



Śrī Annadā Ekādaśī

Issue no: 265

19th August 2025

SUDAMA VISITS LORD KRISHNA IN DVARAKA

SUDAMA VISITS LORD KRISHNA IN DVARAKA

Srila Shukadeva Gosvami

THE APPEAL OF SUDAMA'S WIFE

Disciples of His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada

FATE OF A BRĀHMAṆA

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada

NIMAI AND THE BRĀHMAṆA

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

WHEN TO AWARD THE SACRED THREAD?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

WHAT KIND OF VAIṢNAVA HAS NO POSSESSIONS?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura



SUDAMA VISITS LORD KRISHNA IN DVARAKA

Srila Shukadeva Gosvami

[King Parikshit said:] My lord, O master, I wish to hear about other valorous deeds performed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, whose valor is unlimited. O *brāhmaṇa*, how could anyone who knows the essence of life and is disgusted with endeavoring for sense gratification give up the transcendental topics of Lord Uttamahshloka after hearing them repeatedly? Actual speech is that which describes the qualities of the Lord, real hands are those that work for Him, a true mind is that which always remembers Him dwelling within everything moving and nonmoving, and actual ears are those that listen to sanctifying topics about Him. An actual head is one that bows down to the Lord in His manifestations among the moving and nonmoving creatures, real eyes are those that see only the Lord, and actual limbs are those which regularly honor the water that has bathed the Lord's feet or those of His devotees.

[Suta Gosvami said:] Thus questioned by King Vishnurata, the powerful sage Badarayani replied, his heart fully absorbed in meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva.

Shukadeva Gosvami said: Lord Krishna had a certain *brāhmaṇa* friend [named Sudama] who was most learned in Vedic knowledge and detached from all sense enjoyment. Furthermore, his mind was peaceful and his senses subdued. Living as a householder, he maintained himself with whatever came of its own accord. The wife of that poorly dressed *brāhmaṇa* suffered along with him and was emaciated from hunger. The chaste wife of the poverty-stricken *brāhmaṇa* once approached him, her face dried up because of her distress. Trembling with fear, she spoke as follows.

[Sudama's wife said:] O *brāhmaṇa*, isn't it true that the husband of the goddess of fortune is the personal friend of your exalted self? That greatest of Yadavas, the Supreme Lord Krishna, is compassionate to brahmanas and very willing to grant them His shelter. O fortunate one, please approach Him, the real shelter of all saints. He will certainly give abundant wealth to such a suffering householder as you. Lord Krishna is now the ruler of the Bhojas, Vrishnis and Andhakas and is staying at Dvaraka. Since He gives even His own self to anyone who simply remembers His lotus feet, what doubt is there that He, the spiritual master of the universe, will bestow upon His sincere worshiper prosperity and material enjoyment, which are not even very desirable?

Shukadeva Gosvami continued: When his wife thus repeatedly implored him in various ways, the *brāhmaṇa* thought to himself, “To see Lord Krishna is indeed the greatest achievement in life.” Thus he decided to go, but first he told her, “My good wife, if there is anything in the house I can bring as a gift, please give it to me.” Sudama’s wife begged four handfuls of flat rice from neighboring brahmanas, tied up the rice in a torn piece of cloth and gave it to her husband as a present for Lord Krishna. Taking the flat rice, the saintly *brāhmaṇa* set off for Dvaraka, all the while wondering “How will I be able to have Krishna’s audience?”

The learned *brāhmaṇa*, joined by some local brahmanas, passed three guard stations and went through three gateways, and then he walked by the homes of Lord Krishna’s faithful devotees, the Andhakas and Vrishnis, which ordinarily no one could do. He then entered one of the opulent palaces belonging to Lord Hari’s sixteen thousand queens, and when he did so he felt as if he were attaining the bliss of liberation.

At that time Lord Acyuta was seated on His consort’s bed. Spotting the *brāhmaṇa* at some distance, the Lord immediately stood up, went forward to meet him and with great pleasure embraced him. The lotus-eyed Supreme Lord felt intense ecstasy upon touching the body of His dear friend, the wise *brāhmaṇa*, and thus He shed tears of love. Lord Krishna seated His friend Sudama upon the bed. Then the Lord, who purifies the whole world, personally offered him various tokens of respect and washed his feet, O King, after which He sprinkled the water on His own head. He anointed him with divinely fragrant sandalwood, aguru and *kuṅkuma* pastes and happily worshiped him with aromatic incense and arrays of lamps. After finally offering him betel nut and the gift of a cow, He welcomed him with pleasing words. By fanning him with her *cāmara*, the divine goddess of fortune personally served that poor *brāhmaṇa*, whose clothing was torn and dirty and who was so thin that veins were visible all over his body. The people in the royal palace were astonished to see Krishna, the Lord of spotless glory, so lovingly honor this shabbily dressed *brāhmaṇa*.

