



Śrī Aparā Ekadāśī

Issue no:112

30th May 2019

## THE NATURE OF WOMAN

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMAN**

*Srila Sukdeva Goswami*

**WHEN A WOMAN IS ENGAGED**

**IN SĀDHANA-BHAKTI**

*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

**THE NATURE OF WOMAN**

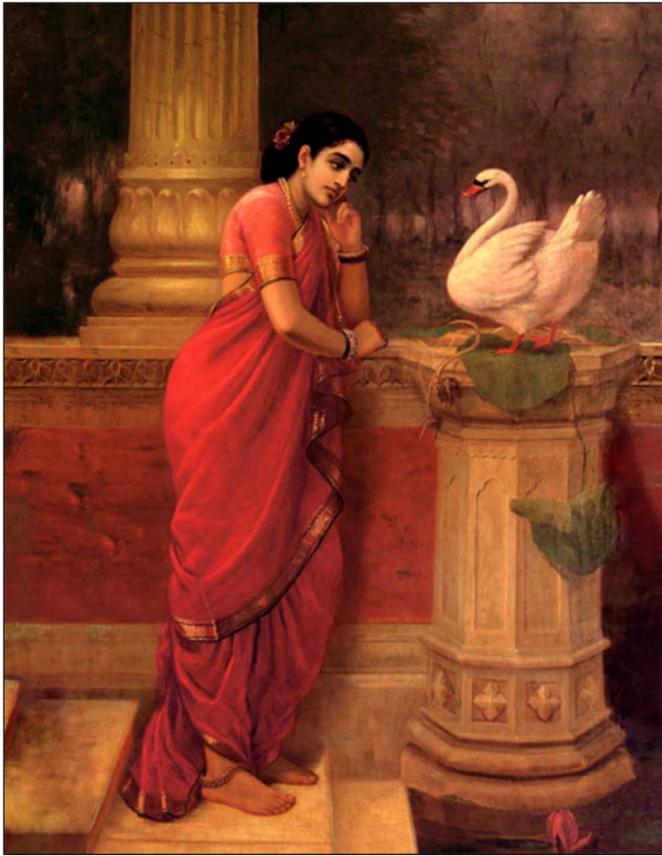
*His Divine Grace*

*A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

**KAUSHALYAS INSTRUCTIONS TO SITA**

*Sriman Krishna Dharma Das*

Circulaton 28, 715



### INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREGNANT WOMAN

*Srila Sukdeva Goswami*

Prsni, who was the wife of Savita, the fifth of the twelve sons of Aditi, gave birth to three daughters Savitri, Vyahrti and Trayi and the sons named Agnihotra, Pashu, Soma, Caturmasya and the five Mahayajnas. O King, Siddhi, who was the wife of Bhaga, the sixth son of Aditi, bore three sons, named Mahima, Vibhu and Prabhu, and one extremely beautiful daughter, whose name was Asi. Dhata, the seventh son of Aditi, had four wives, named Kuhu, Sinivali, Raka and Anumati. These wives begot four sons, named Sayam, Darsha, Prataḥ and Purnamasa respectively. The wife of Vidhata, the eighth son of Aditi, was named Kriya. In her Vidhata begot the five fire-gods named the Purinyas. The wife of Varuna, the ninth son of Aditi, was named Carnani. Bhrgu, the son of Brahma, took birth again in her womb. By the semen of Varuna, the great mystic Valmiki took birth from an anthill. Bhrgu and Valmiki were specific sons of Varuna, whereas Agastya and Vasistha ṛṣis were the common sons of Varuna and Mitra, the tenth son of Aditi. Upon seeing Urvashi, the celestial society girl, both Mitra and Varuna discharged semen, which

they preserved in an earthen pot. The two sons Agastya and Vasistha later appeared from that pot, and they are therefore the common sons of Mitra and Varuna. Mitra begot three sons in the womb of his wife, whose name was Revati. Their names were Utsarga, Arista and Pippala. O King Pariksit, Indra, the King of the heavenly planets and eleventh son of Aditi, begot three sons, named Jayanta, Rsabha and Midhuna, in the womb of his wife, Paulomi. Thus we have heard. By His own potency, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has multifarious potencies, appeared in the form of a dwarf as Urukrama, the twelfth son of Aditi.

