



तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्  
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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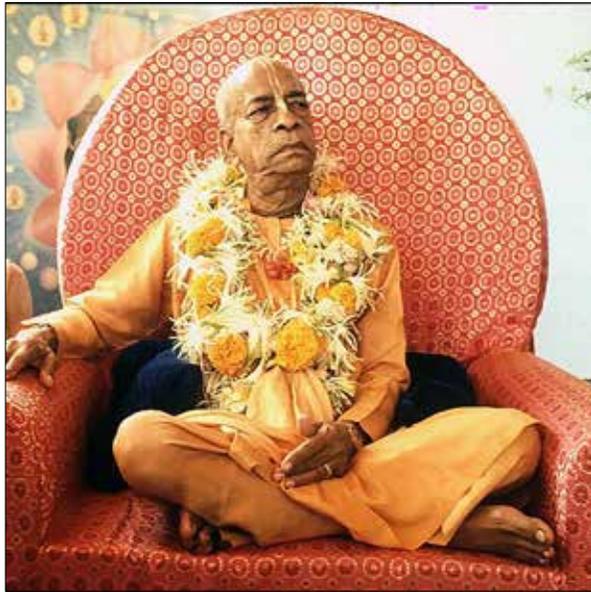
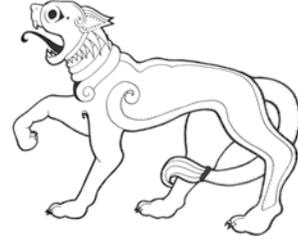
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By an unknown Gaudiya Vaishnava



## THE MADMAN RAMANANDA RAY

*His Divine Grace*

*A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

*Purport to Cc. ādi 10 134*

The *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (120–24) states that Ramananda Ray was formerly Arjuna. He is also considered to have been an incarnation of the *gopī* Lalita, although in the opinion of others he was an incarnation of Vishakhadevi. He was a most confidential devotee of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, “Although I am a *sannyāsī*, my mind is sometimes perturbed when I see a woman. But Ramananda Ray is greater than Me, for he is always undisturbed, even when he touches a woman.” Only Ramananda Ray was endowed with the prerogative to touch a woman in this way;

no one should imitate him. Unfortunately, there are rascals who imitate the activities of Ramananda Ray. We need not discuss them further.

In Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s final pastimes, Ramananda Ray and Swarup Damodar always engaged in reciting suitable verses from Śrīmad *Bhāgavatam* and other books to pacify the Lord’s ecstatic feelings of separation from Krishna. When Lord Chaitanya went to southern India, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya advised him to meet Ramananda Ray, declaring that there was no devotee as advanced in understanding the conjugal love of Krishna and the *gopīs*. While touring South India, Lord Chaitanya met Ramananda Ray by the bank of the Godavari, and in their long discourses the Lord took the position of a student, and Ramananda Ray instructed him. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu concluded these discourses by saying, “My dear Ramananda Ray, both you and I are madmen, and therefore we met intimately on an equal level.” Lord Chaitanya advised Ramananda Ray to resign from his government post and come back to Jagannatha Puri to live with him. Although Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu refused to see Maharaja Prataparudra because he was a king, Ramananda Ray, by a *vaiṣṇava* scheme, arranged a meeting between the Lord and the king. This is described in the *madhya-līla*, chapter twelve, verses 41–57. Sri Ramananda Ray was present during the water sports of the Lord after the *Ratha-yātrā* festival.

Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu considered Sri Ramananda Ray and Sri Sanatan Goswami to be equal in their renunciation, for although Sri Ramananda Ray was a *grhastha* engaged in government service and

Sri Sanatan Goswami was in the renounced order of complete detachment from material activities, they were both servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who kept Krishna in the center of all their activities. Sri Ramananda Ray was one of the three and a half personalities with whom Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu discussed the most confidential topics of Krishna consciousness. Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu advised Pradyumna Mishra to learn the science of Krishna from Sri Ramananda Ray. As Subala always assisted Krishna in his dealings with Radharani in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, so Ramananda Ray assisted Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in his feelings of separation from Krishna. Sri Ramananda Ray was the author of the *Jagannātha-vallabha-nāṭaka*. 🙏



Painting by Murari Das, 16th century. Commissioned by Maharaja Prataprudra.

