

fore, an event that deserves to be recorded and was also exhibited by them, by the beneficent contrivance of the Spiritual Power of the Lord, to teach the proper use of the instinct of fear to all ungodly conditioned souls.

Besides providing the opportunity of service to those devotees who did not know, by the force of the beneficent spiritual Power, that He was Godhead Himself, Sree Gaurasundar also contrived to receive by this method the perfect homage of the most highly beloved of His fully conscious transcendental servitors whom He wanted to specially favour. Fire and the serpent, that were the causes of the consternation of friends and relatives, were respectively the god who identifies himself with the element of fire and Sree Ananta Deva Who is the Plenary Form of Sree Samkarsana and Who serves as the Couch of the Supreme Lord. Sree Gaurasundar chose to receive their service for the purpose of His Pastime on this occasion. The pervert *yogi* only deludes the people by his display of seeming immunity from mundane fire and serpent in juggling imitation of these Acts of the Lord. Their exhibitions tempt other atheistical people like themselves to follow the method of the *astānga yoga* for the profane attainment of powers of apparent mastery over Nature. There are also people who are disposed to class Sree Chaitanya and His devotees with these pseudo-*yogis* and explain also Their Performances by the possession of improper *yogic* powers. But as a matter of fact the display of the pseudo-*yogic* power is *no* part of the function of the pure soul taught and practised by Sree Chaitanya and His associates. The power which the pervert *yogi* imagines as belonging to himself being acquired by his own meritorious endeavours, is a penal delusion which is as condemnable as the attempt of acquiring any other form of worldly power. It happens to possess the appearance of a superhuman entity in degree and measure, but is, as a matter of fact, only a still more objectionable form of selfish material enjoyment and only a potent means of self-deception or godlessness. For this reason, those, who try to understand the Doings of Sree Gaurasundar and His devotees from the point of view of the *astānga yoga*, obtain, as the due punishment of their selfish labours, a further increase of aversion to Godhead.

CHAPTER V

BOYHOOD

AND now the Son of Sree Sachi Devi began to toddle on His tender legs. These pedestrian performances with uncertain steps were confined to the yard of Sree Sachi. The Child constantly moved about in the yard. Every limb of the Boy was most exquisitely beautiful. His Face was the envy of the Moon. His Head was beautifully rounded. A profusion of fine curls gracefully clustered round the Forehead. His Eyes were remarkably wide, resembling the petals of the lotus-flower. These reminded one of the Appearance of Boy-Krishna. His long Hands hang down to the Knees. The Lips were crimson. His Bosom was wide and possessed of every auspicious feature. The whole Form of Gaur had a most pleasing yellowish tint that matched Him to perfection. His Fingers, Hands and Feet were particularly beautiful. While the Lord tripped about in the haphazard fashion of children, the mother used to get alarmed, as it seemed to her that blood came out of the delicate Feet of the Boy as They pressed lightly on the ground.

The parents were unspeakably happy. They felt and whispered to each other that a great Personage was born in the family, which ensured deliverance of themselves and the family from the bondage of this world. These high hopes of the parents were confirmed by the peculiarity that the Child fell to crying if He did not hear the sound of the Name of Hari. He was the Very Embodiment of Joy, whenever the Name of Hari was chanted to Him by clap of hand, and would express His gladness by unceasing laughter and dancing as long as the Name of Hari continued to be sung. This circumstance drew all the ladies of the neighbourhood into the house from early dawn, who formed themselves into

a merry ring round Gaur Sundar and performed the *samkirtan* with clap of hand. The attentive Boy danced, rolled on the ground gray with dust, and, climbing into the lap of mother, burst into merry peals of laughter. He danced with such charming poses of the limbs that it filled all the onlookers with inexpressible delight. The Lord in this artless manner of childhood made all of them perform the *kirtan* of Hari: but they did not understand it.

As the Boy grew up He began to manifest great restlessness of disposition and constantly sped in and out of the house. He would frequently leave the house unattended and would beg from the passers-by fried rice, plantain, sweetmeats, and, in fact, whatever eatables they happened to be carrying. The extraordinary Beauty of the Boy softened everybody towards Him, and perfect strangers gave Him, as soon as they saw Him, whatever He asked. No sooner did He obtain any gift than He ran into the house with the greatest joy and gave it to those ladies who chanted the Name of Hari. Such precocity of the Child made all persons laugh with great delight, and they would continue to chant the Name of Hari with clap of hand. The Lord often left the house in this manner at all hours of the day and even in the evenings.

