

The wives of Brahmana blessed by Lord Krishna

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**With the help of the commenataries of
Sridhar Swami, Srila Jiva Goswami and
SrilaVishvanath Chakravarti Thakura**

Mangalacarana

om̐ ajñāna-timirāndhasya
jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena
tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.

śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭaṁ
sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ
dadāti sva-padāntikam

When will Srila Rupa Goswami Prabhupada, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Chaitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?

vande 'ham̐ śrī-guroḥ śrī-yuta-pada-kamalaṁ śrī-gurūn vaiṣṇavāṁś ca
śrī-rūpaṁ sāgrajātaṁ saha-gaṇa-raghunāthānviṭaṁ taṁ sa-jīvam
sādvaitaṁ sāvadhūtaṁ parijana-sahitaṁ kṛṣṇa-caitanya-devaṁ
śrī-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pādān saha-gaṇa-lalitā-śrī-viśākhānviṭāṁś ca

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master and unto the feet of all vaiṣṇavas, I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Srila Rupa Goswami along with his elder brother Sanatan Goswami, as well as Raghunath Das and Raghunath Bhatta, Gopal Bhatta, and Srila Jiva Goswami. I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Krishna Chaitanya and Lord Nityananda along with Adwaita Acharya, Gadadhar, Srivas, and other associates. I offer my respectful obeisances to Srimati Radharani and Sri Krishna along with Their associates Sri Lalita and Visakha.

he kṛṣṇa karuṇā-sindho
dīna-bandho jagat-pate
gopeśa gopikā-kānta
rādhā-kānta namo'stu te

O my dear Krishna, O ocean of mercy, You are the friend of the distressed and the source of creation. You are the master of the gopīs and the lover of Radharani. I offer my respectful obeisances unto you.

tapta-kāñcana-gaurāṅgi
rādhe vṛndāvaneśvari
vṛṣabhānu-sute devi
praṇamāmi hari-priye

I offer my respects to Radharani, whose bodily complexion is like molten gold and who is the Queen of Vrindavan. You are the daughter of King Vrishabhanu, and you are very dear to Lord Krishna.

vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca
kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the vaiṣṇava devotees of the Lord. They can fulfill the desires of everyone, just like desire trees, and they are full of compassion for the fallen souls.

namo mahā-vadānyāya
kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya-
nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ

O most munificent incarnation! You are Krishna Himself appearing as Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Srimati Radharani, and You are widely distributing pure love of Krishna. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You. — Cc. madhya 19.53

yad advaitam brahmopaniṣadi tad apy asya tanu-bhā
ya ātmāntaryāmī puruṣa iti so 'syāmśa-vibhavaḥ
ṣaḍ-aiśvaryaīḥ pūrṇo ya iha bhagavān sa svayam ayaṁ
na caitanyāt kṛṣṇāj jagati para-tattvaṁ param iha

What the Upaniṣads describe as the impersonal Brahman is but the effulgence of His body, and the Lord known as the Supersoul is but His localized plenary portion. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, full with six

opulences. He is the absolute truth, and no other truth is greater than or equal to Him. — Cc. ādi 1.3

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinīśaktir asmād
ekātmānāv api bhuvi purā deha-bhedam gatau tau
caitanyākhyam prakāṣam adhunā tad-dayam caikyam āptam
rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam

The loving affairs of Sri Radha and Krishna are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure giving potency. Although Radha and Krishna are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united in the form of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Srimati Radharani although He is Krishna Himself. — Cc. ādi 1.5

cirād adattam nija-gupta-vitam
svaprema-nāmāmṛtam atyudāraḥ
āpāmaram yo vitatāra gauram
kṛṣṇo janebhyas tam aham prapadye

The most munificent Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Gaurakrishna, distributed to everyone—even the lowest of men—His own confidential treasury in the form of the nectar of love of Himself and the holy name. This was never given to the people at any time before. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto Him. — Cc. madhya 23.1

gauram sac-caritāmṛtāmṛta-nidhiḥ gauram sadaiva-stuve
gaureṇa prathitam rahasya-bhajanam gaurāya sarvam dade
gaurādsti kṛpālu-ratra na paro gaurasya bhrityo bhavam
gaure gauravamācarāmi bhagavan gaura-prabho rakṣa mām

I pray to Sriman Gauranga Mahaprabhu whose ecstatic transcendental pastimes are like a river of nectar. Gaura has given the path of confidential devotional service. I will completely surrender to Gaura. Is there anyone more merciful than Gaura? I will become a servant of Gaura. I shall preach the glory of Gaura. May my Lord Gaura protect me. — Gaurāṅga-virudāvalī by Srila Raghunandan Goswami

mādhuryyaiḥ-madhubhiḥ sugambhi-bhajana śvarṇambhujānām vanam
kāruṇyāmṛta nirjharai-rupacitah sat-prema hemacālah
bhaktāmbodhara dharaṇī vijayanī niskampa sampāvalī
daivo na kula daivatām vijayatām caitanya-kṛṣṇa-hariḥ

I worship the golden hued Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Who is absorbed in the enchanting mellows of madhurya rasa. May the transcendental love of Krishna that Mahaprabhu is distributing, pour down on this earth like a waterfall of nectar. All glories to that Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

ājānu-lambita-bhujau kanakāva-dātau
saṅkīrtanaika-pitarau kamalāya-tāksau
visvambharau dvijavarau yuga-dharma-pālau
vande jagat priyakarau karuṇāvatārau

I worship Their Lordships Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda Prabhu whose long arms extend down to Their knees, whose beautiful complexions are radiant yellow like molten gold and whose elongated eyes are like red lotuses. They are the topmost brāhmaṇas, the guardians of religious principles for this age, the most munificent benefactors of all living entities, and the most compassionate incarnations of Godhead. They initiated the congregational chanting of the names of Lord Krishna. — Caitanya-bhāgavata ādi 1.1

anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ purāṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandīpitaḥ
sadā hṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vaḥ śacī-nandanaḥ

May that Lord, who is known as the son of Srimati Sacidevi, be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant spiritual knowledge of the mellow taste of His service. — Vidagdha-mādhava 1.2

The following three verses are from Prema-bhakti-chandrikā by Srila Narottama Das Thakur section 10, verses 12-14.

śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanyadeva rati-mati bhava bhaja
prema-kalpa-taru-bara-dātā
śrī-vraja-rāja-nandana rādhikā-jīvana-dhana
aparūpa ei saba kathā

O brother, always worship Sri Krishna Caitanyadeva who is the great philanthropist giving away the treasure of the desire tree of pure love for Krishna. This Lord Chaitanya is actually Lord Krishna, the prince of Vraja and the life of Srimati Radharani. Descriptions of Him are spiritual sounds. They are not at all material. — verse 12

navadvīpe avatari´ rādhā-bhāva aṅgikari´
tāñra kānti aṅgera bhūṣaṇa
tina vāñchā abhilāṣī´ śacī-garbhe parakāṣī´
saṅge lañā pariṣada-gaṇa

Lord Krishna desired to appear in Nabadwip to understand the intense love Srimati Radharani felt for Him, and accept Her golden complexion as His bodily ornament. In order to fulfill these three desires, the Lord appeared in Sacidevi's womb. When the Lord appeared like this in the material world, all His associates followed Him, and also appeared in the world. — verse 13

gaura-hari avatari ´premera vādara kari´
sādhilā manera tina kāja
rādhikāra prāṇa-pati kivā bhāve kānde niti
ihā bujhe bhakata-samāja

The Lord appeared in the golden form of Lord Chaitanya, and preached the message of pure love for Krishna. In this way He fulfilled the three desires in His mind. Only the devotees are able to understand in what a wonderful way Krishna, who is the Lord of Srimati Radharani's life, continually cried in ecstatic love of God. — verse 14

uttama adhama kichu na bāchila yāciyā dilaka kola
kahe premānanda emana gaurāṅga hṛdaye dhariyā bola
bhaja gaurāṅga kaha gaurāṅga laha gaurāṅga nāma (re)
ye jana gaurāṅga bhaje sei haya āmāra prāṇa (re)

Never discriminating who was a fit candidate, elevated or degraded, the son of mother Sachi magnanimously accepts one and all onto His lap in a loving

embrace crying, “Come to My fold, come to My fold!” The poet Premananda Das begs you all to constantly chant the sweet name of Krishna while holding tightly to that son of mother Sachi in the innermost core of your heart. Worship Gauranga! Speak about Gauranga! Oh please take to gaura-nāma! Whoever worships Gauranga is my life and soul.

yasyaiva pādāmbuja-bhakti-lābhyaḥ
premābhidhānaḥ paramaḥ pum-arthaḥ
tasmai jagan-maṅgala-maṅgalāya
caitanya-candrāya namo namas te

O Lord Chaitanyachandra, by devotedly serving Your lotus feet one can attain the pure love for Lord Krishna that is the ultimate goal of all endeavors. O Lord Chaitanyachandra, O great auspiciousness of the world, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. — Srila Prabhodhananda Saraswati, Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta text 9

ānanda-līlāmaya-vigrahāya
hemābha-divya-cchavi-sundarāya
tasmai mahā-prema-rasa-pradāya
caityanacandrāya namo namas te

O Lord Chaitanyachandra, O Lord whose form is full of blissful pastimes, O Lord whose complexion is as splendid as gold, O Lord who gives in charity the nectar of pure love for Lord Krishna. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. — Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta text 11

yan nāptaṁ karma-niṣṭhair na ca samadhi-gataṁ yat tapo dhyāna-yogair
vairāgyais tyāga-tattva-stutibhir api na yat tarkitaṁ cāpi kaiścit
govinda-prema-bhājām api na ca kalitaṁ yad rahasyaṁ svayaṁ tan
nāmnaiva prādurāsīd avatarati pare yatra taṁ naumi gauram

Not attainable by the faithful performers of pious deeds, not understood by those engaged in austerity, meditation, and yoga, not guessed by those absorbed in detachment, renunciation of the fruits of work, philosophical speculation or recitation of prayers, and unknown even to the devotees full of love for Lord Govinda, the secret of pure devotional service has been revealed by the holy name during Lord Gaura’s advent. Let me glorify that Lord Gaura.

— Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta text 3

SB 10.22.29

अथ गोपैः परिवृतो भगवान्देवकीसुतः

वृन्दावनाद्गतो दूरं चारयन्गाः सहाग्रजः

atha—some time later; gopaiḥ—by the cowherd boys; parivṛtaḥ—surrounded; bhagavān—the Supreme Lord; devakī-sutaḥ—the son of Devakī; vṛndāvanāt—from Vṛndāvana; gataḥ—He went; dūram—a distance; cārayan—grazing; gāḥ—the cows; saha-agrajaḥ—together with His brother Balarāma.

Some time later Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, surrounded by His cowherd friends and accompanied by His elder brother, Balarāma, went a good distance away from Vṛndāvana, herding the cows.

Jiva Gosvami: The verse beginning *atha*: the word *atha* expresses the beginning of another pastime, and that is during the hot summer season, according to the words that are going to be spoken, *nidagharkatape* (text 30).

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: Keeping in mind the glorious display of mercy that Kṛṣṇa had shown to the young *gopīs*, Śukadeva Gosvāmī now wanted to describe the blessings Kṛṣṇa bestowed upon the wives of some ritualistic *brāhmaṇas*. The word *atha* indicates at some other time, namely summer.

