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A person feels happy when he is in his/her own country and has no debts. Materially speaking, we may think that we are in our own country, and have no debt; however, we still do not feel happy. That is why it is important to understand the inner meaning of these two points. Here 'own country' means our eternal identity, and 'no debt' means the state when we are observing pure devotion. In the present age, *Kali yuga*, only by chanting *Hare Krishna Mahamantra* one can fulfil these two things and make his/her life meaningful and joyful.

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

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja

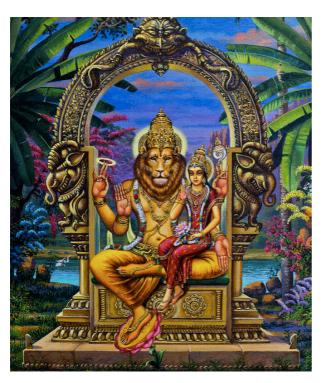


PRAHLAD MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTION ON SEEKING PARAMĀTMĀ

by Srila Vishwanath Chakravarthy Thakura

If you believe my words, may you all have *prema* for the Lord developed from *bhakti* through Nārada's mercy, just as it arises in me, women and other children. Just as fruits of a tree undergo six changes by the influence of time, which is a form of the Lord, while the tree does not change, so the human body undergoes six states, but the soul does not undergo these changes. *Paramātmā* is:

- 1. without destruction,
- 2. without decay,
- 3. pure,
- 4. the one entity,
- 5. the knower of the field,
- 6. the shelter of all things,
- 7. without change,
- 8. self-illuminating,
- 9. the cause of all things,
- 10. all-pervading,
- 11. not influenced by matter, and
- 12. not covered by anything.



By contemplating these twelve features which distinguish the Lord from the jīva, one should give up the false identity of 'me' and 'mine' related to the body, arising from ignorance. As the expert miner obtains gold from the rocks in a mine by various processes, the knower of adhyātmā attains the Paramātmā in the body by methods of realizing ātmā. The acharyas describe eight elements, the three gunas, and the sixteen elementsas well as the one ātmā, which remains there by its relationship to them. The body is a combination of all these. There are two types of bodies: moving and non-moving. One should search out the Paramātmā within the body by rejecting what is different from the Paramātmā. Persons with steadiness, discerning the cause of creation, maintenance destruction, seek out the Paramātmā with pure minds, in order to determine Paramātmā's relationship with difference from the body.

Adapated from Srimad Bhagavatam Canto - 7 Chapter - 7, by Srila Vishwanath Chakravarthy Thakura, translation by HH Bhanu Swami

CIRA-DADHI MAHOTSAVA

by HDG Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakura

Nityananda Prabhu came to Panihati along with Rama Das and Gadadhara Das, where he first visited Raghava Pandit's house. The kirtan that they began from there filled the entire universe with transcendental joy. Panihati is the birthplace of the great devotee, Raghava Pandit. There is no limit to the glories of a great devotee's birthplace. (*Bhakti-ratnākara* 8.156-8)

Mahaprabhu had ordered Nityananda Prabhu to take his associates and leave Puri to preach pure devotion in Bengal. While wandering through the Ganges valley, Nitai was attracted by Raghava Pandit's pure devotional attitude and came to his house in Panihati. Along with him came the three Ghosh brothers, Govinda, Madhava and Vasudeva, who were known for their



abilities as kīrtanīyas. When they began singing, Nityananda became absorbed in a trance-like state and started to dance. When he had finished dancing, He sat on the Deities' altar and Raghava Pandit and Nityananda Prabhu's entourage performed an elaborate *abhisheka* ceremony to honor Him. After the bathing ceremony, they dressed and garlanded him, whereupon Nityananda sat down again on the Deities' throne while Raghava Pandit held the parasol.

