

The Glories of Śrī Rādhikā, an excerpt from ŚRĪ GURU AND HIS GRACE

And Dāsa Goswāmī has given us the understanding of our highest aspiration. He says, “O, Rādhikā, I want Your service. If You are not satisfied with me, I do not want Krishna, nor His land, *Vraja*.” This is his prayer and he is admitted as the *prayojana-āchārya*, the *guru* who has shown us what is the highest aim of our life, *prayojana-tattva*, the ultimate destination. And this *śloka* proves his position as the giver of our destination.

AN OCEAN OF NECTAR

āśābharair-amṛta-sindhu-mayaiḥ kathañcit
kālo mayātigamitaḥ kila sāmpratañ hi
tvañ cet kṛpāñ mayi vidhāsyasi naiva kiñ me
prānair vraje na ca varoru bakārināpi?

This *śloka* is a direct prayer to Rādhārāṇī. It expresses a particular type of hope which is so sweet and reassuring that it is compared with an unlimited ocean of nectar. He says, “With that hope I am somehow passing my days, flagging my days, dragging my life through these tedious times only for that hope. That hope is sustaining me, the nectarine ocean of hope is attracting me and sustaining me. Somehow I am dragging my days to my only safety.

“Otherwise, I have lost the direct association of Mahāprabhu, Svarūpa Dāmodara and so many other great souls, and still I am living. Why? I have a particular ray of hope. And the prospect and quality of my hope is very great and high. But my patience has reached its end. I can’t endure it any longer. I can’t wait. I am finished; I can’t wait anymore. At this moment if you do not show Your grace to me, I am finished. I shall lose the chance forever. I shall have no desire to continue my life. It will all be useless.

“Without Your grace, I can’t stand to live another moment. And Vṛndāvana, which is even dearer to me than my life itself—I am disgusted with it. It is painful; it is always pinching me. What to speak of anything else, I am even disgusted with Krishna. It is shameful to utter such words, but I can have no love even for Krishna, until and unless You take me up within Your confidential camp of service. Such charm I have come

for. I have seen the clue of such charm within the service of Your camp. Without that, everything is tasteless to me. And I can't maintain my existence even in Vṛndāvana. And even Krishna, what to speak of others, has no charm for me.” This is the prayer of Raghunātha Dāsa Goswāmī.

SERVICE OF RĀDHĀRĀṆĪ

So, *Rādhā-dāsyam*, the servitorship of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, is said to be the highest attainment of the living being by the school established by Mahāprabhu. It is the gist of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It is Krishna's own version. He says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.14.15):

na tathā me priyatama
ātma-yonir na śaṅkaraḥ
na ca saṅkaraṇo na śrīr
naivātmā ca yathā bhavān

“O, Uddhava! Neither Brahmā, nor Śiva, nor Baladeva, nor Lakṣmī, nor even My own self are as dear to Me as you are.” And that Uddhava glorifies Vṛndāvana, the *vraja-gopīs*, and Rādhārāṇī in this way in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.47.61):

āsā maho caraṇa-renu-juṣām ahaṁ syām
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām
yā dustyajaṁ sva-janam ārya-pathaṁ ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padaviṁ śrutibhir vimṛgyām

“The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana have given up the association of their husbands, sons and other family members, who are very difficult to renounce, and they have sacrificed even their religious principles to take shelter of the lotus feet of Krishna, which are sought after even by the *Vedas*. O! Grant me the fortune to be born as a blade of grass in Vṛndāvana, so that I may take the dust of those great souls upon my head.”

THE SEARCH FOR ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ

Uddhava has shown us the high position of the *gopīs*. And between all the *gopīs* and Rādhārāṇī there is

also a categorical difference. That was proved in *rāsālīlā*. When Krishna and the *gopīs* openly displayed their transaction of heart, with that divine *rasa* flowing and inundating all directions, Rādhārāṇī was also there. She gave the highest contribution to the common *rasavilāsa* display of the *parakīya-mādhurya-rasa*, paramour mellow. Then, suddenly, dissatisfaction came in Rādhārāṇī's heart. She began to think, "Am I also counted in the common flow of *rasa*?" Some reaction came within Her mind and suddenly She left. After displaying Her peculiar type of superexcellent dancing and singing, introducing a flow of a new type there, suddenly She departed. She left the circle of the *rāsa* dance. And Krishna suddenly found, "Rādhārāṇī is not here. It is tasteless." The flow of *rasa* was there, but the gist, the quality, is a little down. He felt, "Why is it not so satisfactory to My inner heart?" He felt some ebb in the tide. And then by inspection He found that Rādhārāṇī was absent. Disappointed, He left the circle of the *rāsa* dance, and went to search after Her.

Although the *parakīya-mādhurya-rasa*, the highest mellow of conjugal love, Vṛndāvana, and the *gopīs* were all there, still there is a categorical difference in quality between the other *gopīs* and the particular camp of Rādhārāṇī. In every way there is a categorical difference, both in quality and quantity. Jayadeva Goswāmī, in his *Gītā-govinda* (3.1) has described how Krishna left the circle of the *rāsa* dance:

**kaṁsārīrapi saṁsāra-vāsanā-baddha-śṛṅkhalām
rādhām ādhāya hṛdaye tatyāja vraja-sundariḥ**

"Lord Krishna took Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī within His heart, for He wanted to dance with Her. In this way, He left the arena of the *rāsa* dance and the company of all the other beautiful damsels of Vraja." Jayadeva has described in this way that Krishna left the circle of the *rāsa* dance, taking Rādhā within His heart. Krishna departed in search of Rādhārāṇī. Her position is so exalted. It is said, "Lord Krishna's transcendental desires for loving exchanges could not be satisfied even in the midst of billions of *gopīs*. Thus He went searching after Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Just imagine how transcendently qualified She is!" (*śata-koṭi-gopīte nahe kāma-nirvāpana*).

