



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

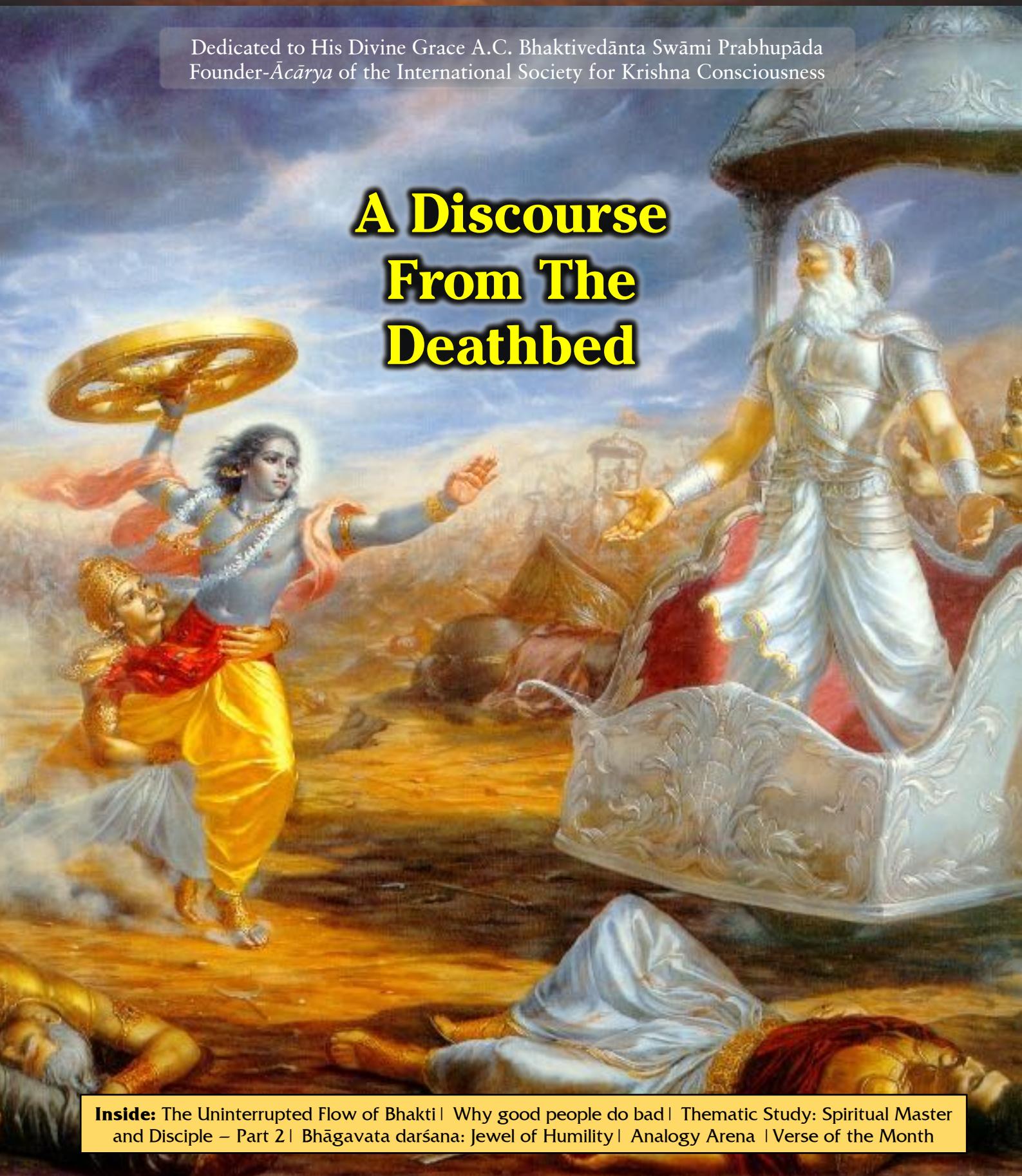
Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

January 2022 | Issue 55

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

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

A Discourse From The Deathbed



Inside: The Uninterrupted Flow of Bhakti | Why good people do bad | Thematic Study: Spiritual Master and Disciple – Part 2 | Bhāgavata darśana: Jewel of Humility | Analogy Arena | Verse of the Month



The uninterrupted FLOW of Bhakti

FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA



The ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE OCEAN (Kṛṣṇa)

The Supreme Lord is uncontaminated by the modes of material nature; therefore He is attractive to the pure devotee. There is no need to practice meditation to attain such attraction; the pure devotee is already in the transcendental stage, and the affinity between him and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is natural and is compared to the Ganges water flowing towards the sea.

The EAGERNESS of the RIVER (Devotee)

The flow of the Ganges water cannot be stopped by any condition; similarly, a pure devotee's attraction for the transcendental name, form and pastimes of the Supreme Godhead cannot be stopped by any material condition. No material condition can stop the flow of the devotional service of a pure devotee. SB 3.29.11-12

What if one is STAGNANT?