In the womb of His wife, whose name was Kirti, He begot one son, named Brhatsloka, who had many sons, headed by Śaubbhaga. Later [in the Eighth Canto of *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam*] I shall describe how Urukrama, Lord Vamanadeva, appeared as the son of the great sage Kashyapa and how He covered the three worlds with three steps. I shall describe the uncommon activities He performed, His qualities, His power and how He took birth from the womb of Aditi.

Now let me describe the sons of Diti, who were begotten by Kashyapa but who became demons. In this demonic family the great devotee Prahlada Maharaja appeared, and Bali Maharaja also appeared in that family. The demons are technically known as Daityas because they proceeded from the womb of Diti. First the two sons named Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyaksa took birth from Diti's womb. Both of them were very powerful and were worshiped by the Daityas and Dnavas. The wife of Hiranyakashipu was known as Kayadhu. She was the daughter of Jambha and a descendant of Danu. She gave birth to four consecutive sons, known as Samhlada, Anuhlada, Hlada and Prahlada. The sister of these four sons was known as Simhika. She married the demon named Vipracit and gave birth to another demon, named Rahu.

While Rahu, in disguise, was drinking nectar among the demigods, the Supreme Personality of Godhead severed his head. The wife of Samhlada was named Krti. By union with Samhlada, Krti gave birth to a son named Pancajana. The wife of Hlada was named Dhamani. She gave birth to two sons, named Vatapi and Ilvala. When

Agastya Muni became Ilvalas guest, Ilvala served him a feast by cooking Vatapi, who was in the shape of a ram. The wife of Anuhlada was named Surya. She gave birth to two sons, named Baskala and Mahisa. Prahlada had one son, Virocana, whose wife gave birth to Bali Maharaja. Thereafter, Bali Maharaja begot one hundred sons in the womb of Ashana. Of these one hundred sons, King Bana was the eldest. The activities of Bali Maharaja, which are very laudable, will be also be described later [in the Eighth Canto]. Since King Bana was a great worshiper of Lord Shiva, he became one of Lord Shivas most celebrated associates. Even now, Lord Shiva protects King Banas capital and always stands beside him. The forty-nine Marut demigods were also born from the womb of Diti. None of them had sons. Although they were born of Diti, King Indra gave them a position as demigods.

**King Pariksit inquired:** My dear lord, due to their birth, the forty-nine Maruts must have been obsessed with a demoniac mentality. Why did Indra, the King of heaven, convert them into demigods? Did they perform any rituals or pious activities? My dear *brāhmaṇa*, I and all the sages present with me are eager to know about this. Therefore, O great soul, kindly explain to us the reason.

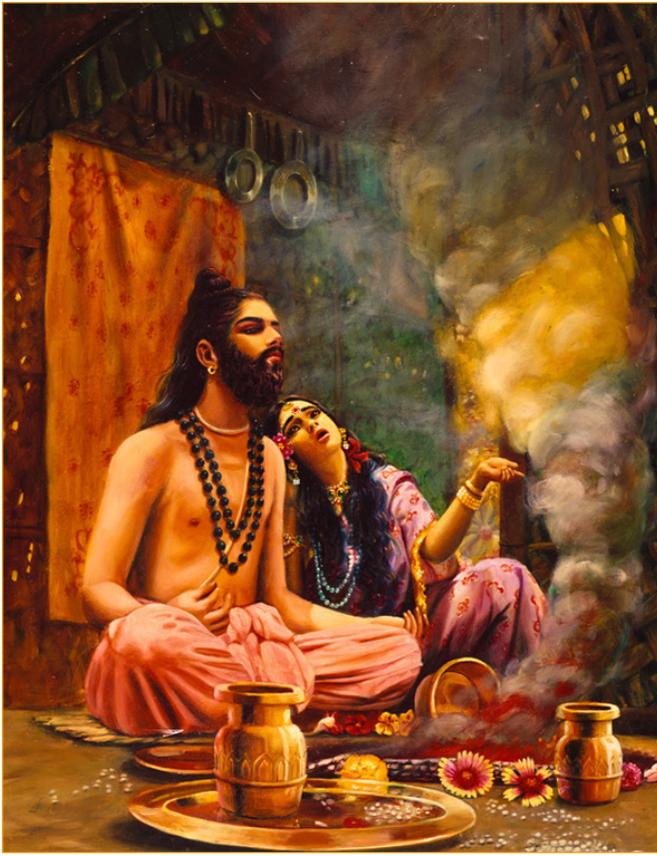
**Sri Suta Goswami said:** O great sage Saunaka, after hearing Maharaja Pariksit speak respectfully and briefly on topics essential to hear, Sukadeva Goswami, who was well aware of everything, praised his endeavour with great pleasure and replied.

