



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

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Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

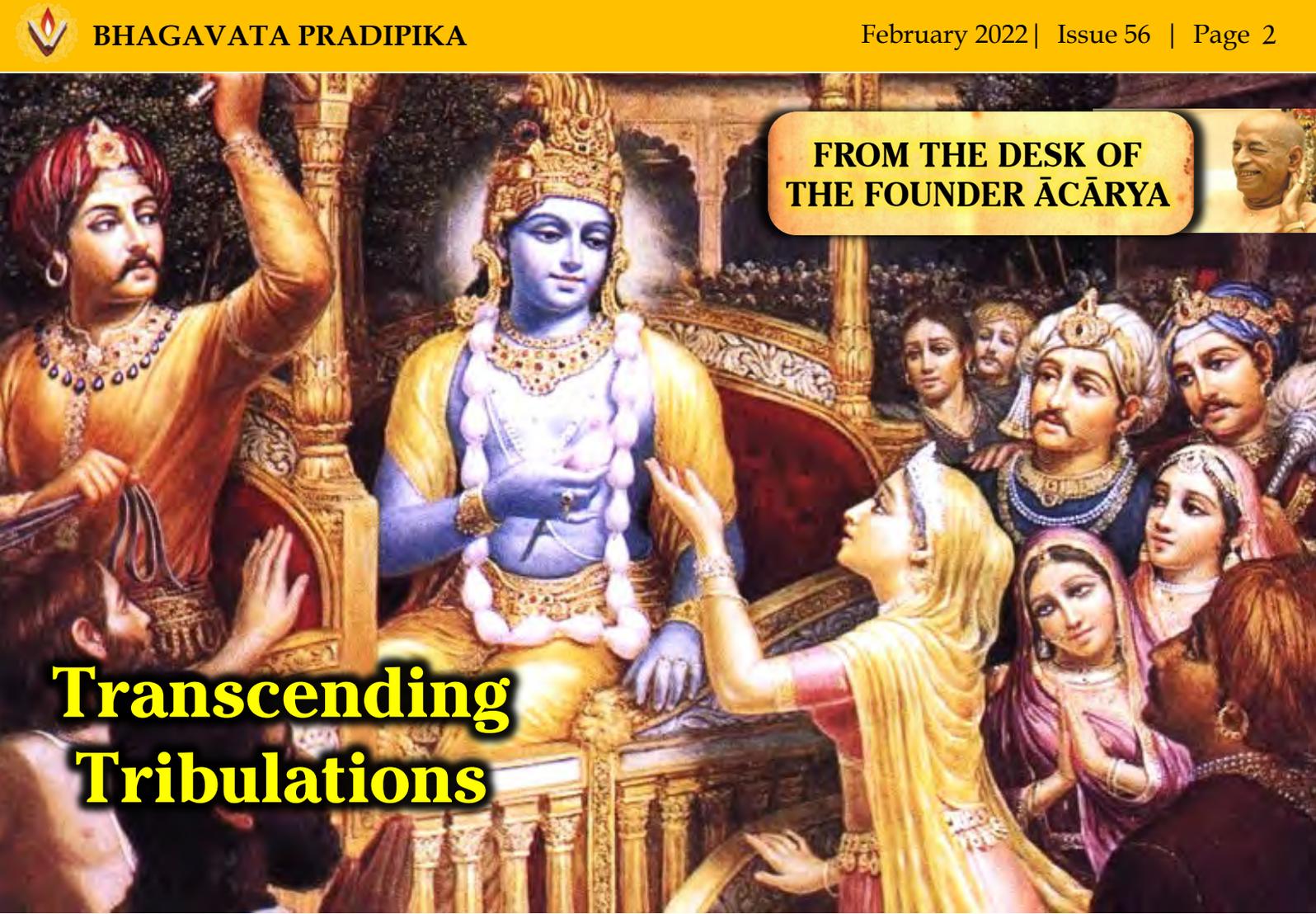
A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam

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

Faith

*The key to enter Kṛṣṇa's
Wonderland, Vṛndāvana*

Inside: Transcending Tribulations | Thematic Study: Kṛṣṇa and the Boat | Bhāgavata darśana: Jewel of Non-Envy | Analogy Arena | Verse of the Month

FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA



Transcending Tribulations

What are Material Tribulations?