Overflow Yourself with the Glories of the OCEAN with a DESIRE to SERVE

A devotee with intelligence plans so many things for the service of the Lord in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that stagnant material desires become overflooded by the desire to serve the Lord. As confirmed by Yāmunācārya, since he has been engaged in the service of the lotus feet of the Lord, there is always a current of newer and newer desires flowing to serve the Lord, so much so that the stagnant desire of sex life becomes very insignificant. SB 4.22.39

A pure devotee must engage in the service of the Lord twenty-four hours a day, without cessation; his life is so molded that at every minute and every second he engages in some sort of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sb 3.29.11-12

The material ocean is stagnant, but the spiritual ocean is dynamic. SB 2.6.36

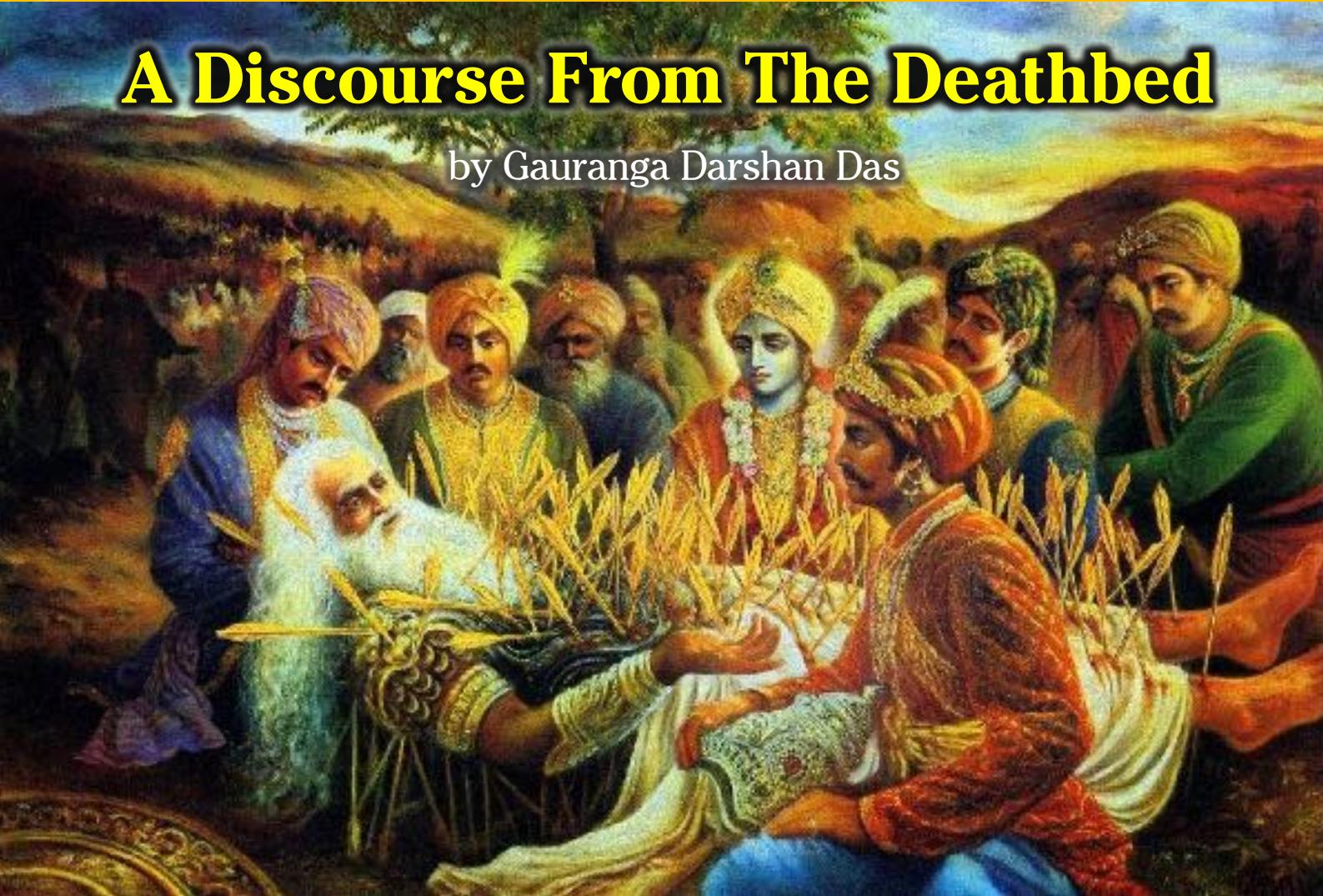
PREACH to give up STAGNANCY and LETHARGY

