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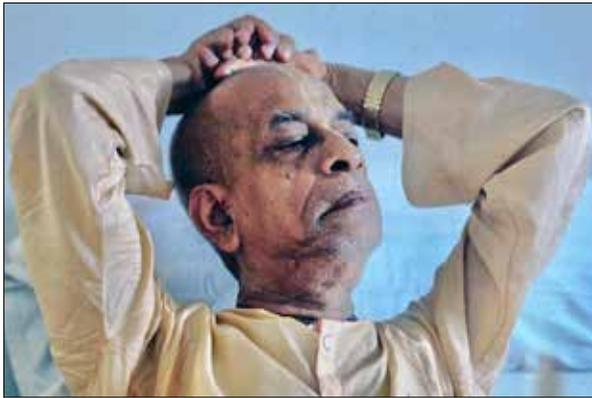
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HARE KRISHNA IS NOT WESTERN OR EASTERN

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Hare Krishna is neither Western nor Eastern. It is meant for human being. You see? This “Western,” “Eastern,” they are our own creation. God is neither Western nor Eastern. God is God. So anyone who will chant God’s name will benefit. That’s all. There is no question of Western and Eastern. 🍀

— From an interview with a reporter in Hong Kong. 19 April 1972.

THE ILLUMINATION OF THE SUDARSHAN CHAKRA

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

The conditioned souls are captured by *māyā*. They are deluded and are groping in the darkness. That darkness, nescience, should be dissipated by the *sudarśana cakra*. The *sudarśana cakra* is spinning

very speedily. She will cut off the darkness. This is illumination. “Come out from the darkness! O fools and rascals, why do you remain in the darkness? Come out to the light!” The Vedas say (*Bṛhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* 1.3.28), *tamasi mā jyotir gamaḥ* — “Don’t remain in the darkness, come to the light!” This is *sudarśana*.

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta madhya* 20.122 it is said:

*māyā-mugdha jīvera nāhi svataḥ kṛṣṇa-jñāna
jīvere kṛpāya kailā kṛṣṇa veda-purāṇa*

The conditioned soul cannot revive his Krishna consciousness by his own effort. But out of causeless mercy Lord Krishna compiled the Vedic literature and its supplements, the *Purāṇas*.

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 12.13.15 describes that the *Bhāgavata-mahā-purāṇa* is the essence of all Vedic literatures — *sarva-vedānta-sāraṁ hi śrī-bhāgavatam iṣyate*. The *Bhāgavatam* is *jīvere kṛpāya kailā kṛṣṇa veda-purāṇa* — the mercy of Krishna on the *jīvas*. Krishna has appeared here and given the Vedas and *Purāṇas* to the conditioned souls captured by *māyā* in this world, souls who are completely forgetful of effulgent Krishna. *Koṭi-sūrya-tejaḥ* — the effulgence of crores of suns is emanating from Krishna, the possessor of *sudarśana cakra*; this is *sudarśana’s* emanation, illumination. Krishna is so merciful! The illusory energy is nescience for the bewildered conditioned souls, and it is the cause of darkness for them. For the conditioned *jīvas* groping in the darkness, the illumination of *veda-purāṇa*, transcendental knowledge, has come. This is the mercy

of Krishna and of the very intimate dear devotees of Krishna, the *mahājanas*. Maharaja Ambarish has prayed to Krishna's *sudarśana cakra*:

*tvat-tejasā dharmā-mayena saṁhṛtaṁ
tamaḥ prakāśaś ca dr̥śo mahātmanām
duratyayas te mahimā girāṁ pate
tvad-rūpam etat sad-asat parāvaram*

O master of speech, by your effulgence, full of religious principles, the darkness of the world is dissipated, and the knowledge of learned persons or great souls is manifested. Indeed, no one can surpass your effulgence, for all things, manifested and unmanifested, gross and subtle, superior and inferior, are but various forms of you that are manifested by your effulgence. — *Bhāg.* 9.5.7

Those who have been illuminated, whose hearts are completely bereft of ignorance, are known as *mahājanas*. There is no darkness in their hearts — they have gotten Krishna. They have bound Krishna up in their hearts. It is stated in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *madhya* 22.31:

*kṛṣṇa—sūrya-sama, māyā haya andhakāra
yāhān kṛṣṇa, tāhān nāhi māyāra adhikāra*

Krishna is like the effulgent sun and *māyā* is like darkness. Where there is Krishna there is no *māyā*, there is no darkness.

