

# Learn and Teach

The VIHE Newsletter

ISSUE No. 5

MAY - JUL '17

It was around 11 am. I had just plucked flowers and Tulasi mañjaris in preparation for my daily worship of Śrī Govinda when suddenly, as if pushed by the firm hand of the personified form of time, I stumbled, lost my balance and helplessly, head first, hit the rough concrete steps I was about to climb. Feeling my two front teeth badly chipped and seeing my right arm deformed, suspecting a fracture, all I could hear myself utter was, "Oh! No! Kṛṣṇa! I have ruined myself." This fraction of a second would resonate in my life for many of the coming weeks. And it still does. I felt grateful for not having suffered a plane crash or a car accident earlier that day, as I had just flown back in the early morning from Western Kenya to Nairobi. But the "No!" feeling was also there. That survivor to my 33 years of chanting and serving, a manifestation of my timeless rebellion against Govinda's supreme loving will, stood alive and kicking. "Why?" was the twin brother of "No!" And, who was that "self" I saw as ruined?

Quickly, the philosophical mind and the devotion-al heart got me back to steady consciousness, but the darśana of the deep dark regions within had brought about a host of cognitive impressions of the thickness of my unfortunate conditioning. A sense of humility, the desired, yet elusive companion of my journey, luckily surfaced. Utsāhaḥ, niścayaḥ, dhairyaḥ—these are not words to be understood but symptoms of states of consciousness to be attained. The cause of suffering is never in the event or in the perpetrator inflicting us misery. Confidence in Kṛṣṇa's will is the gift we await. This all happened on June 10, and the VIHE was to open on June 22.

## Bhakti-Vaibhava Canto 1&2

December 14 '17 - March '18

**Admissions Open!**

[vihe.courses.admissions@pamho.net](mailto:vihe.courses.admissions@pamho.net)



The Bhakti-śāstrī books

## Highlights

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## VIHE Calendar (2017 - 2018)

Sep 8 - 11	: Vaiṣṇavī Retreat in Nepal
Oct 24 - 28	: Teacher Training Course 1
Oct 30 - Nov 4	: Teacher Training Course 2
Nov 8 - 13	: Holy Name Retreat
Nov 17 - 24	: Govardhana Retreat
Dec 4 - Apr 1 '18	: Bhakti-śāstrī (Russian)
Dec 14 - Mar '18	: Bhakti-vaibhava Canto 1 & 2
April '18	: Teacher Training Course 1 (Russian)
Mar '18	: Vaiṣṇavī Retreat at Govardhana
Jun - Oct '18	: Bhakti-śāstrī (English)

### The Category of Eternity

Time is called *kāla*—past, present and future. What is now present, tomorrow will be past, and what is now future, tomorrow will be present. But this past, present and future are the past, present and future of the body. We do not belong to the category of the past, present and future. We belong to the category of eternity. Therefore one should be concerned with how to attain or how to be elevated to the platform of eternity. The developed consciousness of the human being should be utilized not in the animal propensities of eating, sleeping, mating and defending but in searching out the valuable path which will help him get that life of eternity. It is said that the sun is taking away our duration of life—every minute, every hour, every day—but if we engage ourselves in the topics of *Uttama-śloka*, the topics of the Lord, that time cannot be taken away. The time one devotes in a *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness temple cannot be taken away. It is an asset—a plus, not a minus. The duration of life, so far as the body is concerned, may be taken; however one tries to keep it intact, no one can do it. But the spiritual education we receive in *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness cannot be taken away by the sun. It becomes a solid asset.

— Easy Journey to Other Planets

With my right arm hanging in a fling around my neck, I presided over the opening ceremony along with Aruṇa Caraṇa Prabhu, teacher and member of the VIHE curriculum development team. The 2017 Bhakti-śāstrī batch looked bright and serious. Having come from 12 different countries including China and Japan, they and the scheduled teachers for the semester would be the object of our service, care, and attention for the next four months. Two weeks later, more students arrived to study the fourth canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This particular type of service, characteristic of the *bhāgavata-mārga*, is that additional activity *Śrīla* Prabhupāda explains makes a temple complete, turning it into “a spiritual educational shelter.” Education ensures that the *utsāhaḥ*, or spiritual intelligence, remains the guiding force and basis for the devotional service of successive generations of *bhaktas*.