A pure devotee must execute the order of the Lord and must not gratify his senses by remaining stagnant in one place, falsely proud, thinking that because he does not leave Vṛndāvana but chants in a solitary place he has become a great devotee. SB 9.11.25



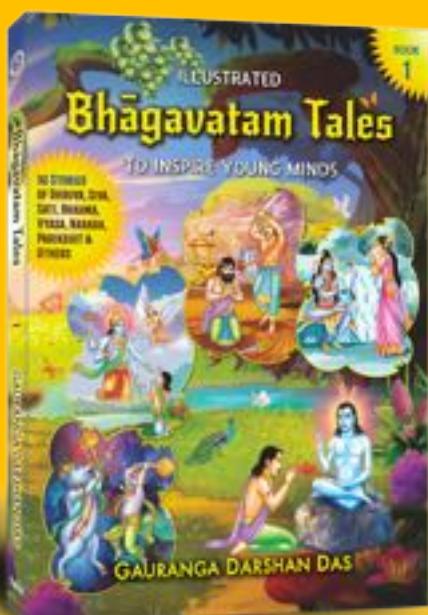
A Discourse From The Deathbed

by Gauranga Darshan Das



An Excerpt from
Illustrated BHAGAVATAM TALES
 to Inspire young Minds

by Gauranga Darshan Das



The Kuruksetra war has just ended. The virtuous Pāṇḍavas won the battle over evil Duryodhana and his supporters. They were guided and supported by their dear friend Lord Kṛṣṇa in many ways. After the war, however, King Yudhiṣṭhīra was overwhelmed with guilt and grief. He felt responsible for the death of thousands of men in the battle.

Vyāsadeva, Dhaumya, and other sages tried to pacify Yudhiṣṭhīra by speaking philosophy. But no one could console him. He lamented, "I am most sinful. My heart is full of ignorance. I have killed many thousands of men in the battle, including the *brāhmaṇas*, friends, brothers, and *gurus*. I shall surely go to hell and will not be relieved from hell."

A noble *kshatriya* king who fights against his evil enemies doesn't incur any sin because he fights for the right cause of protecting the innocent citizens, not out of greed or envy.

But Yudhiṣṭhīra thought, "I sinned killing so many people, only out of greed for a kingdom. I cannot counteract the pain I have given to so many women whose husbands and sons have been killed in the war."



Even Lord Kṛṣṇa tried to counsel Yudhiṣṭhīra, by explaining that there was no sin on his part. But Yudhiṣṭhīra was not pacified. Then Kṛṣṇa inspired Yudhiṣṭhīra to meet Bhīṣma, the grandsire of Kuru dynasty. Thus, the Pāṇḍavas, accompanied by Kṛṣṇa, and sages like Vyāsa and Dhaumya went to the battlefield of Kurukṣetra where Bhīṣma was lying on a bed of arrows. In the war, Arjuna's arrows pierced every part of his body, and since then, he has been lying there.

Bhīṣma, the illustrious grandfather of the Kuru dynasty, was a life-long *brahmacārī* (celibate) and a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He loved the Pāṇḍavas and protected them in various ways. Unfortunately, although being valiant and vastly learned, he had to fight on the wrong side against the virtuous Pāṇḍavas. It was because Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to teach the world the following important lesson through Bhīṣma.

*Vice cannot conquer virtue
regardless of who tries to execute it.*

And Bhīṣma played his humble part in the Lord's divine plan by fighting on the side of Duryodhana. Bhīṣma, however, always had affection for the Pāṇḍavas as they were righteous. Bhīṣma always wanted to see the Pāṇḍavas happy and prosperous, but because of Duryodhana and his associates like Śakuni, Pāṇḍavas were put into several troubles. Now that the Pāṇḍavas have gained the kingdom and became prosperous, Kṛṣṇa brought them before Bhīṣma so that he could be happy in his final moments.

Also, Kṛṣṇa wanted Yudhiṣṭhīra to be enlightened by Bhīṣma. That is the reason for Yudhiṣṭhīra's not getting pacified by anyone, including Kṛṣṇa and Vyāsa. Kṛṣṇa thus wanted to show Bhīṣma's great knowledge to the whole world. Further, Kṛṣṇa wanted to make His pure devotee Bhīṣma happy by giving him *darśana* at the time of his death.

Krishna takes pleasure in fulfilling the long-cherished desires of His devotees.

Bhīṣma saw the Pāṇḍavas very aristocratic and felt happy. The Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa bowed down before Bhīṣma. At that time, great sages from all over the universe, like Parvata Muni, Nārada Muni, Bharadvāja, Paraśurāma, Vasiṣṭha, Gautama, Atri, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Kaśyapa, and others had assembled there to see glorious Bhīṣma. Their disciples also came with them.

Bhīṣma welcomed all of them properly as per his ability. Because arrows pierced his whole body, he couldn't even move. Still, he received all the guests assembled there with his sweet words and hearty expressions. Bhīṣma especially worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa, knowing Him to be the Supreme God.

