

Gaura Lila notes 01
From Navadvipa Dhama Mahatmya

Miscellaneous stuff from Navadvipa Dhama Mahatmya:

Vraja vs. Navadvipa:

“Just see the difference between Vraja tattva and Navadvipa tattva. The offenders of Krishna get the liberation of merging into the Lord’s effulgence, whereas in Navadvipa, the offenders receive the treasure of love of Godhead. Therefore, Gaura lilā may be considered the highest of all. The Gaura Dhama the Gaura Nama, His form & qualities, do not consider offense, for these offenses are easily overcome. If the devotee has some offense in his heart, the Krishna Nama and Krishna Dhama will have effect only after a long time. However, with Gaura Nama and Gaura Dhama, one quickly gets prema. Offenses are no obstacle because here the devotee can conquer over them easily.”

Puskara:

“Everyone now calls this place Brahmana Pura, but in the scriptures it is called Brahmana Puskara. In Satya yuga a brahmana named Divya das gave up family life and went on pilgrimage. Puskara tirtha was very dear to him, but in the course of his wandering he came to Navadvipa. There he had a dream which instructed him to stay there, for he would receive a great treasure. The brahmana built his cottage and lived there until he became old. Though his desire was to see Puskara, he found impossible to move about. In this situation, he began to weep. ‘Now I will never see Puskara!’ the personality of Puskara, being merciful, came before the brahmana in the shape of a vipra and said, ‘Do not cry. Before you is a splendid pond. Take bath there once, and you will see Puskara before your eyes.’”

Bhima:

“See here Samudragari. This is directly Dvaraka Puri and Ganga Sagar. Both of these are present here. For Samudra Sen, a king and great devotee, Krishna was all in all. When Bhima came here with his soldiers to conquer all opponents, he surrounded Samudragari. The king knew the Krishna was the only resort of the Pandavas, and that when they were in danger, he would come to their rescue. He thought that if he could get Bhima to show some fear and scream out, then Krishna would appear, begging merciful to his devotees.

“‘He will come to my country, and I will see with my own eyes the black figure of Krishna.’ Thinking like this he gathered together his soldiers, elephants, horses and soldiers and went to battle. All the time remembering Krishna, he began firing his arrows. Bhima, seeing the shower of arrows, in great danger called Krishna, ‘Oh Lord, protect your Bhima, since you are merciful. I cannot fight with Samudra Sen. If were to defeat him, he would be humiliated. It is very shameful, but I must now be defeated.’”

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“Hearing the plaintive call of Bhima, Krishna appeared on the battle field. No one could see that form except the king. He was of youthful form with complexion the color of a new cloud. Around His neck were ornaments, and yellow garments clothed His wonderful figure. Seeing that form, the king fainted in ecstasy. Controlling himself, he revealed his request to the Lord.

“Krishna, You are the master of the universe, the deliverer of the fallen. Seeing me so fallen, You have come. Everyone is singing about Your pastimes. Hearing that, I had the desire to see Your līlā. My vow was that You should appear in Navadvipa. Now I see Your enchanting form here. Never will I leave Navadvipa. You have upheld my vow and have made Your appearance in the form of Krishna in Navadvipa. But my desire goes even further. Please become Gauranga before my eyes!’ as he looked on, the king beheld the sweet līlā of Radha and Krishna. In the forest of Kumuda Krishna and His friends performed their afternoon activities of going to herd the cows. Then in an instant this līlā disappeared, and he saw the form of Gauranga in a brilliant gold was His complexion, all attractive His eyes drunken, body quivering. The desire of the king’s eyes was fulfilled. When he saw this, the king considered his great fortune and offered prayers at the Lord’s lotus feet. In a few moments, however, this all vanished. Deprived, the king began to weep.

“Bhima had not been able to see this incident, and thought that the king had become suddenly afraid, he was surprised when the king gave up fighting and simply begged to pay a tax to Bhima. Bhima took the levy and went off to other places. The whole world sings the praises of Bhima, conqueror of all directions.”

