



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

Veṇu - gīta



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FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA



The Shelter offered by Mother Ganges

Ganga Sagara Mela –
15th January

Shelter for Those about to Die

Emperor Parīkṣit received the information of his death in time, and he at once left his kingdom and family and sat down on the bank of the Ganges to fast till death. SB 1.3.42

Shelter for Those who have already Died

To date it is the custom in Hindu society to go to the Ganges or any other sacred river to take bath when death occurs in the family. Each of the family members pours out a potful of the Ganges water for the departed soul and walks in a procession, with the ladies in the front. SB 1.8.1

Shelter for Travelling Sages

Ganges is the only celestial river which flows throughout the universe, and great sages travel all over the universe via this sacred river. SB 3.8.5

Shelter for Those who are Living

Freedom of Sins: The Lord is so kind that He has spread the river Ganges throughout the universe so that by taking bath in that holy river everyone can get release from the reactions of sins, which occur at every step. SB 1.19.7

Constant Remembrance of Lord: The banks of the Ganges or the Yamunā give one a chance to remember the Lord continuously. SB 1.19.7

Saves from Yamarāja: Even Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya recommends that a little knowledge of the Bhagavad-gītā and the drinking of a little quantity of Ganges water can save one from the punishment of Yamarāja. SB 3.5.41

Veṇu - gīta

A peek into the hearts of
the most elevated devotees
of Kṛṣṇa



Hari Bhakti Das

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the possessor of sixty-four qualities. He not only possesses these qualities to an extra-ordinary degree, but He exclusively possesses four qualities which are not even seen in Lord Vishnu. 'Rupa- mādhurī' is one of them. Kṛṣṇa's flute playing is the sweetest music in the whole creation, it is the be-all and end-all of everything beautiful, it is the language that Kṛṣṇa speaks through His lips to intimately connect the heart of His devotees with His own, it is the song that sustains the lives of His dearest devotees.

When Kṛṣṇa is going for herding the cows in the morning, the gopīs hear the flute song of Kṛṣṇa. Their emotions and experience, and the feelings of all sentient and non-sentient beings in Vṛndāvana has been depicted in the most charming manner by Śukadeva Goswami in the tenth canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The hearts and the inner mood of the gopīs has not only been elaborated by Śukadeva, but also by the exalted Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas coming in the paramparā.

The Immediate Response

When the gopīs heard Kṛṣṇa's flute song as He was entering the forest on the first day of autumn season, they remembered His wonderful activities. But due to intense emotion, they could not speak. The gopīs life and soul

was Kṛṣṇa. They made their own songs in praise of Kṛṣṇa. They would describe Kṛṣṇa's activities to their friends to give them happiness. Their joy simply lay in making their friends happy. The gopīs inability to speak their own hearts was compensated by Śukadeva Goswami.

*barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ vaijayantīm ca mālām
randhrān veṅor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-vṛndair
vṛndāranyaṁ sva-pada-ramaṇaṁ prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ*

“Wearing a peacock-feather ornament upon His head, blue karṇikāra flowers on His ears, a yellow garment as brilliant as gold, and the Vaijayantī garland, Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibited His transcendental form as the greatest of dancers as He entered the forest of Vṛndāvana, beautifying it with the marks of His footprints. He filled the holes of His flute with the nectar of His lips, and the cowherd boys sang His glories.” SB 10.21.5

This expression of Śukadeva is considered to be the pinnacle of exquisite poetry in glorification of Kṛṣṇa in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The speechlessness of the gopīs didn't last for long. They regained their composure and in ecstatic love, began describing the song of Kṛṣṇa's flute.

Appreciating the Good Fortune of Others

The gopīs considered it a perfection of their senses to see Kṛṣṇa, to hear Kṛṣṇa's sweet words and to associate with Kṛṣṇa. The gopīs initially appreciate the fortune of the cowherd boys who have attained success due to being able to see Kṛṣṇa constantly when He is with them in the forest. The cowherd boys not only see, but they experience singing and dancing with Kṛṣṇa. On the other hand, the gopīs themselves are locked in their own houses unable to get that darshan.

The gopīs are glorifying the flute's fortune, and the austerities that he must have performed to get so close to Kṛṣṇa. The flute is not just being played by Kṛṣṇa, rather, the flute is proclaiming the whole world the enjoyment he gets by associating with Kṛṣṇa.

The gopīs are in ecstasy remembering and appreciating the response of the peacocks, the doe and the bucks after hearing Kṛṣṇa's flute. The birds who raise themselves on branches to see Kṛṣṇa close their eyes in rapture hearing Kṛṣṇa's flute. Even the inanimate objects like rivers break their flow of current. They move in whirlpools being agitated by the flute song. With the arms of their waves, they embrace Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.



