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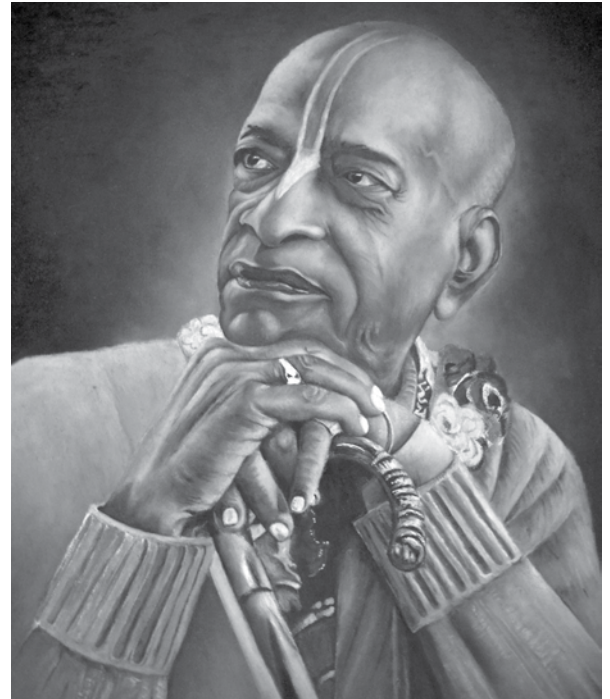
DIFFICULT PARENTS

His Divine Grace A. C.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

I am very much encouraged that despite so many difficulties and tricks of *māyā* that you are still desiring Krishna so much. Thank you very much. In order to attain the topmost perfection of this human form of life one simply has to try for Krishna with enthusiasm and patience, and all obstacles will be overcome. If you are determined in this way to be his devotee, Krishna will provide some happy solution. But even if he puts us into extreme difficulty, we must always be prepared to consider everything as his special mercy, that he is testing our sincerity, or that this trouble is nothing to what we deserve. Just see Prahlad Maharaja! His father tried to kill him many times! At least I don't think your father is trying to kill you. And after Krishna in the form of Lord Nrsimhadeva came and killed Hiranyakasipu, Prahlad prayed to Krishna to have mercy on his demon father. So we must take the instruction to respect our parents, and to be kind and very tolerant and patient with them, and very soon I promise you everything will be all right.

I am very pleased that you are chanting regularly. This will save you and protect you from all misfortunes. Chant Krishna's name regularly, think about him all the time, and your love for him will keep you



Painting by Tripti Dasi

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

free from any bondage. Also, you must try somehow to avoid eating any meat, fish or eggs. Be very strong in this respect, and eventually your parents will appreciate your determination, especially if you are otherwise always very kind to them. ❁

— Letter to Patty Dorgan, 17 November 1971.

SAME AS THE SERVICE OF THE GOPIS
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati
Thakur Prabhupada

The perfect chant of the name of Krishna is available to all souls. It is identical with the amorous service of the spiritual milkmaids of Vraja. This is the sum and substance of the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Conversely, those who do not perform the congregational chanting of the name of Krishna in the manner that is free from offense are not in a position to realize the nature of divine amour. Those who miss such realization remain subject to the abject slavery of mundane lust. ❀

— *Sri Chaitanya's Teachings*. Edited by Bhakti Vilas Tirtha Goswami. Sree Gaudiya Math. 1989. Madras. Page 606.

**BIG ENDEAVORS AND
 UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS**
Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur
Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta

Unhealthy relationships are also forbidden for the *vaidha-bhakta*, a practitioner of regulated devotional service. There are four types of unhealthy relations: with disciples, with associates, with servants, and with friends. By taking unqualified people as disciples for wealth and power, great disturbance is created in the *sampradāya*. The *vaiṣṇava* will not initiate disciples if there are no qualified persons. By taking association of those who are not devotees, many types of sinful habits will appear. Therefore such association should be given up. It is not beneficial to take servants unless they are devotees. In making friendship as well, the devotee should first consider if that person is a *vaiṣṇava*.

The devotee should give up enthusiasm for big endeavors in three situations. If the person has no funds in the beginning, he should not attempt the work. If his life is nearly finished he should not start a big project. If the work requires a lot of manpower and he has no way of getting assistance, then he should not attempt the work. Such things create an obstacle in devotion. If huge projects for temple, hall, or ashram are difficult to execute, then they should not be considered. ❀

— English translation by Bhanu Swami. Unpublished manuscript.

KRISHNA'S BRAHMACARI LIFE
PART ONE: SNEAKING AWAY
Adapted from Srila Jiva Goswami's
Gopāla-campū, part 2, chapter 8

After the completion of their sacred thread ceremony in Mathura, Krishna and Balaram desired to learn the four Vedas and their various branches. They decided that they should follow the same process as others: "According to the ancient sages one should study by going to the *gurukula*. Though Vyas and others of great stature would be suitable as gurus and are well known, they will realize that we two already have all knowledge. Therefore they will hesitate to be our guru. We want to pursue all this attractive education. Though we have knowledge by our natures, it is best that we go to the *gurukula*. If we break the rules it will not be auspicious for the world. A person who is fixed in *śabda-brahma* and worships Shiva would be the best guru. The great soul Sandipani of a dynasty from Kasi is a worshiper of Shiva. He previously went to Prabhas and now lives in Avanti, a place emanating happiness and near to a Shiva temple. We should go there, but in such a way that others do not know. Otherwise, if it is widely known that we have gone far away, our enemies will give trouble to the Yadus. And if that happens then all of the people of Vraja from our father's family down to the paid servants will give up their bodies. What to speak of mother Yasoda, who displays the most intense pain to all people."