Jayadeva:

“When Laksmana Sen was the King of Nadiya, Jayadeva was one of his subjects in Navadvipa. He built a hut on Ballala Dirgika’s bank and lived with his wife Padma in peace. There he wrote the Dasa Avatara poem, which came into the King’s hand. The king read the poem with great relish and inquired who had written it. Govardhana Acarya answered the Jayadeva had written it. The king asked where he lived, and the acarya told him. Secretly the king made a search and in the night came to Jayadeva’s house. Dressed as a Vaisnava, the king entered the cottage, paid respects to the poet and seated himself. But Jayadeva knew that he was the king dressed as a penniless Vaisnava. The king then introduced himself and begged the poet to come to his palace. Jayadeva, being very detached from materialism, could not agree to go to the house a materialist.

“He answered the king, ‘I will give up your kingdom and go elsewhere. Association with materialists is not auspicious. I will cross the Ganga and head for Puri.’

“The king said, ‘Do not give up Navadvipa ever. Listen to my words. Your vow should remain true but my wish should also be fulfilled. Do your activity but be

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merciful to me. Across the Ganga is the enchanting Campa Hatta. Stay there for a few years. I will not go these as I please, but will see you only on your wish.’

“Hearing the king's words, the poet agreed and replied quickly. ‘Though you are endowed with so much wealth and such a kingdom, you are a devotee of Krishna, and are not bound to have tolerated it. Thus I know that you are a devotee of Krishna. Though taking material things, you remain unattached. I will remain some time in Campa Hatta and you can come secretly, giving up your opulent position.’

“The king very happily had his ministers build Jayadeva a cottage in Campa Hatta. There Jayadeva stayed for some time, engaged in worshipping Krishna according to the process of raga marga. Padmavati would bring heaps of campaka flowers, which Jayadeva would offer to Krishna. In great love the poet offered, and Krishna, seeing that, accepted the campaka.

“Krishna then appeared, golden in hue, the color of the campa flower, all attractive, shining like a hundred thousand moons, with a beautiful face. He had curled hair and a garland of flowers around his neck. His arms were long. His effulgence lit the room. Seeing that form of Gauranga, Jayadeva fainted and tears streamed from his eyes. Padmavati fell to the earth unconscious.

“The Lord with His two lotus hands lifted the couple up and spoke nectarean words. ‘Very soon I will take birth in Nadiya in the womb of Saci. Will all the devotees of all the avatars, I will distribute the gift of prema and Krishna sankirtana. After twenty-four years I will take sannyasa and live in Puri. There in the association of the devotees, overcome by prema, I will taste the poems of your Gita Govinda continuously, for it is very dear to me. You will return to this Navadvipa Dhama after death. This I say for certain. Therefore, both of you go to Puri now, worship Jagannatha and attain love of God.’

“Gauranga disappeared. The two fainted, overcome by separation, and began to weep profusely. While weeping they made a request.

“‘What a form we have seen! How can we live in your absence? Why did you order us to leave Nadiya? We must have committed some offense here. We are becoming disturbed just to think that we must leave Nadiya, the spiritual kingdom. It would have been better to be a bird or beast in Navadvipa, for then could stay a long time, always meditating of the Dhama. We can give up living, but we cannot give up Navadvipa, for the attachment is too deep. Oh Lord, give us your lotus feet, and let us stay here.’

“As they were crying, they heard a voice. ‘Do not be sorrowful, but go to Puri. There are two things to keep your heart undisturbed. Sometime before, you two were thinking of going to Puri for a visit. The Lord had to fulfill that wish. Jagannatha is

eager for your darshan. By pleasing Him, on leaving your body, you will again come to Navadvipa and remain here eternally.’ Hearing that the two immediately left.

“Turning back, they glanced once more at Navadvipa, and with tears flowing, heart throbbing, they spoke in sorrow to the residents. ‘Please give your mercy to us, who have offended. Please purify us!’

