

## Manah-siksa Verse 1, lecture2

Yesterday, I started speaking on the first verse of Manah-siksa by Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. I'm going to read it in Sanskrit again:

*gurau gosthe gostalayisu sujane bhusura-gane sva-mantre sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane sada dambham hitva kuru ratim apurvam atitara-maye svantar bhratas catubhir abhiyace dhrita-padah*

I was saying that in this verse Raghunatha dasa Gosvami implores his mind, getting hold of its feet *abhiyace dhrita-padah* with sweet words – *catubhir*. He says, “O my brother, my inner self, my companion, the one I have endless talks with, I plead with you - *sada dambham hitva* – cast away pride, cast away your craftiness, your cunning. *Kuru ratim apurvam atitara* – try hard to develop attachment. Attachment to what? *Gurau gosthe gostalayisu* – to the guru, to Vrindavana, to the residents of Vrindavana, to Vaisnavas – *sujane*, to *brahmanas* - *bhusura-gane*, to the *mantras* - *sva-mantre*, you received during the initiations, to the holy name - *sri-namni*. And, finally, *vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane* – to the shelter that can be given to you by Kishore-Kishori, the eternally young couple residing in Vraja.

I was saying yesterday that here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami explains the discipline of the mind – how one should interact with one's mind. In the Eighth Canto of the Srimad-Bhagavatam Brahma utters an amazing verse. He says that one can derive fire from what? From wood. Water and food grains from what? From the land. Milk can be derived from what? From the milk bag of the cow. Similarly, one can derive God from what? From the mind. Naturally, grain and water are not derived from the land – they aren't generated by the land. Similarly, God is no brainchild. But if one cultivates the land properly, treats it duly, one can derive water from it. He continues by saying, “Where can one derive money? From business activities. Similarly, one can derive God from the mind. But from the mind as such – God is no creation of the mind. By means of the mind as a result of a particular process. As a result of yoga – *yoga bih*. If this mind gets into a definite, desirable shape, it becomes our tool with the help of which one can approach God. This is a very important thing to be understood. The same is explained by Krishna in Bhagavad-gita. He says that our mind can be our greatest enemy and the same mind can become our best friend. The mind can give us God and it can eclipse God from us forever and ever. The mind can deceive us and deprive us of an opportunity to see God and interact with Him. Therefore, in these instructions Raghunatha dasa Gosvami explains how one should teach one's mind, bring it up, coach it so it becomes a friend.

Yesterday, I stopped before starting to describe the mind's pranks and tricks, and Raghunatha dasa Gosvami uses the word “*dambha*” to describe them. *Sada dambham hitva* – always be alert. Always remember the mind is a liar, that is always around, a small liar, which keeps telling you, “You are right. You are the best. You are the most handsome/beautiful. You are the smartest. You are the fairest. You are the kindest. You are the most devoted.” There's always the mind there, which is the source of pride. One should always be alert, on one's guard. One should always remember that the source of *dambha* is within one.

What is pride, actually? Pride is nothing more than the roles we choose to play. The mind is, actually, generates such roles. *Dambha* is identifying oneself with the material body and even more with the martial mind, which plays roles. We all have a split personality. In the spiritual world there's no difference between the soul, its mind, its feelings – these all make one pure soul. Here, though, there is a difference. Sometimes people start thinking in doubt whether they feel something or not, and who feels it – is it my mind or myself? During a *kirtana* we experience some ecstasy, some enthusiasm, inspiration. And then suddenly we think, “What is

this all? Is it me or not, who's experiencing and feeling it." And it's hard for people to detach themselves from the mind. For them it's hard to understand that they are the soul. They don't understand it.

I once was on a train with a man. He was tipsy. In my compartment there were three drunk guys sleeping and snoring, so, there was nothing else for me to do but go out into the corridor and chant the *mantra*. He couldn't sleep – neither could I. He approached me while I was chanting the *mantra* and asked, "What are you, Buddhists, doing here?" One word led to another, and I started to explain that, "You're a soul! Just look: everything about you has changed – your mind, your body. In your childhood you were different but the soul remained unchanged, you remain unchanged." He started thinking, scratching the back of his head. I went on, "Try to remember what you were like as a child." He kept thinking for a while and then, "No, it wasn't me. It was another soul."

People find it hard to understand who, what and why. So, the mind is the source of pride. It makes one play every role possible. I am this, I am that, different signboards we put up, some titles we get.

I've recently visited one festival on my preaching mission. It's a festival for esotericists, an ethnic festival where had come lots of odd people interested in various esoteric teachings. Half of them were gods and the other part were just enjoying. Fifty-fifty. And it didn't stop them walking around nude. Anyway, there was a stage we went on and started answering the people's questions. Somewhere in the middle a young woman got up and yelled in a high-pitched voice, "Get right at the truth. Tell me the truth." There were three *sanyasis*: myself, the invited one, and two other *sanyasis* from the *Gaudiya-matha* who had organized that festival. The announcer *sanyasi* looked at me and said, "Well, we want to ask Gosvami Maharaja of ISKCON to answer this question, to tell the truth." It was quite unexpected, so I started to think trying frantically to work out what truth I was supposed to tell right there. I looked at her – she was standing there dressed in a swimsuit, full of fighting spirit.

- So, you want to know the truth?
- Sure.
- I can tell you the truth. The truth is that you are a servant of God thinking oneself to be God.

She yelled:

- I am a servant? I am not. I am Lily, the first wife of Adam.

My congratulations! People can't put up with that, they can't accept their true position. So, Krishna was merciful enough to provide them with the mind that explains to them that they are the most important, the most outstanding, that they're a Lily or something else.

In the long run, we try to work it all into the spiritual realm. There's a very important point we have to understand: even being on the spiritual path, even theoretically accepting one is a servant – and any true spiritual path teaches one one's true position –one doesn't always become reconciled with it within. And the mind explains to him that he is such a servant that is almost on God's level. A very good servant.

Jiva Gosvami gives a very interesting explanation of what knowledge is. He says that knowledge is the essence of experience. Knowledge is what one has experienced; it's equal to perception. And when Krishna begins speaking about what knowledge is, he starts with the two following words: *amanitvam adambhitvam* B.-g. 13.8-12). To gain true knowledge, that is true experience, to approach God, to see God, one should, first of all, cast away, one's passion for honor –

*amanitvam* and *adambhitvam* – this pride, consisting in our ability to deceive and delude ourselves.

There are two forms of pride that exhibit themselves on the spiritual path. At times devotees are naturally naïve. As a rule, they come with their hearts open and expect a miracle. Everybody is waiting for a miracle. Most of us expect something to happen after they chant the mantra. And if they experience some miracle, they consider it as proof of genuineness of the spiritual path.

I'd like to say a few more words about *dambha*, because sometimes miracles don't prove that the spiritual path is true. In the south of India there lives one "incarnation of God" who works miracles on a regular basis. And it's not just tricks, although he does those, too – but miracles. Many people can attest that he materialized something before them, gave them some experience; he came into their dreams, saved them in some situations. At the same time this guy says he is God. And not just God but *purna avatara*. The rest of the avatars were partial avatars, the rest had been looking forward to this *purna avatar's* arrival, so that it "purnaavatarizes" here and does some strange things. Or some people in their frenzy to get stigmata on their hands, they begin bleeding. It's not at all proof of the true spiritual experience. It's not at all proof of their intimacy with God because the mind can be the cause of all these miracles. One can instill something into one's mind, fly into a tantrum. The mind will work such wonders making us think, "God must have come to me." Someone's going to talk to us. There are lots of examples of, so to speak, spiritual experience in inverted commas. Contactees, psychics, mediums, magicians, *avatars* – all the world and his wife. One drives oneself into a frenzy. Sometimes we see devotees trying to rush a miracle, to make it happen sooner – so impatient we are. We've spent here hundreds of lives wasting our time, and then, at last, when we get spiritual, we think, "A miracle must happen now. God must appear before me." Sometimes He does; sometimes even with a peacock feather with a blue body.

I remember chanting the *mantra* for the first time with one devotee. He continuously had a big blue finger appear before him. Patanjali describes it as one of the obstacles on the spiritual path. He calls it the last obstacle – *brantidarsana*. Literally, it means false visions. Hallucinations coming as a result of one's attempt to force spiritual experience, which one mentally isn't ready for yet - when one drives oneself to frenzy or ecstasy – exaltation. That's what, actually, is done by one category of *sahajiyas*. They sometimes cry, spin, roll on the floor, in the dust. And most surprising is that they sometimes seem to have this love of God. But then they go out and... have a smoke.

Srila Prabhupada warned again and again: don't force it, don't make this mistake, don't rush things – it's supposed to come naturally. This is the way as described by *acaryas* – and it's not an easy one. This is one of the mistakes one can make – one type of pride, because one, after all, is prompted by one's desire to gain this experience of pride. He thinks, "I deserve more than that. I need my spiritual experience right here and right now. God should come to me or I should experience some kind of miracle; or I'll bring myself to some state to make everyone understand I'm the smartest, the most remarkable." This fault, actually, resides in the mind.

But there's even a more profound fault, a more serious mistake one can make on the spiritual path when one begins doing some spiritual practice, some devotional service and then achieves some success; when one learns something, when he learns to touch people's hearts with the words of the *sastra*, with the words one has heard from the spiritual master, from Srila Prabhupada; when he learns how to make people cry; and as this process of spiritual purification goes on he, all of a sudden, imagines oneself to be something important, elevate oneself in one's own eyes, become more and more puffed up; when one ascribes to oneself the merits and achievements he received from one's spiritual master, which he got, after all, by God's mercy,

one forgets it. One should always remember that one owes God everything he has; one owes one's spiritual master everything one has. On no account should one attempt to claim the credit by saying, "Yes, that's me. I had it all happen." This is when one gets down to the *sahajiya* level. This is how this self-importance manifests itself through illusion or false visions. But there's another, more profound, manifestation of pride, which is vanity and conceit. Bhaktivinoda Thakura gave the most amazing definition of humility because humility is the opposite of vanity and pride. Sometimes we think we are humble. But sometimes we're humble for the sake of showing off how humble we are. The mind sometimes says, "Be humble because this is the way of receiving honor from devotees. So, one becomes humble."

Bhaktivinoda Thakuran gives a definition of humility one can use to check whether one is humble or not. He says that true humility is when I don't expect anything from anyone, where I don't think that someone owes me something. That's it. Who of you has this "no one owes me anything" mood? No one is supposed to glorify me – I have no merit. No one is supposed to take notice of my merit. No one is supposed to notice how good I am, how well I am preaching. No one. So, next time when you are going to take offence because someone hasn't done something you expected him to, remember this instruction of Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. *Sada dambham hitva*. Keep renouncing your pride because it manifests itself in our resentment, in our mood that someone owes us something, that we are exceptional.

I'd like to tell a wonderful story of our *sampradaya* illustrating this point. Caitanya Mahaprabhu came to teach this to us. He came to say, "Everyone can see God. Everyone has this way open before him regardless of what family he was born into, regardless of where he comes from, regardless of the sins he's committed, regardless of the age; even if one is at death's door; even if seven days separate one from one's death, you can still see God."

The important thing is to develop true humility because it is the basis of the genuine spiritual experience. The rest that occurs on the basis of pride is false spiritual experience. That's what Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself taught.

Anyway, I wanted to tell a story about one man from our *sampradaya*. One of *pancasakhas*... *Pancasakhas* are the five associates of Lord Caitanya in Orissa who are still worshipped, still praised, who contributed a lot to Orissa culture. But *Gaudiya vaisnavas* don't recognize them, they consider them to be cheaters and swindlers, although they were together with Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Puri and had His personal association. The Orissians are pretty resentful at the Bengal *Vaisnavas*. They say, "They are just envious of us, the Orissians. We had these five intimate associates and these Bengalis don't recognize them." As a matter of fact, we recognize the genuine devotees of Caitanya Mahaprabhu from Orissa. There were lots of them: Prataparudra, Kasi Misra, Sikhi Mahiti and his sister. These are truly remarkable people.

I'd like to tell a story about some Jagannatha dasa who was born into a *brahmana* family, in one of the ten Brahmin villages, which take a direct part in the most important activities of the Jagannatha temple. The temple council consists of ten villages. He was born in one of these villages. He was very young and amazingly handsome. He never got married. He remained a *brahmacari* and then at some point he accepted *sanyasa*. He sang beautifully. When he was singing people just got mad and he was a wonderful poet at that. He translated the whole Srimad-Bhagavatam into Oriya. People went crazy just at seeing him and he possessed mystic powers. Jagannatha Himself came to him in his dream. And we say that he is a cheater. How come? Why?

His story is as follows. He is the founder of the *Atibadi* or *Atibori* sect. The principal *math* of this sect is still located in Puri. This is the palace of Maharaja Prataparudra's wife who gave this palace to Jagannatha dasa. This Jagannatha met Caitanya Mahaprabhu when the latter arrived in Orissa. Some say that he met Him in Kittaka when Caitanya Mahaprabhu had crossed Orissa on the border between Bengal and Orissa. And he joined Him. Others say that he was among the people who were there when Caitanya Mahaprabhu entered Jagannatha temple. So, he became His follower and Caitanya Mahaprabhu told him, "Go to Haridasa Thakura and chant the *mantra* with him in the mood of being lower than the grass and more tolerant than a tree." But Jagannatha dasa thought he knew better what to do. So, once he approached Caitanya Mahaprabhu and said, "I know You are the Supreme Soul in everyone's heart. I know that You know all. Nevertheless, I want to share my experience with You and hear Your confirmation of that." So, he started, "I once became absorbed in meditation. I was sitting and thinking about Radha and Krishna. I saw Them in my meditation. I saw Radha and Krishna. Radha was sitting next to Krishna and Krishna was sitting next to Radha. They were in this *milana* mood, the mood of meeting. They were enjoying each other. Radha said something and Krishna laughed. He gave a laugh and You were this laugh. I saw that the laugh took shape of Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Puri. And Radha laughed in reply and I was this laugh. Is it true or not? Can you confirm this? Is it so?" At that moment, according to Jagannatha dasa's biographer, Caitanya Mahaprabhu took off His clothes, put them on him and said, "Yes, that's really so. You are a great *atibori*. This means you are so great, too great." But the *Gaudiyas* say, "Hey, guys, this is not serious. He just mocked him. He just said that "my dear, you are too great. Yes, sure, you are Radha's laugh – that's what you are." Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught a lesson when Prakasananda Sarasvati called Him God when trying to touch His feet. Caitanya Mahaprabhu ran away in horror crying, "How can you call me God? One should never call oneself God!" Although He was an incarnation of Krishna Himself.

Later, an amazing thing happened to Jagannatha dasa showing that even miracles aren't proofs, even miracles can be manifestation of *dambha*, pride.

Jagannatha translated Srimad-Bhagavatam into Oriya. This Srimad-Bhagavatam is still known by heart in Orissa because he made an amazingly beautiful and accurate translation of Srimad-Bhagavatam putting in some of his own things and added another five chapters of his own. All the same, this is the classics of Orissian literature. And when he completed it, he started to sing Srimad-Bhagavatam and organize *Bhagavata-pathas*. Thousands of people got together to hear him. They listened to him singing about Krishna and Radha. Tears came into their eyes, their hair stood on end; they rolled on the floor in ecstasy. And most of the audience was composed of guess who? Women. When they saw how handsome he was, when they saw him crying, how much he loved Krishna; when they saw him playing, singing the amazingly beautiful verses, they freaked out thinking, "I love Krishna. This is love." Actually, it's this same sensuality, the same lust taking this shape because everything comes from *dambha*. Finally, this Jagannatha started to visit houses telling Srimad-Bhagavatam in the women's quarters. The women got together to listen to him but their husbands were not very happy about that for different reasons. So, they got angry, "What's the matter? Why is he giving some special classed to *matajis*?" They complained about that to Maharaja Prataparudra. Without a moment's hesitation he seized this Jagannatha dasa and threw him into prison asking, "What are you doing?"

- I'm teaching Srimad-Bhagavatam classes.
- Okey, you are teaching Srimad-Bhagavatam, but why are you doing that in the women's quarters?

