

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the  
Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

## Verse-8

If there is absence of the association of devotees, the devotee is exalted in his mercy on:

(a) Remove wickedness from heart

(b) Give Premā

(c) Inspire within my heart the process of worshipping R & K.

yathā duṣṭatvaṁ me davayati śaṭhasyāpi kṛpayā  
yathā mahyaṁ premāmṛtam api dadāty ujjvalam asau  
yathā śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye prerayati mām  
tathā goṣṭhe kākvā giridharam iha tvam bhaja manah

Humility

Even though I am a cheater (śaṭhasya api), the Lord's mercy (yathā kṛpayā) can drive away (davayati) my inherent wicked nature (duṣṭatvaṁ me), give me (yathā mahyaṁ dadāty) the glowing (ujjvalam) nectar of divine love (premāmṛtam api), and inspire my heart (yathā prerayati mām) with the process to worship Śrī Gāndharvikā (śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye). Therefore (tathā), O mind (manah), with pleading words (kākvā), you should worship (tvam bhaja) Śrī Giridhārī (giridharam) here in Vṛndāvana (iha goṣṭhe).

# Verse-8

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Maharaj

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

This verse happens to be my favorite verse of Manah-śikṣā.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī looks back at what he discussed in verses 4–7—innumerable obstacles.

He says that his heart is full of lust. His mind is bathing in duplicity, which is like acidic donkey's urine.

He has so much desire for recognition, and needs the good association of a devotee who can remove it all.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

All the obstacles can be summarized with one word, duṣṭatvam or wickedness—this is meanness or pollution of the consciousness, according to the ācāryas.

The original spiritual consciousness or Kṛṣṇa consciousness is pure, but when this spiritual consciousness is covered over, it becomes polluted.

Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī has already discussed in previous verses two solutions for the wickedness of the heart: ① utter humility; ② the bhakti general.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Why is humility important?

A fruit needs a protective skin.

Without it, very quickly the flies come and infect it with germs.

If devotees do not have a protective peel of humility and want to show off, immediately their so-called devotion becomes corrupted.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Without protection, a good fruit is in danger of being contaminated.

After going through the obstacles honestly and realistically Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī discusses the solution of the shelter of the bhakti general.

We may wonder where we can find this association.

So here in verse 8, he offers the answer that we can just worship Śrī Giriraja Govardhana in such a way that he becomes pleased.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Girirāja Giridhārī is the greatest of all devotees and is Kṛṣṇa himself.

Let us turn to Girirāja Govardhana.

If we have any spiritual desire, Girirāja will fulfill it.

When we circumambulate Govardhana Hill, it is said that he follows us to see what we want, and he fulfills it.



## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī himself turned for shelter to the Girirāja śilā he received from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Govardhana worship is how we can enter the camp of Śrī Rādhā.

So, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī writes from his experience.

He turned to Giridhārī Kṛṣṇa, but I encourage you to turn to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī himself, in the same way that Śrīla Prabhupāda told us we can always contact him in his vāṇī, instructions.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

I found an old manuscript describing the mode of conduct of a renunciate in Vraja.

There it says that of all manifestations of wickedness, the worst of all is fault-finding.

So it gives seven prescriptions:

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

- 1/ Be always absorbed in your bhajana and sādhana.
- 2/ Speak only about sādhana and the Lord.
- 3/ Speak only about beneficial things.
- 4/ Walk on the road with your head lowered, palms joined and show respect to everyone.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

- 5 Never criticize others.
- 6 Know that everyone is superior to you.
- 7 If someone comes to you and criticizes someone else, say, “Oh, I have something urgent to do,” and leave the place immediately.

We know that other defects are somewhat correctible, but finding fault or Vaiṣṇava nindā erases everything. It uproots our bhakti-latā.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī must have had specific thoughts when he spoke of Śrī Govardhana.

He said, “Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, by offering me the govardhana-śilā offered me shelter at the Govardhana Hill, and by offering me the guṣṭhā mālā necklace, he offered me the shelter at the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.”

My dear devotees, we all have direct access to Girirāja, and we can pray to him to remove all wickedness from our hearts.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

He will then do something that will make our hair stand on end.

