



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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APPROACHING KRISHNA THROUGH HIS REPRESENTATIVE

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

Prabhupada: *Tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā* [Bg. 4.34]. Find someone who can instruct you. But you must surrender and not challenge. And *sevā*, you must render service. Then you can ask him and you will understand. But if you have no surrender and no service attitude — simply a challenging spirit — then you'll never understand anything. That is not the process. If you want to know, then you must find someone you can surrender to. Surrender means that you must render service to him, then you can ask him and he'll give you knowledge — *upadeśyanti te jñānaṁ*. That is the process. Krishna wants surrender, so you have to surrender to his representative. Then you will know.

Guest: Can one not directly surrender to Krishna through his own feelings and heart?

Prabhupada: No. That is not the process. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu teaches, *gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ* [Cc. madhya 13.80]. He wants to become the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of Krishna. That is the process. If you want to know Krishna directly, it is not possible. Otherwise why does Krishna say, *tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā* [Bg. 4.34]? And how can you directly approach Krishna?



Drawing by Anuradha Dasī

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

Guest: By chanting his names, surrendering to him, feeling love for him, and doing service. Is that not ...?

Prabhupada: No. That is not the way. Krishna says, *evam paramparā-prāptam imaṁ rājarṣayo viduḥ* [Bg. 4.2]. You have to accept the *paramparā*, disciplic succession. That is a challenge, not that, "I don't want to surrender to anyone."

Guest: No, not challenge... I'm not saying... I mean ...

Prabhupada: No, it is not possible. Krishna himself accepted a guru. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu accepted a guru. They are God himself. So how can you think: "I can approach Krishna without a guru?" You do not know who is guru. When you actually want Krishna seriously, then Krishna will give you a guru. Just like Dhruva Maharaja. He was advised by his mother, "Go to the forest, there you can see God." So he went there. And when he was very serious, then Krishna sent him Narada Muni. If you are actually serious about getting Krishna, then Krishna will send you his representative and he will take charge of you. That is the process. If you do not find a guru, that means that Krishna is not yet pleased, because you are not serious. Just like when you become serious to study any subject matter, you will search out some college or institution. You cannot purchase the books and read at home and become an expert engineer. No. That is not the process. Therefore the Vedic knowledge is called *śruti*. *Tad-vijñānārthan sa gurum evābhigacchet, śrotṛiyan brahma-niṣṭham*— To learn transcendental subject matter, one must approach a spiritual master who is expert in the Vedic conclusion and is firmly devoted to the Absolute Truth. [*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12]. So we have to hear by *paramparā* system. You attend the lectures of a professor because he has heard. He has listened to the same instructions from his professor. You don't go to a professor who has never gone to school. Just as material knowledge is received by *paramparā*, similarly, spiritual knowledge is received also by *paramparā*. Krishna says, *evam paramparā-prāptam imān rājarṣayo viduḥ* — "This supreme science was received through the chain of disciplic succession, and the saintly kings understood it in that way [Bg. 4.2]." By *paramparā* system. ॐ

— Room conversation, 11 September 1972. Arlington, Texas.

CHEATING BHAJAN

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Sometimes some pride may come and one may think, "I am a *vaiṣṇava*." Bhaktivinode Thakur *mahājana* has sung in *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru* (3.2.8):

'āmi ta' vaiṣṇava' e buddhi ha-ile
amāni nā ha'ba āmi
pratiṣṭāśā āsi' hṛdaya dūṣibe,
ha-iba niraya-gāmī

If I think that I am a *vaiṣṇava* then I shall look forward to receiving respect from others. If the desires

for fame and reputation pollute my heart then I shall certainly descend into hell.

The moment the thought, "I am a *vaiṣṇava*," enters your mind is a most dangerous moment. When that thought comes you cannot become *amāni*, you cannot offer respect to one and all. You will demand respect and thereby run after name, fame and prestige. Then your heart will be polluted. If you keep this thought in your heart you will go to hell. Therefore Mahaprabhu has taught us in his *Śikṣāṣṭaka* (3):

*tṛṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā māna-dena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

Be humbler than a blade of grass in the street. Be as tolerant as a tree. Don't demand respect. Rather, offer respect to one and all. Then you can do *hari-bhajana*. If you don't possess these qualities you cannot do *hari-bhajana*.

