

Founder Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur

# BHAGAVATA

The e-magazine of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math

Issue No.4

February 2017

# DHARMA

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The world currently is a turbulent place due to material desires and sectarian mentality of religious groups. The philosophy of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is not to discriminate on the basis of caste and creed or based on religious designations. Rather, love one another, as we all come from the same source, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. We are all related to each other as brothers and sisters. Therefore, we are supposed to share loving exchanges with each other instead of involving ourselves in war. According to the instruction of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, by chanting the Hare Krishna Mahamantra we can establish the mood of loving each other and make the entire society peaceful and blissful.

*In the Service of Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's Mission,*

*His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja*



## VASANTA PANCAMI: THE ARRIVAL OF SPRING IN VRINDAVAN

By Srila Kavi Karnapura

With the arrival of spring, the different types of *Vraja-gopīs* enjoyed many delightful pastimes. The unmarried *gopīs* started the gaities by sneaking off to the forest to pick flowers. Then the married *gopīs*, who had previously worshipped Kātyāyani, were granted permission by their mothers-in-law to worship ‘*kunja-devata*<sup>1</sup>. Secretly, they also worshipped Vrinda-devi. In this way, the intelligent *gopīs* could enter the forest of Vrindavana and attain the intimate association of Kṛṣṇa.

The tender petals of the Kunda flowers of spring broke the fierce tusk of the elephants of winter. The spring season arrived in the form of a playful lion cub showing his teeth as the stamens of the flowers. The southern breezes forced the chills of winter to depart. It appeared as if time personified had now opened his nostrils and begun breathing.

The juncture of winter and spring seemed like the period between boyhood and adolescence. The tender creepers exploded with new buds. The cuckoos sang their sweet melodies – *kuu huu, kuu huu* – although they did not sing the fifth note which lovers murmur at union. Though the southern breezes had begun, they were weak due to their lingering attachment to the Malaya hills. It seemed as if buds, birds, and breezes simultaneously awaited the departure of winter season.

The forest welcomed the spring season with the sweet fragrance of fresh flowers. With the disappearance of winter, the forest beamed with delight like a man feeling fresh and clean after morning bath. The creepers appeared to

be splashed with rich aromas. Overwhelmed with joy, the birds sang happily.

It seemed that wives of the four directions smiled favourably at the arrival of spring. The moonlight appeared like sandalwood paste pleasantly anointing the night. The rambling Malayan breezes carried the sweet flavor of fragrant flowers. The bumble bees returning to their hives looked like a flock of birds in the sky. The budding mango trees looked as if they were filled with tiny bumps of joy from the touch of Mādhavi creepers. What more can be said about the arrival of spring? The forest appeared like Kandarpa who had just changed his body.

On Vasanta Pancami, the first day of spring, Shyāmasundara, whose joyfully sweet and sportive nature spread in all directions, filled the horizons with the reflection of His beautiful blue complexion. The *Vrajavāsis* mistook the nectar shower of Kṛṣṇa’s sweet beauty to be an unexpected monsoon rain. Their eyes, ears, and minds tingled with joy upon hearing that spring had arrived and that Kṛṣṇa hankered to celebrate it. The hearts of the moon-faced *Vraja-gopīs* throbbed with anxiety to meet their beloved. Overwhelmed by the intoxication of spring, Radhika, Candravali, Syama-devi, and all their respective girlfriends abandoned their shyness and ran to the forest with a strong desire to take part in the celebrations.

With great love and affection, Vrinda-devi and her *vanadevis* appropriately decorated Radhika and the *gopīs* for the joyous festival of spring. They dressed the *gopīs*, their revered objects of love, in bright coloured blouses, sarees with gold *jari*, and veils made from the finest soft cloth. They adorned them with fresh flowers and sixteen types of

<sup>1</sup> This worship was the result of the clever plan of Madhumangala who had been approached by the

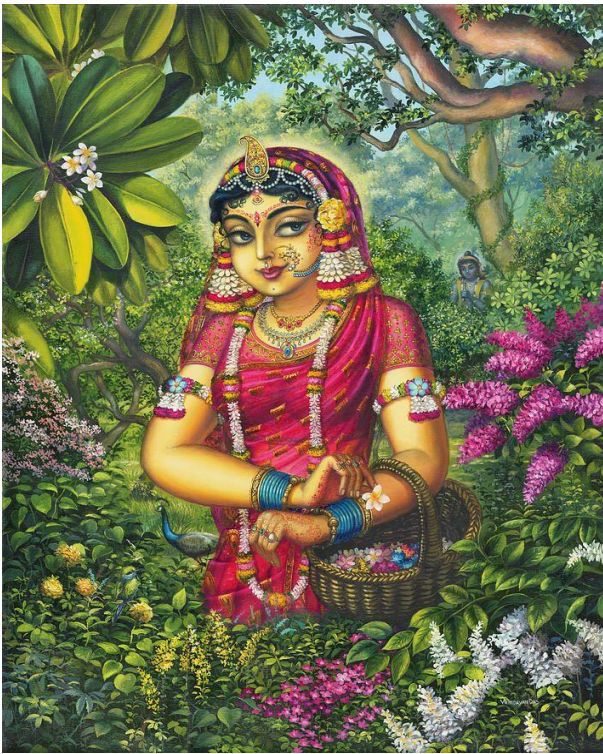
elderly *gopīs* who were concerned for their daughters-in-laws lack of affection towards their husbands



