

THE GLORIOUS SAINT

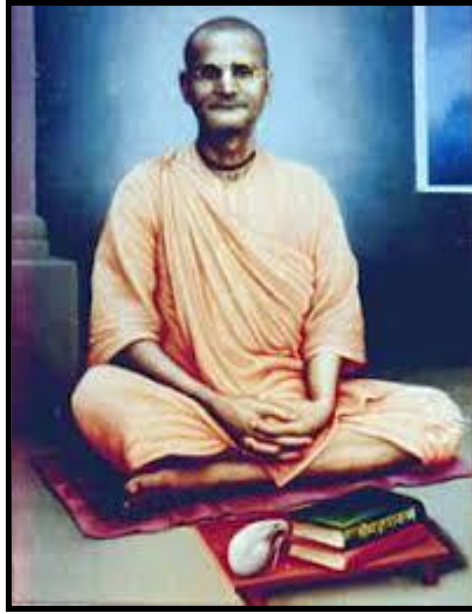
SRILA BHAKTIVEDANTA VAMANA GOSVAMI MAHARAJA

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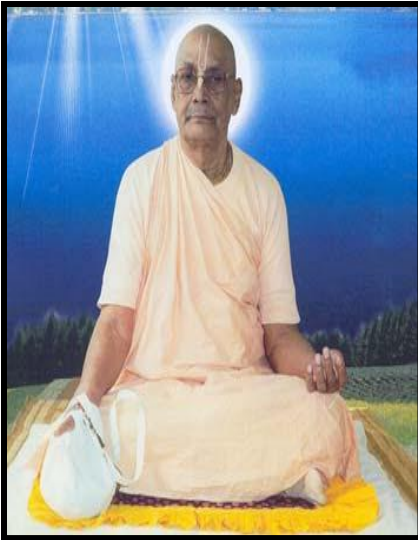
Excerpts from various spiritual discourses



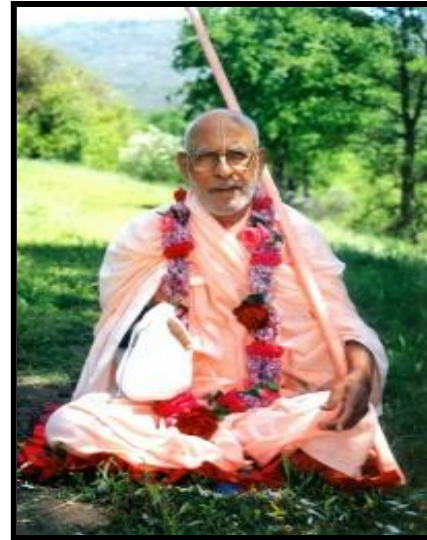
INSPIRED BY THE LECTURES OF SRIMATI UMA MATAJI



Sri Srimad Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja



**Srila Bhaktivedanta Vamana
Gosvami Maharaja**



**Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana
Gosvami Maharaja**

The Glorious Saint & Excerpts from Various Spiritual Discourses

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ABOUT THE PREACHER

Srimati Uma Mataji has been studying the theory and practice of *bhakti-yoga* for over four decades under the guidance of Gaudiya Vaishnavas. In her youth, she received the mercy of Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja and his eminent disciple Srila Bhaktivedanta Trivikrama Gosvami Maharaja. In 1970, she accepted *diksha*



initiation from her divine master Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Maharaja, who is also a disciple of Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja. In 1986, Srimati Uma Mataji renounced her family's home and took up permanent residence in Sri Kesavji Gaudiya Matha in Mathura, India, where she heard daily classes from Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja for the next twenty years. On the order of her beloved *siksha guru*, Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja, Srimati Uma Mataji is preaching the message of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, even in her advanced age. Srimati Uma Mataji imparts the knowledge of unalloyed *bhakti* that she received from her spiritual teachers without deviation. Her vast knowledge and experience, in addition to her sparkling personality, makes her instruction on *bhakti-yoga* simply a delight for her audiences.

(Source: www.purebhakti.com)

PREFACE

By the causeless mercy of Sri Hari, Guru and Vaishnavas, this booklet became manifest to present the sweet pastimes of Srila Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Maharaja. His exemplary life from childhood till the time he served in the temple gives the sincere seeker of the Absolute Truth a glimpse of his immense mercy. By reading the pastimes of such a great personality who is completely surrendered to Sri Sri Radha Krsna and Sri Guru, it is hoped that Their Lordships will bestow mercy upon us. We pray at Srila Gurudeva's lotus feet that his pastimes will give us an inspiration in our hearts to always be surrendered and to be in the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master.

This booklet has been divided into two parts. The first part is the life story of Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Maharaja and the second part is the excerpts from various spiritual discourses given by Srimati Uma Mataji in Malaysia. Please excuse any shortcomings in our humble effort to please Sri Guru and Gauranga. It is hoped that readers will find this booklet to be of immense spiritual enlightenment.

