



Home Deity Worship Course

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.24.45-46



ISKCON Deity Worship Ministry

SB 4.24.45-46

*snigdha-prāvṛṭ-ghana-śyāmam
sarva-saundarya-saṅgraham
cārv-āyata-catur-bāhu
sujāta-rucirānanam*

*padma-kośa-palāśākṣam
sundara-bhru sunāsikam
sudvijam sukapolāsyam
Sama-karṇa-vibhūṣaṇam*

snigdha — glistening; *prāvṛṭ* — rainy season; *ghana-śyāmam* — densely cloudy; *sarva* — all; *saundarya* — beauty; *saṅgraham* — collection; *cāru* — beautiful; *āyata* — bodily feature; *catur-bāhu* — unto the four-armed; *su-jāta* — ultimately beautiful; *rucira* — very pleasing; *ānanam* — face; *padma-kośa* — the whorl of the lotus flower; *palāśa* — petals; *akṣam* — eyes; *sundara* — beautiful; *bhru* — eyebrows; *su-nāsikam* — raised nose; *su-dvijam* — beautiful teeth; *su-kapola* — beautiful forehead; *āsyam* — face; *sama-karṇa* — equally beautiful ears; *vibhūṣaṇam* — fully decorated.

The Lord’s beauty resembles a dark cloud during the rainy season. As the rainfall glistens, His bodily features also glisten. Indeed, He is the sum total of all beauty. The Lord has four arms and an exquisitely beautiful face with eyes like lotus petals, a beautiful highly raised nose, a mind-attracting smile, a beautiful forehead and equally beautiful and fully decorated ears.

Purport

After the scorching heat of the summer season, it is very pleasing to see dark clouds in the sky. As confirmed in *Brahma-saṁhitā*, *barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam*: the Lord wears a peacock feather in His hair, and His bodily complexion is just like a blackish cloud. The word *sundara*, or *snigdha*, means “very pleasing.” *Kandarpa-koṭi-kamanīya*: Kṛṣṇa’s beauty is so pleasing that not even millions upon millions of Cupids can compare to it. The Lord’s form as Viṣṇu is decorated in all opulence; therefore Lord Śiva is trying to see that most opulent form of Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu. Generally the worship of the Lord begins with the worship of Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu, whereas the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā is most confidential. Lord Nārāyaṇa is worshipable by the *pāñcarātri*ka-vidhi, or regulative principles, whereas Lord



Kṛṣṇa is worshipable by the *bhāgavata-vidhi*. No one can worship the Lord in the *bhāgavata-vidhi* without going through the regulations of the *pāñcarātri-ka-vidhi*. Actually, neophyte devotees worship the Lord according to the *pāñcarātri-ka-vidhi*, or the regulative principles enjoined in the *Nārada-pāñcarātra*. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa cannot be approached by the neophyte devotees; therefore temple worship according to regulative principles is offered to Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa. Although there may be a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *vigraha*, or form, the worship of the neophyte devotees is acceptable as Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa worship. Worship according to the *pāñcarātri-ka-vidhi* is called *vidhi-mārga*, and worship according to the *bhāgavata-vidhi* principles is called *rāga-mārga*. The principles of *rāga-mārga* are especially meant for devotees who are elevated to the Vṛndāvana platform.

The inhabitants of Vṛndāvana — the *gopīs*, mother Yaśodā, Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd boys, the cows and everyone else — are actually on the *rāga-mārga* or *bhāgavata-mārga* platform. They participate in five basic *rasas* — *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, *mādhurya* and *śānta*. But although these five *rasas* are found in the *bhāgavata-mārga*, the *bhāgavata-mārga* is especially meant for *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*, or parental and conjugal relationships. Yet there is the *vipralambha-sakhya*, the higher fraternal worship of the Lord especially enjoyed by the cowherd boys. Although there is friendship between Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys, this friendship is different from the *aīśvarya* friendship between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna. When Arjuna saw the *viśva-rūpa*, the gigantic universal form of the Lord, he was afraid for having treated Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary friend; therefore he begged Kṛṣṇa's pardon. However, the cowherd boys who are friends of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana sometimes ride on the shoulders of Kṛṣṇa. They treat Kṛṣṇa equally, just as they treat one another, and they are never afraid of Him, nor do they ever beg His pardon. Thus in the *rāga-mārga*, or *bhāgavata-mārga*, friendship exists on a higher platform with Kṛṣṇa, namely the platform of *viśrambha* friendship. Parental friendship, parental service and conjugal service are visible in the Vṛndāvana *rāga-mārga* relationships.

