

The Life and Teachings of
(Nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa
Om̐ 108 Śrī)
Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī (Mādrāsī)
of Radhakund

Karunamayi Dasa
(Zakrent Christian)

Edited, corrected, and introduced
by
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Author's Preface

Auspicious Invocations

*ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-shalakaya
chakshurunmilitam yena tasmai shrigurave namah*

I offer my humble obeisance to my initiation-giving teacher (guru), who has opened my eyes by treating them with the balm of divine knowledge, dispelling in this way the darkness of my ignorance.

*vande 'ham shri-guroh shri-yuta-pada-
kamalam shri-gurun vaishnavamsh cha
shri-rupam sagrajam sahanaga-
raghunathanvitam tam sajivam
sadvaitam savadhutam parijana-
sahitam shri-krishna-chaitanya-devam
shri-radha-krishnapadan sahanaga-
lalita-shri-vishakhanvitamsh cha*

I praise the lotus-like feet of my initiating guru; and I praise my other gurus,¹ the Vaishnavas,² of Shri Rupa Goswami and his elder brother Sanatan Goswami, as well as Raghunath Bhatta, Raghunath Das and Shri Jiva Goswami. I praise Shri Krishna Chaitanya-deva

¹The instructing, hearing, holy name, and path-showing gurus (*shiksha, shravana, hari-nama, and vartma-pradarshaka*). These are the four varieties of guru or spiritual teacher recognized in the Chaitanya tradition. Sometimes one guru plays the roles of all of them, but often the various roles are played by different teachers.

²Devotees or *bhaktas* of Vishnu-Krishna.

with Shri Nityananda and Shri Advaita as well as Shri Radha and Krishna with their companions, headed by Lalita and Vishakha.

*acharyam mam vijaniyan navamanyeta karhichit
na martya-buddhyasuyeta sarva-devamayo guruh³*

[Shri Krishna told his friend Uddhava:] “You should recognize the *acharya*⁴ as me. Never disrespect or be displeased with him, thinking that he is just an ordinary man. The guru is an aggregate of all the gods.”

*yadyapi amar guru chaitanyer das
tathapi janiye tinho tanhar prakash⁵*

Although my guru is a servant of Shri Krishna Chaitanya [the Supreme Person himself], yet I know him to be the Lord's very manifestation.

*guru krishna-rupa han shastrer pramane
guru-rupe krishna-kripa karen bhakta gane⁶*

The guru is a form of Krishna; that is proven by the scriptures. Krishna bestows his grace upon his devotees in the form of the guru.

*tatprasado hi sva-sva-nana-pratikara-dustyajyanartha-hanau pa-
rama-bhagavat-prasada-siddhau cha mulam⁷*

The pleasing of the guru is the root cause of the elimination of all harmful habits, which are difficult to give up by other means, and of obtaining God's grace.

³*Bhagavata Purana*, 11.17.27.

⁴The guru who teaches by personal example.

⁵Krishna Das Kaviraj, *Chaitanya-charitamrita*, Adi 1.44.

⁶*ibid.*, Adi 1.45.

⁷Jiva Goswami, *Bhakti-sandarbha*, para. 237.

*tatha pitha-pujayam bhagavad-dhame shri-guru-paduka-pujanam
evam sangacchate yatha ya eva bhagavan atra vyashti-rupataya
bhaktavataratvena shri-guru-rupo vartate, sa eva tatra samashti-
rupataya sva-vama-pradeshe sakshad-avataratvenapi tad rupo var-
tate iti*⁸

The worship of the throne (*pitha*) in the Lord's abode goes along with the worship of the guru's shoes. The Supreme Person descends [into this material world] in the distributive form (*vyashti-rupa*) of the guru as a devotee [experienced in his service]. He also exists there [at the Lord's throne in the Lord's abode] in the collective form (*samashti-rupa*) of the guru, as the Lord's direct descent (*sakshad-avatar*), on his left side.

