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Śrī Śrī Rāga Vartma Candrikā

Prathama Prakaṣaḥ (First Diffusion)

1. Again and again I offer my humble obeisances to those devotees who are like cakora birds, relishing the nectar of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami's words. Through even their slightest mercy I am able to speak this book "Raga Vartma Candrika".
2. Previously I gave a concise description of the path of raganuga bhakti, or devotion following one's spiritual desires, in my book "Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu Bindhu".
3. When one's devotion is prompted by orders received from the revealed scriptures, then it is called vaidhi bhakti. But when one is prompted simply by spiritual greed, then it is called raganuga bhakti.
4. The word pravartakaḥ (in the previous verse) means being fixed in devotional practices. The two kinds of candidates for devotional service (vaidhi and raganuga) should have fear of scriptural injunctions and intense spiritual greed respectively.
5. Śrīla Rūpa Goswami has personally given the following definition of lobha (sacred greed). "When the heart yearns for the sweetness of the moods of Kṛṣṇa and His eternal associates in Vraja, and one is not prompted by scriptural injunctions or logical arguments, then that is the definition of 'sacred greed'. If one thinks 'let such greed arise in me also', after hearing about moods such as the transcendental conjugal mood toward Kṛṣṇa of His associates the gopis in Vraja, then one need not wait for suitable sanctions from the revealed scriptures or logical arguments. If such impetuses are there, then it cannot be justly called greed. This greed never arises in anyone on such bases, nor does the candidate ever consider whether he is qualified for the path of raganuga bhakti or not. Rather, simply after hearing about the subject matter, or seeing it, that greed will arise in him.
6. There are two causes for the appearance of greed: The mercy of God or the mercy of another anuragi devotee. There are again two kinds of mercy bestowed by a devotee: praktana and adhunika. Praktana means mercy bestowed by a raganuga in a previous life, and adhunika is mercy bestowed in the present birth. The praktana devotee takes shelter of the lotus feet of a raganuga guru after the greed has arisen in him, and the adhunika will get that greed only after having surrendered to the feet of such a guru. It is said (in Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu): "The

only causes of the appearance of greed is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa or His devotee. Therefore some call the path of raganuga bhakti puṣṭi marga (the path of mercy).”

7. Now, when both the above-mentioned kinds of devotees become inquisitive about how to attain the mood of Kṛṣṇa’s eternal associates in Vraja, then we see that they are again dependent on information from the revealed scriptures and logical arguments. The way can only be shown through the rules set forth by the scriptures and their resultant logical arguments. There is no other way. Just like when one is greedy for cow’s milk, one must ask someone who knows about it how to get that milk, and one is dependent on that person’s instructions. That person will say: “You should buy a cow”, and will also instruct one how to bring the cow, how to feed it grass and how to milk it. One does not attain the required knowledge just like that, without being instructed. It is said in the 8th Canto of Śrīmad Bhagavatam: “As one can derive fire from wood, milk from the milk bag of the cow, food grains and water from the land, and prosperity in one’s livelihood from industrial enterprises, so, by the practice of bhakti-yoga, even within this material world, one can achieve Your favour or intelligently approach You. Those who are pious all affirm this.” (Śrīmad Bhagavatam 8.6.12)

8. Lord Kṛṣṇa himself describes in Śrīmad Bhagavatam 11.14.26 how the devotee on the path of greed advances and becomes more purified by the day, from the initial stage of surrender to the feet of a guru up to the point in which he directly attains the Lord: “The more one’s mind gets purified by hearing and chanting of My beautiful pastimes, the more able is one to discern the subtle reality of the self, just as the eye is better able to perceive subtle things when it is treated with medicinal ointment.”

9. When this greed has appeared in the heart, one becomes enlightened in different ways. Uddhava says in Śrīmad Bhagavatam 11.29.6: “Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself through the acarya (spiritual master) or through the agency of the Supersoul.” Thus some devotee attains knowledge about the moods of Kṛṣṇa and His Vraja associates from the mouth of a guru, some from the mouth of a learned raganuga devotee, and some, whose hearts have been purified by the practise of devotional service, will have this knowledge directly revealed to them from within their hearts. They advance in great transcendental bliss, just as one sees a lusty man enjoying great pleasure when his desires are fulfilled.

