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## THE 100 YEARS OF LIFE

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*Srila Narada Muni*

**MATERIAL LIFE**

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

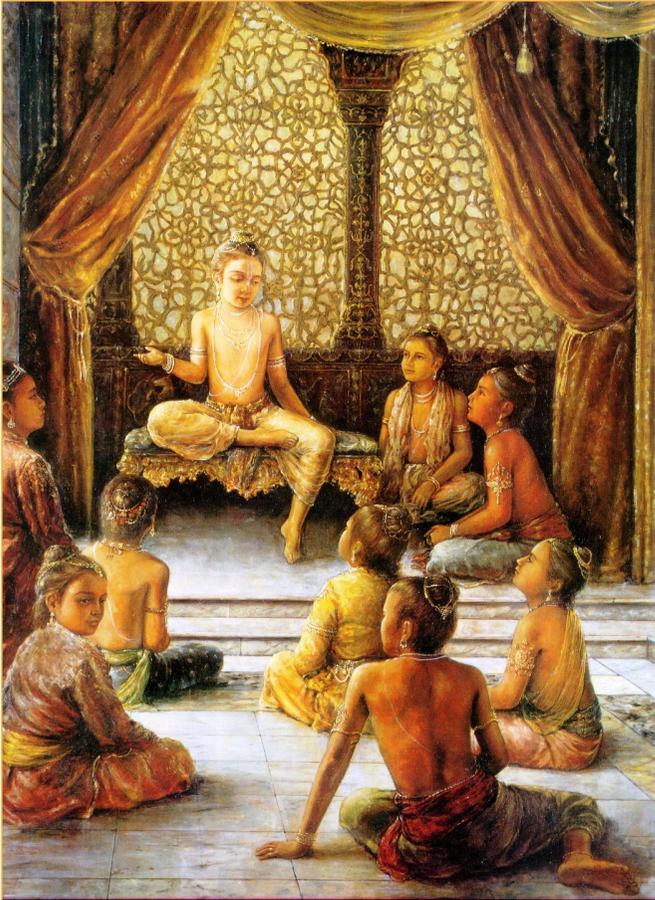
**THE 100 YEARS OF LIFE**

*His Divine Grace*

*A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.*

**ONE'S CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION**

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**PRAHLADA INSTRUCTS HIS DEMONIC SCHOOLMATES***Srila Narada Muni*

**Prahlada Maharaja said:** One who is sufficiently intelligent should, from his very childhood, use the human body to practice the activities of devotional service. In other words, from the tender age of childhood, a person should cultivate devotional service to the Supreme Lord, giving up all other engagements. The human body is very rarely achieved, and although temporary like other bodies, it is meaningful because in human life one can perform devotional service. Even a slight amount of sincere devotional service can give one complete perfection. The human form of life affords one a chance to return home, back to Godhead. Therefore every living entity, especially one in the human form of life, must engage in devotional service to the lotus feet of Lord Visnu. This devotional service is natural because Lord Visnu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the most beloved, the master of the soul, and the well wisher of all other living beings.

**Prahlada Maharaja continued:** My dear friends of demoniac descent, the happiness perceived with reference to the sense objects contacting the senses can be obtained in any form of life, according to one's past fruitive activities. Such happiness is automatically obtained without endeavour, just as we obtain distress without making efforts intended to create them. Endeavors merely for sense gratification or material happiness through economic development are not to be performed, for they result only in a loss of time and energy, with no actual profit. If one's endeavours are directed toward Krishna consciousness, one can surely attain the spiritual platform of self-realization. There is no such benefit from engaging oneself in economic development. Therefore, while in material existence, a person fully competent to distinguish wrong from right must endeavour to achieve the highest goal of life as long as the body is stout and strong and is not embarrassed by dwindling.

Every human being has a maximum duration of life of one hundred years, but for one who cannot control his senses, half of those years are completely lost because at night he sleeps twelve hours, being covered by ignorance. Therefore such a person has a lifetime of only fifty years. In the tender age of childhood, when everyone is bewildered, one passes ten years. Similarly, in boyhood, engaged in sporting and playing, one passes another ten years. In this way, twenty years are wasted. Similarly, in old age, when one is an invalid, unable to perform even material activities, one passes another twenty years wastefully. One whose mind and senses are uncontrolled becomes increasingly attached to family life because of insatiable material desires and overwhelming illusion. In such a madman's life, the remaining years are also wasted because even during those years he cannot engage himself in devotional service.

