

Kartik

Handbook



Includes _____

- Śrī Bhajan Rahasya
- Śrī Girirāja-Govardhana
- Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam
- Asta-kaliya-yam Kirtan

by

His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhakti Ballabh Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāj

Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Math
Sector 20-B, Chandigarh

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(songs for eight Period of devotional service)

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Other books by Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Goswami Maharaj
in english:

Sri Chaitanya: His Life and Associates
A Taste of Transcendence
Sages of Ancient India
Suddha Bhakti
Daśavatāra
Nector of Harikatha
Hari Katha and Vaishnava Aparadha
The Holy life of Srila B.D. Madhava Goswami Maharaj
Sri Archana Paddhati
Affectionately Yours
Sri Guru-Tattva
The Philosophy of Love

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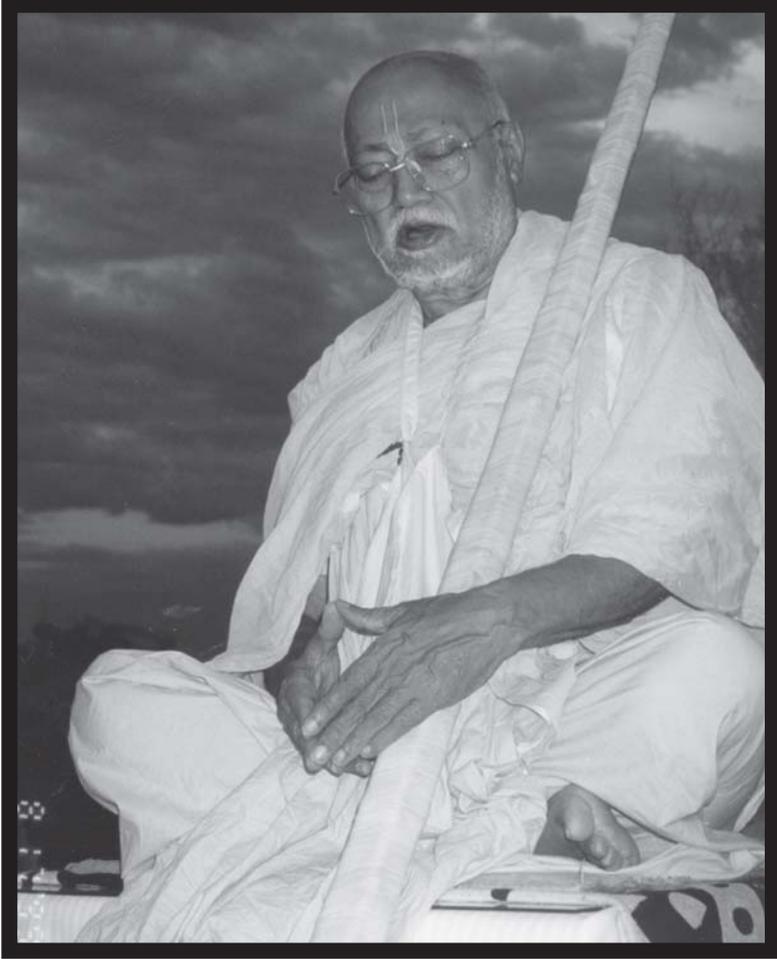
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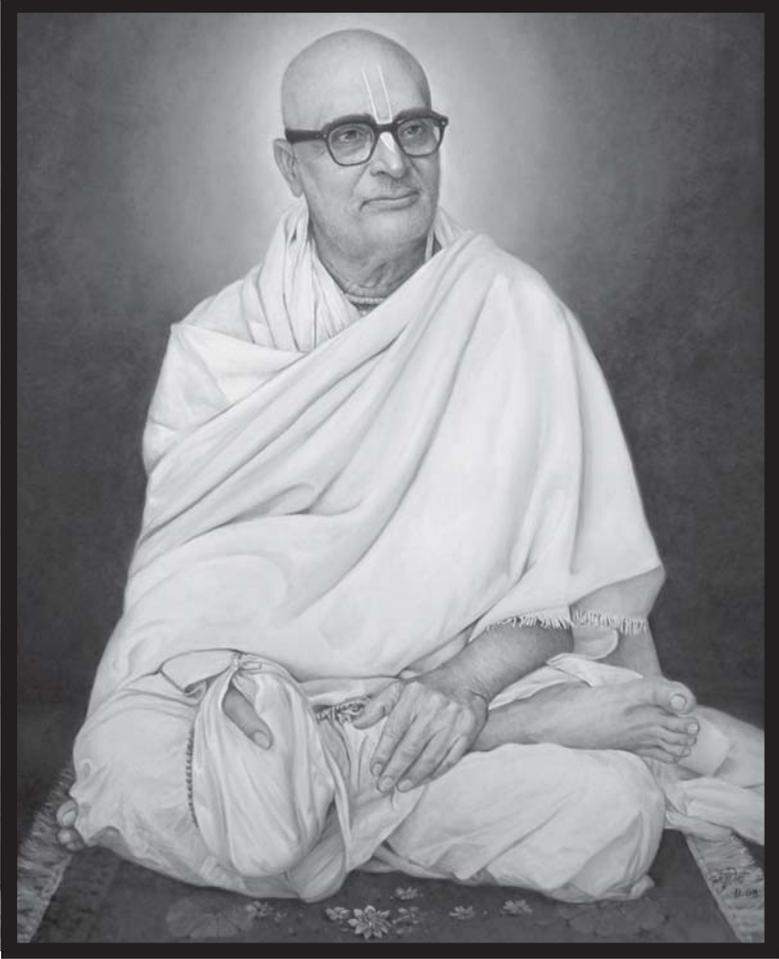
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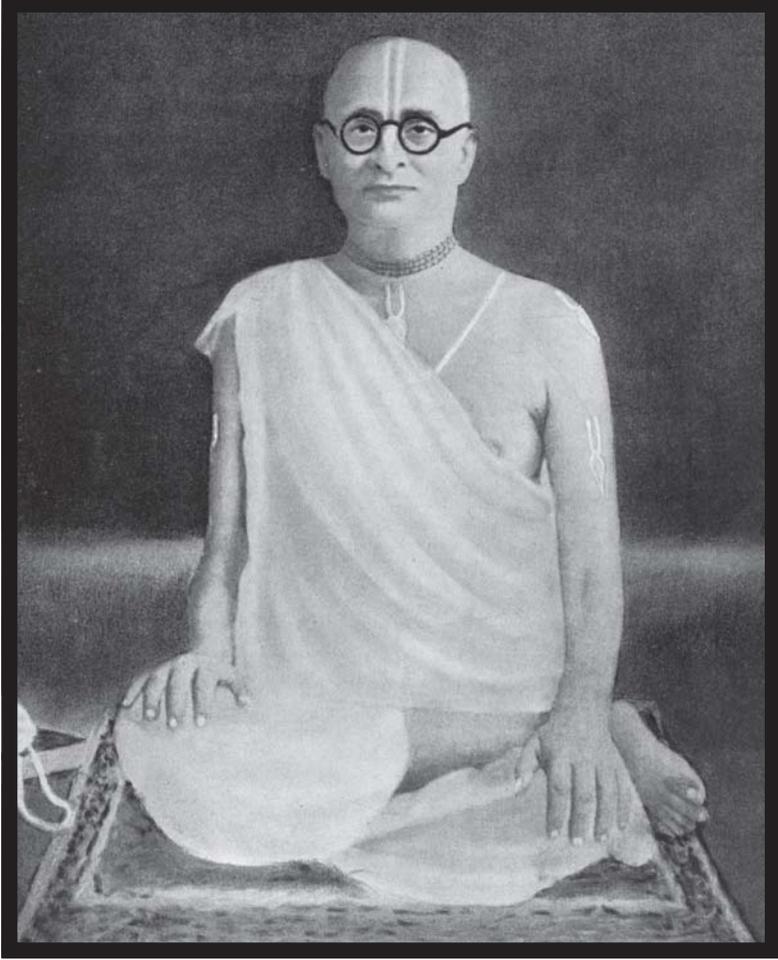
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Om Viṣṇupāda 108
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Ballabha Tīrtha Goswāmī Mahārāja



Nityalīlā-pravista Om Viṣṇupāda 108
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhav Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Nityalīlā-pravista Om Viṣṇupāda 108
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura

Śrī Bhajan Rahasya

Rahasyer Prāgbandha

[Prior obligatory regulation for being eligible

to realize ontological mystery of Bhajan]

By Srila Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Goswāmi Thākura

Translated & Commented by

Srila Bhakti Ballabha Tirtha Goswami Maharaj.

‘Śrī Bhajan-Rahasya’— Book is compiled by Revered Srila Bhaktivinode Thākur. He has shown a few hints about his own mode of worship in the form of a book as an instance to his own devoted followers. I, being an insignificant person, observed him a few years before, overwhelmed with Transcendental Divine Love while relishing several scriptural verses incessantly in this way.

[There are stages of advancement of pure devotion— First stage— ‘Kaniṣṭha’, second higher stage—‘Madhyam’ (middle) and third highest stage— ‘Uttam’. Accurate understanding of the words ‘Kaniṣṭha’, ‘Madhyam’ and ‘Uttam’ is necessary for proper realization of the ontological mystery of Bhajan as expounded or interpreted by Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswāmi Thākur.]

Provision for ‘Arcan’— Worship of Deities is recommended in the domain of pure devotion in consideration of the eligibility of the devoutness of ‘Kaniṣṭha devotee’— first advanced stage of devotion. Many votaries being unable to reflect upon the distinction between ‘Arcan’ and ‘Bhajan’ indicates the words to be same as ‘Arcan’ is ‘Bhajan’. When bhajan is possible on the basis of nine forms of devotion, as

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‘Arcan’ is included within it, ‘Arcan’ should be accepted as ‘Bhajan’, that is their idea. Total bhajan and practice of one form of bhajan, atleast of the aforesaid first advanced stage of devotion, should not be considered to indicate the same significance.