**Sri Sukadeva Goswami said:** Just to help Indra, Lord Vishnu killed the two brothers Hiranyaksa and Hiranyakashipu. Because of their being killed, their mother, Diti, overwhelmed with lamentation and anger, contemplated as follows. Lord Indra, who is very much fond of sense gratification, has killed the two brothers Hiranyaksa and Hiranyakashipu by means of Lord Vishnu. Therefore Indra is cruel, hardhearted and sinful. When will I, having killed him, rest with a pacified mind? When dead, the bodies of all the rulers known as kings and great leaders will be transformed into worms, stool or ashes. If one enviously kills others for the protection of such a body, does he actually know the true interest of life? Certainly he does not, for if one is envious of other entities, he surely goes to hell.

**Diti thought:** “Indra considers his body eternal, and thus he has become unrestrained. I therefore wish to have a son who can remove Indras madness. Let me adopt some means to help me in this.” Thinking in this way and harboring a desire for a son to kill Indra, Diti began constantly acting to satisfy Kashyapa by her pleasing behavior. O King, Diti always carried out Kashyapas orders very faithfully, as he desired. With service, love, humility and control, with words spoken very sweetly to satisfy her husband, and with smiles and glances at him, Diti attracted his mind and brought it under her control. Although Kashyapa Muni was a learned scholar, he was captivated by Ditis artificial behavior, which brought him under her control. Therefore he assured his wife that he would fulfil her desires. Such a promise by a husband is not at all astonishing. In the beginning of creation, Lord Brahma, the father of the living entities of the universe, saw that all the living entities were unattached. To increase population, he then created woman from the better half of the male body, for womanly behavior easily carries away a man’s mind. O my dear one, the most powerful sage Kashyapa, felt extremely pleased by the mild behavior of his wife Diti, and with a smile spoke to her as follows.

**Kashyapa Muni said:** O beautiful woman, O irreproachable lady, since I am very much pleased by your behaviour, you may ask me for any benediction you want. If a husband is pleased, what desires are difficult for his wife to obtain, either in this world or in the next?

A husband is the supreme demigod for a woman. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Vasudeva, the husband of the goddess of fortune, is situated in everyones heart and is worshiped through the various names and forms of the demigods by fruitive workers. Similarly, a husband represents the Lord as the object of worship for a woman. My dear wife, whose body is so beautiful, your waist being thin, a conscientious wife should be chaste and should abide by the orders of her husband. She should very devoutly worship her husband as a representative of Vasudeva. My dear gentle wife, because you have worshiped me with great devotion, considering me a representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, I shall reward you by fulfilling your desires.



boon unobtainable for an unchaste wife.

**Diti replied:** O my husband, O great soul, I have now lost my sons. If you want to give me a benediction, I ask you for an immortal son who can kill Indra. I pray for this because Indra, with the help of Vishnu, has killed my two sons Hiranyaksa and Hiranyakashipu.

Upon hearing Diti's request, Kashyapa Muni was deeply aggrieved. "Alas," he lamented, "now I face the danger of the impious act of killing Indra."

**Kashyapa Muni thought:** Alas, I have now become too attached to material enjoyment. Taking advantage of this, my mind has been attracted by the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of a woman [my own wife]. Therefore I am surely a wretched person who will glide down toward hell. This woman, my wife, has adopted a means that follows her nature, and therefore she is not to be blamed. But I am a man. Therefore, all condemnation upon me! I am not at all conversant with what is good for me, since I could not control my senses. A woman's face is as attractive and beautiful as a blossoming lotus flower during autumn. Her words are very sweet, and they give pleasure to the ear, but if we study a woman's heart, we can understand

it to be extremely sharp, like the edge of a razor blade. In these circumstances, who could understand the dealings of a woman? To satisfy their own interests, women deal with men as if the men were most dear to them, but no one is actually dear to them. Women are supposed to be very saintly, but for their own interests they can kill even their husbands, sons or brothers, or cause them to be killed by others. I promised to give her a benediction, and this promise cannot be violated, but Indra does not deserve to be killed. In these circumstances, the solution I have is quite suitable.

