

**Girirāja Govardhana**  
**Hari-Dāsa-Varya**  
The Chief Devotee of Lord Hari



**ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD**  
**GOVUR GOVINDA SWAMI MAHĀRĀJA**





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# Girirāja Govardhana

## Hari-Dāsa-Varya

### The Chief Devotee of Lord Hari



**T**oday Vaiṣṇavas observe a great festival, the worship of Giri Govardhana known as Annakūṭa-mahotsava. For this Govardhana-pūjā large amounts of *anna*, food preparations, are offered to Giri Govardhana. In Vṛndāvana the devotees go to Govardhana and circumambulate Giri Govardhana with *saṅkīrtana*. This festival, the worship of Giri Govardhana, is observed throughout the world in all Vaiṣṇava temples, especially in our ISKCON centres.

### Receiving the Mercy of Bhakta and Bhagavān

First I will glorify Giri Govardhana then read from the *Kṛṣṇa Book*, written by Śrīla Prabhupāda, based on the descriptions given in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, of how Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa protected the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, in Vṛndāvana, from the wrath of King Indra. I request everyone to

sit tight, hear *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, *bhāgavata-kathā* with concentrated attention. Do not feel impatient. If you feel so, then you will never receive the mercy of Giri Govardhana or the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. There should be no disturbance at all.

After this lecture we will be offering worship to Giri Govardhana. We will circumambulate Girirāja Govardhana, then offer *ārati* and the *annakūṭa-mahotsava*, nice foodstuffs have been prepared and will be offered to Girirāja Govardhana and Kṛṣṇa. Then that nice *prasāda* will be distributed to everyone. Therefore be happy receiving the mercy of *bhakta* and Bhagavān. Girirāja Govardhana is a devotee, *bhakta*, and Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān.

## Caṭaka Parvata - Giri Govardhana

When Mahāprabhu was staying in Jagannātha Purī-dhāma, Puruṣottama Kṣetra, He was visiting different places, and in His vision these places were sometimes appearing like Vṛndāvana. Seeing the Jagannātha Vallabha gardens, Mahāprabhu immediately thought of Vṛndāvana. Seeing the ocean, He immediately jumped into it, thinking it was the Yamunā. This is Mahāprabhu's *līlā*.

Similarly, one day when Mahāprabhu was going to bathe in the ocean, He saw Caṭaka Parvata, a sand dune. If you have been to Jagannātha Purī you might have seen it. Caṭaka Parvata is situated in between the Ṭoṭā-gopīnātha temple and the Puruṣottama Gauḍīya Maṭha, the Gauḍīya Mission's Maṭha, which was established by Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. As soon as Mahāprabhu saw Caṭaka Parvata, He thought it was Giri Govardhana appearing before Him and He immediately



recited a verse from the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* spoken by the *gopīs* in glorification of Giri Govardhana,

*hantāyam adrir abalā hari-dāsa-varyo  
yad rāma-kṛṣṇa-carāṇa-sparaśa-pramodaḥ*

*mānaṁ tanoti saha-go-gaṇayos tayor yat  
pānīya-sūyavasa-kandara-kandamūlaiḥ*  
(*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.21.18)

“O my dear girl companions, Girirāja Govardhana has become purified by the touch of the lotus feet of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. He looks very joyful, blissful. He supplies nice clear running water, fresh grass, roots and fruits for our cows, calves, the cowherd men, boys and women. In this way he is offering *pūja*, worship, to Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Therefore this mountain, Girirāja Govardhana is known as *hari-dāsa-varya*. Nārada, Yudhiṣṭhira and Uddhava are *hari-dāsa*, devotees of Lord Hari, and Girirāja Govardhana is *hari-dāsa-varya*, one of the chief devotees of the Lord.”

