

Founder Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakura

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On this auspicious occasion of Guru Purnima (Balaram Jayanti), I am praying to my spiritual master HDG Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur, my garand spiritual master HDG Bhaktisiddhanta saraswati Goswami Thakur, and all the members of our lineage, Brahma sampradaya, to bestow their mercy upon us, so we may progress spiritually and realize the taste of divine love in this lifetime, thus allowing all of you to be delivered from this material world.

*In the Service of Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu's Mission,
His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja*



ŚRĪ GURU IS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF ŚRĪMATĪ RĀDHĀRĀṆĪ

by

HDG Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan
Goswami Maharaja

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. One of His plenary expansions is Saṅkarṣaṇa. One of Saṅkarṣaṇa's plenary expansions is Kāraṇodakaśāyī Mahā-Viṣṇu. When Kāraṇodakaśāyī Mahā-Viṣṇu glances at the illusory energy (Maya) it causes the creation of the material world. Various types of living entities (*jīvas*) are present in the material world being bound by their previous actions (*karma*). This state of the *jīva* being bound in illusion due to previous actions is known as, *maya-baddha*. How many states of existence exist for a *maya-baddha jīva*? We are informed of the answers to these questions by our most worshipful Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. A *maya-baddha jīva* has five states of consciousness. In other words, according to the *jīva*'s materially bound state its consciousness is covered (*ācchāditā-cetana*), shrunken (*saṅkucita-cetana*), budding (*mukulita-cetana*), blooming (*vikacita-cetana*), or blossomed (*pūrṇa-vikacita-cetana*). Now let us discuss these five states of consciousness according to the classifications provided by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura:

1. Covered Consciousness (*ācchāditā-cetana*) – Trees, grass, stones, rocks and mountains are all living entities who possess completely covered consciousness. Their understanding of dharma is practically nonexistent and is considered to be in a sleep-like state. Having forgotten their constitutional existence as the servants of Kṛṣṇa they

are so deeply absorbed in the qualities of material nature that they have absolutely no cognizance of their eternal spiritual existence in the spiritual world. Through the six transformations of the body (*ṣaḍ-vikārā*), they possess a slight understanding of their true existence. This is the most fallen state of existence for the *jīva*. When one discusses the *Purāṇic* histories of Ahalya, Yamalārjuna trees, Saptatala and so on, it is seen that one attains this state of completely covered consciousness due to committing an extremely heinous offense. One becomes delivered from such a state of existence by Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

2. Shrunken Consciousness (*saṅkocita-cetana*) – Animals, birds, reptiles, aquatics like fish, and insects all possess shrunken consciousness. Those with covered consciousness have practically no realization of anything. In comparison, living entities with a shrunken consciousness have a somewhat higher-level of realization and understanding. According to their desires they act with regards to gathering food, sleeping and defending. They can dispute with others in order to maintain their own existence. They become angry upon seeing injustice. All of these qualities are seen in one with shrunken consciousness. They do not have any knowledge of the spiritual world. Even a monkey possessing mischievous intelligence exhibits some sort of reasoning capability. They think about what the result of will be of one's action in the future and so on. Signs of gratitude can be seen in their mindset. The knowledge of food quality and value is also clearly seen in some of these creatures. Those with a



shrunk consciousness do not try to find out the Supreme Lord. Thus, their understanding of dharma is narrow or nonexistent. Bhakta Bharata, despite receiving the body of a deer, possessed knowledge of the Supreme Lord and His name. This has been described in the scriptures but is a unique example; it is certainly not the norm. Due to his offense Bharata had to take birth in the animal kingdom, and by the mercy of the Supreme Lord he was reestablished on the proper path towards attaining the Lord.

3. Budding, Blooming and Blossomed Consciousness (*mukulita*, *vikacita* and *pūrṇa-vikacita cetana*): A bound soul (*baddha-jīva*) in human form is seen to be in three states of existence, namely the budding state of consciousness (*mukulita-avastha*), the blooming state of consciousness (*vikacita-avastha*) and the blossomed state of consciousness (*pūrṇa-vikacita-avastha*). Humans can be classified into five categories. Those who follow no rules (*niti-śūnya*), those who follow rules but do not believe in a supreme controller (*nirīśvara naitika*), those who follow rules and also believe in a supreme controller (*seśvarā naitika*), those who perform devotional practices in a regulated manner (*sādhana-bhakta*) and those who are in the initial stages of loving devotion (*bhāva-bhakta*). Humans who out of ignorance or due to being influenced by various atheistic ideas do not believe in a supreme controller are classified as either *niti-śūnya* or *nirīśvara naitika*. Those who follow rules and have some belief in a supreme controller are known as *seśvarā naitika*. Those who engage in devotional practices (Bhakti-yoga) according to the rules and regulations mentioned in the scriptures are known

