



Śrī Pāsānkuṣa Ekādaśī

Issue no:171

16th Oct 2021

## A DISCUSSION ON OFFENCES

AMBARISA MAHARAJA  
OFFENDED BY DURVASA MUNI  
*Srila Sukadeva Goswami*

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**Sukadeva Goswami said:** The son of Nabhaga named Nabhaga lived for a long time at the place of his spiritual master. Therefore, his brothers thought that he was not going to become a householder and would not return. Consequently, without providing a share for him, they divided the property of their father among themselves. When Nabhaga returned from the place of his spiritual master, they gave him their father as his share. Nabhaga inquired, “My dear brothers, what have you given to me as my share of our father’s property?” His elder brothers answered, “We have kept our father as your share.” But when Nabhaga went to his father and said, “My dear father, my elder brothers have given you as my share of property,” whereupon the father replied, “My dear son, do not rely upon their cheating words. I am not your property.” Nabhaga’s father said: All the descendants of Angira are now going to perform a great sacrifice, but although they are very intelligent, on every sixth day they will be bewildered in their performance of sacrifice and will make mistakes in their daily duties. Nabhaga’s father continued: “Go to those great souls and describe two Vedic hymns pertaining to Vaisvadeva. When the great sages have completed the sacrifice and are going to the heavenly planets, they will give you the remnants of the money they have received from the sacrifice. Therefore, go there immediately.” Thus, Nabhaga acted exactly according to the advice of his father, and the great sages of the Angira dynasty gave him all their wealth and then ascended to the heavenly planets.

Thereafter, while Nabhaga was accepting the riches, a dark-looking person from the north came to him and said, “All the wealth from this sacrificial arena belongs to me.”

Nabhaga then said, “These riches belong to me. The great saintly persons have delivered them to me.” When Nabhaga said this, the dark-looking person replied, “Let us go to your father and ask him to settle our disagreement.” In accordance with this, Nabhaga in-quired from his father. The father of Nabhaga said: Whatever the great sages sacrificed in the arena of the *Dakṣa-yajña*,

they offered to Lord Siva as his share. Therefore, everything in the sacrificial arena certainly belongs to Lord Siva. Thereupon, after offering obeisance to Lord Siva, Nabhaga said: O worshipable lord, everything in this arena of sacrifice is yours. This is the assertion of my father. Now, with great respect, I bow my head before you, begging your mercy. Lord Siva said: What your father has said is the truth, and you also are speaking the same truth. Therefore, I, who know the Vedic *mantras* perfectly, shall explain transcendental knowledge to you. Lord Siva said, “Now you may take all the wealth remaining from the sacrifice, for I give it to you.” After saying this, Lord Siva, who always strictly adheres to religious principles, disappeared from that place. If one hears and chants or remembers this narration in the morning and evening with great attention, he certainly becomes learned, experienced in understanding the Vedic hymns, and expert in self-realization. From Nabhaga, Maharaja Ambarisa took birth. Maharaja Ambarisa was an exalted devotee, celebrated for his great merits. Although he was cursed by an infallible *brāhmaṇa*, the curse could not touch him.

**King Parikṣit inquired:** O great personality, Maharaja Ambarisa was certainly most exalted and meritorious in character. I wish to hear about him. How surprising it is that the curse of a *brāhmaṇa*, which is insurmountable, could not act upon him.

**Sukadeva Goswami said:** Maharaja Ambarisa, the most fortunate personality, achieved the rule of the entire world, consisting of seven islands. He also achieved inexhaustible, unlimited opulence and prosperity on earth. Although such a position is rarely obtained, Maharaja Ambarisa did not care for it at all, for he knew very well that all such opulence is material. Like that which is imagined in a dream, such opulence will ultimately be destroyed. The King knew that any non-devotee who attains such opulence merges increasingly into material nature’s mode of darkness. Maharaja Ambarisa was a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, and of the saintly persons who are the Lord’s devotees. Because of this devotion, he thought of the entire universe as being as insignificant as a piece of stone. Maharaja Ambarisa always engaged his mind in meditating upon the lotus

