

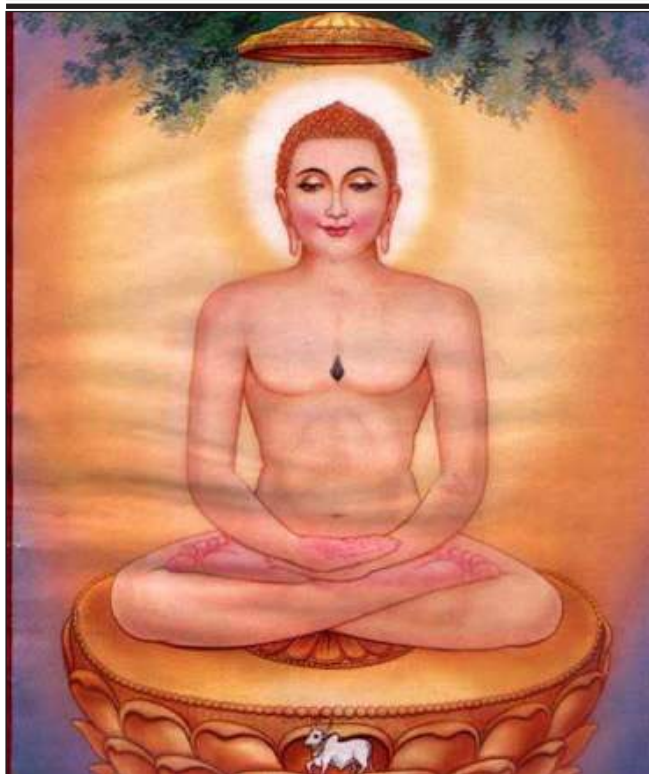


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Teachings, Activities And Nature Of Lord Rsabhadeva



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TEACHINGS OF LORD RSABHADEVA

Srila Sukadeva Goswami

Lord Rsbhadeva told His sons: My dear boys, of all the living entities who have accepted material bodies in this world, one who has been awarded this human form should not work hard day and night simply for sense gratification, as that is available even for the dogs and hogs that eat stool. Rather one should engage in penance and austerity to achieve the divine planform of devotional service to the Supreme Lord. By such activities, one's heart is purified, and, he finally attains eternal, blissful life, which is transcendental to material happiness and which continues forever. One can enter the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities- either impersonalists or devotees. Whether one wants to merge into the Lord's existence or wants to associate with the Personality of Godhead, one should render service to such *mahātmās*. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of womanly association and sex, the gate to hell is wide open.. The *mahātmās* do not see any difference between one living entity and another. They are equipoised, very peaceful and are fully absorbed in devotional service to the Lord. They are devoid of anger, and work for the benefit of everyone. They never behave in an abominable way. Such people are known as *mahātmās*. Those who are interested in reviving Krishna consciousness and increasing their love of Godhead do not like to do anything unrelated to Krishna. They are not interested in mingling with people who are busy maintaining their bodies through eating, sleeping, mating and defending. Although they may be householders, they are not attached to their homes. Nor are they attached to

wives, children, friends or wealth. At the same time, they are not indifferent to the execution of their duties. Such people habitually collect only enough money to keep body and soul together.

When a person considers sense gratification the aim of life, he certainly becomes mad after materialistic living and performs all kinds of sinful activity. He does not know that due to his past misdeeds he has already received a body which, although temporary, is the cause of his misery. Truthfully speaking, the living entity should not have taken on a material body - he has been granted the material body for sense gratification. Therefore I think it not befitting an intelligent man to involve himself again in the activities of sense gratification by which he perpetually gets material bodies one after another.