Another important point in this verse is that if we want to experience Kṛṣṇa with all his qualities, we can only do so by worshiping him through Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Just like we cannot get the nectar-honey directly from a flower, but only from the bees, so we cannot get the highest ujjala-rasa without entering the camp of Rādhā

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Turn to Girirāja and Girirāja will turn us to Rādhārāṇī.

In Rādhā's camp we will find our good fortune and the honey of what Kṛṣṇa consciousness is.

She is the bee-like, topmost devotee of Kṛṣṇa, who draws all of Kṛṣṇa's honey, as well as his divine qualities that will flood our hearts when we become (her servant).

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

So what is the process of becoming a servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī?

This is so sublime that it is a well-kept secret of our sampradāya.

It has to be kept confidential because we can make so many mistakes.

In my personal practice, I find we can go through Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu who is the combined form of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.



## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

The first step is forgetting all self-identification as “an enjoyer.”

Be humble, be realistic, but know what anyone can become, and yearn.

After more than 40 years of practice, what works for me is changing the heart by association—with a person, food, object, environment, and literature.

①      ②      ③      ④      ⑤

Associate with high things and your consciousness will become higher.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

In the Nectar of Instruction, verse 4, purport, Śrīla Prabhupāda says,  
“In Bhagavad-gītā (2.62) it is stated, saṅgāt saṁjāyate kāmāḥ: one’s  
desires and ambitions develop according to the company one keeps.”

It is often said that a man is known by his company, and if an  
ordinary man associates with devotees, he will certainly develop his  
dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Yes, dear devotees, you can change!

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaj

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that he is wicked, and dishonest, but can change with the association of Giridhārī.

Associate with affection not with the computer, which I call a modern mind without a conscience, but associate with affection with the proper things and they will transform you.

# Verse-8

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami

Maharaj

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Yathā duṣṭatvaṃ me davayati śaṭhasyāpi kṛpayā.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī explains how we can eradicate duṣṭatvam (wickedness).

He says that mercy will deliver me from my wicked nature.

It sometimes happens that when we are performing sādhana, it feels like we are just marking time, and there never seems an end to our anarthas.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Some things may seem to have already gone, yet here they are again.

This is because our perverted nature has actually always been here, due to our material body and mind which are influenced by the guṇas of material nature.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī calls this perverted nature duṣṭatvam.

Another word he uses is śaṭhasyāpi, meaning I am a cheater and hypocrite.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Naturally, in one sense, this mood of a struggling devotee is the reflection of the nature of bhakti because even when devotees develop prema, they say, “I am still a hypocrite.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu authors an amazing verse in Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā (2.45):

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

na prema-gandho 'sti darāpi me harau  
krandāmi saubhāgya-bharaṁ prakāśitum  
vaṁśī-vilāsy-ānana-lokanaṁ vinā  
bibharmi yat prāṇa-pataṅgakān vṛthā

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu continued, “My dear friends, I have not the slightest tinge of love of Godhead within my heart. When you see me crying in separation, I am just falsely exhibiting a demonstration of my great fortune. Indeed, not seeing the beautiful face of Kṛṣṇa playing his flute, I continue to live my life like an insect, without purpose.”



## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

In one sense this is the nature of prema—prema never knows it is within someone’s heart.

If people say, “I have prema,” flee from them because not only do they not have prema, they have no conscience.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, “I have not the slightest tinge. I am a cheater.”

Even on the highest levels of devotional service such a person feels like a cheater.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

One devotee, trembling and crying, asked Gaura Govinda Mahārāja if she would ever develop prema.

He looked at her and said, “You will, but you’ll never know that you have.”

This is the nature of love.

I’ve already mentioned that when wandering in the material world we cannot feel satisfied with anything material, so we look for spiritual love.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

But when we develop this love, we will be satisfied but not satiated.  
We will continue to feel spiritual thirst or spiritual insatiability.

In one sense, these words by Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī describe both the highest platform and the state of mind of a devotee still on the path.

It sometimes seems impossible to eradicate our perverted nature.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

It is true that as long as we have this material body and mind, our vices will emerge seemingly from nowhere.

Then we catch ourselves desiring to enjoy the material world again.

Cheaters want to enjoy like Kṛṣṇa, deeply within convinced that they are meant to enjoy.

This lust or desire to enjoy pervades everything.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

So, Lord Caitanya says, “I am śaṭha. And, even though I am a cheater, despite my complex nature, I’m hoping for your mercy.”

