

Founder Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakura

BHAGAVATA

The e-magazine of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math

Issue No.11

March 2018

DHARMA

President & Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja

In this issue:

The Appearance of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu	2
Following Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu	3
About Sri Navadvip Dhama Circumambulation	7
The Festival of Sri Jagannatha Misra	9
Glories of Sri Govinda Ghosh	10
Duties of a Devoted Wife	11
Sri Jahnava Mata's Travel to Vrindavan	12
Prayers to Lord Narasimha	13



Nowadays film stars are far more famous than divine personalities. And, we can see that people are not gathering for spiritual programs; however, at a film or entertainment event, there are no seats available. This proves that our interest has shifted to engage ourselves in mundane emotions more than in spiritual emotions. I hope that you all are aware that the film producers are making the films using their imagination and emotional manipulation, which should be called mythology. But with the influence of the entertainment industry and media, people believe that spiritual descriptions are mythology and that the films are real. This is completely opposite to truth. Therefore, we can say that in Kali-yuga everything is upside down. Please be careful not to be cheated by the mundane influence.

In the Service of Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu's Mission,

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja



THE APPEARANCE OF LORD SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

*sarva-sad-guṇa-pūrṇām tām
vande phālguna-pūrṇimām
yasyām śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya
vatīrṇaḥ kṛṣṇa-nāmaḥ*

Unto that full-moon evening in the month of Phalguna, which was an auspicious time decorated with many auspicious symptoms, during which Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu appeared in this world accompanied by the chanting of the holy names of Krishna, I offer my respectful obeisance.

*a-kalaṅka gauracandra dilā daraśana
sa-kalaṅka candre āra kon prayojana*

When the flawless moon of Caitanya Mahaprabhu appears then, what is the need of an ordinary moon with black marks all over its body?

When the whole world was chanting the holy names of the Supreme Lord to counteract the malevolent effect of the lunar eclipse, Lord Sri Krishna manifested Himself in this world in the form of Gaurahari. The Hindus chanted with faith and the non-Hindus chanted in comical imitation of them. Due to the extensive chanting of the Lord's holy names, everyone everywhere felt exceedingly jubilant. Inside the houses, the elated ladies alternatively sung the holy name of Hari and vibrated the *uludhvani*; in the heavenly planets dancing and music were going on, and the gods and goddesses were very eager to understand the cause of the jubilation they saw below them and felt in their hearts. In this way, the ten directions became jubilant, as did the rivers which were decorated with wavelets on their flowing waters. All beings, both moving and non-moving, were overcome by transcendental bliss.

By His causeless mercy, Sri Gauracandra became the full moon and Nadia became the mountain over whom the moon rose. The light of this moon vanquished the darkness

of the world's sin and caused the entire universe to become overjoyed and chant the holy names in great merriment. Simultaneously in His Santipur residence Sri Advaita Acharya was dancing in bliss. He brought Haridasa Thakura there and together they danced and chanted the names of Krishna and Hari loudly. No one could there understand their great delight. Looking to the sky and laughing Advaita Acharya and Haridasa Thakura quickly went to the Ganga and bathed jubilantly. On the pretext of the lunar eclipse Advaita Acharya gave the *brāhmaṇas* varieties of charity within his mind. Seeing the entire world jubilant the astonished Haridasa Thakura spoke and indicated to Advaita Acharya saying, "Your dancing and giving charity somehow make me feel elated, so I feel there is some special intention behind them."



Similarly all the devotees everywhere, in their own places were dancing, chanting the



holy names and on the pretext of the lunar eclipse joyously giving charity within their minds. In Navadvipa all kinds of *brāhmaṇas* and respect worthy gentlemen and ladies went to the house of Jagannatha Misra, carrying trays of gifts on their upheld hands. When they saw the new born child who shone with a golden hue, they gladly showered their blessings upon Him. Celestial women like the wives of Lord Brahma, Lord Siva, Lord Narasimhadeva, King Indra and Vasistha Rsi and even Apsara Rambha disguising themselves as *brāhmaṇas* bearing various gifts came to see the child. From the heavens the gods such as the *gaṇḍharvas*, *siddhas* and *caraṇas* offered eulogies in praise and, accompanied by music, song and drums danced in joy. In the same way in the town of Navadvipa the dancers, musicians and professional blessing givers gathered and danced in an elated spirit. In that blissful melee no one could understand who was arriving and who was departing and no one could understand the language of anyone else. All unhappiness and lamentation was dispelled and everyone was filled with jubilation.

Seeing this Jagannatha Misra was overcome with blissfulness. Both Candrasekhara Acharya and Srivasa Thakura came to Jagannatha Misra with various recommendations. According to religious principles, they performed different auspicious rituals prescribed for new born children. Jagannatha Misra also gave profuse charity. All the gifts, presentations as well as whatever wealth he had previously gathered was given in charity by Jagannatha Misra to honour the *brāhmaṇas*, professional singers, dancers, blessing givers and poor people. Malini Devi, the wife of Srivasa Thakura accompanied by the wife of Candrasekhara arrived in great joy and began to lavishly worship the new child with ingredients such as vermilion, turmeric, oil, fused rice, bananas and coconuts.

