



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

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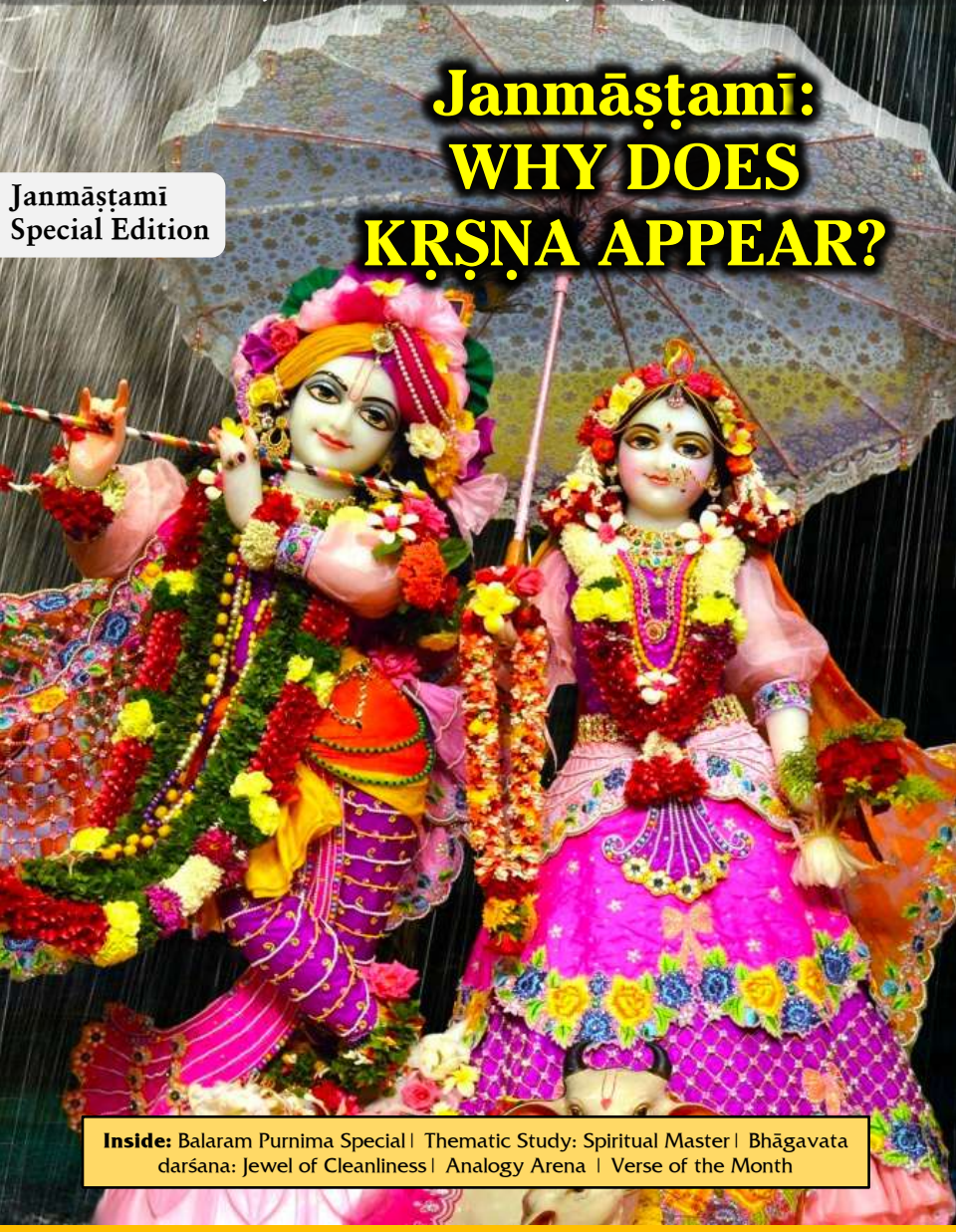
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A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhāgavatam

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

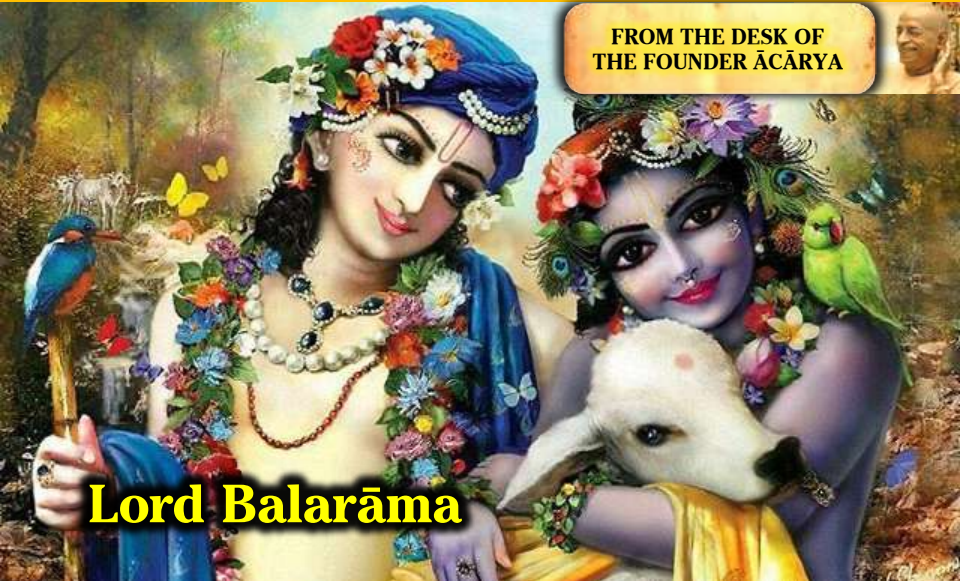
Janmāṣṭamī: WHY DOES KṚṢṆA APPEAR?

Janmāṣṭamī
Special Edition



Inside: Balaram Purnima Special | Thematic Study: Spiritual Master | Bhāgavata darśana: Jewel of Cleanliness | Analogy Arena | Verse of the Month

FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA



Lord Balarāma

Different Names of Balarāma

The son of Rohiṇī will also be celebrated as Saṅkarṣaṇa because of being sent from the womb of Devakī to the womb of Rohiṇī. He will be called Rāma because of His ability to please all the inhabitants of Gokula, and He will be known as Balabhadra because of His extensive physical strength. SB 10.2.13

The Supreme Personality, different from the Jivas

Lord Balarāma is also called as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the immediate expansion of viṣṇu-tattva as prakāśa-vigraha of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The Supreme Lord, although one without a second, expands Himself as many other living beings. The viṣṇu-tattva living beings are plenary expansions of the Supreme Lord, and thus all of Them are qualitatively and quantitatively equal with the Lord. But expansions of the jīva-śakti, the category of the ordinary living beings, are not at all quantitatively equal with the Lord. SB 1.14.28-29

Everything is void without His Mercy

One cannot attain the goal of life without the mercy of Balarāma. Śrī Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore says,

nitāiyera karuṇā habe, vraje rādhā-
kṛṣṇa pābe: when one receives the
mercy of Balarāma, Nityānanda,
one can attain the lotus feet of
Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa very easily.

se sambandha nāhi yāra, bṛthā
janma gela tāra,
vidyā-kule hi karibe tāra

If one has no connection with Nitāi, Balarāma, then even though one is a very learned scholar or jñānī or has taken birth in a very respectable family, these assets will not help him. We must therefore conquer the enemies of Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the strength received from Balarāma. SB 7.15.45



Janmāṣṭamī: WHY DOES KṚṢṂA APPEAR?

Gauranga Darshan Das

Kṛṣṇa who appeared on the Mother Earth by her invitation, also appears in our hearts when we invite Him. That is Janmāṣṭamī – to invite Kṛṣṇa into our hearts with our love, and to open our hearts to receive His love.