What person too attached to household life due to being unable to control his senses can liberate himself? An attached householder is bound very strongly by ropes of affection for his family. Money is so dear that one conceives of money as being sweeter than honey. Therefore, who can give up the desire to ac-

cumulate money, especially in household life? Thieves, professional soldiers and merchants try to acquire money even by risking their very dear lives.

How can a person who is very affectionate for his family, the core of his heart being always filled with their pictures, give up their association? Specifically, a wife is always very kind and sympathetic and always pleases her husband in a solitary place. Who could give up the association of such a dear and affectionate wife? Small children talk in broken language, very pleasing to hear, and their affectionate father always thinks of their sweet words. How could he give up their association?

One's elderly parents and one's sons and daughters are also very dear. A daughter is especially dear to her father, and while living at her husband's house she is always in his mind. Who could give up that association? Aside from this, in household affairs there are many decorated items of household furniture, and there are also animals and servants. Who could give up such comforts?

The attached householder is like a silkworm, which weaves a cocoon in which it becomes imprisoned, unable to get out. Simply for the satisfaction of two important senses the genitals and the tongue one is bound by material conditions. How can one escape? One who is too attached cannot understand that he is wasting his valuable life for the maintenance of his family. He also fails to understand that the purpose of human life, a life suitable for realization of the Absolute Truth, is being imperceptibly spoiled. However, he is very cleverly attentive to seeing that not a single farthing is lost by mismanagement.

Thus although an attached person in material existence always suffers from threefold miseries, he does not develop a distaste for the way of material existence. If a person too attached to the duties of family maintenance is unable to control his senses, the core of his heart is immersed in how to accumulate money.

Although he knows that one who takes the wealth of others will be punished by the law of the government, and by the laws of Yamaraja after death, he continues cheating others to acquire money. O my friends, sons of demons!

In this material world, even those who are apparently advanced in education have the propensity to consider, "This is mine, and that is for others." Thus they are always engaged in providing the necessities of life to their families in a limited conception of family life, just like uneducated cats and dogs. They are unable to take to spiritual knowledge; instead, they are bewildered and overcome by ignorance.

My dear friends, O sons of the demons, it is certain that no one bereft of knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead has been able to liberate himself from material bondage at any time or in any country. Rather, those bereft of knowledge of the Lord are bound by the material laws. They are factually addicted to sense gratification, and their target is woman. Indeed, they are actually voluntary playthings in the hands of attractive women. Victimized by such a conception of life, they become surrounded by children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and thus they are shackled to material bondage. Those who are very addicted to this conception of life are called demons. Therefore, although you are sons of demons, keep aloof from such persons and take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, the origin of all the demigods.

My dear sons of demons, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, is the original Supersoul, the father of all living entities. Consequently there are no impediments to pleasing Him or worshiping Him under any conditions, whether one is a child or an old man. The relationship between the living entities and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is always a fact, and therefore there is no difficulty in pleasing the Lord.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, who is infallible and indefatigable, is present in different forms of life, from the inert living beings, such as the plants, to Brahma, the foremost created living being. He is also present in the varieties of material creations and in the material elements, the total material energy and the modes of material nature, as well as the un-manifested material nature and the false ego. Although He is one, He is present everywhere, and He is also the transcendental Supersoul, the cause of all



causes, who is present as the observer in the cores of the hearts of all living entities. He is indicated as that which is never pervaded and as the all-pervading Supersoul, but actually He cannot be indicated. He is changeless and undivided and is simply perceived as the superlative form of eternity, knowledge and bliss. However due to His being covered from our sight by the curtain of the external energy, to the atheist He appears nonexistent.

