



Sri Krishna Kathamṛta Bindu

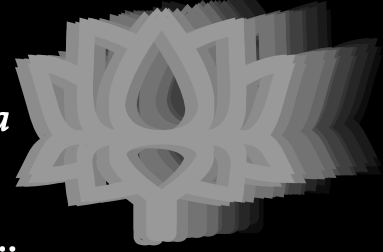
Bi-monthly email mini-magazine from Gopal Jiu Publications

Issue No. 4 19 May 2001

Śrī Aparā Ekādaśī, 12 Trivikrama, 515 Gaurābda

CONTENTS:

- “Even Namaparadha”
Srla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
- *Abhiram Thakur Tests the Sons of Lord Nityananda*
Adapted from Śrī Abhirāma Līlāmṛta
- *Bhajan and Begging*
From The Life of Srla Gour Kishor Das Babaji



“EVEN NAMAPARADHA”

... with a strong vow one should chant the holy name of the Lord — *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* — for thus one will certainly be delivered from the clutches of *māyā* by the grace of Krishna.

The chanting of the Hare Krishna mantra is recommended even for persons who commit offenses, because if they continue chanting they will gradually chant offenselessly. By chanting the Hare Krishna mantra without offenses, one increases his love for Krishna. As stated by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, *premā pum-artho mahān*: one's main concern should be to increase one's attachment to the Supreme Personality of Godhead and to increase one's love for Him.

In this regard Srla Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur quotes the following verse from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.19.24):

evaṁ dharmair manuṣyāṇāṁ uddhavātmani vedinām mayi sañjāyate bhaktiḥ ko 'nyo 'rtho 'syāvaśiṣyate

“My dear Uddhava, the supreme religious system for human society is that by which one can awaken his dormant love for Me.” Commenting on this verse, Srla Viswanath

Chakravarti Thakur describes the word *bhakti* by saying *premaivoktaḥ. Kaḥ anyaḥ arthaḥ asya*: in the presence of *bhakti*, what is the necessity of liberation?

Srla Viswanath Chakravarti Thakur also quotes this verse from the *Padma Purāṇa*:

nāmāparādha-yuktānāṁ nāmāny eva haranty agham aviśrānti-prayuktāni tāny evārtha-karāṇi ca

Even if in the beginning one chants the Hare Krishna mantra with offenses, one will become free from such offenses by chanting again and again. *Pāpa-kṣayaś ca bhavati smaratām tam ahar-niśam*: one becomes free from all sinful reactions if one chants day and night, following the recommendation of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. It was Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu who quoted the following verse:

harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā

“In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way.” [Cc. ādi 17.21] If the members of the Krishna consciousness movement strictly follow this recommendation of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, their position will always be secure. — Purport to *Bhāg.* 6.3.24 ❀

ABHIRAM THAKUR TESTS THE SONS OF LORD NITYANANDA

Abhiram Thakur is perhaps the most prominent follower of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. According to Srila Kavi Karnapur, Abhiram Thakur is the incarnation of Sridama Sakha, the chief cowherd boy in kṛṣṇa-līlā.² His pastimes were described in simple Bengali verse by his disciple Sri Tilak Ram Das in a book called Śrī Abhirāma Lilāmṛta. In the fourth chapter the author reveals how he was able to write:

uṭha uṭha ore śiṣya śunaha vacane
āmāra yateka līlā karaha varṇana
eta bali mora sāthe caraṇa dharilā
caraṇa paraśe līlā svaraṇa hailā

[My guru Abhiram Thakur came to me while I was resting and said] “Wake up! Wake up! O disciple, hear my words! I want you to write about my pastimes.” I touched my head to my guru’s lotus feet and at that time all of his pastimes appeared to me.¹

The following story, adapted from chapter 15, verses 141-246, describes how Abhiram Thakur tested the newborn sons of Lord Nityananda.

