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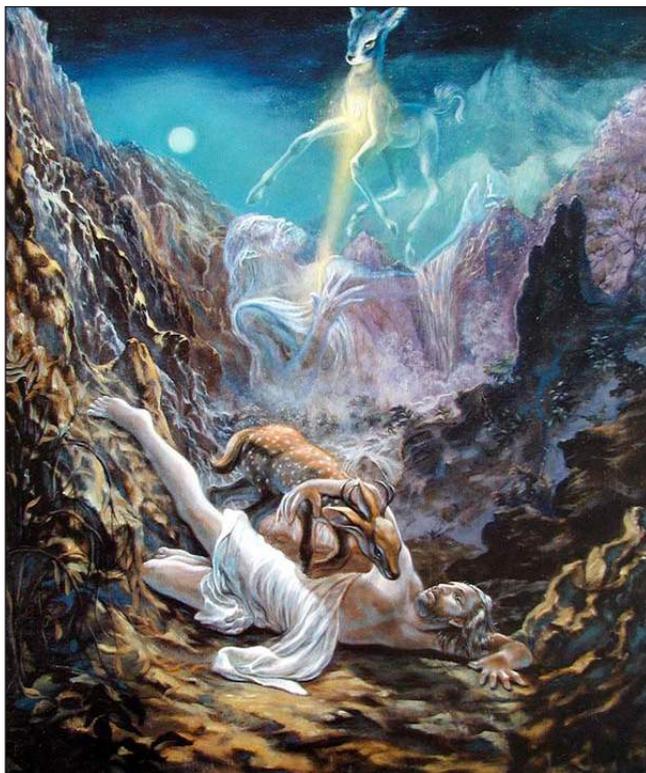
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THE SUPREME CHARACTER OF JADA BHARATA
Sriḷa Sukadeva Goswami

After giving up the body of a deer, Bharata Maharaja took birth in a very pure *brāhmaṇa* family. There was once a *brāhmaṇa* who belonged to the dynasty of Angira. He was fully endowed with brahminical qualifications. He was able to control his mind and senses, and had studied the primary and subsidiary Vedic literatures. Aside of being expert in giving charity, he was always satisfied, tolerant, very gentle, learned and non-jealous. In all he was a self-realized person, always in trance due to his constant engagement in the devotional service of the Supreme Lord. This *brāhmaṇa* had nine equally qualified sons by his first wife, and by his second wife he begot twins - a brother and a sister. Of these the male child was said to be the topmost devotee and foremost of saintly kings Bharata Maharaja. This, then, is the story of the birth he took after giving up the body of a deer.

Due to his especially being gifted with the Lord's mercy, Bharata Maharaja could remember the incidents of his past life. Although he received the body of a *brāhmaṇa*, he was still very afraid of being influenced by his relatives and friends who were not devotees of the Lord. He was very cautious of such association because of his apprehension that he would again fall down. Consequently he manifested himself before the public as a madman - dull, blind and deaf - so

that others would not try to speak to him. In this way he saved himself from bad association. Within his heart he was always thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord and chanting the Lord's glories, which save one from the bondage of fruitive action. In this way he protected himself from the onslaught of non-devotee associates.