as *sādhana-bhaktas*. Those who have attained the initial stages of love in relation to the Supreme Lord are known as *bhāva-bhaktas*. The *niti-śūnya* and *nirīśvara naitika* are in the budding stage (*mukulita*). The *seśvarā naitika* and the *sādhana-bhakta* are in the blooming stage (*vikacita*). The *bhāva-bhakta* is in the blossomed stage (*pūrṇa-vikacita*).

According to the above-mentioned analysis of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura Mahāśaya, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa has granted the embodied *jīva* a human body, which is the greatest body amongst the Lord's creations. In the human form alone the *jīva* is able to attain a blossomed (*pūrṇa-vikacita*) state of consciousness. It is impossible for a *jīva* to attain this blossomed state of consciousness through its individual effort. Therefore, a human must first take shelter of the lotus feet of a genuine spiritual master (*sad-guru-pādāśraya*).

The true meaning of taking shelter of the lotus feet of a genuine spiritual master is as follows. Spiritual teachings are passed down through the generations from spiritual master to disciple (*guru paramparā*). When such teachings reach a living entity through the initiating spiritual master (*dīkṣā-guru*) and instructing spiritual masters (*śikṣā-guru*), one must embrace all such teachings deep within the core of one's heart and proceed accordingly on their spiritual journey, acting always in adherence to such injunctions. The initiating spiritual master (*dīkṣā-guru*) is capable of doing the work of an instructing spiritual master (*śikṣā-guru*). In the absence of the initiating spiritual master (*dīkṣā-guru*), in accordance with his instructions, one can accept one or greater than one instructing spiritual master(s) (*śikṣā-guru(s)*). The instructions from the initiating and



instructing spiritual masters gradually cause an increase in one's strength to perform our spiritual practice (*sādhana-bala*). This *sādhana-bala* is our assistant in achieving the state of a blossomed consciousness (*pūrṇa-vikacita*).

Although the scriptures inform us that the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the spiritual master of the entire universe (*jagat-guru*), the main object of worship in the Gauḍīya Maṭha is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa who has assumed the mood and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. The scriptures inform us that once in a day of Brahma during the Kali-yuga of the 28th *catur-yuga* in the seventh manvantara the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Through His own behavior and activities, having taken the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, He teaches by His direct example how we can attain service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. At present, some people, without clear understanding of scriptural conclusions, think Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu) to be that same Śrī Kṛṣṇa who performs pastimes and wanders about in the supreme spiritual abode of Goloka Vṛndavana. Although they are the same Divine Lord, below I am providing scriptural evidence which clearly show the distinctions between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya's pastimes:

*ajāyadhavamajāyadhavamajāyamadhavaṁ na
saṁśaya|*

*kalau saṁkīrtanārambhe bhaviṣyāmi
śacīsutaḥ|| (bhaviṣyapurāṇaḥ)*

In the age of Kali, I will appear as the son of Śacī Devi to begin the saṁkīrtan movement. There is no doubt of this.

*Kalighoratamasācchannān sarvānācāra
varjitan|*

*śacīgarbhe ca sambhūya tāriyīṣyāmi nārada||
(vāmanapurāṇaḥ)*

Oh, Narada! I will take birth from the womb of Śacī Devi to deliver all the people who are bereft of proper conduct and who are overcome by the darkness of the horrible age of Kali.

*kaleḥ prathamāsandhyāyām
lakṣmīkāntobhaviṣyati|*

*brahmarūpaṁ samāśritya sambhavāmi yuge
yuge|| (varāhapurāṇaḥ)*

In the first portion of the age of Kali, I will appear as the beloved of Lakṣmī and subsequently, will take shelter of Jagannātha. Like this, I appear age after age.

*golokanca parityaktvā lokānām
trāṇakāriṇām|*

*kalau gaurāṅga-rūpeṇa līlālāvaṇya vighrahaṁ||
(mārkaṇḍeyapurāṇaḥ)*

In order to deliver the people of the material world, I will give up My residence of Goloka and take on the form of Gaurāṅga, in the age of Kali, performing beautiful pastimes in My enchanting form.

