



*A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhāgavatam*

Dedicated to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda  
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

**Bridging the Gap  
Between Knowledge  
& Realization**



Verse of the month

Analogy Arena

Upcoming Courses

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**FROM THE  
DESK OF THE  
FOUNDER  
ĀCĀRYA**



*Light of Bhagavata*

By A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

*The evening in the rainy season is dark all around. There is no sight of the twinkling stars on the horizon or the pleasing moon. They are covered by clouds. And the insignificant glowworms become prominent in the absence of the luminaries in the open sky.*

As there are seasonal changes within a year, so there are changing ages in the duration of the manifest cosmic world. These changing ages are called yugas, or periods. As there are three modes of nature, there are also various ages dominated by these three modes. The period dominated by the mode of goodness is called Satya-yuga, the period of passion is called Tretā-yuga, the period of mixed passion and ignorance is called Dvāpara-yuga, and the period of darkness and ignorance (the last period) is called Kali-yuga, or the age of quarrel. The word kali means “quarrel.” Kali-yuga is compared to the rainy season because many difficulties in life are experienced during this damp season.

In Kali-yuga there is a dearth of proper guidance. One may take guidance in the evening from the stars and moon, but in the rainy season the light of guidance comes from insignificant glowworms. The real light in life is the Vedic knowledge. Bhagavad-gītā affirms that the purpose of the Veda is to know the all-powerful Personality of Godhead. But in this age of quarrel there are quarrels even over the point of the existence of Godhead. In the godless civilization of the age of quarrel there are countless religious societies, them trying to banish God from religion. Glowworms want to be prominent in the absence of the sun and the stars, and these small groups following various religious conceptions are like glowworms trying to be prominent before the eyes of the ignorant mass of people. There are now a number of self-made incarnations people follow without authority from the Vedic literatures, and there is regular competition between one incarnation’s group and another’s.

The Vedic knowledge comes in a tradition from the spiritual master through the chain of disciplic succession, and the knowledge must be acquired through this chain, without deviation. In the present age of quarrel the chain has been broken here and there, and thus the Veda is now interpreted by unauthorized men who have no realization. The so-called followers of the Vedas deny the existence of God, as in the darkness of a cloudy evening the glowworms deny the existence of the moon and stars. Saner people should not be waylaid by such unscrupulous men. Bhagavad-gītā is the summary of all Vedic knowledge because it is spoken by the same Personality of Godhead who imparted the Vedic knowledge into the heart of Brahmā, the first created being in the universe. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam was especially spoken for the guidance of the people of this age, which is darkened by the cloud of ignorance.

*A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda*



# Bridging the Gap Between Knowledge and Realization

By Gauranga Darshan Das

There is often a painful gap between what we know and what we actually practice. We may hear profound wisdom, study scriptures regularly, attend classes, and even explain philosophy to others—yet, in crucial moments of life, we may fail to apply what we know.

This gap between knowledge and realization is one of the greatest challenges in spiritual life.

The first step in reducing this gap is acknowledging that it exists. Some people imagine that simply possessing knowledge is perfection in itself. But spiritual wisdom is not meant merely to decorate or stimulate the intellect; it is meant to transform the heart and guide our actions.

We may know a great deal, but apply only a little. And often, the main reason this gap persists is that we do not honestly recognize it within ourselves.

Even highly learned people can struggle with this. Great sages, scholars, and tapasvīs may possess vast scriptural understanding, yet still find it difficult to apply that knowledge at the right time. Information may be abundant, but application limited—and realization even more limited.

True spiritual growth begins when knowledge becomes lived experience.

## Transforming Jñāna to Vijñāna

In spiritual life, knowledge alone is not enough. Scriptures repeatedly emphasize the importance of realization.

Jñāna often refers to theoretical knowledge. Vijñāna means realized knowledge—wisdom that has entered one’s character through sincere practice. Knowledge becomes realization only when it is applied – put into practice. Otherwise, jñāna remains information without transformation. Thus, the gap between jñāna and vijñāna is application.



We do not simply want information; we want transformation. Information may impress others, but transformation purifies the self. One may collect many quotations, memorize verses, and speak eloquently, yet if one’s behavior remains unchanged, the essence of spiritual life has not yet been touched.

Application may take time, and perfection may not come immediately, but there must at least be a sincere attempt to live according to what we know. Every honest effort to practice spiritual wisdom gradually converts theory into realization.

Just as reading books about swimming cannot save a drowning person unless he enters the water and practices, spiritual knowledge becomes meaningful only when it is lived.

