

Dedicated to
His Divine Grace
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Swāmi Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the
International Society for
Krishna Consciousness

KĀRTĪKA
SPECIAL

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BHAKTA VAŚYATĀ

Bound By Devotion

evam sandarśitā hy aṅga hariṇā bhṛtya-vaśyatā
sva-vaśenāpi kṛṣṇena yasyedaṁ seśvaram vaśe

The entire universe, with its great, exalted demigods like Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā and Lord Indra, is under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa. Yet He has one transcendental attribute: He comes under the control of His devotees (*bhṛtya-vaśyatā*). This quality is exhibited by Kṛṣṇa in the Dāmodara-līlā. (SB 10.9.19)

Controlled By Devotees

Everyone worships Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Lord. Therefore, He sometimes desires to be controlled by someone else. Such a controller can only be a pure devotee, who conquers the Lord by the power of his or her devotional service. Various poets headed by Śukadeva Gosvāmī describe this quality of Kṛṣṇa by the words like – *bhakta-vaśyatā* (controlled by devotees), *bhṛtya-vaśyatā* (controlled by servitors), *bhaktair-jitatvam* (conquered by devotees) and *bhakti-baddham* (bound by loving devotion). Kṛṣṇa reveals this quality vividly in His various dealings with the Vrajavāsīs, who consider Him as their life and soul, dedicating their body, mind and words for His pleasure alone. Kṛṣṇa

takes great pleasure in being bound by their loving service in various mellows like friendship, parental affection and conjugal feelings.

The Wealthiest Thief

Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme unrivalled proprietor and master of all the material and spiritual worlds and is served by thousands of goddesses of fortune. Nonetheless, He steals butter in the houses of Vrajagopīs, as if He is poverty-stricken. And thus He is subject to the criticism and chastisements of the gopīs who later lovingly lodge complaints against Him in front of Mother Yaśodā. Although being the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa often ‘lies’ in front of the gopīs and claims innocence.





Cause Behind Contradictions

By acting in such contradictory ways, Kṛṣṇa actually relishes the love of His devotees and expresses His love for them. To manifest this quality of 'bhakta-vaśyata,' Kṛṣṇa sometimes even relinquishes His other opulences and attributes, and thus proudly declares to everyone else the glories of His devotees who have full control over Him (*darśayāms tad-vidān loka ātmano bhakta-vaśyatām*, SB 10.11.9). Dāmodara-līlā is an unparalleled example in which Kṛṣṇa behaves in such contradictory ways to exhibit His quality of 'bhakta-vaśyata'.

The Self-satisfied Becomes Hungry

Early in the morning of Dīpāvalī, engaging her maidservants in various activities, Mother Yaśodā personally started churning butter for Kṛṣṇa. While engaging her body in churning, she also engaged her mind in thinking of her beloved son and her words in singing about His activities. Her complete absorption in Kṛṣṇa attracted Kṛṣṇa who is self-satisfied in all respects (*ātmā-rāma*). He got up from sleep and came to her eagerly, hungry for her milk (*stanya-kāma*). Kṛṣṇa climbed on her lap, His property, and she started feeding Him. A transcendental competition between Yaśodā's love in the form of her milk and Kṛṣṇa's hunger for it started. Both knew no bounds and the feeding went for a good while losing all sense of time!

Peace Personified Becomes Angry

Suddenly, the milk boiling in the kitchen started overflowing, and to save it, Yaśodā immediately kept Kṛṣṇa aside and ran there. Upon being deprived of mother's milk, greedy Kṛṣṇa became very dissatisfied. Kṛṣṇa is known as *viśuddha-sattva vigraha*, or one in pure goodness devoid of any tinges of passion and ignorance. Yet He shed tears and now manifested anger and broke a pot of yogurt and stole butter. He started distributing butter to the monkeys, yet restlessly looking around, anxious that His mother might come and punish Him.

