's intelligence is the place where Śrī Kṛṣṇa's handprints can be seen and the place where Surabhī's footprints can be seen is Govardhana's wings. Puccha-kuṇḍa is Govardhana's tail, Vatsa-kuṇḍa his strength, Rudra-kuṇḍa his anger, Indra-sarovara his lust, Kuvera-tīrtha his enterprise, Brahma-tīrtha his satisfaction and Yama-tīrtha his ego.

O King of Mithilā! In this way the sages have described each of Govardhana's limbs in connection with all the holy places that are there, and they have been described by me to you as such. Any fortunate person who hears this description of Śrī Girirāja will become qualified to live in Goloka, the abode which is rarely attained by the *yogīs*!"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Śrī Kṛṣṇa always personally resides here as Gopāla!" This was also described by Śrī Nārada to Bahulāśva in the Garga Saṁhitā (3.7.28-32):

*yena rūpeṇa kṛṣṇena dhṛto govardhano girih;
 tad rūpaṁ vidyate tatra nṛpa śṛṅgāra maṇḍale
 abdās catuḥ sahasrāṇi tathā cāṣṭau śatāni ca;
 gatās tatra kaler ādau kṣetre śṛṅgāra maṇḍale
 girirāja guhā madhyāt sarveṣāṁ paśyatā nṛpa;
 svataḥ siddhaṁ ca tad rūpaṁ hareḥ prādurbhaviṣyati
 śrī nāthaṁ deva-damaṇaṁ taṁ vadiṣyanti sajjanāḥ;
 govardhana girau rājan sadā līlāṁ karoti yaḥ
 ye kariṣyanti netrābhyāṁ tasya rūpasya darśanam;
 te kṛtārtha bhaviṣyanti maithilendra kalau janāḥ
 jagannātho raṅganātho dvārakānātha eva ca;
 badrināthas catuṣkoṇe bhāratasyāpi parvate
 madhye govardhanasyāpi nātho'yaṁ vartate nṛpa;
 pavitre bhārate varṣe pañcanāthāḥ sureśvarāḥ
 sad dharma maṇḍale stambhā āṛta-trāṇa parāyaṇāḥ;
 teṣāṁ tu darśanaṁ kṛtvā naro nārāyaṇo bhavet
 caturṇāṁ bhuvi nāthānāṁ kṛtvā yātrā naraḥ sudhīḥ;
 na paśyed deva-damaṇaṁ na sa yātrā-phalaṁ labhet
 śrī-nāthaṁ deva-damaṇaṁ paśyed govardhane girau;
 caturṇāṁ bhuvi nāthānāṁ yātrāyāḥ phalam āpnuyāt*

"O King, the form Kṛṣṇa showed as He lifted Govardhana Hill is still present at Śṛṅgāra-maṇḍala. 4.800 years after the beginning of the Kali-age, Śrī Hari will spontaneously appear from a cave of Govardhana Hill and reveal His form to everyone at Śṛṅgāra-maṇḍala. (He appeared to Śrīpāda Mādhavendra Purī in a dream and told him to unearth Him from a cave of Śrī Girirāja. He was initially installed on top of Govardhana Hill as Śrī Nātha-mūrti, but now He is opulently served in the town of Nāthadvāra in Rājasthāna) O King, the saints will call this form of the Lord of the demigods, Who always enjoys pastimes on Govardhana Hill, Śrī Nātha. O King of Mithila, the people in Kali-yuga who see this form of the Lord with their eyes will be

blessed. In four corners of Bhārata (India) the Lord is present in four forms — Jagannātha, Raṅganātha, Dvārakānātha and Badrinātha, and on Govardhana Hill the Lord is also present, as Śrī-Nātha.

These five Nātha-*mūrtis* are the five pillars that uphold the platform of religion and they are dedicated to protecting the miserable people. Anyone who sees these five Nātha-*mūrtis* will attain *sārūpya-mukti* with Lord Nārāyaṇa. If someone has gone for the *darśana* of the other four *mūrtis*, like Raṅganātha and Jagannātha and has not seen the fifth *mūrti* Śrī Nātha, then his *darśana* of the other four *mūrtis* was a waste."

(The Śrī-Nātha *mūrti* was present on Govardhana Hill at the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu and the Gosvāmīs Śrī Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha dāsa, who were all very eager for his *darśana*. The deity descended (had Himself removed) from the Hill on the pretext of being afraid of a Muslim-invasion, so that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, as well as Rūpa, Sanātana and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī (who had all vowed not to climb the Hill) could still have His blessed *darśana*. They did not go to see Him in Nāthadvāra. Any fortunate person who merely beholds the Śrīnātha-*mūrti* at Govardhana will attain the merit of seeing all five of the Nātha-*mūrtis*, even without seeing the other four."

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "With their natural beauty the trees, vines, cows, deers and birds of Govardhana Hill who is Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's most lovely pastime-place or the throne of Their erotic pastimes, always remind us of Śrī Hari. Who is there who will not take shelter of this Govardhana Hill?"

bahu tīrthera samāśraya giri-govardhana;
mahā-tīrtha hoīyāchena bhuvana pāvana
gaṅgādi tīrtha hoīte mahimā pradhāna;

*sarva-tīrtha phala yin̄ho korena pradāna
 śrī govinda baladeva brahmā hara kori;
 apsarā śrī dāna-kuṇḍa cāri dike gheri
 yāra śobhā satata-i koriche varddhana;
 śuka muni yāra guṇa korena kīrtana
 sei govardhana kon vrata parāyaṇa;
 āśraya nā koribeka loiyā śaraṇa*

"Which avowed person will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, who is the shelter of many holy waters which have become great sacred places that purify the whole world, that excel even the glories of the Gaṅgā and other holy waters and that can bestow the merit of all the holy waters upon the pilgrim, whose beauty is always increased by the surrounding lakes of Śrī Govinda, Baladeva, Brahmā, Hara (Śīva) and the Apsarās, as well as Śrī Dāna-Kuṇḍa, and whose glories have been sung by the great sage Śuka Muni?"

*yāra catur-dike jyotsnā-mokṣaṇa, mālyahāra;
 sumano, gaurī, balāri-dhvaja kori āra
 gāndharvādi manohara nānā sarovare;
 nirjhara giri yathā āche śobhā kore
 svayaṁ bhagavān sadā gopāla mūrti dhare;
 vihariche yathā nitya nānā khelā kore
 śṛṅgārera śimhāsana yāhāra svarūpa;
 vichāye rekheche deho līlā anurūpa
 go mṛga pakṣī yoto vṛkṣa latā gaṇe;
 sājāye rekheche yin̄ho koriyā udyāne
 atī manohara sei giri govardhana;
 yathāya vihare kṛṣṇa saha sakhāgaṇa
 līlā-sthālī govardhane kon bhāgyavāne;
 āśraya nāhiko kore līlā daraśane*

"Which fortunate soul will not take shelter of the very enchanting pastime-place Giri-Govardhana, who is surrounded by different enchanting lakes like Jyotsnā, Mokṣaṇa, Mālyahāra, Sumano, Gaurī, Balāri-dhvaja and Gāndharvā, the place where there is beautiful Nirjhara-Giri, where the Supreme Lord is always assuming the form of Gopāla and eternally plays different pastimes. Giri-Govardhana whose form is the throne for the erotic mellows, spreading out its body according to the pastimes that take place there. The place that keeps cows, deer, birds, trees and vines in its gardens to decorate them and where Kṛṣṇa enjoys with His cowherd boyfriends?"

VERSE 5:

***gaṅgā-koṭy-adhikaṁ bakāri-pada-jāriṣṭāri-kuṇḍaṁ vahan
bhaktyā yaḥ śirasā natena satataṁ preyān śivād apy abhūt
rādhā-kuṇḍa-maṇim tathāiva muraḥjit-prauḍha-prasādam dadhāt
preyaḥ-stavyamano 'bhavat ka iha taṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet***

gaṅgā - Ganges; *koṭi* - millions; *adhikaṁ* - greater; *bakāri* - Kṛṣṇa; *padaja* - coming from the feet; *ariṣṭāri kuṇḍa* - Śyāmakuṇḍa; *vahan* - carrying; *bhaktyā* - with devotion; *yaḥ* - who; *śirasā* - on the head; *natena* - humbly; *satataṁ* - constantly; *preyān* - dearer; *śivād* - than Śiva; *api* - even; *abhūt* - became; *rādhākuṇḍa* - Rādhākuṇḍa; *maṇim* - jewel; *tathā* - then; *eva* - certainly; *muraḥjit* - Kṛṣṇa; *prauḍha* - great; *prasādam* - mercy; *dadhāt* - manifested; *preyaḥ* - dear; *stavyatama* - most praiseworthy; *abhavat* - became; *ka* - who; *iha* - here ; *taṁ* - to Him; *govardhanaṁ* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter..

Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, who is most praiseworthy for the devotees, who is the object of Murajit's (Kṛṣṇa's) great mercy and who has become even more dear than Lord Śiva, because He always carries Ariṣṭakuṇḍa (Śyāmakuṇḍa), whose waters flow from Bakāri's (Kṛṣṇa's) feet and are superior to millions of Gaṅgā-rivers, and who carries the jewel named Rādhākuṇḍa on his head, which is lowered out of devotion?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmīcaraṇa reveals the glories of Haridāsa-varya Girirāja Śrī Govardhana as being even greater than Lord Śiva, who is the crown jewel of Vaiṣṇavas "*vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā śambhuḥ*"¹⁶, by being dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by being the recipient of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy and by being dear to the devotees.

Śrīman Mahādeva (Lord Śiva) has become 'Śiva' (blissful, or auspicious) by carrying the Gaṅgā which springs from Lord Viṣṇu's lotus feet on His head.

yac chauca niḥsṛta sarit pravarodakena tīrthena mūrdhnyadhikṛtena śivaḥ śivo'bhūt (Bhāgavata 3.28.22):

"Śiva has become *śiva* (auspicious or blessed) by carrying the water of the sacred Gaṅgā, the greatest of rivers, which emanates from His (Lord Viṣṇu's) lotus feet, on his head."

Here Śrī Śiva has become *śiva* because he became immersed in the bliss of devotion due to holding the Gaṅgā, which streams from the lotus feet of the Lord on his head and thus became the bestower of devotion to the world.

According to Bhāgavata-commentator Śrīdhara Svāmī the word 'Śiva' means 'topmost bliss' and this automatically means

¹⁶ Bhāgavata 12.13.16

the attainment of the bliss of devotion for there is no greater bliss in the world than the bliss of devotion.

From this it is understood that Śrī Gaṅgā awakens this devotion to the Lord.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa says: "The water of Ariṣṭakuṇḍa or Śyāmakuṇḍa, which flows from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, is millions of times holier than the water of the Gaṅgā".

Connection with Śrī Govinda's lotus feet makes a holy place an even more holy place. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings: *tīrtha-yātrā pariśrama, kevala monera bhrama, sarva siddhi govinda caraṇa*:

"The hard labor of pilgrimage is simply a mental illusion. All perfection lies at Govinda's lotus feet."

Who can describe the glories of this Śyāmakuṇḍa which was created by a strike of Govinda's heel and that was filled with all the holy waters of the universe on Govinda's order and by His wish? Is it so astonishing that this Ariṣṭakuṇḍa or Śyāmakuṇḍa is adorned with great glories that exceed the Gaṅgā millions of times? Besides, there is also Rādhākuṇḍa, the crown jewel of Vraja, which Kṛṣṇa considers to be even more glorious than His own *kuṇḍa* Śyāmakuṇḍa. This *kuṇḍa* is as dear to Kṛṣṇa as Rādhārāṇī Herself and anyone who bathes here just once receives the love that She feels for Him.

*sei kuṇḍe eka bāre yei kore snāna;
tāre rādhā sama prema kṛṣṇa kore dāna (C.C.).*

"Can there be any doubt that Govardhana, who carries both Rādhākuṇḍa and Śyāmakuṇḍa, is a much greater relisher of the mellows of devotion and bestower of *prema* than Lord Śiva, the carrier of the Gaṅgā?"

Śrīla Girirāja's carrying Rādhākunḍa and Śyāmakunḍa on his head particularly excels Lord Śiva's carrying the Gaṅgā on His head in many ways.

First of all, the Gaṅgā that Śrīman Mahādeva carries on his head flows from Lord Viṣṇu's lotus feet, but Śyāmakunḍa flows like honey from the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, the origin (*amśī*) of Lord Viṣṇu. Śrī Rādhākunḍa is even more glorious than Śyāmakunḍa. Secondly, Lord Śiva carries only the Gaṅgā on His head, while Śyāmakunḍa contains the sum total of all the holy waters in the universe, and these rivers had been called there by the Lord Himself. All these holy waters then came to reside in Śrī Rādhākunḍa with even more enthusiasm and devotion, and thus considered themselves completely blessed.

Thirdly, Śrīman Mahādeva did not devotedly carry voluntarily the Gaṅgā, which is Viṣṇu's foot water, on his head. King Bhagīratha performed penances to please the Gaṅgā and to get her to descend from Brahmaloaka to redeem his ancestors. Then he pleased Lord Śiva to convince him to carry the Gaṅgā on his head, so that he would bear the force of the cascading water. But Śrī Girirāja Govardhana carries the most glorious Rādhākunḍa and Śyāmakunḍa on his head with the greatest devotion (*bhaktiyā yaḥ śirasā natena*). No one had to request him to do it!

Fourthly, Lord Śiva does all kinds of things and goes around everywhere with the Gaṅgā on His head, whereas Govardhana stands still, forever carrying these two glorious *kunḍas* on his lowered head (*śirasā natena*).

Symbolizing a prostrated obeisance, Śrī Girirāja most devotedly carries the two holy *kunḍas* on his lowered head, and thus became an even greater receptacle of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's topmost love and mercy than Gaṅgādhara (Śiva). Hence Śrīla Girirāja Govardhana is named *hari-dāsa-varya*, the best of Lord Hari's

servants, for he became the object of the Lord's love and the Lord's grace. Thus he became the most worshipable object of devotion for innumerable devotees. Why? Because devotion for such great devotees is even greater than devotion for the Lord's own lotus feet and it causes such a (devotee-) worshipper to become an even greater object of the Lord's grace.

Knowing this, the devotees cherish even greater devotion to and faith in Girirāja.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Which person would not accept the shelter of Girirāja Govardhana?"

*kṛṣṇa pādapadma jāta śyāmakunḍa nāma;
koṭi gaṅgādhika yāra mahimāra gāna
divya cintāmaṇi-rūpa śrī rādhākunḍa;
dui kuṇḍera guṇa gāya akhila brahmāṇḍa
mahātīrtha dui kuṇḍa avanata mātḥe;
vahana korena yini sevā-vrata bhāve
mahādeva hoite tāra mahimā apāra;
kṛṣṇa anugraha pātra vandita sabāra
haridāsa varya sei śrīla govardhane
keṅā nā bhajana kore loiyā śaraṇe?*

"Who will not take shelter of Śrīla Govardhana, the best of Hari's servants, who is the object of Kṛṣṇa's mercy and praiseworthy by all of His devotees, and worship him, who devotedly carries Śyāmakunḍa, which has flown from Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, and Śrī Rādhākunḍa, which is made of divine Cintāmaṇi-gems, two ponds that are glorified by the whole world, on his lowered head, thus becoming even more glorious than Mahādeva?"

VERSE 6:

***yasyām mādharma-nāviko rasavatim ādhāya rādhām tarau
madhye cañcala-keli-pāta-valanāt trāsaiḥ stuvatyās tataḥ
svābhīṣṭam paṇam ādadhe vahati sā yasmin mano-jāhnvī
kas taṁ tan nava-dam-pati-pratibhuvanḥ govardhanam nāśrayet***

yasyām - where; *mādhava* - Kṛṣṇa; *nāvikaḥ* - boatman; *rasavatim* - Rādhā, who has *rasa*; *ādhāya* - takes; *rādhām* - Rādhā; *tarau* - on the boat; *madhye* - in the middle; *cañcala* - naughty; *keli* - play; *pāta* - waves; *balanāt* - from the force; *trāsaiḥ* - with fear; *stuvatyā* - prays; *tataḥ* - then; *sva* - own; *abhīṣṭam* - desired; *paṇam* - wager; *ādadhe* - takes; *vahati* - carries; *sā* - She; *yasmin* - in which; *mano-jāhnvī* - Mānasa Gaṅgā lake; *kaḥ* - who; *taṁ* - him; *tat* - that; *nava* - young; *dampatī* - love couple; *pratibhuvan* - mediator; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, who became the mediator for the youthful loving Couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, when Mādhava became the boatman who took Rasavati Rādhā on His boat to the middle of the Mānasa Gaṅgā-lake where She fearfully prayed to Him to calm the strong restless waves and He took His desired fee from Her?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: While Śrīmat Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmīpāda glorifies Śrī Girirāja, suddenly a very intimate pastime of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava on the greatest limb and most confidential pastime-place of Govardhana known as Mānasa Gaṅgā becomes manifest in his consciousness.

In this verse he elaborates on this.

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa has left the duty of cow-herding to His cowherd boyfriends and is staying alone on the bank of the Mānasa Gaṅgā-lake!"

When Śrīmatī hears this news from a *sārikā* (female parrot) She goes there with Her girlfriends, setting out from Śrī Rādhakuṇḍa to Govardhana, carrying milk, buttermilk, and butter in pots on Her head. In his *mañjarī-svarūpa* (spiritual body named Tulasī Mañjarī) Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī follows Svāminī (his mistress) Rādhikā as if she is Her shadow. Her heart horripilating of ecstatic love, Śrīmatī thus walks on, thereby blissfully speaking about Kṛṣṇa with Her girlfriends. Different flowers of ecstatic love blossom on the vine of Her body when She hears the joking words of Her girlfriends, headed by Lalitā and Viśākhā, and Her gait is slow out of ecstasy because She's going to see Śyāma. How wonderful is the beauty of Girirāja! Its valleys are covered with thick, luscious grass and blooming trees and vines, the bumblebees are blinded by intoxication from the fragrance of the flowers and are buzzing around the branches of the trees which bear ripe and juicy fruits and the forest is filled with the sweet chirping of different birds and hares while deer and other animals are freely wandering around. Girirāja is beautified by beautiful cascades and caves and all the moving and non-moving beings around Girirāja tremble of ecstasy when they see Śrī Rādhikā and Her girlfriends.

Meanwhile Śyāma hears from a *śuka* (male parrot) that Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends are coming His way. It is the rainy season and the Mānasa Gaṅgā is filled to the brim. Mādhava dresses up like a boatman and takes an old boat to the middle of the lake, singing songs He likes and diffusing a blue light over the chest of the Jāhnavī (Mānasa Gaṅgā).

Slowly, slowly Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends arrive at the shore of the lake. When Śrīmatī sees the youthful boatman the ocean of Her love for Him wells up and Her lotus feet become motionless. The *sakhīs* take their baskets off their heads and call out: “Boatman! Boatman!”, but Kṛṣṇa pretends not to hear and see them. Looking the other way He keeps on singing as He pleases. Then slowly He steers His boat to the shore. It is an old boat. Śrīla Jñāna dāsa sings:

*mānasa suradhunī dukūla pāthāra;
 kaichane sahacarī hoyabo pāra
 prāvṛt samaye garaje ghana ghora;
 kharatara pavana bohoi tahi jora
 dūrahi nehārata nāgara śyāma;
 taraṇī lei milalo soi ṭhām
 hāsi hāsi kohoye nāvika vara kāna;
 coḍho sabe pāra utārabo hām
 śunī suvanānī dhanī haraṣita bheli,
 coḍholo taraṇī pāra sahacarī meli
 nautuna nāvika kachu nāhi jāno;
 vegete taraṇī lei korolo payāna
 tuṭī taraṇī heri bhelo tarāsa;
 siñcaye pānī kore jñāna dāsa*

"The Mānasa-Gaṅgā is a vast expanse of water. How will the *sakhīs* cross it? In the monsoon time the clouds rumble terribly and a heavy gale is blowing. Nāgara Śyāma (the amorous hero Kṛṣṇa) saw them from a distance and brought His boat to the shore. The best of boatmen, Kāna (Kṛṣṇa), laughed and said: ‘Climb in My boat! I will bring You across!’

When Suvadani (fair faced Rādhikā) heard this, She smiled and climbed in the boat with Her girlfriends. The new boatman didn't know anything (about sailing), but still He quickly set off

with His boat. Seeing that the boat is leaking, Jñāna dāsa became afraid and started scooping out the water!"

Śrīmatī Rādhikā is named *rasavati* here, because She carries the highest spiritual flavour, *mādana rasa*, in Her heart and because She carried *go-rasa*, or milk in a pot on Her head. When the boat comes to the middle of the lake, clouds appear in the sky and a strong wind begins to blow. The old boat begins to rock strongly and is about to sink.

The hearts of Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends begin to pound in their chests. Afraid of drowning Śrīmatī calls out, "Help! Help! Boatman!" so many times, but the boatman doesn't care about it. The naughty boatman simply collects His desired fee of ferrying by kissing and embracing Śrī Rādhikā as if that would protect Her. Śrīla Jñāna dāsa also sings:

*mānasa gaṅgāra jala, ghana kore kala kala,
du'kūla bohiyā yāi dheu
gagane uṭhilo megha, pavane bāḍhilo vega,
taraṇi rākhite nāre keu*

"The water of Mānasa-Gaṅgā dashes loudly and her billows are hitting both shores. Clouds arise in the sky and the wind begins to increase its force. No one can protect the boat."

*dekho sakhi! navina kāṇḍārī śyāma rāya
kokhono nā jāne kān, bāhibāra sandhān,
jāniyā coḍilum kene nāy*

"O *sakhi*, look! The young helmsman Śyāma Rāya doesn't know anything about sailing! He's never done it before! Why did I climb into this boat, although I know all this?"

*nāiyāra nāhiko bhay, hāsiyā kathā-ṭi koy,
kuṭila nayāne cāhe more
bhayete kām̐piche de, e jvālā sahibe ke,
kāṇḍārī dhariyā kore kore*

"He's not afraid of sailing at all! He's just smirking and talking, looking at Me with crooked eyes! I'm trembling with fear. Who can tolerate such suffering? This boatman is holding His hand on my lap!"

*akāje divasa gelo, naukā pāra nāhi hoilo,
parāṇa hoilo paramāda
jñāna dāsa kohe sakhi, thira hoiyā thāko dekhi
ekhon nā bhāvīho viṣāda*

"The day has passed and no work has been done! The boat never crossed the lake! My heart has gone mad! Jñāna dāsa says: 'Sakhi! Stay calm, and don't be sad!'"

The *sakhīs* are enchanted when they behold the sweetness of the *Yugala-līlā* and the boats of their hearts sink in the waves of the ocean of the *Yugala prema rasa*. When Śrīmatī calls out, "Helmsman! Helmsman! ", the *rasika nāvika* Kṛṣṇa replies with faltering voice:

*śuno vinodini dhani, āmāra kāṇḍārī tumi,
tomāra kāṇḍārī koho kāre
tuyā anurāge prema, samudre ḍubechi āmi
āmāre tuliyā koro pare*

"Listen, O Vinodini-dhani (delightful girl)! You are My helmswoman! Tell Me Who's Your helmsman? I am drowning in the ocean of Your passionate love! Pick Me up and make Me cross that ocean!"

*yogī bhogī nāpitānī, tomāra lāgiyā dānī,
ojhā hoilām tomāra kāraṇe
tuyā anurāge more, loiya phire ghare ghare
tuyā lāgi korilum dokāne*

"For Your sake (desiring to meet You) I became a *yogī*, a *bhogī*, a barber, a tax-collector and an exorcist! Out of love for You I ran a shop!"

*rākhāla loiyā vane, sadā phiri dhenu sane,
tuyā lāgi vane vanacārī
tomāra pirīti pāiyā, e bhāṅgā taraṇī loiyā,
tuyā lāgi hoinu kāṅḍārī*

"I take My cowherd boys into the forest and I always ramble there with My cows. For Your sake I became a forest-dweller! I came with this broken boat just to get Your love! For You I became a boatman!"

*nā bolo kubola dhani, ramañira śīromaṇi,
tuyā preme ki nā kori āmi
dāsa jagannāthe koy, nā ṭheliho rāṅgā pāy,
jāti jivana dhana tumi*

"Don't speak harsh words to Me, O crown jewel of lady-loves! Don't (You know that) I love You?"
Jagannātha dāsa says: "Don't kick me away! You are my caste, my life, and my wealth!"

Then slowly the boat reached the shore and the Yugala Kīśora entered a *kuñja* where They had Their sweet pastimes-of-meeting, which were witnessed through the holes in the foliage by the *sakhīs* who had made all arrangements for Their meeting there.

In this way everyone (the Yugala as well as Their girlfriends and maidservants) had all Their desires fulfilled. Śrīmatī and Her girlfriends fed Śyāma all the *ghī*, milk, and yoghurt that they carried with them and then returned home, pouring their bodies in the stream of the bliss of meeting and the agony of separation.

*tvarāya taraṇī loiyā tire āilā śyāma;
saphala korilā vidhi pūriḷo manakāma
navanī mākhana chenā ye chilo pasāre;
sakala dilena śyāma nāgarera kore
aṅjali aṅjali kori korilā bhojana;
sabe meli colilena āpana bhavana
āilā mandire rāi sakhīgaṇa saṅge;
hariṣe bosilā dhanī premera taraṅge*

(Pada Kalpataru)

"Śyāma quickly took the boat to the shore and fate satisfied Him by fulfilling His desires. Whatever butter and buttermilk the *gopīs* carried in their baskets they all handed it to Śyāma Nāgara, Who ate it with both hands. Then they all returned to their own homes. When fortunate Rāi returned home with Her *sakhīs* She sat down, floating on the waves of *prema*.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha's vision ends, and in external consciousness he says:

"Who will not take shelter of this Govardhana Hill, who is a mediator in the meeting of the eager amorous Couple, and where the beautiful lake Mānasa Gaṅgā is, where They play such intimate sports? He can bless the sincere devotees with the vision of all these confidential pastimes, which are taking place on his own chest!" That is the purport.

*ye sthānete śrī govinda nāvika rūpete;
 rasavatī radhikāya caḍāye naukāte
 taraṅgita madhya-sthale naukāya dolane;
 bhayete vihvāla rādhā hrdaya kampane
 stuti kore rasavatī śrī kṛṣṇa-carāṇe;
 paṇa loya nāvika cumbana ālīngane
 sei to mānasa gaṅgā bhuvana pāvana;
 virājita ye sthānete sei govardhana
 vraja nava dampatīra madhyastha svarūpa;
 akhila brahmāṅḍa mājhe dhanya rasakūpa
 sei govardhana bhāi ei tribhuvane;
 keṅā nā āśraya kore ekānta śaraṇe*

"O brother! Who in the three worlds will not take exclusive shelter of Govardhana, the blessed well of *rasa* for the whole world, who serves as a mediator for the youthful loving couple of Vraja, where there is the world-purifying Mānasa Gaṅgā-lake where Śrī Govinda assumed the form of a boatman and got Rasavatī Śrī Rādhikā to board His boat, where the waves in the middle of the lake caused the boat to rock and made Rasavatī pray for protection at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's feet, Her heart trembling with fear, and where the boatman Kṛṣṇa collected His fee in the form of Her kisses and embraces?"

VERSE 7:

*rāse śrī-śata-vandya-sundara-sakhī vṛndāñcitā saurabha-
 bhrājat-kṛṣṇa-rasāla-bāhu-vilasat-kaṇṭhī madhau mādhavī
 rādhā nṛtyati yatra cāru valate rāsa-sthalī sā parā
 yasmīn kaḥ sukṛtī tam unnatam aye govardhanam nāśrayet*

rāse - in the Rāsa-dance; *śrī* - goddess of fortune; *śata* - hundreds; *vandya* - worshipable; *sundara* - beautiful; *sakhī* - girlfriends; *vṛnda* - group; *añcita* - accompanied; *saurabha* - fragrance; *bhrājat* - glistening; *kṛṣṇa* - Kṛṣṇa; *rasāla* - nectarean; *bāhu* - arm; *vilasat* - splendid; *kañṭhī* - neck; *madhau* - in the springtime; *mādhavī* - dear to Kṛṣṇa; *rādhā* - Rādhā; *nṛtyati* - dances; *yatra* - where; *cāru* - beautiful; *balate* - moves; *rāsa-sthalī* - the place of the Rāsa-dance; *sā* - She; *parā* - supreme; *yasmin* - in which; *kaḥ* - who; *sukṛtī* - pious; *tam* - him; *unnatam* - elevated; *aye* - O!; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

O! Which pious soul will not take shelter of this elevated Govardhana Hill, where Mādhavī (Śrī Rādhikā) beautifully dances on the grounds of the Rāsa-dance in the springtime, being embraced around the neck by Kṛṣṇa's nectarean fragrant arm, and being surrounded by Her girlfriends, whose beauty is praised by hundreds of goddesses of fortune?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī describes another one of Girirāja Govardhana's glories. There are special places in Vrajabhūmi where Kṛṣṇa plays His different pastimes, but the crown jewel of all of His pastimes is Śrī-Śrī Rāsa-*līlā*.

Rāsa means: the full manifestation of the aggregate of all transcendental flavours. All the different lovely pastimes of the Lord which are separately included in His various other pastimes have been jointly included in the Śrī Rāsa-*līlā*.

Starting from *pūrva-rāga* (falling in love) and *abhisāra* (love journey), and culminating into *utkañṭhitā* (eagerly waiting for the beloved to come), *māna* (pique when the lover does not show up), *viraha* (separation from the beloved) and *milana*

(reunion), all these different delicious pastimes have been included in this one single vessel of *rasa*.

This delight of the Rāsa-*līlā*, the aggregate of transcendental loving pastimes, is only possible in *līla-puruṣottama*, the Playful, Original Personality of Godhead Śrī Yaśodā-nandana. He is highly able and He is the king of relishers Who is always eager to relish the pure love of His devotees, which is unadulterated with feelings of awe and reverence.

