

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

Our Family Goal

Govardhana, India; November 25, 2004

[On November 25, one of the ISKCON leaders, Pujyapada Svarupa Damodara Maharaja, came to Govardhana to visit Srila Narayana Maharaja. After that meeting he attended bhajanas and Srila Maharaja's class, and Srila Maharaja requested him to speak.

Sripad Svarupa Damodara Maharaja then enthused the audience of over 600 international pilgrims, by sharing with them Srila Prabhupada's order to him that he preach to the scientists and convince them about the existence of the soul, and God as the Supreme Soul. He related his recent experiences in that preaching work, in a special conference in Italy, and told of its successes.]

[Srila Narayana Maharaja] I think always, and I also tell my devotees, that we are in only one family – the family of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Sri Nityananda Prabhu. We should always be together and preach their mission throughout the world. If we are united again, we can preach throughout the world – as in the time of Srila Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja.

Sripad Svarupa Damodara Maharaja is very qualified. He is not sectarian: He does not think, "They are Gaudiya Matha and we are ISKCON." From the beginning I saw him in this way. He always wanted that we preach together – for the same purpose – for the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu.

I am requesting him to give some instructions to the devotees, so that they can develop in Krsna consciousness.

[Sripad Svarupa Damodara Maharaja (after sharing with his attentive audience some examples of scientific-logical arguments used by him to convince the scientists, he concluded with these words):] It is difficult to preach to scientists without proving God's existence in scientific language. Many brilliant scientists today are becoming interested in this angle. We have our god-brother Jnanadasa, who is now Bhaktivedanta Nemi Maharaja sitting in the audience. Maybe we can join together again.

I was remembering Srila Narayana Maharaja today. In Vrndavana, at our Krsna-Balarama temple, our Disappearance Day of Srila Prabhupada festival remains incomplete without Him. Now the time is right that we should do something. In the family there are sometimes misunderstandings, but now the time has come to do something so that our mission will go on as before.

I came to know about Srila Maharaja several years ago, when he was giving us guidelines. Especially when our Srila Prabhupada departed, he took care of us in such a wonderful and very loving manner – something we can never forget.

At the exact time Srila Prabhupada was passing away, Srila Maharaja was not there. He was in Mathura. There were a few of us and we didn't know what to do. Prabhupada had passed away and we did not know how to do the last rites. Without Srila Maharaja's loving guidance we would not have known what to do. He came from that time on, he took care of everything, and we followed his direction.

That incident was very important and memorable. Srila Maharaja took care of us, and also taught all of us how to attend to the acarya when he leaves this world. This always remains fresh in our minds. So how can we remain isolated? It is not possible. Without Srila Maharaja we cannot be in a good position. Again we should re-unite.

I pray for Srila Maharaja's blessing that I can do my seva to Srila Prabhupada.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] By the causeless mercy of Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga and also Sri Giriraja Govardhana, today we have successfully completed our parikrama to Kokilavana, Yavatgaon and other places.

There is a question however. What is the goal? What is the aim and object of performing this Vraja-mandala parikrama? The object is this: by its performance we will obtain perfection in our bhajana. We will attain perfection in our devotional service under the guidance of Srila Rupa Gosvamipada.

Sri Narada Muni previously received a benediction from Sri Krsna that if someone will do parikrama and touch the dust of those places where Krsna performed His sweet and beautiful pastimes, that person's innermost heart's desires will be fulfilled. Especially, his desire to attain Vraja-bhakti would be fulfilled. If he will do parikrama under the guidance of a realized rasika Vaisnava, he will surely obtain perfection in his bhajana.

We go to these places, touch the dust there and pray to the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha and Krsna. It is for this reason that I have invited and called devotees from all the various countries of the world. This is the reason Srila Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja went to the West and traveled throughout the many countries of the world. He went there to explain the meaning of Sri Rupa-siksa, the teachings of Srila Rupa Gosvamipada, and also the special confidential purpose of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's descending to this world and preaching through the medium of harinama-sankirtana.

Srila Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja went to the West and preached. Most of his time, however, was taken up by cutting the jungles of the misconceptions of those who have no idea what is God, what is the soul, and what is devotion to God. He preached to those infected with impersonalism and atheism, and first he had to defeat all their misconceptions.