## When Knowing More Only Leads to Understanding Less

There is another danger in spiritual learning: knowledge can increase pride instead of humility. If our knowledge increases arrogance, then that knowledge actually becomes ignorance.

A beautiful way to understand this is through simple Sanskrit words. Ahaṅkāra means false ego or arrogance. Jñāna means knowledge. If we add the “a” from ahaṅkāra to jñāna, it becomes ajñāna—ignorance.



But there is another equation. Vinaya means humility. Add “vi” from vinaya to jñāna, and it becomes vijñāna—realized knowledge.



Arrogance converts knowledge into ignorance, while humility converts knowledge into realization.

This is why genuinely wise people become softer, kinder, and humbler—not harsher or more self-righteous. Real spiritual advancement is measured not merely by how much we know, but by how much our heart has changed.

## The Story of Jamadagni and Paraśurāma



Jamadagni was a great sage and the father of the mighty Paraśurāma. His wife was Reṇukā Devī.

One day, the powerful king Kārtavīrya Arjuna arrived at Jamadagni's simple forest hermitage with thousands of soldiers. They were exhausted from hunting and required food, water, accommodation, and rest.

Although Jamadagni lived very simply, he welcomed the king with extraordinary hospitality. This became possible through the divine cow Kāmadhenu, who could produce anything required.

The king and his army were astonished. After being served royally, Kārtavīrya Arjuna asked Jamadagni how such abundance was possible. When he learned about Kāmadhenu, greed entered his heart, and he shamelessly demanded the cow.

Jamadagni replied with wisdom and dignity that he could not part with the cow. Kārtavīrya Arjuna was a kṣatriya, and Jamadagni was a brāhmaṇa. Kṣatriyas are meant to give charity to brāhmaṇas, not take from them.

But the king ignored dharma. He forcefully stole Kāmadhenu and left.

### A Teacher of Forgiveness

When Paraśurāma heard about this offense, he became furious. He went to the king's capital, fought a terrible battle, killed Kārtavīrya Arjuna, and recovered the cow.

However, when Paraśurāma returned, Jamadagni chastised him.

“He only stole my cow,” Jamadagni said, “but you took his life. You gave excessive punishment. A brāhmaṇa's duty is forgiveness.”

Then Jamadagni quoted a profound verse:

*kṣamayā rocate lakṣmīr  
brāhmī saurī yathā prabhā  
kṣamiṇām āśu bhagavāṁs  
tuṣyate harir īśvaraḥ*

“The beauty of a brāhmaṇa shines through forgiveness, just as the sun shines with its radiance. Lord Hari is quickly pleased with those who are forgiving.”

Jamadagni emphasized: “A brāhmaṇa must tolerate and forgive.” He instructed Paraśurāma to perform pilgrimage and purification.

His knowledge was perfect.

His philosophy was correct.

His teaching was noble.

But then came the real test.



## The Unexpected Examination

One day, Reṇukā Devī went to fetch water from the river. There she briefly saw the Gandharva Citraratha enjoying with his queens in royal luxury.

For a moment, her mind became distracted. She experienced a brief attraction toward such opulence and enjoyment. It was only mental and momentary and she did not act improperly in any way. But because of this distraction, she returned home slightly late.

Using his mystic powers, Jamadagni understood what had happened. Instead of responding with empathy and compassion, he became furious.

“How can my wife become attracted to material enjoyment?” he thought.

In anger, he gave an unimaginable order to his sons: “Kill your mother.” The sons refused. Jamadagni became even more enraged by his sons’ refusal.

Then he called Paraśurāma and gave an even harsher instruction: “Kill your mother—and kill your brothers as well.”

At this moment, a painful contradiction became visible.

Earlier, Jamadagni had delivered a profound discourse on forgiveness. He taught that even a king who stole a sacred cow should be forgiven. He even prescribed atonement to Paraśurāma for killing Kārtavīrya Arjuna. But now, when his own wife committed a small mental mistake, Jamadagni could not tolerate it.

This is the central lesson:

The problem was not lack of knowledge.

The problem was the inability to apply that knowledge at the right moment.

In fact, this struggle is not limited to ordinary people. Even highly learned and spiritually advanced personalities can sometimes become bewildered by the Lord’s illusory energy when emotions overpower discrimination.

## Life's True Tests Come In Unexpected Moments

In a classroom examination, we receive preparation time. But life’s examinations come unexpectedly.

