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BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

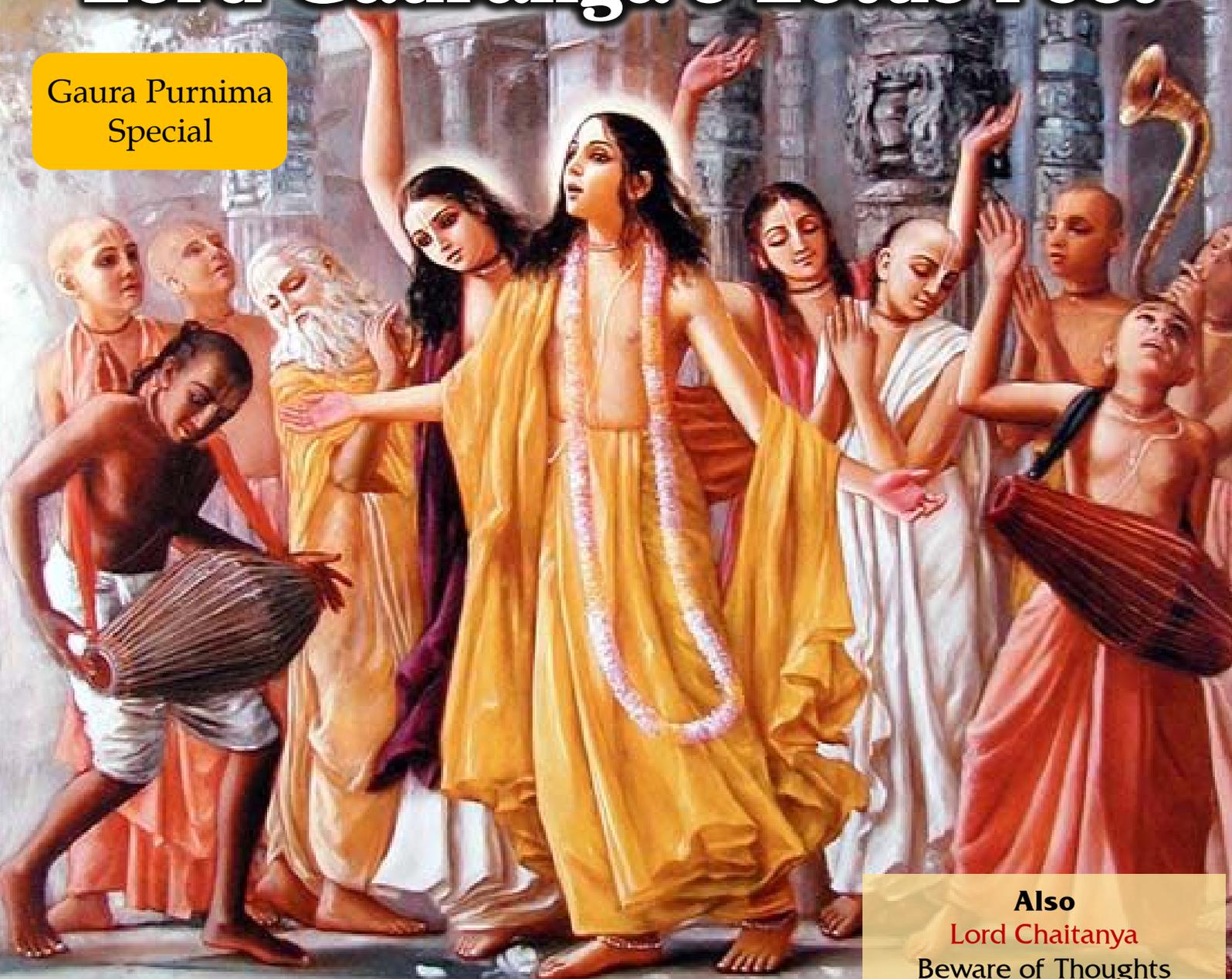
Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

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

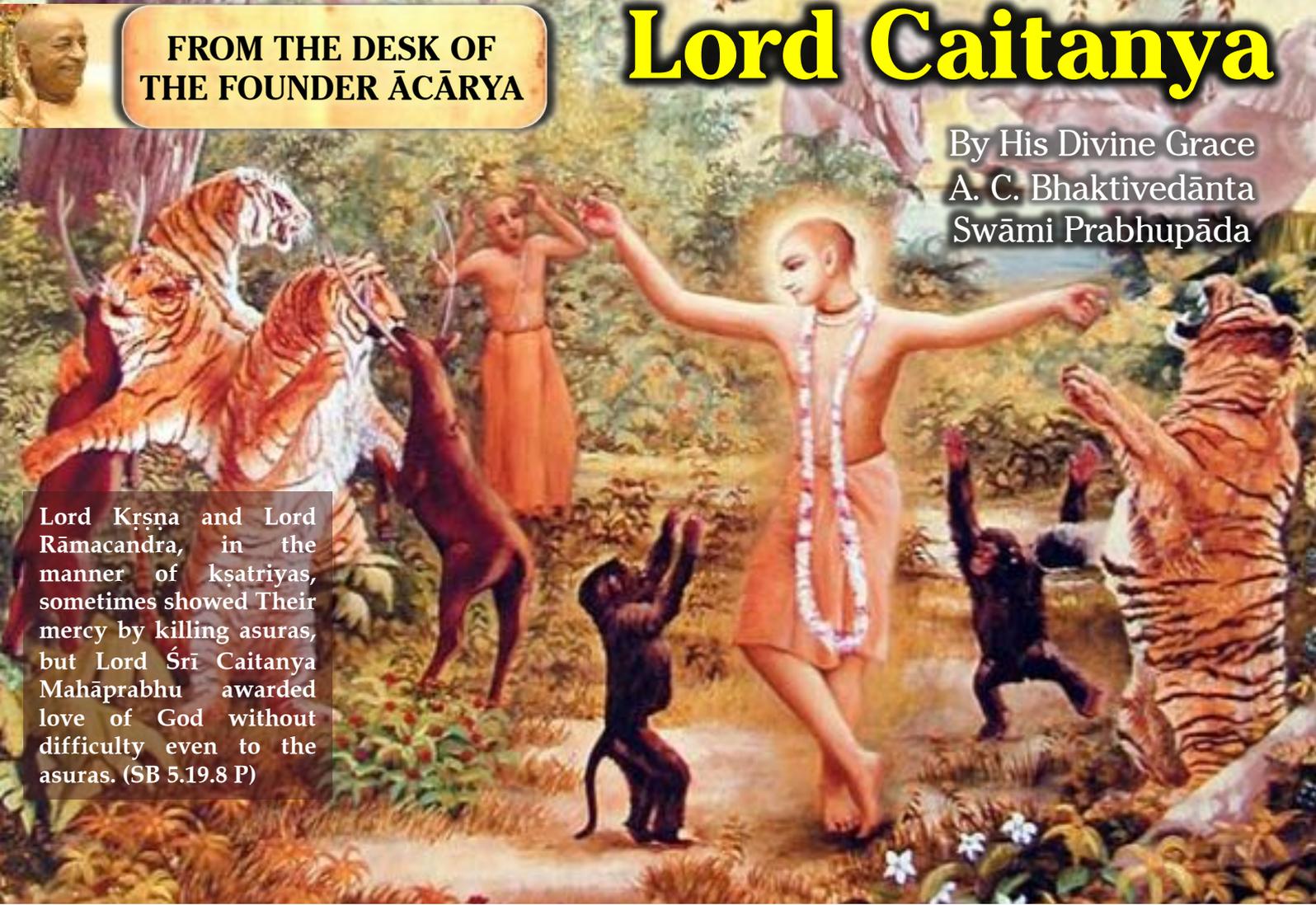
Dedicated to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Nine Glories of Lord Gaurāṅgā's Lotus Feet