He is erotic mellows personified and He is most merciful. Without Him, the transcendental king of dancers, and Śrī Rādhikā, Who is also known as Rāseśvarī, the Queen of the Rāsa-dance, Who is endowed with *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*, the delight of the Rāsa-*līlā* is impossible to accomplish.

The bank of the Yamunā in Śrī Vṛndāvana is the lovely place where this Rāsa-*līlā* takes place. That is why Śrī Vṛndāvana is so glorious. But Girirāja Govardhana is also not deprived of this great fortune. At the base of Govardhana Hill Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava dance the Vasanta-Rāsa, the vernal Rāsa-*līlā*.

In this verse Śrī Raghunātha dāsa gets a transcendental vision of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava dancing the Rāsa with Their girlfriends near Govardhana Hill.

How beautiful is Girirāja with its treasure of natural beauty when the spring, the king of seasons (*ṛtu-rāja vasanta*), arrives there! The tender clove-vines softly swing in the southern breezes, bees are buzzing in each and every *kuñja*, and the cuckoos sing in the fifth note. The wind is like a dancing teacher that teaches the tender twigs of the vines, which are like young dancing girls, how to dance in the sweet spring days. The nice fragrance of the Tamāla-flowers covers that of the fresh musk there and in each forest the red Palāśa-flowers resemble the sharp nail-weapons of Cupid. The Keśara-flowers are blooming like handles for Cupid's golden umbrellas and the blooming

roses, which are surrounded by swarms of thirsty bees, are like Cupid's flower bow that carries many arrows.

When beholding the blossoming Ketakī-flowers it seems as if Vāsantī (the goddess of spring) is laughing, displaying her row of teeth. The forest-smells of Mādhavī- and Jasmine-flowers, the budding mango-tree horripilates of bliss when it is embraced by the Mādhavī-vine, and the singing of the cuckoos which sit on the many branches of the mango trees, sounds like the playing of Cupid's drum of victory. Again and again swarms of bees which are intoxicated by the smell of the honey agitate the mango buds. The soft breeze carries the pollen from the hearts of the Mallī-flowers and fills all directions with their fragrance.

In the evening the eastern direction is reddened by the rising full moon (in the month of April), just as a man who returns from a journey colours the face of his beloved, who had been suffering separation from him, with fresh *kuṅkuma*.

In this beautiful vernal surrounding Śyāmasundara, the king of dancers, enjoys the Rāsa-dance with Śrī Rādhikā and Her girlfriends.

sarasa vasanta, samaya vana sohana,
mohana mohinī saṅga
aparūpa rāsa, vilāsahi nimagana
duhuṅ duhuṅ aṅgahi aṅga

"The forest is beautified by the romantic spring. Mohana and Mohinī (enchanted Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa) are absorbed in enjoying Their wonderful Rāsa-play, holding Each other in a tight embrace."

*dekho sakhi! rāsa vilāsa
koto koto yantra tantra sawārata
kotohuñ rāga parakāśa*

"Look at the Rāsa-pastime, O *sakhi!* How many musical instruments are played and how many tunes they can manifest!"

*yūtha hi yūtha mili saba kāmīnī
yāmīnī vilasa-i bhālo
nācata raṅgiṇī, prema taraṅgiṇī
gāota madana gopāla*

"All the girls meet in groups to have a good time at night. These playful girls, who are like rivers of love, dance while Madana Gopāla sings."

*bāoye upāṅga, ḍampha svara maṅḍala,
kaṅkaṅa kiṅkiṇī rola
bahu vidha tāla, māna dharu karatale,
ananta ānanda hillola*

"Drums are beating and various voices are singing the entire gamut, while bangles and anklets jingle. The *gopīs* clap different rhythms in their hands and make endless waves of bliss."

Śrī Raghunātha says: "All of Rādhikā's girlfriends who take part in the vernal Rāsa-dance, are praiseworthy for hundreds of goddesses of fortune. They are all endowed with *mahā-bhāva*, which is something that no other kind of divine consort has. It is this *mahā-bhāva* which is the direct cause of the transcendental Rāsa-flavour. There is no Rāsa-*līlā* anywhere else but in Vraja.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (10.47.60) Uddhava Mahāśaya already announced the *gopīs*' glorious victory over the goddess of fortune in the Rāsa *līlā*:

*nāyam śriyo'ṅga u nitānta rateḥ prasādaḥ
svaṛ yoṣitām nalina gandha rucām kuto'nyāḥ
rāsotsave'sya bhujā-daṇḍa grhīta kaṇṭha
labdhāśīṣām ya udagād vraja-sundarīnām*

"Not even the loving goddess of fortune, who always resides on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's left chest (nor the other consorts of the Lord like Bhū and Līlā from Vaikuṇṭha), nor the heavenly damsels, whose bodies smell of lotus flowers, what to speak of any ordinary girl from the earth, attained the blessing the beautiful girls of Vraja received to be embraced around the neck by the Original Personality of Godhead Vrajendra-Nandana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa)'s arms in the Rāsa-festival and thus have their desires fulfilled."

In this way the *gopīs*, headed by their crown jewel, *mahābhāva-svarūpiṇī* Śrī Rādhikā, are embraced around the neck by the fragrant and erotically exciting arms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa at the second Rāsa-ground at the base of Govardhana Hill, during the very blissful Rāsa-dance.

Which fortunate soul is there who will take shelter of that great Girirāja Govardhana? In other words, the highly fortunate *sādhakas* take exclusive shelter of the base of this Girirāja to attain the realisation of pastimes such as the delicious Rāsa-*līlā*.

*yāñdera vandanā kore lakṣmī śata śata;
ramaṇīya sakhīgaṇe hoye parivrta
śrī kṛṣṇera rasamaya saurabha pūrta;
dirghārgala sama yei bāhu subalita*

*sei bāhu yugalete ābaddha hoiyā;
 mādhaveṛa priyā rādhā kaṇṭha milāiyā
 madhu māse nṛtya kore navīna dampati;
 dvitīya se rāsa-sthalī govardhane khyāti
 atula mahimāmaya śrīla govardhana
 kebā nā āśraya kore ohe bhaktaḡaṇa*

"O assembled devotees! Who will not take shelter of the incomparably glorious Śrīla Govardhana, where the second Rāsa-place is, where the youthful Couple dances in the month of Madhu (March-April) and where Mādhava embraces His beloved Rādhā around the neck with His two tasteful, fragrant, long and strong bolt-like arms, as She is surrounded by Her lovely girlfriends, who are all praised by hundreds and hundreds of goddesses of fortune?"

VERSE 8:

***yatra svīya-gaṇasya vikrama-bhṛtā vācā muhuḥ phullatoḥ
 smerakrūra-dṛg-anta-vibhrama-śaraiḥ śaśvan mitho viddhayoḥ
 tad yūnor nava-dāna-sṛṣṭija-kalir bhaṅgyā hasan jṛmbhate
 kas taṁ tat-pṛthu-keli-sūcana-śilam govardhanam nāśrayet***

yatra - where; *svīya* - own; *gaṇasya* - of the group; *vikrama* - heroism; *bhṛta* - holding; *vāca* - words; *muhuḥ* - repeatedly; *phullatoḥ* - blossoming; *smera* - smile; *krūra* - sharp; *dṛg* - eyes; *anta* - corners; *vibhrama* - moving; *śaraiḥ* - with shafts; *śaśvad* - constantly; *mithaḥ* - each other; *viddhayoḥ* - piercing; *tad* - that; *yūnaḥ* - loving Couple; *nava* - new; *dāna* - tax; *sṛṣṭi-ja* - caused by the creation; *kalih* - quarrel; *bhaṅgyā* - with gestures; *hasan* - laughing; *jṛmbhate* - expanding; *kaḥ* - who; *taṁ* - him; *tat* - that; *pṛthu* - great; *keli* - play; *sūcana* -

indicating; *śilam* - rocks; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, where Rādhā's and Kṛṣṇa's groups, the gopīs and the gopas, constantly and blissfully make the hearts of the youthful Couple blossom of joy by quarrelling with each other (about whether Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa is supreme) with heroic words; where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa expand Their ever-fresh Dāna-Keli-quarrel, piercing Each other with the arrows of Their playful glances, smiling and joking with Each other and whose boulders indicate this great Dāna-pastime?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Now the *Dāna-līlā*, one of the humorous *rasika* pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava which takes place on Śrī Govardhana, arises in Śrīpāda Raghunātha's consciousness and he describes this pastime in the course of his glorification of Śrī Govardhana.

The Divine Pair can relish a wonderful sweet erotic mellow when They proudly quarrel about tax to be levied at the Dāna-Ghāṭī, supported by Their own groups.

The *Dāna-līlā* truly is full of wonderful relish! It is said that when Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī saw the condition of Śrīpāda Raghunātha, who was suffering the pangs of love-in-separation, he gave him his Lalita-Mādhava-Nāṭaka to read, a play which is filled with the transcendental flavours of love-in-separation. He was thinking that this was going to soothe his burning affliction caused by the fire of separation that was raging within him. When Raghunātha read this story, which is full of the great flavours of love-in-separation, he became almost mad such an extent that it was hard for him to remain alive.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda then took back his Lalita Mādhava, saying that he still had to edit it, and he gave Śrī Raghunātha his 'Dāna Keli Kaumudī', a description of the Dāna-*līlā*, which describes the wonderful meeting of the Divine Pair and which is filled with the mellows of laughter and joking, to read instead. This caused Śrīpāda Raghunātha's transcendental feelings to change and gave him so much relish that as a *rasodgāra* (transcendental recollection) he composed two poems named 'Dāna Keli Cintāmaṇi' and 'Muktā Carita' which are both filled with the flavours of meeting, laughter and joking.

By the wish of Śrī Vasudeva Mahāśaya sages like (Gargamuni's son-in-law) Śrī Bhāgurī Muni have commenced a sacrifice for the welfare of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Baladeva near Govinda-Kuṇḍa, at the base of Govardhana Hill.

It is announced throughout Vraja that the *gopīs* who bring *ghī* to this sacrifice will certainly have their desires fulfilled. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her girlfriends, headed by Lalitā, dress themselves with the most beautiful garments and ornaments and go towards Govinda-Kuṇḍa, taking fresh *ghī* along with them. With restless eyes Śrīmatī looks here and there: "Where is the Lord of My life?"

Hearing this, Vrajendra-Nandana and His dear most friends ascend Śrī Girirāja, stand at the place named Śyāma-Vedī, which is close to the Mānasa Gaṅgā, and erect an incomparable toll station there. Both moving and non moving creatures are horripilating when they hear the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

*sundari! śunoho ājuka kathā
tāpa dūre gelo, sab bhālo hoilo
iha upajilo yathā*

"O beautiful girl! Listen to what happened today! Everything has turned out all right, and My anguish went far away!"

*aruṇa udoye, brāhmaṇa nicaye,
āṅilo gokula mājha.
jaratīra sthāne, kori nivedane
āpana manera kāja*

"When the sun rose the *brāhmaṇas* came to Gokula and told Jaṭilā what they wanted to do."

*govardhana pāṣe, āmarā hariṣe,
koribo yajñera kāma.
ye gopa yuvatī ghr̥ta dibe tathi,
iṣṭavara pābe dāna*

"We will blissfully commence a sacrifice near Govardhana Hill and any young *gopī* who brings us *ghī* will receive the boon she desires."

*jaṭilā śuniyā, āmāre ḍākiyā,
yatana koriyā boilo
vadhūre sājāiyā, gavī-ghr̥ta loiyā,
turite tāhāi coilo*

"Hearing this, Jaṭilā called Me and carefully said: "Dress up my daughter-in-law and quickly go there with Her, taking cow's *ghī* with you!"

*e sab vacane, sab sakhigane,
rāiyera ānanda hoy
se heno nāgara, guṇera sāgara,
daraśa hoibe moy*

"When they heard all these words, Rāi and Her *sakhīs* were in ecstasy: "I will see that Nāgara (amorous hero), Who is an ocean of qualities!"

*eto mane kori, ati rase bhari,
 aṅgahi suveśa koilo
ghṛtera pasarā, sājāiyā satvara,
 sabe meli coli gelo*

"Thinking like this they dressed all their limbs in a very tasteful way and quickly left, taking loads of *ghī* with them."

*e kothā jāniyā, se ye vinodiyā,
 bāṅdhiyā o cūḍā cānde
subalādi loiyā, ādha pathe yāiyā,
 rahalo dānīra chānde*

"Knowing this, Vinodī (Kṛṣṇa) put on His peacock-feather crown and went halfway to meet them, taking His friends like Subala with Him and appearing like a tax-collector."

*veṇura nisāna, koroye saghana,
 bājāya o jaya turī
e yadunandana, kore daraśana,
 nivīda ānande bhari*

"He loudly played His flute and many victory-horns resounded. Yadunandana Ṭhākura is in great ecstasy when he sees this."

Śrīmatī and Her *sakhīs* approach the Dāna-Ghāṭī, where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa see Each other. Great waves of *mahābhāva* well in the river like heart of *mahābhāvamayī* Rādhikā.

A jubilant pastime of laughter and joking now arises with the *sakhīs*. Subala loudly says: "O cowherd girls! Why are you ignoring My toll-station? Ā-rey! Pay your toll first!"

The *sakhīs* don't even raise an eyebrow. These proud girls just walk away, making their arms oscillate. Śyāma Nāgara attentively watches Śrīmatī's each footstep. The jingling of Her ornaments shower His ears with nectar. The enchanted Nāgara comes running. This enchanting tax-collector holds a flute in His hands, has a smile on His face and casts naughty glances from His eyes. The fish-like minds of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* swim in the cascade of Yugala-*mādhurī* in great bliss.

Nāgara blocks their way and says: "Pay Me My tax!", making Śrīmatī's eyes manifest the *kila-kiñcita-bhāva*.

garavahi sundarī, cololohi ānata
nāgara pantha āgora
kahotohi bāta, dāna deho majhu hāta
āna chale kāñculī tora

"The proud beautiful girls walk down the road in a stooping way, but are spotted by Nāgara, Who tells them: "Place the tax in My hand, otherwise I will seek it in your blouse!"

aparūpa prema taraṅga
dāna keli rasa, kalita mahotsava,
vara kila kiñcita raṅga

"How wonderful are the waves of *prema*! The Dāna-*keli* is a great festival made of *rasa*, which includes the *kila-kiñcita*-pastime!"

*alapa pāṭala bhelo, athira ḍṛgañcala
tāha jala kaṇa parakāśa
dhunāite bhuru-dhanu, pulake pūrala tanu,
alakhita ānanda hāsa*

"Her restless eyelids became slightly pinkish and showed teardrops. Her eyebrows turned crooked, Her body was studded with goose pimples, and She blissfully smiled in an unseen way."

*aichana heri, carita puna taikhone,
bāhuḍala pada dui cāri
rādhā mādhava, duhuñ kara-padatale,
rādhā mohana bolihāri*

"To see this pastime again I turned back two to four steps. Rādhā Mohana dāsa praises the hand palms and footsoles of Rādhā-Mādhava."

First a splendid quarrel over taxation goes on between the *sakhīs* and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His pals. Svāminī is grave and silent. How delicious are the waves of ecstatic love She shows on Her face and in Her eyes! The stupefied Nāgara goes up to Śrīmatī to lay His hands on Her, but Lalitā comes up to Him, stops Him and says:

*ei mone vane, dānī hoiyācho,
chuite rādhāra aṅga
rākhāla hoiyā, rāja kumārī saṅge,
kisera rabhasa raṅga*

"In this mind, in this forest You became the tax collector just to touch Rādhā's body! You're quite bold to touch a princess (like Her), being a mere cowherder!"

*emon ācara, nāhi koro đoro,
ghanāiyā āsicho kāche
guru-vara āge, koribo gocara,
tokhono jānibe pāche*

"Are You not afraid to come so close to Her? I will tell this to our superiors, You will find out about them later (when they punish You)!"

*chu'io nā chu'io nā, nilaja kānāi,
āmarā parera nārī
para puruṣera, pavana paraśe,
sacele sināna kori*

"Don't touch! Don't touch, O shameless Kānāi, we are other men's wives! When even the wind from another man touches us we take a bath with all our clothes on!"

*govinda dāsera, vacana mānaho,
nā koro emana đhaṅga
yoi nāgarī, o rase āgarī,
koro ho tāhāra saṅga*

"Heed the words of Govinda dāsa and don't act like that! Go and unite with any other heroine, who may be an ocean of *rasa*!"

Finally Lalitā and the *sakhīs* and Subala, Madhumaṅgala and the *sakhās* start quarreling with each other with crooked words about whether Rādhā or Kṛṣṇa is the monarch of Vṛndāvana. The *sakhīs* use many scriptural references and logical arguments to prove that Rādhā is the Queen of Vṛndāvana and they accuse Kṛṣṇa and His friends of destroying the beauty of Vṛndāvana's grass, trees, and vines and uprooting them by

herding Their hundreds of thousands of cows there. The *sakhās* react by erecting a toll station to establish Kṛṣṇa's Lordship over Vraja.

Rādhā and Mādhava smile and frown Their eyebrows when They see and hear these joking quarrels and pierce Each other's hearts with hundreds of arrow-like glances fired from Their bow-like eyebrows. In this way the quarrel escalates. Seeing the impudence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His friends, one *sakhī* secretly whispers into Śrīmatī's ear:

*sundari! alakhite hao tirodhāna!
girivara kuñja, kuṭire ati gopate,
yāi rākhoho nija māna*

"O Sundari! Try to steal away without being seen! Go to this secret hut in that grove near Govardhana and thus protect Your honour!"

*iha ati capala, carita vara giridhara,
kiye jāni koru viparīta
śuni uho swacana, bhītahi janū jana,
rāi korolo soi nīta*

"This excellent Giridhārī has a very naughty character. Who knows what nonsense He may commit?" Hearing this good advice, Rāi fearfully did what She was advised."

*bujhi puna nāgara, saba guṇa āgara,
alakhite tahi upanīta
rādhā mohana puna, dekhi sunāgarī,
ānande nimagana cita*

"Understanding where She had gone, Nāgara, the ocean of all divine qualities, went there in an unseen way. Looking again, Rādhā Mohana dāsa sees Sunāgarī (Rādhikā) immersed in bliss."

The *sakhīs* then expertly arranged for the eager Divine Pair to have a sweet meeting in a *kuñja* near Girivara Govardhana. The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* became blessed by relishing the sweetness of the amorous pastimes of the Divine Pair through th

*paraśahi gada gada nahi nahi bol;
tanu tanu pulakita ānanda hilol
ko koru anubhava duhuka vilāsa;
eka mukhe śitakāra eka mukhe hāsa
nimīlita nayana nayana aru thira;
mañi taralita mañi mañju mañjira
nāgarī deoyala ghana rasa dāna;
rādhā mohana pahu amiyā sināna*

"When Kṛṣṇa touches Her, Rādhikā says, "No! No!", with stuttering voice. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's bodies are studded with goose pimples of ecstasy.

Who has realized these pastimes of Theirs? One mouth (Rādhikā's) screams (in protest) and one mouth (Kṛṣṇa's) laughs. They stare Each other in the eyes without blinking and Nāgarī pays for Her dairy products with Her jewelled locket and Her lovely jewelled ankle bells. (Beholding this) Rādhā Mohana dāsa bathes in an ocean of nectar."

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Who will not take shelter of this Girirāja, which is beautified even now by the boulders that are marked by the signs of this ever-so-sweet Dāna-*līlā*?"

madhumaṅgalādi chale kohe vyaṅga kori;
avadhāna koro ogo lalitā sundarī
vṛndāvanera rājā kṛṣṇa vrajendranandana;
tomarā tāhāra prajā yoto gopījana
śuniyā lalitā kohe śuno ohe baṭu;
vṛndāvanera rājñī rādhā keno koho kaṭu
tomarā sakale rādhāra ekānta āśrita;
vākya kalahete rādhā-śyāma hṛṣṭa-citta
kila kiñcita bhāve apāṅga cālana;
paraspara bāṇe viddha kalaha vacane
ye sthānete rādhā-kṛṣṇera nava dāna līlā;
sei cihne sucihnita govardhana śilā
hari līlā-kṣetra ei girivara rāja;
keṅā nā āśraya kore bhakata samāja?

"Madhumaṅgala jokingly and sarcastically said: "O Lalitā Sundarī! Take care! The king of Vṛndāvana is Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vraja's Nanda Mahārāja, and you *gopīs* are all His subjects!" Hearing this, Lalitā said:

"Listen, O Baṭu! Why are you speaking bitter words about Rādhā, the Queen of Vṛndāvana? You are all exclusively surrendered to Rādhā!"

This quarrel delighted Rādhā-Śyāma's hearts. They pierced Each other with arrow-like glances in the *kila-kiñcita*-mood and with quarrelsome words.

Who in the society of devotees will not take shelter of Girivara Rāja, Hari's playground, whose boulders give signs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's ever-fresh Dāna-*līlā*?"

VERSE 9:

***śrīdāmādi-vayasya-saṅcaya-vṛtaḥ saṅkarṣaṇenollasan
yasmin go-caya-cāru-cāraṇa-paro rīrīti gāyaty asau
raṅge gūḍha-guhāsu ca prathayati smāra-kriyāṁ rādhayā
kas taṁ saubhaga-bhūṣitāncita-tanuṁ govardhanam nāśrayet***

śrīdāma - Śrīdāma; *ādi* - and others; *vayasya* - friends; *saṅcaya* - multitude; *vṛtaḥ* - surrounded; *saṅkarṣaṇena* - with Balarāma; *ullasan* - playing; *yasmin* - in which; *go-caya* - herd of cows; *cāru* - beautiful; *cāraṇa* - herding; *paraḥ* - dedicated; *rī-rīti* - like *rī rī*; *gāyati* - sings; *asau* - He; *raṅge* - in the arena; *gūḍha* - hidden; *guhāsu* - in the caves; *ca* - and; *prathayati* - manifests; *smāra* - amorous; *kriyāṁ* - pastimes; *rādhayā* - with Rādhā; *kaḥ* - who; *taṁ* - that; *saubhaga* - with fortune; *bhūṣita* - adorned; *añcita* - endowed with; *tanuṁ* - body; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

Who will not take shelter of Govardhana Hill, whose form is adorned with great fortune, where Kṛṣṇa blissfully and beautifully tends His beautiful cows with His brother Balarāma and friends like Śrīdāma while singing tunes like ‘rī rī’ and where He plays erotic pastimes with Śrī Rādhā on the stage of its lonely caves?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In the course of his glorifications of Śrī Govardhana Hill Śrīpāda Raghunātha mentions another day’s pastime there which he perceived in a transcendental vision.

All these pastimes are the very treasure of the *rāgānugī-sādhakas’* meditations. As a result of performing a lot of *sāadhanā* and attaining the causeless mercy of the pure devotees one obtains the great fortune of *rāgānugā-bhajana*.

Those whose hearts are pure and who are able to understand the truth about transcendental emotions can become blessed with the great fortune of attaining loving devotional service in *rāgānugā mārga*. Of all kinds of *rāgānugā-bhakti*, *bhajana* in the wake of the *gopīs* is again more confidential. All is completely dependent on the mercy of a pure devotee who is endowed with such feelings.

By hearing, chanting and remembering the greatly powerful words of the Gosvāmīs, the stream of their mercy can be infused into the heart of the *sādhaka*. The *sādhaka* will then easily be elevated to the kingdom of transcendental ecstatic love and be blessed with the deep relish of all these confidential pastimes.

One summer day Śrīmatī Rādhikā sat at home in Yāvata, feeling great separation from Her beloved Kṛṣṇa. Out of separation from Śyāma Her life-airs came up to Her throat and She told Her maidservant Tulasī: "Tulasi! You are the only one who can help me in this difficult time! Save My life by helping Me to meet My Priyatama!"

The *kinīkarīs* are surrendered to the lotus feet of Svāminī and they are Her only support in all circumstances. The Mahājanas say: "Although Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are all pervading in their transcendental bliss, they can't achieve nourishment without the aid of the *sakhīs*, just as the supreme *brahman* can't attain nourishment without the aid of the *cit-śakti*, although it is all pervading and self-manifest."

*vibhur ati sukha-rūpaḥ sva-prakāśo'pi bhāvaḥ
kṣaṇam api na hi rādhā-kṛṣṇayor yā rte svāḥ*

*pravahati rasa-puṣṭim cid vibhūtir iveśaḥ
śrayati na padamāsām kaḥ sakhinām rasajñāḥ*

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 10.17)

*sakhī vinu ei līlā puṣṭi nāhi hoy;
sakhī līlā vistāriyā sakhī āsvādoy*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta)

"Without the aid of the *sakhīs* such pastimes can't be nourished. The *sakhīs* expand these pastimes and make them relishable."

Among these *sakhīs* the greatest are again the *mañjarīs*, which are non-different from Śrīmatī in body and heart. This is because Śrīmatī is too shy to reveal many of Her feelings to Her girlfriends, but She is not at all shy to reveal them to Her maidservants.

Greatly eager Śrīmatī went out of the house with Tulasī. Completely unaware of which direction to take *divābhisārikā* (Rādhikā, who goes out to meet Kṛṣṇa at noontime) walks on, filled with the limit of passion, holding Tulasī by the hand. Tulasī, who knows and shares Her feelings, takes Her to Śrī Girirāja Govardhana.

*mātha hi tapana, tapata patha bāluka,
ātapa dahana vithāra
nonika putali tanu, caraṇa kamala janu,
dina-hi koyolo abhisāra
hari hari! premaka gati anivāra!
kānu paraśa rase, paravaśa rasavati,
vichurala sakala vicāra
guru-jana nayana, pāśa-gaṇa vāraṇa,*

māruta maṇḍala dhūli.
tā sañe meli, calali vara-raṅgiṇī,
pati geḥa nītahi bhūli
yoto yoto vighni, jitali anurāgini,
sādhali manasija mantra.
govin
hari sañe rasamaya tantra

"The sun shines on the head and burns the sand on the road, spreading itself in the sky like a burning canopy. Her body is as soft as butter and Her feet are as tender as lotus flowers, yet She goes on Her daytime rendez-vous. Hari! Hari! The course of love can't be stopped! This amorous girl gives up all considerations, desiring to be touched by Kṛṣṇa! The most excellent playful Rāi is shielded from the noose-like looks of her suspicious elders by a whirlwind that throws up a lot of dust. In this way She went, forgetting all about Her home and Her husband. O Passionate Rāi! You have conquered over all obstacles after mastering all of Cupid's *mantras*! Govinda Dāsa says: 'May Hari now teach You the *tantras* of *rasa*!'"

Śrīmatī is as soft as a puppet of butter. The holy *dhāma* contracted itself¹⁷ and brought Her to Govardhana in no time. Hearing Śyāmasundara, Baladeva and Their friends singing the *rī-rī* song and seeing the cows grazing here and there, Tulasī guessed that Śyāmasundara must have been on top of Govardhana Hill, so she seated Śrīmatī in a hidden grove and followed the *rī-rī* sound to find Śyāmasundara.

¹⁷ According to the necessities during the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the transcendental abode of Vraja contracts itself to so that Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa can cross long distances, and extends itself to cast unwanted spectators far away.

Seeing that Śyāmasundara was accompanied by Baladeva and His friends Tulasī cleverly showed herself to Him once from a slight distance and then hid herself between the trees.

Tulasī is Śrīmatī's shadow, and as soon as Śyāma saw Her He became agitated by feelings of separation from Her. Seeing that Kṛṣṇa's mind has wandering off Baladeva told Him:

"O brother, You've become tired! Go and take a little rest at the base of this tree! I will take care of the cows with Our friends!" Saying this, He went off, following the cows with the cowherd boys. Then Tulasī came to Śyāma and accomplished the sweet meeting of the Divine Pair in a lonely cave of Girirāja.

*duhuṅ doṅhā daraśane bhāve vibhora,
duhuṅka nayane bohe ḍharakata lora
duhuṅ tanu pulakita gada gada bol,
gharamahi bhigala duhuṅka nicola
aparūpa duhuṅ jana bhāva taraṅga,
kṣaṇe ghana kampana kṣaṇe thira aṅga
coloite cāhi duhuṅ coloi nā pāri,
kohe mādharma duhuṅ yāo bolihāri*

"When They saw Each other They were filled with emotions and tears streamed from Their eyes. Their voices faltered, Their hairs stood on end and Their garments were soaked by perspiration. How wonderful are the waves of Their feelings! Sometimes They trembled and sometimes Their bodies remained calm. They both wanted to move, but couldn't. Thus Mādhava dāsa praises the Divine Couple."

How many hundreds of artistic dances in the form of erotic pastimes Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava performed on the dancing stage-like, solitary caves of Govardhana Hill!

The eyes and mind of the fortunate maidservant Tulasī also wonderfully danced along on the rhythm of this dance as she witnessed this from behind the screens.

Remembering the divine visions of these pastimes Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Who else but Girirāja is so fortunate to host these *rasika*-pastimes of Rādhā and Mādhava and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of tending the cows? Truly his body is decorated with the ornaments of good fortune! Who would not take shelter of this Girirāja?"

*śrīdāmādi sakhāgaṇa baladeva saṅge;
ye sthānete śrī govinda gocāraṇa raṅge
'rī rī' kori madhura svare kore nānā gāna;
nitya vihariche yathā govardhana nāma
yāra guhā grha madhye dekhi raṅga sthala;
kandarpa keli kore navīna yugala
saubhāgya-sālī sei giri govardhana
kebā nā āśraya kore ohe bhaktagaṇa*

"O devotees! Who will not take shelter of fortunate Giri Govardhana, where Śrī Govinda enjoys the pastime of herding His cows with Baladeva and His friends, headed by Śrīdāma, singing different sweet songs like *rī-rī*, and where the Youthful Couple always enjoys erotic pastimes on the stage-like cave-abodes?"

