



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



A WORDLESS INVITATION

A Wordless
Invitation

Finding True Joy: A
Spiritual way to Navigate
Life's Challenges

Honouring Sacred
days

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FROM THE DESK OF THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA

**A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
Prabhupāda**

The misuse of the small amount of independence given to living beings can lead them to wrongly believe they can accept prayers and become false gods. They do not direct their prayers to the true Godhead. This misguided intention leads conditioned souls to try to design a peaceful world, but their imperfect desires lead them to become leaders of innocent people, like blind men leading the blind. This happens when pure self-knowledge is overshadowed, making them see themselves as the supreme doer.

However, in the company of devotees, one learns that they are neither the designer nor the master, and that everything is done by God's will through various agencies. Hence, God alone deserves adoration and worship. Reaching the standard of pure devotional activities is challenging in this world. Most people work for personal gain under the laws of Karma, laboring for themselves, their families, or their communities, but not for God. Such laborers are called 'kṛpāṇa' (misers) as opposed to 'brāhmaṇas' (liberals). These narrow-minded leaders might be popular for their philanthropic activities, but they can only offer temporary relief and illusory happiness. The devotees teach us that our duty is to work according to God's plan, offering transcendental loving service. This service is accessible to all beings because God is for everyone. Unlike sectarian service, which excludes lower entities, transcendental service is universal. Non-devotees see human life as a means of enjoyment, distinguishing it from animal life by the capacity for greater sense gratification.

Conditioned souls fear associating with devotees, worrying it will disrupt their sensual enjoyment. They accuse devotees of being restrictive and not supporting material indulgences. To non-devotees, the disciplined life of a devotee seems monotonous and restrictive. Non-devotees will perfect their lives when they see God beside themselves and serve Him instead of falsely serving themselves. This realization will free them from false ideologies and engage them in the science of transcendental loving service to God, learned from dedicated devotees.

Without associating with pure devotees, non-devotees risk wasting their human energy in material pursuits. Devotees understand that by serving God, all other needs are met, similar to watering a tree's root or feeding the stomach. This secret is revealed through the association with pure devotees, who are peaceful and non-materialistic, finding true attraction in the beauty of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. The lack of this attraction indicates being misled by illusory energy.

Complete knowledge comes from knowing the perfect whole through His devotee. A devotee, possessing the all-perfect 'Bhagavān,' is full of all opulence and cannot be compared to mundane creatures. Lord Caitanya, an ideal devotee, demonstrated humility and attracted people to devotional service. Unlike Lord Kṛṣṇa, who was misunderstood by some, Lord Caitanya appeared as a humble devotee, making the path to God more accessible. He showed that serving Kṛṣṇa is in the devotee's interest, as God needs no service, being self-sufficient.

Misconceptions, like seeing God as an ordinary man or vice versa, are dangerous. Lord Caitanya defeated mental speculators, revealing the true nature of living beings as servants of Kṛṣṇa. His teachings practically demonstrated the Bhagavad-gītā's principles. When the mind, influenced by external energy, deceives the soul, the entity becomes a fruitive worker. Mental speculation leads to fruitive actions and false ego, preventing true devotion.

To fulfill our life's mission, we must serve and associate with devotees wholly engaged in divine service, avoiding misleading religious ideologies based on mental speculation.



FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA

A WORDLESS INVITATION

BY GAURANGA DARSHAN DAS



Imagine you were separated from your beloved for a long time. But then, as the time ticks by, you have the opportunity of meeting up once again? Wouldn't that be a pleasurable moment? It definitely would. But about 5000 years ago, the reunion of two most intimate parties had been the cause of enhanced separation.



Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had enacted their enchanting childhood pastimes in Vṛndāvana and captivated the hearts of the residents there, so much so that they could not bear even a moment of separation from the divine Brothers.

