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The Way to Eternal Vrindavan

by Chandan Goswami

Our teachers on the path of *bhakti* – the yoga (योग) of devotion – have made it clear that in order to reach eternal Vrindavan, we need to have an intense greed for sacred love (*prem*); in other words, exclusive and pure love for Krishn. Let me illustrate this through a story.

Once, an Arab man brought a shiplot of horses from Iran to the great South Indian city of Vijay Nagar. The horses were of the finest quality, and the king's men bought many. However, a local horse-trader named Raman claimed that his horses were even better than the Arabic ones.

The king's ministers asked Raman to prove his claim with a horse race. Raman agreed. On the day of the race, the Arabic horses appeared strong and well-fed, but Raman's horse was very thin and frail. Furthermore, the king's men used expert horseback riders, while Raman rode his horse by himself.

As the race began, Raman took out a pole with a bundle of grass dangling from one end by a string. As he placed the grass in front of the hungry horse's mouth, the horse began to run. No matter how fast he ran, the grass remained out of the horse's reach; but his hunger was so intense that he did not stop until he reached the finish line.

As Raman's horse finished the race in first place, Raman embraced him and treated him to a feast of green grass. The king was amazed and asked Raman how he had accomplished such a difficult task. Raman said, "In order to succeed, you need to have intense hunger for the goal."

We all have some level of greed within us, but generally, this is only enough for us to maintain our daily spiritual practices. It doesn't push us to move beyond our current state. Perhaps we are well-behaved devotees, and maybe we perform worship every day, but this alone will not take us to eternal Vrindavan.

Shri Roop Goswami says:

कृष्णभक्तिरसभाविता मतिः
क्रीयतां यदि कुतोऽपि लभ्यते ।
तत्र लौल्यमपि मूल्यमेकलं
जन्मकोटिसुकृतैर्न लभ्यते ॥

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ
krīyatām yadi kuto'pi labhyate ।
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalaṁ
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate ॥*

This means that sacred love is the supreme goal. Even if you do good deeds for infinite births, the nectar of *prem* will never fill your heart. The only thing you can use to buy this love is greed, so be ready to purchase it wherever you may find it.

Attaining success on this path of devotion is not dependant on the amount of practice that you do. A greedy devotee who practices less has more chance of attaining the goal than one who has many practices but less greed. This greed will also improve the quality of the devotional practice that you do.

If you lack this greed, do not despair. It can be attained through Krishn's mercy and the association of his devotees who have sacred love for him.



Shrinivas Acharya, Part 5 of 12: Shrinivas in Vrindavan



In the previous edition, Shrinivas went to Navadwip and met Mahaprabhu's parikars there. In this edition, Shrinivas travels to Vrindavan, where he finally meets his guru, Gopal Bhatt Goswami.

Shrinivas had hoped to meet and learn from Shri Roop and Sanatan, but as soon as he reached Mathura, he discovered that they had just departed this world for *nitya lila*. The news left Shrinivas completely shattered. The *Anuraag Valli*, *Bhakti Ratnakar* and *Prem Vilas* all tell a similar tale of what happened next.

Shrinivas started walking back towards Bengal, barely aware of his body or surroundings. It was late at night when he collapsed under a tree, weak and barely breathing. Knowing Shrinivas was on the verge of giving up, Roop and Sanatan appeared in a vision and instructed him to go to Vrindavan. They told him how dear he was to them, and informed him that they had already told Gopal Bhatt Goswami and their nephew, Jeev Goswami, about him.

Shrinivas entered Vrindavan on Vaishakh Purnima.¹ He had no idea where he was going, or where he would stay, but it didn't matter to him. His broken heart was soothed

by the beautiful trees and vines, singing birds and dancing peacocks. When some devotees told him that Govind Dev's *sandhya aarti* was about to begin, he ran to the temple. He found it filled with joyful devotees, and the sweet song of the flute, *pakhawaj* and veena.

Finding his way to the inner part of the temple near the altar, an intense song of prayer emerged from Shrinivas's lips, like he was stringing a garland for Govind Dev with syllables of love. The beauty of Govind's lotus face sent Shrinivas into a blissful trance, and he collapsed to the left of the altar door. After most of the crowd had left, he was found by Jeev Goswami, the incarnation of Radharani's maidservant, Vilas Manjari. He was also one of Vrindavan's greatest scholars and Shri Roop and Sanatan's nephew.

In his ecstasy, Shrinivas was unable to speak, and teardrops fell as Jeev Goswami held his hand and lifted him up. He wiped away Shrinivas's tears and took him to Govind Dev's *rasoi* (kitchen) where the head of the temple fed him a full meal of *prasad*. He also gave him Govind Dev's *prasadi* garland, *chandan* (sandalwood paste) and *beeda* (betel leaf wrap). Then Jeev Goswami took Shrinivas to stay with him in his own hut.

¹ Vaishakh Purnima is Radharamanji's Appearance Day, Shrinivas Acharya's birthday, and also the anniversary of when Radha and Krishna first met.

