



तव कथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam

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SNAKES WITH FANGS REMOVED

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

In his early life, Bilvamangal Thakur was an impersonalistic monist, and he used to meditate upon the impersonal Brahman effulgence. Later, he became a devotee of Lord Krishna. Sometimes a devotee gradually comes to the stage of *bhagavān* realization, realization of the supreme person, after having attained the lower stages of realization — impersonal *brahman* realization and localized *paramātmā* realization. The condition of such a devotee is described in the *Caitanya-candrāmṛta* (5) by Prabodhananda Saraswati:

*kaivalyaṁ narakāyate tridaśa-pūr ākāśa-puṣpāyate
durdāntendriya-kāla-sarpa-ṣaṭālī prokṣhāta-damīṣṭṛāyate
viśvāṁ pūrṇa-sukhāyate vidhi-mahendrādīś ca kīṭāyate
yat-kāṁṇya-kaṭāṅṣa-vaibhava-vatāṁ taṁ gauram exa stumah*

Kaivalya, the state of oneness with the effulgence of *brahman*, appears hellish to the devotee. Also, the heavenly planets, which are the abodes of the demigods, appear to a devotee like phantasmagorias. The *yogīs* meditate in order to achieve control of their senses, but for the devotee the senses appear like serpents with broken teeth. The devotee doesn't have to endeavor to control his senses because they are already engaged in the Lord's service. Consequently there is no possibility that the senses will act like serpents. In the material condition, the senses are as strong as



His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

poisonous snakes. But when the senses are engaged in the Lord's service, they are like poisonous snakes with their fangs removed — they are no longer dangerous. (Purport to *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *madhya* 10.177) ❁

WHAT KRISHNA THOUGHT BEFORE APPEARING AS GAURANGA

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Krishna came 5,000 years ago in *Dvāparā-yuga* and manifested his transcendental pastimes. In his *kurukṣetra-līlā* he was the charioteer of Arjuna, and on that battlefield he spoke the *Bhagavad-gītā*. One should not think that Krishna spoke the *Bhagavad-*

gītā only to Arjuna. It was for all humanity. He gave confidential, more confidential, and most confidential instructions to Arjuna. Then he finished his *līlā* in this material world and went back to his own abode, Goloka Vrindavan. There, Krishna was thinking, “I appeared in the material world; speaking to Arjuna, I gave such nice instructions for all humanity.” What are the most confidential instructions of Krishna in *Bhagavad-gītā*?

*man-manā bhava mad-bhaktō mad-yājī mām namaskuru
mām evaiśyasi satyaṁ te pratijāne priyo 'si me*

“Worship me, pay your obeisances unto me, then surely you will come to me — there is no doubt.” This is a most confidential instruction. Krishna spoke this verse at the end of the 9th chapter [text 34], and again he repeated it at the end of the 18th chapter [text 65]. It is so important and confidential.

Then,

*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

“Give up all varieties of religion and just surrender unto me.” This is Krishna’s concluding instruction at the end of the 18th chapter of *Bhagavad-gītā*. These are his most confidential instructions. While in his abode, Krishna was thinking that after *Dvāpara-yuga*, *Kali-yuga* would be coming. *Kali* is the worst *yuga* because *pāpa*, sin, is prominent. In *Kali-yuga* the people are very, very degraded. Their consciousness is very, very low. Krishna knows everything, and he is the only well-wishing friend of the living entities, so he was thinking, “I spoke everything in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Speaking to Arjuna, I gave the most confidential instructions for all humanity. But can the people of *Kali-yuga* understand these instructions?”

When Krishna said, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja* — “Give up all varieties of religion and just surrender unto me.” — why will one surrender unto him? Because he is *rasa-maya-mūrti*, the embodiment of *rasa*. He is amorous love personified. We *jīvas* want to taste *rasa* because we are the eternal fragmental parts and parcels of that *rasa-maya-mūrti*, Krishna. That is why Krishna said *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*.

But later, in his abode, he was thinking, “Can the people of *Kali-yuga* understand these loving affairs

just by my mere words?” Krishna said, “If someone is fortunate enough to understand, to realize this, then *mām evaiśyasi*, he can come to me.” Otherwise it is not possible to approach Krishna. Krishna said, *prati-jāne priyo 'si me* — “You are my very dear friend, Arjuna, so I can tell you this confidential instruction.” But Krishna was later thinking, “How many people of this *Kali-yuga* can understand? I think no one can understand because they are conditioned souls, *māyā-baddha-jīvas*. They always think themselves the body. They don’t know about the soul.”

