



Sage Dadhici and Indra

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## THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE DEMIGODS AND VRTRASURA

*Srila Sukadeva Goswami*

After instructing King Indra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Hari, the cause of the cosmic manifestation, immediately disappeared from the presence of the onlooking demigods. O King Pariksit, following the Lord's instructions, the demigods then approached Dadhici, the son of Atharva. Dadhici was very liberal, and when begged to give his body, he at once agreed in principle. However, just to hear religious instructions from the demigods, he smiled and jokingly spoke as follows:

O elevated demigods, at the time of death of all living entities who have accepted material bodies, severe, unbearable pain overwhelms them leaving them in a senseless stupor. Do you not know about this pain? In this material world, every living entity is very strongly attached to his body. Everyone tries to protect his body by all means, struggling to keep it forever, even at the sacrifice of all his possessions. Therefore, who would be prepared to give his body to another, even if it were demanded of him by Lord Vishnu?

The demigods replied: O exalted *brāhmaṇa*, pious persons like yourself, whose activities are always praiseworthy, are naturally very kind and affectionate to people in general. What can't such pious souls give in charity for the benefit of others? They can give everything, including their very bodies. Those who are very self-interested beg something from others, not considering of the others' pain. If the beggar knew the difficulty of the giver however, he would never ask for anything. Similarly, one who is able to give charity is generally not aware of the beggar's difficulty, for otherwise he would not refuse to give him anything he might want in charity.

The great sage Dadhici said: Just to hear about religious principles from yourselves,

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I refused to offer you my body upon your request. Now, although my body is extremely dear to me, I will surely give it up for your better purposes since I know that it will be gone today or tomorrow.

O demigods, one who has no compassion for suffering humanity and does not sacrifice his impermanent body for the higher causes of religious principles which are eternally glorious, is certainly pitied even by the immovable beings. If one is unhappy to see the distress of other living beings and joyful in their happiness, his religious principles are appreciated as imperishable by exalted persons who are pious and benevolent. This body, which is destined to be eaten by jackals and dogs after death, does not actually do any good for me, the spirit soul. It's utility is but for a short time and it may perish at any moment. The body and its possessions, its riches and relatives, must all be engaged for the benefit of others. If not they will be sources of tribulation and misery.

Sri Sukadeva Goswami said: Dadhici Muni, the son of Atharva, thus resolved to give his body to the service of the demigods. In meditation he placed himself, the spirit soul, at the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and in this way gave up his gross material body made of five elements. Dadhici Muni controlled his senses, life force, mind and intelligence and became absorbed in trance. Thus he severed all his material bondage and thus could not directly perceive how his material body became separated from his self. Thereafter, once it was re-constructed by Visvakarma using the bones of Dadhici, King Indra very firmly took up the improved thunderbolt with battle in his mind. His weapon endowed with the extraordinary strength of Dadhici Muni and his heart enlightened and empowered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Indra rode on the back of his carrier Airavata. He was surrounded by all the demigods, and the celestial sages offered him praise. As he

rode off to kill Vṛtrasura, King Indra shone with a beautiful effulgence, pleasing the three worlds. My dear King Parikṣit, as the enraged Rudra had formerly charged toward Antaka (Yamaraja) to kill him, with great force and anger Indra attacked Vṛtrasura, who was surrounded by the leaders of the demon armies. Thereafter, at the end of Satya-yuga and the beginning of Treta-yuga, a fierce battle took place between the demigods and the demons on the bank of the Narmada. O King, when all the asuras came onto the battlefield, headed by Vṛtrasura, they saw King Indra carrying the thunderbolt and flanked by the Rudras, Vasus, Adityas, Asvini-kumaras, Pitas, Vahnīs, Maruts, Rbhus, Sadhyas and Vishvadevas. In the midst of his army, Indra shone so brightly that his effulgence was intolerable to the demons. Many hundreds and thousands of demons, demi-demons, Yaksas, Raksasas (man-eaters) and others, headed by Sumali and Mali, resisted the armies of King Indra, which even death personified cannot easily overcome. Among the demons were Namuci, Shambara, Anarva, Dvimurdha, Rsabha, Asura, Hayagrīva, Sankushira, Vipracitti, Ayomukha, Puloma, Vrsaparva, Prahēti, Hēti and Utkala. Roaring tumultuously and fearlessly like lions, these near invincible demons, all dressed in golden ornaments, injured the demigods with weapons like clubs, bludgeons, arrows, barbed darts, mallets and lances. Armed with lances, tridents, axes, swords and other weapons like shataghnis and bhushundis, the demons attacked from different directions to overwhelm and scatter all the chiefs of the demigod armies. As the stars in the sky cannot be seen when covered by thick clouds, the demigods, were completely covered by a deluge of arrows and weapons descending upon them one after another, and could not be seen. The showers of various weapons and arrows launched to kill the soldiers of the demigods however did not reach them because the demigods quickly countered, cutting the weapons into thousands of pieces in the sky. As