There are two kinds of worship— (1) Worship of Deities with the help of articles and with reverence is ‘Arcan’. (2) Service of the object of worship with the feeling of eternal sweet delightful relation, viz. delightful relation between devotee and devoted as bosom friends, sweet parental affection without the obstruction of fear and reverence etc. are referred to as ‘Prema’. There is a gulf of difference between these two ways of service of the Object of worship. Arcan is connected with the worship of Deity with reverence. Without sweet delightful eternal relation, there cannot be total service of the Highest Objective Supreme Lord.

Worship of Deity— Supreme Lord in consideration of His appearance in this world, with articles and reverence is termed ‘Arcan’. Although inspite of the cognition of the dimness of the scorching rays of reverential majestic worship in this world, excellence of the sweetness of the service of the Deity with delightful charming love-relation like pleasant moonlight, cannot be denied. A brief method of worship (Arcan) is annexed to the appendix of the book. The underlying implication of bhajan is stated in the body of the book. Relation with gross and subtle bodies is more or less involved in ‘Arcan’, while in the domain of bhajan, the devotee is directly in contact with the object of devotion Supreme Lord Bhagavān, Who is beyond gross and subtle bodies and is the Indwelling Monitor residing in the hearts of all embodied souls. A true devoted soul is well-established in his real self and is completely liberated from all non-eternal material denominations, his cognitions of the sense-organs are spiritual, beyond the thought of material range. As they are always

Śrī Bhajan Rahasya directly in contact with Absolute Knowledge, Who is Transcendental, they are always engaged in transcendental service of the Divinity. Speciality of the instructive object of Guru is considered Rahasya (Mystery) which can only be comprehended by persons who have got firm faith and confidence.

Truly following the path of bona fide sādhus, association of whom can be achieved only by the fruits of serving the third advanced stage of highest devotees, who have received instructions of Kṛṣṇa-bhakti after practising the list of Sādhan-bhakti, mentioned in 'Śrī Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu', is actual Bhajan-Rahasya (mystery of bhajan). Desireless modest devout devotee being fully liberated from worldly entanglement, is completely released from the association of uncongenial persons disinclined to serve Kṛṣṇa and entrapped with ulterior desires. Just then only, total service or service of eight periods of the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa can be manifested in him. Pure devotee who is inclined to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa always dislikes the association of enjoyers of earthly pleasures (Bhogis) and renouncers (Tyagis), as he knows the association of such non-devotees is an obstacle to the achievement of his objective. Such 'Karmīs', 'Jñānīs' or persons of ulterior desires have got no liking for Bhajan-Rahasya. As they have got no eligibility to enter into the eight periods of pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Transcendental Realm, this book (Bhajan-Rahasya) cannot become always very appreciative to them.

Day and night (24 hours) is divided into eight periods. One period is stated as 'Yam'. Night consists of three yams (three periods), day consists of three yams (three periods), along with these six periods, if 'dawn' and 'dusk' are added, sum total— 8 periods.

It is possible only for a Vaiṣṇava to worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa all the time in all respects with profound devoutness. With

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wrong conception of self, other than the real self eternally related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it is not possible to worship Kṛṣṇa all the time. A conditioned soul cannot release him from his engagement if he attributes materiality to all things or articles related to the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Vaiṣṇavas having the firmness of the realization of their real self are always in worshipful mood. They cannot do any action except service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Eight verses of Śikṣāṣṭaka of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu are in conformity with the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the eight periods (Aṣṭayāma). Eleven verses of Sri Rūpa Goswāmi and hymns written by his personal associates to increase eagerness of Bhajan, conforming to eight pastimes will be congenial for incessant Bhajan. Sincere servitors of Guru will always discuss these verses, being completely relieved from the influence of material time, space, and so called deserving or undeserving persons of the world.

Kanpur
13th November, 1927

Harijanakinkar,
(servant of the associates of Śrī Hari)
Das Sri Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati

First Period of Devotional Practice (1st Yāma Sādhana)

Bhajan at close of night— Śraddhā (Firm Faith)

Therefore, glow of the Holy Name can destroy all sins and deliver conditioned souls from worldly bondage. As for instance Śrī Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu, Dakṣiṇ Part, 1/52:-

*taṁ nirvyājam bhaja guṇa-nidhe pāvanaṁ pāvanānām
śraddhā-rajyan-matir atitarām uttamaḥ-śloka-maulim
prodyann antaḥ-karaṇa-kuhare hanta yan-nāma-bhānor
ābhāso 'pi kṣapayati mahā-pātaka-dhvānta-rāśim*

That person is addressed as Guṇa-nidhe (one who is richly endowed with good qualities), who has got the aptitude to utter without delay, the Holiest Divine Name 'Kṛṣṇa', greatest Redeemer of all redeemers, with firm faith, without hypocrisy and with simple-heartedness. Why? Because the glow of the Holy Name Kṛṣṇa, like the glimpse of the light of Sun at dawn, entering into the cave of his heart, will destroy all great sins and nescience.

Srila Bhaktivinode Thākura's instruction (His own writing in Bengali):-

*parama pāvana kṛṣṇa tānhānra charaṇa,
niskapata śraddhā saha karaha bhajan,
jānra nāma suryābhās antare praveśi,
dhvaṁsa kare mahāpāp andhakārarāśi,
ei śikṣāṣṭake kahe kṛṣṇalīlā-kram,
ihāte bhajan krame līlāra udgam,
prathame prathama śloka bhaja kichu din,
dviṭīya ślokete tabe hauta pravīṇ*

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Redeemer. His Lotus Feet should be worshipped with firm faith and without deceitfulness. Glow of the Holy Name, like dawn of sunrise, entering into the heart,

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will destroy all great sins and remove all kinds of nescience— deep darkness. Gradual sequential development of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa is narrated in Śikṣāṣṭaka. By this sequence of bhajan, pastimes will be manifested. At first, the first verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka is to be practised for some days. Thereafter you become eligible for practice of second verse.

*chāri śloke kramaśaḥ bhajana pakkva kara,
pañcam ślokete nija siddha deha vara,
ei śloke siddhadehe rādhāpadāśraya,
ārambha kariyā krame unnati udaya,
chaya śloka bhajite anartha dure gela,
tabe jāna siddhadehe adhikāra haila,
adhikāra nā labhiyā siddhadeha bhāve,
viparjya buddhi janme śaktira abhāve*

Then by careful practice of the four verses of Śikṣāṣṭaka, gradually you acquire maturity in bhajan. After that, be eligible for achieving your realized eternal spiritual form by practising the fifth verse. Being well-established in the fifth verse, get the service of the Lotus Feet of Rādhārāni by attaining realized form. Advancement of bhajan will begin from this and will be developed. After being competent in realizing the transcendental sweet ecstatic feelings through practice of sixth verse, your attachment for ulterior reverse desires will be removed totally. Then actually you will be entitled to get eternal realized spiritual form. When eight principal modes of transcendental ecstatic feelings will be revealed, the criterion of your attainment of safety region is achieved. Without the manifestation of these ecstatic feelings, if any aspirant poses to get that realized state, it will be cause of disaster to him due to lack of intrinsic spiritual force from within.

*sāvdhāne krama dhara yadi siddhi cāo,
sādhura carita dekhi śuddha buddhi pāo,
siddhadeha peye krame bhajana karile,*

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*aṣṭakāla sevāsukha anāyāse mile,
śikṣāṣṭaka cinta kara smaraṇa kīrtan,
krame aṣṭakāla-sevā habe uddīpana,
sakala anartha jābe pābe premadhana,
caturvarge phalguṇprāya habe adarśana*

If the aspirant wants to get realized state, he should very carefully accept the gradual procedure, strictly following the direction of pure devotee— sādhu, which is the only way of getting eternal pure devotional wisdom. After being eligible for getting eternal realized spiritual form, by sincere bhajan the aspirant can attain easily transcendental blissful service of eight periods of pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa. Service of eight periods of pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa will be gradually manifested by incessantly thinking, remembering and singing of the eight verses of Śikṣāṣṭaka. By this devotional practice, all ulterior desires will be removed, the highest wealth of Transcendental Divine Love will be achieved and undercurrent flow of desires for Caturvarga—the four objects of human pursuits—mundane virtue, wealth, sensuous enjoyment and desire for salvation will disappear.

1st verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

*ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanaṁ bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇaṁ
śreyah-kairava-candrikā-vitaraṇaṁ vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varadhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmytāsvādanam
sarvātma-saṅgaṇam paraṁ vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*

Chanting of the Holy Name Śrī Kṛṣṇa, completely, loudly in the company of devotees and without tenfold offences, which can bestow seven attainments— viz. cleansing of the mind-mirror, extinguishing of the forest fire of birth-death and threefold afflictions, bestowing eternal soothing benefit like moonlight, life of spiritual learning i.e. awakening of the real self, increasing of the ocean of bliss, bestowing at every step sweet taste of complete transcendental ambrosia, holy immersion of body-mind-real self— be supremely glorified.