Material Body: Because of the material body, the living entity is subjected to many tribulations brought about by air, water, fire, extreme heat, extreme cold, sunshine, excessive eating, unhealthy food, maladjustments of the three elements of the body (kapha, pitta and vāyu), and so on.

Material Relationships: Miseries created by other living entities - The state exacts taxes, and there are also many thieves, rogues and cheaters.

Material World: There are also miseries in the form of famine, pestilence, scarcity, war, earthquakes and so on.

DEVOTEE'S ATTITUDE:

Can I COUNTERACT them?

A devotee considers the acts of the external energy to be supreme, yet he also sees the internal energy of the Lord helping him in all tribulations. A devotee is always in a renounced temperament because the worldly attractions can never satisfy him. SB 3.1.16

It is the Lord's Favor

Kṛṣṇa endows more favor to a devotee who is in greater dangers. Sometimes He puts His pure devotees in such dangers because in that condition of helplessness the devotee becomes more attached to the Lord. The more the attachment is there for the Lord, the more success is there for the devotee. SB 1.8.23

Tribulations imposed upon the devotees by the Lord constitute another exchange of transcendental bhāva between the Lord and the devotees. The Lord says "I put My devotee into difficulty, and thus the devotee becomes more purified in exchanging transcendental bhāva with Me." Placing the devotee into material troubles means delivering him from the illusory material relations. SB 1.9.19

Devotee Automatically Transcends Tribulations

As long as a person is fully in cooperation with the wishes of the Lord, guided by the bona fide brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas and strictly following religious principles, one has no cause for despondency, however trying the circumstances of life. SB 1.9.12



FAITH

The key to enter Kṛṣṇa's Wonderland, Vṛndāvana

Hari Bhakti Das

The Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives a mesmerizing description of the *Bhū-maṇḍala* (earthly planetary system). In *Ilāvṛta-varṣa*, (one of the nine divisions of Jambūdvīpa which is the innermost of the seven islands of *Bhū-maṇḍala*) there are huge lakes filled with water tasting like milk, honey, sugarcane juice, and pure water. When Bhavani's maidservants drink the water of the river, their bodies become fragrant and it perfumes the entire atmosphere for eighty miles. The mud beside the Jambū river transforms into gold called Jāmbū-nada which is used by the heavenly denizens to decorate their youthful wives. Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gives a description of Vaikuṅṭha being full of wish fulfilling trees, charming birds, exquisite palaces and so forth. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa's superhuman pastimes are described in the Tenth Canto. Kṛṣṇa lifting the Govardhana Hill, swallowing the forest fire totally enchant the mind and heart of the listener.

Hearing such a description surely fills the mind with wonder. But one may develop some suspicion also. Do such places really exist? In our own planetary system? And what about the heavenly and the spiritual planets with their huge expanse and unlimited variegated opulences?

The following analysis will help in this regard:

Is Intelligence a Sufficient Factor to understand Kṛṣṇa's opulences?

1. Our Limited Intelligence

Having knowledge of English doesn't necessarily mean one can understand Physics. Similarly, simply by reading it is difficult to understand the import of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Furthermore, our knowledge is masked with four defects - namely mistakes, illusion, cheating and imperfect senses. It is extremely difficult for us to perceive the unlimited things going on in our body itself. Our eyes have no power to behold anything in pitch



darkness. Our ears can hear sounds only of certain frequencies. Can we then have the power to understand the huge cosmos?

2. Even the Learned are Bewildered

SB 1.19.16 says, *muhyanti kavayo 'pi hi* - even the learned poets get bewildered! Brahmāji, whose entire body is made up of intelligence, got bewildered thinking of Kṛṣṇa as an ordinary cowherd boy. Only after revelation could he understand the supremacy of Kṛṣṇa.