A miraculous event ensued. Nityananda Prabhu, still in a trance-like state, ordered Raghava Pandit to quickly bring him a garland of kadamba flowers. Raghava answered that kadamba trees were not yet in flower. Nityananda Prabhu told him to look around the grounds of his house and he would find the flowers. As Raghava searched, he was amazed to find kadamba flowers blossoming on a lime tree. He quickly picked the flowers and made a garland, which he placed around Nityananda's neck.

Later, Nityananda ordered Raghunatha Das Goswami to put on a feast of chipped rice and yoghurt for his entourage. Raghava Pandit came there also with various foods that had not been contaminated by the touch of cooked rice. He thus witnessed Nityananda's lila of picnicking by the riverbank in great astonishment. After resting the afternoon by the Ganges, Nityananda spent the evening at Raghava Pandit's house immersed in kirtan and dance. Mahaprabhu Himself manifested there, attracted by Nityananda's dancing. In order to reveal the extent of Raghava Pandit's good fortune, Mahaprabhu and Nityananda sat down together and accepted his offerings of rice and various vegetable preparations, as well as cakes and sweet rice, all of which was like the nectar. Overcome with affection for Raghunatha Das, Raghava Pandit gave Mahaprabhu's remnants to him.

From The Associates of Caitanya by HDG Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakura

SHYAMANANDA PRABHU'S MERCY TO SERA KHAN

by Sri Nityananda Das

After stopping in Ambika Kalna to visit his spiritual master Hrdaya Caitanya, Shyamananda Prabhu travelled on to Orissa, to Ambuya Dharenda, his home village. He showed much affection and compassion towards the inhabitants there. From that time on, he vigorously preached the sankirtana movement and because of this, he was able to deliver many sinful rogues and atheists.

One day Shyamananda Prabhu went out with his associates to perform sankirtana in the streets of hs village. This infuriated a representative of the Mohammedan king named Sera Khan who lived in the village. Sera Khan was possessed by an envious nature and would burn with anger whenever he heard the sound of kirtana. Although he had previously ordered Syamananda Prabhu stop performing kirtana Shyamananda Prabhu and his followers ignored that mandate. Because of this one day the angry Mohammedan plunderer and his associates attacked the sankirtana party and broke their mrindangas and kartalas.

This incident made Shyamananda Prabhu furious and though he personally took no action what ensued terrified the Muslims. Suddenly their beards and mustaches burst into flames and they began to vomit blood. In this way, they were punished for their offenses of impeding the sankirtana of Shyamananda prabhu. On the following day, Shyamanada organised an even bigger sankirtan and joyfully led the party through the village. At that time Sera Khan came to offer obeisance, falling at Shyamananda Prabhu's lotus feet saying, "O my master Shyamananda, please have mercy on me. By obstructing your kirtana I have committed a great offense. Please forgive me and show kindness by granting me the shade of your



lotus feet. Due to my sinful action, my beard and mustache were scorched and blood flowed from my mouth and nose. In a dream a formidable personality approached me, slapped my face and in a voice as deep as thunder proclaimed, 'O sinful Muslim, I am your God, Allah". After saying this, He then exhibited a golden form and continued to say in a sweet voice, "My name is Sri Krsna Caitanya and I am the shelter of the countless living entities. Shyamananda Pandita is My dear devotee. If you at all desire your personal welbeing, then you will take initiation from him and become his servant. Otherwise you will certainly go to hell and be punished severely there.'

Seeing that beautiful form, tears cascaded from my eyes and I prayed to him, 'O Lord, You are the master of the entire universe and capable of punishing all. Though there is no one who is more sinful than myself I beg You to kindly give me shelter at your lotus feet."

When Shyamananda Prabhu saw the sincerity and humilityof Sera Khan, he felt compassion and bestowed his mercy upon him. After delivering that repentant man, Shyamananda Prabhu and the devotees continued on to the next village named Rayani to distribute prema bhakti there.