Thinking of Kṛṣṇalīlā (pastimes of Kṛṣṇa)

At the close of night absorbing meditation of the break of sleep of Rādhākṛṣṇa in their secret grove (Awakening song). Provision for relishing Kṛṣṇa-līlā— Transcendental sweet pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa can only be relished by Citta (mind) gradually. [Citta indicates store of thoughts. Actually, there is no synonym of ‘Citta’ in English.]

rātryante trastavṇderita bahu-vira-vaibodhitau kirasārī
padyair-hṛdhyair api sukha-śayanād-utthitau tau sakhibhiḥ
dṛṣṭau hṛṣṭau tadātvoditarati-lalitau kakkhaṭīgīḥ saśaṅkau
rādhā-kṛṣṇau satṛṣṇāv api nija-nija dhāmnyāpta
talpau smarāmi

Govindalīlāmṛta

Vṛndā Devi apprehending day-break sends Śuk-Sārikā (male and female parrots) and other birds to start chirping to awaken Rādhākṛṣṇa. Here chirping indicates sweet singing of the glories of Rādhākṛṣṇa. There is competition between Śuk and Sārikā to sing the glories of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā more than each other. When Śuk sings more qualities of Kṛṣṇa, devotees on behalf of Kṛṣṇa are satisfied, but when female parrot Sārikā sings glories of Rādhārāni more than Kṛṣṇa, the personal associates of Rādhārāni become happy. In this way, competition of singing continues. By hearing this sweet competition of songs and also sweet songs of the gopīs, Rādhārāni is awakened and opens her eyes but Kṛṣṇa is not awakened. Kṛṣṇa remains with closed eyes. So long, gopīs had the responsibility to awaken Rādhākṛṣṇa, but when Rādhārāni is awakened, their responsibility to awaken Kṛṣṇa is over. Rādhārāni is worried and afraid seeing the light of the Sun increasing, but she cannot push Kṛṣṇa to wake-up for fear of offence. There is one female monkey of the name ‘Kakkhati’ to serve Rādhākṛṣṇa, by her own capacity and she wants permission of the gopīs to make a harsh loud sound to awake Kṛṣṇa. But gopīs are not giving

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permission considering by hearing her harsh voice, Kṛṣṇa will be disturbed. But Kṛṣṇa is gracious to all, He wants to give scope of service to all devotees without considering their qualities. Kṛṣṇa does not open His eyes and gopīs are compelled to allow female monkey to make a harsh sound. On hearing the harsh sound, Kṛṣṇa opens His eyes. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā looking at each other with wistful eyes— both are afraid thinking it is high time to return to their respective houses. They quickly run to their respective houses and entering into their houses go to bed to sleep. By the influence of Yogamāyā, Nanda Mahārāja, Yaśodā Devi, mother-in-law of Rādhārāni ‘Jatilā’ and her husband ‘Āyan Ghoṣ’ cannot detect them.

Second Period of Devotional Practice (2nd Yāma Sādhana)

Morning Bhajan— Association of devotee-sādhus, taking shelter of pure devotee— bona fide Guru (Spiritual Guide), devotional practice as per direction of Guru and removal of ulterior desires

2nd verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka
nāmnām akāri bahudhā nija-sarva-śaktis
tatrārṇpitā niyamitaḥ smaraṇe na kālaḥ
etādṛśi tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi
durdaivam īdṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ

There is no consideration of regulation in uttering Holy Name. Holy Name can be uttered anywhere and everywhere— auspicious or inauspicious time. Holy Name is All-Powerful. Amongst all forms of devotional practice, uttering of Harinām is the best.

O Supreme Lord! Your Holy Name bestows all kinds of eternal welfare to the conditioned souls. For that reason, your Principal Holy Names (Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, Gopīnāth etc.)— Original Transcendental Spiritual Names have no direct or indirect connection with the non-eternal material world. These Holy Names have descended in this world. Supreme Lord has bestowed all powers to His Names and no restriction is imposed to utter the Holy Names. No restriction of time, space— rules and regulations, for utterance and remembrance of the Holy Names. O Lord! You are so merciful to the conditioned souls i.e. out of compassion you have made easy for the conditioned souls to remember and chant Holy Names, but due to my tenfold offences and my greatest misfortune I have got no liking for Holy Name which has been made so easily obtainable.

*aneka lokera vāñchā aneka prakāra,
kṛipā te karila aneka nāmera prakāra,*

*khāite śūite yathā tathā nāma laya,
deśa-kāla-niyama nāhi sarvasiddhi haya,
sarvaśakti nāme dila kariyā vibhāga,
āmāra durdaiva nāme nāhi anurāga*

Many persons have got many desires. The significance of these many desires is— many desires for service of Kṛṣṇa with different delightful relations— Śānta, Dāsyā, Sākhya, Vātsalya, Madhur. To fulfil the desires of the devotees to serve Kṛṣṇa with different delightful relations, Kṛṣṇa appears in this world in different Names. Holy Name can be uttered anywhere and everywhere, even during eating and lying down. There is no consideration of space, time and regulation. Utterance of Holy Names can bestow all kinds of attainments. All powers have been given to the Names appearing in this world according to different delightful devotional relations, but it is my greatest misfortune, that I have got no devoted inclination for this. Bhaktivinode Thākura has given reference from Haribhaktivilāsa and significance of that reference in his own Bengali writing in the form of devotional hymn to attain one-pointed devotion:-

*ekānta bhakatera mātra kīrtan-smaraṇa,
anya parve ruchi nāhi haya pravartana,
bhāvera sahita haya śrīkṛṣṇa-sevana,
svārasikī-bhāva krame haya uddīpana,
ekānta bhakatera kriyā mudrā rāgodita,
tathāpi sei saba nāhi vidhi vipīṛita,
sarva tyāga karile o chārā sukaṭhina,
pratiṣṭhāśātyāge yatna payibe pravīna,
prabhate gabhīra rātre madhyāhne sandhyāye,
anartha chāriyā lo nāmera āśraya,
ei rūpe kīrtana smaraṇa jei kare,
kṛṣṇa-kṛpā haya śigrha, anāyāse tare,
śraddhā kari' sādhu sange kṛṣṇa-nāma laye,
anartha sakala jāye niṣṭhā upajaye,
prātaḥkāle nityalīlā karibe cintana,
cintite cintite bhāvera haibe sādhana*

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A Pure devotee who has got one-pointed devotion to Lord has got liking only to perform devotion of chanting and remembering Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He cannot be persuaded to change his taste to any other form of devotion. They serve Kṛṣṇa with delightful relation of love. According to their delightful relation, there is inspiration of gradual development of love. Devoted devotee's all actions are inspired by pure love originating from delightful relation. Such devotee's actions may seem to be against regulated devotion, persuaded by reverence, but the purpose of service to satisfy the object of worship is preserved in Rāgabhakti. Hence, devotion of a pure devotee with delightful relation, which gives satisfaction to the object of worship, cannot be against the purpose of devotion. We can renounce everything but it is very difficult to give up the desire for name and fame. The wise votary who wants development of pure devotion must be very careful in regard to this. The votary who wants Raga-Bhakti should do Harinām giving up all ulterior desires in the morning, midnight, mid-day and in the evening, i.e.— always. With this devoutness when the said votary performs 'Kīrtan' and 'Smaran', he will get grace of Kṛṣṇa soon and will be able to get the highest objective by which he will be actually emancipated from all attachments. The aspirant should utter the Name of Kṛṣṇa in the company of bona fide sādhus with firm faith, then all ulterior desires will be removed and he will get permanent fixation of the mind to the object of worship.

Morning pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa

We are to think about the second period of eternal pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa in the morning. By thinking, only by thinking, we can get development of pure divine love.

*rādhām snāta-vibhūṣitām vrajapayāhūtām sakhibhiḥ prage
tad-gehe vihitanṇa-pāka-racanām kṛṣṇāvaśeṣanām
kṛṣṇam buddham avāpta-dhenu-sadanam nirvyūḍha-go-dohanam
susnātam kṛta-bhojanam saha-caraistam cātha tām cāśrye*

Govindalīlāmṛta

I take shelter at the Lotus Feet of Srimati Rādhārāni who, after taking bath in the morning at Jāvaṭ, decorating herself with beautiful dress and various ornaments liked by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, goes to the house of Nanda Mahārāja (Nandagrām) along with other confidantes (sahkis), being called by Yaṣodā Devi, to engage herself for cooking different varieties of food for Kṛṣṇa. After Kṛṣṇa's taking of that food, she honours the remnants with great satisfaction. Here it is to be carefully noted, why Yaṣodā Devi without cooking food herself, has called Rādhārāni to cook the food. Because she has come to learn, if my beloved son takes the food prepared by Rādhārāni, His span of life will be increased as Rādhārāni has got such boon from Durvāsā Ṛṣī. Nanda Mahārāja and Yaṣodā Devi can never think 'Kṛṣṇa' to be Supreme Lord, Lord of all lords, but always think Him as their beloved little child. This is the speciality of pure love of Nanda-Yaṣodā in Braja Dhām. Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in the morning of being awakened from the sleep is also to satisfy His parents Nanda Mahārāja and Yaṣodā Devi. Nanda Mahārāja and Yaṣodā Devi do not know what happened in the night. They are happy seeing their son rising from the bed. Kṛṣṇa is always careful to give satisfaction to the cows and cowherd boys— other personal associates. As per His regular duty given by the parents to Him, He goes to the cowshed to milk the cows to give them satisfaction by touching them and after returning from cowshed, calls the cowherd boys who are His bosom friends and always anxious of getting His company to take bath. After taking bath, Kṛṣṇa sits down with other cowherd boys to eat the food cooked by Rādhārāni and distributed by Yaṣodā Devi. During these pastimes union of Rādhākṛṣṇa also occurs. I also take the shelter of the Lotus Feet of such 'Kṛṣṇa'. The aspirants for getting such Braja Prema should think about these pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa while doing Harinām in the company of ṣuddha bhaktas— pure devotees in the morning. By thinking about the pastimes and doing saṅkīrtan, the aspirants can get inspiration of Transcendental Divine Love immediately.

Third Period of Devotional Practice (3rd Yāma Sādhana)

*Niṣṭhā-bhajana— Fixation of mind to the Object of worship
(Śrī Kṛṣṇa)*

3rd Verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

*tṛṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

The person entitled to do Nāma Saṅkīrtan— the procedure of doing Harinām, is ascertained in the third verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka. The aspirant who is more humbler than a blade of grass, more forbearing than tree and who is completely devoid of desire for getting respect from others but giving due respect to all is eligible for doing Harikīrtan always.

