



ŚRĪ MANAḤ-ŚIKŚĀ – INSTRUCTIONS TO THE MIND

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| A) Verses 1-3 | The Goal and Orientation of all Gaudīya vaiṣṇavas |
| B) Verses 4-7 | Obstacles and How to Overcome Them |
| C) Verses 8-12 | The Highest Aspiration & the Result of Chanting the Manaḥ-sikṣā Daily |

C) THE HIGHEST ASPIRATION & THE RESULT OF CHANTING THE MANAḤ-ŚIKŚĀ DAILY *(continued)*

REMEMBER VṚNDĀVANA LIFE

(verse 9)

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa will never leave Vṛndāvana, so if you want to invite them into your heart, you must make your heart Vṛndāvana. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī helps us in this by drawing a whole picture of Vṛndāvana life, and informing us how to meditate on Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and their associates:

The moon of Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa, is sitting next to Vṛndāvanēśvarī. The rays of their effulgence light up the forest. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is my Mistress, and Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of Her life.



Raghunātha dāsa sees himself as Rādhā's servant. This is the general vision of our *sampradāya*. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura once informed a devotee, who had observed a king and his royal family doing full obeisances around Rādhārānī's lake Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, about the Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava position in regard to Śrīmatī Rādhārānī: "We worship Kṛṣṇa only because of His connection to Rādhā. Kṛṣṇa is Rādhā's beloved and this is how we approach Him." Rādhā's devotee knows that Rādhā is always with Kṛṣṇa. She is a golden creeper embracing the *tamāla* tree of Kṛṣṇa. Her devotee knows, "If I connect with my Rādhā, I'm like a leaf on the creeper, and I experience whatever She experiences in Her loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa."

Śrī Lalitā devī is the dear friend of my Svāmī, and Śrī Viśākḥā devī the śikṣā-guru for the services rendered to the Divine Couple.

If you want to contact an important person, you must go through his or her friends and/or servants. Lalitā is so dear to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that She absolutely controls Them. When She commands something, they do it! No one ever says "No" to Lalitā. When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa perspire, Lalitā comes and wipes the drops of perspiration from Their faces and lotus feet. This is how close She is to Them. Whenever She finds someone in Vṛndāvana who has an inclination towards Rādhārānī, She will immediately arrange for that person to meet Rādhā. Pray to Her, "Kindly, arrange some possibility for me to meet Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa."

Simply by seeing Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Girirāja Govardhana one attains the darśana of the Divine Couple and sublime love for Them.

Just by contact with the *dhāma* love will sprout inside your heart.

Some of you might ask yourselves now: Is it bona fide to meditate like this? Did Śrīla Prabhupāda speak about meditation, *smaraṇam*, on Kṛṣṇa? Here is a good answer to this doubt: "People who are constantly engaged in the transcendental meditation of seeing Kṛṣṇa, internally and externally, by thinking of Him playing the flute, entering the Vṛndāvana forest and tending the cows with the cowherd boys; have really attained the perfection of *samādhi*."

(Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead, chapter 21)

Exercise:

Connect with Lalitā by singing Her *aṣṭakam* (by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, taken from *Stava-mālā*) with all your heart.

Śrīla Lalitā-praṇāma-stotra (Bowing down to Śrī Lalitā)

*rādhā-mukunda-pada-sambhava-gharma-bindu-
nirmañchanopakaraṇī-kṛta-deha-lakṣām
uttuṅga-sauhṛda-viśeṣa-bharāt pragalbham
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, who worships the perspiration from Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mukunda's lotus feet, and who, out of great love, is very bold and arrogant.