VERSE 10:

***kāḷindīm tapanodbhavam giri-gaṇān aty-unnamāc-chekharān
śrī-vṛndāvipinam janepsita-dharam nandiśvaram cāśrayam
hitvā yaṁ pratipūjayan vraja-kṛte mānam mukundo dadau
kas taṁ śṛṅgi-kirīṭinam giri-nṛpaṁ govardhanam nāśrayet***

kāḷindīm - Yamunā; *tapana* - the sun; *udbhavām* - born; *giri* - mountain; *gaṇāt* - groups; *ati* - very; *unnamat* - high; *śekharān* - crowns; *śrī vṛndā-vipinam* - Śrī Vṛndāvana; *jana* - people; *ipsita* - desire; *dharam* - fulfilling; *nandiśvaram* - Nandiśvara; *ca* - and; *āśrayam* - shelter; *hitvā* - given up; *yaṁ* - which; *pratipūjayan* - worshipping; *vraja* - Vraja; *kṛte* - for the sake; *mānam* - honour; *mukundaḥ* - Mukunda; *dadau* - gave; *kaḥ* - who; *taṁ* - him; *śṛṅgī* - of mountains; *kirīṭinam* - the crown; *giri* - mountains; *nṛpaṁ* - the king; *govardhanam* - Govardhana; *na* - not; *āśrayet* - will take shelter.

Who will not take shelter of the king of mountains, Govardhana, who was honoured and formally worshipped by Mukunda as the crown jewel of mountains for the sake of protecting the inhabitants of wish yielding Śrī Vṛndāvana, making Him neglect the (worship of) the Yamunā (river, the daughter of the sun), all other high mountains and even His own abode Nandiśvara ?

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: At the end of this *stava* Śrīpāda Raghunātha mentions yet another one of Śrī Girirāja's glories to show the absolute necessity of taking shelter of Govardhana Hill.

Although there are many pastime-places in the 168 miles circumference of Vraja-*maṇḍala* which are endowed with great glory Śrī Girirāja is the greatest because he is so dear to Śrī

Kṛṣṇa. This can easily be understood, because of all the hills Śrī Kṛṣṇa chose the crown jewel of hills Śrī Govardhana to protect the Vrajamaṇḍala with, stopping the sacrifice to Indra and initiating the worship of Girirāja instead.

Just to establish the worship of Girirāja the Lord expounded *karma-vāda* (the path of action) to Nanda and the cowherds, who were accustomed to perform their traditional sacrifice to Indra. In this way He cleverly explained to them the necessity of worshipping Girirāja. Hearing the nectarean words emanating from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's divine mouth Nanda and the cowherds immediately developed faith in the worship of Girirāja without argument.

Being their livelihood, Girirāja was naturally the object of the Vrajavāsīs' worship and devotion. This subject is described as follows in Śrī Harivaṁśa:

*dāmodara vacaḥ śrutvā hr̥ṣṭās te goṣu jīvinah;
tad vāg amṛtamāsādyā pratyūcur aviśāṅkayā
tavaiṣā bāla mahatī gopānāṁ citta-vardhinī;
pṛiṇayatyeva naḥ sarvān buddhir vṛddhi-karī gavām
tvam̐ gatis tvam̐ ratiścaiva tvam̐ vettā tvam̐ parāyaṇam;
bhayeṣvabhayadas tvam̐ nas tam̐ eva suhṛdām suhṛt*

"Hearing Dāmodara's words, the Vrajavāsīs became very happy. It is as if their fear vanished simply by drinking the nectar of His words. They told Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "O child of ours! Your excellent intelligence is benefitting the cowherd-clan and causes an increase in our wealth of cows, and thus it greatly increases the love of all of us! You are our only goal, the Vrajavāsīs are lovingly attached to You only. You alone know what is good for us and what is not. You grant us fearlessness when we are afraid and You are our greatest friend."

With great enthusiasm Nanda and the cowherds began to worship Girirāja with different paraphernalia. Govardhana, the crown jewel of mountains, accepted this worship and the great mountains on earth - Sumeru, Himālaya and so - also came there to worship Girirāja, taking different offerings with them.

*govardhano ratna-silā-mayo'bhūt
suvarṇa śṛṅgaiḥ paritaḥ sphuradbhīḥ
mattālibhir nīrjhara sundaribhīḥ
darībhīr uccāṅga karīva rājan
tadaiva sailāḥ kila mūrtimanta
sopānayā meru himācalādyāḥ
nemur girim maṅgala pāṇayas taṁ
govardhanaṁ rūpa-dharaṁ girīndrāḥ*

(*Garga Saṁhitā*)

"When sages like Bhāgurī and Garga, who were *brāhmaṇas* learned in the Vedas, began to worship Govardhana Hill, Govardhana manifested himself with many jewelled boulders and golden peaks. Intoxicated bees buzzed around the thick, flowering vines and there were beautiful cascades and caves there. Then mount Meru, the Himālaya and other great mountains came to offer their devoted obeisances unto him, bringing him auspicious presents. In this way Govardhana bore the form of the king of mountains!"

Then the Lord played another clever trick to reveal the superiority of Girirāja's power and worship to everyone's minds and eyes. When Nānda and the cowherds devotedly offered handfuls of flowers and a huge food-offering to Govardhana, Śrī Kṛṣṇa assumed a huge and most astonishingly beautiful form on top of the mountain and said:

"O cowherds headed by Nanda! I am Govardhana, and I have appeared because I am pleased with your worship and your devotional feelings!"

Saying this, He began to eat the large amount of food, which was offered to Him by the Vrajavāsīs with an amazing expertise.

*kṛṣṇo'pi sāksād vraja sailam adhyāt
 dhṛtāti-dūrghaṁ kila cānya rūpam
 'sailo'smi' lokān iti bhāṣayan san
 jaghāsa sarvaṁ kṛtam annakūṭam
 gopās ca gopī-gaṇa-vṛnda-mukhyā
 ūcuḥ svayaṁ vīkṣya gireḥ prabhāvam
 dātuḥ varaṁ tatra samudyataṁ
 taṁ suvismitā harṣitamānasās te
 jñāto'si gopair girirāja-devaḥ
 pradarśito nanda sutena sāksāt
 no godhanaṁ vā kila bandhu-vargo
 vṛddhiṁ samāyātu dine dine ke
 tathāstu coktvā girirāja-rājo
 govardhano divya vapur dadhānaḥ
 kirīṭa keyūra manoharāṅgaḥ
 kṣaṇena tatrāntara dhīyatārāt*

(Garga Saṁhitā)

"When the cowherds headed by Nanda began their worship of Govardhana Hill Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared from the mount, assuming a very large form, called the Vrajavāsīs, announced 'I am Govardhana!' and began to eat all the offered food. Seeing this great power of Govardhana and understanding that he was willing to offer them a boon, the Vrajavāsīs said in bliss and astonishment: 'O Girirāja! By Nandanandana's grace we are

now perceiving this divine form of yours! May we have more and more cows and friends each day, by your grace!’ “

Hearing this prayer of the cowherds, Girirāja, whose divine form was beautified by a crown and bangles, said: “*Tathāstu* (so be it)!” and suddenly disappeared.”

From this we can easily understand that Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not display the power and the glory of any other place of Vraja-*maṇḍala* in such a way. After this the Indra-*pūjā* was stopped and Indra, who had become very upset, began to shower Vraja-*bhūmi* with devastating rains, planning to destroy it and causing the Lord to protect Vraja by lifting Girirāja.

Yamunā is called *tapanodbhavā* in the text, which means ‘the daughter of the sun’. The clouds are the sun’s order-carriers, and in the summertime the sun sucks up the water and gives it to the clouds, which shower it back on us in the rainy season. So if we worship the sun’s daughter, then Indra’s clouds can’t do any harm anymore and the disturbance caused by the hail and rain will easily cease. But Kṛṣṇa did not perform the easily fruitful worship of Yamunā, but instead lifted Govardhana Hill for seven days and nights to reveal Girirāja’s great glories.

Again, Nandīśvara Hill is the only shelter of the Vrajavāsīs, which fulfills all their desires. Śrī Kṛṣṇa even lives on the Nandīśvara Hill, so He could have easily stopped the Indra-sacrifice in favor of worship of Nandīśvara and He could have lifted Nandīśvara Hill instead to protect the Vrajavāsīs from Indra’s aggression. That would have been quite reasonable, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave up all these places to promulgate the worship of Govardhana Hill and accepted his help in protecting Vraja, thus establishing his supreme position. Śrīpāda says: “Which person will not take shelter of that king of mountains?”

*kāḷindī, girigaṇa, vraja-tirtha-gaṇe;
nandīśvare tyāga kori vrajendranandana
vṛndāvana rakṣā lāgi giri govardhane;
arcanāya sammānilo śrī nandanandane
parvatera śiromaṇi sei girirāje;
keṅā nā āśraya kore tribhuvana māḷhe?*

"Who in the three worlds would not take shelter of Girirāja, the crown jewel of mountains, whom Vrajendra-Nandana Hari used to protect Vṛndāvana, forsaking the Yamunā, all other mountains of Vraja, all the holy waters of Vraja as well as Nandīśvara, and who was thus honoured in worship by Śrī Nandanandana?"

PRAYER FOR BENEDICTION:

***tasmin vāsadam asya ramya-daśakam govardhanasyeha yat
prādurbhūtam idam yadiya-kṛpayā jīrṇāndha-vaktrād api
tasyodyad-guṇa-vṛnda-bandhura-khaṇer jīvātu-rūpasya tat-
toṣāyāpi alam bhavatu iha phalam pakvam mayā mṛgyate***

tasmin - in this; *vāsadam* - bestowing residence; *asya* - this; *ramya* - beautiful; *daśakam* - ten prayers; *govardhanasya* - of Govardhana; *iha* - here; *yat* - what; *prādurbhūtam* - appeared spontaneously; *idam* - this; *yadiya* - by whose; *kṛpayā* - mercy; *jīrṇa* - old; *andha* - blind; *vaktrād* - from the mouth; *api* - even; *tasya* - his; *udyad* - appearing; *guṇa* - virtues; *vṛnda* - host; *bandhura* - beautiful; *khaṇeḥ* - of a mine; *jīvātu* - the life; *rūpasya* - of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; *tat* - that; *toṣāyā* - by satisfaction; *api* - even; *alam* - greatly; *bhavatu* - let it be; *iti* - thus; *phalam* - fruit; *pakvam* - ripened; *mayā* - by me; *mṛgyate* - being sought.

May Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (or Govardhana Hill), who is my very life, who is a mine of beautiful transcendental qualities, and by whose mercy these prayers have spontaneously come from the mouth of an old and blind (of ignorance) man like me, be pleased with this Govardhanāśraya Daśakam, in which I take shelter of Govardhana Hill and which grant residence in his vicinity. This is the ripened fruit of my prayers that I desire!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa declares here, at the *phala-śruti* (the ‘fruit of recitation’ that is traditionally added to a Vedic hymn) that his prayers were *sva prakāśa*, or spontaneously manifest:

"Although I am old and blinded with ignorance, this beautiful Govardhanāśraya daśakam spontaneously came from my mouth."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has written:

*ataḥ śrī kṛṣṇa nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuratyadaḥ*

"The Holy Names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (or His pure devotees) can't be grasped with the material senses, but they become automatically manifest on the tongue and other senses of a person who has a service-attitude."

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata there are the examples of king Bharata, who chanted the Holy Name of the Lord although he had been degraded to take birth as a deer and Gajendra, the king of elephants, who offered prayers to Lord Viṣṇu, who then came to his rescue.

Normally an animal can't pronounce the Holy Names and qualities of Lord Hari, but the Holy Name does not wait for this lack of qualification because of its great power of self-manifestation. Thus it appeared even on the tongue of King Bharata, who was in the body of a deer and of Gajendra, who was in the body of an elephant.

One may ask here: "Śrīpāda! If the Holy Names, qualities and pastimes of the Lord (and His great devotees like Govardhana) are manifest on the tongues of the dedicated souls, then why do you call yourself 'blind and old' here?" To this Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, who is a mine full of jewels of humility, replies:

yadīya kṛpayā, "It was only possible by Śrī Girirāja's grace."

The mercy of the Lord or His devotee removes all lack of qualification. Śrīla Girirāja, who is a mine of jewel-like qualities like compassion, does not consider whether I am qualified or whether I have any faults or not, and has manifest this beautiful prayer even from the mouth of an old and blind person like me. Śrīla Girirāja is the very life-support this fallen soul; without his grace a person like me has no shelter. May these ten praises, which were manifested solely by his grace, satisfy Girirāja.

In other words, may Girirāja be most pleased with anyone who hears or chants these ten verses and bless him by giving him his shelter and love for him - this is the nicely ripened fruit that I desire of these ten verses."

In his cleverness of description Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī also dedicates this verse to his most beloved *guru*, the mine of all good qualities Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is his *jīvātu*, his life and soul, and by whose grace this 'Govardhanāśraya daśakam' has emanated even from the mouth of an old and blind person like him.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha's incomparable faith in and devotion to Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda can be seen in various places. At the end of Śrī Mukta Carita he has written:

*ādadānas tṛṇaṁ dantair idam yāce punaḥ punaḥ
śrīmad rūpa padāmbhoja dhūliḥ syāṁ janma janmani*

"Taking a straw between my teeth, I pray again and again that I may be the dust on Śrīmad Rūpa Gosvāmī's lotus feet, birth after birth." At the end of Viśākhānandada Stotram he has written:

*śrīmad rūpa padāmbhoja dhūli mātraika sevinā
kenacid grathitā padyair mālā-ghreyā tad āśrayaiḥ*

"This person, who only serves the dust from Śrīmad Rūpa Gosvāmī's lotus feet, has strung this garland of prayers. May the worshippers of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa that follow Śrī Rūpa, smell this garland." He has also written repeatedly that Śrīmad Rūpa Gosvāmī is his *jīvātu* (life and soul):

*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭhaṁ girindro'jāgarāyate
vyāghra tuṅḍāyate kuṅḍaṁ jīvātu rahitasya me*

(Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakam - 11)

"Out of separation from Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is my life and soul, the whole meadow of Vraja appears to be completely void to me. Govardhana Hill stretches itself out like a python and Śrī Rādhākuṅḍa is like a tiger whose gaping mouth wants to swallow me."

*apūrva premābdheḥ parimala payaḥ phena nivahaiḥ
sadā yo jivātur yam iha kṛpayā siñcad atulam
idānīm durdaivāt pratipada vipad dāva balito
nirāmbaḥ so'yaṁ kam iha tam ṛte yātu śaraṇam*

(Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakam - 10)

"Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is my life-support, has mercifully sprinkled me with the foam of the fragrant water of the unprecedented ocean of *prema*. To whom else but him shall I go, now that I am helpless and unfortunate, burning in the forest fire of dangers at every step?" And so on...

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "May this Govardhanāśraya Daśaka satisfy Śrī Rūpa, who is a mine of all jewel like qualities - this will be the ripened fruit of this recitation".

*yāra kṛpāya jirṇāndha mora mukha hoite;
govardhanāśraya daśaka hoiyāche prādurbhūte
sei guṇa khani girira santoṣa vidhāna;
hauk ihāte mora ei to manaskāma
kimvā śikṣā-guru yini śrī rūpa gosvāmī;
tāra santoṣa vidhānārtha abhājana āmi
govardhanāśraya daśaka divya kalpataru;
tāra kore samarpinu vāñchā-kalpataru
mui dina jarā andha ei trijagate;
mo heno adhame yadi siñce kṛpāmṛte
tabe ei divya daśaka kalpataru ḍāle;
acirāya mora bhāgye prema phala phale
tāhāte santuṣṭa hobe śrī rūpa gosāi;
iha hoite adhika lābha mora kichu nāi*

"May Govardhana Hill, the mine of jewel-like qualities by whose grace this Govardhanāśraya Daśakam has appeared from

the mouth of a blind and old person like me, be pleased with me, that is my desire".

Or: "I am unqualified to please my *śikṣā-guru* Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, but I have offered him this divine wish yielding tree named Govardhanāśraya Daśakam. If he showers the most low and fallen person in the three worlds, who is also old and blind, with the nectar of his grace, then the desired fruits of my fortune will swiftly ripen on the branches of this divine wish yielding tree of this *daśakam*. If Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī will be pleased with that, there will be nothing more for me to attain."

**Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's
'Govardhanāśraya Daśakam'.**

Translated 1990-1995 by Advaita dāsa

Śrī-Śrī Govardhana Vāsa Prārthanā Daśakam

"Ten prayers for being able to reside at
Govardhana Hill"

By Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī

VERSE 1

*nija-pati-bhuja-daṇḍā-chatra-bhāvaṁ prapadya
pratihata-mada-dhṛṣṭa-uddaṇḍa-devendra-garva
atula-pṛthula-śāila-śreṇī-bhūpa priyaṁ me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

nija - own; *pati* - Lord; *bhuja* - arm; *daṇḍa* - staff; *cchatra* - umbrella; *bhāvaṁ* - as; *prapadya* - attained; *pratihata* - to obstruct; *mada* - proud; *dhṛṣṭa* - bold; *uddaṇḍa* - arrogant; *deva* - demigod; *indra* - King; *garva* - pride; *atula* - matchless; *pṛthula* - big; *śāila* - mountain; *śreṇī* - group; *bhūpa* - king; *priyaṁ* - dear; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - vicinity; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

**O Govardhana Hill! You became like an umbrella
which was held by the staff-like arm of your own Lord,**

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to destroy the pride of Indra, the proud, bold and arrogant king of demigods.

You are the incomparable king of mountains and you are very dear to me. Please grant me the residence near you which is so dear to me !

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this Govardhana Vāsa Prārthanā Daśakam Śrīmat Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's heart becomes very attracted to the great glories of Śrī Girirāja and thus he reveals his desire to reside at the base of his greatly beloved Govardhana Hill.

First of all he says: *nija pati bhujā daṇḍa cchatra bhāvaṁ prapadya* "O Govardhana! You became like an umbrella that is carried by the staff-like hand of your own Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and you were so fortunate as to have remained thus for seven days and nights."

Just as a boy easily takes up an umbrella Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly picked up Govardhana Hill to protect Vraja. Śrī Śuka Muni said: *dadhāra līlayā kṛṣṇas chatrakam iva bālakaḥ* (Bhāg. 10.25.19) Śrī Kṛṣṇa's left arm looked as beautiful as a rod, holding the umbrella Govardhana, and the people of Vraja, attaining a place under this umbrella, exhibited an opulence which is rarely attained within the three worlds. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written in his Gopāla Campūḥ:

*vilasita maṇi daṇḍa śrīr mukundasya bāhus
tad upari parito'pi cchatra tulya girīndrah
prati diśam iha muktā dāmad vad vāri-dhārā
vraja sadana janānām pratyutābhūd vibhūtiḥ*

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa was surrounded by the Vrajavāsīs in the big hole under the Govardhana Hill as He lifted the hill with His left

hand. This made His upright left arm resemble a sapphire stick, the hill an umbrella and the raindrops that dripped from all of its sides strings of pearls. Thus it looked as if the people of Vraja had displayed rare opulence by standing under this extraordinary umbrella".

Indra was very puffed up because of his opulences. Although he has a thousand eyes, he showed his actual blindness by becoming angry at the Vrajavāsīs for giving up their sacrifice to him, even after he had seen how little Kṛṣṇa had smashed so many powerful demons, and sending the apocalyptic Samvartaka-clouds to Vraja to destroy the place.

In his Gopāla Campū-grantha (Pūrva Campū, 18th Pūraṇa) Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmīpāda has elaborately described how proud Indra was of his regal opulences. This is just a basic description: After having gradually sent hail, rain and thunderbolts to Vraja to destroy the place, Indra doubtfully sent 100 wind-spies there to find out what damage his rains had caused, and the spies, upon returning, told him: "O Mahārāja! Until now the place is not yet inundated!"

Indra then sent more powerful rainclouds to inundate Vraja-maṇḍala, thinking: "This huge shower surely must have inundated Vraja-maṇḍala!" With this in mind he send his cloud-spies to find out what was accomplished, but they also returned swiftly and reported that his purpose had yet not been fulfilled.

Hearing this, Indra became astonished, jumped on his elephant Airāvata and came to Vraja's air-space, very angrily prodding Airāvata with his elephant-goad and then he personally began to throw fiery thunderbolts on Vraja. Finally he sent his lightning-spies to find out about the result.

The lightning-spies returned and told him: "O King of the demigods! Hear this most amazing news! Govardhana has

grown because of eating the huge food-offerings of the people of Vraja and has now lifted himself off the ground!"

Indra sent his lightning-spies out once more and said: "Go and see why the hill has lifted itself and where the miserable people of Vraja have gone with their children and other relatives!" "As you order!", the lightning-spies said and went back to Vraja to find this out. They returned to Indra and said: "O Devarāja! It seems our strikes have scorched everyone to ashes! We can't find anyone in the entire Vraja-maṇḍala anymore!"

Hearing this, king Indra was very happy and he blessed the spies by saying: "May you live long!" He sent them back to Vraja once more to find out all the details. And again the lightning-spies went to Vraja, but this time they reported upon returning: "O Lord of the three worlds! None of the people of Vraja have been vanquished! They are all hiding under Govardhana Hill, making a blissful noise and Balānuja Śrī Kṛṣṇa is lifting the hill!"

Hearing this, Indra said: "Aho! Now I understand! In the past I cut the wings off the mountains, but Govardhana Hill has now regrown its wings and is giving shelter to the Vrajavāsīs, taking their side against me! Allright then, let me throw some more fiery thunderbolts down to smash all the Vrajavāsīs completely!"

Saying this Indra began to cast these thunderbolts, but he soon found out through his spies that he had accomplished nothing with it. Then Indra angrily told his spies: "Go and find out exactly what is going on and why my thunder-fire is thrown in vain all the time!"

The spies inspected the whole scene thoroughly and told Indra: "O King of gods! Not even two or three leaves have fallen from the trees of Govardhana Hill and not even one ant was killed there, no matter how many fiery thunderbolts you threw on them, then what to speak of the people of Vraja, who are

blissfully enjoying shelter under the hill?" Finally, after another endeavour to smash Govardhana with his thunderbolt, Indra became embarrassed and fearful and he once more realized Śrī Kṛṣṇa's greatness.¹⁸

Through all this, the pride and impudence of Indra, caused by his intoxication of opulence, and also the prowess and glories of Govardhana Hill are shown. Śrī Raghunātha says:

*atula pṛthula śailaśreṇi bhūpa priyaṁ me nija nikaṭa nivāsa
dehi govardhana tvam*

"O Giripate! You are the king of all mountains, even of the Himālaya and Sumeru! Residence at your vicinity is very dear to me, therefore I very much crave for that! But if the holy *dhāma* does not give its shelter no one can live there simply by his own endeavours: I therefore pray to you: please bless me so that I can live at your base!"

*ohe govardhana! tumi ei akiñcane;
more atiśaya priya tava sannidhāne
vāsa dāna kori more kṛtārtha koro;
atula mahimā tava āmāre dekhāho
śrī kṛṣṇera hasta rūpa daṇḍa agrabhāge;
virājita hoye tumi yeno chatra-bhāve
mada matta uddhata ye śacī-pati indra;
tāra garva kharva koile mahimā pracaṇḍa
girivara rāja tumi e boḍo mahimā;
ātmasāt koro more koriyā karuṇā*

"O Govardhana! This wretch very much loves to reside close to you. Please bless me with a place in your vicinity and show me your matchless glories! You were held like an umbrella on the rod-like hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to destroy the pride of Śacī's lord

¹⁸See Gopāla Campūḥ, Pūrva Campū 18th Pūraṇa.

Indra, who was intoxicated by false vanity, and to establish your own glories. O Govardhana, you are so great! Please take me to you!"

VERSE 2:

*pramada-madana-līlāḥ kandare kandare te
racayati nava-yūnoḥ dvandvam asminn amandam
iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagnakaḥ tad-dvayoḥ me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

pramada - intoxicated; *madana* - erotic; *līlā* - pastimes; *kandare kandare* - in every cave; *te* - your; *racayati* - performs; *nava* - young; *yūnoḥ dvandvam* - of the couple; *asminn* - in this; *amandam* - great; *iti* - thus; *kila* - certainly; *kalana* - seeing; *arthaṁ* - for the sake; *lagnakaḥ* - amidst; *tad* - that; *dvayoḥ* - the couple; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - near; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! The youthful couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa play passionate erotic pastimes in your every cave and I became very eager to witness them. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Within Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's heart, illuminated by *viśuddha sattva*, the different glories of Śrī Girirāja are revealed.

The Lord personally said: *mad bhakta pūjābhyaḍhikā*¹⁹

¹⁹ Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 11.19.21

"The worship of My devotee is greater than My own worship". Therefore Śrī Raghunātha hopes to live nearby the crown jewel of devotees, Śrīla Girirāja for the fulfillment of his sacred aspirations.

It is as if Govardhana asks Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī: "Ohe Raghunātha! If you are so anxiously revealing your aspiration to love close to me, then your aspirations can also be fulfilled by living close to me for just two or four days. Why do you want to stay here all the time? Don't the scriptures say that simply by living in Vraja for even one day one attains devotion to Hari (*dinam ekaṁ nivāseṇa harau bhaktir prajāyate* - Padma Purāṇa)? Therefore you can become blessed even if you stay here for only two or four days!"

To this Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī replies: "Ohe Girirāja! I am not just eager to be blessed with the attainment of *bhakti*; I have still another desire that I want to submit to your lotus feet. In each and every one of your caves my Śyāma-Svāminī are constantly engaged in greatly intoxicating **erotic pastimes!**"

The saints say: *sādhu sāvadhana!* "Beware, O holy man! This is not mundane **eros!**":

*vṛndāvane aprākṛta navīna madana;
kāma gāyatrī, kāma bije yāhāra upāsana
puruṣa yoṣit kibā sthāvara jaṅgama;
sarva cittākaraṣaka sāksān manmatha madana*

(C.C. Madhya 8)

"Kṛṣṇa is Vṛndāvana's **transcendental youthful Cupid** Who is meditated upon by the *Kāma-gāyatrī mantra* with the *Kāma bija* (seed of spiritual desire). He attracts everyone - men,

women, moving and non moving beings, for He Himself agitates Cupid".

Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja writes in his Sāraṅga Raṅgadā-commentary on verse 3 of Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta

(*kāmāvatārāṅkuram*): *prākṛtāprākṛta kandarpa nidāna vṛndāvanābhinava kandarpam ity arthaḥ. āgamādau kāmāgāyatrīyā kāma-bijena ca tasya tad rūpeṇopāsyatvāt. koṭī madana vimohanāśeṣa cittākarṣaka sahaja madhuratara lāvaṇyāmṛtāpārṇavena mahānubhāva-cayenānubhūyamāna tat tan mahā bhāva nivahena śrīman madana gopāla rūpeṇādhunāpi vṛndāvane virājamānatvāc ca.*

"This transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana is the origin of all mundane and spiritual love gods, the origin (*avatāri*) of all the different manifest descensions (*avatāra*), and His worship has been prescribed by the Vedas through the Kāma Gāyatrī-*mantra* with the *kāma bija*.

He enchants millions of Cupids and attracts everyone's minds with His nectarean elegance, which is like a shoreless ocean, and in *mahā-bhāva* (the greatest divine love) for Him this sweetness is fully experienced. He eternally resides in transcendental Vṛndāvana as Śrīman Madana-Gopāla (the beautiful Cupid as cowherd boy)".

This transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana is experienced through the fully blown *mahā-bhāva*, the quintessence of the supreme love of God, residing in the hearts of the Vrajadevīs; hence the Vedic scriptures and the great saints call their love *kāma* (lust):

*premaiva gopa rāmānām kāma ity āgamāt pratham
ity uddhavādayo'py etaṁ vāñchanti bhagavat priyaḥ*

(*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* 1.2.285,286).

"Although the love of the *gopīs* is called lust, it is actually nothing else but pure love: This love is coveted even by the greatest lovers of the Lord, like Uddhava, but not attained by them." This rarely attained thing has now become the practice and the goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas by the grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-*ācāryas* like Śrīla Rūpa and Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī have relished it and thought it to the *sādhakas* of this world.

The jewelled caves of Govardhana Hill are very solitary and filled with all kinds of paraphernalia suitable for the love-pastimes of the Yugala Kīśora, such as jewelled bedsteads, jewelled lamps, garlands, sandalwoodpulp, betelnuts etc. Thus all these caves are suitable places for the Yugala Kīśora's greatly intoxicated confidential loving pastimes, which only take place in Vraja-maṇḍala and nowhere else.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Girirāja! By living close to you one becomes blessed by seeing and experiencing all the love-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava! You know that I am Śrī Rādhikā's maidervant and that I want to be blessed by seeing these incomparable loving pastimes and attaining the service of my Īśvarī and Her Prāṇanātha! By living close to you I will see how my Īśvarī fights beautiful and intense erotic battles with Her Prāṇanātha."

*rati-rase mātala atiśaya nāha;
amiyā sarovare duhuṅ avagāha
sahaje niraṅkuśa nāgara rāja;
tāhe manamatha nṛpa kautuka kāja
dṛḍha parirambhane ghana sītakāra;
anukhana kiṅkiṇī koroye phukāra
kara gahi rākhi o yuga cakebā;
damśaite sarasija bārabō kebā*

*koho hariballabha saharī kule;
dekhoi nibhṛte ulāsahi phule*

"They both plunged into a lake of nectar when They became greatly intoxicated by the flavours of love. Nāgara Rāja (Kṛṣṇa, the king of amorous heroes) is naturally very wayward and king Cupid played many tricks on Him. In Kṛṣṇa's firm embrace Rādhikā uttered loud screams and Her waistbells were constantly jingling. Śrī Kṛṣṇa held both Her breasts with His hands and bit Her lips without hindrance. Hariballabha says to the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*: 'Behold the blossoming of Their secret delight!' When will I see my Īsvarī falling on Her Lord's chest on the erotic bed, perspiring and exhausted at the end of Her love-pastimes?"

*śramajala kaṇa digdha snigdha nispanḍa mūrtir
galita vasana bhūṣākalpa jalpa prajalpā
priya hṛdi patitāṅgī rādhikā mīlitākṣī
sthira taḍid iva navyāmbhodhare sa vyarājīt*

(Śrī Govinda Līlāmṛta 15,23)

"Śrī Rādhikā was exhausted from Her erotic battle with Her beloved and She fell on His chest. Her motionless body was beautified by sweatdrops of fatigue, Her eyes were closed and Her dress and ornaments had fallen off. While She exchanged loving words with Him, She looked like a steady lightning-strike on a fresh raincloud."