Therefore, my dear young friends born of demons, please act in such a way that the Supreme Lord, who is beyond the conception of material knowledge, will be satisfied. Give up your demoniac nature and act without enmity or duality. Show mercy to all living entities by enlightening them in devotional service, thus becoming their well-wishers. Nothing is unobtainable for devotees who have satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the cause of all causes, the original source of everything.

The Lord is the reservoir of unlimited spiritual qualities. For devotees, therefore, who are transcendental to the modes of material nature, what is the use of following the principles of religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation, which are all

automatically obtainable under the influence of the modes of nature? We devotees always glorify the lotus feet of the Lord, and therefore we need not ask for anything in terms of *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. Religion, economic development and sense gratification these are described in the Vedas as tri-varga, or three ways to salvation. Within these three categories are education and self-realization; ritualistic ceremonies performed according to Vedic injunction; logic; the science of law and order; and the various means of earning one's livelihood. These are the external subject matters of study in the Vedas, and therefore I consider them material. However, I consider surrender to the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu to be transcendental.

Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the well-wisher and friend of all living entities, formerly explained this transcendental knowledge to the great saint Narada. Such knowledge is extremely difficult to understand without the mercy of a saintly person like Narada, but everyone who has taken shelter of Narada's disciplic succession can understand this confidential knowledge. Prahlaḍa Maharaja continued: I received this knowledge from the great saint Narada Muni,

who is always engaged in devotional service. This knowledge, which is called *bhāgavata-dharma*, is fully scientific. It is based on logic and philosophy and is free from all material contamination.

**The sons of the demons replied:** Dear Prahlada, neither you nor we know any teacher or spiritual master other than Sanda and Amarka, the sons of Shukracarya. After all, we are children and they our controllers. For you especially, who always remain within the palace, it is very difficult to associate with a great personality. Dear friend, most gentle one, would you kindly explain how it was possible for you to hear from Narada Muni? Kindly dispel our doubts in this regard.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 1: Creation » Canto 7: The Science of God » Chapter six» Verses: 1-30.