10. In Śrīmad Bhagavatam, which is the essence of all the Upaniṣads, Lord Kapila speaks the following words (3.25.38): “To the devotees I am the beloved, the very Self, the son, the friend, the spiritual master, the well-wisher, Fate, or the chosen Deity.” Bhakti Rasamṛta Sindhu of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami, which describes the devotion propounded by the Śrīmad Bhagavatam, provides the following three verses: “the devotee should remember Kṛṣṇa and an eternally liberated devotee of Kṛṣṇa of his own choice. He should always live in Vraja and be attached to topics concerning Kṛṣṇa and that favourite devotee of his.” (1.2.294) “Both in his material and in his mentally conceived spiritual body he should follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja, always desiring their moods and activities.” (1.2.295) “The practitioner of raganuga bhakti should also perform all the limbs of

vaidhi bhakti, such as hearing and chanting, as far as they are favourable. This is what the learned say.” (1.2.296) These three verses explain the position of the kamanuga devotee (those serving in a conjugal mood).

11. First of all, through the words “remembering Kṛṣṇa” (BRS 1.2.294), it is indicated that remembrance (smaranam) is the main item of raganuga bhakti. Raga is a special feature of the mind.

The beloved is the Lord of Vṛndavana, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who enjoys pastimes suitable to His own mood. By “His people also” is meant His beloved eternal associates in Vraja, and particularly that transcendental personality that the practising devotee favours, like Vṛndavaneśvari Śrīmatī Radharani, Lalita, Viśakha, Rupa Manjari etc. Although they are Kṛṣṇa’s favourites, they are also more favourite to those devotees who desire to enter into the glistening conjugal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

If one cannot live in Vraja physically one must at least mentally do so. But the next verse (1.2.295) clearly explains how one must live in Vraja physically. Living with the sadhaka rupa means in the physical body of the practising devotee, and the siddha rupa means one’s own desired mentally conceived spiritual body, that is suitable for direct transcendental service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Tad bhava lipsuna means being eager to attain the glistening conjugal moods towards Kṛṣṇa of one’s favourite devotees in that mood, like Śrīmatī Radharani and the gopis.

How to serve? With paraphernalia that are collected either mentally (in siddha rupa) or physically (in sadhaka rupa).

How to follow in the footsteps of the people of Vraja? In one’s physical body one follows in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami and other saints that lived in Vraja, and in the mentally conceived spiritual body one follows in the footsteps of Śrīmatī Rupa Manjari and the other eternal associates of Kṛṣṇa. The people of Vraja that should be followed, such as Candrakanti, the sages of the Dandaka forest, whose story is told in the Bṛhad Vamana Purana, as well as the Śrutis, have attained their spiritual relationship with Kṛṣṇa. One should act like them. In this way the first two verses described smaranam and living in Vraja and the third verse (1.2.296) describes practises such as hearing about Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. All other limbs of devotional practise are attained through the practise of hearing and chanting. Without hearing and chanting one’s following in the footsteps of the people of Vraja will remain fruitless. This was said by the learned sages after elaborate consideration. One should only practise those limbs that are favourable to one’s own devotional mood and not those that are opposed to it.

12. Worshipping oneself, using mudras or nyasa, meditating on Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes in Dvaraka and worshipping Kṛṣṇa’s Queens in Dvaraka are practises not to be done by a raganuga sadhaka, although they are described in the Vedic scriptures. If, on the path of devotion, there is a slight deficiency on the part of the devotee, that will not be a fault; that can be seen in the scriptures. In the 11th canto of Śrīmad Bhagavatam the 9 Yogendras tell King Nimi: “O King! A person who takes shelter of the path of devotion will never be in danger. Even if he runs over this path with his eyes closed he will not trip or fall.” The Lord also tells Uddhava in Śrīmad Bhagavatam 11.29.20: “O Uddhava! In this endeavour of devotion to Me there cannot be the slightest loss or destruction!” The word yan in

the former verse means that there can be no fault if one takes shelter of the process of hearing and chanting. It is also said in the Narada Pancaratra that that exclusive devotion to Lord Hari that does not follow the rules and regulations prescribed in the scriptures is simply the cause of disturbance.