## A Dear Devotee is as Good as Bhagavān

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is *purāṇam amalāṁ*, the spotless proof. This is what Mahāprabhu taught. Mahāprabhu is the authority, the *ācārya*, therefore we accept Girirāja Govardhana as a devotee of Lord Hari, not as Bhagavān. Some devotees have a misconception and worship Girirāja Govardhana as Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa, placing a peacock feather or a flute on him. However *Bhagavatām* has said he is one of the chief devotees of Lord Hari, and Mahāprabhu uttered this verse, therefore we should accept Girirāja as a chief devotee of Lord Hari, not as

Bhagavān. Though a dear devotee, he is as good as Bhagavān, *sākṣād-dhari*. In *Gurvaṣṭaka* we offer this prayer:

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair  
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhiḥ  
kinto prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“The spiritual master is to be honoured as much as the Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Śrī Hari [Kṛṣṇa].” (*Śrī Śrī Gurv-aṣṭaka* 7.)

He is *sākṣād-dhari*, he is as good as Hari. There are four manifestations of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the material world,

*bhāgavata, tulāsī gaṅgāya, bhakta jane  
caturdhā vighraha kṛṣṇa ei cāri sane  
(Caitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-līlā 22.81)*

Bhāgavata, Gaṅgā, *bhakta*, *tulāsī* (because *tulāsī* is a dear devotee) are four manifestations of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, though Girirāja is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa we accept him as a dear devotee and we should offer worship to him as a dear devotee, *hari-dāsa-varya*. Not in another way.

## Mahāprabhu saw Caṭaka Parvata and Fainted

When Mahāprabhu saw Caṭaka Parvata, He uttered this verse and became ecstatic. He ran as swiftly as the wind, and a wonderful ecstatic mood appeared in His body. All *sāttvika* transformations appeared. On the way the *sāttvika* transformation of *stambha* [being stunned] manifested and He could not move. At last He fainted and fell down to the ground. The devotees who were running with Him, led by Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, all loudly chanted *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare, hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare* into Mahāprabhu's ears, and after some time the Lord regained His consciousness.

In this way, day and night Mahāprabhu remained in an ecstatic mood, sometimes external, sometimes internal and He would take His bath, take His food mechanically, fluctuating from external to internal consciousness. When He went to have *darśana* of Lord Jagannātha and approached the gate, Mahāprabhu would catch hold of the gatekeeper's hand and plead, "O please help Me to have the *darśana* of the Lord of My heart." This is Mahāprabhu's *līlā*. Seeing Caṭaka Parvata, Mahāprabhu thought of Giri Govardhana in Vṛndāvana and explained that Girirāja is *hari-dāsa-varya*, he is one of the chief devotees of Lord Hari.

## Śrī Govardhana-Vāsa-Prārthanā-Daśakam

Now I will chant the ten verses of *Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam*, written by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī in glorification of Girirāja Govardhana.

*nija-pati-bhuja-daṇḍa-cchatra-bhāvaṃ prapadya  
prati-hata-mada-dhr̥ṣṭod-daṇḍa-devendra-garva  
atula-pṛthula-śaila-śreṇi-bhūpa! priyaṃ me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṃ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Śrīman Giri Govardhana, king of the hills and mountains, who is spread far and wide, please give me a place to stay with you because, like an umbrella you were lifted by your master Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa and rested in His hand. The Lord crushed the pride of the heavenly King Indra who was very puffed up and proud because of his opulence.

*pramada-madana-lilāḥ kandare kandare te  
racayati nava-yūnor dvandvam asminn amandam  
iti kila kalanārthaṃ lagnakas tad-dvayor me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṃ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O my dear Govardhana! Please give me a place to stay with you because the loving conjugal sweet *lilā* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa has manifested in each of your caves. Staying with you I want to see those sweet loving conjugal *lilās* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

*anupama-maṇi-vedī-ratna-simhāsanorvī-  
ruhajhara-darasānudroṇi-saṅgheṣu raṅgaiḥ  
saha bala-sakhibhiḥ saṅkhelayan sva-priyaṃ me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṃ dehi govardhana! tvam*

My dear Govardhana! Please give me a place with you. If you ask, “Why do you want a place with me? If you want to see these nice sweet loving conjugal pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, you can see them anywhere in Vṛndāvana, they are going on everywhere. Why do you want to stay with me?”

In answer I may say, “Because you are very dear to Kṛṣṇa, O my dear Govardhana. You have allowed Kṛṣṇa to sit on an elevated *simhāsana* made of jewels and pearls, on you. You have allowed Kṛṣṇa to sit underneath your trees, by the side of your fountain, your valleys and caves. You have not only allowed Kṛṣṇa, but also Balarāma, and all of Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd boyfriends, and They have manifested Their very sweet nectarean *līlās* there. Thereby you have given all pleasure to them. So why shall I stay in any other place than yourself? For that reason I want to have a place with you.”

