



तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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THE VISION OF A DEVOTEE

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

When there is suffering given by Krishna, a devotee does not take it seriously. A devotee thinks, “It is the favor of Krishna that he has put me into suffering.” They never see suffering as suffering. It is favor of Krishna. That is a devotee’s vision. It is exactly like a son who knows his father well. If the father slaps, the son never protests. He knows, “It is good for me.” Similarly, a devotee is never disturbed when there is suffering given by Krishna. 🙏

— Morning Walk Conversation, 2 May, 1974.

THE SOLUTION FOR DISTRESS

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada

Everything that happens is the Lord’s supreme will. Therefore there is nothing we can do but wait patiently for the Lord’s mercy whenever

we experience distress. Sri Nrisimhadev always protects his devotees from all inauspiciousness. If we are fixed in devotional service we need not worry about our protection or maintenance. All material inauspiciousness will be destroyed simply by our surrendering to the Supreme Lord. 🙏

— Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. *Amṛta Vani*. A collection of statements from Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Originally compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Translated into English by Bhumpati Das. P. 342. Touchstone Media, Mumbai, 2004.



STRAW IN A POT

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

When Radharani said, “In *pūrva-līlā*, his previous pastimes, your master or friend was Rama and Vaman.” That means that he is the Supreme Lord. This is contradictory! The *gopīs* know that Krishna is the Supreme Lord, but then again how is it that they

don't know? They know and they don't know. How is this? It is very difficult to understand. It is a very deep and confidential question. The question should be solved, otherwise it will cause confusion.

The *ācāryas* have answered it. When the *gopīs* and Radharani unite with Krishna they forget that Krishna is the Supreme Lord. They forget everything, otherwise such union could not be possible. That is the activity of Yogamaya. But when they feel very acute pangs of separation, this understanding sometimes comes up. Radharani described Krishna as being Rama and Vaman while she was feeling acute pangs of separation.

The *ācāryas* have given the following example: If you place a big pot filled to the brim with milk on the fireplace, it will boil and overflow. To keep the milk from overflowing, one may place some tiny pieces of straw or grass in the milk before it boils. The straw goes under the foam and is not visible. However, when the milk is boiling the straw goes up and down. Sometimes it then becomes visible. When the *gopīs* with Radharani feel such acute pangs of separation, it is like heat. Their hearts are boiling, boiling, and burning. So sometimes this understanding comes up momentarily and is expressed: “Hey Bhagavan!” “Hey Rama!” “Your friend was Rama.” “Your friend was Vaman in another *yuga*.” That means Lord Vishnu. When the milk is boiling the straw sometimes comes up and then again goes back down. If someone thinks, “Let me take the straw out,” he cannot catch it. Immediately it goes back down. Only for one moment is it on top. No one can catch it.

Similarly, the acute pangs of separation are like heat. The heart is boiling, boiling, burning, so this idea sometimes comes up: “That Bhagavan!”

— Excerpted from a lecture in Bhubaneswar, 22 September 1992. Printed in *Mathura Meets Vrindavan*, Chapter 14. Gopal Jiu Publications, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, 2003.

SACRED BATHING

Adapted from the Kāmyavana-māhātmya

We have seen that when *sādhus* in India take bath in sacred lakes, rivers, and tanks, they generally all show respect for the holy waters by observing certain strictures. Many different *śāstras* describe these basic principles for sacred bathing in similar ways. Here is a list mostly based on the *Varāha Purāṇa*.

1) One should not take a sacred bath in an unclean condition or after having passed stool. If necessary one should first take bath in some other place and then take bath in the sacred waters.

श्रीकृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

2) Understanding that it is improper to take sacred bath while wearing dirty cloth, many pilgrims purchase new cloth just for bathing.

3) One should not kick the water with ones feet.

4) At the end of one's bath one should offer oblations of the water to the demigods, sages, and forefathers. [*Gauḍīyā vaiṣṇavas*, however, generally offer to their guru, the previous *ācāryas*, the *pañca-tattva*, and Radha Krishna.]

5) After offering oblations one should come out of the water and wring out ones garments away from the sacred water.

Note: Following the standard of behavior that the associates of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu exhibited when taking bath in sacred waters, the Radhakunda municipality prohibits washing clothes, using soap, or spitting in the waters of Radhakund or Shyamakund.

— Translation by Pradosh Sahoo, from Pandit Madan Gopalji Sastri's Hindi translation of Narayan Bhatta Goswami's Sanskrit *Kāmyavana-māhātmya*. Published by Gaurapada Dasji Maharaja. Kaman, District Bharatpur, Rajasthan. 1994.



Radhakund by Eeshan Achary

Radhakund

MANTRAS FOR BATHING

From Śrī Manohara Bhajana Dīpikā

These are some commonly recited prayers and mantras for taking bath in different sacred waters.

Obeisances to Radhakund

*śrī-vṛndā-vipināṁ su-ramyam api tac chrīmān sa govardhanaḥ
sā rāsa-sthalikāpy alam rasa-mayaiḥ kim tāvad anya-sthalaiḥ
yasyāpy aṁśa-lavena nārhati manāk sāmyam mukundasya tat-
prāṇebhyo 'py adhikam priyeva dayitam tat-kuṇḍam evāśraye*

The forest of Sri Vrinda is a most attractive place. Within this forest is the most opulent Govardhan. In comparison to the place of *rasa* nearby where Krishna performed his *rāsa* dance, what is the use of all other places? I take shelter of the lake of she who is dearer to Mukunda than his own life airs.