*ye-rūpe la-ile nāma prema upajaya
tāhāra lakṣaṇa śloka śuna, svarūpa-rāma-rāya
uttama hañā āpanāke māne tṛṇādhama
dvi-prakāre sahiṣṇutā kare vṛkṣa-sama
vṛkṣa yena kāṭileha kichu nā bolaya
śukāñā mailea kāre pānī nā māgaya
yei ye māgaye, tāre deya āpana-dhana
gharma-vṛṣṭi sahe, ānera karaye rakṣaṇa
uttama hañā vaiṣṇava habe nirabhimāna
jīve sammāna dibe jāni' 'kṛṣṇa'-adhiṣṭhāna*

Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Antya, 20/20, 22-25

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu addressing Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāi Rāmānanda has said, “Hear about the scriptural verse expressing the characteristics of how to do Harinām by which pure devotional love can be manifested. In spite of being endowed with good qualities, one who considers himself more abominable than blade of grass, who has got the quality of forbearance in two ways— like the tree, in spite of being loped,

Śrī Bhajan Rahasya does not say anything but tolerates and has no aptitude to give trouble to anybody for it's own sake for getting water, i.e. for sacrificing it's own interest to fulfil the desire of others who seeks it's help. True Vaiṣṇavas are endowed with such good qualities. They see their object of worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa in all living beings and give respect to all.”

Forenoon Pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa

The blessed votary should think about it while doing Harinām—

*pūrvāhṇe dhenu-mitrair vipinam anusṛtaṁ goṣṭha-lokānuyātaṁ
kṛṣṇaṁ rādhāpti-lolaṁ tad abhisṛti-kṛte prāpta-tat-kuṇḍa-tīram
rādhāṁ cālokya kṛṣṇaṁ kṛta-gṛha-gamanāṁ āryayārkārcanāyai
diṣṭāṁ kṛṣṇa-pravṛtyai prahita-nija-sakhī-vartma-netrāṁ smarāmi*

Govindalīlāmṛta 5/1

When Kṛṣṇa with calves (or cows) and cowherd boys goes to forest, Nanda Mahārāja, Yaśodā Devi and other milkmen and milkwomen of Brajadhām are following Kṛṣṇa as long as they can see Him. They are going but when they cannot see Him, they return disappointed. Kṛṣṇa delights the calves and cowherd boys but attracted by pure devotion of Rādhārāni, goes to Rādhākuṇḍa to meet Rādhārāni, who has been anxiously waiting at Rādhākuṇḍa to see Kṛṣṇa and to get His company. Kṛṣṇa, of course, consoled the calves or cows and cowherd boys before going to Rādhākuṇḍa at noon. I remember the Lotus Feet of such Kṛṣṇa in the forenoon pastimes.

Rādhārāni is always anxious to meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa and she took advice of Kṛṣṇa, how she could come and meet Him because mother-in-law 'Jaṭilā' would not allow her to come. Kṛṣṇa has advised Rādhārāni, “You should not say you are coming to see me, then you will not get her permission. Household persons are more inclined to worship demigods to get worldly benefits. You should pray to your mother-in-law that you want to worship

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Sun-God. Then your mother-in-law will immediately approve it and allow you to worship Sun-God for getting mundane benefits. Under the pretext of worshipping Sun-God, you will be able to meet me”. Rādhārāni with great perturbation of heart has sent one confidante (sakhi) to search for Kṛṣṇa and how she can go to the particular place where Kṛṣṇa is residing and she can meet Kṛṣṇa. Rādhārāni is very anxiously awaiting for the return of the confidante to get the information where to go to see Kṛṣṇa. I remember the Lotus Feet of such Rādhārāni in the forenoon pastimes.

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Fourth Period of Devotional Practice (4th Yāma Sādhana)

*Midday pastimes— Bhajan with taste
The true worshipper of Harinām has got no other desire except
causeless devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa*

4th Verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka
*na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagad-isa kamaye
mama janmani janmanisvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaitukh tvayi*

O Supreme Lord! I have got no desire for wealth, manpower or erudition (desire for deceitful Trivarga— worldly piety, money and lust or even to merge myself with the Impersonal Formless Brahma, i.e. ‘Mukti’— salvation, which is more deceitful). My only prayer is to get causeless one-pointed devotion to You.

*griha dravya śiṣya paśu ādi dhana
stri putra dāsa dāsi kuṭumbādi jana
kāvyā alankāra ādi sundari kavita
pārthiva viśaya e saba vārtā
ei saba pāibāra āsā nāhi kari
śuddhabuddhi deha more kṛṣṇa kṛpā kari
premera svabhāva jānhā premera sambandha
sei māne kṛṣṇa mora nāhi bhakti gandha*

Srila Bhaktivinode Thākura has elaborated each desire specifically in detail. Desire for wealth— desire for a good house, property or non-eternal things of the world, desire for making disciples with worldly motive, desire for domestic animals, desire for paddy— crops etc. Desire for manpower— desire for wife, children, servants, maid servants and other relatives. Desire for erudition— Kāvya—book of verse relating to poetic drama, rhetoric art, poetical talent. All these relate to worldly matters, as such I do not want assurance to get these. O Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Kindly bestow me pure devotion.

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Here it is necessary to understand the significance of pure love and it's relation. When there will be actual pure love, the votary will have the feeling of humbleness within his heart and he will admit that he has got not even a tinge of devotion. For evidence, reference of Mahāprabhu's own saying in Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Madhya 2/45,—

*na prema-gandhosti darāpi me harau,
krandāmi saubhāgyabharam prakṛśitum
vaṁśibilāsyāna nalokanam binā,
bibhasmi yat praṇapataṅga kān vrithā*

Mahāprabhu speaks to Svarūpa Dāmodara and Rāi Rāmānanda, "I have got not even an iota of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa." Then if it is questioned, why Mahāprabhu is crying so much for Kṛṣṇa? Mahāprabhu's reply, "I am crying only to show others my reputation that I am graced by Kṛṣṇa to get such prema. Ample proof of my devoidness of actual love for Kṛṣṇa is that without seeing the sweet face of Kṛṣṇa with flute, I am still living."

Indication of Midday Pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa

*madhyāhne 'nyonya saṁgodita vividha-vikārādi-bhūṣāpramugdhou
vāmyotkaṅṭhātilolau smaramakha lalitā dyāli-narmāptaśātau
dolāraṇyāmbu-vaṁśi-hṛti-rati-madhupānārka-pūjādi-lilau
rādhā-kṛṣṇau satṛṣṇau parijana-ghaṭayā sevyamānau smarāmi
Govindalīlāmṛta*

[According to Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava school of thought, midday pastime of Rādhākṛṣṇa at Rādhakuṇḍa is the highest. Devotees of Nimbārka sampradāya also worship Rādhākṛṣṇa but they think Rāsālilā with gopīs at Vṛndāvana under Vāṁsivaṭa is the highest. The speciality of the transcendental love of the gopīs is, they do not want direct contact with Kṛṣṇa, but they want to make union of Sṛimati Rādhā with Kṛṣṇa because Rādhā's prema is more than the prema of hundred crores of

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gopīs. By getting contact with Rādhārāni, Kṛṣṇa's
transcendental sweetness is increased so much, that by seeing
that gopīs become more happy than by their direct contact
with Kṛṣṇa.] All the ecstatic feelings of highest order including
Aṣṭasāttvik-vikār— eight principal ecstatic feelings, thirty three
kinds of other subordinate ecstatic feelings— sanchāri— all
kinds of highest sweet inciting transcendental ecstatic feelings
are manifested in Rādhākuṇḍa. In no other pastimes such
excellent charmness of sweet ecstatic feelings can be found.
Some extraordinary ecstatic feelings have been mentioned
here. 'Vāmya'— crookedness of prema, external expression of
rudeness, harshness is there but inside actually just the
reverse— which is inexplicable. 'Utkaṅṭhā'— supreme
eagerness to get contact with the object of love, which removes
all kinds of restlessness but in this ecstatic feeling they have
become externally too much restless. By hearing jokes of the
gopīs Rādhākṛṣṇa get happiness. In addition to these, there
are innumerable pastimes, viz. swinging ceremony of
Rādhākṛṣṇa, pleasant strolling in the forest, water sports in
ponds and rivers, stealing of flute and other transcendental
amorous pastimes, drinking of sweet honey, worship of Sun
God etc. Rādhākṛṣṇa while engrossed in these transcendental
pastimes are served by gopīs. I remember such pastimes of
Rādhākṛṣṇa.

Fifth Period of Devotional Practice (5th Yāma Sādhana)

Afternoon Bhajan— Attachment to Kṛṣṇa

5th Verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

*ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram
patitaṁ mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-ṣaṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-sadṛśaṁ vicintaya*

O Nandanandan, in spite of my being your eternal servant, due to predicament of my own deeds, I am drowned in the terrible ocean of births and deaths. Out of compassion kindly think me as dust particle of your Lotus Feet.

Bhaktivinode Thākura's Bengali hymn (invoking Kṛṣṇa's grace)

I am your eternal servant. By forgetting you I am entangled by your illusory energy and have been drowned in the ocean of births and deaths. Kindly please consider me as dust particle of your Lotus Feet. I am your eternal servant, engage me in your service.

Indication of afternoon eternal pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa

*śrī rādhām prāpta-gehām nija-ramaṇa-kṛte kṛpta nānopahārām
susnātām ramya-veśām priya-mukha-kamalāloka-pūrṇa-pramodām
śrī kṛṣṇaṁ caivāparāhṇe vrajam anucalitaṁ dhenu-vṛndair vayasyai
śrī rādhāloka-tṛptaṁ pīṭṛ-mukha-militaṁ mātṛ-mṛṣṭaṁ smarāmi*

Govindalīlāmṛta 19/1

I remember such Srīmatī Rādhārānī who has returned from Rādhākuṇḍa to Jāvaṭ in the afternoon and is engaged for preparing various good dishes of different names— 'Amṛtkeli', 'Karpurkeli' etc. for presentation to beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Rādhārāni also takes bath nicely, dresses herself with good garments, to satisfy Śrī Kṛṣṇa and very anxiously waits on the path for the return of Kṛṣṇa from pasture and is extremely delighted to see the Lotus Face of Śrī Kṛṣṇa [It is to be very carefully noted here that whatever Rādhārāni is doing is not to satisfy her or to satisfy other persons, her ultimate target is to satisfy Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa alone. Means is justified by the end.]

Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in the afternoon— Kṛṣṇa with cows or calves and cowherd boys, returns from the grazing ground of the cows— Braja Dhām and on seeing Rādhārāni on the way, is extremely delighted. [Kṛṣṇa is attracted by the pure love of Rādhārāni.] After returning to the house, Kṛṣṇa meets His father Nanda Mahārāja and other father-like milkmen as well as mother Yaśodā and other mother-like milkwomen. All gopā-gopīs are extremely delighted to get Kṛṣṇa back and to see Him. Yaśodā Devi out of affection embraces and cleanses Kṛṣṇa. I remember such Kṛṣṇa in the afternoon.

Sixth Period of Devotional Practice (6th Yāma Sādhana)

Evening Bhajan— Bhāva (Prior stage of prema)

6th Verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

External symptoms of realized state
nayanam galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanam gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitam vapuḥ kadā
tava nāma-grahaṇe bhaviṣyati

O Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa! When by uttering your Holy Name, my eyes will be adorned with sacred glamour of the rolling down of tears, while uttering, my voice will be choked (will not be able to utter the complete Holy Name, words will be incoherent— not understandable to ordinary persons), the whole body will be horripilated (saturated with thrilling sensation).

Srila Bhaktivinode Thākura in his own writing Bengali hymn, has clearly narrated eight principal ecstatic feelings— rolling down of tears from the eyes, choking of the voice (incomplete utterance of the Holy Name), horripilation, sweating, shivering, motionlessness and paleness.

prema dhana binā vyārtha daridra jivana
dāsa kari vetana more deha premadhana

Without the wealth of ‘Prema’— pure devotional love, life is futile and poor. Kindly accepting me as your servant pay me salary— the wealth of divine love.

Hint of evening pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa

Śrī Bhajan Rahasya
*sāyam rādhām sva-sakhyā nija-ramaṇa-kṛte preṣitāneka-bhojyām
sakhyānīteṣa-śeṣāśana mudita hṛdam tām ca tam ca vrajendrum
susnātām ramya-veśam gṛham anu-janaṅ lālitām prāpta-goṣṭham
nirvyūḍho 'srālidohaṁ svagrham anu punar bhuktavantam smarāmi*
Govindalīlāmṛta, 20/1

Rādhārāni, sends the good preparations of food cooked by her in the afternoon for Kṛṣṇa through one confidante (sakhi) to Nandagrām in the evening. Sakhi brings those good preparations of food from Jāvaṭ to Nandagrām and offers to Yaṣodā Devi. Yaṣodā Devi feeds her child Kṛṣṇa with great affection and satisfaction. After Kṛṣṇa's taking food, the remnant— prasād, has been brought back by sakhi from Nandagrām to Jāvaṭ and is offered to Rādhārāni. Rādhārāni takes the remnant— Kṛṣṇa's Prasad, with great satisfaction. I remember such sweet pastimes of Rādhārāni.

Kṛṣṇa's pastimes— Yaṣodā Devi bathes the child nicely and dresses the child with good garments and adores the child on her lap inside the house, shows affection to the child for taking so much trouble for tending the cows in the pasture moving through the forest with soft Feet over stone chips and thorns. After pacifying the child, Yaṣodā Devi persuades the child to go to the cowshed to milk the cows, otherwise how it will be possible to maintain the family. On hearing the desire of mother, Kṛṣṇa immediately goes to cowshed with other cowherd boys to milk the cows. Kṛṣṇa gives satisfaction to the cows and also to other gopīs. Cows are extremely happy to see Kṛṣṇa and to get nectar of the sweet touch of Kṛṣṇa. Out of spontaneous love the cows are giving milk automatically. Kṛṣṇa returns to the house and gladly takes the food prepared by Rādhārāni sent through sakhi. I remember such sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in the evening with great adoration.

Seventh Period of Devotional Practice (7th Yāma Sādhana)

Devotional spiritual practice at Dusk
‘Prema’— Divine Love in separation

7th Verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

Internal symptoms of realized state or highest objective—
‘Premabhakti’

yugāyitaṁ nimeṣeṇa cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam
śūnyāyitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ govinda-viraheṇa me

Symptoms of separation grief— even a moment’s separation from Govinda will be considered as an epoch, tears will roll down from the eyes like rainfall, realization of the voidness of the whole world.

Srila Bhaktivinode Thākura’s writing:-

Due to separation grief, these symptoms will be manifested— every day is spent with anxiety, one moment of separation is equal to an epoch, tears are rolling down from the eyes like the clouds of rainy season, voidness of three worlds, due to extreme separation grief from Govinda burning sensation like inextinguishable fire made with husk yet life is not collapsing.

Indication of pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa at dusk

rādhāṁ sālīgaṇāntām asitasitanisā-yogyā-veśāṁ pradoṣe
dutyā vṛndā-padeśādabhiṣṭa-yamunā-tīra-kalpāga-kuñjām
kṛṣṇaṁ goṣaiḥ sabhāyām vihita-guṇi kalālōkanam snigdha mātṛā
yatnādānīya saṁśāyitam atha nibhṛtaṁ prāpta-kuñjaṁ smarāmi
Govindalīlāmṛta, 21/1

Srīmatī Rādhikā, as per advice of Vṛndā Devi, at dusk wearing garments of black and white colour, suitable to dark fortnight and bright fortnight respectively (with the desire to hide herself from the detection of others), in the company of sakhis (confidantes), with female messenger (gopī), goes to Sanket Kuñja (particular suggested grove) under wish-yielding tree, saturated by beautiful sacred surroundings at the bank of the Yamuna to meet beloved Kṛṣṇa at the appointed time and place.

On the other side, Kṛṣṇa's pastimes at dusk— Kṛṣṇa has satisfied all His personal associates except gopas (milkmen). The gopas are disheartened not to get scope to serve Kṛṣṇa, but as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Omniscient, He knows the minds of the milkmen. When milkmen want to exhibit some interesting games and sports with skillfulness and Kṛṣṇa is invited to come to the special meeting place to see the sports, Kṛṣṇa immediately accepts the proposal and goes to the meeting place to see nice skillfulness of the gopas and the sports and wrestling activities. Kṛṣṇa is so much attracted by seeing the sports, He is requesting to demonstrate different sports, one after another. Affectionate mother Yaśodā Devi is very much worried on seeing the son not coming from the meeting and going to bed. Yaśodā Devi is repeatedly calling the son for going to bed to sleep, but the son is not coming. Such is the nature of restless children. Yaśodā Devi goes herself to 'Kṛṣṇa' to pacify the child and to ask the wrestlers to stop showing wrestling and their skillfulness. She brings the child to bed and sings songs to make the child sleep. When Kṛṣṇa has sound sleep, Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā Devi are happy. They also go to bed for sleep but what happens— Kṛṣṇa being attracted by pure devotion of Rādhā, secretly leaves the bed and goes to Sanket Kuñja (the said particular grove) to meet Rādhārāni at dusk. I remember such Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Eighth Period of Devotional Practice (8th Yāma Sādhana)

Night pastimes
Prema Bhajan in direct contact
Great devoutness to complete realized state or to highest
objective— 'Prema-bhakti'

8th Verse of Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka

Excessive subservience to Kṛṣṇa alone
āśliṣya vā pāda-ratām pinaṣtu mām
adarśanān marma-hatām karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo
mat-prāna-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ

Jewel amongst all beloved gopīs Srīmatī Rādhikā's apophthegm— Śrī Kṛṣṇa can crush this maid servant, devoted to His Lotus Feet, by firmly embracing me or mortifying me anywhere and everywhere by His profligate behaviour with any of His beloved gopīs, yet He is my dearest beloved and nobody else.

In this context, it will be relevant to go through one verse of Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Antya līlā 20/52), written by Srīla Kṛṣṇadās Kavirāj Goswāmī:-

nā gaṇi āpana dukha, sabe vāñchi tāra sukha,
tāra sukha āmāro tātparya,
more yadi diyā dukha, tāra hailo mahāsukha,
sei dukha mora sukhavarjya

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, accepting the mode of worship and form of Rādhārānī, with extreme separation grief, has stated thus— Rādhārānī's apophthegm. Only Rādhārānī can speak like this— "I do not consider my own grief, I only want His contentment, my purpose is His satisfaction. If by giving suffering to me, He becomes very happy, that distress to me

Śrī Bhajan Rahasya will be my highest contentment.” Nobody on earth can inflict suffering to any person who is well-established in such thought or atleast sincerely endeavouring to attain such state of mind.

Indication of night pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa

*tāv utkau labdha-saṅgau bahu-paricaraṇair vṛndayārādhyamānau
preṣṭhālibhir lasantau vipīna-viharaṇair gāna-rāsādilāsyaiḥ
nānā-lilā-nitāntau praṇaya-sahacarḥ vṛnda-saṁsevyamānau
rādhā-kṛṣṇau niśāyāṁ sukusuma-śayane prāpta-nidrau smarāmi
Govindalilāmṛta, 22/1*

Only dearest confidantes are entitled to enter into the night pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa. Sakhis always try for the union of Rādhākṛṣṇa. Actually, Rādhākṛṣṇa are very much eager for mutual union at night. When Rādhākṛṣṇa’s union is manifested, Vṛndā Devi with dearest sakhis worship Rādhākṛṣṇa in various ways. After that Rādhākṛṣṇa with those sakhis move in the forest, sing songs, do Rāsālilā with dancing etc. When Rādhākṛṣṇa, by doing so much pastimes become extremely fatigued, most beloved sakhis serve them nicely and at the end, make nice bed with flowers where Rādhākṛṣṇa make the pastimes of sleep. I remember such sweet pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa.

Our Revered Guruvargas used to caution us by saying— only eligible votaries can remember the pastimes of Rādhākṛṣṇa of mid-day at Rādhākuṇḍa, dusk pastimes and night pastimes of Rāsālilā.

