



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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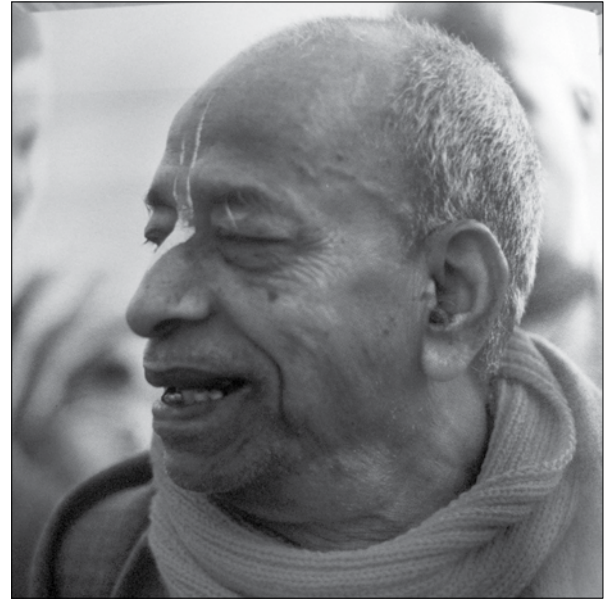
RAMA AND KRISHNA

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

An explanation of the word *rāma* is given in the *Padma Purāṇa*. The word comes from the Sanskrit root *ram*, which transforms to *ramante*. *Ramante* means fulfilling pleasures and desires. *ramante yogīno 'nante* — Amongst those who are yogis, the *bhakti-yogī* is the topmost. *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.47) says:
*yoginām api sarveṣāṁ mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo māṁ sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

Yogis are not interested in material enjoyment because material enjoyment is temporary. *ramante yogīno 'nante* — Everyone is seeking happiness, blissful life, but those who are less intelligent, *mūḍha*, they are satisfied with the temporary so-called happiness of material existence. But yogis are not like that. Yogis are interested in permanent happiness. Therefore, the verse ends with *anante*, not *ante*.

Antavanta ime dehāḥ. Deha means this body. *antavanta ime dehā nityasyoktāḥ śarīriṇaḥ*: [Bg. 2.18] — But within the body, the proprietor of the body is eternal, *nitya*. So, *nityo nityānām* — if I am *nitya*, eternal, then I should be interested in eternal happiness. But eternal happiness is not possible in this body. Therefore it is said, *ramante yogīno 'nante*. So *rāma* means *ananta-ānanda*, unlimited happiness. Lord Rama is *param brahma*, and Krishna is also *param brahma*. Krishna is recognized by Arjuna after understanding *Bhagavad-gītā*: *param brahma*



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

param dhāma pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān — You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate abode, the purest, and the absolute truth. [Bg. 10.12] So there is no difference between Rama and Krishna. Krishna is also *param brahma* and Rama is also *param brahma*. We *vaiṣṇavas* have equal faith and respect for all *viṣṇu-mūrtis. rāmādi-mūrtiṣu* — Rama, Nrsimha, Varaha, Narayan, Mahavishnu are *advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*, unlimited forms that are without a second, without decay, and without a beginning. [Brahma-Saṁhita 5.33] We *Gauḍīya* or *Madhva-Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas* are worshipers of Lord Krishna's *mūrti*. There is no difference between Lord Ramachandra's *mūrti* and

Krishna's *mūrti*. But as I have already explained, *kṛṣṇa paraṁ brahma* — Krishna is full-fledged. Although Lord Ramachandra is also full-fledged, he did not exhibit his full-fledged opulence. So these are very confidential things, but still, on the birthday of Lord Ramachandra we offer our respectful obeisances at his lotus feet so that he may be merciful upon us to bestow his *bhakti*, devotional service.