Gaura Purnima
Special



Also
Lord Chaitanya
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Pari-prasna



FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA

Lord Caitanya

By His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedānta
Swāmi Prabhupāda

Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Rāmacandra, in the manner of kṣatriyas, sometimes showed Their mercy by killing asuras, but Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu awarded love of God without difficulty even to the asuras. (SB 5.19.8 P)

Who is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu?

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the incarnation for this Age of Kali, as confirmed in many places throughout the Purāṇas, the Mahābhārata, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and the Upaniṣads. The summary of His appearance is given in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 6.99) as follows:

*kali-yuge līlāvātāra nā kare bhagavān
ataeva 'tri-yuga' kari' kahi tāra nāma*

In this Age of Kali, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Bhagavān) does not appear as a līlāvātāra, an incarnation to display pastimes. Therefore He is known as tri-yuga. Unlike other incarnations, Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appears in this Age of Kali as a devotee of the Lord. Therefore He is called a concealed incarnation (channāvātāra). (SB 5.18.35 P)

What is Lord Caitanya's Movement?

When Kṛṣṇa appeared, He gave His orders, and when Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as a devotee, as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He showed us the path by which to cross the ocean of Kali-yuga. That is the path of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. When Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu appeared, He ushered in the era for the saṅkīrtana movement. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement consists of spreading kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana. Paraṁ vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam: "All glories to the Śrī Kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtana!" Why is it so glorious? This has also been explained by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam: [Cc. Antya 20.12] by the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one's heart is cleansed. (SB 8.5.23 P)

What is the mercy of Lord Caitanya?

For a nondevotee, the world is full of problems, whereas for a devotee the entire world is full of happiness.

*viśvaṁ pūrṇa-sukhāyate vidhi-mahendrādīś ca kiṭāyate
yat-kāruṇya-kaṭākṣa-vaibhavavatām taṁ gauram eva stumaḥ*

This comfortable position of a devotee can be established by the mercy of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Yasmin sthito na duḥkhena guruṇāpi vicālyate (Bg. 6.22). Even when a devotee is superficially put into great difficulty, he is never disturbed. (SB 10.2.24 P)

