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Tridandi Gosvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

THE OCEAN OF ESSENCE IN A BOTTLE

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Transcriber: Srimati Yasoda devi dasi

[Dear Maharajas, Prabhus, and Didi's,

Dandavat Pranama. All glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga.

From Dec.11 to Dec.16, in a village near Paderborn, Germany, 200 devotees gathered to hear 5 days of hari-katha from Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja.

The theme of most of Srila Maharaja's classes was Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura's Jaiva Dharma, and he introduced this theme by telling his audience, "I have already discussed Caitanya-caritamrita, Srimad Bhagavatam, and the sweet pastimes of Krsna from the Bhagavatam. I have recently explained Raya Ramananda Samvad during Jagannatha Puri and Vraja Mandala parikramas, and I have explained so many other topics.

Now I want to explain Jaiva Dharma, because it is very essential. If you hear and understand it, you can very easily make rapidly progress, but you will have to read it again and again.

I think that in four days we will not be able to complete the topics in this book. We can only complete its managala-caranam (auspicious invocation). From this outline, however, an idea about how to read and go very deep may come to you."

The following is a transcription of the first in the series of Jaiva Dharma classes, given on Dec. 12, 2001.

Your aspiring servant, Syamarani dasi]

Srila Rupa Gosvami has full faith in the mano' bhista of Srila Caitanya Mahaprabhu:
sri-caitanya-mano-bhistam / sthapitam yena bhu-tale / svayam rupah kada mahyam /
dadati sva-padantikam. "When will Srila Rupa Gosvami Prabhupada, who has established
within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya, give me
shelter under his lotus feet?"

Srila Rupa Gosvami inspired in the heart of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, the Saptam Gosvami, (seventh Gosvami) the essence of all the teachings of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu: that is, Jaiva Dharma. Jaiva Dharma was written by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in very simple Bengali language. Written in the form of dialogue, it is the essence of all the teachings of all the Gosvamis, especially Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. Now I am going to explain something about that essence which was collected in Jaiva Dharma. If you want to advance in Krsna consciousness, then try to read this book again and again with very strong faith. In this book you can

very easily have the essence of all Indian literature, that is, Veda, Upanisad, Srimad Bhagavatam and Sri Caitanya-caritamrita.

I first translated Jaiva Dharma from Bengali to Hindi. When I had any difficulty to understand, I went to my Gurudeva. I also went to Parama Pujiyapada Srauti Maharaja and all other very qualified disciples of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Thakura for consultation. Srila Bhakti Pramoda Puri Gosvami Maharaja read my translation and expressed his heartfelt appreciation, and now the same book has been translated to English.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has written this book in the form of a dialogue, with questions and answers. You would not be able to even think of as many questions as Bhaktivinoda Thakura has presented there. As many questions as are possible to be asked has been presented there, and no one else could have put forward such questions. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura begins the first chapter by telling us that in this entire universe, this Earth is very prominent. Why? On this planet, Vrndavana Dhama and Navadvipa Dhama are present. It is only for this reason that the Earth is prominent or superior. Why is Vrndavana superior? The gopis are present there. Why are the gopis superior? Srimati Radhika is present with them, and wherever Radhika is present, Krsna is also bound to be there. Why is Gaura Bhumi superior? Caitanya Mahaprabhu took birth there. Mahaprabhu is Krsna, having taken the intrinsic mood of Radhika, along with Her golden beauty. He appeared in Gaura Mandala and that place is therefore the essence of the entire universe. It is not less than Vrndavana. It is the same as Vrndavana, and in some cases it is superior because of its vaisista (speciality). [If one commits offenses in Vrndavana, he gets a very strong reaction. Vrndavana Dhama considers offenses, whereas Navadvipa forgives them.]

Krsna and Mahaprabhu are the same. As They are the same although different at appearance, similarly Vrndavana Dhama and Navadvipa Dhama are the same. Some say that Caitanya Mahaprabhu's exalted separation mood at the Gambira in Jagannatha Puri may be superior to the moods in Navadvipa, but such persons are totally ignorant. Because Subhadra, Baladeva and Krsna are together in Puri, is like Dvaraka. Nowhere in Caitanya-caritamrita or the books of Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha Dasa Gosvami is it written that Puri is Vrndavana. Rather:

sri gauda-mandala bhumi, yeba jane cintamani / tara haya vrajabhumi vasa
"One who understands the transcendental nature of Navadvipa and its surrounding area where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu enacted His pastimes, resides always in Vrndavana."
(Gaurangera dhuti-pada of Srila Narottama dasa Thakura)

It is written in many sastras that Navadvipa is Vrndavana, but it has never written that Puri is Vrndavana. It may have been written that when Caitanya Mahaprabhu was there, He sometimes used to see the sea as Yamuna and Cataka Parvata as Govardhana. He saw that hill AS Govardhana, but it is not that it WAS Govardhana. Even when He was going to Vrndavana on His way in Jharikanda forest, He used to see Vrndavana. That place is

not Vrndavana, but because of His own bhavas, He saw it as such. On the other hand, Navadvipa is actually Vrndavana.