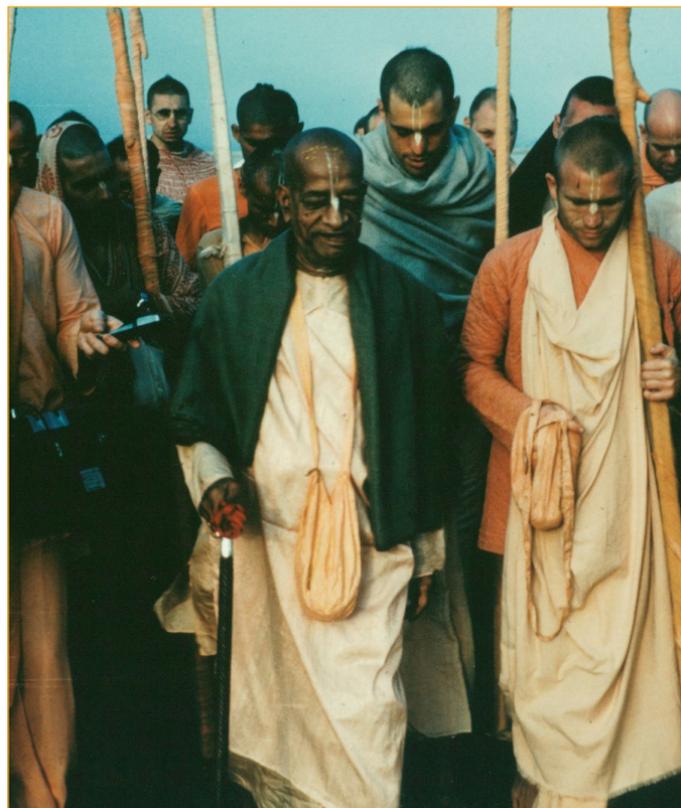
### THE 100 YEARS OF LIFE

*His Divine Grace*

*A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.*

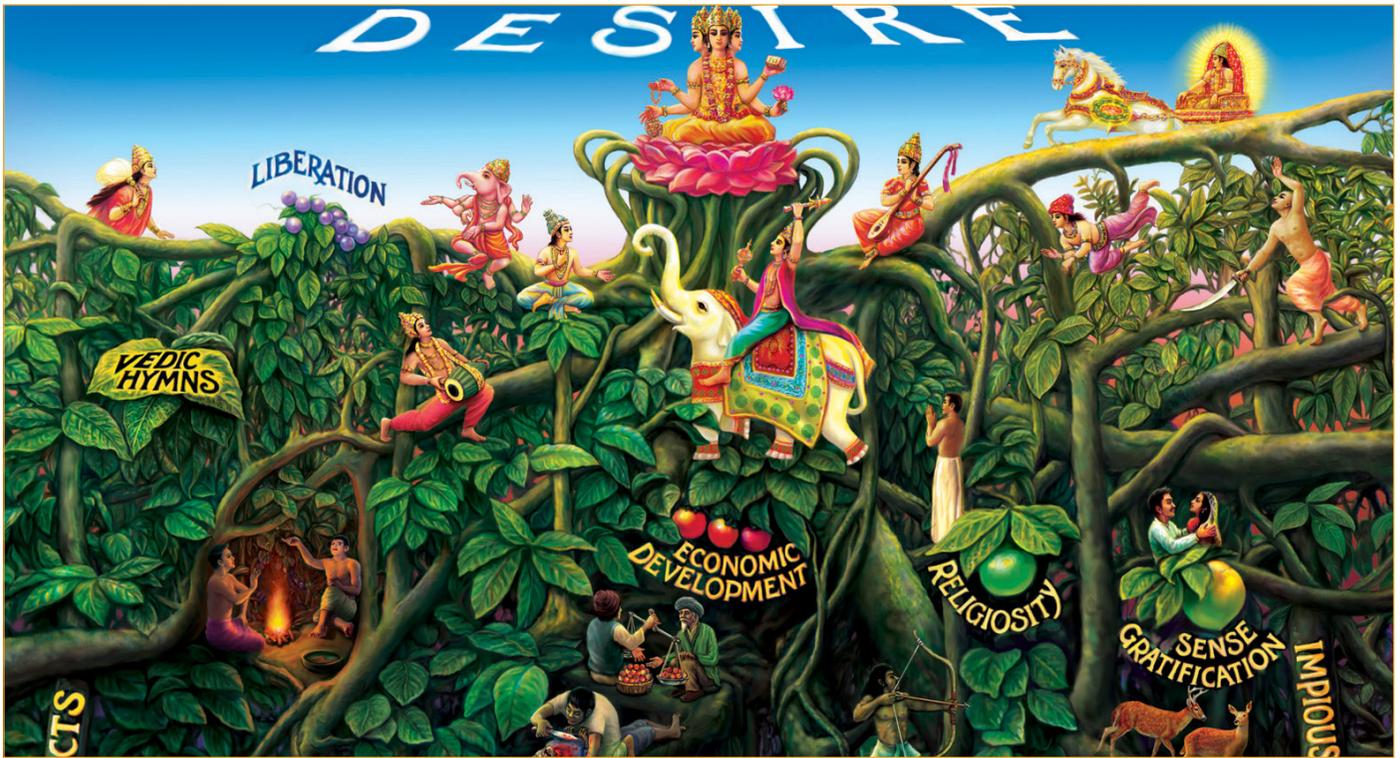
Lord Brahma, a human being and an ant all live for one hundred years, but their lifetimes of one hundred years are different from one another. This world is a relative world, and its relative moments of time are different. Thus the one hundred years of Brahma are not the same as the one hundred years of a human being. From *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand that Brahma's daytime of twelve hours equals 4,300,000 times 1,000 years. Thus the *varṣa-śatam*, or one hundred years, are relatively different according to time, person and circumstances. As far as human beings are concerned, the calculation given here is right for the general public. Although one has a maximum of one hundred years of life, by sleeping one loses fifty years. Eating, sleeping, sex life and fear are the four bodily necessities, but to utilize the full duration of life a person desiring to advance in spiritual consciousness must reduce these activities. That will give him an opportunity to fully use his lifetime.

