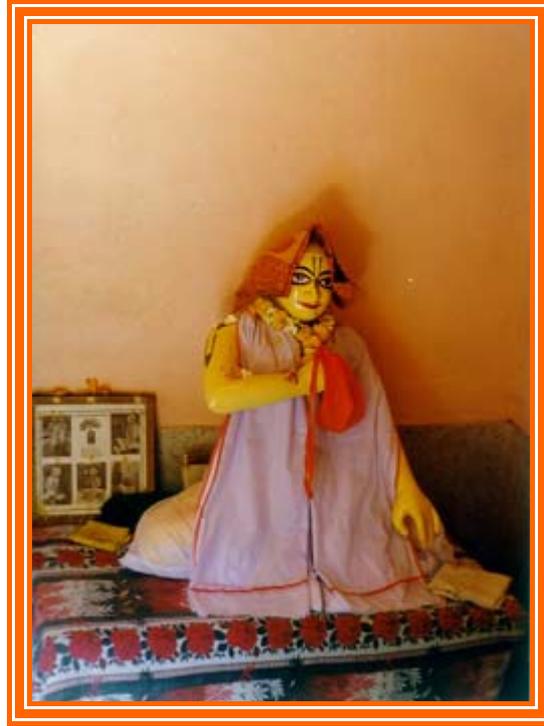


Glory  
of  
Srita Haridas Thakur  
and  
Siddha Bakul

## Preface



Nâmâchârya Sri Haridâs Thâkur needs no introduction. This great saint, who was born as a Muslim, is a great source of inspiration for all devotees, to whichever sect he may belong. He is the epitome of humility, austerity, sweetness and love for Gourânga. He never loses these brilliant qualities how much ever trying the circumstance may be. Even in death, he propounds the highest principle – that is, although he took the Holy Name three lakh times, all his life, while passing away all He wished to utter is “Sri Krishna Chaitanya”. Thus, he proved that if one chants the Mahâmantra sincerely, then it culminates in Gour-prem.

Srila Haridâs Thâkur spent the ecstatic part of his life in Siddha-Bakul. Siddha-Bakul is a kalpa-vriksha (wish-fulfilling tree). How did it come into being? Well, one day, Sriman-Mahâprabhu received a bakul twig that the sevaks had offered Lord Jagannâth as toothbrush. Ordinarily the custom was to offer Neem-twigs, however, on that day, due to some reason, they had offered Bakul twig. Goursundar had brought the special prasâd (the twig) for his dear devotee Haridâs. He planted it in the courtyard of Haridâs’s kutir. And lo behold! Within a short time, the twig grew into a huge tree under whose shade Haridâs could perform his Bhajan. Many great saints came and resided in siddha Bakul – Srila Rupa Goswâmi and Sanâtan Goswâmi, to name a few.

We hope this small text will be an inspiration to all practicing devotees and help us to progress humbly in the highly elevated path shown by Sri Gourânga Mahâprabhu. Jay Nitâi! Jay Gour!

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## Haridâs Thâkur's arrival in Neelâchal

(Excerpt from Sri Chaitanya-Charitâmrita, Madhya-lilâ, eleventh chapter, 157-203)

When Sri Gouranga Mahâprabhu saw the devotees, He honoured them jubilantly. However when He saw that Haridâs was not present there, He asked –"kânhâ Haridâs – where is Haridâs?" Haridâs Thâkur had seen the Lord from far and now lay prostrated on the road. He did not come where the others were meeting the Lord. Instead, he lay on the main road. The devotees rushed forward to bring Haridâs. "The Lord wants to meet you, come quickly," they told him. Haridâs replied, "I am low-born. I have no right to go near the temple. If I get a secluded spot in Totâ-Gopinâth, I will just remain there and spend my time. I do not want the servants of Lord Jagannâth to touch me. So it is better I remain in Totâ-Gopinâth." The devotees carried this message to the Lord. He was so pleased when He heard it. Just then, Kâshi Mishra arrived with a devotee and offered obeisance to Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu.

### The Lord glorified Sri Haridâs Thâkur

Both of them were overjoyed to see the Vaishnavs and met everyone happily. They requested the Lord humbly, "Please order us to serve the Vaishnavs. We have arranged lodging, boarding and *mahâprasâdam* for them." The Lord told them, "Take all of them to Gopinâth and show them their rooms. Then take them to Bâninâth's house and give them *Mahâprasâdam*. There is one secluded room in this garden, close to me. Give me that room – I need it. I will sit and meditate there in silence. Kâshi Mishra said, "My dear Lord, everything belongs to You. Why do You ask? It is all Yours. You just take what You want. We are Your obedient servants. It is Your mercy if You command us and we shall do the needful." Saying this, they took His leave taking Gopinâth and Bâninâth with them. Gopinâth showed everyone his room. Then he took them to Bâninâth's house and gave them lots of *mahâprasâdam*. Bâninâth brought rice and various types of sweet delicacies for the Vaishnavs. Gopinâth returned after cleaning all the rooms. Mahâprabhu said, "Listen O Vaishnavs, now you go to your own rooms. Then you bathe in the sea and take *darshan* of the pinnacle of the Jagannâth Mandir. After that you return here for *prasâdam*." Everyone paid obeisance to the Lord and went to their rooms.

When they had left, the Lord came to meet Haridâs. He saw that Haridâs was absorbed in taking the Holy Name. As soon as he saw the Lord, he prostrated himself at His lotus feet. The Lord picked him up and embraced him. Both of them started crying out of love-ecstasy. The servant (Haridâs) was in raptures because he was touched by His Master's excellences, while the Master (Mahâprabhu) was in ecstasy because of his servant's devotion. Haridâs said, "My Lord, please do not touch me. I am low-born, untouchable and a sinner." The Lord said, "I touch you to purify myself. I am not as pure as you are. You are so pure as if every moment you are bathing in all the Holy Waters, performing all the fire-sacrifices, austerities and giving in charity. You are so pure that you seem to study all the four Vedas constantly. You are supremely pure – much more than a Brahmin and a sannyâsi." Then the Lord quoted a verse from Srimad-Bhâgavatam –

*Ahovat! Swapacha'to gariyân  
Yaj-jivhâgre vartate nâm tubhyang,  
Tepustate juhuvuh sasnurâryâ  
Brahmânuchurnâma grinanti ye te.*

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Meaning – “(Devahuti told her son Sri Kapildev<sup>1</sup>) – The one who chants Your Holy Name constantly – even if he is a Chandâl<sup>2</sup>, we must worship him, since they chant Your Holy Name. When they chant Your Name, it is as good as performing austerities, fire-sacrifices, bathing in the Holy Waters, carrying out devotional etiquette and studying the Vedas.” - (S.B.3.33.7)

**Mahâprabhu enjoys prasâdam with His devotees**

Speaking thus, He took Haridâs to the garden and gave him that most secluded room. He told him, “Stay here and take the Mahâmantra. I shall come here and meet you everyday. Take *darshan* of the Divine *Chakra*<sup>3</sup> and pay obeisance. I will make arrangement for your *prasâdam* here itself.” When Lord Nityânanda, Jagadânanda, Dâmodar and Mukunda saw Haridâs, they were very happy. The Lord bathed in the sea and returned to His quarter, while Advaita and all the other devotees went for their bath. After returning, they took *darshan* of the pinnacle of the Mandir and came to Mahâprabhu’s house to take *prasâdam*. Lord Sri Gourhari seated everyone according to seniority and distributed *prasâdam* with His own hands. The Lord could never pick up less and He put on each plate *prasâdam* fit for two or three people. However, no one would start eating until the Lord ate. The devotees sat with their hands raised. Swarup Gonsâi told Him, “Nobody will eat until You sit for *prasâdam*. Gopinâth-Achârya has invited all the *sannyâsis* to take *prasâdam* at his place. He has brought *prasâdam* here also. Puri Bhârati is waiting for You. It is better if You sit with Nityananda for *prasâdam*. Please allow me serve the Vaishnavs. Then Mahâprabhu carefully dispatched some *prasâdam* to Haridâs through Govinda.



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<sup>1</sup> Sri Kapildev is an incarnation of the Supreme Personality

<sup>2</sup> Low-born

<sup>3</sup> The wheel atop the pinnacle of Jagannâth Mandir

## Srila Rupa Goswâmi's pastimes at Siddha Bakul

(Excerpt from Sri Chaitanya-Charitâmrita, Antya-lilâ, first chapter)

When Sri Rupa Goswâmi arrived at Neelâchal, he was pondering on his new drama. He reached Thâkur Sri Haridâs's residence. Haridâs Thâkur was very kind to him. He said, "The Lord had informed me that you would come here." When Sri Rup heard Haridâs Thâkur mention the word 'Prabhu', he became all the more anxious to meet the Lord. Haridâs guessed his feelings and said, "Prabhu will arrive any moment now." Lord Goursundar took darshan of Jagannâthdev's 'upalbhog' and came to Haridâs's residence as He always did everyday. Haridâs told Him - "Rup is paying You obeisance". The Lord met Haridâs and embraced Rup. He took both of them and sat down. Then He enquired about their welfare and spent some time in Ishta-goshthi. When Goursundar questioned Rup about Sanâtan, he replied, "I did not meet him; I came by Gangâ while he took the highway. Therefore, I could not see him. When I reached Prayâg, I heard that he had left for Vrindâvan." Then Rup broke the news of his brother Anupam's demise.

Before leaving, Sri Gourânga Mahâprabhu told Rup to live with Haridâs Thâkur. Afterwards The Lord's associates came to meet Rup. He touched their feet and begged them for their kripâ. They were full of compassion and embraced him. The Lord told Nityânanda Prabhu and Adwaita Prabhu to bless him with all their heart and soul. Sri Rupa Goswâmi became a darling of all Gour-devotees - whether Odiyâ<sup>1</sup> or Goudiyâ.<sup>2</sup> The Lord came to meet both Rup and Haridâs everyday and brought Prasâd for them from the Mandir. He spent a lot of time in Ishta-goshthi and then left for His mid-day duties. Rup's bliss knew no bounds when he got such kripâ from the Lord.

One day, Sriman-Mahâprabhu took all His devotees and cleansed Gundicâ. Then He had a picnic in Âi-totâ with all the disciples. All the devotees were partaking of prasâdam and screaming "Hari!" in ecstasy. Sri Rupa Goswâmi was overjoyed to see Haridâs. Govinda gave the remnants of the Lord's prasâd to both of them. They ate it and went crazy with love. They started dancing in ecstasy.

On another occasion, the Lord sat with Rupa and said (since He was the best Omniscient) - "Don't take out Sri Krishna from Vrajadhâm. He never goes anywhere leaving Vraja.

*Vâsudev Sri Krishna (Sri Krishna the Son of Vasudev) is a manifestation of the Sri Krishna Who is Nanda Mahârâj's Son. Therefore, He is different from Gopendra-nandan Sri Krishna. Gopendra-nandan Sri Krishna never goes anywhere leaving Sri Vrindâvan.*

- (Laghu-bhâgatâmritam, purva-khanda, 32<sup>nd</sup> chapter, yâmal-vachanam)

Saying this much Sriman-Mahâprabhu went for mid-day prasâdam. Sri Rupa Goswâmi was astonished. He thought, "Satyabhâmâ had ordered me to compose a separate drama, now even the Lord is giving me the same command. Earlier I had decided to compose two dramas in one book, now I shall divide it in two parts. I shall write two different prefaces and introductions."

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<sup>1</sup> People of Orissa

<sup>2</sup> Bengalis

**Glory of Srila Haridās Thākur and Siddha Bakul**

Rupa saw Lord Jagannāth during the Ratha-yātrā and the Mahāprabhu's blissful dance before the divine chariot. When he heard the Lord uttering some verse while dancing, he explained its meaning there itself. I have already described this earlier, yet let me repeat this incident.

The Lord used to recite a verse during the kirtan. Nobody knew why He said it. Only Swarup-Dāmodar knew the reason behind this and he sang songs according to the Lord's mood. Rupa Goswāmi came to know of Sri Gourānga Mahāprabhu's feelings and explained the meaning according to His liking. The verse was as follows –

*Yah koumāra-harah sa eva hi dharastā eva  
Chaitra-kshapāste chonmilita-mālati-surabhayah proudhāh Kadamba-nilāh,  
Sā chaivāsmi tathāpi tatra surata-vyāpara-leelāvidhou  
Revā-rodhasi vetasi-taru-tale chetah samutkanthate.*  
- (Kāvya-prakāsh, 1<sup>st</sup> ullās, 4<sup>th</sup> verse)

Meaning – "That very person who stole my virginity is now my husband. This is the same moonlit nights of the month of Chaitra. The air is laden with the same fragrance of Mālati flowers, and the same sweet breeze is blowing from the Kadamba forest. In our intimate relationship, I am also the same sweetheart, yet my mind is not happy here, for I long to go back to that place on the bank of the Revā, under the Vetasī tree."