This famous verse from Caitanya-caritāmṛta describes a devotee as the one who in spite of everything hopes for Kṛṣṇa’s mercy, because he knows he is absolutely hopeless.

Sometimes we may feel desperate, thinking there is no hope for us.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

But at this point we remember, “Kṛṣṇa is merciful and his mercy is more than my hopelessness.”

Despite all of my hopelessness, his mercy excels.”

Therefore kṛṣṇa kṛpā karibena—drdha kari’ jāne, there is this confidence that Kṛṣṇa’s mercy will come.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī makes a very important point here in verse eight: yathā duṣṭatvaṁ me davayati śaṭhasyāpi kṛpayā: “Even if I am śaṭha, I will be able to be rid of it by your mercy.”

Moreover, he says, yathā mahyaṁ premāmṛtam api dadāty ujjvalam asau: “You’ll even give me prema-amṛtam, the nectar of prema, and not just prema but ujjvala-prema, which means the most elevated love for Kṛṣṇa.

Dadāty-api—you will give it to me. There is no getting away from it.”

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

He says, yathā śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye prerayati mām: “There’s a third thing you will give to me, and that is the opportunity to serve Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.”

He addresses Kṛṣṇa directly, saying, “You will give me these things: you’ll smash all of my wickedness, make my heart absolutely pure, and give me premāmṛta—ujjala-premāmṛta—nectar or immortality, which can give love for Kṛṣṇa.”

And you will give me the opportunity to serve Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.  
Yathā śrī-gāndharvā-bhajana-vidhaye prerayati mām.



## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

In the fourth line he clarifies when this will happen: tathā goṣṭhe  
kākvā giridharam iha tvaṁ bhaja manaḥ.

Literally, these words mean: tatha goṣṭhe: “It will happen if I am in  
Vr̥ndāvana” (goṣṭha means Vraja), kākvā giridharam iha: “if I am  
here.”

I will get those mercies if you, my mind, worship Giridhārī, the Lord  
who lifted Govardhana Hill here in Vr̥ndāvana.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

And how will you worship?

Kākvā means with one's heart burning, with deep emotion within one's heart.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī mentions the devotees he associated with: Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana Gosvāmī, Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu—all of them had just left the planet.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

In the previous verse, he said that all the problems will be solved if I serve these advanced devotees: prabhu-dayita-sāmantam atulam, the generals of the army of devotees.

But he is no longer able to associate with them, because they are no longer here.

In verse 8, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī tells us what we are supposed to do even if there is no chance of physically associating with an advanced devotee.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

He recalls the gift Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave to him—the Govardhana-śilā.

This tiny Govardhana-śilā is still in the Rādhā-Gokulānanda temple in Vṛndāvana.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu washed this śilā with his tears, leaving his thumbprint on it.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

That śilā, along with a guṣṭjā-mālā, a garland of small red and black berries, was brought from Vṛndāvana to Purī and given to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

He later gave that śilā to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta describes how Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī worshiped the śilā as Kṛṣṇa himself.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

He realized that the śilā would be his inspiration now that these great associates had departed.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī uses the word Giridhārī, and it is not without reason that he uses this name of Kṛṣṇa in the verse.

# Deity Worship

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja



It is important for us to understand that we always have a chance to receive Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Our spiritual master gives us permission to worship Deities, which is supposed to be done in a special mood.

We should realize that Deities are non-different from Kṛṣṇa himself and then we'll have kāvā within our hearts.



## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu himself relished the story of Sākṣī Gopāla.

When a young brāhmaṇa came and addressed Sākṣī Gopāla, who was then just called Gopāla, “Gopāla, Gopāla!”

You should come with me and bear witness!

The old brāhmaṇa made the promise before you that he would marry me to his daughter.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

He is your devotee; you should uphold his promise.

I don't care about marrying his daughter but you must come and bear witness to protect this old brahmaṇa."

Gopāla replied, "Have you ever seen a statue walking? They don't. I am a mūrti. I can't walk. What do you want from me?"

The young brāhmaṇa looked at him and said, "If you can talk, why can't you walk?"

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

He continued, Pratimā naha tumi—sākṣāt vrajendra-nandana.

“You are not a statue.” Pratimā means a statue or a picture.

