



Home Deity Worship Course

The story of Sākṣi-Gopāla



ISKCON Deity Worship Ministry

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 5

Text 10

*pūrve vidyānagarera dui ta' brāhmaṇa
tīrtha karibāre duñhe karilā gamana*

Formerly at Vidyānagara in South India there were two brāhmaṇas who made a long tour to see different places of pilgrimage.

Text 11

*gayā, vārāṇasī, prayāga — sakala kariyā
mathurāte āilā duñhe ānandita hañā*

First of all they visited Gayā, then Kāśī, then Prayāga. Finally, with great pleasure, they came to Mathurā.

Text 12

*vana-yātrāya vana dekhi' dekhe govardhana
dvādaśa-vana dekhi' śeṣe gelā vṛndāvana*

After reaching Mathurā, they started visiting the different forests of Vṛndāvana and came to Govardhana Hill. They visited all twelve forests [vanas] and at last came to the town of Vṛndāvana.

Purport

The five forests situated on the eastern side of the river Yamunā are Bhadra, Bilva, Loha, Bhāṇḍīra and Mahāvana. The seven forests situated on the western side of the Yamunā are Madhu, Tāla, Kumuda, Bahulā, Kāmya, Khadira and Vṛndāvana. After visiting all these forests, these pilgrims went to a place known as Pañcakrośī Vṛndāvana. Out of the twelve forests, the Vṛndāvana forest extends from the town of Vṛndāvana up to Nanda-grāma and Varṣāṇā, a distance of thirty-two miles, within which the Pañcakrośī Vṛndāvana town is situated.

Text 13



*vṛndāvane govinda-sthāne mahā-devālaya
se mandire gopālera mahā-sevā haya*

In the village of Pañcakrośī Vṛndāvana, at the site where the Govinda temple is now situated, there was a great temple where gorgeous worship of Gopāla was performed.

Text 14

*keśī-tīrtha, kālīya-hradādike kaila snāna
śrī-gopāla dekhi' tāhān karilā viśrāma*

After taking baths at different bathing places along the river Yamunā, such as Keśī-ghāṭa and Kālīya-ghāṭa, the pilgrims visited the temple of Gopāla. Afterwards, they took rest in that temple.

Text 15

*gopāla-saundarya duñhāra mana nila hari'
sukha pāñā rahe tāhān dina dui-cāri*

The beauty of the Gopāla Deity stole away their minds, and feeling great happiness, they remained there for two or four days.

Text 16

*dui-vipra-madhye eka vipra — vṛddha-prāya
āra vipra — yuvā, tāñra karenā sahāya*

One of the two brāhmaṇas was an old man, and the other was young. The young man was assisting the old one.

Text 17

*choṭa-vipra kare sadā tāñhāra sevana
tāñhāra sevāya viprera tuṣṭa haila mana*

Indeed, the young brāhmaṇa always rendered service to the older one, and the old man, being very satisfied with his service, was pleased with him.

Text 18



*vipra bale — tumi mora bahu sevā kailā
sahāya hañā more tīrtha karāilā*

The older man told the younger, “You have rendered various types of service to me. You have assisted me in traveling to all these places of pilgrimage.

Text 19

*putreo pitāra aiche nā kare sevana
tomāra prasāde āmi nā pāilāma śrama*

“Even my own son does not render such service. By your mercy, I did not become fatigued while on this tour.

Text 20

*kṛta-ghnatā haya tomāya nā kaile sammāna
ataeva tomāya āmi diba kanyā-dāna*

“If I did not show you any respect, I would be ungrateful. Therefore, I promise to give you my daughter in charity.”

Text 21

*choṭa-vipra kahe, “śuna, vipra-mahāśaya
asambhava kaha kene, yei nāhi haya*

The younger brāhmaṇa replied, “My dear sir, please hear me. You are saying something very unusual. Such a thing never happens.

Text 22

*mahā-kulīna tumi — vidyā-dhanādi-pravīṇa
āmi akulīna, āra dhana-vidyā-hīna*

“You are a most aristocratic family man, well educated and very rich. I am not at all aristocratic, and I am without a decent education and have no wealth.

Purport



Due to pious activities, one can be enriched by four opulences: one may obtain birth in an aristocratic family, become highly educated, become very beautiful or get a sufficient quantity of riches. These are symptoms of pious activities performed in one's past life. In India it is still current for an aristocratic family never to consider a marriage with a common family. Though the caste may be the same, to maintain the aristocracy such marriages are rejected. No poor man will dare marry the daughter of a rich man. Because of this, when the elderly *brāhmaṇa* offered the young *brāhmaṇa* his daughter, the young *brāhmaṇa* did not believe that it would be possible to marry her. Therefore he asked the elderly *brāhmaṇa* why he was proposing something unprecedented (*asambhava*). It was unheard of for an aristocratic person to offer his daughter to a person who was both uneducated and poor.

Text 23

*kanyā-dāna-pātra āmi nā ha-i tomāra
kṛṣṇa-prītye kari tomāra sevā-vyavahāra*

“Sir, I am not a suitable bridegroom for your daughter. I render service to you only for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa.

