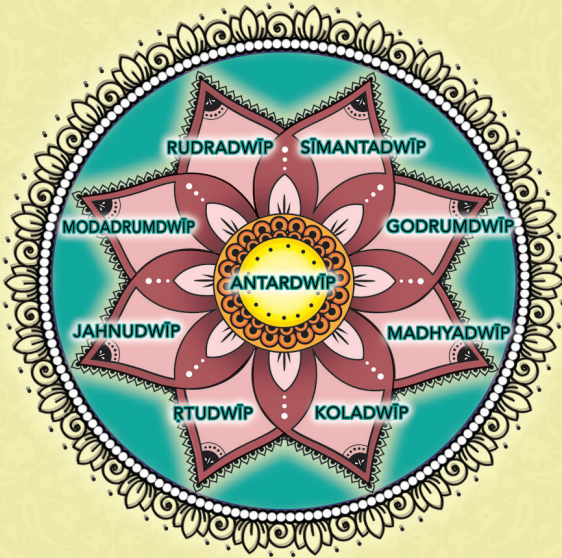


Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Māhātmya-Muktā-Mālā

Om Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj

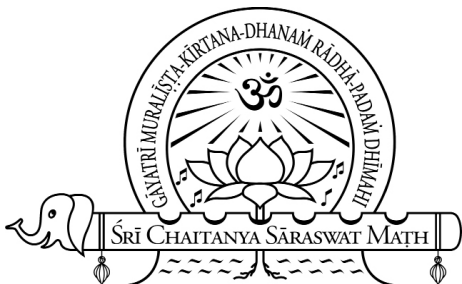


All Glory to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

Śrī Nabadwīp-Dhām Māhātmya-Muktā-Mālā

*A Pearl Necklace of Glories of
Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām*

*Compiled based on the discourses emanating
from the holy lotus mouth of
Ananta-śrī-vibhūṣita Om Viṣṇupād
Paramahaṁsa-kula-chūḍāmaṇi Viśva-vareṇya
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj*



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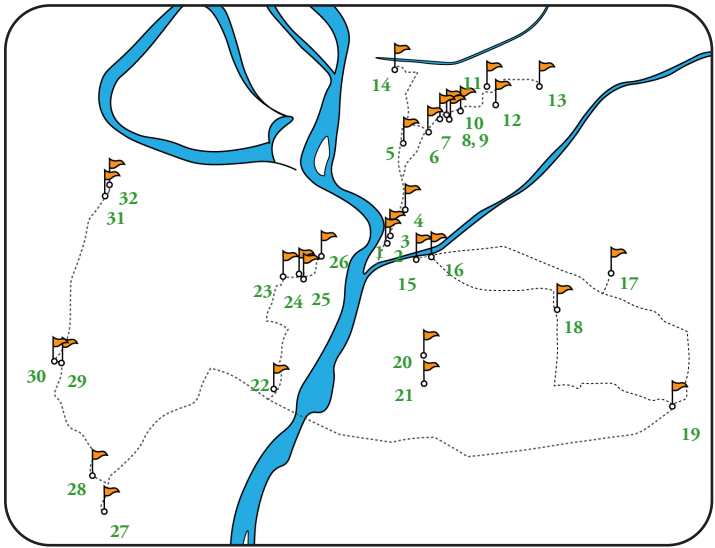
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PRESENTATION

The translation of this holy book from Bengali into English language was completed on Śrī Nityānanda Trayodaśī, 14 February 2022 (535 Gaurabda), following the order of our beloved Śrī Gurupādpadma Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj, expressed shortly before His Divine Grace's holy disappearance. Holding the desire of His Divine Grace on our heads, we carefully bow down at the lotus feet of all holy Vaiṣṇavs and devotees and humbly pray for your mercy as we submit this holy book to you. (The book was further revised and presented again at Śrī Gaura Pūrnimā in 2024.)

In the words of Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj himself:

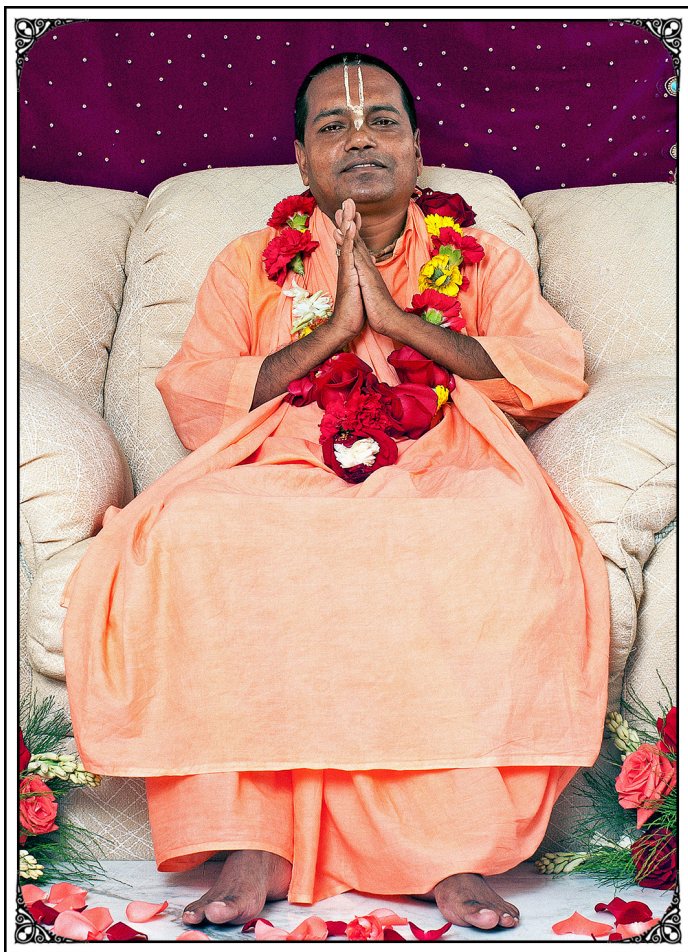
‘You should always remember Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*. We have printed a very good book, *Śrī Nabadwīp-Dhām Māhātmya-Muktā-Mālā*, but it is not translated into English yet. It is written in a very simple language and contains all the lectures that I myself and all the *sannyāsis* give during the *parikramā* time about the glories of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. When I was proofreading it, and when Bengali devotees now read it, we read this book and think, “We are in Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* !” Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura's *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya* is a good book, but it is written as a poem and very hard to understand. Devotees always like easy books: they always want to read what they can understand. Even I am still not so interested in reading *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya*, but the new book *Śrī Nabadwīp-Dhām Māhātmya-Muktā-Mālā* is written in prose, and it is a very great book.’



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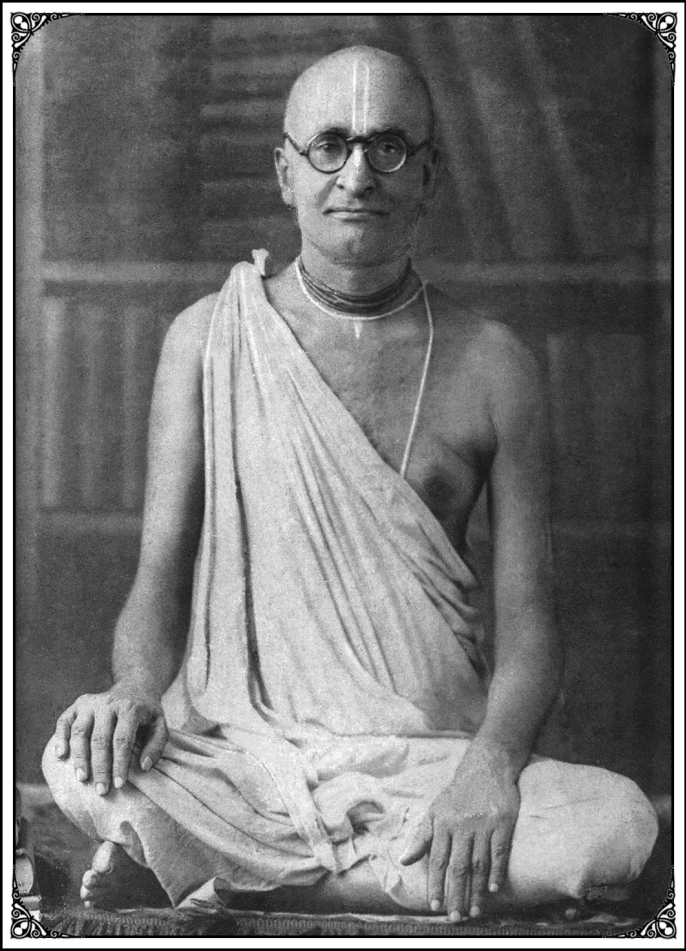
*Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj,
the successor Sevāite-President-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya
Sāraswat Maṭh, the present day holder of the current of pure
devotion in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu*



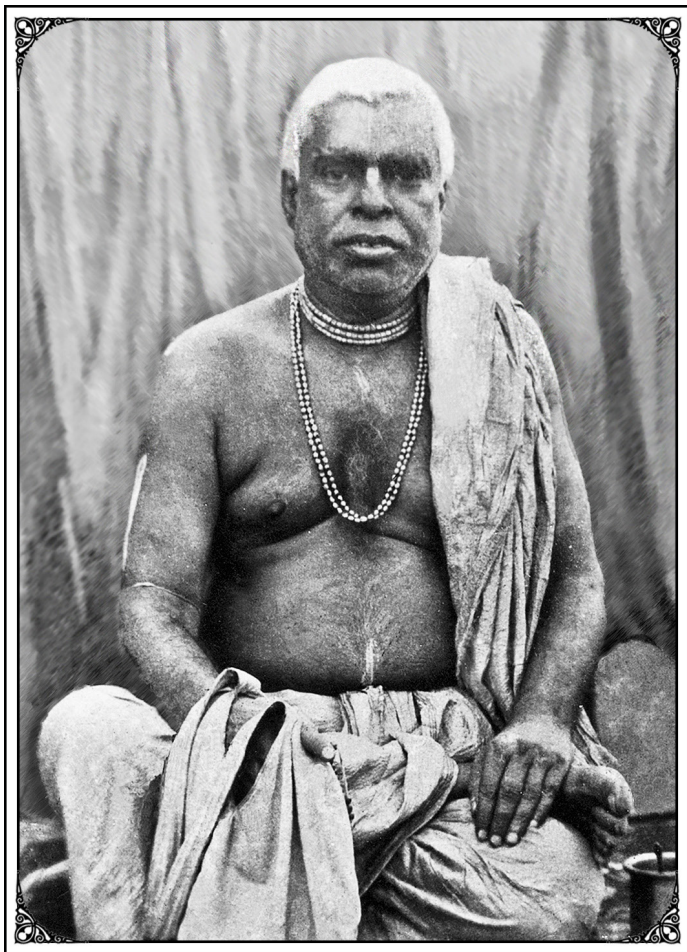
*His Divine Grace Jagad-Guru Om Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj,
the Sevāite-President-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh*



*His Divine Grace Jagad-Guru Om Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj,
the Founder-Āchārya of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh*



*Bhagavān Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sāraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda,
the Founder-Āchārya of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh and the modern age
reviver of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's movement and conception.*



*Sach-chid-ānanda Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura Mahāśaya,
reviver of the current of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's pure
conception; the supreme giver of Śrī Guru, Śrī Grantha, Śrī Gaura
Dhām, the Holy Name, and Holy Devotion.*

Brahmā–Madhva–Gauḍīya Sampradāya (Our Disciplic Succession)

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa
↓
Śrī Brahmā
↓
Śrī Nārada Goswāmī
↓
Śrī Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva
↓
Śrī Madhva Āchārya
↓
Śrī Padmanābha
↓
Śrī Nṛhari Tīrtha
↓
Śrī Mādhava Āchārya
↓
Śrī Akṣobhya
↓
Śrī Jayatīrtha
↓
Śrī Jñānasindhu
↓
Śrī Dayānidhi
↓
Śrī Vidyānidhi
↓
Śrī Rājendra
↓
Śrī Jayadharmā
↓
Śrī Puruṣottama
↓
Śrī Brahmaṇya Tīrtha
↓
Śrī Vyāsa Tīrtha
↓
Śrī Lakṣmīpati
↓

Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī
↓
Śrī Īśvara Purī (Nityānanda Prabhu,
Advaita Āchārya)
↓
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu
↓
Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī (Svarūpa
Dāmodara, Sanātana Goswāmī)
↓
Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī, Śrīla
Jīva Goswāmī
↓
Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Goswāmī
↓
Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura
↓
Śrīla Viśvanātha Chakravartī Ṭhākura
↓
Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa
↓
Śrīla Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja
↓
Śrīla Sachchidānanda Bhakti Vinod
Ṭhākura
↓
Śrīla Gaura Kīśora Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja
↓
Bhagavān Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta
Sārasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda
↓
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāja
↓
Śrīla Bhakti Sundara Govinda
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāja
↓
Śrīla Bhakti Nirmala Āchārya

Introduction

‘Appeal on Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Parikramā’

(By Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj)

bhramite habe nā āra e-chhāra bhuvana
You do not have to wander any longer in this vile world.

anitya e deha-rathe chaḍiyā mṛtyura pathe
himsra-sārddūla-pūrṇa saṁsāra-kānana
bhramite habe nā āra e-chhāra bhuvana [1]

You do not have to wander any longer in this vile world, riding along the path of death in the chariot of this temporary body in the forest of material existence, which is filled with ferocious tigers.

añchale añchala bādhi’ yauvanera sādha sādhi’
‘gṛha-vrata’ nāme śudhu ha’le parichita
janma-janmāntara dhari’ gṛha parikramā kari’
bujhile ki māyā-bhūmi—kaṅṭaka-āvṛta? [2]

Pursuing the desires of youth and getting married, you have known the ‘vow of household life’ in name only. Continuing in this way birth after birth, circling about in household life, have you realised the land of Māyā is covered with thorns?

āra-o karitechha mana bhramaṇera āyojana—
deśa hate videśete grāma-grāmāntare,
ekhano meṭeni āśā āra-o bādhitechha vāsā—
duḍinera pāntha-śālā—pṛthivīra pare? [3]

Not only that, your mind has made arrangements to continue wandering from country to country, from village to village; yet, your desires have never been fulfilled. Still, you have built a residence – a mere temporary hut which lasts but a few days – upon this earth?

mahāmāyā-moha-ghore āra kata-kāla ore!
anitya o gṛhaṭire—karabi bhramaṇa,
dārā-putra-paribāra asāra-anitya chhāra
bile—khāle—āstākuḍe mile ki ratan? [4]

Oh, how much longer will you keep wandering in the darkness of Mahāmāyā's illusion, staying in that temporary home? Your wife, sons and family are worthless, temporary and vile! Can you find a jewel in a swamp, trench or heap of rubbish?

pāye dhari kahi sāra bhramite habe nā āra
nāhi hethā bharasāra—eka-bindu jala,
nāhi āśā sāntvanāra, āchhe śudhu hāhākāra
samasta sāmsāra bharā—jalanta-anala [5]

Clasping your feet, I am telling you this main truth: you do not have to wander here any longer. There is not one drop of the water of hope here. There is no hope of any solace but only cries of distress. The entire burden of material existence is like a blazing fire.

bhramite habe nā āra saṁsāra-kānane
ai śona gaura-jana ḍāke sarva-jane [6]

You do not have to wander any longer in the forest of material existence. Śrī Gaurāṅga's devotees call everyone: 'Listen!

āya āya tvarā kari bāla-vṛddha nara-nārī
divya-chintāmaṇi-dhāma—gaura-janma-bhūmi
praṇayi-bhakata sane jīvanera śubha-kṣaṇe
gaurāṅge janma-dine āya parikrami [7]

'Men and women, young and old, come right away! Come to the divine abode of wish-fulfilling jewels, the land of Śrī Gaurāṅga's advent! Come and circumambulate it in the company of loving devotees during the most auspicious time of your life, the day of Śrī Gaurāṅga's advent.

dhāma-parikramā ka're sāṅga habe chira-tare
ananta janama dha're brahmāṇḍa-bhramaṇa,
dūre yābe bhava-roga khaṇḍibe sakala bhoga
bhūloke-goloka-lābha—ḍāke gaura-jana [8]

'Circumambulate this holy abode and your wandering throughout the universe for innumerable births will come to an end, the disease of material existence will go away, all your suffering will be dispelled, and you will experience Goloka on this earth.'

bhramite habe nā āra e-chhāra bhuvana [9]

You do not have to wander any longer in this vile world.

Śrī Gaura-Dhām and Śrī Bhaktivinod

Śrī Śrīla Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod, an associate of Śrī Gaura Hari, appeared in this world to preach about Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's Holy Name, Holy Abode and Holy Aspiration. His appearance took place within the holy abode of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, in a province near Nabadwīp. So, one time Kṣetrapāl Tārakeśwar (Lord Śiva) said to Ṭhākur in a dream, 'Are you going to Vṛndāvan? But have you done the job that there is to do in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, near your home?'

Ṭhākur loved Śrī Gaura-dhām so much that even if you try to glorify that love with the countless mouths of Anantadev, you will not be able to tell it to the end. When Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod came to Śrī Dhām Māyāpur, he would often say that by beholding the dust, the trees, the grass, the creepers, etc. of the *dhām*, his heart would become surcharged with unprecedented joy and excitement.

Ṭhākur saw Vraja-dhām within Gaura-dhām. He relished within the nine islands of Nabadwīp the nectar of the *aṣṭakālīya* pastimes of Śrī Gaurasundar, the chief commander of the nine types of devotion. In his book *Bhajana-Rahasya*, Ṭhākur shows that one can hear, glorify and remember the *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of the Divine Couple of Vraja (the pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa taking place during

the eight divisions of the day) through the *Śikṣāṣṭakam*, eight verses encapsulating the teachings of Śrī Gaurasundar; and in his books *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga*, *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya* and *Śrī Nabadwīp-śataka*, he indicates that the same *aṣṭakālīya-līlā* of Vraja Dhām is observed within the forests of Gaura-dhām. This is a very esoteric mystery – it is not to be spoken about in front of everyone broadly as there are very few people who are fit to hear about such things (otherwise, even if people hear about it, they will neither believe nor understand it).

Ṭhākur saw the forenoon pastimes of Śrī Gaura Hari within the *kīrtan* island, Śrī Godrum; he considered Godrum to be Śrī Nandīśvar Dhām, the ‘residence of cowherds’ (*gopāvās*) or the ‘pasturing grounds’ (*goṣṭha*). That is why Ṭhākur sings in *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga* (verses 43–44): ‘O mind! Worship, just worship the forest of Godrum! Soon your eyes will behold the wealth of Gaura’s pastimes. By seeing those pastimes, you will easily attain the pastimes of the Divine Couple and your desires will be fulfilled. Godrum is Śrī Nandīśvar Dhām, the residence of cowherd boys, where Śrī Gaurāṅga performs various pastimes. In the morning, the Lord eats milk preparations in cowherd boys’ houses and herds cows with cowherd boys.’

Śrīla Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod would sometimes see Śrī Gokula Mahāvan in Antardwīp, Māyāpur, with the *rāsa-maṇḍala* of Śrī Vṛndāvan within in. We see an indication that Śrī Rāsa Maṇḍala is the place of daybreak pastimes: ‘Māyāpur is Śrī Gokula Mahāvan, and Pāraḍāṅgā is considered Saṭṭikāra. Śrī Rāsa Maṇḍal of Vṛndāvan

is present there, and in the future there will be joyous singing at that place' (Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya, Antardwīp, 88–89).

Śrīla Ṭhākur saw the midday pastimes in Madhyadwīp: 'At midday, Śrī Gaurāṅga roams all these forests with His associates, mad with divine love. Suggesting the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, He dances there with devotees during *kīrtan* and relishes the ecstasy of Rādhā' (Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvataṅga, 57).

Ṭhākur Śrī Bhaktivinod saw the intrinsic form of Śrī Sīmantinī Devī, whose hair parting is adorned with the pollen from the lotus feet of Śrī Gaura and who is the protectress of the island Śrī Sīmanta, as Yogamāyā Paurṇamāsī. Śrī Gaurasundar said to Pārvatī Devī: 'You are not separate from Me. You are My energy and the goddess of all. My consort (My singular energy) has two forms: as My personal energy, you are Rādhikā, and as My external energy, Rādhā expands into you. My pastimes are not complete without you. As Yogamāyā, you are certainly involved in My pastimes. In Vraja, you are eternally present as Paurṇamāsī, and in Nabadwīp, you are present as Prauḍhā Māyā with Lord Śiva, the guardian of the Dhām' (Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Māhātmya, Sīmantadwīp, 71–74).

Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod described the Protector of the Dhām, Vṛddha Śiva, as the 'Protector' (Kṣetrapāl) of Śrī Māyāpur. When Mahāprabhu later manifests His disappearance pastime and Gaṅgā Devī covers Śrī Māyāpur (in some places almost completely), there will be only the birthplace of Śrī Gaura and some places

nearby left. When, by the wish of Śrī Gaurasundar, devotees again manifest a temple at His appearance place, Praudhā Māyā and Vṛddha Śiva will come again and fulfil their duties according to the wish of the Lord. Later, Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod saw in a dream that the glory of Śrī Gaura Hari's service would spread widely, and it has indeed come true. Ṭhākur wrote in *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya* (Antardwīp, 74): 'A wonderful temple will manifest, and the daily worship of Gaurāṅga will flourish in it.'

Later on, Ṭhākur described Ballāl Dirghikā, excavated by Lakṣmaṇ Sen, as a pond of 'Vaiṣṇav Mahārāj Pṛthu', or 'Pṛthu Kuṇḍa'.

Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod called Śaraḍāṅgā 'Śrī Puruṣottama Dhām'. Seeing Vidyāvāchaṣpati's place as Dvārakā, Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod, an exalted associate of Śrī Gaura and a follower of Śrī Svarūpa-Rūpa Goswāmī, considered the verse 'Yah kaumāra-haraḥ' and, subsequently, Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī's verse 'Priyah so'yaṁ' and wanted to see Śrī Gaura Hari in the non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvan temple of Śrīvās on the bank of Pṛthu Kuṇḍa.

We see that Koladwīp is described in *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga* (74) as Bahulāvan, and the hill in Kuliyā is described as Giri-Govardhan in *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya* (Koladwīp, 37-38): 'Fortunate souls can see this abode of ultimate joy, Koladwīp, which is non-different from Śrī Bahulāvan. Having seen the mountain-like form of Varāhadev, wise Vāsudev decided that this place would be named Koladwīp Parvat. Since then, it has been known as Parvat. O Jīva! Devotees know this place

to be Govardhan Hill of Vṛndāvan, which is filled with the Lord's eternal pastimes.'

Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod saw Bahulāvan in the northern part of Koladwīp (Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya, 11.39–42) and described the astonishing harmony and sweetness of the twelve forests of Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām within Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, existing here in a reversed order: 'See Śrī Bahulāvan to the north. Its effulgence shines in all directions. O Jīva, the twelve forests are not arranged here the way they are in Vṛndāvan – by the will of the Lord, their order is reversed. The Lord does what He likes, and He alone knows the reason for what He does. See the way they are arranged here. This extraordinary reversal increases everyone's divine love.'

In Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya (11.43–44), Samudragaḍ is described as the city of Dvārakā: 'See here Samudragaḍ. O best of the wise, see here both Dvārakā Purī and Śrī Gaṅgāsāgar.' Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod described Champahaṭṭa within Ṛtudwīp as Khadiravan or the land of Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa's area (Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya, 11.86–87): 'Previously, there was a beautiful champaka forest here, which was part of Khadiravan. Champakalatā Sakhī would pick champaka flowers here every day, string garlands and serve Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.'

It is said in Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāva-taraṅga (78–79), 'There is a champaka forest in Champahaṭṭa where Champakalatā Devī picks flowers. This village in Nabadwīp is Śrī Khadiravan, which is a resting place of Balarām and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja. Ṛtudwīp is forested and extremely enchanting. Here, spring and other seasons are devoted to the service

of Gaura. Worshipped by all seasons, this land is an abode of joy. A manifestation of Rādhā Kuṇḍa exists here.'

In chapter 12 of *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya* (verses 12–15), Ṛtudwīp is described as Rādhā Kuṇḍa: 'Hearing the Name of Gaurāṅga, Nitāi immediately arose and said, "This is the place of Rādhā Kuṇḍa. Here, Gaurahari would perform *kīrtan* with the devotees in the afternoon. Here, the six seasons meet and enhance the beauty of Gaurāṅga's *kīrtan* pastimes. Rādhā Kuṇḍa in Vraja is present here in Ṛtudwīp, where devotees drink and relish divine love. See also the beauty of Śyāma Kuṇḍa, which enchants the mind of every soul in this world, and the groves of the *sakhīs* nearby. Gorā would become immersed in *saṅkīrtan* here in the afternoon and satisfy everyone with the gift of divine love. Brother! We find no place like this in the three worlds. Know that this is the place where devotees serve the Lord. The souls who reside here attain the wealth of divine love, and their hearts become serene.'"

In *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvataraṅga* (80–81), Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod described the appearance of Rādhā Kuṇḍa within Ṛtudwīp: 'When will I roam Ṛtudwīp, remembering the pastimes of the Lord, seeing the beauty of its forests? The pastimes of the Lord at Rādhā Kuṇḍa will then manifest before me, and I will become stunned to have the *darśan* of all that.'

Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod saw the Bhadravan forest in Jhanudwīp (*Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvataraṅga*, 96; *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya*, ch.13), the forest Bhāṅḍīravan in Modadrumdūp (*Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvataraṅga*, 110), Niḥśreyasavan in Vaikuṅṭhapur within Modadrumdūp

[*Kalyāṇ-kalpataru*] (*Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga*, 117), and Kāmyavan in Mahatpur (*Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga*, 124). In *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga*, Ṭhākur Śrīla Bhaktivinod sang the glory of Nidayā as the embodiment of *sāyujya-mukti* (merging one's existence with the existence of Brahman, the impersonal aspect of the Lord). Śrī Gaurasundar granted liberation to all *jīva* souls – even Sālokya-, Sāmīpya-, Sārūpya- and Sārṣṭi-mukti went to Vaikuṅṭha (different kinds of liberation: having equal place of residence, equal association, equal bodily features and equal opulence as the Lord), but He was merciless only towards Sāyujya-mukti because devotees feel extremely averse towards her. 'Śrī Gaurāṅga Prabhu delivered everyone. He was only merciless towards me. Everyone will know the place where I will now give up my life as Nidayā ("Merciless")' (*Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga*, 140).

Śrīla Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod described Nabadwīp, the abode of Lord Gaurāṅga, as a place of nine kinds of devotion, and fruitive work, knowledge, *yoga*, etc. are servants waiting upon devotion here. When approached by those who are averse to the Lord, the scriptures bestow upon such persons a wicked mentality; and when approached by those who are favourable and who behave gently, the scriptures bestow the gift of attachment to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. So, even having read the scriptures, many do not have faith in Śrī Gaura-dhām. 'Nabadwīp is the abode of the ninefold practice of devotion. Here, action and knowledge always serve devotion. The scriptures feed misconceptions to those who are averse and feed love for Kṛṣṇa to those who are gentle.'

Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod also mercifully revealed in his books the various pastimes of Gaura-dhām and Vraja-dhām that he himself beheld. He wrote, ‘Nabadwīp-maṇḍal, Vraja-maṇḍal and Goloka are non-different and indivisible. They became divided only because transcendental love manifests itself in an unlimited number of peculiar mellows’ (Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā, 5.5).

In Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya (3.79–85), the divine forms of Nabadwīp-dhām and Vraja-dhām, as well as the chambers of the *mādhurya* and *audārya* moods that are found within Goloka, are described in the following manner: ‘Nabadwīp is the best of all abodes of the Lord. Beyond Śrī Virajā, Brahmaloaka and Vaikuṅṭha is Śvetadwīp, Śrī Goloka and, lastly, Gokula Vṛndāvan, Kṛṣṇa’s abode. Lord Kṛṣṇa’s abode manifests itself in two ways: its *rasa* appears as either *mādhurya* or *audārya*. *Audārya* is fully present in *mādhurya*, and *mādhurya* is fully present in *audārya*. Still, fortunate souls know that Vṛndāvan is the place where *mādhurya* is predominant. All the Vedas say that Nabadwīp-dhām is a place where *audārya* is always predominant. There is no difference between Vṛndāvan and Nabadwīp other than the difference in their respective manifestation of *rasa*.’

Ṭhākur said in *Jaiva-dharma*, ‘These three abodes – Goloka, Vṛndāvan and Śvetadwīp – are private chambers of Paravyoma. Goloka is an abode of Kṛṣṇa’s lawful pastimes (*svakīya*, the pastimes that Kṛṣṇa performs together with His internal potency); Vṛndāvan is an abode of paramour pastimes (*pārakīya*); and Śvetadwīp is a supplementary abode of those pastimes. There is no difference between Goloka, Vṛndāvan and Śvetadwīp – although Śrī

Nabadwīp is actually Śvetadwīp, it is non-different from Vṛndāvan.’

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinod, an embodiment of Nadia, has also told us how one can get the eyes to see Śrī Gaura-dhām. If you are to receive the mercy of Śrī Gaura’s abode, you must first of all receive the mercy of Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinod. If you desire to attain the great fortune of eternal residence in the abode of Śrī Gaura, you must become a particle of dust adhering to the holy lotus feet of Śrī Bhaktivinod. If you identify yourself with the body, if you have fleshy vision, then you will not see the holy abode or be able to identify yourself with it. You can see the true holy form of the *dhām* through the vision of the Holy Name. Ṭhākura Bhaktivinod repeatedly glorified this truth: ‘According to the desire of the Lord, until and unless your illusory body leaves you, the nature of the *dhām* will not be fully revealed to you, and your intelligence will not leave its conditioned nature behind. By the will of the Lord, you can receive a spiritual body and become free here; the covering of the net of material illusion will disappear, and you will feel unlimited joy in this eternal abode’ (*Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga*, 105–106).

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinod tells us how we must practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness (serve the Lord) in the holy abode of Śrī Gaura in *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga* (verses 100–109). The meaning of what he says there is that worshipping Gaura Hari having given up all hopes and aspirations and having come to reside in the abode of Gaura is the way how to become liberated from material bondage and attain the lotus feet of Śrī Gaura. When such liberated

souls attain Mahāprabhu's grace, they constantly see the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Gaura within this abode of Gaura. Being constantly immersed into the nectar of servitude to Lord Kṛṣṇa in this holy abode, pure devotees are not troubled by any worldly need, pain or material endeavours – their bodies and hearts (aspirations) are pure and transcendently fulfilled. The holy abode of Śrī Gaura is eternal; there is no material illusion within it. For as long as *jīva* souls remain situated within an illusory body, they should give up slack life and serve a pure devotee with utmost caution, tolerance and patience – if they practise spiritual life in this way (constantly chanting the Holy Name, worshipping the Divine Couple, appealing for the mercy of Śrī Dhām, Śrī Nāma and Their devotees) and remain always cautious about unholy association, they will attain the mercy of Śrī Dhām, the holy abode of the Lord. Describing the holy abode of Śrī Gaura, Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod revealed his own divine form when describing his dearest Godrumdwīp, which is non-different from Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa – his Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, his Mistress of Svānanda Kuñja – as well as the mood of servitude and the aspired service position pertaining to his pure nature. To serve the Supreme Lord Īśānāth having come to reside in the holy abode of the Supreme Lord (Īśākṣetra) is Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod's ultimate objective and service life.

In *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga* (26–27), Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur tells about a grove called Īśodyān that is situated in the southern part of Māyāpur, on the bank of the Jāhnavī (Gaṅgā), not far from the confluence of the Gaṅgā and

Sarasvatī. For him, this grove evokes the memory of the pastimes that take place at Rādhā Kuṇḍa at noon, and he describes it in the following way: ‘In the southern part of Māyāpur, on the bank of the Gaṅgā, quite near its confluence with the Sarasvatī, there is a large garden known as Īsodyān. May it forever be my place of worship. Seeing the splendour of that grove where my Lord, Śrī Śachī-nandan, performs His pastimes with devotees at midday, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa come to mind. May all these places always appear before my eyes.’

The forest of Śrī Godrum also arouses within Ṭhākur the memory of Śrī Rādhā Kuṇḍa. At the time when he entered his eternal pastimes, the perfection of this pure transcendental position manifested in him of its own accord. We have heard about it from great souls; it is a transcendental, supra-mundane matter. This clearly proves that Gaurahari, the Master of Śrī Dhām, sent Ṭhākur to this world to spread all possible glory of Śrī Gaura-dhām. We see that Ṭhākur’s earnest hankering within Śrī Godrum, which is non-different from Rādhā Kuṇḍa, is expressed in the following way:

“sei śrī-godrūma-vana adbhūta vyāpāra
kabe va dekhiba peye rādhā-kṛpā-sāra”

‘This forest of Śrī Godrum is something astonishing! When will I attain the prerequisite mercy of Śrī Rādhā and get to see it?’

(Śrī Nabadwīp-śataka, 42–43)

Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod, an exclusive follower of Śrī Gaurāṅga and the holy embodiment of Nadia, prayed for the mercy of Śrī Gaura-dhām, which was all-in-all in his

life, with a great hankering. What is that mercy of Śrī Gaura-dhām? What does it take to reside in Śrī Gaura-dhām? What sort of humility do the residents of Śrī Gaura-dhām possess? And by whose mercy does one attain residence in Śrī Gaura-dhām? Praying ardently for the mercy of the servants of his servants, we would like to conclude this article by quoting Ṭhākura Bhaktivinod himself. ‘Living in my grove near Īśodyān, I will worship the Divine Couple and moon-like Śrī Gaurāṅga. Bhaktivinod, a servant of the servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, prays for residence in Nabadwīp. Yearning for the feet of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunāth, he desperately prays for the fulfilment of his desires. O residents of Nabadwīp and Vṛndāvan, please swiftly grant me a place in the abode of the Lord. It is your abode, and I am simply your servant. By serving you all, I will attain residence in the Dhām. O Nabadwīp! Please bestow your mercy upon me. Who attains the Lord’s abode without your mercy? Please do not judge my worthiness. I have accepted the instructions of Jāhnavā and Nitāi as my all-in-all’ (Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāvatarāṅga, 163–167).



About Dhām Parikramā (Circumambulating a Holy Place)

Many can ask, 'Why is it necessary to travel to so many places? Especially since you can engage in the service of the Lord while living at home, why is it necessary to go anywhere else?'

When we stay at home, we cannot mix and associate with saintly persons, we do not get an opportunity to listen to their class. When we are not busy, we start doing nonsense – we spend time telling stories and gossiping about others. In saintly association, we can hear Hari-kathā. We often do wrong because we follow our judgement, but saintly association can release us from all such unwanted activities. We are always troubled by our senses, but by hearing Hari-kathā in saintly association, we can become released from the hands of all such troubles. At every moment, Māyā, the divine potency of the Lord, forces us to stay within the domain of aversion towards the Lord. The moment we lose protection, everything in our environment becomes our enemy and attacks us. Our sole protection is the holy narratives of saints. It is said in the scriptures,

**“sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-nāma — ei-mātra chāi
saṁsāra jinite āra kona vastu nāi”**

‘I only desire to chant the Name of Kṛṣṇa in the association of the saints. There is no other way to conquer material existence.’

—By Śrīla Sarasvatī Goswāmī Prabbupād

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Parikramā

*Nectarean all-auspicious discourses
emanating from the holy lotus mouth of
Ananta-śrī-vibhūṣita Oṃ Viṣṇupād
Paramahaṃsa-kula-chūḍāmaṇi Jagad-Guru
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj*

nindantaṁ pulakotkareṇa vikasan-nīpaprasūnachchhaviṁ
prodhvikṛtya bhuja-dvayaṁ hari-harītyuchchhair-vadantaṁ muhuḥ
nṛtyantaṁ drutamaśru-nirjharachayaṁ siñchantamūrvītaṁ
gāyantaṁ nija-pārṣadaiḥ parivṛtaṁ śrī-gaurachandraṁ numaha

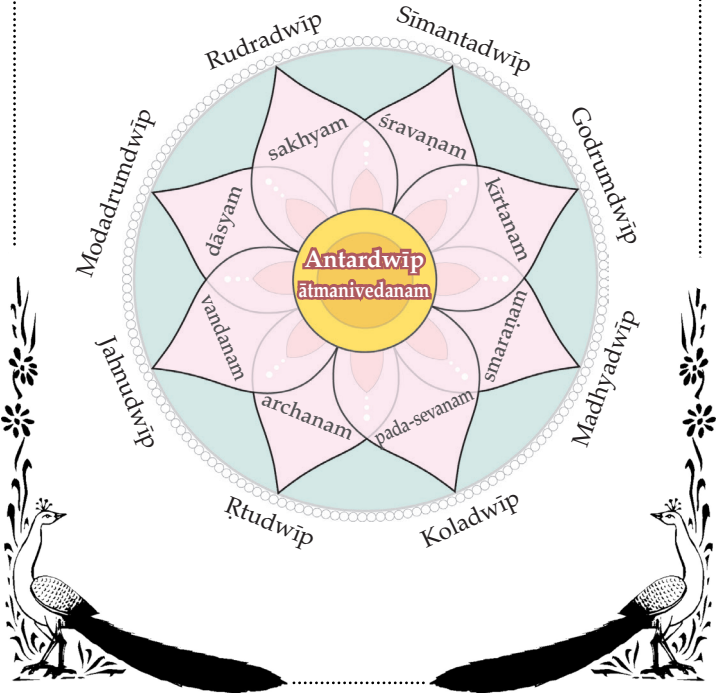
(Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī)

‘As Mahāprabhu became completely intoxicated, relishing the nectar of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s divine mood, all hair on His body stood on end and thus His divine form would look just like a kadamba flower. Raising His arms and pointing towards Goloka, He would walk about and cry, “Hari! Hari! Hari bol! Hari bol!” When He danced, the ground would become moist from the tears falling from His lotus eyes. He is surrounded by His associates – Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍit, Śrī Advaita Āchārya, Śrīvās Ṭhākura, Nāmachārya Haridās Ṭhākura, Śrī Mukunda, Śrī Murāri Gupta and others. All devotees would wander throughout the length and breadth of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām together with the Lord. We bow in obeisance at the holy lotus feet of this Śrī Gaurachandra.’

(By Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj)

Śrī Antardwīp

(Ātmanivedanam: self-submission)



suddha-bhakata- charaṇa-reṇu
bhajana-anukūla
bhakata-sevā parama siddhi
prema-latikāra mūla [1]

The dust of pure devotees' feet is favourable to devotion. Serving the devotees is the supreme fulfilment and the root of the creeper of divine love.

mādhava-tithi bhakti-jananī
yatane pālana kari
kṛṣṇa-vasati vasati bali'
parama ādare bari [2]

I carefully observe the holy days related to Mādhava – they are the mother of devotion. With great adoration, I embrace the abode of Kṛṣṇa as my own.

gaura āmāra ye-saba sthāne
karala bhramaṇa raṅge
se saba sthāna heriba āmi
praṇayi-bhakata-saṅge [3]

In the company of loving devotees, I behold all the places my Gaura visited during His pastimes.

mṛdaṅga-vādyā śunite mana
avasara sadā yāche
gaura-vihita kīrtana śunī'
ānande hṛdaya nāche [4]

My heart always begs for the opportunity to hear the sound of the *mṛdaṅga*. Hearing the *kīrtan* prescribed by Gaura, my heart dances for joy.

yugala-mūrti dekhiyā mora
parama ānanda haya
prasāda-sevā karite haya
sakala prapañcha jaya [5]

Beholding the Deity forms of the Divine Couple, I feel greatest joy. By honouring *prasād*, I overcome the entire material illusion.

ye-dina gr̥he bhajana dekhi
gr̥hete goloka bhāya
charaṇa-sīdhu dekhiyā gaṅgā
sukha nā sīmā pāya [6]

When I see devotional service in my home, I feel Goloka has manifested. Seeing the Ganges, the nectar from the Lord's feet, my happiness has no limit.

tulasī dekhi' juḍāya prāṇa
mādhava-toṣaṇī jāni'
gaura-priya śāka-sevane
jīvana sārthaka māni [7]

Seeing Tulasī Devī soothes my soul, knowing she pleases Mādhava. Honouring Gaura's favourite spinach, I consider my life successful.

bhaktivinoda kṛṣṇa-bhajane
anukūla pāya yāhā
prati divase parama sukhe
svikāra karaye tāhā [8]

Whatever Bhaktivinod obtains that is favourable to Kṛṣṇa's service, he accepts that every day with greatest joy.

Śrī Gaṅgānagar

As the result of great fortune and by the inconceivable mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, devotees and Vaiṣṇavs, we have again got an opportunity to circumambulate this supreme Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, as each previous year. Our first day is the *parikramā* of Śrī Antardwīp. When Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu circumambulated Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām together with Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī, He first showed him Śrī Gaṅgānagar, which is situated on the outskirts of Śrī Antardwīp. Following His holy lotus feet, remembering His divine words and praying incessantly for the holy



foot dust of all residents of this holy abode, we also begin our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* by first entering Śrī Antardwīp. ‘*Gaura āmāra ye saba sthāne karala bhramaṇa raṅge, se saba sthāna heriba āmi prañayi-bhakata-saṅge.* In the company of loving devotees, I behold all the places my Gaurasundar roamed during His ecstatic pastimes.’

Crossing Śrī Gaṅgā Māyī, we have come to Śrī Gaṅgānagar that was founded in ancient times by Bhagīrath Mahārāj. One time, Bhagīrath Mahārāj had been performing severe austerities for many years to please Śrī Gaṅgā Devī. In the end, Śrī Gaṅgā Devī appeared before him, saying, ‘Mahārāj, I am pleased with the austerities you have performed. Tell me what boon you want to receive from me?’ Bhagīrath Mahārāj replied, ‘O Devī, if you could come down to earth together with me, my relatives and all the residents of earth would get liberation. I have no other way to accomplish this unless you come.’ Despite Bhagīrath Mahārāj’s plea, Śrī Gaṅgā Devī did not agree to come. She said, ‘I will not go there! If I come to this earth, all sinners will bath in my water, and I will become polluted and go to hell! What benefit is it to me?’ Bhagīrath Mahārāj assured her, ‘Why are you saying this, dear Mother? The Lord Himself rests in the hearts of pure *sādhus* who are devoid of any material desires or attachments – when these *sādhus* bath in your water, the Lord will remove from you all the sins of other people. You will always remain pure.’ In the end, merciful Śrī Gaṅgā Devī agreed to come with Bhagīrath Mahārāj.

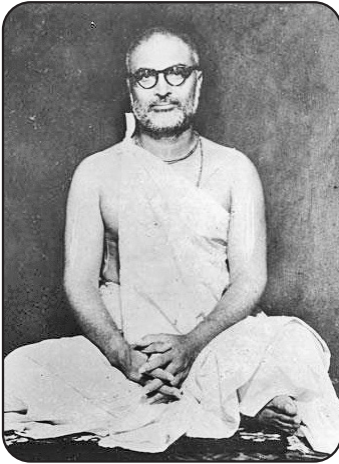
Bhagīrath Mahārāj went first, blowing a conchshell, and merciful Śrī Gaṅgā Devī went behind him. When they were passing this Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, Gaṅgā Devī

suddenly stopped. After a while, Bhagīrath Mahārāj noticed that Gaṅgā Devī was not following him anymore – feeling suddenly scared, he turned back to look for her. Finding Gaṅgā Devī, he saw that she did not want to move any further. ‘Oh no! What will happen now?’ There was no way out, so Bhagīrath Mahārāj sat down here in this Gaṅgānagar (Māyāpur) and started meditating and performing austerities again. Satisfied with his *tapasyā*, Gaṅgā Devī came to him to speak. Bhagīrath Mahārāj prayed to her, ‘O Mother, if you do not continue the way, my ancestors will never get relief. Please come with me.’ Gaṅgā Devī replied, ‘Listen to what I say, dear child! O great hero Bhagīrath! Stay here for a few days. We have come to this Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām in the month of Māgh (January/February)! When the month of Phālgun (February/March) finishes, I will again come with you. Try to understand it – I have come to the holy abode of the One whose feet I wash; therefore, I want to stay here to fulfil my deep longing. My Lord’s appearance day is on the full moon day in the month of Phālgun, and I want to observe this day. After that I will come with you, do not worry.’

So, Bhagīrath Mahārāj stayed here in Gaṅgānagar for one month. It is said in the scriptures that if you stay in Gaṅgānagar, bath in the Gaṅgā, fast and worship Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu on the full moon day in the month of Phālgun, you will cross this material world and reach Śrī Goloka, and thousands of generations of your ancestors will also go to Śrī Goloka Dhām with you. Such is the glory of this Śrī Gaṅgānagar.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay. Śrī Gaṅgā Devī ki jay.

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Goswāmī Mahārāj's Śrī Chaitanya Gauḍīya Maṭh



By the mercy of our Śrī Gurupādpadma, continuing our *parikramā*, we have now come to our first holy place and stop for today – Śrī Chaitanya Gauḍīya Maṭh of Pūjyapād Om Viṣṇupād Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Goswāmī Mahārāj. Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Mahārāj was a very dear godbrother of the Founder Āchārya of our Maṭh, Om

Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. Before taking *sannyās*, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj's name was Śrī Hayagrīva Brahmachārī. We heard about him from the lotus mouth of our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Mahārāj was a very strong and strict Vaiṣṇav. We have heard that when the temple bell went off for *prasādam*, all the *brahmachārīs* would immediately come to the *prasādam* hall, and the hall was full. Seeing this, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj thought, 'What is this? When I give class, only five–six *brahmachārīs* are

present, but when it is *prasādam* time, there are twenty of them!’ Then, without saying a word to anyone, he came to the *prasādam* hall, sat on a *vyās-āsan* and, taking Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta out, said, ‘Do not mind me. Take *prasādam* with your mouths, and I will read to you; you can listen to me with your ears.’ All the disciples became shy. Such was Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj’s character.

There is also one story that happened before Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj took *sannyās*. Prabhupād Śrīla Bhakti-siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur had to go to Mathurā, and before travelling there, he had sent Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj to Delhi to rent some suitable accommodation. It happened so that Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj had to travel on the Janmāṣṭamī day. Generally, we fast the whole day until midnight on Janmāṣṭamī and take some *anukalpa prasād* (fruit, curd, potato, etc.) at night. But Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj had to go to Delhi on that day, so Śrīla Prabhupād thought, ‘He will have to make a tedious journey. If he fasts, he will have no energy, but he has got an important duty to find a house there, so he must take proper *prasādam* (rice, etc.)’ So, Śrīla Prabhupād ordered his own cook, ‘Hayagrīva is going to Delhi tomorrow, arrange for some *prasādam* for him – feed him rice, *dal*, etc.’ The cook was surprised, ‘Prabhupād must have forgotten that it is Janmāṣṭamī (fast) tomorrow... Shall I remind him?’ Then, somewhat hesitating, the cook said, ‘Prabhupād, but it is Janmāṣṭamī tomorrow...’ Śrīla Prabhupād immediately replied, ‘I know that!! You do not need to teach me!’ Hearing Śrīla Prabhupād’s shout, the cook got scared and ran away. He arranged everything as Śrīla Prabhupād had ordered. But Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj

was very strict – although he knew it was Śrīla Prabhupād’s order, he still hesitated and did not take rice that day. He went to the kitchen and told the cook, ‘If I have to take something, I will take some sago, *subji* and curd. Rice, *dal*, etc. are not necessary.’ Śrīla Prabhupād had another famous disciple, Prof. Nisikānta Sānnyāl (Bhakti Sudhākar Prabhu), whose mood was different. If he was in the place of Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj – if Prabhupād told him to take rice on Janmāṣṭamī – he would say, ‘Śrīla Prabhupād said I must take rice, then I must take rice!’ He was extremely adherent, submissive to Śrīla Prabhupād’s order. But Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj hesitated, ‘It is not necessary. I am strong enough, I shall do the duty. If Śrīla Prabhupād wants me to eat something on this day, let me have some *anukalpa* (non-grain *prasādam*).’

Our Param Śrīla Guru Mahārāj also told that one day, when there was a festival at Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh, having been busy the whole day with the arrangements of the festival, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj (Hayagrīva Prabhu at the time) did not get time to do his *mālā*. So, at midnight, after the festival, he went up to the roof and started doing his *mālā*. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj heard somebody chant on the roof and went upstairs to check. When he saw Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj there, he said, ‘Prabhu, go to bed. You have to wake up early for the *maṅgal-ārati* tomorrow. How many rounds have you done?’ Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj said, ‘Five.’ Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, ‘It is enough. Go to bed. If you take rest, then you will get strength to do even more service tomorrow, and if you try to finish your rounds now, you will have no strength and you will not be able to do anything tomorrow.’

This is our line. Śrīla Prabhupād says that we need to engage ourselves in service. Service mood can give you everything. ‘*Etat sarvam gurau bhaktyā puruṣo hy añjasā jayet.* We cannot control our senses, but it is possible to control them easily through the service to the *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs.’ This is what all scriptures say. In the time of Mahāprabhu, all rules and regulations were very strict. Mahāprabhu said, ‘I will take *prasādam* only in the house of a millionaire (*lakṣa-pati*),’ meaning, ‘I will take *prasādam* only in the house of the person who chants one hundred thousand (*lakh*) Holy Names (sixty-four rounds) every day.’ Mahāprabhu said this, but even in those days, not everybody chanted one hundred thousand Holy Names. Later, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād came and said, ‘You must chant sixteen rounds,’ but even then not everybody chanted sixteen rounds. It is necessary to chant the Holy Name, but it is necessary to chant through service:

ataḥ śrī kṛṣṇa nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ
sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ

‘Although Kṛṣṇa’s Name, form, qualities, pastimes, etc. cannot be grasped by material senses, they appear of their own accord on the tongues of those who have service mood.’ It is necessary to do service. Service comes first, and it must be genuine service; otherwise, your attempt can also go in a wrong way: if some ego comes to you, you will go down. You must try to satisfy your *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs without any ego, then you will get a proper result.

In his *brahmachārī* days, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj (Hayagrīva Prabhu) went for preaching with Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj: they went together to Madras

and also discovered Śrī Ramānanda Gauḍīya Maṭh on the bank of the Godavari in Kovvur. Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj was always very affectionate, very loving towards Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, and he always respected him as his elder brother. Sometimes, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj also visited our Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh in Nabadwīp.

After Śrīla Prabhupād's disappearance, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj had told Śrīla Guru Mahārāj many times that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj should take charge of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh, but Śrīla Guru Mahārāj did not want it. He said later, 'They all wanted me to become the *āchārya*, but if I had become the *āchārya*, then Mādhav Mahārāj, Keśav Mahārāj, Jājāvar Mahārāj and others would never have become *āchāryas*. Because I did not take disciples, they started taking disciples themselves. Later, Mādhav Mahārāj told me that I was not a king but rather more of a minister. He said that I could give good advice, I had the foresight, but I would not be able to work as a king.'

Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj initially wanted to take *sannyās* from Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, but when he came to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, he fell at his feet and said, 'Mahārāj, I wanted to beg you for *sannyās*, but I cannot give up Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Māyāpur, and I know that you will not come back there. That is why I cannot take *sannyās* from you. But please give me your mercy – give me my *sannyās* name.' Then, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave him the name Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Mahārāj.

In front of his disciples, Śrīla Mādhav Mahārāj was always very strict in his conduct and practice because he wanted to show his disciples a very strict ideal of

a *guru* without any defect. But when he visited Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj, he would act like a child, or a pet child. There was no restriction in him, even if his disciples and followers were present too. He had no independence in the association of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj. He would sleep on the floor, he would sometimes take some fried rice and *pakorās*, etc. He would become free in his dealings. But when he was separate, he was a very strict *āchārya*, observing all practices and rules, so that his disciples would not mistake him to be in an enjoying mood.

I have also heard that once one of the disciples of Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj grabbed a man by the neck and brought him to Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj, saying, ‘Gurudev, do you see? This man is distributing leaflets with things written against you!’ Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj said, ‘OK, OK, leave him. Let me see the paper.’ Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj read the paper and said, ‘Oh, what he is writing is nothing. I am actually worse than that. Please, bring a packet of sweets.’ Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj fed sweets to that man. This is what is called ‘*pratihimsā tyāji anye karabi pālana*: nurture others giving up vengeance’ Our *guru-varga* teach all this to us, and we must learn from their example.

Following our Gauḍīya Calendar, every year we observe Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj’s appearance and disappearance days, and we pray at the holy lotus feet of this Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura: wherever he may be, may he please bestow his mercy upon us.

Jay Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Mahārāj ki jay.

parama karuṇa pāhu dui jana
nitāi gaurachandra
saba avatāra- sāra śiromaṇi
kevala ānanda-kanda [1]

The two Lords, Nitāi and Gaurachandra are extremely merciful. They are two crest-jewels of all incarnations and the only source of joy.

(kevala-i ānanda kanda)
(nityānanda gaurachandra
kevala-i ānanda-kanda)

Nityānanda-Gaurachandra are the only source of joy.

bhaja bhaja bhāi chaitanya nitāi
sudṛḍha viśvāsa kari'
viṣaya chhāḍiyā se rase majiyā
mukhe bala hari hari [2]

Brother! Serve! Serve Chaitanya-Nitāi with strongest faith! Leave aside material world and everything in it, submerge yourself into this ecstasy and chant aloud, 'Hari! Hari!'

(mukhe bala gaurahari)
(viṣaya-kathā parihari'
mukhe bala gaurahari)
(grāmya-kathā parihari'
mukhe bala gaurahari)

(Chant aloud, 'Gaurahari!'
Give up mundane talks and gossips and chant aloud, 'Gaurahari!'

dekha ore bhāi tribhuvane nāi
emana dayāla dātā

Brother, listen! There is nobody as merciful as Them in the whole three worlds.

(eman dayāla ke bā āchhe)
(nitāiyera gaurera mata
eman dayāla ke bā āchhe)
(mar kheyee nāma prema yāche)
(eman dayāla ke ba āchhe)

Is there anyone else as merciful? Is there anyone as merciful as Nitāi and Gaura? Even when They are beaten, They bestow divine love. Is there anyone as merciful?

paśu pākhī jhure pāṣāṇa vidare
śunī' yāra guṇa-gāthā [3]

Hearing about Their glories makes birds and animals cry and stones melt.

saṁsāre majiyā rahili paḍiyā
se pade nahila āśa
āpana karama bhuñjāya śamana
kahaye lochana dāsa [4]

'Fallen and immersed in material life, I have never hankered for Their feet. Now I am suffering for my own previous actions,' says Lochan Dās.

Śrī Nandan Āchārya's Bhavan

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have now come to our next stop. You must all know where we have come and why we have come here. This is a very important place. This is the house (*bhavan*) of Śrī Nandan Āchārya.



As you all know, Śrī Gaurāᅅga Mahāprabhu appeared in this world in Śrī Māyāpur Dhām, and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu appeared in Śrī Ekachakrā Dhām (its contemporary, official name is Birchandrapur). Śrī Gaurāᅅga Mahāprabhu is a combined form of Śrī Śrī

Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu is Lord Balarām Himself (we also sing in one of the *kīrtans*, ‘*Balarāma haila Nitāi*: Balarām became Nitāi’). Although They assume two different forms, Kṛṣṇa and Balarām or Gaura and Nityānanda, They are in fact one, but They only manifest Themselves in two forms (*ḍui dehe eka-i rūpa*’).

When Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu was a youth of twelve years old, He left Śrī Ekachakrā Dhām in the company of a mendicant monk (*sannyāsī*) and travelled all over India, eventually reaching Vṛndāvan. There, overcome with transcendental mellows of divine love (*Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-prema*), He kept on looking for Kṛṣṇa. One day, He received a divine message from the sky, saying, ‘Kṛṣṇa has now appeared as Gaurāṅga and lives in Nadia. Go there, and You will find Kṛṣṇa.’ Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu immediately left Vṛndāvan and started off for Nabadwīp. He ran there as if mad. Sometimes He would take some milk on the way, sometimes He fasted. In this fervent state, He entered Śrī Māyāpur Dhām. Where did He first come? He came at the house of Śrī Nandan Āchārya where we are present now.

Śrī Nandan Āchārya Prabhu was a great, exalted devotee living on the bank of the Ganges in Nabadwīp together with his spouse, Śrī Sudevī Mātā. Seeing Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu’s sun-like radiance, although he could not recognise who He was, he worshipped Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu out of his natural devotion and humbly asked Him to stay at his house. This is how Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu came to stay at the house of Śrī Nandan Āchārya Prabhu. He spent here several days.

In the meantime, Mahāprabhu felt that Nityānanda Prabhu had come. Not being able to tell devotees about it openly, He had to make up some excuse. At first, He told devotees, 'A great soul will come to Māyāpur in a few days.' Devotees could not really understand what Mahāprabhu meant, so they did not say anything in reply. Later, Mahāprabhu said again, 'I had a strange dream today. I saw a chariot adorned with the flag of Balarām (featuring a palm tree) come to My house – a great soul got off the chariot and kept asking, "Where is the house of Nimāi Paṇḍit?" He must have certainly come to Māyāpur. Please go and find Him, bring Him here.'

In those days, Māyāpur was not what you can see now – there were not many houses, there were no grand temples or anything like that. Māyāpur was a small village with, perhaps, only ten–twelve houses. Moreover, there were not so many houses between Yogapīṭh (Mahāprabhu's home) and Nandan Āchārya's house. However, when devotees went to look for that great soul, who was Nityānanda Prabhu Himself, they could not find Him anywhere. They came back to Mahāprabhu and said that nobody had come to Māyāpur. Then, Mahāprabhu said, 'Have you not found Him? All right, then I will go Myself!'

Such was the pastime of Gaura-Nitāi. On the one hand, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu thought, 'My Lord must come Himself for Me – He must come Himself to bring Me!' On the other hand, Nityānanda Prabhu is so hidden and esoteric that who is actually able to find Him? Do you think that anyone and everyone can so easily get Nityānanda Prabhu's *darśan*? Can anyone and everyone

attain Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy? No. It is not so easy to find Him.

When Mahāprabhu personally went to look for Nityānanda Prabhu, He went straight to the house of Śrī Nandan Āchārya Prabhu. Curious to know who that great personality was and what was happening, all the devotees came there with Him. When Mahāprabhu entered the house of Śrī Nandan Āchārya Prabhu, He saw Nityānanda Prabhu sitting on the veranda. Seeing Gaura Hari, the Lord of His life (His 'Prāṇeśvar'), Nityānanda Prabhu looked at Him intently and, becoming overwhelmed with divine love for Him, fell unconscious. This was Their first meeting. Then, becoming overwhelmed with divine love, too, Mahāprabhu pulled Nityānanda Prabhu up, seated Him on His lap and embraced Him. Both began to roll on the ground, swooning with divine love and crying. All the devotees (Haridās Ṭhākur, Śrīvās Paṇḍit, Chandrasekhara Āchārya and others) were astonished to see this meeting – everyone began to chant *kīrtan* out of great joy.

After that, Mahāprabhu took Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and all the devotees to Śrīvās Paṇḍit Prabhu's house; and from then on, Nityānanda Prabhu mostly stayed there, together with Śrīvās Paṇḍit and his spouse, Śrī Mālinī Devī. He was very much like a son to them.

We should understand that when you stay within strict adherence to Vaiṣṇavs (when you devotedly follow their instructions, with all sincerity and chastity), you can see everything; otherwise, without making any effort, without hearing anything, you will not see anything, you will not get any result.



This temple here at Śrī Nandan Āchārya's Bhavan was established by a most worshipping great Vaiṣṇav and a godbrother of our Param Guru Mahārāj, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj – Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. You should know who Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī

Mahārāj is and what is our connection and relationship with him. You must remember this connection because without the knowledge of the relationship (*sambandha-jñāna*), you will develop neither the knowledge of *abhidheya* (the means to attain the goal) nor the knowledge of *prayojana* (the goal).

Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj (his *brahmachārī* name was Śrī Aprākṛta Prabhu) was a prominent disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur. When Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur entered his eternal pastimes, Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj (Aprākṛta Prabhu at the time), although a very senior *brahmachārī* preacher, left the *brahmacharya āśram* and went back to his house in great distress. His was born in a village called Patrasayer (our Betur temple is situated nearby). After some time, Śrīla Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj come to Śrī Aprākṛta Prabhu and said, 'Prabhu, you are living a family life now, let it be, but if you stay here, who will preach the conception of Mahāprabhu

and Śrīla Prabhupād in this world? You have so much qualification for service and preaching – you *must* come back.’ Then, Śrīla Aprākṛta Prabhu said, ‘If you give me *sannyās*, I will leave my home and family and come back.’ Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj agreed and gave him *sannyās* and the name Śrī Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. From that time, he came back to his preaching services.

Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj began to preach in various places. Trying to fulfil the earnest desire of Śrīla Prabhupād to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj even went to London, where he kept preaching and, eventually, after much effort and having tolerated much austerity, managed to open a small centre. He also has temples in Kolkata, Jalpaiguri and other places. In his lifetime, he established twenty-four centres in various places, among which is the temple in Imlitalā, Vṛndāvan, where Kṛṣṇa was sitting when He decided that He would steal Rādhārāṇī’s heart and halo and come as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj always helped our Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh in various ways, especially during *parikramās* and with collection. Later, he finally established this temple here, at the place where the first meeting of Śrī Śrī Gaura Nityānanda Prabhu took place. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj had come here together with Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj to see the land, and he gave Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj much advice on what kind of temple to make, on the size of the *nāṭ mandir* and other aspects.

There is much that can be said about Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. After taking *sannyās* in 1940,

he always kept in touch with Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj. Our Śrīla Gurudev, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, said:

‘Once, Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj gave a very special lecture. He explained that he and other great preachers were active in all directions, but they all waited to see what Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj thought about the quality of their preaching style. He used the phrase *siṃha avalokana* (a lion’s glance), saying, “We are preaching over the whole world, but from time to time we look back to see whether Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj is happy with our preaching activities.” “*Siṃha avalokana*” means when a lion goes some distance, it stops and looks behind to check the environment, then proceeds further, then again looks behind, and so on. In this way, Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj described how all the preachers again and again looked towards Śrīla Guru Maharaj to see if their preaching had his approval.

‘Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj was the dearest disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswāmī Ṭhākura – Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura depended on his service. At the same time, although Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj takes a unique position in Gauḍīya Mission, he was very affectionate to our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. I have never seen him go against any decision of our Guru Mahārāj; we can say he almost blindly followed whatever Guru Mahārāj decided, but he was not a blind man – he had much faith in Guru Mahārāj.’

Moreover, one year, during the circumambulation of Vṛndāvan, Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj personally worshipped Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj with one hundred and eight lamps, incense and other paraphernalia

on the occasion of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's appearance day. Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj performed this function, joined by many of his disciples and other godbrothers.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj was Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj's godbrother and *sannyās-guru*, but it is remarkable what kind of respect he had for Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. Every year, Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj's disciples would arrange a very fine Vyāsa-pūjā celebration on the appearance day of Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj, and Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj would personally go to Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh to invite Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj to come to his temple on that day. Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj usually did not go to other temples, but he would always come to the temple of Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj (this very temple where we are sitting now). Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj not only invited Śrīla Guru Mahārāj – he would give whatever presentations, whatever donations or gifts he had received from his disciples on that day to his *sannyās-guru*, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

One year, showing a pastime of feeling unwell, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj could not come to the festival in honour of Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj's appearance, and that day Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj said, 'Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj has been coming every year, and I have been getting one more year of life, but since he could not come this year, I think I will not be alive next year.' And this is what happened – a few months later, on 26 May 1964, Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj entered his eternal pastimes.

After him, the *āchārya* of the temple was Śrīla Bhakti Suhr̥ḍ Akiñchan Goswāmī Mahārāj. He loved my Śrīla

Gurudev very much. In 1995, when we were celebrating a grand festival in honour of Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj's centenary anniversary, Śrīla Gurudev ordered me, 'Śrīla Bhakti Suhr̥d Akiñchan Goswāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Bhakti Kumud Shānta Goswāmī Mahārāj wanted to come, so go to Māyāpur and bring them here.' I took a driver and brought Śrīla Shānta Mahārāj and Śrīla Akiñchan Mahārāj to our temple in the Ambassador car (the one that is still kept in our temple in Nabadwīp).

Also, my Gurupādpadma, Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, composed the *praṇām-mantra* of Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj:

divyaṁ dīrgha-bhujāravinda-nayanam sārasvataṁ sundaram
tejo-dīpta-vapubudhaika-suhr̥dam karbūra-garvāpaham
pāṣaṇḍāsura-chaṇḍa-daṇḍa dalanam dambhādri-dambholikam
vandevandya-kulābja-bhāskara-vibhumsāraṅga-gosvāminam

'I offer my obeisance unto the beautiful follower of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, Śrīmad Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. He possesses a radiant form, long arms and lotus eyes. He crushes the pride of the wicked and squashes the cruel oppression of the heretics and demons. He is like a thunderbolt striking the mountain of hypocrisy. He is the sole friend of the intelligentsia and a shining sun above the lotus of the aristocracy.'

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Coming to this temple, we must also speak about one more great Vaiṣṇava, Śrīla Bhakti Kiraṇa Giri Mahārāj. Every year, he would lead our Maṭh's *parikramās* of Śrī Nabadwīp



and Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām. In the end, he spent his last days living here, at this Śrī Nandan Āchārya Bhavan. Śrīla Bhakti Kiraṇ Gīri Mahārāj took *sannyās* from Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj although he was a prominent disciple of Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj.

Our Gurudev, Om Viṣṇupād Jagad-guru Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda

Dev- Goswāmī Mahārāj, told about him:

‘Śrīmad Bhakti Kiraṇ Gīri Mahārāj is my very old friend and a very close servitor of Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. He is also an affectionate *sannyās* disciple of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. He knows me very well and has been very affectionate to me since my childhood. When I prayed to him, “I have no other way unless you join our mission for the *parikramā*,” Śrīla Bhakti Kiraṇ Gīri Mahārāj replied, “It is my duty to do it, so I must come”. From that, you can understand what relationship he has with our Mission.

‘Śrīmad Bhakti Kiraṇ Gīri Mahārāj is actually the leader of our *sankīrtan* party of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*. He gives us much enthusiasm with his service mood, and he is very affectionate to me. He always makes us remember Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s mercy. Although he is a disciple of Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj, he took

sannyās from our beloved Guru Mahārāj because he knows the mood of his *gurudev* (he distributes his mercy all over the world) and he knows how much affection and respect his *gurudev* had for our Guru Mahārāj.

‘Every year, Śrīmad Bhakti Kiraṇ Gīri Mahārāj joins our temple for the service of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj during Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parīkramā* and comes at other times, too. He inspires me a lot in the service to my Guru Mahārāj, and he is my very good friend. People here like to say, “He is my friend”, “He is my friend”, but what does a real friend mean?

sei se parama bandhu sei pitā-mātā
 śrī-kṛṣṇa-charaṇe yei prema-bhakti-dātā
 aneka janme pitā-mātā sabe pāya
 kṛṣṇa-guru nāhi mile bhajaha hiyāya

‘Those who give divine love for the holy lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are my greatest friends – they are my father and my mother. Everybody gets a father and a mother in many births, but it is not in every birth that you can worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Guru in your heart.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-maṅgala, Madhya)

‘Our real friends are those who give us real inspiration to serve the Lord, to serve our *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs. In this way, I can say that Śrīmad Bhakti Kiraṇ Gīri Mahārāj is my real friend: he always gives me enthusiasm to serve Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. He is very humble and always tries to satisfy Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. Bowing down at his holy lotus feet, I always pray to him, “Please give me your mercy so that I can serve my Lord, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.” I bow

down at his lotus feet and pray that he must be merciful to me, that he must always be with me until my death.'

Śrīpād Giri Mahārāj fulfilled this desire of our Śrī Gurupādpadma – he came to our Nabadwīp Temple (in Koladwīp) at the time when Śrīla Gurudev showed the pastime of leaving this world. Six years later, in 2016, he himself left us all and entered his eternal pastimes...

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Coming to this supremely worshipping place, we humbly pray that wherever these exalted great Vaiṣṇavs are now, may they mercifully cast a glance upon the fallen, lowly souls like us, may they give us the right to do service and always keep us engaged in any small service to our Śrī Gurupādpadma.

Jay Śrī Nandan Āchārya's Bhavan ki jay.

Śrī Nandan Āchārya Prabhu ki jay.

Śrī Śrī Gaura Nityānanda Prabhu ki jay.

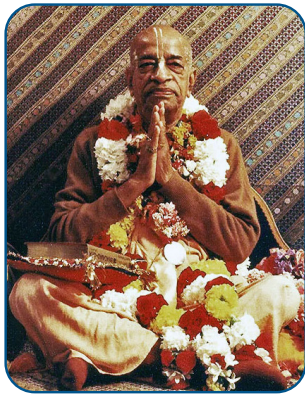
Oṃ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj ki jay.

Oṃ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Suhr̥d Akiñchan Goswāmī Mahārāj ki jay.

Parama-pūjyapād Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kiraṅ Giri Mahārāj ki jay.

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Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād's Mission



By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, leaving Śrī Nandan Āchārya's Bhavan, we have now arrived at the headquarters of ISKCON (International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness) and the *puṣpa-samādhi-mandir* of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur.

Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Abhay Charaṇāravinda Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād laid a channel to the West, and so many devotees are now coming through that channel. But for his mercy, we would not have been able to conceive today that anything like this could be possible. We feel very happy to be getting the association of international devotees now.

You have all heard that Śrīman Mahāprabhu made the following prediction:

“pṛthivīte yata āchhe nagarādi grāma
sarvatra prachāra haibe mora nāma”

‘My Name will spread to every village and town on this earth.’

Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur Prabhupād tried in many ways to spread the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-kathā and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* in the West and East – he had sent many disciples abroad, but they were not particularly successful. However, Prabhupād Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur had a disciple upon whom he bestowed special mercy – this great soul and exalted Vaiṣṇav is Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj preached all over the world and succeeded in conquering all Western and Eastern countries through Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj met our Śrīla Param Guru Mahārāj (Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj) for the first time in Allahabad when Śrīla Guru Mahārāj went there for preaching. Both had not yet taken *sannyās* at that time – Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was a *brahmachārī*, and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj was a *gṛhastha*. After their meeting, they very soon developed a very close friendship.

When Prabhupād Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur entered his eternal pastimes and some time later our Param Guru Mahārāj established Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād invited Śrīla Guru Mahārāj to stay at his house at 7–8 Sitakanta Banerjee Lane, Kolkata. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj accepted the invitation and stayed there for eight or ten years with our Gurupādpadma, Oṃ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. During this time, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would often participate in various preaching programmes in Kolkata together with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād was always very enthusiastic to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes, he would also take our Śrī Gurupādpadma for preaching — he would tell Śrīla Gurudev (at that time Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj was a *grhastha*, and Śrīla Gurudev a *brahmachārī*), ‘Gaurendu, you are wearing saffron clothes, so you will sit on the *vyāsa-āsan* and read *Bhāgavatam*, and I will sit on the ground and give explanation.’ Sometimes, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj would also take Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj for preaching. In whichever possible way, wherever there was any opportunity to preach, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj always wanted to preach. Although he was a *grhastha*, he would go door to door, trying to preach.

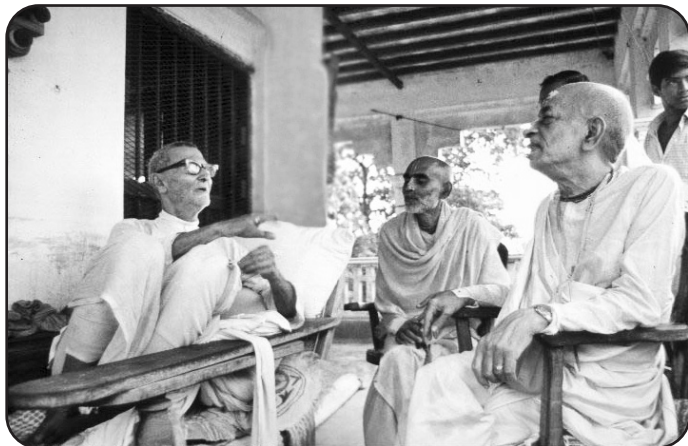
I have heard from my Śrī Gurupādpadma that when he stayed in Kolkata with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, he would sometimes go begging door to door. One day, somebody asked him, ‘Why are you worshipping Kṛṣṇa and not Kālī?’ Gurudev was a new *brahmachārī* at that time, so he did not think of any reply, but when he came back home and asked Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj about it, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj smiled and said:

‘Gaurendu, could you not say something in reply to that gentleman? Why did you not tell him what the worship of Kālī gives one? If you worship Kālī, what will you eat and who will be your friends? Have you seen Mā Kālī’s *muṇḍa-mālā* (a garland of heads)? Are there any Vaiṣṇava *tilaks* (forehead marks) on this garland? None! All *tilaks* are *asura tilaks* (marks of demons)! And how does Mā Kālī live? Your Mā Kālī lives naked – she attracts you by showing you her tongue, and although you are her

son, you run to enjoy with her. As soon as you come close to her, she grabs you by the hair, cuts off your head and puts it on her neck as a garland or sometimes throws it to jackals and ghosts! She always runs in all directions, and her husband, Sivjī Mahārāj, has to fall at her feet to stop her! This is your mother for you. But if you worship Lord Kṛṣṇa, you will get so many nice things, such as the bank of the Yamunā, beautiful forests, groves, gardens, fragrant flowers, sweets, nectar. It is a transcendental environment. There, you will eat curd, cheese, condensed milk, laddus, luchi, transcendental fruit and other delicious things – you will get there all these nice things, and you will play, dance, chant and enjoy *rasa-līlā* with Lord Kṛṣṇa. And if you worship Kālī, you will go to the cremation *ghāṭ*, where dead bodies are burnt. You will see there many jackals, witches and demons – and you, too, getting a form like them, will dance drinking blood of demons and liquor. The choice is yours, so do as you like.’ Such was Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s preaching. ‘I am giving you an alternative. If you go in this direction, you will get this; and if you go in that direction, you will get that. If you like to drink blood and wine, if you like witches and ghosts, then go ahead and worship Kālī.’

When Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj stayed in Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s house, they spent much time together every day, discussing Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Many years later, having witnessed their spirited conversation and not being able to understand the language (they were speaking in Bengali), one of the foreign devotees asked Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, ‘Prabhupād, what were you talking

about?’ In reply, Śrīla Prabhupād only said, ‘If I tell you, you will faint!’ Such was the relationship between Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.



Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur had a very clear desire – he wanted to spread Kṛṣṇa-kathā, Mahāprabhu’s message and prediction door to door all over the world. When Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj first came to Śrīla Prabhupād, Śrīla Prabhupād looked at him and said, ‘You are an educated person. You can preach Mahāprabhu’s message to the English-speaking world. You can preach in the West.’ Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj always remembered these words and was extremely enthusiastic to preach. In the end, he felt such a deep inspiration to fulfil the desire of his *gurudev* that he decided to leave his family and take *sannyās*.

At first, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj came to Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj to ask him for *sannyās*, but Śrīla

Guru Mahārāj said, ‘Prabhu, I have some relationship with your family. If I give you *sannyās*, they will hate me because I stayed at your house comfortably and they will say that now I am taking the husband away from the family. They will all accuse me of breaking the family. It does not look good, and it will be inauspicious for you also. Besides, we are friends – if you take *sannyās* from me, how can I think of you as my disciple? You will also be unable to give me respect as your *sannyās-guru*. Here is what I suggest though. Go to Vṛndāvan, stay there for six months or a year, and then you can take *sannyās* and leave. In this case, nobody will blame me.’ But Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj did not agree. He said, ‘No, Mahārāj. I cannot wait for so long. I want to take *sannyās* now and go abroad right away.’ Then, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj said, ‘Then go to Śrīpād Keśava Mahārāj. I will tell you your *sannyās* name, and as for the *mantra*, I have given it to him, so you can take *sannyās* from him. It will be good – then you can maintain the same relationship with me as before.’ Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj did so.

After taking *sannyās*, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj went to Vṛndāvan and stayed at the Rādhā-Dāmodar temple, where he translated *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* into English. Some time later, he felt a strong inspiration that he had to go abroad. Before leaving, he asked Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj for his blessing. He sent a letter to him, saying, ‘Mahārāj, please bestow your mercy on me. I am going abroad. Please give me your blessing so that I can preach there.’ Then, in 1965, despite his age – he was sixty-nine years old(!) at that time – Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj travelled to America

virtually empty-handed, with almost no money. He only had some clothes and a trunk full of scriptures with him. Tolerating all danger and austerity, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj started preaching in the US. We have heard that he would sit alone under a tree in some park, play *kartāls* and chant the *mahā-mantra*, and all the hippies would flock and dance around him. Gradually, some people noticed him and starting coming regularly to listen Kṛṣṇa-kathā from him. In this way, through much struggle and relentless effort, in full surrender at the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj conquered the mind of foreigners and succeeding in planting the seeds of devotional creeper in that soil. When my Śrīla Gurupādpadma, Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, heard how much austerity Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj had to tolerate there and how he manifested his *paramahansa* mood (the highest transcendental devotional mood), he said, *‘I want to break my head at Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s lotus feet!’*

One time, when Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj was preaching abroad, he fell very sick. Feeling apprehensive, he sent a letter to Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, asking, ‘Mahārāj, I have left Vṛndāvan, and I am so far away now. Having fallen sick recently, I am thinking I may not survive this time. What should I do now? Should I return to India or stay here? I will do as you say.’ Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj wrote in reply, ‘Mahārāj, you are not an ordinary person. You are preaching in the West, and it is your great fortune. You have done what many great Vaiṣṇavs have tried but have been unable to do before! So, wherever you are, you are always in Vṛndāvan. Do not worry. Besides,

you are actually turning the West into Vṛndāvan through your good association and Hari-kathā.’ When Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj read this, he felt peaceful and did not return to India at that time.

