

Pictures depicting Bālakhbhāv (Part 1)

(Pictures that bestow Ānand of devotion unto Shrīkrushna)

Preface

Every moment of the day we are aware of our existence; because it has percolated to our subconscious mind. Everything happens and is experienced with this awareness. Having intense awareness of the existence of God or the Guru in any form, performing every act in life with this awareness and living on the backdrop of this awareness is known as 'having *bhāv* (Spiritual emotion) unto God or the Guru' or 'being in communion with them'.

There are various types of *bhāv* unto God; for example, Yashoda's *vātsalyabhāv* (Spiritual emotion of maternal love), Deity Hanumān's *dāsyabhāv* (Spiritual emotion of a servitor), Arjun's *sakhyabhāv* (Spiritual emotion of a friend) etc. *Bālakhbhāv* is also a type of *bhāv*. In this type, a seeker has innocence, purity and a *bhāv* that 'I am a small child of God, He alone is my mother, father, brother, friend and almost everything and only He is my protector'. This *bālakhbhāv* unto Shrīkrushṇa arose in the mind of Mrs Uma Ravichandra (Mrs Uma, as she is fondly called), Sanatan's lady-seeker from Chennai (Tamil Nadu). In this state of *bhāv* she began to think that she was a 3-year-old child and she drew a range of pictures. The readers will be able to understand the nature of *bālakhbhāv* upon looking at these pictures.

Characteristics of Mrs Uma Ravichandran

1. Mrs Uma Ravichandran has drawn *bhāv*-enriched pictures of Shrīkrushṇa despite the fact that she does not have a formal education of the art of drawing. As *sāadhanā* (Spiritual practice) progresses, the proportion of *bhāv* unto God in a seeker also increases. God creates in the seeker the art in which he can express his *bhāv* intensely. Then the art bestows Bliss upon others and their *bhāv* is also awakened. The pictures of *bālakhbhāv* drawn by Mrs Uma Ravichandran also have this quality. Several charming pictures depicting her engrossment in devotion unto Shrīkrushṇa like a girl-child playing with Him, worshipping Him, dancing with Him etc. are given in this Holy text.

2. 'Mrs Uma Ravichandran's pictures are the one and only example of expressing *bālakhbhāv* in an indescribable manner through the medium of pictures in history.

3. In the Path of devotion, some seekers are in *bālakhbhāv* and some in *gopībhāv* (Spiritual emotion of the *gopīs* who were supreme devotees of Shrīkrushṇa). They carry the same *bhāv* throughout the day. The characteristic of Mrs Uma is that she is in *bālakhbhāv* only at the time of drawing a picture. Later, while carrying out the familial and *prasār* (Spread of Spirituality) responsibilities she is in a different *bhāv*. As a result, she can perform both the *vyashti sāadhanā* (Individual spiritual practice) and *samashti sāadhanā* (Spiritual practice for the spread of Spirituality) equally well and hence, she is progressing fast.' - **Compiler**

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(An * sign has been put along with important points)

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