

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

## **Some Secrets in Bhakti (Raya Ramananda Samvad)**

Part One of a Lecture Given in Los Angeles, California: May 13, 2001 (evening)

Gauranga bolite habe pulaka sarira. When will that day come that we will realize the mercy of Gauracandra? When, while chanting His names, Gauranga and Sacinandana, will our hearts be at once melted and our hairs stand on end? These are sattvika-bhavas. We are calling out His names but these symptoms of sattvika-bhava are not coming. Why not? We are not actually realizing who is Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He is directly Radha-Krsna Conjugal. Krsna has come, having taken the golden beauty and intrinsic mood of Radhika, and He has become Gaura Sacinandana, Gaurahari. He tasted all the moods of Radha in the Gambhira, and we have been discussing all these topics in Raya Ramananda Samvad.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu mercifully displayed His most confidential form of Rasaraja-Mahabhava to Raya Ramananda. Rasaraja is Krsna and Mahabhava is Radhika. In that form, every limb of Krsna is covered by every limb of Srimati Radhika. No one had ever seen this form, and Raya Ramananda, being Visakha-sakhi, fainted when he saw it. When anyone realizes this form, then, when he sings, "Gauranga bolite habe pulaka sarira, hari hari bolite nayane ba'be nira", his hairs will stand on end and his eyes will fill with tears.

This is only possible, however, by the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu. If anyone wants to know who is Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he must come to Nityananda Prabhu who is 'adhara-bhumi', the platform on which Mahaprabhu manifests. Nityananda Raya is akrodha-paramananda. Akrodha means He never becomes angry. Even when Jagai and Madhai cut His head, Nityananda Prabhu thought, "Oh, I want to give them krsna-prema." He gave them this prema, He did so many other acts that were even greater than this, and He was like this throughout His life. Thus, without the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu, you cannot realize who is Caitanya Mahaprabhu. You cannot know Him by studying history books.

You can have an abhasa, a vague idea about Him, from Sri Caitanya Caritamrta, but by chanting and remembering and by following in the footsteps of Sri Rupa Gosvami and Sri Raghunatha Gosvami, you will understand something more.

Rupa raghunatha-pada hoibe akuti kabe hama bujhabo se yugala-piriti. What is yugala piriti? It is conjugal love. Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to give that kind of love, but if you only try to understand externally, you will not know about His life in full. External understanding is like a soul-less body. If you really want to know Him, you should know what was His mission and what was the nature of His love and affection for all. He only came to distribute raganuga-varnana, the path of raganuga-bhakti, to teach us how we can achieve that love and affection of Vraja and especially gopi-prema. Without the mercy of Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, you cannot know this. Rupa raghunatha-pade rahu mora asa, prarthana koroye sada narottama dasa. Srila Narottama dasa is praying to all acaryas and associates of Mahaprabhu, from top to bottom, "They should kindly be merciful so that I can realize the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu."

Now come with me to Raya Ramananda on the banks of the Godavari in South India, where some discussions were going on. Mahaprabhu was asking questions and Raya Ramananda was replying. Krsna is endless, and therefore Mahaprabhu is also an endless ocean of love and affection.

Even Krsna Himself cannot know how deep is the love and affection in Srimati Radhika and the gopis. He has a scale to measure it, but the love and affection for Krsna in Srimati Radhika and the gopis is so deep that His scale becomes a failure.

If anyone tries to know Caitanya Mahaprabhu by his intelligence, he will not be able to do so. Only by the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself can you know something. If Krsna Himself cannot measure it, how can you? You can know some external things such as how He preached, how He controlled even mad elephants, and how He gave prema to trees and creepers. You can outwardly see this, but how did He actually do it? Without the mercy of Nityananda Prabhu, and without the mercy of the gopis and especially Radhika, you cannot know these truths. I am therefore explaining something of these topics to you.

Mahaprabhu told Ramananda Raya that varnasrama dharma cannot help you ultimately. Eho bhaya; it is external. He said that offering your fruitive karmas will also not do, and He even rejected sarva dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja as external. Raya Ramananda then proposed jnana-misra bhakti:

brahma-bhutam prasannatma na socati na kancati  
samah sarvesu bhutesu mad-bhaktim labhate param

Mahaprabhu rejected this as well, although these are the highest teachings in the Gita. Mahaprabhu rejected all the philosophies of the Gita as being the ultimate goal of life.