He had very powerful female followers. So, at that point, making excuses to Maharaja Prataparudra, Jagannatha dasa said, "When I am speaking about Krishna, I'm not a man, I am a

woman, a *gopi*, otherwise how could I put people into the state of spiritual ecstasy? So at such moments I turn into a *gopi*.”

Maharaja Prataparudra replied, “It’s perfectly all right! But you should go to prison all the same. Although you are a *gopi*.” He hadn’t believed him. So, then Jagannatha began to pray to Lord Jagannatha in prison like this, “Save me. Rid me of my disgrace. Do so I could prove my innocence, that I really do it in a female body.” According to his biographer who glorifies him, Jagannatha came to him in his dream and gave him a boon by saying, “If you wish it, from now on, by choice you’ll be able to change your form. Your material form can be both male and female. Do you want it?” Just like some people do it nowadays. They have surgeries, get hormone injections to change their sex. And Jagannatha said, “Without resorting to surgeries or hormones you can change your sex.” The next morning Jagannatha dasa woke up and saw he had turned into a woman. He started banging on the door crying, “Bring me a sari, quick! Bring Maharaja Prataparudra here! I’ll prove him wrong. Here I am.” Maharaja Prataparudra saw that miracle and said, “Go in piece.” The more so, that his female followers had gone to a demonstration and on a hunger strike.

We should always monitor that. And here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says *sada dambham hitvam*. *Sada* - whichever level you’ve reached. Moreover, the higher level you’ve reached, the more likely you are to become proud. So, as soon as you become proud, you are finished. You are bound to fail. This is the instruction he’s giving to us. He’s further saying that we should just cast away our pride. What’s the point of the following instruction? He says - *sada dambham hitvam* – cast away your pride. What is pride? Pride generates attachments; pride is our way to exist in this world; pride is the roles we are playing. It’s easy to say, “Cast away your pride.” Can we cast away our pride? Actually, we won’t be able to exist – because how can we exist without any kind of pride? We can’t. How is it that I am no one? Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that, in the long run, one should get rid of all these outer wrappings and designations.” But I can’t exist without them, because living here is being proud. But Raghunatha dasa Gosvami makes a very important point here that one should cast away one’s pride and keep checking one’s heart for it simultaneously. At the same time he says – *ratim apurvam atitaram kuru* - develop attachment to the *guru*. *Gurau gosthe gosthalayisu sujane bhusura-gane* – try hard to develop attachment to the *guru*, the Vaisnavas, the inhabitants of Vrindavana, to the Vraja Dhama itself and the *brahmanas*. What does develop attachment actually mean? It means that, having renounced my material roles, I have to accept my spiritual role. Having broken off one’s material ties, one should develop spiritual ties. One can’t do without ties. One requires attachments. One needs certain self-designations. And here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “Renounce your material self-designations and develop a spiritual self-designation through the attachment to these things. Take roots in the spiritual world.” This is his first instruction.

Through a strong attachment to *apurvam* – an extraordinary attachment to spiritual things – develop your personality in the spiritual world because one is not impersonal there. What is a personality? Who are we, actually? How do we know about our personality? What is our personality? How do we designate our personality? If I ask you who you are, what will you say? Your last or first name? What’s next? Your occupation, sex, age, nationality? Then you will say, “I am the husband of such and such. I am the father of these children. I was born in such and such country. I have this or that educational background.” In other words, one’s personality is one’s ties. This is where one was born. It’s one’s homeland.

I’ve recently heard one lecture, and the lecturer was saying that we are like germs, even smaller than germs, on the God’s feet. If we have some germ on our nail, what is the nail to him? And he continued, “The nail is the germ’s homeland.” We also have our homeland, we were also born here. And when we’re saying we’re this and this, when we’re trying to designate ourselves, we

do it through our material ties. I am related to this woman – she’s my wife. I am related to these little Nityanandas and Balaramas running around me or someone else. That’s me.

So, here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “Renounce your material ties but develop the spiritual ones straight away. Immediately destroy this strong, extraordinary attachment.” And he starts by saying that the first attachment one should develop is the one to the *guru* and makes it a point that one should take every effort to achieve it. And the point of this instruction is that one can develop such an attachment.

In the Gospel there are very good words that impressed me once. I don’t remember the context but Jesus Christ was reproaching one of his disciples or followers. So, he said that he was neither hot nor cold but warm. Neither hay nor grass, neither fish nor fowl. There’s neither spiritual nor material fire in you. There’s something warm. Yes, *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare*, that’s good. I visit the temple to have some *prasadam*. That will do.

Here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that one shouldn’t remain “warm”. If you want to achieve something in spiritual life, you should have a strong attachment. Where your spiritual attachment begins there begins the formation of your spiritual personality. He’s, essentially, explaining how one can change one’s material mind for the spiritual one; how one can change one’s material personality for the spiritual one. But first one should develop this extraordinarily strong attachment to a *guru*. Jiva Gosvami explains what a strong attachment to a *guru* is. He says that spiritual life is meant for one to surrender to Krishna, God. And one can treat one’s *guru* in different ways. One should have a *guru*. But a *guru* can play supporting roles in our life and he can also play the lead role. And he says that in this case one gets a special perfection, which is our attachment to a *guru*. He begins by explaining why one needs an attachment to a *guru*. Why does one need a *guru*? To give us a spiritual name for us to say that “I used to be Scoundrel dasa Brahmachari and now I am Paramahansa dasa Brahmachari.” Jiva Gosvami explains by quoting verses from Chapter Seven of the Srimad-Bhagavatam, which say that one needs a *guru* in the first place. What’s the result of serving one’s *guru*? The result is that one can rid of all the faults. Serving one’s *guru* results in one’s faults leaving one’s heart. Just by being with one’s *guru*, communicating with him, remembering him one can see one’s insignificance. Because one can see how great one’s *guru* is; because what should one do before one gets rid of one’s faults? One should see them. But can I see my faults if I am all by myself, if I am just standing in front of a mirror? Am I able to see my faults when standing in front of a mirror? What do I see? My virtues, of course. But we should stand before a spotless mirror, which is the heart of our spiritual master. And when we look into it, we’ll see everything – pride, envy. How can we see our envy? When we are with the one who doesn’t have it. When we’re socializing with those who are envious, we may think we have none of that because they are like us. But when seeing the one who doesn’t have envy, we’ll clearly see our envy.

Therefore, Narada Muni tells Maharaja Yudhisthira that it’s very hard to get rid of one’s faults. Narattoma dasa Thakura cries, “The only thing I fear is that these faults will go on living in my mind.” Therefore, Jiva Gosvami says that one needs a *guru*. Service to the *guru* can deliver one from one’s faults. But that’s not all. Jiva Gosvami says that there’s some exclusive perfection that one can obtain by serving one’s *guru*. What is this exclusive perfection? He says that this special perfection one can only get from *guru* and no one else but *guru*. According to Narada Muni, there are different ways of getting rid of faults, but this exclusive perfection is this special mood, in which he himself serves Krishna, which I cannot obtain from anyone else but from the *guru*’s heart, by his mercy. And it’s only due to my serving him will I be able to penetrate his heart. What should happen in one’s mind when one starts serving?

We chant this *mantra sri-caitanya-mano-'bhishtam sthapitam yena bhuta-tale svayam rupah kada mahyam dadati sva-padantikam* (Prema-bhakti-candrika, verse 2, Narottama dasa Thakura). By serving someone. If I serve, I should respect his mind, I should penetrate his heart. And what happens due to this attachment, when this attachment becomes genuine, not just cilly, not just formal, not just giving a *daksina* to a *guru*? What happens when I'm trying to understand his heart, when I'm trying to understand his mood? I can develop the same mood he's serving in.

So, Jiva Gosvami says, "It's the greatest gift one can get. And it only comes due to personal communication with and service to a *guru*. It doesn't come easily." Without the mood we can't get to the spiritual world. If we consider all the things Raghunatha dasa Gosvami touches upon here, we'll see that they all possess a certain mood, helping us cast away our enjoyer mood, the mood of the one who is ruling and enjoying here, develop the true mood of a servant. And this channel is first of all supposed to occur between me and my spiritual master. My spiritual master can do everything, he can give us all the blessings.

Like there's a story of Bihari, Jagannatha dasa Babaji's disciple. Jagannatha dasa Babaji died when he was 147 years old. He was so old that he needed someone to lift his droopy eyelids. Bihariji had been carrying his guru in a basket for 30 or 40 years. He served him with faith and truth. He was a simple man. Once Jagannatha dasa Babaji gave him Caitanya-Caritamrita and said, "Read Caitanya-Caritamrita because I can't see. I need verses from Caitanya-Caritamrita." Bihari who came from Vrindavana replied, "Guru Maharaja, I'd be happy to but I don't know these Bengali letters. I don't know Bengali properly either. I can't read Bengali." "If I told you to read, you should read." – he said. Well, okay, if the *guru* says I should read, so I should. He opened Caitanya-Caritamrita, saw these Bengali letters and suddenly found himself reading them. And he started to read. Because *yasya prasada bhagavat-prasado ...* (Sri Sri Gurvastakam). Everything can come by the *guru's* mercy. Once Jagannatha dasa Babaji told him, "Play the *mridanga*." Bihari replied, "I can't play the *mridanga*. I can't even play the *karatalas*, what to speak of *mridanga*. I can't play this "one-two-three" beat. But his *guru* insisted, "Play the *mridanga*." Okay, if you say, everything is possible by your mercy. He started to play the *mridanga*, beating the beats that even professional *mridanga* players couldn't. When Jagannatha dasa Babaji was departing, he said, "Bihari, you have been serving me faithfully and unflinchingly. You have done so many things for me whereas I have done none. I feel guilty. Do you want something?" Bihari replied, "What can you give to me. I know, you are a mendicant, you are penniless. You may die in peace and quiet without worrying about me. I'll make it somehow. I am a big guy, I'm still strong." Jagannatha dasa Babaji said, "If you want me to, I'll ask Caitanya Mahaprabhu and he will provide you with five carts of riches – five carts laden with gold, right away. What do you want, Bihari?"

- I don't want anything. I want you. There's nothing else I want, just having you by my side.

Pleased, Jagannatha dasa Babaji smiled and said, "Thanks God. I was about to give these 5 carts to you but I wanted to hear it from you first. I'm giving you my blessing that you'll never experience any problems. You are going to have whatever you need. Your each and every desire will be fulfilled, you are going to live to be a hundred and I'll always be by your side. All the time, any instant of your life you will hear my voice within your heart."

Actually, according to Rupa Gosvami, after one has been initiated - *visrambhena guroh seva* (Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu 1.2.74-75) – one should begin serving one's *guru* and his service should be filled with the spirit of *visrambha*. *Visrambha*, verbally, means trust. *Visrambha* is the mood in which Krishna communicates with His cowherd friends. *Visrambha* means unconditional trust, intimacy one serves in; when I'm trying to perceive my spiritual master's mood, what's within his mind; when I'm trying to feel the way he feels without trying to imitate, to parrot; when I'm trying to fathom his mind, his consciousness. Jiva Gosvami says that a *guru*



should become our God, and people find it hard to understand. But he explains what it means. He continues, “For *karmis* the *guru* is God.” Why is the *guru* God for *karmis*? Because the *guru* can fulfill any wish of theirs. He mentions this verse from the Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.17.27) - *ācāryaṁ māṁ vijānīyān navamanyeta karhicit*. *Acarya* is non-different from Myself, therefore, one should – *anasuya* – by no means be envious of him. *Sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ* - The spiritual; master is the representative of all the demigods. It means that the *guru* can fulfill all our material desires. If you want to obtain knowledge, the *guru* can give it to you. But the most valuable thing the *guru* can give you is *bhakti*. He can bring us nearer to God.

One of the teachers in our Madhava-*sampradaya* is the famous Raghavendra Puri. He was a great mystic – he is said to be the third incarnation of Prahlada Maharaja. In Krishna’s days Prahlada Maharaja came as Bahlika to be killed by Bhima. And before being killed by Bhima he asked him for a boon. He approached him and said, “Kill me, Bhima. I am fighting on the opposite side and I want you to kill me.” Bhima says, “How can I kill you if you are a Lord’s devotee? It’s an *aparadha*.”

- It’s not going to be felt as an *aparadha* because I am asking you for it. Kill me.
- I can’t.
- Kill me, I deserve it.
- Okay, then you should attack me first, I’ll kill you then.

Then king Bahlika attacked Bhima and was killed by him. In his next life he was born as Raghavendra Puri, according to legend in Madhava-*sampradaya*. He was a great mystic. A poor *brahmana* boy came to him once. This boy had heard a lot about his spiritual power. Sometimes people come to the *guru* to have their material desires fulfilled. He was needy, poor and illiterate. He tended cows and began to serve Raghavendra Puri. He served him faithfully. Raghavendra Puri was very pleased with him, so he said, “Take this rice” and stretched out his arm with some dry rice in his hand. He read some *mantras* over this rice and said, “Put this rice in a knot and, when you’re in trouble, pour it on your head and remember me. And all of your desires will be fulfilled.” The boy grasped the rice, put it in a knot and waited for it to come in handy.

One day he was herding his cows. The day being hot, he was sitting under a tree. Next to him under another tree there was sitting a big handsome man. He started looking closely at him and discovered it was the Muslim ruler of that state – the nabob himself. While he was looking at him a messenger arrived, dismounted and handed in a letter to the nabob. The latter opened it, but he was illiterate because a Muslim should not necessarily be literate – they are *raganuga-bhaktas*. The messenger was also illiterate. So, he called the boy and told him to read. This was a *brahmana* boy – he had a *sikha*. The nabob saw the *sikha* and thought to himself, “He’s going to do it.” But the boy was illiterate. He started thinking, “What shall I do?” Suddenly, he remembered that he had the rice in the knot on his *dhoti*. He grasped it, poured it on his head and cried, “Raghavendra! Raghavendra! Raghavendra! Raghavendra!” Opening the letter he realized he could read. So, he read it – and the letter contained a piece of good news that his wife had given birth to a son, that he’d finally got an heir. In his joy he took off his pearl necklace, put it on the boy with the words, “You’ve brought me good news.” But the boy had his wits about him – the years he had spent serving his *guru* weren’t wasted on him – and said, “If you like me that much, hire me.” And he did, and, finally, the boy was appointed prime minister. He was Raghavendra Puri’s patron and paid honor to his *guru*. This is a historical fact.

The point is that if we have material desires, our guru can fulfill them. If we want impersonal liberation, guru can give it. But the main thing a *guru* can do if we have an attachment, is to bring us closer to Krishna. In another prayer Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “Everything I have was given to me by my *guru*. The *guru* brought me to Mathura, the *guru* gave me my *svarupa*, Rupa Gosvami, Sanatana Gosvami. The *guru* gave me the Govardhana Hill. The *guru* gave me the Radha-kunda.” We should understand that Krishna acts through our *guru*. Krishna’s mercy only comes through our *guru*. And we should develop this loyalty to the spiritual master, trust to and love for him in our hearts. That’s what one should work on consciously.

So here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “That’s the first thing one should get to find one’s spiritual personality in the spiritual world.” It’s not about being formally initiated. It’s not about getting chanting beads and a new name. It’s about developing love for one’s spiritual master who gives instructions and initiates us into the *mantra*. This is a very important thing for our devotion to develop: love for our spiritual master must be genuine, not false, it shouldn’t be a personality cult. It must be based on our spiritual attachment to him.

Thank you very much! Srila Prabhupada ki! Jai!