Adapted from Caitanya Caritāmṛita Adi lila Chapter 13, Texts 19, 91, 94 – 110 by Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami

FOLLOWING SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU

*An offering on His Divine Appearance
2018, by Sri Lakshman Das Prabhu*

Jai Sri Sri Guru Gauranga! Jai Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura! Jai Srila B.P. Puri Goswami Maharaj! Jai Sri Param pujiyapada Srila B.B. Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja!

I offer all of you my respect, for you are all sincere devotees of the Lord and Sri Krishna finds repose in your hearts. In such a respectful climate I wish to present the topic at hand.

Within this age of Kali Sri Caitanya is the master of religion. Although religion and dharma are manifold, and rightly so, those who acknowledge the special position of the teachings of Sri Caitanya are most fortunate. Out of His unlimited compassion He descended into this mortal world where death is an ever present fear, and where the age of Kali is ever accelerating and swiftly casting the world's inhabitants into hell. Observing such a climate, agitated at heart, the Lord assumed a most compassionate and magnanimous form. We are fortunate to call ourselves followers of that very same Lord. All glories to Sri Caitanya and all His intimate associates and followers. May They bless our endeavours, even though faultily performed.

That same Sri Caitanya, with a vision to save all sincere souls, preached that all living entities are the eternal servants of Krishna, and the ultimate goal of life is *Sri Krishna-prema* (love of God). This we know is not a dogmatic statement but is supported by all theistic scriptures of the world, and taught by all bona-fide saints. But as only an *Avatar* can He brought the utmost clarity to that message, and not only that He elevated it to a level very rarely seen in this world, in doing He revealed, in their full glory, *Vraja-mādhurya-prema* (the sweet love of Vrindavan) and *gopī-bhāva* (the loving



sentiments of the cowherd girls of *Vraja*). He also brought with Him the most efficacious means to attain them - *Sri Hari-nāma*.

Although garbed in the form of a man, He is none other than the Lord of the three worlds and the Master of all living entities. He knew His time on earth would be a short forty eight years. As a junior He studied, upon maturity He instructed the world that man should dedicate his life to Krishna, and in His final years He taught us practically how to become introverted in the mature phase of Krishna-bhakti. Wishing to establish Himself and His message as a permanent fixture in this age of Kali, not as an emblem of Kali but as it's supreme contrast, He empowered His followers to systematise His teachings and establish them clearly and authoritatively upon the basis of the Holy Veda.

Desiring His message to continue and thrive after His departure, that it may remain alive and well amidst the onslaught of this most abominable age of Kali, an age that by nature demoralises all truth and corrupts all virtue, He gave His supreme commandment to all that would be fortunate enough to call themselves His followers:

"Whomsoever thou meet'st, instruct him regarding Krishna, by My command being Guru deliver this land; in this thou wilt not be obstructed by the current of the world; thou wilt have my company again at this place."

Here we clearly see that His desire is for all His followers to assume the role of Guru, and thereby deliver the world. Such a bold statement! Who can assume the role of Guru? He is the Supreme Lord, He is perfect and capable in every way. The Veda's explain that it is He only that can teach true religion. We on the other hand are a liability unto ourselves, full of faults and are drowning in the ocean of material existence. While this world is full of atheists and false religionists, hedonists and scientists, sceptics, socialists, terrorists, fanatics, and dogmatists, it is full of

all forms of opposition, in fact the very land all around is scorched by a myriad of conceptions contrary to the simple self-evident truths of Sri Caitanya's teachings. Why has He then burdened us with such a commandment?

This is a question we at some point in our devotional life are forced to ask. We have taken His message as our duty, our hearts in singular resonance with His have born His command therein. In the hope to earn His favour we have struggled in our attempts to fulfil this order, so that we may sincerely call ourselves His followers. In those attempts we have discovered enemies both within and without. In our own selves we have been forced to face our own weaknesses and inadequacies, our attachments, fears and hopes; while from without we have faced stiff opposition, we have been let down by falsehood in others, and been subjected to factionalism and sectarianism.

All these things being so, the order of the Supreme Lord cannot be neglected. What a quandary, we are stuck between a rock and a hard place. Why has He commanded us thus?

We must consider though that the Supreme Lord is all-good, and remember that He means us no harm; to the contrary, He is always concerned for the welfare of all living entities, especially those that have dedicated themselves to Him. In this way we can clearly understand that such a commandment must be both good for us and good for others. This particular command of the Lord is laden, overflowing with the nectar of the Lord's compassion, and that compassion is seeking out vessels, vehicles for this His inner most sublime expression. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura wrote:

Sriman Mahaprabhu did not descend with His associates to deliver a certain number of human beings in the land of India, but rather His purpose was to deliver and uplift all



living beings in all countries of the world by preaching the eternal religion of all souls.