\* Someone insults us. \* A relationship disappoints us. \* Our ego becomes hurt. \* Anger suddenly rises.

In those moments, our true level of realization becomes visible.



Jamadagni knew the philosophy of forgiveness; he even preached it emphatically. But when emotionally disturbed, he could not apply it.

This discussion is not meant to criticize great personalities like Jamadagni. The Bhāgavatam presents the mistakes of great souls so that we may learn what not to do from them. At the same time, we should be careful not to offend them.

And what happened once in Jamadagni's life may happen daily in ours.

We may speak beautifully about patience, humility, compassion, and tolerance—but in moments of pressure, we forget everything. Why? Because acquiring knowledge is easier than applying it and the scriptures presented examples of it.

Many people prioritize collecting information but neglect practicing it. When acquisition becomes more important than application, knowledge remains theoretical. But when sincere effort is made to practice spiritual wisdom, maturity gradually develops.

Yes, we may fail repeatedly. But failure should not discourage us. A child learning to walk falls many times, yet every fall strengthens the next step.

Similarly, in spiritual life, we need to recognize our mistakes, learn from them, sincerely repent, pray for strength, and continue trying yet again. Krishna sees our sincere effort and supports us.

## Paraśurāma At The Crossroads of Obedience and Compassion



Paraśurāma now faced an impossible dilemma. If he disobeyed, Jamadagni—overwhelmed by anger—might curse him. If he obeyed, he would kill his own mother and brothers.

Paraśurāma reasoned deeply: “If I obey my father, he will likely become pleased and offer me a boon. Then I can ask him to restore them.”

Trusting in divine arrangement, Paraśurāma carried out the order. Jamadagni became satisfied and offered him any boon.

Immediately, Paraśurāma requested: “Please bring my mother and brothers back to life. And please remove their memory of this incident.” Jamadagni granted the boon.

Even within this painful situation, we see Paraśurāma's intelligence, obedience, and concern for relationships.

## Dhṛtarāṣṭra: Knowledge Overpowered by Attachment

Another striking example appears in the life of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Dhṛtarāṣṭra was not ignorant of dharma. He knew very well that Krishna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He understood that his son Duryodhana was acting adharmically. He knew the Pāṇḍavas were righteous. Yet he repeatedly supported the wicked plans of Duryodhana.

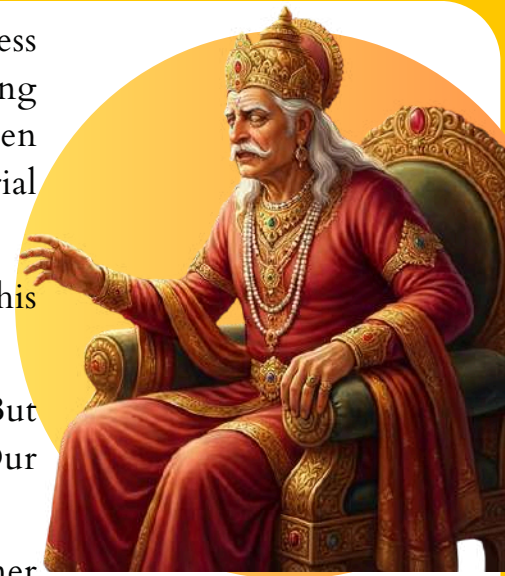
Why? Because attachment clouded his intelligence.

His problem was not lack of knowledge. His problem was weakness caused by material affection. Affection itself is not bad. Loving relationships are essential, especially in Vaiṣṇava culture. But when affection becomes mixed with selfish attachment and material expectation, it weakens our ability to act according to truth.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra became a victim not merely of circumstances, but of his own undue attachment to his evil son, Duryodhana.

Often in life we say: “He hurt me. She caused my suffering.” But many times, we ourselves are both the culprit and the victim. Our own attachments, expectations, and weaknesses create suffering.

Dhṛtarāṣṭra’s life teaches us that knowledge without inner purification cannot protect us.



## Knowledge and Realization: Bridging the Gap

So how do we reduce this gap? The answer – sincere application of spiritual culture and good association. By hearing regularly, chanting sincerely, associating with devotees, introspection, humility, prayer, and practical application, knowledge gradually becomes realization.

Another important principle emerges here: theoretical understanding alone is not enough to overcome illusion. Realization deepens especially through humble service to advanced devotees. Therefore, the Bhāgavatam repeatedly emphasizes the transformative power of serving saintly persons.

Spiritual life is not about becoming a walking encyclopedia of philosophy. It is about becoming a walking example of the principles we discuss.

