

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

But Here's the Question

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First of all, I offer my heartfelt obeisances unto the lotus feet of my Gurudeva, Sri Srimad Bhaktiprajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and the same unto the lotus feet of my siksa-guru, om visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja.

Perhaps you know why I have come from Vrndavana, a place very far away from this country of Russia. When I reached the airport in Moscow, the custom officials dealt very badly with us. At that time, I promised I would never again come to Russia. But now I am seeing more than six-hundred devotees here, receiving and welcoming me; so I have forgotten what happened in the airport.

You know why I have come here:

sri-caitanya mano bhistam sthapitam yena bhutale
svayam rupah kada mahyam dadati sva-padantikam

[“When will Sri Rupa Gosvami give me the shelter of his lotus feet? Because he understood the innermost desire of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he was able to establish His mission in this world and is very dear to the Lord.” (Sri Prema-bhakti-candrika, Narottama dasa Thakura)

Srila Rupa Gosvami knew the mood of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Mahaprabhu inspired in his heart what He wanted to taste and give – why He descended from Goloka-Vrndavana to this world. It was in Prayaga that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu inspired His aim and object in the heart of Srila Rupa Gosvami. Then in Puri, He requested Sri Nityananda Prabhu, Sri Svarupa Damodara, Sri Raya Ramananda and all His personal associates to bestow their mercy upon Srila Rupa Gosvami, so that he could establish in this world the Lord's inner-most desire. By Caitanya Mahaprabhu's inspiration and by His mercy, Srila Rupa Gosvami wrote Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu, Ujjvala-nilamani, Lalita-Madhava, Vidagdha-Madhava and so many other books.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is not only Caitanya Mahaprabhu, but Sri Krsna Himself – having taken the beauty and internal moods of Srimati Radhika. Whatever He could not give in Krsna's pastimes, He gave as Sacinandana Gaurahari.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu descended to this world from Goloka-Vrndavana, Goloka-Svetadvipa. His motive was to give krsna-prema.

anarpita-carim cirat karunaya vatirnah kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam sva-bhakti-sriyam
harih purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandipitah
sada hrdaya-kandare sphuratu vah saci-nandanah

[“May the Supreme Lord who is known as the son of Srimati Saci-devi be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the Age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation has ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 1.4)]

Lord Krsna had three internal reasons for descending. He wanted to understand and relish the love of Srimati Radhika. Also, although He is so beautiful and sweet, He could not relish Himself to the extent She could:

sri-radhayah pranaya-mahima kidrso vanayaiva-
svadyo yenadbhuta-madhurima kidrso va madiyah
saukhyam casya mad-anubhavatah kidrsam veti lobhat
tad-bhavadhyah samajani saci-garbha-sindhau harinduh

[“Desiring to understand the glory of Radharani’s love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She realizes the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appeared from the womb of Srimati Saci-devi, as the moon appeared from the ocean.” (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 1.6)]

He wanted to know and to relish all the moods of Srimati Radhika. “Sri radhaya pranaya-mahima...” He wanted to know the glory of Her love, what it is in Him that makes Her maddened, and the nature of the pleasure She experiences by remembering Him. The mood He thus relished is called unnatojjvala-parakiya-bhava.

He wanted to give His mercy: “karunayavatirnah kalau samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam sva-bhakti-sriyam”. Sva-bhakti-sriyam means manjari-bhava. He did so, but since He wanted to give this one gift, why did Srila Rupa Gosvami write so many books, like Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu and Upadesamrta? Why did he not write only about the topics of manjari-bhava – for the entire world and all devotees? This is the question.

There is a second question as well: why could Srila Rupa Gosvami not have written only one book, saying, “You are all manjaris.”? Are all in one stage of bhakti, or in different stages? There are millions of stages of devotees, and one manjari-bhava. This manjari-bhava is certainly our highest aim and object, but Srila Rupa Gosvami has written in his Bhakti-rasamrta sindhu:

sravanokirtanadini vaidha bhakty uditani tu
yany angani ca tanyatra vijneyani manisibhih

[“The angas of bhakti such as sravana, kirtana, sri guru-padasraya, and others, which have already been described in regard to vaidhi-bhakti, are also useful and necessary in raganuga-

bhakti. But judicious sadhakas will adopt only those angas which nourish their specific bhava, avoiding those which hamper it.”]