Purport

Both *brāhmaṇas* were pure Vaiṣṇavas. The younger man took special care of the older one simply to please Kṛṣṇa. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.19.21) Kṛṣṇa says, *mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā*: “It is better to render service to My devotee.” Thus, according to the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava philosophy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it is better to be a servant of the servant of God. One should not try to serve Kṛṣṇa directly. A pure Vaiṣṇava serves a servant of Kṛṣṇa and identifies himself as a servant of a servant of Kṛṣṇa. This is pleasing to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura confirms this philosophy: *chāḍiyā vaiṣṇava-sevā nistāra peyechē kebā*. Unless one serves a liberated Vaiṣṇava, he cannot attain liberation by directly serving Kṛṣṇa. He must serve the servant of Kṛṣṇa.

Text 24

*brāhmaṇa-sevāya kṛṣṇera prīti baḍa haya
tānhāra santoṣe bhakti-sampad bāḍaya”*



“Lord Kṛṣṇa is very much pleased by service rendered to brāhmaṇas, and when the Lord is pleased, the opulence of one’s devotional service increases.”

Purport

In this regard, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura comments that the younger *brāhmaṇa* rendered service to the older one with the purpose of pleasing Kṛṣṇa. It was not a matter of ordinary worldly dealings. Kṛṣṇa is pleased when a Vaiṣṇava is rendered service. Because the younger *brāhmaṇa* served the older one, Lord Gopāla agreed to become a witness of the marriage negotiation in order to maintain the prestige of both devotees. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would certainly not have liked to hear about marital dealings unless such dealings were exchanged between two Vaiṣṇavas. Marriage arrangements and ceremonies belong to ordinary material *karma-kāṇḍa* sections of the scriptures. The Vaiṣṇavas, however, are not interested in any kind of *karma-kāṇḍa* dealings. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says: *karma-kāṇḍa jñāna-kāṇḍa kevala viṣera bhāṇḍa*. For a Vaiṣṇava, the *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa* sections of the *Vedas* are unnecessary. Indeed, a real Vaiṣṇava takes these sections as a poison pot (*viṣera bhāṇḍa*). Sometimes we take part in a marriage ceremony for our disciples, but this does not mean that we are interested in *karma-kāṇḍa* activities. Sometimes, not knowing the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, an outsider criticizes such activity, maintaining that a *sannyāsī* should not take part in a marriage ceremony between a young boy and a young girl. However, this is not a *karma-kāṇḍa* activity, because our purpose is to spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. We are giving all facility to the general populace to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and in order to fix the devotees in concentration on the service of the Lord, marriage is sometimes allowed. We have experienced that such married couples actually render very important service to the mission. Therefore, one should not misunderstand when a *sannyāsī* takes part in a marriage ceremony. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu took great pleasure in hearing about the marriage ceremony between the young *brāhmaṇa* and the daughter of the elderly *brāhmaṇa*.

Text 25

*baḍa-vipra kahe, — “tumi nā kara saṁśaya
tomāke kanyā diba āmi, karila niścaya”*

The older brāhmaṇa replied, “My dear boy, do not doubt me. I will give you my daughter in charity. I have already decided this.”



Text 26

*choṭa-vipra bale, — “tomāra strī-putra saba
bahu jñāti-goṣṭhī tomāra bahuta bāndhava*

The young brāhmaṇa said, “You have a wife and sons, and you have a large circle of relatives and friends.

Text 27

*tā’-sabāra sammati vinā nahe kanyā-dāna
rukmiṇīra pitā bhīṣmaka tāhāte pramāṇa*

“Without the consent of all your friends and relatives, it is not possible to give me your daughter in charity. Just consider the story of Queen Rukmiṇī and her father, Bhīṣmaka.

Text 28

*bhīṣmakera icchā, — kṛṣṇe kanyā samarpite
putrera virodhe kanyā nārila arpite”*

“King Bhīṣmaka wanted to give his daughter, Rukmiṇī, in charity to Kṛṣṇa, but Rukmī, his eldest son, objected. Therefore he could not carry out his decision.”

Purport

As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.52.25)*:

*bandhūnām icchatām dātum kṛṣṇāya bhaginīm nṛpa
tato nivārya kṛṣṇa-dviḍ rukmī caidyam amanyata*

King Bhīṣmaka of Vidarbha wanted to offer Kṛṣṇa his daughter, Rukmiṇī, but Rukmī, the eldest of his five sons, objected. Therefore Bhīṣmaka withdrew his decision and decided to offer Rukmiṇī to the King of Cedi, Śiśupāla, who was a cousin of Kṛṣṇa’s. However, Rukmiṇī conceived of a trick: she sent a letter to Kṛṣṇa asking Him to kidnap her. Thus in order to please Rukmiṇī, who was His great devotee, Kṛṣṇa kidnapped her. There ensued a great fight between Kṛṣṇa and the opposing party, headed by Rukmiṇī’s brother Rukmī. Rukmī was defeated and,



because of his harsh words against Kṛṣṇa, was about to be killed, but he was saved at the request of Rukmiṇī. However, Kṛṣṇa shaved off all of Rukmī's hair with His sword. Śrī Balarāma did not like this, and so to please Rukmiṇī, Balarāma rebuked Kṛṣṇa.

Text 29

*baḍa-vipra kahe, — “kanyā mora nija-dhana
nija-dhana dite niṣedhibe kon jana*

The elderly brāhmaṇa said, “My daughter is my own property. If I choose to give my property to someone, who has the power to stop me?”

Text 30

*tomāke kanyā diba, sabāke kari ’tiraskāra
saṁśaya nā kara tumi, karaha svīkāra”*

“My dear boy, I will give my daughter to you in charity, and I will neglect the position of all others. Don't doubt me in this regard; just accept my proposal.”

