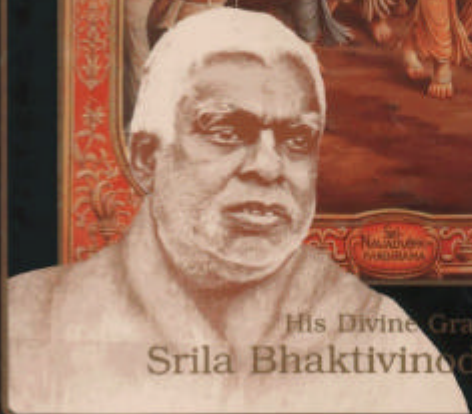
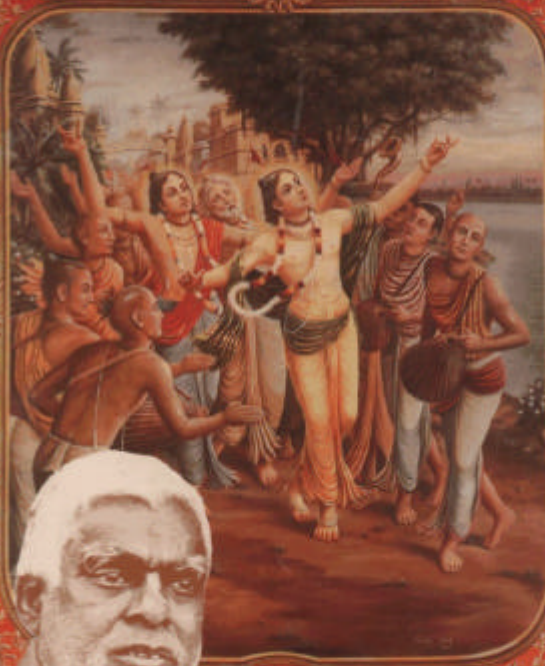


Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

His Life and Precepts



His Divine Grace
Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

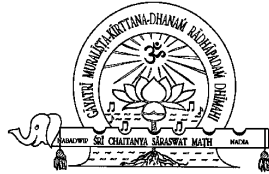
SRI CHAITANYA MAHAPRABHU
His Life and Precepts

by
Śrīla Bhaktivinod Ṭhākura

As Published by Gaudiya Press, 1987
Edited by Śrīpād B.K. Giri Mahārāj and Alwarnath Prabhu

The Complete and Unabridged PDF/Internet Edition
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Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

His Life and Precepts

This book was written in 1896 by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and sent to the library of McGill University in Canada, thus initiating the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in the Western World. To impress the reader about the value of this small book of infinite message we preferred to quote the same author from another of his great literary works, *The Bhagavata* :

"Subjects of philosophy and theology are like the peaks of large, towering, and inaccessible mountains standing in the midst of our planet inviting attention and investigation. Thinkers and men of deep speculation take their observations through the instruments of reason and consciousness. But they take different points when they carry on their work. These points are positions chalked out by the circumstances of their social and philosophical life, different as they are in the different parts of the world. Plato looked at the peak of the Spiritual question from the West and Vyasa made the observation from the East. So Confucius did it from further East, and Schlegel, Spinoza, Kant, and Goethe from further West. These observations were made at different times and by different means, but the conclusion is all the same in as much as the object of observation was one and the same. They

(continued on back flap)

all hunted after the Great Spirit, the unconditioned Soul of the Universe. They could not but get an insight into it. Their words and expressions are different, but their import is the same. They tried to find out the absolute religion and their labours were crowned with success, for God gives all that He has to His children if they want to have it. It requires a candid, generous, pious, and holy heart to feel the beauties of their conclusions.

"Party spirit—that great enemy of truth—will always baffle the attempt of the enquirer who tries to gather truth from the religious works of his nation, and will make him believe that absolute truth is nowhere except in his old religious book. What better example could be adduced than the fact that the great philosopher of Benares will find no truth in the universal brotherhood of man and the common fatherhood of God? The philosopher thinking in his own way of thought can never see the beauty of the Christian faith. The way in which Christ thought of his own Father was love absolute, and so long as the philosopher will not adopt that way of thinking, he will ever remain deprived of the absolute faith preached by the Western Saviour. In a similar manner, the Christian needs adopt the way of thought which the Vedantist pursued before he can love the conclusions of the philosopher. The critic, therefore, should have a comprehensive, good, generous, candid, impartial, and sympathetic soul."

Cover Flaps: Front and back

**Sri Chaitanya
Mahaprabhu**

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To
Our Guardians
The Vaishnava Acharyas

Completed
On the appearance day of Lord Nityananda
February 10, 1987.

*krishna-varnam tvishakrishnam
sangopangastra-parshadam
yajnaih sankirtana-prayair
yajanti he su-medhasah*

In the age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Krishna. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Krishna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions.

Srimad Bhagavatam (11.5.32)

All Glories to Sri Guru and Gauranga

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

His Life and Precepts

His Divine Grace

Srila Saccidananda
Bhaktivinoda Thakur

Edited by
Swami B.K.Giri
and
Alwarnath Das



Gaudiya Press
New York - San Francisco

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Preface

*Om ajnana-timirandhasya
jnananjana-salakaya
caksur unmilitam yena
tasmai sri guruve namah*

"I was born in the darkest of ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him."

*vancha-kalpatarubhyas ca
krpa-sindubhya eva ca
patitanam pavanebhyo
vaishnavebhyo namo namah.*

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the *Vaishnava* devotees of the Lord. They can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and they are full of compassion for the fallen souls."

After taking sannyasa in late 1981, I recalled a passage written by His Divine Grace Srila A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada—"the first duty of a sannyasi is to produce some literature." This phrase made a deep impression on me at the time, and I began to contemplate how I might best fulfill that instruction.

In the early part of 1982 I had the opportunity to assist in a small way with the publishing of the English translation of His Divine Grace Srila B.R. Sridharadeva Goswami Maharaja's book *Prappana Jivnamrtam*, a compilation of verses gathered from both the predecessor acharyas, and Srila Sridhara Maharaja's own original Sanskrit slokas. It was the first time I had been directly involved with the publishing of *Vaishnava* literature, and I became inspired to do more of this type of work. Unfortunately, I was doing a considerable amount of traveling at the time, without any fixed residence, and did not have the opportunity.

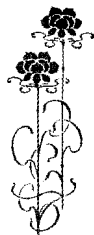
In 1983 I read an excerpt from Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur's lecture *The Bhagavat* in the forward of *The Search for Sri Krishna*. Although this booklet of Srila Bhaktivinoda was known to me I became very enthusiastic to go through it again and again. With each

reading, I could not refrain from thinking that this book should be printed and distributed widely. Lacking the means to accomplish this in its entirety, I produced a small pamphlet containing the first half of *The Bhagavat* .

Srila Prabhupada's instruction to produce transcendental literature continued to occupy my thoughts. The next time I visited Srila Sridhara Maharaja I sought his blessing to print *The Bhagavat* in an elaborate edition. At that time Srila Sridhara Maharaja told me that *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, His Life and Precepts* was "a more important work," and he encouraged me to print it rather than *The Bhagavat*. The significance of Bhaktivinoda Thakur's *Life and Precepts* has also been suggested in the Dedication of the *Teachings of Lord Chaitanya*. by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami:

"Dedicated to the sacred service of Srila Saccidanda Bhaktivinoda Thakura who initiated the teachings of Lord Chaitanya in the western world (McGill University, Canada) in 1896, the year of my birth." [*Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, His Life and Precepts* was installed in the University's library in this year.]

The year 1896, therefore, was marked by two auspicious events that changed the course of history.



Prior to this time the teachings of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had been confined within the boundries of India. In this year, however, not only did the first book expounding Mahaprabhu's religion arrive in the western world, but a personality was born that would spread these teachings to nearly every country on the globe.

While encouraged by Srila Sridhara Maharaja's words, constant change of events again inhibited me from printing the book, although I did begin preparation of the text. Sometime afterward I showed the work to Alwarnatha Prabhu who was eager to help with the editing. Although the book was originally published in English it had been nearly a century since the book was written and the language changed considerably in that time. We did not want to alter the contents, but felt that changes in spelling and grammar would make it more appealing to the modern reader. With this in mind we took up the work of editing.

As the work progressed it gradually drew the help of many other devotees that all made contributions essential to the completion of the project. It should be mentioned that I was especially inspired by the example of His Holiness Bhakti Sudhira Goswmi,

who had already published several important works.

Almost one year ago to date, His Holiness Tripurari Swami and myself joined forces under the name of the Gaudiya Vaishnava Society. With our combined resources and mutual inspiration to draw from, the prospect of publishing our own books became a reality and gradually the necessary facilities became available to us. In the past few months, His Holiness B.R. Sadhu Maharaja committed his talents for design and layout along with his selfless dedication to the project. His Holiness Jagat Guru Maharaja, and His Holiness Bhavananda Raya Swami volunteered their photographic talents to the project. This, combination of devotees with their dedication and varied skills not only made us feel secure in our ability to print this book but in forming an on-going publishing house, The Gaudiya Press. It is under the auspices of The Gaudiya Press that we are printing this book.

I am finally feeling some satisfaction in being able to present this book of His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur to the world. Although I am confident that Srila Prabhupada will be pleased with this endeavor, still I am left with the uneasy feeling that I will not truly be able to satisfy Srila Prabhupada's

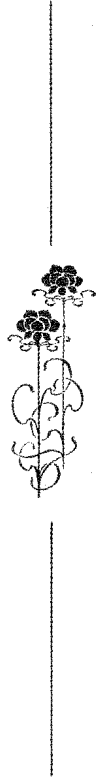


instruction to produce transcendental literature until I can become sufficiently fixed in the absolute plane that my own writings will approach the standard expected by him. I pray for his mercy and the mercy of the devotees of the Lord that I may one day be able to fulfill his expectations.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur writes in *The Bhagavata Speech* : "The student is to read the facts with a view to create, and not with the object of fruitless retention. Students, like satellites, should reflect whatever light they receive from authors and not imprison the facts and thoughts just as the Magistrates imprison the convicts in the jail! Thought is progressive. The author's thought must have progress in the reader in the shape of correction or development." While we do not pose ourselves as being capable of "correction or development" of the thoughts of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, we pray that he will bless our attempt to present his thoughts in a way that may be more suitable for the readers of the present day.

B.K. Giri

Swami B.K.Giri
February 9, 1987
San Francisco





Introduction

KEDAR NATHA DATTA who would later come to be known as Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, was born at Ula, a very prosperous village in the district of Nadia, on September 2, 1838 to an aristocratic family, the owners of Govindapur (the present site of Fort Williams in Calcutta). His childhood was spent in the home of his maternal grandfather. At the age of fourteen he began to study under one of the literary luminaries of the time Kashi Prasad Ghosh, the editor of



the *Hindu Intelligencer*. The paper was famous for its literary appeal and the editor attracted many writers eager to learn from him the correct use of the English language. Within a short time Kedar Natha was contributing articles to the *Intelligencer* and the *Literary Gazette*, another newspaper of the day. By the time he was eighteen he had composed two books of the *Poriad* which he intended to complete as twelve volumes. The first of these books can be found in the British Museum, of London.

During his stay with Kashi Prasad he became well known for his great talent at debate and often exchanged ideas on spiritual and literary subjects with such men as Devendra Nath Tagor and other eminent men of the day who found great value in his discussions.

In 1860 Kedar Natha published a pamphlet titled *The Maths of Orissa* after visiting all the major maths (temples) in the state of Orissa. He also made mention of a piece of land that had been handed down to him from his ancestors. "I have a small village (Chotimangalpur) in the country of Cuttack, of which I am the proprietor. In that village is a religious house, to which was granted, by my predecessors, a holding of rent-free land. The head of the in-

stitution gave up entirely entertaining such men as chanced to seek shelter on a rainy night. This came to my notice; and I administered a severe threat to the head of the house, warning him that his lands would be cruelly resumed if, in the future complaints of inhospitality were brought to my knowledge."