*“In Vṛndāvana there are so many temples... They have made a business by showing the temple, collecting money. This is not good... Temple means people should come, people should learn the science of God. That is temple. Not that [we] make a business of temple. Therefore, not only in India, all over the world, the churches also, they’ve dwindled. In Europe and America, so many churches are for sale. We have purchased so many churches because people have no more interest. There is no education. Temple means spiritual educational shelter. People should come, they should learn what is spiritual life, what is God, what is their relationship with Him. That is temple... Two processes should be followed: *pañcarātriki-vidhi* and *bhāgavata-vidhi*. We follow both. *Bhāgavata-vidhi* is the philosophical side of religion, and *pañcarātriki-vidhi* is the worship side of the temple—how to worship the Deity, how to dress, how to decorate, how to offer respect. *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī* [Bg. 18.65]. Temple worship is *mad-yājī*, worshiping the Deity. So this is the test, this is the test.” (SP Lecture on Bg 9.2)*

It takes patience, goodness, endurance and a long-term vision to sustain educational programs. The goal is a complete temple in every town and every village so that the *Saṅkīrtana* Movement may pass the test of time.

- Praśāntā Devī Dāsī



# A Visit to Kusuma Sarovara

Adapted from a compilation by Vraja Lakṣmī Devī Dāsi

On July 23, in the early hours of dawn, our busy Bhakti-śāstrī study schedule took us to Kusuma Sarovara at Girirāja Govardhana for japa, Śrīla Prabhupāda guru pūjā and Bhagavad-gītā class. The group spirit was cooperative, enthusiastic, peaceful and full of gratitude. At this most magnificent place, beautified by a 300 year old palatial pink stone structure, we were greeted by Praśāntā Mātāji in the flower garden where Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and her sakhi friends used to gather flowers. During Kṛṣṇa's manifest presence, the land of Vraja displayed all the opulences of the spiritual world. Eternal associates of the Divine Couple, as well as demigods, came from their respective abodes to accompany Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Their pastimes. Some assisted in fighting against the demoniac kings, while others served by manifesting the pure loving exchanges of the eternal realm. When Kṛṣṇa wound up His earthly līlā, gradually, all departed.

Kusuma Sarovara is a celebrated place in Vraja. Kṛṣṇa, disguised as a gardener, created it by

sticking His flute into the ground. The original, natural color paintings on the ceilings of the elegant domes over the covered areas commemorate this pastime of Vana-vihārī. And for us, who are trying to make progress on the path of hearing, Kusuma Sarovara is especially attractive because it is there that Uddhava recited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to Kṛṣṇa's queens, who had come from Dvārakā-purī under the protection of Arjuna after Kṛṣṇa's departure. Inspired by Queen Kālindī, they had come via Hastināpura, aspiring for the Vraja bhakti of the gopīs. They had heard that while residing in Mathurā Kṛṣṇa had sent His intimate associate Uddhava to the gopīs with a message to pacify their burning feelings of separation from Him, as well as to give Uddhava the opportunity to understand their love for Him, which is the topmost of all, being free from all sense of reverence. They wished to be similarly instructed, and for this purpose they began a grand saṅkīrtana performance at Kusuma Sarovara, where Uddhava was said to reside in the form of blades of grass awaiting the dust of the



Teacher, Students and Staff with Śrīla Prabhupāda at Kusuma Sarovara





Wall painting of Vana-vihāri līlā

feet of the Vrajavāsīs. As the kīrtana intensified, that great personality indeed appeared and, being fervently requested, he began to narrate Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja, pastimes imbued with Vraja prema. As he spoke, the queens, rapt in attention, gradually disappeared one by one from mundane vision as they entered Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in their spiritual bodies. Such is the perfected stage of sincere and eager hearing of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam from an authentic source.