Time Personified Flees In Fear

As it is common for a thief to leave some clue, Kṛṣṇa leaves a clue for Mother Yaśodā to catch Him – His butter footprints. Following them, Yaśodā, desiring to teach a lesson to her naughty child Kṛṣṇa, the all-knowledgeable, reaches there calmly, with a stick in her hand. Kṛṣṇa becomes shocked! Although fear personified and even Yamarāja fears Kṛṣṇa, He is now fearful of Yaśodā. Kṛṣṇa runs away towards the main gate, hoping that Yaśodā wouldn't punish Him in public.



The Fastest Becomes Caught

Despite her fatigue Mother Yasoda chased Kṛṣṇa with great determination who looked behind often, always keeping Himself a safe distance, at least a hand's length away from Yaśodā. At times she almost caught Him, but just missed. The *yogīs* cannot capture Kṛṣṇa within their hearts and the Upaniṣads declare that He can run faster than the mind, but now a simple *gopī* of Vṛndāvana, Yaśodā finally captured Him, although He wanted to avoid being arrested by her. This is because of her pure love.

The Condensed Bliss Cries

Yaśodā then threatened Kṛṣṇa by raising the stick, although she never intended to beat Him. Kṛṣṇa became more afraid and cried. His tears mixing with the black ointment around His eyes. Usually when Kṛṣṇa cries, Yaśodā would wipe His tears, but now He Himself rubbed His eyes with His own hands, and thus smeared the ointment all over His face. He is trembling in fear and breathing heavily as He cried. Seeing His soothing smile dries up the ocean of tears created due to the lamentation of the conditioned souls, but now He is crying in fear of His mother.





The Object of Prayers Gets Scolded

Yaśodā scolded Kṛṣṇa for all His offenses of breaking pot, stealing butter, distributing it to the monkeys and running away from her. Considering Him as her son, out of her intense maternal affection, she became eager to discipline Him and train Him as a good human being. She chastised Him as restless, hot-tempered, greedy, a monkey-lover and house plunderer. She threatened Him that she wouldn't feed Him milk products or give toys or allow Him to play with His playmates.

The Supreme Judge Awaits Judgement

Kṛṣṇa is guilty! His fate is completely in His mother's hands. She may punish Him, bind Him or release Him at her will. Kṛṣṇa bent His head low in front of Yaśodā and promised her that He wouldn't do such mischief anymore and anxiously pleaded her to drop the stick. Due to her intense affection, Yaśodā became worried to see His distress and suspected that He might run away due to fear, anger and fickleness. Unaware of His prowess, she thought it wise to bind Him to keep Him home, as she is busy with her household chores, and ordered her servants to get soft ropes.

An Attempt to Bind The All-pervading

The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa is all-pervading in time and space. He has no beginning or end, no exterior or interior, no front or rear and is beyond sense perception. Mother Yaśodā, considering Him her own child, tried to bind Him to the wooden mortar with a rope. She tried to tie up with her cords of strong prema the all-pervading Lord of all, who binds up with the ropes of māyā everyone from Brahma to the blade of grass.

Fist-sized Waist Not Bound By Meters of Rope

Kṛṣṇa didn't want to be bound! He desired to do His daily duties of stealing yogurt and playing with friends. So, His *satya saṅkalpa-śakti* (power to fulfil His every desire) inspired His *vibhūti-śakti* (power of showing His opulence) to manifest in His body. Thus, the rope of Mother Yaśodā became two fingers short. She got more and more ropes and tied them together, but it was still two fingers short.





Divinity's Desire Vs. Devotee's Determination

Yaśodā's determination didn't slacken despite her failure. So, Kṛṣṇa had to transform His desire. Seeing her loving endeavour (*parīśrama*) Kṛṣṇa became merciful (*kṛpā*). Kṛṣṇa's *kṛpā-śakti* which reigns as the king of all His potencies and illuminates all others, melts the heart of the Lord and turns it into butter. It made His *satya saṅkalpa* and *vibhūti śaktis* immediately disappear. The distance of two fingers was filled by the devotee's endeavour and the Lord's causeless mercy. The *bhakta-niṣṭhā*, or the firm faith of the devotee seen in his or her tireless endeavours to serve and worship Kṛṣṇa, and the *sva-niṣṭhā* or the steady quality in Kṛṣṇa, which brings forth His mercy upon seeing the devotee's efforts causes Kṛṣṇa to be bound. In the absence of these two, the rope will remain two fingers too short.