A decade had passed while Kṛṣṇa performed His sweet pastimes with the Vrajavāsis. But one day, to the sorrow of the Vrajavāsis, Akrūra, a minister of the cruel king Kāmsa, came to Vṛndāvana and took Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to Mathurā. This left the tender hearts of the residents of Vṛndāvana battered. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma stayed in Mathurā for some time and later made Dvārakā their headquarters. Years later, on the day of a solar eclipse, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma along with their sister Subhadrā came to the pilgrimage place of Kurukṣetra to have a holy bath. They arrived on royal chariots accompanied by a troop of soldiers and other kingly paraphernalia. At that time, the residents of Vṛndāvana also came to Kurukṣetra and saw Kṛṣṇa there. Although upon seeing Kṛṣṇa, the lives of the Vrajavāsis were renewed, they simultaneously felt extreme separation at that time of reunion. Technically, every relationship has an inherent mood that forms the basis of such bonding. Such a mood often demands a particular ambience and outfits.

The residents of Vṛndāvana were accustomed to see Kṛṣṇa as a simple cowherd boy holding a flute in his hand. They could not appreciate this form of their beloved as a royal prince of the kingly order. Desiring to have His association again in His charming form of Gopāl, they pulled the chariots of Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā within their hearts towards Vṛndāvana. This earnest invitation that the residents of



Vṛndāvana offered to Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadrā later turned out to be the grandest and most popular event on this planet, the festival we all lovingly refer to as ‘Śrī Jagannātha Rathayātrā.’ Rathayātrā, the Festival of Chariots also known as – Guṇḍicā yātrā, Ghoṣa yātrā, Navadina yātrā and Daśavatāra yātrā is celebrated every year at Jagannātha Purī in the state of Orissa. The wooden deities of Lord Jagannātha (Kṛṣṇa), Balabhadra (Balarāma) and Subhadrā, with the celestial wheel Sudarśana are taken out from the temple

precincts in an elaborate ritual procession on huge chariots. The colorful chariots are drawn by thousands of devotees to the Guṇḍicā temple. After a stay for seven days, the deities return to their abode in Śrī-mandira.



The custom in South India is that the utsava-mūrtis or the representative deities of a temple are taken out in procession. But the presiding deities of Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva and Subhadrā are taken out for procession during the Jagannātha Rathayātrā. Saints and scriptures have repeatedly glorified the sanctity of this most special festival. A single glimpse of Lord Jagannātha on the chariot is considered to be very auspicious. The sanctity of the festival is such that even a touch of the chariot or even the ropes with which these are pulled is considered enough to confer the results of several pious deeds or penance for ages.

FINDING TRUE JOY: A SPIRITUAL WAY TO NAVIGATE LIFE'S CHALLENGES

BY **SHRILAKSHMI S**



Difficulties are a natural part of life. At some point, everyone in this world has to deal with difficulties in one of three categories: interpersonal, global, or individual.

The idea of a problem- or suffering-free existence is impractical because suffering is a natural part of the human condition.

It is impossible to expect to come out of a deep coal mine neat and clean. Similarly, we cannot anticipate eternal enjoyment after entering this material realm. So, what's the solution? Where should we look for happiness? We cannot ask for a salwar at restaurants or demand food at a textile shop. It's irrelevant. In the same way, we must seek happiness in the right place. Our material world is undoubtedly not the right place for everlasting enjoyment.

Even so, we can be joyful. How? Let's analyze! We often experience disappointments, depression, tension, sorrow, confusion, bewilderment, failures, etc. Let's revisit those situations to see how we responded and managed them. Mostly, we grieve, cry, and worry even more. What should have been done? Scriptures frequently mention great personalities and how they handled situations similar to those we are currently dealing with. Let's see how Māhāmuni Śrīla Vyāsadeva responded to a particular scenario that caused him displeasure.

