



Nityam Bhagavata-sevaya
A Fortnightly E-magazine for serving Srimad Bhagavatam

Śrī Śayana Ekādaśī

Issue no: 17

27th July 2015

Vidura, Uddhava and Maitreya



Lord Krishna instructing Uddhava

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VIDURA QUESTIONS UDDHAVA*Srila Sukadeva Goswami*

After passing through very wealthy provinces like Surat, Sauvira and Matsya and through western India, known as Kurujangala. At last he reached the bank of the Yamuna, where he happened to meet Uddhava, the great devotee of Lord Krishna. Then, due to his great love and feeling, Vidura embraced him [Uddhava], who was a constant companion of Lord Krishna and formerly a great student of Brihaspati's. Vidura then asked him for news of the family of Lord Krishna, the Personality of Godhead.

O Uddhava, [Please tell me] whether the original Personalities of Godhead, who incarnated Themselves at the request of Brahma [who is born out of the lotus flower from the Lord] and who have increased the prosperity of the world by elevating everyone, are doing well in the house of Surasena. [Please tell me] whether the best friend of the Kurus, our brother-in-law Vasudeva, is doing well. He is very munificent. He is like a father to his sisters, and he is always pleasing to his wives. O Uddhava, please tell me how is Pradyumna, the commander-in-chief of the Yadus, who was Cupid in a former life? Rukmini bore him as her son from Lord Krishna, by the grace of *brāhmaṇas* whom she pleased. O my friend, [tell me] whether Ugrasena, the King of the Satvatas, Vrishnis, Bhojas and Dasharhas, is now doing well. He went far away from his kingdom, leaving aside all hopes of his royal throne, but Lord Krishna again installed him. O gentle one, does Samba fare well? He exactly resembles the son of the Personality of Godhead. In a previous birth he was born as Kartikeya in the womb of the wife of Lord Shiva, and now he has been born in the womb of Jambavati, the most enriched wife of Krishna. O Uddhava, does Yuyudhana fare well? He learned the intricacies of the military art from Arjuna and attained the transcendental destination which is very difficult to reach even for great renunciators. Please tell me whether Akrura, the son of Shvaphalka, is doing well. He is a faultless soul surrendered unto the Personality of Godhead. He once lost his mental equilibrium due to his ecstasy of transcendental love and fell down on the dust of a road which was marked with the footprints of Lord Krishna.

As the Vedas are the reservoir of sacrificial purposes, so the daughter of King Devaka-bhoja conceived the Supreme Personality of Godhead in her womb, as did the mother of the demigods. Is she [Devaki] doing well? May I inquire whether Aniruddha is doing well? He is the fulfiller of all the desires of the pure devotees and has been considered from yore to

be the cause of the Ṛg Veda, the creator of the mind and the fourth Plenary expansion of Viṣṇu. O sober one, others, such as Hridika, Charudeshna, Gada and the son of Satyabhama, who accept Lord Sri Krishna as the soul of the self and thus follow His path without deviation—are they well? Also let me inquire whether Maharaja Yudhisthira is now maintaining the kingdom according to religious principles and with respect for the path of religion. Formerly Duryodhana was burning with envy because Yudhisthira was being protected by the arms of Krishna and Arjuna as if they were his own arms.

[Please tell me] whether the unconquerable Bhima, who is like a cobra, has released his long-cherished anger upon the sinners? The field of battle could not tolerate even the wonderful playing of his club when he stepped on the path. [Please tell me] whether Arjuna, whose bow bears the name Gandiva and who is always famous amongst the chariot warriors for vanquishing his enemies, is doing well. He once satisfied Lord Shiva by covering him with arrows when Shiva came as an unidentified false hunter. Are the twin brothers who are protected by their brothers doing well? Just as the eye is always protected by the eyelid, they are protected by the sons of Pritha, who snatched back their rightful kingdom from the hands of their enemy Duryodhana, just as Garuda snatched nectar from the mouth of Indra, the thunderbolt carrier. O my lord, is Pritha still living? She lived only for the sake of her fatherless children; otherwise it was impossible for her to live without King Pandu, who was the greatest commander and who alone conquered the four directions simply with the help of a second bow.