The effulgence coming from Krishna is not material. *koṭi-sūrya-prabhā* — it is like the effulgence of millions of suns. A *vaiṣṇava*, *mahājana*, *sādhu*, who has gotten Krishna, who has bound up Krishna in his heart with the rope of love, is always in illumination. He is always with Krishna. There is no question of darkness for him at all. Such a *sādhu* is the embodiment of the *Bhāgavata*. He is therefore known as *bhakta-bhāgavata*. The *Bhāgavata* is the essence of all *veda-purāṇas*, and the heart of such a *vaiṣṇava-sādhu* is completely, transcendently illuminated because of the presence of Krishna. Krishna is there in his heart. Therefore, the heart of such a *sādhu* is Vrindavan. In *Prārthanā*, Srila Narottam Das Thakur has prayed to the *vaiṣṇava-sādhus*:

*tomāra hṛdoye sadā govinda-viśrām
govinda kohena—mora vaiṣṇava parāṇ*

Your heart is always the resting-place of Lord Govinda, and Lord Govinda says, “The *vaiṣṇavas* are in my heart.”

O *vaiṣṇava-ṭhākura!* Your heart is Vrindavan! Krishna resides there blissfully and peacefully. *Vṛndāvanarī parityajya sa kvacin naiva gacchati* —because Krishna never leaves Vrindavan, therefore he never leaves your heart. (*Laḡhu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.461)

Krishna never even takes one step away from Vrindavan. He is always in Vrindavan. And where is that Vrindavan? The heart of a pure devotee, a *premi-bhakta*, is Vrindavan. He who has developed *kṛṣṇa-prema*, who has bound up Krishna with the rope of love in his heart — his heart is illuminated by *bhāgavatārka*, the sun-like effulgence of Krishna. This *bhāgavat-tattva-jñāna*, knowledge of the Lord, is illumination. The heart of such a *premi-bhakta* is completely illuminated with that *tattva-jñāna*. There is no question of darkness for him. Such devotees always see Krishna everywhere — *yānhā yānhā netra paḍe tānhā kṛṣṇa sphure* (*Cc. ādi* 4.86). Wherever they look they see only Krishna. There is no question of *māyā*, nescience, ignorance. They have transcendental vision, which comes from the effulgence of *sudarśana*. You should hear *bhāgavat-tattva-jñāna* from such a devotee *bhāgavata*, *bhakta-bhāgavata*, who sees



Nāma-tattva

EVEN BY NAMABHASA

*Srila Murari Gupta's
Śrī Caitanya-carita Mahā-kāvya*

*nāma-mātra-vibhavana bhavābdheḥ
pāram eva para-dustarasya ca
gacchatu sa-gaṇa eva kupābdher
dhāma kiṁ punar ajasya su-sevā*

[Spoken by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu:] By the power of the holy name of the Lord, Ajamila and all those associated with him could surmount the insurmountable ocean of birth and death to attain the abode of the ocean of mercy, Lord Narayan. And how much more is liberation assured for one who renders favorable service to the unborn Lord?

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Photo by Ananta Vrindavan Das

Srila Narottam Das Thakur's original deities of Sri Sri Radha Vraja-mohan, currently being worshiped in Vrindavan

Krishna always and everywhere. He sees with *śāstra-cakṣus*, transcendental vision, the vision of *śāstra*:

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-sālākayā
cakṣur unmilitam yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.

What is the work of guru? *ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-sālākayā* — he opens the eyes with the torchlight of knowledge. He imparts the illumination of *tattva-jñāna*. As long as you have not gotten this *tattva-jñāna* you are in darkness. You are in nescience. You are a blind man groping in the darkness. These *tattva-ācāryas*, Rupa, Sanatan, Jiva, the *gauḍīya guru-varga*, are imparting the illumination of this *tattva-jñāna*. That illumination will dissipate the darkness that has been prevailing in your heart from time immemorial. That means your heart will be completely cleansed of all material contamination. Your heart will be completely purified. Then it will become Vrindavan. And Krishna, who is as effulgent as millions of suns, will appear there.