Text 31

*choṭa-vipra kahe, — “yadi kanyā dite mana
gopālera āge kaha e satya-vacana”*

The younger brāhmaṇa replied, “If you have decided to give your young daughter to me, then say so before the Gopāla Deity.”

Text 32

*gopālera āge vipra kahite lāgila
‘tumi jāna, nija-kanyā ihāre āmi dila’*

Coming before Gopāla, the elderly brāhmaṇa said, “My dear Lord, please witness that I have given my daughter to this boy.”

Purport



In India it is still the custom for a daughter to be offered to someone simply by word. This is called *vāg-datta*. This means that the father, brother or guardian of a girl has given his word that she will be married to a certain man. Consequently, that daughter cannot be married to anyone else. She is reserved by virtue of the honest words of the father or guardian. There are many instances in which the parents of a female child have given someone a verbal promise that their daughter will be married to his son. Both parties agree to wait until the boy and girl are grown up, and then the marriage takes place. Following this custom, which is very old in India, the elderly *brāhmaṇa* promised to give his daughter to the younger *brāhmaṇa* in charity, and he promised this before the Gopāla Deity. In India the custom is to honor any promise made before the Deity. Such a promise cannot be canceled. In Indian villages, whenever there is a quarrel between two parties, they go to a temple to settle the quarrel. Whatever is spoken in front of the Deity is taken to be true, for no one would dare lie before the Deity. This same principle was followed in the Battle of Kurukṣetra. Therefore in the very beginning of the *Bhagavad-gītā* it is stated: *dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre*.

By not becoming God conscious, human society is deteriorating to the lowest standard of animal life. This Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is very essential to reviving God consciousness among the general populace. If people actually become God conscious, all quarrels can be settled outside of court, as happened in the case of the two *brāhmaṇas* whose disagreement was settled by the witness Gopāla.

Text 33

*choṭa-vipra bale, — “ṭhākura, tumi mora sākṣī
tomā sākṣī bolāimu, yadi anyathā dekhi”*

Then the younger brāhmaṇa addressed the Deity, saying, “My dear Lord, You are my witness. I shall call for You to testify if it is necessary later on.”

Text 34

*eta bali’ dui-jane calilā deśere
guru-buddhye choṭa-vipra bahu sevā kare*

After these talks, the two brāhmaṇas started for home. As usual, the young brāhmaṇa accompanied the elderly brāhmaṇa as if the older brāhmaṇa were a guru [spiritual master] and rendered him service in various ways.



Text 35

*deśe āsi' dui-jane gelā nija-ghare
kata dine baḍa-vipra cintita antare*

After returning to Vidyānagara, each brāhmaṇa went to his respective home. After some time, the elderly brāhmaṇa became very anxious.

Text 36

*tīrthe vipre vākya diluṇ, — kemate satya haya
strī, putra, jñāti, bandhu jānibe niścaya*

He began to think, “I have given my word to a brāhmaṇa in a holy place, and what I promised will certainly come to pass. I must now disclose this to my wife, sons, other relatives and friends.”

Text 37

*eka-dina nija-loka ekatra karila
tā-sabāra āge saba vṛttānta kahila*

Thus one day the elderly brāhmaṇa called for a meeting of all his relatives and friends, and before them all he narrated what had taken place in front of Gopāla.

Text 38

*śuni' saba goṣṭhī tāra kare hāhā-kāra
'aiche bāt mukhe tumi nā ānibe āra*

When those who belonged to the family circle heard the narration of the old brāhmaṇa, they made exclamations showing their disappointment. They all requested that he not make such a proposal again.

Text 39

*nīce kanyā dile kula yāibeka nāśa
śuniñā sakala loka karibe upahāsa'*



They unanimously agreed, “If you offer your daughter to a degraded family, your aristocracy will be lost. When people hear of this, they will make jokes and laugh at you.”

Text 40

*vipra bale, — “tīrtha-vākya kemane kari āna
ye ha-uk, se ha-uka, āmi diba kanyā-dāna”*

The elderly brāhmaṇa said, “How can I undo the promise I made in a holy place while on pilgrimage? Whatever may happen, I must give him my daughter in charity.”

Text 41

*jñāti loka kahe, — ‘morā tomāke chāḍiba’
strī-putra kahe, — ‘viṣa khāiyā mariba’*

The relatives unanimously said, “If you give your daughter to that boy, we shall give up all connection with you.” Indeed, his wife and sons declared, “If such a thing happens, we shall take poison and die.”

Text 42

*vipra bale, — “sākṣī bolāñā karibeka nyāya
jiti’ kanyā labe, mora vyartha dharma haya”*

The elderly brāhmaṇa said, “If I do not give my daughter to the young brāhmaṇa, he will call Śrī Gopālajī as a witness. Thus he will take my daughter by force, and in that case my religious principles will become meaningless.”

Text 43

*putra bale, — “pratimā sākṣī, seha dūra deśe
ke tomāra sākṣī dibe, cintā kara kise*

His son replied, “The Deity may be a witness, but He is in a distant country. How can He come to bear witness against you? Why are you so anxious over this?



Text 44

nāhi kahi — nā kahio e mithyā-vacana
sabe kahibe — ‘mora kichu nāhika smarāṇa’

“You do not have to flatly deny that you spoke such a thing. There is no need to make a false statement. Simply say that you do not remember what you said.

Text 45

tumi yadi kaha, — ‘āmi kichui nā jāni’
tabe āmi nyāya kari’ brāhmaṇere jini”

“If you simply say, ‘I do not remember,’ I shall take care of the rest. By argument, I shall defeat the young brāhmaṇa.”