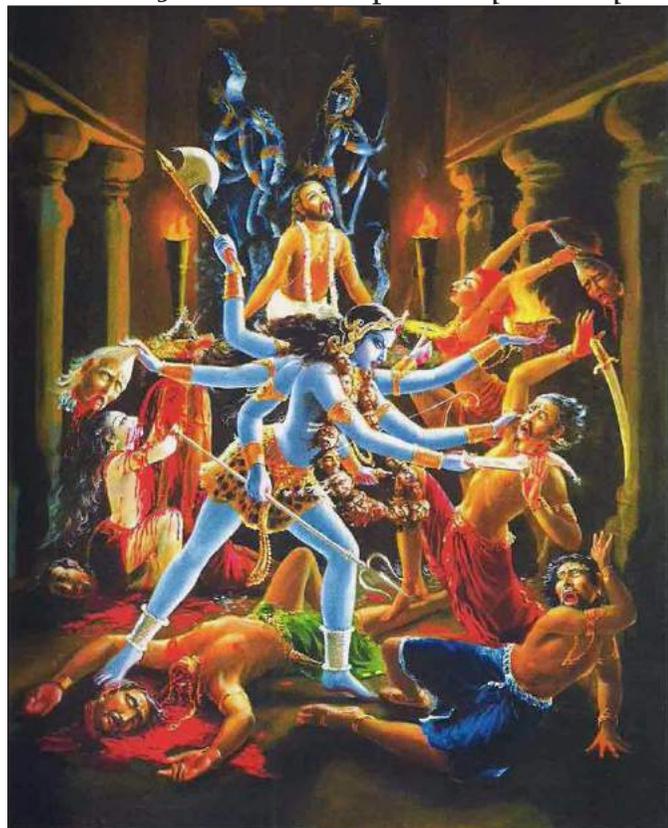
Bharata Maharaja's father was very attached to his youngest son whom he knew as Jada Bharata. His mind was always filled with affection for him. Because Jada Bharata was unfit to enter the *gṛhastha-āśrama*, he simply executed the purification processes applicable to the end of the *brahmacarya-āśrama*. Although Jada Bharata was unwilling to accept his father's instructions, the *brāhmaṇa* nonetheless instructed him in how to keep clean and how to wash himself etc, thinking that a son should be taught such things by his father. Jada Bharata behaved before his father like a fool, despite his father's adequate instruction in Vedic knowledge. He behaved in that way so that his father would think him unfit and abandon the attempt to instruct him further. Whatever he was taught, he would do the opposite of. For example, although instructed to wash his hands after evacuating, he would wash them before. Nonetheless, his father endeavored to give him Vedic instructions during the spring and summer. He tried to teach him the *Gāyatrī mantra* along with *omkāra* and *vyāhṛti*, but after four months his father still was not successful.

The *brāhmaṇa* father of Jada Bharata was very attached to his son, considering him his heart and soul. He very dutifully tried to educate his son in the rules and regulations of *brahmacarya* including the execution of the Vedic vows, cleanliness, study of the Vedas, the regulative methods, service to the spiritual master and the method of offering a fire sacrifice. He tried his best to teach his son all this but his endeavors failed. In his heart he hoped that his son would be a learned scholar, but all his efforts were futile. Like everyone, this *brāhmaṇa* was attached to his home, and he had forgotten that someday he would die. Death, however, was not forgetful. At the proper time, death appeared and took him away. Thereafter, the *brāhmaṇa*'s younger wife, after entrusting her twin children- the boy and girl - to the elder wife, departed for *Patiloka*, voluntarily dying with her husband.

After the father died, the nine stepbrothers of Jada Bharata, who considered him dull and unintelligent abandoned the father's attempt to give him an education. These stepbrothers were learned in the three Vedas which strongly encourage fruitive activity - the *Rg Veda*, *Sāma Veda* and *Yajur Veda*. The nine brothers were not even slightly spiritually enlightened in devotional service to the Lord. Consequently they could not understand the exalted position of Jada Bharata. Degraded men are actually no better than animals. The only difference is that animals have four legs and such men have only two. These two-legged, animalistic men mistreated Jada Bharata and used to call him mad, dull, deaf and dumb. Jada Bharata behaved for them like a madman who was deaf, blind or dull. He did not protest or try to convince them that he was not so. If others wanted him to do something, he acted according to their desires. Whatever food he could acquire by begging or by wages, and whatever came of its own accord - be it a small quantity, palatable, stale or tasteless, he would accept and eat it. He never ate anything for sense gratification because he was liberated from the bodily conception of life, which induces one to discriminate between palatable or unpalatable food. He was absorbed in the transcendental consciousness of devotional service, and therefore was unaffected by the dualities arising from the bodily identification. In body he was as strong as a bull, and his limbs were very muscular. He didn't care for winter or summer, wind or rain, and he never covered his body at any time. He lay on the ground, and never put oil on his body or took a bath. Because his body was dirty, his spiritual effulgence and knowledge were covered, just as the splendor of a valuable gem is covered by dirt. He only wore a dirty loincloth and his sacred thread, which

was blackish. Understanding that he was born in a *brāhmaṇa* family, people would call him a *brahma-bandhu* and other names. Being thus insulted and neglected by materialistic people, he wandered directionless. Jada Bharata used to work only for food. His stepbrothers took advantage of this and engaged him in agricultural work in exchange for some food, but actually he did not know how to work very well in the field. He did not know where to spread earth or where to make the ground level or uneven. His brothers used to give him broken rice, oil cakes, rice chaff, worm-eaten grains and burned grains that had stuck to the pot, but he gladly accepted all this as if it were nectar. He did not hold any grudges and happily ate all of this.