feet of Krishna, his words in describing the glories of the Lord, his hands in cleansing the Lord's temple, and his ears in hearing the words spoken by Krishna or about Krishna. He employed his eyes in seeing the Deity of Krishna, Krishna's temples and Krishna's places like Mathura and Vrindavana, he engaged his sense of touch in touching the bodies of the Lord's devotees. He used his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of *tulasī* offered to the Lord, and he engaged his tongue in tasting the Lord's *prasāda*. He used his legs to walk to the holy places and temples of the Lord, his head in bowing down before the Lord, and all his desires in serving the Lord, twenty-four hours a day. Indeed, Maharaja Ambarisa never desired anything for his own sense gratification. He used all his senses in devotional service, in various engagements related to the Lord. This is the way to increase attachment for the Lord and be completely free from all material desires. In performing his prescribed duties as king, Maharaja Ambarisa always offered the results of his royal activities to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, who is the enjoyer of all things and is beyond the perception of material senses. He certainly took advice from *brāhmaṇas* who were faithful devotees of the Lord, and thus he ruled the planet earth without difficulty. In desert countries where the river Sarasvati flowed, Maharaja Ambarisa performed great sacrifices like the *aśvamedha-yajña* and thus satisfied the master of all *yajñas*, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Such sacrifices were performed with great opulence and suitable paraphernalia and with appropriate remunerations (*dakṣiṇā*) to the *brāhmaṇas*, who were supervised by great personalities like Vasistha, Asita and Gautama, and who represented the king, the performer of those sacrifices. In the sacrifice arranged by Maharaja Ambarisa, the members of the assembly and the priests were splendidly attired, and they all looked exactly like demigods. They eagerly tended to the proper performance of the *yajña*. The citizens of the state of Maharaja Ambarisa were accustomed to chanting and hearing about the glorious activities of the Personality of Godhead. Thus, they never aspired to be elevated to the heavenly planets, which are extremely dear even to the demigods. Those whose hearts are saturated with the transcendental happiness of rendering service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead are uninterested even in the achieve-

ments of great mystics, for such achievements do not match the transcendental bliss felt by a devotee who always thinks of Krishna within the core of his heart. The king of this planet, Maharaja Ambarisa, thus performed devotional service to the Lord and in this endeavour practiced severe austerity. Always satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead by his constitutional activities, he gradually gave up all material desires. Maharaja Ambarisa gave up all of his attachment to household affairs, wives, children, friends and relatives, to the best of powerful elephants, to beautiful chariots, carts, horses and inexhaustible jewels, and to ornaments, garments and an inexhaustible treasury. He gave up attachment to all of them, regarding them as temporary and material. Being very pleased by the unalloyed devotion of Maharaja Ambarisa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gave the King His disc, which is fearful to enemies and which always protects the devotee from enemies and adversities.

To worship Lord Krishna, Maharaja Ambarisa, along with his queen, who was equally qualified, observed the vow of *Ekādaśī* and *Dvādaśī* for one year. During that vow, in the month of *Kārttika*, having observed a fast for three nights and having bathed in the river Yamuna, Maharaja Ambarisa worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, in Madhuvana. Following the standard principles of that worship (*mahābhīṣeka*), Maharaja Ambarisa performed the bathing ceremony for the Deity of Lord Krishna with all kinds of paraphernalia, and then he dressed the Deity with fine clothing, ornaments, fragrant flower garlands and other paraphernalia for worship of the Lord. With attention and devotion, he worshiped Lord Krishna and then many greatly fortunate *brāhmaṇas* who were internally free from material desires. Thereafter, Maharaja Ambarisa satisfied all the guests who arrived at his house, especially the *brāhmaṇas*. He gave in charity sixty crores of cows whose horns were gold plated and whose hooves were silver plated. All the cows were well decorated with garments and had full milk bags. They were mild-natured, young and beautiful and were accompanied by their calves. After giving these cows, the King first sumptuously fed all the *brāhmaṇas*, and when they were fully satisfied, he was about to observe the end of *Ekādaśī* with their permission, by breaking the fast. Exactly at

that time, however, Durvasa Muni, the great and powerful mystic, appeared at that place as an unexpected guest.