A few years later, when Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj decided to return to India together with a few foreign disciples, he sent letters to all his godbrothers informing them of his return, but nobody wanted to accept him at that time – everybody had a strict brahmanical mentality and thought that because he had gone to the *mlechha* countries, he must have become a *mlechha* himself. Therefore, nobody wanted to keep any connection with him. However, when Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj heard the news about Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s imminent arrival, he became very excited and happy – he told Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, ‘Gaurendu, immediately send him a reply. Say that he can stay here, and try to arrange a proper reception in Nabadwīp in honour of his arrival.’ Śrīla Gurudev arranged everything, and all the godbrothers from Gauḍīya Maṭh also came there because the reception had been organised by Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj: everybody held Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj in very high esteem, so when they saw that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj praised Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, they too started to praise him.

You all know how Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj lived and what his nature was like. He slept on a broken bed, wore clothes that must have had a hundred stitched holes. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was very simple. So, when he heard Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj was coming from the West, he became excited and cleaned his room and bed, thinking, ‘Śrīla Swāmī

Mahārāj will stay here and sleep on this bed!’ However, when Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj came to our Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh temple in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām and saw that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj had prepared his room for him, he said to our Gurudev (Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, at that time his name was Gaurendu Brahmachārī), ‘Gosh, this is Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj’s bed! Am I to stay in the room that I pay my obeisance to? It is impossible! I will not sleep on my Master’s bed. What to speak of sleeping on this bed, I cannot even sit on it! Listen, Gaurendu, where is your room? I will stay with you!’ So, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj spent some days in our Maṭh, living together with our Gurudev.

When Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj returned from the West, he first met with Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj and told him everything: how he preached, how the preaching was spreading in the West, etc. Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj was very pleased to hear it.

After that, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj bought this land in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur and established here the headquarters of ISKCON. This Śrī Chandradaya Mandir was inaugurated in 1973. Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj had invited all his godbrothers to the inauguration, and Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj came to the inauguration ceremony with Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj (Gaurendu Brahmachārī at the time) and Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Bābājī Mahārāj. When they came there, Śrīla Gurudev asked Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, ‘Mahārāj, you have invited us to the inauguration of the temple, but I cannot see any *yajña* (fire sacrifice)...’ Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj replied, ‘What need is there for a *yajña*? Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj has come, so the temple is already inaugurated!’ He gave Śrīla Guru

Mahārāj so much respect. That day, during the lecture, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj requested Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj to speak some Hari-kathā, but Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj said, 'I am not feeling very well today, so Gaurendu Prabhu will say something on my behalf.' During his lecture, Śrīla Gurudev recited a peculiar śloka:

**kam-prati kathayitum īse sam-prati ko vā pratītim āyātu
go-pati-tanayā-kuñje gopa-vadhūtī-vidāṇ brahma**

'To whom can I speak? Who will believe me when I say that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is hunting gopīs in the bushes by the banks of the Yamunā? In this way the Lord demonstrates His pastimes.'

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 2.19.98)

He said, 'Whom shall I tell and who will believe it if I say that the Supreme Lord is playing in a jungle with some milkmaids? In the same way, whom shall I tell that our Abhay Bābū, whom we all know as a simple householder, has now become a great Jagad-Guru and is spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world? He has done impossible work!' As soon as Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Bābājī Mahārāj heard this śloka and understood what Śrīla Gurudev was going to say, he jumped up and cried, '*Hari bol! Hari bol!*' That day, hearing Śrīla Gurudev's lecture, everybody was very pleased, and at the end, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj also said about our Śrīla Gurudev, 'He is my dearest son!'

Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj said about Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj:

'Our Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj has done a miracle! What Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur conceived and Śrīla

Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur Prabhupād tried, according to his conception, to put into action, we find that those revelations have been fulfilled through Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj in his last days. We are happy, we are glad, we are proud of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj! Moreover, it is not a small thing that Mahāprabhu’s grace has been spread all over the world through Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. I have gradually come to realise that he is a *śaktyāvesa avatāra* – some divine potency has descended unto him. Ordinary things can be spread, but it is not an ordinary deed to distribute such things of the highest quality so extensively all over the world. Some divine potency came down to him. It is very rare to find such a saint amongst millions of Vaiṣṇavs, but I can see that by his grace this greatest gift is now being thrown around all over the world without any restriction. We see transcendental *vaiṣṇava* perfection in him, and this is all inconceivable. Mahāprabhu said, “*Prthivīte āchhe yata nagarādi grāma sarvatra prachāra haibe mora Nāma*. My Name will spread to every village and town on earth,” and this was Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s intent. He has always been very affectionate and kind towards me; this is my great fortune.’

In the end, the Lord fulfilled His devotee’s desire – it was Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s heart-felt desire to leave his body in Vṛndāvan. In the end, he had grown very weak. He was lying on his bed when suddenly he threw his arms in the air and shouted, ‘Hare! Hare Kṛṣṇa!!’ and after that entered his eternal abode and eternal pastimes...

We all pray at the holy lotus feet of this Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj that even now, when he is in his abode in Goloka Vṛndāvan, he may bestow his mercy on us so that we

could serve devotees by his grace. We do not know how long, how many more days we will be alive in this world, but we only pray, 'Please, give us some mercy, please give us some place at your holy lotus feet.' Everybody must pray for the mercy of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj.

Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupād ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Śrī Dhām parikramā-pālankārī bhakta-ṛṇda ki jay.



(ohe) vaiṣṇava ṭhākura, dayāra sāgara,
e dāse karuṇā kari
diyā pada-chhāyā, śodha he āmāre,
tomāra charaṇa dhari [1]

O Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur, ocean of mercy! Please be merciful to this servant. Grant me the shade of your feet and purify me. I am clasping your feet.

chhaya vega dami', chhaya doṣa śodhi,
chhaya guṇa deha dāse
chhaya sat-saṅga, deha he āmāre,
basechhi saṅgera āśe [2]

Please subjugate my six urges [*speech, mind, anger, tongue, stomach, genitals*], rectify my six defects [*greed, doing what is unfavourable to devotion, idle talks, attachment to inferior rules, material association, fickle-mindedness*] and bestow the six good qualities [*enthusiasm, faith, patience, doing what is favourable to devotion, avoiding bad association, following sādhus' practices*] upon this servant. Please grant me six kinds of good association [*giving devotees gifts, taking gifts from devotees, confiding in devotees, enquiring from devotees, taking prasād, feeding devotees prasād*]. I am waiting, hoping to attain this association.

ekākī āmāra, nāhi pāya bala,
hari-nāma-saṅkīrtane
tumi kṛpā kari, śraddhā-bindu diyā,
deha kṛṣṇa-nāma-dhane [3]

Alone I am not getting the strength to chant the Lord's Name. Please give me a drop of faith and bestow upon me the treasure of Kṛṣṇa's Name.

kṛṣṇa se tomāra kṛṣṇa dite pāra
tomāra śakati āchhe
āmi ta kāṅgāla 'kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa' bali
dhāi tava pāchhe pāchhe [4]

Kṛṣṇa is yours, so you have the power to give Kṛṣṇa. Yet, I am very poor – calling out, 'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!' I am running after you.

**hari bolo hari bolo hari bolo bhāi re !
hari-nāma āniyāchhe gaurāᅅga nitāi re [1]
(moder duᅅkha dekhe re)**

Chant the Lord's Name! Chant the Lord's Name! Brother, chant the Lord's Name! Gaurāᅅga and Nitāi have brought this Holy Name (seeing our misery).

**hari-nāma binā jīvera anya dhana nāi re
harināme śuddha hala jagāi mādhāi re [2]
(baᅅa pāpī chhilo re)**

Except for this Holy Name, *jīva* souls have no other wealth. Jagāi and Mādhāi became pure by chanting this Holy Name (although they were great sinners)!

**michhe māyā-baddha haye jīvana kāᅅai re
(āmi āmār bole re)
āśāpaśe ghure ghure āra kothā yāi re [3]
(niraśa ta sukha re)**

I spend my life in the false bondage of Māyā (considering that I belong to myself). Having roamed in every possible direction, I do not know where else to go now. (There is no hope for happiness!)

**hari bole deo bhāi āśāra mukhe chhāi re
(niraśa ta sukha re)
bhoga-mokᅅa-vāñchhā chāᅅi' harināma gāi re [4]
(śuddha-sattva haye re)**

Brother, chant the Holy Name! Throw ash into the face of all such hopes! (There is no hope for happiness!) Chant the Holy Name of the Lord, giving up desire for enjoyment and liberation. (Establish yourself in pure goodness!)

**nā cheyeo nāmera guᅅe o saba phala pāi re
(tuchhha phalera prayāsa cheᅅe re)
vinoda bole yāi laye nāmera bālāi re [5]
(nāmer bālāi cheᅅe re)**

You will get all result (enjoyment, liberation, etc.) on the strength of the inherent quality of the Holy Name, without even wishing for it. (Give up your endeavours towards this trifle gain.) Vinod says such things are attained even by offensive chanting of the Holy Name. (So, give up offences to the Holy Name!)

Śrī Bārakoṇā Ghāṭ and Śrī Mādhāi Ghāṭ

As we continue our *parikramā* of Śrī Antardwīp, we have now, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, come to Śrī Mādhāi Ghāṭ. There is also Śrī Bārakoṇā Ghāṭ nearby (since the current of the Ganges changed, it has existed in a hidden way), and near Śrī Bārakoṇā Ghāṭ is the house of Śrī Śachī Mātā and Śrī Jagannāth Miśra. Many very special pastimes of Mahāprabhu took place here.

In the time of Mahāprabhu, Nabadwīp was a renowned place of education (it was often called the ‘Oxford’ of India). One time, an old *paṇḍit* called Keśav Kāśmīrī, who had conquered all great scholars of Kashmir and Kasi, came here desiring to conquer Nabadwīp. When he arrived, he heard from the prominent *māyāvādīs* and *gosāñīs* that Nimāi Paṇḍit was the most erudite scholar among all scholars of Nabadwīp and that everybody would come to Him if they wanted to learn something.

At that time, Mahāprabhu Nimāi Viśvambhar was only a sixteen-year-old boy, and He was teaching Sanskrit primary grammar. One day, Mahāprabhu went with His pupils to the bank of the Ganges and started discussing some grammar points. Seeing Nimāi’s extraordinary radiance from afar, Digvijayī Paṇḍit (*‘digvijayī’* means one who has conquered all scholars) came up to Him to

talk. Nimāi treated Digvijayī Paṇḍit with much respect – He gave him a seat on a raised platform and said, ‘We are very fortunate that you have come to us today. You have conquered so many places, there is no scholar who could match you.’ Hearing Nimāi’s sweet words, Digvijayī Paṇḍit became even prouder.

‘Everybody says You are a great *paṇḍit*,’ he said. ‘What do You teach?’

‘Nothing special,’ replied Nimāi. ‘Actually, I have not studied anything, so I am only teaching Sanskrit primary grammar.’

‘Primary grammar of Sanskrit? But this is nothing! Have you not read the Vedas and the *Vedānta*?’

‘My *guru* never ordered Me to study all this,’ Nimāi explained. ‘Considering Me a fool, My *guru* told Me to engage in *Hari-kīrtan* – He told me to always chant and dance. So, apart from that, I do not know anything.’

kibā mantra dilā, gosāñi, kibā tāra bala
japite japite mantra karila pāgala

‘What mantra have you given Me, Gosāi? What sort of power does it possess? I have been chanting this mantra, and it has driven Me mad!’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 1.7.81)

‘All right,’ Digvijayī Paṇḍit said then, ‘but everybody praises You, and even I have heard Your name.’

‘People are affectionate to Me, that is why they say many things.’ Then, Nimāi Paṇḍit folded His palms and said, ‘Prabhu, can I ask you for something? As we are sitting here on the bank of the Ganges, can you say something in glorification of the Ganges?’

‘I can, but how will You be able to understand the glories of the Ganges? You are just a primary-grammar teacher! You have not even read the Vedas and the *Vedānta!*’

‘Well, I will try,’ replied Nimāi.

Then, Digvijayī Paṇḍit started to recite *ślokas* at a lightening speed. Having recited a hundred *ślokas*, he stopped, and Nimāi Paṇḍit said, ‘We cannot understand everything, but if you could explain to us the meaning of one–two *ślokas*, perhaps, we will understand something.’

Digvijayī Paṇḍit decided to test Nimāi Paṇḍit, so he asked Him, ‘I have spoken many verses, which verse’s meaning would you like to hear?’

‘This one,’ said Nimāi and recited the verse:

mahattvaṃ gaṅgayāḥ satatamidamābhāti nitarām
yadeṣā śrī-viṣṇoś-charaṇa-kamalotpatti-subhagā
dviṭīya-śrī-lakṣmīr iva suranair archchya-charaṇā
bhavānī-bharturyā śirasi vibhavaty-adbhuta-guṇā

‘The greatness of Mother Ganges always exists brilliantly. She is most fortunate because she emanates from the lotus feet of Supreme Lord Viṣṇu. She is a second goddess of fortune, and therefore she is always worshipped by both demigods and humans. Endowed with all wonderful qualities, she flourishes on the head of Lord Śiva.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 1.16.41)

Digvijayī Paṇḍit was taken aback, ‘I spoke those verses at a lightening speed, how could You remember this particular verse?!’

“prabhu kahe, devera bare tumi ‘kavi-bara’
aichhe devera bare keha haya ‘śruti-dhara’”

Prabhu said, 'By the mercy of the Lord, you are known as a great poet; similarly, by the mercy of the Lord, somebody else can also be blessed with great memory (can remember everything by hearing it just once).'

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 1.16.41)

'You have got a boon from Saraswatī Devī,' replied Nimāi Paṇḍit, 'and I have also got a boon from her – I can remember everything just by hearing it once.'

Annoyed, Digvijayī Paṇḍit explained the meaning of the verse, but his explanation was full of *māyāvād* conception. Nimāi Paṇḍit said, 'We are fortunate to hear the explanation of the verse's meaning, but could you tell us about the merits and faults in the composition of this verse?'

Getting even more annoyed, Digvijayī Paṇḍit cried out, 'Faults?! There are no faults in this verse! All that I have said is correct!'

'Yes, of course,' replied Mahāprabhu, 'but even great scholars can make a mistake. I see that there is some mistake in the verse.'

'If You see it, then You say what it is.'

'If you do not become angry, I will say it.' Then, Mahāprabhu explained everything, and He explained everything in such a way that Digvijayī Paṇḍit's head drooped.

The pupils began to laugh, but Mahāprabhu scolded them, 'Hey, what are you doing? Stop it! Stop it!' and then said to Digvijayī Paṇḍit humbly, 'Prabhu, please do not take My offence; please forgive Me. They do not understand anything. You are a great scholar, but, perhaps,

you are not feeling well today or you are not in the mood. Come tomorrow, we can meet and talk again.'

Returning to his room at night, Keśav Kāśmīrī did not eat anything. He kept thinking, 'I have come to Nabadwīp to defeat all scholars, but I have been defeated by a small boy! O Devī! What offence have I made to you? You have told me that nobody in this world would be able to defeat me!' With these thoughts in his mind, he went to rest, and at night, Saraswatī Devī appeared to him in a dream and said, 'O Digvijayī Paṇḍit, O Keśav Kāśmīrī! Wake up! I have come to see you. Do you know who defeated you today? Do you know who He is? Did you recognise Him? What I told you is true – nobody in this world can defeat you; but He is not a man of this world. He may look like an ordinary man, but He is actually the Lord Himself!'

**īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāranam**

'Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, for He is the prime cause of all causes.'

(Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā, 5.1)

'He is my Lord, my Husband! You have become my disciple, and now you have got the highest teachings from Him. Go to Him again tomorrow and apologise.'

Next day, when Mahāprabhu was going to bath in the Ganges, Digvijayī Paṇḍit saw Nimāi and cried out to Him from afar, 'Prabhu! Wait! Hold on!' Catching up with Nimāi, Digvijayī Paṇḍit clasped His feet, and Mahāprabhu said, 'Kāśmīrī! Is that you? You are a world-renowned paṇḍit, why are you touching My feet?! What are you

doing?’ Digvijayī Paṇḍit pleaded, ‘Prabhu, please do not deceive Me any more. I could not recognise You before, but Saraswatī Devī, from whom I have learnt everything, has told me who You are. Please forgive my offence, I am surrendering at Your holy lotus feet. Please accept me.’

This is how Mahāprabhu rescued Digvijayī Paṇḍit here, at this very Bārakoṇā Ghāṭ. Also, the place where we are sitting right now is called Śrī Mādhāi Ghāṭ, and one very famous pastime took place here.

When Mahāprabhu began preaching, He first appointed Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākur as His generals in the preaching field. He instructed them:

“śuna śuna nityānanda, śuna haridāsa
sarvatra āmāra ājñā karaha prakāśa
prati ghare ghare giyā kara ei bhikṣā
‘bala kṛṣṇa, bhaja kṛṣṇa, kara kṛṣṇa śikṣā’
ihā bai āra nā balibā, balāibā
dina-avasāne āsi’ āmāre kahibā”

‘Listen, listen, Nityānanda! Listen, Haridās! Make My order known everywhere – go to each and every house and beg everyone, “Say Kṛṣṇa, worship Kṛṣṇa, learn about Kṛṣṇa!” Do not speak or hear about anything except that. In the evening, come to Me and tell Me the news.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 2.13.8-10)

‘Listen, Nitāi! Listen, Haridās!’ Mahāprabhu said. ‘I am ordering you to go door to door and tell people about Kṛṣṇa. Tell people to chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, tell them to accept the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And at night, come back to Me and tell Me what has happened during the day.’

Following this order, Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridās Ṭhākur started preaching house to house in Nadia.

In the meantime, there were two sinful drunkard brothers, Jagāi and Mādhāi, who had been roaming around different places. One day, they came to Nabadwīp and decided to stay at the *ghāṭ* where Mahāprabhu usually bathed. At night, when Mahāprabhu chanted *kīrtan* at the house of Śrīla Śrīvās Paṇḍit, they could hear the sounds of the chanting and would start dancing, singing and drinking even more.

One night, Nityānanda Prabhu was passing by that *ghāṭ*, and this was when He saw them for the first time. The next day, He told Haridās Ṭhākur, ‘Haridās, you know, there are two drunkards living at the *ghāṭ* of our Lord. Everyone is scared to even look at them, but if we come to them and tell them to chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, then everyone will think, “Look, Jagāi and Mādhāi are chanting the Holy Name!” and they will become even more enthusiastic to chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa!’

Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākur agreed, and Nityānanda Prabhu immediately rushed to the *ghāṭ* – He ran so fast that Haridās Ṭhākur, who was already rather old at that time, could not keep up with Him. Looking behind, Nityānanda Prabhu kept calling him, ‘Haridās! Are you coming? Come, come!’ Haridās Ṭhākur replied, ‘I am coming, I am coming. You go first, and I am coming behind You.’ When people on the street saw where Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridās Ṭhākur were heading, they warned them, ‘Be careful! Where are you two going? They are horrible and dangerous people! Do not go there! They will kill you!’

Starting to feel uneasy, Haridās Ṭhākur said, ‘Nitāi, have You heard what these people are saying?’ But Nityānanda Prabhu did not care. He only said, ‘Do not be afraid! Come with Me!’

When they reached the *ghāṭ*, they approached Jagāi and Mādhāi. Seeing both brothers stark drunk, Nityānanda Prabhu, the rescuer of the fallen and mercy incarnate, said, ‘Brothers! Say, “Kṛṣṇa”!’ The brothers got angry and threatened Nityānanda Prabhu, ‘Who are You? Get out of here! Otherwise, we will kill You!’

By this time, Haridās Ṭhākur had caught up with Nityānanda Prabhu, but hearing these words, he ran away. Nityānanda Prabhu left, too, and later He asked Haridās Ṭhākur, ‘Why did you run away?? We must go there again tomorrow!’

The next day, they again went to that *ghāṭ*. Nityānanda Prabhu again asked Jagāi and Mādhāi, ‘Please say “Kṛṣṇa” just one time!’ Swearing at Nityānanda Prabhu, Jagāi and Mādhāi were going to strike Him, but Nityānanda Prabhu was not afraid. He repeated, ‘I am clasping your feet – please chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa!’ Then, Mādhāi became furious and hurled a piece of a broken clay pot at Nityānanda Prabhu. Struck by the piece of clay, Nityānanda Prabhu’s head began to bleed. Seeing blood falling from Prabhu’s head, Haridās Ṭhākur fled again, but this time he ran to Mahāprabhu and told Him all the news. He said, ‘Prabhu, You have ordered Nitāi to preach the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa everywhere, but do You know what has happened just now? That drunkard Mādhāi has beaten Nitāi! Nitāi’s head is bleeding so much!’

Mahāprabhu was furious to hear this. He started calling His Sudarśan-chakra. Calling again and again, ‘*Chakra, chakra, chakra!*’ Mahāprabhu ran to the *ghāṭ*. In the meantime, even having been beaten, Nityānanda Prabhu was not afraid – He simply laughed and again begged Mādhāi to chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa.

We sing in one of the *kīrtans*, ‘*Mār kheyo-o Nām prema yāche!* Even when He is beaten, He keeps bestowing the gift of transcendental love for the Lord!’ So much blood was falling from His head, but He did not say anything – He only kept saying, ‘Say “Kṛṣṇa”! Please chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa! Say “Hare Kṛṣṇa”!’ Clasp everyone’s feet, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu distributed the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, begging everyone, ‘Take it! Take it! You can buy Me if you take this Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa!’ He would chant:

**bhaja gaurāṅga, kaha gaurāṅga, laha gaurāṅger nām re
ye jana gaurāṅga bhaje, sei āmār prāṇ re**

‘Worship Gaurāṅga, speak about Gaurāṅga, chant Gaurāṅga’s Name! Those who worship Gaurāṅga are My heart and soul!’

Hearing Nityānanda Prabhu’s words, Mādhāi was so furious that he was about to strike Him again, but this time Jagāi caught hold of Mādhāi’s hand and said, ‘Leave it, brother. It is no use beating a *sannyāsī*.’

Then, Mahāprabhu came running with His Sudarśan-chakra. Seeing Sudarśan-chakra next to Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu stopped Him, ‘My Lord, You have promised that You will not fight with weapons in Kali-yuga. You have promised that You will spread only love and affection. Please do not be angry. Yes, Mādhāi has hit

Me, but Jagāi has saved Me! Please rescue these two! There is no one else in this world who can save them!’

Seeing Mahāprabhu’s anger, the two sinners began to tremble, but when Mahāprabhu heard that Jagāi had saved Nitāi, He became very pleased. Embracing Jagāi all of a sudden, Mahāprabhu gave him pure loving devotion and showed him His four-armed form. Seeing this transcendental form of the Lord, Jagāi became overwhelmed with divine love and, falling at the holy lotus feet of Mahāprabhu, began to roll on the ground and cry.

When Mādhāi saw his brother’s state, his mood changed, too. He at once fell at Mahāprabhu’s holy lotus feet and apologised. But Mahāprabhu said to him, ‘Because you have hit Nityānanda Prabhu, I will not accept you. Nitāi’s body mean more to Me than My own body, so if anyone commits an offence at His lotus feet, I can never accept this person.’ Mādhāi began to weep, ‘What will become of me then, Prabhu? If You do not bestow Your mercy upon me, how can I ever be rescued in this world?’

Then, Śrīman Mahāprabhu, the rescuer of the fallen, spoke again. ‘Clasp Nitāi’s holy feet and ask Him to forgive your offence, then you will be rescued.’ Mādhāi at once fell at Nityānanda Prabhu’s holy lotus feet and begged Him to forgive his offence. In response to that, Nityānanda Prabhu declared, ‘If I have any *sukṛti* from any of My previous births, I am giving all this *sukṛti* to Mādhāi!’ Saying this, Nityānanda Prabhu pulled Mādhāi up, and as He embraced him, He entered his body. Seeing this astonishing pastime, everyone started to loudly chant the Lord’s Names.

This is how Jagāi and Mādhāi were rescued. From that time on, both brothers became great devotees. Receiving Nityānanda Prabhu’s and Mahāprabhu’s mercy, they started to chant the Holy Name every day. They felt very much ashamed because they always remembered their previous sins. Especially Mādhāi cried a lot, remembering his offence of striking Nityānanda Prabhu and making blood fall from His holy body.

One day, Mādhāi fell at the holy lotus feet of Nityānanda Prabhu and again begged Him to forgive his offence. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu is supremely merciful – He hugged Mādhāi, pressing him to His chest, and said: ‘Listen, do something for Me. Make a proper *ghāṭ* here and serve this place.’

Following the order of Nityānanda Prabhu, Mādhāi established here a *ghāṭ* (a bathing place with nice steps to enter the water and other amenities) and cleaned it every day. Not only that, when people came here to bath in the Ganges, he would come to everyone and beg them to forgive his offence. In olden days, there were no bathrooms, so everyone passed stool on the bank of the Ganges and then bathed in the Ganges – Jagāi and Mādhāi would personally sweep the *ghāṭ* and clean all stool every day. It is written in *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* (2.15.92–98):

“parama kaṭhora tapa karaye mādhāi
 ‘brahmachārī’ hena khyāti haila tathāi
 niravadhi gaṅgā dekhi’ thāke gaṅgā-ghāṭe
 svahaste kodāli lañā āpaneī khāṭe
 ādyāpiha chinta āchhe chaitanya-kr̥pāya
 ‘mādhāi ghāṭa’ bali’ sarva-loke gāya

‘Mādhāi performed severe penance and became known as Mādhāi Brahmachārī. He always beheld the Ganges and stayed at the ghāt on the bank of the Ganges. With a spade, he cleaned the place with his own hands. By the mercy of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, this place is still present in this world, glorified by everyone as Mādhāi Ghāṭ.’

There is one more very important thing. Mādhāi was a terrible drunkard, he could steal, he could kill, but he has one very good quality – he never committed a *vaiṣṇav-āparādh*. You can ask me, ‘But he has beaten Nityānanda Prabhu! Is that not an offence?’ It is, but if he had not struck Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, how would he have been rescued? Moreover, if Mādhāi had not struck Nityānanda Prabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu’s glory would not have been revealed in this world.

Coming to this *ghāṭ*, we must all pay our obeisance here and pray that such vile and sinful souls as we are (*‘Jagāi Mādhāi haite muñi se pāpiṣṭha, purīṣera kīṭa haite muñi se laghiṣṭha* – I am more sinful than Jagāi and Mādhāi, I am more insignificant than worms in stool!’) could somehow one day receive the causeless mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu and service to His devotees. This is our only hope.

Jay Śrī Jagāi Mādhāi Prabhu ki jay.

Jay Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu ki jay.

Śrī Bārakoṇā Ghāṭ and Śrī Mādhāi Ghāṭ ki jay.



Śrī Yogapīṭh Temple

jaya śachī-nandana, sura-muni-vandana,
bhava-bhaya-khaṇḍana jaya he
jaya hari-kīrtana- nartanā vartana,
kali-mala-kartana jaya he [1]

All glory to the son of Śrī Śachī, who is worshipped by the demigods and sages and destroys all fear of material existence! Glory to Him! He is the inaugurator of dancing and chanting of the Lord's Names and removes the contamination of Kali! Glory to Him!

nayana-purandara, viśvarūpa snehadhara,
viśvambhara viśvera kalyāṇa
jaya lakṣmī-viṣṇupriyā, viśvambhara-priya-hiyā,
jaya priya kiṅkara īśāna [2]

He delights everyone's eyes, He is affectionate to His brother, Viśvarūp. He maintains the whole world and bestows benediction on all creation. Glory to Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā Devī and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, who are dear to Viśvambhar's heart! Glory to His dear servant Īśān!

śrī-sītā-advaita-rāya, mālinī-śrīvāsa jaya,
jaya chandraśekhara āchārya
jaya nityānanda rāya, gadādhara jaya jaya,
jaya haridāsa nāmāchārya [3]

Glory to Śrī Sītā and Śrī Advaita! Glory to Mālinī and Śrīvās!
Glory to Chandraśekhar Āchārya! Glory to Nityānanda Rāy!
Glory to Gadādhara! Glory to the *nāmāchārya*, Haridās Ṭhākur!

murāri mukunda jaya, premanidhi mahāśaya,
jaya yata prabhu pāriṣada
vandi savākara pāya, adhamere kṛpā haya,
bhakti sapārṣada-prabhupāda [4]

Glory to Murāri, Mukunda and Premanidhi (Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi)! Glory to all the associates of the Lord! Offering obeisance at everyone's feet, I pray that the Lord and His associates may bestow mercy and devotion upon this lowly soul.

Śrī Yogapīṭh

(1) The crown-jewel abode of Śrīman Mahāprabhu

Continuing our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, we have now come to Śrī Yogapīṭh, the birthplace of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. You will see a *neem* tree just next to the temple – this is the very tree under which Mahāprabhu appeared from the womb of Śrī Śachī Mātā at the house of Śrī Jagannāth Miśra. There is a peculiar expression found in Śrī *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, ‘Śachī-garbha-sindhau harīnduh. The moon-like Lord arose from the ocean of Mother Śachī’s womb.’ Taking shelter of Śrī Jagannāth Miśra and Śachī Mātā, Śrīman Mahāprabhu appeared at this place. Because He appeared under a *neem* tree, He was named Nimāi; the astrologer, who came to make the chart for the newborn baby, gave Him the name Viśvambhar; and later, after taking *sannyās*, His name became Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* was first made by Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu in the company of Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur describes it in Śrī *Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya* in this way: ‘Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu, a beautiful young boy, possessing a truly astonishing level of renunciation, left home and went to Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. Walking with tears in his eyes, he kept saying, “O Gaurāṅga! O Nityānanda! When will You

bestow Your mercy on me? When will I get Your *darśan*? O Nabadwīp! When will I get to see this crown jewel of all abodes?"

Walking in this way, when he finally saw Nabadwīp from afar, he fell on the ground in a prostrate obeisance and nearly lost consciousness. Composing himself, he woke up and continued his way. When he entered Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, he first came to Śrī Bārakoṇā Ghāṭ. There, he asked some man, 'Prabhu, where is Nityānanda Prabhu?' Surprised at Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī's half-mad state, the man quickly took him to Nityānanda Prabhu. Seeing all the devotees for the first time, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu at once fell on the ground, offering obeisances at their holy lotus feet. When he got up, he said, 'When you, Vaiṣṇavs, show kindness and compassion to me, I will get the lotus feet of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu – all scriptures say this. So, today this lowly soul has attained Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy!' Seeing Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī's extraordinary devotional mood, some devotees took foot dust from his feet on their heads. Then, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu was taken to Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu.

Seeing Nityānanda Prabhu's transcendental form, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu fell unconscious on the ground. Nityānanda Prabhu is omniscient, so He knew everything – seeing and recognising who it was, Nityānanda Prabhu, very tall and strong, felt so happy that He picked Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu in His arms and began to dance with him! All devotees then started chanting *kīrtan* out of joy. After a while, when the *kīrtan* stopped, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu introduced himself, and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu gave him very much mercy.

That day, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu stayed at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit (Śrīvās-āṅgan), and in the evening, when he saw Nityānanda Prabhu sitting alone, he again came to Him and offered Him his obeisance. Nityānanda Prabhu seated him next to Himself, and then Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu asked the Lord with folded palms, ‘Prabhu, could You please describe the glory of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām?’

‘Listen, Jīva,’ Nityānanda Prabhu replied, ‘I will tell you something very secret; please do not tell anyone what you will hear. What I am about to tell you will be revealed later.’ Saying this, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu then started to speak about the nature of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. ‘Jīva, this Nabadwīp Dhām is the gist, the heart of all holy places. Crossing the holy Virajā River, there is Brahmā-loka, then Vaikuṅṭha, Śvetadwīp, Śrī Goloka, and, finally, within Goloka, there is Gokula Vṛndāvan, which is the planet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. This planet is manifest in two moods, as *mādhurya* (sweetness) and as *audārya* (magnanimity). Although the mood of *audārya* is fully present within *mādhurya* and the mood *mādhurya* is fully present within *audārya*, the mood of *mādhurya* is predominant in Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām and the mood of *audārya* is predominant in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. Apart from that, there is no difference between Vṛndāvan and Nabadwīp.

‘O Jīva! These sixteen *kroś* (thirty-two miles) of Nabadwīp Dhām are non-different from Vṛndāvan Dhām and are comprised of nine islands – forming eight petals around the core, they float on the surrounding water. Māyāpur is situated in the centre of Antardwīp, which

forms the core surrounded by the eight petals, or islands. Within Māyāpur, there is an eternal abode called Yogapīṭh, where Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu manifests His eternal pastimes. The circumference of this Yogapīṭh is six miles, and its diameter is two miles.

‘The glory of Yogapīṭh is absolutely exceptional – no other place, no other holy place of pilgrimage on this earth can ever compare to Yogapīṭh. By the will of the Lord, the water of the Ganges will very soon conceal this holy abode – it will almost entirely become hidden, but after some time, also by the will of the Lord, this crown-jewel abode will again become manifest. If a place is an eternal abode, it can never become extinct – even if it becomes hidden for the time being, it eventually emerges again. My Lord is eternally present in Māyāpur, on this eastern bank of the Ganges. People say that when Viśvambhar took *sannyās*, He left Nabadwīp and went elsewhere, but actually My Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu has never left the village of Māyāpur.’

Many people think that Mahāprabhu left Nabadwīp and went to some other place; many say that Kṛṣṇa left everything and went to Mathurā. Kṛṣṇa may have left for Mathurā, but Vṛndāvan-Kṛṣṇa never leaves Vṛndāvan. Vraja-Kṛṣṇa always stays in Vraja.

adyāpiha sei līlā kare gaura-rāya

kona kona bhāgyavāna dekhibāre pāya

‘Gaura Rāy to this day performs His pastimes, and some fortunate souls can see that.’

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu continued explaining to Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu, ‘People look with their material

eyes and see this holy land as material, but Māyā always keeps the transcendental form of holy abodes concealed. There is no influence of Māyā in real Nabadwīp – no conception of time, space or any other garbage can ever touch it. Living in illusory bondage and existing through material activities, conditioned souls enter Nabadwīp as an ordinary material place, but when, by the influence of saintly association, transcendental love for the Lord awakens within a soul, this soul will easily be able to see the supra-mundane abode (transcendental place, time, abode, objects, etc.) with its own eyes.’

This unparalleled Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, including Śrī Māyāpur Dhām, was given to us by Śrīla Bhaktinod Ṭhākur. Before 1888, everyone thought that Mahāprabhu’s birthplace had been lost in the Ganges. It is true that from time to time the current of the Ganges can take some land, but at the same time the Ganges can also return the land. So, at first Mahāprabhu’s birthplace was indeed taken by the Ganges, but later she returned this land. Just as America existed before Columbus discovered it (somebody only went there and ‘discovered’ it, but they did not create or establish it); similarly, Mahāprabhu’s birthplace also existed but in a concealed way. So, we are very much indebted to Śrīla Bhaktinod Ṭhākur for revealing Lord Śrī Gaurasundar’s eternal abode and making it manifest again.

When Śrīla Bhaktinod Ṭhākur lived at Svānanda-sukhadā-kuñja in Godrumdwīp (his house and *bhajan-kuṭir*), one day he was chanting the Holy Name on the roof of his house. His habit was always such that he would go to

bed early in the evening and wake up at midnight to write scriptures and chant the Holy Name. That day, standing on the roof and chanting, he suddenly saw some strange light. The next day he went to the place where he had seen the light. He saw there a wild field with many Tulasī trees growing everywhere. He asked someone the name of the place, but nobody could tell it – the place had suddenly emerged from the Ganges. Neither did any one know who the owner of that place was. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur was only told that people had tried to cultivate the land but to no avail because only Tulasī trees grew there.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur wondered, ‘Why does Tulasī grow here?’ Returning to Nabadwīp, he went to Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj, who was 137 years old at that time, and asked him, ‘Prabhu, I have found a very unusual place. Can you please come with me to see it?’ Because of his very old age, Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj could not walk, so his servant placed him into a basket and carried him on his head. When Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj came to the place that Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur had discovered, he jumped out of the basket and began to dance! He kept crying, ‘Yes! I have found it! This is the Lord’s birthplace! This is Yogapīṭh!’

Later, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur had to face much opposition. All the *bābājī sampradāyas* filed a court case, claiming that Yogapīṭh was not the actual birthplace of Mahāprabhu. They lost their case, and Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur proved in High Court(!) that this place is the real Yogapīṭh. This is how Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur revealed Mahāprabhu’s birthplace.

(2) Appearance of Śrī Gaura

In 1955, our Śrī Gurupādpadma Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj wrote a very beautiful editorial article in our Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh's magazine Śrī Gauḍīya Darśan (Year 1, Issue 9), called Appearance of Śrī Gaura. We would like to present this article here.

The pious land of India, bearing the holy footprints of the holy Lord and His devotees, is the land of religion on this earth. Among the seven cities within India that can grant liberation, there is Śrī Māyāpur that is situated within Śrī Dhām Nabadwīp, which is non-different from Śrī Mathurā Maṇḍala. That is why Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur wrote:

“navadvīpa hena grāma tribhuvane nāi
yāhā avatīrṇa hailā chaitanya gosāi’

‘There is no place within the entire three worlds that could compare to Nabadwīp, the appearance place of Lord Chaitanya.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 1.2.55)

Actually, there is no other place in this world that could compare to or exceed the supremacy of Śrī Nabadwīp because Śrī Gaura Hari, an ocean of pure compassion and mercy, appeared in this place destroying the darkness of this world and freely distributed transcendental love for the Lord (which is very rare to attain even for demigods) to anyone and everyone, including even the lowest and the meanest, without considering whether they were worthy or unworthy, fit or unfit. Therefore, the glory of Nabadwīp is truly unparalleled in this world.

Almost five hundred years ago [as of 1955], the city of Śrī Nabadwīp was renowned all over the world as the main holy place where people would come to receive education. The scriptures on logic and argument that had been brought from Mithila were nourished through the intellectuals of Nabadwīp, spreading the scent of its fame. Renounced monks and educated professors from Varanasi and other cities in North India would arrive here to study logic and the *Vedānta*. Many students from Kasi and other cities in South India would also come to the city of Nabadwīp to seek education.

“nānā-deśa haite loka nabadvīpe yāya
navadvīpe paḍile se vidyārasa pāya
ataeva paḍuyāra nāhi samuchchaya
lakṣa koṭi adyāpaka—nāhika niśchaya”

‘People came to Nabadwīp from various places. When they studied in Nabadwīp, they got the taste for knowledge. Therefore, it is impossible to count its students; there were also millions and millions of teachers. It is impossible to say how many for sure.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 1.2.60)

So, as a result of their stay in Nabadwīp, the students from all these various places became expert scholars, adept in many kinds of scriptures; and when they became expert in all scriptures, they would leave and go on a holiday. Because many various scriptures were taught in Nabadwīp and there were countless teachers available here, the number of students was also inestimable. What can one say? In those days, ‘even young boys [who had studied in Nabadwīp] would challenge and baffle

great scholars.’ Everybody considered themselves great professors. Moreover, if somebody had not studied or taught in Nabadwīp, their scholarship would not be acknowledged and established in the intellectual society.

In terms of opulence, Śrī Nabadwīp rightfully deserved its fame as a place of incomparable splendour. Śrī Nabadwīp was the place of residence of all wealthy people who received the grace of Lakṣmī Devī. Firstly, it is situated on the bank of the Ganges; secondly, it was a great place of education; and, above all, it was a great holy place of pilgrimage, Śrī Māyāpur. Therefore, many rich people from all over India and other countries would come to live here. Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur wrote:

“navadvīpa-sampatti ke varṇivāre pāre
eko gaṅgā-ghāṭe lakṣa loka snāna kare”
“ramā dṛṣṭipāte sarvaloka sukhe vaise”
“avataribena prabhu—jāniyā vidhātā
sakala sampanna kari thuilena tathā”

‘Who can describe the wealth of Nabadwīp? Hundreds of thousands of people at a time would bath at the ghāṭ on the bank of the Ganges. By the merciful glance of the goddess of fortune Ramā, everyone lived here very happily. Knowing that the Lord would appear here soon, the Supreme Lord of Providence, Vidhātā, who controls the entire creation, arranged everything here perfectly.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 1.2.57, 62, 56)

Actually, when some place is famous as a place of residence for countless people, famous for its assemblies of rich *sampradāyas* from all kinds of places, and as a great place of pilgrimage and a great place of education, it goes without saying that this place is great. At the same

time, however, there was no end to the sadness that pure devotees felt in their hearts. Although this holy abode is very beautiful in all respects, what everyone did there was simply wasting time on mundane pleasures. How could pure devotees feel happy to see this situation? Everybody was intoxicated with the wine of their wealth, beauty, followers and knowledge, proud of their mundane scholarship. Seeing this land filled with the havoc of material gain, worship and fame, devotees became deeply perturbed. When people are intoxicated with material happiness and waste their time relishing mundane ('village') life and judge about everything through the prism of sense-gratification, this is unbearable for devotees. Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur wrote:

'The whole material world was devoid of devotion to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Those were the first signs of the behaviour that would predominate in the Age of Kali. All that people knew and believed in was staying awake and singing songs in praise of the goddesses Maṅgala and Chaṇḍī. Some people worshipped the goddess Viṣahari out of pride – they made an idol and offered a lot of riches to it. Everyone in the world wasted time on worrying about their sons and daughters and on squandering their wealth. People never spoke about the religion of the present age (*Kṛṣṇa-kīrtan*) and never spoke about anyone's good qualities without finding faults in them. You would never hear the Holy Name of the Lord from the mouths of even very strict and proud ascetics. Only those who had very much *sukṛti* would chant the Names of Govinda and Puṇḍarīkākṣa when bathing in the Ganges. Even when

they taught *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* or *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, they never mentioned devotion in their explanation. Seeing the world swooned in this way by the illusory potency of the Supreme Lord, devotees became extremely sad. Seeing the whole material world around them devoid of devotion to the Supreme Lord, all devotees' hearts plunged into anguish. Some wanted to give up their bodies out of pain, some shed tears, sighing heavily and chanting Kṛṣṇa's Name. They lost all appetite – even when they ate nice meals, they felt no taste for anything. Seeing the behaviour of the people around them, they felt sad.'

Amidst this averse and undevotional situation in the society, there lived Śrī Advaita Āchārya, who was the most blessed, the most respectable and the foremost leader among all Vaiṣṇavs. Śrī Advaita Prabhu moved to Śrī Māyāpur and manifested here the pastimes of preaching about the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa, desiring to bring eternal spiritual benefit to everyone who had turned away from the Lord. The plight of the souls averse to the Supreme Lord gave much pain to his heart, and all the devotees who assembled at his house every day shed tears as they shared their deep sadness. One day, overcome with sadness for all souls, Śrī Advaita Prabhu himself, who is an ocean of mercy, roared and promised:

**“āniyā vaikuṅṭhanātha sākṣāt kariyā
nāchiba gāhiba sarva-jīva uddhāriyā”**

‘I will bring the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, and I will dance and chant when He comes and all souls become rescued!’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 1.2.93)

Śrī Advaita Āchārya's glory was not unknown to the devotees, so when they heard his promise, they became very joyful and supported him. In the meantime, Śrī Advaita Āchārya started to continuously offer Ganges water on Tulasī leaves and incessantly and earnestly call out to the Supreme Lord, who resides and enjoys His eternal pastimes in Goloka, asking Him to come. It made the Lord's throne shake. Devotees were always busy calling out to the Lord, and they abstained from all comforts and worldly pleasures. As the result, seeing the unhappiness of the devotees, the compassionate Lord began to prepare His advent in this world.

There is, perhaps, one more thing that actually goes without saying. When the Lord appears, His associates and holy abode appear along with Him; therefore, before the Lord's appearance, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, who takes care of arranging all necessities for the Lord, also appeared in Rāṛhdeś, bestowing the supreme benefit upon all souls.

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Śrī Māyāpur is situated in the centre of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, that is why it is called '*antar-dwīp*' ('inner island'). In this Antardwīp, there lived Śrī Jagannāth Miśra, a greatest scholar and a shelter of pure goodness and nobility. Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur wrote:

'There was a great personality called Śrī Jagannāth Miśra living in Nabadwīp. He was just as expert in following his prescribed religious duties as Vasudev, the father of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Nothing could compare to his magnanimous character and the extent of his brahmaṇical qualities. Whether as Kaṣyapa, Daśaratha, Vasudev or

Nanda, Śrī Jagannāth Miśrachandra was unparalleled in all respects. His spouse, Śrī Śachī Devī, is a great and devoted wife; she is the mother of the entire world and the very embodiment of devotion to the Supreme Lord.’

When, having first lost eight daughters, this supremely pure *brāhmaṇ* couple finally had a son, Śrī Viśvarūp, who was adorned with unearthly beauty, they worshipped the Lord with extreme joy. Day by day, Viśvarūp also increased the joy of his parents as he grew resembling a moon on a bright fortnight. This plunged-into-darkness world began to gain the strength of an auspicious planet. In 1485, one very special day, Śrī Jagannāth Miśra saw a very soft, loving divine light enter his heart and then, re-emerging from his heart, enter the heart of Śrī Śachī Devī. Śrī Jagannāth Miśra became thrilled with joy. From that day, Śachī Devī also radiated miraculous effulgence, resembling a goddess. When Śrī Miśradev told her about it in a great joy, she shared with him that she was even more surprised, ‘I also see that so many beautiful gods are watching over me, singing praises from the sky. All four directions are filled with joy, and various effulgent people keep coming and going, and so on.’ Hearing her words, Miśra replied happily, ‘It looks like some great personality must be about to take birth.’ Following that, they started to worship the Supreme Lord even more assiduously.

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The evening of the full moon in the month of Phālgun (18 February) in 1486 is the birth day of Śrī Gaura Hari. Firstly, it was a charming spring evening; secondly, it was a full-moon day; and, on top of it, that day was also

a lunar eclipse. On the bank of the Ganges, on the streets and at the *ghāṭs* of the city – there were throngs of people everywhere; everyone was jostling and shoving. Seeing it, you would think that there was probably no living soul left anywhere else in the entire fourteen worlds. Everyone was overflowing with happiness and overwhelmed with the joy of the Lord’s Names being chanted in every direction. It was as if all highly auspicious constellations of the universe arose all at once, enhancing the beauty of Nabadwīp. Hearing the unprecedented chanting of the Holy Names, many devotees also gathered on the bank of the Ganges. Seeing that the flood of Holy Names chanted due to the lunar eclipse had removed all inauspicious signs, devotees’ happiness knew no bounds. Standing on the bank of the Ganges, everyone thought, ‘Where have so many people come from?! There have been other eclipses before, but so many people, so much chanting of the Holy Names – such intoxication has never been seen before, has never been even heard of before!!’ Everyone felt very happy, although nobody could understand why; but, anyway, even then, everyone liked what was happening very much. Even Muslim people laughed and chanted ‘Hari! Hari!’ together with Hindus, teasing them. Everyone in ten directions rejoiced, as did the very water of the river.

“*siṁha rāśī, siṁha lagna, uchcha graha-gaṇa
ṣaḍ-varga, aṣṭa-varga, sarva sulakṣaṇa*”

‘The moon was in the Leo zodiac, Leo was the ascendant, several planets were strongly positioned, and other astrological signs showed all-auspicious influences.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 1.13.90)

Garbing herself into all these astrologically favourable signs, the moon (the supremely auspicious queen of the evening) started singing about the coming of the Lord.

“henai samaya sarva jagata-jīvana
avatīrṇa hailena śrī-śachī-nandana”

‘At this very time, Śrī Śachīnandan (the son of Śrī Śachī Devī), the very life of the entire world, appeared.’

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmīpād sang:

“hariḥ puraṭasundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hr̥daya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śachī-nandana”

‘May the son of Śrī Śachī Devī, resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, always appear in the core of your hearts.’

Śrī Jagannāth Mīśra thought, “There is no end to the happiness in Śachī’s room!” Flooding the entire world with Holy Names, a spotless full moon has arisen today, that is why even Chandradev (the God of Moon), appearing in the sky today, covered his face out of shame. And why would he not? The abode of extremely soft and loving mercy emanating from this Golden Moon’s toe nails puts the coolness of millions of moons to shame – this is that Śrī Gaurachandra who has arisen today!! Flowers were being showered in all fourteen directions. Beating kettledrums to the sound of millions of conchshells, demigods started to dance. Dharaṇī Devī (Mother Earth) chanted ‘Jay! Jay!’ throughout the creation, declaring the news of Śrī Gaura Hari’s advent. Devotees could as if clearly feel that their hearts’ hankering had been fulfilled. Making the sweet sounds of conchshells, bells, drums and *karatāls* even sweeter, it was as if the sounds of chanting

could be heard in the background, ‘*Jaya Śāchī-nandan! Jay Gaura Hari! Glory to the son of Śāchī! Glory to the Golden Lord!*’

Everything about this Gaura Hari is eternal – His Name is eternal, His form is eternal, His qualities, pastimes, associates and features are all eternal. His appearance is eternal, and His disappearance is also eternal. The Supreme Lord forever enjoys these eternal pastimes in fortunate souls’ hearts radiating pure goodness. The tiny human intellect cannot grasp all this, that is why the Supreme Lord appears as an *āchārya*, although He is transcendental and belongs to the realm of inconceivable oneness and difference (*achintya-bhedābheda siddhānta*). It is by the mercy of *sādhus* and *gurus* that it is possible to know the glory of Śrī Chaitanyadev, who is an eternally pure and completely liberated extreme manifestation of transcendental existence – such fortunate souls (recipients of this great mercy) can perceive in their hearts the appearance of Gaurachandra, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, garbed into the heart and halo of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and come to experience great happiness. For such souls,

adyāpiha sei līlā kare gaura-rāya

kona kona bhāgyavāna dekhibāre pāya

‘*Gaura Rāy to this day performs His pastimes, and some fortunate souls can see that.*’

This statement is expressed very clearly and radiantly.

“*anarpita-charīm chirāt karuṇayāvātīrṇaḥ kalau*

sampayitum-unnatōjjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam hariḥ puraṭasundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ

sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śāchī-nandana”

'May the son of Śrī Śachī Devī, resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, always appear in the core of your hearts. He descended in the Age of Kali to bestow the wealth of devotion to His own self, the highest transcendental paramour relationship with the Lord which had never been granted before.'

(3) Śrī Māyāpur Dhām, land of miraculous pastimes

There are many pastimes that took place here in Māyāpur Dhām, and at Śrī Yogapīṭh in particular. If you read *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, and especially *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata*, you can find all the pastimes of Śrī Gaurasundar there.

śrī kṛṣṇa-chaitnaya-dayā karaha vichāra
vichāra karile chitte pābe chamatkāra

'Just think about the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya! If you think about it, you will be deeply astonished.'

When Nimāi was three years old, a *brāhmaṇ* who had been travelling to various holy places all over India came to Śrī Jagannāth Miśra's house one day. The name of this *brāhmaṇ* is not written anywhere, but some say that it could be Śrīla Mādhavendra Purīpād.

The *brāhmaṇ* came to Śrī Śachī Mātā and Śrī Jagannāth Miśradev and said, 'Please accept my obeisance. Can you give me some alms?'

'Yes, of course. You have come at an odd time, and the cooking has not been done yet,' replied Jagannāth Miśra with folded palms. 'But I cannot let you leave without having anything. Could you please cook something and offer it to the Lord?'

‘All right, let it be so,’ the *brāhmaṇ* agreed and went to the kitchen to cook. After cooking, he went to offer the *bhoga* to the Deities. Placing the offering in front of the Deities, he started to recite the *mantras* that are usually recited when offering *bhog*. As he recited the *mantras*, he suddenly saw that Nimāi had come and was putting the Deities’ *bhoga* into His mouth! Surprised, the *brāhmaṇ* shouted, ‘Hey, where have You come from, naughty boy?! What are You doing? You are spoiling the Deities’ offering!’ Nimāi fled from the room without saying a word.

Hearing the noise, Jagannāth Miśra came to the *brāhmaṇ* and asked him what had happened. The *brāhmaṇ* explained, ‘I was making the offering when your small son came and started eating from the plate! He has run away!’ Jagannāth Miśra was amazed, ‘But we offer *bhoga* every day, He has never behaved like that before!... Please do not mind Him. I have made an offence. You are our guest, Lord Nārāyaṇ – you have come today to our house, so please do not leave without eating anything. Could you please cook again? I will watch over Nimāi.’

The *brāhmaṇ* agreed and went to cook again. When he finished cooking for the second time and went to offer the *bhoga* to the Lord, Jagannāth Miśra stood on guard in front of the door. Offering the *bhog* to the Lord, the *brāhmaṇ* prayed, ‘O Lord! I am giving You food at this odd time, please forgive my offence.’ Suddenly, Nimāi came there again and ate the *bhoga*! The *brāhmaṇ* cried, ‘What is this?! You again?!’

Hearing the shouting, Jagannāth Miśra came inside the room and asked, ‘What has happened? What is wrong?’

‘Your son has come again!’ said the *brāhmaṇ*.

‘What?!’ Jagannāth Miśra became angry and chased Nimāi out of the room. And Nimāi was so naughty! He again ran away, but this time He ran to a neighbour’s house and locked the door. Jagannāth Miśra took a stick and went after Him, ‘Open the door! Open up!’ Hearing His father’s angry voice, Nimāi shivered with fear, ‘Father will beat Me!’

Just look at this: He, whom the entire three worlds are shivering with fear for is now shivering with fear for His parents! Such is the relationship that the Lord has with His devotees who possess parental devotion.

ye yathā mām prapadyante tāms tathaiva bhajāmy ham
mama vartmānuvartante manuṣyāḥ pārtha sarvaśaḥ

‘As You serve Me, so will I serve you – howsoever people worship Me, I accordingly fulfil their desires.’

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā, 4.11)

So, the *bhog* was spoilt(?) for the second time. Śachī Mātā and Jagannāth Miśra began to cry, ‘O Lord! We have a guest at home, but our child is so naughty! What will happen now?’ In the meantime, Viśvarūp, the elder son of Śachī Mātā and Jagannāth Miśra, came home. Seeing the hubbub at home, he asked his parents, ‘What has happened here? Why is everyone crying? What is wrong?’ Śachī Mātā and Jagannāth Miśra said, ‘This respectable *brāhmaṇ* has come to our house, but we have made such a big offence!’ Then, the *brāhmaṇ* explained to Viśvarūp, ‘I have cooked twice already, but your younger brother is very naughty – every time He comes, eats the Deities’ *bhog* and runs away!’

‘Oh, I see’, said Viśvarūp. ‘Prabhu, please do not mind it. I am His elder brother, He is afraid of me, so I will guard the door this time – you will see, He will get scared and will not come.’

So, the *brāhmaṇ* cooked for the third time. Nimāi went to sleep in Śachī Mātā’s room, and everyone was sure that this time everything would be all right. In the meantime, the evening passed and the night came – having finished his cooking, the *brāhmaṇ* again went to offer the *bhog* to the Deities. Closing his eyes, he prayed to the Lordships and started reciting the *mantras*. Having recited the *mantras* for some time, he prayed, ‘O Lord! I have made an offence at Your holy feet. I am giving You an offering deep at night... I have kept You fasting the whole day... Please forgive my offence.’ When he finished reciting all the *mantras* and again opened his eyes, he saw that the plate was empty – Nimāi had come and eaten everything again! The *brāhmaṇ* scolded Him, ‘Naughty boy! You again?!’

Then, Nimāi finally said, ‘Listen, you keep on calling Me – you called Me at noon, you called Me in the afternoon, and you were calling Me again just now. It is deep night now, I was fast sleep on the lap of My mother! I have not eaten anything the whole day! You keep calling Me, but you are not giving Me anything to eat! Instead of feeding Me, you chase Me away! Famished, I fell asleep on My mom’s lap, but then you suddenly call Me again, and when I come, you are asking Me, “Where have You come from?! Go away!” You say that I am naughty, but do you think I am not hungry? Must I not eat anything? Why do you keep calling Me and chasing Me away like this?!’

The *brāhmaṇ* was nonplussed, ‘What are You saying? Why would I call You?’

‘Oh, so you have not called Me? Then who were you calling?’

‘The Lord, of course! I am calling the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇ, Viṣṇu!’

‘Oh, so you are calling the Lord, not Me?’

Then, suddenly Nimāi showed the *brāhmaṇ* His four-armed form, holding a conch, a disc, a club and a lotus. He said, ‘You were calling Nārāyaṇ, but I am Nārāyaṇ! I let you see Me in Satya-yuga, I let you see Me in Tretā-yuga, I let you see Me in Dvāpar-yuga. You are very fortunate because even now in Kali-yuga I am letting you see Me, but you must not tell anyone about it.’

Hearing the Lord’s words and seeing the Lord’s form, the *brāhmaṇ* attained divine love for Kṛṣṇa and could not leave Nabadwīp after that – he secretly stayed in Nabadwīp Dhām in a place near Yogapīṭh, and every day, when he went begging, he would come to see Nimāi...

Appearing in this world, Śrīman Mahāprabhu rescued people of all sorts. One time, He rescued thieves by tricking them. This pastime happened in Nimāi’s childhood, too.

When Nimāi appeared, many people would come to Jagannāth Miśra’s home with various gifts, so Śāchī Mātā would decorate Nimāi’s arms with armlets, hang a golden locket on His neck, put anklebells on His feet, etc.

One day, two thieves saw those ornaments on Nimāi and became very greedy. When Nimāi went outside to play,

the thieves started to plan how to steal those ornaments. One thief said, 'I will take the anklets!' The other thief said, 'And I will take the armlets!'

They came close to Nimāi and gave Him a sweet saying, 'Come here, darling, come. Let us take You home.'

Seeing the sweet, Nimāi smiled and climbed on the shoulders of one of the thieves. The thieves were speaking sweetly to Nimāi as they carried Him away.

Meanwhile, they thought to themselves, 'Where will we take Him? We will go to the bamboo grove, take all the ornaments off and leave Him there!'

As they were carrying the baby and thinking about all this, they suddenly realised that they had lost their way! They could neither find the bamboo grove, nor their own house. Hour after hour they kept roaming round and round – they had walked so much that they were finally completely exhausted and bewildered. Then, they suddenly found themselves coming to the house of Jagannāth Miśra, bringing Nimāi back to His home!

In the meantime, everyone noticed that Nimāi was not around and began to look for Him – anxious, everyone wondered, 'What is this? Who has taken Nimāi?' The thieves left Nimāi amidst the excited crowd and ran away. Nimāi at once called out to Śachī Mātā, and when she saw her son, she sighed with relief and said, 'Who has brought my son? I want to reward them!'

Do you think the thieves would stay there? The thieves ran away, but the Lord had bestowed His mercy upon them – they carried the Lord Himself(!) on their shoulders. When somebody touches the Lord, when

somebody chants the Lord's Name, when somebody chants the glories of the Lord, when somebody serves the Lord, they will never have to live in this world – they will never have to suffer from birth, death, old age and disease, and they will not have to keep coming to this world again and again – such fortunate souls go back to the domain of the Lord.

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Sometimes, Nimāi would play pranks on the *brāhmaṇs*, and, not being able to tolerate His practical jokes, everyone would come to Jagannāth Miśra and Śachī Mātā to complain about the bad behaviour of their naughty son.

Somebody said, 'He starts kicking water on people while they are bathing in the river! He spits water at people! We try to catch Him, but nobody can catch Him!'

Somebody said, 'I was sitting and meditating on the bank of the Ganges, and Nimāi threw water on me!'

Somebody said, 'He steals our clothes or mixes our clothes with women's clothes! He has no shame!'

Somebody else said, 'I kept an offering in front of the *āsan* of the Deity and went to bath in the Ganges, but Nimāi came and sat on the *āsan* like a king, eating all my offering! I scolded Him, but He says, "What is the problem? I am Nārāyaṇ in this Kali-yuga! So, you are very fortunate – He whom you have offered all this *bhoga* has come and taken all your offering!'"

Somebody else said, 'I was standing in the Ganges, reciting *gāyatrī*, when suddenly Nimāi crept up to me and pulled me by the legs, dunking me underwater!'

Somebody said, 'He is always stealing my *Bhagavad-gītā*!'

Somebody else said, 'He is always stealing my *dhoti*!'

Somebody said, 'He throws water into the ears of my little child!'

And the biggest complaint came from the girls. Sometimes, small girls of nine–ten or twelve–fourteen would worship the Ganges by making nice offerings of choice rice, bananas and other good ingredients. All girls did this worship properly, with very much effort, following all the rules and regulations, but Nimāi would come to the Ganges and sometimes throw water into their faces or sometimes block their way, saying, 'Where are you all going? Worship Me!' (What does it mean? If you worship the Supreme Lord, then all kinds of worship are automatically accomplished.)

The girls who were a little older said, 'Hey Nimāi! What is wrong with You? In this village, we are all Your elder sisters. Why are You so naughty with Your elder sisters?' Nimāi would then scatter all the pots that they had brought for the worship and say, 'What will you get by worshipping Gaṅgā? Better worship Me! I am hungry now, give this *prasād* to Me!'

The girls became annoyed and went away in another direction, but Nimāi shouted behind them, 'If you do not give anything to Me, you will get an old man as a husband and live with his other seven wives!' Hearing this, the girls became scared and quickly said, 'O Lord, what kind of curse has He given us? Quick, give everything to Him!'

Hearing all these stories, Śachī Mātā spoke sweetly to everyone, trying to comfort them. But one time, Jagannāth Mīśra became very angry and went to the Ganges to

punish Nimāi. Seeing His furious father coming to the Ganges, somebody warned Nimāi about it, and Nimāi told His friends, 'If Father comes and asks about Me, tell him that I have not come to bath yet!' Then, Nimāi went back home taking another road. On the way, He smeared some dust on His body and sprinkled some ink on His face – He turned up at home in this dirty state, pretending that He had just come back from school.

When Jagannāth Miśra came to the Ganges, he heard from the boys that Nimāi had not come yet, but the *brāhmaṇs* who had come to complain earlier that day said that Nimāi had run away in fear of His father. Seeing Jagannāth Miśra's anger, they said, 'There is no one in this world as fortunate as you are! You are extremely fortunate to have got such a son. Even if Viśvambhar commits millions of offences, we will still always keep Him in our hearts!'

Hearing the words of the *brāhmaṇs*, Jagannāth Miśra softened up and said, 'He is your son, too, so please forgive His offences...' Having spoken sweetly to everyone, Jagannāth Miśra then went back home. When he came home, he took Nimāi on his lap and hugged Him, forgetting all about these external events.

Later, when Nimāi again went to bath in the Ganges, Śachī Mātā and Jagannāth Miśra spoke to each other, 'This Viśvambhar is probably not an ordinary person! Seeing His pastimes, we feel as if Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself has taken birth in our house!'

In this way, Nimāi performed many pastimes together with His devotees. At this holy house here in Yogapīṭh, He

also performed the pastime of marriage – Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā and later Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī were His spouses. So many things happened here. In the end, when Nimāi Viśvambhar was twenty-four years old, He decided to take *sannyās*. On His last night at this house, when all devotees had assembled here in the evening, He gave everyone His ultimate instruction:

“yadi āmā’-prati sneha thāke sabākāra
 tabe kṛṣṇa-vyatirike nā gāibe āra
 ki śayāne, ki bhojane, kibā jāgaraṇe
 aharnīśa chinta kṛṣṇa, balaha vadane”

‘If you love Me, then do not speak about anything except Kṛṣṇa. Whether you are sleeping, eating or waking up, incessantly think about Krishna and chant the Name of Krishna with your mouth.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 2.28.27–28)

So, when we come here, we must always remember,

“gorāra āmi, gorāra āmi” mukhe balile nāhi chale
 gorāra āchāra, gorāra vichāra la-ile phala phale
 loka dekhāna gorā bhajā tilaka mātra dhari
 gopanete atyāchāra gorā dhare churi

‘Just saying, “I am Gorā’s! I am Gorā’s!” will not do. Only when you follow Gora’s practice and Gora’s conception will you get the proper result. You put on tilaks and show the whole world that you serve Gora, but secretly you do outrageous things. Gora will catch you out, thief (hypocrite)!’

(Śrī Śrī Prema-vivarta, 8.6–7)

You wear the *tilaks* and neckbeads to show others that you practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but secretly you engage in activities that are unfavourable to devotion. This is

wrong. We must practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness properly – we must follow all spiritual rules and regulations, we must always keep ourselves engaged in the service that was given to us by our *gurudev*.

We have not got any scripture from Mahāprabhu, but we can get the highest advice in our lives from the advice He spoke and from His *Śikṣāṣṭaka*:

trṇād api sunīchena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

‘Those who are humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, who give honour to others without desiring honour for themselves are qualified to always chant the Holy Name.’

grāmya-kathā nā śunibe, grāmya-vārtā nā kahibe
bhāla nā khāibe āra bhāla nā paribe
amānī mānada hañā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la’be
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā mānase karibe

‘Do not listen to village talks, do not listen to village news. Do not eat fancy food, do not wear fancy clothes. Do not expect honour to yourself, offer all respect to others. Always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa and serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in your mind.’

Do not cheat yourselves – do not put on a show. People sing (in a popular Bengali folk song), ‘Oh, if you give up Golden Gaura, you will never get Him back, but I have kept You in my heart and will never give You up!’ You say it lip-deep, but it will not do: you must love Gaura *with your heart*. Love comes from heart. When you love somebody only to impress others, this is not love. Real love must come from the heart.

So, we pray to you all: whether you live in a house or in a jungle, please always remember Mahāprabhu's birthplace, Mahāprabhu's devotees, Mahāprabhu's divine message and His miraculous pastimes.

Śrī Nimāi Viśvambhar ki jay.

Śrī Jagannāth Miśradev, Śrī Śachī Mātā ki jay.

Śrī Yogapīṭh, Śrī Māyāpur Dhām ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.



kabe habe bala se dina āmāra
(āmāra) aparādha ghuchi, śuddha nāme ruchi,
kṛpā-bale habe hṛdaye sañchāra [1]

Tell me, when will that day be mine? When, by mercy, will my offences go away? When will I get taste for the pure Holy Name?

trṇādhika-hīna, kabe nije māni,
sahiṣṇutā-guṇa hṛdayete āni'
sakale mānada, āpani amānī,
haye āsvādiba nāma-rasa-sāra [2]

When will I feel I am lower than a blade of grass, when will I bring the quality of tolerance within my heart, become eager to honour everyone without any desire for honour from anyone and relish the essence of the Name's nectar?

dhana jana āra, kavītā sundarī,
baliba nā chāhi deha-sukha-karī
janme janme dāo, ohe gaurahari,
ahaitukī bhakti charaṇe tomāra [3]

When will I say that I do not want any wealth, followers, poetic gift or any other bodily happiness? O Gaura Hari! Birth after birth, please give me unconditional devotion to Your holy feet!

(kabe) karite śrī-kṛṣṇa- nāma uchchāraṇa,
pulkita deha gadgada vachana

Śrīvās Aṅgan

About three hundred meters south-east of Śrī Yogapīṭh, there is a house, or '*aṅgan*', of Śrī Śrīvās Paṇḍit. It is said in the scriptures that Mahāprabhu always stays in four places: at the kitchen of Śrī Śachī Mātā, wherever Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu is dancing, at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit and at the house of Śrī Rāghav Paṇḍit.

There were four brothers living at Śrīvās Paṇḍit's *aṅgan*: Śrīvās, Śrīrām, Śrīpati and Śrīnidhi. Among all of them, Śrīvās Paṇḍit has particularly strong devotion, attraction and affection for Mahāprabhu. Śrīvās Paṇḍit



had a very intimate and profound relationship with Śrīman Mahāprabhu since the day Śrīman Mahāprabhu appeared in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām.

Chāpāl Gopāl's Fate

Once, Mahāprabhu spent a whole year chanting daily nocturnal *saṅkīrtan* here, at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit at Śrī Māyāpur Dhām, Śrī Nabadwīp. Not everybody was allowed to enter these esoteric *kīrtans*, and on the order of Mahāprabhu, Śrīvās Paṇḍit would close the door at night and only then start the *kīrtan*.

Some naughty outside people often got drunk and harassed devotees. When Śrīvās Paṇḍit was inside his house chanting *kīrtan*, some bad people would eat meat, drink alcohol, etc. and then come to Śrīvās Paṇḍit's house, throw bones and empty bottles in front of his door and go away. They thought, 'Everybody will see that this man chants *kīrtan* and speaks Hari-kathā the whole day, but at night he drinks alcohol! His reputation will be ruined!' Śrīvās Paṇḍit would say nothing; he tolerated everything silently and did not do anything against them in return.

However, one night a *brāhmaṇ* called Chāpāl Gopāl came to Śrīvās Paṇḍit's house and did a very naughty thing: he left some items for Durgā worship (sindoor, red sandalwood, turmeric, rice powder, etc.) and a bottle of wine in front of Śrīvās Paṇḍit's door. In the morning, Śrīvās Paṇḍit woke up and saw the things standing in front of his door. He called all the senior neighbours and said, 'Look! Look! Just see how senile I have become! What a scrape

I have got myself into! I have been chanting *kīrtan* and drinking wine today!’ All the senior neighbours said, ‘No, no! You are such a noble Vaiṣṇav. Who could have thought of such a mischief? Who did this? They have made such a big offence, what will become of them as the result?’

Three days later, this Chāpāl Gopāl went down with leprosy. He had to leave Māyāpur and live alone on the bank of the Ganges.

One day, when Mahāprabhu was going to bath in the Ganges, Chāpāl Gopāl stopped Him on the way and said, ‘Sir, You rescue everyone, You bestow Your mercy upon everyone, You are everyone’s near and dear – can You please rescue me?’

Hearing his words, Mahāprabhu became very angry. ‘You have made an offence at the lotus feet of Śrīvās Paṇḍit! I will continue feeding you to insects birth after birth! Stay in the most terrible realms of hell for ten million births!’ Saying this, Mahāprabhu went away. He did not give His mercy to this sinful heretic.

Several years later, when Mahāprabhu returned to Kuliyā after taking *sannyās*, Chāpāl Gopāl surrendered at the lotus feet of Mahāprabhu, and Mahāprabhu told him, ‘I cannot forgive you. If you ask for forgiveness of your offence at the lotus feet of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, then your offence will be removed and all this disease will come right too.’

hari-sthāne aparādhe tāre harināma

tomā-sthāne aparādhe nāhika eḍāna

‘If you commit an offence again the Lord, the Holy Name can save you, but if you commit an offence against a devotee of the Lord, nothing can save you then.’

If you commit an offence at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord, you can get a relief from it, but if you make an offence at the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇav, you will never get any relief. Therefore, we must always think and be careful not to make any offence at the holy feet of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavs. We must always pay obeisance at the holy feet of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavs and never look for faults in them.

Mukunda Datta's Exclusive Faith

One day, Mahāprabhu was doing *kīrtan* at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit (here, at Śrīvās-āṅgan). Overwhelmed with divine love for the Lord, He said to the devotees all of a sudden, 'Look into My eyes and tell Me what you want. Today, I will fulfil all your desires.' Devotees became very happy and asked for various boons. Mahāprabhu called out each of them by their name and blessed them, 'You will get mercy', 'You will get mercy', and so on. However, there was one person whose name Mahāprabhu did not call out. It was Śrī Mukunda Datta Prabhu. Although he was a very good *kīrtan* singer, Mahāprabhu did not mention his name. At this time, Mukunda Datta was sitting behind a curtain at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, waiting, 'When will Prabhu tell my name?' Feeling shy, he could not come out in front of Mahāprabhu. In the end, Śrīvās Paṇḍit asked Mahāprabhu, 'Prabhu, You have given Your mercy to everyone today, but why have You not mentioned Mukunda's name? He is sitting over there, but he will not come forward himself unless You tell his name.' Mahāprabhu replied, 'I will not tell his name because he is a *khaḍajāṭhiyā!*'"

What does ‘*khaḍajāṭhiyā*’ mean? Mukunda Datta is sometimes humility personified, holding straw (*khaḍa*) between his teeth (showing himself to be as meek as a cow), and sometimes he also attacks Mahāprabhu. So, he is such that, on the one hand, he is seated at Mahāprabhu’s feet, but, on the other hand, he is also sitting on Mahāprabhu’s neck. Whenever he gets into a scrape, he is a vehement follower of Mahāprabhu, but at other times he can criticise Mahāprabhu. Mukunda would go to all *sampradāyas*, and wherever he went, he would mix with everyone and start saying nonsense. That is why Mahāprabhu said, ‘When he goes to other *sampradāyas*, he strikes My body with a stick (*jāṭhi*). When someone says that there is something higher than devotion, they strike Me with a stick. I do not feel it is necessary to give him any boon! Because he has made an offence against Devotion (Bhakti Devī), he cannot see Me.’

Sitting behind the curtain, Mukunda heard what Mahāprabhu had said. He thought, ‘Gosh, I am so unfortunate. I will go and commit suicide today. If I am not able to get the *darśan* of the Lord, this life is useless. I always sing for Mahāprabhu, He is the Lord of my very being, my Prāṇanāth. How can I live without him? If He does not like me, if He does not bestow His mercy on me, then what will I live for?’ Then, Mukunda called Śrīvās Paṇḍit and said with tears in his eyes, ‘Thākur, please go to the Lord and ask Him when I will be able to see Him.’

Seeing Mukunda’s state, all the devotees became very sad. Śrīvās Paṇḍit went to Mahāprabhu and asked Him, ‘Prabhu, will Mukunda then never get Your mercy?’

‘He will. He will get mercy after ten million births. He will have to come back to this world ten million times, and after that he will get mercy.’

Śrīvās Paṇḍit thought, ‘We are doomed! Mukunda sings *kīrtans* so beautifully, Mahāprabhu becomes very happy when He hears him sing, and if it takes *him* ten millions births, then what is our situation?’

However, hearing Mahāprabhu’s harsh words, Mukunda suddenly threw off his clothes and started to dance naked! He kept saying, ‘I will get the Lord! I will get the Lord! Even if it takes me ten million births, but one day I will get Him!’

Everyone was astonished to see him, thinking, ‘Prabhu said that he would get mercy after ten millions births, but he is dancing and rejoicing! What sort of *sādhu* is he?’

Seeing Mukunda’s behaviour, Mahāprabhu became very pleased and told Śrīvās Paṇḍit, ‘All right, call him now, tell him to come here!’

Śrīvās Paṇḍit went to call Mukunda, but Mukunda said, ‘No, no. Prabhu said that I would get His *darśan* in ten million births – if I come to Him now, I will not be able to get His *darśan*; what I see will be only illusion.’

When Śrīvās Paṇḍit told Mahāprabhu what Mukunda had said, Mahāprabhu became even more pleased. He said, ‘Excellent! What a strong faith he has! Tell him that his ten million births have now finished – he does not have to wait any longer. Bring him here at once!’

Then, Mukunda came and, feeling overwhelmed with divine love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, fell at the holy lotus feet of Mahāprabhu. Mahāprabhu said to him, ‘Get up, my

Mukunda, get up! You have no offence. You heard what I said and you believed it – I will forever remain bound to you within your heart. You are My dear singer, and you must always stay with Me. I was only joking with you.’

Hearing this, Mukunda felt extremely contrite and condemnable; he began to cry.

We too must have this kind of faith. We must have the strongest faith in what Mahāprabhu says, in what Kṛṣṇa says in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*. We do not actually know Mahāprabhu, we do not know Kṛṣṇa, but we know our *gurudev*, therefore if we serve our *gurudev* (not for our own interests, but only for the interest of *gurudev*), if we become surrendered to *gurudev*, then we can get mercy. You must not think or worry about yourself – if you think about Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa will look after you. It is necessary to believe in this.

Fortunate Duḥkhī

One day, Mahāprabhu came to the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit together with Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Mahāprabhu always came there and danced during *kīrtan* in the mood of a devotee. However, that day His mood was different – that day He did not hide His transcendental identity of the Supreme Lord. He sat upon the worshipping seat prepared for the worship of Lord Viṣṇu, and, to bestow His special mercy upon the devotees, declared, ‘Today will be My *abhiṣek* (holy auspicious bathing).’ Śrīvās Paṇḍit then quickly called a maidservant named Duḥkhī who served at his house and told her to go to the Ganges and bring water. In those days, there were no tube-wells, so everyone went

to a pond or the Ganges to bring water. Ordered to fetch water, Duḥkhī started bringing water from the Ganges. While Mahāprabhu danced and chanted *kīrtan* in great joy, Duḥkhī did nothing else: she only kept going to the Ganges, tears flowing from her eyes. She scooped water into a clay pot and carried it back to the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit for Mahāprabhu's *abhiṣek*. When she came home with the water, she tearfully looked at Mahāprabhu dancing and after a short while again went to the Ganges to bring more water. She was not tired, she felt no distress; rather, her heart was constantly overflowing with jubilation. She kept going back to the Ganges again and again, bringing water and keeping all the clay pots in the house in a row.

As she fetched more and more water, she thought, 'I bring water every day, but today this water is for the bathing of the Lord Himself! How fortunate I am!'

Noticing this exclusive, one-pointed intense desire and tireless service of Duḥkhi, Mahāprabhu was extremely satisfied. One day, He asked Śrīvās Paṇḍit, 'Śrīvās, who brings Ganges water here every day?'

Śrīvās Paṇḍit said, 'A maidservant named Duḥkhī brings all water.'

'Call her, tell her to come here.'