*kaleḥ prathamāsandhyāyām
gaurāṅgo'saumahītale|*

*bhāgīrathītaṭebhūmni bhaviṣyati sanātana||
(padmapurāṇaḥ)*

The eternal Lord, Gaurāṅga will appear in the first portion of the age of Kali on earth by the banks of the Ganges River.

bhaktiyoga pradānāya lokasyānugrahāya ca|

*sannyāsirūpamāśritya kṛṣṇacaitanya
nāmadhrk|| (brhat-vāmanapurāṇaḥ)*



The Supreme Lord will take *sannyāsa* and will be known as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya; He will appear to distribute the yoga of devotion and to bless the people of the world.

*gopālaṁ paripālayan vrajapure lokān vahan
dvāpare|*

*gauraṅga-priyakīrtanaḥ kaliyuge
caitanyaṁ hariḥ|| (nṛsiṁhapurāṇaḥ)*

The Supreme Lord, Gopala, who appeared in the age of Dvāpara in Vraja to carry the burden of the earth appears in the age of Kali with the name of Caitanya in a golden form, lovely chanting the holy names of Hari.

After reading the above quotes, I hope that there are no doubts in the minds of the readers in regard to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu being the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, who again returns in the Iron Age of Kali-yuga.

Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself He is overwhelmed by the ecstatic mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, in such a state He was ever trying to seek out Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Since the very moment Śrī Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndavana for Mathura Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī became filled with the intensely blissful pain of separation (*vipralambha-bhāva*). Mahāprabhu and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's spiritual emotions (*mahā-bhāva*) were one and the same. Only the genuine spiritual masters (*sad-gurus*), following in the line of Mahāprabhu have realized and are able to taste the pain of separation felt by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. One can similarly realize that blissful pain of separation solely through the genuine spiritual masters (*sad-gurus*); they give us these teachings and teach us perfectly through their own practice, behavior and example. Therefore, even though according to the scriptures, Kṛṣṇa is the spiritual master of the entire universe (*jagat-guru*), the true

guru of all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Now, let us discuss the true meaning of the word *Rādhā* in accordance with the words spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Brahma-Vaivarta Purana:

*rām śabdaṁ kurvatastrasto dadāmi
bhaktimuttamaṁ|*

*dhā śabdaṁ kurvataḥ paścād yāmi śravaṇa
lobhataḥ|| 70*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa says, “I quickly bestow supreme devotion (*uttamā-bhakti*) upon one who pronounces the first syllable of the word Rādhā, namely ‘rā’. Then again, being greedy to hear the name of Rādhā, I trail closely behind such a person when he says the second syllable of the word Rādhā, namely ‘dhā’.”

ye sevante ca dattā māmupacārāmśca śoḍaśaḥ|

*yāvajjīvana paryantaṁ nityaṁ bhaktyā
susamṃyutāḥ|| 71*

When one says the name Rādhā, one gains more love than that which is gained by performing worship of Me with sixteen articles (*śoḍaśa upacāra*) for their whole lives with fixedness.

yā prītirmama jāyate rādhāśabdāttato'dhikā|

*priyā na me tathā rādhe rādhā vaktā
tato'dhikā|| 72*

One who says the name Rādhā, who is dearer to Me than My very own life, becomes even more dear to Me.

For this reason, in order to attain love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas place in the core of their hearts' Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as their guru. They understand the initiating spiritual master (*dīkṣā-guru*) to be the representative of



Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Thus, with the blossomed consciousness of *bhāva-bhakti*, they go on to achieve *prema-bhakti*.

‘*Guru-kṛpā-kevalam*’ – In accordance with this statement of the scriptures, let us discuss the twelve names of the guru.

prathameśca gurudevaṁ dvitīye caitanyapradā

tṛtīye jṣāna dātā ca caturthe iṣṭa devatā||

pañcama śrī jṣātinātha ṣaṣṭhe patitapāvana|

*saptame śrī karṇadhāra, mantrācārya
tathāṣṭame||*

navametu parabrahma daśame trāṇa kāraṇa|

ekādaśedīnabandhu dvādaśe harirīśvara||

The twelve names of Śrī Guru are as follows:

1. Gurudeva, the worshipful spiritual master,
2. Caitanya-prada, the giver of consciousness,
3. Jṣāna-dātā, the giver of knowledge, 4. Iṣṭa-devatā, the primary worshipful master, 5. Jṣātinātha, the very dear, intimate kinsmen, 6. Patitapāvana, the deliverer of the fallen, 7. Karṇadhāra, the captain of the ship to cross over the ocean of birth and death, 8. Mantrācārya, the spiritual master who teaches by example and bestows the divine mantra, 9. Parabrahma, the Supreme Lord, 10. Trāṇa-kāraṇa, the cause of one's deliverance, 11. Dīnabandhu, the friend of the fallen, 12. Harirīśvara, the supreme controller, Śrī Hari.

