

from Gauḍa. Who can take shelter of Lord Caitanya without first receiving Your grace?

If anyone falls from the favour and association of Lord Nityānanda then he can never ever experience actual bliss.

Will that day ever be mine when I shall see Śrī Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya together with all Their associates?

My greatest source of strength and security is that Śrī Caitanya is the Lord of my dear Śrī Nityānanda.

I pray at the lotus feet of Advaita Ācārya Prabhu that may my natural attraction flow spontaneously to His lotus feet and to the feet of all His servitors.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Śrī Nityānanda are my life and soul. I, Vṛndāvana dāsa, offer this humble song at Their lotus feet.

23. Śrī Caitanya Visits the Kazi with His Saṅkīrtana Party

All glory to Śrī Caitanya who is an ocean of all transcendental excellences! All glory to Him who is known as Viśvambhara, who is the lawgiver of the entire material creation!

You are very dear to Śrī Nityānanda and the crest jewel of the brahminical race. All glory to Your dearest devotees.

Śrī Viśvambhara continued His transcendental activities in Navadvīpa, but not all could see them. As Śrī Viśvambhara, the Supreme Hero, having descended from Vaikuṅṭha, went about revealing His pastimes, the sublime joy of the devotees also increased.

Viśvambhara was accompanied everywhere by His dearest associate and brother, Nityānanda, and they, together with all the devotees, ecstatically relished the transcendental mellows. The Lord was always intoxicated, drinking the nectar of His own transcendental name.

Every night, He was submerged in the congregational chanting of the Lord's name, but with only His devotees—the non-devotees were disallowed in these *kīrtanas*. No one could fathom the Lord's potencies or activities. The envious persons, not being welcome to these *kīrtanas*, went around spreading bad rumours.

Someone said, "Who can be a real Vaiṣṇava in Kali-yuga? All those people are doing this simply for their food."

Someone else said, "If we could tie their hands and feet and throw them into a pond, then we might enjoy peace and quiet."

Yet another said, "Know one thing for certain, friends: This Nimāi Paṇḍita will ruin this village."

These miscreants tried various means to enter the *kīrtana* hall while the *kīrtana* was in progress. They even reverted to threatening the devotees, but because their hearts were devoid of any piety, they could not influence the devotees and so could not participate in the *kīrtanas*.

Śrī Caitanya performed these nocturnal *kīrtanas*, and thus purified the entire material existence. Many townsfolk desired very much to see these *kīrtanas* and lamented bitterly upon their exclusion, ascribing the reason to their great misfortune.

Some of them would approach one of the devotees and pray to them to first deliver them from their sins and then secretly smuggle them inside the *kīrtana* hall. Nevertheless, the devotees knew that the Lord is the Omniscient Supersoul and that He would immediately detect an unauthorized person's presence, so out of fear of inviting the Lord's wrath, the devotees refused to take anyone inside.

Once a *brahmacāri*, a celibate student, who was very peaceful, honest and faultless, practicing penances and living only on milk and fruits,

wanted to see the *kīrtanas* of the Lord. However, the Lord would personally shut the doors so that the non-devotees could not enter. This *brahmacāri* would visit Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita everyday and repeatedly request him to be allowed for the *kīrtana*. He would say, “If you kindly take me inside your house during the *kīrtana* then I can feast my eyes on the *paṇḍitas* chanting and dancing. I will be ever grateful to you for this.”

Finally, one day, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita replied, “I know you to be a good person, who spends a sinless life eating only fruits and milk, maintaining strict celibacy. I think you are eligible to see the Lord’s *kīrtana* and dancing, but you will have to remain hidden inside the house since the Lord’s orders are that no one is to be allowed within.”

Śrīvāsa then secretly brought the *brahmacāri* inside, who soon carefully concealed himself.

The *kīrtana* started and the Lord of the fourteen worlds, Viśvambhara began to dance. Lord Nityānanda and Gadādhara Paṇḍita danced around the Lord, while Advaita went dancing hither and thither, floating on waves of joy.

Everyone was drowned in the ocean of ecstasy, becoming oblivious of the external world, as the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, lost within Himself, danced to His devotees singing. The only sound to be heard was the names of the Lord and that same Lord now manifested all the ecstatic symptoms in unlimited waves of nectar.

The omniscient Supreme Lord Viśvambhara was fully aware of the presence of the *brahmacāri* even though he had concealed himself. After a short while, the Lord commented, “Today, I do not feel the usual ecstasy while dancing can any of you explain this? Maybe someone is hiding inside the house, please tell me the truth.”

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita became very afraid, he said, “My Lord, I assure you there are no atheists or non-believers in the house, only a *brahmacāri*, a fully qualified *brāhmaṇa* who is sinless and drinks only milk and eats only fruits. He had a strong desire to see You dancing. You were completely right my Lord, he is here in hiding”

This information enraged the Lord, who said, “Right now, this very moment, take him out of this house. What spiritual *sādhana* does he possess that enables him to see My dancing. How can he develop devotion to Me simply by drinking milk.” The Lord dramatically raised His arms and pointing His finger to make a point, continued, “Just by drinking milk no one can attain Me. Even a low caste dog-eater can claim Me, if he takes full shelter of Me, I then accept him.

“A person maybe a *sannyāsī*, a renunciate without any worldly attachments, but if he does not surrender to Me then I do not favour him. Tell me, how did Gajendra, the elephant; or Hanumān, the monkey; or the *gopīs*, the simple milkmaids of Vraja, attain Me? What great austerities did they perform? Even the demons perform severe penances and austerities, but they are slain because they do not surrender to Me. I will not have any milk-drinker here polluting everything, I will destroy everything.”

The *brahmacāri* was by now trembling with fear. He came out of hiding thinking, “It has been my great fortune to see what I have seen, but I have also received the commensurate punishment for my misdeed. However, what wonderful dancing and singing I have glimpsed!”

A devotee thinks and feels this way, being the Lord’s servitor he is always willing to accept all chastisement from the Lord. The *brahmacāri* started to walk out of the house with these thoughts in his mind, which were, of course, already known to the Lord.

The most merciful Lord then had the *brahmacāri* brought back to the house. He placed His lotus feet upon his head and blessed him, saying, “Do not try to gain power by performing austerities and penances. Render loving devotional service to the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa, for this is the highest of all activities.”

Thinking constantly about the Lord’s causeless mercy upon him, the *brahmacāri* began to weep in joy. The devotees became jubilant and offered their obeisances to the Lord, who then resumed His ecstatic dancing.

One who hears this wonderful narration will certainly unite with Lord Caitanya in devotional service. I offer my prostrated obeisances at the feet of the *brahmacāri* who displayed such wonderful devotional understanding in accepting the Lord's chastisement.

Time passed and the Lord continued His nocturnal *kīrtana* sessions with His intimate devotees, barring everyone else to enter the premises. The pious population of Navadvīpa felt pained at being disallowed during these *kīrtana* pastimes of the Lord and they blamed the atheists and miscreants.