The poet Govinda Dāsa sings:

*rati rasa charame, śyāma hiye śutali,
śarada indumukhī bālā*

*marakata madane, koi janu pūjala,
 dei nava kāñcana mālā
 śyāma vayāna pora, vayāna virājai,
 ura para kuca yuga sāje
 kanaka kumbha janu, ulaṭi boisāyalo,
 madana mahodadhi mājhe*

"This girl (Rādhikā), Whose face shines like the autumn-moon, lies on Śyāma's chest after reaching the climax of Her loveplay. It is as if someone worships an emerald-coloured Cupid with a new golden necklace. She keeps Her face near Śyāma's face and Her breasts, which resemble golden jugs lying upside-down in an ocean of eros, on His chest."

*joḍala tanu mana, bhuje bhuje bandhana,
 adharahi adhara miśāna
 beḍalo mṛṇāle, hema nilamaṇi janu,
 bāndhala yuga eka ṭhāna
 ghana saṅe dāminī, dukūle dukūle janu,
 duhuṅ jana eka paṭavāsa
 caraṇa beḍhiyā cāru, aruṇa saroruha,
 madhukara govinda dāsa*

"Their bodies and minds have merged, Their arms embrace each other and Their lips meet each other. Golden and sapphire lotus stems (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's arms) entwine and bind each other. Śrī Rādhikā looks like a lightning strike lying on a cloud. Both the lovers are covered with one mere silken garment. Govinda Dāsa is like a bee circling around their beautiful reddish lotus like feet."

(Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prays:) "O Girirāja! When will I see my master and mistress thus enjoying in your caves as soon as I obtained residence close to you? I will dry up Their

sweatdrops by sweetly fanning Them (when They are tired of love making in the cool caves of Govardhana Hill) I will wash Their lotus like faces and hands with cold water from a golden jug, place delicious fresh betel leaves in Their mouths, put Their scattered anklebells and bangles back on Their wrists and feet, hang flower garlands around Their necks and anoint Their beautiful bodies with fragrant camphor and sandalwood pulp!"

*govardhana girivara, kevala nirjana sthala,
rāi kānu koribe śayane
lalitā viśākhā saṅge, sevana koribo raṅge,
sukhamaya rātula caraṇe*

*kanaka sampūṭa kori, karpūra tāmbūla pūri,
yogāibo vadana kamale
maṇimaya kiṅkiṇī, ratana nūpura āni,
porāiḥo caraṇa yugale*

*kanaka kaṭorā pūri, karpūra candana bhari,
kobe dibo du'janāra gāya
mallikā mālatī yūthi, nānā phule mālā gāṅthi,
kobe dibo doṅhāra golāya*

(Prārthanā)

"There is a solitary place at Govardhana Hill where Rāi and Kānu lay down to rest and where I will serve Their blissful ruddy lotus feet in the company of Lalitā and Viśākhā. I will fill up a golden box with camphor-laced betel leaves and place them in Their lotus mouths and I will bring jewelled waistbells and anklebells and place them on Their lotus feet. When will I fill up a golden box with camphor and sandalwood pulp and anoint Their limbs with these unguents, and when will I string

garlands of various flowers like Mallikā, Mālatī and Yūthi, and hang them around Their necks?"

This is the practice as well as the goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas! Their lives are filled with this aspiration. They meditate on all these devotional services during the stage of practice (*sādhana*) and attain that service directly when they attain perfection (*siddhi*). The Gosvāmīs are the Lord's eternal associates that have descended to the world of *sādhana* to teach devotional expertise to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas by giving the perfect example.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Govardhana! You are the mediator in the attainment of the perfection of *rasa*! You can make me so fortunate to be able to attain such fortune. Therefore you don't have to do anything more than allowing me to stay at your base and this will bring my aspiration to its fulfillment. Therefore please bless me by granting me residence in your vicinity!"

*pramada madana līlā kandare kandare;
koriteche nitya nava yugala kiśore
sei līlā daraśane ākula parāṇa;
tomāra nikāṭe śīghra vāsa koro dāna*

"O Govardhana! The Yugala Kiśora is performing intoxicating erotic pastimes in each of your caves, so please quickly grant me residence in your vicinity, for I am very anxious at heart to see these pastimes."

VERSE 3:

***anupama-maṇi-vedī-ratna-simhāsānorvī-
ruha-jhara-dara-sānu-droṇi-saṅgheṣu raṅgaiḥ
saha bala-sakhībhiḥ saṅkhalayan sva-priyaṁ me
nija-nikāta-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

anupama - incomparable; *maṇi* - jewelled; *vedī* - altars; *ratna* - jewelled; *simhāsāna* - thrones; *urvīruha* - trees; *jhara* - waterfalls; *dara* - caves; *sānu* - peaks; *droṇi* - valleys; *saṅgheṣu* - in the multitudes; *raṅgaiḥ* - with happiness; *saha* - with; *bala* - Balarāma; *sakhībhiḥ* - with friends; *saṅkhalayan* - playing; *sva* - own; *priyaṁ* - dear; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikāta* - near by; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

**O Govardhana! Kṛṣṇa plays many games with His brother Balarāma and His cowherd boyfriends on your incomparable jewelled thrones, under your trees, in your brooks, caves, valleys and on your peaks!
Please grant me the residence near you which is so dear to me!**

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: How many hundreds of honey-sweet pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the incomparable, natural and beautiful surroundings of Śrī Girirāja awaken within the *mahā-bhāva*-saturated consciousness of Śrīpāda Raghunātha, who is floating on the waves of prayer!

In the previous verse he revealed his aspiration to reside permanently at the base of Govardhana Hill and witness the frantic erotic pastimes of the Yugala Kiśora in its caves. Then it is as if Śrī Girirāja says: "Ohe Raghunātha Dāsa! You can also reside at other meeting places of the Yugala like Saṅketa and

be blessed with the vision of such frantic erotic pastimes. Therefore I don't see any direct need for you to stay near my base. Moreover, you can be blessed by seeing these Yugala-pastimes much easier in the lovely Nikuñja-mandiras on the level surface than in my caves, which are hardly accessible."

In this verse Śrīpāda answers these words by saying:

"O Giripate (lord of mountains)! There is another reason why I pray to you for residence in your vicinity. While you are the charming abode where Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava have Their confidential pastimes with Their *sakhīs*, you are also the exclusive abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's blissful and variegated pastimes with His brother Balarāma and His cowherd boyfriends. Your jeweled platforms, different flowering and fruitful trees, cascades, caves, valleys and passages are the different blissful places where Śrī-Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Baladeva take rest, make different luscious jokes, search for their cows, play on the swing, play hide-and-see, wrestle, eat and lie down to rest on jewelled bedsteads. In Śrīmad Bhāgavata there are the following words from the lotus mouth of Śrī Rādhārāṇī²⁰:

*mānaṁ tanoti saha go-gaṇayos tayor yat
pānīya sūyavasa kandara kanda mūlaiḥ
(10.21.18)*

"This Govardhana Hill serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, Who are surrounded by Their cows and cowherd boyfriends, in different ways with his stainless water, soft grass, wonderful caves, bulbs and roots."

²⁰ This will be explained in verse 8.

*tanotīti sarvair anyair api kriyamānaṁ mānamayaṁ vistāreṇa
karotītyarthaḥ pānīyāni peyāni jala-madhvādīti
sūyavasāni komalāni puṣṭi varddhanāni dugdha sampādakāni. yad
vā pānīyāṁ suvate kṣarati pānīyasuvo nirjharāḥ bhū iti kvacit
pāṭhaḥ. upaveśādyarthaṁ sundara sthānam ityarthaḥ. kandarā
guhāḥ taiś ca tatradya ratna paryāṅka pīṭha
pradīpādarśādayopyupalakṣyāḥ yathā-sambhavaṁ ca taiś teṣāṁ
māno jñeyāḥ
(Ṭikā - Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī)*

"On his body Śrī Girirāja keeps different ingredients which he applies in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma and Their cows and cowherd boyfriends, such as spotless water, honey, fruit juice and other drinks, fresh soft grass for the cows, which will increase their strength and their output of milk, cascades, different enchanting sitting places, jewelled bedsteads in the caves, jewelled lamps and jewelled mirrors."

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Just by living at your base one becomes so fortunate to perceive all these pastimes."

At this point one may ask: "Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī meditated on himself as a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. He should have desired to see Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's loving pastimes around Govardhana Hill. Why did he instead reveal his desires to see the different pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and the cowherd boys near Girirāja?"

The *ācāryas* say out of experience that the erotic pastimes in Vraja of Nitya Kīśora Rasa-rāja Rasikendra Maulī Vrajendra-Nandana with Mahā-bhāva-mayī Śrī Rādhārāṇī are incomparable, and friends, parents and servants are all supporting these loving affairs of the Yugala Kīśora. Pastimes with His mother, father, friends and girlfriends are all necessary for Kṛṣṇa to relish His wonderfully sweet erotic pastimes with

Śrī Rādhārāṇī. All pastimes nourish and increase the great relish of the Yugala-līlā.

For instance, although they are the personifications of motherly love, mother Yaśodā and Rohiṇī-devī can't satisfy anyone unless they are fed food which was cooked by Śrī Rādhārāṇī's hand. For this reason Śrī Rādhā and Her girlfriends come to Kṛṣṇa's abode Nandīśvara to cook for Him every morning and Kṛṣṇa enjoys a wonderful sweet erotic relish during these pastimes of cooking and eating. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa's *goṣṭha līlā* (when He goes out every morning to herd His cows) is also to make Him relish the sweetness of meeting with Śrī Rādhikā.

rākhāla loiyā bone, sadā phiri dhenu-sane, tuyā lāgi bone banacārī (Pada Kalpataru): "For You I'm always rambling with My cows, taking My cowherd boyfriends with Me and for You I am wandering in the forest as a forest dweller!"

Rādhārāṇī is always on Śyāmasundara's mind and when He is out in the meadows She is difficult to see, so that increases the astonishing flavour of His transcendental yearning for Her. The experienced *rasikas* can understand all these purports. Also in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of tending the cows with Baladeva and His friends the wonderful and special features of the Yugala's anxious erotic pastimes are preserved.

*ohe govardhana! tumi ati manohara;
tomāra nikāṭa vāse juḍāya antara
nirupama līlā yoto tāra daraśane;
sukha anubhava koro prati kṣaṇe kṣaṇe
anupama maṇi-vedī ratna simhāsane;
manohara vṛkṣa-śobhā parama nirjane
kibā nirjhara sānudeśa giri kandarete;
baladeva sakhā saha giri saṅkaṭete*

*sadā vihariche kṛṣṇa parama ānande;
parihāsa lukocuri malla kṛīḍācchande
nava nava līlā yoto tomāra gocare;
tomāte bihare sadā navīna kiśore
tomā sama bhāgyavān nāhi tribhuvane;
pada tale sthāna dāo ei dina jane*

"Ohe Govardhana! You are so enchanting! My heart is soothed by living just next to you, experiencing jubilation at every moment by seeing all the matchless ever-fresh pastimes, like joking, hide-and-peek and wrestling, which Kṛṣṇa constantly enjoys with Baladeva and His friends around your incomparable jewelled platforms and thrones, your beautiful and charming solitary trees, your cascades, valleys, caves and passages.

The Navīna-Kiśora Kṛṣṇa always enjoys on and around you, therefore no one in the three worlds is as fortunate as you are. Please give this wretch a place at your base!"

VERSE 4:

***rasa-nidhi-nava-yūnoḥ sākṣinīm dāna-keler
dyuti-parimala-viddham śyāma-vedim prakāśya
rasika-vara-kulānām modam āsphālayan me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam***

rasa-nidhi - ocean of spiritual flavours; *nava* - youthful; *yūnoḥ* - of the Couple; *sākṣinīm* - witness; *dāna* - tax; *keleḥ* - of the pastimes; *dyuti* - splendor; *parimala* - fragrance; *viddhām* - filled; *śyāma vedī* - Śyāma vedi; *prakāśya* - revealing; *rasika* - men of taste; *vara* - best; *kulānām* - of the hosts; *modam* - joy; *āsphālayan* - increasing; *me* - my;

nija - own; *nikṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Revealing the beautiful and fragrant Śyāma-Vedī (or Dāna-Ghāṭī), the place witnessing the Dāna-Keli (tax game) of the young Divine Couple Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Who are an ocean of rasa (spiritual flavours), you increase the ecstasy of the rasika devotees (spiritual connoisseurs) ! Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha perceives the great glories of Śyāma-vedī at the Dāna-Ghāṭī, one of the pastime-places of Śrī-Śrī Girirāja.

The Dāna-*līlā* is one of the very delicious pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Remembering this **Dāna-līlā** Śrīpāda Raghunātha calls it the pastime of the *rasa-nidhi nava yūnoḥ*, **the ocean of rasa**, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, the hero and heroine also known as the Śrī-Śrī Yugala Kiśora.

Just as the *ācāryas* have defined Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the embodiment of all nectarean spiritual flavours (*akhilā-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*), the object of everyone's purest love, the embodiment of the erotic transcendental flavours, the transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana and the agitator of even Cupid who attracts everyone's mind, including His own, they have described Śrī Rādhā as *akhaṇḍa-rasa-vallabhā* (the lady love Who embodies all *rasa*) *ānanda cinmaya rasa ghana vighrahā* (the embodiment of all condensed transcendental flavours), *mahā-bhāva svarūpinī* (the personification of the pinnacle of spiritual ecstatic love), *viśuddha kṛṣṇa-prema ratnākarā* (the ocean of pure love for Kṛṣṇa) and the mine of transcendental attributes like beauty, sweetness and good fortune.

The *rasika* pastimes of *akhaṇḍa rasa vigraha* Śrī Kṛṣṇa and *akhaṇḍa-rasa-vallabhā* Bhānu-nandinī are like an ocean of *rasa* which is hard to cross, hard to enter and boundless. Who can ascertain how unlimited is the power of He Who is able to inundate the whole universe with a mere drop of His being? Great *rasika-mukuta-maṇi* devotees (the crown jewels of transcendental connoisseurs) come and stand on the shore of this transcendental ocean in astonishment. Perhaps they are standing there on the shore, desiring to touch a single drop of it and thus consider all their *sādhana* to be successful.

Beyond all that, even Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of condensed transcendental bliss, stands on the shore of the ocean of Śrī Rādhā's *mādanākhyā-rasa*, the source of all *bhāvas*, speechless like a wooden doll, for it awakens a wonderful intoxication even in Him!

How wonderful is the manifestation of this transcendental ocean of emotions! In this ocean there are thousands of experiences of union such as embraces and kisses as well as thousands of kinds of separation, appearing like a mutually opposed mixture of nectar (union) and poison (separation) that is most extraordinary.

The supreme culmination of this *prema-tattva* of blended poison and nectar is found in Śrīmatī Bhānu-nandinī. In Her we find the summit of all ecstatic transcendental flavours.

The manifestation of *rasika* bliss in the Dāna-keli is vast and enormous, hence it is the *rasa-nidhi* of hero and heroine Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

At Śyāma-Vedī, near the Dāna-Ghāṭī, the sensitive *rasika* devotees of Kṛṣṇa relish the mellows of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's Dāna-*līlā*. On the one hand this pastime is full of billowing waves of joking and laughter and on the other hand it

is deeper than millions of oceans: boundless and never able to touch the bottom.

A billowing ocean may have high waves on its surface, but on the bottom it is still and deep. Similarly the *Dāna-līlā* is billowing with the wave-like exchanges of humorous words between Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Who are surrounded by Their boyfriends and girlfriends, but when he dives deep a *rasika* devotee will feel the depth of complete and causeless love. The wave-like *vyabhicārī bhāvas* (transgressing moods) like joy, fear, anger and jealousy are dancing on the ocean of their *sthāyi bhāva* (permanent mood) called *prīti* (love) here.

Śrī Rādhikā and Her *sakhīs* walk on, carrying pots of *ghī* on their heads, but that is just a pretext. Their actual purpose is to see Kṛṣṇa: *dāna cchale bheṭibo kānāi*. When She is suddenly stopped on the way by Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His chums, Śrīmatī reveals the *kila-kiñcit-bhāva*, a mixture of seven contradicting moods: joy-producing pride, desire, crying, smiling, jealousy, fear and anger.

When one high wave of the ocean hits the other, an explosive collision of waterdrops takes place which extends to all four directions. In the same way, the wave of Śrī Bhānu Nandinī's joy is covered over by a wave of negligence in the ocean of Her love, as She tries to conceal the bliss that swells up in Her when She sees Kṛṣṇa. Because of the resultant clash, all above-mentioned seven moods are externally revealed. Such is the fathomless ocean of *rasa* and *bhāva* of this encounter.

The Vraja-sundarīs want to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa without reward. In Śrīmad Bhāgavata (10.31.2) the *gopīs* call themselves Kṛṣṇa's unpaid maidservants - *aśulka dāsikāḥ*. But in this *Dāna-Keli* Kṛṣṇa asks payment from them! These contradictions are only possible in the transcendental kingdom of ecstasy and are inconceivable to the Vedas. Actually Kṛṣṇa wants only love from

the *gopīs*, and the Dāna-Keli is just an external cause. Śrī Kṛṣṇa begs causeless love from them, hence He is named **Mahā Dānīndra** (the great king of taxcollectors) at the Dāna-Chāṭī. Śrī Rādhā is unlikely to go anywhere without offering *mahādāna* (the great gift of love). Therefore Paurṇamāsī-devī has said: the Dāna-*līlā* only serves to show the world (***viśva-prakāṭa dāna***) how Dānīndra Śrī Kṛṣṇa is controlled by love alone.

The banner of this attribute of *prema-vaśyatā*, through which He can relish the mellows of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-Nandinī's love, flies in all directions in the sky of loving devotion.

sa ca tāsām dāna vyavahāro bāhyaḥ abhilaṣita vāstava eva (Viśvanātha) "The actual relish of the mellows of love, which was Their highest aspiration, was concealed by the external event of the Dāna-*līlā*."

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has written:

*yasyādhyakṣaḥ sakala haṭhinām ādade cakravartī
sulkam nānyad vraja mṛgadṛśām arpaṇād vighrahasya
ghaṭṭasyoccair madhukara rucas tasya dhāma prapañcaih
śyāma prasthaḥ prathayatu sadā śarma govardhano naḥ*

(*Stavamālā*)

"May Govardhana Hill, where Kṛṣṇa became the king of the toll-station, which was coloured like a blackbee, and which made the tableland become coloured bluish-black, and where He did not ask any other tax from Vraja's doe-eyed *gopīs* but their bodies, grant us all auspiciousness!" The *rasika* devotees can still experience all of this.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! The most fragrant and lustrous Śyāma-vedī at the Dāna-Ghāṭī on top of your good self is a witness to this most relishable pastime even now."

In other words, when the *rasika* devotees of Kṛṣṇa see this place they feel as if Rādhā-Śyāma's dazzling bodily luster illuminates the Śyāma-vedī and when they smell the fragrance of this place they feel that the transcendental fragrance of Their bodies is scenting this place.

"O Girirāja! Hankering for the relish of a drop from that ocean of bliss I am hoping to attain residence at your base!"
nija nikāṭa nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam.

*ohe girirāja tomāra premamaya rūpa;
rādhā-kṛṣṇera dāna lilāra sāksi-svarūpa
divya kānti parimala 'śyāma-vedī' nāma;
prakāśa koriyā tumi ati bhāgyavān
rasika bhakata gaṇera ānanda vardhana;
koriteche sarva kṣaṇa ohe govardhana
parama nirjana sthāna tuyā pāda-deśe;
sthāna diyā dhanya koro lilāra uddeśe*

"Ohe Girirāja! Your love-filled form is the direct witness of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Dāna-*lilā*, and you are very fortunate to reveal the place known as Śyāma-vedī, which is endowed with divine luster and fragrance and which increases the ecstasy of the *rasika* devotees at every moment. Please bless me by granting me a place to stay at your most solitary base, so that I can witness the transcendental pastimes there."

VERSE 5:

***hari-dayitam apūrvam rādhikā-kuṇḍam āma-
priya-sakham iha kaṇṭhe narmaṇāliṅgya guptaḥ
nava-yuva-yuga-khelās tatra paśyan raho me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam***

hari dayitam - dear to Hari; *apūrvam* - wonderful; *rādhikā kuṇḍam* - Rādhikā's lake; *ātma* - own; *priya* - dear; *sakham* - friend; *iha* - here; *kaṇṭhe* - around the neck; *narmana* - jokingly; *āliṅgya* - embracing; *guptaḥ* - secretly; *nava yuva* - youthful; *yuga* - couple; *khelāḥ* - play; *tatra* - there; *paśyan* - seeing; *raho* - privately; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsam* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Affectionately and secretly you embrace the neck of your own dear friend, Hari's dear wonderful lake Rādhākuṇḍa, secretly watching the pastimes of the youthful Divine Couple. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrīpāda Raghunātha describes the glories of the different pastime-places around Śrī Girirāja and the sweetness of the pastimes that take place there, and prays to be allowed to reside in these pastime-places at the base of Śrī Girirāja. To that it is as if Śrī Girirāja says: "O Raghunātha! There are many places all around me! Tell me frankly in which place you like to reside!" Experiencing these words of Girirāja Śrī Raghunātha reveals his desire to reside at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa at the base of Girirāja in this verse.

Kuṇḍavāsī Śrī Raghunātha is exclusively attached to residing at **Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa**. Sitting on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa he

is floating in his own tears while writing this 'Stavāvalī.' He has no desire to leave the bank of Śrī-kuṇḍa to go anywhere else. He/she is Kuṇḍeśvarī's *kin̄karī*, and Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is millions of times dearer to him than his own life. At the end of Vilāpa Kusumāñjali he has written:

*sva kuṇḍam tava lolākṣi sa priyāyāḥ sadāspadam
atraiva mama saṁvāsa ihaiva mama saṁsthiti (97)*

"O restless-eyed Śrī Rādhē! This *kuṇḍa* of Yours is the dear most playground of You and Your heart's lover Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the bank of this Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa I live. May I reside here forevermore.

saṁvāsa saṁsthiti means: "Living there completely and remaining there fully." These words reveal Śrīpāda's firm fixation in residing at Rādhākuṇḍa. In his Śrī Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakam (3) he has written:

*udañcat kārūṇyāmṛta vitarāṇair jīvita jagad
yuva-dvandvaṁ gandhair guṇa sumanasāṁ vāsita janam
kṛpāṁ cen mayyevaṁ kirati na tadā tvaṁ kuru tathā
yathā me śrī kuṇḍe sakhi sakalam aṅgaṁ nivasati*

"O *sakhi* (Rūpa Mañjari)! If this Youthful Couple, Who enlivens the whole world by distributing the nectar of Their mercy and Who scents all the people with the fragrance of Their flower-like attributes, do not bestow Their mercy on me, then please arrange for it that I can always stay at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa!" Through this we can understand how firmly fixed Śrīpāda was in residing at Rādhākuṇḍa.

In his prayer to Govardhana Hill for residence at Rādhākuṇḍa Śrīpāda first says: *hari-dayitam apūrvam rādhikā-*

kuṇḍam "Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is unique and is most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa." In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos tasyāḥ kuṇḍam priyam tathā
sarva gopīṣu saivaikā viṣṇor atyanta vallabhā*

"Just as Śrī Rādhā is dearer to Śrī Nanda-Nandana than His own life, so is Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. Of all the *gopīs* Śrī Rādhā is Nanda-Nandana's dear most beloved." She is endowed with *mādanākhyā-mahā-bhāva* and She is His dear most beloved because of Her attributes of love, beauty and good fortune.

Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is similarly incomparably dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

When the *kuṇḍa* appeared in this world Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally revealed it in His words:

*proce hariḥ priyatame tava kuṇḍam etat
mat kuṇḍato'pi mahimādhikam astu loka
atraiva me salila kelir ihaiva nityam
snānam yathā tvam asi tadvad idam saro me*

Śrī Hari said: "O Dearest One! May Your *kuṇḍa* be even more glorious in this world than mine! Here I will always bathe and play in the water, because this lake is as dear to Me as You are!"

In this way Hari's beloved Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is **unique**. Priyājī's Sarasī (Rādhā's lake) is the abode of an enchanting beauty equal to that of Priyājī's, and it shines like the crown jewel of the Yugala's playgrounds in Vraja-maṇḍala, keeping all these playgrounds on its banks and in its waters.

*kuṇḍera mādhurī yeno rādhāra madhurimā;
kuṇḍera mahimā yeno rādhāra mahimā (C.C.)*

"The *kuṇḍa*'s sweetness is like Rādhā's sweetness and the *kuṇḍa*'s greatness is like Rādhā's greatness."

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatipāda has described the uniqueness of the *kuṇḍa*'s natural beauty as follows:

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa raha kathānuvadanād āścarya mādhurayavad
dhvānaiḥ śrī śuka sārīkā-vyatīkarair ānanda sarvasvadam;
karṇākaraṣi kuhūḥ kuhūr iti kalālāpair vṛtaṁ kokilair
nṛtyan matta mayūram anya vihagaiś cānanda kolāhalam
tan madhye nava mañju kuñja valayaṁ śobhā vibhūtyāsamā-
nordhvaṁ divya vicitra ratna latikādyānanda puṣpa śriyā;
antastalpa varaṁ varopakaraṇair āḍhyaṁ samantād dadhad
rādhā-mādhava bhukta bhogyam akhilānandaika sāmṛjya-bhūḥ
madhyaitādṛṣa kuñja maṇḍalam aho kuṇḍaṁ mahā mohanam
sāndrānanda mahā-rasāmṛta bharaṁ svacchaiḥ sadā sambhṛtam;
ratnābaddha catustaṭi vilasitaṁ sad ratna sopānavat
tīrthaṁ śrī taṭa sat kadambaka talacchāyā maṇi kuṭṭimam*

"The *kuñjas* give great delight with their sweet and amazing male and female parrots which loudly repeat Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's intimate talks, and they are decorated with cuckoos which delight the ears with their unclear sweet singing of *kuhū kuhū*, intoxicated peacocks which beautify the place with their dancing and various birds which make a great ecstatic tumult.

These fresh groves have attained a peerless status with their treasures of beauty and the blissful flowers of the wonderful and divine jeweled vines. Here again are the greatest couches which are endowed with the most excellent ingredients for the enjoyment of Śrī Rādhā and Mādhava. In this way nothing else

can be perceived anywhere but the kingdom of transcendental bliss".

"In the middle of these *kuñjas* is a charming pond, which is always filled with clear nectar-like water which crystalizes the strong flavours of deep bliss. Its four banks are studded by jewels; the *ghāṭs* (landing places) are beautified by super excellent jeweled staircases and enchanting jeweled platforms which lie in the shade of Kadamba-trees."

Nowhere in the Vrajamaṇḍala is there any playground for Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava which is so solitary, filled with a wealth of natural beauty and suitable in all respects. Therefore Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is the place where the most confidential midday-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and Their *sakhīs* are taking place.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! You are embracing your dear most Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa around the neck as the dear most friend and thus you have become so fortunate to be able to secretly and blissfully witness the most intimate midday-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and relish their sweet mellows. Please allow me to reside on the bank of this your dear most Rādhākuṇḍa, which is situated close to you, so that I can also become blessed with the relish of the sweet mellows of these pastimes!"

*govardhana! tumi mora nivedana dhara;
tomāra nikāṭe sei sthāna dāna koro
priya sakhā śrī kuṇḍere āliṅgana kori;
gupta bhāve sadā hero vilāsa mādhuri
kṛṣṇa priya rādhākuṇḍe yugalera khelā;
vibhora hoiyā heri se ānanda līlā*

"O Govardhana! Please hear my prayer! Please give me a place close to your dear friend Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa, whom you embrace to be able to secretly watch the sweet pastimes of the Yugala Kīśora there, so that I can also be immersed in bliss while watching these pastimes at Kṛṣṇa's dear most Rādhākūṇḍa."

VERSE 6:

***sthala-jala-tala-śaspair bhūruha-chāyayā ca
pratipadam anukālam hanta samvardhayan gāḥ
tri-jagati nija-gotraṁ sārthakaṁ khyāpayan me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam***

sthala - land; *jala* - water; *tala* - surface; *śaspair* - with grasses; *bhūruha* - trees; *chāyayā* - with shade; *ca* - and; *prati* - each; *padam* - step; *anu-kālam* - every moment; *hanta* - alas!; *samvardhayan* - keeps; *gāḥ* - cows; *tri-jagati* - three worlds; *nija* - own; *gotraṁ* - name; *sārthakaṁ* - meaningful; *khyāpayan* - proclaiming; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsam* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! You make your name (keeper of cows) meaningful by always providing land, water, grasses and the shade of your trees to the cows and thus you proclaim yourself in the three worlds! Please allow me to live close by you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha ascertains how suitable the name of Govardhana is and prays to be allowed to live close to the Hill. At different

places Śrī Girirāja has facilities where the cows are herded, where they can drink water, table-lands where they can rest, places where there is grass for them to graze and places where there are trees whose shades protect them from the heat and rain. Because he thus protects and maintains the cows the hill is justly called *go* (cows) *vardhana* (protector). When He was seven years old Lord Śrī Gopāladeva told Nanda and the Vrajavāsīs just that when they were about to worship Indra with a sacrifice and He made it clear to them that they should give that up and worship Govardhana Hill instead.

*na naḥ puro janapadā
na grāmā na grhā vayam
vanaukasas tāta nityam
vana śaila nivāsinaḥ
tasmād gavām brāhmaṇānām
adreś cārabhyatām makhah
ya indra-yāga-sambhārās
tair ayam sādhyatām makhah*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.24.24-25):

"We do not possess any cities, territories, villages, or even houses, O father! We are cowherders, therefore we are eternally forest- and mountain-dwellers! Let us therefore offer sacrifice to the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and the (Govardhana) Hill!" Śrīdhara Svāmī explains in his commentary on this Bhāgavata-verse: *asmākaṁ yoga-kṣema hetur vana śailādaya eveti bhāvaḥ* "O father! The cows provide our livelihood, and this hill provides everything to them! Therefore he is our worshipable Godhead (instead of Indra)!" The cowherdmen floated in an ocean of topmost bliss when they heard these

reasonable words of Gopāla and they gave up their traditional worship of Indra to turn to worship of Govardhana. As the cowherds commenced this the cows, that were their means of subsistence, filled all directions with an ecstatic tumult, and this increased the bliss of the cowherds unlimitedly.