*sat-karma nipuno vipro mantra-tantra-visharadah
avaishnavo gurur na syat vaishnava-shvapacho guruh*⁹

A *brahmin* who is expert in the pious rites, as well as in the *mantra* and *tantra*, but who is not a Vaishnava [devotee of Vishnu-Krishna] should not be one's guru, while someone born in a family of dog-eaters who is a Vaishnava should be one's guru.

*anarpita-charim chirat karunayavatirna-kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam sva-bhakti-shriyam
harih purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandipitah
sada hridaya-kandare sphuratu vah shachi-nandanah*¹⁰

May Lord Hari, whose form shines with beautiful and golden light, who has compassionately descended in this Age of Kali as the Son of Shachi [Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu], in order to bestow [on all] the treasure of *bhakti* to himself which culminates in an elevated, splendid flavour (*rasa*)¹¹ not given for a long time [since his last appearance in the previous day of Brahma], always be visible in the cave of your hearts.

⁸Ibid., para. 286

⁹*Padma Purana*, ?

¹⁰Rupa Goswami, *Vidagdha-madhava*, 1.1.

¹¹That is, it culminates in a particular kind of *rasa*-experience or experience of sacred rapture as a result of cultivating passion-pursuing (*raganuga*) *bhakti* in the identity of a *manjari* of Shri Radha.

After requesting my eternal guru-deva, 108¹² Shri-Shrimad Krishna Das Madras Babaji Maharaj, to allow me to write something on his life and receiving his most compassionate permission, I questioned him in great detail and thus gathered the information for the book. May I always have increasing devotion for my Shri guru-deva so that Shri Hari will be satisfied with me and grant me his personal companionship, as is promised in a verse from a text called the *Vamana-kalpa* (The Ordinances of Vamana):

*yo mantrah sa guruh sakshat yo guruh sa harih svayam
gurur yasya bhavet tushtas tasya tushto harih svayam*¹³

[Brahma said:] The initiation *mantra* is identical with the guru and the guru is identical with Shri Hari himself. [There is no substantial difference between them.] Whoever the guru is pleased with Shri Hari himself is also pleased with.

And in the *Padma Purana*:

*bhaktir yatha harau me 'sti tadvan-nishtha gurau yadi
mamasti tena satyena svam darshayatu me harih*¹⁴

If I have devotion to my guru like that to Shri Hari, then by that truth may Shri Hari show himself to me.

And in the *Bhakti-sandarbha*:

*harau rushte gurus trata gurau rushte na kashchana
tasmad sarva-prayatnena gurum eva prasadayet*¹⁵

If Hari is displeased with someone the guru can still save him, but if the guru is angry with someone, nobody can save him. Therefore with all effort one must please one's guru.

¹²One hundred and eight, here, stands for one hundred and eight "Shris" which are affixed to the names of persons one wishes to show the highest respect to. Naturally, Karunamayi Das wishes to show that sort of respect to his guru. [Ed.]

¹³*Vamana-kalpa*, cited in the *Bhakti-sandarbha*, para. 237.

¹⁴*Padma Purana*. Cited in the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa*, 4.358.

¹⁵*Bhakti-sandarbha*, 238 and in the *Hari-bhakti-vilasa*, 4.360.

*sutan hitveti pativrata patyur iva guroh sevayam pravrittah shishyah
shravana-kirtanadiny api bhogan tad-utthana-premanandan api gri-
han tad-uchita-vivikta-sthalam api naivapekshate. sri-guru-sevayai-
va sukkena sarva-sadhya-siddhyartham ity upadesha-vyanjitat ...
guru-sevaya sarva-vedena sarvadhikasyoktatvat.*¹⁶

When a chaste wife is absorbed in the service of her husband, she does not care even for her sons. Similarly, a disciple who is deeply absorbed in the service of his guru knows that by such service alone he can easily attain success in *bhakti* and consequently does not depend on hearing, chanting, and so forth [of the names, forms, qualities and sports of Shri Radha and Krishna]. Just as a chaste wife does not covet any sensual pleasure and home comfort, so a disciple, who is completely absorbed in the service of his guru, does not long for the bliss derived from such hearing and chanting, nor for a suitable place for practicing *bhakti* to the Lord. This is what this verse [*Bhagavata*, 4.28.34] teaches us. Service to the guru is declared the highest of all in all the Vedas.

