

4 Vaisnava Sampradayas: notes on a seminar given by Atmatattva Prabhu, Gaura Purnima festival March 1989, in Sridhama Mayapura

Gautama Rsi to his disciple Sadananda: described Kali yuga. Mother earth comes as a cow to Brahma, who goes to milk ocean to pray. The Lord informs Brahma he'd appear as a devotee, the Saci-suta in Navadvipa, to teach the chanting of the Hare Krishna Mahamantra. "I will accept sannyasa and be known as Sri Krsna Caitanya." The Lord told Brahma that the devas would also take birth as His associates. (Vayu Purana, which other Puranas declare has 26000 verses, but which now has only 11-12000 in available editions. This quote is from the Ananta-samhita section, quoted in a commentary by Ramananda Goswami, disciple of Gopal Bhatta Goswami.)

Rig means "calling in prayer."

Yajur means "whispering."

Sama means "metrical verses."

Atharva is the maintenance Veda.

The philosophies of the 4 sampradayas do not fully establish the relationship, process and application of devotional service.

Comparative terminologies: Buddhism and Advaitism

Ajativada = Mayavada (i.e. there is no source of the material existence)

Samvritti-satya = Vyavaharika (conventional truth)

Paramartha-satya = Paramarthika (absolute, inexpressible truth)

Anitya = Mithya (world is temporary and thus false)

Mahasukha = Ananda (the final goal is bliss)

Shunya (void) = Nirvishesha Brahman (absolute oneness without distinction)

Nirvana = Moksha (cessation of miseries; liberation)

Avyakrta Vastuni = Anirvichaniya (inexpressible issues)

Sri Sampradaya:

Alvars = Goswamis

1-3: Poigai Alvar, Bhutap Alvar and Peyaal Alvar lived for 3100 years. They appeared out of flowers. They arrived at Tirukovilu while it was raining and one by one entered a veranda. The first laid down, another came and said, "If one can lay two can sit." The third came and said, "If two can sit, three can stand." They felt the presence of a fourth person - this was Trivikrama, who

declared: "Because you are here, I am here. Now come to My temple."

4: Bhaktisara was born in the Kali Yuga (beginning) and lived for 2,300 years. He was born on the bank of the Payasvini River to Satya-yaga Rishi and his wife, but it was a premature delivery, so his form was just a lump. They left him in a bush. Hands and legs etc. developed shortly after. The Deity of Vishnu gave darshana to the crying child, but then disappeared. A carpenter who was coming to cut cane found him in a bush and took him. The child refused all food, didn't speak or see, but still grew.

One shudra begged, "Please take this milk." So Bhaktisara took the milk, because he wanted the child of this shudra to become his disciple. He studied the Vedic philosophies for 700 years, then he threw all his books in a well. He stayed as a babaji in Sri Rangam, sewing his own cloth while sitting in the sun. Shiva came in the area with Parvati. Their shadow crossed the ground and Bhaktisara, sensing inauspiciousness, moved out of their shadow. Parvati asked Shiva, "Who is this who is so bold as to move out of our shadow?" "This is Bhaktisara. He is a great Vishnu-bhakta. We don't have any business with him."

But Parvati wanted to test him. So Shiva and Parvati came down before him. "Ask for a boon", they ordered. "I don't require anything from you," he answered, and continued to sew. He was so poor he didn't even have a needle; he was using a broomstraw with thread tied around it. "I'll give you heaven", Lord Shiva then offered, being prompted by his wife. He just kept on sewing. "I'll give you the post of Brahma." He sewed. "I'll give you my form." "You have enough problems," Bhaktisara answered. "Then you ask for something." "Give me complete liberation from material existence." "I can't give you that." "Then what is the use of my asking you anything? Oh, very well - just make this thread stick to this straw, because it keeps falling off." This made Lord Shiva angry, and fire came from his third eye. Bhaktisara pressed his toe on the sand, and a fire sprang out of the earth that devoured Shiva's fire and chased Lord Shiva, who ran to Ranganatha. Visnu sent a Vaikuntha cloud that flooded the area, putting out the fire. Bhaktisara just floated on the surface. Therefore Shiva gave him his name, Bhaktisara (essence of bhakti).

Another time a shukti-hara (magician) came by, flying on a tiger. Bhaktisara was washing a plate in the river. The Shukti-hara's tiger came to earth - it could not fly over the head of Bhaktisara. So the S.h. wanted to benedict him, so he gave him some fancy silk cloth, which turned to an old torn cloth when Bhaktisara touched it. Then Bhaktisara gave his own torn piece of cloth to the shukti-hara, which became melted diamonds.

5) Kulaksekhar was king of Padmanabhatirtha (Trivandram). He always desired

to go to Sri Rangam. So the ministers arranged for Vaishnavas to come to visit, so that Kulaksekharā would be engaged in serving them. Once he heard the devotees having Rama Katha - King Kulaksekharā ordered his ministers to call out the army, because Rama is now standing on the shore of Lanka with only His brother and some monkeys, and He needs help. So the ministers became very worried and thought, "Now he's become mad."

While K.K. was worshipping, the ministers stole a necklace to be offered to Padmanabha and blamed the Vaishnavas. The king asked for a black cobra to be placed in a clay pot. He said, "If the Vaisnavas have stolen the necklace, when I put my hand in the pot, the cobra will bite." But it didn't. "Now I am going to Sri Rangam."

6) Visnucitta Alwar was the gardener at the Srivilliputtur temple. The king of Madurai met a brahmin and told him, "I am unhappy." The brahmin told him, "Don't be concerned for happiness in this life. Happiness only comes when you are sure of happiness in the next world." "Then what should I do?" "You should find out the Supreme Truth." So the king offered 1000 gold coins for the person who would come to his court and establish the Supreme Truth. The Deity told Visnucitta, "Go to Madurai and establish the Supreme Truth." "But I am just a gardener - I only know about planting tulasi." "I am the Supreme Truth. Therefore only I can establish it. It will be done by Me, not by you. So don't worry - just go." He went there and before hundreds of pandits, philosophers, and learned teachers of all description, he spoke first. After he spoke, nobody else spoke, because there was nothing left for them to say. The king brought Visnucitta on an elephant to the Madurai Mandira. Garuda carrying Visnu came flying out, and Visnucitta blessed the Lord - "Live long!"

Visnucitta found Godadevi under a Tulasi plant. Her service was to make garlands for the Lord of Srivilliputtur. He had raised her as his daughter with the help of some matajis from the village. Once he came home early and found her wearing the garland, smiling in front of the mirror. He became angry and "fired" her from garland-making. Then he arranged to make another garland, but while placing it upon the Deity, it broke. So then he made two more, one right after the other, but the same thing happened. So he cried and fell unconscious.

In a dream the Deity said, "I'll only accept garlands worn by Godadevi." So Visnucitta asked Godadevi what this could mean; she answered, "I was only checking how the garland looked because my body is the same size as the Deity."

When her time to be married came, she refused to accept any human being. So as a joke Visnucitta described Lord Ranganath to her; she fell in love with Him upon hearing His glories. Soon after a party of priests from Sri Rangam came and requested Godadevi to come to Sri Rangam, as the Lord had made known

to the head priest that He desired to marry her. Thinking they were mad, Visnucitta drove them away. Later a procession came - "She should sit in this palanquin, for the Lord desires her hand in marriage, which is to take place immediately." So he relented, thinking them all mad. On the way, she composed beautiful songs describing the marriage ceremony that would happen. She got out of the palanquin when it came into the temple, paid her obeisances, and then walked towards the Deity. Visnucitta tried to stop her, but she walked into the altar room and climbed up on the Deity and began massaging His lotus feet. Visnucitta fainted. When he awoke, she had disappeared, having merged into the Deity.

8) Vipranarayana appeared shortly after the age of Kali began. He was a gardener at Sri Rangam. He picked flowers for the Deity, and only saw them. Once a prostitute named Deva Devi came by with her older sister. Kings used to wait in line to see her, for which they would pay big money. So Deva Devi was resting with her sister in that garden, and Vipranarayana came by, picking flowers. He said, as he came upon them, "No flowers", and moved on by. So DD and her sis started talking. DD said, "He'll be my slave in 9 days. Her sister was horrified and left.