An insignificant aspirant for the service of Sri Hari, Guru and Vaishnavas,
Ashalata devi dasi

(Completed on the Disappearance day of nitya-lila pravista om visnupada paramahansa parivrajakacarya assottara-sata Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja and Appearance day of nitya-lila pravista om visnupada paramahansa parivrajakacarya assottara-sata Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Maharaja – 11 December 2017)

~Boyhood Pastimes~

My Guru Maharaja was very calm and quiet in his boyhood. He did not play any games like other children. He was always reading or studying some books. Guru Maharaja was very fond of books. It was Guru Maharaja who established the library at Devananda Gaudiya Math.

Guru Maharaja could remember anything by just reading it once. He is known as the Gaudiya dictionary. Whenever a *sloka*, verse, was quoted, Guru Maharaja could immediately remember it. Each time the teacher at school gave any lessons; there was no need for him to do any revision. And he was only around 6 to 7 years old!

Once, a new head teacher came and Guru Maharaja was present at class. He asked the students to open their books. He wanted to ask the students some questions. Guru Maharaja did not open his book. The head teacher noticed this and asked, “Why did you not open your book?”

Guru Maharaja remained silent. After repeatedly asking two to three times, the head teacher ordered Guru Maharaja to stand on the bench as a punishment.

Then, one student told the head teacher, “Whatever you ask Santosh (*Guru Maharaja’s boyhood name*), he will be able to answer without looking at the book.”

The head teacher was incredulous, “How is this possible? OK. I will say out one paragraph and let’s see if you are able to tell it.”

The head teacher picked a sentence from a paragraph and read it out loud. Guru Maharaja was able to quote line by line the entire paragraph. The head teacher became speechless.

~Sweet and Shy Nature~

Once it was about 7:00 a.m. or 8:00 a.m. and Guru Maharaja was at home studying. After 8:30 a.m., his mother called out to him to have his breakfast. But Guru Maharaja was so absorbed in his studying that he did not answer. Then his mother called out loudly, “Come on and have your breakfast!”

Guru Maharaja then answered, “I will not have anything.”

His mother said, “Come and have at least a little bit.” And she left.

Now it was about 10:00 a.m. Guru Maharaja was feeling very hungry. But he was thinking how to approach his mother as he told her firmly that he will not have anything. Guru Maharaja had this shy nature from boyhood. So, feeling hungry, he went outside and then again he came inside the house. When Guru Maharaja noticed his mother was not calling out for him, he decided to lie on his bed. Facing the wall, he scribbled these words on the wall, “If you call me once, I will come and have *prasadam*.”

After some time, his mother came for him and she saw the scribbling on the wall. She immediately pulled him to her and asked him to have some *prasadam*, sanctified food that is offered to the Lord.

~Meeting Manosa Devi~

When Guru Maharaja was about 6 or 7 years old, the entire village was busy making all sorts of preparations as an offering to Manosa Devi. Each house made at least one preparation. There were at least 200 over preparations. All these were put in bullock carts to be taken to the outskirts of the village. Guru Maharaja knew that this preparation will be taken to some corner of the village to Manosa Devi, the presiding deity of all the offerings. It was an open place, somewhat like Govardhan *puja*, worship. The villagers will put the preparation there and will head back home. It was believed that if Manosa Devi was happy, no snake bite will happen in the village. The villagers wanted to satisfy Manosa Devi.

Guru Maharaja followed the villagers and waited until everyone went home. He was curious to see Manosa Devi himself. He waited and waited and looked everywhere for Manosa Devi for at least an hour. Suddenly, Guru Maharaja saw an effulgent light. It was so blinding that he could not open his eyes. It was like looking at the sun. Inside the effulgent light, there was a very beautiful young girl. Guru Maharaja became unconscious. He only managed to get a glimpse.

Who was this girl? It could be Manosa Devi and that means it could be Srimati Radhika Herself!

In the meantime, the villagers were concerned about the whereabouts of Guru Maharaja. They now knew Guru Maharaja was not

with them and they searched everywhere for him. Finally they found Guru Maharaja lying unconscious.

~Meeting Srila Prabhupada~

When Guru Maharaja was 9 years old, he came to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur Prabhupada. His family members were mostly initiated by Srila Prabhupada. His mother and his uncle were also initiated disciples of Srila Prabhupada. His uncle took *sannyasa*, the renounced order, from Srila Prabhupada and was given the name Srila Bhakti Kusal Narsing Gosvami Maharaja.

When he came for *parikrama*, pilgrimage, with his mother for the first time in Mayapur *dham*, holy land, they went everywhere to take *darshan*, audience, under the guidance of Srila Prabhupada. Although this was the first time in Mayapur *dham*, Guru Maharaja felt that he was at his own home and village. During the *parikrama*, he heard *Hari-Katha*, topics related to the Lord, from Srila Prabhupada and he developed so much attachment that he did not want to go back to his birth place in Bangladesh.

