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NARADA VISITS VAIKUNTHA

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When Dhruva was maintaining his meditation, Narada Muni went to Vaikuntha. With sweet music from his *vinā*, Narada Muni began to entertain Lord Vishnu, who was sitting on His throne with Laksmi devi. Smiling gently, the Lord leaned over and said, "Narada, why am I not enjoying your *vinā* today?"

Narada replied, "Listen, my dear lotus-eyed Lord. Today your mind finds no pleasure in my music, because You, who are the Protector of the distressed, are thinking of one of Your devotees."

Lord Vishnu said, "Who is that devotee who is remembering Me?"

Narada Muni replied, "Dhruva, the son of King Uttanapada. He is a saintly boy, but he suffers misfortune since his mother, Suniti, is not loved by her husband, the King. Recently, Dhruva's step-mother, Suruci, was sitting on the throne with King Uttanapada playing with their seven year old son. Seeing the fun, Dhruva tried to climb up the King's throne, but Suruci pushed him down. Poor Dhruva fell to the floor, crying. Being controlled by his wife, the King remained silent. Suruci's actions and words strongly affected Dhruva and his heart burned. Although a tender-aged boy, he left home and went to the forest of Madhuvana to perform intense *tapasya* [penance]."

The lotus-eyed Lord Vishnu, smiling slightly, spoke sweetly. "Narada, I don't show My mercy to one who is not connected to Me by initiation. I also don't take offense from one who is not initiated."

Narada said, "My Lord, Dhruva is initiated by me. So please show him Your mercy. Go to see him and

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relieve him from the fire of material existence."

The Lord replied, "I will surely give My mercy to anyone who gives up his parents, goes to Madhuvana, and meditates upon Me while performing severe austerities!"

O Narada, a non-devotee can't take birth in the womb of a devotee. On My behalf, a Vaisnava can tolerate any difficulty. I will always give My mercy to a devotee. I am bound by the ropes of the *prema-bhakti* of My devotees. I can never neglect any devotee who thinks of Me. Therefore, I will give Dhruva whatever he wants."

— From *Sri Chaitanya Mangala of Sri Lochan Das Thakur*, Translated by *Srila Mahamidhi Swami* ❁

DHRUVA GLORIFIES THE SUPREME LORD

Sri Maitreya Rṣi

The Lord, who is nondifferent from the Sahasrasirsa incarnation, got on the back of Garuda, and together they went to the Madhuvana Forest to see His servant Dhruva. Dhruva, in his mature yogic process, was fully absorbed in meditation, on the form of the Lord, which was brilliant like lightning. All of a sudden that wonderful form disappeared. Thus Dhruva was perturbed, and his meditation broke. But as soon as he opened his eyes he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally present, just as he had been seeing the Lord in his heart.

When Dhruva saw his Lord in front of his very eyes, he was greatly agitated and offered Him obeisances and respect. He fell flat before Him like a rod and became absorbed in love of Godhead. Dhruva, in ecstasy, looked upon the Lord as if he were drinking the Lord with his eyes, kissing the lotus feet of the Lord with his mouth, and embracing the Lord with his arms.

Dhruva was a small boy, yet he wanted to offer prayers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead in suitable language. But because he was inexperienced, he could not do so. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being situated in everyone's heart, could understand Dhruva's awkward position.

Out of His causeless mercy He touched His conch shell to the forehead of Dhruva, who stood before Him with folded hands. At that time Dhruva became perfectly aware of all the Vedic conclusions. He understood the Absolute Truth complete with His relationship with all living entities. In accordance with the line of devotional service to the Supreme Lord whose fame is widespread, Dhruva, who in the future would receive a planet which would never be



Artist: Prasanta Dasa

annihilated, even during the time of dissolution, offered his deliberate and conclusive prayers.

dhruva uvāca

*yo 'ntaḥ praviśya mama vācam imān prasuptān
sañjīvayaty akhila-śakti-dharaḥ sva-dhāmnā
anyānś ca hasta-caraṇa-śravaṇa-tvag-ādīn
prāṇān namo bhagavate puruṣāya tubhyam*

Dhruva Maharaja said: My dear Lord, You are all-powerful. After entering within me, You have enlivened all my sleeping senses—my hands, legs, ears, touch sensation, life force and especially my power of speech. Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*ekas tvam eva bhagavann idam ātma-śaktiyā
māyākhyayoru-guṇayā mahad-ādy-aśeṣam
sṛṣṭvānuviśya puruṣas tad-asad-guṇeṣu
nāneva dāruṣu vibhāvasu vad vibhāsi*

My Lord, You are the supreme one, but by Your different energies You appear differently in the spiritual and material worlds. You create the total energy of the material world by Your external potency, and after creation You enter within the material world as the Supersoul. You are the Supreme Person, and through the temporary modes of material nature You create

varieties of manifestation, just as fire, entering into wood of different shapes, burns brilliantly in different varieties.