If someone, overcome by spiritual greed, begins on the path of bhajana, but still feels that it is not proper to give up all the rules prescribed by the revealed scriptures, even if they are unfavourable to his own sweet, spontaneous mood, and meditates on Dvaraka-līla etc., then he will attain the transcendental position of an associate of the Lord's Queens in Dvaraka. This is confirmed by the scriptures: "One who has the great desire to have a conjugal relationship with the Lord, but who worships Him solely with vidhi bhakti will become a Queen in Dvaraka." (BRS 1.2.203) The meaning of the word kevala in this verse is kṛtsnenaiva, not being able to give up any unfavourable item of his practise, such as worshipping the Queens of Dvaraka and being dedicated exclusively to vidhi bhakti. The Amara Koṣa dictionary confirms that the word kevala can mean kṛtsna. Still we cannot suggest that, just as if one worships exclusively in vidhi marga one will become Lord Kṛṣṇa's Queen in Dvaraka, so one will attain Kṛṣṇa in the abode of Mathura by practising a mixture of vidhi bhakti and raganuga bhakti. How can one, after all, become a Queen in Mathura like in Dvaraka? If you answer that you will become an associate of Kubja in Mathura, then I say that this is unfair. After all, the rasa of Kubja with Kṛṣṇa is inferior to the rasa of the Queens of Dvaraka (as explained in Ujjvala Nilamāni). How then can one get something inferior through the practise of mixed vidhi and raganuga bhakti, which is superior to simply vidhi bhakti? The Gopala Tapani Upaniṣad proves that Rukmini was married in Mathura. One verse states: "Kṛṣṇa, Balarama, Aniruddha, Pradyumna and Rukmini eternally dwell in Mathura." Therefore the explanation that one will become an associate of Rukmini in Mathura as a result of mixing vidhi bhakti with raga bhakti is also not reasonable, because not everyone confirms that Rukmini is married in Mathura. How can one become an associate of Kubja or Rukmini after worshipping Śrī Śrī Radha Kṛṣṇa? That is a second injustice.

Actually, when one follows vidhi marga, prompted by greed, that is called raganuga bhakti, and when one follows vidhi marga and is prompted by the orders from the revealed scriptures, that is called vidhi bhakti. When one worships Kṛṣṇa without following the rules set out by the scriptures, as the aforementioned verse of the Narada Pancaratra proves, then it is considered to be a disturbance.

13. The scriptures show five kinds of devotional practises to make clear which limbs of devotional service are to be practised in raganuga bhakti, what they are like, what is their actual nature, what is to be done and what is not to be done. They are: those which are filled with the desired mood, those which are related to the desired mood, those which are favourable to the desired mood, those that are not opposed to the desired mood and those which are opposed to the desired mood.

Of them, some are both the practise and the goal (the only difference being that the former are in an unripe state, and the latter are ripe), some are the direct cause of attaining the goal (prema), some are the indirect cause, some are helpful, some are harmful and some are neutral. All these divisions have been shown.

14. Servanthood, friendship and so on are all both the means and the goal and are svabhīṣṭa bhavamaya — full of the desired mood. Items of bhajana, from “taking shelter of the feet of a guru” up to “mantra japa and meditation” are bhava sambandhi or “related to the desired mood” and are direct causes for attaining the goal, love of God. Statements such as “always do japa with a fixed mind” indicate nitya kṛtya, or perpetual duties. Those who follow the order of the Gaura Ganoddeśa Dipika “always do japa of Kṛṣṇa’s holy name, which is related to the desired mood” in their mentally conceived spiritual bodies, are also called “related to the desired mood” which is a direct cause for attainment of their goal. The explanation of the Gopala mantra according to Gaura Ganoddeśa Dipika is: “The lover of the gopis (gopijana vallabha) is pervading all my senses (govinda). Kṛṣṇa’s holy name in the form of the 18 syllable or 10 syllable Gopala mantra is the best example of what is related to the desired mood. Another direct cause of what is bhava sambandhi is hearing about Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental forms, qualities, names and pastimes. It is said: “One should wander alone, giving up all shyness and sing the names of Kṛṣṇa, glorifying His sweet form” and “all the devotees attain paramount bliss by constantly describing, remembering and hearing about Your character.” In this way the practises are proven to be related to the desired mood (bhava sambandhi).