Although Kedar Natha began his life as a school teacher, by the year 1866 he had accepted a position with the government as the Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector at Chapra. In March 1868 he was appointed Deputy Magistrate at Dinajpur. It was in Dinajpur that Kedar Natha first came in contact with *Vaishnavism*, which had been prevalent under the patronage of Raya Saheb Kamala Lochana. This great Zamindar of Dinajpur, was a descendant of Ramananda Vasu, an ardent follower of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Having become acquainted with many of the Vaishnavas there, Kedar Natha secured a copy of the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* and a Bengali translation of the *Srimad Bhagavatam*.

After reading the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* for the first time, Kedar Natha formed a very high opinion of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and began to regard Him as God, and took to serious study of Mahaprabhu's teachings in association with the *Vaishnavas* of



Dinajpur. He made a comparative study of *Vaishnavism* with reference to other religions, by studying the literature of Brahmoism, Christianity, and Islam, but found the perfect consummation of his own thought in *Vaishnavism*. Now Kedar Natha became a full fledged *Vaishnava*. He became so much fixed in the principles found in the *Bhagavatam* that he delivered a powerful lecture on the subject in 1869 which attracted the attention of thousands and was later published as a small booklet (*The Bhagavat*).

He was transferred some years later to a town called Champaran. There a *brahma-daitya* (a type of ghost) inhabited a great banyan tree, while being worshiped by many degraded people. One day the father of a famous girl scholar came to Kedar Natha for alms, at which time Kedar Natha at once employed him in reading the *Bhagavatam* under the shade of the banyan tree, which was the abode of the ghost. After one month, the *Bhagavatam* was completed, at which point the tree crashed to the ground, causing the ghost's permanent disappearance. Everyone was thankful for this act except a few dishonest persons who were worshiping the ghost.

After living in Champaran for only a few months, Kedar Natha was transferred to Jagannatha Puri, ac-

accompanied by his family. He also brought with him his two favorite books—*Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita* and the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. He was happy to be posted in Puri where his object of worship, Sri Chaitanya had lived for many years. The government commissioner was very pleased to get him in his division, and asked him to watch the affairs of the temple of Jagannatha on behalf of the government. It was through Kedar Natha's exertions that many malpractices were checked and the time for offering foods to the Deity was regulated to its extreme punctuality.

Kedar Natha was especially entrusted to quell a rise against the government by a person named Bisikisena, who declared himself to be an incarnation of Maha-Vishnu. During the course of his investigation, Kedar Natha found him to be a hoax and a culprit and charged him with transgressing government injunctions.

After his trial the fellow was sentenced to imprisonment for a year and a half, but he died after a short time in jail. This man was possessed of unnatural powers, but as they were the outcome of non-spiritual practices, he had to submit to Kedar Natha. Bisikisena was held in dread by the common people.



Everyone warned Kedar Natha not to admonish him, even for the sake of justice, in view of the serious consequences that the yogi would inflict. Although Kedar Natha was not a man of ostentation and did not generally allow people to know his true qualities and spiritual strength, he easily cut down the demon-iac power of the imposter. With the fall of Bisikisena there rose an imposter named Balarama in another village, and there were also other so-called incarnations of God, but their plans were similarly frustrated.

Living in Jagannatha Puri Kedar Natha's devotion to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu grew very intense. He appointed a pandit named Gopinatha to assist him in his study of the *Bhagavatam* with its commentary by Sridhara Swami. Hariharadas and Markendeya Mahapatra who had studied the Nyaya and Vedanta in Navadwipa and Benares (two great centers of learning) began to study the *Bhagavatam* along with him.

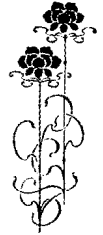
Having learned Sanskrit grammar and literature under the great Isvara Chandra Vidyasagara, Dwijendra Nath Tagore and others during his school days in Calcutta, Kedar Natha continued to study the language. Many of the *Vaishnava* literatures such as the *Srimad Bhagavatam* were originally composed in



Sanskrit text and his knowledge of the language allowed him access to those great works. After finishing the *Bhagavatam*, he went on to study the works of Jiva Goswami and Rupa Goswami which he obtained from the library of the Raja of Puri.

Now he had mastered the philosophy of *Vaishnavism* and completed a book of his own in Sanskrit titled *Datta Kaustubha*. He also began writing *Sri Krishna Samhita*, another book in Sanskrit, which later become famous. He wrote many other works during this period and began a class in which he taught the *Bhagavatam*. He stayed in Puri for five years in which time all the *Vaishnava* leaders became impressed with his learning and devotion to the precepts of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

From Puri he was transferred to different places in Bengal, and in 1878 he became stationed in the Narail in the District of Jessore. Here he became very popular as a *Vaishnava* Magistrate and many kirtan groups would come to entertain him with their songs. From here he published *Sri Krishna Samhita* in 1889, and it soon received praise through out India. Sir Reinhold Rest of the India Office in London expressed an opinion that seems to characterize the works of Kedar Natha: "By presenting Krishna's



character and His worship in a more sublime and transcendent light than has hitherto been the custom to regard Him in, you have rendered an essential service to your co-religionists."

While living in Narail, Kedar Natha was initiated by Sri Bipin Vihari Goswami, and he adopted all the *Vaishnava* practices in their strictest form. He now resolved to interest the educated people in the principles of *Gaudiya Vaishnavism* (*Vaishnavism* as it was taught by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu). With this in mind, he began publishing a Bengali monthly called *Sajjana Toshani*, (The Satisfaction of Pure Devotees) the first *Vaishnava* newspaper.

After staying for three years in Narail, he made a pilgrimage to various holy places. In Vrindavan he encountered a band of dacoits known as Kanjharas. These powerful bandits terrorized the roads surrounding the holy city, making it a practice to attack innocent pilgrims. Kedar Natha brought this news to the government and after many months of struggle extirpated the bandits from Vrindavana forever.

From this time on, he preached extensively in large gatherings, explaining all the precepts of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's *sankirtana* movement. In recognition of his vast learning and devotion the go-

swamis of Vrindavan conferred upon Kedar Natha the title Bhaktivinoda.

It was also in Vrindavan that he met Srila Jagannatha Das Babaji, the head of the *Gaudiya Vaishnavas*, who subsequently became the religious guide of Bhaktivinoda Thakur and helped him in his missionary activities. At this point Bhaktivinoda Thakur decided to take up the preaching of *Vaishnavism* in earnest, and founded a printing press known as the Vaishnava Depository.

When he was commanded by his God in a dream to render service to Sri Navadvipa Dhama, the birthplace of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Srila Bhaktivinoda applied for a transfer to Krishnagar, which is a short distance away from Navadvipa. In December of 1887 his transfer request was granted.

Srila Bhaktivinoda was very happy to move to Krishnagar, having gone with the hope of discovering the exact birth site of his beloved Diety, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. While living in Puri he had acquired two books that would help him in his archaeological investigation. One of the books was the *Bhaktiratnakara* of Narahari Chakravarti, and the other was a book authored by Paramananda Das.

One night while on the roof of his residence in



Navadwipa, during his deep meditation on the birth-place of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, he is said to have seen in a vision a luminous building towards the northeast.

The next morning he went to the vicinity of the place that had appeared to him. During his investigation he came to know of a place that was being adored by some of the local residents as the true birth site of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. They pointed out an extensive mound covered with Tulasi plants and informed him that this was the actual site of the house where Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had appeared. At last succeeding in his attempt he became extremely joyful. That same year Srila Bhaktivinoda composed and published his famous *Navadwipa Dhama Mahatmya* in glorification of every place within the circumference of Navadwipa.

In 1894 Thakur Bhaktivinoda established "Sri Navadwipa Dham Pracharini Sabha," with the ruling Prince of Tripura as its President. The purpose of the Sabha was to arrange for the proper maintenance of the temple and worship of the Deities there. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur was so devoted to this project that he was willing to go door to door himself, if necessary, to solicit contributions for the cause. The

Amrita Bazar Patrika noted the event with the following statement:

"Babu Kedar Natha Dutt, the distinguished Deputy Magistrate, who has just retired from the service, is one of the most active members. Indeed, Babu Kedar Natha Dutt has been deputed by the committee to raise subscription in Calcutta and elsewhere and is determined to go from house to house, if necessary, and beg a rupee from each Hindu gentleman for the noble purpose.

"If Babu Kedar Natha Dutt, therefore, really sticks to his resolution of going round with a bag in hand, we hope, no Hindu gentleman, whose house may be honoured by the presence of such a devout *bhakta* as Babu Kedar Natha, will send him away without contributing his mite, however humble it may be."

During his lifetime Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur wrote, edited and published over 100 books in Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Persian, and English. Some of his more prominent works include: *The Maths of Orissa*, *The Bhagavat* (Speech), *Sri Krishna Samhita*, *Chaitanya Shikshamrita*, *Navadwipdham Mahatmya*, *Sri Bhagavata Arka Marichimala*, and commentaries on the *Bhagavad Gita*, *Chai-*



tanyopanishad, Isho panishad, and Sri Chaitanya Charitamrta.

Prior to the time of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur principles of *Vaishnavism* were unknown outside of India. In 1896, however, Bhaktivinoda Thakur sent a copy of *Sri Gauranga Lila Smarana Mangala Stotram* to the West where it found its way into the library of McGill University in Canada. During the same years that Emerson and Thoreau were yearning for Vedic wisdom, the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of London* (of which Bhaktivinoda Thakur was a member) made the following remarks:

"Under the title of *Sri Gauranga Lila Smarana Mangala Stotram*, the well-known Vaishnava Sri Kedarnath Bhaktivinoda, M.R.A.S. has published a poem in Sanskrit on the life and teachings of Chaitanya. It is accompanied by a commentary, also in Sanskrit, in which the subject further elucidated is preceded by an introduction of sixty-three pages in English [*Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, His Life and Precepts*], in which the doctrines taught by Chaitanya are set out in somewhat full detail. This position and more especially as against Shankara and the Advaita Vedantists, is explained at length. The little volume will add to our knowledge of this remarkable

reformer, and we express our thanks to Bhaktivinoda for giving it to us in English and Sanskrit, rather than in Bengali, in which language it must necessarily have remained a closed book to European students of the religious life of India."

The work of preaching the holy name was also in full swing, and it spread fast into the distant corners of the globe. The *Sri Gauranga Lila Smarana Mangala Stotram*, with a preface in English containing the life and precepts of Sri Chaitanya, came out from Bhaktivinoda's pen soon after the discovery of Lord Chaitanya's birthplace and found its place in all the learned institutions of both hemispheres.

The more the names of Lord Chaitanya and Lord Krishna were preached, the merrier was Thakura Bhaktivinoda. He thereafter made annotations of *Sri Brahma Samhita* and *Sri Krishna Karnamrta* and gave to the world his immortal and precious works *Sri Hari Nama Cintamani* and *Bhajana Rahasya*. He also edited, with commentary, *Srimad Bhagavatarka Marici Mala*, which contains all the most prominent *slokas* of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* pertaining to the *Vaishnava* philosophy.

Bhaktivinoda Thakur's pen never tired, and it pro-



duced many other *Vaishnava* philosophical works. He would begin his writings very late at night, after completing his government work, and stay up until one or two o'clock in the morning composing songs and literatures. Most of his works appeared in the *Sajjana Toshani* magazine. He was equally engaged in writing and in preaching the holy name in many districts of Bengal. His personal appearances in villages had marvelous effects on the people. To maintain the center at Nadia he built a house at Sri Godruma-dwipa which is called Sri Svananda-sukhadakunja. Here in this abode the preaching of *hari nama* continued in full swing.