*tvad-dattayā vayunayedam acaṣṭa viśvam
supta-prabuddha iva nātha bhavat-prapannaḥ
tasyāpavargya-śaraṇam tava pāda-mūlan
vismaryate kṛta-vidā katham ārta-bandho*

O my master, Lord Brahma is fully surrendered unto You. In the beginning You gave him knowledge, and thus he could see and understand the entire universe, just as a person awakens from sleep and visualizes his immediate duties. You are the only shelter of all persons who desire liberation, and You are the friend of all who are distressed. How, therefore, can a learned person who has perfect knowledge ever forget You?

*nūnan viṃṣṭa-matayas tava māyayā te
ye tvān bhavāpyaya-vimokṣaṇam anya-hetoḥ
arcanti kalpaka-taruṇ kuṇapopabhogyam
icchanti yat sparśajan niraye 'pi nṛṇām*

Persons who worship You simply for the sense gratification of this bag of skin are certainly influenced by Your illusory energy. In spite of having You, who are like a desire tree and are the cause of liberation from birth and death, foolish persons, such as me, desire benedictions from You for sense gratification, which is available even for those who live in hellish conditions.

*yā nirvṛtis tanu-bhṛtān tava pāda-padma-
dhyānād bhavaj-jana-kathā-śravaṇena vā syāt
sā brahmaṇi sva-mahimany api nātha mā bhūt
kiṁ tv antakāsi-hulitāt patatān vimānāt*

My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating upon Your lotus feet or hearing about Your glories from pure devotees is so unlimited that it is far beyond the stage of *brahmānanda*, wherein one thinks himself merged in the impersonal Brahman as one with the Supreme. Since *brahmānanda* is also defeated by the transcendental bliss derived from devotional service, then what to speak of the temporary blissfulness of elevating oneself to the heavenly planets, which is ended by the separating sword of time? Although one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, he falls down in due course of time.



*bhaktiṁ muhuḥ pravahatāṁ tvayi me prasaṅgo
bhūyād ananta mahatām amalāśayānām
yenāñjasolbaṇam uru-vyasanāṁ bhavābdhiṁ
neṣye bhavad-guṇa-kathāmrta-pāna-mattaḥ*

O unlimited Lord, kindly bless me so that I may associate with great devotees who engage in Your transcendental loving service constantly, as the waves of a river constantly flow. Such transcendental devotees are completely situated in an uncontaminated state of life. By the process of devotional service I shall surely be able to cross the nescient ocean of material existence, which is filled with the waves of blazing, fire like dangers. It will be very easy for me, for I am becoming mad to hear about Your transcendental qualities and pastimes, which are eternally existent.

*te na smaranty atitarāṁ priyam īśa martyaṁ
ye cānv adah suta-suhṛd-grha-vitta-dārāḥ
ye tv abja-nābha bhavadīya-padāravinda-
saugandhya-lubdha-hṛdayeṣu kṛta-prasaṅgāḥ*

O Lord who has a lotus navel, if a person happens to associate with a devotee whose heart always hankers after Your lotus feet, seeking always their fragrance, he is never attached to the material body or, in a bodily relationship, to offspring, friends, home, wealth and wife, which are very, very dear to materialistic persons. Indeed, he does not care for them.

*tīryaṁ-naga-dviija-sarīṣpa-deva-daitya-
martyādibhiḥ paricitāṁ sad-asad-viśeṣam
rūpaṁ sthaviṣṭham aja te mahad-ādy-anekaṁ
nātaḥ paraṁ parama vedmi na yatra vādaḥ*

My dear Lord, O Supreme Unborn, I know that the different varieties of living entities, such as animals, trees, birds, reptiles, demigods and human beings, are spread throughout the universe, which is caused by the total material energy, and I know that they are sometimes manifest and sometimes unmanifest; but I have never experienced the supreme form I behold as I see You now. Now all kinds of methods of theorizing have come to an end.