With these Kusuma Sarovara pastimes echoing in our consciousness, we applied ourselves to chanting japa with the best prayerful attitude we could muster, searching for the domain of deep



H.H. Bhakti Dhīra Dāmodara Svāmī giving Bhagavad-gītā class

absorption in hearing the Holy Name. The quiet and serene atmosphere was unusually cool for the season, with fresh breezes passing through, up until the end of our stay. Next followed our offering of guru pūjā to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who brought us all to this magical place. Devotees danced to their heart's content.

Breakfast had been arranged at the small Śrī Rādhā-Vana-vihāri temple right next to the Sarovara, on the Govardhana parikramā path. We drank in the beautiful forms of the large Girirāja Śīlās, complete with hands holding comb and mirror—Kṛṣṇa braiding and decorating Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's hair with flowers from Kusuma vana, while she looks at His charming figure in the mirror. Our host was Palindrī Devī Dāsī, an ISKCON devotee from South Africa, who got the amazing service of assisting the aging temple pūjārī and his wife, thus securing Vraja-vāsa on the banks of the holy kuṇḍa for the last 18 years. She described the pastimes of Vana-vihāri and the history of the construction of the kuṇḍa.

Back to the peaceful upper area above the Sarovara, we heard His Holiness Bhakti Dhīra Dāmodara Svāmī speak from the fourth chapter of Bhagavad-gītā. But the outing did not end there. We then visited Uddhava Baiṭhāka, where Uddhava spoke, and concluded the outing with a bath in the warm, yet cooling waters of Kusuma Sarovara. In the words of Bhaktin Saṅkīrtana, one of the Bhakti-śāstrī students, "The place touched our soul." We sang and danced on the bus all the way back to Vṛndāvana.



Hearing and taking notes



# An Insider's Look at the Monday Evening Kīrtana

By Dvijamaṇi Gaura Dāsa



Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi

*Lord Viśvāmbhara said, "Whatever you have studied is good enough. There is no further necessity to study more. Now all get together and chant 'Kṛṣṇa'. May, by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, all the Vedic śāstras be revealed in your heart. You are my eternal friends life after life." (Caitanya Bhāgavata, Madhya Khanda 393-394)*

At the beginning of each new week of intensive study of Śrīla Prabhupada's books, the VIHE students gather together in the VIHE temple room for an extended session of harināma chanting—the Monday Evening Kīrtana. There is a special quality to this association. Almost everyone here has come to Vṛndāvana specifically to engage in deep study of Śrīla Prabhupada's books. We are reminded by each other's presence of the ultimate purpose of our scrutinizing the books: to gain stronger attachment to the Holy Name.

As the chanting begins, there is appreciation in the air for the yajña of study that all are undertaking. Now is the time for us to relax our analytical minds and aim for absorption in the pure vibration of the mahā-mantra. This simple method of calling out for the mercy and service of the Lord, through the grace of His eternal consort, is the activity of "the highest Vedāntist," as explained in Bhagavad-gītā.

By seeking purification through chanting, our studies take on a deeper dimension. The Holy Name gives everything to the sincere chanter – all good qualities, all knowledge, and transcendental loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

The setting is warm, distinct and somewhat rustic. It's a simple temple room with adobe walls and dim lighting. The simple pastoral atmosphere is enhanced by the sight of the cows milling about just a few meters outside the windows. The altar has ample space for the images of the ācāryas, including individual pictures of the Six Gosvāmīs. Each is garlanded in a simple manner. A larger, installed portrait of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī stands to the side of the altar as the overseer, inspiration and protector of the loyal servants of VIHE. Above everyone preside the jubilant transcendental forms of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa Balarāma, masters of this humble community.