From Prema Vilasa by Sri Nityananda Das

OUR QUALITIES AND OUR REAL DHARMA

by HDG Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Swami

We have come to know the instructions of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna through His teachings in Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā.

cātur-var nyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa-karmavibhāgaśah (Bhagavad-gīta 4.13) In the Vedic system of human society, there are four social divisions, or castes. These four castes are known as *brāhmaṇas*, *ksatriyas*, *vaishyas* and *śudras*. The Supreme Lord Sri Krishna classified these four castes according to the modes of material nature and the work ascribed to them.



The Lord has stated:

- 1) The prominent qualities of the brāhmaṇas are peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, contentment, forgiveness, simplicity, religiousness, compassion and truthfulness.
- 2) The qualities of the kṣatriyas are strength, power, self-restraint, chivalry, endurance, generosity, enthusiasm, and serenity.
- 3) The qualities of the vaisyas are belief in religion, giving charity, devotion, social equity, and a thirst for wealth.
- 4) The qualities of the śūdras are service to the brāhmaṇas, the cows and the Gods, and personal contentment.

We can observe that in today's society there is an abundance of characteristics that are fundamentally opposed to the above list. We see impurity, lying, stealing, atheism, quarrelling, lust, anger and sensual desires. Persons possessing these characteristics are called *antyaja* (uncultured); they do not



belong to any of the above four divisions and are considered to be extremely uncultured.

It is the current norm for people to decide their caste on the basis of their birth. As a result, people who have the abovementioned *antyaja* nature are consigning themselves to one of the four cultured divisions or castes.

The qualities delineated by Lord Sri Krishna for the four enlightened social divisions may be present in some humans by birth. And it is understood that these qualities are coming from their previous lives. However, most people develop their current nature by the influence of their association.

In the present society, we can see that all of the above-mentioned qualities, of those belong to the four caste divisions, and of those belong to *antyaja*, are present in all of us, to some degree. The quantity may vary, and in general, we are not consciously aware of these qualities and how they shape our everyday lives.

All living beings emanate from Lord Sri Krishna. The inner meaning of this sentence is that we all are in the seed forms or part and parcels of the Supreme Lord. Lord Sri Krishna has sown this seed in the region of the meeting place of the spiritual and material worlds which is known as *taṭa*. As the seed-ike *jīvas* have been sown in the region of *taṭa*, they are called *taṭasthā-śakti* or the marginal potency of the Lord.

The following example may be used in order to gain a better understanding of this topic.

A foreign national visits India, and during his visit he impregnates a local Indian woman and goes back to his own country. Therefore, the child was in a foreign land in the form of a seed within the semen of the man, but the seed was sown in India, which in this case represents the marginal region (taṭa). Similarly, all souls exist in dormant

forms within the body of the Lord, and when they are sown by Him in the region of *taṭa*, they acquire the facility and ability to act according to their respective desires. This is why the *jīvas* or living beings are called the marginal potencies of the Lord.

In this age of Kali, (Kali-yuga), the common understanding amongst so-called religions which have become famous in the market place or on television, is that Krishna is a manifestation of Vishnu. But the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam rectifies this misconception by clearly stating that there are four principal expansions that emanate from Krishna's svarūpa, or His original form. They are, Vāsudeva, Sankarsana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. Out of these expansions, Sankarsana is Balarāma Himself. For Sri Krishna's service in the functions of creation and maintenance of the material world and of the living entities, Balarāma then further expands His body into five portions. They are kāraņodakaśāyī viṣṇu, garbhodakaśāyī kṣīrodakaśāyī mahāsañkarṣaṇa and śeṣa nāga. From this authoritative scriptural explanation of the expansions of the plenary portions of the ādi-deva, or the original complete form of Sri Krishna, we can understand Vishnu's position as an expansion of Sri Krishna.

It is my great hope that the readers of this book will abandon their erroneous conceptions which they have gleaned from unauthorised publications and bogus or imitation scriptures, and from the plethora of incorrect concepts presented on television. My aspiration is that the readers will understand two essential points: the first is that Krishna did not originate from Vishnu, and the second is that because Vishnu is Sri Krishna's plenary (full) portion Vishnu and Krishna are identical in tattva.