## Manah-siksa Part 1

Today, we're going to start discussing Manah-siksa by Raghunatha dasa Goswami. I chose this topic because it's of great importance to all of us. Manah-siksa by Raghunatha dasa Goswami is instructions to the mind given by Raghunatha dasa Goswami. These are the instructions we have to give our mind on a daily basis. We've been singing a *bhajana* by Narottama dasa Thakura where he says *rupa-raghunatha-pade rahu mora asha*. He says that his only aspiration – *asha* means aspiration – is for the shelter of the lotus feet of Rupa and Raghunatha - *rahu mora asha*. What does the shelter of the lotus feet of Rupa and Raghunatha mean? Srila Prabhupada explains by translating *rupa-raghunatha-pade* in this *bhajana* as the books authored by Rupa and Raghunatha. The books written by Rupa and Raghunatha are meant to protect our *bhakti*. Because now our *bhakti* is hardly *bhakti* – it's just a shadow of *bhakti*. A tiny, tender sprout of *bhakti*. And like everything tender and new, like a nucleus, it's prone to different diseases; it's very easy to destroy. When a tree is big it's hard to destroy; one should cut it down and you can't even cut down any tree. But if it's just a tiny sprout, it's easy to crush. And the *bhakti*, which, by sheer luck, flew into our heart, is not *bhakti* itself – it's a tiny, timid sprout of *bhakti*. And, like anything new, tender it needs to be protected. So, Narottama dasa Thakura says this is his only plea. This song is called Lalasamayi prarthana, a prayer filled with aspiration coming from the bottom of his heart. He says that the main point of this prayer, which keeps playing in his mind, is for the lotus feet of Rupa and Raghunatha to give him protection. From the practical point of view, that means that we should know what Rupa and Raghunatha write about. What they write about to lead us along this hard path of devotion. And not just devotion but spontaneous devotion. At the very beginning of the First Verse we're going to start reading soon Raghunatha dasa Goswami says that our *sadhana*, our aspiration to serve Krishna, shouldn't initially be based on fear, on the principles we're following because we fear something. Not on some calculations, even very far-reaching. Bhaktivinoda Thakura gives a very interesting explanation. He says that *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti* ... What's *vaidhi*? *Vaidhi* is injunctions of the *sastras* and it's based on two things. It's based on the knowledge of the *sastras* and the intellect - intelligence, understanding of logic. And Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, "Why do we need logic? Why do we need intelligence? Because it's, eventually, based on calculations." After all, calculations underlie our following *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti* principles. We want to get something in return. This way or another, we make calculations, we think about how we're going to benefit. Our calculator turns on and starts calculating: I am doing this, I'm giving Krishna this... And Krishna says, "Give me just one fruit and I'm going to give you lots of them. Render some insignificant service to Me and I'll give you the rest." We're calculating and saying, "This is a good bargain, it's worth making." But here, in the first verse we're going to read soon, Raghunatha dasa Goswami says that our initial aspiration to serve Krishna should be based on attachment. Moreover, not just attachment but strong attachment. And all this small work, all of these instructions to the mind in twelve verses, the instructions Raghunatha dasa Goswami's giving to his mind, are meant to develop this attachment in the mind. He establishes this principle, he makes this point at the very beginning. Everything we're doing should be based on our heartfelt aspiration not on some cold heartless planning or gain but on an emotional impulse. He further explains how to form such an attachment. This is why it's so important. Right at the beginning he's telling us that our service to Krishna is supposed to be based on spontaneity, *raga*, attachment.

You may know that our tradition, or school, founded by Lord Chaitanya consists of two schools or two trends explaining in a slightly different way the method and principle of this attachment. After all, we need an attachment. Just half an hour ago I was talking to a devotee who's been practicing Krishna consciousness since the early 1980s. He's one of those guys who joined at the very beginning and were the so called cannon fodder. They manned the breach and stopped the

gap. The people were very inexperienced then, there was no understanding or guidance. We're still inexperienced. But we've at least gained some experience.

Anyway, he told me a little of his story that at some point after five or ten years of practicing the KGB stopped persecuting devotees. Actually, it was a very dramatic moment in the history of Krishna consciousness when the KGB stopped persecuting. Because while they were being persecuted it was giving the thing a particular taste. And even if there wasn't a taste of the inner *atman*, there was a taste of one having to hide from the KGB, it was secret, special and exclusive. It had its own *rasa*, which is absent now, which you know nothing of. It was something incomparable. But then all of a sudden, at some point the KGB lost its interest in us. It was absolutely unexpected. Before that we had been persecuted, we'd had to do things in secret, everybody had been a revolutionary, a member of an underground organization. And it suddenly got boring. And he says that at some point when this external pressure was gone there was boredom and the taste had gone. And since the taste had gone he couldn't understand where it'd gone. He tried to search for it, to bring it back but failed. At last he gave up the practice thinking that this taste mightn't have existed. But he'd had it for a while. Now he's back speaking about how he felt then.

In the beginning when one takes to devotional service he develops this taste. Everything's new, everything's unusual, everything's absolute and this novelty thrills you, makes all of your practice inspirational. But then it turns to be a dreary routine. We've already learnt how to put on a *dhoti*, how to apply *tilak*.

At first everything's unusual. I remember a group of Russian devotees coming for the first time to India in 1988. One devotee was caught putting on *tilak*. He spat in his hand, made *tilak* paste and applied it. We now know everything - we don't spit any more, we know how to do it. But something is suddenly gone. If one doesn't understand and doesn't develop this profound attachment coming from the bottom of one's heart, everything is bound to turn into a dreary routine, everything gets boring. There's a very interesting thing this devotee told me about why he had left. He'd left because he'd thought, "I'm the only pretender - everyone around me has such a taste and I don't. On the other hand, new, young devotees worship me like I am a demigod. I can't go on pretending anymore." And now, ten years later, he's back and says, "I've come here now and realized (he's very enthusiastic) that everyone is faced up with this problem - no one has this taste." Everyone is talking about it, everyone is discussing it, everyone's trying to work it out, how to solve this problem. And then I realized that it's all right, it's okay, everything's going according to the plan. After all, it's not about not having the taste, it's about having it.

So, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is giving these invaluable instructions how to acquire this taste. Now, on what principles our service should be based, what our attitude towards what we're doing should be, what we should do, what we should keep in mind, what should be happening in our hearts, for us to develop this taste.

I started by speaking about two schools because when explaining in Caitanya Caritāmṛta the reasons why He appeared in this world, Lord Chaitanya says that the whole world is following *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti*. This is God's vision; we may fail to see that but He does. All the people, this way or another, follow some principles, fear something. They think "if I do it, I'll be better off than if I don't do that." Everyone is trying to follow something. He wasn't interested in preaching it. There were four schools, four *sampradayas*, preaching *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti* and teaching how one should follow it. Lord Chaitanya says, "I've specially come to teach how to develop attachment. And not just an ordinary attachment but the kind of attachment that eternally resides in the hearts of the residents of Vraja." From the very start He begins to teach this. And,

actually, it wasn't even Lord Chaitanya who taught it. Lord Chaitanya just set an example. He just cried in Gambhira. He just spent sleepless nights listening to the songs sung to Him by Ramananda Roi and Svarupa Damodara Gosvami. It was Svarupa Damodara Gosvami who taught this. Lord instructed him by saying, "Teach others. Give them a chance to satiate themselves." So, one school originated in the instructions initially transferred by Svarupa Damodara Gosvami to Vrakreshvara Pandita. He was one of Lord Chaitanya's personal associates in Navadvipa and later in Puri. Vrakreshvara Pandita in turn transferred it to Gopal Guru Gosvami, Gopal Guru Gosvami transferred it to Jnanchanda Gosvami. This is the path called *bahiranga-raganuga-sadhana* or *sadhana* to develop *raga*, attachment, by means of external methods, external tools. In this school Svarupa Damodara explained in what way one can develop attachment by worshipping Deities.

Gopal Guru Gosvami and Jnanchanda Gosvami wrote *Padati*, or a detailed manual how to worship Krishna with attachment, what *mantras* one should chant, how one should treat Him, how one should imagine Him, how one should meditate while worshipping Deities. In other words, they translated the language of *arcana* into the language of *raga*, into the language of attachment. How one should follow *arcana*, worship Deities, develop one's attachment. It's not following some principles.

But there's another school going back to Svarupa Damodara Gosvami based on the instructions given by him to Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. When, having finally escaped from the well of household life, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami arrived in Puri, he addressed Lord Chaitanya, "Explain to me, what *sadhana* I should follow, what's the process, what's the method, what should I do? What's the *sadhya*, what's the purpose of what I'm doing? Tell me." Lord Chaitanya shrugged His shoulders, "I don't know. What can I say? I'm just thinking about Krishna. There's no *sadhana* to speak of, I have no *sadhana*. I'm just crying for Krishna day and night. How can I explain it to you?" But it's actually the goal. I've overheard Purnachandra Prabhu say that we should ultimately learn to cry. Just like Gour Govinda Maharaja would say that "we've opened a crying school here in Bhubaneswar where we're teaching people to cry." But when asked to teach to cry, Lord Chaitanya said, "I don't know how to cry. I'm always crying. How can I teach you?" It's hard for the one who has spontaneous love of God in his heart to teach someone something. To be able to teach someone one should go all the way. And when Raghunatha dasa Gosvami asked Lord Chaitanya this question "tell me what *sadhana* is about, what *sadhya* is about", Lord Chaitanya replied, "I won't tell you, go ask Svarupa Damodara. But if you insist I can tell you in a few words." And he uttered one verse where he explained the underlying principle, the fundamental principle. He said: *amānī mānada hañā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la'bevraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe* (C.C., Antya, 6.237). He said that externally one should be more humble than a blade of grass. You shouldn't have any pride, you should be very humble, you shouldn't expect honor, you shouldn't have an ounce of false pride. And, again, externally, *krishna-nama sada labe*, one should chant the holy name. We know that. We've heard that a lot. We've often heard that one should be humble, one should behave properly. Sometimes we go around bearing a yoke of humility, which is lying heavily on us. And we walk around harassed and oppressed by this humility. Sometimes I just feel like approaching some *bhakta* saying, "First become a human - why should you be that humble?" It's some artificial external form. We know, we've been more than once told that externally I should be chanting the *mantra* and we think that everything will come automatically. *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare*. But this path, this school that originated in this verse is about what should be happening in my heart. Externally we're doing this but what's going on in our hearts? Lord Caitanya explains it in the next line of this verse: *vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe* - "within your mind you should render service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa." And not just Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, but Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in

Vraja. But what it means and what should be happening in our hearts is not an easy question to answer.

Certainly, externally we must be humble. Externally, we should try and offer respect to one and all not expecting it in return. Externally, we should chant the holy name, but what should be happening, what should be occurring in our hearts? Because chanting the holy name isn't a mechanical process.

A young man has approached me recently. He's joined Krishna consciousness relatively recently. He used to be Christian. So, he said, "I got my first spiritual experience, my first spiritual emotion there. I came, I was given some prayers, and I started to pray. And at some point I felt tears streaming down my face or something. I'd read Krishna consciousness philosophy and seen its pre-eminence. I'd seen that this philosophy is more scientific, giving deeper understanding. But there's one thing I can't grasp. I'm chanting the mantra but no one has told me yet what I should chant about. What? What? I'm saying "Hare Krishna" But what's "Hare Krishna" is about, what should I put into it? What should be happening inside" Because externally it's *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare* but what should be occurring in my heart? What should be developing? And that's what Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, actually, explains - what processes should be taking place in my heart, what emotions I should be experiencing, what mood should I be developing while chanting the holy name and practicing. That's what Raghunatha dasa Gosvami explains here, in Manah-siksa. Now, that I've said it I guess we can chant the first verse. It's hard but we're not going to chant it in unison.

*gurau gosthe gotalayisu sujane bhusura-gane sva-mantre sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane sada dambham hitva kuru ratim apurvam atitara-maye svantar bhratas catubhir abhiyace dhrita-padah*

I'm going to read the translation. Of course, we can't explain this whole verse – there's too little time left – but we have plenty of time. As one devotee put it – we have all eternity ahead of us, there's no need to be hasty.

This the first prayer or the first instruction. And in this first instruction Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, "O my brother, *bhratas*, o my brother, my dear mind, I'm offering my obeisances to you, I'm taking a very humble position. I'm taking hold of your feet." Like when we want to get something from someone, the best way is to offer obeisances to him, take hold of his feet not letting go of them until he grants our wish. And Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that "this is the way I'm taking hold of your feet, o my brother, and, when embracing your feet, I humbly pray to you. What do I pray to you for? Please, give up all your pride: *sada dambham hitva*. Moreover, he further says, "I pray to you after you *sada dambham hitva, ratim apurvam atitara. Ratim apurvam, rati* means attachment. *Apurvam* isn't just attachment – it's exceptional attachment, it's strong attachment, the kind of attachment that induces drug addicts. He says - *ratim apurvam* - develop this attachment. And not just develop but *kuru atitara. Kuru* means do, develop, try to acquire. But *atitara* means try hard. He says, "O mind, try your hardest to develop attachment. Why? This is, actually, contained in the following line. Or, to be more exact, the first two lines where he enumerates what we should develop our attachment to. *Gurau* to Sri Guru, *gostha* – Vrindavana. *Gotalayisu* - to the residents of Vrindavana. *Sujane* means devotees. *Bhusura-gane* means *brahmanas*. *Sva-mantre* means in one's own *diksa-mantras*. *Sri-namni* – the holy name. *Vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane* - the shelter of the lotus feet of Kishor-Kishori.

This is, actually, the whole verse. Today I'm going to explain the meaning of each word, because each of them conveys a great depth of meaning. Each word carries an important message, which will help us get a clearer idea of how one should chant the holy name, how one should perform devotional service and what Raghunatha dasa Gosvami means to say with this verse.

First of all, I'd like to explain the word he uses to describe his mind. He says - *svantah bhratas*. *Svantah*. *Sva* means "my own" and *antah* means "I". To cut it short, "my inner self". He addresses the mind, he's conversing with himself, with his mind. It's a very important thing, because we should, first of all, understand what mind is. Sometimes you find it very difficult to explain to people they're not their mind. To understand that you're not your body is easy, to understand that we're not our mind is hard. Who's: is it me or my mind? It's me, who else? And we're told it's our mind thinking. It's kind of schizophrenia, double personality. Moreover, we're told to beat the mind with a stick every day. I remember one lecture by Bhakti Vaibhava Svami where he was explaining about this inner dialogue with one's mind. He describes the way one interacts with one's mind. The latter tries to flatter one, it approaches one, kisses, gives a smacking kiss, "You're the best." But Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is explaining one very important thing, one very important point about *svantah*. We should understand that in the conditioned state we delegate our mind the functions of our personality. The soul delegates the functions of our personality to the mind. Actually, there's no soul here - it's sleeping. Yes, we are a soul, I am a soul. But this all is delegated to the mind. Therefore, we find it so hard to detach ourselves from our mind; therefore Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says - this is my inner self. And he addresses his inner self with much respect.

But, as a matter of fact, it presents a huge practical problem. Actually, who does vile things? Who? The mind. I've got nothing to do with that. The soul is eternal, it's full of knowledge and bliss. It's pure, never contaminated. Who does all these mean things? Where do all the vices lie? Who am I? Everything's in the mind. We've merged with it so tightly that we have delegated it the functions of our self. It has a notarized power of attorney, a general power of attorney. I, this and this, one ten thousandth part of the top of the hair, authorize His Majesty the Mind to represent me in all life situations. It has a letter of credence; he's always carrying it. From now on, there's no you, there's only me. I'm now acting for you. And this is the mind that creates all our material life. Whatever we do - it's our mind. Why does it do this? Because there are particular *samskaras* imprinted in our mind. All of the past life impressions make up our personality. A child is born a ready-made personality. Have a look at a newly born baby. A father's approached me recently giving me a hundred of photos of his two-week old baby and saying, "Take a look. I started looking - no difference, all the same to me. And the father goes on "Look, how clever he is; how serious and intelligent he looks." To me it's just a piece of flesh but his dad's already seeing a serious face. But, as a matter of fact, it's all there already. One is born with the mind, which's already generated one's body. This mind has plans from the previous lives. And karma is just the process of evolving all these impressions and desires already residing in our mind. We're born with an endless stream of desires. The seeds of these desires are already in our mind. This is the reason why we should treat our mind with much respect. And Raghunatha dasa Gosvami demonstrates it here by saying, "O my dear brother, my mind. I'm addressing to you *catubhir*. *Catubhir* means with sweet words. In other words, I want to flatter you, which is a very important point because the mind is very hard to cope with. It's like a sponge absorbing all and everything. This is one of the most amazing and awful qualities of the mind; because an avid material mind, attached to material things, absorbs everything. And we absorb all of these material impressions, living the material life, saturating it. And then we don't know ourselves how we're going to act.