SB 10.22.30

निदघार्कातपे तिग्मे छायाभिः स्वाभिरात्मनः

आतपत्रायितान्वीक्ष्य द्रुमानाह ब्रजौकसः

nidāgha—of the hot season; arka—of the sun; ātape—in the heat; tigme—fierce; chayabhiḥ—with the shade; svābhiḥ—their own; ātmanaḥ—for Himself; ātapatrāyitān—serving as umbrellas; vīkṣya—observing; drumān—the trees; aha—He said; vraja-okasaḥ—to the boys of Vraja.

Then the sun's heat became intense, Lord Kṛṣṇa saw that the trees were acting as umbrellas by shading Him, and thus He spoke as follows to His boyfriends.

हे स्तोककृष्ण हे अंशो श्रीदामन्सुबलार्जुन
विशाल वृषभौजस्विन्देवप्रस्थ वरूथप
पश्यतैतान्महाभागान्परार्थैकान्तजीवितान्
वातवर्षातपहिमान्सहन्तो वारयन्ति नः

he stoka-kṛṣṇa—O Stoka Kṛṣṇa; he aṁśo—O Aṁśu; śrīdāman subala arjuna—O Śrīdāmā, Subala and Arjuna; viśāla vṛṣabha ojasvin—O Viśāla, Vṛṣabha and Ojasvī; devaprastha varūthapa—O Devaprastha and Varūthapa; paśyata—just see; etān—these; mahābhāgān—most fortunate; para-ārtha—for the benefit of others; ekānta—exclusively; jīvitān—whose life; vāta—the wind; varṣa—rain; ātapa—heat of the sun; himān—and snow; sahanṭaḥ—tolerating; vārayanti—keep off; naḥ—for us.

[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] O Stoka Kṛṣṇa and Aṁśu, O Śrīdāma, Subala and Arjuna, O Vṛṣabha, Ojasvī, Devaprastha and Varūthapa, just see these greatly fortunate trees, whose lives are completely dedicated to the benefit of others. Even while tolerating the wind, rain, heat and snow, they protect us from these elements.

Sridhara Svami: Going to the sacrificial arena for the purpose of showing mercy to the wives of the *brahmanas*, and having in mind the hard-heartedness of the *brahmanas*, Kṛṣṇa praises the trees as superior to them, by the four verses beginning *paśyata* (texts 32-35).

O cowherd boys headed by Stoka-kṛṣṇa and others, just see these trees whose life is meant exclusively for the benefit of others. This is described: that while tolerating the wind, rain, and so forth, they protect us from those elements.

Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur: In these verses Kṛṣṇa indicates that even trees who are dedicated to the welfare of others are superior to *brāhmaṇas* who are not. The cowherd boys beginning with Stoka-Kṛṣṇa are situated in the eight directions with the duty of protecting Kṛṣṇa. Devaprastha and Varūthapa, who are Kṛṣṇa's umbrella carrier and cleanser of His path, are situated in front and behind. The eleventh boy, Bhadrāsena, is the leader of the cowherd boys. He pays attention to all the details and supervises all the boys, but presently he was situated at a distance. Kṛṣṇa observed that while tolerating rain and scorching sunshine, the trees would continue to shelter others from rain and heat.

SB 10.22.33

अहो एषां वरं जन्म सर्वं प्राण्युपजीवनम्
सुजनस्येव येषां वै विमुखा यान्ति नार्थिनः

aho—oh, just see; eṣām—of these trees; varam—superior; janma—birth; sarva—for all; prāṇi—living entities; upajīvinam—who provide maintenance; su-janasya iva—like a great personality; yeṣām—from whom; vai—certainly; vimukhāḥ—disappointed; yānti—go away; na—never; arthinaḥ—those who are asking for something.

Just see how these trees are maintaining every living entity! Their birth is successful. Their behavior is just like that of great personalities, for anyone who asks anything from a tree never goes away disappointed.

Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur: The trees were like generous persons (*sujana*) who are intent on serving guests. Whoever approaches them to ask for something (*arthinaḥ*) never goes away disappointed.

SB 10.22.34

पत्रपुष्पफलच्छाया मूलवल्कलदारुभिः
गन्धनिर्यासभस्मास्थि तोकमैः कामान्वितन्वते

patra—by their leaves; puṣpa—flowers; phala—fruits; chāyā—shade; mūla—roots; valkala—bark; dārubhiḥ—and wood; gandha—by their fragrance; niryāsa—sap; bhasma—ashes; asthi—pulp; tokmaiḥ—and young shoots; kāmān—desirable things; vitanvate—they award.

These trees fulfill one's desires with their leaves, flowers and fruits, their shade, roots, bark and wood, and also with their fragrance, sap, ashes, pulp and shoots.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: *Niryāsa* means sap, *āsthi* means pulp, and *tokmaiḥ* means the young shoots.

SB 10.22.35

एतावज्जन्मसाफल्यं देहिनामिह देहिषु
प्राणैरर्थैर्धिया वाचा श्रेयआचरणं सदा

etāvat—up to this; janma—of birth; sāphalyam—perfection; dehinām—of every living being; iha—in this world; dehiṣu—toward those who are embodied; prāṇaiḥ—by life; arthaiḥ—by wealth; dhiyā—by intelligence; vācā—by words; śreyaḥ—eternal good fortune; ācaraṇam—acting practically; sadā—always.

It is the duty of every living being to perform welfare activities for the benefit of others with his life, wealth, intelligence and words.

Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura: One should use his life to serve others.

SB 10.22.36

इति प्रवालस्तबक फलपुष्पदलोत्करैः

तरूणां नम्रशाखानां मध्यतो यमुनां गतः

iti—thus speaking; pravāla—of new branches; stabaka—by the clusters; phala—of fruit; puṣpa—flowers; dala—and leaves; utkaraiḥ—by the abundance; tarūṇām—of the trees; namra—bowed down; śākhānām—whose branches; madhyataḥ—from within the midst; yamunām—the Yamunā River; gataḥ—He came upon.

Thus moving among the trees, whose branches were bent low by their abundance of twigs, fruits, flowers and leaves, Lord Kṛṣṇa came to the Yamunā River.

Sridhara Svami: Thus offering praise, He came upon the Yamuna from the midst of the trees, whose branches were bowed down because of their multitude of twigs and so forth.

Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura: They passed among the trees with branches bent low from the heavy weight of fruits, flowers and leaves.

SB 10.22.37

तत्र गाः पाययित्वापः सुमृष्टाः शीतलाः शिवाः

ततो नृप स्वयं गोपाः कामं स्वादु पपुर्जलम्

tatra—there; gāḥ—the cows; pāyayitvā—making drink; apaḥ—the water; su-mṛṣṭāḥ—very clear; śītalāḥ—cool; śivāḥ—wholesome; tataḥ—then; nṛpa—O King Parīkṣit; svayam—themselves; gopāḥ—the cowherd boys; kāmam—freely; svādu—sweet-tasting; papuḥ—they drank; jalam—the water.

The cowherd boys let the cows drink the clear, cool and wholesome water of the Yamunā. O King Parīkṣit, the cowherd boys themselves also drank that sweet water to their full satisfaction.

SB 10.22.38

तस्या उपवने कामं चारयन्तः पशून्प
कृष्णरामावुपागम्य क्षुधार्ता इदमब्रवन्

tasyāḥ—along the Yamunā; upavane—within a small forest; kāmam—here and there, as they wished; cārayantaḥ—tending; paśūn—the animals; nṛpa—O King; kṛṣṇa-rāmau—Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma; upāgamyā—approaching; kṣut-ārtāḥ—disturbed by hunger; idam—this; abruvan—they (the cowherd boys) said.

Then, O King, the cowherd boys began herding the animals in a leisurely way within a small forest along the Yamunā. But soon they became afflicted by hunger and, approaching Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, spoke as follows.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī: The cowherd boys were concerned that Kṛṣṇa would be hungry, and thus they feigned their own hunger so that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma would make suitable arrangements to eat.

Sridhara Svami: Because, on account of before being excited by the Lord's joking with the young girls, the cowherd boys had failed to take their meal prior to leaving, and thus it is stated that they were pained by hunger.

The Brāhmaṇas' Wives Blessed

SB 10.23.1

श्रीगोप ऊचुः

राम राम महाबाहो कृष्ण दुष्टनिबर्हण

एषा वै बाधते क्षुन्नस्तच्छान्तिं कर्तुमर्हथः

śrī-gopāḥ ūcuḥ—the cowherd boys said; rāma rāma—O Lord Rāma, Lord Rāma; mahā-bāho—O mighty-armed one; kṛṣṇa—O Lord Kṛṣṇa; duṣṭa—of the wicked; nibarhaṇa—O destroyer; eṣā—this; vai—indeed; bādgate—is causing distress; kṣut—hunger; naḥ—to us; tat-śāntim—its counteraction; kartum arhathaḥ—You ought to do.

The cowherd boys said: O Rāma, Rāma, mighty-armed one! O Kṛṣṇa, chastiser of the wicked! We are being harassed by hunger, and You should do something about it.

Sridhara Svami: Next, in the 23rd chapter, on the pretext of the cowherd boy's begging for food, Kṛṣṇa makes the *brahmanas* who are initiated for sacrifice feel remorse by giving special mercy to their wives.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: This chapter describes how the cowherd boys were disrespected when begging food from some *brāhmaṇas* performing a sacrifice, how Kṛṣṇa showed mercy to the *brāhmaṇas'* wives, and how their husbands felt remorse. The cowherd boys said, “The *Vedas* say that hunger is man's worst enemy. If you can destroy our hunger now, then you will be successful in conquering this enemy.” This is the boys' logic.

SB 10.23.2

श्रीशुक उवाच

इति विज्ञापितो गोपैर्भगवान्देवकीसुतः

भक्ताया विप्रभार्यायाः प्रसीदन्निदमब्रवीत्

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca—Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; iti—thus; vijñāpitaḥ—informed; gopaiḥ—by the cowherd boys; bhagavān—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; devakī-sutaḥ—the son of Devakī; bhaktāyāḥ—His devotees; vipra-bhāryāyāḥ—the wives of the brāhmaṇas; prasīdan-desiring to satisfy; idam—this; abravīt—He spoke.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus entreated by the cowherd boys, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the son of Devakī, replied as follows, desiring to please certain of His devotees who were brāhmaṇas' wives.

Sridhara Svami: The use of the singular form of the word *bhaktayah* is with the idea of considering them all simultaneously together.

Jiva Gosvami: The word *bhaktayah* is in the singular form in the sense of category; they are being described as by their very nature having their minds predominated by Kṛṣṇa.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: In the phrase *vipra-bhāryāyāḥ* (*brāhmaṇas'* wives) the word for wife (*bhāryāyah*) is in the singular form signifying a class. Kṛṣṇa spoke in order to give mercy (*prasīdann*) to the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*. Some say that the singular form is used to indicate one particular wife who attained the tenth stage of *prema*. Out of compassion, Kṛṣṇa wanted to show her mercy. *Prasīdann* has two meanings: giving mercy and lamenting.