There, Jeev Goswami embraced Shrinivas and said, "Govind Dev has truly blessed me by giving me a friend like you."

एकत्र रहिबो केहो कोथाहो ना जाबो ।
निरन्तर कृष्ण कथा आस्वाद कोरिबो ॥

*ekatra rahibo keho kothaaho naa jaabo ।
nirantar krishn kathaaswaad koribo ॥*

"Let us always stay together and never part! We will relish Hari Katha all the time." (*Anuraag Valli*, 3.183)

As an *acharya* of the highest calibre, Jeev Goswami was worshipping for Shrinivas. But even so, Jeev Goswami always tried to treat Shrinivas like a brother or a friend. That night, the two stayed awake all night sharing Hari Katha. When morning came, they took a holy bath in the Yamuna River. Then they went to meet Gopal Bhatt Goswami; the incarnation of Radharani's maidservant, Gunmanjari, and the one whose love brought Shri Radharaman Lal to this world.²

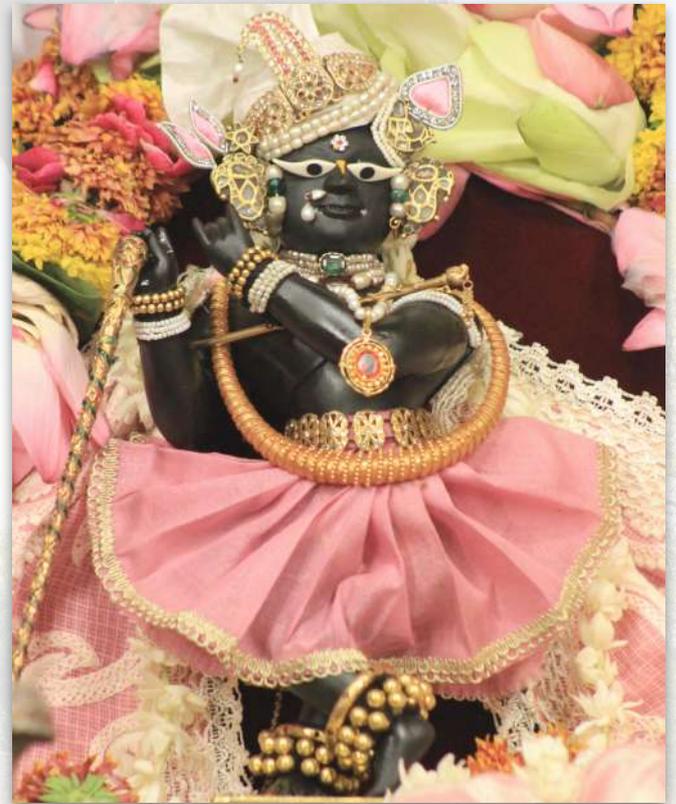
Shrinivas Meets Gopal Bhatt Goswami

As Shrinivas bowed before Gopal Bhatt Goswami, he lovingly placed his lotus hand on Shrinivas's back. But when Shrinivas sat down, Gopal Bhatt questioned him: "Oh my son, why did you take so long to come here? Everyone was so eager to meet you, but now Shri Roop and Sanatan have gone. There is so much *seva* for you to accomplish, and if you had come

sooner, I could have assisted you in your mission."

Shrinivas explained that he had tried to meet every remaining associate of Mahaprabhu in Bengal. Hearing this, Gopal Bhatt started crying and said, "You are fortunate, my child. I never got a chance to meet Mahaprabhu's associates, and now even Shri Roop and Sanatan have left me." Despite the intense pain of separation, Gopal Bhatt felt joy upon seeing Shrinivas, and he agreed to give him *diksha* (initiation).

The following day, Jeev Goswami accompanied Shrinivas back to Gopal Bhatt's residence. After the two offered their obeisances, Gopal Bhatt took Shrinivas to Shri Radharaman Lal.



Shri Radharaman Lal

² To read the full story about how Radharamanji appeared, please read *Shri Radharaman Prakatya* by Sarvabhaum Madhusudan Goswami. Click [here](#) to purchase the book.

Shrinivas Attains Eternal Shelter

Gopal Bhatt Goswami sat at Radharamanji's lotus feet and asked Shrinivas to sit near him. Then he instructed Shrinivas to fold his hands and meditate on the Divine Couple with all their *sakhis* and *manjaris*. In his eternal form as Gunmanjari, Gopal Bhatt entered Shrinivas's meditation and guided him to worship Radha and Krishn and their associates one by one. He introduced him to each *sakhi* and *manjari*, and they accepted him in their eternal shelter.

After that, Gopal Bhatt worshipped Radharamanji with offerings brought by Shrinivas. He decorated Radharamanji's heart with a dot of *chandan* and offered many *tulsi manjaris* at his lotus feet. Then Gopal Bhatt whispered the *diksha* mantras into Shrinivas's ear, and taught him the rules for chanting. He also revealed Shrinivas's true identity, saying, "You are Radharani's eternal maidservant named Mani Manjari, who serves under the shelter and guidance of Gunmanjari (Gopal Bhatt Goswami's *gopi* form)."