Just like after seeing some movies people get into some situations and start quoting monologues from them. They pretend to be the heroes they've seen. It's not just movies. It even takes to read some book. Okay, books, movies. When one's watching a cartoon and behaving like some Chip or Dale or someone else, one picks up the words of their one's favourite heroes and starts using them. This is the mind. The mind absorbs things, it's like a big vacuum-cleaner. It sucks dust. In the same way the mind absorbs material impressions; it accumulates material impressions; it stores them, it classifies them somehow, it sorts them out. And, finally, it starts acting being guided by these impressions. It starts acting as if it's us, based on what it's absorbed. And these things are external, yet, it's hard to deal with them. Arjuna says, "I can't cope with that." It's Arjuna who can't deal with that. When Krishna addresses Arjuna "*Maha-baho*, the mighty-armed!", Arjuna replies, "There's nothing I can do about that." Krishna says, "How so? You're such a remarkable archer. You possess such an ability to concentrate." Arjuna says, "*Pramathi dritham* – there's nothing I can do about that. My mind excites my senses – *pramathi*. *Balavad* – there's so much power in it that there's nothing I can do about it. *Dritham* – it's as stubborn as a donkey. It is stubborn. One's an idea gets hold of it. *Pramathi balavad dridham* (Bhagavad-gita 6.34). Like Nekrasov said when explaining the nature of the Russian man, but like any talented poet he explained the nature of the mind. He says, "The Russian peasant is like a bull: once an idea has taken hold of the brain, it's almost impossible to eradicate." Arjuna was also speaking about it five thousand years ago. The same nature. The mind is stubborn. The mind is very hard to deal with. If there's something in it, if some desire gets into it, whatever you preach it, whatever you tell, it only makes things worse. It's going to be worse, so what? Let it be. Let it be worse. I want it. It has the power and this power is generated by material impressions.

We keep to nourish these impressions. All of these things are formed within the mind. Therefore, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, as Nistya-sastras explain, that an enemy can be treated in different ways. If we're stronger than the enemy, what should we do? Punish it – *danda*. We just should give it a good beating. But if we're not sure whether we're stronger or not, what should we do? We should flatter it. We should seek approaches, we should win it over. We should say, "O my brother, my inner self (with sweet words), I plead with you. I've got hold of your feet and thrown myself on your mercy. Do to me whatever you like. But now listen what you should do." One should admit that the mind is strong, that it's hard to cope with but, nonetheless, I should explain it to myself. These are, actually, the principles of modern psychology. Like some people try to defeat their mind with coercion. There are people who take up Krishna consciousness. They try, this way or other, just with effort to rein their mind. Even Krishna says, "Nothing will come out of it." If one just tries to rein one's mind, if one just whips it, the mind will kick up like a wild, unbroken horse and throw off its rider.

Therefore Raghunatha dasa Gosvami takes a very tactful approach. He says, "O my mind, I love you so much. I love you so much, trust me, I wish you well. Therefore you should develop attachment to what you should have it to." This is truly a very important method. Like there are people trying to reform themselves by force, by torturing themselves. Others say the opposite that one should just love oneself. This philosophy has recently become very popular with some devotees. They read Walsh, Osho. They're reading and saying, "Finally, we've been told what we've wanted to hear. Just love yourself." And how shall we love ourselves? Causelessly. Because love should be causeless. Do some mean thing and love yourself all the same. And tell yourself, "Fine, good for you. You don't need these psychological problems. Everything's all right. Love yourself causelessly. Do a nasty thing and love yourself. And if you do a good thing, love yourself even more. If you do a big, bad thing, love yourself as much as to overlook it." And people hear that and think, "That's the real spiritual philosophy - we've finally found the true path."



But Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “No. I’m addressing you gently, with touching, sweet words – my brother, my mind, you should change yourself. You should make some profound changes in yourself, which are bound to be painful.”

This is a very important thing one should understand: the mind should tune to another program, because at the moment we are the victims of a false program installed in our mind, and this program is called *karma*. This program unfolds itself according to its principals and we fall prey to it. This program causes us to suffer, making other people around us suffer, too due to all of the vices residing in our mind. And here he says, “I have a request to make of you. There’s one thing I beg of you: *sada dambham hitva* - cast away all pride.” This is the first small request everything is supposed to start with.

The word *dambha* is quite interesting. *Sada* means “once and for all”. *Hitva* means cast away – cast away once and for all. And *dambha* means pride; it also means deception or propensity for deception. And it also means hypocrisy. Bhaktivinoda Thakura goes on to analyze and explain the anatomy of *dambha*, the anatomy of what one should initially give up. This is the first step, the first instructions to the mind. *Sada dambham hitva*. To put it simply, *dambha* is both false ego and propensity for deception, and not just deception but self-deception, self-delusion. And this is, actually, the biggest problem. This is the step, the first step, one should make on any path if one intends to achieve some goal, and a spiritual goal in particular. One has to cast away this tendency towards self-delusion.

The Christians are talking about the same. But there the mind plays the role of the devil. They call the devil what we call the mind. And the devil appears as the serpent. This serpent comes and says, “Just eat the apple, the juicy one, you won’t regret. Eat the apple and you’ll become God.” And we’re thinking, “It just takes eating an apple to become God. Good bargain! I’ll have it.” And it’s this same wicked mind within us, which says, “No problem. I’m going to explain everything. You close your eyes tight, you open them and – you’re God. It’s going to be all right, I know the ways. I’ve got you all futzed up so you’ll be 100% sure you’re God.” The mind in explaining this – it’s *dambha*. This is man’s propensity for deception. It was given to us by His mercy because we initially wanted it. So Krishna said, “Okay, here’s the serpent - the mind – which is going to bring home to you. It’s going to teach you. You’re bound to be sure that the entire world obeys you and your mind is going to explain to you that you’re the best, the most intelligent, the most remarkable, the most amazing, the most unique, the most celebrated, the most renounced, the humblest, after all.” This is what your mind’s going to whisper into your ear. This serpent will be there within.” So, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “The first step one should make is *sada dambham hitva*.” One should cast away this *dambha* – pride – and not just do it one time, but all the time, every day, because the serpent isn’t sleeping, it’s there. It’s there all the time.” Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains that this *dambha* or pride has six constituents. He continues, “First it’s *maya* or illusion, our knack for being illusioned.” And here there’s nothing much to explain. We’re all apt to be illusioned. The great Russian poet Pushkin had very good words to say about it, “Oh, it takes little to assure me!.. I am so willingly deceived!” We’re happy to be deceived. Because we’re easy to deceive. Then he says, “*Chala* - a tendency to deceive.” When we try to deceive others. Not everyone is a cheater. There are people who live an honest life. Not everyone is a cheater but everyone tends to deceive. Not everyone allows this tendency to manifest itself but everyone should know that we all 100% have this tendency.

Then goes *kapata*, which means hypocrisy, pretence. When we’re trying to pretend to be something or someone. Play some roles. The *avidya*, ignorance.

The fifth is *kuti-nati* – dishonesty. And the sixth and the last one is depravity or corruptness. These make up *dambha*. These are what Raghunatha dasa Gosvami implores us to give up.

And it's particularly important in the spiritual life. Because our mind says, "You are the best." Just like one devotee told me, "I've wanted to be the greatest three times in my lifetime. First time when I finished school and said to myself, "I'm going to be the greatest I don't know what." Second time when I became a military man and said, "I will be the greatest military man because I've chosen this career." And third time I made up my mind to become the greatest when I became a devotee." He said, "I'm going to be the greatest devotee, the greatest Vaisnava."

One has this *dambha* – pride. And one sometimes takes up spiritual practice for the sake of becoming famous. One's learning scriptures to quote them, to deceive oneself. People have reached perfection in it. Like there's an English idiom "devil can quote Scripture for his own purpose". In our case, it's Bhagavad-gita.

Anyway, there's a wonderful story that illustrates this point. It's a story of Nasreddin. He was a devotee, a mullah who performed Salat five times a day. He once calls his wife and asks,

- Hey wife, bring me some cheese. Cheese is very healthy – it enhances appetite and strengthens the gums. It's high energy food.

- My husband, I know cheese is very healthy but, unfortunately, we don't have it.

- Well, okay, cheese destroys digestive fire, weakens the gums, is hard to digest and contains no vitamins at all.

- My husband, could you explain, please, which of your statements is the right one? At first you said that cheese was healthy and then you claimed no less convincingly that cheese was very unhealthy.

Nasreddin replied, "Listen, you stupid woman, when we have cheese at home the first statement is correct and when there's no cheese the other one is correct. Don't you understand?"

That's what is going on in our mind. So, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is saying here, "If you want to have taste, you should, first of all, dispose of this propensity towards deception. Don't let your mind deceive you."

Srila Prabhupada called his book "Bhagavad-gita as it is" and it has a deep philosophical meaning. It means that we're not trying to interpret the scriptures the way we want to, to please ourselves, to somehow benefit. We take it as it is. Honesty is the first rule when one has to get rid of this tendency to deceive.

Another famous example I often give is about one Moslem living a dissipated life. He was carousing, drinking, eating and indulging himself. A mullah approached him saying,

- My son, don't you know the Quran says that one shouldn't do this because one is going to destroy one's eternal soul? You're carousing, drinking, corrupting people and the like.

- How come, mullah, that you don't know the Quran? It says – eat, drink, have a good time.

My son, there's more to that line – eat, drink, have a good time and you will destroy yourself.

- Holy father, no one can follow the scriptures meticulously. I prefer following the first line of this verse. No one follows completely. It says – eat, drink, have fun.

First thing one should understand is that the enemy is within and it's always ready to deceive us as well as it's always ready to justify us. It starts justifying us, it's telling us we're the best, it's finding fault with others, it assures us it's not our fault. This, actually, is the mind. Srila Prabhupada called the mind a lawyer. The mind is the best lawyer. What's a lawyer paid for? For lies. The best lawyer is the one who can lie convincingly. He's going to win. Within us there's this best of the lawyers working for free. It's always lying. And what's his lie? That you're the best? You're always right, you can't be at fault. You noticed it? Right. I remember speaking with one devotee in 1998. There'd been a conflict between him and another devotee. I was trying to pacify, to reconcile them. I said, "I'm sorry, he might be wrong but you might be wrong too. This is always the way when conflicts occur." And he replied, "I'm not sure about him, but as far as I am concerned, I'm 100% confident I'm always right." I looked at him thinking to myself, "There, how well he has preserved himself He's absolutely convinced that he's always right."

But this is the foundation of pride. Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “Until one casts away this *sada dambham hitva*, until he does it on a regular basis.” Until he casts away pride manifesting itself through this deception as well, he’ll never be able to make the next step. He’ll never be able to understand or achieve something on the spiritual path. Otherwise, we’ll never be able to understand what’s going on.

One *mataji* who’d just joined told me, “I’ve read Bhagavad-gita – a stunning book. I loved it. But most of all I liked Chapter 16. Why? Because it says that there are only two types of people – the demons and the devotees, and I realized I was a devotee and the rest are demons.” When it comes to him – he’s a demon, when it comes to me – I’m a devotee, a *Vasnava*. I become a *Vaisnava*. Here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says: *sada dambham hitva*. All the time, every minute one should catch oneself out, one should be on one’s guard and remember that the mind is always willing to deceive.

I guess we should stop here.

Raghunatha das Gosvami ki! Jaya!

### Manah-siksa Verse 1, lecture 3.

Today, we are going to continue discussing the first verse of Manah-siksa. In it Raghunatha dasa Gosvami pleads with his mind:

*gurau gosthe gotalayisu sujane bhusura-gane sva-mantre sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane  
sada dambham hitva kuru ratim apurvam atitara-maye svantar bhratas catubhir abhiyace dhrita-padah*

He appeals to his mind to develop attachment. So, that's what I wanted to talk about today - about the nature of attachment. The point is that this attachment can be developed. Just like a feeble man can go to a bodybuilding club and bulk up muscle mass while doing some work-out, one can develop attachment. If we don't develop spiritual attachments, we are sure to be strangled by material attachments. Material attachments are deep-rooted in our hearts. And here, at the very beginning, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, "My mind, you have stepped on the spiritual path, and if you want to stay on this path, you should develop spiritual attachments. You should know what you must be attached to so that you, finally, can change." If we consider the nature of attachment, of how it develops, we'll understand what the most powerful way of developing attachment is. Like comparatively recently, at the beginning of World War II, people died while crying, "To the Motherland! To Stalin!" They had developed such a strong attachment that they were ready to die. Where does it come from? Where does it take its roots? Preaching, yes. *Sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam Stalin sevnam*. Not Visnu but... (laughter). Essentially, attachment can be developed – every attachment, especially the one to someone, originates in the sense of duty. And it's not just the sense of duty but conscious, voluntary performance of one's duty.

I once was speaking with an astrologist – someone had asked me to enquire about his compatibility with his fiancée or future wife. The astrologist took a look and said, "No compatibility. But it doesn't matter." I was taken aback – how come? The laws of astrology are being violated by its representative himself. And he told me a very interesting thing, "Even if a marriage is perfect, if the compatibility is totally ideal, it can fail. Because it's not centered around *dharma*, or duty. And the opposite, there can be no compatibility at all, not points of contact, but the marriage can be perfect if the husband and wife put *dharma* or duty in the center."

So, in the long run, one can develop attachment without any propensity for developing it, if one realizes that it should be based on a conscious and voluntary performance of one's duty. And the point is that one should develop one's qualifications to perform *raga-bhakti*, the *bhakti* filled with attachment to Krishna. But it should be based on a conscious performance of one's duty. To develop attachment to the holy name, to the spiritual master we must first learn to perform our duty consciously and voluntarily, and, little by little, this attachment will come to stay.

Last time I finished by saying that our attachment to the *guru* can fulfill our material desires, our desired for liberation. But the main thing it can give is to bring one closer to Krishna.

So, I wanted to start our lecture by explaining what love for Krishna means and what is the difference between love for Krishna and, accordingly, love for spiritual things, the *guru*, Vrindavana, the *Vaisnavas*, and an ordinary love. One, in the long run, should develop awareness of the nature of this love and unselfishness, which we want to develop. With this Jiva Gosvami begins his *Priti-sandarbha*, the last of the *sandarbhas* describing the nature of love. This is a philosophic treatise of love. Someone may say, "Love has nothing to do with philosophy and philosophy has nothing to do with love." But Jiva Gosvami gives an amazing, brilliant and striking definition of love – a striking definition of *priti*. Having understood this definition, we'll be able to tell the difference between an ordinary love and spiritual love and how we should treat our spiritual master. He says that there are basic characteristics of spiritual love, *priti*.

In Sanskrit the first characteristic is called *visaya-anakulyatmika*. *Visaya* is the object of our love. In this case it can be Krishna or the *guru*, since we are talking about how one should treat one's *guru*, how one should love him. *Visaya-anakulyatmika* means that we must act in the way that pleases the object of our love. And this is a simple thing, an easy one. This is the first condition if we love someone and want this love to be genuine and concrete, not abstract. Like sometimes people say they have love in their hearts.

But if you ask them “what are you doing for the sake of love?”, there’s no clear answer. Krishna says, “Love must be concrete.”

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam  
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati  
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtam  
aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ*

“If you love Me, bring me a berry at least. Don’t keep telling me “I love You” without giving anything at that. Give Me something.”

Here Jiva Gosvami explains that love has this *visaya-anakulyatmika* characteristic, which means I want to please the object of my love. I want to please it with my actions, and more than that, I am always in this mood, I have this desire within. I keep thinking about how and what to do to please the one I love, to make the one I love happy. This is the first definition of love. This is where we can immediately tell the difference between material and spiritual love. If love is material we keep thinking about why he/she doesn’t do what pleases me. This permanent desire and its consequent actions make us please the object of our love. This is the first definition. But, as I’ve already said, it’s easy. Easy to think about it, easy to do something. This is the simplest condition.