Sri Rupa Goswāmi explained the above verse in the following manner –

*"priyah so'yam krishnah sahachari! Kuruksheṭra-miliya-  
Sthāham sā rādhā tad-idam-ubhayoh sangama-sukham,  
Tathāpy-antah-khelan-madhura-murali-panchamajushe  
Mano me kālindi-pulina-vipināya sprihāyati.*

Meaning - "My dear sakhi, now I have met my very old and dear friend Kṛṣṇṇa on this field of Kuruksheṭra. I am the same Rādhārānī, and now we are meeting with each other. It is very pleasant, but my heart still yearns for the gardens on the banks of the Kālindi. I wish to hear the vibration of His sweet flute playing the fifth note within the woodlands of Vṛiṇḍāvan."

He wrote this on a palm-leaf and hid in the shed of the cottage. Then he went for a bath in the sea. Meanwhile the Lord came to meet him and saw something hidden in the shed. He took it out and read the verse. He was overjoyed and was absorbed in love. When Rupa returned, he saw the Lord and fell at His feet. The Lord slapped him on the back and cried, "How on earth did you know my secret – which I had hidden so carefully in my heart?" and he enfolded Sri Rupa in tight embrace. Srīman-Mahāprabhu showed that verse to Swarup Gosāin and asked him, "How come Rupa knows my innermost secret?" Swarup replied, "I know, You must have showed kṛpā on him; otherwise how is it possible? I think You must have taken mercy on him and let him know."

The Lord said, "He met me in Prayāg. I knew he is worthy and so I was compassionate to him. I empowered and instructed him. You too teach him the Science of Ras." Swarup said, "As soon as I saw this verse, I realized You must have been kind to him. *Phalena phala-kāranam-anumeeyate* – The reactions lead us to the truth.

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'The swans told Damayanti – we have eaten the stem of the golden lotus blooming in the celestial river; therefore we have become golden in colour. By seeing the effect, you can arrive at the source.'

– (Naishadheeya, 3<sup>rd</sup> sarga, 17<sup>th</sup> verse)“

The Vaishnavs spent the Châturmasya in Puri and returned to Goud. However, Sri Rupa Goswâmi remained at Sriman-Mahâprabhu's lotus feet. One day as Rupa was writing the drama; all of a sudden, Mahâprabhu entered the room. Both Sri Haridâs and Rupa prostrated themselves before Him. The Lord embraced them and sat on the seat. 'What are you writing?' He asked and picked up one page. Rupa's handwriting shone like drops of pearls. Seeing this the Lord was immensely pleased and He praised it. Then He saw a verse on that page and was engrossed in love -

'Oh my my! I do not know what nectar these two syllables of 'Krishna' contain! As soon as I utter them, I wish I had hundreds and thousands of mouths. When this sound enters my ears, I desire for crores and crores of ears and when it dances in my heart, all senses come to a stand still.'

When Haridâs heard the verse, he was overjoyed. He started dancing in ecstasy, all the while glorifying the verse. He said, "I have heard the glory of the Holy Name from the Shâstras and the saints, but I have never heard such a sweet eulogy of the Name before this!" Then Sriman-Mahâprabhu embraced them and went to the sea to perform His mid-day activities.

On another day, after taking darshan of Lord Jagannâth, the Lord went to meet Rupa along with Sârvabhouma, Râmânanda and Swarup. On the way, they were glorifying Sri Rupa. The Lord was so happy with the two verses he had written, that He was full of praises for His devotee. He wanted to test Sârvabhouma and Râmânanda. Therefore, he started extolling Rupa's virtues before them.

Characteristically, Sri Bhagavân does not take it seriously if devotee commits an offense against Him. In stead, He accepts whatever small service a devotee renders, as being a great service. He is so much pleased that He is prepared to give even Himself, what to speak of other benedictions. We find the following verse in Sri Bhakti-Rasamrita-sindhu, Dakshin-vibhâg, 70<sup>th</sup> verse –

"When Akurji had gone with Sri Krishna's syamantak-gem to Kâshi, Uddhav had told him that, Sri Krishna, Who is the Supreme Personality, completely ignores even the gravest offence committed by His servant. Not only this, He also considers a small service as great. He is so good-natured and His intellect is so pure that He does not dislike even an evil person."

When Haridâs Thâkur and Rupa Goswâmi saw that Śrī Chaitanya Mahâprabhu had come with His intimate devotees, they prostrated themselves before Him and offered prayers at His lotus feet.

Thus, Śrī Chaitanya Mahâprabhu and His personal devotees met Rupa Goswâmi and Haridâs Thâkur. The Lord then sat with His devotees on a low stool, while Rupa Goswâmi and Haridâs Thâkur sat on the floor. Although everyone asked them to sit on raised platforms, they did not do so. Then the Lord ordered Rupa Goswâmi to read the verse they had previously heard. Sri Rupa, out of great shyness, did not read it and remained silent. Then Swarup Dâmodar Goswâmi recited the verse. When all the devotees heard it, they were wonderstruck.

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"My dear sakhi, now I have met my very old and dear friend Kṛiṣṇa on this field of Kurukshetra. I am the same Rādhārānī, and now we are meeting with each other. It is very pleasant, but my heart still yearns for the gardens on the banks of the Kālindi. I wish to hear the vibration of His sweet flute playing the fifth note within the woodlands of Vrīṇḍāvan."

After hearing this verse, Rāmānanda Roy and Sārvabhouma Bhaṭṭāchārya said to Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, "Without Your special mercy, how could this Rupa have understood Your heart?" Śrīla Rāmānanda Roy said that previously Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu had empowered him so that he could express such principles of ras, to which even Lord Brahmā has no clue. Had You not previously bestowed Your mercy on him, it would not have been possible for him to express Your internal feelings."

Then the Lord said, "My dear Rupa, please recite that verse from your drama which makes all miseries and problems melt away."

When the Lord persisted in His command, Rupa Goswāmī recited that verse - 'Oh my my! I do not know what nectar these two syllables of 'Krishna' contain! As soon as I utter them, I wish I had hundreds and thousands of mouths. When this sound enters my ears, I desire for crores and crores of ears and when it dances in my heart, all senses come to a stand still.'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhav 1.33)

When all the devotees, especially Śrī Rāmānanda Roy, heard this verse, they became blissful and wonderstruck. Everyone admitted that although they had heard many statements glorifying the Holy Name of the Lord, they had never heard such sweet descriptions as those of Rupa Goswāmī.

Rāmānanda Roy inquired, "Which drama are you writing? It must be a treasure-house of principles." Swarūp Dāmodar replied on behalf of Srila Rupa Goswāmī - "He wanted to compose a drama about the pastimes of Lord Kṛiṣṇa. He planned to describe the pastimes of Vrīṇḍāvan and Dwaraka in one book; He had started that way, but now, following the order of the Lord, he has divided it in two and is writing two plays, one concerning the pastimes of Dwārakā and the other concerning the pastimes of Vrīṇḍāvan. The two plays are Vidagdha-Mādhav and Lalita-Mādhav. Both of them wonderfully describe the ecstatic love of Sri Krishna."

Rāmānanda Roy said, "Please recite the introductory verse of Vidagdha-Mādhav." Commanded by the Lord, Śrī Rupa Goswāmī recited the verse (1.1) -

'The pastimes of Sri Krishna are so extremely sweet that they crush the pride of even the nectar produced on the moon. It is fragrant with the camphor-like love of Srimati Rādhārānī and the Vraja-beauties. May such pastimes destroy your worldly miseries and material desires that result in the cycle of birth and death.'

Rāmānanda Roy said, "Now please recite the description of the glories of your worshiped Deity." Rupa Goswāmī, however, hesitated due to embarrassment because Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was present. The Lord encouraged him, saying, "Why are you embarrassed? Let the assembly of Vaishnavs hear the merits of your book." When Rupa Goswāmī recited the verse, Srīman-

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Mahâprabhu objected to it because it glorified Him. He said that it was an exaggeration. The verse was as follows –

'May the Supreme Lord, Who is Mother Shachi's delight, be transcendently situated in the innermost core of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has descended in the Kaliyug by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation has ever offered before - the most elevated and brilliant ras, that of the conjugal love.'

-(Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.2)

All the devotees present so greatly appreciated the verse that they expressed their gratitude to Śrī Rupa Goswāmī for his divine recitation. They said that they were fortunate to hear such a supreme glorification. Râmânanda Roy asked, "How have you introduced the assembly of the characters of the drama?" Rupa Goswāmī replied, "The characters enter the stage at a suitable time, as in 'pravartak'."

'When the entrance of the actors is set in motion by the arrival of a suitable time, the entrance is called 'pravartak.'" – (Nâtak-Chandrikâ, 12)

'Springtime had arrived, and the full moon was so radiant that it made the nine planets fade into oblivion. On such a beautiful night Sri Pournamâsi Devi will enthusiastically arrange for the Supreme Lover Sri Krishna, Who is in the throes of new-found love with the beautiful Śrīmatī Râdhārâni to increase His bliss.'

-(Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.10)

Râmânanda Roy said, "Please recite the 'prarocanâ' portion." Knowing that the Lord too wished to hear it, Śrī Rupa recited -

'The anchorperson's companion is saying – the devotees present here are free from the effect of Mâyâ, their intellect is highly pure and their nature is unblemished. On the other hand, Vidagdha-Mâdhav, a drama about the Friend of the Gopa-brides (Sri Krishna), too is highly decorated with literary ornaments. In addition, the Râs-floor of Vrindâvan has turned into a stage for an exciting drama. Therefore I think that the pious activities of even fallen a person like me have started showing result.' – (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.8)

Sri Rupa continued (he is addressing the readers) - 'O learned devotees, I am by nature ignorant and low, yet even though Vidagdha-Mâdhav has come from me, it is full of the transcendental qualities of Sri Hari. Therefore, will not such a literature make us attain the highest goal of life? Although a tribal may have ignited the fire, it can nevertheless purify gold. Similarly, though I am very fallen, this book will help purify the hearts of sincere devotees.'

-(Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.6)

Then Râmânanda Roy inquired from Rūpa Goswāmī about the cause of the loving affairs between Kriṣṇa and the Gopis, their mood and activities during purva-râg, endeavors for meeting, and exchanges of letters.

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Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī satisfied Rāmānanda Roy by replying to all his questions. Hearing his explanations, all the devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu were wonder struck.

"During pūrva-rāg, Śrīmatī Rādhārānī thought: 'Since I have heard the name Kṛṣṇa, I have practically lost my good sense. Then, there is another person who plays His flute in such a way that after I hear its notes, intense madness arises in my heart. Again, there is still another person to whom I have lost my heart when I saw His serene fresh cloud-like effulgence in the picture. Therefore, I think that I am greatly condemned, for I have simultaneously fallen in love with three persons. It would be better for me to die because of this.'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhav 2.8)

A sakhi said: 'My dear friend, these palpitations of Rādhā's heart are extremely difficult to cure. Even if one applies some medical treatment, it will only result in defaming Her (since people will learn of Her yearning for Shyām).'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhav 2.6)

Sri Rādhā said: O my dear handsome one, Your lovely picture is now impressed within my heart. Since You are now living within my heart, wherever I wish to run, I find that You, O my friend, are blocking my way.

- (Vidagdha-Mādhav 2.48)

'Upon seeing peacock feathers in front of Her, this girl (Rādhā) suddenly begins trembling. When She sometimes sees a necklace of gunjā, She sheds tears and cries loudly. I do not know whether some ghost has cast a spell on Her.'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhav 2.13)

[Śrīmatī Rādhārānī said to Her intimate sakhi Viśākhā:] 'My dear friend, it is not your fault that Kṛṣṇa is unkind to me. I shall surely die, but please do not cry for me. Rather you do one thing for me - to observe my funeral ceremony, tie my arms to the branch of a Tamāl tree so that I may remain forever in Vṛndāvan. This is my last request.'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhav 2.35)

Rāmānanda Roy inquired, "What are the characteristics of *bhāva*?" Rūpa replied, "This is the nature of emotional love for Krishna -

My dear beautiful friend, if one develops love for Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāj, all the bitter and sweet influences of this love will manifest in one's heart. Such love acts in two ways. It is so poisonous that it defeats the severe and fatal venom of the serpent. Yet at the same time, one experiences nectarine bliss, which pours down and defeats the poisonous effects of a snake."

-(Vidagdha-Mādhav 2.18)

### **Glory of Srila Haridâs Thâkur and Siddha Bakul**

Râmânanda Ray further inquired, "What are the natural characteristics of prem?" Rûpa Goswâmî replied –

'When one hears praise from his beloved, he feels sad thinking that he is being sarcastic (and this would mean that he is indifferent to him). When he hears his beloved criticizing him, he takes them to be jokes and enjoys the pleasure. When he finds faults in his beloved, his love does not diminish, nor do the beloved's good qualities increase his adoration.'

– (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 5.4)

Sri Rupa read further – (Sri Krishna ignored the messenger sent by Sri Radha. Later on, He thought) – "My cruelty may establish some kind of tolerance in beautiful Râdhikâ. Will it destroy Her new-found love and turn Her against me? On the other hand, She may become afraid of the Love-god's bow and give up Her life. Alas! Alas! I have foolishly uprooted the soft wish-fulfilling creeper just when it was ready to grant my desires."