Śrīvās Paṇḍit called Duḥkhī. When she came in, she began to cry again. Mahāprabhu asked her, 'Why are you crying? Why are you sad [duḥkhī]?''

Śrīvās Paṇḍit said, 'She is crying out of joy! Every time she sees You, she starts crying out of joy.'

Mahāprabhu asked her, 'Really? What is your name?'

'Duḥkhī,' the girl replied.

‘Who said your name is Duḥkhī [sad]? From today, your name will be Sukhī [happy]!’

This is how she attained Mahāprabhu’s mercy. She got it through service: she had no education, she had no wealth, she did not even go to school, she did not know anything, but she came to the Supreme Lord through her simple-hearted service.

Another time, a tailor who made clothes for Śrīvās Paṇḍit attained Mahāprabhu’s mercy, although he was Muslim by birth. One day, coming to Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s house, Mahāprabhu started calling everybody, ‘Come everybody, come! Please come whoever is there!’ At that time the tailor came to Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s house and saw Mahāprabhu. He became so blissfully happy that he started to cry, thinking, ‘Oh, why was I born in a Muslim family?! Why was I not born in a Hindu family? If I had been born in a Hindu family, I could serve Mahāprabhu!’ Just by seeing Mahāprabhu that tailor received Mahāprabhu’s mercy. Such is the result of having a simple heart and a strong faith.

‘Nārāyaṇī, the Recipient of Gaurāṅga’s Remnants’

There was one more person at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit who received Mahāprabhu’s mercy in a very astonishing way. It was a small girl called Nārāyaṇī, a niece of Śrīvās Paṇḍit. She received Mahāprabhu’s blessing in her early childhood.

One day, Mahāprabhu was taking *prasādam* at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit when Nārāyaṇī suddenly came in front of Mahāprabhu with an outstretched hand. She was about

three or four years old at that time. Mahāprabhu gave her some *prasād* and said, 'Now cry and chant "Kṛṣṇa!"' Affected by the order of Mahāprabhu, Nārāyaṇī started to cry and chant, 'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!'

Another time, some neighbours heard Śrīvās Paṇḍit chanting *kīrtan* with devotees late at night. Becoming jealous and annoyed, they started complaining, 'It is so late, we cannot sleep! All day and night they do their *kīrtan*! They must stop it; otherwise, we will have to beat Nimāi and we will break Śrīvās's house and throw it into the Ganges!'

Hearing their angry words, Śrīvās Paṇḍit stopped *kīrtan* from the next day, but that day Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to his house and asked, 'Śrīvās, what has happened? Why did you stop *kīrtan*?'

Śrīvās Paṇḍit replied, 'First come in, do not worry about it. Take a seat.'

'Why must I sit? Why has the *kīrtan* stopped? Speak up.'

'Do not get excited, sit. Neighbours are saying that they will break the house and throw it into the Ganges. I do not mind it, but they also say that they will raise their hands on You. How can I let anyone touch You?'

Mahāprabhu replied, 'Oh, is that so?' Then, He showed His transcendental power: He put His hand on Nārāyaṇī's head and blessed her, 'May you get devotion to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa!' Nārāyaṇī at once cried, 'O Kṛṣṇa! O Gaura!' and started rolling on the ground. After that, Mahāprabhu said to the devotees, 'So, do you believe it now, or do you still think that anyone can break your house?'

Everyone then believed Mahāprabhu and never stopped *kīrtan* again.

On account of all this, Nārāyaṇī became renowned as ‘Nārāyaṇī, the Recipient of Gaurāṅga’s Remnants.’ A few years later, they arranged her marriage into the paternal house of Mālinī Devī in Mamgachi. The name of her husband is not mentioned anywhere in the scriptures; however, soon after her marriage she begot a son – an exalted Vaiṣṇav called Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur. Such was her fortune.

About Śrī Mālinī Devī

As we mentioned Śrī Mālinī Devī, we can remember some pastimes related to her that also took place here.

One time, Nimāi’s elder brother, Viśvarūp Prabhu, came to the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit. He was about thirteen or fourteen years old at that time. He came to Śrīvās Paṇḍit to ask for his help, ‘Prabhu, I need one book, and I was hoping that you might have it.’ (At that time, Muslim people burnt Hindu scriptures, so it was not easy to find scriptures.) Śrīvās Paṇḍit replied, ‘I have sent the book you need to Tripura [Hindu area].’ Then, Mālinī Devī came into the room. Seeing Viśvarūp, she showed much affection to him. Śrīvās Paṇḍit told her sadly, ‘Viśvarūp came to ask me for help, but I could not help him.’ Mālinī Devī said suddenly, ‘How will *you* help him? You are always busy with *kīrtan*! You only know to go to Advaita Āchārya’s class. What to speak of helping others, you cannot even take care of your own family! So, how will you be able to help others? You are not a family man!’ Mālinī Devī scolded Śrīvās Paṇḍit in this way in front of Viśvarūp. Viśvarūp felt shy to hear her hot-headed words, but Śrīvās Paṇḍit

said to him, 'Have you heard it, Viśvarūp? What did I say and what is she saying to me? Now you see what it is like to live a family life. This family life is a big headache! Never get married!' Actually, at that time they had already heard the news about Viśvarūp's marriage – his parents had already found a girl for him; but Viśvarūp always remembered Śrīvas Paṇḍit's words and in the end, a few days later, ran away from home and took *sannyās*. That kind of mood came to him.

Mālinī Devī always treated all devotees, especially Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, with motherly affection. One time, when Nityānanda Prabhu came to Śrīvās Paṇḍit's house, Mālinī Devī was busy with *pūja* and *archan* when suddenly a crow came through the window and took one of the Deities' pots! Mālinī Devī started to cry out of fear, thinking, 'If Śrīvās Paṇḍit gets to know about it, he will scold me!' Nityānanda Prabhu asked her, 'What has happened, mother?' Mālinī Devī explained what had happened, and Nityānanda Prabhu said, 'Do not worry, I will return the pot.' Then, Nityānanda Prabhu smiled and called out to the crow, 'Hey, listen here, crow! Give the pot back!' And Mālinī Devī saw that the crow came back, kept the pot in the room and flew away. She thought, 'Nitāi is not an ordinary man!' Astonished, she started praising Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, but hearing her words, Nityānanda Prabhu only smiled and said, 'Mother, I am hungry.' Overwhelmed with divine parental affection, Mālinī Devī started to feed Him – Nityānanda Prabhu did not take *prasād* with His own hand; rather, Mālinī Devī always fed Him like a mother.

Nityānanda Prabhu always saw Śrīvās Paṇḍit and Mālinī Devī as His father and mother, and they always treated Him as their own son. Sometimes, just by seeing Nityānanda Prabhu, milk would start flowing from Mālinī Devī’s breasts. She had no breast milk, but by the influence of divine parental love, milk would start flowing from her breasts, and Nityānanda Prabhu would drink it like a baby.

Moreover, it is said in *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* that Mālinī Devī could always see Nityānanda Prabhu’s childhood pastimes, but Mahāprabhu ordered her not to tell anyone about that.

One day, Mahāprabhu asked Śrīvās Paṇḍit, ‘Śrīvās, why do you always keep this *avadhūt* at your house? You do not know anything about Him. What is his caste? Where was He born? If you want to protect your own caste and lineage, you must steer clear of Him! Tell Him to leave!’ Hearing Nimāi’s words, Śrīvās Paṇḍit smiled, ‘You do not need to test me. Nityānanda is Your own body, and those who worship You are my heart and soul. Even if Nityānanda grabs a drunk Muslim girl and destroys my caste, my being or my wealth, I will not change my mind – I swear to You.’ When Mahāprabhu heard Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s words, He rose and embraced him, roaring for joy! Then, He said, ‘I have entrusted Nityānanda to you; you please manage Him.’ So, Śrīvās Paṇḍit and Mālinī Devī always loved, treated and took care of Nityānanda Prabhu as their own son.

A lesson from Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s son

Śrīvās Paṇḍit and Mālinī Devī had only one son, but he got sick and left this world. When it happened, all the ladies

at home started weeping, but Śrīvās Paṇḍit told everyone to stop crying so as not to obstruct Mahāprabhu's *kīrtan* and dancing. A short while later, Mahāprabhu asked Śrīvās Paṇḍit, 'Śrīvās, tell Me, has anything happened at home? For some reason, I am not enjoying the *kīrtan* so much today. I am not feeling happy.' Śrīvās Paṇḍit had no choice, so he had to tell the truth, 'Yes, Prabhu, I did not want to disturb Your *kīrtan*, but my only son has died today.' Seeing Śrīvās Paṇḍit's devotion and faith, Mahāprabhu was pleased internally, 'Somebody has died in his house, but he is not telling Me anything.' Then, Mahāprabhu chided Śrīvās Paṇḍit, 'Why did you not tell Me anything before? Where is the boy? Let us go to him!' They went into the room, and Mahāprabhu spoke to the dead boy: 'Child, why are you leaving Śrīvās and Me? What offence have we made to you that you are leaving us and going away?' Then, the dead boy suddenly started speaking, 'Prabhu, I stayed here for a few days and had some connection with you all, but now You have called me, so I am going to Your abode. I have been born many times and have died many times, but this time at the time of death I have got to behold Your holy lotus face, so I am going away happily.'

Śrīvās Paṇḍit's exemplary service

Those who can take part in service every day are very fortunate. Not everyone attains this kind of fortune. Not everyone can do service – Hari-kathā does not enter everyone's ears. If you come to the Lord and say, 'I will serve You' – if such determination comes to you – then the Lord will manifest Himself in front of you.

What kind of householder was Śrīvās Paṇḍit?

Mahāprabhu said, ‘Śrīvās, I may go away from here one day, but *kīrtan* must continue in your house just as it is going on every day now. Every evening, you must gather all together with the people from the neighbourhood and chant *kīrtans* with the *mṛdaṅga* and *karatāls*.’

The Lord always stays wherever His devotees always think about Him. ‘*Ye dina gṛhe bhajana dekhi, gṛhete goloka bhāya*. Brother, whenever I see spiritual life practised in my house, my house turns into Goloka.’ Where is Goloka? Goloka is in the house where the Lord is talked about and where the Lord is served every day. In terms of service or practising devotion, there are sixty-four limbs of devotion, and *Nāma-saṅkīrtan* is the best among those limbs.

So, on the order of the Lord, there was daily *kīrtan* held at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, and Śrīvās Paṇḍit had a very good habit – he thought, ‘Devotees will come in the evening. How can they leave without eating anything? No. If I can give them some *prasād*, it will be good.’ Śrīvās Paṇḍit did not have a job, he did not have any business or income, so where would he get the money to arrange *prasād*? He went begging (collecting *mādhukarī*). He offered whatever he collected during the day to the Lordships at his house and in the evening distributed *prasād* to everyone.

Can everyone in the world be good though? There are always some naughty people. Take a hundred people – there will always be more bad people than good. So, when Śrīvās Paṇḍit went begging, some naughty people abused and tortured him very much. Because Śrīvās Paṇḍit held *kīrtans* at his house, people said, ‘This pauper is so hungry

that he cannot sleep at night, that is why he does *kīrtans* all night long!’ Some drunkards would come stark drunk and keep empty bottles at the door of Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s house; the next day people saw the bottles and said, ‘He chants *kīrtans* the whole day and drinks wine in the dead of night!’

Because Śrīvās Paṇḍit went begging, people criticised him, ‘This uncle begs and collects money to live comfortably with his wife and son!’

Hearing such talks, Mahāprabhu thought, ‘These people are making offences, and they will have to dwell in hell. I must fix this.’

Then, Mahāprabhu went to Śrīvās Paṇḍit and said, ‘Śrīvās! Listen to Me.’

‘Yes, Prabhu, what is it? What is Your order?’

‘My Order is this: from tomorrow, you will not go begging anymore.’

‘What are You saying? You told me to hold *kīrtans* in the evenings, so how can I let devotees leave with empty stomachs? How can I not give them any *prasād*? I cannot find any job, that is why I have to go begging.’

‘I do not know all this! You must not go begging. I am telling you that from tomorrow you will not go begging!’

Then, Śrīvās Paṇḍit laughed and said, ‘All right! One clap, two clap, three clap!’

‘One clap, two clap, three clap? What language are you speaking?’

‘I am saying that I will see one day, I will see the second day (I will fast for one day, I will fast for two days), and on the third day, not being able to tolerate hunger any more, I will jump into the Ganges!’

‘Yes, very good. Jump into the Ganges, no problem,’ Mahāprabhu said, testing Śrīvās Paṇḍit. Saying this, Mahāprabhu went away, and the next day in the morning, so much rice, *dal* and vegetables came to Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s house! Śrīvās Paṇḍit was nonplussed, ‘Who is bringing it? Where is it all coming from?’ His whole house became filled with *bhoga*, and Śrīvās Paṇḍit never lacked anything.

It is necessary to have this kind of faith – it is necessary to be this kind of householder. ‘Dear Lord, I rely on You. Keep me any way You wish to. I will serve You – whether You take my service or not, what You give me or not give, it is Your matter. It does not matter whether I like something or do not like something – if You think bad about me and want to punish me, You can do so; and if You think good about me and want to give me happiness, You can do so. Be it happiness or unhappiness, I do not mind anything.’

So, we have come here, to the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit by great fortune. Taking the dust of this supremely worshippable place on our heads, we must always remember all these things that we have discussed and pray that in some future birth, somehow, we can become members of devotees’ family and take part in their service.

Jay Śrīvās Paṇḍit’s Aṅgan ki jay.

Śrī Śrīvās Paṇḍit, Śrī Mālinī Devī ki jay.

Jay Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi ki jay. Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

**mānasa, deha, geḥa, yo kichhu mora
arpilũ tuyā pade nanda-kiśora [1]**

I offered my mind, body, home, whatever I have, at
Your feet, Nanda Kiśor.

**sampade vipade jīvane maraṇe
dāya mama gelā tuyā o pada varaṇe [2]**

Whether I am living peaceful or in danger, whether
alive or dead, all my responsibility is gone by embracing
Your feet.

**mārabi rākhabī yo īchchhā tohārā
nitya-dāsa prati tuyā adhikārā [3]**

You may kill me, You may keep me alive – as You
wish. You have full right over Your eternal servant.

**janmāobi moye īchchhā yadi tora
bhakta-gr̥he jani janma hau more [4]**

If You wish that I take birth again, let me be born in
the home of Your devotees.

**kīṭa janma hau yathā tuyā dāsa
bahir-mukha brahma-janme nāhi āśa [5]**

I do not mind being born as a worm as long as I am
Your servant: I do now want to be born as Brahma, averse
to You.

**bhukti-mukti-spr̥hā-vihīna ye bhakta
labhaite taṇ'ka saṅga anurakta [6]**

I hanker to attain the association of the devotees who
have no desire for enjoyment or liberation.

**janaka-jananī-dayita-tanaya
prabhu, guru, pati tuhũ—sarva-maya [7]**

Father, mother, beloved, son, master, *guru*, husband –
You are everything to me.

**bhakati-vinoda kahe śuna kāna!
rādhānātha! tuhũ hāmāra parāṇa [8]**

Bhaktivinod says, 'O Kāna! O Rādhānāth! You are my
life and soul.'

Śrī Advaita Āchārya Bhavan

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, continuing our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, we left Śrīvās Paṇḍit's house and have come now to this small adjacent temple. This temple is the holy dwelling of Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu. Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur established this temple here in 1919.

In the magazine *Śrī Gauḍīya*, we find an extremely valuable article about Śrīla Advaita Āchārya Prabhu. '*Vaiṣṇavera guṇa-gāna karile jīvera trāṇa, śuniyāchhi sādhu-guru-mukhe*: I hear from the holy lotus mouth of *sādhus* and my *guru* that glorification of Vaiṣṇavs' qualities can



liberate your soul.’ Therefore, for our own benefit and the benefit of the entire world, to remember the divine glory and qualities of Śrī Advaita Āchārya, we are presenting this article here.

Śrī Śrī Advaita Āchārya

(Reprinted from weekly magazine *Gauḍīya*: volume 5, issue 2)

Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu is a particle of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahāviṣṇu, the primeval all-cognizant Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore, he belongs to Viṣṇu-tattva, being non-different from the Lord. Lord Viṣṇu is the embodiment of goodness, He is the origin of all creation, and He Himself has no creator. Nobody is His creator or father. Although He is essentially the father of all living souls, to nourish the parental devotional mellows and increase transcendental parental love of His devotees, He Himself appears in the form of a son of His devotees. Advaita Āchārya Prabhu became visible to the eyes of the souls of this world at the house of Kuver Miṣra, who resided in a village called Navagrāma near Śrīhaṭṭa – he arose from the ocean of Kuvera Miṣra’s spouse Nābhā Devī’s womb on a very auspicious day of *śuklā-saptamī* (the seventh day of the waxing moon) in the month of Māgh (January–February).

It is said that one time Guhyakeśvar Kuvera, an associate of the great Vaiṣṇav Mahādev, engaged in the worship of Lord Śiva. Mahādev was pleased with his worship and told him to pray for a boon. Kuver then prayed to Mahādev for the following boon: ‘Please, Sir,

become my son.’ This Guhyakeśvar Kuvera is Kuver Miśra, the esteemed father of Advaita Prabhu, an incarnation of Sadā-Śiva. Because he is non-different from the Lord, his name is ‘Advaita’ (non-dual); and because he incarnates as a devotee and gives devotional guidance, his name is ‘Āchārya’ (teacher). Āchārya Prabhu showed the pastimes of a householder devotee. Accepting Mādhavendra Purīpād, the king among the highest *paramahansa* devotees, who showed the pastimes of the fourth order of life (*sannyāsa*), as his *guru*, he taught the necessity of accepting a pure *mahābhāgavata vaiṣṇav guru*.

Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu is the main trunk of the wish-fulfilling tree of devotion. He has two other names, Maṅgal (‘spiritual benefit’) and Kamalākṣa (‘lotus-eyed’). After his parents departed for the Ganges (left their bodies), he went to Śrī Vṛndāvan, becoming immersed in the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Later, he returned to Śāntipur, and his manifestation (his glory) became known in Nabadwīp. With great joy, the residents of Śāntipur provided everything he needed (constructed his house and supplied all other facilities) and, with his consent, arranged his marriage to Śrī and Sītā (two daughters of a great *brāhmaṇ* Nṛsiṃha Bhādurī), who were endowed with all good qualities. In this way, they made a great effort to keep Śrī Advaita Prabhu in Śāntipur. Yogamāyā and her embodiment who appeared as Sītā and Śrī became Śrī Advaita Prabhu’s pious spouses.

At that time, almost all places were swayed by the people who lacked devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa and were

overt materialists; seeing them engaged in their fruitless, ostentatious display of knowledge, Śrī Advaita Āchārya felt much pain inside him. There were only one–two people in Nadia (Śrīvās Paṇḍit and a few others) who were exclusive pious devotees and spent their time discussing *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and other devotional scriptures properly. When Āchārya Prabhu got to know about those devotees, he immediately came to meet with them. He experienced great happiness relishing the nectar of devotion to Kṛṣṇa at the holy house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, who lived close by. However, Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu did not feel satisfied that such an unparalleled and priceless source was kept hidden in this way. Feeling the misery of the souls who were averse to the Lord, his very being shed tears. The suitable time had come for the Lord to make His auspicious advent and establish the religion of the current age. So, feeling immediately a great longing for the Lord’s coming, Śrī Advaita began to incessantly offer Ganges water and Tulasī at the holy lotus feet of the Lord, calling Him with deep cries that pierced the entire universe.

At a very auspicious moment, Śrī Gaurāṅga, who is non-different from Śrī Vrajendranandan (the son of the King of Vraja), appeared on the lap of Śrī Śāchī Mātā in the house of Śrī Jagannāth Miśra in Śrī Māyāpur, Nabadwīp. At that time, Śrī Advaita was in Śāntipur, and our Nāmāchārya Ṭhākur Haridās was also there. They both spent the entire brightly-lit Phālgunī Pūrṇimā (full moon) night of the Lord’s appearance dancing and chanting jubilantly with upraised arms in the association of faithful devotees. Burning with enthusiasm, the Great

Āchārya kicked all obstacles and disasters on their heads and started to preach genuine spiritual religion (*bhāgavata-dharma*). Axing the root of all long-nourished foolishness and infatuation with competition, he declared everywhere the glory of the truth through his daily practice (*āchār*) and preaching (*prachār*).

Before those events, Śrī Āchārya Prabhu submitted with great affection a *pitṛ-śrāddha* offering to Śrī Ṭhākur Haridās, who appeared in this world in a Muslim family, but Śrī Āchārya Prabhu considered him the best among millions of *brāhmaṇs*. In this way, Śrī Āchārya Prabhu had been preaching about the impartiality and piety of the preacher and teacher of devotion. During a short time, Śrī Advaita Prabhu was assisted by the elder brother of Gaurasundar, Śrī Viśvarūpa, who was inclined to leave his house. Śrī Advaita Prabhu taught the pure, authorised by great souls commentaries and conceptions of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and other devotional scriptures – in this way, he turned many atheists and fallen, ignorant people into excellent devotees. When His elder brother left home, Śrī Gaurasundar started to reveal His childhood and adolescent pastimes, enchanting everyone with His supra-mundane glories and spiritual excellence. One day, Śāchī Mātā showed a pastime of committing a *vaiṣṇava-aparādha* through an accidental slip of the tongue – she had made an offence to Śrī Advaita Prabhu, an incarnation of a devotee, by criticising him, and when Advaita was once lying unconscious, being overwhelmed with divine love, she was told to beg forgiveness at his lotus feet.

The sounds of *Harinām-saṅkīrtan* echoed in all four directions. Just as all rivers of a country flow from a thousand directions to unite at the confluence in the ocean, in the same way, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Haridās and other close associates converged at the holy lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga. Seeing that his staunch determination was fulfilled, Āchārya's joy knew no bounds. He, too, took advantage of the auspicious time and kept himself at the Lord's lotus feet. Together with Gadādhara, Śrī Gaura Hari would personally turn up at Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu's house and accept his worship, and He also promised him to always grant him His *darśan*.

Āchārya Ṭhākura Prabhu devised various tricks to make Śrī Gaurasundar known to devotees and common people. One day, Śrī Advaita ran away from Nabadwīp and hid in Śāntipur. Revealing the mood of the Supreme Lord at the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Gaura Hari sent Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's cousin, Rāmāi, to go and immediately bring Śrī Advaita back from Śāntipur. Rāmāi went to Śāntipur together with his wife, but Śrī Advaita sent them back, saying, 'I will not come with you.' Meanwhile, he hid himself in the house of Nandan Āchārya, deciding to himself, 'If Prabhu comes for me and places His lotus feet on my head today, then I will know that He is my Prāṇanātha (the master of my very being).' And the Lord did actually come. Very soon the desire of Advaita Prabhu's heart was fulfilled. The Lord knows everything, so He came for him and placed His holy lotus feet on Advaita Prabhu's head. At that time, the Lord promised in front of everyone that He would keep those who were intoxicated with pride because of

their knowledge, wealth, lineage, various penances, etc. scorching in threefold miseries and would fulfil His life by bestowing devotion to Himself to anyone who has no pride and considers themselves bereft and poor, be it a highly qualified person, a woman, a person born in the lowest caste of base workers, a fool, a despicable person or a meat-eater, etc. – He would bestow devotion to anyone as long as they have no ego (do not live in the world of ‘me’ and ‘mine’); the Lord promised to make even the lowest and most despicable persons dance enthralled by the pure divine love for the Holy Name. Hearing the Lord proclaim this, hundreds and hundreds of voices filled the nether world and heaven in simultaneous, joint cries of ‘Jay!’

There were so many pastimes, there was so much joy that great Āchārya Prabhu partook in together with Śrī Gaurasundar, together with Śrī Nityānanda. He fought with Nitāi in the garden; both he and Gaura competed, offering each other worship and taking each other’s foot dust. What a wave of transcendental love arose in those pastimes! One day, to craftily preach in this world through Śrīman Mahāprabhu about the futility of attempts to cultivate knowledge of the impersonal conception of Godhead and about the superiority of devotion, Advaita Āchārya Prabhu hid his internal spiritual mood and started to speak about the greatness of *yoga*, asserting that liberation was higher than devotion. Mahāprabhu showed a pastime of becoming enraged with Advaita Prabhu and gave him a very good beating. Oh, how much joy flowed in all those pastimes! However, this joy and happiness did not stay for long... Śrī Gaurasundar accepted *sannyās*

(entered the renounced order of life) and went away from His house, leaving behind all the weeping devotees of Nadia.

At first, Śrī Gaurasundar came begging to the house of Śrī Advaita, where He stayed for a few days under the care of Śrī, Sītā and Śāchī Mātā, before departing for Śrīdhām Nīlāchal. Feeling deep anxiety of separation from Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Āchārya Prabhu wanted to go with Him, but the Lord put him off by reminding him about the duty he had at that time: to stay in Gauḍadeś and keep people engaged in spiritual practice by preaching pure devotional religion. Sītānāth (the master of Śrī Sītā Devī) stayed and followed the Lord's order. However, every year at the time of Ratha-yātrā, he had an opportunity to come to Śrī Kṣetra with all the devotees of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, so he would spend four months in the joy of service to their all-in-all, their treasure, Śrī Śāchinandan. That time gave them the highest comfort and fulfilment.

Afterwards, every year, during the few months they got to spend with the Lord at Ratha-yātrā, which was their only chance to meet with Him, they started to feel various transcendental loving joy. Once, in Śrī Nīlāchal, Āchārya Prabhu invited the Lord to his house, thinking to himself, 'If Prabhu comes alone today, it will be very good because I will be able to serve Him at ease, filling my very being with His service.' The Lord, a wish-fulfilling tree, fulfilled the longing of His devotee – He came to Advaita Āchārya Prabhu alone at noon, and there started such a heavy downpour and hailstorm that nobody else could come there at that time. Jubilant, Āchārya Prabhu

recited prayers to Indra, the carrier of clouds and, assisted by his wife, served the Lord of his very being in the way that he hankered to. With His own mouth the Lord praised and glorified Śrī Advaita so much, but Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu would reply to that, 'All my power comes from devotion to You. Please give me a boon that You may never leave me.'

It was in this Śrī Kṣetra that Śrī Gaurasundar once asked His dear devotee Śrīvās, 'What kind of Vaiṣṇav do you consider Advaita to be?' Śrīvās said, 'He is like Śuka and Prahlād.' The Lord got angry and immediately slapped Śrīvās, scolding him just like a father scolds his son, 'What? What have you said, Śrīvāsiyā? Do you compare Advaita to the newborn babies Śuka and Prahlād? You have such a big mouth to say such things about My Nāḍā [Caller; he who called Me to this world]? You have made Me very sad today.' Saying this, He grabbed a lamp stand that was at hand and was about to hit Śrīvās with it. Our Āchārya Gosāñi, who was nearby at that time, immediately got up and caught Prabhu's hand, asking Him to please forgive Śrīvās as he was just a child. The Lord calmed down and started to sing the glories of Śrī Achārya Prabhu in a very firm voice. He said, 'Śuka and others are his children. They were all born after him. My advent in this world is only owing to him. Who knows his glory?' Śrīvās prayed at the Lord's lotus feet to forgive him and said, 'Prabhu, unless You tell us about it, how are we to know about who Advaita is? I feel very fortunate to have learnt this today.'

One time, when the Ratha-yātrā festival was over, Śrī Advaita Prabhu worshipped Mahāprabhu with Tulāsī

and flowers, and Mahāprabhu also worshipped Advaita Āchārya with the flowers and Tulasī that were left in the *pūja* glass, reciting the *mantra*, ‘*Yo’ si so’ si namo ‘stu te’* (‘You are whatever you are – I am offering My respectful obeisance to you’).

Śrī Advaita Āchārya had six sons; their names were Śrī Achyutānanda, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Gopāl, Balarām, Svarūp and Jagadīs. Among them, three sons were Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s great devotees and were always attached to His service. The other three took to other doctrines and were scorned upon by their father and all the devotees of Gaura. Śrī Achyuta, an exalted devotee who had been attached to the lotus feet of Gaura from his childhood, showed the pastime of accepting a very strict vow of celibacy.

Śrī Gaurasundar came answering Śrī Advaita Prabhu’s ardent call. When later the work had been done, it was again by Śrī Advaita Prabhu’s hint that the Lord went on to leave for His own abode. The marketplace of divine love was shattered. Gradually, all of the Lord’s dear associates concealed themselves. So, why will Śrī Advaita stay? In due course of time, he too disappeared from everyone’s view.

dhana mora nityānanda, pati mora gaurachandra,
prāṇa mora yugala-kiśora
advaita āchārya bala, gadādhara mora-kūla,
narahari vilasai mora [1]

Nityānanda is my wealth. Gaurachandra is my lord, and my very life is the Divine Couple. Advaita Āchārya is my strength, Gadādhara is my family, and Narahari is my play and pastimes.

vaiṣṇavera pada-dhūli, tahe mora snana-keli,
tarpaṇa mora vaiṣṇavera nāma
vichāra kariyā mane, bhakti-rasa āsvādane,
madhyastha śrī-bhāgavata-purāṇa [2]

The foot dust of the Vaiṣṇavs is where I sport and take bath; Vaiṣṇavs' names are the water oblation; and *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* is the ultimate way to relish *bhakti-rasa* (nectar of devotion).

vaiṣṇavera uchchhiṣṭa, tāhe mora mano-niṣṭha,
vaiṣṇavera nāmete ullāsa
vṛndāvane chabutarā, tāhe mora mano-gherā,
kahe dīna narottama dāsa [3]

'My mind is intently fixed upon the remnants of Vaiṣṇavs. I feel elated upon hearing the names of Vaiṣṇavs. My entire mind dwells within the courtyard of Vṛndāvan,' says poor Narottam Dās.

Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita Goswāmī

Next to Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu's house is the house of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita.

From his childhood, Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita stayed near Mahāprabhu. His father's name is Mādhava Mīśra, and his mother's name is Ratnāvalī Devī. They lived close to Śrī Jagannātha Mīśra's house in Māyāpura, and Ratnāvalī Devī treated Śachī Devī as her elder sister.



During His childhood pastimes, Śrī Gaura Hari always played with Gadādhara Paṇḍit. Although Gadādhara Paṇḍit was a few years younger than Mahāprabhu, they studied together at the local school. Mahāprabhu could not stay without Gadādhara, and Gadādhara also could not stay even a moment without Mahāprabhu.

One day, Śrī Īśvara Purī came to Māyāpur. During his visit, he taught Gadādhara a scripture called *Kṛṣṇa-līlāmṛta* – hearing this holy scripture from Śrī Īśvara Purī's holy mouth, Gadādhara was extremely captivated. From his childhood, Gadādhara Paṇḍit was placid, peaceful, reserved and renounced. When Gaura Hari was small, He would display a very naughty mood and sometimes ask Gadādhara hard questions, trying to trick him with logic. Gadādhara Paṇḍit did not particularly like it, so sometimes he would try to keep away from Nimāi (sometimes, seeing Nimāi walking down the street, he would turn around and go in the opposite direction to avoid Him), but Śrī Gaurasundara did not let him go.

Once, Gadādhara Paṇḍit came to Mahāprabhu and said, 'Prabhu, give me initiation.' Mahāprabhu replied, 'Your guru is coming; wait for him, he will give you initiation.' After a while, Śrī Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi came to Nabadwīp from Chaṭṭagrām (Mahāprabhu always called him 'father'). Soon after that, Mukunda Datta came to Gadādhara Paṇḍit and asked him, 'Prabhu, would you like to meet a Vaiṣṇava?' Gadādhara Paṇḍit answered, 'Yes, of course! Let us go!' When they came to the house of Śrī Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi, Gadādhara Paṇḍit lost the enthusiastic faith he had had before coming. He saw that Śrī Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi was

a householder devotee: dressed in a costly *dhoti* and a fine *kurta*, he sprawled leisurely on his opulent bed, chewing *pān*. Gadādhara Paṇḍita had come to see a *sādhu*, but it turned out that the ‘*sādhu*’ looked just like a materialist. Thinking in this way, Gadādhara Paṇḍita actually made an offence. He wondered, ‘Who is this man? Why does he behave like a gross materialist if he is a Vaiṣṇava?’ Mukunda Datta understood what had gone through Gadādhara Paṇḍita’s mind, so he recited a verse describing pastimes of Kṛṣṇa:

aho bakī yaṁ stanakālakūṭaṁ
 jighāmsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī
 lebhe gatiṁ dhātry-uchitāṁ tato ‘nyāṁ
 kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema

‘Oh! Even though the wicked Pūtānā nursed Kṛṣṇa with her poison-smeared breasts, intending to kill Him, Kṛṣṇa granted her a position befitting His mother! Of what merciful Lord shall we take shelter other than Him?’

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, 3.2.23)

Hearing Mukunda sing about Kṛṣṇa’s pastime in a very sweet voice, Śrī Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi immediately started crying, ‘Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!’ – tears flowed from his eyes, and he fell unconscious. Seeing this, Gadādhara Paṇḍita thought, ‘I have mistaken this great Vaiṣṇava for a materialist! I have made an offence! Unless I take the *mantra* from him, I will not become free – this offence will not go away.’

Why did Mahāprabhu call Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi ‘father’? There is a reason behind it. In Dvāpara-yuga, this Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi was Rājā Vṛṣabhānu, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s father. Who is Gadādhara Paṇḍita? He is an incarnation of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. So, when Gadādhara Paṇḍita told

Mahāprabhu what had happened, Mahāprabhu approved of it, saying, ‘Yes, to remove your offence, you must take initiation from him. *He is your guru!*’

When, Mukunda Datta intimated Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍit’s peculiar identity to Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi, Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi felt happy:

śuniyā hāsena puṇḍarīka vidyānidhi
 “āmāre ta’ mahāratna milāilā vidhi
 karāimu ihāte sandeha kichhu nāi
 bahu janma-bhāgye se emata śiṣya pāi”

‘Hearing this, Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi laughed: “The Providence has brought a great jewel to me! I have no doubt about it. I am getting this kind of disciple as a result of a great fortune accumulated after many, many births”.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 2.7.117–118)

‘It is my great fortune to accept him as a disciple! So, it is not I who has bestowed mercy on him; rather, by getting a disciple like him, I think it is he who has bestowed his mercy on me!’ Then, Gadādhara Paṇḍit came in front of Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi and offered his obeisance to him, and Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi gave him the *mantra*. After Gadādhara Paṇḍit returned home, he manifested a new life: he became inundated with transcendental love for Lord Kṛṣṇa and floated continuously, day and night, engrossed in it.

Gadādhara Paṇḍit and Mahāprabhu performed their Nadia pastimes together, and when Mahāprabhu showed the pastime of accepting *sannyās*, Gadādhara Paṇḍit accepted *kṣetra-sannyās* (the vow of a renounced person to stay in one place the whole life) on the order of Mahāprabhu and settled in Nīlāchal (Jagannāth Puri) – he

lived there like Mahāprabhu's shadow.

When Kṛṣṇa stole Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's heart and halo and became Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī became empty – Her entire being had been taken away, and only Her body remained standing like a shadow. Such was Gadādhara Paṇḍita's position as his form is non-different from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Like a shadow, he could not leave Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu: wherever Mahāprabhu went, Gadādhara Paṇḍita followed Him from afar. Although he did not know anything except Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, he did not come close to Mahāprabhu: he always stayed in the background, behind Him. We can see that Mahāprabhu appeared on a full moon day (*pūrṇimā*), and Gadādhara Paṇḍita appeared on a new moon day (*amāvasyā*). A new moon day means when there is no moon in the sky: Mahāprabhu had taken the moon, and Gadādhara Paṇḍita choose to come on the holy day when there was no moon. Gadādhara Paṇḍita is the master, but he has given everything to his Lord. Such was his character – he revealed the example of the highest sacrifice.

In Gaura-līlā, Mahāprabhu's nature was aggressive, bold and miraculously genius, and Gadādhara Paṇḍita's nature was just the opposite. Nonetheless, Gadādhara Paṇḍita was naturally drawn and surrendered to Nimāi Paṇḍita, and Nimāi Paṇḍita was also attracted to Gadādhara Paṇḍita, but because Gadādhara Paṇḍita was a little shy, he could not look straight into Nimāi Paṇḍita's face. Moreover, seeing Nimāi Paṇḍita, Gadādhara Paṇḍita would try to show he was indifferent, but Nimāi did not let him go: He always asked Gadādhara Paṇḍita various questions, showing many

pastimes in his association.

When, overcome with the mood of a devotee, Nimāi Paṇḍit returned to Nabadwīp from Gayā and saw Gadādhara Paṇḍit, He said, ‘Gadāi, your life is perfect! You have had firm devotion to Lord Nārāyaṇ and Kṛṣṇa since your childhood, but My life is spoilt: I have wasted so much time on mundane talks and discussions, I have not practised Kṛṣṇa consciousness! But you have been a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa from the beginning. I want your mercy so that I may also be able to spend My life with devotion.’

In 1956, our Param Guru Mahārāj, Om̐ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, wrote a very beautiful article about Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍit. We are presenting this article here for the eternal spiritual benefit of the world.

Paṇḍit Gadādhara Goswāmī

Among dear associates of Śrī Gaurāṅga, Śrī Gadādhara Goswāmī is the highest. Just as Śrī Rādhikā’s position in the amorous pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa is indisputably the highest of all; in the same way, in the magnanimous pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, who assumes the form of Gaura, in terms of service in the magnanimous mood of divine love, Śrī Paṇḍit Goswāmī’s character possesses the strongest attraction to Śrī Gaurāṅga, the embodiment of magnanimous loving devotion. Great souls behold Śrī Rādhā *tattva* within Paṇḍit Gadādhara.

Paṇḍit Gadādhara appeared in the summer, on the new moon day in the Bengali month of Jyaiṣṭha (May–June); his holy disappearance day is one month later, on the new

moon day in the Bengali month of Āṣāṛha (June–July). The peculiarity of Paṇḍit Goswāmī's character is such that he embodies a silent gift of complete self-sacrifice to his Dearest. Those who can relish wondrous happiness by realising in their hearts the oxymoron (contradictory) excellence of the sight of Lakṣmī Devī carrying the bag of a beggar on her shoulder are qualified to feel and realise the extraordinary glory of Śrīmat Paṇḍit Goswāmī's transcendental personality. From his childhood, he is very simple-hearted, innocent, unpretentious and very courteous, devoted to gods and *brāhmaṇas* and very affectionate to his friends. Although gentle, he is fearful; although submissive, he feels he is an offender; although replete with full knowledge, he feels he is amateur; although a main hero, he poses as a loyal menial servant. He is firmly fixed in his Lord, Prabhu Śrī Gaurāṅga: a mere glance cast upon him by Gaurasundar's ordinary followers makes him shy away and feel fearful. His insanely profound absorption in his Śrī Guru-Gaura makes him forget the *mantras* that are recited for the Deity worship. Even a little bit of faith in Śrī Gaurāṅga attracts his heart so much that no matter whether Śrī Gaurāṅga rewards or reprimands him in His reciprocal affection, he takes everything as a precious ornament. In short, Śrī Paṇḍit Goswāmī's nature is such that he is a neglected worshippable deity that has given away all his wealth and voluntarily accepted the garb of a beggar.

Śrī Gadādhara's wealth is not the external wealth of Harishchandra's kingdom or the wealth of bodily sacrifices of King Shibi and King Dadhichi, just as it is not some sacrifice that the nurse Panna Dai (she sacrificed her son,

who was more dear to her than her own life, allowing him to be killed) or the self-immolation sacrifice of Padmini and other chaste women; it is not even some sacrifice like that of Socrates, who sacrificed his body to spread the 'know thyself' teachings, or Jesus Christ, who sacrificed his body to rescue the world. Great self-realised souls who are situated on a higher place consider bodily sacrifice trifle: it is much more difficult to give up the wealth of one's internal body, or one's own pure identity. If we can go beyond the wealth of devotion that is characteristic of liberated souls and realise the form of the object of divine love, then we will realise the profundity of the unparalleled gift of Śrī Paṇḍit Goswāmī's internal wealth, and this can be possible only by his and his dear associates' mercy. All this very complicated matter cannot be perceived all of a sudden as some common matter; however, considering that it was necessary, it has been revealed.

Moreover, just as it is appropriate to determine one's moral standard by analysing the quality of the gift, it is also definitely possible to understand the quality of the gift by analysing the qualification of the recipient of the gift. The more qualified the person who receives the gift is, the more glorious and successful the giver of the gift is. Therefore, there is no comparison with regard to Śrī Paṇḍit Goswāmī's gift of his own self and the supreme position of the recipient of his gift; that is why the wealth of the divine love of Śrī Rādhā is the highest and Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra is the highest recipient. As we discuss this matter, we are reminded of an episode related to Śrī Yājñavalkya. He was asked, step by step, higher and higher questions about

the soul, then he was asked a question about the highest matter, and then the inquirer asked about even a higher matter – in reply to another question, Yājñavalkya Ṛṣi solemnly told the man that there was a limit to satisfying one’s curiosity.

Although it is impossible for us to realise the glory of Śrī Paṇḍita Goswāmī, great souls have kept for us their divine realisation with regard to Gadādhara’s identity. However, ill-fated as we are, being certainly incapable of establishing our faith in what they describe, we plunge ourselves into offences and disrespect. At the same time, some climb on the shoulder of Nityānanda-Baladev, who embody the wealth of Śrī Rādhā, or climb on the shoulder of Dāsa Gadādhara, raising their own flag of mental concoction (*mano-dharma*) and becoming offenders of the *sambandha-tattva* (the nature of the transcendental relationship), bolting thus the door to attaining the perfection of self-realisation (*svarūpa-siddhi*). Some, engrossed in the mood of enjoyment and not being able to understand Gadādhara’s way of worshipping Gaura-Kṛṣṇa, pass Nārāyaṇa as a womaniser, invoking the union pastimes of Viṣṇupriyā’s husband, Gaura-Nārāyaṇa. When Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in the garb of Śrī Rādhā’s mood, He is Śrī Gaura, and when Gaura is physically detached from Rādhā, He is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the only object of worship in all possible mellows of devotion (conjugal, etc.). Śrī Rāma and other incarnations are not like that. Twice-born Śrī Gaurasundar or the master of renunciates Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyadev never mixed and never mixes freely with women, assuming the mood of a womaniser. To see paramour enjoyment within these

pastimes is *rasābhās* (a wrongful confusion of devotional mellows), an offence, antagonism towards great souls and sheer heresy. In the authentic scriptures, such as *Śrī Chaitanya-bhagavata* and *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*, there is not, and there cannot be, even slightest mention of an event or conclusion pointing at this conception of Gaura as a womaniser (Gaura-nāgara). Just as when a pious, devoted-to-her-husband wife, who is attached to the worship of her husband, seeing him as non-different from God, serves her husband in various favourable ways, trying to worship her venerable husband (yet, at this time, she does not obstruct her God-like husband's worship by discussing seductive amorous matters); in the same way, in the pastimes of Kṛṣṇachandra, meditating on worshipping Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mood of Śrī Rādhā (His corresponding form of Śrī Gaurasundar who worships Śrī Kṛṣṇa), Śrī Gadādhara, being the embodiment of Śrī Rādhikā, manifests a life filled with auspicious practices in the worship of his divine Master (this form is manifest within Gadādhara eternally). Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa eternally enjoy Their pastimes in Vraja, and Śrī Gadāi-Gaurāṅga eternally reside in Nabadwīp, performing their magnanimous pastimes there. Those who are Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the amorous pastimes in Vraja are Śrī Gadādhara-Gaurāṅga in the magnanimous pastimes in Nabadwīp. Thinking about the oneness of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Gadādhara-Gaurāṅga in any other way brings about ruination. For practitioners, it is necessary to give up common ideas and take shelter of the great souls' path.

Śrī Gaurāṅga is the Lord of Divine Love (*prema-devatā*). Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes the Lord of Divine

Love, He possesses all rights and, according to His wish, this form is not manifest to everyone primarily because of the connotation of enjoyment. However, Śrī Gaurāṅga is the Deity of Divine Love to those common conditioned souls who have a strong faith and have taken shelter in the devotional mellows of separation and magnanimity. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu assumes the form of Śrī Gurudev and, wandering door to door, ardently bestows the gift of this Lord of Divine Love to all fallen souls. Śrī Advaita Prabhu is the Lord of supreme auspiciousness who reveals the path to one's spiritual benefit – he is the one who calls and brings this Lord of Divine Love, Śrī Chaitanyachandra, to this earth. Śrīvās Paṇḍita and others are the precious assistants in the pastimes of Śrī Gaura, supporting the *saṅkīrtan* pastimes of this Lord of Divine Love, Śrī Gaurāṅga, as the embodied Deities of the Lord's seat. Śrī Svarūpa, Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunāth, Jīva and others, who are all nectar-filled channels of the fountain of divine love, have infused life into the entire universe. (This vilest soul, overcome with wicked desires, is begging to attain a drop of this nectar; the mercy of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavs is the only hope.)

The Lord of Divine Love, Śrī Gaurāṅga, has assumed this deity form to glorify the object of divine love, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Understanding that it was possible to do it by accepting the mood of His dearest beloved, the highest object of the wealth of divine love took it from Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted to worship Śrī Rādhā exclusively – and He did that. However, even in the Gaura-līlā pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇā, He very clearly manifested to His devotees His form

of Kṛṣṇa (i.e. His love for the *gopīs* as well as submission to Śrī Rādhā). Gaura's love for Gadādhara is extraordinary, but this love manifested in an opposite way. Kṛṣṇa could garb Himself into Rādhā's mood, and Śrī Rādhā stood emptied – that is the worshipping form of Śrī Gadādhara. Standing in the background of Gaura's worship of Kṛṣṇa in the mood of Rādhā, Śrī Gadādhara has submitted everything to his beloved, and after that his bare glorious divine form was reflected in the intent glance of his greedy eyes, in his thirsty look, revealing his piercing deep cravings of love towards his intimate associate. The object of worship has taken the garb of a worshipper. The worshipper has submitted himself to his object of worship, who has assumed the form of a worshipper, to the extent of submitting the very source of offering of worship and remained standing there as a holy deity of complete self-surrender. Therefore, aspiring to attain the priceless wealth of the attraction or love that the worshipper feels for the object of his worship, devotees of Gaura discovered the result of worshipping and the method of inconceivable worship (the worship of Śrī Gaurāṅga) in strict adherence to Gadādhara. It was mostly the followers of Gadādhara who relished the transcendental feeling of separation of Śrī Rādhā in a more profound way.

gadāi-gaurāṅga jaya jāhnavā jīvana
sītāpati jaya śrīvāsādi-bhakta-gaṇa

'Glory to Gadāi-Gaurāṅga, the very life of Jāhnavā. Glory to Sītā Thākuraṅgī's spouse, Śrīvās and all the devotees.'

kabe gaura-vane, suradhunī-taṭe,
'hā rādhe hā kṛṣṇa' bale
kādiyā beḍāba, deha-sukha chhāḍi',
nānā-latātaru-tale [1]

When will I leave all bodily pleasures and cry, 'O Rādhā! O Kṛṣṇa!', roaming the places of Gaura's pastimes on the banks of the Ganges, at the foot of various *sal* trees?

śvapacha-grhete, māgiyā khāiba,
piba sarasvatī jala
puline puline, gaḍāgaḍi diba,
kari' kṛṣṇa-kolāhala [2]

I will eat by begging food from the houses of dog-eating *chaṇḍāls* and drink the water of the Sarasvatī. I will roll on the banks of the Gaṅgā, creating a tumultuous vibration of Kṛṣṇa's Name.

dhāma-bāsī jane, praṇati kariyā,
māgiba kṛpāra leśa
vaiṣṇava-charaṇa- reṇu gāya mākhi,
dhari' avadhūta-veśa [3]

I will offer obeisance to the residents of the holy land and beg them for a drop of mercy. I will smear the dust from the holy lotus feet of Vaiṣṇavs on my body and wear the garb of an *avadhūt*.

gauḍa-vraja-jane, bheda nā heriba,
haiba varaja-bāsī
dhāmera svarūpa, sphūribe nayane,
haiba rādhāra dāsī [4]

I will see no difference between the associates of the Lord residing at Gauḍa and Vraja, and I will become a resident of Vraja. The Lord's abode will manifest itself before my eyes, and I will become Rādhā's maidservant.



Ākar-Maṭh-rāj Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh

Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupād's
samādhi-mandir



Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh

(1) Ākar-Maṭh-rāj

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have now come to Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, where our Param Guru Mahārāj's Gurudev, Om Viṣṇupād Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur, stayed and preached.

When Mahāprabhu finished His pastimes, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī stayed in this world; after them, there was Śrīla Narottam Dās Ṭhākur, Āchārya Śrīnivās, Śrī Śyāmānanda Prabhu, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī – they all continued expanding Mahāprabhu's preaching and family. After they all left, Mahāprabhu's religion took another turn in this world, and there appeared many *sampradāyas* that preached misconception: *āul*, *bāul*, *kartābhajā*, *neḍā*, *derveśa*, *sāi*, *sahajiyā*, *sakhībhekī*, *smārta*, *jāta-gosāñi*, *atibāḍī*, *chūḍādhārī*, *gaurāñga-nāgarī*, etc. As the result of that, people started criticising and hating the entire Vaiṣṇav *sampradāya*.

Many years later, in 1838, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur appeared in the village of Ulā (Vīranagar, Nadia district). When he was a magistrate, he collected many scriptures and saw what Mahāprabhu preached. He saw that whatever was preached in this world was all misconception – instead of Mahāprabhu's teachings, a multitude of wrong *sampradāyas* were spreading misconception. Seeing

the plight of this world, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur prayed to Bimalā Devī, ‘O Devī! Please send someone who will be able to preach Mahāprabhu’s genuine teachings in this world!’ After that, Śrīla Prabhupād took birth in Śrī Purī Dhām. Later, he stayed together with Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur in Śrī Godrumdwīp (Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām), from where they established Yogapīṭh and, a little later, Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh. Through this temple, Śrīla Prabhupād preached Mahāprabhu’s conception (the pure conception of devotion, *śuddha-bhakti-siddhānta-vāñī*) all over the world. Therefore, we are extremely indebted to Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur.

Śrīla Prabhupād performed his manifest pastimes in this world during only sixty-four years; however, during these sixty-four years, he established sixty-four temples, mostly all over India and in a few places abroad. This Chaitanya Maṭh here is the main temple, or the Ākar-Maṭh-rāj (‘the king and the fountainhead of all temples’), of all Gauḍiya Maṭhs.

Before establishing this Chaitanya Maṭh, Śrīla Prabhupād stayed in Māyāpur. Here, he vowed to chant one billion Holy Names, which took him four years and four months to complete. He spent the whole day only chanting the Holy Name, having promised, ‘I will chant one billion Holy Names and after that start preaching Mahāprabhu’s teachings.’ When Śrīla Prabhupād finished his vow, Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Giridhārī (Śrīmatī Rādhārāṅī) came to him and said, ‘O Nayanā Mañjarī! You must preach the teachings of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, the combined form of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa,

in this world! Preach about Me!’ Śrīla Prabhupād replied, ‘I am alone, how will I preach?’ but Rādhārāṇī assued him, ‘Do not worry, I will send to you My associates who performed pastimes with Me in Vṛndāvan.’

After that, one by one, many great scholar (*digpāl*) *āchāryas* came to help Śrīla Prabhupād: our Param Gurudev (Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj), Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj (the Founder-Āchārya of ISKCON), Śrīla Bhakti Vilās Tīrtha Goswāmī Mahārāj (Śrīpād Kuñja Bābu, the Successor-Āchārya of this Chaitanya Maṭh), Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj (the founder of the Gaura-Nityānanda *mandir*), Śrīla Bhakti Prajñān Keśav Goswāmī Mahārāj (Vinod Bihārī Brahmachārī, the Founder-Āchārya of Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭh), Śrīla Bhakti Kamal Madhusūdan Goswāmī Mahārāj (the founder of Kṛṣṇa-Chaitanya Maṭh), Śrīla Bhakti Vichār Jājāvar Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Kumud Shānta Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhaktyāloka Paramahaṁsa Goswāmī Mahārāj (the founder of Paramahaṁsa Gauḍīya Maṭh), Śrīla Bhakti Pramod Purī Goswāmī Mahārāj, Śrīmad Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānas Mahārāj, Śrīmad Bhakti Svarūpa Parvat Mahārāj, Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhāratī Mahārāj and others. In this way, Śrīla Prabhupād started preaching the pure conception (*śuddha-siddhānta*).

By his mercy, we are all here today and have an opportunity to preach. A great Vaiṣṇav poet wrote:

śrī gaurāṅga-pāriṣada, ṭhākura bhaktivinoda,
dīna-hīna patitera bandhu

kali-tamaḥ vināśite, ānilena avanīte,
 tomā' akalaṅka pūrṇa indu

'To dispel the darkness of this Age of Kali, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, an associate of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and a friend of fallen souls, brought to this earth you [Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur], a spotless, unblemished full moon.'

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur brought to this world Śrīla Prabhupād, a spotless full moon, who then declared a totalitarian war against Māyā and distributed the Holy Name in this world. To this day, his disciples and the disciples of his disciples continue preaching about the Lord on this planet, rescuing such fallen souls as ourselves. Going door to door, they pray:

sthāne sthāne kata maṭha, sthāpiyāchha niṣkapaṭa,
 prema-sevā śikhāite jīve
 maṭhera vaiṣṇava-gaṇa, kare sadā vitarāṇa,
 hari-guṇa-kathāmṛta bhave
 karitechha upakāra, yāte para upakāra,
 labhe jīva śrī-kṛṣṇa-sevāya
 uṭhare uṭhare bhāi, āra ta samaya nāi,
 'kṛṣṇa bhaja' bale uchchaiḥsvare

'You have established temples in many places to teach the souls sincere loving service to the Lord. The Vaiṣṇav residents of these temples always spread the nectar of the glories of the Lord. You have done a great good through which souls get the benefit of attaining service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Wake up, wake up, brother! There is no time! "Worship Kṛṣṇa!" they call out loudly.'

Engaging everyone in the service of the Lord, he also distributed Mahāprabhu's teachings in this world:

trṇād-*api* sunīchena taror-iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

‘One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree and who gives honour to others without desiring it for themselves is qualified to always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 3.6.239)

Even now, there are still such *bābājī gosāñi* in Kolkata and Nabadwīp Town (Kuliyā) – in Prabhupād’s time, they did so many things against him: they attacked him, they harassed him, and so on. But Śrīla Prabhupād did not say anything to them:

kuliyāte pāṣaṇḍīrā, atyāchāra kaila yārā,
tā sabāra doṣa kṣamā kari’
jagate kaile ghoṣaṇā, ‘taroriva sahiṣṇunā’,
hana ‘kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ’

‘You [Śrīla Saraswatī Thākur] forgave the atheists of Kuliyā village despite their atrocities. You proclaimed to the whole world: one who is as tolerant as a tree can always chant the glory of the Lord.’

Therefore, coming to this main temple, we pray that in some birth, as a result of a great fortune, we may in whichever possible way become members of this great Gauḍīya Mission and be able to do some smallest service to devotees and that Śrīla Prabhupād, wherever he is at present, may forgive our innumerable offences and mercifully give us the qualification and an opportunity to preach his pure conception. This is our aspiration and payer at his holy lotus feet.

(2) Śrīla Prabhupād's disappearance and *samādhi-mandir*

Our Param Guru Mahārāj, the founder of our Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, composed this poem in glorification of Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur:

sujanārvuda-rādhita-pāda-yugaṁ
yuga-dharma-dhurandhara-pātra-varam
varadābhaya-dāyaka-pūjya-padaṁ
praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [1]

'I am offering obeisance to Prabhupād (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur), whose holy lotus feet are worshipped by millions of pious souls; who is the establisher of the religion of the age (*Kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtan*); who is the presiding divine successor (at the Viśva-Vaiṣṇava-Rāja Sobhā, the assembly of Vaiṣṇavs of the whole universe); who fulfils the desires of the dispellers of all fears – I offer obeisance at his holy lotus feet. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.'

bhajanorjjita-sajjana-saṅgha-patiṁ
patitādhika-kāruṇikaika-gatiṁ
gati-vañchita-vañchakāchintya-padam
praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [2]

'He is the master of great souls enriched with flourishing devotional life; he is very merciful to fallen souls, being their only path; he is the cheater of

cheats, the revealer of the path. I offer obeisance at his inconceivable lotus feet. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.'

atikomala-kāñchana-dīrgha-tanuṁ
tanu-nindita-hema-mṛṇāla-madam
madanārvuda-vandita-chandra-padaṁ
praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [3]

'I offer my obeisance to his very soft, golden tall figure, the figure whose beauty excels even the obsessive beauty of golden lotus stems. The beauty of the holy lotus feet of my Śrī Gurupādpadma is enhanced by his moon-like toenails, which are worshipped by millions of Cupids. I eternally offer obeisance to this radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.'

nija-sevaka-tāraka-rañji-vidhum
vidhutāhita-huñkṛta-simha-varam
varaṇāgata-bāliśa-śanda-padaṁ
praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [4]

'Like the moon that makes stars rejoice, he is surrounded by his disciples, ever delighting their hearts. His roar drives away all those who hate and envy devotees. The simple, innocent devotees attain supreme benefit by taking shelter at his lotus feet. I offer obeisance to him. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.'

vipulikṛta-vaibhava-gaura-bhuvanṁ
 bhuvaneṣu vikīrtita-gaura-dayam
 dayanīya-gaṇārpita-gaura-padaṁ
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [5]

‘He revealed the vast beauty and nature of Śrī Gaura Dhām, broadcast Gaurāṅga’s great magnanimity throughout the whole world and installed the holy lotus feet of Śrī Gaura within the hearts of his dear recipients of mercy. I offer obeisance to him. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

chira-gaura-janāśraya-viśva-guruṁ
 guru-gaura-kiśoraka-dāsyā-param
 paramādṛta-bhaktivinoda-padaṁ
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [6]

‘An eternal shelter of the souls surrendered to Gaura, he is the *guru* of the whole world. He is devoted to the service to his own *guru*, Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj and feels deepest adoration for Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. I offer obeisance to him. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

raghu-rūpa-sanātana-kīrtti-dharaṁ
 dharaṇī-tala-kīrttita-jīva-kavim
 kavirāja-narottama-sakhya-padaṁ
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [7]

‘His very existence lies in raising the banner of Śrī Rūpa, Sanātan and Raghunāth. On this earth, many souls always glorify him saying that his figure

is non-different from Śrī Jīva, who is extolled for his great erudition. He is renowned as an intimate friend of Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj and Ṭhākur Narottam. I offer obeisance to him. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

kṛpayā hari-kīrtana-mūrti-dharaṁ
 dharaṇī-bhara-hāraka-gaura-janam
 janakādhika-vatsala-snigdha-padaṁ
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [8]

‘Bestowing his mercy upon the *jīva* souls, he is manifest as a worshippingable deity of *Hari-kīrtan* personified. He is an associate of Śrī Gaura who removes the burden of offences from Mother Earth. I offer obeisance to this very gentle fountainhead of greater parental affection towards *jīva* souls than even that of a father. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

śaranāgata-kiṅkara-kalpa-taruṁ
 taru-dhik-kṛta-dhīra-vadānya-varam
 varadendra-gaṇārchita-divya-padaṁ
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [9]

‘Fulfilling the cherished aspirations of surrendered servants, he resembles a wish-fulfilling tree. His tolerance and magnanimity put trees to shame. I offer obeisance to his divine holy lotus feet, which are worshipped even by the best of benefactors. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

parahaṁsa-varam paramārtha-patim
 patitodharaṇe kṛta-veśa-yatim
 yati-rāja-gaṇaiḥ parisevya-padam
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [10]

‘He is the ornament of the entire class of *paramahamsas*, the master of the fifth and greatest goal of life, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-prema*. He accepts the garb of a renunciant (a *sannyāsī* beggar) to rescue fallen souls. I offer obeisance to his holy lotus feet, which are worshipped by the highest *tridaṇḍī sannyāsīs*. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

vṛṣabhānu-sutā-dayitānucharam
 charaṇāśrita-reṇu-dharas tam aham
 mahad-adbhuta-pāvana-śakti-padam
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam [11]

‘He is a dear assistant of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī. I am very proud to have got an opportunity to place the dust from his holy lotus feet on my head. I offer obeisance to his miraculous holy lotus feet, replete with Her rescuing power. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj also composed Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s *ārati* song. When we do the evening *ārati*, we always sing this *kīrtan*:

jayare jayare jaya gaura-sarasvatī
 bhakativinoda nvaya karuṇā-murati
 prakāśile gaura-sevā bhūvana-mangala
 bhakatisiddhānta śuddha prajñāna ujjala

All glory, all glory to Sri Gaura–Saraswatī, the holy embodiment of mercy in the line of Śrī Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. Revealing service to Śrī Gaura, which spreads auspiciousness in this world, you presented devotional teachings (bhakti-siddhānta) that radiate self-effulgent pure transcendental knowledge.'

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur worshipped Bimalā Devī to get a son who would preach about the Lord and Mahāprabhu, who would bless this world, and Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur then mercifully gave this most exalted son to us. By the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupād, we have got our Param Gurudev and many very exalted *gurus* and scholars. If he had not come, how would we have come to Gauḍīya Maṭh? We would not have known anything.

Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur was an undaunted preacher: he declared a totalitarian war against Māyā. Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj wrote:

nikhila-bhuvana-māyā-chhinna-vichchhinna-kartrī
vibudha-bahula-mṛgyā-mukti-mohānta-dātrī
śīthilīta-vidhi-rāgārādhyā-rādheśa-dhānī
vilasati hṛdi nityaṁ bhakti-siddhānta-vāṇī

'He slashed to shreds the illusion of the whole material universe, putting a stop to scholarly speculations and conceptions of liberation; he eased the strict rules and regulations, bestowing the conception of natural loving worship of the Divine Couple – may the devotional teachings of this Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta play eternally in your heart.'

People say, 'Sādhus are fighting! What is this?' But who do they fight against? Against illusory environment (Māyā). They defeat Māyā and utilise everyone in the service to Māyā's Master (the Supreme Lord).

kr̥payā hari-kīrtana-mūrti-dharam
 dharaṇi-bhara-hāraka-gaura-janam
 janakādhika-vatsala-snigdha-padam
 praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam

‘Bestowing his mercy upon jīva souls, he is manifest as a worshippable deity of Hari-kīrtan personified. He is an associate of Śrī Gaura who removes the burden of offences from Mother Earth. I offer obeisance to this very gentle fountainhead of greater parental affection towards jīva souls than even that of a father. I eternally offer obeisance to the radiance emanating from the toenails of my master.’

Śrīla Śrīdhār Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj said, ‘Prabhupād was hard as a thunderbolt and soft as a lotus. Just as a father is always affectionate towards his son, in the same way, our Gurupādpadma, Śrīla Prabhupād, was even more affectionate towards us than a father.’

Śrīla Prabhupād himself said, ‘You will not like to hear what I said, but when I am no more, then you will remember my words.’ We should preach Śrīla Prabhupād’s words all over the world: there is no one else in this world who is capable of giving that which he has given us. We must always remember everything he has arranged for us in this world. Śrīla Prabhupād said:

- ‘We have not come to this world to become carpenters and brick-layers. We have come to rescue the *jīva* souls of this world.’
- ‘If you always serve *jīva* souls, it will bring benefit to your own soul.’ It is necessary to show kindness, compassion to *jīva* souls: we must bring the souls who have turned away from Kṛṣṇa to this path. Only chanting

yourself will not do – you must encourage others to chant the Holy Name. Another thing is that only chanting, ‘*Hari bol, Hari bol*’ will not do – you must say this from your heart. It is necessary to serve eternally.

- ‘Instead of opening millions and millions of hospitals and serving millions and millions of patients, it will be million times better if you can bring to this path a single person who is averse to Kṛṣṇa!’

- ‘A flatterer can never become a *guru*.’

- ‘Even amidst hundreds of dangers, hundreds of reproaches and hundreds of abuses, do not leave Kṛṣṇa consciousness (do not leave your service to the Lord). Do not become disheartened seeing that most people of this world do not accept genuine, sincere service to Kṛṣṇa; you must never leave your own spiritual life, your all-in-all, which is Kṛṣṇa-kathā, *śravaṇ*, *kīrtan*. Always engage in the *kīrtan* of the Lord, become humbler than a blade of grass and more tolerant than a tree. May the current of the conception of Śrī Rūpānuga flow in this world. No matter what circumstances we maybe in, may we never show any apathy or aversion towards the seven tongues (flames) of Śrī-Kṛṣṇa-*saṅkīrtana-yajña* (the fire sacrifice of congregational chanting of the Holy Names of the Lord). If we keep ourselves more and more exclusively attached to it, we will get all possible spiritual perfection.’

- ‘Making a show of spiritual life, satisfying the whims of your mind and doing what you please, is not what is called spiritual life. Spiritual life means serving your *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs in strict, chaste adherence to them, it means satisfying *their* minds and desires.’

• ‘Devotees dedicated to the Lord’s service are eternal servants of Śrī Guru and eternal servants of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Devotees eternally serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa following their *guru* with faith and in strict adherence. If someone tries to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness without faithfully following their *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavs, this is not service to the Lord – it is service to *māyā*. If someone does not faithfully follow their *guru*, but following their own ideas, behaves virtuously, visits holy places, performs the sixty-four practices of devotion to the Lord, practises renunciation, austerities, *Nāma-saṅkīrtan*, *japa*, meditation or engages in any other devotional(?) practices, they do not do even a little service to the Lord thereby; rather, they are simply fulfilling their desire to gratify their own senses.

‘When service to the Lord appears to be sense gratification in disguise, many people are often cheated by such disguised enjoyment. A deceitful show of service to the Lord motivated by the desire for fame, wealth and women is not “service to the Lord” – it is simply hypocritical cheating of oneself and others.

‘Service to the Lord is based on following your *guru* and the Vaiṣṇavs with chastity and submission. Pretending to serve the Lord without faithfully following your *guru* is a wicked idea compared to “jumping over the *goḍa* to eat grass”. In the conditioned state, one cannot gain entrance into the Lord’s service without faithfully adhering to their *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs, and even in the liberated state, when one serves the Lord in the spiritual body, constant adherence to one’s *gurudev* continues. If one does not faithfully follow the eternal embodiment of the Lord’s

shelter (the *āśraya-vigraha*), Śrī Gurudev, and his followers, then one only, in essence, commits the offence of worshipping one's own self.'

We pray to Śrīla Prabhupād: 'O Prabhupād! Wherever you may be, you are residing happily in your eternal pastimes, but your unfortunate sons have stayed behind in this world, floundering amidst the illusory environment of this world, suffering unbearable agony amidst all this illusion! Prabhu, we are praying humbly at your holy lotus feet – please, give us your blessing, please give us your mercy so that we may take shelter at your holy lotus feet and never deviate from it. We are taking shelter at the holy feet of your associates in the *guru-paramparā* line who are preaching about the Lord, about Mahāprabhu in this world, and we are praying to them that we may have attachment to the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in Vṛndāvan.'

You all know that Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj first came to the holy lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupād in Kolkata, in 1926. Soon after that, he joined the temple in Māyāpur and took shelter (initiation) at Śrīla Prabhupād's holy lotus feet.

A few months before he manifested his disappearance pastime at Bāgbāzār Gauḍīya Maṭh (Kolkata), Śrīla Prabhupād wanted to hear a particular *kīrtan*. Somebody started chanting that *kīrtan*, but Śrīla Prabhupād suddenly stopped it and said, with much dissatisfaction, 'I want to hear this *kīrtan* from Śrīdhar Mahārāj. I do not want to hear the tune! I want to hear the *kīrtan*. Where is Śrīdhar Mahārāj? Call him, tell him to come.' Then, Śrīla Śrīdhar

Mahārāj came and chanted that *kīrtan* ‘Śrī-Rūpa-mañjarī-pada’. When the *kīrtan* finished, Śrīla Prabhupād left this world. At that time, everyone could understand that Śrīla Prabhupād had given a hint in this way that Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj was the only preacher who could preach the line of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunāth after him.

In one of his lectures, remembering the disappearance pastime of Śrīla Prabhupād, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj spoke the following:

‘In his last days, Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura had been showing to us for some time that his heart was going to be damaged. Doctors had administered some sort of treatment, allopathic treatment was also being used, but he gradually felt that he was becoming weaker and weaker.

‘In October 1936, Śrīla Prabhupād went to Purī along with some of us. There is Śrī Puruṣottama Maṭh at Chatak Parvat (a sand hillock); this is where his bungalow was and where he lived. He was very fond of hearing the *śloka* of Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī,

pramada-madana-līlāḥ kandare kandare te
rachayati nava-yunora dvandvam asminn amandaṁ
iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagnakas tad-dvayora me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam

“O Govardhana, the Divine Couple liberally enact pastimes of mad love in your caves. Please grant me a dwelling beside you so I can behold Their pastimes.”

‘This was sung in front of him every day, and also Śrīpād Jājāvar Mahārāj would sing “Śrī Rūpa-mañjarī-pada, sei mora sampada” to him every day.

‘When Śrīla Prabhupād was in Purī, Śrīpād Goswāmī Mahārāj (Aprākṛta Prabhu at that time) was sent to London. Śrīla Prabhupād personally came to Khurda station (Bhubaneswar, Odisha) and put his own garland on his neck, saying, “Go there, and if anyone desires to take *Harinām*, I allow you to give it to them.”

‘A month later, Śrīla Prabhupād came back to Kolkata, leaving a party in Cuttack for some collection (I was among them). When we got the news that his health was deteriorating day by day, we also came to Kolkata.

‘Coming back to Kolkata, we found that it was a stinging cold winter. The treatment was going on, but in spite of that, Śrīla Prabhupād’s health did not improve. We rendered duty at his sickbed, and I was also among those rendering duty – my duty was at night, from two to four o’clock in the morning.

‘Just twenty-four hours before his departure, Śrīla Prabhupād called for me and asked me to sing “Śrī Rūpamañjarī-pada, sei mora sampada”, this famous song which is considered to be the highest realisation of any Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇav devotee. Twenty-four hours later – it was 1 January, early in the morning – he left the world. He was lying down, then he jerked slightly thrice, and everything was calm...

‘We carried his holy body from Bāgbāzār Gauḍīya Maṭh to the Sealdah train station (Kolkata), where a special train was arranged to Krishnanagar. From Krishnanagar, we came to Svarup Ganj *ghāṭ* on the roof of a bus, crossed the Saraswati River, and again carried him on our shoulders to Chaitanya Maṭh, the place where his *samādhi-mandir* is

now. It took us the whole day to reach Chaitanya Maṭh from Kolkata: we started in the morning and reached Chaitanya Maṭh at about seven–eight o'clock in the evening. Then, the digging of the grave began – we engaged ourselves in that. After that, early in the morning, Śrīla Prabhupād was placed there. I still remember his dignified figure. He sat in a very dignified position. His complexion was fair, and when he was seated on the *āsan* after twenty-four hours, he sat in a dignified position of an *āchārya* – his body was tall, fair, thin and very soft... Then, of course, salt was given around, and after that soil. When the soil reached to his head, I came out – I could not stand to see his head being covered. I went away. When I returned after a while, everything was covered and a Tulasī plant was placed there. We all circumambulated him with some chanting. After that, there was reading of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, and I specially requested the gentleman who was chanting to read the concluding poem Śrīla Prabhupād wrote at the end of his commentary to *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*:

chāriśata ūna-trimśe, jyaiṣṭhe dina eka-trimśe,
 chaitanyābde, māsa—trivikrama
 śrī-vraja-pattane thāki', 'gaura-hari' bali' ḍāki,
 dayita-dāsiyā narādhama [1]

On 31 Jyoistho 439 of Chaitanya Era, in the month of Trivikram (14 June 1932), staying in the town of Śrī Vraja, this lowest among men, Dayita Dāsiyā, is crying out, 'Gaura Hari!'

navadvīpa-māyāpure, prabhu-gṛha nātidūre,
 anubhāṣya kaila samāpana

śrī-gaura-kiśora-dāsa, samprati kuliyā vāsa,
yāra bhṛtya—ei abhājana [2]

This *anubhāṣya* commentary was completed in Māyāpur, Nabadwīp, not far from the house of My Lord. Śrī Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj recently resided in Kuliyā (Nabadwīp area), and this worthless person is his servant.

āji ei sukha-dine, bhaktivinoda bine,
sukha-vārttā jānāba kāhāre ?
'anubhāṣya' śuni' yei, parama praphulla hai',
urukṛpā vitarila more [3]

Today, on this happy day, Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur is not here – whom will I tell the happy news?... If he heard this *anubhāṣya*, he would be extremely happy and abundantly shower his mercy on me.

tāhāra karuṇā-kathā, mādharma-bhajana-prathā,
tulanā nāhika tribhuvane
tāra sama anya keha, dhariyā e nara-deha,
nāhi dila kṛṣṇa-prema-dhane [4]

There is no comparison within the three worlds to his merciful teachings of the practice of devotion to Kṛṣṇa. No one has ever assumed a human form and distributed the wealth of *Kṛṣṇa-prema* like him.

sei prabhu-śakti pāi', ebe 'anubhāṣya' gāi,
ihāte āmāra kichhu nāi
yāvat jīvana rabe, tāvat smariba bhabe,
nitya-kāla sei pada chāi [5]

Receiving energy from his Master, this lowly soul sings this *anubhāṣya*; I have no merit in it. As long

as there is a sign of life (in this body), I will always remember him, eternally aspiring for his lotus feet.

gadādhara-mitra-bara, śrī-svarūpa-dāmodara,
sadā kāla gaura-kṛṣṇa yaje
jagatera dakhi' kleśa, dhariyā bhikṣuka-veśa,
aharahaḥ kṛṣṇa-nāma bhaje [6]

Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodar, a great friend of Gadādhār, always worships Gaura-Kṛṣṇa. Seeing the miseries of this world, he now accepted the garb of a beggar and incessantly worships the Name of Kṛṣṇa.

śrī-gaura-ichchhāya dui, mahimā ki kaba mui,
aprākṛta-pāriṣada-kathā
prakaṭa haiyā seve, kṛṣṇa-gorābhinna-deve,
aprakāśya kathā yathā tathā [7]

It is the wish of Śrī Gaura, but what am I to tell about the glory of these two transcendental associates (Śrī Gadādhār and Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodar; Śrīla Bhaktivinod and Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj)? It becomes revealed when one serves Kṛṣṇa and His non-different from of Gorā, and it is something that should not be spoken publicly anywhere and everywhere.

śrī-gaurāṅga-nija-jana, bhaktivinoda-gaṇa,
aprākṛta-bhāve yāra sthiti
'anubhāṣya' sayatane, pāṭha kara bhakta-sane,
lābha kara yugala-pīriti [8]

Please study this *anubhāṣya* very carefully together with the devotees of Śrī Bhaktivinod, who is a close associate of Śrī Gaurāṅga and whose existence is on the plane of transcendental loving devotion, and attain love for the Divine Couple.

‘Śrīla Prabhupād wrote this poem in a very sweet and very lamenting temperament. I asked them to read that poem of his, and it was read. Then, Haridas Thakur’s *niryāṇ* (disappearance) was read from *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. One gentleman requested me to chant the same “Śrī Rūpa-mañjarī-pada” that I had sung two days before that, and I sang it. Then, everything finished...

‘We all had been fasting – Śrīla Prabhupād disappeared one or two hours before the sunrise; then, it took us the whole Friday to take him to Chaitanya Maṭh, and everybody fasted, we did not take even a drop of water. The next day, it was Saturday, at about nine or ten o’clock we took some *prasādam*. After that, we had some engagement in Kolkata, so we again had to go back to Kolkata to attend some meeting. My whole body was so tired that it could not move. Still, we had to go to Kolkata. So many disciples from all over India flocked then: everybody came in pain and a weeping mood. The whole small area of the *samādhi* was full; everybody was crying and weeping. In this way 1936 went away and 1937 began. It happened at the meeting point between the two years...’