They complained, "On account of these fault-finding non-devotees, we cannot see the wonderful *kīrtanas*, which are like grand celebrations every evening. The fault-finders only know one activity, and that is to criticize others. As a result, we are being deprived of seeing the extraordinary *kīrtana* pastimes of the Lord. Nimāi Paṇḍita has thus shut the doors to keep out these mischief mongers, but unfortunately, even the good people are now kept from coming.

"Everyone knows that Nimāi Paṇḍita is a very exalted devotee of Kṛṣṇa, His heart is pure and faultless. If we have full faith and devotion in Him, then eventually we will indeed see His *kīrtana* and dancing.

One of the pious souls commented, "Let us just go, sit there, and pray that one day we may feast our eyes upon Nimāi's dancing. Nimāi Paṇḍita has appeared in Navadvīpa to deliver the entire universe. I tell you that He will propagate the congregational chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa in every house, in every town."

In this way, all the pious folks increased their good fortune, whereas the impious ones simply multiplied their sufferings by their criticism of the Lord.

With the approach of dawn, all the devotees went to meet Nimāi Paṇḍita. Everyone brought some gifts for the Lord; new items, bananas, fruits, yoghurt, clarified butter, and flower garlands etc. As soon as they saw the Lord, they fell to the ground in prostrated obeisances. The Lord

blessed them saying, “May you be blessed by developing love for Kṛṣṇa. Do not waste time with gossip, just chant Kṛṣṇa’s holy name.”

The Lord then instructed them on the holy name, “Now hear from Me the *Mahā-mantra*:

“ ‘Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.’

“Go and repeatedly chant this *mantra* a prescribed number of times.

“One can achieve all perfection by this chanting so always repeat these names for this chanting is not restricted by any rules. Five or ten of you can sit together in your house and chant or sing this *mantra* accompanied by the clapping of hands or cymbals.

“When you are singing together, then also sing this: ‘*haraye namaḥ, kṛṣṇa yādavāya namaḥ/*

gopāla govinda rāma śrī-madhusūdana.’ This congregational chanting should be joined by everyone—father, brother, wife, son, and daughter.”

Having directly received the *mantra* and the instructions to chant from the Lord, the devotees went happily back to their homes after once again offering their obeisances to the Lord.

They strictly followed the Lord’s instructions and all the time chanted Kṛṣṇa’s name, meditating on the Lord’s lotus feet. At the end of the day, they all assembled in their houses and loudly sang the Holy Names, gaily clapping their hands and cymbals in rhythm.

In this manner, Śrī Caitanya began inspiring everyone to take up the congregational chanting of the holy name. Encouraging their devotional zeal, He went about embracing the devotees and placing His own garlands around them. In a most humble manner, He went about requesting all, “My dear brothers! Please serve Kṛṣṇa!”

Seeing the Lord in this mood, an emblem of humility, the devotees became surcharged with spiritual sentiments and began to weep and

intensify their chanting. The whole town now became involved in congregational chanting. The devotees brought out their drums, conchshells, and cymbals that previously had been generally used to celebrate the worship of the Goddess Durgā, during Her big festivals.

However, now they began to play upon the same instruments in the *kīrtana*, making joyous sounds. The whole town was enveloped by the transcendental sound of the Holy Name of the Lord.

Śrīdhara, the leaf-plate seller, happened to be walking by, whilst loudly singing Kṛṣṇa's name. When he heard the loud *kīrtana*, he began to dance in ecstasy. When the other devotees saw this dear devotee of Śrī Caitanya dancing, they came, surrounded him, and began to sing.

Śrīdhara was overwhelmed with spiritual emotions. He fell to the ground and rolled about, yet continued to chant Kṛṣṇa's Name. When the non-devotees saw him, they started ridiculing and laughing at him.

They said, "Just see him! That fellow has also become a Vaiṣṇava. He can neither afford clothes, nor does he have any money to eat, yet suddenly he is exhibiting all these ecstatic symptoms, this is all for show. They all live by begging and now they have started an untimely festival."

The atheists continued to hurl insulting remarks at the devotees, but undeterred, the pious devotees went on chanting the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa.

One day, the Muslim magistrate, the Kazi, was passing that way. He heard the tumult of singing of the Lord's name accompanied by drums, cymbals and conchshell. He remembered the instruction in his own scripture about the practice of other religions. The Kazi cried out, "Catch them all, let us see what your teacher, Nimāi Paṇḍita, does to stop me."

All the devotees fled in fear of the Muslim fanatics. The Kazi's men went about breaking the drums and beating up the devotees, spreading terror. The Kazi said, "It seems that nowadays in Nadia there is a sudden outburst of Hindu religious activities. I will punish the culprits severely.

Since it is already late and getting dark I am letting you off, but if I see all this again I will convert you all to Islam.”

Everyday, the evil Kazi would send his men patrolling the town looking for any *kīrtana*. The devotees became despondent and went into hiding, fearing violent retaliation from the Kazi and his men.

The envious atheists were siding with the Kazi. They commented, “Hari’s name should be chanted in the mind. Which scripture enjoins one to make a clamour in chanting Kṛṣṇa’s name? For transgressing the *Vedic* injunctions, they have received a suitable punishment.

“Apparently, they have no fear of flouting the social norms. That Nimāi Paṇḍita, who acts so proudly, will now be covered by the Kazi. In addition, that Nityānanda, who roams about everywhere, will soon see the end of all His fun. They dare to call us atheists for speaking out the truth, but now at long last Nadia will be rid of these charlatans.”

Out of fear, the devotees did not protest against the ban of the Kazi. Nevertheless, they went to the Lord and gave a report to Him, “We have stopped our *kīrtana* out of dread of the Kazi—throughout Navadvīpa hundreds his men search the streets and our houses. We have come to tell You that we will have to leave Navadvīpa and settle elsewhere—away from all this.”

When Śrī Caitanya heard that someone was trying to stop the *saṅkīrtana* movement, He became infuriated. He looked awesome, almost like Lord Śiva at the time of the cosmic annihilation. Like the rumbling of thunder, He roared loudly and seeing this sudden change in the Lord, the devotees became afraid and held their ears as if begging forgiveness from the Lord for a mistake they had not committed.

The Lord said, “Nityānanda, be prepared! Go immediately to all the Vaiṣṇavas and assemble them all on the streets. I shall bring out a *kīrtana* party and take it all over Navadvīpa. Today we will see if anyone can do anything to Me. You will see how I burn the Kazi’s house down. Today I shall shower the incessant rains of love of Kṛṣṇa upon everyone.

Today, the atheists will face their final hour. Therefore, My brothers, do not waste a moment, go deliver this message to everyone.