Purport

The son of the elderly *brāhmaṇa* was an atheist and a follower of the *Raghunātha-smṛti*. He was very expert in dealing with pounds-shillings-pence, but he was fool number one. Consequently, he did not believe in the spiritual position of the Deity, nor did he have any faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, as a typical idol worshiper, he considered the form of the Lord to be made of stone or wood. Thus he assured his father that the witness was only a stone Deity and was not capable of speaking. Besides that, he assured his father that the Deity was situated far away and consequently could not come to bear witness. In essence, he was saying, “Have no anxiety. You do not have to lie directly, but you should speak like a diplomat, like King Yudhiṣṭhira when he spoke to Droṇācārya — *aśvatthāmā hata iti gajaḥ*. Following this principle, simply say that you do not remember anything and are completely unaware of the statements given by the young *brāhmaṇa*. If you make the background like that, I shall know how to fill in the argument and defeat him by word jugglery. Thus I shall save you from having to give your daughter to him. In this way, our aristocracy will be saved. You have nothing to worry about.”

Text 46

eta śuni’ viprera cintita haila mana
ekānta-bhāve cinte vipra gopāla-carāṇa



When the elderly brāhmaṇa heard this, his mind became very much agitated. Feeling helpless, he simply turned his attention to the lotus feet of Gopāla.

Text 47

*‘mora dharma rakṣā pāya, nā mare nija-jana
dui rakṣā kara, gopāla, lainu śaraṇa’*

The elderly brāhmaṇa prayed, “My dear Lord Gopāla, I have taken shelter of Your lotus feet, and therefore I request You to please protect my religious principles from disturbance and at the same time save my kinsmen from dying.”

Text 48

*ei-mata vipra citte cintite lāgila
āra dina laghu-vipra tāṇra ghare āila*

The next day, the elderly brāhmaṇa was thinking deeply about this matter when the young brāhmaṇa came to his house.

Text 49

*āsiñā parama-bhaktye namaskāra kari’
vinaya kariñā kahe kara dui yuḍi’*

The young brāhmaṇa came to him and offered respectful obeisances. Then, very humbly folding his hands, he spoke as follows.

Text 50

*‘tumi more kanyā dite karyācha aṅgikāra
ebe kichu nāhi kaha, ki tomāra vicāra’*

“You have promised to give your daughter in charity to me. Now you do not say anything. What is your conclusion?”

Text 51

*eta śuni’ sei vipra rahe mauna dhari’
tāṇra putra mārīte āila hāte theṅgā kari’*



After the young brāhmaṇa submitted this statement, the elderly brāhmaṇa remained silent. Taking this opportunity, his son immediately came out with a stick to strike the younger man.

Text 52

*‘āre adhama! mora bhagnī cāha vivāhite
vāmana hañā cānda yena cāha ta’ dharite’*

The son said, “Oh, you are most degraded! You want to marry my sister, just like a dwarf who wants to catch the moon!”

Text 53

*theñā dekhi’ sei vipra palāñā gela
āra dina grāmera loka ekatra karila*

Seeing a stick in the hand of the son, the younger brāhmaṇa fled. The next day, however, he gathered together all the people of the village.

Text 54

*saba loka baḍa-vipre ḍākiyā ānila
tabe sei laghu-vipra kahite lāgila*

All the people of the village then called for the elderly brāhmaṇa and brought him to their meeting place. The young brāhmaṇa then began to speak before them as follows.

Text 55

*‘īnha more kanyā dite karyāche aṅgikāra
ebe ye nā dena, pucha inhāra vyavahāra’*

“This gentleman has promised to hand over his daughter to me, yet now he does not follow his promise. Please ask him about his behavior.”

Text 56

*tabe sei viprere puchila sarva-jana
‘kanyā kene nā deha, yadi diyācha vacana’*



All the people gathered there asked the elderly brāhmaṇa, “If you have already promised to give him your daughter in charity, why are you not fulfilling your promise? You have given your word of honor.”

Text 57

*vipra kahe, — ‘śuna, loka, mora nivedana
kabe ki baliyāchi, mora nāhika smaraṇa’*

The elderly brāhmaṇa said, “My dear friends, please hear what I have to submit. I do not exactly remember making a promise like that.”

Text 58

*eta śuni’ tānra putra vākya-cchala pāñā
pragalbha ha-iyā kahe sammukhe āsiñā*

When the elderly brāhmaṇa’s son heard this, he took the opportunity to juggle some words. Becoming very impudent, he stood before the assembly and spoke as follows.

Text 59

*‘tīrtha-yātrāya pitāra saṅge chila bahu dhana
dhana dekhi ei duṣṭera laite haila mana*

“While touring various holy places of pilgrimage, my father carried much money. Seeing the money, this rogue decided to take it away.

Text 60

*āra keha saṅge nāhi, ei saṅge ekala
dhuturā khāoyāñā bāpe karila pāgala*

“There was no one besides this man with my father. Giving him an intoxicant known as dhuturā to eat, this rogue made my father mad.

Text 61

*saba dhana lañā kahe — ‘core la-ila dhana’
‘kanyā dite cāhiyāche’ — uṭhāila vacana*



“Having taken all my father’s money, this rogue claimed that it was taken by some thief. Now he is claiming that my father has promised to give him his daughter in charity.

Text 62

*tomarā sakala loka karaha vicāre
‘mora pitāra kanyā dite yogya ki ihāre’*

“All of you assembled here are gentlemen. Please judge whether it is befitting to offer this poor brāhmaṇa my father’s daughter.”