The sweet pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, which took place in Navadvipa, are far superior to what took place in Gambhira, and what to speak of what took place in South India, on the bank of Godavari, where Raya Ramananda and Mahaprabhu met and discussed.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura tells us that Surabhi cow once came to Navadvipa and performed austerities and aradhana there. Worship and aradhana are different.

[Sripada Madhava Maharaja:] Worship is puja.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Aradhana means uttering and meditating on the gopala-mantra or kama-gayatri mantra. The aradhana for Krsna may be done only by kama-bhija and kama-gayatri:

vrndavane 'aprakrta navina madana'
kama-gayatri kama-bije yanra upasana (C.c. Madhya 8. 138)

"In the spiritual realm of Vrndavana, Krsna is the spiritual, ever-fresh Cupid. He is worshiped by the chanting of the kama-gayatri mantra, with the spiritual seed klim".

It is this aradhana which she performed, and it was at this place that Pradyumna Brahmacari used to worship Sri Nrsimhadeva and meditate. There, at Pradyumna Bhajana Kutira, Prema dasa Babaji was engaged in performing bhajana. Paramahamsa Prema dasa Babaji was the siksa-sisya disciple of Pradyumna Misra Brahmacari. It has not been written by whom was he initiated. It has not been written who was his diksa-guru. Why? He accepted the Bhagavata-guru-parampara.

In our line (the Gaudiya Sampradaya) there is a prominence of bhagavat-parampara. In our line, Srila Gaura dasa Babaji Maharaja was a disciple of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura was a disciple of Jagannatha dasa Babaji Maharaja in bhagavat-parampara. Bhaktivinoda Thakura was formally initiated by his family guru, Vipina Bihari Gosvami, but he accepted Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji Maharaja, his siksa-guru, as his actual guru. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura also never gave very much importance to the diksa-guru-parampara. Rather, he accepted the bhagavat-parampara.

The bhagavata-parampara consists only of siddha-mahatmas, realized persons, Krsna's associates; whereas in the diksa-parampara, the parampara consisting of only diksa-gurus, may or may not include that very high class of siddha-guru. Besides Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, all the sastras including Srimad-Bhagavatam have accepted this line, because the diksa-guru-parampara is included in the bhagavat-guru-parampara.

Nowadays, so many are hearing from sahajiya babajis. Because they are ignorant, they do not accept this truth of bhagavat-parampara. I have given so many examples and clear vision of siksa-guru, diksa-guru, bhagavata-parampara, and other related topics in my book, Five Essential Essays (Prabandha Pancakam). If one wants to know more about these topics, he can read that book. Always be careful regarding these sahajiya babajis and others like them.

If you go deep in your reading of Jaiva Dharma, so many new things will come. As Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura said that he read Prahlada-caritra (the Srimad-Bhagavatam 7th Canto history of Prahlada Maharaja) not less than 100 or 108 times, so I have read Jaiva Dharma not less than 108 times.

In Jaiva Dharma we read about the siddha-mahatma, Premadasa Babaji. How was Premadasa Babaji engaged in bhajana? He was very learned in all the scriptures, especially in Srimad-Bhagavatam and Sri Caitanya-caritamrita. He always resided and performed bhajana in Navadvipa Dhama, especially in Godruma, where Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura also used to do his bhajana. There he regularly chanted two lakhs of holy names, and by such chanting he was weeping and his heart was melting. He was offering thousands and thousands of satstanga-pranama daily, to each Vaisnava in our guru-parampara. He also offered obeisances to all the important places of Sri Vraja Mandala Dhama, Sri Navadvipa Mandala Dhama, and Sri Ksetra Mandala Dhama. He regularly offered obeisances to Bhandira-vata, Rasa-sthali, Vrndavana, Vamsi-vata, Gopesvara Mahadeva, Yamuna phulina (the shore of Yamuna), the associates of Radha and Krsna like Lalita, Visakha, Citra, Campakalata, all the sakhis, all the manjaris, all the vipaksa, tatastha, and suhrt gopis. He offered obeisances to everyone, from top to bottom, for hours and hours. He was not merely offering namaskara-pranama (with folded palms), but rather he offered satstanga-pranama (obeisances with all the limbs of the body).