We are all fallen souls. We have no power to approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead except as directed by *śāstra*. So although there is no difference between Sri Rama and Sri Krishna, one devotee is attracted by one feature of the Lord and the other is attracted by the other feature. Once, Krishna disappeared from the *rāsa* dance and the *gopīs* were very eager to find Krishna again. Krishna appeared before them as four-handed Narayan. The *gopīs* saw the form of Lord Narayan, but they did not become attracted by him. They said, "Oh, he is Narayan! Let us offer our respects," and then they went away. Actually there is no difference between Krishna and Narayan. But the *gopīs* were not very much interested in Narayan. They wanted Krishna, although there is no difference between Narayan and Krishna. Similarly, although there is no difference between Rama and Krishna, some devotees are attracted by *rāma-mūrti* and some devotees are attracted by *kṛṣṇa-mūrti*. ❀

— Lecture on *Bhagavad-gīta* 4.12, 1 April 1974.

SRIVAS' LEVEL OF SURRENDER

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

We should completely depend on the will of Krishna. Krishna says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that he will take up the responsibility to maintain a surrendered devotee. "Whatever the devotee lacks," Krishna says, *vahāmy aham* — "I personally carry it."

Srivas Pandit was not doing any business or going out to earn money. Day and night, twenty-four hours, he was engaged in *śravaṇa-kīrtana* and bhajana with all his family members. Once, to test Srivas, Mahaprabhu asked him, "Srivas, you are a householder. You have a big family to maintain. Why don't you go earn some money? Otherwise, how will you maintain your big family?"

Srivas did not say anything. He only clapped three times. Mahaprabhu asked, "What does that mean?"

Srivas said, "I have complete faith in your words — *yoga kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*. [Bg. 9.22] You have taken up the responsibility to maintain a surrendered soul, and whatever such a person lacks you personally carry. I and all my family members are engaged day and night in your service. We have no other business. *Hari-sevā* is our only business."

Srivas had firm faith that Krishna will maintain, that supplies would definitely come. If you become fully dependent on Krishna, engaged day and night, twenty-four hours, in Krishna's service, then the supplies will definitely come.

Then he explained the meaning of his clapping three times. "If supplies will not come on one day, we will fast. We will think that it is Krishna's will and we will fast for the day. If supplies do not come on the second and third day, still we will fast. And if on the fourth day no supplies come, then all of our family will go and drown ourselves in the Ganges and be finished. If Krishna becomes a liar, then how is he Bhagavan? And why will people do his *bhajanā*?"

Hearing this, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu became very happy. Mahaprabhu said, "Srivas! The supplies will definitely come! Why should you think of anything else?"

Such a devotee is Srivas Pandit. He is *niṣkāma*, completely desireless. ❀

— Lecture in Bali, Indonesia, 6 October 1995.

PRAYERS TO SRIVAS PANDIT

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita-dhyānam

*āśrayāmi śrī-śrīvāsaṁ tam-ādyaṁ paṇḍitaṁ sadā
śuklāmbara-dharaṁ gaurāṁ gaura-bhakti-pradāyakam*

*śrī-gaurāṅga-kṛpāvāsaṁ gaura-mūrtiḥ rasa-pradam
śuklāmbara-dharaṁ devaṁ sarva bhakta-jana priyaḥ*

*saṅkīrtana rasāveśaṁ sarva-saubhāgya bhūṣitam
smarāmi bhakta-rājaḥ hi śrīvāsaṁ śrī-hari-priyam*

*śrī-gaurāṅga kṛpā-pātraṁ paṇḍitākhyāṁ sadā śucim
śuklāmbara-dharaṁ gaurāṁ gaura-bhakti-pradāyakam
śrī-kīrtane sadonmattaḥ dhyāyet śrīvāsa sattamam*

I always take shelter of Sri Srivas, leader of all the pandits. Wearing a brilliant white cloth, he has a golden complexion and bestows devotion unto Lord Chaitanya. He is the shelter of Lord Gauranga's mercy; he has a golden form; he bestows mellows of devotional service; he wears a brilliant white cloth; he is divine and is dear to the devotees of the Lord.

Intoxicated by mellows of *saṅkīrtana*, he is decorated with all good fortune. I meditate on that king of devotees, Srivas Pandit, who is dear to Sri Hari.

Let there be meditation on the most excellent Sri Srivas — the container of Lord Gauranga's mercy; the eternally pure personality renowned as a pandit. He wears a brilliant white cloth, has a golden complexion, bestows devotion unto Lord Chaitanya, and is always intoxicated in *kīrtana*.