It was at the beginning of the twentieth century that he chose to live at Puri and build a house on the beachfront there. Many honest souls sought his blessings and readily obtained them. Though he was leading the life of a renounced soul, he could not avoid the men of all description who constantly visited him. All of them received oceans of spiritual training, instructions, and blessings. In 1910 he completely withdrew from the world and remained in a perfect state of *samadhi*, or full concentration on the eternal pastimes of the Lord. In 1914 he passed on to the blissful realm of Goloka on the day which is ob-

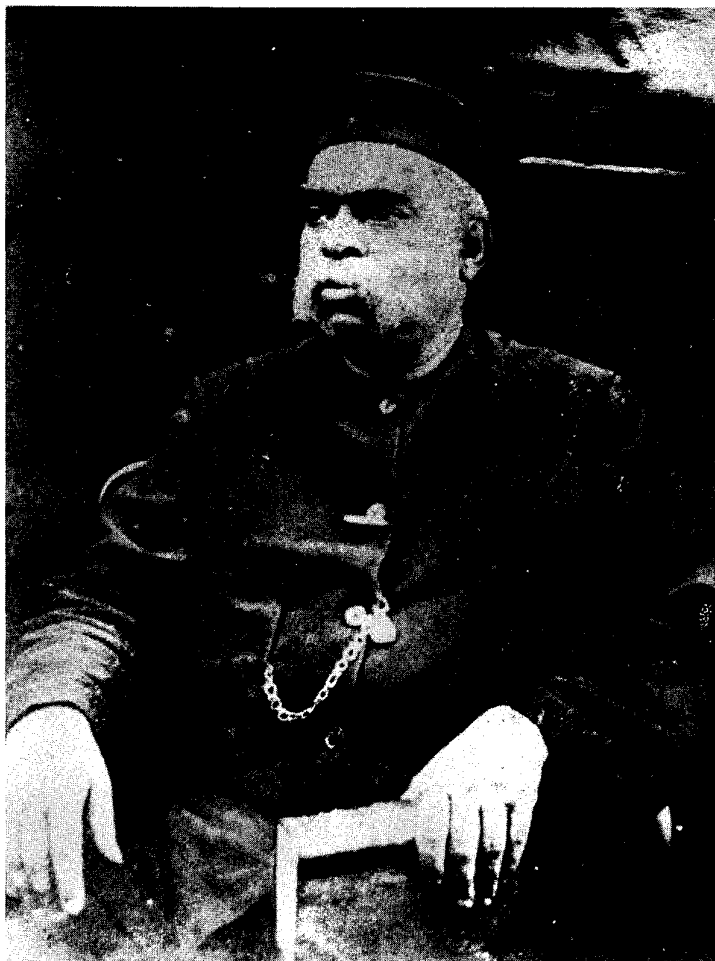
❧ Introduction ❧

served as the disappearance day of Sri Gadadhara.

Here we quote a stanza written on the *samadhi* of Haridasa Thakura which Srila Bhaktivinoda wrote sometime in 1871 to explain what influence a *Vaishnava* carries in this world even after his departure:

He reasons ill who tells that *Vaisnavas* die
When thou art living still in sound!
The *Vaisnavas* die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around!





Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur

In the year 1874 Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur published a philosophical book titled *Datta Kaustubha*. During the same period of time he composed the following poem known as *Sharagrahi Vaishnava*.

Alas for those who spend their days
In festive mirth and joy.
The dazzling, deadly, liquid forms
Their hearts fore'er employ.

The shining bottles charm their eyes
And draw their heart's embrace;
The slaves of wine can never rise
From what we call disgrace.

Was man intended to be
A brute in work and heart?
Should man, the Lord of all around,
From common sense depart?

Man's glory is in common sense
Dictating us the grace,
That man is made to live and love
The beauteous Heaven's embrace.



The flesh is not our own alas;
The mortal frame a chain;
The soul confined for former wrongs
Should try to rise again.

Why then this childish play in that
Which cannot be our own;
Which falls within a hundred years
As if a rose ablow.

Our life is but a rosy hue
To go ere long for naught;
The soul alone would last fore'er
With good or evil fraught.

How deep the thought of times to be!
How grave the aspect looks!
And wrapt in awe become, O, we,
When reading Nature's books.

Man's life to him a problem dark—
A screen both left and right;
No soul hath come to tell us what
Exists beyond our sight.



But then a voice, how deep and soft;
 Within ourselves is left;
Man! Man! Thou art immortal soul!
 Thee Death can never melt.

For Thee Thy Sire on High has kept
 A store of bliss above,
To end of time, thou art Oh! His—
 Who wants but purest love.

O Love! Thy power and spell benign
 Now melt my soul to God;
How can my earthly words describe
 That feeling soft and broad.

Enjoyment, sorrow—what but lots
 To which the flesh is heir?
The soul that sleeps alone concludes
 In them it hath a share.

And then, my friends, no more enjoy
 Nor weep for all below;
The women, wine, and flesh of beasts
 No love on thee bestow.



But thine to love thy brother man
And give thyself to God,
And God doth know your wages fair—
This fact is true and broad.

Forget the past that sleeps and ne'er
The future dream at all
But act in times that are with thee
And progress thee shall call.

But tell me not in reasoning cold,
The soul is made alone
By earth's mechanic lifeless rules
And to destruction prone.

My God who gave us life and all
Alone the soul can kill
Or give it all the joys above
His promise to fulfill.

So push thy onward march, O soul,
Against an evil deed
That stands with soldiers Hate and Lust—
A hero be indeed.



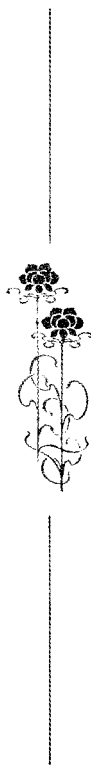
Maintain thy post in spirit world
As firmly as you can
Let never matter push thee down—
O stand heroic man.

O Sharagrahi Vaishnava soul,
Thou art an angel fair;
Lead, lead me on to Vrindaban
And spirit's power declare.

There rests my soul from matter free
Upon my Lover's arms—
Eternal peace and spirits love
Are all my chanting charms.

—Bhaktivinoda Thakura





❧ Part One ❧

*The Life of
Sri Chaitanya
Mahaprabhu*





THE object of this little book is to bring the holy life of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His precepts to the notice of the educated and religious people. Most of the books treating these subjects have hitherto been printed in the Bengali language. Hence, the life and precepts of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu have scarcely passed beyond the boundaries of Bengal. A book has, therefore, been printed in Sanskrit type for circulation all over India. Our educated brethren of Europe and America have taken, of late, to the study of the Sanskrit language, and it is our belief that this booklet will go to their hands in a very short time. This book contains 104 verses with copious commentaries. It makes a succinct mention of all the anecdotes of the life of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as related in the famous book *Chaitanya Charitamrta* by Krishna das Kaviraj Goswami. Verses 75 to 86 inclusive will give an outline of the precepts of that great personage, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. With a view to help our English readers in going through the book, we have here summarized in English the contents of the work.



His Appearance

Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was born in Mayapur in the town of Nadia, just after sunset on the evening of the 23rd Phalguna 1407 *Sakabda*, corresponding to February 18th, 1486 of the Christian Era. The moon was eclipsed at the time of His birth, and the people of Nadia were then engaged, as usual on such occasions, in bathing in the Bhagirathi (Ganges River) with loud cheers of "*haribol*." His father, Jagannath Misra, was a poor brahman (priest) of the Vedic order, and His mother Sachidevi was a woman of ideal character. Both descended from brahman families originally residing in Sylhet. Mahaprabhu was a beautiful child, and the ladies of the town came to present Him with gifts. His mother's father, Pandit Nilambar Chakravarti, a renowned astrologer, foretold that the child would be a great personage in time, and he therefore gave Him the name Vishvambhar. The ladies of the neighborhood called Him Gaurahari because of His golden complexion, and His mother called Him Nimai because there was a nim tree near the place where He was born. The boy was very beautiful and everyone loved to see Him every day. As He grew up He became a mischievous and frolicsome lad. After His fifth year He was admitted into a





Deities of the Lord's parents: Srimati Sacidevi and Jagannath Misra at His birthplace in Mayapura—Bengal.

school where He mastered the Bengali language in a very short time.

Most of Lord Chaitanya's contemporary biographers have mentioned certain anecdotes regarding Him, which are simple records of His early miracles. It is said that when He was an infant in His mother's arms, He wept continually, and when the neighboring ladies and His mother cried "*haribol*," He would

stop. Thus there was a continuation of the utterance of "haribol" in the house, foretelling the future mission of the Lord. It has also been stated that when His mother once gave Him sweetmeats to eat, He ate clay instead of the food. When His mother asked for the reason, He stated that as every sweetmeat was nothing but clay transformed, He could eat clay just as well. His mother, who was also the wife of a scholar, explained that every element in a particular state was adapted to a special use. Earth, while in the state of a jug, could be used as a water pot, but in the state of a brick such a use was not possible. Clay, therefore, in the form of sweetmeats was usable as food and not clay in its other states. The lad was convinced and admitted His foolishness in eating the clay and agreed to avoid the mistake in the future.

His Early Pastimes

Another miraculous act has been related. It is said that a brahman on pilgrimage became a guest in the house of Jagannath Misra. The brahman cooked his food and said his grace while meditating on Krishna. In the meantime the lad came and ate up the cooked rice. The brahman, astonished at the lad's act,

cooked again at the request of Jagannath Misra. The lad again ate up the cooked rice while the brahman was offering the rice to Krishna by meditation. The brahman was persuaded to cook for the third time. This time, all the residents of the house had fallen asleep and the lad showed Himself as Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and He blessed the traveller. The brahman was then lost in ecstasy at the appearance of the object of his worship.

It has also been stated that two thieves stole away the lad from His father's door with a view to purloin His jewels, and they gave Him sweetmeats on the way. The lad exercised His illusory energy however and directed the thieves back towards His own house. The thieves, for fear of detection, left the boy there and fled.

Another miraculous act has been described of the lad's demanding and getting from Hiranya and Jagadish all the offerings they had collected for worshipping Krishna on the day of *Ekadashi*. When only four years of age, He sat on rejected cooking pots which were considered unholy by His mother. He explained to His mother that there was no question of holiness or unholiness regarding earthen pots thrown away after the cooking was over. These



anecdotes relate to Lord Chaitanya's tender age up to the fifth year.

In His eighth year, He was admitted into the school of Ganganadas Pandit in Ganganagar close by the village of Mayapur. In two years, He became well read in Sanskrit grammar and rhetoric. His readings after that were of the nature of personal study in His own house where He had found many important books belonging to His father, who was a scholar himself. It appears that He read the *smriti* (scriptures) in His own study and the *nyaya* (logic) also, in competition with His friends, who were then studying under the celebrated pandit Raghunath Shiromani.

After His tenth year of age, Nimai became a learned scholar in grammar, rhetoric, the *smriti* and the *nyaya*. It was after this that His elder brother Vishvarupa left home and accepted the ashram (status) of a *sannyasi* (ascetic). Though a very young boy, Nimai consoled His parents saying that He would serve them with a view to please God. Just after that, His father left this world. His mother was exceedingly aggrieved and Lord Chaitanya, with His usual contented demeanor, consoled His widowed mother.

His Marriage And Social Life

It was at the age of fourteen or fifteen that Mahaprabhu was married to Lakshmipriya, the daughter of Ballabhacharya, also of Nadia. At this time Nimai Pandit was considered one of the best scholars of Nadia, which was the renowned seat of *nyaya* philosophy and Sanskrit learning. What to speak of the *smarta* (caste) pandits, the logicians were all afraid of confronting Him in literary discussion. Being a married man, He went to Eastern Bengal by the banks of the Padma for the acquirement of wealth. There He displayed His learning and obtained a good sum of money. It was at this time that He preached *Vaishnavism* at intervals. After teaching Tapan Mishra the principles of *Vaishnavism*, He ordered him to go and live in Benares. During His residence in East Bengal, His wife Lakshmipriya left this world from the effects of a snakebite. On returning home, He found His mother in a mourning state. He consoled her by speaking about the uncertainty of human affairs. It was at His mother's request that He married Vishnupriya, the daughter of Raj pandit Sanatan Mishra.