Without serving Kṛṣṇa according to the *vidhi-mārga* regulative principles of the *pāñcarātri-ka-vidhi*, unscrupulous persons want to jump immediately to the *rāga-mārga* principles. Such persons are called *sahajiyā*. There are also demons who enjoy depicting Kṛṣṇa and His pastimes with the *gopīs*, taking advantage of Kṛṣṇa by their licentious character. These demons who print books and write lyrics on the *rāga-mārga* principles are surely on the way to hell. Unfortunately, they lead others down with them. Devotees in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should be very careful to avoid such demons. One should strictly



follow the *vidhi-mārga* regulative principles in the worship of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa, although the Lord is present in the temple as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa includes Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa; therefore when one worships the Lord according to the regulative principles, the Lord accepts the service in the role of Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa. In *The Nectar of Devotion* full instructions are given about the *vidhi-mārga* worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, or Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa. Although there are sixty-four kinds of offenses one can commit in *vidhi-mārga* worship, in *rāga-mārga* worship there is no consideration of such offenses because the devotees on that platform are very much elevated, and there is no question of offense. But if we do not follow the regulative principles on the *vidhi-mārga* platform and keep our eyes trained to spot offenses, we will not make progress.

In his description of Kṛṣṇa's beauty, Lord Śiva uses the words *cārvāyata-catur-bāhu sujāta-rucirānanam*, indicating the beautiful four-armed form of Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu. Those who worship Lord Kṛṣṇa describe Him as *sujāta-rucirānanam*. In the *viṣṇu-tattva* there are hundreds and thousands and millions of forms of the Supreme Lord, but of all these forms, the form of Kṛṣṇa is the most beautiful. Thus for those who worship Kṛṣṇa, the word *sujāta-rucirānanam* is used.

The four arms of Lord Viṣṇu have different purposes. The hands holding a lotus flower and conchshell are meant for the devotees, whereas the other two hands, holding a disc and mace, or club, are meant for the demons. Actually all of the Lord's arms are auspicious, whether they are holding conchshells and flowers or clubs and discs. The demons killed by Lord Viṣṇu's *cakra* disc and club are elevated to the spiritual world, just like the devotees who are protected by the hands holding the lotus flower and conchshell. However, the demons who are elevated to the spiritual world are situated in the impersonal Brahman effulgence, whereas the devotees are allowed to enter into the Vaikuṇṭha planets. Those who are devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa are immediately elevated to the Goloka Vṛndāvana planet.

The Lord's beauty is compared to rainfall because when the rain falls in the rainy season, it becomes more and more pleasing to the people. After the scorching heat of the summer season, the people enjoy the rainy season very much. Indeed, they even come out of their doors in the villages and enjoy the rainfall directly. Thus the Lord's bodily features are compared to the clouds of the rainy season. The devotees enjoy the Lord's beauty because it is a collection of all kinds of beauties. Therefore the word *sarva-saundarya-saṅgraham* is used. No one can say that the body of the Lord is wanting in beautiful parts. It



is completely *pūrṇam*. Everything is complete — God’s creation, God’s beauty and God’s bodily features. All these are so complete that all one’s desires can become fully satisfied when one sees the beauty of the Lord. The word *sarva-saundarya* indicates that there are different types of beauties in the material and spiritual worlds and that the Lord contains all of them. Both materialists and spiritualists can enjoy the beauty of the Lord. Because the Supreme Lord attracts everyone, including demons and devotees, materialists and spiritualists, He is called Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, His devotees also attract everyone. As mentioned in the *Ṣaḍ-gosvāmī-stotra*, *dhīrādhīra-jana-priyau*: the Gosvāmīs are equally dear to the *dhīra* (devotees) and *adhīra* (demons). Lord Kṛṣṇa was not very pleasing to the demons when He was present in Vṛndāvana, but the Six Gosvāmīs were pleasing to the demons when they were present in Vṛndāvana. That is the beauty of the Lord’s dealings with His devotees; sometimes the Lord gives more credit to His devotees than He takes for Himself. For instance, on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, Lord Kṛṣṇa fought simply by giving directions. Yet it was Arjuna who took the credit for fighting. *Nimitta-mātram bhava savyasācin*: “You, O Savyasācī [Arjuna], can be but an instrument in the fight.” (Bg. 11.33) Everything was arranged by the Lord, but the credit of victory was given to Arjuna. Similarly, in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, everything is happening according to the predictions of Lord Caitanya, but the credit goes to Lord Caitanya’s sincere servants. Thus the Lord is described herein as *sarva-saundarya-saṅgraham*.