

Sri Bhakti Rasamrta Sindhu 26 11

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Vaishnavapada das Babaji Maharaja

The avatar of Kali Yuga is Sri Gauranga Mahaprabhu. His close associate, Srila Rupa Goswamicaran is the jewel in our sampradaya. In his book *Sri Bhakti Rasamrta Sindhu* first chapter, there is a description of sadhana bhakti and the symptoms of raganuga bhakti. What is raganuga bhakti? Vrajavasis are servants, friends, parents, and beloveds. Four types of rasa - dasya, sakhya, vatsalya and madhurya. They are Vrajavasis - someone who is present in Vraja. Those who are very careful follow them. The bhakti of these Vrajavasis is called ragatmika and those who follow them, their bhakti is called raganuga. One needs to follow strictly.

Goswamipada gives an example. Raga means love. This raga bhakti is in the heart of the Vrajavasis. Raga bhakti is the special treasure of the Vrajavasis. They have a special and strong love. For example the friends - Krishna is playing with them. Sometimes they serve Him and sometimes He serves them. They think, *"He is not higher than us. He is the same as us. He is our friend."* His mother takes care of Him, like a small child. Those who love Him have very deep bhakti. It is called ragatmika bhakti. It means that they are aflamed with raga. This is selfless love - ragatmika bhakti. Those Vrajavasis are filled with love. The jivas don't have ragatmika bhakti. This is the treasure of the eternal associates. To follow them is called raganuga bhakti - following ragatmikas. This bhakti is called raganuga. Devotees are following the words of the ragatmikas. Those who follow the ragatmika bhaktas are called raganuga. Jivas cannot be ragatmika bhaktas. They can only be raganuga bhaktas. Those who follow do sravanam and kirtanam. They are following the ragatmika devotees. Even the birds and animals in Vraja have ragatmika bhakti. They have a special position. Their prema is amazing! The Vraja gopis are saying, *"How fortunate the birds are! How they love Krishna! How fortunate the cows, trees and vines are! They are all in ecstasy! Nectar is coming from the flowers."* By this we can understand what raganuga is. Their atmas are made of raga. An atma who has raga, that's a ragatmika. Raga and anuraga is attraction.

In the beginning Goswamipada is describing the symptoms of raga bhaktas. Devotees naturally do everything for God. They are serving Krishna. This

means raga. How amazing! Intelligence cannot understand that. Love cannot be understood by the intelligence. That's why it is called svabhavika or spontaneous. It is most desirable. In *Sri Caitanya Caritamrta*, madhya lila - where Mahaprabhu explained raganuga bhakti to Rupa and Sanatana Goswamis, He said that the symptoms of raganuga bhakti is constant attraction to the deity. There are two kinds of symptoms - main and secondary. What is the main symptom of raga bhakti? It is the desire to bring happiness to the ishtadeva - a very strong desire. This very clearly appears in the Vrajavasis. The Vrajavasis have this constant focus to the highest degree. They have a strong urge to satisfy Krishna - and Krishna is their only shelter. That is called ragatmika. Their life is Krishna, like the friends of Krishna - Subal, Sridhama etc. To follow the mood of the Vrajavasis, that is called raganuga bhakti - bhakti based on affection.

So how to attain raganuga bhakti? Goswamipada is explaining this to us. There are two types of ragatmika bhaktas. For the servants Krishna is the son of a king. This is the servants' sambhanda. Love is always there, but to what degree depends on the sambhanda. Servants have one sambhanda, friends have another sambhanda, and parents have still another sambhanda. Each sambhanda has its particular love. In this world it is similar, but it is initiated in Vraja dhama. In this world there are also different sambhandas - relatives, friends and so on. The servants in Vraja think that Krishna is the king's son and that they are His servants. They have their special love. And the friends are playing with Krishna. That is their sambhanda. Krishna's mother has a different relationship. She is saying, "*Kanai, Kanai - it's very late! Enough playing! Come and rest now.*" This is her love and her attraction to serve Krishna. His mother and father are so attracted to take care of Him and support Him. When Uddhava came he saw their love and determination. But who has the strongest desire to serve Him? Friends or parents? Goswamipada is saying that this is bhakti sambhandanuga. Their love for Krishna depends on their sambhanda. But the Vraja gopis... Formally they don't have a relationship with Krishna. The Vraja gopis are 'nobody' for Krishna. Formally they are not wives, so there is no sambhanda.