*ānanda janano ghoṣo mahān mudita gokulaḥ
turyapraṇāda ghoṣas ca vṛṣabhānām ca garjjitaiḥ
hāmvaravaś ca vatsānām gopānām harṣa vardhanaḥ*

(Hari Vaṁśam)

"When the Govardhana pūjā commenced in Vraja a great ecstatic tumult arose in all directions and the cows went beside themselves of bliss. Transcendental sounds were heard, cows and bulls were bellowing, calves could be heard to moo in all directions and all the people of Vraja were submerged in an ocean of bliss."

While Govardhana was worshipped the Lord Himself assumed the wonderful form of Śrī Girirāja and offered boons, so the cowherds prayed for an increase in their number of cows. He also personally ordered them:

*sa uvāca tato gopān giri prabhavayā giriḥ
adya prabhṛti cejyo'haṁ goṣu ced asti vo dayā
ahaṁ vaḥ prathamo devaḥ sarva kāmakaraḥ śubhaḥ
mama prabhāvāc ca gavām ayutāny-eva bhokṣatha
śivaś ca vo bhaviṣyāmi mad bhaktānām vane vane
raṁsye ca saha yusmābhir yathā divigatas tathā
ye ceme prathitā gopa nanda gopa purogamāḥ
evam pṛitah prayacchāmi gopānām vipulam dhanam*

(Hari Vaṁśam)

With a voice as deep as the clouds the huge form of Govardhana told the cowherds: "If you are kind to your cows, then you should worship me from today on! I am your first worshipable deity and I can fulfill all your desires and arrange for your welfare! By my power you can enjoy the possession of many thousands of cows! You are my devotees and there is auspiciousness for my devotees in all the forests (in the form of ample grass, water etc. for the maintenance of the cows).

I will play with you as I ramble with my associates in my transcendental abode! With love I will give ample wealth to all the renowned cowherds of Vraja, headed by Nanda Mahārāja!"

For this reason Śrī Govardhana, who deserves his name, provides the cows with plenty of fragrant, soft, enjoyable and nutritious grass, which gives them wonderful strength, nourishment and satisfaction and which will increase their huge output of milk, making it smell like lotus flowers.

This milk will please Śrī Gopāladeva and thus the love of the cowherders for Gopāla's lotus feet will increase beyond description! Similarly, Govardhana quenches the thirst of the cows and cowherd boys with cool drinkable water from its brooks and cascades and provides them with places to rest and protection against rain and heat under the thick shade of his trees. Govardhana also expands the service of the cows through various means, like providing them tablelands where they can blissfully walk around or lie down to rest. In this way Govardhana Hill makes his name, meaning 'protector and maintainer of cows, useful!'

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Please allow me to live close by you, so that I can become blessed with the vision of my beloved Śrīman Madana Gopāla-deva and His friends, who are

herding and protecting the cows there. Hence I say: *nija nikaṭa nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam.*"

*sthala jala tala ghāsa vṛkṣa-chāyā dāne;
vardhana koroho tumi sadā gābhī-gaṇe
tāi govardhana nāma anvartha tomāra;
ataeva tava pade prārthanā āmāra
sevāra saubhāgya tomāra tri-jagate khyāti;
tomāra nikate āmāya dibe ki vasati?⁹
gocāraṇe śrī govinde kon śubha kṣaṇe;
niścaya pāibo dekhā tuyā saṅga guṇe*

"Because you maintain the cows with your land, water, grass and the shade of your trees you fully deserve the name Govardhana. Therefore I offer one prayer unto you. You are famous throughout the three worlds for your fortune of devotional service. Will you allow me to reside close to you? Then I would certainly be able to see Śrī Govinda herding His cows at some blessed moment, on the strength of your association!"

VERSE 7:

*surapati-kṛta-dīrgha-drohato goṣṭha-rakṣām
tava nava-grha-rūpasyāntare kurvataiva
agha-baka-ripuṇocair datta-māna drutaṁ me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam*

sura-pati - the king of demigods; *kṛta* - done; *dīrgha* - long; *drohataḥ* - from enmity; *goṣṭha* - Vraja; *rakṣām* - protection; *tava* - your; *nava* - new; *grha* - house; *rūpasya* - of the form; *antare* - within;

kurvata - done; *eva* - surely; *agha* - Aghāsura; *baka* - Bakāsura; *ripuṇā* - by the enemy; *uccaiḥ* - greatly; *datta* - given; *māna* - honour; *drutaṁ* - swiftly; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Aghāsura and Bakāsura, quickly gave you a lot of honour when He used you as a new house for the people of Vraja to live in, protecting them from the long lasting anger of the king of demigods, Indra. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: How many hundreds of Śrī Girirāja Govardhana's glories become manifest in the heart of Śrīpāda Raghunātha, which is permeated by *viśuddha sattva*!

Śrī-Śrī Girirāja is the unrivalled playground of the Original Personality of Godhead Vrajendra-Nandana! Hari dāsa Varya, the unrivalled servant of Śrī Hari (Govardhana), is always immersed in the mellows of service, providing all the paraphernalia for service at hand.

When the Lord wants to accept service from a particular servant, although there are hundreds of other servants around and there are hundreds of other means through which He can be served, but still the Lord rejects them all, then that servant is truly blessed. Śrīla Govardhana is such an exclusive servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; this is ascertained in this verse.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa killed the powerful demons Aghā and Bakāsura, for whom Indra and the other demigods were fearfully hiding behind the clouds without difficulty. He who casually could kill such powerful demons in the course of His childhood pastimes could easily have protected Vraja from the onslaught of the ordinary Indra through some other means. Therefore we can't find any other reason for Him to have gone through such a lot

of trouble by carrying the Govardhana Hill for seven days and nights.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "He only did it to give great honour to Govardhana Hill. Girirāja obtained the great fortune and honour of having been held like an umbrella on the blue sapphire rod-like arm of the Original Personality of Godhead Vrajendra-Nandana. In this way he attained the greatest service and the greatest honour by protecting Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved Gokula-vāsīs. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written:

*nila stambhojjvala ruci-bharair maṇḍite bāhu-daṇḍe
chatra-cchāyām dadhad agharipor labdha saptāha vāsaḥ
dhārāpāta glapita-manasām rakṣitā gokulānām
kṛṣṇa-preyān prathayatu sadā śarma govardhano naḥ*

(*Stavamālā*)

"May Girirāja Govardhana, who was beautifully held like an umbrella on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's rod-like arm, which resembled a sapphire pillar endowed with dazzling luster, for seven days and nights, and who was thus fortunate enough to protect the people of Gokula, who had become very distressed because of being showered by Indra's heavy rains, bestow all auspiciousness upon us!"

While lifting Govardhana Hill, Śrī Kṛṣṇa made a new, large and enchanting home (for the people of Vraja) under the hill. In this connection it is written in the Vaiṣṇava-Toṣaṇī-tīkā (commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmīpāda) on the Bhāgavata-verse *ityuktvaikena hastena* (10.25.19):

tatra vraja kartṛka darśana saukaryāya śrī kṛṣṇa-kartṛka dhāraṇa saukaryāya śobhā-viśeṣāya ca idam kalpyate utthāpana samaye līlā-

*śaktyānukūlyena parvata madhyādho-bhāgāt vicchidyā
kuṭṭimāyamāno mahā-śilā samuccaya eko madhya gartye sthitaḥ
yaṁ śilā samuccayam āruhya yaṁ nimnaṁ parvata madhya-deśaṁ
śrī-hastena viṣṭabhya ca sukhaṁ dadhāreti*

"When Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill with His left hand, the people of Vraja had a good opportunity to admire His lotus like face. On the ground under the hill was an elevated spot where Kṛṣṇa could stand on, and on the bottom of the hill itself was a lower portion where Kṛṣṇa held His finger (to hold the hill). Kṛṣṇa was, after all, only seven years old and He was the smallest of His clan. If these spots had not been there, there wouldn't have been any height for all the big cowherdmen to stand under the hill or to gaze at Kṛṣṇa's beauty for seven days and nights".

In the Hari Vamśa, Kṛṣṇa says:

*śailotpātana bhūr eṣa mahatī nirmītā mayā
trailokyam apy usāhate rakṣitum kiṁ punar vrajam*

"There is enough place to protect all the three worlds under this Govardhana Hill I'm lifting, what to speak of just the people of Vraja?"

There should not be any doubt or astonishment about this, because even one speck of dust from the Lord's transcendental abode can contain all the innumerable mundane universes. The Garga-Saṁhitā describes how the Vrajavāsīs were protected from the vast showers of Indra's devastating Samvārtaka-clouds for seven days and nights:

*jalaugham āgataṁ vīkṣya bhagavāṁs tad girer adhaḥ;
sudarśanaṁ tathā śeṣaṁ manasājñāṁ cakāra ha
koṭi sūrya prabhaṁ cādrer ūrdhvaṁ cakraṁ sudarśanam;*

*dhārā sampātam apibad agastya iva maithila
adho'dhas tad gīreḥ śeṣaḥ kuṇḍalībhūtam āsthitāḥ;
rurodha taj jalam dirgham yathā velā mahodadhim
saptāham susthiras tasthau govardhana dharo hariḥ;
śrī kṛṣṇacandraṁ paśyantaś cakorā iva te sthitāḥ*

"Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave shelter to the Vrajavāsīs by holding Govardhana Hill with His left hand, Indra would not stop showering them. Thinking that the cowherds might become afraid that the huge streams of rainwater might inundate the cavity under Govardhana Hill where they were standing, Kṛṣṇa mentally ordered His Sudarśana-chakra and the divine serpent Śeṣa to come.

Invisible to others, the Sudarśana-chakra hung over Govardhana Hill, shining like ten million suns and drinking the rainstreams just as Agastya Muni drank the water of all the seven oceans. Meanwhile the serpent Śeṣa formed a ring around the cavity under the hill where the Vrajavāsīs were hiding to stop the water from pouring in, just as a barrage stops the water of the ocean from inundating the towns and villages on the coast. Thus Hari stood steadily for seven days lifting Govardhana Hill while the Vrajavāsīs drank the nectar from His moon like face, like thirsty Cakora-birds".

By Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mere wish He could have stunned the hands of the thunderbolts and the showers of the clouds within a moment, but just to reveal the fortune of Girirāja Govardhana He made Indra continue his hostilities so that He had to lift the Hill singlehandedly for seven days and thus to also give the Vrajavāsīs the fortunate opportunity to relish the sweetness of this indescribable and amazing pastime of His for each moment of these seven days and nights.

Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmī gives an indication of this indescribable pastime of Giridhārī by writing:

*saptāhar niśa nirmitā giribhṛtā ye ye vilāsas tadā
tān kalpaiḥ saha saptabhiḥ kathayitum śeṣo'pi nāśeṣataḥ
evam ced vacanair amuṁs tricaturaiḥ sac cāturī varjitaḥ
tūrṇam varṇitavān kavīḥ svayam asau durbhūya dodūyate*

(Gopāla Campū)

‘Even in seven *kalpas* (millennia) the thousand-headed Śeṣa could not finish His description of Giridhārī’s pastime of lifting the Govardhana Hill for seven days! If any poet would try to describe it in just three or four stories, he would simply gain misery and infamy!’

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Who will not desire to live close to a highly fortunate great devotee of Lord Hari like you? Therefore *nija nikāṭa nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*.

*agha-bakāsura śatru govinda āpane;
indrera jighāmsā hoite vrajavāsī-jane
nava grha rūpa tomāra yei madhya-sthāne;
rakṣā lāgi vāsa dilo krame sāta dine
ei rūpe tava māna varddhana korilo;
haridāsa varya nāma sārthaka hoilo
ohe girirāja more tomāra nikāṭe;
sthāna diyā dhanya koro yāci karapuṭe*

"O Govardhana! Govinda, the enemy of Aghāsura and Bakāsura, gave shelter to the Vrajavāsīs for seven days in a new house that He made of you, just to protect them from Indra’s attacks. In this way He increased your fame and made you

deserve your name Haridāsa Varya, the best of Hari's servants. Ohe Girirāja! I pray to you with folded hands: Please bless me by giving me a place to live close by you.

VERSE 8:

***giri-nṛpa-hari-dāsa-śreṇi-varyeti-nāmā-
mṛtam idam uditam śrī-rādhikā-vaktra-candrāt
vraja-nava-tilakatve klpta-vedaiḥ sphuṭam me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam***

giri - of mountains; *nṛpa* - king; *hari dāsa* - servants of Lord Hari; *śreṇi* - class; *varya* - the best; *iti* - thus; *nāma* - name; *amṛtam* - nectar; *idam* - this; *uditam* - appeared; *śrī rādhikā* - Śrī Rādhikā; *vaktra* - mouth; *candrāt* - from the moon; *vraja* - of Vraja; *nava* - new; *tilakatve* - as the tilak marking; *klpta* - made; *vedaiḥ* - by the Vedas; *sphuṭam* - manifested; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsam* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana, whose nectarean name of ‘best of Lord Hari’s servants’ emanated from Śrī Rādhikā’s moon like mouth! You are the king of mountains and the Vedas describe you as the new tilaka of Vraja. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In the previous verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha revealed the great glories of Śrī Girirāja in which the Lord Himself gave him such a great honour to use him to protect the people of Vraja, and while ascertaining this he revealed his desire to live at the base of Śrī Girirāja.

It is as if Śrī Girirāja Govardhana says: "Ohe Raghunātha! You are the greatest scholar! Remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statements in the Padma-Purāna: *panca yojanam evāsti vanam me deha rūpakaṁ*:

"This Vṛndāvana which extends over forty miles is My body." Therefore your devotional desires will be fulfilled by living at any place in Vraja, which is the wish-yielding body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Why are you over-praising me by calling me 'the best place of Vraja'?"

Thinking about these words of Girirāja, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Girirāja! My praises are not exaggerated! Śrī Vārṣabhānavī Rādhā Herself has called you 'the best of Hari's servants' in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, the crown jewel of all Purānas:

*hantāyam adrīr abalā haridāsa varyo
yad rāma kṛṣṇa caraṇa sparśa pramodāt
mānaṁ tanoti saha go gaṇayos tayor yat
pānīya sūyavasa kandara kanda mūlaiḥ*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.21.18)

"O girls! This mountain is the best of Lord Hari's servants and he feels very happy when Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma's lotus feet touch him! He gives all honour to Them and Their cows by providing them with water for drinking, soft grass, caves and roots!"

Śrīmad Bhāgavata makes this statement in the *veṇu-gīta*-chapter, which describes the *gopīs' pūrva-rāga* (falling in love), but Śrīmat Dāsa Gosvāmī clearly states that the words uttered in this verse emanate from the moon like mouth of the crown jewel of all the *gopīs*, Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī.

Certainly the crown jewels of devotees like Dhruva, Prahlāda, Nārada, Vyāsa and Śukadeva gave up everything to serve the Lord, but no other devotee but Govardhana could offer his own body to the Lord as His playground. That is why Śrī Rādhā's moon like mouth calls him 'the best of Hari's servants'.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata there are a number of devotees called Hari dās: king Yudhiṣṭhira, Uddhava and Govardhana. But of them Govardhana is the best for he offers Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and Their dear most cows and cowherd boy friends fresh grass as soft sitting places, cool caves, fruits and roots for eating, the shade of his trees, the trees' honey for drinking, mineral pigments for make-up, different flowers for garlands, caves with jewelled couches as sitting places and its shining rocks as jewelled lamps.

He also shows all the signs of transcendental ecstatic love on his body, such as goose pimples by his erect grass, sweating by his moisture, tears by his cascades etc.

When he is touched by the lotus feet of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, so in all respects he is the crown jewel of all of Lord Hari's devotees!

Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Girirāja! Just as material nectar which trickles from the moon is enjoyable for the demigods, so the nectar of your glories as **Hari's greatest servant** emanates from Śrī Rādhā's moon like mouth to be relished by the saintly devotees. (Previously, in Manaḥ Śikṣā verse 11, Śrīpāda has mentioned five kinds of nectar with which to serve Girirāja)

O Girirāja! You told me that Kṛṣṇa says in the Purāṇas that I should give up living close to you and that I should live in Vṇḍāvana. We are Rādhikā's maidservants, we can't always

understand the tricky words of this crown jewel of cheaters (Kṛṣṇa)! But our Īsvarī (Rādhā) is very honest and sincere! We have full faith in Her nectarean words (in the above-quoted Bhāgavata verse). Moreover, She is our very life! We can also easily understand that Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the crown jewel of all the Purāṇas, has much more authority than the other Purāṇas. And especially for those who wish to relish *rasa*, the association of Kṛṣṇa's *rasika* devotees is even more important than Kṛṣṇa's own association. The Bhāgavata (3.7.19) says:

ratir asau bhavet tivrāḥ padayor vyasanardanaḥ: "As a result of serving or associating with great souls, intense love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet is attained."

And Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī says (in B.R.S.): *rasikāsaṅga raṅginām*: "For one who wants to taste *rasa*, the association with *rasika* devotees is very blissful."

That is why my ultimate desire is to live close by you.

And I also say: "O Giripate! The Vedic scriptures say that you are the *tilaka* on Vraja-maṇḍala's forehead."²¹ In the Garga Saṁhitā, Nārada Muni tells king Bahulāśva of Mithila:

*govardhana giri rājan sarva tīrtha-varaḥ smṛtaḥ
vṛndāvanam ca goloka mukuṭo'driḥ prapūjitaḥ
gopa-gopī gavāṁ raksā pradaḥ kṛṣṇa priyo mahān
pūrṇa brahmātapatram yas tasmāt tīrtha-varaś ca kaḥ*

"O King! Govardhana Hill is the best of all holy places! It is the crown of Vṛndāvana and Goloka and it is always protecting the cowherd boys, the *gopīs*, and the cows. It is most dear to

²¹ With 'new *tilaka* of Vraja', Dāsa Gosvāmī means to say that Govardhana Hill is the best of holy places, ornamenting Vraja as one ornaments one's forehead with a mark of *tilaka*.

Kṛṣṇa and it serves as an umbrella for the full *brahman*. What greater holy place could there be?" Therefore, O Girirāja! Please bless me by allowing me to live close by you!

*śrī rādhikā nija sakhī sambodhana kore;
candra-mukhe tomāra guṇa kīrtana ye kore
hantāyam adrīr abalā haridāsa varya;
haridāsa gaṇa madhye tumi śīrodharya
bhāgavata padye tomāra ei nāmāmṛta;
prakāśa koriyā viśva koilo āpyāyita
tilaka svarūpe tumi vrajera lalāṭe;
bhūṣita āchaho śāstra kohe akapāṭe
ohe girirāja! tumi mahā-śakti-dhara;
pāda-deśe dīna jane vāsa dāna koro*

"O Govardhana! Śrī Rādhikā glorifies you with Her moon like mouth when She tells Her girlfriend '*hantāyam adrīr abalā haridāsa varya*': You are the crown jewel of all of Hari's servants.

Thus She revealed the nectar of your name to the world in this Bhāgavata-verse. The scriptures boldly declare that you are the *tilaka* that decorates Vraja's forehead. Ohe Girirāja! You are so powerful! Please give this fallen soul a place to stay at your base!"

VERSE 9:

***nija-jana-yuta-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-maitrīrasākta-
vraja-nara-paśu-pakṣi-vrāta-saukhyaika-dātaḥ
agaṇita-karuṇatvān maṁ urī-kṛtya tāntaṁ
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

nija - own; *jana* - people; *yuta* - endowed; *rādhā kṛṣṇa maitrīḥ* - with friendship for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; *asākta* - attached; *vraja* - of Vraja; *nara* - people; *paśu* - animals; *pakṣi* - birds; *vrāta* - to the hosts; *saukhya* -happiness; *eka* - only; *dātaḥ* - donor; *agaṇita* - immeasurable; *karuṇatvat* - out of mercy; *mādhurī* - sweetness; *kṛtya* - doing; *tāntaṁ* - weary; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! You are the only giver of joy to the people, animals and birds of Vraja who are attached to the friendship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their groups (the *gopīs* and *gopas*). Please accept weary me out of your unlimited mercy and allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: After proclaiming Govardhana to be *haridāsa-varya* Śrīpāda Raghunātha now mentions another characteristic of Govardhana.

It is natural that the devotees of Hari, whose hearts and minds are filled with the service of the Lord, also develop great love, faith and friendship for other devotees of Hari. Therefore all the people, animals and birds of Vraja who are befriended with Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their friends in Vraja have unlimited faith and love for Girirāja, who gives topmost bliss to them.

Those who whose hearts are lovingly attached to Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa perceive Their different confidential pastimes as soon as they see Haridāsa-varya Girirāja. On the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa Their very wonderful and most confidential, long-lasting midday pastimes take place, and around Govardhana there are lonely places where the Dāna-*līlā*, the Rāsa-*līlā* and the boating pastimes can freely take place.

Apart from that Girirāja bears all the hallmarks of these confidential pastimes, giving topmost bliss to the loving devotees of the Yugala Kīśora. Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote in his Stavamālā:

*gāndharvāyāḥ surata kalahoddāmatā vāvadūkaiḥ
klānta śrotrotpala valayibhiḥ kṣipta piñchāvataṃsaiḥ
kuñjais talpopari pariluthad vaijayanti paritaiḥ
puṇyāṅga śrīḥ prathayatu sadā śarma govardhano naḥ*

"May Govardhana Hill, in whose beautiful enchanting *kuñjas* the ear-decorating lotuses, the bangles made of lotus-stems and the peacock feather-crowns wilt and fall, where the Vaijayanti-flower garlands roll on the bed, revealing Śrī Rādhā's intense erotic battle, bestow all auspiciousness unto us!"

The animals, birds and men who take shelter of Vraja-dhāma are all naturally attached to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in love and friendship. All the cows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa herds are endowed with a natural motherly love for Him. The love of the cows and calves for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was described by the *gopīs* themselves during their *pūrva-rāga* (falling-in-love) stage:

*gāvaś ca kṛṣṇa mukha nirmita veṇugita
pīyūsam uttabhita karṇapuṭaiḥ pibantyaḥ*

*śāvāḥ snuta stana-payāḥ kavalāḥ sma tasthur
govindam ātmani dṛśāśru kalāḥ sprśantyaḥ*

(*Bhāgavata 10.21.13*)

"The cows too, when they drink the nectar of Govinda's flute song with the raised cups of their ears along with their calves which drink from their udders, embrace Him within their hearts and stand motionlessly before Him with tear filled eyes!" The cows are always kept and protected as Kṛṣṇa's personal pets and He cuddles them in a motherly mood. But even the more distant deer in the forest carry a great love for Kṛṣṇa:

*dhanyāḥ sma mūḍha matayo'pi hariṇya etā
yā nanda-nandanam upātta vicitra veśam
ākarṇya veṇu raṇitaṁ saha kṛṣṇa-sārāḥ
pūjāṁ dadhur viracitaṁ praṇayāvalokaiḥ*

(*Bhāgavata 10.21.11*)

"Blessed are these foolish deer for when they hear the flute song of Nanda's wonderfully dressed son, they come along with their husbands the black antelopes to worship Him with their loving glances!"

Even the birds in Vraja are not ordinary birds - they are *munis* who carry natural love for Kṛṣṇa. That is also described by the Vraja-*devīs*:

*prāyo batāmba vihagā munayo vane'smin
kṛṣṇekṣitaṁ tad uḍitaṁ kala veṇugītam*

*āruhya ye drumabhujan rucira prabālān
śṛivanty amīlita dṛṣo vigatānya vācaḥ*

(*Bhāgavata 10.21.14*)

"O mother!²² All these birds here in the forest are sages who are rising on the trees which have fresh sprouts on their branches, listening to Kṛṣṇa's flute song and staring at Him with wide open eyes, forgetting all other words (such as the Vedas and Upanisads in which they are usually very learned)!"

In the same way the male and female parrots in the trees wake Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa up early in the morning, help Them to meet Each other at noontime, sing beautiful poems about Their love and forms and delight the Yugala with their *rasika* quarrels in the afternoon. The old she-monkey Kakkhatī helps them out of Their complacent morning hang-over, etc.

Because it is such a lovely place of solitude for the Yugala-pastimes, Govardhana Hill gives the greatest joy also to all these devoted animals and birds of Vraja, and because Girirāja gives the greatest happiness to the animals and birds Śrīpāda Raghunātha covets a place to stay nearby him.

It is as if Girirāja says: "Ohe Raghunātha Dāsa! All you say is true! The greatest loving devotees are blessed by staying close by me, this is how I make them happy. But you don't have such devotion, so how will you be able to attain a position close to me?"

To this Śrī Raghunātha answers: "What you say is true a thousand times! I am very fallen and I have no devotion nor am

²² Although there is no one in the assembly of *pūrvarāgavati* Vrajasundarīs who should have been addressed as mother, the address 'O mother!' is easily used by an astonished woman.

I doing any *bhajan*, there is no doubt about that! But still I say, O Girirāja, you are the abode of boundless mercy, be merciful to this undevoted soul and bless me by allowing me to live close to you!"

*nija jane veṣṭita ye yugala kiśora;
tāñdera maitrī rase yāra sikta kalevara
sei vraja nara paśu pakṣī sukha dātā;
emana dayālu svabhāva āra pābo kothā
kṛpā kori mo adhame aṅgikāra kore;
tomāra nikaṭe vāsa dāna koro more*

O Govardhana! Where can I find such merciful creatures as the delight-bestowing humans, animals and birds of Vraja, whose bodies are sprinkled with the nectar of friendship for the Yugala Kiśora, Who are surrounded by Their own devotees? Please accept a fallen soul like me and allow me to reside close to you!"

VERSE 10:

***nirupadhi-karuṇena śrī-śacīnandanena
tvayi kapaṭi-śaṭho 'pi tvat-priyenārpito 'smi
iti khalu mama yogyāyogyatām mām agrhṇan
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

nirupadhi - causeless; *karuṇena* - by mercy; *śrī śacī-nandanena* - by Lord Caitanya; *tvayi* - in you; *kapaṭi* - cheater; *śaṭhe* - in a deceitful; *api* - even; *tvat* - you; *priyeṇa* - by the dear; *arpita* - submitted; *asmi* - I am; *iti* -thus; *khalu* - surely; *mama* - my; *yogyā* - suitable; *ayogyatām* - being unfit; *tām* - him; *agrhṇan* - not considering; *nija* -

own; *nikāṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvaṁ* - you.

O Govardhana! Although I am hypocritical and deceitful I was submitted to you by your dear most and causelessly merciful Śrī Sacīnandana (Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu). Therefore do not consider whether I am qualified or not but accept me and allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In the previous verse Śrī Girirāja said: "Can a person with the devotion like Raghunātha dāsa attain that which the great devotees attain?"

It is as if those words are still ringing in the ears of Raghunātha Dāsa, who is a mine of humility. It is as if Girirāja is still saying: "O Raghunātha! Greatly pious people are so fortunate that they can reside within my vicinity. What kind of pious merit do you have that you desire to live close to me?"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha is absorbed in thinking: "Throughout my life I have never performed any pious acts through which I could attain residence nearby Govardhana Hill!"

Absence of satiation is the nature of *prema*:

*premera svabhāva - yāhā premera sambandha;
se-i māne kṛṣṇe mora nāhi prema gandha*

(C.C. Antya 20)

"It is the nature of *prema* that the lover thinks 'I don't even have a whiff of love for Kṛṣṇa!'"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa floats on an ocean of humility and the darkness of his despair becomes even deeper. Then at once his

heart is illuminated by the light of hope when he remembers the causelessly merciful Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and in this light he speaks this verse.

Humbly and regretfully Śrīpāda says: "O Girirāja! I am very crooked and deceitful! I show a lot of devotion on the outside, but I don't really have any devotion in my heart. Publicly I speak very sweet words, but privately I speak very negatively. You know very well how unqualified I am, but you also know that the merciful Śrī Śacīnandana has submitted me to your lotus feet!" Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Antya 6, 306-308) beautifully describes how Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu granted Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī a place near Govardhana Hill, being pleased with his devotion and renunciation:

*raghunātha sei śilā mālā yabe pāilā;
gosāira abhiprāya ei bhāvanā korilā
śilā diyā more samarpilā govardhane;
guñjā mālā diyā dilā rādhikā caraṇe
ānande raghunāthera bāhya vismaraṇa;
kāya mane sevīlena gaurāṅga caraṇa*

"When Lord Caitanya gave him His rock from Govardhana Hill and His string of sacred *guñjā*-beads, Raghunātha thought about the Lord's purpose of this as follows: "**The Lord has entrusted me to Govardhana Hill by giving me this rock** and He placed me at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhikā by giving me this string of *guñjā*-beads!" Raghunātha dāsa was beside himself of ecstasy and served Lord Gaurāṅga's lotus feet with body and mind".

Śrī Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Although I am very deceitful and crooked, the causelessly merciful Lord Śacīnandana has submitted me to you, so don't consider my

qualifications and allow me to live close to you! After all, the Lord is very dear to you. Forget about my lack of qualifications and remember my relationship with the Lord and give me the mercy! It is also natural that the qualities (of compassion) of the Lord are also present within his beloved servant."

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has described how the Lord bestows His causeless mercy on all kinds of unqualified persons:

*pātrāpātra vicāraṇaṁ na kurute na svam paraṁ vikṣyate
deyādeya vimarsāko na hi na vā kāla pratikṣaḥ prabhuḥ
sadyo yaḥ śravaṇekṣaṇa praṇamana dhyānādinaḥ durlabham
datte bhakti-rasaṁ sa eva bhagavān gauraḥ paraṁ me gatiḥ*

(Caitanya Candrāmṛtam 77)

"This Lord Gaurasundara, Who makes no distinction between who is qualified and who is unqualified, what is his own and is of others, what is to be given and not to be given or what is the proper or improper time when He bestows *bhakti-rasa*, which is very hard to attain even through ardent meditation, hearing, seeing or offering obeisances, He is my only shelter!"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Remembering the great munificence of the Lord, please follow the Lord's path of compassion, since you are so dear to Him and bless me by allowing me to reside close to your lotus feet."