*Guest reception is an essential part of our culture.
One should do so to the best of one's capacity.*

Seeing the Pāṇḍavas overwhelmed and silent, Bhīṣma had tears. He encouraged them, "Oh, what great injustices you good people had to face! Still, you all were saved because of your devotion to the *brāhmaṇas*, *dharma*, and Kṛṣṇa. Kuntī also suffered greatly due to Pāṇḍu's death and faced many difficulties raising young sons. Even in the presence of Yudhiṣṭhīra – the son of Dharma, Bhīma – the great club fighter, Arjuna – the expert bowman, and Kṛṣṇa as your direct well-wisher, there were many difficulties! I consider all this to be the Lord's divine plan. So, accept it and follow it. You should rule the kingdom and take care of your citizens, as the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa had desired."

Even amid difficulties, devotees do not give up their faith in God. To show this quality of His devotees to the whole world, sometimes God may temporarily put them into some difficulty. But ultimately, He only saves them.

After consoling the Pāṇḍavas, Bhīṣma spoke about Lord Kṛṣṇa, "This Kṛṣṇa is moving as a member of Yadu dynasty, like one of us. But He is the Supreme God. Only pure devotees can understand His greatness. You all thought of Him to be your cousin, friend, messenger, and so on. But He is the Supersoul (Paramātma) in everyone's heart. Although He is equal to all, He is especially inclined to His devotees. So, He has mercifully come before me now at the last stage of my life. May He await me with His pleasing smile while I am quitting this body."

Yudhiṣṭhīra then inquired from Bhīṣma about various *dharma*s. And Bhīṣma explained to him about the duties of different members of human society, the responsibilities of kings, and the responsibilities of devotees. At that time, the auspicious time of *uttarāyana* had arrived. Bhīṣma then withdrew his mind from everything else and



focused only on Lord Kṛṣṇa, who stood before him, in a four-handed form, which was Bhīṣma's favorite.

God reciprocates with His devotees in the forms and moods that they particularly like.

Bhīṣma then offered his heartfelt prayers to the Lord, "My master Kṛṣṇa has mercifully come to me in my last moments. Let me offer Him the gift of my loving thoughts and emotions. Let me have a love for that friend of Arjuna (Vijaya-sakha). His glittering yellow clothes shine in the sun, and curly locks of hair surround his lotus face. Let my mind go unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa on the battlefield, whose flowing hair was covered with dust raised by the horses, and whose face was wetted with sweat. Yet, when My sharp arrows wounded his skin, He enjoyed it."

Some devotees serve the Lord in a chivalrous mood and give Him the pleasure of fighting. Naturally, the Lord enjoys such kind of worship too.

Bhīṣma continued, "May I have a love for Pārtha-sārathi (the charioteer of Arjuna), who stood with a whip in His right hand, and the reins in His left, carefully protecting Arjuna and his chariot. At the Rājasūya-yajña conducted by Yudhiṣṭhira, I witnessed Him being worshipped by great kings and sages as the most exalted."

Thus meditating on Kṛṣṇa, Bhīṣma left this world and entered a Vaikuṇṭha planets, where Lord Kṛṣṇa is in His form of *Pārtha-sārathi* (Arjuna's chariot driver). Celebrating this event, the *devatās* praised Bhīṣma and showered flowers from the sky. Then Yudhiṣṭhira performed funeral rites for Bhīṣma and was overtaken with grief. Yudhiṣṭhira, along with Lord Kṛṣṇa, went back to Hastināpura and consoled Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Gāndhārī. King Yudhiṣṭhira then ruled the kingdom in an exemplary way, according to the teachings of Bhīṣma and Lord Kṛṣṇa.

A Lesson on INTENTION

Actions are seen, but the intentions behind those actions are often hidden. One may doubt genuine devotees like Bhīṣma, seeing their external activities. But Lord Kṛṣṇa always knows their intentions and never misunderstands them. It is He who sometimes engages them in uncommon activities to teach important lessons to this world. And it is He who reveals their greatness at the right time. Kṛṣṇa revealed how knowledgeable and devoted Bhīṣma was just before his departure. And Kṛṣṇa personally came to give His darśana to Bhīṣma as he was departing.

ACTIVITY

Why does Krishna arrange difficult situations in His devotees' lives? Discuss with your friends and come up with at least three reasons.

VERSE OF THE MONTH



Sense Gratification is Source of Misery

SB 5.5.4

*nūnāṁ pramattāḥ kurute vikarma
yad indriya-prītaya āprṇoti
na sādhu manye yata ātmano 'yam
asann api kleśada āsa dehāḥ*

When a person considers sense gratification the aim of life, he certainly becomes mad after materialistic living and engages in all kinds of sinful activity. He does not know that due to his past misdeeds he has already received a body which, although temporary, is the cause of his misery. Actually the living entity should not have taken on a material body, but he has been awarded the material body for sense gratification. Therefore I think it not befitting an intelligent man to involve himself again in the activities of sense gratification by which he perpetually gets material bodies one after another. (*Rśabhadeva to his sons*)



BHAGAVATAM APPLIED SERIES



Why Good People do Bad Things?