**Sri Sukadeva Goswami said:** Kashyapa Muni, thinking in this way, became somewhat angry. Condemning himself, O Maharaja Parikṣit, descendant of Kuru, he spoke to Diti as follows.

**Kashyapa Muni said:** My dear gentle wife, if you follow my instructions regarding this vow for at least one year, you will surely get a son who will be able to kill Indra. However, if you deviate from this vow of following the Vaiṣṇava principles, you will get a son who will be favorable to Indra.

**Feeling pleased at heart Diti replied:** My dear *brāhmaṇa*, I must accept your advice and follow the vow. Now let me understand what I have to do, what is forbidden and what will not break the vow. Please clearly state all this to me.

**Kashyapa Muni said:** My dear wife, to follow this vow, do not be violent or cause harm to anyone. Do not curse anyone, and do not speak lies. Do not cut your nails and hair, and do not touch impure things like skulls and bones. My dear gentle wife, never enter the water while bathing, never be angry, and do not even speak or associate with wicked people. Never wear clothes that have not been properly washed, and do not put on a garland that has already been worn. Never eat leftover food, never eat *prasāda* offered to the goddess Kali [Durga], and do not eat anything contaminated by flesh or fish. Do not eat anything brought or touched by a *śūdra* nor anything seen by a woman in her menstrual period. Do not drink water by joining your palms. After eating, you should not go out to the street without having washed your mouth, hands and feet. You should not go out in the evening or with your hair loose, nor should you go out unless you

are properly decorated with ornaments. You should not leave the house unless you are very grave and are sufficiently covered. You should not lie down without having washed both of your feet or without being purified, nor with wet feet or with your head pointed west or north. You should not lie naked, or with other women, or during the sunrise or sunset. Putting on washed clothing, being always pure and being adorned with turmeric, sandalwood pulp and other auspicious items, before breakfast one should worship the cows, the *brāhmaṇas*, the goddess of fortune and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. With flower garlands, sandalwood pulp, ornaments and other paraphernalia, a woman following this vow should worship women who have sons and whose husbands are living. The pregnant wife should worship her husband and offer him prayers. She should meditate upon him, thinking that he is situated in her womb. If you perform this ceremony called *pūṁsavana*, adhering to the vow with faith for at least one year, you will give birth to a son destined to kill Indra. But if there is any discrepancy in the discharge of this vow, the son will be a friend to Indra. O King Parikṣit, Diti, the wife of Kashyapa, agreed to undergo the purificatory process known as *pūṁsavana*. "Yes," she said, "I shall do everything according to your instructions." With great jubilation she became pregnant, having taken semen from Kashyapa, and faithfully began discharging the vow.

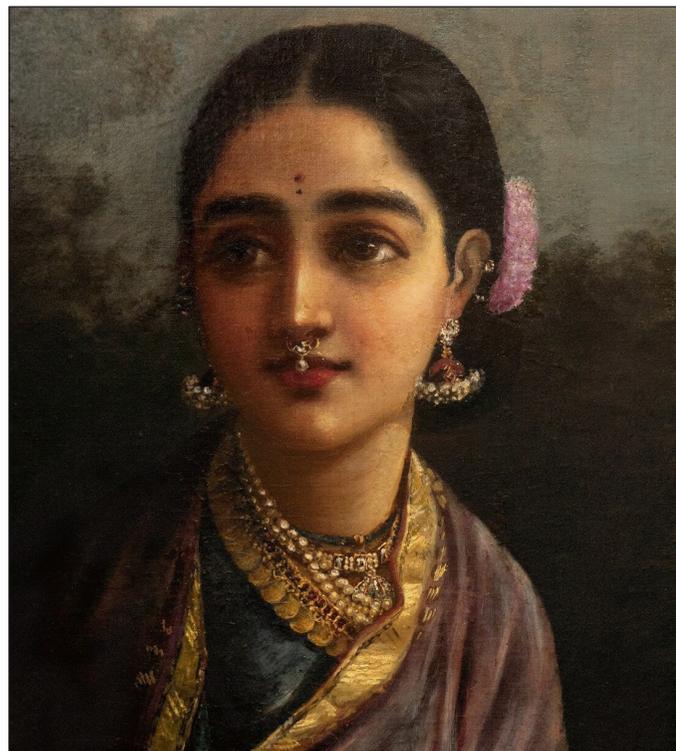
— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam » Canto 6: Prescribed Duties for Mankind » Chapter 18. Diti Vows to Kill King Indra » Verses 1-55