“Tell everyone that if they are desirous of seeing the mystic potency of Kṛṣṇa in action, then let them bring a flaming torch with them. I will smash the Kazi’s palace and I will do *kīrtana* along every street of Navadvīpa. The entire creation is full of My devotees and in My presence, what is there to fear? Go and put a stop to your anguish, come and assemble in the afternoon after lunch.”

The devotees dispersed right away, each going his way in great anticipation, not caring about eating or anything else. Excited talks filled every home, “Nimāi Paṇḍita will take out a *saṅkīrtana* and dance in the streets of Navadvīpa.”

For the many thousands who were lamenting for so long that they could not see Nimāi Paṇḍita’s dancing this news was the cause of great rejoicing. Therefore, everyone prepared his torch. Even if the father had made a torch, the son yet made his own.

They competed with each other to make the biggest torch. Huge barrels of oil were kept in readiness. In those days, Navadvīpa was very densely populated. The constant flow of people with torches poured out of the houses onto the streets. Who could count the millions of torches? The women, children, and old men were excited with great anticipation. Slowly the clusters of devotees moved towards Nimāi Paṇḍita’s house.

When Lord Caitanya heard that all the Vaiṣṇavas had assembled at His behest and were on His doorsteps, He went to meet them and began to organize them into groups. Advaita Ācārya was to head up and be the chief dancer in one group, supported by a *kīrtana* group. In another group, Haridāsa was the leader and dancer; he also was backed by a *kīrtana* group. Yet, another group was to be led with the main dancer being Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita.

The Lord’s eyes fell on Nityānanda, who immediately said, “I will not leave Your side, My Lord. My only duty is to be near You, always. I can never leave Your lotus feet; they are embedded in My heart. What power

do I possess to dance independently away from You? My devotional service to You is that I am always with You.”

When Śrī Caitanya saw the streams of ecstasy flowing from the eyes of Nityānanda, He embraced Him and kept Him near Himself. In this way, everyone had his desire fulfilled. Some went off with his group, others stayed close to the Lord, dancing and singing.

Now please listen attentively to the description of this ‘*nagara-kīrtana*’ for this will cut asunder the bonds of *karmic* reactions. Here is the list of some of the main devotees who came: Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Vakreśvara, Murāri, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Gopīnātha, Jagadīśa, Vipra Gaṅgādāsa, Rāmāi, Govindānanda, Candraśekhara, Vasudeva, Śrīgarbha, Mukunda, Śrīdhara, Govinda, Jagadānanda, Nandana Ācārya, and Śuklāmbara.

The devotees of Lord Caitanya are innumerable and I do not know all their names, Vedavyāsa will reveal all their names in the future in the *Purāṇas*. What human being has the ability to describe the Lord’s dancing with His unlimited associates, servants, weapons and confidential companions?

The *saṅkīrtana* pastimes of the Lord are unique, never before, in any other incarnation, were such pastimes ever revealed. As the *kīrtana* picked up gusto, the Lord’s joy also increased. The devotees were carried in waves of sublime joy.

The Lord and husband of the Goddess of Fortune was dancing on the streets of Navadvīpa and anyone who saw Him became free from all sorrows. Soon it was dusk, but the devotees were perfectly engrossed in the *kīrtana*, oblivious of the material realm.

Standing in doorways, millions of men, women and children lined the streets seeing the moving mass of men whose tumultuous singing of the Holy Name of the Lord echoed and filled the cosmos. Above this tumult rang loud and clear the Lord’s own thunderous voice. The devotees replied with equal gusto, chanting the name of Lord Hari. Then magically, as if by previous arrangement, all the torches were lit at the same time.

Millions of flaming torches lit up the darkened sky, matched only by the millions of hearts kindled by the delight of sublime bliss. Words fail to describe the marvellous sight. One could be easily confused and wonder if it were a night of the full moon, perhaps broad daylight, or perhaps even Kṛṣṇa Himself had manifested His *brahmajyoti!*

The Lord repeatedly called out the name of Śrī Hari and the devotees became attentive. They surrounded the Lord with the *kīrtana* party. All the devotees were decorated with flower garlands around their neck and their bodies were smeared with sandalwood paste and scented vermilion powder. They all had various musical instruments in their hands and looked more powerful than thousands of lions.

The Lord looked around Himself to see His devoted, servitors eagerly waiting to render Him any service. He began to dance, lifting the devotees to soaring heights of ecstasy. Everyone began chanting loudly and whoever saw the Lord's moonlike beautiful face was released from the searing pains of material existence.

The Lord's charming looks easily overshadowed the attractiveness of millions of cupids. I am at a loss to find the appropriate similes to describe the beauty of the Lord, yet I venture to do so by His mercy alone. Otherwise, who would dare to attempt such an impossible task?

He glowed like a mountain of gold, His body being smeared with sandal paste sometimes looked like the rising full moon. His curly dark tresses were decorated with fragrant *mālatī* garlands; a sweet smile clung intimately to His lips that could surely win the hearts of all the muses. Sandalwood *tilaka* with a red dot of vermilion clearly adorned His beautiful broad forehead.

Chanting the name of Hari, He raised His arms up in the sky and danced. The knee-length flower garland around His neck swayed with each movement. His upraised arms glistened like fine tapering pillars of gold and His body became drenched with the incessant flow of ecstatic tears from His lotus petal eyes. As the ecstatic feelings increased, the hairs of His body stood on end like the ever-fresh *kadamba* flower.

His moist reddish lips were so exquisite. When they parted, they revealed a symmetrical set of pearl-like white teeth. The long arched eyebrows languished almost all the way to the beginning of His ears. His strong shoulders shamed the king of elephants and His chest was broad and full. The Brahmin thread hung loosely across His chest. Lakṣmī Devī and Tulasī Devī constantly pray for the shelter of His lotus feet.

The Supreme Lord wears His fine and clean clothes very artistically. The high nose is aristocratic and the sinewy tendons of His neck give the impression of being the neck of the king of the forest, strong and powerful. He towers over others, His long body well formed and beautifully proportionate shining like a mountain of gold. Everyone looking at Him commented on His divine and beautiful presence.

The millions who milled around for this momentous occasion were very fortunate and in spite of their large numbers, they all received the Lord's benediction by being able to see the Lord's exquisite transcendental face. They simply stared at Him, irresistibly drawn to His beauty and spontaneously exclaimed aloud the Lord's name as uncontrollable emotions welled up within their hearts.

The citizens had nicely decorated their doorways with banana trees, water pots, mango leaves and green coconuts. A ghee lamp flickered in every house and an offering plate sat upon all the altars holding yoghurt, grains, and *dūrvā* grass.

All this happened as if at the command of an unseen voice. Out onto the streets men, women and children poured to join the congregation. All were intoxicated with sublime joy, oblivious to every other care. Seeing the carefree citizens leaving their houses unguarded, a thief thought to himself, "This is good opportunity for me to clean out the people's belongings."

However, as time passed and the chanting entering his ears took affect, the thief lost his thieving tendencies and joined in with the others, joyously chanting Lord Hari's sweet transcendental name.