Uncommon Powers

Abhiram Thakur was a very powerful personality. It is said that he would sometimes test the authenticity of a *śālagrāma-śīlā* or a deity by offering obeisances. If they were not genuine, they would break. He had other uncommon powers as well.

On one occasion Abhiram Thakur met Nityananda Prabhu on the bank of the Ganga, near to the home of Nityananda Prabhu. Nitai offered Abhiram a seat. They embraced, and both sat down.

Nitai said, “O brother Abhiram, what is your desire? Why have you come to My home?”

“I want to see Your son.”

Hearing this, Nityananda became happy. However, when Nityananda Prabhu showed him His son, Abhiram offered obeisances to the child and immediately the child died. When Nityananda Prabhu’s wives Vasudha and Jahnava heard the news, they both fainted. Nityananda then placed the body of the child in the Ganga and they all took bath.

Sometime later, another child was born, and again Abhiram Thakur came. As before, when Abhiram offered his obeisances, the child died. Everyone was astonished, thinking, “What is Abhiram’s purpose?” In this way, every time a child was born, Abhiram would come, offer obeisances, and the child would die.

No Invitation

Although Nityananda Prabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Balaram, still, while acting out His human-like pastimes, He externally became very unhappy seeing all of His sons die. Therefore, when the next child was born, Nitai thought to Himself, “If Abhiram does not come My child will live.”

Nityananda Prabhu invited many guests for the festive occasion, but He did not invite Abhiram Thakur. Seeing that Abhiram was not there, Adwaita Acharya inquired from Nityananda, “Why have You not invited Abhiram?”

Nityananda Prabhu replied, “Abhiram has made Me bereft of sons. So I will not invite him. I’ve told all of the boatmen not to bring him across the Ganga in their boats.”

During the time of the festival for the birth of Nityananda Prabhu’s latest son, Abhiram and his wife Malini were staying at Krishnagar. Vakreswar Pandit came to see them. Malini offered him a seat, and Vakreswar inquired from Abhiram, “Nitai is performing a festival on the occasion of the birth of his son. You are the *pradhāna-gopāl*, the leader of the cowherd boys. Is He inviting you or not?”

Abhiram laughed and said, “No. He is not inviting me.”

Vakreswar humbly told Abhiram, “Without your presence this ceremony cannot be performed properly. Although He is not inviting you, still you should go.”

“How can I go without an invitation?”

Malini then said, “Abhiram is a *rākhāl*, a cowherd boy. Such cowherders have no *abhimān*, false ego. He is not finding fault with Nityananda Prabhu for not inviting him.”

Crossing the Ganga

Abhiram Thakur then told Vakreswar, “O brother, I’ll go there later.” After Vakreswar left, Abhiram conceived a plan. He bade Malini goodbye and started off, saying, “Gaura Hari ki jaya!” He went to the bank of the Ganga and said to a boatman, “Take me across!”

The boatman looked at Abhiram Thakur and inquired, “Who are you sir? Give me your name and then I will start the journey. If I take the wrong person across then Nityananda Prabhu will be very angry with me.”

Abhiram replied, “Why does He want to restrict this person from crossing?”

The boatman said, “Nityananda Prabhu is miserable and lamenting for His lost children. He told me, ‘There is one person named Abhiram Thakur. He is very powerful. If he offers obeisances to My son then the child will die.’ Saying this, Nityananda Prabhu told me not to bring that person across. I think that you are that same Abhiram Thakur.”

Out of fear of Nityananda Prabhu, the boatman then put water in his boat and made it sink. Hearing that Abhiram Thakur had come, all of the other boatmen also filled their boats with water and sank them.

Abhiram Thakur then took some cloth and threw it in the river. The cloth floated, and, sitting on it, Abhiram crossed the river.