Previously it was discussed that smaranam is the chief item of raganuga bhakti, but even this is dependent on kīrtana. In the present Age of Kali everyone can enter into bhajana through the means of kīrtana. All the scriptures proclaim that kīrtana is the very best limb of bhakti. In the Ujjvala Nilamani it is found that the srutis had attained birth in Vraja as gopis as a result of performing penance full of love. But in the present Kali yuga the performance of penance is denounced and the Lord Himself says: “Those vows taken for My sake are actually penance.” Hence penances such as fasting on Ekadasi and Janmastami are indirect causes of prema. We can understand that these occasional duties are perpetual because one can learn that giving up such vows will create obstacles on the path of the practising devotee. In the smrtis it is said the fasting on Ekadasi will lead to the remembrance of Govinda, so it is a direct cause for the devotional limb of smaranam.

On the other hand, the Skanda Purana and other scriptures say that one who does not fast on Ekadasi is as sinful as the killer of one’s own mother, father, brother or spiritual master. Thus he is an offender to the holy name. In the Viṣṇu Dharmottara it is said that through atonement one may be freed from the sin of drinking liquor, stealing or having sex with a superior, but the sin of eating grains on Ekadasi is indestructible. All these denouncing statements prove that vows like Ekadasi are compulsory. Such vows should always be kept. What more can be said? The Skanda Purana says “one may be in great distress or in great ecstasy, but anyone who does not give up the vow of Ekadasi has made his Vaiṣṇava initiation a success,” and “anyone who offers all his activities unto Lord Viṣṇu is a successful Vaiṣṇava.” These two statements give a definition of Ekadasi and a Vaiṣṇava. It is forbidden for a Vaiṣṇava to eat food which is not offered. Even maha prasada is forbidden for a Vaiṣṇava on Ekadasi.

The vow in the month of Kartikka is an indirect cause for the limb of penance and a direct limb for the limb of hearing and chanting. In many places, Śrīla Rūpa Goswami has called Śrīmatī Radharani “Kartikka devata”, “Urjjadevi”,

or “Urjjesvari”, the goddess of the month of Kartikka, so it is clear that in the month of Kartikka one has a special opportunity to attain Her.

With the statement “O King Ambariṣa! Always listen to Śrīmad Bhagavatam spoken by Śuka Muni!” from the smṛtis, we see that hearing Śrīmad Bhagavatam is also a perpetual duty.

From the statements: “Thus I fully glorified the Maha Puruṣas to you”, and “Those who desire pure devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa should always hear the glorification of His attributes, that destroy all inauspiciousness” from the 12th Canto of Śrīmad Bhagavatam, we can understand that hearing of the character of Lord Kṛṣṇa, which is especially related to the 10th Canto of that book, is a perpetual duty that must be repeatedly performed, and that is related to development of the desired mood. Wearing beads of tulasi, tilaka, the names or footprints of Kṛṣṇa drawn with gopicandana are favourable to developing the desired mood.

Serving tulasi, circumambulating and offering obeisances are also favourable to developing the desired mood. Honouring cows, dhatri and aśvattha trees and brahmanas is not opposed to developing the desired mood and is helpful, but serving the Vaiṣnavas is the most special item> This should be counted amongst all that is mentioned. We have seen in Śrīmad Bhagavatam that Mother Yaśoda made her beloved Kṛṣṇa wait for His breastmilk in order to take milk which was also meant to nourish Him from the fire.

For this she had to leave Kṛṣṇa who was sucking her breast. Similarly it is also not improper for a raganuga devotee to pay attention to the abovementioned limbs of devotions which nourish the main limbs of hearing and chanting.

Meditating on oneself, nyasa, mudera, meditating on Dvaraka-lila and worshipping Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Queens are harmful for developing the desired mood and are practises that should not be performed. Hearing stories from the Puranas are neutral factors. They are not helpful, nor are they harmful. Although there is no transformation or change in transcendental devotion, it has nevertheless been divided in parts like “direct cause” etc., to make it more easily understandable, which it would not have been otherwise. Just as it is said in the devotional scriptures “the 6 bhavas like sneha are manifestations of prema” and the rasa śāstras define rasa with words like vibhava and so on, so I have also used terms like upadana karana (indirect causes) etc. to make my point more easily understandable. May the saints forgive me.