The residents in Bhadrāśva-varṣa offer prayers to the Lord,

*vadanti viśvaṁ kavayaḥ sma naśvaram
paśyanti cādhyātmavido vipāścitaḥ
tathāpi muhyanti tavāja māyayā
suoismitaṁ kṛtyam ajam nato 'smi tam*

“Learned Vedic scholars preach to everyone that this world is perishable. They also realize the factual position of this world. Yet even they are sometimes bewildered by Your illusory energy. This is Your own wonderful pastime. Therefore, I can understand that Your illusory energy is very wonderful, and I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.” SB 5.18.4

3. No one can understand Kṛṣṇa fully

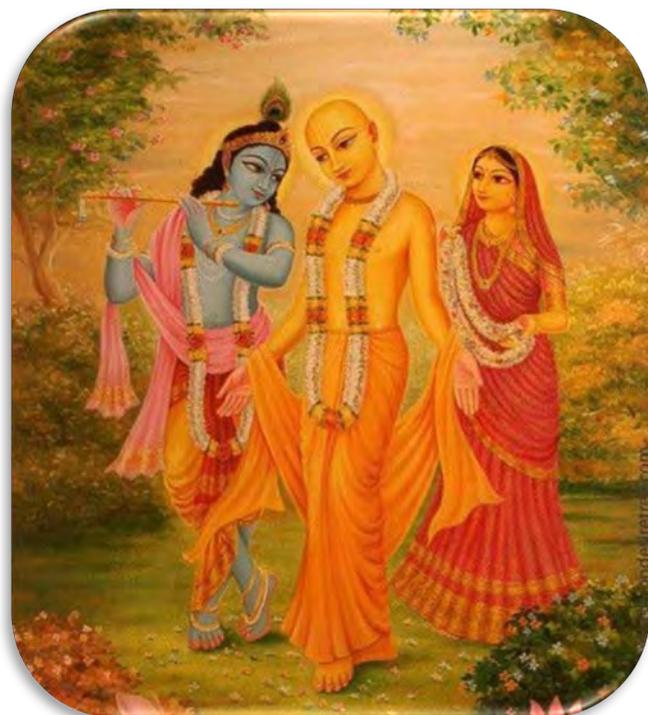
Kṛṣṇa is called as *karuṇā-sindhu*, a shoreless and bottomless ocean of compassion. Trying to understand Him or His energies can be compared to a child's endeavor to understand Ph.D. books, or a dwarf's endeavor to touch the moon. Even Kṛṣṇa's material energy is difficult to understand.

Brahmāji prays to Kṛṣṇa,

*jānanta eva jānantu
kiṁ bahūktyā na me prabho
manaso vapuṣo vāco
vaibhavaṁ tava go-caraḥ*

“There are people who say, "I know everything about Kṛṣṇa." Let them think that way. As far as I am concerned, Your opulences are all beyond the reach of my mind, body and words.” SB 10.14.38

What to speak of Brahmā, even Kṛṣṇa cannot understand Himself fully. Therefore, He descends as Lord Caitanya in the form of a devotee to taste the love and the ecstasies His devotees' feel in their loving service to Him.



Therefore, intelligence is not at all a qualification to understand the Supreme Lord or His potencies.

Someone may ask, but what about the scriptures?

Don't scriptures seem far exaggerating?

1. Reality:

Scriptures are not fictional, they are factual. Śaunaka and other sages mention the current characteristics of people in Kali Yuga – having shorter memory spans, disturbed due to unwanted things in life and not so intelligent as regards to interest in spiritual life. Twelfth canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes the future of Kali Yuga which is so evident in today's age.

2. Uniformity:

The principles, the values, and the teachings mentioned in the scriptures are uniform. Even the characters are uniform if multiple scriptures are compared and have been written over a vast expanse of time. The fourteenth century commentator of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrīla Sridhar Svāmī has commented on the same verses of Bhagavatam, as have the other ācāryas who appeared after him.



Then, why would a particular section of the scripture would be a fantasy talk?

3. Practicality:

Scriptures give practical solutions to the problems faced by the common man. Vyasadeva's purpose in writing. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is very succinctly described by Maitreya. He says,

*so 'ham nṛṇām kṣulla-sukhāya duḥkham
mahad gatānām viramāya tasya
pravartaye bhāgavatam purāṇam
yad āha sākṣād bhagavān ṛṣibhyaḥ*

Vyasa spoke Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to the sages for the benefit of all people engaged in great endeavors for meagre happiness. SB 3.8.2

Myths may describe some practical lessons for life, but what is practical cannot be mythical. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam teaches the art of living and also the art of leaving. Parikṣit Maharaj was about to leave his body when Bhāgavatam was spoken to him, whereas Śaunaka and other sages requested Suta Gosvāmī to speak the same Bhāgavatam while they were living!