O gentle one, I simply lament for he [Dhritarashtra] who rebelled against his brother after death. By him I was driven out of my own house, although I am his sincere well-wisher, because he accepted the line of action adopted by his own sons. I am not astonished at this, having traveled over the world without being seen by others. The activities of the Personality of Godhead, which are like those of a man in this mortal world, are bewildering to others, but I know of His greatness by His grace, and thus I am happy in all respects. Despite His being the Lord and being always willing to relieve the distress of sufferers, He [Krishna] refrained from killing the Kurus, although they committed all sorts of sins and although He saw other kings constantly agitating the earth by their strong military movements carried out under the dictation of three kinds of false pride. The appearance of the Lord is manifested for the annihilation of the upstarts. His activities are transcendental and are enacted for the

understanding of all persons. Otherwise, since the Lord is transcendental to all material modes, what purpose could He serve by coming to earth?

O my friend, please, therefore, chant the glories of the Lord, who is meant to be glorified in the places of pilgrimage. He is unborn, and yet He appears by His causeless mercy upon the surrendered rulers of all parts of the universe. Only for their interest did He appear in the family of His unalloyed devotees the Yadus.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo*
» Chapter 1: Questions by Vidura » Verses: 24 to 45

THE MOST EXALTED PERSONALITY IN THE VRISHNI DYNASTY

Sriman Purnaprajna Dasa

Uddhava, a cousin-brother of Krishna's, came to see Krishna from Dwarka. He was the son of Vasudeva's brother and was almost the same age as Krishna. His bodily features resembled Krishna's almost exactly. After Krishna returned from His teachers home, He was pleased to see Uddhava, who happened to be His dearest friend. Krishna wanted to send him to Vrindavan with a message to the residents to pacify their deep feelings of separation.

Uddhava is described as the most exalted personality in the Vrishni dynasty, being almost equal to Krishna. He was a great friend of Krishna's, and being the direct student of Brihaspati, the teacher and priest of the heavenly planets, he was very intelligent and sharp in decision. Intellectually, he was highly qualified. Krishna, being his very loving friend, wanted to send him to Vrindavan just to study the highly elevated ecstatic devotional service practiced there. Even if one is highly elevated in material education and is even the disciple of Brihaspati, he still has to learn from the gopis and the other residents of Vrindavan how to love Krishna to the highest degree. It was Krishna's special favor to Uddhava to send him to Vrindavan with a message for the residents there, which was meant to pacify them.

— *Sriman Purnaprajna Dasa, Taken from the Introduction to the book "Sri Uddhava-sandesa & Sri Hamsaduta" By Srila Rupa Goswami.*

UDDHAVA REMEMBERS KRISHNA

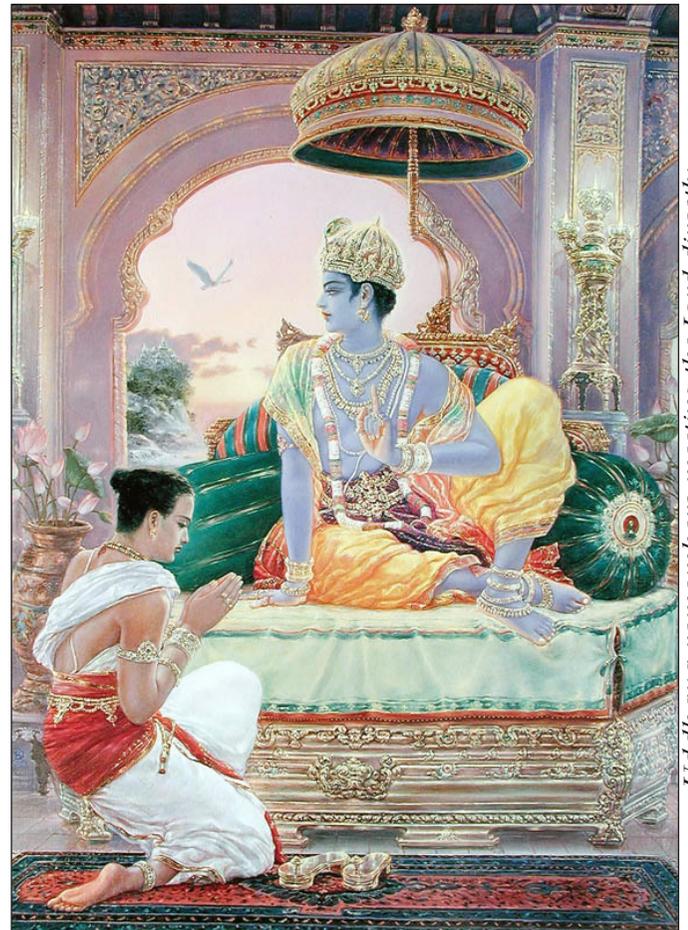
Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