The second characteristic is called *anukulyanugata* and this one is much more complicated. *Anukulyanugata* means that one should desire for what the object of his love does. In other words, I should have no desires, which would somehow bother the one I love. And it’s much harder. That means that his desires should be above mine. It, actually, means that if he wants to see me, I want to be seen by him, too. If he doesn’t want to see me, I, too, don’t want him to see me.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu says:

*ashlishya va pada-ratam pinashtu mam  
adarshanan marma-hatam karotu va  
yatha tatha va vidadhatu lampato  
mat-prana-nathas tu sa eva naparah  
(Siksastakam, verse 8)*

“You can fail to appear before me; You can crush me; if You like it, I will like it, too.” And it’s already a little alarming – what if he should like something I don’t. But I must desire for what he likes, not for what I do. It’s quite rare in the material world.

And, finally, the third characteristic is called *jnanavisesa*. It literally means some special knowledge.

At the very beginning of Priti-sandarbha Jiva Gosvami explains that love is knowledge. It’s also a very unusual definition. What does it mean that love is knowledge? He explains that love is a certain perception. What is knowledge? It’s something that I know from within. Something is moving within and I know that. Love has the nature of knowledge in the sense that it’s some perception. If we take the Sanskrit words defining love, they are going to be, like in any other language, some synonyms of love. This way or other, all of them are but shades of some happiness, bliss or joy. It’s common knowledge. One loves and wants to be loved to be happy. Sooner or later, it happens to anyone. As a good judge of love A.S. Pushkin said, “Time has come: she fell in love.” Or the wise Russian people say – love is blind. At some point one gets this perception, which makes one happy. And people are, actually, so overwhelmed by this feeling because of being attached to this inner sense of happiness, delight and some

extraordinary expansion of consciousness. But Jiva Gosvami says that spiritual love is different from material love. For this reason he calls it *jnanavisesa* where *visesa* means special. This is the same knowledge, the same perception but it's special. This sense of happiness is not experienced by me myself but is reflected. It's when I am happy with the happiness felt by the one I love; when I am not interested in my own happiness; when I reflect and feel the same that the one I love does; when the one I love feels happy, I am happy, too. I don't have my own feelings – my feeling is just the reflection of what is happening in his heart. This is where true unselfishness lies; when I want to be only happy with his happiness; when I only want to share his joy without wanting anything for myself. This is the essence of unconditioned unselfishness of spiritual love. The same applies to the spiritual master because the spiritual master, or *guru*, is supposed to bring us to the spiritual world. He is the one who can help us create the mood of the spiritual world in our hearts and in our minds, the mood of complete, absolute, pure unselfishness. He is the one we should develop similar feelings to, because they are to bring us finally to the spiritual world. So it is said:

*sakshad-dharitvena samasta-shastrair  
uktas tatha bhavyata eva sadbhihi  
kintu prabhoh yah priya eva tasya  
vande guroh sri-charanaravindam* (Sri Sri Gurvastakam)

One is supposed to regard the spiritual master as God, and the feelings we have towards him should be the same. I only want to do what he wants me to. I want to desire for what he desires. I want to be happy when he is happy. I am grieving when he is grieving. This is, actually, the essence of attachment which is to finally develop in our heart. It, actually, makes this attachment unprecedented. Here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that this attachment should be *apurvam*, unprecedented, unheard-of. Such attachment just doesn't exist in the material world. So, the task is not an easy one. It's not that I am my own master and he is his own. It's not like he just gave me my new name. Period. As I heard here people cheering and clapping their hands when someone was given the name of Radharani devi dasi. And I thought to myself, "God forbid she becomes proud." But it's just the beginning. At first we get our name but then we should go a long way to understand and get into the heart of this person and develop the mood he serves Krishna in to finally get to the spiritual world.

Next, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says: *gurau gosthe*. *Gurau* means Vrindavana the land where cows live. *Gostha* is a place where there are lots of cows. In Lithuania there are also lots of cows. Does it imply that we should develop an unprecedented attachment to Lithuania? What does it, actually, mean? Why should we develop attachment to a place where there are a lot of cows? Vrindavana is a special place. And, as I've already mentioned, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that we should gradually create the atmosphere of the spiritual world in our hearts and minds. And we begin to understand the mood of the spiritual master while watching him. But Vrindavana on the Earth is a visible manifestation of this atmosphere. By His mercy Krishna manifested the spiritual world here. If we are ever in Vrindavana, we'll be able to sense it. Just like in the *bhajana* by Narottama dasa Thakura we sing before these lectures, where he says, "When will my eyes be purified and my heart be freed from the material desire for sense gratification so that I shall be able to see real Vrindavana; Vrindavana where the earth is made from the philosopher's stone and all the trees are desire trees; where cows, birds and other living beings live?" It's very hard to describe this specific atmosphere of Vrindavana. One can't even feel it unless one stops desiring to enjoy, though sometimes even in this case one can. Devotees like visiting Vrindavana but with some of them attachment to Vrindavana comes to Loi bazaar. This is the place where one can mainly meet all the devotees. There are even Russian signs. Others sit in front of Krishna-Balaram Mandir eating ice-cream. They've been performing this

austerity for a year – abstaining from ice-cream. They came to India and since all the ice-cream sold in Vrindavana is *prasadam* you can eat it to your heart’s content. But, actually, it’s a special place, a special country. In Nectar of Devotion Rupa Gosvami says that this place is so powerful that even one with material desires can be elevated to the *bhava* level. He quotes this verse when describing the 5 powerful forms of devotional service. He says that if one finds oneself in Vrindavana, one can immediately feel something out of ordinary. Every time when on my way to or out of Vrindavana, I get astounded by some odd feeling I get as soon I cross the town’s boundary by Kosha in a taxi, as if you are in the material world again. Everything seems to be the same: the trees, the houses, the whiskey advertising board but something is wrong – there’s some special atmosphere.

I was told a story that one devotee had once met a man, somewhere. The man was quite old but didn’t look like a devotee – he walked around Vrindavana. And this devotee started to talk to him. This devotee was German and the old man too. So, he asked him, “What brings you here?”

- I am a wealthy retired man, I have nothing to do. I decided to go and see the world. I visited different countries, cities, was in Hawaii. And somehow I happened to visit Vrindavana. Since I first visited Vrindavana I have been here every year – I just can’t help it. I don’t know what’s so special about this place – pigs running around, there are no five-star hotels but there’s something special. Here I feel something I’ve never felt anywhere else. It’s boring elsewhere.

All these material desires are rotten giving nothing to the soul – but there one can feel something one is unable to feel anywhere else. According to *acaryas*, Vrindavana is the place where one should die. But one has to live there first of all. One can’t die in Vrindavana if one doesn’t live there. This is the best place. There are lots of holy places in India one better than another. I was lucky enough to visit some of them. You come and think, “Oh Lord! Oh God! What a place!” You come to Balaji – and this is Vaikuntha on the Earth. You come to Srirangam – it’s Vaikuntha on the Earth again. But they say that all the other holy places can bestow a maximum of liberation if we associate with great devotees but Vrindavana can give us love for Krishna – and there’s no other place that can give love for Krishna. It’s only Vrindavana that can give *bhakti* – this is the potency of the *Dhama*.

Therefore, Rupa Gosvami says, “If you can’t live in Vrindavana in your physical body, you should live in Vrindavana in your mind - 24 hours should you be there, on Govardhana, Varsana or somewhere else, permanently.” There’s a very important thing, which Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “If in some other holy place a great devotee is speaking about Krishna in the presence of Deities and telling *hari-katha*, I will flee this holy place to hear ordinary Vrindavana villagers gossiping. Ordinary villagers’ gossiping in Vrindavana is better than *hari-katha* in a holy place from the mouth of a great devotee in the presence of Deities.” Because this gossiping is filled with love for Krishna; because even gossiping there is filled with love. The buffaloes, the children running about, dirty, even the pigs are filled with love for Krishna. One should see Vrindavana with spiritual eyes. On no account should one see it with material eyes.

One *matangi* told a story about how she was moving around Vrindavana in a rickshaw. You can easily pretend to be the king or the queen of Vrindavana – just hire a rickshaw for ten rupees. You are sitting looking down on everyone – someone is driving you, laboring, and you are just

sitting and looking. She was once riding around Vrindavana in the mood of *isvara-bhave, īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī* (B-g., 16.13-15) looking down on Vrindavana wondering what is going on there. And then she remembered hearing that everyone living in Vrindavana is much happier than people living in other countries – even pigs, or some insects, ants. And she just couldn't get it. Right at that moment she saw a black pig lying in Vrindavana mud with its ears over its eyes and grunting with pleasure in a giant puddle. The woman made a grimace as though meaning to say, "How can you compare me with it. And she felt contempt and disdain. At that very moment there was another rickshaw coming in the opposite direction, so, her driver turned the handle bar sharply, the rickshaw knocked over and she found herself lying next to this same pig in the same puddle (laughter). She was lying and thinking, "No, the pig is luckier than me – it is in Vrindavana."

Vrindavan is living. Vrindavan knows all we feel, all we think all our sensations. One should come to Vrindavana in a due state of mind and mood. For this reason Vrindavan is so special. One should be always trying to develop attachment to it. Prabhodananda Sarasvati says that when you come to Vrindavana, you should fall down to the ground and roll in the dust, love Vrindavana with all your heart, love every blade of grass there, think about Uddhava, one of the greatest devotees of Lord, the greatest *jnani*, the disciple of Brihaspati himself, pleading to be honored to become a blade of grass in Vrindavana. This is the attitude we should have.

So, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is telling his mind, "My mind, develop this extraordinary attachment to this holy place." Prabhodananda Sarasvati, too, glorifies Vrindavana in Vrindavana Mahimamrita by saying, "I'd rather be a worm in Vrindavana than a personal servant or Lord's associate in any other place."

As I've already said, it's great happiness to die in Vrindavana but one can only die there if one permanently lives there. It's not that easy.

I was told a story about a *gunda*, mobster, living in Vrindavana. He was terrible – everybody was afraid of him. His name was Kivan. And as it's often the way with mobsters, he was badly wounded in a shootout. So, being a Vrindavana native, he said, "I am going to die here. I don't need anything, I'll be lying here; I'll be waiting until I die." He was ready to die in Vrindavana; he started to chant the mantra; he was preparing for that moment; he even refused to take any pain killers. But days passed and he wouldn't die. He was suffering so badly but couldn't die. After ten days in that condition unable to die in Vrindavana he, finally said, "Take me to Delhi for treatment. I understood I am going to survive – everything's going to be alright." He was put in a taxi, took out of Vrindavana and as soon as the car crossed Vrindavana boundary before it could reach Delhi, he left his body.

One should have Krishna's special blessing to die in Vrindavana. For that, one should live there trying to develop this amazing attachment. When we realize what is Vrindavana, what is its atmosphere, we'll be able to understand what it means to be in the spiritual world. It's really hard for us to realize now what it means to be in the spiritual world.

I've recently got a letter, a question asked in a forum. One young man writes, "What am I going to do in the spiritual world? Will I always be making garlands for Krishna? If so, I am going to flee it immediately. And it's at the best. What is worse, you may become a parrot there, in the



spiritual world.” The one who isn’t aware of what it’s like, will never get to the spiritual world. A man with a material mind will never be able to get to the spiritual world – unless I understand that the garland I am making is the one made of my love and that all of my body is made of love; that my *dhoti* and *sari* are made of love; that my ornaments are made of love; that the body I am in is called *bhava-deha*, which means body of spiritual emotions. When the living entities residing there are making a garland, they are making it from their love; and when a parrot is speaking about Krishna he’s absolutely ecstatic, his feathers bristling and tears streaming down his face, and it’s sweating – *asta sattvika vikara*. Until I realize that I can be making garlands forever while experiencing this staggering, amazing love for Krishna, I won’t make it to the spiritual world. To realize it one should get to Vrindavana and feel this miraculous atmosphere.

Therefore, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says: *gurau gosthe* – first develop attachment to the *guru* who is your guide to the spiritual world. But later, when in the spiritual world, you’ll feel what it means to be there. For that one needs a very strong faith resulting from our attachment to the *guru*. Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains here that when Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says *gurau gosthe gostalayisu sujane bhusura-gane* he’s speaking about three types of devotees. First – *gosthe*, Vrindavana; then *gostalayisu* meaning the residents of Vrindavana; then *sujane* – the *Vaisnavas* engaged in *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti*, or *madhyama-adhikaris*; and the last are *brahmanas* who are *kanistha-adhikaris*.

He begins with Vrindavana and goes on to the inhabitants of Vrindavana. The next object of our extraordinary attachment should be the residents of Vrindavana – *uttama-adhikaris*, those who have nothing but love for Krishna. In his Vrindavana Mahimamrita Prabhodananda Sarasvati says, “If someone relates to me the faults of one of the residents of Vrindavana, then how is his action different from cutting me with hundreds of sharpened swords?” This is the kind of attachment one should have to the residents of Vrindavana that if someone at least makes an offensive insinuation, it should break my heart into pieces. This is how much we should love those who love Krishna. Because our access to the spiritual world is through their love. We’ll never be able to understand this love or see, or reproduce in our hearts unless we see this love in others. Krishna, actually, enjoys. He has nothing else to do but enjoy. And what does He enjoy? He enjoys His own energy, *svarupananda*, – there’s nothing else He can enjoy. But it is said that when this energy of enjoyment, or this feeling of happiness is within Him, it doesn’t make Him as happy. But when He puts this same happiness, this *svarupananda*, into a devotee, He then enjoys; when He sees how much His devotee loves Him, He enjoys a thousand, a million times as much. Jiva Gosvami compares it with playing the flute. He says one can whistle and enjoy it. But if one puts the same sound into a flute, the sound coming from it pleases us and others more than anything. Krishna uses His devotees as His own flute. He puts into them His own energy. When He sees how this energy is working, He goes crazy with happiness. He enjoys them. This is the secret, or point, of being in Vrindavana. Sanatana Gosvami says that Krishna in Dvaraka would sometimes toss about His luxury bed, Rukmini and Satyabhama being by His side. They are the most beautiful women in the universe in the richest country of the universe. When Krishna was tossing about in His bed like that, He was saying the names of the residents of Vrindavana – Sridhama, Sudama, Lalita, Visakha. Occasionally, he would call the names of cows – Harini, Syamala. Satyabhama who was quite hot-tempered, was wondering whether He loved cows more than her. But the point is that Vrindavana cows love Krishna more than His wives in Dvaraka. So, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “I first should develop my attachment to the residents of Vrindavana.” In Jiva Gosvami’s *Gopala-campu* there’s an amazing verse. He says, “After I had seen Syama, my heart remained cruel. When Goparaja, Nanda Maharaja, and his wife Yasodamayi appeared before me, my heart remained cruel. But when I saw how much they love Krishna, when I saw how much Nanda Maharaja loves Krishna, how much Yasoda loves Krishna, my heart melted. What I had seen had struck me so strongly that my heart stopped being as cruel as before.”

One should know and feel that all the inhabitants of Vrindavana are special living entities, special people. Even now and here. Like Vrindavan itself, this holy place itself has a dimension beyond our comprehension. Just like the whole spiritual world is located in this place in the world, all the residents of

Vrindavana have their own dimension inaccessible to us. We may sometimes think they are ordinary people, see some faults in them.

A *bhakta* told me a story about a German *bhakta* setting off for Vrindavana. Of course, the first thing a Westerner should find in Vrindavana is... Not even Loi Bazaar – an Internet café. How can one do without the Internet in Vrindavana? Attachment to the Internet is much stronger than attachment to Vrindavana. So he set off looking for an Internet café. Don't worry, there's an Internet café in Vrindavana. Those attached to the Internet can find it. But it's special, spiritual Internet. Its spirituality consists in not working. Anyway, he found an Internet café, brought his computer and tried to get connected but failed. The owner of the café came out to him and there was a conversation. He saw that she worshipped Durga. He got resentful, "How come?! What's that?! What's the deal?! Why is Durga worshipped in Vrindavana?! One shouldn't worship Durga. Srila Prabhupada writes in all of his books that those worshipping demigods go to hell." He remembered all of this Bhagavad-gita philosophy at once and decided to save this innocent resident of Vrindavana. He addressed her:

- How come? You live here and you should worship Krishna. This is Krishna's place.
- No, I can't worship Krishna.
- You should because Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- No, Krishna isn't the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I can't worship Him.
- Why?
- He is my relative. He is a member of my family. How can I worship Him? One doesn't worship one's family members. I will worship Durga.