their weapons and mantras decreased, the demons began showering mountain peaks, trees and stones upon the demigod soldiers. Again the demigods were so powerful and capable in battle that they nullified all these weapons by breaking them to pieces in the sky as before.

As the soldiers of the demons commanded by Vṛtrasura, saw that the soldiers of King Indra were quite well, having not been at all injured at all by their volleys of weapons, not even by the trees, stones and mountain peaks, the demons felt great trepidation. When insignificant persons use crude and hurtful words to cast false, malevolent accusations against saintly persons, their ineffectual words do not disturb the great personalities. Similarly, all the military exertions of the demons against the demigods, who were favorably situated under the protection of Lord Krishna, were futile. The asuras, in whom is never found devotion to Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, lost their chivalrous pride when they found all their endeavors fruitless. Abandoning their great leader even in the very beginning of the fight, they decided to flee because all their strength had been sapped by the enemy. Seeing his army broken and all the asuras, even those known as great heroes, fleeing the battlefield out of intense fear, Vṛtrasura, who was truly a great-minded hero, smiled and spoke the following words according to his position and the time and circumstances.

Vṛtrasura, the hero among heroes, spoke words that were appreciated by all thoughtful men. He called to the heroes of the demons, “O Vipracitti! O Namuci! O Puloma! O Maya, Anarva and Shambara, please hear me and do not flee. All living entities who have taken birth in this material world must certainly die. It is an established fact that no one in this world has ever found any means to be saved from death. Death is so inevitable that even providence has not provided a means to escape it. Under the circumstances,

if one can gain promotion to the higher planetary systems in the afterlife and be perpetually celebrated here by meeting a hero's end, what man will not accept such a glorious death? There are two ways to meet a glorious death, and both of them are exceptionally rare. One is to die after performing mystic yoga, especially *Bhakti-yoga*, by which one controls the mind and living force and thus leaves the body absorbed in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The second exalted departure from this world is to die on the battle-field, leading the army and never showing one's back. These two kinds of death are recommended in the *śāstra* as glorious.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 6: Prescribed Duties for Mankind » Chapter 10: The Battle Between the Demigods and Vṛtrasura » Verse: 1-33.*

