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## THE MOST GLORIOUS PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE  
DEMIGODS AND THE DEMONS

KING INDRA ANNIHILATES THE DEMONS  
*Sri Sukadeva Goswami*

THE SYMPTOM OF A DEVOTEE  
*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami*

SIMPLY BY ASSOCIATING WITH DEVOTEES  
*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

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SURRENDERED DEVOTEES ARE  
UNDER THE LORD'S PROTECTION  
*Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura*

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### THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE DEMIGODS AND THE DEMONS

Both the demigods and the demons are expert in activities involving the material energy, but the demigods are devotees of the Lord, whereas the demons are just the opposite. The demigods and demons churned the ocean of milk to get nectar from it, but the demons, not being devotees of the Lord, could derive no profit. After feeding nectar to the demigods, Lord Viṣṇu returned to His abode on the back of Garuḍa, but the demons, feeling very aggrieved, again declared war against the demigods. Bali Maharaja, the son of Virocana, became the commander in chief of the demons. In the beginning of the battle, the demigods set their minds on defeating the demons. Indra, King of heaven, fought with Bali, and other demigods, like Vāyu, Agni and Varuṇa, fought against other leaders of the demons. In this fight the demons were defeated, and to save themselves from death they began to manifest many illusions through mystical manipulation, killing many soldiers on the side of the demigods. The demigods, finding no other recourse, surrendered again to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, who then appeared and counteracted all the illusions presented by the jugglery of the demons. Heroes among the demons such as Kalanemi, Mali, Sumali and Malyavan fought the Supreme Personality

of Godhead and were all killed by the Lord. The demigods were thus freed from all dangers.

— *Srimad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) - Canto 8: Withdrawal of the Cosmic Creations - Chapter Ten— Verses Summary.*

### KING INDRA ANNIHILATES THE DEMONS *Sri Sukadeva Goswami*

Sukadeva Goswami said: Thereafter, by the unsurpassed grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Hari, all the demigods, headed by Indra and Vayu, were brought back to life. Becoming invigorated, the demigods began severely attacking the very same demons who had defeated them before. When the most powerful Indra became angry and took his thunderbolt in hand to kill Maharaja Bali, the demons began lamenting, “Alas, alas!” Sober and tolerant and well equipped with paraphernalia for fighting, Bali Maharaja moved before Indra on the great battlefield. King Indra, who always carries the thunderbolt in his hand, rebuked Bali Maharaja as follows.

Indra said: O rascal, as a cheater sometimes binds the eyes of a child and takes away his possessions, you are trying to defeat us by displaying some mystic power, although you know that we are the masters of all such mystic powers. Those fools and rascals who want to ascend to the upper planetary system by mystic power or mechanical means, or who endeavour to cross even the

upper planets and achieve the spiritual world or liberation, I cause to be sent to the lowest region of the universe. Today, with my thunderbolt, which has hundreds of sharp edges, I, the same powerful person, shall sever your head from your body.

Although you can produce so much jugglery through illusion, you are endowed with a poor fund of knowledge. Now, try to exist on this battlefield with your relatives and friends.

Bali Maharaja replied: All those present on this battlefield are certainly under the influence of eternal time, and according to their prescribed fate born of their own previous actions, they are destined to receive fame, victory, defeat and death, one after another. Seeing the movements of time, those who are cognizant of the real truth neither rejoice nor lament for different circumstances. Therefore, because you are jubilant due to your victory, you should be considered not very learned. You demigods think that you, yourselves are the cause of your attaining fame and victory. Because of your ignorance in such matters, saintly persons feel sorry for you. Therefore, although your words afflict the heart, we do not accept them.

Sukadeva Gosvami said: After thus rebuking Indra, King of heaven, with sharp words, Bali Maharaja, who could subdue any other hero, drew back to his ear the arrows known as naracas and attacked Indra with these arrows. Then he again chastised Indra with strong words. Since Maharaja Bali's rebukes were truthful, King Indra did not at all become sorry, just as an elephant beaten by its driver's rod does not become agitated. When Indra, the defeater of enemies, released his infallible thunderbolt scepter at Bali Maharaja with a desire to kill him, Bali Maharaja indeed fell to the ground with his airplane, like a mountain with its wings cut off. When the demon Jambhasura saw that his friend Bali had fallen, he appeared before Indra, the enemy, just to serve Bali Maharaja as he would a dear friend.