Several years ago I was in Sri Navadvip Dhama, where one finds many temples dedicated to Sri Caitanya and Sri Sri Radha-Krishna. It was Gaura-Purnima, the appearance festival of Sri Caitanya, and the atmosphere was charged with devotional enthusiasm. That being said some temples were more "alive" than others. Srila Gurudev Sri Parampujyapada Srila B.B. Bodhayan Goswami Maharaj was confined, practically all day, to a room in Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math, initiating disciples. The whole temple was full of people, and activities in aid of the auspicious day were being performed according to schedule. As I left the temple I could see other temples similarly abuzz while others less so and others seemingly dormant. Later on I shared my observation with Srila Gurudev, "it appears that those temples that have a preaching spirit are abuzz with activity" to which he replied simply but powerfully "that preaching gives life to a temple".



Preaching gives life. The import of such a statement was not lost on me. The temple is a spiritual place, the abode of Krishna. Is it not true also that the wise will see the body as none other than Sri Vishnu's temple. In mundane people we find zeal for mundane things, whatever their myriad of interests dictate, be it money, power, recognition or to acquire the finer things of life, one will find so much vigour in their endeavours. So let us think a moment upon the core activities of a temple, is it not to recognise and glorify the absolute supremacy of that most beautiful Cowherd? Is it not supposed to act as a base for which that knowledge and glorification can emanate throughout the world? Upon finer discrimination an intelligent devotee will similarly consider that His very body is meant for the same purpose. The same zeal for material enjoyment that we find in a materialist's heart, except in its purest form, we should find within the heart of the devotee. Whether we are inside a temple or outside our duty is to always attempt to expand the glories of the Lord.

Therefore Sri Krishna implores us:

*mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā
bodhayantaḥparasparam
kathayantaś ca māmṇityam
tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*

The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me,
Their lives are fully devoted to My service,
And they derive great satisfaction and bliss from always,
Enlightening one another and conversing about Me. (*Bhagavad-gīta* 10.9)

However important our particular duties are, relative to time and place, we should perform them diligently. But we should never forget Sri Caitanya teachings, that we are actually the eternal servant of the Lord:



*nāhaṁviprona ca nara-
patirnāpivaśyonaśūdro
nāhaṁvaṁīna ca grha-patir no
vanasthoyatirvā
kintuprodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-
pūrnāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥpada-kamalayordāsa-
dāsānudāsaḥ*

I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, I am not a *kṣatriya*, I am not a *vaiśya* or a *śūdra*.
Nor am I a *brahmacāri*, a householder, a *vānaprastha* or a *sannyāsī*.
I identify Myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Sri Krishna the maintainer of the *gopīs*.

He is like an ocean of nectar, and He is the cause of universal transcendental bliss.
He is always existing with brilliance.
(*Caitanya Caritāmṛita Madhya* 13.80)

In the temple and similarly in the company of devotees we will find a proper atmosphere conducive to our devotions. Outside thereof, in the workplace, etc., we may not, even though meditating deeply thereon. Under such circumstances one's Bhakti remains hidden. In patience and preparation we must wait for circumstances and people that may represent a suitable seat conducive to receive the seed of Bhakti. We should have an ear attuned to such circumstances.

Are we qualified to fulfil this order of the Lord? Personally I feel my own disqualification acutely. What shall be done then? Shall we abandon the order of Sri Sri Guru Gauranga? The order of the Supreme Lord and the Spiritual Master are the life of the devotee and our very means of purification. Should there be any consideration of qualification or disqualification? By following such an instruction, even though faultily, the Lord will become happy with us and gradually we can expect to become more capable and pure:

*śreyānsva-dharmoviguṇaḥ
para-dharmātsv-anuṣṭhitāt
sva-dharmenidhanamśreyah
para-dharmobhayāvahaḥ*

It is far better to discharge one's prescribed duties, even though faultily, than another's duties perfectly. Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path is dangerous.
(*Bhagavad-gīta* 3.35)

There is though consideration in this matter. Our revered Param Gurudev Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Maharaj stipulated: "First practice and then Preach". The purport of such a statement is ripe with meaning. The Acharya, by definition, perfectly practices what he preaches. We must though endeavour to do our best according to our ability, and once we have reached the extent of our ability refer sincere souls onto those more qualified.

Different devotees, according to their nature and the development of their realisation, will value and lean towards different aspects of the path of *bhakti*. Some will say that before they start preaching they wish to attain depth in their *bhajan*, and such logic I respect. There will though be others that, overflowing with compassion, will perform their *bhajan* and preach side by side. To that latter class the words of Srīman Mahāprabhu will have an imminent immanence:

"Whomsoever thou meet'st, instruct him regarding Krishna, by My command being Guru deliver this land; In this thou wilt not be obstructed by the current of the world; thou wilt have my company again at this place."