Nimai's comrades joined Him on His return from touring. He was now so renowned that He was





*Srimati Vishnupriya's Deity of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
still being worshiped at Navadwip—Bengal.*

considered to be the best pandit in Nadia. Keshava Mishra of Kashmir, who had called himself the Great Digvijai, came to Nadia with a view to debate with the pandits of that place. Afraid of the so-called conquering pandit, the professors of Nadia left their town on pretense of invitation. Keshava Mishra met Nimai at *Barokona Ghat* in Mayapur, and after a very short discussion he was defeated by the boy, and humiliation obliged him to decamp. Nimai Pandit was now the most important scholar of His time.

At the age of sixteen or seventeen, Lord Chaitanya travelled to Gaya with a host of His students and there took His spiritual initiation from Ishvara Puri, a *Vaishnava sannyasi* and a disciple of the renowned Madhavendra Puri. Upon His return to Nadia, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu began vigorous preaching of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu began vigorous preaching of the *Vaishnava* principles. His divine nature became so strongly represented that Adwaita Prabhu, Srivasa Pandit, and others who had accepted the *Vaishnava* faith prior to the birth of Lord Chaitanya, were astonished at the change in the young man. He was no longer simply a contending *naiyaika*, a wrangling *smarta*, or a criticizing rhetorician. He swooned upon hearing the name of Krishna and behaved as an





Mahaprabhu being worshiped by the members of the Pancha Tattva: Nityananda Prabhu, Adwaita Prabhu, Sri Gadadhara, and Srivasa Thakur.

inspired man under the influence of His divine sentiment. It has been described by Murari Gupta, an eyewitness, that He showed His divine powers in the house of Srivas Pandit in the presence of hundreds of His followers who were mostly well-read scholars. It was at this time that He opened a nocturnal school of *sankirtan* (congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names) in the compound of Srivas Pandit with His sincere followers. There He preached, sang, danced, and expressed all sorts of

spiritual emotions. Nityananda Prabhu (an incarnation of Balarama, the first expansion of Krishna), who was also a preacher of *Vaishnavism* and had just completed His travels all over India, joined Him by that time. In fact, a host of pandit preachers of *Vaishnavism*, all sincere at heart, came and joined Him from different parts of Bengal. Nadia now became the regular seat of a host of *Vaishnava acharyas* whose mission it was to spiritualize mankind with the highest influence of the *Vaishnava* creed.

Mahaprabhu's Mission

The first mandate that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu issued to Nityananda Prabhu and Haridas Thakur was to "Go friends, go through the streets of the town, meet every man at his door, and ask him to sing the name of Hari with devotion, and then come and report to Me every evening the result of your preaching." Thus ordered, the two preachers went on and soon met Jagai and Madhai, two most abominable characters. They insulted the preachers upon hearing Mahaprabhu's mandate, but were soon converted by the influence of *bhakti* (devotion to Krishna) inculcated by the Lord Himself. The people of Nadia were now surprised. They said, "Nimai



Pandit is not only a great genius, but He is certainly a missionary from God Almighty."

From this time to His twenty-third year, Mahaprabhu preached His principles not only in Nadia but in all important towns and villages around His city. In the houses of His followers He showed miracles, taught the esoteric principles of *bhakti*, and sang His *sankirtan* with other *bhaktas* (devotees of Krishna). His followers in the town of Nadia commenced to sing the holy name of Hari in the streets and market-places. This created a sensation and roused different feelings in different circles. The *bhaktas* were highly pleased. But the *smarta* brahmans became jealous of Nimai Pandit's success and complained to Chand Kazi, deprecating the character of Sri Chaitanya as un-Hindu. The *Kazi* came to Srivasa Pandit's house, broke a *mridanga* (drum) and declared that unless Mahaprabhu ceased making unorthodox noise about His religion, the *Kazi* would be obliged to enforce Mohammedanism on Him and His followers.

This was brought to Mahaprabhu's notice, at which time He ordered the townspeople to appear that evening, each with a torch in his hand. This they did, and Mahaprabhu marched out with His *sankirtan* party divided into fourteen groups. Upon

His arrival at the *Kazi's* house, He held a long conversation with him, and in the end communicated into his heart His *Vaishnava* influence by touching his body. The *Kazi* then wept and admitted that he had felt a deep spiritual influence which had cleared up his doubts, and produced in him a religious sentiment which gave him the highest ecstasy. The *Kazi* then joined the *sankirtan* party. The world was



Sri Hari Nama Sankirtan
(Congregational chanting of the holy names of God)

astonished at the spiritual power of the great Lord, and hundreds and hundreds of heretics converted and joined the banner of Mahaprabhu after this affair.

It was after this that some of the jealous and low-minded brahmans of Kuliya picked a quarrel with Mahaprabhu and collected a party to oppose Him.

Taking Sannyasa

Mahaprabhu was naturally a soft-hearted person, though strong in His principles. He declared that party spirit and sectarianism were the two great enemies of progress, and as long as He continued to be an inhabitant of Nadia belonging to a certain family, His mission would not meet with complete success. He then resolved to become a citizen of the world by cutting off His connection with a particular family, and with this resolution, He took *sannyasa* at Katwa under the guidance of Keshava Bharati of that town, in His twenty-fourth year. His mother and wife wept bitterly for His separation, but though soft in heart, Mahaprabhu was a strong person in principle. He left home to give the unlimited spiritual world of Krishna to man in general.

After His *sannyasa*, He was induced to visit the house of Adwaita Prabhu in Shantipur. Sri Adwaita

managed to invite all His friends and admirers from Nadia and brought Sachidevi to see her son. Both pleasure and pain invaded her heart when she saw her son in the attire of a *sannyasi*. As a *sannyasi*, Lord Chaitanya wore nothing but a *kaupin* (loin cloth), and a *bahirbas* (outer covering). His head was without hair, and His hands bore a *danda* (staff) and a *kamandalu* (ascetic's water pot). The holy son fell at the feet of His beloved mother and said, "Mother! This body is yours, and I must obey your orders. Permit Me to go to Vrindavan for My spiritual attainments." Mother Sachi, in consultation with Adwaita Prabhu and others, asked her son to reside in Jagannatha Puri, so that she might obtain information about Him now and then. Mahaprabhu agreed to that proposition, and in a few days He left Shantipur for Orissa.

His biographers have described the journey of Sri Krishna Chaitanya (the name He received after taking *sannyasa*) from Shantipur to Puri in great detail. He travelled along the side of the Bhagirathi as far as Chatrabhog, situated now in Thana Mathurapur, Diamond Harbour, 24 Parganas. There He took a boat and went as far as Prayag Ghat in the Midnapur District. Then He walked through Balasore and



Cuttack to Puri, seeing the temple of Bhubaneswar on His way.

Revealing The Ultimate Truth

Upon His arrival at Puri, He saw Lord Jagannatha in the temple and visited Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya at his request. Sarvabhauma was a great pandit of the day. His readings knew no bounds. He was the best *naiyaika* (logician) of his time, and was known as the most erudite scholar in the *Vedanta* philosophy of the school of Shankaracharya. He was born in Nadia (Vidyanagar) and taught innumerable pupils the *nyaya* philosophy in his school there. He had gone to reside in Puri some time before the birth of Nimai Pandit.

His brother-in-law, Gopinath Misra, introduced the new *sannyasi* to Sarvabhauma, who was astonished at His personal beauty, and feared that it would be difficult for the young man to maintain His *sannyasa* vows for the duration of His life. Gopinath, who had known Mahaprabhu from Nadia, had great reverence for Him, and stated that the *sannyasi* was not a common human being. On this point Gopinath and Sarvabhauma had a heated discussion. Sarvabhauma then requested Mahaprabhu to hear his

recitation of the *Vedanta Sutras*, to which He tacitly submitted.

Lord Chaitanya heard with silence what the great Sarvabhauma gravely spoke for seven days, at the end of which the Bhattacharya said, "Krishna Chaitanya! I think You do not understand the *Vedanta*, as You have not said anything after hearing my recitation and explanations." The reply of Lord Chaitanya was that He understood the *sutras* very well, but He could not make out what Shankaracharya meant by his commentaries. Astonished at this, Sarvabhauma said, "How is it that You understand the meanings of the *sutras*, yet You do not understand the commentaries which explain the *sutras*? Very well; if You understand the *sutras*, please let me have Your interpretations."



Mahaprabhu thereon explained all the *sutras* His own way, without touching the pantheistic commentary of Shankara. With His keen understanding, Sarvabhauma saw the truth, beauty, and harmony of the explanations given by Lord Chaitanya, and he was obliged to admit that it was the first time he had found anyone who could explain the *Brahma Sutras* in such a simple manner. He admitted also that he felt the commentaries of Shankara never gave such

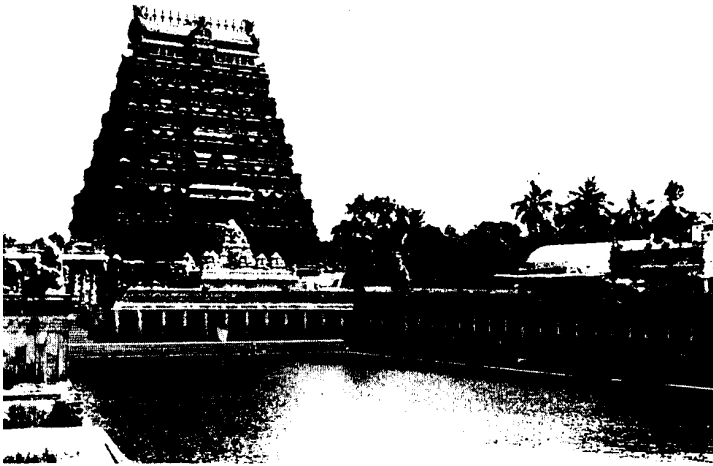
natural explanations of the Vedanta *Sutras* as he had obtained from Mahaprabhu. He then submitted himself as Mahaprabhu's advocate and follower. In a few days, Sarvabhauma became one of the best *Vaishnavas* of the time. When news of this spread, all of Orissa sang the praise of Sri Krishna Chaitanya, and hundreds and hundreds of people came to Him and became His followers.

Some time later, Mahaprabhu visited Southern India, accompanied on His journey by one brahman named Krishna Das. His biographers have given us the details of the journey. He first went to Kurmakshetra, where He performed a miracle by curing a leper named Vasudeva. From there, He met with Ramananda Rai, the governor of Vidyanagar, on the banks of the Godavari, and had a philosophical conversation with him on the subject of *prema bhakti*. He performed another miracle by touching the seven *Tal* trees and making them immediately disappear. It was through these trees that Lord Sri Ramachandra had shot His arrow and killed the great king Vali. Mahaprabhu preached *Vaishnavism* and *nama sankirtan* throughout the entire journey.

At Rangakshetra, He stayed for four months in the house of Vyenkata Bhatta during the rainy season.

There He converted the whole family of Vyenkata from Ramanuja *Vaishnavas* into Krishna *bhaktas*, along with the son of Vyenkata, a boy of ten years named Gopal, who afterwards came to Vrindavan and became one of the six Goswamis or prophets serving under their leader Sri Krishna Chaitanya. Trained up in Sanskrit by his uncle Prabodhananda Saraswati, Gopal Bhatta wrote several books on *Vaishnavism*.