The greatly powerful Jambhasura, carried by a lion, approached Indra and forcefully struck him on the shoulder with his club. He also struck Indra's elephant. Being beaten by Jambhasura's club, Indra's elephant was confused and aggrieved. Thus it touched its knees to the ground and fell unconscious. (Thereafter, Matali, Indra's charioteer, brought Indra's chariot, which was drawn by one thousand horses. Indra then left his incapacitated

elephant and got onto the chariot. Appreciating Matali's excellent service, Jambhasura, the best of the demons, smiled. Nonetheless, he struck Matali in the battle with a trident of blazing fire. Although the pain he experienced was severe, Matali tolerated it with great patience. Indra, however, became extremely angry at Jambhasura. He struck Jambhasura with his thunderbolt and thus severed his head from his body.

When Narada Ṛṣi informed Jambhasura's friends and relatives that Jambhasura had been killed, the three demons named Namuci, Bala and Paka arrived on the battlefield in great haste. Rebuking Indra with harsh, cruel words that were piercing to the heart, these demons showered him with arrows, just as torrents of rain wash a great mountain. Quickly handling the situation on the battlefield, the demon Bala put all of Indra's one thousand horses into tribulation by simultaneously piercing them all with an equal number of arrows. Paka, another demon, attacked both the chariot, with all its paraphernalia, and the chariot driver, Matali, by fitting two hundred arrows to his bow and releasing them all simultaneously. This was indeed a wonderful act on the battlefield. Then Namuci, another demon, attacked Indra and injured him with fifteen very powerful golden-feathered arrows, which roared like a cloud full of water. Other demons covered Indra, along with his chariot and chariot driver, with incessant showers of arrows, just as clouds cover the sun in the rainy season. The demigods, being severely oppressed by their enemies and being unable to see Indra on the battlefield, were very anxious. Having no captain or leader, they began lamenting like traders in a wrecked vessel floundering in the middle of the ocean. Thereafter, Indra released himself from the network of arrows. Appearing with his chariot, flag, horses and chariot driver and thus pleasing the sky, the earth and all directions, he shone effulgently like the sun at the end of night. Indra was bright and beautiful in the vision of everyone. When Indra, who is known as Vajra-dhara, the carrier of the thunderbolt, saw his own soldiers so oppressed by the enemies on the battlefield, he became very determined to defeat his enemies. Thus he took up his thunderbolt to kill them all. O King Parikṣit, King Indra used his thunderbolt to cut off the heads of both Bala and Paka in the presence of all their relatives and followers. In this

way he created a very fearsome atmosphere on the battlefield.

O King, when Namuci, another demon, saw the killing of both Bala and Paka, he was full of grief and lamentation. Thus he angrily made a great attempt to kill Indra. Being angry and roaring like a lion, the demon Namuci took up a steel spear, which was bound with bells and decorated with ornaments of gold. He loudly cried, “Now you are killed!” Thus coming before Indra to kill him, Namuci launched his weapon. O King, when Indra, King of heaven, saw this very powerful spear hurtling toward him like a blazing meteor, he immediately cut it to pieces with his arrows. Then, being very angry, he struck Namuci’s shoulder with his thunderbolt to cut off Namuci’s head. Although King Indra hurled his thunderbolt at Namuci with great force, it could not even pierce his skin. It is very wonderful that the famed thunderbolt that had pierced the body of Vrtrasura could not even slightly injure the skin of Namuci’s neck.

When Indra saw the thunderbolt return from the enemy, he was astounded and very afraid. He began to wonder whether this had happened because of some miraculous superior power. Indra pondered: Formerly, when many mountains flying in the sky would crush people upon coming to the ground, I cut their wings with this same thunderbolt. Vrtrasura was the essence of the austerities undergone by Tvasta, yet the thunderbolt killed him. Indeed, not only he but also many other stalwart heroes, whose very skin could not be injured even by all kinds of weapons, were killed by the same thunderbolt. But now, although the same thunderbolt has been re-leased against a less important demon, it has been ineffectual. Therefore, although it was as good as a *brahmāstra*, it has now become useless like an ordinary rod. I shall therefore hold it no longer. Sukadeva Gosvami continued: While the morose Indra was lamenting in this way, an ominous, un-embodied voice said from the sky, “This demon Namuci is not to be annihilated by anything dry or moist.” The voice also said, “O Indra, because this demon has been given the benediction that he will never be killed by any weapon that is dry or moist, you have to think of another way to defeat him.” After hearing

Bhāgavata Mahāvidyālaya

the ominous voice, Indra, with great attention, began to meditate on how to kill the demon. He then realised that foam would be the means, for it is neither moist nor dry. Thus Indra, King of heaven, severed Namuci’s head with a weapon of foam, which was neither dry nor moist.