SB 10.23.3

प्रयात देवयजनं ब्राह्मणा ब्रह्मवादिनः

सत्रमाङ्गिरसं नाम ह्यासते स्वर्गकाम्यया

prayāta—please go; deva-yajanam—to the sacrificial arena; brāhmaṇāḥ—brāhmaṇas; brahma-vādinaḥ—followers of the Vedic injunctions; satram—a sacrifice; āṅgirasam nāma—known as Āṅgīrasa; hi—indeed; āsate—they are now performing; svarga-kāmyayā—with the motive of promotion to heaven.

[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Please go to the sacrificial arena where a group of brāhmaṇas, learned in the Vedic injunctions, are now performing the Āṅgīrasa sacrifice to gain promotion to heaven.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Kṛṣṇa sent the boys to the *brāhmaṇas* to teach them that He does not bestow mercy upon those devoid of *bhakti*, even though they are endowed with austerity, knowledge and religious principles. On the other hand, Kṛṣṇa

showed that He does give mercy to those having *bhakti*, like the *brāhmaṇas'* wives, even though they lacked knowledge and austerity.

SB 10.23.4

तत्र गत्वौदनं गोपा याचतास्मद्विसर्जिताः

कीर्तयन्तो भगवत आर्यस्य मम चाभिधाम्

tatra—there; gatvā—going; odanam—food; gopāḥ—My dear cowherd boys; yācata—just request; asmat—by Us; visarjitāḥ—dispatched; kīrtayantaḥ—announcing; bhagavataḥ—of the Supreme Lord; āryasya—the elder; mama—My; ca—also; abhidhām—name.

When you go there, My dear cowherd boys, simply request some food. Declare to them the name of My elder brother, the Supreme Lord Balarāma, and also My name, and explain that you have been sent by Us.

PURPORT

Lord Kṛṣṇa encouraged His boyfriends to request charity without being embarrassed. In case the boys felt they had no right to personally approach such respectable *brāhmaṇas*, the Lord told them to mention the names of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, the holy names of God.

Sridhara Svami: Sent forward by the two of us (*asmat-visarjitah = avabhyam prahitah*), just beg. What need do you have to be embarrassed about that? They may object, still, because we are not fit candidates, why will they give to us? In reply to that, the Lord speaks the words beginning *kīrtayantah*.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: Kṛṣṇa said, “You should ask (*yācata*) for rice, calling out Our names. Though those *brāhmaṇas* are supposed to be intelligent, they must be woken from their deep slumber of forgetfulness by calling out Our names. You should call out Baladeva’s name first because those materialistic *brāhmaṇas* will think that Balarāma, being a *kṣatriya*, is a worthy recipient of charity, whereas I, being a mere *vaiśya*, am certainly unworthy. Even if they give a little, it is acceptable.”

SB 10.23.5

इत्यादिष्टा भगवता गत्वा याचन्त ते तथा

कृताञ्जलिपुटा विप्रान्दण्डवत्पतिता भुवि

iti—in these words; ādiṣṭaḥ—ordered; bhagavatā—by the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa; gatvā—going; ayācanta—begged; te—they; tathā—in that manner; kṛta-añjali-putāḥ—joining their palms in humble supplication; viprān—to the brāhmaṇas; daṇḍa-vat-like sticks; patitāḥ—falling; bhuvi—upon the ground.

Thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cowherd boys went there and submitted their request. They stood before the brāhmaṇas with palms joined in supplication and then fell flat on the ground to offer respect.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The cowherd boys approached with folded hands to show their humble attitude. Though they fell on the ground, the cowherd boys appeared more effulgent than the *brāhmaṇas* who were standing upon the land of Vṛndāvana.

SB 10.23.6

हे भूमिदेवाः शृणुत कृष्णस्यादेशकारिणः

प्राप्ताञ्जानीत भद्रं वो गोपान्नो रामचोदितान्

he bhūmi-devāḥ—O earthly gods; śṛṇuta—please hear us; kṛṣṇasya ādeśa—of the order of Kṛṣṇa; kāriṇaḥ—the executors; prāptān—arrived; jānīta—please recognize; bhadram—all good; vaḥ—unto you; gopān—cowherd boys; naḥ—us; rāma-coditān—sent by Lord Rāma.

[The cowherd boys said:] O earthly gods, please hear us. We cowherd boys are executing the orders of Kṛṣṇa, and we have been sent here by Balarāma. We wish all good for you. Please acknowledge our arrival.

Jiva Gosvami: The word *kṛṣṇasya* refers to the statement of Sri Kṛṣṇa. Pretending to have forgotten the proper sequence (of things that they were supposed to do), they are expressing some words of respect in order (to give themselves the chance) to remember that, with the words beginning *bhadram*. According to Sri Kṛṣṇa's instruction, they are speaking the words beginning *rama*.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: The cowherd boys said, “We are executing the order of Kṛṣṇa, who is more powerful than Balarāma because He the son of King Nanda. Since we have been sent by Baladeva, we will give Him the first rice that we receive.”

गाश्वारयन्तावविदूर ओदनं रामाच्युतौ वो लषतो बुभुक्षितौ

तयोर्द्विजा ओदनमर्थिनोर्यदि श्रद्धा च वो यच्छत धर्मवित्तमाः

gāḥ—Their cows; cārayantau—grazing; avidūre—not far away; odanam—food; rāma-acyutau—Lord Rāma and Lord Acyuta; vaḥ—from you; laṣataḥ—are desiring; bubhukṣitau—being hungry; tayoh—for Them; dvijāḥ—O brāhmaṇas; odanam-food; arthinoḥ—begging; yadi—if; śraddhā—any faith; ca—and; vaḥ—on your part; yacchata—please give; dharma-vit-tamāḥ—O best knowers of the principles of religion.

Lord Rāma and Lord Acyuta are tending Their cows not far from here. They are hungry and want you to give Them some of your food. Therefore, O brāhmaṇas, O best of the knowers of religion, if you have faith please give some food to Them.

Sridhara Svami: The two of Them, being present nearby, are desiring the food you have (*lasatah = abhilasatah*). If you have food, or else if you have faith, then give it.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura : The cowherd boys said, “Please give us some rice?”

The *brāhmaṇas* replied, “Because Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are not *brāhmaṇas*, we cannot give you until after the *brāhmaṇas* have eaten.”

The cowherd boys said, “But Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are hungry. Of course, you know the Vedic injunction, *annasya kṣuditam pātram* (food should be given to those who are hungry).”

Seeing the *brāhmaṇas* unfavorably inclined and not saying anything, they continued: “O *brāhmaṇas*! If you have faith in Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, then give, and if you do not, then say “No” and we will go back. Seeing you remaining silent upon hearing our request to feed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the sound of whose names causes the entire universe to melt with love, we can understand that your being “twice born” (*dvijā*) merely means born from two parents (*dvi*-two, *ja*-born).”

When the *brāhmaṇas* did not respond to the cowherd boys’ initial request, the boys addressed them with a touch of sarcasm: “Of course you know the highest principles of religion (*dharma-vittamāḥ*), so what can we tell you about *dharma* and *adharmā*?”

The phrase *dharma-vittamāḥ* (best knowers of *dharma*) can also be taken as *dharma-vi-tamāḥ*, which means the ritualistic *brāhmaṇas* were actually totally ignorant of religious principles.

दीक्षायाः पशुसंस्थायाः सौत्रामण्याश्च सत्तमाः

अन्यत्र दीक्षितस्यापि नान्नमश्नन्ति दुष्यति

dīkṣāyāḥ—beginning with the initiation for a sacrifice; paśu-saṁsthāyāḥ—until sacrificing the animal; sautrāmaṇyāḥ—outside of the sacrifice known as Sautrāmaṇi; ca—and; sat-tamāḥ—O purest ones; anyatra—elsewhere; dīkṣitasya—of one who has been initiated for the sacrifice; api—even; na—not; annam—food; aśnan—eating; hi—indeed; duṣyati—creates offense.

Except during the interval between the initiation of the performer of a sacrifice and the actual sacrifice of the animal, O most pure brāhmaṇas, it is not contaminating for even the initiated to partake of food, at least in sacrifices other than the Sautrāmaṇi.

Sridhara Svami: Automatically anticipating the objection that the *brahmanas* may speak, “We are initiated for this sacrifice and must refrain from eating,” the cowherd boys speak in reply that from the time of the sacrificial initiation up until the slaughtering of the sacrificial animal, which is known as *agnisomiya*, this is improper, but not at other times (during the sacrifice), at other times than the *sautramani*.

Jiva Gosvami: This is faulty from the time of the initiation up to the time of the killing of the animal, but it is not faulty at other times. During the *sautramani* sacrifice, on the other hand, it is faulty throughout.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: The cowherd boys anticipated the possible objection from the *brāhmaṇas* that they couldn’t give the boys any food because they themselves had not yet eaten, and that a priest initiated to perform a sacrifice should not eat. Therefore the boys humbly informed the *brāhmaṇas* about various technicalities of ritualistic sacrifice.

The cowherd boys said, “This rule applies from the beginning of the sacrifice until the animal is killed. But after that there is no fault in taking food. This applies to all sacrifices other than the Sautrāmaṇi, in which none of the food can be eaten.” It is understood from this verse that the animal was already killed.

इति ते भगवद्याञ्जां शृण्वन्तोऽपि न शुश्रुवुः

क्षुद्राशा भूरिकर्माणो बालिशा वृद्धमानिनः

iti—thus; te—they, the brāhmaṇas; bhagavat-of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; yācñām—the supplication; śṛṇvantāḥ—hearing; api—although; na śuśruvuḥ—they did not hear; kṣudra-āśāḥ—full of petty desire; bhūri-karmāṇaḥ—entangled in elaborate ritualistic activities; bālīśāḥ—childish fools; vṛddha-māninaḥ—presuming themselves to be wise men.

The brāhmaṇas heard this supplication from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, yet they refused to pay heed. Indeed, they were full of petty desires and entangled in elaborate rituals. Though presuming themselves advanced in Vedic learning, they were actually inexperienced fools.

Sridhara Svami: Whose desire was for the insignificant, simply for attainment of heaven, and so forth, whose ritualistic activities were extensive, full of trouble, and who therefore were foolish, vainly considering themselves advanced in knowledge.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: Though the brāhmaṇas were knowledgeable of scripture, why didn't they respect Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma? This verse answers the question. Actually the brāhmaṇas did not know scripture; rather they were ignorant in realizing and imparting scripture. Therefore, for two and a half verses [9-11] Śukadeva Gosvāmī ridicules them for being full of petty desires, such as aspiring for the heavenly planets. The brāhmaṇas thought themselves advanced in knowledge (vṛddha-māninaḥ), but actually they were only advanced in age (vṛddha). The word vṛddha means wisdom and old age.

