



Sri Krishna Kathamrita

तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्

tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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STANDARDS FOR OFFERING BHOGA

His Divine Grace A. C.

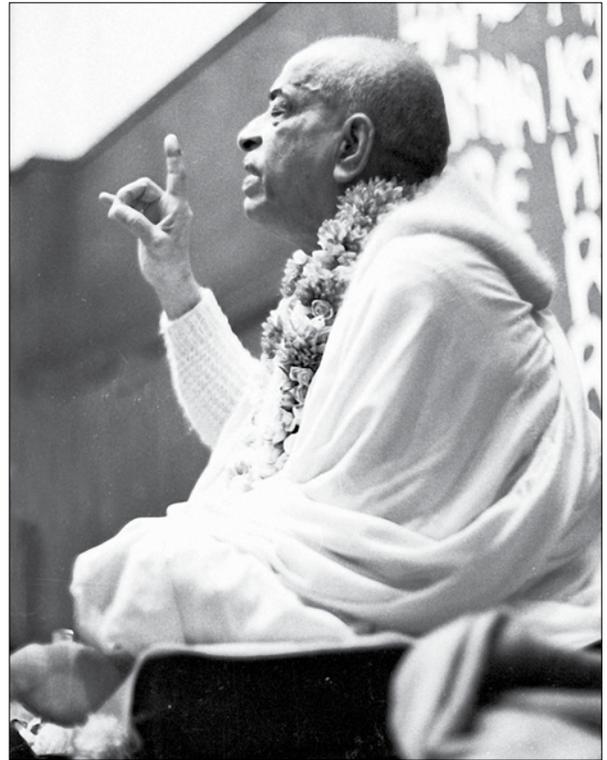
VBhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Brown rice is generally doubly boiled; therefore it cannot be used for Krishna *prasādam*. Unpolished rice which looks like brown rice can be used. Generally in America the brown rice is doubly boiled, therefore it is unfit. We do not mind polished or unpolished, but doubly boiled mustn't be used. Doubly boiled rice is considered impure. Sun baked rice is all right. (Letter to Mahapurush, 17 October 1967.)

Brijbasi & Co. are not ordinary businessmen; they are devotees. So their pictures aren't poisonous. Even it is poison, because we are paying for their goods, therefore if any poison is there, it becomes ineffective. Just like we are buying so many things at the market which are not fit for offering to Krishna, but because we are purchasing them, we can offer. (Letter to Jadurani, 15 February 1968.)

So far as offering Krishna apple cider, this can be done only if is prepared by devotees. These food manufacturers do not take proper precautions in cleanliness nor do they have devotion to Krishna in their labors, so it is not a very acceptable offering. If you can make this preparation yourself then it will be all right. (Letter to Rukmini, 19 December 1968.)

Regarding purchasing things in the market, these items are considered as purified when we pay the price for them. That is the general instruction. But when we know something is adulterated, we should avoid it. But unknowingly if something adulterated



His Divine Grace

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is purchased, that is not our fault. Things which are suspicious, however, should be avoided. (Letter to Krishna Das, 25 December 1969.)

Regarding the preparation of rice by steaming and then drying, we can offer such rice even if it is twice-cooked. Gaudiya Math offers; even during the presence of Prabhupada [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati] it was done, so there is nothing wrong. It is called *cīrā*. I never took *cīrā* except in Gaudiya Math. (Letter to Jayapataka Swami, 22 October 1972.)

LESSONS IN LOVE AND FLUTE

*Adapted from Srila Jiva Goswami's
Gopāla-campū Pūrva, chapter 17*

One evening, in a village assembly attended by the *gopīs* and Srimati Radharani, the poet Madhukantha started speaking. As the various pastimes of Krishna he spoke unfolded, especially those that occurred after the killing of Dhenuka, the desire of the *gopīs* swelled with each passing day, exactly like the growing soft petals of a lotus. These desires started manifesting in the *gopīs* daily activities, and this in turn increased the desires of the unfathomable Krishna. And paramount among them were the intensifying desires of Sri Radhika.

