



PRINCETON BHAKTI VEDANTA INSTITUTE

REPORT - AUGUST 5, 2017

Bhakti Vedanta Institute
of Spiritual Culture and Science
20 Nassau St., Ste. 116
Princeton, NJ 08542
Phone 732-604-4135
Website: bviscs.org

Divine Appearance of Lord Balarama

In celebration of Sri Balaram Purnima (Appearance day of Lord Balaram), Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaja. PhD, (Sripad Puri Maharaja), focused our weekly *sadhu sanga* on reading the Sanskrit verses from *Śrī Nityānanda Dvādaśakamī*^[1] while the devotees took turns reading their English translations.



Rasaraja das Prabhu during *Sankirtan*. Prabhus: Nila Madhava das, Rasaraja das, Sripad Puri Maharaja and Sobha ji during *sadhu sanga*

Sripad Puri Maharaja asked everyone in the room how they refer to themselves. Each in turn replied "I" because I am "individual" Nila Madhava das Prabhu responded. "When you are naming yourself, you call yourself "I," she calls herself "I," and so does he. So why do we all call ourselves by the same name? What does that "I" really refer to?" Sripad Puri Maharaja asked. "Do you know what a Universal is?" Kushum Devi responded, "That which is the same in many things is called a universal." "Very good," Sripad Puri Maharaja said then continued "The color of a snowflakes is white, isn't it? But that whiteness is not only in a particular snowflake but in every snowflake. Therefore the 'white' color is called a universal."

"Thus if everyone calls themselves 'I' then "I" is a universal. 'I have an existence that I am, which 'I' identify as my singular self but despite what I mean to designate as individual/singular it turns out to be universal. This is true for every singular, 'This apple' can be said of every instance of 'this apple.' 'This piece of paper in front of me' can be said of every

instance of 'this piece of paper in front of me.' What we say and what we mean are therefore different."

"Like 'acintya-bhedābheda-tattva' simultaneously one and different," Nila Madhava das Prabhu said. "The singular 'I' and the universal sense of 'I' represents a difference. In the universal sense of 'I,' we are all parts of that universal 'I,' and that is true of all of us." Sripad Puri Maharaja said. "We are all connected with that but in the platform of mere difference, we are not conscious of that universal truth of which we are a part. Lord Balarama represents that difference that is also identical with Krishna," Sripad Puri Maharaja explained. "Balarama is Krishna but is also different from Krishna. The temperament or sense of difference without identity or connection with Krishna is called Ego. From Balarama expands the *Chatur Vyuha* of which Sankarshan becomes Shiva who is lord over the ignorance of the collective or universal Ego."

"In Aristotle's philosophy thinking thinking itself is the absolute. We think, we believe that we are the source of thinking but how do we think? You do not even know how you lift your arm, right? So how do you think? What do we do when we want to think? Doesn't it just happen - like digestion?" Sripad Puri Maharaja asked. Rasaraja das responded, "We don't make any effort to digest, it just occurs."

"Digestion is an autonomic function of the body. It occurs automatically. Thinking is also going on automatically but we have some control over it, just as breathing is autonomic but can also be consciously controlled to some extent. Arjuna tells Krishna that the mind is more difficult to control than the wind [*Bhagavad-gita* 6.34]. I am identifying it as my thinking which is just identifying that universal

activity with my singular self. But that is an assumption that I am making. How do we distinguish 'I am doing it' from 'I am experiencing it' A yogi can control the mind with the intelligence, but that is not so easy for ordinary folks."

"Besides the *atma* or soul there is another Soul called *Paramatma* (*Ksīrodakaśāyī Visnu*). Thus Krishna's first expansion as Balarama is involved in that way," Sripad Puri Maharaja said then asked where is *Ksīrodakaśāyī Visnu* coming from? In response Kushum said "Maha Visnu." Ultimately, yes, you have Maha Visnu (Karandaksayi Visnu), Garbhodakasayi Visnu and *Ksīrodakasayi Vishnu*. Karandaksayi Visnu is originally coming through many expansion from Sri Balaram, who is also Sri Nityananda Prabhu," Sripad Puri Maharaja responded. "Balarama is also the *sandhini* potency of the Lord, the manifesting potency of the environment of Krishna's abode. We have a particular conception of that surrounding environment in this material world. We see so many things in our surroundings but we don't see Krishna. Yet in the spiritual plane His expansion as Baladeva is there producing the environment which serves to remind the devotees of Krishna."

