



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

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Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam

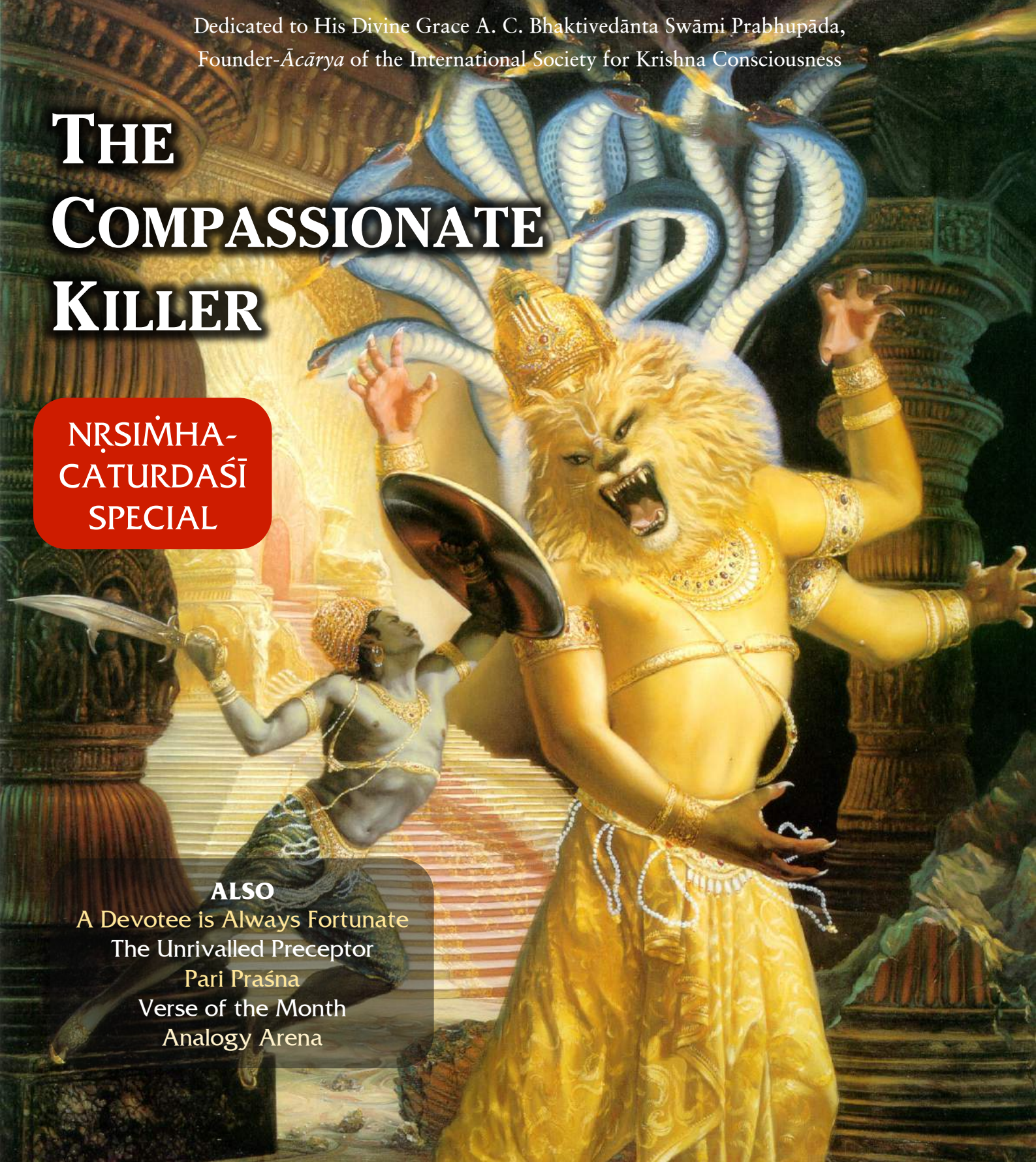
Dedicated to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda,
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