## THE GLORIES OF SRILA RAMANANDA RAY

By an Unknown Gaudiya Vaishnava

jayare jayare jaya                      pitarīti ratnālāra  
 rāma rāya rasera sāgara  
 āpani caitanya yāhe                      mano sādhe ava gāhe  
 rasonmādi nāgarī nāgara

## श्रीकृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

Glory, glory, glory to the jewel mine of love, Sri Ram Ray, who is the ocean of transcendental mellows. Sri Chaitanya by his own wish takes bath in that ocean. They are just like the lover and the beloved relishing the mellows of love.

gaura prema rasa ghana                      bhavānanda mandana  
 jaya jaya rāmanānda rāya  
 ālāla-nātha sannidhāne                      venkaṭapura nāma grāme  
 kṛpā kari ha-ilā udaya

Ramananda Ray, the son of Bhavananda Ray, is the embodiment of the dense mellow and love of Gaura. He mercifully appeared in Venkatapur, a place near to Alalanatha.

[Note: Venkatapur is today known as Bentapur, and Alalanatha is known as Alarnath.]

śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya nāma                      śrī rādhāramaṇa rāma  
 tāhāre ānanda vitārite  
 śrī viśākhā sundarī                      rāmānanda nāma dhari  
 udaya ha-ilā avanīte

To give pleasure to Sri Krishna Chaitanya, who is actually Sri Radharaman Ram, beautiful Vishakha has appeared on the earth taking the name of Ramananda.

śaisābe saṅgī sane                      rādhā kṛṣṇa guna gāne  
 du nayane premadhārā baya  
 rādhā kṛṣṇa prema līlā                      bime anya nāhi khelā  
 nīti nava nikuñja racaya

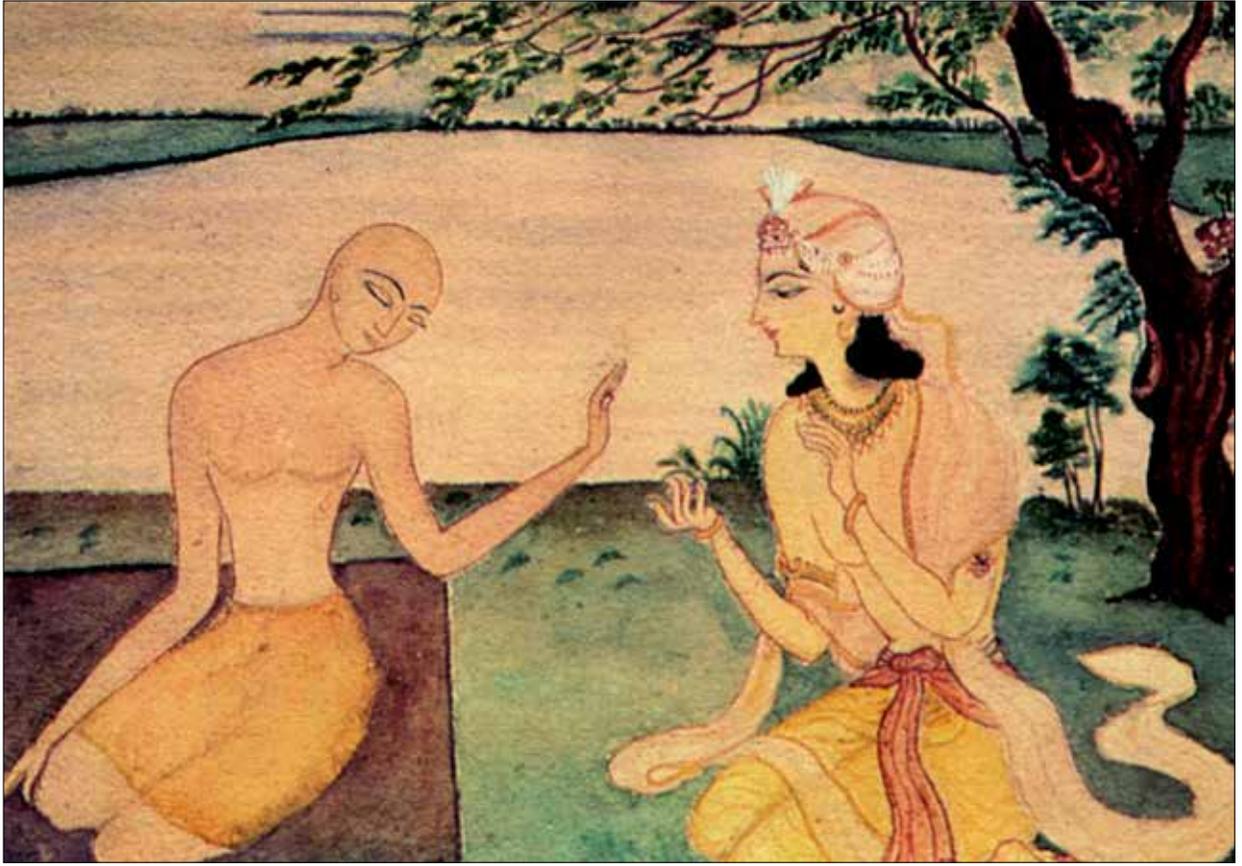
In his childhood he would sing the glories of Radha Krishna while tears of love would roll down from his eyes. There was no other sport for him than the loving pastimes of Radha and Krishna. He would always create new *kuñjas* [forest groves or bowers for their pastimes].