My desire is that the readers of this book will give proper acknowledgement and respect to both the *mādhurya* (sweet) and *aiśvarya*



(opulent) *vigrahas* (forms) of the Lord, and that they will make sincere efforts to progress in their spiritual life.

At present the number of people possessing brāhmaṇical qualities is slowly declining. Not only *brāhmaṇas*, but persons possessing the qualities of all the four classes created by the Lord are slowly reducing in number. And the number of those who do not possess the qualities of these four classes is increasing in an exponential manner. This *antyaja* natured people who exhibit inferior characters and who therefore do not belong to the four social divisions created by the Lord is a primary characteristic of *Kali-yuga*.

The nature of a king influences the nature of his subjects. Gradually the citizens will absorb the nature of their King into their own natures. In Kali-yuga, at this present point in time, there are more than 200 countries on every country, earth. In the main administrator is a King, Prime Minister or These individuals introduce President. themselves as the prime administrators of their respective countries. However, in reality, they are all under the influence of Kali Maharaja, therefore the actual administrator of all the leaders and their citizens is Kali Maharaja himself.

Kali-yuga not only impacts upon India, but is evident all over the world. We have observed that in today's world, one country will not hesitate to kill thousands of people in order to dominate another country and to spread its boundaries. And some countries, in order to protect their own boundaries, they are killing multitudes of people without feeling any guilt at all. Amidst this atmosphere of war and violence, the countries are spending copious amounts of money to create and maintain nuclear weapons. Some countries are manufacturing these nuclear weapons, and those who are incapable of producing them are hiring some of these countries who are greedy for money and fame to manufacture these dangerous nuclear weapons for them. These countries, abandoning all moral and ethical principles, in order to gain wealth are making these weapons and selling them to others.

From Jagat Jagaran Hari-Nama, World Awakening Holy Name, by HDG Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja

A SUMMARY OF THE VAISHNAVA PHILOSOPHY

by Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

All glories to Lord Govinda, who is known as Gopinatha and Madana Gopala. By His mercy, I shall now speak this excellent and subtle book *Prameya-ratnāvali* (Jewels of the Vaishnava Philosophy).

We pray that we may develop intense constant devotion for Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Lord Nityananda Prabhu, and Lord Advaita Prabhu, the controllers of all religious activities. They are pleased even with the dim reflection of devotional service. The chanting of Their holy names delivers the entire universe.

All glories to Shrila Madhvacarya Swami, the abode of transcendental happiness. Those who are learned and intelligent glorify him, for he is like a boat which enables the conditioned souls to cross beyond this realm of repeated birth and death.

A discriminating person pleases Lord Hari by remembering the faultless disciplic succession of bona-fide spiritual masters, who enable one to attain the perfection of unalloyed devotional service.

The *Padma Purana* explains: "Unless one is initiated by a bona-fide spiritual master in the disciplic succession, the mantra he might have received is without any effect. For this reason, four Vaishnava disciplic successions,



inaugurated by Lakshmi-devi, Lord Brahma, Lord Shiva, and the four Kumaras, will appear in the holy place of Jagannatha Puri, and purify the entire earth during the age of Kali."

Lakshmi Devi chose Ramanujacarya to represent her disciplic succession. In the same way Lord Brahma chose Madhvacarya, Lord Shiva chose Vishnu Svami, and the four Kumaras chose Nimbarka.

With great devotion we glorify the spiritual masters in the Gaudiya Vaishnava disciplic successions. A list of their names are:

1) Sri Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, 2) Brahma, 3) Narada, 4) Vyasa, 5) Madhvacarya, 6) Padmanabha, 7) Nrihari, 8) Madhava, 9) Akshobhya, 10) Jayatirtha, 11) Jnanasindhu, 12) Dayanidhi, 13) Vidyanidhi, Jayadharma, 14) Rajendra, 15) 16) Purushottama, 17) Brahmanya, 18) Vyasatirtha, 19) Lakshmipati, 20) Madhavendra Puri, and 21) Ishvara Puri, Advaita Prabhu and Nityananda Prabhu (who were all disciples of Madhavendra Puri).