### THE NATURE OF WOMAN

*His Divine Grace*

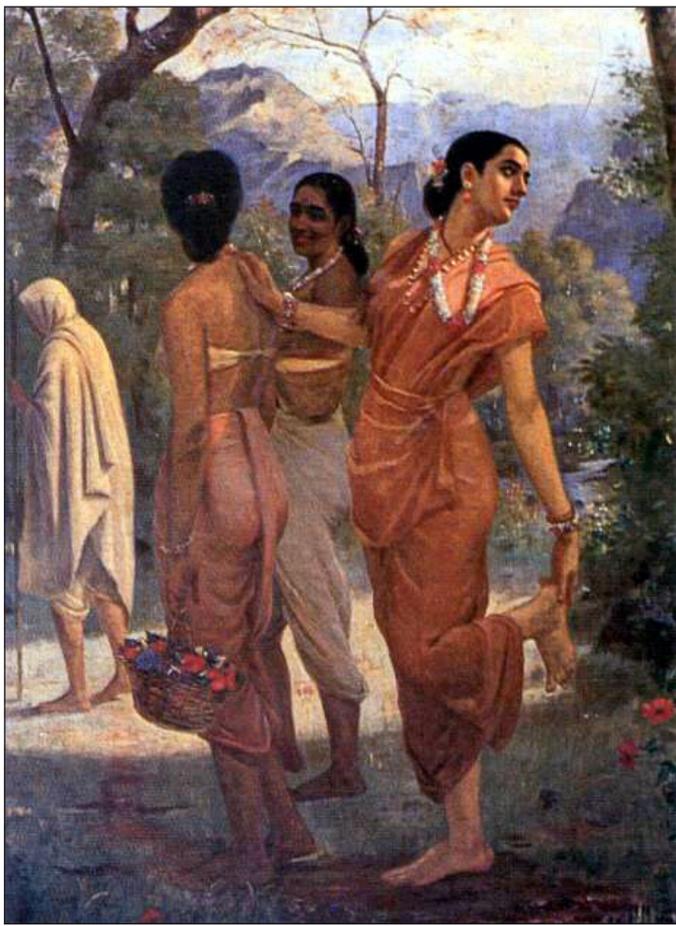
*A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

A woman's nature has been particularly well studied by Kashyapa Muni. Women are self-interested by nature, and therefore they should be protected by all means so that their natural inclination to be too self-interested will not be manifested. Women need to be protected by men. A woman should be cared for by her father in her childhood, by her husband in her youth and by her grown sons in her old age. This is the injunction of Manu, who says that a woman should not be given independence at any stage. Women must be cared for so that they will not be free to manifest their



natural tendency for gross selfishness. There have been many cases, even in the present day, in which women have killed their husbands to take advantage of their insurance policies. This is not a criticism of women but a practical study of their nature. Such natural instincts of a woman or a man are manifested only in the bodily conception of life. When either a man or a woman is advanced in spiritual consciousness, the bodily conception of life practically vanishes. We should see ourselves and all women as spiritual units (*aham brahmāsmi*), whose only duty is to satisfy Krishna. Then the influences of the different modes of material nature, which result from one's possessing a material body, will not act.

The Krishna consciousness movement is so beneficial that it can very easily counteract the contamination of material nature, which results from one's possessing a material body. *Bhagavad-gītā* therefore teaches, in the very beginning, that whether one is a man or a woman, one must know that he or she is not the body but a spiritual soul. Everyone should be interested in the activities of the spirit soul, not the body. As long as one is activated by the bodily conception of life, there is always the danger of being misled, whether one is a man or a woman. The soul is sometimes described as *puruṣa* because whether one is dressed as a man or a woman, one



is inclined to enjoy this material world. One who has this spirit of enjoyment is described as *puruṣā*. Whether one is a man or a woman, he is not interested in serving others; everyone is interested in satisfying his or her own senses. Krishna consciousness, however, provides first-class training for a man or a woman. A man should be trained to be a first-class devotee of Lord Krishna, and a woman should be trained to be a very chaste follower of her husband. That will make the lives of both of them happy.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* » Canto 6: Prescribed Duties for Mankind » Chapter 18. Diti Vows to Kill King Indra » Verses 42, Purport.