Seeing this, the people became astonished and ran to tell Nityananda Prabhu. Although Nitai became worried, He took all of the mahants who were present at the festival and went to meet Abhiram Thakur. Abhiram saw them all performing ecstatic *kīrtana* and coming toward the bank of the Ganga to meet him. Abhiram then began playing his flute, and he lost external consciousness. Tilak Ram Das says, “Who can understand Abhiram Thakur?”

Prasad at Nitai’s Home

When they came together, Abhiram embraced all of them with ecstatic love while his hairs stood on end. Nitai brought Abhiram into His home. Abhiram told Him, “I am very hungry. Please give me some *prasād*.” Nitai gave him a seat in a room and Vasudha and Jahnava happily brought him nice *prasād* consisting of sweet rice, fancy rice and many opulent dishes. As

much *prasād* as they brought, Abhiram ate it until he had finished everything in the house.

Seeing that he had eaten everything, Nitai said, “Dandavats to your pastimes! Who can understand You? In *vraja-līlā* you are Sridama. Have you forgotten our loving relationship? In Vraja we all shared *prasād* together. But now, forgetting all of that, you are taking all of the *prasād* alone. In Vraja we would always share whatever fruits we got. What sort of behavior is this that you are taking all of the *prasād* alone?”

Abhiram listened and said, “My nature is that of a cowherd boy. First I take, then I give to others. My behaviour is that of Vraja. Knowing my nature and activities in Vraja, how can You say I took all of the *prasād*? Go and see Your pots.” Then Abhiram performed *ācamana*.

Nityananda Prabhu went to see the pots and found that double the original amount of *prasād* was there. Nitai then happily embraced Abhiram.

Abhiram said, “O brother, you should feed all of the mahants.”

The mahants then happily took *prasād* and shouted, “Hari! Hari!” Finishing, they all performed *ācamana*. Then Nitai gave them *tāmbūla* and a place to take rest.

“Spare Our Child!”

Abhiram Thakur said, “Nitai, you have celebrated a festival for the birth of Your son. What sort of son do You have? Please bring him and I will offer my obeisances to him.”

Hearing this, everyone became worried. Nityananda Prabhu’s wives Vasudha and

BHAJAN AND BEGGING

From the Life of Srila Gour Kishor Das Babaji

Sri Manindrachandra Maharaja was an aristocratic landowner king. He once invited Srila Gour Kishor and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur to join in an assembly of *vaiṣṇavas* at his palace in Kasim Bazar. Hearing his request, Gour Kishor said, “If you want my association, then you must offer all of your wealth unto the hands of the rent collector and come here and live with me. You should build a *bhajan kuṭīr* here and we will live together.

“You do not have to worry about what food-stuffs you will eat because I will daily collect by begging and feed you myself. If you come here in this mood I will always be impelled to visit

your *bhajan kuṭīr*. But if I leave the transcendental abode of the Supreme Lord, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and come to your castle, which is the same as Lord Indra’s, then after some time I will begin to think that I would also like to amass a great amount of land. The result of all of this will be that the desire for sense gratification will enter my heart.

“As a result of amassing large amounts of land, I will become an object of your envy. If you want to become very dear to me, then as a friend you should bestow your mercy by coming here to the spiritual world of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and maintain your life by the activity of begging.” ॐ

Translated by Vyankata Das Brahmachari from *Anaran Prabhuṛa Katha*, a collection of articles written by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada.

Jahnava approached Abhiram and humbly said, “This time please give protection to our child. Don’t let us be criticized for not having a son. If you offer obeisances to our son then he will die. Every time this is what has happened. If you do this again, then we will also die.”

Abhiram said, “Why are you fearing? You don’t understand. I am offering my obeisances to test the child. If he is *svayam-svarūpa*, the Lord’s personal manifestation, then he will survive my obeisances.”