THE COMPASSIONATE KILLER

**NṚSIMHA-
CATURDAŚĪ
SPECIAL**

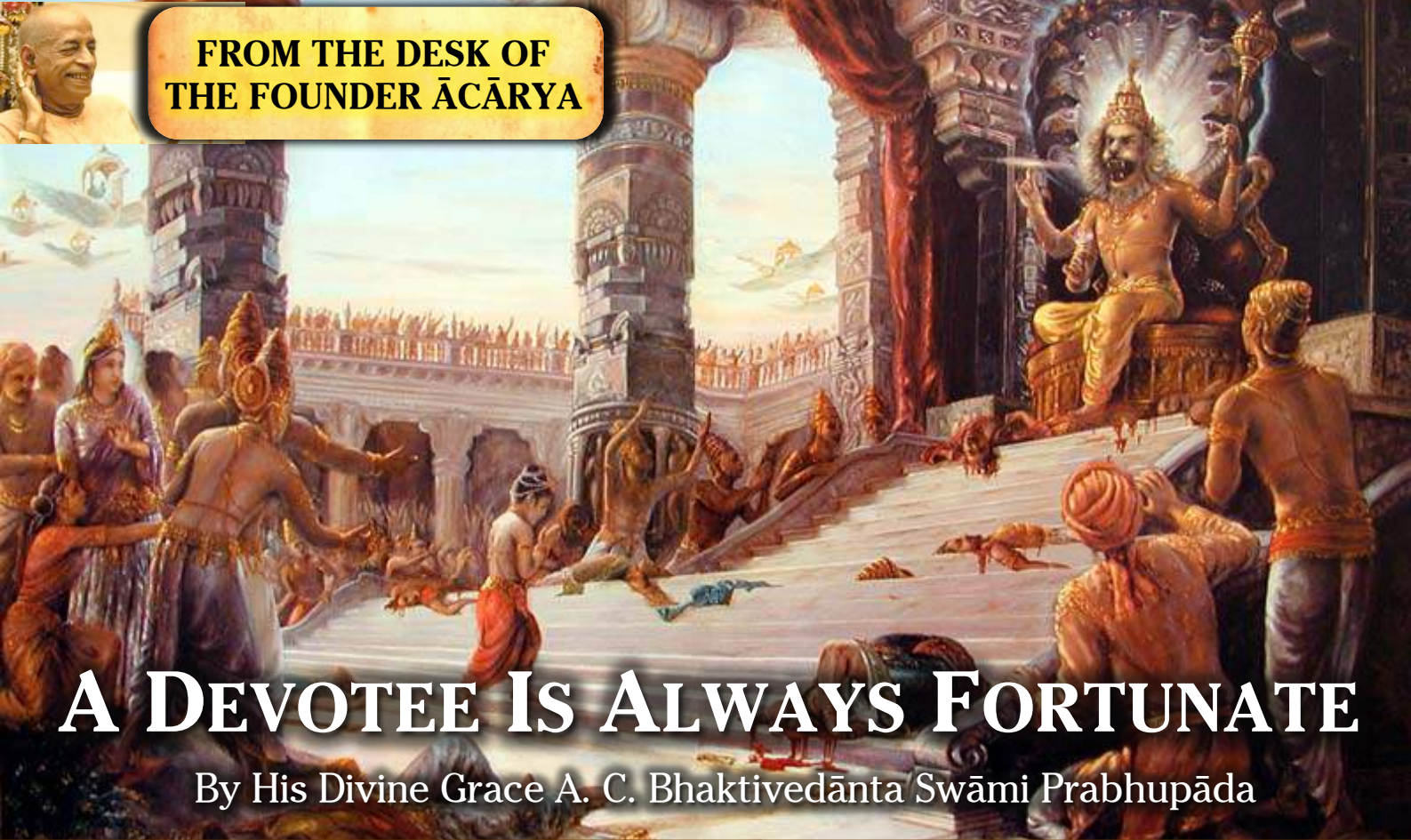
ALSO

A Devotee is Always Fortunate
The Unrivalled Preceptor
Pari Praśna
Verse of the Month
Analogy Arena





FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA



A DEVOTEE IS ALWAYS FORTUNATE

By His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmi Prabhupāda

*The combined mercy of Lord Nṛsiṃha-deva and Prahlāda Mahārāja
on demon Hiranyakaśipu*

When the Lord sat on the throne of Hiranyakaśipu, there was no one to protest; no enemy came forward on behalf of Hiranyakaśipu to fight with the Lord. This means that His supremacy was immediately accepted by the demons. Another point is that although Hiranyakaśipu treated the Lord as his bitterest enemy, he was the Lord's faithful servant in Vaikuṅṭha, and therefore the Lord had no hesitation in sitting on the throne that Hiranyakaśipu had so laboriously created.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks in this connection that sometimes, with great care and attention, great saintly persons and ṛṣis offer the Lord valuable seats dedicated with Vedic mantras and tantras, but still the Lord does not sit upon those thrones. Hiranyakaśipu, however, had formerly been Jaya, the doorkeeper at the Vaikuṅṭha gate, and although he had fallen because of the curse of the brāhmaṇas and had gotten the nature of a demon, and although he had never offered anything to the Lord as Hiranyakaśipu, the Lord is so affectionate to His devotee and servant that He nonetheless took pleasure in sitting on the throne that Hiranyakaśipu had created. In this regard it is to be understood that a devotee is fortunate in any condition of his life. (SB 7.8.34 P)

Although Hiranyakaśipu was purified as soon as he came in contact with the Lord's lap and the Lord saw him, Prahlāda Mahārāja still wanted to hear from the Lord's own mouth that his father had been purified by the Lord's causeless mercy. Prahlāda Mahārāja offered this prayer to the Lord for the sake of his father. As a Vaiṣṇava son, despite all the inconveniences imposed upon him by his father, he could not forget his father's affection. (SB 7.10.17 P)



**BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

One cannot be cheerful by nature unless one is factually seated in self-realization, which is transcendental to the material body and mind. (1.5.2 P)



THE COMPASSIONATE KILLER

By Gauranga Darshan Das

*The act of God punishing the demons denotes
His way of purifying our negative qualities.*

“Is there a demon within me!?” It’s hard to believe it. One may think, “After all, I am neither a demon nor haunted by a ghost.” Yes! we are not ghostly, but godly. But its a fact that negative personality traits that are commonly found in demons are also sometimes found in common people. A responsible person diligently detects them in oneself and tries to eradicate them with determination and devotion.

