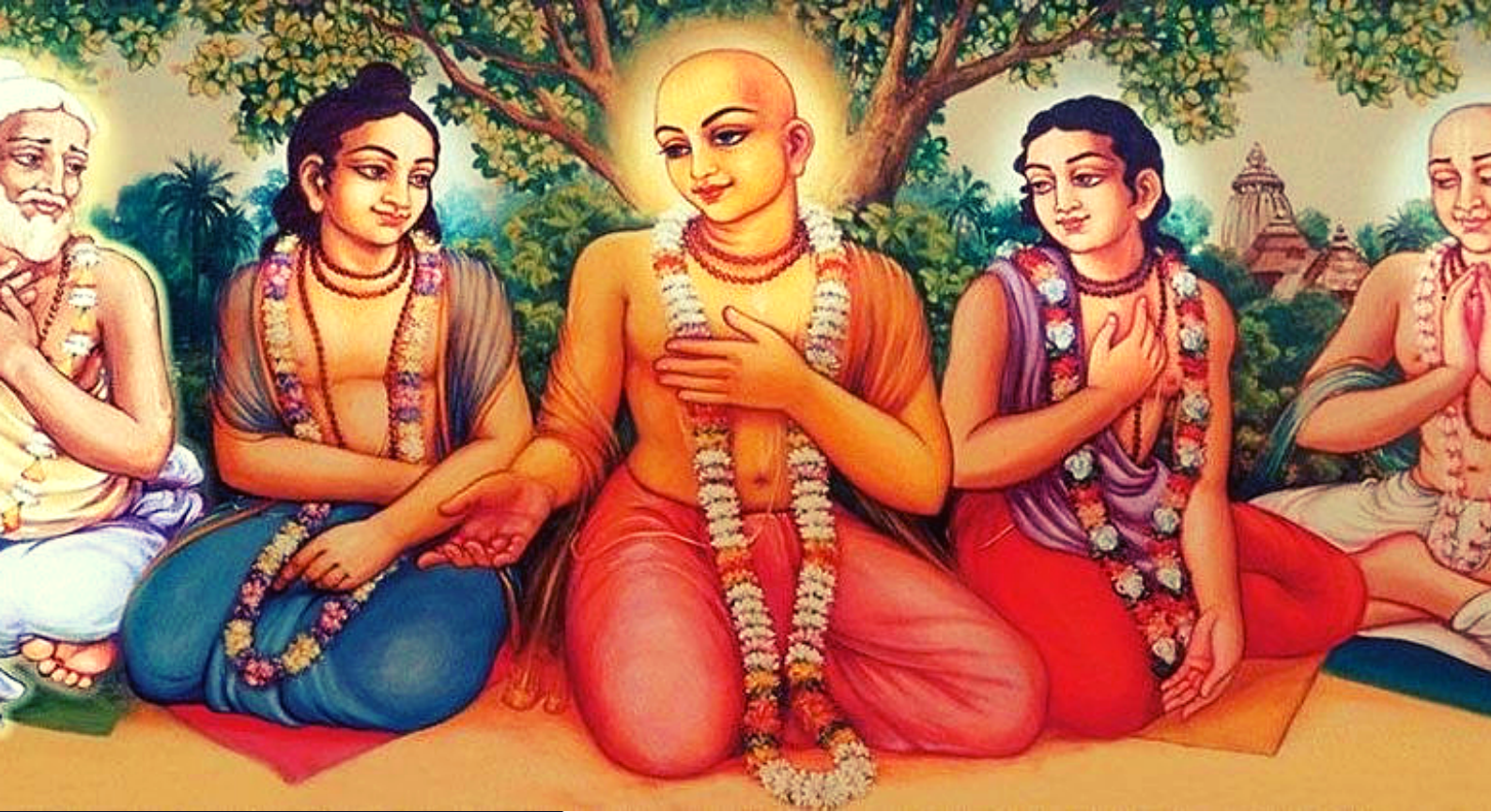


Bhāgavatam Rasamālayam

The Abode of Supreme Nectar

Meditations & Reflections from the lectures of His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami

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Gauranga - The Life & Soul of Gadadhar