This cannot be practiced artificially. It is a natural thing. If you do it artificially it will be hypocrisy. Krishna is in your heart. He knows what you are whispering in your heart, what thoughts are there in your mind. You cannot cheat Him. How many days can you act artificially? Mahaprabhu teaches this, and Srila Kaviraj Goswami, one of the dearest devotees of Srīman Mahaprabhu, says, "Make a garland of this verse, put it around your neck, and do *hari-bhajana*." Otherwise you are not doing *hari-bhajana*. Your *bhajana* will be *kevala kaitava*, only cheating.

This material world is such a dreadful, dangerous, nasty place. Srīmad Bhaktisiddhanta Goswami Prabhupada has said, "This is not at all a fit place for any gentleman to live." In such a dangerous situation, who will save us? The dear devotees of Srīman Mahaprabhu, the *gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-ācāryas*, are our saviors.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 11.26.32 states:

*nīmajjyonmajjatām ghore
bhavābdhau paramāyaṇam
santo brahma-vidah śāntā
naur dṛḍhevāpsu majjatām*

The devotees of the Lord, peacefully fixed in absolute knowledge, are the ultimate shelter for those who are repeatedly rising and falling within the fearful ocean of material life. Such devotees are just like a strong boat that comes to rescue persons who are at the point of drowning.

This material world is known as *bhava-sāgara*, the dreadful ocean of material existence. We have been drowning here for millions of lives and are in

need of a strong boat. That strong boat is the *brahma-vidah-sādhus*, the *gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-ācāryas*.

One should understand that this material world is *duḥkhalāyamaśāśvatam*—a temporary, illusory world full of unlimited miseries. *Pade pade vipadāni* — at every step there is danger. But those who are fortunate enough to have accepted the lotus feet of a *mahad-guru*, a dear devotee of Sriman Mahaprabhu, are protected. Such gurus teach how to serve Krishna. Srila Rupa Goswami states in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.11):

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnya jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
āmukūlyena kṣṇānu-śīlanāni bhaktir uttamā*

When first-class devotional service develops one must be devoid of all material desires, knowledge obtained by monistic philosophy, and fruitive action. The devotee must constantly serve Krishna favorably, as Krishna desires.

Srila Rupa Goswami teaches what is *uttama-bhakti*, real *bhakti*, the best type of *bhakti*. The phrase *āmukūlyena kṣṇānuśīlanam* is most important and significant. In English you say, “to serve Krishna favorably,” but that is not sufficient to understand this verse. What does it mean to serve Krishna favorably? To serve Krishna in such a way that Krishna will be pleased. His pleasure is the only requirement in our life. We are *jīvera 'svamīpa' haya kṣṇera 'nīya-dāsa'*—as His eternal servants, our duty is to render loving service to Krishna [Cc. *madhya* 20.108]. Serving Krishna with pure love means to serve without expecting anything in return. If you want something from Krishna in return for your service, that is not service. ❀

— From *The Worship of Sri Guru*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, India. 2000.

KRISHNA KATHA IS LIFE

From the Life of Jayadev Goswami

Padmavati, sometimes called Padma, was the wife of Jayadev Goswami, the famous author of *Gīta-govinda*. It is said that once Padma was visiting with the queen of the *gajapati* king of Puri. Knowing that Padmavati was cent-per-cent dedicated to her beloved husband, the queen, deciding to joke with Padma, told her that Jayadev had unexpectedly passed away while he was praying in the temple of Lord Jagannath. Much to everyone's shock, as soon as she heard these words, Padmavati, feeling great separation from her devotee husband, clutched her heart and suddenly fell to the ground lifeless. The king was informed, and he called for Jayadev to tell him the sad news concerning the mischief of his queen. To his surprise, Jayadev didn't



Unknown artist

Padmavati and Jayadev

seem disturbed. He merely asked to be taken to the remains of his wife. When brought before the body of Padmavati, Jayadev began sweetly singing a line from *Gīta-govinda*: *priye cāru-śīle muñca mayi mānam anidānāni* — “My beloved, O graceful one, give up this causeless aversion.” This line is part of the tenth *sarga* of Jayadev's *Gīta-govinda*. It was sung by Krishna to Srimati Radharani when he was once trying to soothe her sulky pique.