"Baladeva is the *Sandini* potency. He's *Anantasesha*, the bed upon which Krishna rests, the umbrella, the throne, the manifested portion of the spiritual world, all is coming from Baladeva. It all seems different from Krishna although it is all connected with Him and supporting His pastimes. It is the *acintya beda abeda tattva* principle of identity in difference. When we see everything as different from Krishna that creates our own sense of difference or ego," Sripad Puri Maharaja continued. "A devotee gives up this ego of being an absolute identity opposed to the Absolute Godhead Krishna in self-forgetfulness, that is Krishna consciousness."

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 4. "Let us eternally worship that great personality Śrī Nityānanda-chandra, who freely grants the association of Śrī Gaurāṅgādeva, who is none other than Lord Krishna."



Clockwise: Prabhus: Nila Madhava, Rasaraja, Sripad Puri Maharaja and Sobha ji

"How does Nityananda Prabhu freely grant association of Gaurangadev? Sripad Puri Maharaja asked his attentive audience. In response, he said, "Through the great *acharyas* (Vedic spiritual teachers). They manifest before our eyes because we are in contact

with the environment that is already there, freely given to us. We don't have to make any effort to come in contact with the environment, it is there but that environment has a connection with Krishna through Baladeva, Nityananda or Gurudeva."

"Lord Nityananda is the Guru in general or universal Guru, in a form we can relate to, non-different from Krishna, *acharya mam vijaniat*, in a form we can see," Sripad Puri Maharaja explained then asked what do we see in that connection? In response he said, "Materialists see the environment as just material. They have no idea of its origin. In that case the environment doesn't serve as a connection to Krishna for them. But for one who has some merit, *sukriti*, the devotees, they have some regard for Gurudev, for the environment, they can make that connection. The environment comes to help them, it connects them with Krishna."

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 5. "Pure unalloyed love for Lord Krishna, which is inconceivable to all, embodies the most supreme and intense happiness."

"Unalloyed love means without *karma*, *jnana* or any other selfish aspirations. Devotion that is not tinged with calculation for achieving anything, acting only out of pure love for Krishna is called *jnana sunya bhakti*. We may have knowledge of all these things but if we don't have love for Krishna, then all our knowledge is useless. Real knowledge comes to one who has devotion, *dadami buddhi yogam toam*. Real knowledge means the knowledge of how to come to Krishna with devotion. The *raga-bhakta* devotees are on the platform of spontaneous love and have no other goal to achieve when they reach that plane." Sripad Puri Maharaja explained. "Just as a child playing with a toy will give it up if you offer him some candy that is more enjoyable to him than the toy. He will automatically drop the toy and take that candy. You will not have to force that toy out of his hand. It's the same way, when one tastes the joy of Krishna *prem* (loving service of Guru and Krishna), then other things don't become enjoyable at all."

"Krishna says, 'I am the servant of one who knows Me because you have understood the goal and purpose of all knowledge by developing love for Me.' Our constitutional nature is to be *bhaktas* (devotees), not *janis* (knowledge=seekers). *Bhakti* comes from *bhaktas*. How do we get that *bhakti* (devotion) from *bhaktas*?" Sripad Puri Maharaja asked then said, "By *sadhu-sanga*. humbly serving the *bhaktas* and Krishna, otherwise, how will we get it?"

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 6. "Once, a renunciate arrived at the house of Nityānanda and prayed to the boy's father for his son."

“Do you know who that renunciate was?” Sripad Puri Maharaja asked then said, “It is said it was Śrī Mādhavendra Purī ‘the crest jewel of the renounced order,’ who came to the house of Sri Nityananda-Chandra and asked His parents for their son. Of course when a *sannyasi* comes to the home of the householders they must try to serve him in whatever way they can, as if God Himself came to their house. They were shocked by this request ‘how would they give up such a wonderful son to this *sannyasi*?’ How could they possibly bear to give up such a son who was like Krishna Himself? But because they were such pious souls, they understood that when a *sannyasi* comes to their house they must humbly obey his orders and so they gave Nityananda to him and he went off to travel with him and also became a renunciant.”

