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## Highlights

- **PERFECTING THE MANTRA**

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

- **MEETING A GURU**

*Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja*

- **SRIMATI RADHARANI IN SRI VAISHNAVISM**

*From Sri Vedanta Deshika's composition named Yādavābhyudaya*

- **WITHOUT GAURANGA**

*The medieval poet Premananda Das*

- **MATERIAL BENEFITS FROM BHAKTI**

*Srila Rupa Goswami's Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.245*

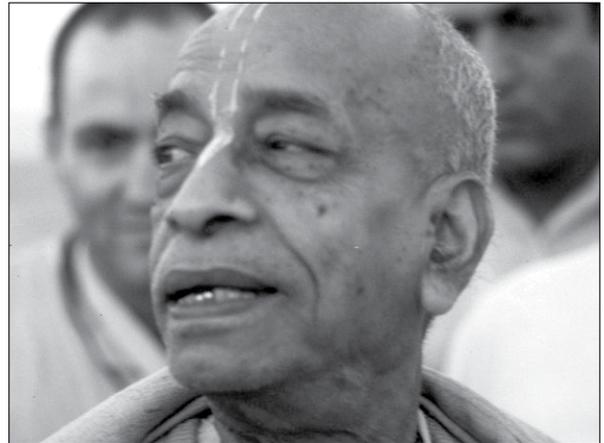


## PERFECTING THE MANTRA

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

The etymological alphabets are surcharged with spiritual potency. All mantras indicating the transcendental holy name of God are to be understood in that way. When we chant the mantras as they were presented by authorities, the process helps communication with the Personality of Godhead by sound waves. The powerful mantras have such potency if they are sounded properly. By chanting mantras one can spiritualize ones existence, just like heat can expand a spherical object. *Mantra-siddhi* means complete liberation. There is no difference between the holy name and mantra. 'Man' means mind and 'tra' means deliverance. That which delivers one from mental speculation is called mantra. *Mantra-siddhi* means to transcend the gross and subtle mental plane. (Letter to Padampatji, 7 May 1957.)

Persons who want to gain some advantage through acquiring a cheap reputation imitate great personalities like Haridas Thakur, who was chanting 300,000 holy names daily. By such solitary chanting he got so much spiritual power that he was able to convert a harlot into a great devotee, whereas an ordinary person falls easily to such allurements. One should not imitate such great personalities but should



*His Divine Grace*

*A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

try to see how that personality has developed such taste that he can remain alone simply engaged in chanting. If one can remain alone simply chanting, that is very good. But it is very difficult also. For a conditioned soul it is very difficult to concentrate the mind fully on chanting. Better to be engaged in preaching work and that will make one gradually successful. When we are actually engaged in preaching work then we gradually acquire spiritual strength. (Letter to Sivananda, 11 November 1968.)

There is no requirement that *japa* should be done silently and chanting should be done differently. Loudly or silently, everything is all right. There is no such restriction. The only thing is that we should

chant very attentively, hearing the vibration very distinctly. (Letter to Satsvarupa, 8 March 1969.)

Generally it is the process to simply chant and hear, but if Krishna's *līlā* comes into remembrance, that is very good. It should come automatically. Not that you are remembering it artificially. (Letter to Prahladananda, 17 June 1971.)

Even when you are walking you can softly chant "Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna ..." or even when you are on the bus going somewhere you can chant. When you are working with your hands you can chant and when you are resting or going to take rest you can chant. Even in your toilet room while taking bath you can chant. In this way there is no limitation or restriction for chanting this holy name of God, Krishna, and his energy, Hara. In doing this business there is no loss, but there is very great gain which is transcendental realization. (Letter to Srīman Minoru and Kenji, 22 April 1970.)

## MEETING A GURU

### *Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja*

Guru is the spiritual master, the representative of Krishna. He is a very dear devotee of Krishna, who is *caitya-guru*, seated in the heart as the supersoul. The spiritual master is always there. Don't think that he is not physically present, that he is not there. He is there. He is always there. If you have developed love for the spiritual master, if you have developed that eye, then you can see him, you can talk to him. And he is also present in the form of books, *vāṇī-rūpa*; his instructions are there.

The *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.2.23) states:

*nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo  
na medhayā na bahudhā śrutena  
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas  
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*

You cannot understand the absolute truth through your own mundane scholarship, your own mundane intelligence, *medhayā*. Nor can you understand it by listening to many lectures by *karmīs*, *jñānīs*, and *yogīs*. Those who are not devotees, who never come under a bona fide disciplic succession, cannot know it.

Then how can you know? *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* says, *yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām*. *Ātmā* here means *paramātmā*, the supersoul who is seated in everyone's heart. Assuming a body, he personally comes as spiritual master to teach *paramātmā-tattva*. He is *caitya-guru*. Unless he speaks, you cannot understand.