As long as one does not inquire about the spiritual values of life, one is defeated and subjected to miseries arising from ignorance. Be it sinful or pious, *karma* has its resultant actions. If a person is engaged in any kind of *karma*, his mind is called *karmātmaka*, colored with fruitive activity. As long as the mind is impure, consciousness is unclear, and as long as one is absorbed in fruitive activity, he has to accept a material body. When the living entity is covered by the mode of ignorance, he does not understand the individual living being and the supreme living being, and his mind is subjugated by fruitive activity. Therefore, until one has love for Lord Vasudeva, who is none other than Myself, he is certainly not delivered from having to accept a material body again and again. Even though one may be very learned and wise, he is mad if he does not understand that the endeavor for sense gratification is a useless waste of time. Being forgetful of his real self interest, he tries to be happy in the material world, centering his attention on his home, which is based on sexual intercourse and because of this he gets all kinds of material miseries. In this way he is no better than a foolish animal. The attraction between male and female is the basic principle of material existence. On the basis of this misconception, which ties together the hearts of the male and female, one becomes attracted to his body, home, property, children, relatives and wealth. In this way one increases life's illusions and thinks in terms of "I and mine." Only when the strong knot in the heart of a person implicated in material life due to the results of past action is loosened does one turn away from attachment to home, wife and children. In this way, he gives up the basic principle of illusion [I and mine] becomes liberated and gradually ascends to the transcendental world.

O My sons, you should accept as *guru* a highly elevated *paramahansa*. In this way, you should place your faith and love in Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. You should detest sense gratification and tolerate the duality of pleasure and pain, which are like the seasonal changes of summer and winter. Try to realize the true condition of living entities, who are miserable even in the higher planetary systems. Philosophically inquire about the truth, and undergo all kinds of austerities and penances for the sake of devotional service. Give up the endeavor for sense enjoyment and instead perform the service of the Lord.



Listen to discussions about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and always associate with His devotees. Chant about and glorify the Supreme Lord, and look upon everyone equally by spiritual vision. Give up enmity and subdue anger and lamentation. Abandon identifying the self with the body and the home, and practice regularly reading the revealed scriptures. Live in a secluded place and practice the process by which you can completely control your life air, mind and senses. Have full faith in the revealed scriptures, the Vedic literatures, and always observe celibacy. Perform your prescribed duties and avoid unnecessary talk. Always thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, acquire knowledge from the right source. Thus practicing *bhakti-yoga*, patiently and enthusiastically, you will be elevated in knowledge and will be able to give up the false ego. My dear sons, you should very carefully act as I have advised you. By these means you will be freed from ignorance in the form of the desire for fruitive activity, and thus the knot of bondage in the heart will be completely severed. For further advancement, you should also give up the means. That is, you should not become attached to the process of liberation itself.

If one is serious about going back home, back to Godhead, he must consider the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the summum bonum and chief aim of life. If he is a father instructing his sons, a spiritual master instructing his disciples, or a king instructing his citizens, he must instruct them as I have instructed yourselves. Without being angry, he should continue giving instructions, even if his disciple, son or citizen is sometimes unable to follow them. Ignorant people who engage in pious and impious activities should be engaged in devotional service by all means. They should be taught to always avoid fruitive activity. If one puts his disciple, son or citizen who is bereft of transcendental vision into the bondage of *karmic* activity, how will he profit? It is like leading a blind man to a dark well and causing him to fall in. Due to ignorance, a materialistic person does not know anything about the auspicious path in life and his real self-interest. He is simply bound by material cravings and all his plans are made for this purpose. For temporary sense gratification, such a person creates a society of envy, and due to this mentality, he plunges into the ocean of suffering. Such a foolish person does not know the cause of his suffering. If someone is ignorant and addicted to the path of *samsāra*, how can one who is actually learned, merciful and advanced in spiritual knowledge engage him in fruitive activity and thus further entangle him in material existence? If a blind man is walking down a dangerous path, how can a gentleman allow him to continue on his way? No wise or kind man can allow this. One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother or a worshipable demigod.

My transcendental body [*sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*] looks exactly like an ordinary human form, but it is not. It is inconceivable. I am not forced by nature to accept a particular type of body; I take on a spiritual body by My own sweet will. My heart is also spiritual, and I always