*yogyāyogya pātrāpātra tomāra nikaṭe;
yadi pade vāsa dāna e vicāra ghaṭe
se vicāra koro nā he āmāra sambandhe;
ho'le-o kuṭila kapaṭa patati pāṣaṇḍe*

*tava atiśaya priya śrī śacīmandana;
nirupādhi prema dātā patita pāvana
tiñho samarpilo more tomāra padete;
avicāre grahaṇa koro kāñāla patite
ei deho samarpiluñ ohe girirāja;
sthāna dāo pade prema bhaktira mahārāja*

"If you discriminate between who is qualified and unqualified to live close to you, then please don't practice such distinction with me, because the causeless bestower of *prema* and saviour of the fallen, your dear most Śrī Śacīmandana, has offered me to your lotus feet, although I am a crooked and mischievous atheist.

O Girirāja! Please accept this fallen beggar without making any distinction! O great king of loving devotion! I have offered my body unto you! Please give me a place to stay with you!"

BENEDICTION:

***rasada-daśakam asya śrīla-govardhanasya
kṣitidhara-kula-bhartur yaḥ prayatnād adhīte
sa sapadi sukhade 'smin vāsam āsādyā sākṣāc
chubada-yugala-sevā-ratnam āpnoti tūrṇam***

rasada - giving spiritual flavours; *daśakam* - ten prayers; *asya* - this; *śrīla govardhanasya* - of beautiful Govardhana; *kṣitidhara* - mountain; *kula* - group; *bhartuḥ* - Lord; *yaḥ* - who; *prayatnāt* - carefully; *adhīte* - recites; *sa* - he; *sapadi* - suddenly; *sukhade* - giving bliss; *asmin* - in this; *vāsam* - residence; *āsādyā* - attains; *sākṣāt* - directly; *śubhada* - bestowing auspiciousness; *yugala* - of the Divine Couple; *sevā* - service; *ratnam* - jewel; *āpnoti* - attains; *tūrṇam* - swiftly.

Anyone who carefully recites these ten prayers which bestow spiritual flavours and which praise the king of mountains, beautiful Govardhana, will soon attain a place to live close to him, thereby giving him great joy. Surely he will obtain the precious jewel of the auspicious loving service to the Divine youthful Couple Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha pronounces the *phala-śruti* (final benediction) of his Govardhana-Vāsa-Prārthanā-Daśaka.

Govardhana is the king of all mountains. What to speak of other mountains, Śrī Girirāja Govardhana exceeds even the most sacred mountains here on earth.

In the Garga Saṁhitā it is written:

*girirājo hareḥ rūpaṁ śrīmān govardhano giriḥ;
 tasya darśana mātrena naro yāti kṛtārthatām
 gandha mādana yātrāyām yat phalaṁ labhate naraḥ;
 tasmāt koṭi guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girirājasya darśane
 pañca varṣa sahasrāṇi kedāre yat tapaḥ phalam;
 tac ca govardhane vipra kṣaṇena labhate naraḥ
 malayādrau svarṇa-bhāra dānasyāpi ca yat phalam;
 tasmāt koṭi guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girirāje hi māsikam
 ṛṣyamūkasya sahyasya tathā deva gire punaḥ;
 yātrāyām labhate puṇyaṁ samastāyā bhuvāḥ phalam
 girirājasya yātrāyām tasmāt koṭi guṇaṁ phalam;
 girirāja samaṁ tirthaṁ na bhūtaṁ na bhaviṣyati*

"Girirāja is another direct form of Śrī Hari. Simply by seeing Govardhana all living beings will be blessed. The mere view of

Govardhana is ten million times more meritorious than circumambulating the Gandhamādana-mountain.

Staying near Govardhana Hill for just a moment is ten million times more meritorious than practicing penances on the Kedāra-mountain for five thousand years.

Residing near the base of Govardhana Hill for one month is ten million times more meritorious than donating loads of gold at the Malayan mountain and circumambulating Govardhana Hill is ten million times more meritorious than circumambulating the whole world, along with Ṛṣyamūka-parvata, Deva-giri and Sahya-giri. There is no holy place equal to Govardhana and there never will be."

From this statement we can easily understand that Govardhana is the king of all mountains. The culmination of all religious activities is attainment of devotion to the lotus feet of Śrī Govinda.

svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya saṁsiddhir hari toṣaṇam (Bhāg.)
"The perfection of all religious ceremonies is reached by satisfying Lord Hari."

Śrī Girirāja is called here *rasada* or the bestower of transcendental mellows. This is the greatest fruit of seeing Govardhana Hill, offering obeisances to him, serving him or circumambulating him.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Those who carefully recite these ten prayers to Śrī Girirāja, *govardhana vāsa prārthanā daśakam*, will quickly be blessed with a residence near Govardhana Hill, where they can most blissfully hear and chant about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the local *mahātmas* and nicely relish the mellows of devotion with them.

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī has written: *sajātiyāśayā snigdhe sādhoḥ saṅgaḥ svato-vare*.

"Those who are eager to advance in *sādhana-bhajana* and who want to enhance their relish of devotional mellows should associate with devotees who are endowed with similar devotional aspirations, who have a pleasant nature and who are more advanced than oneself."

Here the word *sajātiyāśaya* ascertains that by associating with such devotees one will advance in *bhajan* and one will be able to enhance one's relish of devotional mellows. The word *svato-vare* shows that by associating with *mahā-bhāgavatas* the flavours of devotion will awaken.

Therefore as a result of reciting this 'Govardhana-Vāsa Prārthanā-Daśakam' the *sādhaka* will become able to eternally reside at the base of blissful Girirāja and he will become blessed by attaining the most auspicious jewel of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa by Their grace. This is the merciful blessing of Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī on the *sādhakas* of this world.

*bhūdhara kulera guru govardhana pade;
daśa śloka viracana svādu pade pade
yini ati yatna kore kore adhyayane;
ati śighra vāsa pāya giri govardhane
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā amūlya ratana;
sei sevā dena tāre giri govardhana
dāsa raghunātha bosī rādhākuṇḍa tīre;
daśa śloke mahā-ratna korilā pracāre
sei divya ślokāvalira kori anuvāda;
lobhe haripade sevāya māge anurāga*

"Anyone who carefully recites these ten verses which glorify Govardhana, the *guru* of all mountains, and which are relishable at every step, will very quickly attain residence at

Govardhana, and Giri Govardhana will give such a devotee the valuable jewel of service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī sits on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and writes these ten great jewel like verses and Haripada dāsa translated these divine verses (into Bengali), being passionately eager for devotional service."

**Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's
'Govardhana Vāsa Prārthanā Daśakam'**

Translated in 1986- 1995 by Advaita dāsa.

Śrī-Śrī Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam

Eight prayers to Śrī Rādhākunḍa

VERSE 1:

*vṛṣabha-danuja-nāśān narma-dharmokti-raṅgair
nikhila-nija-sakhībhīr yat sva-hastena pūrṇam
prakaṭitam api vṛndāraṇya-rājñā pramodais
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kunḍam evāśrayo me*

vṛṣabha - bull; *danuja* - demon; *nāśāt* - from destruction; *narma* - joke; *dharmā* - religious; *ukti* - words; *raṅgaiḥ* - with pastimes; *nikhila* - complete; *nija* - own; *sakhībhīḥ* - with girlfriends; *yat* - what; *sva* - own; *hastena* - with the hand; *pūrṇam* - filled; *prakaṭitam* - revealed; *api* - even; *vṛndāraṇya* - of Vṛndāvana; *rājñā* - by the king; *pramodaiḥ* - with pleasures; *tad* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant or beautiful; *rādhākunḍam* - Rādhākunḍa; *eva* - certainly; *āśrayaḥ* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very dear, beautiful and fragrant Rādhākunḍa, which appeared after a joking quarrel about piety between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa after the killing of the Ariṣṭa bull demon, and which was joyfully revealed and filled up by Śrī Rādhā's own hand with the assistance of Her girlfriends —this Rādhākunḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In the preceding ‘Śrī Govardhanāśraya-daśakam’ Śrīpāda Raghunātha discussed the importance of taking shelter of Govardhana and in his ‘Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-Prārthanā-daśakam’ he prayed for living at the base of Govardhana.

Although there are many holy lakes and ponds around Govardhana Hill, Śrī Dāsa Gosvāmī is mostly attached to Śrī Rādhākunḍa, because Rādhākunḍa’s glories equal Śrī Rādhā’s glories. *kunḍera mahimā yeno rādhāra mahimā* (C.C.).

Particularly the desire to serve Śrī Rādhā awoke within the heart of Śrī Raghunātha when he first saw the *kunḍa*. In Vilāpa Kusumāñjali (15) he has written:

*yadā tava sarovaram sarasa bhṛṅgasaṅghollasat
saroruhakulojjvalam madhura vāri sampūritam
sphuṭat sarasijākṣi he nayana yugma sākṣād vabhau
tadaiva mama lālasājani tavaiva dāsyē rase*

"O Blooming lotus-eyed girl (Rādhē)! When my eyes directly saw Your pond (Rādhākunḍa), which is filled with sweet water and lotus flowers surrounded by blissfully humming bees, then I really got the desire to taste the nectar of Your service!"²³

Hence Śrī Raghunātha glorifies Śrī Rādhākunḍa in this Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam because he desires to live on its banks. In this verse he describes the appearance of Śrī Rādhākunḍa, which is also praised as *vraja-mukuṭa-maṇi*, the crown jewel of all holy places of Vraja.

Although Śrī Rādhākunḍa and Śyāmakunḍa are manifest from beginningless time during Kṛṣṇa’s manifest pastimes on

²³ See the Parimala Kaṇā-comment on Vilāpa Kusumāñjali, verse 15, by Śrīla Ananta dāsa Bābāji.

earth, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and Their *sakhīs* used a humorous pastime to reveal the *kunḍas*. In the Ādi-Varāha-Purāṇa, Govardhana-Parikramā-Prasaṅga, it is thus described:

*gaṅgāyās cottaram gatvā deva devasya cakriṇaḥ;
ariṣṭena samam yatra mahad yuddham pravartitam
ghātayitvā tatas tasminn ariṣṭam vṛṣarūpiṇam;
kopena pārṣṇi-ghātena mahyās tirtham prakalpitam
vṛṣabhasya vadho jñeya ātmanaḥ śuddhim icchatā;
snātas tatra tadā kṛṣṇo vṛṣam hatvā sagopakah
vipāpmā rādhām provāca katham bhadre bhaviṣyasi;
vṛṣa hato mayā cāyam ariṣṭah pāpa sūcakah
tatra rādhā samāśliṣya kṛṣṇam akliṣṭa kāriṇam;
sva nāmnā viditam kunḍam kṛtam tirtham adūrataḥ
rādhākunḍam iti khyātam sarva pāpaharam śubham*

"On the northern side of Mānasa Gaṅgā, the God of Gods Who carries a disc (Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa) began a fierce fight with Ariṣṭāsura. Then, to atone for the sin of killing a bull, the Lord angrily struck the ground with His left heel and revealed a great holy tank (Śyāmākunḍa) in which He bathed for purification along with His cowherd boyfriends. (According to the Hari Vamśa, Kṛṣṇa then entered the *goṣṭha* (meadows) with His friends for an hour or so, after which He called Śrī Rādhā and the *gopīs* for a Rāsa-dance with His all-attractive flute playing)

Then He said: "Bhadre! (beautiful, auspicious Rādhē) Now I am purified from the sin of killing a bull, how will You get purified now (the whole area is, after all, polluted by the sin I committed and everyone must share my *karma* for it!)?"

Then Rādhā embraced Kṛṣṇa, the remover of all distress Who can easily perform difficult tasks like destroying demons, and made a lake which was named after Her on the west of

Śyāma's *kuṇḍa*. This auspicious lake destroying all sins, is known as **Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa**."

How Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa appeared is also elaborately described by *parama-surasika-kavi* Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda in his Sārārtha Darśinī-commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, verse 10.36.15, '*evam kakudminam*'.

Here he quotes twenty verses from the Purāṇas describing the humorous pastimes surrounding the advent of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and Śrī Śyāmakuṇḍa. The essence of this story is written down here.²⁴

After Kṛṣṇa had killed the demon named Ariṣṭāsura, who had assumed the form of a bull, Śrī Rādhārāṇī and Her girlfriends blamed Him for killing a bull and told Him that He could only get purified from this sin by bathing in all the holy waters if He ever wanted to gain qualification to touch the *gopīs* again!

Hearing their words Kṛṣṇa forcefully struck the ground with His left heel and thus made the water of the Bhogavatī Gaṅgā appear from the Pātāla-region. Like this Kṛṣṇa invoked all the holy waters and thus revealed **Śrī Śyāmakuṇḍa**.

He bathed in the water of this *kuṇḍa* and then told all the holy waters of the world to appear within it. The *gopīs* did not believe Him, though and therefore by Kṛṣṇa's wish, all the holy waters assumed visible forms and thus introduced themselves.

Kṛṣṇa then jokingly told the *gopīs* that He had revealed such an enormous holy place, but that they were bereft of all religiosity and pious merit. Hearing these joking challenges of Kṛṣṇa Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī wanted to reveal another beautiful *kuṇḍa*, and, seeing a huge cavity created by the hooves of the bull on the western side of Śyāmakuṇḍa, She began to dig out

²⁴ The original verses with their comments can be read in Śrīla Ananta dāsa Babāji's booklet 'Śrī-Śrī Rādhākuṇḍera Mahimā O Aitiya'.

the earth there with Her own hands assisted by Her girlfriends.

Within 48 minutes She had dug out a beautiful lake of Her own. In this way **Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa** advented itself. Then Kṛṣṇa wanted to fill up Rādhākuṇḍa with all the holy waters which had filled up Śyāmakuṇḍa, but Rādhārāṇī refused, saying that the water of Śyāmakuṇḍa, in which Śyāmasundara had bathed, was now stained by His sin of killing a bull and that Her creation of Rādhākuṇḍa would thus become useless.

So She went with Her *sakhīs* to the pure Mānasa-Gaṅgā lake and filled up Her own *kuṇḍa* with its water. Then, on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's indication, all the holy waters of Śyāmakuṇḍa arose and offered choice praises and obeisances unto Śrī Rādhikā. Being satisfied with these praises Rādhārāṇī gave them permission to enter into Her *kuṇḍa*, so they broke the dam which existed between the *kuṇḍas* and forcefully entered into Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, thereby filling it up.

In this *kuṇḍa* Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa eternally play Their watersports. Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is even more glorious than Śyāmakuṇḍa and in this lake Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa always play Their midday-pastimes.

Hearing about the appearance of Rādhākuṇḍa, Bhagavatī (the holy mother) Paurṇamāsī ecstatically called Vṛndādevī (the presiding goddess of the Vraja-forests) and told her to plant various trees and vines on all four banks of the *kuṇḍas*. According to her own wish, Vṛndādevī also had different jewelled and pearly *ghāṭas* (bathing places) built which were suitable for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, with stairs leading down to the *kuṇḍa*.

She arranged for beautiful *kuñjas* to be laid out with different kinds of trees, vines and flowers. On both sides of the Ghāṭa she had charming, wish-yielding *kalpavṛkṣa*-trees planted. Singing male and female parrots, pigeons, cuckoos and peacocks are

always sitting on the branches of these trees and the *kuñjas* are filled with golden, yellow, green, red, blue and white lotus flowers.

On all four sides of the *kuṇḍa* are the enchanting arbours of Lalitā, Viśākhā and the other *sakhīs*. This Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is the place where Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava have Their most confidential, eternal midday-pastimes.

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī says: "May this very fragrant and beautiful Rādhākuṇḍa be my only shelter."

*śrī nandanandana saha māti raṅga rase;
rādhā nija kuṇḍavara karilā prakāṣe
vṛṣāsure vināśānte parihāsa chale;
sakhī saha rādhā khanana kori nija kare
prakaṭita koriyāche yei sarovara;
atiśaya ramaṇīya mano mugdhakara
sei rādhākuṇḍa mora ekānta āśraya;
hauk ei prārthanā koriye niścoya*

"May that Rādhākuṇḍa, where Śrī Nanda-Nandana blissfully revealed the greatest of holy tanks with Rādhā, joking with Her after killing the Ariṣṭāsura, which was dug out by hand by Rādhā and Her *sakhīs* and which is the most mind-enchanting place in existence, be my only shelter. Therein lies my ardent prayer!"

VERSE 2:

***vraja-bhuvi mura-śatroḥ preyasīnām nikāmair
asulabham api tūrṇam prema-kalpa-drumam tam
janayati hṛdi bhūmau snātur uccair priyam yat
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kuṇḍam evāśrayo me***

vrajabhuvi - Vraja; *muraśatroḥ* - of Kṛṣṇa; *preyasīnām* - of the dear girls; *nikāmair* - by desires; *asulabham* - hard to obtain; *api* - even; *tūrṇam* - swiftly; *prema* - of love of God; *kalpadrumam* - desire tree; *tvam* - you; *janayati* - generates; *hṛdi* - heart; *bhūmau* - in the ground; *snātuḥ* - of a bather; *uccair* - greatly; *priyam* - dear; *yat* - which; *tad* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākuṇḍam* - Rādhākuṇḍa; *eva* - only; *āśrayaḥ* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very fragrant, dear and beautiful Rādhākuṇḍa, which instantly makes a desire tree of *prema* (love of God) sprout in the heart-land of anyone who bathes there, although this is very difficult to attain even for Kṛṣṇa's beloveds in Vrajabhumi - this Rādhākuṇḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī explains more confidential truths about Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, saying: "The desire tree of *prema* of anyone who bathes there grows here".

One may ask here: "How can that supreme goal which is only attained after a long time of devotional practice be suddenly attained just by bathing in Rādhākuṇḍa?" The answer is: Rādhākuṇḍa's glories are said to be equal to Rādhārāṇī's glories. That love which is normally only attained after a long time of practice (*sādhya vastu sādhana vinā keho nāhi pāy*, no one can attain the goal without practicing, C.C.) is attained

simply by seeing Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, even without performing any *sādhanā*. This is the special feature of Rādhārāṇī which even *Svayaṁ Bhagavān Śrī Vrajendra-Nandana* (Kṛṣṇa) does not have!

Śrīmat Sanātana Gosvāmī has written in his *Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta* (2.5.233) *sā rādhikā bhagavati kvacid iksyate cet premā tad anubhavam ṛcchati mūrtimān saḥ*

"Anyone who somehow sees the supreme Goddess Rādhikā will experience *prema* in its real form". Therefore it is no wonder that a single bath in Rādhākūṇḍa causes the tree of *prema* to sprout in the field of one's heart.

One may now ask: "But I see thousands of men and women taking bath in Rādhākūṇḍa every year! Why don't I see at least one of them getting *prema* at once then? How can I establish my faith in these statements of the great self-realized souls?"

To this the answer of the Mahājanas will be: "Wherever the scriptures and the saints proclaim such miraculous and inconceivable results, it must be understood to refer to offenseless practitioners. Only an offenseless soul who bathes in Rādhākūṇḍa will attain love of God, otherwise this would actually be visible on anyone who bathes there.

Such offenseless persons are very rare and the fruits of such a benediction are not visible to our eyes so soon. There is no reason to doubt these glorifications. But even an offensive person who bathes in Rādhākūṇḍa can get rid of his offensive attitude and attain this supreme goal by patiently bathing in Rādhākūṇḍa again and again. This is the realized conclusion of the scriptures and the great saints."

Someone may also think: "The whole of Vraja-maṇḍala has the power to give love of God to its pilgrims for the Padma Purāna states '*dīnam ekaṁ nivāsena harau bhaktir prajāyate*'

"Simply by staying in the Mathurā-district for one day one

will attain devotion to Lord Hari." What is then so special about bathing in Rādhākuṇḍa?

The answer to this is: "Love for Kṛṣṇa is greater than love for any other form of God, because Kṛṣṇa is the Original Personality of Godhead. The pure and intimate love of the *rāgātmikā-vrajavāsīs* is far greater than the reverential devotion of the inhabitants of Dvārakā and Mathurā. to Lord Hari

On top of that, as the text says, the *prema-kalpadruma* (desire tree of love) attained by bathing in Rādhākuṇḍa is not only unattainable by *aiśvarya* devotees or by those who worship Kṛṣṇa in the mood of a servant, friend, or parent, but it is even hard to attain by Kṛṣṇa's own *madhura-bhāvamayī* girlfriends.

It is well known that the amorous mellow is superior to the fraternal and servitude-mellow.

*dāsyā sakhya, vātsalya, āra śṛṅgāra;
cāri bhāvera caturvidha bhaktai adhāra
nija nija bhāva sabe śreṣṭha kori māne;
nija bhāve kore kṛṣṇa sukha āsvādane
taṭastha hoiyā mone vicāra yadi kori;
saba rasa hoite śṛṅgāra adhika mādhurī*

(*Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Ādi 4*)

"There are four kinds of feelings devotees can have for the Lord: servitude, fraternal love, parental love and amorous love. Everyone considers his own feeling to be the best and most fulfilling and through these feelings he makes Kṛṣṇa relish happiness according to the quantity and quality of his love. But if a *rasika* considers things from a neutral point of view, considering the superiority and inferiority of the different

ingredients of relish, such as *vibhāvas*²⁵, *anubhāvas*²⁶, *sāttvika bhāvas*²⁷ and *vyabhicāri-bhāvas*²⁸, then we will see that the amorous love has the sweetest taste and it is the most astonishing."

The crown jewel of all these *madhura-rasa-nāyikās*, (*gopīs*) is Vṛṣabhānu's princess Śrī Rādhārāṇī. Her astonishing *mādana-rasa* gives the greatest and indeed complete relish to Kṛṣṇa and She has mercifully infused this sweet *rasa* in Her surrendered girlfriends and maidservants too.

Therefore in the kingdom of ecstatic love the relish of the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* reigns supreme. Still, the maidservants taste even more *rasa* than the *sakhīs*. It is their *prema* which is hard to attain even for Kṛṣṇa's beloveds (the *sakhīs*), but which is sown in the heart of someone who faithfully and offenselessly bathes in Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa!

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "May my dear most and most desired Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa be my shelter!"

*nitya snāna kore yihon śrī rādhākūṇḍete;
kṛṣṇa prema kalpavṛkṣa tāra hṛdayete
prādurbhūta hoy śighra kuṇḍera prabhāve;
vraje vraja rāmādera-o yāhā to durlabhe
yei rādhākūṇḍa hoy atisāya priya;
sei sarovara mora ekānta āśraya*

"The wish-yielding tree of love for Kṛṣṇa swiftly grows in the heart of anyone who always bathes in Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa. Such is

²⁵ Cause of an emotion.

²⁶ Consequent emotion.

²⁷ Existential ecstasies, like goose pimples, tears, shivering and inertia.

²⁸ Adulterated ecstasies.

the prowess of the *kuṇḍa*! That dear most Rādhākunḍa which is hard to attain even by the Vraja-*gopīs*, is my only shelter!"

VERSE 3:

***agha-ripur api yatnād atra devyāḥ prasāda-
prasara-kṛta-katākṣa-prāpti-kāmaḥ prakāmam
anusarati yad ucaaiḥ snāna-sevānubandhaiḥ
tat ati-surabhi rādhā-kunḍam evāśrayo me***

agharipu - Kṛṣṇa; *api* - even; *yatnāt* - carefully; *yatra* - where; *devyāḥ* - of a goddess; *prasāda* - mercy; *prasara* - manifestation; *kṛta* - done; *kaṭākṣa* - glance; *prāpti* - attainment; *kāmaḥ* - desire; *prakāmam* - voluntary; *anusarati* - follows; *yad* - which; *uccaiḥ* - greatly; *snāna* - bathing; *sevā* - service; *anubandhaiḥ* - expert; *tat* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākunḍam* - Rādhākunḍa; *eva* - only; *āśrayaḥ* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very dear, beautiful and fragrant Rādhākunḍa, where even Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Aghāsura, eagerly and carefully bathes and renders submissive and expert devotional service, thereby desiring to obtain the merciful glance of goddess Rādhikā - this Rādhākunḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī is the embodiment of Śrī Rādhākunḍa's mercy and therefore he is always aware of the *kuṇḍa*'s glories. For the sake of all the devotees who take shelter of Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet he reveals all the confidential truths about Rādhākunḍa in this Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam.

In the previous verse it was explained that the wish yielding tree of *mañjarī-bhāva* sprouts in the hearts of those who simply bathe in Rādhākuṇḍa. In this verse it is shown that not only the neophyte-devotees but even Vrajendra-Nandana, the original Personality of Godhead, has His greatest desires fulfilled here by Śrī Rādhā's grace.

This verse describes the sweet memory of a vision attained one day. Once Śrīpāda Raghunātha falls on the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa, weeping out of separation from Śrī Rādhārāṇī. His life-airs reach up to his throat due to his strong feelings of love-in-separation. Suddenly he sees a sweet pastime before him. Absorbed in his *mañjarī-svarūpa* he sees the sweet meeting of Śrī-Śrī-Rādhā-Mādhava on the bank of the *kuṇḍa*. The Śrī Yugala sits down in a beautiful *kuñja* on a jewelled throne faced by Their girlfriends like Lalitā and Viśākhā, illuminating the bower house with Their blue and golden auras. Many wave-like jokes well up in the ocean of Their conversation and maidservants are around everywhere, absorbed in their service.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, in his transcendental identity as Tulasī Mañjarī, serves the Divine Couple by fanning Them. Everyone is immersed in boundless bliss. Then one very amazing wave wells up in this ocean of divine ecstasy: Śrīmatī sees Her own golden lustre reflected in Śyāma's shining emerald-coloured bluish chest and She becomes angry with Him, taking this lustre to be one of Her rival *gopīs*.

*rasavati rāi rasikavara ṭhāma;
śyāma tanu mukure herai anupāma
nija pratibimba śyāma aṅge heri;
rokhe kohoto dhanī ānana pheri
nāgara eto kiye cañcala bheli;*

*hāmāri samukhe koru āna sañe keli
eto kohi rāi korolo tahi māna;
āna thāme cololi upekhiyā kāna
sahacarīgaṇa taba kotoye bujhāya;
uddhava dāsa minati koru pāy*

(Pada Kalpataru)

"Rasavatī Rāi looked in the peerless mirror of the body of Śyāma, the greatest Rasika. Seeing Her own reflection there Dhanī²⁹ became angry and turned Her face away from Him, saying: 'Nāgara!³⁰ You've become so naughty that You're enjoying with another girl right in front of us!' Seeing that Rāi was angry Kṛṣṇa went somewhere else, thus leaving and ignoring Her. Now the *sakhīs* have quite some explaining to do to Rāi! Uddhava dāsa thus humbly prays at Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet."

Before coming to Rādhākūṇḍa, Rādhā had heard that Candrāvalī's girlfriend Śyāmalā had met Śyāmasundara on the bank of Kusuma-Sarovara (close to Rādhākūṇḍa) and had told Him where He could meet Candrāvalī, and now, seeing Her own reflection in His body, Rādhikā anxiously presumed that Kṛṣṇa had actually met her. "Oh! Śyāma is playing with Candrāvalī on His lap right before Me! Who can tolerate that?"

She went to another cottage near Rādhākūṇḍa, covered Her head with Her veil and proudly turned Her back on Kṛṣṇa! Her girlfriends tried to convince Her of Kṛṣṇa's innocence, but in vain!

²⁹ Fortunate Rādhā.

³⁰ Lover, lit. 'man about town'.

*sundari! jānalum tuyā dūra bhāṇa
hari ura mukure, heri nija cāhari,
tāhe sautinī kori māna*

"O Beautiful girl! We know that You are mistaking! You've seen Your own reflection in Hari's mirror-like chest and You take it to be one of Your rivals!"

*kānana kuñje, kusuma śara jarajara,
vayāna heri puna tori.
bhāgye milalo puna, tohe kamala mukhi,
rokhe cololi mukha moḍi*

"We see Your face now in this *kuñja*-forest tormented by Cupid's floral arrows! O lotus faced girl! Fortunately You have met Him again, but now You are angrily turning Your face away from Him!"

*koto koto mugadhī, aiche bhelo vañchita,
hari puna tāhe nā lāgi.
tuhum puṇavatī tohe, yohi mānāoto,
ki kohobo tohāri sohāgi.*

"How many young girls aren't there, all deprived of Hari's love! He doesn't care about them! But You are such a fortunate girl! Who can describe Your fortune in love?"

*to vinu śutalo, śītala bhūtale,
dūratara viraha hutāše
tuyā koro sarasa, paraśe rijhāoha
tohe koho govinda dāsa*

"When He is deprived of Your love He sleeps on the cold floor, but He doesn't feel cold at all for He's burning in the fire of separation from You! Please soothe Him once more with Your blessed touch, Govinda Dāsa says to You!"

But Śrīmatī's *māna* did not subside because of the *sakhīs'* canvassing words. When She heard their words She thought that they were all engaged by Kṛṣṇa in pacifying Her with false and crooked words.

As a princess, She gave up Her honour, Her family reputation and Her shame and She went through different kinds of bodily suffering to come out of Her house to see this boy, and now He enjoys with one of Her rivals on His lap right before Her? This agony is intolerable!

When the *sakhīs* saw that Śrīmatī could not be pacified, they went to Kṛṣṇa and urged Him to personally apologize to Her lotus feet. He went to Her and tried His best:

yāhān sakhīgaṇa, saba rāi bujhāyato,
turite āolo tāhā kāna.
heraite kamala vayanī, dhanī mānini
avanata korolo vayāna

"The *sakhīs* all tried to explain to Rāi the truth of the matter when Kṛṣṇa quickly arrived there. Seeing Him, lotus faced Dhanī-Mānini lowered Her face."

heraite nāgara, gadagada antara,
mana māhā bhelo bahu bhīte.
gale pītāmbara, caraṇa yugala dhara,
kohotohi gadagada cite

"Seeing this Nāgara became very much afraid at heart and spoke with faltering voice, keeping His Pitāmbara at His neck and clasping both Her lotus feet."