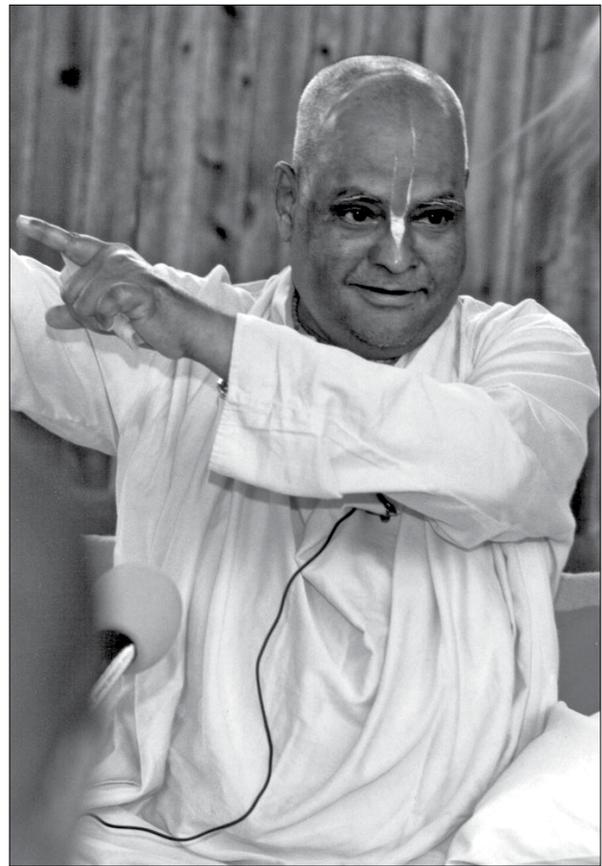


Photo by Adideva Das

*Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja*

Where does he appear? Who meets him? That is another question. When an individual person is very, very inquisitive, very eager to understand all these things, the *paramātmā* knows, "Oh, now he is very eager to understand me. I must help him."

So he comes, assuming the body of guru. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*madhya* 19.151) states:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

After wandering through so many planetary systems, undergoing so many species of life, such a person who meets a bona fide spiritual master is most fortunate, *bhāgyavān*. It is Krishna's mercy. *kṛṣṇa kṛpāte guru mile guru kṛpāte kṛṣṇa mile* — By Krishna's mercy you get a bona fide spiritual master, and by the mercy of the spiritual master you get Krishna. *Paramātmā* arranges that meeting. So we must be very eager, very inquisitive, as Dhruva Maharaja was, to get the Lord. *Paramātmā* arranged for Narada Muni to appear before him. "All right, he is very eager now. You go and show him the path, help him."

— *My Revered Spiritual Master*, Chapter 3. Gopal Jiu Publications. 2010.



## SRIMATI RADHARANI IN SRI VAISHNAVISM

From Sri Vedanta Deshika's composition  
Named Yādavābhyudaya

*nirapekṣa ivaīṣa nīlayā  
rasikaḥ pālikayā sa-rādhayā  
pṛthag atra kim etad ucyate  
kuhakaḥ kaścīd asau kulasya naḥ*

**Commentary by Sri Appayya Dikshit:** *nirapekṣa iti arasika nīrasa-hṛdaya eṣa kṛṣṇa. nīlayā sa-rādhayā rādhayā sahitayā pālikayā ca nirapekṣa iva apekṣyata ity apekṣa. karmany apratyaya... apekṣaṇīya-kṛtya-rahita evety arthaḥ. Ivakāro 'vadhāraṇe. nīlādayo gopikāviśeṣāḥ. atra gopikāsu pṛthag nīlādikā pratyekaṁ udāhṛtya. kim etad ucyate? asau kṛṣṇa? na asmākaṁ kulasyaiva kaścīd kuhako vañcakaḥ.*

**Translation (according to the commentary):** Krishna behaves in an unexpectedly distant, emotionless manner with Nīla, Palika and Radha. They then ask the other *gopīs*, “Is this our Krishna?” and they reply, “No. He doesn’t seem to be from our group. He seems to be a cheater.” (Canto 9, verse 90.)

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the *Yādavābhyudaya* with the commentary of Appayya Dikshita, Volume III. Sri Vani Vilas Press, Sri Rangam. 1924.