When the British left India in 1947, it was divided into Pakistan and India. East Bengal was under the rule of Pakistan but they later separated from Pakistan and became independent Bangladesh.

Many of our prominent Gaudiya Vaishnavas came from Bangladesh. Our Paramgurudeva (Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja) and Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Gosvami Maharaja

also came from there. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu preached there, therefore some people in that area follow Mahaprabhu. Srila Narottama das Thakur is also from Bangladesh.

When the *parikrama* was over, Guru Maharaja did not want to go home. All the family members, especially his mother and aunty cried so much. But Guru Maharaja made up his mind and said that he was at home. Finally Guru Maharaja's uncle pacified them and said that Guru Maharaja could stay there and continue his studies.

Srila Prabhupada admitted him in a school. He was always the first in class every year.

~Sweet Exchanges with Srila Prabhupada~

Guru Maharaja did extremely well and had excellent results in his studies. Now he was known as Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari which was his *harinama* initiated name. Those days, *diksha*, initiation, was only given after 5 to 6 years or even 10 years later. Once after Guru Maharaja's Board Examination, Srila Prabhupada called Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari and told him, "I've got very bad news."

"What is it," Guru Maharaja asked anxiously.

Srila Prabhupada said that Guru Maharaja had failed in his Board Examination. When Guru Maharaja heard this, he said it was impossible. He was sure that he passed. Srila Prabhupada then queried how was it impossible?

Guru Maharaja said, “I did Vaishnava *seva*, service, so how am I to fail? They always bless me. It is not possible for me to fail.”

Srila Prabhupada smiled and said, “You are the top student.”

Guru Maharaja used to be very strict in his *sadhana*, devotional practice, and *bhajan*, worship and devotion. He used to say that without chanting of the Holy Names, one cannot do any other service. He used to wash the toilets, cut the vegetables and serve the devotees with salt and lemon when they were to partake in *prasadam*.

Srila Prabhupada bought him a pair of short pants and shirt to be used in school. Guru Maharaja always washed and wore this shorts and shirt every day. Once it rained all night. Guru Maharaja was worried how he was ever going to go to school with wet clothes on. While thinking about this, Guru Maharaja continued to do some service at the temple.

In the meantime, Srila Prabhupada said, “Go to school!”

Guru Maharaja did not mention that his clothes were wet. He went upstairs and prayed to Lord Nrsimhadeva. Then, he went to take his clothes. Surprisingly, his clothes had become dry. It was as though someone had ironed his clothes! It must be that Lord Nrsimhadeva Himself ironed his clothes.

When I was in Allahabad, I met with Srila Olim Maharaja who was the elder brother of Sri Paratpara-guru (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada). I heard this story from Srila Olim

Maharaja. He asked me whether I was the disciple of Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja. When I told him that I am the disciple of Srila Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Maharaja, Srila Olim Maharaja told me how my Guru Maharaja used to do so much service to Vaishnavas.

Guru Maharaja used to say that all Vaishnavas blessed him and that is why he is still in spiritual line.

~Diksha Initiation~

When Srila Prabhupada left this material world, there was some disarray. Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja (who was then known as Vinod Bihari Brahmachari) and some devotees were falsely accused of murder and were put in jail in Krsnanagar. Vinod Bihari Brahmachari and Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari had a very intimate relationship. Vinod Bihari Brahmachari used to encourage the *brahmacharis*, celibate students, especially the younger ones, to remember a *sloka* a day from the Bhagavad-gita. If they were able to do so, he would reward them with candy sweets. Every *brahmachari* used to remember a *sloka* a day just to get the candy sweets. But Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari used to remember up to 10 *slokas* a day. As promised, Vinod Bihari Brahmachari will give candy sweets amounting to the number of *slokas* remembered by Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari, who in turn will distribute it to the other *brahmacharis*. Vinod Bihari Brahmachari used to love Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari very much.

So, when the devotees were in jail, Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari used to go there with important files, taking *prasadam* for them and to also meet up with the lawyers. At one time, the cook became very sick. Now, who was going to cook? Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari could not cook because he did not have *diksha* initiation. Therefore, Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja initiated Guru Maharaja with the *diksha* mantras through the jail bars.

Finally, it was concluded that the devotees were wrongly accused of murder and the victim had actually fallen from a tree. Soon they were released and Vinod Bihari Brahmachari went to Srila Bhakti Vicar Jajavara Gosvami Maharaja, who was giving initiation at that time. Some had this idea that Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari was a disciple of Srila Bhakti Vicar Jajavara Gosvami Maharaja. But this is not true. Guru Maharaja firmly told everywhere that he was a disciple of Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja. So many people do not know this. At that time, Vinod Bihari Brahmachari was still not a *sannyasi*.

Srila Prabhupada wanted to give Vinod Bihari Brahmachari *sannyasa* but the other devotees wanted him to manage the temple. He was asked twice to take *sannyasa*. Then Srila Prabhupada came in a dream of Vinod Bihari Brahmachari and ordered him to take *sannyasa*. Then he finally took *sannyasa* in Katwa where Mahaprabhu Himself took *sannyasa*. Vinod Bihari Brahmachari took *sannyasa* from Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Gosvami Maharaja.