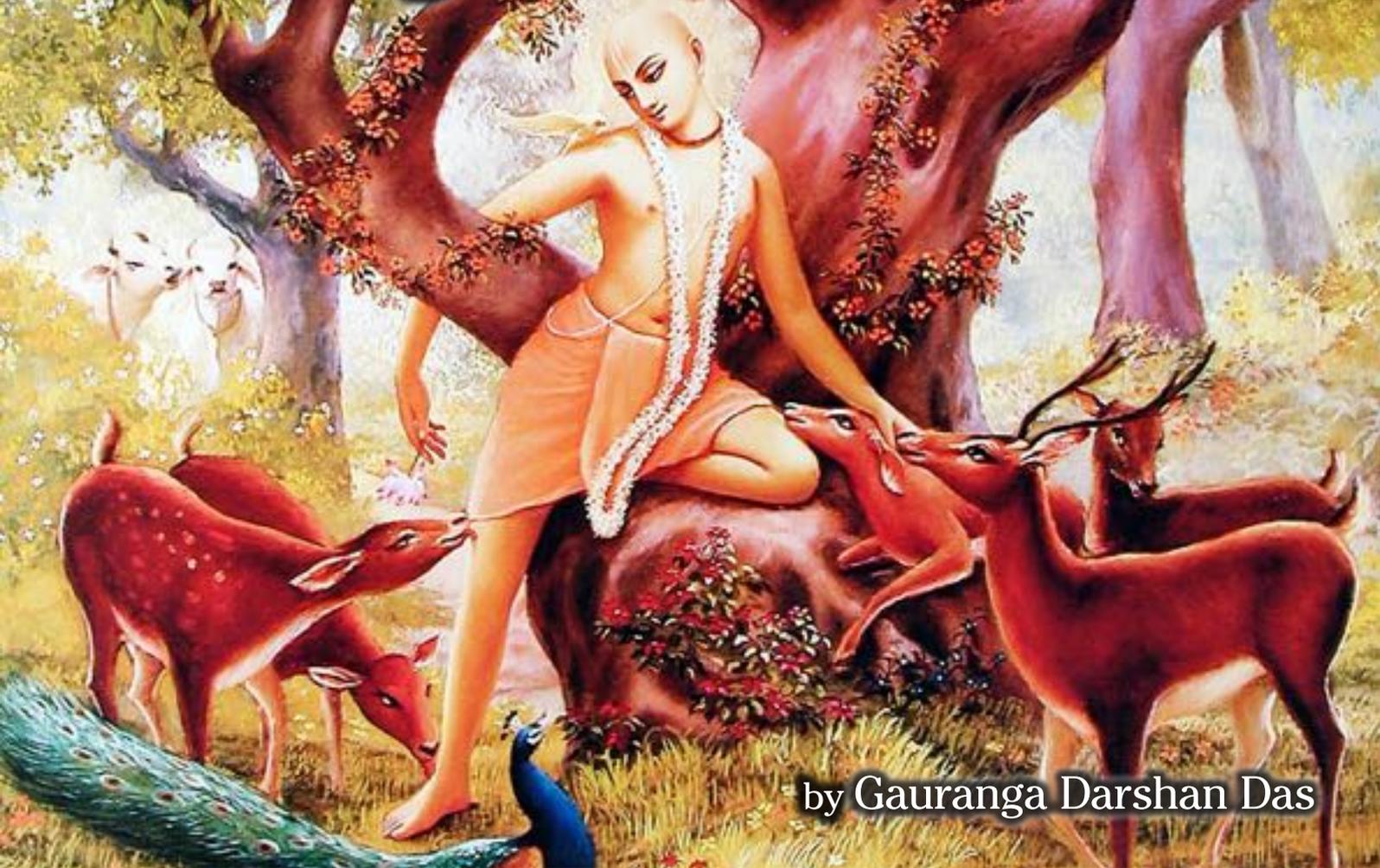


BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ

Book in the Thematic of the Bhāgavata

Only the pure devotees can know the transcendental name, form and activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa due to their being completely freed from the reactions of fruitive work and mental speculation. (SB 1.3.38 P)

Nine Glories of Lord Gaurāṅgā's Lotus Feet



by Gaurāṅga Darshan Das

Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gīta* that He descends in every *yuga* as an incarnation for three purposes: to protect the righteous, to punish the mischievous, and to establish *dharma*. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended in the current age of Kali as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu or Śrī Gaurāṅga. In this incarnation, the Lord appears in the form of a devotee to teach how to perform loving devotional service (*bhakti*) unto Him.

Assuming the emotions of a devotee, Lord Gaurāṅga constantly chants Kṛṣṇa's holy names and thus spreads the *yuga-dharma* or the process of salvation for this age, which is *kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana* or congregational chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa.

*dhyeyaṁ sadā paribhava-ghnam abhīṣṭa-dohaṁ
tīrthāspadaṁ śiva-viriñci-nutaṁ śaraṇyam
bhṛtyārṭi-haṁ praṇata-pāla bhavābdhi-potaṁ
vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam*

The above verse of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.5.33) describes how the lotus feet (*caraṇāravindam*) of the great personality (*mahā-puruṣa*) Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu are glorious in nine ways –

1. *dhyeyaṁ sadā* – eternal object of meditation
2. *paribhava-ghnam* – destroy the insults of material life
3. *abhīṣṭa-dohaṁ* – award the greatest desire of the soul
4. *tīrthāspadaṁ* – shelter of holy places and saintly people
5. *śiva-viriñci-nutaṁ* – honoured by Śiva and Brahmā
6. *śaraṇyam* – worthy of surrender
7. *bhṛtyārṭi-haṁ* – relieve the distress of devotees
8. *praṇata-pāla* – protect those who simply bow down
9. *bhavābdhi-potaṁ* – boat to cross the material ocean

1. Eternal object of meditation (dhyeyaṁ sadā)

Dhyeyam refers to “an object that is to be meditated upon.” *Sadā* means “always.” The worthiest object of everyone’s meditation is the Supreme Lord and His divine form, name, pastimes, and qualities. And that meditation is to be done constantly (*sadā*). There are no hard and fast rules about time and place for such devotional mediation.

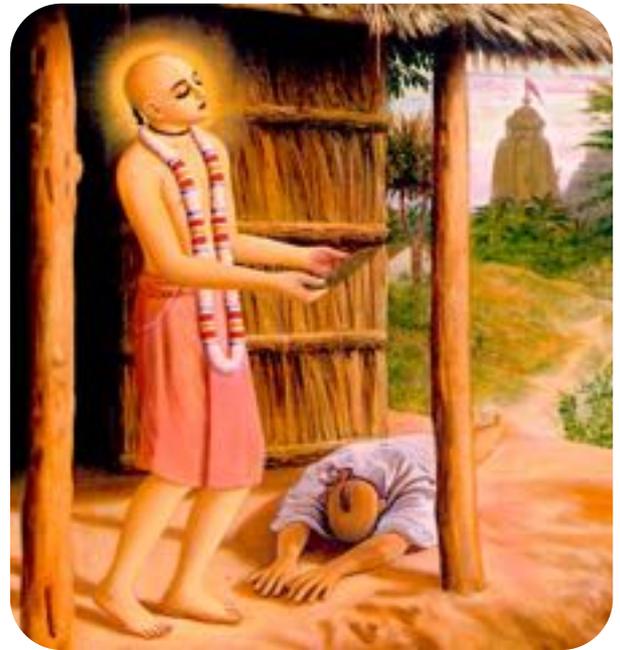
Meditation on the Lord begins from His lotus feet. It is repeatedly recommended by the scriptures that a devotee should always meditate upon the Lord’s lotus feet to purify one’s consciousness. Dhruva Mahārāja says that happiness can be attained only in two ways (SB 4.9.10), namely – meditation of the Lord’s lotus feet (*tava pāda padma dhyānāt*), and hearing about Him in the association of His devotees (*bhavat-jana kathā śravaṇa*). The moon-like effulgence emanating from the toenails of the Lord’s lotus feet destroys the thick gloom of darkness of ignorance in our hearts (SB 3.28.21). In Kali-yuga the authorized process of meditation is to chant the holy names of the Lord, especially the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* which Lord Gaurāṅga had propagated far and wide in His pastimes.

2. Destroy the insults (paribhava-ghnam)

Paribhava means “insults in material existence.” *Ghnam* refers to “destruction.” The very fact that the blissful spirit soul is entrapped in the material world undergoing unnecessary suffering itself is an insult (*parābhava*) for the soul! The merciful lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga destroys this humiliation.

