



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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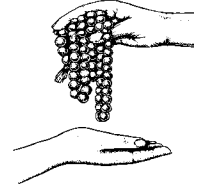
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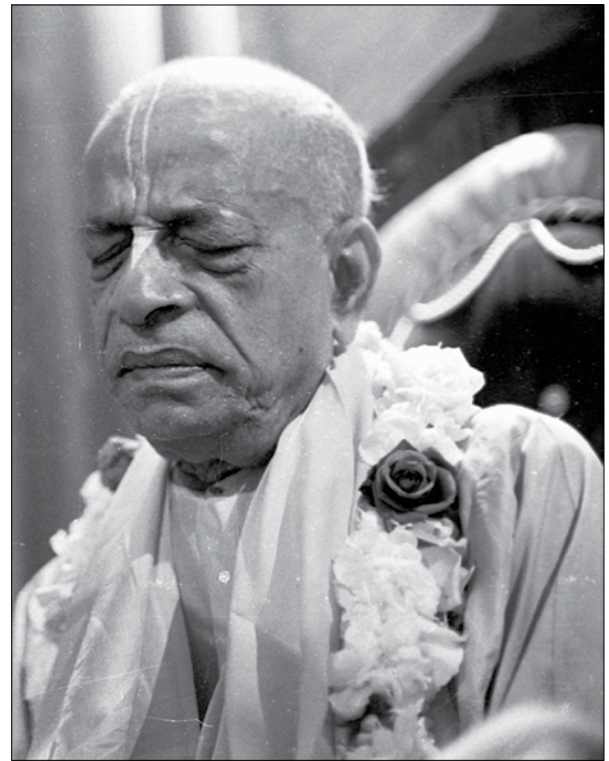


LORD NITYANANDA — OUR GURU

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The bona fide spiritual master always engages in unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By this test he is known to be a direct manifestation of the Lord and a genuine representative of Sri Nityananda Prabhu. The real Vedic philosophy is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*, which establishes everything to be simultaneously one with and different from the Personality of Godhead. Srila Raghunath Das Goswami confirms that this is the real position of a bona fide spiritual master and says that one should always think of the spiritual master in terms of his intimate relationship with Mukunda (Sri Krishna). Srila Jiva Goswami, in his *Bhakti-sandarbha* (213), has clearly defined that a pure devotee's observation of the spiritual master and Lord Shiva as one with the Personality of Godhead exists in terms of their being very dear to the Lord, not identical with him in all respects. Following in the footsteps of Srila Raghunath Das Goswami and Srila Jiva Goswami, later *ācāryas* like Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur have confirmed the same truths. In his prayers to the spiritual master, Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur confirms that all the revealed scriptures accept the spiritual master to be identical with the Personality of Godhead because he is a very dear and confidential servant of



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

the Lord. *Gauḍīya vaiṣṇavas* therefore worship Srila Gurudeva (the spiritual master) in the light of his being the servitor of the Personality of Godhead. In all the ancient literatures of devotional service and in the more recent songs of Srila Narottam Das Thakur, Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur, and other unalloyed *vaiṣṇavas*, the spiritual master is always considered either one of

Unknown artist



Sri Nityananda Prabhu

the confidential associates of Srimati Radharani or a manifested representation of Srila Nityananda Prabhu. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Ādi 1.46 purport.)

So far your questions are concerned: Nityananda is the principle of guru. So, *gurudeva* is the incarnation of Nityananda. Anyone strictly following the instruction of guru is following Nityananda. The price one has to pay if he wants to become Krishna conscious is that he must dedicate himself to following the order of the spiritual master, *mahat-sevā*. If the spiritual master is pleased with the disciple then the blessings of guru will be there. That is the best way to become Krishna conscious, and Krishna is non-different from Nityananda. You may pray to Lord Nityananda to help you become dedicated in the service of your guru. Krishna consciousness cannot be achieved artificially. You should approach Nityananda Prabhu through your spiritual master. (Letter, 24 October 1976.) ❧

ETERNAL VARNASHRAM DHARMA

Srila Bhaktivinode Thakura

In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.35) it is stated:
*yaśya yal lakṣaṇaṁ proktaṁ puṁso varṇābhivyañjakam
 yad anyatrāpi dṛśyeta tat tenaiva vinirdiśet*

If one shows the symptoms of being a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, or *sūdra*, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptoms of classification.

