

Gitamala — Chapter 5 — Siddhi-lalasa

Intense, Eager Longing for the Highest Spiritual Perfection

Introduction to Chapter 5

In this final chapter of *Gita-mala*, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura hankers for birth in Vraja in the spiritual body of a *gopi*, being trained up by the *sakhis* headed by Sri Lalita and Sri Rupa Manjari for rendering eternal service to the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani. This is a very high goal for Gaudiya Vaisnavas who feel attracted to the *madhura-rasa*, and it is a very precious gift which was brought by the most merciful incarnation, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. All the *acaryas* in our disciplic succession acknowledge this – for example, Svarupa Damodara Gosvami (in his notebooks), Srila Ramananda Raya (in *Caitanya-caritamrta*), the six Gosvamis of Vrndavana, Narottama Dasa Thakura (in his song *Sri Rupa Manjari Pada*), and Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura (in *Sri Krsna Bhavanamrta*). And now in this final chapter of *Gita-mala*, Thakura Bhaktivinoda gives his own conclusive description. This divine perfectional stage can only be attained by the mercy of the bona fide spiritual master who is already a resident of Vraja. Such a level of perfection is awarded by the guru to the disciple only when he sees that the disciple is totally finished with the material world and has absolutely given up all forms of mundane (gross and subtle) sense gratification and has a natural growing attraction for Sri Krsna and His world.

Therefore, to factually follow in Bhaktivinoda Thakura’s footsteps instead of imitating cheaply, one should offer body, mind and words for the perpetual service of the bona fide representatives of Lord Caitanya, continue following His authorized method of preaching, and give proper respect (from an honest distance) to such exalted, rarely-attainable things as presented by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura in his final, delightfully ecstatic chapter of *Gita-mala* entitled “*Siddhi-lalasa*”—The intense, eager longing for the highest spiritual perfection.

* NOTE: Songs 1, 2, and 9 of this chapter are also found within Thakura Bhaktivinoda’s book *Saranagati*, which was published the same year as *Gita-mala* (1893). The other 7 songs are unique to *Gita-mala*).

Song 1: Hankering and wandering in Navadvipa

*kabe gaura-bane, suradhani-tate,
“ha radhe ha krsna” bo’le
kandiya bedabo, deho-sukha chadi,
nana-lata taru-tale*

When, oh when will I wander here and there weeping in the shade of the trees and creepers along the banks of the celestial Ganges River in Navadvipa? I will cry out “Oh Radhe! Oh Krsna!”, and will completely forget about all the so-called pleasures of the material body.

*(kabe) swapaca-grhete, magiya khaibo,
pibo saraswati-jal
puline puline, gadagadi dibo,
kori' krsna-kolahal*

When will I be able to live simply by begging some food from the homes of the untouchables? I will drink the water of the Sarasvati river, and in ecstasy I will roll about on the banks of the river, raising a loud uproar of “Krsna! Krsna!”

*(kabe) dhama-basi jane, pranati koriya,
magibo krpar lesa
vaisnava-carana- renu gay makhi',
dhorì' avadhuta-besa*

When will I bow down to all the inhabitants of the holy land of Navadvipa and humbly beg for a drop of their mercy? I will smear the dust of the Vaisnavas' lotus feet all over my body, and will wander around wearing the dress of an *avadhuta*.

*(kabe) gaura-braja-bane, bheda na koriya,
hoibo baraja-basi
(takhan) dhamer swarupa, sphuribe nayane,
hoibo radhar dasi*

When will I make no distinction between the holy land of Gaura-mandala and Vraja-mandala? At that time, I shall be transformed into a *Vraja-basi*. Then I will see the true form of the transcendental realm opening up before my very eyes, and I will thus become one of the maidservants of Srimati Radharani.

Song 2: Taking birth in Vraja in my own eternal spiritual body

*dekhite dekhite, bhulibo ba kabe,
nija sthula paricoy
nayane heribo, braja-pura sobha,
nitya cid-ananda-moy*

When will I be able to leave my gross bodily identity far behind? Within a split second, I will completely forget about all these false external affairs and behold the exquisite beauty of the divine realm of Vraja, which is completely pervaded with eternal, conscious bliss.

*vsabhanu-pure, janama loibo,
yavate vivaha habe
braja-gopi-bhava, hoibe swabhava,
ana bhava na rohibe*

I shall then take birth in the town of King Vrsabhanu, and I will be married nearby in the town of Yavat. My disposition shall be that of a simple cowherd girl of Vraja, and I shall not know any other mood.