*sundari! michāi koroho mujhe māna.
nirahetu hetu, jāni tuhu rokhali.
pratibimba heri koho āna.*

"O beautiful girl! You are wrongly proud at Me for no reason! You mistook Your own reflection to be some other girl!"

*tuyā vine nayane, āna nāhi heriye,
nā kochiye āna sañe bāta.
tohāri sakhinī vine, bāta nā puchiye,
nā bosiyē kāhuka sātha*

"My eyes don't see anyone else but You. I don't speak with anyone else. I don't inquire from anyone else but from Your girlfriends or maidservants and I don't sit with anyone else either!"

*tab tuhum kāhe, māna mujhe korotahi,
nā bujhiye tuyā manakāje
uddhava dāsa minati, kori kohotohi
heraho nāgara rāja*

"But still You maintain this unreasonable huff against Me; I don't understand what's on Your mind! Uddhava dāsa humbly prays to You: Look at Your king of lovers!"

Despite Nāgara's endeavours Śrīmatī's māna was not broken. She just stubbornly sat there, covering Her head with Her veil. The rejected Nāgara thought of different means to break Śrīmatī's māna. Suddenly He thought: "Aho! **I'm standing on**

the bank of Rādhākuṇḍa! By the grace of the *kuṇḍa* I will also be showered by the grace of Śrī Kuṇḍeśvarī!

After all, the Mahājanas have written:

*śrī kṛṣṇa yokhon rādhā daraśana lāgi utkaṅṭhita hoy;
sakala upāya viphala hoiyā rādhākuṇḍāśraya loy
tat kāle rādhāra pāya daraśana emati kuṇḍa prabhāva;
rādhāra-o temati śyāmakūṇḍāśraye kṛṣṇa saṅga hoy lābha*

"When Kṛṣṇa becomes eager to see Rādhā, and all His endeavours fail, He takes shelter of Rādhākuṇḍa. At that moment He gets the audience of Rādhā on the strength of the *kuṇḍa*. In the same way Rādhā also takes shelter of Śyāmakūṇḍa and thus attains the company of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

In this way some hope illuminated Nāgara's desperate heart. He bathed in Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, picked flowers from the trees and vines on its banks and sat down on His knees on the jewelled steps leading down to the *kuṇḍa*, moistening the flowers with His tears of love before throwing them into the *kuṇḍa* as a devotional offering. He offered prostrated obeisances to the *kuṇḍa* while praying: "O Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa! May I get the merciful glance of your Īśvarī (presiding goddess) by your grace!"

One *sakhī* who witnessed Nāgara's activities ran to Śrīmatī's *kuṅja* and told Kuṇḍeśvarī of Kṛṣṇa's devotional service to Her *kuṇḍa*, making tears of compassion trickle from Her lotus like eyes. The *sakhīs* understood that Śrīmatī was pleased with Kṛṣṇa again, so they quickly brought Him to Her.

Kuṇḍeśvarī, being pleased with this servant of the *kuṇḍa*, **cast a merciful glance at Him, filled with the *rasa* of love.** Nāgara, understanding that His service of the *kuṇḍa* was successful, considered Himself blessed and the *sakhīs* and

mañjarīs were also blessed by seeing the sweet meeting of the Yugala. Remembering his vision of this pastime Śrī Raghunātha said:

*anyera kā kathā svayaṁ vrajendranandana;
rādhikāra praṇaya kaṭākṣa korite darśana
rādhā-priya rādhākūṇḍe avagāhana kore;
sevā pāripāṭye koto bhāse āśru-nīre
atīśaya kamanīya rādhākūṇḍa nāma;
satata āśraya hok prema pariṇāma*

"What to speak of others, even Vrajendra-Nandana Himself, in order to receive Rādhikā's loving glance, bathes in Rādhā's dear lake Rādhākūṇḍa! Floating on His own tears, He shows His dexterity in devotional service. May the most enchanting and lovely name of Rādhākūṇḍa always be my shelter, culminating in *prema*!"

VERSE 4:

***vraja-bhuvana-sudhāṁśoḥ prema-bhūmir nikāmaṁ
vraja-madhura-kīśorī-mauli-ratna-priyeva
paricitam api nāmnā yā ca tenaiva tasyāś
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kūṇḍam evāśrayo me***

vraja bhuvana - the land of Vraja; *sudhāṁśoḥ* - of the moon; *prema* - love; *bhūmiḥ* - abode; *nikāmaṁ* - very much; *vraja* - of Vraja; *madhura* - sweet; *kīśorī* - adolescent girl; *mauli* - crown; *ratna* - jewel; *priya* - dear; *iva* - just like; *paricitam* - known; *api* - even; *nāmnā* - by name; *yat* - what; *ca* - and; *tena* - by him; *eva* - certainly; *tasyāś* - his;

tad - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākūṇḍam* - Rādhākūṇḍa; *eva* - only; *āśrayah* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very dear, beautiful and fragrant Rādhākūṇḍa, which is the abode of love for the moon of Vraja (Kṛṣṇa), which is as dear to Him as the crown jewel of sweet adolescent girls of Vraja (Śrī Rādhikā) Herself and which was called after Her by Kṛṣṇa - this Rādhākūṇḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: How many self manifested, transcendental realizations of the glories of Rādhākūṇḍa are coming to Śrī Raghunātha, who is the greatest object of mercy of Rādhākūṇḍa, the lake of which he has taken shelter!

In the previous verse Śrī Raghunātha explained how even Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is the universal object of worship, must worship Rādhākūṇḍa in order to attain the mercy of *mānini* Rādhā and get His desires fulfilled. One may now ask: "Did Śrī Kṛṣṇa worship Rādhākūṇḍa to have His own desires fulfilled or simply because the place is so dear to Him? After all, there is no glory in motivated service (*sakāma sevā*), because when the *sevyā* (object of service) does not fulfill the worshiper's desires such a 'devotee' will give up his worship. Service becomes eternal and earnest when the *sevyā* is dear to the devotee and to answer such questions this verse has been written.

It has been said that Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa is as dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa the moon of Vraja as is Śrī Rādhā, the crown jewel of adolescent girls of Vraja.

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos tasyā kuṇḍam priyam tathā
sarva gopīṣu saivaika viṣṇor atyanta vallabhā*

"Just as Rādhā is dear to Lord Viṣṇu, so is Her lake. Of all the *gopīs* She is Lord Viṣṇu's most beloved One."

This verse from the Padma-Purāṇa proves that it is simply out of love that Kṛṣṇa worships Rādhākunḍa as described in the previous verse and not just for the fulfillment of His own desires. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the emperor of the fullest *rasa* and Śrī Rādhā is the empress of the fullest *bhāva*. When we study *rasa* and *bhāva* we find that *bhāva* is the worshipper and *rasa* is the worshipped. Within this worshipped/worshipper relationship Śrī Rādhā is the crown jewel of all Vraja's *mahābhāvavati-madhura-kīśorī*³¹, because She can fulfill all of Kṛṣṇa's desires.

kṛṣṇa vāñchā-pūrti-rūpa kore ārādhane; ataeva 'rādhikā' nāma purāṇe vākhāne (C.C.) "She worships Kṛṣṇa by satisfying all of His senses, hence the Purāṇas call Her 'Rādhikā'."

Śrīpāda Śuka Muni describes how the *gopīs* reveal the extraordinary status of Śrī Rādhā's worship of Kṛṣṇa:

*anayārādhito nūnaṁ bhagavān harir īśvaraḥ
yanno vihāya govinda prīto yām anayad rahaḥ*

(*Bhāgavata* 10.30.28)

" Lord Hari Who destroys the misery of His devotees and Who fulfills their desires must certainly have been worshipped by this girl because Govinda was so much in love with Her that He left us all behind and took Her along to another place."

From this statement we can understand what is the distinction between the worship of Rādhā and the worship of all the other *mahābhāvavati-gopasundarīs*. The verbal root

³¹ There is nothing in the world as sweet as *mahābhāva*, both for the object and the subject.

rādh means ‘to worship’ and She who worships is therefore named Rādhā, the greatest of all the milkmaids of Vraja to worship Kṛṣṇa. No other *gopī* in Vraja has such a significant name.

For instance, anything which contains water can be called *jaladhi* but pools, ponds and rivers are never called *jaladhi* by anyone. When one says *jaladhi* everyone will understand that one means the ocean. That is so because the ocean is the root-reservoir of all the water in the world.

In the same way all the *gopīs* and indeed all the loving devotees may worship Kṛṣṇa according to their own love for Him, but no one else but Vṛṣabhānu-Nandinī can be called Rādhā. Vṛṣabhānu-Nandinī is the root reservoir of all Kṛṣṇa-worship.

Again, according to the quality and the quantity of their love all the different devotees may be dear to Kṛṣṇa, but Mahā-Premavatī Rādhā is Kṛṣṇa’s dear most beloved for Her love is the greatest, both in quantity and in quality. Therefore Her sounds, touch and so on are the cause of the greatest relish to Kṛṣṇa, although He is the embodiment of full transcendental bliss. Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

*koṭi kāma jini rūpa yadyapi āmāra;
 asamordhva mādhyā - sāmya nāhi yāra
 mora rūpa āpyāyita hoy tribhuvana;
 rādhāra darśane mora juḍāya nayana
 mora vanśī gīte ākarṣaye tribhuvana;
 rādhāra vacane hare āmāra śravaṇa
 yadyapi āmāra gandhe jagata sugandha;
 mora citta prāṇa hare rādhā aṅga gandha
 yadyapi āmāra rase jagata surasa;
 rādhāra adhara rasa āmā kore vaśa*

*yadyapi āmāra sparśa koṭīndu śītala;
rādhikāra sparśe āmā kore suśītala
eimata jagatera sukhe āmi hetu;
rādhikāra rūpa guṇa āmāra jīvātu*

(Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 4)

"Although My form defeats that of millions of Cupids and is unrivalled in its sweetness, soothing the three worlds, but the sight of Rādhā soothes My eyes. The song of My flute attracts the three worlds but Rādhā's words soothe My ears. Although My fragrance scents the whole world, My heart is stolen by Rādhā's bodily fragrance. Although the whole world is juiced up by My flavour, the flavour of Rādhā's lips subdues Me. Although My touch is cooler than that of millions of moons, Rādhikā's touch cools off even Me! In this way, although I am the cause of all the pleasure of the world, Rādhikā's form and qualities are My very life!"

Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa pleases all of Kṛṣṇa's five transcendental senses just as Śrī Rādhā Herself does:

Kṛṣṇa's eyes enjoy seeing it, His nose enjoys the smell of its water and the lotus flowers floating in it, His skin enjoys the touch of this cool water, His ears enjoy the sounds of its chirping birds and humming bumblebees and His tongue enjoys the taste of its ambrosial water. Although Kṛṣṇa is called *vraja-bhuvana-sudhāṁśu*, the moon Who pleases the whole circle of Vraja, in this verse it is declared that Rādhākūṇḍa pleases even His senses!

Then Śrī Raghunātha says:

*paricitam api nāmnā yac ca tenaiva tasyāḥ. tenaiva vraja
bhuvana sudhānīśunā tasyā śrī rādhāyā nāmnā eva paricitam
saṅketitam api*³²

"The *kunḍa* has been named after Rādhā by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself."

When Rādhākunḍa advented itself Kṛṣṇa personally gave it that name, as Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī has stated:

proce hariḥ priyatame tava kuṇḍam etat

Because Śrī Rādhā is non different from Her name Śrī Kṛṣṇa is seen to be most attached to Her name as well. In the stage of *pūrva rāga*³³ we can read:

*sakhi! rādhā-nāma ki kohile!;
śuni kāna mana juḍāile
koto nāma āchaye gokule;
heno hiyā nā kore ākule
ei nāme āche ki mādhurī;
śravaṇe rahalo sudhā bhari
cite niti murati vikāśa;
amiyā sāyare yeno bāsa
āṅkhite dekhite kore sādha;
e yadunandana mana kānda*

(*Pada Kalpataru*)

"Sakhi! Who has pronounced this name 'Rādhā'? When I hear this My mind and ears are soothed! How many names are there in Gokula? None of them has agitated My heart as much (as this one)! How much sweetness is there in this name? It fills My ears with nectar! Her form becomes clearly manifest in My

³² Sanskrit commentary by Baiṅeśvara Vidyābhūṣaṇa.

³³ Beginnings of love.

mind and it is as if I float in an ocean of nectar! I will be fulfilled if I can see Her with My own eyes!" Thus Yadunandana's mind weeps.

When He first hears the name of Rādhā the ears and mind of Śyāma, the embodiment of bliss, are soothed, His heart becomes agitated, His ears are showered by a stream of nectar, and the name has given to the bearer of that name a clear shape within His mind. When He hears this name He becomes very eager to meet the named One too - **the name of Rādhā** is filled with sweet honey.

Not only that, simply by hearing that Rādhā-*nāma* the transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana Śyāmasundara feels the agitation of lust within His heart, which means that He's actually very eager to relish the flavours of Her *mādana-prema*. His mind is absorbed in Śrī Rādhā and He thinks: 'If this girl's name is so sweet, then what must Her form be like?'

Thinking like this, He becomes very eager to see Her and He impatiently asks one *sakhī* to describe Her form to Him:

*rādhā-nāma ki kohile āge;
 śunaite manamatha jāge
 sakhi! kāhe koholi uha nāma;
 mana māhā nāhi lāge āna
 koho tachu anupama rūpa;
 bujhlam amiyā svarūpa
 heraitte āñkhi kore āśa;
 koho rādhā mohana dāsa*

"Who has pronounced the name Rādhā just now? After I heard it Cupid awakened! Sakhi! Tell Me, who has such a name? My mind can't think of anyone else anymore! Describe

Her unrivalled form to Me; I understand that it must be pure nectar! My eyes yearn to see Her!" Thus spoke Rādhā Mohana dāsa.

When Śyāma hears even a single syllable of Rādhā's Holy Name He eagerly wants to run up to the person who pronounced it and when He hears the second syllable He immediately runs anxiously up to that person.

The Purāṇas say:

*rā-śabdoccāraṇād eva sphūto bhavati mādhhavaḥ
dhā śabdoccārata paścād dhāvaty eva sasambhramah*

"When Mādhava hears the syllable 'rā' He becomes very happy, and when He hears the syllable 'dhā' after it, He eagerly runs (after Rādhā)."

That is why Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave the name **Rādhākuṇḍa** to the lake of His **priyājī** Rādhā, because Her name is as dear to Him as She is.

Śrī Raghunātha says: "May that most lovely Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa be my sanctuary."

*vraja madhura kiśorī vrajāṅganāgaṇa;
tāhādera śīroratna rādhārāṇī hon
vṛndāvana candra yini vrajendra nandana;
kuṇḍa tāra rādhā sama premāspada hon
rādhā nāma dvārā śrī kuṇḍera paricaya;
rādhā sama rādhākuṇḍa priyatama hoy
sei rādhākuṇḍa hoy ati manorama;
āmāra āśraya hon ei mora mana*

"Rādhārāṇī is the crown jewel of all the sweet adolescent girls of Vraja and Her *kuṇḍa* is as dear to Vrajendra-Nandana, the

moon of Vṛndāvana as She is. You become acquainted to the *kuṇḍa* through the name Rādhā and nothing is as dear to Kṛṣṇa as Rādhākunḍa, just as Rādhā Herself is. May that most enchanting Rādhākunḍa be the shelter of my mind!"

VERSE 5:

***api jana iha kaścīd yasya sevā-prasādaiḥ
praṇaya-sura-latā syāt tasya goṣṭhendra-sūnoḥ
sapadi kila mad-īśā-dāsyā-puṣpa-praśasyā
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kunḍam evāśrayo me***

api - even; *jana* - people; *iha* - here; *kaścīd* - one; *yasya* - whose; *sevā* - service; *prasādaiḥ* - by mercy; *praṇaya* - love; *suralatā* - desire vine; *syāt* - may be; *tasya* - His; *goṣṭha* - of Vraja; *indra* -king; *sūnoḥ* - of the son; *sapadi* - suddenly; *kila* - certainly; *mad* - my; *īśā* - mistress; *dāsyā* - service; *puṣpa* - flower; *praśasyāḥ* - celebrated; *tad* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākunḍam* - Rādhākunḍa; *eva* - only; *āśraya* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very beautiful and fragrant Rādhākunḍa, by whose mercy the desire vine of love for Kṛṣṇa, which bears the flowers of service for my queen Śrī Rādhā, instantly sprouts in the heart of anyone who performs devotional service there - this Rādhākunḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrī Kuṇḍāśrayī³⁴ Śrīpāda Raghunātha has attained the greatest fixation in the *kuṇḍa* of

³⁴ Someone who has taken shelter of the *kuṇḍa*.

his Prāṇeśvarī. In his heart pervaded by *mahābhāva*, he perceives the glorious sweetness of the Kuṇḍa, which is as glorious as Rādhārāṇī Herself hundreds of times over.

In the previous two verses Śrī Raghunātha described how Śrī Govinda took shelter of the *kuṇḍa* in order to please Śrī Rādhā and how glorious the *kuṇḍa* is because its service is dear even to Kṛṣṇa. Hearing this, someone may ask:

"Śrīpāda! Śrī Kṛṣṇa may attain Rādhārāṇī by serving Her *kuṇḍa*, the *kuṇḍa* may be as dear to Him as She is, and the *kuṇḍa* may be the supreme attainment for great saints like yourself who can sit there and get such sublime visions, but please tell me something about the *kuṇḍa*'s mercy upon persons like me, who are attached to materialistic life and who are fallen and blinded by ignorance! Although you have already said something about this before (in verse 2), still I would like to hear such kind of aspirations once more from your blessed mouth!"

To answer such people, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa speaks this verse:

*api jana iha kaścid yasya sevā prasādaiḥ praṇaya suralatā
syāt tasya goṣṭhendra sūnoḥ*

"By the *kuṇḍa*'s mercy the desire vine of love for Kṛṣṇa in the heart of any unscrupulous, unqualified person (*kaścit*) who serves it by living on its banks, bathing there, performing some worship there, seeing or touching the water or circumambulating the *kuṇḍas*, will swiftly sprout and grow."

Love for Kṛṣṇa is the crown jewel of all human pursuits, the great treasure of the spirit soul and the highest result of any human activity. It is the only thing which can cause one to relish Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sweetness.

Prema makes the otherwise supremely independent Kṛṣṇa completely submissive to His surrendered devotee and *prema* can forever bless all the living entities, who are constitutionally Kṛṣṇa's eternal servants, by bestowing the bliss of devotional service on them.

*pañcama puruṣārtha sei prema mahādhana;
kṛṣṇera mādhurya rasa korāya āsvādana
premā hoite hoy kṛṣṇa nija bhakta vaśa;
premā hoite pāi kṛṣṇa sevā sukha rasa*

(*Caitanya Caritāmṛta*, Ādi 7)

"The great treasure of *prema* is the fifth goal of human life (beyond religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation) and it makes one relish the sweet Kṛṣṇa-flavours. Through *prema* Kṛṣṇa becomes controlled by His devotees and through *prema* the devotees attain the blissful mellows of Kṛṣṇa's devotional service."

Devotion is a rarely attained thing. Śrīmad Bhāgavata states: *bhagavān mukundo muktirṅ dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti yogam*

"Lord Mukunḍa may grant liberation to some, but He does not give *bhakti yoga* so easily!"

*akaitava kṛṣṇa-prema,
yeno jāmbūnada hema,
sei premā nṛ-loke nā hoy.
(C.C.)*

"Earnest love for Kṛṣṇa is as pure as the gold from the Jāmbū-river. Such love can't be found in the human world."

In all these statements the rarity of *prema* is declared. After realizing how rarely attained *prema* is, Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote,:

*yasya sphūrtilavāṅkureṇa laghunāpy antar munināṃ manah
sprṣtam mokṣa sukhād virajyati jhaṭity āsvādyamānād api
preṃṇas tasya mukunda sāhasitayā śaknotu kaḥ prārthane
bhūyāj janmani janmani pracayinī kintu sprhāpy atra me*

(*Stavamālā*)

"O Mukunda! Who dares to pray for that *prema*, even the slightest relish of which causes the *munis* to give up the bliss of liberation? May my desire for *prema* simply increase birth after birth!"

Again, love of God, *prema*, the ultimate result of *bhakti*, is the highest aspiration for a living entity and is most rarely attained. It is the Lord's *svarūpa-śakti*, or innate potency, being a combination of the essence of the *hlādinī-śakti*³⁵ and the *sandhinī-śakti*³⁶. A fortunate soul who attains the grace of a great saint can enter into the workings of this innate potency of the Lord through the process of hearing, chanting and remembering the glories of the Lord.

In this way the material dullness will disappear from the heart of the neophyte and everything will culminate in *prema*. *Prema* is the culmination of a whole sequence of spiritual advancement:

association with the saints, hearing and remembering the glories of the Lord, faith in the scriptures, obtaining the

³⁵ Pleasure-potency.

³⁶ Existence-potency.

association of a qualified *guru*, taking initiation and instructions from him, surrendering and serving the *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas, serving the deity, aspiring for *bhajana*, earnestly practicing *bhajana*, having taste for *bhajana*, becoming attached to the Lord, *bhāva* and *rati*.

This is attained by two kinds of fortunate souls: those who attain it on the strength of their own *bhajana* and those who attain it by the grace of Kṛṣṇa or His devotees.

Everywhere it is seen that *prema* is attained through *sādhana* while the attainment of *prema* through grace is rare.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī teaches us (in Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu 1.3.6):

*sāadhanābhiniveśena kṛṣṇa tad bhaktayoḥ tathā
prasādenati dhanyānām bhāvo dvedhabhijāyate
ādyas tu prāyikas tatra dvitīyo viralodayaḥ*

"Love of God is attained either by absorption in devotional practice or by the grace of Kṛṣṇa and/or His devotees. The former occurs usually often, the latter rarely."

This very rarely attained desire vine of love for Kṛṣṇa, which is attained by grace, suddenly grows in the soil of the heart of any person (either qualified or unqualified) who serves Śrī Rādhākunḍa by bathing in the *kunḍa*, seeing it, touching it, living in the Rādhākunḍa-village or worshipping it, by the inconceivable potency and grace of the *kunḍa*.

Śrī Raghunātha says: "And this is also not just *dāsya* or *sakhyā-bhāva*, but *mad īśā dāsya puṣpa praśasyā*;

"The desire-vine of love becomes manifest, beautified by the flowers of service to my Īśvarī Śrī Rādhā."

By the grace of the the service to the *kunḍa* the highest goal ever to be achieved by any *sādhaka*, *mañjarī-bhāva* or the

loving devotional service to Śrī Rādhā, grows up. No higher stage than this can be achieved for a person who treads the path of loving devotion.

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī says:

*rādhā nāgara keli sāgara nimagnāli dṛśāṁ yat sukham
no tal leśa lavāyate bhagavataḥ sarvo'pi sukhlyotsavaḥ*

(Vṛndāvana Mahimāmṛta 1.54)

"All the bliss enjoyed in connection with the Lord can't be compared to even a drop of the transcendental bliss the *gopīs* experience when they are absorbed in witnessing the ocean of pastimes of Rādhā's lover!"

The maidservants of Śrī Rādhā swim in an ocean of indescribable bliss when they relish the mellows of these devotional services.

*rati-raṇe śramayuta, nāgarī nāgara
mukha bhari tāmbūla yogāya
malaya-ja kuṅkuma, mṛga-mada karpūra,
militahi gāta lāgāya
aparūpa priya sakhī prema!
nija prāṇa koṭi, dei niramāñchai,
naha tula lākho bāṇa hema*

"How wonderful is the love of the *priya sakhīs*! They serve Nāgarī (heroine Rādhikā) and Nāgara (hero Kṛṣṇa) with millions of lives when They are tired of love making, by filling Their mouths with betel leaves and by anointing Their bodies with sandalwood paste, vermilion, musk and camphor. Their

love is so pure that it can't even be compared to gold molten a hundred thousand times over!"

*manorama mālya, duhu gole arpai,
vijai śīta mṛdu bāta
sugandhī śītala, koru jala arpaṇa,
yaiche hota duhu śānta*

"They offer enchanting garlands to Their necks, give Them a cool breeze by fanning Them and relieve Them from Their heated affliction by offering Them cool and fragrant water."

*duhuka caraṇa puna, mṛdu saṁvāhana,
kori śrama korolohi dūra
iṅgite śayana, korolo duhu sakhī-gaṇa
abahu manoratha pūra*

"These *sakhīs* again softly massage Their feet and thus remove Their fatigue. On Their indication they put the Divine Pair to rest and fulfill any of Their other desires."

*kusuma śeje duhu, nidrita herai,
sevana parāyaṇa sukha.
rādhā mohana dāsa, kiye herabo,
meṭabo sab mano-duḥkha*

"These girls, being totally dedicated to their devotional service, then put the Divine Pair to sleep on a bed of flowers. All the mental distress of Rādhā Mohana dāsa is mitigated when he sees this."

The practicing devotee is blessed if he attains this wealth of service and supreme love by the grace of serving the *kunḍa*.

Śrī Raghunātha said: "May that most glorious Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa be my sanctuary!"

*ei saṁsāre vivekādi śūnya kon jana;
śrī rādhākuṇḍera yadi koroye sevana
kuṇḍera prasāde sei bhāgyavanta jana;
kṛṣṇa premakalpalatā peye dhanya hon
śrī rādhāra dāsya rūpa vicitra puṣpete;
kalpalatā suśobhita hoy trijagate
ei rūpa guṇānvita ati manorame;
rādhākuṇḍa āśraya mora jīvane maraṇe*

"Even if any dullwitted person in this world would serve Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, then by the grace of the *kuṇḍa* such a fortunate person would be blessed to attain the wish-yielding vine of love for Kṛṣṇa. This wish-yielding vine beautifies the three worlds with the wonderful flowers of Śrī Rādhā's service. The shelter of such a qualified and utterly enchanting Rādhākuṇḍa is my shelter, in life or in death!"

VERSE 6:

***taṭa-madhura-nikuṅjaḥ kṛpta-nāmāna uccair
nija-parijana-vargaiḥ samvibhajyāśritas taiḥ
madhukara-ruta-ramyā yasya rājanti kāmīyās
tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kuṇḍam evāśrayo me***

taṭa - on the shore; *madhura* - sweet; *nikuṅjaḥ* - groves; *kṛpta* - made; *nāmāna* - by name; *uccaiḥ* - greatly; *nija* - own; *parijana* - friends; *vargaiḥ* - by the groups; *samvibhajya* - having divided; *āśritah* - sheltered; *taiḥ* - by them; *madhukara* - bees; *ruta* - sounds; *ramyā* -

beautiful; *yasya* - whose; *rājanti* - shine; *kāmyāḥ* - delightful; *tat* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākuṇḍam* - Rādhākuṇḍa; *eva* - only; *āśrayaḥ* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very beautiful and fragrant Rādhākuṇḍa, whose shores are divided among Śrī Rādhikā's girlfriends who all have their own sweet *nikuñjas* (groves) there being named after them, and where the bees are buzzing sweetly - this Rādhākuṇḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa's heart has melted from the deep anguish of Śrī Raghunātha's prayers and so the *kuṇḍa* now showers him with the *rasa* of grace, through which he can now perceive the transcendental form of the water and the bank of the *kuṇḍa*.

Here the actual transcendental form (*svarūpa*) and sweetness of the *kuṇḍa*'s banks are described. The bank of this beautiful lake of Śrī Rādhārāṇī has been divided by the *kuñjas* of Lalitā, Viśākhā and the other *sakhīs* and they have become known under the names of these *sakhīs*. The eight corners of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa thus shelter eight *kuñjas*: one for each of the eight *sakhīs*, starting with Lalitā.³⁷

In the north is the *kuñja* named **Lalitānandada**, which has a regal courtyard named Anaṅga-raṅgāmbuja, the lotus for Cupid's pastimes, which is nicely maintained by Lalitā's *sakhī* Kālāvalī. This Lalitānandada-*kuñja* is shaped like an eight-petalled lotus flower, and each petal contains a *kuñja*.

³⁷ In Śrī Govinda Līlāmṛta a charming description can be found of these *kuñjas*. In my book 'Śrī Śrī Rādhākuṇḍera Mahimā O Aitihya' the original verses describing these *kuñjas* can be relished with their commentaries.

In the north is Sitāmbuja (white lotus), in the north-west Vasanta-Sukhada (delighter of spring), in the west Hemāmbuja (golden lotus), in the south-west Śrī Padma-mandira (the beautiful lotus temple), in the south is Aruṇāmbuja, in the south-east is Madanāndolana (Cupid's swing), in the east is Asitāmbuja (the dark lotus) and in the north-east is a wonderful, variegated *kuñja* named Mādhavānandada (the delighter of Mādhava). The Rasika Mithuna (relishing Couple) Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa always plays various pastimes in this king of *kuñjas* which is filled with a very wonderful natural beauty and which is studded with various jewels.

In the north-eastern corner of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa is the four-coloured **Viśākhānandada-kuñja**, or Madana-Sukhadā. Viśākhā's very expert and artistic disciple named Mañjumukhī is maintaining this *kuñja*. The Madana-Sukhadā-*kuñja* resembles a large royal palace which is always inundated by the *rasika* flood of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and always gives great joy to the eyes.

In the east is **Citrānandada-kuñja**, where there are trees, vines, animals and birds of various³⁸ colours. Here Citrā-*sakhī* blissfully serves Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their friends in various ways. In the south-eastern corner is the white *kuñja* called **Indulekhā-sukhada**.

The trees, vines, animals and birds are all white here. If Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their *sakhīs* come here on the full moon night and sport here dressed in white no one will immediately recognize Them. Here Indulekhā-*sakhī* lovingly serves Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their *sakhīs*.

³⁸ The word *citra* means 'variety' and 'wonderful'. These meanings are both applicable here.