The Prayers to the Six Gosvāmīs enhance the remembrance of and longing to please our most glorious forefathers in the line of devotion to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. A meditative mood is engendered as each syllable is delivered with care by the selected kīrtana leaders. Pleasing pronunciation and delivery are only a few of their ornaments. The supportive mood of the VIHE staff, shown through well-coordinated programs, is communicated to the students who in turn take courage to chant with feeling. Many rise to their feet to dance and leap in ecstasy. A special highlight is the soulful chanting of the prayer at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī (Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī).

All in all, this is a session worth investing time in. Glorification through musical kīrtana is the glue that keeps us focused and united as a family. Enthused by the Holy Name and Vaiṣṇava saṅga, the upcoming week of studies becomes infused with vigor for expanding the saṅkīrtana movement. Param vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtanam!

All glories to His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Om tat sat.



# Bhakti-vaibhava Seminar - Daśa-mūla-tattva

By Sitārāṇī Devī Dāsī



Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

H.G. Kamala Locana Prabhu, the Temple President of ISKCON Mira Road, Mumbai, presented a very erudite and highly philosophical seminar on Daśa-mūla-tattva as part of the Bhakti-vaibhava Canto 4 study. Daśa-mūla-tattva represents the ten fundamental principles of Vedic philosophy taught by Śrī Caitanya. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has very eloquently and clearly illuminated these ten fundamental principles in his book Jaiva Dharma.

During the times of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, early in the twentieth century, the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had become completely covered. 'Vaiṣṇava' had become a derogatory word and misinterpretation, mental speculation and condemnation abounded in people's approach to Vedas and Vaiṣṇava scriptures. Mahāprabhu's pure teachings were twisted to give rise to various apasampradāyas. Against this backdrop, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura made it his life's mission to re-establish and present the tenets of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in their original pristine purity.

He mined ten esoteric essential truths from the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and presented them as Daśa-mūla-tattva. This is a central work of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and these ten truths contain the whole gamut of Vedic knowledge. The introductory verse presents the ten truths out of which the first is pramāṇa (the evidence, or the source of knowledge) and the remaining nine are prameya (the principles that are substantiated by the evidence)-

*āmnāyaḥ prāha tattvaṁ harim iha paramaṁ  
sarva-śaktim rasābhidhīm  
tad bhinnāmsāṁś ca jīvān prakṛti-kavalitān  
tad-vimuktāṁś ca bhāvāt  
bhedābedha-prakāśaṁ sakalam api hareḥ  
sādhanam śuddha-bhaktim  
sādhyam tat-prītim evety upadiśati janān  
gaura-candraḥ svayaṁ saḥ*

(1) The Vedas are the principal scriptural evidence, which expound the remaining nine truths: (2) Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Absolute Truth; (3) Kṛṣṇa is omnipotent; (4) He is the fountain-head of all relationships and love; (5) the living entities are His separated parts and parcels; (6) the living entity, due to his constitutional situation as the marginal energy, may come under the sway of the material energy; (7) again, due to his marginal nature, the living entity in the liberated condition is free of the influence of material nature; (8) the living entity and everything in this material cosmos are simultaneously one with and different from the Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa; (9) pure devotional service is the living entity's occupation and means of attaining his ultimate goal; (10) pure love of Kṛṣṇa is the living entity's ultimate goal.

The first principle establishes the Vedas as the bona-fide source of information. The second to eighth principles establish sambandha-jñāna, the ninth principle establishes the abhidheya principle and the tenth, the prayojana principle.

These ten truths presented in the form of aphorisms wonderfully expound and present the philosophy of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that by assimilating and emulating the teachings of the Daśa-mūla-śikṣā, the jīva uproots the poisonous ivy of ignorance and, in the association of saintly Vaiṣṇavas, nourishes the creeper of bhakti with bhāva while experiencing complete satisfaction.