After the disappearance of Śrīla Prabhupād, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj composed *Śrī Śrī Dayita-dāsa Daśakam*:

nīte yasmin niśānte nayana-jala-bharaiḥ snāta-gātrārvvudānām
uchchair-utkrośatām śrī-vṛṣakapi-sutayādhīrayā svīya-goṣṭhīm
pṛthvī gāḍhāndhakārair-hṛta-nayana-mañivāvṛtā yena hīnā
yatṛāsau tatra śīghram kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kinkaro ‘yam [1]

‘At the end of the night, Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Nandinī suddenly took him to Her entourage, drawing him away from the company of thousands of grief-stricken, lamenting souls, their bodies drenched in tears. When he was thus stolen away, this world was plunged into deep darkness as when the jewel of one’s eyes is plundered (Saraswatī Ṭhākur’s hidden name is Nayana-maṇi, ‘the jewel of one’s eyes’). O my wretched eyes (bereft of the vision of my Divine Master)! (*Alternative interpretation*: O rescuer of the fallen! O Master Nayana, who, in his mercy, is miserly not letting me get his company!) Wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there!’ [1]

yasya śrīpādapadmāt pravahati jagati prema-pīyūṣa-dhārā
 yasya śrīpādapadmachyuta-madhu satataṁ bhṛtya-bhṛṅgān vibhartti
 yasya śrīpādapadmam vraja-rasika-jano modate sampraśasya
 yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [2]

‘From his lotus feet, the nectarine river of divine love flows throughout the world; his servitors, like bees, are maintaining their lives by always drinking the honey falling from his lotus feet; the pure devotees in the shelter of the amorous devotional mellows of Vraja always experience happiness singing the glories of his lotus feet: O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [2]

vātsalyam yach cha pitro jagati bahumataṁ kaitavam kevalam tat
 dāmpatyam dasyutaiva svajana-gaṇa-kṛtā bandhutā vañchaneti
 vaikuṅṭha-sneha-mūrteḥ pada-nakha-kiraṇair yasya sandarśito ‘smi
 yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [3]

‘Parental affection, which is so highly esteemed in the world, is a colossal hoax (being an obstacle to devotion to the Lord); the socially recognized so-called pure conjugal love (a demoniac effort that plunders both the husband’s and the wife’s eagerness to acquire the wealth of pure transcendental love) is nothing but dacoitry; and common friendship is only deception – I have been shown and taught all this in the rays of the light emanating from the toenails of the holy feet of that great personality, the embodiment of supra-mundane affection. O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [3]

yā vāṇī kaṇṭha-lagnā vilasati satataṁ kṛṣṇa-chaitanya-chandre
karṇa-kroḍaj-janānām kim u nayana-gatām saiva mūrtim prakāśya
nīlādri-śasya netrārpaṇa-bhavana-gatā netra-tārābhidheyā
yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [4]

‘Did he show the inner meaning of his name ‘Nayana-maṇi’ (the jewel of the eye), manifesting from the ear a visible worshipping form of the divine message sung by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyachandra, that always plays in the ears of people, by making his advent in the palace favoured by the glance of Śrī Nīlāchalachandra (at the time of Ratha-yātrā)? O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [4]

gaurendor asta-śaile kim u kanaka-ghano hema-hṛj-jambu-nadyā
āvīrbhūtaḥ pravaraṣair nikhila-jana-padaṁ plāvayan dāva-dagdham
gaurāvīrbhāva-bhūmau rajasi cha sahasā saṁjugopa svayaṁ svam
yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [5]

‘Did this golden cloud arise, drawing the pure gold waters of the Jambu River mentioned in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* atop the hill, where the golden moon Śrī Gaura had set, showering torrents of rain on the entire land scorched by the forest fire (of the threefold miseries), and then all of a sudden hide himself in the dust of the land from where the golden moon Śrī Gaurāṅga had arisen?! O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [5]

gauro gaurasya śiṣyo gurur api jagatām gāyatām gaura-gāthā
 gauḍe gauḍīya-goṣṭhy-āsrita-gaṇa-garimā drāviḍe gaura-garbī
 gāndharvā gaura-vāḍhyo giri-dhara-parama-preyasām yo gariṣṭho
 yatrāsau tatra śīghram kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [6]

‘He is of the same hue as Śrī Gaura, and although he, the singer of Śrī Gaura’s tidings, is the (natural) Guru of the whole universe, he accepted discipleship of a great soul, Śrī Gaura Kiśor. In the whole of Gauḍa Maṇḍal, he is a repository of the spiritual glory of those who liberally grant entrance into the family of pure Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavs. He takes pride in preaching Śrī Gaura’s teachings (service to Śrī Rādhā-Govinda in Vraja) to the Drāviḍa Vaiṣṇavs (worshippers of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa). The devotees of Śrī Gāndharvā can see the wealth of his spiritual glory, too; he holds the supreme position in the intimate circle of Śrī Giridhārī: he is the dearest of Lord Mukunda. O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul is now, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [6]

yo rādhā-kṛṣṇa-nāmāmṛta-jala-nidhinā-plāvayad-viśvam etad
 āmlechhāśeṣa-lokaṁ dvija-nṛpa-vaṇijaṁ sūdra-sūdrāpakṛṣṭam
 muktaih siddhair agamyaḥ patita-jana-sakho gaura-kāruṇya-śaktir
 yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro 'yam [7]

‘He plunged the whole universe of countless living beings – *brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas*, *vaiśyas*, *śūdras*, less than *śūdras* and even *mlecchas* – into the oceanic nectar of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s Holy Name. Although unapproachable for liberated (*mukta*) souls and the souls who have attained spiritual perfection (*siddha*), he is known as a friend of the fallen and the power of Śrī Gaurāṅga’s mercy. O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [7]

apy āsā varttate tat puraṭa-bara-vapur lokituṁ loka-śandaṁ
 dīrghaṁ nīlābja-netraṁ tila-kusuma-nasaṁ ninditārdhendubhālam
 saumyaṁ śubhrāṁśu-dantaṁ śata-dala-vadanaṁ dīrgha-bāhuṁ vareṇyaṁ
 yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro 'yam [8]

‘Is there any hope to ever see that beautiful golden worshippable deity form that brings auspiciousness to the world? Is there any hope to ever have the *darśan* of that tall figure once again, his blue lotus eyes, his nose excelling the charm of the sesame flower, his forehead shaming the half-moon, his graceful lotus face, his gleaming pearl-white teeth, his long arms extending to his knees? O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul has gone, please swiftly take this servitor there.’ [8]

gaurābde sūnya-vāṇānvita-nigamamite kṛṣṇa-pakṣe chaturthyām
 pauṣe māse maghāyām-amara-gaṇa-guror-vāsare vai niśānte
 dāso yo rādhikāyā atīśaya-dayito nitya-līlā-praviṣṭo
 yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [9]

‘In 450 Gaurābda, in the month of Poush, on the fourth day of the dark fortnight of the moon in the star of Maghā, at the closing of Thursday night (5.30 a.m., Friday, 1 January 1937), this extremely beloved attendant of Śrīmatī Vṛṣabhānu-nandini entered his eternal pastimes. O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [9]

hā-hā-kārair-janānām guru-charaṇa-juṣām pūritābhūr-nabhaś cha
 yāto ‘sau kutra viśvaṁ prabhupada-virahād-dhanta sūnyāyitaṁ me
 pādābje nitya-bhr̥tyaḥ kṣaṇam api viraham notsahe soḍhum atra
 yatrāsau tatra śīghraṁ kṛpaṇa-nayana he nīyatām kiṅkaro ‘yam [10]

‘The entire earth and sky became filled with the wailing of common people and the disciples attached to the service of their Śrī Gurupādpadma. Where has that great soul gone? Alas! In separation from Prabhupād, the whole universe feels void now. The servitor of his lotus feet cannot tolerate even a moment of separation from him. O Dīna-nayana, wherever that great soul may be, please quickly take this servitor there.’ [10]

(3) Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj's
samādhi-mandir

There is one more very important place here, at Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, that we should mention. It is Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj's *samādhi-mandir*.



Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj came to Nabadwīp from Vṛndāvan. One day, he received inspiration from Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, 'Why are you staying here at Rādhā Kuṇḍa? You must come to Nabadwīp! My *līlā* is not in Vṛndāvan: My *līlā* is going on in Nabadwīp now, so you must come

here.' Even though he was quite old at that time, he came.

Everybody thought that he looked like a crazy man: he could not see anything, did not wear good clothes – he did not care about anything. Some boys threw stones at him, and he would only get annoyed and say, 'Hey Gopāl! What are You doing? I will complain to Your Mom, Yaśoda, and Your Dad, Nanda Mahārāj!' He would say like this, but people threw stones, spat at him, did so many things... It was too much. Nobody recognised him at that time.

One time, he came from Chāpāhāṭī to Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur's place in Godrumdwīp (Svānanda Sukhada

Kuñja). He was virtually blind and could not walk well; moreover, that day was *amāvasyā*, a new moon day, so it was pitch dark outside. When Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur heard Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj’s voice outside his house and came out, he was surprised, ‘Mahārāj, is that you? How did you come here on such a dark night?’

Bābājī Mahārāj replied, ‘Oh, somebody helped me.’

‘Who? I cannot see anyone, you are here alone!’

‘Oh, am I? No, somebody took my hand and brought me here. He was here just now...’

* * * * *

Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj’s nature was miraculous. One time, he took some cloth at the cremation *ghāt*, washed it, tied it into knots and chanted the Holy Name on that instead of Tulasī beads. He would get some rice but he never cooked: he would just soak the rice in some water, and three–four days later, when it got a little soft, he would eat it. That was his only food...

Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj once stayed in a public latrine for six months. When somebody asked him, ‘Bābājī Mahārāj, how can you tolerate the stench here?’ Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj replied, ‘I do not mind the smell here, but what I cannot understand is how you can tolerate the stench that comes from materialists’ minds – from those who are intoxicated with the material world, who are proud of their money, wealth, etc.! Their stench is very hard to tolerate.’

Later, Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj stayed in a hut on the bank of the Ganges. By this time, everybody was already offering him obeisances, considering him

a great *sādhu*. Seeing the attention Bābājī Mahārāj was getting, some man once started imitating Bābājī Mahārāj, thinking, 'If I behave like him, everybody will give me respect!' He made a small house nearby, dressed like Bābājī Mahārāj and chanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. Somebody came to Śrīla Gaura Kīśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj and told him there was another man like him nearby. Generally, Bābājī Mahārāj treated that man with respect, but one day he said a very beautiful thing about him: When a pregnant lady feels labour pain, she is taken to hospital, and then she delivers the baby – a girl or a boy comes. This is natural. On the other hand, somebody can pretend to be pregnant – they put a pillow inside their clothes, say they are pregnant and start crying, 'Oh, I have so much pain! So much pain! Take me to hospital!' Somebody will take them to hospital, but will the baby come like that? Nothing will come out of such a '*sādhu*'. You can look like a pregnant lady, but how can a baby come out unless you are actually pregnant? It ludicrous. So, you will not attain the level of a *bābājī* just by dressing like one or just by imitating one.

Śrīla Gaura Kīśor Dās Goswāmī Mahārāj advised married people: '** Babu has got married, it is good. Now he can himself cook an offering for the Lord every day and, having offered it to the Lord, serve that *prasād* to his pious wife, seeing her as a Vaiṣṇav; and after she has taken *prasād*, he can take some himself. Instead of thinking of her as an object of enjoyment, he must think that he can serve her in various ways always thinking about his *guru* – in this way he can get spiritual benefit. This entire world – all wealth, jewels, women and men of this world

are meant only for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment. He must use Kṛṣṇa's property for the service of Kṛṣṇa. Likewise, he must not see his wife as his maidservant; rather, he must respect her as a maidservant of Kṛṣṇa.'

Another time, Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was sitting in a palm leaf hut on the bank of the Ganges, chanting the Holy Name. At night, some naughty people walked past and heard him talking with somebody – it was a lady's voice. They thought, 'Some lady must have come to Bābājī Mahārāj at night!' so they decided to watch the place in the daytime to see who the lady was when she came out. They had kept guard there for one day, two days, but they did not see anybody although they could still hear Bābājī Mahārāj talking with the lady. In the end, the people lost patience and broke into the hut, but they saw that there was nobody there except Bābājī Mahārāj. As they went away, they could again hear the lady's voice, but they could not hear who was talking and what they were talking about. You can understand that Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself came there – Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj is Her dear, close associate.

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When Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura was a *brahmachārī*, he one day decided to take initiation. He came to Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura and told him about his desire to take initiation, but Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura sent Śrīla Prabhupād (his name was Bimalā Prasād at that time) to Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj.

When Śrīla Prabhupād came to Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj and asked him humbly for initiation, Bābājī

Mahārāj told him to go away, ‘Get out of here! Go away!’ Prabhupād was taken aback, ‘A boy comes to a *guru* and begs for initiation, but *gurudev* tells him to get out of here. What is this?’

Then, Śrīla Prabhupād returned to Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur and told him what had happened that day. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur told him, ‘Go to him again tomorrow.’

The next day, Śrīla Prabhupād came to Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj again. This time, Bābājī Mahārāj asked him, ‘You again? Your father is a great soul and an exalted Vaiṣṇav, why do you not take initiation from him?’

‘Father has sent me to you,’ Śrīla Prabhupād replied.

‘All right, but I must first ask Gaura Hari. If He gives permission, I will give you initiation.’

The next day, or a few days later, Śrīla Prabhupād again came to Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj. Bābājī Mahārāj said, ‘You? Oh, I have forgotten, I have not asked yet.’ Again there was no initiation. At this point, Śrīla Prabhupād started thinking, ‘I have come to him on the order of Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, he said he would ask Mahāprabhu, but he has forgotten. What is the cause?’ Then, Śrīla Prabhupād understood, ‘I lack something. I think that I am of pure moral character, I am educated, I am a big scholar, I have indomitable strength of mind, but all this is ego! Bābājī Mahārāj is showing me that this is nothing – there is no merit, no qualification in that. Rather, I must think that I am unfit, I am a beggar: I am begging for the mercy of his holy lotus feet. I have come to beg him for mercy. I must approach him in a helpless, utterly poor and humble way – without

his grace, my life will be ruined. I want his mercy! All my pride is now gone: I am so unqualified that he did not even tell Mahāprabhu about me: he has completely ignored me, it did not even enter his memory.’ Feeling ashamed and filled with this self-deprecating mood, Śrīla Prabhupād again came to Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj the next day. This time, Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj said, ‘Yes, Mahāprabhu has accepted you.’ He gave initiation and the *mantra* to Śrīla Prabhupād.

Later, when Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj showed his disappearance pastime, a big story happened that day. Having got the news of Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj’s demise, all *smārta bābājis* and *goswāmīs* of Nabadwīp wanted to take his body for their own purpose. There started a big fight. In the meantime, Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Thākur got the news and went together with one of his disciples, Śrī Kuñja Bābu, to Bābājī Mahārāj’s *bhajan-kuṭīr*. When he arrived, he saw that there was a crowd of people fighting over the body. The police were there too, but nobody could decide who should take the holy body of Bābājī Mahārāj and make his *samādhi*. Everybody claimed that Bābājī Mahārāj was their *guru*.

In the end, Śrīla Prabhupād said, ‘They are saying that they are disciples of Bābājī Mahārāj, but actually none of them is! When he was alive, no one cared, and now everybody is saying, “He is my *guru*!” They are all liars! They are dressed as *sādhus*, but none of them is a *sādhu*. There are many *bābājis*, but they are all doing *strī-saṅga* (they mix with ladies). I am a *naiṣṭhik brahmachārī* (a life-long strict celibate), so no one can tell a lie in front of me.

Let those who have not associated with a lady for the past six months raise their hands.'

Out of fear or shame, some *bābājis* left. Then, Śrīla Prabhupād said again, 'Let those who have not associated with a lady for the past three months raise their hands.'

Some left.

'One month.'

More left.

'Who has not done any *strī-saṅga* for the last three days?' (There are many types of *strī-saṅga* – even thinking of a woman is also considered *strī-saṅga*.)

Hearing this, all of them went away. A policeman who was there asked Śrīla Prabhupād, 'How would you know they were not lying if they had said that they had not done any *strī-saṅga*?' Śrīla Prabhupād replied, 'I said that I was a *naiṣṭhik brahmachārī* – none can tell a lie in front of me.' After that, Śrīla Prabhupād took the holy body of his *gurudev* and made his *samādhi* with his own hands...

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur entered his eternal pastimes in 1914, and one year later, in 1915, Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj left, too. Having lost both his *gurus*, Śrīla Prabhupād felt extremely dejected, 'I am helpless. Devoid of a guardian, all burden has come to me now.' Śrīla Prabhupād said that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's dear associate, Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was Guṇa Mañjarī. Śrīla Prabhupād said about him, 'My Gurudev did not know how to write his own name, but we never thought that he was a fool or uneducated. All scholarship, all wealth, everything was there within his faith. Moreover, there is no such learning in this world, no such sound

reasoning in all the fourteen worlds, no man or god that can weigh more than a solitary particle of dust from the lotus feet of my *gurudev*.’

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj composed this *Śrī Śrīmad Gaura Kiśora Namaṣkāra Daśakam* in glorification of Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj:

guror guro me paramo gurus tvam
vareṇya! gaurāṅga-gaṇāgragāṇye
prasīda bhṛtye dayitāśrite te
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [1]

O *guru* of my *guru*! My Param Guru, you are worshipped in the foremost society of Śrī Gaurāṅga’s devotees. May you be propitiated with this servitor surrendered unto your loving servitor Dayita Dās (Śrīla Prabhupād). O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

sarasvatī-nāma-jagat-prasiddham
prabhuṁ jagatyām patitaika-bandhum
tvam eva deva! prakāṭi-chakāra
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [2]

O worshipful one, you have revealed in this world my Master, who is world-renowned as Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, who is the only friend of fallen souls. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

kvachid-vrajāraṇya-vivikta-bāsī
hṛdi vraja-dvandva-raho-vilāsī
bahir virāgī tv avadhūta-veśī
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [3]

When you lived in solitude in Vraja Dhām, you happily worshipped the most secret pastimes of the Youthful Divine Couple of Vraja, but externally you followed the formal rules of renunciation and, at some point, accepted the garb of an *avadhūt*. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

kvachit punar gaura-vanāntachārī
surāpagā-tīra-rajo-vihārī
pavitra-kaupīna-karañka-dhārī
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [4]

Sometimes, you roam the edge of Gauravan (Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām), wandering along the sandy banks of the Gaṅgā. You wear a pure loin-cloth and carry a mendicant's water-pot. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

sadā harer nāma mudā raṭantañ
gṛhe gṛhe mādhuakarīm aṭantam
namanti devā api yañ mahāntañ
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [5]

You always chant the Holy Name of the Lord with great happiness and beg *mādhukārī* house to house, like a bee collecting honey flower to flower. You are a great soul whom even demigods offer obeisances to. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

kvachid-rudantañ cha hasan-naṭantañ
nijeṣṭa-deva-praṇayābhibhūtam
namanti gāyantam alañ janā tvām
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [6]

Overwhelmed with love for your worshipful Lord, you sometimes dance, sometimes cry, sometimes laugh and sometimes sing prayers out loud. People always abundantly offer obeisances to you. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

mahāyaśo-bhaktivinoda-bandho!
mahāprabhu-prema-sudhaika-sindho!
aho jagannātha-dayāspadendo!
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [7]

O friend of greatly renowned Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod! O one and only ocean of the nectar of transcendental love for Mahāprabhu Śrī Chaitanyadev! O moon, recipient of Vaiṣṇav Sarvabhauma Śrī Jagannāth's mercy! O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

samāpya rādhā-vratam-uttamaṁ tvam
avāpya dāmodara-jāgarāham
gato 'si rādhādara-sakhya-riddhim
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [8]

Completing the highest Ūrjja-vrata, you selected the *uttāna* day of Śrī Damodar month and attained the treasure of being a loving friend of Śrī Rādhikā. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

vihāya saṅgaṁ kuliyā-layānām
pragr̥hya sevām dayitānugasya
vibhāsi māyāpura-mandira-stho
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [9]

Giving up the company of the residents of Kuliya, you accepted the service of your staunch follower, Śrī

Dayita Dās, and are now residing in a holy temple in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

sadā nimagno 'py aparādha-panke
hy ahaitukīm eṣa kṛpāñ cha yāche
dayāñ samuddhṛtya vidhehi dīnañ
namo namo gaura-kiśora tubhyam [10]

Although I am always submerged in the mud of offences, I (this fallen soul) am begging you for your causeless mercy. Please take pity, rescue this poor person. O Gaura Kiśor, obeisances to you again and again.

When Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj entered his eternal pastimes, Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur wrote two articles for *Sajjan Toṣaṇī* (Volume 19, Issues 5 and 6). We are presenting these two articles here for the eternal benefit of the world.

About My Lord (1)

I am a conditioned soul, therefore I suffer from various deficiencies. In order to fill these deficiencies, I occupied myself with acquisition of all sorts of material pursuits up to the highest material position of Brahmā. I used to think that material pursuits could fulfil my deficiencies. So often, I would obtain a lot of rare material acquisition, but my deficiency did not go away thereby. I have met many persons of great character in this world, but seeing their

own various deficiencies, I could not give them respect. Seeing my unfortunate, miserable condition, supremely compassionate Gaurasundar permitted His two dearest associates to show me their special favour. As I was overwhelmed with mundane ego and praised myself on account of material achievements, I lost my own spiritual benefit, but on the strength of my previously acquired spiritual merit (*sukṛti*), I have got Śrī Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod as my auspicious spiritual well-wisher. My Lord often paid auspicious visits to him and often stayed with him. Being compassionate towards me, Śrīmad Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur showed me my Lord. Upon meeting my Lord, my mundane pride started to subside. Before, I knew that anyone who assumed a human form was as contemptible and vile as myself, but when I observed the character of my Lord, I could gradually understand that a perfect Vaiṣṇav could exist in this world.

By the mercy of my Lord, I, too, became gradually inclined to appreciate the supra-mundane character of Śrīmad Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. My Lord is known as Śrī Gaura Kiśor Dās in this world. He left for transcendental Gaura-dhām last year, on Utthān Ekādaśī, at the end of Chātur-māsya. In this world, people are generally known by some chronological description of the events of their lives, but in this sense we will not be able to collect a consistent biography of my Lord. Yet, I have seen some of the events of his life myself and also heard something from others, so having recorded these, I am now writing something about Paramahansa Bābājī Mahāśaya, whose heart is non-different from Śrīmad Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur

and who is a dearest and closest associate of Gaura Hari. If somebody knows something that I am unaware of in relation to His Divine Grace and lets me know about it, I will be very grateful.

The words and pastimes of saintly persons can enrich such deficient *jīva* souls as myself in many ways. Hearing about the character of saintly persons and their pastimes can cleanse many unsaintly hearts. With this hope I am writing a few words about Paramahaṁsa Bābājī.

I have heard that he appeared in the *vaiśya* caste in some Gaṇḍagrām village situated in Faridapur, near the Padmāvati River. His appearance took place approximately 80 years ago.[†] His father's name is Vaṁśidās. This great soul (Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dās Bābājī Mahārāj) got married and lived in his house for twenty-nine years. After his spouse's demise, he left his business of grain brokerage and accepted *kaupīna* [a loincloth, worn by a very strict renunciate] from Śrī Bhāgavat Dās Bābājī, a *veśa* disciple of the renowned devotee Śrī Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahāśaya. While still in his family life, he had received the second initiation (*pāñcharātrika-mantra*) from a descendant of Advaita Āchārya Prabhu. After accepting the *kaupīna veśa*, he lived in different villages of Śrī Vraja-maṇḍal for almost thirty years, constantly engaging in his transcendental service (*bhajan*). During this time, he sometimes travelled to the holy places in North India and especially Gaura Maṇḍal. He met and associated with Śrīla Svarūpa Dās Bābājī in Śrī Puri Dhām, with Śrī Bhagavān Dās Bābājī in Kālnā and with Śrī Chaitanya

[†] As of 1916, when the article was written.

Dās Bābājī in Kuliya [Nabadwīp]. Apart from that, he was acquainted particularly with all the great souls who resided in Vraja Maṇḍal. Although he knew everyone, he nevertheless never approved of anybody's material endeavours. He himself would stay alone and, having rejected all association, spent his days in pure *bhajan*.

The year when Śrī Gaura Hari was installed in Śrī Māyāpur on Phālgun Pūrṇimā, that is in the month of Phālgun in 1300 (21 March 1894), on the order of Mahātma Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahāśaya, this great soul arrived in Śrī Gaura Maṇḍal from Śrī Vraja Maṇḍal and from then on stayed in different small villages of Śrī Dhām Nabadwīp until his very demise. From 1905, we noticed that his eye sight diminished. From 1906, he left the religious practice of a mendicant renunciate and accepted a small hut (*kuṭīr*) as a place of his residence. Prior to that, he had been collecting *mādhukarī* in different villages of Śrī Dhām and maintained himself in every respect by his own effort. Nobody ever received an opportunity to do any service for him. Hearing about his extreme renunciation, the *jīva* souls are reminded of the Lord's associate Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī Prabhu. It is great fortune to have Paramahansa Bābājī Mahāśaya as one's shelter for he embodies detachment from the material world and all that is opposed to Lord Krishna; and those who had witnessed the pastimes of his renunciation, no doubt, became, to a greater or lesser extent, disgusted with the material world and all that is opposed to the Lord. This is an indisputable truth. The ideal of his renunciation from the material world and all that opposes Lord Kṛṣṇa

can melt the hardest of stone hearts. Therefore, I aspire to have the great fortune to speak about this exalted soul and try to increase the joy of the listeners.

I have seen Tulasī beads on his neck, I have seen Tulasī beads (*mālā*) placed in his hand, strung for counting the number of the Holy Names chanted, and I have also seen he had several holy books written in the Bengali language. Sometimes, he would wear no neckbeads; sometimes, he would be seen holding a *mālā* made from some torn cloth with knots tied on it instead of Tulasī beads for counting the number of Holy Names; he would stay naked, wearing only an open loincloth (*kaupīn*); he could become repulsed and use very strong language without any apparent reason, etc. – I have seen many, many sides of his nature. Many new people, many wide experts, young and old people, scholars and fools, many people who were proud of their devotion could have seen him, but they could not get the *darśan* (behold the transcendental form) of Paramahaṁsa Mahāśaya. Such is the divine power of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s devotees. So many materialists came to him with their material desires to get his advice, it is true, but that advice merely cheated them. Countless people accept the attire of a saintly person and show some activities like those of a saintly person, but they are situated very far from the position of a true saint. There was no such duplicity, no such deceit in my Lord. His activities manifested the truth that produced no pain, no immorality. He may not have been seated in the same manner as scriptural scholars, but he was adept at the gist beauty of all scriptures. As a result of his sincere service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, he attained all possible

knowledge. The aim of this article is not to describe his opulences; besides, his genuine affection is so unparalleled that it only proves the gain of any opulence to be a trifle.

This Paramahansa dev was eternally situated within devotion to Kṛṣṇa. He was *niṣkiñchan* (devoid of any material possessions or attachment); therefore, desire for *pratiṣṭhā* (mundane name and fame) could never touch him. He felt no aversion towards those who tried to compete with him or oppose him; neither did he show any particular favour towards those who were the recipients of his mercy. He used to say, 'I have nobody to feel enmity or love for in this world. For me, everyone is worthy of respect.' Another transcendental thing is that Paramahansa Mahāśaya was always surrounded by many common people who followed some pseudo-religion that opposed the religion of pure devotion, and these people, declaring themselves the recipients of the *sādhu's* mercy, became intoxicated with vile material activities, but he would never publicly reject them or tell them to go away; neither did he ever accept such people in any way. We were also blessed to see such hypocrites, who once opposed devotion, being accepted and shown the transcendental religion of *Bhāgavatam*. Ṭhākur Vṛndāvan Dās mentions '*amāyāya-dayā*' (genuine mercy, or compassion, devoid of any deceit) – those who receive such genuine mercy attain real spiritual benefit, become detached from the material world and receive transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa.

The meaning of the word 'impartial' is resplendent in the character of Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod and my Lord. Those who nurture an independent mood due to some secondary

material pursuits cannot at all perceive transcendental Vaiṣṇavs, who are great souls situated beyond the three modes of material nature. If we become impartial, we can see that the above-mentioned two great saints, being made of one substance and performing various pastimes of one Lord as they please, engaged the whole world in the service of the Supreme Lord.

About My Lord (2)

I wrote something in the previous article, and I am enclosing here a few more incidents related to that:

(1) One new *kaupīna-dhārī* man (a very strict renunciate) had often visited Bābājī Mahāśaya during several days and then acquired a 5-cottah (33.5 sq.m.) piece of land in Kuliya, Nabadwīp, from a worker at a landlord estate of XXX Rāñī. Hearing about this, my Lord said, ‘Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām is transcendental, so how did this local mundane landlord get this land that he can now give five cottah of the land to this *kaupīna-dhārī* novice? Even if you give all jewels of this universe in exchange, it cannot compare to the price of a single particle of dust of this transcendental Nabadwīp. So, where will any landlord get such a price as to have the right to give the land of Nabadwīp to anyone? And what is the strength of the spiritual practice of this *kaupīna-dhārī* novice that he is able to purchase this land with the “coin” of his spiritual practice? If one considers the land of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām mundane, what to speak of being a *dhām-bāsī* – such people are actually

called *sahajiyās* (imitators) because they regard the supra-mundane world with their mundane knowledge.’

(2) One time, knowing my Lord to be the highest Vaiṣṇav, some prominent Bengali landlord called him to join a devotional gathering at his great palace, which possessed opulence like that of Indra. Softened by the ardent prayer of the Vaiṣṇav landlord, Bābājī Mahāśaya instead invited him to engage in exclusive practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness by establishing some grass rug on the bank of the Ganges beside him and sustaining his life on humble alms (*mādhukarī*) and also said that if he submitted his great opulence to the hands of all landlords and resigned from all involvement with the material world, he could himself become a Vaiṣṇav – then my Lord would be bound to accept the invitation to his courtyard. Otherwise, even if Bābājī Mahāśaya accepted the invitation of the Vaiṣṇav king and came from transcendental Gaura Dhām to the king’s palace to humour the king for his hospitality and affection, then a few days later, he would adopt the king’s mentality and also start searching for a great land to acquire. In fact, the result would be that in a few days, his practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, being an object of the king’s envy, would be reduced to something material. On the other hand, if the Vaiṣṇav king establishes another cottage next to his and starts practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness, sustaining his life on collecting alms at others’ houses, then one day, becoming his dearest friend, he would not become prone to envy. If the Vaiṣṇav friend and king wants to show any mercy to him, then he should mercifully engage

himself in the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, adopting a lifestyle similar to his.

(3) Quite shocked by the internal character of one former resident of Kuliya (Nabadwīp), who was an experienced *kaupīna-dhārī* (severe renunciate) and a respected *paṇḍit bābājī*, my Lord one day gave up his *kaupīna*, garbed himself into a fine clean *dhoti* with a black border and a *chādar* (shawl) and came like this to the house of Śrīmad Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura in Svānanda Sukhada Kuñja. Seeing this play of Bābājī Mahāśaya and his changed clothes, Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura became curious and asked him about the reason behind the change. My Lord replied, 'We accept the cloth of Chaitanya, but taking shelter in deceit, we do not shun away even from unlawful mixing with women; therefore, we would show more respect to the truth if we accepted the garb similar to those who enjoy material luxuries and have dissolute sinful wives.' This very clever behaviour of Bābājī Mahāśaya bore a great result among those who engaged in malpractices.

(4) There was one Goswāmī Santan, who was very learned in *Bhāgavatam* and who, driven by greed for money, was also very anxious to accumulate disciples, employing dishonest tricks. One day, Bābājī Mahāśaya heard him singing and desired to express something peculiar about the devotional preaching of this man. Having heard how this immature singer, a respectable *gṛhastha goswāmī*, always told others to chant, 'Gorā, Gorā' and how he cleverly amassed countless disciples, Bābājī Mahāśaya said that this Goswāmī Santan Mahāśaya did not explain

goswāmīs' scriptures (the scriptures of the great sense-controlled devotees) – instead, he explained the 'senses' scriptures (i.e. read the scriptures with the purport of sense gratification) and never actually said in front of others, 'Gorā, Gorā' – instead, he only shouted, 'Money, money, my money!' This can never be a spiritual practice. Moreover, being a mere covering of a true religion, this brings nothing but harm to the world.

(5) Many people engage in material pursuits, pretending to follow the religion of devotion to the Lord and trying to impress others with their scriptural knowledge and righteous spiritual practice. My Lord compared their material attempts to interpret *goswāmīs'* scriptures to stool, and in order to demonstrate this, my Lord personally stayed in a public latrine near a guesthouse during almost six months. He engaged in this material matter to set the example and teach those who follow the pure lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanyadev but invite material stool in their lives by preaching the stench of their own prestige (*pratiṣṭhā*). People do not understand the pure religion of Vaiṣṇavism, encouraging material pursuits in the garb of a Vaiṣṇav, and my Lord showed everyone by the example of his own life that this is extremely abominable and must be given up.

(6) Many householder Vaiṣṇavs often presented some money and expensive shawls, etc. to Bābājī Mahāśaya. Whenever he got some money, he would tie it in a cloth with two–five knots and keep it in different places, showing he was very anxious about wealth. Foolish people

who loved money thought that Bābājī Mahāśaya was very greedy for money. Whenever somebody gave him some expensive clothes, he would praise the giver lavishly and explain how insignificant those clothes were.

Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupād ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Gaura Kīśora Dās Bābājī Mahārāj ki jay.

Ākara-Maṭh-Rāj Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh ki jay.

Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā,

Śrī Dhām-parikramā-pālankārī bhakta-vṛnda ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



His Divine Grace speaks Hari-kathā in the courtyard of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh

sarvasva tomāra, charaṇe s̄piyā,
paḍechhi tomāra ghare
tumi ta' ṭhākura, tomāra kukkura,
baliyā jānaha more [1]

I have offered everything at Your feet and taken shelter in Your home. You are my Master; please consider me Your dog.

badhiya nikate, amare palibe,
rahiba tomara dvare
pratipa-janere, asite na diba,
rakhiba gadera pare [2]

Tie me up nearby and be my guardian. I will remain at Your doorstep, I will not allow anyone who is against you to enter; I will keep them on the far side of Your moat.

tava nija-jana, prasada seviya,
uchchhista rakhibe yaha
amara bhojana, parama-anande,
prati-dina habe taha [3]

I will eat every day with great joy whatever remnants Your devotees leave behind after honouring Your *prasād*.

basiya suiya, tomara charana,
chintiba satata ami
nachite nachite, nikate yaiba,
yakhana dakibe tumi [4]

Sitting or lying down, I will always think of Your holy feet. I will come to You whenever You call me, dancing all the way.

nijera posana, kabhu na bhaviba,
rahiba bhavera bhare
bhakati-vinoda, tomare palaka,
baliya varana kare [5]

I will never think about my own maintenance; I will always remain within the shelter of loving attachment to You. Bhaktivinod embraces You as his master.

Śrī Śrīdhar Aṅgan

Continuing our *parikramā* of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have now come from Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh to Śrī Śrīdhar Aṅgan. Although this may seem to be a wild and very small place, some very beautiful pastimes took place here. This is the house where Śrī Kholāvechā Śrīdhar Prabhu stayed.

Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu came here with Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī, and when Śrīdhar Prabhu heard that Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu had come together with the devotees, he came out to welcome them. He offered his obeisances and various worship to the Lord and the devotees. Then, he said humbly, ‘Prabhu, please be merciful to this lowly servant – please take rest at my house.’

‘Śrīdhar,’ Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu said, ‘you are so fortunate! The Lord has bestowed so much mercy on you. Yes, I will take rest at your house today!’

Śrīdhar Prabhu was very happy to hear it. With much care he served Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and all the devotees. He asked a *brāhmaṇ* to cook something and then served *prasādam* to everyone. After that, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu lay down in Śrīdhar Prabhu’s room, and Śrīdhar Prabhu massaged the Lord’s feet. Having taken some rest, everyone then continued Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* in the association of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu.

Why did Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu say that Śrīdhar Paṇḍit was a great recipient of Mahāprabhu's mercy? You must know who Śrīdhar Paṇḍit is, and you must always remember and keep his mood in your heart.

Śrīdhar Paṇḍit, or 'Kholāvechā' Śrīdhar, was a very poor devotee. He lived on the northern outskirts of Śrī Antardwīp and used to make a living by selling spinach, bananas, plantain, *thor* (banana stems), roots, etc. – he would spend half of the money he earned to buy some fruit, sweets, etc. for the worship of Śrī Gaṅgā Devī and the other half on his household expenses. He lived his life in this way. Śrīman Mahāprabhu Viśvambhar would every day take *prasādam* on the banana leaves from Śrīdhar Prabhu's house.

When Śācī Mātā from time to time sent Nimāi to the market to get some bananas, roots, spinach, etc., Mahāprabhu would always come to Śrīdhar Prabhu's shop. He would come every time and bargain with him: Śrīdhar Prabhu would tell Him one price, and Nimāi would take some *thor*, bananas or roots in His hand and name another price. Śrīdhar Prabhu did not agree to bring the price down (he would say, 'Please forgive me, Ṭhākur. I am Your dog, but I cannot give You a discount') and would try to take the vegetables out of Mahāprabhu's hand, but Mahāprabhu did not give it back. Both of them would start a sort of a tug of war. Sometimes, Nimāi would pull so hard that, being unable to hold the slippery banana stem, Śrīdhar Prabhu would fall down on the ground! In this way, Mahāprabhu enjoyed playing and joking in the company of Śrīdhar Prabhu every day.

One day, Mahāprabhu came to Śrīdhār Prabhu's house and said, 'Śrīdhār, you are very clever. Your name, Kholāvechā, has a very deep meaning.'

'Prabhu, stop teasing me,' Śrīdhār Prabhu answered. 'Are there no other shops at the market besides mine? Why do You always behave like this with me?'

'There are other shops,' Nimāi replied, 'but you are My supplier, so why should I leave you?' (Just see this! The Lord does not catch anyone so easily, but if He does catch someone, He will not leave them!) 'Besides, you buy so many things for Gaṅgā-pūja every day, then why would you not give anything to Me? You are worshipping Gaṅgā, but trust Me, I am the father of Gaṅgā!'

Śrīdhār Prabhu was a very truthful and strict Vaiṣṇav, so when he heard this 'nonsense' talk, he could not tolerate it. Hearing Mahāprabhu's words, Śrīdhār Prabhu put his fingers into his ears and said, 'Viṣṇu! Viṣṇu!' He understood that it was useless to argue with Nimāi, so finally he would give up and give Him so many roots, vegetables, etc. Then, Nimāi would joke, 'Oh, why are you giving Me so much spinach, so many bananas and roots? Are they all rotten or what?'

Śrīdhār Prabhu said, 'No, no, no! Why will I give You rotten things? Take whatever You need from my shop!'

Mahāprabhu would always come to Śrīdhār Prabhu's house on various pretexts. One day, when He came to Śrīdhār Prabhu's house, Śrīdhār Prabhu offered obeisance to the Lord and gave Him a seat. That day, a wondrous conversation took place between them. Mahāprabhu said, 'Listen, Śrīdhār, you always say "Hari", "Hari" and

worship Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇ, but you do not have good clothes, you do not eat well, you are so poor! What is the use of your worship?’

‘Prabhu, I may be poor,’ Śrīdhar Prabhu replied, ‘but I do not starve. Whether big or small, good or bad, but I do have a place to stay at and things to wear.’

‘Sure,’ Nimāi continued, ‘you say you have clothes, but I see your clothes are stitched and mended in a hundred places! Yes, you do have a house, but your house does not even have straw on the roof. In Nabadwīp, those who worship Durgā are all well-off. So, you would be better off if you worshipped Durgā!’

‘Yes, what You are saying is correct, but everyone’s life goes the same way. Even if one lives in a big house, eats opulent food, wears good clothes, everyone will finish in the same way – everyone will die. Everything happens by the will of the Lord, so whatever the Lord allots, that is sufficient. I am happy with that.’

Hearing Śrīdhar Prabhu’s words, Nimāi was extremely pleased. He said, ‘Śrīdhar, you have such immense wealth, but you are hiding it and enjoying with it yourself. You do not share it with anyone. You are cheating others!’

Śrīdhar Prabhu did not like to hear his own praise, so he said, ‘Listen, go home now. You are talking like a madman, it is not necessary to tell all this nonsense to me! I do not want to fight with You.’

‘You will not get rid of Me so easily! Tell Me, what are you going to give Me today?’

‘Take whatever You want. You know what I sell, and You know the prices, too.’

‘Yes, but you have some hidden treasure. Let it be for now, but in the future, you will give Me banana stems, bananas and banana flowers for free! If you agree, then I give you My word that I will not pester you again.’

Śrīdhar Prabhu got a little scared, thinking, ‘If I say no to this *brāhmaṇ* boy, He can beat me – what will I do then? I can neither refuse to give Him what He is asking for, nor can I give Him everything for free. What do I do now?’ In the end, he decided, ‘If a *brāhmaṇ* comes and asks me for something, what loss is it for me? I have to give what He is asking for, it is my fortune.’ Then, Śrīdhar Prabhu said that Nimāi could take anything He wanted, for free.

Another day, Nimāi came to the house of Śrīdhar Prabhu and asked him for a glass of water. Getting shy, Śrīdhar Prabhu said that he did not have a proper glass (there was a hole in the only glass he had). Bhāvagrāhī Bhagavān Śrī Nimāisundar did not mind it – closing the hole with His finger, He drank water from that glass.

**bhaktera padārtha prabhu hena-mate khāya
koṭi haileo abhaktera ulaṭi’ nā chāya**

‘The Lord eats anything and everything that His devotees offer to Him, but He does not want anything from non-devotees, even if they are millionaires.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 2.9.185)

Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself says, ‘I do not take anything from non-devotees’ hands. I take from those who serve Me – if someone gives Me something with devotion, that is sufficient for Me.’ Kṛṣṇa Himself ate banana skin from the hand of Vidura’s wife, He ate flat rice from Sudāmā Vipra, but Kṛṣṇa never took *rāj-bhog* (very opulent

preparations) from Duryodhan. The main thing is that whatever you give, you must give it whole-heartedly, with heart and soul. If you can serve with all your heart, mind, soul, that is sufficient. People can do so many external things, but it may or may not be service. When you do service, you must do it with your heart, mind, and soul. This is the main thing. We see the proof of these words in Śrīdhara Prabhu's example – he had nothing, he did not have any wealth, any riches, he had no money, no knowledge, he was not a scholar, he did not even have a proper house, but he had *love* in his heart, and this is what Mahāprabhu accepted from him so happily. He was a great servitor of Mahāprabhu.

ki karibe vidyā, dhana, rūpa, yaśa, kule
 ahañkāra bāḍi' saba paḍaye nirmūle
 kalā mūlā vechiyā śrīdhara pāilā yāhā
 koṭi-kalpe koṭīśvara nā dekhībā tāhā
 dekhi' mūrkhā daridra sujanere hāse
 kumbhīpāke yāya sei nija-karma-doṣe
 vaiṣṇava chinite pāre kāhāra śakati
 āchhaye sakala siddhi, dekhaye durgati

'What is the use of knowledge, wealth, beauty, fame and high birth? It only increases one's ego. Everything will finish and fall off fruitlessly. In millions of lifetimes, millionaires have never seen that which Śrīdhara, who was a mere seller of bananas and roots, had. If anyone sees this great soul as foolish and poor and laughs at him, they will go to a foul hell of burning oil as the result of their own actions. Who has the power to recognise a Vaiṣṇava? Even if you have all kinds of perfections, you can still be unfortunate.'

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 2.9.234–235, 239–238)

One day, Nimāi wanted to give a boon to Śrīdhara. He asked Śrīdhara Prabhu, 'Śrīdhara, what boon do you want to get? Tell Me.'

Śrīdhara Prabhu said with folded palms, 'Prabhu, I do not want any boon. If You must give me some boon, then this what I want —

ye brāhmaṇa kāḍi' nila mora kholā-pāta
 ye brāhmaṇa hauka mora janma janma nātha
 ye brāhmaṇa mora saṅge karila kandala
 mora prabhu hauka t̃āra charaṇa-yugala

'May this brāhmaṇ who has been taking away my banana leaves be my master life after life. May the lotus feet of this brāhmaṇ with whom I have been quarrelling be my lords.'

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 2.9.225–226)

Saying this, Śrīdhara Prabhu raised his arms – he began to cry and loudly chant *kīrtan*.

The day before Mahāprabhu took *sannyās*, all devotees assembled at the house of Śrī Śachī Mātā and Nimāi Viśvambhar. Everybody came there, and Śrīdhara Prabhu was also there – he brought a *lau* (calabash/bottle gourd) and gave it to Nimāi. When Nimāi took that *lau*, His heart melted. He said, 'Śrīdhara, I have been taking and stealing bananas, banana stems and flowers from you My whole life – and today, on this last night, you have brought a *lau* for Me! I cannot but accept it. You are My eternal servant, Śrīdhara. I have tested you in so many ways, but you have no ego. I am indebted to you for your service, devotion and pure love.' When somebody else brought some milk after a while, Mahāprabhu asked Śrī Śachī Mātā, 'Mother, please take this *lau* and make some

sweet *lau* (*lau* boiled in milk with sugar).’ Nimāi took that sweet *lau* on that night...

After Mahāprabhu took *sannyās*, being unable to stay without the *darśan* of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, Śrīdhar Prabhu would every year go together with other devotees to Purī to see the Lord.

In this world, people serve the Lord in three ways. Somebody worships the Lord because they are afraid. Somebody worships the Lord because they have some material desires (they always want something from the Lord, they are always attached to material things, material world). And somebody worships the Lord out of sense of duty, thinking, ‘Oh, because we are eternal servants of the Lord and Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we must serve Kṛṣṇa.’ This is not right. You must serve your *guru*, Vaiṣṇavs and the Lord out of love, affection, out of attachment and love for their lotus feet – only then will it be real service.

In this way, by great fortune, by the unlimited mercy of our Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have come to this eternal pure place, and as we speak about the glories of Śrī Śrīdhar Prabhu, we take the dust from his holy house on our heads and pray that we may one day be able to serve our *guru*, Vaiṣṇavs and the Lord with sincerity, with heart and soul, with love, leaving behind all material attachments.

Śrī Kholāvechā Śrīdhar Prabhu ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwip Dham Parikrama ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



At Śrī Śrīdhar Aṅgan



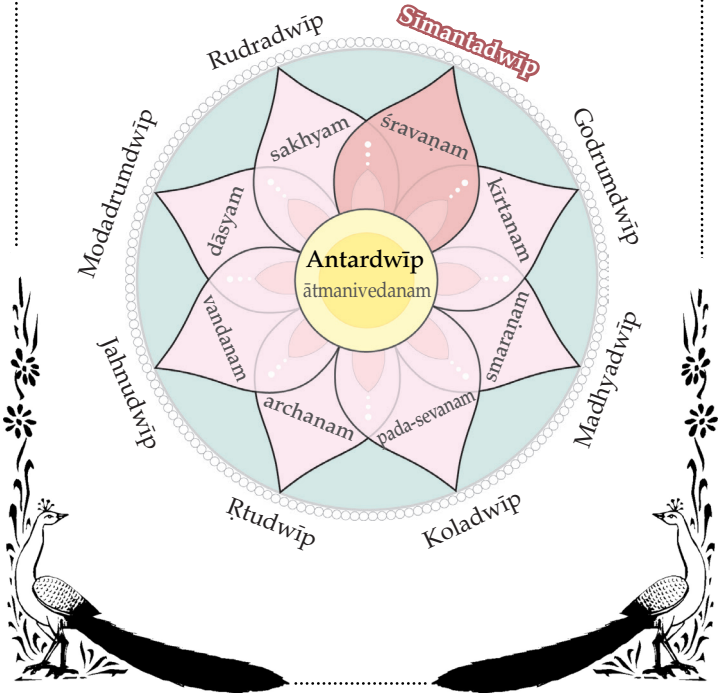
‘Although Śrī Gaurasundar’s appearance day takes place every year, why is it so that many of us cannot establish the seat of Śrī Gaura’s appearance within the faculty of our consciousness? Why do we not realise the meaning and magnanimity of Śrī Gaura’s appearance? Why are we eager for other matters besides ‘Gaura’? Why are we eager to desire anything else except service to Gaura? Why are we eager to pursue any other primary or secondary goals except service to Gaura’s Name (Gaura-Nāma), Gaura’s desires (Gaura-Kāma) and Gaura’s abode (Gaura-Dhāma)? Why do we not accept that Śrī Gaurasundar’s teachings are the only path and teachings?’

‘Śrīla Kavi Karṇapur gave the solution to all these problems in his play *Śrī Chaitanya-chandrodaya Nāṭaka*. Somebody asked, “O learned Sir, if Śrī Chaitanyachandra’s conclusions and decisions are all-good, eternal, universal, so unparalleled and liberal, then why is it so that everyone in this world always accepts all the other teachings and paths instead of accepting His teachings? They assume that all these teachings and paths are all one stairs leading to the spiritual kingdom!” The reply was, “It is not so. It is not so. The truth is one. The sun rises in the east, and only in the east. The west, the south, the north are not the east; if you come in any of these directions, you will not be able to arrive in the east; rather, you will end up even further from the east. Therefore, there is a reason why one must accept the one and only unparalleled conception. How can people who are captured by various desires for enjoyment, liberation, etc. ever become disposed towards this transcendental path? All other various paths are born of faith that is infested with material desires.”

(From *Gauḍīya*)

Śrī Sīmantadwīp

(Śravaṇam: listening)



Glory of Śrī Sīmantadwīp

Continuing our *parikramā* path, we have crossed Śrī Antardwīp and have entered Śrī Sīmantadwīp. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur described the glory of this island in his holy book *Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Māhātmya*:

Continuing Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu came to this village called Simuliyā. Coming here, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu told:

This is definitely Sīmantadwīp. Later, Gaṅgā will capture this island, and only this place here will remain visible.

One day in Satya-yuga, Śivjī Mahārāj started dancing, chanting the Holy Name of Gaurāṅga. Seeing his state, Pārvatī Devī (Śivjī Mahārāj’s spouse) asked him, ‘Why are you always calling out, “O Gaurāṅga! O Gaurāṅga!”? Who is this Gaurāṅga? When I see you dance and hear the Name of Gaurāṅga, it is melting my heart. I am thinking that whatever *mantras*, *tantras*, etc. I have heard before, it is all garbage for the soul! Tell me about Gaurāṅga. I can feel that if I serve Him, I will gain life.’

Hearing Pārvatī’s words, Mahādev said, ‘As you are the *primaeval* energy, part of Śrī Rādhā, I will tell you everything openly. In Kali-yuga, Kṛṣṇa will take Rādhā’s

heart and halo and appear in a village called Māyāpur. Intoxicated with the joy of *kīrtan*, He will distribute the jewel of transcendental love to everyone without any discrimination. Remembering the promise of the Lord makes me feel overwhelmed with transcendental love. Unable to steady my mind, I left Kāśī and came to Māyāpur, where I then decided to worship Gaurāṅga in a small hut on the bank of the Ganges.'

Hearing Śivjī Mahārāj's words, Pārvatī Devī came to Śimantadwīp and started meditating on Śrī Gaurāṅga's form. As she chanted and chanted the Holy Name of Gaurāṅga, transcendental love sprang up in her heart. She could no longer control her mind. In the end, Gaura appeared in front of her together with His devotees. He asked her, 'Pārvatī, what do you want? Why have you come here?'

Feeling anxious, Pārvatī Devī offered her obeisance at the Lord's holy lotus feet and spoke in reply, 'Prabhu, You are the life and soul of the world, you my Prāṇanāth, the Master of my very being. You are bestowing Your mercy, love and affection all over the world, but You are so cruel to me! You have given me such a cruel service: I bind the souls who are averse to you. I am doing what You told me to do, but I myself am cheated out of Your mercy! People say that wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, there is no place for Māyā (Māyā cannot stay there): I have become completely separated from You. When and how will I be able to see Your pastimes? If You do not tell me how to reach You, I will lose all hope.' Saying this, Pārvatī took some dust from the holy feet of Gaurāṅga and rubbed it

on the parting of her hair (*sīmanta*). From that time, this place became known as Sīmantadwīp, although ignorant people still call it Simuliyā-grām.

In reply to Pārvatī's words, Mahāprabhu said, 'Pārvatī, you are My non-different energy. You are the Mistress of the whole world, and you are always staying with Me. You have two forms: by your intrinsic nature, you are My Rādhikā, and externally, you are an expansion of Rādhā. My pastimes are not possible without you. You are always present in My pastimes as Yogamāyā. In Vraja, you perform your eternal pastimes as Paurṇamāsī, and in Nabadwīp, you live with Kṣetrapāl (the guardian of the *dhām*) Śivjī Mahārāj as Prauḍhā Māyā.' Saying this, Mahāprabhu disappeared.

Ever since then, always keeping these words in her heart, Pārvatī Devī has been staying as Simantini Devī in Sīmantadwīp and as Prauḍhā Māyā in Māyāpur. Such is the glory of Śrī Sīmantadwīp.

*Jay Śrī Sīmantadwīp ki jay.
Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.
Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.*

dayāl-nitāi chaitanya ba'le nāchre āmar' man'
(ekbār') nachre āmār' man', nachre āmār' man'
(eman' dayāl' to nāi he, mār' kheyē prem' deya)

Dear mind! Dance and chant, 'Merciful Nitāi! Chaitanya! Dayal Nitāi! Chaitanya!' (Dance, my mind! Dance! There is nobody as merciful as Them! They give divine love for the Lord even to those who beat Them!)

(ore) aparādha dūre yābe, pābe prema-dhan'
(o nāme aparādha-vichār' to nāi he)
(takhan') kṛṣṇa-nāme ruchi ha'be, ghuchibe bandhana
(kṛṣṇa-nāme anurāg' to habe he)

Listen! Offences will go away, and you will get transcendental love for the Lord! (There is no consideration of offences in chanting Their Names!) (Then,) you will get taste for the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa and your bondage will be destroyed. (You must certainly get loving attachment to the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa!)

(takhan') anāyāse saphal' ha'be jīvera jīvan'
(naile jīvan' to michhe he)
(kṛṣṇa-rati binā jīvan' to michhe he)
śeṣe vṛndāvane rādhā-śyāmer' pābe daraśan'
(gaura-kṛpā ha'le he)

(Then,) your life will be easily successful! (Otherwise, life is useless.) (Without attachment to Kṛṣṇa, life is useless). (In the end,) you will be allowed to behold Rādhā-Śyāma in Vṛndāvan. (If you get the mercy of Śrī Gaura.)

Rescuing Chāḍ Kazi

As we continue our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have now come to the *samādhi-mandir* of Chāḍ Kazi. The town Kazinagar, where this *samādhi-mandir* is situated, is non-different from Mathurā. He who was famous as Kamsa in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja became Chāḍ Kazi in the pastimes of Gaura.

One day, when Kazi was passing the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, he heard devotees chanting *kīrtan*. Annoyed, he entered the house and broke a *mṛdaṅga*, threatening everyone, 'You must stop all this *kīrtan*! If you do not stop it, I will punish you even more!' Everyone became afraid and soon told Nimāi about their plight. When Mahāprabhu heard about the atrocious behaviour of Kazi, He became very angry and immediately ordered devotees, 'Tell everyone that they must come out tonight with oil lamps. We shall go to town with *saṅkīrtan*!' The order was announced everywhere, and in the evening, thousands and thousands of people came out onto the street, each carrying a burning lamp in their hand. Then, together with the devotees, with the drums and *karatāls*, Mahāprabhu started a great *mahā-nagar-saṅkīrtan*. Whichever village Mahāprabhu entered with His party, all women and old

and young men would all come out on the street, offering obeisance at Mahāprabhu's lotus feet. The hearts of atheists burnt in anguish at this sight.

Proceeding down the streets with *kīrtan*, everyone finally came to the house of Chāḍ Kazi. Peeking through the window of his room, Chāḍ Kazi saw the crowd and got scared: he rushed inside the house and quickly bolted the door. Mahāprabhu gave an order to break the door.

Then, entering Kazi's room, Mahāprabhu said, 'What is going on? We come as guests to your house, but seeing us, you hide in your room! Is it part of your religion to hide when guests come to your house?'

'No, no! I was thinking that you all have come in anger, that is why I got a little scared.'

'What is there to be scared of? We have come to talk to you.'

'So I see... Prabhu, can I say something to You?'

'Yes, what is it?' Mahāprabhu asked.

Looking around and seeing the great crowd, Kazi said softly, 'I mean, can I say something to You privately?'

Mahāprabhu replied, 'Everyone here is My own men, you can say it in front of them.'

'All right... That day when I broke the *mṛdaṅga*... When I went to sleep, a lion came to me in a dream and jumped on my chest. That Narasimha pressed His claw against my chest and said, "Because you have broken a *mṛdaṅga*, I will tear your chest apart!" Seeing His enormous claw, I was terrified and closed my eyes. Then, He said, "What? Are you scared? I will let you go this time, but if you ever again do anything against My devotees, I will not tolerate

it – I will destroy you and your entire family!” Saying this, Narasimha went away, but just look – there is still a claw mark on my chest!’ Then, Chāḍ Kazi unbuttoned his shirt and showed his chest to everyone. When everyone saw the claw mark, they believed him.

Kazi continued, ‘I have not told anyone about it, but the next day, a servant came to me and said that he was going to stop *kīrtan* somewhere when suddenly his face caught fire! His whole beard got burnt, and he has blisters on his neck. After that, another servant came to me and told the same thing had happened to him, too. Then, another one. I told them that they did not have to stop *kīrtans* anymore and sent them to stay at home for a few days. Then, after a few days, some Muslim commoners came to me and complained that Hinduism was growing and only “Hari Hari” was heard everywhere! The Hindus also came to me complaining, “Because of Nimāi Paṇḍit’s influence all the lower caste people are now chanting the Name of the Lord – they constantly say, “Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa”! As the result of their sins, the Name of the Lord will become contaminated and the power of the Name will diminish! We will run away from this Nabadwīp!” Everyone is coming and saying to me, “You are the head of the village – kick Nimāi out of here!” I told everyone, “Go to your home, I will take care of it,” but now I am thinking that You are the Lord Himself.’

Hearing all this, Mahāprabhu was very pleased – placing His hand on Kazi’s body, He said with a smile, ‘To hear the Name of Kṛṣṇa come from your mouth is a great wonder. Because you have taken the Name of Kṛṣṇa, you

have become supremely pure – all your sins have been removed now.’ When Mahāprabhu said this, Chāḍ Kazi began to cry and fell down at Mahāprabhu’s holy lotus feet. This is how he was rescued and became a devotee.

We can see even today that, by the influence of the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, people all over the world become devotees and chant the Holy Name.

Mahāprabhu once asked Haridās Ṭhākur, ‘How can *yavanas* get liberated in this Kali-yuga?’ Haridās Ṭhākur replied, ‘*Nāmābhāse mukti pāibe*. They will be liberated through the shadow chanting of the Holy Name.’

If you say, ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’, Kṛṣṇa Himself will protect you: you will not have to be again born in a dog’s or cat’s body – you will be rescued from this material world. This is the result of chanting the Holy Name, but when you chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa, there can be offence in your chanting. What is the solution then? If you chant the Names of Nitāi and Gaura, there is no consideration of offences. Nityānanda Prabhu does not judge whether there is any offence or not – if you sincerely, without any duplicity, call out to His Holy Name, you will get every possible result of chanting the Holy Name.

This is how Mahāprabhu bestowed the treasure of divine love upon Chāḍ Kazi, making him a Vaiṣṇav. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur said, ‘This is the difference between Vraja and Nabadwīp: those who make offences in Kṛṣṇa-līlā receive *nirvāṇa* (impersonal liberation), and those who make offences in Gaura-līlā are presented with the jewel of divine love. That is why Gaura-līlā is the highest. If there is any offence in a conditioned soul, Kṛṣṇa’s Name,

Kṛṣṇa's abode, etc. rescue this soul after a very long time, but Gaura's abode, Gaura's Name, Gaura's beautiful form, qualities, associates and paraphernalia do not mind any offence – they rescue everyone easily, and no offence can check this. If you receive the *darśan* of Chāḍ Kazi's *samādhi*, all your pain and misery will go far away.'

Therefore, coming to the *samādhi* of Chāḍ Kazi, we offer our obeisance at his feet, remembering Mahāprabhu's pastimes and praying to attain the Lord's mercy and service.

Jay Śrī Chāḍ Kazi ki jay.

Śrī Nimāi Paṇḍit ki jay

Harinām-saṅkīrtan ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay

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Śrī Bhaktisiddhānta-Vāṇī

‘Lord Jagannāth is not an object of vision, Jagannāth is the seer. When *jīva* souls give up the ego of a ‘seer’ and become completely established in the pure ego of being an object of Jagannāth’s vision and enjoyment, then they will attain service mood and will be able to receive the *darśan* of Lord Jagannāth with the eyes of divine love, filled with serving attitude.

‘For as long as we think, “I will see Jagannāth,” we will not see Jagannāth – instead, we will see only wood, stone, a formless figure from Buddhist literature or historical accounts, an enjoyable idol; and when we can wholeheartedly feel, “He will see me. We are objects meant for His enjoyment; there is no veil of our own enjoyment when it comes to His pleasure; He is free to act as He pleases without any constraints,” then Jagannāth will manifest Himself before us.

‘However, whether the people of this world realise it or not, their minds are bewildered by the idea that “I will see Jagannāth – I will survey His eternal, all-conscious, blissful holy deity with my fleshy eyes and enjoy.” That is why even after the so-called ‘*darśan*’ of Jagannāth, their minds and hearts still run to see various ugly sights of this world.’ (Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Thākura)



Śrī Jagannāthdev's Temple

The last place we visit on the first day of our *parikramā* is this charming place that is known as Śaṅkhavaṇīk-nagar, or Śrī Śaraḍāṅga. This is the place where Śrī Jagannāthdev, Śrī Baladev Prabhu and Śrī Subhadrā Māyī reside with *śabaras* (an ancient caste with whom Lord Jagannāth stayed at first, before coming to Purī).

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur wrote in his holy scripture *Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Māhātmya*: 'There was a time when an atheist Muslim ruler named Rakhabāhu performed various atrocities in Odisha; at that time, the Lord came here with *śabaras* and has always lived here since then. This place is non-different from Śrī Puruṣottam Kṣetra (Śrī Purī Dhām).'

Jay Śrī Baladev Subhadrā Jagannāth jiu ki jay.

Śrī Sīmantadwīp ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



'Here in Bengal, we always welcome Phālgunī Pūrṇimā, but it is up to the learned to discern how much of this welcome is selfish and how much unselfish (causeless). May the youthful spring, the king of seasons, increase our passions; may the calls of cuckoos, the messengers of spring, shower our ears with the heavenly ambrosia; may Lakṣmī, the spring's intrinsic nature, create new gifts for our mundane literature or bring abundance and great crops to Mother Earth, letting us enjoy even more – cherishing these dreams and hopes, we welcome Phālgunī Pūrṇimā; or noticing the banner of the tidings of the coming Phālgunī festival celebrated in the society by young boys and girls and sweethearts, we congratulate each other and invite everyone to celebrate Phālgunī Pūrṇimā; otherwise, instead of worshipping (commemorating) the birth day of a powerful hero or a leader who provided us with some sort of illusory gift of social or practical opportunism that is common for the world of mundane realism, we consider this day very special as we are inspired to worship our own opportunism. However, the peculiarity of Śrī Phālgunī Paurṇamāsī is that she does not pamper one with the universal illusion of mundane realism or philanthropic envy-driven opportunism. Phālgunī Paurṇamāsī has devised a golden opportunity to expel universal unconsciousness. Phālgunī Pūrṇimā reveals the beauty coming from the toenails of the holy lotus feet of the full moon Śrī Chaitanya. A great Bengali poet sang:

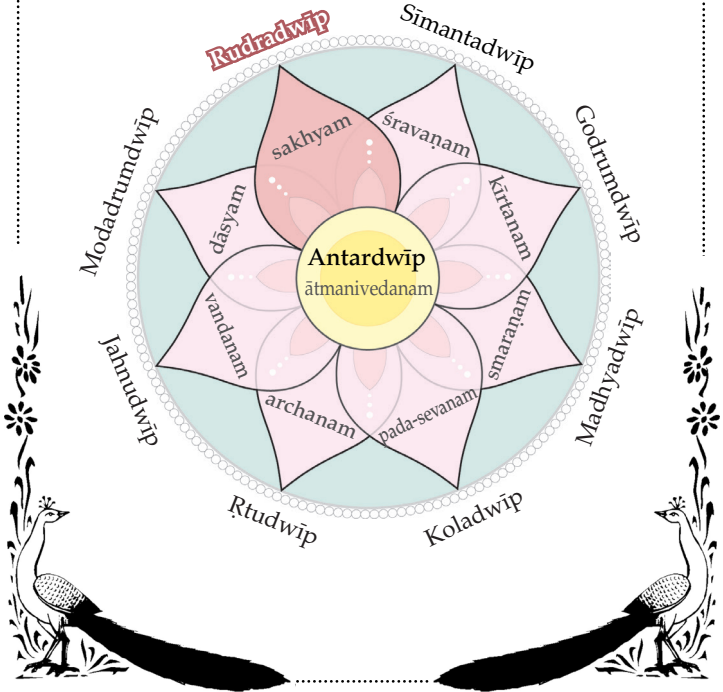
“chaitanyera janma-yātrā — phālgunī pūrṇimā
brahmā ādi e-tithira kare ārādhana
parama pavitra tithi bhakti-svarūpiṇī
yāhi avatīrṇa hailena dvija-maṇi”

“Beginning with Brahmā, everyone is worshipping Phālgunī Pūrṇimā, the holy appearance day of Śrī Chaitanya. This supremely pure holy day, the personification of Devotion, is the day when the jewel of the twice-born descended to this world.”

(Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata, 1.3.43–44)

Śrī Rudradwīp

(Sakhyam: friendship)



avatāra sāra, gorā avatāra,
kena nā bhajili tãre,
kari' nīre vāsa, gela nā piyāsa,
āpana karama phere [1]

Gorā Avatār is the best of Avatārs. Why haven't you worshipped Him? You live in the water, but your thirst does not go away – you are in trouble due to your own actions.

kañṭakera taru, sadāi sevili (mana),
amṛta pā'bāra āše
prema-kalpa-taru, śrī-gaurāṅga āmāra,
tāhāre bhāvili viṣe [2]

Dear mind, hoping to get nectar, you always chewed thorny wood (mistaking the blood in your mouth for nectar). My Śrī Gaurāṅga is a wish-fulfilling tree of divine love, but you considered Him to be poison.

saurabhera āše, palāśa śúkili (mana),
nāsāte paśila kīṭa
'ikṣu-daṇḍa' bhāvi', kāṭha chuṣili (mana),
kemane pāibi miṭha [3]

Dear mind, seeking some fragrance, you smelt the odourless *palāśa* flower and only insects entered your nose. O mind, thinking it was sugar cane, you sucked dry wood. How will you get any sweet taste like that?

'hāra' baliyā, galāya parili (mana),
śamana kiṅkara sāpa
'śītala' baliyā, āguna pohāli (mana),
pāili bajara-tāpa [4]

Dear mind, taking it for a necklace, you wore a serpent, death's servant, around your neck. Dear mind, thinking it cooling, you embraced fire and received deep burns.

samsāra bhajili, śrī-gaurāṅga bhulili,
nā śunili sādharma kathā
ihā-parakāla, dukāla khoyāli (mana),
khāili āpana mātā [5]

You worshipped your material life, forgot Śrī Gaurāṅga and never listened to *sādhus'* words. O mind, you have wasted both this life and next life – you have been eating your own brain (ruining your own life).

Śrī Rudradwīp

Between Śrī Antardwīp and Śrī Sīmantadwīp (to the north-west), there lies one more enchanting island called Śrī Rudradwīp. To bestow auspiciousness upon this world, Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura established here Śrī Rudradwīp Gauḍīya Maṭh in 1936. Since then, the original temple was taken by the Ganges and later rebuilt by the devotees of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh. We used to come here every year before, but we have not visited this place for many past years – we did not have that kind of *sukṛti*. This year, in 2021, we have got the fortune to come here again by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādapaṃsa.

This island, Śrī Rudradwīp, is divided by the current of the Ganges into two parts: one part of the island is on the western bank, where Nabadwīp town is, and the second part, where we are sitting now, is on the eastern bank. Although, by the desire of the Lord, nobody lives in this area, the *kīrtan* of the glories of this place is chanted eternally.

There is a famous village called Śrī Śaṅkarpur in the middle of this island (in the western part).

In ancient times, Śrī Śaṅkar Āchārya was a great preacher in this world. He is a Vaiṣṇava and an expansion of Śivī Mahārāj (Rudra), but following a special order of the Lord, when he performed his pastimes, he showed that he was

a servant of Māyā and preached *advaitavād* (disguised Buddhism, or *māyāvād*, impersonalism). When Śrī Śaṅkar Āchārya came to Nabadwīp to conquer local scholars and establish his universal authority, Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu appeared before him and spoke to him sweetly:

‘Śaṅkar, you are My servant. Placing My order on your head, you are very ardently preaching *māyāvād*, but this Nabadwīp Dhām is My favourite place, and *māyāvād* will never have any place here. Vṛddha Śiva and Praudhā Māyā reside here and preach an artificial (imaginary) conception, but they only cheat those who are jealous of devotees. Apart from that, only My devotees live here – there is no need to preach any misconception here. Please go somewhere else. Do not worry the residents of Nabadwīp.’

Understanding the nature of Nabadwīp and feeling overwhelmed with devotion, Śaṅkar Āchārya left.

This Rudradwīp is also the residence of many Rudras, where they dance and chant the glories of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. Seeing their dance and feeling overjoyed, all the demigods shower flowers from the sky.

One time, Śrī Viṣṇu Swāmī came here with his disciples, desiring to conquer local scholars and establish his worldwide authority. Hearing Viṣṇu Swāmī reciting praises and prayers and his disciples chanting ‘Hari! Hari!’, seeing them all dance, Śivjī Mahārāj became very pleased and appeared before them. They were greatly surprised to see Śivjī Mahārāj and immediately fell flat on the ground, offering him their obeisances. Then, Śivjī Mahārāj said to them mercifully, ‘You are all Vaiṣṇavs and very dear to me. When I see you, my heart rejoices. What boon would you

like to receive from me? When Vaiṣṇavs ask for something or need something, I can give them anything they want.’ Then, Viṣṇu Swāmī said, ‘If you desire to give us a boon, then we would like to ask you to bless us so that we may one day become established within the devotional school.’ Greatly jubilant, Rudra (Śivji Mahārāj) bestowed this boon on them, and by the wish of Śrī Viṣṇu Swāmī, he called that school ‘Rudra Sampradāya’.

By the mercy of Śivji Mahārāj, Viṣṇu Swāmī stayed here for some time and always worshipped Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. One day, Mahāprabhu came to him in a dream and said, ‘Listen, Viṣṇu. My devotee Rudra bestowed his mercy on you – you are very fortunate that you have got the gift of devotion in Nabadwīp. However, you must preach *śuddhādvaita* here. When I appear, you will come as Śrī Vallabha Bhaṭṭa and meet with Me in Purī Dhām, after that you will go to Mahāvan and your *sampradāya* will gain renown.’ Following the order of Mahāprabhu, Viṣṇu Swāmī started to preach *śuddhādvaita*.

In this area, Lord Śrī Gaurasundar in the same way granted His *darśan* to Śrī Rāmānuja Āchārya, Madhva Muni and Nimbārka Āchārya, giving them comprehensive instructions on how they must preach. This is how the four Vaiṣṇav *sampradāyas* (schools) – Śrī (Śrī Rāmānuja Āchārya), Brahma (Śrī Madhva Āchārya), Rudra (Śrī Viṣṇu Swāmī) and Kumār (Śrī Nimbārka Āchārya) – manifested in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām in ancient times and have since existed in this world.

When Mahāprabhu appeared in this world, He Himself accepted Śrī Brahma Sampradāya. Before coming

to Śrī Rudradwīp, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu told Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu about Śrī Madhva Āchārya:

When Śrī Madhva Muni lived with his disciples in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, Śrī Gaurasundar once came to him in a dream and said with a smile, ‘Madhva, everyone knows that you are My eternal servant. When I manifest Myself in Nabadwīp, I will accept Your *sampradāya*. As for now, please do Me a favour – eradicate all *māyāvād* and misconception from the entire country and reveal the glory of Deity worship. Later, when I come, I will display your pure conception.’ Saying this, Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu disappeared, and Madhva Muni woke up and fell unconscious. When he came round, he began to cry, ‘Will I ever see this beautiful golden form of the Lord?’ Then, he heard a divine message in the sky, ‘If you serve Me, you will come to Me.’ Composing himself, Madhva Āchārya followed Mahāprabhu’s order and conquered all *māyāvādī digvijayas* (great scholars of impersonalism who were accepted as absolute authority at the time).

Strolling about Śrī Rudradwīp, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu showed Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu various other places, such as Śrī Pulina, where Śrī Rāsa Maṇḍal and Dhīra Samīra are manifest. Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvan Dhām, so all the holy places are manifest here and all the pastimes are happening here, too: every day, Kṛṣṇa enjoys here His ecstatic pastimes with *gopas* and *gopīs*. Those who are fortunate can sometimes see this.

Śrī Rudradwīp ki jay. Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



Śrī Rudradwīp Gauḍīya Maṭh

gurudev!
baḍa kṛpā kari', gauḍa-vana-mājhe,
godrume diyāchha sthāna
ājñā dila more, ei vraje vasi',
harināma kara gāna [1]

Gurudev! Bestowing great mercy on me, you have given me a place in Śrī Godrumdwīp amidst the forests of Gauḍa. You ordered me, 'Reside in this abode, which is non-different from Vraja, and chant the Lord's Name.'

kintu kabe prabho, योग्यातं अर्पिभे,
e dāsere dayā kari'
chitta sthira habe, सकला साहिबा,
ekānte bhajiba hari [2]

But when, O master, will you mercifully grant this servant the qualification to do this? When will my heart become steadfast? When will I tolerate everything and serve the Lord sincerely?

śaiśava-yauvane, जाड़ा-सुखा-सांगे,
abhyāsa haila manda
nija-karma-doṣe, e deha ha-ila,
bhajanera prati-bandha [3]

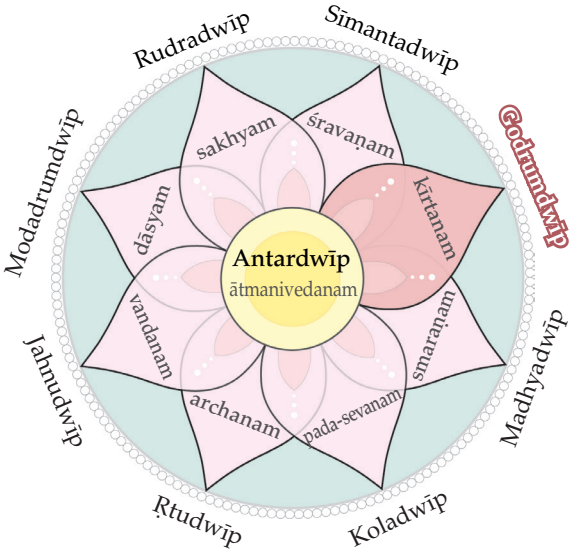
In my childhood and youth, I always indulged in material happiness and, as a result, have become habituated to bad things. Because of my own sins, this body has become an obstacle to spiritual life.

vārdhake ekhana, पांचा-रोगे हाता,
kemane bhajiba bala'
kāḍiyā kāḍiyā, तमारा चारणे,
paḍiyāchhi suvihvala [4]

In my old age, I am now afflicted with five-fold diseases (*avidyā*, *asmitā*, etc.). Tell me, how shall I serve You? Crying incessantly, I have fallen at your feet, utterly bewildered.

Śrī Godrumdwīp

(Kīrtanam: chanting)



gaurāṅgera duṭi pada, yāra dhana sampada,
se jāne bhakati rasa-sāra
gaurāṅgera madhura-lilā, yāra karṇe praveśilā,
hṛdaya nirmala bhela tāra [1]

Those whose wealth and treasure is Gaurāṅga's two feet know the excellence of devotional ecstasy. When Gaurāṅga's sweet pastimes enter one's ears, their heart becomes pure.

ye gaurāṅgera nāma laya, tāra haya premodaya,
tāre muṇi yāi balihārī
gaurāṅga-guṇete jhure, nitya-lilā tāre sphure,
se jana bhakati-adhikārī [2]

When one chants Gaurāṅga's Name, divine love arises in them – I find this astonishing! Eternal pastimes are revealed to those who shed tears hearing Gaurāṅga's qualities – such persons are qualified for devotion.

gaurāṅgera saṅgi-gaṇe, nitya siddha kari māne,
se yāya vrajendra-suta-pāśa
śrī-gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, yebā jāne chintāmaṇi,
tāra haya vraja-bhūme vāsa [3]

Those who consider Gaurāṅga's associates to be eternally liberated reach Kṛṣṇa, the son of King of Vraja. Those who always think about Śrī Gauḍa Maṇḍal reside in the land of Vraja.

gaura-prema-rasārṇave, se taraṅge yebā ḍube,
se rādhā-mādhava-antaraṅga
gṛhe vā vanete thāke, 'hā gaurāṅga' bale ḍāke,
narottama māge tāra saṅga [4]

Those who dive into the waves in the ocean of divine love for Gaura are intimate associates of Rādhā-Mādhav. No matter whether one lives in a house or a forest, if they call out to Gaurāṅga, Narottam begs for their association.

Śrī Suvarṇa Bihār

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have started our second day of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* and have first come to Śrī Suvarṇa Bihār Gauḍīya Maṭh, which was established in Godrumdwīp by Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda.

A king called Śrī Suvarṇa Sen lived in this place in Satya-yuga. He had so much deep material attachment that he was always busy with the affairs of his kingdom, and he did not stop even when he became old. Ever



engrossed in his material life, he was always thinking, 'How can I increase my wealth and property?'

King Śrī Suvarṇa Sen had some *sukṛti*, or *punya*, from his previous lifetimes, owing to which he once got to meet with a Vaiṣṇav: by some fortune, Śrī Nārada Muni happened to come to his house. Although a materialistic king, Suvarṇa Sen had a good habit: whenever a saint or a guest came, he would treat them with hospitality. So, because the king showed much respect to Nārada Muni, Nārada decided to bestow on him special mercy. He took the king to a secluded place and gave him the following spiritual advice:

'O King! Your days are passing in vain! You are busy with your material life all the time, thinking only, "Money, money, money!" that is why you are always attacked by illusory environment and always feel attachment to material things. You are wasting your life! Think just once deep in your heart: what is bad and what is good? *Anārtha* (lit. 'something that is wrong, inauspicious or unworthy of being offered in worship') means material desires, but *paramārtha* (lit. 'the highest aspiration or religion') is another matter – *paramārtha* means transcendental knowledge.