ornaments. As they were being dressed, the *gopīs* bashfully remembered the boon that Kṛṣṇa had given them when He stole their clothes on the last day of their *Kātyāyavi-vrata*.

Vrinda-devi felt very joyful as she personally decorated Radhika with flower ornaments. She set white lilies in Radhika's hair and placed a bakula garland across Her hairline that seemed to kiss Sri Radha's forehead. Then Vrinda-devi adorned parting of Sri Radha's hair with deftly placed red asoka flowers, hung mango buds over Her ears, and beautified Her bosom with a *vasanti* garland.

As a final touch, the *vanadevis* smeared the bodies of all the *gopīs* with sandalwood pulp and offered them splendid flower garlands. Thus the gorgeous *gopīs* further beautified the spring forest of Vrindāvana.



Adapted from *Ananda Vrindavan Campu* by Srila Kavi Karnapura, translated by Sri Bhanu Swami and Sri Subhag Swami

## ŚRĪ-NITYĀNANDĀṢṬAKAM

By Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura

*sarac-candra-bhrāntīm sphurad-amala-  
kāntīm gaja-gatīm  
hari-premonmattam dhṛta-parama-sattvam  
smīta-mukham  
sadāghūrṇan-netram kara-kalita-vetram kali-  
bhidam  
bhaje nityānandam bhajana-taru-kandam  
niravadhi (1)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. As He walks with the grace of a majestic elephant, His pure, splendid beauty shines like the full autumn moon. Though He Himself is the Absolute Truth, He is maddened with pure love for Lord Hari. He smiles as He rolls His eyes in apparent intoxication, He carries a stick in His hand – in the mood of a cowherd boy – and He breaks the power of the Age of Kali.

*rasānām āgāram svajana-gaṇa-sarvasvam  
atulam  
tadīyaika-prāṇa-pramīta-vasudhā-jāhnavā-  
patim  
sadā-premonmādam param aviditam manda-  
manasām  
bhaje nityānandam bhajana-taru-kandam  
niravadhi (2)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He is the abode of the mellows of devotional service, and no one can be compared to Him. He is the be-all and end-all for His devotees, and the husband of Vasudhā and Jāhnavā, to whom He is more dear than life itself. Because He is always maddened with pure love for Kṛṣṇa, the foolish non-devotees cannot understand that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.





*śacī-sūnu-preṣṭham nikhila-jagad-iṣṭam  
sukha-mayam  
kalau majjaj-jivoddharaṇa-karaṇoddāma-  
karuṇam  
harer ākhyānād vā bhava-jaladhi-garvonnati-  
harām  
bhaje nityānandam bhajana-taru-kandam  
niravadhi (3)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He is very dear to the son of Śacī-devī and is worshiped by the entire universe. Out of His great mercy He chants the holy name of Lord Hari, thus rescuing the souls drowning in the age of Kali and crushing the pride of the ocean of repeated birth and death.



*aye bhrātar nīṇām kali-kaluṣiṇām kim nu  
bhavitā  
tathā prāyaścittam racaya yad-anāyāsata ime  
vrajanti tvām ittham saha bhagavatā  
mantrayati yo  
bhaje nityānandam bhajana-taru-kandam  
niravadhi (4)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He said to Lord Caitanya, “O brother, the people are all becoming infected by the sins of Kali-yuga. How will they atone for these sins? Please give them some means to easily approach You.”

*yatheṣṭham re bhrātaḥ kuru hari-hari-  
dhvānam anīṣam  
tato vaḥ saṁsārāmbudhi-taraṇa-dāyo mayi  
laget  
idam bāhu-sphoṭair aṭati raṭayan yaḥ  
pratigrham  
bhaje nityānandam bhajana-taru-kandam  
niravadhi (5)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He went to each house in Bengal and, raising His arms, said, “O brother, if you will, please constantly chant the holy name of Lord Hari. If you do this, you will become free from the ocean of birth and death. Please give Me this gift of your liberation.”

*balāt saṁsārāmbhonidhi-harana-  
kumbhodbhavam aho  
satām śreyaḥ-sindhūnnati-kumuda-bandhum  
samuditam  
khala-śreṇī-sphūrjit-timira-hara-sūrya-  
prabham aham  
bhaje nityānandam bhajana-taru-kandam  
niravadhi (6)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He is the Agastya Muni who forcibly swallows the ocean of repeated death. He is a rising full moon, friend of the night-blooming lotus, who expands the ocean of the saintly devotees’ good fortune. He is the blazing sun who extinguishes the darkness of the community of demons.