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 7. “Shortly following Nityananda’s arrival at Nabadvip-Mayapur Dham, Lord Chaitanyadeva Himself, in the company of Śrīnīvās Pandit and Haridās Thākura, went to the house of Śrī Nandanāchārya and found Nitāi there.”



Clockwise - Sobha ji, Nila Madhava Prabhu, Ralph, Rasaraja Prabhu, Sripad Puri Maharaja

“Does anyone know the story of how Chaitanya Mahaprabhu went to Sri Nandan Acharya’s home (where Lord Nityananda was staying)?” Sripad Puri Maharaja asked. “They say that when Lord Nityananda heard that Mahaprabhu was revealing His identity and His *sankirtana* pastimes in Sridham Nabadwip he immediately went to the Dhama and waited at Nandana Acarya’s house for Mahaprabhu,” Rasaraja das Prabhu responded. “Also, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had a dream where He saw a chariot come and stop in front of His house. Sitting on that chariot was a great personality with huge body. He was holding a club, which indicates Lord Balaram. He looked like a great *avadhuta*. To see such a splendid personality He felt much happiness in His heart. He informed all the devotees that ‘a great personality’ has come here. So the devotees went to search for Nityananda Prabhu but they could not find Him anywhere. Mahaprabhu became worried thinking that ‘how come that personality came and we couldn’t find Him?’ Then Mahaprabhu went with His associates to where Nityananda Prabhu was staying at Nandana Acarya’s house. He saw Him sitting on the porch in the front of the house. Immediately They hugged like They hadn’t seen

each other for a long time. None of the associate knew Nityananda Prabhu before but they saw that there was a wonderful loving connection between Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Nityananda.”

“One scientist was saying that despite all talk of ancient Vedic culture they didn’t tell us anything about how the brain is working or about cell phones.” Sripad Puri Maharaja said laughingly. “In this pastime of the Lord nobody called Him (Mahaprabhu didn’t have a cell phone) or gave Him any directions yet He knew exactly the house where Nityananda Prabhu was staying. He went directly to Nandana Acarya’s house.”

“I remember a story with Srila Govinda Maharaja who had to do a business transaction with somebody in another village and the phone was not working. There was absolutely no connection and then by some miracle the phone rings and he answered. It was that same person he was doing business with that was on the phone. It was like a miracle,” Rasaraja das Prabhu recalled. “That was during the purchasing of land for the Vrindavan *mandir*,” Sripad Puri Maharaja said.

“When that scientist said such things, in my mind I was thinking ‘doesn’t he know *Bhagavad Gita*?’” Sripad Puri Maharaja said then asked what is going on there in the *Bhagavad Gita*? “Sanjaya (a disciple of Vyasadev) was sitting at the palace with King Dhritarashtra, who was blind, and was not only hearing but also seeing everything that was taking place on the battlefield of Kurushetra, and reporting it to the King,” Sripad Puri Maharaja continued. “We are now using cell phones and are not developing those abilities for which one may aspire by spiritual development. Of course, Sanjaya was a very advanced, obedient, and devoted disciple of his guru Srila Vyasadeva. Thus he was able to receive the benediction and mercy from his *gurudev*. Because Sanjaya was a purified soul he was able to mystically witness that conversation which only a pure devotee could hear.”

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 8. - One evening, Lord Nityānanda encountered two drunken and sinful brothers, Jagāi and Mādhāi, who were previously *brahma-daitya* demons of the first order, acting under the devastating spell of *Kali-yuga*. Suddenly, Nitāi was attacked by Mādhāi, whereupon His body became smeared with blood. In response, Lord Nitāi exhibited deep affection for the welfare of the two brothers and rescued them from their abominable condition.