The midnight of the eighth day of the dark fortnight of the month of Bhādrapadā. Day long nectarean Kṛṣṇa-katha alongside some soul-stirring *kīrtan* that gets started when the clock strikes twelve simply heightens the festive spirit. All this, to celebrate *Janmāṣṭamī*, the appearance of the delight of Braja, Kṛṣṇa. This day is immediately followed by our beloved acarya Śrīla Prabhupāda's day of appearance who literally followed Kṛṣṇa in every way possible, even in terms of birthdays! He keeps leading our way back to Godhead even today.

Lord Kṛṣṇa is unborn. Still, history indicates that He took birth about fifty centuries ago. Why? – This article presents wherefore Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world, along with the divine nature of His appearance, and the result of knowing about His appearance and activities.

Divine Nature of Kṛṣṇa's appearance

The Lord is never compelled to take a form like an ordinary conditioned soul. Kṛṣṇa's appearance and disappearance are compared to the sunrise and sunset respectively. Sunrise, in not the sun's birth, similarly, Kṛṣṇa's

appearance in this world is not exactly His birth, but just the beginning of His pastimes. Sunset is not the sun's death; similarly, Kṛṣṇa's disappearance from this planet is not His death, instead, it is the conclusion of His pastimes here. When the sun sets at one place, he rises in the other hemisphere, similarly, when Kṛṣṇa disappears from one universe, He appears in a different universe to perform His pastimes. When the sun sets, he rises again the next day. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa concludes His pastimes during one day of Brahma and reappears in the next only to resume His pastimes.

While a conditioned soul is forced to take birth according to *karma*, Kṛṣṇa is never obliged to appear in this material world in some form. Yet, He willingly appears in various forms, to accomplish various things. He specifically descends whenever there is a decline in *dharma* and increase in *adharmā*, to reverse the situation (BG 4.7). All His forms, appearances and activities are divine. One who understands this is liberated, as Kṛṣṇa Himself promises in the following shloka.

*janma karma ca me divyam
evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

“One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.” (BG 4.9)

The following are various reasons for Kṛṣṇa's appearance. Firstly, Kṛṣṇa Himself gives three reasons for His appearance in the *Bhagavad-gita* (4.8)

*paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām
vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya
sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

1. Protection (*paritrāṇāya sādḥūnām*) and Reciprocation

Kṛṣṇa is the supreme well-wisher of all living beings. He is especially the protector of all His surrendered devotees who take exclusive shelter of His divine lotus feet. He relieves them from all sinful reactions, sufferings, and obstacles on the spiritual path. He protects whatever they have, and supplies whatever they need for their spiritual progress.

In fact, protecting the virtuous people is the primary reason among the three reasons mentioned in the Gita. When Mother Earth was overburdened by demoniac people who posed themselves as kings, the Lord appeared on the Earth to relieve her from suffering. He protected all

the residents of Vrindavan from various demons, and after coming to Mathura, He protected the virtuous residents of Mathura from the demoniac king Kamsa. Later Kṛṣṇa protected several other devotees like Rukmini who was troubled by her brother Rukmi, the 16,100 princesses who were kidnapped by Narakāsura, the 20,000 kings who were arrested by Jarāsandha, and so on. Kṛṣṇa even protected the devatas when the demons troubled them. Mother Kunti expresses that one of the reasons for Kṛṣṇa's appearance is to cause prosperity (*ksemaya*) to all good people in this world.

Kṛṣṇa's appearance is not just for protecting His devotees, but also to experiencing and tasting the sweet, loving relationships He has with them (*prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādana*, CC Adi 4.15). The Lord appears to bless the pious, and expand the glories of His devotees. To satisfy His great devotee Yadu, Kṛṣṇa had appeared in the Yadu dynasty, just as sandalwood appears in the Malaya Hills. Kṛṣṇa appeared as the son of Mother Devaki and noble-hearted Vasudeva, in reciprocation with their desire, love and affection. (SB 1.8.31-33)

He appeared to establish *prema* in the hearts of all of us, the supreme goal of life. Although, He is omnipresent, still, Kṛṣṇa specially appeared in this world to attract our minds back to His lotus feet, just so that we could see Him everywhere and in everything and, could serve and love Him everywhere and in everything. Thus, Kṛṣṇa performs pastimes to reclaim those in the mode of pure goodness. (SB 1.2.34)