~Life of Service~

From the very beginning, Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari stayed with his Guru Maharaja, Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and followed him like a shadow. Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja established the first temple in Chinsura, produced Gaudiya Patrika and other books and also a printing press. Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari used to look after the press. Those days the printing was hand pressed.

Once when the printing was going on, Guru Maharaja's hand was badly crushed, and nearly the entire top phalanx of his middle finger was cut off. But Guru Maharaja just continued on with his work.

When Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja knew this, he wept like a child and took him to the Calcutta Hospital for immediate treatment. Later on, by the mercy of Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, his finger miraculously grew back!

Once, some of Paramgurudeva's god brothers came from afar to visit him at the Chinsura temple after the noon time *prasadam*. There were no *prasadam* left. Paramgurudeva wanted to serve them. When he went into the kitchen, the cook was not there. So he entered Sajjan Sevaka Brahmachari's room. That day, my Guru Maharaja was very sick.

When Paramgurudeva entered his room, he said, "Get up and cook!"

Paramgurudeva did not notice that my Guru Maharaja was having fever. My Guru Maharaja prayed to the Lord and cooked and fed all the devotees. Later he went into his room to lie down; Guru Maharaja noticed that his fever was gone. He never skipped in the service of the Vaishnavas.

Guru Maharaja used to say that there is no “*cuti*” or holiday or rest when it comes to *seva*, service. When we finally get the shelter of Sri Radha and Krsna, only then there will be eternal rest. Guru Maharaja was the embodiment of:

*trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih*

(*Sri Siksastaka*, verse 3)

(Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than insignificant grass which has been trampled beneath everyone’s feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being prideless, and offering respect to all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Sri Hari)

~Guru Maharaja’s Magnanimous Mercy~

Although he was *acarya*, spiritual master, he never showed himself to be such. He liked to live a simple life. He used to say that he had no bank balance. If by any accident that he died, then whatever money in his pocket will be his bank balance. Most of Guru Maharaja’s disciples

are Bengali villagers. They were very poor and had no money. Sometimes, Guru Maharaja gave money to his disciples to host him.

There was a time, a lady disciple who lived in the border of upper Bengal. It was a 10 miles distance from where Guru Maharaja was staying. She arranged for some *prasadam* and wanted very much Guru Maharaja to come to her house. Unfortunately, Guru Maharaja's train was at 10:00 a.m. and it was quite impossible for Guru Maharaja to go to her house. So, Guru Maharaja told the lady to make breakfast and offer it to his picture at 8:30 a.m.

In the meantime, Guru Maharaja's *brahmacari* servant made breakfast and requested Guru Maharaja to have some *prasadam*. Guru Maharaja said that he already had his breakfast.

The Brahmacari was surprised. "How is that so? You were staying here and chanting all the time."

Guru Maharaja said, "You can ask my lady disciple yourself. She made all these preparations. Ask her during the Navadwip *parikrama*."

The Brahmacari wrote down all the preparations mentioned by Guru Maharaja. When Navadwip *parikrama* came, the Brahmacari asked the lady disciple. She told exactly all the preparations that was mentioned by Guru Maharaja.

~The Bus Moved~

Once, Guru Maharaja was travelling from Bengal to Assam. There was not much money in those days and all travelling was by bus. It was

a long wait. All the buses that came were full of people. Finally a bus was coming to the stop. Guru Maharaja decided that he must board the bus. The bus was also fully packed, but Guru Maharaja and the accompanying Brahmacarīs managed to board it. It was so packed and they had no choice but to stand. After some distance, the driver declared that the Assam border was closed. He ordered all the passengers to alight the bus. Everyone did so but Guru Maharaja went to the front seat and sat down. The Brahmacarīs thought that Guru Maharaja was resting.

Seeing Guru Maharaja still seated, the driver said, “Today the bus will not move.”

Guru Maharaja very firmly replied that the bus will move. The driver was surprised but did not say anything. Again, after a few minutes, the driver said that the bus will not move. But Guru Maharaja said that it will. The driver thought that Guru Maharaja had some problem understanding him.

Later an announcement came that the bus can move. Everyone boarded the bus. The bus conductor did not ask any money for the tickets as he knew that Guru Maharaja was not an ordinary person.

~Kṛṣṇa and Balaram to the Rescue~

There was a time when Srīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Maharaja was in the Mathura Math. He was making some preparations for *Harinama* initiation and Guru Maharaja was to give the initiation as Guru Maharaja was the initiating Guru. During that time, a family

wanted to take *darshan* of Varshana, Govardhan and perhaps even of the Madan Mohan temple and then back again to Mathura with Guru Maharaja. Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja told my Guru Maharaja to be back by 8:00 p.m. and not to be late.