–(Vidagdha-Mâdhav 2.31)

Srimati Râdhârâni felt Sri Krishna was ignoring Her. Therefore She said in misery, 'O sakhi, I desired the happiness of His association. In this endeavour, I disregarded even my superiors and relaxed my modesty before them. (I was neither ashamed nor scared). Furthermore, although you are my best friend, more dear to me than my own life, I have given you so much trouble. Indeed, I even put aside the vow of chastity to my husband, a vow kept by the most elevated women. Oh alas! Although He is now neglecting me, I am so sinful that I am still living. Therefore I must condemn my so-called patience.'

– (Vidagdha-Mâdhav .2.32)

In Her mind, Srimati Râdhârâni said to Sri Krishna, "I was engaged in playful activities in my home, and because of my childish innocence I did not know right from wrong. Therefore, is it good for You to have forced us into being so much attracted to You and then to have neglected us? Now You are indifferent to us. Do You think this is right?" – (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 2.34)

Lalitâ told Vishâkhâ – "We are so miserable that we are certainly going to enter the abode of Yamrâj (the Lord of Death)<sup>1</sup>. Nevertheless, Krishṇa continues to smile seductively to cheat us. O Râdhike, You are very intelligent. How could You have developed such great loving affection for this deceitful debauchee from the cowherds?"

- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 2.29)

"O Lord Krishna, You are just like an ocean. The river like Sri Râdhikâ has reached You from a long distance — leaving far behind Her tree-like husband, breaking through the bridge of social convention, and forcibly crossing the mountainous obstacles caused by the elder relatives. She came here because of

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<sup>1</sup> We shall die

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Her newly-found love for You. Why are You turning Her back with a volley of unfavorable words”

-(Vidagdha-Mâdhav 3.7)

Śrīla Râmânanda Roy further inquired, "How have you described Vrindâvan, the sweet resonance of the flute, and the relationship between Kriṣṇa and Râdhikâ? Please tell us all this, for your poetic ability is magnificent that even Sri Krishna is wonderstruck." After offering obeisance to Râmânanda Roy, Rûpa Goswâmī gradually answered his queries.

(Sri Krishna told Madhumangal) – “The sweet, fragrant honey oozing from the mango inflorescence is repeatedly attracting groups of bumblebees. This forest is quivering in the soft breeze from the sandalwood forests of the Malaya Hills. Thus, the woods of Vrindâvan are greatly enhancing my bliss.

My dear friend, see how this forest of Vrindâvan is full of divine creepers and trees. The tips of the creepers are laden with flowers, and intoxicated bumblebees are singing around them, humming songs that please the ear and surpass even the Vedic hymns.

My dear friend, somewhere bumblebees are singing sweetly, and in some places, cool breeze is bowing. Somewhere the creepers are dancing, the Mallikâ flowers are spreading their fragrance, and abundant of juice is constantly flowing in showers from pomegranate fruits. Dear sakhâ, this forest of Vrindâvan is pleasing to our senses in various ways.”

- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.15,16,29)

Then Sri Rupa Goswâmi described Sri Krishna’s flute –

Sri Krishna’s spellbinding flute is studded with Indraneel gems on the top and bottom. There are dazzling rubies at both the ends, while the center is plated with gold set ablaze by diamonds. This auspicious flute is sparkling in His hand with divine brilliance.

- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 3.1)

(Srimati Râdhârâni addressed the flute) - 'My dear friend the flute, you seem to come from a very good family, for you reside in the hands of Śrī Kriṣṇa. By birth, you are straight (meaning simple) and are not at all crooked. Why then have you taken initiation into this dangerous mantra that enchants all the Gopis?'

- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 5.19)

(Chandrâvali addressed the flute in front of Padmâ) – “My dear friend the flute, you are actually full of many holes or faults. You are small, extremely hard, ras-less (unsophisticated) and full of knots. But what pious activities have you performed so that Sri Krishna kisses and embraces you?”

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- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 4.8)

'The transcendental vibration of Sri Krishna's flute blocked the movements of the rain clouds, astonished Tumburu, the King of Gandharvas, broke the meditation of great saints like Sanak and Sanandan. It created wonder in Lord Brahmâ and made him forget the art of creation, aroused intense curiosity in the mind of Bali Mahārāja, made Sri Anantadev's head whirl around, and penetrated the strong coverings of the universe. Thus the sound of the flute in the hands of Kriṣṇa created a fantastic situation.'

- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.17)

Devi Pournamâsi told Nândimukhi - 'The beauty of Kriṣṇa's eyes surpasses the magnificence of the blue lotus, His golden yellow garments exceed the brilliance of fresh kumkum, His ornaments of forest flowers subdue the value of the best of garments, and His body dazzles more than emerald.'

- (Vidagdha-Mâdhav 1.14.)

Srimati Râdhârâni told Lalitâ - 'O most beautiful sakhi, please accept this Embodiment of transcendental bliss (meaning Sri Krishna). He is standing with His right foot placed below the knee of His left leg, His body curved in three places, and His neck gracefully tilted to the side; He takes His flute to His pursed lips and moves His fingers upon it swiftly. He looks with sidelong glances, and His eyebrows dance like bumblebees on His lotus like face.'

- (Lalita-Mâdhav 4.27)

Srimati Râdhârâni told Lalitâ - 'O Sumukhi<sup>1</sup>, who is this master craftsman standing before us? With the sharp chisels of His loving glances, He is splitting the hard stones of many women's devotion to their husbands. And with the luster of His body, surpassing the brilliance of countless emeralds, He is simultaneously constructing private meeting places for His pastimes.'

- (Lalita-Mâdhav 1.44)

Lalita told Srimati Râdhârâni - 'My dear friend, this newly youthful Kriṣṇa, the moon in the family of Nanda Maharaja, is so gorgeous that He defies the splendor of Indraneel gem. All glory to the resonance of His flute, for it is expertly breaking the patience of chaste ladies by loosening their skirt-strings.'

- (Lalita-Mâdhav .1.41)

Sri Pournamâsi Devi described Srimati Râdhârâni as follows - "Śrīmatī Râdhārānī's eyes are so beautiful that they forcibly devour the beauty of newly bloomed blue lotuses, and the beauty of Her face surpasses that of an entire forest of fully blossomed lotuses. Her luster seems to place even gold in an embarrassing situation. Thus the wonderful, inexpressible beauty of Śrīmatī Râdhārānī is manifesting itself in Vrīṇḍāvan.'

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<sup>1</sup> A maiden with beautiful face

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Sri Krishna told Madhumangal - 'Although the moon shines brilliantly at night, in the daytime it fades away. Similarly, although the lotus is beautiful during the daytime, at night it closes. However, O my friend, the face of my most beloved Rādhā is always bright and beautiful - all day and night. Therefore, to what can we compare Her face?'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhava 5.14)

Sri Krishna told Madhumangal - 'When Śrī Rādhā smiles, waves of joy flow over Her cheeks, and Her arched eyebrows dance like the bow of Kandarpa. Her glance is so enchanting that we feel they are bumblebees dancing inebriated. That bee (glance) is biting my heart.'

- (Vidagdha-Mādhava 2.43)

Having heard these verses recited by Rūpa Goswāmī, Śrīla Rāmānanda Roy said, "Your poetry is like continuous showers of nectar. Kindly recite the introduction of the second drama." Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī said, "You are like brilliant sunshine, while I am as insignificant as a glowworm. It is impudent for me even to open my mouth before you." Then, having said this, he recited the introductory verse of Lalita-Mādhava.

'The beautiful moonlike glory of Mukunda causes distress to the lotus like faces of the wives of the demons and to their chakravāk-like breasts<sup>1</sup>. That glory, however, is pleasing to all His devotees, who are like chakor<sup>2</sup> birds. May His glory forever give pleasure to you all.'

- (Lalita-Mādhava 1.1)

When Rāmānanda Roy asked about the second introductory verse, Śrīla Rupa Goswāmī was somewhat hesitant; nevertheless, he began to recite -

"May the moon-like Son of mother Śachī, Who has now appeared on earth to spread His nectarine love, Who is the crest-jewel of the Who can drive away all darkness of ignorance and control the mind of everyone in the world fill us with indescribable joy!"

- (Lalita-Mādhava 1.2)

Although Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was greatly pleased when He heard this verse, externally He spoke as if in anger -

"Your exalted poetry, describing mellows of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, are like an ocean of nectar. But why have you put in a false glorification about me? It is like a drop of distasteful alkali."

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<sup>1</sup> Since the lotus closed in moonlight and the chakravāk, due the curse of a Muni, is deprived from making love at night and hence pines for her.

<sup>2</sup> The Greek partridge, fabled to subsist on moon rays.

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Srila Rāmānanda Roy objected, "It is not alkali at all. It is a drop of camphor he has put into the nectar to heighten its relish." Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "My dear Roy, you are jubilant with these poetic expressions, but I am ashamed to hear them, for people in general will make fun of me."

Rāmānanda Roy said, "Instead of joking, people will feel overjoyed in hearing such poetry, for it is auspicious to remember one's worshiped Deity in the beginning."

Then Rāmānanda Roy inquired, "In which act do the characters enter?" Rūpa Goswāmī answered -

The anchorperson told the danseuse - 'While dancing on the stage after having killed the ruler of uncivilized men [Kamśa], Lord Kriṣṇa, the master of all arts, will at the proper time accept the hand of Śrīmatī Rādhārānī at the auspicious moment called 'purna-manorath'.

- (Lalita-Mādhav 1.11)

Sri Rupa explained, "This introduction is technically called 'udghātyak', and the whole scene is called vīthī. You are so expert in dramatic expression that each of my statements before you is like a wave of impudence."

- (Sāhitya-Darpan.6.289)

He continued, "To explain an unclear word, men generally join it with other words. Such an attempt is called udghātyaka."

When Rāmānanda Roy requested Srila Rūpa Goswāmī to speak further about various portions of the play, Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī briefly quoted from his Lalita-Mādhav.

Gargi told Devi Pournamāsi - "All glory to the sweet sound of Lord Kriṣṇa's flute, His authorized messenger, for it expertly releases Śrīmatī Rādhārānī from Her shyness and attracts Her from Her home to the woods."

- (Lalita-Mādhav 1.18)

Devi Pournamāsi said - "The dust from cows' hoofs are indicating to the Gopis that Kriṣṇa is returning home from the pasture. In addition, the darkness of evening encourages the Gopis to meet Kriṣṇa. Thus the pastimes of Kriṣṇa and the Gopis are inconceivable to Vedic scholars."

- (Lalita-Mādhav 1.17)

On seeing Sri Krishna Srimati Rādhārānī told Her sakhi - 'My dear friend, who is this fearless young man? He is as bright as a fresh monsoon cloud, and He wanders like an intoxicated elephant! From where has He come to Vrīṇḍāvan? Alas, by His restless movements and attractive glances He is plundering my self-control from the vault of my heart.'

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– (Lalita-Mâdhav 2.9)

On beholding Srimati Râdhârâni, Sri Krishna said - 'Râdhikâ is the Gangâ in which my elephant-like heart is always playing. She is the radiant full moon of the autumn for the chakor-like eyes. She is the dazzling ornament, the bright and beautiful arrangement of stars, on the expanse of my sky-like chest. Now I have gained Her because of the highly elevated state of My mind.'

–(Lalita-Mâdhav 2.8)

After hearing this, Śrīla Rāmānanda Roy submitted at the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu the wonderful excellence of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī's poetry and began to extol it as if he had thousands of mouths. He said, "This is not a poetic presentation; it is an incessant shower of nectar. Indeed, it is the essence of all ultimate realization, appearing in the form of dramas. When the devotees hear them, their heart and ears will immerse into a whirlpool of divine bliss.

'What is the use of a bowman's arrow or a poet's poetry if they penetrate the heart but do not cause the head to spin?'

–Ancient Indian proverb.

Then Roy turned to Sriman-Mahāprabhu and said knowingly - "Without Your mercy such poetic expressions would be impossible for an ordinary living being to write. I guess You have given him the power."

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu replied, "I met him at Prayāg. He attracted and pleased me with his qualities." The Lord praised the literary ornaments of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī's divine poetry. Without such poetic attributes, He said, it is impossible to describe ras. Sriman-Mahāprabhu requested all His personal associates to bless Rūpa Goswāmī so that he may continuously describe the pastimes of Vrajadhām, which are full of eternal love for Sri Krishna. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī's elder brother, Sanātan, is such a wise and learned scholar that no one is equal to him." (The Lord told Rāmānanda Rāya) "Sanātan's renunciation is just like yours. Humility, renunciation and scholarliness reside in him simultaneously. I empowered both these brothers to go to Vriṇḍāvan to manifest Bhakti-literature."

Srila Rāmānanda Rāy said, "My Lord, You are the Supreme Controller. If You like, You can make even a wooden doll dance. I see that Rūpa has explained all the truths regarding transcendental mellows that You expounded through me in his writings. Because of Your causeless mercy toward Your devotees, You want to reveal the sweet ras of Vraja. You can empower anyone to do this and that person will bring the entire world under Your influence."

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu then embraced Rūpa Goswāmī and asked him to offer prayers at the lotus feet of all the devotees present. Advaita Āchārya, Nityānanda Prabhu and all the other devotees blest Rūpa Goswāmī by embracing him. Seeing Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's special mercy toward Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and seeing his personal qualities, all the devotees were amazed.