In Mathura Krishna got married. There was yajna. He got brahmin thread. But in Vrindavan He did not get married. There was no marriage between the gopis and Krishna. So who then are the gopis for Krishna? Even though they do not have a formal relationship, sambhanda, they are all His energies of joy and ananda. They are His beloveds. They eternally serve Krishna with their love. When there was prakat lila here, they didn't have formal relationship with Him. They are only bound to each other by love and

attraction. This is ragatmika bhakti. It is most special. They love Krishna from childhood. Subconsciously, from childhood they looked at Him, they saw Him and they were very attracted. When Krishna began His lila on earth, they didn't know what kind of relationship they would have with Him. They don't know that they are the eternal parakia rasa of Krishna. Even when they were small girls they didn't know who Krishna was in relationship to them. They were asking, *"Who is Krishna?"* But they loved Him and they liked His name. Then they had to overcome all kinds of obstacles, all the rules and regulations. This attraction for Krishna cannot be stopped. They are attracted to each other. This attraction is very powerful. They are saying, *"You are our life!"* Yogamaya made it like that. In this way she pulled them towards each other - by her special shakti. In reality Krishna is their eternal husband, but Yogamaya covered this knowledge. In their consciousness they have one thought - that they are married to some other men. In this way they don't know that they are eternal beloveds of Krishna. In their mind they think they are married. Radharani married Abhimaniu. He is the eternal parishar of Krishna. He is not Her real husband. There is not any intimacy between them. This marriage only looks like a marriage. But Krishna and the Vraja gopis think like that. They don't have any formal relationship. In reality Abhimaniu doesn't even see Radharani. He can only see the shadow murti of Radharani. He never touches Her. It is theater of Yogamaya. The thirst of Their attraction reaches a very powerful stage because of this. They think, *"What to do? I got married, but I love Krishna with all My heart! What to do?"* The gopis came to the bank of Yamuna and prayed to Purnamasi, *"We love Krishna. We don't want any other man. Krishna is everything for us. He is our only shelter. How can we have any other husband?"* They don't even remember that they are married. It is as if it was a dream. They just think that they are married. They are always attracted by Krishna. But Yogamaya makes these obstacles. Under their cover of Yogamaya, the gopis live in the houses of their husbands.

One time Radha and Krishna wanted to get married. Yogamaya came and said, *"No no, They should not get married. That would be so much troubles and problems. It's impossible."* Their parents asked her, *"Maybe we wait? Maybe later we can have Them married?"* *"No no no, it's impossible"*, Purnamasi said. *"They can never get married."* The gopis were saying, *"How can we serve Krishna?"* Yogamaya answered, *"I will arrange everything. You will serve Krishna! Don't worry about it. This is my headache. I will make a way to connect you."* That's why the gopis' position is such that they have to overstep dharma. Like a river is flowing by itself towards the ocean, the river

may have different obstacles and the water is accumulating at some places. After some time there is so much water that all the obstacles are destroyed and this water rushes forth a thousand times more powerful than how it was flowing before. The eternal servants of Krishna are like this. If somebody asks, *"Why do you love Him so much? Who is He?"*, they cannot answer. They just love Him. They overcome all dharma. They are on the bank of Yamuna and there they secretly meet each other. Sometimes they meet in secluded places in Govardhana. Attracted by Krishna they meet with Him - to serve Him. They have unlimited anuraga and by this they overcome all dharma.

The principle of the Vedas is that they are in family life. But in reality they are the most devoted wives of Krishna. Lakshmi is worshipping them. The srutis are praising and glorifying their bhakti. Uddhava Mahasaya said, *"They turned away from their relatives. They left their dharma for the service of Krishna."* The srutis are praising and glorifying that - and glorifying their service. Karmic people may think, *"What kind of behavior is that? We don't understand it."* They don't understand the position of the gopis. So many obstacles are there for them. So many tests. In this way their raga will reach great heights. Sometimes there is meeting, sometimes there is no meeting. In the eyes of the gopis the meeting with Krishna is very rare - and for Krishna it is also rare and very desirable. From both sides they are so attracted to each other. Krishna and the gopis have different obstacles to face. This prema is called mahabhava. To serve Krishna the gopis overstep all dharma. It looks like they should be together always, just like Lakshmi is always together with Narayana and Janakidevi is always together with Ramacandra.