Girirāja-Govardhana

Appearance of Govardhana and appellation of “Girirāja”

The appearance of Śrī Govardhana in this world and how He acquired the appellation of “Girirāja” is described in the *Garga-saṁhitā* (*Vṛndāvana-khaṇḍa*, chapter 2) of Śrī Gargācārya in the conversation between Nanda Mahārāja and his senior advisor, the *gopa* Sananda. Sananda spoke to Nanda Mahārāja giving reference to the conversation between Pāṇḍu and Bhīṣma.

Desiring to appear in this world to allay the earth’s burden of grave sins committed by the demoniac, Śrī Kṛṣṇa directed Rādhikā to appear in this world. However, Rādhārāṇī expressed Her unwillingness to go to a place where Vṛndāvana, Yamunā and Śrī Govardhana were not present. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then sent His own Transcendental Spiritual Realm of Vraja-dhāma, an area of 84 *krośa* or 252 kilometers (1 *krośa* is equal to 3 kilometers), to descend to India in this world. Vraja-dhāma is not a part of the material world consisting of earth, water, fire, air and sky. Govardhana appeared as the son of the mountain Droṇa in Śālmālī Island in western India. All the demigods were exceedingly delighted at the appearance of Govardhana and showered down flowers.

All the big mountains such as the Himālayas and Sumeru were happy to hear about Govardhana’s appearance. They came to pay their homage to Govardhana and to worship Him. In their prayers they said, “Since Govardhana is the holy place of pastimes of the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the

Girirāja-Govardhana

Transcendental Sweet Realm of Goloka, He is the King of all mountains and the crown of Goloka. He is like an umbrella for Parabrahman Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Vṛndāvana is within His lap.” Since then, Govardhana has been renowned as “Girirāja.”

Pulastya Muni is one of the seven mind-born sons of Brahmā known as the Mānasa-Putra. Once upon a time, Pulastya Muni was traveling on pilgrimage and came to Śālmālī Island. There, he was astonished and charmed to see the extraordinary beauty of Govardhana mountain adorned with a variety of fruit and flower trees, pleasant sitting places, springs, radishes, soft grass, etc. When Pulastya Muni approached Droṇācala, he was worshipped by Droṇācala. Pulastya Muni said to Droṇa, “I live in Kāśī which has special significance due to the presence of the Ganges and Viśveśvara Mahādeva. Sinners go there to get salvation, but my desire is to perform penance there after installing Govardhana”. Although extremely worried due to his affection for the child, Droṇācala was fearful of being cursed by Pulastya Muni and directed the child to go to the holy land of Bhārata (India) with the Muni. Initially, Govardhana was 64 miles long, 40 miles wide and 16 miles high [The present length of Govardhana is approximately 7 miles]. The question arose as to how the Muni would carry the big mountain Govardhana. Pulastya Muni said that he could easily carry the mountain on the palm of his hand. Govardhana agreed to go with the Muni on the condition that if he put Him anywhere on the ground while going, Govardhana would remain there due to His great weight and would not move. Pulastya Muni accepted the condition and promised to carry the mountain to the destination without putting Him down on the land. The Muni then began to move slowly to his destination while carrying Govardhana on the palm of his right hand. But when the Muni reached Vraja-dhāma, Govardhana saw the Yamunā and Vṛndāvana and remembered the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. He wanted to remain there and therefore became very heavy. The

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Muni became very much distressed and, forgetting his promise, put the mountain down on the land. After finishing his daily evacuation, bath and *sandhyā-pūjā* (silent recitation of prayers), Pulastya Muni returned to the place and asked Govardhana to sit on the palm of his hand. Govardhana, however, expressed His reluctance at moving. Pulastya Muni tried his best to lift the mountain but was unable to move Him. He became enraged and cursed Govardhana that He would diminish in size every day according to the measure of one sesame seed.

The present diminished Govardhana is about 7 miles long. As long as Govardhana exists, the current black age of Kali-yuga will not be able to show its paramount power. But after thousands of years when Govardhana and the Yamunā have disappeared, Kali will be vehemently strong and all living beings will be oppressed and tortured to the extreme. The plight of human beings will then be precarious.

Govardhana-Dharan-Lilā (The lifting of Govardhana)

The Original Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has revealed the ontological aspects and glories of Śrī Govardhana. It has been especially narrated in the most ancient history and civilization of India mentioned in the *Ṛg Veda* that Indra, the presiding deity of the clouds, was worshipped on the Earth so that crops could be grown and reanimated by rainfall. We hear from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that according to human tradition and custom, annual worship of Indra was introduced in Vraja-dhāma so that there could be cultivation of land and protection of the cows. That was the only means of livelihood for the residents of Vraja-dhāma.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that His father Nanda Mahārāja and other milkmen had collected many articles for the Indrayāg (oblation ceremony for the worship of Indra). Śrī Kṛṣṇa asked His father about the utility of performing such a function. Nanda Mahārāja said that if Indra, the presiding deity of the clouds

Girirāja-Govardhana

was propitiated, there would be rainfall at the appropriate time. Thereby, paddy crops and grasses would be grown and that would be helpful for their livelihood and for the sustenance of the cows. Nanda Mahārāja again said, “If we neglect to perform our hereditary custom and duty, we will never get eternal welfare.” After hearing this from His father and other milkmen, in order to infuriate Indra, Śrī Kṛṣṇa made the Vrajavāsīs (residents of Vraja) understand the futility of the worship of Indra and convinced them of the efficacy of worshipping Govardhana: “Indra is a demigod without any hold over the fruits of actions. He cannot award bad fruit for a good action and good fruit for a bad action. Birth and death, happiness and affliction are due to the actions of the individual souls. Even worldly actions are the cause of enmity, friendship and indifference. Indra cannot undo the fruits of actions. Although cultivation, trade, protection of cows and money-lending are the livelihood of the *vaiśyas* (trader class of society), the Vrajavāsīs have only accepted protection of the cows as their principal means of livelihood. The residents of Vraja-dhāma live in the forests and mountains; therefore, cities, crowded human habitation and houses are not good for them. Therefore, they should start an oblation function for the worship of the cows, *brāhmaṇas* and mountains. Just as an unchaste lady who leaves her husband cannot get actual welfare by serving another person, similarly, the Vrajavāsīs cannot get actual welfare by serving others, leaving the service of Girirāja Govardhana Who is their actual shelter.” Kṛṣṇa advised the milkmen of Vraja-dhāma to worship Girirāja Govardhana with all the articles collected for the Indrayāg. He also advised them to bring milk, yoghurt and other milk products to cook different preparations of food, viz. *Pāyasa* (preparation of milk, rice and sugar), *Mudgasūpa* (soup prepared from a kind of pigeon pea or pulse), *Piṣṭaka* and *Śaṣkuli* (sweet preparations made of rice, coconut, sugar and milk). Kṛṣṇa also directed them in the method of worship of Girirāja Govardhana: “It should be done by the ceremony of giving away cows and

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offering honorarium to the Vedic *brāhmaṇas* who will perform the oblation. *Brāhmaṇas* should be served with good preparations of food. After that, all others, including the *Caṇḍālas* (lowest caste), fallen persons and dogs should be served with appropriate offerings. Cows should be served with fresh grass. After Govardhana-pūjā, everyone should be adorned with ornaments, good dresses and anointments and should sit down to honour *prasāda*. Lastly, everyone should circumambulate Govardhana mountain with the cows, *brāhmaṇas* and the Fire-god.” Being enchanted and subdued by his deep parental affection, Nanda Mahārāja worshipped Girirāja Govardhana and all the *brāhmaṇas* properly with all the articles collected for the Indrayāg, as per the desire of his beloved son Śrī Kṛṣṇa. After that, while serving the cows with grass and straw, Nanda Mahārāja performed *parikramā* of Govardhana with all the *gopas* and *gopīs*, with the cows leading in front. All the *gopas* were adorned with beautiful ornaments and the *gopīs* sitting on the bullock-carts performed Govardhana *parikramā* while constantly singing the glories of Kṛṣṇa. To proclaim to the Vrajavāsīs that Girirāja Govardhana is non-different from Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa repeatedly and loudly uttered the words, “I am the mountain Govardhana,” and began to eat all the offerings given to Govardhana by extending thousand of hands. In another Form of Gopāla, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, Kṛṣṇa made obeisances to His own manifested Form of Govardhana. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself introduced the practice of making prostrated obeisances to Govardhana as well as the circumambulation of Govardhana. Those who disregard Govardhana will be killed by Him in the form of serpents, etc.

Devarāja Indra, the emperor of the demigods, became furious at the Vrajavāsīs for stopping the Indrayāg. Indra oppressed the Vrajavāsīs by incessant heavy rainfall and a strong hailstorm-like cataclysm. All the Vrajavāsīs were severely distressed and took shelter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa then

Girirāja-Govardhana protected them by lifting Govardhana with His left hand. Later on, Devarāja Indra could understand his mistake and came to Kṛṣṇa with the Surabhi cow. He worshipped Kṛṣṇa and prayed to Him to forgive his offence. Girirāja Govardhana is identical with Kṛṣṇa and He is also the foremost servitor of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prays to Girirāja Govardhana as follows:

*giri-nṛpa! haridāsa-śreṇi-varyeti-nāmā
mṛtam idam uditam śrī-rādhikā-vaktra-candrāt
vraja-nava-tilakatve kṛpta! vedaiḥ sphutam me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam
(Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam, verse 8)*

“O Girirāja Govardhana, when your nectarean name was uttered from the lotus lips of Śrīmatī Rādhikā in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.21.18), ‘*Hantāyam adrir abalā hari-dāsa-varyaḥ*,’ i.e. ‘O simple-hearted innocent *gopīs*, this mountain is foremost amongst all the servitors of Śrī Hari,’ then you were consecrated by all the Vedas as the new beautiful *tilaka* (sandalpaste mark) of Vraja-dhāma. I therefore pray to you to bestow me a dwelling place in your vicinity.”

The Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa stopped the worship of the demigods and introduced the worship of Govardhana, i.e. He introduced the service of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa-*bhaktas*. One meaning of Govardhana is to enhance the sense-organs, so Govardhana-pūjā signifies the enhancement of the transcendental eternal spiritual sense-organs of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa-*bhaktas*.