*rasa-nidhi-nava-yūnoḥ sākṣiṇīm dāna-keler  
dyuti-parimala-viddhām śyāma-vedīm prakāśya  
rasika-vara-kulānām modam āsphālayan me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Giri Govardhana! Please give me a place with you because you are the witness of the *dāna-keli-līlā* of the ever-fresh Youths, Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and you are the reservoir of all *rasas*, mellows. You have made a beautiful platform, known as *śyāma-vedī*, from which nice scent is emanating; thereby you are giving pleasure to Rasarāja Kṛṣṇa and His dear devotees. So why shall I want to reside in any other place than you?”

*hari-dayitam apūrvam rādhikā-kuṇḍam ātma-  
priya-sakham iha kaṇṭhe narmaṇālingya guptaḥ  
nava-yuva-yuga-khelās tatra paśyan raho me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Govardhana! If you ask me, “There are many places in me. Which place do you want to stay?” In answer I may say, “O my dear Govardhana, I want to stay at the place named Rādhā-

kuṇḍa, because Rādhā-kuṇḍa is very dear to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore it is incomparable. You are a very dear devotee and friend of Kṛṣṇa. For this reason I want a place on your chest, where you have placed that Rādhā-kuṇḍa, where these two new fresh Youths, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, are always confidentially engaged in Their conjugal loving affairs. This place is befitting for me. While sitting there I want to see, like you, those nice nectarean conjugal loving pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.”

*sthala-jala-tala-śaṣpair bhūruha-chāyayā ca  
pratipadam anukālam hanta samvardhayan gāḥ  
tri-jagati nija-gotraṁ sārthakaṁ khyāpayan me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Giri Govardhana! Please give me a place with you, because you are freely giving your water, land, grass and the cool shade of your trees at any moment to the cows and calves of Vṛndāvana, who are Nanda Mahārāja’s cows and calves that Kṛṣṇa was tending, and who you, Govardhana, are nourishing. Your very name ‘Govardhana’ is well known throughout the three planetary systems because you are nourishing ‘go’, the cows and calves. Therefore, if I obtain a place with you, it will be very easy on my part to have the *darśana* of my dearest Lord Kṛṣṇa, who goes every day to you to tend the cows and calves of Nanda Mahārāja.

*sura-pati-kṛta-dīrgha-drohato goṣṭha-rakṣāṁ  
tava nava-grha-rūpasyāntare kurvataiva  
agha-baka-ripuṅocair dattamāna! drutaṁ me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Giri Govardhana! In response you may ask, “By staying in any part of Vṛndāvana you may have the *darśana* of Lord Kṛṣṇa, why do you want to stay with me?”

In answer I will reply, “O my dear Govardhana, please give me a place with you because Kṛṣṇa, who is the enemy of the two demons, Aghāsura and Bakāsura, has established a new house beneath you while carrying you like an umbrella, giving protection from the wrath of the heavenly King Indra to all the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi. Thereby Kṛṣṇa has given you much admiration and thus all people pay you respect. This is the nature of Kṛṣṇa; that though someone may be very unqualified or insignificant, if he stays with His dear devotee who is respected by one and all, he very easily obtains Kṛṣṇa’s mercy. I am a most insignificant and disqualified person, therefore if I reside near you I will certainly obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. This is my desire.”

*giri-nṛpa! hari-dāsa-śreṇi-varyeti-nāmā-  
mṛtam idam uditam śrī-rādhikā-vaktra-candrāt  
vraja-nava-tilakatve klpta! vedaiḥ sphuṭam me  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana! tvam*

If you say, “This Vṛndāvana covers five *yojanas*, (40 miles). It is like Kṛṣṇa’s body. Anyone may stay in any part of Vṛndāvana and fulfill his desire, so why do you choose to stay with me?” In answer I may reply, “O Girirāja Mahārāja, please see, this verse from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *hari-dāsa-varya*, is coming from the lotus moon-like face of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. This verse explains that you are the chief of all *hari-dāsas*. This is the nectarean name you have received. Therefore all Vedas have described you as the new and wonderful *tilaka* of Vrajabhūmi. This is very clear. What more shall I say? To stay with you is the

most befitting place for me. Therefore, O my dear Govardhana, please give me a place with you.”