*kalpānta etad akhilaṁ jaṭharena grhṇan
śete pumān sva-dṛg ananta-sakhas tad-anke
yam-nābhi-sindhu-ruha-kāñcana-loka-padma-
garbhe dyumān bhagavate praṇato 'smi tasmai*

My dear Lord, at the end of each millennium the Supreme Personality of Godhead Garbhodakashayi Vishnu dissolves everything manifested within the universe into His belly. He lies down on the lap of Sesha Naga, from His navel sprouts a golden lotus flower on a stem, and on that lotus Lord Brahma is created. I can understand that You are the same Supreme Godhead. I therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*tvam nitya-mukta-parīśuddha-vibuddha ātmā
kūta-stha ādi-puruṣo bhagavāns try-adhīśaḥ
yad-buddhy-avasthitim akhaṇḍitayā sva-dṛṣṭyā
draṣṭā sthitāv adhimakho vyatirikta āsse*

My Lord, by Your unbroken transcendental glance You are the supreme witness of all stages of intellectual activities. You are eternally liberated, Your existence is situated in pure goodness, and You are existent in the Supersoul without change. You are the original Personality of Godhead, full with six opulences, and You are eternally the master of the three modes of material nature. Thus, You are always different from the ordinary living entities. As Lord Vishnu, You maintain all the affairs of the entire universe, and yet You stand aloof and are the enjoyer of the results of all sacrifices.

*yasmin viruddha-gatayo hy aniśaṁ patanti
vidyādayo vividha-śaktaya āmupirvyāt
tad brahma viśva-bhavam ekam anantam ādyaṁ
ānanda-mātram avikāram ahaṁ prapadye*

My dear Lord, in Your impersonal manifestation of Brahman there are always two opposing elements—knowledge and ignorance. Your multienergies are continually manifest, but the impersonal Brahman, which is undivided, original, changeless, unlimited and blissful, is the cause of the material manifestation. Because You are the same impersonal Brahman, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You.

*satyāśiṣo hi bhagavāns tava pāda-padmam
āśis tathāmubhajataḥ puruṣārtha-mūrteḥ
apy evam aṛya bhagavān paripāti dīnān
vāsreva vatsakam anugraha-kātarō 'smān*

My Lord, O Supreme Lord, You are the supreme personified form of all benediction. Therefore, for one who abides in Your devotional service with no other desire, worshipping Your lotus feet is better than becoming king and lording it over a kingdom. That



is the benediction of worshipping Your lotus feet. To ignorant devotees like me, You are the causelessly merciful maintainer, just like a cow, who takes care of the newly born calf by supplying milk and giving it protection from attack.

When Dhruva Maharaja, who had good intentions in his heart, finished his prayer, the Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, who is very kind to His devotees and servants, congratulated him, speaking as follows.

The Personality of Godhead said: My dear Dhruva, son of the King, you have executed pious vows, and I also know the desire within your heart. Although your desire is very ambitious and very difficult to fulfill, I shall favor you with its fulfillment. All good fortune unto you. I shall award you the glowing planet known as the polestar, which will continue to exist even after the dissolution at the end of the millennium. No one has ever ruled this planet, which is surrounded by all the solar systems, planets and stars. All the luminaries in the sky circumambulate this planet, just as bulls tread around a central pole for the purpose of crushing grains. Keeping the polestar to their right, all the stars inhabited by the great sages like Dharma, Agni, Kashyapa and Shukra circumambulate this planet, which continues to exist even after the dissolution of all others. After your father goes to the forest and awards you the rule of his kingdom, you will rule continuously the entire world for thirty-six thousand years, and all your senses will continue to be as strong as they are now. You will never become old. Sometime in the future your brother, Uttama, will go hunting in the forest, and while absorbed in hunting, he will be killed. Your stepmother, Suruci, being maddened upon the death of her son, will go to search him out in the forest, but she will be devoured by a forest fire. I am the heart of all sacrifices. You will be able to perform many great sacrifices and also give great charities. In this way you will be able to enjoy the blessings of material happiness in this life, and at the time of your death you will be able to remember Me. My dear Dhruva, after your material life in this body, you will go to My planet, which is always offered obeisances by the residents of all other planetary systems. It is situated above the planets of the seven *ṛśis*, and having gone there you will never have to come back again to this material world.