Without Krishna consciousness, one wastes twenty years in childhood and boyhood and another twenty years in old age, when one cannot perform any material activities and is full of anxiety about what is to be done by his sons



and grandsons and how one's estate should be protected. Half of these years are spent in sleep. Furthermore, one wastes another thirty years sleeping at night during the rest of his life. Thus seventy out of one hundred years are wasted by a person who does not know the aim of life and how to utilize this human form.

This is the account of one hundred years of life. Although in this age a lifetime of one hundred years is generally not possible, even if one has one hundred years, the calculation is that fifty years are wasted in sleeping, twenty years in childhood and boyhood, and twenty years in invalidity. This leaves only a few more years, but because of too much attachment to household life, those years are also spent with no purpose, without God consciousness. Therefore, one should be trained to be a perfect student (*brahmacārī*) in the beginning of life. Then, being perfect in sense control, one will follow the regulative principles even if he becomes a householder. From household life one is ordered to accept the retired *vānaprastha* life and go to the forest and then accept *sannyāsa* for full renunciation. That is the perfection of life. From the very beginning of life, those who are *ajitendriya*, who cannot control their senses, are educated solely for



the purpose of sense gratification, as we have seen in the Western countries. Thus the entire duration of a life, of even one hundred years is wasted and misused, and at the time of death one transmigrates to another body, which may well not be human. At the end of one hundred years, one who has not acted as a human being in a life of *tapasya* (austerity and penance) must certainly be embodied again in a body like those of cats, dogs and hogs. Therefore this life of lusty desires and sense gratification is extremely risky.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 1: Creation » Canto 7: The Science of God » Chapter six » Verses: 6-8 » Purport.

### MATERIAL LIFE

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

#### What is material desire?

“I will enjoy sense gratification as long as I live in this world.” To maintain such a mentality is called material desire.

#### Why is this material world called a prison for conditioned souls?

Those devotees who have no material wants or needs (*akiñcana*) understand that there is nothing in this world that can give us eternal happiness. There is no possibility of lasting happiness in here. The material world is thus

a prison for conditioned souls. We are imprisoned here because of our aversion to Krishna. This is the result of our unlimited desires which create immeasurable miseries and distresses. According to the dictation of the mind, which is compared to the superintendent of a prison, we accept our lesser miseries as happiness and our bigger miseries as great suffering. Foolish persons who run after material happiness find themselves increasingly entangled in Maya’s network.

Attached householders think, “Establishing a house and home will make us happy. We will find ourselves some servants and will understand everything we want to know through mental and intellectual exertions.” To desire to become politicians, literateurs, scholars, aristocrats, philanthropists, national leaders, or meritorious workers is simply an attempt to master the illusory energy. But Prahlada Maharaja warned us not to engage our senses in external activity or to aspire for selfish interest.

We think we have become masters in this world because we have become attached to family life and have accepted the body as the self. We think the material world and everything in it is meant for our enjoyment. Our conception is that the earth, water, fire, air, ether, sun, moon, planets, stars, animals, birds, trees, and creepers—all have been placed here



for our enjoyment. Along with that idea, we think everyone and everything here has been designed simply to serve us. We never think about the actual purpose of this material world: everything here is intended to be used as an ingredient for the Supreme Lord's worship. If we are not worshiping Lord Hari, we have no right to take even a blade of grass from this world.

### **Why is this material world full of miseries?**

The Lord says, "I have arranged all these miseries and dangers not to give you trouble, but to teach you that the material aspirations which are the causes of such miseries are unnecessary and that you should instead search after supremely desirable eternal happiness."

### **What is Maya?**

Maya mean "that which is not." Maya is that which we can measure. All temporary perishable objects are Maya. That which is not the Supreme Lord is Maya. The Supreme Lord is Maya's controller and no one can measure Him. According to the Christians, Godhead is separate from Satan, but the Maya described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is not like that. According to the *Bhāgavata* school Maya is present in the Supreme Lord, although she is ashamed of her role, which is to rectify the living entities who are averse to Krishna by punishing them.

### **What is meant by "the ascending path"?**

The ascending path can be compared to Ravana's attempt to build a staircase to heaven. Such "uphill work" is a most puzzling task. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has instructed us to reject uphill work, which is exemplified by Ravana's attempt to build a staircase to heaven.

