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A BIG TEMPLE IS NOT NECESSARY

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

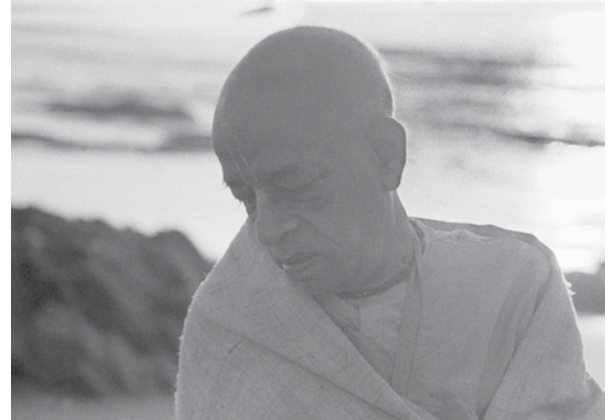
You can worship [the Lord] anywhere. You can keep [him] in a box. It doesn't mean that you must have a very big temple. No. According to one's means. If you have got money then build a temple, just like we have in Bombay and Vrindavan. If money comes, then build. Otherwise, keep [the deity] in a box. Krishna does not say first of all build a big temple, then I will accept your service. He's agreeable. *patram puṣpaṁ phalam* — Just offer a leaf, a flower or some water. [Bg. 9.26]. The real thing is *bhakti*. Either you keep him in a box or in a big temple. If you have the means to build a big temple, then don't keep him in a box. That is cheating. Krishna can understand. If you have got no means, he's agreeable. Keep him in a box. Devotion to Krishna cannot be checked in any circumstances. You can stay anywhere very peacefully. Worship the deity on a small scale or on a big scale. What is the problem? ❀

— From *My Glorious Master*. Bhurijana Dasa. VIHE Publications. Vrindavan. 1996. Chapter 21.

LORD RAMA'S MAYAPUR PASTIMES

*Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode's
Śrī Śrī Navadvīpa-bhava-taraṅga
Texts 110 to 115*

*modadruma śrī bhāṅḍīra haya eka tattva
yathā paśupakṣiṅgaṇe saba śuddha sattva*



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

*manohara vṛkṣaḍāle basi' pikagaṇa
gaurahari sūtā-rāma gāya anukṣaṇa*

This island of Modadruma is non-different from the forest of Sri Bhandiravan in Vraja. All the animals and birds are fully spiritual entities having the nature of pure goodness. In the branches of the trees sit cuckoos who incessantly sing the glories of Gauranga and Sita-Rama.

*kata kata vaṭa-vṛkṣa chāyā vistāriyā
śobhiche bhāṅḍīravana sūrya ācchādiyā
rāma-kṛṣṇa-līlāsu 'na pratyakṣa bhuvane
kabe vā sphuribe mora e dui nayane*

Countless banyan trees spread their branches here and block out the rays of the sun. When will this place, where Krishna and Balaram displayed their pastimes, be visible to my eyes?

*dekhiyā vanera śobhā bhramite bhramite
śrī rāma-kuṭīra cakṣe paḍe ācambite
durvādala-varṇa rāma brahmacārī veśe
lakṣmaṇa jānakī-saha tāra eka deśe*

Wandering and wandering about, observing the glory of the forest, I will suddenly behold the cottage of Lord Sri Rama. Then will I see Rama Himself, the colour of fresh *durvā* grass, dressed like a *brahmacārī* and sitting along with Lakshman and Sita.

*dekhiyā śrī rāmacandra-rūpa manohara
acetane paḍiba se kānana-bhitara
preme gara gara deha nā sphuribe vāṇī
dui āṅkhi bhāri piba dei rupakhāni*

Seeing Lord Ramachandra's beautiful form within that forest, I will swoon on the spot. My entire body overwhelmed with ecstatic love, I will remain stunned and speechless as I fill both my eyes that are heartily drinking the beauty of his form.

*kṛpā kari rāmānuja āsi' dhire dhire
vana-phala rākhi' pada dibe mama śire
balibena, vatsa, tumi khāo ei phala
vanavāse phalaphule ātithya kevala*

Being merciful, Lakshman will come forward slowly, set down some fruit and place his feet upon my head. He will say, "My dear child, please eat this fruit. Since we are living here in the forest, this is all we have to offer our guests."