Lord Chaitanya visited numerous places in South India as far as Cape Comorin, and returned to Puri



The Rangakshetra temple—One of the temples that Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu visited on His tour of South India.

in two years by Panderpur on the Bhima. In this latter place He spiritualized Tukaram, who from that time became a religious preacher himself. (This fact has been admitted in the *abhangas* of Tukaram which have been collected in a volume by Mr. Satyendra Nath Tagore of the Bombay Civil Service.) Also along His journey He had discussions with Buddhists, Jains, and *Mayavadis* in several places, and converted His opponents to *Vaishnavism*. Upon His return to Puri, King Prataparudra and several pandit brahmans joined under the banner of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

His Topmost Assistants

In His twenty-eighth year, Mahaprabhu went to Bengal as far as Gauda in Maldah. There He picked up two great persons named Rupa and Sanatana. Though descended from the lineage of the Karnatic brahmans, these two brothers were considered Muslims due to their continual association with Hussain Shah, the emperor of Gauda. Their names had been changed by the emperor into Dabir Khas and Sakar Mallik, and their master loved them dearly as they were both learned in Persian, Arabic, and Sanskrit, and were loyal servants of the state. The two

gentlemen had found no way to return to Hinduism and had written to Mahaprabhu for spiritual help while He was at Puri. Mahaprabhu had written in reply that He would come to them and extricate them from their spiritual difficulties. Now that He had come to Gauda, both the brothers appeared before Him with their long-standing prayer. Mahaprabhu ordered them to go to Vrindavan and meet Him there.

Lord Chaitanya returned to Puri through Shantipur where He again met His dear mother. After a short stay at Puri, He left for Vrindavan. This time He was accompanied by one devotee named Balabhadra Bhattacharya. He visited Vrindavan and came down to Prayag (Allahabad), converting a large number of Mohammedans into *Vaishnavas* by presenting arguments from the *Koran*. The descendants of those converts are still known as Pathan *Vaishnavas*. At Allahabad, Rupa Goswami met with Lord Chaitanya, who trained him up in spirituality in ten days and directed him to go to Vrindavan on missions. His first mission was to write theological works explaining scientifically pure *bhakti* and *prema*. The second mission was to revive the places where Sri Krishnachandra had, at the end of *Dvapara-yuga*, exhibited His spiritual *lila* (pastimes) for the benefit of the world.



After Rupa Goswami left Allahabad for Vrindavan, Mahaprabhu went to Benares. There He stayed at the house of Chandrashekar and accepted His daily *bhiksha* (alms) in the house of Tapan Misra. It was here that Sanatan Goswami joined Him and took



The six Goswamis of Vrindavan: Sri Rupa, Sri Sanatan, Sri Raghunath Das, Sri Jiva, Sri Gopal Bhatta, and Sri Raghunath Bhatta.

instruction in spiritual matters for two months. The biographers, especially Krishnadas Kaviraj, have given us the details of Lord Chaitanya's teachings to Rupa and Sanatan. Krishnadas Kaviraja was not a contemporary writer, but he gathered his information

from the Goswamis themselves, who were the direct disciples of Mahaprabhu. Jiva Goswami, who was the nephew of Sanatan and Rupa, and who has left us his invaluable work the *Sat-sandarbha*, has philosophized on the precepts of his great leader. We have gathered and summarized the precepts of Sri Chaitanya from the books of those great writers.

While at Benares, Lord Chaitanya had an interview with the learned *sannyasis* of that town in the house of a Maharastrian brahman who had invited all the *sannyasis* for a discussion. At this interview, Mahaprabhu exhibited His spiritual effulgence, which attracted all the *sannyasis* to Him. Then a reciprocal conversation ensued. The *sannyasis* were headed by their most learned leader, Prakashananda Saraswati. After a short controversy, they submitted to Lord Chaitanya and admitted that they had been misled by the commentaries of Shankaracharya. It was impossible even for learned scholars to oppose Lord Chaitanya, as there was something special in Him which touched their hearts and made them weep for their spiritual improvement. The *sannyasis* of Benares soon fell at the feet of Lord Chaitanya and asked for His *kripa* (mercy). Lord Chaitanya then preached pure *bhakti* and instilled into their hearts



spiritual love for Krishna, which obliged them to give up sectarian feelings. On this wonderful conversion of the *sannyasis*, the whole of Benares became *Vaishnavas*, and they all performed *sankirtan* with their new Lord.

After sending Sanatan to Vrindavan, Mahaprabhu again went to Puri, traveling through the jungle with His comrade Balabhadra. Balabhadra reported that Mahaprabhu had exhibited many miracles on His way to Puri, such as making tigers and elephants dance upon hearing the name of Krishna.

From His thirty-first year, Mahaprabhu continually lived in Puri at the house of Kasi Misra, until His disappearance in His forty-eighth year at the time of *sankirtan* in the temple of Tota Gopinath. During these eighteen years, His life was one of settled love and devotion. He was surrounded by numerous followers, all of whom were of the highest order of *Vaishnavas*, distinguished from the common people by their character and learning, firm religious principles, and spiritual love for Radha and Krishna.

Svarupa Damodar, who had been known by the name of Purushottamacharya while Mahaprabhu was in Nadia, joined Him from Benares and engaged in His service as His secretary. No production of any

poet or philosopher could be laid before Mahaprabhu unless Svarupa Damodar had acknowledged it as pure and useful. Ramananda Rai was the second of His most intimate confidants. Both he and Svarupa Damodar sang while Mahaprabhu expressed His sentiments on a certain point of worship. Paramananda Puri was His minister of religion.

Mahaprabhu slept little. His sentiments carried Him further and further into the firmament of spirituality every day and night, and all His admirers and followers observed Him throughout. He worshipped, communicated with His missionaries at Vrindavan, and conversed with those religious men who had newly come to visit Him. He sang and danced, taking no care of Himself, and often lost Himself in religious beatitude. All who came to Him saw Him as the all-beautiful God appearing in the material world for the benefit of mankind. He lovingly remembered His mother all along, and sent her *mahaprasad* (food offered to the Lord) now and then with those who went to Nadia. Since He was most amiable in nature, humility was personified in Him, and His sweet appearance brought joy to all who came in contact with Him.

Lord Chaitanya appointed Nityananda Prabhu as



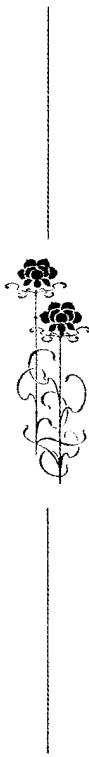
the missionary in charge of Bengal. He dispatched six disciples (the Goswamis) to Vrindavan to preach in the upcountry. He punished all of His disciples who deviated from a holy life. This He markedly did in the case of Chota (junior) Haridas. He never failed to give proper instructions in life to those who solicited them. This was seen in His teachings to Raghunath Das Goswami. His treatment of Haridas (senior) showed how He loved godly men and how He defied caste distinction in the face of spiritual brotherhood.



❧ Part Two ❧

The Precepts
of
Sri Chaitanya
Mahaprabhu





LORD Chaitanya teaches us first that the rational attributes of men are not capable of approaching the divine sphere of spirit. He considers reason to be quite incompetent in such a matter. However, He considers that the religious sentiment in man, even in a very small quantity, does have the power to comprehend spirit. Inspiration alone can give light to spiritual matters. Inspiration coming down from the higher realm through purified and blessed souls has been exhibited in the form of the *Vedas*. The *Vedas*, together with their explanatory notes, the Puranas, are, therefore, the only evidence in matters of spirit, and are eternal in nature. Thus, *Vedic* truths should be accepted as the only truth in higher matters. Reason, while sincerely helping the inspired truth, may be accepted as auxiliary evidence. According to Lord Chaitanya, the *Vedas* teach us nine principal doctrines:

1. Hari (the Almighty) is one without a second.
2. He is always vested with infinite power.
3. He is an ocean of *rasa* (sweetness).
4. The soul is His *vibhinnangsha* or separated part.
5. Certain souls are engrossed by *prakriti* or His



illusory energy.

6. Certain souls are released from the grasp of *prakriti*.
7. All spiritual and material phenomena are *achintya-bhedabheda-prakash* of Hari, the Almighty.
8. *Bakti* is the only means of attaining the final objective of spiritual existence.
9. Krishna *prema* is alone the final object of spiritual existence.

1. Hari, The Almighty One

In *Vedic* theology, the creative principle of the Deity is personified in Brahma, and the destructive principle is Shiva. Indra is the head of some of the lower elements of administration. Hence, they are not the Almighty Himself, but are different representations of different attributes of the Almighty. They have obtained their powers from an original fountainhead. Thus, they are subordinate beings in the service of Hari. Then again there are three distinct philosophical ideas of the Deity, i.e., (1) the idea of the all-pervading *Brahman* of the pantheistic school, (2) the idea of a universal soul (*Paramatma*) of the *yoga* school, and (3) the idea of a personal God

(*Bhagavan*) with all His majesty, might, glory, beauty, wisdom, and supremacy combined in His personality. The idea of *Brahman* and *Paramatma* are, therefore, included in the idea of *Bhagavan*. Thus, *Bhagavan* is Hari, the Supreme Being.

Human ideas are either mental or spiritual. The mental idea is defective, as it has its relation to the created principle of matter. The spiritual idea is certainly the nearest approach to the Supreme Being. Then again, the spiritual idea of *Bhagavan* is of two kinds. In one kind, the person is overpowered by His majesty, and in the other, His personal beauty over powers all His majesty. The first idea is represented in the great Narayan of *Vaikuntha*, who is the Lord of lords and God of gods. The second idea is represented in the all-beautiful Krishna with Radhika, who is the representative of His *hladini* or superior ecstatic energy.

Krishna appears as a man amongst men, yet is generally accepted as God above gods. Krishna attracts, loves, and produces ecstasy in all souls. His qualities and personal paraphernalia are all purely spiritual, and have no relation to the material world. The material senses of man cannot approach Him. It is the spirit in man which can see Him directly and





Deities of the all-beautiful Sri Krishna and Srimati Radharani.

communicate with Him. The soul fettered in matter has, from its own degradation, lost its right to see Krishna and His spiritual *lila* in the spiritual world, but Krishna may, out of His own supreme power and prerogative, appear with all His Vrindavan *lila* before the eyes of all men. The rational man can hardly conceive of or believe in Krishna and His *lila*, but as a man's spiritual vision improves, he sees

Krishna and loves Him with all his heart. This subject can hardly be explained fully and exhaustively. We therefore leave this point to our readers with these words: "Give up the shackles of material life slowly. Cultivate your spiritual consciousness internally. Give up prejudices which you have acquired from the so-called rational thinkers who deny the existence of spirit. Be humble and learn to respect those who work towards spiritual attainments. Do this with your heart, mind, and strength in the company of *Vaishnavas* alone, and you will see Krishna in no time. Krishna is not an imaginary being, nor have you a right to think that He is a material phenomenon fancied to be the Supreme Being by fools. Krishna is not understood by the process of distinguishing the subjective from the objective, nor is He to be accepted as an imposition on the people set up by self-interested men. Krishna is eternal, spiritually true, reflected on the human soul relieved of all attachment to dull matter, and is the subject of love which proceeds from the soul. Accept Him as such, and you will see Him with your soul's eyes.

"Words fail to describe the Transcendental Being. The highest, best, and most spiritual ideal of the Divinity is to be found in Krishna. To bring arguments



against Him is simply to deceive one's self, and deprive one's self of the blessings that God has kept in store for man. Hence, all descriptions of His name, form, attributes, and *lila* should be accepted spiritually, giving up the material conceptions which words must necessarily convey."

2. Hari Has Infinite Powers

Infinite powers mean powers which know no bounds either in space or in time. As God's powers alone created space and time, His powers are identical to Himself. In material life, there is a difference between a person and his powers, between a thing and its attributes, its name, its form, and its activities; but it is a spiritual truth that in spirit, a person is identical with his name, form, attributes, and activities. This truth cannot be subjected to dry reason which deals with gross matter alone. Krishna is the supreme will in Himself, and He exercises His supreme power at His pleasure, which submits to no law, because all law has proceeded from His will and power.

Power is known by its exercise. In this world we have experience of only three of the attributes of God's power. We see the material phenomena and

we understand that His power has the attribute to create matter. This attribute is known in the *Vedas* as *maya-shakti*. We see a man and we understand that the supreme power has the attribute to produce limited and imperfect souls. The *shastras* (scriptures) call that attribute *jiva-shakti*. We conceive of one who is



Indian painting depicting Lord Sri Krishna's pastime of lifting Govardhan Hill with His little finger.

spiritual and supreme in His realm of eternal spirits; thus, we understand that His power has an attribute to exhibit perfectly spiritual existences.