VYĀSADEVA – A DEVOTED DISCIPLE

We often think we will be happy when we do something for ourselves. However, true satisfaction comes from serving others in a way that is genuinely beneficial to them. Vyāsadeva, who composed the entire Vedas, should have been quite satisfied. Yet, he wasn't. To sort out his dissatisfaction, he did two things: he conducted an introspective study on himself, and he consulted his guru. He identified the cause:

" kim vā bhāgavatā dharmā
na prāyeṇa nirūpitāḥ."

It was because he did not specifically highlight devotional service.

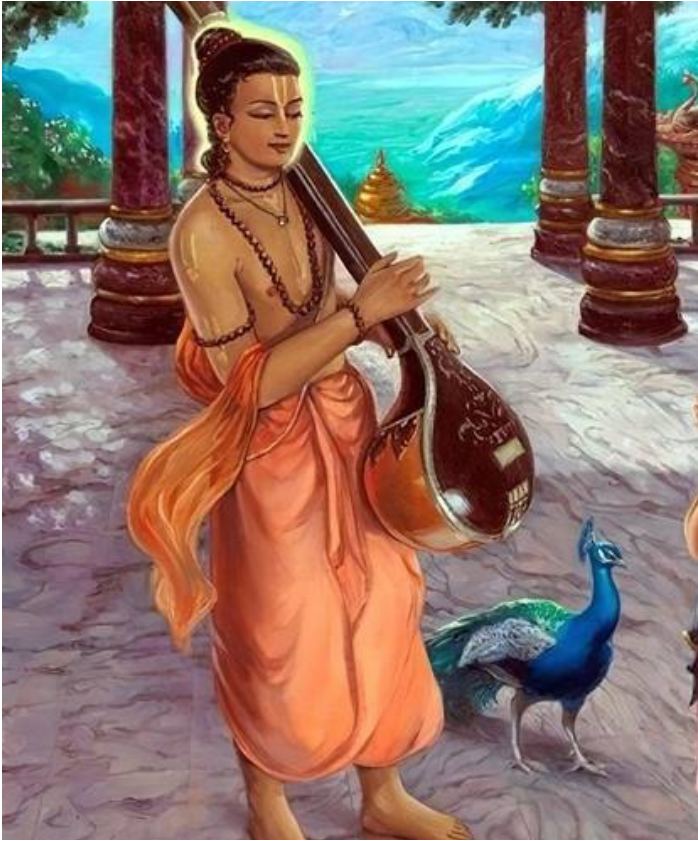
We should not misunderstand Vyāsadeva's work as completely unworthy; the Lord desired to manifest Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by causing him displeasure. Next, he sought the guidance of his guru, who timely came to his cottage.



Nārada Muni, being a genuine guru, pointed out the incompleteness of his work. Similarly, Arjuna took shelter in the Lord as a disciple when he got confused in battle. He prayed, "śiṣyas te 'haṁśādhi mām tvām prapannam" — "Now I am Your disciple, and a soul surrendered unto You. Please instruct me." Mahārāja Parīkṣit also took shelter of Śukadeva Gosvāmī when he was about to die within seven days. Dhruva Mahārāja, when insulted by his stepmother, approached his mother and followed her words to the core of his heart to get a kingdom greater than that of Brahmā. Ultimately, he got purified.

When we face problems, we need to understand the reasons and seek solutions with the help of elders, teachers, mentors, etc. They know exactly what to do, and their guidance always leads us closer to the Lord.

NĀRADA MUNI – A GLORIOUS GURU



Nārada Muni arrived, completely aware of Vyāsadeva's anguish, and began speaking. He specified that Vyāsadeva possessed two types of wisdom. He wrote the Mahābhārata, indicating his scriptural knowledge, and the Vedānta-sūtras, indicating his realized knowledge. Yet, he questioned Vyāsadeva, "What is the cause of your displeasure?" Vyāsadeva didn't immediately express the reasons but praised Nārada Muni and asked him back. One may be a great scholar or stalwart, but it is always good to solve problems by approaching a guru.