So DD tried by her usual means to attract his mind, but it didn't work. So then she dressed like a rishi and came into the garden with a vina, singing the songs of Vipranarayana himself. He was pleased to hear the glorification of the Lord. She fell at his feet and said, "My name is Deva Devi. I am born in a prostitute family, but actually I hate that sinful business. I am a devotee of the Lord. But now my mother wants to engage me in prostitution on my next birthday, which is only in nine days. Can you please give me shelter?" "Yes, you may sing for Lord Ranganatha. You have a very sweet voice which is most pleasing to Him, I am sure. And otherwise, you can help in the garden."

So, once when it was raining, he was in his house and he heard her outside in the rain, singing beautifully. So he asked her to come in, while he remained outside. But then the song stopped. He came in and found her crying. She said, "I'm wet and feverish, I need a change of clothes." So he gave her his own cloth to wear. Then she said, "Now that we are together like this, you might as well accept me as your wife. Otherwise my mother will surely take me away to become a prostitute." "Alright, I can see you are a nice girl."

But after the ninth day, she left him and went home to her mother anyway. He went mad. Lord Ranganatha sent a gold pot to D.D.'s house as payment for her services to Vipranarayana. Because of this, when he came to see her, the mother, thinking he must be rich, let him in, and instructed DD to be nice to him. "He's a paying customer." But then the priests discovered that the pot was missing, so an investigation was made. The pot was found at the prostitute's house. DD accused VN: "He stole the pot to pay me off." But the

king, knowing VN well, did not believe her. Lord Ranganatha revealed to the King that He Himself had sent the pot to her house. So she was banished. But as she was leaving, she really repented and became an ascetic, and came to VN for her last instructions. He told her, "Now you should become a true devotee and sincerely glorify the Lord." Then she left that place forever.

9) Munivahana Alwar was not born from a womb. He was Srivatsa-anga (31/2 circle of gold-colored hair). He appeared in a grain field, was found by a shudra. There were musicians in the village he grew up in, so he learned music and composed beautiful songs to Sri Ranganatha. Sri Rangam is an island surrounded by the Kaveri River. The head priest of Sri Rangam was Lokasaranga Muni. Ranganatha is a two-handed form of Visnu on Sesa. He has beautiful eyes.

While Lokasaranga was gathering water, he saw Munivahana on the other side singing. So LS threw a stone to shut him up. MV fell crying, "Why am I a shudra? Why have I disturbed the water-gathering of the Lord?" LS returned to find the Deity doors closed. He inquired, "Who locked these doors?" Nobody knew. Then he heard a voice from behind the door: "I closed the door. Bring MV on your shoulders because he is too humble to touch this island." So LS brought MV and the door opened. MV offered a prayer to the Lord and then fell from LS's shoulders and left his body. Therefore he is known as muni (Loka Muni) vahana (vehicle).

10) Kalidvamsa (Nila) was an amsa of Sarnga. Kalidvamsa means destroyer of Kali. He was born in the 5th class - a black dude. He learned sword/spear fighting, archery and was excellent at wrestling. In short, a killer. He was also fully absorbed in sense enjoyment.

Near that village there was a water-tank where heavenly women came to bathe. One day, one girl stayed. A brahmin doctor saw her and asked, "I know everybody in this village, and you are certainly a stranger here - who are you?" She answered, "I don't know." So he took her home. His wife said, "She'll be our daughter." She was named Kumuda, which means "lotus."

Once KD saw her when she was on the roof of the doctor's house. He came with money and said, "I want her as my wife." The doctor answered, "Well, this girl is actually a foundling. She's not really my daughter. You'll have to ask her if she agrees." So KD introduced himself to her, bragging that "My fist can punch and kill 500 people." She said, "I don't like this at all. If you want to marry me, you have to become a Vaishnava."

Not really knowing what a Vaishnava was, he went to the priest of the temple and inquired. He explained that a Vaishnava is fully surrendered to Vishnu

and always depends upon Him for everything. KD said, "Sounds right on to me." So the priest gave him a garland and said, "You are a Vaishnava."

KD came back to the girl but she said, "Official Vaishnavism is not good enough. You must daily feed 1008 Vaishnavas and drink the caranamrta from their lotus feet for one year."

So he called the leaders of his gang together: he had a dude who could hide in his own shadow, a cat who could break any lock and restore it after the theft was completed, and a mean mutha who was expert in silent murder. KD told them, "Be catchin' me 1008 Vaishnavas every day, and be feedin' them. Be washin' their feet, and be givin' me that wash water. I'll be drinkin' it." They asked, "What's wrong with you?" He said: "Be something going wrong with YOU, you all don't be doing what I ask right now."

By doing this seva, Nila changed - he got real humble-like, and forgot that he was doing this seva for the girl. Soon all his wealth was used up, so since he was the tax collector (since he was the baddest dude around), he started using the tax money, which angered the king so much he sent his head honcho (C. in C.) with a guard of soldiers to wail on Nila's haid. Trouble was, Nila beat all their buns. He tole the C. in C., "Be tellin' you king I can pay him the same kind o' tax I paid you." That king was MAD. He came with he whole army, but Nila kicked their buns all over the map. Dig - he was standin' on the king's chest, sayin' "I'll be takin' that tax money as a loan from you, Jack."

But the king had some ministers, and they said to Nila, "Slow down, Slim, slow down. Now check it out - you done WRONG, and so you gotta do time in the slammer. It don't matter if the king can't whip your buns - you still be wrong, dig?" He said, "Cool." He did time. While in the big house, he prayed "I want to serve." The Lord said, "Go to Kanchipuram and you'll get money. Give the king his due, and use the rest for seva."

So he convinced the king to let him out, he got treasure at Kanchi under the direction of the Deity. He offered to pay off the king, but the king, seeing how tight Nila was with the Lord, said, "Hey, no dice. Keep it all, Slim!" Nila, who was tall, slim and blacker'n'the ace of spades, said "You the boss, Jackson."

But it wasn't too long before his seva exhausted that stash too. So then he decided to plunder businessmen. He got his gang together and said, "Dig - we hittin' the merchants. But we gonna be righteous about it. We'll stop a caravan of merchants and tell'em, 'Yo, we be servants of Vaisnavas, and we

need cash. So do a little punya and give.' If they welsh, we'll just take it, see?" So in the beginning the businessmen would say "No", and he'd tie them up and plunder them. After a while, he got the name "Paratala", which is a name for Yamaraja.

So once Lord Visnu Himself came with Laxmi as a merchant and wife leading 30 bullock-carts of goods, with His eternal associates as the attendants. Nila and gang accosted them on a lonely stretch of road. "You look quite rich, sir!" Nila began. "I'm not just rich, I'm the owner of all wealth. I use my wealth for Vaisnava-seva." "OK, that's a gas, because we BE Vaisnavas, and we here to collect our share." "That's alright, but I won't give it. You just take it."

So Nila and crew plundered. He even went after Laxmi's toe ring, by biting it so that it would come off he got all kinds of realizations but still grabbed that ring. This was the start of Laxmi sampradaya. But then he couldn't lift the riches. The merchant was smiling. "Hey", said Nila, "you must be havin' a mantra for movin' this loot." Lord said, "Sure, Slim, here it is", and gave him a mantra. Then Nila realized the merchant and his wife were Laxmi-Narayana. He just said, "Wow! I gotta go - but thanks a lot. Can I see you tomorrow?" "Sure thing", said Vishnu, "catch you on the rebound."

The next day Nila inquired, "What can I do to always have wealth to serve the Vaishnavas?" The Lord told him, "Just attack the Buddhist temples and take their gold murtis and ornaments." He attacked and either converted or killed the Buddhists. KD wrote in DP: "One who does not accept Vishnu does not deserve to live."