That the Holy Name of Godhead should be sung constantly, to the exclusion of every other activity, is a proposition that is repeatedly enjoined by the Scriptures, although it may appear at first sight to be impracticable. The mercenary preacher accepts a pecuniary remuneration for his exertions in delivering the Word of God on the ground that he must have something to live upon. How can the Name of Godhead be taken night and day without exposing oneself to sure starvation? The physical needs of the body compel every mortal to devote a part of his time to activities of this world. It may be urged with apparent reasonableness that the worldly activity for earning a livelihood is imperative and cannot be neglected by anybody in this world, whether he is a prince or a peasant, an atheist or a preacher of the Word of God. Therefore, the declaration of the Scriptures, that the chanting of the Name of Godhead *at all time* is the *only* function of every soul, requires to be liberally interpreted in its application to the people of this world. The impracticability is perfectly clear and simple and

can be understood even by a child. It is not possible that this obvious difficulty should have been overlooked and overruled by the numerous Scriptural declarations, unless for a very good reason. That reason is also quite plain and may be briefly stated as follows. Godhead Himself has the Power and the Will to provide for the maintenance of those who devote themselves wholeheartedly, night and day, to the performance of the *kirtan* of Himself. Wherefore, it is expressly forbidden in the Scriptures to *sell* the Word of God in exchange for anything. If a person, who sets up as a preacher of the Word of God, makes of it a trade for the maintenance of himself and his family, for lacking the necessary faith in the promise of Godhead that he need not think for his own maintenance, he thereby commits an act of disobedience against Godhead and by reason of such sinfulness becomes unfit to receive or still less convey to others the Holy Word of the Lord.

Sree Chaitanya taught that the Name of Godhead should be taken at all time with patience and humility. The patience consists in practising perfect reliance on the Word of God. The humility consists in giving up all thought of selfish enjoyment and accepting the desire to please and obey Godhead as the only object of one's serving activity. These considerations supply the real explanation of the otherwise mysterious Behaviour of the Divine Child. Godhead Himself procures the necessaries for the maintenance of every one who devotes himself to the chanting of the Name of God,—declare the Scriptures. The level of conduct of all preachers should come up to this cardinal fact of spiritual practice, if they expect to make their hearers believe, or make themselves believe, in the Truth of the Scriptures. Dancing and singing are forbidden to the Brāhmanas, *i.e.*, to those who know Godhead, except to serve the pleasure of Godhead and His devotees. The Brāhmanas alone, who abstain from singing and dancing for any worldly purpose, are not only fit, but it is their duty to dance and sing the *kirtan* of Hari for pleasing Godhead and His devotees.

Nimāi now set Himself to carrying out in a systematic manner a series of reckless depredations in the households of the friends of the family who resided in the neighbourhood. He took to thieving and it was His daily pastime to steal something or

other. He would stealthily drink the milk of one household, eat the cooked rice of another without notice, or, if He could obtain nothing to eat, He would break the earthen cooking-pots, of a third home. He would poke the babies put to sleep and make them cry, beating a hasty retreat the moment He was detected. If anybody chanced to catch Him at His tricks, He would fall at his feet and express repentance. 'Let Me go this time. I won't come again. I give My Word to you that I won't steal again.' Every one was astonished at such precocity of the little Child. No one was ever angered by these freaks; on the contrary, they all loved Him. Nay, they loved Him far more tenderly than they loved their own children. He stole away every faculty of the heart at the very first sight. The Divine Child took His pleasure in such extreme naughtinesses.

The Favour of God bears no resemblance to the favour that is expected from or conferred by worldly persons. We desire, by everything we do, only the gratification of our own senses in a gross or subtle form. When, therefore, we want to favour anybody, we naturally suppose that the only means of doing this is by providing him with the means of his sensuous gratification. 'All the ills that flesh is heir to' are traceable to this inveterate self-indulging principle of our conditioned nature. The elaborate social machinery, with its so-called ethical codes, has been devised for the express purpose of augmenting each man's average share of worldly enjoyment.

But we are all of us more or less conscious of the wild-goose-chase character of the pursuit of all worldly enjoyments. The causes of disappointment are many. Our hopes are never fully realised. The bliss, that we promise ourselves, invariably palls on its seeming attainment. We are perpetually oppressed with the sense of some besetting evil that poisons everything we desire to taste in the very act of tasting. We may be temporarily dazzled by worldly performances; but the inevitable dross is sure to discover itself in the long run in the most promising deeds of our lives. There is always this skeleton in the cupboard. The tragedies and comedies of worldly life alike repel us in the end by their grossness and triviality. Those, who consider it heroic to put

a good face on the inevitable, thereby only display their disinclination to honestly tackle the issue that confronts them all the same. The attitude of patience for the inevitable, which appeals so strongly to the so-called practical temperament, is tantamount to an avoidance to think on the solution a besetting problem under the tacit plea that one's duty is done by simply shutting one's eye to the inexplicable side of one's conduct.

But it is only a display of thoughtless egotism that imagines the presence of adverse circumstances and their abundance in this world for which the person himself is not in any way responsible. This attitude is both dishonest and shallow. It means only that one should consider it his duty to move heaven and earth for securing his own enjoyment and, after having secured a fair share of it, when he finds that it does not answer his purpose, must still go on advocating the wisdom of such course and shut his eyes to the real worthlessness of such policy. This attitude is possible only when a person is too much enamoured of the sensuous life despite its utterly disappointing quality. The faculties of the mind of such a person are viciously attracted towards hollow worldly advantages. He is so completely engrossed in his contemplation that he has neither time nor inclination to look to the other side.