Demons Represents Our Frailties

Lord Kṛṣṇa said in the *Bhagavad Gita*, “I descend to protect the righteous and punish the mischievous.” Protecting devotees is His primary concern, while punishing demons is secondary. However, His punishing is also a form of protection. After all, the Lord is the supreme father of all beings. He therefore lovingly protects His cultured children, and responsibly corrects His misguided children. His punishment or killing is His causeless mercy that transforms the lives of the demons and transfers them to higher levels of consciousness.



**BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

A pure devotee continuously remembers the lotus feet of Lord Krishna and does not forget Him even for a moment, not even in exchange for all the opulence of the three worlds.(SB 1.5.19 P)

In His various incarnations on this planet, the Lord killed and liberated several demons. These demons often represent various *anarthas* or unwanted personality traits in the practitioners of spiritual life. The devotees pray to the Lord to destroy those unwanted qualities in them just as He destroyed the demons. When one is purified of negative tendencies, one can easily make progress in spiritual life.

In Vṛndāvana, Lord Kṛṣṇa killed several demons including Pūtana, Śakaṭāsura, Bakāsura, Aghāsura and so on. The Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* explain that Pūtana represents a pseudo *guru* who misdirects innocent public towards sense gratification or liberation of both. Pūtana also represents the fickle mind that convinces a spiritual seeker to believe unfavorable things to spiritual life to be favorable. Similarly, Tṛṇāvarta represents pride in material scholarship.

Hiraṇyakaśipu, The Personification of Material Desire

Lord Nṛsiṃha-deva was the divine half-man half-lion incarnation of the Supreme Lord. Nṛsiṃha-deva killed the great demon Hiraṇyakaśipu and protected his virtuous son Prahlāda. Hiraṇya means “gold” and kaśipu means “a soft bed”. Materialistic people immersed with the thoughts of sense enjoyment, always aspire for immense wealth to utilize it for exuberant bodily comforts. Their minds and hearts are filled with material desires. In other words Hiraṇyakaśipu lives within them. Śrīla Prabhupāda thus explains that Hiraṇyakaśipu was the personification of material desire and was the perfect representative of materialistic life (SB 5.18.8 Purport).

One whose mind is filled with selfish material desires and egoistic tendencies, often cause great disturbance to the devotees of the Supreme Lord, just as Hiraṇyakaśipu tormented his own little son Prahlāda. Hiraṇyakaśipu threatened to kill Prahlāda ruthlessly in various ways, until Lord Nṛsiṃha-deva appeared to kill the demon. Similarly material desires torment spiritual seekers (*sadhakas*) in various ways trying to distract them from the path of pure *bhakti*.



Therefore, any devotee aspiring to be free of material desires should sincerely seek the shelter of Lord Nṛsiṃha-deva who compassionately destroys them, just as He killed Hiraṇyakaśipu. Prahlāda Mahārāja prays to Lord Nṛsiṃha as follows.

*“om namo bhagavate narasiṃhāya namas tejas-tejase
āvīr-āvīrbhava vajra-nakha vajra-damṣṭra
karmāśayān randhaya randhaya tamo grasa grasa om
svāhā; abhayam abhayam ātmani bhūyiṣṭhā om
kṣraum.”*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva, the source of all power. O my Lord who possess nails and teeth just like thunderbolts, kindly *vanquish our demon-like desires* for fruitive activity in this material world. Please appear in our hearts and drive away our ignorance so that by Your mercy we may become fearless in the struggle for existence in this material world.” (Bhāgavatam 5.18.8)

When Material Desires are Absent...

A pure devotee who has no material selfish desires in the heart, naturally desires the welfare of all living beings. Such devotees are completely free from material envy. Envy is a prominent *anartha* in the conditioned souls dwelling in this material world. Due to envy one develops the tendencies of unnecessary competition, comparison, complaints and criticism of others. One who is freed from the disease of envy becomes liberal in one's social dealings and can think of others' welfare. One who performs *bhakti-yoga* cleanses one's mind of all envy.



Therefore devotees pray to Lord Nṛsimha-deva to sit in their hearts (*bahir nṛsimho hṛdaye nṛsimhaḥ*) and kill all bad propensities including envy. Unless one is freed from the disease of envy, one cannot enter the spiritual realm.