[The residents of the palace said:] What pious acts has this unkempt, impoverished *brāhmaṇa* performed? People regard him as lowly and contemptible, yet the spiritual master of the three

worlds, the abode of Goddess Sri, is serving him reverently. Leaving the goddess of fortune sitting on her bed, the Lord has embraced this *brāhmaṇa* as if he were an older brother.

Shukadeva Gosvami continued: Taking each other’s hands, O King, Krishna and Sudama talked pleasantly about how they once lived together in the school of their guru.

[The Supreme Lord said:] My dear *brāhmaṇa*, you know well the ways of dharma. After you offered the gift of remuneration to our guru and returned home from his school, did you marry a compatible wife or not? Even though you are mostly involved in household affairs, your mind is not affected by material desires. Nor, O learned one, do you take much pleasure in the pursuit of material wealth. This I am well aware of. Having renounced all material propensities, which spring from the Lord’s illusory energy, some people execute worldly duties with their minds undisturbed by mundane desires. They act as I do, to instruct the general populace. My dear *brāhmaṇa*, do you remember how we lived together in our spiritual master’s school? When a twice-born student has learned from his guru all that is to be learned, he can enjoy spiritual life, which lies beyond all ignorance. My dear friend, he who gives a person his physical birth is his first spiritual master, and he who initiates him as a twice-born *brāhmaṇa* and engages him in religious duties is indeed more directly his spiritual master. But the person who bestows transcendental knowledge upon the members of all the spiritual orders of society is one’s ultimate spiritual master. Indeed, he is as good as My own self.

Certainly, O *brāhmaṇa*, of all the followers of the *varṇāśrama* system, those who take advantage of the words I speak in My form as the spiritual master and thus easily cross over the ocean of material existence best understand their own true welfare. 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.

O *brāhmaṇa*, do you remember what happened to us while we were living with our spiritual master? Once our guru’s wife sent us to fetch firewood, and after we entered the vast forest, O twice-born one, an unseasonal storm arose, with fierce wind

and rain and harsh thunder. Then, as the sun set, the forest was covered by darkness in every direction, and with all the flooding we could not distinguish high land from low. Constantly besieged by the powerful wind and rain, we lost our way amidst the flooding waters. We simply held each other's hands and, in great distress, wandered aimlessly about the forest. Our guru, Sandipani, understanding our predicament, set out after sunrise to search for us, his disciples, and found us in distress.

[Sandipani said:] O my children, you have suffered so much for my sake! The body is most dear to every living creature, but you are so dedicated to me that you completely disregarded your own comfort. This indeed is the duty of all true disciples: to repay the debt to their spiritual master by offering him, with pure hearts, their wealth and even their very lives. You boys are first-class brahmanas, and I am satisfied with you. May all your desires be fulfilled, and may the Vedic mantras you have learned never lose their meaning for you, in this world or the next.

[Lord Krishna continued:] We had many similar experiences while living in our spiritual master's home. Simply by the grace of the spiritual master a person can fulfill life's purpose and attain eternal peace.

[The *brāhmaṇa* said:] What could I possibly have failed to achieve, O Lord of lords, O universal teacher, since I was able to personally live with You, whose every desire is fulfilled, at the home of our spiritual master? O almighty Lord, Your body comprises the Absolute Truth in the form of the Vedas and is thus the source of all auspicious goals of life. That You took up residence at the school of a spiritual master is simply one of Your pastimes in which You play the role of a human being.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 80 » Verses 1-34 » Translation By the Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada*

THE APPEAL OF SUDAMA'S WIFE

Disciples of His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti explains in his commentary how the brahmana's wife anticipated every possible objection her husband might make

to her request that he go to Lord Krishna to beg charity. If the *brāhmaṇa* might say, "How could the husband of the goddess of fortune befriend a fallen soul like myself?" she replies by saying that Lord Krishna is *brahmaṇya*, very favorably disposed toward the brahmanas. If Sudama might claim to have no real devotion for the Lord, she replies by saying that he is a great and wise personality who would surely obtain the shelter and mercy of the Lord. If the *brāhmaṇa* might object that Lord Krishna is equally disposed to all the countless unhappy conditioned souls suffering the fruits of their own *karma*, she replies that Lord Krishna is especially the Lord of the devotees, and thus even if He Himself did not grant Sudama His mercy, certainly the devotees engaged in serving the Lord would mercifully give him some charity. Since the Lord protects the Satvatas, the members of the Yadu dynasty, what difficulty would there be for Him to protect a humble *brāhmaṇa* like Sudama, and what fault would there be in His doing so?

