



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्  
*tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam*

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Highlights

• **THE TOPMOST GOPI**

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

• **WHO ARE THE GAUDIYA VAISHNAVAS?**

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Prabhupada*

• **EXTERNALLY TWO, INTERNALLY ONE**

*Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja*

• **THE BEAUTY OF RADHA**

*Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur*



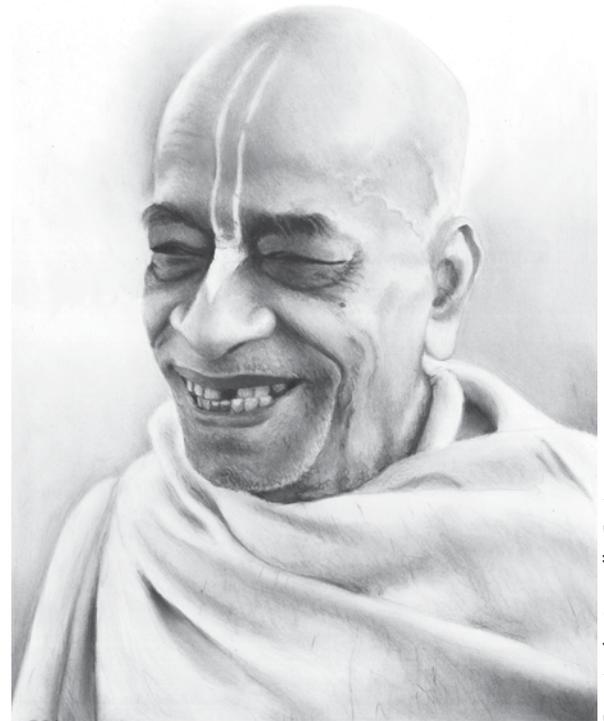
## THE TOPMOST GOPI

*His Divine Grace A. C.*

*Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

We should never try to take any benefit from Krishna. Simply try to give benefit to Krishna. This is pure devotion. Once upon a time Rupa Goswami desired, “If I could get some nice foodstuffs, I would invite Sanatan Goswami and cook some nice food.” They were living in Vrindavan here and there, under the shade of trees. They had nothing. Shortly thereafter, a very beautiful girl came and offered rice, *ḍāl*, and ghee. She said, “*Bābā*, we are having a festival.” In this country they address a saintly person as “*Bābā*”. Rupa Goswami was a very good cook, and he prepared a nice preparation and offered Sanatan Goswami the *prasādam*. Sanatan Goswami was astonished, and inquired, “Where you got all these nice things in this forest?”

Rupa Goswami told the whole story. “In the morning I desired, and a few hours later one very beautiful girl came and offered these ingredients.” After hearing the description of the beautiful girl, Sanatan Goswami could understand that she was Radharani. He immediately chastised Rupa Goswami, “You have taken service from Radharani! This is not good. We are trying to give service to Radharani, and you have taken service from her.” This is the *vaiṣṇava* consideration. They are firmly determined not to bother Krishna with anything. They simply want to serve him. Similarly, Krishna also looks for the opportunity to serve his devotee. This is their



Drawing by Anuradha Dasī

*His Divine Grace A. C.  
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

reciprocation. The devotee wants to serve Krishna without any return, and Krishna also wants to serve the devotee whenever there is an opportunity. This is the transaction of love — not to take anything in return.

*āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ pinaṣtu mām  
adarśanān marma-hatāṁ karotu vā  
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampāṭo  
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ*

[next column](#) ↗



Let Krishna tightly embrace this maidservant who has fallen at his lotus feet, or let him trample me or break my heart by never being visible to me. He is a debauchee, after all, and can do whatever he likes, but still he alone, and no one else, is the worshipable Lord of my heart.

This is Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's teaching, "From Krishna's side, he may do whatever he likes. He is still my worshipable master, and no one else." Bhaktivinode Thakur has sung [*Saraṇāgati* 2.3], *mānasa, deha, geha, yo kichu mora arpilūñ tuyā pade, nanda-kīśora!*—"My dear Nanda Kishore, Krishna, whatever I have, I am offering everything to you." What I have got? *Mānasa, deha, geha*—"I have my body, my mind, and a so-called home of wife and a few children. Everything is offered to you." This is full surrender. Then he says, *mārabi rākhabi* — *yo icchā tohārā*—"I am surrendering everything to you. If you like you can save me, or if you like you can kill me." This is full surrender. The topmost surrendered devotees are the *gopīs*. There are no higher, more exalted devotees than the *gopīs*. Therefore [as Srinath Chakravarti describes in his *Caitanya-maṅjūṣā* commentary on *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*] Chaitanya Mahaprabhu recommends, *ramyā kācid upāsanaṁ vrajavadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā*—"There is no better type of worshiping Krishna than the method by which the *gopīs* worship Krishna." Their love was so intense that they did not care for any family, honor, or prestige — nothing. That is the highest, topmost stage of love for Krishna. So much so that Krishna told them, "You cannot expect any return from me for your ecstatic love. I cannot repay you. It is beyond my power." So the *gopīs* purchased Krishna with their love. And the topmost *gopī* is Radharani. ❀