So Guru Maharaja left with this family in a car to take *darshan* of all these holy places. After *darshan*, when the car left Govardhan, it suddenly stopped. Apparently the car was out of petrol. The driver insisted he filled the car with petrol. Then one Brahmachari went in search for petrol. Guru Maharaja was thinking about what Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja said; that is to return by 8:00 p.m. The time was already 6:00 p.m. They were all thinking of what to do next.

Guru Maharaja called his personal servant, Gopi Kanta prabhu (Now Srila Janardhan Maharaja) over. He said, “Gopi, there is a nearby village. You can get some petrol over there.”

The Brahmacharis searched for the village. Soon they saw some lights coming through the shaded trees. They went nearer and saw an old man smoking a hookah. The old man joked, “Baba, why are you doing *madhukari*, begging for alms, at night time?”

The Brahmacharis answered, “Our car broke down. We need some petrol.”

The old man said, “We got a truck. My son will help you fill up some petrol.”

After filling up with petrol, Guru Maharaja wanted to give some money, but the old man's son refused. Instead Guru Maharaja gave the son two packets of *prasadam*, which he accepted.

When everyone was in the car, the Brahmacharis asked Guru Maharaja, "How did you know that there is a village here?"

Guru Maharaja replied, "When I was chanting in the car, two boys came and told me where the village is."

Perhaps the two boys are Krsna and Balaram. Actually, Guru Maharaja never told this story. We heard this from the Brahmacharis.

~The Ghostly Wedding~

Once, my Guru Maharaja wanted to visit a devotee in a nearby village. At that time there was no public transportation. So, Guru Maharaja used to walk everywhere. He walked for a very long time and soon it was really late at night. He was passing by a jungle and the time was almost twelve midnight.

Suddenly, he saw some decorative bright lights. It was as though some wedding festival was going on. A person approached Guru Maharaja and asked Guru Maharaja to bless his daughter and son-in-law. Although, very late, and not thinking anything out of the ordinary, Guru Maharaja obliged. After the young couple got their blessings, Guru Maharaja went on his way to the devotee's house. Soon he reached the devotee's house and knocked on the door. Upon opening the door, the

devotee was shocked to see Guru Maharaja arriving at his home very, very late at night.

"Maharaja, you have come so late. What happened?" inquired the devotee.

"Oh, I went to bless a young couple on their wedding day."

The devotee looked very puzzled. "But there are no houses anywhere near here, Maharaja. No matter, we will look into this tomorrow."

The next day, Guru Maharaja and the devotee went to the spot where the wedding festival was held. The place was a cremation ground. This shows that Guru Maharaja not only delivers humans but also other entities such as ghosts.

~The Foot Bath Water of a *Mahajana*, a Great Soul~

Once, a *brahmacari* from Rupa Sanatana Gaudiya *Math*, temple, went to stay at his sister's house, which was nearby the temple. He went to the Yamuna River to take his bath. As he was dipping himself, he felt someone was pressing his head down. It was as though a heavy weight was put on him. He kept coming up to the surface but to his surprise, there was no one around. Each time he dipped, he felt something heavy was on him. Feeling a little afraid, he came out of the water and started off towards the house. He felt someone was following him.

That night, he saw a female ghost in his room. The ghost said that it had committed suicide because the man whom it was supposed to marry did not keep his promise. After seeing the *brahmacari*, the ghost said it had fallen in love with him. The ghost also warned the *brahmacari*, not to tell anyone of this incident or it will kill him. Fearing for his life, the *brahmacari* did as he was told. Soon, the *brahmacari* looked pallid. The *brahmacari*'s room was adjacent to his sister's and she heard her brother talking to someone at night. Feeling suspicious, she decided to confront her brother.

"Who were you talking to at night? I hear voices coming from your room. Tell me honestly!" demanded the sister.

The *brahmacari* did not reply. The concerned sister then, requested the help of another *brahmacari* from the temple to find out what was actually wrong with her brother. The *brahmacari* from the temple came and inquired on what was going on with his god brother.

The disturbed *brahmacari* told his god brother about the ghost. The temple *brahmacari* then asked his god brother to inquire from the ghost on how it could be appeased.

The ghost said that it will leave the disturbed *brahmacari* if it can get the foot bath water of a *mahajana*. Not any *mahajana* but the foot bath water of my Guru Maharaja. The ghost demanded him to bring the

foot bath water in a pot and leave it by the banks of the Yamuna. The *brahmacari* was ordered not to look behind after leaving the pot there. Soon enough, the ghost left the disturbed *brahmacari*.

~His Service is My Service~

This shows how very powerful, Guru Maharaja was and always is. We should not think that my Guru Maharaja and Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja are any different. Once Sripad Bhaktivedanta Madhava Maharaja told our Guru Maharaja that he wanted to serve Guru Maharaja. Our Guru Maharaja said, "Don't think I am any different from Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja. You should serve him. His service is my service."