Then all the sages satisfied Indra, the exalted personality, by showering flowers and garlands upon him, almost covering him entirely. Visvavasu and Paravasu, the two chiefs of the Gandharvas, sang in great happiness. The kettledrums of the demigods sounded, and the Apsaras danced in jubilation. Vayu, Agni, Varuna and other demigods began killing the demons who opposed them, just as lions kill deer in a forest. O King, when Lord Brahma saw the imminent total annihilation of the demons, he sent a message with Narada, who went before the demigods to make them stop fighting.

The great sage Narada said: All of you demigods are protected by the arms of Narayana, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and by His grace you have gotten the nectar. By the grace of the goddess of fortune, you are glorious in every way. Therefore, please stop this unnecessary carnage.

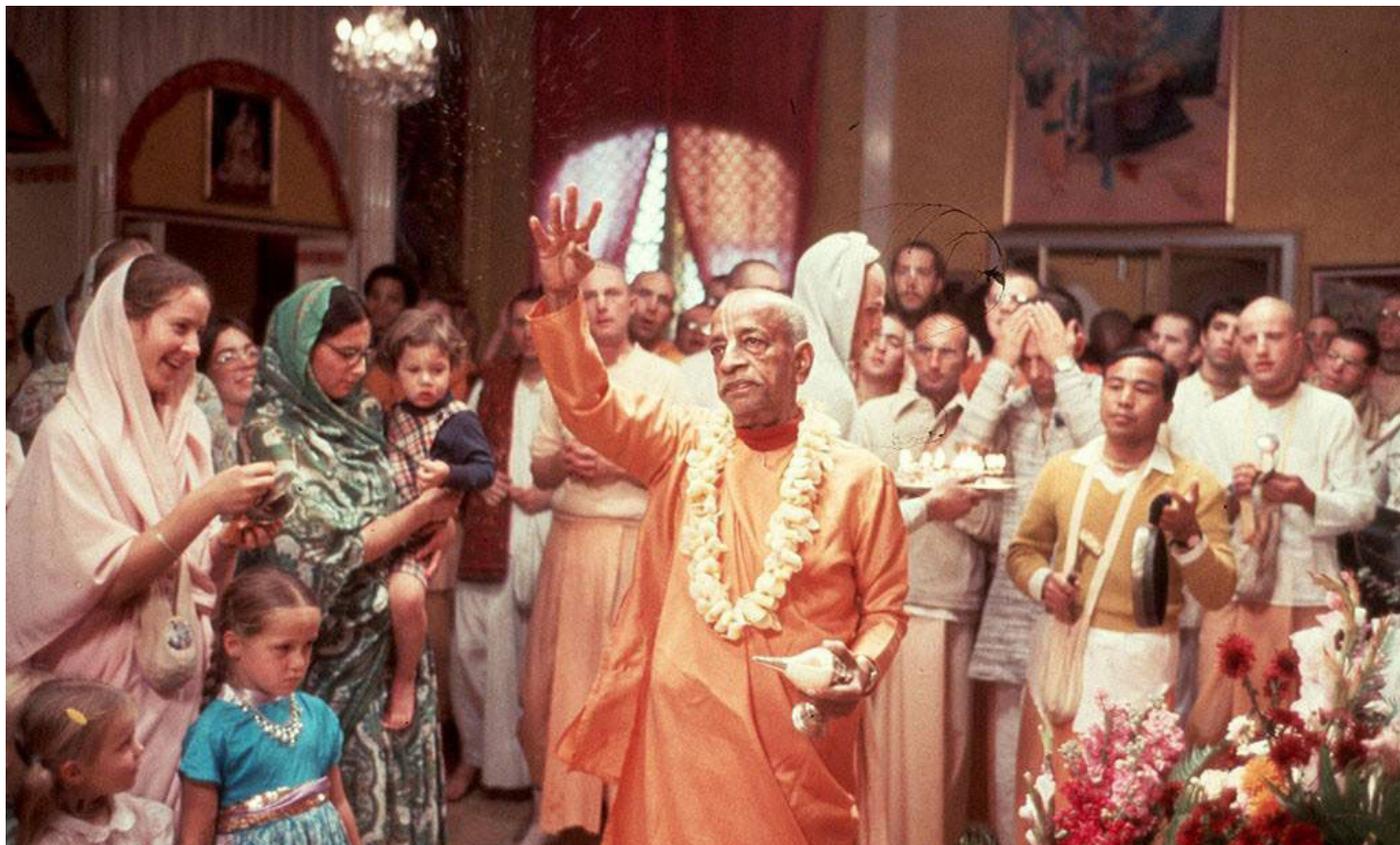
Sri Sukadeva Gosvami said: Accepting the words of Narada, the demigods gave up their anger and stopped fighting. Being praised by their followers, they returned to their heavenly planets. Following the order of Narada Muni, whatever demons remained on the battlefield took Bali Maharaja, who was in a precarious condition, to the hill known as Astagiri. There, on that hill, Sukracarya brought to life all the dead demoniac soldiers who had not lost their heads, trunks and limbs. He achieved this by his own mantra, known as Samjivani. Bali Maharaja was very experienced in universal affairs. When he regained his senses and memory by the grace of Sukracarya, he could understand everything that had happened. Therefore, although he had been defeated, he did not lament.