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Then, when Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu left with all of His devotees, Haridās Thākura got up and hugged Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī tightly. Haridās Thākura told him, "There is no limit to your good fortune! It is difficult to comprehend the glory of what you have just now described!" Śrī Rūpa said, "I do not know anything. I utter only what Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu wants me to speak.

I am a minute creature called Rupa, and have no knowledge whatsoever; Lord Sri Chaitanyadev has taken mercy on me and has inspired me to write devotional literature. Therefore I offer my obeisance at the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, the Supreme Personality, who has given me the chance to write these books."

In this way Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī passed his time in close association with Haridās Thākura – both of them being happily absorbed in the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

All the devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu spent four months with Him. Then the Lord bade them farewell, and they returned to Bengal. Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī, however, stayed at the lotus feet of the Lord, and when the Dol-yātrā festival took place, he saw it happily in presence of the Lord. After the Dol-yātrā festival ended, Srīman-Mahāprabhu bade farewell to Rūpa Goswāmī. The Lord empowered him and bestowed upon him all kinds of mercy. The Lord said, "Now go to Vrīṇḍāvan and stay there. Please send your elder brother Sanātan here. When you go to Vrīṇḍāvan, stay there, preach Bhakti-literature and excavate the lost holy places. Establish the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa and preach the transcendental mellows of Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotional service. I shall also go to Vrīṇḍāvan once more." Having thus spoken, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu embraced Rūpa Goswāmī, who then placed the lotus feet of the Lord upon his head.

Śrī Rūpa Goswāmī took leave of all the devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and returned to Vrīṇḍāvan via Bengal.

Srila Krishnadās Kavirāj Goswāmī writes – "Thus I have described the second meeting of Rūpa Goswāmī with Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Anyone who hears this narration will certainly attain shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu."



## **Sriman-Mahâprabhu and Thâkur Haridâs at Siddha-Bakul**

One day the Lord met Haridâs Thâkur along with other Vaishnav associates. He asked him, "Haridâs, Kaliyug is full of Moslems. They are hostile towards the devotees and cows. They are also very violent. How will they get succour? I am very sad because I cannot see how to save them. Haridâs said, "O my dear Lord, please do not make Yourself miserable worrying about their upliftment. They will get liberation because they utter the abuse "Hârâm! Hârâm!" Thus they perform 'Nâm-âbhâs' unknowingly. The devotee takes the Holy Name "Hârâm! Hârâm!" (O Lord Râm! O Lord Râm!) with love, while the Moslem takes the same Holy Name unwittingly. Just see how fortunate he is! Although He does not realize it, he is uttering the same Holy Name that is all-powerful. (Since in whatever manner we make take the Holy Name, His potency never diminishes.)"

Then Haridâs Thâkur quoted a verse from Sri Nrisimha Purân –

*Danshtri-danshtrâhato mlechchho hârâmeti punah punah  
Uktvâpi muktim-âpnoti kim punah shraddhayâ grinan*

Meaning – "When the tusks of a pig hurt a Mohammedan, he says 'Hârâm, hârâm'. Thus, he attains liberation. Then is it surprising that one who utters the Holy Name respectfully will surely attain the supreme state?"

The great saint continued, "Ajâmil called his son 'Nârâyan' and the emissaries of Lord Vishnu came and freed him from bondage. Nâmâbhâs can destroy all sins and break the cycle of birth and death. Sri Vidur Mahâshay told King Dhritarâshtra –

'You are an ocean of good qualities, therefore, please pay heed to this –A vast number of sins have made our hearts pitch dark, while Sri Krishna's Name is like a brilliant sun. Its mere reflection can destroy the great darkness in our heart. His Holy Name is supremely pure since He is the crest-jewel of all great prayers. Hence worship Him respectfully with a pure heart.'

Also –

'Ajâmil was extremely sinful and neither did he have any faith. At the time of his death, he called out to his son 'Nârâyan'. Yet, he ascended to Vaikuntha. Then do I need to mention that if we take the Holy Name with faith and respect we shall easily attain the supreme abode?' - (Srimad-Bhâgavatam.6.2.42.)

All the scriptures state that Nâmâbhâs can liberate us. Sri Bhâgavatam presents Ajâmil as a witness to this effect."

When the Lord heard this, He was very pleased. Again, He asked him, "There are many moving and non-moving objects on earth. How will they break free of material bondage?" Haridâs replied, "Dear Lord, You are so compassionate that You have already liberated them. You have started this loud congregational chanting of the Holy Name. When the living beings hear it, they automatically

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become free. This holy sound vibration reverberates from the non-living – nay, it is not a reverberation, but they are actually repeating the Holy Name. Your unbound mercy is making the impossible possible, that all world is loudly chanting today. Hearing this, the living and non-living are dancing in ecstasy in the same manner that they did in Jharkhand, on Your way to Vrindâvan. Balabhadra Bhattâchârya has narrated this incident to me.

You have appeared in the garb of a devotee to deliver all the souls and are preaching loud sankirtan. In this manner, You have destroyed material bondage.”

The Lord asked in curiosity, “When all the living beings will gain liberation, this universe will become empty. Then what will happen?” Haridâs replied, “When Lord Râmchandra returned to His divine abode, He took all entire Ayodhyâ with Him. Then it became full with other living entities. Likewise, as long You are present, You will deliver everything to Vaikuntha. Then Living beings from other places will perform karma and become moving and non-moving objects here. You have descended and are performing leelâs. However, no one can comprehend Your mysterious activities. Just as in the days of yore, Sri Krishna appeared and liberated everyone from this material ocean.

*Na chaivam vismayah kâryo bhavatâ bhagavatyaje,  
Yogeshwarwareshware krishne yata etad-vimuchyate.*

Meaning – Sri Shukadev said – O Mahârâj Parikshit, Sri Krishna has no birth (HE is eternal). He can liberate all moving and non-moving objects. There is nothing surprising about this.

- (Srimad-Bhâgavatam.10.29.15)

*Ayam hi bhagavân drishtah kirtitah samsmritashcha  
Dweshânubandhenâpy-akhila-sura-surâdi-durlabham  
Phalam prayachchhati kimut samyag-bhaktimatâm*

Meaning – If we behold, glorify and remember Sri Krishna even with envy, He grants them liberation, something that is rare even for the devatâs. Then need we mention that He will grant the highest result that is, love, to His devotees?

- (Vishnu Purân.4.15.10.)

Similarly, You too have descended in Nabadweep and have delivered all living beings of this universe. Whosoever says ‘I know the glory of Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu’ let him say so. I am firmly reiterating that Your leelâs are an ocean of nectar and I cannot conceive even a single drop.”

When the Lord heard this, He was astounded. He thought, “How did Haridâs know my secret?” He lovingly embraced Haridâs. He told him not to express to anyone. It is the nature of God to hide His majesty. However, His devotees always find out.

Then Mahâprabhu went to His devotees and glorified Haridâs abundantly, for nothing pleases the Lord more than to extol His devotee. Indeed, Haridâs Thâkur’s excellent qualities are countless. It is impossible to state all of them. Sri Vrindâvan dâs has extolled some of it in Sri Chaitanya Mangal. Actually, Haridâs’s qualities are so vast that one can never describe them fully. One may glorify only a part of it simply to purify oneself. Dear devotees, please hear some of his qualities that Vrindâvan dâs has not described.

### **Glory of Srila Haridâs Thâkur and Siddha Bakul**

After Haridâs had left his home, he lived in a secluded hut in Benâpol and served Tulasi-devi. He took three lakh Mahâmantra all day and night. He used to live on alms from Brahmin homes. People were so much impressed with him that they worshiped him. Râmchandra Khan, the landlord, was an atheist and envious of the Vaishnavs. He could not tolerate the fact that the people adored Sri Haridâs. He thought of ideas how to insult him. However, he could not find any fault with him. Therefore, he brought some prostitutes and told them, "This Haridâs is a celibate. You have to break his vow of celibacy." There was a beautiful young woman amongst the prostitutes. She was confident of achieving the object within three days. Khân was pleased. He said, "Let my constables go with you and catch him red-handed." She told him, "Let me associate once with him. Then I shall inform you and you may send your men during the second meeting."

At night, that prostitute dressed up well and joyously went to Haridâs's residence. She offered obeisance to Tulasi Devi and remained standing. Then she sat at the doorstep displaying her body. She told him very sweetly - "Thâkur, you are very handsome and you are in the early stages of youth. Which woman will not be tempted by you? I am eager for you, and shall not survive without you." Haridâs replied, "I shall certainly accept you, but only after I have completed the prescribed number of Mahâmantra. Until then you sit and hear my chanting. When it is over I shall do as you please." When the woman heard this, her heart was at rest. She sat and heard his chanting. The sun arose. When she saw it was morning, she went away and reported to Râmchandra Khân - "Today he has accepted me vocally. Tomorrow he will surely make love to me."

When she approached Haridâs the following night, he assured her profusely. He apologized to her and said, "Yesterday I offended you, please forgive me. I shall certainly accept you. Until then you sit here and here my loud chanting of the Holy Name. When I complete the prescribed rounds, I shall fulfill your heart's desire." The prostitute paid obeisance to Tulasi Devi and sat on the threshold. She heard the Holy Name and she too started chanting "Hari Hari". The night came to an end. She was fidgety. Haridâs told her, "I have vowed to take the Holy Name one crore times in one month. This is 'koti-nam-grahan-yagnya'. It is nearly complete. I had a feeling it would be over today. However, in spite of taking the Name whole night, it is still not over. Tomorrow it will be complete. Then I shall accomplish the vow. I will be able to associate freely with you." The prostitute went and gave the message to Khân.

She arrived at Thâkur's cottage the following day. This time she paid obeisance to Tulasi Devi as well as to Haridâs Thâkur and sat on the doorstep, listening intently to his chanting. She uttered "Hari Hari". Haridâs said, "Today it will get over and then I shall do as you please." They spent the night in this manner. The prostitute's heart underwent a sea change in Thâkur Haridâs's company. She fell at his feet and revealed Râmchandra Khân's conspiracy against him. She told him, "I am a prostitute. I have committed innumerable sins. Please take mercy on me and deliver me from this material world."

Haridâs said, "I know everything about Khân. He is ignorant and foolish. His actions do not offend me. I would have gone away from here that very day, yet I stayed back for three days just to deliver you." She said, "I beg of you to instruct me. What should I do to get rid of suffering?" Thâkur told her,

'Distribute amongst the devotees whatever wealth you have. Then you come and reside here. Take the Holy Name constantly and serve Tulasi Devi. You will

reach Sri Krishna's feet very soon." Then he left the place uttering "Hari Hari". As advised by her Gurudev (Haridâs Thâkur), the woman gave away all her possessions to the devotees. She shaved her head, donned a single piece of cloth and lived in that house. All day and night, she took the Holy Name three lakh times. She only chewed Tulasi leaves and fasted. All her senses came under control and prem manifested in her heart. She became a famous Vaishnavi and a supreme leader of the Vaishnavs. Great devotees came to her to take darshan. People were wonderstruck by her conversion and they bowed remembering the glory of Haridâs.

In this manner, Râmchandra sowed the seed of Vaishnav-offence. The seed sprouted a tree and bore a fruit; that is, one offence led to another, until he was severely punished. It is remarkable how one has to suffer due to mahat-  
aparâdh<sup>1</sup>. O my dear devotees, please hear attentively –

Râmchandra Khân was a non-Vaishnav by nature. Now he had offended Haridâs Thâkur. As a result, he became like an asur. He continued his tirade against Vaishnavism and the Vaishnavs; and finally he paid for it.

Lord Nityânanda was going around Bengal and distributing love. He had two jobs – to preach the message of love and destroy the atheists. The all-knowing Nityânanda came to his house. He came and sat inside the temple of Mother Durgâ<sup>2</sup>. Râmchandra sent his servant to him. He said, "Gosâin, Khân sent me to tell you that he will arrange for your stay in another person's house. It will be better if you live in the cowshed. This place is too small for you, while you have a large retinue." The Lord went out on hearing this. Nityânanda Prahbu laughed loudly and said in anger, "It is true; this place is not meant for me. It is fit for the Muslims who kill the cattle." He punished Râmchandra Khân by not remaining there. On the other hand, Khân ordered his servants and got them to dig the place where the Lord had sat. Then he smeared the entire courtyard with cow-dung and still he was not satisfied.

Râmchandra used to loot the villagers and not pay any tax. The Muslim minister was angry with him and came to his resident. He put up in the very same Durgâ-mandap. He killed the forbidden animal<sup>3</sup>, cooked and ate there. He tied up Râmchandra along with his wife and sons, and looted his house as well as the entire village. Then he departed from there. In this way, Khân lost his caste, wealth and people. For many days, the village was deserted. It is true that when someone insults a great devotee, not only does he perish, but all the people associated with him are also destroyed.

### **Haridâs Thâkur in Chândpur**

Haridâs Thâkur left Benâpol and arrived at Chândpur. There he stayed in Balarâm Âchârya's house. There were two brothers by the names of Hiranya and Govardhan. They were the officers of that region. Balarâm was their priest. He was a devotee and Haridâs Thâkur took mercy on him. He kept Haridâs in that village and took good care of him. Haridâs Thâkur stayed in a hut made of leaves, took the Holy Name and had prasâdam at Balarâm Achârya's house. At that time, Raghunâth dâs was a child engaged in studies. He used to go and take Haridâs's darshan. He blessed Raghunâth, due to which he got Sri Chaitanya Mahâprabhu's kripâ later on. Dear devotees, please listen carefully the wonderful deeds that Thâkur Haridâs performed in Chândpur.