There are two ways to look at things. One can try to forcibly see the sun at night with the help of a lamp, or one can wait until sunrise and see the sun with the help of the sunshine itself. If a person desires material prosperity, he is bound to adopt the ascending path. If one wants to tread the path of *jñāna*, *karma*, or *yoga*, he must make much endeavour. Still, the ascending path will always remain incomplete. A twenty-year civilization or experience

will prove faulty and incomplete before a one hundred-year civilization or experience. Two hundred years of experience may seem silly in the face of a thousand years of experience. Intelligent persons do not follow the ascending path but the descending path, which is based on real experience.

### **Does anyone in this world respect a real devotee?**

In a world full of cheaters, cheaters are respected. Pure devotees who do not misguide people are rarely respected in this world. It has become fashionable to be cheated by those who misguide people in the name of *hari-kathā*. Genuine devotees and those who expose non-devotees are often mistaken for ordinary people because non-devotees and cheaters mislead ordinary people by calling these devotees thieves. In this way they try to sustain their own cheating. The illusory energy does not allow the living entities to become sincere at any cost. Therefore she arranges various tricks to keep people away from the association of real devotees.

—*Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda* » Compiled by *Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja* » Adapted and Published by *Īśvaradāsa* » Translated from Bengali by *Bhumipatidāsa*.

### **ONE'S CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION**

*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

### **How is the misconception regarding one's constitutional position destroyed and how does a person revive his constitutional position and cultivate Krishna consciousness ?**

"The misconception regarding one's constitutional position is not eradicated in a single day. It gradually vanquishes as one cultivates Krishna consciousness. The constitutional position of a living entity is that he is an eternal servant of Krishna. Cultivation of Krishna consciousness with this conviction is the actual cultivation of Krishna consciousness. The science of self realization is awakened within the heart by the mercy of the spiritual master. A disciple should try to realize his constitutional position with utmost care otherwise his first



obstacle in the path of spiritual life will not be destroyed. “

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 9/9

### How would material desires be removed from the heart?

“If one has material desires in his heart, then with all humility he should reluctantly accept them and continue to worship the Lord without any duplicity. Within a short period of time the Lord will sit in one’s heart, and thereafter remove all material desires and arouse the longing for His loving service.”

—Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 1/7

### How are *bhāva* and *prema* awakened?

“While cultivating the holy names of Hari, by the strength of the association of the saintly persons the state of *bhāva* is awakened. If one continues to cultivate the chanting of the holy names then gradually one’s dormant love for Krishna (*prema*) is awakened. As *prema* manifests liberation herself personally appears before a devotee as a secondary fruit of his chanting.”

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 9/9

### How can one get freedom from the influence of offenses against the holy names and how does the stage of *Nāmābhāsa* manifest?

“By the mercy of the spiritual master the stage of *Nāmāparādha* is destroyed and one is protected from the offenses in chanting the holy names.”

—Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 6/4

### What is the essence of various methods of *bhajana*?

“Among all methods of *bhajana* the chanting of the holy names of Hari is the essence.”

—Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 3/3.

### How does one develop a taste for chanting the holy names and achieve unalloyed devotional service in the form of taking complete shelter of the holy names?

“Mere belief in the science of the holy names or studying about them in the scriptures is not

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

enough to awaken spiritual consciousness. Only if we practically apply the conclusions of the scriptures will we get the desired result. Those who do not chant the holy names even after understanding their glories are without offense. Such people do not develop a taste for chanting the holy names because their faith is weak due to bad association. Therefore they are inevitably make offense at the feet of the holy names. The auspicious path is that one should nullify all one’s offenses by associating with the devotees of the Lord thus take shelter of the holy names without duplicity. If one carefully chants the holy names offenselessly then in a very short time the pure holy name blissfully appears within his heart. Gradually the bliss experienced by such pure chanting increases in such a way that one does not wish to give up chanting at any time. This is the method of taking complete shelter of the holy names. “

—Sajjana Toṣaṇī 11/5

—Bhaktivinoda Vānī Vaibhāva, Published by Īśvaradāsa.



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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