

**Bhaktyaloka**

**By**

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# History of Upadesamrita

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Śrī Upadeśāmṛta is highly revered in the Śrī Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava spiritual community (sampradāya).

Resplendent with the inner sentiment (bhāva) and outer complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the inaugurator of the congregational chanting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names (śrī nāma-saṅkīrtana) and the bestower of that most elevated, radiant divine love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa which had never been given before.

For the benefit of all living beings, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī churned the ocean of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's instructions and extracted the essence in the form of Śrī Upadeśāmṛta.

## History of Upadesamrita

The instructions given in this book are indispensable for practitioners (sādhakas) of the devotional path (bhakti).

Without following these instructions, entering the realm of pure devotion and especially following the intricate and elevated path of spontaneous devotion (rāgānuga bhakti) is not only difficult, but impossible.

We learn from the diary of Govinda dāsa, the personal servant of the prema-avatāra (incarnation of divine love), Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, that prior to returning to His eternal, unmanifest pastimes, Mahāprabhu remained constantly overwhelmed in a highly inflamed (sūddīpta) mood of divine separation (vipralambha).

## History of Upadesamrita

At that time Mahāprabhu's two intimate, eternal servitors, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda would try to pacify Him by singing verses that were relevant to His mood.

On one occasion Mahāprabhu was sitting with His devotees on the shore of the ocean engaged in hearing narrations concerning Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-kathā).

Seeing the dense grove of trees lining the shore of the blue ocean and the tall sand dunes, remembrance of Govardhana Hill and the Yamunā River with the many beautiful gardens and groves (kuñjas) situated on her banks suddenly sprang up inside Him.

## History of Upadesamrita

Then He began bitterly weeping in separation from Kṛṣṇa.

When after some time His excitement subsided and He became peaceful, He gave the assembled devotees some instructions in a soft and sweet voice. Those instructions comprise the verses of this Śrī Upadeśāmṛta.

From the very beginning it is compulsory for sādhakas desirous of entering the realm of bhakti to renounce activities that are unfavourable for progress in spiritual life.

## History of Upadesamrita

1-2

These include the urges of mind, speech, anger, tongue, stomach and genitals, as well as avoiding overeating, unnecessary endeavours, useless conversation, improper compliance with the rules and regulations of devotion, bad association, and either greed or the restlessness of the mind to adopt worthless opinions.

3

Simultaneously it is imperative to adopt those things that nourish one's bhakti, such as enthusiasm, determination, patience, the good behaviour associated with bhakti and the ideals for devotional life that have been established by pure devotees.

## History of Upadesamrita

4-6

After progressing somewhat, one should engage in the six kinds of devotee association, give appropriate respect to the three levels of Vaiṣṇavas and serve them accordingly.

7-8

Finally, while residing either physically or mentally in Vraja and following in the footsteps of devotees who possess deep love for Kṛṣṇa and who are adept at relishing the devotional mellows of Vraja (vraja-rasa), one should constantly engage his tongue and mind in chanting and remembering Śrī Kṛṣṇa's names (nāma), form (rūpa), qualities (guṇa) and pastimes (līlā).



## History of Upadesamrita

Just as Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the most dear to Kṛṣṇa, similarly Her pond (kuṇḍa) is also the most dear to Him.

9-11

Therefore practitioners of bhakti must certainly take shelter of the embodiment of the ultimate devotional ecstasy (mahābhāva), Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and Her pond, Śrī Rādhā-kunda. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu completely preserved this topmost essence of all instructions within the verses of Śrī Upadeśāmṛta.

# Understanding the Relevance of Bhatyaloka

Qualification for becoming a  
Jagat Guru???

Conditional urges  
↳ Urge ones → when pacified → goes away

|| NOI-1 ||

vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam  
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam  
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ  
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt

A sober person (**dhīraḥ**) who can tolerate (**yo viśaheta**) the urge to speak (**vāco vegam**), the mind's demands (**manasaḥ vegam**), the actions of anger (**krodha-vegam**) and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals (**jihvā-vegam udara-upastha-vegam**) is qualified to make disciples (**sah śiṣyāt**) all over the world (**sarvām api imām pṛthivīm**).

# Developing the Internal Wiring

a) Conscious choice of  
Lifestyle

Dant's

|| NOI-2 ||

atyāhārah prayāsaś ca  
prajalpo niyamāgrahah  
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyam ca  
ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati

Bhakti is destroyed by the following six kinds of faults (**ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati**): (1) eating too much or collecting more than necessary (**atyāhārah**), (2) endeavours that are opposed to bhakti (**prayāsaś ca**), (3) useless mundane talks (**prajalpo**), (4) failure to adopt essential regulations or fanatical adherence to regulations (**niyamāgrahah**), (5) association with persons who are opposed to bhakti (**jana-saṅgaś ca**) and (6) greed, or the restlessness of the mind to adopt worthless opinions (**laulyam ca**).

Do's

|| NOI-3 ||

utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt  
tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt  
saṅga-tyāgāt sato vṛtteḥ  
ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati

Progress in bhakti may be obtained by the following six practices (**ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati**): (1) enthusiasm to carry out the rules that enhance bhakti (**utsāhān**), (2) firm faith in the statements of śāstra and the guru, whose words are fully in line with śāstra (**niścayād**), (3) fortitude in the practice of bhakti, even in the midst of obstacles, or patience during the practice stage of bhakti, even when there is delay in attaining one's desired goal (**dhairyāt**), (4) following the limbs of bhakti such as hearing (śravaṇa) and chanting (kīrtana) and giving up one's material sense enjoyment for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (**tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt**), (5) giving up illicit connection with women, the association of those who are overly attached to women and the association of māyāvādīs, atheists and pseudo-religionists (**saṅga-tyāgāt**), and (6) adopting the good behaviour and character of pure devotees (**sato vṛtteḥ**).