2. Punishing the Vicious (*vināśāya ca duṣkṛtām*)

When Mother Earth was overburdened like a boat at sea and was aggrieved, Lord Brahma prayed for the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa. To reciprocate with the devotion of Bhumi and Brahma, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared to destroy the demoniac forces on earth and diminish the trouble earth faced. (SB 1.8.34)

*bhārāvatāraṇāyānye
bhuvo nāva ivodadhau
śīdantya bhūri-bhāreṇa
jāto hy ātma-bhuvārthitaḥ*

Kṛṣṇa exterminated several demons in Vrindavan namely, Pūtanā, Śakaṭāsura, Trnāvarta, Bakāsura, Vatsasura, Aghāsura, Aristāsura, Vyomāsura, Keśi and so on. Many of these tyrants appeared in Vrindavan in innocent forms like a calf, a crane, a cowherd boy, a motherly woman and so on. Lord Kṛṣṇa exposed their real forms and attitudes and destroyed them to ultimately liberate them from demoniac life.

In Mathura, Kṛṣṇa killed unrighteous people like Kamsa, and his associates including his brothers, wrestlers and elephant Kunalayapida.

He also defeated the great armies of Jarasandha seventeen times and later empowered His devotees to kill demons like Kalayavana, Duryodhana, and Jarasandha. In Dwaraka and Hastināpura too, Kṛṣṇa killed several demons like Śiśupāla, Dantavakra, Vidhurata, Śalva, Kāśiraja, Paundraka and so on. Mother Kunti also confirms that Kṛṣṇa appears on this planet to destroy the *asuras* who envy devotees and the *devatas* (*vadhāya ca sura-dviṣām*, SB 1.8.33).

3. Establishing Dharma (dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya) and Bhakti

Dharma is enacted directly by the Lord (*dharmam tu sakshat bhagavat pranitam*). Lord Kṛṣṇa delivered the teachings of *dharmā* to humanity through the *Bhagavad Gīta*. Apart from teaching, Kṛṣṇa also sets a good example of Varṇāśrama dharma by performing His duties as a cowherd boy in Vrindavan, and a prince and householder in Dvārakā. He also enunciates the various *dharmas* that humankind must take to. Above all the *dharmas*, is the *para-dharma* or the supreme duty of all living beings which is to perform unmotivated and uninterrupted loving devotional service unto the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. That is known as *bhakti-yoga*. Ultimately Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared to establish and propagate *bhakti* in this world.

Although Kṛṣṇa unveiled karma-yoga, jnana-yoga, and dhyana-yoga in the Bhagavad Gīta, His conclusive message in the Gīta is taking up bhakti-yoga, the Supreme path that connects all the living beings to Kṛṣṇa and reinstates them in their eternal glory as servants, lovers, and associates of the Supreme Lord. Thus, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme teacher, and protector of Dharma.

It is also mentioned in the Sri Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Adi 4.15) that Kṛṣṇa wanted to propagate devotional service in the world on the platform of spontaneous attraction (*rāga-mārga bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa*). Mother Kunti said:

*bhave 'smin kliṣyamānānām
avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ
śravaṇa-smaraṇārthāṇi
kariṣyann iti kecana
(SB 1.8.35)*

Kṛṣṇa appeared for the sake of rejuvenating the devotional service of hearing, remembering, worshiping and so on in order that the conditioned souls suffering from material pangs might take advantage and gain liberation.



Śrīla Prabhupāda describes in the purport of this sloka, “Adoption of all the above-mentioned items, or any one of them, can help a conditioned soul get out of the tangle of nescience and thus become liberated from all material sufferings created by the living being illusioned by the external energy.”