Ramananda Raya then came to jnana-sunya bhakti:

jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam  
sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir  
ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam  
(Madhya 8.67)

What is the meaning of this sloka? There are two kinds of jnana, knowledge. The first states that we are brahma: "Sarvam khalv idam brahma", "Aham brahmasmi", "So ham", and so on. What is this? It is nonsense. Krsna can say, "So'ham", "I am that brahma", but no jiva can ever say it. We are brahma-jatiya, but not brahma. We are all eternal parts and parcels of that brahma. We are not full brahma. Those who speak in this false way are called brahma-jnanis.

Those who possess the second kind of jnana are called jnani-bhaktas, and they are personalities like Prahlada Maharaja, Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana, Bhisma Pitamaha, and Sukadeva Gosvami in the first part of his life.

Two terms are used here: jnani and jnani-bhakta. Jnanis are offenders at the lotus feet of Krsna. They don't accept His form, qualities, or potencies, and therefore they are offenders. On the other hand, jnani-bhaktas are accepted as devotees. Jnani-bhaktas are very good. They are always thinking, "The supreme Lord Krsna can create millions upon millions of universes in a moment, and He can also destroy them. He is therefore Lord of Lords. He has so much opulence and so many attributes." Jnani-bhaktas think, "I should serve my Lord so I can achieve something from Him. He is self-satisfied, He is full, He has no thirst, no appetite, and no fatigue; so how can I serve Him?" They only pray, as Prahlada prayed. He could not serve his Lord.

For this reason we don't fully follow these jnani-bhaktas. The pure bhakta forgets that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and we want to follow them.

To make a platform, first we should know that Krsna is the supreme Godhead, and we are parts and parcels of that Krsna. We are His eternal servants. However, if you want Vraja-prema, then you will also have to forget this. You will only need to know that He is Yasoda-nandana and Nanda-nandana, that He is the friend of Sudama and Subala, that He is the beloved of all the gopis, and that He especially serves the gopis. He cannot repay these gopis, He wants to take the dust of the gopis' lotus feet, and He wants to serve them. At that time He becomes Radha-Kanta, Madana Mohana, Syamasundara, and Radha-Ramana.

No one in Vraja-mandala will accept Krsna as Parabrahma, and even Krsna forgets this. He can take the prasadam remnants of Nanda Baba, He can carry the sandals of Nanda Baba on His head and, dancing and calling out, "Tey, tey", He will very happily come to Nanda Baba. As a baby, He cannot turn over on His side. He can create so many universes, but in Vraja He has no power to change sides and therefore Yasoda will come and quickly turn Him over. He cannot eat anything by Himself; rather Mother Yasoda and Nanda Baba will support and nourish Him. Sometimes He will be defeated by Sridama. He can kill Kamsa, Jarasandha, and all other demons, but when He comes to Sridama and fights with him, Sridama can defeat Him in a moment. And, when He is defeated, He will be very happy. He will even be defeated by the gopis. He wanted to wrestle with the gopis, and at once, in a moment, the gopis defeated him and He became so very happy.

In this way there is so much difference between jnani-bhaktas who worship Krsna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and these classes of Vraja-bhaktas. In this sloka, jnane prayasam udapasya, that jnana is offensive which says that Krsna is nirguna, avyakta, anadi, and alesa, that He has no shape, no attributes, no power, and no qualities. Krsna does have shape, beauty, all qualities and all kinds of opulence, but we can never realize this with our mundane eyes.

Srila Jiva Gosvami has written a commentary on this sloka. In that commentary he says that if you want to serve Krsna and you want to please Him the most, like the gopis of Vraja, then try to do pranama from far away to this jnana that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You will have to forget it. If you do not forget it, you cannot love Krsna very much. You will have to forget it.

First we must understand that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, just as Srila Swami Maharaja explained in His Gita and all other books. However, he also wanted to tell this fact: "Try to forget it".