After standing up to receive Durvasa Muni, King Ambarisa offered him a seat and paraphernalia of worship. Then, sitting at his feet, the King requested the great sage to eat. Durvasa Muni gladly accepted the request of Maharaja Ambarisa, but in order to perform the standard ritualistic ceremonies he first went to the river Yamuna. There he dipped into the water of the auspicious Yamuna and meditated upon the impersonal Brahman. In the meantime, only a short time of the *Dvādaśī* day was left in which to break the fast. Consequently, it was imperative that the fast be broken immediately. In this dangerous situation, the King consulted learned *brāhmaṇas*.

**The King said:** “To transgress the laws of respectful behaviour toward the *brāhmaṇas* is certainly a great offence. On the other hand, if one does not observe the breaking of the fast within the time of *Dvādaśī*, there is a flaw in one’s observance of the vow. Therefore, O *brāhmaṇas*, if you think that it will be auspicious and not irreligious, I shall break the fast by drinking water.” In this way, after consulting with the *brāhmaṇas*, the King reached this decision, for according to brahminical opinion, drinking water may be accepted as eating and also as not eating. O best of the Kuru dynasty, after he drank some water, King Ambarisa, meditating upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead within his heart, waited for the return of the great mystic Durvasa Muni. After executing the ritualistic ceremonies to be performed at noon, Durvasa returned from the bank of the Yamuna. The King received him well, offering all respects, but Durvasa Muni, by his mystic power, could understand that King Ambarisa drank water without his permission. Still hungry, Durvasa Muni, his body trembling, his face curved and his eyebrows crooked in a frown, angrily spoke as follows to King Ambarisa, who stood before him with folded hands. Alas, just see the behaviour of this cruel man! He is not at all a devotee of Lord Visnu. Being proud of his material opulence and his position, he considers himself God. Just see how he has transgressed the laws of religion. Maharaja Ambarisa, you have invited me to eat as a guest, but instead of feeding me, you

yourself have eaten first. Because of your misbehaviour, I shall show you something to punish you. As Durvasa Muni said this, his face became red with anger. Uprooting some matted locks from his head, he created a demon resembling the blazing fire of devastation in order to punish Maharaja Ambarisa. Taking a trident in his hand and making the surface of the earth tremble with his footsteps, that blazing creature came before Maharaja Ambarisa. But the King, upon seeing him, was not disturbed at all and did not move even slightly from his position. As fire in the forest immediately burns to ashes an angry snake, so, by the previous order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His disc, the Sudarsana cakra, to protect the Lord’s devotee, immediately burned to ashes that mystically created demon. Upon seeing that his own attempt had failed and that the Sudarsana cakra was moving toward him, Durvasa Muni himself became very frightened and began to run in all directions to save his life. As the blazing flames of a forest fire pursue a snake, the disc of the Supreme Personality of Godhead began following the sage. Durvasa Muni saw that the disc was almost touching his back, and thus he ran very swiftly, desiring to enter a cave of Sumeru Mountain. In order to save his life, Durvasa Muni fled everywhere in all directions, in the sky, on the surface of the earth, in caves, in the ocean, on different planets of the rulers of the three worlds, and even on the heavenly planets. However, wherever he went he immediately saw following him the unbearable fire of the Sudarsana cakra. With a fearful heart, Durvasa Muni went everywhere seeking shelter, but when he could find no shelter, he finally approached Lord Brahma and said, “O my lord, O Lord Brahma, kindly protect me from the blazing Sudarsana cakra sent by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

**Lord Brahma said:** “At the end of the *dvi-parārdha*, when His pastimes Lord come to an end, Lord Visnu, by a flick of His eyebrows, vanquishes the entire universe, including our places of residence. Such personalities as myself and Lord Siva, as well as Daksa, Bhrigu and similar great saints of which they are the head, and also the rulers of the living entities, the rulers of human society and the rulers of the demigods all of us surrender to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Visnu,

bowing our heads, to carry out His orders for the benefit of all living entities.

When Durvasa, who was greatly afflicted by the blazing fire of the Sudarsana cakra, was thus refused by Lord Brahma, he tried to take shelter of Lord Siva, who always resides on his planet, known as Kailasa.

**Lord Siva said:** My dear son, I, Lord Brahma and the other demigods, who rotate within this universe under the misconception of our greatness, cannot exhibit any power to compete with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for innumerable universes and their inhabitants come into existence and are annihilated by the simple direction of the Lord.