In this regard the illustrious Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura gives clarity and confirmation:

He whose only teaching is humility greater than that of a blade of grass, said "By My



command being Guru save this land!" In this instance Mahaprabhu Himself has given the command. His command being "Perform the duty of the Guru, even as I do it Myself. Also convey this command to whom-so-ever you chance to meet." Chaitanyadeva says, "Tell them these very words viz, by My command being Guru save this land. Deliver the people from their foolishness." Now who-so-ever happens to hear these words would naturally protest with palms joined - "But I am really a great sinner; how can I be Guru? You are Godhead Himself, the Teacher of the world. You can be Guru.' To this Mahaprabhu replies:

"In this thou will not be obstructed by the current of the world; Thou wilt have My company once again at this place."

Do not practice the craft of a Guru for the purpose of injuring others through malice. Do not adopt the trade of a Guru in order to get immersed in the slough of this world. But if you can, indeed, be "My guileless servant you will be endowed with My power - then you need not fear."

Srila Prabhupada clearly defines that our motives must be pure, we must be guileless. As Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar Goswami would say "sincerity is invincible". Even though sometimes some fault may appear in us during the discharge of this service, we should remain sincere, guileless. The more we can be properly situated in this regard Sri Caitanya will bestow His mercy and empower us. He reassures us with the words "do not fear".

From the Gaura Purnima Offering written by Sri Lakshman Das

ABOUT SRI NAVADVIPA DHĀMA CIRCUMAMBULATON

*by His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha
Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja*

The Navadvipa *Dhāma* is considered equivalent to the holy land of Vraja. It is the Lord's *sāndhini* potency, eternal existence, upon which His *cit* and *ānanda* potencies reside. The Lord has brought these *Dhāmas* into the material world to help the conditioned souls. The *Dhāmas* are one in principle, but for the sake of pastimes, they have taken the form of two abodes. All the holy places in Vraja are said to be contained in Navadvipa also. This is the land where the Supreme Lord in his form as Gauranga was born and performed His most magnanimous pastimes (*audārya hīla*). In contrast, in other Holy places (like Kanchi) the pastimes were replete with either majestic opulence (*aiśwarya*), or with intrinsic sweetness as in Vraja (*mādhurya*). In fact, here in Navadvipa, offences committed by the aspirant are forgiven by Mahaprabhu; unlike in Vraja where one has to reap the full consequences of any offences committed.



Navadvipa consists of nine islands arranged according to the eight petals of a lotus flower, the whorl of which is Antardvipa. After the departure of Srīman Mahaprabhu, this Holy *Dhāma* was covered by the material energy. So it was the wish of compassionate Lord that in this iron- age the scriptures relating to the confidential



pastimes of Mahaprabhu and His *Dhāma* be revealed so that faithful people can easily cross over the material coverings and relish these pastimes of the Lord in His transcendental land. The total circumference of the Navadvīpa *Dhāma* is about 32 km or sixteen kosas. Four of the islands are on the east bank of the Ganga namely, Antardvīpa, Simantadvīpa, Godrumadvīpa and Madhyadvīpa and five on the west bank namely, Koladvīpa, Rtvīpa, Jahnudvīpa, Modrumadvīpa and Rudradvīpa.



The way to do the proper circumambulation is to commence from Antardvīpa, journey through the four islands, then reverentially cross the Ganga to visit the other four, then to go back to Rudradvīpa which is now on the eastern bank, and to finally end in Yoga Pitha. It is imperative to pray to Lord Gaurāṅga to forgive any offences that might be committed during the circumambulation and so that we may be able to traverse all nine islands by the proper route successfully. The best time for doing this is the period before the Lord's Holy Appearance during the bright moon fortnight of Phalguna month which usually falls in the solar month of March. By the movements of the river Ganga, some sites have been transferred from the east side to the west and vice-versa during the course of time. Presently, many of the rivers have dried up by the Will of the Lord- although sometimes they may again flow by His inconceivable potency. This *Dhāma* is transcendental and said to contain all the

seven primary holy cities of India, namely Ayodhya, Mathura, Ujjain, Kanchi, Dwarka, Haridwara and Kasi.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has compiled scriptures explaining the nature of the Dhama. In books such as Navadvīpa Mahatmya and Navadvīpa Bhava Taranga, he described the circumambulation of Navadvīpa performed by Lord Nityananda Prabhu, who was guiding Sri Jiva Goswami through this *Dhāma*.

The same circumambulation was carried out by Isana Thakur; who later explained this to Srinivasa Acharya. These details are all recorded in the book, Sri Bhakti Ratnakara. This present article is based on those books and the Caitanya Charitāmrita and Caitanya Bhāgavata as well. Some verses have been added to prove the authenticity of Mayapur itself as the original birthplace of Lord Gaurāṅga.

