

The *Vrndavan-lila* Recording Project

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The Vrndavan-lila Recording Project is a major work in progress. Based firmly on the spiritual principles of Vedic music, the Vrndavan-lila Recording Project is an outgrowth of over 30 years of training and experience as a bhakti-yogi in the holy places of India and around the world. As a sincere disciple of Krsna-bhakti, my most heartfelt desire is to share the wonderful spiritual vision that has inspired my life and blessed my work with the people of the world. You are invited to share this material with others interested in Vedic music, and to become involved with this project as an investor or performer.

I would like to share with you my understanding of the Vedic musical system and outline the fundamentals of a Vedic-based musical theory that can be applied to musical interpretation, composition and improvisation. This foundation of all my music is contained in my thesis *Sapta Svarah: Intonation in Vaisnava Music*.

In the years since I wrote *Sapta Svarah* my thinking has advanced considerably. I have created *RagaJazz*, an entirely new system of musical composition, still Vedic-based but capable of extension into the most rarefied and complex aspects of chromatic harmony, jazz fusion and contemporary ambient musical styles. This work was strongly influenced by the theoretical works of modern classical composer Paul Hindemith and jazz educator John Mehegan.

I envision a series of 12 CDs based on a 36-raga daily cycle, inspired by the spiritual pastimes of Radha and Krsna in Vrndavana. The conceptual and compositional theory work for the series is complete, and I am starting to do the actual arrangements and recording.

The Vrndavana-lila Series

Vrndavana-lila is a pioneering presentation of Krsna's Vrndavan pastimes in the medium of *RagaJazz* recordings. I have been working on this project since 1985, when I was in Sri Mayapur Dham, the birthplace of Lord Caitanya. I received the inspiration to revive the *Padavali Kirtan* of Narottama das Thakur in a contemporary form in the English language. I have been preparing ever since to bring forth this great inspiration and share it with the world.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.9.1-2:

*ekadā grha-dāsīṣu
yaśodā nanda-gehinī
karmāntara-niyuktāsu
nirmamantha svayaṁ dadhi*

*yāni yānīha gītāni
tad-bāla-caritāni ca
dadhi-nirmanthane kāle
smarantī tāny agāyata*

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: One day when mother Yaśodā saw that all the maidservants were engaged in other household affairs, she personally began to churn the yogurt. While churning, she remembered the childish activities of Kṛṣṇa, and in her own way she composed songs and enjoyed singing to herself about all those activities.

PURPORT

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, quoting from the Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, says that the incident of Kṛṣṇa's breaking the pot of yogurt and being bound by mother Yaśodā took place on the Dīpāvalī Day, or Dīpa-mālikā. Even today in India, this festival is generally celebrated very gorgeously in the month of Kārtika by fireworks and lights, especially in Bombay. It is to be understood that among all the cows of Nanda Mahārāja, several of mother Yaśodā's cows ate only grasses so flavorful that the grasses would automatically flavor the milk. Mother Yaśodā wanted to collect the milk from these cows, make it into yogurt and churn it into butter personally, since she thought that this child Kṛṣṇa was going to the houses of neighborhood gopas and gopīs to steal butter because He did not like the milk and yogurt ordinarily prepared.

While churning the butter, mother Yaśodā was singing about the childhood activities of Kṛṣṇa. It was formerly a custom that if one wanted to remember something constantly, he would transform it into poetry or have this done by a professional poet. It appears that mother Yaśodā did not want to forget Kṛṣṇa's activities at any time. Therefore she poeticized all of Kṛṣṇa's childhood activities, such as the killing of Pūtanā, Aghāsura, Śakaṭāsura and Tṛṇāvarta, and while churning the butter, she sang about these activities in poetical form. This should be the practice of persons eager to remain Kṛṣṇa conscious twenty-four hours a day. This incident shows how Kṛṣṇa conscious mother Yaśodā was. To stay in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we should follow such persons.