Past, present and future are known to me [Lord Siva], Sanat-kumara, Narada, the most revered Lord Brahma, Kapila [the son of Devahuti], Aparatarama [Lord Vyasadeva], Devala, Yamaraja, Asuri, Marici and many saintly persons headed by him, as well as many others who have achieved perfection. Nonetheless, because even we ourselves are covered by the illusory energy of the Lord, we cannot understand how expansive that illusory energy is. You should simply approach the Supreme Personality of Godhead to get relief, for this Sudarsana cakra is intolerable even to us. Go to Lord Visnu. He will certainly be kind enough to bestow all good fortune upon you. Thereafter, being disappointed even in taking shelter of Lord Siva, Durvasa Muni went to Vaikuntha-dhama, where the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Narayana, resides with His consort, the goddess of fortune. Durvasa Muni, the great mystic, scorched by the heat of the Sudarsana cakra, fell at the lotus feet of Narayana. His body trembling, he spoke as follows: O infallible, unlimited Lord, protector of the entire universe, You are the only desirable objective for all devotees. I am a great offender, my Lord. Please give me protection. O my Lord, O supreme controller, without knowledge of Your unlimited prowess I have offended Your most dear devotee. Very kindly save me from the reaction of this offence. You can do everything, for even if a person is fit for going to hell, You can deliver him simply by awakening within his heart the holy name of Your Lordship.

**The Supreme Personality of Godhead said to the brāhmaṇa:** I am completely under the control

of My devotees. Indeed, I am not at all independent. Because My devotees are completely devoid of material desires, I sit only within the cores of their hearts. What to speak of My devotee, even those who are devotees of My devotee are very dear to Me. O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, without saintly persons for whom I am the only destination, I do not desire to enjoy My transcendental bliss and My supreme opulence. Since pure devotees give up their homes, wives, children, relatives, riches and even their lives simply to serve Me, without any desire for material improvement in this life or in the next, how can I give up such devotees at any time? As chaste women bring their gentle husbands under control by service, the pure devotees, who are equal to everyone and completely attached to Me in the core of the heart, bring Me under their full control. My devotees, who are always satisfied to be engaged in My loving service, are not interested even in the four kinds of liberation [*sālokya*, *sārūpya*, *sāmīpya* and *sārṣṭi*], although these are automatically achieved by their service. What then is to be said of such perishable happiness as elevation to the higher planetary systems? The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything else but Me, and I do not know anyone else but them. O *brāhmaṇa*, let Me now advise you for your own protection. Please hear from Me. By offending Maharaja Ambarisa, you have acted with self-envy. Therefore, you should go to him immediately, without a moment's delay. One's so-called prowess, when employed against the devotee, certainly harms he who employs it. Thus, it is the subject, not the object, who is harmed.

For a *brāhmaṇa*, austerity and learning are certainly auspicious, but when acquired by a person who is not gentle, such austerity and learning are most dangerous. O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, you should therefore go immediately to King Ambarisa, the son of Maharaja Nabhaga. I wish you all good fortune. If you can satisfy Maharaja Ambarisa, then there will be peace for you.

- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Canto 09: "Liberation" > Chapter 04 Ambarisa Maharaja Offended by Durvasa Muni > Verses: 1-71, Translations by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.



### A DISCUSSION ON OFFENCES

*His Divine Grace*

*A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

Since Durvasa Muni wanted to chastise Maharaja Ambarisa, it is to be understood that he wanted to give pain to the heart of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for the Lord says, *sādhavo hṛdayam mahyam*: "The pure devotee is always within the core of My heart." The Lord's feelings are like those of a father, who feels pain when his child is in pain. Therefore, offensive behaviour towards a devotee is serious. Caitanya Mahaprabhu has very strongly recommended that one should not commit any offence at the lotus feet of a devotee. Such offences are compared to a mad elephant because when a mad elephant enters a garden it causes devastation. Therefore, one should be extremely careful not to commit offences at the lotus feet of a pure devotee. Actually, Maharaja Ambarisa was not at all at fault; Durvasa Muni unnecessarily wanted to chastise him on flimsy grounds. Maharaja Ambarisa wanted to complete the *Ekādaśī-pāraṇa* as part of devotional service to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore he drank a little water. Although Durvasa Muni was a great mystic *brāhmaṇa*, he did not now understand all things clearly. That is the difference between a pure devotee and