## WITHOUT GAURANGA

The medieval poet Premananda Das

*re mana! śacira nandana vine (dhru)  
prema boli nāma ati adabhuta śruta haite kāra kāṇe?*

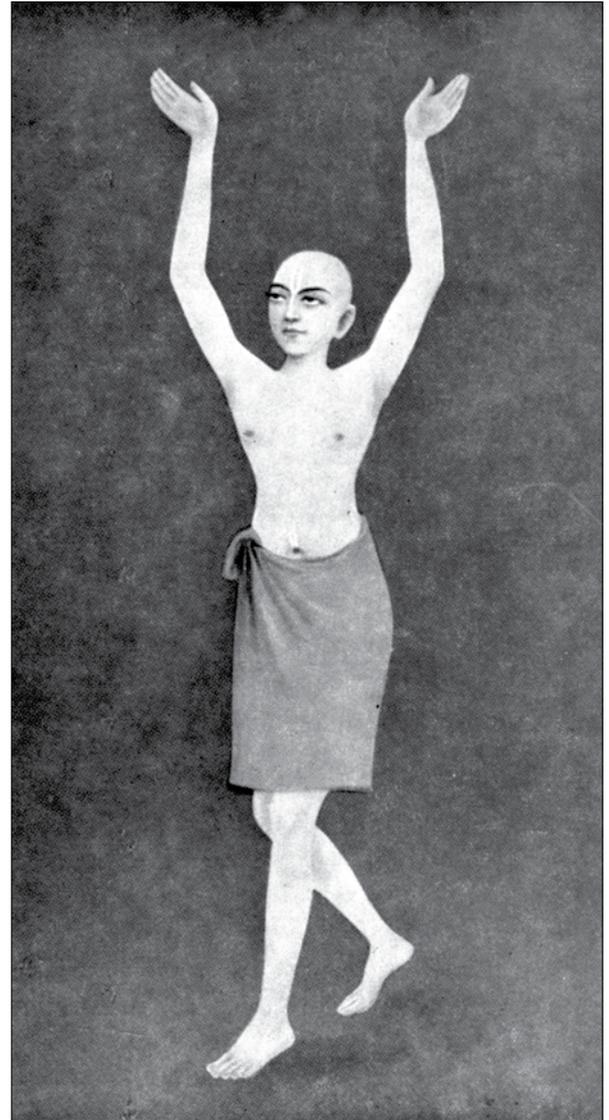
O mind! Without the son of Mother Saci, who would have made us hear the loving chant of the wonderful holy names in our ears?

*śrī-kṛṣṇa nāmera saḡuṇa mahimā kebā jānāita āra  
vṛndā vipinera mahā-madhurimā āsvāda ha-ita kāra*

[Without him], how would the qualities and glories of the name of Lord Krishna be known? How would the great sweetness of the forest known as Sri Vrindavan be experienced?

*kebā jānāita rādhāra mādhyura rasa yaśaḥ camatkāra  
tāra anubhava, sāttvika vikāra gocara chila vā kāra*

[Without him], how would the conjugal love of Srimati Radharani and the astonishing *rasa*



Unknown artist, c. 1865



experienced by her be known? How would her loving feelings and ecstasies be otherwise known?

*vraje ye vilāsa, rāsa mahā-rāsa prema parakīyā tattva  
gopīra mahimā vyabhicārī sīmā kāra avagati chila eta*

[Without him] how would the great rāsa in Vraja and the mood of conjugal love, especially the feelings of parakīyā be known? How would the glories of the gopīs and the limits of their ecstasies be known?

*dhanya kali dhanya, nitāi caitanya parama karuṇā kari  
veda-vidhi agocara, premera vikāra prakāṣe jagata bhari*

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Glorious indeed is this *kali-yuga*, for Lord Nitai and Chaitanya have manifested immense mercy and illuminated the path of *prema* or love of God in this world, a path which is unreachable even through the Vedas.

*uttama adhama kichu na vāchila yāciṇā dileka kola  
kahe premānanda emana gaurāṅge antare dhari de dola*

Never discriminating who is elevated or who is fallen, Lord Gauranga lovingly embraces one and all. The poet Premananda Das says, “Hold tightly to that Gauranga in the innermost core of your heart and sway back and forth in ecstasy.” ॥

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from *Premānanda Dāsa viracita Manah-śikṣā*. Edited and Published by Din Sri Jagadbandhu Bhadra. Unknown Date.

### MATERIAL BENEFITS FROM BHAKTI

*Srila Rupa Goswami's*

*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.245*

*keṣāñcit kvacid aṅgānām yat kṣudraṁ śrūyate phalam  
bahir-mukha-pravṛtyaitat kintu mukhyaṁ phalaṁ ratih*

“[The various *purāṇas* and other scriptures say that] certain limbs of *bhakti* reward one with great material benefits. These promises of meager material rewards to be earned by the practice of such activities are given only for inspiring the non-serious candidates to perform them. The main fruit of these activities, however, is *rati*, deep attraction to Lord Krishna.” ॥

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira.