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 80 » Verses 9 » Purport By the Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada*

FATE OF A BRĀHMAṆA

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada

When a human being gives up sinful activities and accumulates piety, then he is born in a high-class *brāhmaṇa* family. The identification of a *brāhmaṇa* is the highest identification in this world. A *brāhmaṇa* is respected by all, and his example should be followed by everyone. Due to their sinful propensities, living entities feel proud to identify with castes other than *brāhmaṇa*, but there cannot be any fault in identifying oneself as a real *brāhmaṇa*. Those who commit sinful activities are awarded severe miseries by Yamaraja, who awards punishment. Particularly, if in spite of being born in a *brāhmaṇa* family by the influence of one's piety, and if in spite of receiving the great opportunity of obtaining proper instruction one becomes bewildered and engages in committing various offenses, he can never escape the unlimited miseries in the abode of Yamaraja.

—Madhya-khaṇḍa 13.065 Śrīla Vrindavan Dasa Thakura » The vyāsa-avatāra of Caitanya-līlā » With English Translation of the Gauḍīya-bhāṣya Commentary and Chapter Summaries of His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja » Translated by Bhumiapati Dasa

NIMAI AND THE BRĀHMAṆA

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

One day Sri Jagannatha Mishra ordered his son to bring a book from the house. As Nimai went in the house to bring the book, Sachi and Jagannatha heard the pleasing sound of ankle bells. After Vishvambhara brought the book and went out to play, the *brāhmaṇa* couple saw footprints marked with a flag, thunderbolt, goad, and banner in their house. But due to the nature of paternal affection, they could not understand that those footprints belonged to their own jewel-like son, rather they concluded that their family Deity, Sri Damodara-shalagrama, had walked about their house unseen. Thinking in this way, they arranged an abhiṣeka, a special offering, and worship for their Deity, Lord Damodara. On another day a mendicant *brāhmaṇa* who worshiped Bala-gopala became a guest at the house of Jagannatha Mishra. After completing his cooking, the *brāhmaṇa* offered Lord Krishna the foodstuffs in meditation.

In order to bestow mercy on the devoted *brāhmaṇa*, Gaura-gopala came there and ate a handful of the rice offering. Seeing the boy eat the food that he had offered to Krishna, the mendicant *brāhmaṇa* shouted, “This naughty boy has spoiled the offering.” When Jagannatha Mishra heard this he prepared to beat the boy in anger, but he was stopped by the *brāhmaṇa*’s request. Jagannatha Mishra then requested the *brāhmaṇa* to again cook an offering for Krishna. At the suggestion of those present, mother Sachidevi took the boy to the neighbor’s house until the *brāhmaṇa* finished eating. Meanwhile, the *brāhmaṇa* cooked for the second time and then offered the foodstuffs to Bala-gopala in meditation. At that moment, Sri Gaurasundara, the predominating Deity of the mind, bewildered everyone with His *yogamāyā* potency, came before the *brāhmaṇa*, and began to eat the offering. When the *brāhmaṇa* again loudly shouted, “The offering is spoiled!” Jagannatha Mishra became even more

angry at Nimai. Thereafter, on the special request of Vishvarupa, Vishvambhara’s elder brother, the *brāhmaṇa* agreed to cook again. All the relatives then sat around the Lord in a room, and Jagannatha Mishra sat at the doorway to ensure that the naughty boy could not spoil the offering again. Jagannatha Mishra and the others even considered binding the boy with ropes.