So, Prahlāda Mahārāja fervently prays to Lord Nṛsimha that envious people be purified by the practice of *bhakti-yoga*.

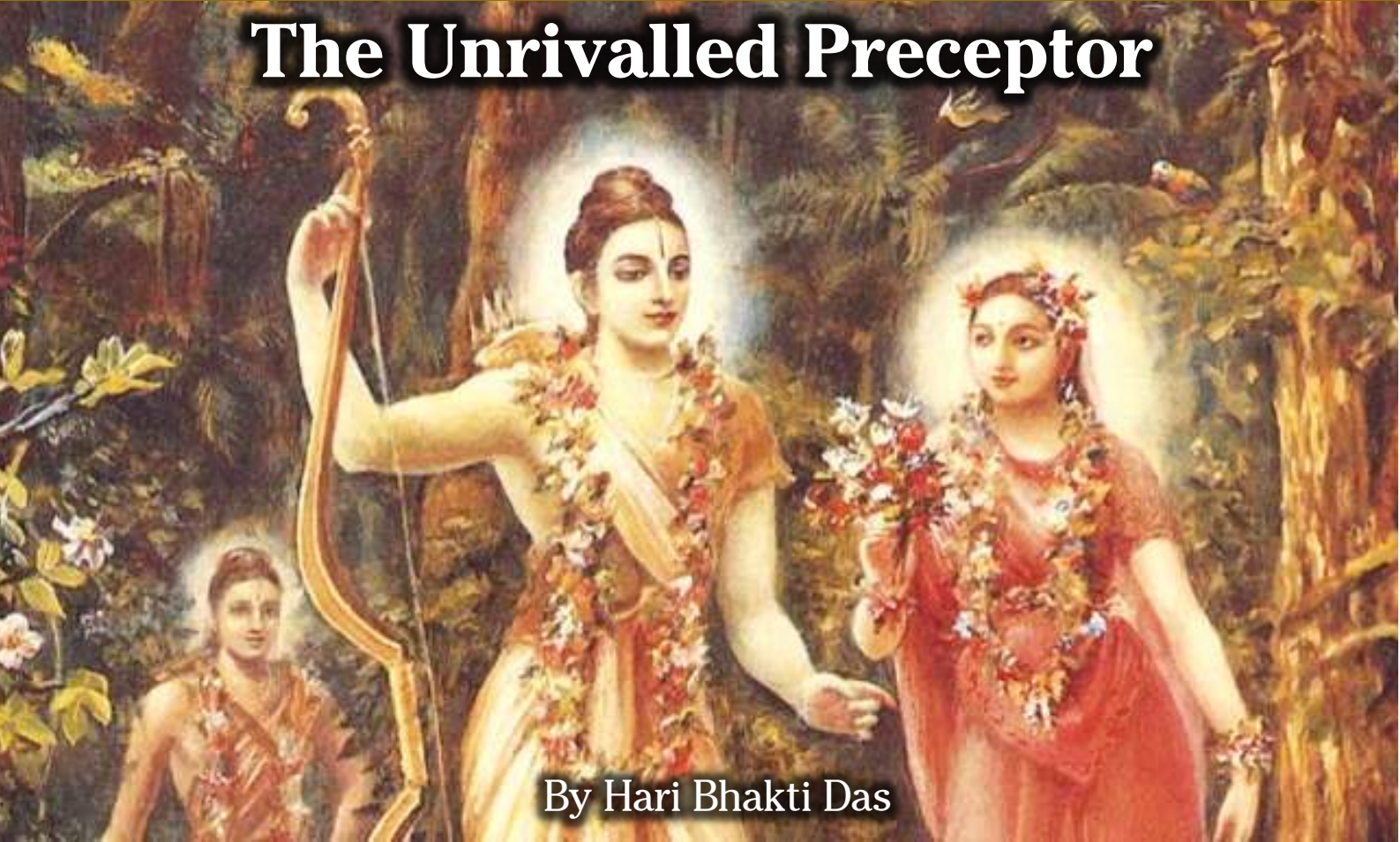
*svasty astu viśvasya khalah prasīdatām
dhyāyantu bhūtāni śivam mitho dhiyā
manaś ca bhadram bhajatād adhokṣaje
āveśyatām no matir apy ahaitukī*

“May there be good fortune throughout the universe, and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practicing *bhakti-yoga*, for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other's welfare. Therefore let us all engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.” (*Bhāgavatam* 5.18.9)

Glorifying Prahlāda's well-wishing nature, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “Prahlāda Mahārāja is a typical Vaiṣṇava. He prays not for himself but for all living entities—the gentle, the envious and the mischievous. He always thought of the welfare of mischievous persons like his father, Hiranyakaśipu. Prahlāda Mahārāja did not ask for anything for himself; rather, he prayed for the Lord to excuse his demoniac father. This is the attitude of a Vaiṣṇava, who always thinks of the welfare of the entire universe.” (*Bhāgavatam* 5.18.9 Purport)

In this way, a sincere practitioner of *bhakti* has to diligently protect oneself from falling into the clutches of the *anarthas* of material desires and envy. One must learn the science of *bhakti* from pure devotees of Krishna who are the bona fide teachers or *acharyas*. If we are sincere in seeking shelter of Lord Nṛsimha-deva, He will divert us from material desires and direct us towards spiritual activities.