think of the welfare of My devotees. Therefore within My heart can be found the process of devotional service, which is meant for the devotees. I abandoned irreligion [*adharma*] and non-devotional activities far from My heart. They do not appeal to Me. Due to all these transcendental qualities, people generally pray to Me as Rsabhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all living entities. My dear boys, you are all born of My heart, which is the seat of all spiritual qualities. Therefore you should not be like materialistic and envious men. You should accept as your leader your eldest brother, Bharata, who is exalted in devotional service. If you engage yourselves in Bharata's service, your service to him will include My service, and you will be able to rule the citizens automatically. Of the two manifest energies [spirit and dull matter], beings possessing living force [vegetables, grass, trees and plants] are superior to dull matter [stone, earth, etc.]. Superior to non-moving plants and vegetables are worms and snakes, which can move. Superior to worms and snakes are animals that have developed intelligence. Superior to animals are human beings, and superior to human beings are ghosts because they have no material bodies. Superior to ghosts are the Gandharvas, and superior to them are the Siddhas. Superior to the Siddhas are the Kinnaras, and superior to them are the asuras. Superior to the asuras are the demigods, and of the demigods, Indra, the King of heaven, is supreme. Superior to Indra are the direct sons of Lord Brahma, sons like King Daksa, and supreme among Brahma's sons is Lord Shiva. Since Lord Shiva is the son of Lord Brahma, Brahma is considered superior, but Brahma is also subordinate to Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, because I am inclined to the *brāhmaṇas*, the *brāhmaṇas* are best of all.

O respectful *brāhmaṇas*, as far as I am concerned, no one in this world is equal or superior to the *brāhmaṇas*. I do not find anyone comparable to them. When people know My motive, after performing rituals according to the Vedic principles they offer food to Me with faith and love through the mouth of a *brāhmaṇa*. When food is thus offered unto Me, I eat it with full satisfaction. Indeed, I derive more pleasure from food offered in that way than from the food offered in the sacrificial fire. The Vedas are My eternal transcendental sound incarnation. Therefore the Vedas are *śabda-brahma*. In this world, the *brāhmaṇas* thoroughly study all the Vedas, and because they assimilate the Vedic conclusions, they are considered to be the Vedas personified. The *brāhmaṇas* are situated in the supreme transcendental mode of nature, *sattva-guṇa*. Because of this, they are fixed in mind control [*śama*], sense control [*dama*], and truthfulness [*satya*]. They describe the Vedas in their original sense, and out of mercy [*anugraha*] they preach the purpose of the Vedas to all conditioned souls. They practice penance [*tapasya*] and tolerance [*titikṣā*], and they realize the position of the living entity and the Supreme Lord [*amubhava*]. These are the eight qualifications of the *brāhmaṇas*. Therefore among all living entities, no one is superior to the *brāhmaṇas*. I am fully opulent, almighty and superior to Lord Brahma and Indra, the King of the heavenly



planets. I am also the bestower of all happiness obtained in the heavenly kingdom and by liberation. Nonetheless, the *brāhmaṇas* do not seek material comforts from Me. They are very pure and do not want to possess anything. They simply engage in My devotional service. What then is the need of their asking for material benefits from anyone else?

My dear sons, you should not envy any living entity, be he moving or nonmoving. Knowing that I am situated in them, you should offer respect to all of them at every moment. In this way, you offer respect to Me. The true activity of the sense organs, mind, sight, words and all the knowledge-gathering and working senses is to engage fully in My service. Unless his senses are thus engaged, a living entity cannot think of getting out of the great entanglement of material existence, which is exactly like Yamaraja's stringent rope.

Sukadeva Goswami said: Thus the great well-wisher of everyone, the Supreme Lord Rsabhadeva, instructed His sons. Although they were perfectly educated and cultured, He instructed them just to set an example of how a father should instruct his sons before retiring from family life. *Sannyāsīs*, who are no longer bound by fruitive activity and who have taken to devotional service after all their material desires have been vanquished, also learn by these instructions. Lord Rsabhadeva instructed His one hundred sons, of whom the eldest, Bharata, was a very advanced devotee and a follower of Vaisnavas.