*naṭantaṁ gāyantaṁ harim anuvadantaṁ  
pathi pathi  
vrajantaṁ paśyantaṁ svam api na dayantaṁ  
jana-gaṇam  
prakurvantaṁ santaṁ sa-karuṇa-dṛg-antaṁ  
prakalanād  
bhaje nityānandaṁ bhajana-taru-kandaṁ  
niravadhi (7)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He traversed every road, dancing, singing the names of Lord Hari, and describing His glories. Without considering His own interests, He was merciful to everyone He met, and cast upon them His merciful sidelong glance.

*su-bibhrāṇam bhrātuḥ kara-sarasijaṁ  
komalatarāṁ  
mitho vaktrālokocchalita-paramānanda-  
hṛdayam  
bhramantaṁ mādhyair ahaha madayantaṁ  
pura-janān  
bhaje nityānandaṁ bhajana-taru-kandaṁ  
niravadhi (8)*

I worship Lord Nityānanda, the limitless root of the tree of devotional service. He fondly grasped His brother Lord Caitanya's soft and beautiful lotus hand, and together They wandered here and there, delighting the townspeople with Their sweet beauty. Their hearts filled with bliss when They gazed upon each other's lotus faces.

*rasānāṁ ādhāraṁ rasika-vara-sad-vaiṣṇava-  
dhanam  
rasāgāraṁ sāraṁ patita-tati-tāraṁ  
smaraṇataḥ  
paraṁ nityānandāṣṭakam idam apūrvam  
pathati yaḥ  
tad-aṅghri-dvandvābjaṁ sphuratu nitarāṁ  
tasya hṛdaye (9)*

These eight verses glorifying Lord Nityānanda are the abode of the mellows of devotional service, and they are the wealth of the pure devotees who are expert at relishing those mellows. All the fallen, conditioned souls can get liberation just by remembering this āṣṭakam. These verses are excellent, transcendental, and unprecedented. May the lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda appear eternally in the hearts of those who read these verses and remember the Lord.

*Adapted from Sri Nityānandāṣṭakam by Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, translation by Sri Kusakratha Das*

### **SRILA JAYADEVA GOSWAMI AND THE ROBBERS**

*by HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami  
Thakur*

Once Srila Jayadeva Goswami wished to put on a festival for his beloved deities Sri Rādhā Mādhava. However, he lacked sufficient funds to do so. He decided to go outside his village to collect some funds, using his poetic skills. On his return, he was stopped by a group of robbers who not only stole his money but cut his hands and feet and threw him into a well to die. Despite being in severe pain, Jayadeva continually called out the names of the Lord as loudly as he could.

Three days later, the king happened to pass that way on a hunting expedition and heard the sound of the holy names coming from the well. The king approached the well out of curiosity and was horrified to see Jayadeva in a serious condition. He rescued Jayadeva from the well and brought back to his palace to personally treat him. Under the king and queen's care, Jayadeva gradually returned to health.

Both the king and queen were enchanted by Jayadeva's sweet singing of the *Gīta-Govinda*



as well as his saintly character. They immediately sent servants to bring Padmavati to the palace. The royal couple began to hear about Kṛṣṇa regularly from Jayadeva. They took initiation from Jayadeva and started to make their lives successful through service to the Lord and His devotees.

One day, the robbers who had attacked Jayadeva came to the king's palace disguised as devotee guests. Even though Jayadeva recognized the robbers, he still honoured them according to their external appearance and arranged for the appropriate hospitality to be offered. The robbers, however, did not understand Jayadeva's forgiving and generous nature. Fearing capture and punishment, they thought it would be best to leave without accepting the royal hospitality. Jayadeva understood their fear and asked the king to give them a large sum of money and escort to usher them out of the palace.

After they had gone a certain distance, the robbers said to the escorting soldiers, "You need not go any further. We would like to tell you a secret message to convey to the king. Prior to becoming *Vaiṣṇavas*, we were the servants of a certain king who for a very good reason ordered us to murder this priest, Jayadeva. So we cut his hands and feet and left him to die. Fearing his secret would come out now, the priest gave us a lot of money and asked us to leave quickly."

Mother Earth could not tolerate hearing such a horrendous lie. So she opened and swallowed the entire gang of robbers.

In *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (8:20:4), mother Earth has said:

*na hy asatyāt paro'dharma  
iti hovāca bhūr iyam /  
sarvaṁ soḍhum alaṁ madhye  
ṛte'likaparaṁ naram //*

"There is no greater irreligiousness than untruth. I can bear any burden other than that of a person who constantly lies."