'When you die, neither your wife nor your son nor your friends will help you. They are nobody to you! They may be your friends now, but they stay with you only out of their own interests. When you die, they will take your body to the crematorium, throw it into fire (or set it floating down the Ganges) and return home. Why cherish all these false hopes then? Why are you always running

behind farce? You have nobody in this world. If you say, “This is not so. I have no sadness in my life. I only want happiness in my life, that is why I am naturally trying to earn some money.” This is a lie. Even if you have money, you still suffer from the threefold miseries (*ādhibhautik*, *ādhidaiivik*, *ādhyātmik*: the miseries caused by other souls, by the nature and by your mind). If you have money, does it mean that all suffering and hardships will go away? Does having money make one happy? What will become of you when time comes to leave everything and go away? All these material things will go away one day – all your wealth and property will be gone. This life is not eternal: you will be alive for a hundred years, and after that you will have to give up everything and leave.

“Therefore, you must overcome all this illusion. When you cross the illusory world, you will understand that there is no unhappiness – real happiness is devoid of any fear or grief. Tell me, how is it possible to achieve such a miraculous result? Everyone knows that if you want to get something, you must give something up for that, but this result that I am telling you about cannot be attained by any austerity or knowledge. Renunciation and knowledge will dissolve your material bondage, but all you will get through that is impersonal Brahman (the one-without-a-second Supreme Lord). There is no joy in impersonal Brahman – your entire being will be destroyed. As the result, you will lose everything without getting any highest benefit. Therefore, those who are intelligent give up all enjoyment and liberation and practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

‘You, king, are very intelligent, so judge yourself how you can attain benefit.

‘The knowledge of the relationship, the means and the goal is in detachment from the material world and attachment to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. If you want to get Kṛṣṇa, you can only get Him through devotion – not through any material actions (*karma*), not through any knowledge (*jñāna*), not through any supernatural perfections (*yoga*). All desires for enjoyment and liberation are extremely trifle.

‘If you keep thinking about your material desires all the time, then, by the influence of Māyā’s touch, you will always remain bound within the illusory environment. Those *jīva* souls who live within illusory bondage are always busy with various activities – wandering in the illusory net, they keep coming and going in this world. They sometimes practise *aṣṭāṅga yoga*, sometimes *brahma-jñāna*, they try to practise all sorts of religions, but everything is in vain: they do not even attain the knowledge of who they are. Eventually, “having travelled throughout the universe and got the mercy of Śrī Guru and Kṛṣṇa, fortunate souls receive the seed of the devotional creeper (*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva, guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*)”: after coming and going, coming and going, as the result of some fortune, conditioned souls reach the lotus feet of Śrī Gurupādpadma and Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and get faith and pure devotion. Having got pure saintly association, all dirt, all unwanted elements go away from such fortunate *jīva* souls’ hearts, and they become firmly fixed in their spiritual life. From

firmness gradually comes taste; from taste, attachment; from attachment, transcendental love and devotion. This is how full result comes through listening (*śravaṇ*) and chanting (*kīrtan*).

‘Dear king, you are so fortunate – you live right here in Nabadwīp! Make your faith firm in the association of saints and chant the glory of the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa! Then the sun of transcendental love must no doubt arise in your heart.

‘When Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu comes in Kali-yuga, everyone will get the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa. You, too, will again come here at that time, and you will chant the Holy Name of Gaurāṅga. If you worship Kṛṣṇa without chanting Gaurāṅga’s Name, it will take you a very long time to reach Kṛṣṇa’s land, but if you chant Gaurāṅga’s Name, all offences will go away from your heart and you will get Kṛṣṇa very quickly.’

As Nārada Muni spoke all this, he became overwhelmed with transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa and began to dance and chant, ‘Gaura! Gaura!’ His *vīṇā* also started chanting, ‘Gaura Hari! Gaura Hari!’ In the end, Nārada said, ‘When will this blessed Kali-yuga come? When will this Gaurāṅga come? Chanting Gaura’s Name, I will become so fortunate!’ Saying this, Nārada left.

Having got the association of Nārada Goswāmī, King Śrī Suvarṇa Sen started thinking about what he had heard. The seed of material attachment growing in his heart gradually began to perish, and after that, first, detachment from the material world, and then transcendental love, arose in it: affected by Nārada Goswāmī’s words, he

started to dance, chanting, 'O Gaurāṅga! O Gaurāṅga!' Falling at all saints' holy lotus feet, he started begging them for transcendental love: all his material desires and attachment were gone far away.

One day, Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara, along with some devotees, came to the king in a dream. The king saw that everyone was dancing in his courtyard, embracing and greeting each other, with the sounds of 'Hare Kṛṣṇa' being chanted and heard all around. When the dream broke and the king awoke, he began to weep. Suddenly, he heard a divine message from the sky: 'Dear king, when Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu comes, you too will come as His associate. Your name will be Buddhimanta Khān, and you will get an opportunity to serve Gaurāṅga.'

In this way, he who was King Śrī Suvarṇa Sen in Satya-yuga became Buddhimanta Khān in Kali-yuga.

In 1936, Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura established a temple of Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh here in Śrī Suvarṇa Bihār, and we have been coming here and remembering these beautiful pastimes every year by the mercy of our Śrī Gurupādpadma.

Nitāi Gaura premānande Hari bol!

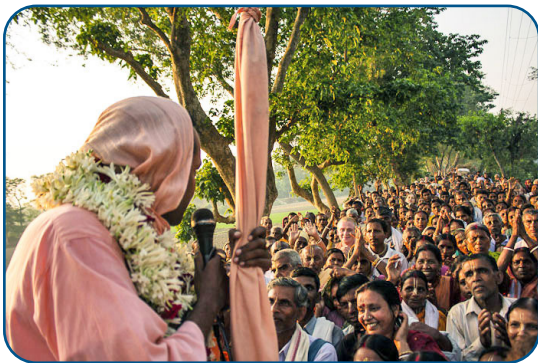
Śrī Suvarṇa Bihār ki jay.

Rājā Śrī Suvarṇa Sen, Buddhimanta Khān ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Oṃ Viṣṇupād Jagad-Guru

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj ki jay.



Broker's Song

baḍa sukhera khabara gāi
surabhi-kuñjete nāmera hāṭa khule'chhe khoda nitāi

I am singing about the greatest news! A marketplace of the Holy Name has opened at Surabhi Kuñja, and its proprietor is Nitāi!

baḍa majāra kathā tāya
śraddhā-mūlye śuddha-nāma sei hāṭete vikāya

This is such great news! You can buy the pure Name at this marketplace at the cost of faith.

yata bhakta-vṛnda basi'
adhikārī dekhe' nāma vechchhe dara kaṣi'

So many devotees come there. Seeing a fit soul, He sells them the Name at a bargain price.

yadi nāma kinbe bhāi
āmāra saṅge chala mahājanera kāchhe yāi

Brother, if you want to buy this Name, come with me! I am going to this great soul now.

tumi kinbe kṛṣṇa-nāma
dasturi laiba āmi, pūrṇa ha'be kāma

If you will buy the Holy Name, I will get a discount and my desire will be fulfilled.

baḍa dayāl nityānanda
śraddhā-mātra la'ye dena parama ānanda

Nityānanda is very merciful – at the cost of mere faith He bestows greatest joy.

ek-bāra dekhle chakṣe jala
'gaura' bole' nitāi dena sakala sambala

If Nitāi sees someone says, 'Gaura' just once with tears in their eyes, He gives them all His wealth.

dena śuddha kṛṣṇa-śikṣā
jāti, dhana, vidyā-bala nā kare apekṣā

He gives pure teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa without expecting any high caste, wealth or strength of knowledge from anyone.

amāni chhāḍe māyā-jāla
gṛhe thāka, vane thāka, nā thāke jañjāl

The net of illusion will fall off on its own, then wherever you are – whether you live in a house or in a forest – there will be no more material garbage left in your life.

āra nāiko kalira bhaya
āchaṇḍāle dena nāma nitāi dayāmaya

There is no fear of Kali anymore – merciful Nitāi gives the Name even to the lowest among men.

bhaktivinoda ḍāki' kaya
nitāichādera charaṇa bina āra nāhi āśraya

Bhaktivinod calls out, 'There is no other shelter except for Nitāi's feet!'

Śrī Surabhi Kuñja

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, today, as every year, continuing our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, we have come from Śrī Suvarṇa Bihār Gauḍīya Maṭh to this extremely pure place, Śrī Surabhi Kuñja.



The name of this island is Śrī Godrumdwīp, and this island is the place of *kīrtan*. From here, on the bank of the Saraswatī River, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur Mahāśaya started his *kīrtan* and preaching of the glories of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. In Śrī Nabadwīp, there are two rivers flowing inside the Ganges: the current of the Ganges is on one bank, the current of the Saraswatī River is on the other bank (when we cross the Ganges, you can see

that the colour of the water is different). So, this island Godrumdwīp lies on the bank of the Saraswatī River, and within it there are many villages, such as Gadigachha, Balirchar, Maheshganj, Tiyorakali, Amghat, Shyamnagar, Virija, Harishpur, Suvarna Bihar and Devapalli. Local people call Godrumdwīp ‘Gādigāchhā’, but in Vaiṣṇav language, we say Godrumdwīp. At this place, having received by the mercy of Surabhi Cow an order to engage in the worship of Gaura, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni took shelter in pure devotion. In Kṛṣṇa-lilā, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni was Lord Indradev. Actually, *go* means ‘a cow’ and *drum* [pronounced as ‘droom’] means ‘a tree’ – because there used to be an *āsvattha* (banyan) tree and the heavenly cow Surabhi lived under it, this place is called Godrum. Try to remember and keep all that is spoken in your heart.

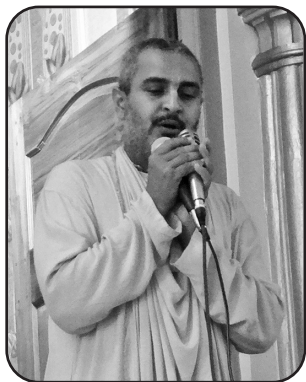
You must have heard about the nine kinds of devotion; these nine kinds of devotion reside within a corresponding island of Nabadwīp:

Śimantadwīp – *śravaṇam*, **Godrumdwīp** – *kīrtanam*, **Madhyadwīp** – *smaraṇam*, **Koladwīp** – *pāda-sevanam*, **Ṛtudwīp** – *archanam*, **Jahnudwīp** – *vandanam*, **Modadrumdwīp** – *dāsyam*, **Rudradwīp** – *sakhyam*, **Antardwīp** – *ātma-nivedanam*. So, because *kīrtan* resides on the island of Godrumdwīp, we must loudly and properly chant *kīrtan* here.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur built this Surabhi Kuñja house in 1888, and our Śrīla Bhakti Vedānta Avadhūt Mahārāj serves this place single-handedly. When our Gurudev disappeared, there was nothing here except for a small house, but Śrīla Bhakti Vedānta Avadhūt Mahārāj

has since then arranged this beautiful place for us all to sit. It is our great fortune to be able to come here. He is also my dear friend, and I would like to request Śrīla Avadhūt Mahārāj to please sing *kīrtan* and speak some Hari-kathā.

Below is Pūjyapād Śrīla Bhakti Vedānta Avadhūt Mahārāj's glorification of Śrī Godrumdwīp and Śrī Surabhi Kuñja:



We are extremely happy today to have got the company of our dearest friend, Pūjyapad Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj. Although he comes here only once a year on this day, he has done so much service to this place – to this day, I have not got so much great fortune to serve this place as

much as Mahārāj has served it. I do not know when that day will come – if Mahārāj gives his mercy to me, then it must happen. We have invited Mahārāj many times for the separation festival of our *gurudev*, but Mahārāj is always busy and has not been able to come, so we are very happy to have him here today. We like to see him. '*Vaiṣṇava saṅgete mana ānandita anukṣaṇa, sadā haya Kṛṣṇa parasaṅga*. In the association of Vaiṣṇavs, my mind is always joyful: in their association I always get the association of Kṛṣṇa.'

Pūjyapād Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj's contribution is incomparable: his service has brought about all sorts of auspicious benefit. I have heard that he has established

a temple at the birthplace of Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu in Ekachakrā Dhām; he is making a beautiful temple near the birthplace of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in Māyāpur Dhām; and he has also made a beautiful temple in Nrisingha Palli, where Lord Nṛsimhadev, the protector of all devotees (*bhakta-rakṣak*) and destroyer of all obstacles (*viḡhna-vināśakārī*) resides eternally. This gives us very much joy. Moreover, Mahārāj is also very affectionate to us. We also often think about him: his *gurudev* has kept abundant blessings with him, that is why, despite any perilous position, he is never harmed. When we see his example, we are reminded how the Lord tested Prahlād Mahārāj's deep devotion when his father harassed him in so many ways – in the same way, the Lord also tested Pūjyapād Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj in many ways, but the *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs are always with him, protecting him. Kṛṣṇa also says in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, 'Na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati: My devotee is never vanquished.'

Anyhow, you have all come to this eternally pure place, where Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu started a marketplace of the Holy Name (Nāma-ḥaṭṭa) and started preaching on the order of Mahāprabhu. Later, when Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur came here, he composed a special *kīrtan* called 'Broker's Song' ('*Baḍa sukher khabar gāī*') about the glory of this Nāma-ḥaṭṭa.

In Dvāpar-yuga, not being able to recognise the Lord, Indradev committed an offence at the holy feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. What offence was it? Every year, the residents of Vraja usually made an offering to Lord Indra to get regular rains (if it rains regularly, then grass grows well, cows eat

well, the crops are good, and so on). One year, however, Lord Kṛṣṇa said, 'We must worship Girirāj Govardhan now! We will not worship Indra anymore! If we worship Girirāj Govardhan, we will get everything!' Then, Nanda Mahārāj, together with all the Vraja-bāsīs, stopped their worship of Indradev and started worshipping Girirāj Govardhan.

Indradev became angry that the residents of Vraja had worshipped Govardhan, so he sent torrential rains onto Vṛndāvan. All the Vraja-basis became scared, 'Indradev has become angry! O Lord, please protect us!' but Kṛṣṇa assured them, 'There is nothing to be afraid of! Girirāj Govardhan will protect us.' Then, Lord Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhan Hill and during seven days sheltered all Vraja-bāsīs underneath it. Because Śrī Kṛṣṇa showed Himself as a cowherd boy, they all forgot that Kṛṣṇa was the Supreme Lord. Then, seven days later, Indradev stopped the rain, thinking, 'These Vraja-bāsīs must be all scared – now they will again start worshipping me!' However, when the rain stopped and all the water dried up, Vraja-bāsīs returned to their homes and were amazed to see that all their things at home were just like that – there was no damage or loss. They were very happy, 'Now we will worship Girirāj Govardhan every year! We will not worship Indra anymore.'

Meanwhile, Indradev began to doubt, 'These Vraja-bāsīs did not become scared, and there was no damage to their houses – they behave like nothing has happened.' He came to meet with the heavenly cow Surabhi, the mother of all cows. He asked her, 'Mother, tell me who is this Kṛṣṇa? Is He an ordinary cowherd boy? He is saying that they must stop my worship and worship Govardhan instead,

and after worshipping Govardhan, their happiness has only increased!’ Surabhi said, ‘Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He has protected everyone. You have made a mistake: not being able to recognise Him, You mistook Him for an ordinary boy. Go to Him and beg Him forgiveness.’ Indradev agreed, but then he said, ‘I am scared to go alone. Please come with me.’

In this way, Indradev came to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with Surabhi Cow. Arriving at Govardhan Hill, Indradev pleased the Lord with his offering of prayers, praise and *abhiṣek* (auspicious bathing). Feeling satisfied with Indra, Śrī Kṛṣṇa then cleared his offence.

After that, Indradev returned to heaven, but some days later, he felt uneasy again. He again came to Surabhi and said, ‘Mother Surabhi, I again feel scared...’

‘King, listen to what I will tell you,’ Surabhi said. ‘Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu will appear in Nabadwīp Dhām in Kali-yuga, and He will grant all offenders the Holy Name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, liberating them thus from all offences: He will bless them with devotion and transcendental love to Kṛṣṇa.’

‘Mother Surabhi,’ Indradev asked, ‘I could not recognise Kṛṣṇa, so when Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu comes, what if I again cannot understand His pastimes or recognise Him, too? I will again commit offences then. Mother, please do me a favour. Take me now to this Nabadwīp Dhām. I will worship Gaurāṅga and receive His *darśan*.’

So, Indradev came here, to the place where we are sitting now, in Dvāpar-yuga with Surabhi Cow. There used to be a banyan tree here before: Surabhi and Indradev sat

under that tree and started worshipping Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Some time later, Mahāprabhu granted them His *darśan*: receiving the Lord's *darśān*, Indradev felt extremely happy in his heart. After that, Indra left for heaven, but Surabhi Cow stayed here. This is how this place got its name, Śrī Surbhi Kuñja (the grove of Mother Surabhi).

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur said that this Godrumdwīp is non-different from Nandagrām in Vṛndāvan. The island of Godrumdwīp stretches from here all the way to Nrisingha Palli, and the expanse of the banyan tree that grew here was eight kilometres.

One time, there was a great flood in the world. A sage named Mārkaṇḍeya Muni had received a boon of seven *kalpas* (seven days of Lord Brahmā, each day consisting of four *yugas*, finishing with the universal annihilation) from Lord Śiva, which meant that he did not die when there was the universal flood at the end of each *kalpa*. One day, at the time of one of such floods, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni was floating in the water and somehow came to Nabadwīp Dhām (the glory of Nabadwīp Dhām is such that this holy abode is never flooded). So, when Mārkaṇḍeya Muni came here, he saw Surabhi Cow. He came to her and asked, 'Mother, I have been starving for a very long time. Please let me drink some milk to regain my strength.' Merciful Surabhi fed Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi with her milk and helped him recover.

Regaining his strength, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi offered prayers to Surabhi Cow and asked her, 'Mother Surabhi, why are you sitting here? Do you not stay in heaven?'

Surabhi Cow replied, 'I am worshipping my Lord here, that is why I am here.'

‘You are so fortunate! Why have I only got this boon of seven *kalpas*? I do not understand anything. Getting this boon, I only feel unhappy. What should I do now?’

‘Stay here and worship Gaura!’ Surabhi replied.

‘What will I get if I worship Gaura?’

‘If you worship Gaura, He will grant His *darśan* to you: you can get transcendental power (devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa), and there will be no unhappiness left in your life. There is no criteria in worshipping Gaura – whoever chants the Name of Gaura, all their material bondage, attachment and desire for liberation are destroyed.’

Overcome with devotion, Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi started chanting the Name of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. As he chanted the Holy Name, he felt he had got his life back.

After that, Mahāprabhu appeared in this world, and when He left for Śrī Purī Dhām, He sent Nityānanda Prabhu here for preaching. Coming to Nabadwīp Dhām, Nityānanda Prabhu stayed here for three months and opened here a marketplace of the Holy Name (Nāma-haṭṭa). After Nityānanda Prabhu left, three hundred years later, the preaching of Vaiṣṇavism had eventually stopped. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur came here for the first time in 1888 and again started to manifest that Nāma-haṭṭa. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur wrote this prayer glorifying Godrum:

sura-sarīda upakaṅṭhe godrume gaura diyechhe
 vasati surabhi-kuñje bhakti-purvaṁ vinoda
 yugala-charaṇe sevā sakya-labhiyā aśo
 vraja-rasa-rasikayā pādapadma āśraya atra

‘As I have pleased Bhakti Devī, Gaura has given me a dwelling at Surabhi Kuñja that stands on the bank of the Ganges, on

the outskirts of Godrum. Aspiring to enter the service of the Divine Couple as a friend, I have taken here shelter of the holy lotus feet of expert devotees revelling in the ecstatic devotional mellows of Vraja Dhām.'

Staying here, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur composed many scriptures, such as *Jaiwa Dharma*, *Śaraṅāgati* and *Chaitanya-chartāmṛta's Amṛta-Pravāha Bhāṣya*. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur preached from Surabhi Kuñja, and it is by his mercy that we are able to do this Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* today.

gaura āmāra, ye-saba sthāne,
karala bhramaṇa raṅge
se saba sthāna, heriba āmi,
praṇayi-bhakata-saṅge

'In the company of loving devotees, I behold all the places my Gaura visited during His Pastimes.'

Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj is a genuine Vaiṣṇav, and his service is incomparable. He has done much service to us here in Surabhi Kuñja – he has helped us so much to build this temple. We are praying at his holy lotus feet that we, too, may have such energy to serve the holy *dhām* and to serve our *guru* as he has.

vāñchhā-kalpatarubhyaś cha kṛpā-sindhubhya eva cha
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

'Again and again I offer my obeisance unto the Supreme Lord's devotees, who are saviours of the fallen, oceans of mercy and wish-fulfilling trees.'

Glory be unto Pūjyapād Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj.

**nadiyā godrume nityānanda mahājana
pātiyāchhe nāma-haṭṭa jīvera kāraṇa**

In the land of Nadia, on the island of Godrum, Nityānanda has set up a marketplace of the Holy Name for the *jīva* souls.

**(śraddhāvān jana he, śraddhāvān jana he)
prabhura ājñāya, bhāi, māgi ei bhikṣā
bala kṛṣṇa, bhaja kṛṣṇa, kara kṛṣṇa śikṣā**

I am appealing to those who have faith: brother, on the order of Mahāprabhu, I beg this from you – chant ‘Kṛṣṇa’, serve Kṛṣṇa, learn about Kṛṣṇa.

**aparādha-śūnya ha’ye laha kṛṣṇa-nāma
kṛṣṇa mātā, kṛṣṇa pitā, kṛṣṇa dhana-prāṇa**

Becoming free from offences, chant Kṛṣṇa’s Name. Kṛṣṇa is your mother, Kṛṣṇa is your father, Kṛṣṇa is your wealth and life.

**kṛṣṇera saṁsāra kara chhāḍi’ anāchāra
jīve dayā, kṛṣṇa-nāma sarva-dharma-sāra**

Enter Kṛṣṇa’s family and leave bad habits. Mercy to the *jīva* souls and chanting the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa is the gist of all religions.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur's Bhajan-kuṭīr (Svānanda-Sukhadā-Kuñja)

vande bhaktivinodaṁ śrī-gaura-śakti-svarūpakam
bhakti-śāstrajña-samrājaṁ rādhā-rasa-sudhānidhim

'I offer my obeisance unto Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, the embodiment of Śrī Gaurasundar's potency. He is the king of all experts of the scriptures of pure devotion and an ocean of the nectar of devotion to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.'

By the mercy of Śrī Gurudev, by the mercy of all the devotees, our Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh (International) Saṅgha has now come to the *bhajan-kuṭīr* and *samādhi-mandir* of Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. This is the house where Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur stayed and worshipped the Lord.

When Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur had just come here, there was nothing in Māyāpur: all the temples, great buildings and everything else that you can see today were not there at that time. Even Mahāprabhu's birthplace was hidden. All temples of Gauḍīya Maṭh were discovered and established through Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur.

When Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur read our Param Gurudev Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj's poem 'Śrīmad Bhaktivinod Viraha Daśakam', he was very pleased, especially with this *śloka*:

śrī-gaurānumataṁ svarūpa-viditaṁ rūpāgrajenādṛtaṁ
rūpādyaiḥ pariveśitaṁ raghugaṇair āsvāditaṁ sevitaṁ
jīvādyair abhiraḥṣitaṁ śuka-śiva-brahmādi-sammānitaṁ
śrī-rādhā-pada-sevanāmṛtaṁ aho tad dātum īso bhavān

‘O wonder of wonders! That which, on the order of Śrī Gaurachandra, Śrī Svarūp Dāmodar knows the internal purpose of; which is adored by Śrī Sanātan Goswāmī; which is distributed by the preceptors, headed by Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī, who teach transcendental mellows; which is tasted and enhanced by Śrī Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī and his followers; which is carefully protected by the votaries headed by Śrī Jīva Prabhu; and which (from a respectful distance) is venerated by great personalities, such as Śrī Śuka, Lord Śiva, the chief of the demigods, and Lord Brahmā, the grandfather of all beings – you are capable of giving us that treasure of the nectarine rapture of servitude to the holy feet of Śrī Rādhā.’

What has Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur given us?
guru-daṁ grantha-daṁ gaura-dhāma-daṁ nāma-dam mudā
bhakti-daṁ bhūri-daṁ vande bhaktivinodakaṁ sadā

‘He is the giver of Śrī Guru; he is the giver of scriptures; he is giver of the holy abode of Gaura; he is the giver of the Name; he is the giver of pure devotion. He is the greatest donor. I forever offer my obeisance to this Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur.’

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur has given us **Guru**.

Actually, if he had not given us Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur, where would we have got shelter then? At whose feet would we take shelter? From where would we have got our *guru* and *guru-varga*?

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur was a deputy magistrate in many places of Odisha and Bengal. Eventually, he understood that Mahāprabhu's pure devotion, Mahāprabhu's pure teachings and conception had been almost completely lost. At that time, there were so many *āul*, *bāul*, *kartābhajā*, *neḍā*, *daraveśa*, *sāi*, *sahajiyā*, *sakhībhekī*, *smārta*, *jāta-goswāmī*, *atibāḍī*, *chūḍādhārī*, *gaurāṅga-nāgarī* – so many misconception people were roaming all over the world. Feeling deeply pained at the situation, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur (at that time his name was Śrī Kedārnāth Datta) went to the temple of Lord Jagannāth with his spouse, Bhagavatī Devī, and prayed to Bimalā Devī, 'O Devī! Please send us someone who will be able to keep the current of the conception of pure devotion flowing!' and by the mercy of Bimalā Devī, he got his sixth son. His name was Bimalā Prasād, and he later became known as Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur. He was the one to start preaching all over India, and even around the world, establishing sixty-four temples in his lifetime. It is by causeless mercy of Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur and Śrīla Prabhupād that we are now able to do this *parikramā* and have got an opportunity to be in the association of Śrī Rūpānuga *guru-varga*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur has given us **Scriptures**.

When Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur first learnt about Mahāprabhu's pure conception, he tried very hard to find and collect Śrī *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* and other important scriptures. At that time, all scriptures had been virtually lost or were kept in the libraries of some ancient temples.

To preach Mahāprabhu's pure conception (*śuddha-siddhānta*), Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur collected many scriptures and also composed many scriptures himself. He wrote many songs, poems, commentaries to scriptures, gave lectures and published articles. Almost all *kīrtans* that we sing every day in the morning and in the evening were composed by him. Many of the *kīrtans* come from his holy book *Śaraṇāgati*.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur has given us **Gaura Dhām**.

When Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur appeared in this world, many thought that Mahāprabhu's birthplace had been lost in the Ganges, but Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur thought, 'The Ganges can take something, but the Ganges can also return it. I am sure that Mahāprabhu's birthplace exists even now.'

One day, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur was chanting the Holy Name on the roof of this house here. His daily routine was like that: in the evening, he went to rest very early; then, he woke up at midnight and started chanting the Holy Name. From the rooftop of his house, he saw some light coming from a place a little far off. The next morning, he went there and saw a vacant place, looking like a field, where many Tulasī plants were growing. He asked some local Muslim people who the proprietor of that land was, but the local people did not know it. Then, Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur asked them, 'Why are there so many Tulasī trees here?' He was told, 'We have tried cultivating some crops, rice or jute, but nothing grows here except Tulasī.' Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur wondered, 'This must be



Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura's Deities, Śrī Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara, and his *bhajan-kuṭir* (holy dwelling).



a very special place; otherwise, why does Tulasī grow here like this?’ Then, he returned to Nabadwīp and came to visit Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj. He asked him, ‘Prabhu, can you please come with me? I have seen an unusual place, I want to show it to you.’ Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was very old (his age was about 137 at that time) and could not walk, so his servitor put him in a basket and carried him on his head to that field. When Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj arrived at the place, he jumped out of the basket and began to dance! He cried, ‘Yes! I have found it! This is the birthplace of the Lord! This is Yogapīṭh!’

This is how Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur revealed Mahāprabhu’s birthplace and holy abode. Having discovered Māyāpur, he and Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur together bought all the lands related to the pastimes of all Gaura’s associates and established Gauḍīya Maṭhs there. By their mercy, we can now go to all these holy places, temple to temple, circumambulating this holy abode of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

There is one more thing that should be said and should be known. When Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur discovered Māyāpur Dhām, all the *bābājīs* grouped together and filed a case against Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. They said, ‘No, Mahāprabhu’s birthplace is actually in Nabadwīp Town (not in Māyāpur, but on the other side of the Ganges).’ However, High Court and Supreme Court ruled that no, Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu’s birthplace *is* in Māyāpur (where Yogapīṭh is today). You must always remember this. *Sahajiyās, āuls, bāuls* and others think and say that Nabadwīp Town is ancient Māyāpur and Mahāprabhu’s birthplace, but Gauḍīya

Vaiṣṇavs never think like that: Yogapīṭh (Māyāpur) is the birthplace of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur has given us **the Holy Name**.

Mahāprabhu said:

hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare
 hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare
 harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam
 kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatiṛ anyathā

'Chanting the Holy Name, chanting the Holy Name, chanting the Holy Name – there is no other way, no other way, no other way.'

However, after Mahāprabhu, there have gradually sprung up many offenders of the Holy Name in this world. Many *apa-sampradayās* started distributing the Holy Name, but their 'Holy Name' was a concoction. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur said, 'Nityānanda Prabhu opened a market of the Holy Name (Nāma-haṭṭa), and I will become a sweeper of that Nāma-haṭṭa! Taking a broom, I will sweep all misconception from the market of the Holy Name!' This was his declaration, and he did that.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur has given us **devotion**.

It is not so easy to get devotion to the Lord from the Lord Himself. The Lord always hides Himself.

kṛṣṇa yadi chhuṭe bhakte bhukti mukti diyā
 kabhu bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā

'If a devotee aspires for enjoyment or liberation, Krishna hides the knowledge about pure devotion and dismisses them, giving them enjoyment or liberation.'

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 1.8.18)

Even if the Lord gives you His devotion, it is not perfect devotion: He can give you so many things, but He will not give Himself to anyone. Moreover, if you come to Kṛṣṇa to associate with Him, you may get Kṛṣṇa who is the killer of demons: what will be your position then if you associate with Him? However, who can really give you Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Only Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur, a pure devotee of the Lord. When the Lord's dear devotee gives you something, that will be a perfect gift. Therefore, the gift that Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod has given us, the devotional conception that he preached all over this world, that is pure devotion. There is no greater gift in this world than that.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur is our greatest **benefactor**.

He is the seventh *goswāmī*. Mahāprabhu sent six *goswāmīs* to Vṛndāvan: Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī, Śrīla Raghunāth Bhaṭṭa Goswāmī, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī, Śrīla Gopāl Bhaṭṭa Goswāmī and Śrīla Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī. Mahāprabhu ordered them to go to Vṛndāvan and preach His main conception. They did that, and they were successful: they perfectly fulfilled Mahāprabhu heartfelt desire.

However, after that, they all left for their own abode... Who will preach after them? One day, Shishir Ghosh wrote, 'Who can be the seventh *goswāmī*? If after the six *goswāmīs* there can be a seventh *goswāmī* in this world, it can only be Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur Mahāśaya.'

We can say so many things about Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. He left his main teachings within his holy books. If you read his books, you will be able to understand what

is called *sanātana-dharma*, or *jaiva-dharma* (the true religion of the soul), what our conception is, and so on.

But for Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, how would we have got all this? How would we have got Śrīla Prabhupād? If Prabhupād had not come to this world, how would we have got Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj? And if Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj had not established Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, then how would we have got our *gurudev*, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj? Therefore, we must always remember Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur's contribution and teachings.

Expressing feelings of separation from Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, our Param Gurudev, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, composed this 'Śrīmad Bhaktivinod Viraha Daśakam' poem in 1936:

hā hā bhaktivinoda-ṭhakura! guro ! dvāvimśatis te samā
 dīrghād-duḥkha-bharād-aśeṣa-virahād-duḥsthikṛtā bhūriyam
 jīvānām bahu-janma-puṇya-nivahākṛṣṭo mahī-maṇḍale
 āvirbhāva-kṛpām chakāra cha bhavān śrī-gaura-śaktiḥ svayam [1]

'Alas, alas! O Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, O Supreme Guru! For the past twenty-two years, this earth has been grasped by the misery of deep sadness in unfathomable separation from you. Śrī Gaura's potency personified, you graciously appeared on this planet, being attracted by the *jīva* souls' *sukṛti* (devotional merit) amassed during many lifetimes.' [1]

dīno 'ham chira-duṣkṛtir na hi bhavat-pādābja-dhūli-kaṇā-
 snānānanda-nidhiṁ prapanna-śubhadam labdhum samartho 'bhavam

kintv audārya-guṇāt-tavāti-yaśasaḥ kārūṇya-śaktiḥ svayam
śrī-śrī-gaura-mahāprabhoḥ prakatītā viśvaṁ samanvagrahīt [2]

‘I am poor and very unfortunate; therefore, I did not get the fortune to reach the ocean that bestows the auspiciousness of surrender by joyfully bathing in the dust of your holy lotus feet. Yet, your magnanimity is such that Mahāprabhu Śrī Gaurāṅga’s mercy and grand renown manifest themselves on their own – in this way, you granted your favour to this universe (I became a recipient of His favour just by being present within this universe).’ [2]

he deva! stavane tavākhila-guṇānām te viriñchādayo
devā vyartha-mano-rathāḥ kim u vyaṁ martyādhamāḥ kurmahe
etan no vibudhaiḥ kadāpy atīśayālaṅkāra ity uchyatām
śāstreṣv eva ‘na pāraye ‘ham’ iti yad gītām mukundena tat [3]

‘O Lord, when even all the demigods headed by Lord Brahmā feel frustrated trying to (properly) extol your great qualities, then where does it leave such vile human beings as us? The learned will never mean this as a hyperbole or an ornamental figure of speech because even the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself famously sung a famous song recorded in the scriptures, saying, “I cannot (repay your devotion).”’ [3]

dharmāś-charma-gato ‘jñataiva satatā yogaś cha bhogātmako
jñāne śūnya-gatir japena tapasā khyātir jighāmsaiva cha
dāne dāmbhikatā ‘nurāga-bhajane duṣṭāpachāro yadā
buddhim buddhi-matām vibheda hi tadā dhātrā bhavān preṣitah [4]

'When religion was based on skin type, ignorance was considered saintliness and *yoga* was motivated by enjoyment; when cultivation of knowledge was merely a path to non-existence and *japa* and austerities were practised in search of fame and out of spite; when charity was an exercise of pride; and with the all awful atrocious behaviour exhibited in the name of loving devotion, the minds of even the intelligent people were diverted – at this very time you were sent by Vidhātā (Providence).' [4]

viśve 'smin kiraṇair yathā hima-karaḥ sañjīvayann oṣadhīr
nakṣatrāṇi cha rañjayan nija-sudhām vistārayan rājate
sach-chhāstrāṇi cha toṣayan budha-gaṇam sammodayams te tathā
nūnam bhūmi-tale śubhodaya iti hlādo bahuḥ sātvatām [5]

'Just as in this universe, the cooling moon enhances its beauty by spreading the nectar of its moonlight, filling all plants with life and delighting the stars with its rays – in the same way, your auspicious descend onto this earth, no doubt, fills the learned with joy (through your authoritative conception) and pleases all pure scriptures (through your studying them). As a result, the joy of devotees knows no bounds.' [5]

lokānām hita-kāmyayā bhagavato bhakti-prachāras tvayā
granthānām rachanaiḥ satām abhimatair nānā-vidhair darśitaḥ
āchāryaiḥ kṛta-pūrvam eva kila tad rāmānujādyair budhaiḥ
premāmbho-nidhi-vigrahasya bhavato mähātmya-sīmā na tat [6]

'Blessing everyone, you exhibited preaching of devotion to the Lord by composing many

scriptures and various methods approved by saintly personalities. Previously, greatly learned souls (Śrī Rāmānuja and others) as well as many spiritual teachers performed this work; this is how preceptorial line is formed. However, the extent of your glory is not (limited by) that, as you are a worshippingable embodiment of the nectar of transcendental love.’ [6]

yad dhāmaṇḥ khalu dhāma chaiva nigame brahmeti samjñāyate
yasyāṁśasya kalaiva duḥkha-nikarair yogeśvarair mṛgyate
vaikuṅṭhe para-mukta-bhṛṅga-charaṇo nārāyaṇo yaḥ svayam
tasyāṁśī bhagavān svayaṁ rasa-vapuḥ kṛṣṇo bhavān tat pradaḥ [7]

‘You have given Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the fountainhead of all transcendental mellows and the origin of even Lord Nārāyaṇ Himself, the master of the spiritual world. That which the Vedas describe as Brahman is merely the effulgence of His transcendental abode; and that which experts of *yoga* search accepting many hardships is merely a part of a part of His expansion. Moreover, great liberated souls exist beautifully as honeybees at His lotus feet.’ [7]

sarvāchintyamaye parātpara-pure goloka-vṛndāvane
chil-līlā-rasa-raṅginī parivṛtā sā rādhikā śrī-hareḥ
vātsalyādi-rasaiś cha sevita-tanor-mādhurya-sevā-sukhaṁ
nityaṁ yatra mudā tanoti hi bhavān tad dhāma-sevā-pradaḥ [8]

‘You can grant the service to the holy abode of Śrī Vṛndāvan that is situated in Goloka, the highest region of the spiritual world, filled with all kinds of

inconceivable qualities, where, revelling in the nectar of transcendental pastimes, Śrīmatī Rādhikā eternally and jubilantly bestows the bliss of loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇachandra, the worshippable Deity served in four mellows of devotion (parenthood, etc.).' [8]

śrī-gaurānumataṁ svarūpa-viditaṁ rūpāgrajenādṛtaṁ
rūpādyaiḥ pariveśitaṁ raghugaṇair āsvāditaṁ sevitam
jīvādyair abhirakṣitaṁ śuka-śiva-brahmādi- sammānitaṁ
śrī-rādhā-pada-sevanāmṛtam aho tad dātum īso bhavān [9]

'O wonder of wonders! That which, on the order of Śrī Gaurachandra, Śrī Svarūp Dāmodar knows the internal purpose of; which is adored by Śrī Sanātan Goswāmī; which is distributed by the preceptors, headed by Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī, who teach transcendental mellows; which is tasted and enhanced by Śrī Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī and his followers; which is carefully protected by the votaries headed by Śrī Jīva Prabhu; and which (from a respectful distance) is venerated by great personalities, such as Śrī Śuka, Lord Śiva, the chief of the demigods, and Lord Brahmā, the grandfather of all beings – you are capable of giving us that treasure of the nectarine rapture of servitude to the holy feet of Śrī Rādhā.' [9]

kvāhaṁ manda-matis tv atīva-patitaḥ kva tvaṁ jagat-pāvanaḥ
bho svāmin kṛpayāparādha-nichayo nūnaṁ tvayā kṣamyatām
yāche 'haṁ karuṇā-nidhe! varam imaṁ pādābja-mūle bhavatsarvasvāvadhī-rādhikā-dayita-dāsānām gaṇe gaṇyatām [10]

'Where I am, a foolish and very fallen soul, and where you are, a great soul, the rescuer of the world!

O Lord! You will no doubt mercifully forgive me (the author of this eulogy) for committing offences. O ocean of mercy! I am praying now at the soles of your lotus feet that you may make my life successful by counting me amongst the family of your heart's all-in-all, Śrī Vārṣabhānavī Dayita Dās.' [10]

In 1955, our Gurudev, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, wrote a very beautiful article about Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur in our Maṭh's *Gauḍīya Darśan* magazine. To conclude, we would like to present this special article here:

On disappearance day of Śrīla Bhaktivinod

By Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

Śrī Dhām Nabadwīp

mūkaṁ karoti vāchālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam

'The dumb can speak, the lame can climb a hill – all it takes is mercy from gurudev.'

namo bhaktivinodāya sach-chid-ānanda-nāmine
gaura-śakti-svarūpāya rūpānuga-varāya te

'Obeisance unto you, Śrīla Sachchidānanda Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, the embodiment of Śrī Gaura's potency, the greatest follower of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī.'

vāñchhā-kalpatarubhyaś cha kṛpā-sindhubhya eva cha
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

'Again and again I offer my obeisance unto the Supreme Lord's devotees, who are saviours of the fallen, oceans of mercy and wish-fulfilling trees.'

Today, in the absence of Śrī Gurupādpadma from our holy temple, I am standing in front of you to offer, on his order, praise to Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur. A fallen, lowly, materialistic person like myself has no right, no qualification to chant the glory and speak about transcendental Ṭhākur Mahāśaya because *'aprākṛta vastu nahe prākṛta-gochara, Veda-Purāṇete ihā kahe nirantar* – you can never see that which belongs to the transcendental world with your mundane eyes; all Vedas and Purāṇas constantly tell this.' The Supreme Lord or His devotees (associates) are beyond the perception of material senses, and Their Names, forms, qualities, pastimes, associates and everything else are all beyond the perception of material senses, too. This is something that is absolutely impossible to know with the help of the knowledge collected through one's senses. This is extolled clearly in the Vedas and all other scriptures: *'Nāyam ātmā pravachanena labhyo na medhayā vā bahunā śrutena*. The Supreme Lord is unattainable, no matter how much you discuss about Him, how much intelligence you have or how much you hear about Him', and so on. Then how can a fool like me introduce this subject matter? Nevertheless, it is only by the merciful order of Gurupādpadma that I have stood today in front of such great learned Vaiṣṇavs as yourselves. *'Vaiṣṇavera guṇa-gāna karile jīvera trāṇa, śuniyāchhi sādhu-guru-mukhe*. I have heard from the lotus mouths of saints and *gurus* that glorifying Vaiṣṇavs rescues your soul' – yet,

I am unqualified. Still, by accumulating the power of Śrī Gurupādpadma's mercy, even a stool-eating crow can attain the title of Garuḍa, the carrier of the Lord; even a lame man can become capable of climbing a hill; even a great fool can illuminate all ten directions with the light of his erudition and intellectual brilliance; even a mute person, who is devoid of the power of speech, can become a lecturer like Saraswatī, the Goddess of learning. Therefore, I am first of all bowing to Śrī Gurupādpadma, praying for the power of his mercy, aspiring to serve him.

By the desire of Lord Śrī Gaurasundar, Ṭhākur Śrīla Sachchidānanda Bhaktivinod, embodiment of His mercy's potency, appeared almost 117 or 118 years ago [as of 1955] in the village Birnagar within Gaura Dhām, Nadia district.

It can be seen in the scriptures that the signs indicating the time for the Lord or His associates to appear are as follows: whenever there is a decline in religion and uprising of irreligion, the Lord, His associates or His devotees appear in this world to rescue or protect saints, to destroy or restrain the vile and to establish religion. Some time after Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, exactly this dark situation had appeared in the world and among *jīva* souls. By the influence of time, the purest Vaiṣṇav religion, representing the gist meaning of all scriptures, had gradually hidden itself, and in its place, various new wanton religions of the witch Māyā were guiding *jīva* souls down a very dark murky path of misconception; as a result, religion was practised primarily based on one's skin! Ignorance had taken the holy seat of saintliness; *yoga*, etc. became an oceanic source of enjoyment; cultivation of

knowledge ended with the concept of impersonal voidism; people practised *japa*, etc. for fame and performed various austerities out of envy; people gave charity, etc. to gain prestige, and with all the awful, atrocious behaviour exhibited in the name of loving service to the Lord, even the minds of the intelligent were diverted. Beholding the influence and vehemence of time and their own transpired dangerous position, *sādhus* became fearful and prayed, appealing anxiously, with heart and soul, to the lotus feet of the Lord for the spiritual benefit of all *jīva* souls. It was exactly at this time that Śrīla Sachchidānanda Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, the embodied power of the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga-sundar who enjoys His pastimes in Nadia, appeared as a source of pure joy to more and more increase the joy in the hearts of *sādhus*, manifesting himself in the east of Nadia to fulfil his Lord's cherished desire.

Although the pastimes of birth, etc. of the Lord or His associates can be visible for material eyes, these pastimes are actually transcendental – you have heard this many times. The *jīva* souls who are situated within the bondage of their own actions have to take birth in this world to reap the result of their own actions, but the Lord or His associates, becoming subject to mercy, accept the pastime of birth by their own will to take *jīva* souls from the unconscious world (from the material world drenched in danger) to the transcendental blissful abode: i.e. to grant them the treasure of their own spiritual form, which is blissful servitude to the Lord. On the one hand, it is subjection (actuated out of submission); on the other hand, it is independent and deliberate (actuated by Their

own free will). As a partial example, it can be compared to a prison, where there can be convicts and there can also be teachers who educate and reform the convicts. In addition, whatever caste or family they are born into, they have no relationship with that caste or family. Hanumān took birth in the monkeys' family; Garuḍa, the carrier of the Lord, took birth in the birds' family; nevertheless, the entire universe always worships them. In this world, it can be seen in the *daiva-varṇāśrama* prescribed by the scriptures that no matter what family a person is born into, one must be defined as a *brāhmaṇ*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*, etc. based on their qualities, actions, etc. Belonging to a particular social class (*varṇa*) is not determined by one's birth. Therefore, how is it possible to describe the associates of the Lord, who are eternally liberated, based on the family or caste they were born in? That is why Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī, the teacher of all *jīva* souls, used the term '*kāyastha-kulābjabhāskaraḥ*' (the sun and the lotus of the *kayastha* caste) when describing Śrī Dās Goswāmī Prabhu's family: they have as much relation as there is between the sun and a lotus flower – between a lotus flower born from water and the sun, a burning ball of fire that illuminates the world. There is no comparison or similarity between the two classes. Despite that, the sun enters into some relationship with a lotus flower, allowing it to blossom and bloom, by extending its rays, so Vaiṣṇavs are related to their family to the same extent that the sun is related to a lotus flower. This example can also be accepted in part. Actually, when the Lord's associates and Vaiṣṇavs accept a certain family and appear in it, that entire family becomes purified –

you will see this verse in the scriptures that can serve as a proof: '*Kulaṁ pavitraṁ jananī kṛtārthā vasundharā sāvāsatiś cha dhanya*. The family becomes pure, the mother feels successful, Mother Earth becomes enriched and all the dwelling is blessed.' '*Mad-bhakto-pūjābhyadhikā*. Worshipping My devotee is higher than worshipping Me' – considering the meaning of this expression, we can also understand that the glory of a devotee's holy appearance day is greater and more auspicious than even the glory of the holy appearance day of the Lord because we get an opportunity to learn very easily and properly about practising spiritual life and the Lord from the life and character of devotees, something that cannot be done to the same extent when dealing with the character of the Lord Himself. Therefore, the Supreme Lord mercifully teaches devotion by descending disguised as a devotee in the form of Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

This is how Ṭhākura Śrīla Bhaktivinod's appearance is gradually changing the tendency of the world, and his symptoms of a great personality rivet the attention of pious souls, giving them much joy. From the ordinary, worldly point of view on his personality, he lost his father at a very early age and spent much time studying, etc. at the house of his maternal uncle. Astonished to see his incredible erudition, captivating efforts, unprecedented poetic power and profound love for religion, his relatives were very affectionate to him. Love for religion was so strong in the life of Ṭhākura that even when he was very young, scholars were enchanted by his unfathomable expert knowledge of religious scriptures. At that time,

Ṭhākur Mahāśaya composed various scriptures in various languages. Also, seeing his youthful beauty, his relatives arranged his marriage.

When he was older, Ṭhākur Mahāśaya manifested his pastimes working like an ordinary *jīva* soul; at that time, he took posts that were rarely achievable for a person of the Bengali origin. When he became Deputy Magistrate, he came to Odisha and lived beside the temple of Lord Jagannāth. At that time, he received a very good opportunity to discuss religion. He established Śrī Bhakti Maṇḍap at the temple of Lord Jagannāth and, just like Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī Prabhu, he discussed *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* and other scriptures, severing material bondage of the *jīva* souls of this world and becoming enriched by the influence of many devotees, scholars and *brāhmaṇs*. He was so deeply pained to see the misery of the *jīva* souls who were averse to Kṛṣṇa and disposed to material life that he would sometimes as if forget himself, crying out loud, 'O Gaurāṅga, O Nityānanda! O Lord, please glance just once on all these *jīva* souls of this world!' Saying this, he would weep profusely. Owing to Bhaktivinod's ardent cries to the Lord, one day the residents of this world received the dust from the holy lotus feet of Śrīla Saraswatī Goswāmī Prabhupād, who came to this world as a worshipping embodiment of Gaura Mahāprabhu's mercy. Very soon, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur's name became famous everywhere, and also while he performed his pastimes as a spiritual teacher, many educated, respected and important persons joined his religious preaching, etc. as servants. Before Śrīla Ṭhākur's preaching, the pure

Vaiṣṇavism that was preached by Śrīman Mahāprabhu had become so much vitiated, distorted and turned topsy-turvy by some people pursuing wrong interests that people ridiculed Vaiṣṇavism as something extremely despicable, repugnant and of very lowly nature; however, owing to Bhaktivinod's coming into prominence and his effort, Vaiṣṇavism was freed from its decline and again manifested its pure form, taking the highest place among all religions and emerging effulgently as *jaiva-dharma* (religion of the soul) in the religious sky of the world like the newly risen morning sun. All pious souls knew that Vaiṣṇavism was the religion of one's true self, pure, effulgent, devoid of envy and pleasing to Bhakti Devī, Devotion – where there is no duplicity, filth, inferiority – and they also knew: if all religions, individually or collectively, are practised properly, then they will no doubt exist beautifully as steps of Vaiṣṇavism.

In his writing, speeches and all kinds of endeavours, Ṭhākura Mahāśaya removed the misconceptions of the proponents of so-called material synthesis (where all conceptions are seen as equal and one) and proved that only the religion preached by Śrīman Mahāprabhu can bring all religions into great transcendental agreement. Actually, the way he protected the *jīva* souls of this world from aversion to the Lord after Śrī Chaitanyadev and His associates, it is extremely rare to find another example of that. Nobody ever saw that Śrīla Ṭhākura Mahāśaya envied or spited anyone, yet there was also never even a drop of hesitation in his extolment of unprejudiced truth. He never showed any favour to the pretentious religions practised in

the name of devotion or the conceptions of false devotion and non-devotion. His writings undauntedly and loudly proclaimed the truth. He compared mundane name and fame to pigs' stool. A greatest contemporary Bengali playwright once requested Śrīla Ṭhākur to inaugurate a play about Gaurāṅga, but he refused to do that straight out, calling it a hodgepodge. When some Odiya *mahāyogī*(?) was moving with his flock down the path of hell, claiming from the top of a mountain of stool (prestige) that he was an incarnation of Mahāviṣṇu and threw thorns on the path of pure religion of the soul (*sanātana-dharma*), Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur subdued him in a very severe way. When he set out on an expedition to purify various contaminated holy places in India, so many sinful and miserable people considered themselves blessed by coming in touch with his extremely cooling holy feet. How many other examples of that will I tell? Owing to his travel around India, many antagonistic religious conceptions were terminated. Even from all this, it is not possible for me to even briefly describe his glory. Śrīla Saraswatī Goswāmī Prabhupād gave a very concise but broad presentation of Ṭhākur Mahāśaya's esoteric nature in a few simple Bengali verses, and those learned personalities who read them can get the proper understanding of who Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur was. Śrīla Prabhupād wrote in his commentary to *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*:

tāhāra karuṇā-kathā, mādhava-bhajana-prathā,
 tulanā nāhika tribhuvane
 tāra sama anya keha, dhariyā e nara-deha,
 nāhi dila kṛṣṇa-prema-dhane

and where I, a downright fallen soul, am! The only small hope that binds me is that even through just some small relationship with Śrīla Bhaktivinod Prabhu, it is possible for a *jīva* souls to attain the highest benefit. Actually, Ṭhākur's mercy, which flows through thousands of mouths and thousands of channels, purifies the entire universe.

There was no matter, there was no feeling, there was no subject that Śrīla Ṭhākur did not employ in relation to Kṛṣṇa. There were two main currents in his endeavours – through the current of the Bhāgīrathī River (through his own practise and preaching), he purified and engaged the whole world in service to Kṛṣṇa; and through the current of the Saraswatī River, like Vedavyās, he churned the scriptures (the Vedas, etc.) and very easily, simply and open-handedly distributed everywhere the cream of transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa. There is neither any comparison nor any alternative to the unparalleled gift Śrīla Bhaktivinod gave to this world. In the scriptural world also, Ṭhākur's divine glory is and will be remembered eternally, always and everywhere. What is discussed in the holy works composed by him (his *sūtra* scriptures; *samhita* scriptures; *gīta* scriptures; Bengali scriptures; scriptures on the Lord's pastimes; scriptures on the science of transcendental mellows; scriptures presenting critical reviews; his various commentaries; scriptures on the fundamental spiritual concepts; poetic, scientific, literary works, etc.) – all kinds of published and unpublished beautiful scriptural works of Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod are illuminated even more today in the extremely affectionate, devotional light of Śrī Chaitanya

Mahāprabhu's expressions, and, as far as the spiritual benefit of all the *jīva* souls of the world is concerned, they demonstrate that their intrinsic nature is identical with the intrinsic affection of the genuine (devoid of cheating) mercy of the magnanimous source of all incarnations. The time has become very short now; therefore, I will say one–two more things and take your leave.

In his endeavours, Bhaktivinod Prabhu manifested the acme of service to the holy abode of Lord Gaurāṅga – you have all heard about him revealing Mahāprabhu's holy abode. As far as discovering Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace is concerned, many offenders obstructed him in various ways, but remaining unwavering and unperturbed, he fulfilled Śrī Gaurasundar's cherished desire to reveal His holy abode and did it in such a proper way that all the deceit of offenders' sinful tongues is stopped today. It is now impossible to find any way to hush up or conceal Māyāpur. Now, everyone openly and loudly sings the glories of Māyāpur. One more thing we can mention is that Śrīla Ṭhākur Bhaktivinod was a combined form of simultaneously Śrī Svarūp Prabhu, Sanātan Prabhu, Rūpa Prabhu, Raghunāth Prabhu, Rāya Rāmānanda Prabhu, Haridās Prabhu, Śrī Jīva Prabhu, Kṛṣṇa Dās Prabhu and Narottam Prabhu because the learned can see within him the full-fledged acme of all endeavours of the *goswāmīs*. Whether it is his revealing the holy *dhām*, whether it is his rescuing the lost holy places, whether it is his composing transcendental scriptures, whether it is his devotional conclusions, whether it is his renunciation, whether it is his profound spiritual vision, whether it is his glorification

and chanting of Hari-kathā, whether it is his pastimes of rescuing *jīva* souls through congregational chanting of the Holy Name – in all respects, when any fortunate person saw the glory of his supra-mundane capacity, they rolled at his holy feet.

Choosing today's day, he disappeared. Therefore, this lunar day is supremely worshippable, venerable and merciful. I have no means to worship this holy day. You are all great, you are supreme Vaiṣṇavs – please bestow your mercy on me and make me qualified to worship this holy day; may by your mercy a great intense desire to pray for Śrīla Bhaktivinod Prabhu's mercy awaken within me; may I become adorned with the internal dignity and honour through chanting the Holy Name, as prescribed by Śrī Gaura; and may you eternally engage me in the service to the devotees of Śrī Vinoda-Sāraswata. This is my prayer.

vāñchhā-kalpatarubhyaś cha kṛpā-sindhubhya eva cha
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

'Again and again I offer my obeisance unto the Supreme Lord's devotees, who are saviours of the fallen, oceans of mercy and wish-fulfilling trees.'



Śrī Hari-Hara Kṣetra

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, continuing our *parikramā* of Śrī Godrumdwīp, we have now come from Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur's *bhajan-kuṭīr* to this enchanting place. This place is called Śrī Hari-Hara Kṣetra, and there is a very ancient pastime related to this place.



One time, a great sage and *yogī* Durvāsā Muni was walking down the street when he suddenly met King Indradev. Durvāsā Muni wanted to give his blessing to the king of demigods, so he took the garland from his neck and gave it to the king. However, Indradev, intoxicated with his ego and opulence, gave that garland to his elephant, Airavāt. Seeing the king's insolence, Durvāsā Muni cursed him, 'May you lose all your opulence along with the three worlds!'

Having heard about that incident and feeling very happy about it, demons declared a war against demigods. Demigods lost the war and had to flee from heaven. They all went to Brahmā and started praying and crying to him. Brahmā then came with demigods to the shore of the ocean of milk and offered praise and prayers to the Lord. Pleased with the praise offered by all the demigods headed by Brahmā, Kṣīrodaśāyī Viṣṇu appeared and advised them to negotiate a clever truce with demons and churn the ocean of milk (using Mandar Hill as the churning rod and Vāsukī, the king of snakes, as the rope) to get nectar that would grant them immortality. The Lord also warned them against showing greed or fighting for anything else that would come out of that churning.

So, following the Lord's advice, demigods declared a truce with demons. Then, they went to Mandar Hill and offered demons to churn the ocean of milk together to get the nectar that would make them immortal. Demons agreed. Demigods and demons worked so hard churning the ocean that many demigods and demons actually died due to their intense labour, but the supremely merciful Lord came and brought them back to life. Because Mandar Hill floated in the ocean, it was impossible to churn it; so, the Lord appeared as Kurmadev (a tortoise) and, entering the water, held Mandar on His back. After that, many things appeared from the churned ocean, but first there was poison. Seeing the poison coming out, everyone got scared, but demigods came to Lord Śivjī Mahārāj and prayed to him for help. Śivjī Mahārāj mercifully came to the place and drank all poison: as the result, his throat turned blue and

since that time he has been famous as Nīlakaṅṭha. Although Lord Śiva drank the poison, some drops of poison got scattered around, and when those drops fell on the ground, they entered the bodies of snakes, scorpions, poisonous trees, plants, etc. Having got rid of the poison, demigods and demons continued churning the ocean. Next, Surabhi Cow appeared. Demigods took her to perform fire sacrifices (cows give milk that can be turned into ghee, butter, etc.). After that, a horse called Uchchaiṣravā came out. Bali Mahārāj took it. Then, so many other auspicious gifts came out: the *kaustubha* jewel, the *pārijāta* flower, *apsarās* (angels), Lakṣmī Devī, and so on. Demigods took everything. In the end, the Lord appeared as a man called Dhanvantari and brought nectar.

Seeing the pot with nectar, demons decided not to lose time: they snatched the pot and quickly ran away. However, then demons started fighting among themselves, unable to decide who would drink it first. Demigods were shocked to see demons' boastful vanity, so they went again to Viṣṇu and started praying. Without saying anything to them in reply, Viṣṇu assumed the form of an extremely beautiful, enticing young girl called Mohinī. Coming to demons, Mohinī cast some illusion on them, and all demons completely fell for Her unbelievable beauty. The Lord, in the form of Mohinī, understood that demons had become weak, so She agreed to divide the nectar among them. However, demons were so blindly drawn to her beautiful form that they did not notice that the Lord had cheated them: the Lord gave all nectar to demigods! Foolish demons were so bewildered that they did not even notice anything.

Some time before that, Śivjī Mahārāj was once thinking about the Lord and prayed, ‘Prabhu, please show me some of Your pastimes. I want to see Your miraculous form and beauty.’ So, when the Supreme Lord Śrī Viṣṇu appeared as Mohinī, He decided to test Śivjī Mahārāj.

When Kṛṣṇa suddenly appeared as Mohinī after the churning of the ocean, He answered Śivjī Mahārāj’s prayer and appeared before him, playing with a ball. Seeing this amazingly gorgeous girl, Śivjī Mahārāj felt completely charmed and ran after Her.

Seeing him run, everyone said, ‘Oh my, why is this *sādhu* running behind a girl? Has he gone mad?’

Pārvatī (Lord Śiva’s spouse) also said, ‘Oh my, where are you going, my husband?! I am your wife!’

What wife! Śivjī Mahārāj gave up everything and could not hear anything. In the end, he managed to catch Mohinī, and as he embraced Her, the beautiful girl turned into Kṛṣṇa and their bodies merged into one: one part is Hari, and the other part is Hara. The place where it happened became known as Śrī Hari-Hara Kṣetra.

By great fortune and the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma and all the *guru-varga*, we have come here today and have got an opportunity to remember this miraculous pastime of the Lord.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay. Śrī Hari-Hara Kṣetra ki jay.

**tumi sarveśvareśvara vrajendra-kumāra
tomāra ichchhāya viśve sṛjana saṁhāra [1]**

You are the Lord of Lords, Vrajendra Kumār! By Your will, creation and annihilation take place within the universe.

**tava ichchhā-mata brahmā kareṇa sṛjana
tava ichchhā-mata viṣṇu kareṇa pālana [2]**

By Your will, Brahmā creates the universe; by Your will, Viṣṇu maintains the universe.

**tava ichchhā-mata śiva kareṇa saṁhāra
tava ichchhā-mate māyā sṛje kārāgāra [3]**

By Your will, Śiva annihilates the universe; by Your will, Māyā creates her prison house.

**tava ichchhā-mata jīvera janama-maraṇa
saṁṛddhi-nipāta-duḥkha-sukha-saṁghaṭana [4]**

By Your will, souls take birth and die; by Your will, they experience prosperity and ruin, happiness and distress.

**michhe māyā-baddha jīva āśāpāśe phire
tava ichchhā binā kichhu karite nā pāre [5]**

Bound by Māyā, souls uselessly wander about; unless it is Your will, they are not able to do anything.

**tumi ta' rakṣaka āra pālaka āmāra
tomāra charaṇa binā āsā nāhi āra [6]**

You are my protector and maintainer; I aspire for nothing other than Your feet.

**nija-bala-cheṣṭā prati bharasā chhāḍiyā
tomāra ichchhāya āchhi nirbhara kariyā [7]**

I give up relying on my own strength and effort; I depend upon Your will.

**bhaktivinoda ati dīna akiñchana
tomāra ichchhāya tā'ra jīvana maraṇa [8]**

Bhaktivinod is very poor and detached; whether he lives or dies, it is up to You.

Śrī Nṛsiṅha Pallī

The last place of our *parikramā* today is the temple in Śrī Nṛsiṅha Pallī (Nṛsimha Pallī). By the mercy of Śrī Gurudev, by the mercy of Śrī Nṛsimhadev and by the mercy of Śrīla Prahlād Mahārāj, we have got here a small place, which gives us now an opportunity to do Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* every year from here.

The story of Śrī Śrī Nṛsimhadev and Prahlād Mahārāj is very important. You must listen to it very attentively and always remember it.

The two brothers Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa were actually two gatekeepers in Vaikuṅṭha; their original names are Jaya and Vijaya. One day, when Nārāyaṇ and Lakṣmī Devī were resting in Their room and Jaya and Vijaya were guarding outside Their room, four sons of Brahmā suddenly came to the palace of the Lord stark naked. Jaya and Vijaya slightened them, saying, ‘Nārāyaṇ is resting now, you cannot go there.’ They did not know that those four boys were Brahmā’s sons, so they chased them away. One of the boys then said to Jaya and Vijaya, ‘We will curse you two! You will go to Earth – you will not be able to stay here in Vaikuṅṭha!’ Jaya and Vijaya were so surprised that they almost fainted, ‘What?! What have they just done? They have cursed us?!’

At this time, hearing some noise outside, Nārāyaṇ came out and asked what had happened. Jaya and Vijaya explained, ‘O Lord, we are Your gatekeepers, and these small boys told us to disturb Your rest – because we refused to do that, they have just cursed us!’

Nārāyaṇ said, ‘*Tathāstu*. So be it.’

‘What?! Will we really have to go down to Earth?’

‘If they have uttered a curse, then you have to go.’ (Everything happens by the will of the Lord.) Then, Nārāyaṇ let them choose, ‘If you come to Earth as My friends – if you choose to worship and serve Me – then it will take you seven births before you can come back; and if you decide to become My enemies, then it will take you three births to come back. Which do you choose?’ Jaya and Vijaya replied, ‘Lord, we want to come back to You as soon as possible, so we will become Your enemies!’

This is how they became Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa in Satya-yuga, Rāvaṇ and Kumbhakarna in Treta-yuga, and Śīsupāl and Dantavakra in Dvāpar-yuga – each time, they came as antagonists and haters of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

So, there were two brothers, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Hiraṇyākṣa. These two brothers harassed and tortured everyone. How many atrocities they committed! Even demigods had to run away from heaven, not being able to tolerate the two demons’ atrocities. Hearing that demigods had fled, Hiraṇyākṣa started harassing everyone even more. Then, one day, the Lord could no longer tolerate it – He became so angry that He assumed the form of a boar (Varāha) and killed Hiraṇyākṣa.

When Hiraṇyakaśipu got the news that his brother was dead, he was livid. He went to a forest and started practising austerities to get a boon from Brahmā. He had fasted for many thousands of years – his practice was so severe that he had lost all his flesh and there were only bones left of his body. Finally, Brahmā became very satisfied with his austerity, so he came to the demon and asked him, ‘What boon do you want?’

‘I want to be immortal,’ Hiraṇyakaśipu said. ‘Give me such a boon so that nobody can kill me.’

‘This is not in my hands; it is beyond my power,’ Brahmā answered. ‘My lifetime is very long, but even I have to leave this body one day. So, I cannot grant you the boon you are asking me for. Is there anything else you want to get?’

Then, Hiraṇyakaśipu decided to show his demoniac cunningness. ‘Then I want you to do so that I will not die during the day, and I will not die during the night.’

‘All right,’ Brahmā agreed.

‘I will not be killed by anyone created by you.’

‘All right.’

‘I will not be killed by any weapon.’

‘All right.’

‘I will not die in the sky, I will not die on earth, nor will I die in the netherworld.’

‘All right.’

‘I will die neither indoors nor outdoors.’

‘All right. I have given you the boon you have asked.’

Hiraṇyakaśipu had a wife called Kayādhū. When he left for the jungle to meditate on Lord Brahmā, she

stayed at home. But when the Lord defeated Hiraṇyākṣa, demigods again returned to heaven and one day came to the house of Hiraṇyakaśipu and destroyed it completely. Seeing Kayādhū alone at home, they decided to kill her, so they took her with them and went away. On the way, they met Nārada Goswāmī.

Surprised, Nārada asked them, ‘Where are you taking her?! This woman’s husband is now in the forest, meditating on Brahmā – where are you taking her?’

‘We are going to kill her. She has Hiraṇyakaśipu’s son in her womb. If this child is born, he will become a demon, too. We will not put up with it!’

Then, Nārada Goswāmī explained to them, ‘You do not know that the son who will be born from her womb will become a great devotee. He will *protect* you. Here is what you should do – instead of killing her, give her to me.’

So, Kayādhū went together with Nārada to his *āśram*. There, she started serving the Lord (she washed the dishes, offered worship, etc.). Also, Nārada read *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* every day, and she would come and hear Hari-kathā from him. Prahlāda Mahārāja also listened to the teachings of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* from his mother’s womb (and later taught what he had heard to his father and classmates).

One day, Nārada said to Kayādhū, ‘I am very pleased with your service. What boon would you like to receive?’

Kayādhū replied, ‘My husband has gone to the forest and is meditating to get a boon from Brahmā. Although he is a demon, he is still my husband... Please give me such a boon that I may not deliver the child until he returns.’

Nārada agreed and granted her that boon.

In the meantime, as soon as Hiraṇyakaśipu had got the boon from Brahmā, he returned to his house and found it in a complete mess. Furious, he yelled, 'WHERE IS MY WIFE?!' Somebody told him, 'Nārada Muni came here and took her with him. She is at his *āśram*.' So, Hiraṇyakaśipu went to Nārada Goswāmī's *āśram* and brought his wife back home. Then, Kayādhū delivered the child, and they called the boy Prahlād.

By and by, Prahlād grew up, and it was time for him to get education. Demons had a *guru* called Śukrāchārya. This Śukrāchārya had two sons, Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, and Hiraṇyakaśipu sent Prahlād to them, ordering them, 'Teach him *sāma* (pacifying), *dāna* (giving money in charity), *bheda* (dividing), *daṇḍa* (punishment) and everything else!' Prahlād sat at the lessons, but nothing they taught him entered his ears.

One day, Hiraṇyakaśipu asked Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka, 'What has my son learnt? Bring him here.' When Prahlād came home, his mother dressed him in new clothes, smeared some oil on his head, etc. and took him to his father. Hiraṇyakaśipu took him on his lap and asked, 'Son, what is the best lesson you have learnt at school so far? Of all the lessons you have got, which lesson is the best?' Prahlād replied, 'Father, let me tell it to you,' and then he said:

**īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam**

'Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, for He is the prime cause of all causes.'

When Hiranyaśipu heard it, he threw him off his lap, 'What is this?! An enemy was born in my house! My own son has become my enemy!' He sent for Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka and roared at them, 'HEY, WHAT HAVE YOU TWO TAUGHT MY SON?!'

'Sir, please believe us, we have never taught him this. We do not know where he has heard this,' Ṣaṇḍa and Amarka explained.

Hiranyaśipu believed them and gave them a very strict order, 'Keep a good eye on him! Perhaps, somebody else came to your school and taught him this.'

'All right. We will take care of it,' the demons promised.

Prahlād went back to school, but what did he do? All the demons who were at school came to Prahlād Mahārāj's group, and Prahlād Mahārāj would teach them exactly the opposite of what their school master was teaching them.

A few days later, Hiranyaśipu again called for his son and again asked him, 'What have you learnt at school? What did the school master teach you?'

Prahlād replied, '*Śravanam, kīrtanam, smaranam, vandanam, pāda-sevanam, dāsyam, sakhyam, ātma-nivedanam*: hearing about the Lord, chanting the Lord's Name and glories, remembering the Lord, offering obeisance to the Lord, serving the Lord as a servitor and as a friend, and self-submission to the Lord...'

'WHAT IS THIS??! What are you saying?!' Hiranyaśipu was fuming! He yelled, 'YOU ARE DISGRACE OF THE FAMILY!' Then, he thought to himself, 'The way things are, I will have to kill him.' So, Hiranyaśipu ordered his

men to kill his son. He tried to kill him in so many ways, so many times – he tried to drown him, tried to crush him by tying him up to a mad elephant’s leg, tried to feed him snake venom, tried to throw him into fire, throw from a mountain – no matter what methods he ordered his people to employ, he could not kill him; all attempts were in vain. Then, Hiraṇyakaśipu told his men, ‘I cannot do anything through you. Bring him to me! I will teach him his ultimate lesson!’

Prahlād Mahārāj came and sat quietly beside his father.

Hiraṇyakaśipu roared, ‘Tell me right away – who have you learnt all these things from?’

Prahlād Mahārāj replied in a calm voice, ‘Father, I was taught by Him whose teachings this is.’

‘The school master says he never taught you these things!’ Saying this, Hiraṇyakaśipu thought, ‘If they could not kill him, I will take care of it myself!’ Then, he asked Prahlād Mahārāj again, ‘Listen here, you disgrace! Tell me, where have you got your power? You do not die even when burning in fire; you do not die even when submerged into water; I had you thrown from a mountain and you still did not die! Speak up! Who gave you this power?’

‘My worshipping Father, I am empowered with the same power that empowers you. I have got a boon from the same place where you have got yours. You got your boon from Brahmā, and Brahmā got all his power from the Supreme Lord. Having got your boon from Brahmā, you have become completely mad with ego, so you forget where you have got your boon. Everything comes from the Supreme Lord.’

‘Tsk! Again you are saying, “Lord”, “Lord”! Where is your Lord?’

‘Kṛṣṇa, Hari, is everywhere.’

‘Oh really? Where does your Hari live?’

‘Where does Hari not live?’

‘So He is everywhere? Is He, perhaps, in this pillar, too?’

‘Yes, He is there, too.’

‘YOUR HARI IS HERE??!’

Then, Hiranyaśipu gave a mighty punch to the pillar, and as the pillar broke, there sounded a terrible cry: the Supreme Lord Himself appeared in front of the demon! Nṛsiṃhadev, half-man, half-lion, appeared from the pillar. Seeing Him, Hiranyaśipu became stark mad with fury; seeing the demon, Nṛsiṃhadev was also beyond Himself with rage. The Lord had told Jaya and Vijaya that they would have to fight against Him, so remembering those words, the Lord prepared Himself to fight.

Then, there was a fierce fight between Hiranyaśipu and Lord Nṛsiṃhadev. Seeing their terrible battle, all demigods said, ‘Oh no! What will happen now? Just now the Lord is about to lose! What if the Lord loses this battle?...’ The Lord let Hiranyaśipu go, then again grabbed him, and then again suddenly let him go. Demigods were watching with fear, ‘Oh no, what if the Lord will not make it? Is He losing the battle?!’ When Hiranyaśipu managed to punch the holy body of Nṛsiṃhadev, this time Nṛsiṃhadev finally grabbed him and put him on His lap (Hiranyaśipu had got the boon from Brahmā that he would not die in the sky or on the ground, he would not be

killed by any weapon, etc. but we can see that Nṛsiṃhadev kept him on His lap, etc.). Then, not delaying any longer, the Lord opened up Hiraṇyakaśipu's stomach with His claws, took out his intestines and put them on His neck as a garland.

Having slain the demon, Nṛsiṃhadev continued to show His anger. Hearing his terrifying cries, even demigods began to shiver. They ran to Lakṣmī Devī and asked her, 'Lakṣmī, come and pacify the Lord. The whole world will be obliterated just now by His cries!' Lakṣmī Devī replied, 'I cannot! I serve Nārāyaṇ when He is cool-headed. He is livid now – I will not go there.' Then demigods asked Prahlād Mahārāj to pacify the Lord. As soon as Prahlād Mahārāj came forward to the Lord, Nṛsiṃhadev become peaceful and felt very happy.

Taking Prahlād on His lap, the Lord asked him, 'My child, do you want to get some boon?'

'Prabhu, what boon will I ask?' Prahlād answered. 'You have come to bestow Your mercy on me. That is sufficient for me. I do not want anything more than that.'

'No, no, you must take something from Me,' the Lord insisted.

'All right then. My father has hit Your holy body – please mercifully rescue him,' Prahlād asked.

'This is not a boon. Those who sing My glories, chant My name, receive My *darśan*, etc. automatically get My mercy and go to Vaikuṅṭha, and your father has touched My body. Whether he pushed Me out of anger or not, whether he did that with a desire to kill Me or not, but he has touched My body, so he has already gone to My

abode. This is not a boon. Tell Me what else would you like to get? What boon can I give you?’

Then, Prahlād said, ‘What can I want? Prabhu, if You want to give me something, then give me such a boon that all desires will leave me. Give me this boon, Prabhu.’

This is the main lesson of this pastime. All desires to get something from the Lord must go away. We always come to the Lord and ask for so many things for our own sense gratification: we always want this, that, that. We must stop being like that. The meaning of this pastimes of Prahlād Mahārāj, Hiraṇyakaśipu and Nṛsimhadev is that people always come to Nṛsimhadev and ask, ‘I want my son to find a job’, ‘I want my daughter to get married’, ‘I want to be healthy’, ‘I want to be rich’, and so on. But pure devotees pray, ‘O Lord, my only prayer to You is that I may always have sincere devotion to Your lotus feet, that I may have attachment to Your lotus feet, that I may, by Your mercy, serve You eternally. Please destroy the obstacles on the path of devotion so that my devotion does not become destroyed. Please bestow such mercy on me that I may not fall under the influence of the illusory environment and ruin my devotion. This is the boon I want. I do not want anything for the pleasure of my senses.’

To protect Prahlād Mahārāj and destroy the obstacles to pure devotion, Nṛsimhadev descended to this world. When this work was done, He then took rest at an auspicious place in Godrumdwīp: after slaying Hiraṇyakaśipu, the Lord washed His hands in a pond near the temple here and rested for some time. Assuming the form of Lord Nṛsimhadev’s Deity, He then manifested

Himself here to accept service from devotees. In this way, the worship of Lord Nṛsiṃhadev has been going on here in Nabadwīp since Satya-yuga.

You must always remember that the Lord cannot tolerate insult, humiliation or any trouble of His devotee. To protect His devotee, the Lord assumed the form of Nara-siṃha. You must always remember this.

There is one more very important thing that I heard directly from the lotus mouth of my Gurudev, and these are very important and confidential words. You must listen to it with your heart and always remember it. You cannot understand the lesson of Lord Nṛsiṃhadev's pastime with your common, material intelligence or intelligence full of material attachments – full of *bhukti* (desire for enjoyment), *mukti* (desire for liberation), *siddhi* (desire for perfections), full of *dharma* (desire for religious piety), *artha* (desire for prosperity), *kāma* (desire for material enjoyment), *mokṣā* (desire for liberation). It is necessary to have exclusive pure devotion – it is necessary to be completely surrendered.

Once, a devotee bought a *kavach* (amulet) with Nṛsiṃhadev's *śloka* written on it. He wore it on his neck and came to Gurudev. Noticing the *kavach*, Gurudev asked him, 'What is this?'

'This is Nṛsiṃhadev's *kavach*,' the devotee answered.

'I see that,' Gurudev said. 'But are you using Nṛsiṃhadev for your own purpose or are you serving Nṛsiṃhadev? Are you using Nṛsiṃhadev for your own interest or do you want to serve Nṛsiṃhadev? Which is right? Think about it and tell me.'

It was a senior devotee. When I heard Guru Mahārāj's question, I was stunned and sat there quietly. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said then, 'You are engaging Nṛsiṅhadev to serve your own purpose, but Nṛsiṅhadev is the destroyer of obstacles to pure devotion – Nṛsiṅhadev is not the destroyer of *your* obstacles! Do not use Nṛsiṅhadev. You must *serve* Nṛsiṅhadev.'

