



तव कथामृतं तसजीवनम्
tava kathāmytam tapta-jīvanam

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THE RIVER OF NECTAR

Translation and Purport to
Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 4.29.39-40
His Divine Grace A.C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupada

yatra bhāgavatā rājan sādhaso viśadāśayāḥ
bhagavad-guṇānukathana-śravaṇa-vyagra-cetasah
tasmin mahān-mukharitā madhubhic-caritra-
pīyūṣa-śeṣa-saritaḥ paritaḥ sravanti
tā ye pibanty avitrṣo nrpa gāḍha-karṇais
tān na sprṣanty aśana-tṛḍ-bhaya-śoka-mohāḥ

My dear King, in the place where pure devotees live, following the rules and regulations and thus purely conscious and engaged with great eagerness in hearing and chanting the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in that place if one gets a chance to hear their constant flow of nectar, which is exactly like the waves of a river, one will forget the necessities of life—namely hunger and thirst—and become immune to all kinds of fear, lamentation and illusion.

PURPORT: The cultivation of Krishna consciousness is possible where great devotees live together and constantly engage in hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord. In a holy place like Vrindavan, there are many devotees constantly engaged in chanting and hearing the glories of the Lord. If one gets the chance to hear from pure devotees in such a place, allowing the constant

flow of the river of nectar to come from the mouths of pure devotees, then the cultivation of Krishna consciousness becomes very easy. When one is engaged in constantly hearing the glories of the Lord, he certainly rises above the bodily conception. When one is in the bodily conception, he feels the pangs of hunger and thirst, fear, lamentation and illusion. But when one is engaged in hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, he transcends the bodily conception.

The word *bhagavad-guṇānukathana-śravaṇa-vyagra-cetasah*, meaning “always eager to find the place where the glories of the Lord are being heard and chanted,” is significant in this verse. A businessman is always very eager to go to a place where business is transacted. Similarly, a devotee is very eager to hear from the lips of liberated devotees. As soon as one hears the glories of the Lord from the liberated devotees, he immediately becomes impregnated with Krishna consciousness. This is also confirmed in another verse:

satām prasaṅgān mama vīrya-saṁvido
bhavanti hr̥t-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati

“In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and to the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes

fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.” (*Bhāg.* 3.25.25) In the association of pure devotees, one becomes attached to hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord. In this way one can cultivate Krishna consciousness, and as soon as this cultivation is advanced, one can become faithful to the Lord, devoted to the Lord and attached to the Lord, and thus one can very quickly attain full Krishna consciousness. The secret of success in the cultivation of Krishna consciousness is hearing from the right person. A Krishna conscious person is never disturbed by the bodily necessities—namely eating, sleeping, mating and defending. ❀

SĀDHU-SAṄGA AND VAIṢṆAVA-APARĀDHA

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

There are ten *nāma-aparādhas*, offenses to the holy name. The first is *sādhū-nīnda*, blaspheming a *sādhū*. This is the most serious *aparādha*. Other types of *aparādhas* can be rectified, but if you commit *sādhū-nīnda*, *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*, blaspheming sadhu, guru, *vaiṣṇava*, that offense cannot be rectified or destroyed. There is no atonement. The offender will lose all of his *bhakti-sukṛti*. Mahāprabhu says that *vaiṣṇava-aparādha* is like a mad elephant. If a mad elephant enters into a garden then the elephant will pull out all of the creepers and trees from their roots. Everything will be finished. From the very root, *bhakti* is finished. Such an offender cannot develop *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

How can one become free from such an *aparādha*? You must beg excuse at the lotus feet of the sadhu or *vaiṣṇava* against whom you have committed the *aparādha*. The only means to become free from this offense is if he excuses you.

In the beginning you have attachment to your body, bodily relations, home and hearth, wife, son, daughter, friend, family members, kith and kin. For those who have come to this path of *bhajana*, if they regularly associate with *sādhū-vaiṣṇavas* and hear *kṛṣṇa-kathā* from their lips, then all these attachments will be finished. Then you will develop attachment to the lotus feet of Krishna. Therefore it is said, *mahat-saṅga vimuktir dvāḥ* — association with the *mahātmā*, pure sadhu, guru, *vaiṣṇava*, opens your door to the spiritual kingdom. But if you associate with atheists, non-*vaiṣṇavas*, offenders, especially if you associate with women or persons very much addicted to women, then you will open your

door towards hell, *tamo-dvāram*. Neophyte *sādhakas*, those who have come for *sādhana*, should be very, very careful in this regard. They should become greedy to regularly get association with *sādhū-vaiṣṇavas*. If you regularly associate with sadhus your material attachment will gradually be destroyed and you will develop attachment to Krishna. Then you will find a very secure position. *Mahat-saṅga*, *sādhū-saṅga*, is like a strong fort. One who always remains in the association of *mahat-saṅga*, *sādhū-saṅga*, is secure.