*nija-jana-yuta-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-maitrī-rasākta-  
vraja-nara-paśu-pakṣi-vrāta-saukhyaika-dātaḥ  
agaṇita-karuṇatvān mām urī-kṛtya tāntaṁ  
nija-nikāṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Govardhana! If you ask, “Any of the *vrajavāsīs* can fulfill your desire, why are you asking me?” In answer I will say, “You are very dear to Kṛṣṇa. You are always surrounded by the damsels of Vrajabhūmi, the *sakhīs* and *sakhas*, the cowherd girls and boys, those who are very dear to Kṛṣṇa, and you enjoy with Him in *sakhya-rasa*, friendly mellow. You are giving pleasure to all the birds, animals, men and women, to everyone in Vrajabhūmi, which means that you are very, very merciful. As soon as Kṛṣṇa touched you, you automatically lifted yourself up to rest on His left hand, as an umbrella, allowing Kṛṣṇa to protect all the *vrajavāsīs*, the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, from the wrath of Indra. You are so merciful. Therefore why shall I go to some other resident of Vrajabhūmi leaving you, such a merciful devotee? Why shall I pray to them?”

If you ask, “The *vrajavāsīs* who have taken shelter under me, they are very, very dear to Kṛṣṇa.” Pointing to me you would say, “You are not so dear. Therefore how can I give you a place to stay?” In answer I may say, “O my dear Govardhana, you are very, very merciful. I am *dina duḥkhī*, I am a most insignificant creature, a pauper. Please accept me, because one who is a Vaiṣṇava, *bhakta*, a devotee, showers his mercy on those who are *dina*, very fallen and insignificant. Therefore please give me a place with you. If I obtain a place with you and you show me



your mercy then I may become very dear to Kṛṣṇa, otherwise how can I obtain Kṛṣṇa's favour?"

*nirupadhi-karuṇena śrī-śacī-nandanena  
tvayi kapaṭi-śaṭho 'pi tvat-priyenārpito 'smi  
iti khalu mama yogyāyogyatām mām agrhṇan  
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana! tvam*

O Giri Govardhana! Why would you give a place to one who is very low, degraded and most insignificant, a pauper like me? I will tell you the reason; although, I am indeed a great duplicitous person, Śacīnandana Gaurahari, Caitanya Mahāprabhu who is very dear to you and who is supremely merciful, has handed me over to you. Thus you are therefore obliged to accept me.

If you ask, "Why has Śacīnandana Gaurahari sent you here from Puruṣottama-kṣetra Jagannātha Puri-dhāma? He must have some purpose?" However I say there is no purpose at all. He is wonderfully merciful. Therefore, O my dear Govardhana, do not deliberate on my qualifications or disqualifications; just accept me. You are very, very merciful. Shower your causeless mercy on me and please give me a place to stay with you."

## The Chief of all Bhaktas

After these ten verses, written by Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, glorifying Girirāja Govardhana, there is a concluding verse:

*rasada-daśakam asya śrīla-govardhanasya  
kṣiti-dhara-kula-bhartur yaḥ prayatnād adhīte*

*sa sapadi sukha-de 'smin vāsam āsādyā sākṣāc  
chubha-da-yugala-sevā-ratnam āpnoti tūrṇam*

Girirāja Govardhana is very dear to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. He is *dāsa*, a great servant of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. He is known as *hari-dāsa-varya*, the chief of all *bhaktas*, all *hari-dāsas*. The service he renders is compared to an invaluable gem. Anyone who reads these ten verses, known as *Śrī Govardhana-vāsa-prārthanā-daśakam*, with love and affection, with complete faith and pure devotion, will definitely acquire *bhakti-rasa*, the mellow of *bhakti*, and can very easily obtain a place with Girirāja Govardhana.

His dear devotee is as good as Hari, as good as Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Govardhana is as good as Kṛṣṇa because he is a dear devotee. This is our philosophy.