Since heaps of various items of cooked vegetable dishes were offered to Girirāja Govardhana in Govardhana-pūjā, this festival is also well-known as the Annakūṭa Festival. Śrī Govardhana-dhāri Gopāla was originally installed by Vajra (the

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grandson of Kṛṣṇa and son of Aniruddha). Due to Śrīla Mādhavendra Puripāda's extraordinary pure devotion, Govardhana-dhāri Gopāla reappeared in Govardhana near the bank of Govinda-kuṇḍa. Mādhavendra Puripāda performed the Annakūṭa Festival in Kali-yuga. This topic is narrated in detail in the *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta* (*Madhya-līlā*, chap. 4).

Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam

[Eight verses in adoration of Damodar : by Satyavrata Muni

Verse 1 *namāmīśvaram sac-cid-ānanda-rūpaṁ
lasat-kuṇḍalam gokule bhrājamānam
yaśodā-bhiyolūkhalād-dhāvamānam
parāmṛṣṭam atyantato drutya gopyā*

I lie prostrate in obeisance to the Lotus Feet of Supreme Lord ‘Damodar’ [Damodar— Krishna with corded belly], Who is Eternal-Omniscient-Ever Blissful, Whose earring is constantly swinging, Who is the glowing Beauty of Gokul, Who after stealing cream, out of fear of being apprehended by mother ‘Yasoda’, leaped from mortar and fled. Mother Yasoda seeing this followed the child very speedily and caught hold of His back.

Verse 2 *rudantaṁ muhur netra-yugmaṁ mṛjantam
karāmbhoja-yugmena sātaṅka-netram
muhuḥ śvāsa-kampā-tri-rekhāṅka-kaṇṭha-
sthita-graivam dāmodaram bhakti-baddham*

Apprehending of being beaten by mother, child Krishna is crying and rubbing His two eyes again and again, Who is looking with panic, Whose neck is adorned with three charming thin lines created by repeated breathing and shivering and due to that Whose golden necklace is oscillating, Whose belly is fastened by mother Yasoda with rope, I sing the wonderful glories of Sri Damodar, Who is bound by pure devotion.

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Verse 3 *itīḍṛk-sva-līlābhir ānanda-kuṇḍe*
 sva-ghoṣaṁ nīmajjantam ākhyāpayantam
 tadīyeśīta-jñeṣu bhaktair jitatvaṁ
 ṇaṇḥ prematās taṁ śatāvṛtti vande

I, again, in loving devotion sing in adoration of the Lotus Feet of Supreme Lord Damodar by hundreds of hymns because Sri Damodar has immersed all residents of Gokul in the holy charming pond of boyhood pastimes and He has proclaimed to the devotees performing reverential worship that He can be only conquered by sweet devotion of Vrajadham, emanating from intimate delightful relation.

Verse 4 *varam deva mokṣaṁ na mokṣāvadhīm vā*
 na cānyaṁ vṛṇe 'haṁ vareśād apīha
 idaṁ te vapur nātha gopāla-bālaṁ
 sadā me manasy āvirāstām kim anyaiḥ

O beloved God (devoted to childhood sweet pastimes)! Although you are competent to bestow all kinds of boons, I do not want from you chaturtha varga— fourth pursuit salvation, even beyond salvation I do not want condensed bliss of Vaikuntha. I do not ask for any other boon. O Lord! I only want eternal appearance of your sweet childhood Form 'Gopal' in my heart and nothing else.

Verse 5 *idaṁ te mukhāmbhojam atyanta-nīlair-*
 vṛtaṁ kuntalaiḥ snigdha-raktaiś ca goṇyā
 muhuś cumbitaṁ bimba-raktādharmaṁ me
 manasy āvirāstām alaṁ lakṣa-lābhaiḥ

O Lord! May your beautiful lotus face enclosed by dark blue and pleasant crimson colour hairs and your red lips similar to 'bimba' fruit (red colour fruit) kissed repeatedly by mother Yasoda, appear in my heart. I do not need to get millions of other attainments.

Verse 6 *namo deva dāmodarānanta viṣṇo
prasīda prabho duḥkha-jālābdhi-magnam
kṛpā-dṛṣṭi-vṛṣṭyāti-dīnam batānu-
grhāṇeśa mām ajñam edhy akṣi-dṛśyaḥ*

○ God! O Damodar! O Unlimited! O Overlord! I bow down in obeisance to your Lotus Feet. Kindly be gracious to me as I am submerged in the ocean of series of sufferings due to my aversion to you. Please rescue me— a wretched soul, from the aforesaid severe suffering by showering your compassionate glance and appear before me with your natural sweet Form.

Verse 7 *kuverātmajau baddha-mūrtyaiva yad-vat
tvayā mocitau bhakti-bhājau kṛtau ca
tathā prema-bhaktim svakām me prayaccha
na mokṣe graho me 'sti dāmodareha*

○ Damodar! You accepted mother's tie of affection— your fastening with the mortar and make the pastimes of liberating deserving persona Nalakuver and Manigriv, sons of Sri Kuver and bestow bhakti upon them. In a like manner, kindly give me the same Prembhakti. I do not aspire for salvation like Nalakuver and Manigriv. (I want only pure devotion to you to engage me completely in your service.)

Verse 8 *namas te 'stu dāmne sphurad dīpti-dhāmne
tvadīyodarāyātha viśvasya dhāmne
namo rādhikāyai tvadīya priyāyai
namo 'nanta-līlāya devāya tubhyam*

○ Damodar! I bow with devoutness to the blooming bright fastening cord of your belly. After that I also make my humble obeisance to your belly as receptacle of the whole universe (Brahmanda). I make prostrated obeisances to your dearest consort Srimati Radhika and also to you— Supreme Lord, endowed with the opulence of making infinite pastimes.

Asta-kaliya-yam Kirtan

(songs for eight Period of devotional service)

Śikṣāṣṭaka Song 1

pīta-varaṇa kali-pāvana gorā
gāoī aichana bhāva-vibhorā (1)

citta-darpana-parimārjaṇa-kārī
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya citta bihārī (2)

helā-bhava-dāva-nirvāṇa-vṛtti
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya kleśa-nivṛtti (3)

śreyah-kumuda-vidhu-jyotsnā-prakāśa
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya bhakti-vilāsa (4)

viśuddha-vidyā-vadhū jīvana-rūpa
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya siddha-swarūpa (5)

ānanda-payo-nidhi-wardhana-kīrti
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya plāvana-mūrti (6)

pade pade pīyūṣa-swāda-pradātā
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya prema-vidhātā (7)

bhaktivinoda-svātma-snapana-vidhāna
kṛṣṇa-kīrtana jaya prema-nidāna (8)

Lila kirtan one

dekhiyā aruṇodoy, vṛndā-devi byasta hoy,
kuñje nānā raba korāilo
śuka-śārī padya śuni, uṭhe rādhā-nīlamaṇi,
sakhī-gaṇa dekhi' hṛṣṭa hoilo (1)

kālocita sulalita, kakkhaṭīra rabe bhīta
rādhā-kṛṣṇa sa-tṛṣṇa haiyā
nija nija gṛhe gelā, nibhṛte śayana kailā
duñhe bhaji se lilā smariyā (2)

ei lilā smaro āra gāo kṛṣṇa-nāma,
kṛṣṇa-lilā prema-dhana pābe kṛṣṇa-dhāma (3)

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Śikṣāṣṭaka song two ~

tuñhu doyā-sāgara tārayite prāñī
nām aneka tuyā śikhāoli āni' (1)

sakala śakati dei' nāme tohārā
grahaṇe rākholi nāhi kāla-vicārā (2)

śrī-nāma-cintāmaṇi tohāri samānā
viśve bilāoli karuṇā-nidānā (3)

tuyā doyā aichana parama-udārā
atiśoy manda nātha! bhāga hāmārā (4)

nāhi janamalo nāme anurāga mora
bhaktivinoda-citta duḥkhe vibhora (5)

Lila kirtan two ~

rādhā snāta vibhūṣita, śrī-yaśodā-samāhūta,
sakhī-saṅge tad-gṛhe gamana
tathā pāka-viracana, śrī-kṛṣṇāvaśeṣāśana
madhye madhye duñhāra milana (1)

kṛṣṇa nidrā porihori', goṣṭhe go-dohana kori',
snānāśana sahacara-saṅge
ei līlā cintā koro, nāma-preme goro-goro,
prāte bhakta-jana saṅge raṅge (2)

ei līlā cinto āra koro saṅkīrtana
acire pāibe tumi bhāva-uddīpana (3)

Śikṣāṣṭaka song three ~

śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtane jadi mānasa tohāra
parama jatane tāhi labho adhikāra (1)

tṛṇādhika hīna dīna, akiñcana chāra
āpane mānobi sadā chāri' ahañkāra (2)

vṛkṣa-sama kṣamā-guṇa korobi sādhana
pratihimsā tyaji' anye korobi pālana (3)

jīvana-nirvāhe āne udvega nā dibe
para-upakāre nija-sukha pāsaribe (4)

hoile-o sarva-guṇe guṇī mahāśoṇa
pratiṣṭhāśā chāri koro amānī hṛdoya (5)

kṛṣṇa-adhiṣṭhāna sarva-jive jāni' sadā
korobi sammāna sabe ādare sarvadā (6)

dainya, doyā, anye māna, pratiṣṭhā-varjana
cāri guṇe guṇī hoi' koroha kīrtana (7)

bhakativinoda kāñdi', bole prabhu-pāy
heno adhikāra kabe dibe he āmāy (8)

Lila kirtan three ~

dhenu-sahacara-saṅge, kṛṣṇa vane jāya raṅge,
goṣṭha-jana anuvrata hari
rādhā-saṅga labhe punaḥ, rādhā-kuṇḍa-taṭa-vana,
jāya dhenu saṅgi parihari (1)

kṛṣṇera iṅgita pāiyā, rādhā nija gṛhe jāiyā
jaṭilājñā loy sūryārcane
gupte kṛṣṇa-patha lakhi', kata-kṣane āise sakhī
vyākulitā rādhā smari mane (2)