The streets were strewn with puffed rice and coins thrown by the citizens as they watched the chanting procession passing by. Later, they themselves joined the procession and so the march swelled in numbers.

One should not consider these descriptions as exaggerations. Such happenings are commonplace when the Supreme Lord is present. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was in Dvārakā, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* describes that in a twinkling of an eye He made appear nine hundred thousand palaces all bedecked with jewels and marble.

Again, in the *Harivaṁśa*, it is described that when Lord Kṛṣṇa was enjoying water sports with the Yadus in the salt-water ocean that surrounds Dvārakā, the entire ocean in a moment turned nectarine sweet. Now that very same Supreme Lord is present in Navadvīpa, almost unconscious with sublime bliss, dancing and chanting, so naturally all-auspicious happenings are occurring.

The ocean of people now surged forward in slow fluid motion like the current of the Gaṅgā, which flowed beside them. They all danced and chanted surrounding the dancing golden form of the Lord. Advaita Ācārya, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and other senior associates of the Lord led huge groups of dancing and chanting devotees, everyone exulting in the bliss of the Lord's presence. Those who previously could not sing were now singing with the sweetest melodious voices.

The best singers surrounded the Lord; Murāri, Mukunda Datta, Rāmāi, Govinda, Vakreśvara, and Vasudeva. Lord Nityānanda and Gadādhara Paṇḍita danced on either side of the Lord, completely submerged in divine bliss. The dancing and celebrating form of the Lord brought wonderment and exhilaration to the hearts of all who beheld His golden form.

This was a magnificent sight, the dancers moved forward with rhythmic motions, simultaneously millions of burning torches also moved, their licking flames animated in a passionate dance. It was night, but the dancing figure of the Lord was clearly visible as if bathed full-moon light of autumn. Sometimes, His body was covered with shining dust particles

and at other times, He bathed His transcendental form in His cascading tears of ecstasy.

The different ecstatic symptoms appeared in His body: sometimes shivering; sometimes profuse perspiration; again at other times horripilation. They changed like the seasons. The sound of the Lord's name reverberated throughout the universe, "...*haraye namaḥ, kṛṣṇa yādavāya namaḥ/ gopāla govinda rāma śrī-madhusūdana...*" Some devotees danced on their own, but there were many large groups of devotees dancing together keeping time by clapping hands. Another wonderful sight was the innumerable devotees, all carrying torches and oil containers.

Navadvīpa was ringing with the sounds of sublime jubilation, as if the Lord's spiritual abode, Vaikuṅṭha, had descended. Now the residents of Navadvīpa acquired the same characteristics as the residents of Vaikuṅṭha. They all manifested four-arms, but because they were so engrossed in the ecstasy of chanting and dancing, they did not even notice this divine transformation of their person. Engulfing all was the ever-increasing bliss of Vaikuṅṭha.

As they passed by the bank of The Gaṅgā, Śrī Caitanya dancing in the midst looked like Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, with a flute in His hand and a garland of wild flowers swaying around His neck.

The devotees had never experienced the ecstasy of such a massive congregational chanting. They forgot their bodily identity, their tribulations. They sang, danced, and rolled upon the ground. Many persons became emboldened and made their views publicly heard. One said, "Where did the rascal Kazi go? Now, if I just find him, I will sever his head."

Others shouted out the names of certain atheistic persons and beat the ground, as if sealing their fate with a stroke. Some others even ran helter-skelter trying to locate them. There was no accounting the number of people singing, or the number playing *mṛdaṅga* drums. Navadvīpa was flooded with the nectarine shower of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, so

much so that even the eternal residents of Vaikuṅṭha hankered for this bliss. Even Lord Ananta, Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā rarely experience this kind of joy.

Sublime bliss had descended over the entire planet, as the Lord danced with His associates and devotees. Anything inauspicious or impure found no place. This was the first major *nagara-saṅkīrtana* of the Lord.

The procession moved on, but no one actually knew where they were going. There was just one resounding, all-pervading thunder of Lord Hari's name piercing the coverings of the material world.

The demigods with their associates came to have *darśana* of the Lord. When they saw Gaurāṅga, they, like the humans, also became overwhelmed with transcendental joy. To avoid detection, dressed as humans, they mingled in with the crowd and with gusto joined in the singing and dancing.

All the demigods were present: Brahmā, Śiva, Varuṇa, Kuvera, Indra, Yamarāja, Soma, etc. Aware that everyone present was experiencing transcendental ecstasy, they accompanied the devotees wanting more and more of the Lord's association. The humans and the demigods were chanting the Lord's Holy Name together.

As the procession passed the nicely decorated uncountable houses, the market places and large squares, one could understand that Navadvīpa was a very well populated and an opulent town. It was impossible to count the people that lived there. It seemed that because the Supreme Lord was to advent here, He had arranged for many, many people to live there and participate in His *saṅkīrtana* movement. Even the number of ladies, who were chanting, was so numerous that counting them would be futile.

Everyone who saw the Lord dancing and chanting like a golden flash of lightning could not contain his heart and emotions. Even those with hearts of stone were moved to tears and fell to the ground upon receiving the Lord's shower of causeless mercy and hearing the sighs and sobs of sublime ecstasy from His devotees. As the Lord danced,

constantly repeating Lord Hari's name, the garland of flowers about His beautiful neck swayed wildly.

His beauty was breath-taking, the way the Brahmin thread hung carelessly over His shoulders, the *dhotī* nicely pleated and neatly tucked into place, His golden frame covered with fine glimmering dust. Tears flowed unrestrainedly from His lotus eyes like the languid flow of the Mandākinī Gaṅgā of His heavenly planets.

Who would have cared to see the moon after having seen the blooming lotus face of the Lord? Some of the teardrops clung to the cleft of His fine nose, and shone like a string of white pearls. His glossy black locks, entwined with the garlands around His head, made a fine sight.

The devotees prayed, "O Lord, please grant us this one desire that we may hold this pastime within our hearts, birth after birth." In this manner, the devotees were requesting benedictions from the Lord as the Lord continued His extraordinary pastime of dancing, surrounded by His intimate associates. The Lord knew how to inspire the devotees to join in and He danced in reciprocation with the mood and movement of the devotees. The Lord of Vaikuṅṭha danced as the devotees sang, "All of you come and sing, 'Hari, Hari!' Put fear aside, for the Holy Name, even though not chanted purely, will deliver you from birth and death."

In humility, the author describes, poetically, Lord Caitanya as He danced.

Lord Viśvambhara, the Lord of the Universe, danced along the bank of the Gaṅgā. The devotees eagerly covered themselves with the earth that carried the impressions of His lotus feet. Wonderful ecstatic symptoms manifested upon His person and tears of nectar cascaded from His eyes. With a voice like the rumble of thunder, He chanted the name of Lord Hari. Smiling sweetly, He raised His arms and sang.