## Questions & Answers

**Devotee:** That is the teaching?

**Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami:** That is the teaching, the philosophy. As I mentioned, there are four manifestations of Kṛṣṇa in this world; Bhāgavata, *tulāsī*, Gaṅgā, and *bhakta*. The *bhakta*, dear devotee is a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa. You should understand this in *tattva*, *tattva-vicāra*, not as an apparent truth, *apāra-vicāra*.

**Devotee:** When we go to Vṛndāvana, we see the devotees who are staying around Govardhana, they are worshipping Girirāja with a flute and peacock feather. Is this incorrect?

**Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami:** Yes. A devotee doesn't wear a peacock feather and doesn't hold a flute. He is not Kṛṣṇa. He thinks, "I am *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*." Why did Mahāprabhu utter that *Bhāgavata* verse glorifying Govardhana as *hari-dāsa-varya*? He is the chief of *hari-dāsas*, chief of the servants of Hari. Why will he wear a peacock feather or hold a flute? Is he Kṛṣṇa?

**Devotee:** So they are all doing wrong?

**Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami:** Definitely.





## About the Author



Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami, appeared in this world on the 2nd of September, 1929, in the village of Jagannāthapura, in the state of Orissa, India. The families on both the paternal and maternal sides have been Vaiṣṇavas for hundreds of years, dating back to the time of Śyāmānanda Prabhu, and prior to that, in Bengal for many centuries. His divine appearance in this world was not the appearance of an ordinary being. He appeared only to fulfill the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

### Tattva-vicāra

He dedicated his whole life to preaching the absolute consideration, *tattva-vicāra*, and spoke uncompromisingly against accepting *aparā-vicāra*, the apparent consideration. Speaking in his own words, His Divine Grace said, “ ... I am stressing on *tattva*. In all my lectures I stress on it, *tattva-vicāra*. Do you know the real *tattva*? You are all after this apparent consideration, not *tattva-vicāra*. That mistake is there. You do not know who you are, who Kṛṣṇa is, who is *guru*, who

is *sādhu*, and what is the relationship, like this, you do not know the *tattvas* ...”

## By Kṛṣṇa’s Arrangement

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami is a disciple of His Divine Grace, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda (1896-1977), the Founder-Ācārya of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness. By Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement they met in the transcendental land of Vṛndāvana, in 1974. This transcendental meeting has been nicely described by Gunanarva Dāsa, in the book, *Encountering the Kṛṣṇāliṅgita-vigrahā*, Part One, a meeting that can only be described as a meeting of two Divine Graces. They had not met previously, but there was immediate recognition.

His Divine Grace, Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda said of his disciple, Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami, “... Kṛṣṇa has sent him...” and “...Gour Govinda Swami is a devotee from birth...”

## The Three Sevās

Śrīla Prabhupāda entrusted Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami with three important services:

1. To stay in Orissa and build a temple like the Jagannātha temple in Jagannātha Purī. As Orissa is a very important place in Mahāprabhu’s *līlā*.
2. To translate all of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books into Oriya.
3. To accept disciples and train them.

Upon receiving these instructions from his spiritual master, Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Mahārāja immediately returned to Orissa and started working earnestly on plans for what would become the famous Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Temple in Bhubaneswar, to which Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “This temple will be one of the best ISKCON temples in the

world. This place will be the heart of the city.” Gour Govinda Swami embraced the *sevā* of translating Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books into Oriya as a sacred duty that he continued, without fail, every day for the rest of his life.

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Mahārāja executed the first two instructions without wasting a precious moment, but the third final instruction he received from Śrīla Prabhupāda was to prove more difficult to carry out and he was not able (given permission by the GBC) to begin for many years, and when he did, he very hesitantly took on the role of being a *guru*, as he knew being *guru* meant very heavy responsibility.

## Lord Jagannātha is in Bhubaneswar

Śrīla Prabhupāda had accepted many Western disciples and taught them the glories of Puruṣottama-kṣetra Jagannātha Purī dhāma where Mahāprabhu performed His pastimes. However, when his disciples went to visit Jagannātha Purī they were refused entrance to the famous Lord Jagannātha temple because that temple refuses entry to anyone who is not a Hindu.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “I will build a temple in Bhubaneswar similar to the Jagannātha temple in Jagannātha Purī, because my Western disciples are not allowed there. Lord Jagannātha will come and stay in Bhubaneswar. So all my disciples can go there and have His *darśana*”.