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Śikṣāṣṭaka song four ~

prabhu tava pada-yuge mora nivedana
nāhi māgi deha-sukha vidyā dhana jana(1)

nāhi māgi svarga āra mokṣa nāhi māgi
nā kori prārthanā kona vibhūtira lāgi' (2)

nija-karma-guṇa-doṣe je je janma pāi
janme janme jena tava nāma-guṇa gāi (3)

ei mātra āśā mama tomāra caraṇe
ahaitukī bhakti hṛde jāge anukṣane (4)

viṣaye je prīti ebe āchaye āmāra
sei mata prīti hauk caraṇe tomāra (5)

vipade sampade tāhā thākuka sama-bhāve
dine dine vṛddhi hauk nāmera prabhāve (6)

paśu-pakṣi ho'ye thāki svarge vā niroye
tava bhakti rohu bhaktivinoda-hṛdoye (7)

Lila kirtan four ~

rādhā-kuṇḍe sumilana vikārādi vibhūṣaṇa
vāmyotkaṇṭhā mugdha-bhāva-līlā
sambhoga narmādi-rīti dolā-khelā vaṁśī-hṛti
madhu-pāna sūrya-pūjā khelā (1)

jala-khelā vanyāśana chala-supti vanyāṭana
bahu līlānande dui jane
parijana suveṣṭita rādhā kṛṣṇa susevita
madhyāhna-kālete smari mane (2)

Śikṣāṣṭaka song five ~

anādi karama-phale porī' bhavārnava-jale
taribāre nā dekhi upāy
e viṣaya-halāhale divā-niśī hiyā jvale
mon kabhu sukha nāhi pāy (1)

āśā-pāśa śata śata kleśa deya avirata
pravṛtti ūrmira tāhe khelā
kāma-krodha-ādi choy bāṭapāḍe deya bhoy
avasāna hoilo āśī' belā (2)

jñāna-karma-ṭhog dui, more pratāriyā loi'
avaśeṣe phele sindhu-jale
e-heno samaye bandhu, tumi kṛṣṇa kṛpā-sindhu
kṛpā kori' tolo more bole (3)

patita-kiṅkore dhori', pāda-padma-dhuli kori'
deho bhaktivinode āśroy
āmi tava nitya-dāsa, bhuliyā māyāra pāśa
baddha hoye āchi dayā-moy (4)

Lila kirtan five ~

śrī rādhikā gṛhe gelā, kṛṣṇa lāgi viracilā,
nānā-vidha khādyā upahār
snāta ramya veśa dhori', priya-mukhekṣaṇa kori',
purnānanda pāilo apār (1)

śrī-kṛṣṇa aparāhṇa-kāle, dhenu mitra loiyā cole,
pathe rādhā-mukha nirakhiyā
nandādi milana kori, yaśodā mārjita hari,
smaro mon ānandita hoiyā (2)

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Śikṣāṣṭaka song six ~

aparādha-phale mama, citta bhelo vajra-sama
tuyā nāme nā labhe vikār
hatās hoiye hari, tava nāma ucca kori'
boro duḥkhe ḍāki bāra bāra (1)

dīna dayāmoy karuṇā-nidān
bhāva-bindu dei' rākhoho parāṇ (2)

kabe tuyā nāma-uccaraṇe mora
nayane jhorabo dara dara lora (3)

gada-gada svara kaṇṭhe upajabo
mukhe bola ādha ādha bāhirābo (4)

pulake bhorabo śarīra hāmāra
sveda-kampa-stambha hobe bāra bāra (5)

vivarṇa-śarīre hārāobuñ jñāna
nāma-samāśraye dhorobuñ parāṇa (6)

milabo hāmāra kiye aiche dīna
roye bhaktivinoda mati-hīna (7)

Lila Kirtan Six ~

śrī-rādhikā sāyam-kāle, kṛṣṇa lāgi' pāṭhāile
sakhī-haste vividha miṣṭānna
kṛṣṇa-bhukta-śeṣa āni', sakhī dilo sukha māni'
pāñā rādhā hoilo prasanna (1)

snāta ramya-veśā dhori', yaśodā lālita hari
sakhā-saha go-dohana kore
nānā-vidha pakva anna, pāñā hoilo parasanna
smari āmi parama ādare (2)

Śikṣāṣṭakam song seven ~

gāite gāite nāma ki daśā hoilo
kṛṣṇa-nitya-dāsa mui hṛdaye sphurilo (1)
jānilām māyā-pāse e jaḍa-jagate
govinda-virahe duḥkha pāi nānā-mate (2)

āra je saṁsāra mora nāhi lāge bhālo
kānhā jāi' kṛṣṇa heri e cintā viśāla (3)

kāndite kāndite mora ānkhi bariṣoy
barṣā-dhārā heno cakṣe hoilo udoy (4)

nimeṣe hoilo mora śata-yuga-sama
govinda-viraha āra sahite akṣama (5)

sūnya dharā-tala cau-dike dekhiye
parāṇa udāsa hoy
ki kori ki kori sthira nāhi hoy
jīvana nāhiko roy (6)

braja-bāsī-gaṇa, mora prāṇa rākha
dekhāo śrī-rādhā-nāthe
bhakativinoda, minati māniyā
laohē tāhāre sāthe (7)

śrī-kṛṣṇa-viraha āra sahite nā pāri
parāṇa chārite āra dina dui cāri (8)

[Daśakuśī]

gāite govinda-nāma, upajilo bhāva-grām
dekhilām jamunāra kūle
vṛṣabhānu-sutā-saṅge śyāma-naṭa-bara raṅge
bāṁsarī bājāy nīpa-mūle (1)

dekhiyā yugala-dhana, asthira hoilo mon

jñāna-hārā hoinu tokhon
koto kṣane nāhi jāni, jñāna-lābha hoilo māni
āra nāhi bhelo daraśan (2)

[Jhānphi—Lophā]

sakhi go kemote dhoribo parāṇ
nimeṣa hoilo jugera samāna (1)

śrāvaṇera dhārā, ānkhi bariṣoy
śūnya bhelo dharā-tala
govinda-virahe, prāṇa nāhi rohe
kemane bāncibo bolo (2)

bhakativinoda, asthira hoiyā
punaḥ nāmāśraya kori'
ḍake rādhā-nātha, diyā daraśan
prāṇa rākho nahe mori (3)

Lila kirtan seven ~

rādhā vṛndā upadeśe, yamunopakula-deśe,
sāṅketika-kuñje abhisāre
sitāsītā niśā jogya, dhori' veśa kṣṣṇa-bhogya,
sakhī-saṅge sānanda antare (1)

gopa-sabhā mājhe hari, nānā-guṇa-kalā heri
mātṛ-jatne korilo śayan
rādhā-saṅga soṅāriyā nibhṛte bāhira hañā
prāpta-kuñja koriye smaraṇ

Śikṣāṣṭaka song eight ~

āmi kṛṣṇa-pada dāsī, teṅho rasa sukha-rāśī,
āliṅgiyā kare ātma-sātha
kivā nā deya darasana, nā jāne mora tanu mana,
tabu teṅho mora prāṇa-nātha

Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Antya Līlā 20.48–52)

Lila kirtan eight ~

vṛndā-paricarya pāiyā, preṣṭhāli-gaṇere loiyā
rādhā kṛṣṇa rāsādika-līlā
gīta-lāsyā koilo kata, sevā koilo sakhī joto,
kusuma-śajyāya duṅhe śuilā (1)

niṣā-bhāge nidrā gelo, sabe ānandita hoilo,
sakhī-gaṇa parānande bhāse
e sukha-śayana smari', bhaja mana rādhā-hari
sei līlā praveśera āśe (2)

About the Author

His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Ballabh Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāj is the foremost spiritual leader of the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates in the world today. His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Ballabh Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāj is the present President-Ācārya of the Śrī Caitanya Gauḍiya Maṭha devotional institution and the Founder of GOKUL (Global Organisation of Kṛṣṇacaitanya's Universal Love). He also serves as president of the World Vaiṣṇava Association (WVA).

Śrīla Bhakti Ballabh Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāj appeared in 1924 in Assam, India, on Rāma-Navami. While studying at the Calcutta University, he came in contact with his spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāj, and immediately became attracted by his transcendental, powerful personality. After completing his Masters Degree in Philosophy in 1947, Śrīla Tīrtha Mahārāj wholeheartedly and unreservedly dedicated his life to the service of his spiritual master. After the disappearance of his beloved spiritual master Śrīla Mādhava Mahārāj in 1979, Śrīla Tīrtha Mahārāj was appointed as President-Ācārya of the Sree Chaitanya Gaudiya Matha.

For the last five decades, Śrīla Tīrtha Mahārāj has been engaged in the propagation of the all-embracing doctrine of transcendental Divine Love of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to counter the present trend of violence and cruelty, and to bring about unity of hearts among all, irrespective of caste, creed or religion. "Example is better than precept" is his way of preaching. Śrīla Tīrtha Mahārāj is known for not deviating even one inch outside of the four corners of the prescripts of

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the Holy Scriptures. His Divine Grace is a renowned authority on Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy and is beloved by thousands of devotees throughout the world as the very embodiment of humility and spiritual affection.

Since 1997, Srila Bhakti Ballabh Tirtha Goswami Maharaja has been traveling the globe several months a year enlivening all who come in contact with his sweet personality and message of divine love.

His Divine Grace has authored numerous articles and books of a profoundly spiritual nature in several Indian languages, as well as in English. To date, his books in English include Śuddha Bhakti, Sages of Ancient India, A Taste of Transcendence, Śrī Caitanya: His Life and Associates, Daśavatāra, Nectar of Hari Kathā The Holy life of Śrīla B. D. Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāj, Guru Tattva, Affectionately Yours, Sri Archana Paddhati and Hari Kathā and Vaiṣṇava Aparādha.