Dvitiya Prakāṣaḥ (Second Diffusion)

1. Śrī Śyāmasundara is always so absorbed in His pastimes with the beautiful girls of Vraja who have accepted Cupid as their friend, that He is not aware of any loss, exhaustion, household duties, danger, fear, worry or defeat by His enemies. From all this we can understand that He has no chance to think of anyone else but Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the gopis of Vraja, since He is bewildered by His loving pastimes with them. How will He then accept the service rendered to Him by the countless rāganuga devotees who come to Him from different directions and from

different countries? Who will listen to all the different prayers that are offered to Him? One may offer the solution that Kṛṣṇa's expansion, the Supersoul who lives in everyone's heart, listens, and that the expansion and the origin are actually one, but that will hurt the rāganuga bhakta's heart very much. What is then the solution?

The answer can be found in the words of Uddhava. He says: "O Lord! When You considered whether or not it was proper to kill Jarasandha and to go to the Rajasuya sacrifice You called me to You and said 'O Uddhava! What should I do now?' like a bewildered person. You bewildered me at that time, acting like an ignorant, yet omniscient man who needed advice from a counsellor, although You are not conditioned by time and space and You are full of causeless knowledge eternally." But if someone will explain that in this case You seemed bewildered, but actually You weren't, then that is also not right, because Your activities are without endeavour and Your birth is birthless — amidst all these words, this proposal is useless.

Therefore we should not explain it in the latter way. We must accept that just as Kṛṣṇa is sometimes bewildered in His Dvaraka pastimes, although he is omniscient, similarly by His inconceivable potency He is sometimes omniscient in His Vṛndāvana pastimes, although He is bewildered. We must therefore accept the words of Bilvamangala Thākura in Kṛṣṇa Karnamṛta "in all His pastimes the Lord is simultaneously bewildered and omniscient."

2. In this case omniscience means that Kṛṣṇa has great power and opulence, not sweetness, and outside of His majestic pastimes He is only sweet when He imitates humans in His pastimes. This is what those with firm intelligence say.

3. Now we will define sweetness. Sweetness is there when the human mood is not violated, regardless of whether Kṛṣṇa shows His divine prowess or not. For example, when baby Kṛṣṇa killed the witch Putana He was playing a human child by sucking her breast. Although He smashed the cart demon, He did so by kicking it with His tender footsoles while He was a baby of only three months, lying flat on His back. Although He bewildered Lord Brahmā and Balarāma by showing innumerable Viṣṇu expansions of Himself He also tended the calves and cows. He stole the milk and curd of the cowherd women in an unseen way and He had conjugal relations with many gopis while displaying His divine prowess by expanding Himself into as many forms as there were gopis.

If performance of merely human pastimes with much bewilderment and without any display of prowess is called sweetness, then the bewilderment of a naughty playful child would also be called sweetness. Therefore this definition of sweetness is not proper.

4. That manifestation of God that does not depend on humanlike moods and is only revealing majestic, divine manifestations is called aiśvarya (prowess). When Kṛṣṇa showed such aiśvarya in His 4 armed form when He appeared in Mathura to Vasudeva and Devaki He told them: "I showed you this 4 armed form of Mine so that you can remember My previous birth. Simply by seeing Me as a human child you would not get this realisation." (Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.3.44) Lord Kṛṣṇa told Arjuna in Bhagavad Gītā 9.5: "Look at My majestic form!" and showed him His

proWess, and in His Vṛndāvana pastimes He showed Brahmā His thousand four armed forms after showing His sweet and beautiful pastimes in Vraja.

5. Now follows the description of the devotees who are fixed in their conception of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Lord (aiśvarya jñāna nistha bhaktah). Vasudeva tells Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: “You are not our sons, but You are directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” And when Arjuna sees Kṛṣṇa’s Universal Form in Bhagavad Gītā chapter 11, he says: “O Kṛṣṇa! Please forgive me for whatever I may have said to You in the past due to love and bewilderment!”