In the south of Rādhākūṇḍa is the golden *kuñja* named **Campakalatānandada**. Here all the trees, vines, animals and birds are golden. If Rādhā enters this *kuñja* dressed and ornamented in yellow Śrī Kṛṣṇa will not recognize Her. Here is Campakalatā's famous kitchen, where the expert teacher of cooking, Campakalatā, prepares feasts for Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and pleases the Yugala with various other services.

In the south-western corner of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa is the all-Śyāma-coloured *kuñja* named **Raṅgadevī-sukhada**.

If Mukharā or other elders are coming here while Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are enjoying Themselves here they will only see Śrī Rādhā, not Kṛṣṇa.

In the western corner of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa is the red *kuñja* called **Tuṅgavidyānandada**. Here everything is red. This is wished for by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

In the north-western corner is the green *kuñja* called **Sudevī-sukhada**. Here everything is green and here Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa play Their *rasika* game of dice.

Apart from that there is also a *kuñja* in the middle of the *kūṇḍa* named **Śrī Anaṅga-Mañjarī-sukhada**. This ruby, moonstone and emerald-studded *kuñja* appears to the viewers to be radiant as water and is shaped like a 16-petalled lotus flower and it is connected with the northern bank of the *kūṇḍa* by a bridge. Here the different articles required for the Śrī Yugala's service are stored and here Anaṅga Mañjarī and her group are engaged in this service. Because it is floating on the water like a lotus flower it is called **salila-kamala**.

All these *kuñjas* are beautified by different trees and vines, singing birds and cuckoos, humming honeybees, different fragrant flowers, freely playing deer, rabbits and dancing peacocks that all arouse erotic feelings in the hearts of Śrī-Śrī

Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. This greatly delights the eyes of anyone who sees it.

But only if the mind, the senses and the heart of the neophyte become immersed in *viśuddha-sattva*, pure goodness, this place can be seen in its real *svarūpa* (transcendental form). Ordinary eyes see it just as a material place.

*cintāmaṇi bhūmi, kalpavṛkṣamaya vana;
carma cakṣe dekhe tāre prapañcera sama
prema netre dekhe tāra svarūpa prakāśa
gopa gopī saṅge yāhā kṛṣṇera vilāsa*

(*Caitanya Caritāmṛta Ādi 5*)

"The ground is made of thought-stones and the forests are full of desire-trees, but the physical eye sees it just as a material forest. A loving eye can see this realm, where Kṛṣṇa plays with the cowherd boys and girls in its real, transcendental form."

*līlānukūleṣu janeṣu citteṣv utpanna bhāveṣu ca sādhakānāṃ
evaṃ vidhaṃ sarvaṃ idaṃ cakāsti svarūpataḥ prakṛtavat pareṣu*

(*Govinda Līlāmṛta 7,119*)

"Those *nitya siddhas* who are favorable to these pastimes and the practitioners in whose hearts these transcendental emotions have appeared, can see the holy realm in its real form, but others (non-devotees) see it just as a material place."

Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is an eternal associate of the Lord, so the endless wealth of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa's sweetness is naturally manifest to his love-saturated eyes. Therefore Śrī

Raghunātha says: "May that most enchanting Rādhākūṇḍa be my sanctuary!"

*śrī rādhākūṇḍera tire sakhīyūtha vāsa;
sakhī nāme kuñjanāma korilā prakāśa
uttare lalitānanda kuñjavana nāme;
viśākhā-sukhada kuñja śobhita iśāne
pūrva-taṭe nāma hoy citrā-sukhada;
agnikoṇe indulekhā nāma manomada
dakṣiṇe campakalatā nairṛte raṅgadevī;
paścimete tuṅgavidyā vāyute sudevī
prati kuñja ramaṇīya bhramara guñjita;
śṛṅgāra rasakeli kore uddīpita
surabhi se rādhākūṇḍa āmāra āśraya;
snāna pāna tire vāsa e lālasā hoy*

"On the banks of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa all groups of *sakhīs* reside and each *kuñja* is named after one of them. In the north is a forest named Lalitānandada-*kuñja*, in the north-east is the beautiful Viśākhā-sukhada-*kuñja*, on the eastern bank is the Citrā-sukhada-*kuñja*, in the south-eastern corner is the intebriating *kuñja* named after Indulekhā, in the south is Campakalatā, in the southwest Raṅgadevī, in the west Tuṅgavidyā and in the northwest Sudevī.

Each *kuñja* is laden with buzzing bumblebees inciting lusty feelings. That fragrant, beautiful Rādhākūṇḍa is my sanctuary and I desire to drink its water, bathe in it and reside on its banks!"

VERSE 7:

***tata-bhuvi vara-vedyām yasya narmāti-hṛdyām
madhura-madhura-vārtām goṣṭha-candrasya bhaṅgyā
prathayati mitha īsā prāṇa-sakhyālibhiḥ sā
tat ati-surabhi rādhā-kunḍam evāśraya me***

tatabhuvi - on the shore; *vara* - excellent; *vedyām* - on the platform; *yasya* - whose; *narma* - by joking; *ati* - very; *hṛdyām* - pleasant; *madhura madhura* - ever-so-sweet; *vārtām* - words; *goṣṭha candrasya* - of the moon of Vraja; *bhaṅgyā* - with gestures; *prathayati* - manifests; *mitha* - mutually; *īsā* - the queen; *prāṇa sakhi* - heart's friend ; *ālibhiḥ* - with girlfriends; *sā* - She; *tat* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* - fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākunḍam* - Rādhākunḍa; *eva* - only; *āśrayah* -shelter; *me* - my.

That very beautiful and fragrant Rādhākunḍa, where my mistress Śrī Rādhikā makes ever-so-sweet and pleasant jokes about Kṛṣṇa, the moon of Vraja, with Her dearest girlfriends on a nice platform on the shore - this Rādhākunḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrī Raghunātha's consciousness is immersed in the sweetness of the *kunḍa*.

He is the eternally perfect maidservant of Śrī Rādhārāṇī and his life-air is offered to Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet.

The bank of the *kunḍa* is dearer to him than millions of life-air, because this is the peerless abode of Rasika Mithuna Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's greatly intoxicated erotic pastimes.

On the bank of this *kunḍa* the *priya-kinikaris* of Śrī Rādhā are always absorbed in the transcendently blissful devotional

service of the Yugala and in the concomitant relish of Their sweet intimate love-pastimes.

The *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs* are like fishes blissfully swimming in the billowing waves of the *rasika* pastimes of the ocean of *rasa*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the ocean of *prema*, Śrī Rādhā.

These things can't be understood as long as we are materially conditioned. One must awaken the consciousness of 'I am Śrī Rādhikā's maidservant' in order to enter into this.

Śrī Raghunātha is a *nitya-siddha-kiṅkari*³⁹ of Vraja and the transcendental *saṁskāra*⁴⁰ of the Yugala-*rasa* is his innate wealth. Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura Mahāśaya called Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī '*yugala ujjvalamaya tanu*' (the embodiments of the erotic flavours of the Divine Pair):

jaya sanātana rūpa, premabhakti rasakūpa, yugala ujjvalamaya tanu (Prema Bhakti Candrikā).

By their grace Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was emancipated with them;
Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written:

*yan mitram raghunātha dāsa iti vikhyātaḥ kṣitau rādhikā-
kṛṣṇa prema mahārṇavormi nivahe ghrṇan sadā divyati
dṛṣṭānta prakara prabhābharam atityaivānayor bhrājator
yas tulyatva padam matas tribhuvane sāścaryam āryottamaiḥ*

"Raghunātha Dāsa has become world famous for being the friend of Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana. He always swims in the waves of the great ocean of love for Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa. The greatest saints say that no one in the world can be compared to Rūpa

³⁹ Eternally perfected maidservant.

⁴⁰ Innate culture and/or knowledge.

and Sanātana, but amazingly enough Raghunātha Dāsa has attained a position equal to theirs!"

Therefore Śrī Raghunātha always perceives the self-manifested sweetness of the *kunḍa* as well as the sweet pastimes which are performed there in his consciousness that is fixed on Śrī Rādhā.

In this verse a sweet pastime is described which was perceived one day. On Jaṭilā's order Śrī Rādhārāṇī leaves Her village Yāvata to go and worship the sungod with Her girlfriends, but instead She goes to Rādhākunḍa to meet Kṛṣṇa there. With Her left hand She holds the hand of Her friend Kundalatā and with Her right hand She twirls around Her playlotus.

In this way the Rādhā-Surataraṅginī (Ganges-river) runs towards the Śyāma-ocean. Dhaniṣṭhā and Tulasī walk ahead of Her. Lalitā and Viśākhā walk on either one of Her sides and Her maidservants, headed by Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī follow Her carrying the paraphernalia for the Sūrya-pūjā and other ingredients for their upcoming devotional service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with them.

bhāva-kusuma (flowers of ecstatic love) like goose pimples, tears of love and paralysis are blossoming on Śrīmatī's vine-like body when She thinks of Her upcoming meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. How beautiful is *abhisārikā*⁴¹ Śrī Rādhā!

taruṅārūṇa caraṇa yugala mañjarī tahe śobhe;
bhṛṅgāvalī puñja puñja guñjare madhulobhe
kumbhi kumbha jini nitamba keśari khina mājhe;
lilāncita paṭṭāmbara kiṅkiṇī tahi bāje
bāhu yugala thira vijuri kari śāvaka śuṅḍe;

⁴¹ Girl on a love-journey.

*hemāṅgada maṇi kaṅkaṇa nakhare śaśikhaṇḍe
 hemācala kucamaṇḍala kāñcali tahi mājhe;
 candrakānta dhvānta damana kaṅthe karṇe sāje
 jāmbūnada hema yoto mukutāphala pānti;
 phaṇi maṇi yuta dāma śobhita dāminī sama bhānti
 bimbaphala nindi adhara dāḍima bīja daśane;
 besara tahi nolake jhalake manda manda hasane
 nāsā tīla phula tula bāñdhe kabārī chānde
 madana mohana mana mohinī calali tahi rādhe*

(Pada Kalpataru)

"Her reddish, youthful lotus feet are beautiful like shoots attracting hosts of buzzing bumblebees who are greedy for their honey. Her buttocks defeat the trunks of elephants and Her waist is as thin as that of a lion. Waist bells are jingling on Her playfully flapping silken *sārī* and Her arms resemble the trunks of baby-elephants or a steady lightning streak.

She wears golden armlets and jewelled bangles and Her nails resemble moons. Her breasts resemble golden mountains which are covered by a blouse and the ornaments on Her ears and Her neck destroy the shining of the moonlight. She shines like a lightning-streak with Her golden ornaments. Her pearls and Her lips defeat the red splendour of Bimba-cherries and Her teeth shine more brightly than pomegranate-seeds.

Her nose pearl shimmers and oscillates on Her sesame flower-like nose when She slightly smiles and Her hair is nicely braided. Thus Rādhā moves on, enchanting the mind of the enchanter of Cupid (Kṛṣṇa)."

Keeping the paraphernalia for her *pūjā* at the Sūrya-mandira in Sūryakuṇḍa Śrīmatī proceeds to Rādhākūṇḍa, accompanied by Her *sakhīs*, thereby floating on waves of ecstatic love.

Goṣṭhacandra⁴² Śrī Kṛṣṇa meanwhile hands the responsibility for His herd of cows over to Baladeva and His friends at Govardhana and then also comes to the bank of Rādhākunḍa on the pretext of admiring the beauty of the forest there.

Here He sits down, endlessly waiting for Premamayī⁴³, eagerly desiring to see Her. Then They see Each other from close by through the vines. Endless waves of *bhāva* well up from the ocean of *rasa* (Kṛṣṇa) and the ocean of *prema* (Rādhā) when They thus meet Each other.

*duhuṅ mukha heraitte duhuṅ bhelo dhanda;
 rāi kohe tamāla mādharma kohe canda
 cita putalī janu rahu duhuṅ deha;
 nā jāniye prema kemonā achu leho
 e sakhi! dekho dekhi duhuṅka vicāra;
 ṭhāmahi koi lakhai nāhi pāra
 dhanī kohe kānanamaya dekhi śyāma;
 so kiye guṇabo majhu pariṇāma
 camaki camaki dekhi nāgara kāna;
 prati tarutale dekhi rāi samāna
 doṅhe doṅhe yabahu nicaya kori jāno;
 duhuṅka hṛdaye paṭhala premabāna
 daraśane nayane nayane bohe lora;
 āpāda mastaka duhuṅ pulake āgora
 sajani hero dekho prema taraṅga;
 koto bhāve thakito bhelo aṅga
 duhuṅkara dehe ghāma bohi yāto;
 gada gada kāhuka nā nikasaye bāta*

⁴² The moon of the meadows.

⁴³ Rādhā, who is full of love for Kṛṣṇa.

*duhuṅ jana kampana heri lāge dhanda;
rādhā mohana heri parama ānanda*

(Pada Kalpataru)

"When They saw Each other's faces They became doubtful. Rāi said 'This (Kṛṣṇa) is a Tamāla-tree!' and Mādhava said 'This (Rādhā) is the moon!'

I don't know how love dwells within their bodies and within their doll-like hearts! O *sakhi!* Just behold Their doubts! They can't distinguish between anything of Each other! Fortunate Dhanī Rādhā says 'I see Śyāma all throughout the forest! How will I distinguish Him from all?'"

Nāgara Kāna⁴⁴ is astonished as He sees Rāi at the base of each and every tree. And then, when They clearly have recognized Each other, Cupid's arrows enter into Their hearts! As They look at Each other tears stream from Their eyes and Their bodies are covered from tip to toe with goose pimples.

O *sakhi!* Look at these waves of love! How many ecstatic symptoms are visible on Their limbs! Their bodies are studded with sweat drops and They can't utter a word because Their voices are faltering. They see Each other shivering and when Rādhā Mohana dāsa sees this he is most ecstatic."

After this the Divine Pair and Their *sakhīs* have a lot of *rasika* fun over flower picking, the theft of Kṛṣṇa's flute and so on. While Kṛṣṇa quarrels with the *sakhīs* over His stolen flute Śrī Rādhā catches the opportunity to hide Herself in a secret *kuñja*.

Finally, after a long search for Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa gets a hint from Kundalatā that She's hiding in that *kuñja* so He enters it and

⁴⁴ The amorous hero Kṛṣṇa.

becomes absorbed in a highly astonishing love game there with Śrī Rādhā.

After this *vilāsa* the Yūgala comes out of the *kuñja* and sits on a jewelled platform on the bank of Rādhākunḍa.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa, in his *kinikarī svarūpa*, then becomes absorbed in fanning the Twin Divinities along with other maidservants. Lalitā, Viśākhā and other *sakhīs* all giggle and come to sit around the jewelled platform where the Śrī Yūgala is seated, releasing a stream of *parihāsa-rasa*⁴⁵ by telling Śrī Rādhā:

"O *sakhi!* where have You gone, leaving us all behind? We looked for You everywhere, but could not find You! Where did You meet this shameless guy? Anyway, fortunately You were not defeated by that cheater. This is very good news!"

When Śrī Rādhā heard these joking, crooked words from Her *sakhīs* and saw the naughty insinuating gestures they made about the signs of Her love making with Kṛṣṇa, She became both shy and malicious. She frowned Her vine like eyebrows, waved Her index finger and chastised Her Kānta⁴⁶ with trembling lips and a faltering voice, telling Her friends:

"*Sakhīs!* I was on My way home when You tugged at My garment and then brought Kṛṣṇa Who was in hiding to Me! In this way I had to suffer even while you were here with Me! Tell Me, why should I still stay with you?"

In this way Śrī Rādhā and Her *sakhīs* engage in so many hundreds of *rasika* discussions. Nothing can be compared to these ever-so-sweet discussions between Śrīmatī and Her *prāṇa-sakhīs!*

⁴⁵ The flavour of transcendental joking and laughter.

⁴⁶ Lover.

While the maidservants are absorbed in their ecstatic devotional services they float on the waves of sweet Kṛṣṇa-*kathā* created by their Īsvarī and Her *sakhīs*.

Remembering these most lovely pastimes Śrī Raghunātha says: "May Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa, where all these *rasika* pastimes are performed, be my sanctuary! If I take shelter of this place then I can be blessed with the ever-so-sweet relish of Kṛṣṇa-*kathā*!"

*yei rādhākuṇḍa-tīre ratana vedite;
 bosī rādhārāṇī sab sakhīra sahite
 prāṇa koṭi nirmaṅchana govinda prasaṅga;
 bhāṅgīkōri bole sumadhura rasaraṅga
 sarva jana manohara rādhākuṇḍa nāma;
 āmāra āśraya hauk nayanābhirāma*

"May that eye-enchanting Rādhākuṇḍa, on whose bank Rādhārāṇī sits on a jewelled platform with Her *sakhīs*, speaking so sweetly about Govinda, who is dearer to Her than millions of life-airs, and that enchants everyone, be my shelter!"

VERSE 8:

***anudinam ati-raṅgaiḥ prema-mattāli-saṅghair
 vara-sarasija-gandhair hāri-vāri-prapūrṇe
 viharata iha yasmin dam-patī tau pramattau
 tad ati-surabhi rādhā-kuṇḍam evāśrayo me***

anudinam - every day; *ati* - very; *raṅgaiḥ* - happy; *prema* - with love; *matta* - intoxicated; *ali* - girlfriends; *saṅghaiḥ* - with groups; *vara* - excellent; *sarasija* - lotus flowers; *gandhaiḥ* - with scents; *hāri* - charming; *vāri* - water; *prapūrṇe* - filled; *viharata* - enjoying; *iha* -

here; *yasmin* - in which; *dampati* - loving couple; *tau* - both; *pramattau* - intoxicated; *tad* - that; *ati* - very; *surabhi* -fragrant, beautiful; *rādhākuṇḍam* - Rādhākuṇḍa; *eva* - only; *āśrayaḥ* - shelter; *me* - my.

That very beautiful and fragrant Rādhākuṇḍa, in whose water filled with nicely smelling lotus flowers, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa daily sport in loving intoxication along with Their girlfriends, who are in a similar loving frenzy - this Rādhākuṇḍa is my only shelter!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: By the grace of Śrī Kuṇḍeśvarī, Kuṇḍāśrayī Śrīpāda Raghunātha perceives the water sports of the Twin Divinities in Rādhākuṇḍa and he describes them here in this final verse of the Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam.

*yei kuṇḍe nitya kṛṣṇa rādhikāra saṅge;
jale jalakeli kore - tīre rāsa raṅge
(C.C.)*

"In the water of this (Rādhā)kuṇḍa Kṛṣṇa eternally performs water sports with Rādhikā or dances the Rāsa on its banks."

*śrī rādheva hares tadīya sarasī preṣṭhādbhutaiḥ svair guṇair
yasyām śrī yukta mādhavendur anīsaṁ prītyā tayā kriḍati*

(Govinda Līlāmṛta 7,102)

"Because of its own qualities this lake is as dear to Hari as Śrī Rādhā Herself is. Here the beautiful moon-like Mādhava always lovingly plays with Her."

In this transcendental vision Śrī Raghunātha sees that Rādhā and Mādhava have become tired of Their midday-sports such

as touring the forest, drinking honey wine and making love. Thus they enter into the water of Śrī Rādhākunḍa to play there with their girlfriends like a king of elephants with its she-elephants.

When Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* enter into the water, holding hands, they look like a golden net (the *gopīs*) radiating moonbeams (their radiant smiles) surrounding a monsoon cloud (Kṛṣṇa). The most amazing thing is though that the raincloud itself is sprinkled by the golden net (with Rādhākunḍa-water) although a cloud usually sprinkles water itself.

The *gopīs* gently sprinkle Kṛṣṇa with small handfuls of water and Kṛṣṇa blissfully protects His eyes with His hands.

Then, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa forcefully splashes the beautiful *gopīs* in return they all become physically agitated. Only their moon like faces do not wilt because of their great ecstasy.

Now Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa begin to play in the water. The loser of this water splashing-game must give a prize to the winner. Kundalatā is the referee. Śrī Rādhā first splashes Kṛṣṇa. How sweetly Her jewelled bangles jingle around Her lotus whorl-like hands! It is as if Cupid wants to defeat Kṛṣṇa with His water missile! It has become intolerable for Kṛṣṇa! How beautiful Śrīmatī looks when She throws the water! Śyāma and the *sakhīs* swim in this ocean of beauty. The water Śrīmatī throws at Her Prāṇanātha brightly shimmers on His chest. His garland of divine forest flowers loosens and His big vine like necklace falls off. Only the powerful Kaustubha-gem is able to tolerate this stream of water without agitation and it remains on Priyatama's body. After this Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

"Priyatame! Now You tolerate this!" He blissfully starts splashing Preyasī's lotus like face with enchanting streams of water. Tulasī watches on the bank of the *kunḍa* how Rādhā and

Śyāma are having a huge fight in the water. Tender hearted Svāminī thinks that Her Prāṇanātha, Who is dearer to Her than millions of Her life-air, will suffer too much if She splashes in His eyes, so She doesn't do that, but Śyāma, desiring victory, does splash Śrīmatī's eyes again and again.

The *premaṅgī-sakhīs* forbid Śyāma again and again to throw water at Her eyes, but Śyāma does not listen. Svāminī becomes mad from His expert splashing, although She is normally so grave and She backs away. Śyāma loudly laughs, claps His hands and says: "You're defeated! You're vanquished! Give Me My prize! I'm the victor!"

How beautiful are Svāminī's eyes and face when Śyāma holds Her around the neck! How many hundreds of waves of ecstatic love are there in this ocean of beauty! The fish like eyes of Śyāmasundara, the *sakhīs* and the *mañjarīs* are swimming in this ocean of beauty!

Then, when Śyāma has collected His prize, Svāminī dives under water and swims to a patch of golden lotus flowers, feeling ashamed before Her girlfriends. Her lotus like face on Her *deha-mṛṅāla*, lotus stem-like body, mixes with the golden lotus flowers (in the *kunḍa*).

The *sakhīs* tell Śyāma:

"What have You done to our *sakhī*? Quickly go and look for Her!", but Śyāmasundara can't find Śrīmatī anywhere. Finally He notices many bees becoming attracted to the extraordinary fragrance of Īśvarī's face. They abandon a cluster of lotus flowers and they are madly flying towards the cluster of golden lotus flowers where She's hiding, so He goes there and catches Śrīmatī. The *sakhīs* go there too.

Then Madhusūdana forcibly begins to drink the honey from the lotus like mouths of Śrī Rādhā-*padmini*⁴⁷ and Her *sakhīs*, Who are maddened by *prema* in the lotus scented water.

Of some *sakhīs* He removes the jewelled ornaments. Soon some *sakhīs* loudly exclaim ‘My necklace is gone!’; some say ‘My locket is gone!’ and some cry out ‘Where have my waistbells gone?’ Kṛṣṇa then removes the veils and blouses of some of the *sakhīs* in order to behold their indescribable sweetness.

Seeing the different erotic watersports of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, Who are maddened by Their own pastimes, Tulasī Mañjarī and the other *kiṅkarīs* are beside themselves in transcendental bliss.

After the watersports the Navīna-Yugala⁴⁸ comes back to the shore with Their *sakhīs* and there the *kiṅkarīs* anoint and massage Them with oil, bathe Them once more and dress them in the *nikuñja-mandira*⁴⁹ with a variety of wonderful garments and ornaments.

After remembering his vision of this pastime Śrī Raghunātha ends this Kuṇḍāṣṭakam by saying:

padma-gandhe suvāsita rādhākunḍa jale;
vihare pramatta hoiyā dampati yugale
prema mattā sakhīgaṇa yugalera saṅge;
sarovare kore keli nava rasa raṅge
manojña se rādhākunḍe ekānta prārthanā;
āmāra āśraya hon kori e kāmanā

⁴⁷ The Rādhā-lotus.

⁴⁸ The fresh, youthful Couple.

⁴⁹ Arbour temple (pastoral palace).

"The loving Couple madly plays ever-fresh watersports in the lotus-scented water of Rādhākunḍa with their equally love-intoxicated *sakhīs*. My sole prayer to this beautiful Rādhākunḍa is: May it be my sanctuary! This is my desire!"

BENEDICTION:

*avikalam ati devyās cāru kuṇḍāṣṭakam yaḥ
paripaṭhati tadīyollāsi-dāsyārpitātmā
aciram iha śarīre darśayaty eva tasmai
madhu-ripur ati-modaiḥ śliṣyamāṇām priyām tām*

avikala - fixed, unagitated; *mati* - intelligence; *devyāḥ* - of a goddess; *cāru* - beautiful; *kuṇḍa* - of the lake; *aṣṭakam* - eight prayers; *yaḥ* - whoever; *paripaṭhati* - recites; *tadīya* - his; *ullāsi* - splendid; *dāsyā* - servanthood; *arpita* - offered; *ātmā* - oneself; *aciram* - soon; *iha* - here; *śarīre* - in the body; *darśayati* - shows; *eva* - surely; *tasmai* - unto him; *madhuripuḥ* - Kṛṣṇa; *ati* - very; *modaiḥ* - gladly; *śliṣyamāṇām* - being embraced; *priyām* - dear; *tām* - him.

Anyone who recites this beautiful Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam for goddess Rādhā with an unagitated mind and a fixed intelligence and who submits him/her-self to Her blissful service will soon see Madhuripu (Kṛṣṇa) in Her delightful embrace, even while being in this (material) body!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Dāsa Gosvāmīcaraṇa describes the *phalaśruti* (benediction on the reciters) of Śrī Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam.

Can there be any doubt that there must be an extraordinary, indescribable fruit (result) from reciting this Śrī Kuṇḍāṣṭakam, which is filled with the glorification of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa?

This lake, which is most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, just like *sākṣāt mādanākhyā mahābhāvavatī kṛṣṇapriyā śīromaṇi Śrī Rādhārāṇī*, which bestows a love for Kṛṣṇa just like Śrī Rādhā's on anyone who simply bathes there once, and which blesses anyone who serves it by seeing it or touching it with the greatest love, culminating in the personal service of Śrī Rādhā?

Śrī Raghunātha says:

"Anyone who has dedicated himself to the service of Śrī Rādhā in topmost bliss and who recites this Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam with a steady intelligence is qualified to receive the above-mentioned boon."

The word *avikalamati* then means that there must be no doubt at all in the intelligence of the reciter about the glories of Rādhākuṇḍa being described in these eight verses.

Unswerving faith in the words of the saints, the spiritual master and the scriptures is called *śraddhā*.

This *śraddhā* qualifies the devotee to commence *bhajana* or devotional practice.

A person who doubts the words of the saints, the spiritual master or the scriptures can't experience anything tangible as a result from his devotional practice, therefore the saints and the scriptures have advised us to do *bhajana*, consisting of hearing and chanting, while keeping unswerving faith in the scriptures and in the *guru*.

The word *avikalamati* can also mean '*niścayātmikā buddhi*', the fixed intelligence described in Bhagavad Gītā (2.41).

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartīpāda comments as follows on this verse and thereby gives the following definition of *niścayātmikā buddhi*:

*mama gurūpadiṣṭam bhagavat kīrtana smaraṇa caraṇa
paricaraṇādikam etad eva mama sādhanam etad eva mama
sādhyam etad eva mama jīvātuh sādhana sādhya daśayosa
tyaktum aśakyam etad eva me kāmiam etad eva me kāryam
etad anyam na me kāryam nāpy abhilaṣaṇīyam svapne'pity
atra sukham astu duḥkham vāstu saṁsāra naśyatu vā na
naśyatu tatra mama kvāpi kṣatir ity evam niścayātmikā
buddhiḥ-*

"The devotional service my Guru has given me, consisting of hearing, chanting, remembering and serving the lotus feet of my beloved deity is my practice, my goal and my very life.

Neither in the stage of *sādhana*, nor in the state of perfection will I be able to give up this order. This is what I desire, this is my duty and I don't want to do anything else, not even in dreams!

It may make me happy, it may make me miserable, it may liberate me from material life, it may not liberate me from material life, all this doesn't matter to me! This attitude is called *niścayātmikā buddhi*."

This is also the kind of determination of a person who is dedicated to the service of Śrī Rādhā, which is the most blissful and most delicious thing existing in the kingdom of devotion:

"The service of Śrī Rādhā is my goal, it is my practice, it is my very life, I am absolutely unable to give up the service of Śrī Rādhā. It may make me happy, it may make me unhappy, I may take birth in any kind of womb, I may go either to heaven or hell as a result of my activities - let my only duty and activity be the practice of *rādhā-dāśya*, consisting of hearing, chanting, remembering or serving the deity of Śrī Rādhā!

If an *avikalamati*-person, who is thus exclusively fixed in the service of Śrī Rādhā, recites this Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam, he then

will swiftly be able to see Śrī Rādhārāṇī in the embrace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This is the highest perfection for the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, for their only desire is:

ballabī bhujalatābaddhe brahmaṇi mano me ramate

"May the supreme *brahman* delight my mind as He is bound by the vine like arms of the *gopīs*!"

*rādhāpade kori yihoṇ ātma-samarpaṇa;
rādhā pada-dāsī nāma koreche dhāraṇa
śrī rādhāra manohara ei kuṇḍāṣṭaka;
nitya pāṭha kore yiho loṭāye mastaka
kṛṣṇa-candra tāra prati hon suprasanna;
yugala darśana bhāgye hoy upasanna
rādhālingita kṛṣṇe sādḥaka śārīre;
śrī kuṇḍa dekhāye dena rādhākunḍa-tīre
kuṇḍa-taṭe vāsa kori raghunātha dāsa;
bhajānaa sampuṭa korilā prakāśa*

"Kṛṣṇa-candra will be very satisfied with anyone who surrenders unto Rādhā's lotus feet, who bears a name thus marking her as a maidservant of Rādhā's lotus feet and who always recites this enchanting Rādhākunḍāṣṭakam, rolling with his head (at the feet of this *aṣṭakam*) and He will bestow the audience of the Yugala-Kiśora to such a fortunate soul.

Such a devotee will be able to see Śrī Rādhā wrapped in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's embrace on the bank of Rādhākunḍa.

In this way Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, who lives on the bank of Rādhākunḍa, opens the basket of his *bhājana* and shows us its contents."

**Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's
'Rādhākuṇḍāṣṭakam'**

Translated 1988 - 1996 by Advaita Dāsa.