kaiśorete alpadine                      sarva śāstra adhyayane  
 su paṇḍita pradhāna ha-ilā  
 bhakati siddhānta khani                      rasika mukuṭa mani  
 nija gune jagat jinilā

Very early in his youth he became the chief of great scholars by studying all the scriptures. He was the mine of all devotional conclusions and the crown jewel of all *rasikas*, those who are learned in transcendental mellows. He conquered the world by his own qualities.

pratāprudra mahārāja                      jānilena jagamājha  
 rāmānanda apūrva ratana  
 karibāre rāja kāja                      yogya nāhi sabhā mājha  
 rājya bhāra karilā arpana

King Prataprudra handed over the work of ruling the kingdom to Ramananda, knowing him as a wonderful and incomparable jewel within this world.



Unknown artist

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Ramananda Ray on the bank of the Godavari River

eka dina śubhakṣane      godāvārī nadī snāne  
 āilena dolāra chaḍīya  
 saṅge pātra mitra-gaṇa      cale vandī bādkaḡaṇa  
 pāṭhaka purohita agre la-iyā

One day at an auspicious time, Ramananda Ray came on a palanquin to the bank of the Godavari to take bath, accompanied by courtiers, ministers, musicians and priests.

kari nitya kṛtya snāna      ānkhi mudi kare dhyāna  
 nija iṣṭa śyāma nava ḡhana  
 śyāmarūpa heri bāre      yateka yatana kare  
 tata here gaura varaṇa

Completing his daily activities and bathing, with closed eyes he was meditating upon his worshipable, Shyama, whose complexion is like new clouds. Yet the more he strived to see the form of Shyama, he was only beholding someone with a golden complexion.

ājānu lambita bhuja      eka nava nyāsīrāja  
 rasabhūpa mānasa mohana  
 gaura rūpe ālo kari      ḡṛdi simhāsanopari  
 varsi kare sarva sva haraṇa

That personality was the king of all ascetics. His arms extended down to his knees. He was the reservoir of all transcendental mellows and enchanting to

the mind. That golden form, illuminating all the directions, sat on the throne of Ramananda Ray's heart and stole his everything.

vyākula ha-iyā rāya      nayana meliyā cāya  
 dekhe ḡhāta chāḍi kata dūre  
 basi jala sannidhāne      kare nāma saṅkīrtane  
 cita corā sei nyāsī bare