One night he and his men cracked a heavily protected Buddhist vihara. To open the temple one had to turn a wheel, but by turning the wheel a big bell would also ring and thus all the monks would come running. So he sent shadow man in with the lock breaker. They dismantled the wheel. But still the bell rang, so the Buddhist dudes spilled out of their sacks. Nila was slammin' and jammin' dudes while his men were trying to rip off the big golden Mahanirvana Buddha murti. But because of tantric spells the murti started moving all around as they tried to seize it. Nila yelled an order for them to just take a leak, and when they did, the murti was still. So they loaded up and split with a horde of Buddhist dudes right behind them. The gang came to Sri Rangam.

The Buddhists went to the king, and so the king summoned Nila - "Hey, Slim, you rip off these dudes?" "Right, Jim Dandy. But dig - gimme till the next full moon night, and I return the murti not less a finger." The Buddhist dudes were there on the next purnima, and Nila came with a golden finger of

the Buddha. There was a big fight, the Buddhist dudes got their tails kicked, and Sri Rangam got covered with gold. During processions he used to walk in front of the Deity with a sword. When asked why, he answered, "Offenders will get chopped." He wrote many prayers and poems.

11, 12) Madhu Kavi was a brahmin, and Shatakopa was a shudra. When S. was in the womb he remembered the Lord, so when the wind (shata) which causes birth and also forgetfulness started pushing him, he got angry at Shatavayu, and was therefore known as Shatakopa. He wouldn't drink milk or pass after he was born, and showed no sensual functions. But he grew. His parents went to a temple and gave him to a tamarind tree which had Ananta-shakti. He crawled within a hole in the tree and stayed in the lotus position for 16 years.

MK was in Ayodhya and saw a light, followed it and came to that village. Upon inquiring he found out there was a boy in the tree. MK threw a stone at the tree and the boy opened his eyes. MK asked, "In the womb of the dead, where will it live and what will it eat?" SK answered, "There it will live, that it will eat." MK became his disciple. Deities would come to the tree to give SK darshana. While describing the mercy of the Lord, SK left his body.

THE SRI VAISNAVA ACARYAS

The period of the Alvars ended 300 years after the start of the Age of Kali. Shaivism became prominent, and bhakti was gradually covered over by externals. The Dravida Veda (Divya Prabandha) disappeared. There was no darshana pravartaka. Then 3224 years after Kali Yuga began, Natha Muni appeared. He is the first darshana pravartaka.

In a village of the name Viranarayana Pura there lived a brahmin devotee of Lord Vishnu named Isvarabhata. He prayed to the Lord and got a son, Natha Muni. After study, NM took many pilgrimages and finally came to Vrindavana. He circumambulated Govardhana Hill. He prayed to the Lord that he might establish the Visistadvaita philosophy. He was called back to his own home village by Viranarayana. At the temple he saw some simple villagers reciting a verse in front of the Deity. This verse contained the statement "This is one of the 1000 verses of Madhura-kavi. One should engage in pure devotional service." He interrupted them - "Where have you learned this verse?" They were frightened. He said, "No, don't be afraid, you are giving me my life. Teach me more of these verses." They answered, "We only know this one verse. It was handed to us via family tradition."

He searched for others who might know more verses by wandering about chanting this one. In this way he searched everywhere for 6 years. During this time he almost gave up his life. He went to the birthplace of Shatakopa Alvar and

chanted this verse 12000 times. Shatakopa appeared before him and asked him "why are you chanting this verse again and again?" NM answered, "I want to know all the verses of the Divya Prabandha." SK declared, "I'll tell you the 1000 written by me and the 3000 other verses. I will also tell you the purport. You teach your disciples these truths. A great acarya will appear in your line."

He stayed in Viranarayana Pura and trained many disciples, thus re-establishing the chanting of the DP. He told his son Iswara Muni, "Your son will be a great preacher. You take shelter of my disciples and get your son trained up by them." He told his most intimate disciples Puyakundar (a great preacher) and Kavala (a great yogi) to train up his grandson when he appeared.

While NM was once doing puja, Sita-Rama-Laxmana came asking for him from the children outside. When he came out, they were gone, and the children described the trio to him. He could understand Their identities. He went running after them so madly that people thought he was crazy. He climbed up a mountain - for 1 moment he saw Them, and then he rolled down the mountain, leaving his body.

Puyakundar and Kavala continued preaching. Puyakundar had one disciple named Manakalnambi, who served him for 12 years. Puyakundar had two daughters but had lost his wife, so Manakalnambi was like their nursemaid. He even laid in a puddle for the two little girls so that they wouldn't get their footsies wet. This pleased Puyakundar so much that he placed his feet upon MK's head and asked him for a boon. MK said, "Please always keep your feet on my head," and PK answered, "These feet are always moving. But you should teach Iswara Muni's son." MK would come back from travelling and preaching periodically to see if IM had yet gotten a son. Finally he got, and MK named him Yamunatira (later Yamunacharya).

YT was sent to school to learn Vedic knowledge. But he became bored - "They're chanting the same thing every day." He learned the Taittiriya Upanisad in one day. So he went to Mahabhasya Bhatta (known as Astavadhani, because he could think of 8 things at once). He taught everything at once, and YT learned everything at once.

In that city, Aki, the court pandit, would defeat all comers and the penalty would be that the defeated pandit would lose an ear. When he heard of Mahabhasya Bhatta, he sent a challenge to him by way of a royal messenger. When that messenger came, YT was cleaning the cow stall. He took the challenge missive and used it to clean, saying "We have no time for such

nonsense. Forget it." YT was milking the cow when the messenger came again. "Aki wants to know if you are poets or logicians", the messenger demanded. "Tell him we are lions", YT answered. "Prativadi bhayankara simha" (great ferocious arguing lions.)"

When Aki asked his messenger about YT's answer, he told him "He said 'we are lions'". Aki said to the king, "These men are too proud. They must be forced to come here." Out of respect, the king sent the royal elephant, palanquin, chamaras and the chief minister to request them to visit his court. This procession was greeted by MBB himself, who agreed.

While riding in the palanquin, YT told MBB, "This is just a small-time program. Don't speak, I'll take care of everything." When they arrived, Aki was waiting for them with thousands of books and 50 one-eared pandits who had become his disciples. He said upon seeing MBB, "You have nice ears - now you will lose one. I can prove day is night and life is death." YT said, "What is the use of proving such ridiculous things as that?" Everyone applauded.

In this way YT established that he would face MBB on behalf of his guru. Out of deference to the boy (who was then only 9 yrs. old), Aki asked YT to open the debate by asking him challenging questions. So YT said, "I will make three statements. You just disprove them: 'Your mother is not barren; the king is ruler of the earth; the queen is chaste.'" Aki, in embarrassment, thought for a while and answered, "I can say nothing about these statements."

The queen (who was much taken with the bold little fellow) stood up and said, "Now let the young scholar prove his own arguments. If he can do that, give him 1/2 of the kingdom." YT cited sastra to show that a mother who has only one son may be considered barren. Then he said that the king is not the ruler of the whole earth, but only a part of it. Then he said, when a girl attains puberty, two demigods occupy her body, and when marriage is made, the priests ask the two devatas to leave. This means that before marriage she was united with two men. The queen embraced him and called him Albandaru.

After YT was a big king, Manakalnambi wanted to meet him, but he was not allowed in by the guards. Finally MKN ran into YT's cook and asked him what food the king likes best. When he heard wit was a particular kind of green spinach, he daily brought 3 kilos for two years. Then MKN stopped for three days; when the cook was asked by the king what had happened with the spinach, he answered that one brahmin had been donating, but had just stopped. YT said, "Bring him here." So the cook fetched him, and YT remembered him: "For a long time I didn't see you." MKN said, "I want to give you the family wealth which is guarded by 1000 snakes and which you must protect. To do this

I need 2 hours every day for 3 months." YT agreed and in that time learned Bhagavad-gita. Then he took sannyasa. He asked MKN, "Show me this wealth now", and MKN took him to Sri Rangam - "This is wealth, protect it with siddhanta."