All these auspicious qualities can be seen in a genuine spiritual master who has been appointed by the *guru-paramparā* and who is following every single instruction provided to him by that *guru-paramparā*.

On this day, I offer my humble prayer to my most worshipful spiritual master mantradata gurudeva nitya-lila pravista Om Visnupada

108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramode Purī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura who is completely full in these twelve qualities of a guru; to my grand spiritual master parama-guru-pada-padma nitya-lila-pravista 108 Śrī Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvami Ṭhākura; and to the lotus feet of all the previous spiritual masters in our lineage. Through your quality of not seeing faults in others, please forgive this most fallen servant for all his offenses, be they committed knowingly or unknowingly. Further, for as long as you will keep this servant in this body, keep me under the shade of your lotus feet. Please bless this servant that he follows and practices pure devotion staying in the service of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's mission of spreading divine love until his very last breath.

56th Vyasa puja message by Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami, August 2019

The image is a composite. On the left is a portrait of Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaj, a man with a grey beard and a yellow shawl. On the right is a poster for the 'Jhulan Festival of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath & Guru Puja'. The poster features a central image of Lord Radha and Lord Gopinath in a chariot. Text on the poster includes: 'Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Jayatah', 'Jhulan Festival of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath & Guru Puja', 'Starting - 10th August 2019 Saturday', 'Finishing - 15th August 2019 Thursday', and contact details for Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math in Mayapur, Nadia.



THE GLORIES OF SRI GURU

by

Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur

Sri Krishna Das Kaviraj Goswami starts his *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* with a discussion of *guru-tattva*. He tells us that Krishna, the source of all incarnations, the *avatāri* and ultimate object of all service, the *viṣaya-vigraha*, appears as His own servant, the *āśraya-vigraha*, in order to show His mercy to the devotees. This is the *guru*, who mercifully reveals Krishna to his disciples. Since the *guru* is the *āśraya-vigraha*, he never claims to be the object of service; nor does he think of himself in this way. Rather, he presents himself as the eternal servant of the servant of the servants of Krishna or Sri Chaitanya, just as Mahaprabhu presented Himself while dancing in front of Lord Jagannatha's chariot in Puri:

*nāhami vipro na ca narapatir nāpi vaiśya na
sūdro
nāhami varṇi na ca grhapatir no vanastho yatir
vā
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-
pūrṇāmṛtābdher
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-
dāsānudāsaḥ*

“I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, nor a *kṣatriya*, nor a *vaiśya*, nor a *sūdra*. Neither am I a *brahmacārī*, a householder, a retired man, or a renunciant monk. My real identity is that I am the most insignificant servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Krishna, the lover of the *gopīs* and over owing ocean of supreme and immortal joy.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 2.13.80, quoted in *Padyāvalī*74)

Nevertheless, even though the spiritual master identifies himself as Krishna's servant, the disciple who wishes to receive the spiritual master's blessings will look on him

with transcendental intelligence as a direct manifestation of Krishna or Sri Chaitanya. Since the spiritual master is Krishna's most beloved associate, he is not different from Him. Krishna gave this very instruction to Uddhava in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27.)

*ācāryam mām vijānīyān
nāvamanyeta karhicit
na martya buddhyāsūyeta
sarva deva mayo guruḥ*

“O Uddhava! You should consider the guru to be My very self—that is, the embodiment of love for Me and therefore nondifferent from Me. You should therefore never disrespect him by envying him or thinking him to be an ordinary man, for he is the sum total of all the demigods. “

Krishna follows this verse by speaking two others (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 11.17.28 and 29) that give essential information about how an exemplary disciple should serve the spiritual master:

*sāyam prātar upānīya
bhaikṣyam tasmai nivedayet
yac cānyad apy anujātam
upayusjīta samiyataḥ*

“In the morning and evening one should go begging and bring whatever one gathers to the spiritual master. One should then take permission before one himself eats.”