*sva-mātuḥ svinna-gātrāyā visrasta-kabara-srajaḥ
dṛṣṭvā pariśramam kṛṣṇaḥ kṛpayāsīt sva-bandhane*
(SB 10.9.18)

The Liberator In Bondage

Thus Kṛṣṇa who can liberate everyone from the material bondage is Himself bound by the love of His devotee. Thus the rope with which Yaśodā bound Him is the rope of her pure love. In this Dāmodara-līlā, Kṛṣṇa showed Yaśodā and the whole world that only love can bind Him. Yet, although He is in bound up state, He retains His quality of liberating others, as He had liberated the sons of Kuvera by pulling down the Yamalārjuna trees. Still in His liberating them, He exhibited His quality of being controlled by His devotee Nārada who desired that the sons of Kuvera be liberated by Kṛṣṇa.

The Possessor Of All Qualities And Their Opposites

To show this quality of being controlled by His devotees, Kṛṣṇa acted against some of His innate qualities, yet there is no contradiction in this, because Kṛṣṇa possesses all the qualities and all their opposites too. His quality of being merciful to His devotees, being controlled by their loving devotional service, stands as the epitome of all His attributes. Thus the process of bhakti is glorified in Dāmodara-līlā.

*nāyam sukḥāpo bhagavān dehinām gopikā-sutaḥ
jñāninām cātma-bhūtānām yathā bhaktimatām iha*

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Mother Yaśodā, is easily accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but not to mental speculators, aspirants of self-realization, or to those in bodily identification. (SB 10.9.21)

Mother Yaśodā, The Epitome of Vātsalya-rasa

*nemaṁ viriñco na bhavo
na śrīr apy aṅga-saṁśrayā
prasādam lebhire gopī
yat tat prāpa vimuktidāt*

Neither Lord Brahmā, nor Lord Śiva, nor even the goddess of fortune, who is always the better half of the Supreme Lord, can obtain from Him, the deliverer from this material world, such mercy as received by Mother Yaśodā. (SB 10.9.20) ☀

VERSE OF THE MONTH

trayyā copaniṣadbhiś ca
sāṅkhya-yogaiś ca sātvataiḥ
upagīyamāna-māhātmyam
harim sāmānyatātmajam

The glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are studied through the three Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the literature of Sāṅkhya-yoga, and other Vaiṣṇava literatures, yet Mother Yaśodā considered that Supreme Person her ordinary child. (SB 10.8.45)

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura comments
that this verse should be taken as the
Paribhāṣā sūtra of Kṛṣṇa-līlā.





Just as people take pleasure in mixing different flavors of ice cream to produce wonderful combinations of flavor. Similarly, on the spiritual platform Sri Kṛṣṇa and His devotees expertly mix the flavors of spiritual bliss, which were a treat for the gopīs. (SB 10.35.26 P)

Sometimes a king may engage a joker, and in the process of joking, the king is sometimes insulted. The king, however, enjoys these activities. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa enjoys being dependent on the mercy of Mother Yaśodā. Thinking Himself dependent on the devotee gives the Supreme Lord great enjoyment. (SB 4.31.20 P)

Just as a lamp does not seem to shine as brightly in sunlight as it does in the shade, or as a diamond does not seem as brilliant on a silver platter as it does on a plate of blue glass, the Lord's pastimes as Govinda do not seem as amazing in the transcendental abode of Vaikuṅṭha as they do within the material realm of Māyā. (SB 10.14.37 P)

ANALOGY ARENA

We often observe that a mother's loving concern for her adult child is not always justified by an actual danger to the child. A grown child may be wealthy, competent and healthy, and yet the mother's loving concern continues. Similarly, a pure devotee always feels loving concern for Lord Kṛṣṇa, as exemplified by mother Yaśodā, who could only think of Kṛṣṇa as her beautiful son. (SB 10.48.26 P)