*nija siddha deha, nija siddha nama,
nija-rupa, swa-basana
radha-krpa-bale, labhibo ba kabe,
krsna-prema-prakarana*

I shall obtain my own eternal spiritual body, transcendental name, and specific type of beauty and dress for the pleasure of Krsna. And when, by the power of Sri Radha's causeless mercy, will I be allowed entrance into the methods of expressing divine selfless love for Krsna?

*jamuna salila, aharane giya,
bujhibo jugala-rasa
prema-mugdha ho'ye, pagalini praya,
gaibo radhar jasa*

As I go with a waterpot on my head to draw water from the Yamuna river, I shall cherish remembrance of the ecstatic mellows that are shared by the Divine Couple. Thus being enchanted by Their sublime conjugal love, I will sing the glories of Sri Radha like a madwoman.

Song 3: Entrance into the group of Lalita Sakhi

*heno kale kabe, vilasa manjari,
ananga manjari ar
amare heriya, ati krpa kori',
bolibe bacana sar*

While I am thus absorbed in singing and singing, will Vilasa Manjari and Ananga Manjari come along on the same foot-path and, seeing me in this crazed state of mind, begin speaking to me with the sweetest essence of words?

*eso, eso, sakhi! sri-lalita-gane,
janibo tomare aj
grha-katha chadi', radha-krsna bhajo,
tyajiya dharama-laj*

They will say, "Come, come, *Sakhi!* Our very dear friend! From now on you will be counted amongst the attendants of Sri Lalita Sakhi! Giving up all your household concerns and fears of transgressing religious principles, just come along with us now and worship Sri Sri Radha-Krsna!"

*se madhura vani, suniya e jana,
se dunhar sri-carane
asraya loibe, dunhe krpa kori',
loibe lalita-sthane*

Hearing such sweet words, I will unhesitatingly take shelter of the lotus feet of both these *sakhis*. Then they will show their merciful favor by taking me by the hand into the forest, finally bringing me into the presence of Sri Lalita Sakhi.

*lalita sundari, sa-doya hoiya,
koribe amare dasi
swa-kunja-kutire, dibena basati,
jani' seva-abhilasi*

Then the most beautiful Lalita Sundari will behave very graciously towards me and will accept me as one of her own maidservants. She will give me residence in a small cottage in her own garden, knowing me to be intensely desirous of rendering service.

Song 4: Trained up by Lalita Devi and the *sakhis*

*palya-dasi kori', lalita sundari,
amare loiya kabe
sri-radhika-pade, kale milaibe,
ajna-seva samarpibe*

When will Lalita Sundari foster me as her own aspirant maidservant? Hopefully she will train me up and eventually offer me unto the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani, placing me entirely at Her disposal for rendering various services according to Her own merciful orders.

*sri rupa manjari, sange jabo kabe,
rasa-seva-siksa-tare
tad-anuga ho'ye, radha-kunda tate,
rohibo harsitantare*

When will Sri Rupa Manjari take me along with her to the banks of Sri Radha-kunda to give me lessons in the performance of service to the transcendental mellows? She will take me there and make me practice by following her instructions and movements. Thus I will pass my time feeling the greatest delight within my heart.

*sri visakha-pade, sangita sikhibo,
krsna-lila rasa-moy
sri rati manjari, sri rasa manjari,
hoibe sabe sa-doy*

At the lotus feet of Sri Visakha I will learn to play music and sing songs which are full of the transcendental mellows of Krsna's pastimes. All of the other *sakhis* in our group, including Sri Rati Manjari and Sri Rasa Manjari, will also welcome me into their fold with most kind and affectionate dealings.

*parama anande, sakale miliya,
radhika carane rabo
ei parakasta, siddhi kabe habe,
pabo radha-padasaba*

All of us will thus stay together, feeling the greatest supreme bliss, and we will perpetually remain at the lotus feet of Sri Radhika. When, oh when will I achieve this highest excellence of spiritual perfection, whereby I will attain the intoxicating *amrta* flowing from the lotus feet of Srimati Radharani?

Song 5: Ecstasy at Radha-kunda

*cintamani-moy, radha-kunda-tata,
tahe kunja sata sata
prabala vidruma- moy taru-lata,
mukta-phale avanata*

The banks of Sri Radha-kunda are made of billions of conscious, ecstatic desire-fulfilling touchstones, and surrounding the lake are hundreds and hundreds of beautiful transcendental gardens and groves. All the trees and creepers in those gardens are made of coral and rubies, and the fruits they produce are diamonds and pearls. Indeed, their branches are bending down to the ground due to the weight of so many lovely gemstone fruits.