Bhāgavata Mahāvīdyālaya

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

a so-called learned scholar of Vedic knowledge. The devotees, being always situated in the core of the Lord's heart, surely get all instructions directly from the Lord, as confirmed by the Lord Himself in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.11):

*teṣāṁ evānukampārtham  
aham ajñāna-jaṁ tamah  
nāśayāmy ātma-bhāvastho  
jñāna-dīpena bhāsvatā*

"Out of compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance." The devotee does not do anything not sanctioned by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As it is said, *vaiṣṇavera kriyā mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya* [Cc. *Madhya* 23.39]. Even the most learned or experienced person cannot understand the movements of a *Vaiṣṇava*, a pure devotee. No one, therefore, should criticize a pure *Vaiṣṇava*. A *Vaiṣṇava* knows his own business perfectly well. Whatever he does is perfectly correct right because he is always guided by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

- *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Canto 09: "Liberation" > Chapter 04 Ambarisa Maharaja Offended by Durvasa Muni > Verse: 69, Purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.*

### WHAT IS AN OFFENCE?

*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

#### 1. Why are offences very grave?

"If one disregards and disrespects the *Vaiṣṇavas* he commits an offence. Sinful reactions are nullified simply by undergoing ordinary atonement; but offence is not nullified as easily. The sin is committed by both gross and subtle bodies. An offence is degradation to one's quest of self-realization. Therefore, those who desire to worship the Supreme Lord must be always vigilant to avoid committing any offence."

- (*Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 5/2)

#### 2. What is an offence?

"When sinful activities are committed against the saintly persons and the Supreme Lord, it is called

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an offence. Offences are very grave and therefore must be given up by all means.”

- (Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 2/5)

### 3. Is it possible to attain *Kṛṣṇa-prema* if one commits offences?

“One who does not attain love of God after worshiping Krishna birth after birth has certainly committed heaps of offences because simply by chanting Krishna's name without offences can one attain *Kṛṣṇa-prema*.”

- (Navadvīpa Mahātmya Chapter 1)

### 4. Who are offenders at the feet of *Bhakti Devī*?

“Being induced by propensities that are detrimental to devotional service like envy, hatred, pride or desire for fame, those who criticize others, are offenders at the feet of *Bhakti Devī*.”

- (Sajjana Toṣaṇī 10/10)

### 5. How do the *madhyama adhikārīs* commit offences against the *Vaiṣṇavas*?

“The category of pure *Vaiṣṇavas* begins with *madhyama adhikārīs* because their goal of life is to serve the *Vaiṣṇavas*. If *madhyama adhikārīs* give up the considerations of *Vaiṣṇava* and *non-Vaiṣṇava*, then they commit an offence against the *Vaiṣṇavas*.”

- (Harināma Cintāmani)

### 6. What is more offensive than a *Vaiṣṇava aparādha*?

“For a living entity there is no offence graver than an offence committed against the *Vaiṣṇavas*.”

- (Sajjana Toṣaṇī 2/6)

### 7. Where is the test of persons who consider that the *Vaiṣṇavas* belong to a particular caste?

“Those who become averse to accepting the remnants of a pure *Vaiṣṇava* by considering him to be belonging to a particular caste are cheaters and as such they cannot be counted as *Vaiṣṇavas*. For those who are proud of their respectable caste, accepting remnants of *Vaiṣṇavas* is how their faith and humility is tested.”

- (Prema Pradīpa Ray 7)

### 7. Why is it improper to consider that the *Vaiṣṇavas* belong to a particular caste?

“If you are really afraid of cheating your own progress to self realisation, then you should never consider that the *Vaiṣṇavas* belong to a particular caste.”