Photo by Eeshan Achary

The Yamuna at Keshighat in Vrindavan

Obeisances to Shyamakund

*duṣṭāriṣṭa-vadhe svayaṁ samabhavat kṛṣṇāṅghri-padmād idaṁ
sphītaṁ yan-makaranda-vistrītir ivāriṣṭākhyam iṣṭaṁ saraḥ
sopānaiḥ parirañjitaṁ priyatayā śrī-rādhayā kārītaiḥ
premāliṅgad iva priyā-sara idaṁ taṁ nitya-nityaṁ bhaje*

This favorite lake named Arishta manifested spontaneously from the lotus feet of Krishna when He killed the wicked Arishtasura. It is a splendid expanse of nectar from His feet and is decorated with steps that were constructed for Krishna's satisfaction by Sri Radha. I perpetually worship this lake, which is situated as if embracing the lake of Krishna's beloved (Radhakund).

Obeisances to the River Yamuna

*gaṅgādi-tīrtha-parisevita-pāda-padmām
goloka-saukhya-rasa-pūra-mahim mahimnā
āplāvitākhila-susādhu-jalām sukhābdhau
rādhā-mukunda-muditām yamunām namāmi*

I offer my obeisances to the Yamuna, whose lotus feet are reverentially served by all the holy places, including Ganga. Her exalted currents carry the blissful nectar of Goloka, and she has attracted by her greatness all the sanctified waters to fill her. She delights Sri Radha and Mukunda, immersing them in the ocean of happiness.

Obeisances to the River Ganga

*navadvīpārāma-prakara-kusumāmoda-balitām
sphurad-ratna-śreṇī-cita-taṭa-sutīrthāvali-yutām*

*harer gaurāṅgasyātula-caraṇa-reṇūkṣita-tanuṁ
samudyat-premormi-tumula-harisaṅkīrtana-rasaiḥ
prabhu-kriḍāpātrīm amṛta-rasa-gātrīm ṛṣi-ghaṭā-
śiva-brahmendrāḍīḍita-mahita-māhātmya-mukharām
lasat-kiñjalkānbhojani-madhupa-garbhuru-karuṇām
ahaṁ vande gaṅgām agha-nikara-bhaṅga-jala-kaṇām*

I offer my respects to the Ganga, adorned with the fragrance of the pleasure gardens of Nabadwip. She is joined by rows of excellent bathing places whose shores are bedecked with many shining gems. Her body has been sprinkled by the precious dust of Lord Hari Gauranga, and her waves of pure love have been aroused by the tumultuous mellows of *hari-saṅkīrtana*. She is the worthy place of Mahaprabhu's pleasure pastimes. Immortal nectar flows in her body. Countless sages and demigods headed by Shiva, Brahma, and Indra eloquently praise her great glories. She is most merciful, and within her are lotuses with shining filaments and honeybees. I offer my respects to her, a drop of whose water destroys heaps of sins.

Mantra for Bathing in Radhakund

The following mantra may also be recited while sprinkling water from the *kuṇḍa* on one's head.

*rādhikā-sama-saubhāgyaṁ sarva-tīrtha-pravanditam
prasīda rādhikā-kuṇḍa snāmi te salile śubhe*



Radhakund in the 1800's

Your good fortune is equal to that of Radhika herself. You are honored by all the holy places. O Radhikakund, please favor me. I am now bathing in your sacred water.

Mantra for Bathing at Shyamakund

*udbhutaṁ kṛṣṇa-pādābjād ariṣṭa-vadhataś chalāt
pāhi mām pāmaraṁ snāmi śyāma-kuṇḍa jale tava*

You were born from the lotus foot of Krishna on the pretext of his killing Arishta. O Shyamakund, please protect me, a most fallen soul. I am now bathing in your water.

Mantra for Bathing in the Yamuna

*kalinda-tanaye devi paramānanda-vardhini
snāmi te salile sarvāparādhān mām vimocaya*

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श्रीकृष्णकथामृत बिन्दु

O daughter of Kalinda, O goddess, O increaser of supreme bliss, I am now bathing in your water. Please deliver me from all offenses.

Mantra for Bathing in the Ganga

*viṣṇu-pāda-prasūtāsi vaiṣṇavī viṣṇu-devatā
pāhi nas tv enasas tasmād ā-janma-maraṇāntikāt*

You are born from the feet of Vishnu. You are a *vaiṣṇavī*, and your deity is Lord Vishnu. Please protect us therefore from the offenses we commit from our birth up to our death.



Photo by Shahmawaz Zafar

Sindhu River in Kharmang District, Pakistan

Mantras for Calling Sacred Waters

When not in the proximity of sacred waters, many *vaiṣṇavas* chant the following mantras while taking bath. The first one is for calling the sacred waters and the next is a meditation. Only pure water should be used for this, and the sacred waters thus called should be shown all due respect.

*gaṅge ca yamune caiva godāvare sarasvati
narmade sindho kāveri jale 'smin sannidhiṁ kuru*

O Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu, and Kaveri, please enter this water.

*kurukṣetra-gayā-gaṅgā-prabhāsa-puṣkarāṇi ca
tīrthāny etāni puṇyāni snāna-kāle bhavantiha
pāvanākhyam saraḥ śrīmat tathā mānasa-jāhnavī
yamunā śyāma-kuṇḍam ca rādhā-kuṇḍam tathaiva ca
etāni puṇya-tīrthāni snāna-kāle bhavantiha*

These holy places — Kurukshetra, Gaya, Ganga, Prabhasa, and Pushkar, the splendid lake called Pavana, the Manasi-ganga, the Yamuna, Shyamakunda, and Radhakunda — are present at the time of bathing. 🙏

— Translated by Gopiparanadhana Das, from Dina Narottam Das (chota)'s *Śrī Manohara Bhajana Dīpikā*. Published by Sri Sudhasindhu Das. Govardhan. Gaurabda 519. Bengali.