



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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FAITH AND THE GURU'S QUALIFICATION

*His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

If one has got unflinching faith in his spiritual master and Krishna, then he's successful. If the guru is false, then how they can keep their faith? That will be broken. (Conversation in Detroit 14 June 1976)

... [W]hen there is doubt you must go to a guru. Now who is a guru? The definition is there. Just like who is a medical practitioner. The medical practitioner is one who has passed his medical examination — that is his qualification — and he is actually working in some hospital. Then you can see, “Yes. Here is a medical practitioner.” Similarly, the Vedic injunction is that to clear your doubts you must go to a guru. Who is a guru? Brahma-*niṣṭham* — a guru is one who is fully convinced in the absolute truth. One who is fully Krishna conscious, he is guru. So you have to begin, “Here is a man who is talking only of Krishna consciousness.” Then he may be accepted. There may be pseudo-gurus. Just like you have to go to a physician, but if the man is a fraud, that is your misfortune. But God is in everyone's heart. He leads. If you are actually sincere and serious he will take you to the real guru. That is God's grace — *guru-kṛṣṇa-kṛpāya pāya* [Cc. *madhya*19.151]. Krishna is also working. He is seeing



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

how much you are sincere. If you are serious, then he will lead you — “Here is a perfect person.” ❀ Room conversation in London, 5 August 1973.)

SHORTCOMINGS OF THE PATH OF DRY ARGUMENT

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta
Saraswati Thakur Prabhupada*

As long as people accept the path of dry argument, they cannot find a bona fide spiritual master. The path of argument causes us to doubt the fact that there cannot be any truth superior to or separate from the spiritual master’s teachings. Those who follow the path of argument disregard the spiritual master. The spiritual master alone is capable of removing all doubts and misconceptions. Dry argument has no foundation or standing. The truth received through disciplic succession does not change. The spiritual master gives us that unchangeable truth. The conception maintained in the argument-prone hearts of those who are envious of the spiritual master is disrespectful toward the guru and scriptures. ❀

— From *Amṛta-Vani*, collected teachings of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. Compiled in Bengali by Sri Bhakti Bhagavat Mayukha Maharaja. Adapted and translated into English by Bhumiapati Das and Isvara Das. Touchstone Media. Mumbai. 2004. Anecdote 34.

GURU CAN FREE THE DISCIPLE FROM DOUBT

Various Commentaries on Śrīmad- Bhāgavatam 11.3.21

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātām brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

A person who seriously desires real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him. The qualification of the bona fide guru is that he has realized the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.

Srila Sridhar Swami: [The disciple] should be desirous of knowing the highest benefit in life [i.e. the knowledge of the self]. [The guru] should be an expert in *śabda-brahma* or in the Vedas, having studied all its meanings. Otherwise the resolution of [the disciple’s] doubts will never occur. [The guru] should also be an expert in *para-brahma*, in

directly perceiving the absolute truth, otherwise he won’t be able to transmit such truth [to the disciple]. The symptoms of a person fixed in the *para-brahma* are given by the term *upaśamāśrayam*. (*Bhāvārtha-dīpikā*)

Srila Vishwanath Chakravarti Thakur: [The guru] should be expert (*niṣṇātām*) in realizing [the first type of *brahman*, i.e.] ‘*śabda brahman*’, which is the Vedas and other literature which explain the meanings of the Vedas. Otherwise, in situations where the disciple’s doubts have not been resolved, there will be bitterness in the disciple’s mind, and it is also possible that the disciple’s faith may slacken. [The guru should also be expert] in realizing [the second type of *brahman*, i.e.] ‘*para brahman*’, which means that he must be capable of directly experiencing the absolute truth. Otherwise the mercy that he bestows cannot be completely fruitful. The fact that such a guru is expert in *para brahman* is described by the term ‘*upaśamāśrayam*’. This term means that the guru should be free from the influence of anger, greed etc. (*Sārārtha-darśini-tikā*)

Srila Jiva Goswami: *śābde pare ca niṣṇātām* means, *śābde brahmaṇi vede tātparya-vicāreṇa niṣṇātām tathaiva niṣṭhām prāptam, pare brahmaṇi bhagavad-ādi-rūpāvīrbhāves tu aparokṣānubhavaṇa* — “One who is expert in explaining the purport of the Vedas, which are *śabda-brahma*, who has direct experience of *para-brahma* (the Supreme Brahman, Sri Krishna), and who is devoid of all material expectations and requirements should be accepted as a genuine spiritual master. One should take shelter of such a guru through the process of hearing in order to know the truth regarding *sādhana*, the means, and *sādhya*, the goal.” (*Bhakti-sandarbhā* 202) ❀