To such people the conduct of the Boy Nimāi would appear to be not at all different from that of ordinary naughty children who often turn into moral men and women on attaining the age of discretion and whose childish vices, therefore, are a mere result of the exuberance of their animal spirit and should not be put in the same category with the objectionable vices of grown-up people. Even this sort of moral condonation of childish vices seems unnecessary to a school of thinkers who are disposed to give every child a long rope in order to enable him to develop freely all sides of his nature. According to this school, a virile and aggressive personality in the worldly sense is better than a regulated and cramped one. The conduct of Gaurāṅgī and His parents may, therefore, meet with the worldly approval of people of this stamp.

But the attitude that the associates of Sree Gaurāṅgī want us to realise in regard to these Activities of the Lord is different from what are recommended by both the above views. The

depredations that are committed against our worldly 'possessions' by Godhead are of the nature of His Special Favour. This becomes self-evident, as soon as they are understood as proceeding directly from the Will of the Lord. In the cases we are considering just now, this latter condition was supplied automatically by the fact that the mischievous Acts of the Child were actually *liked* by those persons against whom they were committed by the Lord Himself and were liked because of their connection with the Lord. If we love a frail mortal child, the imperfections of the object of our passion prevent the sentiment from acquiring the permanence that is its due and without which its full requirement is not satisfied. Hence the love of average worldly people for their children is unsure and shallow and cannot, by the very nature of its imperfection, extend to other children or even to all acts of one's own child. If one sets himself deliberately to love all little children without reservation, he will be rightly charged with trying to do something that is unnatural and fictitious. Such affection has no real basis to stand upon. We want to love our children from a natural impulse which is balked of its satisfaction by the unworthiness of the object to which it is directed. There was no cause of any such disappointment in the case of their love for Sree Gaurasundar, as He is, indeed, Godhead Himself. Hence, says the *Bhāgavatam*, 'all the faculties really succeed in obtaining what they seek only when they are directed towards Godhead.' This overwhelming attractiveness also supplies an indirect proof of the Perfect Personality of the Supreme Lord.

An incident of these Infant days is thus recorded by Krishnā-dās Kavirāj Goswāmi. One day Sachi brought a vessel full of fried rice and sweetmeats and gave it to Nimāi, asking Him to sit down and eat the same. Sachi then left Him to attend to household work. The Boy, however, began to eat raw earth by avoiding any notice. Sachi, however, perceived this and came running to the Child with expostulations of disapproval, snatched the earth from the Boy and asked Him why He preferred it to the other eatables. The Child burst into tears. 'Why are you angry?' He said, 'How am I to blame? It is you who gave Me the earth to eat. Fried rice, sweetmeats, cooked rice, etc., are all transforma-

tions of earth. This, which I am eating, is earth; those are also earth. Why do you consider them to be different? This body is of earth; its food is also earth. Consider this well. I am helpless, if you blame without reflection?' Sachi was very much surprised in her heart at such reply. 'Who taught you,' she said, 'to eat earth by the barren policy of intellectualists? The body is nourished only by eating cooked rice which is a transformation of earth. If raw earth is eaten, disease is produced and the body is destroyed thereby. We fetch water in a pitcher which is a transformation of earth. If we put water on a lump of clay, it soaks and dries up.' The Child said, 'Why did you not tell Me this before? I shall no more eat earth now that I know. When I feel hungry, I shall suck your breast.' And, saying this, the Boy smiled and climbed to the lap of mother and began to suck. These revelations of Supreme Power were constant and various. They were secured against recognition by the display of childishness that followed and served to blind everybody's judgment.

Sree Sachi Devi did not evidently belong to the school of empiric abstractionists who deny Godhead the power of real manifestation and real creation, regarding the latter as temporary, unwholesome and illusive and, therefore, impossible of being in any way related to perfect Godhead. Sachi Devi, on the contrary, believed in the relationship of simultaneous unity and diversity of Power with Possessor of Power and was not prepared to ignore qualitative differences that really exist between the fried rice and raw earth, after the manner of the Buddhists or believers in the Undifferentiated Abstract Negation as *Brahman*. Child Nimāi was more easily converted to the creed of His mother by her effective protest than falls to the lot of the average Māyāvādin.

One day as the Child was roaming in the town as usual by Himself and with ornaments on all parts of His Body, He attracted the attention of two thieves who thought on a plan of robbing His ornaments. Accordingly, one of them with sweet words took up the Lord into his arms, saying that they had been searching for Him and would take Him home. The Lord at once consented to their proposal and was carried on their shoulders a long distance through intricate lanes towards the place where the nefarious deed

was to be perpetrated with safety and secrecy. Those thieves endeavoured all this time to keep Nimāi in humour by sweet words and the offer of prospective sweetmeats. While the Lord was being thus hurried off to their rendezvous, the members of His family missed Him and began to search in all directions, but could find the Boy nowhere. A great fear gradually took possession of their minds. Meanwhile the thieves had been led by the Deluding Power of Vishnu into taking the road to the Home of Jagannāth Misra, under the impression that it led to their own place and, on their arrival at Misra's house, felt quite sure that they had successfully reached their destination.