But he came to the world to fulfill the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who came to this world for this:

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.” (Caitanya-caritamrta Adi-lila 1.4)]

Srila Rupa Gosvami said that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu came here to offer the beauty of the mood of Srimati Radhika – service to Her lotus feet. Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja descended to give this service, but because he spent most of his time defeating opposing conceptions, he had little opportunity to establish the gift that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to give. He did the most excellent work of making a very good platform, so that in the future a qualified person would come and, on the basis of that platform, present the positive contribution of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to all the living entities of Kali-yuga. He translated and commented on these deep subjects in his books, and he also spoke of them occasionally in his classes and darsanas. For the most part, however, in his general preaching he did not discuss these topics.

Today we went to Yavat, where Sri Sri Radha and Krsna perform very beautiful and astonishing pastimes. In these pastimes there is a very high class of teaching to everyone. For example, once Srimati Radhika was in maan – She became upset with Lord Krsna and refused to meet with Him. The days were passing and Krsna became very desperate to meet with Her, but it was not possible. In His desperation, He disguised Himself as a brahmana brahmacari, wearing wooden shoes and taking a book underneath His arm. In this way He came “begging” in the area of Radha’s home.

At that time Jatila devi had not bathed, and being in an impure condition she could not give alms to Him. She told Srimati Radhika, “You should give Him alms, because if a saintly person comes to one’s house and leaves empty-handed, a great calamity will fall upon that house. Our cows will become weak and die, and many problems will come.” Ordered by Her mother to give Him something, Srimati Radhika took a golden plate, and on this golden plate She placed some flour and other ingredients. Covering Her face with Her veil She went to the door of the house with Her sakhis, where that brahmana beggar was waiting. Sri Krsna said, “I have not come to beg for these things, but rather I have come to beg one jewel. I want You to place in my bag the jewel of Your sulky mood.”

When Srimati Radhika heard these words She recognized the identity of that beggar. She smiled very slightly, which meant that Her maan was broken. Smiling, She turned that plate of flour, dahl and other ingredients upside down on the head of Sri Krsna and quickly went back inside the house.

Who was that person suffering and burned by the sulky mood of Srimati Radhika?

isvarah paramah krsnah
sac-cid-ananda-vigrahah
anadir adir govindah
sarva-karana-karanam

[“Krsna who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes.” (Sri Brahma-Samhita 5.1)]

He is the Supreme Controller of the entire universe, the eternal Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes. How He becomes controlled by the prema of Srimati Radhika!

This is the nature of aprakṛta-līla, the Lord’s transcendental pastimes which transpire eternally in Goloka Vrndavana. Sri Kṛṣṇa descended to this world and displayed those pastimes, and Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu came and taught how to perform bhajana. In this way the conditioned souls could realize and enter into those pastimes to serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Rādhā-dāsyā – the service of the lotus feet of Srimati Rādhikā – is the aim and object of our life. This has been explained explicitly by our ācāryas such as Śrīlā Rūpā Gosvāmī, Śrīlā Rāghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīlā Bhaktivīnoda Thākura, Śrīlā Prabhodānanda Sarasvatī and others. Therefore, the attainment of service in these transcendental pastimes is the root cause of all the preaching of all the ācāryas, and this should be the root cause of our preaching also.

(To Svarūpa Dāmodara Mahārāja) Your Prabhupāda would be very, very happy to hear this.

We see that many people around the world are familiar with Lord Kṛṣṇa as we see Him in Śrīmad Bhāgavad-gīta or Mahābhārata. In Bhāgavad-gīta and Mahābhārata He gives some instructions about religion, and He also sets an example of proper behavior. People have faith in this, and they try to follow this in their lives.

However, they have no faith in Kṛṣṇa as we find Him described in Śrīmad-bhāgavatam, and this is their great misfortune. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His prominent associate Śrīlā Rūpā Gosvāmī and his associates, taught that the teachings found in Bhāgavad-gīta are just a foundation in spiritual life. Śrīlā Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja also taught this, as this is our Vaiṣṇava philosophy. The post-graduate study is Śrīmad-bhāgavatam [See Endnote 1], so one must advance further in one’s education and come to the conclusion. This conclusion is extremely confidential.

What to speak of ordinary people, even Vaiṣṇavas of other sampradāyas like the Vallabha sampradāya cannot understand the confidential teachings which are given in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. That very person who is Parabrahma, the Supreme Absolute Truth who is so powerful that He can create millions upon millions of universes in a second and

destroy them, and again recreate them, who can make the impossible possible and the possible impossible – goes to Srimati Radhika and begs for Her prema. The people in general, and also those from other sampradayas, don't believe He exists.