देशः कालः पृथग्द्रव्यं मन्त्रतन्त्रत्विजोऽग्नयः

देवता यजमानश्च क्रतुर्धर्मश्च यन्मयः

तं ब्रह्म परमं साक्षाद्भगवन्तमधोक्षजम्

मनुष्यदृष्ट्या दुष्प्रज्ञा मर्त्यात्मानो न मेनिरे

deśaḥ—the place; kālaḥ—time; pṛthak dravyam—particular items of paraphernalia; mantra—Vedic hymns; tantra—prescribed rituals; ṛtvijaḥ—priests; agnayaḥ—sacrificial fires; devatāḥ—the presiding demigods; yajamānaḥ—the performer of the sacrifice; ca—and; kratuḥ—the offering; dharmāḥ—the invisible power of fruitive results; ca—and; yat—whom; mayaḥ—constituting; tam—Him; brahma paramam—the Supreme Absolute Truth; sākṣāt—directly manifest; bhagavantam—the Personality of Godhead; adhokṣajam—who is transcendental to material senses; manuṣya-dṛṣṭyā—seeing Him as an ordinary man; duṣprajñāḥ—perverted in their intelligence; martya-ātmānaḥ—falsely identifying themselves with the material body; na menire—they did not properly honor.

Although the ingredients of sacrificial performance—the place, time, particular paraphernalia, mantras, rituals, priests, fires, demigods, performer, offering and the as yet unseen beneficial results—are all simply aspects of His opulences, the brāhmaṇas saw Lord Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary human because of their perverted intelligence. They failed to recognize that He is the Supreme Absolute Truth, the directly manifest Personality of Godhead, whom the material senses cannot ordinarily perceive. Thus bewildered by their false identification with the mortal body, they did not show Him proper respect.

PURPORT

The ritualistic brāhmaṇas could not understand why the sacrificial food should be offered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, whom they considered an ordinary human being. Just as a person with rose-colored glasses sees the entire world as rose-colored, a conditioned soul with mundane vision sees even God Himself as mundane and thus loses the opportunity to go back home, back to Godhead.

Vishavanath Chakravarti Thakur: When should a person overlook the rules outlined in scriptures for suitability of place, time and person and give his acquired goods to another person? This verse answers the question. Due to their material vision (*martyātmānaḥ*) the *brāhmaṇas* thought of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Absolute Truth, as an ordinary human. Although Kṛṣṇa cannot be perceived by the material senses (*adhokṣaja*), He can be realized by mercy.

Time, place, the sacrificial offerings such as cooked rice (*pṛthak dravyam*), the rituals (*tantra*), *mantras*, the priests, fires, demigods, sponsors, the sacrifice and religious principles are all simply aspects of Kṛṣṇa's opulence.

SB 10.23.12

न ते यदोमिति प्रोचुर्न नेति च परन्तप

गोपा निराशाः प्रत्येत्य तथोचुः कृष्णरामयोः

na—not; te—they; yat—when; om—"so be it"; iti—thus; procuḥ—did speak; na—not; na—"no"; iti—thus; ca—either; parantapa—O chastiser of the enemies, Parīkṣit Mahārāja; gopāḥ—the cowherd boys; nirāśāḥ—discouraged; pratyetya—returning; tathā—thus; ūcuḥ—described; kṛṣṇa-rāmayoḥ—to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāma.

When the brāhmaṇas failed to reply even with a simple yes or no, O chastiser of the enemy [Parīkṣit], the cowherd boys returned disappointed to Kṛṣṇa and Rāma and reported this to Them.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakur: Thinking, “How can we give to the cowherds before we have eaten?” the *brāhmaṇas* did not say “yes”. And they did not reject the proposal to give their remnants after the *yajña* by saying “No.” Seeing that Parīkṣit Mahārāja was becoming angry on hearing this, Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, “O subduer of enemies (*parantapa*)! If you had been there, even though they were the best of *brāhmaṇas*, you would have punished them like enemies.”

SB 10.23.13

तदुपाकर्ण्य भगवान्प्रहस्य जगदीश्वरः

व्याजहार पुनर्गोपान्दर्शयन्लौकिकीं गतिम्

tat-that; upākārṇya—hearing; bhagavān—the Supreme Lord; prahasya—laughing; jagat-īśvaraḥ—the controller of the entire universe; vyājahāra—addressed; punaḥ—again; gopān—the cowherd boys; darśayan—showing; laukikīm—of the ordinary world; gatim—the way.

Hearing what had happened, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord of the universe, simply laughed. Then He again addressed the cowherd boys, showing them the way men act in this world.

Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur: Kṛṣṇa laughed because it was not proper to show anger towards the ignorant *brāhmaṇas*. Furthermore, Kṛṣṇa wanted to teach that a beggar

should not become despondent, because it is nature of begging (*laukikim gatim*) that one is often refused.

SB 10.23.14

मां ज्ञापयत पत्नीभ्यः ससङ्कर्षणमागतम्

दास्यन्ति काममन्नं वः स्निग्धा मय्युषिता धिया

mām—Me; jñāpayata—please announce; patnībhyah—to the wives; sa-saṅkarṣaṇam—together with Lord Balarāma; āgatam—arrived; dāsyanti—they will give; kāmam—as much as you desire; annam—food; vaḥ—to you; snigdhaḥ—affectionate; mayi—in Me; uṣitāḥ—residing; dhiyā—with their intelligence.

[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Tell the wives of the brāhmaṇas that I have come here with Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. They will certainly give you all the food you want, for they are most affectionate toward Me and, indeed, with their intelligence reside in Me alone.

Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur: Kṛṣṇa said, “Just tell the wives of the *brāhmaṇas* that Balarāma and I have come. But don’t tell them I am hungry, for if they hear that these devoted ladies will become severely distressed.”

Cowherd boys: “But how will they give us food, if we do not tell them You are hungry?”

Kṛṣṇa: “Seeing that you are hungry, they will give food for Us.”

Cowherd boys: “But their husbands will prevent them.”

Kṛṣṇa: “The *brāhmaṇas*’ wives have great affection for Me. They will not heed their husbands’ prohibitions. Since their minds dwell in Me (*mayi uṣitā dhiyā*), it is only their bodies that are residing in their husbands’ houses.”

SB 10.23.15

गत्वाथ पत्नीशालायां दृष्ट्वासीनाः स्वलङ्कृताः

नत्वा द्विजसतीर्गोपाः प्रश्रिता इदमब्रुवन्

gatvā—going; atha—then; patnī-śālāyām—in the house of the wives of the brāhmaṇas; dṛṣṭvā—seeing them; asīnāḥ—sitting; su-alāṅkṛtāḥ—nicely ornamented; natvā—bowing down to offer obeisances; dvija-satīḥ—to the chaste wives of the brāhmaṇas; gopāḥ—the cowherd boys; praśritāḥ—humbly; idam—this; abruvan—spoke.

The cowherd boys then went to the house where the brāhmaṇas' wives were staying. There the boys saw those chaste ladies sitting, nicely decorated with fine ornaments. Bowing down to the brāhmaṇa ladies, the boys addressed them in all humility.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The cowherd boys said, “We have been sent here by Kṛṣṇa (*iṣitā*).”

SB 10.23.16

नमो वो विप्रपत्नीभ्यो निबोधत वचांसि नः

इतोऽविदूरे चरता कृष्णेनेहेषिता वयम्

namaḥ—obeisances; vaḥ—unto you; vipra-patnībhyaḥ—the wives of the brāhmaṇas; nibodhata—please hear; vacāṁsi—words; naḥ—our; itaḥ—from here; avidūre—not distant; caratā—who is going; kṛṣṇena—by Lord Kṛṣṇa; iha—here; iṣitāḥ—sent; vayam—we.

[The cowherd boys said:] Obeisances unto you, O wives of the learned brāhmaṇas. Kindly hear our words. We have been sent here by Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is passing by not far from here.

SB 10.23.17

गाश्वारयन्स गोपालैः सरामो दूरमागतः

बुभुक्षितस्य तस्यान्नं सानुगस्य प्रदीयताम्

gāḥ—the cows; cārayan—tending; saḥ—He; gopālaiḥ—in the company of the cowherd boys; sa-rāmaḥ—together with Lord Balarāma; dūram—from far away; āgataḥ—has come; bubhuṣitasya—who is hungry; tasya—for Him; annam—food; sa-anugasya—together with His companions; pradīyatām—should be given.

He has come a long way with the cowherd boys and Lord Balarāma, tending the cows. Now He is hungry, so some food should be given for Him and His companions.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Upon hearing the name of Kṛṣṇa, the *brāhmaṇas*' wives fainted in bliss. To revive them, the boys explained why they had come to their houses, beginning in a gentle way and ending boldly.

The boys said, “Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have come a long way (dūram).” Seeing the wives becoming very attentive upon hearing this, the boys decided to inspire them further by

mentioning that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma wanted some food. The cowherd boys said, “Kṛṣṇa and His friends are suffering from hunger.”

SB 10.23.18

श्रुत्वाच्युतमुपायातं नित्यं तद्दर्शनोत्सुकाः

तत्कथाक्षिप्तमनसो बभूवुर्जातसम्भ्रमाः

śrutvā—hearing; acyutam—Lord Kṛṣṇa; upāyātam—come nearby; nityam—constantly; tat-darśana—for the sight of Him; utsukāḥ—eager; tat-kathā—by descriptions of Him; ākṣpita—enchanted; manasaḥ—their minds; babhūvuḥ—they became; jāta-sambhramāḥ—excited.

The wives of the brāhmaṇas were always eager to see Kṛṣṇa, for their minds had been enchanted by descriptions of Him. Thus as soon as they heard that He had come, they became very excited.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The wives began criticizing their minds on hearing that Kṛṣṇa was hungry: “O you low mind! Although you have heard that your beloved Kṛṣṇa is suffering from hunger, why did you not wake up from fainting?”

SB 10.23.19

चतुर्विधं बहुगुणमन्नमादाय भाजनैः

अभिसस्रुः प्रियं सर्वाः समुद्रमिव निम्नगाः

catuḥ-vidham—of the four varieties (that which is chewed, that which is drunk, that which is licked and that which is sucked); bahu-guṇam—endowed with many rich tastes and fragrances; annam—food; ādāya—bringing; bhājanaiḥ—in large vessels; abhisasruḥ—they went forward; priyam—to their beloved; sarvāḥ—all of them; samudram—to the ocean; iva—just as; nimna-gāḥ—the rivers.

Taking along in large vessels the four kinds of foods, full of fine tastes and aromas, all the ladies went forth to meet their beloved, just as rivers flow toward the sea.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The four varieties of foods are those that are chewed, sucked, licked and swallowed. The foods were full of rich tastes and aromas (*bahu guṇa*). the wives of the brāhmaṇas experienced conjugal feelings toward Kṛṣṇa, as if He were their paramour; thus they could not be checked as they rushed to see Him.

निषिध्यमानाः पतिभिर्भ्रातृभिर्बन्धुभिः सुतैः

भगवत्युत्तमश्लोके दीर्घश्रुत धृताशयाः

यमुनोपवनेऽशोक नवपल्लवमण्डिते

विचरन्तं वृतं गोपैः साग्रजं ददृशुः स्त्रियः

niṣidhyamānāḥ—being forbidden; patibhiḥ—by their husbands; bhrātr̥bhiḥ—by their brothers; bandhubhiḥ—by other relatives; sutaiḥ—and by their sons; bhagavati—directed toward the Supreme Personality of Godhead; uttama-śloke—who is praised with transcendental hymns; dīrgha—for a long time; śruta—because of hearing; dhṛta—acquired; āśayāḥ—whose expectations; yamunā-upavane—in a garden along the river Yamunā; aśoka-nava-pallava—by the buds of the aśoka trees; maṇḍite—decorated; vicarantam—wandering; vṛtam—surrounded; gopaiḥ—by the cowherd boys; sa-agrajam—together with His elder brother; dadṛśuḥ—they saw; striyaḥ—the ladies.