They accordingly made the Boy descend from their shoulders just where Jagannāth Misra and the friends and relations of the family were sitting in silent grief, apprehending a great calamity. Nimāi at once ran into the arms of His father and all present shouted 'Hari, Hari' in the joy of a great relief, as if Life Himself was restored to their bodies. The thieves looked foolish and perplexed and were very much frightened when they found out that it was not their own place. Thereupon availing of the confusion caused by the arrival of Nimāi they made good their escape.

They did not stop till they felt that they were out of the reach of any possible pursuers. They were amazed by the nature of their adventure and thought that they had been under the spell of a black magician and had been saved only by the grace of goddess Chandi whom they worshipped. They hugged each other in a close embrace in their ecstacy of joy at their Providential escape. As a matter of fact, it was also no ordinary good luck that had provided them an opportunity of carrying Nimāi on their shoulders.

Here, at the house of Jagannāth Misra, after the first outburst of joy had subsided, they began to look about for the person who had brought Nimāi home with the object of rewarding him by the present of a head-dress. This was a piece of cloth which they wanted to tie round his head with their own hands. But although it transpired that two men had actually brought the Child on their shoulders, no one came forward to claim the reward. Nimāi was questioned and declared that He had gone to the bank of the *Bhāgirathi* and had been brought on the shoulders of two

strangers by paths that were unknown to Him. The people arrived at the conclusion that it was an instance of what the Scriptures declare, *viz.*, that children, old men and those who have nobody to look after them, are protected by the gods in the shape of luck. Thus thought they in their ignorance, unable to realize the significance of the occurrence by reason of the sportive intervention of the Power of Vishnu. Those, concludes Thākur Brindābandās, who listen to this story, which is one of the *hidden* narratives of the Scriptures, attain to firm devotion to the Feet of Sree Chaitanya.

Vishnu's Power possesses at one and the same time a double face. One of these confers the knowledge of the Divinity on one disposed to serve, the other obscures the spiritual vision and makes the *jīva*, who is averse to the service of Godhead, hanker for sensuous enjoyment. The *jīva* falls into the clutches of the latter, also called *Māyā*, if he makes the attempt to understand the Divinity by the resources of his own paltry intellect. In this instance the thieves were prevented by the Spiritual Energy to act in the wrong way, in spite of their bad intentions. The members of the family of Jagannāth Misra were also prevented by the Spiritual Power, who supplies the conjunction of events forming the *Leelā* of Godhead, from realising the whole truth of the incident. The *jīva* possesses freedom of will but is lacking in the power of taking the effective initiative which belongs exclusively to Godhead. The *jīvas* are made conscious of the Purpose of Godhead in what they are enabled to do, just in the proportion that is necessary for the Divine Purpose. Those, who rely on their own judgment for finding out the Divine Purpose, without desiring to receive the knowledge of it from Himself, are guided by the Deluding Energy into wrong conclusions; but they are not themselves aware that their conclusions are wrong.

This is, however, really opaque delusion. Those, who submit to receive their enlightenment from Godhead, are not thus deprived of the service of Godhead by the Deluding Power. In this instance it is not the Deluding Energy but the preventing Spiritual Power that relieved the thieves from their thievish propensity and sowed the seed for future service of the Divinity. Herein the thieves

were really most fortunate. It could not be otherwise, as Godhead Himself is directly concerned. When thieves steal the property of worldly people, they are under the deluding Power who punishes those who desire to serve themselves instead of God by helping them to gain their object in the shape of the attainment of their selfish enjoyment. But stealth, which is contrived by the Spiritual Power to be directed apparently against God Himself for enhancing the charm of the Divine *Leelā*, produces the best results in spite of the apparently evil intention of the person who attempts to rob Him, if the thief is not really anxious to go *consciously* against Godhead. In the case even of demon Rāvana, who apparently succeeded in robbing Sitā Devi, the illusion of his apparent success operated for his benefit by his death at the Hands of Godhead Himself.

From these instances we should be careful, however, not to draw the wrong conclusion and suppose that Godhead is apt to reward those who cherish evil intentions towards Himself for such offensive conduct. God rewards everybody impartially and fully. But the reward takes different forms according to the different antecedents of the recipients. In the case of the thieves, the stealth of God's property was prevented; but of this they were not conscious and God was also served unconsciously by allowing Himself to be carried on their shoulders to His Own Home. In the case of Rāvana, he was deluded by the Spiritual Power into the belief that he was successful in stealing Sitā. He, however, stole only the delusive form of Sitā. This proved a means of correction for Rāvana, although he had planned his *offence* against good advice. He was punished by the Spiritual Power by the salughter of himself with all his kindred and followers. Rāvana was well aware that he was going against Godhead. He was more fortunate than the two thieves, because he was enabled to realise that he was punished for his offence and also the utter wickedness of opposing the Divine Will. The Power of Godhead is really One but acts consistently in opposite ways, accordingly as He is served or opposed. Her external face, which alone is open to the view of those who are opposed to Godhead, seems to be terrible and incalculable as long as they continue to be averse to God. Her

benign face is seen only by those who are disposed to serve Godhead. The delusion of Jagannāth Misra and his kindred and friends was absolutely wholesome, being of the nature of the benign operation of the Spiritual Power of Godhead in furtherance of the joy of His Divine Activities.