We often want spiritual masters to support our unethical choices, but Vyāsadeva wanted to hear from his teacher while being aware of the cause of his displeasure. He is an example for us all. Nārada Muni wrote "Pāñcarātra," and he never experienced any unhappiness. Vyāsadeva felt displeased after huge compilations, indicating his effort was inadequate. Nārada Muni said the cause was a lack of complete glorification of the Supreme Lord and the devotional service unto Him. Vyāsadeva had not sufficiently appreciated and glorified the Lord selflessly. The verse "ānanda-mayo 'bhyāsāt" states that the only way to satisfy the mind is to repeatedly glorify the Lord. If praising the Lord is the answer to the Great Sage Vyāsadeva's despair and dissatisfaction, then the same logic applies to us. The solution is praising the Lord.

It is stated in SB 1.5.10, "na yad vacaś citra-padaṁ harer yaśo," that even literary compositions should be rejected if they do not glorify the Lord. People attracted to useless mundane literature or who are devoid of the Lord's glory fall into the category of crows. Vyāsadeva's writings cannot be equated to crows because he did slightly glorify the Lord. The Lord declares in the verse "sādhavo hṛdayaṁ mahyaṁ" — "Saints are my heart, and I am their heart." We glorify those we hold in our hearts. In the same way, devotees glorify the Lord out of love and affection. A person is then joyful. Devotees don't glorify the Lord just to solve problems; it's a result of pure love.



DOES GLORIFICATION RESOLVE THE PROBLEM?

Absolutely, "YES." We suffer due to our previous actions and sins. What happens if sins are destroyed? Sufferings are consequently lessened, leading to a happier life. How can sins be eradicated? According to the verse " tad-vāg-visargo," even imperfectly composed glorification of the Lord will eradicate one's sins. Yet, this should be done with bhakti. Bhakti is more essential than perfect words. Without bhakti, Vedic realization is futile. In 1.2.17, "śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ," the process of hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord and His devotees purifies one's heart and destroys sins. Śukadeva Gosvāmī says, "prāyeṇa munayo rājan nivṛttā vidhi-ṣedhataḥ" (2.1.7) — the greatest transcendental pleasure or happiness lies in glorifying the Lord.

One may say, "I don't know how to glorify the Lord!" The answer is to follow the previous paramparācāryas and recite or repeat their prayers. Or, if one is sincere in the attempt to glorify, the Lord will arrange it. When Dhruva Mahārāja was stuck without knowing how to appreciate, the Lord touched a conch shell to his head, enabling him to glorify Him. A sincere attempt with selfless love pleases the Supreme Lord, which is the only solution to all problems.

In conclusion, understanding and accepting that difficulties are an inherent part of life helps us navigate them more effectively. Recognizing our place in the world, we should seek happiness in the right places, not in material gains but in spiritual fulfillment. As exemplified by great personalities like Vyāsadeva and Arjuna, introspection, guidance from mentors, and devotion to a higher purpose are key to overcoming dissatisfaction and finding true joy. By glorifying the Supreme and serving others selflessly, we can mitigate suffering and lead a more contented life. In essence, true happiness lies in spiritual practice and selfless devotion, transforming our challenges into opportunities for growth and connection with the divine.



VERSE OF THE MONTH



ABSORPTION - THE KEY TO ATTAIN KRISHNA

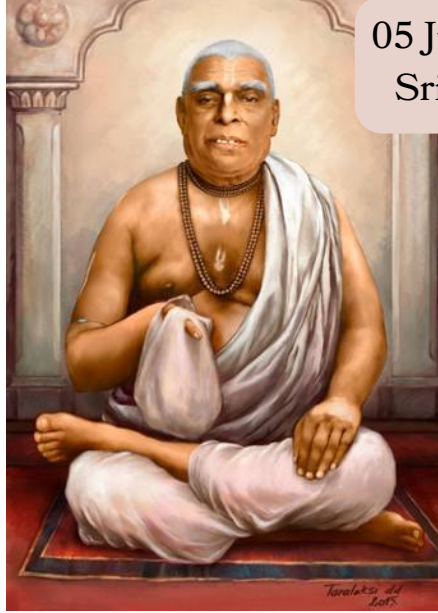
ŚB 7.1.26

*tasmād vairānubandhena
nirvairēṇa bhayena vā
snehāt kāmēna vā yuñjyāt
kathañcin nekṣate pṛthak*