“While looking back they proceeded further and further away. Navadvipa out of sight, they crossed out of Gaura Bhumi, weeping as they went. Arriving at Nilacala, some days later, they pleased Lord Jagannatha.”

Radha Kunda

“They came to Ratupur and saw the beauty of that town. When they came to Navadvipa, Sri Nityananda said, ‘This place is extremely attractive. The trees are bending down their heads in respect, the breeze is blowing gently, and the flowers are blooming on the walls. The humming of the bees and the fragrance of the flowers intoxicate the minds of the traveler here.’

“As he was saying this, Nityananda became like a madman.

“Quick, bring my horn, my friends have gone far off and Krishna is fast asleep and won’t come. He is acting like a baby. Where are Subala & Dama? All alone I cannot go and herd the cows!’

“Shouting for Krishna, Nityananda jumped a few yards. Seeing his state, the devotees immediately supplicated at Nityananda’s feet.

“Oh, Prabhu Nityananda, your brother, Gauracandra is no longer here. He has taken sannyasa and gone to Nilacala, leaving us poor beggars.’

“Upon hearing those words, Nityananda became dejected. Crying, he fell to the ground.

“You have us in such sorrow, Kani, my brother, for you have taken sannyasa and given up all of us. I cannot continue my life. I will jump in the Yamuna River.’

“Sri Nityananda lost consciousness.

“Sensing the elevated spiritual emotional state of Nityananda Prabhu, they began to chant the Holy Name, but four dandas passed and Nityananda still did not rise. Finally, when the devotees began chanting the glories of Gauranga, Nitai awoke.

“This is the place of Radha Kunda!’ He exclaimed.

“Here in the afternoon, Gauranga would do kirtana with His associates. Look at the brilliance of Syama Kunda, attracting all the minds of the people of the universe,

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and look at the groves of the sakhis here and there. Here in the afternoon, Gauranga, immersed in singing Krishna's glories, would satisfy all by giving prema. Know that such a place as this, where the devotees worship the Lord, can be found nowhere in the universe. Whoever lives here will get love of God. This will soothe the burning fire of material life.'

“In this place the devotees stayed, calling the name of Gauranga, drowned in love of God. There in Rtudvipa they spent the night.”

Various sages

“At the time of the pralaya, Navadvipa, the eternal Dhama, remains situated in the pure form of an eight-petalled lotus. All the avatars and all the fortunate living entities stay somewhere in that lotus at that time. Matsya avatara carried the Vedas to Vidya Nagar of Rtudvipa. Since all knowledge is contained in the Vedas which came to this place, it is known as Vidya Nagar.

“The when Brahma, with the intention to start creation again, glanced fearfully upon the devastated earth, the Lord showed mercy to him here. Brahma began praising the Lord. When Brahma opened his mouth, Sarasvati was born from his tongue. With her assistance, Brahma happily praised the Lord. At the time of the creation, maya crossed over the Viraja and spreads out her three gunas everywhere. The great rsis with great effort revealed knowledge within this universe. Taking shelter of this abode of Sarasvati, the rsis conquered over ignorance. After having received lessons on the sixty-four branches of knowledge, the rsis set themselves up at various places throughout the world. But all the respective branches of knowledge of the respective rsis are situated eternally at this holy spot. Valmiki came here and by the mercy of Narada received the Ramayana, Dhanvantari received the Ayurveda here and Visvamitra and others received the teachings of the Dhanurveda. Here Saunaka and the rsis read the mantras of the Vedas and Siva discussed tantra. At the request of the rsis Brahma here produced the four Vedas. Living here, Kapila created sankhya philosophy and Gautama brought forth logic and the process of argument. Kanubhuk produced the vaisesika philosophy here and Patanjali the Yoga Sutra. Jaimini wrote the Mimasa Sastra here and Vedavyasa wrote the Puranas. The five rsis headed by Narada wrote the Pancaratra here to teach the people about practical devotional service.