After considering in this way, they devised a plan to inform only the leading Yadus, while simultaneously fooling all others [so that no enemy would think of attacking]. They popularized the rumor amongst everyone that they were performing vows in a secluded place in Mathura [so that no one would think that they had gone far away]. Understanding the fact that their going away should be kept a secret, and to console the grief-stricken Vasudeva, Devaki and Rohini, Krishna said, "If Balarama is with me, it is as good as if ten million of my intimate associates are with me. We derive unparalleled strength from your blessings. Therefore there is no one



Balaram and Krishna

in all the three worlds who can conquer us. So please don't worry." Hearing this, Vasudeva and Devaki [who were aware of his opulences as the supreme] were relieved, but Rohini [who was always absorbed in maternal love free from any conception of Krishna's supreme position] was still in anxiety.

Since one should not accept a vehicle until *brahmacārī* life is finished, Krishna and Balaram accepted their own strength as their carriage [they walked]. They saw many picturesque villages along the way. When they saw cowherd villages, they would become stunned [remembering their childhood pastimes in Vraja]. Eventually they arrived at Avanti. Though dressed in simple *brahmacārī* clothing, they attracted all people's eyes because of their effulgence. But no one could recognize them.

*rāmam ajānan jyotiḥ param iha pānthās tadāvantyāḥ
tīmrām jyotiḥ kiṁ vety ajite dṛṣṭe tu sandidihuh*

When passersby in Avanti saw the camphor-like effulgent Balaram, they could only identify him as the topmost light. However, when they saw the dark-hued yet effulgent Krishna, they could not identify him and doubted whether he was actually a source of light or darkness. (Text 17)

(to be continued)

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- *Śrī Gopāla-campū*. English transliteration from www.granthamandira.org.

UNAFFECTED BY POISON AND MUNDANE WEAPONS Viṣṇu Purāṇa, canto one, chapter 17

*viṣṇuḥ śastreṣu yuṣmāsu mayi cāsau vyavasthitāḥ
daiteyāstena satyena mā kramantvā yudhāni me*

[When the demons were preparing to kill Prahlad Maharaja on the order of Hiranyakāsipu, Prahlad told them:] “O demons! Lord Vishnu is situated in all these weapons. He is situated within you, within me, and within each and every thing. This is the infallible truth. Therefore, these weapons shall have no effect on me. (Text 33)

hiranyakāśipur uvāca

*bho bhoḥ sarpā durācāram enam atyanta durmatim
viśajvālā kulair vaktraih śadyo nayata sanḥṣayam*

Hiranyakāsipu said, “O deadly serpents! Destroy this foolish miscreant using your immensely venomous fangs.” (37)

śrī paraśara uvāca

*ity uktāste tataḥ sarpāḥ kuhakāstakakādayaḥ
adaśanta samasteṣu gātreṣvativiṣolbaṇāḥ*

*sa tv āsaktamatih kṛṣṇe daśyamāno mahoragaih
na vivedātmano gātram tat smṛtyāhlāda susthitāḥ*

Parashara Muni continued: Hearing this order of Hiranyakāsipu, those merciless snakes such as Takshaka bit Prahlad Maharaja on all parts of the body. But since Prahlad Maharaja was constantly immersed in the transcendental ocean of

love of Krishna, the biting of the serpents had absolutely no effect on him. (38-39) ❀

— Translated by Bhakta Harshad Marathe from the Gita Press edition published by Motilal Jalan.

SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND RADHA'S LOVE Govinda Das

For more about the poet Govinda Das, see Bindu issue 25.

(Suha-i-rāga)

*śrī kṛṣṇa caitanya gorā śacīra dulāla
ei ye pūrabe chila gokulera gopāla*

In his previous birth Sachi's son, fair Sri Krishna Chaitanya, was a cowherd boy in Gokul.

*keha kahe jānakī-vallabha chila rāma
keha bale nanda-lāla nava-ghana-śyāma*

Some say he was Janaki's beloved, Lord Ramachandra. Others say He was Nanda's son, dark like a monsoon cloud.

*pūrabe kāliyā chila gopī-preme bhorā
bhāviyā rādhāra varaṇa ebe haila gorā*

In ancient times he was dark, but now, overcome by personally experiencing the love the *gopīs* feel for him, he became fair like Srimati Radharani.



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Unknown artist

Radha in Separation

*chala chala ariṇa-nayana anurāgī
nā pāiyā bhāvera ora ha-ila vairāgī*

Tears flowed from his reddened eyes. He could not find the limit of that ecstatic love. He renounced everything.

*sannyāsi vairāgī haiya bhrame deṣe deṣe
tabu nā pāila rādhā-premera uddēse*

He accepted *sannyāsa* and wandered from place to place. He tried to understand Radha's love, but he could not.

*govinda-dāsiyā kaya kiśorī-kiśorā
svarūpa rāmera sane sei rase bhorā*

Govinda Das says, it was in the company of Svarup Damodar and Ramananda Ray that Lord Chaitanya, overwhelmed, tasted the nectar of ecstatic love for Sri Sri Kishori Kishora, the teenaged divine couple. ❀

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