

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

The Glory of Pure Love

[The following is a continuation of a lecture-course on Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura's book, Prema-samput.]

Mathura, India: October 18, 2005

The book Prema-samput is very exalted; the moods expressed in it cannot be understood by ordinary persons. I will therefore complete it quickly, and then I will begin discussing the book Madhurya-kadambini, which explains the process of gradual development in devotional service.

We have heard how Srimati Radhika is discussing the truth of prema-tattva to Sri Krsna, who has disguised Himself as a damsel from the heavenly planets.

Srimati Radhika told the demigoddess-disguised Krsna, "Prema is 'sva-samvedya dasa.' This means it can only be understood by that person who is experiencing it, and not by another. Prema cannot be described by words; it can be understood by realization and nothing else. Only one in whose heart prema has appeared can understand what it is. Another person cannot understand. Prema cannot be understood by much deliberation, nor can it be understood by an absence of deliberation. Either way, it cannot be understood. On the other hand, unless we deliberate and endeavor to please Krsna, prema will not come.

That desire or tendency – "How can I please Krsna?" – is the symptom of prema. We may understand that someone has achieved prema by looking at his or her various ecstatic emotions, like vyabicari, asta-sattvika-bhava and so on. These symptoms must be seen in the heart in which prema has appeared.

Srimati Radhika continued, "You have described Krsna as being a debauchee, but really, He is the topmost hero or lover (nayaka). He alone has the qualification to love many heroines or lady beloveds (nayikas). The moods seen in Krsna cannot be seen in any other great personality. Even when He performs apparently abominable pastimes such as going to Candravali and other beloveds, still, in that condition He only remembers the happiness that He experienced when He was with Me.

"When I weep in separation from Krsna, all the plants and animals of Vrndavana also weep. Krsna performs pastimes of being with other, rival gopis only to show the world what is prema. This is why Krsna leaves Me and goes to other heroines.

"When a beloved meets with Krsna, all the unlimited happiness of this world multiplied millions of times does not equal one drop of the happiness I experience in association with Krsna. Similarly, all the unhappiness of the world multiplied millions of times cannot be equal to one drop of the unhappiness I experience in His separation."

The qualities of Lord Sri Krsna can only be seen in Him; not in Rama or Narayana. They have the self-conception that, "I am God," and there is great opulence in their intrinsic nature, They come here to protect religion and to destroy irreligion. They

have many duties, preoccupations and responsibilities. On the other hand, Sri Krsna has no responsibilities or duties. He only moves the cows from one place to another. He has no worries or responsibilities; He is completely carefree. Therefore, He alone can perform such activities with the gopis, and there is no fault with Him in this regard. It is His quality.

Even Sri Krsna in Dvaraka has many responsibilities, such as killing demons, whereas Krsna in Vrndavana never kills any demons. It is Lord Visnu situated within the body of Krsna who kills them.

As Krsna is unique, so the gopis of Vraja are also unique. Only they can have such unprecedented prema towards Krsna to be able to control Him as they do. Even the queens in Dvaraka cannot control Krsna completely, because they also have other responsibilities and duties, such as nourishing their children and taking care of household duties. The gopis, on the other hand, have left everything – all shyness, chastity, worldly responsibilities, fear of society and fear of scriptural injunctions. They have given up everything for the happiness of Krsna. They have no children – they have nothing but Krsna. They have husbands, but they have no responsibility or attachment towards those husbands.

Srimati Radhika continued speaking to Sri Krsna, who was disguised as a lady from a heavenly planet. She said, "If any gopi tells another, 'Let's go. Take me to meet Krsna. I want to see Him,' this is not lust – because everything they do is for the happiness of Krsna, not for their own happiness. *[See endnote 1] The attraction of the gopis towards Krsna is not lust; it is prema.