Astonishingly, even though Radha and Krishna were separated by a distance, both demonstrated the same symptoms in their behavior due to undergoing the same emotions. The desire to meet on a pretext; to see each other from a distance; to actually meet; exasperation against detractors; a constant feeling of angst — these emotions arose simultaneously in Radha and Krishna. Indeed, their emotions were like two mirrors facing each other. When either of them would almost faint due to these emotions, the swoon would be prevented by an auspicious anticipation of their actual meeting. In this way, the *gopīs*, who had the rarest type of love for Krishna, somehow passed the not-so-favorable autumn season, just to find that the month of *mārgaśīrṣa* (November-December) had paved their way to the homes of their so-called husbands [in other words, they had all reached marriageable age].

The parents of those *gopīs* were themselves extremely hesitant to give away their daughters to anyone besides Krishna, considering all such marriage proposals to be like bad dreams, and this resulted in them not being able to provide proper hospitality to the would-be grooms' families. Moreover, they saw the crestfallen condition of the girls, and thus they too were in a state of anxiety. Fear of social reproach [which would result should they not get their daughters married] was also gripping them. At that time, an anxious Purnamasi instructed each of the parents, "You continue to maintain your disinterested attitude. I myself will arrange for the hospitality of the would-be in-laws and everything else for the marriage. I'll also ensure that your daughter is engaged in the service of her husband at her in-laws' place."

Worshiped by even the gods, Purnamasi herself appeased the angry in-laws of the *gopīs*, who were displeased by the indifference of the *gopīs* parents. Thus, as intended, she made the in-laws favorable.

Alas! The poor *gopīs* could never tolerate going to the homes of those who proudly considered themselves to be their husbands. Neither could they tolerate the imposed bond of marriage and the harsh words given to them by their in-laws.

Then, through a magic spell, Purnamasi made it possible that their desired goal — Krishna — would be attained and the undesirable association of the so-called husbands would be avoided. By her *māyā*, Purnamasi made the original *gopīs* disappear during intimate moments with their so-called husbands and made artificial replicas of those *gopīs* appear in the same place. Later, when the intimacy between the so-called *gopīs* and so-called husbands ended, she restored the original *gopīs* back to their places. However, this did not end the fear of the *gopīs*.

The *gopīs* considered their bodies to be prison-houses in absence of an opportunity to obtain Krishna. How troublesome it was to stay at their parents homes before marriage! And fie upon their current condition, when they were at their in-law's places. Indeed, their in-law's homes were like a burning fire for their souls. In the absence of Krishna, even favorable objects appeared unfavorable. What then to speak of unfavorable objects? The unfavorable objects were just like a bed of dry grass that had caught fire.

When Purnamasi nicely established the *gopīs* at their so called in-laws homes, she then planned to leave. In order to console the anxious *gopīs*, she told them, "Whenever you see yourselves in a dangerous situation, run away from there. My occult powers will ensure that the situation remains under control. You will spontaneously come to know where you have to run to."

The *gopīs* who had shifted from their parents homes to their in-laws were just like prisoners who were earlier staying in a royal prison but had to suddenly shift to an enemy prison due to being conquered by an enemy king. The restrictions imposed on them increased their desires and caused them great anxiety. This anxiety merged with their breathing process.

Although the *gopīs*' desire to attain Sri Hari had risen to a great extent within their hearts, they suppressed these desires exactly as a dung-patty suppresses fire.



Painting by D. Banerji

In other words, as a dung-patty initially covers up the fire in which it is placed but ultimately becomes its fuel, the *gopīs* suppression of desires will ultimately become a catalyst for arranging a meeting with Krishna again.

This suppression of desires is demonstrated by the example of Sri Radhika's following statement, "He whose effulgence is as pleasing and cooling as the moonshine, whose qualities make everyone stunned with ecstasy, and whose heart is extremely soft, is the ultimate destination of us *gopīs*, who are just like *cakorī* birds waiting for the moon to rise. Alas! *Dharma*, the code of religion, stops my way and forces me on the path of *adharmā*, irreligion."

Krishna thought, "Alas! The single-pointedly devoted Sri Radhika, who is just like my life, is now under the control of someone else. Remembering this, I am reeling and forgetting myself." Remembering Sri Radhika in this way, for many days he sadly wiped his eyes with his yellow turmeric-colored cloth.