They worship Durga and pray to her for Krishna's well-being. He's just a member of their family. The residents of Vrindavana are special people and we should always remember that while being there. Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is saying here that the biggest obstacle to be overcome by the one who stepped on the spiritual path is one's *pasandata* – materialism, our habit to judge things from the material point of view. We have this material vision of the world, material eyes, material judgments, material mind. If we don't get rid of this material mind, if we continue to try to measure spiritual categories and things by our own yardstick, we are bound to commit two unforgivable offences. And, having committed them, we'll never ever be able to love Krishna.

There is a lot to say about the residents of Vrindavana, about their love for Krishna but I don't have the qualifications to explain all of these things. I guess you got the idea that some day we are supposed to develop this attachment in our hearts.

He further speaks about *sujane*. Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains that these are *madhyama-vaisnavas*, the *Vaisnavas* from other *sampradayas*. Actually, they are just the *Vaisnavas*. It means another thing that to develop this spiritual mood, spiritual state, create the spiritual atmosphere in one's heart one should put oneself at the mercy of these spiritual things. First is the mercy of the *guru*, then that of Vrindavana and the residents of Vrindavana.

Another very important aspect of our spiritual life and atmosphere is devotees. I should understand that I depend on devotees, on the *Vaisnavas*, that the *Vaisnavas* are my family. And Krishna Himself says that a devotee can only receive mercy through the *Vaisnavas*. Some people want Krishna's mercy, but Jiva Gosvami explains that the only manifestation of Krishna's mercy are the *Vaisnavas*. Krishna's mercy cannot ascend otherwise than through the *Vaisnavas* because Krishna's greatest mercy is love for Him. Krishna's greatest mercy is devotion to His lotus feet and Krishna Himself can give it. But He doesn't, as a rule. Essentially, we can only receive this devotion through the *Vaisnavas*, through a *Vaisnava*. One cannot receive it directly. In Padma Purana there's a verse, which says that the one who directly worships Acyuta Himself may or may not reach perfection. But the one who worships Acyuta's great devotee is sure to achieve perfection. Krishna Himself keeps saying in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.19.21): *mad-bhakta-puja-bhyadhika* - worshipping My devotee is better than My own worship. Rupa Gosvami describes *sadhana* and different forms of *sadhana*. At the end of this description he says that this book reviews various forms of service. Among these 64 forms of devotional service there is no direct instruction to serve the *Vaisnavas*. But Rupa Gosvami says the wise understand it. The wise are those who have a head on their shoulders. They realize that the most important form of devotional service is

service to devotees. And service to devotees, the *Vaisnavas*, may elevate us to devotion at any stage. Therefore, it's so important to always remember that we should serve the *Vaisnavas*. As Bhakti Vikasa Svami says, "You don't know who's sitting next to you. This might be Narada Muni or Prahlada Maharaja, or Hiranyakasipu. He, to, is Lord's great devotee." We must always remember that we should treat all the devotees the right way, according to the etiquette, according to their spiritual level but only if we are absolutely certain about their level. Devotees sometimes love judging others: he is on the *nistha* level, I am on the *asakti* level and the rest are on the *anartha-nivritti* level at the very best. This *bhakta* has some *sraddha* due to my preaching. But, actually, to be able to judge someone, to really understand someone, one should be on a very high level. We should be certain about another devotee's level; we shouldn't have any doubts. But if we are doubtful, if we have the intelligence... What is the function of the intelligence? Being doubtful. If you are doubtful, you should treat the devotee whose level you are not certain about, as an *uttama-adhikari*, just in case; as if he is on the highest level of devotional service to prevent oneself from committing some offence. We should understand we are very much dependent on devotees. We'll never lose if we love them. Love for devotees is an all-prize lottery. And, the opposite, offensive, disdainful attitude towards devotees is a very sad thing we are not to gain anything from.

After this Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says: *sujane bhusura-gane*. *Bhusara-gane* means the *brahmanas*. *Bhu* means the earth, *sura* means gods on the earth, those who live on the earth. Bhaktivinoda Thakura says that he means *kanistha-adhikaris* because *brahmanas* are mostly *Vaisnavas*. If a *brahmana* isn't a *Vaisnava*, he is no *brahmana*. But, as a rule, their devotion to Krishna is associated with various rites; they are very much attached to different rites, *mantras* and the like. But here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that one should even be attached to them, feel reverence and shouldn't offend them.

We sometimes come to India and show disregard to the *brahmanas* around. Of course, we are devotees, the *Vaisnavas*, *Hare Krishna Hare Krishna*. But Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that the *brahmanas* are dear to Krishna. Krishna is called *brahmanyadeva*. He loves Brahma, he loves the *brahmanas* for their purity, for their uncompromising stand, for caring for others, for their unselfishness. As a matter of fact, we should judge others by their qualities. One of the qualities of a *brahmana* is absolute unselfishness. The *brahmanas* are those who completely rely on Krishna. They don't care about their food, they rely on Krishna's mercy accepting what Krishna gives to them.

Essentially, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is speaking about the attachment to the *brahminical* culture; that we should be attached to the qualities the *brahmanas* show; and when we see the one who demonstrates these qualities, we should develop attachment to such one because this person is our guide and helper on the spiritual path.

In Caitanya Bhagavata there is a story of Lord Caitanya heading for Gaya. Accompanying Him were many of His *brahmana* disciples from Navadvipa. The Navadvipa *brahmanas* are special ones. They are the most learned, the most expert. So, this crowd of His own students was following Him. They stopped somewhere halfway to Gaya at some small village. There were the local *brahmanas*. The local *brahmanas* did some things in a different way from the Navadvipa *brahmanas*. There are a lot of *brahmanas* here. *Brahmanas* are always nitpicking: a wrongly done *mudra* or something else. A *brahmana* knows how to do things right and, accordingly, is quick to see something is being done wrong and he criticizes. This is, actually, in the nature of the *brahmanas* - it is supposed to be like that. So, if you have it in you, you have attained the level of *kanistha-adhikari*. This is a high level. God grant we really ever attain it.

We know how to do things the right way. A true *brahmana* counts how many times he moves his toothbrush because if he does a move less, he will lose his *brahminical* dignity. Not that kind of purity. Everything should be counted, all the *mantras* should be chanted; everything must be the way it's supposed to be.

So, of course, one of Lord Caitanya's followers noticed that they were doing something in a different way. So, he stood looking down on them getting a certain look. He didn't say a word, he didn't even show this offensive mood, but Lord Caitanya noticed that. What did He do? He got a high fever and began to toss about. His disciples got alarmed, they brought Him medicines, they asked Him, "What's wrong with You? What's going on?! Nimai, You've never been sick. How can Lord fall ill? He can't."

All the means were used but nothing helped. Finally, Nimai Himself said, “Quick, quick! I am dying, bring me the water that washed the feet of a local *brahmana*. I’m going to be cured as soon as I drink it. This is the only thing that can cure Me.” The disciples got frightened. How come? But a local *brahmana* was somewhere around. He said, “But of course” and got his feet washed. Brahmana’s feet are a special thing. There’s some potency in them. Nimai Pandit savored a few glasses of this water and His fever was immediately gone. “You see how potent is the water you washed the *brahmana*’s feet with?” The disciple who has this disdain in his heart took Lord aside, cried and said, “I know why you’ve done it. You’ve done it to teach me a good lesson. You knew the thoughts I had. You can’t have a high fever, You don’t need water from *brahmanas*’ feet. You showed how one should treat *brahmanas*, how to revere and respect this elevated culture.”

Sometimes we are quite scornful of *kanistha-adhikaris*. God grant us to become *kanistha-adhikaris* some day. A *kanistha-adhikari* is the one who knows that a *murti* is non-different from God Himself, who knows that Krishna is within the holy name. This *adhikar* is a very high qualification. That’s why Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “My mind, get attached to the *brahmanas*, to the *guru*, to Vrindavana, to *uttama-adhikari*, to those who love Krishna with all their hearts, to the *Vaisnavas* and even to *brahmanas*; render service to them and try to understand that if you ever want to return to the spiritual world, you should have this attachment to all of these people helping you on your spiritual path.

Tomorrow I am going to speak on *sva-mantre sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane* – attachment to your *mantra*, to the holy name and attachment to the loving couple, the rulers of Vraja.

Question: Can Mayapur give *prema-bhakti*?

Answer: Mayapur is non-different from Vrindavana. The one who thinks that Mayapur is different from Vrindavana, doesn’t understand anything. Mayapur is Mayapur - in Mayapur *prema-bhakti* is more accessible than in Vrindavana. Mayapur is very generous, so one should first visit Mayapur to purify oneself there. Mayapur tolerates offences. In Vrindavana it’s very dangerous; in Vrindavana one should be very humble to feel Vrindavana. In Mayapur Lord Caitanya is very generous; therefore, one should go to Mayapur, take a bath in the Ganges, go to Vrindavana and take a bath in the Yamuna. Our way to Vrindavana goes through Mayapur.

Question: What does a parrot think about Vrindavana?

You should ask a parrot. We can understand it from the Srimad Bhagavatam, because it was told by Sukadeva Gosvami. Who is Sukadeva Gosvami? *Suka*, a parrot. He already said what he thinks about Vrindavana. He said, “There’s nothing better than Vrindavana.” He knows that being a parrot in Vrindavana is, actually, a great honor one should earn.

Question: You said that one should live in Vrindavana if one wants to die there.

- At least in one’s thoughts.

There was a situation in Vrindavana two years ago you might have heard of that a man had come to Vrindavana from Moscow for the first time in his life. He had never chanted the *mantra* – he was far from Krishna consciousness. He visited a *kirtana* and left his body the following morning.

Question: May he rest in peace. But we don’t know what the man had done in his previous lives. It’s just that one should have a huge *sukriti*. People from Moscow don’t get to Vrindavana for no particular reason. People from Moscow usually go Agra; and even if they get to Vrindavana, they don’t, as a rule, leave their bodies there. This is an exception, which should make us think what this man had to do in his previous life so that it befell him. We’ve been in so many *kirtans*, but somehow we didn’t leave our bodies after them. Lord Caitanya says, “If only I had a grain of love for Krishna, I wouldn’t be able to live – My heart would have torn apart.” He visited one *kirtana* and, apparently, experienced something so extraordinary that there was nothing for him to do but return to the spiritual world. It is explained in Nectar of Devotion that one should have *stayi-bhava*. *Stayi-bhava* is a deep, everlasting subliminal emotion. And if one attained this emotional state of love of God in the previous life, he can fail to feel it

in this one. Just like we may not remember about some profound emotions we had in the previous life, but under certain circumstances they will be revived in our hearts. For example, a man got drowned in the previous life. In this life he doesn't experience any emotions until he finds himself on the ocean shore where he experiences a terrible fear because one day he got drowned in a shipwreck. The mere sight of the ocean gives him the shudders making his hair stand on end. And he doesn't understand where it comes from. Likewise, if I practiced devotional service in my previous life attaining a certain emotional state, it comes the same way. It can be concealed until time comes, until I find myself in a situation that reminds me of it – in Vrindavana or somewhere else when I hear the sound of the *mantra*.

One devotee told me a story of his life. He used to be a mobster. And a mobster's heart is, you know, nothing like tender. They are not paid for that. To properly perform their responsibilities they should have a cruel heart. He had his own business. Once he heard the *mantra*, a *kirtana*. When he heard Niranjana Maharaja singing a *kirtana* broadcast on the radio he started crying. He kept on crying for three hours unable to stop. Where did it come from? Not from this life, considering his *karma* in this life. There was something in his soul, his heart. And once he heard this sound, he remembered everything. He started crying over all the things he had done in his life. The same is here: a man had come to Vrindavana, remembered everything and left his body.

Question: At the beginning of the lecture you said that following *dharma* makes a strong family. What's *dharma* of a strong family?

Answer: Our family life will be strong if we have an attachment. If this attachment is based on some hormonal things where volumes of adrenaline are released into the blood stream. Until it is there, I am attached. As soon as it stops being released, I start thinking, "Who is it by my side?" Because there are no hormones. If I see my partner through some hormones, my attachment is soon gone. But it can be strong and firm if founded on the sense of duty – conscious and voluntary - when one understands that one should serve this person, that they should serve one another, help one another to ultimately return to God. *Dharma* is just understanding that we have a duty, obligations towards one another. We uttered these obligations before the sacred fire and if not before the sacred fire than before the woman in the civil registry office who asked us, "Do you agree to be a husband and a wife?" And you muttered, "I do." You put the wedding bands on your fingers. And it's the same as taking on an obligation. I assumed the obligation to take care of, love and respect the other person. He/she assumed the obligation to love, take care of and help me. And if this is the determining thing, not the adrenaline in the blood, a strong attachment is sure to develop. If our relationship is based on some momentary emotions, which are soon gone, nothing is going to come out of it. Naturally, we should make sure that we have as much as possible in common, have some mutual interests, that there is some intimacy. We should understand that we have assumed obligations towards one another and they are so simple. A worthy, noble person when taking on some obligations will carry them out to the end regardless of how hard it is. If I assumed an obligation, I should carry it out. Now, when people get together, they know that they can get divorced any time. And this perception poisons their relationship completely. If people have entered into this relationship, they shouldn't admit even the thought of it. We should share everything – the bad and the good. If we build our relationship like that there will be a deep, genuine attachment, which will help our spiritual advancement. I don't know what else there's to say. I only have a theoretical vision of the things. Therefore I reserve the right to be idealistic.

Question: Do people only leave the *Vaisnava* society due to offences?

Answer: Not only. It may result from some weakness. A man can leave a *Vaisnava* society because of the weakness of the heart and in this case he will preserve this taste. This taste is going to remain within and one is going to seek the taste one has experienced. He will be looking for it there and there to finally understand it's not there. And when one does, one will return. But if he leaves because of having offended someone, he may lose and forget this taste. And then there is no certainty of it coming back. But if he just left due to some weakness, he is bound to return. So, the point is not to commit offences.

Question: It's hard to detach oneself from one's mind. How does one do it? How does one sort things out, understand what's in one's heart and mind?

Answer: To detach oneself from the mind one shouldn't let oneself be led by it or satisfy its whims. Essentially, Krishna speaks about it in Bhagavad-gita. He first says: *dehino 'smin yathā dehekaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā* – you are not this body (B.-g. 2.13). You've changed so many bodies throughout one life. And it's easy for everyone to understand. I used to have one body, now I have another one and another one. And in the next verse He says:

*mātrā-sparsās tu kaunteya  
śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ  
āgamāpāyino 'nityās  
tāṁs titikṣasva bhārata (B.-g.2.14)*

What does he say in this verse? Tolerate it. Tolerate the cold and the heat, happiness and distress – *sukha-duḥkha*; *sitoshana* – summer and winter. Tolerate and perform your duty. When you are tolerating, is it you or your mind? No, the mind is unable to tolerate. It keeps saying, "I can't. I don't want." Shut up, you should! This is how we can detach ourselves from the mind. The best way to do that is to get up at 4 a.m. in Lithuania in winter, go out and pour a bucket of cold water on oneself. At that moment you'll understand that you are not your mind because it will get into a rage and you will keep saying, "You should. This is my duty. Tolerate. You should do it." Why I gave this very example is because I was in Lithuania in the 80-ies staying at one hut that contained the temple. That's what the people did there. They went out barefoot onto the snow and, as if nothing had happened, poured a bucket of cold water on themselves and went in. That was my first real experience of realizing I wasn't the mind, because my mind kept on saying, "I don't want to! I can't!"

Hare Krishna! Thank you very much. Srila Prabhupada ki! Jaya!

## Manah-siksa, verse 1, lecture 4

Today is the last lecture. Let's read Text 1 again:

*gurau gosthe gostalayisu sujane bhusura-gane sva-mantre sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane sada dambham hitva kuru ratim apurvam atitara-maye svantar bhratas catubhir abhiyace dhrita-padah*

I have been trying to explain what we should teach our mind. Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that the mind should be taught to get attached to spiritual things because this is the nature of our mind that it shouldn't be taught how to get attached to material things. This is just staggering how much it's attached to dirty things. As soon as you open some stupid newspaper, your mind immediately gets fixed on it, or some TV news. But it is all futile, it doesn't make any sense. Nevertheless, the mind is attached to these.