Krishna in Dvaraka has 16.108 wives. Sometimes they are separated - when Krishna goes to Hastinapura. Then they are waiting for Him in Dvaraka. They feel separation, waiting until He will come back. We can think that they have separation, but it cannot be compared to the separation that the gopis in Vraja experience. Sathyabhama is saying, *"He married me, but I cannot enter His mind. His mind is in Vraja, with the Vraja gopis. He thinks about them and talks about them, but not about us. I understand that. He loves His Vraja gopis so much! We can never take the same place as them. What great servants they are in Vraja!"* The queens in Dvaraka accept this. They don't have different obstacles to overcome in order to meet Krishna. No, they can only think about this and they can together discuss how it is for the Vraja gopis, but they don't have this kind of problem. They can only hear the stories of Vraja. But for the gopis, they sometimes can meet Krishna and

sometimes they cannot. All day they want to meet with Krishna, but there are so many obstacles. They can only see Krishna from afar. One moment of separation seems like thousands years. They don't know which road Krishna is going to take on His way home - this road or that road. They are hoping to at least see Him. This is the highest point of raganuga bhakti. Sometimes they meet and sometimes not. Yogamaya blows winds towards each other and they have to meet secretly. These obstacles are doing an amazing seva. The jiva can reach raganuga bhakti, but these Vraja gopis have ragatmika bhakti. It is not sambhandanuga because they don't have any formal relationship. Krishna for them is not friend, nor son or husband. They don't have any formal relationship - and that's why it is called ragatmika kamanuga. Sambhandanuga is when there is formal relationship. The Vraja gopis have kamanuga. What does kama mean here? It means prema. Their connection is based on prema. They don't have any responsibilities towards each other. Their prema is called mahabhava. Uddhava was so surprised by their sringara rasa - their kamanuga bhakti, a connection which is based on love. Sri Rupa Goswamipada is saying, "*Kama and prema is like iron and gold. There is a big difference between them. But this word kama can be used even for mahabhava.*" So there is sambhandanuga and kamanuga - and Rupa Goswami gives us this word: kama. In Srimad Bhagavatam, seventh chapter towards the end, Narada called the bhakti of the gopis kama. By mahabhava they serve Krishna.

Sambhandanuga is also called snehad. Some are connected to Krishna through fear, like Kamsa and Sisupal. They are enemies. They always think about Krishna in fear. Krishna can be friend, son etc. - this is sambhanda. And through kama the gopis are commecyd ith Him. This kama doesn't have even a shadow of regular kama. This kama means mahabhava - kamanuga. If the jivas follow the sadhana of the Vrajavasis, then they will reach the same bhakti. But the jiva cannot take the same position as the eternal associates. By doing sadhana the jiva can attain the same bhakti - raganuga bhakti. The jiva will be under the guidance of the ragatmika bhaktas. How can the jivas reach there? Through sravanam, kirtanam and smaranam. These are the three main processes. First is sravanam. A fortunate person will listen and get attracted. He will listen about the glorious gopis. Then he will start to do kirtanam. He is attracted by listening and he will read about all this. Our mind will change only because of sravanam and kirtanam if there are no samskaras. This will create them. The mind is like wet earth - anything can be built from it, like pots etc. This is the special position of the jiva. The atheists say the mind cannot be changed - that the mind is

completely fixed. But we are jivas - and by listening our mind can be formed into spiritual consciousness. The eternal associates can never change their mood, whereas the jivas are in the bridge position. Narada, Uddhava and others cannot adopt the mood of the gopis because their minds are already fixed. But a jiva who is not yet formed can develop any mood, any relationship with Krishna. Somebody may say, "*Lakshmidēvi is in one svarupa on the chest of Krishna.*" Still she cannot become servant of Krishna. We cannot compare the jiva and Lakshmi. If someone thinks that he will become Lakshmidēvi, that will be aparadha. Why? Because the jiva is *tatasta shakti*. The jiva cannot become Krishna's eternal shakti. That is how Rupa Goswami describes us.