

# Gopi-prema

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Into English and within square brackets: Kid Samuelsson.

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[...] Gopis' direct love of God (prema) is eternally present in them; all that they are consists of prema. *This* prema, however, has forms of intensity that the prema of other eternal bhaktas don't have.

One important form is *mana*, to send Krishna away or withdraw from Him because of the suffering that consists in the fact that Krishna deprives Himself of the joy that the gopi knows that her service gives Him.

Another important form is *anuraga*, a form of joy in serving that is so immense that the gopi thinks that she has never before really served Him lovingly, and up to that moment neither has seen Him nor served Him. As a result of this anuraga, Krishna and the gopi become fully dependant on and subordinated to each other, yes, when they are most intimate together they are so absorbed in each other's qualities that they no longer experience or see the bearer of these qualities, and in the vehement pain of separation they search for the owner of these qualities (*prema-vaicittya*). Yes, the longing appear to be some lifeless thing, or a plant or an animal, and in this way be able to serve Him.

If, for some reason, Radha and Krishna are separated, the might of this anuraga causes that Krishna becomes *drawn* to Her. Apart from the form He dwells in at another place, during the separation, He is also always and everywhere present in His eternal, invisible form. In this form He suddenly appears, "shines forth", in Her heart or before Her, and just as fast He becomes invisible again.

The next form of gopi-prema is even stronger in its intensity. It is called *rudha-bhava* or *maha-bhava*, which is the most intensified form of loving service for the Beloved. When prema has reached this stage, one second of not being able to serve Him directly becomes unbearable; those who are nearby are put into a state of violent inner agitation; an aeon of union seems like one second; one moment of separation seems like an aeon; even *without moha*, i.e., to be disconnected from inner and outer mental activity (unconsciousness), everything else is totally forgotten; yes, even when she experiences that He is full of joy and they are both together, the gopi is devastated for fear that His joy shall be disturbed.

These forms of prema, all the way *up to* anuraga, are characteristic for all those gopi-s who serve Him in the love play; *rudha-mahabhava* characterizes only Radha and Her eight most intimate and beloved female friends.

Here it is important always to remember that this prema, all the way up to *rudha-mahabhava*, is in the gopis, in Radha and *also* in Krishna, because just as He is the object of service from their side, *they* are the object of service from His side.

There is, however, an even higher form of prema, of even higher intensity, which only characterizes Radha and no other gopi. This is *adhirudha-mahabhava*, which is called *modana* or ecstatic joy during the time of union and *mohana* or mental derangement during the time of separation. The latter has characteristics as: *to accept* the unbearable suffering of separation, of being unable to serve Him directly, with the wish that He may be happy even *without* Her; the desire – if one should perish in suffering – that the elements of one’s body may serve Him: the fire [light] as the lustre of His mirror, the earth as soft sand under His feet, the water as water in the pond He bathes in, the breath as the wind that refreshes Him etc.

A further heightening of this *mohana* is the stage of prema called *divya-unmada*, a form of mental derangement, which causes things to be said or done that seems to be pure madness.

An even more intensified form of prema than *mohana* [which appears when They are separated] is *madana-mahabhava* [*madana-modana-mahabhava* or *madan-akhya-mahabhava*], which appears when They are together [*modana*]. In this state the highest form of jealousy appear – not jealousy because one’s own service has been depreciated, but at the same time as Radha serves Him directly, She feels envious of the *flute*, the flower garland, for their happiness in serving Him.

In *mohana-mahabhava*, the serving longing for Him, the object of service, is so extremely great that He, even when He dwells far away from Her in *one* form, not only shines forth to Her and becomes visible *for a brief moment*, but now *He Himself manifests* His eternally present presence, and She plays and dances with Him as She did before She was separated from Him. But then She does not have the awareness of the Radha Who plays on earth and was separated from Him. Then She is the Radha, Who, analogous to “fullness taken from fullness...” eternally plays with Him, serving Him lovingly in the realm that never becomes visible on earth [Goloka]. This is called *avirbhava*, to become visible, and is participation in the realm of God that never is visible in the world. This is the *avirbhava* that is dealt with [1] in Uddhava’s secret message to the gopis; [2] in Krishna’s words to Uddhava in the Uddhava-Gita; [3] in Krishna’s words to the gopis when they return from Kurukshetra without Him; [4] in the words describing what was happening to the gopis who could not come to Him during a certain night of the *rasa*;

[5] and furthermore in the words describing what the gopas, the cowherds experienced when Krishna made it possible for them all to behold the unmanifest realm of Goloka – the realm which they, so to say, all return to at the end of the Vraja-lila. [...]

(Sadananda, Corrections, page 211 ff.)