Uddhava, his face washed by tears because of disturbance due to *prema*, describes the pastimes of Krishna in Vraja until the rasa dance. Uddhava who was fainting because of increased *prema* due to separation

from Krishna, spoke without being able to reply to the questions of Vidura. This shows his condition. He began to remember the Lord when his fainting was broken by the loud questions of Vidura.

Playing as a boy of five years, he worshipped a five-year old form of Krishna using articles of worship he had made. Though his mother called him for breakfast, he did not want to eat since he had not completed his worship. Even though years passed he did not age, being under the influence of service to Krishna. Another meaning is "Under the influence of service performed at the proper time, he did not age."

When he recovered from fainting by the questions of Vidura, Uddhava, exclaimed, "Oh! I have been separated from my master!" He remained silent for forty-eight minutes because of relishing the nectar of Krishna's beauty which he had attained by meeting the Lord directly by remembering his lotus feet. He became submerged in the sweetness of *prema* which appeared when the pain of separation from Krishna increased. This made him forget his previous pain. He remained in this blissful state. His whole body was filled with sprouting hairs, like sprouts of trees or shrubs. He also became stunned. Tears flowed from his closed eyes. Vidura understood that Uddhava had become successful because he had attained *prema*, as indicated



Uddhava remembers meeting the Lord directly.

by his symptoms, and because of that *prema*, he was absorbed completely in the melting of his heart for the Lord. First he was absorbed in *prema*, and then he was absorbed in *sneha*, the next stage of pure love.

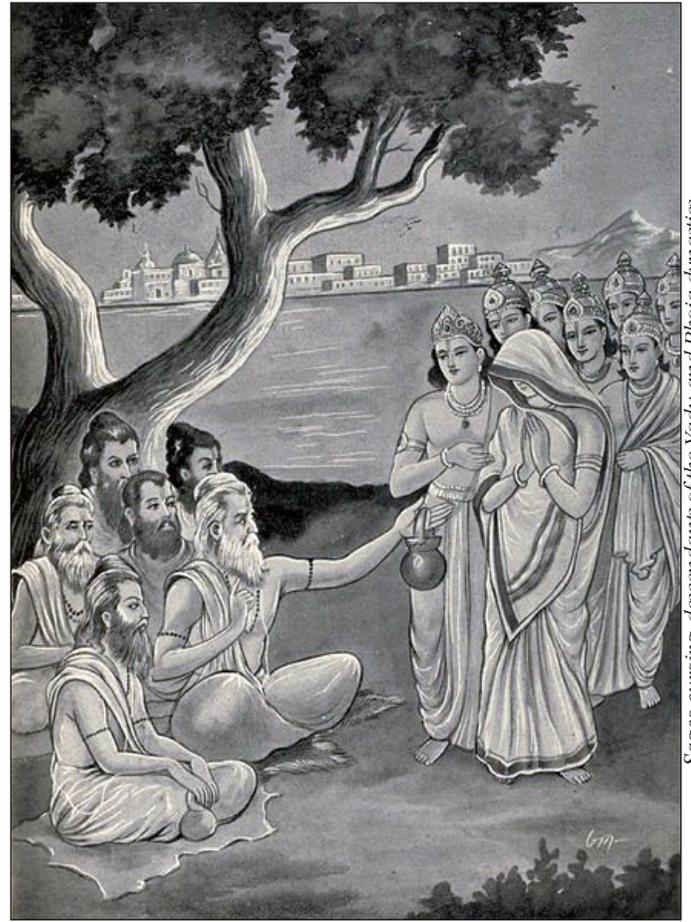
From the world of the Lord from Dwarka which is filled with eternal pastimes and which he had attained due to his intense *prema*, he returned to external consciousness again, attracted by the questions of Vidura. A second time his trance was broken. He became amazed by remembering the skill with which Krishna had performed acts such as relieving the world of its burden.