### ONE SHOULD NOT DENY A BEGGAR

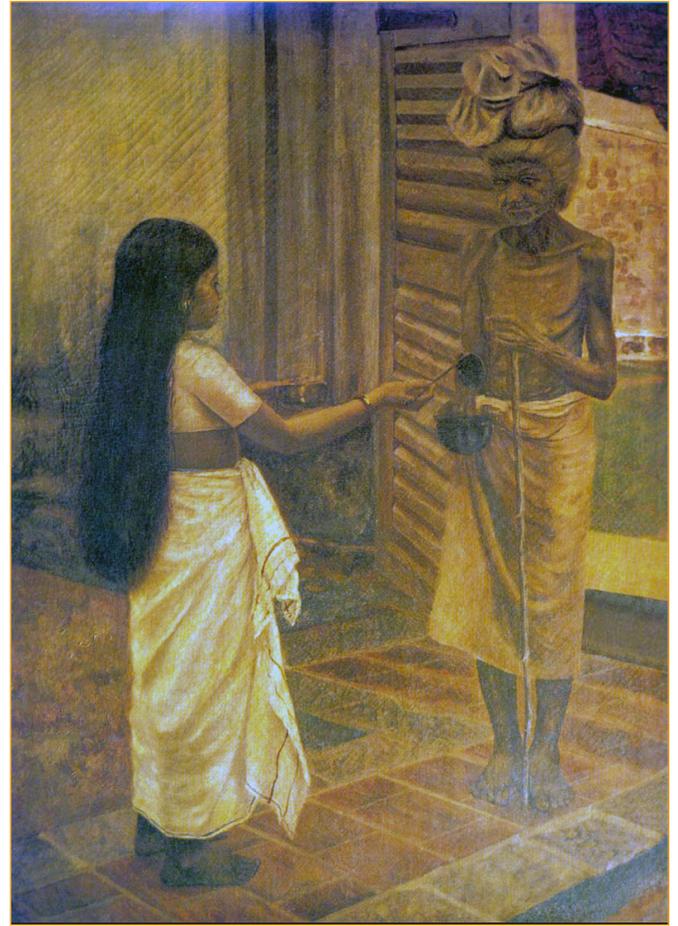
*His Divine Grace*

*A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada*

*nūnaṁ svārtha-paro loko  
na veda para-saṅkaṭam  
yadi veda na yāceta  
neti nāha yad īśvaraḥ*

This verse describes two people—a person who gives charity and one who begs for it. A beggar should not ask charity from someone who is in difficulty. Similarly, one who is able to give charity should not deny a beggar his mite. These are the moral instructions of the *śāstra*. Chanakya Pandita similarly says, *san-nimite varam tyāgo vināṣe niyate sati*: everything in this material world will inevitably meet destruction, and therefore one should use everything for a good purpose. If one is advanced in knowledge, he will naturally always be prepared to sacrifice anything for a better cause. At the present moment the entire world is under the spell of a godless civilization and thus in a precarious position. The Krishna consciousness movement needs

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many exalted, learned persons who will sacrifice their lives to revive God consciousness throughout the world. We therefore invite all men and women who are advanced in knowledge to join the Krishna consciousness movement and sacrifice their lives for the great cause of reviving the God consciousness of the entire human society.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 6: Prescribed Duties for Mankind » Chapter 10: The Battle Between the Demigods and Vṛtrasura » Verse: 6*

### WHAT IS THE HIGHEST WELFARE ACTIVITY?

*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

Let everyone be devoted to Krishna. This is the highest benediction for all people. The highest form of welfare is to engage people's minds in thinking of at Krishna's lotus feet. The topmost charity or altruism is to distribute Krishna's devotional service to everyone. The devotees of Krishna are always anxious to help others in these ways.

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To know God is supreme knowledge. The *śāstra* says that true knowledge means to know the Supreme Lord. Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu states, *prabhu kahe*—“*kon vidyā vidyā-madhya sāra?*” *rāya kahe*—“*kṛṣṇa-bhakti vinā vidyā nāhi āra*” The Lord inquired: “Of all types of education, which is essential?” Ramananda Raya replied: “No education is important other than the transcendental devotional service of Krishna.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 8.245*)

The godless education that is currently being disseminated widely does not benefit the general populace in any way at all. Rather, the people have been harmed by it and will continue to be harmed. Humankind can be benefited rather by simply distributing Sri Chaitanyadeva’s mercy.

— *Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality*, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja, Adapted and Published by Īśvara dāsa.

### ACCEPTING AND GIVING CHARITY TO MATERIALISTS

*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

*dadāti pratigrhṇāti  
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati  
bhukte bhojayate caiva  
ṣaḍ-vidham pṛīti-lakṣaṇam*

"Offering gifts in charity, accepting charitable gifts, revealing one's mind in confidence, inquiring confidentially, accepting *prasādam* (sanctified foodstuffs, flowers etc.) and offering *prasādam* are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another."