After being worshiped and honored by the boy, Dhruva Maharaja, and after offering him His abode, Lord Vishnu, on the back of Garuda, returned to His abode, as Dhruva Maharaja looked on. Despite having achieved the desired result of his determination by worshipping the lotus feet of the Lord, Dhruva Maharaja

was not very pleased. Thus he returned to his home.

—Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 9. Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home » Verses: 1-27 ❀

WHY WAS DHRUVA DISPLEASED?

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

A pure devotee is always free from any kind of material desires. In the material world, one's material desires are all most demonic; one thinks of others as one's enemies, one thinks of revenge against one's enemies, one aspires to become the topmost leader or topmost person in this material world, and thus one competes with all others. This has been described in the *Bhāgavad-gītā*, Sixteenth Chapter, as asuric. A pure devotee has no demand from the Lord. His only concern is to serve the Lord sincerely and seriously, and he is not at all concerned about what will happen in the future.

In the *Mukunda-mālā-stotra*, King Kulashekharā, author of the book, states in his prayer: "My dear Lord, I don't want any position of sense gratification within this material world. I simply want to engage in Your service perpetually." Similarly, Lord Chaitanya, in His *Sikṣāṣṭaka*, also prayed, "My Lord, I do not want any amount of material wealth, I do not want any number of materialistic followers, nor do I want any attractive wife to enjoy. The only thing I want is that I may engage life after life in Your service." Lord Chaitanya did not pray even for *mukti*, or liberation.

Dhruva Maharaja was influenced by a revengeful attitude towards his insulting stepmother, did not think of *mukti*, nor did he know what *mukti* was. Therefore he failed to aim for *mukti* as his goal in life. But a pure devotee also does not want liberation. He is a soul completely surrendered to the Supreme Lord, and he does not demand anything from the Lord. This position was realized by Dhruva Maharaja when he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead present personally before him because he was elevated to the *vasudeva* platform. The *vasudeva* platform refers to the stage at which material contamination is conspicuous by absence only, or in other words where there is no question of the material modes of nature—goodness, passion and ignorance—and one can therefore see the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Because on the *vasudeva* platform one can see God face to face, the Lord is also called *Vāsudeva*.

The reason is that an insignificant insect has a desire for sense gratification and even a great personality like Lord Brahma also wants to dominate this material nature.

Dhruva Maharaja's propensity in the beginning was like that. He wanted to dominate this material world in a greater position than Lord Brahma. Therefore elsewhere it is described that after the appearance of the Lord, when Dhruva Maharaja thought and compared his determination to his final reward, he realized that he had wanted a few particles of broken glass but instead had received many diamonds. As soon as he saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face, he immediately became conscious of the unimportance of his demand from the Lord to have an exalted position better than Lord Brahma's.

When Dhruva Maharaja became situated on the *vasudeva* platform due to seeing the Lord face to face, all his material contamination was cleared. Thus he became ashamed of what his demands were and what he had achieved. He was very much ashamed to think that although he had gone to Madhuvana, giving up the kingdom of his father, and he had gotten a spiritual master like Narada Muni, he was still thinking of revenge against his stepmother and wanted to occupy an exalted post within this material world. These were the causes for his moroseness even after he received all the desired benedictions from the Lord.

When Dhruva Maharaja factually saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead, there was no question of a revengeful attitude towards his stepmother nor any aspiration to lord it over the material world, but the Supreme Personality is so kind that He knew that Dhruva Maharaja wanted these. When Dhruva Maharaja demanded material benefits, the Lord was present within his heart and so knew everything. The Lord always knows everything a man is thinking. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* also: *vedāhami samatītāni* [Bg. 7.26]. The Lord fulfilled all Dhruva Maharaja's desires. His revengeful attitude towards his stepmother and stepbrother was satisfied, his desire for a more exalted position than that of his great-grandfather was also fulfilled, and at the same time, his eternal position in Dhruvaloka was fixed. Although Dhruva Maharaja's achievement of an eternal planet was not conceived of by him, Krishna thought, "What will Dhruva do with an exalted position within this material world?" Therefore He gave Dhruva the opportunity to rule this material world for thirty-six thousand years with unchangeable senses and the chance to perform many great sacrifices and thus become the most reputed king within this material world. And, after finishing with all this material enjoyment, Dhruva would be promoted to the spiritual



world, which includes the Dhruvaloka.