From these examples we can see that their respective feelings of parental and fraternal love towards Kṛṣṇa were slackened after seeing His divine prowess. This is called aiśvarya jñāna. And madhurya jñāna is that mood which does not cause a heart attack or even the slightest feelings of awe after seeing some display of his prowess, because feelings of intimacy are already firmly established in the heart. For example, the gopis described Kṛṣṇa as follows in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10th canto chapter 35, when He returned to the village after herding His cows in the forest: “Kṛṣṇa is being praised by demigods who surround Him and worship Him with songs and flowers” and “on the way Brahmā and other demigods praise His feet.”

Despite the fact that Śrīdāma and Sudama and the other cowherd boys saw the demigods offering prayers and flowers to Kṛṣṇa, there was not the slightest slackening of their pure fraternal love for Him visible in them, and the beautiful girls of Vraja remained fixed in their sweet romantic feelings for him despite hearing about His prowess. In the same way the pure parental love of Mother Yaśoda was not diminished even slightly despite Nanda Mahārāja’s consoling words to Vrajvasis. Her love for Kṛṣṇa rather increased and thoughts like: “I am blessed that my son is the Supreme Lord Himself” appeared in her heart. Even a mundane mother whose son becomes the ruler of the world still shows her motherly love for him.

The intimate moods of the cowherd boys, who may think: “We are blessed that our friend is the Supreme Lord,” and the gopis, who may think: “we are also blessed that our beloved is the Supreme Lord,” are rather strengthened when they hear about Kṛṣṇa’s divine prowess.

In times of meeting aiśvarya jñāna is not fully manifest. The moonrays of union are very cool, but the time of separation is as hot as the sunrays. These statements fully reveal aiśvarya jñāna. Nevertheless, if there is no reverence that causes a heart attack and the resultant esteem during the manifestation of aiśvarya jñāna, then it cannot be really accepted as aiśvarya jñāna. “In His descent as Rāma He pierced the king of monkeys Bali like a hunter. An ordinary hunter kills creatures because He likes the meat, but He killed Bali without any reason, so He is even more cruel than a hunter. Again, being controlled by a woman (His wife Sita) He cut Surpanakha’s nose and ears off. In His descent as Vamana He accepted the worship of Bali Mahārāja like a crow and then bound him up. Therefore there’s no need for us to make friends with dark-complexioned men. But still it is difficult to stop talking about Him!”

Before Kṛṣṇa lifts Govardhana Hill the Vrajvasis were not aware of His divinity, but after He lifted Govardhana Hill and had gone to Varuna-loka, the

hearts of Vrajbasis were, after initially realising Him to be the Lord Himself, at once filled with sweet feeling of love towards him. One has never heard even a single word like: “You are not our sons, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead: from the mouth of Nanda Mahārāja, like they were spoken by Vasudeva to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, even after he had heard from Varian and Uddhava that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord. Therefore the Vrajvasis were always full of Madhurya jñāna, but Kṛṣṇa’s associates in Dvaraka were filled with aiśvarya jñāna mixed with madhurya jñāna.

7. The next question is: Did Kṛṣṇa, while playing humanlike pastimes as the son of Nanda in Vṛndāvana know He is God in the same way as He knew it as the son of Vasudeva in Dvaraka, or not? If you say “yes” then I say He would not have been able to cry tears of fear while He was being bound with ropes by Mother Yaśoda. It does not look good on learned devotees to explain that He was simply pretending to be afraid, and that’s why He was crying tears. Only a less intelligent society would have given such an explanation. If intelligent devotees would give this explanation then the words of Queen Kunti in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 1.8.31 “Mother Yaśoda took up a rope to bind You when You committed an offence, and Your perturbed eyes overflowed with tears, which washed the collyrium from Your eyes. And You were afraid, trying to hide Your face, although fear personified is afraid of you. This sight is bewildering to me” would never contain the word “vimoha” (enchanted).

The purport of this verse is that Kunti’s conception is aiśvarya jñāna. That is why she says that even fear personified is afraid of You, With the words bhaya bhāvamaya sthitasya, that He is afraid by meditating on fear, it is proven that Kunti finds Kṛṣṇa genuinely afraid in His heart. If Kunti had thought that Kṛṣṇa was simply pretending to be afraid, then she would not have been bewildered.