O *sādhakas*, unavoidably one must accept contact with both bad and good people as one passes his life. This equally applies to both the householders and the renunciates. Contact is inevitable, nevertheless one should not engage in bad association. What does that mean? Giving in charity, accepting charity,



revealing one's mind, hearing another's confidential disclosures, accepting foods, and giving foods - if done with love, these are constitute *saṅga*, or association. Giving some foodstuffs to a hungry person and accepting some charity from a pious man is done out of duty, not out of love. Even if they are materialists, this type of engagement is not considered association. But if they are pure devotees, then such activities are to be performed with love. When acts are performed out of love, then it is association. Therefore giving charity to pure Vaisnavas and accepting items or the wealth of transcendental knowledge from them becomes *sat-saṅga* (association of the virtuous). Giving charity to a materialist or accepting charity from one, if done out of love, becomes *asat-saṅga* (wrong association). When a materialistic person approaches you, whatever is required to be done should be done only out of duty. One should not speak confidentially with a materialist. Generally there is some love involved in confidential speaking, therefore it is association. While meeting a materialistic friend, one should speak only what is extremely necessary. At that time it is better not to exhibit heartfelt love. But if that friend is a proper Vaisnava, then one should accept his association by speaking to him with love. This type of behavior with relatives and friends creates no hostility. There is no association in ordinary talk if executed this way. One should behave with ordinary people as one externally behaves with a stranger while buying something in the market. The same dealings with a pure devotee of the Lord should be done out of love. If one is obliged to feed hungry people, needy people, and teachers, he should do so as a host dutifully cares for his guest, there is no need to exhibit love. Care for them, but not out of love. One should feed pure Vaisnavas with love, and when possible accept their remnants with love. If one can behave in this way while giving in charity, accepting charity, speaking confidentially, hearing confidentially, feeding, and accepting food with one's

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wife, children, servants, maidservants, strangers, and whoever else one meets, there will be no unholy association (*asat-saṅga*), only good association (*sat-saṅga*). There is no possibility of achieving devotion to Krishna until one gives up unholy association in this way.

A renunciate Vaisnava should accept whatever alms he receives by *mādhukarī*, (begging), at the house of a honest householder with the above mentioned consideration. He should always remember the difference between gross begging and proper *mādhukarī*. A *gṛhastha* Vaisnava should accept *prasāda* grains and drinks - in the house of another *gṛhastha* who has pure character. One should always be cautious about taking *prasāda* in the house of a non-devotee and one with bad character.

There is no need to speak further about this. Due to their pious activities, those who have developed faith in devotional service by the mercy of Krishna have a little pure intelligence. Due to that intelligence they can easily understand the essence of the ācāryas' instructions. Therefore only a few words are needed to instruct them. Those who have no pious credits are also without faith. Even if they are given volumes of instruction, they will not understand anything of these matters. Therefore Srila Rupa Goswami has given only a few words of instruction in his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*.

— *Śrī Bhaktyāloka - The Six Faults and Qualities of Bhakti, Writings of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Translated by Sarvabhāvana dāsa.*

### **SRI KRISHNA IS THE MOST GENEROUS GIVER OF CHARITY**

*Srila Sanatana Goswami*

*yad arcitaṁ brahma-bhavādibhiḥ suraiḥ  
śriyā ca devyā munibhiḥ sa-sātvataiḥ  
go-cāraṇāyānucaraiś carad vane  
yad gopikānām kuca-kuṅkumācitam*

[After seeing the footprints of Lord Krishna's feet in the dust of Vrindavan Akrura thought:] "The lotus feet of Krishna are worshiped by Brahma, Shiva, and all the other demigods, by the goddess of fortune, and also by the great sages and Vaisnavas. Lord Krishna walks about the forest while herding the cows with His companions upon these feet, and these feet are smeared with the *kuṅkuma* from the chests of the gopis."

### COMMENTARY

This verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.38.8) expresses some of the thoughts Akrura had whilst traveling on the road to Vrindavan. Akrura mentions different personalities one after another in the order of their increasing greatness. Were he not to speak in this specific manner, his praise would be as absurd as praise given to a person first for being a great brāhmaṇa and then a great king. Competent poets disapprove of such an awkward sequences hence they generally glorify related subjects in ranked order, from the least significant to the most.