The other *gopīs* numbered so many, but in quality they were a little less. Their total combination could

not satisfy Krishna. The qualitative difference was there. That is found.

The *rūpānuga-sampradāya*, the followers of the line of Śrī Rūpa, are those who have the unique taste of service in the camp of Rādhārāṇī. In that plane, there is no entrance of any mundane exploitation or renunciation, and not even legalized *śāstric* devotion. The highest kind of devotion is not controlled by any law. It is spontaneous and automatic. Sacrifice to the highest Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, the *bhakti-rasāchārya*, giver of the *rāgānuga-śāstras*. degree is only possible in that camp. The highest kind of divine sentiment is distributed from the camp of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and that can never be compared with any attainment hitherto known even in the eternal factor of time and space.

Then, there is another stage for which we should be prepared. Why should we try to enter into the camp of Rādhārāṇī? Should we think that there, in that better atmosphere, we shall have Krishna's presence more confidentially? Should we think, "I will have contact with Krishna very intimately?" Should we want to enter into that camp? No—we want to avoid the connection of Krishna, but concentrate on the service of Rādhārāṇī. Why? What more benefit is possible there in the service of Rādhārāṇī? If we approach Krishna directly to give service to Him, we shall be losers. Rādhārāṇī's service to Krishna is of the highest order in every way. If we devote our energy to help Rādhārāṇī, our energy will be utilized in Her service. In this way She will serve Krishna with Her service more enhanced. Then the reciprocation will pass to us through Her as our reward. That will be devotion of the highest type, *mahābhāva*.

So, the general inclination of the *sakhīs*, the confidential maidservants of Rādhārāṇī, is not to come in direct connection with Krishna. They avoid that. But still, it is the benevolent and generous nature of Rādhārāṇī to connect them with Krishna on some plea at some time or other. But their innate nature is always to avoid Krishna and concentrate on the service of Rādhārāṇī. This is confirmed in the *Chaitanya-charitāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.209):

**rādhāra svarūpa—kṛṣṇa-prema kalpalatā
sakhī-gaṇa haya tāra pallava-puṣpa-pātā**

“By nature, Śrīmate Rādhārāṇī is just like a creeper

of love of Godhead, and the *gopīs* are the twigs, flowers and leaves of that creeper.” Eternally the twigs, flowers and leaves sprout from the creeper of Śrīmate Radhārāṇī. She is the trunk, and they are the branches. This is their relationship.

Yet still, there is another, higher thing. We are known as *rūpānugas*, or the followers of Śrī Rūpa. Why? The service of Śrīmatī Radhārāṇī eliminates everything, even Nārāyaṇa, to go to Krishna. There is the Krishna of Dvārakā, the Krishna of Mathurā, and the Krishna of Vṛndāvana. Then again in Vṛndāvana, where there is free mixing without hesitation in other camps, Radhārāṇī’s camp is the highest. Eliminating all other camps, direct service to Radhārāṇī is considered to be the highest. Still, there is another point.

ŚRĪLA RŪPA GOSWĀMĪ—ŚRĪ RŪPA MAÑJARĪ

Who is Rūpa? Rūpa Mañjarī. Generally the hierarchy in the spiritual world is eternal. New recruits can occupy a particular rank of *mañjarī*, assistant, in *mādhurya rasa*. And the leader of the *mañjarīs* is Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. What is the special feature in the *mañjarī* camp which is not found among the *sakhīs*, girlfriends of Krishna? First there is Rādhārāṇī, then the camp of Her right-hand personal attendant, Lalitā. Then, under Lalitā, there is Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. What is the unique position of the followers of Śrī Rūpa? The new recruits can attain to that status. Now, the privilege of this *mañjarī* class we are to conceive most respectfully and attentively.

When Rādhā and Govinda are in secrecy, in a private place, the *sakhīs*, who are well-versed in the art of that kind of play because they are a little grown-up, do not like to approach there to disturb Their confidential mixing. If the more grown-up *sakhīs* enter there, both Rādhā and Govinda will feel shy. So their presence may create some disturbance. But the younger girls can enter there, and then Rādhā and Govinda have no hesitation in free mixing. So in that highest stage of the mixing of Rādhā-Govinda, the free play of Rādhā-Govinda, these *mañjarīs*, the younger girls, can have admission. But the grown-up *sakhīs* cannot have admission there. New recruits may come up to the *mañjarī* class. And the *mañjarīs* have that sort of special advantage under

the leadership of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. So, they get the best advantage there, the most sacred type of pure service, which is not open even to the *sakhīs*, is open to the *mañjarīs*. That is found in Rādhārāṇī's camp. So, the position of the *rūpānugas*, the followers of Śrī Rūpa, is the most profitable position. That has been given out by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. That has been shown by Him, and that is fixed as the highest limit of our fortune in Krishna's concern. This is unexpectable, undesignable and beyond hope, but our prospect lies there in that subtle camp of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Rūpa Goswāmī.

So, the camp, the *sampradāya* of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu is known as the *rūpānuga sampradāya*. There our fate and our fortune is located. Now we have to conduct ourself in such a way that naturally we can connect with that highest, purest spiritual conception from here. We must not allow ourselves to be satisfied with anything less than this highest ideal. That should be the highest goal of our life. And we must adjust our approach from our present position.