*nri-deham adyam sulabham sudurlabham
plavam sukalpam guru-karnadharam
mayanukulena nabhasvateritam puman
bhavabdhim na taret sa atmaha*¹⁷

[Shri Krishna told Uddhava:] Anyone who is fortunate enough to attain a human body, which is like an exceptionally fit ship, piloted by an expert captain, the guru, propelled by the favorable breezes of my blessings, and which is rarely attained and useful, but who fails to cross the ocean of repeated birth and death, is undoubtedly a killer of his own soul.

¹⁶Vishvanath Chakravarti's *Sarartha-darshini* commentary on *Bhagavata*, 4.28.34.

¹⁷*Bhagavata*, 11.20.17.

Expression of Gratitude

Let me offer my humble obeisance and express my most deeply felt eternal gratitude to Pandit Shri Ananta Das Babaji Maharaj, my instructing guru, the present *mahanta* (abbot) of Shri Radhakund in whom my guru-deva found immense and intense spiritual pleasure, while hearing his discourses on the sweet sports (*madhurya-lila*) of Shri Radha and Krishna in Vraja, and who revealed to me the details of the story of how the famous notes on the *Shri Vilapa-kusumanjali* were received from my guru-deva.¹⁸

*na kahile hay mor kritagnata dosh;
dambha kori boli shrota na kariho rosh
toma sabar charan dhuli karinu vandan*¹⁹

If I did not say this I would be guilty of ingratitude. May my audience not be angry with me, calling me arrogant. I praise the dust of the lotus feet of all of you.

*jagai madhai hoite mui se papishtha;
purisher kita haite mui se laghishtha
mora nama shune yei tara punya kshay
mora nama lay yei tar papa hay*²⁰

I am more sinful than Jagai and Madhai and I am lower than a worm in stool. Anyone who hears my name loses his virtuous merit and anyone who utters my name commits a sin.

¹⁸See Section Five of Chapter Two, "Baba's Treasure," for this story.

¹⁹*Chaitanya-charitamrita*, Antya 20.91-2.

²⁰*ibid.*, Adi 5.205-206.

Radhakund



After reading in Shri Rupa Goswami's *Upadeshamrita* (The Ambrosia of Instruction)²¹ about the greatness of Shri Radhakund²² because it is not different from Shri Radhika herself and thus is the paramount place to practice the *raganuga* (passion-pursuing) cultivation of the feelings of *manjaris* of Radha, my heart brought me there first in November, 1978. I already had been staying in Vraja for two months, appreciating the spiritual sweetness of that holy place and its people's lovely devotion to Shri Radha and Krishna. But as soon as I stepped into the outskirts of the village surrounding Shri Radhakund I felt

²¹Rupa Goswami, *Upadeshamrita*, 9:

*vaikunthajjanito vara madhuripuri tatrapi rasotsavad
vrindaranyam udara-pani-ramanat tatrapi govardhanah
radhakundam ihapi gokulapateh premamritaplavanat
kuryad asya virajato giritate sevam viveki na kah*

Greater than Vaikuntha is Mathura; greater than that is Vrindavan, where the Rasa-festival (Circle Dance) took place; greater than that even is Govardhan, which was beautified by the charming hand of Giridhari (Krishna holding the mountain aloft); but greatest of all is Radhakund which is inundated by ambrosial love of the Lord of Gokula (Krishna). What discerning person will not serve this Radhakund, which is situated at the base of Govardhan?

²²The pond of Shri Radha.

that the concentrated essential part of Vraja was present here. That is to say, I felt that the living heart of Vraja and of the most perfectly sweet form of the Supreme Person, Shri Krishna, was really present there exactly as asserted in India's scriptures. In the ancient scripture the *Padma Purana*, for instance, it is said:

*yatha radha priya vishnos tasyah kundam priyam tatha
sarva-gopishu saivaika vishnor atyanta-vallabha*²³

Just as Shri Radha is dear to Vishnu [Krishna], so is her pond, Radhakund, [dear to him]. Of all the cowherd women she alone is extremely dear to Vishnu.