By Chaitanya Charan Das

*kṛṣṇe gate bhagavati śāstary utpatha-gāminām
tad bhinna-setūn adyāham śāsmi paśyata me
balam*

“After the departure of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead and supreme ruler of everyone, these upstarts have flourished, our protector being gone. Therefore I myself shall take up this matter and punish them. Just witness my power.” (*Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* 1.18.35)

When good people do good things, that's expected. Encouraging, but expected. When bad people do bad things, that too is expected. Discouraging, but expected. When good people do bad things, however, that is so unexpected as to be disruptive and disorienting. It raises disturbing

questions about the trustworthiness of not just those people but of humanity itself: “If good people can do something like this, can we trust anyone at all?”

Similarly disturbing was the case when the brahmana boy, Śringi, cursed Parīkṣit Mahārāja to die in seven days. Śringi was just a child; he was too young to be a bad guy. Then what prompted him to do something so terrible as to curse to death not just any ordinary person, but the emperor of the world? This verse gives us a sobering glimpse into his thinking. Through the words he spoke in this and the previous verse, he justified to himself his harsh action. From his words, two characteristics stand out:



Presumptuousness: When we are presumptuous, we assume for ourselves an authority that we don't actually have. In this verse, Śrīṅgi claims that he has to do the work of Krishna — protecting dharma — because Krishna is no longer present on the planet. Once he had self-appointed himself as the protector of dharma, he felt that he was qualified, even duty-bound, to punish those who he thought were the opponents of dharma. And that was the label he assigned to the king, who had in actuality dedicated his life to protect dharma.

Self-righteousness: When we are self-righteous, we convince ourselves that we are far more virtuous than the other person. Grabbing whatever evidence we can find, we conclude that the other person is in fact vicious. Such self-righteousness is seen in Śrīṅgi's assertion in the previous verse, "The king is like a watchdog who has overreached arrogantly and offended outrageously." (1.18.36) By comparing the king to an animal, Śrīṅgi dehumanized the king. Thus, he conveniently desensitized himself to the universal human afflictions of hunger and especially thirst that had impelled the king to disrespect the sage Shamika, who was Śrīṅgi's father. Due to his self-righteousness, Śrīṅgi jumped to the conclusion that Parīkṣit Mahārāja's misbehavior was due to his viciousness.

Few things can make us behave as inappropriately or even obnoxiously as when we believe that we are doing the work of some authority bigger than ourselves, especially some sacred authority such as God. The same holds true if we believe that those whom we are targeting are evil, vile, demonic. The double combination of presumptuousness and self-righteousness can make decent people do dreadful things — and even feel good while doing those things. Such a mentality can make ordinary people act like terrorists and bomb hundreds of innocent people. In the past, it has made religious puritans stone to death those suspected of adultery.

Can the blame for such depraved actions be laid on religion and God? That's what many people do, but such explanations are facile. They overlook the reality that similar dastardly deeds have been perpetrated by atheistic people, even aggressively atheistic people such as communists. During the Communist regimes in Soviet Russia and China, people ratted on family members to gain favor in the state's eyes. Ordinary people aided in the plunder, arrest and murder of wealthy people, all in the service of the 'sacred' cause

of communism. Nowadays, every small incident of religious violence grabs headlines. But not even all the religions of the world in their entire recorded history have caused the piling up of a hundred million corpses — a deathly distinction that communism achieved in less than a century.

When people do such depraved actions, the cause goes beyond specific ideologies, be they religious or secular. It goes to mentalities to which we all are vulnerable: the twin mentalities of presumptuousness and self-righteousness.

What makes the presumptuous and self-righteous especially dangerous is when they gain or grab power. Śrīṅgi's example demonstrates the danger of having capacity without maturity; he had the brahminical power to curse, but not the brahminical wisdom to discern who deserved to be cursed. And we all are in Śrīṅgi's position today — we may not have the power to curse others to death, but we have the power to malign others, due to the prevalence of technology such as social media. We can cherry-pick others' statements; caricature and character assassinate them; spread rumors, half-truths and insinuations about them; and get them cancelled. For those who are cyber-citizens, being cancelled is social death.

Although having capacity without maturity is so dangerous, we all crave for more and more capacity. Why? Because we live in a hyper-comparing culture, that constantly shows us the things we don't have. Social media makes comparison so easy and even unavoidable — how many of us look at the view count of a post before looking at the post? Living in a world of unceasing comparison, we often lament that we don't have many outer powers such as followers, gadgets, positions etc. Maybe it's better that we first work on getting the inner power to responsibly use what we presently have.