The Unrivalled Preceptor



By Hari Bhakti Das

Relief is one of the most sought after commodities in the world. Vidyāpati, a great Vaiṣṇava poet says, "I have offered my mind unto the society of women, children, and friends, but this experience has been just like offering a drop of water unto the burning hot sands." Material world is a place meant to frustrate our desires. Imagine a big cloth store in a Super Mall. The name is indicative of the things available inside. The Lord, while giving the knowledge of Bhagavad-gītā to Arjuna says that in this store named "Material World", the only two things available are misery and impermanence. An intelligent person understands this fact and doesn't strive to search for what the store doesn't provide. The Lord in order to re-emphasise this, to encourage the conditioned souls, and to make them aware of the eternity and bliss of the spiritual world incarnates frequently to this mortal sphere in His divine form. Lord Rāma, a popular household name, descended in the Tretā-yuga into this world. He is called Rāma because the elevated transcendentalists derive unlimited transcendental pleasures from Him. Lord is the only person who can forever provide pleasure and shelter. Taking support of anyone or anything apart from the Lord is tantamount to trying to cross an ocean holding a dog's tail. Simply by lending our ears to the Lord's glories from the Vedic literature results in developing a feeling of loving service to the Lord which extinguishes the fire of lamentation of the past, illusion of the present and fear of the future (SB 1.7.7).

In Lord Rāma's sojourn, He taught various things through His personal behavior.

Teaching by following

Lord Rāma was utmost obedient to His father's instructions. Kaikeyi, the mother-in-law of Lord Rāma, was poisoned by her maid Mantharā to hamper Rāma's coronation. She got successful in exiling Rāma into the forest for fourteen years. Rāma accepted the orders of His father without the slightest trace of contempt. When mind is fixed on a purpose and when love exists in a relationship, challenging instructions can be followed guilelessly. Lord Rama acted as a perfect submissive disciple of Viśvamitra in every instance. On the other hand, Rāvaṇa, disregarding the good advice of Mandodarī and Vibhīṣaṇa, followed his wicked mind by abducting Sitā. When uncontrolled mind becomes the chief advisor, unhealthy circumstances are brought about in life. The importance of proper guidance cannot be under-estimated. For instance, Jambhavān helped Hanumān realize his true potential. When the experiences, suggestions and instructions of well-wishers and spiritual preceptors are followed, the doors of success, fortune and grace get wide open.

Teaching through Compassion

Vibhīṣaṇa, as Rāvaṇa's well-wisher, was repeatedly urging him to return Sitā to Lord



Rāma. But it fell on deaf ears. Finally, Vibhīṣaṇa decided to join Lord Rāma with his four associates. As Vibhīṣaṇa was approaching Lord Rāma's camp stationed near the ocean, Sugrīva became apprehensive of the latter's intentions. He told Lord Rāma about Vibhīṣaṇa's purpose. The Lord asked all the chief monkey soldiers about their viewpoints. Most of them thought it unwise to accept Vibhīṣaṇa, he being the brother of Rāvaṇa, and after all, a Rākṣasa. Only Hanumān wished to have Vibhīṣaṇa on their side. Finally, they asked the Lord about His opinion. The Lord said, "If a person approaches me and says 'I am Yours' even once, then I shall forever grant him freedom from all fear." This statement evoked tears of joy from the chieftains present there.

The Lord in His Paramātmā feature is always present with the living entity. The soul's aversion to the Lord even for millions of lifetimes cannot minimise the Lord's compassion. He is always alert and He reciprocates even for the slightest of surrender. Witnessing this merciful nature of the Lord inspires one to surrender more and more unto Him. And what is result of such surrender? One develops complete love for the Supreme Lord and is blissfully situated in ecstatic love. Also, the Lord gets pleased the most when someone inspires such love in His parts and parcels.

Teaching through killing

Rāvaṇa, the emblem of lust, kidnapped Mother Sītā and took her to Lankā. He coerced Her in various ways to make Her his own. But Sītā was not among the ones who could be wooed by some paltry requests. Rather, Rāma came to Lanka and slayed Rāvaṇa. Rāvaṇa lost all his good fortune due to the anger of Sītā. What fortune can be there for one who has displeased the goddess of fortune? Rāvaṇa abducted, abused and offended the goddess of fortune which brought about his misfortune. Rāvaṇa, although very powerful, was powerless before the enemy of lust. The six anarthas of lust, anger, greed, envy, pride and illusion put the conditioned soul in an overwhelming state. Instead of seeking pleasure in the transcendental subject matters, the soul centres his life in the pursuits of unhealthy and unwanted things which further aggravates the diseased condition. Sincerely chanting the holy names of the Lord – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare - helps in eradicating these undesirable traits.