*nawadvīpa madhye mayapur name sthan,
yatha janmilēn gaurachandra bhagavan*

“In Navadvīpa there is the place called Mayapura where the Supreme Lord Gaurachandra was born.” (*Caitanya Bhāgavata*)

*jambudvīpe kalau ghore mayapure
dvijalaye
janitva parsadaih sardham kirtan
kararisyati*

“In this Dark Age of Kali, The Supreme Lord will take birth in a *brāhmaṇa* household in Mayapura within Jambudvīpa and will perform congregational chanting with His associates (*Kapila tantra*)

*mundake kathitam yattu brahmadhama
hiraṇmayam
mayapura gatam tadi yogapitam
sunirmalam
bagirathitade purve mayapuranta
gokulam*



*tasyastade pashime hi vrndavanam
vidurbudhah*

“As described in *Mundāka Upanishad*, there is a golden, transcendental abode called Mayapur in the center of which is the pure place called Yoga Pith. Mayapur is on the east bank of the Bagirathi River and is similar to Gokula and on sites on the west bank are likened to Vrindavana is the verdict of the wise.” (*Urdahamnaya tantra*)

*From Navadvipa Dhama Parikrama booklet
compiled by the devotees of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya
Math for Srila B.B. Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja*

THE FESTIVAL OF JAGANNATHA MISRA

by Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami

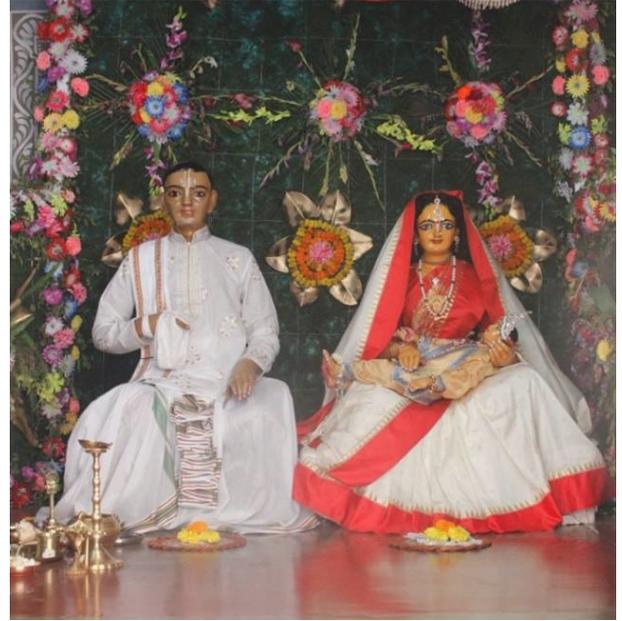
One day after the birth of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the greatly respected wife of Advaita Acharya, Sita Devi, took her husband's permission and went to see that highly exalted child, carrying with her all kinds of gifts and presentations. She brought many valuable ornaments, like armlets, necklaces, anklets and bracelets all made of shining gold. Furthermore, she carried tiger nails set in gold, waist decorations of silk and lace, hand and leg ornaments, ornate printed silken saris, and a silken child's garment. Sri Sita Devi also gave many other opulent gifts as well as gold and silver coins.

Accompanied by maidservants and travelling on a palanquin hooded with cloth, Sita Thakurani came to the house of Jagannatha Misra, carrying with her in a large basket, various auspicious articles such as fresh grass, paddy, gorocana, turmeric, kumkuma and sandalwood. Arriving at the house of Saci Devi in this way, Sita Thakurani was astonished to see the new-born child, whom she realised, except for His golden bodily hue, was directly Gokula Krishna Himself. All the limbs of that golden effulgent child were perfectly balanced and full of auspicious symptoms. Seeing this, Sita Thakurani was very satisfied in her mind and

felt that her heart was melting in maternal affection.

Placing fresh grass and paddy on His head She blessed the new-born child saying, “May You live a long life.” However, being concerned with the danger of ghosts and witches, she also named the child Nimai in remembrance of the auspicious Nimba tree.

Again on the day Saci Devi and her glorious child bathed and left the maternity house, Sita Thakurani returned and presented varieties of ornaments and garments. She also honoured Jagannatha Misra. After honouring mother Saci Devi and Jagannatha Misra, feeling great happiness in her mind, Sita Thakurani returned to her home.



In this way Jagannatha Misra and Saci Devi, upon obtaining a son who was the husband of the goddess of fortune had all their desires fulfilled. Their storehouses were ever endowed with wealth and grain cereals. Seeing the form of their son, all-pleasing Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the happiness of Jagannatha Misra and Saci Devi blossomed day after day.

*Adapted from Caitanya Caritāmrita Adi lila, Chapter
13, texts 111- 119, by Srila Krishna Das Kaviraj
Goswami*



GLORIES OF SRI GOVINDA GHOSH

by His Divine Grace Bhakti Promode Puri
Goswami Thakura

*kalāvati rasollāsā guṇatūṅgā vraje sthitāḥ
śrī-viśākhā-kṛtāṁ gītāṁ gāyanti smādya tā
matāḥ
govinda-mādhavānanda-vāsudevā yathā-
kramam*

Govinda, Madhava and Vasudeva were three *gopīs* in Vraja, namely Kalavati, Rasollasa and Guṇatunga, who used to sing the songs composed by Vishakha. (*Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* 188)

These three brothers were born in an upper class kayastha family from northern Rarha. All three were singers famed for the sweetness of their voices.