Fulfilling the Mission through Devotees

Lord Kṛṣṇa accomplishes all His missions through His devotees as well. Although, Kṛṣṇa has personally killed many demons and protected the devotees, in the Kurukshetra war, He empowered and assisted the Pāṇḍavas to kill the miscreants and protect the innocent. Although, Kṛṣṇa is capable of reducing the burden of earth Himself, He empowered Arjuna to destroy the celebrated warriors of the earth who stood on the side of *adharma*. He empowered Bhīma to kill Jarāsandha, all the hundred sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and many others. Kṛṣṇa taught the Uddhava-gītā to His dear devotee Uddhava and enabled Him to give those spiritual teachings to the sages of Badarikāśrama. Kṛṣṇa likes to giving more credit to His devotees than He takes for Himself. He desires to see His devotees glorified.

The Spirit of Celebrating Janmāṣṭamī

Although, Kṛṣṇa experiences supreme spiritual bliss in the spiritual world, He descends into this world for all the abovementioned reasons, and thus tries to attract our hearts towards Himself. We can approach Him to the degree we understand His heart and reciprocate with His attempt to reclaim us. Kṛṣṇa reveals Himself to us in tune with our attitude.

Before Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on this planet, His parents Mother Devaki and Vasudeva underwent a lot of difficulties. Mother Devaki had to helplessly witness the ruthless murder of her six children being carried out by her cruel brother Kamsa. Finally, Kṛṣṇa appeared as her child. Similarly, we can have Kṛṣṇa appear in our hearts and live in there, when we are willing to undergo whatever difficulties or austerities are necessary for our purification, and are eager to lovingly serve Him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, out of his deep compassion, underwent various difficulties and austerities so that Kṛṣṇa makes His appearance in the lives of all the suffering conditioned souls in this world. When Śrīla Prabhupāda was travelling to the West in the Jaladuta, he celebrated Janmāṣṭamī while passing through the Arabian sea. He gave a small inspiring talk to the sailors and co-passengers of Jaladuta, cooked some prasād, did some kīrtan and thus celebrated Janmāṣṭamī in those circumstances. When we have love and devotion, when we are eager for Kṛṣṇa's appearance in our hearts, and also share the fortune of having Kṛṣṇa's appearance in the lives of everyone around us. We can always celebrate Janmāṣṭamī under any circumstances. Because of Śrīla Prabhupāda's sincere efforts, today hundreds and thousands of devotees are celebrating Janmāṣṭamī in various parts of the world. It all began with Śrīla Prabhupāda's eagerness to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world and enable the appearance of Kṛṣṇa in the lives of one and all.

Śrīla Prabhupāda had complete faith in the instructions of his spiritual master and the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa empowered with which, he confidently and courageously crossed the oceans and went to the other side of the globe, to places that he had never seen before. He did so only to inspire countless people to celebrate Janmāṣṭamī.

Kṛṣṇa appeared in the prison cell of Kamsa and illuminated the entire prison cell with His divine spiritual effulgence. Our heart is also like a prison cell and if we invite Kṛṣṇa into our hearts by sincerely performing *bhakti*, Kṛṣṇa surely and eagerly enters our hearts and illuminates our hearts with His divine spiritual blessings, knowledge, inspiration and guidance, enabling us to come closer to His lotus feet. Let us all pray for the appearance of the Kṛṣṇa in our hearts this Janmāṣṭamī. Hare Kṛṣṇa!



VERSE OF THE MONTH



A Divine Glorification of the
Supremely Divine Personality

SB 10.9.18

śrī-brahmovāca

*naumīḍya te 'bhra-vapuṣe taḍid-ambarāya
guñjāvataṁsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhāya
vanya-sraje kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-
lakṣma-śriye mṛdu-pade paśupāṅgajāya*

Lord Brahmā said: My dear Lord, You are the only worshipable Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore I offer my humble obeisances and prayers just to please You. O son of the king of the cowherds, Your transcendental body is dark blue like a new cloud, Your garment is brilliant like lightning, and the beauty of Your face is enhanced by Your guñjā earrings and the peacock feather on Your head. Wearing garlands of various forest flowers and leaves, and equipped with a herding stick, a buffalo horn and a flute, You stand beautifully with a morsel of food in Your hand.