The *Vedas* call that attribute by the name of *atma-shakti* or *chit-shakti*. All these attributes together

form one supreme power which the *Vedas* call *para-shakti*. In fact, power (*shakti*) is not distinguishable from the personality of that Supreme Being. Still, the powers are separately exhibited in their separate actions. This is styled *achintya-bhedabheda-prakash* or inconceivable, simultaneous existence of distinction and non-distinction. Hari, being the supreme will above law, exercises His infinite powers while He Himself remains unaffected. This is not understood by reason, but felt in the soul as an intuitive truth.

3. He Is An Ocean Of Sweetness

Rasa has been defined as that ecstatic principle which comprehends *sthayi-bhava*, *vibhava*, *anubhava*, *satvik*, and *sanchari*. *Vibhava* is divided into *alambana* and *uddipana*. *Alambana* is subdivided into *vishaya* and *ashraya*. *Ashraya* is that person who has in himself the principle of *sthayi-bhava*, and *vishaya* is that person to whom the *sthayi-bhava* directs itself. *Sthayi-bhava* has been explained to be *rati* or the tendency of the pure spiritual heart. By a connection of *ashraya* and *vishaya* the *sthayi-bhava* arrives at its stage of action. When it obtains its active stage, certain signs are exhibited in the person which are called the *anubhavas*. These are thirteen in number. Eight

other *bhavas* exhibited in the body are known as *satvik-bhavas* such as tears, shivering, etc. Thirty-three other *bhavas*, such as *harsha*, *vishad* etc. have been shown to be *sanchari-bhavas*. These combined in the soul form the *rasa*.

This process of exhibition of *rasa* relates to the exhibition of *rasa* in the man enthralled by matter. But *rasa* itself is an eternal principle identified with the Supreme, Hari. Hari is the ocean of *rasa*, and in the human soul only a drop of the ocean could be conceived. *Rasa* naturally is spiritual, but in a man subjected to *maya*, the progenitor of matter, it has been identified in a perverted state with the sensual pleasure of man in connection with material objects. In this condition, the soul loses itself in the mind, and the mind acting through the senses enjoys the perverted reflection of *rasa* in the five different kinds of objects of the five senses. This is the soul's going abroad, with *avidya* or ignorance of the spiritual self. When the soul looks inward, it obtains its spiritual *rasa*, and the perverted *rasa* wanes off in proportion to the development of the spiritual *rasa*.

In spiritual *rasa*, the souls—with each other and with the all-beautiful Lord—have their unfettered action in Vrindavan, rising above material time and



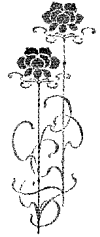
space. Hari, with His infinite supreme free will, has eternal ecstasy in His spiritual power or *chit-shakti*. The *samvit* attribute of *chit-shakti* (spiritual wisdom) produces all *bhavas*, relations, and affections. The *sandhini* attribute of *chit-shakti* produces all existence (other than the free will), including the *dhamas* (abodes), individualities, and other substances in connection with the action of the spiritual *rasa*. All these exhibitions are from *chit-shakti* or the spiritual power.

The *mayik* or material creation, including time, space, and gross objects, has no place in *chit-jagat* or the spiritual world, which is the same as Vrindavan. *Maya-shakti* is a perverted reflection of the *chit-shakti*. Hence, the qualities in the *mayik-jagat* (material world) have semblance with the qualities in the *chit-jagat* (spiritual universe), but are not substantially the same. The *chit-jagat* is the model of the *mayik-jagat*, but they are not identical. We must guard ourselves against the idea that man has imagined *chit-jagat* from an experience of the *mayik-jagat*. This idea is pantheistic, and it may also be styled atheistic. Reason not spiritualized has a tendency to create such a doubt, but one who has a wish to enjoy spiritual love must give it up as misleading. The eter-

nal *rasa* of Krishna exists spiritually in *chit-jagat*. To us who are in the relative world, there is a screen which intervenes between our eyes and the great spiritual scene of Krishna lila. When by the grace of Krishna that screen is drawn up, we have the privilege to see it, and again when it pleases the Almighty to drop the screen, the great Vrindavan *lila* disappears. "Taste the subject, and your conviction will be the same as mine. Brethren, do not give up such an important subject without liberal examination!"

4. The Soul Is His Separated Part

By soul, the *Vedic* literatures refer to all sorts of souls, whether animal, human, or celestial. It must be understood that Mahaprabhu taught the very liberal principle of transmigration (reincarnation) of the soul. Although certain readers may reject this idea on the grounds that certain forms of faith do not support this theory, it is not proper to reject a theory because it differs with the dogmas of certain sectarian creeds. Indeed, it is a matter which reason cannot dare to meddle with. Candidly examining, we cannot find any strong reason to disbelieve the theory of transmigration. Rather, our unprejudiced mind is inclined to accept it.

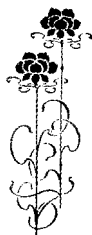


The belief that the human soul has only one trial in life is evidently dogmatic, unjust, and contrary to the belief that God is all good. When our spiritual sentiment supports the *Vedic* conclusions, which have taught us the facts about continual existence of the soul in different stages of creation, we must give up the idea of disbelieving in the principle of transmigration of the soul. However educated and scientific a man may be, he is always liable to a creeping error, and that error may even be supported by an entire sect or nation.

The soul, according to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, is an atomic part of the Divine Soul. It is a part of God's power to produce beings who are spiritual in essence, but liable to be enthralled by *maya* (illusion) when they forget their position as eternal servants of the Supreme. God here is compared with the sun, and the souls are said to be the atomic portions of that sun's rays, unable to stand freely unless they are protected by another attribute of God's power. The word "part" is not meant in the same way as to describe portions cut out of a piece of stone by an axe, but should be understood by the example of one lamp lit from another, or gold produced from an alchemical stone.

The souls are also compared with separate atomic sparks of a burning fire. Each soul has drawn from its fountainhead a proportionate share of the attributes of the Supreme, and consequently a small proportion of the free will. These souls are naturally located between the *chit-jagat* and *mayik-jagat*. Those who chose to serve their God were protected from falldown by the interference of the *hladini* attribute of the Supreme's *chit-shakti*. They have been admitted as eternal sevants of the Lord in various ways. They know not the troubles of *maya* and the *karma-chakra*, or rotative principles of *mayik* action and its result. Those who wanted to enjoy were captured by *maya* from the other side. They are in Maya's *karma-chakra*, ending only when they again see their original position as servants of the Supreme Lord. These souls, whether liberated from Maya's charm or enthralled by her, are separate responsible beings depending on the Supreme, Hari.

Hari is the Lord of Maya; she serves Him at His pleasure. The soul or *jiva* is so constructed as to be liable to be enthralled by *maya* when unassisted by the *hladini shakti* of the Lord. Hence, there is a natural and inherent distinction between God and the *jiva* which no pantheistic maneuver can annihilate.



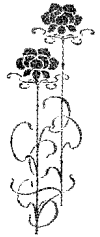
Please avoid the misleading question, "When were these *jivas* created and enthralled?" The *mayik* time has no existence in spiritual history, because it has its commencement after the enthrallment of *jivas* in matter and one cannot, therefore, employ *mayik* chronology in matters like these.

5. The Soul Captured By Illussion

Prakriti, maya, pradhan, prapancha, and avidya are different names of the same principle according to its different phases and attributes. *Maya* is not an independent *shakti* from the supreme *svarup-shakti*. She is simply a devotee serving God in executing His orders to reform those who become ungrateful to Him. *Maya* is in charge of God's house of correction, and her energy is a reflection of God's supreme power. Those *jivas* who abused their free will and forgot that they were eternal servants of the Lord, and thought of enjoying for themselves, were captured by *Maya* for their penal servitude and correction.

Maya has three attributes: *sattva, rajas, and tamas*. Those attributes are just like chains used to bind the ungrateful souls. *Maya* then applies a double casing

on the spiritual form of the soul. The casing is described by the words *linga* and *sthul*. The *mayik* existence has twenty-four substances. The five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), the five properties (sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell), the five knowledge-acquiring senses (eye, ear, nose, tongue, and skin), and the five working senses (the hands, legs, speech, genital, and organ for evacuation) - these twenty form the *sthul* or outer-casing. The mind, intelligence, contaminated consciousness, and false ego compose the *linga-deha* or inner-casing. Then, after encasing the spiritual form of the soul, Maya employs the fallen souls in different kinds of work. *Mayik* work is composed of *karma*, *akarma*, and *vikarma*. *Karma* is conventionally good action done to obtain *punya* or virtue, such as performance of duties enjoined by the *varnashram dharma* of the *smartas*. *Akarma* is the omission of prescribed duty. *Vikarma* is sin or crime. *Karma* is rewarded by heavenly elevation up to the standard of *Brahmaloka*, *akarma* places one in an unpleasant state on Earth, and *vikarma* hurls souls down to hellish life. The fallen souls travel from body to body with their *linga-deha*, doing *karma* or *vikarma*, rising up to the heavens and again coming down at the



exhaustion of their virtues, going down to hell, and after suffering punishment, again rising up to the platform of fruitive work. Thus, the state of the fallen souls is deplorable to the extreme degree, as they sometimes suffer massacre and murder, and sometimes enjoy as princes. The material world is, therefore, a prison, or a house of correction, and not a place for enjoyment, as some people assert.

6. The Soul Released From Illusion

Jivas are travelling on the path of *mayik* existence from time immemorial, experiencing all sorts of pleasure and pain. How can one become free of this unpleasant condition? Religious rituals, performance of duty, *yoga*, development of powers of the body and the mind, *sankhya* (empiric philosophical analysis), simple knowledge that one is a spiritual being, and *vairagya*, giving up all enjoyments in the world, are not the proper means by which one can actually achieve what he genuinely wants. When a man comes in contact with a *Vaishnava* whose heart has been melted by *hari-bhakti-rasa*, it is then that he may desire to imbibe the sweet principle of *bhakti* and follow in the holy footsteps of the devotee by constantly practicing *krishna-bhakti*. He slowly washes off

his *mayik* condition, and in the end, after obtaining his true nature, enjoys the sweetest unalloyed *rasa*, which is the ultimate attainment of the soul. *Satsanga*, or the company of spiritual people, is the only means to obtain the ultimate objective of life. *Bhakti* is a principle which comes from soul to soul, and like electricity or magnetism in gross matter, it conducts itself from one congenial source to another. The principle of *bhakti* is sincere, entire dependence on the Supreme Lord in every act of life. The principle of duty is no part of *bhakti*, as it acts on the basis of gratitude for favors obtained, and it involves obligation, which is contrary to natural love.

The principle of morality in the mortal world, though good in its own way, scarcely brings spiritual results in the end. Faith in the supreme beauty of the Lord, a desire for the eternal unselfish service of that Supreme Being, and a consequent repulsion of every other thought of pleasure or self-aggrandizement are the three principles which constitute *sraddha*, or actual hankering after *bhakti*. *Bhakti* by nature is *ananya* or exclusive. Is it chance, then, which brings *bhakti*? No, *sukriti* or good work is the prime moving principle.

Good work is of two types. One type, passing as morality, includes those works which bring virtue and aggrandizement. The other type of good work includes all activities which have a tendency to bring spiritual progress. This latter type of good work or *sukriti* brings one in contact with a sincere *Vaishnava* from whom one can initially imbibe *sraddha* or faith in spirit; and being then capable of receiving *bhakti*, one obtains the seed of devotional service from that *Vaishnava*, who is actually the person's guru.