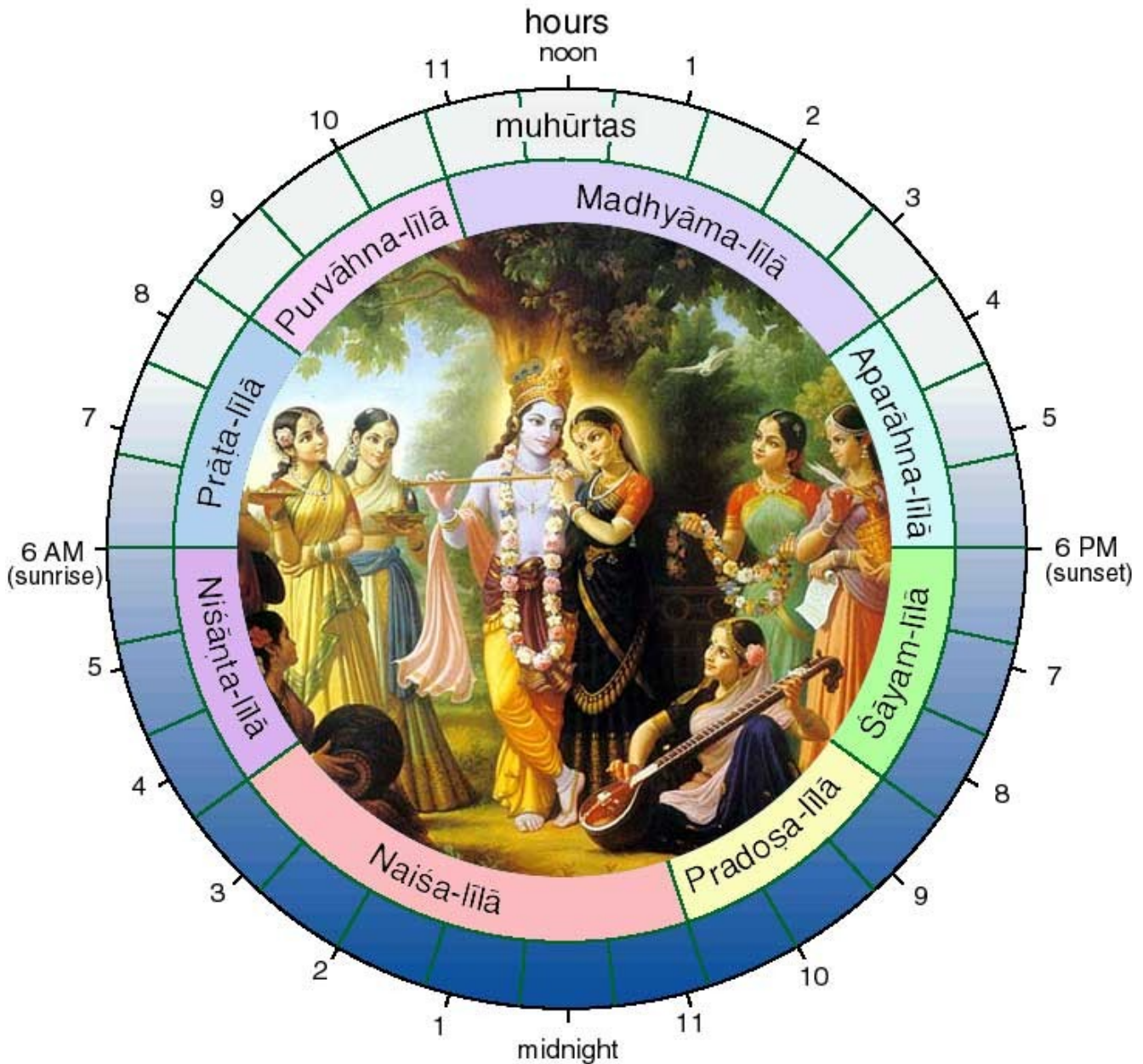
Purport to *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 10.12.34:

Everyone has some particular duty. The sāstra has concluded (nirūpitaḥ) that everyone should glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead by his own qualifications. If you are a singer, always glorify the Supreme Lord by singing very nicely. If you are a musician, glorify the Supreme Lord by playing musical instruments. Svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya samsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam (SB 1.2.13). The perfection of life is to satisfy the Personality of Godhead. Therefore, beginning from this earth up to the celestial kingdom, everyone engaged in glorifying the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The decision of all great saintly persons is that whatever qualifications one has acquired should be utilized to glorify the Supreme Lord.