*rākā-sudhā-kiraṇa-maṇḍala-kānti-daṇḍi-
tuṅḍa-sriyaṁ cakita-cāru-camūru-netrām
rādhā-prasādhana-vidhāna-kalā-prasiddhām
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, the beauty of whose face rebukes the full moon's splendor, whose eyes are like the lovely eyes of a frightened doe, and who is famous for artistically decorating Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

*lāsyollasad-bhujaga-śatru-patattra-citra-
paṭṭāmśukābharaṇa-kañculikāñcītānīm
gorocanā-ruci-vigarhana-gaurimāṇam
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, whose transcendental form is gracefully dressed with a bodice, ornaments, and silk garments wonderfully colorful as the tail of a jubilantly dancing peacock, and whose fair complexion rebukes the splendor of *gorocanā*.

*dhūrte vrajendra-tanaye tanu suṣṭhu vāmyaṁ
mā dakṣiṇā bhava kalaṅkini lāghavāya
rādhe giram śṛṇu hitām iti śikṣayantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, who gives the following instruction, “Rādhā, please hear these beneficial words: Be contrary with the rogue who is the prince of Vraja. O dishonored one, do not become gentle and submissive for Your own undoing.”

*rādhām abhi vraja-pateḥ kṛtam ātmajena
kūṭam manag api vilokya vilohitākṣīm
vāg-bhaṅgibhis tam acireṇa vilajjyantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, who, seeing Him even slightly cheat Śrī Rādhā, with reddened eyes shames the prince of Vraja with a flood of words.



*vśātsalya-vandal-vasatiṁ paśupāla-rājñyāḥ
sakhyaṇuśikṣaṇa-kalāsu gurum sakhinām
rādhā-balāvaraja-jivita-nirviśeṣām
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, who is the abode where the queen of the *gopas* places her love, who is the teacher of the arts of friendship to her friends, and who considers Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as dear as life.

*yām kām api vraja-kule vṛṣabhānujāyāḥ
prekṣya sva-pakṣa-padaṅgam anurudhyamānām
sadyas tad iṣṭa-ghaṭanena kṛtārthayantīm
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, all of whose desires became at once completely fulfilled when She saw in Vraja the path of Śrī Rādhā blocked by a certain person.

*rādhā-vrajendrasuta-saṅgama-raṅga-caryām
varām viniścitavatīm akhilotsavebhyaḥ
tām gokula-priya-sakhī-nikuramba-mukhyām
devīm guṇaiḥ su-lalitām lalitām namāmi*

I offer my respectful obeisances to charming and virtuous Lalitā-devī, who is the first of Rādhā's friends in Gokula, and for whom the meeting of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa is the greatest of jubilant festivals.

*nandann amūni lalitā-guṇa-lalitāni
padyāni yaḥ paṭhati nirmala-dṛṣṭir aṣṭau
prītyā vikarṣati janam nija-vandal-madhye
tam kīrtidā-pati-kulojvala-kalpa-valli*

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the splendid desire tree vine in the family of King Vṛṣabhānu, lovingly accepts among Her own associates a person who happily and with pure vision reads these eight verses describing the charming virtues of Śrī Lalitā.

THE SINGLE OBJECT OF WORSHIP

(verse 10)

In one of his last verses Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī addresses the question, “Who is the single most object of worship?” This is, of course: Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

The Glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī

Just as you cannot see the moon without its rays, you cannot experience Kṛṣṇa in His fullness without Rādhā. Śrīla Prabhupāda declares, “I emphatically say to you, O brothers, you will obtain your good fortune from the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa only when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī becomes pleased with you.” (The Jaladuta Diary)