7. Unity In Diversity

Metaphysical discussions are perfectly useless. The *Vedas* sometimes establish that the *jiva* is distinct from the Lord, and sometimes that the *jiva* is the same as the Lord. Factually, the *Vedas* always tell the truth. The *jiva* is simultaneously distinct from and identical with God (*achintya-bhedabheda-prakash*). This is not understood by the rationalist. Hence, it must be said that in the exercise of His powers beyond human comprehension, God is distinct from the *jiva* and the world, and yet identical with them at all times. The *Vedanta* teaches us the *shakti-parinamvad*, and not the erroneous *vivartavad* of

Shankaracharya. Shankara's teachings are explained in different ways. Some say that the world and the *jiva* have emanated from God, and others establish that the *jiva* and the world are but developments of the Godhead. Shankara, in order to avoid *brahma-parinam* (transformation of the Godhead into the world) theorizes that Srila Vyasadeva teaches us *vi-vartavad*—that God undergoes no change whatsoever, but it is *maya* which covers a part of the Supreme just as a pot encloses a part of the sky); or that God is reflected on *avidya* or ignorance, while in fact nothing other than God has yet come into existence.

These are worthless and abstruse arguments. It is plain that the *Vedanta* teaches us that God is unchangeable and is never subject to modifications. His power alone creates the *jiva* and the material world by its own *parinam* (modification). The example is in the action of the alchemist's stone, the power of which comes in the form of gold while the stone remains unchanged. Thus, *chit-shakti* appears in the form of the *chit-jagat*, with all its particularities of eternal *rasa*, and *jiva-shakti* appears in the form of innumerable *jivas*, some staying in *Vaikuntha* as *parishads* or "angels," and others moving in this world in various shapes and forms under very



different circumstances. *Maya-shakti* creates numerous worlds for the habitations and entertainments of the fallen souls.

Vivartavad is no doubt an error, and is quite opposed to the teachings of the *Vedas*, whereas *shakti-parinamvad* alone is true and supports the fact that spiritual love is eternal. If *vivartavad* were true, the natural consequence would be to declare spiritual love to be a temporary principle.

8. Bhakti Is The Only Means

Karma alone cannot directly and immediately produce a spiritual result. When it does, it does so by means of *bhakti*. Hence, *bhakti* is independent, and *karma* and *jnana* are dependent principles. *Jnana*, or the knowledge that man is a spiritual being, cannot directly bring the ultimate result. When it does, it does so with the assistance of *bhakti*. *Bhakti*, therefore, is the only means to obtain the ultimate goal. *Bhakti* is the cultivation of a friendly sentiment for Krishna, free from all desires other than those for the sentiment's own improvements, unalloyed by such other ingredients as *karma* and *jnana*, etc. It will be seen that *bhakti* is itself both a feeling and an action. *Bhakti*

has three stages: *sadhana-bhakti*, *bhava-bhakti*., and *prema-bhakti*. *Sadhana-bhakti* is that stage of culture when the feeling of love for Krishna has not yet been aroused. In *bhava-bhakti* the feeling awakens, and in *prema-bhakti* the feeling is fully set into action. *Bhakti* is a spiritual feeling towards the spiritual object of love.

Sadhana-bhakti is of two kinds: one is called *vaidhi-sadhana-bhakti*, and the other is called *raganuga-sadhana-bhakti*. The word "vaidhi" is from "vidhi," or "rule." *Vaidhi-bhakti* is to be aroused by the rule of the *shastras*, whereas in *raganuga-bhakti*, one out of natural tendency loves Krishna, and there is a strong desire to serve the Lord of the heart. One who is charmed by the beauty of this process is quickly able to cultivate his feeling for Krishna; but of the two, *raganuga-bhakti* is stronger than *vaidhi-bhakti*. Cultivation of the friendly feeling for Krishna is performed in nine different ways:

1. Hearing of the spiritual name, form, attributes, and *lila* of Krishna.
2. Speaking about and singing the glories of all those.
3. Meditating on and remembering all those.
4. Serving His holy feet.



5. Worshipping
6. Bowing down.
7. Doing all that pleases Him.
8. Developing friendship towards Him.
9. Complete surrender to Him.

Of all these processes, *kirtan*, or singing the name of Krishna, is the best.



His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada performing kirtan with his disciples in the city of San Francisco—1968.

Humble knowledge is necessary in these types of worship, and fruitless discussions must be avoided. There are some who object to the idea of wor-

shipping *Srimurti* (the Deity form of Krishna). They say, "It is idolatry to worship *Srimurti*. *Srimurti* is an idol formed by an artist and introduced by no one other than Satan himself. Worshipping such an object would arouse the jealousy of God and limit His omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence!"

To this we reply, "Brethren! Candidly understand the question and do not allow yourself to be misled by sectarian dogmas. God is not jealous, as He is one without a second. Satan is no other than an object of the imagination or the subject of an allegory. An allegorical or imaginary being should not be allowed to act as an obstacle to *bhakti*.

"Those who believe God to be impersonal simply identify Him with some power or attribute in nature, though in fact He is above nature, her laws, and her rules. His holy wish is law and it would be sacrilege to confine His unlimited excellence by identifying Him with attributes which may exist in created objects such as time, space, etc. His excellence lies in His having mutually contradicting powers and attributes ruled by His supernatural Self.

"He is identical with His all-beautiful form, having such powers as omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence, the like of which cannot be found



elsewhere. His holy and perfect personality exists eternally in the spiritual world, and at the same time exists in every created object and place in all its fullness. This idea excels all other ideas of the Deity. Mahaprabhu rejects idolatry, yet considers the worship of *Srimurti* to be the only unexceptionable means of spiritual culture.

"It has been shown that God is personal and all-beautiful. Sages like Vyasadeva and others have seen that beauty in their soul's eyes and left us descriptions. Of course, words carry the grossness of matter. But truth is still perceivable in those descriptions. According to those descriptions, one delineates a *Srimurti* and sees the great God of our heart there with intense pleasure. Brethren! Is that wrong or sinful?

"Those who say that God has no form, either material or spiritual, and at the same time imagine a false form for worship, are certainly idolatrous. But those who see the spiritual form of the Deity in their soul's eyes, carry that impression as far as possible to the mind, and then frame an emblem for the satisfaction of the material eye for continual study of the higher feeling, are by no means idolatrous. While seeing a *Srimurti*, do not even see



Sri Sri Radha Ramana is the self-manifested Deity of Gopal Bhatta Goswami and has been worshiped in Vrindavan for the last 450 years.

the image itself, but see the spiritual model of the image and you are a pure theist. Idolatry and *Srimurti* worship are two different things! But my brethren, you simply confuse one with the other out of hastiness.

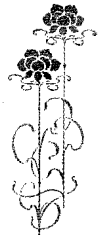
"To tell you the truth, *Srimurti* worship is the only true worship of the Deity, without which you cannot sufficiently cultivate your religious feelings. The world attracts you through your senses, and as long as you do not see God in the objects of your senses, you live in an awkward position which scarcely helps you in procuring your spiritual elevation. Place a *Srimurti* in your house. Think that God Almighty is the guardian of the house. Offer food to Him and take it as His *prasada* (mercy). Flowers and scents should also be offered to Him and accepted as *prasada*. The eye, ear, nose, skin, and tongue all have a spiritual culture. You do it with a holy heart and God will know it and judge you by your sincerity. Satan will have nothing to do with you in that matter!

"All sorts of worship are based on the principle of *Srimurti*. Look into the history of religion and you will come to this noble truth. The Semitic idea of a patriarchal God both in the pre-Christian period

of Judaism and period of Christianity thereafter, and Mohammedanism, is nothing but a limited idea of *Srimurti*. The monarchic idea of a Jove amongst the Greeks and of an Indra amongst the Aryan *karma-kandis* is also a distant view of the same principle. The idea of a force and *Jyotirmaya Brahma* of the meditators, and a formless energy of the Shaktas is also a very faint view of the *Srimurti*.

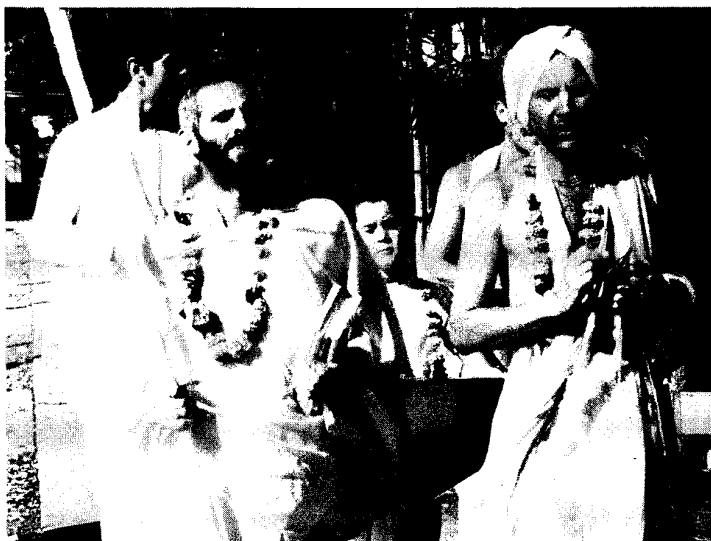
"In fact, the principle of *Srimurti* is the truth itself differently exhibited in different people according to their different phases of thought. Even Jaimini and Comte, who are not prepared to accept a creating God, have prescribed focusing on certain aspects of the *Srimurti*, simply because they have been impelled by some inward action from the soul! And of course, we meet with people who have adopted the Cross, the *Shalagram-shila*, the *Shivalingam*, and other such emblems as indicators of the inward idea of *Srimurti*.

"Furthermore, if divine compassion, love, and justice could be portrayed by the pencil and expressed by the chisel, then why shouldn't the personal beauty of the Deity be portrayed in poetry or in picture or expressed by the chisel for the benefit of man? If words can impress thoughts, a watch can indicate



time, and a sign can tell us a history, then why can't a picture or figure bring associations of higher thoughts and feelings related to the transcendental beauty of the Supreme Lord?"

Srimurti worshipers are divided into two classes: the ideal and the physical. Those of the physical school are obliged from their circumstances of life and state of mind to establish temple institutions. Those who are by circumstances and position entitled to worship the *Srimurti* within the mind have,



Kirtan is the universal church for the present age. Abandoning all sectarian differences, everyone can join together in singing the names of God.

with due deference to the temple institutions, a tendency to worship usually by *sravana* (hearing) and *kirtana* (glorifying), and their church is universal and independent of considerations of caste and color. Mahaprabhu preferred this latter class, and exemplified their worship in his *Shikshastaka*. Worship, then, without interruption in a mood of surrender, and in a very short time you will be blessed with prema.

9. Krishna Prema Is The Goal

The *karma-margis* declare that enjoyment in this world and in the heavens hereafter is all that a man requires. *Karma*, or action, is of two types: *karma* done with a view to obtain a material result, and *karma* done with a view to please God. To the *karma-margis*, both types of karma have the object of procuring enjoyment. God is worshiped simply in exchange for material enjoyment. Here is the line of demarcation between *bhakti* and *karma*. *Bhakti* aims at procuring the principle of *priti* or divine love as the final result of all actions, while *karma* aims at selfish enjoyment as the ultimate goal of action.

The *jnana-margis*, on the other hand, cultivate *jna-na* or spiritual knowledge to obtain *mukti* or salvation



as the final aim of their cultivation. *Mukti* is defined to be of two kinds. In one kind of *mukti*, total absorption of the soul in God is effected, bringing about the annihilation of the separate existence of the soul from God. This is known as *sayujya*. In the other kind of *mukti*, the soul stands eternally distinct from God, and when salvation ensues, the soul goes to the spiritual world, obtaining: *salokya* or residence in the kingdom of God; *samipya* or close association with the Lord; *svarupya* or attainment of a spiritual form like that of God Himself; or *sarshti*, the attainment of powers similar to the powers of God.

The latter class of *mukti* is inevitable when it pleases the Almighty to grant us that state. But then after obtaining that *mukti*, we serve God with *priti* or pure love. The first kind of *mukti* is rejected by the *bhaktas* as not worth having, because of its tendency to annihilate the highest principle of love. The second type of *mukti* cannot be the ultimate objective, as it acts like an intermediate condition of the soul, *priti* there acting as the ultimatum. *Mukti* therefore must be treated as an intermediate result of our spiritual disenchantment.

