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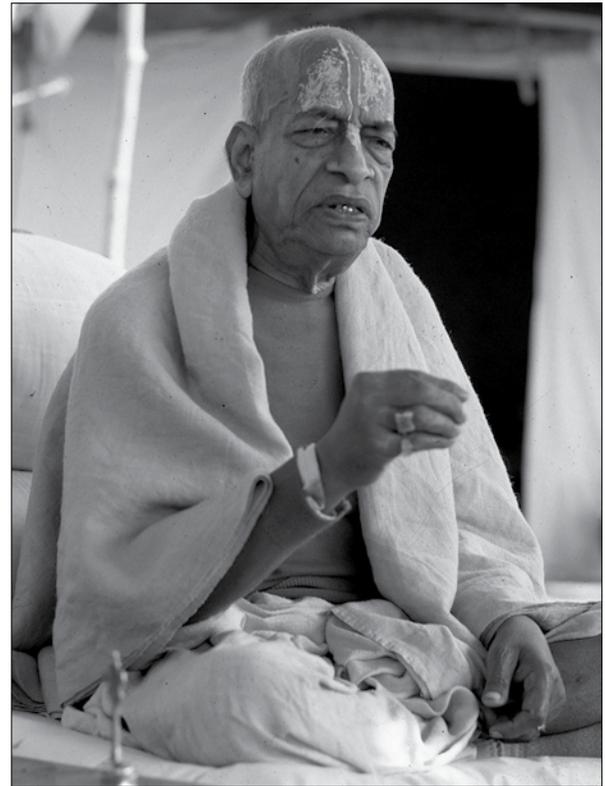
THE SIMPLICITY OF BRAHMINICAL CULTURE

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

In the old days, life was not so much conditional and encumbered. The simple problems were then the problems of bread, clothing and shelter, which were solved by the simplest process. By agriculture they used to solve the bread, clothing and shelter problems, and industrialization was unknown to them. Thus they had no idea of living in big palatial buildings at the cost of sacrificing the boon of humanity. They were satisfied to live in cottages, and yet they were perfectly intelligent. Even the famous Chanakya Pandit, who was the Prime Minister of India during the reign of Chandragupta, used to live in a cottage and draw no salary from the state. Such simple habits did not deteriorate his high intelligence and dignity, and as such he had compiled many useful literatures which are still read by millions for social and political guidance. Thus the simplicity of brahminical culture was an ideal to the subordinate members of the society, and in the deductive way the subordinate orders, namely the the *kṣatriyas*, the *vaiśyas* and the *sūdras*, would follow the instruction of the cultured Brahmins. Such ways of approaching the truth are always simple, plain, and perhaps the most perfect.

In the old days even a politician Brahmin like Chanakya would say:



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

*vidvatvaṁ ca nṛpatvaṁ ca naiva tulya kadācana
sva-deśe pūjyate rājā vidvān sarvatra pūjyate*

A really cultured, learned fellow is far above a politician because a politician is honoured by the votes of his countrymen while a cultured and learned fellow is honored everywhere all over the world. So we say that Rabindranath and Gandhi were never

dependent on the votes of their countrymen but they were honored all over the world for their cultural contribution. The same Chanakya Pandit defined the standard of learning. The standard of learning had to be testified by its result and not by the manner of university degrees. He said that one who looks upon all women except one's married wife as mothers, all other's wealth as pebbles on the street, and all living beings as one's own self, is a really learned fellow. He never stressed on the point of how many grammars, rhetorics or other books of knowledge that one might have gone through or how many doctorates of different universities one might have been decorated with. 🙏

— Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, 20 January 1952.

REPENT AND CRY

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Don't find fault with others; find fault with yourself. See all good in others and bad in yourself. The *caitya-guru*, *paramātmā*, Krishna, knows your heart. He knows what you are whispering in your heart. You cannot cheat him. Outwardly you may be speaking very sweet from the lips. Your external dealings may be very nice. But inside, don't be a hypocrite. Be a simple, natural Vaishnava.

You have no simplicity in your heart. Duplicity, pretentiousness, crookedness, politics — so many nasty things are there in your heart. You follow this *gaḍḍārikā-srota-nyāya* [the maxim of one foolish sheep leading the entire flock of foolish sheep to fall into a ditch].