His golden form was much more enchanting than that of Cupid. Charmingly dressed, His black curly hair was decorated with fresh and fragrant flower garlands. Upon seeing such beauty, the mind reeled as if afflicted by the five amorous arrows of Cupid. In complete bliss,

Viśvambhara moved about in a restless dance, intoxicated by the Holy Name. His body and limbs were perfectly shaped, their beauty enhanced by the decoration of sandalwood paste.

The garland around His neck matched His love inspired movements. The arch of His eyebrows was like the bow of Cupid shooting arrows of enchantment. His teeth were pure white and glistened like pearls. His benign face was an ocean of mercy.

How can one describe the many hundreds of ecstatic emotions that manifested in the Lord? Sometimes He shivered, sometimes He perspired, and sometimes tears fell from His eyes like rain. At times, He bent His body in three places just like Kṛṣṇa and appeared to play the flute with His fingers.

He moved about like a maddened elephant, the cynosure of every eye. His Brahmin thread decorated His broad chest, as if Ananta Śeṣa had taken that very thin form to serve His Lord. Lord Nityānanda, Gadādhara Paṇḍita and all the intimate devotees danced beside Him and each time they looked at the Lord, they saw the Lord smiling back at them.

By chanting the His name, Lord Śiva becomes mad and, forgetting Himself, staggers about naked. Lord Caitanya is dancing on the streets of Navadvīpa, performing the congregational chanting of the Holy Name.

Lakṣmī Devī, the Goddess of Fortune, enthralled by His beautiful dress and appearance, hankers constantly to touch and dress the black curly locks of this Supreme Lord, who now, absorbed in singing and dancing, rolls in the dust in ecstasy. Following Him are His devotees carrying millions of flaming torches lighting up the world like the full moon, not a soul present could refrain from chanting the Lord's Holy Name. This marvel Navadvīpa had never witnessed—the residents simply looked at one another and chanted, "Hari! Hari!"

Lord Nityānanda was always by the side of Viśvambhara and, knowing His every mood, would capture the Lord in His arms to steady Him whenever He swooned in ecstasy. One time, as Nityānanda held Him,

Viśvambhara slowly sat down in a meditative pose and gleefully clapping His hands, began to loudly chant, “Hari! Hari!”

He then began to speak with a childlike innocence, “I am the Supreme Lord Nārāyaṇa, I killed that demon Kāmsa, and I deceived Bali Mahārāja. I constructed that bridge over the ocean to Śrī Laṅkā and killed the demon Rāvaṇa, I am Lord Rāmacandra.”

In this manner, He revealed His actual Supreme identity. Everyone does not understand this inconceivable esoteric truth for it is inconceivable to the human mind. Yet, in the next moment, increasing the people’s confusion, the Lord changed His mood completely and said with the utmost humility and meekness, “O Lord, please grant Me devotion at Your lotus feet.”

Even if He were to put His toe to His mouth, whatever way the Lord acted stole one’s mind. The Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, Viśvambhara, was dancing throughout the town of Navadvīpa. Actually, this town is the Svetadvīpa of the spiritual world—in the *Vedas*, this will be explained. Amidst the countless *mṛdaṅga* drums, conchshells, and cymbals and the chanting of the Holy Name, the Lord danced like the crest jewel of a crown.

All glory to the congregational chanting! All glory to Śrī Viśvambhara! All glory to the devotees of the Lord! Wherever I look, I see Śrī Viśvambhara drowning everyone in the nectar ocean of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

The procession sometimes moved fast, sometimes much slower depending on how long the Lord danced in one place. The chanting was jubilant and echoed in the spiritual abode of Vaikuṅṭha. The Lord, the cynosure of everyone, moved about like a maddened lion intoxicated with the holy name. The procession passed many bathing places and proceeded towards Simuliyā. No one was tired, millions were singing and dancing and a million flaming torches made it difficult to discern whether it was night or midday.

The people welcomed the procession with flowers and doorway decorations. As they passed each house, the demigods rained confetti of fragrant flowers.

Mother Earth was thrilled with ecstasy as the Lord walked and danced upon Her. She wanted the Lord to walk upon the softest of surfaces so it appeared that she had collected and strewn flowers to cover the pathway, which thus resembled her most delicate skin.

Śrīvāsa, Advaita and Haridāsa were dancing in their own groups, ahead of Lord Viśvambhara. As the procession entered each new locality, people left their homes, running to see the Lord. They forgot family members and all other duties in their eagerness to see the beatific moonlike face of the Supreme Soul of the entire creation. Without consciously realizing it, they were all being automatically drawn into the congregational chanting.

Practically without noticing, they all became intoxicated with holy name of Kṛṣṇa. They began manifesting symptoms of supra-mundane joy. Some rolled on the ground, some made sounds with their mouth as if playing a musical instrument and others were embracing anyone they met. They had become so inebriated by the chanting and dancing that many offered prostrated obeisances, falling to the ground like rods. Others caught the feet of the devotees, crying in ecstasy.

One could hear many comments from different people.

One said, “I am this Nimāi Paṇḍita. I have been assigned to deliver the entire world.”

Another commented, “I am a Vaiṣṇava from Svetadvīpa.”

Yet another remarked, “I am an eternal resident of Vaikuṅṭha.”

Again someone else said, “Where is that rascal Kazi? I would crush his head, if I could lay my hands on him.”

Incited by such comments, some ran as if trying to capture an atheist. They climbed trees and then jumping down, angrily shouted, “I am Death to a dozen atheists!”

Another said, “Can you hear me, O God of Death! Tell me where is your son, the Sun God? The Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, appearing as the son of Śacī, was just now here, chanting and dancing. He has flung open the floodgates of the Holy Name.”

The Holy Name that had bestowed upon the God of Death, Yamarāja, the name Dharmarāja, as the upholder of religious principles; the Holy Name that had saved the worst of sinners, Ajāmila, from the jaws of doom, was now being freely distributed by the Lord Himself. Moreover, even those who would not chant the Holy Name could now, at least, hear it and so reap the unlimited transcendental benefit.

Citrugupta, the compiler of the good and evil deeds of a man in life, should be immediately informed that his records are to be thrown away. If he disobeys, stern action must be taken against him for now every living entity is liberated and delivered.

Vārāṇasī has become one of the most important places of pilgrimage because there, Lord Śiva constantly chants the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa. The purest of devotees, the eternal residents of the spiritual abode, always chant the Holy Name. Lord Śiva has become worshipable by all the demigods and human beings because at every moment, he is engaged in relishing the sweet nectar of the Holy Name.

The Name was now being heard by every living entity. So inspired, the devotees now warned all the atheists to discard their evil ways and take up the worship of Lord Viśvambhara and the chanting of the Holy Name. If they refused, they would be destroyed. The devotees now loudly challenged the atheists to come forward and dare to halt their chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s Holy Name. They fisted the earth with great force as if beating to pulp a recalcitrant atheist. The effects of chanting the Holy Name had so divinely enmaddened them, that they were unaware of their words and actions.

