

GLORIES OF BHAGVATAM



This son of Vyāsadeva was only sixteen years old. His legs, hands, thighs, arms, shoulders, forehead and the other parts of his body were all delicately formed. His eyes were beautifully wide, and his nose and ears were highly raised. He had a very attractive face, and his neck was well formed and beautiful like a conch shell. He was blackish and very beautiful due to his youth. Because of the glamour of his body and his attractive smiles, he was pleasing to women.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit, bowed his head to receive the chief guest, Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

At that time all the ignorant women and boys ceased following Śrīla Śukadeva. Śukadeva Gosvāmī was then surrounded by saintly sages and demigods just as the moon is surrounded by stars, planets and other heavenly bodies. His presence was gorgeous, and he was respected by all. The sage Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī sat perfectly pacified, intelligent and ready to answer any question without hesitation. The great devotee, Mahārāja Parīkṣit, approached him, offered his respects by bowing before him, and politely inquired with sweet words and folded hands.

The fortunate King Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa, by your mercy only, you have sanctified us, making us like

unto places of pilgrimage, all by your presence here as my guest. By your mercy, we, who are but unworthy royalty, become eligible to serve the devotee.

Simply by our remembering you, our houses become instantly sanctified. Just as the atheist cannot remain in the presence of the Personality of Godhead, so also the invulnerable sins of a man are immediately vanquished in your presence, O saint! O great mystic!

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is very dear to the sons of King Pāṇḍu, has accepted me as one of those relatives just to please His great cousins and brothers. You are the spiritual master of great saints and devotees. I am therefore begging you to show the way of perfection for all persons, and especially for one who is about to die.

Please let me know what a man should hear, chant, remember and worship, and also what he should not do. Please explain all this to me.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: My dear King, your question is glorious because it is very beneficial to all kinds of people. The answer to this question is the prime subject matter for hearing, and it is approved by all transcendentalists.

Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O Emperor. The lifetime of such an envious householder is passed at night either in sleeping or in sex indulgence, and in the daytime either in making money or maintaining family members. Persons

devoid of ātma-tattva do not inquire into the problems of life, being too attached to the fallible soldiers like the body, children and wife. Although sufficiently experienced, they still do not see their inevitable destruction. O descendant of King Bharata, one who desires to be free from all miseries must hear about, glorify and also remember the Personality of Godhead, who is the Supersoul, the controller and the savior from all miseries. The highest perfection of human life, achieved either by complete knowledge of matter and spirit, by practice of mystic powers, or by perfect discharge of occupational duty, is to remember the Personality of Godhead at the end of life. At the end of the Dvāpara-yuga, I studied this great supplement of Vedic literature named Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is equal to all the Vedas, from my

father, Śrīla Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva. That very Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam I shall recite before you because you are the most sincere devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who gives full attention and respect to hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam achieves unflinching faith in the Supreme Lord, the giver of salvation.