In order to rule the whole world, the Lord enthroned His eldest son on the royal seat. Thereafter, although still at home, Lord Rsabhadeva lived like a madman, naked and with disheveled hair. Then the Lord took the sacrificial fire within Himself, and He left Brahmavarta to tour the whole world. After accepting the feature of *avadhūta*, a great saintly person without material cares, Lord Rsabhadeva passed through human society like a blind, deaf and dumb man, an idle stone, a ghost or a madman. Although people called Him such names, He remained silent and did not speak to anyone. Rsabhadeva began to tour through cities, villages, mines, rural areas, valleys, gardens, military camps, cow pens, the homes of cowherd men, transient hotels, hills, forests and hermitages. Wherever He traveled, all bad elements surrounded Him, just as flies surround the body of an elephant coming from a forest. He was always being threatened, beaten, urinated upon and spat upon. Sometimes people threw stones, stool and dust at Him, and sometimes people passed foul air before Him. Thus people called Him many bad names and gave Him a great deal of trouble, but He did not care about this, for He understood that the body is simply meant for such an end. He was situated on the spiritual platform, and, being in His spiritual glory, He did not care for all these material insults. In other words, He completely understood that matter and spirit are separate, and He had no bodily conception. Thus, without being angry at anyone, He travelled the whole world alone. Lord Rsabhadeva's hands, feet and chest were very long. His shoulders, face and limbs were all very delicate and symmetrically proportioned. His mouth

was beautifully decorated with His natural smile, and He appeared all the more lovely with His wide reddish eyes which resembled the petals of a newly grown lotus flower covered with morning dew. The irises of His eyes were so pleasing that they removed all the mental troubles of everyone who saw Him. His forehead, ears, neck, nose and all His other features were very beautiful. His gentle smile always made His face beautiful, so much so that He even attracted the hearts of married women. It was as though they had been pierced by arrows of Cupid. About His head was an abundance of curly, matted brown hair. His hair was disheveled because His body was dirty and not taken care of. He appeared as if He were haunted by a ghost.

When Lord Rsabhadeva saw that the general populace was antagonistic to His execution of mystic *yoga*, in order to counteract their opposition He accepted the behavior of a python. Thus He stayed in one place and lay down. While lying down, He ate and drank, and He passed stool and urine and rolled in it. Indeed, He smeared His whole body with His own stool and urine so that opposing elements might not come and disturb Him. Because Lord Rsabhadeva remained in that condition, the public did not disturb Him, but no bad aroma emanated from His stool and urine. Quite to the contrary, His stool and urine were so aromatic that they filled the countryside with a pleasant fragrance to a distance of eighty miles. In this way Lord Rsabhadeva followed the behavior of cows, deer and crows. Sometimes He moved or walked, and sometimes He sat down in one place. Sometimes He lay down, behaving exactly like cows, deer and crows. In that way, He ate, drank, passed stool and urine and cheated the people in this way. O King Pariksit, just to show all the *yogīs* the mystic process, Lord Rsabhadeva, the plenary expansion of Lord Krishna, performed wonderful activities. Actually He was the master of liberation and was fully absorbed in great transcendental bliss. Lord Krishna, Vasudeva, the son of Vasudeva, is the original source of Lord Rsabhadeva. There is no difference in Their constitution, and consequently Lord Rsabhadeva awakened the loving symptoms of crying, laughing and shivering. He was always absorbed in transcendental love. Due to this, all mystic powers automatically approached Him. These included the ability to travel in outer space at the speed of mind, to appear and disappear, to enter the bodies of others, and to see things far, far away. Although He could do all this, He did not exercise these powers.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa)* » Canto 5: *The Creative Impetus*
» Chapter 5: *Lord Rsabhadeva's Teachings to His Sons* » Verse: 1-35

THE HARD KNOT IN THE HEART

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

In the lowest stage of devotional life, one is not an unalloyed devotee. *anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyaṁ jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 19.167)*. To be an unalloyed devotee, one must be freed from all material desires and untouched by fruitive activity and speculative knowledge. On the lower platform, one may



sometimes be interested in philosophical speculation with a tinge of devotion. However, at that stage one is still interested in sense gratification and is contaminated by the modes of material nature. The influence of *māyā* is so strong that even a person advanced in knowledge forgets that he is Krishna's eternal servant. Therefore he remains satisfied in his householder life, which is centered around sexual intercourse. Conceding to a life of sex, he agrees to suffer all kinds of material miseries. Due to ignorance, one is thus bound by the chain of material laws.