—*Srimad Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 4: The Creation of the Fourth Order » Chapter: 9. Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home » Verse: 29 » Purport by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.* ❀

DHRUVA RETURNS HOME

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

When the King heard that his son was coming back, as if returning from death, he could not believe it. How can a rascal like me have such good fortune? But by dint of his having faith in the words of Narada, he believed it. Overwhelmed with an outburst of joy, and feeling greatly pleased, he gave a valuable necklace to the bearer of the news. Eager to see his son, he hastily came out of the city, riding his gold ornamented chariot which was drawn by fine horses. The King was surrounded by elders of the family, ministers and friends, and he went accompanied by the sounds of conches, drums, and flutes, and the chanting of the Vedas. His two queens Suniti and Suruci, ornamented with gold, mounted a palanquin along with Uttama, the King's other son, and also went out. Seeing his son Dhruva approaching near a grove, the King who had been longing for him for a long time, breathing heavily, immediately dismounted from his chariot and approached the boy. Overwhelmed with affection, he embraced his dear son who had destroyed unlimited sins by receiving the touch of the Lord Vishnu's feet. His greatest desire fulfilled, the King smelled his son's



head again and again, and bathed him with cold tears. Bowing to his father's feet, and receiving blessings of *mantras*, Dhruva, the foremost among good men, was welcomed. He then bowed to his two mothers with his head. Suruci raised the boy up when he fell at her feet. Embracing him, she said with a choked voice and tears, "May you live long!"

Just as water flows naturally to a lower level, all living beings naturally offer respect to that person with whom the Lord is pleased, because of his qualities and universal friendliness. Overwhelmed with affection, Uttama and Dhruva embraced each other. Their hairs stood on end and torrents of tears appeared. Embracing her son, dearer to her than her life airs, Suniti, his mother, gave up her grief and was satisfied by touching his body. Milk constantly flowed from her breasts, which were sprinkled with her tears. She was the mother of a hero. The public praised the queen saying, "By good fortune, your son, the destroyer of suffering, has returned after being lost a long time. He will protect the whole earth. You must have worshiped the Supreme Lord, destroyer of his devotees' suffering, meditating on whom the wise have conquered all powerful death. "

Whilst being praised, the joyful King placed Dhruva, adored by the people, along with his brother, on an elephant and returned to his city. Every door was decorated with arches, erected overhead which had shining *makaras* engraved on them. The doorways were also decorated with banana trunks with buds and flowers and young betel trees. Over the doors were hung mango leaves, cloth and strings of pearls and the entrances were decorated with water pots and lamps. Everywhere the city was ornamented by having walls, gates and houses covered in gold, and it shone with beautiful domes and spires. The yards, highways, watchtowers and roads were washed and smeared with sandalwood and covered with offerings of raw rice, fruits, flowers, barley grains and fused rice. As they saw Dhruva approach on the road, the chaste women of the city scattered white mustard seeds, barley, yogurt, water, *dūva* grass, flowers and fruits, while uttering blessings out of affection. While hearing beautiful songs Dhruva entered the house of his father.

From then on Dhruva lived like a *devatā* in the heavens. He was hrupampered constantly by his father who situated him in the best of houses, covered with valuable jewels. In that house there were valuable chairs, golden furniture and ivory beds which were white like the foam of milk and covered with gold.

There were jewel lamps embellished with bejeweled figures of women, shining on crystal and emerald walls. There were pleasant gardens with colorful,

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heavenly trees, filled with singing couples of birds and buzzing, intoxicated bees. There were lakes with cat's eye staircases, filled with lotuses, blue lotuses and white lotuses, inhabited by swans, ducks, cakravakas and cranes.

Uttanapada, sage among kings, seeing and hearing the great influence of his son, felt great wonder. Seeing that Dhruva was mature, approved by the ministers, and beloved of the citizens, the King made him king of the earth. Considering his advanced age, the King, reflecting on his goal in life, became detached and entered the forest.

— From *Sārāntha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* » Canto 4: *The Creation of the Fourth Order* » Chapter: 9. *Dhruva Maharaja Returns Home* » Verses: 37-67 by Srila Vishvanātha Cakravartī Thākura. ❧



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Dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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(Śrīmad-bhāgavata mātmya , Chapter Three)