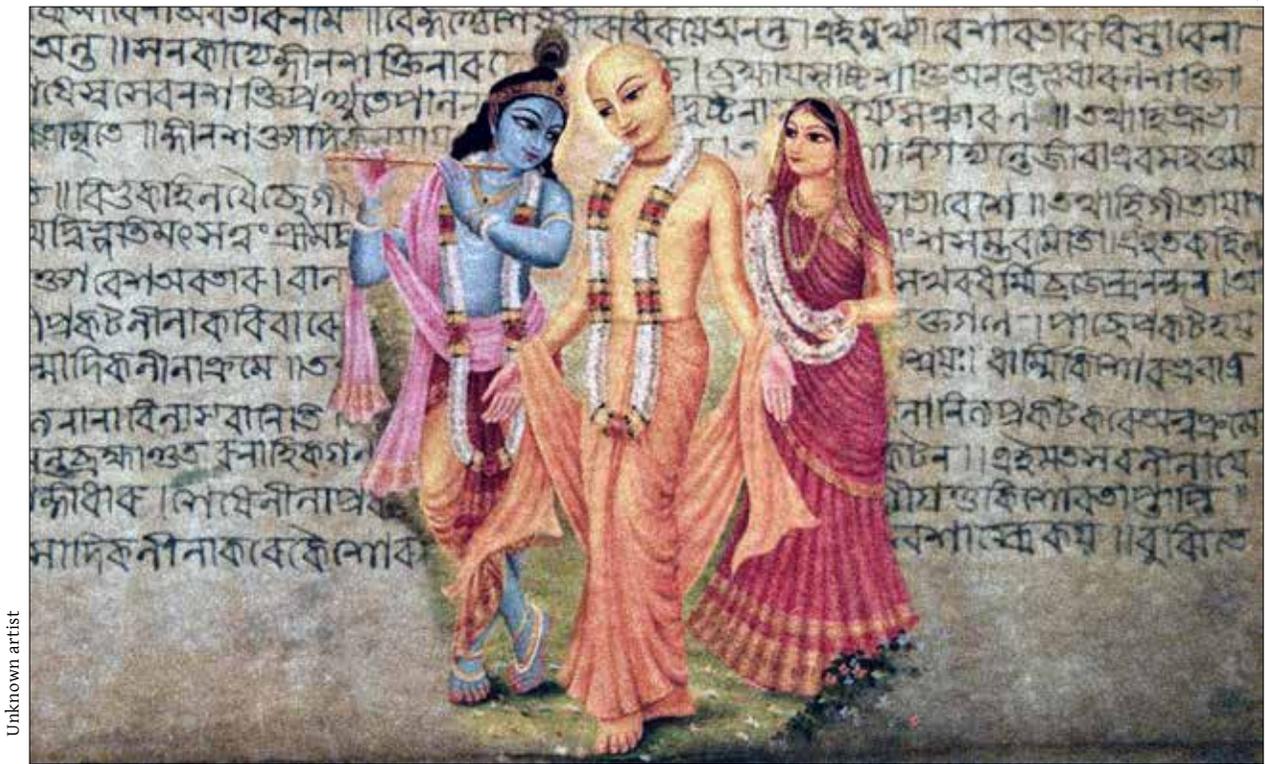
With great restlessness, Ray opened his eyes and saw that a little distance from the bathing ghat that chief of the sannnyāsīs was doing nāma-saṅkīrtana,, sitting close to the river.

sūryaśata sama jyoti      ujjvala kanaka kānti  
 paridhāne aruna vasana  
 subalita dīrgha kāya      ḡhairaja dharite pāre  
 mana prāna haila ucāṭana

He was as effulgent as hundreds of suns. His bodily complexion was like bright gold and he was dressed in saffron cloth. His form was strong and tall, the hairs on his body were standing on end like kadamba flowers, and his lotus-like eyes were shedding tears of love.

prānapaṇe prāna dhāne      āsi paḍe śrī caraṇe  
 karilena ātma samarpaṇa  
 kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kaha bali      āliṅgite kutuhālī  
 nyāsī puḡe tumi rāmāṇanda

Beholding that king of ascetics, his mind and heart became so restless he was unable to restrain himself.



Unknown artist

The vision revealed by Mahaprabhu to Ram Ray

With the utmost eagerness he rushed forward and fell at his lotus feet, surrendering unto him. Saying, “Krishna! Krishna!” that *sannyāsī* embraced him with great joy and asked, “Are you Ramananda?”

tenha kahe sei hao                      carane śaraṇa cāo  
tava dāsādama śūdra manda  
nyāsi mani tā śuniyā                  du bāhu pasāriyā  
rāmānande ḥṛdaye dharilā

Ramananda replied, “This *śūdra* is your wretched and lowly servant seeking shelter at your lotus feet.” Hearing his words, the crest jewel of all renunciates extended his arms and embraced Ramananda to his chest.

sahaja prema uddiṇaṇe                  prabhu bhṛtya dui jane  
acetana bhūmite paḍilā  
kampa aśru pulaka gāya                doṅhe bhume gaḍi yāya  
vismaya māne saba jane

By that touch of love the Lord and his servant fell to the ground unconscious. Shivering, tears, and horripilation appeared on their bodies, and they were rolling on the ground. Seeing this everyone became astonished.