That day, Gopal Bhatt Goswami gave many teachings to Shrinivas, including the following:

1. We worship the Vrindavan form of Krishn who is with Radha. Radha is never there with Narayan or even other forms of Krishn.
2. Always remember that Radharaman is non-different from Mahaprabhu (Radha and Krishn in a single form).
3. Worship Radharaman on the path of Raganuga Bhakti as described by Roop Goswami.
4. Accept whatever helps your devotion, and give up whatever harms it.³
5. Always avoid *aparadh* (offences), for these will destroy your devotion. *Aparadh* is like the seed of a banyan tree, which starts out small but can quickly grow to huge proportions.
6. One who criticises the gods and goddesses is not successful in devotion.
7. Always follow the example of the *sadhus* and scriptures on this path.

As Shrinivas offered *pranam* to his guru, he couldn't stop his tears. Gopal Bhatt Goswami embraced him saying, "May you attain the supreme goal."

To be continued . . .

References

Anuraag Valli by Manohar Das

Bhakti Ratnakar by Narahari Chakravarti

Prem Vilas by Nityanand Das

³This is Shri Roop Goswami's definition of surrender. To learn more, please refer to *Hari Bhakti Vilas*, 11.417 and *Chaitanya Charitamrit*, 2.22.100.



Mahaprabhu's Philosophy

From *Chaitanya Mata Manjusha* by
Shrinath Chakravarti



आराध्यो भगवान् व्रजेशतनयस्तद्धाम वृन्दावनं ।
रम्या काचिदुपासना व्रजवधूवर्गेण या कल्पिता ॥
श्रीमद्भागवतं प्रामाणममलं प्रेमा पुमर्थो महान् ।
श्रीचैतन्यमहाप्रभोर्मतमिदं तत्रादरो नापरः ॥

*ārādhyo bhagavān vrajēśatanayas tad dhāma vṛndāvanam ।
ramyā kācid upāsana vraja vadhū vargeṇa yā kalpitā ॥
śrīmad bhāgavatam prāmaṇam amalam premā pumartho mahān ।
śrī caitanya mahāprabhor matam idam tatrādaro nāparaḥ ॥*

"The object of our worship is Shri Krishn of Vrindavan, and our spiritual mood is to follow the sacred love of the Braj *gopis*. The pure teachings of *Shrimad Bhagwatam* make up our philosophy, and we accept sacred love (*prem*) as the greatest goal of human life. This is the philosophy of Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu; we follow this and nothing else."



Braj Animal Care



"My name is Gopi. I am a young cow from Braj. One day, I was walking along when someone hit me in the leg with a stick. I don't know why they did it. My leg was completely broken! Then my 'owner' took me to the animal hospital, but when they found out how bad my injury was, they just left me there! I wandered around the hospital alone for three days before Braj Animal Care found me and took me home.

"They didn't have an ambulance, but Vishakha Didi let me sit in her lap in the car! She even got me admitted in a local cow shelter. Now



Gopi

my leg is healing, and I am so happy to be in my forever home."

For more information about how you can help, please call or WhatsApp on [+91 89237 37924](tel:+918923737924) or visit www.brajanimalcare.com. You can also follow us on Instagram at www.instagram.com/braj.animal.care and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/braj.animal.care.



Maharajji's Latest Updates



On March 1st and 15th, Shri Radharaman Sankirtan programs were held in New Delhi, and Chandan Goswami (Maharajji) blessed the devotees with the nectar of Hari Katha.



Maharajji

From late February until March 3rd, Maharajji performed the *seva* of Shri Radharaman Lal in the temple. Maharaj served Shriji on his altar by dressing him and offering him *bhog* and *aarti*. Coloured powder (*gulal*) and seasonal folk songs (*rasiyas*) were also offered in honour of the Holi season, which lasts for forty days in Braj. The *prasadi gulal* was then thrown into the air by the temple Goswamis for devotees to submerge themselves in.

March 9th and 10th marked ODev's yearly Holi celebration, hosted by Maharajji in the Radharaman Temple campus. During the

festival, devotees blissfully submerged each other in wet and dry colours.

At the Amiya Nimai Mahaprabhu Temple, Gaur Purnima celebrations were held on the evening of March 9th. A beautiful *abhishek* was offered in honour of Mahaprabhu's Appearance Day, with many devotees in attendance.

Upcoming Radharaman Sankirtans

Our regular Sankirtans have been temporarily postponed due to social distancing measures implemented in response to Covid-19, however you can still receive Maharajji's association through his recorded *kathas* on YouTube at [ChandanjiOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCChandanjiOfficial) and [ODevOfficial](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCODevOfficial). For more information about Shri Radharaman Lal and Maharajji, please contact us at odev108@gmail.com or call or WhatsApp us on [+91 83687 83201](tel:+918368783201).

Vaishnav Calendar

For upcoming festivals and Ekadashi dates, please click [here](#) to view our Vaishnav calendar.