Text 63

*eta śuni’ lokera mane ha-ila saṁśaya
‘sambhave, — dhana-lobhe loka chāḍe dharma-bhaya’*

Hearing all these statements, all the people gathered there became a little doubtful. They thought it quite possible that because of attraction for riches one might give up his religious principles.

Text 64

*tabe choṭa-vipra kahe, “śuna, mahājana
nyāya jinibāre kahe asatya-vacana*

At that time the young brāhmaṇa said, “My dear gentlemen, please hear. Just to gain victory in an argument, this man is lying.

Text 65

*ei vipra mora sevāya tuṣṭa yabe hailā
‘tore āmi kanyā diba’ āpane kahilā*

“Being very satisfied with my service, this brāhmaṇa said to me of his own accord, ‘I promise to hand over my daughter to you.’

Text 66



*tabe muñi niṣedhinu, — śuna, dvija-vara
tomāra kanyāra yogya nahi muñi vara*

“At that time I forbade him to do this, telling him, ‘O best of the brāhmaṇas, I am not a fit husband for your daughter.

Text 67

*kāhāṇ tumi paṇḍita, dhanī, parama kulīna
kāhāṇ muñi daridra, mūrkhā, nīca, kula-hīna*

“ ‘Whereas you are a learned scholar, a rich man belonging to an aristocratic family, I am a poor man, uneducated and with no claim to aristocracy.’

Text 68

*tabu ei vipra more kahe bāra bāra
tore kanyā diluṇ, tumi karaha svīkāra*

“Still this brāhmaṇa insisted. Again and again he asked me to accept his proposal, saying, ‘I have given you my daughter. Please accept her.’

Text 69

*tabe āmi kahilāṇ — śuna, mahā-mati
tomāra strī-putra-jñātira nā habe sammati*

“I then said, ‘Please hear. You are a learned brāhmaṇa. Your wife, friends and relatives will never agree to this proposal.

Text 70

*kanyā dite nāribe, habe asatya-vacana
punarapi kahe vipra kariyā yatana*

“ ‘My dear sir, you will not be able to fulfill your promise. Your promise will be broken.’ Yet, again and again the brāhmaṇa emphasized his promise.

Text 71



*kanyā tore diluṇ, dvidhā nā kariha cite
ātma-kanyā diba, kebā pāre niṣedhite*

“ ‘I have offered you my daughter. Do not hesitate. She is my daughter, and I shall give her to you. Who can forbid me?’ ”

Text 72

*tabe āmi kahilāṇ dṛḍha kari’ mana
gopālera āge kaha e-satya vacana*

“At that time I concentrated my mind and requested the brāhmaṇa to make the promise before the Gopāla Deity.

Text 73

*tabe iṇho gopālera āgete kahila
tumi jāna, ei vipre kanyā āmi dila*

“Then this gentleman said in front of the Gopāla Deity, ‘My dear Lord, please bear witness. I have offered my daughter to this brāhmaṇa in charity.’ ”

Text 74

*tabe āmi gopālere sākṣī kariṇā
kahilāṇ tāṇra pade minati kariṇā*

“Accepting the Gopāla Deity as my witness, I then submitted the following at His lotus feet.

Text 75

*yadi ei vipra more nā dibe kanyā-dāna
sākṣī bolāimu tomāya, ha-io sāvadhāna*

“ ‘If this brāhmaṇa later hesitates to give me his daughter, my dear Lord, I shall call on You as a witness. Please note this with care and attention.’ ”

Text 76



*ei vākye sākṣī mora āche mahājana
yānra vākya satya kari māne tribhuvana”*

“Thus I have called upon a great personality in this transaction. I have asked the Supreme Godhead to be my witness. The entire world accepts the words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Purport

Although the young *brāhmaṇa* described himself as having no claims to aristocracy and being an uneducated common man, still he had one good qualification: he believed that the Supreme Personality of Godhead was the topmost authority, he accepted the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa without hesitation, and he had firm faith in the Lord’s consistency. According to Prahlāda Mahārāja, another authority on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, such a staunch and faithful devotee of the Lord must be understood to be a most learned scholar: *tan manye ’dhītam uttamam* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.5.24). A pure devotee who has firm faith in the words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is to be considered a most learned scholar, the topmost aristocrat and the richest man in the whole world. All godly qualities automatically exist in such a devotee. In the preaching work of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, we, as the servant of the servant of the servant of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, fully believe in the words of Kṛṣṇa and His servants, the disciplic succession. In this way we are presenting the words of Kṛṣṇa throughout the world. Even though we are neither a rich man nor a very learned scholar, and even though we do not belong to any aristocracy, this movement is still being welcomed and is very easily spreading all over the world. Although we are very poor and have no professional source of income, Kṛṣṇa supplies money whenever we need it. Whenever we need some men, Kṛṣṇa supplies them. Thus it is stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.22): *yaṁ labdhvā cāparam lābham manyate nādhikam tataḥ*. Actually, if we can attain the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, we do not need anything else. We certainly do not need those things which a mundane person considers to be material assets.

Texts 77-78

*tabe baḍa-vipra kahe, “ei satya kathā
gopāla yadi sākṣī dena, āpane āsi’ ethā*



*tabe kanyā diba āmi, jāniha niścaya”
tānra putra kahe, — ‘ei bhāla bāta haya’*

Taking this opportunity, the elderly brāhmaṇa immediately confirmed that this was really true. He said, “If Gopāla personally comes here to serve as a witness, I shall surely give my daughter to the young brāhmaṇa.”