Teaching by giving & accepting Love

Sugrīva in his prayer to Lord Rāma mentions,
 na janma nūnaṁ mahato na saubhagaṁ
 na vāṅ na buddhir nākṛtis toṣa-hetuḥ
 tair yad viśṛṣṭān api no vanaukasaś
 cakāra sakhye bata lakṣmaṇāgrajaḥ

"Material qualities like birth, beauty, eloquence, intelligence or bodily features cannot please the Lord. Otherwise, how could the Lord befriend us although we are uncivilised inhabitants of the forest?" (SB 5.19.7)

Lord Rāma with the army of monkeys achieved victory over the entire Rākṣasa clan. The Lord didn't need the monkeys, but nonetheless He accepted their service. Lord doesn't bother to look at the externals. The achievements and fame of this world are a mere facade. Lord is concerned more with the internals. Devotion and a sincere desire to serve constitute the core substances of one's internal cultivation. This attitude was recognized by the Lord in the monkeys. For the Lord who is the possessor and the source of all the opulences, He is not impressed by a spark of His own qualities. Of what use is a sum of hundred dollars to a billionaire? Of what significance is a palmful of water to an ocean? But when someone tries to serve the Lord with sincere heart and conquers the Lord by his love, He gives Himself to such a person. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "The relationship between the Lord and His servitor is very sweet and transcendental. The servitor is always ready to render service to the Lord, and, similarly, the Lord is always seeking an opportunity to render some service to the devotee. He takes greater pleasure in His pure devotee's assuming the advantageous position of ordering Him than He does in being the giver of orders." (BG 1.21-22 P)

Conclusion

This reciprocation between the Lord and the devotee goes on increasing indefinitely. Lord Rāma enchanted this world by His wonderful pastimes. Śrīmad Bhāgavatam describes the result of hearing the pastimes of the Lord,

puruṣo rāma-caritaṁ
 śravaṇair upadhārayan
 āṅśamsya-paro rājan
 karma-bandhair vimucyate

"Anyone who aurally receives the narrations concerning the characteristics of Lord Rāmacandra's pastimes will ultimately be freed from the disease of envy and thus be liberated from the bondage of fruitive activities." (SB 9.11.23)

Envy for the Lord is a major obstacle in one's progress in devotional life. This malady lasting since millions of lifetimes can be totally eradicated by hearing about the Lord. Understanding and knowledge of the Lord's transcendental pastimes frees one from the bodily conception of life, helps in developing love for the Supreme Lord and makes one eligible to go back home, back to Godhead.



PARI PRAŚNA

Question: When does sinful activities become visible even in the pious families?

Answer: It is important to maintain the purity of hereditary succession in a family. The pious seminal succession in the twice-born families of the *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* especially, as well as in the families of *vaiśyas* also, must be kept very pure by the observation of the purificatory processes beginning with *garbhādhāna-saṁskāra*, which is observed before conceiving a child. Unless this purificatory process is strictly observed, especially by the *brāhmaṇas*, the family descendants become impure, and gradually sinful activities become visible in the family. (SB 4.14.42 P)

Question: Why is a civilized man expected to give all protection to the bulls and cows?

Answer: The cow is the most important animal for developing the human body to perfection. The body can be maintained by any kind of foodstuff, but cow's milk is particularly essential for developing the finer tissues of the human brain so that one can understand the intricacies of transcendental knowledge. Similarly, the bull helps in the agricultural process of producing grain, etc., and thus in one

sense the bull is the father of humankind, whereas the cow is the mother, for she supplies milk to human society. A civilized man is therefore expected to give all protection to the bulls and cows. (SB 3.5.7 P)

Question: How can one talk with God and receive knowledge from Him?

Answer: The bhakti process, as performed under the regulative principles of *vaidhī-bhakti*, or devotional service following the prescribed rules and regulations, is defined by the revealed scriptures and confirmed by great *ācāryas*. This practice can help the practitioner to rise to the stage of *rāga-bhakti*, in which the Lord responds from within as the *caitya-guru*, or the spiritual master as Superconsciousness.

By devotional service only does one's heart become completely purified from all material coverings like karma, *jñāna* and *yoga*. Only in such a purified stage does the Lord, who is seated in everyone's heart with the individual soul, give instruction so that the devotee can reach the ultimate destination of going back home, back to Godhead. This is confirmed in *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.10): *teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatām*. Only when the Lord is satisfied with the devotional service of the devotee does He impart knowledge, as He did for Arjuna and Uddhava. (SB 3.5.4 P)

Mail us at pradipika@vidyapitha.in your questions on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Answers to shortlisted questions shall be published in the next issue of *Bhāgavata Pradīpikā*.