Here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, "My mind, my brother, my friend, my relative, my comrade, my dear, why do you need all these? *Sada dambham hitva* – cast away your pride. I've mentioned that pride, actually, is identifying oneself with the material body, which is, essentially, identifying oneself with the material world. Cast away your pride, cast away all of your perceptions of happiness in this world because our perception of happiness in the material world means *īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī siddho 'haṁ balavān sukhī* (B.-g. 16.14) – I am the lord, I am the enjoyer, I am perfect, I am the strongest, I am the most powerful. And this is the first step one should take on this path. Having taken it, one will gradually be able to develop the highest spiritual love, the love, which will crowd any kind of selfishness from one's heart; the love, which leaves no place for any kind of contamination in one's heart. Lord Caitanya explains the last Text of Siksastaka, I quoted yesterday:

*ashlīshya va pada-ratam pinashtu mam  
adarshanan marma-hatam karotu va  
yatha tatha va vidadhatu lampato  
mat-prana-nathas tu sa eva naparah*

He explains, "I am not bothered by my own distress or happiness, but if my distress pleases You, I am ready to suffer it. And my distress will be Your happiness, and my distress will become my happiness for it pleases You." This is the kind of selfishness we should strive for; because in the material world all of our emotions, all of our feelings, all of our relationships are contaminated and clouded by selfishness. In the long run, we want happiness for ourselves. And what shall I do if no one takes any notice of me?

Like today I've received a resentful letter. Why resentful? Because I had written a dry reply. The letter was supposed to be wet with tears. And it was dry. I am now the wrong person. Period. But true love doesn't see whether it's dry or wet. Caitanya Mahaprabhu gives an example from the *Puranas* to explain this text. This story is mentioned in several *Puranas*: in *Padma Purana*, in *Markandeya Purana*, in *Vadita Purana*. It's about a woman whose husband was leprosy. She was a faithful wife and loved her husband sincerely, although he was leprosy and a lecher at that. And her husband had fallen in love with a prostitute. He had lost sleep and peace of mind. So, his wife asked, "What do you want?" He answered, "I want her." The prostitute was very expensive because she wasn't just a whore – she was a royal whore. Kings lined up for her taking off their crowns and putting them to her feet. And this leper with a distorted nose, with his hands trembling wanted to enjoy her company. So, to please her husband his wife went to serve this woman. And when the latter tried to reward her his wife said, "I don't need anything."

- How come? You are serving me. You are doing me so many things. Since you came here my house has changed. Tell me what you want.

And then the woman said, “If you promise to grant my wish, I will tell you what I want.”

- But of course, whatever you want. If you want diamonds, jewelry, I have lots of crowns. Choose whichever you like.

She replied, “I don’t need anything. Just spend a night with my husband.”

The prostitute said, “Sure. Haribol!” So the woman brought her husband in a basket because he couldn’t walk any more. And when her husband saw what his wife had done, he cried out of repentance, of love, of everything else. He said, “Take me back home. I don’t want anything. What have I been chasing while having you by my side.” She put him on her shoulders and took him back. On the way back he happened to touch Markandeya Risi. Markandeya Risi is a great *rishi* and some dirty leper contaminated him with his touch. So, he cursed him, “You are going to die by sunrise.” His wife was resentful, “How come? What is it? This is my husband and some *rishi* has cursed him. You are not going to die. And if it takes the sun not to rise, it won’t rise.” And the sun stopped as though struck-dumb – so strong was the power of her chastity, the power of her love, the power of her faithfulness. It is said that at that moment Brahma, Visnu and Siva descended and told her, “What do you want? We’ll do anything you want because you’ve won us with your love.” They cured her husband, delivered him from the curse and sent the sun going.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that love conquers all. In fact, there’s nothing as strong as love in this world. Love can conquer everything but one should learn to love. One can learn to love. And it’s this pure love that one should learn because sometimes, almost always, people mistake love for lust. When explaining this verse, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati says that this is what distinguishes true *bhakti* from what *prakrita-sahajiyas* do. *Prakrita-sahajiyas* want to enjoy Krishna. They come to a spiritual movement, to the spiritual world, take to a spiritual practice because they want to enjoy alone but they don’t hurry to sacrifice themselves, which turns their spiritual life into a travesty, a farce.

So, today, we are going to finish this text where Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says: *sva-mantra sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane*. “May you have this attachment to the *mantra* you received during your *diksa*, initiation; to the holy name and to the shelter of the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha- Krishna, the ever youthful Divine Couple of Vrindavana.

Yesterday, I explained that one’s attachment manifests itself as a result of conscious and voluntary performance of one’s duty. This is the first stage, or step. Therefore, to develop this attachment to the *mantra*, to the holy name and, finally, to Krishna, we should first realize what is happening during the *diksa* ceremony; what is happening while we are chanting the holy name. That’s what I am going to talk about today. We’ll develop the attachment when we realize that the holy name can save us; when we realize that the *mantra* we’re chanting is a life-buoy our *guru-deva* has thrown to us, which we have to hold on to with all our might. We forget that one day we are going to lie and wheeze, and we’ll need to utter the holy name when breathing our last. If we make it, it’ll save us, if not – we won’t benefit from what we’ve been doing.

In the *bhajana* we sing before every lecture, Narottama dasa Thakura says an amazing thing. He says: *ara kabe nitai-cander koruna hoibe* (Lalasarayiprarthana). “When will Nitai Candra’s, Lord Nityananda’s causeless mercy be bestowed upon me?” Lord Nityananda is the spiritual master. He is the embodiment of the spiritual master. Narottama dasa explains where the mercy of the spiritual master lies. We’ve already talked about the *guru*, the attachment to the *guru*. But today we’re going to speak about what the *guru* gives us; about what this attachment should entail and what it gives. *Ara kabe nitai-cander koruna hoibe* – when will *nitai-cander*, or the spiritual master, bestow His mercy on me? And what is supposed to happen at that? *Samsara-*



*basana mora kabe tuccha ha'be*. What is *samsara-basana*? *Samsara-basana* means *karma*. *Basana* is what accumulates in our sub-consciousness, all possible imprints, *samskaras*, we've accumulated in our mind. *Samsara-basana* also means identifying oneself with the material body, with *samsara*. This identification is surprisingly profound. We have no idea how many layers our sub-consciousness contains, how many complexes, problems and the like. This is an ocean, the abyss of material self-identification. But when my spiritual master bestows his mercy on me it becomes *tuccha ha'be* – infinitesimal; it stops playing its part in my life. Now we completely identify ourselves with the matter and the material body, and the role of the spiritual master is to destroy or knock this platform of material self-identification from under us.

I would like to speak about what is supposed to be happening and what is happening when one is receiving one's *mantra*. Yesterday, there was an initiation and some of you received your *mantra*, the *diksa*, the second initiation. “*Sva-mantre*” – says Raghunatha dasa Gosvami here. And a *mantra* is an amazing thing. In *Antya-lila*, the last part of *Caitanya-caritamrita*, Sri Caitanaya Mahaprabhu explains what is happening when one is receiving a *mantra*. It is said that a *mantra* is not just a sound and not even a special sound, it contains in itself a certain type of a *jiva-Krishna* relationship. Chanting a *mantra*, *gayatri-mantra*, and *Krishna-gayatri-mantra* in the first place, means that while I am chanting it I am beginning to restore my relationship, to acquire my true spiritual identity, spiritual personality. The beginning of a *mantra* contains *bija om*, or *klim*. This *bija* already contains the seed of a relationship, which is the seed of a *mantra*. A *mantra* ends in *namaha* or *svaha* meaning I am surrendering and renouncing myself. Krishna's name is in the middle of a *mantra*. Any *mantra* has this structure. *Bija* contains the seed of a relationship. Sprouting through chanting of the holy name, this seed of a relationship is supposed to lead one to self-surrender and self-oblivion. Because what is *svaha* or *namaha*? *Namaha* means I have no false ego any more. What does *svaha* mean? It means I take my false ego and throw it into the fire causing it to burn brightly. *Svaha* means I have forgotten myself, about my selfishness, about who I am here, that self comes first. This is how a *mantra* is arranged.

And Caitanya Mahaprabhu speaks about what is happening during the *diksa* ceremony. He says: *diksa-kale bhakta kore atma-samarpan* (C.C., *Antya* 4.192-193). The moment one receives the *diksa* or a *mantra* from one's spiritual master, the moment the spiritual master is whispering a *mantra* into one's ear the *bhakta* should do *atma-samarpan*, which means he should sacrifice oneself, surrender. *Atma* – one should take one's ego, the *atma*, and give it to the spiritual master – *atma-samarpan*. And the moment one surrenders, the moment one receives one's *mantra* – *sei-kale Krishna tare kore atma-sam* – Krishna makes one equal to Himself.

That's what happened to you yesterday. Who became equal to Krishna? Feel free to raise your hands. When one is receiving a *mantra* and surrenders, if he's really receiving a *mantra* - not just listening patiently to some syllables - Krishna makes him equal to Himself. And Caitanya Mahaprabhu goes on explaining what is happening. When one receives a *mantra*, with it one receives one's spiritual body – *siddha-svarupa*. At that moment one's true relationship comes into being.

The novel by Bhaktivinoda Thakura *Jaiva-dharma* describes two heroes, Vijai Kumar and Vajalanatha, receiving this *mantra*. They received the *mantra* from their spiritual master. And when it had happened, tears came into their eyes and they started to cry, “Gauranga! Gauranga! Gauranga!” Their hair stood on end. Their guru looked at them and said, “You purified me today

when I saw what had happened to you". The moment one is receiving a *mantra*, one should undergo a transformation. It's an alchemical process, which is to take place within one's heart. After they had received their *mantra* they summoned all the *brahmanas* of Navadvipa, all the *babajis* and all the devotees in Srivasangam. They made a huge feast for everyone. And while they were sitting modestly aside waiting for everyone to finish their meal to take the remains of their food, they saw Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They saw His associates. They saw Caitanya Himself come to participate in that celebration.

This is that same spiritual vision one gets as soon as one receives a *mantra*. Well, now, who saw Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates on the day of initiation? Who felt one's relationship with Krishna? This is a process, which has two constituents, two conditions. Effort must be taken by both the parties. In our case we may take a little longer to see Lord Caitanya. But, in the long run, a *mantra* is to change our consciousness when I begin to see the world in a different way, because I'm getting rid of the cataract of selfishness. When we are chanting *mantra om ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana salakaya aksur unmilitam yena jnananjana-salakaya*. *Salakaya* means a surgical instrument used in Ayurveda to remove a cataract. Even then they performed eye surgeries and removed this clouding. This *salakaya* is a cataract on our eyes removed by our *guru*. And the *guru* removes it with this instrument and opens my eyes with the torch of knowledge - *jnananjana salakaya*. And we start to see due to our sight recovering.

A *mantra* or initiation. Receiving a *mantra* is called *dvija*, the second birth. We are born for the second time, the second *janma*, or birth; and the one who received this *mantra* is called a *dvija*, twice-born. Who else are called twice-born? Birds. Birds are also twice-born. First a bird is born from an egg. And its second birth is as a bird. What's the difference between the first and the second births? The second one enables a bird to fly. During my first birth I am inside this shell bound hand and foot. I am struggling in this conditioning shell wanting to break free. I am a free soul, I want to love, I want to fly but I am inside an egg. Therefore, I need a *guru* who'll break this shell with his beak. This is the shell of material conditioning. The difference between the first and the second birth is that during the second birth one gets unlimited freedom and can fly. He gets the whole sky. During his first birth he gets a shell. He feels much better in this egg than is the womb but still it's cramped. This is what is supposed to be happen during initiation.

Gopa Kumar is another example – when he received a *mantra* from his *guru*. He had seen the *guru* and began to serve him on Govardhana providing him with milk. Once his *guru* was chanting a *mantra* and as soon as he had chanted half of it, he got a lump in his throat. He hardly finished the *mantra* and fainted. Gopa Kumar ran to fetch some water and bring him to his senses. But when he returned his master was gone, he had vanished. So, he started chanting the *mantra*. Gradually, the seed, which a *mantra* is often compared to, sprouted.

In other words, there are two things that occur during initiation: our *guru* puts his spiritual experience into the *mantra*; when receiving the *mantra* we also receive *brahma-nistha*, or our spiritual master's spiritual experience. All this spiritual experience is supposed to sprout in our heart if our heart is ready to have something sprout within. As a rule, a heart is like that – nothing grows there whether you plant anything or not. Our heart should be fertile. On the one hand, the spiritual master puts certain energy into these words, the energy of his understanding, his realization, his spiritual experience. Together with this energy we receive something very important. But the main thing is to grow what we've received. Just like a small seed contains the energy necessary to make a tree out of it. But if this seed falls down into barren soil, the tree won't grow – this energy is going to be wasted.

Sometimes the power of the *mantra* the spiritual master puts into it is compared to the power put into instructions. It's, actually, not hard to understand – there's nothing mystical about what I am

saying. Everyone has had the experience I am talking about. Just like we know that we can give someone instructions but they won't work whereas if someone else gives the same instructions, they may change his life completely. The same words. When Srila Prabhupada says, "Chant Hare Krishna and be happy" – this is one thing. If I say the same, this is another thing. When Srila Prabhupada said that, the hippies started to chant the *mantra*. When Caitanya Mahaprabhu said those words, elephants, tigers and deer began to chant the *mantra*. Moreover, tigers and deer began to embrace each other. We chant the *mantra* but, for some reason, we don't embrace one another - we argue with each other. And, having received this sound from the mouth of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the deer made it up with the tigers. The more *sakti* we put into a word the more effective it is, because a word itself may be powerful or may not depending on who says this word.

For example, yesterday I was talking about Vrindavana and I the way I was doing that because I love Vrindavana. But if I had been talking about Vrindavana without ever visiting it, that wouldn't have contained any power. You wouldn't have believed it because I wouldn't have been able to put any *sakti* into that. Any words are powered by experience and we sometimes can feel that. Like one woman told me that she had read Bhagavad-gita by Srila Prabhupada. And when she was reading it for the first time she was crying from beginning to end. When I was reading her letter, I thought, "Why am I not crying?" I've been reading Bhagavad-gita for years but I've never got tears in my eyes. And she opened it and just started to cry. And she explained why – because she had immediately understood that each word in that book was true. That's what she realized. This is the power that Srila Prabhupada had put into his words. This same power is put into the words of the *mantra* by the spiritual master. But at the same time I, like the one who has received the *mantra*, should possess certain qualities for this power to manifest itself. I can fail to see or feel it at once. It takes some time for this energy to sprout in my heart. And, as I have already mentioned, the heart, or the soil of our heart, should be fertile.

Srila Prabhupada explained that receiving a *mantra* is *divya jnan hride prokasito*. When we are speaking about *divya jnan*, the divine knowledge, the spiritual knowledge, the seed of the spiritual knowledge is within the *mantra*. In fact, the whole spiritual knowledge is within the *mantra*. This is the essence of *divya jnan* that when one is chanting a *mantra*, Madana Mohan, Who is a personification of the spiritual master *sambandha-jnana*, gets attracted to it. When chanting the *mantra* received from the spiritual master, one should understand that his spiritual body is supposed to be growing.