The meritorious Madhava Ghosh devoted himself to kirtan. There was no singer on earth who was his equal. It was said of him that he was a singer from Vrindavan. He was most dear to Nityananda Prabhu. The three brothers, Govinda, Madhava and Vasudeva began to sing while Lord Nityananda danced. (*Caitanya Bhāgavat* 3.5.257-9)

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu danced to the kirtan of the three brothers, Govinda, Madhava and Vasudeva. (*Caitanya Bhāgavat* 1.15.115)



When Nityananda returned to Gauḍadeśa to preach, he was accompanied by Vasudeva and Madhava Ghosh. Meanwhile Govinda remained in Nilachala with Mahaprabhu.

Govinda is counted amongst the branches of Caitanya Mahaprabhu (*Caitanya Caritamrita* 1.10.118).

Eventually, he made his home in Agradvipa, Vasudeva in Tamluk, and Madhava Ghosh in Dain Hat. Govinda Ghosh Thakur's house is not far from Agradvipa in Kashipura Vishnutala. Some are of the opinion that Vaiṣnavatala was his birthplace. Govinda Ghosh participated in Mahaprabhu's *līlas* in Srivasa Angan, in the *nagara-sankīrtan* to the Kazi's house, and in the house of Raghava Pandit. During the Rathayatra festival, he was the lead singer in the fourth kirtan group, accompanied by his two brothers, Junior Hari Das, Vishnu Das and Raghava Pandit. Vakresvara Pandit joined this group as the principal dancer.

On Mahaprabhu's direction, Govinda revealed the Gopinath deity from a black stone in Agradvipa. Mahaprabhu also instructed him to get married. The story goes that Govinda Ghosh's wife and son both died untimely. As he grew older, Govinda began to wonder who would perform the last rites for him, as it is considered important for one to have a son who can do the *śrāddha* ceremony on his behalf. He had a dream in which Gopinath appeared to him and said, "Don't worry about this. I will perform the *śrāddha* ceremony for you Myself."

When Govinda Ghosh finally died, Gopinath offered the *pinḍa* on his behalf. Gopinath continues to perform this ceremony every year on the anniversary of Govinda Ghosh's departure from this world. This takes place on the *kṛṣṇā trayodaśī* of the month of Chaitra.

From *The Associates of Caitanya* by HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur



DUTIES OF A DEVOTED WIFE

by Sage Sri Valmiki

Afraid of prolonging his stay at Citrakuta due to many handicaps, Sri Rama soon left that mountain. Reaching the hermitage of Sage Atri, He greeted the Rsi, and the glorious Atri received Him as if He was his own son. Glorifying the ascetic life of his wife Anasuya, the sage urged Rama to send His consort Sita Devi to her. Sita, the princess of Mithila, then greeted the venerable elderly lady as instructed by Her husband. In the subsequent conversation, Anasuya Devi gives Her instructions on duties of a devoted wife:

“Luckily, You have Your eyes fixed on righteousness. Having forsaken Your relatives and given up Your exalted status, O proud Sita, I am glad that You are following Your husband Sri Rama, who has been exiled into the forest. Worlds that are attended with great prosperity await those women to whom their husband is dear, no matter whether he lives in a city or in a forest, whether he is propitious or adverse. In the eyes of women who are blessed with a noble disposition, the husband is the highest deity, no matter whether he is ill-mannered or licentious or entirely devoid of riches. Though deeply pondering, for a woman, I do not see a friend greater than the husband and more capable of yielding one’s austerities, O princess of Videha kingdom! Those evil women, however, whose hearts are swayed by desire, who lord it over their husband, having no sense of virtue and vice, move about without following him. Indeed, fallen a prey to concupiscence, women who belong to that category, meet with all fallen from virtue and also reap infamy. Women like You, on the other hand, who are adorned with virtues and have discovered what is good and what is evil in this world, will dwell in heaven in the same way as those who have performed meritorious deeds. Therefore, remaining devoted to the service of this prince, looking upon Him as the foremost object of Your worship and

attending to him at the proper time, practice virtue in cooperation with Him. Thereby You will easily attain fame as well as religious merit.”

Applauding her speech when instructed by Anasuya, Sita, who was free from the carping spirit, began to slowly reply: “This instruction which you have given Me is no matter for wonder on your holiness’s part. It is however, known to me as well as how the husband is adored of a matron. Even if this husband of Mine were ignoble and without any means of livelihood, I ought to have nonetheless conducted Myself in the same way, without any hesitation or scruple towards him – this is my duty. How much more worthy of devotion is he who is deserving of praise by virtue of his excellences and full of compassion, who has controlled his senses, who is constant in his love, whose mind is set on righteousness and who is as loving as both a mother and a father combined! Sri Rama, who is possessed of great might, conducted Himself towards the other consorts of the king Dasaratha in the same way as he did towards his mother Kausalya. Giving up self-esteem, the gallant prince, who was lovingly devoted to his father, and knows what is right, conducted Himself towards the women who had been looked on with love, as He would towards His mother.”