— Lecture, 13 Sept 1976, Vrindavan.

## WHO ARE THE GAUDIYA VAISNAVAS?

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati  
Thakur Prabhupada*

Devotees of Vishnu are called *Vaiṣṇavas*, devotees of Krishna are called *Kāṛṣṇas*, and the devotees of Sri Radha are called *Gauḍīyas*. Lord Gauranga's devotees who are under the shelter of *parakīya-mādhurya-rati* and who follow Sri Rupa are called *Gauḍīya*. The *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* follow Sri Swarupa Damodar Goswami, the incarnation of Lalita. Therefore they can be defined as followers of Sri Swarup and Sri Rupa. Therefore Mahaprabhu commented to Sri Swarupa Damodar

Prabhu, "This is the behavior of your *Gauḍīya* devotees." The *Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* are interested in *mañjari-bhāva* [worshiping Krishna in the mood of a young maidservant]. Sri Radha-Govinda, Sri Radha-Gopinath, and Sri Radha-Madan-mohan are their worshipable deities. ❀

— From *Amṛta Vāṇī*, a collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumipati Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. pp. 123-124.

## EXTERNALLY TWO, INTERNALLY ONE *Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja*

There is no difference between Radha and Krishna, *śakti-śaktimān-abhinna*. There is no difference between *śakti*, the energy, and *śaktimān*, the energetic. *rādhā-kṛṣṇa aiche sadā eka-i svarūpa līlā-rasa āsvādite* — In order to relish the sweet mellows of these pastimes of conjugal love there are two forms, two bodies. *Ramaṇa* means enjoyer, and *ramaṇī* means enjoyed. Krishna is *ramaṇa*, and Radharani is *ramaṇī*. Radha and Krishna are two persons with two bodies. That is a fact. There is *bhinna*, difference, in the sense of them being *śakti* and *śaktimān*, the energy and the energetic source, but there also is *abhinna*, non-difference, in the sense of their moods. The difference is in *viśaya* and *āśraya*. Krishna is *viśaya-ālambana* and Radha is *āśraya-ālambana* — Radha is the abode of love, whereas Krishna is the object of love. But although there is difference, there is also non-difference between them. Radha and Krishna in two bodies is *acintya-bhedābheda tattva*, simultaneous difference and non-difference. Krishna is *śṛṅgāra-rasarāja-mūrti* — the embodiment of *śṛṅgāra-rasa* — and Radharani is the embodiment of *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*. To relish mellow there are also two types, *āśraya-ālambana*, and *viśaya-ālambana*. Radharani is *āśraya-ālambana*, the abode of love, whereas Krishna is *viśaya-ālambana*, the object of love.

*Śṛṅgāra-rasarāja-pūrṇa-brahma* Sri Krishna is *viśaya*. He is *pūrṇa-śaktimān*, the source of all potencies, and Radharani is *pūrṇa-śakti*, the complete potency. In *tattva* there is a difference in the sense of *śakti* and *śaktimān*, and simultaneously there is also non-difference in the sense of mood, *bhāva*. There is difference in the sense of bodies



Brijbasi painting from Vrindavan. Unknown artist

Krishna comes disguised as a gopī before Srimati Radharani

and in the sense of *ālambana*, but in *bhāva* there is no difference.

So it is neither correct to say that there is complete difference nor would it be correct to say that there is complete non-difference. There is simultaneous difference and non-difference, and this is *acintya*, inconceivable. They are *acintya-bhedābheda* — simultaneously one and different.

As long as there is a difference of mood then the relishing of mellow will not be complete. When it comes to the stage of non-difference, oneness, then the relishing of mellow is complete — *viśrambha mananam*. *Viśrambha* means oneness. Therefore this verse says, “*praṇaya-vikṛtir*” not “*prema-vikṛtir*”.