The goddess of the Earth was unable to support the weight of the sinful liars and so she swallowed them up. As they blasphemed Jayadeva, a great devotee of the Lord, they met their doom in the bowels of the Earth.

The servants of the king who had accompanied the robbers were amazed to see how they were punished for their offense to Jayadeva. They returned to the palace and told the king everything that they had witnessed. The king inquired from Jayadeva about the robbers and he told the entire story. He said, "O king, a saintly person does not take revenge on those who have behaved malevolently towards him. Instead he tries to please them by polite behavior. Even so, the Lord's flawless will makes them suffer the consequences of their sinful actions, as He did in this case."

*Adapted from Associates of Lord Caitanya by HDG  
Sri Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur*

## SRILA VISVANATHA CAKRAVARTI THAKURA FACES OPPOSITION

*By Sri Bhaktivedanta Narayana Goswami  
Maharaja*

At the time of Sri Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, there were some *panditās* in Vrindavana who opposed him for propagating the worship of the Lord in the mood of paramour (*parakīya bhāva*). In debate however, Visvanatha defeated them by his deep scholarship and irrefutable logic. On account of this, the envious *panditās* resolved to kill him. Visvanatha had the habit of rising early in the morning and performing *parikrama* of Vrindavana. The *panditās* formulated a plan to kill him at that time in some dense, dark grove.



While performing *parikrama* one day, Visvanatha came to the place where the *panditās* were hiding. They saw him approaching, and suddenly he was no longer there. Instead, they saw a beautiful young *Vrajavāsi* girl picking flowers along with two or three of her friends. The astonished *panditās* inquired from the girl, "Dear child, just a moment ago we saw a devotee approaching here. Did you happen to see him? Where did he go?" The girl replied, "I saw him, but I don't know where he went."

Seeing the astounding beauty of the girl, her sidelong glances, graceful feminine manner, and gentle smile, the *panditās* were captivated. Instantly, all impurity in their minds was vanquished and their hearts were softened. The *panditās* then requested the girl to introduce herself. She politely replied, "I am a maidservant of Svāmīnī Srimatī Rādhikā. She is presently at Her mother-in-law's house at *Yāvata*. She sent me here to pick flowers." Saying this, the girl disappeared, and in her place, they saw Srīla Visvanatha Cakravartī Thakura. Horrified at their offense, the *panditās* fell at his lotus feet and begged for forgiveness. Out of natural compassion, he forgave them.

*Adapted from the introduction to Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu-bindu By Srīla Bhaktivedanta Narayana Goswami Maharaja*

## MAHAPRABHU'S PREMA FOR NAROTTAMA DAS THAKUR

*By Sri Nityananda dasa*

This pastime demonstrates how Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu bestowed love of God on Narottama das Thakur even before his birth.

One day as Lord Caitanya was dancing in *sankīrtana*, He suddenly called out the name, "Narottama! Narottama!" He stood by Lord

Nityananda's side, resting his hand on his shoulder, while shedding tears of ecstatic love. Nityananda Prabhu loudly chanted Jagannath's name which brought Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu back to external consciousness. Then again, Lord Caitanya called out, "Narottama! Narottama!", looking around as if to find him. Everyone decided that it would be best to somehow or other take the Lord to Nilacala, thinking that once He crossed the river Padmavati, He would again become peaceful.

When the Lord again called "Narottama! Narottama!", the people began to understand that perhaps a great person was about to appear. Lord Caitanya embraced Nityananda in ecstatic love and soaked His body with tears. Nityananda prabhu pacified the Lord and asked, "My Lord, You have repeatedly been calling out Narottama during your *kīrtana*. I think he must be an exalted devotee and I wish to see him. I think gaining his association would be of great benefit to me." Lord Caitanya said, "There is a place called Gaderahaat on the bank of the Padmavati near here. It is so pleasant that if you visit it, you will not want to leave. My dear Nityananda, I have a great desire to distribute love of God at that place. The *sankīrtana* movement has inundated the entire Navadwīp area, but now I live in Nilacala. I wish to preserve the *sankīrtana* movement after I leave this world, so I will distribute love of God at Gaderahaat." Nityananda Prabhu said, "O Lord, You seem to be quite taken by this place. I wonder who is that fortunate soul there, upon whom You will bestow Your mercy!" Lord Caitanya replied, "O Nityananda, as long as You are present in this world, love of God will remain here. Presently, people all over the country are intoxicated by love of God. Still, I wish to save that *prema* for future generations. If love of





God were given to a suitable person, it would remain intact; otherwise it might be lost. Let us now go to Gaderahaat; there I will give love of God to a person who will, in due course of time, intoxicate everyone with it.”

“My dear Nityananda, You bound me with Your love since I have been in Nilacala. I want to deposit that love in the waters of the river Padmavati so that she can deliver it to one Narottama, who will be the personification of the love of God. He will soon take birth there.”