Krishna as *caitya-guru*, *paramātmā*, knows you are not serious. You should be thinking, “How can I get a bona fide guru? The aim of my life is to get Krishna, cent-percent Krishna.” You should be crying in your heart. Krishna will know, “Yes, this soul is crying for me.” This crying is most important. In the *Ādi Purāṇa*, Krishna has said, *rudanti mama sannidhau*. “*Rudanti*” means crying. *aham parikṛītaḥ* — One who cries for me from the core of his heart purchases me. Have you ever cried for this? Therefore I say you are not serious. You are superfluous. You are just following this *gaḍḍārikā-srota-nyāya*. That is your mistake. Why do you find fault with others? Krishna knows, “Oh, this fellow wants a cheater, not a teacher.” Therefore Krishna provides a cheater. You should admit that it is your bad karma, your mistake. Then repent and cry.

Cry before Krishna, before Mahaprabhu. Cry from the core of your heart so they'll shower mercy on you. Then you'll never be cheated. This is the process. It is a most important and serious thing. This is a personal relationship and a personal responsibility. It is not the responsibility of anyone else. You alone are responsible for your activity. Why should someone else be responsible? It is up to you to accept a bona-fide guru, not a bogus guru; to get cent percent Krishna; to make your life successful, not his life, or that life, or anybody else's life. This is a very deep, confidential philosophy. Try to understand it. 🙏

— The Process of Inquiry, Chapter 8. Gopal Jiu Publications.

RESIDENCE NEAR GOVARDHAN, PART 2

Srila Raghunath Das Goswami's

Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam

With the commentary

Attributed to Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan

A Sanskrit recitation of these prayers is available at:
<https://youtu.be/rhX8HFQOwY4>

Verse 3:

*anupama-maṇi-vedī-ratna-simhāsanorvī-
ruha-jhara-dara-sānu-droṇi-saṅgheṣu raṅgaih
saha bala-sakhibhiḥ saṅkhalayan sva-priyam me
nija-nikāṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam*

On your incomparable jewel-bedecked stone platforms that act as thrones, under your trees, in various places such as waterfalls and caves, and on even and uneven lands, you fully arrange various sports for your dear Krishna along with his jovial friends and Balaram. [For witnessing all these,] please give me permanent residence near you!

Commentary: [Giriraj asks another question:] “Reside near Sanket-van. There certainly you will experience the sight of various divine pastimes of the youthful couple. Why do you pray for residence near me?”

[**Translator's Note:** *Saṅketa* means a secret meeting spot. Sanket-van is a forest midway between Barsana and Nandagram where Radha and Krishna would each travel half the distance to meet at a secret location and perform conjugal pastimes. Govardhan is suggesting that this could possibly be an ideal location to reside for a person desirous of viewing all such pastimes.]



Photo by Madhavananda Das

Govardhan Hill near Panchari

Replying to this, Sri Raghunath Das Goswami utters this verse. He says, “O Govardhan! You fully arrange various sports for your dear Krishna along with his various jovial friends and Balaram on incomparable jewel-bedecked stone platforms which act as decorated thrones, and also at various other places. While arranging for such sports, please give me residence near you.”

The mood here is that by residing near Govardhan, all varieties of pastimes of Krishna can be experienced [not only the conjugal ones with Radha and the *gopīs*].

The incomparable jewel-bedecked platforms that act as decorated sitting places, the trees, waterfalls, caves, and even and uneven fields, all act as pastime grounds for activities such as relieving fatigue and cracking jokes, playing on swings, games of finding lost cows [wherein one cowherd boy assumes the role of a lost cow and other cowherd boys divide themselves into two groups, one that tries to rescue the cow and one that tries to steal it], playing hide and seek, and wrestling.

[**Translator’s Note:** The places and pastimes are sequentially connected by the commentator:

- * The jewel-bedecked platforms act as sitting places for relief of fatigue and cracking jokes.
- * The trees are used for playing on swings.
- * Waterfall areas and caves are ideal for playing the games of lost cows and hide and seek.
- * Even and uneven fields provide variegated experiences in wrestling.