— From 'Sarartha danshini, Srila Vishwanatha Chakravarti Thakur's commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 2 Uddhava Remembers Kṛṣṇa » Verses: 1 to 6

UDDHAVA GUIDES VIDURA TO TAKE SHELTER OF MAITREYA ṚṢI Srila Sukadeva Goswami

Uddhava spoke to Vidura: Once upon a time, great sages were made angry by the sporting activities of the princely descendants of the Yadu and Bhoja dynasties, and thus, as desired by the Lord, the sages cursed them. A few months passed, and then, bewildered by Krishna, all the descendants of Vrishni, Bhoja and Andhaka, who were incarnations of demigods, went to Prabhasa, while those who were eternal devotees of the Lord did not leave but remained in Dwarka. After arriving there, all of them took bath, and with the water of this place of pilgrimage they offered their respects to the forefathers, demigods and great sages and thus satisfied them. They gave cows to the *brāhmaṇas* in royal charity. The *brāhmaṇas* were not only given well-fed cows in charity, but also gold, gold coins, bedding, clothing, animal-skin seats, blankets, horses, elephants, girls and sufficient land for maintenance.

Thereafter they offered the *brāhmaṇas* highly delicious foodstuffs first offered to the Personality of Godhead and offered their respectful obeisances by touching their heads to the ground. They lived perfectly by protecting the cows and the *brāhmaṇas*. Thereafter, all of them [the descendants of Vrishni and Bhoja], being permitted by the *brāhmaṇas*, partook of the remnants of prasada and also drank liquor made of rice. By drinking they all became delirious, and, bereft of knowledge, they touched the cores of each other's hearts with harsh words. As by the friction of bamboos destruction takes place, so also, at sunset, by the interaction of the faults of intoxication, all their minds became unbalanced, and destruction took place. The Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna, after foreseeing the end [of His family]



Sages cursing descendants of the Yadu and Bhoja dynasties

by His internal potency, went to the bank of the River Sarasvati, sipped water, and sat down underneath a tree. The Lord is the vanquisher of the distresses of one who is surrendered unto Him. Thus He who desired to destroy His family told me previously to go to Badarikashrama. Yet in spite of my knowing His desire [to destroy the dynasty], O Arindama [Vidura], I followed Him because it was impossible for me to bear separation from the lotus feet of the master. Thus following, I saw my patron and master [Lord Sri Krishna] sitting alone and deeply thinking, taking shelter on the bank of the River Sarasvati although He is the shelter of the goddess of fortune.

The Lord's body is blackish, but is eternal, full of bliss and knowledge, and very, very beautiful. His eyes are always peaceful, and they are reddish like the rising morning sun. I could immediately recognize Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead by His four hands, different symbolic representations, and yellow silk garments. The Lord was sitting, taking rest against a young banyan tree, with His right lotus foot on His left thigh, and although He had left all household comforts, He looked quite cheerful in that posture. At that time, after traveling in many parts of the world, Maitreya, a great devotee of the Lord and a friend and well-wisher of the great sage Krishna-dvaipayana Vyasa, reached that spot out of his own perfect accord. Maitreya Muni was



Lord Krishna Inspiring Uddhava and Maitreya

greatly attached to Him [the Lord], and he was listening in a pleasing attitude, with his shoulder lowered. With a smile and a particular glance upon me, having allowed me to rest, the Lord spoke as follows.