In this Kali-yuga, the age of quarrel, people cannot tolerate others’ prosperity and status, and thus there are fights even among family members, what to speak of states or nations. The real cause of all problems is the identification of the soul with the material body and mind. Such false identification makes one believe that a temporary sense of enjoyment gives happiness, although it ultimately gives pain, and pursuing it causes insult. And people are further tormented by excessive heat, cold, famine, drought, and so on in this world.

All these harassments and embarrassments caused by envious people (*ādhibhautika kleśas*), by one’s own body and mind (*ādhyātmika kleśas*), or by natural calamities (*ādhidaiivika kleśas*) can be relieved by taking shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. One who takes shelter of His lotus feet loosens the hard knot that psychologically binds one to bodily identification and resultant attachment. Then, one need not face any more insults in this world and be spiritually blissful.



3. Award the greatest desire (abhīṣṭa-dohaṁ)

Abhīṣṭa means “desire.” *Dohaṁ* means “to give.” The living being in this material world may have unlimited material desires. But in the purest state of the soul, the soul only desires and hankers to love and serve Kṛṣṇa. *Kṛṣṇa-prema* or love of God is the deepest desire of every living being. Just as sugar is meant to be sweet, the soul is meant to love and serve Kṛṣṇa. Any other attitude or engagement of the soul is only a temporary and unnecessary cloud on the soul’s pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The mercy of Lord Caitanya’s lotus feet enables one to revive one’s dormant *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Lord Caitanya is so merciful that He gives the rarest *kṛṣṇa-prema* to the most fallen soul also without any reservations. Therefore He is called *kṛṣṇa-prema pradāyate*.

*cirād adattam nija-gupta-vittam
sua-prema-nāmāmṛtam aty-udārah
ā-pāmaram yo vitatāra gaurah
kṛṣṇo janebhyas tam aham prapadye*

“The most munificent Supreme Personality of Godhead, known as Gaurakṛṣṇa, distributed to everyone—even the lowest of men—His confidential treasury in the form of the nectar of love of Himself and the holy name. This was never given to the people at any time before. I, therefore, offer my respectful obeisances unto Him.” (CC Madhya 23.1)

4. Shelter of holy places and saintly people (tīrthāpadam)

Tīrtha means “a holy place or a saintly person,” and āspadam means “abode or shelter.” Lord Caitanya’s lotus feet are the shelter of all holy places and saintly devotees. The holy river Ganges emanated from the Supreme Lord’s lotus feet. So, the Lord is also called tīrtha-pāda. People go to a holy place or a holy river to free themselves from sinful reactions. But when pure devotees who took shelter of the Lord’s lotus feet visit those holy places, those places are purified of all the accumulated sinful contamination of people.

People living in various parts of the world may not be able to visit the holy places like Vṛndāvana, Māyāpura and so on. But by worshipping Lord Caitanya’s lotus feet, one gets the results of visiting and bathing in all sacred places. Therefore, one need not worry about the impurity caused by objects, places, and actions in Kali-yuga, but just take shelter of Lord Caitanya’s lotus feet.

5. Honoured by Śiva and Brahmā (śiva-viriñci-nutam)

Viriñci means “Lord Brahmā.” Nutam means “to bow down.” Even the great devatās and most powerful personalities in this universe like Śiva and Brahmā bow down to Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s lotus feet, and meticulously worship Him. In the Kali-yuga, Lord Śiva appeared as Advaita Ācārya and Lord Brahmā appeared as Haridāsa Ṭhākura. They both appealed to Lord Kṛṣṇa to descend as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and liberate the fallen people of Kali-yuga. Responding to their request, Lord Caitanya descended. So He is called śiva-viriñci-nutam. The following a Bhāgavatam prayer that establishes the Lord as most worshipable by great devatās.

*natāḥ sma te nātha sadāṅghri-pankajam
viriñca-vairiñcyā-surendra-vanditam
parāyaṇam kṣemam ihecchatām param
na yatra kālaḥ prabhavet paraḥ prabhuḥ*

“O Lord, You are worshiped by all demigods like Brahmā, the four Sanas, and even the King of heaven. You are the ultimate rest for those who are aspiring to achieve the highest benefit of life. You are the supreme transcendental Lord, and inevitable time cannot exert its influence upon You.”

(SB 1.11.6)



6. Worthy of surrender (śaraṇyam)

Śaraṇyam means “most worthy to take shelter of.” Lord Caitanya is the most munificent of all the incarnations of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He is easily served, and He is the worthiest object of surrender. Even Lord Śiva and Lord Brahmā are not safe without the shelter of the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya. He is śaraṇyam (the person unto whom it is just worthy to surrender) because He is karuṇārṇavam (an ocean of compassion).

7. Relieve the distress of devotees (bhṛtyārti-ham)

Bhṛtya means “a servant.” Ārti means “distress.” Ham means “to relieve.” Lord Caitanya’s lotus feet can relieve all His servants from all kinds of distresses. Because the Lord is very affectionate to His devotees, He relieves them of suffering. Lord Caitanya once relieved a leper brāhmaṇa named Vāsudeva from his leprosy and gave him a beautiful body. Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, a scholarly devotee of Lord Caitanya praised Lord Caitanya’s mercy as follows in his Śacīsutaṣṭakam:

*satatam janatā-bhava-tāpa-haram
paramārtha-parāyaṇa-loka-gatim
nava-leha-karam jagat-tāpa-haram
praṇamāmi śacī-suta-gaura-varam*



“He is always removing the suffering of material existence for mankind. He is the goal of life for persons who are dedicated to their supreme interest. He inspires men to become like honeybees (eager for the honey of kṛṣṇa-prema). He removes the burning fever of the material world. I bow down to Gaura, the beautiful Son of Mother Śacī.”

8. Protect those who simply bow down (praṇata-pāla)

Praṇata means “to surrender or to bow down.” *Pāla* means “to maintain or to protect.” Lord Caitanya is so merciful that He protects not only His surrendered devotees but even those devotees who simply offer obeisances unto His lotus feet without duplicity. He protects anyone who simply bows down with the thought of doing service, although they have not done the service. Even the neophytes will get all protection from the Lord’s lotus feet if they are sincere in seeking shelter.