The Lord's potency acts in both the spiritual and material worlds. In the spiritual world the Lord's potency works as yogamāyā, and in the material world the same potency works as mahāmāyā, exactly as electricity works in both a heater and a cooler. (SB 10.1.25 P)

In His original form, God has a most playful nature and occasionally enjoys submitting to the strength or desire of His loving friends. A father may sometimes playfully fall down on the ground when struck by his beloved little child. These acts of love give pleasure to all parties. (SB 10.18.24 P)





PARI PRAŚNA



Mail us at pradipika@vidyapitha.in your questions on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Answers to shortlisted questions shall be published in the next issue of Bhāgavata Pradīpikā.

Question: If the soul is purely spiritual and is always conscious, how then does the soul be entangled in a material body and experience sufferings? (By Ganesh)

Answer: A teacher in school once threatened his pupil that he would cut off the pupil's head and hang it on the wall so that the child could see how his head had been cut off. The child became frightened and stopped his mischief. (If one's head is cut off, how can he see himself? However, in a 'dream' one may see so.) Similarly, the miseries of the pure soul and the disruption of his self-identification (which are as good as a dream) are managed by the external energy of the Lord, which controls those mischievous living entities who want to go against the will of the Lord. (3.7.10 P)

As the moon reflected on water appears to the seer to tremble due to being associated with the quality of the water, so the self associated with matter appears to be qualified as matter. But that misconception of self-identity can be diminished gradually by the mercy of the Personality of Godhead, Vāsudeva, through the process of devotional service to the Lord in the mode of detachment. (3.7.11-12)

The living entity is influenced by the avidyā potency. The living entity is parā prakṛti, or parā śakti. He is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord as potency and not as the potent. The potent can exhibit many potencies, but the potency cannot equal the potent at any stage. One potency may be overcome by another potency, but to the potent, all potencies are under control. The jīva potency of the Lord, has the tendency to be overpowered by the external potency, avidyā, and in this way he is placed in the awkward circumstances of material existence. The living entity cannot be forgetful of his real identity unless influenced by the avidyā potency. Because the living entity is prone to the influence of the avidyā potency, he can never equal the supreme potent. (3.7.5 P)

The application of devotional service to Lord Vāsudeva invites pure knowledge and it quickly detaches one from the material conception of life and thus revives one's normal condition of spiritual existence, even in this life, and frees one from the material winds which cause one to quiver. Only knowledge in devotional service can elevate one towards the path of liberation. (3.7.12 P) ☀





BHĀGAVATA PRAVĀHA

The Flow of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

THE ECSTASY OF SEPARATION & MEETING

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Canto 1 Chapters 10-11]



Having stayed for some time at Hastināpura even after the Kurukṣetra battle, Lord Kṛṣṇa prepared to depart for Dvārakā. In these two chapters, Sūta Gosvāmī wonderfully describes the heartfelt emotions of the Hastināpura-vāsīs in separation from Kṛṣṇa (vipralambha) and the ecstatic feelings of the Dvārakā-vāsīs upon meeting with Kṛṣṇa (sambhoga) after a long time.

Results of Righteous Reign

Having conquered his enemies and restored the Kuru dynasty, and after having been enlightened by Bhīṣmadeva and Lord Kṛṣṇa, Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira ruled over the earth and seas, followed by his brothers. During his reign, the clouds showered sufficient rain, the earth produced in profusion, the cows moistened the lands with fatty milk bags, and rivers, oceans, hills, herbs, etc., all produced their respective resources in abundance. The living beings were not afflicted by mental agonies, diseases nor excessive heat or cold.