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<sup>1</sup> Offence committed against a great Vaishnav

<sup>2</sup> Many houses in Bengal have a quadrangle marked out as 'Durgâ Mandap'. It has a stage on which people install Devi Durga once a year and worship her.

<sup>3</sup> cattle

**Haridâs Thâkur explains the main outcome of Harinâm in Hiranya-Govardhan's assembly.**

One day, Balarâm requested Haridâs and brought him to the assembly of the Majumdars. When the brothers saw Thâkur entering, they rose from their seats, paid obeisance at his feet and respectfully offered him a seat. There were many scholars and Brahmins in that assembly. Even Hiranya and Govardhan were highly learned. All the pandits extolled Haridâs. This made Hiranya and Govardhan very happy. The scholars knew that Haridâs took the Holy Name three lakh times, so they asked him to elaborate on the glory of the Holy Name. Someone said, "Holy Name destroys sin", while another person said, "If we repeat the Holy Name, we get liberation." Haridâs stopped them and said, "These are not the chief outcomes of Harinâm. The main result of Harinâm is – love for Sri Krishna's lotus feet." He quoted the scriptures to prove his point.

*Whoever takes Harinâm gets deep love very quickly. He laughs, cries and dances like a crazy person, oblivious of onlookers.*

- (S.B.11.2.38)

*As soon as the sun rises, darkness disappears. Similarly, Harinâm immediately annihilates mountainous sins. All glory to such Harinâm!*

- (Padyâvali.15)

O learned scholars, please explain the meaning of these verses."

The Pandits said, "It is better if you explain." Haridâs said, "Let us take the example of the sun. Darkness flees even before the sun actually rises. Similarly, righteous conduct and auspicious activities drive away the fear of thieves, goblins and demons. Even the mere shadow of Nâm can grant liberation. However although Sri Krishna wants to give the devotee Mukti<sup>1</sup>, he does not accept it.

*Ajâmil was extremely sinful and neither did he have any faith. At the time of his death, he called out to his son 'Nârâyan'. Yet, he ascended to Vaikuntha. Then do I need to mention that if we take the Holy Name with faith and respect we shall easily attain the supreme abode?*

- (Srimad-Bhâgavatam.6.2.42.)

*My devotees do not accept the four types of Muktis, namely, sâlokya, sârshiti, sârûpya and sâmpitya although I offer them. They only want to serve me*

- (S.B.3.29.12)

**Gopâl Chakraborti's disbelief and fall**

Gopâl Chakraborti lived in Goud. He was an executive of the Badshah. He was the one who carried the twelve lakh rupees to the Badshah. He was very handsome, young and learned. He could not tolerate the statement that 'even the shadow of the Holy Name grants liberation'. He said angrily, "When one performs austerities for crores of lifetimes, one realizes Brahman, and then one gets liberation. And just see what he (Haridâs is saying! How can one get that same liberation only by the shadow of the Holy Name? I tell you, O learned scholars, this is emotional gibberish!" Haridâs said humbly, "Why do you doubt? The Shâstras proclaim that the shadow of the Holy Name gives Mukti. However, the pleasure of Mukti is nothing as compared to the immense joy of Bhakti. As a result, the devotees do not accept Mukti."

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<sup>1</sup> liberation

Gopal said with arrogance, "If Nâmâbhâs cannot result in liberation; I shall cut off your nose." Haridâs said, "Sure. If Nâmâbhâs cannot grant Mukti, you must cut off my nose." Hearing this assembly started lamenting. Majumdar scolded Gopal and said he should be ashamed of himself. Balarâm, the priest also chastised him, "You stupid fellow! Do you know anything about Bhakti? How dare you insult Haridâs Thâkur! You will surely perish – no good can befall you." Haridâs arose and left the place, while Majumdar threw Gopal out of his job. He, along with other members of the assembly fell at Haridâs's feet. Thâkur smiled and said sweetly, "What is your folly? This young man is ignorant. He too is not at fault, he just likes to argue, and that is all. However, he should realize that one cannot comprehend the glory of the Holy Name by argumentative logic. How will he know the Truth? Now you return home. May Sri Krishna bless everyone. No one should be sad because of me." Hiranya dâs came home and issued an order that Gopâl should never enter his house.

Within three days, that Brahmin was struck by leprosy and his very high nose degenerated and dropped off. His beautiful fingers and toes also disappeared. He was left with stubs. The people were awestruck. They glorified Haridâs and bowed before him.

A pure devotee forgives the offense committed by an ignorant person. Krishna, however, cannot tolerate the blasphemy of His devotees. Therefore, although Haridâs Thâkur, as a Vaishnav, did not take the Brahmin's offense seriously, God could not tolerate it, and thus he made the Brâhmin suffer the consequences.

Haridâs Thâkur was unhappy when he heard that the brâhman Gopâl Chakraborti had leprosy. He took Balarâm Âchârya's (the priest of Hiranya Majumdâr) permission and went to Śântipur, the home of Advaita Âchârya. Upon meeting Him, Haridâs Thâkur offered Him respect and obeisance. Advaita Âchârya embraced him and showed respect to him in return.

On the bank of the Gangâ, in a solitary place, Advaita Âchârya made a cave like home for Haridâs Thâkur and spoke to him about the real meaning of Śrîmad-Bhâgavatam and the Bhagavad-gîtâ in terms of devotional service. Haridâs Thâkur accepted prasâdam daily at Advaita Âchârya's house. Together, they would relish nectarine Sri Krishna-kathâ. Haridâs Thâkur said, "My dear Gosâin, let me submit something before You. Every day You give me alms of food to eat. Why is it necessary? Sir, You are living within the society of very great brâhmanṣ and aristocrats, yet without fear or shame You adore a low class man like me. My dear Sir, Your behavior is unnatural. Indeed, sometimes I am afraid to speak to You. But please be careful from the society."

Advaita Âchârya replied, "My dear Haridâs, do not be afraid. I shall behave strictly according to the principles of the Shâstras. Feeding you is equal to feeding ten million brâhmanṣ," Advaita Âchârya said. "Therefore, accept this śrâddha-pâtra." Thus, Advaita Âchârya honoured him as the chief guest during his father's death anniversary.

Âchârya Prabhu was always absorbed in thoughts of how to deliver the fallen souls of the entire world. "The entire world is full of non devotees," He thought. "How will they be delivered?" Determined to deliver all the fallen souls, Advaita Âchârya pledged to make Sri Krishna. With this vow, He began to offer Gangâ-

### **Glory of Srila Haridâs Thâkur and Siddha Bakul**

water and Tulasi leaves to the Lord. On the other hand, Haridâs Thâkur chanted in his cave on the bank of the Gangâ praying for Sri Krishna's descent.

The devotional service of these two great persons made Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu descend on earth. He preached the Holy Name of the Lord and ecstatic love of Krishna to deliver the entire world.

There is another incident concerning Haridâs Thâkur's transcendental behavior. One will be astonished to hear it. We should hear about such incidents without putting forth dry arguments, for these incidents are beyond our material conception. One must believe in them with faith.

#### **Mâyâ Devi tests Thâkur Sri Haridâs**

One day Haridâs Thâkur was sitting in his cave, reciting the Holy Name of the Lord very loudly. The night was full of moonlight, which made the waves of the Gangâ sparkle. The quarters were clear and bright. Thus everyone who saw the beauty of the cave, with the Tulasi plant on a clean altar, was pleased.

At that time, in that beautiful scene, a woman appeared in the courtyard. She was so beautiful and radiant that it tinged the entire place with a yellow hue. The fragrance of her body perfumed all directions, and the tinkling of her ornaments startled the ear. After coming there, the woman offered obeisance to the Tulasi plant, and after circumambulating the Tulasi Devi, she came to the door of the cave where Haridâs Thâkur was sitting. With folded hands, she offered obeisance at his feet. Sitting at the door, she then spoke in a very sweet voice -

"My dear friend," she said, "you are the friend of the entire world. You are so beautiful and qualified. I have come here only to associate intimately with you. My dear sir, kindly accept me and be merciful toward me, for it is the characteristic of all saints to be kind toward the poor and fallen." After saying this, she began to exhibit various poses, which could make even the greatest sage to lose their self-control. However, Haridâs Thâkur was immovable, for he was deeply absorbed in Bhakti. Out of compassion, he began to speak to her -

"I have been initiated to perform a great sacrifice by taking the Holy Name a certain number of times every day. Until I fulfill my vow, I do not desire anything else. When I finish my *Jap*, then I have an opportunity to do anything. Sit down at the door and hear the vibration of the Hare Krishna Mahâ-mantra. As soon as I complete my rounds, I shall satisfy you as you desire."

After saying this, Haridâs Thâkur continued to utter the Holy Name of the Lord. The woman sat before him and heard the Holy Name. In this way, as he continued his loud *Jap*, the morning approached, and when the woman saw that it was morning, she got up and left. For three days, she came to Haridâs Thâkur in this way, exhibiting various seductive poses that would baffle even Lord Brahmâ. However, Haridâs Thâkur was always absorbed in thoughts of Sri Krishna and the Holy Name. Therefore, all the tempting gestures of the woman were like a cry in the desert. At the end of the night of the third day, the woman spoke to Haridâs Thâkur as follows -

"My dear sir, for three days you have cheated me by giving me false assurances, for I see that throughout the entire day and night you never finish

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your prescribed rounds." Haridās Thâkur said, "My dear friend, what can I do? I have made a promise. How, then, can I give it up?"

The woman offered obeisance to Haridās Thâkur and said, "I am the Sri Bhagavân's illusory energy Mâyâ. I came here to test you. I had previously captivated the mind of even Brahmā, what to speak of others. I failed to attract only you.

My dear sir, you are the foremost devotee. Simply seeing you and hearing you take the Holy Name of Krishna has purified my consciousness. Now I too want to take the Holy Name of the Lord. Please be kind to me by instructing me about the ecstasy of chanting the Hare Krishna Mahâ-mantra. Now Lord Chaitanya has brought a deluge of the Amritam of Sri Krishna-prem; all living entities are floating in that deluge. The entire world is now thankful to the Lord. Anyone who does not float in this flood is most condemned. Such a person cannot be delivered for millions of kalpas.

Formerly I received the Holy Name of Lord Rām from Lord Śiva, but now, due to your association, I am greatly eager to take the Holy Name of Lord Krishna. The Holy Name of Lord Rām certainly gives liberation, but the Holy Name of Krishna transports one to the other side of the ocean of nescience and at last gives one ecstatic love of Krishna. Please give me the Holy Name of Krishna and thus make me fortunate, so that I also may float in the flood of Krishna-prem brought by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu."

After speaking in this way, Mâyā worshiped the lotus feet of Haridās Thâkur, who initiated her by saying, "Just take the Hare Krishna Mahâ-mantra."

After Haridās Thâkur had thus instructed her, Mâyā left with great pleasure. Unfortunately, some people have no faith in these narrations. Therefore, I shall explain the reasons why people should have faith. Everyone who hears this will become faithful.

Lord Chaitanya tempted even such personalities as Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva and the four Kumāras with His Krishna-prem – so much that they took birth on this earth. All of them, including the great sage Nārad and devotees like Prahāda came here in the guise of human beings, singing the Holy Names of Lord Krishna together, and dancing and floating in the shower of Sri Krishna-prem. The goddess of fortune and others, allured by love of Krishna, also came down in the form of human beings and relished the Holy Name of the Lord and His prem. What to speak of others, even Krishna, the son of Nanda Mahārāj, personally descends to relish the nectar of prem-ras. Therefore is it astonishing that Mâyâ (Sri Krishna's external energy), begs for Sri Krishna-prem? This shows that without the mercy of a devotee and without taking the Holy Name of the Lord, Sri Krishna-prem is not possible. Lord Gourānga Mahāprabhu's transcendental nature makes the three worlds dance and sing in Sri Krishna-prem.

The Holy Name of Krishna is so attractive that anyone who takes it — including Lord Krishna Himself — absorbs in love of Krishna. This is the effect of taking the Hare Krishna Mahâ-mantra.



## **Sripâd Sanâtan Goswâmi visits Neelâchal and resides at Siddha Bakul**

(Excerpt from Sri Chaitanya-Charitâmrita, Antya-leelâ, fourth Chapter)

### **Summary**

When Sanâtan Goswâmi returned from Vrindâvan, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu affectionately saved him from his determination to commit suicide. Then, after testing him, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu purified his body.