**Seated Left - Srila Bhaktivedanta Vamana Gosvami Maharaja
Seated Right - Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja**

Excerpts from Various Spiritual Discourses

~Krsna – The Supreme Thief~

Once there lived a young thief. One day, the thief heard a *sadhu*, holy man, giving *hari-katha* about a very beautiful Boy with lovely curling locks and dark bluish complexion. And that the Boy wears many types of ornaments. This beautiful Boy goes cow grazing everyday with His friends. Sometimes He is with all His friends and sometimes He is alone.

The thief thought of becoming the friend of this beautiful Boy. And later he will be able to steal all His ornaments. Then, he would not have to steal anymore and live a very comfortable life.

So, the thief went to Vrndavan. He was searching every day for this beautiful Boy. Many days passed. The thief's eagerness grew immensely strong. He was so determined in wanting to meet this Boy with the ornaments.

After some days had passed, the thief saw the Boy who is after all Krsna Himself. Beautiful Krsna was decked in His ornaments and He quickly ran towards the thief and embraced him saying, "O I was waiting for you for a long time."

The thief thought, "This is going to be easy. I was thinking of becoming His friend and now He has befriended me instead."

Soon Krsna and the thief went everywhere together. The thief's heart was completely purified and forgot all about stealing the ornaments.

One day Krsna did not come as usual. The thief waited and waited in separation of Krsna. His heart was burning in intense separation. The next day Krsna came and again Krsna took the thief here and there in Vrndavan.

Then, one day, Krsna took all His ornaments and bundled it in a cloth and said, "O my friend, I want to give you this bundle. Here, take it."

The thief said, "I don't want anything. I only want You as my friend forever!"

Purport

When you hear very high class *hari-katha* from bona-fide high class Vaishnavas, then greed will come into your heart. Greed is the only qualification to attain Krsna.

We must first hear all these *hari-katha* from a bona-fide Sri Guru. Give your ears and then take *darshan* of the holy places. Otherwise if you were to go to Govardhan, you will think of Govardhan as a rock. You won't know the glories of Govardhan. By hearing all these top most *hari-katha* from bona-fide Vaishnavas, you will develop greed.

~The Beauty of Radha and Krsna~

In this world we are attracted to very beautiful persons. In the beginning a man is very attracted to the face of his beautiful wife. Her face will be like the beautiful moon. After some time, her face will be like the sun. So much heat is coming. After many years her face will be like the volcanoes. This means her beauty fades and she is not as palatable as she was before.

Miss Universe is very beautiful. But how long will her beauty last? This is material beauty. Nothing lasts. Therefore the beauty of Sri Radha and Krsna is forever beautiful. It is transcendental beauty. If one has the good fortune to see Their Beauty, then all material desires will be vanquished.

Once there was a *goonda*, ruffian, called Dhanurdasa. Everyone was afraid of him. He married a very beautiful girl. Her father had to give her hand in marriage to Dhanurdasa as her father was afraid of the *goonda*. Dhanurdasa was enamoured by his wife's beauty.

One day, Dhanurdasa and his wife went to Sri Rangam temple. Dhanurdasa had his back turned towards the Deities. He was admiring his wife's beauty. The temple authorities could not open the curtains because Dhanurdasa's back was turned towards the Deities. The temple priest told the matter to Sri Ramanujacarya.

Sri Ramanujacarya asked Dhanurdasa to take *darshan* of the Deities and not turn his back on Them.

Dhanurdasa said, "Is Thakurji more beautiful than my wife?"

Then Sri Ramanujacarya said, "I will show you the One who is more beautiful!"

Dhanurdasa ridiculed, "Impossible! If you do, then, I will be your servant; otherwise you will have to be my servant."

Sri Ramanujacarya placed his hand on Dhanurdasa's head and took him to have *darshan* of the Lord. Dhanurdasa was overwhelmed with the love of God. Now he knew than none can equal the beauty of the Lord. He immediately became a follower of Sri Ramanujacarya.

~The Greatness of Chanting~

Once, in a village, a young boy was bitten by a snake. His parents were heart-broken. They wept bitterly. The whole village came over to see what had happened. Then someone said that he will call a snake charmer who is an expert in mantras. Soon the snake charmer came. He kept reciting a mantra loudly. He also put some stones on the boy's forehead, arms, and feet and behind the boy's head. After much recitation, the stone behind the boy's head disappeared. Shortly, a huge snake unwillingly came as if it was being pulled by the stone that disappeared from the boy's head. It sucked out all the poison from the boy's body and died. Thus, the boy was saved. If a worldly mantra can have so much power, just imagine what the maha-mantra can do.

**Hare Krsna Hare Krsna
Krsna Krsna
Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama
Rama Rama
Hare Hare**

This is the top most mantra. If anyone has taken shelter of a bona-fide guru, and following all of Sri Guru's instruction, then the disciple will see the results quickly. He will feel peace and bliss. He will not be disturbed by the material calamities. The maha-mantra has been infused by Sri Guru's powers when he initiated the disciple. It is now the duty of the disciple to follow all the instructions of Sri Guru strictly.