Even though he was extremely eager to meet Sri Radhika, how could Krishna disclose this irreligious fact to his friends? Therefore, clever-minded Krishna engaged his eyes in doing the messenger work for him. In other words, whenever he saw the *gopīs*, his eyes would do the talking for him.

The *gopīs* later acknowledged the role of his eyes, as follows:

*śarad-udāśaye sādhu-jāta-sat-
sarasijodara-śrī-muṣā dr̥ṣā
surata-nātha te 'śulka-dāsikā
vara-da nighnato neha kim vadhaḥ*

O Lord of love, in beauty your glance excels the whorl of the finest, most perfectly formed lotus within the autumn pond. O bestower of blessings, you are killing the maidservants who have given themselves to you freely, without any price. Isn't this murder? (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.31.2.)

Alas! When the side-long glances of Lord Krishna fall on any devotee besides the *gopīs*, the authors of the *dharma-śāstras* (codes of religious conduct) consider it the fruit of all the *śāstras* (scriptures). And when these same side-long glances fall on the *gopīs*, they are considered to be like the sharp edge of a weapon (*śāstra*).

In the hearts of Krishna and the *gopīs*, fires burnt constantly during the afternoons and nights, but the fire would flare up in the mornings and evenings due to seeing each other. Indeed, in this way it was just like the fire in the homes of the *agnihotra*-performing *brāhmaṇas*.

When Krishna would leave for the forests in the early morning and come back in the late evening, the *gopīs* would gather along with all the others for seeing him. Among the *gopīs*, Sri Radhika appeared as special as the *Anurādhā* constellation on a *pūrṇimā* day.

When Krishna would leave for the forests in the morning he would hold the hand of the *gopa* next to him while looking in an indirect way toward the *gopīs*. While embracing and playing with his friends, Krishna would give signals to the *gopīs* by the sound of his flute.

The *gopīs* will express this in the future as follows:

*prahasitaṁ priya-prema-vikṣaṇaṁ
viharaṇaṁ ca te dhyāna-maṅgalam
rahasi saṁvido yā hr̥di spr̥śaḥ
kuhaka no manaḥ kṣobhayanti hi*

Your smiles, your sweet, loving glances, the intimate pastimes and confidential talks we enjoyed with you — all these are auspicious to meditate upon, and they touch our hearts. But at the same time, O deceiver, they very much agitate our minds. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.31.10)

When Krishna would return from the forest in the evening, the *gopīs* would see his lotus face covered with cow-dust and surrounded by curly locks of bluish-black hair. It seemed that cupid, in the form of those curly hair-locks, had created a trap for the bee-like eyes of the *gopīs*.

The *gopīs* will express the same as follows:

*dina-parikṣaye nīla-kuntalair
vanaruhānaṁ bibhrad āvṛtam
ghana-rajasaṁ darśayan muhur
manasi naḥ smaraṁ vīra yacchasi*

At the end of the day you repeatedly show us your lotus face, covered with dark blue locks of hair and thickly powdered with dust. Thus, O hero, you arouse lusty desires in our minds. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.31.12)



Unknown artist

In this way, the competitive desires increased on a day-to-day basis, and the anxiety of the *gopīs* appeared to have put the newly arrived months of *caitra-vaishākhā* (March-April-May) in anxiety.

Sri Shukadev narrates this anxiety of the *gopīs* as follows:

*gopīnāṁ paramānanda āsīd govinda-darśane
kṣaṇaṁ yuga-śatam iva yāsāṁ yena vinābhavat*

The young *gopīs* took the greatest pleasure in seeing Govinda come home, since for them even a moment without his association seemed like a hundred ages. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 10.19.16)

What this means is that the pleasure derived in seeing Govinda cannot be described in words. It only occurs when the correct circumstances are present. A few moments of separation from Krishna would appear to them as many *yugas*. And on meeting Krishna, thousands of *yugas* appeared like a few moments. When even a few moments of separation would appear as long as *yugas*, we can't imagine how the *gopīs* spent their nights in separation from Krishna. Somehow the *gopīs* spent their time gazing at Krishna in the mornings and evenings, and thus the summer season passed, paving way for the rains. 🌧️

(To be continued)

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das, from the Sanskrit at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (<http://www.granthamandira.com>)

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