*"All glory to Lord Chaitanya! All glory to Lord Nityânanda! All glory to Advaitachandra! And all glory to all the devotees of Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu!"*

### **Srila Sanatân Goswâmi arrives from Vrindâvan to Neelâchal, he resides at Haridâs Thâkur's âshram at Siddha-Bakul and meets Sriman-Mahāprabhu**

When Śrīla Rūpa Goswâmi returned from Jagannâth Purī to Bengal, Sanâtan Goswâmi went from Mathurâ to Purī to see Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. He walked alone through the Jhārikhanḍa forest in central India. Sometimes he fasted, and sometimes he would eat. Because of bad water in the Jhārikhanḍa forest and because of fasting, Sanâtan Goswâmi contracted a disease that made his body itch. Thus, he was afflicted with itching sores from which pus oozed out. Sanâtan Goswâmi was depressed and considered, "I am of a low class, and my body is now unfit for devotional service. When I go to Jagannâth Purl, I shall not be able to see Lord Jagannâth, nor shall I always be able to see Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

I have heard that the Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu resides near the Jagannâth Mandir. However, I shall not have the power to go near the temple. The servants of Lord Jagannâth generally move about attending to their duties, but if they touch me, I shall be an offender. Therefore, if I sacrifice this body in a holy place, it will assuage my sorrow and I shall attain an exalted destination.

During the Rath-yâtrâ festival, when Lord Jagannâth comes out of the temple, I shall give up this body under the wheel of His car in the presence of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. This will be the highest benediction of my life."

Having made this resolution, Sanâtan Goswâmi went to Nīlâchal, where he asked directions from people and approached the residence of Haridâs Thâkur. He offered his respects to the lotus feet of Haridâs Thâkur, who recognized him and embraced him.

Sanâtan Goswâmi was very eager to see the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore, Haridâs Thâkur said, "The Lord will come here very soon."

At that very moment, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, after visiting Jagannâth Mandir to see the offering of upal-bhog [morning refreshments], came with His devotees to see Haridâs Thâkur. Seeing the Lord, both Haridâs Thâkur and Sanâtan Goswâmi immediately fell like sticks to offer obeisance. The Lord then

### **Glory of Srila Haridās Thākur and Siddha Bakul**

lifted Haridās and embraced him. Haridās Thākur said to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, "Here is Sanātan offering his obeisance." Seeing Sanātan Goswāmi, the Lord was greatly surprised.

When Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu came forward to embrace him, Sanātan backed away and cried out -

"My Lord, please do not touch me. I fall at Your lotus feet. I am the lowest of men, having been born in a low class. Besides that, I have infections all over my body."

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, however, embraced Sanātan Goswāmi by force. Thus, the pus oozing out from the itching sores touched Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's divine body. Then The Lord introduced all the devotees to Sanātan Goswāmi, who offered his respectful obeisance unto all of them.

#### **Sanātan describes his younger brother Anupam's extraordinary faith in his worshiped Deity.**

The Lord and His devotees sat on a raised platform, and below that sat Haridās Thākur and Sanātan Goswāmi. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu inquired from Sanātan about his well-being. Sanātan replied, "Everything is well because I have seen Your lotus feet."

When the Lord asked about all the Vaishnavs at Mathurā, Sanātan Goswāmi informed Him of their well-being.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu told Sanātan, "Rūpa was here for ten months. He left for Bengal just ten days ago. Your brother Anupam is now dead. He was a very good devotee who had firm faith in Lord Rāmchandra."

Sanātan Goswāmi said, "I was born in a low family, for my family commits all kinds of irreligious acts that violate the scriptural injunctions. My Lord, without hatred for my family You have accepted me as Your servant. Only by Your mercy, there is good fortune in my family.

From the very beginning of his childhood, my younger brother Anupam was a great devotee of Raghunāth [Lord Rāmacandra], and he worshiped Him with great determination. He always chanted the Holy Name of Raghunāth and meditated upon Him. He continuously heard about the pastimes of the Lord from the Rāmāyan and glorified them.

Rūpa and I are his elder brothers. He was always with us. He heard Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and about Lord Krishna with us, and both of us put him to test. 'Dear Vallabh,' we said, 'please hear from us. Lord Krishna is supremely attractive. His beauty, sweetness and loving pastimes are unsurpassed. Engage yourself in Sri Krishna-bhakti along with us. All three of us shall stay together and delight in the pastimes of Lord Krishna.'

In this way, we spoke to him repeatedly, and because of this persuasion and his respect for us, his mind turned somewhat toward our instructions.

Vallabh replied, 'My dear brothers, how can I disobey your orders? Initiate me into the Krishna mantra so that I may perform devotional service to Lord Krishna.'

After saying this, at night he began to think, 'How shall I give up the lotus feet of Lord Raghunāth?' He stayed up all night and cried. In the morning, he came to us and pleaded -'I have sold my head at the lotus feet of Lord Rāmchandra. I cannot take it away. That would be too painful for me. Both of you please be merciful to me and order me that I may serve the lotus feet of Lord Raghunāth life after life. It is impossible for me to give up the lotus feet of Lord Raghunāth. Even if I think of giving them up, my heart breaks.'

Upon hearing this, we embraced him and encouraged him by saying, 'You are a pure devotee, for you have single-pointed devotion.' In this way, we praised him. My dear Lord, the family upon which You bestow even a little mercy is always fortunate, for such mercy makes all miseries disappear."

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "There was a similar incident concerning Murāri Gupta. Formerly I put him to test, and he too showed strong determination. Glorious is that devotee who does not give up the shelter of his Lord, and glorious is that Lord who does not abandon His servant. If by chance a servant falls down and goes somewhere else, glorious is that master who captures him by the hair and brings him back."

Then the Lord said, "It is very good that you have arrived here. Now stay in this room with Haridās Thākur. Both of you are expert in understanding the mellows of Lord Krishna's devotional service. Therefore you should both continue relish such leelās and repeat the Hare Krishna Mahā-mantra."

Having said this, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu got up and left, and through Govinda He sent prasādam for them. In this way, Sanātan Goswāmi stayed under the care of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. He would see the wheel on the pinnacle of the Jagannāth temple and offer respectful obeisance.

**Sriman-Mahāprabhu expertly prevents Sanātan from committing suicide and instructs him.**

Every day Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu would go there to meet these two exalted devotees and discuss topics of Krishna with them for some time. The prasādam of Lord Jagannāth was divine. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu would bring this prasādam for the brothers.

One day when the Lord came to meet them, He suddenly began speaking to Sanātan Goswāmi. "My dear Sanātan," He said, "If I could attain Krishna by committing suicide, I would certainly give up millions of bodies without a moment's hesitation. You should know that one cannot attain Krishna simply by giving up the body. Krishna is attainable by devotional service alone. There is no other means for attaining Him.

One commits suicide are due to ignorance, and in ignorance and passion, one cannot understand who Krishna is. Unless one practices devotional service, one cannot awaken one's dormant love for Krishna, and there is no means for attaining Him other than awakening that dormant love.

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Lord Sri Krishna has said, "My dear Uddhav, one cannot satisfy me much either through aṣṭāṅga-yog [the mystic yog system for controlling the senses], or through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, or through study of the Vedas, or through austerities, charity or acceptance of sannyās. One can satisfy me more by developing unalloyed devotion for me."

To commit suicide is a sin. A devotee never achieves shelter at Krishna's lotus feet by such actions. Because of feelings of separation from Krishna, an exalted devotee sometimes wants to give up his life. By such ecstatic love, however, Sri Krishna then gives him darshan, and he cannot give up his body.

One who is deeply in love with Krishna cannot tolerate separation from Him. Therefore, such a devotee always wishes to die.

*(Sri Rukmini Devi said) - 'O lotus-eyed one, great personalities like Lord Śiva wish to bathe in the dust of Your lotus feet to drive away ignorance. If I do not get the mercy of Your Lordship, I shall observe vows to reduce the duration of my life, and thus I shall give up bodies for hundreds of births if it is possible to get Your mercy in that way.'* – (S.B.10.52.35)

*(The Gopis said) - 'O dear Krishna, You have awakened a fire of lusty desire in our hearts with Your smiling glances and sweet speech. Now You should extinguish that fire with a stream of nectar from Your lips by kissing us. Kindly do this. Otherwise, dear friend, the fire within our hearts will raze our bodies to ashes because of separation from You. Thus by meditation we shall claim shelter at Your lotus feet.'* – (S.B.10.29.35)"

Chaitanya Mahāprabhu told Sanātan Goswāmi, "Give up all your nonsensical desires and instead engage yourself in hearing and glorifying. Then you will undoubtedly achieve Krishna-prem very soon. A person born in a low family is fit for practicing devotional service, but one may not be qualified for devotional service although he may be born in a good Brahmin family.

Anyone who takes to devotional service is glorious, whereas a non-devotee is always condemned and abominable. Therefore, in practicing devotional service to the Lord, there is no consideration of the status of one's family. Krishna, the Supreme Personality, is always favorable to the humble and meek, but aristocrats, learned scholars and the wealthy are always proud of their positions.

*'One may be born in a brāhman family and have all twelve brahminical qualities, but if in spite of being thus qualified he is not devoted to the lotus feet of Aravinda-nābh<sup>1</sup> Lord Krishna, he is not as good as a chaṇḍāl who has dedicated his mind, words, activities, wealth and life to the service of the Lord. Simply to take birth in a brāhman family or to have brahminical qualities is not sufficient. One must be a pure devotee of the Lord. Thus if a śva-paca, or chaṇḍāl, is a devotee, he delivers not only himself but his entire family as well, whereas a brāhman who is not a devotee but simply has brahminical qualifications cannot even purify himself, what to speak of his family.'*

- (S.B.7.9.9.)

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<sup>1</sup> The One Who has lotus-shaped navel

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The nine best ways of executing devotional service have great potency to attain Krishna and Krishna-prem. Of these nine ways, the most important is to take the Holy Name of the Lord always. If one does so, avoiding the ten offenses, one very easily obtains the priceless treasure called 'Krishna-prem'."

After hearing this, Sanâtan Goswâmi was exceedingly astonished. He understood, "Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu does not appreciate my decision to commit suicide." He further thought, "Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, Who is omniscient has forbidden me to commit suicide." He then fell down, touching the lotus feet of the Lord, and spoke to Him as follows -

"My Lord, You are the omniscient, merciful, independent Supreme Lord. Exactly like a puppet, I dance as You wish. I am lowborn. Indeed, I am the lowest. I am condemned, for I have all the characteristics of a sinful man. If You keep me alive, what will You gain?"

Sriman-Mahāprabhu replied, "Your body is my property. You have already surrendered unto me. Therefore, you no longer have any claim to your body. What right do you have to destroy another's property? Can you not distinguish between right and wrong?"

Your body is my principal instrument for executing many essential sevâ. With your body, I shall carry out many tasks. You shall have to ascertain the basic principles for a devotee, devotional service, Sri Krishna-prem, duties of a Vaishnav and Vaishnav-etiquette. You will also have to preach devotional service unto Sri Krishna and Krishna-prem. You have to excavate the Holy places that are now lost and teach people the rules of the renounced order.

Mathurā and Vrindâvan are my own very dear abodes. I want to do many things there to preach the religion of love and devotion. By the order of my mother I am sitting here in Jagannāth Purī; therefore, I cannot go outside to teach people how to live according to religious principles. I have to do all these works through your body, but you want to give it up. How can I tolerate this?"

Sanâtan Goswâmi was overwhelmed by what he heard. He fell at the Lord's feet and said, "I offer my respectful obeisance unto You. No one can understand the plans that are so deep within Your heart. A wooden doll sings and dances according to the direction of a magician but does not know how it is dancing and singing. My dear Lord, as You cause one to dance, he dances accordingly, but he does not know how he dances and who is causing him to dance."

Sriman-Mahāprabhu then said to Haridâs Thâkur, "My dear Haridâs, please hear me. This person wants to destroy another's property. One who is entrusted with someone else's property does not distribute it or use it for his own purposes. Therefore, tell him not perform anything illegal."

Haridâs Thâkur replied, "We are falsely proud of our intelligence. Actually, we cannot understand Your deep intentions. "Unless You inform us, we cannot understand what Your purpose is or what You want to accomplish and through whom. You, the Supreme Person, have accepted Sanâtan; no one is more fortunate than he."

## **Glory of Srila Haridās Thâkur and Siddha Bakul**

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu embraced both Haridās Thâkur and Sanâtan Goswâmi and then got up and left to perform His noon duties.

Haridās Thâkur said embraced Sanâtan Goswâmi and said, "My dear Sanâtan, I cannot extol enough the limits of your good fortune. The Lord has accepted your body as His own property. Therefore, no one is as blessed as you are. What Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu cannot do with His personal body He wants to do through you, and He wants to do it in Mathurā.

Whatever the Supreme Personality wants us to do will certainly be successful. I conclude that this is your great fortune. I can understand from the words of the Lord that He wants you to write books about the principles of devotional service and about the regulative principles revealed in the Shâtras.

Alas! My body is of no use in the service of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore although it took birth in the holy land of India, this body is useless."

Sanâtan Goswâmi replied, "O Haridās Thâkur, who is equal to you? You are one of the intimate associates of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore, you are the most fortunate. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu has descended to spread the importance of the Holy Name of the Lord. However, instead of personally doing so, He is spreading it through you.

My dear sir, you are taking the Holy Name three lakh times daily and are spreading the glory of Holy Name. Some practice Bhakti very well but do not preach, whereas others preach but do not practice themselves. You practice as well as preach the Holy Name. Therefore you are the spiritual master of the whole world, for you are the most advanced devotee."