9. Boat to cross the material ocean (bhavābdhi-potaṁ)

Bhava means the material existence characterized by repeated birth and death. *Abdhi* means an ocean. *Potaṁ* refers to a boat. Thus *bhavābdhi-potaṁ* refers to Lord Gaurāṅgā’s lotus feet that act as a suitable boat for crossing the ocean of material existence. The following prayer by the *devatās* further describes how His lotus feet act like a boat.

*tvayy ambujākṣākhila-sattva-dhāmnī
samādhināveśita-cetasaike
tvaat-pāda-potena mahat-kṛtena
kurvanti govatsa-padaṁ bhavābdhim*

“O lotus-eyed Lord, by concentrating one’s meditation on your lotus feet, which are the reservoir of all existence, and by accepting those lotus feet as the boat by which to cross the ocean of nescience, one follows in the footsteps of great devotees. By this simple process, one can cross the ocean of nescience as easily as one steps over the hoofprint of a calf.” (SB 10.2.30)

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that a follower of Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *jīvan-mukta*, or a liberated soul. The devotee is always confident (*niścaya*) that the Lord will quickly take him across the ocean of material existence. A devotee is firmly convinced about the potency of the process of devotional service. The devotee is not even aware when he has crossed the ocean of material life.

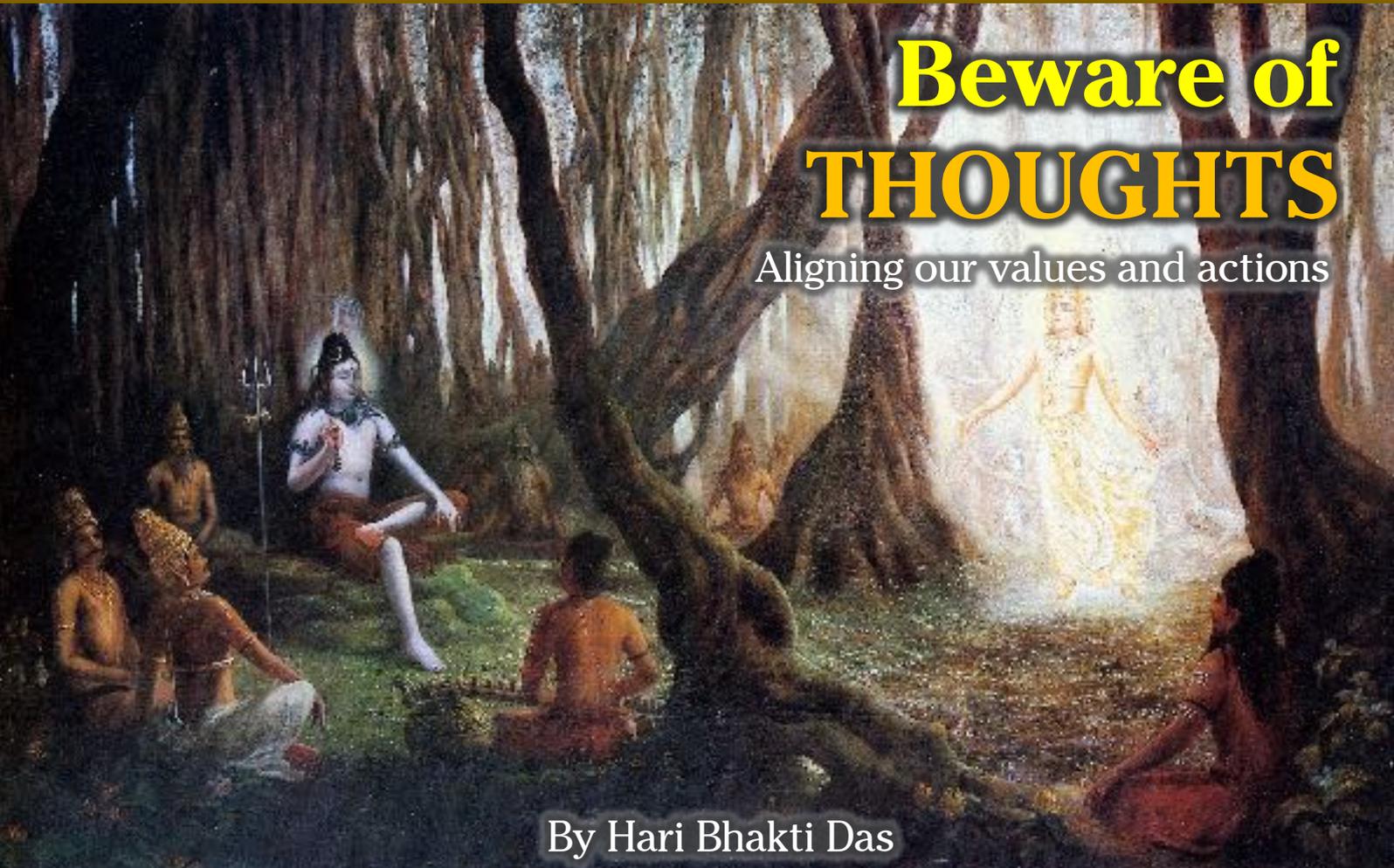
Lord Śrī Gaurakṛṣṇa is addressed by the word *mahāpuruṣa* in this verse, and the whole intention of this verse is to offer obeisances at His lotus feet. Those divine lotus feet are the actual eternal object of meditation for all of us because they cut off the bondage of material life and fulfill the spiritual desires of the devotees.





Beware of THOUGHTS

Aligning our values and actions



By Hari Bhakti Das

From the Episode of Dakṣa

Thoughts generally manifest in one's speech and actions. Sainly, sober and cultured people are known by the refinedness in their words and actions. Actions have the power to positively or negatively affect the lives of others. An improper thought has to be dealt with very carefully, for it has the power to transform into a destructive act. The following story from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* illustrates the stark contrast between actions resulting from an unhealthy thought process, and those resulting from a divine thought process. It also signifies the necessity of cultivating divine, saintly and positive thoughts and the dangers of harboring demoniac, unhealthy and negative thoughts.