In his commentary, Sridhar Swami has written:

*śamādhībhīr eva brāhmaṇādi vyavahāro mukhyaḥ,
 na jāti mātrād ity āha—yasyeti. yad yadi anyatra
 varṇāntare 'pi dṛśyeta tad varṇāntaraṁ tenaiva
 lakṣaṇa nimittenaiva varṇena vinirdiśet, na tu
 jāti nimittenety arthaḥ*

The brahmins' main characteristics are qualities such as peacefulness, not birth. If these main characteristics are seen in persons other than those born as brahmins, then such persons should be considered brahmins. They should not be considered according to their caste by birth.

This kind of eternal *varṇāśrama-dharma* is always to be followed. It is often useful for devotional service. Members of the four *varṇas* and the lower castes should be eager to progress their *sāttvic* nature. If an outcaste becomes fortunate due to his pious deeds, then he should progress his cultivation of goodness while following the conduct of a *sūdra*. Everyone should give prominence to devotional service and progress the cultivation of goodness to the platform of *nirguṇa*, transcendence, by the mercy of the devotees. These are the stages of *sanātana-dharma*. With devotion, the member of any *varṇa* is considered the best of the *brāhmaṇas*. But without devotion, the life of a *brāhmaṇa* fixed in goodness is useless.

For example, let us consider the statement [of Srila Narottam Das Thakur from *Prema-bhakti-candrikā*]: *mahājanera yei patha, tā 'te ha'ba anurata, pūrvāpara kariyā vicāra* — “I will be attached to following the path chalked out by the *mahājanas*. I will consider their example very carefully from all angles of vision.” The *ṛṣis* and *mahātmās* who have taught conduct before the appearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are considered to be the previous *mahājanas*. The conduct seen in the *mahājanas* after the appearance of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the conduct of later *mahājanas*. The conduct of the later *mahājanas* is superior and should be adopted. The conduct of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and his followers is meant to teach people. That conduct should be followed in all respects. ❧

— *Śrī Bhaktiyāloka - Illuminations on Bhakti*. Published by Torchlight Publications, 2002.



Painting by B. K. Mitra. Gita Press, Gorakhpur

Muralikā-asara — "The captive influence of the flute"

SHOWING GOLOKA TO THE VRAJA-VASIS

Some Points from the Commentaries on Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.28.17

Part Four: Submerged in the Greatest Joy

*nandādayas tu taṁ dṛṣṭvā paramānanda-nivṛtāḥ
kṛṣṇaṁ ca tatra cchandobhiḥ stūyamānaṁ su-vismīṭāḥ*

Nanda Maharaja and the other cowherd men felt the greatest happiness when they saw that transcendental abode. They were especially amazed to see Krishna himself there, surrounded by the personified Vedas, who were offering him prayers.

Srila Sanatan Goswami (Bṛhat-vaiṣṇava-toṣiṇī):

First Interpretation — The cowherd men became extremely happy by the vision of Krishna's special abode, which they had desired to see. They became astonished to see that Krishna was present even there, in *vaikuṅṭha*.

Second Interpretation — The cowherd men became extremely happy by the vision of

Krishna's special abode which they had desired to see. They saw that Krishna was being praised in that abode of Vaikuntha/Golok with Vedic hymns. Seeing that he was also being praised next to them (in the earthly Vrindavan), they became greatly astonished. This has already been explained by Srila Sridhar Swami.

Third Interpretation — Eagerly seeing Vaikuntha, all the cowherd men became joyful. Krishna's dearest devotees headed by Nanda were astonished to see Krishna being glorified by Vedic hymns in Vaikuntha. However, their joy was only due to seeing Krishna near them again, as their supreme friend and the master of their lives. Seeing Vaikuntha itself was not the cause of their great happiness.

Fourth Interpretation — Even though Krishna was being praised with Vedic hymns in Vaikuntha, the cowherd men saw that he was also present with them. Thus they became greatly pleased and their faces became decorated with beautiful smiles (*suvismīṭāḥ*).

Fifth Interpretation — The cowherd men became supremely happy seeing their most dear Krishna being glorified in Vaikuntha with Vedic hymns.