"Krsna is an ocean of prema. He has so many apparent disqualifications, such as restlessness, cruelty and thoughtlessness, and He is unreliable – but these are actually His good qualities. If He did not manifest these "disqualifications," the ever-increasingly new tastes of My loving relationship with Him (nava-nava rasa) would not have been able to reach their height. If anyone thinks Krsna's qualities are His faults, that person has no prema. The so-called faults of Krsna are not faults, but qualities."

One example of Srimati Radhika's statement is as follows: Krsna has arranged to meet with Her, but on the way He meets another gopi, like Candravali or Saibya. Srimati Radhika is waiting the entire night, lamenting for Krsna. Krsna comes to Her early in the morning, looking like Nila Rohit (a body of bluish color, with reddish marks everywhere) Mahadeva (Lord Siva) because His eyes are very red. Srimati Radhika asks Him, "Where have you been?" Lying, Krsna replies, "I came directly here, I have not come after being with anyone else." Srimati Radhika's unhappiness then increases, so much so that despite Her meeting with Krsna She feels more separation. She then enters the state of maan (transcendental sulky mood) and calls Him ill-names.

Srimati Radhika continued speaking to the disguised Krsna, explaining Her own mind, "I become angry thinking, 'Why did He go there?' I know that if He goes to any other gopi, He cannot experience the happiness He attains in My association. The anger I display is a manifestation of prema, because I know that He cannot experience full happiness when He goes to another gopi. Krsna then says to Me, 'Yes, yes, I also know that.'

"Krsna is self-satisfied and has no unfulfilled desires. He is never controlled by lusty desires. He is only controlled by pure prema. Only the gopis of Vrndavana can control Him – no one else can do so. When He is late in coming to meet Me due to some disturbance caused by other gopis, I become angry because I see His dissatisfaction and lack of fulfillment. I become unhappy and angry that He hasn't tasted full happiness. My anger is only for His happiness.

"I tell Him, 'If You experienced so much happiness with that other gopi, then go back to her.'

"When Krsna comes to Me with marks on His body from associating with other gopis, I become angry and say to Him, 'You characterless person, get away from here and go back to that other gopi.' Then, in front of Me, Krsna admits all His faults.

"Why does He act the way He does? Prema is like a lamp, and it reveals the innermost intentions of both the hero and the heroine. Their hearts are revealed by the lamp of prema. If prema is spoken, that is, if the lover and beloved say, 'I love you,' then prema is lost. Prema can be compared with camphor. If camphor is placed near a window and the window is open, its aroma evaporates.

"Krsna tells the other gopis, 'You are My most beloved. Apart from you I do not love anyone else.' Krsna does not say this to only one gopi, but to all the gopis, including Me. Why does He do this? This is not His fault. All the gopis have great attachment (anuraga) for Him. Each gopi has controlled Him up to the amount of anuraga she possesses. Krsna's meeting with them is not His fault, but His quality. Each gopi captures Him according to her bhakti.

"Another doubt may come. If prema is not spoken, then how is it that sometimes the gopis reveal their prema to Krsna?

yat te sujata-caranamburuham stanesu
bhitaḥ sanāḥ priya dadhimahi karkasesu
tenatavim atasi tad vyathate na kim svit
kurpadibhir bhramati dhir bhavad-ayusam nah

["O dearly beloved! Your lotus feet are so soft that we place them gently on our breasts, fearing that Your feet will be hurt. Our life rests only in You. Our minds, therefore, are filled with anxiety that Your tender feet might be wounded by pebbles as You roam about on the forest path." (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.31.19)]

"The gopis expressed themselves to Krsna, "Oh Krsna, we are not satisfied to meditate on Your lotus feet. Rather, we want You to place them on our breasts. Although we are fearful when Your feet come directly upon our breasts, because our breasts are very hard, at the same time we know that you are satisfied." The gopis expressed their prema, so is the prema of the gopis not being dissipated by expressing their heart? *[See endnote 2]

Srimati Radhika continued, "No, this is not a fault in the prema of the gopis. In their case it is simply a symptom of their prema. Their prema can never be diminished or destroyed.