To say, “I am a spirit soul,” is only speaking theoretically. It is not practical. We cannot understand. But when you chant Hare Krishna and make some advancement on this spiritual path, then you can understand. It is not theoretical. It is very practical. So Krishna was thinking, “How many of these people of *Kali-yuga* can understand this truth? They are conditioned souls. They are always hankering after their own sense gratification and material happiness. They don’t know that there is anything other than material pleasure. They don’t have any knowledge of it. They have no taste for it. They cannot put faith in my words because they only know the happiness of material sense gratification. What should be done? I have only spoken theoretically. I have not given any example.” There is a very nice saying in English, “Example is better than precept.” “I gave only precept. I have not set an example. So how can they understand?” Krishna then thought, “I’ll go and set an example and enable them to taste this *rasa*, this mellow. Only then will it be possible for them to understand. These conditioned souls are only eating stool, very abominable things. They don’t know about this transcendental mellow. Only if someone can make them taste it can they then understand.”

Krishna comes once in a *kalpa*, and Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu also comes once in a *kalpa*. Krishna was thinking, “Many many *yugas* have passed. For such a long time I have not given this *prema-bhakti*. So now I’ll go again and give this *prema-bhakti*. I myself will observe and practice this *prema* in my life and set an example for these conditioned souls of *Kali-yuga*. Otherwise it is not possible for them to understand.”

*śrī-kṛṣṇa caitanya gosāṇī vrajendra kumāra
rasa-maya-mūrti kṛṣṇa śākṣat śṛṅgāra*

Lord Krishna Chaitanya is Krishna, *vrajendra kumāra*, the embodiment of *rasa*. He is amorous love personified. [Cc. ādi 4.222]

Therefore, that *rasa-maya-mūrti*, embodiment of *rasa*, Vrajendra Kumar, Krishna, became Gaurasundar, assuming the mood of the *gopīs*, because the *gopīs*, especially Radharani, are enjoying the fullest *rasa*. *ekali rādhikā āsvāde sakali* — “Only Radharani experiences these *rasas* fully. So I have to assume the mood of Radharani, appear myself, and distribute them.” In this way, Krishna became Gauranga Mahaprabhu and set a practical example of the confidential teachings in *Bhagavad-gītā*. ❀
— From a lecture in Bhubaneswar, 31 March 1989.

IN WHATEVER BIRTH I TAKE ...

Pāṇḍava-gītā

Also known as the *Prapanna-gītā*, the *Pāṇḍava-gītā* is a collection of prayers to the Lord that have been voiced by various great personalities in the Purānic era. It is called *Pāṇḍava-gītā* because many of the prayers are offered by the five *pāṇḍavas* or their relatives. It is known as *Prapanna-gītā* due to the fact that the prayers express the mood of *prapanna*, complete surrender at the feet of the Lord. The name of the devotee who collected these verses is not known, nor is there any known evidence of when it was compiled. Copies of this literature have been found amongst old Sanskrit manuscripts in libraries of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

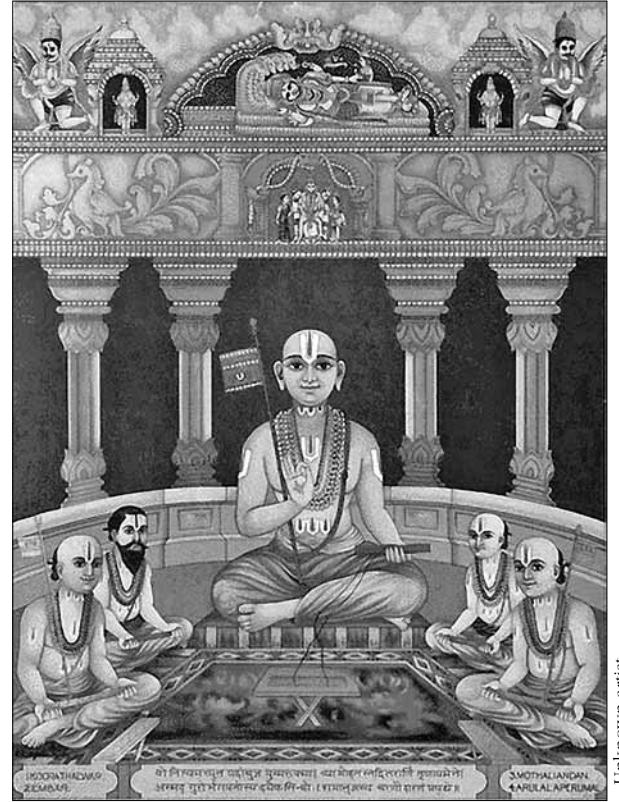
nakula uvāca
yadi gamana-madhastāt karma-pāśānubandhāt
yadi ca gati-vihīne jāyate pakṣi-kūṭe
kṛmi-śatam api gatvā tad gatābhyantarātmā
mama bhavatu hṛdīsthā keśave bhaktir ekā