When the atheists saw that citizens of Navadvīpa had become mad with ecstasy, they began to bathe within with hate and envy. They got together and began conspiring. They said, “If the Kazi was to come right now, I would like to see where that Nimāi Paṇḍita would run to. What will happen to all their fanfare of dancing and singing? Where will they hide their banana trees, mango leaves and rest of their decorations? As soon as Kazi hears their great commotion and sees their lit torches, he will immediately come and they will have to jump into the Ganges to escape his wrath.”

One of them said, “Then, I will place myself near a group and in the stampede I will tie their necks together.” Another said, “Then let us go and inform the Kazi.” Someone objected to this saying, “I see no logic in doing that.” Another made his point strongly, “I can see only one logical thing to do. Let us go altogether to those sentimentalists and loudly shout, ‘The Kazi and his men are here!’ Then they will quickly disperse.” This way the jealous hearts of the atheists were burning, while the devotees floated on clouds of ecstatic chanting and dancing.

The devotees were looking so effulgent, decorated with sandalwood paste and flower garlands. They were so fully engrossed in the Holy Name that they became oblivious to everything as the *saṅkīrtana* proceeded towards Simuliyā.

As the devotees chanted and danced, the Lord also chanted and danced right within in their midst. The activities of devotees increased the Lord’s ecstasy. No one could fathom how much water was contained within the lotus eyes of the Lord.

Incessant tears cascaded in rivulets of pure nectarine water. Sometimes, shivering so overcame the Lord that He laid uncontrollable upon the ground. Even Nityānanda Prabhu was lamenting because He could not hold Him still. When at the pinnacle of His ecstasy, the Lord fell unconscious, then, for a long time, no life force could be found within Him. This was the wonder of wonders.

Excited talks went around amongst the citizens. They said, “This person must be the Supreme Lord, Nārāyaṇa, Himself.” Another said, “He is so much like Nārada or Prahlāda or even Śukadeva Gosvāmī.” Another answered, “Whoever He may be, He is certainly not an ordinary human being.” The more critical and analytical said, “He is indeed a great devotee.” Each one commented according to his level of understanding.

Nimāi was oblivious to everything. He was engrossed in the ecstasy of the Holy Name, as He lifted His arms chanting, “Hari! Hari!” Everyone around, by hearing the Lord, felt irresistibly drawn to Him and they all echoed loudly the Lord’s name. Whichever direction the Lord chose, the entire congregation moved that way. The Lord was now heading towards the Kazi’s house. The tumultuous sound of the chanting and revelry became clearly audible to the inmates of Kazi’s palace.

When the Kazi heard the loud clamour of chanting, he enquired, “Can you hear that sound of music and singing? Is that a marriage party, or is it some weird incarnation of strange beings. Have they disobeyed my orders and again started their Hindu practices out on the streets? Go quickly and find out all the details, after you return with information, I shall go personally.”

The Kazi’s spies left immediately and arrived at the scene of the massive congregational *kīrtana*. They were overawed at the sight of the huge mass of people shouting, “Kill the Kazi!” Murmuring verses from the Koran for protection, they fled in terror.

They came running to the Kazi and spoke rapidly in gulps, “What are we doing here, let us quickly escape. That Nimāi Ācārya is coming with thousands and thousands of men. They are carrying thousands and thousands of flaming torches, all singing their Hindu God’s name. The citizens have decorated their houses and doorways for welcoming this immense and incredible procession. The roads are covered with flower petals and puffed rice. The sound of their singing is so loud that I feared my eardrums would burst.

“I have never seen such a sight. Even the coming of our royal monarch never draws such unbelievable crowds. Nimāi is their leader, dancing in the middle, and everyone is simply following Him. The singers we attacked the other day are also there. They are all shouting, ‘Kill the Kazi!’ Nimāi is the gang leader, stirring them all up. I wonder why this *brāhmaṇa* fellow Nimāi weeps so much. The tears spout out like two rivers.”

The other spy reported, “I think He may have some relative somewhere distant, so He is crying out of separation.” The other replied, “I am afraid to even look at Him, He looks like He is coming to gobble us up.” The Kazi said, “Is that really Nimāi Paṇḍita? Maybe He is going to get married. I cannot imagine that anyone would try to disregard my orders. If they do, then I will convert them to Islam.” As they were discussing, the sound of the *kīrtana* became closer and closer.

The huge mass of congregation arrived in the locality of Kazi’s palace. The crest jewel amongst them all, Lord Viśvambhara, led them up whilst dancing. The sound of their chanting boomed throughout the entire universe, echoing in the vaults of heaven, earth and hell. The chanting became unbearably loud for the Kazi and his men and they made haste to escape, fearing the worst for themselves. They were like mice running for their lives from the mouth of a snake. However, in the bustle and commotion, they became confused and lost their way.

Many of the Kazi’s men spread open their rolled up head cloth and hung it over their heads, so as to be not recognized and joined in with the dancing, but with fearful thumping hearts. The bearded compatriots of the Kazi hung their heads downward so that their give-away beards remained unexposed.

There were so many people that it would be impossible for anyone to know everyone by face and besides that, the people were so excited that they were unaware of even their own persons. Everyone was completely lost in singing and dancing.

Lord Viśvambhara stood before Kazi's palace doors, His rising anger visible, with a voice like thunder, He said, "Where is that mischief monger, Kazi! Right this minute, bring him to Me and cut his head off. I will obliterate the entire *yavana* race from the face of this earth, as I have done previously. Break open and smash everything. Break it! Break it!"

These were the orders of the Supreme Lord. Who could disobey? The congregation was already exuberant and inebriated by association with Lord Caitanya and the Holy Name, so such a command from the Lord was immediately put into action with great enthusiasm.

The congregation ransacked the entire property. They went through the house and indiscriminately broke anything that came in their way. The garden lay limp and ravaged as if after a hurricane. Banana trees lay uprooted, broken branches hung from the mango trees, the flower garden was stamped to the ground.

Lakhs and lakhs of people overran the palace rooms and grounds. Throughout the entire operation the congregation was chanting, "Hari! Hari!" The Holy Name was their constant companion. They punctuated every move with Lord Hari's name.

Lord Viśvambhara then said, "Now burn down everything. Put fire to the house; let the Kazi and all his men burn to death. I want to see what his king will do to Me. I also want to see who has the audacity to check Me. The God of Time and Death are all my devoted servitors. They are created by my glance over material nature. To propagate the congregational chanting of the Holy Name is the main purpose of my advent. If any one so much as tries to cause obstruction, then I will annihilate him.

"However, even if the lowest of sinners participates in the chanting of the Lord's name, then he shall be remembered by Me and saved. On the other hand, even if persons are performing austerity, renunciation, Vedic studies and *yoga*, but do not join the *saṅkīrtana* movement, then

they will certainly perish. So now, do not fear, put fire to the house. I will bring about the total devastation of the entire race of *Yavanas*.”