Unbearable Separation

Lord Kṛṣṇa stayed at Hastināpura for a few months to pacify His relatives and please His sister, Subhadrā. Later, He exchanged greetings with the relatives and mounted His chariot, ready to depart. Unable to bear separation from Kṛṣṇa, the members of the Kuru dynasty all nearly fainted. How could the Pāṇḍavas tolerate separation from Kṛṣṇa, having intimately associated with Him, seeing Him face to face, touching Him, conversing with Him, and sleeping, sitting and dining with Him? Even for an ordinary person, just by hearing once of His glories in the association of devotees, he can't resist to hear more. The ladies prepared to bid farewell withholding their tears with great difficulty, so as not to cause any misfortune during the time of departure.



**BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

When Kṛṣṇa plays with His young friends, Mother Yaśodā is very much disturbed by thoughts that Kṛṣṇa, because of always playing and not taking His food properly, must be getting weak. These are examples of the exalted ecstasy felt in Kṛṣṇa's service as manifested in Vṛndāvana (SB 7.1.27 P)



Most Attractive Talks

The Kuru ladies looked at the Lord from the rooftops as they talked about Him. Their talks which were more attractive than the Vedic hymns consisted of Kṛṣṇa's glories – “His existence is beyond the creation and annihilation of the material world. He is understood only by devotees cleansed of material contamination. The Yadu dynasty, the land of Mathurā and Dvārakā are most glorious and His wives are greatly fortunate.” Lord Kṛṣṇa smilingly reciprocated with their talks and left being accompanied by phalanxes towards Dvārakā.

Radiant Reception

Upon reaching the border of His city, Lord Kṛṣṇa sounded on His conch shell, pacifying the dejecting citizens. The conch, reddened by His lotus lips, appeared like a white swan playing in the stems of red lotuses. The citizens came forward to offer their gifts, although it was like offering a lamp to the sun. Being ecstatic to welcome the Lord, they spoke affectionately, “Dear Lord, you are the most worshipable and ultimate resort for all. You are our mother, father, guru, well-wisher and worshipable deity. It's our good fortune that we are able to see Your smiling face again. Please continually give us this mercy, for whenever you go away to Mathurā, Vṛndāvana or Hastināpura, a moment of Your absence appears like millions of years.” The Lord acknowledged them and entered the beautifully decorated Dvārakāpurī where every home is prepared to receive and worship Kṛṣṇa.

Befitting Reciprocation

The Lord's family members, *brāhmaṇas*, dramatists, musicians and others gave their offerings. Kṛṣṇa reciprocated with each one befittingly, either by bowing His head, exchanging greetings, embracing, shaking hands, smiling, assuring and awarding benedictions. Although regularly accustomed to seeing Kṛṣṇa's beauty, the residents of Dvārakā were never satiated, because He is the abode of all beauties. As He walked on the road it seemed that sun (His umbrella), moon (fan), stars (flower showers), rainbow (garland), cloud (His body) and lightning (His dress) simultaneously appeared. Later, the Lord was embraced by his mothers, headed by Devakī, who were delighted.

Transcendental Relationship

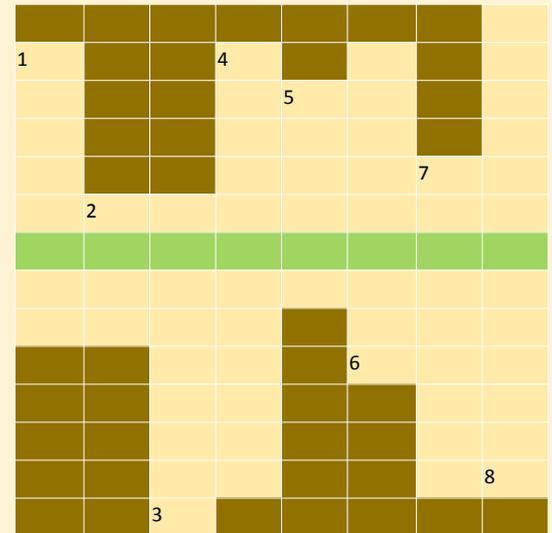
Then Kṛṣṇa entered His palaces to meet His wives, who shyly covered their faces and looked coyly. They embraced Him within their hearts, then visually, then by sending their sons forward. Kṛṣṇa's relationship with His queens is transcendental with no tinge of material lust. Although the charms of these women could captivate Cupid and even Lord Śiva, still they could not agitate the senses of the Lord even slightly. Similarly, devotees who have taken His shelter do not become influenced by material qualities. These women were unaware of the glories of their husband, just like atheists are unaware of the supreme controller.