rasa prema sindhu jane                  rāya taraṅginī mile  
kallola bhāsila tribhūvane  
godāvarī nadī tīre                      sei rātre vipra ghare  
nirajane milana doṅhāra

All in the three worlds were inundated by the waves of the ocean of transcendental mellows generated from their meeting. That night they met

each other in the secluded home of a Brahmin on the bank of the Godavari River.

iṣṭa goṣṭhi kṛṣṇa kathā                  rāya vaktā prabhu śrotā  
baye yāya premera pāthara  
prema sindhu gaura rāya                rāya megha bariṣaya  
sindhu tāhe ratna ālaya ha-ila

In these discussions of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, where Ray was the speaker and the Lord was the listener, the ocean of love was flowing incessantly. Gauraraya is the ocean of love and Ramananda Ray became the cloud raining the jewels from that ocean.

pahilehi pada śuni                          āveśete nyāsīmani  
rāmarāyera mukha ācchādila  
iṣṭa goṣṭhi samāpana                      kare joḍe nivedana  
kare rāya gaurāṅga carane

Hearing the verse beginning with the words “*pahilehi rāga*”, the crest jewel of the ascetics became overwhelmed with emotions and covered Ram Ray’s mouth. At the end of their discussion, Ray pleaded the following at the lotus feet of Gauranga.

[**Note:** The “*pahilehi rāga*” verse (Cc. *madhya* 8.194), was personally composed by Ramananda Ray. It speaks about the height of the love of Radha and Krishna where they become one in mind and heart.]

ye tattva sphurāle more                  brahmādira o agocare  
āmi kabhu nā jāni svapane  
kalite sannyāsī veśe                      more dekhā dile ese  
ebe heri śyāma-goparūpa



Photo by Bhakta Charles

The Gambhira in Jagannath Puri where Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu stayed

“The philosophy that you have manifested within me is not visible even to Lord Brahma, and I do not know them even in my dreams. You came before me as a *sannyāsī*, but now I see you in the form of a cowherd boy who has a blackish complexion.

*svarṇa pañcālikā dhākā muralī vadana bāñka*  
*eki tava līlā aparūpa*  
*prabhu kahe tāhā śuni tumi bhakta cūḍāmani*  
*sarvabhūte kṛṣṇa daraśana*

“That form is covered by a golden cloth, is playing a flute, and has a three-fold bending form. How wonderful your pastimes are!” Hearing this, the Lord said, “You are the crest jewel of all the devotees and therefore you see Krishna within everyone.”

*rāma kahe gaurahari chāḍa tumi bhāribhuri*  
*nijarūpa nā kara gopana*  
*ebe prabhu mṛḍu hāsi gūḍharūpa parakāśī*  
*priya rāmānande dekhāilā*

Ray replied, “O Gaurahari, please give up your pretext. Don’t cover yourself.” The Lord then smiled and revealed his confidential form to his dear Ramananda.

*rasarāja mahābhāva dui tanu abhinava*  
*svarūpa rahasya prakāśilā*  
*vivarte vivarta rañga tāhāte vilāsa rañga*  
*heri rāya mūrachita bhela*

The Lord manifested himself in the two confidential forms of *rasarāja*, the king of mellows, and *mahābhāva*, the embodiment of the topmost love. The Lord then revealed the two becoming one. Seeing this pastime, Ray fainted.

*paraśe caitanya diyā rāmarāye uṭhāiyā*  
*mahānanda sindhu ukhalila*  
*ājñā diyā āni tāre nilācale corā ghare*  
*antarañga rasa āśvādane*

By touching Ram Ray, Sri Chaitanya brought him back to external consciousness and thus the ocean of great transcendental bliss surged up. Giving the order, Mahaprabhu brought Ramananda to the secret chamber in Nilachala where they relished confidential transcendental mellows.

*prema vaicitra līlā milame milā amilā*  
*bhāvocchāse niśī jāgaraṇa*  
*bale sakhī o viśākhā kothā se tribhañga bāñkā*  
*eme dekhā nahe prāna yāya*

[In Nilachala] they discussed the pastimes of various loving affairs of union and separation, remaining awake throughout the night overwhelmed with emotion. [Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said,] “O my dear friend Vishakha, where is that threefold bending form? Bring him before me, otherwise I cannot survive.”