Nityananda said, “Where is this place Gaderahaat? I would like to go there.”

Lord Caitanya and Nityananda, along with Their associates then set out to Gaderahaat while pretending to others that They were going to Vrindavan. Soon They arrived at the beautiful village of Kudodarapura, where They spent the night discussing Kṛṣṇa *katha*.

They rose early the next morning and performed *sankīrtana*. They roared loudly and their bodies shivered in ecstasy. They danced so exuberantly that thousands of people could not have held them. During this *kīrtana*, the Lord repeatedly called out “Narottama! Narottama!”

Nityananda Prabhu said jokingly, “This Narottama has stolen Your love of God.”

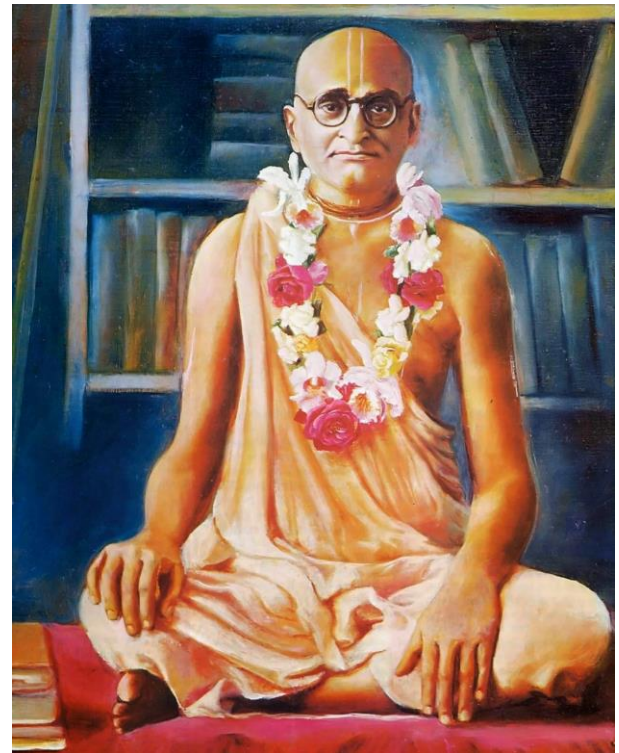
The two Lords and Their associates finally stopped the *kīrtana* and entered Padmavati to bathe. As soon as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s body touched the waters of the river, goddess Padmavati became intoxicated with love of God. Her waves came to a standstill and her water began to rise. Within a short time, the entire village was flooded. The people were both astonished and frightened to see so much water when it was not the rainy season. The Lord told Padmavati, “Save this ecstatic love for Narottama. You can award it to him

in due course of time.” Giving assent, Padmavati asked, “How will I recognize him?” The Lord replied, “When someone’s mere touch makes you ecstatic, you will know for certain that he is Narottama.” Happily, Padmavati held within herself the love of God given to her by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, saving it for Narottama. As Padmavati bade Them farewell, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu, stood silently for some time.

*Adapted from Prema Vilasa – Pastimes of Love, by Sri Nityananda dasa, translation by Sri Bhumipati dasa*

### APPEARANCE OF SRILA PRABHUPADA

*by HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami  
Thakur*



Mahaprabhu could not tolerate hearing anything that contradicted the pure spirit of devotion. For this reason, He always had Svarupa Damodar read everything before He Himself listened to it. For the very same reason, He arranged for Bhaktivinoda Thakur to take responsibility for the Jagannath





temple in Puri for a period of five years (1871-1875). It was during this time that Srila Prabhupada took birth.

Bhaktivinoda Thakur is the best of the followers of Svarupa Damodar and Rupa Goswamis. He noted that my spiritual master, Srila Prabhupada, had taken birth in the land of Purushottam, Jagannath Puri, where the Supreme Lord Himself had come to relish the taste of love in separation. Bhaktivinoda Thakur thus recognized his appearance to be the blessings of, Bimala Devi, Jagannath Deva's personal energy who was acting to enrich the Lord's pastimes. So he named the child Bimala Prasad. It is impossible for anyone to preach about the divine abode, name, form, activities and glories of the Supreme Lord without the direct blessings of His internal potency, *Yogamāya*. This is corroborated in *Caitanya Caritamṛta – kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*.

In his later life, Srila Prabhupada took on other names (Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati and Varshabhanavi-dayita Das) that were reflections of his virtues and activities.

As a small boy, Srila Prabhupada did not show the typical childish enthusiasm for play and sports. He considered such activities to be a waste of time. Instead he had a natural taste for worshiping the Lord and chanting His names. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur later gave Prabhupada his blessings to go and live in Mayapur in a place called Baraja-pota. Srila Prabhupada renamed that place Vraja-pattana and later established Chaitanya Math there. He lived there following a strict celibate life, exemplifying the duty of a *sādhaka* by taking the vows of *Chaturmasya* and chanting one billion Holy Names. During this time, he also wrote commentaries on *Caitanya Caritamṛta*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, Srila Rupa Goswami's *Upadeśāmṛta* and Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣāṣṭaka*.