Therefore by enmity or by devotional service, by fear, by affection or by lusty desire – by all of these or any one of them – if a conditioned soul somehow or other concentrates his mind upon the Lord, the result is the same, for the Lord, because of His blissful position, is never affected by enmity or friendship.

Asadha - Shravana Masa (July)

Devoid of pride, full of humility, radiant with pure love for Radha-Govinda, Srila Prabhupada gave all credit to the previous acaryas. "We should take it," said Srila Prabhupada, "that Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura was the origin of the Krishna Consciousness Movement in its pure form."



05 July - Disappearance Day of
Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

*namo bhaktivinodāya sac-cid-ānanda-nāmine
gaura-śakti-svarūpāya rūpānuga-varāya te*

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda, who is transcendental energy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He is a strict follower of the Gosvāmīs, headed by Srīla Rūpa."



21 July - Disappearance Day of
Sanatana Goswami



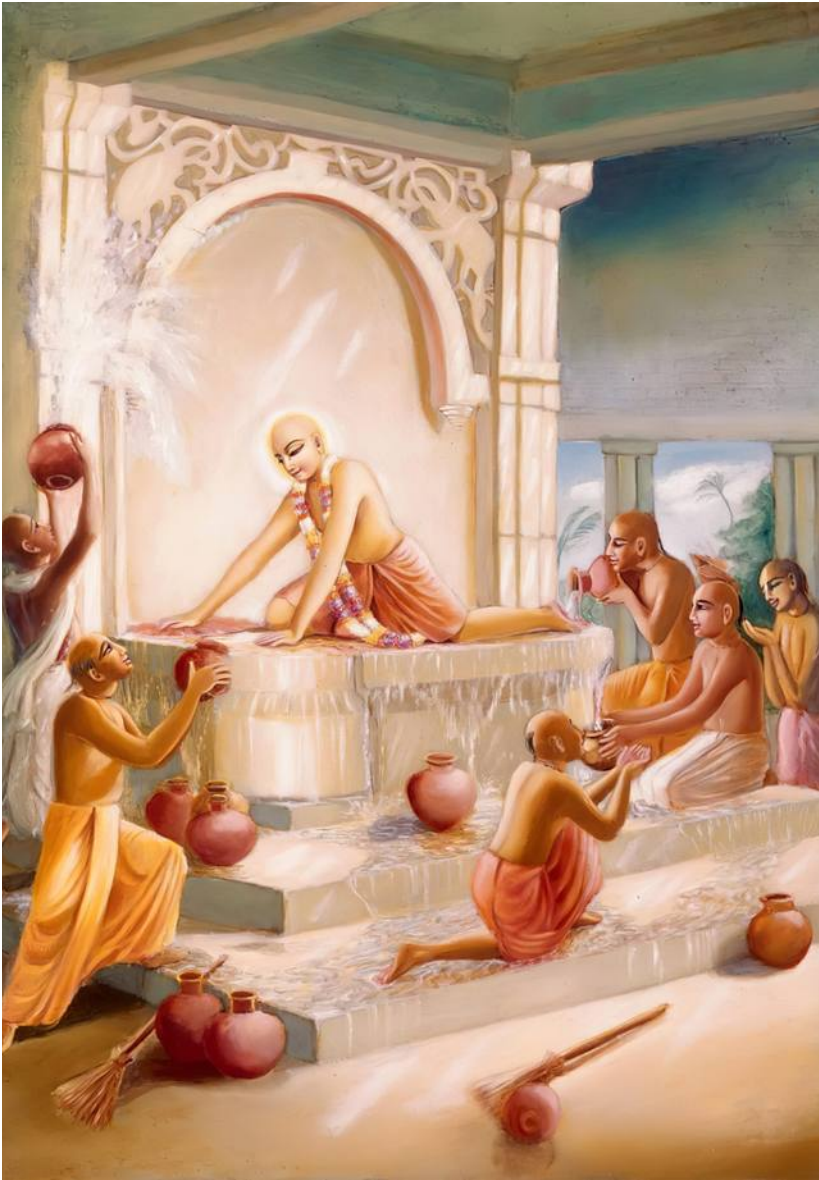
25 July - Disappearance Day of
Srila Gopala Bhatta Goswami