Once, the leaders of the universal creation decided to perform a great sacrifice. All the great sages, philosophers, demigods and fire-gods assembled for that purpose. The leader of all Prajāpatis, Dakṣa, whose bodily luster equaled the sun's effulgence, then entered the assembly. Influenced by his prowess, all the participants in that great assembly stood up out of respect for Dakṣa. Only Lord

Brahma and Lord Śiva maintained their seats. Lord Brahma is the father of Dakṣa, whereas Lord Śiva is the topmost Vaiṣṇava, absorbed in transcendence.

"I should be Respected!"

Dakṣa was very much offended seeing Lord Śiva sitting and not respecting him. He became overly angry at Lord Śiva. Dakṣa's anger was manifested first in his bodily demeanor. His eyes turned red and glowed with wrath. Even though all the great sages in the entire assembly respected Dakṣa, he was dissatisfied because Lord Śiva didn't stand up. The innate craving for being respected and recognized by others often results in frustration. One can never get enough of anything in this world. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states the example of the great demon Hiranyakaśipu. He had gained control over all the demigods. Still, because his sole son Prahāda was worshipping Lord Viṣṇu, Hiranyakaśipu could not enjoy his universal influence. A thorn plucking the sole of a feet diverts all attention to that feet even though the entire body may be functioning perfectly. Similarly,



a small thing going against one's plan becomes the cause of misery and unhappiness.

"I have the Right to Judge!"

Dakṣa then began to speak against Lord Śiva. He said to everyone present, "Please hear me with attention, for I speak the manners of gentle people. I do not speak out of ignorance or envy." Dakṣa justified his ill-motivated speech. To find faults in others is extremely easy. Kali Yuga is nominated as an ocean of faults. Just as it is natural and easy to find water in an ocean, it is easy to find faults in this age. Real intelligence is in seeing the good, fanning the good and taking inspiration from the good. Generally, faults that one sees in others are the reflection of one's own faults. It is ridiculous for a sieve to laugh at a needle for having a hole. The sieve itself is full of holes. Recognizing our mistakes and unhealthy tendencies is the first step in removing them.

Dakṣa spoke, "Śiva has spoiled the mannerisms of gentle people. He is shameless. He has eyes like that of a monkey, yet he has married my daughter whose eyes are like those of a deer cub. He has broken all the rules of civility. He is impure. He lives in filthy places like crematoriums. His companions are ghosts and demons. He smears ashes all over his body. He doesn't bathe regularly, and ornaments his body with skulls and ashes. Therefore, he is Śiva, or auspicious only in name. Actually, he is the most inauspicious creature."

The Disease of Envy

Dakṣa thought it appropriate to criticize because he was blinded by pride. His pride led to his becoming envious of Lord Śiva. Envy is the root cause of one's existence in the material world. Envy is the burning in the heart caused by the excellence of another person. A person with superior qualities than oneself may become an object of envy resulting in a vacant heart. In actuality, Śiva was spiritually superior to Dakṣa, and therefore, he was worthy of all respect. But Dakṣa could not take this in his heart. His obsession of proving himself to be superior resulted in his finding fault with Lord Śiva. A person exhibiting a good quality is but a fraction of that quality present in its fullness in Krishna. Therefore, envying anyone is symbolic of one's original envy for Krishna.

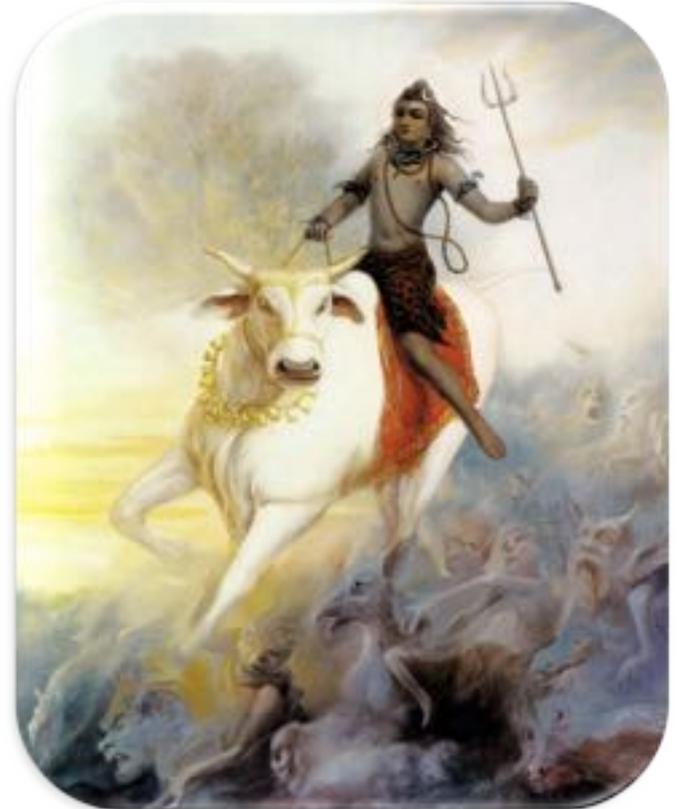
Envy makes the heart hard. It makes one lose all intelligence. One in the fray of envy can commit any

heinous activity. An envious person can never be happy in one's life. Rather, one gives trouble to others. Dakṣa could not do anything positive. He only cursed Śiva which later led to cursing and counter-cursing among both the parties.

Going Behind the Externals

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes about the exalted position of Lord Śiva, "The name Śiva, is actually fitting, for he is very kind to persons who are in the darkness of the mode of ignorance, such as unclean drunkards who do not regularly bathe. Although it is very difficult to raise such creatures to spiritual understanding, Lord Śiva takes charge of them, and therefore, as stated in the Vedas, Lord Śiva is all-auspicious. Thus by his association even such fallen souls can be elevated. Sometimes it is seen that great personalities meet with fallen souls, not for any personal interest but for the benefit of those souls." (SB 4.2.14 P)

Dakṣa judged Śiva on face value. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna doesn't bother about the externals. Only love and devotion can satisfy Him. Gajendra was an elephant, Prahlada was born in a demoniac family, Vidura was the son of a *śūdrāṇī* and Dhruva was just a small child. But these weren't disqualifications to attain Krishna. Krishna's devotees are also broad minded like Him. They don't criticize based on externals.