He also wrote a book describing the relative positions of a *Vaiṣṇava* and a *brāhmaṇa*. This text made him the object of Mahāprabhu and Bhaktivinoda Thakur's undying affection. Nevertheless, Srila Prabhupada himself said that his main mission in life was to preach the books and message of Bhaktivinoda Thakur. He considered Bhaktivinoda to be the manifest representative of Srimati Rādhārānī. He had a saying, *bābā bādhā rādhā*, which means "thinking of him as a father is an obstacle to attaining Rādhārānī." Throughout his lifetime, Srila Prabhupada very often named his deities Vinodānanda, Vinodaprāṇa, etc., in remembrance of Bhaktivinoda Thakur. The Thakur also showed his particular affection for Srila Prabhupada when he wrote:

*sarasvatī kṛṣṇa-priyā kṛṣṇa-bhakti tāra hiyā  
vinodera sei se vaibhava*

"Saraswati is dear to Kṛṣṇa; his heart is filled with devotion for Kṛṣṇa. He is the manifestation of Bhaktivinoda's opulence."

*Adapted from On Love and Separation by HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur*

## VAIṢNAVĀNĀM YATHĀ ŚAMBU

By HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* tells the story of how Yajñeśvara, Lord Viṣṇu, refused to grace King Dakṣa's royal sacrifice because Dakṣa disrespected the topmost *Vaiṣṇava*, Śiva, by not inviting him. Dakṣa's daughter Satī, the devoted wife of Śiva, could not refuse Dakṣa's invitation because he was her father, so she attended despite her husband's not approving.

At the sacrificial arena, her father began to publicly malign Śiva. Satī was deeply pained and thought, "Feeling sentimental, I ignored



my husband’s warning and came to my father’s house. Now I am tormented having to hear blasphemy against an elevated *Vaiṣṇava*. Shame on me a thousand times! I don’t know what to do. I cannot continue to live in this wretched body of mine, which was conceived by my blasphemous father. I will abandon it and purify my soul by bathing in the dust of my godly husband’s feet.”

Satī then addressed her father Dakṣa, “My Lord Śiva is dear to all living beings; he loves everyone and has no enemies. Who else but you could behave in such a despicable manner to this divine personality?”

A saintly person’s nature is to overlook other’s faults and appreciate their good qualities. But an envious person sees even the good qualities of others as faults. The *madhyama-adhikārī Vaiṣṇava* properly discriminates between good qualities and bad qualities. The *uttama-adhikārī* recognises even the minutest good qualities in others and praises them as if they were great; whereas a fool decries even a great personality who possesses all good qualities.

The *Caitanya Charitāmṛta* describes a *Vaiṣṇava* in the following way:

*uttama hañā vaiṣṇava habe nirabhimāna  
jībe sammāna dibe jāni’ kṛṣṇa adhiṣṭhāna  
Caitanya Charitāmṛta, Antya 20.25*

“Although a *Vaiṣṇava* is the most exalted person, he is pride-less and respects everyone, knowing that Kṛṣṇa dwells within them.”

Satī continued, “Anyone who limits his concept of the self to the body, mind, or intellect is certainly deluded. It is not surprising that such fools malign exalted persons.” Elevated souls calmly tolerate all blasphemies hurled against them; they are undisturbed by praise or criticism, honor or dishonor. However, their followers, who are

like particles of pollen clinging to their lotus feet, never tolerate such blasphemy. They want to destroy the offenders.

“The two syllables forming the name Śiva — *śi* and *va* — are so auspicious that by their mere utterance all inauspiciousness and evil is removed. Śiva’s instructions are not to be neglected, his pastimes are all glorious, and he is the best friend of all living beings. Therefore, only an envious fool could think of criticizing him.”



Dakṣa responded, “You have described the sublime characteristics of saints and warned against finding faults in others, but what about me? I am a *brāhmaṇa* and a *Prajāpati* (progenitor); everyone honors me. I am your father and therefore should be highly respected by you, my daughter. Do you not think it is an offense to criticize me?”

Satī replied, “How can you, an enemy of Śiva, speak of blasphemy? As a party to this heinous offense I should kill you, and by not doing so I am worsening my own offense.”

Then she recited the following verse:

*karṇau pidhāya nirayād yad akalpa iṣe  
dharmāvitary aśṛṇibhir nṛbhir asyamāne  
chindyāt prasahya ruśatīm asatīm prabhuś  
cej*

*jihvām asūn api tato visrjet sa dharmāḥ  
Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 4.4.17*



“Upon hearing blasphemy of a protector of religion like Lord Śiva, one should block his ears and go away if he is unable to punish the blasphemer. If he is not in a position to enforce corporal punishment, then he should give up his own life.”