### **Sriman-Mahāprabhu makes Srila Sanâtan Goswâmi meet all the devotees**

In this way, both of them passed their time discussing subjects concerning Krishna. Thus, they enjoyed life together.

During the time of Ratha-yātrā, all the devotees arrived from Bengal to visit the car festival as they had done previously.

During the Ratha-yātrā festival, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu again danced before the chariot of Jagannāthdev. When Sanâtan Goswâmi saw this ecstatic dance, he was wonderstruck.

The Lord's devotees from Bengal stayed at Jagannāth Purī during the four months of monsoon. Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu introduced Sanâtan Goswâmi to all of devotees such as - Advaita Âchârya, Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrīvās Thâkur, Bakreshwar Paṇḍit, Vāsudev Datta, Murāri Gupta, Rāghav Paṇḍit, Dāmodar Paṇḍit, Paramānanda Purī, Brahmānanda Bhāratī, Swarūp Dāmodar, Gadādhara Paṇḍit, Sārvabhouma Bhaṭṭāchârya, Rāmānanda Roy, Jagadānanda Paṇḍit, Śaṅkar Paṇḍit, Kāśīśwar and Govinda.

The Lord asked Sanâtan Goswâmi to offer obeisance to all the devotees. Thus, He introduced Sanâtan Goswâmi to them all, just to make him an object of their mercy. Sanâtan Goswâmi endeared himself to everyone because of his exalted

### **Glory of Srila Haridās Thākur and Siddha Bakul**

qualities and learning. Therefore, they bestowed upon him mercy, friendship and honor.

When all the other devotees returned to Bengal after the Ratha-yātrā festival, Sanātan Goswāmi stayed under the loving shelter of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet.

Sanātan Goswāmi observed the Dol-yātrā ceremony (Holi) with Sriman-Mahāprabhu. In this way, his happiness knew no bounds in the company of the Lord.

#### **Sri Sanātan Goswāmi exhibits remarkable love for Sriman-Mahāprabhu**

Sanātan Goswāmi had come to see Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu at Jagannātha Purī during the month of April-May, and during the month of May-June Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu tested him. He came to the Temple of Yameśvar [Lord Śiva] and accepted prasādam there at the request of the devotees. At noon, when it was time for lunch, the Lord called for Sanātan Goswāmi, who was very happy to receive such a command. It was the scorching Indian summer, the sand on the beach was as hot as fire, but Sanātan Goswāmi came by that path. Overwhelmed with joy at being called by the Lord, he did not feel that his feet were burning in the hot sand. Although the soles of his feet were blistered because of the heat, he nevertheless went to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. There he found that the Lord resting after prasādam. Govinda gave Sanātan Goswāmi the plate with the remnants of Lord Chaitanya's food. After taking the prasādam, Sanātan Goswāmi approached the Lord.

The Lord asked him, "Sanātan, by which path did you come?" Sanātan Goswāmi replied, "I came along the beach." Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "How did you come along the beach, where the sand is so hot? Why didn't you come by the path in front of the Simḥa-dwāra (the Lion-gate)? It is very shady there. The hot sand have blistered your soles. Now you cannot walk. How did you tolerate it?"

Sanātan Goswāmi replied, "I did not feel much pain, nor was I aware of the blisters. I have no right to pass by the Simḥa-dwār, for the servants of Jagannāth are always moving to and fro. If a fallen person like me touches them, I shall be committing a grave aparādh which will destroy my spiritual life."

This pleased Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu greatly and He spoke as follows -

"My dear Sanātan, although you have the capacity to deliver the entire universe and you can purify even the devatās and great saints, you maintain Vaishnav etiquette. Observing Vaishnav etiquette is the ornament of a pure devotee. If one transgresses principles of etiquette, people make fun of him, and thus he perishes in both this world and the next. By following Vaishnav etiquette, you have pleased me. Who else but you could show this example?"

After saying this, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu embraced Sanātan Goswāmi, and the pus oozing from the Sanātan's itching sores smeared the body of the Lord. Although Sanātan Goswāmi repeatedly forbade Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu to embrace him, the Lord still did so. The pus rubbed on to His body and Sanātan

became greatly distressed. Thus, both servant and master departed for their respective homes.

**Sri Gourāṅga Mahāprabhu expresses extraordinary love for Sanātan Goswāmi and glorifies him**

The next day, Jagadānanda Paṇḍit went to meet Sanātan Goswāmi. When they sat together and began to discuss about Lord Krishna, Sanātan Goswāmi revealed his sorrow to Jagadānanda Paṇḍit. He said, "I came here to lessen my misery by seeing the, but the He did not fulfill my desire. Although I request Him not to do so, He embraces me; His body gets smeared with the pus from my sores. In this way, I am committing grave offenses at His lotus feet, and I no one can deliver me from these offenses. In addition, I cannot see Lord Jagannāth. This is my great unhappiness. I came here for my welfare, but now I see that I am getting just the opposite. I do not know, nor can I ascertain, how to mitigate my sorrow."

Jagadānanda Paṇḍit said, "The most suitable place for you to reside is Vrindāvan. After seeing the Ratha-yātrā festival, you can return there. The Lord has already ordered both of you brothers to live in Vrindāvan. There you will achieve all happiness. Your purpose in coming has been fulfilled, for you have seen the lotus feet of the Lord. Therefore, after seeing Lord Jagannāth on the chariot, you can leave."

Sanātan Goswāmi replied, "You have given me very good advice. I shall certainly go there, for that is the place the Lord has marked out for me."

After making this decision, Sanātan Goswāmi and Jagadānanda Paṇḍit returned to their respective duties. The next day, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu went to see Haridās and Sanātan Goswāmi.

Haridās Thākura offered obeisance to the lotus feet of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, and the Lord embraced him in ecstatic love. Sanātan Goswāmi too offered his obeisance, but from a distance. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu called him repeatedly to come close so that He could embrace him. Out of fear of committing offense, Sanātan Goswāmi did not come forward to meet Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. The Lord however advanced to meet him. Sanātan Goswāmi backed away, but Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu caught him by force and embraced him.

The Lord took both of them and sat on a raised seat. Then Sanātan Goswāmi, began to speak in distress. "I came here for my benefit," he said, "but I see that I am getting just the opposite. I am unfit to render service. I simply commit offenses day after day. By nature, I am lowborn. I am a contaminated reservoir of sins. If You touch me that is a great offense on my part. Moreover, pus is flowing out from the sores on my body, rubbing on to You; yet You touch me by force. My dear Lord, You do not have any aversion to touching my body, which is in a horrible condition. Because of this offense, I will perish. Therefore, I see that I will get nothing auspicious by staying here. Kindly command me to return to Vrindāvan after the Rath-yātrā festival.

I have consulted Jagadānanda Paṇḍit for his opinion, and he has also advised me to return to Vrindāvan."

Hearing this, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu began to chastise Jagadānanda Paṇḍit in an angry mood. "Jagā [Jagadānanda Paṇḍit] is only a neophyte, but he has become so proud that he thinks himself competent to advise a person like you. In affairs of spiritual advancement and even in ordinary dealings, you are on the level of his spiritual master. Yet not knowing his own standard, he dares to advise you!

My dear Sanātan, you are my advisor, for you are an authority in Bhakti-shāstra. Nevertheless, Jagā wants to advise you. This is but the impudence of a naughty boy."

When Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was thus chastising Jagadānanda Paṇḍit, Sanātan Goswāmī fell at the Lord's feet and said, "I can now understand how fortunate Jagadānanda is. I can also understand my misfortune. No one in this world is as fortunate as Jagadānanda. My Lord, You are making Jagadānanda drink the nectar of affectionate relationship, whereas by glorifying me, You are making me drink the bitter juice of nimba and niśindā (bitter fruits).

It is my misfortune that You have not accepted me as one of Your intimate relations. But You are the Supreme Being, and hence completely independent."

Hearing this, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was somewhat ashamed. Just to satisfy Sanātan Goswāmī, He spoke the following words. "My dear Sanātan, please do not think that Jagadānanda is more dear to me than you. However, I cannot tolerate anyone transgressing Vaishnav etiquette. You are an experienced authority in the śāstras, whereas Jagā is just a fledgling in these matters. You have the power to convince even me. In many places, you have already showed me the way of ordinary behavior and devotional service. I cannot tolerate Jagā advising you. Therefore, I am chastising him.

I glorify you not because I think of you as an outsider but because you are actually so qualified that one is forced to praise your qualities. Although one has affection for many persons, different types of ecstatic love awaken according to the nature of one's personal relationships. You consider your body dangerous and awful, but I think that your body is like nectar.

Actually, your body is transcendental, never material. You are thinking of it, however, in terms of a material conception. Even if your body were material, I still could not neglect it, for we should not consider the material body as either good or bad. Anything not related to Krishna is illusion [māyā]. None of the illusions uttered by words or conceived in the mind are factual. Because illusion is not factual, there is no distinction between what we think is good and what we think is bad. When we speak of the Absolute Truth, such speculations do not apply.

In the material world, conceptions of good and bad are all mental speculations. Therefore, saying 'This is good' and 'this is bad' is all a mistake. The humble sages, by virtue of true knowledge, see with equal vision a learned and gentle brāhman, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a dog-eater. One who is fully satisfied in knowledge obtained and practically applied in life, who is always determined and fixed in his spiritual position, who completely controls his senses, and who sees pebbles, stones and gold on the same level is understood to be a perfect yogī.

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Since I am in the renounced order, I should not make any distinction and be equally disposed to all. I should treat sandalwood pulp and dirty mud equally. Hence, I cannot reject you. If I hate you, I would be deviating from the path of righteousness."

Haridās said, "My dear Lord, You are trying to deceive us with external formalities. My Lord, by accepting a fallen person like me You have displayed Your magnanimity. You are famous for Your compassion towards the under trodden.

Lord Gourānga smiled and said, "My dear Haridās and Sanātan, hear the truth about how my mind is attached to you. Haridās and Sanātan, I think of you as my little children whom I have to nourish. The parent never finds fault with his child. I never think of myself as deserving any respect but I always consider all of you like my children. When a child passes stool and urine that touch the body of the mother, she never hates it. On the contrary, she takes much pleasure in cleaning him. The stool and urine of the child appear like sandalwood paste to the mother. Similarly, when I touch the pus oozing from Sanātan's boils I feel no hatred."

Haridās Thākura said, "My dear Lord, You are the Supreme Controller and most munificent. No one can understand what is within Your deeply affectionate heart. You embraced the leper Vāsudev, whose body was completely infected by germs. You are so kind that in spite of his condition You embraced him and made him as handsome as the Love-god. We cannot understand the depth of Your mercy."

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "The body of a devotee is never material. It is transcendental, full of spiritual bliss. At the time of initiation, when a devotee surrenders absolutely unto the lotus feet of the Lord, Sri Bhagavān accepts him to be as good as Himself. At that moment, the devotee's body becomes divine. The devotee, in that transcendental body, worships the lotus feet of the Lord.

'The living entity, who is subjected to birth and death, attains immortality when he gives up all material activities, dedicates his life to execute my order and acts according to my directions. In this way he becomes fit to enjoy the spiritual bliss by interacting lovingly with me.' – (S.B.11.29.32)

Krishna manifested these sores on Sanātan's body and sent him here to test me. If I had hated him and had not embraced him, Sri Krishna would have certainly punished me for committing an offense. Sanātan is one of the associates of Krishna. There could not be any bad odor from his body. On the first day, when I embraced him, I got the fragrance of chatuṣṣama [a mixture of sandalwood pulp, camphor, aguru and musk]."

The reality is that, when Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu embraced Sanātan Goswāmi, by the Lord's touch a fragrance exactly like that of sandalwood pulp emanated from Sanātan's body.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu continued, "My dear Sanātan, do not grieve, for when I embrace you I actually get great pleasure. Stay with me at Jagannāth Purī for one year, and after that I shall send you to Vrindāvan."

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After saying this, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu again embraced Sanātan Goswāmi. And immediately the sores disappeared, and his entire body turned into a golden hue. Seeing the change, Haridās Thâkur, greatly astonished, told the Lord, "This is Your pastime. My dear Lord, You made Sanātan drink the water of Jhārikhaṇḍa, and generated the sores on his body. In this way You put Sanātan to test. No one can understand Your transcendental pastimes."

The Lord embraced Haridās Thâkur and Sanātan Goswāmi and returned to His residence. Great ecstatic love filled both of them and they began to describe the Lord's divine excellences. Thus Sanātan Goswāmi stayed under Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's care and extolled His transcendental qualities with Haridās Thâkur.

After they saw the Dol-yātrā festival, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu instructed Sanātan Goswāmi completely about what to do in Vrindāvan and bade him farewell. The scene of separation is so pathetic that i cannot describe it.

Sanātan Goswāmi decided to go to Vrindāvan by the very forest path on which Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu had once set His feet. Sanātan Goswāmi noted from Balabhadra Bhattāchārya all the villages, rivers and hills where Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu had performed His pastimes. He met all the devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and then, traveling by that same path, visited the places through which Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu had passed. Whenever he visited a place where Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu had performed His pastimes on the way, he was immediately full ecstatic love.

In this way, Sanātan Goswāmi reached Vrindāvan. Later Rupa Goswāmi came and met him.



