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THE INNER MEANINGS OF VARIOUS BHAJANAS  
(A lecture given on Janmastami Morning)  
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[The following is a translation of the Hindi class given by Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja on the morning of Sri Krsna Janmastami. In this class, the deep rasika meanings of various bhajanas were explained, and the translation was kindly given by Uttama dasa brahmacari:]

After Srila Maharaja led the devotees in singing Sri Nandanandan-astakam, he explained that this song is the vandana (prayers of glorification) of Krsna. Hearing this song pleases Him, but He is most pleased when the devotee worships and glorifies those who are most dear to Him. If one does vandana of pastimes such as those found in Sri Ujjvala Nilamani and other Gosvami granthas (scriptures) wherein Krsna bows His head at the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani, Krsna will be most pleased. Srila Maharaja said that if we really want to please Krsna, we should sing Radha-Krpa-Kataksa-Stava-Raja, which is the glorification of Srimati Radharani. Therefore this song, Nanda-nandanastakam, which indicates the glorification of Krsna, gives pleasure to Sri Radha.

Srila Maharaja then led the devotees in singing Srimati Radharani's astakam, Sri Radha-Krpa-Kataksa-Stava-Raja, after which he explained that the verses in this bhajana are just like mantras (mantra does not mean "prayer"; it is the actual presence of the mantra's istadevi or worshipable deity) and in fact every word in each verse is also a mantra. This bhajana is just like a desire tree; it can fulfill all of our desires. Also, every verse of Srimad Bhagavatam is a mantra, and one can attain siddhi (perfection) from each of them. These verses can fulfill even the topmost desire, but unfortunately we have no faith in this. We are chanting the maha-mantra and we have no faith in it; but this and all other mantras are truly kalpa-vrksa, desire trees. Every sloka of Srimad-Bhagavatam is like kama-denu (the cows of Goloka Vrndavana, who can fulfill all of one's desires). Not only one kama-denu – each sloka can be compared to millions of kama-denus.

Ananga-ranga-mangala-prasanga-bhangura-bhruvam...[In the immensely auspicious drama enacted with loving playfulness (prema-vilas) on the amorous battlefield, your eyebrows curving like bows suddenly unleash the arrows of your sidelong glances, piercing Nanda-nandana with amorous delusion and bringing Him under reverential submission...]. In this verse, every word is a mantra which describes the moods of Srimati Radharani, and especially Her topmost moods of madanakya-mahabhava. These moods can be understood only by the mercy of Guru and Vaisnavas, and also by those who have previous samskaras (impressions on the heart made by devotional activities of this and previous lives).

Asesa-hava-bhava-dhira-hira-hara-bhusite [You are adorned with all Your various deep emotions (anuraga, dhiradhira, kilakincita, etc.) for Krsna, which shine on Your person like a diamond necklace]. Hava is explained in Srila Rupa Gosvami's Sri Ujjvala Nilamani. They are gestures of Radharani such as Her sidelong glances towards Krsna,

and also the tilting of Her head. When She acts in these ways, Krsna becomes completely powerless and begins trembling. Bhava means ecstasies or moods, or a combination of varieties of moods like kilakincita bhava, and these are also elaborately explained in Sri Ujjvala Nilamani. If one is qualified he can read Sri Ujjvala Nilamani, but he must do so under the guidance of exalted Vaisnavas. In that way, by the mercy of Guru, he can realize all those moods.

These verses can give you the highest perfection. These mantras and guru are so powerful that by their mercy they can manifest all transcendental moods and deep meanings in your heart. Unfortunately, however, we have no faith in guru or the power of the mantras.

Nitamba-bimba-lambamana-puspa-mekhala-gune [Your rounded hips are decorated with dangling flowers and tiny tinkling jeweled-bells hang from the flower belt on your charmingly slender waist]. No one can explain the meaning because it is unfathomable, and even Srila Rupa Gosvami cannot speak about these hidden truths. In his realized state he could only write down his realizations in his books. Later, when Srila Visvanatha Cakravartipada read them, he began laughing and feeling shyness in his heart. Thus, he was qualified to give a tika (commentary) on the verses of Srila Rupa Gosvami.

We are really very unfortunate: we have the opportunity for this type of wealth, but still we try to collect the wealth of this material world. The bhavas of Srimati Radharani are the most valuable wealth in this world. Anyone who has once tasted this wealth can reject all material wealth. Unfortunately, however, we are still searching for insignificant material wealth.

Srila Maharaja then led the devotees in singing Krsna Deva! Bhavantam Vande, and then explained that if you want to please Srimati Radharani, you will have to sing Krsna Deva! Bhavantam Vande; this song especially gives Her pleasure. And, if you want to please Yugala Kisor, both Radharani and Krsna, you must sing Sri Gaura-gita. This song, which reveals the moods of Srimati Radharani and also of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, gives great pleasure to Yugala Kisor.