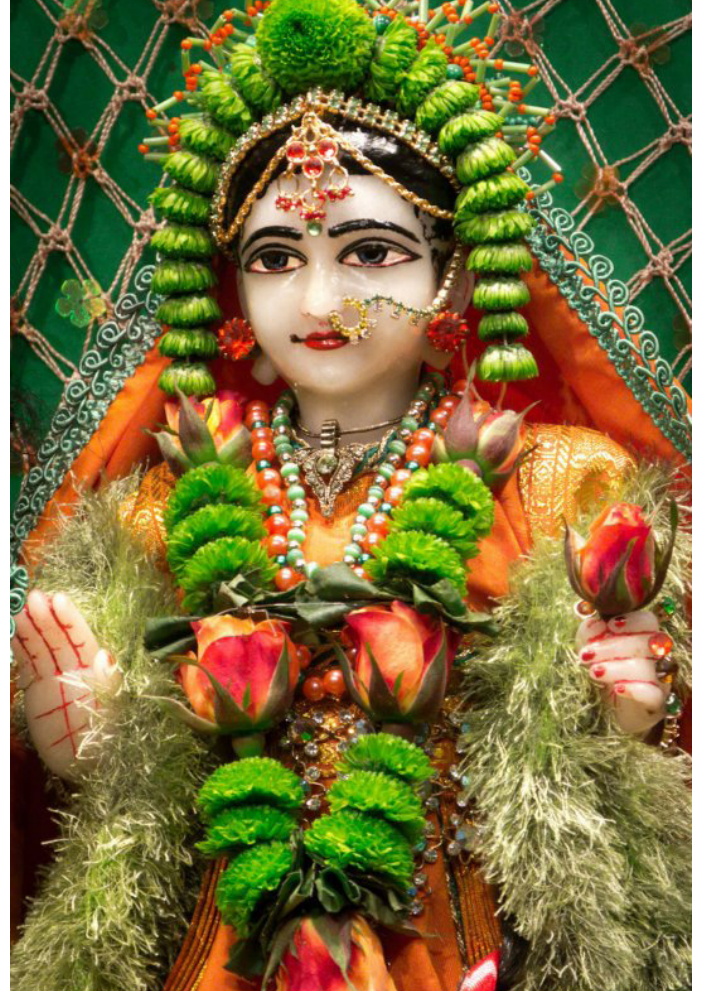
Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī glorifies three qualities of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī:

1) Rādhā’s beauty:

It is said, “True beauty comes from within.” Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the personification of love of Kṛṣṇa, She carries the greatest amount of love for Him, and it is this love that makes Her so exceptionally beautiful.

2) Rādhā’s good fortune:

The greatest fortune is to be in Kṛṣṇa’s thoughts. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is Kṛṣṇa’s most beloved and as such, always in His thoughts. This makes Her most fortunate. Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī describes that “She is the Mānasa-sarivara lake where the swan of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s heart swims, [...]” (Śrī Viśākhānandābhīdha-stotra, 52)



3) Rādhā’s ability to control Kṛṣṇa:

“By using the mystic power of Her intense love for Lord Kṛṣṇa She has brought Him completely under Her control.” (Śrī Viśākhānandābhīdha-stotra, 57) Kṛṣṇa once confessed this to Rādhā: “I am fully under Your control. I am unable to think about anyone but You! When I repeat Your name, and meditate on Your form, I cannot remain patient. If I hear the words “Śrī Rādhē”, my mind runs into the direction out of which these words came.”

How to Receive Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s Mercy

We can truly become fortunate only by mercy. How can we get it? Pray for it, plead and beg for it! Śrīla Bhaktivinode Ṭhākura (Śrī Bhajana-darpaṇa) lists three qualities one needs to develop in order to receive Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s mercy:

1) Unpretentious Humility –

You can see to which extent you have unpretentious humility by estimating the degree to which you can tolerate the misbehavior of others. A truly humble person continues in his or her services without protest, even when wronged.

2) Intense Greed –

Develop an intense hankering to attain your goal.

3) Undeviating Resolve –

You must be single-pointedly focused on your goal.

Exercise:

The following poem is a prayer for the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Try to situate yourself in the above-mentioned three qualities and then pray from your heart:

Prārthanā-paddhati (by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī)

*śuddha-gāṅgeya-gaurāṅgīm
kuraṅgī-laṅgimekṣaṇām
jita-koṭīndu-bimbāsyām
ambudāmbara-saṁvṛtām*

O Rādhe! Your limbs are more golden than pure gold, Your beautiful eyes are like those of a doe, Your lips conquer millions of moons, and You are dressed in garments as blue as monsoon clouds.