Srila Gadadhar Pandit is one of the Panca Tattvas. Krishna appeared in five features. Krishna appeared as a devotee. Krishna appeared as the "swarupa" – the "rupa" of a devotee. Krishna appeared as Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Balaram appeared as Nityananda Prabhu. So Krishna and Balaram are Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu. "Vrajendra nandana jei Saci suta hoilo sei, Balarama hoilo Nitai." In Goloka Vrindavan that same personality appeared as the son of Mother Saci, "Saci suta hoilo sei". The son of Nanda Maharaj in Vrindavan, Krishna became Sachinandana Gaura. And "Balarama hoilo Nitai" and Balaram became Nityananda Prabhu. And "Bhakta rupa swarupakam", then "Bhakta-avataram" – the incarnation of a devotee of the Lord, Maha-Vishnu appeared as Advaita Acarya Prabhu and "Bhakta Shakti", the internal potency, the manifestation of hlandini shakti, Srimati Radharani is Gadadhar Pandit. So, "Vrajendra nandana jei Saci suta hoilo sei, Balarama hoilo Nitai" – Vrajendra Nandana Krishna became Sachisuta Gaura-Hari, Nityananda Prabhu is none other than Balaram Himself.

"Panca-tattvatmakam krishnam, bhakta-rupa-svarupakam bhaktavataram bhaktakhyam namami bhakta-saktikam." – Bhakta Avatara is Advaita Acarya Prabhu and Bhakta Shakti is Gadadhar Pandit, Srimate Radharani and Bhaktakhyam, the devotee, Narada Muni appeared as Srivas Thakur. So this is the Pancha Tattva. Gadadhar Pandit was one of Mahaprabhu's most intimate associates. Naturally, Krishna appeared as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, so Krishna's pleasure potency, Srimate Radharani is Gadadhar Pandit, naturally therefore They have a very very deep relationship amongst Themselves.

Gadadhar Pandit was a few years younger than Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, but they were very intimate. They were together most of the time. And Gadadhar Pandit from his childhood was very sober, very quiet, very peaceful and he used to like to be in solitary place. He did not like to be in the middle of a crowd and he was very withdrawn. And he was also very renounced. This has been described as the nature of Gadadhar Pandit. Whereas Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was extremely naughty when He was young. He was naughty, He was flamboyant, He was quarrelsome. He used to invite people – come, have a debate based on Nyaya. So this Nyaya Shastra is logic. So through means of logic He used to make right appear to be wrong and wrong appear to right. He was such a brilliant person. It has been described that Mahaprabhu could make the day appear to be night and night appear to be day. And then He would reverse it and prove that yes, day is day and night is night. Not that He used to turn the day into night, but through logic, through argument. That shows He was such a brilliant personality. And Mahaprabhu's brilliance has been established as the greatest scholar of India at that time by Him defeating Keshav Kashmiri.

He was from Kashmir. Very learned scholar. Kashmir was the seat of the Vedic Brahmanas those days. And from Kashmir he travelled all over India. From North, he travelled to the West, then South, then middle. And the last place he had to defeat was Navadwip. So through this arrangement what actually happened - Keshav Kashmiri defeated all the scholars of India and the only place that was left to be defeated was scholars of Navadwip. Navadwip also was a very prominent place of learning those days.

But Keshav Kashmiri's fame spread in such a way when the scholars of Navadwip got to know that Keshav Kashmiri was coming, in order to save themselves from the shame of being defeated, they ran away from Navadwip under various pretexts. So Navadwip became empty of all the scholars. All the scholars left. It has been described that some scholars were hiding in their houses and wouldn't come out. The only scholar that was left in Navadwip was Nimai Pandit, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Nimai Pandit – Pandit means learned scholar, so Nimai – the scholar was left, but He was only 14 years old at that time. So Keshav Kashmiri was waiting for the other scholars to return.