Purport

The elderly brāhmaṇa’s son immediately confirmed this, saying, “Yes, this is a very nice settlement.”

As the Supersoul within the heart of all living entities, Kṛṣṇa knows everyone’s desire, everyone’s request and everyone’s prayer. Although all these may be contradictory, the Lord has to create a situation in which everyone will be pleased. This is an instance of a marriage negotiation between an elderly *brāhmaṇa* and a youthful one. The elderly *brāhmaṇa* was certainly willing to give his daughter in charity to the young *brāhmaṇa*, but his son and relatives became impediments to this transaction. The elderly *brāhmaṇa* considered how to get out of this situation and still offer his daughter to the young *brāhmaṇa*. His son, an atheist and a very cunning fellow, was thinking of how to stop the marriage. The father and son were thinking in a contradictory way, yet Kṛṣṇa created a situation wherein they agreed. They both agreed that if the Gopāla Deity would come and serve as a witness, the daughter would be given to the young *brāhmaṇa*.

Text 79

*baḍa-viprera mane, — ‘kṛṣṇa baḍa dayāvān
avaśya mora vākya teṇho karibe pramāṇa’*

The elderly brāhmaṇa thought, “Since Lord Kṛṣṇa is very merciful, He will certainly come to prove my statement.”

Text 80

*putrera mane, — ‘pratimā nā āsibe sākṣī dite’
ei buddhye dui-jana ha-ilā sammate*

The atheistic son thought, “It is not possible for Gopāla to come and bear witness.” Thinking thus, the father and son agreed.



Text 81

*choṭa-vipra bale, — ‘patra karaḥa likhana
punaḥ yena nāhi cale e-saba vacana’*

The young brāhmaṇa took this opportunity to speak: “Please write this down on paper in black and white so that you may not again change your word of honor.”

Text 82

*tabe saba loka meli’ patra ta’ likhila
duñhāra sammata lañā madhyastha rākhila*

All the assembled people got this statement down in black and white and, taking the signatures of agreement from both of them, served as the mediators.

Text 83

*tabe choṭa-vipra kahe, — śuna, sarva-jana
ei vipra — satya-vākya, dharma-parāyaṇa*

The young brāhmaṇa then said, “Will all you gentlemen present please hear me? This elderly brāhmaṇa is certainly truthful and is following religious principles.

Text 84

*sva-vākya chāḍite inñhāra nāhi kabhu mana
svajana-mṛtyu-bhaye kahe asatya-vacana*

“He had no desire to break his promise, but fearing that his kinsmen would commit suicide, he deviated from the truth.

Text 85

*inñhāra punye kṛṣṇe āni’ sākṣī bolāiba
tabe ei viprera satya-pratijñā rākhiba*



“By the piety of the elderly brāhmaṇa, I shall call the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a witness. Thus I shall keep his truthful promise intact.”

Text 86

*eta śuni' nāstika loka upahāsa kare
keha bale, īśvara — dayālu, āsiteha pāre*

Hearing the emphatic statement of the younger brāhmaṇa, some atheists in the meeting began to cut jokes. However, someone else said, “After all, the Lord is merciful, and if He likes, He can come.”

Text 87

*tabe sei choṭa-vipra gelā vṛndāvana
daṇḍavat kari' kahe saba vivaraṇa*

After the meeting, the young brāhmaṇa started for Vṛndāvana. Upon arriving there, he first offered his respectful obeisances to the Deity and then narrated everything in full detail.

Text 88

*“brahmaṇya-deva tumi baḍa dayā-maya
dui viprera dharma rākha hañā sadaya*

He said, “My Lord, You are the protector of brahminical culture, and You are also very merciful. Therefore, kindly show Your great mercy by protecting the religious principles of us two brāhmaṇas.

Text 89

*kanyā pāba, — mora mane ihā nāhi sukha
brāhmaṇera pratijñā yāya — ei baḍa duḥkha*

“My dear Lord, I am not thinking to become happy by getting the daughter as a bride. I am simply thinking that the brāhmaṇa has broken his promise, and that is giving me great pain.”

Purport



It was not at all the intention of the young *brāhmaṇa* to get the daughter of the elderly *brāhmaṇa* in marriage and thus enjoy material happiness and sense gratification. It was not for that reason that the young *brāhmaṇa* went to Vṛndāvana to ask the Supreme Personality of Godhead to act as a witness. His only concern was that the elderly *brāhmaṇa* had promised something, and if Gopāla did not bear witness to that transaction, then the older *brāhmaṇa* would incur a spiritual blemish. Therefore, the young *brāhmaṇa* wanted protection and help from the Deity. The young *brāhmaṇa* was thus a pure Vaiṣṇava, and he had no desire for sense gratification. He wanted only to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the older *brāhmaṇa*, who was also a Vaiṣṇava and very much devoted to the Lord.

Text 90

*eta jāni' tumi sākṣī deha, dayā-maya
jāni' sākṣī nāhi deya, tāra pāpa haya*

The young *brāhmaṇa* continued, “My dear Sir, You are very merciful and You know everything. Therefore, kindly be a witness in this case. A person who knows things as they are and still does not bear witness becomes involved in sinful activities.”