– Srimad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) - Canto 8: Withdrawal of the Cosmic Creations - Chapter Eleven - Verses: 1-48

THE SYMPTOM OF A DEVOTEE  
His Divine Grace A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami

Bali Maharaja knew that Indra, King of heaven, was extremely powerful -- certainly more pow-

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erful than he himself. Nonetheless, Bali Maharaja challenged Indra by saying that Indra was not a very learned person. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.11) Krishna rebuked Arjuna by saying:

*aśocyān anvaśocas tvam  
prajñā-vādāmś ca bhāṣase  
gatā sūna gatā sūmś ca  
nānuśocanti paṇḍitāḥ*

"While speaking learned words, you are mourning for what is not worthy of grief. Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor the dead." Thus as Krishna challenged Arjuna by saying that he was not a *paṇḍita*, or a learned person, Bali Maharaja also challenged King Indra and his associates.

In this material world, everything happens under the influence of time. Consequently, for a learned person who sees how all things are actually taking place, there is no question of being sorry or happy because of the waves of material nature. After all, since we are ourselves being carried away by these waves, what is the meaning of being jubilant or morose? One who is fully conversant with the laws of nature is never jubilant or morose because of nature's activities. In *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.14), Krishna

advises that one be tolerant: *tāmś titikṣasva bhārata*. Following this advice of Krishna's, one should not be morose or unhappy because of circumstantial changes. This is the symptom of a devotee.

A devotee always carries out his duty in Krishna consciousness and is never unhappy in awkward circumstances. He has full faith that in such circumstances, Krishna protects His devotee. Therefore a devotee never deviates from his prescribed duty of devotional service. The material qualities of jubilation and moroseness are present even in the demigods, who are very highly situated in the upper planetary system. Therefore, when one is undisturbed by the so-called favorable and unfavorable circumstances of this material world, he should be understood to be *brahma-bhūta* [Bhāg. 4.30.20], or self-realized. As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.54), *brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocatina kāṅkṣati*: "One who is transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman and becomes fully joyful." When one is undisturbed by material circumstances, he should be understood to be on the transcendental stage, above the reactions of the three modes of material nature.

—Srimad-Bhāgavatam (BhāgavataPurāṇa) - Canto 8: Withdrawal of the Cosmic Creations - Chapter Eleven - Verse: 8, Purport.



SIMPLY BY ASSOCIATING WITH DEVOTEES  
*Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura*

If one does not realize that he has a spiritual body, then he will remain forgetful of Krishna and consider his material body to be himself. The Absolute Truth is always beyond all material sense perception. Krishna is the master of the senses, and one must serve Him with all one's senses. Service to Krishna is rendered through service-inclined senses, spiritualized senses. One revives one's spiritual body only by guru's mercy. The soul serves the Supersoul, who is *sat-cit-ānanda*, through its spiritual senses.

People devoid of service inclination toward the transcendental Lord are compared to animals. The best course is that one always associate with saintly persons. The Lord's devotees are constantly engaged in His service. If we associate with such devotees, we will also develop the propensity to give the Lord pleasure. Simply by associating with devotees we can come to understand that we possess a spiritual body. Then we will no longer consider the material body the self and our desire for material happiness, which is all-destructive, will be destroyed forever.