Although their husbands, brothers, sons and other relatives tried to forbid them from going, their hope of seeing Kṛṣṇa, cultivated by extensive hearing of His transcendental qualities, won out. Along the river Yamunā, within a garden decorated with buds of aśoka trees, they caught sight of Him strolling along in the company of the cowherd boys and His elder brother, Balarāma.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Due to conjugal feelings the wives of *brāhmaṇas* went to meet (*abhisasruḥ*) Kṛṣṇa as if He were their paramour. In order to avoid censure for their conduct, Śukadeva Gosvāmī compares them to rivers flowing naturally toward the sea, because they had already heard extensively about Kṛṣṇa.

श्यामं हिरण्यपरिधिं वनमाल्यबर्हं

धातुप्रवालनटवेषमनव्रतांसे

विन्यस्तहस्तमितरेण धुनानमञ्जं

कर्णोत्पलालककपोलमुखाब्जहासम्

śyāmam—dark blue in complexion; hiraṇya—golden; paridhim—whose garment; vana-mālya—with a forest garland; barha—peacock feather; dhātu—colored minerals; pravāla—and sprigs of buds; naṭa—like a dancer upon the stage; veṣam—dressed; anuvrata—of a friend; aṁse—upon the shoulder; vinyasta—placed; hastam—His hand; itareṇa—with the other; dhunānam—twirling; abjam—a lotus; karna—upon His ears; utpala—lilies; alaka-kapola—with hair extending over His cheeks; mukha-abja—upon His lotuslike face; hāsam—having a smile.

His complexion was dark blue and His garment golden. Wearing a peacock feather, colored minerals, sprigs of flower buds, and a garland of forest flowers and leaves, He was dressed just like a dramatic dancer. He rested one hand upon the shoulder of a friend and with the other twirled a lotus. Lilies graced His ears, His hair hung down over His cheeks, and His lotuslike face was smiling.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The brāhmaṇas' wives saw Kṛṣṇa dressed in a yellow cloth (*hiranya paridhiḥ*). He was decorated with a garland of forest flowers and leaves extending to His feet, a peacock feather in His top knot, *tilaka* and designs of colored clay, fresh leaves tucked in His belt, water lilies over His ears, curls of hair falling over His cheeks, and a beautiful smile on His lotus face. Kṛṣṇa looked like a theatrical artist.

Kṛṣṇa conveyed His intentions by His gestures; resting His left arm on a friend's shoulder and twirling a play lotus (*dhunānam abjam*) in His right hand. By this Kṛṣṇa was telling the ladies, "I have seized within My hand your lotus hearts and am eagerly twirling them about." Or Kṛṣṇa was telling them, "While seeing you, who possess loving sentiment, My lotus heart is twirling out of eagerness. Thus on the pretext of twirling a toy lotus flower, I am revealing to you that My heart is twirling about. This is what you should deduce from how I am acting."

SB 10.23.23

प्रायःश्रुतप्रियतमोदयकर्णपूरैर्
यस्मिन्निमग्नमनसस्तमथाक्षिरन्द्रैः
अन्तः प्रवेश्य सुचिरं परिरभ्य तापं
प्राज्ञं यथाभिमतयो विजहृर्नरेन्द्र

prāyaḥ—repeatedly; śruta—heard; priya-tama—of their dearest; udaya—the glories; karṇa-pūraiḥ—which were the ornaments of their ears; yasmin—in whom; nimagna—submerged; manasaḥ—their minds; tam—Him; atha—then; akṣi-randhraiḥ—through the apertures of their eyes; antaḥ—within; praveśya—making enter; su-ciram—for a long time; parirabhya—embracing; tāpam—their distress; prājñam—the inner consciousness; yathā—as; abhimatayaḥ—the functions of false ego; vijahuḥ—they gave up; nara-indra—O ruler of men.

O ruler of men, for a long time those brāhmaṇa ladies had heard about Kṛṣṇa, their beloved, and His glories had become the constant ornaments of their ears. Indeed, their minds were always absorbed in Him. Through the apertures of their eyes they now forced Him to enter within their hearts, and then they embraced Him within for a long time. In this way they finally gave up the pain of separation from Him, just as sages give up the anxiety of false ego by embracing their innermost consciousness.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Their ears had become successful by hearing repeatedly (*prāyaḥ*) about the excellent qualities of their beloved, and thus their minds became absorbed in Kṛṣṇa. They brought Kṛṣṇa through the doors of their eyes, and made Him lie down upon the lotus flower bed of their hearts. Then by embracing Kṛṣṇa for a long time (*su-ciram*), they gave up their distress. By that embrace they fainted in the bliss of union with Kṛṣṇa. In this way, they became relieved of the pain of separation from Him. This resembles the sages who gain freedom from the pains of false ego by embracing their inner consciousness.

SB 10.23.24

तास्तथा त्यक्तसर्वाशाः प्राप्ता आत्मदिदृक्षया

विज्ञायाखिलदृग्द्रष्टा प्राह प्रहसिताननः

tāḥ—those ladies; tathā—in such a state; tyakta-sarva-āśāḥ—having given up all material desires; prāptāḥ—arrived; ātma-didṛkṣayā—with the desire of seeing Himself; vijñāya—understanding; akhila-dṛk—of the vision of all creatures; draṣṭā—the seer; prāha—He spoke; prahasita-ānanaḥ—with a smile upon His face.

Lord Kṛṣṇa, who witnesses the thoughts of all creatures, understood how those ladies had abandoned all worldly hopes and come there simply to see Him. Thus He addressed them as follows with a smile upon His face.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Seeing the ladies in such a state (*tāḥ tathā*), standing stunned with the plates of food in their hands, Kṛṣṇa, the witness of everyone's thoughts, (*akhila dṛg draṣṭā*) began laughing and spoke.

SB 10.23.25

स्वागतं वो महाभागा आस्यतां करवाम किम्

यन्नो दिदृक्षया प्राप्ता उपपन्नमिदं हि वः

su-āgatam—auspicious welcome; vaḥ—for you; mahā-bhāgāḥ—O fortunate ladies; āsyatām—please come sit; karavāma—I can do, kim-what; yat—because; naḥ—Us; didṛkṣayā—with the desire of seeing; prāptāḥ—you have come; upapannam—fitting; idam—this; hi—certainly; vaḥ—on your part.

[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Welcome, O most fortunate ladies. Please sit down and make yourselves comfortable. What can I do for you? That you have come here to see Me is most appropriate.

PURPORT

Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa welcomed the gopīs who came to dance with Him at night, He similarly welcomed the brāhmaṇas' wives, whose pure love for Him was proved by their overcoming many hindrances to see the Lord. The word *upapannam* indicates that although these ladies had rejected their husbands' orders, their behavior was not at all inappropriate, since their husbands had obviously tried to obstruct their loving service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Kṛṣṇa addressed the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*, who were endowed with the greatest *prema*, in a similar manner that He addressed the *gopīs* who came for the *rāsa* dance.

Kṛṣṇa said, “Your coming is all glorious! And you are very fortunate (*mahābhāgā*). Out of desire to see Me, you have overcome many obstacles to come here. But I cannot repay you in any way, so what can I do for you? I can simply remain your debtor. Please rest here for some time and take My *darśana*.”

SB 10.23.26

नन्वद्धा मयि कुर्वन्ति कुशलाः स्वार्थदर्शिनः

अहैतुक्यव्यवहितां भक्तिमात्मप्रिये यथा

nanu—certainly; addhā—directly; mayi—unto Me; kurvanti—they perform; kuśalāḥ—those who are expert; sva-artha—their own true benefit; darśinaḥ—who perceive; ahaitukī—unmotivated; avyavahitām—uninterrupted; bhaktim—devotional service; ātma—to the soul; priye—who am most dear; yathā—properly.

Certainly expert personalities, who can see their own true interest, render unmotivated and uninterrupted devotional service directly unto Me, for I am most dear to the soul.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Though the wives were full of the highest *prema*, fulfilling their desires now would not nourish the *rasa*. And without nourishing the *rasa* the pastimes would not be as relishable. Though Kṛṣṇa was moved and controlled by their *prema*, suddenly within His mind His *līlā-śakti*, pastime potency, manifested her influence to bring on a mood of *aiśvarya*, (the majestic mood of showing Himself as God) which caused Kṛṣṇa to send them home.

Although Kṛṣṇa's opulence (*aiśvarya*) does not tend to manifest in the presence of personalities who have pure ecstatic love for Him, still for the purpose of keeping the pastimes perfect, it became manifest to increase the eagerness of their feeling of separation and unalloyed love. Subduing Kṛṣṇa's *rati*, it brought out His discrimination and thus He spoke in two verses, according to the mood of *aiśvarya*. Kṛṣṇa said, "Not only you have become attached to Me, but other persons as well have developed affection for Me. Who are they? Those who expertly (*kuśalāḥ*) see to their own welfare (*sva-artha darśinaḥ*) serve Me without personal motives (*ahaituki*) or the obstructions (*avyavahitā*) of mental speculation, just as one affectionately serves one's own body, husband and other things."

SB 10.23.27

प्राणबुद्धिमनःस्वात्म दारापत्यधनादयः

यत्सम्पर्कात्प्रिया आसंस्ततः को न्वपरः प्रियः

prāṇa—one's vital force; buddhi—intelligence; manaḥ—mind; sva—relatives; ātma—body; dāra—wife; apatya—children; dhana—wealth; ādayaḥ—and so forth; yat—with which (self); samparkāt—because of contact; priyāḥ—dear; āsan—have become; tataḥ—than that; kaḥ—what; nu—indeed; aparāḥ—other; priyaḥ—dear object.

It is only by contact with the self that one's vital breath, intelligence, mind, friends, body, wife, children, wealth and so on are dear. Therefore what object can possibly be more dear than one's own self?

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: To inspire them with intelligence, Kṛṣṇa uses logic to pacify the *brāhmaṇas*' wives. "It is because (*yā*) of contact (*samparkāt*) with the self that one's vital breath, intelligence, mind, friends, body, wife, children and wealth are dear. What can be more dear than the self (*tataḥ*)?"

Another reading of Kṛṣṇa's statement: "But actually I, the Paramātmā, the inner seer, am dearer than one's body, sons, husband and family."

SB 10.23.28

तद्यात देवयजनं पतयो वो द्विजातयः

स्वसत्रं पारयिष्यन्ति युष्माभिर्गृहमेधिनः

tat—therefore; yāta—go; deva-yajanam—to the sacrificial arena; patayaḥ—the husbands; vaḥ—your; dvi-jātayaḥ—the brāhmaṇas; sva-satram-their own sacrifices; pārayiṣyanti—will be able to finish; yuṣmābhiḥ—together with you; gṛha-medhinaḥ—the householders.

You should thus return to the sacrificial arena, because your husbands, the learned brāhmaṇas, are householders and need your assistance to finish their respective sacrifices.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: "Because I am that very Supersoul (Paramātmā), as you have heard from Garga Muni, therefore, I am always embracing your bodies. Therefore, return to the sacrificial arena."