Once, a leader of highway robbers who came from a *śūdra* family wanted to get a son. To achieve this he planned to worship the goddess Bhadra Kali by offering her in sacrifice a dull man, who is considered no better than an animal. The leader of the thieves captured a man-animal for sacrifice, but he escaped, so he ordered his followers to find him. They searched in different directions but could not find him. Wandering here and there in the dense darkness of late night, they came to a paddy field where they saw the exalted son of the Angira family [Jada Bharata], who was sitting in an elevated place guarding the field against the attacks of deer and wild pigs. The followers and servants of the thieves chief considered Jada Bharata to possess qualities quite





suitable for a man-animal, and they decided that he was a perfect choice for sacrifice. Their faces bright with happiness, they bound him with ropes and brought him to the temple of the goddess Kali.

After this, all the thieves, according to their imaginative ritual for killing animalistic men, bathed Jada Bharata, dressed him in new clothes, decorated him with ornaments befitting an animal, smeared his body with scented oils and decorated him with tilaka, sandalwood pulp and garlands. They fed him sumptuously and then brought him before the goddess Kali, offering her incense, lamps, garlands, parched grain, newly grown twigs, sprouts, fruits and flowers. In this way they worshiped the deity before killing the man-animal, and they vibrated songs and prayers and played drums and bugles. Jada Bharata was then made to sit down before the deity. At this time, one of the thieves, acting as the chief priest, was ready to offer the blood of Jada Bharata, whom they imagined to be an animal-man, to the goddess Kali to drink as a liquor. He therefore took up a very fearsome sword, which was very sharp and, consecrating it by the *mantra* of Bhadra Kali, raised it to kill Jada Bharata.

All the rogues and thieves who had made arrangements for the worship of Goddess Kali were low minded and bound to the modes of passion and ignorance. They were overpowered by the desire to become very rich; therefore they had the audacity to disobey the injunctions of the Vedas, so much so that they were prepared to kill Jada Bharata, a self-realized soul born in a *brāhmaṇa* family. Due to their envy, these dacoits brought him before the goddess Kali for sacrifice. Such people are always addicted to envious activities, and therefore they dared to try to kill Jada Bharata, who was the best friend of all living entities. He was no one's enemy, and was always absorbed in meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He was born of a good *brāhmaṇa* father, and killing him was forbidden, even though he might have been an enemy or aggressive person. In any case, there was no reason to kill Jada Bharata, and the goddess Kali could not bear this. She could immediately understand that these sinful thieves were about to kill a great devotee of the Lord. Suddenly the deity's body burst asunder, and the goddess Kali personally emerged from it in a body burning with an intense and intolerable effulgence. Intolerant of the offenses committed, the infuriated Goddess Kali flashed her eyes and displayed her fierce, curved teeth. Her reddish eyes glowed, and she displayed her

fearsome features. She assumed a frightening body, as if she were prepared to destroy the entire creation. Leaping violently from the altar, she immediately decapitated all the rogues and thieves with the very sword with which they had intended to kill Jada Bharata. She then began to drink the hot blood that flowed from the necks of the beheaded rogues and thieves, as if this blood were liquor. Indeed, she drank this intoxicant with her associates, who were witches and female demons. Becoming intoxicated with this blood, they all began to sing very loudly and dance as though prepared to annihilate the entire universe. At the same time, they began to play with the heads of the rogues and thieves, tossing them about as if they were balls. When an envious person commits an offense before a great personality, he is always punished in the way mentioned above. Those who already know that the soul is separate from the body, who are liberated from the invincible knot in the heart, who are always engaged in welfare activities for all living entities and who never contemplate harming anyone are always protected by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who carries His disc [the Sudarśana cakra] and acts as supreme time to kill the demons and protect His devotees. The devotees always take shelter at the lotus feet of the Lord. Therefore at all times, even if threatened by decapitation, they remain unagitated. For them, this is not at all wonderful.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) » Canto 1: Creation » Fifth Canto: The Creative Impetus » 9. The Supreme Character of Jada Bharata » Verses: 1-20