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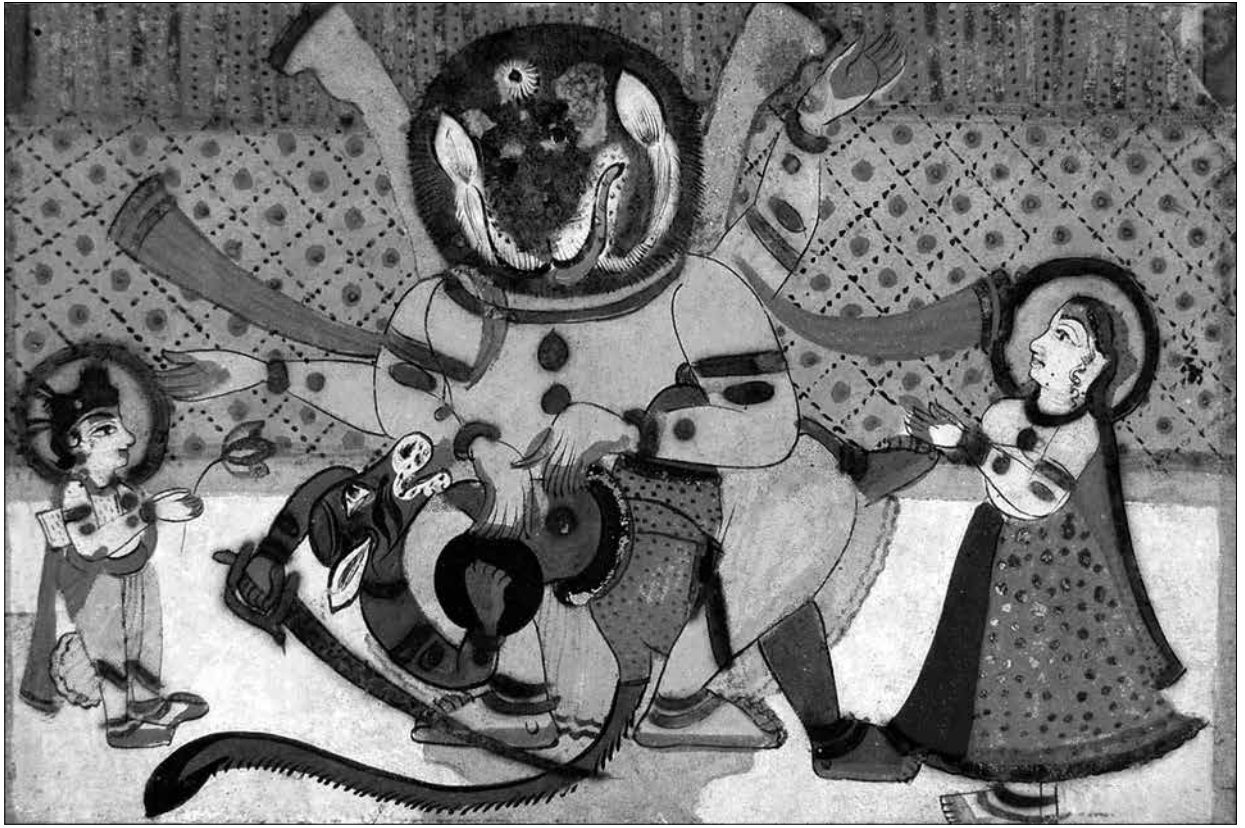
ALL GLORIES TO LORD NRISIMHA!

Assorted verses from Subhāṣita-ratna-bhāṇḍāgāram

*śatroḥ prāṇānilāḥ pañca vyaṁ daśa jayo ’tra kaḥ
iti kopād ivātāmrāḥ pāntu vo nṛharer nakhāḥ*

May the finger-nails of Narahari (Nrisimha), who are assuming a reddish color and are thinking, “The enemy has only five life-air while we are ten in number, so how can the enemy win against us?” protect you all!

North India, c. 1800. Unknown artist



Prahlad and Lakshmi offer prayers to the Lord

[**Translator's Note:** According to *āyurveda*, every mortal body has five life-airs. These airs are known as *prāṇa*, *udāna*, *vayāna*, *samāna* and *apāna*. When all

these life-airs, especially the *prāṇa*, depart from the body, the body dies.]