When they saw the Lord’s wrath the devotees fell on their knees and raising their arms prayed to Him, “One of Your principle expansions is Lord Sankarṣaṇa, His anger is never manifested untimely. When the time is ready for the destruction of the material world, then Rudra appears as the expansion and incarnation of Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa. After Rudra completes the work of annihilation, *pralaya*, he then returns into Your transcendental body.

“The work of annihilation is carried out by the expansion of Your expansion, so if you are angry, who can check Your wrath? The *Vedas* glorify You as ‘without anger and eternally blissful’, our hearts cannot see You minimize the Vedic injunction. Even Lord Brahmā never attracts Your ire. Creation, maintenance and annihilation of the material world are simply Your transcendental pastimes.

“Today, You have sufficiently chastised the Kazi and if next time he does anything against You, then You can destroy him. All glory to Lord Viśvambhara, the Supreme Lord of all lords! All glory to Lord Gaurasundara, the Lord of the Universe and the Lord of Lakṣmī Devī, who rests upon Lord Ananta Śeṣa!”

Lord Caitanya smiled after listening to their choice prayers and then saying, “Hari! Hari! Hari!” He again began to dance and chant with everyone. The Kazi had been justly dealt with and the Lord was pacified knowing that the public congregational chanting would continue. He now led the procession back towards the town.

With the previous jubilation and exuberance, the chanting and dancing began again. Joy once more filled the atmosphere. The devotees were now free from any fear or inhibition. They could chant their beloved Lord Kṛṣṇa’s name anytime, anyplace.

The atheists were subdued, their spirit broken. On the other hand, the devotees were victorious and jubilant. They again became submerged in the ecstasy of chanting and dancing. Now all the devotees went ahead,

dancing and chanting, and the Lord came up from behind. Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Lord Ananta and all the other demigods enjoyed themselves participating in the congregational chanting.

The procession entered the locality of traders who deal with conchshells and other such items. All the residents came out in their best attire and welcomed the congregation with the necessary Vedic rituals known as 'pūrṇa kumbha'. The roads were strewn with flowers and lamps were lit up in the house.

Then, the congregation went through the locality of the weavers. A great sound of jubilation and chanting of the Lord's name greeted the approaching *saṅkīrtana* party. Everywhere they went, people were mad with joy. They were relishing their well-earned victory over despotism. Lord Caitanya was very happy to see that all were chanting the Holy Name of the Lord.

Dancing in mad ecstasy, Lord Caitanya went to house of Śrīdhara, who lived in a small broken hut with practically no possessions. A dented and old metal water pot belonging to Śrīdhara stood outside his door. The pot had been repaired so many times that even a thief would not think of taking it. The Lord was dancing in front of Śrīdhara's house, when He saw that the old pot was filled with water. The Supreme Lord, Viśvambhara, wanting to teach the human society how much He loves and cares for His devotees, picked up Śrīdhara's worn out old water pot and proceeded, with great pleasure, to drink from it. Even if someone wanted to stop the Lord, who could they do so? When Śrīdhara saw what Viśvambhara was doing, he came running, exclaiming, "O Death, I am finished! You have come to my house to destroy me!" So saying, Śrīdhara, the most saintly personality, fainted on the ground out of great spiritual perturbation.

Viśvambhara, with utmost satisfaction, said, "My whole being has now become purified. Today, finally, I have attained devotion unto the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa simply by drinking water from Śrīdhara's pot." Saying this, the Lord shed tears of divine ecstasy.

Through this pastime, the Lord taught the world that by drinking water from the water pot of a pure devotee, one immediately develops attachment to the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In the *Padma Purāṇa, Ādi-khaṇḍa* 31.112. it is stated: “The wise devotee, who is desirous of purifying himself completely of all sinful reactions, should specifically approach a pure Vaiṣṇava and beg from him his food remnants. If this is not available, then at least he should beg some of his water remnants, or drink the water that has washed his feet.”

The devotees began to cry in great joy, having seen the Supreme Lord manifest such mercy and special affection towards His devotee. Nityānanda, Gadādhara, Advaita and Śrīvāsa fell down to the ground and began to roll about in tears. Haridāsa, Vakreśvara, Candraśekhara, Jagadānanda and the numerous other close associates of the Lord were unable to contain their spiritual emotion. They burst into tears of exultation; they cried out Kṛṣṇa’s sweet name.

The house of Śrīdhara became the blessed exhibition site for the highest form of spiritual ecstasy in *kṛṣṇa-prema*. The whole universe exulted with the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s Holy Name. Gauracandra smiled benignly—His mission was accomplished.

Just behold the glory of the Śrīdhara’s devotion, the Supreme Lord reciprocated with His fullest mercy. The Lord drank water with infinite pleasure from Śrīdhara’s water pot made of a base metal. The pot was full of repairs and dents, a pot that was used for many purposes.

However, the Lord enjoyed drinking from this pot because He was drinking Śrīdhara’s transcendental devotion and so the common liquid water was immediately transformed into divine ambrosia. Thus, the Lord taught that everything in relation to a pure devotee is transcendental.

The Supreme Lord, on the other hand, ignores the valuable gem-studded water pot of an insolent materialist. He accepts any offering from His surrendered devotees, irrespective of any rules and regulations of offering. If His devotee has little and but ordinary food then He forcibly

takes it from him, as He displayed in Dvārakā with Sudāmā Vipra. Thus, we see that the Lord sells Himself to His devotees.

When the Pāṇḍavas were banished to the forest, Lord Kṛṣṇa relished a simple offering of leafy vegetables from Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja. The pure devotees are Kṛṣṇa's father, mother, wife, and brother. Lord Kṛṣṇa sees His surrendered devotees as His own kith and kin, and non-different from Himself. Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself according to the desire and mellow of His unalloyed devotee. He becomes their property and thus allows Himself to be bought and sold by only them.

All the scriptures have described this wonderful quality of Lord Kṛṣṇa: He especially favours His pure devotees and is always personally protecting them from all calamity.

One should see the magnanimous position of a pure devotee and be thus inspired to develop spiritual attachment to Kṛṣṇa. The position of Lord Kṛṣṇa's servant is never to be viewed deprecatingly. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Godhead, never accepts as His servant a person of little spiritual calibre.

After having performed his prescribed duties for many millions of lifetimes, leading a pious life of non-violence and humility, and praying constantly and sincerely to the Supreme Lord, a person is awarded the opportunity of sipping Gaṅgā water and the chanting the Holy Name of Lord Nārāyaṇa at the time of death. This will certainly afford him liberation from all material bondage, only then can he be blessed to become a servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

All the commentators of the *Bhāgavatam* have clearly indicated that the liberated souls may render full devotional service to the Supreme Lord, the performer of transcendental pastimes. Therefore, the position of a devotee is almost equal to the Lord Himself, and the Lord always sees His devotees in a more exalted position than even Himself.