He heard of Nimai Pandit from the other scholars but He was only 14 years old – so why waste my time, rather wait for the great scholars, the big scholars to come back. Naturally Chaitanya Mahaprabhu defeated Keshav Kashmiri in a very amazing way. Keshav Kashmiri, one afternoon was walking on the bank of the Ganges and there he saw under a tree, one boy is teaching some students. So Keshav Kashmiri became curious and asked Him, "Who are you?" So Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, when He saw Keshav Kashmiri He offered His respects to him. He said, "My name is Nimai, I am the son of Jagannath Mishra. So Keshav Kashmiri said, "Oh, you are the Nimai Pandit!" So Mahaprabhu in a very humble way told him, "Well actually, people out of affection call me "Pandit", but actually I'm not really a scholar. So Keshav Kashmiri said, "Okay, I can see that you are very humble. But still come, lets have an exchange. Let's have a fight." Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said since I have got this good fortune of coming across you let me take advantage of your scholarship, your learning. Let me learn something from you. So Keshav Kashmiri was pleased and said so tell me what do you want to hear from me? So Mahaprabhu said, "Why don't you glorify the Ganges that is flowing."

So Keshav Kashmiri with the speed of the movement of the Ganges, with the flow of Ganges, he recited 100 verses glorifying the Ganges right there. One after another, spontaneously, he just made the verses in glorification of Ganges and recited there. Then everyone was spellbound – such beautiful composition and such beautiful descriptions of the glory of Mother Ganges. So Keshav Kashmiri asked, "So how did you like it?" Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "It was nice, very nice, excepting a few mistakes here and there."

Accepting Defeat - Growing with Grace

So Keshav Kashmiri became furious. He said, "In Keshav Kashmiri's composition, there is no mistake. What do you know about poetry? What do you know about alankaar – ornamentation of poetry? You're just a teacher of grammar, teaching some students, young boys. And you dare to find mistakes in my composition?" So Mahaprabhu just sat there quietly without making any statement. So Keshav Kashmiri asked, "So what is the mistake according to you?" Then Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took one verse from this 100 compositions, the 64th verse. And He pointed out 6 mistakes in one verse, one sloka. And Keshav Kashmiri was spellbound. He was defeated. And he asked Him, "I recited this poetry practically with the speed of the flow of the Ganges. And how did you remember this verse? How did you memorise this verse? Then Mahaprabhu said that just as someone is a Shrutidhar, memorises just by hearing, sometimes someone can also retain everything in his memory as well. But Keshav Kashmiri was defeated. He had to accept the points that Mahaprabhu made.

And one of the points that Mahaprabhu made was very beautiful – and we can relate to that mistake. The others were alankaaric mistakes. The Sanskrit poetry follows a very strict structure and the ornamentations have to be in a certain way. And Chaitanya Mahaprabhu pointed out those mistakes and one mistake was a descriptive mistake. The descriptive mistake was that Keshav Kashmiri described Lord Shiva as "Bhavanu Bhatti" – means the husband of Bhavani. Bhavani is Parvati, the wife of Lord Shiva. And Bhatti means the husband. So he described Lord Shiva as the husband of the Bhavani but Mahaprabhu pointed out that the expression Bhavani means that the wife of Bhava, i.e. the wife of Lord Shiva. So this Bhavanu Bhatti actually then means the husband of the wife of Bhava as if the wife of Lord Shiva has another husband other than Lord Shiva. So Keshav Kashmiri was completely devastated. So we can see that Chaitanya Mahaprabhu by defeating the greatest scholar of that time in India became the greatest scholar, the uncontested scholar of India. And that also at the age of 14. And Mahaprabhu used to challenge when He was younger, at that time also Mahaprabhu used to challenge people and He used to defeat everybody, through logic.

Gadhadhar pandit was very quiet compare to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu – very quiet, composed. So one day he complained, "Nimai, why do you waste your time like this – unnecessary argument whereas the goal of life is to become a devotee of Krishna. Serving the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the ultimate goal of life but why are you wasting your time in unnecessary arguments?" Then Chaitanya Mahaprabhu told Gadhadhar Pandit, "Gadhadhar, one day I'll become such a great devotee that Brahma and Shiva will even start to worship me." So this is how Mahaprabhu predicted His identity, revealed His identity. And it happened, when Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went to Gaya to offer the Shradha ceremony to His father and forefathers, there He met Iswara Puri and Iswara Puri gave Him initiation. And then Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was completely transformed. He started to display this "Divya Unmaadana" – divine madness, transcendental madness. He became mad. Mahaprabhu became completely mad in ecstasy of Krishna Consciousness.