*daityāsthi-pañjara-vidāraṇa-labdha-randhra-
raktāmbu-nirjara-sarid ghana-jāta-paṅkāḥ
bāleṇdu-koṭi-kuṭilāḥ śuka-cañcu-bhāsāḥ
rakṣantu siṃha-vapuṣo nakharā harer vaḥ*

They have become as reddish as a parrot's beak due to contact with the blood flowing like a river from the crevices in the broken bones of the demon [Hiranyakashipu]. They appear curved like the waxing moon on the second day. May those fingernails of Hari, who assumed the form of a lion, protect you!

*caṭac caṭiti carmaṇi cchamiti cocchalac choṇite
dhagad dhag iti medasi sphuṭa-ravo 'sthiniṣṭhāg iti
punātu bhavato harer amara-vairī-vakṣa-sthala-
kvaṇat karaja-pañjara-krakaca-kāṣa-janmānalaḥ*

May the fire born out of the friction of the teeth of Hari's saw against the chest of the demon purify you! On the demon's skin, this fire made the noise, "*caṭa caṭa*". His flowing blood created the noise "*chama chama*". The fire burning his fat made a loud, "*dhaga dhaga*" sound, while the fire burning his bones, created a loud cracking sound, "*kaḍa kaḍa*".

[Translator's note: Lord Nrisimha's arm is compared to a saw and the fingernails attached to that arm are compared to the teeth of that saw.]

Pata-citra sstyle. Odisha. Unknown artist and date.



North Indian style. Unknown artist and date.



Nrisimha kills the daitya-king while Hiranyakasipu's army attacks

diśyāt sukhaṁ naraharir bhuvanaika vīro
yasyāhave diti-sutoddalanodyatasya
krodhoddhataṁ mukham avekṣitum akṣamatvaṁ
jāne 'bhavan nija-nakheṣv api yan natās te

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Even his own fingernails are not able to look at the angry face of Nrisimhadev, made angrier by the slaughter of Diti's son in battle. That is the reason why these nails are bent down [as if cowering away in fear]. May the sole hero of the universe named Narahari (Nrisimha) bestow happiness on you!

vapur dalana-sambhramāt sva-nakharaiṁ praviṣṭe ripau
kva yāta iti vismayāt prahita-locanas sarvataḥ
vṛtheti kara-tāḍanān nīpatitaṁ puro dānavaiṁ
nirīkṣya bhūvi reṇu-vaj jayati jāta-hāso hariḥ

Fearing the destruction of his body, the enemy [Hiranyakashipu] entered into Nrisimha's nails. Nrisimha, being astounded at this disappearing act, thought "Where is he? Where is he?" and looked everywhere. Not finding him, Nrisimha said, "Oh! It was all in vain!" and banged his palm [on the wall]. Thus the demon fell down like a speck of dust on the ground. Seeing him like this, the Lord laughed loudly. All glories to that Lord [Nrisimha]!

pūryanto jala-rāsayo vasumatī majjaty adho lupyate
pātālaiṁ śatadhā gataiṁ nīpatati brahmāṇḍa-khaṇḍam divaḥ
nikṣiptena sura-dviṣo 'sya vapuṣā matveti manye vahann
utsaṅgena hataiṁ hiranyakasipuṁ sinho hariḥ pātu vaḥ

"If I throw away the body of this enemy of the demigods, then the oceans will overflow, the earth will drown in the causal ocean, the lower planets will be destroyed, the universe will be shattered into pieces and the heavens will fall down." — Thinking like this, he kept bearing the body of dead Hiranyakashipu on his lap. May that Hari, who appeared as a lion, protect you all! 🙏

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the *Subhāṣita-ratna-bhāṇḍāgāram*. *Nṛsimha* section. Compiled by Kashinath Sharma.

BEYOND FAME,
INFAMY AND EXPECTATIONS

Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati's
Vṛndāvana-mahimāmṛtam (3.56)

mānāpamāna-koṭibhir akṣubhitātmā samasta-nirapekṣaḥ
vṛndāvana-bhūvi rādhā-nāgaram ārādhaye kadā muditaḥ

When in the land of Vrindavan will I happily worship the clever hero of Radha, patiently tolerating millions of waves of fame and infamy and not expecting anything from others?

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (www.granthamandira.com).