The innumerable eulogies that have been compiled since time immemorial about the divine excellences of a pure devotee are an inadequate description. Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are very happy to be

called servants of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Ananta Śeṣa is always hankering to serve Him. Although the pure devotees are almost equal to the Lord Himself, they still constantly desire to serve Him in loving attachment.

Advaita Ācārya is one such elevated devotee. Many persons do not know his real mood and position and so they are discontented, when He is glorified as a devotee of Lord Caitanya. Yet, even Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself is greatly pleased if anyone should call Him a ‘devotee’, for who but the Lord knows perfectly well the glory of a pure devotee.

The most abominable of all sinners proclaim themselves as ‘God’ hoping to ensure regularly a full belly. Gathering around him a crowd of asinine disciples, the impostor poses himself as the Lord of the Universe. Although the body of such a cheater is only fit for the meal of a dog, he still becomes deluded by the external energy of Lord Viṣṇu to think that he is the Supreme Controller.

Now just behold the opulence of the Lord of all lords, Lord Gauracandra, simply by His desire, millions of people converged with millions of burning torches to begin a historic march against oppression. All the way, they were greeted with decorated doorways and showers of floral confetti from the heavenly denizens.

To understand the transformation that took place in the Lord after He drank water from Śrīdhara’s water pot is difficult to understand. All the devotees began to shed tears of joy upon seeing the special mercy that the Supreme Lord had showered upon His pure devotee.

Śrīdhara was thunderstruck, with tears in his eyes brimming over and holding straw between his teeth in utter humility, he knelt before the Lord chanting His Holy Name and said, “What have you done my Lord, what water have You drunk?”

Nevertheless, Viśvambhara’s bliss was unrestrainable after having drunk water from His devotee’s water vessel, He danced in ecstasy surrounded by all His associates who sang and danced along with Him. Nityānanda Prabhu and Gadādhara Paṇḍita were always like two jewels decorating either side of the Lord.

The fortune of Śrīdhara is indeed so great that even Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are moved to tears of joy in appreciation. The Supreme Lord, Śrī Caitanya, is unattainable by wealth, fame, or erudition, but is captivated by unalloyed devotion. After the water-drinking pastime, the Lord moved on from Śrīdhara's place towards the town.

Navadvīpa became the most hallowed place in the entire creation as Lord Caitanya and His associates danced and sang in the ecstasy of the Lord's Holy Name. The concave extremities of the universe echoed with only the sound of the Holy Name.

The divine exultation that is experienced by Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Nārada Muni, Lord Śiva, and others upon hearing the Holy Name was now being experienced by the residents of Navadvīpa as they passed through the different localities of the town. Although the *kīrtana* was going on for a whole night, one should not presume that this was just one night. Rather, unknown to anyone, several *yugas* passed within that single night.

For Lord Caitanya, the Supreme Lord, nothing is impossible to accomplish. A mere raising of His eyebrows annihilates the entire universe. Only the most fortunate and pious souls can comprehend such esoteric truths about the Absolute. Certainly, a dry mental speculator is never eligible for such revelations.

Making loud thunderous shouts of joy, the townspeople were enraptured beyond comprehension by the beautiful dancing of Lord Caitanya and the profuse flow of divine nectar from the chanting of the Holy Name.

People thanked Mother Śacī for carrying in her womb such a child as Viśvambhara and blessed Jagannātha Miśra for being a good father to the Lord. For the good fortune that had descended upon themselves as the residents of Navadvīpa, they were more than grateful. They all wished that this night would never end and that the Lord would continue His pastimes for many *yugas*.

These pastimes of the Lord have neither beginning nor end. They appear and then after a certain time, they disappear. The Lord manifests Himself to His devotee according to the desire and mood of the devotee.

The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* 3.9.11. states: “O Supreme Lord who is glorified in choice verses! You are so merciful to Your devotees that You manifest Yourself in the particular eternal form of transcendence in which they always think of You.”

Even to this day, Śrī Caitanya is performing His eternal pastimes and those who are pure in heart can see them. The Lord descends only to please His devotees. One may perform austerities and sacrifices for millions of lifetimes, but without devotional service, all his performances are futile. Pure devotional service is to serve the pure devotee of the Lord, this is the verdict of all the scriptures.

I offer my obeisances to Śrī Nityānanda. All glory to Him, for only by His mercy can one glorify Śrī Caitanya. Many persons see Nityānanda in different ways. Some say that He is Balarāma, that He is very dear to Śrī Caitanya, or that He is the expansion of the omnipotent Lord. Many say that they do not know or understand who He really is.

Each one sees Śrī Nityānanda according to his own particular realization. Whoever Nityānanda maybe, He is very special to Śrī Caitanya and may His lotus feet be the only treasure of my heart.

Let all the atheists who criticize Śrī Nityānanda be very careful lest they be kicked in the head. I offer my obeisances at the feet of this dearest devotee of Lord Caitanya, may He eternally be my Lord and master.

I can know Śrī Nityānanda only by the mercy of Śrī Caitanya and I can know Śrī Caitanya only if Śrī Nityānanda reveals Him to me.

Caitanya is Rāma and Nityānanda is Lakṣmaṇa. Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa and Nityānanda is Saṅkarṣaṇa.

Nityānanda possesses the power to fully satisfy Śrī Caitanya with His transcendental service and the intimate associates of Śrī Caitanya are in full knowledge of the extraordinary position of Nityānanda, but at times

one may see a certain elevated devotee disagreeing and quarrelling with other devotees. This is transcendental and is happening by the desire of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Since they are all the most elevated Vaiṣṇavas, no one should side with any party, because and in so doing, one will certainly make some offence against a Vaiṣṇava. One can only become a true Vaiṣṇava by serving Kṛṣṇa and not finding faults in others.

I offer my obeisances at the lotus feet of Advaita Ācārya, may I remain attached to his dear servitors. All glory to Śrī Caitanya along with all His associates. These narrations about His pastimes reward one with the highest devotional mood.

If one sides with Advaita against Gadādhara Paṇḍita, then, due to this imbecilic act, one is never allowed shelter by Advaita Ācārya as his devotee.

The transcendental pastimes of Śrī Caitanya are the purest form of divine ambrosia. I pray that these unlimited pastimes increasingly appear in the minds of all living beings. One who desires joy from hearing these narrations will surely see the beautiful face of Lord Caitanya directly.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Śrī Nityānanda are my life and soul. I, Vṛndāvana Das, offer this song at Their lotus feet.

24. Śrī Caitanya Reveals His Universal Form

All glory to Lord Caitanya; He is epitome of divine peace! He protects the pious and annihilates the miscreants. All glory to the son of Jagannātha Miśra and Śacīmātā; He is glorified with choice verses!

All glory to Lord Caitanya, the life and purest treasure in the heart of Jagadānanda Paṇḍita, Haridāsa and Kāśīśvara! You are an ocean of