Dakṣa not only spoke from external point of view, but he also criticized Dakṣa as being impure at heart. Dakṣa felt he could even see what is in Lord Śiva's heart. Often, we judge ourselves by our actions, and others by their intentions. Dakṣa was not intending to know Lord Śiva. His only interest was in demeaning him. One cannot minimize other's position by criticizing that person. The idea that one can become a great person by pinning down someone else is a diseased mentality.

"I can even Curse!"

Dakṣa then became angry at his father Brahma. He said that only because Brahma said he had handed over his chaste daughter Sati to Śiva. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "In anger one forgets everything, and thus Dakṣa, in anger, not only accused the great Lord Śiva, but criticized his own father Lord Brahmā." (SB 4.2.16 P)

Furthermore, Dakṣa cursed Lord Śiva. After washing his hands and mouth, he said, "All the demigods are eligible to share in the oblations of sacrifice. But Lord Śiva, who is the lowest of all the demigods, should not have a share." Then, Dakṣa left the assembly and went back to his home.

Understanding that Lord Śiva had been cursed, Nandīśvara, one of Lord Śiva's principle associates, became angry. He cursed back Dakṣa and the brāhmaṇas. He said, "Anyone who has accepted Dakṣa as a great personality and neglected Lord Śiva will be bereft of transcendental knowledge. Dakṣa, because of forgetting the Lord's lotus feet, is attached to sex life only. Within a short time, he will have the head of a goat. May those envious of Lord Śiva always remain attached to fruitive acts. The brāhmaṇas shall be devoid of all discrimination. They shall acquire money simply to satisfy the body." The atmosphere of anger affected everyone present in that assembly. Rather than following Lord Śiva who was silent and tolerant, his follower Nandi thought it wise to curse Dakṣa and the brāhmaṇas.

Hearing this, Bhṛgu Muni became angry. He cursed back, "One who takes to the worship of Lord Śiva will become an atheist. The worshippers of Śiva are very foolish. They imitate him by keeping long hair. They prefer to live on wine, flesh and other things." Hearing this cursing and counter-cursing, Lord Śiva left the arena followed by his disciples. He understood that was the only way he could stop

Nandī and Bhṛgu from further cursing. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "In spite of the cursing and counter-cursing between the parties of Dakṣa and Śiva, because he is the greatest Vaiṣṇava he was so sober that he did not say anything. He became morose because he knew that these people, both his men and Dakṣa's, were unnecessarily cursing and counter-cursing one another, without any interest in spiritual life. From his point of view, he did not see anyone as lower or higher, because he is a Vaiṣṇava." (SB 4.2.33 P)

We see a great contrast herein in the behavior of Lord Śiva and Dakṣa. Lord Śiva was completely absorbed in transcendence, whereas Dakṣa was wanting respect for himself. Śiva hardly cared for his prestige, whereas for Dakṣa, that was of prime importance. Lord Śiva didn't judge anyone, but Dakṣa dared even to judge the internals of Lord Śiva. Lord Śiva's mind was calm and serene like a lake, whereas Dakṣa's mind was agitated like an ocean by the waves of envy and hatred.



As is further revealed in the pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Dakṣa even offends Sati, his own daughter, because of her connection with Lord Śiva. Sati, unable to tolerate her husband's disrespect, decides to relinquish the connection with her father by ending her life. Consequently, Dakṣa receives the head of a goat, and then finally comes back to his senses.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is a book filled with life-lessons which can help one deal with the endless complexities of this material world and bring about a transformation of our thoughts, values, behavior and character.



PARI PRAŚNA

Question: Where did those who got killed in battlefield of Kurukṣetra do?

Answer: Those who saw the beautiful face of the Lord on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra were purified first by Arjuna when he made his onslaught with arrows. The Lord appeared for the mission of diminishing the burden of the world, and Arjuna was assisting the Lord by fighting on His behalf. Arjuna personally declined to fight, and the whole instruction of the Bhagavad-gītā was given to Arjuna to engage him in the fight. As a pure devotee of the Lord, Arjuna agreed to fight in preference to his own decision, and thus Arjuna fought to assist the Lord in His mission of diminishing the burden of the world. All the activities of a pure devotee are executed on behalf of the Lord because a pure devotee of the Lord has nothing to do for his personal interest. Arjuna's killing was as good as killing by the Lord Himself. As soon as Arjuna shot an arrow at an enemy, that enemy became purified of all material contaminations and became eligible to be transferred to the spiritual sky. Those warriors who appreciated the lotus feet of the Lord and saw His face at the front had their dormant love of God awakened, and thus they were transferred at once to Vaikuṅṭhaloka, not to the impersonal state of the brahma-jyoti, as was Śiśupāla. Śiśupāla died without appreciating the Lord, while others died with appreciation of the Lord. Both were transferred to the spiritual sky, but those who awakened to love of God were transferred to the planets of the transcendental sky.

Question: What is the danger of committing offense to devotees?

Answer: To commit an offense against a devotee is very dangerous in devotional service. Lord Caitanya therefore said that an offense to a devotee is just like a mad elephant run loose; when a mad elephant enters a garden, it tramples all the plants. Similarly, an offense unto the feet of a pure devotee murders one's position in devotional service. One can deliver himself from all offenses at the feet of the Lord by taking shelter of His holy name. But one cannot protect himself if one commits an offense at the feet of the holy name of the Lord. One's longevity, opulence, beauty, education and whatever else one may possess as a result of pious activities cannot protect one if one commits an offense at the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava. Despite whatever one possesses, if one offends the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava he will be vanquished.

VERSE OF THE MONTH



A Worthy Aspiration

ahaṁ hare tava pādaika-mūla-
dāsānudāso bhavitāsmi bhūyaḥ
manaḥ smaretāsu-pater guṇāms te
gṛṇīta vāk karma karotu kāyaḥ

O my Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, may I again be able to be a servant of Your eternal servants who find shelter only at Your lotus feet. O Lord of my life, may I again become their servant so that my mind may always think of Your transcendental attributes, my words always glorify those attributes, and my body always engage in the loving service of Your Lordship.