What does it mean? Everybody says, 'O Nṛsiṅhadev, please remove obstacles from my life', 'Please give me this', 'Please give me that', but they are using Nṛsiṅhadev. We go to Nṛsiṅhadev to serve Him, to offer Nṛsiṅhadev our obeisances, not to use Nṛsiṅhadev for our own purpose. You can remember Nṛsiṅhadev, but do not use Nṛsiṅhadev for your health, body or mind. This is what our Guru Mahārāj said, and what he taught was very important. I still remember what he told me, and I am telling it to you now for your eternal spiritual benefit. You can serve Nṛsiṅhadev, but you cannot use Nṛsiṅhadev to remove obstacles in your life. How beautiful Śrīla Gurudev's words are!

When I pass Nṛsiṅhadev's temple here, I offer obeisance from the street. I stop the car in front of the temple and come to the temple to offer obeisances. Sometimes there are crowds of people here, then I pay my obeisance from far. Actually, we do not have the eyes to have the *darśan* of Lord Nṛsiṅhadev. We come here and what we can see or what we cannot see, that is not our business: Nṛsiṅhadev knows everything perfectly well. If Nṛsiṅhadev sees I have come to Him, that is well and good. I do not have the eyes to think or say that I come to see Nṛsiṅhadev.

andhībhūta chakṣu yāra viṣaya dhūlite
ki-rūpe se para-tattva pāibe dekhite

‘When your eyes are blind by the dust of the material world, how can you see that which is transcendental?’

We must serve Nṛsimhadev; we must not use Nṛsimhadev. Nṛsimhadev *kavachas* are sold in many places, and people use Nṛsimhadev to do business: they sell Nṛsimhadev, they do not serve Nṛsimhadev. We do not come to Nṛsimhadev with such intentions. We come and give some sweet rice, some milk, sugar, some other *bhog* – this is what service to Nṛsimhadev is. You must always have this mentality, this attitude.

There is one more thing: the teachings that Prahlād Mahārāj heard from his mother’s womb are written in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (he heard it from Nārād Muni). Nārād Muni’s main instruction is that whatever happens, whatever exists, everything comes from the Lord.

īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

‘Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, for He is the prime cause of all causes.’

(*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*, 5.1)

Money, religion, enjoyment, liberation – all this is temporary, but if you get the Lord through devotion, that is permanent. Therefore, we must practise devotion, avoiding all hypocritical religions (religious piety, material prosperity, material enjoyment, liberation).

There are different moods of devotion: there is *śānta-rasa* (neutral service to the Lord), *dāsya-rasa* (serving the Lord

as a servant), *sakhyā-rasa* (serving the Lord as a friend), *vātsalyā-rasa* (parental service to the Lord) and *madhura-rasa* (service to the Lord in conjugal love). Based on Prahlād Mahārāj's qualification, he is a *śānta-rasa* devotee. Although he was very young (five years old), Prahlād Mahārāj worshipped and attained the Lord, and not only that: just as Bali Mahārāj gave up his *guru* and just as Bharat Mahārāj gave up his mother, Prahlād Mahārāj also gave up his father to come to the Lord. When Bali Mahārāj's *guru* gave him bad advice, he did not like that advice because if he had followed it, it would have obstructed his service to the Lord; therefore, Bali Mahārāj disobeyed and rejected his *guru*. However, when Prahlād Mahārāj rejected his father, he asked the Lord forgiveness on his behalf – this is the mood of a person who has no envy. There is no envy, no selfishness in Prahlād Mahārāj's devotion. His devotion is not driven by any selfish motive.

When we come to Nṛsiṅgha Pallī to fulfil our own purpose – we come and tie a bead to the tree – that is not pure devotion. There are different qualities of devotion: devotion can be selfish and can also be selfless. Selfish devotion (*sakāma-bhakti*) means we want something in our mind in exchange for devotion: 'I will serve the Lord and want to get something for that.' Prahlād Mahārāj's devotion was selfless (*niṣkāma-bhakti*). He said, 'O Lord, I want to serve You, and I do not want anything in return for that. Rather, give me such a boon that all my desires will go away.' This is the main lesson.

So, what I want to say is that whether it is religious piety, material prosperity, material enjoyment or

liberation – all this is temporary. What is eternal? If you practise devotion, if you practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you will get the Lord. That is what is permanent.

Therefore, continuing our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikrama*, we come here to Śrī Nṛsiṅha Pallī. We must always remember and keep all these things in our heart. Beware!

Jay Śrī Śrī Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṃhadev ki jay.

Jay Bhaktarāj Prahād Mahārāj ki jay.

Jay Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda Prabhu ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay. Śrī Godrumdwīp ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

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**śrī-nṛsimha, jaya nṛsimha, jaya jaya nṛsimha
prahlādeśa jaya padmā-mukha-padma-bhṛṅga [1]**

All glory to Nṛsimhadev! All glory to Nṛsimhadev!
Glory to the Lord of Prahlād Mahārāj! Glory to Him at
whose chest Śrī Lakṣmī Devī always joyfully resides!

**ito nṛsimhaḥ parato nṛsimho
yato yato yāmi tato nṛsimhaḥ
bahir nṛsimha, hṛdaye nṛsimho
nṛsimhādim śraṇam prapadye [2]**

Nṛsimha is here, Nṛsimha is there – Nṛsimha is
everywhere I go. Nṛsimha is outside, Nṛsimha is
within my heart. I am surrendered unto that primaeval
Lord Nṛsimha.

**vāg-īśā yasya vadane lakṣmīr yasya cha vakṣasi
yasyā ste hṛdaye samvit taṁ nṛsimhamhaṁ bhaje [3]**

I worship Lord Nṛsimha, within whose mouth
resides the great mistress of eloquence (Saraswatī
Devī), upon whose chest resides the goddess of
fortune (Lakṣmī Devī), and within whose heart resides
the divine potency of cognisance.

ke yābi ke yābi re bhāi bhava-sindhu pāra
dhanya kali-yuge re chaitanya avatāra [1]

Brother, who will come? Who will come to cross this ocean of material existence? Lord Chaitanya descends in this blessed Kali-yuga!

āmāra gaurāṅgera ghāṭe ujānakheyā vaya
kaḍipāti nāhi lāge amani pāra haya [2]

At the *ghāṭ* of my Gaurāṅga, the ferry-boat is going upstream. There is no fee – everyone crosses just like that.

harināmera tarīkhāni śrī-guru-kāṇḍārī
saṅkīrtana-keroyāla du'bāhu pasāri [3]

The Holy Name is the boat, the *guru* is the captain, and the oars of *saṅkīrtan* are two upraised arms.

sarva-jīva uddhāra haila premera vātāse
lochana paḍiyā raila karamera doṣe [4]

All *jīva* souls have been rescued by the wind of transcendental love. But Lochan Dās fell back and stayed behind due to his own *karma*.

Śrī Gādigāchhā

We have already said that Śrī Godrumdwīp is the place of *kīrtan*: coming here, we must chant *kīrtan*. In the holy book of Śrī Śrī *Prema-Vivarta*, we can find the evidence of the glory of *kīrtan*. The pastime that is described there took place in a village called Gādigāchhā, here in Śrī Godrumdwīp. (There is no temple established in honour of this place, but we always stop on the way, while walking through Godrumdwīp with *saṅkīrtan*, to speak about and remember the glory of this pastime of the Lord.)

There is a forest called Kāmyavan within the *churāśī kroś* (eighty-four miles) of Vṛndāvan. One day in Satya-yuga, when Durvāsā Muni was resting in this forest, a small boy-god (*dev-śiśu*) childishly cut his *śikhā* (*jaṭā*, dreadlock). Durvāsā Muni became very angry and cursed the boy, ‘You shall be a crocodile for four ages (Satya, Treta, Dvāpar, Kali)!’

Hearing Durvāsā Muni’s words, the boy started to cry, ‘Prabhu, please forgive me! I have committed an offence, please forgive me!’

At first, Durvāsā Muni replied, ‘I have already uttered the curse, so I cannot take it back.’ But then, hearing the bitter crying of the boy, the sage softened up, ‘Listen, naughty boy! When you are born for the fourth time,

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāj, will come as Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in the Age of Kali. (“*Kali-kāle Nāma-rūpe Kṛṣṇa-avatāra, Nāma haite haya sarva-jagat nistāra*. In Kali-yuga, Kṛṣṇa appears in the form of His Holy Name, and the whole world becomes rescued through that Holy Name.”) When, chanting *kīrtan*, Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu comes to the bank of your lake, you will be rescued by hearing the Holy Name.’

Then, Satya-yuga passed, Treta-yuga passed, Dvāpar-yuga passed, and finally came Kali-yuga.

One day, coming from Māyāpur to Godrumdwīp, Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu was strolling and chanting *kīrtan* with devotees when He came across the lake where the boy-god lived in the form of a crocodile. When they came to the lake, Mahāprabhu saw a cowherd boy hurrying to Him. ‘My name is Bhīm Ghoṣh,’ the boy said as he approached. ‘My mother always calls Śachī Mā “mother”, so, Uncle, please come with me. Mother is waiting for You, she has prepared some curd, butter, etc. for You. Please come.’

‘All right, let us go to your home!’ Nimāi agreed, and everyone went to the house of Bhīm Ghoṣh. Bhīm Ghoṣh gave Mahāprabhu a chair, and then his mother came out. She asked Nimāi, ‘Brother, how is Mother? Is she all right?’

‘Yes, she is fine,’ Nimāi replied.

‘Good.’ Then she said to all the devotees, ‘Please sit down, I will give you some *prasād*.’

Everybody sat on the ground and Bhīm’s mother served *prasād* to everyone. After taking *prasād*, Nimāi said, ‘Come, let us go to the lake and chant *kīrtan*!’

Getting frightened, Bhīm said, ‘Uncle, do not go there!’
‘But why not?’ Mahāprabhu asked.

‘There is a crocodile in that lake. We never go there, and our cows also do not drink water from that lake – they only get scared and keep mooing when they see the crocodile.’

Nimāi actually knows everything. He said, ‘A crocodile? What is there to be afraid of? Come, let us go and see!’ He came with the devotees to the bank of the lake and sat there chanting *kīrtan*. Hearing the Hari-kīrtan and the *mahā-mantra*, a baby crocodile came out of the water and, clasping Mahāprabhu’s feet, immediately assumed his human form.

‘Where have you come from?’ Mahāprabhu asked.
‘Why have you been living in this water?’

‘Prabhu, I was not a crocodile before,’ the boy explained. ‘I used to be a boy-god, but because I had cut off Durvāsā Muni’s *jaṭā* when I was playing, he cursed me. You have rescued me through Your *Harinām-saṅkīrtan*!’

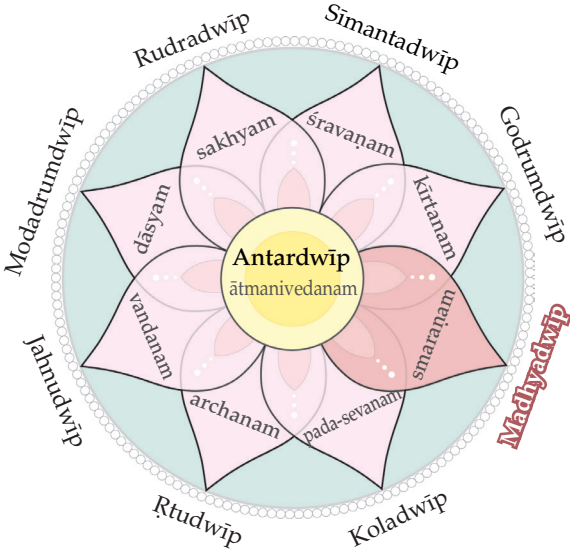
The boy then paid obeisance to the Lord and, taking His permission, left for heaven to reunite with his parents.

Such is the result of chanting the Holy Name. This pastime happened here, in Śrī Godrumdwīp.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

Śrī Madhyadwīp

(Smarāṇam: remembering)



śrī-kṛṣṇa-chaitanya prabhu jīve dayā kari'
svapārṣada svīya dhāma saha avatari [1]

Out of mercy to the *jīva* souls, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu descends with His own associates and abode.

atyanta durlabha prema karibāre dāna
śikhāya śaraṇāgati bhakatera prāṇa [2]

To grant the rarest divine love, He teaches surrender, which is the life and soul of devotees.

dainya, ātma-nivedana, goptṛtve varaṇa
'avaśya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa'—viśvāsa pālana [3]
bhakti-anukūla mātra kāryera svīkāra
bhakti-pratikūla bhāva—varjanāṅgīkāra [4]
ṣaḍ-aṅga śaraṇāgati ha-ibe yāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā śune śrī-nanda-kumāra [5]

(1) Humility, (2) self-submission, (3) accepting that the Lord is your maintainer, (4) keeping faith that 'Kṛṣṇa will certainly protect'; (5) engaging only in what is favourable to devotion; (6) rejecting what is unfavourable to devotion. Śrī Kṛṣṇa hears the prayers of those who surrender in these six ways.

rūpa-sanātana-pade dante tṛṇa kari'
bhaktivinoda paḍe dui pada dhari' [6]

Placing a straw between his teeth and falling before Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātan, Bhaktivinod clasps their feet.

kāḍiyā kāḍiyā bale, āmi ta' adhama
śikhāye śaraṇāgati karahe uttama [7]

Crying and crying, he prays, 'I am the lowest, please teach me surrender and make me a pure devotee.'

Śrī Madhyadwīp

In his holy scripture *Śrī Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Māhātmya*, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur Mahāśaya describes the glory of Śrī Madhyadwīp in this way:

Entering Śrī Madhyadwīp, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu said to Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu:

This is a village called **Mājidā** (Mājadiyā). Once in Satya-yuga, seven sages prayed to Lord Brahmā to get transcendental love of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, and one day, being very pleased with their prayers, Brahmā came to them and said, ‘You must go to Nabadwīp. Go there, and you will easily get Gaura’s transcendental love by singing His glory. When you get the mercy of the Lord’s holy land, you will get the association of *sādhus*; when you practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the association of *sādhus*, you will get the supreme spiritual benefit. This is the greatest happiness and the goal of life. Those who become drawn and attached to Nabadwīp get the right to reside in Vraja. All *sādhus* (pure saints) aspire to live in this transcendental abode, Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām.’

Following Brahmā’s guidance, the sages came to Nabadwīp Dhām, where they started to worship Gaura, dancing and chanting His glories. Praying earnestly within their hearts for the *darśan* of Lord Śrī Gaura Hari,

they engaged themselves in severe austerities – leaving all food and sleep, they only constantly chanted the Holy Name of Gaura. One day, Gaura Hari mercifully granted His wondrous *darśan* to the sages. Seeing Gaura’s golden form, the sages were astonished. They prayed, ‘O Lord! We surrender at Your holy lotus feet. Please mercifully grant us devotion to You.’

In reply to their prayer, merciful Lord Gaura Hari spoke thus, ‘O sages! Give up all other desires, all knowledge and material pursuits and only speak about Kṛṣṇa. You must not tell anyone what I am about to tell you. Very soon, I will come to this Nabadwīp Dhām and reveal My pastimes – at that time, you, too, will behold My pastimes. For now, go to Śrī Kumār Haṭṭa and practise spiritual life at a *ghāṭ* there.’ Saying this, Gaura Hari disappeared from their sight.

Following Gaura Hari’s order, the sages then came to Śrī Kumār Haṭṭa and started worshipping Lord Kṛṣṇa there. You can see that there is a small hill in Śrī Madhyadwīp – this is the place where those sages stayed and where they attained Gaura Hari.

Having narrated this pastime, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu then showed Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu a few other places. Śrī Madhyadwīp is the place where the pure **Gomatī River** and the great forest **Naimiṣa** are present. In the past, the sage Śaunaka, along with many other sages, heard here about the glories of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu from Śrī Sūta Goswāmī. At another time, leaving his carrier Bull Nandī, Śivjī Mahārāj came here on Brahmā’s

swan and heard the glories of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu together with his followers from Kāśī: all the devotees danced surrounding Śivjī Mahārāj and showered flowers.

In the south of this island, Śrī Madhyadwīp, there is one more enchanting place called Śrī Puṣkara Tīrtha. Located in Śrī Brāhmaṇpur, it is the place where one quite esoteric pastime took place.

In Satya-yuga, there lived a *brāhmaṇ* called Dibdās. At some point in his life, he left his home and set off to travel to all holy places of India. One day, he came to Śrī Puṣkara Tīrtha (it is situated in the present-day Rājasthān). He was very attracted to this holy place, but after a while he continued his travel and eventually came to Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. When he came here, he suddenly heard a divine message in a dream: ‘O *brāhmaṇ*, you must stay here, in this eternal holy abode.’

Following the order of the Lord, Dibdās made a small cottage (*kuṭīr*) in this Nabadwīp Dhām and settled there. As he grew old, his mind became more and more restless as he always remembered Śrī Puṣkara Tīrtha. Being no longer able to travel, he felt very sad. He cried, thinking, ‘I will never get the *darśan* of my beloved Śrī Puṣkara Tīrtha!’

Taking pity on Dibdās, Lord Puṣkaranāth assumed the form of a *brāhmaṇ* and came to Dibdās, saying, ‘O Dibdās, do not cry. Do you see this pond here in front of you? Submerge yourself into it, and you will get the *darśan* of Śrī Puṣkara Tīrtha in its water.’

Dibdās did as the *brāhmaṇ* said. He quickly went to bath in the pond, and there he got divine eyes and

the *darśan* of Śrī Puṣkara Tīrtha. Seeing his beloved holy place, Dibdās wept and said to Puṣkaranāth, ‘You have taken such a great trouble for my sake! You have come to me from so far!’

‘Dibdās,’ replied Puṣkaranāth, ‘you are very fortunate! I have not come from far. Actually, I live here eternally. This Nabadwīp Dhām is the abode of all possible holy places, so all holy places are present here. I also reside here eternally. Therefore, those who want to leave Nabadwīp to travel to any other place are foolish and roguish. Having visited all holy places, fortunate souls get an opportunity to reside here, at this Nabadwīp Dhām. If you look over there, you will see Śrī Kurukṣetra and Brahmāvarta. Here are the Saraswatī and the Dṛṣadvatī Rivers. O Dibdās, I will tell you one secret: very soon, there will be great joy in this Nabadwīp Dhām because Gaurasundar will appear here and distribute transcendental love for the Lord in all four directions. Roaming all over Nabadwīp Dhām, He will dance and chant in *saṅkīrtan* together with His devotees. He will flood the entire world with transcendental love. With the exception of staunch scholars who love arguing and exercising logic, all *jīva* souls will attain great transcendental love. Having worshipped Kṛṣṇa even for millions of years, unfortunate *jīva* souls do not become attached and attracted to the Name of the Lord, but if *jīva* souls worship Gaurāṅga, all their unwanted elements and faults become removed and they very quickly attain service to Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Vraja Dhām. O Dibdās, stay here. You will no doubt get the *darśan* of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and His associates.’

Saying this, Puṣkaranāth disappeared. Presently, Dibdās heard a divine message in the sky: ‘O *brāhmaṇ!* Blessed is Kali! You will be born in Kali-yuga and spend your life swimming in the transcendental love of *Gaura-kīrtan.*’

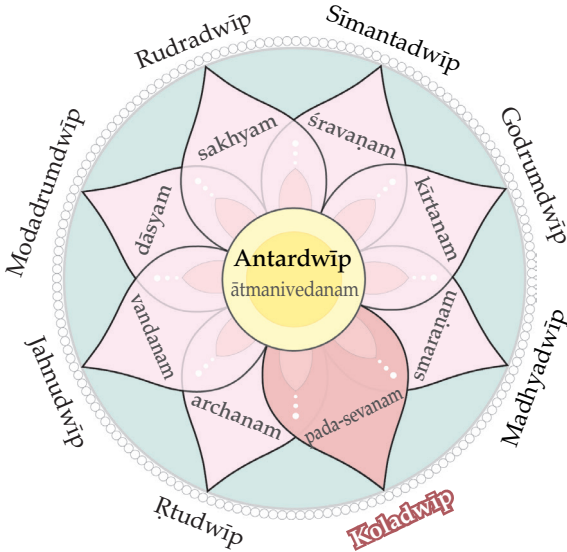
As He spoke about all these ancient pastimes, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu also showed Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu a place called **Uchchahaṭṭa** (situated in Kurukṣetra). He said, ‘All demigods have come here. All holy places that can be found in Brāhmavarta and Kurukṣetra are present here – they come here and serve Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. If you spend one night here, you will get the result of living at Kurukṣetra for one hundred years. Demigods made here a market place called **Haṭṭadāṅga**, where they come to discuss the pastimes of Gaura.’

After that, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, together with Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu and all the devotees, crossed the Ganges and entered Śrī Koladwīp...

Jay Śrī Madhyadwīp ki jay.
Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.
Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

Śrī Koladwīp

(Pada-sevanam:
serving the lotus feet of the Lord)





Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, Koladwīp



Kuliyā and Śrī Gupta-Govardhan

Darśan of Śrī Varāhadev and Gupta-Govardhan

This island is famous as Kuliyā Hill because it is situated on a mountain-like elevation on the bank of the Ganges. Scriptures describe this Kuliyā Town as Koladwīp.

In Satya-yuga, there lived a boy called Vāsudev who every day worshipped Lord Varāhadev. As he worshipped the Lord, he always prayed, ‘O Lord! Please allow me to have Your *darśan* – please make my life successful! Without having seen You, my life will pass in vain!’

One day, Lord Varāhadev mercifully appeared before Vāsudev in an enchanting miraculous form of a boar (*kola*). Adorned with various jewels, Varāhadev was as tall as a mountain. As soon as Vāsudev saw the Lord, he fell on the ground in a prostrate obeisance, overwhelmed with divine love. Pleased to see his devotion, the Lord then spoke: ‘Vāsudev, you are My devotee, and I am very pleased with your worship. There is no other holy place in the entire three worlds that could compare with this Nabadwīp Dhām. You are so fortunate to live here. Because you are worshipping Me here in Nabadwīp, when I appear in Kali-yuga as Gaura, you too will be born, and you will be able to see My *sankīrtan* pastimes.’ Saying this, Lord Varāhadev disappeared.

Vāsudev was overjoyed. After that incident, he engaged himself in *saṅkīrtan*, always chanting the Holy Name of Gaura. Having got the *darśan* of Lord Varāhadev, Vāsudev called this island Koladwīp.

When Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu came here with Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu, He said that this Koladwīp is non-different from Giri-Govardhan. That is why this place is also known as Gupta Govardhan, or ‘hidden’ Govardhan. Therefore, if you do the *parikramā* of this Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, you automatically get the result of doing the *parikramā* of Govardhan.

There are also other very high places existing eternally within this island of Śrī Koladwīp, such as Bahulāvan, Khadiravan, Dvārakā, Mahā-Prayāg, Gaṅgā-Sāgar, Kuliya, Samudragaḍ, Champāhṭṭi and the school of Vidyā-Vāchaspati.

Kuliya Grām: Aparādha-Bhañjaner Pāṭ

The contemporary name of Koladwīp is Nabadwīp Town. Before that, it was known as Kuliya-grām (the village, or *gañj*, of Kuliya), and there is one very important pastime that took place here.

When Mahāprabhu Nimāi Viśvambhar took *sannyās*, He left Nabadwīp and travelled to Purī Dhām. However, when some time later He showed His desire to go to Vṛndāvan, on the way He came to Gauḍadeś again. When everyone got the news that Mahāprabhu was coming to Nabadwīp again, thousands and thousands of people thronged to see Him. There was no end to the crowd! Even those who were offensive to Mahāprabhu – all

the sinners, atheists, etc. – came to Mahāprabhu and fell at His feet, asking Him forgiveness for their offences. Because Mahāprabhu forgave everyone’s offences and bestowed transcendental love for Lord Kṛṣṇa onto them, this Kuliyā Grām, where it happened, became famous as *aparādha-bhañjanera pāt*: ‘the place where offences are forgiven.’ Even Chapāl Gopāl became rescued here (we spoke about him earlier, when we were in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur).

Here in Kuliyā Grām, there was a very famous house where a scholar called Devānanda Paṇḍit read *Bhāgavatam* – many people came here every day to hear his lectures.

One day, Devānanda Paṇḍit prayed to Mahāprabhu for Kṛṣṇa-prema, but Mahāprabhu told him, ‘You have made an offence to a Vaiṣṇav, so I cannot give you Kṛṣṇa-prema.’

Devānanda Paṇḍit was very surprised to hear this, so he asked, ‘To whom and when did I commit an offence? I do not remember anything like that!’ Then, Mahāprabhu reminded Devānanda Paṇḍit what had happened between him and Śrīvās Paṇḍit.

One day, Śrīvās Paṇḍit came to Devānanda Paṇḍit’s lecture to hear *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. As he listened to the lecture, Śrīvās Paṇḍit suddenly became overwhelmed with transcendental love for the Lord. ‘Oh! Every letter of *Bhāgavatam* is filled with divine love!’ – thinking in this way, he started to cry loudly. Some of Devānanda Paṇḍit’s disciples became annoyed and told Śrīvās Paṇḍit, ‘Stop it! You are disturbing the class!’ Somebody else said, ‘Go from here! Leave!’ In the end, they took Śrīvās Paṇḍit by the arm and took him outside. Devānanda Paṇḍit saw it

and did not say anything. That was his offence. (We must always be very careful: we cannot understand when we are committing an offence.)

Moreover, when Mahāprabhu later remembered about Devānanda Paṇḍit, He became so angry that He said, 'I will tear his *Bhāgavatam*! Everything he explains is illusion, it is a farce! It is all misconception!' Śrīvās Paṇḍit and other devotees stopped Mahāprabhu and did not let Him do this. It is not so easy to read *Bhāgavatam*. One time, Śrīla Swarūp Dāmodar Goswāmī said to someone, '*Bhāgavata paḍa Vaiṣṇavera sthāne, ekānta āśraya kara Chaitanya-charaṇe!* Read *Bhāgavatam* in the association of Vaiṣṇavs and take exclusive shelter of the holy lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya!' If you want to read *Bhāgavatam*, you must take shelter of the holy lotus feet of Vaiṣṇavs and hear *Bhāgavatam* from their holy mouths; otherwise, independent reading of *Bhāgavatam* can be equal to reading a newspaper.

In the end, Mahāprabhu told Devānanda Paṇḍit, 'If you ask Śrīvās Paṇḍit forgiveness for your offence, then you will attain Kṛṣṇa-prema.' Utterly ashamed, Devānanda came to Śrīvās Paṇḍit and asked him forgiveness.

This happened here in this Kuliyā town in Śrī Koladwīp.

Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh

Coming to Śrī Koladwīp, there is one more profound thing that must be said: within Gupta Govardhan stands our beloved Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh.

Our Param Gurudev, Pūjyapād Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, came here

in 1941. At first, he stayed in a small *kuṭīr* (hut) on the bank of the Ganges – his younger brother Mani Bābu would give him ten rupees per month, and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj lived there alone, supporting himself with that money. He did not go begging and did not particularly preach. Shortly after that, Śrīpad Sakhī Charaṇ Prabhu offered him, ‘If you choose some land, I will give you money to purchase it.’ Remembering the glory of the *aparādha-bhañjanera pāṭ* and Śrī Gupta Govardhan, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj then choose the land in Śrī Kolergaṅj (where Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh stands to this day), and the same year, on the holy day of Śrī Jagannāthdev’s Ratha-Yātrā, he entered the new place and started living there. He named the temple ‘Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh’.

Although we belong to Brahma-Mādhva-Gauḍīya *sampradāya*, the conception of the holy *rāgānuga-bhakti* (spontaneous loving devotion) actually first manifested through Śrīla Mādhavendra Purīpād – he is the seed of the spout of divine love; and we can see that by the influence of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, this seed has become transformed into a beautiful, full-fledged tree. Remembering this core identity of our *sampradāya*, Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj included the words ‘Śrī Chaitanya’ in the name of his temple. Also, the name of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj’s Gurudev is Om Viṣṇupād Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhuṇpād – therefore, to include the entire identity of our *sampradāya*, from the very beginning until the end, Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj named his temple and mission ‘Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh’.

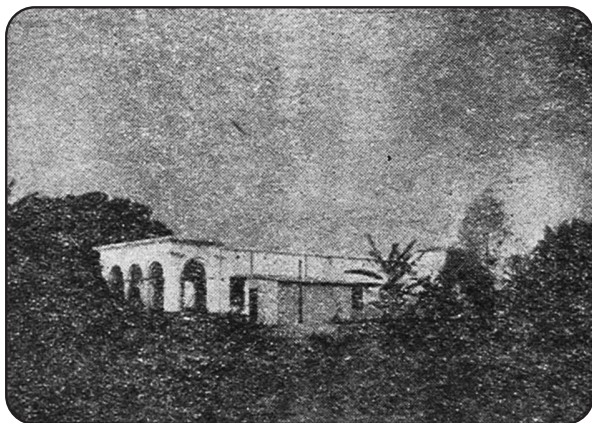
At first, Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh's land was just one acre (almost three *bighās*) – at that time, there were not so many trees, gardens or great buildings. There were just three mango trees, two guava trees and a bamboo grove. However, having purchased this land, the first thing Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj did was to go to a bamboo garden and personally choose a very long and expensive bamboo pole – he brought that pole to the temple and established it at the very place where the main temple is built now. Raising a flag atop the pole, he proclaimed:

śrīmach-chaitanya-sārasvata-maṭhabara-udgīta-kīrtir-jaya-śrīm
vibhrat-sambhātī gaṅgā-taṭa-nikaṭa-nabadvīpa-kolādri-rāje
yatra śrī-gaura-sārasvata-mata-niratā gaura-gāthā gṛṇanti
nityam rūpānuga-śrī-kṛta-mati-guru-gaurāṅga-rādhā-jitāśā

‘At this supremely enchanting divine *aśram*, materially destitute and spiritually loving devotees of Śrī Gaura-Saraswatī, who are expert at favourable practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, constantly chant within their hopeful hearts the glories of Lord Śrī Śrī Gaurasundar, the greatly magnanimous source of all incarnations of the Lord, following in strict adherence the line of Śrī Śrī Rūpa-Raghunāth, the inexhaustible storehouse of the wealth of divine ecstatic consortherhood love, being eternally eager to engage in the loving service to Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Govindasundar and Their associates. This effulgent and supremely worshipping king among all temples, Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, is situated within Koladwīp, which is non-different from Śrī Govardhan, the king of mountains, on the enchanting bank of the revered Bhāgīrathī River, who rescues all fallen souls,

in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, a holy abode of touchstones that is non-different from Śrī Vṛndāvan. Capturing Jayaśrī (the Goddess of Victory – Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī), it exists eternally, leaving the entire creation of moving and non-moving entities astonished in the extremely cooling and loving shade of the soaring victory flag of its ever-increasing celebrated renown.'

Soon after that, a few devotees came and stayed together with Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj; also, many of Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's godbrothers were looking for him, and when they found him, they would also come and stay at the temple during some time. This is how Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh started.



(Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, circa 1955)

When Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj first came here, he had the Deity of Giridhārī (a Govardhan *śilā*) that he had brought from Vṛndāvan. Mahāprabhu's Deity was installed in 1944–1945, and about four years after our Gurudev, Oṃ Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda

Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, joined the temple, the Deities of Śrī Śrī Gāndharvā Govindasundar jiu were brought from Vṛndāvan and installed at the temple. The construction of the main temple began later, sometime in 1955, and it took almost twenty years to complete it (the construction finished in 1973). After that, in 1975, the construction of the *nāṭ-mandir* started. This is the brief history of our temple in Koladwīp.

When Sakhī Charaṇ Prabhu heard the *śloka* extolling Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh (*‘Śrīmach-chaitanya-sārasvata-maṭhabara...’*), he said to Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj, ‘You have nothing except for a small thatched house – you are using a brick for a pillow and sleep on some straw – but you have put up such a big bamboo pole and composed such a high *śloka!*’ Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj replied, ‘You will see in the future what will be here.’ We can easily realise what Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj implied by seeing the present-day miraculous form of the temple, resembling a whole town. And this is not just some grand buildings! When the ground floor of the temple was completed, the master of Koladwīp (Śrī Śrī Lakṣmī-Varāhadev) came here, out of His own accord and in a very miraculous way, in the form of a *śālagrām-śilā*.

This *śālagrām-śilā* originally lived in the house of a king, but because many problems started happening later, the king gave the *śālagrām-śilā* to a big *paṇḍit*. Some time later, problems started happening at the house of the *paṇḍit*, too. One day, that *paṇḍit* met with Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj, and he told Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj, ‘This *śālagrām-śilā* is creating disturbance everywhere. Please take this

śālagrām-śilā away from here.’ Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj agreed, and told the *paṇḍit* to send his *śilā* to Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh.

At first, the *paṇḍit* sent the *śālagrām-śilā* to the temple of Śrīla Jājāvar Mahārāj in Mednipur, but two weeks later, the *śilā* started creating so much disturbance again that nobody could even stay at the temple anymore! Then, Śrīla Jājāvar Mahārāj wrote a letter to Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj, saying, ‘Please take your *śilā* away from here!’ Because Midnapore is a little far from Nabadwīp, Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj told Śrīla Jājāvar Mahārāj to send the *śilā* to the temple of Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj in Kolkata, and he would later send it from there to Nabadwīp.

Śrīla Jājāvar Mahārāj sent the *śilā* to the temple of Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj, who thought, ‘I have got a *śālagrām-śilā*! I will keep it here.’ He knew that Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj would not mind it, so he kept the *śilā* at his temple. During the next fifteen days, again so many things happened at the temple. Śrīla Goswāmī Mahārāj thought, ‘This *śilā* is very bad for my temple!’ Then, he wrote a letter to Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj, saying, ‘Mahārāj, please take your *śilā* from my temple as soon as possible.’ Then, Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj sent Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj to Kolkata to bring this *śālagrām-śilā* to Nabadwīp.

When the *śālagrām-śilā* finally arrived, Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj told Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, ‘What is the matter? Why does this *śilā* cause so much disturbance? Look up the name of this *śālagrām-śilā*.’ Then, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj searched the descriptions of many *śālagrām-śilās* in *Hari-bhakti-vilās* and *Garuḍa Purāṇa* and found out that

this *śālagrām-śilā* had the symptoms of Śrī Śrī Lakṣmī-Varāhadev. Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj also said, 'I too thought that it was Lakṣmī-Varāhadev – He is the master of Koladwīp, and He wanted to come to his Koladwīp. But to be sure, write a letter to the *paṇḍit* where the *śilā* stayed at first and ask him.' The *paṇḍit* replied that, yes, it was indeed Lakṣmī-Varāhadev. Then, Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj said, 'That is it! That is why He did not want to stay anywhere. This is His own place here, that is why He wanted to come here.'

The worship of Śrī Lakṣmī-Varāhadev is very difficult. Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj said that Śrī Lakṣmī-Varāhadev must be offered nice, specially made sweet rice every day. From that time, Śrī Lakṣmī-Varāhadev has been living at the temple happily, and the temple started growing very quickly: before that, there were no houses, no temple, there was only one three-room building, but after that the temple was built and so many other buildings appeared –



(Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, circa 2013)

especially Śrī Govinda Kuṇḍa, which manifested later in a very special and beautiful way along with the temples of Śrī Sadā Śiva Gaṅgādhara and Śrī Girirāj Govardhan.

This is the abode of Śrī Koladwīp, and this is the history and glory of our main Maṭh. It is a very auspicious place. 'Kuliyā grāmete āsi' Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya hena nāhi yā're prabhu nā karilā dhanya. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya Mahāprabhu came to Kuliyā-grām and there was not a living soul who was not blessed by the Lord.' If one commits an offence at this holy place, there is no salvation for this soul, but if someone commits an offence staying elsewhere and comes here and genuinely asks forgiveness, then their offences will be removed.

Jay Śrī Koladwīp ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh ki jay.

Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Govindasundar jiu ki jay.

Śrī Sadā Śiva Gaṅgādhara ki jay.

Śrī Gupta Govardhan ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

(ohe) vaiṣṇava ṭhākura, dayāra sāgara,
e dāse karuṇā kari
diyā pada-chhāyā, śodha he āmāre,
tomāra charaṇa dhari [1]

O Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur, ocean of mercy! Please be merciful to this servant. Grant me the shade of your feet and purify me. I am clasping your feet.

chhaya vega dami', chhaya doṣa śodhi,
chhaya guṇa deha dāse
chhaya sat-saṅga, deha he āmāre,
basechhi saṅgera āśe [2]

Please subjugate my six urges [*speech, mind, anger, tongue, stomach, genitals*], rectify my six defects [*greed, doing what is unfavourable to devotion, idle talks, attachment to inferior rules, material association, fickle-mindedness*] and bestow the six good qualities [*enthusiasm, faith, patience, doing what is favourable to devotion, avoiding bad association, following sādhus' practices*] upon this servant. Please grant me six kinds of good association [*giving devotees gifts, taking gifts from devotees, confiding in devotees, enquiring from devotees, taking prasād, feeding devotees prasād*]. I am waiting, hoping to attain this association.

ekākī āmāra, nāhi pāya bala,
hari-nāma-saṅkīrtane
tumi kṛpā kari, śraddhā-bindu diyā,
deha kṛṣṇa-nāma-dhane [3]

Alone I am not getting the strength to chant the Lord's Name. Please give me a drop of faith and bestow upon me the treasure of Kṛṣṇa's Name.

kṛṣṇa se tomāra kṛṣṇa dite pāra
tomāra śakati āchhe
āmi ta kāṅgāla 'kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa' bali
dhāi tava pāchhe pāchhe [4]

Kṛṣṇa is yours, so you have the power to give Kṛṣṇa. Yet, I am very poor – calling out, 'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!' I am running after you.

Śrī Burorāj (Vṛddha) Śiva

Continuing Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have now come to the lotus feet of Buro Śiva at the *aparādha-bhañjanera pāṭ* in Śrī Koladwīp.



You may have seen Gopeśvar Mahādev in Vṛndāvan, Chākleśvar Mahādev in Govardhan, Bhūteśvar Mahādev in Mathurā, Āśeśvar Mahādev in Nandagrām; there is also Kṣetrapāl Śiva in Māyāpur and Sadā Śiva Gaṅgādhār in Koladwīp (at our Maṭh in Nabadwīp). And this here is Śrī Burorāj (or Vṛddha) Śivjī ('Old' Śiva). We must always pray to Śivjī Mahārāj. He is Dhāmeśvar: he is the guardian

of the holy *dhām*, and he protects the entire Nabadwīp Dhām. Therefore, when we come Śivjī Mahārāj, we must always pray to him that we may be able to stay and serve Śrī Dhām, so that we may again be able to come here.

One time, Āśeśvar Mahādev came to Mother Yaśodā in Gokula and asked her permission to see Gopāl. When Mother Yaśodā saw him, she said, 'No, no! If my Gopāl sees you, He will become scared! You have enormous dreadlocks, a long beard, and you have come with a snake on your neck! What is all this? Sorry, I will not let Gopāl see you.' Then, Mahādev sat a little far from that place and started meditating, 'When will I get the *darśan* of the Lord?' In the meantime, Gopāl (Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself) could understand everything and started crying loudly because His devotee, His bosom friend had left without seeing Him, getting so much trouble. Then, Gopāl said to His mother, 'Bring Mahādev, then I will stop crying!' and pointed in the direction where Mahādev was sitting. Mother Yaśodā and Nanda Mahārāj took Gopāl to Rāśeśvar Mahādev, and Gopāl stopped crying: as soon as the Lord saw His devotee, He felt at peace...

One day, Pārvatī Devī asked Śivjī Mahārāj, 'Prabhu, whose worship is the highest?' Śivjī Mahārāj replied, 'The worship of Lord Viṣṇu is the highest of all worship.' Pārvatī Devī was upset to hear the answer. She thought, 'The worship of Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, is the highest, but I worship Lord Śiva. What am I to do?' Seeing Pārvatī Devī's troubled face, Śivjī Mahārāj said then:

ārāadhanānām sarveṣām viṣṇor ārāadhanam param
tasmāt parataram devi tadīyānām samarchchanam

‘Why are you upset, Devī? The worship of Lord Viṣṇu is the highest, but higher than that is the worship of Lord Viṣṇu’s devotee.’ Then Pārvatī Devī felt at peace.

We must understand that if you are to serve Śivjī Mahārāj, you must practise what Śivjī Mahārāj says. The worship of devotees is the highest of all worship.

You have also heard that Śivjī Mahārāj became a *gopī* and managed to enter *rāsa-līlā*: to this day, even Lakṣmī Devī has not been able to enter *rāsa-līlā*, but Śivjī Mahārāj did. Such is his glory. Śivjī Mahārāj is a great Vaiṣṇav. There is no problem if you worship Lord Śiva, but you must always remember one thing – when you go to worship Śivjī Mahārāj, you must not imitate Śivjī Mahārāj.

In this world, there are devotees who instead of worshipping Śivjī Mahārāj, instead of satisfying and making Śivjī Mahārāj happy, become Śiva(?) themselves. If you dress as a policeman – wear the uniform, the cap, and have a gun swinging at your belt – does it mean that you have become a policeman? It does not. It only means that you have become a make-believe (fake) policeman. Therefore, you can dress as Śiva, you can grow dreadlocks or wear a wig, dye your hair, etc., but does pretending to be Śivjī Mahārāj make you Śiva? Many ‘devotees’ of Śiva smoke marijuana, but Śivjī Mahārāj can also drink poison – if they think they can smoke marijuana, then they should take poison as well. Śiva can take marijuana, but if you start taking marijuana, it is very bad. This is not what the worship of Lord Śiva is. It is necessary to show *devotion* for Lord Śiva, ‘Dear Śivjī Mahārāj, you are a bosom friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa! You are very powerful.

O Śivjī Mahārāj, please give me devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa. I am praying at your holy lotus feet that I may have devotion to your holy feet.’ Moreover, this is not a prayer or an obeisance for one or two days only – we must pray to Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur every day. This is our *eternal* devotion.

People usually worship Lord Śiva to fulfil their desires and interests, but this is not genuine worship. Do not do this. Do not worship Lord Śiva out of some selfish interests or with the hope to get something – do not turn Lord Śiva into a menial servant. People say, ‘Lord Śiva, give me this’, ‘Lord Śiva, give me that’ – Śivjī Mahārāj becomes their menial servant. However, our duty is to *worship* Lord Śiva. We will worship him, and whether Śiva takes this worship or not, what he will give or not give, that is his matter. It does not matter whether I like something or do not like – if he feels happy to make me struggle, he will arrange that for me; and if he is happy to see me live happily, then he will arrange that for me. My happiness or unhappiness is not a problem at all. We must always remember this.

Śivjī Mahārāj’s name is Āśutoṣ: it takes very little to make him happy. Therefore, when we come here, we must pray at the holy lotus feet of Lord Śivjī Mahārāj with all our hearts, ‘Prabhu! You are the supreme Vaiṣṇav, the Lord listens to what you say – please give me the right, the qualification to serve the Lord. O Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur! Kṛṣṇa rests in your heart – you can give Kṛṣṇa to others.’

Jay Śrī Burorāj Śivjī Mahārāj ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



(The Deity of Śrī Burorāj Śivjī Mahārāj in Śrī Koladwīp)

devādidevam-ahibhūṣaṇam-indukāśam
pañchānanam paśupatiṁ varadaṁ prasannam
gaṅgādharam praṇatapālakamāśutoṣam
vande sadāśiva-haripriya-chandramaulim

'The chief of the Devas, whose body is decorated by snakes, whose body shines like the moon, who has five heads, who carries his weapon known as Paśupat, who gives boons, who is of satisfied nature, who holds the Gaṅgā on his head, who maintains those who give obeisance to him, who is easily pleased – I offer my obeisances to Sadā Śiva, who is dear to Hari and whose crown is the moon.'

(This praṇam-mantra to Lord Śiva residing at Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh in Nabadwīp, composed by Śrīla B.S. Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj)

Śrī Prauḍhā Māyā

Having paid our obeisance to Śrī Vṛddha Śivjī Mahārāj, we have now come from his temple to the temple of Śrī Prauḍhā Māyā, or Yogamāyā, at Paramatala. Māyā is a power of Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and she manifests in two ways, as Yogamāyā and Mahāmāyā. Yogamāyā serves the Lord in His eternal abode, and Mahāmāyā serves the Lord in this material world. As we offer our obeisances at this temple of Yogamāyā, we should remember what was spoken earlier in relation to Sīmantadwīp:

One day in Satya-yuga, Śivjī Mahārāj started dancing, chanting the Holy Name of Gaurāṅga. Seeing his state, Pārvatī Devī (Śivjī Mahārāj's spouse) asked him, 'Why are you always calling out, "O Gaurāṅga! O Gaurāṅga!'"? Who is this Gaurāṅga? When I see you dance and hear the Name of Gaurāṅga, it is melting my heart. I am thinking that whatever *mantras*, *tantras*, etc. I have heard before, it is all garbage for the soul! Tell me about Gaurāṅga. I can feel that if I serve Him, I will gain life.'

Hearing Pārvatī's words, Mahādev said, 'As you are the primaeval energy, part of Śrī Rādhā, I will tell you everything openly. In Kali-yuga, Kṛṣṇa will take Rādhā's heart and halo and appear in a village called Māyāpur. Intoxicated with the joy of *kīrtan*, He will distribute the jewel of transcendental love to everyone without any

discrimination. Remembering the promise of the Lord makes me feel overwhelmed with transcendental love. Unable to steady my mind, I left Kāśī and came to Māyāpur, where I then decided to worship Gaurāṅga in a small hut on the bank of the Ganges.’

Hearing Śivjī Mahārāj’s words, Pārvatī Devī came to Sīmantadwīp and started meditating on Śrī Gaurāṅga’s form. As she chanted and chanted the Holy Name of Gaurāṅga, transcendental love sprang up in her heart. She could no longer control her mind. In the end, Gaura appeared in front of her together with His devotees. He asked her, ‘Pārvatī, what do you want? Why have you come here?’

Feeling anxious, Pārvatī Devī offered her obeisance at the Lord’s holy lotus feet and spoke in reply, ‘Prabhu, You are the life and soul of the world, you my Prāṇanāth, the Master of my very being. You are bestowing Your mercy, love and affection all over the world, but You are so cruel to me! You have given me such a cruel service: I bind the souls who are averse to you. I am doing what You told me to do, but I myself am cheated out of Your mercy! People say that wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, there is no place for Māyā (Māyā cannot stay there): I have become completely separated from You. When and how will I be able to see Your pastimes? If You do not tell me how to reach You, I will lose all hope.’ Saying this, Pārvatī took some dust from the holy feet of Gaurāṅga and rubbed it on the parting of her hair (*sīmanta*). From that time, this place became known as Sīmantadwīp, although ignorant people still call it Simuliyā-grām.

In reply to Pārvatī's words, Mahāprabhu said, 'Pārvatī, you are My non-different energy. You are the Mistress of the whole world, and you are always staying with Me. You have two forms: by your intrinsic nature, you are My Rādhikā, and externally, you are an expansion of Rādhā. My pastimes are not possible without you. You are always present in My pastimes as Yogamāyā. In Vraja, you perform your eternal pastimes as Paurṇamāsī, and in Nabadwīp, you live with Kṣetrapāl (the guardian of the *dhām*) Śivī Mahārāj as Prauḍhā Māyā.' Saying this, Mahāprabhu disappeared.

Ever since then, always keeping these words in her heart, Pārvatī Devī has been staying as Simantini Devī in Sīmantadwīp and as Prauḍhā Māyā in Māyāpur. Such is the glory of Śrī Sīmantadwīp.

Coming here, to Prauḍhā Māyā, we, lowly and fallen conditioned souls, very carefully pay our obeisance at her holy lotus feet and submit our prayer to her, praying that she may one day bestow her mercy on us, and that she may, removing all material dirt and material attachment from us, give us the right to enter the domain of devotion to the Lord and service to the Lord's devotees.

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14):

daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etām taranti te

'My supramundane trimodal illusory potency (alluring those who are averse to Me) is extremely difficult to overcome. However, this insurmountable potency of Mine can be overcome by those who exclusively surrender to Me.'

‘I have created Māyā, and you cannot overcome her. What is the way out then? When one surrenders to My feet (when one comes and falls at My feet), I gradually rescue this surrendered soul from Māyā. When you become My devotee and become surrendered to Me, then Māyā Devī can see, “My Master, my Creator has come,” and she will gradually run away from you.’ To overcome Māyā, the illusory environment, you must always keep good, saintly association. There is no other way to defeat the illusory environment except through *sādhu-saṅga*:

māyāre kariyā jaya chhāḍāna nā yāya
sādhu-guru kṛpā binā nā dekhi upāya

‘It is impossible to conquer illusory environment and become released from it. I see no other way to get relief except by the mercy of saints and the guru.’

On the one hand, we come to Māyā and always humbly pray to her for her mercy; on the other hand, we must always remember one thing: Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur Prabhupād declared a totalitarian war against Māyā, so we must always be very careful and never compromise with Māyā.

We will not be here in this world for a long time. This is no news. If I live for one hundred years but do not do anything during this time, do not show kindness to *jīva* souls, do not think about other *jīva* souls, do not serve my *gurudev* and the Lord, if I only live selfishly eating fancy food, wearing fancy clothes, sleeping on a fancy bed, then living for a hundred years is the same as not living at all – such a life is inauspicious, useless; there is no value in such a life. If I live for one hundred years but do not show any

mercy to other *jīva* souls, do not treat other *jīva* souls with genuine compassion, do not serve my *guru*, do not serve the Lord, then I do not need to live for one hundred years. However, if I live just thirty or forty years but during these forty years I think about other *jīva* souls, about the Lord, about Vaiṣṇavs and devotees, then albeit only forty years, this life is successful...

Another thing is that we should not judge others. We should first see our own faults, but the problem is that we cannot see it – we always try to find faults with others, and we never think what faults there are within ourselves. We are deeply conditioned souls, so much so that we have fallen into the bondage of illusory environment and we can never discern our faults, we always try to find fault in others. Vaiṣṇavs are *adoṣa-daraśī*: they never see faults in others. But we always try to see faults in others instead of trying to find faults in ourselves.

As long as we are alive in this world, if we can do some service to the Lord, *guru*, and Vaiṣṇavs, then our life will be successful, and even if we live for just a few days, such a life will be successful – we can truly reach the Lord.

We always say, ‘Surrender, surrender’, but how many of us have truly surrendered to the Lord and *gurudev*? Instead of serving our *guru*, we only pretend that we have taken initiation; we have become *guru-bhogī* and *guru-tyāgī* (we either use our *guru* or reject our *guru*), but we cannot become *guru-sevī*, servants of our *guru* (we cannot serve our *guru*). We have been spending our lives pursuing our own interests, living for ourselves, worrying about our own good and bad, about money and other things, but we

never think about other *jīva* souls, about how other *jīva* souls can get some spiritual benefit.

When somebody takes initiation from me, I must remember that I am not doing a favour to this person; rather, this person has done me a favour by taking initiation from me. When disciples would come and offer obeisance to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, he would say, ‘*Dāso ‘smi*. I am your servant.’ But we have all become ‘masters’ now – everybody has become ‘*prabhu*’ and ‘*mahārāj*’. If somebody does not pay obeisance to me, I become angry, my ego hurts, ‘Oh, I have taken *sannyās*, but nobody pays obeisance to me! Nobody calls me *mahārāj*!’ This kind of ego and pride comes to our minds, but this is not Vaiṣṇavism, brother! Vaiṣṇava culture is completely different:

dainya, dayā, anye māna, pratiṣṭhā varjjana
chāri-guṇe guṇī hai karaha kīrtana

‘Humility, compassion, honouring others and giving up prestige – become qualified with these four qualities and chant the Holy Name and glories of the Lord.’

It is necessary to be humble. It is necessary to be kind. We must give honour to others. These qualities must always be there. We do not need to become big. What did Mahāprabhu say?

na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagadisa kamaye
mama janmani janmaniśvare
bhavatād-bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi

‘O Supreme Lord (Master of the Universe, Jagadīśvara)! I do not desire any wealth (religion, money or material desires),

any followers (wife, sons, servants or maidservants) or material knowledge (beautiful poetry). My only prayer is that I may birth after birth have pure devotion to You, devoid of seeking any result.'

Explaining this śloka, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur wrote in one of his kīrtans:

dhana jana āra, kavitā sundarī,
 baliba nā chāhi deha-sukha-karī
 janme janme dāo, ohe gaura-hari,
 ahaitukī bhakti charaṇe tomāra

'When will I say that I do not want any wealth, followers, poetic gift or any other bodily happiness? O Gaura Hari! Birth after birth, please give me unconditional devotion to Your holy feet!'

We can see that outside people (the *jīva* souls who are averse to Kṛṣṇa) come to the Lord and pray, '*Dhanam dehi, vidyām dehi, rūpaṁ dehi, bhāryām dehi, kavitaṁ sundarīm dehi.* Make me rich, give me knowledge, make me beautiful, give me a wife, make me a great poet.' People want this all the time. *Brāhmaṇs* recite such 'give me' *mantras*, people also say this and think about this all the time, but whatever will be will be (whatever is written in your destiny, this is what will happen). You think that you are happy sleeping in a ten-storey building, but you can feel even more happiness when you sleep on the bare ground.

Look at Mahāprabhu's teachings. When Kṛṣṇa was in Dvārakā, He was fanned by His queens, He lay leisurely on a royal bed, but when this same Supreme Lord came as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu in Kali-yuga and took *sannyās*, He slept on dry banana leaves on the ground! How much austerity He had to undergo when He preached in this world – for *our* sake!

Therefore, we must always glorify the Lord, we must always chant the Lord's Names. You must always rely completely on the Lord. Always think about the Lord – you must always give up your own happiness and enjoyment. Do not surrender to Māyā. If you surrender to the Lord, you will be a gainer. We all live in the world of Māyā and spend our days and nights within the bondage of illusory environment, submitting and surrendering ourselves to illusion, Māyā. Why is it necessary to do that?

Our message is one: '*Kṛṣṇa bolo, saṅge cholo! Ei mātra bhikṣā chāi*. Chant "Kṛṣṇa", come with us. This is all we beg you for.' We pray to you that wherever you stay, whatever you do, if you can amidst all that, at the back of your mind, serve the Lord, serve your *guru*, engage yourself in the glorification of the Lord, *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs, if you can glorify the qualities of the *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs, then you will get supreme benefit; otherwise, you will have to keep coming and going in this material world. '*Nitāi charaṇa nā bhajila yāoyā-āsā sāra haila*. You have not worshipped Nitāi, so all you did is just come and go in vain.'

We must always remember this. If we genuinely want to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we must leave all illusory environment, we must leave all material attachment and enter the domain of devotion, accepting the advise of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavs in our hearts. Moreover, we are doing this *parikramā* now, but we must think: are we doing the *parikramā* of Māyā or are we doing the *parikramā* of the holy *dhām*? Watch out!

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

jaya śachī-nandana, sura-muni-vandana,
bhava-bhaya-khaṇḍana jaya he
jaya hari-kīrtana- nartanā vartana,
kali-mala-kartana jaya he [1]

All glory to the son of Śrī Śachī, who is worshipped by the demigods and sages and destroys all fear of material existence! Glory to Him! He is the inaugurator of dancing and chanting of the Lord's Names and removes the contamination of Kali! Glory to Him!

nayana-purandara, viśvarūpa snehadhara,
viśvambhara viśvera kalyāṇa
jaya lakṣmī-viṣṇupriyā, viśvambhara-priya-hiyā,
jaya priya kiṅkara īśāna [2]

He delights everyone's eyes, He is affectionate to His brother, Viśvarūp. He maintains the whole world and bestows benediction on all creation. Glory to Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā Devī and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, who are dear to Viśvambhar's heart! Glory to His dear servant Īśān!

śrī-sītā-advaita-rāya, mālinī-śrīvāsa jaya,
jaya chandraśekhara āchārya
jaya nityānanda rāya, gadādhara jaya jaya,
jaya haridāsa nāmāchārya [3]

Glory to Śrī Sītā and Śrī Advaita! Glory to Mālinī and Śrīvās! Glory to Chandraśekhar Āchārya! Glory to Nityānanda Rāy! Glory to Gadādhara! Glory to the *nāmāchārya*, Haridās Ṭhākura!

murāri mukunda jaya, premanidhi mahāśaya,
jaya yata prabhu pāriṣada
vandi savākara pāya, adhamere kṛpā haya,
bhakti sapārṣada-prabhupāda [4]

Glory to Murāri, Mukunda and Premanidhi (Puṇḍarik Vidyānidhi)! Glory to all the associates of the Lord! Offering obeisance at everyone's feet, I pray that the Lord and His associates may bestow mercy and devotion upon this lowly soul.

Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī's House: Abode of Separation

Continuing Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have now come from the temples of Śrī Vṛddha Śīva and Prauḍhā Māyā to this enchanting and extremely esoteric place: this is the house of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī (people often call it 'Mahāprabhu's house'). This is the place where Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī (the Lord's eternal potency, eternal consort) appeared and where she also spent the later part of her life.

We can see in Śrī *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* that Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is Satyabhāmā in the Dvārakā pastimes of the Lord: she is an expansion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

The name of Viṣṇupriyā Devī's father is Śrī Sanātan Mīśra. Being a great Vaiṣṇav and a *brāhmaṇ* devoted to Lord Viṣṇu, he received a jewel of a daughter, who was not only extremely beautiful but also embodied all good qualities – he named her Śrī Viṣṇupriyā ('dear to Viṣṇu'). From her childhood, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī served Tulasī every day, engaged in Deity worship and other services to the Lord, and she would also go to the Ganges every day to take bath. Sometimes, she would meet Śachī Mātā – every time Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī saw her, she offered her obeisances. Śachī Mātā would also bless her every time,

‘May Kṛṣṇa give you a worthy husband,’ thinking to herself, ‘May this girl marry my son.’

Mahāprabhu’s first spouse was Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā Devī, but when Mahāprabhu went to Bangladesh to study, she was bitten by the snake of separation: not being able to tolerate separation from Mahāprabhu, she left her body and went to Mahāprabhu. After a while, Śrī Śachī Mātā went to Kāśīnāth Paṇḍit and requested him to arrange Nimāi and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī’s marriage. To please His mother, Nimāi did not object, and in this way He got married the second time. On the day of their marriage, all devotees were so extremely jubilant – I have no power to describe it! Entire Nabadwīp was filled with joy on that day. Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī’s heart was also overjoyed: she had been very attracted to the Lord since her childhood, and now her innermost desire was finally fulfilled – she received the shelter and service to the Lord’s holy lotus feet.

Some time after His second marriage, Mahāprabhu went to Gayā Dhām, and upon His return, everything changed. Even when He looked at Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, He did not see her: overwhelmed with Kṛṣṇa-prema, He only chanted the Holy Name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Nobody could understand anything. Everybody said that Nimāi had gone mad. Seeing the conditioned souls averse to the Lord and their deep attachment to the illusory environment, Mahāprabhu eventually decided to take *sannyās* (enter the renounced order of life). Before leaving home, He revealed His intention to Śrī Śachī Mātā and Viṣṇupriyā Devī, and both were dumb-struck and could not say anything: Mahāprabhu is the Lord Himself, He is the independent Supreme Lord, so nobody could bind Him and force Him to stay.

There is a very intimate and painful conversation that Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur did not write about in his *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* very clearly or broadly, but Śrīla Lochan Dās Ṭhākur presented in *Śrī Chaitanya-maṅgala* the conversation that took place between Mahāprabhu and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī before Mahāprabhu left her to take *sannyās*. Mahāprabhu would always feel restless – He was going to leave His house and very young (thirteen-fourteen-year-old) wife. Śrīla Lochan Dās Ṭhākur writes:

prabhura vyagrata dekhi, viṣṇupriyā chandra-mukhī,
 kahe kichhu gad-gad svare
 kaha kaha prāṇanātha, mora śire diyā hāta,
 sannyāsa karibe nāki tumi

Seeing some perturbed eagerness in the Lord, moon-faced Viṣṇupriyā Devī spoke in a slightly trembling voice: Tell me, tell me, Prāṇanāth! Put Your hand on my head and tell me – are You going to take *sannyās*?

loka-mukhe śuni ihā, vidarite chāhe hiyā,
 āgunita praveśiba āmi
 to lāgi jīvana dhana, rūpa nava-yauvana,
 veśa-vilāsa bhāva kalā

I hear people talk... You want to tear my heart apart – I will enter fire! You are the treasure of my life. This time of life is filled with beauty, fresh youth, it is the time when You dress well, live well and love.

tumi yabe chhāḍi yābe, ki kāja e chhāra jīve,
 hiyā poḍe yena viṣa-jvālā

Mahāprabhu tried to give some nourishment to Viṣṇupriyā Devī. He said, 'Everything in this world is nothing. This relationship with our father, mother, wife, husband – everything is very temporary. Once the *jīva* soul comes out of the body, it cannot enter it again, and this body will rot within a few days.'

michhā suta pati nārī, pitā mātā ādi kari,
 pariṇāme kebā nā kāhāra
 śrī-kṛṣṇa charaṇa bahi, āra ta kuṭumba nāhi,
 yata dekha—saba māyā tāra

Sons, husbands, women, parents, etc. are all false. Ultimately, nobody belongs to anyone. Except for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, there is no kin. Everything you see here is His illusion.

'Who is your own? Who should you have a relationship with? With the Lord. All other relationships are material and part of the illusory environment. Your parents, all your friends' and relatives' circle, everything in this world is illusion. It is all illusory environment.'

ki nārī puruṣa dekha, ātmā se sabāra eka,
 michhā māyā-bandhe bhāve dui
 śrī-kṛṣṇa sabāra pati, āra saba prakṛti,
 e kathā nā bujhaye koi

Whether a man or a woman, everyone's soul is the same. Only those who are situated in illusory bondage see them as different entities. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is everyone's husband (master), and all souls are female. Can you not understand it?

rakta retaḥ-sammilane, janma viṣṭhā-mūtra sthāne,
 bhūme paḍi haye ageyāna
 bāla yuvā vṛddha haiyā, nānā duḥkha-kaṣṭa pāiyā,
 dehe gehe kare abhimāna

When blood and semen are combined, one is born from the same place where urine and stool come out. It all later falls unconscious on the ground. Going through childhood, youth and old age, souls suffer so much, being proud of their body and house.

bandhu kari yāre pāli, tāra saba di-i gāli,
 abhimāne vṛddha-kāla vañche
 śravaṇa nayāna āndhe, viṣāda bhāriyā kānde,
 tabu nāhi bhajaye govinde

When all one's friends have run away, everyone will swear them, and they will be cheated in their old age because of their pride. Deaf and blind, filled with sorrow, they will weep, but even then they will not worship Govinda!

Then, Mahāprabhu advised Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī:

kṛṣṇa bhajibāra tare, deha dhari e saṁsāre,
 māyā bandhe pāsari āpanā
 ahañkāre matta haiyā, nija prabhu pāsariyā,
 śeṣe pāi naraka-yantraṇā

They have got a body in this world and if they use it to worship Kṛṣṇa, they will automatically leave all illusory bondage. However, those who lose their mind because of pride forget their own Master, and in the end, they undergo hellish suffering.

Listen to Me, Viṣṇupriyā Devī. I have told you that whenever you think of Me, I will be always in your room, wherever I may be at that time. I assure you this is the truth.

prabhu-ājñā-vāñī śuni, viṣṇupriyā mane guṇi,
svatantra īśvara ei prabhu
nija-sukhe kare kāja, ke dibe tāhāte bādha,
pratyuttara nā dilena tabhu

Hearing Prabhu's advice and order, Viṣṇupriyā composed herself thinking: This Prabhu is independent Supreme Lord. He does what pleases Him, what use is it trying to stop Him? So, she said nothing in reply.

viṣṇupriyā heṭa-mukhī, chhala-chhala kare ākhi
dekhi prabhu sarasa sambhāṣe
prabhu-ācharaṇa-kathā, śunite lāgiye vyathā
guṇa gāya e lochana dāse

Viṣṇupriyā listened to the Lord's sweet words with her face lowered, eyes filled with tears... This Lochan Dās is singing the glories of the Lord's pastimes although this behaviour of the Lord is painful to hear.

The day when Mahāprabhu left His family, He called Kālanidra. There are 330 million demigods, and Kalanidra is one of them: *kāla-nidra* means a deep sleep, the kind of sleep that you cannot wake up from. So, Kālanidra Devī came to the Lord and asked Him, 'Prabhu, I have come. What is Your order?' Mahāprabhu told her, 'Now do your duty,' and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī fell into such a deep sleep that she could not wake up that night. Kālanidra did her

duty at that time, and did it very well; otherwise, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī would have started shouting and crying and Mahāprabhu would not have been able to run away...

This is how Mahāprabhu left His home. Somebody can say that, materially speaking, this is not such a big matter, not a big sacrifice, but there is no parallel in this world to the devotion, dedication and sacrifice Viṣṇupriyā Devī had in her heart. Out of kindness to *jīva* souls, to rescue *jīva* souls and to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, Mahāprabhu had to sacrifice the imperial throne of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī's love. This is not an ordinary matter. Although Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī was merely fourteen years old, she gave up her beloved Lord for the sake of this world. We must always remember her unparalleled sacrifice.

Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī knew before too that Mahāprabhu would leave home and take *sannyās* – she knew that He would not stay at home. Mahāprabhu also explained everything to her and even showed His *chatur-bhuja mūrti*, but after He had left, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī was absolutely distraught, feeling an agony of separation from the Lord. She cried day and night, 'My Lord has left me and gone away!'

The day when Mahāprabhu left Nabadwīp Dhām, entire Nabadwīp plunged into complete darkness. All residents of Nabadwīp, even those who were atheists, even those who criticised Mahāprabhu, everyone cried and was stricken with grief. At our temple, every year when it came to the time of Mahāprabhu's leaving home and taking *sannyās*, our Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti

Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, spent three days (from the time Mahāprabhu takes *sannyās* until He reaches Shantipur) in a very grave mood. During these three days, only one simple vegetable dish is cooked at the temple – after the offering is done to the Deities, all *subji* is mixed with *ātop* rice, and the *prasād* is distributed in this way. Feeling overcome with separation, our Param Guru Mahārāj did not leave his room during these days. This is how he observed this pastime. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura wrote in his *Śrī Nabadwīp-bhāva-taraṅga* (70):

āmi chāi gaurachandre laite māyāpure
 yathāya kaiśora-veśa śrī-aṅgete sphure
 yathāya chāchāra keśa trikachchha-vasane
 īsodyāne līlā kare bhakta-jana sane

'I want to get Gaurachandra back in Māyāpur, where His youthful dress shines on His divine form, where He has wavy hair, wears a dhoti tucked in three places and performs His pastimes at Īsodyān together with devotees.'

...At first, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī stayed at home with Śāchī Mātā – she would cry on her lap and somehow passed her life. Two servants, Īsān Ṭhākura and Vamśīvan Ṭhākura, took care of them. Later, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī went back to her father's house and, locking the door of the house, stayed there until the end of her life. It is at this house that we have come today by our great fortune and the mercy of our Śrī Gurupādpadma.

When Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī came to her father's house, she had a Deity of Mahāprabhu made: she personally went to the Deity maker to see the Deity, but every time she saw

the Deity, she said, 'No, this is not my Prabhu,' 'This is not my Prabhu.' Finally, when she came to the Deity maker one day, she saw the Deity and covered her head. In this way, she indicated that this Deity was perfect. She always served this Deity. Every day, she would take a grain of rice,



chant, 'Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare, Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare' and put the grain of rice aside, then take the next grain of rice, chant again, and so on. She would cook whatever rice she had put aside in this way during the day and offer it to her Deity of

Mahāprabhu. After that, she would take that *prasād*. This is how she spent her days.

Coming here, we have an opportunity to have the *darśan* of Dhāmeśvar Mahāprabhu's Deity that was served by Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī. We must always remember the sacrifice Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī made in her life. This life is not for enjoyment. The purpose of this life is to sacrifice. We must learn from Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī. She was only a fourteen-year-old girl, but she gave up everything in her life: she even gave up the Supreme Lord and the dearest master of her very life. But we cannot give up even some small trifle things (we cannot even give up drinking tea!). We must throw our own happiness away. Devotees never think about themselves – they always only serve the Lord and always think about the Lord's happiness. Devotees always think, 'How can I please my Lord, my *guru*?' *Vraja gopīs* also say, 'Even if we go to hell, we do not mind it – the Lord's happiness is all that matters. Whatever makes Him happy is the source of our true happiness.'

We have also heard one very esoteric discourse from the holy lotus mouth of our Śrī Gurupādpadma. There is a verse mentioned in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* (2.13.145) that came out of Śrī Rādhārāṇī's mouth:

nā gaṇi āpana-duḥkha, dekhi' vrajeśvarī-mukha,
 vraja-janera hṛdaya vidare
 kibā māra' vraja-vāsī, kibā jīyāo vraje āsī',
 kena jīyāo duḥkha sahāibāre?

'I do not care for My personal unhappiness, but when I see the morose face of Mother Yaśodā and the hearts of all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvan breaking because of You, I wonder

whether You want to kill them all or do You want to enliven them by coming there? Why are You simply keeping them alive in this state of suffering?’

She said, ‘We are not considering our heart pain, but when we see Mother Yaśodā’s face, and Mother Yaśodā’s situation without Your presence, our heart is breaking after breaking after breaking... This is happening, and we cannot tolerate this pain. We can tolerate our own pain, but we cannot tolerate to see Mother Yaśodā’s pain.’

We can see a similar situation in the pastimes of Mahāprabhu. When Mahāprabhu decided to take *sannyās*, He told about it to five people, one of whom was Śrī Śachī Mātā. She fainted to hear it, but Mahāprabhu showed His divine form to Śachī Mātā and said, ‘Who are you and who am I? You know everything.’ Nimāi comforted and gave nourishment to Śachī Mātā, but it helped only for a short time. When Mahāprabhu finally left, Śachī Mātā immediately went into a coma-like state: she sat outside the house, and Mahāprabhu touched her lotus feet and went away to Keśav Bhāratī’s *āśram*... Śachī Mātā made no expression at that time: she only remained sitting there like a stone statue.

We always remember the pain of Rādhārāṇī and Her associates, the Vraja *gopīs*, but we forget how much pain, how much suffering Nanda Mahārāj, Yaśomatī Mayī and Śachī Mātā got. ‘I do not care for My personal unhappiness, but when I see the morose face of mother Yaśodā and the hearts of all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvan breaking because of You, I wonder whether You want to kill them all, or do You want to enliven them by coming

there? Why are You simply keeping them alive in this state of suffering?’ – Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī asked Kṛṣṇa this question. In reply, Kṛṣṇa said, ‘I come to Vraja Dhām every day. You think it is all illusion or a dream, but it is not so – I come personally.’ Rādhārāṇī believed Him. Describing the agony of separation that devotees experience, Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī wrote (2.2.29–35):

vaṁsī-gānāmṛta-dhāma, lāvaṅyāmṛta-jaṅma-sthāna,
 ye nā dekhe se chāḍa vadana
 se nayane kibā kāja, paḍuka tāra muṅḍe bāja,
 se nayana rahe ki kāraṇa

‘Of what use are the eyes of those who do not see the face of Kṛṣṇa, which resembles the moon and is the birthplace of all beauty and the reservoir of the nectarean songs of His flute? Oh, let a thunderbolt strike their heads! Why do they keep such eyes?’

sakhi he, śuna, mora hata vidhi-bala
 mora vapu-chitta-mana, sakala indriya-gaṇa,
 kṛṣṇa binā sakala vipphala

‘My dear friends, please hear Me. I have lost all providential strength. Without Kṛṣṇa, My body, consciousness, mind as well as all My senses are useless.’

kṛṣṇera madhura vāṇī, amṛtera taraṅgiṇī,
 tāra praveśa nāhi ye śravaṇe
 kāṇākaḍi-chhidra sama, jāniha se śravaṇa,
 tāra jaṅma haila akāraṇe

‘Topics about Kṛṣṇa are like waves of nectar. If such nectar does not enter one’s ear, this ear is no better than the hole of a damaged conchshell. Such an ear is created for no purpose.’

kṛṣṇera adharāmṛta, kṛṣṇa-guṇa-charita,
 sudhā-sāra-svādu-vinindana
 tāra svāda ye nā jāne, janmiyā nā maila kene,
 se rasanā bheka-jihvā sama

‘The nectar from the lips of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His transcendental qualities and characteristics surpass the taste of the essence of all nectar, and there is no fault in tasting such nectar. Those who do not taste it should die immediately after birth, and their tongues are to be considered no better than the tongue of a frog.’

mṛga-mada nīlotpala, milane ye parimala,
 yei hare tāra garba-māna
 hena kṛṣṇa-aṅga-gandha, yāra nāhi se sambandha,
 sei nāsā bhastrāra samāna

‘One’s nostrils are no better than the bellows of a blacksmith if one has not smelled the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa’s body, which is like the aroma of musk combined with that of the bluish lotus flower. Indeed, such combinations are actually defeated by the aroma of Kṛṣṇa’s body.’

kṛṣṇa-kara-pada-tala, koṭi-chandra-suśītala,
 tāra sparśa yena sparśa-maṇi
 tāra sparśa nāhi yāra, se yāike chhārakhāra,
 sei vapu lauha-sama jāni

‘The palms of Kṛṣṇa’s hands and the soles of His feet are so cool and pleasant that they can be compared only to the light of millions of moons. One who has touched such hands and feet has indeed tasted the effects of a touchstone. If one has not touched them, their life is spoilt, and their body is like iron.’

kari’ eta vilāpana, prabhu śachī-nandana,
 ughāḍiyā hṛdayera śoka

'Lamenting in this way, Śrī Śāchīnandan Gaura Hari exposed the grief of His heart.'

Therefore, coming to this abode of separation, we are remembering the pastimes of devotees' divine separation and continuing our *parīkramā*. We do not know in which birth we will be able to understand this or in which birth we will be able to develop service mood and enter this highest domain of devotion, but it is our greatest fortune that we, being so lowly and vile, have still got in this life the chance to join the current of this Śrī Rūpānuga line.

To conclude, we would like to present here a jewel of an article about Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī and her divine nature that we find published previously in *Śrī Gauḍīya Darśan* magazine.

Appearance day of Śrī Śrī Viṣṇupriyā

(Reprinted from the weekly Gauḍīya)

Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is the embodiment of transcendental pure loving devotion (*prema-bhakti*). It is impossible to attain pure loving devotion without her mercy. In the pastimes of Śrī Gaura-Nārāyaṇ, she is the embodiment of Gaura-Nārāyaṇ's *bhū-śakti*. The perception of Gaura-Nārāyaṇ is based on morality, and it is the mood of servitude (transcendental devotion of the lawful wife) that predominates there. There is no place whatsoever for the common material relationship between the wife and the husband there. She is the housewife at Śrī Gaura's house. If one establishes themselves in strict devotional adherence to her, then material existence, where

the mundane conceptions of the enjoyer and the enjoyable predominate, being born from the base discrimination between male and female, will be removed, and the *jīva* soul will attain the right to enter the house of Śrī Gaura, with the aspiration awakening within them to gain the qualification to serve there the holy marketplace of the Holy Name as some cleaning utensil.

It is mentioned in some places that Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is Śrī Satyabhāmā, the *vāmya-svabhāv* (leftist and feisty) lawful spouse of Dvārakeś Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who had a loving relationship with many ladies, but the peculiarity there is such that Śrī Kṛṣṇa begot children from the actual union with the Queens Śrī Rukmiṇī-Satyabhāmā, but no such pastime is manifest in relation to Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī: she is always considered an embodiment of Lakṣmī Devī in the pastimes of Śrī Gaura-Nārāyaṇ, following the line of exclusive morality. Unlike the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the pastimes of Śrī Gaura-Nārāyaṇ show no pastimes of engaging in loving relationship with multiple ladies.

In the pastimes of Śrī Gaura Viśvambhar, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā is an embodiment of loving devotion, a worshippingable Deity-like plenary incarnation of Śrīmatī Vṛṣabhānundinī; being ardently devoted to Śrī Vārṣabhānavī (Śrī Rādhikā), she nourishes the pastimes of divine separation from Vrajendra-nandan, being absorbed into Śrī Rādhā's divine mood. In her trying to prevent the pastime of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *sannyās*, there is no trace of any conception of enjoyment or physical union. If someone tries to show much devotion to Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī and gets busy trying to bring her to the Gambhīrā room at the house of Kāśī

Miśra in Nīlāchāl to get her to unite with Śrī Gaurasundar, such people are great offenders to the holy lotus feet of both Śrī Gaurasundar and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā – they are antagonists of the conception of pure devotion, wickedly guilty of *rasābhās* (offensive mixing of devotional moods) and extremely offensive *prākṛta-sahajiyā* (gross imitators). Although Śrī Gaura-Nārāyaṇ and Śrī Gaura-Viśvambhar are actually non-different from each other (beyond duality), there are characteristic peculiarities of Their manifest pastimes as well as distinct compartmentalisation of Their pastimes, and the immature folly and vision of those who try to meddle with these distinct peculiarities of Their pastimes are absolutely contemptible.

Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita, Śrī Gadādhara, Śrīvās, et al. are all our spiritual teachers (*āchāryas*) – they are worshipping Deities, non-different from Śrī Gaurasundar; they are Śrī Gaurasundar Himself. However, there is some distinction: although Śrī Gaurasundar is an *āchārya*, He is also the Lord of all *āchāryas*. Although Śrī Nityānanda, Śrī Advaita and others are masters, they predominantly perform the role of servants.

