

## Question Six

**What does it mean to take shelter of, and serve under the direction of, “the confidential serving maids (*mañjarīs*) of Śrī Rādhā”?**

This is a very deep, confidential and big topic and so far now we’ll just touch on the essence of it.

***So what's so special about Śrī Rādhā's mañjarīs?***

It's their mood. And, if we want entrance into the realm of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's shelter and service, we need to imbibe that mood and cherish it as our own.

**So what is that mood?**

Only by the mercy of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura can we answer this question. Let's explore a *bhajana* from his *Siddhi-lālasā* (*Gītamālā*, Chapter five) to gain some insight into the essence of the mood of the *mañjarī*.

*rohibo ami prayasi  
vṛṣabhānu-sutā-caraṇa-sevāne  
hoibo je pālya-dāsī  
śrī-rādhāra sukha satata sādhana*

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

*śrī-rādhāra sukhe kṛṣṇera je sukha  
jānibo manete āmi  
rādhā-pada chāḍī' śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅgame  
kabhu nā hoibo kāmī*

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

*sakhī-gaṇa mama parama-suhṛt  
jugala-premera guru  
tad-anuga ho'ye sevibo rādhāra  
caraṇa-kalapa-taru*

All my associate *sakhīs* 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 Rādhā, which are just like desire-fulfilling trees.

*rādhā-pakṣa chāḍi' je-jana se-jana  
je bhabe se bhabe thāke  
āmi to' rādhikā-pakṣa-pātī sadhā  
kabhu nāhi heri tā'ke*

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

— Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura's *Gītamālā*

## Very, very high, isn't it?!

Let's ground ourselves a little by hearing a few encouraging down-to-earth words from Śrīla Prabhupada.

Be serious. Don't be misled by the allurements of *māyā*. Remain strong. And then, in this life, you'll be able to become fit candidate to go back to home, back to Godhead. *Dīvyad-ṛndāranya-kalpa-drumādhaḥ*. You'll also be one of the associates of Kṛṣṇa, as you desire. Kṛṣṇa will give you the opportunity to serve Him as you desire. If you want to serve Him as a *gopī*, you'll get that position. If you want to serve Him as cowherd's boyfriend, you'll get that opportunity. If you want to serve Kṛṣṇa following the footsteps of Mother Yaśodā, accepting Kṛṣṇa as your son, you'll get it. Accepting Kṛṣṇa as your son, Nanda Mahārāja following... We have to follow their principle, not that "I shall become Nanda Mahārāja" or "I shall become Yaśodā," "I shall..." No, that is *Māyāvāda*. You have to follow how they are loving Kṛṣṇa. You have to learn that. Then you'll get the chance of Kṛṣṇa's association.

— CC Lecture, *Ādi-līlā 1.16, Māyāpura, April 9, 1975*



*Gopīs*, they are not conditioned souls. They are liberated spirits. So first of all you have to come out from this conditioned life. Then the question of serving *gopī* will come. Don't be at the present moment, very eager to serve *gopī*. Just try to get out of your conditional life. Then time will come when you'll be able to serve *gopī*. In this conditional stage we cannot serve anything.

But Kṛṣṇa gives us opportunities.....*Gopīs* means who are always, constantly engaged in the service of the Lord. So that eternal relationship will be revealed. So we have to wait

for that. Immediately we cannot imitate serving *gopīs*. That's a good idea that you shall serve *gopī*, but it will take time. Not immediately.

— **Lecture on Bg 2.8.12, Los Angeles, November 27, 1968**

**Please Don't Overlook the Mercy of Śrī Nityānanda Rāma**

Nityānanda does not directly instruct in the confidential service of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the Guru of the inner circle of the servants of Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī, however, accepts the offer of service of only those souls who are especially favoured by Nityānanda and are deemed by Him to be fit for Her service. There is, therefore, a most intimate relationship between the function of Nityānanda and that of Śrīmatī.

— **“Associates of Śrī Caitanya”, *Harmonist*, Feb 1932**