The *brāhmaṇas*' wives replied, "That may be but how can we return there, giving up You, who are directly the Paramātmā standing before us?"

Kṛṣṇa: "Your husbands need your assistance to complete the sacrificial rituals which have been explained by Me in the *Vedas*. Therefore go and perform those activities according to My order, and you will be able to see Me directly there as well."

SB 10.23.29

श्रीपत्य ऊचुः

मैवं विभोऽर्हति भवान्गदितुं ऋशंसं

सत्यं कुरुष्व निगमं तव पदमूलम्

प्राप्ता वयं तुलसिदाम पदावसृष्टं
केशैर्निवोढुमतिलङ्घ्य समस्तबन्धून्

śrī-patnyaḥ ūcuḥ—the wives of the brāhmaṇas said; mā—not; evam—like this; vibho—O almighty Lord; arhati—ought; bhavān—You; gaditum—to speak; nṛ-śaṁsam—harshly; satyam—true; kuruṣva—please make; nigamam—the promise given in the revealed scripture; tava—Your; pāda-mūlam—the base of the lotus feet; prāptāḥ—having obtained; vayam—we; tulasi-dāma—the garland of tulasī leaves; padā—by Your foot; avasṛṣtam—neglectfully kicked away; keśaiḥ—upon our hair; nivoḍhum—in order to carry; atilaṅghya—rejecting; samasta—all; bandhūn—relations.

The wives of the brāhmaṇas replied: O almighty one, please do not speak such cruel words. Rather, You should fulfill Your promise that You always reciprocate with Your devotees in kind. Now that we have attained Your lotus feet, we simply wish to remain here in the forest so we may carry upon our heads the garlands of tulasī leaves You may neglectfully kick away with Your lotus feet. We are ready to give up all material relationships.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Here the brāhmaṇas' wives speak the same line that the *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa's *parama premi-bhaktas*, said at the beginning of the *rāsa* dance when Kṛṣṇa told them to go home as well: *maivam vibho rhati bhavān gaditum nṛ-śaṁsam* (Bhag. 10.29.31)

The *brāhmaṇas*' wives said, “O all-powerful Lord! You should not speak such cruel words (*nṛ-śaṁsam*). The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (8.15.1) (*nigama*) says: *na sa punar āvartate*, ‘One who enters the spiritual world never returns to the material world of birth and death.’ You should make Your words true, such as *ye yathā mām prapadyante, tāms tathaiva bhajāmy aham*, “If one surrenders unto Me, I will reward him” (Bg. 4.11) and *mām eva ye prapadyante, māyām etān taranti te*, “Those who surrender unto Me can easily cross beyond all difficulties.” (Bg. 7.14)

Kṛṣṇa: “You young ladies are members of the aristocratic *brāhmaṇa* community, so how can you surrender at the feet of a mere cowherd boy?”

Wives: “But we have already surrendered by taking the dust of Your lotus feet on our heads. Since we desire to become Your servants, we are obviously not maintaining a false

identification as members of the so-called *brāhmaṇa* community. You can easily ascertain this from our words.”

Kṛṣṇa: “I am a cowherd boy, and those who are cowherd girls are suitable to be My maidservants and lovers.”

Wives: “True, let them be so. Let them shine forth if You are embarrassed in front of Your relatives to make *brāhmaṇa* ladies Your maidservants. We certainly don’t want to embarrass You. We will not go to Your village but will rather remain in Vṛndāvana, like presiding deities of the forest. We simply desire to perfect our lives by any contact with You.

“We will be happy to remain at a distance, and simply pick up the *tulasī* leaves that have fallen from Your feet, or which have been crushed by the feet of Your lovers after they have embraced You, or which have fallen under Your flower bed and been mercifully given to us by Your servants. We will bind these *tulasī* leaves in our hair. We do not aspire to become Your intimate girlfriends or maidservants because that position is very difficult to achieve.”

Kṛṣṇa: “But will your family members not object?”

Wives: “If they do, we will reject (*atilaṅghya*) them and immediately come to You.”

SB 10.23.30

गृह्णन्ति नो न पतयः पितरौ सुता वा
न भ्रातृबन्धुसुहृदः कुत एव चान्ये
तस्माद्भवत्प्रपदयोः पतितात्मनां नो
नान्या भवेद्गतिररिन्दम तद्विधेहि

gr̥hṇanti—they will accept; naḥ—us; na—not; patayaḥ—our husbands; pitarau—fathers; sutāḥ—sons; vā—or; na—not; bhrātr̥—brothers; bandhu—other relatives; suhṛdaḥ—and friends; kutaḥ—how then; eva—indeed; ca—and; anye—other people; tasmāt—therefore; bhavat—Your; prapadayoḥ—at the tips of the lotus feet; patita—fallen; ātmanām—whose bodies; naḥ—for us; na—not; anyā—any other; bhavet—there can be; gatiḥ—destination; arim-dama—O chastiser of enemies; tat—that; vidhehi—kindly bestow upon us.

Our husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, other relatives and friends will no longer take us back, and how could anyone else be willing to give us shelter? Therefore, since we have thrown ourselves at Your lotus feet and have no other destination, please, O chastiser of enemies, grant our desire.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The wives of the *brāhmaṇas* said, “From our youth we have heard about the sweetness of Your form and qualities from the flower ladies and betel-nut sellers of Vṛndāvana. Consequently we have fallen in love with You and become indifferent to our household duties. Seeing us deviating, our husbands have become doubtful and no longer deal with us. After this, they will not accept us in the house.” With this in mind they speak this verse.

Sutā refers to their married sons, and *anye* means neighbors. Now the *brāhmaṇas*’ wives were ready to formally reject their families and neighbors. Weeping they touched their heads to Kṛṣṇa’s feet and said with choked voices, “As we have no other shelter, You should do something. Oh killer of enemies (*arindama*)! Please vanquish the obstacles which prevent us from attaining You.”

SB 10.23.31

श्रीभगवानुवाच

पतयो नाभ्यसूयेरन्पितृभ्रातृसुतादयः

लोकाश्च वो मयोपेता देवा अप्यनुमन्वते

śrī-bhagavān uvāca—the Supreme Personality of Godhead said; patayaḥ—your husbands; na abhyasūyeran—will not feel inimical; pitṛ-bhrāṭṛ-suta-ādayaḥ—your fathers, brothers, sons and others; lokāḥ—the general populace; ca—also; vaḥ—toward you; mayā—by Me; upetāḥ—advised; devāḥ—the demigods; api—even; anumantate—regard favorably.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead replied: Rest assured that your husbands will not be inimical toward you, nor will your fathers, brothers, sons, other relatives or the general populace. I will personally advise them of the situation. Indeed, even the demigods will express their approval.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Kṛṣṇa replied, “Since you have pure love for Me and are dedicated to My happiness, you should not do something which is against My intentions. Do not be stubborn like this, but return home.”

The wives reply, “O topmost of learned personalities! Being women from aristocratic families, even the sun does not touch us. We have disobeyed our husbands, neglecting them as insignificant as blades of grass, and come a long way from our village to be near You, who are famous throughout Vraja as being licentious. If we try to return home, our husbands and others won’t allow us to enter the village, and out of anger they will surely kill us.”

Anticipating this, Kṛṣṇa answers the *brāhmaṇas*’ wives in this verse: “There is no use in unfounded fears. Your husbands will not find fault with you, what to speak of others, such as mothers and fathers. Why? Even if you were to intimately associate with Me, which you have not done yet, they will not find fault because they know that I am the Supreme Lord of everyone. Your husbands, seeing the demigods at their sacrifice, will ask them about this matter and they will give their approval. The demigods and all learned men of the past are in agreement that I am the Supreme Lord of all living entities.”

SB 10.23.32

न प्रीतयेऽनुरागाय ह्यङ्गसङ्गो नृणामिह

तन्मनो मयि युञ्जाना अचिरान्मामवाप्स्यथ

na—not; prītaye—for satisfaction; anurāgāya—for loving attraction; hi—certainly; aṅga-saṅgaḥ—physical association; nṛṇām—for people; iha—in this world; tat—therefore; manaḥ—your minds; mayi—upon Me; yuñjānāḥ—fixing; acirāt—very quickly; mām—Me; avāpsyatha—you will achieve.

For you to remain in My bodily association would certainly not please people in this world, nor would it be the best way for you to increase your love for Me. Rather, you should fix your minds on Me, and very soon you will achieve Me.

Jiva Gosvami: But, they may question, then we are going to have Your physical association? In reply to that, Kṛṣṇa say that in this, the birth of a *brahmana*, for you good ladies to have bodily association with Me will not make people happy (*prītaye* = *sukhaya*), and certainly will not make them attracted.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas*’ wives said, “Then will our desire ever be fulfilled, or not?”

Kṛṣṇa said, “Since you are asking this with your tearful sidelong glances, I will reply thus. The people in this world will not appreciate it if you stay with Me. It is also not the best

way to increase your love for Me. Longing in separation will create more intense attraction to Me. Therefore (*tat*), absorb your minds in Me, and you will attain Me very soon.”

SB 10.23.33

श्रवणाद्दर्शनाद्धानान्मयि भावोऽनुकीर्तनात्

न तथा सन्निकर्षेण प्रतियात ततो गृहान्

śravaṇāt—by hearing; darśanāt—by seeing the Deity form; dhyānāt—by meditation; mayi—for Me; bhāvaḥ—love; anukīrtanāt—by chanting My names and qualities; na—not; tathā—in the same way; sannikarṣeṇa—by literal proximity; pratiyāta—return; tataḥ—therefore; grhān—to your homes.

It is by hearing about Me, seeing My Deity form, meditating upon Me and chanting My names and glories that love for Me develops, not by physical proximity. Therefore please go back to your homes.

SB 10.23.34

श्रीशुक उवाच

इत्युक्त्वा द्विजपत्न्यस्ता यज्ञवाटं पुनर्गताः

ते चानसूयवस्ताभिः स्त्रीभिः सत्रमपारयन्

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca—Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; iti—with these words; uktāḥ—spoken to; dvija-patnyaḥ—the wives of the brāhmaṇas; tāḥ—they; yajña-vāṭam—to the place of sacrifice; punaḥ—again; gatāḥ—went; te—they, their husbands; ca—and; anasūyavaḥ—not inimical; tābhiḥ—together with them; strībhiḥ—their wives; satram—the sacrificial performance; apārayan—they completed.

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus instructed, the wives of the brāhmaṇas returned to the place of sacrifice. The brāhmaṇas did not find any fault with their wives, and together with them they finished the sacrifice.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The wives of the *brāhmaṇas* obeyed Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s order and returned to their husbands, whereas the Vraja-gopīs, although ordered by Kṛṣṇa

to go home, remained in the forest to dance with Him through the full-moon night. Both the Vraja-gopīs and the *brāhmaṇas'* wives achieved unalloyed *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

SB 10.23.35

तत्रैका विधृता भर्त्रा भगवन्तं यथाश्रुतम्
हृडोपगुह्य विजहौ देहं कर्मानुबन्धनम्

tatra—there; ekā—one of them; vidhṛtā—held back by force; bhartrā—by her husband; bhagavantam—the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa; yathā-śrutam—as she heard about Him from the others; hṛdā—within her heart; upaguhya—embracing; vijahau—she gave up; deham—her material body; karma-anubandhanam—which is simply the basis of bondage to material activity.