When the child Gaurahari displayed His pastimes of *yoga-nidrā* (mystic sleep) inside the room, everyone felt relieved. Then, since it was late at night, everyone fell asleep. When the *brāhmaṇa* meditated on offering the foodstuffs to Bala-gopala for the third time, Gaura-gopala again came and ate the offering. Sri Gaurasundara then appeared before the *brāhmaṇa* in a four-armed form holding conch, disc, club, and lotus; He ate butter with one hand from a pot held in another hand and with two other hands He played flute. After appearing in that wonderful form along with His own abode, the Lord bestowed unlimited mercy on the pious *brāhmaṇa*. He explained to the *brāhmaṇa* His own identity, the *brāhmaṇa*’s position as His eternal servant, and the cause of His incarnation, and then the Lord forbade the *brāhmaṇa* from disclosing these secret topics to anyone. After this incident the *brāhmaṇa* would beg alms here and there during the day, but one time everyday he would visit the house of Jagannatha Mishra in Navadvīpa to see his worshipable Lord.

—Madhya-khaṇḍa 13.065 Śrīla Vrindavana Dasa Thakura » The vyāsa-avatāra of Caitanya-līlā » With English Translation of the Gauḍīya-bhāṣya Commentary and Chapter Summaries of His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

Nityam Bhāgavata-sevayā E-magazine

is a part of

In Service of Srimad Bhagavatam™

Quotations from the books, letters, and lectures of
His Divine Grace
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada

©Bhaktivedanta Book Trust International.

©All the paintings are copyrights of their respective artists.

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja » Translated by
Bhumipati Dasa

WHEN TO AWARD THE SACRED THREAD?

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

It is stated in the Vedas: *aṣṭa-varṣam brāhmaṇam upanayīta*—“When the son of a *brāhmaṇa* becomes eight years old, he should be awarded the sacred thread.” In this statement the word *brāhmaṇa* refers to those who will become *brāhmaṇas* in the future. The *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (11.17.39) statement: *grhārthī sadṛṣīm bhāryām udvahet*—“One who desires to establish family life should marry a wife of his own caste,” refers to those who will accept wives in the future, and in the same way a non-*brāhmaṇa* who will become a *brāhmaṇa* in the future is called a *brāhmaṇa*. In the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.13) it is stated: *saṁskārā yatṛvicchinnaḥ sa dvijo ’jo jagāda yam*—“Those who have been reformed by the *garbhādhāna* ceremony and other prescribed reformatory methods, performed with Vedic mantras and without interruption, and who have been approved by Lord Brahma, are *dvijas*, or twice-born.”

In the *Viṣṇu Yāmala* it is stated:

*aśuddhāḥ śūdra-kalpā hi
brāhmaṇaḥ kali-sambhavāḥ
teṣāṁ āgama-mārgena
śuddhir na śrota-vartmanā*

“The brahmanas born in the Age of Kali are merely sudras. Their so-called Vedic path of karma is polluted and cannot purify them. They can only be purified by following the path of the agamas or *pāñcarātrika-viddhi*.” From this statement it is understood that due to the lack of purity in family lines in the Age of Kali, or quarrel, one should become purified through the process of *pāñcarātrika* initiation. Therefore, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (7.11.35) states:

*yasya yal lakṣaṇam proktam
punso varṇabhivyāñjakam
yad anyatrāpi dṛśyeta
tat tenaiva vinirdiśet*

“If one shows the symptoms of being a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or *śūdra*, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those

symptoms of classification.” And Sridhara Svami in his commentary on this verse states: *yad yadi anyatra varṇāntare ’pi dṛśyeta, tad-varṇāntaram tenaiva lakṣaṇa-nimittenaiva varṇena vinirdiśet, na tu jāti-nimitttenety arthaḥ*—“If the proper symptoms are seen in persons other than those born as brahmanas, then such persons should be considered brahmanas. They should not be considered according to their caste by birth.”

The *Mahābhārata* (*Anuśāsana* 143.46 and 50) states: *śūdro ’py āgama sampanno dvijo bhavati saṁskṛtaḥ*—“Persons born in lower, degraded castes can become qualified well-versed *brāhmaṇas*.” *na yonir nāpi saṁskāro na śrutam na ca santatiḥ kāraṇāni dvijatvasya vṛttam eva tu kāraṇam*—“Therefore, neither the source of one’s birth, nor his reformation, nor his education is the criterion of a *brāhmaṇa*. The *vṛtta*, or occupation, is the real standard by which one is known as a *brāhmaṇa*.”