Hiding their own emotions

The word 'gopi' comes from 'gopyah' which means hidden. The gopīs are expert at hiding their internal feelings for Kṛṣṇa. One reason why the gopīs are mentioning everyone's feelings apart from themselves is because they wish to keep their feelings hidden. Also, it is their natural humble disposition to appreciate the greatness of others and not consider themselves worthy of Kṛṣṇa's reciprocation. While wanting to mention about Kṛṣṇa, they mention Balarāma also along with Kṛṣṇa so as to not appear suspicious. The fact that they are able to see such transformations even in inanimate objects is a proof of their ecstatic devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

The Best Devotee

The gopīs glorify not only Vrajvasis, they are also appreciating the damsels of heavenly planets, who get captivated by the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute while passing by from their airplanes. They certify Govardhana as the best devotee because of the hill's eagerness to serve Kṛṣṇa in multifarious ways. Govardhana provides nice resting places, drinking water, soft grass for cows, caves, fruits, flowers and vegetables. He has given his entire existence in service of Kṛṣṇa. The gopīs believe that without the shelter of great devotees, their desire to be with Kṛṣṇa cannot be fulfilled.

The gopīs are described by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and all His servants as the topmost devotees. What is their greatness? They don't wish to proclaim their greatness. They attribute all greatness to others. And they regard themselves as utterly insignificant. The secret of their absorption in Kṛṣṇa – kīrtaniya sadā hariḥ, is a result of their deep love for Kṛṣṇa coupled with their humility, tolerance, eagerness to respect others and wanting no respect for themselves.

VERSE OF THE MONTH



Attachment to Hearing Kṛṣṇa's Pastimes

SB 10.13.2

*satām ayaṁ sāra-bhṛtām nisargo
yad-artha-vāṇī-śruti-cetasām api
prati-kṣaṇaṁ navya-vad acyutasya yat
striyā viṭānām iva sādhu vārtā*

Paramahaṁsas, devotees who have accepted the essence of life, are attached to Kṛṣṇa in the core of their hearts, and He is the aim of their lives. It is their nature to talk only of Kṛṣṇa at every moment, as if such topics were newer and newer. They are attached to such topics, just as materialists are attached to topics of women and sex. (*Śukadeva Gosvāmī to Parīkṣit*)

THEMATIC STUDY

BHISMADEVA



One of the Twelve Great Authorities to ascertain Dharma:

In SB 6.3.20-21, Yamarāja mentions Bhīṣma as one of the twelve mahājānas.

Unflinching Servitor of the Lord:

Kṛṣṇa appeared to Bhīṣma at his deathbed with all the Pandavas. SB 1.9.22

Arjuna had some bodily relation with Kṛṣṇa because the Lord happened to be his maternal cousin. But Bhīṣma had no such bodily relation. Therefore the cause of attraction was due to the intimate relation of the soul.

In Virya-rasa with Kṛṣṇa:

Bhīṣmadeva never forgot the beautiful feature of the Lord as Pārtha-sārathi, which even Arjuna could not see as Arjuna was behind the Lord. Bhīṣmadeva was just in front of the Lord. As far as the military feature of the Lord is concerned, Bhīṣmadeva observed this with more relish than Arjuna. SB 1.9.39

Bhismastami – 29th January

Why did he fight against the Pandavas?

The Lord wanted to show that vice cannot conquer virtue, regardless of who tries to execute it. Bhīṣmadeva was a great devotee of the Lord, but he chose to fight against the Pāṇḍavas by the will of the Lord because the Lord wanted to show that a fighter like Bhīṣma cannot win on the wrong side. SB 1.9.16

Was Aware of the Greatness of Vraja-gopis:

Bhīṣma's Prayer: Let my mind be fixed upon Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose motions and smiles of love attracted the damsels of Vrajadhāma [the gopis]. The damsels imitated the characteristic movements of the Lord [after His disappearance from the rāsa dance]. SB 1.9.40

Kṛṣṇa broke His own promise for Bhīṣma's sake:

During the battlefield of Kuruksetra, Bhīṣma had vowed to kill all five Pandavas, and if would be unable to do so, he had vowed he will break Kṛṣṇa's promise of not lifting any weapons. Kṛṣṇa broke his promise just to fulfill the vow of Bhīṣma. Bhīṣma mentions in one of his prayers.