He also engaged in madhukari-bhiksa. Unless one performs madhu-kari in Nandagaon, he cannot attain perfection. Even if he regularly performs madhukari in Vrndavana, he must also do it at least one day in Nandagaon. Nandagaon is the place of Mother Yasoda and Nanda Baba, and Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Sanatana Gosvami stayed there at Ter Kadamba. Navadvipa is non-different from Vrndavana, and in Navadvipa, Godruma is Nandagaon.

When Premadasa Babaji had extra time, he did not engage in gramya-katha (mundane talks). Rather, he used to read Sri Prema-vivarta. Prema-vivarta was written by Srila Jagadananda Pandita, one of the high-class associates of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. That book is full of transcendental mellites, very elevated truths, and so many teachings.

When Premadasa Babaji read it, he used to weep bitterly. His heart melted and his bodily hairs stood on end.

Do you read Sri Caitanya-caritamrita like this? You should try to do so. If you do, anarthas will disappear and you will go deep in love and affection. If you are chanting, "Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare" without a deep mood, tears will not come. However, when you call out,

"Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare" with a deep mood of longing, then Krsna may come. He is bound to enter our hearts, at which time our hearts will melt by taking His darsana. Moreover, Krsna will not come alone. He will come with Radhika. Moreover, Radhika will not come alone, but with all Her associates. She will come with all of Vrndavana Dhama. Your heart will melt if you chant in this way.

Whenever Premadasa Babaji chanted Hare Krsna, he was always remembering all the sweet pastimes of Krsna. All the neighboring persons would come and hear from him, and those who came also used to weep. This is reminiscent of the assembly of Srila Rupa Gosvami. All devotees present there wept by seeing Rupa Gosvami weep as he heard Srimad Bhagavatam from Srila Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami.

Those who have many, many worldly desires cannot weep. They can weep only when there is a problem. Always engaged in looking after their bodies, they have no time to weep for Krsna. You should be very careful about this. Someone may be continually engaged in sense gratification, in overeating, and in collecting all things for sense gratification, and at the same time he may be thinking, "I will do bhajana." This is not the process.

One day, at about three 3 o'clock in the afternoon, after he had completed his chanting, Premadasa Babaji was reading Prema-vivarta and weeping. At that time, a renounced order sannyasi who had come from Kasi, Varanasi began to offer him his satstang pranama. For some time that sannyasi did not rise up, and Babaji Maharaja was totally absorbed in the mood of Prema-vivarta. In Prema-vivarta, Sri Jagadananda Pandita was remembering his association with Nimai Pandita (Sacinandana Gaurahari) in Navadvipa. He remembered when, one day, both were quarreling, and Mahaprabhu came and found him weeping alone on the banks of Ganges at midnight.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked his associates, "Where is Jagadananda? Perhaps he is in a sulky mood, and that is why he has not yet returned." Sulking in a mood of transcendental loving anger, He wept due to his remembering Nimai Pandita, and he did not speak with anyone. Mahaprabhu embraced him, also weeping, and said, "Oh, Jagadananda, without you, I cannot remain in my room". Somehow Jagadananda Pandita was pacified, and then both returned to Mahaprabhu's residence.

[In Caitanya-caritamrta it is stated that Jagadananda Pandita gave some valuable oil to Govinda, to present to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and Govinda told the Lord, "It is his desire that Your Lordship apply a little of this oil on Your head so that blood pressure due to bile and air will be considerably diminished." The Lord replied, "A sannyasi has no use for oil, especially perfumed oil such as this. Take it out immediately." Then Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said to Jagadananda Pandita, "My dear Pandita, you have brought Me some oil from Bengal, but since I am in the renounced order, I cannot accept it. Deliver the oil to the temple of Jagannatha so that it may be burned in the lamps. Thus your labor in preparing the oil will be fruitful." Jagadananda Pandita replied, "Who tells You all these false stories? I never brought any oil from Bengal." After saying this,

Jagadananda Pandita took the jug of oil from the room and threw it down before Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu in the courtyard and broke it. After breaking the jug, Jagadananda Pandita returned to his residence, bolted the door and lay down. Three days later, Caitanya Mahaprabhu went to the door of his room and said, "My dear Jagadananda Pandita, please get up. I want you personally to cook My lunch today. I am going now to see the Lord in the temple. I shall return at noon. After Caitanya Mahaprabhu said this and left, Jagadananda got up from his bed, bathed, and began to cook varieties of vegetables.]