The author of this song, Sri Radha-mohana dasa, is a highly qualified Vaisnava in our sampradaya. In the last line of his bhajana he sings, paramakincana-kincana-nara-gana-karuna-vitarana-silam [I hanker to relish the unparalleled pastimes of the greatly munificent Sri Gaurasundara, who distributes mercy in the form of nama prema to the supremely fortunate niskincana souls (those whose only possession is love of Krsna)]. He considers himself to be very akincana (fallen and worthless). Although he is very great, still he says, "I am akincana." Ksobhita-durmati-radha-mohana-namaka-nirupam-lilam [the fallen and foolish Radha-Mohana sings in a mood of great distress]. Duramati – here he says, "I am duramati. I am a very low-minded person."

Ksobhita means one whose heart is disturbed. Why is the author's heart now disturbed? Nidhuvana nagari mohita-manasa-vikathita-gadgada-bhasam [The heart of Krsna, in the form of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, is thoroughly immersed in Srimati Radhika's unnatojjvala prema. That Caitanya Mahaprabhu now lovingly extols Sri Krsna in a

choked voice]. Nidhuvana is one of the topmost vanas (forests) in Vrndavana, where Yugala Kisorā enjoy Their sweet pastimes. Srimati Radharani is the nagari (heroine) of this Nidhuvana. Here, Kṛṣṇacandra serves Srimati Radharani from the beginning to the end of night, and still He cannot serve Her completely. By remembering this type of pastime, Radha-mohana dasa's heart is agitated. This pastime of Nidhuvana is the crown jewel of all pastimes (lila-mukut-mani).

Srila Maharaja then spoke from Brahma-saṁhita. He began by saying that Brahmaji, the adi-guru of our sampradaya, realized his offense to the lotus feet of Govinda after stealing His sakhas and their calves. He therefore performed atonement and offered stutis, prayers, unto Govinda's lotus feet.

Since the time of Srila Rupa Gosvami, no one in our sampradaya offers prayers of formal worship to Govinda. Bhajami means to do bhajana, but in our sampradaya bhajana means something more than that which is described in Brahma-saṁhita. The acaryas in our Gaudiya Sampradaya worship Govinda in this mood: He is always using sweet words to flatter Srimati Radharani. Govinda is not the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Rather, His qualification is that He is always following Srimati Radharani's orders. Whatever She wants Him to do, He must follow. This is Govinda.

Srila Maharaja then quoted verses from Brahma-saṁhita, such as:

yad-bhava-bhavita-dhiyo manujas tathaiva  
samprapya rupa-mahimasana-yana-bhusah  
suktair yam eva nigama-prathitaih stuvanti  
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami

["I adore the same Govinda, the primeval Lord, in whose praise men who are imbued with devotion sing the mantra-suktas told by the Vedas, by gaining their appropriate beauty, greatness, thrones, conveyances and ornaments." (BBT} Brahma-saṁhita 5.36)]

Yad bhava bhavita dhiyo. . . I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of Govinda, the hearts of whose devotees are overwhelmed by various kinds of bhavas towards Him. Someone may have sakhya-bhava, someone vatsalya, and someone else may have madhurya-bhava. All the acaryas in our sampradaya have the mood that, "I am the maidservant of Srimati Radharani," and it is from the vantage-point of this mood that we look at Govinda.

Mahimasana generally means asana (sitting place), but here asana means Vraja-bhumi. Vraja-bhumi is the only sitting place of Govinda; and greater than Vraja is Radha-kunda, which is the highest sitting place of the Divine Couple. Still greater is Srimati Radharani's bhava, which is the only asana for Kṛṣṇacandra, Govinda. Kṛṣṇa always desires to be situated in Radharani's bhava. Those who are overwhelmed by the moods of our sampradaya, thus performing this type of bhajana to Govinda, can attain the highest perfection very quickly.

Srila Maharaja then spoke about bhava. He said that there are eleven types of bhava revealed by the guru when the disciple is entering bhava-bhakti. [1) sambandha (relationship), 2) vayasa (age), 3) nama (name), 4) rupa (personal form and beauty), 5) yutha (group), 6) vesa (dress), 7) ajna (specific instruction), 8) vasa (residence), 9) seva (exclusive service); 10) parakasta-svasa (the highest summit of emotion, which is the aspirant's very life breath, and 11) palya-dasi-bhava (the sentiment of a maidservant under the protection of Sri Radha).]

There are also five dasas (stages of advancement approaching the stage of perfection). This is explained in Jaiva Dharma, and those who really desire to do bhajana will attain these eleven types of moods and five dasas.

yam krodha-kama-sahaja-pranayadi-bhuti-  
vatsalya-moha-guru-gaurava-sevya-bhavaih  
sancintya tasya sadrsim tanum apur ete  
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami

["I adore the primeval Lord Govinda, the meditators of whom, by meditating upon Him under the sway of wrath, amorous passion, natural friendly love, fear, parental affection, delusion, reverence and willing service, attain to bodily forms befitting the nature of their contemplation." ({BBT} Brahma-samita 5.55)]

Here Brahmaji is giving us encouragement. Whoever serves Govinda and adheres to any of these types of moods in relation to Krsna, such as krodha (anger), kama (desire for sense gratification), sahaja pranaya (natural friendly love), and so forth, will one day attain perfection. Different people have different types of relationships with Krsna, and through this relation they attain Him. Brahma says in this verse that one who comes to Krsna must one day attain perfection; there is no doubt about it. The type of sraddha one has in his heart determines what type of perfection he ultimately attains.

Gaura premanande.

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