We can ourselves become better and can make the world a fractionally better place if we watch more carefully what we do with what we have, instead of watching all the things we don't have.



Devaki became beautiful by carrying Lord Kṛṣṇa, within the core of her heart, just as the east becomes beautiful by carrying the rising moon. SB 10.2.18

Just as the sunshine is spread all over the universe, the energy of the Lord is spread all over the creation, and everything is resting in that energy. SB 10.3.15-17

As fire is kindled from wood by another fire, the divine consciousness of man can similarly be kindled by another divine grace. His Divine Grace the spiritual master can kindle the spiritual fire from the woodlike living entity by imparting proper spiritual messages injected through the receptive ear. SB 1.2.32

ANALOGY ARENA

The modern scientist, for example, has created space satellites, and by some arrangement these satellites are thrown into outer space to fly for some time at the control of the scientist, who is far away. Similarly, all the universes with innumerable stars and planets are controlled by the intelligence of the Personality of Godhead. SB 1.1.1

The touchstone can convert an unlimited quantity of iron into gold, and still the touchstone remains as it is. Similarly, the Supreme Lord can produce all manifested worlds by His inconceivable energies, and yet He is full and unchanged. SB Intro

Men with a poor fund of knowledge mistake the bodily machinery to be the living being, but the fact is that the living being is the basis of the bodily machine. The bodily machine is useless as soon as the living spark is away from it. Similarly, the original source of all material energy is the Supreme Person. SB Intro





THEMATIC STUDY

SPIRITUAL MASTER AND DISCIPLE

PART-2



Three kinds of Gurus/ Births

1] **First Guru:** He who gives a person his physical birth is his first spiritual master. This is also the **first birth** (śaukra).

2] **Second Guru:** He who initiates him as a twice-born brāhmaṇa and engages him in religious duties is indeed more directly his spiritual master. This is the **second birth** (sāvitra)

3] **Third Guru:** The person who bestows transcendental knowledge upon the members of all the spiritual orders of society is one's ultimate spiritual master. He is as good as Krishna's own self.

Third Birth: When one is given the opportunity to worship Lord Viṣṇu, that is said to be the third birth (yajñika).

Despite the opportunities for attaining such births, even if one gets the life-span of a demigod, if one does not actually engage in the service of the Lord, everything is useless.

Ref: SB 10.80.33, SB 4.31.10



What Pleases Krishna the MOST?

SB 10.80.34

nāham ijyā-prajātibhyāṁ
tapasopaśamena vā
tuṣyeyāṁ sarva-bhūtātmā
guru-śuśrūṣayā yathā

I, the Soul of all beings, am not as satisfied by ritual worship, brahminical initiation, penances or self-discipline as I am by faithful service rendered to one's spiritual master.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleased with those who follow in His footsteps and engage without reservation in the service of the descendants of brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas, for He is always dear to brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas and they are always dear to Him. SB 4.21.39

What Pleases the Guru?

SB 10.80.41

etad eva hi sac-chiṣyaiḥ
kartavyam guru-niṣkṛtam
yad vai viśuddha-bhāvena
sarvārthātmārpaṇām gurau

This indeed is the duty of all true disciples: to repay the debt to their spiritual master by offering him, with pure hearts,

- 1] their wealth and
- 2] even their very lives.

What is bestowed upon the sincere disciple?

1] **Knowledge** – ācāryavān puruṣo veda: one who follows the disciplic succession of ācāryas knows things as they are (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.14.2)

- Eg: Vidura & Maitreya, Suta Goswami and Saunakadīrsis, Devahuti & Kapila
- cakṣu-dāna dila yei, janme janme prabhu sei: the **guru gives spiritual insight** to the disciple, and therefore the guru should be considered his master, life after life. SB 6.7.21

2] **Realization** - which comes only through service – Vidura to Maitreya - I am obliged to you because now I can understand that this material manifestation is without substance although it appears real. I am confident that **by serving your feet I will be able to give up the false idea.** SB 3.7.18

3] **Love for God** - śrī-guru-carane rati, ei se uttama-gati

Whether a devotee is alive or dead, his only concern is to serve the Lord. Tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mām eti [Bg. 4.9]. When he gives up his body, he goes directly to become an associate of the Lord. SB 9.13.9 P



The First Item of Knowledge which Krishna describes in the Bhagavad-Gita is humility. A natural symptom of one advancing in spiritual life is one feels humble. The opposite of humility is pride which turns all good qualities into naught.