QUALITIES OF A PURE DEVOTEE

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

There are several great qualities possessed by a pure devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Firstly, such a devotee is firmly convinced of his spiritual identity. He never identifies with the body; he is firmly convinced that the spirit soul is different from the body. Consequently he fears nothing. Even though his life may be threatened, he is not at all afraid. He does not even treat an enemy like an enemy. Such are the qualifications of devotees. Devotees are always fully dependent on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the Lord is always eager to give them all protection in all circumstances.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) » Canto 1: Creation » Fifth Canto: The Creative Impetus » 9. The Supreme Character of Jada Bharata » Verses: 20, Purport.



THE THREE TYPES OF VAIṢṆAVAS
Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura

The *Vaiṣṇava*, who is attached to chanting the Holy Name, becomes recognised as a member of Sri Chaitanya's family and dedicated to His lotus feet. The title of *Vaiṣṇava* is awarded to one who chants the Holy Name occasionally. The devotee who chants incessantly is called a *Vaiṣṇava-tara*, an elevated *Vaiṣṇava*, and the *Vaiṣṇava* who inspires others to chant the Holy Name simply by his presence is a *Vaiṣṇava-tama*, the most elevated.

These gradations have been explained in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 15.111, 16, 72, 74, 75)

ataeva yānra mukhe eka kṛṣṇa nāma
sei ta' vaiṣṇava, kariha tānhāra sammāna
kṛṣṇa nāma nirantara yāhāra vadane
sei vaiṣṇava śreṣṭha, bhaja tānhāra caraṇe
yānhāra darśane mukhe āise kṛṣṇa nāma
tānhare jāniha tumi vaiṣṇava pradhāna
krama kari kahe prabhu vaiṣṇava lakṣaṇā
vaiṣṇava vaiṣṇavatara āra vaiṣṇavatama

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised:

"One who is chanting the Hare Krishna *mahā-mantra* is understood to be a *Vaiṣṇava*; therefore, you should offer all respects to him. A devotee who is always chanting the Holy Name of the Lord is to be considered a first class *Vaiṣṇava*, and your duty is to serve his lotus feet. The most

elevated *Vaiṣṇava* is he whose very presence makes others chant Krishna's name. In this way, Lord Chaitanya described the characteristics of the different levels of *Vaiṣṇava*: *Vaiṣṇava*, *Vaiṣṇava-tara* and *Vaiṣṇava-tama*."

It is the duty of every living entity to associate with all three types of saintly devotees. A *Vaiṣṇava* must at all times be respected; and the *Vaiṣṇava-tara* and *Vaiṣṇava-tama* must be served with loving reverence. The householder *Vaiṣṇava* must celebrate festivals in the company of such *Vaiṣṇavas*. Whether the *Vaiṣṇava* is a householder or a renunciant, the devotee should respect him according to his level. When a devotee seeks *sādhu-saṅga*, saintly association, he must approach a more advanced *Vaiṣṇava*.

As is described in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.92, 90):

sajātīyāsaye snigdhe sādhou saṅgaḥ svato vare
śrīmad bhāgavatārthānām āsvado rasikaiḥ saha

"One should associate with devotees who are more advanced than oneself and endowed with a similar type of sentiment and attraction for the Lord. One should relish the purport of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* in the association of pure devotees who are steeped in spiritual life and realisation."

One must be very cautious not to judge a *Vaiṣṇava* based on his previous sins, residual sinful reactions, or a sudden fall-down into sinful activity.

Sri Rupa Goswami has warned in the



Upadeśamṛta (6): *na prākṛtatvam iha bhakajānasya paśyet* — "One must not see a *Vaiṣṇava* as a mundane person."