*svananda-sukhada, kunja manohara,
tahate kutir sobhe
basiya tathay, gabo krsna nama,
kabe krsna-dasya lobhe*

My small cottage is shining beautifully within the most enchanting garden called *Svananda-sukhada-kunja* (The grove that gives the happiness of my own bliss). Living there, I will sing Krsna's holy name, and will greedily hanker for that time when I will attain the personal service of Him and His associates.

*emon samoy, muralir gan,
pasibe e dasi-kane
anande matibo, sakala bhulibo,
sri-krsna-vamsir gane*

Suddenly, while chanting and meditating like this, the songs of a divine flute will enter this maidservant’s ear. Becoming enchanted by such a sound, I will forget everything and will only listen spellbound to those wonderful songs of Sri Krsna’s flute.

*radhe radhe boli’, murali dakibe,
madiya iswari nama
suniya camaki’, uthibe e dasi,
kemon koribe prana*

The low, deep sound of His long *murali* flute will call out, “Radhe. . . Radhe. . .”—the very name of my own worshipable Queen! Startled with wonder by hearing such a sound, this maidservant will jump up in great haste with an extremely anxious heart, not knowing what to do next.

Song 6: The first chance for seva

*nirjana kutire, sri radha-carana,
smarane thakibo rata
sri rupa manjari, dhire dhire asi,
kohibe amaya kota*

Thus waiting in my solitary cottage, I will constantly remain absorbed in the remembrance of Sri Radha’s lotus feet. After some time, I will eventually see Sri Rupa Manjari approaching me. Coming up to me, she will speak some very sweet words to me. . .

*bolibe o sakhi! ki koro basiya,
dekhaha bahire asi’
jugala milana- sobha nirupama,
hoibe carana dasi*

She will say, “Oh *Sakhi!* My dear friend, what are you doing sitting here? Come outside and look — just see Who is coming! The Divine Couple will now perform Their splendrous, unparalleled transcendental meeting, and today you will be one of the maidservants at Their lotus feet!”

*sva-rasiki siddhi, braja-gopi dhana,
parama-cancala sati
jogir dheyana, nirvisesa jnana,
na paya ekhane sthiti*

The real treasure of the *gopis* of Vraja is their *sva-rasiki siddhi* — the eternal perfection of the personal mellow they each express; and these individual moods are transcendently fickle and supremely chaste. In contrast, neither the meditations of the *yogis*, nor the impersonal speculations of the mayavadis can bring such practitioners

anywhere near the realm of such transcendental mellows as are naturally exhibited by each of the *Vraja-gopis*.

*saksat darsana, madhyahna lilaya,
radha-pada-sevarthini
jakhana je seva, korocho jatane,
sri radha-carane dhani*

If I could see Them personally performing Their midday pastimes at Radha-kunda, I would be very much desirous of serving the lotus feet of Sri Radha. And whenever I do get an opportunity to render some small service, I will perform that act with the greatest care and attention, and will thus become rich with the divine treasure of Her lotus feet.

Song 7: The glories of Radha-kunda

*sri rupa manjari kabe madhura bacane
radha-kunda mahima barnibe samgopane*

When will Sri Rupa Manjari speak to me with such sweet words in a private place, vividly explaining to me the transcendental glories of Sri Radha-kunda?

*e caudda bhuvanopari vaikuntha niloy
tad-apeksa mathura parama sresta hoy*

“Beyond these fourteen worlds is the spiritual realm of the Vaikuntha planets. And beyond that, the area known as Mathura is the topmost supreme abode.”

*mathura-mandale rasa-lila sthana jatha
vrndavana sresta ati suno mama katha*

“Within that Mathura-mandala, the place known as Vrndavana is best of all, for that is where the *rasa-lila* takes place. Please hear me now as I narrate these glories.”

*krsna-lila-sthala govardhana srestatara
radha-kunda srestatam sarva-sakti-dhara*

“Out of all the places in Vrndavana where Krsna performs His pastimes, the place known as Govardhana is even better. And the best place in all of Govardhana is Radha-kunda, which possesses all transcendental potencies.”

*radha-kunda-mahima to' koriya sravan
lalayita ho'ye ami padibo takhan*

As soon as I hear Sri Rupa Manjari thus describe the glories of this sacred Radha-kunda, I will become seized with such an eager yearning that I will swoon and fall down unconscious.