“Whatever was taught to Me by My mother-in-law while I was coming to the lonely forest, which is so frightful, stands inscribed in My heart. That lesson too which was actually imparted to Me in the past by My mother while making over My hand in the presence of the sacred fire is still remembered by Me. All that teaching has been renewed in My mind by your teachings, O lady, committed to the practice of virtue! No asceticism other than the service of one’s husband is enjoined on a matron. Having rendered service to her husband all her life, Savitri is greatly respected in heaven now; conducting yourself in the same way, you too have



virtually ascended to heaven through service to your husband. By virtue of devotion to her spouse, Rohini, most excellent of all women and now dwelling in heaven as a deity, it is not seen in the heavens without the moon even for a while. Steadfast in their vow to fidelity to their husband, such exalted women are highly respected in the realm of gods by virtue of their meritorious action.”



Highly rejoiced to hear the reply by Sita, Anasuya said thereupon: “Indeed there exists to my credit ample spiritual energy earned through religious observations of various kinds. Banking on that energy, O Sita of holy vows, I request you to ask boon from me. What You have said, O princess of Mithila, is reasonable and just, and I am pleased to hear it. Tell me O Sita, what kind act can I do for you?” Astonished to hear Anasuya’s words, Sita, gently smiling, replied: “Everything stands accomplished already by your grace alone.” Spoken to in these words by Sita, Anasuya who knew what is right felt all the more gratified and

said, “Ha Ha, I make your extreme gratification fruitful. Here are an excellent celestial garland, garment and ornaments, cosmetics and precious unguent, O princess of the Videha kingdom! O Sita, let this gift, bestowed by me, beautify your limbs. It will prove worthy of You and remain intact for all the time to come. O daughter of Janaka, limbs smeared with the celestial cosmetic, You will adorn Your husband as Lakshmi does the imperishable Lord Vishnu.” The princess of Mithila accepted the gifts as an unsurpassed gift of love. She remained seated with joined palms, by the side of Anasuya, the lady whose wealth was her asceticism.

From Srimad Valmiki Ramayana, Ayodhykanda, Chapter 17-18

JAHNAVA MATA’S TRAVEL TO VRINDAVAN

by Srila Narahari Chakravarthy

While travelling to Vrindavan, Sri Jahnava and her party passed through a large village and wanted to break their journey stop there for some time. However, Sri Isvari was advised that many atheists who habitually antagonised the Vaishnavas stayed in that village. Thus they stayed nearby. In the evening the Krishna bhaktas of the village came to meet Sri Isvari and paid her due respect. However the atheists who gathered there criticised the Vaishnavas saying that had no knowledge and therefore they bowed to a mere human being instead of worshipping the gods.

One such villager conjectured that perhaps the Vaishnavas bowed to Jahnava Mata because they thought she was the personification of goddess Candi. Another loudly proclaimed, “What do these Vaishnavas know of the grace of Sri Candi! How can an ordinary woman be compared to Her?” Thinking thus they immediately went to the temple of Sri Candi and prayed that she might kill the



foolish Vaishnavas. After making this malevolent prayer they returned to their homes to rest.

Goddess Candi, did indeed become angry. However, the object of her rage was not the Vaishnavas but the foolish atheists. Her eyes reddened, and her lips quivered in anger. Carrying a very sharp scimitar, She appeared before each of those atheists in their dreaming vision and angrily addressed them, “You sinful, proud, offenders have deliberately insulted the *parama bhāgavatas!*” She raised her scimitar to kill them, simultaneously chastising him for considering Sri Isvari (Jahnava Mata) to be an ordinary *brāhmaṇi*. Candi Devi informed them that Sri Isvari was the wife of Lord Nityananda, who was an incarnation of Lord Balarama. He was due to be worshipped by the whole universe and even by Sri Candi Herself. Thus Jahnava Isvari was competent to carry the living entities beyond all miseries and fears in this world. She was the personification of loving kindness and had no purpose but to show mercy to all living beings. Sri Candi warned them that if they did not seek the forgiveness and mercy of Sri Jahnava Isvari, then her mighty sabre would send them to eternal damnation. Roaring in rage goddess Candi told them all these truths and then disappeared.

The offensive villagers at once awoke from their slumber and trembled in fright as they understood the grim danger they faced. When the sun arose, they immediately went to the Vaishnava *mahantas* deeply regretting their offensive actions. Their cheeks soaked by their own tears of self-condemnation, the villagers fell at the feet of the *mahantas* and prayed for forgiveness. They sought the mercy of the *mahantas*, knowing that they forgave them, then Sri Isvari would certainly also forgive them. Admitting their faults they prayed for an opportunity to take shelter of Her feet. Inspired by their humility and self-reproach, the *mahanta* forgave those repentant

villagers, and consequently Sri Isvari also accepted them.



After blessing the reformed villagers, Jahnava Mata and her party remained there village for a few more days then resumed her journey. By the mercy of Isvari Sri Jahnava the atheists were transformed into devotees of the Lord.”