*māyāre kariyā jaya chādāno nā jāya
sādhū-kṛpā binā āra nāhika upāya*

Even if I can cure my blindness and defeat the *māyā*-hangman, I cannot become free from material illusion without the mercy of the *sādhū-guru* and the saintly devotees. — Srila Narottam Das Thakur’s *Prārthanā* 46.4

Although *māyā* is the inferior, external energy of the Lord, it is very, very strong. *daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā* — A *jīva* cannot conquer *māyā* by his own strength. [*Bg.* 7.14] *Māyā* comes in various ways, even for those who have come for *bhajana* and have given up their home and hearth, material possessions, money, assets, and family members. They have joined the Krishna consciousness society and are doing *bhajana* under the guidance of guru. They have become *vaiṣṇava*. Still, *māyā* comes to them in various forms. A conditioned soul is in the lap of *māyā*. When you go to get out of *māyā*’s lap she becomes very furious. *Māyā* says, “What is this? You are trying to get out of my grip! I’ll see how you can get out!” So *māyā* enters. “All right. He has become a *vaiṣṇava*. So I will become a *vaiṣṇavī*, a lady devotee!” *Vaiṣṇavīs* are here, putting on *tilaka* and chanting (imitates a lady’s voice), “*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare*.” “Oh, such a nice western lady *vaiṣṇavī*! She looks very nice. White complexion, very beautiful, and she chants very nicely. Yes, I am a *vaiṣṇava*, and she is a *vaiṣṇavī*. We shall stay together and do *bhajana*. Very nice! Then *māyā* says, “Now you are captured.”

*māyāre kariyā jaya chādāno nā jāya
sādhū-kṛpā binā āra nāhika upāya*

The *kṛpā* of *sādhū-guru* is very powerful. Only if someone gets the mercy of *sādhū-guru*, can they conquer *māyā*. There is no other means. *Māyā* is so strong. She is always there.

You should consider how *māyā* came to test Haridas Thakur. Who are you? What

strength do you have? Haridas Thakur was chanting three lakhs of name, day and night. He was not sleeping, not eating, and he had gotten *siddha-deha* [realized his spiritual nature]. Still, *māyā* came to test him in the form of a very beautiful young maiden. She said:

*o vaiṣṇava-ṭhākura, daṇḍavat
vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

“O Haridas Thakur, *vāñchā-kalpa-taru* — you are a desire-fulfilling tree. Please fulfill my desire.”

“Yes. What is your desire?”

“I am a young lady, maiden. I want sex. That is my desire. Please come and have sex with me. Please fulfill my desire.”

A *vaiṣṇava* fulfills all desires, so Haridas Thakur said, “All right, I may fulfill your desire, but I have one condition. My guru has told me to chant three lakhs of names a day. When I finish I will fulfill your desire. Sit down outside the cottage and allow me to finish my chanting,

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

But Haridas Thakur did not finish chanting. The night passed, but the chanting was not finished. When dawn came, the sun arose and Haridas Thakur came out.

“What can I do? I am very sorry. I cannot fulfill your desire today because I cannot finish my rounds. Please come tomorrow.”

For three continuous days, *māyā* came. Each time Haridas Thakur said the same thing, “I am sorry, what shall I do? I cannot finish my rounds. How can I fulfill your desire?”

For three days she heard the pure devotee Haridas Thakur, chanting the pure name,

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

And by hearing the chanting she developed *bhakti*. *māyā-dāsī ‘prema’ māge, ithe ki vismaya?* — What is the wonder if the maidservant of Krishna, His external energy, begs for love of Godhead? [Cc. *antya* 3.266] When Mahaprabhu came to indiscriminately distribute *prema*, *māyā* also came. She prayed, “Give me *prema*, give me *prema* also.”

After the third day, *māyā* came to Haridas Thakur and said, “I am *māyā*. I had come to test you. No one has defeated me, but you defeated me. I have defeated Brahma. I have defeated Siva. But I could not defeat you, Haridas Thakur.

You defeated me. Therefore I want to be your servant. Please give me *harināma* and make me your *śiṣya*, disciple.” In this way, *māyā* was defeated. Otherwise *māyā* is very strong. Therefore, *sādhu-guru-kṛpā binā āra nāhika upāya*. One who has received the *kṛpā*, mercy, of a *sādhu-guru* is very powerful and cannot be defeated by *māyā*. Without that mercy one will be defeated.