Krsna was controlled by the gopis, Mother Yasoda, Nanda Baba and Sridama Sakha, but especially by the gopis. He accepted this truth and told them: Na paraye 'ham niravadya-samyujam (S.B. 10.32.22). "I cannot repay all you gopis. You have left everything for Me. You have left your husbands, fathers, mothers, fathers-in-law and everything else, and you have been one-pointed to Me. I cannot give up My father, My mother, or any gopi. I cannot be one-pointed like you. If I am one-pointed to any single gopi, like Radhika, then I will be indebted to all others because you are all one-pointed. I cannot even forget a neophyte devotee who is chanting Hare Krsna. I cannot neglect anyone. I will have to reciprocate with everyone: Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham (BG. 4.11)". What is the meaning?

[Devotee:] Everyone, as they surrender to Me, I reward them accordingly.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] He's bound to do so, and therefore He cannot be one-pointed like the gopis. Always remember this. It is therefore said here that if you want to have a high-class love and affection like the Vrajabasis, you'll have to forget that Krsna is Bhagavan.

How can you forget? Without the mercy of the gopis you cannot be like them, and you especially need the causeless mercy of Sri Nityananda Prabhu, Sri Svarupa Damodara, Sri Rupa Gosvami, Sri Sanatana Gosvami, Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, and Sri Raya Ramananda. Without their mercy you cannot know Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Raya Ramananda therefore proposed:

jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam

Have a special kind of greed to hear the pastimes of Krsna, and hear with the eagerness of Pariksit Maharaja who heard for only seven days. He had no time to follow the other processes; he only heard. What became of him? He went to Goloka Vrndavana, with the mood of the gopis whom he followed. In his Sri Brhat Bhagavatamrtam Srila Sanatana Gosvami relates in brief the essence of all that Pariksit Maharaja heard from Sukadeva Gosvami and then told his mother.

Pariksit Maharaja told her, "Although Krsna is like your grandfather or grandfather-in-law, you should not see Him in this way. See Him as your most beloved." Generally a son cannot speak to his mother like this. Kunti also has this mood, as does Draupadi, but they never disclosed it, otherwise foolish, ignorant persons would have laughed. Pariksit Maharaja is telling his mother, "Mother, don't think that He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead or your grandfather or grandfather-in-law. Always think of Him as your most beloved, the preyasi of the gopis." Srila Sanatana Gosvami has revealed this.

You should hear all these sweet and powerful pastimes of Krsna. They are like Krsna. If you are very attached to hearing hari-katha with love and affection, then Krsna Himself, in the form of this hari-katha, will enter your hearts and purify everything. These kathas will show you all the pastimes of Krsna in your hearts. They will manifest there.

Therefore, do pranama to the place where hari-katha is going on. Do pranama to those who are hearing, to the person who is speaking, and to the one who has managed things so that the hari-katha can take place. Try to do pranama to all of them and serve them, and then hari-katha will come into your heart.

Mahaprabhu then began to smile a little and said, "Oh, go on, go on." This is the platform of bhakti. What kind of bhakti? Raganuga bhakti. This is the essence of all bhakti.

prabhu kahe, "eho haya, age kaha ara"  
raya kahe, "prema-bhakti sarva-sadhya-sara"

[Sripad Aranya Maharaja reads the Bhaktivedanta purport:] "At this point Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, 'This is alright, but still you can speak more on the subject.' Ramananda Raya replied, 'Prema-bhakti, ecstatic love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the essence of all perfection.'"

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] They have given evidence from Padyavali, which was written by Srila Rupa Gosvampada:

nanopacara-kṛta-pujanam arta-bandhoh

premaiva bhakta-hrdayam sukha-vidrutam syat  
 yavat ksud asti jathare jaratha pipasa  
 tavat sukhaya bhavato nanu bhaksya-peye

[Sripad Aranya Maharaja reads the translation:] "Ramananda Raya continued, 'As long as there is hunger and thirst, eating and drinking make one feel very happy. Similarly, when the Lord is worshiped with pure love, transcendental bliss is awakened within the heart of the devotee.'"

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] If there is no love and affection, and you are worshiping Krsna with sixteen different types of paraphernalia, Krsna will not accept your worship. And if you have no paraphernalia to offer and give only one drop of water or only a leaf of tulasi with so much love and affection, He will be satisfied. Even if you do not offer any water or tulasi but you tell Him, "O Krsna, I am Yours and You are mine", this will suffice. We should therefore try to follow all these things.

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