YT was now Sri Yamunacharya (YA). He wrote commentaries. He went to keep an appointment with Kavala to learn yoga, but he missed it because he took a side trip to Trivandrum to see Lord Padmanabha. The appointment's conditions were that if he didn't meet K on that day, the knowledge would not every be transmitted to anyone again. YA said, "Let that line now be finished." Thus yoga was cut off from Vaishnava-dharma.

YA had 5 main disciples. He trained each in a particular field: Sankskrit, Puja, Mantra, Divya Prabandha, and Acara. YA told the 5 to be on the lookout for someone with mahapurusha-lakshana and bring him to me, he will be the future acarya.

At Kanchipuram he saw Ramanuja, and told his disciple Mahapurna to bring him to SR. Ranganatha appeared in a dream and told YA, "Come to me." YA said, "I need more time", and Ranganatha said, "OK, but after 9 days, you are coming to me." But Ramanuja did not come within 9 days time. His disciples were just preparing his samadhi on the bank of the Kaveri when Ramanuja arrived in the tow of Mahapurna.

Some of YA's principle disciples were Kancipurna, Sri Ranga Purna, Madurapurna, etc. His famous composition is Sri Stotra Ratna.

Sri Ramanujacharya

YA had a disciple named Sailapurna who dwelt in Tirupati. He had two sisters, one named Sri, the other Bhu. In Bhudapuri, Kesava Somayaji married the older sister, while Ananta Bhatta married the younger one. On eclipse day KS came to Parthasarathi Mandira. He had a dream there, that an amsa of Sesa would appear in his family. Next year Ramanuja took his birth. He'd been expected for 350 years by the acaryas of the Sri Vaisnava line. Sailapurna performed all samskaras; baby was named Rama (Lord Rama) Anuja (younger brother, Laxmana).

Baby was branded with the 4 symbols. SP also performed the hair shaving ceremony and started his schooling. At age 16 RN was married. He went from Bhudapuri to Kancipuram where many schools of philosophy were existing at that time. RN joined the school of Yadavaprakasa, an ekadanda sannyasi. RN went to him to learn siddhanta.

The other sister of Saila gave birth to Govinda, who also came to Kancipuram and joined his brother at YP's school. When YP spoke on impersonal concepts of the Lord, RN would object. YP would become angry and tell him to sit down. But RN would continue. YP got the idea to destroy him. But then he would think, "No, he's so nice", and relent.

Nearby, a king had a daughter haunted by a brahmanaraksasa. The king wanted someone to cure her and brought many doctors, healers, pandits etc. who would try various remedies, but she would just laugh at them. The king heard about YP and invited him to come, which he did with all his disciples. When they arrived the daughter was hanging from the rafters by her legs. YP began meditating on a special mantra. She jumped down and chanted that mantra aloud. The brahmanaraksasa, speaking through her mouth, said "YP, I know both of our previous births. You were a lizard in a well in a Visnuksetra. You by good fortune were sprinkled by water that had washed the hand of a Vaisnava. Now you are a pandit. And I was a pandit like you in my last life who neglected to worship Visnu." The girl jumped on YP's back, screaming "Get out!" RN separated the girl from YP. The girl hid behind a pillar and said "I (the raksasa) will leave if RN puts his foot on my head and gives me the water of his foot-wash to drink." This was done. Then the b.r. spoke once more through the mouth of the girl: "Now I am going. I will break the banyan tree on the north side of the palace to prove I've departed for good."

The king bathed Sri Ramanuja with gold coins. YP was unhappy but did not show it; YP tried to take the credit by saying, "He's from my school." RN gave YP all the gold, but still YP was inwardly disturbed that he'd been surpassed by his disciple.

Later, YP disclosed his resentment towards RN to a few trusted disciples. He was especially worried that RN would develop into a such a learned scholar that he would challenge advaitism's supremacy. His close disciples said, "Do away with RN." He answered, "To simply kill him would be a great sin. But if he goes with us to Kumbha Mela, we can arrange that he drowns in the Triveni-sangam. That way he'll be liberated, and there'll be no reaction for us. Thus advaita siddhanta will remain firmly established as the only philosophy."

RN, in any case, got tired of hearing YP's advaitist explanations of the sastra and stopped coming to classes. Still YP invited him to come with his students to Kumbha Mela in Allahabad. While on the way, Govinda (RN's cousin-brother) understood there was a plot afoot and gave timely warning to RN. In a forest near the Vindhya hills, RN got separated from the rest of the

party. YP cried, thinking, "I wanted to liberate him." When Govinda bathed at the Mela, a shiva-linga came into his hand. YP told him it was a mystical occurrence. G had a dream of Lord Siva and later went to Kalahasti and became Sivacarya.

In the meantime, RN was saved by a hunter and his wife, who gave him water. He told them, "I have to go to Satyavrataksetra at Kanchi." "I live there," the hunter replied. "But no tribals live in that place", countered RN incredulously. "No, I am there", the hunter insisted. They took rest underneath a banyan tree. RN overheard the hunter's wife complaining about thirst, since they'd give all their water to RN. RN couldn't sleep hearing this and went off in the night to search for water. He found a well, but had no means to carry the water except in his hands. So he prayed to Vadiraja. Suddenly the hunter and his wife were standing there. From his hands they took two drinks. As they were taking the third drink, RN found himself in Kanchi. He went to his mother, who told him, "I know YP is not a proper person to instruct you, but now at least you know the purvapaksa. You should approach Kanchipurna and take shelter of him." He went to the temple of Vadiraja where he found KP fanning and talking with the Deity. RN touched his feet, and KP said, "Yes, I know you're coming, you just sit down here. You want to learn from me? I'll tell you what the lesson will be - every day you just bring some water for Vadiraja."

Later YP returned to Kanchi and some of his disciples told RN, "You should go see your guru." KP said, "Yes, you may go to him. Do what he says." YP told him to stop his service to the Deity and learn the Upanisads.

At this time YA came to Kanchi to see RN, about whom he'd heard. KP received him with all honors. From a high place in the temple YA saw RN following YP. "Why does he follow him?" lamented YA. KP assured YA that everything would happen in good time - "RN will soon follow you, and everyone else will follow him, including YP."

YA returned to SR, but learning about his impending disappearance he sent a disciple to pick up RN by reciting the Stotra Ratna. Meanwhile, RN was massaging the legs of YP when YP explained a verse by comparing Visnu's eyes to a monkey's backside. YP felt hot drops fall on his back and inquired what was happening? It was RN crying; his tears had dropped on YP's body. RN angrily denounced YP's interpretation and explained the verse by comparing Visnu's eyes to a red lotus. In this way RN left YP and resumed his service to Vadiraja and Kanchipurna. The next day he heard that disciple of YA reciting the Stotra Ratna and became ecstatic. This disciple, Mahapurna, took RN to Sri Rangam after RN asked KP if it was OK; KP had grabbed the pot and

said, "Don't waste time - go!" RN ran all the way with MP behind.

YA was waiting for RN in SR, but 8 days passed without RN's arriving. YA begged forgiveness from his disciples and told them to work together under the next acarya. He then put the shoes of his guru on his head. "When RN comes, you all teach him", he instructed.

When RN and MP arrived, YA had just left his body; they both fell unconscious. They were awoken by the other disciples. RN saw that YA had three fingers folded in one hand. As RN took a vow of three parts before the body of YA, one by one the three fingers straightened. RN's vows: 1) "I will deliver all the people by preaching Bhagavata-Dharma; 2) "I will make Parasara Muni famous by creating another Parasara" (a disciple with that name); 3) "I will write Sri Bhasya."

RN then went back to Kanchi because he was angry with Ranganatha for taking YA so untimely. When he returned, KP recounted everything that RN had done since his departure, saying "Vadiraja told me everything." RN then asked KP to get from Vadiraja the answers to 4 doubts he was keeping within his mind.