*śuśrūṣamāṇa ācāryam
sadopāsīta nīca-vat
yāna-sāyyāsana-sthānair
nāti-dūre kṛtāṣjaliḥ*

“While engaged in serving the spiritual master one should take the attitude of a humble servant. When the guru is walking, the servant should humbly walk behind. When the guru lies down to sleep, the servant should also lie down nearby, and when the



guru has awakened, the servant should sit near him, massaging his lotus feet and rendering other, similar services. When the *guru* is sitting down on his *asana*, the servant should stand nearby with folded hands, awaiting the *guru*'s order. In this way one should always worship the spiritual master."

Sri Raghunatha Das Goswami writes in his *Manah-sikṣā* that we should think of the *guru* as the dearest companion of the Lord (*mukunda-preṣṭhatve smara*). Sri Jiva Prabhu makes a similar statement in the *Bhakti-sandarbhā* (213), "Pure devotees, however, think of both the spiritual master and Lord Shiva as nondifferent from the Lord due to their being most dear to the Lord" (*śuddha-bhaktās tv eke śrī-guroḥ śrī-śivasya ca bhagavatā sahābheda-dṛṣṭiṇi tat-priyatamatvenaiva manyante*).

Srila Vishwanatha Chakravarti takes up the same theme in the seventh verse of his *Gurvaṣṭakam*:

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhiḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

"I worship the lotus feet of my spiritual master, who is said by all scriptures to be Lord Hari himself, and is indeed thought of that way by all the saints. But this identity is due to his being very dear to the Lord."

Another way to think of the *guru*: as the direct manifestation of Srimati Radharani. Similarly, one can see him as Srimati Radharani's personal companion. My own dear spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, identified himself as the servant of the beloved of Srimati Radharani, or Sri Varshabhanavi-dayita Das. He also revealed to his intimate associates that he was in fact Nayanamani Manjari, the companion of Sri Rupa Manjari in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. Therefore, we pray

to our spiritual master in his identity as Srimati Radharani's handmaiden:

*tvam gopikā vṛṣa-raves tanayāntike'si
sevādhikāriṇi guro nija-pāda-padme
dāsyamī pradāya kuru mām vraja-kānane śrī-
rādhāṅghri-sevana-rase sukhinīm sukhābdhe*

"O Sri Guru! You remain constantly by the lotus feet of the daughter of Vrishabhanu, where you have been given the right to render service. Please give me the joy of swimming in the ocean of service to Srimati Radharani."

There is also a *prāṇam-mantra* to the *guru* in his *sakhī* form:

*rādhā-sammukha-saṁsaktim
sakhī-saṅga-nivāsinīm
tvām ahamī satatam vande
mādhavāśraya-vigrahām*

"I worship you, my spiritual master, in your form as a *gopī* living among the other *sakhīs*, always in the company of Srimati Radharani. You are the repository of love for Madhava."

(Some versions of this mantra have *guru-rūpām parām sakhīm* in the last quarter: "I worship you, my *guru*, in the form of the topmost *sakhī*."

One of the nine Yogendras, Kavi, spoke to King Nimi as follows:

"The Supreme Lord has created a process whereby even the most ignorant and foolish people can attain Him. This process is known as *bhāgavata-dharma*. Anyone who has faith in this process will never be bewildered. Even if he runs with his eyes closed, he will neither slip nor fall."

Those who are averse to the Lord's service fall into the grips of His illusory energy and forget their eternal identity. This leads to identification with the material body and



further disruption of the intelligence. As a consequence, one becomes absorbed in everything but Krishna, everything that is the nonself. And the result of this is fear.

Therefore an intelligent and discerning individual will make the spiritual master his personal Deity (*guru-daivatātmā*) and recognize him as his dearest friend. Following him with this attitude, the disciple should embark on the path of exclusive devotion to the Supreme Lord. Such worship primarily takes the form of loudly glorifying the names of the Lord that are related to his birth and activities without any care for or attachment to what people might think. (SB 11.2.34–37)

In the following chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Prabuddha, the next of the nine masters of *yoga*, continues the discourse on *bhāgavata-dharma*. He begins, in 11.3.22, by saying that one must take initiation from a spiritual master who is situated in full knowledge of the scriptural form of the Lord, who has had direct experience of the Lord, and who is free from anger, lust, greed, and other base qualities, and then study *bhāgavata-dharma* under him:

*tatra bhāgavatān dharmān
śikṣed gurv-ātma-daivataḥ
amāyānūvṛtṭyā yais
tuṣyed ātmātma-do hariḥ*

“Knowing the spiritual master to be one’s ever well-wisher, dearest friend, and the manifestation of the supremely worshipable Lord Hari, one should serve him constantly, with sincerity, and with this attitude learn from him *bhāgavata-dharma*, or the various religious activities that will please Krishna, the giver of the soul.”