In the *Bhāradvāja-saṁhitā* of the *Nārada Pañcarātra* (2.34) it is stated: *svayam brahmaṇi nikṣiptān jātān eva hi mantrataḥ vinitān-artha putrādīn saṁskṛtya prati-bodhayet*—“An *ācārya* should purify his sons and disciples by engaging them in the service of the Absolute Truth after initiating them with proper mantras so that they will be purified and knowledgable.” The *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (Part 2) quotes the *Tattva-sāgara* as follows: *yathā kāñcanatām yāti kāṁsyaṁ rasa-vidhānataḥ tathā dīkṣā-vidhānena dvijatvaṁ jāyate nṛṇām*—“As bell metal, when mixed with mercury, is transformed to gold, a person, even though not golden pure, can be transformed into a *brāhmaṇa*, or *dvija*, simply by the initiation process.” (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 2.12) In his commentary on this verse, Sri Sanatana Gosvami has written: *nṛṇām sarveṣāṁ eva, dvijatvaṁ vipratā*—“All human beings are eligible to become twice-born brahmanas.” In his *Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā* on *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* (2.4.37), he has explained the word, *dīkṣā-lakṣaṇa-dhāriṇaḥ*—“accepting the signs of initiation,” as follows: “Some of them [the residents of Vaikuntha] accepted the signs of initiation, and some of them accepted mantras for worshiping the Lord. They had sacred threads, waterpots, asanas of *kuśa* grass, *tulasī* beads, and various other signs.”

In his commentary on the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.27), Sri Jiva Gosvami Prabhu has written: “After being initiated in the chanting of the eighteen syllable mantra, Lord Brahma became a *dvija*. There was no impediment with this because Lord Brahma was born from Sri Govindadeva, who is the predominating Deity of the eighteen syllable mantra. We can also cite the evidence of Dhruva Maharaja, for he also became a *brāhmaṇa* after initiation.” These and innumerable other statements of the scriptures and mahajanas confirm that everyone must be initiated through the *pāñcarātrika* process and accept the sacred thread. This has been the process since time immemorial.

Therefore Sri Jayatirthapada refers to the *vṛścika-tāṇḍuli-nyāya* in his *Tattva-prakāśikā* commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* (1.3.29) to demonstrate that brahminical qualities acquired by birth or by occupation are accepted. The sacred thread ceremony is meant to give one the qualification for studying the Vedas, because the *Brahma-sūtras* state that *sūdras*, or those without sacred thread, are not eligible to hear *Vedānta*. After accepting *pāñcarātrika* mantras and being properly initiated according to the Sri Narada *Pañcarātra* a person must observe the ten *samskaras*, or purificatory rites, and thereafter hear the meanings of the mantras.

—Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura » *The vyāsa-avatāra of Caitanya-līlā*
» *With English Translation of the Gauḍīya-bhāṣya Commentary and Chapter*
Summaries of His Divine Grace Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivṛājākācārya
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja » *Translated by*
Bhumipati Dasa

WHAT KIND OF VAIṢṆAVA HAS NO POSSESSIONS?

Srīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

Those who want nothing from this world are actually *akiñcana*, devoid of possessions. Such Vaishnavas have understood that there is nothing in this world that can give them eternal happiness. The material world is a prison house for conditioned souls. Because we have been averse to Krishna, we have been imprisoned here and have suffered the material miseries. Although Prahlada Maharaja was an emperor,



he had no possessions. Sudama *brāhmaṇa* was extremely impoverished, and he too was *akiñcana*. Both devotees were free of material desire. The *akiñcana* devotees know well that the material world simply contains ingredients for the service of Hari, guru, and the Vaishnavas. They do not see this material world in the spirit of personal enjoyment, nor do they become indifferent to it. Rather, they engage everything in this world in the Supreme Lord's service. Unless we worship Lord Hari, we have no right to take even a blade of grass from this world. *Akiñcana* devotees realize this fact. The devotees are convinced that by rendering devotional service to Krishna they can attain happiness and auspiciousness. By constantly and offenselessly chanting Krishna's holy name, they realize the essential characteristics of Vaishnavas, devotional service, and the Supreme Lord. We have to hear *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* from the spiritual master and the Vaishnavas and then preach it to others. This is how we cultivate Krishna consciousness. If we are not cultivating Krishna consciousness, we will certainly cultivate attitudes unrelated to Krishna.

—Amṛta Vāṇī: *Nectar of Instructions of Immortality* » *His Divine Grace*
Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhuṇada » *Compiled by Śrīpāda Bhakti*
Mayukha Bhagavat Maharaja » *Adapted and Published by Ishvara Dasa*