In his commentary to this *śloka*, Srila Visvanath Chakravarti writes:

“During the Vedic times in India, it was the duty of a *kṣatriya* (*kṣatriya-dharma*) to punish blasphemers. The other classes of the society — *brāhmaṇa*, *vaiśya* and *sūdra* — were not permitted to mete out physical punishments. Thus, *vaiśyas* (merchants) and *sūdras* (workers) must give up their lives in response to hearing blasphemy. It is not right for a *brāhmaṇa* to give up his life, so he should cover his ears, chant the name of Lord Vishnu, and leave the company of the blasphemer, feeling deeply saddened.”

Since *Vaiṣṇavas* are at least equal to the *brāhmaṇa*, they are expected to follow the regulation for *brāhmaṇas*. Srila Jiva Goswami writes in *Bhakti-sandarbhā*, in the context of *sādhū-nindā* — the first of the ten *nāmāparādhas* — that it is harmful even to overhear blasphemy of a *Vaiṣṇava*. He quotes the *Bhāgavatam*:

*nindām bhagavataḥ śṛṇvamīś  
tat-parasya janasya vā  
tato nāpaiti yaḥ so'pi  
yāty adhaḥ sukṛtāc cyutaḥ*

*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.74.40*

“Upon hearing blasphemy against the Supreme Lord or His devotee, any person who does not leave that sacrilegious place would be implicated in the offense and lose all *sukṛti* (spiritual merit).”

Sri Jiva comments, “The instruction to leave

the place of offense is solely directed at those who are weak. Those who are strong and powerful must retaliate. Those incapable of either of these courses of action should give up their lives.”

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada writes in his purport to the same verse:

“The *brāhmaṇas* are the gurus of the entire *varnashram* society. The *Vaiṣṇava ācārya* is the *guru* (spiritual preceptor) of those *brāhmaṇas*. At the first sign of blasphemy against such an *ācārya*, one should immediately leave. If one cannot execute corporal punishment on the blasphemer, he should give up his body, feeling unbearable distress and shame.”

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Prabhupada also says that one should not only avoid the association of those who blasphemes a *Vaiṣṇava*, but also the company of his associates.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur writes in *Kalyāṇa-kalpa-taru*:

*vaiṣṇava caritra sarvadā pavitra  
jei ninde hiṃsā kari  
bhaktivinoda nā sambhāṣe tāre  
thāke sadā mauna dhari*

“The *Vaiṣṇava*’s character is always pure. I will never speak to envious people who criticize a *Vaiṣṇava*; I will remain silent in their company.”

Satī, the exalted wife of the greatest *Vaiṣṇava* Lord Śiva, continued to fearlessly berate her father: “I cannot bear living in this awful body born from you. If one mistakenly drinks poison, doctors recommend vomiting. Similarly, my poisoned body needs to be rejected and burned. You are so vile that I am ashamed to be your daughter. My husband addresses me as Dākṣyaṇī, the daughter of



Dakṣa. When I think of that and how it binds me to you, I feel disgusted and so deeply pained at heart that I want to kill myself.”

Finishing her heartfelt condemnation of Dakṣa, Satī went into a deep meditation. By dint of her mystic power, she then left her body. Everyone was shocked, and began to wail. Dakṣa however, remained silent. Satī’s bodyguards, the *Pramathas* and *Guhyakas*, rose up in anger to kill Dakṣa. Seeing this, the great sage Bhṛigu chanted a potent mantra from the *Yajur Veda* and offered oblations into the sacrificial fire. Thousands of strong heavenly warriors known as Ribhus, armed with celestial weapons, arose out of the fire and began to rain blows on Satī’s bodyguards. Outnumbered by these superior warriors, Satī’s guards fled in all directions.

Narada Muni, who had seen the entire incident by dint of his mystic vision then went to Lord Śiva and told him everything. The now infuriated Lord Śiva tore a lock of matted hair from his head and dashed it to the ground. From that lock of hair emerged a monstrous warrior named Vīrabhadra, who was an expansion of Lord Śiva. He bowed in deep reverence to his master and prayed for instructions. Śiva said, “You are the embodiment of my anger. Now lead my associates in their mission to destroy Dakṣa and his sacrifice!”

Vīrabhadra immediately raced to the sacrifice and arrested Dakṣa. He tore Bhṛgu Muni’s mustache off his face, because he had twirled it while derisively laughing at Lord Siva. Vīrabhadra slammed Bhagadeva to the ground and ripped his eyes out, because Bhagadeva had encouraged Dakṣa by winking at him while he was insulting Lord Siva. And because Pūṣā had smiled bearing his teeth while Siva was being abused, Vīrabhadra knocked his teeth out, just as Balarāma had

done to Dantavakra.