They are guru and their work is to open the eyes. Through those eyes you can see Krishna everywhere. Rupa, Sanatan, and Jiva Goswamis, Bhaktivinoda Thakur, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati, and Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, all of these *gauḍīya guru-varga ācāryas* are dissipating this darkness. With the torchlight of knowledge, they

are opening the eyes. This is the duty, the work, of the real guru, to impart *tattva-jñāna*, to dissipate the darkness of nescience. To bring the disciple to the light, to illumination, whereby he can see the Lord face-to-face. 🌟

— From a lecture given in Bhubaneswar, 11 Feb 1993.

NAROTTAM FINDS THE DEITY OF GAURA

Prema-vilāsa of Nityananda Das

Nityananda Das was a disciple of Jahnava Mata, the divine consort of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. Jahnava related to Nityananda Das many stories from the lives of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nityananda Prabhu, and their associates. On her order he compiled those stories into the book known as *Prema-vilāsa*. The following is a translation excerpted from the 19th chapter.



Unknown photographer

Close up photo of Vraja-mohan

One day in his home, Narottam thought about installing a deity. That night, Narottam saw six deities in a dream — Gauranga, Vallabhi-kanta, Sri Krishna, Vraja-mohana, Radha-kanta and Radha-ramana. Seeing those six dear deities, the pleasure that Narottam received was beyond description. After seeing that dream, Narottam woke, and sitting up, he spent the rest of the night crying tears of joy.

When the night finished, he performed his morning duties, and then began arranging for the deities to be carved. Stone was brought and artisans started carving those six deities with great devotion. The five Krishna deities were made beautifully, but although all due care was taken in the work, the deity of Gauranga was not made nicely. Seeing the deity of Mahaprabhu, Narottam became disheartened, and began calling out in a loud voice, “Gauranga, Gauranga!” and crying and crying. Later, in a dream, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu appeared before Narottam. In his dream, Narottam saw Mahaprabhu sitting at his side. The Lord said gently:

*ohe bāpu narottama śuna diyā mana
bahu yatne o mora mūrtira nā habe gaṭhana
e mūrtite āmi ādhiṣṭhāna nāhi haba
āmāra nirmita mūrti tomāre kahiba
sannyāsera pūrve nija mūrti niramiyā
keha nāhi jāne rākhi gaṅgāya ḍubāiyā*

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*tumi prema-mūrti mora, tore kari anugraha
vipradāsera dhānya golāya rekhechi vigraha*

“My dear Narottam, listen carefully. With much care you are trying to carve a deity of me, but I will never stay in this mūrti. I will tell you how to obtain a deity of me. Before I accepted *sannyāsa*, I had a deity made of myself which I had put into the Ganges. No one knows about this, but because you are my dear devotee I am blessing you with this knowledge. That deity is now inside the rice storage house of Vipradas.” After saying this, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu disappeared.

Narottam awoke and saw that morning had arrived. After finishing his morning duties, he began making inquiries from people as to the whereabouts of Vipradas. One person told him that Vipradas was a wealthy man who lived nearby. He said that Vipradas was doing business in large quantities of rice and other grains.

Hearing this, Narottam went to the house of Vipradas. When Vipradas saw that Narottam had arrived he offered his obeisances and inquired what had brought him to his home. Thakur Mahashay replied, “I have some special purpose to accomplish here. I want to go to where you store your grains.”

Vipradas replied, “O Mahashay, this is not possible to do. That is a fearful place with many kinds of snakes. As soon as they see a man they begin to hiss very loudly. Out of fear of those snakes no one can go near that place. For many days much grain has been laying there.”

Narottam said, “Don’t worry. When I go there the snakes will all leave.”

After saying this Narottam Mahashay went to that storage room. Immediately all the snakes left that place and then Narottam came out with a deity of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Seeing this, all of the people became surprised.

From that time there was no more fear of snakes in that place and Vipradas became very happy. Vipradas came with his whole family and took shelter at the feet of Thakur Mahashay. Obtaining that deity, Narottam brought him to his house and installed him. Seeing the beauty of that deity, everyone felt very blissful. Those who had previously seen Chaitanya Mahaprabhu verified that the deity looked exactly like him. 🍌

— From the Mahesh Library edition, Calcutta, 1999. Translation by Prabhupada Priya Sevak Das.