O Vasu, I know from within your mind what you desired in the days of yore when the Vasus and other demigods responsible for expanding the universal affairs performed sacrifices. You particularly desired to achieve My association. This is very difficult to obtain for others, but I award it unto you. O honest one, your present life is the last and the supermost because in this term of life you have been awarded My ultimate favor. Now you can go to My transcendental abode, Vaikuntha, by leaving this universe of conditioned living entities. Your visit to Me in this lonely place because of your pure and unflinching devotional service is a great boon for you. O Uddhava, in the lotus millennium in the days of yore, at the beginning of the creation, I spoke unto Brahma, who is situated on the lotus that grows out of My navel, about My transcendental glories, which the great sages describe as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

O Vidura, when I was thus favored at every moment by the Supreme Personality of Godhead and addressed by Him with great affection, my words failed in tears, and the hairs on my body erupted. After smearing my tears, I, with folded hands, spoke like this. O my Lord, devotees who engage in the transcendental loving service of Your lotus feet have no difficulty in achieving anything within the realm of the four principles of religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. But, O great one, as far as I am concerned, I have preferred only to engage in the loving service of Your lotus feet. My Lord, even the learned sages become disturbed in their intelligence when they see that Your Greatness engages in fruitive work although You are free from all desires, that You take birth although You are unborn, that You flee out

of fear of the enemy and take shelter in a fort although You are the controller of invincible time, and that You enjoy householder life surrounded by many women although You enjoy in Your Self. O my Lord, Your eternal Self is never divided by the influence of time, and there is no limitation to Your perfect knowledge. Thus You were sufficiently able to consult with Yourself, yet You called upon me for consultation, as if bewildered, although You are never bewildered. And this act of Yours bewilders me. My Lord, kindly explain to us, if You think us competent to receive it, that transcendental knowledge which gives enlightenment about Yourself and which You explained before to Brahmaji.

When I thus expressed my heartfelt desires unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the lotus-eyed Lord instructed me about His transcendental situation. I have studied the path of understanding self-knowledge from my spiritual master, the Personality of Godhead, and thus after circumambulating Him I have come to this place, very much aggrieved due to separation. My dear Vidura, now I am mad for want of the pleasure of seeing Him, and just to mitigate this I am now proceeding to Badarikashrama in the Himalayas for association, as I have been instructed by Him. There in Badarikashrama the Personality of Godhead, in His incarnation as the sages Nara and Narayana, has been undergoing great penance since time immemorial for the welfare of all amiable living entities.

Sukadeva Goswami said: After hearing from Uddhava all about the annihilation of his friends and relatives, the learned Vidura pacified his overwhelming bereavement by dint of his transcendental knowledge. While Uddhava, the chief and most confidential amongst the devotees of the Lord, was going away, Vidura, in affection and confidence, questioned him.

Vidura said: O Uddhava, because the servants of Vishnu, the Lord, wander in the interest of serving others, it is quite fit that you kindly describe the self-knowledge with which you have been enlightened by the Lord Himself.

Sri Uddhava said: You may take lessons from the great learned sage Maitreya, who is nearby and who is worshipable for reception of transcendental knowledge. He was directly instructed by the Personality of Godhead while He was about to quit this mortal world.

Sukadeva Goswami said: O King, after thus discussing with Vidura the transcendental name, fame, qualities, etc., on the bank of the Yamuna, Uddhava was overwhelmed with great affliction. He passed the night as if it were a moment, and thereafter he went away.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 3: The Lord's Pastimes Out of Vṛndāvana » Verses: 24 to 28 and Chapter 4: Vidura Approaches Maiteya » Verses: 1 to 27*

WHY DID UDDHAVA REFUSE TO BECOME THE SPIRITUAL MASTER OF VIDURA?

His Divine Grace

A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Vidura was older than Uddhava, like a father, and therefore when the two met, Uddhava bowed down before Vidura, and Vidura embraced him because Uddhava was younger, like a son. Vidura's brother Pandu was Lord Krishna's uncle, and Uddhava was a cousin to Lord Krishna. According to social custom, therefore, Vidura was to be respected by Uddhava on the level of his father. Uddhava was a great scholar in logic, and he was known to be a son or disciple of Brihaspati, the greatly learned priest and spiritual master of the demigods.