4. Credibility:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī was fixed in Brahman before he got attracted to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. He had absolutely no interest in anything material. He himself describes in SB 2.1.9,

*pariniṣṭhito 'pi nairguṇya
uttama-śloka-līlayā
grhīta-cetā rājarṣe
ākhyānam yad adhītavān*

“O saintly King, I was certainly situated perfectly in transcendence, yet I was still attracted by the delineation of the pastimes of the Lord, who is described by enlightened verses.”

Śukadeva could not be enamored by any kind of sense pleasure. When he was walking naked in the forest, some ladies who were bathing could understand his transcendental position, and didn't bother to cover themselves up, but they did so when Vyasa passed along that way. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes about Śukadeva, “Because Śukadeva Gosvāmī was transcendental to sex relations, the way he looked at them was very innocent and had nothing to do with worldly affairs. The ladies, by their special qualifications, could sense this at once, and therefore they were not very concerned about him.” SB 1.4.5 P

Why would such a person bother to describe some mythological stories?



5. Responsibility:

Parikṣit Mahārāja was at the fag end of his life's journey. Surely, Śukadeva would not waste time in describing things that don't exist simply to boost his morale. His goal was to free Parikṣit of all his attachments, make him taste the love of Kṛṣṇa, and help him reach his supreme destination.

These are some things that can help us boost our faith in the scriptures and not consider them to be an exaggeration or simply mythological.



Accepting the Inconceivable Potencies

When one develops faith in the scriptures by the practice of devotional service and by the grace of devotees, one starts to accept the inconceivable potencies of Kṛṣṇa. The understanding that I cannot understand everything is the beginning of real understanding. Suta Gosvāmī says in SB 1.18.23, "I shall try to describe to you the transcendental pastimes of Viṣṇu as far as my knowledge allows. As the birds fly in the sky as far as their capacity allows, so do the learned devotees describe the Lord as far as their realization allows."

Devotees of the Lord do nothing but just marvel at the inconceivable pastimes and potencies of Kṛṣṇa. And every act of Kṛṣṇa makes them go closer to Kṛṣṇa. They wish to hear more, they wish to serve him, indeed they desire to give their entire existence in Kṛṣṇa's service.

The Supreme Wonderland, Vṛndāvana

When one performs the nine-fold devotional service beginning with hearing and chanting, the material coverings begin to gradually fade away. SB 11.14.26 describes, "When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form." Just as the fire in the stomach digests all we eat, the practice of *bhakti* dissolves the subtle body of the living entity. Then one becomes qualified to unite with Kṛṣṇa in His Wonderland, Vṛndāvana, where every word is like a song, every walk is a dance, and where water is like nectar.

VERSE OF THE MONTH

SB 10.21.12

*kṛṣṇaṁ nirīkṣya vanitotsava-rūpa-śīlaṁ
śrutvā ca tat-kvaṇita-veṇu-vivikta-gītam
devyo vimāna-gatayaḥ smara-nunna-sārā
bhraśyat-prasūna-kabarā mumuhur
vinīvyaḥ*

Kṛṣṇa's beauty and character create a festival for all women. Indeed, when the demigods' wives flying in airplanes with their husbands catch sight of Him and hear His resonant flute-song, their hearts are shaken by Cupid, and they become so bewildered that the flowers fall out of their hair and their belts loosen. (*Gopis*)

The Greatest FESTIVAL





Electrified by the power of the Lord, the material nature at once creates innumerable universes, just as in due course a tree decorates itself with innumerable grown fruits. SB 1.3.2 P



The crows take pleasure in a place where garbage is thrown out, just as the passionate fruitive workers take pleasure in wine and women and places for gross sense pleasure. SB 1.5.10



We cannot demand the Lord to be present before our vision, just as we cannot demand the sun to rise whenever we like. SB 1.6.19

ANALOGY ARENA

He lifted the Govardhana Hill just as a boy picks up a frog's umbrella and stood several days continuously just to give protection to the residents of Vṛndāvana. SB 1.8.19



We should not expect milk from the fleshy bags on the neck of a goat, although they look like breastly nipples. Similarly, we should not expect any creative power from the material ingredients; we must believe in the power of the puruṣa. SB 1.3.2



Inevitable time, under whose control everyone in every planet is carried, just as the clouds are carried by the wind. SB 1.9.14 P