Therefore we have these regulative principles, including no illicit sex. Illicit sex is a great sinful activity and a great *aparādha*. Even if a married *vaiṣṇava* develops too much attachment to his wife, that also becomes illicit sex. There is only one proper attachment, which is attachment to the lotus feet of Krishna. Mahaprabhu has instructed Raghunath Das, *antare niṣṭhā kara, bāhye loka-vyavahāra* — “Keep Krishna in your heart. Only be attached to Krishna, but externally you should behave as a *gṛhastha*, a family man.[Cc. *madhya* 16.239] You have a wife, a father, and a mother. Externally you should behave in the way they deserve. You should pay respect to your father and mother. As a son you should listen to them. That is social etiquette. Also you have a wife, and she expects something from you as a husband. That is your duty as a husband. How can you ignore it? But that should be all external. *antara niṣṭhā* — In your heart there is only one attachment, and that is to Krishna. These other things are all external attachments. If you behave like that then it will be all right. Otherwise, if you cannot, then there will be havoc in your family life.” That is Mahaprabhu’s instructions, *antare niṣṭhā kara, bāhye loka-vyavahāra*. This is *yukta-vairāgya*. But there should not be too much attachment to one’s wedded wife. The only attachment is to Krishna. Some attachment is there, as much as required, but it is external. If you develop too much attachment to your wife, then that also becomes illicit sex. Then your bondage to this material world will be very strong. Narottam Das Thakur says that the wife, son, and daughter are like *timīṅgila*. In the ocean there are many ferocious aquatic animals such as, crocodiles, sharks and whales. But there is another aquatic animal, a very big fish that devours everything. That is known as *timīṅgila*, the devourer of *timi*, the whale. This material ocean is a dreadful ocean. In this ocean the wife, son, daughter, so-called friends and family members are compared to devourers of whales. If they devour you, you are finished. Then you will not be able to develop *bhakti* and you cannot go back home back to Godhead.

*sādhū-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma — ei mātra cāi
saṁsāra jinite āra kona vastu nāi
[Prema-vivarta 1.6.13]*

Only one desire should be there: greed — how I can have *sādhū-saṅga*, the association of a dear sadhu, *premi-bhakta*, hear *kṛṣṇa-kathā* from his lips, and in his association chant:

*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*

This should be the only aspiration, the only desire. It is the only requirement. There is no other way to cross this dreadful ocean of material existence.

Neophyte *sādhakas* should understand this and they should be very, very careful not to commit *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha* is like a mad elephant. All of your *bhakti* will be completely destroyed. The *bhakti* creeper will be uprooted and thrown out. Then everything is finished. ❧

— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar, Orissa, 3 May 1994

THE GLORIES OF THE DEVOTEES

Srila Rupa Goswami's Padyāvalī

*tebhyo namo 'stu bhava-vāridhi-jīrṇa-paṅka-
sammagna-mokṣaṇa-vicakṣaṇa-pādukebhyaḥ
kṛṣṇeti varṇa-yugala-śravaṇena yeṣāṁ
ānandathur bhavati nartita-roma-vṛndaḥ*

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I offer my respectful obeisances to the devotees of the Lord. Simply by hearing the two syllables 'Krish-na', their bodily hairs stand up in ecstasy and they become moved to dance in ecstatic bliss. With their sandals they expertly extricate the fallen souls deeply sunk in the fetid mud of the ocean of repeated birth and death. — Sri Autkala

*hari-smṛty-āhlāda-stimita-manaso yasya kṛtinaḥ
sa-romāñcaḥ kāyaḥ nayanam api sā nanda-salilām
tam evācandrārkaṁ vaha puruṣa-dhaureyam avane
kim anyais tair bhārair yama-sadana-gaty āgati-paraiḥ*

By remembering Lord Hari, the devotees' hearts become overwhelmed with bliss, their bodily hairs stand erect, and their eyes become filled with tears of joy. O Earth, these devotees are the best of men. Please carefully maintain them for long as the sun and the moon shine in the sky. What is the use of your carefully maintaining those other burdensome persons who are simply intent on coming and going to and from the house of Yamaraja? — Sri Sarvananda

*tvad-bhaktaḥ saritām patim culukavat khadyotavat bhāskarām
meruṁ paśyati loṣṭravat kim aparām bhūmeḥ patim bhṛtyavat
cintāratna-cayam śilā-sakala vat kalpa-drumam kaṣṭavat
saṁsāraṁ tṛṇa-rāśivat kim aparām dehaṁ nijam bhāravat*

O Lord, Your devotee sees the king of rivers as a handful of water, the sun a fire-fly, Mount Meru a clump of earth, the emperor of the world a servant, a multitude of *cintāmaṇi* jewels simply pebbles, a valuable *kalpa-druma* tree a mere stick, the entire world a bunch of straw, and his own body a burden only. — Sri Sarvajna

*jñānāvalambakāḥ kecit kecit karmāvalambakāḥ
vayaṁ tu hari-dāsānām pāda-trāṇāvalambakāḥ*

Some are inclined to speculative knowledge and others are inclined to fruitive work. We, however, are inclined to take shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Hari's servants. ❧ — Sri Madhava Saraswati

— Srila Rupa Goswami's *Padyāvalī* Text 54,55, 56, 58. Translated by Srimad Kusakratha Prabhu.