One day Jagannāth Misra called to his Son and asked Him to fetch his book from the inner apartment. As the Boy entered the room running, Misra and Sachi distinctly heard exquisitely sweet sounds as of jingling of bells of anklets that were produced by the quick movements of the Child. Presently Nimāi came out with the required book and, making it over to His father, ran off for play. The parents were very much perplexed. There were no jingling anklets on the Feet of their Boy. Whence could the sound come? Their astonishment was changed to conviction as they went into the room. There they found, all over the room, prints of Feet marked with the signs of the banner, the bolt and the goad. They at once recognised the Foot-prints of Vishnu, and both of them instinctively exclaimed that there would be no more birth for them as they had a sight of those well-known Wonderful Divine Feet never seen by them before. They reverentially bowed to the foot-prints of Godhead. Misra naturally enough concluded that it was the Act of Dāmodar Silā, *i.e.*, the *Sālagram Silā* Who was the tutelary Deity of the family and was regularly worshipped in the house. He thought that Gopāla (Cow-boy Krishna) Who dwelt in the *Sālagrām Silā* walked about in the room, and the prints were of the Feet of Gopāla. Misra decided to undertake personally the worship of *Dāmodar Silā* from that day and asked Sachi Devi to cook rice boiled in sweet milk mixed with ghee as a special offering to Dāmodar Silā next morning. Misra with his own hands bathed the *Sālagrām Silā* with the five holy products of the cow and, in the company of his pious consort, reverentially worshipped the Deity of the family. The Lord laughed in His Mind at the conduct of His parents.

Thereafter occurred a most wonderful event. A pilgrim Brāhmaṇa, who had done many pious deeds in his previous lives, was wont to wander all over the country in quest of Krishna. He worshipped the six-letter *mantram* of Gopāla (Cow-boy

Krishna) and ate nothing except such food as had already been offered to Gopāla. By good fortune it so chanced that he arrived at the Lord's House in course of his wanderings. The pilgrim Brāhmana wore, as his cherished ornaments, the Holy Forms of Gopāla and the *Sālagrām Silā* suspended from his neck. The whole person of the pilgrim was aglow with the spiritual radiance of the ideal Brāhmana which can never be properly described in words. The mouth of the Brāhmana constantly recited the Name of Krishna. His eyes were listless by the influence of the sweet quality of Govinda That possessed his heart. At the sight of the newly-arrived stranger-guest, Jagannāth Misra, struck by the visible force of his personality, rising from his seat with respect, made obeisance to him. Misra then welcomed his guest with all due formality. He himself washed the feet of his guest and offered him his best seat. After the pilgrim was refreshed and properly seated, the good Misra enquired the place of his residence. To this the Brāhmana replied that he was a recluse and wandered about through sheer restlessness of mind. Misra, bowing low, observed that the wanderings of such as he testified to the good fortune of the world which good fortune belonged to him that day, and, if commanded, he would make the necessary arrangements for his cooking of the meal for Krishna.

The Brāhmana, signifying his assent to the proposal of Misra, the latter with great pleasure proceeded to make all necessary preparations. He made ready the place of cooking by cleansing it with great care and brought thither all the articles required for cooking. The Brāhmana, having cooked the meal with great satisfaction, sat down to make its offering to Krishna.

No sooner did the Brāhmana engage in the meditation of Krishna, than Sree Gaurasundar appeared before him. The Body of the Child was full of dust and perfectly nude. His beautiful Eyes, Hands, and Feet were red. Smilingly He took up the food offered by the Brāhmana with His beautiful Hand and, in the view of the worthy Brāhmana, ate a mouthful. The fortunate Bipra shrieked in an agony of grief: 'That restless Boy has stolen my cooked rice.' His cry quickly brought Jagannāth Misra

to the spot who found Sree Gaurasundar in the very Act of eating the cooked rice with a smiling Countenance.

Misra was greatly enraged and ran to administer his Son a sound thrashing. The pilgrim Brāhmana got up in great fear and caught hold of the hand of Misra. He said that the Child had no knowledge of right and wrong. A wise man should never hurt such a one. He accordingly importuned Misra to do no violence to the Boy. Misra was very much dejected. The Brāhmana said that there was no cause for grief; Godhead alone knows what is to happen on any day. 'I would dine on any fruits, roots or such other food that may be in the house. Be pleased to give the same to me.' But Misra would not hear. 'If you indeed regard me as your servant,' he said, 'be pleased to cook the meal once again. Allow me to make ready the place. I have got everything necessary for your cooking in the house. I shall, indeed, be very glad, if you cook once more.' Other relatives and well-wishers of Misra joined in the entreaty. The importunity of so many persons had its effect and induced the pilgrim to agree to cook again.

This time, in order to keep the Child out of harm's way, Sachi Devi took Him to a neighbour's house. The ladies did not forego such an excellent opportunity of reading a good lesson to the Child. 'Well, Nimāi', they said, 'You are so foolish that you ate the rice that was cooked by a stranger. You will be an out-cast for this. What will you do now?' The Boy laughed and made this strange answer, 'I am a cow-boy. I eat the rice cooked by Brāhmanas at all time.' He looked at them with an arch smile. The reply had its effect. They all burst into uproarious laughter and pressed the Child to their bosom. The Benign Spiritual Power of God prevented them from understanding the actual meaning of His words.