### WHEN A WOMAN IS ENGAGED IN SĀDHANA-BHAKTI

*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

When a woman is engaged in *sādhana-bhakti*, she should not improperly associate with men. Associating with the opposite sex is very inauspicious for the advancing devotee. There are two types of men and women. When a man and woman are married according to religious principles, there is no sin in their touching and talking

Bhāgavata Mahāvidyālaya

Looking at women is prohibited for *sannyāsis* and *brahmacārīs*, but this does not mean that we should consider women bad. That would not be intelligent. Looking at a woman with the spirit of enjoyment is prohibited and condemnable. In this case, there is no fault in the object, only in how we are approaching it. The variety in this world is not bad or faulty, but to misuse it is condemned. What we see is good and acceptable only if it is engaged in the Lord's service.

— Excerpt from the writings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati

with each other; rather, this touching and talking is beneficial because of the scriptural sanction. There is, however, no provision for illusory activities other than the execution of reciprocal duties. If they are bewildered by each other and they engage in activities other than prescribed duties, then that is called *strī-saṅga* and *puruṣa-saṅga*, or association with the opposite sex. For those who are engaged in worshiping Krishna, such association yields inauspicious results. If either one is guilty of such association, then they become an obstacle for the other party. If the wife is helpful in the discharge of devotional service, then the fault of *strī-saṅga* does not arise. But if the wife is an impediment in the discharge of devotional service, then one should carefully give up her association. We should consider the behavior of the great *Vaiṣṇava ācārya*, Srīmad Ramanujacārya. When she wilfully offended his *gurus* wife Srīmad Ramanujacārya sent his wife to her parent's home. He then took *sannyāsa*, in this connection. If there is no marital relationship and one converses with a woman with self gratificatory motives, then this is *strī-saṅga*. That is sinful and detrimental to devotional service. Considering these points, the practicing devotee should very carefully give up the association of women and persons fond of women. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.31.35):

*na tathāsya bhaven moho  
bandhaś cānya-prasaṅgataḥ  
yoṣit-saṅgād yathā puṁso  
yathā tat-saṅgi-saṅgataḥ*

"The infatuation and bondage which accrue to a man from attachment to any

www.ibmedu.org



other object is not as complete as that resulting from attachment to a woman or to the fellowship of men who are fond of women."

For a householder devotee, touching and speaking to his wife in the above mentioned manner is not detrimental to devotional service; but for a renunciate there cannot be any type of talking or touching a woman, otherwise his practice of devotional service will be completely spoiled. Association with such a deviated person should be totally rejected.

One should give up the association of *dharmadhvajis*, the hypocritically devout, with special care. Those who accept the external signs of *dharma* but do not actually follow *dharma* are called *dharmadhvajis*. There are two types of *dharmadhvajis*—the hypocrites and the fools, or the cheaters and the cheated. Such hypocrisy is also condemned in *jñāna-kāṇḍa* and *karma-kāṇḍa*. In devotional service this hypocrisy ruins everything. Better associate with sense enjoyers, for in this whole world there is no worse association than the *dharmadhvajī*. The deceitful *dharmadhvajis* accept the signs of *dharma* with a desire to cheat the world, and to fulfill their crooked desires they cheat the foolish by helping them in their rascaldom. Some of them become *gurus* and others become disciples, and by trickery they accumulate wealth, women, false-prestige, and material assets. If one gives up the association of crooked

hypocrites, then he can honestly engage in devotional service. Honest worship is the only way to attain Krishna's mercy. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.38):

*sa veda dhātuḥ padavīm parasya  
duranta-vīryasya rathāṅga-pāṇeh  
yo 'māyayā santatayānuvṛtṭyā  
bhajeta tat-pāda-saroja-gandham*

"Only those who render unreserved, uninterrupted, and unmotivated service unto the lotus feet of Lord Krishna, who carries the wheel of the chariot in His hand, can know the creator of the universe in His full glory, power and transcendence."