Adapted from Bhakti Ratnakara by Srila Narahari Cakravarti (page 305-306).

PRAYERS TO LORD NARASIMHA

by Bhaktivinoda Thakura

In his *Navadvipa Bhava Taranga* Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has composed five beautiful prayers in petitioning the mercy of Lord Narasimha Deva. These prayers illustrate how the worship of Sri Narasimha need not be antagonistic to the pursuit of pure devotion to Sri Sri Radha Krishna.

*e dusta hrdaye kama adi ripu chaya
kutinati pratisthasa sathya sada raya*



*hrdaya-sodhana ara krsnera vasana
nrsimha-carane mora ei to' kamana*

My depraved heart harbours the six enemies of bhakti like lust anger greed etc. Duplicity, the ambition for adoration and slyness also perpetually haunt me. My earnest desire at the lotus feet of Lord Narasimha, is that out of mercy He will purify my heart and grant me the longing to render service to Lord Krishna.

*kandiya nrsimha-pade magibo kakhana
nirapade navadvipe jugala-bhajana
bhaya bhaya paya yan'ra darsane se hari
prasanna hoibo kabe more daya kari*

When will I tearfully cry at the lotus-feet of Lord Narasimha with the sole request that I may be blessed to fearlessly worship Sri Radha and Krishna in Navadvipa? When will this Lord who is feared by fear personified be satisfied with me and grant His causeless mercy?



*yadyapi bhisana murti dusta-jiva-prati
prahladadi krsna-bhakta-jane bhadra ati
kabe va prasanna ho'ye sa krpa-vacane
nirbhaya karibe ei mudha akincane*

To the sinful Sri Narasimha is terrifying. Yet to the devotees of Krishna like Prahlada Maharaja, He bestows all auspiciousness. I earnestly await the day when He will be pleased with me and speak compassionately unto this destitute fool, thus removing all my fears!

*svacchande baiso he vatsa sri-gauranga-
dhame
jugala-bhajana hau rati hau name
mama bhakta-krpa-bale vighna jabe dura
suddha cite bhajo radha-krsna-rasa-pura*

At that time Sri Narasimha will say, “Stay happily here in Gauranga *Dhāma* as desire oh my dear child. May you begin worship of the Divine Couple, and may you develop attachment and love for Their Holy Names. Kindly remember that all obstacles are cast far away by the mercy of My devotees. Let your heart be purified so that you may perform the worship of Radha and Krishna which is saturated with sweetness.”

*ei boli' kabe mora mastaka-upara
sviya sri-carana harse dharibe isvara
amani jugala-preme sattvika vikare
dharaya lutibo ami sri-nrsimha-dvare*

Speaking these soothing words when will that Lord delightedly place His lotus-feet upon my head? By His touch I will immediately experience sublime love for the Sri Sri Radha Krishna and experience transformations of body due to ecstasy. In this way I will fall to the ground and roll in the dust at the door of Sri Narasimha's temple.

*From Sri Navadvipa Bhava Taranga, 36-40, by Srila
Bhaktivinoda Thakura*



VAISHNAVA FESTIVALS: MARCH - APRIL 2018

Date	Festival
2 March	Appearance Day of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabu (Gaura Purnima)
3 March	Festival of Sri JagannathaMisra
9 March	Appearance Day of Sri Srivasa Pandita
13 March	Papamocani Ekadasi
14 March	Disappearance Day of Sri Govinda Ghosh
22 March	Appearance Day of Sri Ramanuj Acharya
26 March	Appearance Day of Lord Sri Ramacandra
31 March	Sri Balaram Rasayatra; Sri Krishna Vasantayatra; Appearance Day of Sri Vamsivadana Thakura; Appearance Day of Sri Syamananda Prabhu
7 April	Disappearance Day of Sri Abhirama Thakura
11 April	Disappearance Day of Sri Sri VrindavanaDas Thakura
12 April	Varuthini Ekadasi
16 April	Appearance Day of Sri GadadharaPandita
18 April	Candanyatra begins
24 April	Appearance Day of Srimati Sita Devi; Appearance Day of Srimati Jahnava Devi; Disappearance Day of Sri MadhuPandita;
26 April	Mohini Ekadasi
28 April	Disappearance Day of Sri Jayananda Prabhu
29 April	Appearance Day of Lord Narasimha Dev
30 April	Krishna Phula Dola ; Appearance Day of Sri MadhavendraPuri; Appearance Day of Sri Srinivas Acharya; Disappearance Day of Sri Paramesvari Das Thakura

Bhagavata Dharma

A free e-magazine published monthly in service to the mission of Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya, by:
Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math,
Isodhyan, Sri Mayapur
Nadia, West Bengal, India 741313

On behalf of:

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja, President & Acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math;

Dedicated to:

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur, Founder Acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math, and
His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanata Saraswati Goswami Thakur PRABHUPADA.

To subscribe, visit <http://www.gopinathgaudiya.com/newsletter/>
<https://www.facebook.com/SrilaBodhayanMaharaj/>