After explaining this, the commentator provides some meanings of the terms used from popular Sanskrit dictionaries:]

The term *dara* is defined in the *Medinī-kośa* (27.46) as a cave. The term *sānu* is defined in the *Amara-kośa* (2.3.5) as an even field of a mountain. The feminine term *droni* is defined in the *Medinī-kośa* (15.17) as a general tract of uneven land.

Verse 4:

*rasa-nidhi-nava-yūnoḥ sākṣiṇīm dāna-keler
dyuti-parimala-viddhām śyāma-vedīm prakāśya
rasika-vara-kulānām modam āsphālayan me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam*

Having manifested the *śyāma-vedī* — the witness to the toll-tax payment pastime of the eternally youthful couple who are like two personified oceans of conjugal mellow — you bring about immense joy to the assembly of the best of *rasika* devotees. [While you are bringing about such joy], please give me residence near you.

Commentary: In this verse Sri Raghunath Das Goswami prays to Govardhan, who bestows exquisite *darśana* [of rare pastime locations] on the devotees. He says, “O Govardhan! Having manifested the *śyāma-vedī*, which is a witness to the toll-tax payment pastime of the two personified oceans of conjugal mellow, the eternally youthful couple Radha and Krishna, you bring about immense joy to the assembly of the best of *rasika* devotees of Lord Krishna. While you are bringing about such joy, please also consider giving me residence near yourself.” [Part of this purport was intentionally left out by us as the author just rephrased the verse with no extra meaning than what is given in the above translation.]

[**Translator’s Note:** Near the Dana Ghati area on the Govardhan *parikramā* road is a Govardhan *śilā* with the footprints of Srimati Radharani and Krishna. This is the *śyāma-vedī*, i.e. Shyam’s platform. Srila Raghunath Das Goswami describes

the *śyāma-vedī*, also known as the *kṛṣṇa-vedī*, in his *Vraja-vilāsa-stava* (77) as follows:

*ghaṭṭa-kriḍā-kutukita-manā nāgarendro navīno
dānī bhūtvā madana-nṛpater gavya-dāna-cchalena
yatra prātaḥ sakhibhir abhito veṣṭitaḥ samrurodha
śrī-gāndharvān nija-gaṇa-vṛtān naumi tām kṛṣṇa-vedīm*

Excited by the desire to carry out the toll-tax pastime, the youthful king of debauchees (Krishna) became the tax-collector of the king named cupid. On the pretext of collecting tax in the form of milk products, he along with his group of friends fully obstructed the path of Srimati Gandharvika (Radha) and her friends. I offer my obeisances to that place named *kṛṣṇa-vedī* (or *śyāma-vedī*.)

What is the nature of this *śyāma-vedī*? It is replete with radiance and fragrance. Sri Raghunath Das Goswami says, “By having *darśana* of this *śyāma-vedī*, the *rasika* devotees feel immensely joyous and this causes them to shout out chants of joy. By staying near you, O Govardhan, I too will be able to regularly hear these chants of joy! And having heard these chants, I too will be able to visit this place [regularly] and will be able to have [regular] *darśana* of this beautiful witness of your amorous pastimes.”

[To be continued.]

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from *Stava-puṣpāñjalīḥ* with the commentary attributed to Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan. Edited by Shri Batu Das. Published by Nityasvarup Brahmachari. Printed at Devakinandan Press. Vrindavan. Vikram Samvat 1958 (~ 1901 A.D.)

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RADIANCE AND DARKNESS

*Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati’s
Vṛndāvana-mahimāmṛtam (13.67)*

*tejo 'bhāvas tama iti vadanty eka ācārya-deśyā
māyollāsaṁ niḡama-nipuṇās tan-nimittāṁ vadanti
vṛndāṭavyām prasaratī taḍit-koṭi-koṭi-prakāśe
ko 'py āścāryo vilasati mahābhāsvāro dhvānta-rāśiḥ*

Certain learned *ācāryas* of the scriptures say that darkness is the absence of radiance. Other *ācāryas* learned in the Vedas add to this by saying that darkness is a feature caused by *māyā*’s radiance and wherever there is radiance there cannot be darkness. But see how amazing it is that in this forest of Vrindavan, Radha’s radiance, which is equal to the brilliance of millions of lightning bolts, is spreading around and is causing Krishna’s darkness to appear even more brilliant.

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.net).