Purport

The dealings between a devotee and the Lord are very simple. The young *brāhmaṇa* said to the Lord, “You know everything, but if You do not bear witness, You will be involved in sinful activities.” There is no possibility, however, of the Lord’s being involved in sinful activities. A pure devotee, even though he knows everything of the Supreme Lord, can speak with the Lord exactly as if He were a common man. Although the dealings between the Lord and His devotee are always very simple and open, there is formality. All these things happen because of the connection between the Lord and the devotee.

Text 91

*kṛṣṇa kahe, — vipra, tumi yāha sva-bhavane
sabhā kari' more tumi kariha smaraṇe*

Lord Kṛṣṇa replied, “My dear *brāhmaṇa*, go back to your home and call a meeting of all the men. In that meeting, just try to remember Me.



Text 92

*āvirbhāva hañā āmi tāhāñ sākṣī diba
tabe dui viprera satya pratijñā rākhiba*

“I shall certainly appear there, and at that time I shall protect the honor of both you brāhmaṇas by bearing witness to the promise.”

Text 93

*vipra bale, — “yadi hao caturbhuja-mūrti
tabu tomāra vākye kāru nā habe pratīti*

The young brāhmaṇa replied, “My dear sir, even if You appear there as a four-handed Viṣṇu Deity, still, none of those people will believe in Your words.

Text 94

*ei mūrti giyā yadi ei śrī-vadane
sākṣī deha yadi — tabe sarva-loka śune”*

“Only if You go there in this form of Gopāla and speak the words from Your beautiful face will Your testimony be heard by all the people.”

Text 95

*kṛṣṇa kahe, — “pratimā cale, kothāha nā śuni”
vipra bale, — “pratimā hañā kaha kene vāñī*

Lord Kṛṣṇa said, “I’ve never heard of a Deity’s walking from one place to another.”

Purport

The brāhmaṇa replied, “That is true, but how is it that You are speaking to me, although You are a Deity?”

Text 96

*pratimā naha tumi — sākṣāt vrajendra-nandana
vipra lāgi' kara tumi akārya-karaṇa"*

“My dear Lord, You are not a statue; You are directly the son of Mahārāja Nanda. Now, for the sake of the old brāhmaṇa, You can do something You have never done before.”

Text 97

*hāsiṇā gopāla kahe, — “śunaha, brāhmaṇa
tomāra pāche pāche āmi kariba gamana*

Śrī Gopālajī then smiled and said, “My dear brāhmaṇa, just listen to Me. I shall walk behind you, and in this way I shall go with you.”

Purport

The conversation between Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *brāhmaṇa* is proof that the Lord in His *arcā-mūrti*, or form made of material elements, is not material, for those elements, although separated from the Lord, are also a part of the Lord's energy, as stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Because the elements are the Lord's own energy and because there is no difference between the energy and the energetic, the Lord can appear through any element. Just as the sun can act through the sunshine and thus distribute its heat and light, so Kṛṣṇa, by His inconceivable power, can appear in His original spiritual form in any material element, including stone, wood, paint, gold, silver and jewels, because the material elements are all His energy. The *śāstras* warn, *arcye viṣṇau śilā-dhīḥ . . . nārakī saḥ*: one should never think of the *arcā-mūrti*, the Deity within the temple, as stone, wood or any other material element. Because of his advanced devotional position, the younger *brāhmaṇa* knew that although the Deity of Gopāla appeared to be stone, He was not stone. He was the son of Nanda Mahārāja, Vrajendra-nandana Himself. As such, the Deity could act exactly as the Lord does in His original form as Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Kṛṣṇa was talking to the young *brāhmaṇa* just to test his knowledge about the *arcā-vigraha*. In other words, those who have understood the science of Kṛṣṇa — Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities and so forth — can also talk with the Deity. To an ordinary person, however, the Deity will appear to be made of stone, wood or some other material. In the higher sense, since all material elements ultimately emanate from the supreme spiritual entity, nothing is really material. Being omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, Kṛṣṇa can deal with His devotee in any



form without difficulty. By the mercy of the Lord, the devotee knows perfectly well about the Lord's dealings. Indeed, he can talk face to face with the Lord.

Text 98

*ulaṭiyā āmā tumi nā kariha daraśane
āmāke dekhile, āmi rahiba sei sthāne*

The Lord continued, “Do not try to see Me by turning around. As soon as you see Me, I shall remain stationary in that very place.

Text 99

*nūpurera dhvani-mātra āmāra śunibā
sei śabde āmāra gamana pratīti karibā*

“You will know that I am walking behind you by the sound of My ankle bells.

Text 100

*eka-sera anna rāndhi' kariha samarpaṇa
tāhā khāññā tomāra saṅge kariba gamana*

“Cook one kilo of rice daily and offer it. I shall eat that rice and follow behind you.”

Text 101

*āra dina ājñā māgi' calilā brāhmaṇa
tāra pāche pāche gopāla karilā gamana*

The next day, the brāhmaṇa begged permission from Gopāla and started for his country. Gopāla followed him, step by step.

Text 102

*nūpurera dhvani śuni' ānandita mana
uttamānna pāka kari' karāya bhojana*



While Gopāla followed the young brāhmaṇa, the tinkling sound of His ankle bells could be heard. The brāhmaṇa became very pleased, and he cooked first-class rice for Gopāla to eat.

Text 103

*ei-mate cali' vipra nija-deśe āilā
grāmera nikaṭa āsi' manete cintilā*

The young brāhmaṇa walked and walked in this way until he eventually arrived in his own country. When he neared his own village, he began to think as follows.

Text 104

*'ebe muṇi grāme āinu, yāimu bhavana
lokere kahiba giyā sākṣīra āgamana*

“I have now come to my village, and I shall go to my home and tell all the people that the witness has arrived.”