Our most worshipable spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, writes in his *Vivṛti* commentary on this verse:

Once one has taken shelter of the spiritual master, the *jīva* should serve him, taking the attitude that the guru is not a part of this illusory manifestation or mundane creation but one who has taken full shelter of Krishna and is therefore nondifferent from Him. The word *guru* means “heavy” or “important.” If under the influence of the illusory energy, one takes the guru as *laghu*, “light,” and furthermore tries to use him to serve his own circumstantial ends, then he will attain results of a transient nature. This attitude is contrary to the concept of obedience, and so Rupa Goswami has advised us of our duty to serve the spiritual master with a sense of faith and trust. We should serve Krishna with full awareness of His transcendental nature as well as awareness of the transcendental nature of His servants. By so doing, Krishna will be pleased with us, and as a result of His pleasure, our eagerness to serve His servant, the guru, will steadily increase, which in turn will lead to Krishna’s ever greater satisfaction. With this we will come to realize the truth of the famous verses from the *Upaniṣads*:

*yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanah*

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, who is His manifestation and not different from Him, are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23)

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthis
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi
tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare*

“When one has a vision of the Supreme Truth, the knots binding his heart are untied, his doubts are removed, and his bondage to the results of his past deeds is eradicated.”



(*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 2.2.9). See also *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.20 and 11.20.30.

But before the *jīva* can realize the purport of these two verses in his life, he must first follow the instructions Srila Rupa Goswami gives in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.74):

*guru-padāśrayas tasmāt
kṛṣṇa-dīkṣādi-sikṣaṇam
viśrambhena guroḥ sevā
sādhu-vartmānuvartanam*

“First take shelter of a spiritual master. Take initiation and instruction from him. Serve the spiritual master in a spirit of trust and affection and follow the path taken by the saintly devotees.”

When one has accomplished these four acts, he is considered a beginner on the path of devotional practice and can begin to hear *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, the revealed text of the Vaishnavas. At this point he can start to become truly free of the fear that comes from absorption in what is “not Krishna.” As stated in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.2.37):

*bhayam dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo’smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet tam
bhaktyaikayeśa-guru-devatātmā*

“When the living entity is distanced from the Supreme Lord, he is attracted by the material energy, which is separate from the Lord. As a consequence, he is overpowered by fear, his conception of life is reversed, and he becomes forgetful of his constitutional position. All this takes place by the Lord’s illusory energy. Therefore, one who is actually intelligent worships the Lord by the process of unalloyed devotional service, making his spiritual master his worshipful Deity and the source of life.”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.7) also states:

*yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām
kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe
bhaktir utpadyate pumisaḥ
śoka-moha-bhayāpahā*

“By hearing this *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, one is blessed with devotion to Krishna, the Supreme Person. This devotion puts an end to all mourning, bewilderment, and fear.”

Realizing the purport of these verses means that one has truly become a consecrated servant of Krishna. In other words, one does not accept anything other than service to Krishna as the direct or indirect result of his actions. This is the meaning of *bhāgavata-dharma*. Although *bhāgavata-dharma* takes countless forms when it appears in this world, those who take it up are no longer bound by the path of works and ritual (*karma*), knowledge or philosophical speculation (*jnāna*), or the impulse to act whimsically.

The kind of genuine spiritual master who both practices and preaches *bhāgavata-dharma* is rare in this world. Sri Chaitanya Mahāprabhu both taught and exemplified the pure path of devotion, which is based on a correct understanding of spiritual truth. In the course of time, however, the path of *bhāgavata-dharma* was gradually diluted by various false teachings, which distorted the world’s perception of it. Seeing this, Mahāprabhu mercifully sent two powerful individuals in two successive generations: Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and His next manifestation in my spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. The very presence of these two great souls on this earth made it holy. They both set out on a mission to deliver the conditioned souls by preaching *bhāgavata-dharma*.