That pilgrim Brāhmana after cooking a second time sat down to make the offering to Krishna. He meditated on the Cow-boy. Nimāi again appeared before the pilgrim, having eluded the vigilance of all watchers, and ate a handful of the cooked rice which was duly perceived only by the Brāhmana who at once shouted out with grief. This gave the alarm to Misra who detected the Boy as He ran away after eating the rice. Misra took up a stick and

gave chase. But the Boy took refuge inside one of the rooms in great fear. Misra was not to be pacified by the entreaties of anybody. The pilgrim Brāhmana himself again interposed. 'Krishna', he said, 'has not allotted cooked rice for me to-day. This is the real truth, I tell you. The Boy is not to blame at all.' This did not allay the poignant grief of Misra who remained silent and thoughtful.

At this point Viswarup appeared on the scene. The beauty of His person was only equalled by His knowledge of all the Scriptures and His unbounded devotion to Krishna. The very sight of Viswarup was a revelation to the pilgrim who regarded His appearance with great attention and frequently looked at Him with unconcealed admiration. He enquired His parentage and warmly congratulated Misra on the possession of such a son.

Viswarup made obeisance to the Brāhmana. His words were extraordinarily sweet. He said that it was, indeed, very great good fortune that had brought a person who finds all his delight in his own soul as guest to their house. There could be no greater calamity than if this guest had to fast in the house against His will. He felt it a great grief, although He was very glad by seeing him. The Brāhmana said that he lived in the forest and was habituated to a diet of roots and fruits. He felt amply rewarded by having the sight of Viswarup. He would take any article of food that had been offered to Krishna. Viswarup said that a person like the pilgrim Brāhmana naturally cared only for the happiness of others, in preference to his own. Viswarup was, therefore, emboldened to make the request that he would be pleased to cook a third time. The Brāhmana said that the Will of Krishna in the matter was supreme and it had been very clearly declared. It was also almost midnight. He had already cooked twice. As it was not clearly the Will of Krishna that he should eat cooked rice that day, he entreated to be excused any further useless exertion and would accept fruits and roots as his repast for that night.

But Viswarup fell at the feet of the Brāhmana and repeated the entreaty of Himself and of the whole family that he would cook once again for the sake of Krishna. The pilgrim had been thoroughly bewitched by the Beauty and Grace of Viswarup. He

willingly consented to cook a third time amidst the shouts of 'Hari, Hari' that were raised by all present. The place was quickly cleansed and everything was made ready for his cooking.

This time very special care was taken to prevent further mischief by Nimāi. He had already hidden Himself inside one of the rooms. On the advice of those present, Misra had the door of the room securely bound from outside. Misra himself guarded the entrance of the room. The ladies at last announced that there was no further cause for anxiety, as the Child had fallen asleep. But they did not relax their vigilance.

At last the cooking of the Brāhmana was finished, and, having arranged the meal, that Brāhmana of excellent deeds, offered the same to Krishna in meditation. All the people had by this time fallen into a deep slumber. The Son of Sachi Devi again appeared on the spot where the Brāhmana was making his offering of food to Gopāla. On catching sight of the Boy the Brāhmana made a great noise, but no one heard his cries. The Lord said, 'Bipra! You are so generous! You ask Me to come. Is it My fault? Repeating My *mantram* you call upon Me. Finding it impossible to stay away, I have thus come to you. You always long for My Sight. Wherefore, I show Myself to you.'

The Brāhmana forthwith had a vision of the Wonderful Divine Form. The Figure had eight Arms which held the Conch, Disc, Club and the Lotus. There was butter in one of His Hands, which He ate with another. And the Lord played on the *Murali* (flute) with the other two Hands. A garland of jewels and the Gem *Kaustuva* adorned His Breast which was marked with footprints of Bhṛigu. The Brāhmana saw that precious ornaments decorated all parts of His Body. The tail of the peacock, set in the fresh twigs of *gunjā*, adorned His Head. His red Lips added to the Beauty of His moonlike Face. He moved His Lotus Eyes smiling. The *Vaijayanti* Garland waved to and fro as also the *Makara* pendent hanging from His Ears. The charming Anklet (*Nupura*) of jewels adorned the Lotus Feet of the Lord. Darkness was flung back afar by the sheen of His gemlike Toe-nails. On the self-same spot the Brāhmana also saw the wonderful *Kadamba* tree in Brindābana, alive with the sounds of birds. He saw the

cowherds and milkmaids and cows on all sides. He had direct vision of everything on which he was wont to meditate. That Brāhmana of pious deeds swooned away with excess of joy on beholding splendours never seen before.

Sree Gaur-sundar touched the body of the Brāhmana with His Hand. The Touch of Divine Hand restored external consciousness to the Brāhmana. He was rendered passive by joy, and no words came out of his mouth. He swooned away and fell on the ground repeatedly, but, recovering quickly, stood up as often as he fell. No part of his body could be composed by reason of shivering, sweat, horripilation; and tears from his eyes flowed in a stream like the sacred current of the Ganges. Presently the Brāhmana clasped the Feet of the Lord and began to cry with a loud voice.