The whole place seemed inundated by a special type of incredibly fresh love flowing constantly through the atmosphere and permeating everyone and everything contained in it. What struck me at once was the special devotional attitudes of its inhabitants, which disclosed their being specially sheltered by Shri Radha! In fact, as I entered the village everyone fervently uttered 'Jai Shri Radhe! Jai Shri Radhe!', more than anywhere else in Vraja. As I walked forward, the sweet beating of this supreme, original heart of highest spiritual love sounded closer and closer, finally revealing itself as the most simple, charming pond surrounded on its four sides by stairs leading down into its waters and by a few shade trees. I felt I had arrived at the most important and sacred reality of the greatest of all spiritual paradises on earth, the pond of Shri Radha. I felt like I had finally reached my spiritual home and I was moved by deep emotions. It was then that I saw for the first time 108 Shri-Shrimad Krishna Das Babaji Maharaj, who was to become my eternal spiritual father — my initiating guru — nine years later.

As I had come with the intention of staying one week, Baba let me stay in his meditation hut (*bhajan kutir*) situated in front of Shri Radharaman Mandir (Temple). Then I left and returned after a couple of weeks to stay one more week before traveling to Bombay. That week turned into five months because I became so ill with malaria and hepatitis that I was unable to travel anymore. Having survived that period, I left India for Europe. A few years later, I returned to India once more and went again to Shri Radhakund, this time for just a few hours out of which I spent only half an hour at Shri Radharaman Mandir. That

²³*Padma Purana*, cited in Rupa Goswami, *Ujjvala-nilamani*, 4.5.

was the First of November, 1984, the day after Indira Gandhi's assassination and Baba was just getting the news from his radio.

In May, 1985 I started corresponding with Krishna Das Babaji regularly from Europe (and that continued until his passing away in 1998), and in September, 1987, I was back by his side in the hope of having his holy association (*sat-sanga*) and engaging in his service, which he granted me out of his compassionate divine love. On the Fifth of November of the same year he blessed me by giving me the initiation *mantras*, the guru lineage, the perfected lineage and later the eleven details of my eternal identity as a *manjari* and his guru's *Gaura-govinda-lila-smarana-gutika-sutra* (Aphorisms on the Method of Remembering the Sports of Shri Gaur and Govinda), an abridged manual for remembering Shri Gaur and Govinda's supernatural sports. I continued to serve him until March, 1988, and then returned to Europe. I was back again in October, 1988, and resumed my service to him until March, 1989. During this period Baba's hipbone fractured spontaneously due to osteoporosis and I remained with him in a private room at the hospital for nearly two months. Then, from 1991 to 1998, I came regularly every year (except in 1993) with my wife Karunamayi Dasi, for five to six weeks each trip, to serve him and have his holy association. In December, 1992, Baba had me make twenty-four hours of video film of him translating Shri Mahanamabrata Brahmachari's Bengali version of Rupa Goswami's *Uddhava-sandesh* (Instructions to Uddhava) into English, and in March, 1994, he did the same for eighteen hours on one part of Pandit Shri Ananta Das Babaji's edition of Shri Narottam Das Thakura's *Shri Prema-bhakti-chandrika* (Moonlight on the Devotion of Love) and *Prarthana* (Prayers). Those videos are still with me and have been transferred into mpeg format. They can be viewed for those who are interested from my website (www.madrasibaba.org)

Let me thank Advaita Das for his great and precious assistance in the preliminary editing of this book and Nitai Das for its final editing and printing. Let me also thank all those fortunate souls who rendered varied kinds of loving service to my guru-deva, in particular Shri Harimohan Das Babaji, Padma Ma, Govinda Ma, Govinda Charan Ghorai and his relatives (Radha Dasi, Vishakha Dasi, Dulal Ghorai and his wife, etc.), Anup Das, Shiva Das, Hari Das, Vasudeva Das, the rest of my guru-brothers and sisters who nursed him selflessly when he was lame and bedridden. May this narration delight the hearts of those who love my guru-deva, who knew him directly or indirectly, as well as those who are yet to know him. This is all I hope for and in this way my heart will rejoice.

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