Vidura wanted to accept Uddhava as his spiritual master, but Uddhava did not accept the post because Vidura was as old as Uddhava's father and therefore Uddhava could not accept him as his disciple, especially when Maitreya was present nearby. The rule is that in the presence of a higher personality one should not be very eager to impart instructions, even if one is competent and well versed. So Uddhava decided to send an elderly person like Vidura to Maitreya, another elderly person, but he was well versed also because he was directly instructed by the Lord while He was about to quit this mortal world. Since both Uddhava and Maitreya were directly instructed by the Lord, both had the authority

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to become the spiritual master of Vidura or anyone else, but Maitreya, being elderly, had the first claim to becoming the spiritual master, especially for Vidura, who was much older than Uddhava. One should not be eager to become a spiritual master cheaply for the sake of profit and fame, but should become a spiritual master only for the service of the Lord. The Lord never tolerates the impertinence of *maryādā-uyatikrama*. One should never pass over the honor due to an elderly spiritual master in the interests of one's own personal gain and fame. Impertinence on the part of the pseudo spiritual master is very risky to progressive spiritual realization.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 3: The Status Quo » Chapter 1: Questions by Vidura » Verse: 25 and Chapter 4: Vidura Approaches Maiteya » Verse: 26 Purport*

WHY DID KRISHNA SEND UDDHAVA TO BADRIKASHRAMA?

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

*na vastavyaṁ tvayaiveha mayā tyakte mahī-tale
jano 'bhadra-rucir bhadra bhaviṣyati kalau yuge*

My dear Uddhava, you should not remain on the earth after I return to My eternal abode in the spiritual sky because Kali-yuga will influence human beings so that they will become accustomed to performing all kinds of sinful activities. For this reason, you should not remain here.

*tvam tu sarvaṁ parityajya snehaṁ sva-jana-bandhuṣu
mayy āveśya manaḥ sanīyak sama-dṛg vicarasva gāṁ*

Now, you should completely give up all attachment to your friends and relatives and fix your mind on Me. Thus being always conscious of Me, you should observe all things with equal vision while wandering throughout the world.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.7.5 - 6*

Lord Krishna thought as follows: “While remaining on the earth, I satisfied the desires of all those who sincerely wanted to see Me. I married many thousands of women, headed by Rukmini, whom I had kidnapped, and I killed many demons in various places and by various contrivances. I attended the religious functions organized by My friends and relatives, so that I have performed many wonderful pastimes for the satisfaction of My devotees.”

“I gave My personal association to all the great devotees in the lower planets. Just to please My mother,



Devaki, I returned her six dead sons, who had been killed by Kamsa, I went to Sutala and blessed My great devotee, Bali Maharaja. To return the dead son of My spiritual master, Sandipani Muni, I personally went to Yamaraja, and thus gave him My audience. I even benedicted the residents of heaven with My personal association when I went there to take the parijata flower for My wife, Satyabhama. I traveled to Maha-vaikunthaloka, to recover the dead children of a brahmana. In this way, all the devotees who sincerely desired to see Me received the fulfillment of their desires.”

“However, Nara-Narayana Rṣi and the great sages who reside with Him at Badarikashrama, although hoping to see Me, never had their desire fulfilled. I have been on this earth for 125 years and so the duration of My stay has reached its limit. Being busy with My pastimes, I had no time to see these great sages. And yet, Uddhava is almost as good as Me. He is a pure devotee who has been awarded My transcendental opulence. I therefore consider him to be the right person for Me to send to Badarikashrama. I shall impart transcendental knowledge to Uddhava, so that anyone who receives it from him will become detached from material existence. He is the right person to impart this knowledge to the sages at Badarikashrama. He can teach them the procedures for rendering devotional service unto Me. Loving devotional service rendered to Me is the most

valuable treasure available in this world. By receiving this knowledge, the desires of Nara-Narayana and the other great sages will be fulfilled.”

“The great souls who have surrendered unto Me are enriched with transcendental knowledge and detachment from the material world. Sometimes, being fully engaged in My devotional service, they may seemingly forget Me, but a pure devotee who possesses love for Me will always be protected by his sincere devotion. Even if such a devotee unexpectedly meets with death while forgetting to keep his mind fixed upon Me, his love for Me is so strong that it will give him protection so that he will eventually attain My lotus feet, which are beyond the vision of materialistic persons. Uddhava is My pure devotee because he can never give up My association.”