To be continued...

QUIZ CORNER

Fill the boxes based on the clues below.

1. Meeting with Kṛṣṇa is called as _____
2. _____ śakti is the king amongst all of Kṛṣṇa's potencies.
3. Seeing Yaśoda's _____, Kṛṣṇa became merciful.
4. The firm faith of the devotee in serving Kṛṣṇa is called _____.
5. Time personified is fearful of Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is running in fear of _____.
6. _____ is the land of Kṛṣṇa's sweet pastimes.
7. The steady quality in Kṛṣṇa which brings forth His mercy is called _____.
8. _____ śakti is the power of Kṛṣṇa to fulfil His desire.



Gather all the letters from the **green** boxes, **jumble** them and **fill** the following boxes.

Answer:

Mail your answer to pradipika@vidyapitha.in with “October Quiz Corner” in the subject. Names of the first three people who gave correct answers shall be published in the next issue.

Answer for September Quiz Corner:
RADHIKA NATHA

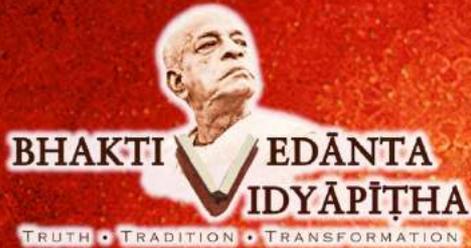
Correct Answers Given by: Hari Govind Das, Pritam Dey, Padma Sakhi Devi, Aniruddha Chakraborty, Gagan Meena, Tripath Sagoo Radhikesh das and Saurav Suman.





CAITANYA SUBODHINĪ

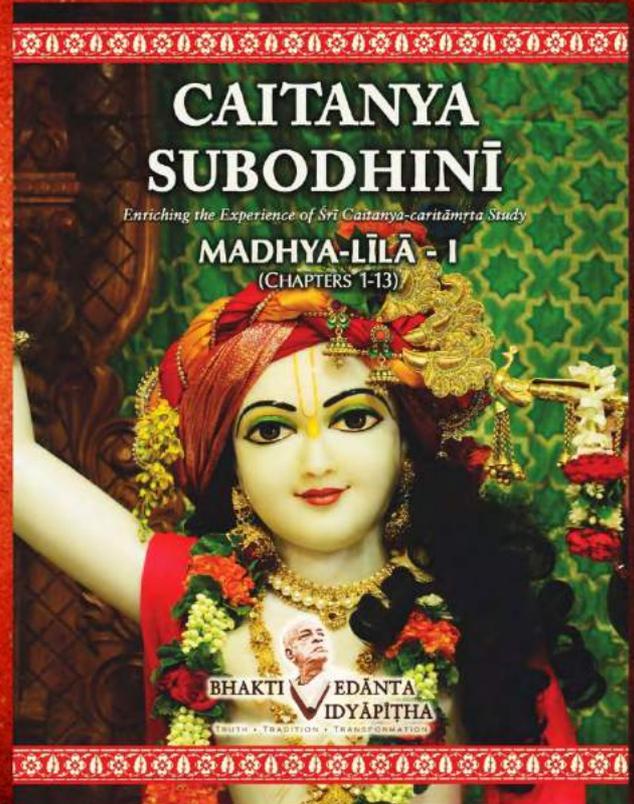
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NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-saṁhitā

1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1

1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1 (If it is beyond Canto 10 Chapter 13, it is from the purport of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples)

1.1.1 V: From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

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**BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

The Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, desires to share His blissful opulences with all living beings, and thus He sincerely invites them to come back home, back to Godhead. (SB 10.54.5 P)