“Here we can see the magnanimous nature of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. When Jesus Christ was crucified He also showed great mercy to His persecutors when he said, ‘Father forgive them for they know not what they do.’ People don’t know what they are doing. They are ignorant. But only someone without ego can have that kind of vision to not offend or take the offenses of others, Sripad Puri Maharaja said. “A vaisnava is one who is free from ego, thinking always of love for Krishna. They have

compassion for everyone because they see Krishna behind everything and in the hearts of every living entity. The three stones at Nityananda Prabhu that hit his head. Blood was coming out but still he was feeling deep concern for their benefit. He saw that they are so degraded, destined for hell but He knew 'if I don't show some compassion to them, then who will teach the proper behavior to such persons. Who will ever help them, so let their rehabilitation start here with me.' That special attitude is Lord Nityananda Prabhu's merciful nature. He is so merciful that He doesn't care for any condition, He only shows mercy. Mercy means it is not based on justice, - on what their behavior deserved. "

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 9. - Lord Gaurāṅga instructed His family members and followers to wear pieces of Lord Nityānanda's *kaupīna* respectfully on their bodies. So pure and impeccable is the character of Nitāi

"Nityananda Prabhu's was called an *avadhūt* (very detached) due to His transcendental nature. Not only will he accept everyone regardless of whether they are degraded or not, He embraces them all without judgement. He doesn't care for any external circumstances. He might appear sometimes like a madman, even mixing with ladies or wine, but He is completely detached from that. Those are external things. His nature is like that. He is the original spiritual master and extensively spread the *yuga dharma* of *sankirtana*. His mercy was unlimited that is why Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu says that 'you will benefit even if you wear a piece of Nityananda Prabhu's underwear (*kaupīna*) because His purity is so powerful it can transform the hearts of the conditioned souls," Sripad Puri Maharaja explained.

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 10 - Lord Nityānanda is the desired goal of all Gaurāṅga's endeavours

"Generally in this world, people tend to shun a very bad person. Nobody wants to come close to them so if someone does show some affection to such a person, what happens to that bad person?" Sripad Puri Maharaja asked. "Even that person gets shunned too," Nila Madhava das Prabhu responded. "But something else also happens to the bad person, what is that?" Sripad Puri Maharaja asked then responded, "Whomever we show affection to, they may feel that 'I may have some worth if someone can love me.' This self-worth is what the bad person is lacking but as soon as he recognizes that he is a servant of the Most High, then he can recognize that in others also and begins the process of rehabilitation. When a devotee shows affection to someone, they are actually demonstrating to that person

that they have some spiritual value and that they should cultivate that divine nature and help others also."

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 11 - Śrīman Mahāprabhu instructed Lord Nityānanda and His associates to go out and profusely distribute the Holy Names of Krishna. However, Lord Nityānanda instead plentifully distributed Lord Gaurāṅga's Name, the most precious fortune available to the living entities, with no impediment at all.

"Nityananda Prabhu used to sing *bhaja gaurāṅga kaha gaurāṅga laha gaurāṅga nāma*, (worship Gauranga, chant the name of Gauranga., speak only about Gauranga).' Mahaprabhu was teaching 'chant Hare Krishna' but Nityananda Prabhu was saying 'Chant Gauranga, chant Gauranga's name,'" Sripad Puri Maharaja said.

Śrīman Nityānanda Dvādaśakam, 12 - Lord Gaurāṅga's personality exclusively embodies the sweet nectar relished deep within the devotional mellows of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Krishna's Pastimes. But if Nityananda's lotus feet are over-looked, then all so-called devotional orations and prayers meant for the highest worship become false, like a dream.

"We may perform all kinds of pious activities, but if we over-look the lotus feet of Śrī Nityananda Prabhu, Sri Gurudeva, then all our devotional activities and prayers become false like a dream. So it is all wasted if we are not developing love for Guru-Gauranga and Radha-Krishna," Sripad Puri Maharaja explained. "All religious acts and prayers are meant for that realization and not for other things."

With this our wonderful *sadhu sanga* on the auspicious appearance day of Sri Balaram came to an end after prasadam was served and honored by all.



Rasaraja, Ralph, Nila Madhava, daughter Madhavi, Spd Puri Maharaj

<p>Your humble servant, Kushum Devi Dasi (New York)</p>		<p>Donations via Pay Pal http://bviscs.org/ donation</p>
---	---	---

[1] <http://www.scsmath.com/docs/articles/NityanandaDvadasakam.pdf> -