*sakhir carane kabe koribo akuti
sakhi krpa kori' dibe sva-rasiki sthiti*

When will I ever become intensely eager to serve the lotus feet of a *sakhi*? When will my service-attitude make her so obliged that she will mercifully bestow upon me situation in my own natural eternal mellow?

Song 8: Siddha-deha

*barane tadit, basa taravali,
kamala manjari nama
sade bara barsa, bayasa satata,
svananda-sukhada-dhama*

This maidservant has a complexion just like lightning, and she is wearing a *sari* which has star-like patterns all over it. My name is Kamala Manjari. Eternally appearing to be only twelve-and-a-half years of age, I always live within the abode of *Svananda-sukhada-kunja*.

*karpura seva, lalitar gana,
radha juthesvari hana
mamesvari-natha, sri nanda-nandana,
amar parana dhana*

I render the service of preparing camphor within the group of Lalita Sakhi. Sri Radha is the leader of our group, and the center of all our activities. And the Lord of my Queen Radha is the delightful Son of Nanda Maharaja, Who is the treasure of my life.

*sri rupa manjari, prabhrtir sama,
jugala sevaya asa
avasya se-rupa, seva pabo ami,
parakasta su-visvasa*

I always desire to execute confidential service to the Divine Couple similar to that which is rendered by Sri Rupa Manjari and her associates. Thus I will certainly get this kind of service, for I so intensely desire it with the absolute totality of my faith.

*kabe ba e dasi, samsiddhi labhibe,
radha-kunde basa kori'
radha-krsna-seva, satata koribe,
purva smrti parihari'*

When will this maidservant thus attain such completely fulfilled spiritual perfection, living by the banks of Sri Radha-kunda? I will eternally serve Radha and Krsna, and all of my previous memories will be long since forgotten.

Song 9: The mood of a *manjari*

*vrsabhanu-suta- carana sevane,
hoibo je palya-dasi
sri radhar sukha, satata sadhane,
rohibo ami prayasi*

For serving the lotus feet of the charming daughter of King Vrsabhanu, I will become a sheltered maidservant of Her maidservant. Indeed, I will live only for the happiness of Sri Radha, and I will always endeavor to increase Her joy.

*sri radhar sukhe, krsner je sukha,
janibo manete ami
radha-pada chadi', sri krsna-sangame,
kabhu na hoibo kami*

I will understand within my heart that Krsna feels happiness only when Radha is happy. Therefore I will never, ever covet being with Krsna myself, thereby abandoning Radhika's lotus feet.

*sakhi-gana mama, parama suhrt,
jugala-premer guru
tad-anuga ho'ye, sevibo radhar,
carana kalpa-taru*

All my associate *sakhis* are my supreme well-wishers, they are my best friends, and they are the teachers of my lessons in conjugal love. By following them loyally, I will serve the lotus feet of Radha, which are just like desire-fulfilling trees.

*radha-paksa chadi', je jana se jana,
je bhava se bhava thake
ami to' radhika- paksapati sada,
kabhu nahi heri ta'ke*

I am forever given to remaining in the group devoted to Sri Radhika. I will never even look upon those persons who have abandoned Her entourage, whoever they may be and whatever mood they entertain.

Song 10: Hankingering for the ultimate perfection

*sri krsna-virahe, radhikar dasa,
ami to' sahite nari
jugala-milana- sukher karana,
jivana chadite pari*

I am absolutely unable to tolerate Sri Radhika's pitiable condition when She is suffering in separation from Sri Krsna — but I am fully prepared to immediately give up my life for the sake of Their happy reunion.

*radhika-carana, tyajiya amar,
ksaneke pralaya hoy
radhikar tare, sata-bara mari,
se dukkha amar soy*

If I were ever to renounce the lotus feet of Sri Radhika for even an instant, I would become totally devastated. For Her sake, I will gladly tolerate the pain and agony of death hundreds of times.

*e heno radhar, carana-jugale,
paricarya pa'bo kabe
haha braja-jana, more doya kori',
kabe braja-bane lo'be*

When will I be able to serve such a divine pair of lotus feet as Radha's? Alas, I beg you all, oh residents of Vraja, please be merciful to me now! When will you take me into the transcendental forests of Vraja?

*vilasa manjari, ananga manjari,
sri rupa manjari ar
amake tuliya, loho nija pade,
deho' more siddhi sar*

Oh Vilasa Manjari! Oh Ananga Manjari! Oh Rupa Manjari! Please lift me up and bring me close to your own lotus feet, thereby bestowing upon me the quintessence of eternal spiritual perfection!