*navīna-vallavī-vṛnda-
dhammillottaṁsa-mallikām
divya-ratnādy-alāṅkāra-
sevyamāna-tanu-śrīyam*

O Rādhe! You are the ornamental jasmine atop a braided bun amongst the young cowherd girls, and the beauty of Your body is enhanced by celestial gems and other ornaments.

*vidagdha-maṇḍala-gurum
guṇa-gaurava-maṇḍitām
abhipreṣṭha-vayasābhir
aṣṭābhir abhivēṣṭitām*

O Rādhe! You are the leader of a coterie of cunning ladies, You are decorated with virtue and dignity, and You are surrounded by Your eight very dear girlfriends.



*cañcalāpāṅga-bhaṅgena
vyākuli-kṛta-keśavām
goṣṭhendra-suta-jīvātu-
ramya-bimbādharaṁṛtām*

O Rādhe! Lord Keśava is bewildered by Your playful restless glances, and the nectar of Your lovely red lips is elixir of life for Kṛṣṇa, the son of the king of Vraja.

*tvām asau yācate natvā
viluṭhan yamunā-taṭe
kākubhir vyākula-svānto
jano vṛndāvaneśvari*

O Queen of Vṛndāvana! Bowing down to You and rolling about on the Yamunā's shores, this fallen soul prays to You with an agitated heart and choked voice.

*kṛtāgaske ,py ayogye ,pi
jane ,smin kumatāv api
dāsya-dāna-pradānasya
lavam apy upapādaya*

Though he may be an unfit offender with a crooked mind, please bestow a small fragment of the valuable gift of Your service to this person.

*yuktas tvayā jano naiva
duḥkḥito ,yam upekṣitum
kṛpā-dyoti-dravac-citta-
navanītāsi yat sadā*

Such a sorrowful person is not fit to be neglected by You, for Your mind, like fresh butter, always melts from the warmth of Your compassion.

ATTAINING DIRECT SERVICE

(verse 11)

In the previous verse Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī described the highest goal – but how do we reach it? How can we attain direct service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, and be reinstated in our real life? He explains this in verse eleven of the *Manaḥ-śikṣā* by mentioning five methods for deeply performing devotional service:ṇī.

1) Arcana – Worshipping the Deities

There is a single ingredient in your worship of the deity which you should never forget: love. Kṛṣṇa does not accept offerings which are given without love. He demonstrated this when He rejected the meal Duryodhana wanted to give Him.

2) Kīrtana – Glorifying the Lord

Glorifying the Lord by praising Him, or singing His names, should also be accompanied by an essential ingredient, and that is humility. If you do not develop humility, you will easily commit offences against Vaiṣṇavas.

3) Dhyāna – Meditation

When you engage in meditation upon the Lord you should avoid speculating, going into an imaginary world. The safest way to meditate is to read and meditate upon revelations from the transcendental platform which have been written down by great devotees in books and prayers.



4) Śravaṇa – Hearing

Hear about the Lord's name, qualities and pastimes from a pure devotee or *sādhu*. Listen regularly, with faith and full attention.

5) Praṇāma – Offering Obeisances

Offer obeisances to the deities and holy places that remind you of the Lord.

The key to spiritual advancement is to be connected to Kṛṣṇa in all one's services, and not to perform them simply mechanically. Fill your mind with Kṛṣṇa, think of the person, whose name you chant, whom you serve! One will remain in the external world if one only performs *bhakti* externally.

Exercise:

Go through this list of the five methods for performing devotional service and see if each of them is regularly part of your life. Try to integrate and strengthen the missing or rare practices.

THE RESULT OF CHANTING THE MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ DAILY (verse 12)

“Whoever – being a follower of Śrī Rūpa and his associates – sings out loud in a sweet and melodious voice, here in the forest of Gokula, this greatest eleven verse prayer called *Manaḥ-śikṣā* with full knowledge of its various meanings, attains the incomparable jewel of the worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.”