The next day, while KP was fanning Vadiraja, the Deity spoke 6 sentences:

- 1) "I am the absolute truth."
- 2) "Surrender to Me is the only process of liberation."
- 3) "There is difference between the ksetrajna and the Supreme Lord" (Ksetrajna Isvara Bheda).
- 4) "It is not necessary at the time of death to make a separate endeavor to remember Me."
- 5) "By performing service one can come back to Me in this lifetime."
- 6) "RN should take shelter of Mahapurna."

KP went out and saw RN waiting with folded hands. KP said, "Here are your answers", and recited them. RN was extremely happy to hear them, and said "Yes, these answers were already within my mind."

The leading devotees met to discuss what to do after the disappearance of YA. They decided that MP should go to RN and either bring him to SR or stay with him at Kanchi. In either case he should give him initiation and train him up.

Mahapurna stayed at Madhurantaka (2 days from Kanchi) on his journey towards Kanchi. RN, on his way to SR, also arrived there, and they met. RN told MP, "The Deity told me to come to you." MP replied, "I am coming with even higher orders, from persons above the Deity, namely the Vaisnavas, who invite the

Lord to come as the Deity. I am to give you initiation. Let us go together to Kanchi, and I will give you diksa." RN cried, fearing separation from his guru by the death of one or the other, as had happened in the case of YA. He told MP, "If there is rain and I see shelter, do I wait 2 days before taking it? Please initiate me now." Even though it was sunset, the yajna was performed.

How Ramanujacharya took sannyasa:

Previously, RN had asked KP to initiate him, but KP had refused. So RN asked him to eat at his house. RN told his wife Raksakambol that KP was coming and that she should cook nice preparations for him. But when the cooking was finished, KP didn't come. RN told his wife to wait. RN, going to the temple, entered from the left side just as KP exited from the right. While RN looked around the temple for KP, KP came to his house and asked RN's wife for prasada, declaring, "I'm hungry." He ate everything on his plate and gave the leaf to the cow. The wife cleansed the place and gave the extra remnants from the pots away. Then she took a bath and was cooking when RN returned. She told RN, "That sudra is gone now." RN, who had wanted to take KP's remnants, saw how his wife viewed KP and was angry. He said, "This was a big mistake you've made. I'll give you just two more chances. If you don't curb down your pride and become a servant of the Vaisnavas, everything between us will be finished."

Another time RN was taking a massage from a Vaisnava of the 5th caste. That Vaisnava became quickly tired by doing massage, so RN asked him why. He said, "I'm quite hungry - I haven't eaten for some time." RN immediately answered, "Go to my house right now and get yesterday's rice from my wife. Eat it and come back." So this devotee came to the house, calling "Hello, I am from the 5th caste. I've come to beg prasada from you. RN says you have some rice here." She started complaining, telling him, "There's nothing here for you." He left without eating. RN, hearing this, came home, went into the kitchen and found the rice, and said, "This is your second mistake. You have only one more chance."

When MP came to Kanchi, RN put him and his wife up in his house. RN told his wife, "This is my guru and his wife. You serve them nicely." One day both wives went to the well simultaneously, and put their pots in the well together for taking water. But some drops of water fell from MP's wife's pot into RN's wife's pot. Raksakambol began complaining, "There are 18 classes of Brahmins. We are of the first class, and you are of the third class. Now my water is contaminated!" MP's wife fell at her feet, "I'm sorry, I didn't know. Please forgive me." RN said, "I can't give you shelter, because I am a woman. You

must fall at my husband's feet." When MP returned he found his wife crying, and when he heard the whole story, he thought, "Oh, what an offense we have made", and left without saying anything.

When RN returned, he saw the house was empty and his wife's nervousness. RK tried to explain by beginning, "That woman is too proud." When he understood what had happened he just ran out of the house trying to find MP and wife. Failing that, he came back and just said, "You've had your third chance." She started weeping and pleaded, "Please forgive me. I am a foolish woman. It is so difficult to overcome my nature. You must protect me, otherwise how will I live? If you leave me, I'll jump in the well!" He said, "Don't contaminate our well. I am going to the temple now. Just compose yourself - we'll talk about this another time."

RN went to the temple and arranged for one brahmin to go to his house and take prasadam. That brahmin felt very reluctant, because he knew well RK's reputation as a shrew. Standing outside the door, he announced himself as a brahmin and told RK that he'd come only on RN's order. But she said, "Oh, I am too confused right now to cook anything. Can you not please go somewhere else?" Relieved, the brahmin left, but because he didn't want to be further entangled in Ramanuja's household troubles, he loitered in a stinky land where poop was passed.

When that brahmin didn't return, RN could guess what had happened. He went searching for him and found him in the stinky lane. This time he sent the brahmin back with a new sari, bangles, fruits and flowers. His story was, "I forgot to tell you last time that I have come from your home town. Your father has sent me here to tell you your brother is getting married. These things are for you. Just take them and I will go." "No, no!" she said, suddenly brightening. "I will cook for you. You please come in!" After serving him nicely, she said, "Please go to the temple and inform my husband that I have fed you. Ask him to send me home so that I can attend my brother's marriage." RN returned home, showing happiness at his wife's behavior. He sent her to her father's home, telling her he'd also come after a few days. After she was gone, he took sannyasa from Vadiraja, Who said, "I am known as Varadaraja (king of benedictors). Now you will be known as Yatiraja." Varadaraja told KP to put RN up in an old monastery.

After 3 days, 600 Vaisnavas had moved into that monastery. RN sent a note to Sailapurna that he should help RN's cousin-brother Govinda (now a known as Shivacharya). YP's mother saw RN one day and told YP to go surrender to him. "Advaitism is useless", she said. "You were always confused." YP said, "Only in time will I do that." That night Varadaraja came to him in a dream, or so

YP thought until VR showed him the whole universe. "I am brahman", VR declared. "Why are you doing all this?" asked YP. "Because you won't follow your mother. You just go ahead and do it. I will help you from within your heart."

Next morning, YP had a kind of nervous attack. "I'm a lizard!" He cried aloud, and ran to RN in a disheveled state. RN fell at his feet. YP began putting questions to him: "Why do you put on this tilaka? Why do you worship shilas? Why did Varadaraja show His universal form to me? Where is all this in sastra?"

RN called KP and asked him to explain the Vaisnava-siddhanta to YP. YP cried, "I am an offender! Where can I take shelter?" He went back to his mother and said, "I touched his feet. Now I shall circumambulate the earth to be relieved of my offenses." His mother said, "You are still confused - you just circumambulate RN." So YP went back to RN and did that, and RN gave him initiation as Govinda dasa Swami; he told him to write a book on tridandi sannyasa.

Through his chief priest, Sri Ranganatha called Mahapurna and told him that somehow or other RN must come to SR. Ranganatha told his temple dancer, Sri Ranga Purna, to go to Kanchi and please Vadiraja. "I can go without entertainment for a few days, but I cannot go on without RN. Ask Varadaraja to release RN from His service and allow him to come to Sri Ranganam."

SRP went to Kanchi and danced for VR for 3 days straight. The Deity asked him why he was doing this. "If You want me to stop, You've got to give me what I want." "What? You can't force Me." "No, how can I force? I'll just go on dancing." "Alright, I'll give you anything except Laxmi." But when he asked for RN the Lord adamantly refused. SRP returned, and Lord Ranganatha commented, "This Varadaraja is too proud."

Back in Kanchi, KP, who had been teaching RN, thought he should go to MP and learn more. KP asked VR, who replied "How can you ask Me for this?" KP said, "You just give RN two forms that he can stay and yet go." And KP told RN afterwards, "Yes, now you may go and stay." When RN walked into the Sri Ranganam temple, Ranganatha took 4 steps in his direction.

RN called the Lord Ranganatha, and Ranganatha called him Mannatha ("My lord.")