— Śrī Bhaktiyāloka - *The Six Faults and Qualities of Bhakti*,  
Translated by Sarvabhauma Dasa

### KAUSHALYAS INSTRUCTIONS TO SITA

*Srīman Krishna Dharma Das*

As Rama and Sita approached the chariot brought by Sumantra, Kaushalya came and tightly embraced Sita, saying, "Wicked are those women who forsake their worthy husbands when fallen upon hard times. Even though such women have in the past been protected and afforded every happiness, they malign and even desert their husbands when misfortune arrives. Such women are heartless, untruthful, lusty and sinful by nature, being quickly estranged in times of trouble. Neither

Once upon a time a Vaisnava *sannyāsi* became attracted to a beautiful young woman. Being induced by his sinful propensity he finally decided as follows: "Since I always chant the holy names I can make that woman my disciple by giving her Harināma initiation and then I can accept service from her. In the process whatever sinful activities will be committed, that will certainly be destroyed by the holy names chanted by both of us. The woman will also get an opportunity to become a Vaisnavi. The association of a Vaisnavas is very rare; moreover I will learn many things about the ecstatic love of the Gopis from her association. Where can I get such an association?" Thinking in this way the Vaisnava *sannyāsi* made that woman a Vaisnavi and enjoyed her service. This is an example of ultimate *Nāmāparādha*."

(*Sajjana Toṣaṇī 8/9*)

kindness nor education nor gift nor even marriage ties can capture the hearts of such women."

Kaushalya loved Sita as a daughter. She knew that Rama's gentle wife was entirely devoted to piety and she spoke to Her only out of motherly affection. She continued, "For virtuous women, who are truthful, pious, obedient to their elders and acting within the bounds of morality the husband is the most sacred object and is never abandoned. Although Rama is being sent to the forest You should never neglect Him, dear Sita. Whether wealthy or without any means whatsoever, He is always Your worshipable deity."

Sita was filled with joy to hear this advice, which was in accord with her life's aim. Joining Her palms, She replied reverentially, "I shall surely do all that your honorable self instructs. I have always heard from you proper advice about how to serve My husband. Even in thought you should not compare Me to wicked women, for I am unable to deviate from virtue, even as moonlight cannot be parted from the moon. As a lute is useless without its strings or a chariot without its wheels, so a wife is destitute when separated from her worthy husband. Having learned from My elders all the duties incumbent upon a wife, and knowing the husband to be a veritable deity, how can I ever neglect Rama, O venerable lady?"

Kaushalya's heart was touched by Sita's reply and she shed tears born of both delight and agony, being moved by Sita's piety and at the same time anguished at the thought of Her imminent departure.

Rama looked with affection at His mother. It was time for Him to leave. He feared Kaushalya would pine away after He left. Rama stood before her with folded palms. "Please do not show My father sad expressions, heightening his grief. Fourteen years will pass quickly, even while you sleep. You will rise one morning to find Me returned with Sita and Laksman, surrounded by friends and relatives."

Rama looked around at all the royal ladies standing there and said, "Please forgive any unkind words or acts which I may have said or done out of ignorance because we have lived closely together. Now I take leave of you all."

A cry that resembled the plaintive call of cranes separated from their mates rose up from the ladies. Dasaratha's palace, which had always been marked with the joyous sounds of music and festivities, was now filled with the sound of agonized wails.

After holding Dasaratha's feet and respectfully walking around him, Rama, Sita and Laksman took their final leave of the monarch and left for the forest.

— An excerpt from *Rāmāyaṇa Retold* by Kṛṣṇa Dharma dasa



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

**ISKCON**

**Bhagavata Mahavidyalaya**

is a branch of

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Acārya: His Divine Grace

A.C. BhaktiVedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Editor

Brajsunder Das

Copy Editor

Isha Prakash Das

Sanskrit Editor,

Vrajsevika Devi Dasi

Assistance

Rasa Manjari Devi Dasi

Hari Lila Devi Dasi

Quotations from the books, letters, and lectures of  
His Divine Grace A.C. BhaktiVedanta Swami Prabhupada

©Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International.

©All the paintings are copyrights of their respective artists.