One of the ladies had been forcibly kept back by her husband. When she heard the others describe the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, she embraced Him within her heart and gave up her material body, the basis of bondage to material activity.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The lady restrained here by her husband was especially devoted to Kṛṣṇa. She gave up her material body but she did not give up her spiritual body, which was filled with *prema* due to her intense love in separation from Kṛṣṇa. That spiritual body was kept hidden by the Supreme Lord, who manifested Himself to her. In that body, which was purely spiritual and invisible to all, she quickly left that place and went to Kṛṣṇa. After having given up one's husband and other objects of attachment, is it surprising that someone also gives up the material body to meet Kṛṣṇa?

To show the power of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, Kṛṣṇa's *kṛpā-śakti* (mercy potency) made that one lady, at the time when all the wives went to meet Kṛṣṇa, give up the material body which is the cause of one's bondage to material activity (*karma-ānubandhanam*), and arrange for her to receive her spiritual body, which is one's connection with pure love of God (*prema-anubandha*). Like a touchstone, she (*kṛpā-śakti*) transformed the other wives' material bodies into pure spiritual bodies as well. Thus from that day forward, the *brāhmaṇa* ladies had no more contact with their husbands. In this way, what is impossible for the *kṛpā-śakti* of Kṛṣṇa? One cannot say whether that one *brāhmaṇa* lady was superior in her *bhakti* to the others or not, since there is no indication given in scripture.

But in any case, all of them became perfect by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa as described in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*: *kṛpā-siddhā yajña-patnī-vairocāni-sukādayaḥ*, “Those who became perfect by receiving the Lord’s mercy, such as the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*, the son of Virocana (Bali Mahārāja) and Śukadeva Gosvāmī.”

SB 10.23.36

भगवानपि गोविन्दस्तेनैवान्नेन गोपकान्

चतुर्विधेनाशयित्वा स्वयं च बुभुजे प्रभुः

bhagavān—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; api—moreover; govindaḥ—Lord Govinda; tena—with that; eva—very same; annena—food; gopakān—the cowherd boys; catuḥ-vidhena—of four varieties; aśayitvā—feeding; svayam—Himself; ca—and; bubhuje—partook; prabhuḥ—the Almighty.

Govinda, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, fed the cowherd boys with that food of four varieties. Then the all-powerful Lord Himself partook of the preparations.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: As Kṛṣṇa is *bhagavān*, the possessor of all powers, in front of Him the *brāhmaṇa* lady gave up her material body. Unseen by others she met Govinda in her spiritual body, and then experienced unlimited pleasure (*vindati*) with her transcendental senses (*ga*). That is the significance of the word “*api*” in this verse.

The food (*tena eva annena*) was inadequate to feed all the cowherd boys. But almighty (*prabhuḥ*) Kṛṣṇa caused all of their bellies to be completely filled. The *ka* in *gopakān* indicates Kṛṣṇa’s merciful attitude towards the boys. Though Kṛṣṇa had no desire to eat, He also ate to show mercy to the cowherd boys. That is the significance of *svayam ca* (he also). Kṛṣṇa had no desire to eat because He was feeling remorse at having made the *brāhmaṇas*’ wives break their vows.

SB 10.23.37

एवं लीलानरवपुञ्जलोकमनुशीलयन्

रेमे गोगोपगोपीनां रमयन्नूपवाक्कृतैः

evam—in this manner; līlā—for pastimes; nara—appearing as a human being; vapuḥ—whose transcendental body; nṛ-lokam—human society; anuśīlayan—imitating; reme—He took pleasure; go—the cows; gopa—cowherd boys; gopinām—the cowherd girls; ramayan—pleasing; rūpa—with His beauty; vāk—words; kṛtaiḥ—and actions.

Thus the Supreme Lord, appearing like a human being to perform His pastimes, imitated the ways of human society. He enjoyed pleasing His cows, cowherd boyfriends and cowherd girlfriends with His beauty, words and actions.

Jiva Gosvami: All of these activities of His were performed for the purpose of giving pleasure to the inhabitants of Sri Gokula, as stated by the verse beginning *evam*.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: In this way, Kṛṣṇa did not directly enjoy with the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*, but He did enjoy (*reme*) with the wives of the cowherd men. This is the intention of this verse. *Līlā-nara-vapu* means that Kṛṣṇa appeared as a human being to relish His pastimes. It indicates that because of the predominance of the *līlā-śakti* over Kṛṣṇa's other *śaktis* such as the *sayta-sankalpa śakti* (potency to fulfill His desires), the pastime with the *brāhmaṇas'* wives did not culminate in direct enjoyment.

Enjoying Himself with the cows, cowherd men and *gopīs*, Kṛṣṇa overwhelmed them with bliss by His form, words and actions. *Gopīnām* refers to the young *gopīs* rather than the elderly ones with maternal affection because of the time and context of the verse. Implied here is a refutation to the opinion that prior to the *rāsa* dance Kṛṣṇa did not enjoy with the young Vraja-gopīs.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī indicates: “Kṛṣṇa performed many pastimes similar to the *rāsa* dance with the Vraja-gopīs, but these have not been mentioned by me.”

SB 10.23.38

अथानुस्मृत्य विप्रास्ते अन्वतप्यन्कृतागसः

यद्विश्वेश्वरयोर्याञ्जामहन्म नृविडम्बयोः

atha—then; anusmṛtya—coming to their senses; viprāḥ—the *brāhmaṇas*; te—they; anvatapyan—felt great remorse; kṛta-agasaḥ—having committed sinful offenses; yat—because; viśva-īśvarayoḥ—of the two Lords of the universe, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma; yācñām—the humble supplication; ahanma—we transgressed; nr-vidambayoḥ—of those who were deceptively appearing as human beings.

The *brāhmaṇas* then came to their senses and began to feel great remorse. They thought, "We have sinned, for we have denied the request of the two Lords of the universe, who deceptively appeared as ordinary human beings."

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas* remembered Kṛṣṇa constantly, and became repentant due to the auspicious presence of their wives. This verse speaks of their repentance: “We are offenders because (*yat*) we have ignored the request of the Lord of the universe.”

What type of Lord was He? “We were deceived (*nṛ-vidambayoḥ*) by Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who requested food from us.”

SB 10.23.39

दृष्ट्वा स्त्रीणां भगवति कृष्णे भक्तिमलौकिकीम्
आत्मानं च तया हीनमनुत्स्रा व्यगर्हयन्

ḍṛṣṭvā—observing; strīṇām—of their wives; bhagavati—for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; kṛṣṇe—Śrī Kṛṣṇa; bhaktim—the pure devotion; alaukikīm—transcendental to this world; ātmānam—themselves; ca—and; tayā—of that; hīnam—devoid; anutaptāḥ—lamenting; vyagarhayan—they condemned.

Taking note of their wives' pure, transcendental devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and seeing their own lack of devotion, the brāhmaṇas felt most sorrowful and began to condemn themselves.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Though the women were their wives, the brāhmaṇas now regarded them as their *gurus*, and they criticized themselves for their own lack of devotion. The *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa, of their wives was impossible to see in ordinary society (*alaukikīm*).

SB 10.23.40

धिग्जन्म नस्त्रिवृत्तद्धिग्व्रतं धिग्बहुज्ञताम्
धिक्कुलं धिक्क्रियादाक्ष्यं विमुखा ये त्वधोक्षजे

dhik—to hell; janma—with the birth; naḥ—our; tri-vṛt—threefold (the first from the physical parents, the second at the time of brahminical initiation, and the third at the time of initiation into the performances of Vedic sacrifice); yat tat—whatever; dhik—to hell; vratam—with our vow (of celibacy); dhik—to hell; bahu-jñatām—with our extensive knowledge; dhik—to hell; kulam—with our aristocratic lineage; dhik—to hell; kriyā-dākṣyam—with our expertise in ritualistic activities; vimukhaḥ—inimical; ye—who; tu—however; adhokṣaje—to the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

[The brāhmaṇas said:] To hell with our threefold birth, our vow of celibacy and our extensive learning! To hell with our aristocratic background and our expertise in the rituals of sacrifice! These are all condemned because we were inimical to the transcendental Personality of Godhead.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas* said, “Our three births: 1) physical birth, 2) *brahminical* initiation, and 3) initiation into the performance of Vedic sacrifice are all useless. Our vow of celibacy is useless. And our expertise in daily and occasional duties (*nitya* and *naimittika kriya*) is all useless because we were inimical to Śrī Kṛṣṇa (*adhokṣaja*).”

SB 10.23.41

नूनं भगवतो माया योगिनामपि मोहिनी

यद्वयं गुरवो नृणां स्वार्थे मुह्यामहे द्विजाः

nūnam—indeed; bhagavataḥ—of the Supreme Lord; māyā—the illusory potency; yoginām—for great mystics; api—even; mohinī—is bewildering; yat—since; vayam—we; guravaḥ—the spiritual masters; nṛṇām—of society in general; sva-arthe—about our own real interest; muhyāmahe—have become bewildered; dvijaḥ—brāhmaṇas.

The illusory potency of the Supreme Lord certainly bewilders even the great mystics, what to speak of us. As brāhmaṇas we are supposed to be the spiritual masters of all classes of men, yet we have been bewildered about our own real interest.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas* said, “If the *yogis* who practice *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* also become bewildered, what can be said of us, who are involved in so much *karmā*? Although we are the spiritual masters (*guravo*) of others, *māyā* has bewildered us about the real goal of our lives.”

SB 10.23.42

अहो पश्यत नारीणामपि कृष्णे जगद्गुरौ

दुरन्तभावं योऽविध्यन्मृत्युपाशान्गृहाभिधान्

aho paśyata—just see; nārīṇām—of these women; api—even; kṛṣṇe—for Lord Kṛṣṇa; jagat-gurau—the spiritual master of the entire universe; duranta—unlimited; bhāvam—the devotion; yaḥ—which; avidhyat—has broken; mṛtyu—of death; pāśān—the bonds; gṛha-abhidhān—known as family life.

Just see the unlimited love these women have developed for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the entire universe! This love has broken for them the very bonds of death—their attachment to family life.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas* said, “As their husbands, fathers or fathers-in-law we are superficially the *gurus* or teachers of these women. But these women have attained perfection in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, whereas we have fallen in the blind well of ignorance.” That is expressed in this verse.

The *brāhmaṇas* said, “These women possess a love for Kṛṣṇa which is impossible for us to understand (*duranta bhāvaṁ*). Just see (*paśyata*) the *prema* they are showing towards Kṛṣṇa.”

The syllable *ha* in *aho* (joy, surprise) indicates that upon returning home the ladies displayed ecstatic symptoms, such as trembling, shedding tears, hairs standing on end, and calling out in choked voices, “O pleasure of my life, O Kṛṣṇa!”

The *brāhmaṇas* continued, “But it is not fitting for a woman to love anyone other than her husband. Though women should regard their husbands as *guru*, what can one say when the Supreme Lord, who is *jagad-guru*, the universal teacher and spiritual master appears directly before them? They have developed their love for the *guru* of the universe (Kṛṣṇa), and now don’t have even a trace of attachment for home, husband, children and so forth. As we no longer see those attachments in them, they are our *gurus*.” From that day on the husbands accepted those ladies as their worshipable spiritual masters and no longer thought of them as their wives or property.