“You are the son of Mahārāja Nanda himself, and can walk and talk.  
You can also run!”

This is a most important thing we have to understand: arcye viṣṇau  
śilā-dhīḥ.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

There is a verse in the Padma Purāṇa quoted in Padyāvalī by Rūpa Gosvāmī, which says that if one thinks that the arcā-vigraha on the altar is a stone, marble or bronze, or iron, then where does one live?

If one hasn't understood the real nature of the Deity, one lives in hell and will continue to live there.

This verse says that we need to understand that hellish consciousness means material consciousness, which deprives us of the opportunity to truly worship Kṛṣṇa or approach him.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī makes a very important point in the Bhakti-sandarbhā.

He says that people who truly worship Kṛṣṇa, who know what it is to worship Kṛṣṇa, do not see the difference between arcā and Kṛṣṇa himself.

This is where the difference between our philosophy and practically all the other spiritual philosophies lies.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Worshipping Deities is so valuable.

Wherever you go, you'll hear people decrying worshiping idols.

They think that Deity worship is idolatry.

But the common person does not understand that God is almighty and is capable of associating with us through any form.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

What to speak of other people, even we do not understand that God and his energy are almighty, and that he will personally associate with us through his Deity form if we are in the right state of consciousness.

This is a very important point in our philosophy because, after all, all the other philosophies are more or less contaminated by Māyāvāda.

There is no difference between Kṛṣṇa and a Deity installed according to pancarātra principles.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Jīva Gosvāmī himself says that the very moment a Deity is installed according to all the principles, Kṛṣṇa comes there in person.

Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī makes a similar point in Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā (17.131):



## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

'nāma', 'vigraha', 'svarūpa'—tina eka-rūpa  
tine 'bheda' nāhi,—tina 'cid-ānanda-rūpa'

Tina means three, nāma means name, and vigraha means form.

Svarūpa means Kṛṣṇa himself. They are the same. There is no  
difference.

Eka-rūpa means the same. The name is Kṛṣṇa himself. Vigraha is  
Kṛṣṇa himself.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

He further says: tīne 'bheda' nāhi,—'cid-ānanda-rūpa'; there is no difference at all because all these three are cid-ānanda-rūpa—they consist of eternity, knowledge and bliss.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is implying that sometimes we have no chance to associate with advanced devotees, but we always have a chance to associate with Deities.

We should just understand who this is on our altar.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī confirms this fact.

He states that worshiping a Deity is the way to get rid of all of our problems.

Sometimes we look for other ways to solve our problems.

He says we have two problems (Bhakti-sandarbhā, 284): kadarya-śīlānām and vikṣipta-cittānām.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Kadarya-śīlānām means bad character developed in previous lives.

In the material world we developed inevitable bad habits, because such is the nature of material life and the nature of material relations in this world.

We wonder what others will do to us if we don't have the ability to become angry, for example, and protect ourselves.

Therefore, Jīva Gosvāmī says: kadarya-śīlānām—we don't need anger to associate with Kṛṣṇa, because anger destroys this association.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Vikṣipta-cittānām is the flickering mind which cannot concentrate, cannot meditate or think long about anything.

It is a mind that always desires something.

Today it wants one thing, tomorrow another.

After fifteen minutes, it wants something else.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Vikṣipta-cittānām means that we always want to do something other than what we are doing.

If I am sitting, I want to walk. If I am walking, I want to lie down.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī says in Bhakti-sandarbhā that worshiping a Deity delivers people from those two things if they worship properly.

Worshipping a Deity keeps us within limits if we really understand that this is Kṛṣṇa himself.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

And this if is of great importance here, because if one thinks the Deity is a statue, it is clear that nothing will come out of the worship.

We invite Deities to our home and connect with Deities to remove our problems and vices as soon as possible.

It is said that if we worship a Deity, placing all of our thoughts towards his lotus feet, this Deity will come to us at the moment of death.

## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Not just some abstract Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa in this same form. He'll  
save us.

If we have realized that we are part of our Deity's entourage—we  
will remain in this retinue.

Everything will come to us due to correctly worshiping the Deity in  
the proper consciousness.

This topic surfaces again and again.



## Verse-8 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

At the beginning of Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī enumerates the three Deities he had visited before writing the book.

He categorically states that Madana-mohana is Kṛṣṇa himself.