Then Vīrabhadra sat on Dakṣa’s chest and severed his head. Vīrabhadra threw the bloody head into the sacrificial fire as an oblation and set the whole arena on fire. Then he called for Siva’s soldiers and left for Kailāsa. Any sacrificial ceremony in which there is blasphemy of a pure *Vaiṣṇava* will face the same destruction.

The sacrificial priest and the attending Gods, all severely wounded, reverently approached Brahmā and narrated the gory episode to him. Brahmā and Sri Nārāyaṇa had stayed away from Dakṣa’s sacrifice, knowing beforehand the terrible outcome. Brahmā patiently heard their pleas and advised: “Those who vilify a powerful personality and then desire to live in peace will find their lives extremely inauspicious. You have offended Śiva, who is a recipient God of the sacrificial oblations. You must be sincerely remorseful and throw yourselves at his feet. He is called Āśutoṣa, very easy to satisfy – so try to please him. When he is angry he is capable of destroying the entire universe. He has been deeply hurt and enraged by the death of his beloved consort. I see no recourse other than sincerely begging forgiveness at his lotus feet.”

Brahma then led Indra and the other Gods to Lord Śiva’s abode, Kailāsa. They found him sitting under a tree and meditating on the Supreme. They offered their respectful obeisance to Siva and he reciprocated. Brahma prayed and begged him to excuse Dakṣa and to find a way for him to complete the *yajñā*. He further pleaded with him to forgive the other gods who were a party to the heinous crime and were now suffering the results of their actions, and to heal the maimed and wounded guests.

Siva was appeased by Brahma and the Gods. By his mystic power, he placed a goat’s head





on Dakṣa and brought him back to life. The others who had been wounded were also healed. Śiva accompanied them to Dakṣa's sacrificial arena, where Dakṣa fell at his feet and begged for mercy. The *yajñā* resumed and this time Narayan came to receive oblations; Śiva and Brahma were worshiped and received the remnants of the sacrificial offerings— Dakṣa's *yajñā* was completed. In

time, Satī was reincarnated as Pārvatī, the daughter of Menakā and Himalaya, and married Śiva again.

By hearing this sacred tale of Śiva, who is the crest jewel among *Vaiṣṇavas*, we advance on the path of devotion.

*Adapted from The Heart of Krishna by HDG Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur*

## VAIṢṆAVA FESTIVALS: FEBRUARY 2017

Date	Festival
1 February	Vasanta pancami, Appearance Day of Srimati Visnupriya Devi, Sri Pundarika Vidhyanidhi, Sri Raghunandana Thakur, and Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami Disappearance Day of Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakur, Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Viveka Bharati Maharaj and Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Svarup Parvat Maharaj Sri Sarasvati puja
3 February	Appearance Day of Sri Advaita Acharya
5 February	Disappearance Day of Srila Sri Madhava Acharya
6 February	Disappearance Day of Srila Sri Ramanuja Acharya
7 February	Bhaimi Ekadasi
8 February	Appearance Day of Sri Varahadev
9 February	Appearance Day of Sri Nityananda Prabhu (Notyananda trayodasi)
11 February	Sri Krishna Madhura Utsava, Appearance Day of Srila Narottam Das Thakur
16 February	Appearance Day of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupad, Disappearance Day of Srila Purushottam Thakur
17 February	Appearance of Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Saranga Goswami Maharaj
22 February	Vijaya Ekadasi
25 February	Sri Siva ratri
27 February	Disappearance Day of Srila Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj, Srila Rasikananda Dev Goswami, and Tridandi Swami Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhav Maharaj
28 February	Appearance Day of Srila Bhakti Kusum Ashram Maharaj



**UPCOMING TRAVEL & SATSANG WITH SRILA BODHAYAN GOSWAMI MAHARAJ**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Satsang Location</b>	<b>Contact</b>
3 – 10 February	San Francisco, USA	Ram Das Prabhu, raoul@insighteditions.com, +1 415-307-6067
11 February	Singapore	Sankarshan Das Prabhu +65 9273 1954
12 - 14 February	Malaysia	Krishnamoorthy Das Prabhu +60 14 330 9108
15- 16 February	Singapore	Sankarshan Das Prabhu +65 9273 1954
17 - 18 February	HasimNagar, Kolkota, India	Hari-Bhakta Das Prabhu
19 February	Behala, Kolkota, India	Behala Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math
20 - 22 February	Nayachak, Joyargori, Howrah, Kolkota, India	
23 February	Khalna, Howrah, Kolkota, India	
24 - 25 February	Amta, Howrah, Kolkota, India	
26 - 28 February	Hotor, Kolkota, India	
28 February – 1 March	Garia, Kolkota, India	
1 - 2 March	Dumdum, Kolkota, India	Vandana Devi & Sanak Prabhu +91-33-25135201, +91-9051141837
3 March	Ghughuragachi	
4 – 18 March	Mayapur	Navadwip Dham Parikrama, Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math

**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.

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