# Learning to Serve

By Mādhurya Gaurāṅgī Devī Dāsī

July in Vṛndāvana has its own specific characteristics. Of course, the thing that immediately comes to mind is the increased amount of rain water pouring down from darkish clouds that have borrowed their hue from Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja. These streams of rain make trees, bushes and shrubs highly jubilant, and their effulgent emerald greenness exhibits the opulence of Vṛndāvana. The river Yamunā beautifully and boldly expands her banks, stretching her transcendental limbs as a gesture of great fulfillment and satisfaction.

Another remarkable sign of July is the innumerable mountains of carefully arranged green and yellow mangoes in the markets and on the street sides. The fruit vendors hidden behind the neat piles are ever eager to sell the nectarean king of all fruits. That king that has now gorgeously appeared on the stage of sellers' stalls, that king that is naturally attracting the eyes and hearts of people in general, is now being eagerly purchased by all to be offered with love and devotion to the Lords of this land of Vraja—Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāma.

These are the most visible and outstanding features of the month noticed and talked about throughout the year. Although the other signs of this season are more or less concealed and covered they are no less significant and exciting. One of them is the Bhakti-śāstrī course at the Vrindavan Institute for Higher Education. The lectures start by the end of June and it is exactly the time when

summer's excessive heat is being moistened and cooled down by the waters of the monsoon clouds. Devotees from all over the world are waiting for this moment—to arrive to Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma and to walk the exalted and ecstatic bhāgavata mārga by diving into the sublime pool of uninterrupted hearing and chanting. Bhagavad-gītā, Śrī Īsopaniṣad, Nectar of Instruction and Nectar of Devotion are among the books presented to the world in English by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. These books are the subject matter for the students for the next four months. The course has been established to fulfill the desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda for devotees to study these Bhakti śāstras in Vṛndāvana to develop the greed and desire to follow in the footsteps of the Six Gosvāmīs. To enhance the progress of the transcendental trekkers of this path of instructions, students are given a chance to engage in various other devotional activities.

Besides the studies and a kīrtana session on Mondays, students are involved in practical services. Activities such as serving prasādam to their peers, tidying up and mopping the prasādam area after lunch, cleaning the VIHE temple as well as some backup services in the pujari department are filling up the time in between the lectures. Teams are set from the beginning of the course to cover the weekly duties. Students also happily embrace the opportunity to render extra services during the various festivals and outings. They assist in set up, decorations, cooking, preparing for the abhiṣekas, lamp offerings and so on, and sponsor various necessary items for holding up the festive events. These transcendental



Daily cleaning after lunch



Saturday morning japa in the VIHE temple room



# GLIMPSES OF THE COURSES



H.H. Bhakti Dhīra Dāmodara Svāmī teaching Bhakti-vaibhava



H.G. Mukunda Datta Dāsa, Deity Worship Teacher



Bhakti-śāstri students in classroom



Bhakti-vaibhava students during class



Personal study



It's test time!



## Our Mission Is Very Great

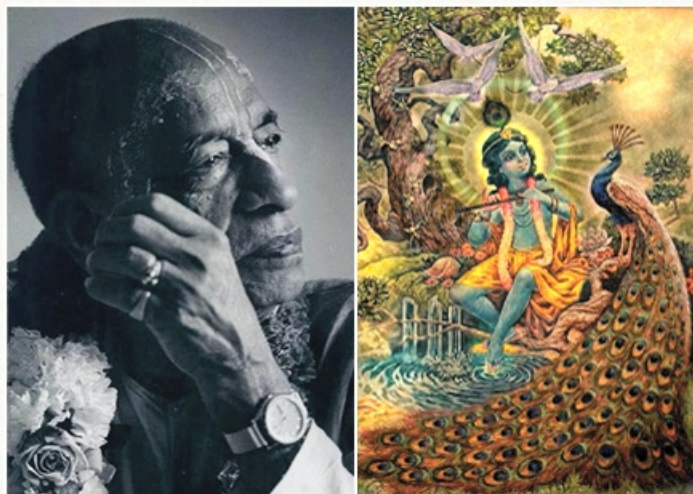
Excerpts from a lecture by Śrīla Prabhupāda

"Only one who can learn the process of nescience and that of transcendental knowledge side by side can transcend the influence of repeated birth and death and enjoy the full blessings of immortality."