Jagadananda Pandita has written that whenever thoughts appear in his memory, he writes them down. He is not writing in serial or chronological order.

[Sripad Madhava Maharaja:] In other books there is sequence, but in this book it is not so.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Babaji Maharaja was totally absorbed in that mood, meditating on the reason for Jagadananda's anger and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pacifying him. And he was also weeping as he remembered the pastime. When he came to his external consciousness, Premadasa Babaji saw that sannyasi doing satstang pranama and called out, "Ha Caitanya, Ha Nityananda. Please be merciful to me. Sprinkle your mercy upon me. He was trinad api sunicena, more humble than a blade of grass, and he began to weep very loudly. The sannyasi then rose up and told him: 'I am so fallen. Why are you mocking me? I'm not of that quality.' And that sannyasi again fell down at the lotus feet of Babaji Maharaja.

Babaji Maharaja then gave him an asana on which to sit. He was niskincana, without material possessions, and was only able to offer an asana made of banana leaves. At that time, the asramas of sannyasis were like so.

Babaji Maharaja asked the sannyasi: "What service may I render to you?" Sannyasi Maharaja put down his kamandalu (water pot). He had no lota. He only had a water pot made of the dry skin of a gourd (loki). It was not made of gold or any other opulent material. He began to say, "For twelve years I studied sankhya, patanjala, vaisesika, purva-mimamsa and uttara mimamsa, all the Upanisads, and Vedanta written by Krsna Dvaipayana Vyasa Deva, in Kasi and other places. I was always absorbed in practicing their teachings. I also took sannyasa from Sacidananda Sarasvati in Kasi, Varanasi."

Sannyasi Thakura was a very learned person. He had read all the sastras, like Veda, Upanisads, Vedanta and Nyaya, and he had taken sannyasa from a high class of advaitavadi sannyasi. He continued, "I went to all the pilgrimage places in the Himalayas, South India, and elsewhere, and I associated with elevated mayavadi philosophers and sannyasis. There I passed the stages of kuticaka, bahudaka, and hamsa." The first stage of a sannyasi is kuticaka. In that stage the sannyasi makes a hut for bhajana and lives there. After that comes the stage of bahudaka. In this second stage of sannyasa, the devotee has no fixed place for performing bhajana, and he drinks water

from many different places. After this comes the stage of hamsa. What is the essence of hamsa?

[Sripad Madhava Maharaja:] A swan can separate milk from water and drink only the milk portion.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Similarly, this 'hamsa' sannyasi knows the difference between worldly things and paramarthika (transcendental or spiritual) things. He rejects all worldly things and has no worldly desires at all. Sannyasi Thakura continued, "Finally I entered the paramahamsa stage and I was totally absorbed in 'Aham brahmasmi,' 'Prajnanam brahma,' 'Sarvam kalvidam brahma,' 'Tattvam asi,' and 'I am brahma, brahma, brahma.' Practicing in that way, I used to think that I had realized Brahma. Yet, I was not satisfied."

Vyasadeva was not satisfied by writing many sastras like Mahabharata and Gita. He had divided all the Vedas in four, he wrote the Vedanta sastras, he wrote the Puranas, and he was master of them all, but still he was not satisfied. One day, Narada mercifully came and told him, "What have you done? You have not glorified the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, and that is why you are not satisfied. You should meditate in trance on Krsna's pastimes, and after that, you should write His glorification."

What is that glorification? Mother Yasoda is twisting the ears of that Paramabrahma. That Paramabrahma is playing with the cowherd boys, and cowherd boys are defeating Him in wrestling. They sometimes eat sweet preparations and then put that same prasadam in the mouth of that Supreme Lord. Sometimes that Supreme Lord prays to gopis, massages their feet, and tells them, 'I will be indebted to you for My whole life. I cannot repay you.' Have you written this?"

Vyasadeva answered, "Never. I don't know all these things."

Narada said, "So, what have you done? You have done nothing."

Vyasadeva asked, "How will I come to know all these things?"