The goal is not merely to speak about humility, forgiveness, and devotion—but to live them. Even if progress is slow, honest effort purifies the heart.

A mirror covered with dust cannot reflect clearly but through regular cleaning, clarity gradually appears. Similarly, through steady sādhana and sincere application, the heart becomes purified, and spiritual wisdom becomes natural.

## Conclusion: From Accumulated Information to Inner Transformation

The real success of spiritual life is not measured by how much we know, but by how much we live according to what we know.

Knowledge is valuable.

Realization is more valuable.

Application is the bridge between the two.

Therefore, we must constantly ask ourselves:

- “Am I only hearing?”
- “Am I genuinely trying to practice?”
- “Has my knowledge made me humbler?”
- “Am I becoming more forgiving, more compassionate, and more self-controlled?”

- When knowledge is joined with arrogance and pride, it becomes ignorance. When knowledge is joined with humility and sincere practice, it becomes realization.
- And when that realization deepens, spiritual wisdom no longer remains theory—it becomes our nature.

# VERSE OF THE MONTH



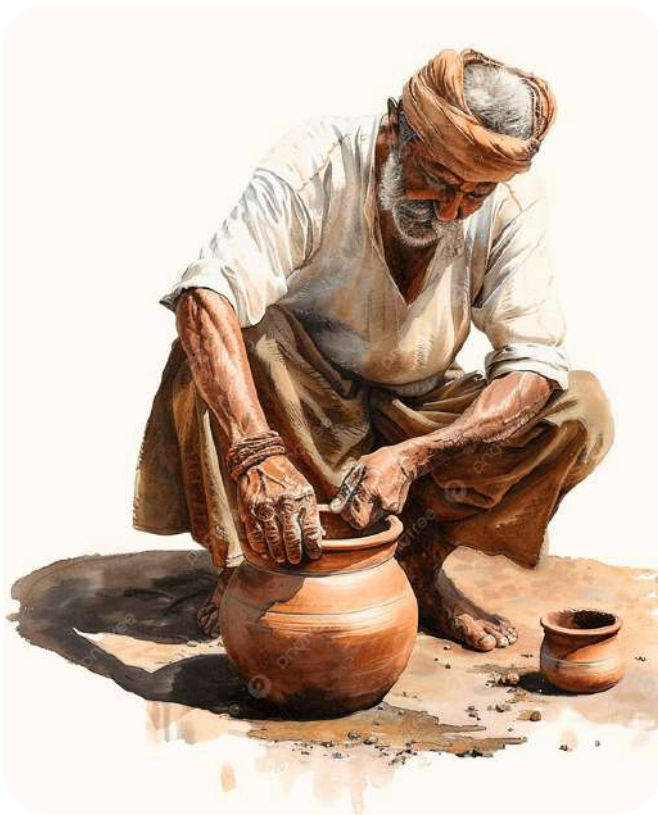
## Crossing Nescience by Glorifying the Lord!

ŚB 7.9.18

*so 'haṁ priyasya suhr̥daḥ paradevatāyā  
līlā-kathās tava nṛsimha viriñca-gītāḥ  
añjas titarmy anugṛṇan guṇa-vipramukto  
durgāṇi te pada-yugālaya-haṁsa-saṅgaḥ*

O my Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, by engaging in Your transcendental loving service in the association of devotees who are liberated souls [haṁsas], I shall become completely uncontaminated by the association of the three modes of material nature and be able to chant the glories of Your Lordship, who are so dear to me. I shall chant Your glories, following exactly in the footsteps of Lord Brahmā and his disciplic succession. In this way I shall undoubtedly be able to cross the ocean of nescience.

# ANALOGY ARENA



By seeing an earthen pot made by a potter, one can conclude the existence of the potter.

Similarly, seeing this material world, any intelligent person can estimate the existence of the Supreme Lord as the creator.

ŚB 8.3.14

Just as the sparks of a fire or the shining rays of the sun emanate from their source and merge into it again and again,

similarly the gross and subtle material bodies and the continuous transformations of the modes of nature all emanate from the Lord and again merge into Him.