# Developing the Internal Wiring

**b) Association – The Key**



|| NOI-4 ||

**dadāti pratigrhṇāti**  
**guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati**  
**bhukte bhojayate caiva**  
**ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam**

Offering pure devotees items in accordance with their requirements (**dadāti**), accepting prasāda or remnant items given by pure devotees (**pratigrhṇāti**), revealing to devotees one's confidential realisations concerning bhajana (**guhyam ākhyāti**), inquiring from them about their confidential realisations (**pṛcchati**), eating with great love the prasāda remnants given by devotees (**bhukte**) and lovingly feeding them prasāda (**bhojayate caiva**) – these are the six symptoms of loving association with devotees (**ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam**).

|| 6.1.17 ||

sadhrīcīno hy ayam loke  
panthāḥ kṣemo 'kuto-bhayaḥ  
suśīlāḥ sādhave yatra  
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ

The path followed by persons (**ayam loke panthāḥ**) who are friendly, virtuous (**suśīlāḥ sādhave**), and surrendered to Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ**) is certain (**sadhrīcīnah**), auspicious (**kṣemah**), and without fear of obstacles (**akuto-bhayaḥ**).

|| NOI-5 ||

kr̥ṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta  
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam  
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-  
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā

One should mentally honor the devotee (**taṁ manasādriyeta**) who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa (**kr̥ṣṇeti yasya giri**), one should offer humble obeisances (**praṇatibhih**) to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation [dīkṣā] (**dīkṣāsti cet**) and is engaged in worshiping the Deity (**ca bhajantam īsam**), and one should associate with (**īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā**) and faithfully serve (**śuśrūṣayā**) that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service (**ananyam bhajana-vijñam**) and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others (**anya- nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam**).

|| NOI-6 ||

dr̥ṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair  
na prākṛtatvam iha bhakta janasya paśyet  
gaṅgāmbhasām na khalu budbuda-phena-paṅkair  
brahma-dravatvam apagacchati nīra-dharmaiḥ

Devotees situated in this material world (**iha bhakta janasya**) should not be viewed with material vision (**na paśyet**); in other words one should not consider them to be ordinary conditioned souls (**prākṛtatvam dr̥ṣṭaiḥ**). The imperfections visible in their natures, such as birth in a low caste, harshness, lethargy and so forth (**svabhāva-janitair doṣaiḥ**), and the imperfections visible in their bodies, such as ugly features, disease, deformities and so on (**vapuṣaś ca doṣaiḥ**), are precisely like the appearance of bubbles, foam and mud in the Ganges (**gaṅgāmbhasām budbuda-phena-paṅkair**). Despite such apparent pollution in the water of the Ganges (**nīra-dharmaiḥ**), she retains her nature as liquified transcendence (**brahma-dravatvam na khalu apagacchati**). Similarly the self-realised Vaiṣṇavas always exist on the transcendental plane and one should not attribute material defects to them.

# Developing the Internal Wiring

c) Know When to expect  
What

|| NOI-7 ||

syāt kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyā-  
pittopatapta-rasanasya na rocikā nu  
kintv ādarād anudinam khalu saiva juṣṭā  
svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-hantrī

The holy name, character, pastimes and activities of Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi**) are all transcendently sweet like sugar candy (**sitā syāt**). Although the tongue of one afflicted by the jaundice of avidyā [ignorance] (**avidyā-pitta-upatapta-rasanasya**) cannot taste anything sweet (**na rocikā nu**), it is wonderful that simply by carefully (**kintv ādarād**) chanting these sweet names (**khalu saiva juṣṭā**) every day (**anudinam**), a natural relish awakens within his tongue (**svādvī bhavati**), and his disease is gradually destroyed at the root (**kramād tad-gada-mūla-hantrī**).

**What comes after Taste?**

## || NOI-8 ||

**tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-  
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya  
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī  
kālaṁ nayed akhilaṁ ity upadeśa-sāram**

The essence of all advice is that (**ity upadeśa-sāram**) one should utilize one's full time—twenty-four hours a day (**akhilaṁ kālaṁ nayed**)—in nicely chanting and remembering (**sukīrtana anu-smṛtyoḥ**) the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes (**tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi**), thereby gradually engaging (**krameṇa niyojya**) one's tongue and mind (**rasanā-manasī**). In this way one should reside in Vraja [Goloka Vṛndāvana dhāma] and serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of devotees (**tiṣṭhan vraje**). One should follow in the footsteps of the Lord's beloved devotees, who are deeply attached to His devotional service (**tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī**).



# Four Essential Elements of Raganuga Practice

**kṛṣṇam smaran janam cāsyā  
preṣṭham nija-samīhitam |  
tat-tat-kathā-rataś cāsau  
kuryād vāsam vraje sadā**

Remembering the Vṛndāvana form of Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇam smaran**) and His dear associates (**ca asyā preṣṭham janam**) who have inclinations for service similar to one's own (**nija-samīhitam**), absorbing oneself in hearing topics related to them (**tat-tat-kathā-ratah**), one should always live in Vraja (**kuryād vāsam vraje sadā**). (BRS)