Hearing Jayadev reciting this line, Padmavati regained her external senses, got up, and began singing the song with Jayadev.

By bringing Padmavati back to life in this manner, Jayadev brought further meaning to the *gopīs'* statement to Krishna in *Bhāgavatam* (10.31.9) *tava kathāmṛtāni tapta-jīvanāni* — [Oh Krishna,] the nectar of your *kathā* bestows life. ❀

— Adapted from Asutosh Nayak's. *Bhaktara Jagannātha*. Published by Sri Govinda Charan Patra, Orissa Book Store. Cuttack. 1998. Oriya. Translated by Balaram Avatar Das.

**PRAYERS TO THE SUPREME
SPIRITUAL MASTER**
Śrī-Kṛṣṇāṣṭakam 2
by Adi Shankaracharya

*vasudeva-sutaṁ devaṁ kaṁsa-cāṇūra-mardanam
devakī-paramānandam kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the Supreme Lord and spiritual master, Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, the greatest transcendental joy of Devaki, and the crusher of demons like Kamsa and Chanura, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*ataśī-puṣpa-saṁkāśam hāra-nūpūra-śobhitam
ratna-kaṅkaṇa-keyūram kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, whose bodily hue resembles an *ataśī* (flax) flower, and who is beautifully adorned with various garlands, jewel-studded anklets, armlets and necklaces, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*kuṭīlāka-saṁyuktam pūrṇa-candra-nibhānam
vilasat-kuṇḍala-dharam kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, who is adorned with curly tresses of hair and dazzling earrings that decorate his resplendent full moon-like beautiful face, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*mandāra-gandha-saṁyuktam cāmi-hāsam caturbhujam
barhi-picchāva-cidāṅgam kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*



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To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, who sometimes appears in a four-handed form as Vāsudeva, and who has an enchanting smile, a decoration of peacock-feathers on his head, and a body exhibiting the fragrance of the *mandāra* (hibiscus) flower, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*utphulla-padma-patrākṣam nīla-jīmūta-sannibham
yādavāmāṁ śīroratnam kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, the crest jewel of the Yadava dynasty, who has eyes resembling petals of a fully-bloomed lotus flower and a bodily hue exactly like a fresh blue monsoon cloud, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*rukmiṇī-keli-saṁyuktam pūtāmbara su-śobhitam
avāpta tulasi-gandham kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, who has attained the fragrance of *tulasi** and is decorated with beautiful yellow garments, enjoying variegated pastimes with Rukmini Devi, I offer my respectful obeisances.

[* Translators note: The word “attained” has been used because Krishna’s bodily fragrance is originally like that of a *mandāra* flower (as indicated in verse 4), but due to constant contact with *tulasi* leaves, this fragrance has been overpowered, just like the fragrance of the *sugandharāja* (gardenia) flower overpowers all others in the night.]

*gopikānām kuca-dvanda kumkumāṅkita vakṣasam
śrīniketaṁ maheśvāsam kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, the abode of Lakshmi Devi, the mighty bowman, and he whose chest carries vermilion marks imprinted from the breasts of the *gopīs*, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*śrīvatsāṅkam mahorakam vanamālā-virājitam
śaṅkha-cakra-dharam devaṁ kṛṣṇam vande jagad-gurum*

To the supreme spiritual master Krishna, who has a broad chest decorated with the *śrīvatsa* jewel, a splendid garland of forest flowers around his neck, and who bears the conch shell and discus in his hands, I offer my respectful obeisances.

*kṛṣṇāṣṭakam-idaṁ puṇyam prātar-uthāya yaḥ paṭhet
koṭi-janma kṛtām pāpām smaraṇena vinasyati*

Anyone who meditates on Lord Krishna by reciting these *Kṛṣṇāṣṭakam* prayers at dawn will have all the sins committed in millions of previous lives destroyed. ❀

— Translated by Bhakta Harshad Marathe from the Sanskrit at: www.stutimandal.com