[Sripad Aranya Maharaja:] Those persons who have realization of Sri Krsna are very thoughtful and philosophical. They have concluded that for those persons who desire to follow raganuga-bhakti or the path of spontaneous devotion, it is appropriate to follow all the angas of vaidhi-bhakti beginning with hearing, chanting and remembering. All the practitioners of raganuga-bhakti are bound to follow the regulations and limbs of bhakti that are included in vaidhi-bhakti, with the exception of a few items. They will not practice mudras, they will not do pranayama, and they will not meditate on the pastimes of Rukmini and Satyabhama with Krsna in Dvaraka; because these are contrary to the development of their internal mood.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Srila Rupa Gosvami has written in Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.2.295):

seva sadhaka-rupena
siddha-rupena catra hi
tad bhava-lipsuna karya
vraja-lokanusaratah

[“The advanced devotee, who is inclined to spontaneous loving service, should follow the activities of a particular associate of Krsna in Vrndavana. He should execute service externally as a regulative devotee as well as internally from his self-realized position. Thus he should perform devotional service both externally and internally.”]

He will have to follow the rupanuga Vaisnavas, in their sadhaka-rupena forms as devotional practitioners and in their siddha-rupena, fully perfect forms as associates of Sri Sri Radha and Krsna. We should follow the teachings of Srila Rupa Gosvami regarding the limbs of bhakti – the rules and regulations. On one hand rupanuga-bhakti doesn't manifest from reading sastra or by following rules and regulations; but you must know that in order to have a greed for rupanuga-bhakti, it is necessary to follow and observe the injunctions of sastra. You will have to obey sastra, otherwise you will simply create disturbance.

sruti-smrti-puranadi-
pancaratra-vidhim vina
aikantiki harer bhaktir
utpatayaiva kalpate

"Devotional service of the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures like the Upanisads, Puranas and Narada-pancaratra is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society."

You should know the meaning of “seva sadhaka-rupena siddha-rupena catra hi.” The raganuga or rupanuga bhakta will follow the rules and regulations of bhakti as Srila

Raghunatha dasa Gosvami did externally, and internally he will follow the mood of Rati Manjari (Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami's form in Radha-Krsna-lila, as a maidservant of Srimati Radhika.) Those who have no greed, that is, who are not at the stage of bhava-bhakti, will not be able to follow him.

Follow all the instructions written in Upadesamrta. If you “boycott” Upadesamrta, your bhakti will be only illusory, and it will cheat you. Try to follow Srila Rupa Gosvami, who is akanda-guru-tattva, the complete undivided principle of guru.

We must know that not everyone is in the same stage of bhakti. Everyone is in different stages. If one is neophyte and does not have sraddha, can you tell him, “You are a manjari and you should book your ticket for only manjari mood.”? I want to tell you all that this is a wrong idea. We should try to actually understand, and then follow, the real meaning of rupanuga. There are some symptoms of one who has greed for this:

ksantir avyarthakalatvam
viraktir manasunyata
asabandhasamutkantha
namaganesadarucih
asaktistadgunakhyane
pritis tadvasatisthale
ityadayo nubhavaḥ syur
jatabhavankure jane

[“When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Krsna fructifies, the following nine symptoms manifest in one’s behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to hear the descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides—that is, a temple or a holy place like Vrndavana. These are all called anubhava, subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify.” (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.3.25–26)]

Nityananda prabhu used to preach everywhere. When he preached in the assembly of Jagai and Madai, they beat him and blood flowed from his head; but still he gave them krsna-prema. He preached throughout Bengal. What was he preaching? Did he preach, “Oh, you are a manjari?” No, he never did so.

Nityananda Prabhu is akanda-guru-tattva. Does he have the mood of a manjari or not? Yes, he is Ananga Manjari. One may think, “He does not have a manjari mood and he did not preach it – so he is not guru. I will not obey him. I will only obey Srila Rupa Gosvami.” A person who thinks in this way is a bogus person, an offender in the lotus feet of the entire guru-parampara. We must obey the guru-parampara. Those who are pure preachers of Krsna’s holy name know the mood of the manjaris, but not all are qualified to hear about it from them.