“In this forest, the Upanisads have all been worshipping Gauranga for a long time. Invisible to their eyes, Gauranga said, ‘Your philosophy of no form (nirakara) has spoiled you all. In the form of sruti you do not recognize Me, but when I shall appear in the form of My devotee on earth, you will see My lilā with our own eyes. At that time you will sing loudly at the top of your voice My glories, the glories of God with qualities and form.

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“Hearing that Gauranga would perform His educational pastimes, Brhaspati came in the form of Vasudeva Sarvabhauma and took great care to please the Lord. Knowing that the Lord would perform pastimes of education in Navadvipa, he became indifferent to the abode of Indra. With his associates he rejected that place and happily took birth on earth.”

Rama Lila

Here, in Modadrumadvipa is Ayodhya. In a previous kalpa when Rama was banished to the forest, with Laksmana and Sita he came to this place. He built a hut under a huge banyan tree and for some time lived here happily. Seeing the effulgent of Navadvipa, the son of Raghu began laughing to Himself.

How attractive was that form, green as new grass, lotus-eyed, with graceful bow in hand! Wearing the dress of a brahmachari, on his head piled matted locks, he attracted all living entities. Seeing the laughing of Rama, the daughter of Janaka, Sita, asked him the reason.

“Listen, Sita, here is one very secret story. When Kali yuga comes to Nadiya, I will be seen in yellow complexion.” Upon saying that, he immediately wanted to take birth in the womb of Sachi in Jagannatha Misra’s house.

“I will give to all those fortunate souls who see My childhood pastimes the supreme gift of prema. For my dear devotees I will perform educational pastimes and then reveal the glories of the Holy Name. Taking sannyasa, I will then go to Puri, and my own mother will weep, with my wife in her arms.

Hearing this, Sita asked, “Oh lotus-eyed one, why will you make our mother cry? Why will you give up your wife and take sannyasa? What happiness is there in giving sorrow to your wife?”

Sri Rama said, “Oh dear one, you know everything. But you have become ignorant just to teach the living entities. Prema bhakti in relation to Me that the devotees relish comes in two ways. Just listen. In union with Me they enjoy what is called sambhoga, and in separation from Me they experience the happiness of vipralambha. My eternal associates desire sambhoga, but in mercy I give them vipralambha. The sorrow in vipralambha that centers on me is actually the topmost bliss. This is how the devotees understand this. After separation, when union occurs, so much greater than before – a hundred thousand times multiplied – is the bliss they feel. That is the explanation of how there can be happiness in separation. You should accept it, for this is the world of the four Vedas.

“Who is now mother Kausalya will become Sachi in Gauranga lila, and you Sita, will serve me as Visnupriya. In separation you will worship My murti and spread My glory. Separated from you, I will worship a golden Sita murti in Ayodhya village. But this topic is very confidential, Sita. Do not reveal this to the people now.

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“This Navadvipa is My dear place, and even Ayodhya is not equal to it. When Kali yuga comes this huge banyan tree will disappear from vision, but will stay in unmanifested form.”

Thus did Rama pass His time here with Laksmana and Sita. Later he went to Dandakaranya to complete His activities. Observe here the place where His hut stood.

Rama’s friend Guhaka, at the desire of the Lord, took birth here in a brahmana’s family. His name was Sadanandana Vipara Bhattacharya. He knew nothing in the three worlds except Rama. He was present in Jagannatha Misra’s house when Gauranga was born. At that time all the devas came to see the child. But this Sadananda knew that his Lord had taken birth. In great delight he went to his house. In meditation on Rama, he saw Gaurasundara.

Gauranga was seated on a throne, surrounded by devas waving camaras. Then he saw Ramacandra, green as grass, and beside him Laksmana, the abode of Ananta. On the left was Sita, and facing him was Hanuman. Seeing this, the viper understood the truth about the Lord. In bliss the vipra made his way to Mayapura, and unseen by anyone, feasted his eyes on the form of Gauranga.