"Listen; I'll give you an example from My own life. Krsna performed the rasa dance with the gopis, and left everyone for Me. Why? He is an ocean of prema. At that time all the gopis were thinking, 'We are the topmost.' Krsna did not want them to think like this, and therefore He took Me away. It is not a fault of Krsna that He took Me away from all the gopis and sat Me on the throne of greatness, giving Me so much honor and position.

"At that time We went to Srngara-vat, and there He personally decorated Me. At that time I was svadhina bhartrika (a heroine or beloved who has controlled Krsna completely). At that time Krsna had no consideration or thought of any other gopi whatsoever. As for Myself, however, I was thinking, 'My sakhis have given their life and soul for My service. How can I alone drink His nectarean association? How can I drink this ocean of prema alone, without My friends? I would be afflicted by the fault of ungratefulness.'

"I could not tolerate the idea of having this fault. I therefore told Krsna, 'I cannot walk anymore. You can carry Me wherever You like.'"

Srimati Radhika desired that all Her sakhis would be able to taste the happiness of Her association with Krsna.

Sri Krsna is Rasika-sekhara, the crest-jewel of heroes, and He could therefore understand the mind of Srimati Radhika. He thought, "Alone, Radhika cannot be happy with Me. She will be happy if Her sakhis can meet Me and Her there. But if all the other gopis find Me alone with Her, they will become envious and angry."

Sri Krsna was referring to the vipaksa and tatastha gopis (those gopis who are opposed and neutral to Srimati Radhika), and Radhika was referring to Her svapaksa sakhis (those gopis who are in Her party and who only desire Her happiness).

At that time He considered, "They will all return to their homes out of anger, and there will be no rasa dance. My desire will not be fulfilled, nor will the desire of Srimati Radhika or any other gopi; we will all be cheated of rasa-lila."

Now at Her home in Yavat, Srimati Radharani continued speaking to Krsna disguised as a heavenly damsel, "What is the necessity of rasa-lila? Krsna desired it, and therefore He called all the gopis with His flute music. So He considered, 'I will leave Radharani for a moment. During that time, when all the other gopis come and see Her condition, they will weep and feel great sympathy for Her. Then, when I return there will be rasa-lila. My desire will be fulfilled, Radharani's desire will be fulfilled and everyone's desire will be fulfilled.' That is why Krsna's leaving Me during rasa-lila is not a fault of His, but a quality.

[At this time Srila Narayana Maharaja paused from speaking on Sri Prema-samput. He requested Sripad Muni Maharaja to sing a few verses from Sri Gita-govinda, and then he explained one of the verses as follows:] It was morning. Sri Krsna was late for

His meeting with Srimati Radhika, and She had become sulky. She told Him with some sarcasm, "Oh Krsna, You are so beautiful. By Your sidelong glance You can take the hearts of all gopis. Oh Madhava, Oh Kesava, this is really so." She addressed Him by two of His names – Madhava and Kesava. [Madhava means Husband of the Goddess of Fortune. Kesava means one who has beautiful, wavy hair, or one who decorated the beautiful hair of Srimati Radhika.] She told Him, "Oh You who previously decorated My hair – that very Kesava. Oh Madhava, beloved of all – not only Laksmi. You should at once go away. Don't tell lies. I know everything, for Your body is telling everything. You should go to that gopi who can take away all Your disease of kama (transcendental lust). Why have You come to Me? Oh, I see that you have not slept the entire night. Your eyes tell this, because they are reddish. And You look somewhat drowsy."

[Srila Narayana Maharaja now resumed the topic of Sri Prema-samput:] You should hear this – that which you have never heard before in your life and that which you may never hear for the rest of your life. Hear this very patiently. Then, making this the object of your life, come down from there to sraddha (initial faith) and nistha (steadiness in the devotional process). Starting the day after tomorrow, I will tell you how to achieve this object.

Why did Krsna disappear from the rasa dance? He could understand that all the gopis had a false conception of themselves; thinking that they were as qualified and fortunate as Srimati Radhika. Srimati Radhika also had an angry mood – a sulky mood towards Krsna. She was thinking, "Why is He treating Me the same as the others?"