ŚB 8.3.24



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(हिंदी में)

भगवद् गीता के 18 अध्यायों के सार के साथ आत्म-विकास और तनाव-मुक्त जीवन जीने का मार्ग।

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- डिप्लोमा कोर्स प्रमाणपत्र

गीता को समझना अब आसान

- ★ 18 सर्गों में 18 अध्यायों का सरल और गहन अध्ययन
- ★ हर श्लोक और अध्याय के आपसी संबंध को समझे
- ★ जीवन में लागू होने वाला व्यावहारिक ज्ञान

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Highlights of the Course

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- Engage in Festival Sevas
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- Group study & discussions
- Vrindāvan Parikramā

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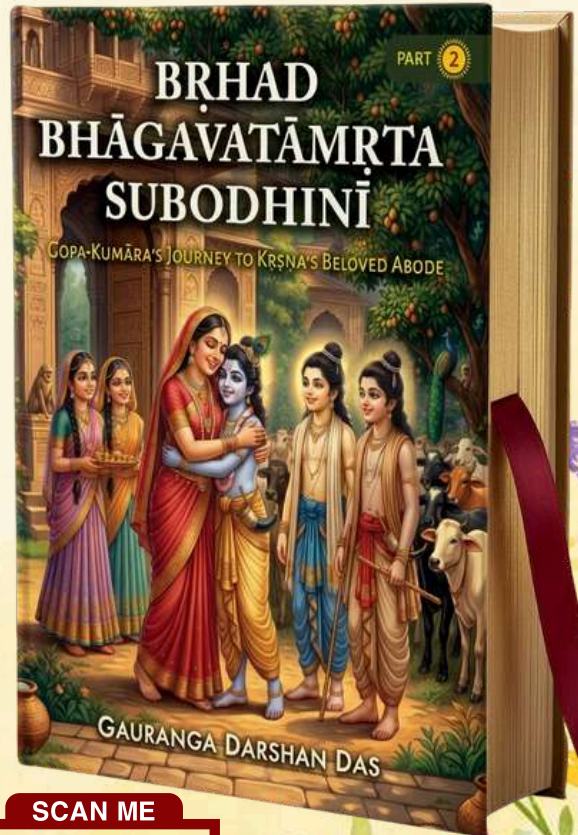
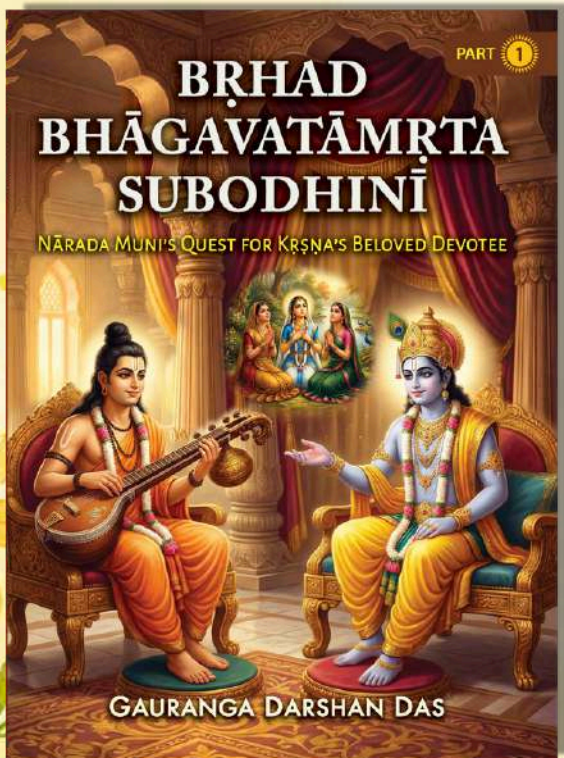
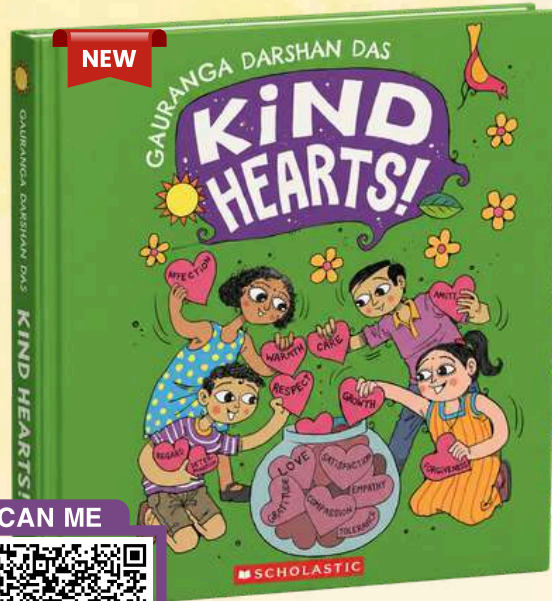
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