RN took instructions from MP. MP told him to get a mantra from Gosthipurna. GP put RN off 18 times. Finally RN got initiation into the secret mantra. Immediately afterwards he climbed up to the top of the Nrsingha temple and

shouted "Om Namo Narayanaya", asking everyone to chant it. Some of GP's disciples stopped him and said, "You are going to hell, but before that, you should see GP." GP was MAD! But then he was pleased, because he actually understood RN's real purpose. He then gave him Charanaopaya initiation (B.g. 18.66 initiation).

Ramanuja's Gurus

Vartmapradarsaka-guru: Kanchipurna
Diksa- and siksa-guru: Mahapurna
Mantra-diksa-guru: Gosthipurna
Divyaprabandha-siksa-guru: Maladhara
Siksa-guru for confidential truths: Sri Rangapurna
Ramayana-siksa-guru: Sailapurna (RN's uncle)

Sri Rangam was flooded with devotees. RN sent some devotees to Kalahasti to correct his brother Govinda. G now had matted locks, wore ashes, and was daily engaged in gathering flowers for puja of Siva. Sailapurna stopped Govinda while he was bringing water for puja and asked him, "What's the use of pouring cold water on a hot head?" SP also wrote some verses and dropped them at a place where Govinda walked. G picked up the leaf and a conversation ensued between them, spoken in cryptic terms, over the proper object of worship. After that, SP used to give class near the tree where G would pick his flowers for worship. SP would deliberately preach KC very loudly; one day, just before G climbed the tree, he asked SP, "Are you so sure that no-one else is worshippable?" SP answered, "Natra samsaya" thrice. Hearing the class up in the tree, he cried aloud, "I've wasted my life!" when SP said that one wastes his life by not serving Visnu. G fell out of the tree. On the spot, SP initiated him.

The Saivites came running up as G was going with SP back to Sri Rangam. "Where are you going? You're our acarya!" G said, "Look, just forget about me now." They turned to SP: "What did you do to him?" Then to G: "Did they hex you, these Vaisnavas?" G: "Go ask Lord Siva." So for 3 days they fasted. Siva appeared in their dreams and said, "He's not my servant, he's a servant of the Supreme Lord Visnu, and so am I." Siva then quoted sastra to support Visnu's supremacy, but concluded, "You can't understand. RN is the amsa of Sesa, and G is the amsa of Garuda. Let him go and leave him be. I'll take care of you. You are confused, as are all my devotees. I only wanted his association, but now RN is calling him away. It's alright, don't worry."

When Maladhara was teaching RN the Divyaprabandhas, RN would interrupt to correct his explanations. So MD stopped the class. When Gosthipurna heard

that, he asked MD why he'd stopped teaching RN, and MD said, "Oh, he has his own meanings for the Divyaprabandhas." GP asked, "Tell me these explanations of his." When he heard them, he was in ecstasy. "Only YA himself knows these meanings!" he exclaimed. When class thereafter resumed, MD forgot some explanations; RN spoke at length on them for 3 days.

RN went to Rangapurna's house to get secret instructions. RN made milk for RP, like a servant in the kitchen. When he tasted it, RP exclaimed "Only YA can make milk like this!" RN would massage, clean, wash and do all menial services for RP. One day RP called RN a robber: "You've come to steal!" RN said, "I am serving, not asking for anything." In this way he went on for 30 days. On 31st day RP said, "I am so pleased with you I must give you this secret knowledge of the 5th process of devotional service, called upadya - taking shelter of the guru." RP lectured for 7 days on upadya, establishing it as the most important process of devotional service.

When RN returned from RP's place, he called for a big meeting and proclaimed a strict schedule for Deity worship. In the course of 24 hours each day, 1000 classes on sastra were held at the temple. 12000 disciples were fed daily; a canal of ghee flowed to the kitchen. Nobody came to Sri Rangam without wearing tilaka.

One Yajnamurti from Kasi collected religionists opposed to Vaisnavism and arrived at Rangaksetra with 68 disciples and 1000 bullock carts of books. RN gave him nice accommodation. On stage before everyone they argued. RN asked in the beginning, what will you do if I defeat you - I'll take your feet on my head and wear tilaka. But what will YOU do if I defeat you? RN said, "You won't defeat me. But if you do, I'll stop writing." The debate raged for 17 days, and RN was almost defeated. That night he went to Lord Ranganatha and complained - is this what you want? Lord said - don't worry, he'll surrender. The next morning RN came to the debate stage brimming with confidence. This rattled YM so much he capitulated. He became Devaraja Muni and was also known as Mannatha. RN would send people to him to become disciples. But though he was put in a big matha building by RN himself, he finally broke that building to dust. He wrote two important literatures: Jnana-sara (essence of knowledge about Krsna) and Prameya-sara (taking shelter of lotus feet of spiritual master).

RN went to Tirupati and lived by the Alwar Tank, but he didn't want to go up to the top of the mountain. Sailapurna told him not to stay longer than 3 days unless he had service; otherwise he should go back to preach. SP instructed RN for 1 year; at the end, SP gave RN Govinda (SP's disciple). But just outside Rangaksetra Govinda got sick from separation from his spiritual

master and ran back to Tirupati; however, SP told him, "We don't feed cows that have been sold." Govinda used to make SP's bed and lay in it to test it; when RN expressed surprise at this, G said, "Yes, let me go to hell, but it must be good for my spiritual master."

RN went up to Kasmir and acquired an old text of Vedanta-sutra; though someone stole it, his disciple Kuresa had memorized it.

A priest bribed a brahmin to put poison in RN's bhiksha (RN went to 7 different houses daily for begging alms). But when the wife gave it over, she was looking at the ground, and so RN looked and saw "visha" was written there. He stopped begging and thus stopped eating. Gosthipurna came to see him; in the hot sands of the Kaveri riverbank, RN paid obeisances, but since KP didn't say anything, RN didn't get up for one hour. After that one disciple jumped under RN to protect him from the sand. GP said, "This man will be your cook, for he puts your well-being before his own." Later that priest put poison in caranamrta for RN; RN could tell because the priest's hand was shaking when he spooned it out. RN said, "Oh so first you put poison in my food, now you're trying my drink. But this time I'll take it, for it is the Lord's footwash. And watch - I won't die. I am a snake - you can't kill a snake by giving him poison." He drank and split.

He cruised around India to establish pancharatra. But Lord Jagannatha said, "Not here." RN said, "It's gotta be." He called in the pandits and defeated them; told them I'm sending for Sri Vaisnava brahmins to show you how to do puja. Balaram threw him to Kurmaksetra. But inbetween time he was sent to Mayapur where he saw Lord Caitanya.

Saivites argued that Srinivasa of Tirupati is actually Siva; RN came and defeated them. They said, "Show practically." The king was p.o.'d but RN said, bring weapons to offer; the next morning, they saw Lord had accepted conch and disc. The Saivites accused, "He's a yogi", but the king said, "Look, if you had any power, you could done that too, if it was true. And even if it is true, it just means RN is better than you." He told them not to live within 3000 miles around his kingdom, and prevented the establishment of any other Deity for 14 miles around Tirupati.

Dhanurdasa and wife story.

While taking bath, he used to put his arm around Dhanurdasa; but they criticized. RN tore up their kaupins; stealers came through tiles of roof.

Chola King Chidambaram, a Saivite, ruled that all scholars had to sign "Nobody

is above Siva." One of his ministers was a blooped disciple of Kuresa, and he said "Just get RN and K to sign, then everybody will sign." When soldiers came to Sri Rangam to fetch RN, K disguised himself as sannyasi and said, "I am RN", MP said "I'm his guru", K's daughter said, "I'm his sister." Kuresa wrote "The Krosadi is above Siva." Meanwhile, to bewilder the Chola king, the Brahmanas sent a prostitute who did the hunchy-punchy with him for 3 days; they could take off with the Govinda Devaraja Deity.

RN had to run away. On a mountain, they saw hunters dancing around a fire. A boy was sent to check them out - "Hey, these are Vaisnava bro's!" A disciple of Kanchipurna had preached to them.