When Srila Gurudeva (Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja) was exhibiting his "sick pastimes," there was a time when he needed to be operated on.

Doctors normally administer anaesthetic and instruct a patient to count from 1 to 10. While counting, the patient will start to get weaker and weaker until he or she completely loses consciousness.

In Srila Gurudeva's case, he was chanting the maha-mantra. Instead of getting weaker, Srila Gurudeva was only getting stronger. All the doctors were amazed. They realized that Srila Gurudeva was not an ordinary person. Somehow or other the operation did take place. As for the doctors, they paid their obeisance to Srila Gurudeva every day! You should never think that the maha-mantra which Sri Guru has given as something ordinary.

~We are like Donkeys~

Once there was a trader. He loaded his donkey with rice, sugar and other foodstuffs and headed towards a hill. Soon it was almost evening. The trader found a spot to rest. Before doing so, he took out his ropes and bound each donkey's legs to another. The next day the trader went along his journey. He was already 30 miles away from the place he rested the previous night. Just then he remembered he left his ropes behind and it was quite impossible for him to get it back.

Soon it will be night. He was worried his donkeys may wander away. At that moment a *sadhu*, holy man, came by.

The holy man asked, "O sir, why do you look so worried?"

The trader said, "I forgot to bring the ropes to bind my donkeys. Now they may wander off!"

"O, don't worry. Just make hand gestures that you are binding your donkeys. And they will not move from there," said the holy man.

The trader did just that. The next morning the trader saw all his donkeys were there, just like what the holy man had predicated. He soon loaded his donkeys. Then he slapped the donkeys on their backs so that they would start to move. Unfortunately the donkeys did not budge at all.

The trader cried out, "O holy man! Can you give me some mantra to make my donkeys to move?"

"Just make the same hand gestures like you are untying the donkeys," said the holy man.

The trader did as he was told. Soon the donkeys began to move and the trader was on his way.

Purport

We are all like donkeys in this material world. We think that this is our actual position when in fact we are the ones holding on to the ropes of *maya*. (*Maya* means that which is not or the illusory energy of the Lord). So, like donkeys we are going about our work doing hard labour and thinking that we will be here permanently.

~Always Chant and Be Happy~

In the scriptures, it is mentioned that when *Hari-katha*, topics related to Lord Krsna and His devotees, is going on, even the sun cannot enter. The Sun-god is stealing our time, and upon sun set, our lives become reduced. As the day passes, our life is diminishing.

When *Hari-katha* is spoken, even the sun-god has no power to steal our time. *Hari-katha* and the Holy Names of the Lord and the Lord Himself are non-different.

When *Hari-katha* is going on, then Krsna must be present. Krsna will be present by the grace of Sri Guru. Krsna enters through our ears and enters our heart. With attentive listening, some mood will come. Krsna will clean our hearts. By speaking *Hari-katha*, it will make our heart and mind purified. *Hari-katha* is so powerful.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gave instruction to everyone, including *grhastha*, householders, to first do *Vaishnava seva*, service to the devotees, *Hari-seva*, service to the Lord and *Nagar-sankirtan*, congregational chanting of the holy names.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said to distribute harinama, *holy names*, to everyone. What is the benefit? If *Hari-Sankirtan*, congregational chanting, is done loudly, the holy names is also benefiting the trees, animals etc as *sabda brahman*, transcendental sound.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu instructed Srila Haridas Thakur and Sri Nityananda Prabhu to give harinama to everyone. He said, "Beg them to chant."

People used to give Srila Haridas Thakur and Sri Nityananda Prabhu rice, flour, etc, but Sri Nityananda Prabhu said He does not want any of these things. He only wants them to chant. Sri Nityananda Prabhu is *guru-tattva*, fundamental truths regarding Sri Guru.

Our Srila Gurudeva went everywhere and preached in his advanced age. Why? So that everyone will chant and become happy. Even if one person can be turned towards Krsna consciousness, then it is so great.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said that we can be happy by chanting. Human life is full of miseries. Due to our past life *sukriti*, spiritual pious activities, we have come to Krsna consciousness. Then, by more and more *sukriti*, taste for Hari-katha shall come.

What does *bhakti*, devotion to the Lord, means? *Bhakti* means no desire for oneself.

The *Gopis*, the cowherd girls in Vrndavan, specialty is only to love and serve Sri Krsna. They have *pranaya*, very strong and thick love, for Krsna. *Gopis* never expect anything from Krsna. They only think about how to serve Krsna. That is their aim and object.

One who does *Krsna bhajan*, devotion to Krsna, is always pleased and happy. Our aim and object should be to attain *radha-dasyam*, the service of Srimati Radhika.

But first practice:

*vaco vegam manasah krodha vegam
jihva vegam udaropastha vegam
etan vegan yo visaheta dhira
sarvam apimam prithivim sa sisyat*

(Sri Upadesamrta, verse 1)

"A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world."