Srila Prabhupada often laughed when speaking about how Vivekananda received the divine knowledge. In one of his books Vivekananda is speaking about how he once visited Ramakrishna. He said, "Master, give me the knowledge." Ramakrishna looked at him. Ramakrishna approached him. Ramakrishna touched his forehead and at that moment as if electric discharge occurred between them and Vivekananda fell down to the ground, unconscious, and Ramakrishna fell, too. Then Vivekananda came round and Ramakrishna came to senses. Ramakrishna said, "I have given you all of my knowledge – there is nothing left. You have all of my knowledge – I am empty." Srila Prabhupada ridiculed it – what kind of knowledge is it that you can give away leaving nothing for oneself? This is nonsense. *Vaisnava-acaryas* say that the knowledge – *divya jnan* – comes with the sound of a *mantra*. Further, what is one supposed to do to make the *mantra* effective, to enable one to chant the it or benefit from it? Like sometimes devotees thirst for the second initiation. When they finally receive it, they

stop chanting the it the following day or a month later. Because they don't get a response from the *mantra* and for a very simple reason. For the chanting of the *mantra* to be really effective and for us to get a response it is said that one should have four qualities. I should chant the *mantra* having the four following things. When we are chanting a *gayatri-mantra* the first thing we should have is *sraddha* – a huge belief that the *mantra* is capable of saving me and creating my spiritual body; that, in the long run, it will take me to the spiritual level equal to God Himself. The second thing is *saranagati* – I should surrender, I should be putting into the *mantra* the power of my surrender. I should be doing it with a lot of feeling within. The third thing is *mantra-dhyana* – I should be mediating on the *mantra*; I should be deeply focused on the sound of the *mantra* in my mind. And the fourth one is the spirit of self-sacrifice – *svaha* – when I am losing myself in the *mantra*. These are the four things one should be chanting the words of the *mantra* with. Then, when he is chanting the main 18-syllable *mantra klim krisnaya govindaya gopijana valabhaya svaha*, he is going to feel the *mantra* responding to him. In Brihad-Bhagavatamrita Sanatana Gosvami says that a *mantra* can take one to any level of existence. Gopa Kumar visited all the planets and became Indra. He would come to some planet, he'd like it at first because he saw how they worshipped Krishna. Then something would happen, a revolution, and Indra would be displaced and Gopa Kumar would become Indra because he chanted his *mantra* attentively, for this reason only. Then he got to the planet of Brahma and something happened to Brahma, too; he was displaced and Gopa Kumar became Brahma. He moved from one level to another, from one planet to another, he was going up and it's all due to the *mantra*. Sanatana Gosvami explains that his *mantra* was leading him all the way. Sometimes his *guru* would come to him. It's said that one first gets a *mantra* from the *guru* and then it becomes one's *guru*, a guide. It leads one. Moreover, the most amazing thing is not that he got from one level to another, reached higher and higher but that he didn't get stuck on any level. Just imagine that tomorrow you will become Indra. Would you enjoy being Indra? *Apsaras* are dancing, the sun is shining – an everlasting festival. Well, sometimes demons attack. One can tolerate it. Or you have become Brahma. Your body is made of pure intelligence. You are the creator of the whole universe. Are you going to want to leave? Why, you are feeling good. Sanatana Gosvami says an amazing thing: a *mantra* contains the highest relationships. If the *guru* has put these highest relationships into the *mantra* and one chants it, what will happen to one, what level will one reach? We tend to be pleased with whatever we reach - Brahma or Indra. What are you talking about? We are going to be pleased with a million dollars or a skyscraper, or, maybe, a mansion somewhere in California. We will forget about everything else. When Gopa Kumar would reach something, he would continue to chant the *mantra* and at some point a terrible pain would start to break his heart. He would start to feel that wasn't what he wanted. He became Brahma – it wasn't that; he became Indra – it wasn't that. He got to Vaikuntha – again, it wasn't that. He didn't need all of those, he needed to go on. And this is where the power of a *mantra* lies. If one chants a *mantra* in the proper way, it will prevent one from resting on one's laurels or being content with something inferior. He will always be striving to get higher and higher; it will help him achieve the highest goal. This is the power of a *mantra*. But for that, we should be attached to it; we should chant it properly, not the way we usually do. That's what happens during the initiation, *diksa*. He says that the second thing is *sva-mantra* – how we should be attached through understanding what a *mantra* is. And then he says – *sri-nama*. This is the very last thing Raghunatha dasa Gosvami speaks on beginning with the *guru*. *Sri-nama* is the holy name. This is what we should get attached to before getting attached to the shelter of the lotus feet of Radha and Krishna.

If we consider *gurau gosthe gostalayisu sujane bhusura-gane*, we can understand that all the things Raghunatha dasa Gosvami enumerates here – the *guru*, Vrindavana where land is made of philosopher's stone, where there grow desire trees, the residents of Vrindavana, the *Vaisnavas*, the *brahmanas*, your *diksa-mantras* and, finally, the holy name – have one quality in common. What is it? What do you think? What can they fulfill? Any of our desires. The *guru* can fulfill

any desire of ours. And if we serve him with devotion, we can get what we want. Our *diksa-mantra* can fulfill any of our desires.

*nama chintamani krisna caitanya rasavighraha purnah suddho nitya-mukto 'bhinnatvan nama-naminoh* (Padma Purana)

*Nama* – the holy name – may fulfill any of our desires. *Nama* is *cintamani* – the philosopher's stone – which can elevate us to any level. In Vrindavana, as I've already mentioned, there grow desire trees. The *brahmanas* may fulfill our desires in case they bestow their blessings. But Raghunatha dasa Gosvami appeals to us to develop this pure attachment, to change our attitude from “how can I benefit from it” to “what am I supposed to want.” I am supposed to want the highest love; I don't want anything else; I only want love for Krishna. And the true attachment to the holy name is when I chant it. But there can be *bhukti-nama* – when the holy name gives *bhukti*, material enjoyment – and *mukti-nama* – when the holy name gives us liberation.

Purnacandra Prabhu told a story of one devotee who was a disciple of one of ISKCON *gurus*. Then he set off for Radha-kunda and got initiated by one of Radha-kunda *babajis*. The latter gave him his *svarupa*, *ekadasi-bhava* and the rest. He gave him meditation and the holy name – everything he was supposed to give. It happened within one year. Purnacandra Prabhu continues, “The following year I come and see him in Vrindavana dressed in luxury clothes. He said, “I am going to get married.” “But you have *svarupa*.” “*Svarupa* will wait. At the moment I need another *rupa*. What's the point of *svarupa*? *Rupa* means beauty. There was a time for *bhajana* and now is the time for *bhojana*.” *Bhojana* means eating. First we do *bhajana* and then *bhojana*.

In fact Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says that our relationship with all of these things should be as pure as possible – I only want the highest. When we are chanting the holy name, we should be asking Krishna, “Krishna, Krishna, Krishna bring me closer to You. Krishna, purify my heart.” Bhaktivinoda Thakura says that when one is chanting the holy name, he shouldn't have any desires. But one can still have one desire. What is it? The desire to purify oneself. At first *prema-bhakti* – pure love of God – seems like a very abstract thing. We may not understand or feel it well. But at the beginning, at least, when we are chanting the holy name, we should have this desire, “Krishna, purify my heart, make my heart pure.”

Let's give it a try. Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. Once more, put your desire into it. Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare. When we are chanting the holy name, we should feel that something is saving me. The only thing that can save is how Rupa Gosvami glorifies the holy name in *Namastaka*. He says, “O Krishna! You manifest in two forms – *vacya* and *vacaka*. You can be an object of description – *vacya*, like Krishna Himself. And Your second form is *vacaka* – the Name.” They are non-different, but, nevertheless, there is some difference. Where is the difference? The difference is that the name is more merciful than Krishna Himself. We can offend Krishna but if we start crying Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare we can get tears of ecstasy. We can offend Krishna, we can offend the holy name but the holy name can even forgive the offence we committed towards God. The holy name can deliver us from numerous offences. So, this is the point that when we are chanting the holy name, we should have this feeling that something is saving me.

There is a wonderful story. Once Ramanujacarya visited to some temple. He started to pray in front of the Deities. In this temple in the south of India, not far from Srirangam, Visnu lies on Anantasesa. So, Krishna was sleeping. Ramanuja started to pray to suddenly hear a voice asking, “Tell me, how did you manage to save so many people?” Ramanujacarya had established this movement – he had as many as 770 *sanyasis* or so apart from *sanyasinis*; he had about a thousand of renounced female disciples; he had tens of thousands of disciples. He lived a long life – 120 years. But when he started his movement the whole South India seemed to have changed. I was all but filled with this love of God he was spreading. So, this deity asked him, “How did you manage? I am God but I can’t do that. People don’t come to Me – I am trying hard but with no success.” And Ramanujacarya replied, “If You want to know the secret, I can help you. But for You to really understand it I should take a seat on a *vysasana*, and You should become my disciple.” Because where should a disciple be if he wants to understand something? Down. The master should be up. Because how does knowledge flow? Downward.

That’s why it is explained that Hanuman, who was in Arjuna’s chariot’s flag, couldn’t comprehend Bhagavad-gita because he was above Arjuna and Krishna. Krishna was teaching and Hanuman was sitting there. He didn’t understand anything. So, Ramanujacarya said, “If you really want to know the secret, please bring me a tall *vyasasan* I will sit down on and whisper it into your ear for nobody to hear it.” The Deity confirmed It wanted it. A *vyasasana* was brought, Ramanujacarya sat before the altar, bowed down toward the Deity’s ear and whispered, “You want to know this secret? I am going to explain You. One should give people the holy name. There’s no other secret.” The secret is that a deity delivers one if one prays to a deity, if one establishes personal relations with a deity. But Ramanujacarya gave the holy name. In this sense the holy name is universal; it can give much more than anything else. The secret how I could save so many people is that I spread the holy name among people.

Jiva Gosvami says that in *kali-yuga* one can only become a great devotee under one condition that he himself serves the holy name and gives it to others. We should give the holy name out of mercy, out of compassion, and do it in the right way, in the right state. This is a very important thing, a very important principle. One should be well aware of this principle. What is one feeling when one is giving? Joy. He is feeling joy, some special, unmatched joy. At the same time something very important is happening on the subtle level.

I am trying to explain some subtle processes happening during initiation or in the course of preaching. It doesn’t matter what one is giving. If one is giving, there forms some vacuum on the subtle level that draws good subtle energy. When giving something we draw something. Some people think that one should save money to become wealthy. What does one have to do to become rich? Give away. What one should do to find love? Give away. To get something in this world one should give. What should one do to get the pure holy name? He should give it. One should give the holy name because when one is doing it, one enriches oneself on the subtle level and gets much more. One starts to feel this energy going through one. And this is a very important thing. It’s said that the holy name is *angi* of devotional service. *Anga* literally means a limb. In Nectar of Devotion Rupa Gosvami enumerates 64 *angas*. But chanting of the holy name – *harinama* – is no *anga*, it’s *angi*. This is the most important part of devotional service. This is the most essential thing one can do. If one does it properly, in a proper mood, in a proper state, he can get everything.

In Caitanya-bhagavata or in Caitanya-Caritamrita (I don’t remember where exactly) Ramananda Roi and Svarupa Damodara asked Lord Caitanya, “How should one chant the holy name to receive *prema*? What’s the method of chanting the holy name? What should one do? What is supposed to be happening in the heart? We also chant the holy name but feel no *prema*.”

Caitanya Mahaprabhu smiled and said, “What is the method of chanting the holy name to receive *prema*?”

trinad api sunichena  
taror api sahisnuna  
amanina manadena  
kirtaniyah sada harih  
(Sri Siksastakam, text 3)

If I chant the holy name in this state of consciousness, in this state of mind, *prema* gets attracted by the holy name. Let’s try it again: Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

I am going to finish but I still need to speak about the shelter of the lotus feet of Radha and Krishna and about the attachment to it.

Finally, Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “O my mind! Take the shelter of the Divine Couple of Vrindavana Sri Sri Radha-Krishna.” This is the reason why Caitanya Mahaprabhu came here. Nowhere else can we get what we can get here because lots of people worship Krishna. Madhava-*sampradaya* worships Krishna, Ramanuja-*sampradaya* worships Krishna, Nimbarka-*sampradaya* worships Radha and Krishna. But nowhere are Radha-Krishna as worshipped as by us. What’s the difference between worshipping Krishna and Radha-Krishna? The difference is that Krishna without Radha is different from when He is with Her. What’s the difference between Krishna without Radha and Krishna with Radharani? What is happening in His heart when He is by Her side? It’s no heart – it’s all syrup. When He is alone, He is alone. He is worshipped, He is listening. But who is He thinking about? About Her. When He is by Her side, He gets sweeter.

Yesterday, Purnacandra Prabhu sang this song *madhuram madhuram, madhuram madhuram ...* But when Srimati Radharani is by His side, He gets even sweeter because He feels She loves Him. And when He feels Her love He is eager to become sweeter. It’s said that when Radha is approaching Krishna, She makes Him get sweeter. And when Krishna gets sweeter She loves Him even more. And Krishna gets even sweeter. This is a chain reaction. Krisnadas Kaviraja Gosvami says that this is the paradox of love. Love can’t be comprehended. Love can’t be logically explained. There is no logic there. He says one of the paradoxes of spiritual love is that it’s eternal. But despite being eternal, it’s ever growing. It’s impossible to understand how something infinite may be ever expanding. How can Krishna’s everlasting sweetness become even sweeter? He is sweet. How can He be sweeter?

Here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami says, “Try to understand that you should get attached to Them. And not just Krishna.” Many people say, ‘Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.’ Many people worship Krishna. But one should get attached to Radha and Krishna because in this case Srimati Radharani enables us to taste Krishna’s sweetness more than we can. Prabhodananda Sarasvati compares Krishna’s sweetness with a drop of the ocean of sweetness one experiences when seeing Krishna and Srimati Radharani together. One drop of the ocean. In the Puranas and Tantras, in Agamas Krishna says that the one who worships Krishna without worshipping Radha is a sinner. Of course I am not qualified to speak about it. But there is some miracle. This is the miracle that Caitanya Mahaprabhu brought and gave us. He gave us a chance to worship love. Actually, we don’t worship God – we worship love.

In Caitanya-caritamrita, Adi-lila, Srila Prabhupada writes an amazing thing that Caitanya Mahaprabhu didn’t come to give people religion. What is ordinary religion? Srila Prabhupada

gives a wonderful definition of religion. Religion proves people that God exists. Right? Explains, proves. And what does it do next? Then it explains what one can get from Him. Srila Prabhupada says that Caitanya Mahaprabhu isn't interested in ordinary religions. Caitanya Mahaprabhu doesn't care. He is indifferent to ordinary religions. He is God Himself. He knows Himself. He says, "Everybody worships me. Bother them! I know how they worship." In fact, this is a terrible thing.

I once happened to be God. At least, I got a very good understanding of what it's like to be God. It was last year during the Ratha-yatra celebration in Ivanovo. Ivanovo is a poor town. According to statistics, it's the poorest town in Russia. And ISKCON held Ratha-yatra there. There was a parade in the local amusement park. Ivanovo young people came there. There was a businessman who had arranged for the Ratha-yatra to be held and had brought boxes of bananas and oranges. He had put them on the chariot. The guest of honor were supposed to strew those bananas and oranges over the crowd of the starving Ivanovo residents who had only seen bananas in picture books and had eaten oranges in their early childhood, which they had received from Santa Clause. This parade was moving across the amusement park. Everybody was quite indifferent until they started to strew the bananas and the crowd got real enthusiastic. Immediately did the people develop *apurva-rati* – an extraordinary attachment – in their hearts and everyone went running after the chariot. I got on it and began to distribute. In the first 6 minutes I relished – I felt like God. There was a crowd around me stretching out their hands crying, "Give me! Give me!" People were smiling, people were praying, people were quivering – and you felt so generous, magnanimous, able to make anyone happy. You chose the object of your mercy, "Here, have it." You were giving and giving and the crowd was getting more and more furious the more they were getting. And, finally, If you are not giving, people start pulling you; someone almost tore off my *dhoti*. Someone poked me as if saying, "Can't you see? I want a banana." And it went on for 2 hours until the bananas were gone. And then suddenly all at once they lost interest in me. Nobody cared about me anymore. I remained the same but the bananas were gone – nobody cared. The same people were walking, eating bananas and looking at me indifferently. They had just been crying with tears in their eyes; they had just been praying as if telling me, "Here we are. We love you."

Therefore, Caitanya Mahaprabhu says it's not interesting. No one needs religion. One only needs pure love. Only pure love can make one happy. And here Raghunatha dasa Gosvami is begging his mind, "My mind! Try and understand what you need. You don't need anything else - you don't need bananas, dates, pears, diamonds, emeralds – you only need Krishna. You only need love for Krishna – you don't need anything else. And you can only get it, if little by little, you develop attachment.

*gurau gosthe gotalayisu sujane bhusura-gane sva-mantre sri-namni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-sarane*

*Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare/Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare.*

Srila Prabhupada ki... Jai! Thank you very!