Sex serves as the natural attraction between man and woman, and when they are married, their relationship becomes more involved. Due to this entangling relationship between man and woman, there is a sense of illusion whereby one thinks, "This man is my husband," or "This woman is my wife." This is called *hṛdaya-granthi*, "the hard knot in the heart." This knot is very difficult to undo, even though a man and woman separate either for the principles of *varṇāśrama* or simply to get a divorce. Whatever the case, the man always thinks of the woman, and the woman always thinks of the man. Thus a person becomes materially attached to family, property and children, although all of these are temporary. He unfortunately identifies with his property and wealth. Sometimes, even after renunciation, one becomes attached to a temple or to the few things that constitute the property of a *sanmyāsī*, but such attachment is not as strong as family attachment. The attachment to family is cause of the strongest illusion. In the *Satyasamhitā*, it is stated:

*brahmādyā yājñavalkādyā
mucyante strī-sahāyinaḥ
bodhyante kecanaitēṣāṃ
viśeṣam ca vido viduḥ*

Sometimes it is found among exalted personalities like Lord Brahma that the wife and children are not a cause of bondage. On the contrary, the wife actually helps further spiritual life and liberation. Nonetheless, most people are bound by the knots of the marital relationship, and consequently they forget their relationship with Krishna.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa)* » Canto 5: *The Creative Impetus*
» Chapter 5: *Lord Rṣabhadeva's Teachings to His Sons* » Verse: 7 and 8,
Purport. ॐ

PIERCING THE KNOT OF MATERIAL DESIRES

Srila BhaktivinodaThakura

*proktena bhakti-yogena
bhajatomāsaḥṣṭmuneḥ
kāmahṛdayyānaśyanti
sarvemayihṛdisthite
bhidyatehṛdaya-granthiś
chidyantesarva-samśayāḥ
kṣīyantecāsyakarmāṇi
mayidṛṣṭe 'khilātmani*

*nairapekṣyamparamprāhur
niḥśreyasamanalpakam
tasmānnirāśiṣobhaktir
nirapekṣasya me bhavet*

"When an intelligent person constantly engages in worshipping Me through loving devotional service as I have described, his heart becomes firmly situated in Me. Thus all material desires within his heart are destroyed. The knot in the heart is pierced, all misgivings are cut to pieces and the chain of fruitive actions is terminated when I am seen as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is said that complete detachment is the highest stage of freedom. Therefore, one who has no personal desire and does not pursue personal rewards can achieve loving devotional service unto Me." *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11:20:20-31)

The purport is this: It is useless trying to independently destroy ignorance and lust in the heart. In the course of cultivating devotional service to the Lord all ignorance, lust, fruitive activities, doubts, and material bondage are destroyed by His mercy. The endeavor of *karmīs* and *jñānīs* does not yield such results. Therefore, when one becomes neutral by giving up other desires and hopes, he attains pure devotional service to Krishna.

We should not lose enthusiasm because we have no strength to destroy the reactions of *karma*. In the very beginning of devotional service the *sādhaka* must have faith with full enthusiasm. One pure *Vaiṣṇavaācārya* has written that the process of *bhajana-kriya*, devotional practice, is of two types—*niṣṭhitā*, fixed, and *aniṣṭhitā*, flickering. With faith, one should learn devotional service under the merciful direction of a *sadhu*; and when he attains the stage of firm faith, he engages in *niṣṭhitā*, fixed, devotional service. Until he attains this fixed devotional service, his service remains flickering. In this stage of devotional service there are six symptoms: *utsāha-mayī*, false confidence; *ghana-taralā*, sporadic endeavor; *vyūḍha-vikalpā*, indecision; *viśaya-saṅgarā*, struggle with the senses; *niyamākṣamā*, inability to uphold vows; and *taraṅga-rangiṇī*, enjoying the facilities offered by *bhakti*.