Krishna is pleased by HUMILITY

The Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa was pleased to place His lotus feet on the lap of Vidura because Vidura was very meek and gentle. SB 10.48.26

Humility is Krishna's SPECIAL MERCY

SB 8.22.26

*janma-karma-vayo-rūpa-
vidyaiśvarya-dhanādibhiḥ
yady asya na bhavet stambhas
tatrāyāṁ mad-anugrahaḥ*

If a human being is born in an aristocratic family or a higher status of life, if he performs wonderful activities, if he is youthful, if he has personal beauty, a good education and good wealth, and if he is nonetheless not proud of his opulences, it is to be understood that he is especially favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.



Humility means to accept others for what they are!

Prthu accepting Indra in spite of his repeated attempts to steal the horse and disturb his yajna on the advice of Lord Brahma.



Humility means to Understand – Without the POWER SOURCE, nothing can happen

SB 1.15.21 – Arjuna to Yudisthira

*tad vai dhanus ta iṣavāḥ sa ratho hayāḥ te
so 'ham rathī nṛpatayo yata ānamanti
sarvam kṣaṇena tad abhūd asad iṣa-riktam
bhasman hutām kuhaka-rāddham ivoptam uṣyām*

I have the very same Gāṇḍīva bow, the same arrows, the same chariot drawn by the same horses, and I use them as the same Arjuna to whom all the kings offered their due respects. But in the absence of Lord Kṛṣṇa, all of them, at a moment's notice, have become null and void. It is exactly like offering clarified butter into ashes, accumulating money with a magic wand, or sowing seeds in barren land.

BHĀGAVATA DARŚANA

Jewels of Vaiṣṇava Character

JEWEL SEVEN HUMILITY

With humility comes gratitude of what one has received

SB 10.81.16

*kvāhaṁ daridraḥ pāpiyān
kva kṛṣṇaḥ śrī-niketanāḥ
brahma-bandhur iti smāham
bāhubhyāṁ parirambhitāḥ*

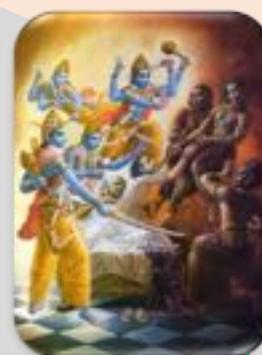
Who am I? A sinful, poor friend of a brāhmaṇa. And who is Kṛṣṇa? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in six opulences. Nonetheless, He has embraced me with His two arms.

Humility enables one to take Shelter

SB 6.2.32

*tasmād yuvāṁ grāmya-paśor
mama mūḍha-dhiyāḥ prabhū
andhe tamasi magnasya
jñāna-dīpa udīryatām*

Because you are great personalities, you can give me real knowledge. I am as foolish as a village animal like a pig or dog because I am merged in the darkness of ignorance. Therefore, please ignite the torch of knowledge to save me. (Citraketu to Narada)



Humility shining in Repentance

SB 6.2.32

*athāpi me durbhagasya
vibudhottama-darśane
bhavitavyāṁ mangalena
yenātmā me prasīdati*

I am certainly most abominable and unfortunate to have merged in an ocean of sinful activities, but nevertheless, because of my previous spiritual activities, I could see those four exalted personalities who came to rescue me. Now I feel exceedingly happy because of their visit. (Ajamila)



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TEACHER
 Gauranga Darshan Das
Author, Writer, Spiritual Teacher

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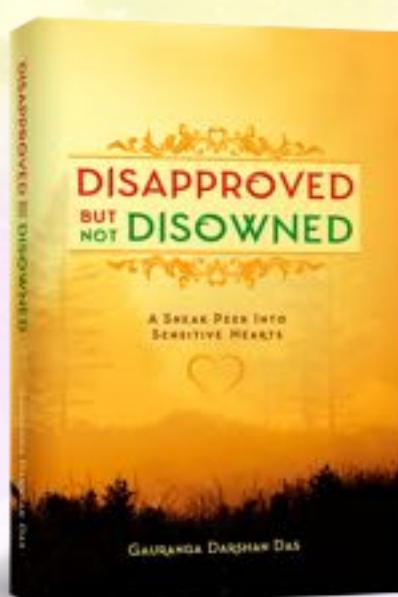
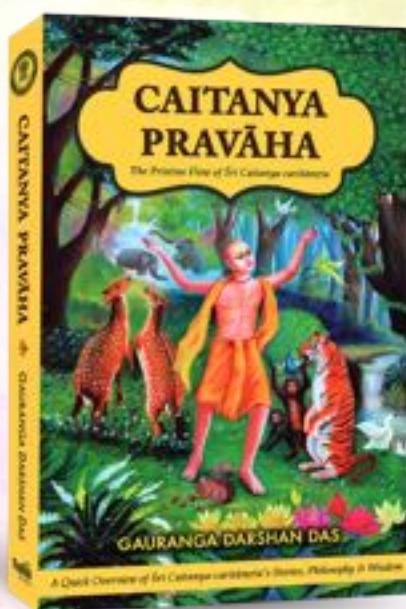
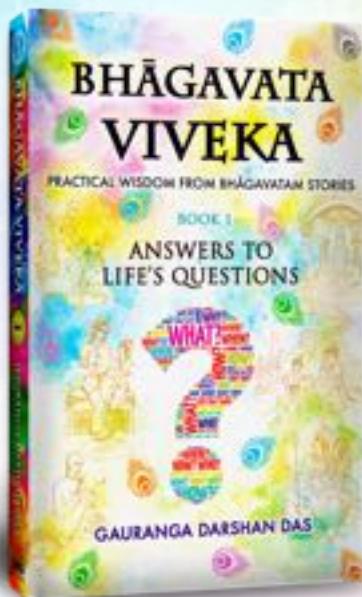
- Bhagavad gita
- Nectar of Instruction
- Sri Isopanishad
- Nectar of Devotion