Nakula said: O Lord! Even if, tied by the ropes of karma, I take a lower birth as a bird or an insect, or even if I am born a hundred times as a worm, my constant prayer is that in all those births may unshakeable devotion to Lord Keshava manifest in my heart. (Text 8)

draupady uvāca
kīṭeṣu vṛkṣeṣu sarīśrapeṣu
rakṣā-pīśācheṣu api yatra tatra
jātasya me bhavatu keśava te prasādāt
tway eva bhaktir acalā 'vyabhicāriṇī ca

Draupadi said: “Whether I am born as an insect, a bird, or a beast, whether I take birth as a demon, a ghost, or a human, may I have unshakeable devotion to you and to you alone. (12) ❀

— Translated from the edition with Bengali translation by Sashibhushan Purakayastha. Published by Upendra Krishna Chakravarti. Kolkata. Sal 1319 (1910 AD).



Unknown artist

INTRODUCTION TO BHAGAVAD-GITA

Sripada Ramanujacharya

By meditating on whose lotus feet I have been freed from infinite impurities and have attained the truth — to that Yamuna Acarya, I offer my obeisances.

Hariḥ om! The Lord of Lakshmi Devi is:

- free from all undesirability;
- the only object of auspiciousness;
- uniquely different from all varieties of things;
- the personification of inexhaustible knowledge and joy;
- an unlimited ocean of limitless groups of auspicious innate qualities, such as knowledge, power, opulence, strength, energy, effulgence, etc.;
- having an inconceivable, unchangeable divine form of his own choice that is eternally perfect and illuminated with infinite qualities such as divine aroma, beauty, tender youth, charm, etc.;
- decorated with numerously variegated and infinitely marvelous eternal divine ornaments befitting him;
- decorated with an infinite number of eternally marvelous and perfectly auspicious weapons suited to him;
- the dear object of affection of Lakshmi Devi, the goddess decorated with infinite auspicious qualities such as having an

- excellent form manifest according to her own desire, with supreme majesty, unlimited opulence, like-minded mood, etc.;
- the one whose lotus feet are worshipped by his desire by devotees who are decorated with infinite qualities such as transcendental knowledge, opulence, activities, etc., and who are fully absorbed in the mood of servitude according to their respective eternal forms (*svarūpa*), positions (*sthiti*) and inclinations (*pravṛtti*);
- the one whose transcendental form and behavior are beyond the purview of the mind and speech;
- the one whose variegated and astonishing residential planets are equipped with infinite objects, places, etc., for enjoyment suited to him, and are infinitely delightful, opulent, and vast.
- the one whose eternal pastime is to create, maintain, and destroy variegated universes filled with various kinds of enjoyers and enjoyed objects.
- the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme *puruṣa* known as Narayan, and who is situated in his inconceivable form after creating everyone and everything in the universe – from Lord Brahma to inanimate objects;
- the one who, although inconceivable and unmanifest even in the meditation and worship performed by Lord Brahma, demigods and humans, gives up this inconceivable nature and repeatedly appears amongst the demigods and humans where he manifests a

suitable form for them, accepts worship from them, and awards them fruits of religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. He does so out of his infinite mercy, goodness, love, and magnanimity.

This same Lord manifested a form visible to the mundane senses on the pretext of relieving the earth of unnecessary burden, while actually coming to provide shelter for souls like us. After that, he manifested sweet pastimes that captivated the eyes and minds of all kinds of living entities.

Thus, he delivered Putana, Sakatasura, the Yamala Arjuna trees, Arishtasura, Pralamba, Dhenukasura, Kaliya, Keshi, Kuvalayapida, Chanura, Mushtika, Toshala, Kamsa, etc. By spreading a philosophy and personal teachings full of unlimited mercy, benefit, and love, he satisfied the entire world. By exhibiting his transcendental beauty and divine qualities, he made Akrura, the garland weaver, and others, his topmost devotees. On the pretense of inciting Arjuna to fight the battle, he manifested his devotional service, which is the topmost goal of life and which is achieved in practice by following the knowledge and activities specified in the *Vedānta-sūtra*.

There (in Kurukshetra), before the war between the Kauravas and Pandavas began, the same Lord of all Lords in a human form, Sri Krishna — through his love for his surrendered devotee Arjuna and with the intention of delivering the entire world — made Arjuna the chariot-fighter and accepted for himself the role of driver for that chariot.

Even though knowing this exalted position of Arjuna, Dhritarashtra — the personality blind in all possible ways, desired the victory of his son Suyodhana (Duryodhana), and thus he asked Sanjay the following question (the first verse of the *Bhagavad-gītā*).

— Translated by Hari Parshad Das from the Sanskrit available at Gaudiya Grantha Mandira (<http://www.granthamandira.com>)

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