Shri Bhaktivinoda Thakura said in Jaiva Dharma: "Sanatana Goswami was empowered to explain the esoteric aspects of Krishna's manifest and unimanifest Vraja lila." Sanatana Goswami made a significant literary contribution to the Gaudīya sampradaya with his Hari-bhakti-vilasa, Brhad-Bhagavatamṛta, and Brhad-Vaiṣṇava-toṣhani.

In the form of Labanga manjari Sanatana Goswami serves Shrimati Vishakha-sakhi in Radha-Madhava's nitya nikunja-lila. Sanatana Goswami's samadhi is behind Radha Madana Mohana's Temple.

Gopal Bhatta Goswami has written a foreword to Jiva Goswami's Sat Sandarbha. He wrote a commentary on Krishna-Karnamṛta. He also wrote Sat-Kriya-Sara Dipika, a guide to Vaiṣṇava samskaras and rituals for birth ceremonies, sacred thread initiations, marriage ceremonies, sannyasa, and funerals etc. In addition to this he composed many other scriptures.

In the Gaura-Gandodesha-Dipika, Shri Kavi Karnapura Goswami writes: "In my opinion, that person who in Vrindavan Leela was Ananga Manjari is now Gopal Bhatt Goswami. Some authorities, however, have given their opinion that he was Guna Manjari."



Gundicha Temple, the birthplace of Jagannath Swami, was constructed during King Indradyumna's reign in Satyuga by a divine carpenter from Deva Loka who crafted the deities of Jagannath, Baladev, and Subhadra Maharani. Named after Queen Gundicha, the temple is situated in Sundaranchal, likened to Vrindavana, whereas Jagannath's main temple in Nilachal symbolizes opulence similar to Dwarka or Kurukshetra. During Rath Yatra, Jagannath is joyfully transported from Nilachal to Sundaranchal, symbolizing a spiritual journey from Dwarka to Vrindavana.

Darshan at Gundicha Temple is considered immensely auspicious. According to the Puranas, witnessing Lord Jagannath in Gundicha yields manifold spiritual benefits compared to seeing him in Nilachal. It is believed that devotees who see Jagannath, Baladev, and Subhadra during Ratha Yatra will attain a heightened divine connection and ultimately reach Vaikuntha.

The temple holds special significance as Jagannath accepted Gundicha Devi, King Indradyumna's wife, as his mother, promising to visit Gundicha Temple annually for her happiness. This unique relationship underscores the temple's sacredness.

Additionally, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu emphasized the importance of cleansing Gundicha Temple, equating it to cleansing the heart of accumulated impurities. He organized the Gundicha Marjana, where devotees meticulously cleaned the temple with devotion, illustrating the principle of serving with responsibility, thoroughness, and love. This act of service purifies both the temple and the devotees' hearts, aligning them closer to the divine essence of Lord Jagannath.

The Rath Yatra festival in Orissa is celebrated with immense enthusiasm and devotion, showcasing the beautiful pastime of Lord Jagannath. Sixteen days before the festival, Lord Jagannath undergoes a special bath during the full moon, then rests for 14 days to prepare for the event. This bathing ceremony, held in Jyestha during Purnima, commemorates Lord Jagannath's appearance, initiated by King Indradyumna as recorded in the Skanda Purana and the Oriya text 'Niladri Mohadaya'.