Śrī Viṣṇupriyā is the embodiment of transcendental loving devotion to Śrī Śrī Gaura-Viśvambhar, and by getting even a slightest trace of her mercy, *jīva* souls become blessed – it increases their firmness in practising chanting the Holy Name in strict devotional adherence to Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavs. Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī teaches and embodies a perfect example of worshipping the Lord in the pastime of separation from Śrī Gaurasundar through the chanting

of His Holy Names. When, right after Mahāprabhu's disappearance pastime, Śrīla Śrīnivās Āchārya Ṭhākur met with Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍit in Nīlāchal and on his order travelled to Śrī Dhām Māyāpur, he got the *darśan* of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī and the old Vaiṣṇava Śrī Īśān Prabhu in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur-Yogapīṭh. These events are described in detail in the holy books of *Bhakti-ratnākar* (4th Taraṅga) and *Prema-vilāsa*. Śrī Viṣṇupriyā chanted the Holy Name counting grains of rice (she would chant sixteen Holy Names of thirty-two syllables and then keep aside a grain of rice; she kept two new clay pots, one empty and the other filled with rice). Then, she would cook whatever rice she managed to keep aside in this way, offered it to Mahāprabhu and then took only a part of that as *prasād*. Even when she was taking *prasād*, she would chant the Holy Name in separation. In this way, her days and nights passed in worship and in chanting the Holy Name.

It is mentioned in *Bhakti-ratnākar* (10th and 12th Taraṅga), *Prema-vilās* (19th Vilās) and *Śrī Narottama-vilās* (6th Vilās) that Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākur Mahāśaya established together with 'Priyā' six Deities in Kheturi on Phālgunī Pūrṇimā: Gaurāṅga, Vallabī-kānta, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vraja-Mohan, Rādhākānta and Rādhā-Ramaṇ. It is also heard that with the permission of Śrī Narahari Sarkār Ṭhākur, the son of Śrī Raghunandan (Śrīla Ṭhākur Kānāi) manifested in Śrīkhaṇḍa the service to the Deities of Śrī Gaurāṅga with Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī on His left. Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur also manifested the service to the Deities of Śrī Gaurāṅga accompanied by Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī on the Phālgunī Pūrṇimā, Wednesday, 9 Chaitra 1300 (21 March 1894).

The authors of *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* (1.10.48) and *Śrī Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpika* describe Śrī Vallabhāchārya as simultaneously Janaka and Bhīṣma, and his daughter Lakṣmīpriyā Devī as Lakṣmī, embodying both Jānakī and Rukmiṇī at the same time. Additionally, *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* (1.15.59) describes Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī as being also an embodiment of Rukmiṇī:

“yena kṛṣṇa rukmiṇīte anyo'nya uchita
sei-mata viṣṇupriyā nimāi paṇḍita”

‘Viṣṇupriyā and Nimāi were as good a match as Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī.’

In *Śrī Gaura-gaṇoddeśa*, Śrī Sanātana Miśra is described as King Satrājīt in Kṛṣṇa-līlā; and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, as the daughter of this Satrājīt, princess Satyabhāma, the mother of the world and the embodiment of the Lord's *bhū-śakti*. As Satyabhāmā and Rukmiṇī are incarnations of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Nandinī, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī can also be called an incarnation of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Nandinī.

If, saying that Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is Rādhā (the source of all expansions), someone tries to say that Śrī Gaura and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā are Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, such people are the most terrible offenders to both because they seek to destroy the distinctive peculiarities of Their pastimes.

There is never any wanton pastimes of Gaurasundar, an embodiment of Śrī Rādhā's heart and halo.

“ataeva yata mahāmahima sakale
gaurāṅga-nāgara,—hena stava nāhi bale”

‘Great personalities never glorify Gaurāṅga as a womaniser.’

(From the lotus mouth of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura)

Remembering the *aṣṭakālīya* pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga (the pastimes during the eight divisions of the day), Śrīla Viśvanāth Chakravarti Ṭhākur is said to have described various interactions between Gaura and Viṣṇupriyā, but there is no question of transgressing the distinctive quality of the pastimes of Śrī Lakṣmī and Gaura-Nārāyaṇ there.

Because Śrī Vakreśvar Paṇḍit called Śrī Viṣṇupriyā ‘Śrī Rādhā’, there is a certain opinion common among the members of the *gaura-nāgarī sampradāya* (imitators that imagine Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu to be enjoying with many ladies). Followers of pure Gauḍīya line know that even when Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is called Śrī Rādhā, there can never be any transgression of the distinctive quality of Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s householder pastimes and the pastimes of His renounced life. Śrī Rādhā, the source of all expansions, manifests Her expansion as Viṣṇupriyā – in this sense, who else can Viṣṇupriyā be beyond being Śrī Rādhā? However, there are transcendental peculiar characteristics and distinctions between the pastimes of Śrī Rādhā-Govinda and the separation pastimes of Kṛṣṇachandra couched into Śrī Rādhā’s heart and halo as well as the pastimes of Śrī Gaura-Nārāyaṇ and Śrī Lakṣmī-Viṣṇupriyā; these differences exist eternally.

In the past, Śrīla Prabhupād wrote to one devotee the letter presented below, dated 11 Ashadh 1336 (22 June 1930), regarding the appropriateness of having Viṣṇupriyā Pallī in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur:

Dear Affection Incarnate,

It is necessary to have Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Pallī in Śrī Dhām Māyāpur, but those who reject strict adherence to Śrī Viṣṇupriyā

*and embrace independence should have no place in Śrī Māyāpur. * * has had Viṣṇupriyā Pallī arranged for seven days already, assuming the role of a father or a son of female devotees, and there has been no trouble in the course of this time.*

** * * Female devotees must serve Śrī Mahāprabhu following Viṣṇupriyā with exclusive devotion. They must not act independently. * * **

Being situated within the religion of householders, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur and Prabhupād did not become residents at their cherished Viṣṇupriyā Pallī. When one receives even the slightest trace of Viṣṇupriyā Devī's mercy, one becomes free from the religion of householders. There is eternal difference between the followers of pure Gauḍīya line and the *gṛhi-bāul sampradāya* that compare the family life of the Supreme Lord Śrī Gaurasundar and His associates with the family life of conditioned souls that revolves around sense gratification.

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur sang:

sarasvatī kṛṣṇapriyā kṛṣṇa-bhakti tā'ra hiyā
vinodera sei se vaibhav

'The devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa that is found within the hearts of Sarasvatī and Kṛṣṇapriyā is Vinod's wealth and opulence.'

Śrī Viṣṇupriyā is Śuddhā Sarasvatī (Pure Sarasvatī); she is the presiding Deity of transcendental knowledge; she is Sarasvatī Devī residing happily on the tongue of Śrī Gaura-Nṛsiṃha. She bestows eternal spiritual benefit on all *jīva* souls by personifying pure speech or the practice of chanting the transcendental sound vibration of the Holy Name. Unfortunate *jīva* souls are deprived of her

mercy – they worship material knowledge that embodies obstruction to spiritual life in service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and being seized by the cravings for enjoyment and salvation, they do not have the guts to kick this knowledge that creates obstacles to devotion in the head, singing the words of great souls, ‘*Mastakete padāghāta kara akaitava*. I will with all sincerity kick it in the head.’

Even if you give hundreds of lectures on the difference between material knowledge and transcendental knowledge, people with limited intelligence will still remain deprived, being unable to sing the victorious hymn of *Kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtan*, embarking on a new life in transcendental knowledge (*para-vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam*).

In *Śrī Chaitanya-chandrodaya Nāṭaka*, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is called a personification of Devotion (Bhakti Devī herself).

Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur wrote about the nature of Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā in his *Jaiḥva-dharma* (chapter 14) as follows:

Question: In which way does Śrī Gaurāṅga’s *yugala* aspect manifest?

Answer: Gaurāṅga’s *yugala* aspect is of two kinds, depending on the approach (the path of Deity worship or the path of devotional service). According to the path of Deity worship, Śrī Gaurāṅga is worshipped as Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā, and according to the path of devotional service, He is worshipped as Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara.

Question: Which energy of Śrī Gaurāṅga is Śrī Viṣṇupriyā?

Answer: Generally, devotees call her His *bhū-śakti*. In fact, she is the *samvit-śakti*, the personified essence of *hlādinī*,

which means that she is a personification of Devotion: she came to assist Śrī Gaurā's *avatār* in preaching about the Holy Name of the Lord. Just as Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām embodies the nine kinds of devotion on its nine islands, Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is similarly a personification of the nine kinds of devotion.

Question: But is Śrī Viṣṇupriyā *svarūpa-śakti* of the Lord?

Answer: What doubt can there be? Is the *samvit-śakti* and the personified essence of *hlādinī* of the Lord's *svarūpa-śakti* not *svarūpa-śakti*?

Śrī Śrīla Prabhupād spoke about Śrī Gaura-Viṣṇupriyā in the following way:

‘When Śrī Gaurasundar manifested His pastimes prior to His arrival in Gayā, these pastimes were manifest as the opulent pastimes of Lord Nārāyaṇ. In His householder pastimes, Śrīman Mahāprabhu revealed His Nārāyaṇ form. The householder pastimes of Lakṣmīpriyā and Gaura must be known as the pastimes of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇ in Vaikuṅṭha. In *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa* (43), Kavi Karṇapur said that he who was known as Janaka, the king of Mithilā, is Vallabhāchārya in the incarnation of Gaura, and this Vallabhāchārya had a daughter, Lakṣmīpriyā. Both Jānakī and Rukmiṇī combined into one and became his one daughter called Lakṣmī. Just before Śrī Gaurasundar manifested His internal nature filled with transcendental loving devotion, Śrī Lakṣmī disappeared, which means when the personification of transcendental loving devotion, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā, was coming into prominence, Lakṣmīpriyā existed beautifully as a servant of Gaura-Nārāyaṇ. Eventually, when transcendental loving devotion came

into prominence and became fit to serve Śrī Gaurasundar, Lakṣmī Devī disappeared. If we consider her spiritual position, Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī is an embodiment of *bhū-śakti*. In *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa*, Śrī Kavi Karṇapur wrote that he who was King Satrājīit is referred to as Rāja Paṇḍit Sanātan in the incarnation of Gaura. The personification of 'bhū' (the mother of the world), Śrī Viṣṇupriyā, is his daughter. In *Śrī Chaitanya-chandrodaya Nāṭaka*, Kavi Karṇapur called Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī a plenary expansion of Earth. Viṣṇupriyā Devī assists Śrī Gaurasundar's transcendental loving devotion. Śrī Gaurasundar is the combined form of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; therefore, it can be said that the mother of the world, the loving motherly guardian of all devotees, Viṣṇupriyā, is a maidservant of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. She can be referred to as Parameśvarī, a devotee and an assistant of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu Nandinī. The character Śrī Gaurasundar showed in His early pastimes (before His journey to Gayā) was the character of Lord Nārāyaṇ. He accepted Śrī Lakṣmīpriyā and Śrī Viṣṇupriyā as His lawful spouses. After He returned from Gayā, He also showed the pastimes that involved mixed devotional mood: His opulence was still visible. For example, He showed His four-armed form of Nṛsimha at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, He showed His form of Varāhadev at the house of Murāri Gupta, etc. Sometimes, He also lay on the cot prepared as the throne for worshipping Lord Viṣṇu.

‘In the final pastimes of His stay at home, He was overwhelmed with the mood of Rādhā and spoke about the conjugal pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, revealing them to this world. At the same time, it is not true that He did not speak

“kanaka jiniyā aṅga se ati malina
kr̥ṣṇa-chaturddaśira śarīra prāya kṣīṇa”

*‘Her limbs that used to be adorned with gold are now soiled,
and her fourteen-year-old body became virtually emaciated.’*

“harināma saṁkhyāpūrṇa taṇḍule karaya
se taṇḍula pāka kari’ prabhure arpaya”

*‘She chanted the Holy Name and counted it with grains of
rice – when she completed chanting a certain number of times, she
cooked that rice and offered it to the Lord.’*

“tārārai kiñchin-mātra karena bhajaṇa
keha nā jānaye kene rākhaye jīvana”

*‘From that, she ate only a little. Nobody knows how she kept
her body and soul together.’*

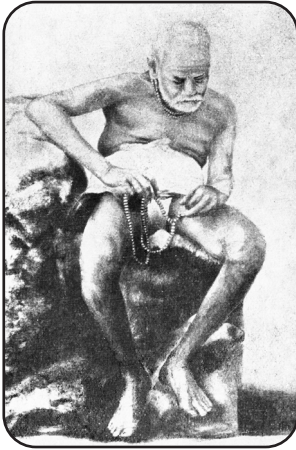
If we are to become sincerely (without any sinful purposes) firm in following the example of spiritual life that was shown by Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, we will embrace the great fortune of being able to join the grand festival of remembering Śrī Gaura in the holy abode of Śrī Gaura in the association of Śrī Gaura’s associates – throwing ourselves into the great sacrificial fire of *saṅkīrtan* at the *saṅkīrtan-rāsa-sthali* revealed by Śrī Gaurasundar, we will attain the highest auspicious opportunity to become servants of the servants at a dwelling established by Śrī Chaitanya Saraswatī next to this *saṅkīrtan-rāsa-sthali* place where everything favourable to Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practised.

Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj's Samādhi-Mandir

Concluding this day's Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, by the mercy of our Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have come to Vaiṣṇav Sārvabhauma Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj.



This is where Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj spent the last period of his life. You can see the photograph of Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj in the *guru-paramparā* photographs in all our temples (the last one on the right).



Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj engaged in his spiritual practice in a very strict way. One time, somebody brought him a pomelo (*bātābi lebu*), saying, ‘Prabhu, please take this, use it for service.’ However, Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj said, ‘You are saying that you have brought it for service, but you have other desires inside you. I know it. You are thinking that if you give some

fruit to me, then your tree will bear more fruit. You have this desire.’ He did not accept that fruit. At another time, he said, ‘Instead of making offences to the Holy Name, it is better if you just water a Vaiṣṇav’s eggplant tree.’

(I have seen many times people sit and chant on their beads during the class or during the *parikramā*, but when the *kīrtans* are chanted, their mouths are shut – they cannot even say ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa’. Our Guru Mahārāj said that this is finger exercise. Such people cannot understand what *kīrtan* is; they are committing offences to the Holy Name.)

Coming here, we must glorify Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj, we must chant his *kīrtan*. Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj did not like any talks except Kṛṣṇa-kathā. He is a great exalted Vaiṣṇav, a self-realised great soul (*siddha-mahā-puruṣa bābājī*).

Our Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla B.R. Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, composed Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj’s *praṇām mantra*, describing the gist of his glory:

gaura-vrajāśrita-āśeṣair vaiṣṇavair vandya-vigraham
jagannātha-prabhuṁ vande pramābdhiṁ vṛddha-vaiṣṇavam

Gaura-vraja-āśrita āśeṣair vaṣṇavair vandya vighraha. All Vaiṣṇavs who have taken shelter at the holy lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Vraja and Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in Nabadwīp offer their obeisance at the holy lotus feet of Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj. He is the supremely worshippable Deity, an embodiment of shelter.

Jagannāth-prabhuṁ vande premābdhiṁ vṛddha-vaiṣṇavam. We eternally offer our obeisance at the holy lotus feet of this supremely worshippable senior Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākura, who is floating in the ocean of transcendental love.

You know that Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was a *siddha-mahāpuruṣa*. Receiving an inspiration from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that all the Rādhā Kuṇḍa and Vṛndāvan pastimes of Kṛṣṇa now existed in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām – driven by this pull – Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj came here despite his old age and settled in a small cottage.

You have heard that when Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj was 137 years old, Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura came here and requested him to come with him to Māyāpur to confirm the discovery of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's birthplace. Coming to the supreme abode of Yogapīṭh, Bābājī Mahārāj jumped out of his basket and began to dance, '*Hari bol!* I have found it! This is Prabhu's birthplace! This is Yogapīṭh!'

We have heard something about the incredible character of Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj from the holy mouths of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavs, and we should learn from those narrations.

Many cook for their *gurudev* and then come to *gurudev* and ask him, 'Gurudev, please give me your *prasād*.' This is what *sahājiyās* do. But if this is a genuine *guru*, he will get irritated to hear this – he would never want to give his remnants to anyone. If you want to get *prasād*, you must do it secretly. When *gurudev* finishes taking *prasād*, and if he has left anything on his plate, you can secretly take a handful later, but there is no question of coming in front of your *guru* and asking him for it. Many think, 'I want to get some *prasād* leftovers of my *guru*, so I will invite him to my house.' They feed their *guru* forcefully just to get his *prasād*. This is not Vaiṣṇav behaviour.

One time, a lady from Dhātrigrām (a village near Kalna) invited Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj to her house. Bābājī Mahārāj had a servitor, Bihārī Dās. The lady told Bihārī Dās, 'I am inviting you and your Master (your *gurudev*). I want to cook for you and give you *prasād* at my house.' Bihārī Dās agreed, 'All right, I will ask Bābājī Mahārāj, and if he agrees, I will tell you the date when he will come, then you can arrange it.'

Bihārī Dās came to Bābājī Mahārāj and said, 'Bābājī Mahārāj, one honourable lady, an elderly widow, came the other day. She was asking if you could come to her house. She wants to cook, offer the *bhog* and give you some *prasād*. Will you go there?'

'All right, I will,' Bābājī Mahārāj said.

'Can you say which day you can go?'

'You can arrange some date, and I will come.'

Then, Bihārī Dās chose the date and informed the lady about it. When the day came, Bābājī Mahārāj set off to her

house on foot (there were no trains in those days) and then finally arrived at that house. The old lady said to Bihārī Dās, 'I have already finished cooking. Please offer the *bhog*.' Bihārī Dās offered the *bhog*, and the lady said, 'Come, sit down, I will serve the *prasādam* to you both.'

She placed two banana leaves on the ground and served them *prasād*. Bābājī Mahārāj ate whatever she had given him, wiping the plate and not leaving a trace of *prasādam*. The lady thought, 'It was so hard to invite Bābājī Mahārāj... I wanted to take his *prasādam*, but I see that he has not left any remnants! Let me feed him something more then!' With this in mind, she tried to give Bābājī Mahārāj more, but Bābājī Mahārāj refused, 'No, no, it is enough, not necessary! I have finished, not necessary to give anything more. I have eaten, I cannot eat more,' but the lady kept insisting, 'No, no, take more!' In the end, she forcefully gave him more *prasād* – *subji*, vegetables, rice, and so on. Bābājī Mahārāj understood what was happening and was displeased at heart, 'You are forcing me to eat because you yourself want to take *prasād*! I have understood what is on your mind.' Without saying a word, Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāj again ate whatever she gave him – along with the plate! Seeing that Bābājī Mahārāj had eaten the plate(!), the lady exclaimed, 'Gosh!' And Bihārī Dās was horrified, 'Gosh, I have made such a big offence! Because of me, there is so much austerity for my Prabhu! I will never accept such invitations again!' As for Bābājī Mahārāj, he did not say anything.

Such was Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj. There is also another story. When Bābājī Mahārāj and Bihārī Dās

were, perhaps, going to the house of that old lady, a rich man saw them on the road and thought, ‘Oh, this *sādhu* is so poor – he is walking barefoot, his clothes are all torn... Let me give him some money – at least he can buy himself some clothes.’ (Actually, the man gave Bābājī Mahārāj money because he was proud of his wealth and riches.) Bābājī Mahārāj took the money and continued his way. A while later, having walked some three–four kilometres, he suddenly ordered Bihārī Dās, ‘Turn back. Let’s go back.’

Bihārī Dās was surprised, ‘Why? Are you not going to that lady’s house?’

‘I am, but first take me to the house of the man who gave this money.’

‘But why?’

‘Go, go. Turn back.’

Bihārī Dās brought Bābājī Mahārāj to the house of that man – a big three-storey house. They saw the man sitting on the roof of the house. Bābājī Mahārāj told Bihārī Dās to ask him to come downstairs (Bābājī Mahārāj was old and spoke softly; he could not shout). Bihārī Dās shouted to the man, ‘Sir, are you home?’

‘I am. What is it?’ asked the man from the roof.

‘Could you please come down for a minute?’

‘Why? What has happened?’ the man asked.

‘Bābājī Mahārāj wants to talk to you,’ Bihārī Dās said.

The man came downstairs, thinking, ‘He must have come to ask me for more money! That is how *sādhus* are – you give them money once, and they will keep coming to you every month after that!’ But what did Bābājī Mahārāj do? *He gave that man his money back.*

The man was taken aback. ‘What is this? You have taken this donation, and now you are giving it back?!’

‘My friend,’ Bābājī Mahārāj explained, ‘you see, I cannot tolerate the burden of this money. When I was walking down the road, I kept thinking what I will buy with this money, what I will do, what should be done with that money – I kept thinking about the money and could not chant the Holy Name. My friend, please take it back – this is such a big headache for me.’

The man could not understand how it was possible. ‘What are you talking about? I have hundreds of thousands of rupees, but I do not think anything of it – it does not give me any headache.’

‘Well, you have a big head, but my head is small, so I cannot take it. Please relieve me of this money – take it and let me go,’ Bābājī Mahārāj asked. He handed the money back to the man and left.

Such is the quality of a Vaiṣṇav. We must learn from this – this kind of Vaiṣṇav mood must come to us, too. ‘*Āmi ta Vaiṣṇava – e buddhi haile āmāni nā haba āmi*. If I think I have become a Vaiṣṇav, then I will never stop expecting honour from others.’ Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur is very merciful. We are often very proud of our material life – some are proud of their money, some are proud of their house, some think, ‘I have become a Vaiṣṇav!’, ‘I have become an *āchārya!*’ People have this kind of ego. When will this ego leave us? We have to give it up. Coming to Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur and giving him one rupee is not *vaiṣṇav-sevā* (service to a Vaiṣṇav). You cannot serve a Vaiṣṇav unless you become a Vaiṣṇav yourself.

I have seen that many people go inside the temple of Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī and come right in front of the holy Deity of Mahāprabhu – in exchange for some donation, the *paṇḍas* bring out Mahāprabhu’s shoes (*pādukā*) and touch them to everyone’s heads, saying that those people have now got Mahāprabhu’s mercy! It is not so easy to get real mercy. Many also come to the temple and quickly elbow their way through the crowd to come right in front of the Deities – there are many senior Vaiṣṇavs in the crowd, but people rush to pay obeisance to the Deities, pushing their way past them. Do you think that if you pay obeisance from behind (from far), the Lord will not see you? You do not need to pay obeisance coming right to the front over the heads of all the Vaiṣṇavs. If you want to become a Vaiṣṇav, you must be humble, you must be tolerant, and you must learn to give honour to others.

Therefore, coming to Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur, we must pray sincerely, with all our hearts, ‘O Vaiṣṇav Ṭhākur! Please bestow your mercy on me so that I may be able to serve you, so that I may be able to leave all ego and become qualified to serve you.’

Jay Śrīla Jagannāth Dās Bābājī Mahārāj ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Śrī Koladwīp ki jay. Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

kabe śrī-chaitanya more karibena dayā
kabe āmi pāiba vaiṣṇava-padachhāyā [1]

When will Śrī Chaitanya be merciful to me? When will I attain the shade of Vaiṣṇavs' feet?

kabe āmi chhāḍība e viṣayābhimāna
kabe viṣṇu-jane āmi kariba sammāna [2]

When will I give up this mundane ego? When will I honour the Lord's devotees?

gala-vastra kṛtāñjali vaiṣṇava-nikaṭe
dante tṛṇa kari' dāḍāiba niṣkapaṭe [3]

I will stand before a Vaiṣṇav sincerely, with a cloth around my neck and joined palms, holding a straw between my teeth.

kāḍiyā kāḍiyā jānāiba duḥkha-grāma
saṁsāra-anala haite māgiba viśrāma [4]

Weeping, I will convey my sorrows to the Vaiṣṇav and pray for shelter from the fire of material existence.

śuniyā āmāra duḥkha vaiṣṇava ṭhākura
āmā' lāgi' kṛṣṇe āvedibena prachura [5]

Hearing of my sorrow, the worshippingable Vaiṣṇav will ardently pray to Kṛṣṇa on my behalf.

vaiṣṇavera āvedane kṛṣṇa dayāmaya
e hena pāmara prati habena sadaya [6]

Lord Kṛṣṇa is merciful – hearing the Vaiṣṇav's appeal, He will take pity on this wretched sinner.

vinodera nivedana vaiṣṇava-charaṇe
kṛpā kari saṅge laha ei akiñchane [7]

Bhaktivinod prays at the holy feet of Vaiṣṇavs: 'Please take this destitute soul with you.'

Śrī Samudragaḍ

We usually visit the second part of Śrī Koladwīp (the western side) during the fourth day of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*. As each year, this year, too, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have entered Śrī Koladwīp on our last day and have now come to Śrī Samudragaḍ, where Śrī Dvāraka Dhām and Gaṅgāsagar reside eternally.



In the previous age, there was a king called Rājā Śrī Samudrasen who lived in this area. Although he was a great king, he was also a big devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa –

he always thought about Kṛṣṇa and knew nothing else except the Lord. One day, Bhīmasen came here to conquer the kingdom. He and his soldiers had surrounded Samudragaḍ, but Rājā Samudrasen was very intelligent: he knew that Kṛṣṇa was the master and close friend of the Pāṇḍavas, and if any of the Pāṇḍavas got into danger, Kṛṣṇa would definitely come to rescue them. So, the king thought, 'If I scare Bhīma, the Lord will hear his prayer and come to my land, and this poor and fallen soul will be able to get His *darśan*.' In this way, thinking about the Lord, the king brought his elephants, horses and soldiers, and a great battle started. Eventually, the king's plan was successful: as the battle went on and on, Bhīma eventually became very afraid; seeing no way out, he prayed to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, 'Prabhu, please protect me! I can neither win this battle nor lose it! If I lose it, I will not be able to tolerate such great humiliation.'

Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of the Pāṇḍavas, heard Bhīma's cry and personally came to the battlefield. Then, something wondrous happened. King Śrī Samudrasen got the *darśan* of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's form of exquisite beauty – he could see nothing except the Lord. At the sight of Kṛṣṇa's beauty, the king became overwhelmed with divine love and was on the verge of fainting. The king then prayed to the Supreme Lord, 'O Lord, You are Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the entire world, Jagannāth, You are the rescuer of the fallen – seeing this fallen soul, You have come to me! The whole world is chanting Your glories, and now that I have seen You with my own eyes, my desire has been fulfilled. At the same time, O Lord, I have promised

that I will not go anywhere from here until You come to this Nabadwīp Dhām. O merciful One! Have You come to fulfil my promise? My hidden aspiration is to behold You as Gaurāṅga.’ Saying this, the king suddenly first saw Vṛndāvan pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and then the mysterious form of Rasarāj-Mahābhāv Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu: Nimāi Viśvambhav was chanting and dancing in *mahā-saṅkīrtan* together with His devotees. After a while, the Lord disappeared. When everything became calm again, the king began to cry.

In the meantime, Bhīmasen saw the king crying (he could not understand why because he had not seen the Lord) and was astonished. He thought that the king was crying out of fear. So, he again started fighting, and this time the king let him easily win the battle. Bhīma got the tribute from the king and went away, feeling pleased with himself. From then on, the whole world chants the glories of Bhīma, calling him ‘*digvijay*’, the conqueror of all directions.

Samudragaḍ (Samudragarh) is situated near the border of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. Even Lord Brahmā himself does not know its glory.

One time, Samudra (the Ocean) came here and, taking shelter of Gaṅga Devī, started serving devotees. Gaṅga Devī told the ocean, ‘Prabhu, very soon my Lord will come and stay on your shore.’

‘O Devī!’ replied the ocean. ‘Can I tell you something? Śāchinandan Gaura Hari never leaves Nabadwīp. Even if He stays on my shore for a few days, He actually always stays in Nadia in an unmanifest way. All the Vedas say that

the eternal pastimes of Mahāprabhu continue eternally in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. O Devī! I will stay here, in your shelter.’

Saying this, the ocean stayed in Nabadwīp Dhām and continues sitting here, in Samudragaḍ, to this day, meditating on the eternal pastimes of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu told Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu about the glory of this place, and by the mercy of Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur, we get to know about all this from *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya*. This is our greatest fortune.

Jay Śrī Samudragaḍ ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā pālankārī bhakta-ṽṛnda ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.





Śrī Chāpāhāṭi

By the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, continuing our way from Śrī Samudragaḍ, we have now come to this very charming place – this is the temple of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara, established by Śrī Dvija Vāṇināth Prabhu. In Mahāprabhu’s time, Mahāprabhu’s Deity was installed in three places: Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara Deities served by Śrī Dvija Vāṇināth Prabhu in Chāpāhāṭi; Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda Deities served by Śrī Gaurī Dās Paṇḍit in Kālnā; and Dhāmeśvar Mahāprabhu served by Śrī Viṣṇupriyā Devī. These three Deities have existed in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām for over five hundred years now.

When Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu was doing Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* together with Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu, He came here and described the glory of this place thus:

In the previous age, there was a forest called Khadiravan in this place. Champakalatā Sakhī gathered champa flowers in this forest and made garlands with them. Every day she served Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa with those champa flower garlands. When Kali-yuga came, gardeners came to the champa forest and started gathering flowers – they established a market nearby, where they sold champa flowers. That is why this place became known as Śrī Champakahāṭṭa, or Chāpāhāṭi (lit. ‘a champa market’).

Many years ago, when Śrī Lakṣmaṇ Sen served as the king in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām (Nadia), a devotee called Jayadev Goswāmī lived here as one of the citizens of this area. Jayadev Goswāmī had a small cottage on the bank of Ballāl Dīrghaka (a pond in Gaṅgānagar, Māyāpur), where he lived together with his pious spouse Padmāvati. Jayadev Goswāmī was a great poet, and many of his poems were composed here in Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām. *Śrī Gīta Govinda* and *Daśa Avatāra Stotram* are particularly famous among his works.

Many come to Chāpāhāṭi and, remembering Śrī Jayadev Goswāmī, chant his *Gīta Govinda*, but we never do that. We mention the '*Dehi pada-pallavam-udāram*' śloka from *Gīta Govinda* and talk about Jayadev and Padmāvati, but tell me, who will you tell about Jayadev's separation and who can understand it?... Actually, Jayadev Goswāmī started composing *Gīta Govinda* in another place in Nabadwīp, but he could not finish it there. When he later came here, to Chāpāhāṭi, he finished it here.

One day, when Jayadev Goswāmī lived in Chāpāhāṭi and was going to write *Gīta Govinda*, he forgot what the next line would be. Nothing came to his mind. Not being able to complete the śloka, he told Padmāvati Devī, 'I am going to take a bath in the Ganges. Please have the *prasād* ready, I will take it when I come back.'

A short while later, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself came in disguise of Jayadev Goswāmī and said, 'Padmāvati, is *prasād* ready?'

'Yes, you said you would take *prasādam* after taking a bath, so come and take it,' she replied.

The Lord took *prasād*, and what did He do next? He went into the room where Jayadev Goswāmī would sit composing *Gīta Govinda*, and the Lord Himself finished that *śloka* from *Gīta Govinda* that Jayadev Goswāmī could not finish. After that, He left the room and went away.

Soon, real Jayadev Goswāmī came home. He asked Padmāvati Devī, ‘Padmāvati, where is my *prasād*?’

Padmāvati Devī was surprised, ‘What do you mean where is your *prasād*? You have just taken *prasād* and went to your room. I saw you going there and writing something.’

Jayadev Goswāmī could not understand anything, ‘What? I have not come before!’ Then, he went into his room and saw that the *śloka* was finished – it was written there, ‘*Dehi pada-pallavam-udāram*: I am placing Your holy lotus feet on My head.’ The Lord Himself came there, wrote this and left. Kṛṣṇa Himself wrote what had to be written about Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī (that the Lord Himself places Her feet on His head) and what Jayadev did not have the courage to write.

Another time, when Jayadev Goswāmī composed *Daśa Avatāra Stotram*, King Śrī Lakṣmaṇ read it and became very happy. He asked one of his men, ‘Whose poetry is this? Who has written this?’ The man replied that the poem had been composed by a poet called Jayadev Goswāmī. Excited, the king became very eager to meet with Jayadev Goswāmī. He then secretly found out where Jayadev Goswāmī was staying, and one night, dressed as a beggar Vaiṣṇav, came to him. Jayadev Goswāmī understood that it was the king but at first did not say it to him. After

a while, the king revealed his identity to Jayadev Goswāmī and invited him to his house. Jayadev Goswāmī became annoyed and declined the king's invitation, explaining, 'I do not want to go to the house of a materialist. If you think that because I am your subject, you can order me around, then I will leave your land and go to some other place. Associating with materialists can never bring anything auspicious. I had better go to Nīlāchal (Śrī Purī Dhām).' Hearing his words, the king became perturbed, 'Please do not leave Nabadwīp! Prabhu, if you do not want to stay here, there is a village called Chāpāhāṭī on the other side of the Ganges – please come to live there. I give you my word that I will never come to you unless you order me to: I will not come to see your holy feet until and unless you call me.' Seeing the king's humility and hearing his soft speech, Jayadev Goswāmī replied, 'So be it. Although you are a materialist king, you are a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. You have no attachment to the material world. I have called you a materialist to test you, but you have no ego – hearing this, you tolerated it silently. This is how I can understand that you are a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. I accept your proposal – I will come to stay in Chāpāhāṭī, and you can secretly come to see me, leaving behind all your royal opulence. I do not have any objection.' So, the king constructed a small cottage in Chāpāhāṭī, and Jayadev Goswāmī stayed there, engaging himself in his eternal worship of the Lord.

Every day, Padmāvati Devī gathered many champaka flowers and gave them to Jayadev Goswāmī, who then worshipped the Lord with those flowers. One day,

the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa mercifully came in front of Jayadev Goswāmī and Padmāvati Devī, revealing His effulgent form the colour of a champaka flower. Seeing the Lord's wondrous form, they began to cry and immediately fell unconscious. Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu then took His two devotees on His lap and spoke, 'You two are My dear devotees. Very soon, I will appear here in Nabadwīp from the womb of Śāchī Devī. I will spread the Holy Name and rescue the entire earth, and when I turn twenty-four, I will take *sannyās* and leave for Nīlāchal. There, I will taste the exclusive mood of My devotees, and I will especially relish the nectar of your *Śrī Gīta Govinda* in the company of devotees. You are My dear devotees, so after you leave your bodies, you will come to this transcendental Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, but for now, please do Me a favour – go to Nīlāchal. You will serve Lord Śrī Jagannāthdev there and attain in this way transcendental love for the Lord.' Saying this, Mahāprabhu disappeared.

Not being able to see the Lord any more, Jayadev and Padmāvati began to weep. Burning with the agony of separation, they lamented, 'O Lord! What will become of us now? How will we live not being able to see our Lord? How can we ever leave this Nabadwīp and go to Nīlāchal? We must have certainly committed some offence! Even if we are born as a beast or a bird, it is still better than leaving! We can lose our life, but we will never be able to leave Nabadwīp! O Lord! Please keep us here, at Your holy lotus feet!' Both of them were crying and lamenting in this way when suddenly they heard a divine message

in the sky, ‘Do not be sad. Go to Nīlāchal and remember what I am saying to you. You wanted to go to Nīlāchal before, so Jagannāth has fulfilled your desire. He wants to meet with you – go to Him and make Him happy. When the right time comes and you leave your bodies, you will again return to Nabadwīp and stay here eternally.’

Having heard this divine message and not being able to ignore the Lord’s order, Jayadev Goswāmī and Padmāvati Devī decided not to delay and set off to Nīlāchal. As they started to walk, they stopped and looked back at Nabadwīp from time to time, with tears flowing from their eyes. From afar, they told all residents of Nabadwīp, ‘Please be merciful to both of us. Please forgive our offences!’ Walking further and further, they kept looking back at their beloved Nabadwīp, and when they could no longer see it, they crossed the boarder of Gauḍadeś shedding incessant tears and some days later arrived in Nīlāchal. Only after having got the *darśan* of Lord Jagannāth, they got their life back.

This is the story of Śrīla Jayadev Goswāmī. This village Chāpāhāṭi is situated on an elevated place (a hill) – Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu told Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu that this was where Jayadev Goswāmī’s cottage was.

There is also another matter that should be mentioned here – the pastimes of Dvija Vāñināth Prabhu. In Dvāpar-yuga, Dvija Vāñināth Prabhu took part in the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa – he was a *gopī* called Kāmālekḥā.

Before that, in Satya-yuga, one *brāhmaṇ* lived in this place. Every day, he would come to the champaka garden, pick champaka flowers and serve Rādhā-Govinda with them. What did the Lord, who is very affectionate to

His devotees, do? Actually, you do not need to offer any expensive food to please the Lord. The Lord says, 'If one worships Me with a drop of Ganges water and a Tulasī leaf, I become very happy.' So, when that *brāhmaṇ* served the Lord with flowers, the Lord became very pleased. One day, when the *brāhmaṇ* was meditating and serving his Deities, Kṛṣṇa decided to appear before Him, revealing His beautiful form to him. The Lord thought, 'This *brāhmaṇ* has been serving me so much, I shall grant My *darśān* to him.' So, when the *brāhmaṇ* was meditating on his beloved worshippable Deity, Śyāmasundar, Kṛṣṇa appeared before him in His golden form, the colour of a champaka flower (in the form of Lord Gaurasundar). The Supreme Lord said, 'I will appear in this form that you see now in Kali-yuga.' Saying this, Mahāprabhu disappeared. Since that time, the *brāhmaṇ* always thought with pain in his heart, 'Prabhu, how long will I live? Will I live to Kali-yuga?' Hearing his thoughts, the Lord appeared before him in a dream on another day and said, 'Do not become disheartened, do not cry! In Kali-yuga, I will come to the house of Śachī Mātā and Jagannāth Mīśra, and at that time you, too, will appear here in this village Chāpāhāṭi.'

That *brāhmaṇ* appeared in Kali-yuga as Dvija Vāṇināth, who installed the Deities of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara at this temple here in Chāpāhāṭi. Some time later, these Deities' service eventually stopped, and almost one hundred years ago, Jagad-Guru Śrīla Prabhupād Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura took charge of the Deities' service. Since that time, the service at this temple has been running properly. We can find the history of how this temple

became manifest in the holy scripture of Śrī Gauḍīya Math called *Saraswatī Jayāśrī*. We are presenting this article with a detailed account of the events below for the eternal benefit of this world.

Jay Śrī Chāṅpāhāṭi ki jay, Śrī Dvija Vāṅināth Prabhu ki jay.

Jay Śrī Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

Śrīla Prabhupād Rescues Abandoned Service to Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara at Chāṅpāhāṭi

From the present time, more or less four hundred years ago, a disciple of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's associate Śrīmat Gadādhara Paṇḍit Goswāmī Prabhu called Dvija Vāṅināth Brahmachārī Mahāśaya revealed the service to the holy Deities of Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara in the village of Champahaṭṭa, or Chāṅpāhāṭi, situated near P.O. Samudragarh, within the present-day Bardhaman (Burdwan) District. The year when Śrīla Prabhupād first re-introduced Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā* (Phālgun 1326; March 1920), the *parikramā* lasted only four days; however, with a view to make it possible for everyone to do the *parikramā* of all places in Nabadwīp, Śrīla Prabhupād sent a few devotees to Champahaṭṭa in Ṛtudwīp to discover all the places of the *parikramā*. Seeing the abandoned state of the temple and the service established by Dvija Vāṅināth in ancient days some four hundred years ago, Śrīla Prabhupād's heart was pained in the extreme.

The original Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara holy Deities lived without anyone serving Them, abandoned and unclothed. Snakes, scorpions, tigers, dogs and other animals established their empire all around Them. Is it possible that anyone would enter there, cutting their way through the impenetrable jungle! Some *grhastha brāhmaṇ* (a meat- and fish-eater) was the guardian servitor, so if he felt like it, at his leisure, he would sometimes come to the holy Deities in daylight and give Them some puffed or flat rice! The very place where Śrī Jayadeva once sang *Madhura Komalakānta Padāvalī* – the place where Brahmā, Śiva and others once performed the royal ablution of the holy footprints of Śrī Gaura's lotus feet, the very object of their aspirations – the place where Dvija Vāṇināth once bestowed auspiciousness upon the world by chanting the glories of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍit Goswāmī – seeing this very place in such a deplorable state, Prabhupād could not restrain his tears.

When Śrīla Prabhupād returned from Champahāṭṭa and finished the festival of Śrī Gaura's appearance, he arrived at Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh in Kolkata and sent some devotees headed by Tridaṇḍi Swāmī Śrīmad Bhakti Viveka Bhārati Mahārāj, to Chāpāhāṭi to preach. They arrived at Samudragarh station and then went three miles (almost 5 km) on foot, reaching Chāpāhāṭi by noon. They asked people for the directions several times and eventually went inside the jungle; making their way with great difficulty, they finally reached the place where Dvija Vāṇināth established the Deity service many years ago. There, they saw an ancient dilapidated, shabby-looking brick house

facing the east, with two ancient holy Deities kept in the northern room. A few days later, Śrīla Prabhupād came to see those two Deities and identified them as Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara. The room of the Deities, which had turned into a kingdom of insects and spiders, was full of dirt-filled cobwebs. In an adjacent house, there were a lot of neglected clay pots and piles of fish scales on the veranda. They were told that some native inhabitant from the village of Mangachi was the guardian-servitor of the Deities and that he would come twice a week with some flat rice or puffed rice and offer it to the Deities with *mantras*. Whenever he came to do that, he would go to that adjacent house, cook some fish, etc. and have a forest picnic!

Śrīmad Bhāratī Mahārāj and Atula Bābu, who was with him, met with the prominent respected residents of Chāpāhāṭī and Samudragarh and informed them that they wanted to recover the ancient service of Dvija Vāṇināth, and the prominent members of the village went the same evening to one old *brāhmaṇ's* house, which was adjacent to the house of Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara. Everyone was exceptionally happy when they heard from Śrīmad Bhāratī Mahārāj about the proposal of Śrīla Prabhupād to recover the service to the Deities. The guardian-servitor, who also came to that assembly together with the villagers, made a registry deed, transferring all rights and the responsibility for the service to Śrī Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara and all the articles required for the service to the Deities to Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh. The next day, Śrīpād Bhāratī Mahārāj personally cleaned the holy bodies of Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara Deities, who had been abandoned

and kept in a neglected state for a very long time, dressed Them in new clothes and gave Them *bhoga*, offering preparations made from the best ingredients. From that time, following the order of Śrīla Prabhupād, the service to Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara has been continuing in accordance with the scriptural prescriptions through the servitors of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh.

Following the order and desire of Śrīla Prabhupād, Śrīpād Bhāratī Mahārāj returned to Chāṅṅpāhāṭi together with two *brahmachārīs* and got some young boys and peasants from the village to clear the jungle at the place where the Deities were served and repair the thatched hut with mud walls and no roof, situated on the periphery of the Lordships' house – there, devotees gave lectures, chanted *kīrtans* and preached the teachings of Śrī Chaitanya in the neighbouring villages. The service kept growing, and to make it even more exalted, Śrīla Prabhupād engaged one of the trustee *āchāryās* of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, Śrīpād Paramānanda Brahmachārī Vidyāratna Prabhu. On the order of Prabhupād, Śrīpād Paramānanda Prabhu, as a prominent servitor of Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh, manifested the exceptional effulgence of the service at Chāṅṅpāhāṭi. It is not only the local residents who felt great joy seeing the holy Deities of Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara, who are the joy of devotees' eyes and hearts, and the clean and neat service – even the devotees from all over the world who came to do the *parikramā*, got to behold the effulgence of the service here and acquire devotional *sukṛti* by being able to join it.

During the third Nabadwīp *parikramā* (on the *ekādaśī-tithi* day of 25 Phālgun 1328 – 9 March 1922), devotees

came here together with Śrīla Prabhupād. At that time, on the order of Prabhupād, there were constructed many temporary rooms, where the devotees doing *parikramā* could stay and take some rest. Preachers who have been coming here for a few days let the current of Hari-kathā flow unhindered through Hari-kīrtan, scriptural readings, lectures, etc.



Śrī Daśavatāra Stotram (By Śrī Jayadev Prabhu)

pralaya-payodhi-jale dhṛtavān asi vedam
vihita-vahitra-charitram-akhedam
keśava dhṛta-mīna-śarīra jaya jagadiśa hare [1]

You easily act as a boat and uphold the Vedas above the waters of the cosmic devastation. O Keśava who assumes the form of a fish! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

kṣitir iha vipulatare tiṣṭhati tava pṛṣṭhe
dharāṇi-dharāṇa-kina-chakra-gariṣṭhe
keśava dhṛta-kūrma-śarīra jaya jagadiśa hare [2]

You uphold Mount Mandara upon Your giant back and become beautified by the circular scar it left on You. O Keśava who assumes the form of a tortoise (Kūrmadev)! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

vasati daśana-śikhare dharāṇī tava lagnā
śāṣiṇi kalaṅka-kaleva nimagnā
keśava dhṛta-śūkara-rūpa jaya jagadiśa hare [3]

The earth sits fixed atop the tip of Your tusk like a dark spot upon the moon. O Keśava who assumes the form of a boar! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

tava kara-kamala-vare nakham adbhuta-śṛṅgam
dalita-hiraṇyakaśipu-tanu-bhṛṅgam
keśava dhṛta-narahari-rūpa jaya jagadiśa hare [4]

As if crushing a wasp, You rip apart Hiraṇyakaśipu's body with the amazingly sharp nails of Your beautiful lotus hands. O Keśava who assumes a half-man, half-lion form! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

chhalayasi vikramaṇe balim adbhuta-vāmana
pada-nakha-nīra-janita-jana-pāvana
keśava dhṛta-vāmana-rūpa jaya jagadiśa hare [5]

In the form of an amazing dwarf, You trick Bali Mahārāj with Your strides and deliver all souls with the water flowing from Your toenails. O Keśava who assumes the form of a dwarf *brahmaṇ* (Vāmanadev)! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

kṣatriya-rudhira-maye jagad-apagata-pāpam
snapayasi payasi śamita-bhava-tāpam
keśava dhṛta-bhṛgupati-rūpa jaya jagadiśa hare [6]

When the world becomes distorted with sins, You spill the blood of *kṣatriyas* and perform abhiṣek, removing all material miseries. O Keśava who assumes the form of the protector of *brahmaṇs* (Paraśurāma)! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

vitarasi dikṣu raṇe dik-pati-kamanīyam
daśa-mukha-mauli-baliṁ ramanīyam
keśava dhṛta-rāma-śarīra jaya jagadiśa hare [7]

To fulfil the wish of great sages, You mercifully fight a battle, pleasing everyone with the tribute of Rāvaṇ's ten heads! O Keśava who assumes the form of Lord Rāma! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

vahasi vapuṣi viśade vasanam jaladābham
hala-hati-bhīti-milita-jamunābham
keśava dhṛta-haladhara-rūpa jaya jagadiśa hare [8]

You wear beautiful, shining clothes the colour of clouds and the colour of the Yamunā River when she is frightened by the strike of Your plough. O Keśava who assumes the form of a plough-holder (Balarām)! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

nindasi yajña-vidher ahaha śruti-jātam
sadaya-hṛdaya-darśita-paśu-ghātam
keśava dhṛta-buddha-śarīra jaya jagadiśa hare [9]

Showing compassionate heart for killed animals, You decry lamentable scriptural injunctions for sacrifices. O Keśava who assumes the form of the enlightened (Buddha)! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

mlechchha-nivaha-nidhane kalayasi karavālam
dhūmaketum iva kim api karālam
keśava dhṛta-kalki-śarīra jaya jagadiśa hare [10]

To slay all lowest men, You carry a sword that is as formidable as a comet. O Keśava who assumes the form of the destroyer of darkness (Kalki)! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!

[śrī-jayadeva-kaver idam uditam udāram
śṛṇu sukha-daṁ śubha-daṁ bhava-sāram
keśava dhṛta-daśa-vidha-rūpa jaya jagadiśa hare] [11]

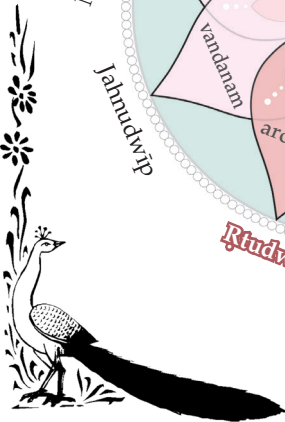
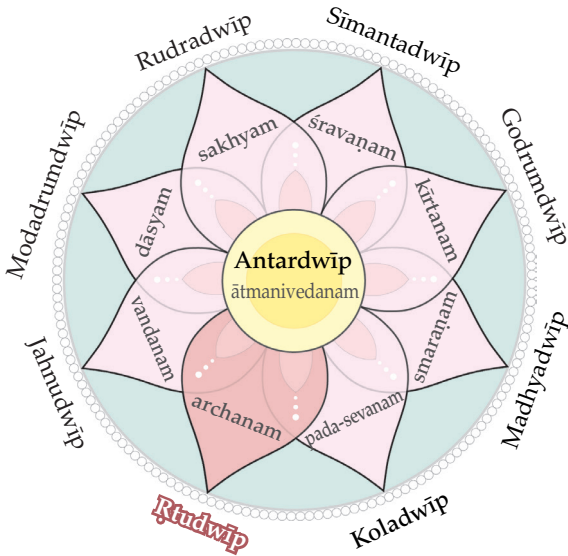
[This poem mercifully arose from the pen of Śrī Jayadev. Please listen to it for it gives happiness, auspiciousness and is the sum and substance of pure devotion. O Keśava who assumes these ten forms! Glory to You, O Lord of the universe, O Hari!]

[vedān uddharate jaganti vahate bhū-golam udvibhrate
daityaṁ dārayate balim chhalayate kṣatra-kṣayaṁ kurvate
paulastyam jayate halam kalayate kāruṇyam ātanvate
mlechhān mūrchhayate daśākṛti-kṛte kṛṣṇāya tubhyaṁ namaḥ] [12]

[I offer my obeisance to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who assumes ten forms and rescues the Vedas, upholds Mount Mandara, uplifts the earth, rips apart demons, tricks Bali Mahārāj, kills *kṣatriyas*, emerges victorious over demons, carries a plough, shows kindness and annihilates the degraded.]

Śrī Ṛtudwīp

(Archanam: Deity worship)



jaya rādhe jaya kṛṣṇa jaya vṛndāvana
śrī-govinda gopīnātha madana-mohana [1]
śyāma-kuṇḍa rādhā-kuṇḍa giri-govardhana
kālindī yamunā jaya jaya mahāvana [2]

Glory to Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa and Vṛndāvan! Glory to Śrī Govinda, Gopīnath and Madan Mohan! Glory to Śyāma Kuṇḍa, Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Govardhan, the Kālindī Yamunā and Mahāvan!

keśī-ghāṭa vāmśī-vaṭa dvādaśa-kānana
yāhā saba līlā kaila śrī-nanda-nandana [3]
śrī-nanda-yaśodā jaya jaya gopa-gaṇa
śrīdāmādi jaya jaya dhenu-vatsa-gaṇa [4]

Glory to Keśī Ghāṭ, Vāmśī Vaṭ and the twelve forests of Vraja where Nanda's son performed all His Pastimes. Glory to Śrī Nanda and Yaśodā! Glory to Śrīdām and all the other cowherd boys! Glory to Vraja's cows and calves!

jaya vṛṣabhānu jaya kīrtidā sundarī
jaya paurṇamāsī jaya ābhīra-nāgarī [5]
jaya jaya gopeśvara vṛndāvana-mājha
jaya jaya kṛṣṇa-sakhā baṭu dvija-rāja [6]

Glory to Vṛṣabhānu and beautiful Kīrtidā! Glory to Paurṇamāsī! Glory to Vraja's cowherd girls! Glory to Gopeśvar Śiva, who stays in Vṛndāvan! Glory to Kṛṣṇa's *brāhmaṇ* friend Madhumaṅgal!

jaya rāma-ghāṭa jaya rohini-nandana
jaya jaya vṛndāvana-bāsī yata jana [7]
jaya dvija-patnī, jaya nāga-kanyā-gaṇa
bhaktite yāhārā pāila govinda-charaṇa [8]

Glory to Rāma Ghāṭ! Glory to Rohini's son Balarām! Glory to all of Vṛndāvan's residents! Glory to the *brāhmaṇs'* wives and Kāliya's wives, who attained Lord Govinda's feet through their devotion.

śrī-rāsa-maṇḍala jaya, jaya rādhā-śyāma
jaya jaya rāsa-līlā sarva-mano rama [9]
jaya jayojjala-rasa sarva-rasa-sāra
parakīyā-bhāve yāhā vrajete prachāra [10]

Glory to the holy site of the *rāsa* dance! Glory to Rādhā and Śyām! Glory to the *rāsa* dance, which captures the hearts of all! Glory to *madhura-rasa*, the best of all *rasas*, which is manifest in Vraja as paramour love!

śrī-jāhnavā-pāda-padma kariyā smarāṇa
dīna kṛṣṇa-dāsa kahe nāma-saṅkīrtana [11]

Remembering the lotus feet of Śrī Jāhnavā Devī, this humble Kṛṣṇa Dās chants the Holy Names of the Lord.

Śrī Ṛtudwīp

The village of Śrī Chāpāhāṭi is situated between Koladwīp and Ṛtudwīp, so as we continue our way with the *parikramā*, we proceed from Śrī Dvija Vāṇināth's temple and now, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, have entered Śrī Ṛtudwīp. Because all six seasons (spring, summer, monsoon, autumn, pre-winter, winter) exist here beautifully all together, this island is called Śrī Ṛtudwīp (*rtu* means 'seasons'). Among the nine kinds of devotion, this island is the place of *archan*, or Deity worship.

Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu came here with Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu and a few other devotees. When He saw this enchanting island, He immediately became spell-



bound. The environment at this place – with its trees, breeze, flowers, bumble-bees, etc. – is very beautiful and sweet, non-different from Śrī Vraja Dhām. Coming to this place, we remember a *śloka* that was composed by Śrīla Jayadev Goswāmī Prabhu and that we heard from the holy lotus mouth of our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj:

lalita-lavaṅga-latā-pariśīlana-komala-malaya-samīre
 madhukara-nikara-karambita-kokila-kūjita-kuñja-kuṭīre
 viharati harir iha sarasa-vasante,
 nṛtyati yuvatī-janena samam sakhi virahi-janasya durante

‘My friend! At the coming of the spring, the gentle fragrant flower-bearing trees, touched by a soft breeze, are such a charming sight; the sweet humming of bumble-bees and coos of cuckoos resound at the solitary forest cottages. Śrī Hari is enjoying Himself with young damsels at this amorous time of spring – alas! this unbearably awful spring season makes those afflicted with separation feel miserable!’ Coming to this enchanting Ṛtudwīp and becoming overwhelmed with this mood, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu spoke in the agony of separation:

‘Come! Come! Quick, bring My horn! The calves have gone far, and Kānāi is sleeping like a baby! Where is Subal? Where is Śrīdām?’ Seeing His wondrous state, devotees said, ‘Dear Nitāi, Your brother Gaurachāḍ is not here. Making us pathetically destitute, He has taken *sannyās* and left for Nīlāchal!’ Hearing this, Nityānanda Prabhu’s joy immediately vanished – He fell on the ground and began to weep, ‘No! Oh no! Kānāi has left us and left for Nīlāchal! I cannot live any longer! I will jump into the Yamunā!’ Not being able to tolerate the pain of separation, Nityānanda

Prabhu fainted and fell on the ground. A long time passed, but He did not wake up. When, in the end, devotees started chanting *kīrtan* in glorification of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, Nitāi suddenly woke up and said to everyone, ‘This here is Rādhā Kuṇḍa, and look, over there is Śyāma Kuṇḍa. We used to chant *kīrtan* here with Gaura’s devotees. There is no other place in all three worlds that could compare to this place. Those devotees who live here attain transcendental love for Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa – their hearts become very serene and cool.’

rādha-kuṇḍa-taṭa-kuñja-kuṭīra
govardhana-parvata, yāmuna-tīra

The grove-dwelling on the banks
of Rādhā Kuṇḍa, Govardhan Hill,
the banks of the Yamunā River.

kusuma-sarovara, mānasa-gaṅgā
kalinda-nandinī vipula-taraṅga

Kusum Soravar lake, the Mānasa
Gaṅgā River, the rolling waves of
Yamunā, the daughter of the sun.

vaṁśīvaṭa, gokula, dhīra-samīra
vṛndāvana-taru latikā-vānīra

Vaṁśīvaṭ, Gokula, the gentle
breezes, the trees, vines, and the
vetasa palms of Vraja.

khaga-mṛgakula, malaya-vātāsa
mayūra, bhramara, muralī-vilāsa

The birds, animals, sweet air of
spring, peacocks, bumblebees,
and sweet flute song.

veṇu, śṛṅga, padachihna, meghamālā
vasanta, śaśāṅka, śaṅkha karatālā

The flute, horn, foot prints, range
of clouds, spring time, the moon,
the conch, hand-cymbals.

yugala-vilāsa anukūla jāni
līlā-vilāsa-uddīpaka māni

I know all this nourishes
the Divine Couple’s pastimes and
excites pleasure in Their pastimes.

e saba chhoḍata kāhā nāhi yāū
e saba chhoḍata parāṇa hārāū

If I were to lose all this, I would
have nowhere to go. If I were to
lose all this, I would just die.

bhaktivinoda kahe śuna kāna
tuyā uddīpaka hāmāra parāṇa

Bhaktivinod says: ‘Hear me,
Kāna! You excite and stir my
very being.’

Śrī Vidyānagar

Continuing our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, we have now come to Śrī Vidyānagar, which is situated in Śrī Ṛtudwīp. We find the description of the glories of this ancient town in Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākur's holy scripture, *Śrī Nabadwīp-dhām-māhātmya*. Coming to this place, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu told Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu:

At the time of universal dissolution, the eternal abode of Śrī Nabadwīp remains as a lotus and is never destroyed; at this time, all incarnations of the Lord as well as some fortunate souls stay here at Nabadwīp Dhām. On this



island of Ṛtudwīp, there exists a supremely pure place called Śrī Vidyānagar. This is the place where the Supreme Lord, assuming the form of a fish, held up all Vedas, and all *ṛṣis*, *munis* as well all knowledge (*vidyā*) lived here, taking shelter in the Vedas – that is how this place got its name, Vidyānagar (lit. ‘town of knowledge’).

One day, Brahmā decided to again create the world; however, seeing the previous universe being destroyed during the universal annihilation, he felt extremely sad and prayed to the Lord. Feeling compassion for Brahmā, the Lord bestowed His mercy on him: when Brahmā opened his mouth to pronounce his prayer, Saraswatī Devī was born on his tongue, so when Brahmā prayed, empowered by the potency of Saraswatī Devī, he felt very happy.

By the mercy of the Lord, it was arranged so that during the creation of the world, Māyā stays on the bank of the Virajā River and pervades all directions, covering the entire material universe with her three modes. Then, the universe becomes manifest, and many *ṛṣis* come to the world and try to reveal knowledge: they take shelter in Saraswatī Devī and start studying knowledge in various places on earth, dispelling ignorance.

The place where these *ṛṣis* reside exists eternally within this island of Śrī Ṛtudwīp. Vālmiki studied poetry here, Dhanvantari studied *āyurveda*, Viśvāmitra studied archery, Sanaka, Sanātana, Sanat, Sananda and others studied Vedic *mantras* here. Even Mahādev learnt about *tantras* in this place. The four Vedas manifested from the holy mouth of Brahmā here. Kapila Muni also lived

here and composed his scriptures on logic and logical argument. Pātañjali, Kaṇāda Ṛṣi and Jaimini composed their scriptures on *yoga* here. Even Vedavyās wrote here many of his scriptures (Purāṇas, etc.). Nārad Muni also lived here when he composed his book *Pañcharātra*. So, this is a very important place.

One day, when *Upaniṣads* were worshipping Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in this charming place, they heard in the sky a divine message from Mahāprabhu, ‘Your hearts have become polluted by misconception, so You will not get Me in this form of *śruti* (orally transmitted scriptures) that you hold now. However, when you are born as My associates at the time when I come to perform My pastimes in this world, you will get to see Me just by dancing and chanting My glories.’ Hearing these words, *Upaniṣads* stayed here and waited for this blessed Kali-yuga to come.

This is the glory of Śrī Vidyānagar.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



Birthplace of Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya

There is one more worshipping holy place situated within Śrī Vidyānagar – the house and the birthplace of a great renowned personality, Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, whose glories you hear every year in Śrī Purī Dhām. Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura Prabhupād discovered and established this small temple here in March 1936. Owing to him, when we come here by the mercy of our Śrī Gurupādpadma, we get an opportunity to happily remember the glory of Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya.



When Bṛhaspati, the *guru* of demigods, heard that the Lord would appear in Kali-yuga as magnanimous Lord Gaurāṅga and would enjoy His knowledge-related pastimes, he left King Indradev's assembly and took birth on earth together with his disciples to spend some time before the Lord's appearance, trying with great effort to please Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. Coming to this world, the great *guru* of demigods Bṛhaspati became known as Vāsudev Sārvabhauma. Because Vāsudev Sārvabhauma established a school here in Vidyānagar, his name became Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya.

One day he thought, 'I have not lost my memory so far, but if I later become tangled in the net of knowledge, I will forget everything.' So, he came up with a clever plan. He thought, 'If I am really a servant of Gaura, then my Lord will definitely bring me to Him.' Keeping all his disciples in Vidyānagar, he went to Nīlāchal, and not only that – when he came there, he started preaching *māyāvād* scriptures supporting impersonalism.

Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu also did that once. From His childhood, Mahāprabhu Nimāi Viśvambhar always treated Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu with much respect – He always offered him obeisance, praised him, etc. Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu did not like it at all. So, one day he thought, 'I will teach Him! I will see how clever He is!' One day, he left Nabadwīp for Śāntipur and started preaching against devotion.

When Nimāi heard this news, He became very angry. Thinking to punish Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu, He ran to Śāntipur together with Nityānanda Prabhu. When

They arrived, Nimāi charged Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu, ‘What are you doing, Advaita?! You have called Me with Gaṅgā water and Tulasī leaves, and now you are joking with Me like this?! What is wrong with you??’ And Nimāi started slapping Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu! When Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī, the spouse of Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu, saw this, she began to cry, begging the Lord, ‘Nimāi, what are You doing? Do not kill him! Do not kill him!’

Seeing the scene, Nityānanda Prabhu, who was standing nearby, burst out laughing and did not say anything. However, Haridās Ṭhākura, who was also there, was very surprised and could not understand anything. Then, Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu said, ‘Oh really! Now I have taught You a good lesson! You have lost, and I have won! You have come today to punish me! Where is all that honour You have been showing me all the time?’ Saying this, Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu then happily fed Mahāprabhu His favourite *śāk prasādam*.

So, Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya Prabhu also went away. He came to Nīlāchal and started preaching against devotion while all his disciples stayed here, in Śrī Vidyānagar. Nimāi Paṇḍit had a lot of fun with them – He crushed everyone! Nobody could compete with Him. Sometimes, Nimāi would come to Vidyānagar and ask such difficult questions that everyone (both students and professors!), not being able to argue with Him, would flee! This is how Mahāprabhu Viśvambhar manifested His *vidyā-līlā* pastimes, establishing that all ignorance (*avidyā*) flees in the face of knowledge (*vidyā*).

When Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu took *sannyās*, He took the *daṇḍa* He had got from his *sannyās-guru* and set off to Purī together with a few devotees (Nityānanda Prabhu, Mukunda and some others). As Nityānanda Prabhu, who is non-different from Balarām, was walking, He thought, ‘Prabhu is carrying this *daṇḍa* – why must He carry Me?’

What did He do then? Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu took the *daṇḍa*, broke it into three pieces and threw those pieces into the Bhārgī River. Mahāprabhu was overwhelmed with *Kṛṣṇa-prema* and did not notice anything – He only kept walking. When they came to the Āṭhārnālā bridge near Purī, Mahāprabhu suddenly remembered about His *daṇḍa*. He asked, ‘Nityānanda, give Me My *daṇḍa*!’

Nityānanda Prabhu lied, ‘When You were doing *kīrtan*, You became overwhelmed with divine ecstasy, fell over on the *daṇḍa* and broke it. Since the *daṇḍa* got broken into three pieces, I threw it into the Bhārgī River.’

Mahāprabhu got very angry, ‘Nitāi, are You kidding Me? I have left everything and took only this one precious thing from Nabadwīp, and what have You done? You have destroyed it! You know everything – You *know* why I have come to this world. I did not take anything with Me, only this *daṇḍa* – a simple stick! – it was My most precious possession in the whole wide world, but You have thrown even that away! Go! I will not go with you all. Either I will go first and you will go later, or you will go first and I will go later. What will you do? Decide quickly.’

Everyone reasoned, ‘If we go first, how will we know in which direction Prabhu will go? We will never find Him then. If Prabhu goes ahead of us, we will be able to see

Him from behind.’ So, Nityānanda Prabhu said, ‘Go first, we will go behind You.’

As soon as Mahāprabhu heard it, He started to walk so fast that even though devotees ran behind Him, they could not catch up with Him! In this way, walking like a mad elephant, Mahāprabhu stormed inside the temple of Lord Jagannāth. In the temple of Lord Jagannāth, there is a bamboo bar in front of the altar, and when Mahāprabhu ran into the temple, He stumbled onto the bar and fell on the ground. Foam started coming out of His mouth, and all He could say was, ‘Ja-ja-ga-ga, Ja-ja-ga-ga’ (He could not even pronounce the Name of Lord Jagannāth). His whole appearance became quite horrible: He did not at all look like a man.

Seeing that some mad-looking man had run into the temple, the guards of the temple were going to beat Him, but by the influence of Mahāprabhu, they could not do that – seeing Mahāprabhu’s appearance, His effulgence and opulence, nobody dared raise their hand to Him. Instead, somebody went to Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya and reported, ‘Prabhu, please come with me. A very strange man has come to the temple! He keeps saying “Ja-ja-ga-ga” and foam is coming from His mouth! He is unconscious now.’ Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya went to the temple of Lord Jagannāth and seeing Mahāprabhu’s state, said, ‘Whoever He is, it does not matter – take Him to my house.’

In Śrī Nīlāchal, Purī Dhām, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya was the manager of Lord Jagannāth’s temple. He lived with his wife and brother-in-law, Gopināth Āchārya. When

Gopīnāth Āchārya saw Mahāprabhu, he immediately recognised Him.

He turned to Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, ‘Can you not recognise Him?’

‘What do you mean?’

‘You used to live in Vidyānagar, Nabadwīp, did you not? How can you not recognise Him? He is Nīlāmbār Chakravartī’s grandson, the son of Jagannāth Mīśra! He appeared from Śachī Mātā’s womb – He is the Father of the Universe, the Supreme Lord Himself! He has now taken *sannyās* from Keśav Bhārati, and His name became Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanya.’

‘No, I do not think he is God,’ Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya replied.

‘You have no mercy, that is why you do not think so. I have mercy, so I am telling you He is the Lord Himself!’

īśvarera kṛpā-leśa haya ta’ yāhāre
sei ta’ īśvara-tattva jānibāre pāre

‘Only those who have received at least a drop of the Lord’s mercy can understand the Lord.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 2.6.83)

If the Lord bestows His mercy on you, then you can know the Lord. It is also not so easy to know the *guru* – if the *guru* bestows his mercy on you, then you can know who the *guru* is. Without the mercy of the *guru*, you can never recognise him. That is why Gopīnāth Āchārya said, ‘Because I have mercy, I can recognise who He is.’

Irritated, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya said, ‘Whatever. Go now, take *prasād*. We will talk later.’

The next day, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya spoke to Gopīnāth Āchārya again. ‘I like this *sannyāsī* boy’s humble demeanour,’ he said. ‘I am thinking He has taken *sannyās* at such a young age, but will He be able to keep up the life of a *sannyāsī*? I say, what if I properly teach Him Vedānta and the religion of renunciation? Then He will be able to become the most exalted *sannyāsī*!’

Gopīnāth Āchārya was quite upset to hear this. He replied, ‘Do you not know who He is? He is the Supreme Lord Himself. I have told you before. How can you try to teach Him?’

‘What are you trying to say? I see you know everything, but it is said in the scriptures that there is no incarnation of the Lord in Kali-yuga – that is why the Lord is called “Triyuga” (He who appears in three ages).’

‘You have read all scriptures, but have you not read *Bhāgavatam* or *Mahābhārata*? It is written there that there is an incarnation in Kali-yuga – there is no *līlā-avatār*, but the Lord Himself comes as a *yuga-avatār*. You are such a great scholar, but because you do not have a trace of mercy, you cannot recognise the Lord even though He is right here in your house. I understand that it is actually not your fault – it is written in the scriptures that nobody can know the Lord through knowledge.’

‘Oh, so you think I have no mercy, and you have it? How can you prove it?’

‘I can recognise Him, and you cannot – this is the proof that I have mercy and you do not. I can give you a lot of proof from the scriptures, but because your heart is full of *māyāvādī* conception, it is the same as trying to plant a seed

in barren soil. When the Lord bestows His mercy on you, then you will be able to understand it.'

Growing angry, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya said, 'Oh really? Go, take *prasādam* and bring Him to me. I will see myself what to do! You can teach me later!' Following the order, Gopināth Āchārya went to Mahāprabhu's room and told Him that Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya was calling Him. Mukunda Datta had heard what Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya said and told about it to Mahāprabhu, but Mahāprabhu dismissed it, 'Do not mind him, he wishes Me well. He has made no offence.'

Then, Mahāprabhu came to Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya and asked, 'Prabhu, have you called Me?'

'Yes, sit down. You have taken *sannyās* at a very young age – what have You studied? Have you studied the Vedas and *Vedānta*?'

'Not much, I have studied some *vyākaraṇ* —'

'What is the use of *vyākaraṇ* (primary grammar)! You have taken *sannyās*, but You have not even studied *Vedānta*!'

('Bhagavān nāhi kahe mui bhagavān': the Lord never says, 'I am the Supreme Lord!' He never discloses His identity to anyone; just as a genuine Vaiṣṇav never says, 'I have become a Vaiṣṇav!') Mahāprabhu replied with folded palms, 'Prabhu, please be merciful to Me. I have given up My mother's service and, becoming crazy, taken *sannyās*. Please bless Me so that I can maintain My *sannyās*.'

'Yes,' Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya said. 'You must study *Vedānta*! So be it, I will teach You *Vedānta*.'

After that, during seven days, Mahāprabhu listened to *Vedānta* from Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya – He would

sit and listen silently, like an obedient student. Seven days later, not being able to control himself any longer, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya asked Him, ‘What is it, new *sannyāsī*? You have been listening to *Vedānta*, but can You understand anything or not? Since You are not asking me any questions, how am I to understand whether You have understood anything?’

Mahāprabhu replied humbly, ‘Prabhu, when you read *Vedānta*, I can understand everything very nicely, but when you start explaining it, I cannot understand anything.’

Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya was taken aback. He thought, ‘What is this boy saying? I have been going out of my way, trying so hard to teach Him properly for seven days, and He is saying that what I am saying is all nonsense!’ Then, he recited the ‘*ātmārāmās cha munayo śloka*, and Mahāprabhu asked him, ‘Prabhu, can you explain what fault is there and what merit is there in this *śloka*?’ Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya became angry, thinking to himself, ‘What “fault”!’ but still, he explained the *śloka*. He gave nine different explanations and then requested Mahāprabhu to speak. Mahāprabhu gave eighteen more explanations of the *śloka*, not touching the nine explanations of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, crushing all his *māyāvādī* conceptions and explaining this *śloka* in a new light, according to the precepts of devotion.

Māyāvādī conception means *brahma-jñāna*: the followers of this school think that Brahmā has created everything. We sing in the *guru-paramparā kīrtan*, ‘*Kṛṣṇa haite chaturmukha hana Kṛṣṇa-sevonmukha, Brahmā haite Nāradera mati*. By Kṛṣṇa’s association, Brahmā became devoted to Kṛṣṇa’s

service; and by Brahmā's association, Nārad Muni became a devotee.' Brahmā has got his power from Kṛṣṇa, but *māyāvādīs* say that everything comes from Brahmā. This is *brahma-jñān*. Rabindranath Tagor, Rama Kṛṣṇa Mission, Sārādā Āśram, Bhārat Sevā Āśram – they are all *māyāvādīs*, they do not believe in the doctrine of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Hearing Mahāprabhu's interpretation, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya was flabbergasted – his eyes popped out, and he became very red. Seething with anger, he thought, 'Who have I been teaching *Vedānta* all these seven days! Who *is* He?!' But even then he did not believe that Mahāprabhu was the Lord Himself.

Then, Mahāprabhu showed His six-armed form, and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya could no longer see Mahāprabhu: seeing the Lord's six-armed form, he fell at His lotus feet, offering Him a *sāṣṭāṅga daṇḍavat*. Only when he fell on the ground, surrendering at Mahāprabhu's lotus feet, did he finally believe that it was the Lord Himself in front of him. Once that happened, Mahāprabhu immediately hid His six-armed form and appeared again as a *sannyāsī*, looking like an ordinary man. However, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya did not get up. Mahāprabhu called him, 'Sārvabhauma, get up! Now get up! It is over!'

He slowly got up. Turning around and looking all around him, he said, 'What is this, Prabhu? What kind of form have I just seen? You were standing here, holding a conch, a disc, a club, and a lotus. And what do I see now?' Hiding His intrinsic form, Mahāprabhu said, 'You must have seen something wrong. You have got some love for Kṛṣṇa, that is why you see all this conch, disc, etc.'

After that day, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya became a devotee of Mahāprabhu and a great Vaiṣṇav. He left all *māyāvādī* conceptions and started preaching the pure conception about the Lord. His initial plan was successful – the Lord had personally come and pulled him to Himself.

Hearing about the pastimes of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya and the glory of Vidyānagar, Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu asked Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, ‘Prabhu, I have some doubt in my mind. The knowledge of *sāṅkhyā* (detailed teachings of the soul), *tarka* (debates, logical arguments), etc. is inauspicious. How can it exist in this eternal holy abode?’

Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu replied, ‘*Hari bol! Hari bol!* Listen to what I will say, Jīva. Nothing inauspicious can exist in a holy abode. Arguments, knowledge, etc. have no power here. Here, everyone and everything is subservient to devotion. Bhakti Devī (the Goddess of Devotion) resides in this abode, and everyone else are her servants and maidservants. Nabadwīp is the place of nine kinds of devotion; here, *jñāna* (knowledge) and *karma* (fruitive pursuits) always serve devotion. If some *jīva* souls are averse to Kṛṣṇa, scriptures give them wicked and wrong conceptions; but if some *jīva* souls are devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa, if their nature is gentle, then scriptures give them attachment to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Praudhā Māyā lives here eternally and serves Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu – she makes those who are averse to Vaiṣṇavism and devoid of devotion blind and inflicts suffering on them.

‘All sins, all material activities are destroyed here – this is the place where Māyā bestows knowledge. However, if somebody commits an offence to a Vaiṣṇav, Māyā removes them from here and leaves them to suffer in material bondage. Such sinners may live here, but they can never get transcendental love for Lord Kṛṣṇa or the *darśan* of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu – they only get the ignorance of knowledge. Therefore, knowledge is not inauspicious – it is ignorance, the shadow of knowledge, that is inauspicious.’

So, this is the story of Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya. Coming to his birthplace, we pray at his lotus feet that by his mercy we may keep away from knowledge and can practise devotion in a pure way – so that we may have attraction and attachment to the service to our *guru*, Vaiṣṇavs and the Lord.

Jay Śrī Vidyānagar ki jay.

Śrī Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya Prabhu ki jay.

Śrī Ṛtudwīp ki jay.

Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



vidyāra vilāse, kāṭāinu kāla,
parama sāhase āmi
tomāra charaṇa, nā bhajinu kabhu,
ekhana śaraṇa tumi [1]

I spent my time enjoying with knowledge, and I have become very bold. I never served Your feet, but now You are my shelter.

paḍite paḍite, bharasā bāḍila,
jñāne gati habe māni'
se āśā vipphala, se jñāna durbala,
se jñāna ajñāna jāni [2]

As I studied continuously, my hopes increased, and I thought that I would attain fulfilment of life through knowledge. But that hope was futile because that knowledge proved useless. Now I know this knowledge is actually ignorance.

jaḍa-vidyā yata, māyāra vaibhava,
tomāra bhajane bādhā
moha janamiyā, anitya saṁsāre,
jīvake karaye gādhā [3]

All mundane learning is a display of illusion and an obstacle to Your service. It produces illusory charm for the temporary material world and turns the soul into an ass.

sei gādhā ha'ye saṁsārera bojhā,
bahinu aneka kāla
vārddhakey ekhana, śaktira abhāve,
kichhu nāhi lāge bhāla [4]

Having become such an ass, I have born the burden of my material life for a long time. Now that I am old and weak, nothing appeals to me.

jīvana yātanā, ha-ila ekhana,
se vidyā avidyā bhela
avidyāra jvālā, ghaṭila viṣama,
se vidyā haila śela [5]

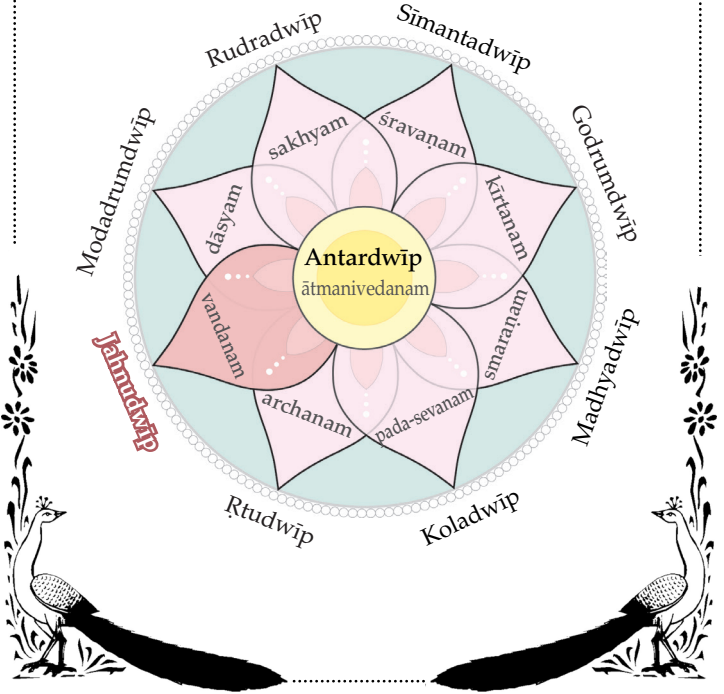
My life has become an agony now; that knowledge turned out to be sheer ignorance. I am chocking in the agony of this ignorance – that knowledge turned out to be a piercing arrow.

tomāra charaṇa, binā kichhu dhana,
saṁsāre nā āchhe āra
bhaktivinoda, jaḍa-vidyā chhāḍi',
tuyā pada kare sāra [6]

There is nothing of value in this material world other than Your feet. Giving up mundane knowledge, Bhaktivinod accepts Your feet as his all-in-all.

Śrī Jahnudwīp

(Vandanam: offering obeisance)





Śrī Jahnudwīp

Continuing Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, we have crossed Śrī Ṛtudwīp and have now come to Śrī Jahnudwīp. There is no temple in this island, but we stop and sit in the middle of the forest in Śrī Jahnudwīp for some time to speak about the glory of this island.

This enchanting forest is Bhadravan of Vṛndāvan Dhām. In ancient days, a great sage Jahnu lived here and practised austerities for a long time, as a result of which he attained the *darśan* of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

When we went to Gaṅgānagar, we spoke about the Ganges: we spoke about how Bhagīrath Mahārāj took Gaṅgā Devī to the ocean to rescue his ancestors. One evening, when Jahnu Muni was sitting here, a pot that he used for the worship of the Lord fell into the swift current of the Bhāgīrathī Gaṅgā and was carried away. When Jahnu Muni say it, he drank all water of the Ganges.

In the meantime, Bhagīrath Mahārāj noticed that the Ganges was nowhere to be seen. He searched and searched for the Ganges and eventually understood what had happened. He came to Jahnu Muni and explained to him everything very humbly, but Jahnu Muni did not say anything. Then, Bhagīrath Mahārāj stayed here and

started worshipping and meditating on the sage to attain his mercy. After a long while, taking pity on the king, Jahnu Muni split his thigh and let Gaṅgā Devī come out of it. This is how Gaṅgā Devī got her name Jāhnavī ('born of Jahnu').

Long after that, in Dvāpar-yuga, Gaṅgā Devī's son, Bhīṣmadev, came here to meet with his mother. Seeing her dear son, Jāhnavī Devī showed much affection to him and took him to the house of her father, Jahnu Muni. Bhīṣmadev lived in the *āśram* of Jahnu Muni for a long time and studied *dharma* from the sage (he later taught these same teachings to Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj). By staying at this Śrī Jahnudwīp within Nabadwīp Dhām and by receiving the treasure of devotion, Bhīṣmadev became a great Vaiṣṇav.

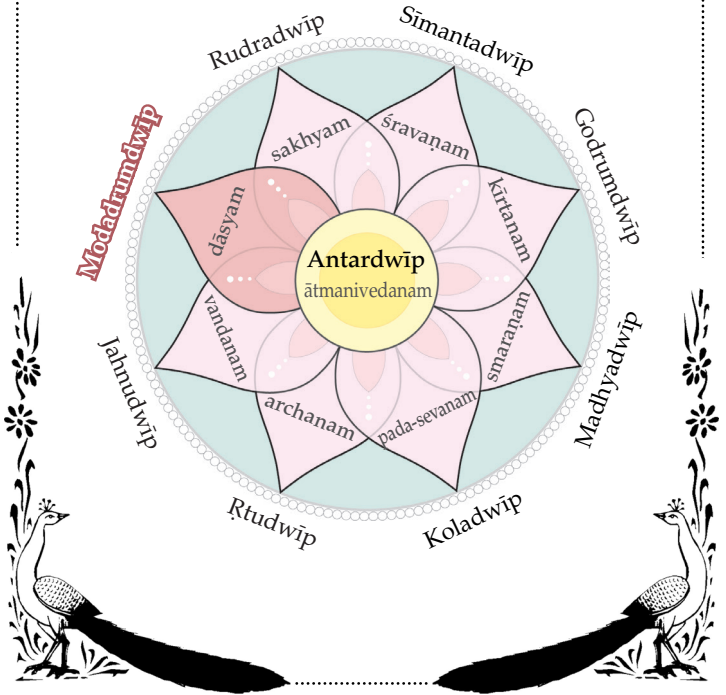
This is the glory of this island, Śrī Jahnudwīp.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.



Śrī Modadrumdwīp

(Dāsyam: servitude)



vibhāvarī śeṣa, āloka praveśa,
nidrā chhāḍī' uṭha jīva
bala hari hari, mukunda murāri,
rāma-kṛṣṇa hayagrīva [1]

O souls! The night has ended, and the light has come. Give up your sleep and wake up! Chant 'Hari! Hari!' Chant the Holy Names of Mukunda, Murāri, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, and Hayagrīva.

nṛsimha vāmana, śrī-madhusūdana,
vrajendra-nandana śyāma
putanā-ghātana, kaiṭabha-śātana,
jaya dāśarathi rāma [2]

Glory to Nṛsimha, Vāmana, Śrī Madhusūdana, to Śyāma, the son of Vraja's King! Glory to the slayer of Putanā and Kaiṭabha! Glory to Dāśarathi Rāma!

yaśodā-dulāla, govinda gopāla,
vṛndāvana-purandara
gopī-priya-jana, rādhikā-ramaṇa,
bhuvana sundara-bara [3]

He is the darling of Yaśodā, Govinda, Gopāl, the King of Vṛndāvan. He is the *gopīs'* sweetheart, Rādhikā's beloved and the most beautiful person in the world.

rāvaṇāntakara, mākhana-taskara,
gopī-jana vastra-hārī
vrajera rākhāla, gopa-vṛnda-pāla,
chita-hārī vaṁśī-dhārī [4]

He is the slayer of Rāvaṇ. He steals butter and *gopīs'* clothes. He tends cows in Vraja and protects cowherd boys. He is a flute player who steals everyone's hearts.

yogīndra-vandana, śrī-nanda-nandana,
vraja-jana-bhaya-hārī
navīna nīrada, rūpa manohara,
mohana vaṁśī-vihārī [5]

He is worshipped by mystic *yogīs*, He is the Son of Śrī Nanda. He removes fear from the residents of Vraja. His captivating form is the colour of a fresh rain cloud. He is enchanting, and He loves playing His flute.

yaśodā-nandana, kaṁsa nisūdana,
nikuñja rāsa-vilāsī
kadamba kānana, rāsa-parāyaṇa,
vṛndā-vipina-nivāsī [6]

He is the Son of Yaśodā and the killer of Kaṁsa. He loves the *rāsa* dance that takes place in the kadamba forests, and He resides in the groves of Vṛndāvan.

ānanda-vardhana, prema-niketana,
phulaśara-yojaka kāma
gopāṅgaṇā-gaṇa, chita-vinodana,
samasta guṇa-gaṇa-dhāma [7]

He increases joy, He is an abode of divine love. He is the Cupid who captures His beloved with flower arrows. He is the joy of the *gopīs'* hearts and an abode of all qualities.

yāmuna-jīvana, keli-parāyaṇa,
mānasa-chandra-chakora
(hari)nāma-sudhā-rasa, gāo kṛṣṇa-yaśa,
rākha vachana mana mora [8]

He is the life of the Yamunā, His playground. He is a mystical bird that drinks the moonbeams of the mind. Dear mind, remember my words: always chant Kṛṣṇa's glories, relishing the nectar of His Holy Name!

Śrī Modadrumdwīp

Continuing our Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, we have passed Śrī Jahnudwīp and have now come to Śrī Modadrumdwīp. This island is situated in the present-day village of Mamgachi. It is said in the scriptures that this pure place is non-different from Śrī Ayodhyā Dhām.



When Lord Rāma lived in the forest together with Lakṣmaṇ and Sītā Devī, they constructed a small cottage under a banyan tree here and stayed there for some time. Seeing the effulgence of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, Śrī Rāmachandra's holy face lit up with a smile. Noticing Him smile, Sītā

Devī asked the Lord, 'Prabhu, why are You smiling?'

Śrī Rāmachandra said, 'O Devī, it is a very mystic matter. When Kali-yuga comes, all *jīva* souls will get to see My golden form here in Nadia. I will appear in the house of Śrī Jagannāth Miśra and Śachī Devī as Gaurāṅga and

deliver the entire world. Fortunate *jīva* souls will see My childhood pastimes and attain transcendental devotional love. Enjoying My scholarship pastimes, I will reveal the glory of the Holy Name to this world. After that, I will take *sannyās* and go away from here to Nīlāchal, and My wife will cry on the lap of My mother.’

Hearing this, Sītā Devī asked further, ‘Why will You make Your mother cry? Why will You take *sannyās* and give so much pain to Your wife? What happiness is it to You if You do this? I cannot understand it.’

‘Dear,’ Lord Rāmachandra said. ‘You know everything. It is to teach other *jīva* souls that you are asking Me this, pretending not to know it. Those who have divine love for Me taste this divine love in two ways, in My presence and in My absence. The happiness of being in My direct presence is called union (*sambhog*), and the happiness of being far from Me is called separation (*vipralambha*). Those eternal devotees who, by My mercy, want to unite with Me experience the happiness of estrangement, burning in the agony of separation. Separation from Me brings great joy. Devotees can understand this. When there is a union after separation, the happiness is many times greater due to separation. My mother (Kauśalyā Devī) will appear in Kali-yuga as Śāchī Devī, and you will serve Me as Viṣṇupriyā. In this Tretā-yuga, in the agony of separation from you, I will make your golden Deity and worship you in Ayodhyā; in return, you will also, in the agony of separation from Me, make My golden Deity in Nadia and worship Me every day. Dear, all this is a hidden secret, do not tell anyone about it. This Nabadwīp Dhām is the dearest place to Me –

there is no other place, not even Ayodhyā, that is as dear to Me. Our Rāmavaṭ (cottage) will not be there in Kali-yuga, but it will always remain here in an unmanifest way.'

By the Lord's desire, Guhaka, a devotee and friend of Śrī Rāmchandra, took birth in the house of a *brāhmaṇ* here in Śrī Modadrumdṅwīp within Śrī Nabadṅwīp Dhām. He was known as Sadānanda Vipra Bhaṭṭāchārya, and he did not know anything in this world except for Lord Rāma.

When Mahāprabhu appeared, Sadānanda Vipra was at the house of Jagannāth Miśra – seeing all the demigods, he could recognise that the Supreme Lord Himself had appeared. Jubilant, he returned to his home and started meditating on the Deity he worshipped. Suddenly, he saw Gaurasundar: Śrī Gaurāṅga Rāy was sitting on a royal throne, and Brahmā and other demigods were fanning Him with *chāmaras*; then he saw Rāmachandra near Mahāprabhu, with Lakṣmaṇ on His right, Sītā Devī on His left and Hanumān in front of Him. Beholding this sight, he could understand that Rāmachandra had come as Gaura in Kali-yuga. He kept saying, 'How blessed I am! How blessed I am!' Later, when Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu manifested His *saṅkīrtan* pastimes, Sadānanda Vipra would dance with Him, chanting the Holy Name of Gaura.

As Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu spoke all these wondrous narratives to Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu, He showed him Śrī Bhāṅḍīraṅgan, and as they continued their way, they reached the village of Mamgachi.

Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay.

Jay Śrī Modadrumdṅwīp ki jay. Śrī Nabadṅwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.

About Śrī Sāraṅga Murāri

Continuing the *parikramā* of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, we have now arrived at this very beautiful place, the temple of Śrī Sāraṅga Murāri. A devotee called Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur used to live here, and later the temple became known as the temple of Śrī Sāraṅga Murāri (Sāraṅga Murāri's Maṭh). Here is how it occurred.

In olden days, there were many snakes in jungles, and many people died when they were bitten by a snake. (You can still see that during the rainy season, people go to a healer or a shaman to take out snake poison. It is practised to this day.) One day, a young boy was bitten by a snake in this village. The parents could not rescue him, so they put the dead body of their son on a raft and set it floating down the Ganges.

In the meantime, there was also Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur, who lived here. He had gone very old, and one day he came into his prayer room (his Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopināth, are still there at the temple) and prayed, 'Dear Lord! What will happen now? I have gone so old, I cannot serve You properly anymore – I cannot offer You *bhoga*, I cannot do all the services... Please give me somebody who can take charge of Your service. I cannot do it anymore...'

The Lordships heard his prayer, and when Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur went to bed that night, They came to him in a dream

and said, ‘Sāraṅga, I will send one person to you. You must give him initiation and accept him as your disciple.’

‘Yes, Prabhu. I will do that,’ Sāraṅga Ṭhākur answered. ‘How will I understand who this person is?’

‘When you wake up and go to the Ganges to take a bath, give initiation to whoever you see first.’ After the Lord said this, the dream broke.

The next day, Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur woke up and went to the Ganges to take a bath. When he came to the bank, he saw a banana-tree raft floating down the Ganges towards him – there was that boy’s dead body on it. Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur remembered what Gopināth had told him, so, following the order of the Lord, he spoke the *mantra* into the dead boy’s ear: ‘*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare.*’ When this *mantra* entered the ear of the boy, the boy opened his eyes. He slowly got up and looked around him – seeing Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur, he offered him his obeisance, accepting him as his *guru*. Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur took a bath in the Ganges and took the boy to his temple. Since that time,



the boy engaged himself exclusively in the service to his *guru* and the Deities.

Meanwhile, the parents of the boy got to hear that their son had survived and was staying in a nearby village. They came to the temple and started to cry, ‘Dear son, you have not died! Sweetheart, come, come. Let us go home!’ But the boy replied, ‘I will not go with you. You have thrown me into the Ganges, so I am not yours anymore. I am not your Murāri; I am now Sāraṅga’s Murāri! I belong to my *gurudev*.’

When Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur left his body, Sāraṅga Murāri stayed here and continued serving. This is a very beautiful place: a place where Mahāprabhu’s associates lived. Coming here, we are remembering how powerful the Holy Name of Lord Kṛṣṇa is – if it is the genuine Name, the result of chanting this Name is inconceivable.

*Jay Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākur ki jay. Śrī Sāraṅga Murāri ki jay
Śrī Modadrumdūp ki jay. Śrī Harinām saṅkīrtan ki jay*



kṛṣṇa-nāma dhare kata bala
viṣaya-vāsanānale, mora chitta sadā jvale,
ravi-tapta maru-bhūmi-sama
karṇa-randhra patha diyā, hṛdi mājhe praveśiyā,
bariṣaya sudhā anupama [1]

How much power Kṛṣṇa’s Name possesses! My heart constantly burns in the fire of mundane desires, like a desert scorched by the blazing sun, but the Name enters the core of my heart through the gateway of my ears and showers incomparable nectar.

hṛdaya haite bale, jihvāra agrete chale,
śabda-rūpe nāche anukṣaṇa
kaṇṭhe more bhaṅge svara, aṅga-kāpe thara thara,
sthira haite nā pāre charaṇa [2]

The Name forcefully moves from my heart to the tip of my tongue and constantly dances there in the form of sound. My voice breaks in my throat, my body trembles violently, and I cannot keep my legs steady.

chakṣe dhārā dehe gharma, pulakita saba charma,
vivarṇa haila kalevara
mūrchhita haila mana, pralayera āgamana,
bhāve sarva-deha jara jara [3]

Tears stream from my eyes, perspiration soaks my body, my hair stands on end, my complexion turns pale, my mind is dazed, a death-like state overtakes me, and my entire body becomes stunned with emotion.

kari' eta upadrava, chitte varṣe sudhā-drava,
more ḍāre premera sāgare
kichhu nā bujhite dila, more ta' vātula kaila,
mora chitta-vitta saba hare [4]

Although making such a severe disturbance externally, Kṛṣṇa's Name showers nectar upon my heart and submerges me into an ocean of divine love. Kṛṣṇa's Name prevented me from understanding anything, made me a madman, stealing my heart and wealth.

lainu āśraya yā'ra, hena vyavahāra tā'ra,
balite nā pāri e sakala
kṛṣṇa-nāma ichchhāmaya, yāhe yāhe sukhī haya,
sei mora sukhera sambala [5]

Land of Childhood Pastimes of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur

As we proceed with the *parikramā* of Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām, we have reached our last stop – this beautiful temple situated in the village of Mangachi within Śrī Modadrumdwīp. This is the place where the supremely worshippable ‘Vyāsa of Śrī Chaitanya-līlā’ – Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur – was born. This is his birthplace. Our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj wrote the *praṇām-mantra* of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur and Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī Prabhu:



dāsa-vṛndāvanaṁ vande kṛṣṇa-dāsa-prabhuṁ tathā
 chhannāvatāra-chaitanya-lilā-vistāra-kariṇau
 dvau nityānanda pādābja-karuṇā-reṇu-bhūṣitau
 vyakta-chchhannau budhāchintyau vāvande vyāsa-rūpiṇau
 śrī-guru-gaura-gāndharvā-govindaś cha gaṇaiḥ saha
 jayanti pāṭhakaś chātra sarveṣāṁ karuṇārthinaḥ

‘I offer my obeisance to Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur and Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī, who made public the pastimes of the hidden avatar, Śrī Chaitanya. They were both adorned with the mercy-dust of the lotus feet of Nityānanda. I offer my obeisance to these two inconceivable sages who assumed the form of Vyāsadev, one explicitly (Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur) and the other one secretly (Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī). Glory to Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Govinda and Their associates! We, students, pray for Their mercy.’

When we went to the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit, we spoke about Śrī Nārāyaṇī Devī:

One day, Mahāprabhu was taking *prasādam* at the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit when Nārāyaṇī suddenly came in front of Mahāprabhu with an outstretched hand. She was about three or four years old at that time. Mahāprabhu gave her some *prasād* and said, ‘Now cry and chant “Kṛṣṇa!”’ Affected by the order of Mahāprabhu, Nārāyaṇī started to cry and chant, ‘Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!’

Another time, some neighbours heard Śrīvās Paṇḍit chanting *kīrtan* with devotees late at night. Becoming jealous and annoyed, they started complaining, ‘It is so late, we cannot sleep! All day and night they do their *kīrtan*! They must stop it; otherwise, we will have to beat Nimāi and we will break Śrīvās’s house and throw it into the Ganges!’

Hearing their angry words, Śrīvās Paṇḍit stopped *kīrtan* from the next day, but that day Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to his house.

‘Śrīvās, what has happened? Why did you stop *kīrtan*?’

‘First come in, do not worry about it. Take a seat,’ Śrīvās Paṇḍit replied.

‘Why must I sit? Why has the *kīrtan* stopped? Speak up.’

‘Do not get excited, sit. Neighbours are saying that they will break the house and throw it into the Ganges. I do not mind it, but they also say that they will raise their hands on You. How can I let anyone touch You?’

Mahāprabhu replied, ‘Oh, is that so?’ Then, He showed His transcendental power: He put His hand on Nārāyaṇī’s head and blessed her, ‘May you get devotion to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa!’ Nārāyaṇī at once cried, ‘O Kṛṣṇa! O Gaura!’ and started rolling on the ground. After that, Mahāprabhu said to the devotees, ‘So, do you believe it now, or do you still think that anyone can break your house?’ Everyone then believed Mahāprabhu and never stopped *kīrtan* again.

On account of all this, Nārāyaṇī became renowned as ‘Nārāyaṇī, the Recipient of Gaurāṅga’s Remnants.’ A few years later, they arranged her marriage into the paternal house of Mālīnī Devī in Mamgachi. The name of her husband is not mentioned anywhere in the scriptures; however, soon after her marriage she begot a son – an exalted Vaiṣṇava called Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura. Such was her fortune.

When Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura grew up, he always served Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and preached together with Him. After Mahāprabhu took *sannyās*, He told

Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, 'Go and preach in Rāṛhdeś!' Following this order, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu returned to Rāṛhdeś [Bengal area to the west of the Ganges] and started preaching there in various ways. Apart from that, once every year, He would take all the devotees from Nabadwīp to Śrī Purī Dhām.

One day, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu, together with devotees, started the journey from Nabadwīp, and as they walked, they came to a village called Denur. They decided to stop in a mango grove there to take some rest. Rāmahari Chakravartī, the landowner of Denur, was a *brāhmaṇ* and a big devotee of Nityānanda Prabhu. He always thought, 'When will I be able to see Nityānanda Prabhu? When will Nityānanda Prabhu come?' So, when that day Rāmahari Chakravartī suddenly saw a big colourful crowd from a distance – some wore yellow clothes; some, blue; some, red; some, white, etc. – he was surprised, 'What is this? Let me go and see what is going on!' He came to the mango grove and saw that Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu Himself was standing there! Seeing his *gurudev*, Rāmahari Chakravartī immediately fell on the ground, offering his prostrate obeisance to Nityānanda Prabhu. When he got up, he said, 'Prabhu, I am always thinking about You. Please come to my house! I will give everyone *prasād*!'

'How?' Nityānanda Prabhu replied. 'There are so many of us here. How can we all fit in your house? You know, better bring whatever rice, dal, etc. you have, and we can make a picnic here.'

Excited, Rāmahari Chakravartī made all arrangements and distributed *prasādam* to everyone very nicely.

After taking *prasād*, Śrīman Nityānanda Prabhu said to His servant, Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur, ‘Where is My thing?’ Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur immediately understood what Nityānanda Prabhu wanted, it was not necessary to say what thing it was. Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur gave Nityānanda Prabhu a *haritaki* fruit (used as a mouth freshener). Seeing that *haritaki*, *akrodha-paramānanda* (always-joyful-and-never-angry) Nityānanda Rāy flared up. He asked Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur, ‘Where did you get it from so quickly?’ Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur explained, ‘Prabhu, when You were taking *prasād* in the morning, a devotee gave me a few *haritaki* fruits knowing that You take it every day. I gave you some in the morning, and I have kept some to give You later during the day.’

He told the truth, but Nityānanda Prabhu became angry when He heard it, ‘With your hoarding mood, you are just like a householder! You are keeping and hoarding things for tomorrow!’ (Householders keep things for the next day, worrying, ‘What will I eat tomorrow? What will I wear tomorrow?’ They always think, ‘When I grow old, who will take care of me?’) So, finally, Nityānanda Prabhu said, ‘If your mood is like this, then you must not come with Me! Stay at the house of Rāmahari and preach here.’

It was a very simple matter – why did Nityānanda Prabhu become angry then? Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur did not do anything wrong: he kept some fruit for his *guru*, what fault is there in doing it? However, the main point here is that Nityānanda Prabhu cannot preach everywhere alone, so He used that situation as a pretext to keep Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur there.

Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur placed the order of Nityānanda Prabhu on his head and followed it: throwing away his own happiness and unhappiness, he started living in Denur. This is where he wrote his famous scripture *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata*; this is where his Deities of Nityānanda Prabhu and Mahāprabhu are; and this is where his holy *samādhi-mandir* is. This is briefly how his life went.

Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur composed *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata*, and when everybody read it, they thought the name appeared to be wrong – this scripture should have been called *Śrī Nityānanda-bhāgavata* because he actually wrote more about Nityānanda Prabhu than Mahāprabhu. Such was his deep attachment to the holy lotus feet of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu.

Just a hundred years ago, this holy place was completely neglected. When Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur Prabhupād first inaugurated Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, he re-discovered, one by one, virtually all places. In 1921, he acquired this land in the birthplace of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur and first built here a shelter; a few years later, in 1938, he made this beautiful temple and established the Deities here. By the mercy of his holy lotus feet, we are able to come here today and get an opportunity to remember the pastimes and glory of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur.

In 1967, our Param Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, wrote a short article about Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur. We are presenting this article below for the eternal benefit of the readers.

Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur

Śrī Gaurāṅgasundar, the Lord of my Lord (*‘āmāra Prabhura Prabhu Gaurāṅga-sundar’*), advised, ‘Those who are humbler than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree, who do not desire any honour and give honour to others are qualified to always chant the Holy Name’ (*‘tṛṇād api sunīchena...’*); but Vṛndāvan Dās Mahāśaya, the ‘Vyāsa of Śrī Chaitanya-līlā’, said, ‘If any sinner disregards this and makes any offence, I will kick this sinner on the head!’ How can this be harmonised? I thought that a devotee would rather show intense, heartfelt sadness – there is no such consideration here. But what is this? Vaiṣṇav Āchārya said: in such cases, the Lord shows extreme mercy to the *jīva* soul. But what do we see here? Taken aback and amazed, I became quite intrigued to understand this. Āchārya said also: in the cases when the Supreme Lord, or even many spiritual teachers, ignore great offenders, Ṭhākur Vṛndāvan does not ignore such sinners – personally taking this responsibility, he bestows punishment on them. Here, establishing a good or a bad relationship with the clan of such ‘candidates for Lord Yama’s punishment, who are not worth being looked at or touched’ (*‘asprśya adṛśya sei haya yama-daṇḍya’*), he pulls them into the court of the Supreme Lord. When it comes to fighting for the dignity of His devotees, the Lord has given some sugar-coated concession to the protesting party; moreover, He explained that first, unknown to them, they are given a grant to ensure the termination of their eternal poverty: *‘Bhakta-pada dhūli āra bhakta-pada-*

jāla bhakta bhukta śeṣa ei tina sādhanera bala. The dust of devotees' feet, the water that has washed devotees' feet and devotees' food remnants – honouring these three gives one strength to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness' – if they can meditate on this formula, they can fulfil their goal. When one is charged with a stick or kicked and the authority has no say in the matter, then what is the use of this authority? 'No war, no booty': if you can file a complaint against the police with the authorities (just as it takes some grinding, some effort, to get powder), then it is possible to gain something – must this be even taught again in this present day and age? Therefore, Śrī Vṛndāvan Ṭhākur made provision for this ruckus with you – think hard and understand how indebted you all are to him for this! Our Master said – and what he said is right – that if we loot the wealth of Śrī Vṛndāvan, we will create even more unrest. However, Āchārya said: when they came to loot, they got such greatly valuable wealth that without informing the authorities about it they stealthy started a great festival of chanting and dancing within their overflowing hearts. The slogan there was, 'The worship of My devotees is higher than My worship.' The dust of devotees' feet, the water that has washed devotees' feet and devotees' food remnants – honouring these three gives one strength to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

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Additionally, we find one more invaluable article coming from Bhagavān Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur Prabhupād himself:

— Life of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur —

(By Prabhupād Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur)

Within the Purbasthali Police Station in Bardhaman District, there is an ancient village called Mamgachi that exists to this day. The elders and the author of *Bhaktiratnākar* instruct that this Mamgachi village is called Modadrums Island of Nabadwīp. The Bhāgīrathī River flows on the outskirts of Mamgachi. The Deities of Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda, who were served by Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās, are worshipped in this village eternally. It is said that Ṭhākur Vṛndāvan took birth in this village. Today, there is a place that is discerned as the house of Ṭhākur Mahāśaya, where Vṛndāvan Dās is considered to have walked and spent his childhood.

The paternal house of Śrīvās's spouse, Mālinī Devi, was in Mamgachi. Śrīvās Paṇḍit, a dear devotee of Śrī Gaurāṅga, lived in Śrī Nabadwīp, and his brother's daughter, Śrī Nārāyaṇī Devī, got married in Mamgachi. In her final years, Mālinī returned to her own father's house and lived there. Nārāyaṇī was married to one of the members of Mālinī's extended family, and Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās appeared from the womb of this Śrī Nārāyaṇī.

Ṭhākur lost his father in his childhood: just as his venerable father became devoted to the service of Lord Śrī Chaitanyachandra, he left his body – his name is not particularly mentioned anywhere. Some say that because his father had not completely taken shelter at the holy lotus feet of the Lord, Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur's identity is not related to the identity of his paternal family.

As of today, the holy Deities of Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda installed by Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās in the house of Śrīvās Paṇḍit's spouse, Mālinī, were moved to another place. Although They are served according to all appropriate rules and regulations, Their service does not have that same flourishing scope and effulgence.

Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur spent much time in Denur. We do not hear anything about Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya accepting a family life (getting married). Among his four disciples, he bequeathed all his property in Denur to Śrī Rāmahari, a *kāyastha brāhmaṇ* from North Rāṛhdeś. To this day, this *brāhmaṇ's* descendants live in the house of Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya in Denur Pāṭ and continue the service there. Although Rāmahari himself reformed and took initiation, after a few generations, his descendants were eventually (under the influence of time) compelled to engage in the social customs pursuant to the *smārta* rules (practised rituals to obtain material gain).

Although we do not find much about the identity of Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur's paternal family, it is known that his father was born in a family of *brāhmaṇs* coming from the Rāṛhdeś caste. Because his maternal family were exclusively surrendered to Śrī Chaitanyachandra and were very prominent householder Vaiṣṇavs, he is generally known by this identification in the Vaiṣṇav world and the literary society of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism.

Born from Śrī Nārāyaṇī, Ṭhākur Mahāśaya possessed a profound genius for devotional scriptures, and, being fixed in Vaiṣṇav practices, tried hard, with his words, thoughts and deeds, to preach the glory of the Vaiṣṇav *guru-varga*.

Because the *smārta* society, who hated Vaiṣṇavs and were just as much overcome by hatred to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, always showed extreme contempt towards Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur, who was a servant of Śrī Nityānanda, and never gave him any elevated place at the top of their hostile-to-Vaiṣṇavs *smārta* society. The deception existing at the root of this society is such that they never found faults or even raised any question with regard to various misconceptions (inauspicious, unspiritual ideas) in the slanderous preaching, etc. practised within their families.

Shortly before Śrī Gaurasundar left Nabadwīp, Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya's mother Nārāyaṇī was only a four-year-old girl. At that time, she was a revered recipient of Śrī Chaitanyachandra's affectionate glance. In the future, when she became a member of her husband's household at the parental house of Śrī Mālinī Devī, she raised and took care of her jewel of a son, Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās, until his adolescence. Falling prey to the contemporary charm of *smārta brāhmaṇs*, some amateur *prākṛta-sahajiyā* (gross imitationist) pseudo-Vaiṣṇavs from Rāṛhdeś decided to excommunicate him from the *brāhmaṇ* society of the time. Actually, he considered that genuine pure *brāhmaṇism* rightfully took the highest position, and he never accepted subservience to the *smārta* society, which hated spiritual life and God. Those who studied Śrī Chaitanya-*bhāgavata* that was written by this great soul know that Ṭhākur Mahāśaya is a highest stalwart in preaching the religion of pure devotion as revealed by Śrī Chaitanyachandra. At the time when Rādhā-ramaṇ, the son of Madhusūdan (the son of

Śrī Advaita Prabhu's son Balarām), lived in Śāntipur and, desiring to uproot the exclusive spiritual religion preached by Śrī Advaita Prabhu, became a staunch follower of the son of honourable Śrī Harihara Bhaṭṭāchārya; at the time when Śrī Vīrachandra Prabhu's three disciples, who were like sons to him, being oppressed and pushed into the frightful jaws of *smārta* dictates, had to place Tripurā Sundarī (one of the five deities worshipped by Hindus) on the same altar with the Deity of Śrī Śyāmasundar; when there were discussions with the Barind *brāhmaṇs* (*brāhmaṇs coming originally from North Bengal, the area that is now mostly situated within Bangladesh*) that, following the social rules and regulations of the Rāṛhdeś community (*brāhmaṇs coming from the western bank of the Ganges*) and considering the background of Gaṅgā Ṭhākuraṇī, the status of the Rāṛhdeś community should be raised to the level of the *gaṅgopadhyāya* caste (*a prominent ancient Bengali brāhmaṇ caste*) – at this very time, the unreasonable attempts to accept, etc. such devotees as Śrī Uddhāraṇ Ṭhākuraṇ in the *daikṣya-sāvitrya* caste of *brāhmaṇs* (initiated into the *mantras* and given the *brāhmaṇ* thread) by giving them initiation were made to prevent in various ways the fame of Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākuraṇ Mahāśaya's Vaiṣṇava society from flourishing. Despite that, Ṭhākuraṇ Mahāśaya – the sun of Gauḍīya literature, Gaura's chief devotee, whose only life and soul is Śrī Nityānanda – could not refrain from recording the truth in *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata*. Those who study *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* very carefully cannot be swayed from the path of unalloyed truth (free from bewitching illusion) which was spoken by Śrī Ṭhākuraṇ Mahāśaya.

The transcendental solutions presented by the precepts of devotion with regard to social disputes are embedded in gold letters in various places of Śrīla Ṭhākur's *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata*. His service mood towards his Śrī Gurudev (Nityānanda) is incomparable. There are no such scholars, no contemporary society in the whole world – be it in India, Gauḍadeś, Śrī Nabadṅwīp Dhām or any other place – that could touch a hair on his head. In later time, in their ardent attempts to attack him, they did not hesitate to scorn his lineage or his heart-felt content.

There is no scarcity of ugly-natured people willing to attack the utmost pure virtues of Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya. Fuelled by hatred for Vaiṣṇavs, some say that Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur Mahāśaya and his eternal servants showed extreme callousness towards non-Vaiṣṇavs and became incapable of attracting the love of inexperienced people with the example of the religion of tolerance and the beauty of the religion of 'being humbler than a blade of grass' that was preached by Śrī Gaura. In reply to that, Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās's followers said: if one wishes to criticise in this manner, then it can be said that when such ugly-natured people who oppose devotees and, couching themselves in the garb of literary lions, climb atop the holy seat of morality cheat people whilst harbouring hatred, this is indicative of their own misfortune. Because they lack spiritual merit, they have the audacity to treat the *guru* and Vaiṣṇavs with such contempt. The arguments that irrational harmonisers put forward against the pure line, striving to harmonise their dry religion of strife with the all-auspicious universal religion of spiritual love are extremely absurd and stem

from envy. Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya is totally (with his body, mind and speech) absorbed in the service to his Guru-Nityānanda; therefore, Śrī Chaitanyachandra never entrusted any powerful authors or amateur moralists to ascribe faults to Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya's spiritual life. As soon as all these critics desist from their whimsical dance in the abode of six mundane enemies, they will recognise Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya as the only *gurudev* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavs and repent of their offences against Śrī Guru.

The style in which *Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata* is written is very easy to understand and extremely captivating to the heart. Śrī Ṭhākur Mahāśaya showed great achievement in describing Śrīla Haridās Ṭhākur's character; in describing the state of the society at the time of Śrī Gaurāṅgadev's appearance; in establishing the literary position of the songs etc. extolling the lives of sense-enjoyers, *yogīs*, and kings; in describing how the *brāhmaṇs* of those days would occasionally chant the name of Puṇḍarikākṣa (Lord Viṣṇu); in describing the glory, opulence, etc. of Śrī Gaurasundar – seeing this great feat of his, those who can behold the beauty of the holy Gauḍīya literature and who have entered the literary temple will have an opportunity to note the supra-mundane literary excellence of the residents of Gauḍa Maṇḍal, who are devoid of illusory propensity for enjoyment. Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavs are not just residents of Gauḍadeś – with the help of the Gauḍīya language (the language of Bengal), they also become adept at the language of liberated associates residing eternally in Goloka, and they can thus communicate with you speaking the theistical Gauḍīya language.

I finished this lecture by reciting the words of our precursory *gurudev*, Śrīla Kavirāj Goswāmī, which were spoken about Śrī Ṭhākura Mahāśaya:

‘ore mūḍha loka, śuna chaitanya-maṅgala
chaitanya-mahimā yāte jānibe sakala

‘O fools, hear Śrī *Chaitanya-maṅgala*! If you hear it, you will understand all glories of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

‘kṛṣṇa-līlā bhāgavate kahe vedavyāsa
chaitanya-līlāra vyāsa—vṛndāvana-dāsa

‘Like Vedavyās, who told about Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, Vṛndāvan Dās is the Vyāsa of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s pastimes.

‘vṛndāvana-dāsa kaila chaitanya-maṅgala
yāhāra śravaṇe nāse sarva amaṅgala
chaitanya-nitāira yā’te jāniye mahimā
yā’te jāni kṛṣṇa-bhakti-siddhāntera sīmā

‘Vṛndāvan Dās composed *Śrī Chaitanya-maṅgala*, by hearing which all inauspiciousness is destroyed; from this book, you can learn about all glories of Chaitanya and Nitāi and understand the acme of the teachings of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

‘bhāgavate yata bhakti-siddhāntera sāra
likhiyāchhena jāni’ kariyā uddhāra

‘Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura presented the conclusion and essence of devotional service by quoting authoritative statements of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*.

‘chaitanya-maṅgala śune yadi pāṣaṇḍī, yavana
seha mahā-vaiṣṇava haya tatakṣaṇa

‘Even great atheists and low-born people can at once become great Vaiṣṇavs by hearing Śrī Chaitanya-maṅgala.

‘manuṣye rachite nāre aichhe grantha dhanya
vṛndāvana-dāsa-mukhe vaktā śrī-chaitanya

‘This holy book was not composed by a man – Śrī Chaitanya spoke though the mouth of Vṛndāvan Dās.

‘vṛndāvana-dāsa-pade koṭi namaskāra
aichhe grantha kari’ tīho tārilā saṁsāra

‘I offer millions of obeisances at Vṛndāvan Dās’s feet. By writing this holy book he delivered the whole world.

nārāyaṇī—chaitanyera uchchhiṣṭa-bhājana
tā’ra garbhe janmilā śrī-dāsa vṛndāvana

‘Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās was born of the womb of Nārāyaṇī, who received Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s food remnants.

‘tā’ra ki adbhuta chaitanya-charita-varṇana
yāhāra śravaṇe śuddha kaila tri-bhuvana

‘How wonderful his description of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s character! By hearing it, all three worlds became purified.

‘vṛndāvana-dāsa kaila chaitanya-maṅgala
tāhāte chaitanya-lilā varṇila sakala

‘Vṛndāvan Dās wrote Śrī Chaitanya-maṅgala, describing therein all pastimes of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

‘sūtra kari’ saba lilā karila granthana
pāchhe vistāriyā tāhāra kaila vivaraṇa
‘vistāra dekhiyā kichhu saṅkocha haila mana
sūtra-dhṛta kona lilā nā kaila varṇana

‘He first briefly summarised all pastimes and then described them in detail. Seeing the extensive descriptions he had written, he felt somewhat shy because he felt that some pastimes had not been captured.

‘nityānanda-līlā-varṇane haila āveśa
chaitanyera śeṣa līlā rahila avaśeṣa
vṛndāvana-dāsera pāda-padma kari’ dhyāna
tā’ra ājñā laiya likhi yāhāte kalyāṇa

‘He ardently described the pastimes of Nityānanda Prabhu, but the last pastimes of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu remained untold. I meditated at the holy lotus feet of Vṛndāvan Dās and upon receiving his order, I am writing this for everyone’s benefit.

‘chaitanya-līlāte vyāsa—vṛndāvana-dāsa
tā’ra kṛpā binā anye nā haya prakāśa’

‘Vṛndāvan Dās is the Vyāsa of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s pastimes. Without his mercy, no one can describe these pastimes.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi, ch. 8)

‘vṛndāvana-dāsa—nārāyaṇīra nandana
chaitanya-maṅgala yīho karila rachana

‘Vṛndāvan Dās, the son of Nārāyaṇī, composed Śrī Chaitanya-maṅgala [Śrī Chaitanya-bhāgavata].

‘bhāgavate kṛṣṇa-līlā varṇilā vedavyāsa
chaitanya līlāte vyāsa—vṛndāvana-dāsa’

‘Like Vedavyās, who described Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, Vṛndāvan Dās is the Vyāsa of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s pastimes.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi, ch. 11)

‘chaitanya-līlāra vyāsa—dāsa vṛndāvana
madhura kariyā līlā karilā rachana’

‘Vṛndāvan Dās is the Vyāsa of Chaitanya Mahāpabhu’s pastimes. His description of the Lord’s pastimes made them even sweeter.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Ādi, ch. 13)

‘chaitanya-līlāra vyāsa—dāsa vṛndāvana
tā’ra ājñāya karō tā’ra uchchhiṣṭa charvaṇa

‘Vṛndāvan Dās is the Vyāsa of Chaitanya Mahāpabhu’s pastimes. Only upon his order am I trying to merely chew the food remnants he has left.

‘bhakti kari’ śire dhari’ tāhāra charaṇa
śeṣa-līlāra sūtra ebe kariye varṇana’

‘Lovingly placing his holy feet upon my head, I shall now briefly describe the Lord’s final pastimes.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya, ch. 1)

‘sahaje vichitra madhura chaitanya-vihāra
vṛndāvana-dāsa-mukhe amṛtera dhāra

‘Chaitanya Mahāpabhu’s playful pastimes are obviously wonderful and sweet, but when coming from Vṛndāvan Dās’s mouth, they are currents of nectar.

‘e sakala līlā śrī-dāsa vṛndāvana
vistāri’ varṇiyāchhena uttama varṇana
ataeva tāhā varṇile haya punarukti
dambha kari’ varṇi yadi taichhe nāhi śakti

‘All these pastimes have been very elaborately described by Śrī Vṛndāvan Dās. Therefore, to describe them again would be a repetition. Moreover, even if I desired to describe them out of pride, I do not have such power.

‘chaitanya-maṅgale yāhā karila varṇana
sūtra-rūpe sei līlā kariye sūchana

‘I am presenting only a summary of the pastimes that were described in *Chaitanya-maṅgala*.

‘tā’ra sūtre āchhe, ṭīha nā kaila varṇana
yathā-kathañchit kari’ se līlā kathana

‘He did not describe in detail some of the incidents, so I shall try to tell about those pastimes.

‘ataeva tā’ra pāye kari namaskāra
tā’ra pāya aparādha nā hauk āmāra’

‘Thus, I offer my respectful obeisances at his lotus feet, praying that I may not cause any offence at his holy feet.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Madhya, ch.4)

‘vṛndāvana-dāsa prathama ye līlā varṇila
sei saba līlāra āmi sūtra-mātra kaila

‘I have presented a brief summary of all the pastimes that were earlier described by Vṛndāvan Dās.

‘tā’ra tyakta “avaśeṣa” samkṣepe kahila
līlāra bāhulye grantha tathāpi bāḍila

‘I have briefly described the pastimes that were “untold” by Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākura. Because there are so many pastimes, this book has turned out very big.

‘nityānanda-kṛpā-pātra—vṛndāvana-dāsa
chaitanya-līlāya tēho haye ādi-vyāsa

‘Vṛndāvan Dās, who is a recipient of Nityānanda Prabhu’s mercy, is the original Vyāsa of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s pastimes.

‘tāra āge yadyapi saba lilāra bhāṇḍāra
tathāpi alpa varṇiyā chhāḍilena āra

‘Although he possess the full store of Mahāprabhu’s pastimes, he described just a few of them, leaving out the rest.

‘ye kichhu varṇilū, seha saṁkṣepa kariyā
likhite nā pārena tabu rākhiyāchhena likhiyā
chaitanya-maṅgale tēho likhiyāchhe sthāne sthāne
sei vachana śuna sei parama-pramāṇe

‘Vṛndāvan Dās could not write briefly about what I have described, but he still did write about it. If you hear his scripture, you will find the evidence: the mention of what I have described here is scattered throughout *Chaitanya-maṅgala*.

“saṁkṣepe kahilū vistāra nā yāya kathane
vistāriyā veda-vyāsa karibena varṇane”
chaitanya-maṅgale ihā likhiyāchhe sthāne sthāne
satya kahena—āge vyāsa karilā varṇane

“I have described Mahāprabhu’s pastimes briefly as it is impossible to describe them in full – Vedavyās will later describe them in detail.” This is written in many places in *Chaitanya-maṅgala*. But the truth is that Vyāsa (Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur) has already described everything.

‘chaitanya-lilāmṛta-sindhu—dugdhābdhi-samāna
tṛṣṇānurūpa jhārī bhari’ tīho kailā pāna

‘The ocean of nectarean pastimes of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is like an ocean of milk. Filling the *jhārī*[†] of his thirst, he drank that nectar.

[†] a small spouted pot for drinking water

‘tā’ra jhārī-śeṣāmṛta kichhu more dilā
tateke bharila peṭa ṭṛṣṇā mora gelā’

‘He gave me the last bits of nectar from his pot, and
filling my belly with those drops, all my thirst is gone.’

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, Antya, ch. 20)

— • • • —



bimala hema-jini, tanu anupama re!
tāhe śobhe nānā phula-dāma
kadamba keśara jini, ekatī pulaka re!
tāra mājhe bindu bindu ghāma [1]

His figure defeats pure gold! Various flowers garlands adorn Him, highlighting His beauty, and in His ecstatic thrill, the hairs on His body standing erect defeat the stamens of kadamba flowers! His body is covered with drops of perspiration.

jini' mada-matta hāti, gamana manthara ati,
bhāvāveśe ḍhuli ḍhuli yāya
aruṇa-vasana chhabi, jini prabhātera rabi,
gaurā-aṅge laharī khelāya [2]

His very slow gait defeats the walk of a mad elephant. Overcome with divine love, He is swayed by ecstasy. The beauty of His crimson garments defeats the morning sun. There are waves playing within His golden limbs.

chalite nā pāre gorā-, chāḍa gōsāñi re,
balite nā pāre ādha-bola
bhāvete āveśa haiyā, hari hari bolāiyā,
āchaṇḍāle dhari' deya kola [3]

Lo, Gorāchāḍ cannot go any further! He cannot talk, uttering only some half-words. Deeply overcome by ecstasy and chanting, 'Hari! Hari!' He catches hold of the lowest of men and embraces them.

e sukha-sampada-kāle, gorā nā bhajinu hele,
hena pade nā karinu āśa
śrī-kṛṣṇa-chaitanya-chandra, ṭhākura śrī-nityānanda,
guṇa gāya vṛndāvana dāsa [4]

It is my loss that at the time of this happy news I did not worship Gorā, did not aspire for this kind of lotus feet. Thus Vṛndāvan Dās is singing the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Chaitanyachandra and Ṭhākur Śrī Nityānanda.

āre bhāi! nitāi āmāra dayāra avadhi!
jīvere karuṇā kari', deśe deśe phiri' phiri',
prema-dhana yāche niravadhi [1]

Brother! My Nitai is the extremity of mercy! Bestowing mercy on souls, He roams from place to place, endlessly begging everyone to take divine love for the Lord.

advaitera saṅge raṅga, dharaṇe nā yāya aṅga,
gorā preme gaḍā tanu-khāni
ḍhuliyā ḍhuliyā chale, bāhu tuli' hari bole,
du-nayane bahe nitāiyera pāni [2]

Rejoicing in the company of Advaita, being unable to maintain His composure, He begins to roll on the ground, overcome with divine love for Gorā. He staggers as He walks, chanting, 'Hari bol!' with upraised arms, tears streaming from His eyes.

kapāle tilaka śobhe, kuṭila-kuntala-lole,
guñjāra āṭuni chuḍā tāya
keśorī jiniyā kaṭi, kaṭi-taṭe nīla-dhaṭi,
bājana nūpura rāṅgā pāya [3]

His forehead is adorned with a *tilak* mark, His curling locks sway to and fro, with a bun tied on top of His head with a string *gunja* seeds. His waist, resembling that of a lion, is adorned with a blue *dhoti*, and there are anklebells tinkling joyfully on His feet.

ke kahu nitāira guṇa, jīve dekhi sakaruṇa,
harināme jagata tārila
madana madete andha, viṣaye rahala dhandha,
hena nitāi bhajite nā pāila [4]

Whom shall I tell about Nitāi's qualities? Seeing *jīva* souls and feeling deep compassion, Nitāi delivered this world through the Holy Name. Those who, blinded by Cupid's intoxicating charm, still had some doubt about it did not worship this Nitāi.

bhuvana-mohana veśa! majāila saba deśa!
rasāveśe aṭṭa aṭṭa hāsa!
prabhu mora nityānanda, kevala ānanda-kanda,
guṇa gāya vṛndāvana dāsa [5]

Dressed in a way that attracts and charms the entire universe, He captures everyone with His beauty, wherever He goes! Overcome with ecstatic devotion, He roars with laughter! My Lord Nityānanda is the root of pure happiness. Vṛndāvan Dās is singing about His glory.

Epilogue

ātma-nivedana, tuyā pade kari',
hainu parama sukhi
duḥkha dūre gela, chintā nā rahila,
chaudike ānanda dekhi [1]

Submitting myself at Your feet, I have become extremely happy. All my unhappiness is gone far away, and I no longer worry about anything – I see happiness in all directions.

aśoka-abhaya, amṛta-ādhāra,
tomāra charaṇa-dvaya
tāhāte ekhana, viśrāma labhiyā,
chhāḍinu bhavera bhaya [2]

There is no grief, no fear at Your two lotus feet – they are an abode of nectar. Coming to them, I have got respite, leaving all fear of material existence.

tomāra saṁsāre, kariba sevana,
nahiba phalera bhāgī
tava sukha yāhe, kariba yatana,
ha'ye pade anurāgī [3]

I will serve Your family and will never take any share of the result for myself. I will do my best to do whatever makes You happy, becoming deeply attached to Your feet.

tomāra sevāya, duḥkha haya yata,
seo ta' parama sukha
sevā-sukha-duḥkha, parama sampada,
nāśaye avidyā-duḥkha [4]

Whatever unhappiness comes in Your service is also my greatest happiness. Both the distress and the happiness that comes in the course of service are my highest wealth and it destroys the misery of ignorance.

pūrva itihāsa, bhulinu sakala,
sevā-sukha pe'ye mane
āmi ta' tomāra, tumi ta' āmāra,
ki kāja apara dhane [5]

I have forgotten all my past history and feel happy serving You. I am Yours, and You are mine. What is the use of any other wealth?

bhakativinoda, ānande ḍubiyā,
tomāra sevāra tare
saba cheṣṭā kare, tava ichchhā-mata,
thākiyā tomāra ghare [6]

Serving You, Bhaktivinod is swimming in happiness. I live in Your house focusing all my efforts on fulfilling Your desires.

My Grief

Today, by the mercy of Śrī Gurupādpadma, by the mercy of Gaura Hari, you have successfully, beautifully and without any obstacles completed Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*. As each year, we have today completed this *dhām parikramā*. You cannot complete this *parikramā* without the mercy of the *guru*, of the *dhām*, of the *dhām-bāsīs*, of Vaiṣṇavs, without Dhāmeśwar Mahāprabhu's mercy, without Nityānanda Prabhu's mercy. Not everyone is able to do a *parikramā* of the holy abode of the Lord. Always remember this.

Today is the *adhivās* day (eve) of Gaura's appearance. It is a very happy, joyful day, but at the same time there is also some sorrow in this day. Why? Because you have done this *parikramā* with Vyāsadev Goswāmī, Śukadev Goswāmī Brahmā, Śiva and others – along with all the devotees, with Gaura Hari, Nityānanda Prabhu, with Gurupādpadma, with Vaiṣṇavs, with so many demigods – but no one can understand this, and we, too, cannot understand this. How many gods and goddesses come from Svaraga-loka (heaven) to do this *parikramā*! Brahmā comes from Brahmā-loka, Śiva comes from Śiva-loka, Vyāsadev Goswāmī, Śukadev Goswāmī, and many others – they all come to do this *parikramā*. They all come to circumambulate the land of the holy pastimes of the Lord(!), but we cannot understand

this; we can neither see it with our common eyes nor understand it. However, the saddest thing about it all is that as you are doing this *dhām parikramā*, you are thinking, ‘When am I going back?’ Many people went to other places in the afternoon, in the middle of the *parikramā*. Without finishing the *parikramā*, today, on the third day, they say, ‘I have stayed here for three days, now I should go home.’ Many have left, but it is their misfortune that they had not managed to complete this *parikramā*...

On this day, Prabhupād Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur always said, ‘After Nabadwīp Dhām *parikramā*, after Jagannāth Miṣra’s *ānanda-mahotsav*, many cross the Ganges and again go back to the illusory world!’

One year, on the day when everybody was leaving, devotees wanted to see Prabhupād before leaving (to offer him obeisances and to say that they were leaving), but at that time Prabhupād was nowhere to be seen. Prabhupād felt very much pain – he sat behind the door, hiding from everyone and crying. Prabhupād often said, ‘You have done this *dhām parikramā*, and I have entered into a relationship with you, but you will forget it!’

In this world, your connection with your father, mother, brother, sister and others is a only two-day connection, but the connection between the *guru* and the disciple is eternal – it continues life after life. Those who cannot understand it can neither be a real *guru* nor a real disciple. You must always remember this. You must understand this relationship; you must know this relationship. It is not possible to understand or see it externally with these common material eyes.

So, that day, everyone started searching, ‘Where has Prabhupād gone?’ They did not find him in his room. In the end, somebody noticed his bathroom door was open – looking into the bathroom, they found him sitting behind the door and crying. They took Prabhupād by the arms and brought him into the room, seating him on a chair. Then, Prabhupād said, ‘You did this *parikramā* for so many days, you have stayed here as members of Kṛṣṇa’s family, but now you are again going to the illusory world of Māyā, you are falling into the bondage of Māyā! We sent devotees to go door to door to bring you from this material illusory world and made you members of Kṛṣṇa’s family, but you are again going back to that material world! You will forget the Lord! You will forget *me*! You have a relationship with me, but you will forget this relationship!’

Śrīla Śrīdhara Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj also said, ‘People came to do the *parikramā*, and they are all going back to their homes now, but what can be more painful than the fact that they leave this relationship with Prabhupād?’ You can realise how intimate Prabhupād’s words were – he spoke about the internal, intimate connection. Common people cannot understand this – they do not understand this connection. This is what is called *viraha, separation...*

When Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvan and went to Mathurā and Dvārakā, Vraja *gopīs* cried so much that they could not see anything – everything merged into one and became blurred. Wherever their glance fell, they only saw Kṛṣṇa. They embraced trees and cried, ‘He has gone this way! Here are His broken ankle bells scattered around! Has Prabhu forgotten us? How cruel! Could He not just kill

us? Has He left us and gone away? How cruel He is! We love Him so much, we do not know anything except Him, we do not understand anything except Him, but He has left us and gone away!’

When Mahāprabhu took *sannyās* and went to Purī, He relished this separation (His *vipralambha-līlā*) there. There is more happiness in separation – there is some happiness in union, but there is far more happiness in separation than in union. The pleasure of a union is momentary, but when you feel pleasure in separation, you feel it at every moment, all the time. If you have a genuine relationship with Kṛṣṇa, if you have a genuine connection with your *guru*, then you will be able to understand everything.

You must understand this *sambandha-jñān* (the connection and the relationship with your *guru* and the Lord) very well. If you read *Rāmānanda-sambād*, you will see that it is an extremely high conception.

When we were at Chāpāhāṭi, you could notice that we did not sing the *Gītā Govinda kīrtan*. We spoke about ‘*Dehi pada-pallavam udāram*’ *śloka*, about Jayadev and Padmāvatī. I have understood it there, but whom will I tell about the separation that Jayadev Goswāmī expressed? Tell me, who will be able to understand it?

You must not forget this connection; this relationship is not a two-day connection. We take initiation and go away, and after that we cannot think about our *guru*, but you must understand: what have you been able to give to your *guru*? How much have you been able to love your *guru*? How much have you been able to do for your *guru*? You must always think about this.

dīkṣa-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa
sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama

'Devotees submit their entire being when they take initiation. At this time, Krishna accepts them as His very own.'

Initiation means transcendental knowledge – when you take initiation and surrender, the Lord takes you as His own. You must always think about it – this mood, this feeling must come to you. It is to taste this feeling, to perform this *līlā* that Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu came to this world. If you hear about the separation Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī feels, you will understand Her agony of separation.

vāśi vāraṇao māne nā, kathā ye śune nā,
o marā kena mare nā
vāśi kona lajja nāi, devānīśi ḍāke-tāi,
āmi yata dūre yāi, vāśi bale eso rāi,
kena ye samaya bujhe nā
duṣṭa vāśi duṣṭāmi, prītera pāgalāmi,
o marā kena mare nā

'I prohibit it, but the Flute does not care – it does not listen to anything I say. It is a dead thing, why does it not just die? The Flute has no shame! It only keeps on calling Me day and night. No matter how far I go, the Flute keeps calling Me, "Come, Rai, come." Why does it not understand? It is a dead thing, but why does it not just die? This naughty Flute is full of mischief, it makes Me mad with love. It is a dead thing, but why does it not just die?'

Kṛṣṇa said, 'O Subal! Balarām is not here today, I will not go to herd the cows today!' Balarām also said that day, 'Kṛṣṇa is not here today, I will not go to herd the cows!'

It is necessary to understand this separation; it is necessary to think about separation. Śrī Gurupādpadma is the Lord's very own – do not forget him. We do not practise like Mīrābāi – it is not our line to sit and only chant, 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.'

rādhā-bhajane yadi mati nāhi bhelā
kṛṣṇa-bhajana taba akāraṇa gelā

'If you do not worship Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, your worship of Kṛṣṇa is nothing.'

If we cannot worship Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, our worship of Kṛṣṇa will not give us anything. Bypassing Nityānanda, you cannot get Gaura; bypassing Gurupādpadma, you cannot get Kṛṣṇa! If you serve the Lord bypassing your *guru*, you will not get any result. Always think about this.

*Jay Śrīla Guru Mahārāj ki jay. Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām parikramā ki jay.
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh ki jay*



aparūpa kata, pūrava parvata,
suvarṇa-chandramā bhāle [7]

Why has the sun become so overwhelmed and immersed into an intensely golden colour as the evening approached? How beautiful the Hill of East looks in the rays of this Golden Moon!

suvarṇa-chandramā, paśichhe nīlimā,
se nīla bilīna heme
ithe kibā bhāya, sādhu-jana gāya,
kalaṅka nā rahe preme [8]

Then, some bluish hue entered the Golden Moon, and this blueness dissolved into its golden colour. All saintly persons begin to chant, 'How beautiful this is! There is no blemish in this transcendental pure love!'

mahājane bale, grahaṇera chhale,
saṅge nāma saṅkīrtana
gaurachandrodaya, pāpa rāhu-kṣaya,
chandra-śobhā-prema-dhana [9]

All great saintly persons say that this eclipse was a mere pretext to chant Nāma-saṅkīrtan. When Gaurachandra (the Golden Moon) arises, He destroys all sins and inauspiciousness of Rāhu (who comes to eclipse the Moon) as this Moon is adorned with the wealth of divine love.

marmajña sakale, kahe kutūhale,
nīlimā bilīna chāde
chhanna avatāra, lukāna kāhāra,
rādhā-ruchi-rūpa-chāde ! [10]

(2)

Śrī Śrī Gaurasundarer Āvirbhāv: Appearance of Śrī Śrī Gaurasundar

By Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta, 1.13.89–124)

chaudda-śata sāta śake māsa ye phālguna
paurṇamāsīra sandhyā-kāle haile śubha-kṣaṇa [89]

In the year 1407 of the Śaka Era (A.D. 1486), in the month of Phālguna [March–April], on the evening of the full moon, the desired auspicious moment appeared.

simha-rāśi, simha-lagna, uchcha graha-gaṇa
ṣaḍ-varga, aṣṭa-varga, sarva sulakṣaṇa [90]

According to the Vedic astronomy, when the figure of the lion appears both in the zodiac and as the time of birth [*lagna*], this indicates a very high conjunction of planets, an area under the influence of *ṣaḍ-varga* and *aṣṭa-varga*, which are all-auspicious moments.

a-kalaṅka gaurachandra dilā daraśana
sa-kalaṅka chandre āra kon prayojana [91]

When the spotless moon of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu became visible, what is the need for a moon full of black marks on its body?

eta jāni' rāhu chandre karilā grahaṇa
'kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' 'hari' nāme bhāse tri-bhuvana [92]

Considering this, Rāhu, the black planet, covered the full moon, and immediately the vibrations of ‘Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Hari!’ inundated the three worlds.

jaya jaya dhvani haila sakala bhuvana
chamatkāra haiyā loka bhāve mane mana [93]

The chants of ‘Jay! Jay!’ filled the whole world, and everybody was astonished at that, wondering what was going on.

jagat bhariyā loka bale—‘hari’ ‘hari’
sei-kṣaṇe gaura-kṛṣṇa bhūme avatari [94]

When the whole world was chanting the Holy Name, Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Gaurahari, made His advent on earth.

prasanna haila saba jagatera mana
‘hari’ bali’ hinduke hāsya karaye yavana [95]

The whole world felt pleased. Laughing at the Hindus, even Muslims chanted Holy Names.

‘hari’ bali’ nārīgaṇa dei hulāhuli
svarge vādya-nṛtya kare deva kutūhalī [96]

All ladies chanted the Holy Name, uttering auspicious cries. And in heaven, demigods played musical instruments and danced, curious to see what was to happen next.

prasanna haila daśa dik, prasanna nadijala
sthāvara-jaṅgama haila ānande vihvala [97]

All the ten directions became pleased, as did the water of all rivers. All living beings, moving and non-moving, were overwhelmed with transcendental happiness.

nadīyā-udayagiri, pūrṇa-chandra gaura-hari,
 kṛpā kari' haila udaya
 pāpa-tamo haila nāśa, tri-jagatera ullāsa,
 jagabhari' hari-dhvani haya [98]

By His causeless mercy the full moon Gaurahari arose in the district of Nadia, which is compared to Udayagiri, where the sun first becomes visible – His rising in the sky destroyed the darkness of sin; all three worlds became joyful and chanted the Holy Name of the Lord.

sei-kāle nijālaya, uṭhiyā advaita rāya,
 nṛtya kare ānandita mane
 haridāse lañā saṅge, huñkāra-kīrtana-raṅge,
 kene nāche, keha nāhi jāne [99]

At that time, Śrī Advaita Āchārya Prabhu, who was in his house in Śāntipur, was dancing for joy. Grabbing Haridās Ṭhākur, he danced and rejoiced, loudly chanting Holy Names. Why were they dancing? No one knew.

dekhi' uparāga hāsi', śīghra gaṅgā-ghāṭe āsi',
 ānande karila gaṅgā-snāna
 pāñā uparāga-chhale, āpanāra mano-bale,
 brāhmaṇere dila nānā dāna [100]

Seeing the lunar eclipse and laughing, Advaita Āchārya and Haridās Ṭhākur hurried to the bank of the Ganges and bathed happily. On pretext of observing the lunar eclipse, Advaita Āchārya mentally distributed various types of charity to *brāhmaṇs*.

jagat ānandamaya, dekhi' mane sa-vismaya,
 ṭhāre-ṭhore kahe haridāsa

‘tomāra aichhana raṅga, mora mana parasanna,
dekhi—kichhu kārye āchhe bhāsa’ [101]

When he saw that the whole world was jubilant, Haridās Ṭhākur was astonished. He allusively suggested to Advaita Āchārya, ‘I am happy to see your joy. I can understand that there is some special reason for that.’

āchāryaratna, śrīnivāsa, haila mane sukhollāsa,
yāi’ snāna kaila gaṅgā-jale
ānande vihvala mana, kare hari-saṅkīrtana,
nānā dāna kaila mano-bale [102]

Overwhelmed with joy, Āchāryaratna (Chandraśekhara) and Śrīnivās (Śrīvās Paṇḍit) went to bath in the Ganges. Their minds full of happiness, they chanted Holy Names of the Lord and mentally distributed charity.

ei mata bhakta-yati, yāra yei deśe sthiti,
tāhā tāhā pānā mano-bale
nāche, kare saṅkīrtana, ānande vihvala mana,
dāna kare grahaṇera chhhale [103]

In this way, renounced devotees in various corners of the world mentally received those gifts. Dancing, chanting Holy Names and overcome with joy, they distributed gifts on pretext of observing the lunar eclipse.

brāhmaṇa-sajjana-nārī, nānā-dravye pātra bhari,
āilā sabe yautuka laiṃyā
yena kāchā-soṇā-dyuti, dekhi’ bālakera mūrti,
āśīrvāda kare sukha pānā [104]

Gathering various gifts, *brāhmaṇs*, gentlemen and ladies arrived with their presentations. Seeing the newborn boy, whose holy form resembled raw gold, they happily offered their blessings.

sāvitṛī, gaurī, sarasvatī, śachī, rambhā, arundhatī,
 āra yata deva-nārīgaṇa
 nānā-dravye pātra bhari', brāhmaṇīra veśa dhari',
 āsi' sabe karena daraśana [105]

Gathering various gifts and dressing themselves as wives of *brāhmaṇs*, all the celestial ladies – Sāvitṛī (Brahmā's wife), Gaurī (Lord Śiva's wife), Sarasvatī (Nṛsimhadev's wife), Śachī (Indradev's wife), Rambhā (celestial dancer), Arundhatī (Vasiṣṭha's wife) and others – arrived to see the child.

antarīkṣe deva-gaṇa, siddha, gandharva, chāraṇa,
 stuti-nṛtya kare vādya-gīta
 nartaka, vādaka, bhāṭa, navadvīpe yāra nāṭa,
 sabe āsi' nāche pāñā prīta [106]

In the sky, all demigods, including the inhabitants of Siddhaloka, Gandharvaloka and Chāraṇaloka, offered prayers and danced to the accompaniment of music. In Nabadwīp, all professional dancers, musicians and religious poets gathered, too, dancing in great jubilation.

kebā āse kebā yāya, kebā nāche kebā gāya,
 sambhālīte nāre kāra bola
 khaṇḍīleka duḥkha-śoka, pramoda-pūrita loka,
 miśra hailā ānande vihvala [107]

Some came, some went; some danced, some sang. Coming from all these different backgrounds, nobody was able to understand what anyone was saying. All unhappiness and grief was shuttered and the world was purged of illusion. Jagannāth Miśra was almost unconscious with joy.

āchāryaratna, śrīnivāsa, jagannātha-miśra-pāśa,
 āsi' tāre kare sābadhāna
 karāila jātakarma, ye āchhila vidhi-dharma,
 tabe miśra kare nānā dāna [108]

'Chandraśekhara Āchārya and Śrīvās Paṇḍit, who were Jagannāth Miśra's neighbours, also came and tried to caution him. They performed the ceremonies prescribed at the time of birth by religious regulations, and then Jagannāth Miśra distributed various charity.

yautuka pāila yata, ghare vā āchhila kata,
 saba dhana vipre dila dāna
 yata nartaka, gāyana, bhāṭa, akiñchana jana,
 dhana diyā kaila sabāra māna [109]

Whatever presentations Jagannāth Miśra received and whatever he had at home, he distributed everything among *brāhmaṇs*. He honoured all dancers, singers, religious poets and the poor by giving them various wealth.

śrīvāsera brāhmaṇī, nāma tāra 'mālinī',
 āchāryaratnera patnī-saṅge
 sindūra, haridrā, taila, khai, kalā, nānā phala,
 diyā pūje nārīgaṇa raṅge [110]

The *brāhmaṇī* wife of Śrīvās Ṭhākura, Mālinī, arrived together with the wife of Chandraśekhara. The ladies offered vermilion, turmeric, oil, fused rice, bananas and various fruit, expressing their worship.

advaita-āchārya-bhāryā, jagat-pūjitā āryā,
 nāma tāra 'sītā ṭhākuraṇī'
 āchāryera ājñā pāñā, gelā upahāra lañā,
 dekhite bālaka-śiromaṇi [111]

Advaita Āchārya's pious spouse, Śrī Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī, who is worshippable for the whole world, came, on the order of her husband, to see the crest-jewel of a child, bringing along various gifts.

suvarṇera kaḍi-bauli, rajatamudrā-pāśuli,
 suvarṇera aṅgada, kaṅkaṅa
 du-bāhute divya śaṅkha, rajatera malabaṅka,
 svarṇa-mudrāra nānā hāragaṇa [112]

She brought gold earrings the shape of a conch, silver anklets with coin-like ornaments, gold bracelets, bangles as well as two exquisite conch bangles for both hands, curved silver foot-bracelets and various gold necklaces with coin-like ornaments.

vyāghra-nakha hema-jaḍi, kaṭi-paṭṭasūtra-ḍorī,
 hasta-padera yata ābharaṇa
 chitra-varṇa paṭṭa-sāḍī, buni photo paṭṭapāḍī,
 svarṇa-raupya-mudrā bahu-dhana [113]

There were also tiger nails set in gold, coloured threads worn on the waist, various ornaments for hands and legs, fine silk *sārīs* and silk shirts for the baby. Many other riches, including gold and silver coins, were also presented to the child.

durvā, dhānya, gorochana, haridrā, kuṅkuma, chandana,
 maṅgala-dravya pātra bhariyā
 vastra-gupta dolā chaḍī', saṅge laṅṅā dāsī cheḍī,
 vastrālaṅkāra peṭāri bhariyā [114]

Taking auspicious offerings, including fresh grass, paddy, *gocharan*, tumeric, kumkum and sandalwood, along with baskets full of clothes and ornaments, she

came in a cloth-covered palanquin together with her maidservants.

bhakṣya, bhojya, upahāra, saṅge laila bahu bhāra,
śachī-gr̥he haila upanīta
dekhiyā bālaka-ṭhāma, sākṣāt gokula-kāna,
varṇa-mātra dekhi viparīta [115]

She arrived at Śachī Devī's house with a great amount of various food preparations and gifts. When she saw the figure of the child, she thought that He looked just like Gokula Kān (baby Kṛṣṇa) Himself, only His bodily colour was different.

sarva aṅga—sunirmāṇa, suvarṇa-pratimā-bhāna,
sarva aṅga—sulakṣaṇamaya
bālakera divya jyoti, dekhi' pāila bahu prīti,
vātsalyete dravila hṛdaya [116]

The limbs of His body were very beautifully built, making Him look like a golden doll. All His limbs were adorned with auspicious signs. Seeing the divine effulgence of the boy, Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī's heart melted with maternal affection.

durvā, dhānya, dila śīrṣe, kaila bahu āśīṣe,
chirajīvī hao dui bhāi
ḍākinī-śākhinī haite, śaṅkā upajila chite,
ḍare nāma thuila 'nimāi' [117]

Placing grass and paddy on his head, she abundantly blessed the baby boy, saying, 'May You and Your brother live a long life.' Suddenly, she felt some fear in her heart that the baby could be attacked by some ghosts or witches, so, to protect the child, she named Him Nimāi.

putramātā-snānadine, dila vastra vibhūṣaṇe,
 putra-saha miśrere sammāni'
 śachī-miśrera pūjā lañā, manete hariṣa hañā,
 ghare āilā sītā ṭhākuraṇī [118]

When the mother and the son came out of the labour room after several days and bathed, Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī honoured the child along with His father, Jagannāth Miśra, by giving them various clothes and ornaments. Then, after being honoured by mother Śachī Devī and Jagannāth Miśra, Sītā Ṭhākuraṇī went back to her house, feeling excited at heart.

aichhe śachī-jagannātha, putra pāñā lakṣmīnātha,
 pūrṇa haila sakala vāñchhita
 dhana-dhānye bhare ghara, lokamānya-kalevara,
 dine dine haya ānandita [119]

In this way Mother Śachī and Jagannāth Miśra obtained the husband of the goddess of fortune as their son – all their desires were fulfilled. Their house was filled with riches and grains. Everybody was drawn to the graceful beauty and effulgence of the child, and Mother Śachī and Jagannāth Miśra felt increasingly joyful day by day.

miśra—vaiṣṇava, śānta, alampaṭa, śuddha, dānta,
 dhana-bhoge nāhi abhimāna
 putrera prabhāve yata, dhana āsi' mile tata,
 viṣṇu-prīte dvije dena dāna [120]

Jagannāth Miśra is an ideal Vaiṣṇav. He is peaceful, restrained in sense gratification, pure and controlled. He is not proud of his wealth or opulence. He collected whatever riches came owing to His son and distributed everything among *brāhmaṇs* out of love for Lord Viṣṇu.

lagna gaṇi' harṣamati, nīlāmbara chakravartī,
 gupte kichhu kahila miśrere
 mahāpuruṣera chihna, lagne aṅge bhinna bhinna,
 dekhi,—ei tāribe saṁsāre [121]

After calculating the birth time of Nimāi, Nīlāmbar Chakravartī said something to Jagannāth Miśra privately. 'Considering all the different symptoms of a great personality in both the body and birth time of the child, this child will deliver the whole world.'

aichhe prabhu śachī-ghare, kṛpāya kaila avatāre,
 yei ihā karaye śravaṇa
 gaura-prabhu dayāmaya, tāre hayena sadaya,
 sei pāya tāhāra charaṇa [122]

Thus, the Lord mercifully appeared at the house of Śachī Devī. Lord Gaura is very merciful, so when anybody hears about His advent in this world, He becomes very compassionate to them and allows them to come to His holy feet.

pāiyā mānuṣa-janma, ye nā śune gaura-guṇa,
 hena janma tāra vyartha haila
 pāiyā amṛtadhunī, piye viṣa-garta-pāni,
 janmiyā se kene nāhi maila [123]

If you get a human birth but do not hear about the glories of Gaurahari, your birth is useless. You have a river of nectar but you drink from a well of poison – why did you not just die right after you were born then?

śrī-chaitanya-nityānanda, āchārya advaita-chandra,
 svarūpa-rūpa-raghunātha-dāsa

īhā-sabāra śrī-charaṇa, śire vandi nija-dhana,
janma-lilā gāila kṛṣṇa-dāsa [124]

Taking on my head as my treasure the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Āchārya Advaitachandra, Śrī Svarūp Dāmodar, Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī and Śrī Raghunāth Dās Goswāmī, I (Kṛṣṇa Dās) have thus described the advent of Lord Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.



Appendix

Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh Book List

Books by Śrīla Bhakti Nirmal Āchārya Mahārāj:

- *Guidance 1, 2, 3, 4 (English)*;
- *Śrī Upadesh 1, 2, 3, 4 (Bengali)*
- *Śrī Purī Dhām Māhātmya-muktā-mālā (Bengali)*
- *Śrī Nabadwīp Dhām Māhātmya-muktā-mālā (Bengali, English)*

Books by Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

- *Affectionate Guidance*
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- *Dignity of the Divine Servitor*
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Books by Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

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- *Holy Engagement*
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- *Ocean of Nectar*
- *Sermons of the Guardian of Devotion (Vol. I-IV)*
- *Śrī Guru and His Grace*
- *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā: The Hidden Treasure of the Sweet*

Absolute

- *Śrī Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam*
- *Subjective Evolution of Consciousness*
- *The Guardian of Devotion*
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Other books

- *Śrī Gauḍīya Gītāñjali*
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māna, tumi tīrthe sadā rata
ayodhyā, mathurā, māyā, kāśī, kāñchi, avantiyā,
dvārāvati āra āchhe yata

'O mind! You are always attached to places of pilgrimage – Ayodhya, Mathurā, Māyā, Kāśī (Vārāṇasī), Kāñchīpuram, Avantiya, Dvārakā and so many other places.'

tumi chāha bhramibāre, e sakala bāre bāre,
mukti-lābha karibāra tare
se kevala tava bhrama, nirarthaka pariśrama,
chitta sthira tīrthe nāhi kare

'You want to travel all these places again and again for the sake of some liberation. These places will never help you fix your mind, so all this is just your illusion, a meaningless labour.'

tīrtha-phala sādhu-saṅga, sādhu-saṅge antaraṅga,
śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhajana manohara
yathā sādhu, tathā tīrtha, sthira kari' nija-chitta,
sādhu-saṅga kara nirantara

'The result of visiting a place of pilgrimage is sādhu-saṅga (holy association) and being drawn to the exclusive service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. A place of pilgrimage is where a sādhu (pure devotee) is. Always keep the association of pure devotees and firmly fix your mind.'

ye tīrthe vaiṣṇava nāi, se tīrthete nāhi yāi
ki lābha hāṭiyā dūra-deśa
yathāya vaiṣṇava-gaṇa, sei sthāna vṛndāvana
sei sthāne ānanda aśeṣa

'I never go to a place of pilgrimage if there are no Vaiṣṇavs in that place (what is the use walking so far?). Vṛndāvan is where Vaiṣṇavs are; in such a place there is no end of joy.'

kṛṣṇa-bhakti yei sthāne, mukti-dāsī sei-khāne,
salila tathāya mandākinī
giri tathā govardhana, bhūmi tathā vṛndāvana,
āvīrbhūtā āpani hlādinī

'In the place where there is devotion to Kṛṣṇa, liberation is a maidservant, all water is the Mandākinī, all mountains are Govardhan, all land is Vṛndāvan, and the internal energy of the Lord automatically appears on her own.'

vinoda kahichhe bhāi, bhramiyā ki phala pāi,
vaiṣṇava-sevana mora vrata

'Vinod says, "Brother, what will I get by roaming all these places? My sole vow is service to Vaiṣṇavs."'