In Jiva Goswami’s *Gopāla-campū* (*purva* 15.2), Madhu Kantha is quoted as saying:

*imau gaurī-śyāmau manasi viparītau bahir api  
sphurat tat-tad-vastrāv iti budha-janair niścitam idam*

Wise persons have determined that although Krishna's body is of a blackish hue and Radha's body is of

a golden hue, in their minds the situation is reversed. And externally, their cloth color matches their mind — Krishna wears yellow garments and Radha wears blue garments.

Radha and Shyama are sitting on one *simhāsana*. Externally they are two, but internally one. How is that? *manasi viparītau bahir api*. Gauri means Radharani. Externally she is *gaurī*, golden-colored. But just the opposite is there inside. Shyama is there in Radharani’s heart. He has entered into the heart of Radharani. Similarly, in the heart of Shyama, Gauri, Radharani, is there. Externally they are two, but internally one. How can one understand it? Those who are *budhās*, pandits, say, *sphurat tat-tad-vastrāv* — it should be understood by the garments. Shyamasundar’s garment is yellow colored. This indicates that in the heart of Shyama, *tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgī* — Gaurangi, Radha, is there. Therefore his garment is yellow. And Radha’s garment is a blue sari. This indicates that in the heart of Radharani *ujjala-nīlamanī*, the brilliant blue gem Krishna, is there. Therefore her sari is blue.

*Kṛṣṇa-mayī kṛṣṇa yāra bhūtare bāhīre* — “*kṛṣṇa-mayī*” means “one whose within and without are Lord Krishna.” [Cc. ādi 4.98] Radharani is *kṛṣṇa-mayī*, Krishna is both outside and inside. Outside we see Krishna to the left of Radha. And inside of her heart Krishna is also there. This is oneness. The color of *unnata-ujjala śṛṅgāra-rasa* is *śyāma*, blue. And the color of *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva* is the hue of molten gold, *taṭṭa-kāñcana-gaurāṅgī*. Therefore *rasarāja* Krishna, the king of mellows, is *nava-ghana-śyāma*, black like the color of a new monsoon cloud. He is Shyamasundar. And *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva-mayī* Radha is *taṭṭa-kāñcana-gaurāṅgī*, whose bodily complexion is the hue of molten gold. ❀

— From *Mathura Meets Vrindavan*. Chapter 9. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar. Orissa. 2003.

## THE BEAUTY OF RADHA Sri Narahari Chakravarti's Bhakti-ratnākara 5.3320-3329

*rāsa-bilāsīnī rāi rāse*  
*sakhī-mājhe bilase śyāmera vāma pāse*

In the *rāsa*-dance, in the midst of her *gopī*-friends, at Lord Shyam's left side, Sri Radha enjoys pastimes.

*āhā mari rūpera ki chaṭā*  
*ālo kare jaga jini upamāra ghaṭā*



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Ah! How effulgent is her form! She fills the worlds with light. She defeats any comparison.

*badane cāndera mada nāse*  
*amiyā garava hare su-madhura hāse*

The moon thinks that he is the most beautiful object, but Radha's face destroys his pride. And the heavenly ambrosia enjoyed by the gods thinks that she is the sweetest thing, but she is humbled by Radha's sweet smile.

*bhurū duṭi bhramarera pānti*  
*kamala-nayana-koṇe bhaṅgi nānā bhāti*

Her eyebrows are like a swarm of black bees. The corners of her lotus eyes shine with numerous artful glances.

*nāsāya beśara bhāla sāje*  
*ki nava sindūra-bindu lalāṭera mājhe*

A glorious ornament adorns her nose. A new *sindūra* dot rests in the midst of her forehead.

*śravaṇe tāḍaṅka manoramā*  
*kanaka-darṣaṇa ninde gaṇḍera suśamā*

Charming earrings adorn her ears. Her beautiful cheeks condemn the effulgence of gold.

*balayā-kañkaṇa kare śohe*  
*kāñculi āncita kuca kānu mana mohe*

Bracelets and armlets adorn her wrists and arms. The bodice on her raised breasts enchants Krishna's mind.

*kiñkiṇi balita mājā kṣiṇa*  
*paridheya vicitra vasama tanu lina*

Tinkling bells adorn her slender waist. Colorful garments adorn her slender form.

*lalita nitamba ūru-deśa*  
*ye gaḍhila tā'ra ki rahila dhṛti-leśa*

Her hips and thighs are graceful. How can Krishna keep even a fragment of peace?

*mañimaya nūpura caraṇe*  
*narahari nichani su-nakhera kiraṇe*

Jeweled anklets adorn her feet. Narahari Das worships the effulgence of her toenails. ❀

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