The day before Snana Yatra, Deities including Lord Jagannath, Subhadra, Balabhadra, and Sudarshana are moved to pandals for public viewing and then participate in the Pahandi ceremony. The decorated bathing pandals feature garden and tree paintings, arches, and mango leaf flags. Following Mangala Aarti, sacred water is collected from the Golden Well and purified for the bathing festival.

After Snana Yatra, the Deities are kept out of public view for 15 days, a period called Anabasara Kaal, during which they are restored and repainted. On the sixteenth day, the Deities are revealed to the public in an event known as Netrotsava. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, founder of Gaudiya Vaishnavism, participated in many of Lord Jagannath's pastimes in Puri.



As a child, Srila Prabhupada was inspired by the Deities and organized his own festival with a small ratha cart with the help of his father Sri Gaur Mohan Dev. ISKCON held its first Rath Yatra outside India in San Francisco in 1976.

Now the festival is celebrated worldwide, with some cities using three chariots and others having all three Deities on one chariot.



Happy Ratha Yatra





Birds like swans and cranes, who enjoy clear waters and lotus flowers, are different from crows, who enjoy filthy places.

Similarly, there are persons who are controlled by the modes of ignorance and passion and those who are controlled by the mode of goodness.

The Ganges water is celebrated in this way because it emanates from the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Similarly, those who are directly in touch with the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and who are absorbed in the chanting of His glories are freed from all material contamination.



NEW!

Reviews from Readers

Welcome you all to take part in.....

We value your feedback on the Bhagavata Pradipika ezine. Share constructive insights relevant to this month's Bhagavata Pradipika ezine to [**bvvp.gev@gmail.com**](mailto:bvvp.gev@gmail.com) to have your review published in next month's magazine.



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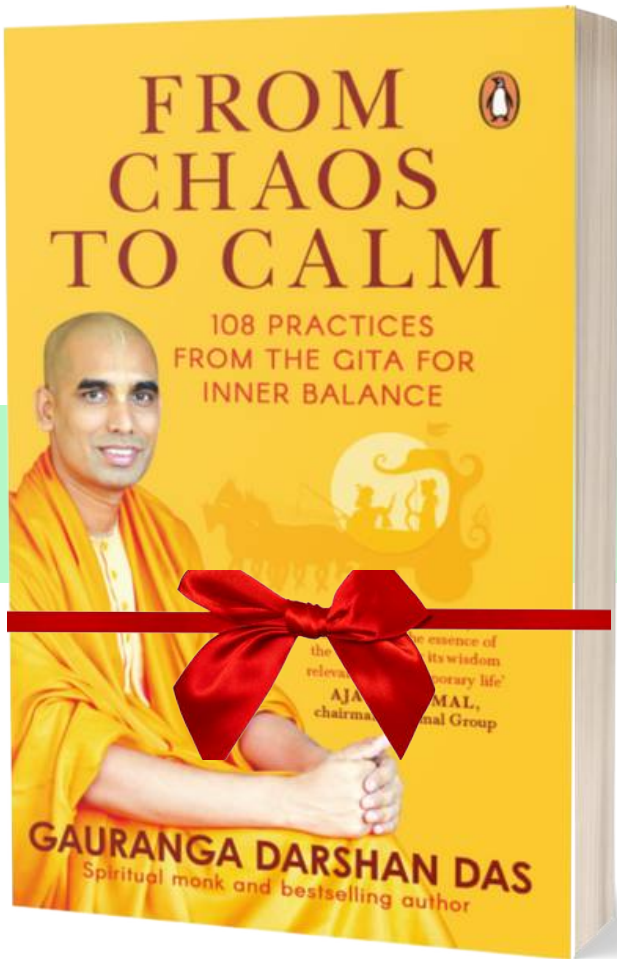
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