So when He returned to Navadwip people thought that He became mad. They didn't understand that this was a transcendental madness – out of His love for Krishna. They started to think that He has got "Baatak Vyaadi" – He has got this disease that is caused by the imbalance of air, which means, which is actually madness, "Vayurog". And at that time Mahaprabhu sometimes used to be completely uncontrollable. One day Gadhadhar pandit came to Chaitanya Mahaprabhu with some offerings, with some remnants from the Lord. And Chaitanya Mahaprabhu asked Gadhadhar, "Gadhadhar where is Krishna? Where is Krishna?" And He started to cry. And Gadhadhar didn't know what to do. He said, "Nimai, Krishna is in your heart. Krishna is there in your heart." When Gadhadhar said that Chaitanya Mahaprabhu tried to tear open His chest. He started to scratch with His nails as if He was trying to – He became so moved by that statement, by that information, He wanted to see Krishna in His heart, in His transcendental ecstasy. And Sachimata was there, she became very worried seeing Him doing that. With His nails, He was trying to open His heart, open His chest. Then Gadhadhar told Him, "Look, Krishna is going to come very soon, don't worry. He'll come. He's coming just now." And then Chaitanya Mahaprabhu became pacified.

Seeing the Saintly with Divine Vision

So seeing that Sachimata expressed her appreciation for Gadhadhar. She said, "Although Gadhadhar is just a young boy, but he's so intelligent and He can control Nimai when He is displaying His madness. And at that time she requested Gadhadhar pandit, "You please stay with Nimai all the time. Never leave Him. Always be with Him. And Gadadhar Pandit accepted that instruction of Sachimata. So He stayed with Chaitanya Mahaprabhu most of the time.

And Gadadhar pandit was very devotionally, spiritually inclined from his childhood. And he was also very close to Mukunda Dutta. Mukunda was another associate of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. So one day Mukunda told Gadadhar, "A great Vaisnava has come so let us go and see him." And that person was Pundarik Vidyanidhi. Gadadhar Pandit got to know from Mukunda that Pundarik Vidyanidhi, a great Vaisnava has arrived. So they went to see him. But when Gadadhar saw that Pundarik Vidyanidhi was a very apparently indulging in a lot of material luxury, he was a very aristocratic person, indulging in luxury and comforts, dressed in fine clothes and somebody was fanning him. And he was sitting on a big asana, which was like a bed. So Gadadhar developed some sort of resentment – he felt that he is a Vaisnava. What kind of a Vaisnava is he? So he had that feeling in his heart and Mukunda could understand that so Mukunda started to recite a verse from Srimad Bhagavatam – "aho baki yam stana-kala-kutam" [SB 3.2.23], describing Putana – Baki, the sister of Bakasura demon came with her breasts smeared with Kalakuta, the most deadly poison to kill Krishna, jighāmsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī – in order to kill Krishna but what did Krishna do?

Krishna gave her the position of Dhattrigati, the position of a foster mother. The mother sometimes in the Vedic culture, some ladies tend the children and feed their breast milk, breastfeed the babies although they're not the mother. Like Krishna's dhattri mother were Ambika and Kilimba. They used to breastfeed Krishna. And Krishna gave Putana that position, practically the position of His mother, although she came to kill Krishna. Now when Pundarik Vidyanidhi heard that verse, Mukunda singing that verse, he just fainted in ecstasy.

So Gadadhar pandit then recognised, "He is such an exalted Vaisnava. And I committed an offense even thinking unfavourably about him, developing some resentment about him in my heart, although I didn't express it." So he felt very very sad, very bad, very guilty. And so then he decided in order to counteract that offense, he decided to take initiation from Pundarik Vidyanidhi. So Gadadhar pandit actually became the disciple of Pundarik Vidyanidhi.