THEMATIC STUDY

KRISHNA AND THE BOAT



Lord's Lotus Feet – Like Boats

SB 4.22.40

*kṛcchro mahān iha bhavārṇavam aplaveśāṁ
ṣaḍ-varga-nakram asukhena titīṣanti
tat tvam harer bhagavato bhajanīyam aṅghriṁ
kṛtvoḍupam vyasanam utara dustarārṇam*

The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are nondevotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers. (Four Kumaras to Prthu)

SB 11.5.33

*dhyeyam sadā paribhava-ghnam abhīṣṭa-doham
tīrthāspadam śiva-viriñci-nutam śaranyam
bhrtyārṭi-ham pranata-pāla bhavābdhi-potam
vande mahā-puruṣa te caraṇāravindam*

Also, SB 10.2.30

Result of Taking Shelter of This Boat

SB 10.14.58

*samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavam
mahat-padam puṇya-yaśo murāreh
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padam param padam
padam padam yad vipadām na teṣām*

For those who have accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Murāri, the enemy of the Mura demon, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's hoof-print. Their goal is param padam, Vaikuṅṭha, the place where there are no material miseries, not the place where there is danger at every step.

Detachment as a BOAT

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari, who contains within Himself all the demigods, must be satisfied with me. Indeed, He has brought me to this suffering condition and forced me to experience detachment, which is the boat to carry me over this ocean of material life. SB 11.23.28 – Avanti Brahmana



Hearing as the BOAT

For a person who is suffering in the fire of countless miseries and who desires to cross the insurmountable ocean of material existence, there is no suitable boat except that of cultivating devotion to the transcendental taste for the narrations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead's pastimes. SB 12.4.40 – Sukadeva Goswami

Human Body as a Boat

SB 11.20.17

*nṛ-deham ādyaṁ su-labham su-durlabham
plavam su-kalpaṁ guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritam
pumān bhavābdhiṁ na taret sa ātma-hā*

The human body, which can award all benefit in life, is automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul. Kṛṣṇa to Uddhava



A Vaishnava genuinely takes pleasure in others' happiness. Non-envy is the characteristic of all birds, animals, trees, etc. in Vaikuntha. Envy is one anartha that cannot be used in the service of the Lord. One has to give it up. To the degree we have envy, the heart remains barren.

SYMPTOMS OF ENVY

Cannot Tolerate Others' Success!

One who is conducted by false ego and thus always distressed, both mentally and sensually, cannot tolerate the opulence of self-realized persons. Being unable to rise to the standard of self-realization, he envies such persons as much as demons envy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. SB 4.3.21 – Siva to Sati

Fault Finding

Twice-born Dakṣa, a man like you can simply find fault in the qualities of others. Lord Śiva, however, not only finds no faults with others' qualities, but if someone has a little good quality, he magnifies it greatly. Unfortunately, you have found fault with such a great soul. SB 4.4.12 – Sati to Dakṣa

Unhealthy Competition

Demons quarreling with each other who will get nectar first.

Wishing Ill for Others

Kṛtadyuti's co-wives killing the child because King Citraketu would give more time to her.

Not Wishing to Hear the Glories of the Other Person

Sisupala could not hear Kṛṣṇa being glorified.

Three LEVELS of NON-ENVY

- 1] Freedom from material envy
- 2] Well-wishers to everyone
- 3] Striving to establish a competitionless society with God in the center. SB 1.1.2



BHĀGAVATA DARŚANA

Jewels of Vaiṣṇava Character

JEWEL EIGHT NON-ENVY

DEVELOPING NON-ENVY

Being FIXED in Life's Goal:

Because they have the highest aim of life, going back to Godhead, they are never envious of anyone, nor are they proud of being eligible to go back to Godhead. Their only business is to chant and remember the holy name, fame and pastimes of the Lord and, according to personal capacity, to distribute the message for others' welfare without motive of material gain. SB 1.6.26 P

Appreciating Others' Contribution

Everyone should be friendly for the service of the Lord. Everyone should praise another's service to the Lord and not be proud of his own service. This is the way of Vaiṣṇava thinking, Vaikuṅṭha thinking. SB 7.5.12 P

Hearing Kṛṣṇa Katha

puruṣo rāma-caritaṁ śravaṇair upadhārayan āṅṣāmsya-paro rājan karma-bandhair vimucyate
O King Parīkṣit, anyone who aurally receives the narrations concerning the characteristics of Lord Rāmacandra's pastimes will ultimately be freed from the disease of envy and thus be liberated from the bondage of fruitive activities. SB 9.11.23

Adjusting the Cause of ENVY

Both King Indra and Mahārāja Pṛthu were envious and angry with each other, but since both of them were Vaiṣṇavas, or servants of Lord Viṣṇu, it was their duty to adjust the cause of their envy. SB 4.20.18

STOPPING Sense Gratification – SB 7.15.23

Understanding Everyone's Position and Capacity is UNIQUE and cannot be compared!