*balite balite līlā ha'be adarśana
kāndite kāndite phala kariba bhakṣaṇa
āra ki dekhiba āmi durvādala-rūpa
hṛdaye bhāviba sei acintya-svarūpa*

Just as he says this, the vision of this pastime will dissolve. Weeping and weeping, I will eat the fruit. Oh, will I ever again see the figure of Rama, green as fresh *durvā* grass? In my heart I will meditate on that inconceivably beautiful form. ❀

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SITA AND THE CROW Valmiki Rāmāyaṇa

After meeting with Sita in the aśoka grove of Ravan's palace in Lanka, Hanuman relayed a message from Lord Ramachandra. Sita's reply follows:

With tear-filled eyes, Sita replied in a faint voice, "O Hanuman, to convince Rama that you have met me,

you may relate to Him the following incident: One day while we were residing at Chitrakut, after playing in the water, Rama sat down, dripping water on my lap. At that time a crow came and began pecking at me, as though eager to eat my flesh. I picked up a lump of dirt to throw to scare it away, but the determined crow remained on the scene, hiding nearby. Becoming angered, I accidentally pulled the string that held my slip, causing it to fall down. Seeing this, Rama laughed heartily, taking advantage of my flustered countenance. In the meantime, the crow returned, and again pecked at me. I took shelter of Rama by sitting on His lap, and he comforted me, wiping the tears from my eyes.

"Feeling exhausted, I soon fell asleep in Rama's arms. Likewise, he soon dozed off, too. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the crow suddenly swooped down and clawed at my breasts. This awakened Rama, who felt drops of my blood falling on him, coming from my wounds.

"Seeing the cuts on my breasts, Rama became enraged, and asked me to identify the culprit. Then, before I could answer, He saw the crow sitting at a distance, his claws dripping with blood. In great anger, Rama took a blade of kusa grass from his mat and surcharged it with the power of a *brahmāstra*. As the straw burst into flames, Rama hurled it at the crow. Then, as the bird flew up into the sky, the kusa-grass weapon followed it.

"This crow was the son of Indra, and while being chased by the *brahmāstra*, he tried to obtain shelter all over the universe. Regardless, even his father was powerless to help him. Finally, the crow came and surrendered to Rama. Out of compassion, Rama forgave the pale, exhausted bird, but said, 'This *brahmāstra* cannot be ineffectual. Therefore, it must be directed somewhere.'

"Saying this, Rama directed the weapon to destroy the crow's right eye. Thereafter, Indra's son departed after offering his obeisances."

Sita became overwhelmed with sorrow while relating her pastime with Rama. Then, with tear-stained eyes, she said, "O Hanuman, formerly, Rama used the *brahmāstra* against an insignificant crow. Why does he not attack Ravan now? Does Rama no longer have any affection for me? In some former life I must have committed an abominable sin to cause Rama to disregard me now."

Hoping to encourage the despondent Sita, Hanuman reassured Sita, saying, "I can personally vouch for the fact that He is feeling great separation from you. Rama is completely merged in the depths

of the ocean of sorrow. Now, please give me some object that I can show to Rama.”

Sighing, Sita said, “At least I now have some real hope of being rescued. Somehow you must urge Rama to come quickly, for if I pass another month away from him I will surely die of grief.”

Saying this, Sita took a bright jewel from her cloth that she formerly used to ornament her head. Giving it to Hanuman, Sita said, “When Rama sees this jewel, he will remember three persons, since it was given to me by my mother as a dowry gift in the presence of Rama and his father. O Hanuman, please return quickly and urge Rama to quickly terminate my unbearable suffering.” ❀

—English translation by Sri Rohini Kumar Das. Unpublished manuscript.

SUPARNAKHA MEETS LORD RAMA *Reverend A. G. Atkins*

For more about the Christian missionary Rev. Atkins, see Bindu 116.

As to Rama she came, she assumed for a while
A fair form, and then said to him with a sweet smile,

“As a man you’re unique; I as woman; that’s splendid!
“Our union has surely by God been intended!