Now there is an interesting thing to note here. Who is Gadadhar pandit? Srimati Radharani. Who is Pundarik Vidyanidhi? – King Vrsabanu. Do you see a link? Radharani is the daughter of King Vrsabanu. So in this pastime although he did not appear as Pundarik Vidyanidhi's son, but he became his spiritual son by accepting initiation from him. After Chaitanya Mahaprabhu took sannyas and went to Jagannath Puri, Gadadhar Pandit also went to Jagannath Puri and he stayed in Jagannath Puri. He took Kshetra Sannyas. He thought that Mahaprabhu will now stay in Jagannath Puri, the land of Lord Jagannath so I will also take sannyas here. Kshetra Sannyas is a kind of sannyas when one takes shelter of a Holy Dham and he never leaves. He takes a vow not to leave that place. So Gadadhar pandit took Kshetra sannyas in Jagannath Puri but when Chaitanya Mahaprabhu decided to go to Vrindavan, Gadadhar Pandit also wanted to go with Him.

So Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "Look, you can't go with me because you have taken a vow of Kshetra Sannyas." Then Gadadhar said, "Who cares about my vow?" All these vows are to get you so I don't care about my vow. I'll go with you." But Mahaprabhu said, "No, you have taken a vow so you must stick to that vow." And He insisted that Gadadhar pandit stayed on and fulfilled his vow. So Mahaprabhu when left, Gadadhar pandit fainted. So this is how deep was Gadadhar pandit's love for Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Reading, Reciting, Remembering

Gadadhar Pandit was famous for reciting Srimad Bhagavatam. And he used to recite Srimad Bhagavatam in such a way that even Chaitanya Mahaprabhu used to sit for hours listening to his recitation of Srimad Bhagavatam. And in that sense we all can see who can recite Srimad Bhagavatam better than Srimati Radharani Herself? Srinivas Thakur described in his pastimes. It has been described in Bhakti Ratnakar – when Srinivas Acarya went to Jagannath Puri, his desire was to study Srimad Bhagavatam, his dream was to study Srimad Bhagavatam under Gadadhar Pandit's tutelage, but when he arrived in Jagannath Puri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu already left this planet. And Gadadhar pandit was completely heartbroken. And many of Mahaprabhu's associates left. For example, Ragunath Das Goswami left. He couldn't stay in Jagannath Puri anymore. And he went to Vrindavan to give up his body, jumping from Govardhan – "Sila Pathan" He thought that he would go to Vrindavan and give up his body.

In this way due to Mahaprabhu's separation, everyone was so heartbroken. They were practically dead due to the separation of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. And the same was the condition of Gadadhar Pandit. So when Srinivas Acarya went to Gadadhar pandit, and expressed his desire to study Srimad Bhagavatam under him, under his tutelage, Gadadhar Pandit told him, "Look, I can't teach, I can't even recite Srimad Bhagavatam any more. I can't even read Srimad Bhagavatam anymore. So I can't teach you but you take my Bhagavatam." So he gave him his Srimad Bhagavatam, which was hand written.

Naturally, as in those days there was no printing press so it was hand written. And Srinivas Acarya when he opened it he found practically the Bhagavatam was wiped out due to the tears of Gadadhar Pandit. When Gadadhar Pandit would recite Srimad Bhagavatam, tears would flow in such a way from his eyes that the letters written with ink were obliterated, wiped out, washed away.

So this is how deep was his love. And also Gadadhar pandit – in Jagannath Puri, he used to worship Gopinath, which is known as Tota-Gopinath. And Bhakti Ratnakar describes that Chaitanya Mahaprabhu actually disappeared in the deity of Tota-Gopinath. That was the worshippable deity of Gadadhar Pandit. So this is how wonderful was the pastime of Gadadhar Pandit – completely absorbed in the activities of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. He didn't have any other consideration. All the time just absorbed in serving Mahaprabhu, remembering Mahaprabhu.

Therefore Srila Bhaktivinod Thakur describes –
 "Smara gaura-gadadhara-keli-kalam
 bhava gaura-gadadhara-paksa-carah
 srnu gaura-gadadhara-caru-katham
 bhaja godruma-kanana-kunja-vidhum"

Always remember the activities of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu with Gadadhar pandit - Smara gaura-gadadhara-keli-kalam, bhava gaura-gadadhara-paksa-carah. Remain with Gaura-Gadadhar – be with Them all the time. And "srnu gaura-gadadhara-caru-katham" always hear the beautiful kathas, descriptions and instructions of Gaura Gadadhar. In this way bhaja godruma-kanana-kunja-vidhum – worship the moon in the bower of the Godrum's forest garden.