Text 105

*sākṣāte nā dekhile mane pratīti nā haya
ihāṇ yadi rahena, tabu nāhi kichu bhaya'*

The brāhmaṇa then began to think that if the people didn't directly see the Gopāla Deity, they would not believe that He had arrived. “But even if Gopāla stays here,” he thought, “there is still nothing to fear.”

Text 106

*eta bhāvi' sei vipra phiriyā cāhila
hāsiṇā gopāla-deva tathāya rahila*

Thinking this, the brāhmaṇa turned to look back, and He saw that Gopāla, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was standing there smiling.

Text 107



*brāhmaṇere kahe, — “tumi yāha nija-ghara
ethāya rahiba āmi, nā yāba ataḥpara”*

The Lord told the brāhmaṇa, “Now you can go home. I shall stay here and shall not leave.”

Text 108

*tabe sei vipra yāi nagare kahila
śuniñā sakala loka camatkāra haila*

The young brāhmaṇa then went to the town and informed all the people about Gopāla’s arrival. Hearing this, the people were struck with wonder.

Text 109

*āila sakala loka sākṣī dekhibāre
gopāla dekhiñā loka daṇḍavat kare*

All the townspeople went to see the witness Gopāla, and when they saw the Lord actually standing there, they all offered their respectful obeisances.

Text 110

*gopāla-saundarya dekhi’ loke ānandita
pratimā caliñā āilā, — śuniñā vismita*

When the people arrived, they were very pleased to see the beauty of Gopāla, and when they heard that He had actually walked there, they were all surprised.

Text 111

*tabe sei baḍa-vipra ānandita hañā
gopālera āge paḍe daṇḍavat hañā*

Then the elderly brāhmaṇa, being very pleased, came forward and immediately fell like a stick in front of Gopāla.

Text 112



*sakala lokera āge gopāla sākṣī dila
baḍa-vipra choṭa-vipre kanyā-dāna kaila*

Thus in the presence of all the townspeople, Lord Gopāla bore witness that the elderly brāhmaṇa had offered his daughter in charity to the young brāhmaṇa.

Text 113

*tabe sei dui vipre kahila īśvara
“tumi-dui — janme-janme āmāra kiṅkara*

After the marriage ceremony was performed, the Lord informed both brāhmaṇas, “You two brāhmaṇas are My eternal servants, birth after birth.”

Purport

Like these two *brāhmaṇas* of Vidyānagara, there are many devotees who are eternal servants of the Lord. They are specifically known as *nitya-siddha*, eternally perfect. Although the *nitya-siddhas* appear in the material world and seem to be common members of the world, they never forget the Supreme Personality of Godhead in any condition. This is the symptom of a *nitya-siddha*.

There are two kinds of living entities — *nitya-siddha* and *nitya-baddha*. The *nitya-siddha* never forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality, whereas the *nitya-baddha* is always conditioned, even before the creation. He always forgets his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Here the Lord informs the two *brāhmaṇas* that they are His servants birth after birth. The phrase birth after birth refers to the material world because in the spiritual world there is no birth, death, old age or disease. By the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *nitya-siddha* remains within this material world like an ordinary man, but the only business of the *nitya-siddha* is to broadcast the glories of the Lord. This incident appears to be an ordinary story about a marriage transaction involving two ordinary people. However, Kṛṣṇa accepted the two *brāhmaṇas* as His eternal servants. Both *brāhmaṇas* took much trouble in these negotiations, just like mundane people, yet they were acting as eternal servants of the Lord. All *nitya-siddhas* within this material world may appear to toil like ordinary men, but they never forget their position as servants of the Lord.



Another point: The elderly *brāhmaṇa* belonged to an aristocratic family and was learned and wealthy. The young *brāhmaṇa* belonged to an ordinary family and was uneducated. But these mundane qualifications do not concern a *nitya-siddha* engaged in the service of the Lord. We have to accept the fact that the *nitya-siddhas* are completely distinct from the *nitya-baddhas*, who are ordinary human beings. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura confirms this statement:

*gaurāṅgera saṅgi-gaṇe, nitya-siddha kari' māne,
se yāya vrajendra-suta pāśa
śrī-gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, yebā jāne cintāmaṇi
tāra haya vraja-bhūme vāsa*

One who accepts the associates of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu as *nitya-siddhas* is certain to be elevated to the spiritual kingdom to become an associate of the Supreme Lord. One should also know that Gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi — those places in Bengal where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stayed — are equal to Vrajabhūmi, or Vṛndāvana. There is no difference between the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana and those of Gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, or Śrīdhāma Māyāpur.

Text 114

*duñhāra satye tuṣṭa ha-ilāṇ, duñhe māga' vara"
dui-vipra vara māge ānanda-antara*

The Lord continued, “I have become very much pleased by the truthfulness of you both. Now you can ask for a benediction.” Thus with great pleasure the two *brāhmaṇas* begged for a benediction.

Text 115

*“yadi vara dibe, tabe raha ei sthāne
kiṅkarere dayā tava sarva-loke jāne”*

The *brāhmaṇas* said, “Please remain here so that people all over the world will know how merciful You are to Your servants.”

Text 116

*gopāla rahilā, duñhe karena sevana
dekhite āilā saba deśera loka-jana*



Lord Gopāla stayed, and the two brāhmaṇas engaged in His service. After hearing of the incident, many people from different countries began to come to see Gopāla.