VERSE OF THE MONTH



Bhakti Removes All Dangers

na yatra śravaṇādīni
rakṣo-ghnāni sva-karmasu
kurvanti sātvatām bhartur
yātudhānyaś ca tatra hi

My dear King, wherever people in any position perform their occupational duties of devotional service by chanting and hearing [śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ SB 7.5.23], there cannot be any danger from bad elements. Therefore there was no need for anxiety about Gokula while the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally present. (SB 10.6.3 – Śukadeva Gosvāmī to Mahārāja Parīkṣit)



Just as springtime in the present indicates the nature of springtimes in the past and future, so this life of happiness, distress or a mixture of both gives evidence concerning the religious and irreligious activities of one's past and future lives. (SB 6.1.47)



Just as a deer, because of ignorance, cannot see the water within a well covered by grass, but runs after water elsewhere, the living entity covered by the material body does not see the happiness within himself, but runs after happiness in the material world. (SB 7.13.29)



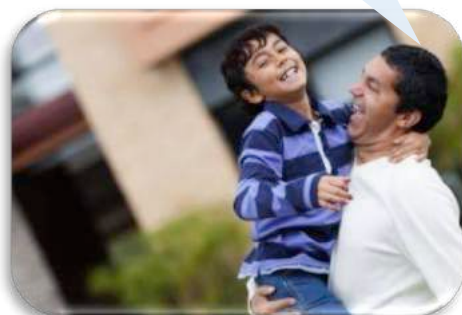
When cotton is transformed into thread, the cotton is no longer visible, and when the thread is woven into cloth, the thread is no longer visible. Similarly, it is perfectly correct that when the seed that had generated from the navel of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu became manifested as the cosmic creation, one could no longer understand where the cause of the cosmic manifestation is. (SB 7.9.34 P)

ANALOGY ARENA

An iron rod put into a fire becomes warmer and warmer, and when it is red hot it is no longer an iron rod but fire. Similarly, when a devotee constantly engages in devotional service and thinks of the Lord in his original Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he no longer has any material activities, for his body is spiritualized. (SB 7.7.36 P)

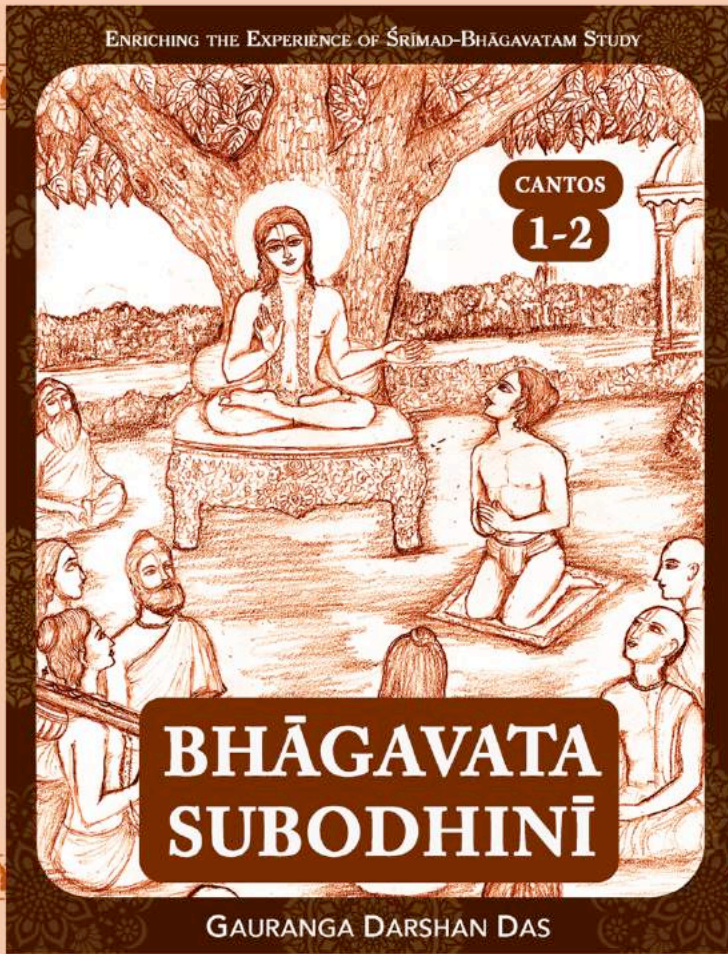


As there is no difficulty in establishing the intimate relationship between a father and son, there is no difficulty in reestablishing the natural, intimate relationship between Nārāyaṇa and the living entities. (SB 7.6.19 P)



When one is very eager for more and more money, he is not satisfied even when he is a millionaire or multimillionaire. Similarly, a devotee is never satisfied, thinking, "This is the limit of my devotional service." The more he engages in the service of the Lord, the more service he wants to offer. (SB 9.5.27 P)