ANALOGY ARENA



To manage the whole show the Supreme Lord incarnates Himself as the Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu just as a magistrate is deputed by the government to manage affairs temporarily. SB 2.6.42 P



The individual living entities are completely dependent on the total energy of the supreme puruṣa. No one has independent existence, just as no electric lamp has independent effulgence. SB 2.10.16



One should not deprecate the Supreme Lord for the creation of this miserable world, just as one should not blame the king for creating a prisonhouse in the government. SB 2.7.50 P

THEMATIC STUDY SPIRITUAL MASTER



Devotional service begins due to Guru

Guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja: [Cc. Madhya 19.151] by the grace of the spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa, one can enter into devotional service. SB 4.8.25

Real identity of spiritual master

The supreme spiritual master is Kṛṣṇa is known as caitya-guru. This refers to the Supersoul, who is sitting in everyone's heart. He helps from within as stated in Bhagavad-gītā, and He sends the spiritual master, who helps from without. The spiritual master is the external manifestation of the caitya-guru, or the spiritual master sitting in everyone's heart. SB 4.8.44

What happens by pleasing the spiritual master?

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his eight stanzas on the spiritual master: yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādaḥ. By pleasing the spiritual master, who is both brāhmaṇa and Vaiṣṇava, one pleases the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased, then one has nothing more to achieve either in this world or after death. SB 4.22.8

What happens by displeasing the spiritual master?

When the spiritual master is dissatisfied there is only havoc on the path of spiritual realization." It is essential, therefore, that a disciple be very much obedient and submissive to the bona fide spiritual master. SB 1.1.8 P

Becoming a Yes-Man of the Spiritual Master

Whatever the father and the spiritual master order should be taken without argument: "Yes." There should be no instance in which the disciple or the son says, "This is not correct. I cannot carry it out." When he says that, he is fallen. As a man cannot separate his life from his body, a disciple cannot separate the order of the spiritual master from his life. If a disciple follows the instruction of the spiritual master in that way, he is sure to become perfect. SB 3.24.13

Sucaye

When Srila Prabhupada was asked how to identify his disciples, on many occasions he would proudly reply, "My disciples are first class ladies and gentlemen."

One of the characteristic traits of a Vaisnava is he or she is clean in body, clean in mind – having serene peaceful mental condition, and clean in heart – devoid of all negative traits of lust, anger, greed and the rest.



BHĀGAVATA DARŚANA

Jewels of Vaiṣṇava Character

JEWEL THIRTEEN CLEANLINESS

Why to clean the mind and heart?

As stated by Lord Caitanya, is that devotional service cleanses the mirror of the mind. In a clean mirror one can see one's face very distinctly. Similarly, simply by cleansing the mirror of the mind one can have a clear conception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. SB 4.3.23

How does the cleaning happen?

Cleanliness is necessary both for the mind and for the body. Simply bodily cleanliness may help to some extent, but cleanliness of the mind is necessary, and it is effected by glorifying the Supreme Lord. No one can cleanse the accumulated mental dust without glorifying the Supreme Lord. SB 1.17.25

THE MOST POWERFUL CLEANSING AGENT:

To become actually cleansed externally and internally, one should chant the holy name of the Lord, Hare Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, constantly. SB 3.32.42

Krishna lives in a clean heart

A gentleman will live only in a clean place. He will not live in a polluted, contaminated place. Similarly, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme gentleman, and therefore He will not live in a polluted heart. When a devotee surrenders to Lord Kṛṣṇa and becomes a lover of the Lord by direct realization of Kṛṣṇa's all-attractive nature, the Lord makes His residence in the clean heart and mind of such a pure devotee. SB 11.2.55

Clean consciousness means Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
SB 3.27.21

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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
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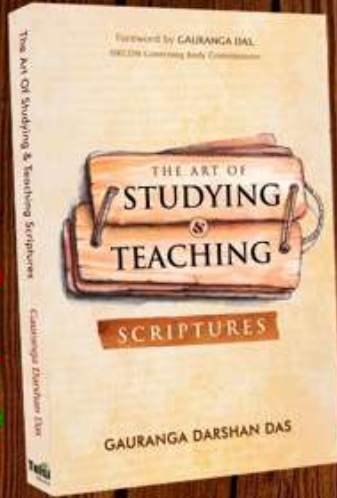
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