Besides that, a hankering after *mukti* spoils the ac-

tion of spiritual cultivation, since it is a strong desire for something other than the improvement of *bhakti*. We must therefore cultivate *bhakti*, being always free from the two contending forces—a desire for *bhukti* or selfish enjoyment, and a desire for *mukti* or salvation. We must depend on Krishna to either give us *mukti* or not as it pleases Him. We must pray for continual development of our religious sentiment. *Bhakti* alone, with *pṛiti* or pure love, is the final object of our existence.

When *rati* (attachment) is mixed with *ulas* (zeal), it becomes *pṛiti*. *Pṛiti* creates exclusive, enthusiastic love for Krishna, and repulsion for things and persons other than Krishna and His entourage. When the idea that "Krishna is mine" is added to *pṛiti*, it becomes *prema*. Here begins the idea that "Krishna is my own Lord and I am His servant." Add confidence to *prema* and it becomes *pranaya* wherein arises the relationship of friendship with Krishna. In *pranaya*, the idea of respect loses its hold. In *pranaya*, the idea that "Krishna is my exclusive and dearest object of love," curiously turns into *mana*. Krishna, with all His greatness and power, exhibits a sort of submission to it.

Excessive melting of the heart being added, *prema*



turns into *sneha*. Here ensues the relationship of a son and parents between Krishna and His devotee. In this stage, much weeping for Krishna, want of satiety in communion, and a desire to protect the interest of Krishna naturally occur. Then, an increase in desire added to *sneha* is *raga*. In this stage, a moment's separation is unbearable. Here commences the relationship of husband and wife between Krishna and His devotee. Distress attending upon want of mutual interview is happiness. *Raga*, seeing its object as new at every moment, and being itself new at every moment, converts itself into *anuraga*. In this stage, reciprocal subjection and a strong desire to accompany the lover everywhere are the principal features. *Anuraga*, infinitely rising in an astonishing state, mounting as if to madness, becomes *mahabhava*. This is indescribable! From *rati* to *mahabhava*, the whole principle is what is known as *sthayibhava*, the eternal ecstasy and beatitude.

We have a perverted picture of this noble *rasa* in human life, as life in the kingdom of *maya* is a perverted reflection of spiritual life. When the soul alone works towards its proper object, the Supreme Lord Krishna, the *rasa* is pure; when the mind and the senses work towards a wrong object, *rasa* is de-

graded and becomes deplorable. The perverted *rasa* gives us a clue as to the nature of the noble spiritual *rasa*; hence these descriptions have been attempted in words which may also be used to describe features of the perverted *rasa*. We ask our readers to take care to make a nice distinction between spirit and gross matter, otherwise a misunderstanding is inevitable.

**HARE KRISHNA HARE KRISHNA
KRISHNA KRISHNA HARE HARE
HARE RAMA HARE RAMA
RAMA RAMA HARE HARE**

The offenseless chanting of the Hare Krishna Maha-Mantra is the prescribed method for deliverance in this age of quarrel.

One who, with a sincere heart, studies the names, forms, attributes, and *lila* of Krishna as described in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* in the company of one who has realized the spirit, will rise higher and higher by the influence of *bhakti*. One who is apt to analyze everything in an academic way can



scarcely acquire the truth in matters of spirit, as by the law of God, reason in its present state can never reach the sphere of spirit.

In order to have the opportunity to go as far as we have stated, one must make a further inquiry from the heart, and the all-beautiful Lord will then help him to realize the spirit and enter its realm. But as long as the mind is confounded by material allurements, there is no way to rise beyond matter in its various forms. The great mistake that most Western philosophers have made is to identify the mind and the perverted ego (*ahankara*) with the soul or spirit. This is most unfortunate.

To summarize, man in his present state has three different principles in him: (1) The *sthul* principle, or gross matter composing his body; (2) the *linga* principle, or sublimated matter appearing in the form of mind, intelligence, contaminated consciousness, and the perverted ego, by which one is bewildered within the material world. This state has been caused by the influence of *maya*, or the illusory energy, with the object of correcting the soul in his wrong intention to enjoy in forgetfulness of his nature as God's servant. (3) Man in fact is solely independent of Maya and her connection. The only way to get rid of the



present difficulty is by the influence of pure *bhakti* imbibed from a true *bhakta*. *Bhakti*, as a means, elevates man up to the all-beautiful abode of Krishna, and again, as an end, maintains him with eternal *krishna-prema*.

While located in the *mayik* world, man must live peacefully with the object of cultivating the spirit. In this society he must lead a pure life, avoid sins, and do as much good as he can to fellow man. He must be humble, bearing the difficulties of life with heroism. He must not brag of any virtues or grandeur that he has, and he must treat everyone with the respect due to them. Marriage with a view towards a peaceful and virtuous life and with the intent to procreate servants of the Lord is a good institution for a *Vaishnava*. Spiritual cultivation is the main object of life. Do everything that helps it and abstain from doing anything which defeats the cultivation of the spirit.

Have strong faith that only Krishna can protect you. Admit Him as your only guardian. Do everything Krishna wants you to do, and never act independent of the holy wish of Krishna. Do all that you do with humility. Always remember that you are a foreigner in this world, and be prepared to go to



your own home. Do your duties and cultivate *bhakti* as a means to obtain the great goal of life, *krishna-priti*. Employ your body, mind, and spirit in the service of the Lord. In all your actions, worship your great Lord.

Thus we have presented a summary of Sriman Mahaprabhu's life and precepts. Our gentle readers will now find that Chaitanya Mahaprabhu preached pure monotheism and chased out idolatry. He taught us that idolatry is the worship of things and persons that are not God Himself. When the *sannyasis* of Benares addressed Him as God Almighty, Mahaprabhu told them that it was the worst of sins to address a *jiva* as God. And He has several times denounced the worship of a form or image other than the true image of God (after which man was created). God is one without a second. "There is none to compete with Him" is the motto of Mahaprabhu's religion.

Also, Mahaprabhu showed, both in His character and preaching, the purest morality as an accompaniment of spiritual improvement. Morality, as a matter of course, will grace the character of a bhakta. If it is

not seen in the character of one who presents himself as a Krishna *bhakta*, his sincerity may be doubted.

There are four classes of thoughts: atheistic, pantheistic, agnostic, and theistic. Chaitanya's religion rejects the first three as inimical to religion. He preaches pure theism alone and advises men to avoid the others.

He preached that *Varnashram-dharma*, including the caste system, is simply a social institution introduced by the *Rishis* (sages) to do good to man in society. Such social institutions should be allowed to decorate the devotees as long as they do not oppose spiritual improvement. By sending Pradyumna Misra, a rigid brahman, to Ramananda Rai for spiritualization, Mahaprabhu has shown that one who is aware of *Krishna-Tattva* may be a guru, be he a *shudra*, *brahman*, or *sannyasi*.

Mahaprabhu preached the equality of men in the enjoyment of spiritual fulfillment. He preached universal fraternity amongst men and special brotherhood amongst *Vaishnavas* who are, according to Him, the best pioneers of spiritual improvement. He preached that human thought should never be allowed to be shackled with sectarian views. He tells us that a man should earn money in a befitting



way through dealings with others and should not immorally obtain it. When Gopinath Pattanayaka, one of the brothers of Ramananda Rai, was being punished by the King for immoral gains, Lord Chaitanya warned all of His associates to be moral in their worldly dealings.

In His own early life, Mahaprabhu taught the *grihastas* (householders) to give all sorts of assistance to the needy and the helpless, and has shown that it is necessary, for one who has the power to do it, to assist in the education of the people, especially the brahmans, who are expected to study the higher subjects of human knowledge.

Sri Chaitanyadeva, as a teacher, has taught men both by precepts and His holy life. There is scarcely a spot in His life which may be made the subject of criticism. His taking *sannyasa*, His severe treatment of junior Haridas, and other such acts, have been viewed as objectionable by certain persons, but we believe that those men have been led to a hasty conclusion because of party spirit. Mahaprabhu was an undaunted hero in the execution of His resolutions; He was amiable to everyone, yet stern in the discharge of His duty.

Once, Brahmananda Bharati, the Godbrother

of Mahaprabhu's *sannyasa-guru* Keshava Bharati, appeared to Him dressed in a tiger's skin. Mahaprabhu would not bow down to him until he gave up the tiger skin and wore linen cloth. He said, "The person before Me is not Bharati. How is it that one equal to My guru could put on an animal's skin? The *sannyasis* do not support the killing of beasts for the sake of their personal use." Bharati understood that Mahaprabhu did not like that, and he changed his apparel. Lord Chaitanya then bowed down to him, showing proper respect to His guru's Godbrother.

Another time, Vallabha Bhatta (a scholar of great renown) wrote what he thought to be an improved commentary of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and showed it to Mahaprabhu, saying that he would not submit to Sridhara Swami. The Lord said that it was an unchaste woman who disregarded her *swami* (husband). This was a remark which mortified Vallabha Bhatta and dissuaded him from expressing further disrespectful opinions about Sridhara Swami, the commentator of the *Bhagavatam*.

Finally, Mahaprabhu impressed upon His disciples that they should enter into the spirit of the *shastras* without being confined by the words themselves.

Devananda Pandit did not understand the spirit of *bhakti* while reading the *Bhagavatam*, and so he incurred offense in the course of his dealings with the Lord's devotees. But when he captured the true spirit of *bhakti*, then Lord Chaitanya embraced him and pardoned him for all that he had done before.

The religion preached by Mahaprabhu is universal and non-sectarian. The most learned and the most ignorant are both entitled to embrace it. The learned people can accept it by studying the literatures left by the great acharyas. The ignorant can have the same



Devotes of the Lord from different parts of the world gathering together for an auspicious ceremony honoring Srila Sridhara Maharaja in Navadwip—Bengal.

privilege by simply chanting the name of the Lord and mixing in the company of pure *Vaishnavas*. The church of *kirtan* invites all classes of men, without distinction as to caste or clan, to engage in the highest cultivation of the spirit. This church, it appears, will extend all over the world, and take the place of all sectarian institutions which exclude "outsiders" from the precincts of the mosque, church, or temple.

If you are inclined, after a study of these pages, to identify Sri Chaitanyadeva as the Supreme Lord, we would beg you not to think that God has entered into the carnal coil like the fallen men. His supreme power can bring Him down to the material world with all His glory and attributes without being touched by the lower energy of *maya*. To believe otherwise would be to commit the sin of minimizing His true position.

We make no objection if the reader does not believe His miracles, as miracles alone never represent the Godhead. Demons like Ravana and others have also performed miracles which do not prove that they were God. It is unlimited *prema* and its overwhelming influence which can be seen in no one other than God Himself.



In conclusion, we leave it to our readers to decide how to view Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. The *Vaishnavas* have accepted Him as the Supreme Lord Krishna Himself. Others have regarded Him as a *bhakta-avatara* (a divine incarnation to distribute love of God). It is at the request of some *Vaishnavas* that we have composed the *Smarana Mangal* verses in the form of prayers for daily recitation at the time of worship. Those of you who are not prepared to accept them in that way may accept Nimai Pandit as a noble and holy teacher. That is all we want our readers to believe.

Noble readers! Pardon us for intruding on you with these pages. As servants of Sri Chaitanyadeva, it was our duty to propagate His supreme teachings and in doing a duty we are entitled to pardon for any trouble we may have given you. We are natives of Bengal and in couching our words in a foreign language we might have been liable to mistakes for which you will please forgive us.

In conclusion, we beg to say that we should be glad to reply to any questions which our brethren would like to address to us on these important subjects. We feel great interest in trying to help our friends to seek the way to spiritual love.



"Sriman Mahaprabhu
did not descend with His associates
to deliver a certain number of human beings
in the land of India, but rather His purpose was
to deliver and uplift all living beings
in all countries of the world
by preaching the eternal
religion of all souls."

— Bhaktivinoda Thakur