In *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* carelessness is counted among the offenses against the holy name. In that scripture the word *pramāda* is described as inattentiveness. *Śrī Hari-nāmacintāmaṇi* has further divided this inattentiveness in three ways. Apathy, inactivity, and distraction are the three types of inattentiveness. Until one gets free from these three types of inattentiveness, one cannot perform devotional service at all. Even if one gives up all other *nāmāparādhas*, if he is still inattentive, he can never have attraction for the holy names. If one has enthusiasm in the beginning of devotional service, and that enthusiasm does not wane, then one will never become apathetic, lazy, or distracted in chanting the holy names. Therefore enthusiasm is the only support for all types of devotional service. By enthusiastically performing devotional service one can surpass *aniṣṭhitā* service in a very short time and attain the *niṣṭhā* stage. Therefore Srila

Rupa Goswami has said:

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt
tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ*

By the awakening of faith, one becomes eligible for devotional service. When this eligibility is attained, one achieves the association of devotees. By the association of devotees, one is engaged in the devotional service of the Lord. In the beginning there is no *niṣṭhā*, or firm faith, in that service because various types of *anarthas* keep crushing the heart. All *anarthas* are vanquished, however, by performing devotional service with enthusiasm. The more that *anarthas* are vanquished, the more that *niṣṭhā* is awakened.

The word *śraddhā* is certainly faith, but enthusiasm is the life of *śraddhā*. Faith without enthusiasm is meaningless. Many people think they have faith in God, but because they have no enthusiasm, their faith has no meaning. Therefore, due to lack of *sādhu-saṅga*, they do not perform devotional service.

— *Śrī Bhaktyāloka - The Six Faults and Qualities of Bhakti* » *Six Qualities that Enhance Bhakti* » *Tat-tat-karma-pravartana - Utsāha – Enthusiasm* » *Writings of ŚrīlaBhaktivinodeThākura.* ❁

DIVINE ACTIVITIES OF LORD RSABHADEVA

Summary of Chapter six, Fifth Canto

Lord Rsabhadeva was not attached to His body even when it was being burned up in a forest fire. When the seed of fruitive activity is burned by the fire of knowledge, spiritual properties and mystic powers are automatically manifest, yet *bhakti-yoga* is not affected by these mystic powers. An ordinary *yogī* is captivated by mystic powers and his progress is checked; therefore a perfect *yogī* does not welcome them. Because the mind is restless and unreliable, it must remain always under control. Even the mind of the advanced *yogī* Saubhari created such a disturbance that he lost his yogic mystic powers. Thus it is shown that due to a restless mind, even a very advanced *yogī* can fall down. The mind is so restless that it induces even a perfect *yogī* to be controlled by the senses. Therefore Lord Rsabhadeva, for the instruction of all *yogīs*, showed the process of quitting the body.

After traveling through the provinces of Karnata, Konka, Venka and Kutaka in South India, Lord Rsabhadeva arrived in the neighborhood of Kutakacala. Suddenly there was a great fire that burned the forest and Lord Rsabhadeva's body to ashes. The pastimes of Lord Rsabhadeva as a liberated soul were known by the King of Konka, Venka and Kutaka. This King's name was *Arhat*. He later became captivated by the illusory energy, and in this condition he set forth the basic principles of Jainism. Lord Rsabhadeva set forth the principles of religion that can free one from material bondage, and He put an end to all kinds of atheistic



Pastimes of Lord Rsabhadeva quitting his body:

activities. On this earth, the place known as *Bhārata-varṣa* was a very pious land because the Supreme Lord appeared there when He wanted to incarnate.

Lord Rsabhadeva neglected all the mystic powers for which the so-called *yogīs* hanker. Because of the beauty of devotional service, devotees are not at all interested in that insignificant mystic power. The master of all yogic power, Lord Krishna, can exhibit all powers on behalf of His devotee. Devotional service is more valuable than yogic mystic powers. Devotees who are misled sometimes aspire for liberation and mystic powers. The Supreme Lord gives these devotees whatever they desire, but they cannot attain the most important function of devotional service. Devotional service to the Lord is guaranteed for those who do not desire liberation and mystic power. ❁

TRANSCENDENTAL NATURE OF LORD RSABHADEVA

Srila Jiva Goswami

Even in the form of the empowered *āveśa-avatāra*, Lord Rsabhadeva is transcendental in nature. This is confirmed by the following verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.5.19) where Lord Rsabhadeva says:

*idam śarīraṁ mama durvibhāvyam
sattvaṁ hi me hṛdayam yatra dharmah
pṛṣṭhe kṛto me yad adharma ārād
ato hi mām ṛṣabhaṁ prāhur āryāḥ*

“My transcendental body (*sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*) looks exactly like a human form, but it is not a material



human body. It is inconceivable. I am not forced by nature to accept a particular type of body; I take on a body by My own sweet will. My heart is also spiritual, and I always think of the welfare of My devotees. Therefore within My heart can be found the process of devotional service, which is meant for the devotees. I have abandoned irreligion (*adharmā*) and non devotional activities far from My heart. They do not appeal to Me. Due to all these transcendental qualities, people generally pray to Me as Rsabhadeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all living entities.”

In this verse Lord Rsabhadeva says: ‘My transcendental body (*sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*) looks exactly like a human form, but it is not a material human body (*śarīram*). It is inconceivable (*durvibhāvyaṁ*). Within My heart (*me hṛdayam*) can be found the process of devotional service (*dharmaḥ*), which is meant for the devotees. Far from My heart have I abandoned irreligion (*adharmā*) and non devotional activities.

In order to demonstrate the proper mode of action for a self-satisfied transcendentalist, Lord Rsabhadeva, the speaker of this verse, pretended to leave His body at the final stage of His earthly pastimes. The ordinary conditioned souls mistakenly thought that He died or left His body.

Lord Rsabhadeva’s final pastimes, and His so-called ‘death’ are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.6.6):

*athaivam akhila-loka-pāla-lalāmo 'pi vilakṣaṇair jaḍavad
avadhūta-veṣa-bhāṣā-caritair avilakṣita-bhagavat-
prabhāvo yoginām sāmparāya-vidhim anuśikṣayan sva-
kalevaram jihāsūr ātmāny ātmānam asaṁvyavahitam
anarthāntara-bhāvenānvikṣamāṇa uparatānuvṛttir
upararāma.*

Lord Rsabhadeva was the head of all kings and emperors within this universe, but assuming the dress and language of an *avadhūta*, He acted as if dull and materially bound. Consequently no one could observe His divine opulence. He adopted this behaviour just to teach *yogīs* how to give up the body. Nonetheless He maintained His original position as a plenary expansion of Lord Vasudeva, Krishna. Remaining always in that state, He gave up His pastimes as Lord Rsabhadeva within the material world. If, following in the footsteps of Lord Rsabhadeva, one can give up his subtle body, there is no chance that one will accept a material body again.”

Lord Rsabhadeva’s celebrated abandonment of His body is described in the devotional scripture of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.6.8): *atha samīra-vega-vidhūta-veṇu-
vikarṣaṇa-jātogra-dāvānalas tad vanam āleliḥānaḥ saha
tena dadāha.*

“While He was wandering about, a wild forest fire began. This fire was caused by the friction of bamboos, which were bring blown by the wind. In that fire, the entire forest near Kutakacala and the body of Lord Rsabhadeva were burnt to ashes.”

We may note in this verse that the words *saha tena*

(with that body) are in the instrumental case, and the subject of the sentence, ‘*dāvānalah*’ (a forest-fire), is in the nominative case. The trees and other residents of the forest who gave up their material bodies in that forest-fire as Lord Rsabhadeva pretended to give up His spiritual form, all attained liberation.

The associates of Lord Ramachandra also attained liberation in the same way. This is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (9.11.22):

*sa yaiḥ sprṣto 'bhidrṣto vā
samviṣto 'mugato 'pi vā
kosalās te yayuḥ sthānām
yatra gacchanti yogināḥ*

“Lord Ramachandra returned to His abode, to which the *bhakti-yogīs* are promoted. This is the place to which all the inhabitants of Ayodhya went after they served the Lord in His manifest pastimes. This service consisted of offering Him obeisance, touching His lotus feet, seeing Him as a father-like King, sitting or lying down with Him as an equal, or even just accompanying Him.”

This is the way, Lord Rsabhadeva’s disappearance in the forest fire is described. We may also note that at the end of this chapter in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the chapter title is given: “The Appearance of Lord Rsabhadeva”. The title clearly does not say ‘the Birth of Lord Rsabhadeva’, because the Lord was not born in the same way conditioned souls are, but rather He appeared in His transcendental body to perform His pastimes here.