So vidyā and avidyā. We should learn what is vidyā and avidyā. Avidyā means this materialistic knowledge. That is avidyā. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has sung, jaḍa vidyā sab māyāra vaibhava: "Advancement of material knowledge means advancement of māyā's jurisdiction." The more you become implicated in material knowledge, [the more you become] entangled, unless you can understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness. People, those who are supposed to be very advanced in material knowledge, think, "Eh, what is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement?" They have no attraction. Just like some of our Indian boys sometimes come. They have come here to learn technology.

So sometimes they question. They are surprised. They have rejected these things, and they have come here to learn technology. So when they see that svāmījī introduced the things which they have rejected in India, they are surprised.

So I also came for that purpose, because our modern India has rejected spiritual knowledge. They are thinking that if they can imitate Westernized technology, then they will be happy.



The subject of vidyā

## Learning to Serve (continued)

activities purify the senses of the performer. That is how the science of bhakti-yoga works—simple for the simple and complicated for the crooked.

In the VIHE besides systematic guidance for studying Śāstra and understanding Śrīla Prabhupāda's mood, we also get an opportunity to learn from senior devotees how to serve the vaiṣṇavas in a proper way, which is very important to get the taste of bhakti."

— Bhakta Shubhankar

Saturday mornings bring all the students to the VIHE temple room for group japa and Śrīla Prabhupāda guru pūjā. The serene atmosphere created by the surrounding gośālā, where the Institute is situated, brings about a special feeling and encourages one and all to fully focus on their chanting. At this time, in the stillness of the early morning, Vṛndāvana manifests her sweetness, taking us on her lap and embracing us with her warm arms. She chants together with us, as if

whispering the mahā-mantra in our ears as a loving mother who selflessly assists her helpless child. Anyone can feel it, maybe not everyone realizes it, but we all know that these VIHE Saturday japa sessions are very special.

Satya Vrata Prabhu, a Bhakti-vaibhava student, expressed himself thus: "Especially today morning, by your mercy I got an opportunity to come to the VIHE. For the first time in my life, after practicing for twenty years, I was able to chant my 16 rounds at a stretch in one place without dozing off and with at least 50% concentration. I felt so satisfied in the association of devotees during chanting and guru-pūjā. The sanctity of this place is well maintained and there is a spiritual vibration here. Everybody could feel the environment was surcharged with peace."

Either as a student, teacher, sweeper or administrator, as Kṛṣṇa's servants at the VIHE, we are happy to come together fully engaged in the activities of Bhakti-yoga.



This is māyā. They do not see that those who are advanced three hundred times more than us in technology, what they have got? They do not see that. India cannot advance in technology like America or Europe at least for three hundred years more, because in these Western countries they have taken this business since a very long time, but Indian culture, beginning from the creation, is spiritual culture. Just see Vyāsadeva. He is the original guru, spiritual master, of Vedic knowledge. How he was living? In a cottage in Badarikāśrama. But just see his knowledge. He has written so many Purāṇas, and Bhāgavata-Purāṇa is one of them. The Vedānta philosophy, Mahābhārata, each and every verse if you study, you can study for the whole life. He has written 100,000's of verses, and each verse is so full of meaning that one has to learn it throughout his whole life. This is Vedic culture. There is no comparison of knowledge, not only in spiritual knowledge, in other department also—in astronomy, in mathematics. It is not that in the ancient ages there were no aeroplanes. We get so much information from the Purāṇas. Their aeroplanes were so strong, so speedy, that they could easily reach other planets. Arjuna went to the heavenly planets. It is not that there was no advancement of material knowledge in the Vedic age. It was there, but they did not take much care of it. They were interested for spiritual knowledge. It is not that material knowledge was not there. It was there. And the opulence... That opulence you cannot compare now. Gold, jewels, full—every city, every individual person, and what to speak of kings and rich men. So avidyā and vidyā. One should know side by side what is vidyā and what is avidyā.