- (Sajjana Toṣaṇī 9/9)

### 8. Is criticizing a *Vaiṣṇava* an offence?

“One who criticizes a *Vaiṣṇava*'s caste, a *Vaiṣṇava* who unknowingly commits an offence, a *Vaiṣṇava*'s almost destroyed faults, and a *Vaiṣṇava*'s sinful behaviour prior to his surrender, is certainly a blasphemer of a *Vaiṣṇava*. Such a person will never develop a taste for chanting the Lord's holy names. A pure *Vaiṣṇava* is he who has taken shelter of pure devotional service. The above-mentioned four types of faults may be occasionally found in him; but there is no possibility of having any other faults in him. “

- (Harināma Cintāmani)

- Bhaktivinoda Vani Vaibhava Published by Isvara dasa

### THE WEAK-WILLED AND THE OFFENDERS Sṛila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura

The weak-willed practitioner and the offender are not the same. Although weak-hardheartedness may eventually become an offence, such persons do have a hatred for sinful activities and offence. Despite the fact that the weak-willed know that committing sinful activities and offences is unlawful, they are unable to give them up. Offenders however, never consider such activities unlawful. They think whatever they do or understand is good and whatever the saints say is wrong. Weak-willed people should give up material desires by condemning them, not embracing them with love and taste. Then they will certainly attain Krishna's mercy. Otherwise they too will be deprived of Krishna's mercy.

- Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality of His Divine Grace  
Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada; Compiled by Sripada Bahkti  
Mayukha Bhagavat Maharaja; Adapted and Published by Isvara dasa; Translated  
from Bengali by Bhumipati Dasa, Touchstone Media.

PUNDARIKA VIDHYANIDHI  
AND GADADHARA PANDITA  
Sri Vrindavan das Thakura

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

ei-mata kata-kṣaṇa prema prakāśiyā  
ānande mūrchita hai' thākilā paḍiyā

When Pundarika Vidhyanidhi heard the description of devotional service from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, he began to weep. The unprecedented flow of tears from his eyes appeared like an incarnation of Gangadevi. All the symptoms of ecstatic love like tears, shivering, perspiration, losing consciousness, hairs standing on end, and loud shouting simultaneously manifested in his body.

Immediately upon hearing the singer Mukunda's recitation of the glories of devotional service, Pundarika Vidhyanidhi became absorbed in ecstasy and the eight genuine transformations of ecstatic love manifested in his body.

He roared loudly while exclaiming, "Go on reciting! Go on reciting!" He could not remain steady and fell to the ground. He broke all the surrounding paraphernalia by the kicking of his feet. Nothing was spared. What happened to the opulent *pan* container and the carefully prepared *pan*? What happened to the waterpots that were used for drinking water?

*kothāya paḍila giyāśayyā padāghāte  
premāveṣe divya-vastra cire dui hāte*

Where did the bed fall by the kick of his feet? Out of ecstatic love, he tore apart his opulent clothes with his two hands. What happened to his opulently styled hair as he rolled on the ground and cried profusely? "O Krishna, O my Lord! O Krishna, O my life and soul! You have made my heart hard like wood or stone." He lamented and cried loudly, "In Your present incarnation I have been deceived." He fell to the ground and rolled about so forcefully that everyone thought, "Have his bones been broken to pieces?"

He shivered so vigorously out of ecstatic love that even ten men could not hold him still. Clothes, bedding, waterpots, bowls, and all other paraphernalia were smashed by the kicking of his feet. There was not a single item spared. All of his servants then pacified him and tried to recover whatever was left.

After revealing his ecstatic love for some time in this way, he remained lying there unconscious in ecstasy.

Vidyanidhi was completely merged in an ocean of bliss with no symptom of life manifest in his entire body. After seeing this, Gadadhara was struck with wonder and became somewhat worried. "I have disrespected such a great personality. At what inauspicious time did I come to see him?"

On seeing Vidyanidhi *Mahāśaya's* opulent paraphernalia and his expertise in enjoying those items, Gadadhara Pandita concluded that he was devoid of devotional service to the Lord. However, seeing Vidyanidhi's exhibition of indifference towards those items and his ecstatic transformations of love upon hearing Mukunda's recitation about the mercy Krishna bestowed on Putana produced astonishment in Gadadhara's heart.

Gadadhara knew how ordinary foolish people are absorbed in enjoying form, taste, smell, sound, and touch and so he was struck with wonder after witnessing how Vidyanidhi *Mahāśaya* was completely aloof from those objects while remaining in their proximity. Gadadhara also realised how Pundarika Vidhyanidhi remained always anxious for the service of Krishna on the strength of his internal tendency. And after Gadadhara understood that he had considered such a *mahā-bhāgavata* equal to an ordinary materialist, he became worried, thinking that he had committed *vaiṣṇava-aparādha*.