A devotee desires neither material enjoyment nor liberation. Rather, a devotee is always eager to please the Supreme Lord by engaging constantly in His service. A materialist thinks, "I will enjoy by usurping the opulence of the Lord." An impersonalist similarly thinks, "I will become the

Lord myself by occupying His ultimate position." Devotees do not possess such sinful mentalities. Rather, their devotional practices situate them in their original and constitutional position as the Lord's servants.

*AmṛtaVāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupāda Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti Mayukha Bhāgavat Mahārāja Adapted and Published by Īśvaradāsa Translated from Bengali by Bhumipatidāsa.*

THE MOST GLORIOUS PEOPLE IN THE WORLD  
*Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

The swanlike devotees who are expert in discriminating between matter and spirit are supremely glorious persons in this world. Only the devotees are learned, because they have surpassed the ocean of illusion in the material world. Only the devotees are full of good qualities, because they have attained the platform of pure goodness, surpassing the three modes of material nature, namely goodness, passion, and ignorance. Only the devotees are happy, because they have attained the transcendental happiness of divya Vraja, surpassing the happiness and distress of the material world. Only the devotees are fearless, because they have become the inhabitants of Goloka, surpassing material time, which consists of past and future. May the devotees live forever and benedict unfortunate persons, who are tortured by *māyā* in various ways.

-*Bhajanāmṛtaṁ commentary.*

THE UNALLOYED DEVOTEES OF THE SUPREME LORD  
Sriḷa Vrindavan Das Thakura

tato 'dhanamtyajantyasya  
svajanāduḥkha-duḥkhitam

The unalloyed devotees can never give up the service of the lotus feet of Lord Viṣṇu, who is very affectionate to His devotees. The Lord also never gives up His unalloyed devotees. In other words, the Lord and His devotees can never be separated for even a moment. Rather the Lord always protects His devotees in all respects. The devotees also protect the Lord from the attacks of the impersonal Mayavadis. This is the unbreakable exchange between the Lord and His devotees.

Delivering the Lord from the cruel hands of those who are hostile to Him is a display of the devotees' compassion. Moreover, by always broadcasting His glories through His devotees, the Lord protects the non-devotees from immediate destruction. In order to increase the glories of His beloved pure *brāhmaṇas*, the Lord concluded His pastime of having fever and thus broadcast in this world the glories of *brāhmaṇas* who are engaged in the service of Krishna.

17.27, Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata Ādi-khaṇḍa Śrīḷa Vṛndāvanadāsa Thākura,  
English Translation of the Gauḍīya-bhāṣya Commentary and Chapter Summaries  
of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda

SURRENDERED DEVOTEES ARE  
UNDER THE LORD'S PROTECTION  
Sriḷa Viṣhvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

The apparent contradiction regarding the suffering of King Yudhisthira and his brothers is succinctly explained by the analogy of a fruit-bearing tree that bears fruit only after a certain period of time, not just at any time, nor immediately upon being planted. Similarly, a devotee blessed by the holy name because of his devotion, is showered with the mercy of the name, all in the proper time. As for the sinful reactions the devotee suffers because of his previous impiety, they are compared to the striking of a fangless snake. In other words they are inconsequential. Therefore his sorrows, reversals, retributions, and diseases should never be seen as the result of previously committed sins fructifying (*prārabdha karma*). The Supreme Lord has declared: (Bhāg. 10.88.8)

śrī-bhagavānuvāca  
yasyāhamanugrhnāmi  
hariṣye tad-dhanamśanaiḥ

The person who is truly blessed by Me, I gradually take away the material wealth and property. His friends and relatives then abandon him because of his poverty and suffering. This is My mercy upon him because then he may take exclusive shelter of Me.

In another place the Lord says:  
nirdhanatva-mahārogo mad anugraha-lakṣaṇam  
The intense affliction known as poverty is in fact a sign of mercy.

The truth is that the Supreme Lord, the greatest benefactor of His devotees, purposely inflicts apparent suffering on His own men to increase their humility and yearning for Him. Thus the devotee's woes are not because of fruitive reactions nor are they reactions of *prārabdha* sins. They come from the hand of the Lord Himself for the ultimate benefit of His devotees.

Madhurya-Kadambini - Śrīḷa Viṣvanātha Chakravartī Thākura Translated by  
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!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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