One must never discuss others' sinful activities except with good intentions to help. One must develop the quality of mercy towards all living entities. One is required to see oneself as meek and humble, thus enabling one to be respectful to everyone and not desire respect for oneself. The householder *Vaiṣṇavas* will accept material things without attachment, but with knowledge of their utility and relationship to Krishna's service. In this way, they will not be contaminated by materialism and they will be able to submerge themselves in the transcendental relish of chanting the Holy Name. And when the taste for Krishna consciousness increases and correspondingly mundane attraction decreases to nil—then automatically a natural mood of renunciation develops and the anxiety of want disappears. This condition and state of consciousness cannot be achieved in any other way.

— *Daśa-mūla-tattva* » Translated by Sarvabhāvanadāsa » Chapter Ten - Pure Devotion--The Only Means of Perfection. ❀

WHEN SHOULD ONE ABANDON A GURU

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

It is to be understood that those who disrespect the spiritual master, who is non-different from the Supreme Lord, by considering him a mortal being and addressing him as "my spiritual master," "his spiritual master," and so on, have not actually accepted the spiritual master as a most dear associate of Krishna. Due to material considerations, people in this world have accepted the spiritual master, who is a direct manifestation of the Supreme Lord, as an object of enjoyment. It is impossible for members of the pseudo *sampradāyas* to come to the same platform or cooperate with the pure devotees. It is also the nature of persons who are envious of the *Vaiṣṇavas* to consider the spiritual master as an object of enjoyment because any consideration other than,

*āmāra prabhura prabhu gaurāṅga-sundara
e baḍa bharasā citte dhari nirantara*

Sri Gaurāṅga-sundara is the Lord of my Lord. I always keep this conviction in my heart, creates thirteen pseudo *sampradāyas* like *āula*, *bāula*, *kartābhajā*, *prākṛta-sahajiyā*, *sakhī-bhekī*, *jāti-gosāi*, and *gaura-nāgarī*. Actually if one rejects the concept of *guru* or disrespects the eternally worshipable Supreme Personality of Godhead's

supreme servitor and attributes abominable, insignificant, mundane considerations on him, then according to the *ardha-kukkuti-nyāya*, or the logic of accepting half of a hen, his atheistic nature will be revealed. Whenever the so-called spiritual masters of the pseudo *sampradāyas* display their envy against the pure *Vaiṣṇavas*, one should abandon those *apa-sampradāyas* so-called *gurus*, who are actually *laghus*, or insignificant, understanding them to be envious of the *Vaiṣṇavas*. One should then search out and take shelter of a pure *Vaiṣṇava*, who is spiritual master of the entire world and knower of the science of Krishna.

Besides members of the *Rūpānuga-sampradāya*, members of the other thirteen *apa-sampradāyas* are envious of the devotees who follow Sri Rupa, therefore Lord Krishna never considers them as dear. That is why people who maintain animosity towards the pure devotee followers of Sri Rupa actually become *laghu*. The spiritual masters who are dear to Krishna are always attached to the *Vaiṣṇava* spiritual masters who follow Sri Rupa. On the pretext of devotional service, the members of the *apa-sampradāyas* appoint someone who is envious of the Supreme Lord as *guru* and thus maintain their pride. Knowing them as bad association, the pure devotees give up their company and remain firmly fixed at the feet of their spiritual master under the subordination of Sri Rupa. While analyzing the answer to the question, "Which person who is accepted as *guru* is actually a pure *Vaiṣṇava*, or very dear to Krishna?" if we find that a person does not accept the followers of Sri Rupa as his intimate friends, but rather envies them, then such a bogus *guru* should immediately be totally rejected.

— *Caitanya Bhāgavata* » *Ādi-khaṇḍa* » Chapter Nine: Nityānanda's Childhood Pastimes and Travels to Holy Places » Verse : 186 » Commentary by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati » Translated by Bhūmipati Das. ❀

PRAYERS AT THE LOTUS FEET OF VAIṢṆAVAS

Srila Narottam Das Thakura

*śuniyāchi sādhu-mukhe bale sarva-jana
rī-rūpa-ṛipāya mile jugala-carāṇa
hā hā prabhu ! sanātana gaura-paribāra
sabe mili bāñchā pūrṇa karaha āmāra
śrī-rūpera ṛipā jena āmāra prati haya
se pada āśraya jāra sei mahāśaya
prabhu lokanātha kabe saṅge laiñā jābe
śrī-rūpera pāda-padme more samarpibe
hena ki haibe mora narma-sakhī-gaṇa
anugata narottama karibe śāsane*

I have heard from the mouths of pure devotees that by the mercy of Sri Rupa Goswami, one can attain the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna.