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita-praṇāma-mantraḥ

*praṇamāmi śrī-śrīvāsam tam-ādyaṁ paṇḍitam mudā
śrī-gaurāṅga kṛpā-pātram kīrtanānanda mānasam
śrīvāsa paṇḍitam naumi gaurāṅga-priya pārśadam
yasya kṛpā-lavenāpi gaurāṅge jāyate ratiḥ
śrīvāsa kīrtanānanda bhakta goṣṭhyeka-vallabha
tvām namāmi mahāyogin bhakta-rūpo 'si nāradaḥ*

I joyously offer my obeisances to you, O Sri Srivas, leader of all the pandits. You are the container of Lord Gauranga's mercy and your mind takes great pleasure in *kīrtana*.

I offer my obeisances to Srivas Pandit, the dear associate of Lord Gauranga. By an infinitesimal fraction of his mercy one develops attachment in everything related to Lord Gauranga.

O Srivas! O you who get ecstatic joy from *kīrtana*! O exclusive leader of the assembly of devotees! I offer my obeisances unto you, the greatest of the *bhakti-yogīs*! In the form of an associate of Lord Gauranga, you are none other than Narada Muni.

Śrī Śrīvāsādi Bhakta-vṛndānām Dhyānam

*ye caitanya-padāravinda-madhupāḥ satprema-bhūṣojvalāḥ
śuddha-svaṁṣarūco dhṛgambu-pulaka svedatīḥ sadaṅga śrīyāḥ
sevopāyana-pāṇayāḥ smītamukhāḥ śuklāmbārāḥ sadvarāḥ
śrīvāsādi-mahāśayān sukhamayān dhyāyema tām pārśadām*

[The devotees headed by Srivas Thakur] are bumblebees at the lotus feet of Lord Chaitanya. They are decorated with the brilliant ornaments of true love. They are endowed with pristine golden complexions. Their divine bodily limbs are decorated with ecstatic bodily symptoms such as crying, goose bumps, ecstatic perspiration, etc. Carrying a wide variety of paraphernalia for the service of the Lord in their hands and beaming with joyous smiles, these most auspicious

*Next column: Srila Srivas Thakur, the head of
Mahaprabhu's devotees*





Santiniketan school. West Bengali. Early 1900s. Unknown artist.

Mahā-prakāśa-līlā in the home of Srivas Thakur

personalities are dressed in brilliant white clothes. Let us meditate on Srivas Pandit and other great associates of the Lord, who are full of transcendental joy.

Śrī Śrīvāsādi Bhakta-vṛndānām Praṇāma

*ye tīrtha-bhramitāḥ punanti jagataṁ sadvaidyakalpāḥ prati-
kuvantīndūmibhāḥ kṛpāmṛta-ruco 'py āpāyayanti svayam
susnigdā haricandanāni kalayantyābhūṣayanty-adbhutā
ratnānīva hi tān namāmi satataṁ śrīvāsa-mukhyān muhuh*

Since they verily are personifications of holy places of pilgrimage, the devotees headed by Srivas Thakur purify everyone by roaming around the earth. Moreover, they diffuse the moonlike rays of the Lord's



nectarean mercy even unto the most expert and capable personalities while simultaneously experiencing it themselves. They decorate themselves with the finest and topmost ornaments of Lord Hari's *gopī-candana*, thereby appearing like wonderful jewels. At every moment, I constantly offer my obeisances to all those great devotees headed by Srivas Pandit.

Śrī Śrīvāsādi Bhakta-vṛndānām Caraṇe Vijñapti

*he śrīvāsādaya iha kṛpā-mūrtayo gauracandra-
premāmbudheḥ sura-viṭapinaḥ śānta-saumya-svabhāvāḥ
dīnoddhāre prabala-niyamāḥ premadā yūyam eva
tasmād ajñānī prapada-rajasaḥ pāpīnānī mānī punīta*

O Srivas Prabhu and associates! O personifications of Lord Gaurachandra's mercy in this world! O distributors of the ocean of love of Godhead to the devotees! O gentle and affectionate ones! You are fixed in the great vow of delivering the fallen souls. Certainly you are the exclusive bestowers of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Therefore, please give me, a foolish sinner, the dust of your lotus feet, and purify me. ❀

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