Ramanuja

This is one more confidential story. A great acarya came to Puri and pleased the Lord with his verses. Jagannatha appeared before him and said, “go and see Navadvipa Dhama, for soon I shall appear there in the house of Jagannatha Misra. Navadvipa is My very dear Dhama, situated in one place in the spiritual sky. As My eternal servant and a leading devotee, you should see Navadvipa. Let your students, who are absorbed in dasya rasa, stay here, and you go alone. Any living being who does not see Navadvipa has been born uselessly. Just one portion of Navadvipa contains Ranga, Venkata, and Yadava Acala. Therefore go to Navadvipa and see the form of Gauranga. You have come to the earth to preach bhakti, so let that birth be successful with the mercy of Gaura. From Navadvipa, go to Kurma Sthana, and there join again with your disciples.”

Joining his hands, Ramanuja made a request to Jagannatha.

“You have mercifully mentioned Gauranga, but exactly who He is I do not know.”

The Lord answered, “Everyone knows the master of Goloka, Krishna,. That Krishna, whose vilasa murti is Narayana, is the supreme truth, residing in Vrndavana. That Krishna is fully manifested in the form of Gauranga, and Navadvipa Dhama is the same as Vrndavana. This Navadvipa is the topmost abode, situated beyond the material universe, and in that place Gauranga stays eternally. By My mercy that Dhama has come to exist within Bhu Mandala, yet remaining unaffected by maya. This is the verdict of scripture. And if you think that Navadvipa

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is only a material location, then your devotion will perish. By My will, My inconceivable energy preserves this full transcendental dhama within the material world. Simply by reading scriptures one will not get the highest truth, for the highest truth surpasses all reasoning power. Only the devotees, by My mercy, can understand.”

Hearing the, Ramanuja was moved with prema.

“Lord, you līlā is truly astounding. The scriptures cannot know your opulence. Why is not Gauranga līlā described clearly in the scriptures? When I closely examine the sruti and puranas, I find some hint of the Gauranga Tattva only. Now, however, I am ready to serve your order for all doubts are gone. If it is your desire, I will go to Navadvipa and preach Gaura līlā throughout the three worlds, giving evidence from the hidden scriptures to all the people, converting all to devotional service to Gauranga. Please instruct me.”

Jagannatha said, “Ramanuja, do not broadcast lie this. Keep the esoteric Gaura līlā secret. Only after He has finished His līlā will the general public receive it. Preach for Me on the level of dasya rasa, while in your heart worship Gauranga constantly.”

Taking the advice of the Lord, Ramanuja secretly cultured his attraction for Navadvipa. Narayana, being merciful, led Ramanuja to Vaikuntha Pur, and there showed him his transcendental form served by Sri, Bhu and Līlā. Ramanuja thought himself fortunate to obtain this darshan, but instantly the figure changed to that of Gaurasundara, the son of Jagannatha Misra, Ramanuja swooned at the brilliance of the form. Gauranga put His lotus feet on his head. Ramanuja, divinely inspired, recited prayers of praise.

“I must see Gaura’s actual līlā on earth. I can never leave Navadvipa!”

Gauranga said, “Your wish will be fulfilled, son of Kesava. When the Nadiya līlā will be revealed in the future, you will take birth here again.”

Gauranga disappeared. Ramanuja, contented, resumed his journey. After some days he arrived at Kurma Sthana and with his disciples saw the place. During his life he preached dasya rasa throughout the south of India, while internally he was absorbed in Gaura līlā. By Gauranga’s mercy, he was later born in Navadvipa as the devotee Ananta.