SB 10.23.43-44

नासां द्विजातिसंस्कारो न निवासो गुरावपि

न तपो नात्ममीमांसा न शौचं न क्रियाः शुभाः

तथापि ह्युत्तमःश्लोके कृष्णे योगेश्वरेश्वरे

भक्तिर्दृढा न चास्माकं संस्कारादिमतामपि

na—there is not; āsām—on their part; dvijāti-saṁskāraḥ—the purificatory rituals pertaining to the twice-born classes of society; na—nor; nivāsaḥ—residence; gurau—in the āśrama of a spiritual master (that is, training as a brahmacārī); api—even; na—no; tapaḥ—execution of austerities; na—no; ātma-mīmāṁsā—philosophical inquiry into the reality of the self; na—no; śaucam—rituals of cleanliness; na—no; kriyāḥ—ritualistic

activities; śubhāḥ—pious; tathā api—nevertheless; hi—indeed; uttamaḥ-śloke—whose glories are chanted by the exalted mantras of the Vedas; kṛṣṇe—for Lord Kṛṣṇa; yoga-īśvara-īśvare—the supreme master of all masters of mystic power; bhaktiḥ—pure devotional service; dṛḍhā—firm; na—not; ca—on the other hand; asmākam—of us; saṁskāra-ādi-matām—who possess such purification and so forth; api—even though.

These women have never undergone the purificatory rites of the twice-born classes, nor have they lived as brahmacārīs in the āśrama of a spiritual master, nor have they executed austerities, speculated on the nature of the self, followed the formalities of cleanliness or engaged in pious rituals. Nevertheless, they have firm devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose glories are chanted by the exalted hymns of the Vedas and who is the supreme master of all masters of mystic power. We, on the other hand, have no such devotion for the Lord, although we have executed all these processes.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī: The husbands were not aware that their wives had occasionally associated with residents of Vṛndāvana, such as the flower ladies, and had heard about the beauty and qualities of Kṛṣṇa. The brāhmaṇas were astonished at their wives' loving devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa, not realizing that this devotion had developed as a result of hearing and chanting about the Lord in the association of His pure devotees.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas* said, “We cannot understand how our wives have developed such extraordinary love for Kṛṣṇa.” That is the intention of this verse.

The *brāhmaṇas* continued, “They did not perform *upanayana saṁskāra*, live as *brahmacārīs* in a *guru's āśrama*, perform austerities, meditate on the soul, or execute auspicious rites. The cause of their love is none other than Kṛṣṇa, the supreme master of all masters of mystic power.”

The cause of their wives' loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa was hearing about the form, qualities and activities of Kṛṣṇa from the flower ladies and other women of Vraja. But the *brāhmaṇas* did not mention this because they were unaware of it. This is Śukadeva Gosvāmī's intention here.

SB 10.23.45

ननु स्वार्थविमूढानां प्रमत्तानां गृहेहया
अहो नः स्मारयामास गोपवाक्यैः सतां गतिः

nanu—indeed; sva-ārtha—about their own true benefit; vimūḍhānām—who were bewildered; pramattānām—who were intoxicated; gṛha-īhayā—with their household endeavors; aho—ah; naḥ—us; smārayām āsa—He reminded about; gopa-vākyaiḥ—by the words of cowherds; satām—of the transcendental souls; gatiḥ—the ultimate destination .

Indeed, infatuated as we are with our household affairs, we have deviated completely from the real aim of our life. But now just see how the Lord, through the words of these simple cowherd boys, has reminded us of the ultimate destination of all true transcendentalists.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: “What mercy the Lord shows, and what selfishness we have.” That is what the *brāhmaṇas* express in this verse.

SB 10.23.46

अन्यथा पूर्णकामस्य कैवल्याद्यशिषां पतेः
ईशितव्यैः किमस्माभिरीशस्यैतद्विडम्बनम्

anyathā—otherwise; pūrṇa-kāmasya—of Him whose every possible desire is fulfilled; kaivalya—of liberation; ādi—and others; āśiṣām—benedictions; pateḥ—the master; īśitavyaiḥ—with those who are meant to be controlled; kim—what; asmābhiḥ—with us; īśasya—of Him who is the absolute controller; etat—this; viḍambanam—pretense.

Otherwise, why would the supreme controller—whose every desire is already fulfilled and who is the master of liberation and all other transcendental benedictions—enact this pretense with us, who are always to be controlled by Him?

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas* said, “As Kṛṣṇa is self-satisfied and has attained fulfillment in every possible desire, what does He need from us? It cannot be anything else (*anyathā*) but an expression of His causeless mercy. By sending His friends to humbly beg food from us, He exposed our foolish arrogance.”

SB 10.23.47

हित्वान्यान्मजते यं श्रीः पादस्पर्शाशयासकृत्
स्वात्मदोषापवर्गेण तद्याज्जा जनमोहिनी

hitvā—giving up; anyān—others; bhajate—worships; yam—which Lord; śrīḥ—the goddess of fortune; pāda-sparśa—for the touch of His lotus feet; āśayā—with the desire; asakṛt—constantly; sva-ātma—of herself; doṣa—the faults (of fickleness and pride); apavargeṇa—putting aside; tat—His; yācñā—begging; jana—ordinary humans; mohinī—bewildering.

Hoping for the touch of His lotus feet, the goddess of fortune perpetually worships Him alone, leaving aside all others and renouncing her pride and fickleness. That He begs is certainly astonishing to everyone.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Someone may reply to the *brāhmaṇas*, “Kṛṣṇa begged rice because He was hungry, not to show mercy. And you should not say that He is self-satisfied, because He performs activities like herding cows for some purpose.” This verse refutes these arguments.

The *brāhmaṇas* said, “The goddess of wealth (Laksmī-devī) gives up her natural tendency of fickleness (*sva-atma doṣa apavargeṇa*) to constantly (*asakṛt*) worship Kṛṣṇa. Yet that supreme master of the goddess of wealth still begs for food. People like us are certainly bewildered by such actions, and cannot believe therefore, that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord.”

SB 10.23.48-49

देशः कालः पृथग्द्रव्यं मन्त्रतन्त्रत्विजोऽग्नयः

देवता यजमानश्च क्रतुर्धर्मश्च यन्मयः

स एव भगवान्साक्षाद्विष्णुर्योगेश्वरेश्वरः

जातो यदुष्वित्याश्रमं ह्यपि मूढा न विद्महे

deśaḥ—the place; kālaḥ—time; pṛthak dravyam—particular items of paraphernalia; mantra—Vedic hymns; tantra—prescribed rituals; ṛtvijaḥ—priests; agnayaḥ—and the sacrificial fires; devatā—the presiding demigods; yajamaṇaḥ—the performer; ca—and; kratuḥ—the offering; dharmāḥ—the pious reaction; ca—and; yat—whom; mayaḥ—constituting; saḥ—He; eva—indeed; bhagavān—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; sākṣāt—directly; viṣṇuḥ—Lord Viṣṇu; yoga-īśvara-īśvaraḥ—the Lord of all mystic controllers; jātaḥ—taken birth; yaduṣu—among the Yadu dynasty; iti—thus; āśṛṇma—we have heard; hi—certainly; api—nevertheless; mūḍhāḥ—foolish; na vidmahe—we could not understand.

All the aspects of sacrifice—the auspicious place and time, the various items of paraphernalia, the Vedic hymns, the prescribed rituals, the priests and sacrificial fires, the demigods, the patron of the sacrifice, the sacrificial offering and the pious results obtained—all are simply manifestations of His opulences. Yet even though we had heard that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, the Lord of all mystic controllers, had taken birth in the Yadu dynasty, we were so foolish that we could not recognize Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be none other than Him.

SB 10.23.50

तस्मै नमो भगवते कृष्णायकुण्ठमेघसे

यन्मायामोहितधियो भ्रमामः कर्मवर्त्मसु

tasmai—unto Him; namaḥ—obeisances; bhagavate—unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; kṛṣṇāya—Lord Kṛṣṇa; akuṅṭha-medhase—whose intelligence is never restricted; yat-māyā—by whose illusory potency; mohita—bewildered; dhīyaḥ—whose minds; bhramāmaḥ—we are wandering; karma-vartmasu—upon the paths of fruitive activity.

Let us offer our obeisances unto Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His intelligence is never bewildered, whereas we, confused by His power of illusion, are simply wandering about on the paths of fruitive work.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: Ashamed about their offense against Kṛṣṇa, the *brāhmaṇas* offered obeisances to the Lord.

SB 10.23.51

स वै न आद्यः पुरुषः स्वमायामोहितात्मनाम्

अविज्ञतानुभावानां क्षन्तुमर्हत्यतिक्रमम्

saḥ—He; vai—indeed; naḥ—our; ādyaḥ—the primeval Lord; puruṣaḥ—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; sva-mayā-mohita-ātmanām—of those whose minds have been bewildered by His illusory potency; avijñāta—who did not understand; anubhāvānām—His influence; kṣantum—to forgive; arhati—should; atikramam—the offense.

We were bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency and thus could not understand His influence as the original Personality of Godhead. Now we hope He will kindly forgive our offense.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: The *brāhmaṇas*, feeling very fallen, then asked forgiveness from the Lord.

SB 10.23.52

इति स्वाघमनुस्मृत्य कृष्णे ते कृतहेलनाः

दिदृक्षवो व्रजमथ कंसाद्भीता न चाचलन्

iti—thus; sva-agram—their own offense; anusmṛtya—thinking back upon; kṛṣṇe—against Lord Kṛṣṇa; te—they; kṛta-helanāḥ—having shown contempt; didṛkṣavaḥ—wishing to see; vrajam—to the village of Nanda Mahārāja; atha—then; kaṁsāt—of Kaṁsa; bhītāḥ—afraid; na—not; ca—and; acalan—they went.

Thus reflecting on the sin they had committed by neglecting Lord Kṛṣṇa, they became very eager to see Him. But being afraid of King Kaṁsa, they did not dare go to Vraja.

Vishvanath Chakravarti Thakura: After realizing their offense against Kṛṣṇa, and finally appreciating His almighty position, why did the *brāhmaṇas* not just rush to Vraja and surrender at the lotus feet of the Lord? This verse answers. At that moment, the *brāhmaṇas* were bewildered by grief and guilt, and were not in agreement as to the proper course of action. Thus they did not go to the Asoka grove to meet Śrī Kṛṣṇa. And even by the end of the day, although they were all in agreement, they still could not go to Vraja. The word “ca” indicates they tried to move but could not. Suddenly at the same time they all felt the presence of Kaṁsa. The *brāhmaṇas* were afraid that Kaṁsa would certainly kill them if his spies reported that they had gone to Kṛṣṇa.

The fear of being killed, however, did not create any obstacle for their wives. Being absorbed in ecstatic Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *brāhmaṇas'* wives immediately went to Kṛṣṇa, just as the *gopīs*, simply to dance with the Lord, traveled in the dead of night through a forest full of ferocious animals. It should be understood that because the *brāhmaṇas* were not on such an advanced platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the shadow of fear in their minds kept them from seeing the Lord face to face.