And if you say “all right, so Kṛṣṇa did not know that He is God, but then by whom or what was His eternally perfect blissful omniscience covered over?” then I say: it is the essence of Kṛṣṇa’s cit or knowledge potency named prema or love of God, that covers him over, making Him forget His actual identity, although He is ecstasy personified, for the sake of increasing His own ecstasy, just as avidya, or the ignorance potency of Maya keeps all the living beings bound up in the material world, making them experience only suffering, and the transcendental energy yogamaya covers over the God-knowledge of Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental associates in Vṛndāvana like Mother Yaśoda, making them experience His all-sweet humanlike pastimes. There can be no fault in prema covering over His knowledge of His svarupa. Just as ignorance binds up the conditioned souls with the ropes of mine-ness, giving them simply misery and making them prisoners bound with ropes and chains that give them much pain, so also is the body of a respectable person bound by valuable pleasure-giving clothes and a turban and so on. In the same way the conditioned soul’s ignorance leads to his misery and Kṛṣṇa’s ignorance makes Him very happy, because He is controlled by love.

Kṛṣṇa enjoys great happiness being overcome with prema, just as a honeybee feels very happy being covered over in the whorl of a lotus. Therefore it is said “O Lord! Don’t leave the lotuslike hearts of Your devotees!” and “the devotees have bound Your lotus feet with the ropes of their love.” Just as one experiences the five kinds of misery in a greater or lesser extent according to the

amount in which one is covered over by ignorance, so also prema covers the knowledge and prowess of both its object and subject, expanding in innumerable ways of transcendental ecstasy. Because their love for Kṛṣṇa is mixed with knowledge of His divine prowess, the inhabitants of Dvaraka like Devaki do not experience as much bliss as pure devotees like Mother Yaśoda and so on do. The Vrajbasis are experiencing ever-increasing bliss, being bound to Kṛṣṇa, the object of their love, by the ropes of mine-ness, that keeps the object and subject of that love controlled by each other. Kṛṣṇa, being bewildered by the love of Mother Yaśoda and others, does not know about his own Godhood. When some disturbance is caused by a demon or by a forest fire, then Kṛṣṇa manifests His omniscience, but that is only for the sake of protecting His devotees, and the lila śakti then makes Him aware of His power.

Previously, in verse 1, it was already corroborated that his inconceivable potency makes Him able to accept the service offered to him by the practising devotees, even when he is bewildered by loving bliss.

In this way we have considered vidhi marga, raga marga aiśvarya and madhurya and aiśvarya jñāna and madhurya jñāna. The philosophy of svakiya and parakiya has been explained in my commentary on Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmi's Ujjvala Nilamani. There it is seen that if one worships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa on the vidhi path one attains aiśvarya jñāna without differentiation between svakiya and parakiya bhāva in the Goloka sphere within Maha Vaikuntha. When one is greedy after the madhurya bhāva, but one holds onto the vidhi marga, one attains the position of associate of Satyabhama in Dvaraka's svakiya rasa, knowing that Rādhā and Satyabhama are one. This is a blend of aiśvarya jñāna and madhurya jñāna. And when one worships solely on the path of raga, one attains pure madhurya and the position of associate of Śrīmatī Rādhārāni in Vṛndāvana's parakiya bhāva.

Although Śrīmatī Rādhārāni is Kṛṣṇa's very own pleasure potency and Kṛṣṇa also belongs to Śrīmatī Rādhārāni, still one must meditate upon Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa within Their pastimes, never only upon Them without Their pastimes. None of the descriptions of these pastimes, nor any of the scriptures revealed by the sages has corroborate a marital status for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana. Therefore Rādhā has a parakiya relationship with Kṛṣṇa, both in the prakata and aprakata pastimes. In this way the essence of all topics has been briefly described.

7. Now it will be described how the rāganuga bhakta gradually advances through the stages of anartha nivṛtti, nistha, ruci and asakti up to the stage of prema and the direct attainment of the beloved Deity. In the Ujjvala Nilamani it is said that "those who are specially attracted to the mood of the Vrajbasis and thus perform rāganuga bhakti will attain that abundance of eagerness that is needed for performing rāganuga bhajana and will take birth in Vraja in groups of one, two or three at the same time." Here the word anuragaugha means "that eagerness that makes one qualified for doing rāganuga bhajana". The anurāga mentioned here does not refer to the sthaya bhāva of that name, because the sthaya bhāva named anurāga cannot be attained within a material body.