Yuddhistira

Here, there is a nice forest called Kamyavana, as in Vraja. Look upon it with devotion. There used to be five banyan trees here in ancient times, but these have now disappeared. The place is now called Mata Pur, but according to scripture the name is Mahat Pur. When the five Pandavas and Draupadi during exile came incognito to Bengal, Yudhisthira had a dream at Ekacakra. The glories of

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Navadvipa were revealed to him and he became anxious to see the place. Happily they all came here. Seeing the splendor of Nadiya, they praised the great fortune of the residents. Living here for some time they killed many demons. See, there is Yudhisthira Tila (hillock), and there in Draupadi's kunda. Aware of the glory of the place, Yudhisthira stayed for some time. One day he had a dream of Gauranga, who shone radiant in all directions and whose form was extraordinary. Smiling, Gauranga spoke.

“See My rare form. At your house I am Krishna the son of Nanda, and I always stay with you as a friend. This Navadvipa will be revealed in Kali yuga, driving out all darkness. As you have all been My servants for a long time, when My lilā takes place, you will again take birth. On the bank of the Sindhu in Orissa, I will stay with you. Please go now to Orissa, purify the place and eliminate the suffering of the living entities.”

Yudhisthira explained this dream to his brothers. After deliberation they all went off to Orissa. It was painful to leave Navadvipa, but the order of the Lord had to be obeyed.

Madhva

Here also Madhva and his disciples stayed for some time. Gaurasundara appeared to him in a dream.

“Everyone knows that you are My eternal servant. Appearing in Navadvipa, I will accept your sampradaya. Go everywhere and carefully uproot all the false scriptures of the mayavadis, and reveal the glories of worshipping the murti of the lord. I will broadcast your pure teaching later on.”

Gauranga disappeared. Madhva, awaking was dumbfounded, “Will I ever see that beautiful golden form again?” he cried.

In reply there came a voice from the sky, “Worship Me secretly and you will come to Me.”

With this instruction, Madhva went on with great resolution to defeat all the mayavadi philosophers.

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Sankaracarya

When he came here, Gaurasundara showed to Sankaracarya his divine form, and then spoke.

“You are My servant. Following My orders, you are preaching effectively the mayavadi doctrine. But as this Navadvipa Dhama is very dear to Me, the mayavadi philosophy has no place here. On My behalf Vrddha Siva and Praudha Maya spread the imaginary impersonal interpretations of scriptures, but only to those people who envy the devotees of the Lord. In this way I cheat them. Since this Navadvipa Dhama is generally a place for My devotees, not for the envious, such doctrines should not be preached here. Therefore you should go elsewhere to perform your particular service. Do not contaminate the inhabitants of Navadvipa.”

Realizing the truth about Navadvipa, and with devotion instilled in his heart, he went elsewhere.

Visnusvami

In this Rudradvipa live the eleven Rudras, who chant Gauranga’s glories. Here Siva and his followers constantly dance in bliss. Seeing the devas shower flowers from the sky.

At one time Visnuswami came here during the course of his tour to defeat opposing philosophies. With his followers he stayed the night in Rudradvipa. The disciples began dancing and singing. Visnu Swami recited verses from sruti and smrti. Pleased by the discussion of bhakti, Siva showed himself. Upon his arrival in the assembly, Visnu Swami became startled. He folded his hands in prayer and recited appropriate praises. Siva spoke to him.

“All of you Vaisnavas are dear to me. Your discussion of devotion has pleased me. Ask a boon, and I shall grant it there is nothing I will not give to the Vaisnavas.”

Paying his dandavats, Visnusvami, filled with spiritual love, said, “Give to use this one gift: that henceforth we shall perfect a sampradaya teaching devotional service.”

In great bliss Rudra consented and named the sampradaya after himself. Thus Visnuswami’s sampradaya is called the Rudra Sampradaya. With the mercy of Rudra, Visnu Swami stayed here, and desiring love of God, took to worship of Gauracandra.

Gauranga appeared in a dream.

“By Rudra’s mercy you have become My bhakta. Being very fortunate, you came to Navadvipa and attained the treasure of bhakti. Now go out and preach the philosophy of suddha advaita. The time of My appearance on earth will come soon. At that time you will appear in the form of Sri Vallabha Bhatta. You will meet me in Puri, and then going to Vrndavana, you will perfect your sampradaya.