Be very careful about this. Do not commit offenses at the lotus feet of Vaisnavas. If anyone says, “There is a difference of opinion between Srila Gurudeva and Aranya Maharaja (or any other disciple), so I will follow Aranya Maharaja and not Gurudeva”, what is this? This is called guru-avajna (defying the authority of guru, considering the spiritual master to be material and therefore envying his exalted position). It is only because of Gurudeva that any Maharaja knows who Srila Rupa Gosvami is and what is the mood of a manjari. If you have this bogus idea, you should correct your feelings – otherwise all your "moods" will vanish.

We should all be careful. I have told this to all of you, because nowadays a wind is blowing in this direction: “We will follow manjari mood only; nothing else.” Don’t think like that. If a real transcendental greed enters your heart to serve Sri Radha and Krsna Conjugal, all the following symptoms will manifest:

ksantir avyarthakalatvam
viraktir mana-sunyata
asa-bandhah samutkantha
nama-gane sada-rucih
asaktis tad-gunakhyane
pritis tad vasati-sthale
ity adayo nubhavah syur
jata-bhavankure jane

[“When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Krsna fructifies, the following nine symptoms manifest in one’s behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to hear the descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides—that is, a temple or a holy place like Vrndavana. These are all called anubhava, subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify.” (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.3.25–26)]

aradhyo bhagavan brajesa-tanayas-tad-dhama vrndavana
ramya kacid-upasana vraja-vadhu-vargena ya kalpita
srimad-bhagavatam pramanam-amalam prema pumartho mahan
sri caitanya mahaprabhu-matam-idam tatradaro nah parah

[“The Supreme Lord Vrajendra-nandana Sri Krsna is my worshipable Deity, and His transcendental abode, Sri Vrndavana-dhama, is equally worshipable. The most excellent method of worshipping Krsna is that adopted by the gopa-ramanis, the young wives of Vraja. Srimad-bhagavatam is the flawless and most authoritative evidence of this. This krsna-prema is the fifth and highest achievement of human life – beyond dharma, artha, kama, and moksa. This is the opinion of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We have supreme regard for His conclusion, and we have no inclination or respect for any other, cheating opinions.”]

Srimad-bhagavatam is the spotless evidence regarding Lord Krsna's transcendental pastimes. But in Srimad-bhagavatam, is the manjari mood directly written about anywhere? It is not, although it is indirectly indicated in so many places. There is even no direct mention of the name "Srimati Radhika", "Lalita" or "Visakha." Why is this so? Did Srila Vyasadeva or Srila Sukadeva Gosvami not know their names? On the contrary, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami would become faint when uttering Radha's name.

Since Srimad-bhagavatam has not openly declared manjari-mood, we also should not. We are not greater than Sri Vyasadeva, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, Srila Rupa Gosvami or Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We should keep that mood in our heart, as a wife who has a paramour does not give her husband any such indication. In India it is done like this, but not in the West. Westerners can have more than one husband at a time – no harm – but in India, to declare another beloved would create a very big problem.

I request that if you feel you have greed for the mood of a manjari, keep it in your heart so that nobody can have any scent of it. Otherwise, in a day or two, offenses will come. Keep it inside, like camphor. If camphor burns at an open doorway it evaporates, whereas if it is kept hidden behind closed doors, it will increase in fragrance. It is very good if one has actual greed. I appreciate this, and my heartfelt blessings to you if you have this. But if you consider that you have it, keep it in your heart and don't disturb others, otherwise they will collect so many lady friends and engage in so-called parakiya mood (illicit and immoral connection with the opposite sex).

My request is: do not be mad to be a manjari. Try to follow Sri Upadesamrta first, and then the other writings of Srila Rupa Gosvami. You can then gradually go to the top of the bhakti tree. Don't try to jump at once to the top of the tree. Otherwise, you may fall down, break your arms and legs, and crack your head. Be careful.

In the evening classes, we will begin our discussion from anyabilasita sunyam (the verse explaining the definition of pure bhakti), Srimad-bhagavatam, and then we will come to the sweet pastimes of Krsna.

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