"I shall try to describe to you the transcendental pastimes of Viṣṇu as far as my knowledge allows. As the birds fly in the sky as far as their capacity allows, so do the learned devotees describe the Lord as far as their realization allows." SB 1.18.23 – Suta to Saunakadi Rsis



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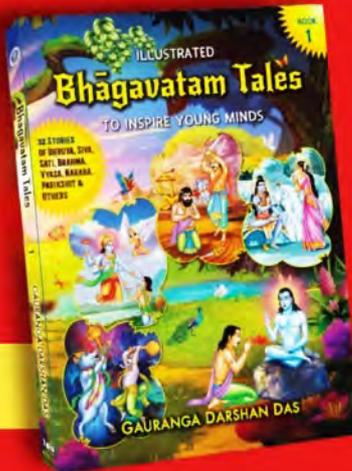
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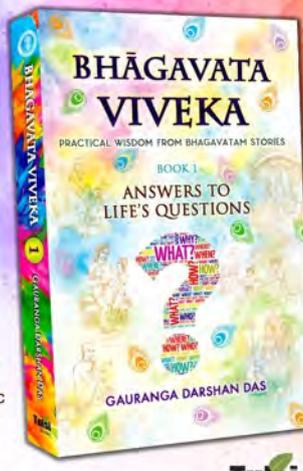
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NOMENCLATURE

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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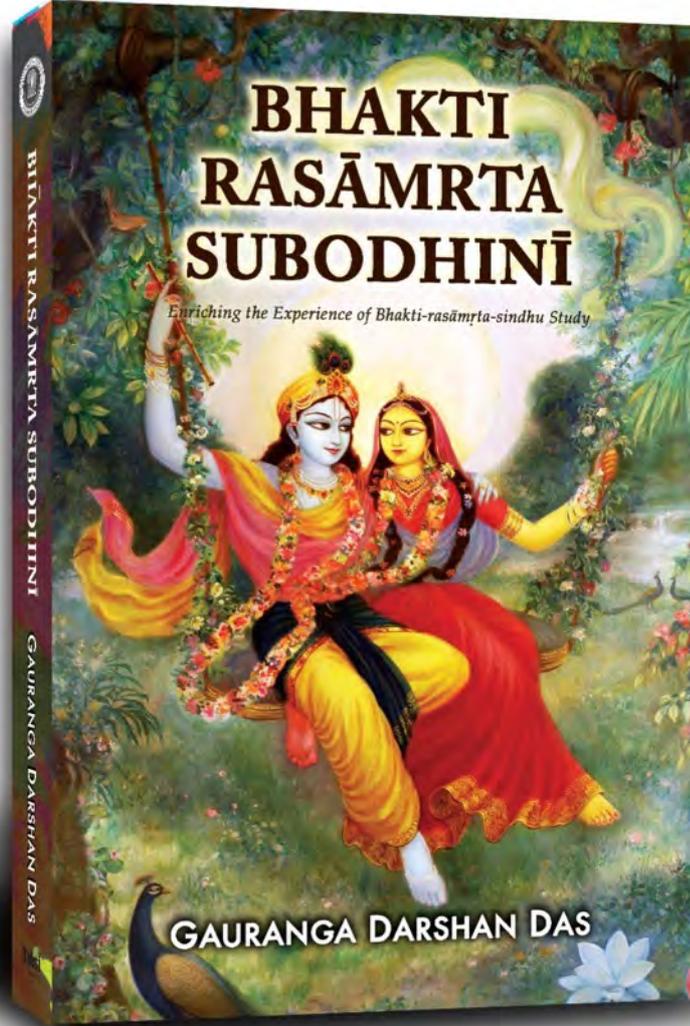
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COMING SOON

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Simplified
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