*rāya kahe vinodini kena ha-ila unmādinī*  
*ei bāje madhura vāñsarī*  
*dhairya dharaha rāi cala vṛndāvane yāi*  
*milāiba śyāma vañśdhārī*

Ramananda Ray replied, “O Vinodini [a name for Radha], why are you so impatient? Listen to the sound of that sweet flute. Have patience my dear Rai [Radha]. Let us go to Vrindavan. There I will unite you with that flute-player Shyama.”

āveśete gaura hari                      rāya svarūpera kare dhari  
cala sakhi vilamba nā saya  
cala tvarā vṛndāvane                      parāna bandhuyā vine  
dehe mora prāna nāhi raya

Immersed in that mood, Gaurahari, grabbing the hands of Ray and Swarupa, said, “Let’s go. I cannot tolerate any delay. Let’s go to Vrindavan immediately. I am not able to remain alive without the love of my heart.”

rāya svarūpa saha-carī                      laye gaura rāseśvarī  
gopinātha samīpete yāya  
heri gaurā gopinātha                      māne pāinu prānanātha  
bhāvollāse vāmete dāṇḍāya

Accompanied by Ray and Swarupa, Rasesvari [Radha, the controller of the rāsa-dance] Gaura went to [Tota] Gopinath. Upon seeing Gopinath, Gaura considered, “I have got my beloved!” And stood on the left in ecstatic trance.

bhāva nidhi gaura hari                      rāya bhāva puṣṭikārī  
bhāva bujhi karaye sevana  
apana nātaka gīta                      śunāya satata niti  
sukhe gorā kare āsvādana

Gaurahari is the ocean of bhāva, and Ray is the one who nourishes that bhāva. Understanding Gaurahari’s bhāva, he performs service accordingly. He constantly arranged dramas and songs that Gaura relished in great joy.



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Email: [katha@gopaljiu.org](mailto:katha@gopaljiu.org)  
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gaurāṅga parāna bandhu                      rāmarāya guna sindhu  
eka bindu jagata dubāya  
arjuna arjunā yāya                      kari nitya samāśraya  
gaura lilāmṛta āsvādāya

Gauranga is the dear friend of Ram Ray. While Ram Ray is the ocean of all good qualities, a little drop of which inundates the entire universe, Arjuna and Arjuna are eternally within him and he is tasting the nectar of Gaura’s pastimes.

[Note: In his *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (text 120), Srila Kavi Karnapur states that Ramananda Ray is both the Pandava Arjuna as well as the cowherd boy Arjuna. A few verses later, (text 123) he says that Ramananda is also the *gopī* Arjuniyaa. Hence this stanza describes Ramananda Ray as both Arjuna and the *gopī* Arjuna.]

pradyumna miśrete dvāre                      jānāilā jagatere  
nija rāmāndera mahima  
rājā pratāprudra rāya                      yāra kṛpāya gaurapāya  
tāra gunera ke pāibe simā

Through Pradyumna Mishra, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu revealed the glories of his dear Ramananda to the world. Who can reach the limit of the wonderful qualities of Ramananda Ray, by whose mercy Maharaja Prataparudra attained Lord Gaura?

jaya rāmānanda rāya                      kṛpākara amāyāya  
eka bindu gaurāṅge mati diyā  
gambhīrāra guptadhane                      dhanī kara nija gune  
kahe dīna dvija abhāgiyā

Glories to Ramananda Ray! Please be merciful and give me a drop of attachment to Lord Gauranga! By your kindness, please enrich me with the secret treasure of the Gambhira! This unfortunate and wretched Dwija submits this plea.

[Note: It’s not clear who is the author of this song. Out of humility, it’s not uncommon for the followers of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to neglect giving their name as the author. The signature “dwija” could refer to any one of many of Mahaprabhu’s associates who wrote *padyāvalī kīrtana*, such as Dwija Kavichandra, the author of *Govinda-maṅgala*, Dwija Pran Krishna, who translated the *Gīta-govinda* into Bengali, Dwija Shankar, who wrote *Govinda-lilāmṛta*, or any other of the dozens of devotees with Dwija in their name. Alternatively, it’s also possible that the author, while dropping his name, was simply acknowledging his *varṇa* as a Brahmin.]

— Translated by Mani Gopal Das from Śrī Śrī *Parikara-gaṇera Mahimā Sūcaka*. Compiled by Kishori Das Babaji. Vaishnava Research Institute. Halisahar, West Bengal. 2005. pp. 65-72. Bengali.