We worship Ishvara Puri's disciple, Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who delivered the entire universe by granting the gift of *Krishna-prema* (pure love of Krishna).

A summary of the Vaishnava philosophy, as taught by Sri Madhvacarya taught are:

- 1) Lord Vishnu is the Absolute Truth, than whom nothing is higher,
- 2) He is known by study of the Vedas,
- 3) the material world is real.
- 4) the jivas (living entities) are different from Lord Vishnu
- 5) the Jivas are by nature servants of Lord Vishnu's lotus feet,
- 6) In both the conditioned and liberated condition, the jivas are situated in higher and lower statuses,

- 7) liberation does not mean an impersonal merging, but the attainment of Lord Vishnu's lotus feet.
- 8) Pure devotional service grants liberation, 9) direct perception, logic, and Vedic authority are the three sources of actual knowledge.

These same truths were also taught by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself in His appearance as Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Adapted from Prameya Ratnavali by Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

SNANA YATRA

by Srimati Parama Karuna Devi and Sri Rahul Acharya

The famous festival of the ritual bathing of Sri Jagannatha falls on the full moon (purnima) of the month of Jyestha. Jagannath was earlier worshipped as Nila Madhava by a Sabara (tribal) chief called Visvavasu. Until now, the Daitapatis, descendents of the Sabaras have the exclusive right to take care of the deities during the long cycle from snana yatra to the completion of ratha yatra.

Tribals called Saoras belonging to the southern part of Orissa still oerform a ritual to bathe their deities ceremonially on the last day of the month of *Jyestha*. For this purpose, they collect water from remote jungles where it remains untouched even by the shadow of animals. The temple festivals that are held in a larger and more elaborate scale in the important temples of Puri and Bhubaneswar are also held simultaneously in all the other small temples of the respective deities, though in a more modest scale, all over Orissa.

In the *Utkala khanda* of the *Skanda Purana*, Jagannatha instructs king Indradyumna to find and clean the ancient *sitala kupa* (well)



that is under the akshaya bata, the eternal kalpa vriksha tree, because the water in this well contains water from all the holy places. It is from this well that the temple sevakas ritually collect the water for solemn public bathing of Jagannatha. This ceremonial public bathing has a deep significance and importance in Vedic culture, as it represents the consecration or installation of the worshipable authority - the deity and the king. The abhisheka is in fact the most important part of the ritual of installation because it is a public celebration where the installed authority graciously receives offerings in the most evident and basic way - getting them poured on His body. A very similar ritual was used in ancient cultures all over the worls, when the king or the deity was anointed as a ritual act of consecration. The annual ritual of abhisheka or snana celebrated for Jagannatha takes place on the platform called snana vedi, situated on the east side of the outer wall and visible from the outside of the temple, so thousands of devotees can assemble to participate in the festival. A temporary structure is buil on the platform and decorated. The traditional royal emblems such as white and black parasols and chamaras are also an important part of the scenery. Flags and toranas (arches) are also erected as symbols of celebration.



On *Jyestha sukla caturdasi* after *bada shringara*, the Mahajans carry Sridevi and Madana Mohana to the *dakshina ghara* while Madhava and Bhudevi sit on Their bed. Then the puja Pandas and pati

Mahapatras perform the *mangalarpana* at the three badas.

Silken ropes are fastened around the deities after which They slowly start climbing up to the *snana mandapa*. The dhadi pahandi (special ritual procession when the Deities come in a row) begins with Sudarshana, Balabhadra, Subhadra, Jagannatha and then Madana Mohana move out. The main Deities are carried by the Daityas and Madana Mohana is carried by the Mahajans.