Here is another example of the pastimes in Yavat: Once, in Nandagaon, Mother Yasoda took a large box and placed jewels, cloth, ornaments and many other valuable paraphernalia inside. Krsna came from behind her and said, "O Mother, mother, is it My birthday today? Are these things for Me?" Mother Yasoda replied, "Go outside and play." This box was for Srimati Radhika. If Mother Yasoda would send Her valuables, Jatila would be pacified and very easily allow Srimati Radhika to come everyday to Nandagaon to cook.

Mother Yasoda packed the box, locked it and sent a message for Abimanyu to come and deliver it to Yavat. Before Abimanyu came to get the box, however, Lord Krsna came along with His friends like Subala and others and broke open the lock. Krsna took out the valuables from the box and threw them elsewhere. He then went inside and His friends helped to lock the box. After some time, Abimanyu came to pick up the box, and then he carried it on his head from Nandagaon to Yavat.

When Abimanyu arrived in Yavat, Srimati Radhika was in the company of Her sakhis and he gave them the box. When they opened the box, what did they find? One black person was inside. Who is that person? That person is Parabrahma, the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead who came to this world to hide inside a box and be a present for Srimati Radhika.

Our acaryas like Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura and others have described many pastimes like this in order to inspire the mellows of transcendental love of Radha and Krsna in Vrndavana in the hearts of all the living entities of this world. There are not one or two pastimes like this; there are thousands – unlimited – pastimes like this. When we come to Vraja-mandala parikrama, it is essential to hear these pastimes from the lips of a realized Vaisnava, so that the inspiration will come in our bhajana to attain the goal of life – loving service of the lotus feet of Srimati Radha and Lord Krsna.

Another time in Yavat, Srimati Radhika was in a sulky mood. Sometimes She is in a sulky mood with a cause, and sometimes without a cause. At those times She has a contrary mood and refuses to meet with Krsna, and on this occasion She refused to meet with Him. Days were passing and Krsna was feeling intense separation and distress. Seeing His distress, His very close friend Subala began to think to himself, "How can I help my friend Krsna?"

Subala is very attractive. If he dresses himself as Srimati Radhika, it is very difficult for anyone to tell the difference between him and Srimati Radhika or vice-versa. He thus made a plan and went to Yavat. As he was approaching Radhika's house, Jatila saw him and thought, "Oh, this is a friend of that black person. He is probably coming here to make some trouble."

She told him, “Go away from here. Why have you come here?” He replied, “I have lost my calf. I think he has gone inside your courtyard.. She said, “You can go inside and get your calf; and then leave.”

Subala went inside and made his way to the room of Srimati Radhika. He began to speak to Her on behalf of Krsna: “Krsna is suffering greatly in separation from You. Sometimes He faints and becomes unconscious. If He will not meet with You right now, He may leave His body.” Srimati Radhika’s heart melted but She said, “I am being guarded by My mother-in-law. How is it possible for Me to go and meet with Him?” Subala suggested, “We can exchange our clothes. You can dress as me and then You can leave and nobody will know.”

Srimati Radhika put on his turban and dressed up as a cowherd boy. But there were some differences between Her and Subala; so they planned that she pick up a baby calf, cover Her chest with the calf and then leave the house. As she was leaving, Jatila saw Her but she did not know she was her daughter-in-law. She asked Her, “Did you find your calf?” Srimati Radhika said in Subala’s voice, “Yes mother, I have my calf right here; so I am going now.”

She went to the place where Krsna was sitting and waiting. When Krsna saw Her He did not recognize Her; He thought Subala was coming. Imitating the voice of Subala Srimati Radhika said, “It was impossible. I could not bring Radhika to meet with You.” Hearing these words, Krsna began to weep and He was overwhelmed with remorse. Then, being satisfied with Krsna’s deep love, Radhika put down the calf and took off Her turban. In this way there was a very sweet meeting between Radha and Krsna.

All these pastimes are of Goloka Vrndavana – of the spiritual world. We are very fortunate to hear them and to take part in this Vraja-mandala parikrama. We are engaged in sadhu-sanga, nama-kirtana, bhagavat-sravana, residing in the dhama, performing parikrama of tulasi and the Deities, and all other opportunities to engage in the 64 limbs of devotional service come to us when we take part in this Vraja-mandala parikrama. Tomorrow, our Kartika-vrata will be completed and the next day we will celebrate the installation festival of the Deities and the official grand opening of this new Giridhari Gaudiya Matha.

[Endnote 1: “Srimad-Bhagavatam is the post-graduate study of knowledge for one who has thoroughly understood the principles of the Bhagavad-gita.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.10.22, Srila Prabhupada’s purport)]

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