After that they met a woman named Shailaachala-ambha in a remote village; she had taken initiation 10 yrs earlier in Sri Rangam. After meeting RN she went on a fast demanding that her Buddhist husband should surrender to RN. 10,000 Buddhists came to debate with him; from behind a curtain he answered all their questions in a Sesa form. One disciple looked behind the curtain and was blinded for 10 days.

Thus the local king became RN's disciple: Vitthalanath. RN here excavated the Sampat Kumar Deity.

On the way back to Sri Rangam, Mahapurna (who had been blinded with Kuresa) died. Kuresa was stopped from returning to Sri Rangam by Chola king's soldiers who didn't want RN's disciples at that temple; the local brahmanas were working with the soldiers for this goal. Hearing all this, RN prayed to Narasimha - "Kill that demon!" The Chola king was preparing to raze RN's matha when his throat got infested with worms; krimikantha. RN told Kuresa to pray to Varadaraja for the return of his sight; K prayed that his ex-disciple goes where he goes. So RN prayed to VR, "Give him sight", and it happened. Back in SR, K asked Sri Ranganatha to go to Vaikuntha; Lord said yes and all those related to you and those related to them. RN was in ecstasy because he is related also as guru.

RN gave disciples final instructions. Take shelter of my disciple Parasara Bhatta for siddhanta; everything is in my books.

In Caitanya-lila he returned as Ananta Brahmana; did pancharatric worship to Laxmi Narayana; was friend of Vallabha-misra. He attended the marriage of LC with Laxmipriya; he remembered everything of his identity and the Lord's; he went mad, breaking up marriage ceremony by chanting Gaura Gaura. The marriage celebrants took him back to his house and kept him inside; there he jumped, and his hands came throughout the grass roof.

In that ecstasy, he went back home, back to Godhead.

Visistadvaita philosophy compared to Acintya-bheda-abheda:

Visistadvaita:	Abbt:
Supreme truth is Visnu, Krsna avatara	Krsna is ST, Visnu form of that
Vaikuntha is supreme, Goloka part	Goloka supreme, Vaikuntha part
Bhokta, bhogyam, Prerita are different	Bhokta, Bhogya energies of Prerita
Brahman (vastu) has Visesa, which are cit and acit: RN refuted bhedabheda as monism.	Bheda-abheda is acintya

Cit-acit form body of Lord, who is the Internal, External, Marginal Supreme Soul (objection: how is something happening that is not in accordance with Lord's Own desire; their answer - lila)

Jnana and Karma are processes by which we take favors of Lord; by Prappati we give service. Don't touch Jnana, Karma for anything

Brahman does not transform into living entity or material energy Lord's energies transform, but Lord is always the same (touchstone)

MADHVACARYA

MA's father was Madhyageha Bhatta; he prayed at the Ananteswara Temple (a Siva temple) in Udipi for a son. Ananteswara is worshipped as the Supersoul of Siva.

MA is Vayuamsa. Vayu is a great Vaisnava preacher who came as Hanuman in the Treta-yuga and Bhima in the Dvapara-yuga.

There was a big festival in the Ananteswara temple. MGB went with his wife and there they prayed. After that one man climbed up a pole in the temple and danced on it, shouting "Mukhya Prana (Vayu) will appear and destroy the demoniac impersonalism." Then he fell.

When MA was born he had the 32 signs of a mahapurusa. MGB wrapped up the baby and went to Pajakaksetra, fearing some harm might come to the boy. A brahmin who was accompanying them got possessed by a brahmana-raksasa along the way, who cried through the mouth of the brahmin, "Let me touch Bhima's feet! I'll be delivered that way!" In PJ, MGB took special care to hide baby from impersonalists.

During his early schooling, MA would correct his teachers and teach them the lessons of one month ahead. Because this disrupted classes, the teachers would come to the house, but finally they had to quit - "He asks questions no-one could answer!"

One Puranika came to teach. Little boy (4 yrs) said "He's lying" during his recitation. There was a big turmoil. Brahmana-raksasa haunts the boy, they said. So the father asked the boy to explain, and he did. Father said, "Yes that's very nice, but we Vaisnavas have no Brahma-sutra commentary to establish our viewpoints." Boy stood on a pot and showed 2 fingers - "I will do it! The soul and God are two!"

One day the boy was crying, so his sister went out to get the mother. The boy crawled into the horse gram dahl barrel and ate 40 kilos. Mother in shock asked him, "Are you thinking there's no difference between my breast milk and this dahl?" From inside the barrel he showed two fingers.

When MGB was doing puja, the boy cried "Hungry!" Father answered, "Look, I bought a bull. I have no money to satisfy your appetite; rather, I owe money." Soon the man who'd sold the bull came by to ask MGB to pay up. The boy met the man and said, "I am responsible for this matter." The man said jokingly, "Oh yes, I've heard about you, they say you are ghostly haunted." "Just tell me what it costs." "300 gold coins." The boy picked up some tamarind seeds and they became gold. Satisfying the man, MA then opened the rope tying the bull, pulled on his tail and went for a ride behind the running animal.

When his sister got married, MA quickly tired of the prajalpa at the marriage party and walked out of the house. He went to a nearby Visnu temple, where folks saw this small boy paying o's and offering prayers. He then went to a Siva temple and did same, and preached to some people that Visnu is superior to Siva. They were pleased with him and gave him sweets. He went all the way to Udipi, a crowd behind him. In the Ananteswara temple he was preaching to a spellbound crowd; at that time the parents came, anxiously looking for him.

They found a huge crowd around their boy, crying and worshipping him. MGB tried to break through the crowd, shouting "He's my son!" But everybody pushed him back, saying "He's our son! We all feel the same way! Why are you so special!" So father waved his chadar over their heads; boy saw and cried "I'm hungry!" Father, embracing the boy, said, "As long as you are hungry, then I can say I am your father." The boy ate a huge amount.

People were saying, "He should take sannyasa!" MA asked father, "What's sannyasa?" Father answered, "A fruit." Boy said, "I want that fruit. Now I am eating only roots, I should come to the fruit stage."

When MGB was giving class, he failed to explain one word in the verse: likuchi (a tree). Boy, who was playing outside, called in "Father, you are cheating your students by not telling them that likuchi means lemon." Everyone was amazed, "How is it he's so smart he can even correct his father?" "He doesn't even know the four orders of life," the boy answered. "He thinks sannyasa is a fruit."

Once a snake attacked the boy, biting him 3 times. His family and friends prayed to Durga to save him. He called out to them, "She can't save anybody!" Then he killed the snake himself. He declared, "Only this snake is a rope! All the other snakes will be defeated by my bhasya!"

MA became student of Acyuta Preksa, who was a Bhagavata. Though coming in mayavadi line, his guru had told him from the deathbed, "I'm not brahman, nor were 10 gurus before me." AP was 65 years old when MA came to him. AP was praying fervently to the Lord - "What is brahman?" MA, arriving for the first time, announced "What is Brahman? I will tell you!"

MGB went to AP and pleaded, "Don't take my son." AP said, "I won't give him sannyasa unless you give permission. AP would teach about brahman as he'd learned it; MA would sneeze and AP would reprimand him - "That's very inauspicious!" MA would retort "Not as inauspicious as your explanation." Then he would explain; AP was so happy he got fat as a result.

MGB and wife had another son, so at age 12 MA (then known as Vasudeva) took sannyasa. Got the name Purna Prajna. Then he lectured for 4 days on one Sanskrit verse. AP danced with MA on his shoulders and sat him on the Vedanta seat, saying "You are my guru." Just then Vadisimha and Buddhisagara, proponents of Vaisesikha and Buddhism, arrived at matha. These dudes could argue on any subject from 18 different angles of attack. They challenged AP and MA returned the challenge; as it was sunset, they offered to take up the debate the next morning but MA said, "No. NOW!" Madhva broke all their

arguments into bits and pieces. BS said at midnight, "According to Vedic principles we should stop now. We will continue tomorrow." MA said, "Why tomorrow? What kind of men are you?" They split that night, but left a palm leaf that said, "You should write your own opinion on Vedanta." And AP confirmed. So MA first wrote a Gita-bhasya.