From *Guru: The Universal Teacher* by Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur



NAME-GIVING CEREMONY OF SRI BALARAM AND SRI KRISHNA

by

Srila Vyasa Dev

Once, as mother Yaśodā was seated with baby Kṛṣṇa on her lap, feeding Him, a Brahmana sage came before her, surrounded by his disciples. He was dressed in white garments and was a master of science and astrology. While gazing at the sage, one would think that he embodied four Vedas. Goddess Saraswati resided on his tongue.

Upon seeing this great sage, Yaśodā got up from her seat and bowed before him. She then presented him arghya, madhuparka and gold before offering him a throne to sit upon.

Mother Yaśodā, thereafter, addressed the sage very respectfully, requesting him to suggest a suitable name for her child. Garga Muni replied, “Your nectarean words are just befitting your family. You are the daughter of the cowherd Giribhanu and his wife Padmavati. You were given the name Yaśodā because you have increased the glory of your family. I know of your identity from previous life, and that of your husband, as well as the reason this child has appeared as your son. However, I will only speak of this privately to your husband.

I am the family priest of Yadu dynasty, and Garga is my name. I have been sent here by Vasudeva for accomplishing a very important mission.”

Just then, having heard of the sage’s arrival, Nanda Maharaja entered and offered his obeisance. Nanda and Yaśodā then took Garga Muni to their private quarter. Only Balaram and Kṛṣṇa were with them.

Garga Muni then said, “Being afraid of Kamsa, Vasudeva brought his son here and exchanged him with the daughter that had just been born to you. He then took your daughter back to Mathura. Therefore, Vasudeva is the actual father of this child, and his elder brother is also the son of Vasudeva. Vasudeva has secretly sent me here to perform the annaprasana and name-giving ceremonies for his children. Kindly make proper arrangements to do this.



Your child is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appearing on Earth to remove her burden. This child first appeared in the prison of Vasudeva, manifesting his eternal four-armed form. He then transformed Himself into this human-like form and requested Vasudeva to bring Him here to Gokula. The child appears in all the four yugas in forms having complexions of white, red, blackish and golden. This child should be given the name Kṛṣṇa because He is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. Indeed, of all of the names of Lord Vishnu, the name Kṛṣṇa is the principal one. Long ago, I heard



the glories of the name Kṛṣṇa from the mouth of Lord Siva.

Now I shall speak about the name of your elder son. Because He was transferred from the womb of Devaki to the womb of Rohini, He will be named Saṅkarṣaṇa. Because of His unlimited prowess, He will also be known as Baladeva, and because He will plough, He will be called Haladhara.

My dear Nanda, on the fourteenth day in the month of Magha, the name-giving ceremony should be performed for these two boys.”

After saying this, Garga Muni departed, and Nanda and Yaśodā began making required arrangements for the name-giving ceremony of their two sons. When all the heaps of foodstuff were prepared and the arena was lavishly decorated, the Vidyadharis danced and the Gandharvas played their musical instruments, as all the invited guests started to arrive.

Thereafter when the name-giving ceremony was performed, the younger child of Nanda

Maharaja was awarded the name Kṛṣṇa, and the elder child was named Balarama. Sumptuous food was then offered to one and all and charity was distributed lavishly.

Garga Muni then took Kṛṣṇa to a secluded place and offered his prayers, wherein he begged to be engaged as an eternal servant of the Lord in Goloka Vrindavana.

Baby Kṛṣṇa smiled and gave His approval to all that Garga Muni had said. Garga Muni then returned Kṛṣṇa to Nanda Maharaja, and took permission to leave. Thereafter, all the people in attendance returned to their homes. Nanda and Yaśodā also took their two sons and entered their residence.

From the Stories from the Brahma-vaivarta Purana by Vedavyasa, translated by Purnaprajna Das



VAISHNAVA FESTIVALS: AUGUST 2019

Date	Festival
1 August	Disappearance day of Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Dev Goswami
4 August	Disappearance day of Srila Vamsi Das Babaji
11 August	Pavitropani Ekadasi; Radha-Krishna Jhulan yatra begins
12 August	Disappearance day of Srila Rupa Goswami and Gauri Das Pandit
14 August	Appearance day of Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaj
15 August	Appearance day of Lord Baladev (Guru Purnima)
23 August	Sri Krishna Janmashtami
24 August	Nandotsava; Appearance day of Srila AC Bhakti Vedanta Swami
26 August	Annada Ekadasi

Bhagavata Dharma

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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.

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