Sixth Interpretation — Seeing that Golok has the same appearance as the Gokul on earth, the cowherds became supremely happy. ॐ

— Translation by Bhakta Vinit from the Sanskrit given in *Śrīmad-bhāgavata-mahā-purāṇam* with multiple commentaries, Canto 10. Shri Krishna Shankar Shastri, Sri Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Gujarat.

ALL GLORIES TO NAROTTAM DAS THAKUR

Govinda Das

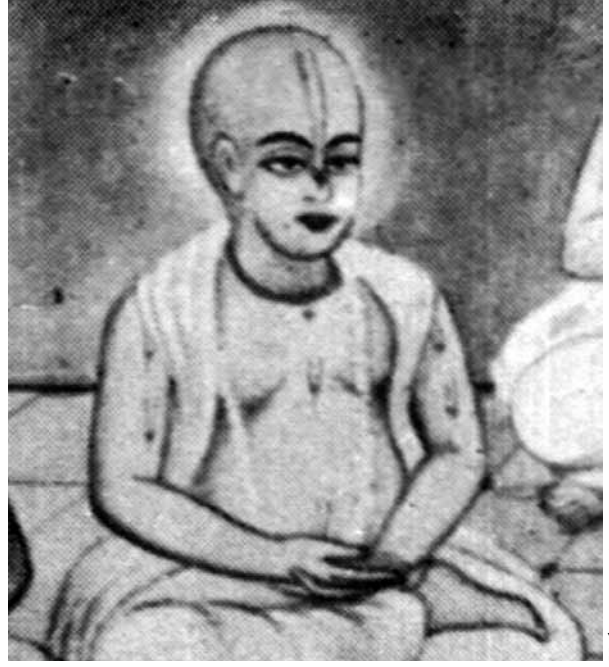
*jaya re jaya re jaya thākura narottama
prema-bhakti maharāja
yāko mantri abhinna kalevara
rāmacandra kavirāja (refrain)*

All glories, all glories to Thakur Narottam, the emperor of *prema-bhakti*! His minister Ramchandra Kaviraj is like his second body.

*prema-mukuta-maṇi bhūṣaṇa bhāvāvali
aṅga hi aṅga virāja
nṛpa āsana kheturi mādā baiṭhata
saṅga hi bhakata samāja*

Every limb of his body is ornamented with multifarious symptoms of the crest-jewels of *prema*. In the great festival at Kheturi, he sat on a grand *āsana* in the society of devotees.

*samātana rūpakṛta grantha bhāgavata
anudina karata vicāra
rādā mādava yugala ujjvala rasa
paramānanda sukhasāra*



Unknown artist

Srila Narottam Das Thakur

His daily practice was to carefully ponder over the books of Srila Rupa and Sanatan Goswamis, which reveal the topmost conjugal mellow of Sri Radha Madhava and are the subject matter of the topmost happiness.

*śrī saṅkīrtana viśaya-rase unmata
dharmādharma nāhi māna
yoga-dāna-vrata ādi bhaye bhāgata
royata karama geyāna*

He was completely absorbed in the ecstasies of *saṅkīrtana-rasa*. He did not care about so called religion or irreligion. Mystic yoga, charity, penance, etc., would run away and *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* would shed tears.

*bhāgavata sāstra-gaṇa yā dei bhakti-dhana
tāka gaurava karu āpa
sāṅkhyā mīmāṃsaka tarkādika yata
kampita dekhi paratāpa*

He took pride in devotional literatures that bestow the treasure of *bhakti*. Seeing his might, *sāṅkhyā*, *mīmāṃsā*, logic, and other philosophies trembled.

*abhakata caura dūrahini bhāgi rahu
niyare nāhi parakāśa
dīna hīna jane deyala bhakti-dhane
vañcita govinda-dāsa*

The non-devotee thieves ran far away, and never came near him. He gave the treasure of *bhakti* even to the most fallen, but Govinda Das has been cheated. ॐ

— Translated from *Vaiṣṇava Padāvalī*, fourth edition, April 2010. Compiled and edited by Hare Krishna Mukhopadhyay. Published by Shishu Sahitya Sansad Pvt. Ltd. Kolkata.

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