## **Srila Haridâs Thâkur's grand departure**

(Excerpt from Sri Chaitanya-Charitâmrta, Antya leelâ, 11<sup>th</sup> chapter)

I offer my respectful obeisance unto Haridâs Thâkur and his master, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, who danced with the body of Haridâs Thâkur on His lap.

All glory to Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu! all glory to the Compassionate One!  
All glory to the Beloved of Sri Advaita Âchârya and Lord Nityānanda!

All glory to the master of Śrīnivâs Thâkur! All glory to the master of Haridâs Thâkur! All glory to the Beloved of Gadādhara Paṇḍita! All glory to the master of Swarūpa Dāmodara's life!

All glory to Lord Śrī Chaitanya, who is very dear to Kāśī Mīśra! He is the Lord of the Jagadānanda's life and the Lord of Rūpa Goswāmī, Sanātan Goswāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Goswāmī.

All glory to the divine form of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, who is Krishna Himself, the Swayam Bhagavān! My dear Lord, kindly shelter me with Your lotus feet by Your causeless mercy.

All glory to Lord Nityānanda, who is the life and soul of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu! My dear Lord, kindly engage me in devotional service at Your lotus feet.

All glory to Advaita Âchârya, whom Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu treats as superior due to His age and respectability! Please engage me in devotional service at Your lotus feet.

All glory to the devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, for the Lord is their life and soul! All of you kindly bestow devotional service upon me.

All glories to Rūpa Goswāmī, Sanātan Goswāmī, Jīva Goswāmī, Raghunātha dāsa Goswāmī, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Goswāmī and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Goswāmī, the six Goswāmīs of Vrindāvan! They are all my masters.

I am narrating the pastimes and qualities of the Lord by the mercy of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates. I do not know how to write properly, but in this is way I am purifying myself.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu resided at Jagannāth Purī with His personal devotees and enjoyed the Harinām Sankīrtan.

In the daytime Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu engaged in dancing and chanting and in seeing the temple of Lord Jagannāth. At night, in the company of His most

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confidential devotees, such as Rāmānanda Rāy and Swarūp Dāmodar Goswāmi, He tasted the nectar of the transcendental mellows of Lord Śrī Krishna's pastimes.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu very happily passed His days in this way at Nīlāchal, Jagannāth Purī. Feeling separation from Krishna, He exhibited many transcendental symptoms all over His body. Day after day, the symptoms increased, and at night, they increased even more. He expressed all the symptoms, such as transcendental anxiety, agitation and talking like a lunatic, just as the shāstras mention. Swarūp Dāmodar Goswāmi and Rāmānanda Rāy, the chief associates in Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes, remained with Him both day and night.

One day Govinda, the personal servant of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, went in great jubilation to deliver the remnants of Lord Jagannāth's food to Haridās Thâkur. When Govinda came to Haridās, he saw him lying on his back and chanting his rounds very slowly. "Please rise and take your mahā-prasād," Govinda said. Haridās Thâkur replied, "Today I am observing a fast. I have not finished my regular number of rounds. How, then, can I eat? Yet you have brought mahā-prasād, and how can I neglect it?" Saying this, he offered prayers to the mahā-prasād, took a little portion and ate it.

The next day, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu went to Haridās's place and inquired, "Haridās, are you well?" Haridās offered his obeisance to the Lord and replied, "My body is all right, but my mind and intelligence are not well." Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu further asked, "Can you tell me what your disease is?" Haridās Thâkur replied, "My disease is that I cannot complete my rounds."

"Now you have become old," the Lord said, "you may reduce the number of Harinām. You are already liberated, and therefore you need not follow the regulative principles very strictly. Your role in this incarnation is to deliver the people in general. You have sufficiently preached the glory of the Holy Name in this world." The Lord concluded, "Now, therefore, please reduce the fixed number of times you take the Hare Krishna Mahā-mantra."

Haridās Thâkur replied, "Please hear my plea. I was lowborn, and my body is most abominable. I always commit sins. Therefore, I am the lowest, most condemned of men. I am not fit to be either seen or touched, but You have accepted me as Your servant. This means that You have delivered me from a hellish condition and raised me to the Vaikuntha platform.

My dear Lord, You are the fully independent Supreme Being. You act by Your own free will. You cause the whole world to dance and act as You like. My dear Lord, by Your mercy You have made me dance in many ways. For example, I was offered the śrāddha-pātra, which should have been offered to brāhmaṇs. I ate from it in spite of being born in a family of meat-eaters.

I have had one desire for a very long time. I think that quite soon You will bring to a close Your pastimes in this material world. I do not wish to see this closing chapter of Your pastimes. Before that time comes, please let my body fall down in Your presence. I wish to hold Your lotus feet upon my heart and gaze at Your

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moonlike face. With my tongue, I shall chant Your Holy Name, 'Śrī Krishna Chaitanya!' 'Śrī Krishna Chaitanya!' This is my desire. Please let me give up my body in this way.

O most merciful Lord, if by Your mercy it is possible, kindly grant my desire. Let this lowly body fall down before You. You can fulfill the goal of my life, my heart's deepest desire!"

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu said, "My dear Haridās, Krishna is so merciful that He must execute whatever you want. But I feel happy only due to your association. It is not fitting for you to go away and leave me behind."

Haridas caught Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet and said, "My Lord, do not create an illusion! Although I am so fallen, You must certainly show me this mercy! My Lord, there are many respectable personalities, millions of devotees, who are much more advanced than I am – they are like precious gems whom I would like to place upon my head. They are helpful in Your pastimes. My Lord, if an insignificant worm like me dies, what is the loss? If an ant dies, how does the world suffer?

My Lord, You are always affectionate to Your devotees. I am just a false devotee; nevertheless, I hope You will certainly fulfill my desire. "

Because He had to perform His noon duties, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu got up to leave, but it was settled that the following day, after He saw Lord Jagannāth, He would return to visit Haridās Thâkur. After embracing him, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu left to perform His noon duties and went to the sea to take His bath.

The next morning, after visiting the Jagannāth temple, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, accompanied by all His devotees, went hastily to see Haridās Thâkur.

The Lord came before Haridās Thâkur, who offered his respects to His lotus feet and to all the Vaishnavs.

Lord Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu inquired, "My dear Haridās, what is the news?" Haridās Thâkur replied, "My Lord, whatever is Your mercy."

Upon hearing this, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu immediately began great Harinām Sankīrtan in the courtyard. Bakreśwar Paṇḍit was the chief dancer. Headed by Swarūp Dāmodar Goswāmi, all the devotees of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu surrounded Haridās Thâkur and began congregational chanting.

In front of all the great devotees like Rāmānanda Rāy and Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchārya, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu began to describe the holy qualities of Haridās Thâkur. As He described his transcendental qualities, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu seemed to possess five mouths. The more He described, the more His joy increased. All the devotees present were struck with wonder when they

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heard the transcendental qualities of Haridās Thâkur. They all offered their respectful obeisance at his lotus feet.

Haridās Thâkur made Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu sit down in front of him, and then he fixed his eyes, like two bumblebees, on the lotus face of the Lord. He held Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's lotus feet to his bosom and then took the dust of the feet of all the devotees present and put it on his head. He began to chant the Holy Name of Śrī Krishna Chaitanya repeatedly. As he drank the sweetness of the face of the Lord, tears constantly rolled down from his eyes.

All the while uttering "Śrī Krishna Chaitanya", he gave up his life. Seeing the wonderful departure of Haridās Thâkur by his own will, which was just like a great mystic yogi, everyone remembered the passing away of Bhishma.

There was a tumultuous noise as they all chanted the Holy Names "Hari" and "Krishna." Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu became overwhelmed with ecstatic love.

The Lord lifted Haridās Thâkur's body and placed it on His lap. Then He began to dance in the courtyard in great ecstatic love. Because of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's ecstatic love, all the devotees were helpless, and in ecstatic love, they began to dance and chant congregationally. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu danced for some time, and then Swarup Dâmodar Goswâmi informed Him of other rituals for the body of Thâkur Haridās.

The devotees put Haridās Thâkur's body on a vehicle that resembled an airship and took it to the sea, accompanied by congregational chanting. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu danced in front of the procession, and Bakreshwar Pandit, along with the other devotees, chanted and danced behind Him.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu bathed the body of Haridās Thâkur in the sea and then declared, "From this day on, this sea has become a great pilgrimage site."

Everyone drank the water that had touched the lotus feet of Haridās Thâkur, and anointed Haridās Thâkur's body with the remnants of Lord Jagannāth's sandalwood paste.

The Lord put a prasadi robe of Lord Jagannāth on his body and lowered him in a pit in the sand. All around the body, the devotees performed congregational chanting, and Bakreshwar Pandit danced in jubilation. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu personally covered the body of Haridās Thâkur with His pure hands by placing sand on his body, crying "Haribol! Haribol!"

Seeing this, the devotees too covered the body of Haridās Thâkur with sand and then constructed a platform upon the site. They protected the platform all around by fencing. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu danced and chanted all around the platform and as the Holy Name of Hari roared tumultuously, the whole universe filled with the vibration.

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After sañkīrtan, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu bathed in the sea with His devotees, swimming and playing in the water in great jubilation. After circumambulating the tomb of Haridās Thâkur, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu went to the Simḥa-dwār (Lion-gate) of the Jagannāth temple. The whole city chanted in congregation, and the tumultuous sound vibrated all over the city.

Approaching the Simḥa-dwār, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu spread His cloth and began to beg prasādam from all the shopkeepers there.

"I am begging prasādam for a festival honoring the passing away of Haridās Thâkur," the Lord said. "Please give me alms."

Hearing this, all the shopkeepers immediately came forward with big baskets of prasādam, which they jubilantly delivered to Lord Chaitanya.

However, Swarūp Dāmodar stopped them, and the shopkeepers returned to their shops and sat down with their baskets.

Swarūp Dāmodar sent Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu back to His residence and kept with him four Vaishnavs and four servant carriers.

Swarūp Dāmodar said to all the shopkeepers, "Deliver to me four palmfuls of prasādam from each and every item."

In this way, he collected varieties of prasādam, packed them in different loads and placed them on the heads of the four servants. Not only did Swarūp Dāmodar Goswāmi bring prasādam, but Bānīnāth Paṭṭanāyak and Kāśī Miśra also sent large quantities.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu made all the devotees sit in rows and personally began to distribute the prasādam, assisted by four other men. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu was not accustomed to giving prasādam in small quantities. He therefore put on each plate what at least five men could eat. At last, Swarup Dāmodar Goswāmi requested Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, "Please sit down and watch. With these men to help me, I shall distribute the prasādam."

The four men — Swarup Dāmodar, Jagadānanda, Kāśīśvar and Śaṅkar — distributed the prasādam continuously.

None of the devotees would eat the prasādam as long as the Lord had not eaten. On that day, however, Kāśī Miśra had extended an invitation to the Lord.

Therefore, Kāśī Miśra went there personally and delivered prasādam to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. He made Him eat with great care. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu sat down with Paramānanda Purī and Brahmānanda Bhāratī, and accepted the prasādam. When He began to eat, all the Vaishnavs followed suit.

Everyone was full up to their necks because Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu kept telling the distributors "Give them more! Give them more!"

### **Glory of Srila Haridās Thâkur and Siddha Bakul**

After all the devotees had finished accepting prasādam and had washed their hands and mouths, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu decorated each of them with a flower garland and sandalwood paste. Overwhelmed with ecstatic love, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu blessed all the devotees, which satisfied them very much.

The Lord gave this benediction: "Anyone who has seen the festival of Śrī Haridās Thâkur's departure, anyone who has chanted and danced here, anyone who has offered sand on the body of Haridās Thâkur, and anyone who has joined this festival to partake of the prasādam will achieve the favor of Krishna very soon. There is such wonderful power in seeing Haridās Thâkur.

Being merciful upon me, Krishna gave me the association of Haridās Thâkur. Being independent in His desires, He has now broken that association. When Haridās Thâkur wanted to leave this material world, it was not within my power to detain him. Simply by his will, Haridās Thâkur could give up his life and go away, exactly like Bhishma, who previously died simply by his own desire, as we have heard from śāstra.

Haridās Thâkur was the crown jewel of this world; without him, this world is now bereft of its valuable jewel."

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu then told everyone, "Say 'All glory to Haridās Thâkur!' and chant the Holy Name of Hari." Saying this, He personally began to dance.

Everyone began to chant, "All glory to Haridās Thâkur, who revealed the importance of chanting the Holy Name of the Lord!"

Thereafter, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu bade farewell to all the devotees, and He Himself, with mixed feelings of happiness and sorrow, took rest.

Thus, I have spoken about the victorious passing away of Haridās Thâkur. Anyone who hears this narration will certainly fix his mind firmly in devotional service to Krishna.

From the incident of Haridās Thâkur's passing away and the great care Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu took in commemorating it, one can understand just how affectionate He is toward His devotees. Although He is the topmost of all sannyâsis, He fully satisfied the desire of Haridās Thâkur.

When Haridās Thâkur was at the last stage of his life, Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu associated with him and allowed him to touch Him. Thereafter, He took the body of Thâkur Haridās on His lap and personally danced with it. Out of His causeless mercy, the Lord personally covered the body of Haridās Thâkur with sand and personally begged alms from the shopkeepers. Then He conducted a great festival to celebrate the passing away of Haridās.