The fact that Brahma and other demigods worship Krishna's lotus feet indicates that those feet are the supremely worshipable and that Krishna is the supreme controller and the greatest Deity. Goddess Laksmi who, simply by her sidelong glance, bestows all riches, also worships Krishna's feet. This indicates that Krishna's feet possess the extreme limit of good fortune. Due to their spiritual acumen, self-satisfied mystic sages (*ātmārāma*) become indifferent to the favor of the goddess of fortune. Yet they also worship Krishna's lotus feet. This means that to achieve service to Lord Krishna's feet is the highest goal of life. Above the great mystics, the wise devotees interested only in pure devotional service to the Supreme Person also worship Krishna's feet. Such pure devotees are much greater than the *ātmārāma* mystics because they do not value even liberation from material

bondage. This also implies that Krishna is the most generous giver of charity because to such pure devotees He gives something even more covetable - His very self.

Sages diligently engaged in the cultivation of karma and jñāna have no inclination to worship the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead. This is because they lack the specific knowledge that would inspire them to begin such worship. Moreover, they also lack the spiritual strength needed for such devotional service. But were those *karmī* and *jñānī* sages to associate with pure Vaisnavas, they would achieve the Vaisnavas' mercy and thus acquire the requisite knowledge and strength. This illustrates how the devotees of the Supreme Lord are superior to non-devotee sages.

By referring to the goddess Laksmi as *devī* (demigoddess) rather than *bhagavatī* (beloved of Bhagavān), Akrura indicates that he is not referring to Lord Narayaṇa's wife Maha-laksmi. Rather, he speaks of the partial expansion of Maha-laksmi who rules the opulence of the material world. Vaisnava devotees actually worship the original Maha-laksmi as the most dear consort of the Supreme Lord. This means that the Vaisnavas accept Her as greater than themselves.

Akrura contemplates Krishna going to the forest with His companions, the young cowherd boys, and in this way thinks of Krishna's incomparable compassion and affection for His devotees. The forest of Vrindavan is the place of Krishna's greatest pleasure pastimes, and the purpose of His going there is to tend His cows, a pastime of supreme joy for Him.

It is not exactly correct to think that the words *arcitam* and *anucaraiḥ* together indicate that Krishna is "worshiped by His companions." Though there may be some grammatical justification for such an understanding, because the cowherd boys are Krishna's personal, intimate friends, their "worship" of His lotus feet differs from the regulated formal worship



usually associated with the word arcitam.

Akrura lastly says that Krishna's lotus feet are smeared with the reddish *kuṅkuma* from the breasts of the gopis. This statement simultaneously reveals their extraordinarily uncommon mode of worshipping the Supreme Lord and how Krishna sports romantically with and bestows upon them the highest form of His mercy by coming under the control of their pure love. The gopis are mentioned at the end of this comparative sequence because they are the greatest of all of Krishna's worshipers. The word yad is repeated in the final line to highlight the special nature of the gopis' worship. The sweet sentiment invoked by the image of Krishna's feet smeared with the gopis' *kuṅkuma* suggests that loving exchanges with the gopis are the primary purpose for which He descended as an *avatāra*. Krishna's favoring the gopis by submitting to their love is the most glorious thing He does here or anywhere.

In this way Akrura describes the various worshipers of Krishna's lotus feet in a perfectly appropriate manner. Lord Brahma is greater than the demigods; Lord Shiva greater than Brahma; the goddess Laksmi is greater than Shiva, the self-contented sages are greater than Sri, the pure Vaisnavas greater than those sages, and Krishna's cowherd friends and ultimately the gopis are greater than all others. Thinking thus Akrura became ecstatic as he approached Vrindavan:

*athāvarūḍhaḥ sapadiśayo rathāt  
pradhāna-puṁsoś caraṇam sva-labdhave  
dhiyā dhṛtam yogibhir apy ahaṁ dhruvam  
namasya ābhyām ca sakhīn vanaukaśaḥ*

“Upon my arrival I will immediately alight from my chariot and bow to the lotus feet of Krishna and Balarama, the Supreme Personalities of Godhead. Great mystic *yogīs* striving for self-realization reverently meditate on Those lotus feet within their minds. I will similarly offer my respects to the Lords' cowherd boyfriends and to

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all the other residents of Sri Vrindavan Dhama.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.38.15)

— *Śrī Bṛhad Bhāgavatāmṛta* of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Volume Three, Chapter 5, 'Prema, love of God', text 197. Translated by Gopīparāṇadhana Dāsa.



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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