SB 6.11.24 – Vṛtrāsura to the Supreme Personality of Godhead





A green bird that enters a green tree appears to merge in the color of greenness, but actually the bird does not lose its individuality. Similarly, a living entity merged either in the material nature or in the spiritual nature does not give up his individuality. Real individuality is to understand oneself to be the eternal servitor of the Supreme Lord. SB 3.27.14



The sense organs are certainly our greatest enemies, and they are therefore compared to venomous serpents. However, if a venomous serpent is bereft of its poison fangs, it is no longer fearful. Similarly, if the senses are engaged in the service of the Lord, there is no need to fear their activities. SB 5.1.17



Darkness is a perverse representation of the sun, and therefore the existence of darkness depends on the existence of the sun, but in the sun proper there is no trace of darkness. As the sun is full of light only, similarly the Absolute Personality of Godhead, beyond the material existence, is full of bliss. SB 1.7.23

ANALOGY ARENA

A person cares for his children not because of partiality but in a reciprocation of love. The children depend on the father's affection, and the father affectionately maintains the children. Similarly, because devotees do not know anything but the lotus feet of the Lord, the Lord is always prepared to give protection to His devotees and fulfill their desires. SB 8.12.47



Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, the devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by any material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord. SB 3.29.11

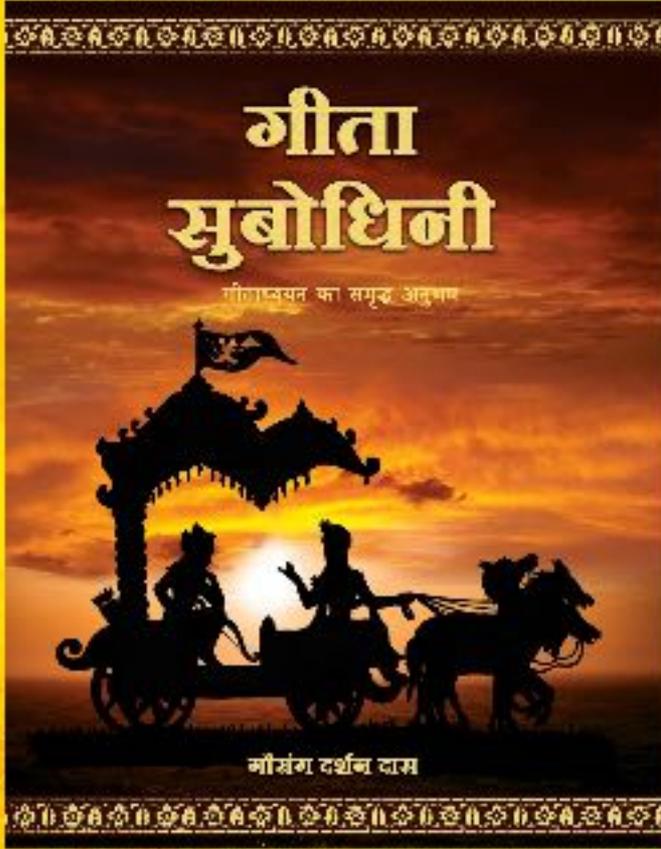


The paramahansa makes his nest in the lotuslike face of the Lord and always seeks shelter at His lotus feet, which are reached by the wings of Vedic wisdom. Since the Lord is the original source of all emanations, intelligent persons, enlightened by Vedic knowledge, seek the shelter of the Lord, just as birds who leave the nest search out the nest again to take complete rest. SB 3.5.41





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NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-sāṁhitā

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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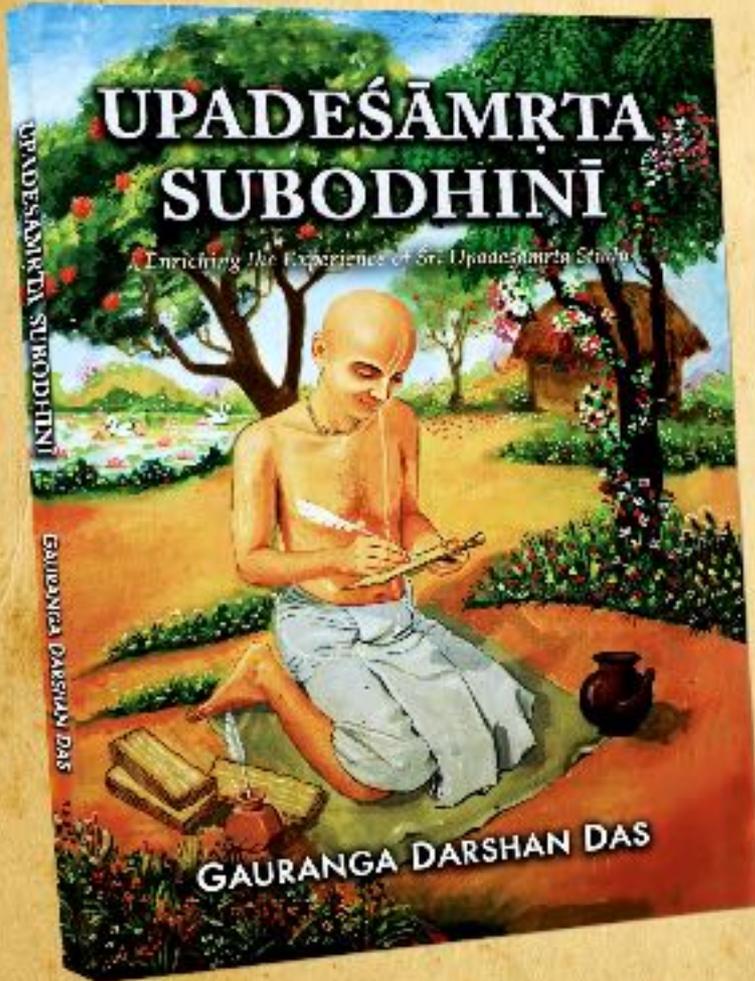
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