—Taken from *Sri Bhagavat-sandarbha* of Sri Jiva Goswami, Anuccheda 52.
Translated by Kushakratha Dasa. ❀

ARHAT COMMUNITY AND RSABHADEVA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati

Learned scholars who have full knowledge of all the Vedic scriptures agree that the incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are innumerable. These incarnations are classified into two divisions, called *prābhava* and *vaibhava*. According to the scriptures, *prābhava* incarnations are also classified into two divisions—those which are called eternal and those which are not vividly described. In this Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in Chapters Three through Six, there is a description of Rsabhadeva, but there is not an expanded description of His spiritual activities. Therefore He is considered to belong to the second group of *prābhava* incarnations. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, First Canto, Chapter Three, verse 13, it is said:

*aṣṭame merudevyām tu
nābher jāta urukramāḥ
darśayan vartma dhīrānām
sarvāśrama-namaskṛtam*



Lord Rsabhadevas deity worshipped in one of the Jain temples

"Lord Vishnu appeared in the eighth incarnation as the son of Maharaja Nabhi [the son of Agnidhra] and his wife Merudevi. He showed the path of perfection, the *paramahansa* stage of life, which is worshiped by all the followers of *varṇāśrama-dharma*."

Rsabhadeva is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His body is spiritual (*sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* [Bs. 5.1]). Therefore one might ask how it might be possible that he passed stool and urine. The *Gauḍīya vedānta ācārya* Baladeva Vidyabhushana has replied to this question in his book known as *Siddhānta-ratna* (1.65-68). Imperfect men who do not understand the spiritual position of His transcendental body call attention to Rsabhadeva's passing stool and urine as a subject matter for study. In this Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.6.11) the illusioned and bewildered state of the materialists of this age is fully described. Elsewhere in Fifth Canto (5.5.19) Rsabhadeva stated, *idaṁ śarīram mama durvibhāvyaṁ*: "This body of Mine is inconceivable for materialists." This is also confirmed by Lord Krishna in *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.11):

*avajānanti mām mūḍhā
mānuṣīm tanum āśritam
param bhāvam ajānanto
mama bhūta-maheśvaram*

"Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My transcendental nature and My supreme dominion over all that be."

The human form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is extremely difficult to understand, and, in fact, for a

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

common man it is inconceivable. Therefore Rsabhadeva has directly explained that His body belongs to the spiritual platform. This being so, Rsabhadeva did not actually pass stool and urine. Even though He superficially seemed to pass stool and urine, that was also transcendental and cannot be imitated by any common man. It is also stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that the stool and urine of Rsabhadeva were full of transcendental fragrance. One may imitate Rsabhadeva, but he cannot imitate Him by passing stool that is fragrant.

The activities of Rsabhadeva, therefore, do not support the claims of a certain class of men known as *arhat*, that they are followers of Rsabhadeva. How can they be followers of Rsabhadeva while they act against the Vedic principles? Sukadeva Goswami has related that after hearing about the characteristics of Lord Rsabhadeva, the King of Konka, Venka and Kutaka initiated a system of religious principles known as *arhat*. These principles were not in accord with Vedic principles, and therefore they are called *pāṣaṇḍa-dharma*. The members of the *arhat* community considered Rsabhadeva's activities material. However, Rsabhadeva is an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore He is on the transcendental platform, and no one can compare to Him.

Rsabhadeva personally exhibited the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.6.8), *dāvānalas tad vanam ālelihānaḥ saha tena dadāha*. at the conclusion of Rsabhadeva's pastimes, an entire forest and the Lord's body were burned to ashes in a great forest fire. In the same way, Rsabhadeva burned people's ignorance to ashes. He exhibited the characteristics of a *paramahansa* in His instructions to His sons. The principles of the *arhat* community, however, do not correspond to the teachings of Rsabhadeva.

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyabhushana remarks that the Rsabhadeva described in the Eighth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is different from the one described in this canto.

—Taken from *Gauḍīya-bhāṣya commentary Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja*.

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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