AP went with MA on a south Indian tour during which MA defeated many pandits. His entourage increased until he had 1000 pandits following him. He stayed for 4 months in Rameswaram. There he told to some pandits, "The Vedas have 3 meanings; the Mahabharata 10 meanings and the Visnusahasranama 100 meanings. They were curious to hear how VSN could have 100 meanings. He launched into an explanation that went on for 9 days. "Stop!" they finally cried.

MA chanted Vedas perfectly; by his pronunciation alone, the meaning of the words was clear.

Then he went back to Udipi; after taking permission from AP, he went on to Badrinatha.

He offered a book he'd written to Badrinarayana; while reading the first verse, the Deity objected, because MA had written "I have explained to my capacity." Deity said, "Even I will have to think twice if you explain something to your full capacity. Better to say, 'I've revealed a little bit.'"

MA told his disciples to stay at Badrinatha while he went onward. But his disciple Satyatirtha stuck by; he sent him to get flowers and left a leaf that said: "There's no truth higher than Visnu; no scripture higher than the Veda; no explanation higher than mine; no place higher than Uttara Badrinatha. Don't follow." ST tried to follow; got stuck among the peaks; he was blown back to Badrinatha.

At UB MA saw Vyasa with big-gun rishis. V called MA closer - the rishis were waiting to Vyasa, but MA got a special darsana. V said, "I want to hear your Gita darsana. As MA read it V would make comments: "That's nice...why didn't you say more here? Add this..." In the end V pronounced, "I approve." Now write an MB commentary - give the correct commentary of the correct text." He put his hand around MA's shoulder and brought him to see Nara-Narayana Rishi. NN told V to give MA instruction; so V explained the 24 incarnations. NN said MA should write a commentary on SB. Getting their blessings, MA went back.

Established Vedic sacrifices without animal killing.

He saved a boat by waving his chadar and breathing in, sucking it to shore. Merchant wanted to reward him; he said give me gopi chandan from the ballast. The six sailors could not lift it. MA picked it up with one hand and jumped from the boat to the ocean. He put the chandan in a tank and it broke to reveal a murti of Krsna holding churning rod ropes.

This was Rukmini-devi's Deity. It was originally worshipped by the gopis of Vrndavana. After destruction of Dwaraka, Uddhava brought this Deity to the forest, and it gradually got encased in mud.

Once a king named Iswara Deva was digging a big pond; he would impress every passer-by in that service. MA talked the king into digging; then water was struck.

Madhva forded a river with disciples in tow when they couldn't get a boat due to Hindu-Muslim tensions. The Muslim king, seeing this, shouted "Allah!" and fainted. MA spoke with him in Persian.

He again went to Uttara Badrinatha and presented his Brahma-sutra commentary. V responded with "aha-kara" again and again during the reading. He jumped in ecstasy and gave him 12 salagram Deities; one Nrsingha salagram is being worshipped at Subrahmanya Ksetra.

From UB he went down through Bengal to Puri and into Andhra. He wrote 10 Upanisad commentaries and the Visnu Tattva Nirnaya.

Mayavadis at the Sringeri Matha became agitated and sent Pundarika Puri and Padmatirtha for debating MA. They ran away after meeting him. They decided to do something nasty, so they arranged for his library to be stolen. MA went to King Jayasimha and complained. JS went to Sringeri and demanded the books, when they answered "We don't know where they are", he replied "In your philosophy, knowing and not knowing are the same. So give!" Jayasimha became the librarian. MA did Caturmasya at JS's place. Trivikrama Pandit became his disciple.

Dictated 4 chapters of a book to 4 disciples simultaneously in 8 days - this is the Anuvyakena, which contains arguments against all philosophies. He refuted 21 commentators of BS.

Heard astrology at the start of every day.

In the Ananteswara temple he explained the BS and the devas showered flowers.

At one point in his explanation the people couldn't understand it anymore. The flowers piled up and covered him. The explanation stopped. When the people came forward to remove the flowers, he was gone.

COMPARISON OF MADHVA PHILOSOPHY WITH LORD CAITANYA'S EXPLANATION:

MADHVA

LORD CAITANYA

Jiva is sarvata bhinna
(always different)

Simultaneous oneness and difference

Attaining lotus feet of Visnu is
the highest goal

Prema Pumartho Mahan

Bhakti is liberation

One should follow in the footsteps of
the residents of Vrndavana.

Evidence is pratyaksa, anumana, sabda SB is only evidence

Miscellaneous details:

First bheda-abhedhi philosopher was Asmaradhya (he was rejected by Vyasadeva as an Advaitist.

MA: Sva Kapola Kalpita Matah: Mayavadi philosophy comes from their own Kapolas (skulls)

YAD ACARA TE BRAHMA - "HE WHO FOLLOWS BRAHMA" (Brahmacari)

NIMBARKACHARYA

Bhavisya, Skanda, Padma Puranas and Visnu Yamala give info that Nimbarka lived much before Sankara. He wrote the Parijata Bhasya and his disciple Srinivasa wrote the Parijata Saurava; Srinivasa was a pandit in the court of Vajranabha, Krsna's grandson.

N was greatly influenced by the Alvars; he uses words from the DP; the teachings of Nama Alvar and Godadevi are stressed; his Dasasloki follows Nama Alvar.

His parents were Aruni Rsi and Jayanti devi. This Aruni Rishi had a famous asrama. N was amsa of Sudarsana - he is known as Sudarsana Acarya.

He moved to the north and lived at Govardhana. He took three preaching tours. He stayed at Simanta-dwipa in Mayapur where Lord Siva appeared in a dream and told him to go to Bilva Paksa, a forest of Bilva trees, which have leaves like Siva's eyes (in groups of three). Siva told him, "In that forest you'll get the darsana of your previous acaryas." So when he went there he saw the 4 Kumaras there. They blessed him and requested him to start the Kumara sampradaya (or Hamsa sampradaya because in the form of Hamsa Lord Visnu gave instruction to the 4 K's). They gave him a mantra to chant: "Gaur-a". By chanting this he got darshana of Lord Caitanya, Who expressed great happiness with N. He told him, "When I appear, you'll also come and I'll cure you of the false pride that you will exhibit at that time as part of the lila." N appeared in Caitanya lila as Keshava Kashmiri (Dig Vijaya Pandita), who after meeting LC became the big acarya in the Nimbarka line.

When N was 6 years old he was known as Nirmananda. A tridandi sannyasi came to his house while his father was away; he'd been walking a long way and wouldn't eat after sunset. As it was already afternoon, and as he was hungry, he requested N's mother to quickly prepare something. She made kichari, but thought this wasn't enough, so she made bhaja, then chutney, then a sweet. By this time the sun was on the horizon. When N was bringing out the preps for Swamiji, he was chanting his gayatri. When he finished he said, "I'm very sorry but I don't eat after sunset." N said, "No, it's not sunset, look through the leaves of that tree." When the swami looked through the tree (a neem tree) he saw the arka (sun) shining - this was actually Sudarsana-chakra.

That swami blessed N by throwing aksara on his head; N bowed head to receive it and when he looked up again, he saw the swami with 4 heads (Lord Brahma), who told him, "Teach the Veda."

For 12 years he lived only on neem leaves and he performed anga pradaksina (rolling around Govardhana with whole body) each day. He went to Dwaraka, Allahabad and Bengal (when he had darsana of 4 K's and LC).

As Kesava Kasmiri, he appeared in Kasmir 38 years before Lord Caitanya. He was an extremely erudite scholar, but was a conquering pandit before he met Lord Caitanya. Then he became the foremost exponent of the Nimbarka siddhanta after that.

Comparison of philosophies:

NIMBARKA

LORD CAITANYA

"Svabhavika bheda-abheda"

"Acintya bheda-abheda"

Supreme goal is Radha-Krsna sambandha S.g. is pure love of RK

Spirit/matter = cause/effect

Krsna has 3 energies

Gopal mantra

Hare Krsna Mantra (GM is namatmika)