On beholding the restlessness of the Brāhmana, Sree Gaur-sundar smiled as He spoke to him briefly. The Lord said 'that the Brāhmana is His servant in every birth and always thinks of having the Sight of Him. Wherefore He had shown him His Form. He had formerly shown His same Form to the Brāhmana in the home of Nanda, in another birth. The Brāhmana had forgot it. On that previous occasion also when Sree Gaurānga had been born in the village of the cowherds, the same Brāhmana, pursuing his pilgrim-journeys as now, had accidentally become the guest in the home of Nanda, and the Lord then showed him the same Form by stealthily eating his cooked food while in the act of offering it to Krishna. Those, who are His servants like the Brāhmana, are privileged to have the Sight of His Divine Form. He then told the Brāhmana not to divulge those secrets to any one as long as He remained Manifest in this world. He also told the Brāhmana that His Advent takes place at the beginning of the congregational chanting (*samkirtan*) and that He will spread the *samkirtan* to all countries. He will give away to every household the Holy Love which is coveted by the gods including Brahmā. The Brāhmana will live to see many of those Activities.' With these words and assuring the Brāhmana not to have any fears, the Lord returned to His own apartment, and there lay in His little bed as before, in the likeness of a child. By reason of deep slumber no one could know anything.

The Brāhmana was filled with supreme bliss on beholding the wonderful Divine manifestation. He besmeared his body with the cooked rice, cried as he ate, danced, sang, laughed and roared with delight. He repeatedly ejaculated 'jais' to the Boy-Krishna (*Gopāla*). The noise made by the Brāhmana at last woke up everybody, when he restrained himself and finished his meal by the customary performance (*āchaman*).

The first impulse of the Brāhmana was to make a clean breast of everything to all the people, so that they might be delivered by recognising the Lord Whom they all believed to be but a mere mortal child. But he desisted from this rashness on remembering his promise made to the Lord not to divulge anything. This fortunate Brāhmana thereupon took up his permanent abode in Nabadwip and daily visited his cherished Divinity at the home of Jagannāth Misra on the conclusion of his day's begging.

The Beatific Vision is different from ordinary seeing. The Brāhmana thought that if only he proclaimed what he had actually seen to all the people, they would implicitly believe in his words and be saved by knowing the Infant Son of Jagannāth Misra as the Lord of the world. This had been forbidden by Sree Gaur-sundar Himself in anticipation. Why did He forbid such disclosure? The Lord had Himself told the Brāhmana that His servants alone are privileged to have the Sight of the Divine Form. Those who are not the servants of Krishna do not see Him. Knowing Him is identical with seeing Him. Those that are not willing to serve Krishna see only a mortal child in the Son of Jagannāth Misra. This hallucination can be removed only by the Lord Himself, because it is His Power that obscures their vision. Unless He allows them to see, they cannot see or know Him as He really is. But the Lord is not unkind to them. He is full of mercy for even those who do not want to serve Him. He does not show Himself to them, lest they are forced to serve Him through fear. He wants their willing service which alone can satisfy also themselves, because that is the really natural relationship between Krishna and *jivas*.

This freedom of will conferred by Krishna on *jivas*, which, therefore, forms a part and parcel of their nature, is allowed free

scope by the Lord in order to enable *jivas* to attain the eternal, natural function of their souls by the process of free rational choice. He does not compel their choice to serve even Himself, against their freedom of will. But the *jiva* cannot sit idly. He must always serve to exist at all. Those, who do not like to serve Krishna, have to be made to serve their own deluded fancies. They hope to be able to avoid the service of Krishna by following their own selfish inclinations. Krishna freely allows them to make this experiment by providing the means for the *seeming* realisation of their desire.

His Deluding Energy creates this world for the purpose by His Will. Those *jivas*, who are averse to serve Krishna, find this world to contain more than an endless abundance of what they can conceivably want in such circumstance, *viz.*, all varieties of means of their own selfish enjoyment. In the process of undergoing such enjoyment, they have nothing to do with Krishna as the only Master to be served. They are thus offered, in fulfilment of their own choice, the vision of that Potency of Krishna whose apparent function is to minister to their selfish pleasures. This is the deluding manifestation or non-Krishna which can alone be available to those who want to lord it over the Divinity.

The Potency of Krishna, who thus appears to serve the erring fancies of disloyal souls, is the Deluding Power or *Māyā*. When Krishna Himself comes down in His own proper Form into this world which is built for the above penal purpose by His Deluding Power, those *jivas*, who happen to be undergoing corrective enjoyment in this lower region, naturally take Him to be an object of this world like the other mundane entities that they know, which are of value to them solely because they minister to their trivial selfish enjoyment. All so-called *service*, that is so loudly advertised in this world, is only a method of procuring the good, *i.e.*, enjoyable things of this world for oneself and other ungodly persons, for pleasing oneself. There is *no* place for the service of Krishna in the scheme of the selfish people of this world. The service of Krishna, the only Master, is not desired at all in this world. We want to be ourselves masters of everything including Krishna Himself if possible. Our lip-homage to Krishna is only a

piece of pious hypocrisy. God does not perpetrate the anomaly of offering us a Master, Who can be no other than Himself, when we want to be served. This aversion is not due to ignorance, but is an innate disposition which is the result of the abuse of our freedom of will. It is only when the will of the *jiva* chooses to serve the Truth, *i.e.*, Krishna, that Krishna shows His Form to him in order to receive his offered service.