The words "he takes birth in Vraja" means the sādḥaka takes birth from the womb of a nitya siddha gopika, just as Kṛṣṇa's eternally beloved gopis appear with Him when He descends to the earth. After that, gradually sneha, mana, pranaya,

raga, anurāga and mahabhāva will become manifest in the gopika body of that sādḥaka by hearing and chanting and seeing the greatness of Kṛṣṇa's eternally liberated gopis. These moods could not possibly arise in the material body of the sādḥaka in his previous birth. In this way the extraordinary greatness of Kṛṣṇa's beloveds in Vraja has been shown.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavatam it is said that the gopis attained the pinnacle of transcendental bliss by seeing Govinda. Without Him they experienced a moment to last a hundred ages. Their statement in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 10.31.15: "Without seeing You we consider a second to last like an age" is a symptom of mahabhāva.

One may ask "Why don't you say that when the sādḥaka attains the stage of prema and leaves his body, he will take a gopika body in the spiritual world without taking birth from the womb of a gopika, after which he manifests sneha etc. there in that body through the association of the eternally perfect gopis?"

The answer here is: "No, that will not happen, because then one cannot get a harmonious acquaintance according to the human-like pastimes there, like: 'whose daughter is this sakhi? Whose wife is she? Whose daughter-in-law is she?' 'Alright then' one may say 'then what is the harm in taking birth in the aprakata lila?' Then the answer is 'No, that also cannot be. Sādḥakas or materially conditioned souls cannot enter into the transcendental manifestation named Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma. Only perfected souls can enter it. Even through one's own sadhana the moods of sneha and so on are not easily attained.

Therefore those devotees for whom Yogamaya, for the sake of perfecting their moods like sneha etc. arranges that prema is manifest in them after they take birth in Kṛṣṇa's materially manifest pastimes in Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma and before they attain Kṛṣṇa's bodily association, are taken to Kṛṣṇa's materially manifest pastimes in Vṛndāvana. Because practising devotees, karmis and perfected devotees can all be seen to enter into the materially manifest Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma, it is experienced as both sādḥaka bhumi and siddha bhumi.

Then if you say "Where will those most eager sādḥakas stay after they attain prema and until they attain a gopika body, after leaving their material bodies?" Then I answer: "After the sādḥaka body perishes, that loving devotee, who has eagerly desired direct devotional service for a long time, will once, by the Lord's grace, receive the gift of the desired service and the audience of the Lord and his eternal associates, just as He once bestowed direct audience to Narada Muni. He will give the sādḥaka a transcendental gopika body.

Yogamaya will make that body take birth from a gopika body in the manifest pastimes, when Kṛṣṇa descends to earth with His eternal associates. There will not be a second delay in that, because the prakata lila goes on without interruption. He will take birth in that material universe where Kṛṣṇa plays His manifest Vṛndāvana lila at that time. Kṛṣṇa and His associates appear when the loving practising devotee leaves his body. Therefore, O greatly eager anuragi devotees, don't be afraid! Be at ease! All is auspicious for You!"

8. O Gokulānanda! You are enjoying Your pastimes like a honeybee thirsty after the buds of devotion! You are bewildered and omniscient at once! I offer my obeisances to You!

O Lord! You personally said: "I will give My devotees that transcendental intelligence by which they can come to Me." Therefore I pray to you: "O

Vrajendranandana! Give me the intelligence by which I can attain you, as You are adorned by the gopis' breasts!"

That rāganuga bhakti that is always fully transcendental to all scriptural injunctions in all respects and that is to be blamed by Bhagavad Gītā verses such as “those who give up all scriptural injunctions to worship with mere faith” and “food made without regulations” has always caused disturbance, is causing disturbance and will cause disturbance. There is no need to say anything more. O! The path of rāganuga bhakti is hard to see even by the demigods. The intelligent devotees will get to know this path through the diffusion of this light.