If we advance in avidyā, or material science, then we have to repeat this birth and death. And there is no guarantee where I shall get my next birth. That is not in your hand. You cannot dictate. You are happy American, but after quitting this body you cannot dictate, "Please give me again an American body." No. That is not possible. You may get an American body, but you may get the American animal's body. Then you are meant for slaughterhouse. So this material knowledge, this nationalism, this socialism, they are simply spoiling time. Real knowledge is the Vedic knowledge and the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa. That is real knowledge. Bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān māṁ prapadyante [Bg. 7.19]. Therefore one who is in real knowledge, after many, many births, he comes to Kṛṣṇa and surrenders unto Him, vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti: [Bg. 7.19] "Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa, You are everything."

So that knowledge we are trying to distribute freely, without any charges. So our mission is very great. You should be conscious of this responsibility. We are giving this supermost thing to the human society. So you try yourself to understand thoroughly and distribute. That will make you very much dear to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad-gītā, na ca tasmād manuṣyeṣu kaścid me priya-kṛttamaḥ: "Anyone who is preaching this Kṛṣṇa consciousness knowledge, oh, nobody is dearer than him to Me." So if you want to be very dear to Kṛṣṇa quickly, you preach this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement very nicely.

— Śrī Īsopaniṣad 11 - Los Angeles, May 16, 1970



### Temples for spiritual education

As clouds pour water on a blazing fire in the forest and thus extinguish it, the intelligent men who work as the spiritual masters of society pour water on the blazing fire of miseries by disseminating spiritual knowledge and inspiring the richer section of the society to help in the cause. Temples of worship, for example, are constructed by the rich, and these temples are meant to impart spiritual education to people in general.

— Light of the Bhāgavata, verse 21



## Eight Kinds of Seers

Excerpts from Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's Sārārtha-darśinī

Satī addresses Dakṣa:

doṣān pareṣāṁ hi guṇeṣu sādhave  
grhṇanti kecin na bhavādṛśo dvija  
guṇāṁś ca phalgūn bahulī-kariṣṇavo  
mahattamās teṣv avidad bhavān agham

- Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 4.4.12

O brāhmaṇa! Saintly persons see that faults are capable of being transformed into good qualities, and they see the good qualities, not the faults. You are the opposite. The best persons magnify even meager good qualities in another person. You see only fault in others.

**COMMENTARY** - Persons of good conduct accept even faults in others since faults can eventually be transformed into good qualities by certain methods. Speaking harshly is a bad quality, but when used for someone's benefit, it becomes a good quality, like nīma juice, which cures sickness though it is bitter. Persons who see in this way are to be considered good (mahat or sādhu). Satī sarcastically addresses Dakṣa as a brāhmaṇa (dvija), saying "You are not like that. Persons like you think that good qualities will turn into faults. You think that someone who wants to help others will become greedy for their assets." Such persons are not gentlemen. They are asādhu.

Some others, overlooking the faults, see the good qualities. Seeing a materialistic merchant, they conclude that he takes care of guests nicely and is worthy of deliverance. They praise the good qualities and do not see the bad qualities. For example, they would say, "This person is renounced, but he also eats a lot." They do not simply think of him as a gluttonous beggar. Such persons are superior and are known as mahattara. Others see faults only, overlooking good qualities. "This sannyāsī eats ghee rice to fill his stomach. He is lusty and should be considered fallen." Persons with this type of attitude are even more improper. They are asādhutara.

Others take small good qualities and magnify them and do not even see small faults. "This person has stolen my cloth because he is cold, and though he has a weapon, he does not attack me because he is merciful. He is virtuous."



Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Such persons, the mahattama, are the greatest of all. Others take small faults and magnify them, and see no good qualities at all. "This renunciant has given up the forest and lives in the house of a married man. He only wants to steal his money." This is the worst person, known as asādhutama.

Yet others see good qualities in others where there are none. "In this world there are no bad people. Everyone is good." They are even greater, greater than the greatest (ati-mahattama). The last category of men sees only faults in others, even where there are no faults. "In this world no one is good. Everyone is evil." They are the very worst of all (aty-asādhutama).

According to the amount of sattva, one is considered good (sādhu). Though there are many types of good persons, they are divided into four types (mahat, mahattara, mahattama, ati-mahattama). According to the amount of tamas, there are four types of bad persons (asādhu, asādhutara, asādhutama and aty-asādhutama), indicated by the words nabhavādṛṣaḥ and avidat bhavān agham. One can also divide devotees into four types by the degrees of bhakti-yoga whose essence is śuddha-sattva, filled with all spiritual qualities, and one can divide non-devotees into four types by the amount of offenses they exhibit.

- Adapted from a translation by H.H. Bhānu Svāmī



# Upcoming Courses & Retreats

## VTE Teacher Training Courses

### TTC 1

Oct 24 - Oct 28, 2017  
Facilitator: Aniruddha Dāsa

### TTC 2

Oct 30 - Nov 4, 2017  
Facilitator: Vamśī Vadana Dāsa



## Bhakti-śāstrī (Russian)

### Бхакти-шастри на русском языке

Dec 4, '17 – Apr 1, '18

#### SUBJECTS & TEACHERS

##### Bhagavad-gītā:

Bhakti Rasāyaṇa Sāgara Svāmī,  
Sārvabhauma Dāsa, Ādi-puruṣa Dāsa,  
Gaurasundara Dāsa, Rādhā Prema Devī  
Dāsī

##### Nectar of Devotion:

Ādi-puruṣa Dāsa

##### Nectar of Instruction:

To be announced

##### Īśopaniṣad:

Suradāsa Dāsa

##### Introduction to Deity Worship:

Mukunda Datta Dāsa, Rāmāi Paṇḍita Dāsa

##### Sanskṛt:

Nityānanda Dāsa

##### TO APPLY:

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## Bhakti-vaibhava

STUDY OF CANTO 1 & 2

Dec 14, '17 - Mar '18

#### SEMINARS

Invocation

Sanskṛt Meters

The Ten Topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

#### TEACHERS

Yadunandana Svāmī, Bhakti Dhīra Dāmodara  
Svāmī, Sārvabhauma Dāsa, Ādi Puruṣa Dāsa,  
Śrīvāsa Dāsa, Praśāntā Devī Dāsī



## International Vaiṣṇavī Retreat in Nepal

“MIND AND SENSE CONTROL  
THROUGH BHAKTI-YOGA”

Sep 8-11, 2017

#### TEACHERS

Nārāyaṇī Devī Dāsī, Yaśomatī Devī Dāsī,  
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#### TO REGISTER:

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## Holy Name Retreat

Nov 8 - 13, 2017

The retreat consists of six days of japa sessions, kīrtanas and classes at the foothill of the most auspicious and merciful Govardhana hill. There will be an outing during the retreat to Ter Kadamba near Nandagaon. The japa sessions and classes will be interspersed with deeply meditative kīrtanas that enrich one with taste and attraction for the Holy Name.

### TEACHERS

H.H. Śacīnandana Svāmī, H.G. Bhūrijana Dāsa

## Govardhana Retreat

Nov 17 - 24, 2017

In the sublime atmosphere of Girirāja Govardhana, devotees immerse themselves in the magical world of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, hearing from Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta—a unique opportunity for unforgettable devotional experiences in Vraja.

### TEACHERS

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Registrations are open

## Links to Previous Issues

Newsletter 3 (Nov '16 - Jan '17):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B9T3Erjtkryt-WHllczEycGRQekE/view?usp=sharing>

Newsletter 4 (Feb '17 - Apr '17):

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