*idam hi puṁsas tapasaḥ śrutasya vā
sviṣṭasya sūktasya ca buddhi-dattayoḥ
avicyuto 'rthaḥ kavibhir nirūpito
yad uttamaśloka-guṇānuvarṇanam*

"Learned sages have definitely concluded that the infallible purpose of the advancement of knowledge, austerity, Vedic study, sacrifice, the chanting of hymns, and charity is found in the transcendental descriptions of the qualities of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry." (SB 1.5.22) This is the perfection of life. One should be trained how to glorify the Supreme Personality of Godhead by one's respective qualities. Education, austerity, penance or, in the

modern world, business, industry, education and so on—all should be engaged in glorifying the Lord. Then everyone in the world will be happy.



The Vrndavana-lila series of recordings is based on the asta-kaliya-lila, or eightfold daily pastimes of Radha and Krsna in the spiritual world of Vrndavana. All these recordings are adapted from authorized descriptions of the spiritual world, such as Srimad-Bhagavatam and Sri Krsna Bhavanamṛta. By hearing and singing along with these easy-to-understand English renditions of Krsna's pastimes, we can remain Krsna-conscious 24 hours a day, just like Mother Yasoda and other great devotees.

The Vedic time-keeping system divides the day into 30 muhurtas, equivalent to our 24 hours. These 30 muhurtas are divided into eight pastime periods of three muhurtas each, except for the Madhyama-lila and Naisa-lila, which are six muhurtas each. The comparison of hours, muhurtas and the eight pastime periods is illustrated in the figure below. By playing the Vrndavan-lila CDs at the appropriate times of the day and night, we can hear beautiful and pleasing descriptions of the Vrndavan pastimes that Krsna

performs at that very time of the day.

The rest of this presentation is an exposition of the theoretical basis for my music. You will find that it is not based on mere sentimentalism, but a deeply thought-out theory of Vedic music based on authentic scriptural understanding of the universe.

If you are interested in becoming a partner in the Vrndavan-lila Recording Project, or if you have any questions or discussion on these ideas, you are welcome to contact me. I am also interested in meeting qualified musicians who are sympathetic to this viewpoint.

Summary of lila (pastimes)

Volume 1: Nisanta-Lila

Early Morning Pastimes 3:36-6:00 AM

Radha and Krsna rise from Their union. They are greeted by Their friends. Then They must part for the day and go home.

Volume 2: Prata-Lila

Morning Pastimes 6:00-8:24 AM

Krsna is awakened by Mother Yasoda, performs morning duties and prepares for His day's activities. He takes breakfast and then leaves for the forest with His friends and the cows.

Volume 3: Purvahna-Lila

Forenoon Pastimes 8:24-10:48 AM

Krsna and the cowherd boys playing in the forest with the cows. The inhabitants of Vrndavan feel separation from Him.

Volume 4-5: Madhyama-Lila

Mid-day Pastimes 10:48 AM-3:36 PM

Krsna takes lunch with His friends, receives Radha's messenger and secretly rendezvous with Her.

Volume 6: Aparahna-Lila

Afternoon Pastimes 3:36-6:00 PM

Krsna returns from His tryst and takes rest in company with Balaram and the cowherd boys. Then they return home.

Volume 7: Sayam-Lila

Twilight Pastimes 6:00-8:24 PM

Krsna and the cowherd boys take dinner and are cared for by their parents. Evening prayers.

Volume 8-9: Pradosha-Lila

Evening Pastimes 8:24-10:48 PM

Krsna and His family members attend devotional musical and dance performances, and hear learned cultural presentations of the Vedic scriptures by great sages.

Volume 10-12: Naisha-Lila

Night Pastimes 10:48 PM - 3:36 AM

Krsna's amorous pastimes with the gopis.