While contemplating in this way, Sri Krishna inspired Sriman Uddhava to inquire about transcendental knowledge, renunciation, and devotional service to Him. He said to Uddhava, “You should give up affection for your relatives and friends in the Yadu dynasty.” This affection of Uddhava towards the members of the Yadu dynasty are of two types.

1. Bodily relationship with the Yadus.
2. Relationship in regard to Krishna.

Among the two, Uddhava is advised give up the former. The Lord will explain to Uddhava how to give up this attachment. As far as the latter relationship is concerned, Uddhava is incapable of giving it up. This relationship is not condemned. Uddhava is certainly aware of Krishna’s mentality.

— From *Saratha darshini, Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur's commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Canto 11: The General History » Chapter 7: Lord Kṛṣṇa Instructs Uddhava » Verses: 6*

WHO IS MAITREYA RṢI ?

Srila Krishna-Dvaipayana Vyasa

Maitreya was one of the disciples of Maharshi Parashara, the father of Vyasadeva. Thus Vyasadeva and Maitreya were friends and mutual well-wishers. (*Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 3.25.4, Purport*).

Maitreya was one among the sages who visited Bhishma while he was lying on his bed of arrows. (*Verse 6, Chapter 47, Śānti-parva, Mahābhārata*)

Maitreya was a courtier of Yudhisthira. (*Verse 10, Chapter 4, Sabhā-parva, Mahābhārata*)



Sri Maitreya Rsi

Once with Srila Vyasa deva he discussed the topics on Dharma. (Chapter 120, *Amuśāsana-parva, Mahābhārata*).

MAITREYA RSI CURSES DURYODHANA

The Pandavas entered the Kamyaka forest where they were welcomed by the sages. Among them Maitreya whom the misfortune of the Pandavas affected much started for Hastinapura for peace parleys. Vidura advised Dhritarashtra that Maitreya's proposals should be respected lest he should curse the King. Dhritarashtra and Duryodhana received the sage with respect. And, the sage asked them to recall the Pandavas from the forest and live on friendly terms with them. Duryodhana did not in any manner respond to the advice of the sage, but stood there absolutely mum tapping his thigh with his fingers and making drawings with the fingers of his feet on the ground. This the sage interpreted as an insult to him. He stood up ablaze with anger and cursed Duryodhana thus: "You will, sooner than later reap the consequences of your false pride; your cruelty will invite terrible war, and in the fight Bhima will rend asunder your thigh, which you struck with your fingers just now."

Greatly agitated over the curse Dhritarashtra prayed the sage for redemption and the sage said: "if only your son resorts to forbearance and peace the curse will not take effect, otherwise it will come true." And after making this announcement the sage returned to the forest. (*Mahābhārata, Vana-parva, Chapter 10*).

GENEALOGY OF MAITREYA RSI

Descending in order from Lord Vishnu : Brahma — Atri — Chandra — Budha — Pururavas — Ayus — Anenas — Pratiksatra — Srnjaya — Jaya — Vijaya —

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Kṛti — Haryashva — Sahadeva — Nadina — Jayasena — Sankṛti — Kshatradharma — Sumagotra — Shala — Arstisena — Kosha — Dirghatapas — Dhanvantari — Ketuman — Bhimaratha — Divodasa — Maitreya.

ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATA PARAMAPARA

Maitreya Rṣi said to Vidura: Lord Sankarshana spoke the purport of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to the great sage Sanat-kumara, who had already taken the vow of renunciation. Sanat-kumara also, in his turn, when inquired of by Sankhyayana Muni, explained *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as he had heard it from Sankarshana.

The great sage Sankhyayana was the chief amongst the transcendentalists, and when he was describing the glories of the Lord in terms of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it so happened that my spiritual master, Parashara, and Brihaspati both heard him.

The great sage Parashara, as aforementioned, being so advised by the great sage Pulastya, spoke unto me the foremost of the *Purāṇas [Bhāgavatam]*. I shall also describe this before you, my dear son(Vidura), in terms of my hearing, because you are always my faithful follower. (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.8.7-9*)



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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