ANALOGY ARENA



Since He is full of all energies, He is all-pervasive in spite of His residing in Goloka Vṛndāvana, just as the sun, although situated in a particular place within the universe, is present by its sunshine throughout the universe. SB 3.19.31

Just as there are many physiological constructions within the body yet they work in one order for the satisfaction of the stomach, and just as in a machine there are hundreds and thousands of parts yet they run in harmony to fulfill the function of the machine, in the Vaikuṅṭha planets the Lord is perfect, and the inhabitants also perfectly engage in the service of the Lord. SB 3.15.33



A wrong act committed by a servant leads people in general to blame his master, just as a spot of white leprosy on any part of the body pollutes all of the skin. SB 3.16.5



JEWEL SIXTEEN PRIDELESSNESS



Why is Pride Dangerous?

1] **One of the four pillars of irreligion** - By pride, either artificial or real, the resultant action of austerity is spoiled. SB 1.17.25

2] **A Proud person can act in the most abominable way** - When a man becomes too proud of his material possessions, he can perform any disastrous act. SB 4.3.2

3] **Makes one lose one's good sense**

4] **One cannot appreciate glories of great personalities**

Although the six qualities education, austerity, wealth, beauty, youth and heritage are for the highly elevated, one who is proud of possessing them becomes blind, and thus he loses his good sense and cannot appreciate the glories of great personalities. SB 4.3.17

BHĀGAVATA DARŚANA

Jewels of
Vaiṣṇava Character

Pridelessness, also known as 'adambhitvam' is mentioned among the eighteen items of knowledge by Sri Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavad-gītā. It denotes the freedom from wanting to be famous by posing oneself as a special, or religious person.

How does a devotee deal with pride?

1] **Prays so that he/she doesn't get puffed up:** O my Lord, the unborn, You have shaken hands with me just as a friend does with a friend [as if equal in position]. I shall be engaged in the creation of different types of living entities, and I shall be occupied in Your service. I shall have no perturbation, but I pray that all this may not give rise to pride, as if I were the Supreme. SB 2.9.30 (Brahmaji to the Supreme Lord Vishnu)

2] **Always gives Credit to the Supreme Lord:** Anyone who takes pride in doing responsible work but does not give credit to the Supreme Lord is certainly falsely proud and cannot execute anything nicely. SB 3.9.29

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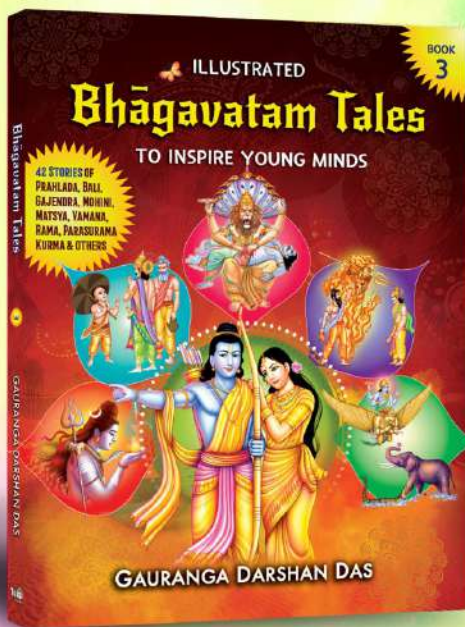
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NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-saṁhitā

1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1, Verse 1

1.1.1 P: From Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to SB 1.1.1

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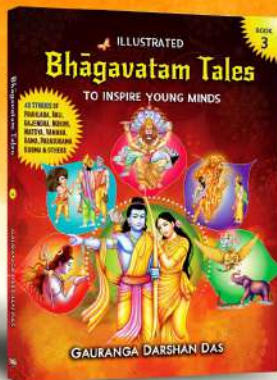
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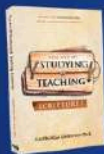
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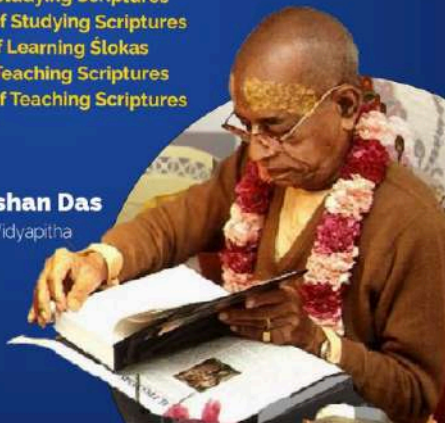
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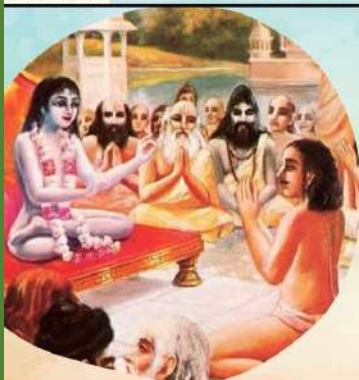
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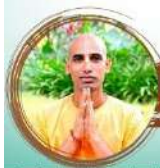
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