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ISKCON DESIRE TREE

*Nectar
Verses*

NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-sāṁhitā

1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1

1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1 (If it is beyond Canto 10 Chapter 13, it is from the purport of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples)

1.1.1 V: From Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

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**BHĀGAVATA
PRADĪPIKĀ**

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

If anyone desires to seek perfect knowledge of everything, he must seek the mercy of the Lord, and there is no other means. (SB 2.9.5 P)

International Society For Krishna Consciousness | Founder Acharya – A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada



NARASIMHA CHATURDASI

Special Lecture Series: 5-6 May 2020

Topic: CHARACTER & PRAYERS OF PRAHLADA MAHARAJA

Speaker: Gauranga Darshan Das

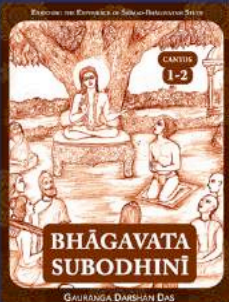
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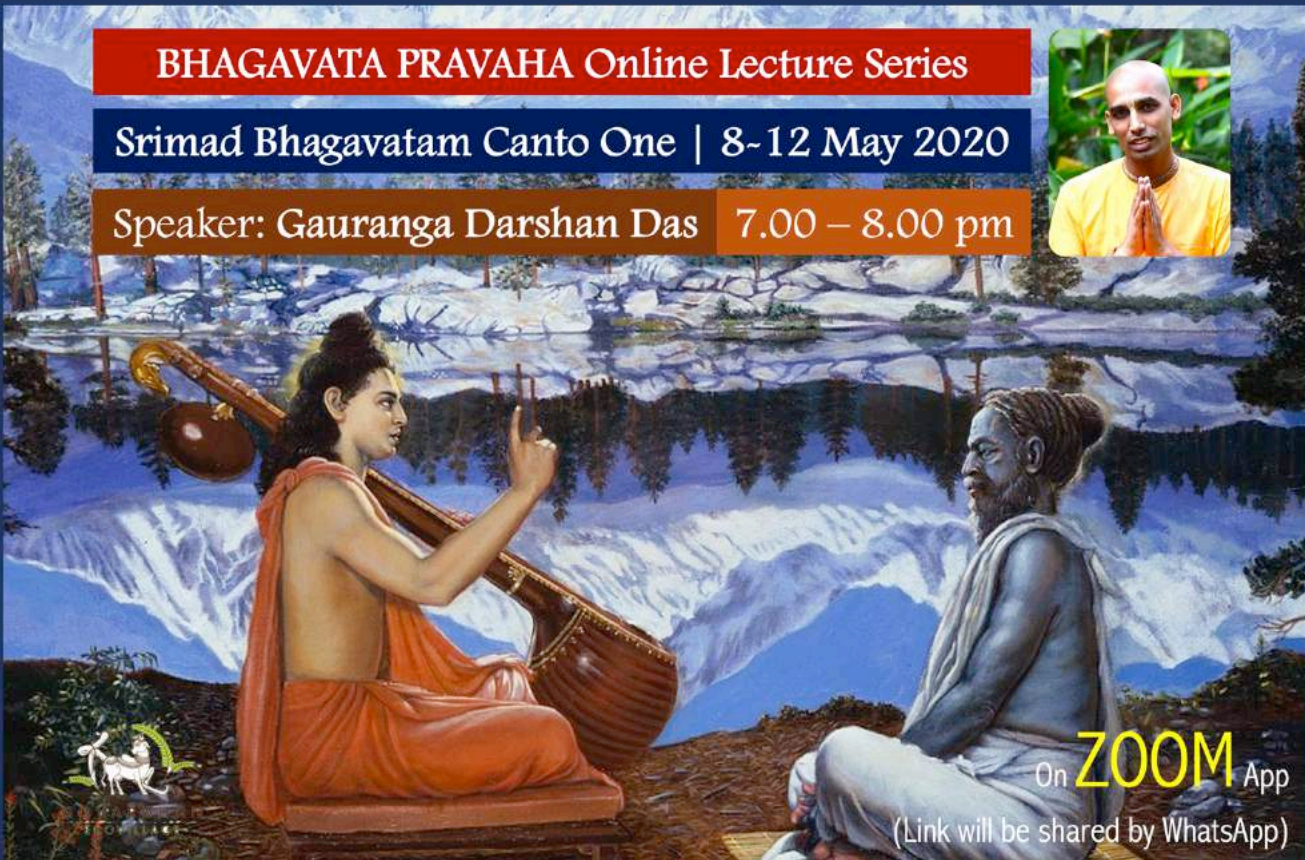
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BHAGAVATA PRAVAHA Online Lecture Series

Srimad Bhagavatam Canto One | 8-12 May 2020

Speaker: Gauranga Darshan Das 7.00 – 8.00 pm



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