Narada answered, "Oh, pray in trance. Surrender yourself. 'Sarva dharman parijyata / mam ekam saranam vraja.' The mantra that contains the word 'pracodayat' will help you. What is the meaning of pracodayat? Praca-udayat. 'Please come in my trance and reveal to me how glorious and sweet you are.' This is the proper prayer, and with prayers such as this, you should surrender." Srila Vyasadeva then totally surrendered and meditated in a trance of bhakti. Bhakti yogena manasi apasaya. Yasyavai suyamame. He saw the Parama-purusha, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Purnam-purusam, the complete feature of the Personality of Godhead. In what way did he see this? Radhika was there with Krsna and Her associates, the sakhis. Nanda Baba, Yasoda, all the sakhis, cowherd boys, and so many thousands and thousands of cows were there. Vrsabhanu Maharaja, Kirtika, and Sridhama were also there.

Srila Vyasadeva also saw in that Purnam-purusa, Narayana, Nrsingha Rama, Kalki and Vamana. He saw the entire universe and all the jivas there. Those jivas who had forgotten Krsna were being crushed in the chain of maya, birth and death, and those who had accepted a sad-guru, and were chanting and remembering Krsna, were gradually going towards him. Vyasadeva then wrote what he saw in his trance of meditation, and that writing was Srimad Bhagavatam. He then became satisfied.

He called his son, Sri Sukadeva Gosvami, and told him, "You should study." Sukadeva Gosvami then studied the entire Srimad Bhagavatam. Although he was atmarama, fully satisfied in his atma, still he studied.

Similarly, Sannyasi Thakura is saying, "I was a very learned person in Veda, Vedanta, and all other sastras, and I was practicing the utterance of 'aham brahmasmi;' but I was not happy. I tried with great difficulty to realize ananda with 'I am Brahma.' Brahma is anandamaya, Brahma is made of happiness, but I did not realize any happiness at all."

"Then, one day I saw in a sadhu Vaisnava in Varanasi and that Vaisnava was weeping bitterly and calling: 'Sri Krsna Caitanya prabhu Nityananda Sri Advaita Gadadhara Srivasadi Gaura bhakta Vrndha.' As that sadhu wept bitterly, he was trying to walk, but he could not. Tears were flowing from his eyes as he cried out. Be merciful to me. Fie on me. I am a wretched person. Although I saw him for only a moment, an ecstatic feeling came, but I cannot express its nature. My heart realized that his mood was so much greater than 'aham brahmasmi.' At that time I could not approach him to ask, 'Who are you and what are you doing?' I avoided him because I thought I was a paramahamsa, absorbed in 'I am Brahma. I am brahma! So fie on me.'

"After some time, I realized my false position and began searching, 'Where is that Vaisnava?' But I was not so fortunate to meet him. I considered that because he was a Vaisnava, he must be somewhere in Vrndavana. I left my position, my danda, my kamandalu, and everything else, and I was searching in the lanes of Vrndavana. When I saw any Vaisnava, he was also weeping bitterly, 'Ha Krsna, Ha Vrajendranandana Syamasundara.' Then I thought, 'Sri Krsna Caitanya Prabhu Nityananda. Oh, he may be in Navadvipa Dhama. I therefore wanted to visit that Navadvipa Dhama, to see why it is considered so glorious. By that curiosity, I came to this place and heard about your glories. So many Vaisnavas told me, 'Babaji Maharaja is so advanced. If you want to hear something about Sri Krsna Caitanya and Prabhu Nityananda, you should take shelter of Prema dasa Babaji Maharaja in Godruma.'" Saying this, Sannyasi Thakura began to weep and offer his satstang pranama. Babaji Maharaja then embraced him, also weeping, and cried out, "Oh Nityananda Prabhu." Now, in a moment, Sannyasi Thakura realized the transcendental happiness he could never realize before.

You can read so many books. You can have thousands and thousands of books, and with those books you can make a big library. But how you can make a library of these moods? How will your heart melt? This is a main subject. Try to follow Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. "Rupa raghunatha pade mora asa / caitanya-caritamrta kahe krsna dasa."

[Sripad Asrama Maharaja:] For the whole tour, gurudeva, please give classes on Jaiva Dharma.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I cannot speak further. Try to digest this much and follow. Try to give up your false ego entirely: your kama, krodha, lobha, mada, matsarya, and worldly attachments. Call out, "Vrajendranandana! Where is Vrajendra nandana? Where is Caitanya Mahaprabhu? Where is Rupa? Ha Rupa! Ha Sanatana!" We should try to advance in this way. This is the essence of Jaiva Dharma.

Try to be like Sannyasi Maharaja. Follow that sannyasi of Kasi, Varanasi. Give up all your learning and worldly sense gratification, and be like him. Gradually we will discuss this further.

Gaura premanande hari hari bol.