O my lord, Sanatana Goswami, and the associates of Gauranga, all of you kindly fulfill my desires.

Let the mercy of Sri Rupa Goswami be upon me, for whoever has taken shelter of him is my master.

When will my lord, Lokanatha Goswami, take me with him, and place me at the lotus feet of Sri Rupa?

Will it ever happen to me that the most dear *sakhīs* will chastise their servant, Narottama dasa?

*ei nava-dāsī bali śrī-rūpa cāhibe
hena śubha-kṣaṇa mora kata-dīne habe
śīghra ājñā karibena—dāsī hethā āya
sebāra susajjā-kārya karaha tvarāya
ānandita hañā hiyā tañra ājñā-bale
pavitra mane kārya karibe tat-kāle
sebāra sāmāgrī ratna-thālete kariyā
subāsita bāri svarṇa-jhārite pūriyā
doñhāra sammūkhe la'ye dība śīghra-gati
narottamera daśā kabe haibe e-mati*

When will the auspicious moment come, when Sri Rupa Manjari will accept me as her maidservant?

She will order me saying, “Quickly make arrangement for the service of Sri Sri Radha and Krishna.”

With joyful mood and pure mind I will immediately execute that order.

Taking the ingredients for Their service on a golden plate along with scented water in a perforated waterpot, I will immediately take them to Their Lordships Sri Sri Radha and Krishna. Thus Narottama yearns for such a situation.

*śrī-rūpa paścāte āmi rahiba bhīta hañā
doñhe pūnaḥ kahibena āmā pāne cāñā
sadāya hṛdaye doñhe kahibena hāsi
kothāya pāile rūpa! ei nava dāsī
śrī-rūpa-manjari tabe doñhā vākya śuni
mañjulālī dila more ei dāsī āni
ati namra-citta āmi ihāre jānila
sebā-kārya diyā tabe hethāya rākhila
hena tattva doñhākāra sāksāte kahiyā*

Seeing me standing in fear behind Sri Rupa, Radha and Krishna, with kind hearts will again smilingly ask Sri Rupa, “Where have you brought

this new maidservant from?”

Hearing Their statements, Sri Rupa will answer: “Manjulali brought her and gave her to me. I could understand her to be very meek and humble, therefore engaging her with service I kept her here”.

Sri Rupa, after disclosing this information to Radha and Krishna, will mercifully engage Narottama dasa in Their service.

*hā hā ! prabhu lokanātha rākha pāda-dvandve
kṛpā-dṛṣṭe cāha jadi haiyā ānande
mano-bāñcchā siddhi tabe hañā puṇa-trṣṇa
hethāya caitanya mile sethā rādhā-kṛṣṇa
tumi nā karile dayā ke karibe āra
manera vāsanā puṇa kara ei bāra
e tina saṁsāre mora āra kehā nai
kṛpa kari 'nija pada-tale deha thāñi
śrī rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā-guṇa gāna rātri-dīne
śrī narottama-bāñcchā puṇa nahe tuyā bine*

O my lord Lokanatha Goswami, please keep me at your lotus feet. Please mercifully glance upon me.

Only by your mercy, my desires of attaining the shelter of Lord Chaitanya here, and attaining the shelter of Radha and Krishna in the spiritual world, will be fulfilled.

If you neglect me, then who else will bestow mercy upon me? Therefore I pray that you kindly fulfill my desires at this time.

Please give me shelter under your lotus feet for I have no one else but you in the three worlds.

Narottama dasa wishes to glorify the pastimes and qualities of Radha and Krishna day and night. This is impossible without your mercy.

—Prārthanā by Srila Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Published by Ishvara Dasa. ❧

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

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