I’ve searched the whole world, but not found anywhere
“Any man that in beauty with me could compare;

“For that reason a virgin till now I’ve remained;
“Seeing you, my desire I feel now is attained.”

But the Lord, as his wife, looked at Sita and said,
“My young brother is standing here; he is unwed.”

To Lakshman she turned; he as foe’s sister knew her;
And, glancing at Rama, he gently said to her,

“Fair lady, as servant my lord I must please;
“In subjection you’d never find comfort or ease;

“This my master is Kosala’s powerful king;
“As his own will he carries out everything.

“If a servant seeks ease, or a beggar respect,
“If adulterers heav’n, or spendthrifts wealth expect,

“If a miser for fame, or one proud for charm tries,
“Tis in vain; they are looking for milk from the skies.”

She went back to Rama when Lakshman thus spumed her,
But he once again to his brother returned her;

“A man would be dead to shame,” Lakshman replied,
“T’would be mere straw to him, if he took you as bride.”



Lakshman disfigures Suparnakha on the order of Lord Rama

She then turned back to Rama, by anger consumed,
And before them her fearsome form once more assumed;

But Raghurai, noticing Sita afraid,
To his brother for action at once a sign made.
With the greatest of ease and with no more delay,
Laksman cut off her ears and her nose;
Thus he seemed to be sending to Ravan a challenge
To come out and fight with his foes. ❀

— Pages 865-866. *The Ramayana of Tulsidas*. Published by Shri Krishna Janmasthan Seva-sansthan. Mathura, India. 1987.

GAURACHANDRA IS RAMACHANDRA

Adapted from

Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's

Bhakti-ratnākara 12.599-624

A brahmin who was a devotee of Lord Ramachandra was present in Jagannath Mishra's home at the time of the birth of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. At the auspicious moment of the child's appearance the heavenly deities chanted, "Jaya! Jaya!" This made the brahmin very happy as he realized that his Lord had revealed himself. He realized that King Dasharath had come in the form of Jagannath Mishra and Queen Kaushalya as mother Sachi.

He did not say anything to anyone, but just kept looking at the baby Vishwambhar. Then he returned to his own house. While meditating on *durvādala-śyāma rāma* — Lord Ramachandra who has a greenish complexion the color of *durvā* grass

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— he suddenly saw the son of Jagannath Mishra, Gaurahari, in place of Ramachandra. He then fell asleep and again saw Gaurachandra in front of him, with his beautiful golden complexion, moon-like face, arms extending to his knees, broad chest, lotus eyes, silky curling hair on his head, decorated with a flower crown, and a sacred thread hanging around his charming neck. Lord Gaurachandra was sitting on a jeweled throne in front of which stood Brahma and other demigods with folded hands.

While the brahmin ecstatically gazed at the exquisite beauty of Gaurachandra, the Lord suddenly changed his form and became *durvādala-śyāma rāma* — Sri Ramachandra, the beloved son of Kaushalya — looking very beautiful in his opulent royal dress, with his smiling face and a bow and arrow in his hands. Sita Devi sat by his side and Lakshmana was holding an umbrella over the Lord's head. In front of them with folded hands stood *śrī pavana-nandana* — Hanuman, the son of the wind god. The brahmin at once fell at the feet of Ramachandra, who is famous as *bhakta-vatsala*, the lover of his devotees. Lord Ramachandra blessed him and then disappeared. The brahmin woke up, and, no longer seeing the Lord, he began to cry. Lord Gaurachandra again appeared before him and forbade him to tell anyone about this dream.

*ethā gauracandra nija-gaṇera sahite
prakāśaye rāma-līlā dekhinu sākṣāte*

Thus, in that place, Sri Gaurachandra and his associates directly manifested the pastimes of Lord Ramachandra for those who could see. (Text 624) ❀

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MY DEAR FRIEND

Valmiki Rāmāyaṇa

Ayodhyā khaṇḍa 45.6

*so 'ham priya-sakhaiṁ rāmaiṁ śayāmaiṁ saha sūtayā
rakṣiṣyāmi dhanuṣ-pāñiḥ sarvathā jñātibhiḥ saha*

I am the dear friend of Rama. When he sleeps with Sita by his side, I will guard him. I will stand there, surrounded by my kinsmen, and a bow in my hand.

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