We must have strong faith in Sri Guru. Sincerely follow Sri Guru's instruction. Then realization will come.

Once someone asked Srila Gurudeva whether mercy is the same for everyone? Srila Gurudeva said no. It is according to our surrender. If we want to be cheated, then we will be cheated by Sri Guru. We cannot do anything by our own endeavour.

So whatever instruction Sri Guru gives, follow it. First become *guru-dasa*, servant of Sri Guru, then *Krsna-dasa*, servant of Krsna, and then *Radha-dasyam*.

~Sri Guru is Always with You~

Once there was a disciple living near the ocean. He was feeling separation for his Gurudeva, who was of advanced age. The disciple was worried that his Gurudeva might soon decide to wind up his pastimes. Therefore the disciple wanted to know how his Gurudeva can always be with him.

He then went to his Gurudeva and asked him this question.

“Srila Gurudeva, I want you to be with me all the time. But how am I to understand this?”

His Gurudeva explained, “When you walk on the bank of the ocean, you will see two sets of footprints. One set is yours and the other is mine.”

The disciple walked on the beach and saw the two sets of footprints. He was overjoyed. Soon his Gurudeva disappeared from this world, meaning Sri Guru was no more physically present in this world. The disciple went about his duties as usual. After some time, his business failed. His wife and children and everyone he knew left him.

When business was good, everyone asked him, “How are you?”

Now when he was penniless, everyone looked at him and said, “Who are you?”

He lost everything but the disciple had very strong faith in his Gurudeva. One day feeling utterly sad by this turn of events, the disciple walked by the banks of the ocean. He was further saddened to see only one set of footprints. He now thought that even his Gurudeva had left him.

That night, his Gurudeva came to him in a dream and said, “I have not left you. You think that you saw your footprints. Actually it is mine. I am now carrying you. I will never leave you.”

Sri Guru never leaves us. He is always there with us. We have to realize this someday.

~There's Money, There's Respect~

Once there was a wealthy father who accumulated a lot of wealth for his only son. He decided to sign off his wealth and property to his son and leave comfortably in his old age with his child.

Soon it was time for his son to be married. Together with his wife, they found a suitable girl. Everything went well for a while until the father became very sick.

Seven months into the marriage, the daughter-in-law started to complain about the father-in-law to her husband. She kept telling her husband how his father coughed at night which disturbed her precious sleep.

Soon the son decided to move his father to the store room downstairs.

“Father, I think it is best that you sleep in the store room from now on. We will clean the room so that you will be comfortable. After all it is not good for your health if you keep climbing up the stairs,” said the son to the speechless father.

The father now slept in the store room. He felt miserable. The servants even refrained from giving tea to the father during tea time. They started to become disrespectful. The father decided to complain to his son.

“My dear son, the servants don’t even give me tea even when I ask for it. They throw food at me as though I am a dog,” said the father.

The son got irritated and harshly brushed off his father, “Can’t you see I am in a hurry to get to work. I have no time to listen to this.”

Heart broken, the father sat quietly in his room, resigned to his fate.

As for the son’s mother, she was always trying to please her daughter-in-law in order not to suffer the same fate as her husband.

One day, the father’s friend came for a visit. He was shocked to see his friend in a sorry state. Soon he hatched an idea where the entire household will respect the old wealthy man once again.

The friend gave some notes and coins and said, “Each time you see your son pass by your room, make sure you clank the coins and start counting the notes loudly. You will soon see a difference!”

The father did as he was told. The son heard the father counting notes and clanking lots of coins. The son thought that his father still had lots of money and not everything was written off to him. The son and his wife started to treat the father with much kindness. Even the servants started to be respectful.

Purport

In this *kali-yuga*, the age of quarrel and hypocrisy, people will respect you, only if you have money. Otherwise even your own family members will neglect you.

~Firm Faith in Krsna~

Some time back, I was making some *subji*, vegetable dish, in the kitchen of a temple. After I prepared everything, the *pujari*, priest, asked whether I used everything for *Thakurji*, the Deities.

I said I kept some vegetables for tomorrow.

The *pujari* said, “Please don’t do that. Whatever we get for today, we will offer everything to *Thakurji*. If *Thakurji* desires, He will provide everything for tomorrow.”

This showed how much firm faith the *pujari* had in Krsna. He did not believe that we should save anything for tomorrow. In the same way, if we are doing everything very nicely, then *Thakurji* will provide. There will be enough money coming to maintain the temple. Of this, there is no doubt.

AUSPICIOUS DONORS

We would like to immensely thank the auspicious donors to make this booklet possible. Only the mercy of Sri Hari, Guru and Vaishnavas will be able to repay their wonderful magnanimity.

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***“Remembrance of Vaishnavas brings auspiciousness
and their forgetfulness brings inauspiciousness”***

- Srila Bhakti Vijnana Bharati Gosvami Maharaja