When the Deities reach the *sata pahacha* (the seven steps on the north side of the temple that leads to the Jagamohana), They are decorated with a tahiya (a traditional head gear made of *sola pith, malati* flowers and *durbha*) and the *chula* (Tulasi tufts) provided by the Raghava Das Matha. Then the Suna Goswami and the Mudirasta bring 108 pots of water that had been collected from the *sona kua* (golden well) In Sitala Devi's shrine near the north gate and kept in the *adhivasa* room. Candana, camphor, saffron and chua oil have been added to the water, after which one coconut each was placed on the 108 pots of water.

While the water is being purified again, the Deities are fastened to Their seats at the *snana mandapa*. The usual rituals take place starting with *mangala arati, abakasha* and *mailama*. Then the Datta Mahapatras wash the face of the Deities with camphor water and wipe Them, as the Deities bodies start sweating.

The Deities are dressed with a special type of silk saree called *boirani pata* and are decorated with flower garlands and Tulasi. After the puja is completed and the *mandapa* is cleaned again, the Garabadus bring the 108 pots of water from the *adhivasa ghara* to the accompaniment of various musical instruments. They have cloth wrapped around their faces (only the eyes are visible) to avoid any chance of



contaminating the pure water by sneezing, etc.

After completing the *sodasha upachara* rituals, the puja pandits start pouring water from the silver pot held by the Mekapa who in turn refills from the pot held by the Garabadu. This whole ritual is conducted to the accompaniment of musical instruments.

By this time, the costumes for *Hati vesa* are brought from Gopala Tirtha Math for Balabhadra, and Raghava Das Math for Subhadra and Jagannatha and kept in the Jagamohana near the Garuda stambha.

Meanwhile the royal rituals are taking place at the snana mandapa where the Mudirasta performs the chera pahanra (royal sweeping ceremony). After this ritual is completed, the Pushpalakas and Datta Mahapatras dress the Deities with *Hati vesa*.

The story of this very peculiar outfit is narrated in the *Oriya Dardhyata Bhakti* as connected to a great devotee of Ganesha, called Ganapati Bhatta, who had come from the village of Kaniari in Karnataka. It is said that Ganapati Bhatta wished to see his beloved ishta deva, Ganesha, while having darsana of Sri Jagannatha. The outfit mainly consists in two huge and elaborately decorated elephant head masks that only show a small portion of Jagannatha's and Balabhadra's faces within an oval-shaped hole in the center. Also Subhadra's face is half-hidden so that the paint smearing from the bathing is not very visible.



After the *Hati vesa* is completed, the puja Pandas present the sakala dhupa food offering, then the pandas, pati Mahapatras and Mudirastas perform the vandapana for the Deities, and the devotees are allowed to get close-up *darsana* of the Deities (*sahana mela*). After sahana mela, the Mudirasta offers pushpanjali and unties the ropes by which the Deities were fastened to the snana mandapa, then the Deities return to the temple.

The particular procession used in this case is called goti pahandi: the Deities come one after the other ie, the pahandi of second Deity starts only after the first Deity has reached the *simhasana*. The Deities again wear new *tahiyas* (head gear) and *chulas* on the *snana mandapa* steps and arrive at the *anavasara pindi*. This completes the *snana purnima* rituals.

Adapated from Puri: The Home of Lord Jagannatha by Srimati Parama Karuna Devi and Sri Rahul Acharya



VAISHNAVA FESTIVALS: MARCH – APRIL - MAY 2018

Date	Festival
5 May	Disappearance Day of Sri Ramanda Raya
11 May	Apara Ekadasi
12 May	Appearance Day of Srila Vrindavan Das Thakura
25 May	Padmini Ekadasi
29 May	Vaisakhi Purnima
10 June	Parama Ekadasi
22 June	Disppearance Day of Srila Baladeva Vidyabhushana
24 June	Nirjala Ekadasi
26 June	Panihati cira dahi festival
28 June	Snana yatra
29 June	Disappearance Day of Sri Shyamananda Pandita

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Bhagavata Dharma

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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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