Therefore, in order to break the false pride of the other gopis, and to please Radhika and break Her sulky mood, Krsna left the rasa arena. He wanted to show the world that Radhika is the topmost gopi. If He had not disappeared, how would the world come to know this? Krsna showed that "among everyone, only Srimati Radhika can completely fulfill My desire."

Tomorrow we will go to Seva-kunja, the place where Lord Sri Krsna performed the pastime of breaking Radhika's sulky mood. Then we will go to Sringara-vata, where He pacified Her by decorating Her. Then finally, we will go to Dhira-samira, the place of rasa-lila.

Thus, as explained by Srimati Radhika, by Sri Krsna's pastime of disappearing, all the other gopis could understand that Her prema is the highest.

Now the disguised Krsna criticized Himself by saying, "Krsna is a very bad person. He killed a lady, He killed a cow, He killed a calf and He killed an innocent snake."

Srimati Radhika replied, "No, it is not like that. Aristasura looked like a bull, but he was not a bull; he was a demon in disguise. Bakasura was not a crane but a demon, and the snake Aghasura was Sin personified. Vatsasura was not an innocent calf, he was also a demon; and Putana was a man-eating witch. In order to protect saintly persons, Lord Visnu entered the body of Krsna and killed those demons. Krsna Himself never killed anyone.

Hearing this, the disguised Krsna became astonished and said, "Oh Radharani, the symptoms of prema described by You are present completely in You alone. I could not understand any of this before, but now I can understand. To the beloved, the faults of the lover are not faults; they are simply qualities."

Endnote 1:

atmendriya-priti-vancha--tare bali 'kama'

krsnendriya-priti-iccha dhare 'prema' nama

["The desire to gratify one's own senses is kama [lust], but the desire to please the senses of Lord Krsna is prema [love]." (Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila 4.165 – translation by Srila Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja)]

Endnote 2:

Excerpt from Srila Narayana Maharajas commentary on verse 19 of Gopi-gita (Srimad Bhagavatam 10.31.19):

The gopis weep while singing their very sweet songs. Yat te sujata-caranamburuham stanesu. "Oh, we very carefully and gently hold Your lotus feet on our heart."

"Why your heart?" Krsna asks.

"Because this is the best part of our entire body. If someone has something valuable, he wants to keep it on his heart."

Krsna is the life of their life. Dhrtasavas in the first sloka and bhavad-ayusam in the last means "You are our life. Every part of You is our life. Your feet are our life, Your face is our life, Your hands, head and everything about you is our life. We want to keep our life in our heart, and we want to serve it very gently.

"You run here and there on the rough paths in Vrndavana, full of pebbles, thorns and stone chips."

Srila Jiva Gosvami explains there is no need for anxiety because Vrnda-devi has arranged that there are actually no thorns or pebbles. Nothing is wrong. Vrndavana is not a desert or hilly place; it has very gentle terrain. However, it is the nature of any lover that out of concern for her beloved she does not acknowledge this.

Krsna may ask, "Why are you worried about My walking in the forest of Vrndavana?" The gopis reply, "Your lotus feet are so soft – more soft than any lotus. We have realization of this. We keep Your feet in our hands and take them on our very soft breasts. But when we compare the two, we see that Your lotus feet are a million times more gentle, sweet, and soft than our breasts. Our breasts are not rough and hard like the pebbles and thorns in the forest, yet in comparison to Your lotus feet they are not very soft. We therefore hold Your feet there very gently and carefully, so that You will have no pain."

Krsna says, "If you know that in comparison to My feet your breasts are rough, why do you try to keep them there?"

"Oh beloved, we know that if we keep them on our breast You will feel great bliss. We are unhappy to do this. However, knowing that You are receiving pleasure, we forget our suffering and we are also immersed in an ocean of happiness. If we see You get a little pleasure in our behavior or by anything else we do or say, we become filled with ever-increasing happiness."

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