The Vision Beatific is, therefore, possible only for those who have attained the highest rung of the ladder of spiritual endeavour towards the unadulterated service of the Divinity. There are hypocritical visions of so-called Divinity which are an ordinary device of the pseudo-*yogis* for deluding those worldly people who desire to *see* (?) Krishna for the gratification of their senses.

These *pseudo-visions and miracles* are by no means any infringement of the law of physical Nature. They come under the law of physical Nature or Deluding Energy as much as the ordinary events of mundane life. They are events of the mental plane. These mental powers can be obtained by the processes of pseudo-*yoga* and are coveted by persons who are inordinately anxious to extend their scope of selfish enjoyment. These bad people naturally fall a victim to the *pervert yogis* who lead them to deeper depths of perdition by producing in their minds such impious hallucinations of mastery over the Divinity. Krishna has His Eternal Divine Form. But His Form is not like those images of God that are set up in the shrines of worldlings for the gratification of fallen *jivas*. The True Form of Krishna is All-pure and Spiritual and can, by His Nature, be seen only by those who are themselves free from all worldly taint. This caution of the Scriptures should serve as a much-needed warning to all educated and high-born people who are specially liable to accept the assurances of pseudo-*yogis* and pseudo-*sādhus* to be enabled to obtain the Sight (?) of the Divinity even in their sinful state.

The process of spiritual progress has its strict gradations which bear a close analogy to those of mental progress. The really moral state is the natural condition of the *jiva*. An immoral or non-moral person is far worse than a brute. This moral condition is the highest ideal of his position conceivable by man as

attainable by his empiric thinking and activities based thereon. The spiritual, indeed, transcends the *ideal* moral, but not in the sense that it transgresses against the so-called moral law, because by such transgression man is only degraded to the condition which is worse than even that of the brute. The spiritual life enables us to realise the moral as a secondary result. The spiritual *fulfils* the moral ideal by transcending it.

Morality can neither be understood nor perfected in practice by the empiric efforts of man. Its ideal is attainment of *perfect* purity (?) of body and mind. This ideal, the Scriptures tell us, can be automatically attained, only if it is made a secondary, and not the primary, object of life, as it happens to be the case with all really immoral people. The perfection of morality is realised as a secondary consequence of serving Krishna and not as a reward of endeavours for the satisfaction of our senses in our temporary worldly sojourn.

Those who serve Krishna are alone necessarily and perfectly moral or free from the evils of the flesh. Those, who are not *perfectly* moral in this real sense, are not spiritual *at all* and have no right of entry into Sree Brindāvana, the Transcendental Abode of the Divinity. But the Deluding Power of God misleads immoral people, through the agency of immoral *yogis*, by showing them a false form resembling that of Godhead, as a means of punishing them for such impious desire of making God an object of the gratification of their senses.

This punishment is a real mercy to such people and is intended to cure them of their rank atheism. It is, therefore, necessary to confront one's so-called spiritual experiences with the authority of the Scriptures and the corroboration of real *sādhus* who do not desire to aggrandise themselves at our expense, before they are admitted by our serving disposition as genuine. The unambiguous advice on such matters is obtainable only from Sreemad *Bhāgavatam* and in the only intelligible form from the career of Sree Chaitanya as described by His associates, Who is the Living Embodiment of the Eternal Religion described in the *Bhāgavatam*. The other Scriptures avoid the concrete presentation of the Truth,

lest He be condemned or disbelieved by those who are deliberately *averse* to Him.

The *rationale* of theism is furnished by the Vaishnava philosophy, which is unique in the world, in its positive aspect. The associates and loyal followers of Sree Chaitanya have left an ample exposition of the philosophy of the religion of the *Bhāgavata* in the clearest possible language. But even so it is suicidal to attempt to understand the highest spiritual principles without availing ourselves of the aid that has been so mercifully placed within our reach by Godhead Himself. The attitude of neglect of the transcendental subject is often due to ignorance, prejudice and irreverence. The two former obstacles can be overcome only by one's own endeavours; but the last is incurable except by Grace. There cannot well be a greater hypocrite than one who professes the desire of serving Krishna but has no absolute regard for those perfectly loyal souls who admit no other legitimate function except the service of Godhead. It is for this sufficient reason that Godhead Himself has ordained that by submitting to His devotees, not once nor twice but constantly and eternally with body, mind and speech, that any one can have real access to His Presence. It is, however, this very dictum of the Scriptures, intended for ensuring devotion to Godhead, that is exploited by the knaves and atheists under the external garb of *sādhus* for passing off the different forms of pseudo-service on willing worldly people for the gratification of their diabolical atheistical purposes which are destructive of even ordinary morality.