Hearing Abhiram’s words, Nityananda Prabhu became happy and brought His son before Abhiram. Abhiram Thakur offered his obeisances, and the child laughed. Abhiram become very happy and offered his obeisances a second and a third time, just to test the child. He saw that this child was *jagat-priya*, dear to the entire universe. Abhiram took the child on his lap and began to dance. He then told all of the mahants there:

*ye nā dekhecha gorā dekha āra bār
punarbār sei gorā vīra avatār*

“So that those who did not see Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu could again have the opportunity to see Him, the Lord has reappeared in the form of Virabhadra Prabhu.”

The Identity of Virabhadra Prabhu

Lord Balaram has appeared as Lord Nityananda Prabhu. As the Supreme Lord, He is *sarvajña*, all knowing. Hence He certainly understood and, in fact, inspired the behavior of Abhiram Thakur. The nature of the Lord is that He likes to see His devotees glorified more than Himself. Therefore, to glorify His devotee Abhiram Thakur, and also His son Virabhadra Prabhu, Lord Nityananda inspired Abhiram Thakur to act in such an unusual way.

Virabhadra Prabhu is the incarnation of Kshirodakasayi Vishnu. Srila Kavi Karnapura has written:

*saṅkarṣaṇasya yo vyūhaḥ payo-viṣayi-nāmakāḥ
sa eva vīracandro 'bhūc caitanyābhinnā-vigrahaḥ*

The expansion of Lord Sankarshan known as Kshirodakasayi Vishnu appeared in Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s pastimes as Virachandra Prabhu. Lord Virachandra was non-different from Lord Chaitanya Himself.³

As Kshirodakasayi Vishnu, Virabhadra Prabhu is the *svayam svarūpa*, the plenary expansion of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj has described:

*saṅkarṣaṇaḥ kāraṇa-toya-śāyī
garbhoda-śāyī ca payobdhi-śāyī
śeṣaś ca yasyāṁśa-kalāḥ sa nityā-
nandākhya-rāmaḥ śaraṇaṁ mamāstu*

May Sri Nityananda Rama be the object of my constant remembrance. Sankarsana, Sesa Naga and the Vishnus who lie on the *Kāraṇa* Ocean (*Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu*), *Garbha* Ocean (*Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu*) and ocean of milk (*Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu*) are His plenary portions and the portions of His plenary portions.⁴ ❀

Notes

¹ *Śrī Abhirāma Lilāmṛta* 4.5-6, 13.

² *Śrī Gaura-gaṇodeśa-dīpikā* text 126.

³ *Śrī Gaura-gaṇodeśa-dīpikā* text 67.

⁴ *Cc. ādi* 1.7

Bibliography

Haridas Das. *Śrī Gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-abhidhāna*. Haribol Kutir. Nabadwip. 501 Gaurabda. (Bengali)

Kavi Karnapur. *Śrī Gaura-gaṇodeśa-dīpikā*. Translated into English by Kusakratha Das. The Krishna Library. Culver City, CA. 1987.

Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. English translation and commentary by Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Los Angeles. 1975.

Tilak Ram Das. *Śrī Abhirāma Lilāmṛta*. Published by Kisora Das Babaji. Halisahar, West Bengal. 506 Gaurabda. (Bengali)

SRI KRISHNA KATHAMRITA BINDU

a free bi-monthly service provided by:

Gopal Jiu Publications

c/o ISKCON Sri Krishna Balarama Mandir
National Highway No. 5, IRC Village
Bhubaneswar, Orissa, India, 751015

Phone: (0674) 557026

Email: katha@gopaljiu.org

For more information about Gopal Jiu Publications check out our website: www.gopaljiu.org

To unsubscribe, send an email to minimag@gopaljiu.org with “unsubscribe” in the subject line. (To subscribe put “subscribe” in the subject line.)

Gopal Jiu Publications is a branch of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

Quotations from the books, letters, and lectures of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda ©Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International. All other materials, unless specified, © ISKCON Bhubaneswar/Gopal Jiu Publications. All rights reserved. Blanket permission is given to redistribute *Bindu* in electronic or print form, provided no changes are made to the contents.