Gadadhara Pandita embraced Mukunda with great satisfaction and bathed him in tears of love saying, "O Mukunda, you have acted as my real friend, for you have shown me the great devotee Vidyanidhi Bhattacarya.

Pundarika Vidhyanidhi was actually "*Bhakti Vidyanidhi*." Generally people simply called him "Vidyanidhi." By realizing the actual position of *Bhakti Vidyanidhi*, Gadadhara established the distinction between the vision of the devotees and that of the foolish materialists. Those who have no faith in the characteristics of the Lord's devotees often consider the activities of the non-devotees as equal to the activities of the devotees.

Pundarika and Gadadhara enacted this pastime in *Śrī Gaura-līlā* to exhibit the insignificance of non-devotees who exhibit ignorance in not discriminating between devotees and non-devotees. Such insignificant personalities who fall into illusion because of willfully not understanding why the members of Sri Navadvipa-dhama *Pracāriṇī-sabhā* and the servants of *Śrī Viśva-vaiṣṇava Rāja-sabhā* respect devotees by awarding them titles indicating their level of devotional service.

Gadadhara Pandita told Mukunda, “Is there another *Vaiṣṇava* like him in the three worlds? In fact, the three worlds become purified by seeing his devotional service. I was able to avoid a great danger because you were with me.”

Mukunda gave Gadadhara Pandita the opportunity to see Pundarika Vidhyanidhi’s devotional mood and destroyed the danger from the *vaiṣṇava-aparādha* of seeing the great *Vaiṣṇava* Pundarika as an ordinary person. In his pastime of pretending to see Vidyanidhi on the same level as a gross materialist, Gadadhara Pandita spoke this statement out of gratitude for Mukunda’s recitation.

If materialists cannot understand the activities and behaviour of *Vaiṣṇavas*, then they will commit mistakes at every moment and accumulate heaps of offences against the *Vaiṣṇavas*. But if they are pious enough, then they will not commit *vaiṣṇava-aparādha* and thereby become misguided. One cannot obtain the result of *yukta-vairāgya*, proper renunciation, through *phalgu-vairāgya*, false renunciation. Rather, one simply accumulates offences resulting from a lack of proper vision. Since devotees under the shelter of Sri Caitanya understand the difference between *yukta-vairāgya* and *phalgu-vairāgya*, they are superior in all respects to the ordinary, foolish, greedy people of this world. Only they are capable of acting as spiritual masters of the entire world. Persons with material vision who are not under the subordination of Sri Caitanyadeva glorify their own foolishness.

Gadadhara Pandita continued, “On seeing his materialistic appearance, I considered him a materialistic *Vaiṣṇava*. You understood my mind and kindly revealed the deep devotional mood of Pundarika.”

*Vaiṣṇavas* are always free from material enjoyment. Those unfortunate souls who are averse to the truth become devoid of faith in the *Vaiṣṇava*

*guru* on seeing his external dress. A materialist is busy enjoying material objects like form and taste. But even though devotees of the Lord who are devoid of material enjoyment are identified by ordinary people as enjoyers of material objects, they are situated far away from material enjoyment. Krishna alone is the *viśaya*, the object of the devotees’ enjoyment. They have no other propensity than the service of Krishna. Not understanding this, materialists consider that devotees are situated on the same platform as themselves. To superficially view a *Vaiṣṇava* dressed as a materialist and consider him a materialist is the source of offences. The way that unqualified observers viewed Sri Gaurasundara, the covered incarnation, and His associates has produced the beliefs of the *prākṛta-sahajiyās* who are offenders and are devoid of devotional service to the Lord.

To not understand Pundarika Vidhyanidhi as a *Vaiṣṇava*, and to consider him a materialist on seeing his external behaviour and his being surrounded by items of enjoyment is simply the result of ignorance. Knowing this, it was necessary for Mukunda to recite the verses about Putana before Pundarika to save Gadadhara Pandita from his ignorance.

- *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* - *Srila Vṛndavana dasa Thakura Madhya-khaṇḍa* 7.92 – 102, including the purport of Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura. Published by Pundarika Vidhyanidhi dasa

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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*Bhāgavata Mahāvīdyālaya*

is a branch of

International Society for Krishna Consciousness

Founder-Acarya: His Divine Grace

A.C. *Bhakti*Vedānta Swami Prabhupada

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