Śrīla Prabhupāda had been donated land in Bhubaneswar and instructed Gour Govinda Swami to stay on the land and build a temple. He entrusted Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami the mission of establishing ISKCON in Orissa, the most important place in Mahāprabhu’s pastimes, and instructed him, “Gour Govind, you will take me to Orissa.”

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami returned to Orissa and stayed on the ISKCON land under the most extreme austere circumstances.

Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Bhubaneswar and stayed in a mud hut on

the land for seventeen days. He waited for the auspicious occasion of the appearance day of Lord Nityananda, on the 2nd of February 1977 to lay the foundation stone of this Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir. The Bhubaneswar temple was to be Śrīla Prabhupāda's last founded project.

In 1991, after sixteen years of determined endeavour, Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami fulfilled the instruction of his most beloved spiritual master and opened the magnificent Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir. Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva and Subhadradevī, came of Their own accord, as Śrīla Prabhupāda prophesied, and this temple now attracts many thousands of people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

### Ācārya-līlā

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami spent many years travelling the world preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness (*ācārya-līlā*). His travels took him to Europe, America, Canada, Africa, Mauritius, Australia, Asia [Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Bali] and of course he preached vigorously in the sub-continent of India, especially in the state of Orissa, where he constructed the glorious temples of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopāl Jīu, to name but a few.

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami often left his audience spellbound by his dynamic presentation of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India and countries beyond Indian shores. He could speak for up to four hours at a time on topics about Kṛṣṇa, leaving his audience enchanted, and wanting to know more. Sometimes he would speak on one verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* morning and evening for seven days. There was no question put to him that he could not answer, and hearing from him on a regular basis would melt even the hardest heart, convincing them to take to the path of *bhakti-yoga*.

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami was expert in knowledge of the *śāstras* and by the depth of his conviction he was able to dispell the doubts of those who came to him for spiritual guidance. He would



place great importance on chanting, encouraging and inspiring everyone to chant without offence, that means, to chant the pure name, and thereby achieve the goal of life, *kṛṣṇa-prema* and to get Kṛṣṇa in this very life.

One of the most important aspects of Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami's preaching was to reveal the innermost secrets of Purī-Bhubaneswar Dhāma, of Lord Jagannātha, and the reason why Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stayed in Jagannātha Purī. This information was almost unknown outside Orissa. He gave the most subtle and lucid understanding of the Lord's pastimes in Jagannātha Purī.

## Storehouse of Knowledge

Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami left this world prematurely, of his own volition, on February 9th, 1996, in Māyāpura Dhāma, on the holy appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda. He left behind a veritable storehouse of knowledge concerning the truth about the *jīva*, *māyā*, and the Absolute Truth Himself. Many of his lectures and talks were recorded at the time, on audio and video, and many of his talks are now available on the internet, on CD, DVD and MP3 formats, as well as in books, published by his disciples.

For a more in depth, yet brief account of Śrī Śrīmad Gour Govinda Swami's life, please read: **Gour Govinda Swami Who Was He.** Published by Tattva Vicāra Publications © 2012.

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Readers interested in the subject matter of this book are invited to correspond with the publisher.

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# Girirāja Govardhana

## Hari-Dāsa-Varya

### The Chief Devotee of Lord Hari

“O my dear girl companions, Girirāja Govardhana has become purified by the touch of the lotus feet of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. He looks very joyful, blissful. He supplies nice clear running water, fresh grass, roots and fruits for our cows, calves, the cowherd men, boys and women. In this way he is offering

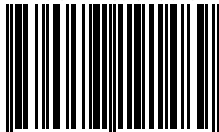
*pūja*, worship, to Rāma and Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore this mountain, Girirāja Govardhana is known as *hari-dāsa-varya*. Nārada, Yudhiṣṭhira and Uddhava are *hari-dāsa*, devotees of Lord Hari, and Girirāja Govardhana is *hari-dāsa-varya*, one of the chief devotees of the Lord.”

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