STUDY GUIDE

Every Sat & Sun
Dates: 8th Jan to 18th Dec 2022
Time : 4 to 6.30pm IST

TEACHER
 Gauranga Darshan Das
Author, Writer, Spiritual Teacher

For details & Registration - Call/WhatsApp: +91 89280 73812 Email: bvre@ceenvillage.org.in



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

1.1.1 V: From Śrila Viśvanātha Cakravarti Ṭhākura's commentary on SB 1.1.1.

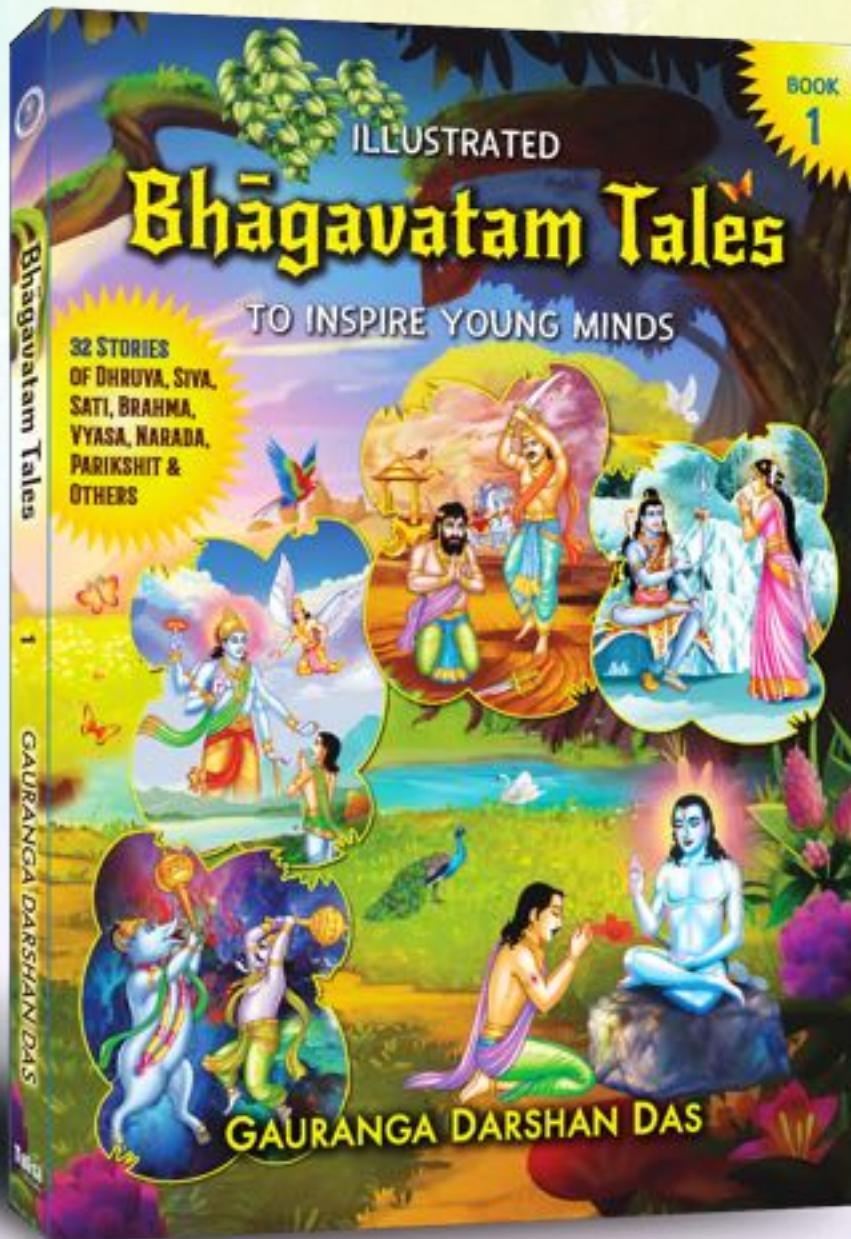
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